

FAB Link Converter Station Site East of Harrier Court Exeter

Archaeological Evaluation



for
RPS Planning & Development

CA Project: 880186
CA Report: 17166

April 2017



FAB Link Converter Station Site East of Harrier Court Exeter

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 880186
CA Report: 17166



Document Control Grid						
Revision	Date	Author	Checked by	Status	Reasons for revision	Approved by
A	28 April 2017	Jonathan Orellana	Derek Evans	Internal review	–	Derek Evans
B	4 May 2017	Jonathan Orellana	Derek Evans	Client review	Edit to para. 5.1 in line with client comments	Derek Evans
C	12 June 2017	Jonathan Orellana	Derek Evans	Curator review	Corrected planning ref.	Derek Evans

This report is confidential to the client. Cotswold Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability to any third party to whom this report, or any part of it, is made known. Any such party relies upon this report entirely at their own risk. No part of this report may be reproduced by any means without permission.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	2
1. INTRODUCTION.....	3
2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND.....	4
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES.....	5
4. METHODOLOGY	5
5. RESULTS	6
6. DISCUSSION.....	7
7. CA PROJECT TEAM.....	7
8. REFERENCES.....	8
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	9
APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM.....	10

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

- Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
- Fig. 2 Trench location plan showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results (1:2000 & 1:1000)
- Fig. 3 Trench 1: plan, sections and photograph (1:100 & 1:20)
- Fig. 4 Trench 3: plan, section and photograph (1:100 & 1:20)
- Fig. 5 Trench 4: plan, section and photograph (1:100 & 1:10)



SUMMARY

Project Name:	FAB Link Converter Station Site
Location:	East of Harrier Court, Exeter
NGR:	SY 0160 9340
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	14–15 March 2017
Planning Reference:	16/2997/MOUT
Location of Archive:	N/A
Site Code:	FABE 17

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2017 on land east of Harrier Court, Exeter, Devon. A total of five trenches was excavated within the site.

The evaluation identified two ditches and a pit. These features were all undated artefactually. The ditches were cut into the subsoil and sealed by the topsoil, suggesting that they are post-medieval/modern in date.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In March 2017, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for RPS Planning & Development at the site of a proposed FAB Link converter station, east of Harrier Court, Exeter, Devon (centred on NGR: SY 0160 9340; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 The FAB Link project is a proposal to build a subsea and underground electricity interconnector between Manuel, France, and Exeter. The link converter station site which is the subject of this evaluation will be at the UK terminal point of the scheme. An outline planning application (reference: 16/2997/MOUT) for the construction and operation of the UK converter station has been submitted to East Devon District Council. The Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCCHET) advised that a condition requiring a programme of archaeological work should be attached to any planning consent granted.
- 1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a trial trench evaluation of the site was prepared by RPS (2017). A Project Design was prepared to supplement the WSI by CA (2017). The evaluation fieldwork was also in line with *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) PPN 3: Archaeological Excavation* (Historic England 2015), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (Historic England 2015) and Devon County Council's *Specification for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (<https://new.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/developmentmanagement/specifications/archaeological-field-evaluation/>).
- 1.4 The evaluation fieldwork was monitored by Stephen Reed (Senior Historic Environment Officer, DCCHET), including a site visit on 14 March 2017.

The site

- 1.5 The proposed development site currently comprises two fields, with the eastern field proposed to contain the converter station and the western field proposed to contain a temporary laydown area and construction compound. The fields have a combined area of approximately 7.86ha, with the converter station field measuring approximately 4.9ha. The site is generally flat and is currently in arable use.

- 1.6 The site lies to the east of Exeter Airport and to the immediate east of the Harrier Court retail/industrial estate. It is bounded to the south by an unclassified road known as Long Lane, with further fields and the A30 beyond. Further fields lie to the north and east of the site.
- 1.7 The underlying geology of the site is mapped as Aylesbeare Mudstone Group, which formed in the Triassic Period. No superficial deposits are recorded (BGS 2017).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The evaluation site has been the subject of an environmental report (RPS 2016), which included an appraisal of the site's archaeological and historical background, and a geophysical survey (Stratascan 2016). The following text is summarised from these sources.
- 2.2 The site was partially within a Dispersed Site associated with Exeter airport during WWII, at which time the airfield was used as an operational fighter base. The Dispersed Sites around the perimeter of the airfield provided accommodation and associated facilities for personnel. Elements of this Dispersed Site that were within the converter station site included: the Sergeants' Quarters, a picket post with sleeping quarters, four barracks huts and four latrine blocks and drying rooms. All of the built elements of the Dispersed Site had been cleared by 1966.
- 2.3 The geophysical survey of the site identified areas of magnetic disturbance associated with the Dispersed Site, as well as a north-east/south-west aligned linear anomaly known to have been a WWII-era trench (possibly for communication or an electricity cable).
- 2.4 Other linear anomalies, on a more north/south alignment, were identified as former field boundaries shown on the 1844 Rockbeare Tithe Map. One north-west/south-east aligned linear anomaly within the south-western part of the converter station site did not correspond to any known former field boundary or cable/pipeline route.



