

LAND AT TRENAVIN, GEORGE HILL, CREDITON, DEVON

Centred on NGR SS 8264 0074

Results of an Archaeological Trench Evaluation

Planning Ref. Mid Devon District Council 13/00915/MARM

Prepared by:
Paul Rainbird

On behalf of:
Persimmon Homes South West Ltd

Report No: ACD739/2/0

Date: 25th September 2013



AC archaeology

LAND AT TRENAVIN, GEORGE HILL, CREDITON, DEVON

Centred on NGR SS 8264 0074

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

Planning ref. Mid Devon District Council 13/00915/MARM

CONTENTS

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

List of figures

- Fig. 1: Site location
Fig. 2: Trench locations and archaeological features
Fig. 3: Trench 6, plan and section

List of plates

- Plate 1: Machine excavation of Trench 7
Plate 2: General view of Trench 6, looking south

Appendix 1: Tabulated trench descriptions

Summary

An archaeological trench evaluation carried out on land at Trenavin, George Hill, Crediton, Devon (centred on SS 8264 0074) was undertaken by AC archaeology during September 2013. The proposed development area occupies 0.9 hectares of grass pasture, lawn gardens and a tennis court. The ground slopes moderately to the southeast at between approximately 110-125m aOD.

The evaluation comprised the machine-excavation of seven trenches totalling 113m in length, with each trench measuring 1.80m wide. These were positioned to provide sample coverage of the proposed development area.

A single probable small ditch or gully was the only archaeological feature recorded in the trenches, with no finds recovered from this. A small collection of finds from the topsoil and subsoil was recovered and dated to the post-medieval and modern periods.

1. INTRODUCTION (Fig. 1)

- 1.1** This document sets out the results of an archaeological trench evaluation undertaken as required under a condition (8) of the grant of outline planning permission for residential development of up to 18 dwellings on land at Trenavin, George Hill, Crediton, Devon (centred on SS 8264 0074). It reports on the archaeological works required by Mid Devon Council as advised by the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (hereafter DCCHET).
- 1.2** The archaeological works were commissioned by Persimmon Homes South West and carried out by AC archaeology on the 13th and 14th September 2013.
- 1.3** The site occupies an area of approximately 0.9 hectares and is situated on the northwest side of Crediton between George Hill and Southfield Drive. It is divided into a number of plots comprising pasture, lawn gardens and a tennis court to the east and south of the existing Trenavin property. The ground slopes moderately to the southeast between 125m and 110m aOD, with the underlying solid geology comprising of the Crediton Breccia Formation.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The site is located to the northwest of the historic core of Crediton, with the town probably established when a monastery was founded here in the 8th century. Approximately 250m to the north of the proposed development site is the former site of St George's Beacon and the suspected site of St George's Chapel (Devon County Historic Environment Record refs. MDV606 and MDV607). To the west of the site, within arable land, is the location of a circular single-ditched enclosure (MDV51381) visible from aerial photographs as measuring approximately 45m in diameter and is potentially prehistoric in date.
- 2.2** The site is located within what are thought to be an area formerly occupied by medieval strip fields (MDV63119). The Crediton parish tithe map of 1841 shows the site as covering two of these probable medieval strip fields (1348 and 1349) extending parallel to George Hill. In the accompanying tithe apportionment of 1838 the fields are named as 'Long Lane Field' and 'Long Close' with their use described as arable.
- 2.3** The 1886 first-edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map shows that the fields had been sub-divided into four plots by this point and with Trenavin House and associated grounds established by the subsequent edition in 1904.

3. AIMS

- 3.1** The aims of the trial trench evaluation were to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site. The results of the work will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent work be it further trenching, area excavation, watching brief or nothing.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design (Hughes 2013) submitted to and approved by DCCHET prior to commencement on site. It comprised the machine excavation of seven trenches totalling 113m in length, with each trench measuring 1.80m wide. Trenches were positioned to provide sample coverage of the development area (Fig. 2). The removal of soil overburden was undertaken under the control and direction of the site archaeologist.
- 4.2** All features and deposits revealed were recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2* (revised August 2012). Detailed sections or plans were produced at a scale of 1:10, 1:20 as appropriate. All site levels relate to Ordnance Datum.

