

LAND AT GREENACRE, TROOD LANE, MATFORD, DEVON

(Centred on NGR SX 9260 8884)

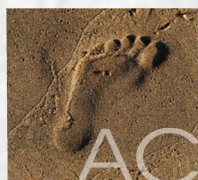
Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

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archaeology

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Checked by	Paul Rainbird
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Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned by the landowner and managed for AC archaeology by Simon Hughes. The site works were carried out by Chris Caine and James Morrison, with the illustrations for this report prepared by Leon Cauchois. The advice of Stephen Reed, Devon County Council Historic Environment Team, is gratefully acknowledged.

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

An archaeological trench evaluation was undertaken by AC archaeology during June 2023 on land at Greenacre, Trood Lane, Matford, Devon (NGR SX 9260 8884). The evaluation comprised the machine excavation of five trenches totalling 75m in length, with each 1.0m wide. These were positioned to target the footprint of a proposed new residential development. The area investigated lay immediately adjacent to a recently recorded Romano-British enclosure.

The trial trench evaluation exposed only post-medieval to modern activity on the site. This comprised thick made ground layers that represented the creation of a terrace dating to around the late 19th to early 20th century and likely associated with the grounds of the adjacent Trood House. A former field boundary ditch relating to a pre-existing field pattern shown on historic mapping was exposed beneath and represented the only archaeological feature present in the trenches. This had been infilled during the later 19th century.

A small assemblage of post-medieval to modern pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe, ceramic building material and animal bone was recovered as well as two residual pieces of worked flint.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trench evaluation was undertaken by AC archaeology during June 2023 on land at Greenacre, Trood Lane, Matford, Devon (NGR SX 9260 8884). The work was undertaken to provide supporting information for a forthcoming planning application for a single dwelling, following consultation with the Devon County Council Historic Environment Team (hereafter DCCHET). The location of the site is shown on Figure 1.
- 1.2 The site is located on the east side of Trood Lane and comprises the north portion of the currently lawn-covered grounds of Greenacre, a detached 20th century dwelling. It is bounded to the north and east by development parcels, with Trood House and grounds to the south. The site lies on flat ground at 24m aOD (above Ordnance Datum) and above a break of slope down towards a tributary stream valley of the Matford Brook to the east. The underlying geology comprises breccia of the Heavitree Breccia Formation (British Geological Survey Online Viewer 2023).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located within an area where extensive archaeological investigations associated with residential and mixed use development comprising land south west of Exeter have been undertaken. One area consisting of an open area excavation was located immediately to the east of the site (Fig. 1). The investigations recorded a square triple-ditched enclosure that probably surrounded a farmstead of Romano-British date (AC archaeology forthcoming). This had previously been identified from cropmarks shown on an aerial photograph (Devon County Council Historic Environment Record reference MDV37440). The majority of the enclosure was present within the area covered by the previous works, while its western extent is projected as crossing into the current site. Within the exposed internal portion of the enclosure was a number of ovens and the remains of a small timber structure, probably representing an ancillary building. As well as the Romano-British enclosure, evidence for prehistoric

activity was also recorded and consisted of the remains of an Iron Age roundhouse positioned immediately to the northeast of the Greenacre plot.

- 2.2** The 1842 Exminster parish tithe map shows the site as having been previously bisected by an approximately east to west boundary. This separated two wider fields of which the one to the south is shown as partially occupied by Trood House. This field pattern is then shown as modified by the 1888 First-Edition 25-inch Ordnance Survey map. On this the boundary is depicted as having been removed and a new one established that is consistent with the current north boundary to the plot. Despite this modification, the map includes a line of retained trees marking the line of the removed boundary. By the 1906 Second-Edition, the tree line is absent and the addition of the current east boundary to the site has been created. This new area was presumably associated with the immediate grounds of Trood House as it is depicted as having an access from its courtyard.

