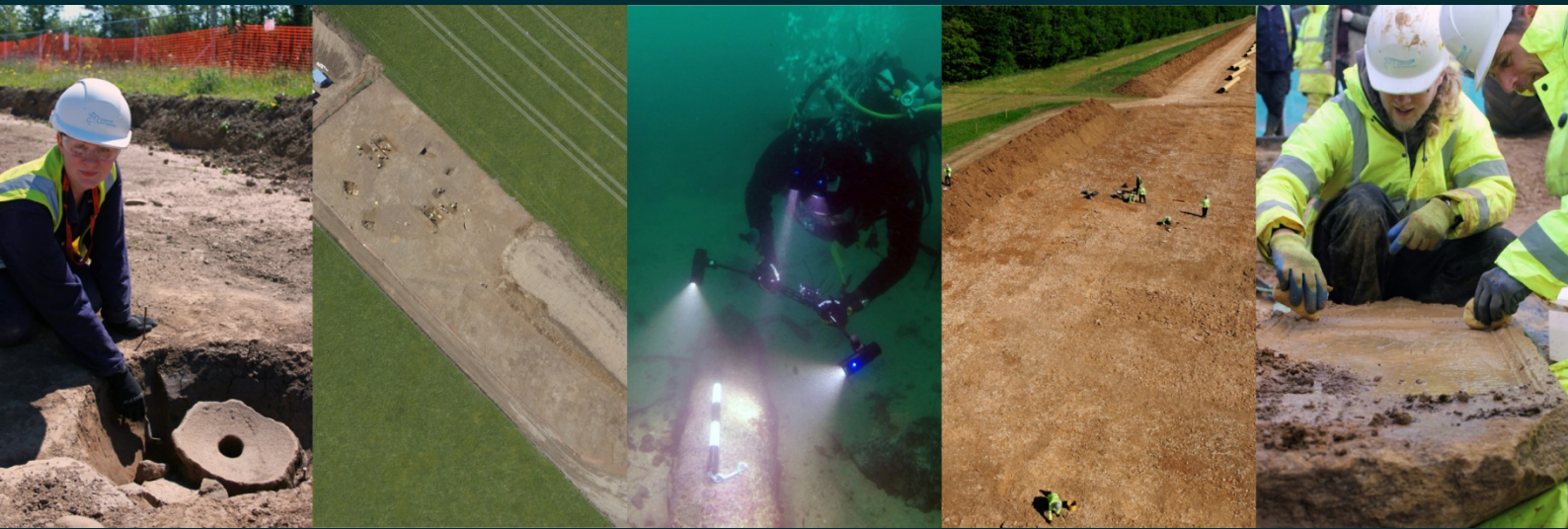


Bray Valley Quarries Brayford Barnstaple Devon

Programme of Archaeological Investigation



for
Hanson UK

CA Project: 880065
CA Report: 12123

March 2016



Bray Valley Quarries
 Brayford
 Barnstaple
 Devon

Programme of Archaeological Investigation

CA Project: 880065
 CA Report: 16123



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A	07/03/2016	George Gandham	Derek Evans	Internal review	N/A	Derek Evans

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Bray Valley Quarries
Location: Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon
NGR: SS 6865 3319
Type: Strip, map and record (SMR)
Date: 8 December 2015 to 13 January 2016
Planning Reference: DCC/0518/1998
Location of Archive: To be deposited with the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon
Site Code: BVQ 15

In December 2015 and January 2016, Cotswold Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological strip, map and sample excavation in advance of quarry extension works at Bray Valley Quarries, Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon.

The watching brief recorded a pit dating to the Early/Middle Bronze Age, as well as an undated pit and an undated (but possibly post-medieval) ditch.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In December 2015 and January 2016, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out a programme of archaeological investigation in advance of quarry extension works at Bray Valley Quarries, Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon (centred at NGR: SS 6865 3319). This work was commissioned by Hanson UK.
- 1.2 Planning permission (planning ref: DCC/0518/1998) for extension works to the extant quarry was granted by North Devon District Council (NDDC; the local planning authority), conditional on a programme of archaeological investigation. The scope of this programme of archaeological investigation was defined subsequently by Stephen Reed, Planning Archaeologist, Devon County Council (the archaeological advisor to NDDC), as the strip, map and record (SMR) investigation of the four proposed quarry extension areas (Strip Areas A–D, Fig. 2). This report presents the results of the Area A SMR works. Areas B–D will be subject to SMR on a phased basis (see Fig. 2 for provisional dates).
- 1.3 The SMR was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2015) and approved by NDDC acting on the advice of Stephen Reed. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014).