3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 As defined in the WSI (RPS 2017), the overall aim of the archaeological evaluation is to provide further information regarding the potential location and nature of archaeological remains within the converter station site. The following specific objectives are also identified:

- to identify the nature, character, extent and possible date of any archaeological sites and/or features within the converter station site;
- to assess the survival, quality, condition and significance of any archaeological remains;
- to ensure the preservation by record of all archaeological remains revealed during the course of the evaluation; and
- to prepare an appropriate archive, including the treatment and preservation of any finds.

3.2 This information will enable East Devon District Council to identify and assess the particular significance of any archaeological heritage assets within the site, consider the impact of the proposed development upon that significance and, if appropriate, develop strategies to avoid or minimise conflict between heritage asset conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five trenches (Fig. 2). Three trenches (T1, T2 and T3) were 20m long; two trenches (T4 and T5) were 25m long. All trenches were 1.8m wide. T1–T3 were located to sample geophysical anomalies. T4 and T5 were additional to the trenches specified in the WSI (RPS 2017), and were excavated by the groundworks contractors in order to ascertain the survival of potential features associated with the Dispersal Site (see Section 2). All 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*.

4.2 All trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. Machine excavation took place to the top of the natural substrate. For T1–T3, all machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological

supervision. For T4–T5, machine excavation was undertaken by the groundworks contractors. Investigation and recording of all trenches was undertaken in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

- 4.3 A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain. This entry will include an uploaded copy of this report.
- 4.4 As no significant archaeological features were identified during the archaeological works, an archive will not be prepared. The results of the fieldwork will be held by DCCHET in the form of this report and the OASIS entry.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 This section presents a summary of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The natural substrate comprised compact reddish clays interspersed with bands of gravel and occasional pebbles. It was encountered at a depth of 0.4m–0.5m below the present ground level. The natural substrate was sealed by 0.1m–0.2m of silty clay subsoil which was covered in turn by modern topsoil.
- 5.3 Archaeological features were identified in T1, T3 and T4.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

- 5.4 North/south orientated ditch 103 was cut into the subsoil and sealed by the topsoil. This ditch was 0.47m wide and 0.4m deep (Fig. 3, Secs. AA and BB), with two undated fills (104 and 105).

Trench 3 (Fig. 4)

- 5.5 North-west/south-east orientated ditch 303 was cut into the subsoil and sealed by the topsoil. This ditch was 1.1m wide and 0.65m deep (Fig. 4, Sec. CC), with two undated fills (304 and 305).



Trench 4 (Fig. 5)

- 5.6 Oval pit 403 was recorded at the level of the natural substrate. It was 0.46m long, 0.2m wide and 0.11m deep (Fig. 5, Sec. DD). It contained a single fill (404), comprising dark blackish grey silty clay with abundant charcoal and ashes.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The evaluation identified two ditches and a pit at the site. These three features were all undated artefactually, although the ditches in T1 and T3 were cut into the subsoil and sealed by the topsoil, which may indicate that they are post-medieval/modern in date. Additionally, T4 was not opened under archaeological supervision (see Section 4); as such it is possible that pit 403 was also cut into the subsoil, but that this relationship was not recorded when the subsoil was machined away. The function of the ditches is uncertain, but they may represent former drainage/boundary features.
- 6.2 There was a low level of correspondence between the evaluation and the geophysical survey results. Ditch 103 (T1) had not been detected by the geophysical survey, although it was within an area of magnetic interference related to a former pond. Ditch 303 (T3) did not correspond exactly to a geophysical anomaly, although it was adjacent to and on the same alignment as a linear geophysical anomaly interpreted in the survey report as a possible modern service (Stratascan 2016). Pit 403 (T4) was not detected by the geophysical survey, although it was within an area of magnetic interference related to the site's former use as a WWII Dispersed Site. There were no archaeological features corresponding directly to the linear anomaly running through T1–T3 although as noted, ditch 303 (T3) was adjacent to and on the same alignment as this anomaly.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 7.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Jonathan Orellana, assisted by Jerry Austin and Edoardo Vigo. This report was written by Jonathan Orellana. The report illustrations were prepared by Aleksandra Osinska. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.



