

Land adjacent to the Long Range Hotel, Whimble, Devon

NGR SY 06375 96223

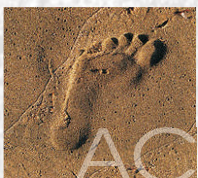
Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

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On behalf of:
Mr David Floyd

Report No: ACD411/2/0

Date: January 2012



archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Whimble, East Devon	National Grid Reference SY 06375 96223	Number:
Subject: Land adjacent to the Long Range Hotel, Whimble, Devon: Results of an archaeological trench evaluation		Photo attached: Plates 1- 4
Planning Application no: 10/2338/FUL	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter	
OASIS ID: 117011	Museum Reference no: RAMM: 11/79	
Contractor's site code: ACD411	Date fieldwork undertaken: 23 December 2011	

Introduction

An archaeological trench evaluation was carried in advance of groundworks associated with the stationing of 11 holiday lodges and one staff accommodation. The evaluation was commissioned by the site owner, Mr David Floyd. The site is situated on former agricultural land to the immediate east of Long Range Hotel, approximately 2km to the southeast of Whimble and adjacent to the former A30 trunk road. The ground slopes gently down to the north at around 157m aOD and the underlying solid geology of the site comprises Budleigh Salterton Pebble Beds Formation.

The site is located to the south of the Roman road between Exeter and Honiton and in an area where extensive evidence for prehistoric activity has been previously identified, including cropmarks indicating early settlement, as well as surface scatters of worked flint. Archaeological investigations to the south of the site in advance of improvements to the A30 also identified evidence for an Iron Age settlement.

Methodology

It was initially intended that the archaeological work would comprise a watching brief during groundworks associated with the development. However, in an attempt to negate the need for archaeological attendance during groundworks, a series of trenches were excavated across the site. The work therefore comprised the machine-excavation of five trenches positioned where groundworks are proposed, but avoiding known existing services, areas of modern dumped material and overhead cables. Each trench measured 8m in length and 1.10m in width and were excavated using a toothless grading bucket working under constant archaeological supervision (Plate 1). All levels relate to a temporary bench mark allocated the nominal value of 100m. The location of the trenches is shown in Fig. 1.

Results

The trenches were excavated to a depth of between 0.42-0.90m below ground level onto undisturbed natural subsoil comprising light yellow-brown clay with gravels. Modern-made levelling deposits and imported soils were present within Trenches 2, 3 and 4, within the eastern half of the site, while Trenches 1 and 5, within the western half, comprised a simple layer sequence of dark brown clay silt topsoil onto a mid reddish-brown sandy clay subsoil. Results from the trenches are summarised below.

Trench 1 (Plan and section Fig. 2a-b, Plates 2 & 3)

This trench was approximately east-west aligned and was excavated to a depth of between 0.42-0.52m below ground level onto natural subsoil (102). The overlying layer sequence comprised 0.32m of topsoil (100) over 0.10m of subsoil (101). A single sub-circular posthole (F103) was recorded cutting through subsoil layer (101). This measured 0.29m in diameter and had steep sloping sides, a flat base and contained a single dark brown soft clay silt fill (104). No finds were recovered.

Trench 2 (Plate 4)

This trench was northeast-southwest aligned and was excavated to a depth of between 0.55-0.60m below ground level onto natural subsoil (202). The overlying layer sequence comprised 0.30m of reinstated topsoil (203), over 0.30m of mixed mid orange and dark brown silty clay (204), containing occasional fragments of clinker, concrete, brick and tarmac. Undisturbed ground was, however, present within the western part of the trench and comprised 0.35m of topsoil (200) overlying 0.20m of subsoil (201). No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 3

This trench was northeast-southwest aligned and was excavated to a depth of between 0.46-0.60m below ground level onto natural subsoil (304). The overlying layer sequence comprised 0.16m of reinstated dark grey silty clay topsoil (300) over 0.22m of imported mid brown silty clay soil (301). These overlay 0.12m of buried topsoil (302), over 0.10m of subsoil (303). No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 4 (Section Fig 2c)

This trench was northwest-southeast aligned and was excavated to a depth of 0.50m below ground level, through reinstated mid brown clay silt topsoil (400) and into modern levelling deposit of mixed mid orange clay and mid brown clay silt (401). A 2m wide sondage was excavated through this deposit to a depth of 0.90m below ground level onto natural subsoil (402). The sondage showed levelling deposit (401) to be 0.70m in depth and overlying 0.15m of agricultural subsoil (403). No archaeological features were present and no finds recovered.

Trench 5

This trench was north-south aligned and was excavated to a depth of between 0.42-0.55m below ground level onto natural subsoil (502). The overlying layer sequence comprised between 0.34-0.45m of topsoil (500), over between 0.08-0.10m of subsoil (501). No archaeological features were present, although a single sherd (8 grams) of 19th century lead-glazed earthenware was recovered from the topsoil.

