

# Shepherd's Farm Clyst St Mary Devon

**Archaeological Evaluation** 

for Solstice Renewables

CA Project: 4855 CA Report: 14182

May 2014

# Shepherd's Farm Clyst St Mary Devon

# Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 4855 CA Report: 14182

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date	14 May 2014		
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date	19 May 2014		
issue	01		

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#### SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Shepherd's Farm

**Location:** Clyst St Mary, Devon

**NGR**: SX 9946 8998

**Type:** Evaluation

**Date:** 28 to 30 April 2014

**Location of Archive:** To be deposited with Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter

Accession Number: RAMM: 14/26

Site Code: SHF 14

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in April 2014 at Shepherd's Farm, Clyst St Mary, Devon. A total of eight trenches was excavated.

A north/south aligned ditch, containing pottery of 3rd to 4th century AD date and possibly representing a former field boundary, was encountered within the northern part of the site. It was cut by an adjacent tree throw pit which also contained pottery of 3rd to 4th century AD date, along with a residual worked flint scraper of probable Bronze Age date.

North-east/south-west aligned ditches associated with two former field boundaries, one of which was depicted on the 1839 Clyst St Mary tithe map and later OS map editions, were also recorded.



2

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In April 2014 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Solstice Renewables on land at Shepherd's Farm, Clyst St Mary, Devon (centred on NGR: SX 9946 8998; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The evaluation forms part of a programme of archaeological works to accompany a future planning application. This programme of archaeological works was requested by Stephen Reed, Archaeologist, Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCCHET), archaeological advisor to East Devon Council, in order to provide further information on the archaeological potential of the site.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2014) and approved by Stephen Reed. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2009), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006). It was monitored by Stephen Reed, including a site visit on 29 April 2014.

## The site

1.4 The site lies approximately 2km south-east of the village of Clyst St Mary, near Exeter, Devon. It is situated on a gentle north-facing slope in a rolling lowland landscape characterised by shallow valleys, farmland and frequent commercial development (EDDC 2008). It is approximately 16.5ha in area and comprises two arable fields. The western field will only be partially developed, with the southwestern boundary of the site currently undemarcated and the western boundary marked by an unfenced trackway except in the north-western corner where a pond is enclosed by a tree-lined fence. The northern, eastern and south-eastern boundaries of the western field are formed of low, tree-lined, hedgebanks. The eastern field is proposed for development in its entirety and has low, tree-lined hedgebanks forming all of its boundaries. The eastern boundary is also marked by a north/south aligned brook, while the northern and western boundaries have drainage ditches dug adjacent and parallel to the hedgebanks. The south-eastern corner of the site is immediately adjacent to a narrow lane that connects Higher Road to Greendale Lane. A trackway runs from this lane across the site to Shepherd's Farm.

To the north-west of the site are the farm buildings associated with Shepherd's Farm. The site is surrounded on all sides by further agricultural land.

- 1.5 The site is set in a landscape of lowland plains, characterised by low-lying flat areas between shallow river valleys and rolling farmed and settled slopes (EDDC 2008). The site occupies a gentle north-facing slope of the shallow valley of the east/west aligned Grindle Brook that passes to the north of the site. The surface level of the western field falls from approximately 35m AOD in the south to approximately 25m AOD in the north-western corner, while the eastern field drops from approximately 30m AOD in the south to approximately 22m AOD in the north.
- 1.6 The solid geology within the site is mapped as Triassic mudstone of the Exmouth Mudstone and Sandstone Formation (BGS 2014). Overlying drift geology is recorded as including alluvium, within the small valley of the Grindle Brook, and Pleistocene river terrace deposits comprising sands and gravels. The natural substrate encountered within Trenches 1 to 8 comprised clay sands, gravels and river pebbles.

