

# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> North Tawton, West Devon	<b>National Grid Reference</b> SS 660 016	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Erection of 11 affordable residential units on land adjacent to Barkers Way, North Tawton, Devon		<b>Photo attached?</b> YES
<b>Planning Application no:</b> 02603/2012	<b>Recipient museum:</b> RAMM	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> southwes1-140496	<b>Museum Accession no:</b>	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b> NTBW13	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 21 <sup>st</sup> -23 <sup>rd</sup> of January, 2013	
<p><b>Description of Works:</b> South West Archaeology Ltd monitored the excavation of a sample area and trenches across the proposed development site on land adjacent to Barkers Way, North Tawton, Devon (Figure 1; Photo 6). The excavation was undertaken with a 1.60m wide toothless grading bucket to the depth of weathered natural. The excavated areas/trenches comprised a area in the south-east corner, c.228m<sup>2</sup> of the proposed site; a 45m long trench from north to south along the western edge of the proposed housing area; a 32m long east-west trench within the middle of the proposed housing area and a north-south 22.5m long trench in the north-western corner of the site within the area of a deep drainage solution (possible soak-away); all were 1.6m wide.</p> <p><b>Site Stratigraphy:</b> (Figures 2.1-2.3) c.0.24m of active topsoil (100), a mid red-brown, soft clay-silt, extremely clean and producing only a very small amount of modern pottery comprising 13 sherds of white-refined-earthen ware and a single sherd of 19<sup>th</sup> century English porcelain. 0.17-0.26m of plough-/subsoil (101), a mid brown-red, soft-firm silt-clay with occasional small sub-angular stones. Occurring below a depth of c.0.38-0.46m, natural (102), a mid red, firm clay with sand with moderate small (&lt;15mmx5mm) sub-angular stones and very occasional medium (&lt;100mm) sub-angular stones</p> <p><b>Site Results:</b> The groundworks revealed two linear features across the site. An east-north-east by west-south-west boundary ditch [103] and an east-west stone lined drain (see Figure 1); neither produced any finds.</p> <p>The boundary ditch [103] (Figures 2.4, 2.5; Photo 1) in the eastern north-south aligned trench, and [109] (see Figures 2.6-2.8; Photos 3, 4) in the western north-south aligned trench, had a steep northern slope and a moderate southern slope breaking to a flat base. As [103] it was 1.48m wide and 0.52m deep and as [109] it was 1.19m wide and 0.47m deep. It appeared to be turning northwards or tapering at its western end. In both instances it contained two fills; (104) in [103] equating to (110) in [109] and (105) to (111) respectively. (104)/(110), the lower fill, was a secondary fill deposited through the natural silting-up of the ditch and was a mid red-brown, soft sandy clay-silt with moderate grit and charcoal fleck inclusions and up to 0.20m thick. (105)/(111), the upper fill, was a tertiary fill deposited by the deliberate backfilling of the ditch and was a mid orange-brown, firm silt-clay with patches of charcoal flecks and occasional small sub-angular stones and up to 0.32m thick. Ditch [103]/[109] would appear to line up with a boundary ditch present to the east on the Ordnance Survey First revision County Series map from 1888 and evident up to 1972 (old-maps.co.uk). It may partly define the existing housing plot boundaries abutting the eastern site boundary and may imply a Medieval date for the feature which then went out of use after the enclosure of the medieval strip fields, which according to the Devon County Councils Historic Landscape Characterisation online resource (HLC) occurred in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries and reduced the number of field boundaries in the area by approximately 33%.</p> <p>The east-west aligned Land Drain [106] (Figures 2.9, 2.10; Photo 2) had vertical sides and a flat base, was 0.72m wide and 0.50m deep. It was lined with locally sourced angular stones and capped with the same. Fill (112) was an active secondary fill as the drain was still working where it was exposed. Although undated the labour and energy for such a well constructed drain may suggest the work of Napoleonic prisoners of war, who were known to be used for public works in the area, including much of the Grand Western Canal. Although such drains may have been constructed by a landowner for any number of reasons, if wealthy or important enough, such as sewage works for the town or potentially monastic or manorial infrastructure.</p> <p>In the south-west corner of the site, within the proposed development site but outside the area of any</p>		

groundworks, were some slight extant earthworks that extended west of the site (Photo 5). These appear to line up in part with previous field boundaries and a non-distinct earthwork (possibly a ruined structure) evident on the afore mentioned 1888- and subsequent maps.

