



Land east of Okehampton Crediton Road Devon

Archaeological Evaluation



for Barratt David Wilson Homes

and Jill Coombe

CA Project: EX0047 CA Report: EX0047_1

September 2019



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SUMMARY

Project Name: Land east of Okehampton

Location: Crediton Road, Devon

NGR: 260388 096047

Type: Evaluation

Date: 6–9 August 2019

Planning Reference: 2731/15/OPA

Location of Archive: N/A

OASIS ID: Cotswold2-360269

Site Code: LEOK 19

In August 2019, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land east of Okehampton, Crediton Road, Devon. A total of 20 trenches were excavated.

The evaluation identified six ditches in the northern and western parts of the site. One of these ditches contained post-medieval/modern artefacts; the remainder were undated artefactually.

A pair of intercutting undated ditches do not respond to historic boundaries visible on 19th/20th century mapping and are on a slightly different alignment to the extant field system. The slightly curved nature of this probable former boundary may indicate that it is medieval in origin.

The remainder of the undated ditches corresponded to historic field boundaries.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 2019, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land east of Okehampton, off Crediton Road, Devon (centred at NGR: 260388 096047; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for Barratt David Wilson Homes and Jill Coombe.
- 1.2 West Devon Borough Council has granted outline planning permission for residential development of the site (planning ref: 2731/15/OPA). Condition 7 of this planning permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. The scope of this evaluation was defined by Stephen Reed, Senior Historic Environment Officer, Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (DCCHET).
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2019) and approved by Stephen Reed. The evaluation fieldwork was also in line with Specification for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Devon County Council 2017), 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) and Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide (Historic England 2015).
- 1.4 The evaluation fieldwork was monitored by Stephen Reed, including a site visit on 9 August 2019.

The site

- 1.5 The evaluation site lies to the immediate north-east of Okehampton, to either side of the B3215 (Crediton Road). It covers an area of approximately 21ha and currently comprises parts of six pasture fields. An artificial attenuation pond lies towards the centre of the site.
- 1.6 The site is bound by recent residential developments to the south/south-west. It is surrounded on all other sides by further pastureland.
- 1.7 The site's underlying bedrock geology is mapped as Ashton Mudstone and Crackington Formation mudstone and siltstone, which formed in the Carboniferous Period. This is overlain in the centre of the site by a band of River Terrace sands and gravels. No superficial deposits are recorded in the remainder of the site (BGS 2019).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The proposed development site has been the subject of a desk-based historic environment assessment (AC 2015) and a geophysical survey (Substrata 2015). The following text is summarised from these sources.

Prehistoric (pre-AD 43) and Roman (AD 43-AD 410)

- 2.2 The cropmarks of four enclosures have been identified within 0.6km of the proposed development site. The closest of these are *c*. 0.2km west and *c*. 0.25km east of the site. It is possible that these enclosures are of later prehistoric or Roman date.
- 2.3 The B3215 (Crediton Road), which runs through the centre of the proposed development site, is believed to preserve the approximate line of a Roman road connecting the forts at Okehampton and North Tawton (which lay *c*. 0.37km west and *c*. 8km north-east of the site, respectively). However, a previous watching brief along the route of the B3215 did not record any evidence for the putative Roman road.
- 2.4 Previous archaeological trenching undertaken to the immediate west of the proposed development site recorded part of a north-west/south-east aligned Roman road/trackway, as well as Roman pits, postholes and ditches.

Early medieval (AD 410–1066) and medieval (1066–1539)

2.5 The manors at Okehampton, Kigbeare and Chichacott were mentioned in the Domesday survey (1086), which suggests that they had early medieval origins. It is probable that the proposed development site formed part of the agricultural hinterland to these settlements in the medieval period. The Devon Historic Environment Service has classified the land within the western part of the site as medieval enclosures based on strip fields. The land within the eastern part of the site is classified as modern enclosures created out of probable medieval fields, with the sinuous medieval boundaries surviving in places.

Post-medieval (1540 to 1800) and modern (1800-present)

- 2.6 The proposed development site appears to have remained in agricultural use throughout these periods. Benjamin Donn's Map of the County of Devon (1765) and the Old Series Ordnance Survey map (1809) show the site as open land to either side of Crediton Road, but neither map is sufficiently detailed to include individual field boundaries. The Okehampton parish tithe map (1841) shows the site as a number of pasture and arable fields, with a stream running approximately north/south through the eastern part of the site.
- 2.7 Previous archaeological trenching undertaken to the immediate south-west of the proposed development site recorded post-medieval field boundary ditches.