## Archaeological background

- 1.7 The site has previously been the subject of an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (DBA; CA 2014), the results of which are summarised below.
- 1.8 There was some limited potential for currently unrecorded Roman archaeology being present within the site, derived from the proximity of the site to a Roman road and a possible Roman settlement site.
- 1.9 A Roman road ran from Exeter to Charminster in the east along a route that is now occupied by the A3052 (Margary 1973, 116, Fig 3, 49), passing approximately 490m to the north of the site. Until recently, there was little associated evidence for Roman activity along the route of the road in the vicinity of the site, although ongoing archaeological excavations at Hill Barton Industrial Estate have produced firm evidence for Roman period activity immediately north of the road approximately 600m north of the site. A series of ditches containing 2nd and 3rd-century AD Roman pottery have been discovered alongside an enclosure on a south-facing slope of the valley of the Grindle Brook that may be evidence for a previously unrecognised Roman settlement site (Farnell 2009). In addition a Roman coin, of

probable 2nd-century AD date, was found on farmland approximately 850m southeast of the site.

- 1.10 The cartographic, historic and archaeological evidence suggests that the site has been agricultural land since the medieval period. Extant earthworks related to a post-medieval or modern field boundary were identified in the eastern field.
- 1.11 The hedgebanks forming the boundaries to the site may constitute historic hedgerows under The Hedgerows Regulations Act, 1997.
- 1.12 A geophysical survey carried out by Pre-Construct Geophysics Ltd (2014) revealed the possible traces of a ring ditch in the eastern field (Field 2) and a number of other possible ditches and pits in the general vicinity of the possible ring ditch. A number of geophysical anomalies suggesting the possible presence of former ditches were identified in Field 1 (Fig. 2).

#### Archaeological objectives

1.13 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. In accordance with the *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2009), the evaluation was designed to be minimally intrusive and minimally destructive to archaeological remains. The information gathered will enable EDDC to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

#### Methodology

- 1.14 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of eight trenches, each approximately 30m long and 1.8m wide, in the locations shown (Fig. 2). Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 Survey Manual (2012).
- 1.15 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or

the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2013).

- 1.16 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites (2003) and one deposit was identified that required environmental sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with Technical Manual 3 Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation (1995).
- 1.17 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the artefacts will be deposited with Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter, under accession number RAMM: 14/26, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

# 2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts, finds and environmental samples (palaeoenvironmental evidence) are to be found in Appendices A, B and C respectively.
- 2.2 Within Field 1 (Trenches 1 to 6) the natural geological substrate was overlain by approximately 0.1m of subsoil and 0.25m of topsoil. In Field 2 (Trenches 7 and 8) the natural substrate was overlain by ploughsoil typically 0.3m in thickness. Modern plough scars, aligned with extant field boundaries, were noted in numerous trenches, and modern field drains were recorded in Trench 8. Geophysical anomalies targeted by Trenches 3 to 5, 7 and 8 generally correlated closely with, and are explained by, areas of natural coarse pebbles present within the clay-sand natural substrate in these areas.
- 2.3 Archaeological features were encountered in Trenches 1, 2 and 6.

### Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 3)

2.4 The natural substrate 102 was identified at a depth of 0.35m below present ground level (bpgl). It was cut by two parallel, north-east/south-west-aligned ditches, 103 and 105. Ditch 103 had a 'U'-shaped profile and measured 1.07m in width and 0.14m in depth (Fig. 3, Section AA). It contained a single sand clay fill, 104, from which a fragment of late 17th to 18th-century brick and an iron object were recovered. Ditch 105 was unexcavated but measured 2.3m in width and had a similar sand clay surface fill, 106, to that observed in ditch 103. An area of root-affected natural between the two ditches may identify a former hedgebank. Both ditches were subsequently sealed by subsoil 101 and topsoil 100.

## Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 3)

2.5 The natural substrate 202 was identified at a depth of 0.3m bpgl. It was cut by north-east/south-west-aligned ditch 203. Ditch 203 had a 'U'-shaped profile and measured 0.7m in width and 0.2m in depth (Fig. 3, Section BB). It contained a single undated sand clay fill, 204. The location and orientation of ditch 203 suggests that it represents part of a former post-medieval field boundary parallel with that encountered in Trench 1. The ditch was sealed by subsoil 201 and topsoil 200.