8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2017 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html>

Accessed 26 April 2017

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 *FAB Link Converter Station Site, East of Harrier Court, Exeter – Archaeological Evaluation: Project Design*

RPS 2016 *FAB Link Interconnector: UK Converter Station Environmental Report*

RPS 2017 *FAB Link Converter Station Site, East of Harrier Court, Nr Exeter Airport, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an Archaeological Evaluation*

Stratascan 2016 *FABlink, Exeter, Devon: Geophysical Survey Report*

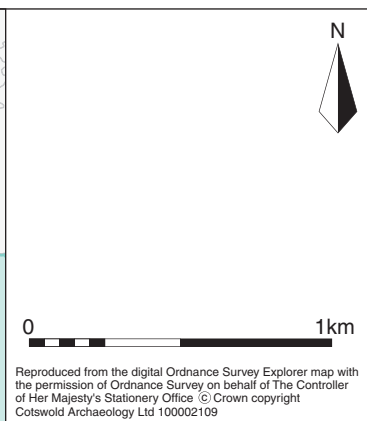
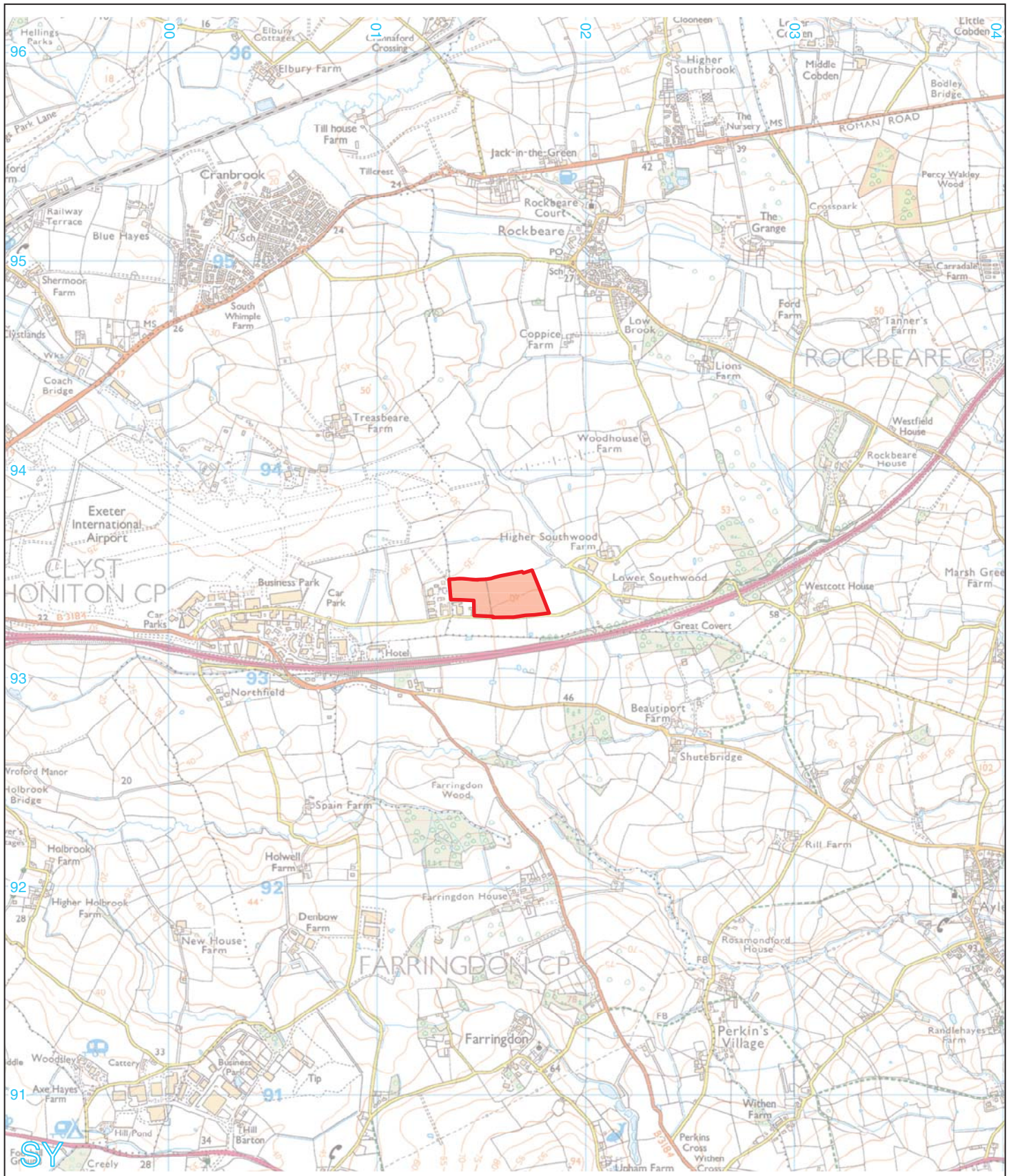



