

**Land East of Two Bridges Road
Sidford, Sidmouth
Devon**

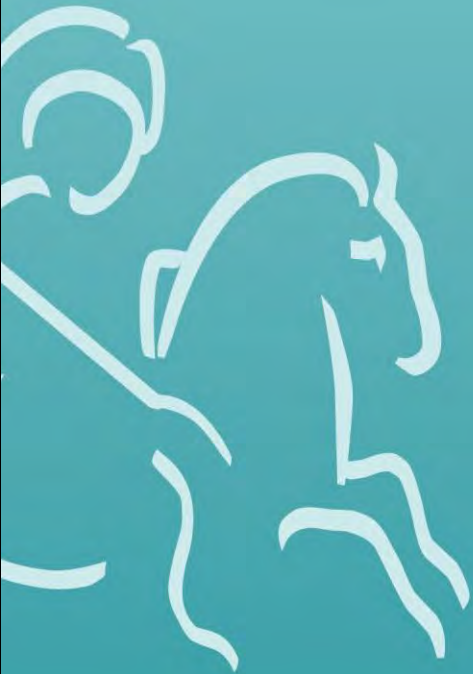
Archaeological Evaluation



for:
NSP Heritage Consulting

CA Project: EX0152
CA Report: EX0152_1

March 2021



Land East of Two Bridges Road Sidford, Sidmouth Devon

Archaeological Evaluation

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CA Report: EX0152_1

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e. enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk				

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SUMMARY

Project name:	Land East of Two Bridges Road Sidford
Location:	Two Bridges Road Sidford, Sidmouth, Devon
NGR:	313532 090298
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	22–24 February 2021
Planning reference:	18/1094/MOUT
Location of Archive:	Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)
Site Code:	ETBR20

In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Land East of Two Bridges Road Sidford. Sidmouth, Devon. A total of 6 trenches were excavated in the initial Phase 1 of the archaeological evaluation. A subsequent Phase 2 trial trench evaluation will follow at a later date.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed. One fragment of Medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil in Trench 6, but it is likely to be residual in nature. A linear feature was recorded in Trench 4 but corresponded with a geophysical anomaly that appear to be natural in origin.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land at Land East of Two Bridges Road Sidford, Sidmouth, Devon (centred at NGR: 313532 090298; Fig. 1). This evaluation was undertaken for NSP Heritage Consulting.
- 1.2. East Devon District Council has granted outline planning for the change of use of the site from agricultural land to employment land, including new highway access, a cycle and footway, improvements to flood attenuation, new hedgerow planting and associated infrastructure (planning ref: 18/1094/MOUT). Condition 16 of this planning permission requires the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with an approved WSI.
- 1.3. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2020) and approved by Stephen Reed.
- 1.4. The evaluation was also in line with, *Specification for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (Devon County Council 2020); *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020), *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: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Historic England 2015).

The site

- 1.5. The proposed development site is approximately 4.02ha in extent. It lies on the northern fringes of Sidford, to the east of Two Bridges Road and north of Laundry Lane. The site currently comprises two agricultural/pastoral fields. A stream runs through the southern field, adjacent to the boundary between the two fields. The site lies at c. 46m AOD on its western edge (adjacent to Two Bridges Road) and slopes gently down from west to east, towards the floodplain of the River Sid.
- 1.6. The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Sidmouth Mudstone Formation, which formed in the Triassic Period. This is overlain by Head sands, clays and gravels, which formed in the Quaternary Period. (BGS 2021).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. The proposed development site has been the subject of a desk-based archaeological assessment (CgMs 2016) and a subsequent geophysical survey (Stratascan 2016). The following text is summarised from these sources, which should be referred to for a full background.

Prehistoric (pre-AD 43)

2.2. A surface scatter of prehistoric worked flints has been recorded in the field to the immediate north of the proposed development site. Further worked flint scatters have been noted in the broader area, including scatters c. 350m south-west, c. 600m north-east and c. 650 north-east of the present site.

2.3. Two prehistoric (possibly Bronze Age) barrows are known c. 200m south east of the proposed development site, and a possible prehistoric enclosure has been identified c. 350 west of the site.