The site

- 1.4 Area A encloses approximately 0.9ha and comprised open farm/grassland on the fringes of the extant quarry.
- 1.5 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as alternating bands of Pilton Mudstone Formation sandstone and limestone. This geology developed in the Carboniferous and Devonian Periods. No superficial deposits are recorded at the site (BGS 2015).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A series of archaeological investigations took place during the establishment and expansion of the existing quarry (EA 1998, 1999, 2000, 2005, 2007, 2010; OA

1999a, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2002). The following section provides a brief summary of the results of these investigations.

Neolithic (4000 BC–2400 BC)

- 2.2 Archaeological works east of Charlestown Barton Farm (c. 240m south-east of Area A) identified two late Neolithic pits.

Bronze Age (2400 BC–700 BC)

- 2.3 A ring ditch associated with a ploughed-out Bronze Age barrow has been identified c. 85m east of Area A.

Iron Age (700 BC–AD 43) and Roman (AD 43–AD 410)

- 2.4 Archaeological works east of Charlestown Barton Farm recorded a series of Iron Age and Roman features, including two ditched enclosures, pits, postholes, further ditches and an iron-smelting site.
- 2.5 Geophysical surveys of the land to the immediate north of Charleston Barton Farm (c. 150m south of Area A) and land east of Welcombe Farm (including most of Area C) have indicated the presence of further enclosures and associated features of probable Iron Age/Roman date.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the programme of archaeological investigation were to investigate, characterise and preserve by record any archaeological remains present at the site prior to their loss through development.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2015). Topsoil and subsoil deposits were stripped from the SMS area by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate. Where



archaeological deposits were encountered, they were excavated by hand in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

- 4.2 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential and a sample was taken in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. All recovered artefacts were processed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.3 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 the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon, along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, as set out within Appendix D, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the SMR results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts can be found in Appendix A. Details of the artefactual material and biological evidence from the site can be found in Sections 6 and 7, respectively. Figure 3 presents a plan of the recorded archaeological features.
- 5.2 Natural geological substrate 102 comprised mid brown-yellow clayey gravel and was revealed at an average depth of 0.57m below the pre-development ground level. The natural was overlain by 0.32m of brown silty clay subsoil 101, which was sealed in turn by 0.25m of dark brown silty clay topsoil 100.
- 5.3 Near the western edge of the area were two pits: 106 and 108. Pit 108 (Fig. 4, sec. CC) was circular in plan and measured 0.84m in diameter and 0.17m in depth. It contained a single silty clay fill (107) from which ten sherds of Early/Middle Bronze Age pottery were retrieved. Pit 106 (Fig. 4, sec. BB) was oval in plan and measured 2.54m in length, 1.1m in width and 0.26m in depth. It contained a single undated silty fill (105).

- 5.4 North-east/south-west-aligned ditch 104 (Fig. 4, sec. AA) terminated in the northern part of the area. This ditch was 1.9m wide and 0.22m deep, with a single undated silty fill (103).

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1 A small amount of artefactual material was recovered from two deposits. All of the recovered material is pottery, and dates to the Bronze Age and post-medieval periods. Appendix A gives details of sherd count/weight per fabric.