### Trench 6 (Figs 2 & 4)

2.6 Natural substrate 601 was recorded at a depth of 0.3m bpgl. It was cut by a north/south-aligned ditch 603, corresponding in position with a linear anomaly identified during the preceding geophysical survey, which may identify a former field boundary. Ditch 603 was 0.75m wide and 0.12m in depth, with a shallow 'U'-shaped profile, moderately sloping sides and a flat base (Fig. 4, Section DD). Its single sand clay fill, 604, contained 41 sherds of 3rd to 4th-century AD pottery. An environmental sample <1> was recovered from fill 604, which produced two poorly preserved cereal grains and a quantity of highly fragmentary charcoal. The small number of cereal grains and the highly fragmented nature of the charcoal suggest the ecofactual material from this feature may represent wind-blown firing debris from activity elsewhere on site. A tree throw pit 605, with irregular sides and base, subsequently cut ditch fill 604 (Fig. 4, Section CC). It contained a single clay silt fill 606, from which nine sherds of 3rd to 4th-century AD pottery and a residual worked flint of probable Bronze Age date were recovered. Fill 606 was sealed by subsoil 601 which was in turn sealed by topsoil 600.

#### The Finds

2.6 Finds recovered from the evaluation included pottery, ceramic building material, clay tobacco pipe, worked flint and metal objects. Codings for Roman fabrics correspond to those defined in the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998).

## Pottery

#### Roman

- 2.7 One bodysherd of Samian ware (LEZ SA 2), manufactured in central Gaul, was recovered from fill 604 (ditch 603). This ware type was exported to Britain between c. AD 120 and 200 (Webster 1996, 3).
- A total of nine sherds of Dorset Black-burnished ware (DOR BB1) were recorded in ditch fill 604 (ditch 603). Black-burnished ware was produced near Poole in Dorset, and when found outside Dorset it typically dates to the second to fourth centuries (Davies *et al.* 107, 1994). These sherds included one base sherd and six rimsherds from (Seager Smith and Davies) Type 25 conical flanged bowls, which can be more narrowly dated to the 3rd to 4th centuries (Seager Smith and Davies 1993, 234-235).
- 2.9 A total of 36 sherds of South Devon (Micaceous) Reduced ware (SOD RE) were recorded in ditch fill 604 (ditch 603) and the fill (606) of tree throw 605. Identifiable forms, all from ditch fill 604, included a large storage jar with a bifid rim, an everted rim jar and a channel rim jar. These date to the 3rd and 4th centuries AD (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 177-180).
- 2.10 An unfeatured bodysherd of greyware and a rimsherd from a flanged bowl with groove, in a black-firing, sand-tempered fabric was recovered from ditch fill 604 (ditch 603). These pottery types are broadly dateable to the Romano-British period.

### Post-medieval

- 2.11 One bodysherd of glazed red earthenware, dating to the 16th to 18th centuries, was recorded in subsoil 201.
- 2.12 Topsoil 101 produced a sherd of blue transfer-printed refined whiteware, which is late 18th to 19th century in date.

#### Ceramic building material

2.13 One fragment of brick of post-medieval date was recovered from ditch fill 104 (ditch 103).

## Clay tobacco pipe

2.14 One fragment from the stem of a clay tobacco pipe was recovered from subsoil 201.

This is dateable to the late 16th to late 19th centuries

## Metal object

2.15 One long, tapering, corroded iron object was recorded in ditch fill 104 (ditch 103).

#### Worked flint

2.16 One rather crude end scraper, made on a quite thick, hard hammer struck flake, was recovered as a residual item in tree throw fill 606 (tree throw 605). This is characteristic of a Bronze Age tool.