Geophysical survey

2.8 The geophysical survey of the evaluation site (Substrata 2015) recorded a series of linear anomalies, the majority of which corresponded to or were on the same alignment as historic field boundaries visible on 19th century cartographic sources. There was some evidence for former ridge and furrow cultivation in the eastern part of the site. A linear anomaly in the north-eastern part of the site was identified as a haul road created to remove spoil during the attenuation pond excavations. Linear anomalies in the south-western part of the site were tested by trial trenching (AC 2015; Fig. 2) and were found to correspond to modern service trenches.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. This information will enable West Devon Borough 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 the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 20 trenches (Fig. 2). Ten trenches were 25m long, eight trenches were 50m long, one trench was 75m long and one trench was 55m long. Trenches were between 1.6m and 2m in width. The trenches were located to test geophysical anomalies and to provide a representative sample of the remainder of the site.
- 4.2 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*. All trenches were excavated 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*.
- 4.3 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. No deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.4 As no significant archaeological features were identified during the evaluation, no project archive will be prepared. The evaluation results will be held by DCCHET in the form of this report and the OASIS entry (see below).
- 4.5 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 (OASIS ID: Cotswold2-360269). The OASIS entry will include an uploaded copy of this report.

5. RESULTS

5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. A detailed summary of the recorded contexts is given in Appendix A.

General stratigraphy

- 5.2 The natural substrate comprised degraded siltstone (shillet) with frequent patches of silty clay. It was generally exposed at a depth of 0.3m–0.44m below the present ground level (bpgl) and was sealed in most trenches by the modern topsoil.
- 5.3 T1, T5, T15, T16 and T20 featured 019m–0.8m of silty colluvial layers between the natural substrate and the topsoil. These layers were intermittent in T1 and T5.
- 5.4 Extensive modern truncation was recorded in T12–T14. In these trenches, the natural substrate was exposed 0.9m–1.35m bpgl. It was covered by up to 1m of modern made ground, which contained frequent wood, plastic and brick inclusions. The made ground was sealed by the topsoil.
- Archaeological features were identified in four of the trenches (T1, T4, T8 and T19) and these are discussed in detail below. The remainder of the trenches contained no archaeological features and are not discussed further. All archaeological features were cut into the natural substrate and sealed by the topsoil.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

5.6 East-west orientated ditch 103 was 0.82m wide and 0.2m deep (Fig. 3, Sec AA), with a single undated fill (104).

Trench 4 (Fig. 4)

- 5.7 Two intercutting north-east/south-west aligned ditches (402 and 404) were identified in T4 (Fig. 4, Sec BB).
- 5.8 Ditch 402 was 0.6m deep and survived to a width of 1.4m. It contained a single undated fill (403). Ditch 402 was truncated by later ditch 404. Ditch 404 was 4.8m wide and 0.8m deep, with two undated fills (405 and 406).

Trench 8 (Fig. 5)

5.9 North-west/south-east aligned ditch 802 was 0.95m wide and 0.35m deep (Fig. 5, Sec CC), with two fills (803 and 804). Fill 804 contained a fragment of post-medieval clay pipe and a single sherd of modern pottery (not retained).

Trench 19 (Fig. 6)

5.10 North-east/south-west orientated ditches 1903 and 1905 were identified in the north-western end of T19. Ditch 1903 was 1.85m wide and 0.4m deep (Fig. 6, Sec DD), with a single undated fill (1904). Ditch 1905 was 1.3m wide and 0.7m deep (Fig. 6, Sec EE), with a single undated fill (1906).

6. DISCUSSION

6.1 The evaluation identified six ditches in the northern and western parts of the site. One of these ditches contained post-medieval/modern artefacts; the remainder were undated artefactually.

