

The Barton, North Tawton, Devon

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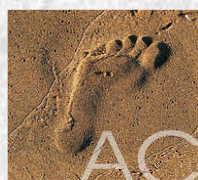
Results of an archaeological trench evaluation Scheduled Monument 10384

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On behalf of:
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THE BARTON, NORTH TAWTON, DEVON (NGR: SS6596000045)

Scheduled Monument 10384

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

CONTENTS

	Summary	1
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Archaeological background	1
3.	Aims and objectives	1
4.	Methodology	2
5.	Results	2
6.	Comments	3
7.	Archive and OASIS	3
8.	Acknowledgements	3
9.	References	3

List of figures

Fig. 1: Site location and position of proposed barn in relation to RCHM(E) plot of cropmarks (from Welfare and Swan 1995) with the addition of three ring ditches omitted from the published plan (shown in red) and scheduled areas (green)

Fig. 2: Location of trenches

Fig. 3: Plan and sections, Trenches 1, 2 and 3

List of plates

Plate 1: View of Trench 1 from the east

Plate 2: General View of Trench 2 from the south

Plate 3 View of Trench 3 from the east

Plate 4 View of north facing section, Trench 3, from the northeast

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, consisting of three machine-excavated trenches, was undertaken by AC archaeology Ltd, within Scheduled Monument 10384, on land at The Barton, North Tawton, Devon in August 2010. The work was undertaken in support of a planning application for the construction of a new agricultural building and was required by English Heritage as part of an application for Scheduled Monument Consent, and was carried out in accordance with a Class 7 Ancient Monuments (Class Consent) Order, 1994. Scheduled Monument 10384 comprises a complex of Romano-British military enclosures, including two forts and two marching camps. Only modern disturbance associated with the adjacent railway viaduct was encountered, with no evidence for any earlier archaeological activity or artefacts present.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document sets out the results of an archaeological trench evaluation on land at The Barton, North Tawton, Devon (SS6596000045). The work was commissioned by Exbourne Planning Services on behalf of the site owner Mr N. Dunn. The location of the site is shown on Fig. 1.
- 1.2 The evaluation was undertaken in order to provide supporting information for a planning application for the proposed construction of a single agricultural building. It was required by English Heritage as part of an application for Scheduled Monument Consent (case no. S00004873/P00077695), and was undertaken in accordance with a Class 7 Ancient Monuments (Class Consent) Order, 1994.
- 1.3 The proposed new building is situated on agricultural land under grass, and is adjacent to and on the north side of the Okehampton to Crediton railway line viaduct. It lies at around 125mOD and the underlying geology comprising Permian Bow Conglomerates underlying alluvial clay and gravels.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site lies within Scheduled Monument 10384, part of a complex of Romano-British military enclosures, comprising two forts and two marching camps. Other designated heritage assets recorded near the site comprise possible prehistoric enclosures and ring ditches, situated on the east bank of the River Taw.
- 2.2 Approximately 60m to the northeast of the proposed barn is a possible Romano-British building interpreted from aerial photographic analysis. This could comprise a three room structure with a corridor on its southern side.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The main aim of the evaluation was to provide sufficient information to English Heritage in order that a decision on the granting of Scheduled Monument Consent can be made for the construction of the new agricultural building.
- 3.2 The main objective was to determine, as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present on the site, as dictated by current best practice.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The investigation comprised the excavation of three trenches totaling 40m in length, with each 1.6m wide and positioned across the footprint of the proposed new building (Fig. 2). All soil removal was undertaken under the control and direction of the Site Archaeologist. Topsoil and overburden were removed by mechanical excavator, using a wide toothless bucket, and ceased at the level at which archaeological deposits or natural subsoil was exposed.
- 4.2 The trenches were recorded using the full range of the standard AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system. All site levels relate to Ordnance Survey datum.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1 (Plate 1; Section Fig. 3a)

This trench was 10m long and was excavated to a maximum depth of 150mm, before natural subsoil was revealed. No archaeological features or artefacts were present. The recorded layer sequence is summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Trench depositional layer sequence

