

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Beer, East Devon	National Grid Reference SY21988 89557	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring on land at Elbow Farm, Quarry Lane, Beer, East Devon		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 17/2400/FUL	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum Exeter	
OASIS ID: southwes1-311687	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: BEF18	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 25 th February 2019	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) on behalf of a private client during the initial groundworks for a small horticultural shed at Elbow Farm, Beer, East Devon. The monitoring was carried out by B. Morris on the 25th February 2018; the weather was fine, dry and warm throughout. This work was undertaken in accordance with a WSI (Balmond 2018) drawn up in consultation with the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).</p> <p>The site is located c.1km west-north-west of the centre of Beer, c.0.5km east of the Beer Quarry Caves, on the south-facing slopes of a valley orientated approximately east-west, at a height of c.75m AOD (Figure 1). The soils of this area are the well-drained calcareous fine silty soils of the Coombe 1 Association (SSEW 1983); these overlie chalk of the Chalk Group (BGS 2019).</p> <p>The site lies within an area of clear archaeological interest. The flint deposits of Beer Head were widely exploited for tool making in the Prehistoric period, and Elbow Farm lies within an extensive area (c.7km²) characterised by lithic material and lithic working sites. Fieldwork undertaken in advance of the construction of another small horticultural shed in 2010 recovered 69 pieces of worked flint (Arrowhead 2010).</p> <p>The footprint of the new shed covered an area 12.3×7.3m across, and was cut back into the slope by up to 1.0m. The chalk bedrock was only exposed to the northern edge of the site; the rest of the site cut through the various soil layers, with ground levels being made up to the south-east corner. The shed is to be built on a concrete raft.</p> <p>The strip revealed three distinct soil layers over the chalk bedrock. The topsoil (100) was a soft pale grey-brown fine silt loam up to 0.28m thick. It contained common to frequent small sub-rounded stones <30mm, and common flint fragments and flint nodules up to 100mm across. This overlay subsoil 1 (101), a soft pale yellowish-brown silt loam up to 0.16m thick. This contained frequent poorly-sorted flint fragments and flint nodules up to 100mm across. This overlay subsoil 2 (102), a soft pale yellowish-brown silt loam up to 0.36m thick. It contained abundant small soft sub-angular to sub-rounded chalk lithorelicts <30mm across, the frequency of which increased towards the base, but no flint. Subsoil 2 overlay the chalk bedrock (103). A modern service trench 0.3m wide for water and electricity crossed the site towards the western side. [Topsoil (100) corresponds to Arrowhead Context 1; Subsoils (101) and (102) correspond to Arrowhead Context 2 ('soil creep').]</p> <p>The flint from the site was scanned for signs of deliberate working, but only one possible example was identified (below). Freshly-broken flint was a dark blue-grey colour; the rest of the flint was a mottled blue-white (patinated) colour. The only finds came from the topsoil: ×1 (32g) brick fragment; ×1 (8g) C19 refined white earthenware saucer rim with blue transfer print; ×1 (5g) sherd abraded post-medieval South Somerset ware; ×1 (35g) flint scraper. The finds were recorded and discarded.</p> <p>Conclusions</p> <p>The excavation exposed three soils layers, similar to those identified in the 2010 excavation. However, the distribution of stony material within the soil profile would suggest these soils developed <i>in situ</i> rather than being colluvial in nature. The apparent absence of worked flint compared to the 2010 site is of interest, and adds a further spatial aspect to understanding of lithic utilisation around Beer.</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p>Arrowhead Archaeology 2010: <i>Archive Report. Archaeological Monitoring and Recording. Land at Quarry Lane, Beer, Devon.</i></p> <p>Balmond, F. 2018: <i>Elbow Farm, Quarry Lane, Beer, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation.</i> SWARCH report no BEF18WSlv2.</p> <p>British Geological Survey 2019: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer.</i> http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html</p> <p>Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: <i>Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales.</i></p>		
Recorder: B. Morris	Date sent to HER: 07.03.19	

