



## Larkbear Phase 1 Barnstaple Devon

Archaeological Evaluation



for Persimmon Homes South West

CA Project: EX0004 CA Report: EX0004\_1

August 2019



## Larkbear Phase 1 Barnstaple Devon

### Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: EX0004 CA Report: EX0004\_1















	Document Control Grid							
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Α	11 July 2019	Jerry Austin	Derek Evans	Internal review	_	Duncan Coe		
В	27 August 2019	Jerry Austin	Derek Evans	Curator review	Minor amendment to Fig. 4 in line with Curator comments			

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#### **SUMMARY**

Project Name: Larkbear Phase 1
Location: Barnstaple, Devon

**NGR**: 254864 131610

**Type:** Evaluation

**Date:** 13–17 May 2019

Planning Reference: 61119
Site Code: LARK19

In May 2019, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Larkbear, Barnstaple, Devon. A total of 19 trenches were excavated within the site.

The evaluation recorded eight post-medieval ditches and one modern ditch. The post-medieval ditches probably represent former boundaries within the extant field system.

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In May 2019, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Larkbear, Barnstaple, Devon (centred at NGR: 254864 131610; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for Persimmon Homes South West.
- 1.2 North Devon District Council has granted planning permission for residential development of the site (planning ref: 61119). A condition attached to this planning permission requires 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 proposed development will be undertaken on a phased basis. This report refers specifically to Phase 1 of the development site (hereafter referred to as the evaluation site).
- 1.4 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2019) and approved by Stephen Reed. The fieldwork also followed: Specification for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Devon County Council 2018), Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (CIfA 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).

#### The site

- 1.5 The evaluation site lies within the southern fringes of the Barnstaple urban area, some 170m north of the A39 highway. It is to the immediate south and east of the Sticklepath and Roundswell suburban areas.
- 1.6 The evaluation site is irregularly shaped and encompasses *c*. 7.36ha of agricultural land. It is bordered to the west, south and south-east by woodland, to the north-east by agricultural land, and to the north-west by residential properties. Open drains (ditches) are located along the western, northern and eastern boundaries of the site, and traverse the western and eastern extremities of the site.
- 1.7 The topography slopes gradually from a high of *c*. 30m in the south-eastern corner of the evaluation site to a low of *c*. 19m in the site's south-eastern corner.
- 1.8 The site's bedrock geology is mapped as Doddiscombe Formation and Codden Hill Chert Formation mudstone of the Carboniferous Period. This is overlain by superficial deposits of mid Pleistocene diamiction till (BGS 2019).

#### 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The wider proposed development site has been the subject of an archaeological desk-based assessment (EDP 2011) and a geophysical survey (Archaeological Surveys 2012). This section is summarised from these sources.

#### Prehistoric (pre-AD 43)

- 2.2 Three Mesolithic hearths were identified *c.* 850m east of the evaluation site, on the River Taw floodplain terraces.
- 2.3 Isolated finds of Neolithic and Bronze Age axes have been made *c*. 200m south and *c*. 800m north-east of the evaluation site, respectively.

#### Roman (AD 43-AD 410) and early medieval (AD 410-1066)

2.4 There is no clear evidence for Roman or early medieval activity in the vicinity of the evaluation site.

#### Medieval (1066-1539)

- 2.5 The boundary adjacent to the proposed new site access from Old Torrington Road is recorded as the boundary between the estates of the Wrey and Sturt families. This boundary is believed to have been established in the 13th century.
- 2.6 Several medieval farmsteads have been noted to the north-east, east and southeast of the evaluation site. Scatters of medieval pottery, suggestive of manuring spread, have been recorded in the vicinity of these farmsteads.
- 2.7 A hollow-way/sunken lane extends from the evaluation site's north-eastern corner. The 1842 Tithe Map indicates that this lane formerly ran along the evaluation site's eastern boundary. This alignment is currently occupied by an open drain.

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

2.8 The evaluation site appears to have been in agricultural use throughout these periods. Cartographic sources from the 19th and early 20th centuries document the gradual loss of some internal field boundaries within the site.

#### Geophysical survey

2.9 The geophysical survey provided only partial coverage of the evaluation site (Fig. 2). It recorded a small number of weak linear anomalies of uncertain origin and parallel linear anomalies suggestive of agricultural activity.

#### 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 North 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 the proposed development, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2018).

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 19 trenches, each measuring *c*. 30m in length and *c*. 1.8m in width (Fig. 2). The trenches were located to test geophysical anomalies and to provide a representative sample of 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. All recovered artefacts were processed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation.
- 4.4 As no significant archaeological features were identified during the archaeological works, no evaluation 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 (Appendix C), including an uploaded copy of the report.