3. AIMS

- 3.1** The main aim of the work was to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character, date and significance of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site, with particular reference to the presence of any archaeological features, deposits or artefacts relating to any Romano-British or prehistoric remains that may relate to the adjacent enclosure. The results of the work will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent mitigation and whether or not the significance and state of survival of any buried archaeological remains is great enough to influence the layout of the proposed scheme should planning consent be obtained.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design prepared by AC archaeology (Hughes 2023), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' guidelines, *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation* (revised 2020) and the DCHET document *Specification for Field Evaluation*. It comprised the machine excavation of five trenches totalling 75m in length, with each 1.0m wide (Fig. 1). These were positioned to target areas of the site that would be impacted on by the proposed development.
- 4.2** All trenches were located with a Leica Net rover GPS accurate to 1cm. The removal of soils within the trenches was undertaken in 20cm spits (maximum) under the control and direction of the site archaeologist. Stripping by mechanical excavator ceased at the level at which archaeological deposits or natural subsoil was exposed.
- 4.3** 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 and plans were produced at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20, while all site levels relate to Ordnance Datum.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Introduction (Plan Fig. 1; Plate 1)

An archaeological feature was present in Trench 3. The trench containing a feature is described in detail below with tabulated context descriptions for all the trenches

provided in Appendix 1. Context numbers are prefixed by the relevant trench number (e.g. 100 for Trench 1, 300 for Trench 3 etc.).

5.2 Natural subsoil, which comprised mid red sandy clay with angular gravel to cobble inclusions was exposed at a depth of between 0.97m and 1.57m below the ground surface and was overlain by subsoil, layers of made ground and garden topsoil.

5.3 Trench 3 (*Detailed plan Fig. 2a and sections Figs 2b-c; Plates 2-3*)

This was located in the western part of the site and positioned to target the footprint of the proposed new dwelling and driveway. Natural subsoil (context 304) was exposed at a depth of 1.0m below the ground surface and was overlain by subsoil (303), two layers of modern made ground (302 and 301) and garden topsoil (300). The trench contained one probable ditch (F305).

5.4 Ditch F305

Ditch F305 was approximately east to west aligned and was partially exposed. Its base was not exposed but it had a moderately steep south side and contained a light brownish red silty sand fill (306) with rare angular gravel inclusions. A sherd of pottery and a shard from a glass vessel were recovered from ditch fill 306. These were both of approximate 19th century date.

6. THE FINDS *By Naomi Payne and Charlotte Coles*

6.1 Introduction

All finds recovered on site during the evaluation have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. They have been quantified according to material type within each context and the assemblage examined to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. The small collection of finds, which were hand-excavated from four of the five evaluation trenches, is summarised in Table 1 below. Most of the finds are post-medieval to modern in date and are of low significance. A Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Level 1 type (descriptive) report as per their online guidance *Toolkit for Specialist Reporting* is therefore considered appropriate.

Table 1. Summary of finds by context (weights in grams)

Trench	Context	Context description	Lithics		Post-medieval pottery		Glass		Clay tobacco-pipe		CBM		Animal bone	
			No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt	No.	Wt
1	100	Trench 1 topsoil			4	83	1	14	1	3	2	45 1		
3	306	Fill of ditch F305			1	137	1	6						
4	403	Trench 4 subsoil											24	25 3
5	500	Trench 1 topsoil	2	203					1	4				
5	503	Trench 5 made ground layer									3	16 2	1	14
Totals			2	203	5	220	2	20	2	7	5	61 3	25	26 7

6.2 Lithics by Naomi Payne

Two pieces (203g) of worked flint/chert were recovered from the topsoil in Trench 5. They include a single platform core of chert with nodule cortex on one side and a probable broken primary flint flake with pebble cortex. These are both quite battered and have presumably been rolled during ploughing.

6.3 Post-medieval/modern pottery by Naomi Payne

Five sherds (220g) of 18th to 19th century pottery were recovered from two contexts. The topsoil in Trench 1 produced a white ware jar base angle with the following stamped lettering: 'MA[...]/N[...]' on the underside, a base angle sherd from a second jar with blue transfer-printed decoration and two body sherds of plain white ware. In addition ditch F305 fill 306 contained a base sherd from a large internally-glazed earthenware vessel of South Somerset type.

