

Land at 137-137a Cowick Street, St Thomas, Exeter, Devon

Results of archaeological investigations

NGR SX 911 9181

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On behalf of
McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd

Document No: ACD191/1/2

Date: October 2011



AC archaeology

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CENTRED ON NGR SX 911 918

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Summary

An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation and watching brief on land at 137 to 137a Cowick Street, St Thomas, Exeter, Devon, was undertaken by AC archaeology between November 2010 and April 2011. Cowick Street might represent the alignment of a Roman road extending west from the Romano-British town, while the main focus of settlement in the medieval period appears to have been along the street between the bridge, completed by 1214 and the later parish church constructed in 1412. Previous trench evaluation on the site had identified a possible former property division extending back from the street frontage, while to the rear of the houses a pit and shallow trench containing 18th century pottery were recorded.

The present investigation comprised the excavation of an area of approximately 700m², followed by a watching brief during other groundworks. This revealed evidence for occupation, in the form of pits, ditches and postholes mainly dating to 18th and 19th centuries. The pottery assemblage recovered comprises mainly wares from North Devon and South Somerset, indicating a site of relatively low status in the post-medieval period. Some structural remains were recorded, but these are likely to be late 19th century and later.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation and watching brief on land at 137 to 137a Cowick Street, Exeter, Devon, was undertaken by AC archaeology between November 2010 and April 2011. The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd on behalf of McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd, and was required by Exeter City Council as a condition (7) of full planning permission, as advised by their Archaeology Officer.
- 1.2 The development comprises the construction of warden-assisted retirement apartments, together with ancillary car parking and landscaping.
- 1.3 The site occupies approximately 0.3 hectares of land fronting onto Cowick Street, with St Thomas Pleasure Grounds bounding the development to the north and east and the parish church of St Thomas immediately to the south, across Cowick Street (Fig. 1). Until recently the site was occupied as a mechanics garage with forecourt and showroom. The site is situated on the floodplain of the River Exe and lies on generally level ground at around 7.6m aOD. The underlying geology comprises Whipton Formation sandstone, below a superficial alluvium of clays, silts, sands and gravels.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site has been the subject of previous archaeological assessment (Weaver 2007) and a subsequent trial trench evaluation (Steinmetzer 2007).
- 2.2 Cowick Street might represent the alignment of a Roman road extending west from the Romano-British town across a causeway in the River Exe. There is only limited evidence for archaeological activity in the area prior to the construction of the stone bridge across the River Exe at the end of the 12th century (Blaylock 2000), although small quantities of Romano-British pottery and tile have been found to the west and east of the present site.
- 2.3 The area containing the site was known as *Cowick* or *Coic* by the Saxons and the manor is referred to in the Domesday Book of 1086 as *Coic*. The place-name is thought to have derived from either the Saxon for cow farm or from the latin *Coico* meaning 'convergence of routes', likely stemming from the convergence at the crossing of the River Exe of the main routes to the city from the west. In the medieval period the main focus of settlement appears to have been along Cowick Street between the bridge, completed by 1214 and the later parish church, constructed in 1412 and dedicated to St Thomas the Martyr (now church of St Thomas the

Apostle). The extent of occupation along Cowick Street prior to the 17th century is not known, as many of the houses were subsequently destroyed during the Civil War when the Royalists fortified and cleared the suburb of St Thomas.

- 2.4 The trench evaluation of the site (Steinmetzer 2007) identified deep alluvial soils in all trenches. A possible former property division was identified extending back from the street frontage in the western part of the site, while to the rear of houses a pit and shallow trench containing 18th century pottery were recorded.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The principal aim of the archaeological work was to preserve by record any archaeological features present towards the street frontage that would be impacted upon by the development.

- 3.2 The results of the previous evaluation identified the following specific objectives:

- To identify and record any surviving relationships between the plot boundaries and earlier boundaries/streets along the street frontage.
- To carry out investigation where groundworks were likely to cut across the line of earlier plot boundaries and where they adjoin, both to gather dating evidence and to record relationships.
- To record any remains of earlier structures fronting the street, as well as any associated rubbish pits or other buried remains surviving to the rear of 137 and 137a Cowick Street.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 Strip map and sample

The excavation was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologist's document *Standards and guidance for archaeological excavation* (published September 1995, revised September 2001 and October 2008), and with a scheme of work approved by the planning authority (Weaver 2010). The excavation area is shown on Fig. 1 and comprised the area to be affected by development towards the street frontage and behind the properties at 137 and 137a Cowick Street.

An area of approximately 700m² was stripped of overburden down to the level at which natural subsoil and archaeological features were exposed. The site was then cleaned by hand and sections were excavated across any pre-modern exposed archaeological features.

The site was recorded in accordance with the AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and with reference to AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*. All plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and sections at 1:10 or 1:20. All levels were related to Ordinance Datum.

4.2 Watching brief

The watching brief comprised monitoring during the removal of existing floor slabs and foundations following the demolition of existing structures. The monitoring of a hand-excavated service trench, measuring 0.8m wide and 1m deep and extending from the south corner of the site, as well as the machine excavation of two footings trenches for boundary walls towards the east of the site, was also undertaken. The machine-excavated trenches measured 1m wide and were dug to a maximum depth of 0.4m.

5. RESULTS: STRIP, MAP AND SAMPLE EXCAVATION AREA

5.1 Introduction

The excavation area was stripped onto layers of mid reddish-brown river gravels (503) in the northeast part of the site, which were overlain elsewhere by a mid brownish-red alluvial silty-clay (502). These layers were below a buried garden soil to the north (501) and to the south by a cultivation subsoil (581), which was sealed by buried topsoil (580). These layers, where present, were below a mixed rubble (500) from recent demolition material or mixed silty-clay levelling (570).

The stripped area revealed a number of features which included ditches, pits, postholes, and structural remains, mainly dating to the 18th and 19th centuries. A plan of all features is included as Fig. 2 and a photograph of the excavation in progress as Plate 1. For ease of reference features are described initially by type and from north to south.

5.2 The linear features

Linear feature F508 (Section Fig. 3a)

Northeast to southwest aligned linear feature F508 was located in the northeast part of the site and was 1.25m wide, 0.24m deep, with a rounded terminal, moderately steep sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a homogenous light brownish-red silty-clay fill (509). One sherd of North Devon gravel tempered ware and one sherd of South Somerset 17th to 18th century pottery were recovered, as well as a clay figurine of a mermaid (Plate 5) and fragments of animal bone and clay tobacco pipe.

Linear feature F629 (Sections Figs 3b and 3c; Plate 2)

To the south of F508 was parallel linear feature F629, which was exposed for a length of 9.7m and had a maximum width of 1.9m. The probable ditch had a rounded terminal in the northwest and was truncated to the southeast. Two segments were excavated into the ditch ([525] and [531]), establishing that it was between 0.14m and 0.16m deep, with gradual sloping sides and a flat base. The ditch contained a consistent mid reddish-brown silty-clay fill (526/532). Finds recovered include sherds of North Devon gravel tempered ware, a South Somerset sherd from a Sgraffito dish and a sherd from a Westerwald Stoneware vessel. Other finds include fragments of clay tobacco pipe, animal bone, bottle glass, iron slag and an iron nail.

Linear feature F630 (Section Fig. 3d)

This was NNE to SSW aligned, was a maximum of 1.74m wide and was truncated along its northern and southern sides by later ditches F611 and F585. Two segments ([563] and [608]) were excavated, which exposed it to be a maximum of 0.21m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a flat base. In segment [608] the ditch contained a dumped deposit of demolition material, including abundant mortar fragments and stone rubble (609). This was overlain by a dark brownish-grey accumulation deposit (610), which was also recorded in segment [563] (fill 562). Finds recovered include sherds from North Devon gravel-tempered and South Somerset wares, as well as clay tobacco pipe fragments and animal bone.