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	100	layer		topsoil	mid brown silty clay			0.3
1	101	layer		subsoil	light yellowish brown silty clay			0.2
1	102	layer		natural substrate	compact red clay with occasional bands of gravel			
1	103	cut		ditch	N/S orientated with steep sides and concave base	>1	0.47	0.4
1	104	fill	103	1st fill of ditch	mid red silty clay	>1	0.35	0.3
1	105	fill	103	2nd fill of ditch	mid yellowish brown silty clay	>1	0.47	0.15
2	200	layer		topsoil	mid reddish brown silty clay			0.25
2	201	layer		subsoil	mid yellowish brown silty clay			0.18
2	202	layer		natural substrate	compact red clay with occasional bands of gravel			
3	300	layer		topsoil	dark brown silty clay			0.3
3	301	layer		subsoil	mid greyish brown silty clay			0.1
3	302	layer		natural substrate	compact red clay with occasional bands of gravel			
3	303	cut		ditch	NW/SE orientated with steep sides and concave base	>0.75	1.1	0.65
3	304	fill	303	1st fill of ditch	mid pinkish red silty clay	>0.75	0.45	0.65
3	305	fill	303	2nd fill of ditch	mid whitish red silty clay	>0.75	1.05	0.5
4	400	layer		topsoil	mid brownish grey silty clay			0.25
4	401	layer		subsoil	light brownish grey silty clay			0.2
4	402	layer		natural substrate	compact red clay with occasional bands of gravel			
4	403	cut		pit	oval in plan with steep sides and uneven base	0.46	0.2	0.11
4	404	fill	403	single fill of pit	dark blackish grey silty clay with greyish ashes and abundant charcoal flecks	0.46	0.2	0.11
5	500	layer		topsoil	mid brownish grey silty clay			0.25
5	501	layer		subsoil	light brownish grey silty clay			0.2
5	502	layer		natural substrate	compact red clay with occasional bands of gravel			

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	FAB Link Converter Station Site, East of Harrier Court, Exeter	
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in March 2017 on land east of Harrier Court, Exeter, Devon. A total of five trenches was excavated within the site. The evaluation identified two ditches and a pit. These features were all undated artefactually, although the ditches were cut into the subsoil and sealed by the topsoil, which suggests that they are post-medieval/modern in date.	
Project dates	14–15 March 2017	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	Geophysical Survey (Stratascan 2016)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	East of Harrier Court, Exeter	
Study area (m ² /ha)	7.86ha	
Site co-ordinates	SY 0160 9340	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	RPS Planning & Development	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	Jonathan Orellana	
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 <i>FAB Link Converter Station Site, East of Harrier Court, Exeter: Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report 17166		



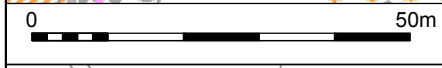
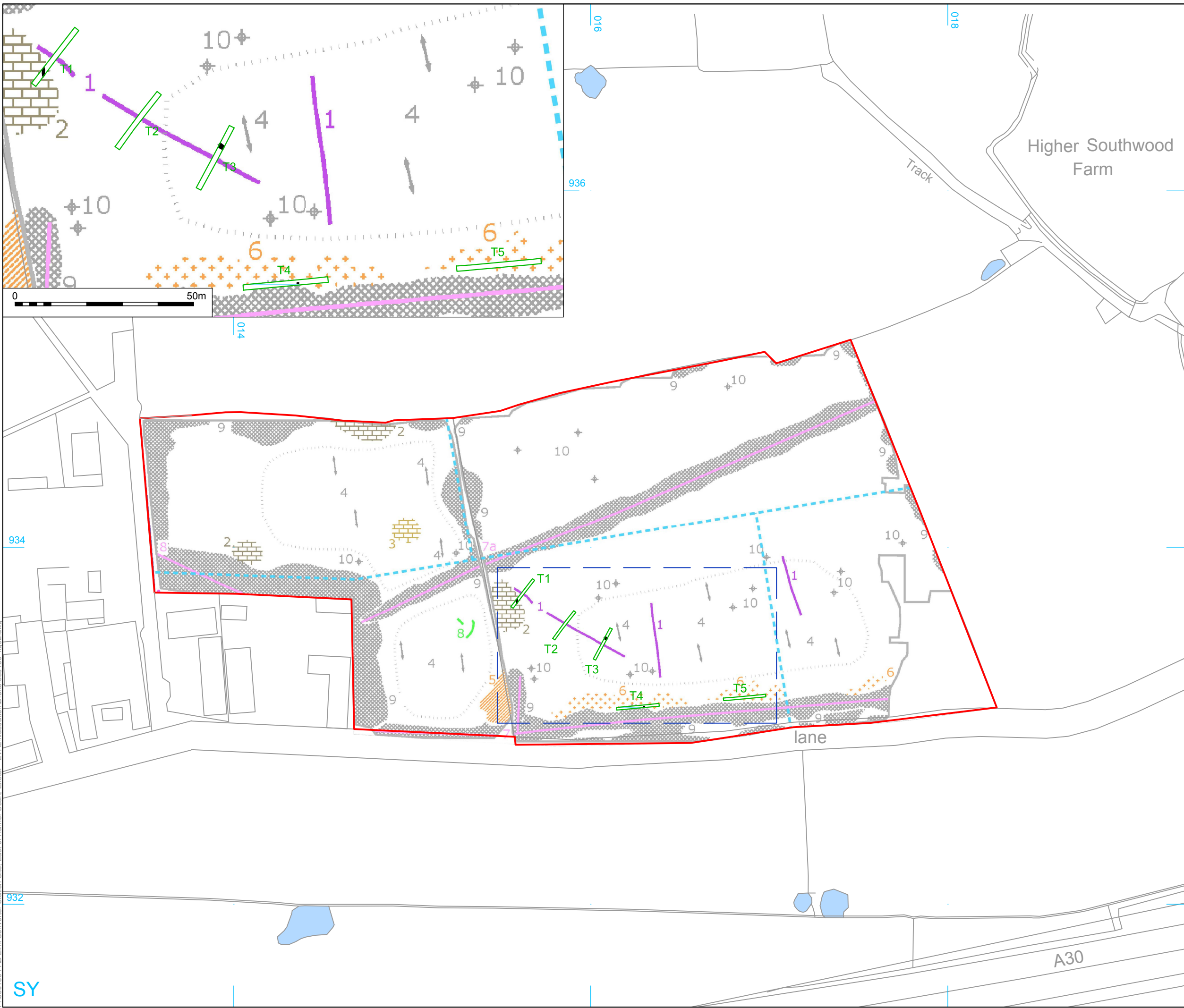

