

Improvements to Junction 29, M5 Motorway, Clyst Honiton, Exeter, Devon

NGR SX 9736 9333

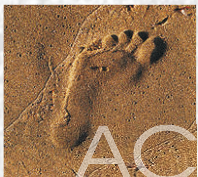
Results of targeted archaeological excavations

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On behalf of
SWH Ltd.

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archaeology

IMPROVEMENTS TO JUNCTION 29, M5 MOTORWAY, CLYST HONITON, EXETER, DEVON

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CONTENTS

	<i>Summary</i>	
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Archaeological background	1
3.	Aim	1
4.	Methodology	1
5.	Results	2
6.	The finds	3
7.	Discussion	3
8.	Archive and OASIS	3
9.	Acknowledgements	4
10.	References	4

List of figures

- Fig. 1: Location of site and Trenches 1-3, showing results from previous evaluation
Fig. 2: Plans and representative sections of Trenches 1-3
Fig. 3: Sections of linear features F103, F203, F302 and F306

List of plates

- Plate 1: General view of site from Trench 2, looking to southeast
Plate 2: Linear feature F203, Trench 2, view to southeast

Summary

An archaeological targeted excavation on land at Junction 29, M5 Motorway, Clyst Honiton, Exeter, was carried out by AC archaeology during May 2011. Previous trench evaluation carried out across the site identified a series of linear features, one of which contained a single sherd of Iron Age pottery.

This phase of work comprised the machine excavation of three 20m long and 3m wide trenches, excavated across the line of the linear feature which contained the Iron Age pottery. Excavation of the three trenches confirmed the presence of a NW-SE aligned ditch in all trenches, with only later post-medieval finds recovered. A second linear feature was identified immediately to the east of similar date, with these likely to represent now infilled flanking ditches either side of a former hedgebank. A boundary in this location is shown on the parish tithe map of 1837, which had been removed by 1889.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report sets out the results of targeted archaeological excavations carried out in advance of groundworks associated with improvements to Junction 29, M5 Motorway, Clyst Honiton, Exeter, Devon (SX 9736 9333). The work was carried out by AC archaeology between the 23rd and 25th May 2011, and was commissioned by South West Highways Ltd, following consultation with Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES).

1.2 The site covers an area of approximately 6.2 hectares of agricultural land, located to the north of the A30, to the east of the M5 and south of Blackhorse Lane (Fig. 1). It lies on land sloping gently down to the south between 19m and 37m OD, with the underlying solid geology comprising Dawlish Sandstone, with Monkerton Formation head deposits and outcrops of Breccia clay.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 An initial geophysical survey carried out across the site (Archaeological Surveys Ltd. 2007) identified part of a circular anomaly, in addition to numerous linear features probably relating to early land division. Subsequent trench evaluation carried out by Wessex Archaeology (2008) identified a large number of post-medieval linear ditches, with one ditch (3704, Trench 37) containing a single sherd of Iron Age pottery, which was the only find from that feature.

3. AIM

3.1 The aim of the investigation was to further define ditch 3704 identified in Trench 37 of the initial evaluation, to enable its preservation by record prior to groundworks commencing in this area.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 The investigation was carried out in accordance with a Project Design prepared by AC archaeology (Valentin 2011), submitted to and approved by the Devon County Archaeology Officer prior to commencement on site. It comprised the machine-excavation of three trenches positioned across the projected line of ditch 3704 (Fig. 1). Trenches 1 and 2 were both northwest to southeast aligned and were positioned towards the northern end of the site, while Trench 3 was

northeast to southwest aligned and positioned to the south. Each trench measured 20m long by 3m wide.

4.2 The site was recorded in accordance with the AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*. All plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50 and sections at 1:10 or 1:20. All levels have been related to Ordnance Datum and the spoil heaps were scanned for displaced finds.

5. RESULTS

5.1 The trenches were excavated through a simple layer sequence comprising between 0.15-0.20m of topsoil, over between 0.35-0.48m of subsoil onto red clay natural subsoil, present at a depth of between 0.50-0.66m below ground level (Figs 2b, 2d & 2f). Archaeological features were present in all three of the trenches. The results of the investigation are summarised in Tables 1-3 below.