#### The Palaeoenvironmental Evidence

- 2.17 One environmental sample (10 litres of soil) was retrieved from a single deposit with the intention of recovering evidence of industrial or domestic activity and material for radiocarbon dating. The sample was processed by standard flotation procedures (CA Technical Manual No. 2).
- 2.18 Sample <1> was recovered from ditch fill 604 (within ditch 603) dating to the 3rd to 4th Centuries AD. The sample contained two poorly preserved cereal grains, of which only one could be confidently identified as spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*). A single spelt wheat glume base was also identified. A number of modern opportunist plant species were also recovered (Appendix C, Table 1) but in such small amounts that their presence is likely due to natural bioturbation rather than contamination from modern activities. Charcoal remains were abundant but were so poorly preserved as to hinder any confident species identification.
- 2.19 The small number of cereal grains and the highly fragmented nature of the charcoal suggest the ecofactual material from this feature may represent wind-blown firing debris from activity elsewhere on site. The assemblage is too small to ascertain

whether crop processing was taking place on site. The cereal grain would be suitable for radiocarbon dating if required.

#### 3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The evaluation has identified limited evidence for Roman activity within Trench 6 within the north-eastern part of Field 1. Although the limited view afforded by evaluation trenching precludes a detailed understanding of its function, truncated ditch 603 may identify part of a former north/south-aligned Roman field boundary perhaps broadly contemporaneous with the 2nd to 3rd-century AD enclosure and field systems identified approximately 600m north of the site during ongoing archaeological work at Hill Barton Industrial Estate.
- 3.2 The evaluation has also identified two further ditched field boundaries within Trenches 1 and 2 within the southern part of the site. Post-medieval ditch 103 and undated ditch 105, correlate in their alignment and positions with a field boundary depicted on the 1839 Clyst St. Mary tithe map and later OS map editions. Ditch 203 within Trench 2, although undated artefactually, may identify another former post-medieval/modern boundary on the same alignment.
- 3.3 The evaluation has also identified that geophysical survey anomalies tested by Trenches 3 to 5 and 7 and 8 reflect variations within the natural geological substrate and the presence of modern field drains within the eastern part of the site.

#### 4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Alistair Barber, assisted by Jon Pick, Mary Ana Lutescu-Jones and Sikko Van Der Brug. The report was written by Alistair Barber and the illustrations prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The finds report was compiled by Jacky Sommerville and the palaeoenvironmental report was compiled by Sarah Cobain. The archive has been compiled by Alistair Barber, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Laurent Coleman.

#### 5. REFERENCES

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# **APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thick ness (m)	Spot- date
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sand-clay	>30	>1.8	0.24	
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Grey silt-clay	>30	>1.8	0.12	
1	102	Layer		Natural	U-shaped ditch, NE/SW orientated				
1	103	Cut		Ditch	mid grey sand-clay	>1.8	1.07	0.14	
1	104	Fill	103	Fill of ditch	Mid grey-brown sand-clay	>1.8	1.07	0.14	Post- medieval
1	105	Cut		Ditch	Mid grey sandy clay and brick rubble	>1.7	2.3		
1	106	Fill	105	Fill of ditch	Mid grey-brown sand-clay, Unexcavated	>1.7	2.3		
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sand-clay	>30	>1.8	0.25	
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Grey silt-clay	>30	>1.8	0.1	
2	202	Layer		Natural	Orange-red sand silt				
2	203	Cut		Ditch	U-shaped ditch, NE/SW orientated	>2	0.7	0.2	
2	204	Fill	203	Fill of ditch	Orange-brown silt-clay	>2	0.7	0.2	
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sand-clay	0.8	0.9	0.3	
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Grey silt-clay	0.8	0.9	0.3	
3	302	Layer		Natural	Orange-red clay-sand				
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sand-clay	>30	>1.8	0.3	
4	401	Layer		Natural	Red-brown silt-clay				
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sand-clay	>30	>1.8	0.3	
5	501	Layer		Natural	Red-brown silt-clay				
6	600	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey-brown sand-clay	>30	>1.8	0.2	
6	601	Layer		Subsoil	Grey silt-clay	>30	>1.8	0.13	
6	602	Layer		Natural	Red-brown sand-silt				
6	603	Cut		Ditch	U-shaped ditch, N/S orientated	>1.65	0.75	0.12	
6	604	Fill	603	Fill of ditch	Grey-brown sand-silt	>1.65	0.75	0.12	C3-C4
6	605	Cut		Tree-throw pit	Irregular, root-affected, sides and base	>1.6	2.2	0.24	
6	606	Fill	605	Fill of tree-throw pit	Grey-brown humic sand-silt and pebbles	>1.6	2.2	0.24	C3-C3
7	700	Layer		Topsoil	Grey-brown clay-silt	>30	>1.6	0.31	
7	701	Layer		Natural	Orange-brown clay-silt with pebbles				
8	800	Layer		Topsoil	Grey-brown clay-silt	>30	>1.6	0.28	
8	801	Layer		Natural	Orange-brown clay-silt with pebbles				

