

# The proposed Crediton Link Road Hillside Route

NGR SX8451999787

## Results of archaeological investigations

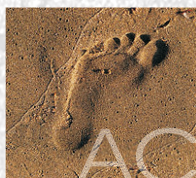
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On behalf of:  
Area East Highway Management,  
Devon County Council

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archaeology

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# THE PROPOSED CREDITON LINK ROAD HILLSIDE ROUTE (CENTRED ON SX8451999787)

## Results of archaeological investigations

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## SUMMARY

*An archaeological trench evaluation and watching brief of geotechnical trial pits, on the site of the proposed Crediton link road hillside route, Crediton, Devon (centred on SX8451999787), were undertaken by AC archaeology during July 2010. The site is located on agricultural land, close to a Romano-British villa and in an area where important palaeoenvironmental evidence had been previously recorded.*

*The work comprised the machine-excavation of six trenches totalling 103m in length, with each trench 1.6m wide. In addition, 16 geotechnical trial pits were excavated under archaeological supervision. With the exception of two modern drainage ditches and a small quantity of finds, including two pieces of prehistoric flaked stone, generally negative archaeological results were recorded.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trench evaluation and monitoring of trial pits during geotechnical investigations, for the proposed Crediton link road hillside route, Downes Home Farm, Crediton, Devon, were carried out by AC archaeology during July 2010. The work was commissioned by Area East Highway Management, Devon County Council, and was undertaken following consultation with the Archaeology Officer, Devon County Historic Environment Service.
- 1.2 The proposed route extends over a distance of around 700m and is situated on agricultural land on the north side of the A377 road and to the east of Crediton (Fig. 1). It lies on ground which slopes down to the south, between c. 90m and 40m OD. As part of the scheme drainage works are also proposed to the south of the A377 in the floodplain of the River Yeo and to the east, in the floodplain of the River Creedy.
- 1.3 The underlying solid geology of the area comprises Permian Breccia, with superficial alluvial sands, gravels and clays in the two floodplain areas.

### 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 To the southeast of the site, in the valley of the River Yeo, a Romano-British villa is present, which appears to be situated within a rectilinear enclosure (DCHER ref. 42065; Griffith 1988). Recent trial trench evaluation to the south and west of the site, also in the Yeo Valley, identified a small number of post-medieval features, as well as a palaeochannel which crossed through a number of trenches (Cotswold Archaeology 2009). This channel has been dated by radiocarbon method to the post Roman period, while a layer below this was dated to the middle/late Bronze Age. In addition, a deep sequence of alluvial deposits was present in some trenches.
- 2.2 Other recorded archaeological sites nearby include an enclosure and ring ditch recorded as cropmarks to the east (57862 & 58482).
- 2.3 The earliest historic map found which depicts the site dates to 1660, and this shows a landscape and field layout not dissimilar to what is present today. The fields on the higher ground are shown as arable, with those to the south as pasture. Field names are given for some plots and landowner/tenant information for all. Much of the land on the north side of the present A377 belonged to 'Will Parke' tenement, with that to the south owned by Henry Harries. There are no what would be considered significant field names shown and Well Parks Farm had not been constructed by this date. A survey map of Crediton and Downes dating to 1787 shows that Well Parks Farm had been built by this date.

**2.4** The Crediton parish tithe map of 1841 shows little change from the earlier maps. The accompanying apportionment indicates that many of the field names on the higher ground contained the suffix 'Acres', with those within the valley containing the word 'Marsh'. As in 1660, the land-use at this time was mainly arable on the higher ground and pasture in the valley bottoms. On the north side of the site, where an industrial estate is now present, the tithe map shows a series of north-south aligned medieval strip fields. The layout of fields remains largely unchanged on the 25-inch Ordnance Survey maps of 1888 and 1904.

### **3. AIMS**

**3.1** The aim of the work was to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site, with particular reference to the palaeoenvironmental potential in the floodplain areas, any remains associated with the nearby Romano-British villa and the potential for prehistoric settlement or funerary features on the higher ground. The results of the work will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent mitigation if the road scheme goes ahead.

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

**4.1** The investigation was undertaken in accordance with a brief provided by DCHES (Reed 2010) and subsequent Project Design prepared by AC archaeology (Valentin 2010). It comprised the machine-excavation of six trenches totalling 103m in length, with each trench 1.6m wide (Fig. 1), as well as monitoring and recording of 16 geotechnical trial pits.

**4.2** The site was recorded in accordance with the AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and with reference to AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*. All sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and all levels have been related to Ordnance Datum.