Table 1. Context descriptions for Trench 1

Trench 1			Length: 20m	Width: 3m	Alignment: NW-SE
Context	Depth below ground level (m)	Description	Interpretation		
100	0-0.18	Mid brown friable silty sand, with moderate small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Topsoil		
101	0.18-0.66	Light-mid reddish-brown friable silty sand, with moderate small-large sub-angular stones <0.08m	Agricultural subsoil		
102	0.66-1.06	Light yellowish-brown friable silty sand, with moderate small-large sub-angular stones 0.05-0.25m	Fill of ditch F103		
F103	0.66-1.06	NW-SE aligned linear feature, 2.4m wide by 0.4m deep, with gently sloping sides onto a narrow flat base	Cut of ditch		
104	0.66+	Light yellowish-brown friable silty sand with moderate small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Exposed fill of probable ditch F105		
F105	0.66+	Unexcavated NW-SE aligned linear feature within the corner of Trench 1	Linear feature exposed in plan – probable ditch		
106	0.66+	Light-mid red loose-compact sand, with occasional large sub-angular stones <0.20m	Natural subsoil		

Table 2. Context descriptions for Trench 2

Trench 2			Length: 20m	Width: 3m	Alignment: NW-SE
Context	Depth below ground level (m)	Description	Interpretation		
200	0-0.20	Mid brown friable silty sand, with moderate small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Topsoil		
201	0.20-0.60	Light-mid reddish-brown friable silty sand with moderate small-large sub-angular stones <0.10m	Agricultural subsoil		
202	0.60-0.72	Mid reddish-brown friable silt sand with rare small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Fill of ditch F203		
F203	0.60-0.72	NW-SE aligned linear feature, 1.70m wide, with gently sloping sides onto a flattish base	Cut of ditch		
204	0.60+	Light-mid red loose-compact sand with occasional large sub-angular stones >0.05m	Natural subsoil		

Table 3. Context descriptions for Trench 3

Trench 3			Length: 20m	Width: 3m	Alignment: NE-SW
Context	Depth below ground level (m)	Description	Interpretation		
300	0-0.15	Mid brown friable silty sand with moderate medium-large sub-angular stones <0.10m	Topsoil		
301	0.15-0.80	Mid reddish-brown friable silty sand with rare small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Fill of ditch F302		
F302	0.15-0.80	NW-SE aligned linear feature with moderately sloping western edge and a flattish base. The eastern edge was not exposed	Cut of ditch		
303	0.15-0.50	Light-mid reddish-brown friable silty sand with moderate small-large sub-angular stones <0.10m	Agricultural subsoil		
304	0.50+	Light-mid red loose-compact sand with moderate-frequent medium-large sub-angular stones <0.10m	Natural subsoil		
305	0.15-0.70	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty sand with occasional small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Fill of ditch F306		
F306	0.15-0.70	NW-SE aligned linear feature, 0.92m wide, with moderate to steep sloping sides and a flat base	Cut of ditch		

5.2 The ditch targeted as part of this investigation was positively identified in each of the three trenches as F103, F203 and F306 (Figs 2a, 2c, 2e and Plates 1 and 2). These showed an inconsistent profile, ranging from gently sloping sides with a flat base (F203), to deeper and more steeply sloping (F306). The ditch measured between 0.92-2.40m wide and contained a mid yellow brown-mid reddish-brown silty sand fill (Fig. 3). A number of post-medieval finds which include pottery, clay tobacco pipe fragments, as well as several coal fragments, were recovered from F103 and F203.

5.3 A second linear feature was also present within Trench 1 (F105; Fig. 2a) and Trench 3 (F302; Figs. 2e & 3c). This was similarly northwest-southeast aligned and parallel to the targeted ditch, approximately 2.50m off its northeastern edge. Finds recovered from F105 and F303 include fragments of 19th century blue and white transfer printed pottery and clay pipe stems.

5.4 No further archaeological feature or deposits were exposed within the three trenches and no pre-modern finds were recovered. A number of sherds of modern pottery and glass was present within the spoil, which were recorded on site but not retained.