6.4 Glass by Charlotte Coles

Two pieces (20g) of glass were recovered from two contexts. These comprise a shard of 19th or early 20th century bottle glass with the letters '[..]OTT[..]' embossed on the side from Trench 1 topsoil, and a shard from a clear hexagonal bottle of similar date from ditch F305 fill 306.

6.5 Clay tobacco pipe by Charlotte Coles

Two pieces (7g) of clay tobacco-pipe were recovered from the topsoil in Trenches 1 and 5. These are both undatable and undecorated stem pieces.

6.6 CBM by Naomi Payne

Five pieces (613g) of post-medieval to modern ceramic building material were recovered from two contexts in Trenches 1 and 5. From topsoil in Trench 1 there was an unglazed floor tile fragment with a thickness of 20mm and a small piece of brick. From made ground layer 503 in Trench 5 there were two pieces of modern glazed wall tile (one plain light olive green and the other mottled and textured brown) and a small piece of pantile.

6.7 Animal bone by Charlotte Coles

A total of 25 pieces of animal bone (267g) were recovered. These comprise 24 pieces of pig bone from subsoil in Trench 4 and a single pig humerus from made ground layer 503. The bones from Trench 4 subsoil include part of a maxilla, a mandible, loose teeth, a scapula and several vertebrae. These are all from the same animal, which was aged between 17 and 19 months old at time of death. There are no butchery marks present on the bones.

7. DISCUSSION

7.1 The trial trench evaluation established the presence of a deep sequence of layers overlying the natural subsoil, which was present at a depth of between c.1m and 1.6m below existing levels. This sequence included thick dumps of imported made ground that sealed buried soils and was overlain by the current garden soil. The made ground was thicker towards the east thereby forming a flat platform against the natural gradient. Based on the historic mapping, the creation of the platform is likely to have taken place around 1900, which is supported by the date of the recovered finds. The function of the terrace is unknown, but based on the mapping and proximity of Trood House to the south, it is likely that it represented part of its immediate grounds.

7.2 Ditch F305 was the only archaeological feature present within the trial trenches. Although only partially exposed, it was likely to represent a ditch, which from finds

recovered was infilled around the later 19th century. Its position broadly corresponds with the location of the historic boundary shown on the 1842 Exminster parish tithe map and is therefore likely to represent this feature.

- 7.3 Although in close proximity to known prehistoric and Romano-British occupation there was no evidence for further activity exposed. The recovery of the two abraded worked flints from topsoil reflects only the general known activity in the vicinity of the site.

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The trial trench evaluation only exposed post-medieval to modern activity on the site. This comprised thick made ground layers that comprised the creation of a terrace in around 1900 and likely associated with the grounds of the adjacent Trood House. This represented a modification of land use from formally agricultural fields as shown on 19th century mapping. A former field boundary ditch of this earlier field pattern was exposed and comprised the only archaeological feature present in the trenches. Historic mapping and finds recovered showed that the boundary was infilled during the later 19th century.

- 8.2 Despite the location of the site as immediately adjacent to the site of prehistoric settlement and a Romano-British enclosure, no evidence for a continuation of this activity was exposed within the areas of proposed development tested by the trial trenches. The trenches have demonstrated that there is also a 1m to 1.5m thick modern deposit sequence overlying the natural subsoil. Based on these results there is a low potential that the proposed development will impact on pre-modern archaeological features or deposits.

9. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 9.1 An online OASIS entry has been completed using the unique identifier **516931**, which will include a digital copy of the final report.

- 9.2 This report represents the archive for the project.