Early prehistoric by Henrietta Quinnell

- 6.2 Ten pottery sherds weighing a total 483g were recovered from deposit 107 (fill of pit 108). Two sherds (96g) are of finer fabric than the others and may come from a separate vessel. The remainder appear to come from the lower part of single vessel and include three base sherds, two conjoining. The fabric appears to have scattered inclusions of grog, less obvious in the two finer sherds. All of the sherds are undecorated and in places their surfaces have suffered from bioturbation. The vessel represented by the majority of sherds was thick-walled (c. 12mm) and part of it was at least 350mm in diameter. The second vessel was rather smaller. The size of the larger vessel suggests a large storage container.
- 6.3 The sherds are very similar in their fabric and general appearance to those found with the only Middle Bronze Age house to have been excavated on Exmoor, at Holworthy in Parracombe parish. Here, a moderate assemblage showed features of the Trevisker tradition and there were a number of associated Middle Bronze Age radiocarbon dates (Green 2009). The Holworthy pottery was grogged with a clay derived from a fairly local source (Quinnell 2009). Similar grogged pottery from locally-sourced clay, also with Trevisker characteristics, was found in a group of three pits at Doniford, Williton (Quinnell n.d.; Hollinrake and Hollinrake 2004), also associated with a Middle Bronze Age radiocarbon date. Holworthy and Doniford are the only broadly domestic sites with Middle Bronze Age pottery in the greater Exmoor area.
- 6.4 Across south-western Somerset and the greater Exmoor area, the use of grogged fabrics is known from the Early Bronze Age from a limited number of barrows and

related monuments and the Trevisker style was in use from the period. The evidence is discussed in Quinnell (2009). It is not possible to say definitely whether the Bray Valley sherds date from the Early or the Middle Bronze Age.

Post-medieval by Jacky Sommerville

- 6.5 Subsoil 101 produced a single sherd (134g) of North Devon Gravel-tempered ware in very good condition. This ware type was manufactured in the Barnstaple area and, when found within Devon, dates to the mid 16th to late 18th centuries (Allan 1984, 129–31).

7. THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

by Sarah F. Wyles

- 7.1 A single sample (six litres of soil) was taken from fill 107 within pit 108 (see also Appendix C). The sample was processed by standard flotation procedures (*CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*).
- 7.2 The sample contained a moderate quantity of charcoal fragments greater than 2mm in size. The assemblage included mature wood fragments. No plant remains or cremated bone fragments were recovered from the sample and there is no evidence that this is a cremation-related deposit. The charcoal assemblage may be representative of dumped material.

8. DISCUSSION

- 8.1 The watching brief recorded a pit dating to the Early/Middle Bronze Age. A Bronze Age ring ditch (associated with a ploughed-out barrow) has previously been identified c. 85m east of Area A (see *Archaeological background*, above) and the current pit may represent limited outlying activity associated with this monument.
- 8.2 The watching brief also recorded an undated pit and an undated ditch. The ditch runs broadly parallel to the extant field boundaries and may therefore represent a post-medieval boundary/agricultural feature.

- 8.3 The shallow nature of all three features might be indicative of truncation caused by post-medieval/modern ploughing.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Martin Gillard and Tina Tapply. This report was written by George Gandham. The finds report was written by Henrietta Quinnell and Jacky Somerville. The report illustrations were prepared by Sam O'Leary. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

10. REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Length	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)	Spot date
100	layer		topsoil	dark brown silty clay			0.25	
101	layer		subsoil	brown silty clay			0.32	
102	layer		natural	mid brown-yellow clayey gravel				
103	fill	104	fill of ditch	mid brown clayey silt			0.22	
104	cut		cut of ditch	NW/SE aligned, east side steep slope, west side shallow/truncated, flat base	>20	1.9	0.22	
105	fill	106	fill of pit	mid orange-brown clayey silt			0.26	
106	cut		cut of pit	oval pit with steep sides and undulating base	2.54	1.1	0.26	
107	fill	108	fill of pit	mid brown silty sand			0.17	E/M BA
108	cut		cut of pit	circular, moderate sides, concave base	0.4	0.84	0.17	

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS*Table B1: Finds concordance*

Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
101	Post-medieval pottery	North Devon Gravel-tempered ware	NDG	1	134	MC16-C18
107	Early prehistoric pottery	Grog-tempered fabric	GR	10	483	EBA-MBA

APPENDIX C: THE BIOLOGICAL EVIDENCE*Table C1: Assessment table of the palaeoenvironmental remains*