Context	Depth b.g.s.	Description	Interpretation
100	0 – 150mm	Mid brown silty clay loam	Topsoil
101	150mm+	Yellowish-red clay and gravels	Natural subsoil

5.2 Trench 2 (Plate 2; Section, Fig. 3b)

This trench was 20m long and was excavated to a maximum depth of 150mm, before natural subsoil was revealed. No archaeological features or artefacts were present. The recorded layer sequence is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Trench depositional layer sequence

Context	Depth b.g.s.	Description	Interpretation
200	0 – 150mm	Mid brown silty clay loam	Topsoil
201	150mm+	Yellowish-red clay and gravels	Natural subsoil

5.3 Trench 3 (Plates 3 and 4; Plan Fig. 3c; Section Fig. 3d)

The trench was situated closest to the adjacent railway viaduct. It was 10m long and excavated to a maximum depth of 300mm through a spread of modern material, before natural subsoil was revealed. Further modern disturbance was present at the eastern extent of the trench. No pre-modern archaeological features or artefacts were present. The recorded deposit sequence is summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Trench depositional layer sequence

Context	Depth b.g.s.	Description	Interpretation
300	0 – 300mm max	Layer of grassed over rounded gravels/stone cobbles	Modern layer probably associated with adjacent railway line maintenance or construction
301	300 – 500mm+	Redeposited natural clay containing common fragments of industrial brick, tile and cinder pieces	Fill of deposit probably associated with adjacent railway line maintenance or construction
302	300 – 500mm+	Gentle sloping, broad cut – not fully excavated	Modern cut probably associated with adjacent railway line maintenance or construction
303	300mm+	Mixed yellow/light grey/red clay and gravels	Natural subsoil

6. COMMENTS

- 6.1** The barn will be situated within a scheduled monument containing remains dating to the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. No such evidence was identified within the trenches, with those furthest away from the railway viaduct containing wholly negative results. In Trench 3, nearest the railway, a modern cut and associated deposits were found, with these probably relating to either the initial construction or later maintenance of the railway line.
- 6.2** The good trench coverage and the absence of any early features or finds indicates that the construction of the new barn will not impact on any buried pre-modern archaeological remains.

7. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 7.1** The paper and digital archive and finds are currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ. They will be deposited at Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter under the accession code 141/2010. The OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations) number for this project is 81251.


8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The evaluation was commissioned by Ian Little of Exbourne Planning Services on behalf of the site owner, Mr N. Dunn. The site trial trenching was carried out by Steve Robinson and Dan Carter and the illustrations for this report were prepared by Sarah Cottam. The advice and collaboration of Nick Russell, English Heritage Inspector and Cressida Whitton, Devon Archaeology Officer, is duly acknowledged.