Roman (AD 43–AD 410)

2.4. The A3052 road, which runs through the centre of Sidford (c. 250m south of the proposed development site), may preserve the line of a Roman road. The evidence for this is limited, however, and there is no other known evidence for Roman activity in the area.

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

2.5. Sidford is within the parish of Sidbury, 2.5. which was recorded in the Domesday Book (1086).

2.6. The proposed development site is likely to have lain with agricultural hinterland associated with the settlements of Sidbury and Sidford in the early medieval and medieval periods.

2.7. A leat running from the River Sid to feed a mill in Sidford may have medieval origins. This leat runs c. 250m to the north-east of the proposed development site.

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

2.8. The Sidmouth Tithe Map (1840) shows the proposed development site divided into two fields by a boundary running approximately east/west through the site's centre. The curving field boundaries shown in the surrounding landscape suggest that the fields had been enclosed at a relatively early date from medieval open fields.

-
- 2.9. The stream which currently separates the site into two fields (and which lies further south than the historic boundary) is not depicted on the tithe map. This stream had been established by the time of the 1899 Ordnance Survey map, which also shows a subsidiary stream and associated sluices in the western part of the site.

Geophysical survey

- 2.10. A geophysical survey by Stratascan (2016) identified a short linear anomaly in the northern part of the site which was interpreted as being of possible archaeological origin, although it may also be of agricultural origin. No other potentially archaeological anomalies were identified.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1. The general objective of the evaluation was to provide further information on the likely archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date and state of preservation. This information will enable Devon County 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 proposals, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019). The work aimed to:

- record and analyse any evidence of past settlement or other land use prior to destruction by the new development;
- recover and analyse any artefactual evidence to date any archaeological remains that may be identified;
- sample and analyse environmental remains to create a better understanding of past land use and economy; and
- archive, analyse, report on and publish the archaeological results at a level appropriate to their significance.

- 3.2. From an assessment of the previously known archaeological information, including the recent geophysical survey (see Archaeological background, above), the detailed focus of the initial Phase 1 trial trench evaluation (see Methodology, below) were to:

-
- investigate the potential for further flint scatters indicating prehistoric activity;
 - investigate/confirm the likely absence of significant archaeology of other periods (i.e. ground-truthing the results of the geophysical survey).
 - make reference to the *South West Archaeological Research Framework* (Somerset County Council 2007) as appropriate, in case of significant archaeological remains, so that the project results can be placed in their regional context.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1. The evaluation fieldwork, Phase 1, comprised the excavation of 6 trenches (Fig. 2):
- 6no 30m x 1.8m trenches;
- 4.2. The trenches were located to test geophysical anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2016) and to provide a representative sample of the remainder of the site.
- 4.3. Trenches have also been located to take account of information supplied by the client in respect of on-site utilities and ecological constraints.
- 4.4. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid co-ordinates using Leica GPS. Overburden was stripped from the trenches by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. All machining was conducted under archaeological supervision to the top of the natural substrate, which was the level at which archaeological features were first encountered.
- 4.5. Trenches were scanned, prior to the excavation of trenches for live services by trained CA staff using CAT and genny equipment, in accordance with the CA Safe System of Work for avoiding underground services.
- 4.6. Records were maintained in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.7. Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential. No deposits were identified that required sampling.