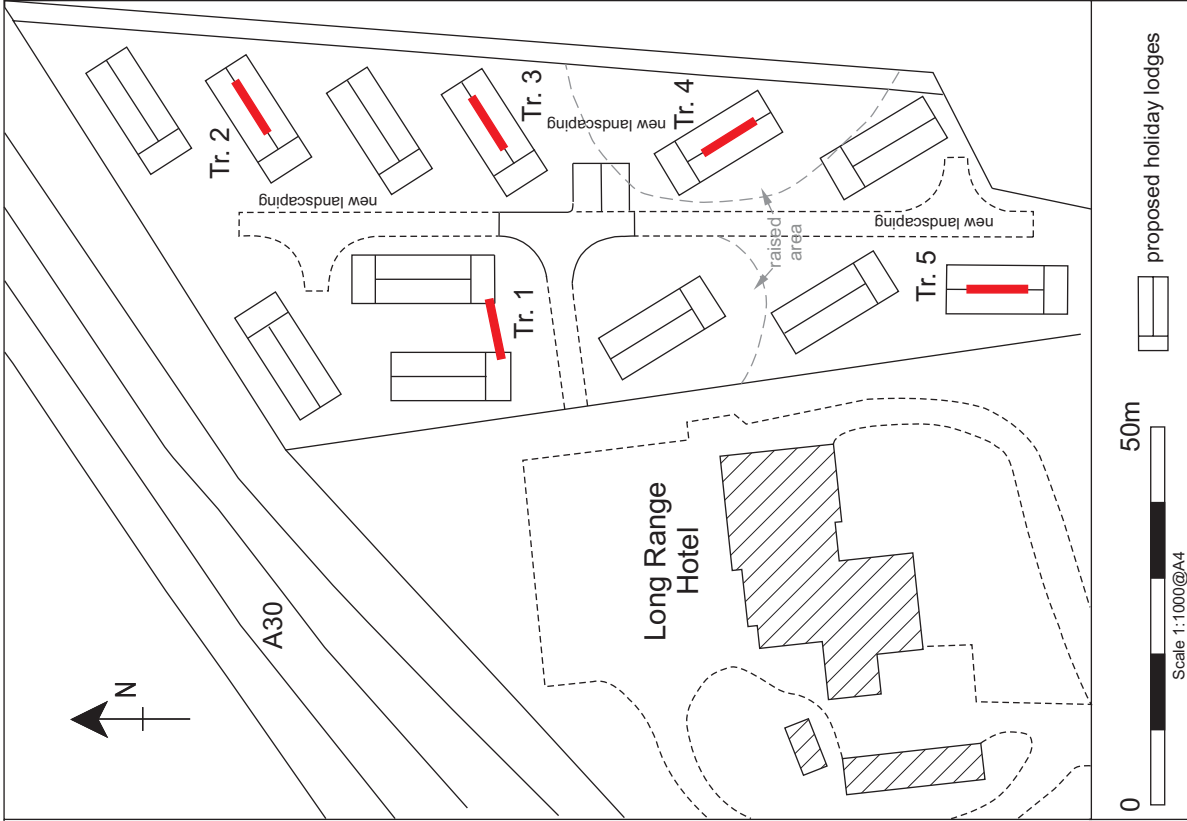
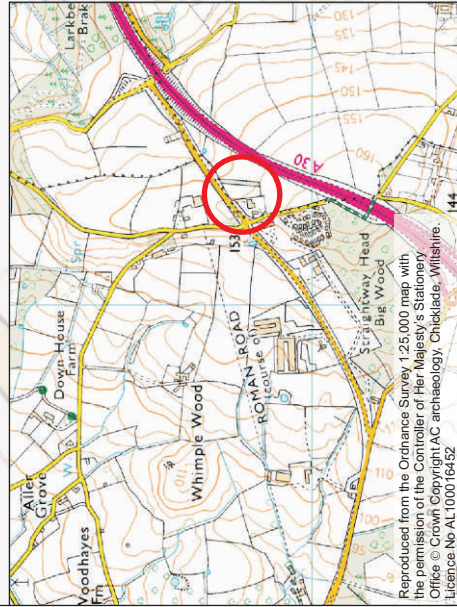
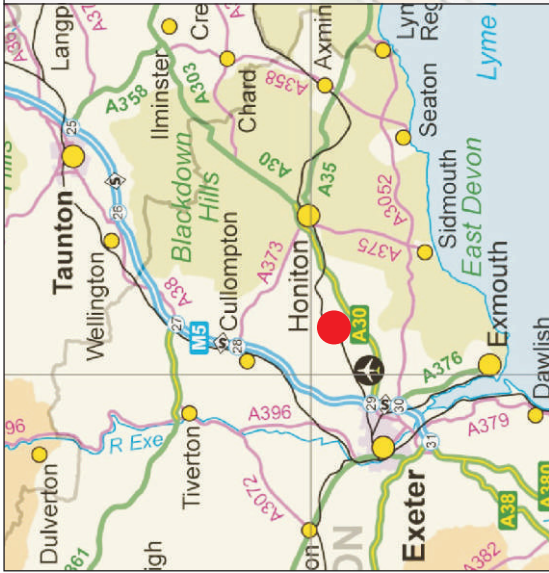
Comments

The evaluation has established largely negative results and has shown that much of the eastern half of site (Trenches 2, 3 & 4) has been subject to modern landscaping and levelling works, carried out during the latter half of the 20th century. The original surface profile within this part of the site would have sloped down gently towards the east. The layer sequence recorded within the western half of the site has been shown to be largely undisturbed and showed a simple layer sequence of topsoil, subsoil then natural subsoil.