Cotswold Archaeology
 Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 FAB Link Converter Station Site,
 East of Harrier Court, Exeter

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	AO	PROJECT NO.	880186	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	EE	DATE	27/03/2017	
APPROVED BY	DE	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	1

Reproduced from the digital Ordnance Survey Explorer map with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright Cotswold Archaeology Ltd 100002109



- ▭ site boundary
- ▭ evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- field drain

MEDIEVAL/POST-MEDIEVAL AGRICULTURE	
	Closely spaced parallel linear anomalies - probably related to agricultural activity such as ploughing
	Linear anomaly - probably related to a former field boundary not present on available mapping
	Strong magnetic debris - related to former pond visible on available mapping
	Strong magnetic debris - possibly related to former pond not visible on available mapping
WWII MILITARY ANOMALIES	
	Magnetic disturbance - likely associated with former structures, or other feature, of military site
+	Scattered magnetic debris - likely related to former military site
OTHER ANOMALIES	
	Linear anomaly - probably related to pipe, cable or other modern service
	Positive anomaly - uncertain origin, possibly associated with WWII military site
	Magnetic disturbance associated with nearby metal object such as service or field boundary
+	Scattered magnetic debris
+	Magnetic spike - probable ferrous object



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey digital mapping with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright Cotswold Archaeology Ltd 100002109.