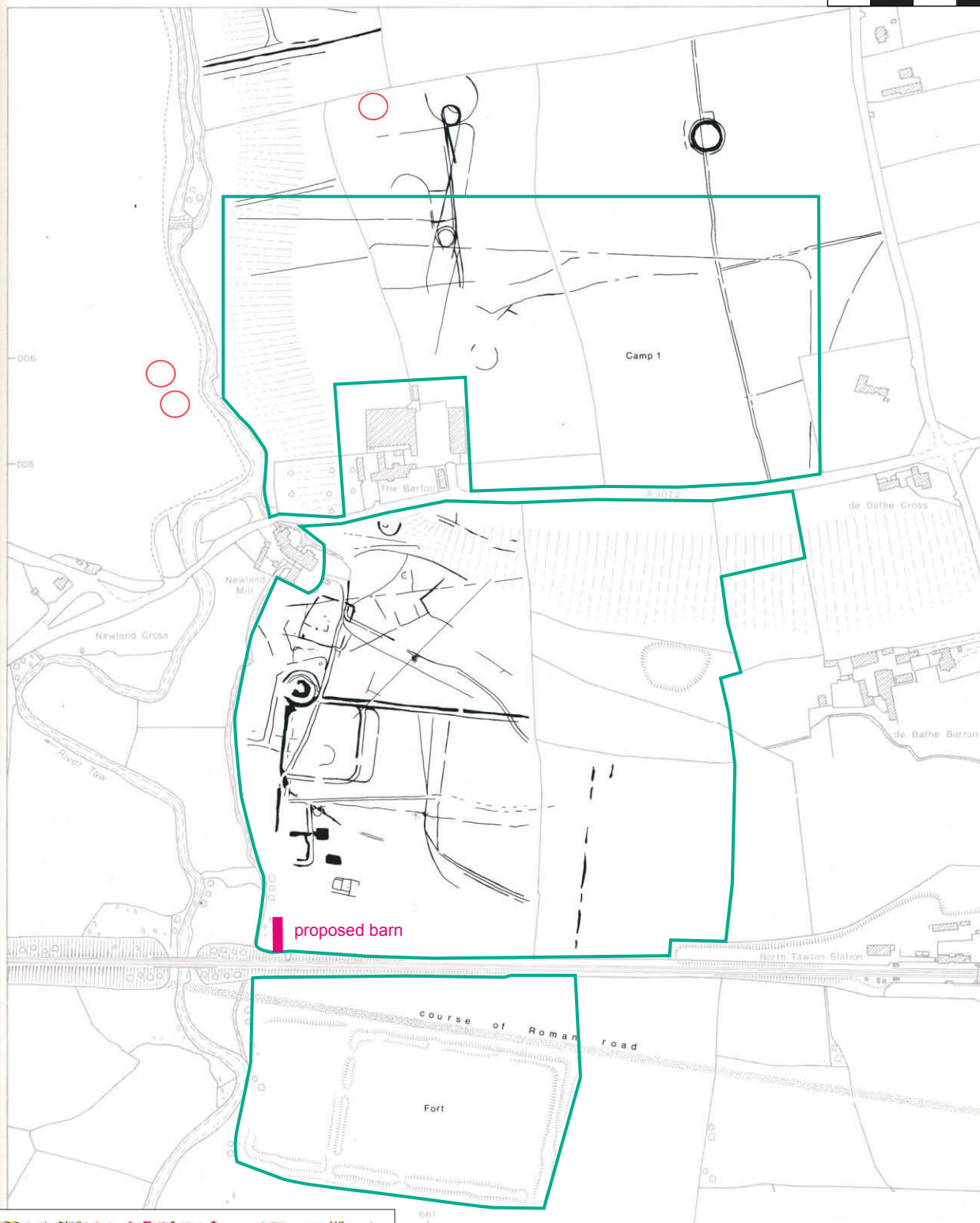
9. REFERENCES

Valentin, J., 2010 *The Barton, North Tawton, Devon (NGR SS6596000045): Method Statement for an archaeological trial trench evaluation. Scheduled Monument 10384*. Unpublished AC archaeology document, ref ACD186/1/0

Welfare, H. & Swan V. 1995 *Roman Camps in England: The Field Archaeology*. HMSO. London.

 Scheduled areas

0 200m



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PROJECT

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Fig. 1: Site location and position of proposed barn in relation to RCHM(E) plot of cropmarks (from Welfare and Swan 1995) with the addition of three ring ditches omitted from the published plan (shown in red) and scheduled areas (green)