#### 5. RESULTS

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are given in Appendix A. Details of the artefactual material (finds) recovered from the site are given in Section 6 and Appendix B.
- The natural geological substrate was exposed across the site at a depth of 0.3m—0.7m below the present ground level. It comprised yellow sandy clay with frequent stone inclusions and occasional bands of gravel. The natural substrate was overlain in T1–T8, T11 and T14 by 0.08m—0.35m of intermittent silty clay subsoil, which was sealed in turn by the modern topsoil. In the remainder of the trenches, no subsoil was present and the natural substrate was overlain directly by the topsoil.
- 5.3 T1, T4, T6 and T17 contained archaeological features and are discussed in more detail below. All archaeological features were cut into the natural substrate.

#### Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

5.4 Trench 1 contained two intercutting north/south aligned ditches, 103 and 105 (Fig. 3, Sec. AA). These ditches were separated from each other by 1.6m. The earliest of the pair was ditch 103, which was 1.07m wide and 0.25m deep. It contained a single fill (104), from which one fragment of undated ceramic building material was recovered. Ditch 105 truncated the eastern side of ditch 103. Ditch 105 was 1.13m wide and 0.51m deep. It contained two fills (106 and 107), the upper of which (107) contained a fragment of undated ceramic building material.

#### Trench 4 (Figs. 4 & 5)

- 5.5 Trench 4 contained three ditches: 403, 405 and 408.
- 5.6 Ditches 403 and 405 (Fig. 4, Sec. BB) ran on a parallel north-east/south-west alignment. These ditches were separated from each other by 1.6m. Ditch 403 was 0.78m wide and 0.34m deep, with a single undated fill (404). Ditch 405 was 0.68m wide and 0.24m deep. It contained a single fill (406), from which a sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered. Probable bank deposit 407 was recorded in the trench section between ditches 403 and 405. This deposit contained two undated ceramic building material fragments and one fragmentary fired clay object.
- 5.7 North-west/south-east aligned ditch 408 (Fig. 5, Sec. CC) was 0.66m wide and 0.16m deep. It contained a single fill (409), from which two fragments of modern glass were recovered.

#### Trench 6 (Fig. 6)

The south-eastern end of T6 contained two intercutting north-east/south-west aligned ditches (Fig. 6, Sec. DD). The earliest of these was ditch 603, which was 1.4m wide and 0.45m deep. It contained two fills (604 and 605), the upper of which (605) yielded five sherds of post-medieval pottery. Ditch 603 was truncated on its north-western side by ditch 606, which was 1.7m wide and 0.44m deep. Ditch 606 contained two fills (607 and 608), the upper of which (608) contained one sherd of post-medieval pottery.

#### Trench 17 (Fig. 7)

- 5.9 T17 contained two parallel north/south aligned ditches (Fig. 17, Sec. EE). These ditches were separated from each other by 1.35m.
- 5.10 Ditch 1702 was 1.8m wide and 0.45m deep. It contained two fills (1703 and 1704), the upper of which (1704) contained three sherds of post-medieval pottery. Ditch 1705 was 1.05m wide and 0.36m deep, with a single undated fill (1706).

#### 6. THE FINDS

6.1 The artefactual material recovered during the evaluation is listed in Appendix B and is discussed further below.

#### Pottery

A small assemblage of pottery (11 sherds, 164g), was recovered from five deposits. The majority of these sherds comprise North Devon products, including both gravel-tempered and gravel-free fabrics, of post-medieval (mid 16th–18th century) date. Ditch 603 (fill 605; T6) produced five sherds of an unglazed fabric of probable similar date.

#### Other finds

- 6.3 A small amount of ceramic building material (four fragments, 82g), was recovered from three deposits. All of this material is too fragmentary to ascertain form or date. Bank deposit 407 (T4) produced a fragmentary fired clay object.
- Two fragments of window and vessel glass of 19th or 20th century date were recovered from ditch 408 (fill 409; T4).

