

LAND ADJACENT TO THE BLACKSMITH'S ARMS, PLYMTREE, DEVON

(NGR ST 0525 0288)

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

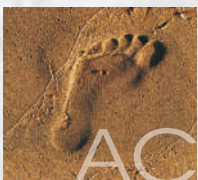
East Devon District Council planning reference
14/1102/FUL, condition 10

Prepared by:
Chris Caine

On behalf of:
Mr James Persey

Document No: ACD972/2/0

Date: July 2015



AC archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Plymtree, East Devon	National Grid Reference ST 0525 0288	Number: (Leave blank for HES to fill in)
Subject: Land Adjacent to the Blacksmith's Arms, Plymtree, Devon		Photo attached? Yes
Planning Application no: EDDC 14/1102/FUL (condition 10)	Recipient museum: N/A	
OASIS ID: 216456	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD972	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 20 April 2015	

Introduction (*Fig 1, Plate 1*)

An archaeological trench evaluation was carried out by AC archaeology on 20 April 2015 on land adjacent to the Blacksmith's Arms, Plymtree. The investigation was the first stage of a programme of archaeological works required under condition 10 of planning consent for a residential development of four dwellings.

The site covers an area of approximately 0.15 hectares and is located in the historic core of the village, adjacent to the Blacksmith's Arms public house, and immediately southeast of the 14th-century parish church of St John the Baptist. It currently comprises a small plot of grass used as a paddock, situated at a height of around 62m aOD. The underlying solid geology comprises mudstone of the Aylesbeare mudstone group.

Results (*Figs 1 and 2, Plates 2 and 3*)

The evaluation was carried out in accordance with an approved project design (Valentin 2014) and comprised the machine excavation of two north-south aligned trenches totalling 45m in length, with each trench measuring 1.6m wide, and. The trenches were positioned to provide sample coverage of the site but with consideration of two electricity cables known to cross the site.

The general layer sequence comprised topsoil (100/200) of mid grey-brown sandy-clay with occasional rounded pebbles measuring up to 0.3m thick, overlying subsoil (101/201) measuring between 0.35m and 0.55m thick, which comprised mid brown clay-loam with occasional rounded pebbles and rare gravel. This sealed the natural (102/202) – a pale yellow-brown clay.

In Trench 1 the natural was encountered at a depth varying between 0.85m at the south end of the trench where the subsoil was deeper, and 0.55m at the north end of the trench where modern landscaping had removed some of the topsoil; it was overlaid by subsoil and topsoil. Three closely-spaced linear features were exposed (103, 105 and F107). All had been cut through the subsoil and early-mid 20th-century pottery was noted on the surface of their fills. Only one feature (F107) was excavated. It was aligned east-west, measured 2.8m wide by 0.85m deep with moderate uneven sides and a narrow concave base (Plate 2; Fig. 2a). It contained a sequence of four fills, some of which produced a small assemblage of late post-medieval and modern pottery as well as plastic fragments. Probable ditch 105 was aligned east-west, measured 0.75m wide, and contained an exposed upper fill of greyish-brown, friable sandy-loam. Probable ditch 103 was aligned northeast-southwest, measured 1.5m wide, and contained an exposed upper fill of dark grey-brown friable sandy-loam.

Trench 2 was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.65m (Plate 3; Fig. 2b), with the natural overlain by subsoil and topsoil. Post-medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil. Two east-west aligned linear probable ditches were exposed (203 and 204); both were unexcavated since they appeared to be continuation of features 105 and F107 recorded in trench 1. Feature 203 contained the poorly-preserved skeleton of a dog.

Discussion

Historic mapping indicates that the site was under cultivation during the later post-medieval period. This was confirmed by the evaluation, with no features, deposits or finds of an earlier date being present. Ditch (F107/204) represents a recorded property boundary separating two fields, which was infilled in the later 20th century when the adjacent Knights Cottage was constructed and its plot enlarged to the north. The other linear features are also of modern date and are probably associated with the use of the site as part of the garden of Knights Cottage.

In summary, there is no archaeological evidence for settlement activity associated with the historic village with all the exposed features dating to the 19th and 20th centuries. The potential for the presence of such material elsewhere in the development site is considered to be low.

This report and the associated OASIS entry represent the archive for the project.