10. SOURCES CONSULTED

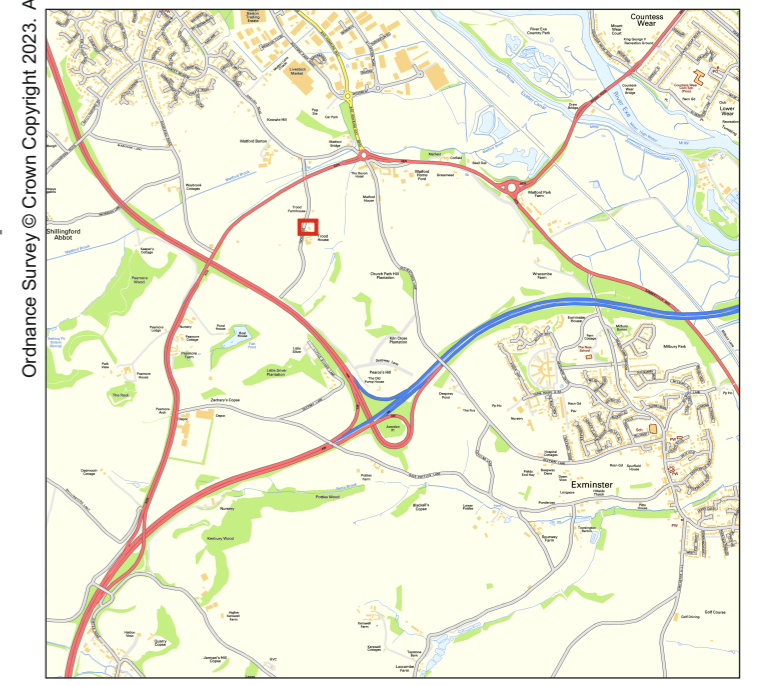
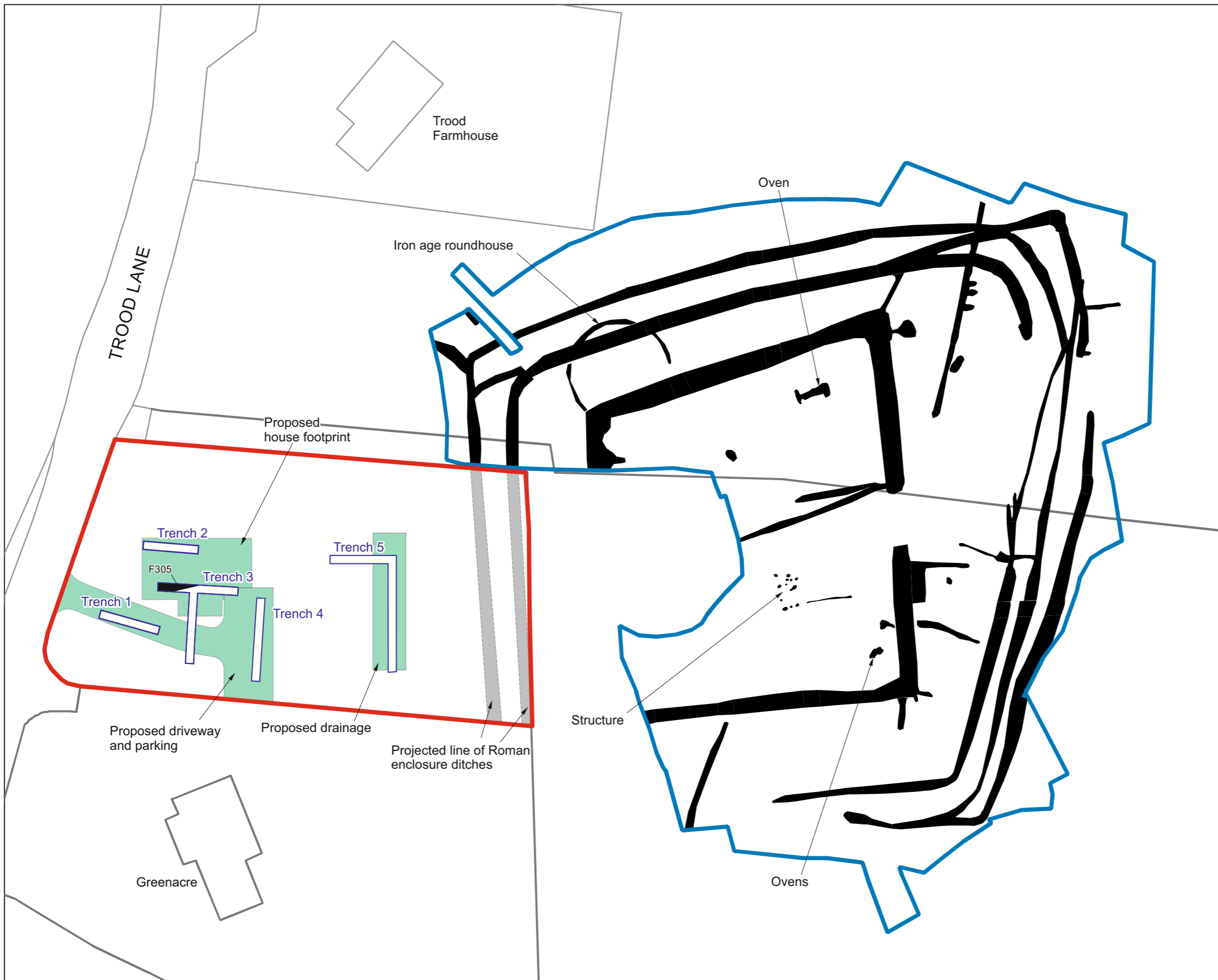
British Geological Survey Online Viewer, 2023, www.bgs.ac.uk.

