

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

S O U T H W E S T

**Town Barton Barn, Charles,
Brayford, Devon**

Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andy Weale

**Site Code: TBB12/188
(SS 6881 3297)**

Town Barton Barn, Charles, Brayford, Devon

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr and Mrs Davis

by Andrew Weale
Thames Valley Archaeological Services
Ltd

SiteCodeTBB12/188

December 2012

Summary

Site name: Town Barton Barn, Charles, Brayford, Devon

Grid reference: SS 6886 3290

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 12th November 2012

Project manager: Andrew Weale

Site supervisor: Andrew Weale

Site code: TBB 12/188

Summary of results: No archaeological features were encountered. Only modern artefacts were recorded from the topsoil

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon in due course, with accession code NDMS2012.44

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 06.12.12 Steve Preston ✓ 06.12.12

Town Barton Barn, Charles, Brayford, Devon An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Weale

Report 12/188

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Town Barton Barn, Charles, Brayford, Devon (NGR SS 6886 3290) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Davis of Town Barton Barn, Charles, Brayford, Devon. Planning permission and part retrospective planning approval have been granted from North Devon District Council (appln no. 54456) for the change of use from agricultural land to agricultural and domestic with construction of agricultural buildings/stable. The consent is subject to a condition (6) relating to archaeology which states:

'No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. The development shall be carried out at all times in strict accordance with the approved scheme, or such other details as may be subsequently agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority'

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by the District Council as advised by Mr Stephen Reed, of Devon County Council Historic Environment Team. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Weale on 12th November 2012 and the site code is TBB 12/188.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services South West, Taunton and will be deposited at the Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon in due course, with accession code NDMS2012.44.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located within the village of Charles which is to the east of the River Bray, with the villages of Brayford 2km to the north and West Buckland 3.5km to the south-west. Exmoor National Park lies 3km to the north-east (Fig. 1). The village lies on the edge of the steep Bray Valley with the river itself some 350m to the east and 80m below. The site lies within two fields of pasture with a trackway to the east (Fig. 2). The site slopes down from Town Barton Barn in the north towards the fields in the south. The fields are currently under pasture and are at 203m AOD approximately. The underlying geology is Pilton Shale (BGS 1982). Weathered and crushed rock was observed along the length of the new access road.

Archaeological background

The proposed development lies in an area of high archaeological potential as recorded in the Devon Historic Environment Record. Archaeological work in and around Charles has demonstrated a concentration of Prehistoric and Roman settlement here. Evidence of iron smelting has also been discovered. The groundworks associated with the construction of the new stables and access track have the potential to expose and damage archaeological and artefactual deposits associated with earlier settlements here. Charlestown Barton Farm, of which Town Barton Barn was a part, is a Grade II listed farmhouse. It is substantially late 16th century in date, but very likely earlier fabric survives. The out-buildings are of late 17th or 18th century date and are also listed, but have now been converted into houses. Before the conversion a geophysical survey, building recording and evaluation were carried out on the then abandoned buildings (Dean 2003; Humphreys 2004).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in particular monitoring the removal of the current conifer hedge and the footing trenches for the new building together with any services.

Results

The access track

The access track was stripped of topsoil, and other overburden, by a 360⁰ tracked machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under archaeological supervision. The track was 41m long and 3m wide (Fig. 3). The stratigraphy comprised topsoil (0.30m) and subsoil (0.10m) above weathered and fractured natural shale bedrock, which was the formation depth of the new access road (Fig. 3; Pls 1 and 2). No archaeological features were observed along the course of the access road. Four sherds of modern pottery (blue and white transfer printed cream ware, yellow glazed earthen ware and red glazed earthen ware) were recovered from the topsoil along with modern plastic, metal and brick/tile.