# **APPENDIX B: THE FINDS**

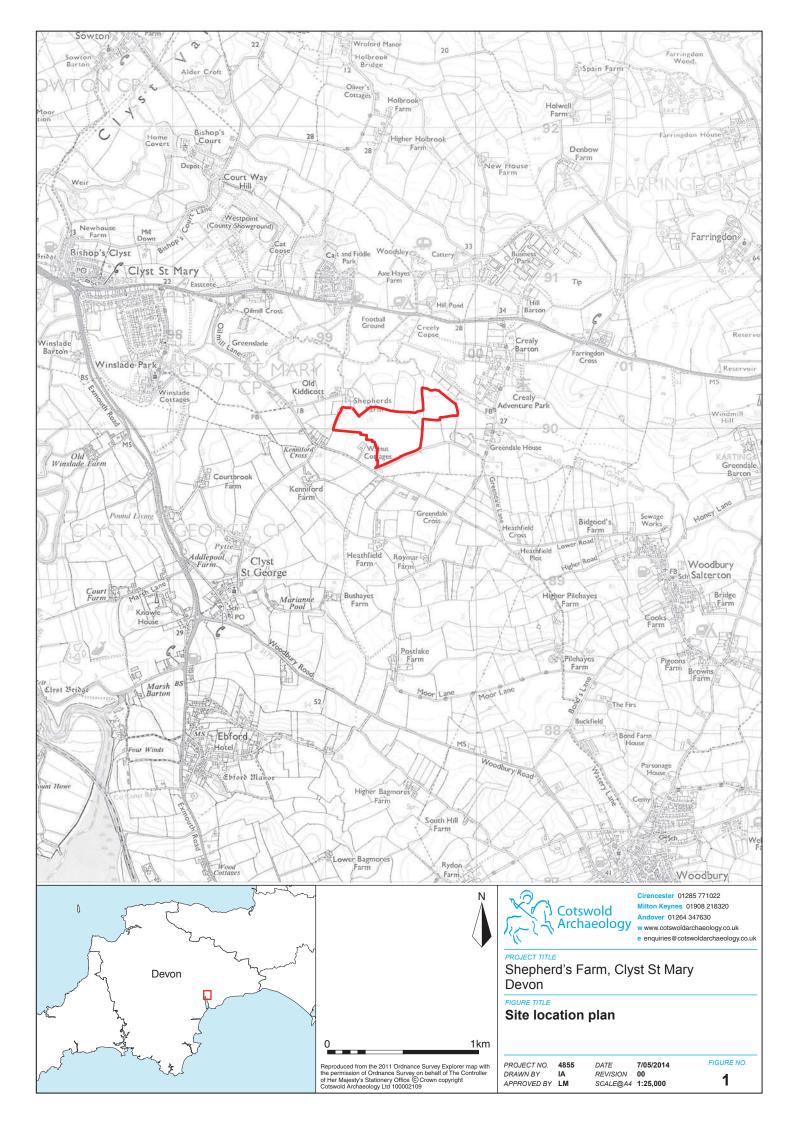
Context	Description	Count	Weight(g)	Spot-date
101	Post-medieval pottery: transfer-printed refined whiteware	1	2	Post-medieval
201	Post-medieval pottery: glazed earthenware	1	3	LC17-C18
	Clay tobacco pipe: stem	1	2	
104	Post-medieval ceramic building material: brick	1	33	Post-medieval
	Iron object	1	369	
603	Roman pottery: Samian	1	13	C3-C4
	Roman pottery: Dorset Black-burnished ware; South Devon	36	575	
	ware; greyware			
	Slate	3	232	
	Roman pottery: Dorset Black-burnished ware; black-firing,	4	40	
	sand-tempered fabric			
606	Roman pottery: South Devon ware	7	19	C3-C4
	Worked flint: end scraper	1	22	