- There was a variable correspondence between the evaluation results and the geophysical survey (Substrata 2015). While all of the ditches recorded by the evaluation were in the exact or approximate locations of linear geophysical anomalies, there were several geophysical anomalies which were not found to correspond to below-ground archaeological features. It is possible that these anomalies were caused by agricultural/other activity which did not penetrate the topsoil/colluvial layers.
- 6.3 Undated intercutting ditches 402 and 404 (T4) do not respond to any historic boundaries visible on 19th/20th century mapping and are on a slightly different alignment to the extant field system. The slightly curved nature of this probable former boundary (visible in the geophysical survey results) may indicate that it is medieval in origin, but this cannot be proved.
- Ditch 103 (T1) is in the approximate location of a former field boundary depicted on 19th century cartographic sources.
- 6.5 Undated parallel ditches 1903 and 1905 (T9) may represent ditches to either side of a hedgeline, and may be indicative of slight shifting of the south-western site boundary.
- 6.6 Ditch 802 contained a small amount post-medieval clay pipe and modern pottery. This ditch is not shown on historic mapping and may represent a modern drainage feature.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

7.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Jonathan Orellana, assisted by Parris Stubbings, Jake Godfrey and Tim Brown. This report was written by Jonathan Orellana. The report illustrations were prepared by Amy Wright. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

8. REFERENCES

- AC Archaeology 2015 Land to the East of Okehampton, Devon: Historic Environment Assessment AC report ACD1179/1/1
- British Geological Survey 2019 *Geology of Britain Viewer* http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.html. Accessed 19 July 2019
- Cotswold Archaeology 2019 Land east of Okehampton, Crediton Road, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019 National Planning Policy Framework
- Substrata 2015 An archaeological gradiometer survey at land to the north of Crediton Road, Okehampton, West Devon Substrata report no. **150706**

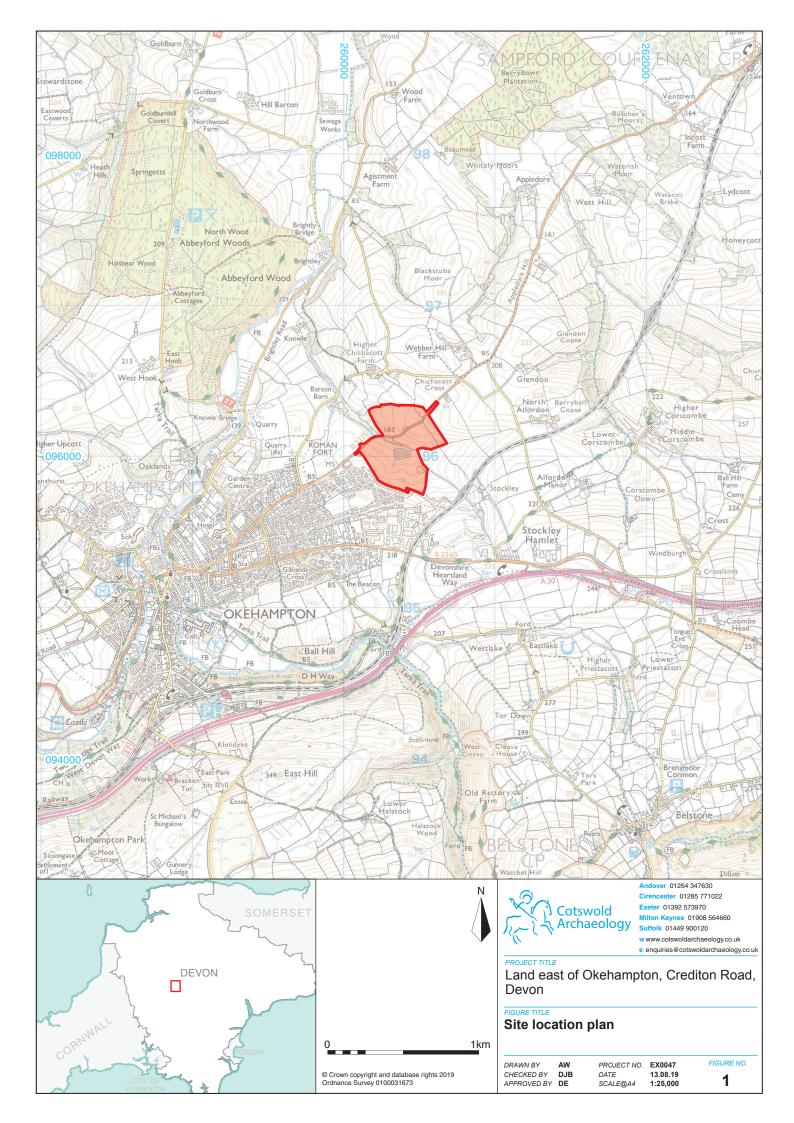
APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