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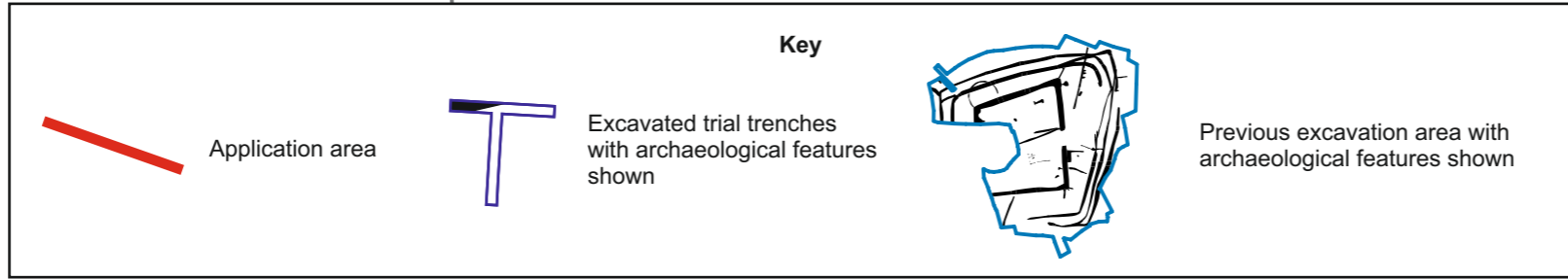
www.archaeologists.net/reporting-toolkit/using-the-advisory-checklist

DCC 2023, Devon County Council Environment Viewer Environmental maps - Environment (devon.gov.uk)

Hughes, S., 2023, *Land at Greenacre, Trood Lane, Matford, Devon: Project Design for an archaeological trench evaluation*. Unpublished AC archaeology document, ref. ACD2964/1/0