The single posthole (F103) recorded in Trench 1 was shown to cut through subsoil layer (101) and, given that its fill was identical to the overlying topsoil, it is unlikely to be of any great age.

Conclusion

Groundworks associated with the proposed development of the site are unlikely to impact upon any hitherto unknown archaeological deposits or features. The depth of excavation of the foundation pad for the lodges will not exceed 0.35m below ground level and, as such, will provide a buffer against the unlikely presence of hitherto unknown archaeological deposits or features, particularly in the previously landscaped ground within the eastern part of the site.



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Fig. 1: Location of site and trenches

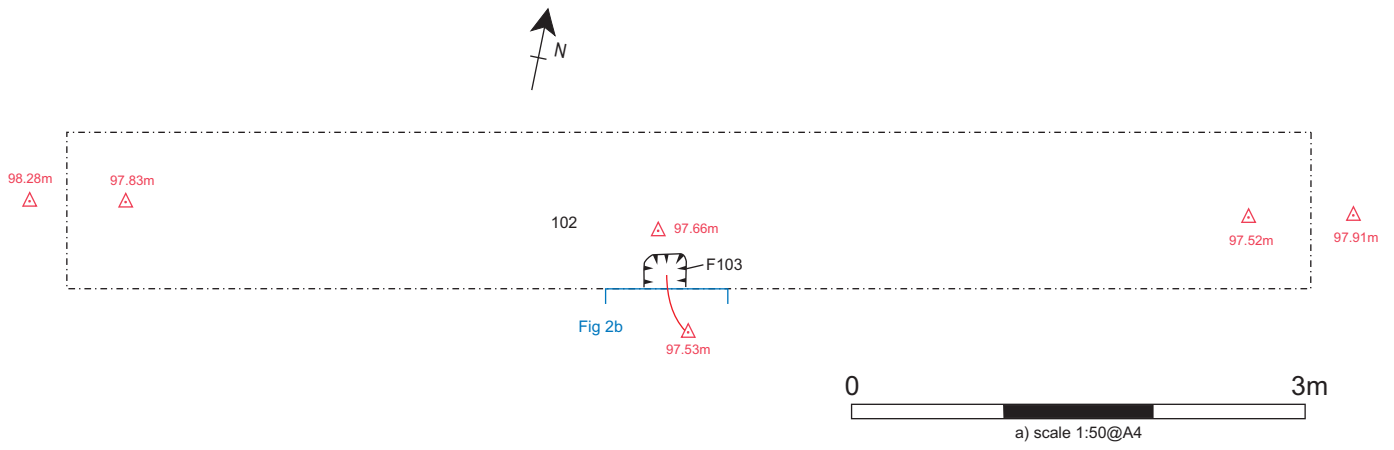


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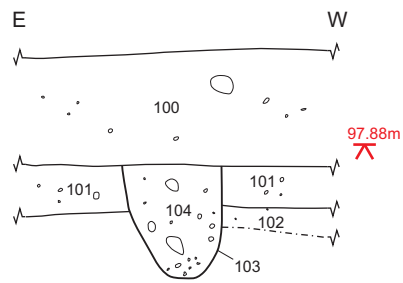
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proposed holiday lodges

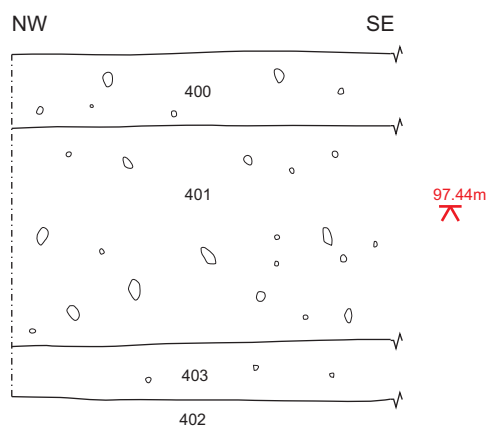
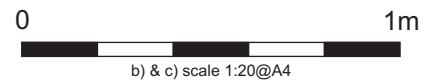
a) Plan of Trench 1



b) Section, F103



c) Representative section of Trench 4



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Fig.2: Plan and section, Trench 1
and section of Trench 4
within sondage



Plate 1: General view of site, looking southeast



Plate 2: General view of Trench 1, looking east
(scale 0.30m)



Plate 3: Section of posthole F103, view to south
(scale 0.30m)



Plate 4: Section of levelling deposits, Trench 2, view to northwest
(scale 1m)

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