Cotswold Archaeology

Sandy Park Junction
Exeter
Devon

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Brief

for
SWH Civils

CA Project: 880153
CA Report: 16677

January 2017

Andover Cirencester Exeter Milton Keynes

Sandy Park Junction
Exeter
Devon

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Brief

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A	10 January 2017	Christina Tapply	Derek Evans	Internal review	–	Derek Evans
B	15 March 2017	Christina Tapply	Derek Evans	Curator review	Revisions to paras 5.2 & 6.2 and figures in line with Curator comments	Derek Evans

CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

SUMMARY

Project Name: Sandy Park Junction
Location: Exeter, Devon
NGR: SX 96201 90949
Type: Watching brief
Date: 3 October 2016
Site Code: SPJ 16

In October 2016, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording brief during the creation of a new compound and service road on land at Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon.

The majority of the monitored groundworks did not penetrate the topsoil, and as such were not deep enough to expose any archaeological remains which may have been present. The watching brief recorded two ditches in an area of deeper excavation for a cable trench. The restricted nature of the cable trench meant that it was not possible to hand-excavate or fully record those ditches. However, they do not appear to relate to any field boundaries depicted on 19th and 20th century cartographic sources and are on a different alignment to the extant field boundaries.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2016, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording brief for SWH Civils on land at Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon (centred on NGR: SX 96201 90949; Fig. 1).

1.2 The archaeological monitoring and recording brief was maintained during groundworks involved in the creation of a road improvement works compound, as well as associated service road and cable trench. The scope of the archaeological monitoring and recording brief was defined by Bill Horner, County Archaeologist, Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCCHET).

1.3 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2016a) and approved by Bill Horner. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (CIfA 2014), *Specification for a programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* (Devon County Council 2015), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

1.4 The site is located on the south-eastern fringe of Exeter city, on a natural low lying spur between the Rivers Exe and Clyst. The area of monitored groundworks covered *c*. 0.19ha and was within a larger pasture field. The field is bounded to the north by the A379, to the east by Sandy Park Way (with the Sandy Park leisure development beyond), to the south by Old Rydon Lane and to the west by Old Rydon Close. The field occupies a gentle south-facing slope.

1.5 The solid geology of the site is mapped as Dawlish Sandstone Formation, which formed in the Permian Period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2016).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The site has been the previous subject of a geophysical survey (PCG 2016) and a desk-based heritage assessment (CA 2016b). The following section is summarised

from these sources, which should be referred to for a full archaeological background.

2.2 Previous archaeological works have recorded a Bronze Age settlement landscape some 400m south-west of the site, as well as Iron Age and Roman activity to the north and south-west of the site. However, none of these remains are known to extend within 150m of the site, suggesting that the site is beyond the limits of this prehistoric and Roman activity.

2.3 The site lies close to the edge of the Clyst Heath Battlefield, where two separate battles took place for control of crossing points over the River Clyst in 1455 and 1549. There is, however, no known evidence that associated activity extended into the site itself. The site is likely to have formed part of the agricultural hinterland of Exeter from the medieval period onwards.

Geophysical survey

2.4 The geophysical survey recorded a small number of anomalies (Fig. 2). Of these, a linear anomaly corresponding to a former field boundary visible on historic cartographic sources passed through the northern part of the monitored groundworks area. A zone of stronger responses in the south-western corner of the site was considered to potentially have an archaeological origin, such as a foci of industrial activity, although a relatively recent origin as a backfilled pond or quarry was also considered feasible. Parts of this zone were within the area of monitored groundworks.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 As defined in the WSI (CA 2016a), the aims of the archaeological monitoring and recording brief were to:

- monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record any significant buried archaeological deposits thus revealed; and
- produce an integrated project archive and a report setting out the project results and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out in the WSI (CA 2016a). An archaeologist was present during the stripping of topsoil from the new compound footprint and the line of the new service road, and the excavation of an associated cable trench (Fig. 2).

4.2 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

4.3 As no significant archaeological features were identified during the archaeological works, no archive will be prepared. The results of the fieldwork will be held by DCCHET in the form of this report and the creation of an OASIS entry (as set out in Appendix B). The OASIS entry will include an uploaded copy of this report.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Natural geological substrate 1002 comprised red sandy clay. It was revealed in the cable trench only, at an average depth of 0.7m below present ground level. The natural substrate was overlain by subsoil 1001, which averaged 0.2m in thickness; this was sealed in turn by modern topsoil 1000, which averaged 0.5m in thickness. The stripping of the compound and service road was undertaken to a maximum depth of 0.2m and did not, therefore, penetrate the topsoil.