5. RESULTS (Figs 2-3; Plates 1-2; Appendix 1)

5.1 Introduction

The evaluation revealed generally low level results and few finds, with only Trench 6 containing a feature of possible archaeological interest. This is described below. The overlying layer sequence was generally consistent across the site, comprising between 0.15-0.24m of topsoil, above between 0.25-0.39m of agricultural subsoil, which in turn was above a weathered natural subsoil of degraded breccia. All of the trenches and contexts are summarised in tabulated form in Appendix 1. The relevant plan and section is included as Fig. 3.

Finds recovered from the evaluation trenches were limited to a small collection from the topsoil and subsoil and are discussed below.

5.2 Trench 6

Trench 6 measured 17.5m in length and was aligned NNW-SSE. A linear feature (F603) was revealed towards the northern end of the trench.

Ditch or gully F603 was east-west aligned and 0.73m wide by 0.24m deep. It had a moderately steep north side with a more gradual sloping south side and a concave base. It contained a naturally accumulated single fill (603) consisting of a firm silty clay with common small gravels and grit. No finds were recovered.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1** Small quantities of finds were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil in four of the seven evaluation trenches. All finds have been cleaned and assessed and all were post-medieval or modern in date. These are listed in Appendix 1 and have not been retained.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1** The evaluation has identified the presence of only a single archaeological feature, comprising a linear ditch or gully (F603) in Trench 6. It was located along the contour and corresponded with a slight break of slope which may indicate lynchetting has occurred along a field boundary. It was not possible to date this feature.
- 7.2** The finds of post-medieval and modern date were not found in a secure context and do not appear to relate to any specific settlement near the site until modern times. Some of the earlier material may also have an agricultural origin and could have been brought to the site during manuring of the fields.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1** This evaluation has identified the presence of a single archaeological feature of unknown date, which is probably associated with the agricultural history of the site. The general scatter of post-medieval and modern finds would also be consistent with agricultural activity, in conjunction with the modern encroachment of settlement through the expansion of Crediton.
- 8.2** This evaluation has established a general paucity of archaeological features and early finds in the majority of the area of the proposed development.

9. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

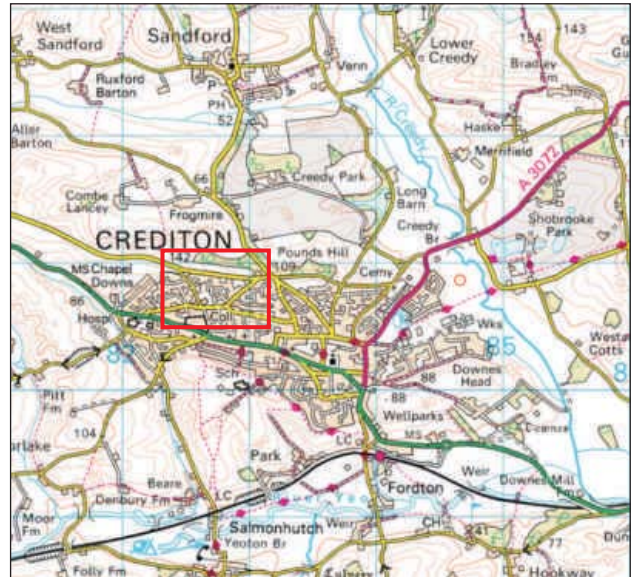
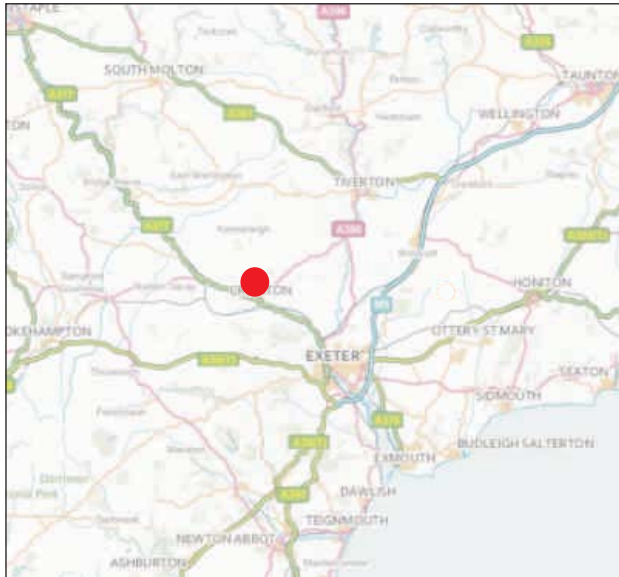
- 9.1** The paper and digital archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. As the results were largely negative and assuming the Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter will not accept the archive, then it will be discarded.
- 9.2** An online OASIS entry has been completed, using the unique identifier 159559, which includes a digital copy of this report.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

