

An archaeological trench evaluation on land at Ashleigh Way, Langage Business Park, Plympton, Devon

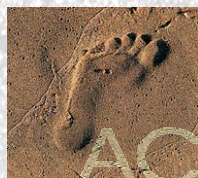
Centred on NGR SX56195571

Prepared by:
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Commissioned by:
Emeris Construction Ltd

Document No: ACD92/2/0

Date: September 2009



archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Sparkwell, South Hams	National Grid Reference SX 56195571	Number:
Subject: An archaeological trench evaluation on land at Ashleigh Way, Langage Business Park		Photo attached Plates 1 & 2
Planning Application no: 49/2535/07/F	Recipient museum: Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery	
OASIS ID: 64439	Museum Accession no: AR.2009.15	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD92	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 28 August 2009	

Introduction (Fig. 1)

An archaeological trench evaluation was carried out by AC archaeology in advance of groundworks associated with the construction of seven office units. The work was commissioned by Emeris Construction Ltd.

The site lies within a single c. 0.65 hectare pasture field located on ground that slopes gently down to the north. The underlying solid geology comprises Middle Devonian slates. An initial desk-based assessment for the scheme (Scott Wilson 2007) established that in the immediate vicinity there are a small number of medieval and later sites. Subsequent investigations at Langage Energy Park identified a number of prehistoric sites, including Bronze Age ring ditches and Iron Age enclosures. A geophysical survey of the site (Stratascan 2007) recorded a series of features of possible archaeological origin, including north-south aligned linear anomalies and possible pits (Fig. 1).

Methodology

The evaluation comprised the machine-excavation of two trenches, each 25m long and 1.6m wide (Plate 1). These were positioned to target some of the anomalies identified during the earlier geophysical survey (Fig. 1). All excavations were carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket and working under constant archaeological supervision.

Results (Fig. 2, Plate 2)

Both trenches were excavated onto natural subsoil present at a depth of between 0.5-0.6m. The recorded layer sequence is described in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Depth (below ground surface)	Description	Interpretation
0-0.3m	Mid brown soft silty clay with frequent small sub-angular slate fragments <0.01m	Topsoil
0.3-0.5m/0/6m	Light-mid reddish-brown soft silty clay with frequent small sub-angular slate fragments <0.01m	Agricultural subsoil
0.5m/0.6m+	Light yellowish-brown clay with abundant slate fragments	Natural subsoil

Trench 1 contained an approximate N-S aligned linear ditch feature (F104), located towards its western end. This was present at a depth of 0.6m below ground level and cut through natural subsoil (102). It was 1.1m wide, 0.5m deep and had moderate to steep-sloping sides and a rounded base. It contained a single mid reddish-brown silty clay fill (103) with frequent slate fragments. No finds were recovered. The ditch is one of the anomalies identified during the earlier geophysical survey. No further archaeological features or finds were present in either trench.

Comments

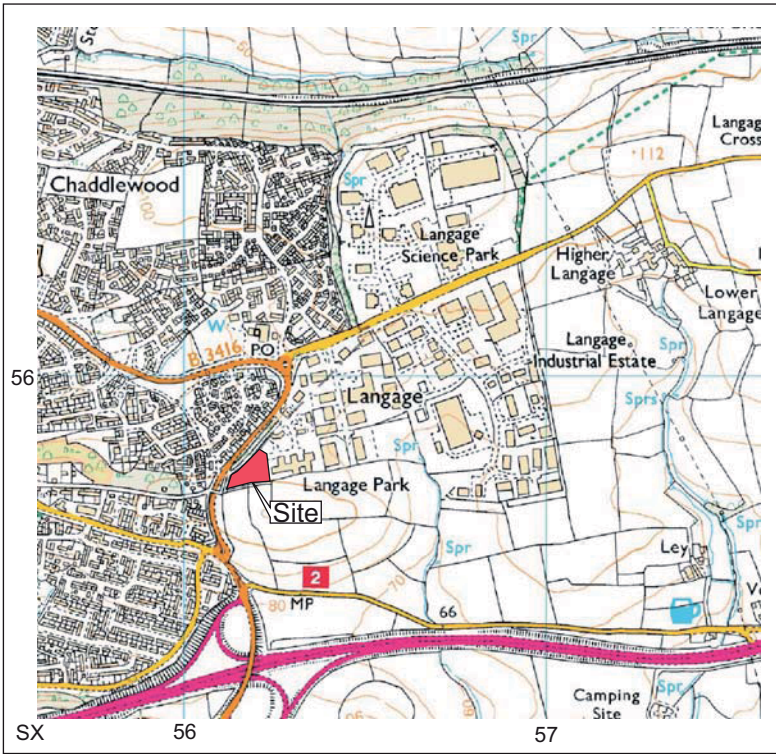
The evaluation has confirmed the presence of an undated linear ditch in Trench 1 which was previously identified during the geophysical survey. This is likely to represent a former field boundary and/or drainage ditch. Other anomalies identified by the geophysical survey were confirmed as variations within the natural subsoil. Based on the results of this work and the earlier geophysical survey, it is considered unlikely that groundworks associated with the development will impact upon any additional buried archaeological features or deposits.

References






Scott Wilson, 2007, *Land at Langage Park, Plympton, Devon: Archaeological appraisal*. Unpublished client report.
Stratascan, 2007, *Geophysical survey report, Langage Park, Plympton*. Report no. J2412.

