

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Culmstock, Mid Devon	National Grid Reference: ST 1031 1351	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring at Nimby Cottage, Threadneedle Street, Culmstock, Devon		Photo attached: N
Planning Application no: 05/02715/FULL	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum	
OASIS ID: exeterar1-57990	Museum Accession no: 74/2008	
Contractor's reference number/code: EA 6485	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 28/04-30/04/2008	
<p>Description of works:</p> <p>Culmstock existed as a settlement mentioned in the Domesday account of 1086 as the manor of Culmestocche. There is a steep natural slope from south to north which reflects the ground falling away from the area of settlement to the River Culm. The development site at Nimby Cottage lies just to the east of the historic core of Culmstock about 60m to the east of the 15th century parish church of All Saints (Fig. 1). Historic mapping suggests that the site was farmland later incorporated as orchard or gardens associated with cottages facing west onto the adjacent Threadneedle Street; this certainly appears to be the picture as presented in the mid 19th Tithe and apportionment records.</p> <p>A watching brief was maintained during groundworks for the construction of a dwelling at the site (Fig. 1). Ground levels across the area of development (shaded grey on Fig. 1) were reduced by 0.3-0.45m. The deposits removed comprised a topsoil (100) found to contain post-medieval and modern pot sherds the earliest of which derived from the 17th century. The watching brief continued during the subsequent excavation of building foundation trenches (Figs. 1 and 2) which were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.6m below the reduced ground level; these revealed the following general layer sequence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 0.45-0.7m Mixed subsoil levelling/made ground (101) • 0.7-1.6m Colluvium (106) • 1.6+ Natural subsoil (107) <p>A well mixed subsoil (101) with post-medieval pottery of the 17th-19th centuries was recorded across the site lying beneath the removed topsoil. Where observed in the northeast corner of the site it sealed feature 102 (see below) and this suggests that it is a levelling layer/made ground – possibly associated with the construction of All Saints vicarage and grounds which appears on mapping of the area in 1888 (1st Edition OS) - or a later episode of deliberate deposition.</p> <p>Two features were exposed in the northeast corner of the site, the more recent of which was a narrow linear feature (102), approximately 0.7m wide and 0.85m deep (Fig. 2). It was seen more clearly in section than during the excavation of the building foundation trenches. The feature had been cut from the top of layer 106 and it contained mixed clay and chert rubble. It was interpreted as a wall-footing and it may represent the remains of a demolished post-medieval outbuilding associated with the cottages fronting onto Threadneedle Street or it too may belong with 19th century vicarage building phase. The feature was not observed in the house foundation trenches which were monitored further to the west.</p> <p>Layer 106, through which feature 102 was cut, was a pale mid brown clayey silt which appears to be a thick deposit of colluvium derived from agricultural activity from the medieval period onward into at least the early post-medieval period. This layer sealed a ditch (108). The east-west aligned ditch (Fig. 2), which was at least 1.1m wide and 0.6m deep, had a northern edge which lay beyond the limits of the excavation trench. It was cut into a silty clay natural subsoil (107) and was filled with a homogeneous clay silt (109) which</p>		

contained a sherd of chert tempered coarseware dated to the 11th-14th century. The ditch may represent a medieval field or property boundary; the ditch fill was observed to continue to the west within the foundation trench before further observation was hampered by weather conditions. No other archaeological features or deposits were observed.

Recorder:

C. Hooper (Exeter Archaeology) with additional material by
J.P. Salvatore (Exeter Archaeology)

Date sent to HER:



Fig. 1 Location of site, showing archaeological features. Scale 1:500.

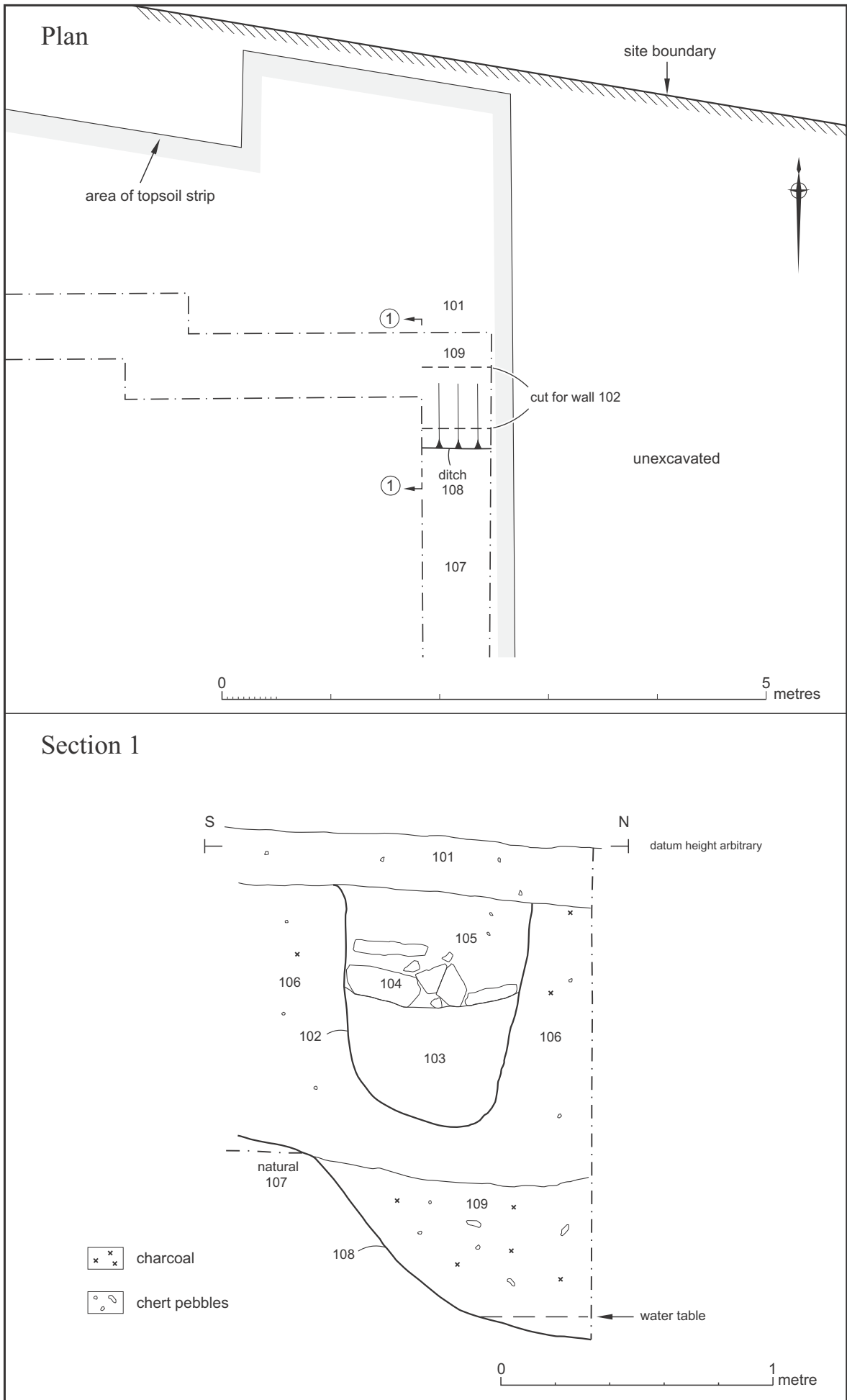


Fig. 2 Plan and section.