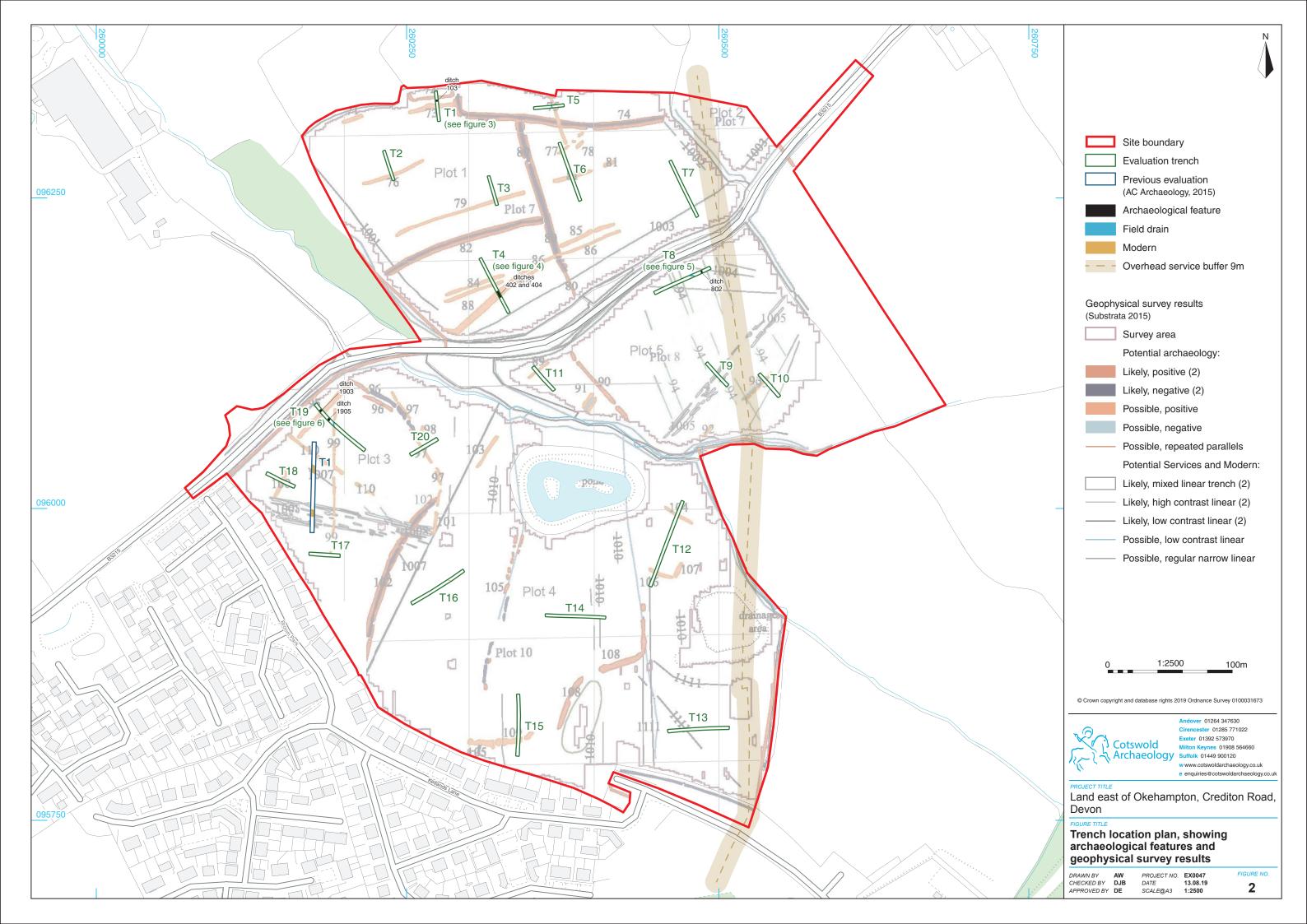
Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Width (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)
1	100	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
1	101	Layer		colluvium	dark brown sandy silt		0.2
1	102	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
1	103	Cut		ditch	E/W orientated, irregular sides and uneven base	0.82	0.2
1	104	Fill	103	single fill of ditch	dark brown sandy silt	0.82	0.2
2	200	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
2	201	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
3	300	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.32
3	301	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
4	400	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
4	401	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
4	402	Cut		ditch	NE/SW orientated, steep NW side and flat base	1.4	0.6
4	403	Fill	402	single fill of ditch	mid brownish grey sandy silt	1.4	0.6
4	404	Cut		ditch	NE/SW orientated, moderate sloping sides and flat base	4.8	0.8
4	405	Fill	404	1st fill of ditch	dark brown sandy silt	3.6	0.8
4	406	Fill	404	2nd fill of ditch	mid greyish brown sandy silt	4.15	0.3
5	500	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.35
5	501	Layer		colluvium	mid brown silty clay		0.33
5	502	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
6	600	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
6	601	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
7	700	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
7	701	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
8	800	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.4
8	801	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
8	802	Cut		ditch	NW/SE orientated, steep sides and flat base	0.95	0.35
8	803	Fill	802	1st fill of ditch	mixed of yellowish and grey clay	0.2	0.35
8 9	804 900	Fill	802	2nd fill of ditch topsoil	dark greyish brown clay dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.75	0.35 0.4
9	900	Layer Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent		0.4
10	1000	Layer		topsoil	patches of brownish grey sandy silt dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.45
10	1001	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
11	1100	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
11	1101	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of brownish grey sandy silt		
12	1200	Layer		topsoil	light brown sandy silt		0.3
12	1201	Layer		made ground	dark greyish black silty clay with frequent modern brick, wood and plastic		>1
12	1202	Layer		natural substrate	mid greyish blue clay with frequent patches of degraded siltstone		
13	1300	Layer		topsoil	light brown sandy silt		0.35