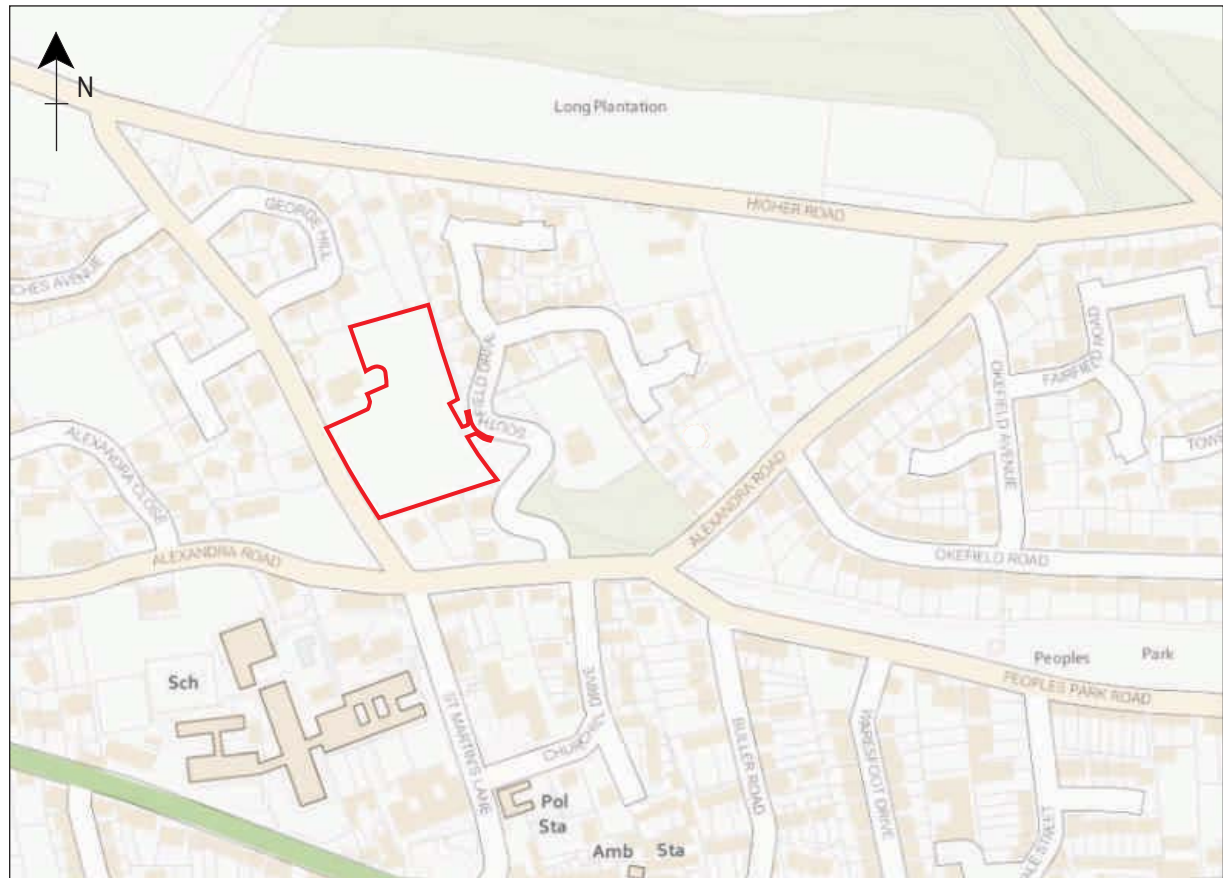
- 10.1** The evaluation was commissioned by Maxine Dudley of Persimmon Homes South West. The site work was undertaken by Alex Farnell, Simon Hughes and Gareth Holes, with the illustrations for this report prepared by Sarnia Blackmore. The collaborative role of Stephen Reed, DCCHET Archaeology Officer is duly acknowledged.