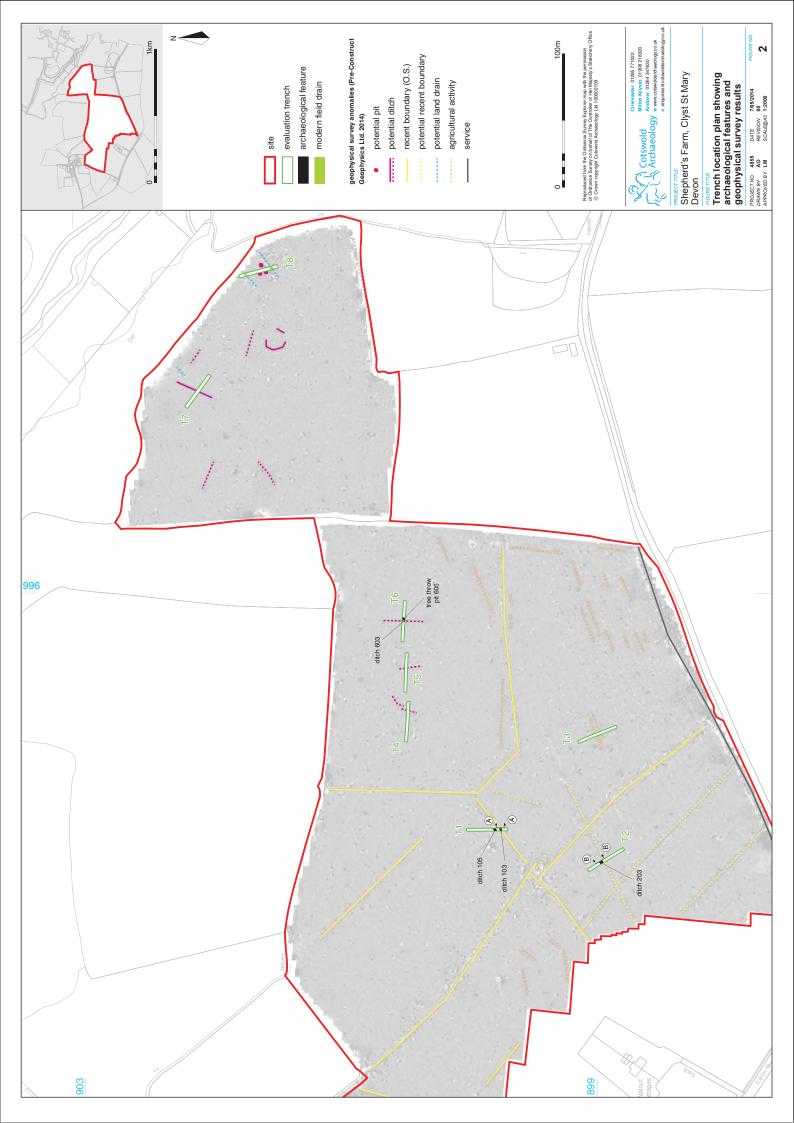
# APPENDIX C: THE PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

Context number				
Feature number				
Sample n	umber (SS)			1
Flot volu	me (ml)			55
Sample v	olume processe	ed (I)		10
Soil rema	nining (I)			0
Period				C3-C4
Plant ma	crofossil preserv	vation		Good
Habitat Code	Family	Species	Common Name	
D/A	Amaranthaceae	Chenopodium album L.	Fat-hen (mod)	++
HSW/D	Asteraceae	Lapsana L.	Nipplewort (mod)	+
P/D	Poaceae	Arrhenatherum elatius (L.) P. Beauv. ex J. & C. Presl	False Oat-grass	+
E		Triticum spelta	Spelt wheat grain	+
E		Triticum spelta	Spelt wheat glume base	+
E		Poaceae	Indeterminate cereal grain (whole)	+
A/D	Solanaceae	Solanum L.	Nightshades- Modern	+
HSW/A/D		Urtica diotica L.	Common Nettle (mod)	+
Flot Inclu	sions		-	
Charcoal quantity				

