

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Salcombe, South Hams, Devon	National Grid Reference SX 7573 3756	Number:
Subject: Wayfield Nursery, East Portlemouth: Construction of roundhouse and siting of five yurts to be used in association with a nature holiday enterprise. Provision of additional facilities for educational, recreational and business activities together with associated car park landscaping works.		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: N/A	Recipient museum: Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery	
OASIS ID: southwes1-129971	Museum Accession no: 2012.37	
Contractor's reference number/code: EPHN12	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 13/07/12	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Catherine Middleditch (the Client) prior to the proposed development works. The work was carried out in accordance with a Project Design drawn up by SWARCH in accordance with a Brief supplied by Graham Tait of Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES). The work was undertaken by Dr. S. Walls and Mr. J. Bampton.</p> <p>The development site lies in a sensitive archaeological landscape. It is located less than 400 metres from the prehistoric field system between Deckler's Cliff and Gammon Head. This site is a Scheduled Monument and is of national archaeological importance. Elsewhere, near the area of the proposed development, is the site of a cropmark directly to the east of High House Farm, which may be the remains of a prehistoric Ring Ditch, possibly representing a Bronze Age burial mound. This monument is of regional archaeological importance. Furthermore, the field boundary to the north of the proposed development area (by the road) is thought to mark the extent of the Bronze Age field system to the south.</p> <p>Five trenches were excavated by a wheeled JCB-type mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless grading bucket, under the supervision and control of the site archaeologist to the depth of weathered natural or archaeological deposits, whichever was highest in the stratigraphic sequence. The trenches were located as shown below (see Figure 1) and their total length equated to 200.3m, just over the 5% of the proposed development area necessitated by the brief.</p> <p>The topsoil (100) on the site extended to a depth of 0.25-0.32m. It was a clean dark brown, friable clay-silt with very occasional slate fragments, quartz pebbles and charcoal flecks. Modern Fe objects and concrete fragments were encountered, particularly within Trench 1. The topsoil deposit (100) overlaid a very thin band of subsoil (101), mostly c. 0.1m thick. The subsoil (101) was a grey brown, friable clay-silt with occasional quartz pebbles and slate fragments. This directly overlaid natural (102) in all 5 trenches which occurred at a depth of between 0.33 and 0.48m below the current ground level. The natural (102) was a gingery-yellow and occasionally light greyish-yellow, firm moist (slightly silty) clay, with occasional slate bands. The slate bands were mainly aligned north-south, but with the strata often perpendicular to the trend (so running east-west).</p> <p>Modern features occurred at the southern end of Trench 1 and the eastern end of Trench 4. These were immediately visible below the stripped turf and produced wood and concrete. They represented a recently demolished fence in Trench 1 with c.1m spaced posts: and a pony stables removed in advance of the proposed landscaping in Trench 4. A natural feature was also investigated in Trench 1, an irregular pit [104] (see Photo EPWN.08), which was formed by rooting or burrowing.</p> <p>One archaeological feature was recorded; Pit [106] (see Photo EPWN.12 & 14 & Figure 2). Pit [106] was an undated feature, perfectly circular in plan 0.75m (dia.) with a steeply sloping profile and flat base. Pit [106] was 0.19m deep and cut subsoil deposit (101). It contained a single fill (105), a dark grey-brown friable clay silt with very occasional small stones and frequent charcoal throughout, with a thin lens of charcoal lining the base and sides. It was sealed by the topsoil (100), and although undated it is probably post-Medieval as it cuts the subsoil (101).</p>		

FINDS

A single shard of white refined earthen ware (<1g) was recovered from Trench 2. This was discarded.

DISCUSSION

Other than evidence for Modern agricultural activity on the site (which can still be seen on the ground today) nothing of archaeological significance was revealed by the evaluation trenching. However the sites location between known Bronze Age seasonal locations and monuments as well as the topography of the site make it fair to assert that it was likely to be as much part of the ancient landscape to those who worked the surrounding land as it is part of todays.

A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.