11. REFERENCES

DRO, Crediton parish tithe map 1841 and Apportionment, 1838.
Ordnance Survey 25-inch Devonshire map sheet 67NW, surveyed 1886, published 1891, revised 1904, published 1906.
Hughes, S., 2013, *Trenavin, George Hill, Crediton: Project Design for an Archaeological Trench Evaluation*. Unpublished AC archaeology document for client, ref. ACD739/1/1.



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright AC archaeology, Chicklade, Wiltshire. Licence No AL100016452



0 250m
Scale 1:5000@A4



Location of site

PROJECT

Land at Trenavin, George Hill, Crediton

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location

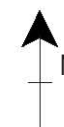


AC archaeology



Plan supplied by Rymack Ltd

- Development layout
- Trenches 1-7
- Archaeological feature



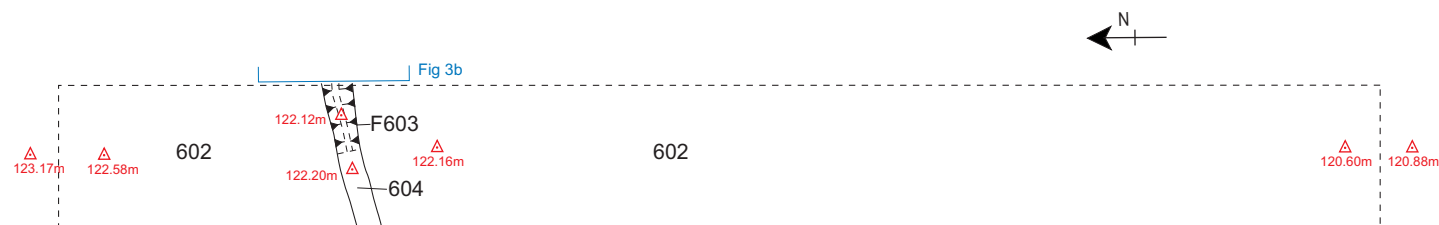
0 25m
Scale 1:500@A3

PROJECT
Trenavin, George Hill, CREDITON

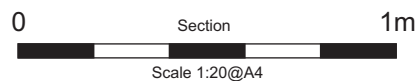
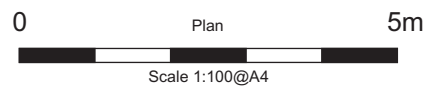
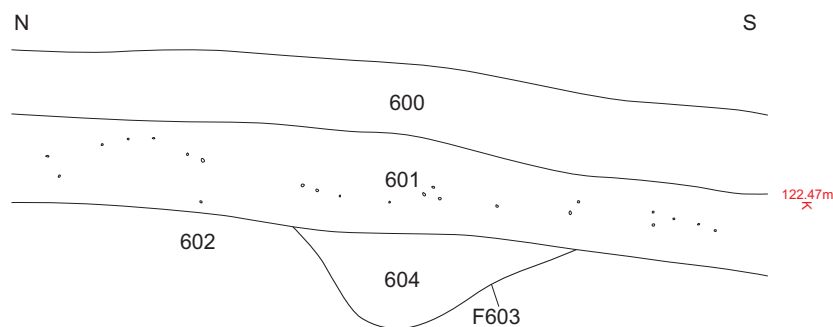
TITLE
Fig. 2: Trench locations and archaeological features