Linear feature F611 (Section Fig. 3d; Plate 2)

Linear feature F611 was cut into fill 610 of parallel ditch F630 and measured 0.51m wide and 0.31m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a single loose stone-rubble and slate-fragment fill (612) suggesting it functioned as a stone drain. Six sherds of South Somerset ware pottery were recovered.

Linear feature F585 (Section Fig. 3e)

This was east to west aligned, 1.8m wide and cut at right-angles across the line of earlier ditch F630. The probable ditch was 1.06m deep and had steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a series of seven fills that comprised dark grey silty-clay accumulation deposits (586

and 588) separated by a dumped deposit of re-deposited natural clay subsoil (587). Above these fills were dumped deposits of mortar rich material (589), stone rubble (590) and mixed mortar fragments and gravels (591 and 592). Finds recovered include sherds from late 18th to 19th century industrial whitewares, Stafford red ware, creamware, and South Somerset types, as well as a fragment of bottle glass.

Linear feature F546 (Section Fig. 4a; Plate 3)

F546 was located to the south of F585 and was on the same broad east to west alignment. The probable ditch was 2.07m wide and 0.34m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a flat base. It contained two fills, comprising accumulation deposits of light brownish-red and mid reddish-brown silty-clays (579 and 545). Finds recovered comprise sherds from 18th century Westerwald stoneware and South Somerset wares, as well as a sherd of 13th to 14th century Dorset sandy ware and a sherd of 16th century Raeren stoneware. Other finds include clay tobacco pipe fragments, animal bone and bottle glass.

Linear feature F582 (Section Fig. 4a)

F546 was cut to the north by later linear feature F582, which in turn cut through a buried cultivation subsoil layer (581). Probable ditch F582 was 1.44m wide and 0.56m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. It contained two fills, comprising a basal fill of accumulated mid reddish-brown silty-clay (583), overlain by a dumped deposit of re-deposited firm red clay (584). Sherds of North Devon gravel tempered ware and South Somerset ware were recovered, as well as a shard of window glass.

5.3 The pits

Pit F510 (Section Fig. 4b; Plate 4)

Sub-oval pit F510 was present in the north part of the site. It measured 2.6m long, 1.89m wide and 1.17m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a rounded base. The pit contained a series of four fills, comprising dumped deposits of a mid reddish-brown clayey-silt (511) and a mid brownish silty-clay (512), which was overlain by dark brown and mid brown clayey-silt accumulation deposits (513 and 514). Finds recovered comprise sherds from several different vessels including North Devon gravel tempered and gravel free wares, South Somerset red wares, Westerwald, Industrial whiteware and Verwood sandy ware. Other finds consist of a copper alloy pin, clay tobacco pipe, animal bone, iron slag and bottle glass.

Pit F515 (Section Fig. 4c)

Adjacent small sub-round pit F515 measured 1.16m long, 0.88m wide and 0.19m deep, with shallow sloping sides and a concave base. The pit contained a mid brown clayey-silt fill (516). One sherd of 18th century Westerwald stoneware and two sherds of South Somerset coarseware were recovered, as well as fragments of clay tobacco pipe.

Pit F504 (Section Fig. 4d)

This was 5.4m long, 1.88m wide and 0.61m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides, a flat base and a stepped NW end. The pit contained three rapidly in-filled deposits, comprising mixed dark brown clayey-silts (505 and 507), which were separated by a dump of gravels (506). Pottery recovered includes sherds of 18th century English Delft ware, Frechen stoneware, Stafford grey stoneware and yellow slip ware. Other finds comprise fragments of animal bone, shards of bottle glass and a piece of iron slag.

Pit F517 (Section Fig. 5a)

This elongated pit measured 4m long, 1.7m wide and 0.93m deep, with steep to vertical sides and an undulating base. The pit contained a basal fill of re-deposited natural water-worn gravels (522), which was overlain by a series of clayey-silt dumped deposits (521, 520, 519 and 518). A large quantity of finds was recovered from the pit, comprising early 18th century pottery which includes Seville olive jar, Nottingham stoneware, Westerwald, North Devon

gravel tempered ware, South Somerset ware, English plain Delft-ware, Bristol/Stafford yellow slip ware, Staffordshire grey stoneware and Staffordshire white stoneware. Other finds include a George II penny, dated 1746, clay tobacco pipe fragments, bottle glass, slag and two iron nails.

Pit F527 (Section Fig. 3b)

Oval pit F527 cut through the fill of ditch F629 and measured 1.9m long, 1.46m wide and 0.41m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. The pit was filled by three dumped deposits that comprised a basal fill of mid brown silty-clay with inclusions of brick fragments, mortar pieces and stone rubble (528), overlain by a top fill of silty-loam (529) and a final fill of re-deposited clay (530). One sherd of 18th century South Somerset ware and two pieces of clay tobacco pipe were recovered.

Pit F606 (Section Fig. 3d)

This was 0.15m deep with gradual sloping sides and a concave base and was heavily truncated by later ditch F611 to the east. It was filled with a mid reddish-brown clayey-silt (607). Finds recovered comprise 18th century sherds of North Devon gravel tempered ware, North Devon sgraffito ware, as well as sherds of 14th to 15th, 16th and 17th century pottery.

Pit F615 (Section Fig. 5b)

Small round pit F615 was 0.65m across and 0.45m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a rapidly in-filled mixed mid reddish-brown silty-clay fill (616). One sherd of late 18th century creamware pottery and a shard of window glass were recovered.

Pit F549 (Section Fig. 4a; Plate 3)

This was 0.8m across and was cut at its upper level by later ditches F546 and F582. The pit had steeply sloping sides and a concave base, with a surviving depth of 0.49m. It contained a basal fill of mid reddish-brown silty-clay (548) with an upper fill of dumped material comprising a silty-clay with abundant gravels and charcoal (547). Three sherds of South Somerset pottery, pieces of clay tobacco pipe and a piece of animal bone were recovered.

Pit F537 (Section Fig. 5c)

Sub-rectangular pit F537 measured 2.25m long, 1.51m wide and 0.5m deep with steeply sloping sides and a flattish base. The pit contained a mixed mid reddish-brown silty-clay fill (538). A total of 136 sherds of pottery was recovered from fill 538, which includes English Delft-ware, Staffordshire grey stoneware, Bristol/Staffordshire yellow slipware, Bristol/Staffordshire press-moulded dishes and South Somerset ware. Other finds include fragments of clay tobacco pipe, bottle glass and part of an iron brace.

Pit F535 (Section Fig. 5d)

Extending beyond the southwest corner of the site was partially exposed sub-rectangular pit F535. This was 0.8m wide and 0.25m deep, with steep to vertical sides and a flat base. The pit contained a mixed mid brown silty-clay fill that contained common stone rubble, brick fragments and pebble inclusions (536). Finds recovered comprised post-1800 pottery (discarded), clay tobacco pipe pieces and animal bone.

Towards the south of the site were two small pits, F578 and F604 which contained articulated dog skeletons. The pits measured 0.95m and 0.6m long respectively and less than 0.1m deep. Both contained mixed mid reddish-brown silty-clay fills (597 and 605). No other finds were recovered.

5.4 The postholes

Posthole F523 (Section Fig. 6a)

Posthole F523 was located in the north part of the site. It measured 0.32m across and 0.19m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a mid brown clay-silt fill (524) and no finds were recovered.