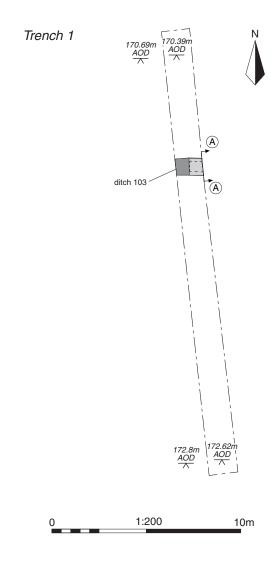
Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Width (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)
13	1301	Layer		made ground	dark blackish grey sandy clay with frequent modern brick, wood and plastic		0.6-1
13	1302	Layer		natural substrate	mid greyish blue silty clay with frequent patches of degraded siltstone		
14	1400	Layer		topsoil	mid greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
14	1401	Layer		made ground	dark bluish grey silty clay with occasional modern brick and plastic		0.6
14	1402	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of greyish yellow silty clay		
15	1500	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown sandy silt		0.2
15	1501	Layer		colluvium	mid reddish brown clayey silt		0.6
15	1502	Layer		colluvium	light bluish grey silty clay		0.2
15	1503	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of greyish yellow silty clay		
16	1600	Layer		topsoil	light brownish grey sandy silt		0.3
16	1601	Layer		colluvium	light bluish grey silty clay		0.7
16	1602	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of greyish yellow clay		
17	1700	Layer		topsoil	light greyish brown sandy silt		0.35
17	1701	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of light yellowish grey clay		
18	1800	Layer		topsoil	mid brown sandy silt		0.4
18	1801	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of light brownish grey clay		
19	1900	Layer		topsoil	dark greyish brown clayey silt		0.3
19	1901				Void		
19	1902	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone and light greyish yellow clay		
19	1903	Cut		ditch	NE/SW orientated, moderate sloping sides and concave base	1.85	0.4
19	1904	Fill	1903	single fill of ditch	mid reddish brown clayey silt	1.85	0.4
19	1905	Cut		ditch	NE/SW orientated, steep sides and concave base	1.3	0.7
19	1906	Fill	1905	single fill of ditch	mid greyish brown silty clay	1.3	0.7
20	2000	Layer		topsoil	light greyish brown sandy silt		0.3
20	2001	Layer		colluvium	light yellowish grey silty clay		0.2-0.4
20	2002	Layer		natural substrate	degraded siltstone with frequent patches of light yellowish grey clay		