PROJECT

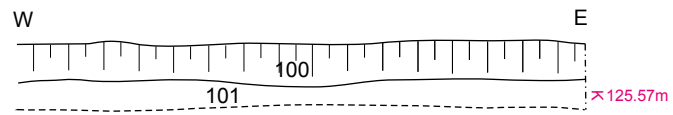
The Barton, North Tawton

TITLE

Fig. 2: Location of trenches

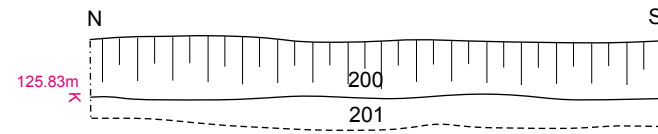
Trench 1

a) Section



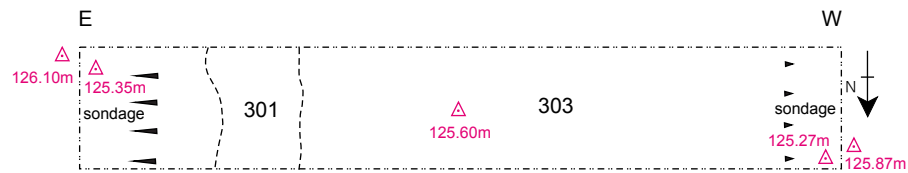
Trench 2

b) Section

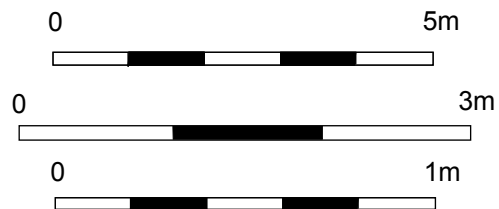
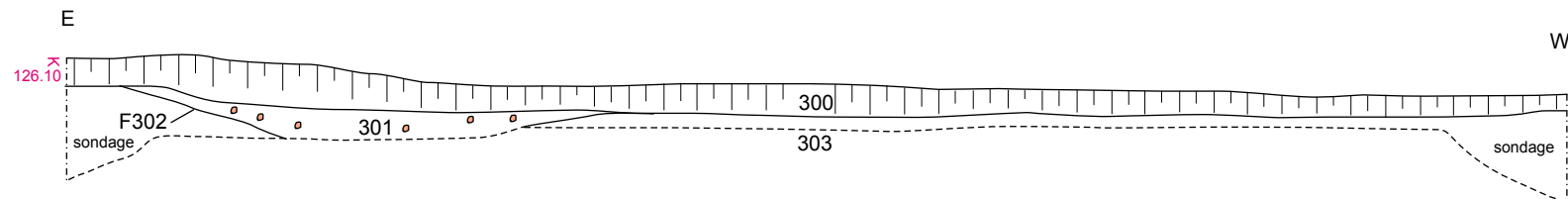


Trench 3

c) Plan



d) Section



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Fig 3: Plan and sections,
Trenches 1, 2 and 3



Plate 1: View of Trench 1 from the east
(scales 2m and 1m)

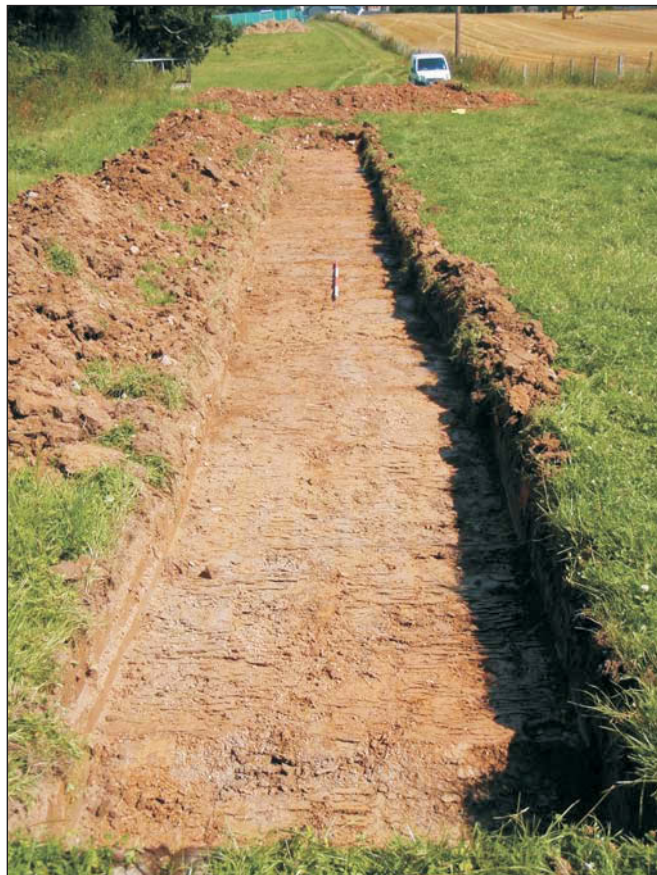


Plate 2: View of Trench 2 from the south (scale 2m)



Plate 3: View of Trench 3 from the east (scale 2m)



Plate 4: View of north facing section, Trench 3,
from the northeast (scale 1m)