-
- 4.8. All artefacts recovered were processed by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 3 *Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.9. CA will make arrangements with the Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter for the deposition of the project archive. A digital archive will also be prepared and deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). The archives (museum and digital) will be prepared and deposited in accordance with *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014; updated October 2020).
- 4.10. A summary of information from this project, as set out in Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1. This section provides an overview of the evaluation results. Detailed summaries of the recorded context are given in Appendix A.
- 5.2. The underlying natural geology slightly varied across the site and consisted of a med-red/brown silty/clay with occasional flint pebbles and cobbles (**Trenches 1-5**) to a dark grey/brown sandy/silt with patches of sand mixed with large flint pebbles and cobbles (**Trench 6**). The natural substrate was encountered at depths of between 0.56m to 0.94m below present ground level (bpgl). The texture of this deposit and the presence of large flint nodules suggest the Head deposit formed under periglacial conditions. The natural substrate was overlain by subsoil consisted of a medium to light red/brown clay/silt to sand/silt which was between 0.18 and 0.77m thick. All trenches were silted by c. 0.20m thick topsoil.
- 5.3. **Trenches 1-3, 5, and 6** did not contain any archaeological features (Fig. 3).
- 5.4. **Trench 5 and 6** contained modern deposits **502** and **602**, respectively. Deposit **602** was tested by a machine sondage. Both deposits were rich in modern debris, including CBM and animal bone fragments; the average thickness was c. 0.67m.
- Trench 4 (Fig. 4)*
- 5.5. **Trench 4** contained a north-west/south-east orientated irregular natural feature, **403**. It was 1.08m long, c. 1.70m wide and 0.33m deep. It had uneven, moderately sloping south-east side and irregular base. It was filled by yellow/grey/brown sandy fill, **404**. No finds were recovered the feature.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1. Artefactual material dating to the medieval period was hand-recovered from one subsoil deposit. The pottery has been recorded according to sherd count/weight per fabric (Appendix B) and the fabric code has been devised for the purpose of this report.

Pottery

- 6.2. An unfeathered bodysherd (4g) in a quartz-tempered, vesicular fabric was retrieved from subsoil deposit 601. The fabric is unglazed and reduced-fired, with one oxidised surface and the source is uncertain. Sandy coarsewares from excavations in Exeter, c. 22km to the west, were in use from the 11th to early 15th centuries (Allan 1984, 4–8) and similar dating is suggested.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1. Despite the archaeological potential of the environs of the site, the evaluation recorded no archaeological features or deposits predating the modern period.
- 7.2. The natural geology recorded at the site can be interpreted as the Head Deposit that formed under periglacial conditions as a result of freeze and thaw processes. **Trench 4** contained a linear feature **403** that was determined to be of natural origin. It is possible that the feature is a natural gully that formed on the gentle west/east slope, and then filled with the sandy sediments and coarse inclusions derived from the Head deposit.
- 7.3. The medieval pottery recovered from the subsoil of Trench 6 is likely residual in nature.

8. CA PROJECT TEAM

- 8.1. Fieldwork was undertaken by Craig Jones, assisted by Chris Brown. This report was written by Agata Kowalska. The finds report was written by Jacky Sommerville. The report illustrations were prepared by Ryan Wilson. The project archive has been compiled by Richard Paxford, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Rey Kennedy.