### **5. RESULTS**

**5.1** The location of trenches and trial pits as excavated is shown on Figs 2 and 3, with representative sections included as Fig. 4. The recorded deposit sequence is summaries in tabulated form in Appendix 1. As would be expected, the trenches on the higher ground to the north (Trenches 1-3, Trial Pits 4-8) contained a shallow layer sequence of ploughsoil directly above natural subsoil. No archaeological features were present and generally only a few finds were recovered. Those in the lower-lying ground to the south (Trenches 4-6, Trial Pits 14-18) contained deeper overlying soils, with alluvium and colluvium present. The colluvium was thickest at the base of the slope in Trial Pit 14, at 1.2m. In Trench 4, two modern approximately northeast to southwest aligned drainage ditches were present at opposing ends of the trench, which contained post-medieval/modern finds (see below).

**5.2** Trial pits off the slope to the north and adjacent to Commonmarsh Lane (Trial Pits 3, 9-13) also contained deeper soils, comprising a colluvial layer washed downslope from the south.



## 6. THE FINDS

### 6.1 Introduction

All finds recovered on site have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. Finds were then quantified according to material type within each context. The assemblage was then scanned by context to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. This information is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Finds quantification (weight is in grams; CBM = Ceramic Building Material)

Context	Context type	Post-med pottery		Clay pipe		CBM		Slag		Fe		Cu alloy		Worked flint		Glass	
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt
300	Ploughsoil Trial pit 3	1	4			3	23							1	1		
400	Ploughsoil Trial pit 4	2	35											1	6		
500	Ploughsoil Trial pit 5	1	1	1	3					1	7						
600	Ploughsoil Trial pit 6																
800	Ploughsoil Trial pit 8															1	62
900	Ploughsoil Trial pit 9					1	37										
1101	Subsoil Trial pit 11	3	62			3	181	2	30			1	5			2	107
1301	Subsoil Trial pit 13					1	612										
2403	Fill of ditch [2404]			5	45	2	1654										
2405	Fill of ditch [2406]			1	3	2	1143	1	95								
<b>Totals</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3650</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>169</b>

### 6.2 Post-medieval pottery

The assemblage contains seven sherds of post-medieval pottery dating mainly to the 18th-19th centuries, including three industrial whiteware sherds and five lead-glazed red earthenware sherds.

### 6.3 Clay tobacco pipe

These comprise two complete bowls, one with rouletting decoration around the rim and one with soot staining, as well as five plain stem fragments.

### 6.4 Ceramic building material

Twelve ceramic building material fragments of probable 19th century date were recovered. These include seven fragments of industrial manufactured red brick (one with glaze), three pieces of unglazed floor tile and two roof tile fragments.

### 6.5 Glass

There were three fragments of glass recovered. One piece of clear square bottle base is moulded with "E B & Co Ld 1611". There is also a green glass circular bottle base fragment with moulding "P & R...". Also present is an opaque perfume bottle neck and rim.

### 6.6 Slag

Three pieces of slag were recovered, comprising one piece of fuel ash slag and two fragments smithing slag.

### 6.7 Iron and cu alloy objects

One iron nail and one copper alloy sub-triangular sheet of unknown function were recovered, both of which are likely to be modern in date.

## **6.8 Worked flint/chert**

Two pieces of prehistoric flaked stone were recovered. One is a retouched flake in flint, while the other is a waste flake. Neither piece is diagnostic to period.

## **7. DISCUSSION**

**7.1** The evaluation and watching brief have generally revealed low level archaeological results in all trenches and trial pits. On the higher ground no *in situ* features or deposits were present, with only a few finds recovered. Trenches and trial pits to the south and on the floodplain, revealed two modern drainage ditches, with no organic material, palaeochannels or other environmental remains recorded. There were only two pieces of prehistoric worked flint recovered, which would only be considered a general background scatter, albeit limited, indication of prehistoric activity in the area.

**7.2** The archaeological trenches were positioned in those areas of the scheme where there was the greatest archaeological potential, for example on the higher ground where prehistoric settlement or funerary activity might be anticipated, as well as in the floodplain area to the south, where good palaeoenvironmental results have been previously recorded (Cotswold Archaeology 2009). Elsewhere along the route, the ground is steep-sloping and therefore not conducive to early settlement.

**7.3** The general low-level results from all trenches indicates that archaeological remains are unlikely to be impacted upon by the scheme proposals, but if they are present then they would probably be highly localised in extent.

## **8. ARCHIVE AND OASIS**

**8.1** 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 132/2010. The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 82657.

