

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: George Nympton, North Devon	National Grid Reference SS 69977 22996	Number:
Subject: Archaeological evaluation prior to erection of dwelling to the rear of the Castle Inn		Photos attached? YES
Planning Application no: 45114	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon	
OASIS ID: Southwes1-71192	Museum Accession no: AC.2008.0008	
Contractor's reference number/code: GNC11	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 27 th September 2011	
<p>DESCRIPTION OF WORKS:</p> <p>A programme of archaeological evaluation and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Mrs Amy Sutton (the Client), prior to the construction of a house to the rear of the Castle Inn, George Nympton. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) drawn up in consultation with Steve Reed, Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES), and was carried out by S. Walls on 27th September 2011.</p> <p>The site lies within the centre of the village of George Nympton, a Saxon settlement which is mentioned in Domesday. The early village is believed to lie close to the 15th century parish church of St. George (40m to the South-east).</p> <p>The single evaluation trench ran east to west across the proposed development site (see Figure 1) and was excavated by a mechanical excavator using a 1.4m wide toothless grading bucket, under strict archaeological supervision. The excavations were to the top of the stony yellow-grey sandy-clay subsoil, which was revealed beneath 0.7m of topsoil at the western end of excavation and sloping to 1m towards the eastern limits (Figure 2).</p> <p>The northern portion of the site (see Figure 1) had been stripped previously (seemingly to subsoil depth) during the construction of the Castle Inn car park. The evaluation trench suggests that the topsoil from this construction had been simply placed over the other portion of the site, with the top 0.35-0.4m of topsoil (101) being a mixed grey-brown gritty silty-clay, with patches of re-deposited natural containing occasional sub-angular stones (>60mm dia.). This material covered (102) an organically rich and moist dark -brown silty-clay (0.24m deep), containing rare sub-angular stones (>45mm dia.), rare brick fragments, and occasional charcoal and coal fragments. Deposit (102) produced the majority of the finds recovered from the site. The rich organic nature of deposit (102) suggests that the former turf-line had been buried during the construction of the car park. A (0.2-0.4m thick) band of grey-brown silt-clay (103) formed the lowest layer of topsoil, below the buried soil (102). Deposit (103) was fairly clean compared to the higher levels of topsoil, containing occasional sub-angular stones (>50mm dia.), rare charcoal flecks and significantly less finds.</p> <p>Below the topsoil (103) the natural subsoil revealed only a single feature, a 0.3m wide linear [104] running east to west towards the eastern limits of excavation. Linear [104] extended to a depth of 0.15m and had a steep curving profile and concaved base (see Figure 1a). The gully [104] was filled with a loose gritty grey-brown silt-clay (105), which was very similar in colour to the lower topsoil (103) that overlay it, but with a much higher proportion of small stones (approximately 40% of the deposit). This feature probably relates to a field drain or removed service pipe. No finds were recovered from this feature.</p> <p>All of the finds recovered were derived from the topsoil deposits (mostly (102)) and included: 2 fragments of animal bone (7g); 4 fragments of well-fired red brick (60g); 2 fragments of vessel glass (21g); 25 clay pipe fragments (92g); 61 sherds pottery (404g). Most of the material is small and somewhat abraded (e.g. average weight of White Refined Earthenware sherds was 2.3g).</p> <p>For the clay pipes, there was one quite early complete bowl c.1610-40, three other bowl/heel fragments (18th and 19th century in date) and one decorated stem similar to an example published in Allan 1984 (CP no. 96 – early 19th date).</p> <p>For the pottery, there is a familiar assemblage of post-medieval and 19th century pottery. Medieval: ×1 sherd North Devon jug decorated with a horizontal incised wavy line (9g). Post-medieval: ×9 sherds gravel-tempered North Devon ware (198g). 18th century: ×8 sherds North Devon ware (74g), ×4 sherds North Devon plain yellow slipware (15g), ×2 sherds Bristol/Staffordshire yellow slipware posset pot (13g), ×2 sherds Mottled ware flagon (10g), ×1 sherd white stoneware cup (5g). Later 18th or 19th century: ×30 sherds white refined earthenware (WRE) (69g), ×1</p>		

sherd bone china cup (2g), ×3 sherds Industrial Slipware (9g).