9. REFERENCES

- Allan, J. P. 1984 *Medieval & Post-medieval Finds from Exeter 1971-1980*. Exeter Archaeological Reports: 3. Exeter, Exeter City Council and The University of Exeter
- British Geological Survey 2021 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <https://www.bgs.ac.uk/map-viewers/geology-of-britain-viewer/> Accessed 2 March 2021
- CgMs Consulting 2016 *Land at Two Bridges Road, Sidford, Devon: archaeological desk-based assessment*
- Cotswold Archaeology 2020 *Land east of Two Bridges Road Sidford, Sidmouth Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Work*
- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government 2019 *National Planning Policy Framework*
- Somerset County Council 2007 *The Archaeology of South West England: South West Archaeological Research Framework – Resource Assessment and Research Agenda*
- Stratascan 2016 *Land at Two Bridges Road, Sidford, Devon: geophysical survey report*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Interpretation	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth/thickness (m)
1	100	layer		topsoil	mid to dark reddish brown clayey silt friable, rooting present.	30	1.8	0.23
1	101	layer		subsoil	mid brownish red silty clay with subangular flints, firm	30	1.8	0.48
1	102	layer		natural	mid red silty clay with subangular flints and gravelly patches, firm	30	1.8	>0.69
2	200	layer		topsoil	dark reddish brown clayey silt friable, rooting present.	30	1.8	0.25
2	201	layer		subsoil	mid red silty clay with subangular flints and gravelly patches, firm	30	1.8	0.46
2	202	layer		natural	mid red silty clay with subangular flints and gravelly patches, firm	30	1.8	>0.19
3	300	layer		topsoil	mid to dark reddish brown clayey silt friable, rooting present.	30	1.8	0.17
3	301	layer		subsoil	mid red silty clay with subangular flints and gravelly patches, firm	30	1.8	0.39
3	302	layer		natural	mid red clayey silt with subangular flints and gravelly patches, compact	30	1.8	>0.24
4	400	layer		topsoil	mid to dark reddish brown clayey silt friable, rooting present.	30	1.8	0.17
4	401	layer		subsoil	mixed, snady silt with patches of sandy silty gravel with large flint nodules, friable	30	1.8	0.77
4	402	layer		natural	mid red clayey silt with subangular flints and gravelly patches, manganese present, compact	30	1.8	>0.21
4	403	cut		natural feature	irregular, linear with irregular sides and uneven base, NE-SW orientation	1.08	1	0.33
4	404	fill	403	fill of 403	yellow grey to light brown, sand with gravel, firm to compact	1.8	1	0.33
5	500	layer		topsoil	mid to dark reddish brown clayey silt friable, flint nodules and rooting present.	30	1.8	0.18
5	501	layer		subsoil	mid redish brown sandy silt with flint gravell, friable abd soft	30	1.8	0.18
5	502	layer		man made ground	rich in modern debris, CBM, bones and large flint fragments.	30	1.8	0.67
5	503	layer		natural	light yellow grey sandy gravel with large flint nodules, iron oxides and manganese concentrations, loose	30	1.8	>0.17
6	600	layer		topsoil	mid to dark reddish brown clayey silt friable, flint nodules and rooting present.	30	1.8	0.18
6	601	layer		subsoil	mid redish brown sandy silt with flint gravell, friable abd soft	30	1.8	0.18
6	602	layer		man made	rich in modern debris, CBM,	30	1.8	0.67

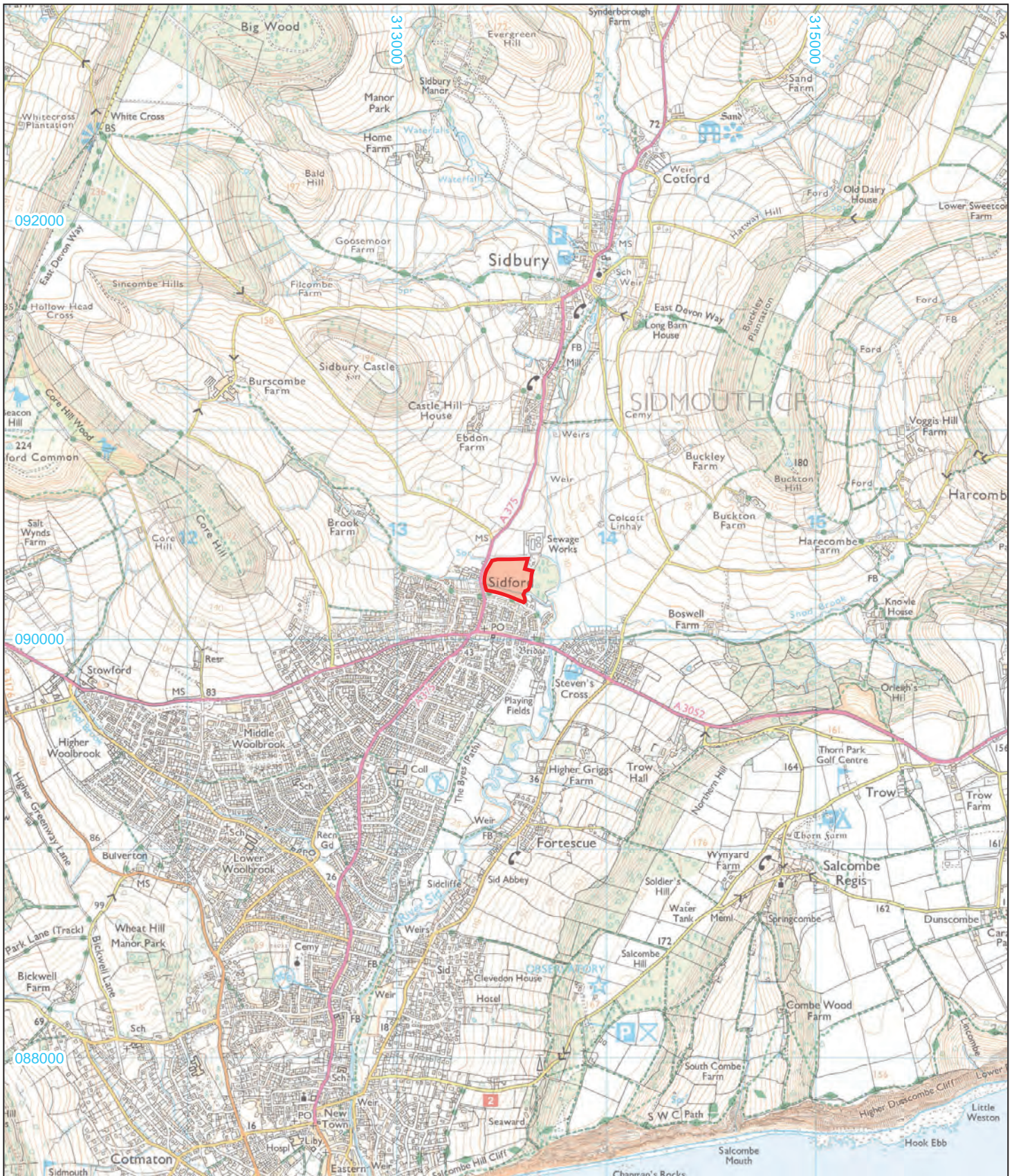
				ground	bones and large flint fragments.			
6	603	layer		natural	dark greyish brown sandsilt with patches of sand mixed with flints	30	1.8	>0.46