Postholes F625, F623, F627, F621, F619 and F613 (Sections Figs 6b-g)

To the southeast of F523 was an approximately northeast to southwest alignment of six postholes. These features measured between 0.15m and 0.4m across and 0.08m to 0.4m deep, with steeply sloping sides and flat to shallow concave bases. Each of the postholes contained a single silty-clay fill that for F625, F621, F619 and F613 was mid reddish-brown in colour (626, 622, 620 and 614) and for F623 and F627 was dark grey (624 and 628). Finds recovered from fills 626 and 628 comprise sherds of late 18th century pottery, including South Somerset ware, blue transfer printed ware and creamware, as well as two pieces of animal bone and two shards of window glass.

Posthole F565 (Section Fig. 6h)

This was visible in the base of ditch segment [563] of F630, and measured 0.25m across and 0.12m deep, with steep sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a dark reddish-brown silty-clay fill (564). One sherd of 18th century South Somerset slipware pottery was recovered.

Posthole F552 (Section Fig. 7a)

This was 0.46m wide, 0.48m deep and had steep to vertical sides and a concave base that was cut into fill 584 of earlier ditch F582. The posthole contained two fills which comprised a basal mid reddish-brown silty-clay (551) under a dark brown silty-clay that contained oyster shell fragments and possible packing material of brick fragments and stone rubble (550). One probably residual sherd from a 17th century South Somerset sgraffito dish was recovered.

Posthole F554

To the southwest of F552 and visible in the base of ditch F546 was posthole F554, which measured 0.25m wide, 0.2m deep and had steep to vertical sides onto a concave base. It contained a mid reddish-brown silty clay fill (548) and no finds were recovered.

Postholes F542 and F544 (Sections Fig. 7b-c)

These two adjacent postholes measured 0.5m and 0.4m across and 0.14m and 0.1m deep, with each having moderately sloping sides and concave bases. Both features contained mid reddish-brown silty-clay fills (541 and 543). A brick fragment was recovered from fill 541, F542.

Postholes F567, F569 and F539 (Sections Figs 7d-e and 5c)

To the south of F542 and F544 were three small dispersed postholes (F567, F569 and F539). These measured approximately 0.3m across and 0.07m to 0.18m deep. Each of the features contained mid reddish-brown to dark brown silty clay fills (566, 568 and 540). One piece of clay tobacco pipe was recovered from fill 568, F569.

Postholes F556, F558, F600 and F602 (Sections Fig. 7f-j)

Alongside the southeast limit of excavation were two pairs of postholes, F556/F558 and F600/F602. These measured between 0.26m and 0.31m across and 0.06m to 0.12m deep, with moderately sloping sides and flat bases. Each of the features contained similar dark grey clayey-silt fills (557, 559, 601 and 603). One sherd of late 18th century creamware pottery and a sherd of possibly residual 13th to 14th century local pottery were recovered from fills 601 and 603.

5.5 Structural remains

A small number of structural remains were present and represented the most recent period of activity on the site. In the northeast corner a partially exposed mortar base (631) was recorded for a single overlying course of Breccia stone masonry (632).

To the southwest of 632 were two parallel northwest to southeast aligned construction cuts (F637 and F639) that contained remnant footings (633 and 634) comprised of single courses of 19th century industrial bricks. The two footings were linked by an abutting NE to SW aligned brick footing, 635, within a construction cut (F638). These footings were overlain by a spread of demolition material (636).

5.6 Other features

Feature F533 (Section Fig. 7k)

In the northeast part of the site was a short curving linear feature (F533) adjacent to ditch terminal F629. This was 0.45m wide and 0.02m deep with a shallow concave profile. It was filled by a dark reddish-brown silty-clay (534) and no finds were recovered.

Feature F641

To the southeast of F533 and cut into the fill of ditch F629 was a sub-rectangular cut (F641) lined with 19th century industrial bricks and filled with water-worn stone (643). The function of this feature was not established.

Feature F617 (Section Fig. 7j)

This was truncated by footing construction cuts F537 and F539 and by ditch F611. It measured a maximum of 0.3m deep with diffuse, irregular sides and base suggesting that it had been disturbed by roots. It contained a mid reddish-brown fill (618). Finds recovered comprise 18th century North Devon gravel tempered and South Somerset wares, as well as fragments of clay tobacco pipe and animal bone.

Feature F560 (Section Fig. 7i)

This short linear feature was 0.45m wide and 0.04m deep, with a shallow concave profile. It contained a mid brown silty-clay fill (561) and no finds were recovered.

Feature F598 (Section Fig. 7m)

This small irregular feature was 0.8m long and 0.15m deep. with an irregular and diffuse profile suggesting it was of natural origin such as the result of root or animal disturbance. It was filled by a light reddish-brown silty-clay (599) and no finds were recovered.

6. RESULTS: WATCHING BRIEF

- 6.1 The hand-excavated trench from the south corner of the site into the pavement (Fig. 1) was dug onto the top of a series of service pipes and ducts present at a depth of 0.7m below current levels. These were under mixed modern backfilled material which was sealed by hardcore for the current tarmac pavement. No pre-modern archaeological features and deposits were recorded.
- 6.2 The two machine-excavated trenches monitored in the east part of the site were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.4m through mixed modern rubble and into a mid-brown clayey-silt buried soil consistent with the overlying profile recorded elsewhere. The trenches were not of a sufficient depth to expose any pre-modern archaeological features or deposits.

7. THE FINDS

by Kerry Dean and John Allan

7.1 Introduction

All finds recovered on site have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. All metal objects have been stabilised by packaging with silica gel. Finds have been quantified according to material type within each context. The assemblage was then scanned by context to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. This information is briefly discussed below. Finds totals by material type are given in Appendix 1, with a catalogue of the pottery included as Appendix 2.

7.2 Iron and Copper Alloy objects

Five pieces of iron (152g) were recovered. These objects comprise part of an iron brace, perhaps for a door from context 538, pit F537. It has one rivet with a rounded profile. Two nails, one bent, with square profiles were recovered from context 518, pit F517, while another nail with a rectangular profile and a large head was recovered from context 532, linear feature F629. There was also one large nail head from context 518, pit F517.

Two copper alloy objects were also recovered; one is a very thin pin with a circular head with an incised line for decoration from context 513, pit F510. The other is a copper alloy penny of George II dated 1746 and recovered from pit F517.

7.3 The pottery

A total of 565 sherds of pottery was recovered weighing 15,090g. Surprisingly, the majority come from the restricted period AD 1690-1740. In this large collection there are relatively few imports or Delft-wares, and few English slipwares. There are a striking number of chamber pots and many dishes and jars. These features of the assemblage are strongly suggestive of low status.

There are a few signs of earlier occupation; six jug sherds of the 14th/15th century, Raeren stone ware of AD 1500-1550, and a rare sherd of Werra slip ware, only the fourth known from Exeter. These early sherds are likely to have been present residually in later contexts, and do not provide firm evidence for earlier occupation of the site.

7.4 The clay mermaid figurine



A figurine in the form of a mermaid and made from 'tobacco pipe' clay was recovered from context 509, linear feature F508. The figurine is made in a two-part mould with no signs of added colour. It is an ornamental piece probably an import from the Low Countries, but could also have been possibly made in Devon, such as at the kiln site on Bartholomew Street, Exeter.

Plate 5. The clay mermaid figurine

7.5 Clay tobacco pipe

A total of 311 fragments of clay tobacco pipe (1,164g) was recovered. Amongst the assemblage are 258 pieces of plain stem of varying diameters and 45 plain bowl fragments. There are seven pieces of clay pipe bowl which have a small amount of decoration in the form of rouletting around the edge of the bowl. One fragment of pipe stem from an unstratified context had ribbed decoration on the bowl end and also had two stamp marks on either side of the stem; one "J.GEORGE" and the other "BURNS CUTTY". This particular pipe was manufactured by Thomas Davidson of Glasgow c.1861-91. The majority of the clay pipe fragments date to c.1700-1840, with three pieces dated to c.1840 or later, while two residual bowl pieces date to c.1640-1680. Thirteen of the pieces have discolouration in the form of sooting, while one fragment had an orange tar staining.