Recorder: J. Bampton

Date sent to HER: 18.07.2012

Please email completed form to: archaeol@devon.gov.uk or post to County Archaeology Service, Environment Directorate, Matford Lane Offices, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW. Information recorded on this form will be added to the Historic Environment Record, and made available to all researchers.

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Figure 1: Above: Location of evaluation trenches, Pit [106], and existing boundaries and features.

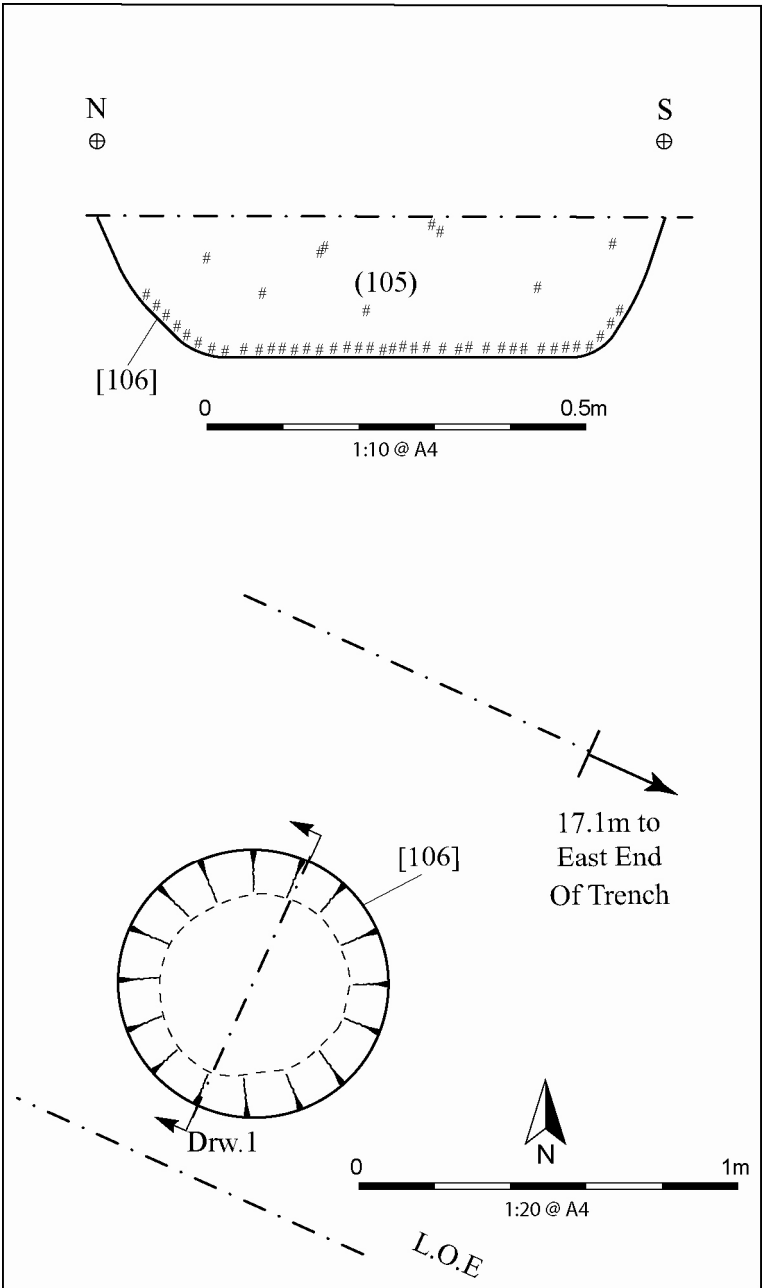


Figure 2: Illustrations of Pit [106].



Photo EPWN.01. Trench 1, looking south.



Photo EPWN.03. Trench 3, looking east.



Photo EPWN.09. Trench 5, looking east.



Photo EPWN.08. Trench 1, Irregular Pit [104], looking north-east.



Photo EPWN.12. Trench 5, Pit [106], Mid-Ex looking east.



Photo EPWN.14. Trench 5, Pit [106], Post-Ex.