#### 7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The evaluation recorded nine ditches, five of which contained post-medieval pottery or modern glass. The four undated ditches are probably also post-medieval in date, given their relationships to the dated ditches and the extant field system.
- The majority of the ditches recorded by the evaluation were outside of the limited area previously subject to geophysical survey (Archaeological Surveys 2012; Fig. 2), although the two ditches recorded in T17 (within the survey area) did not clearly correspond to geophysical anomalies. Similarly, none of the geophysical anomalies tested by T12, T15 and T17 were found to correspond to below-ground archaeological features. This suggests that the anomalies are associated with agricultural activity, such as ploughing within the topsoil/subsoil.
- 7.3 The double-ditch alignments in T4 (ditches 403 and 405) and T17 (ditches 1702 and 1705) probably represent ditches to either side of hedgelined boundaries; the space between ditches 403 and 405 was partially occupied by the remnants of a possible hedgebank. Post-medieval pottery was recovered from both of these boundaries. Ditches 1702 and 1705 are in the broad location of a former field boundary depicted on the Tawstock Tithe Map (1842; reproduced in EDP 2011), although the 403/405 boundary is not shown on the map.
- 7.4 Intercutting ditches 603 and 606 (T6) contained post-medieval pottery. These ditches continued the line of ditches 403 and 405 (T4) and may represent an extension of this former boundary as a simple ditch, rather than a hedgeline.
- 7.5 Intercutting ditches 103 and 105 (T1) could not be dated artefactually and are not depicted on the 1842 tithe map; these ditches were, however, on the same alignment as the extant field system and are assumed to be post-medieval in date.
- 7.6 Ditch 408 contained 19th/20th glass sherds and is assumed to be a modern drainage feature.

#### 8. CA PROJECT TEAM

8.1 The evaluation fieldwork was undertaken by Jerry Austin, assisted by Jake Godfrey and Tim Brown. This report was written by Jerry Austin. The finds report was written by Katie Marsden. The report illustrations were prepared by Amy Wright. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

#### 9. REFERENCES

- Archaeological Surveys Ltd 2012 Land at Larkbear, Barnstaple: Magnetometer Survey
- British Geological Survey 2019 Geology of Britain Viewer <a href="http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.h">http://www.bgs.ac.uk/discoveringGeology/geologyOfBritain/viewer.h</a> <a href="mailto:teller.h">tml</u> Accessed 7 February 2019</a>
- Cotswold Archaeology 2019 Larkbear Phase 1, Barnstaple, Devon: Written Scheme of investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation
- The Environmental Dimension Partnership 2011 Land at Larkbear, Barnstaple: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment EDP Report **H\_EDP1340\_01**
- Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government 2018 National Planning Policy Framework

#### **APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS**

Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Width (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		topsoil	Mid grey brown silty clay		0.35	
1	101	Layer		subsoil	Mid grey brown silty clay		0.11	
1	102	Layer		natural	Light yellow brown sandy clay, rare subangular stone inclusions			
1	103	Cut		ditch	N/S aligned concave sides and base	1.07	0.25	
1	104	Fill	103	single fill	Mid grey brown silty clay	1.07	0.25	
1	105	Cut		ditch	Truncates 103. N/S aligned concave sides and base	1.13	0.51	
1	106	Fill	105	1st fill	Dark grey brown silty clay	1.13	0.2	
1	107	Fill	105	2nd fill	Grey brown silty clay, CBM inclusions	0.45	0.33	
2	200	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.3	
2	201	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, intermittent		0.15	
2	202	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with gravels and patches of red and grey clay			
3	300	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.3	
3	301	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, intermittent		0.25	
3	302	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
4	400	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.25	
4	401	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, intermittent		0.16	
4	402	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
4	403	Cut		ditch	NE/SW aligned concave sides and base 0.7		0.25	
4	404	Fill	403	single fill	Mid grey brown silty clay	0.78	0.25	
4	405	Cut		ditch	NE/SW aligned concave sides and 0.68 base		0.18	
4	406	Fill	405	single fill	Mid grey brown silty clay	0.68	0.18	MC16-C18
4	407	Depos		bank	Light grey brown sandy clay, subangular stone inclusions	2.02	0.18	
4	408	Cut		ditch	N/S aligned straight sides flat base	0.66	0.19	
4	409	Fill	408	single fill	Mid grey brown silty clay	0.66	0.19	C19-C20
5	500	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.35	
5	501	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, frequent subangular stone inclusions. intermittent		0.35	
5	502	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
6	600	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.22	
6	601	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, frequent subangular stone inclusions. intermittent		0.1	
6	602	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
6	603	Cut		ditch	ENE/WSW aligned slightly stepped concave sides and base	1.4	0.45	
6	604	Fill	603	1st fill	Mid yellow brown clay sand >1.53		0.41	
6	605	Fill	603	2nd fill	Dark grey brown silty clay >1.53 0.41		0.41	Pmed
6	606	Cut		ditch	NE/SW aligned. Truncates 603. Concave sides and base. Truncated by modern field drain in NW		0.44	
6	607	Fill	606	1st fill	Grey brown silty clay	1.47	0.18	