6. THE FINDS by Kerry Dean

6.1 Introduction

All finds recovered on site have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate, then quantified according to material type within each context. The assemblage has been scanned by context to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented, with this information briefly discussed below. Finds totals by material type are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Finds quantification (Weight is in grams)

Context	Pottery		Clay pipe		Animal bone		Shell		slag		Clinker	
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt
102			5	13								
104	1	1	1	2								
202	2	20							1	2	1	1
302	8	52	4	14	1	6	1	4				
Total	11	73	10	29	1	6	1	4	1	2	1	1

6.2 Pottery

All of the pottery from this assemblage is post-medieval/modern, dating to between the 17th and 20th centuries. There are a total of 11 sherds (73g), which comprise common domestic wares such as four sherds of South Somerset type lead glazed earthenware, including a jug handle and dish fragments. Also present are one sherd of Bristol/Staffordshire yellow glazed earthenware, three fragments of industrial white ware, one stoneware sherd and one piece of blue and white transfer printed ware. From F203, Trench 2 (context 202) one scrap of 17th/18th century North Devon Gravel Tempered ware with the remains of a lead glaze was found.

6.3 Clay tobacco pipe

Nine fragments of plain clay pipe stem were recovered (29g); the pieces from (302) were particularly abraded. There are also two bowl fragments, one dating to the period c.1680-1710, with the other undiagnostic. Two stem fragments are charred.

6.4 Animal bone and shell

One undiagnostic piece of animal bone was recovered (6g) displaying cut marks. The shell is from one half of a cockle.

6.5 Slag and clinker

There was one fragment of undiagnostic slag (2g) and a small piece of clinker (1g).

7. DISCUSSION

7.1 The targeted excavation has established that ditch 3704 as identified in the initial trench evaluation carried out by Wessex Archaeology is likely to be late post-medieval in date. Finds dating to this period were recovered from two of the three trenches excavated during this phase of investigation. It is therefore likely that the single sherd of Iron Age pottery found in the ditch during the evaluation is residual, but does suggest some activity of this date in the general vicinity.

7.2 Based on historic map evidence the targeted linear feature (3704) appears to be parallel and immediately west of a boundary as depicted on the 1837 parish tithe map (Wessex Archaeology 2008, Figure 4). It is probable, therefore, that the two parallel linear features identified in Trenches 1 and 3, represent now infilled ditches either side of a former hedgebank boundary. The boundary had been removed by 1889 (*ibid.* Fig. 5) and is likely to have formed part of a wider post-medieval field pattern.

8. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

8.1 The paper and digital archive and finds are currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. They will ultimately be deposited under the relevant accession number at RAMM, Exeter, at the earliest in 2013 when the current museum non-acceptance policy will be reviewed. A temporary reference number has been obtained from the museum, which is RAMM: 11/14.

8.2 The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 108159.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

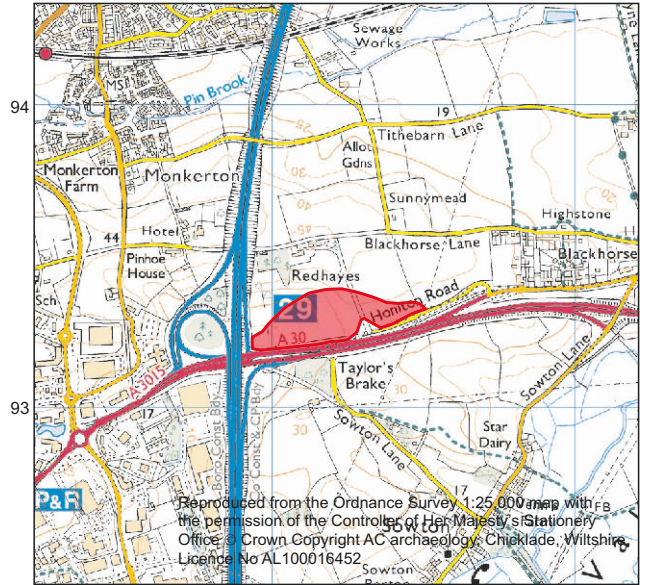
The evaluation was commissioned by Dave Greedy of South West Highways Ltd. The site trial trenching was carried out by Richard Sims and Elisabeth Patkai, with the illustrations for this report prepared by Cain Hegarty. Thanks are due to Bill Horner, Devon County Archaeology Officer, for his advice and collaboration.