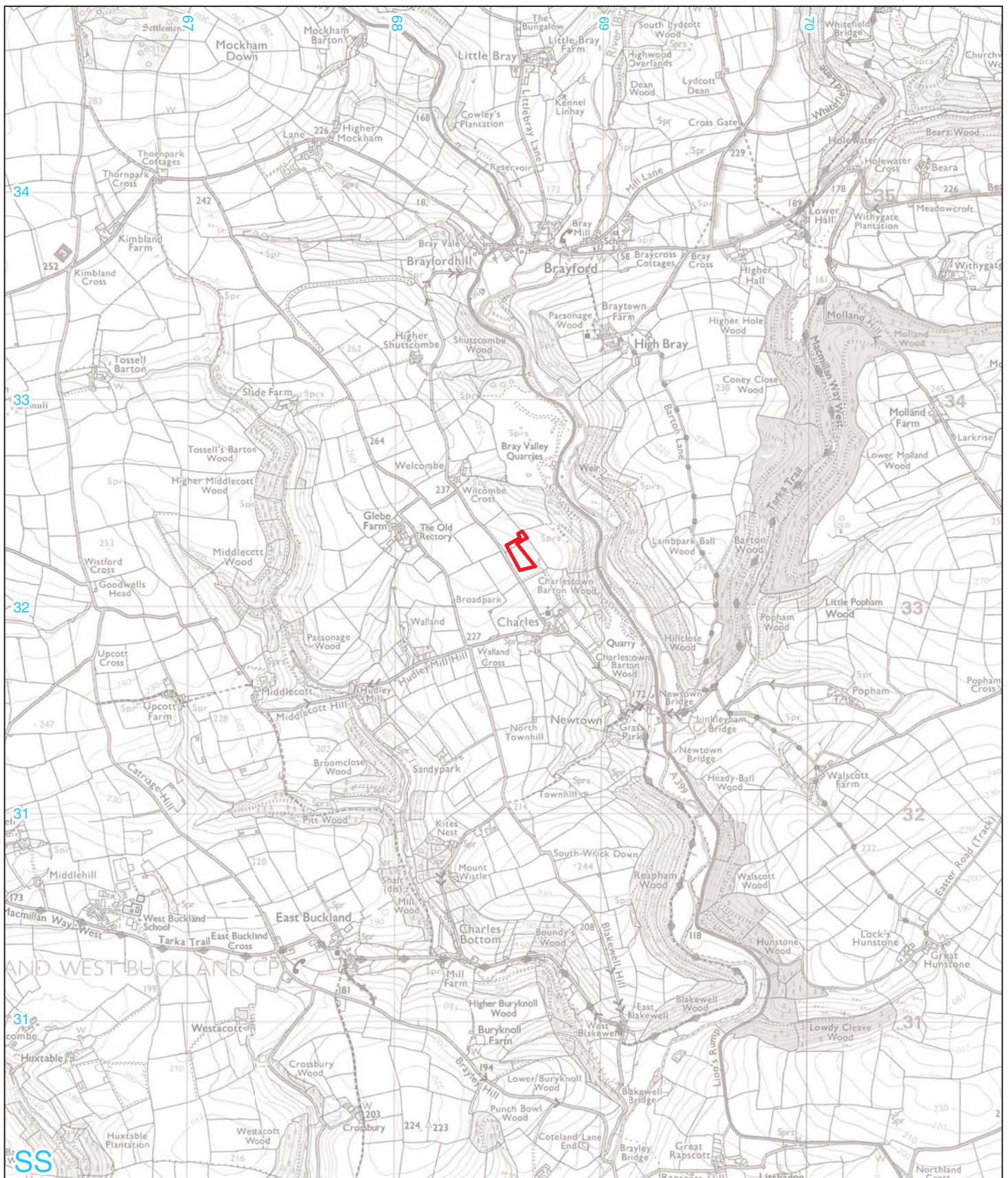
Area	Phase	Feature Type	Feature	Context	Sample	Vol (L)	Flot size	Roots %	Grain	Chaff	Charred Other	Charcoal
A	EBA/LBA	Pit	108	107	1	6	20	30	-	-	-	+++