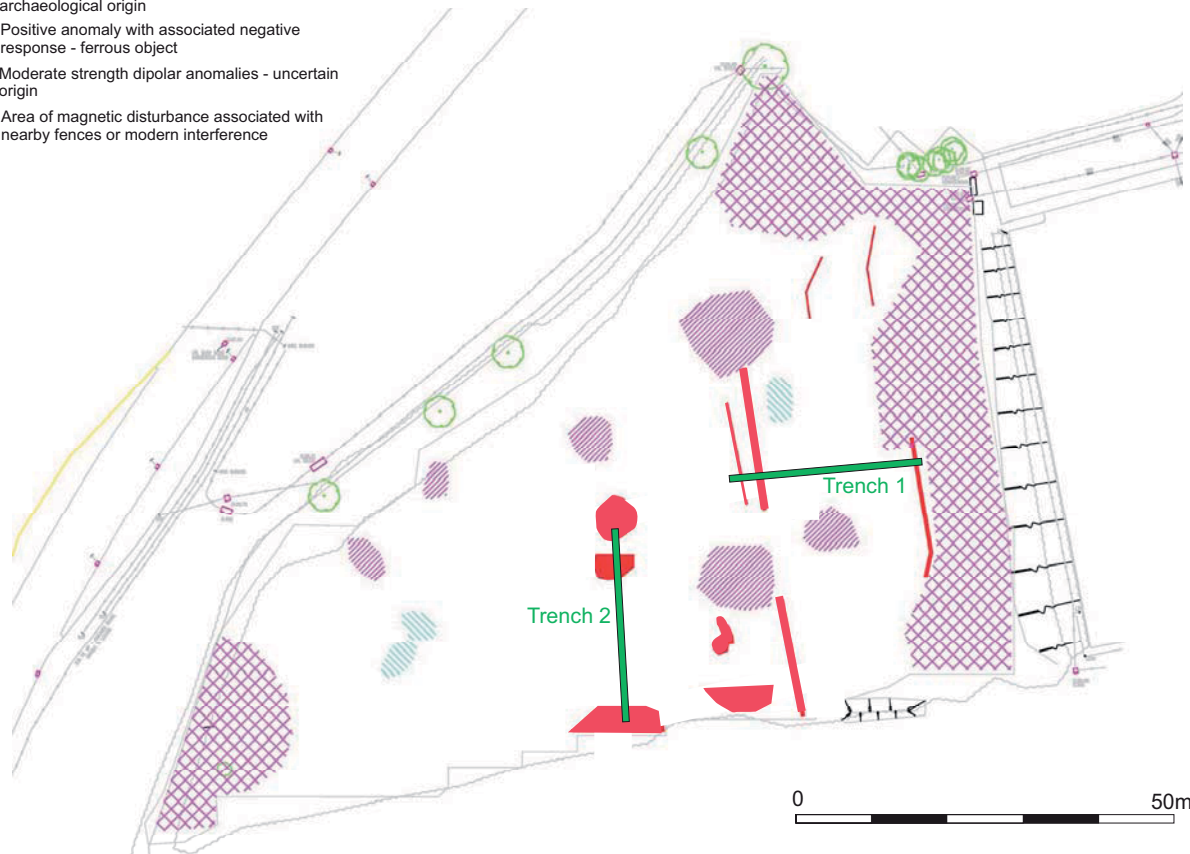
Recorder: R.I.Sims, AC archaeology

Date sent to HER: 17 September 2009



Key to geophysics results:

-  Positive linear anomaly - cut feature of possible archaeological origin
-  Positive area anomaly - cut feature of possible archaeological origin
-  Positive anomaly with associated negative response - ferrous object
-  Moderate strength dipolar anomalies - uncertain origin
-  Area of magnetic disturbance associated with nearby fences or modern interference



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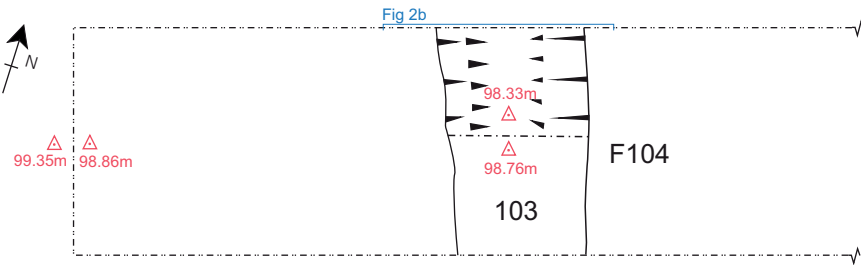
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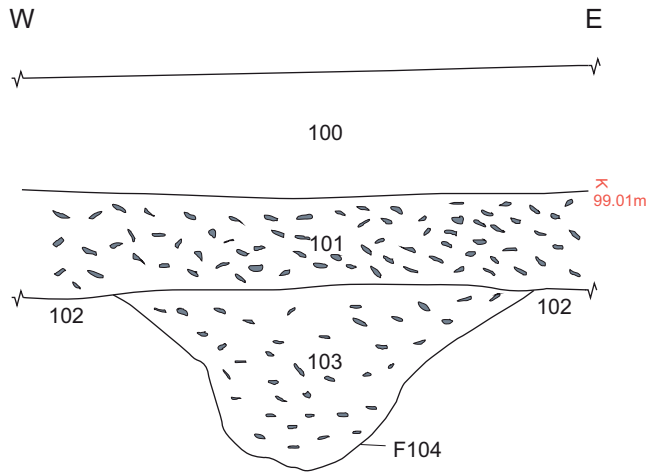
Fig. 1:
Site and trench location

Trench 1

a) Plan



b) Section



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Fig. 2
Plan and section, Trench 1





Plate 1: General view of site, looking to northeast



Plate 2: Section of ditch F104, Trench 1, looking to north (scale 1m)