Cotswold Archaeology

Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

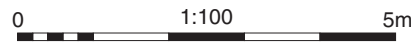
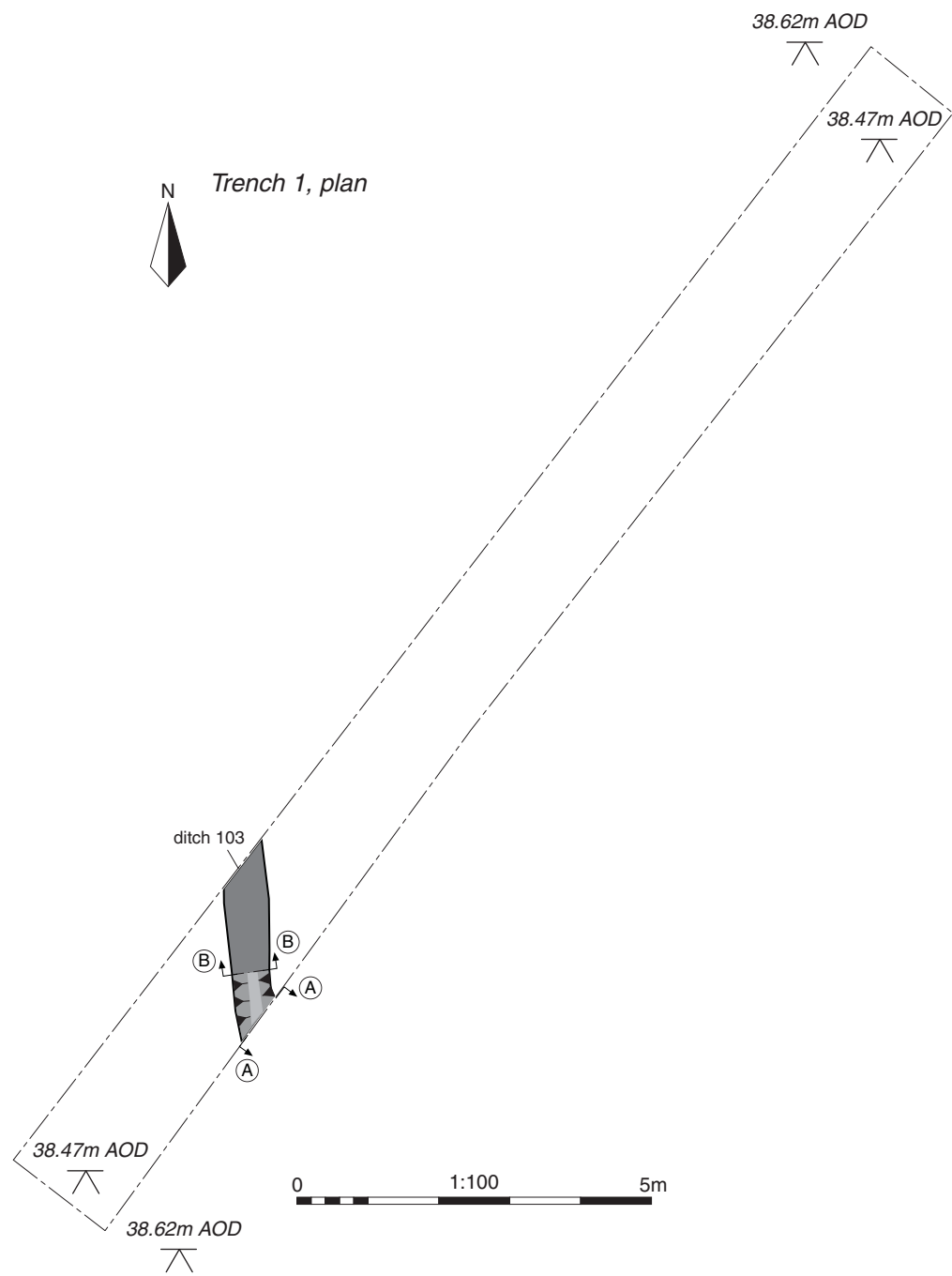
PROJECT TITLE
FAB Link Converter Station Site, East of Harrier Court, Exeter

FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan, showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results

DRAWN BY AO PROJECT NO. 880186 FIGURE NO.
 CHECKED BY EE DATE 27/03/2017
 APPROVED BY DE SCALE@A3 1:2000 & 1:1000 **2**

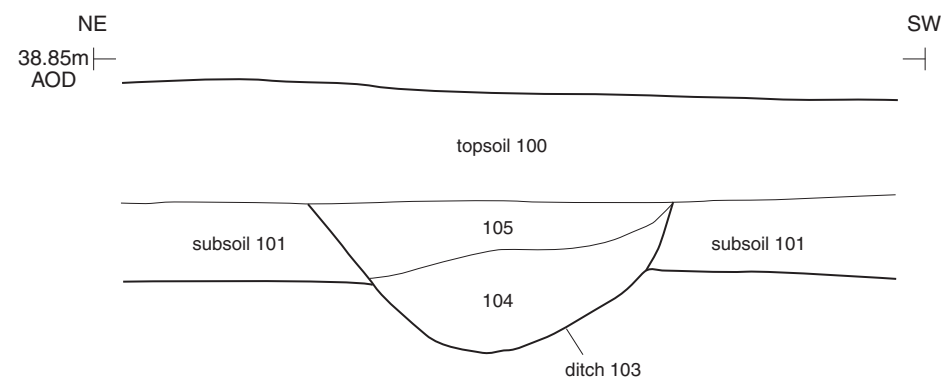
P:\880186 FAB Link Converter Station Site - East of Harrier Court, Exeter - EVAL\Illustration\Drawings\880186_faq02.dwg

SY

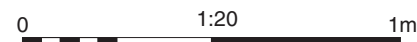
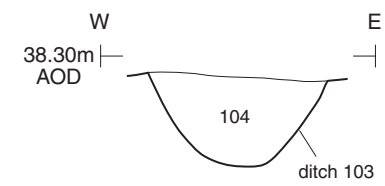


Ditch 103, looking south (1m scale)