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS					
Project name	Land east of Okehampton, Crediton Ro	Land east of Okehampton, Crediton Road, Devon			
Short description	In August 2019, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land east of Okehampton, Crediton Road, Devon. A total of 20 trenches were excavated.				
	The evaluation identified six ditches in the northern and western parts of the site. One of these ditches contained post-medieval/modern artefacts; the remainder were undated artefactually.				
	A pair of intercutting undated ditches do not respond to historic boundaries visible on 19th/20th century mapping and are on a slightly different alignment to the extant field system. The slightly curved nature of this probable former boundary may indicate that it is medieval in origin.				
	The remainder of the undated ditches boundaries.	The remainder of the undated ditches corresponded to historic field			
Project dates	6-9 August 2019				
Project type	Evaluation				
Previous work		Desk-based Historic Environment Assessment (AC 2015)			
	Evaluation (AC 2015)				
Future work	Unknown				
PROJECT LOCATION Site location	Land cost of Okohamatan, Craditan Be	and Davon			
Study area (m²/ha)	c. 21ha	Land east of Okehampton, Crediton Road, Devon			
Site co-ordinates	260388 096047				
PROJECT CREATORS	200300 090047				
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology				
Project brief originator	N/A				
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology				
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					
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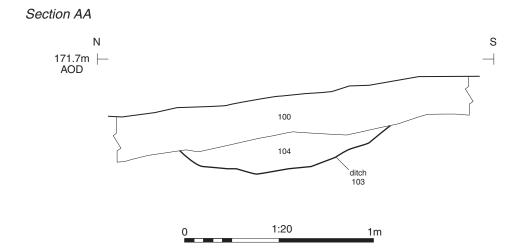








Ditch 103, looking east (1m scale)





Andover 01264 347630 ster 01285 771022 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.u

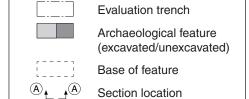
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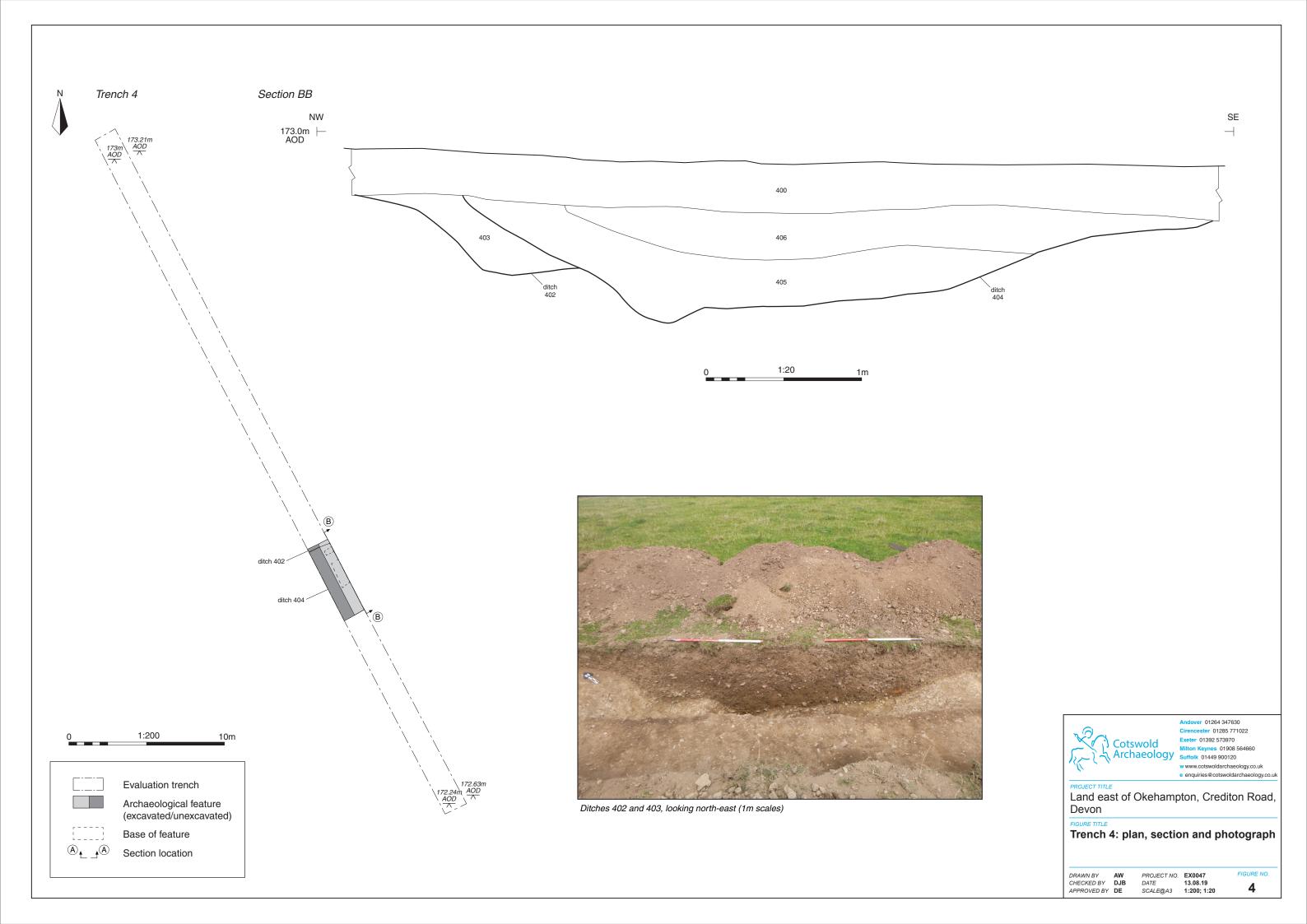
Land east of Okehampton, Crediton Road, Devon