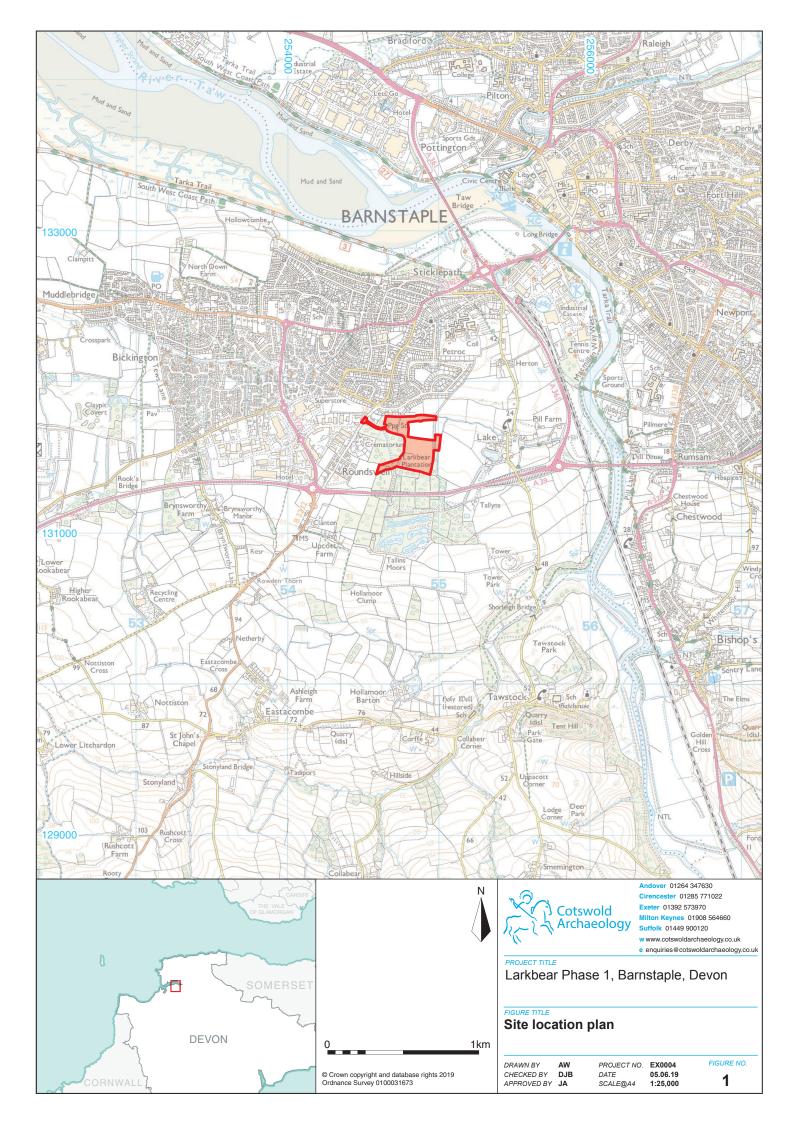
Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	Width (m)	Depth/ thickness (m)	Spot-date
6	608	Fill	606	2nd fill	Mid to dark brown silty clay, with CBM and charcoal flecks	1.15	0.29	MC16-C18
7	700	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.3	
7	701	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, frequent subangular stone inclusions. intermittent		0.1	
7	702	Layer		natural	Light yellow brown sandy clay, frequent subangular stone inclusions			
8	800	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.3	
8	801	Layer		subsoil	Yellow brown silty clay, frequent subangular stone inclusions. intermittent		0.08	
8	802	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
9	900	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.24	
9	901	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
10	1000	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.32	
10	1001	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
11	1100	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.25	
11	1101	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, frequent subangular stone inclusions		0.11	
11	1102	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
12	1200	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.3	
12	1201	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
13	1300	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.29	
13	1301	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
14	1400	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.3	
14	1401	Layer		subsoil	Light grey brown silty clay, frequent subangular stone inclusions. Intermittent		0.2	
14	1402	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
15	1500	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.39	
15	1501	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
16	1600	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.31	
16	1601	Layer		subsoil	Red brown sandy clay		0.07	
16	1602	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
17	1700	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.3	
17	1701	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
17	1702	Cut		ditch	N/S aligned, straight sides with a flat base		0.45	
17	1703	Fill	1702	1st fill	Mid grey brown silty clay	0.73	0.22	
17	1704	Fill	1702	2nd fill	Mid yellow brown silty clay		0.34	MC16-C18
17	1705	Cut		ditch	N/S aligned straight sides and a concave base	1.05	0.36	
17	1706	Fill	1705	single fill	Mid yellow brown silty clay	1.05	0.36	
18	1800	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.41	
18	1801	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			
19	1900	Layer		topsoil	Grey brown silty clay		0.28	
19	1901	Layer		natural	Yellow sandy clay with subangular stone inclusions			