Section AA

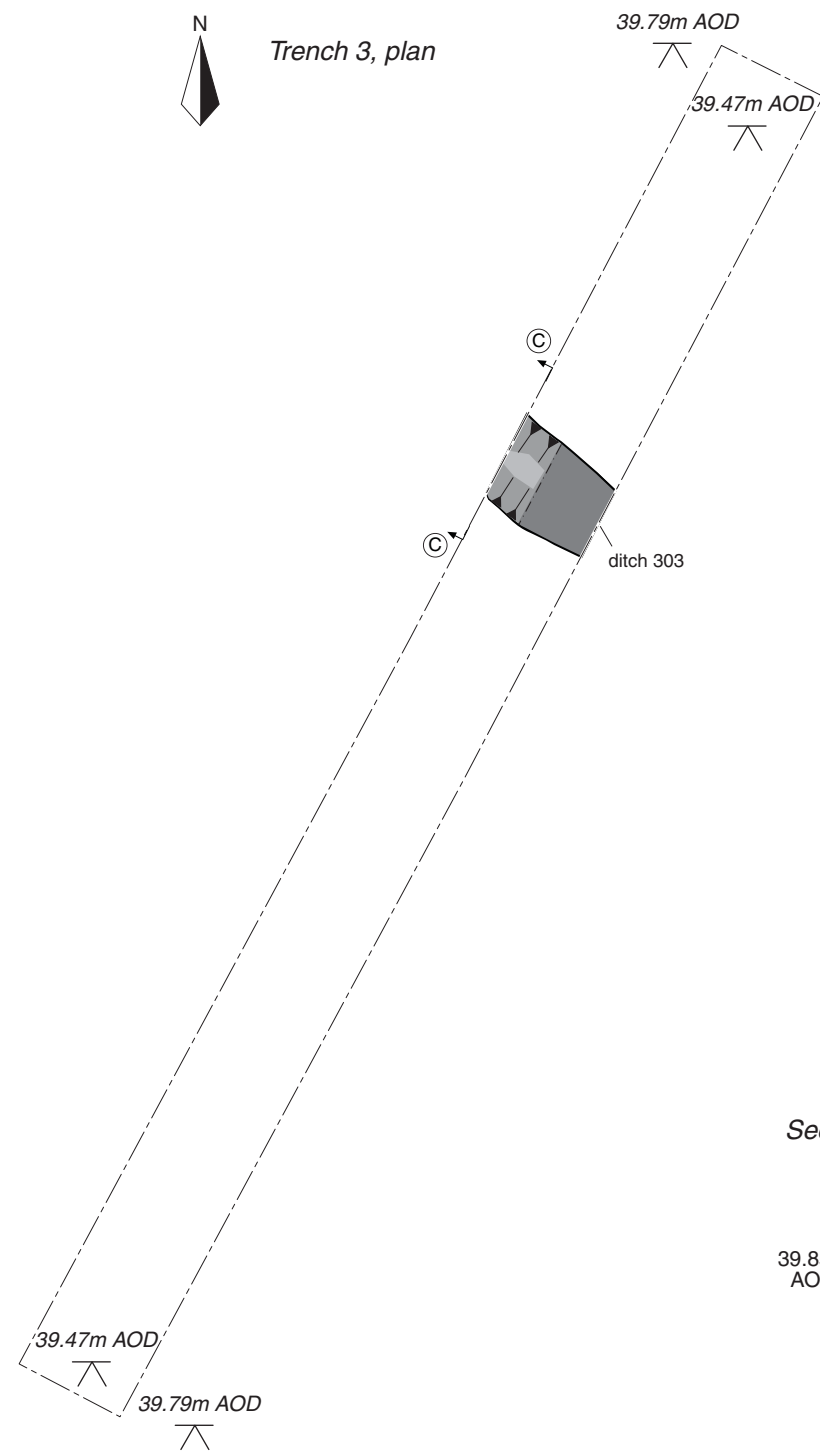


Section BB



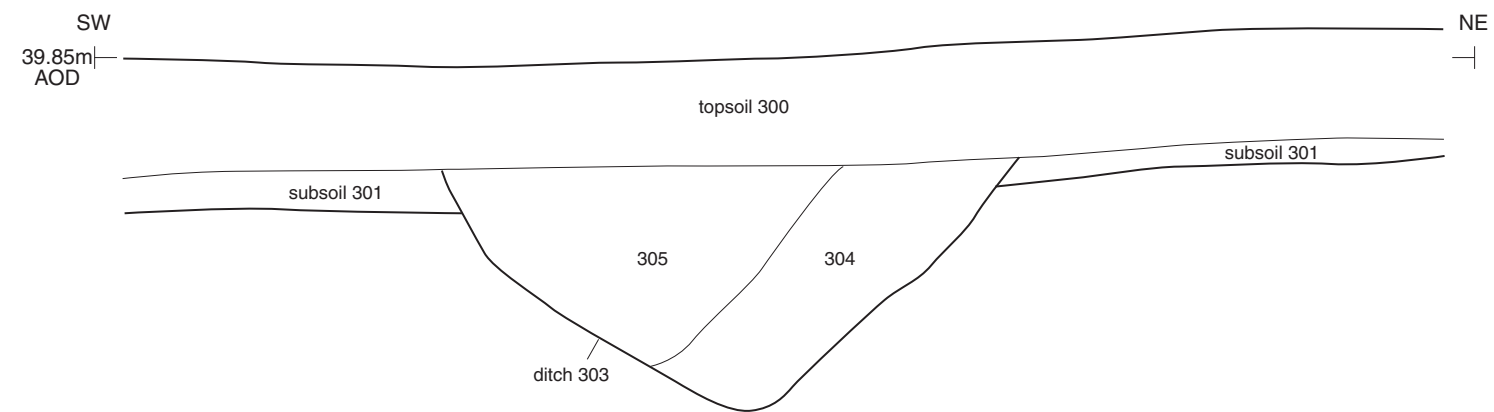


Trench 3, plan



Ditch 303, looking north-west (1m scale)