No significant archaeological features were revealed and all finds were discarded.

**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:** Joe Bampton, South West Archaeology Ltd

**Date sent to HER:**

Please email completed form to: [archaeol@devon.gov.uk](mailto: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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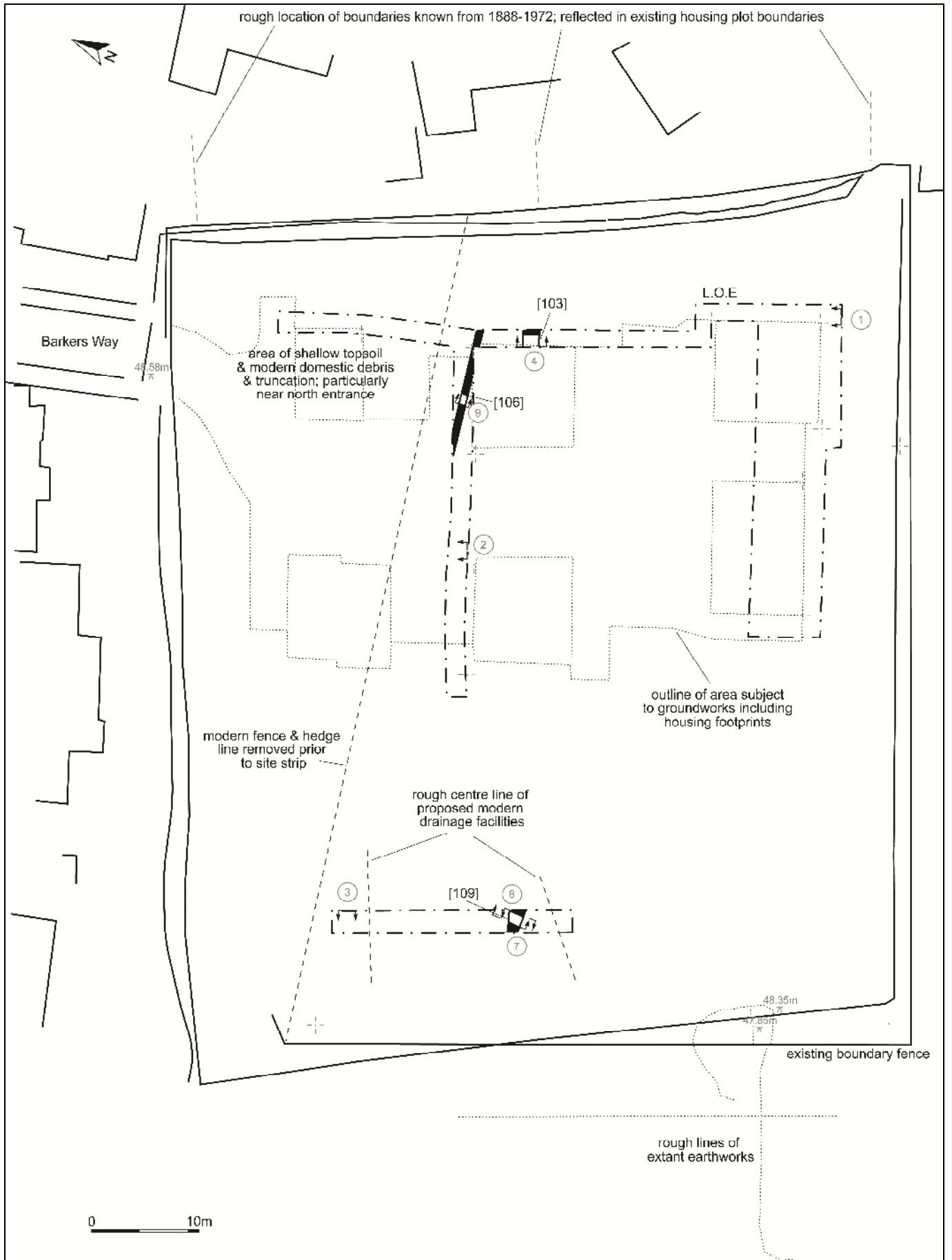


Figure 1: Site plan including the location of section drawings.