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: S. Walls

Date sent to HER: 29/09/2011

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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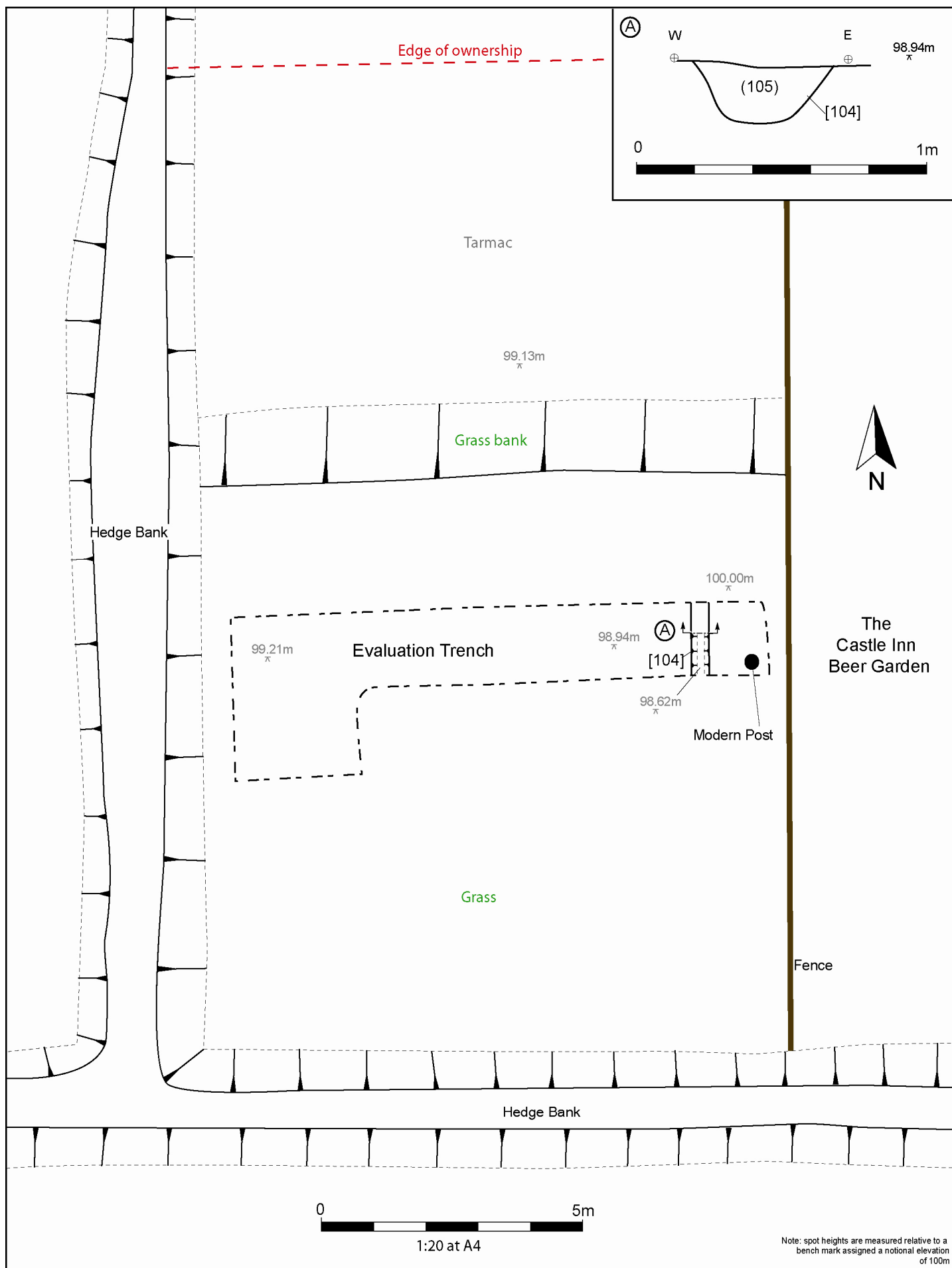


Figure 1: Site plan and section through linear [104].



Figure 2: Evaluation trench viewed from the west (2m scale).