The stable block

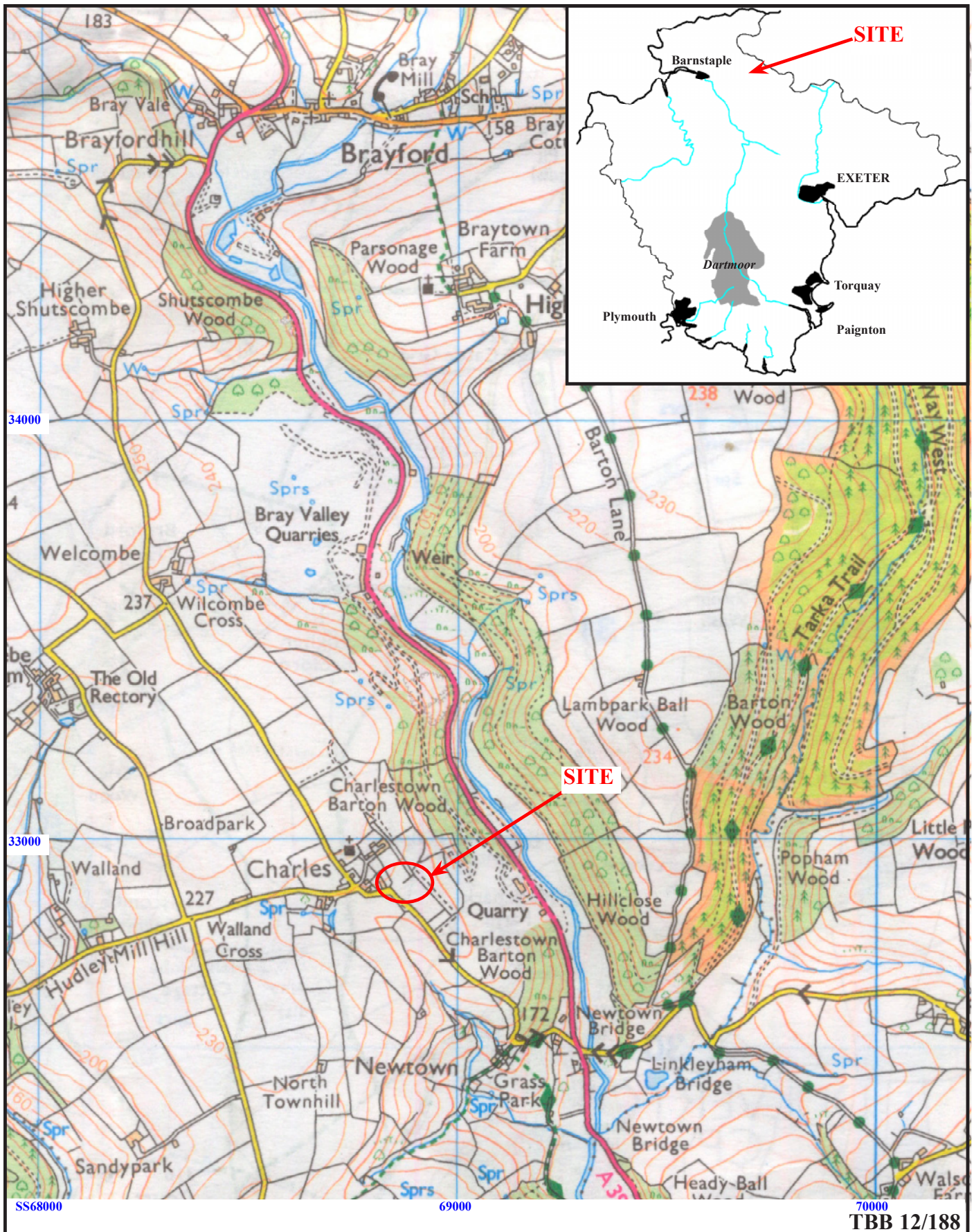
The area of the new stable block was not stripped of overburden but was to be built up on and lie on top of the *in-situ* topsoil. No ground disturbance took place of the archaeologically relevant horizon.

Conclusion

Although archaeological features have been recorded near to Charlestown Farm House to the north, no archaeological deposits were discovered along the trackway route with the only artefacts observed being of modern date.