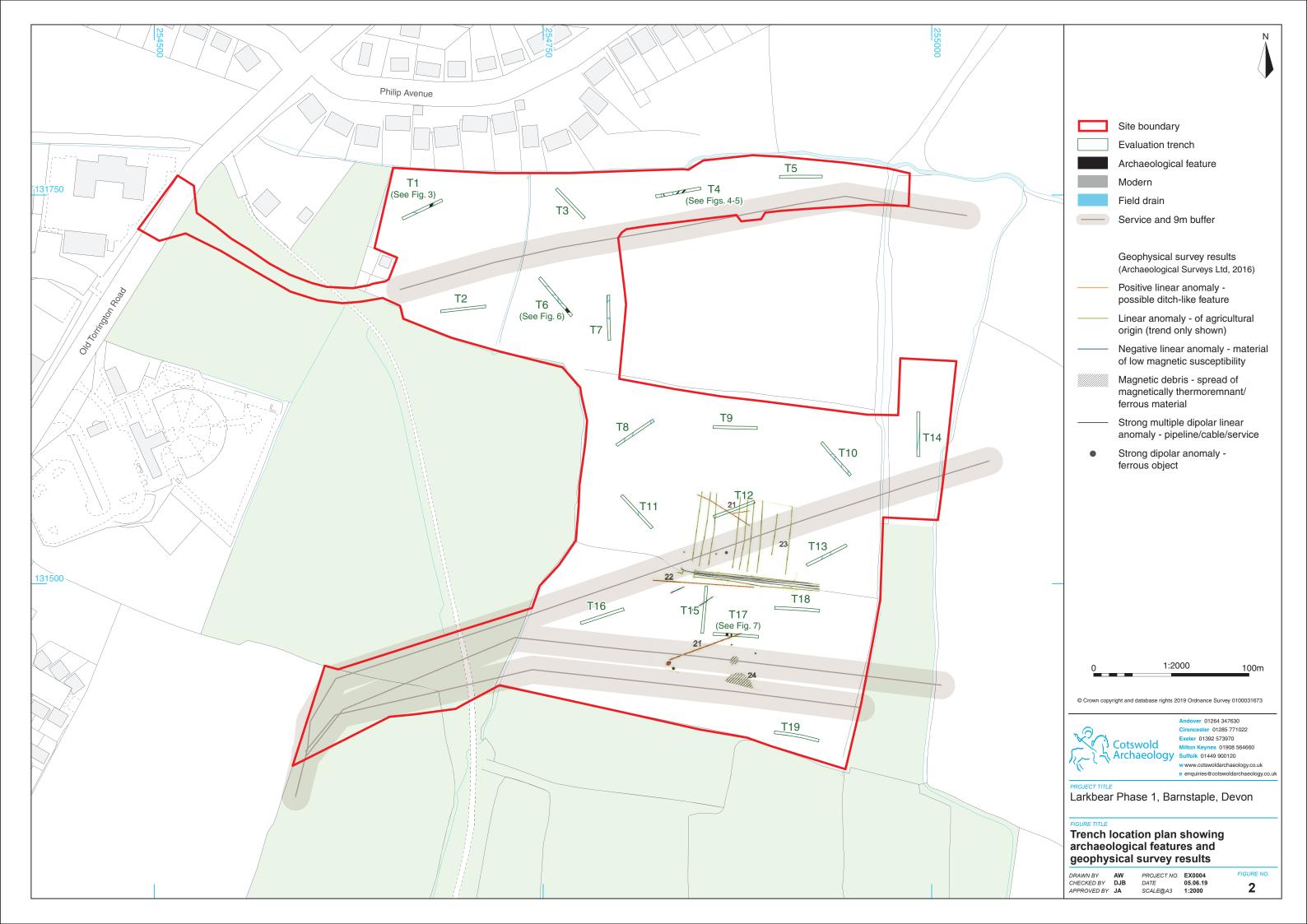
#### **APPENDIX B: FINDS CONCORDANCE**

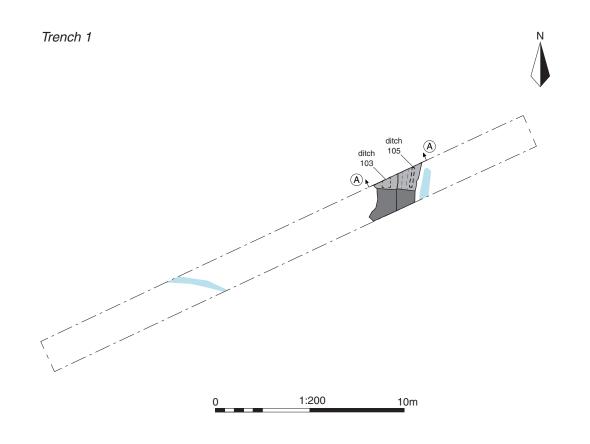
Context	Feature	Class	Description	Fabric Code	Ct.	Wt.(g)	Spot-date
104	Ditch 103	СВМ	fragment		1	1	1
107	Ditch 105	СВМ	fragment		1	4	•
301	Subsoil	Post-medieval pottery	N. Devon gravel-tempered base	ND GTW	1	37	MC16-C18
406	Ditch 405	Post-medieval pottery	N. Devon gravel-tempered bowl	ND GTW	1	52	MC16-C18
407	?Bank material	?fired clay			2	113	
		СВМ	fragment		2	77	
409	Ditch 408	Glass	window, vessel (dark green)		2	2	C19-C20
-605	Ditch 603	Post-medieval pottery	Unglazed ware	UnGEW	5	52	Pmed
608	Ditch 606	Post-medieval pottery	N. Devon gravel-free	ND GF	1	9	MC16-C18
1704	Ditch 1702	Post-medieval pottery	N. Devon gravel-free	ND GF	3	14	MC16-C18

#### APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

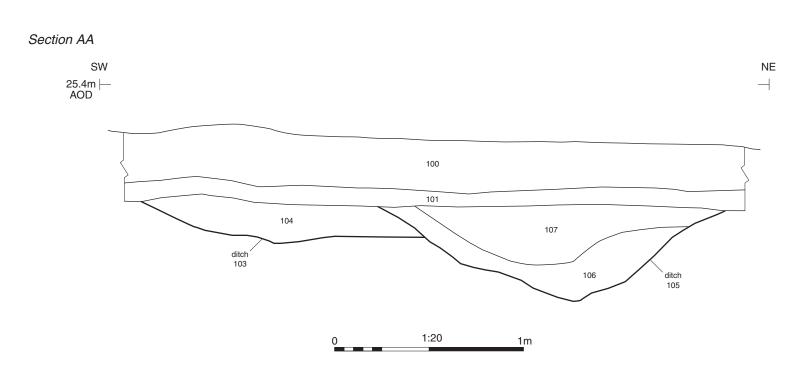
ROJECT DETAILS roject name Larkbear Phase 1, Barnstaple, Devon					
Short description	In May 2019, Cotswold Archaeology of evaluation of land at Larkbear, Barns	In May 2019, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Larkbear, Barnstaple, Devon. A total of 19 trenches were excavated within the site.			