5.2 The cable trench averaged 0.3m in width and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m below present ground level. Two north-east/south-west aligned ditches (1004 and 1006) were observed to cut the natural substrate in the south-eastern end of the cable trench. These features were recorded in plan but, due to the restricted width of the cable trench, it was not possible to hand-excavate or record them further. Ditch 1004 was 0.5m wide; ditch 1006 was 1m wide.

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 The majority of the monitored groundworks did not penetrate the topsoil and, as such, were not deep enough to expose any archaeological remains which may have been present. The watching brief recorded two ditches in an area of deeper

excavation for a cable trench; however, the restricted nature of the cable trench meant that it was not possible to hand-excavate or fully record these ditches.

6.2 The date and function of the recorded ditches is unknown, although they do not appear to relate to any field boundaries depicted on 19th and 20th century cartographic sources (reproduced in CA 2016b) and are on a different alignment to the extant field boundaries. This may suggest that they part of an earlier field system (i.e. medieval or earlier), but this cannot be confirmed at the present level of information.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Christina Tapply, who also wrote this report. The report illustrations were prepared by Sam O'Leary. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html Accessed 28 September 2016

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016a *Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Brief*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016b *Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* CA typescript report **16490**

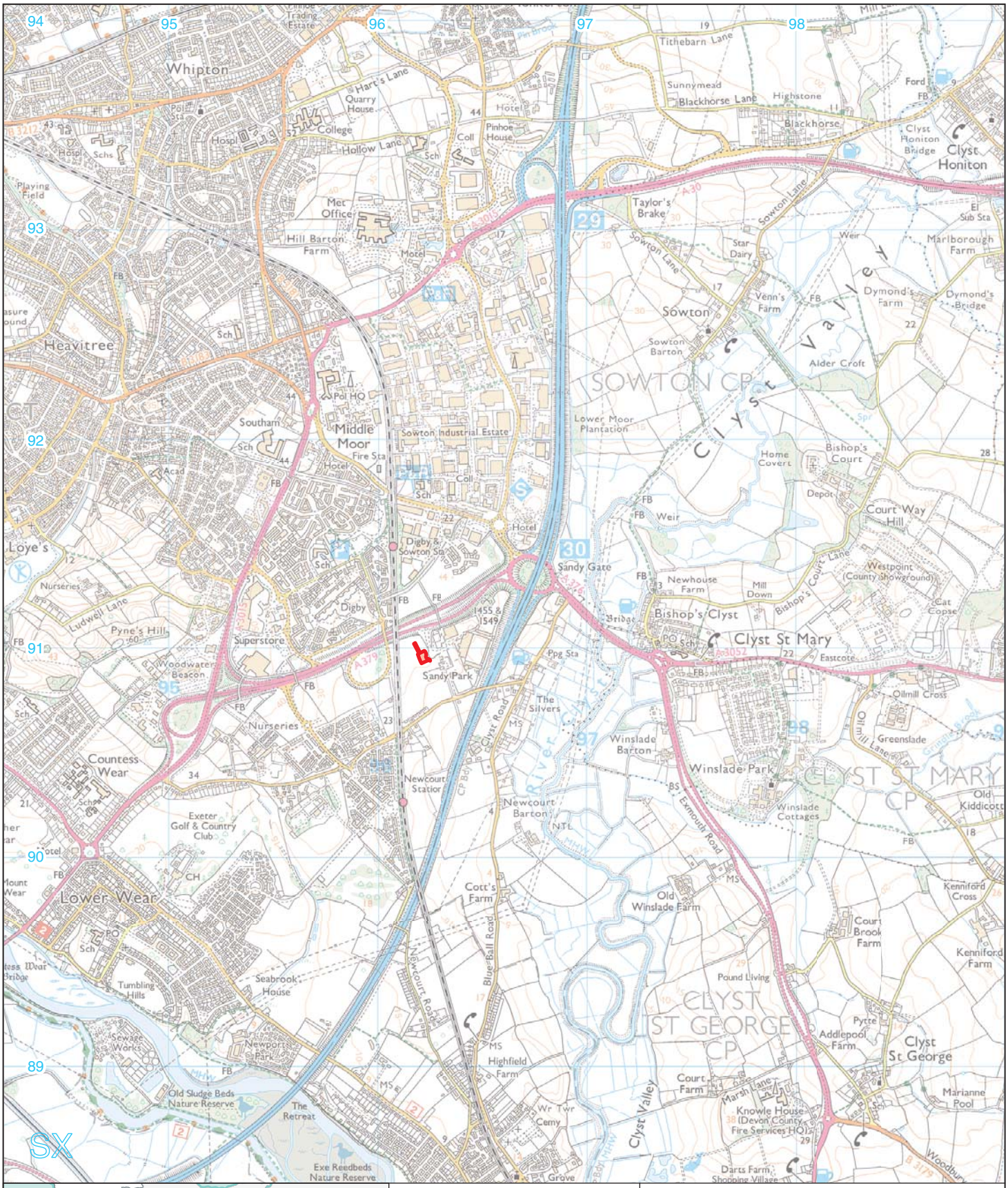
PCG (Pre-Construct Geophysics) 2016 *Archaeological Geophysical Survey: Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Width (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)
1000	Layer		Topsoil	Medium brown silty sand		0.5
1001	Layer		Subsoil	Red brown sandy clay		0.2
1002	Layer		Natural	Red sandy clay		
1003	Fill	1004	Fill of ditch	Medium brown sandy clay		
1004	Cut		Cut of ditch	Not excavated	0.5	
1005	Fill	1006	Fill of ditch	Dark brown sandy clay		
1006	Cut		Cut of ditch	Not excavated	1	