10. REFERENCES

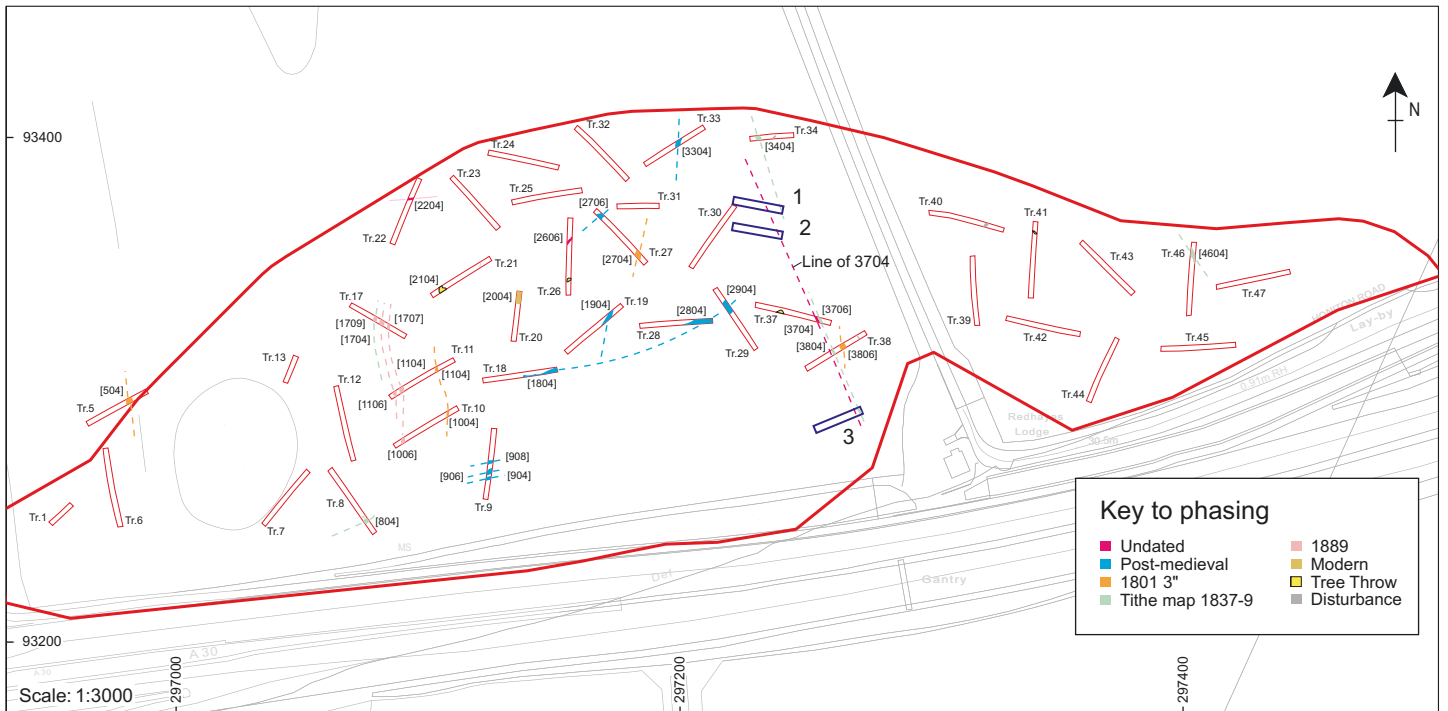
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Wessex Archaeology evaluation trenches 2008
 AC archaeology targeted trenches 2011