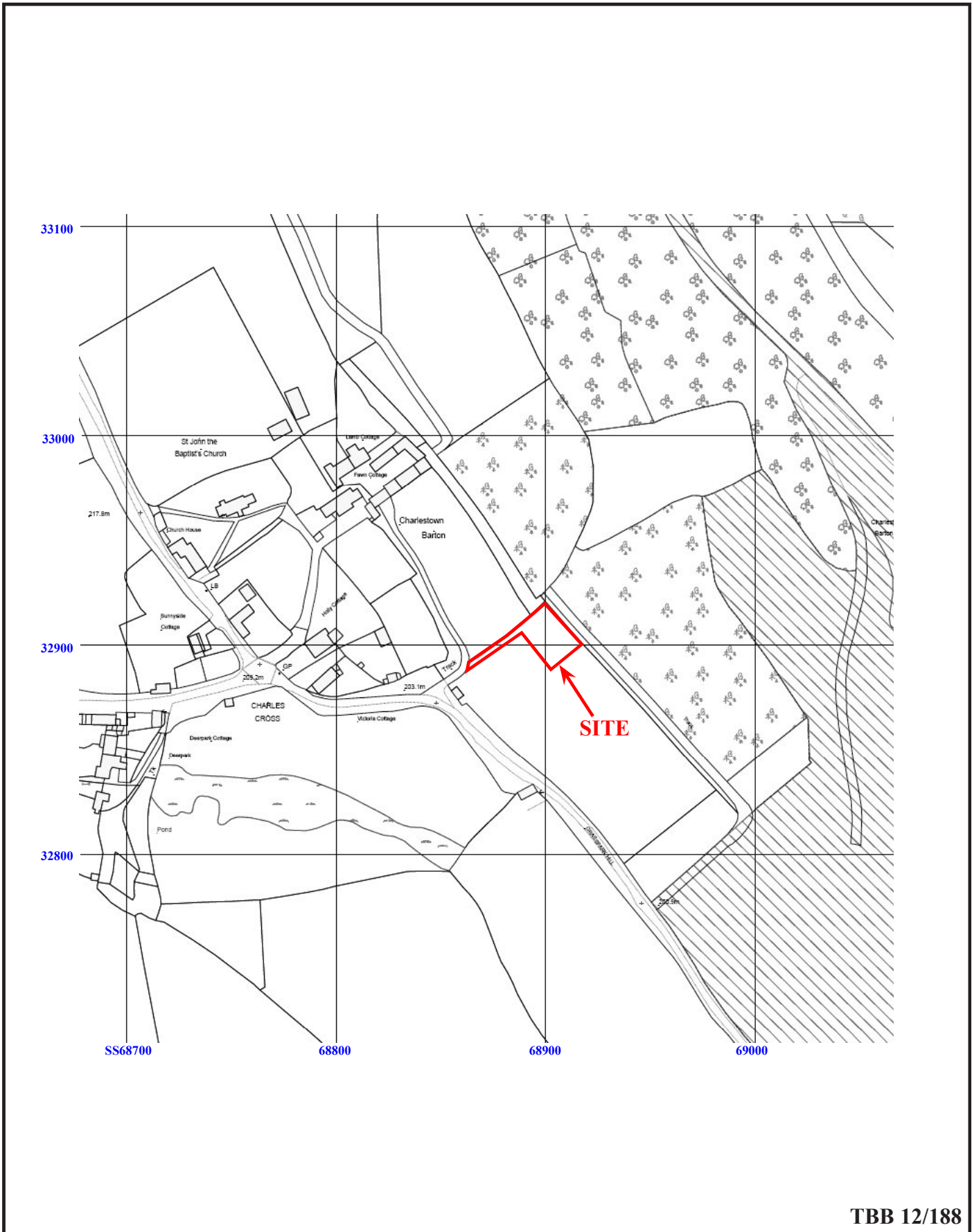
References

BGS, 1982, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 293, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
Dean, A, 2003, 'Charles Town Barton, Geophysical Survey', Substrata report R-CTB03-1910, Bideford
Humphreys, C, 2004, 'Charlestown Barton, Charles, Devon, Results of a survey of the cottages and outbuildings, a geophysical survey and evaluation trenches', South West Archaeology, South Moulton
NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department of Communities and Local Government, London (TSO)



**Town Barton Barn, Charles, Brayford,
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 Figure 1. Location of site in relation to Brayford, Charles and
 within Devon.