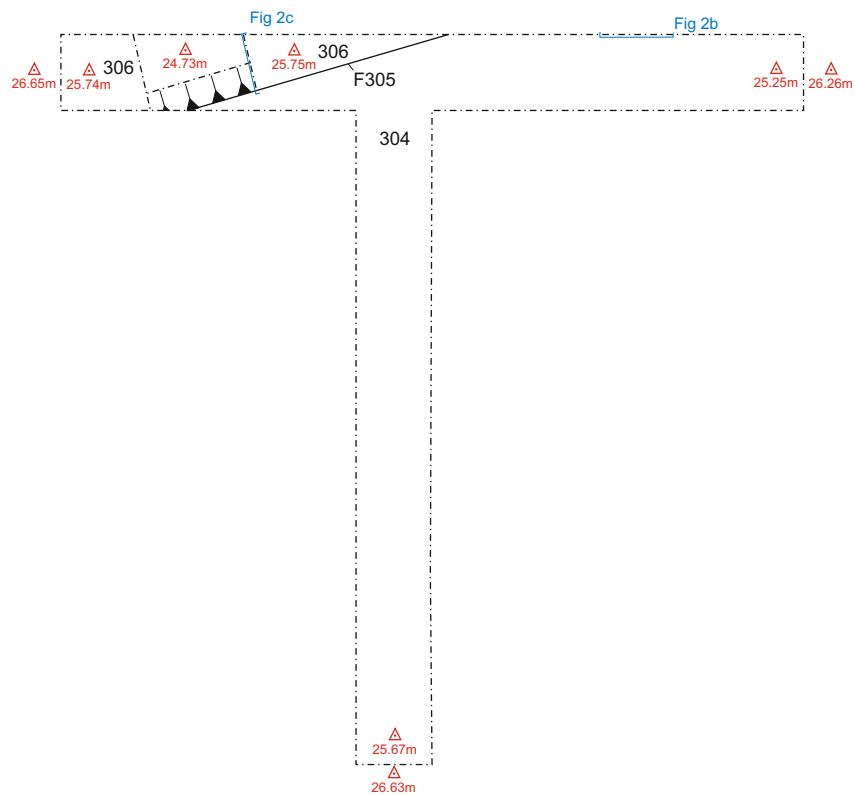
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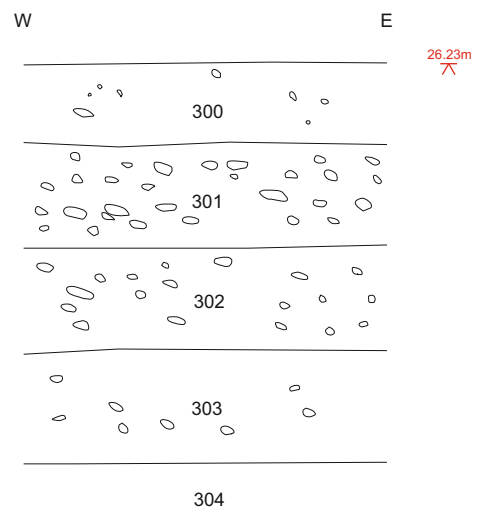
PROJECT
Land at Greenacre, Trood Lane, Exeter, Devon

TITLE
Fig. 1: Location of site and trial trenches with archaeological features shown in relation to proposed development plan and previous archaeological excavation

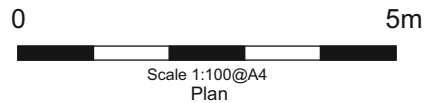
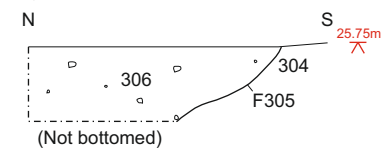
a) Plan of Trench 3



b) Representative section of Trench 3



c) Section of ditch F305



PROJECT

Land at Greenacre, Trood Lane,
Exeter, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 2: Trench 3, plan and sections





Plate 1: General view of site looking southwest towards Greenacre with Trench 5 in foreground