7.6 Ceramic building material (CBM)

There were 31 pieces of ceramic building material (1,641g) recovered. The majority of these are fragments of hand-made, red brick, probably dating to the 18th century. There are also five pieces of modern, industrially produced, red tile. One fragment of residual Exeter series 1 inlaid floor tile was recovered from context 581, which dates to the 13th or 14th century.

7.7 Glass

A total of 42 pieces of glass (1,272g) was recovered. These comprise almost entirely fragments of green bottle glass dating to the 18th and 19th centuries. There are also four sherds of clear window glass and one piece of a clear bottle base, also dating to this period.

7.8 Animal bone

There were a total of 295 fragments of animal bone (3,431g) recovered. These include a wide variety of bones from several different domestic animals including sheep, pig and cattle. There are also several pieces with butchery cut marks.

7.9 Shell

There were nine fragments of shell (48g) recovered. The majority are oyster shells, with the exception of one winkle and one cockle shell.

7.10 Slag & furnace lining

Seven pieces of undiagnostic iron slag (165g) were recovered. One piece of fired clay furnace lining with adhering slag (38g) was also recovered.

7.11 Burnt and foreign stone

A total of seven fragments of burnt stone (316g) was recovered. One has adhering slag suggesting they were involved in some form of industrial process. Three small pieces of a foreign stone in the form of chalk (3g) were also recovered.

8. DISCUSSION

8.1 The investigations have identified a series of archaeological features, the majority of which are fairly closely dated to the 18th and 19th centuries. These features comprised ditches, pits and a small number of postholes which are indicative of archaeological activity to the rear of domestic properties. There were no earlier dated features represented on the site, but residual finds of 14th to 17th century pottery and a medieval floor tile fragment, indicate medieval and earlier post-medieval occupation in the general area.

8.2 The parallel ditches F508, F629 and F546 were regularly spaced and had similar shallow, flat based profiles, with finds recovered indicating that they date to the early to mid 18th century. Their character, alignment and spacing suggest that they are likely to be property or plot boundaries extending back from Cowick Street. These features are among the earliest present on the site, perhaps indicating an 18th century date for the initial sub-division of land in this part

of Cowick Street. Ditch F582 was a likely re-cut along the same line as ditch F545, suggesting a re-establishment of the same boundary. The relationship between ditch F630, which extends at right-angles to ditches F508 and F629, could not be established but the finds recovered suggest a comparable 18th century date.

- 8.3 The pits recorded on the site, the largest of which were located in the northeast part (F510, F504 and F517), contained finds comparable in date to ditches F508, F629 and F546. The majority contained fills characteristic of rapid in-filling, some with evidence of repeated dumped material. This evidence, together with the large number of domestic finds recovered, indicates that they functioned as rubbish pits.
- 8.4 The moderately high number of finds such as pottery, animal bone and clay tobacco pipe that have been recovered from the fills of the pits and ditches indicates *in situ* settlement adjacent to the site. There were no industrial-type features or significant quantities of associated finds such as slag or other residues, to suggest any industrial component to the site. Based on the pottery assemblage, which is composed mainly of South Somerset coarseware, North Devon gravel tempered and North Devon gravel free wares, it is likely that the occupation surrounding the site was of relatively low status. Very few imported pottery sherds were recovered.
- 8.5 No evidence for *in situ* structural evidence to suggest the presence of early buildings was identified in the southwest part of the site, alongside Cowick Street. The four shallow postholes recorded in this area (F556, F558, F600 and F602), which if combined broadly date to the late 18th century, may represent evidence for a simple fence line alongside the road.
- 8.6 The majority of the finds were recovered from the northeast portion of the excavation area, which is set back from the street frontage. There were no 18th century structural remains in this part of the site. However, the basal fill of ditch F630, comprising dumped demolition material (fill 609), indicates the potential for the presence of former structures of this date close by.
- 8.7 Activity on the site dating to the late 18th to mid 19th century principally comprised large ditch F585, pits F535 and F615 as well as footings 632, 633, 634 and 635. Other later features include stone drain F611, as well as a probable fence-line represented by post-holes F625, F623, F627, F621, F619 and F613. Ditch F585 is likely to represent the establishment of the later boundary in the early 19th century, while footings 632, 633, 634 and 635 are likely to be remains of recently demolished structures to the rear of 137 Cowick Street.
- 8.8 Based on the results from this and previous work, it is likely that prior to the 19th century the site was divided by ditches into a series of smaller plots, with no evidence for early *in situ* structural remains. A large building is depicted in the western part of the site on the 1838 parish tithe map, while the former houses of 137 and 137a Cowick Street were built in the latter part of the 19th century. The presence of the many 18th century probable rubbish pits on the site indicate that the land was being used, but probably by adjoining properties for the disposal of domestic refuse.

9. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 9.1 The paper and digital archive and finds are currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd. at 4 Halthaies Workshops, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. They will ultimately be deposited at The Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter under the accession number 163/2010.
- 9.2 The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 111072.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation was commissioned by Steven Weaver of CgMs Consulting on behalf of McCarthy and Stone (Developments) Ltd. The site excavation and monitoring was undertaken by Simon Hughes, Kerry Dean, Naomi Hughes, Stephen Robinson, Richard Sims and Samantha Worrall, with the illustrations for this report prepared by Cain Hegarty. We are grateful to Andrew Pye, Exeter City Council Archaeology Officer, for his assistance and advice during the course of the investigation.