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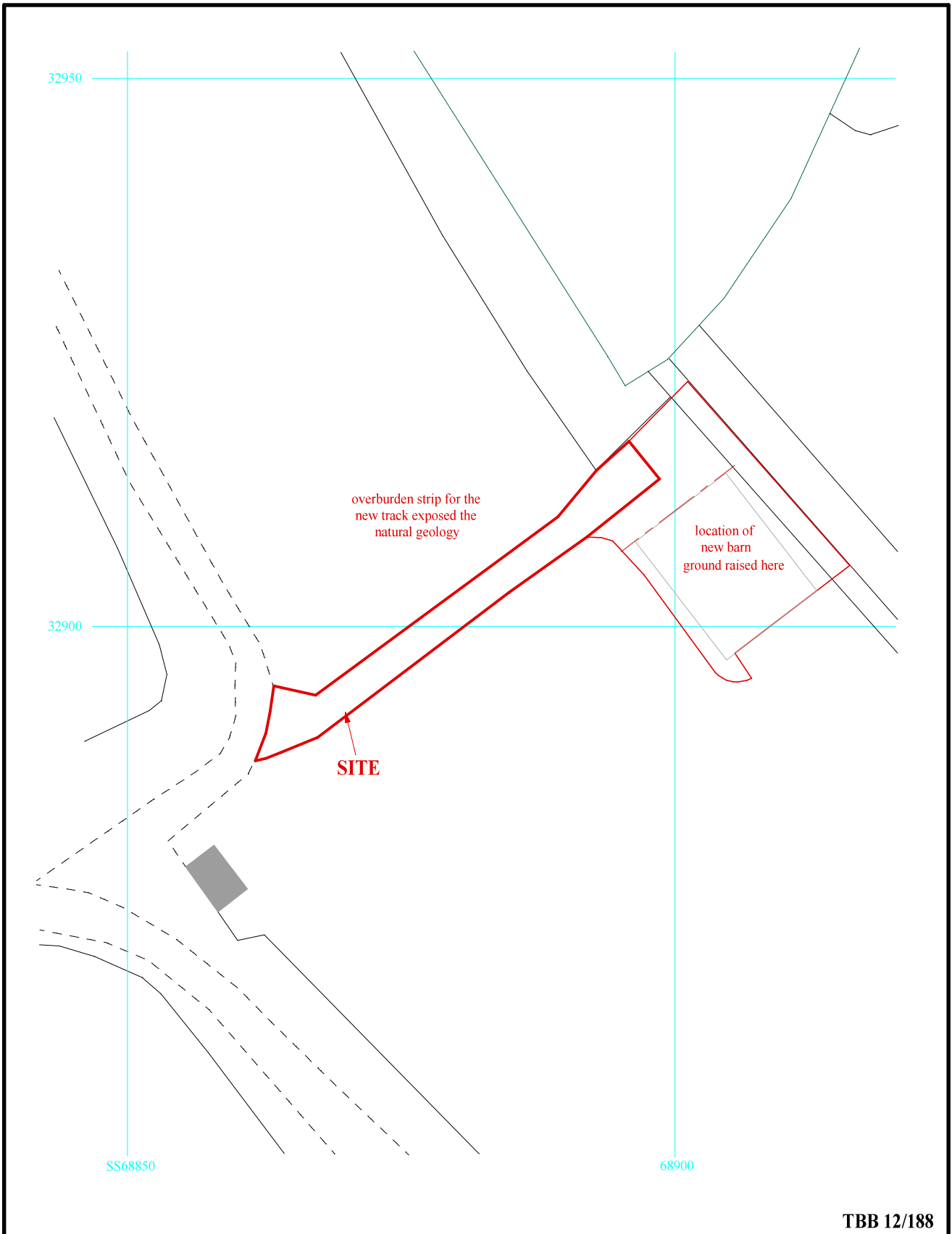


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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Figure 3. Location of observed area.



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Plate 1. Access track looking north east, Scales: 1m and 0.3m.



Plate 2. Access Track looking south west.