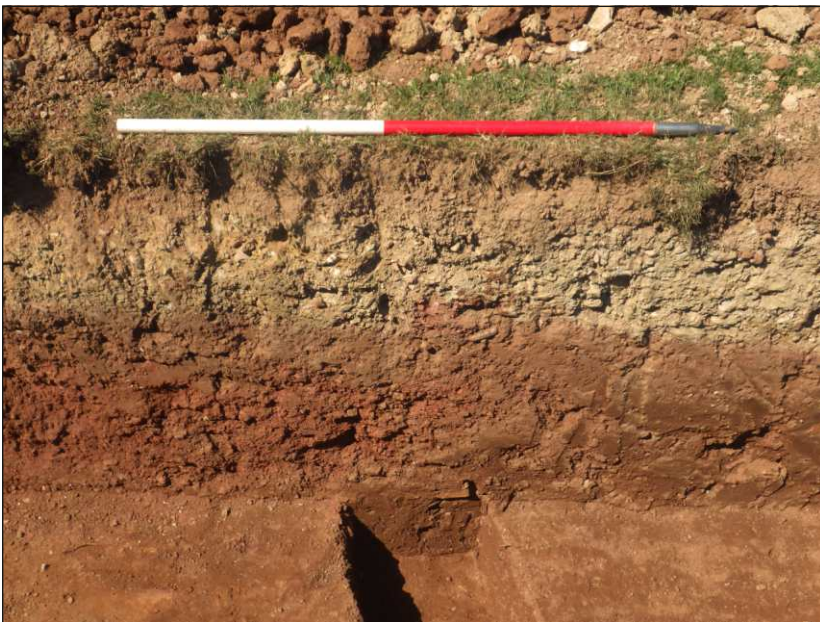


Plate 2: Trench 3 view of trench with F305, looking east (1m scale)



Plate 3: Trench 3, ditch F305. View to east (scale 0.5m)

Appendix 1

Tabulated context descriptions by trench



APPENDIX 1: TABULATED CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS BY TRENCH

Trench 1		Length 7.5m	Width 1.0m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth b.g.s.	Interpretation	
100	Mid greyish brown sandy clay loam	0-0.16m	Topsoil	
101	Mid greyish yellow clay	0.16m-0.35m	Made ground	
102	Dark brownish red sandy silt loam	0.35-0.75m	Made ground	
103	Light brownish red silty sand	0.75m-1.00m	Subsoil	
104	Mid red sandy clay with occasional angular gravel to cobble inclusions	1.00m+	Natural subsoil	

Trench 2		Length 10m	Width 1.0m	Alignment E-W
Context	Description	Depth b.g.s.	Interpretation	
200	Mid greyish brown sandy clay loam	0-0.12m	Topsoil	
201	Mid greyish yellow clay	0.12m-0.44m	Made ground	
202	Dark brownish red sand silt loam	0.44-0.76m	Made ground	
203	Light brownish red silt sand	0.76m-0.98m	Subsoil	
204	Mid red sandy clay with occasional angular gravel to cobble inclusions	0.98m+	Natural subsoil	

Trench 3		Length 20m "T" shape	Width 1.0m	Alignment N-S / E-W
Context	Description	Depth b.g.s.	Interpretation	
300	Mid greyish brown sandy clay loam	0-0.22m	Topsoil	
301	Mid greyish yellow clay	0.22m-0.50m	Made up Ground	
302	Dark brownish red sandy silt loam	0.50-0.68m	Made up Ground	
303	Light brownish red silty sand	0.68m-0.97m	Subsoil	
304	Mid red sandy clay with occasional angular gravel to cobble inclusions	0.97m+	Natural subsoil	
F305	Linear feature approximately E-W aligned, not fully exposed and not fully excavated due to depth	0.97-1.17m+	Cut of ditch	
306	Light brownish red silty sand	0.97-1.17m_	Fill of F305	

Trench 4		Length 10m	Width 1.0m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Depth b.g.s.	Interpretation	
400	Mid greyish brown sandy clay loam	0-0.20m	Topsoil	
401	Mid greyish yellow clay	0.20m-0.33m	Made ground	
402	Dark brownish red sandy silt loam	0.33-0.90m	Made ground	
403	Light red silty sand	0.90m-1.40m	Subsoil	
404	Mid red sandy clay with occasional angular gravel to cobble inclusions	1.40m+	Natural subsoil	

Trench 5		Length 25m "L" shape	Width 1.0m	Alignment N-S / E-W
Context	Description	Depth b.g.s.	Interpretation	
500	Mid greyish brown sandy clay loam	0-0.17m	Topsoil	
501	Mid greyish yellow clay	0.17m-0.41m	Made up Ground	
502	Dark brownish red sand silt loam	0.41-0.83m	Made up Ground	
503	Mid greyish yellow clay	0.83m-1.15m	Made up Ground	
504	Dark brownish red sandy silt loam	1.15-1.28m	Buried topsoil	
505	Light red silty sand	1.28m-1.57m	Subsoil	
506	Mid red sandy clay with occasional angular gravel to cobble inclusions	1.57m+	Natural subsoil	

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