a) Trench 6, plan



b) Section of F603



PROJECT
Land at Trenavin, George
Hill, Creden

TITLE
Fig. 3: Trench 6, plan
and section



Plate 1: Machine excavation of Trench 7



Plate 2: General view of Trench 6, looking south
(scale 1m)

Appendix 1

Tabulated trench descriptions

APPENDIX 1: TABULATED TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1			Length 19m	Width 1.80m	Alignment NE-SW
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
100	Reddish brown soft clay silt	0-0.16m	Topsoil		
101	Red brown friable clay silt with common stones. A single fragment of clay pipe stem was recovered	0.16-0.52m	Agricultural subsoil		
102	Red degraded breccia	0.52m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 2			Length 20m	Width 1.80m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
200	Dark red-brown soft silty clay. A fragment of clay pipe stem and two sherds of blue on white transfer printed pottery were recovered	0-0.16m	Topsoil		
201	Mid red-brown silty loam with common small gravels	0.16-0.52m	Agricultural subsoil		
202	Red degraded breccia	0.52m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 3			Length 10m	Width 1.80m	Alignment NNW-SSE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
300	Dark red-brown soft silty clay	0-0.24m	Topsoil		
301	Mid red-brown silty loam with common small gravels	0.24-0.52m	Agricultural subsoil		
302	Red degraded breccia	0.52m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 4			Length 9.5m	Width 1.80m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
400	Dark red-brown soft silty clay	0-0.15m	Topsoil		
401	Mid red-brown silty loam with common charcoal fragments and gravel. A fragment of clay pipe stem and a sherd of blue on white transfer printed pottery were recovered	0.15-0.45m	Agricultural subsoil		
402	Red degraded breccia	0.45m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 5			Length 20m	Width 1.80m	Alignment NE-SW
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
500	Dark red-brown soft silty clay. A sherd of blue on white transfer printed pottery and a sherd of white industrial china were recovered	0-0.16m	Topsoil		
501	Mid red-brown silty loam. A sherd of green-glazed north Devon gravel-tempered ware, a sherd of blue on white transfer printed pottery, a sherd of white industrial china and an iron bolt were recovered	0.16-0.52m	Agricultural subsoil		
502	Red degraded breccia	0.52m+	Natural subsoil		

APPENDIX 1: TABULATED TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 6			Length 17.5m	Width 1.80m	Alignment NNW-SSE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
600	Dark red-brown soft silty clay	0-0.19m	Topsoil		
601	Mid red-brown silty loam with common gravels	0.19-0.44m	Agricultural subsoil		
602	Red degraded breccia	0.44m+	Natural subsoil		
603	Cut of linear	0.44-0.68m	Ditch		
604	Dark reddish-brown firm silty clay with common small gravels and grit	0.44-0.68m	Fill of F603		

Trench 7			Length 17m	Width 1.80m	Alignment NE-SW
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
700	Dark red-brown soft silty clay	0-0.17m	Topsoil		
701	Mid red-brown silty loam with common gravels	0.17-0.56m	Agricultural subsoil		
702	Red degraded breccia	0.56m+	Natural subsoil		

Devon Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Unit 4, Halthaies Workshops
Bradninch
Nr Exeter
Devon
EX5 4LQ

Telephone/Fax: 01392 882410

Wiltshire Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Manor Farm Stables
Chicklade
Hindon
Nr Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 5SU

Telephone: 01747 820581
Fax: 01747 820440

www.acarchaeology.co.uk