PROJECT

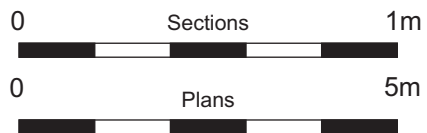
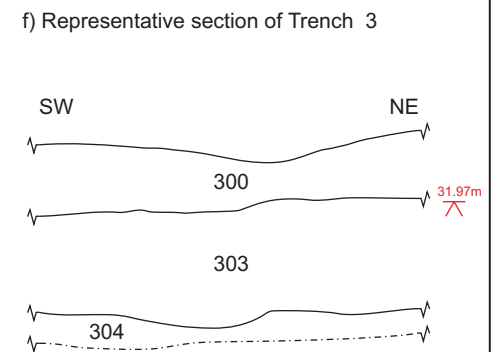
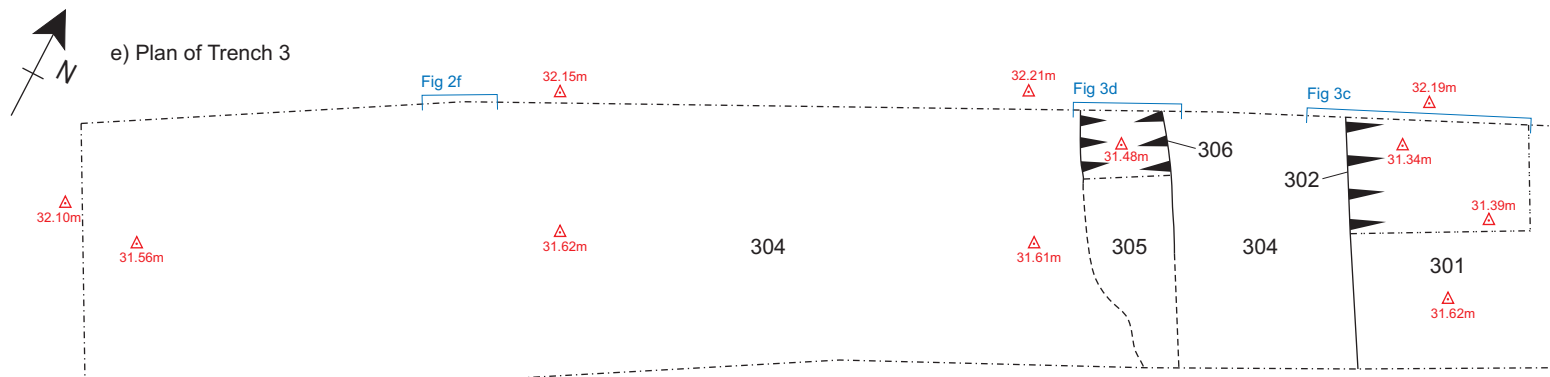
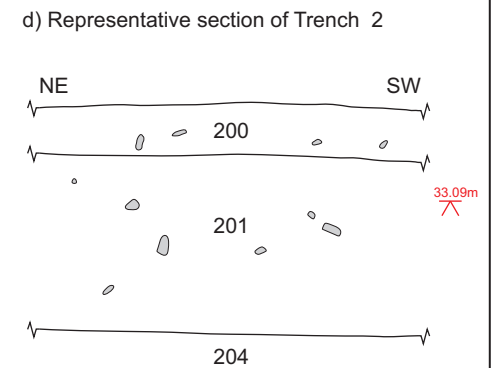