11. REFERENCES

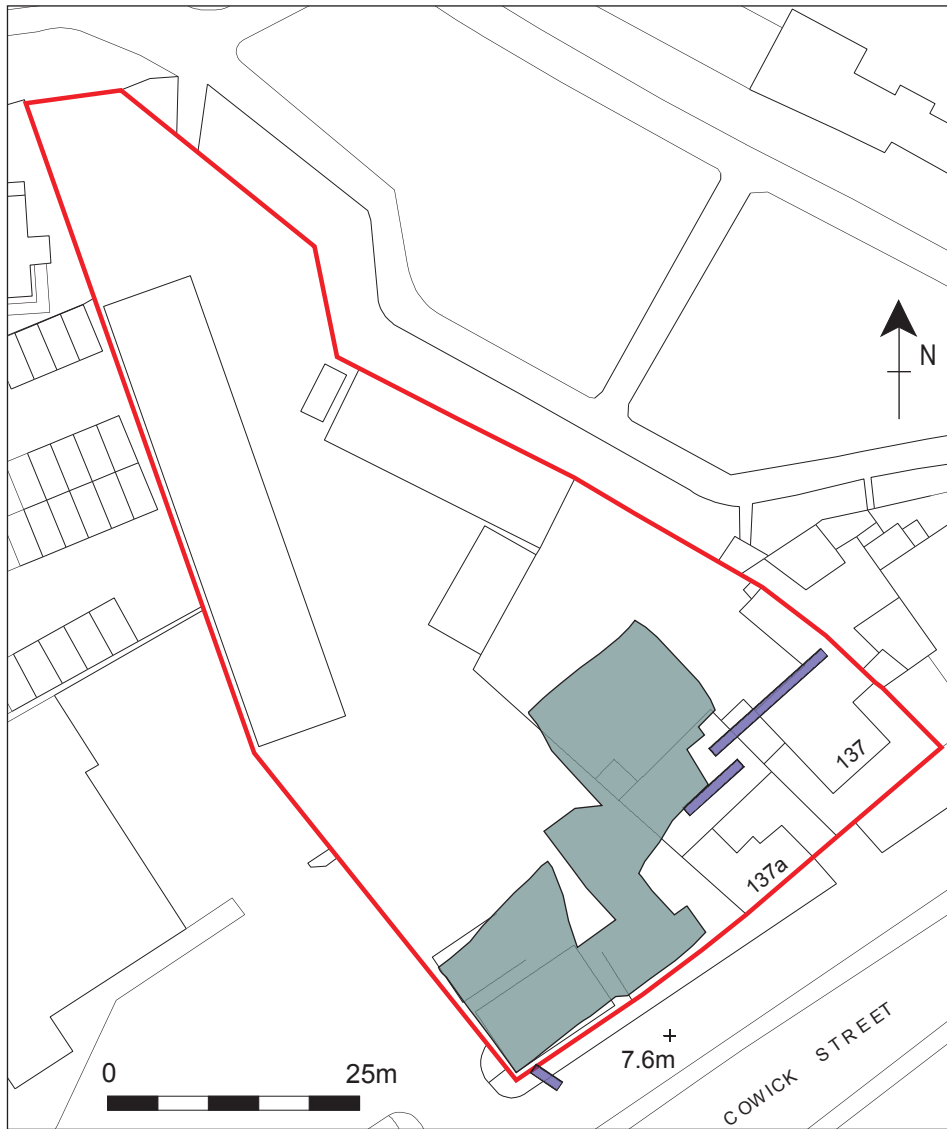
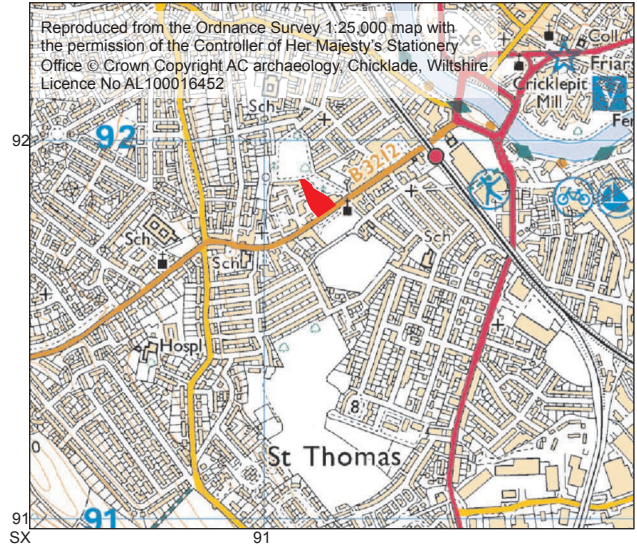
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-  Watching Brief areas
-  Strip Map and Sample excavation area

PROJECT

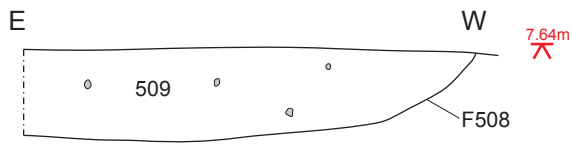
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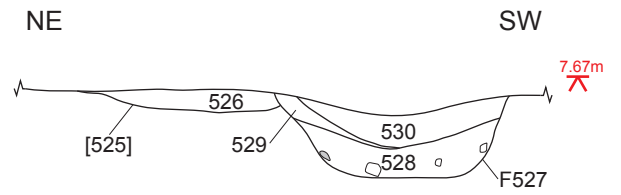
Fig.1: Location of site and investigation areas



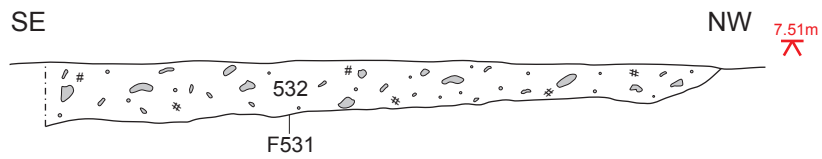
a) Section of linear feature F508



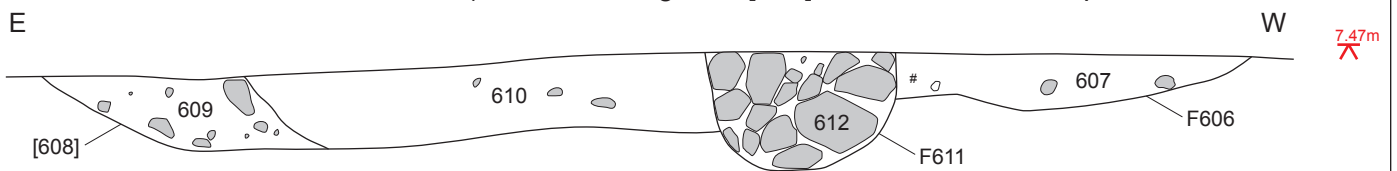
b) Section of segment [525] F629 and pit F525