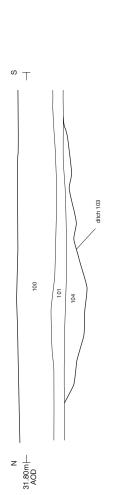
# APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

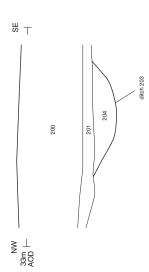
PROJECT DETAILS				
Project Name	Shepherd's Farm, Clyst St Mary, Devon.			
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in April 2014 at Shepherd's Farm, Clyst St Mary, Devon. A total of eight trenches was excavated.			
	A north/south aligned ditch, containing pottery of 3rd to 4th century AD date and possibly representing a former field boundary, was encountered within the northern part of the site. It was cut by an adjacent tree throw pit which also contained pottery of 3rd to 4th century AD date, along with a residual worked flint scraper of probable Bronze Age date.			
North-east/south-west aligned ditches associated with two field boundaries, one of which was depicted on the 1839 Mary tithe map and later OS map editions, were also record				
Project dates	28 to 30 April 2014			
Project type	Evaluation			
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Desk-Based Assessment (CA 2014) Geophysical survey (Pre-Construct Geophysics 2014)			
Future work	Unknown			
PROJECT LOCATION				
Site Location	Shepherd's Farm, Clyst St Mary, Devon			
Study area (M²/ha)	16.5 ha			
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SX 9946 8998			
PROJECT CREATORS				
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Brief originator	N/A			
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Manager	Laurent Coleman			
Project Supervisor	Alistair Barber			
MONUMENT TYPE	None			
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None			
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content		
Physical	Royal Albert Memorial Museum RAMM: 14/26	Pottery, metal, CBM, worked flint		
Paper	Royal Albert Memorial Museum RAMM: 14/26	Trench Recording Forms, Context sheets, Photographic Register		
Digital	Royal Albert Memorial Museum RAMM: 14/26	Digital photos		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		1		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 Shephe typescript report 14182	rd's Farm, Clyst St. Mary, Devon: Archa	aeological Evaluation. CA		

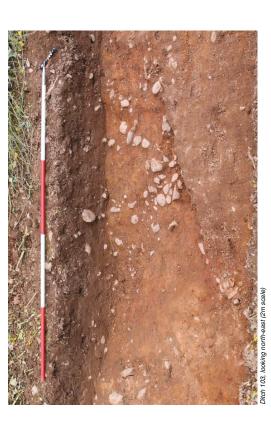




Section BB Section AA







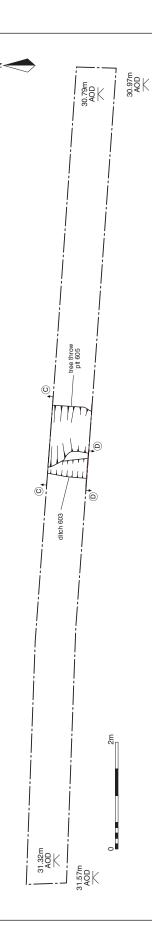


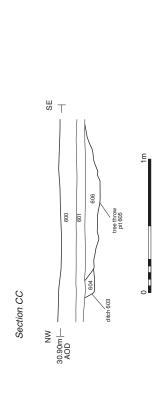


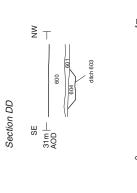


Shepherd's Farm, Clyst St Mary Devon

FIGURETITIE
Trenches 1 and 2: sections and photographs











PROJECT TITLE Shepherd's Farm, Clyst St Mary Devon

ырметте Trench 6 plan, sections and photographs