Section CC



0 1:100 5m

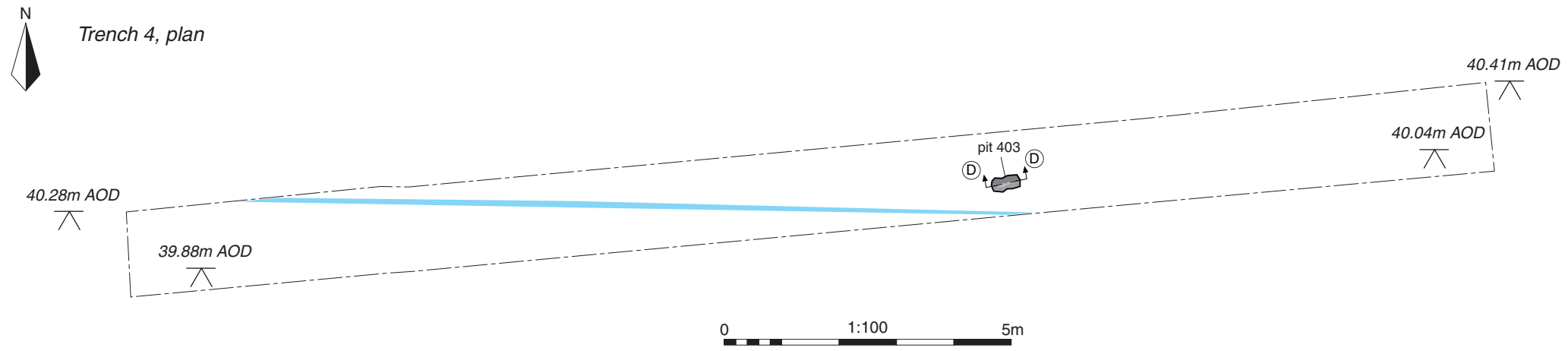
0 1:20 1m




Cotswold Archaeology
 Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

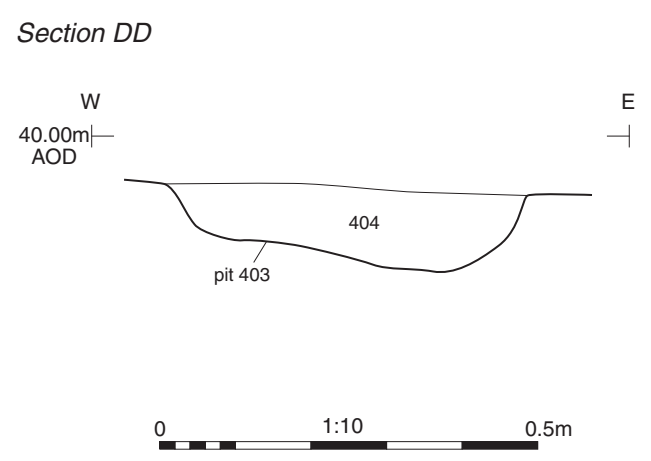
PROJECT TITLE
**FAB Link Converter Station Site,
 East of Harrier Court, Exeter**

FIGURE TITLE
Trench 3: plan, section and photograph

DRAWN BY	AO	PROJECT NO.	880186	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	EE	DATE	27/03/2017	4
APPROVED BY	DE	SCALE@A3	1:100 & 1:20	



-  Archaeological feature
-  Field drain



Pit 404, looking north (0.2m scale)

 Cotswold Archaeology
 Andover 01264 347630
 Cirencester 01285 771022
 Exeter 01392 826185
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
**FAB Link Converter Station Site,
 East of Harrier Court, Exeter**

FIGURE TITLE
Trench 4: plan, section and photograph

DRAWN BY	AO	PROJECT NO.	880186	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	EE	DATE	27/03/2017	5
APPROVED BY	DE	SCALE	@A3 1:100 & 1:10	

Andover Office

Stanley House
Walworth Road
Andover
Hampshire
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

Cirencester Office

Building 11
Kemble Enterprise Park
Cirencester
Gloucestershire
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

Exeter Office

Unit 53
Basepoint Business Centre
Yeoford Way
Marsh Barton Trading Estate
Exeter
EX2 8LB

t: 01392 826185

Milton Keynes Office

41 Burners Lane South
Kiln Farm
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK11 3HA

t: 01908 564660