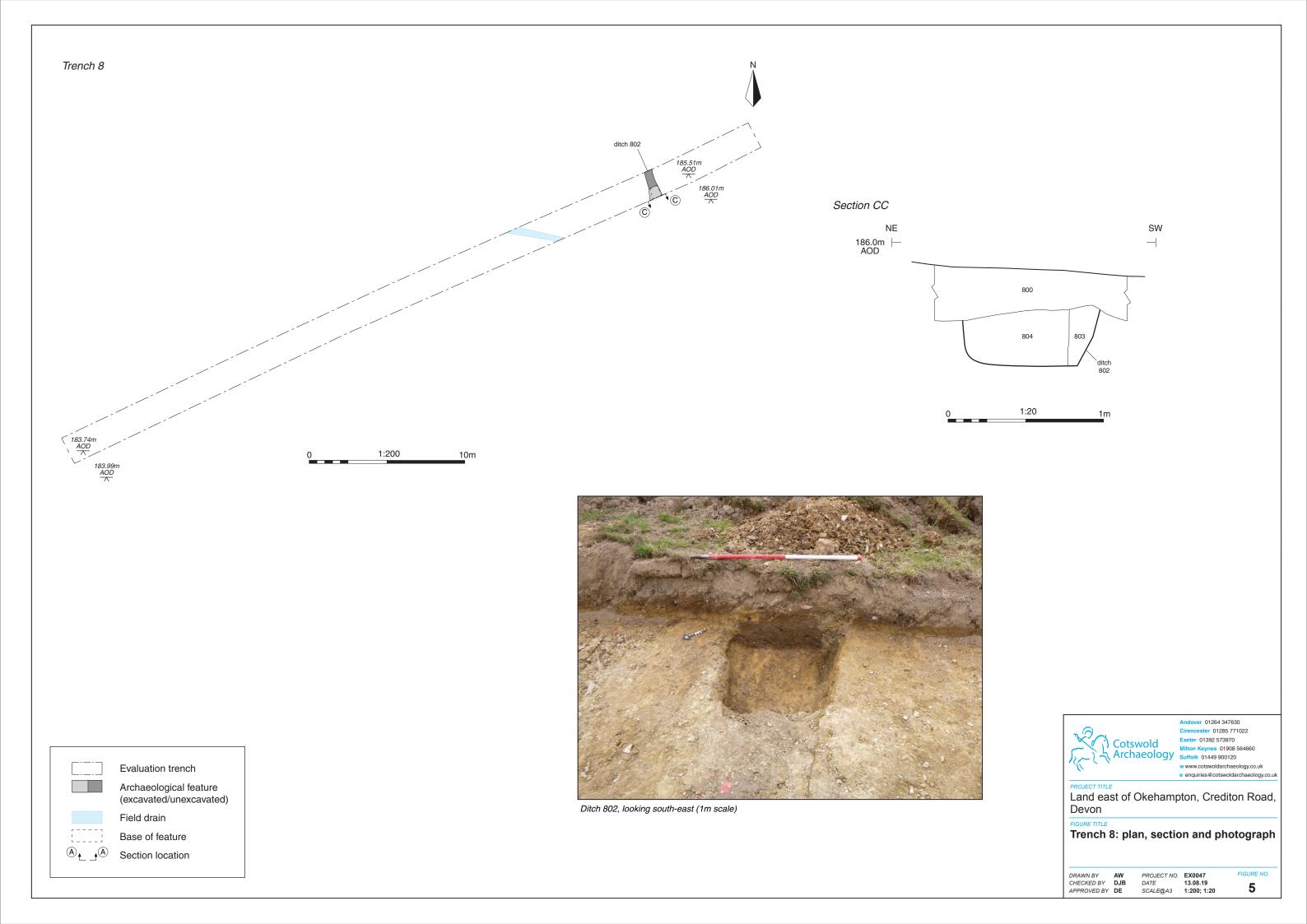
Trench 1: plan, section and photograph

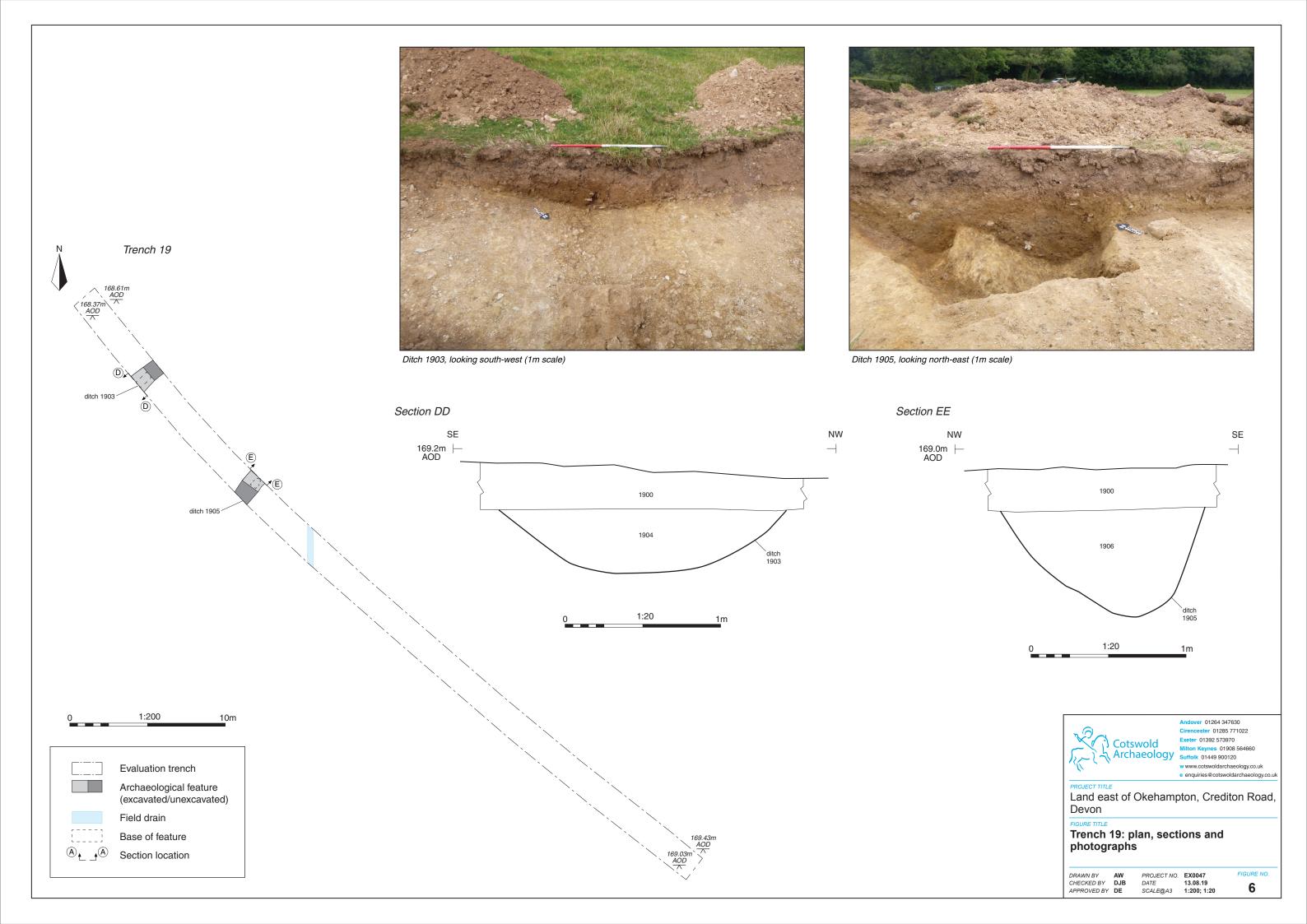
DRAWN BY AW
CHECKED BY DJB
APPROVED BY DE

PROJECT NO. EX0047
DATE 13.08.19
SCALE@A3 1:200; 1:20 3











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