Key

+ = 1–4 items; ++ = 4–20 items; +++ = 21–49 items; ++++ = 50–99 items; +++++ = >100 items

APPENDIX D: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Bray Valley Quarries, Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon	
Short description	In December 2015 and January 2016, Cotswold Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological strip, map and sample excavation in advance of quarry extension works at Bray Valley Quarries, Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon. The watching brief recorded a pit dating to the Early/Middle Bronze Age, as well as an undated pit and an undated (but possibly post-medieval) ditch.	
Project dates	8 December 2015 to 13 January 2016	
Project type	Strip, Map and record (SMR)	
Previous work	Archaeological Assessment (Exeter Archaeology 1998) Archaeological Evaluation (Exeter Archaeology 1999) Archaeological Recording (Exeter Archaeology 2000) Archaeological Recording and Excavation (Exeter Archaeology 2005) Archaeological Recording (Exeter Archaeology 2007) Archaeological Excavation and Monitoring (Exeter Archaeology 2010) Geophysics (Oxford Archaeotechnics 2000-2002)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Bray Valley Quarries, Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon	
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.9ha	
Site co-ordinates	SS 6865 3319	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Devon County Council	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Martin Gillard and Tina Tapplly	
MONUMENT TYPE		
None		
SIGNIFICANT FINDS		
None		
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	The Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	Pottery
Paper		WSI, pro-forma registers, recording forms
Digital	Archaeology Data Service (ADS)	Digital photographs, digital survey data
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2016 <i>Bray Valley Quarries, Brayford, Barnstaple, Devon: Programme of Archaeological Investigation</i> CA typescript report 12123		



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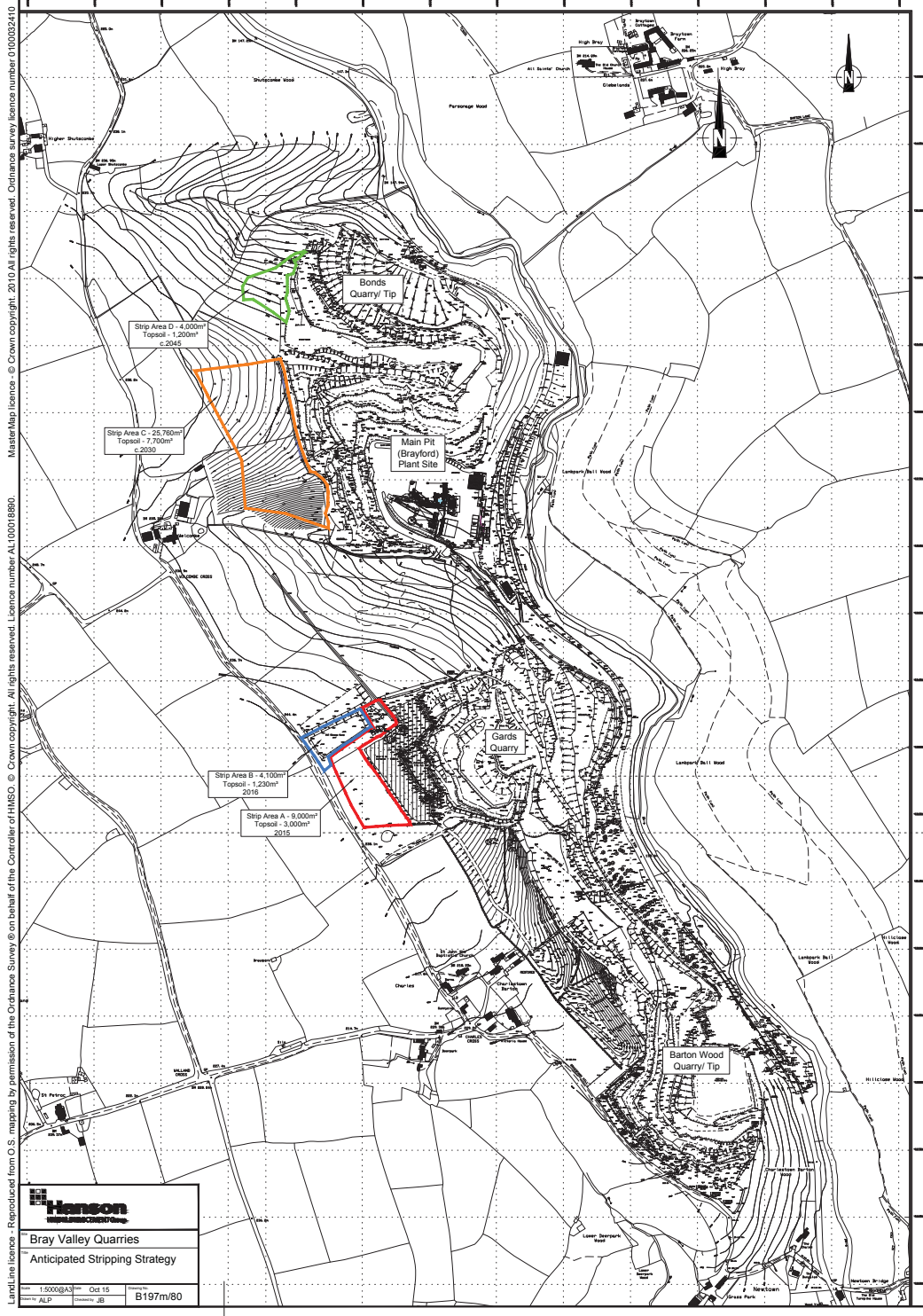
PROJECT TITLE
 Bray Valley Quarries, Brayford,
 Barnstaple, Devon