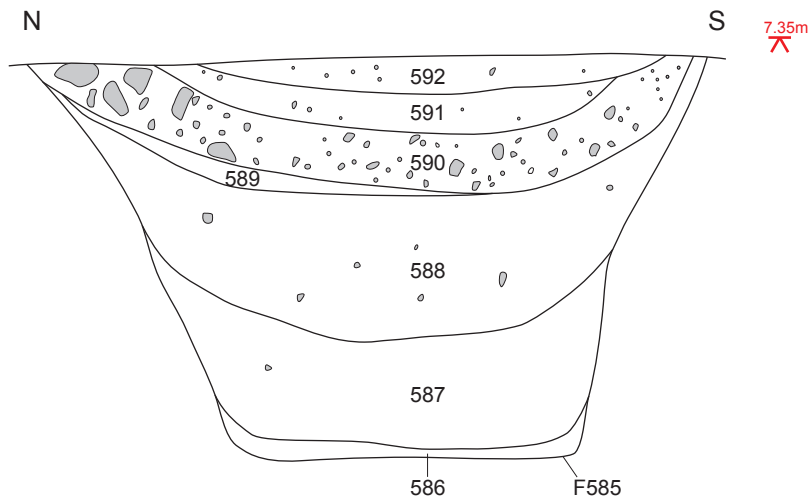
c) Section of segment [531], F629








d) Section of segment [608] F630 and F611 and pit F606

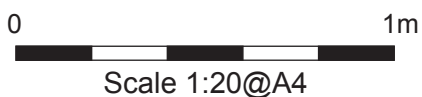


e) Section of linear feature F585



Key to all sections

-  Stone
-  Slag
-  Slate
-  Bone
-  Charcoal



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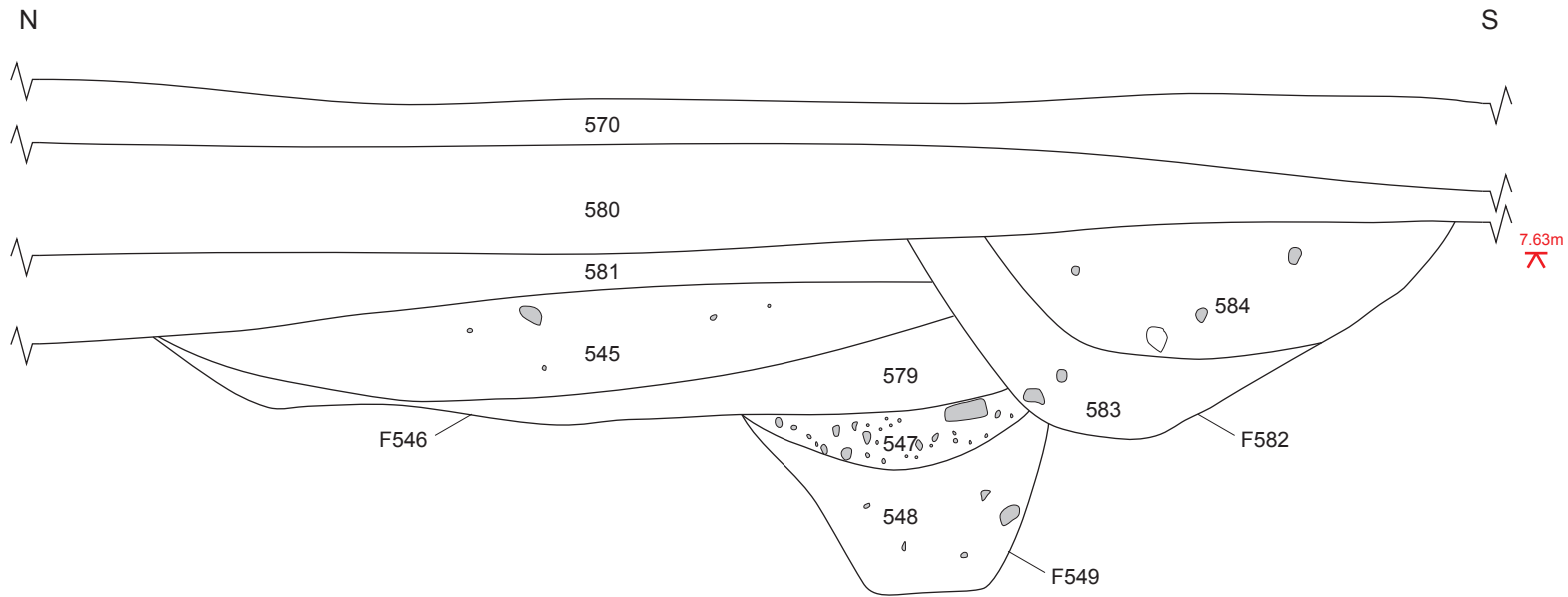
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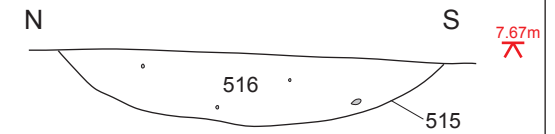
Fig.3: Sections of linear and adjacent features



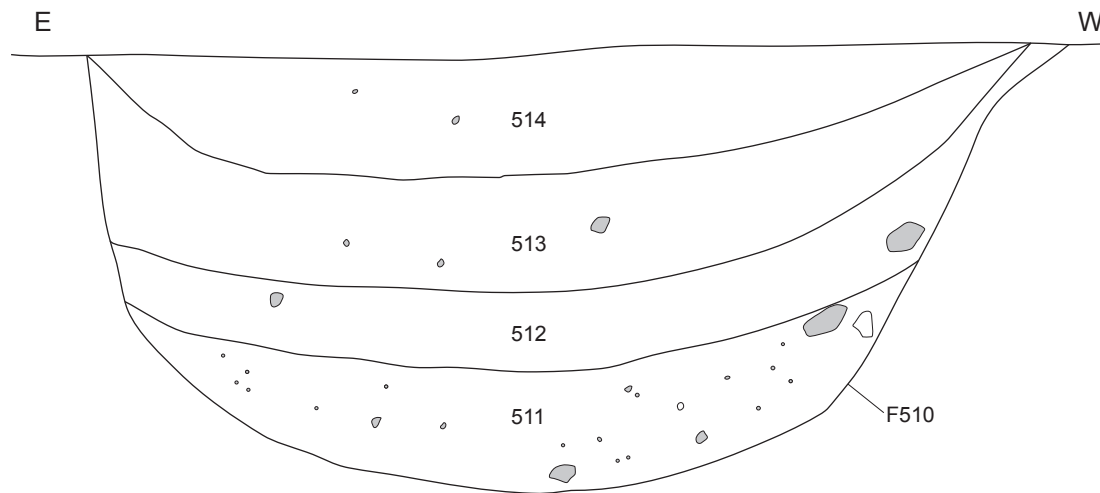
a) Section of linear features F546, F582 and pit F549



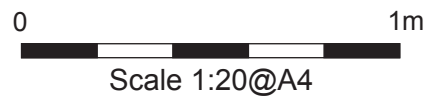
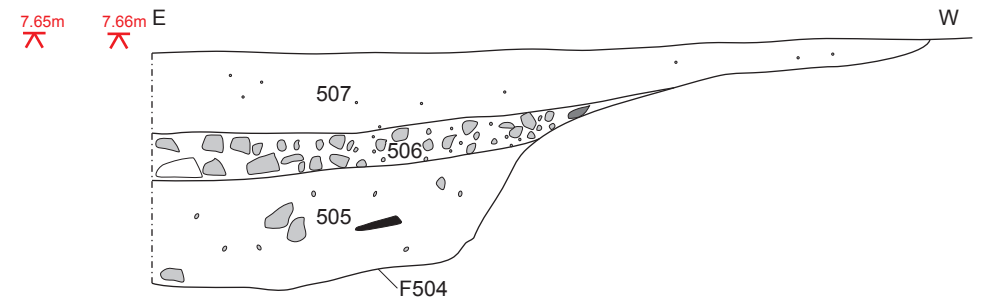
c) Section of pit F515



b) Section of pit F510



d) Section of pit F504



PROJECT

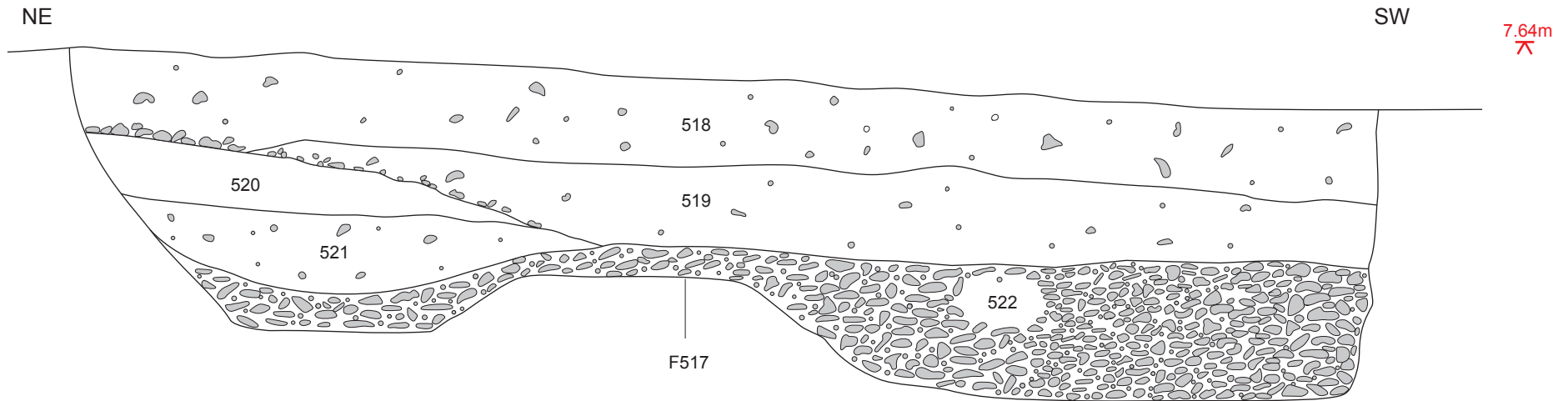
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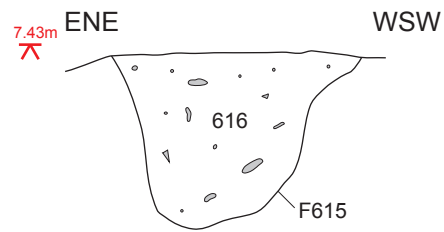
Fig.4: Sections of linear features and pits



