

SAXONS, BROADHAYES CROSS, STOCKLAND, COTLEIGH, DEVON

(NGR ST 22114 02586)

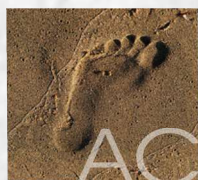
Results of archaeological investigations

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(NGR ST 22114 02586)

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The views and recommendations expressed in this report are those of AC archaeology and are presented in good faith on the basis of professional judgement and on information currently available.

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Summary

Archaeological investigations were carried out by AC archaeology ahead of a proposed planning application on land at Saxons, Broadhayes Cross, Stockland Hill, Cotleigh, Devon (ST 22114 02586). The site lies 1.6km to the east of Cotleigh and comprises an approximately triangular plot occupied by an existing dwelling and associated grounds. The main archaeological interest in the site was its proximity to Stockland Great Castle, a scheduled prehistoric hillfort situated some 350m to the east.

The archaeological work comprised the excavation of a single trial trench and the monitoring of four geotechnical test pits. The excavations exposed simple garden soils overlying the natural subsoil. No archaeological features or deposits were exposed. Two sherds of post-medieval to modern pottery were recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of archaeological investigations on land at Saxons, Broadhayes Cross, Stockland Hill, Cotleigh, Devon (ST 22114 02586). The work was carried out following consultation with the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team out to provide supporting information for a proposed forthcoming planning application for a new dwelling.
- 1.2 Saxons lies 1.6km to the east of Cotleigh and comprises an approximately rectangular a plot bounded to the east by Stockland Hill and occupied by an existing dwelling and associated grounds (Fig. 1). The site lies at around 225m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), with the underlying solid geology comprising sandstone of the Upper Greensand Formation, which is beneath superficial clay, silt, sand and gravel of the Clay-with-flints Formation (British Geological Survey online viewer 2022).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The main archaeological interest in the site is its proximity to Stockland Great Castle, a scheduled prehistoric hillfort, which lies 350m to the east (National Heritage List for England reference 1017952). The Historic England listing describes the monument as:

A prehistoric large univallate hillfort, situated on an east facing slope just below the crest of the long Greensand ridge which lies between the Umborne Brook and the River Yarty. The hillfort has an irregularly shaped interior defended by a single rampart and ditch. A modern road bisects the body of the monument east-west with the greater part of the visible remains standing north of the road. The irregular interior of the hillfort is a maximum 230m east-west by a 270m north-south but the curvature of the defences reduce the available internal area to about 4ha.
- 2.2 The 1840 Stockland parish tithe map shows the site as an undeveloped scrub covered open plot (No. 1778). This is listed in the accompanying tithe apportionment as allotment land with land use as brake.
- 2.3 Archaeological monitoring and recording associated with the creation of new access and parking in the south portion of the site had been previously undertaken (Jones 2022). During this no archaeological features or deposits were exposed.

3. AIMS

- 3.1** The aim of the work was to establish the extent, depth, character and date of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site, with particular reference to evidence for buried remains dating from the prehistoric period. The results from this work will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent mitigation and whether or not the significance and state of any buried archaeological remains is great enough to influence the layout of the proposed development should planning consent be granted.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** All works were undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (both updated 2020). The work comprised the excavation of a single trial trench measuring 14m in length and 1.2m wide. This was positioned to target the footprint of the proposed new dwelling (Fig. 1). The excavation of a total of four geotechnical test pits was also monitored (Test Pits 1-4 on Fig 1). The removal of soils within the trial trench and test pits 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).

5. RESULTS (Fig 1, Plates 2-3)

- 5.1** Natural subsoil, which consisted of a mid-brown silty clay containing common gravel and with occasional cobble inclusions, was exposed in the trial trench (Trench 1 on Fig.1) and the four test pits (Test Pits 1-4) at a depth of between 0.45m and 0.6m below existing levels. It was overlain in Trench 1 and Test Pits 2 and 4 by an approximately 0.25m thick light to mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil with frequent gravel, pebbles and cobble inclusions. The subsoil and the natural subsoil in Test Pits 1 and 3 was overlain by a mid-brown sandy silt loam topsoil.
- 5.2** No archaeological features or deposits were exposed in the trial trench or the geotechnical test pits. Two sherds of post-medieval to modern pottery were recovered from the topsoil in Test Pits 2 and 3.

6. THE FINDS by Naomi Payne

- 6.1** Two small sherds of pottery were recovered from topsoil layers during the investigations. These comprise a base angle from a modern flower pot (6g) from Test Pit 2 and a very small 19th century white ware sherd (0.5g) with blue transfer-printed decoration from Test Pit 3.

7. COMMENTS

- 7.1 The investigations exposed simple garden soils overlying the natural subsoil, with no archaeological features or deposits exposed and only a small quantity of post-medieval to modern pottery sherds recovered.
- 7.2 The main archaeological interest in the site was based on its proximity to Stockland Great Castle, a scheduled prehistoric hillfort, with this some 350m to the east. Due to this proximity, the site was thought to have the potential to contain associated activity in the wider area. The results from the current investigations and from during the previous monitoring and recording (Jones 2022) exposed no evidence for pre-modern activity comprising archaeological features or recovered finds. This suggests that the potential for prehistoric activity within the area covered by the proposed development is unlikely.

8. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 8.1 An online OASIS entry has been completed using the unique identifier **511396**, which includes a digital copy of this report.
- 8.2 This report represents the archive for the project.