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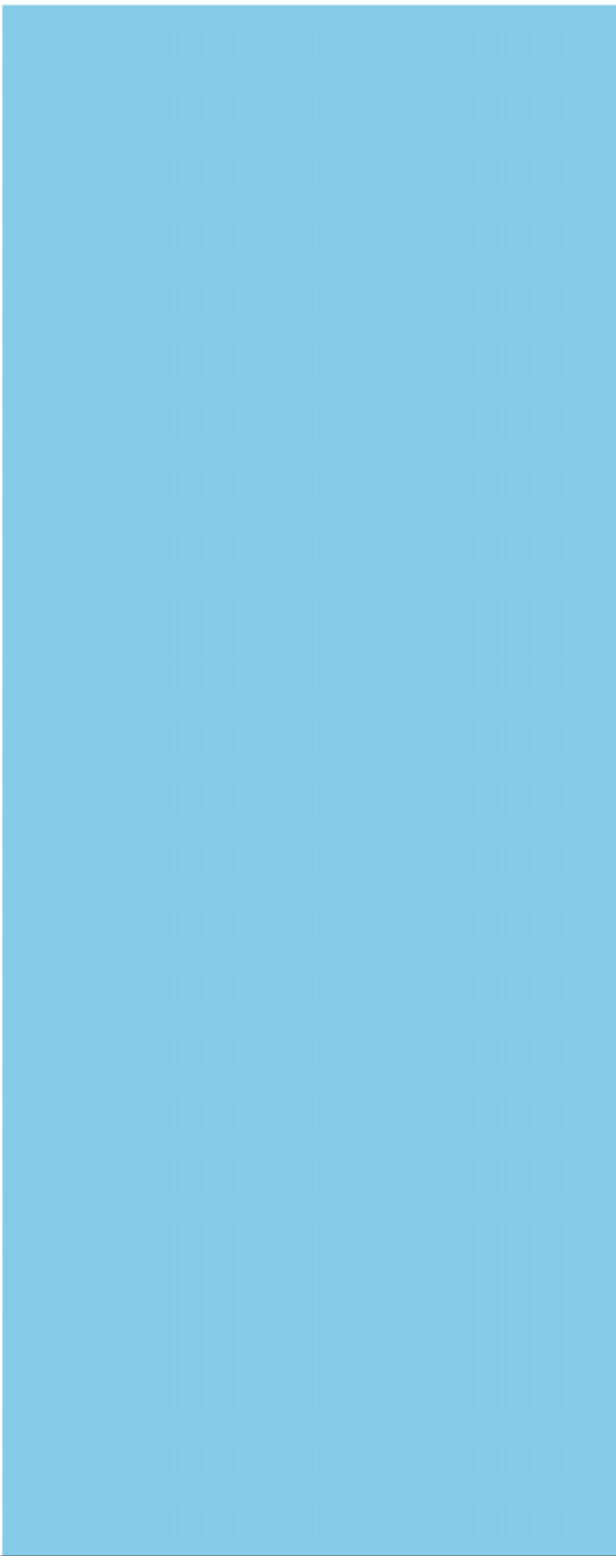
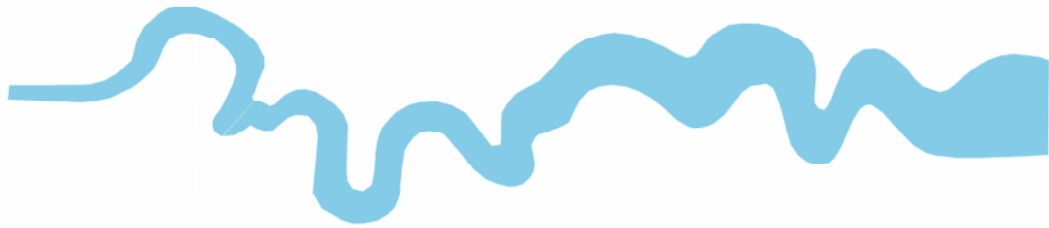
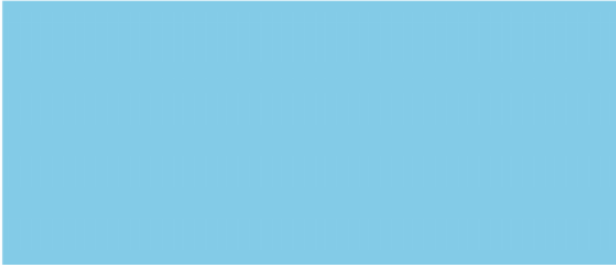
Plates 1 and 2.

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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