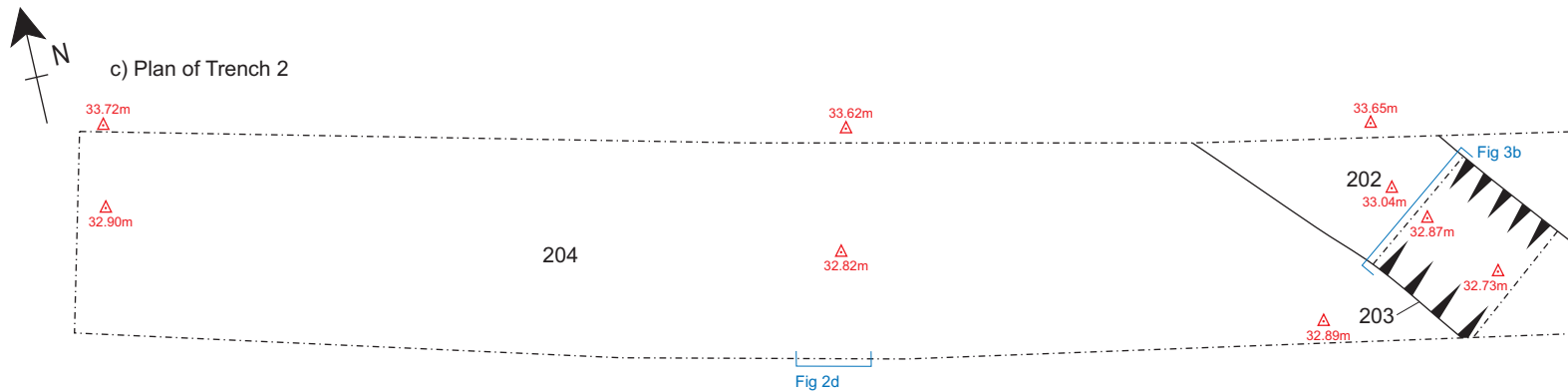
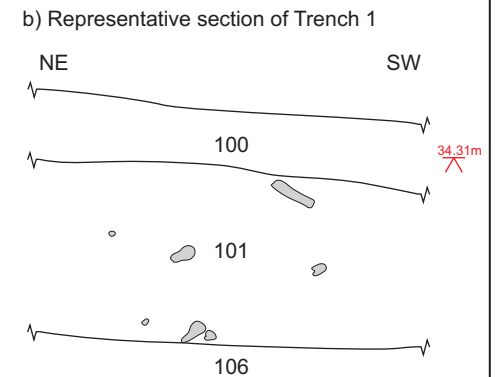
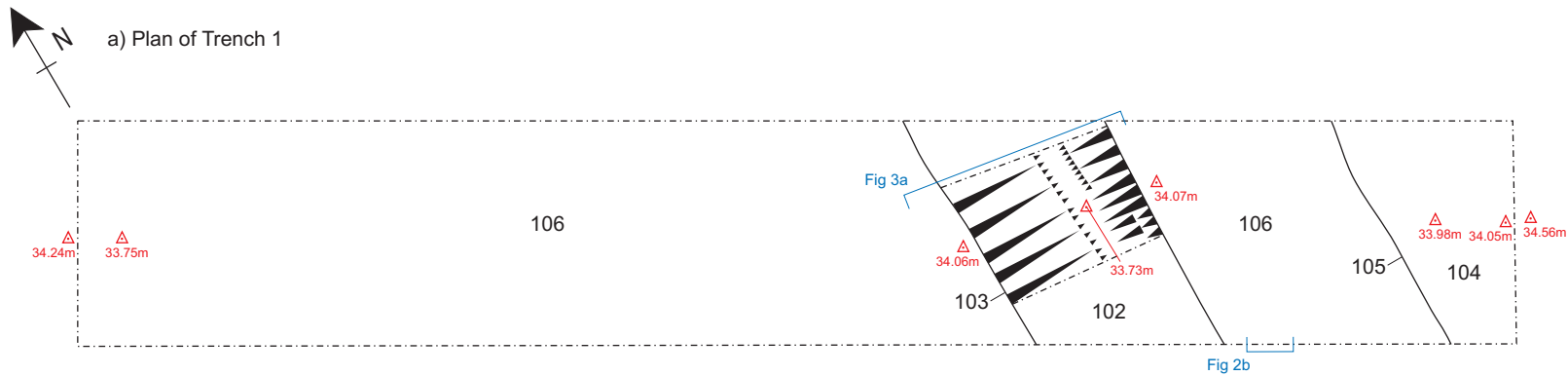
Junction 29, M5, Devon