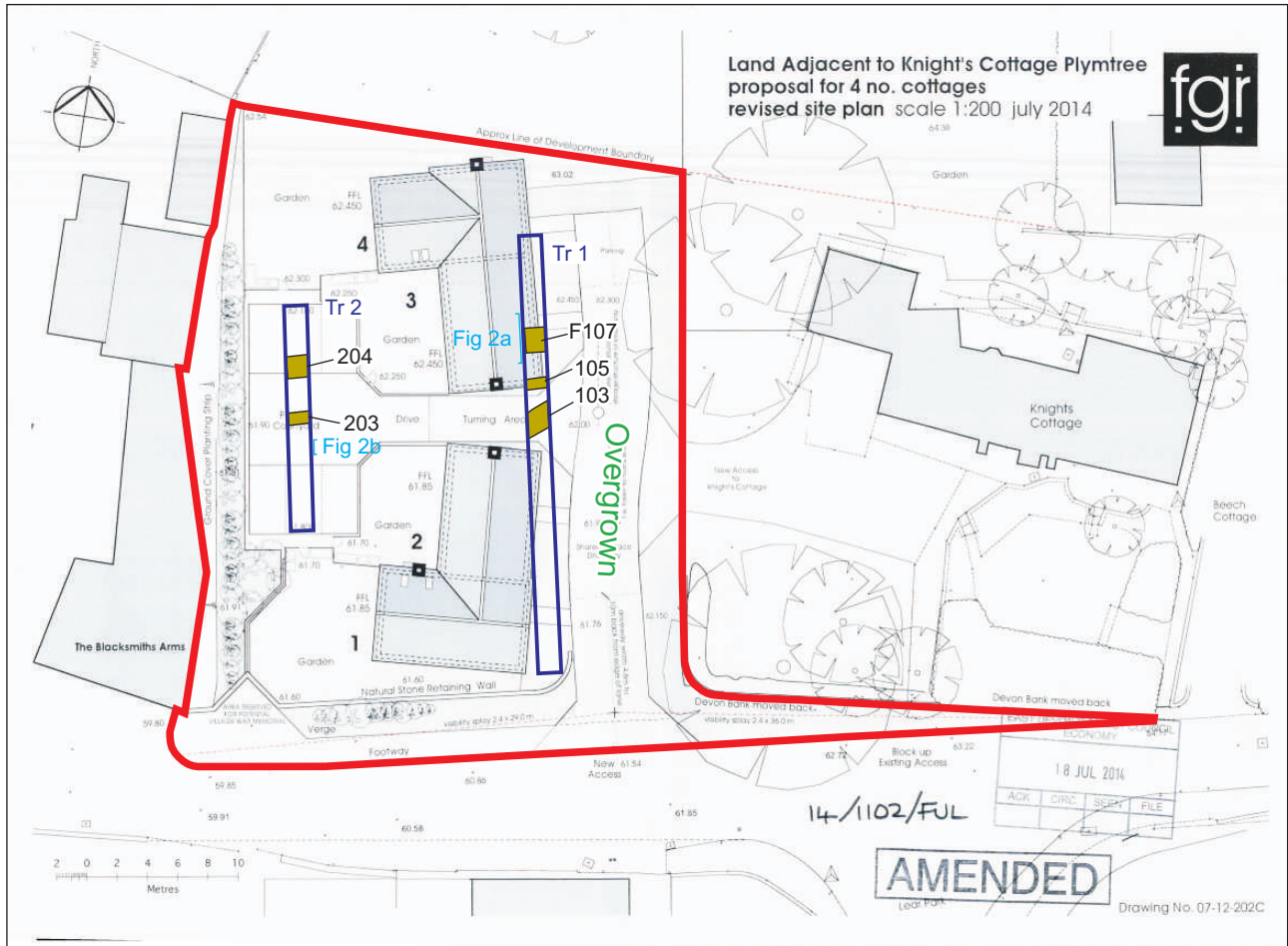
Source Consulted




Valentin, J., 2014, *Land Adjacent to the Blacksmith's Arms, Plymtree, Devon, Centred on NGR ST 0525 0288, Project Design for a First Stage Archaeological Trench Evaluation, Planning Reference: East Devon District Council, 14/1102/FUL (Condition 10)*, AC archaeology Doc. No. **ACD972/1/0**