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Category	Description	Fabric Code	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
601	Medieval pottery	Quartz-tempered, vesicular fabric	QZV	1	4	C11-C15

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Land east of Two Bridges Road Sidford, Sidmouth, Devon. Archaeological Evaluation.	
Short description	<p>In February 2021, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Land East of Two Bridges Road Sidford. Sidmouth, Devon. A total of 6 trenches were excavated in the initial Phase 1 of the archaeological evaluation. A subsequent Phase 2 trial trench evaluation will follow at a later date.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed. One fragment of Medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil in Trench 6, but it is likely to be residual in nature. A linear feature was recorded in Trench 4 but corresponded with a geophysical anomaly that appear to be natural in origin.</p>	
Project dates	22-24 February 2021	
Project type	Trial trench Evaluation	
Previous work	CgMs Consulting (2016) desk-based assessment Stratascan (2016) Land at Two Bridges Road, Sidford, Devon: geophysical survey report	
Future work	Phase 2 trial trench evaluation	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site location	Land east of Two Bridges Road, Sidford, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 9QR	
Study area (m ² /ha)	4.02ha	
Site co-ordinates	313532 090298	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project brief originator	N/A	
Project design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Ray Kennedy	
Project Supervisor	Craig Jones	
MONUMENT TYPE		
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content
Physical	Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter	Pottery fragment
Paper	Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter	Context sheets, trench sheets, photograph register
Digital	Royal Albert Memorial Museum in Exeter	Database, digital photos, survey data
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2021 <i>Land east of Two Bridges Road, Sidford, Sidmouth, Devon. Archaeological Evaluation</i> CA typescript report EX0152_1		