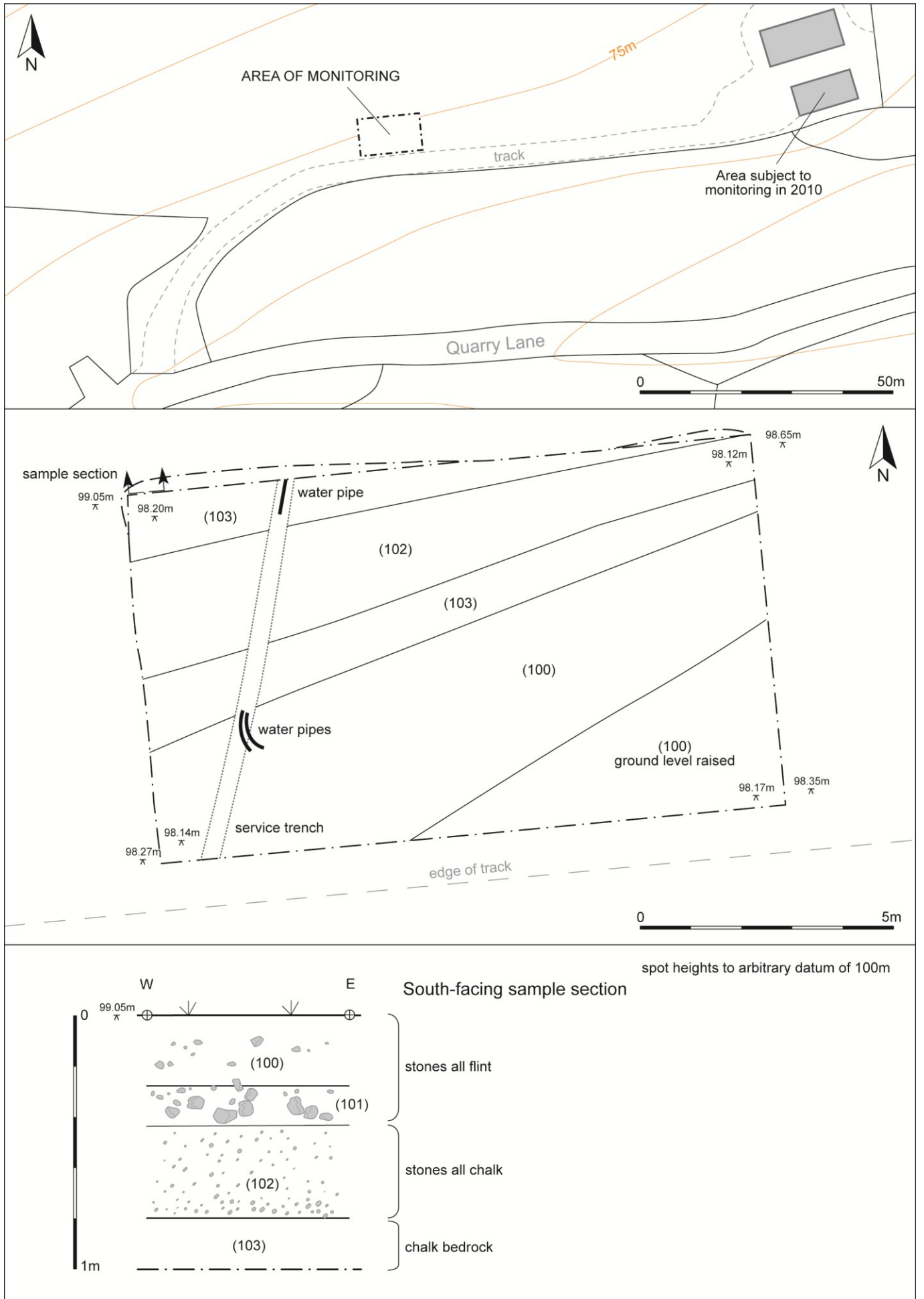


FIGURE 1: LOCATION PLAN, SITE PLAN, AND SAMPLE SECTION.



FIGURE 2: THE EXCAVATED AREA; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH-EAST (2M SCALES). THE LOCATION OF THE SAMPLE SECTION IS INDICATED.



FIGURE 3: SOUTH-FACING SAMPLE SECTION; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH -EAST (1M SCALES).