TITLE

Fig.1: Location of site and Trenches 1-3, showing results from previous evaluation



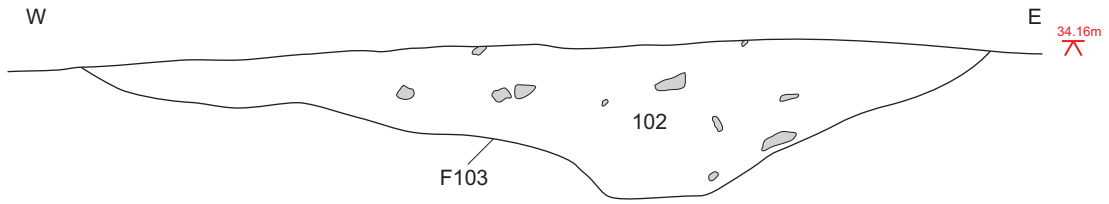
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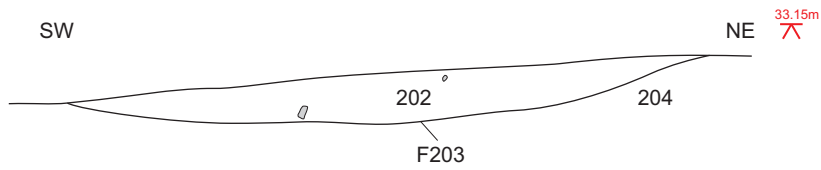
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Fig.2: Plans and representative sections of Trenches 1-3

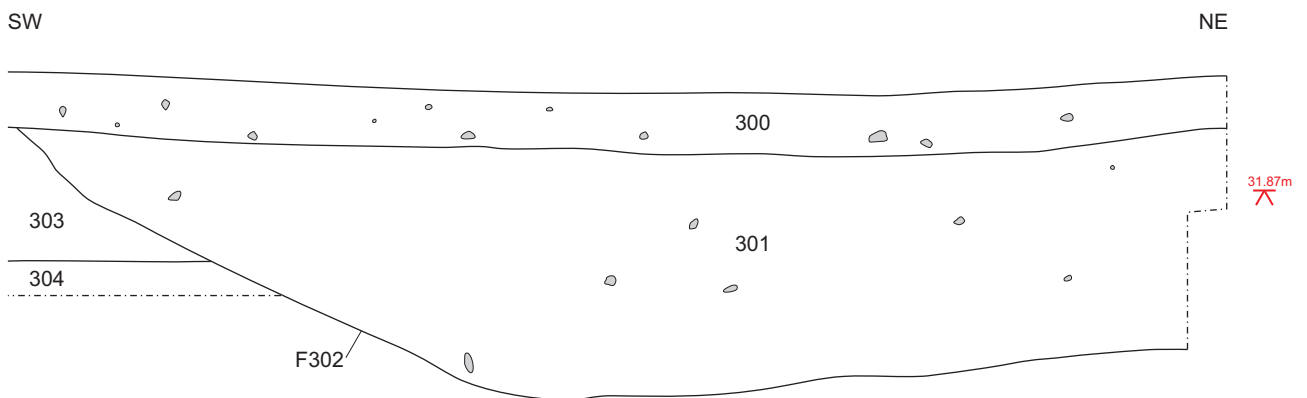
a) Section of F103, Trench 1



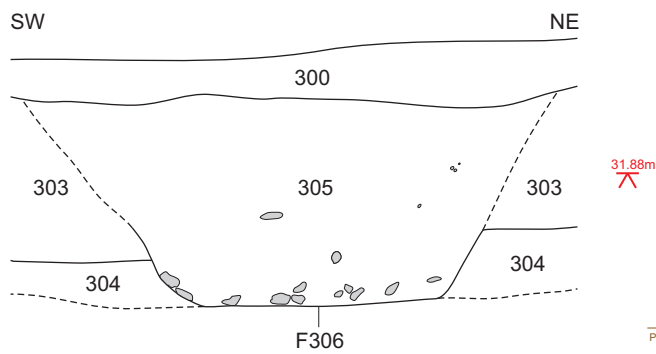
b) Section of F203, Trench 2



c) Section of F302, Trench 3



d) Section of F306, Trench 3



Key to all sections:

 Stones



PROJECT

Junction 29, M5, Devon

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Fig.3: Sections of linear features F103, F203, F302 and F306



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Plate 1: General view of site from Trench 2, looking to southeast



Plate 2: Linear feature F203, Trench 2, view to southeast (Scale 2m)

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