	modern ditch. The post-medieval ditch	The evaluation recorded eight post-medieval ditches and one modern ditch. The post-medieval ditches probably represent former boundaries within the extant field system.			
Project dates	13–17 May 2019				
Project type	Evaluation				
Previous work	Geophysical Survey (Archaeological S Desk-Based Assessment (EDP 2011)	Geophysical Survey (Archaeological Surveys Ltd 2012 Desk-Based Assessment (EDP 2011)			
Future work	Unknown				
PROJECT LOCATION					
Site location	Larkbear, Barnstaple, Devon	Larkbear, Barnstaple, Devon			
Study area (m²/ha)	7.36ha	7.36ha			
Site co-ordinates	254864 131610	254864 131610			
PROJECT CREATORS					
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Brief originator	N/A				
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Manager	Derek Evans				
Project Supervisor	Jerry Austin	Jerry Austin			
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	•	•			

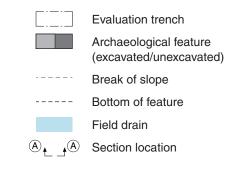














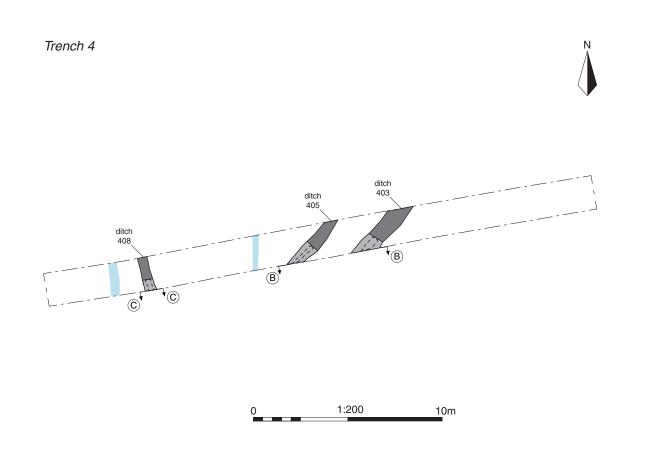
Andover 01264 347630 Cirencester 01285 771022 Cotswold Milton Keynes 01908 564660 Archaeology Suffolk 01449 900120 w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.u