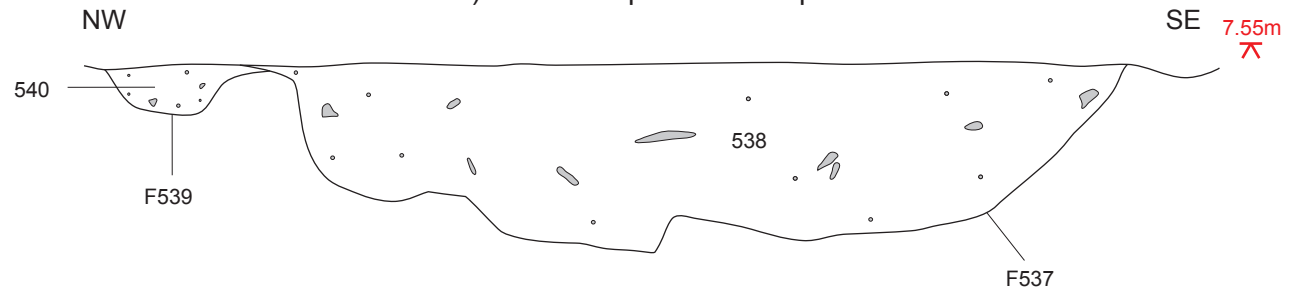
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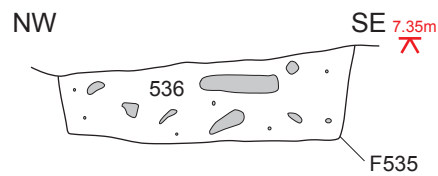
b) Section of pit F615



c) Section of pit F537 and posthole F539



d) Section of pit F555



PROJECT

Cowick Street, Exeter

TITLE

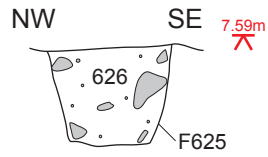
Fig.5: Sections of pits



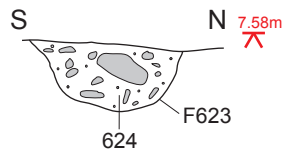
a) Section of posthole F523



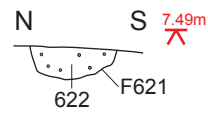
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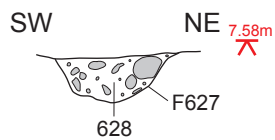
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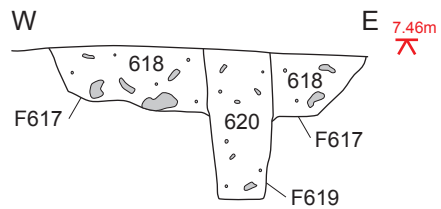
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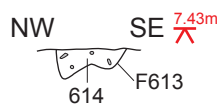
e) Section of posthole F627



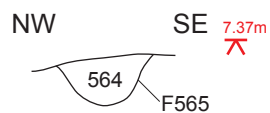
f) Section of posthole F619 and feature F617



g) Section of posthole F613



h) Section of posthole F565



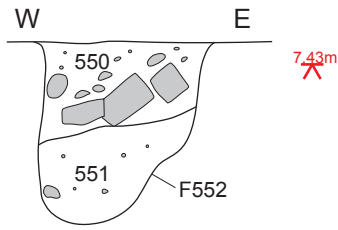
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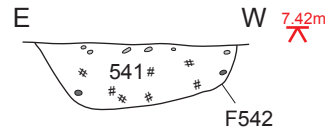
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Fig.6: Sections of postholes

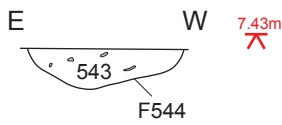
a) Section of posthole F552



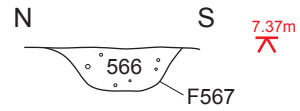
b) Section of posthole F542



c) Section of posthole F544



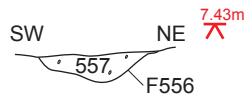
d) Section of posthole F566



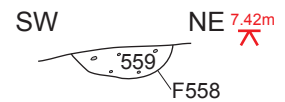
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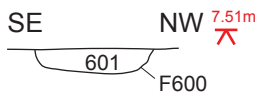
f) Section of posthole F556



g) Section of posthole F558



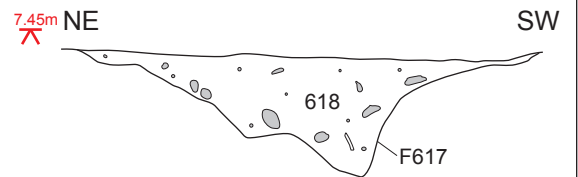
h) Section of posthole F600



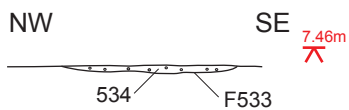
i) section of posthole F602



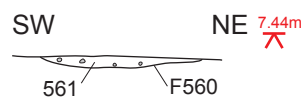
j) Section of feature F617



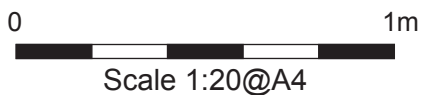
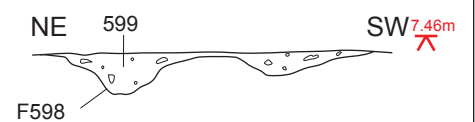
k) Section of feature F533



l) Section of feature F560



m) Section of feature F598



PROJECT

Cowick Street, Exeter

TITLE

Fig.7: Sections of postholes and other features





Plate 1. General view of excavation, looking south



Plate 2. General view of excavation area, including ditches F611 and F629, looking southwest



Plate 3. Ditches F546, F582 and pit F549, southeast facing section (scales 2m and 1m)



Plate 4. Pit F510, north facing section, view to south (scales 2m and 1m)

Appendix 1

Finds quantification

Appendix 1: ACD191 Finds quantifications (weight is in grams). CBM = Ceramic building material

Context	Description	Post-medieval pottery		Clay pipe		CBM		Burnt bone	Animal bone	Shell	Glass	Slag	Furnace lining	Burnt stone	Foreign stone	Iron		Copper alloy		Clay figure									
568	Fill of posthole F569			1	3																								
579	Fill of ditch F546	1	12	1	13																								
583	Fill of ditch F582	6	262	1	4						1	2																	
584	Fill of ditch F584	4	67								1	23																	
586	Fill of ditch F585	5	30								1	9																	
587	Fill of ditch F585	1	27																										
588	Fill of ditch F585	13	273	1	10	1	11																						
592	Fill of ditch F585	5	95																										
601	Fill of posthole F600	1	6																										
603	Fill of posthole F602	1	1																										
607	Fill of pit F606	7	100	4	33				1	10																			
610	Fill of ditch F630 [608]	6	191	10	45																								
612	Fill of ditch F611	6	297																										
616	Fill of pit F615	7	24	3	14				7	8	1	18	1	1															
618	Fill of feature F617	5	96	11	38	1	17		10	66																			
626	Fill of posthole F625	5	42	2	5				2	14		2	6																
628	Fill of posthole F627	1	1																										
Totals		565	15090	311	1164	31	1641	1	3	295	3431	9	48	42	1272	7	165	1	38	7	316	3	3	5	152	2	9	1	57