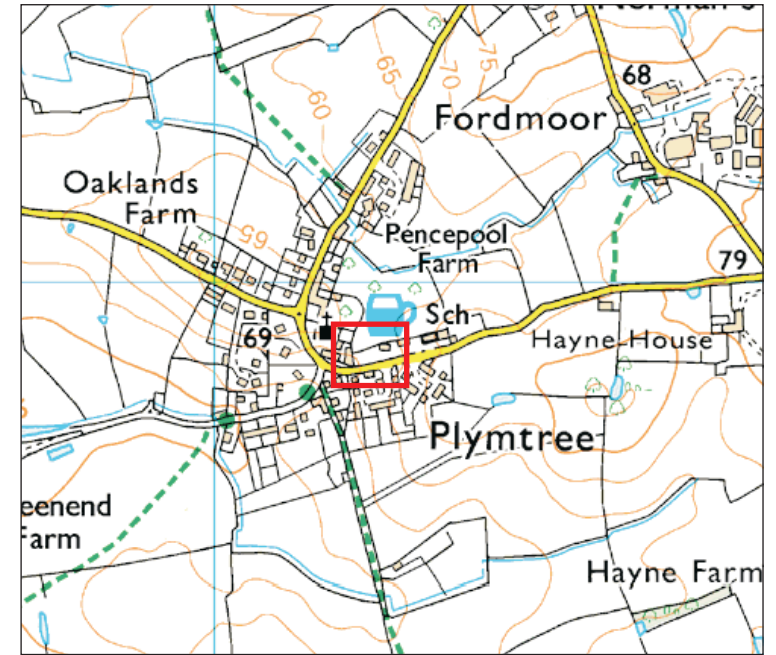
A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.

Recorder: Chris Caine, AC archaeology

Date sent to HER: 2 July 2015



-  Application area
-  Trenches showing features identified
-  Fig 2a Section drawings



PROJECT

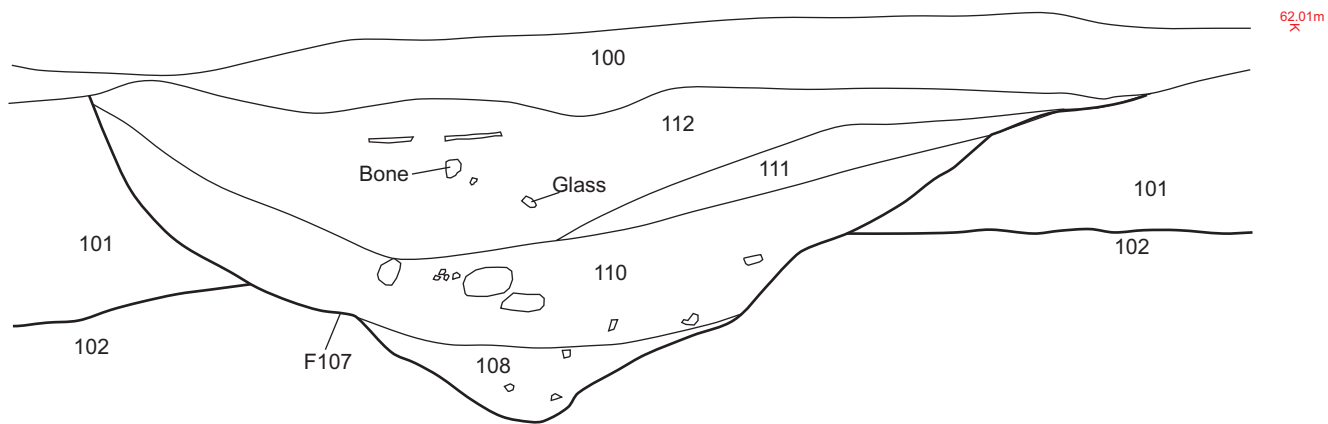
Land Adjacent to the Blacksmith's Arms, Plymtree, East Devon

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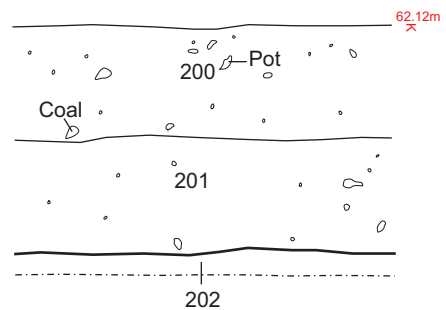
Fig.1: Site location and trench locations showing linear features



a) Section of F107



b) section of trench



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Fig. 2: Sections





Plate 1: General view of site, looking southwest



Plate 2: East facing section through ditch F107, looking west (scale 1m)



Plate 3: Trench 2, looking north (scale 1m)

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