Larkbear Phase 1, Barnstaple, Devon

Trench 1: Plan, section and photograph

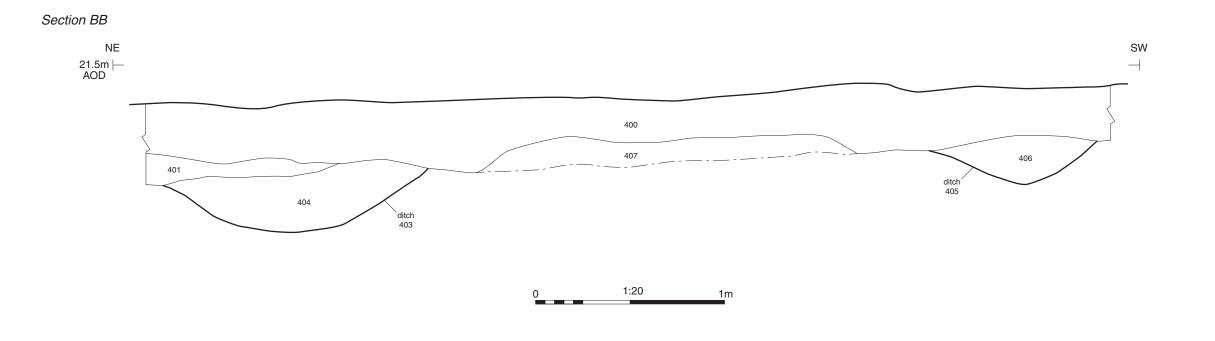
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APPROVED BY JA PROJECT NO. EX0004 DATE 05.06.19 SCALE@A3 1:200; 1:20

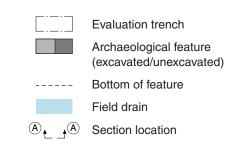
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Larkbear Phase 1, Barnstaple, Devon

Trench 4: Plan, section and photograph

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APPROVED BY JA PROJECT NO. EX0004 DATE 05.06.19 SCALE@A3 1:200; 1:20

# Section CC NE 21.5m |AOD 400 ditch 408





Ditch 408, looking south (1m scale)



Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 573970
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
Suffolk 01449 900120
w www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
e enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE

