

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Dalwood, East Devon	National Grid Reference: ST 2270 0066	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring at Coombeshead Farm, Dalwood nr. Axminster, Devon		Photo attached: N
Planning Application no: 10/0688/MFUL	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum	
OASIS ID: 78818	Museum Accession no: 137/2010	
Contractor's reference number/code: EA 7270	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 21/06/2010	
<p>Background</p> <p>The site of Coombeshead Farm lies about 3km west of the village of Dalwood (Fig. 1) in an area of archaeological potential demonstrated by findspots of prehistoric flint tools recovered from the topsoil in the vicinity of the Yarty Valley, most notably from the collections of Mrs Nancy Pearce who has recovered significant quantities of worked flint of all of the major prehistoric periods. Coombeshead Farm lies just below the major Mesolithic 'collection' site at Telegraph Cottage and within the general area of Neolithic activity centred upon sites to the south of Stockland (Berridge, 1985).</p> <p>The archaeological monitoring work at Coombeshead Farm was required by East Devon District Council as a condition of planning permission for the construction of agricultural buildings with associated landscaping and earthworks, (including the removal of an existing building), and the creation of a new access road and a slurry pit in an earthwork bund. The details of the requirement were provided by the Devon County Council Historic Environment Service (DCCHEs) under their reference Arch/dc/ed/16442 and the works themselves were undertaken by Exeter Archaeology (EA)</p> <p>Description of works</p> <p>Topsoil strip trenches were monitored in the areas affected. Five trenches were excavated in total: two in the area of the access road to the west of the present track, and three within the footprint of the proposed new building (Fig. 1).</p> <p>Along the proposed route of the new access drive, two trenches (Tr. 1 and Tr. 2) were marked out and topsoil was removed using a 2.1m-wide grading bucket on a swing-shovelled excavator. Each trench was the width of the shovel and each was 20m in length. A very thin layer of topsoil was removed, below which was a mid brown clay subsoil containing frequent chert stones. A maximum of c.100mm of topsoil was removed in both trenches and the trenches were dug to a maximum depth of 250mm this being the formation level.</p> <p>Three trenches (Tr. 3, Tr. 4 and Tr. 5) were dug along the length of the footprint of the proposed new building on a north-south axis. These were placed c.20m apart and were exposed for a length of 75m in each case. A 2.1m-wide grading bucket was again used for the excavation.</p> <p>Tr.3 was dug along the west side of the building footprint aligned approximately north-south. 100mm of topsoil lay over mid brown clay subsoil containing frequent chert stones. The trench was dug to a maximum depth of 250mm.</p> <p>Tr.4 was dug parallel with Tr. 3 approximately 22.4m to its east. The soil profile was the same as in Tr.3 and the depth of excavation was also to a maximum of 250mm.</p> <p>Tr.5 was dug along the eastern edge of the footprint of the proposed new building. The depth of the topsoil was slightly deeper at the bottom of the slope at the north end where 200mm of dark, silty, colluvial topsoil had accumulated. This quickly diminished towards the south becoming a mere skim of</p>		

c.0.20mm at the south end of the trench. The excavation reached a maximum depth of 250mm.

No archaeological features, deposits or finds were recorded in any of the trenches monitored.

Reference:

Berridge P. J., 1985 Mesolithic sites in the Yarty Valley *Proceedings of the Devon Archaeological Society*
No. **43**, 1-22

Recorder:

G. Young (Exeter Archaeology)

Date sent to HER:

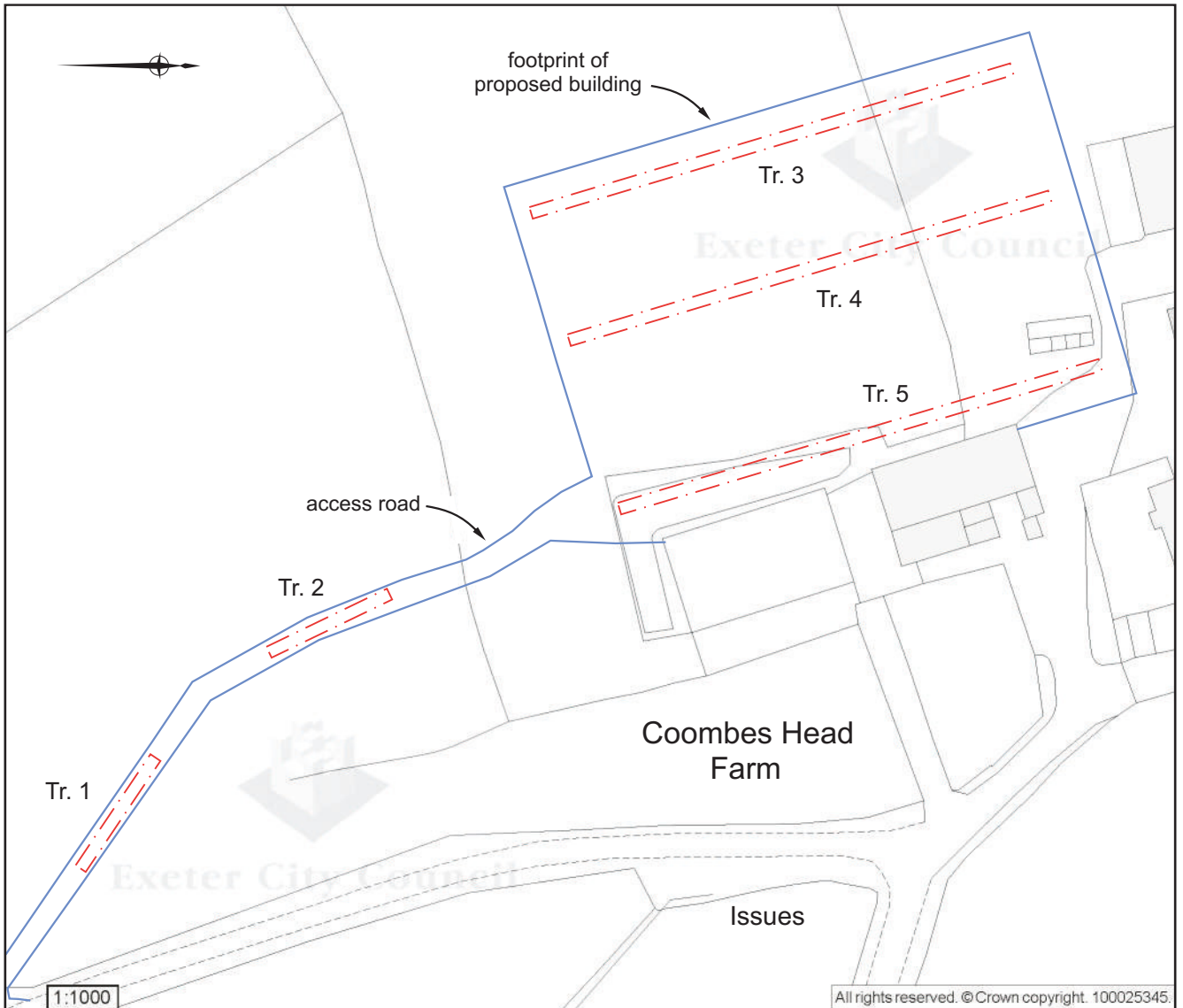
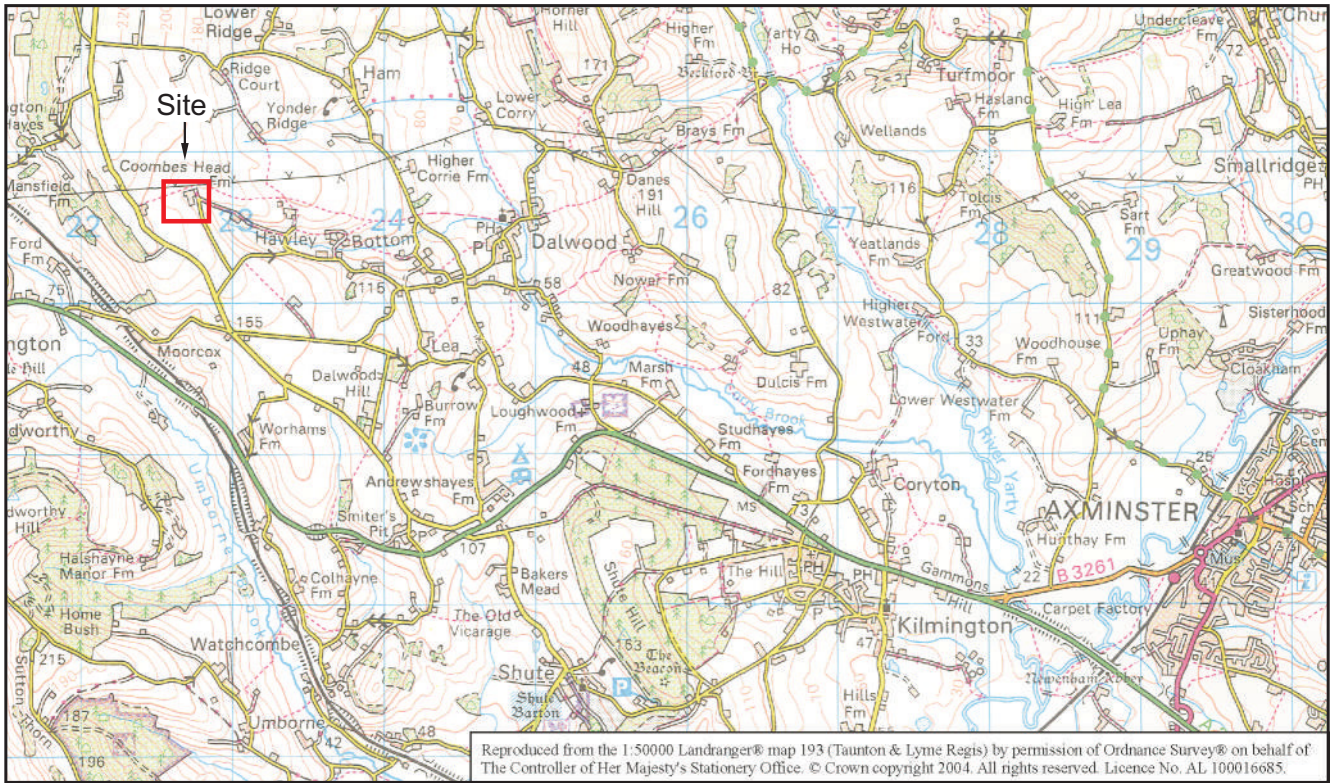


Fig. 1 Site plan showing location of trenches.