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

0 1km

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Bray Valley Quarries

 Anticipated Stripping Strategy

Scale: 1:5000@A3	Qtd: 15	Drawn by: ALP	Checked by: JB	Project No: B197m/80
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site boundary



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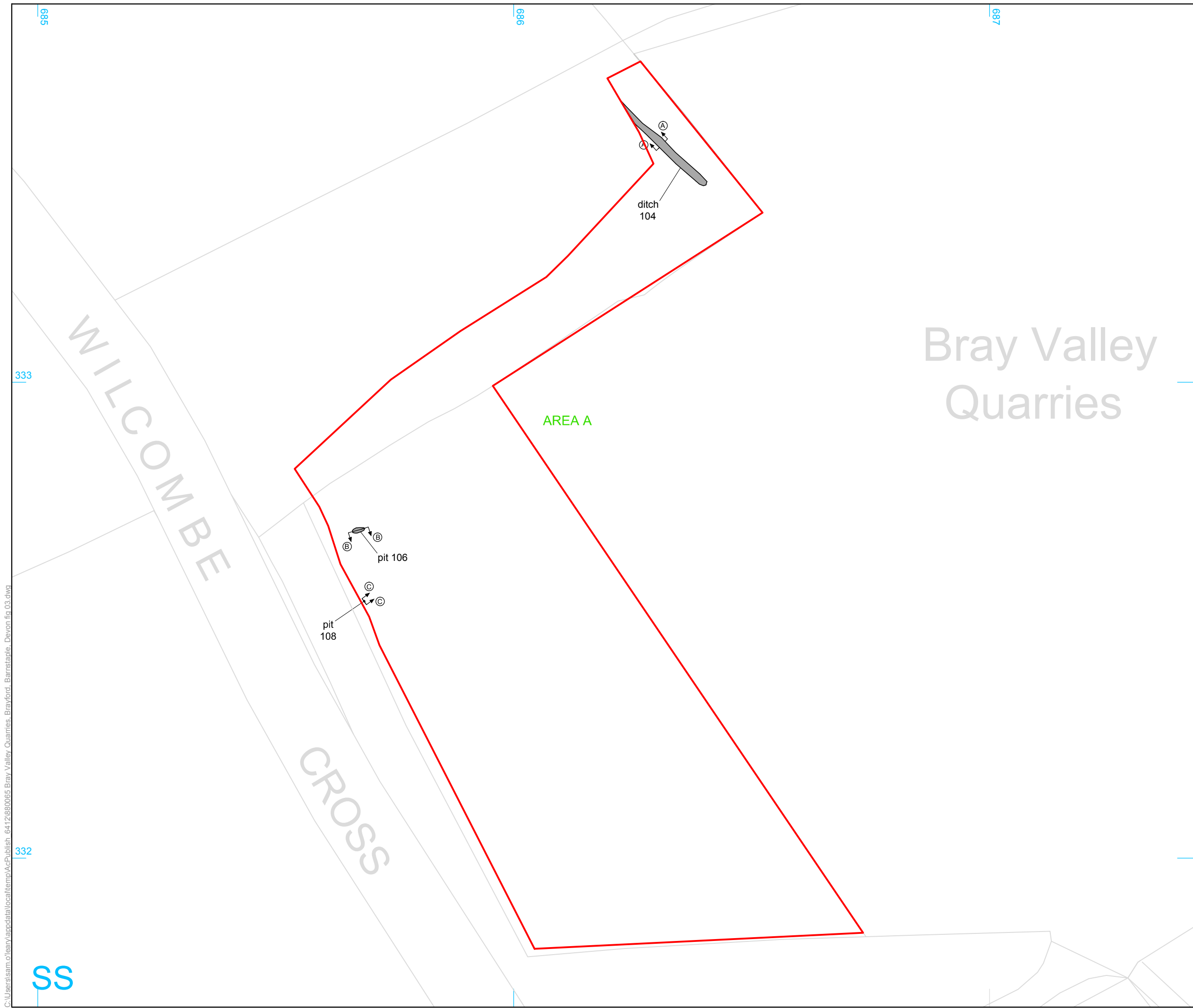
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FIGURE TITLE
 Anticipated stripping strategy