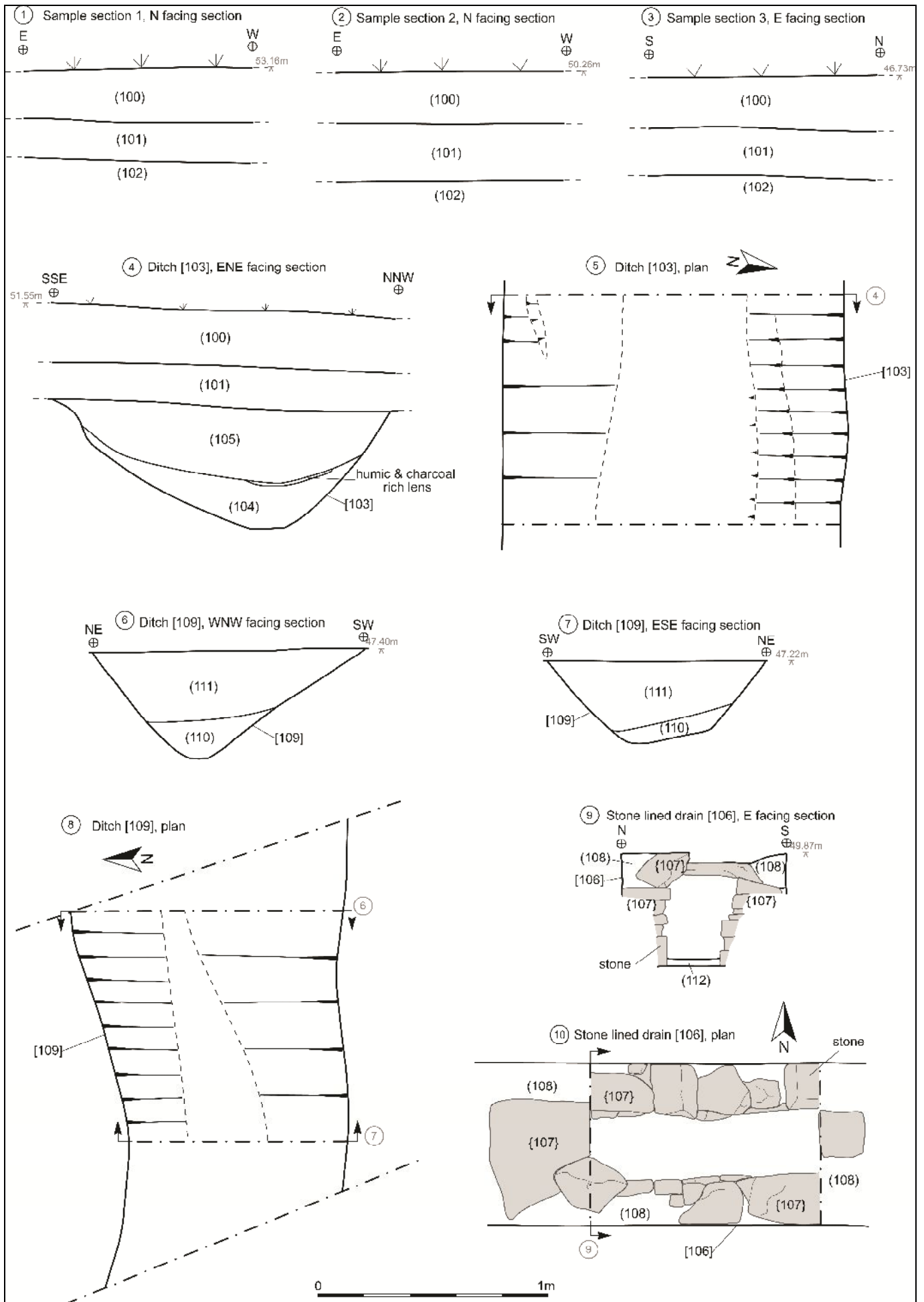


Figure 2: Sections and plans of excavated segments.



Photo1: Ditch [103] - Section, looking West by South-West (scale 1m).



Photo 2: Stone lined drain [106] - Section, looking West (scale 1m).



Photo 3: Ditch [109] - section, looking south-east (scale 1m).



Photo 4: Ditch [109] - section, looking north-west (scale 1m).



Photo 5: Extant earthworks beyond south-west corner of site boundary, looking south-west.



Photo 6: Excavated area in south-east portion of the site, posts denote corners of proposed buildings, looking West (scales 1 & 2m).