 Site boundary

0  1km

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Ordnance Survey 0100031673

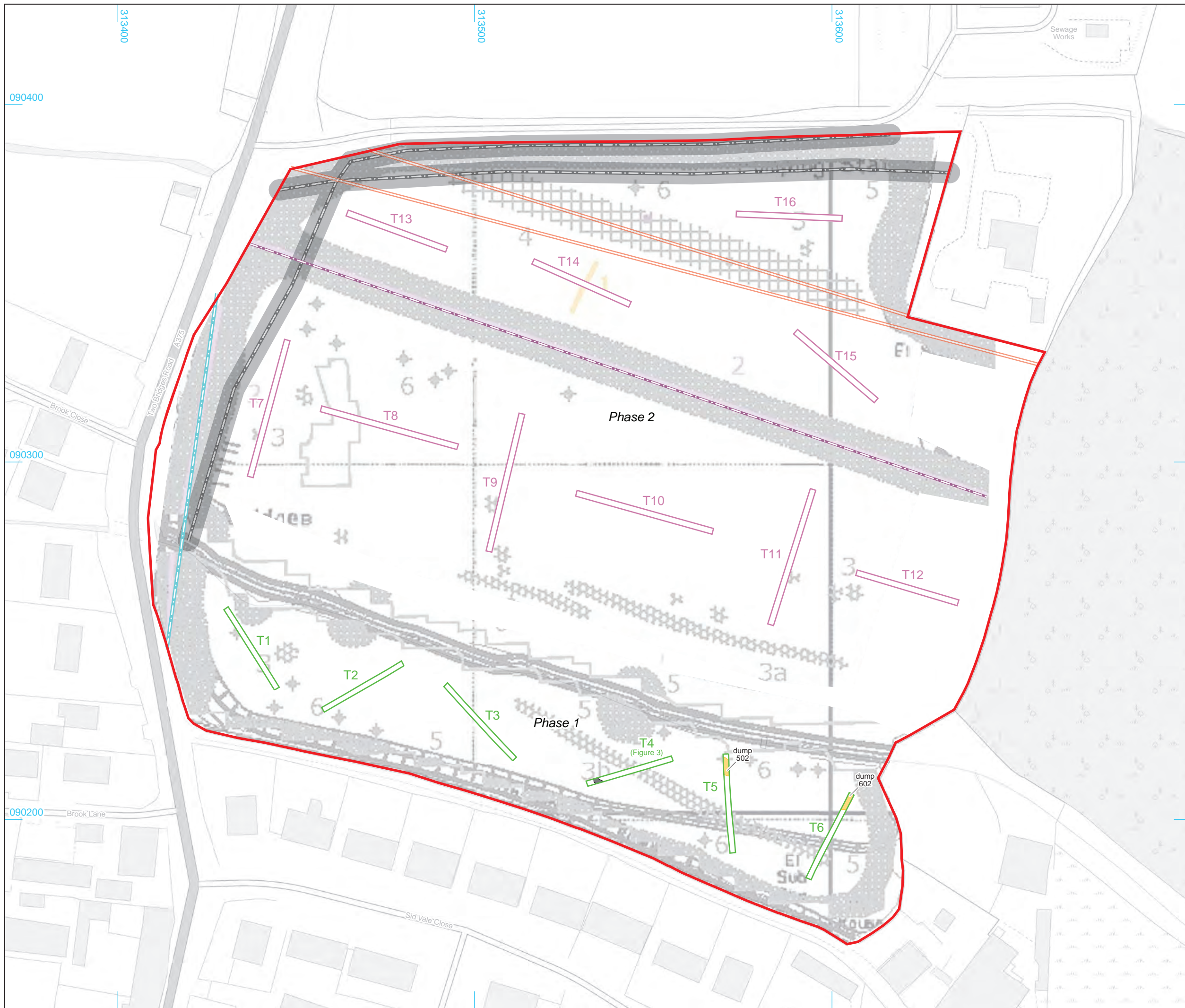


Andover 01264 347630
Cirencester 01285 771022
Exeter 01392 573970
Milton Keynes 01908 564660
Suffolk 01449 900120
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
Land East at Two Bridges Road,
Sidmouth, Devon

FIGURE TITLE
Site location plan

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CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	02/03/2021	
APPROVED BY	CJ	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	1



- Site boundary
- Phase 1 evaluation trench
- Identified feature
- Deposit
- Phase 2 evaluation trench

- South West Water pipeline
- Wales and West Utilities, Intermediate Pressure
- Overhead cable
- Detected service (and buffer)