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- monitored area
- archaeological feature
- B B section location

Bray Valley Quarries



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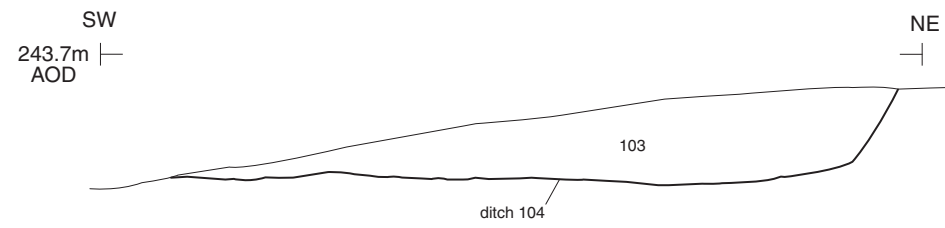
FIGURE TITLE
 Plan of archaeological features

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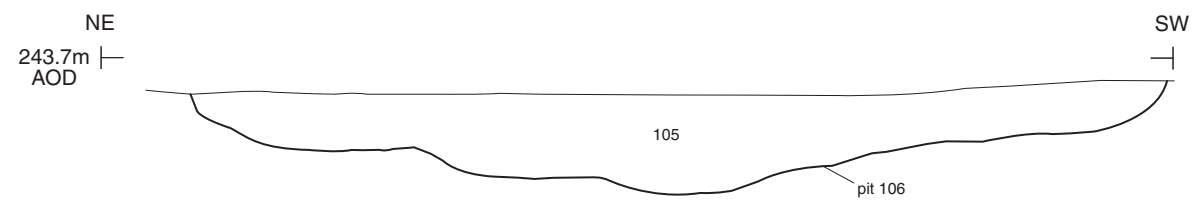
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Section AA



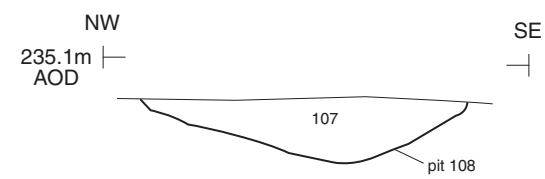
Ditch 104, looking north-west (scale 0.5m)

Section BB



Pit 106, looking south-east (scale 1m)

Section CC



Pit 108, looking north-east (scale 0.3m)



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FIGURE TITLE
 Sections and photographs

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