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Brief	
Short description	In October 2016, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording brief for during the creation of a new compound and service road on land at Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon. The majority of the monitored groundworks did not penetrate the topsoil, and as such were not deep enough to expose any archaeological remains which may have been present. The watching brief recorded two ditches in an area of deeper excavation for a cable trench. The restricted nature of the cable trench meant that it was not possible to hand-excavate or fully record those ditches. However, they do not appear to relate to any field boundaries depicted on 19th and 20th century cartographic sources and are on a different alignment to the extant field boundaries.	
Project dates	3 October 2016	
Project type	Watching brief	
Previous work	Geophysical survey (PCG 2016); desk-based assessment (Cotswold Archaeology 2016)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon	
Study area	0.19ha	
Site co-ordinates	SX 9620 9095	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Christina Tapply	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	N/A	N/A
Digital	N/A	N/A
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Cotswold Archaeology 2017 *Sandy Park Junction, Exeter, Devon: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording Brief* CA typescript report **16677**	



Site boundary

N

0 1km

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PROJECT TITLE

Sandy Park Junction, Exeter
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FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

DRAWN BY	**SO**	*PROJECT NO.*	**880153**	*FIGURE NO.*
CHECKED BY	**DB**	*DATE*	**17/10/2016**	**1**
APPROVED BY	**DE**	*SCALE@A4*	**1:25,000**	

A379 slip road

9620

9100

9095

1

SX

Ditch 1004

Ditch1006

Inset

Geophysical Survey Key (Pre-Construct Geophysics 2016)

>Predominately modern (rubble, metal objects/fencing etc)

Predominately natural, although archaeological remains typically produce weak magnetic anomalies within this range (e.g. ditches/pits). Exceptions include fired material (e.g. tile/pottery, kilns, hearths and other sites subject to intense heat).

< Predominately modern (rubble, metal objects/fencing etc)

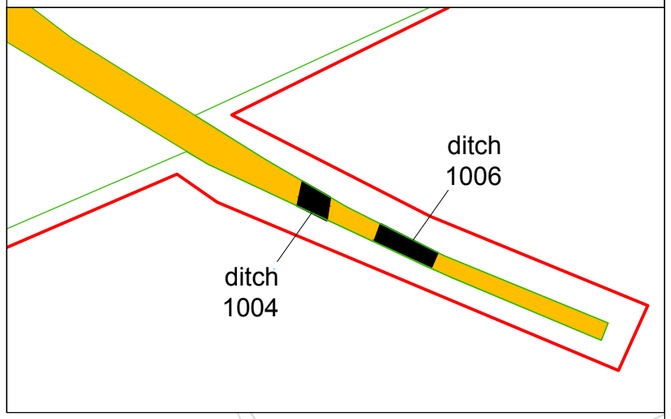
Pit type anomaly

Recent Recent hedge bank boundary (historic O.S.)

Probable recent hedge bank boundary (not recorded on sourced historic maps)

Uncertain origin – possible backfilled pond/quarry or early industrial site

Potential cultivation



N

stripped area (monitored groundworks)

cable trench

archaeological feature

0 20m

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FIGURE TITLE

The site, showing monitored groundworks, geophysical survey results and archaeological features

DRAWN BY	SO	PROJECT NO.	880153	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	17/10/2016	2
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P:\880153 Sandy Park Junction, Exeter - WB\Illustration\Drafts\880153 Figure 2.dwg

3

Working shot, main area strip

4

Ditch 1004, looking north-west

5

Ditch 1006, looking north-west

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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

DRAWN BY	**DJB**	*PROJECT NO.*	**880153**	*FIGURE NO.*
CHECKED BY	**DJB**	*DATE*	**03/03/2017**	**3-5**
APPROVED BY	**DE**	*SCALE@A3*	**NA**	

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