- Geophysical survey results (Stratascan 2016)
- Positive anomaly (possible archaeology)
 - Linear anomaly
 - Magnetic disturbance (fied boundary)
 - Amorphouse magnetic debris (geological)
 - Magnetic spike (ferrous object)



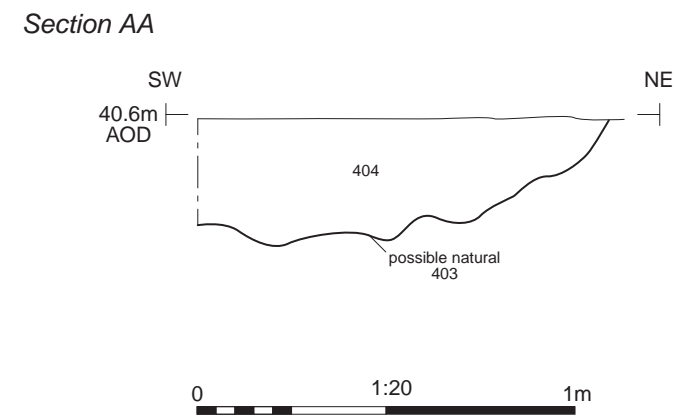
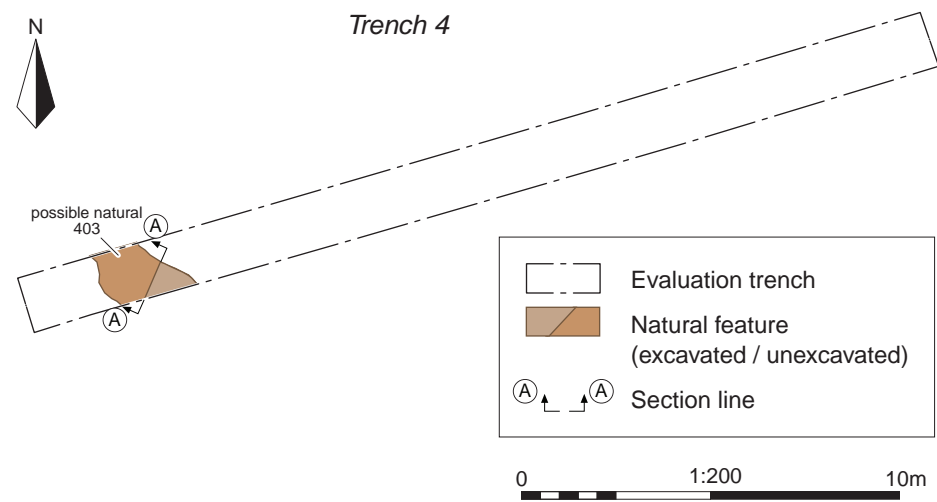
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 Exeter 01392 573970
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660
 Suffolk 01449 900120
www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk
enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

PROJECT TITLE
 Land East at Two Bridges Road, Sidmouth, Devon

FIGURE TITLE
 Site plan, showing Phases 1 and 2 evaluation trenches, identified features and geophysical survey results

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Trench 4, looking south-west (1m scales)



Possible natural feature 403, looking north-west (1m scale)


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

PROJECT TITLE
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 Sidmouth, Devon

FIGURE TITLE
**Trench 4: plan, section and
 photographs**

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CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	02/03/2021	3
APPROVED BY	CJ	SCALE@A3	1:200, 1:20	



Trench 1, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 2, looking south-west (1m scales)



Trench 3, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 5, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 6, looking north-east (1m scales)


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

PROJECT TITLE
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FIGURE TITLE
Trenches 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6: photographs

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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 1, Clyst Units
Cofton Road
Marsh Barton
Exeter
EX2 8QW

t: 01392 573970

Milton Keynes Office

Unit 8 - The IO Centre
Fingle Drive, Stonebridge
Milton Keynes
Buckinghamshire
MK13 0AT

t: 01908 564660

Suffolk Office

Unit 5, Plot 11, Maitland Road
Lion Barn Industrial Estate
Needham Market
Suffolk
IP6 8NZ

t: 01449 900120

e: enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