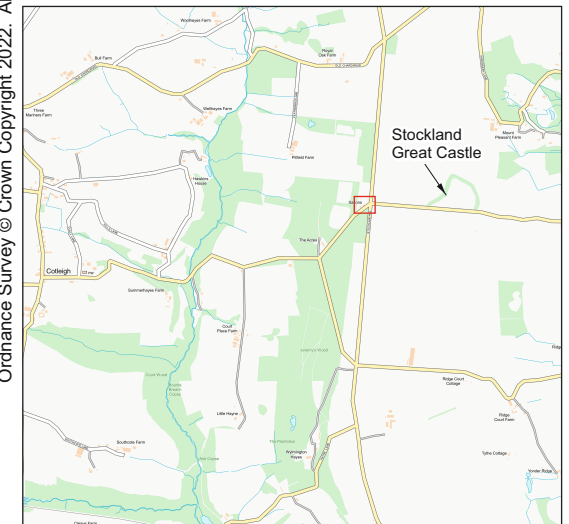
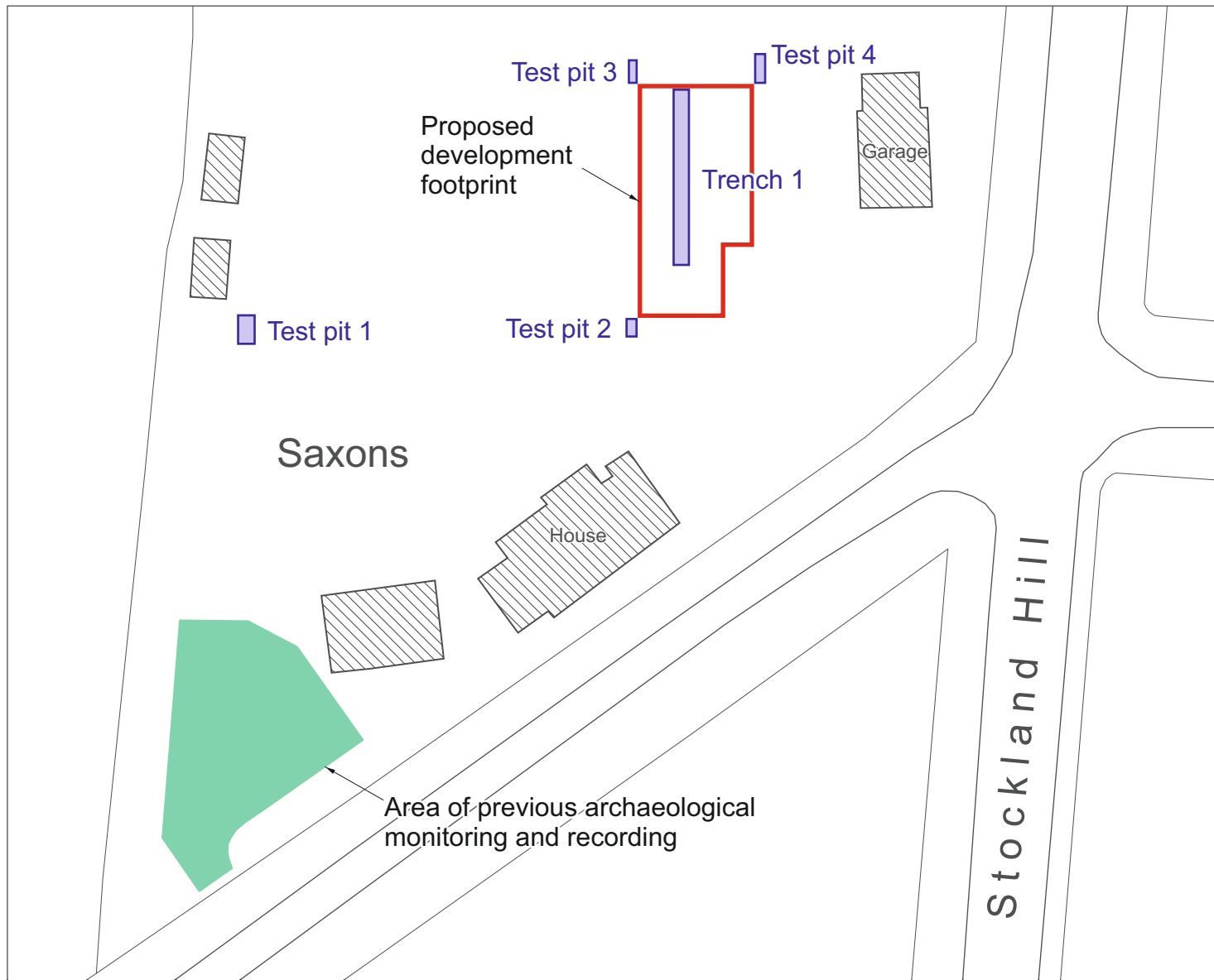
9. SOURCES CONSULTED

British Geological Survey, 2022, online viewer, www.bgs.ac.uk.

Devon County Council Environment Viewer, 2022, Tithe Maps and Apportionments, www.devon.gov.uk/historicenvironment/tithe-map/.

Jones, A., 2022, *Saxons, Broadhayes Cross, Stockland Hill, Cotleigh, Devon: Results of archaeological monitoring and recording*. Unpublished AC archaeology report, ref. ACD2668/2/0

National Heritage List for England, 2022, historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/



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PROJECT
 Saxons, Broadhayes, Cross,
 Stockland Hill, Cotleigh, Devon

TITLE
 Fig. 1: Location of site and proposed
 development footprint with trial
 trench and test pits shown



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Plate 1: General view of site looking south towards Saxons during excavation of Trench 1



Plate 2: Trench 1, view to north (scale 1m)



Plate 3: Trench 1, representative section. View to west (scale 1m)

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