Larkbear Phase 1, Barnstaple, Devon

FIGURE TITLE

Trench 4: Section and photograph

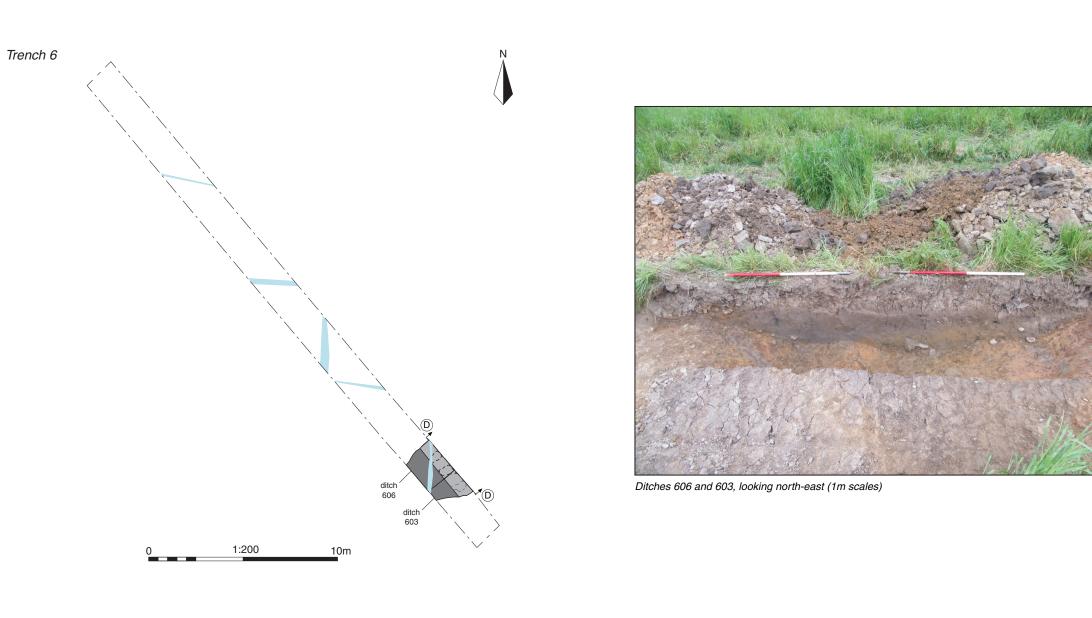
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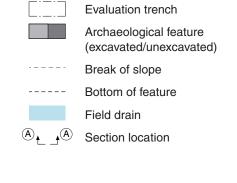
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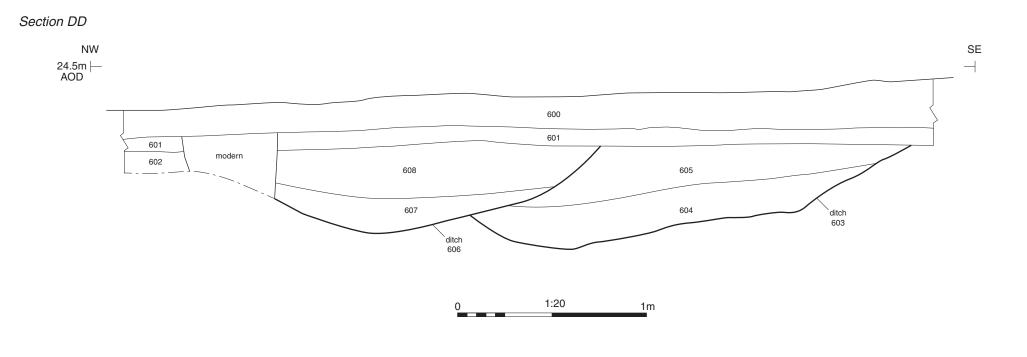
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Larkbear Phase 1, Barnstaple, Devon

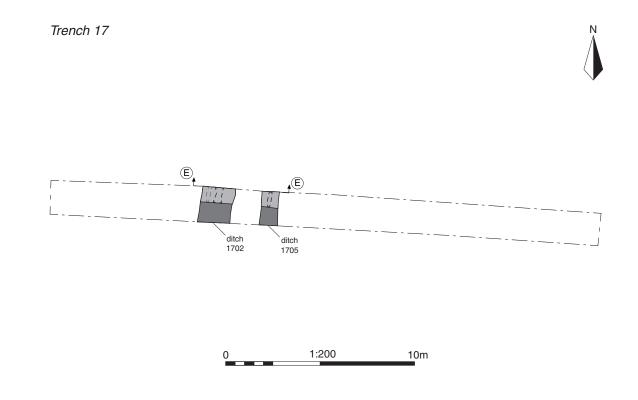
Trench 6: Plan, section and photograph

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CHECKED BY DJB
APPROVED BY JA

PROJECT NO. EX0004 DATE 05.06.19 SCALE@A3 1:200; 1:20

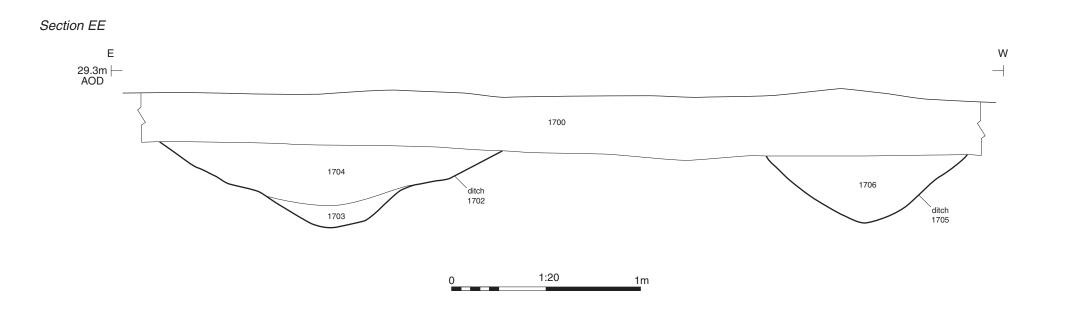
FIGURE NO.

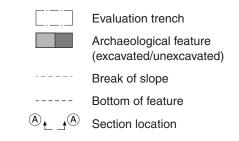
6





Ditches 1702 and 1705, looking north (1m scales)







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Trench 17: Plan, section and photograph

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FIGURE NO. 7



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