Appendix 1

Catalogue of pottery

Appendix 2: ACD191 Catalogue of pottery

Context	Context type	No	Wt (g)	Description
501	Modern garden soil	7	196	Residual – 1 sherd SS jug, late 14-15C. 3 SS with copper green slip, 1 cup. 3 SSCW, MNV=3 incl. 1 bowl and 1 jug -18C.
505	Fill of pit F504	28	398	2 sherds English delft ware, MNV=2 incl 1 dish and 1 painted with sealing wax red, blue, and green paint, 1700-1730. 1 sherd Frechen stoneware, MNV=1. 3 Staff grey stoneware with white engob, MNV=1. 1 Bristol/Staff yellow slip ware, MNV=1. 1 NDGT. 20 SS sherds, MNV=15+.
507	Upper fill of pit F504	6	157	1 sherd Bristol/Staff yellow slip dish, MNV=1 18C. 2 NDGT, MNV=1. 3 SS, MNV=3.
509	Fill of ditch F508	2	177	1 NDGT, 1 SS jug sherd, 17-18C.
511	Lower fill of pit F510	17	322	2 NDGT sherds, 1 NDGF jug. 12 SS, MNV=5 incl. 1 copper green glazed dish, 1 jug. 1 flower pot sherd, 1 Werra slip ware with black trailed slip, 1570-1625, an unusual find.
512	Fill of pit F510	23	1185	Bristol/Staff: brown stoneware 1 sherd, 1 vessel-tankard. 1 sherd Bristol/Staff yellow slip ware. 2 Staff red ware, MNV=1. 1 NDGT. 1 NDGF. SS 17 sherds, 7 vessels incl. 2 small bowls, 1 jug, 1 dish with plain sgraffito. Context date 1700-1730.
513	Fill of pit F510	16	724	1 Westerwald tankard sherd, 17C. 1 sherd White ware. 2 NDGT, MNV=1. 11 SS, MNV=7 incl 2 combed sgraffito dishes, 2 bowls. 1 sherd Verwood (Dorset) sandy ware, 1 vessel.
514	Fill of pit F510	5	48	3 sherds English delft- ware, MNV=3, inc 1 plain ointment jar, 1 blue painted dish and 1 blue and purple painted dish. 1 NDGT, small bowl and 1 sherd SSCW. Context date 1700-1730.
516	Fill of pit F515	4	26	Residual – 1 jug sherd, Ex Fab 42 with applied slip 1250-1450. 1 sherd Westerwald stoneware. 2 sherds SSCW, 2 vessels.
518	Upper fill of pit F517	121	2182	1 globular- body sherd of Seville olive jar, 2 sherds Nottingham stoneware, 5 Westerwald, MNV= 3 incl. 1 chamber pot, 1 tankard with incised bands and 1 jug with purple hearts. NDGT 11 sherds, MNV= 6+. 83 SS incl. 4 plain dishes, 2 bowls, 1 sgraffito dish, 1 chamber pot and 1 plant pot with copper green glaze. 6 sherds English plain delft- ware. 7 Bristol/Staff yellow slip ware, MNV= 5. Staff grey stoneware with white engob 1 sherds, MNV= 1+ incl. tankard. Staff white stoneware 5 sherds, 2 with scratched blue, 1 tankard. Context date 1700-1720.
520	Fill of pit F517	1	4	Bristol/Staff yellow slip ware, after 1700.
521	Fill of pit F517	60	2326	3 Staff grey stoneware with white engobe, MNV= 1. 57 sherds of SS inc 1 double slip dish with feathering, 2 chamber pots, 1 almost complete, probably Donyatt.
522	Fill of pit F517	13	148	1 Westerwald stoneware, MNV=1. 1 sherd Staff white salt-glazed stoneware, after 1730. 10 SS incl. 1 jug, 1 chamber pot, 1 slipware dish. 1 NDGT.
526	Fill of ditch F629 [525]	8	110	1 sherd NDGT, 1 vessel. 7 SS, MNV= 5 incl. 1 18C combed sgraffito dish, 1 18C jar.
528	Basal fill of pit F527	1	7	SS 18C.
532	Fill of ditch F629 [531]	2	4	1 Westerwald stoneware. 1 SS sherd. Context date-after 1680.
536	Fill of pit F535	7	72	All after 1800 – discarded.
538	Fill of pit F538	136	4618	3 English delft- ware, MNV= 3 – 1 plain ointment pot, 1 painted dish with suspension hole painted with sealing wax red, blue and sponged green paint, 1 blue- painted dish rim. 8 Staff grey stoneware with white engobe, MNV=2+. 1 Staff white salt-glazed cup. 5 Bristol/Staff yellow slipware cup, MNV= 2. 2 Bristol/Staff press-moulded dishes, MNV= 2. 9 NDGT, 1 sooted bowl, 1 jug, MNV = 3+. 105 SS incl. 1 chamber pot, 1 jug with horizontal slip bands of 18C type, 3+ bowls, 1 spouted. 3 flower pot sherds, MNV= 3.
540	Fill of posthole F540	2	29	2 sherds NDGT, 2 vessels – post medieval date.
545	Fill of ditch F546	22	350	Residual- 1 sherd Dorset sandy ware 13-14C, 1 sherd Raeren stoneware, 1 vessel, first half 16C. 1 sherd Westerwald stoneware, 1 tankard with purple rosette c.1680-1720. 6 SS incl. 17C style Sgraffito, 1 18C jug, 1 18C bowl, MNV=6. 13 sherds flower pot, 1 vessel. Context date c. 1700-1730.
547	Fill of pit F549	3	56	3 sherds, SS 18C.
550	Upper fill of posthole F552	1	47	1 SS sgraffito dish, 1 vessel. SS 17C.
562	Fill of ditch F630 [563]	5	375	1 sherd NDGT, 1 vessel. 4 SS, MNV=4. Context date c. 18C.
564	Fill of posthole F565	1	5	1 SS slipware dish 18C, 1 vessel.
579	Fill of ditch F546	1	12	1 NDGF, 1 vessel.
583	Fill of ditch F582	6	262	1 NDGT, 1 vessel, jug. 5 SSCW, 1 vessel, jar.
584	Fill of ditch F584	4	67	1 NDGT, 1 vessel. 3 SS, MNV=3 incl. 1 feathered slipware dish.
586	Fill of ditch F585	5	30	1 industrial white ware, 2 sherds SS, 1 Staff red ware, 1 sherd cream ware. After 1770.
587	Fill of ditch F585	1	27	1 sherd ND plain slip, 1 vessel, cup with horizontal handle.
588	Fill of ditch F585	13	273	SS 9 sherd, MNV= 8. 4 sherds Mocha ware, peasant pearl ware 1800-1830.
592	Fill of ditch F585	5	95	1 sherd cream ware. 1 Westerwald stoneware. 3 sherds industrial white-ware. After 1770.
601	Fill of posthole F600	1	6	1 sherd Ex Fab 42 13-14C.
603	Fill of posthole F602	1	1	1 sherd cream ware. After 1770.

Appendix 2: ACD191 Catalogue of pottery

Context	Context type	No	Wt (g)	Description
607	Fill of pit F606	7	100	Residual – 14-15C Granite-derived sherd, 1 Raeren stoneware, 1 vessel: first half of 16C. 1 sherd ND Sgraffito. 3 NDGT, MNV=1. SS 1 black glazed tankard rim 17C.
610	Fill of ditch F630 [608]	6	191	2 sherds NDGT, 1 vessel, chamber pot. 4 SS, MNV=3, 2 jars c.18C.
612	Fill of ditch F611	6	297	6 SS 18C, 1 vessel, large bowl.
616	Fill of pit F615	7	24	1 NDGT. 4 SS sherds. 1 sherd cream ware. After 1770.
618	Fill of feature F617	5	96	1 sherd NDGT, 1 vessel. 4 sherds SS 1 with trailed slip, 1 sgraffito dating to after 1660, probably 18C.
626	Fill of posthole F625	5	42	3 SS sherds, 1 blue transfer printed sherd, 1 sherd cream ware. After 1770.
628	Fill of posthole F627	1	1	1 sherd 18C SS.

Abbreviations:

MNV: Minimum number of vessels

SS: South Somerset

SSCW: South Somerset coarseware

NDGT: North Devon gravel tempered ware

NDGF: North Devon gravel free ware

EX Fab 42: Exeter Fabric 42 ware

Staff: Staffordshire

16C etc: 16th century etc

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