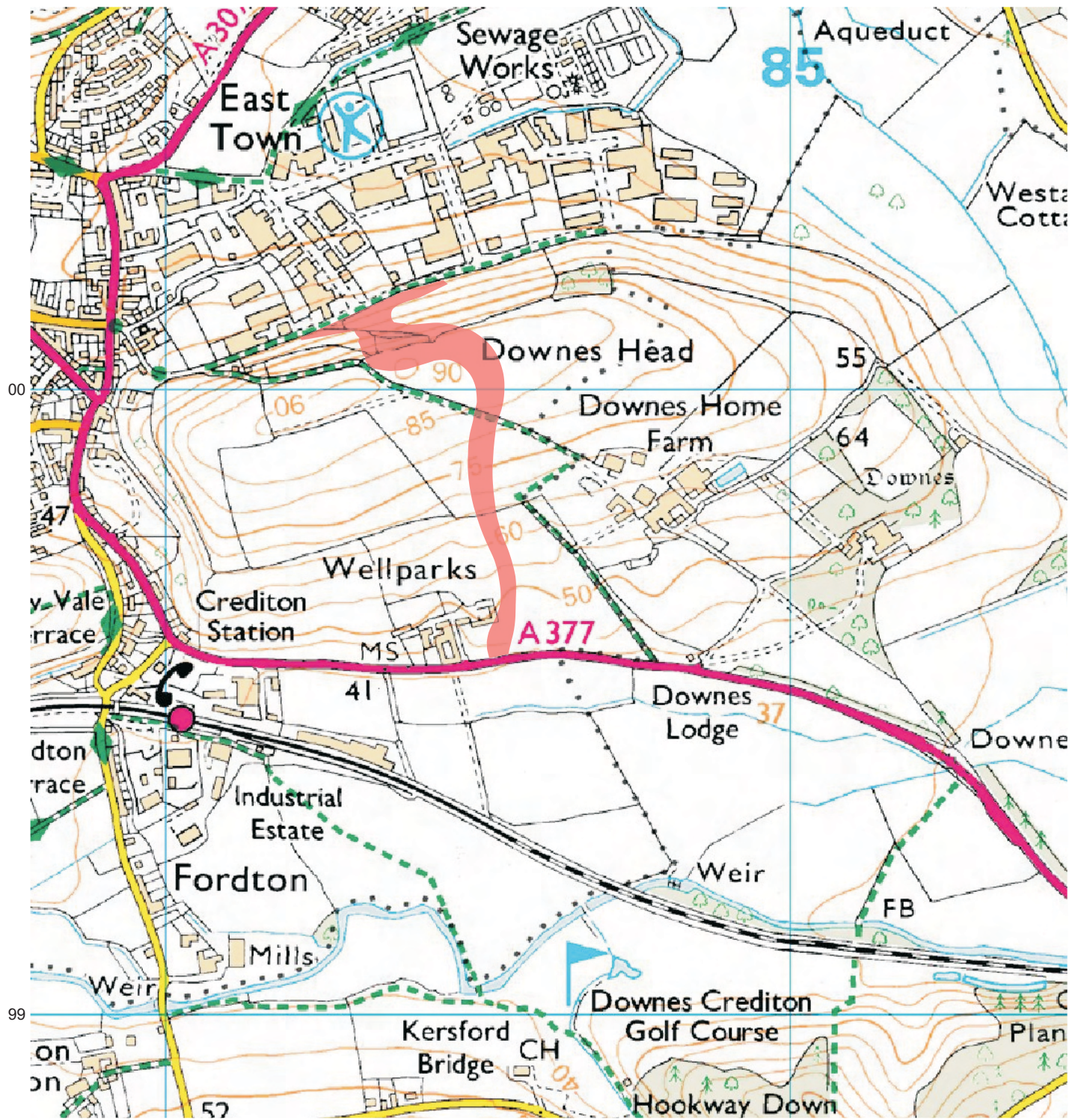
## **9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The evaluation was commissioned on behalf of Area East Highway Management, Devon County Council by Pat Jackson. The site works were carried out by Christopher Caine and the illustrations for this report were prepared by Cain Hegarty. The advice and collaboration of Stephen Reed, Devon Archaeology Officer, is duly acknowledged.




## 10. SOURCES CONSULTED

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- Valentin, J., 2010, *The proposed Crediton Link Road Hillside route: Project Design for an archaeological trench evaluation and watching brief*. Unpublished AC archaeology document, ref. ACD180/1/1



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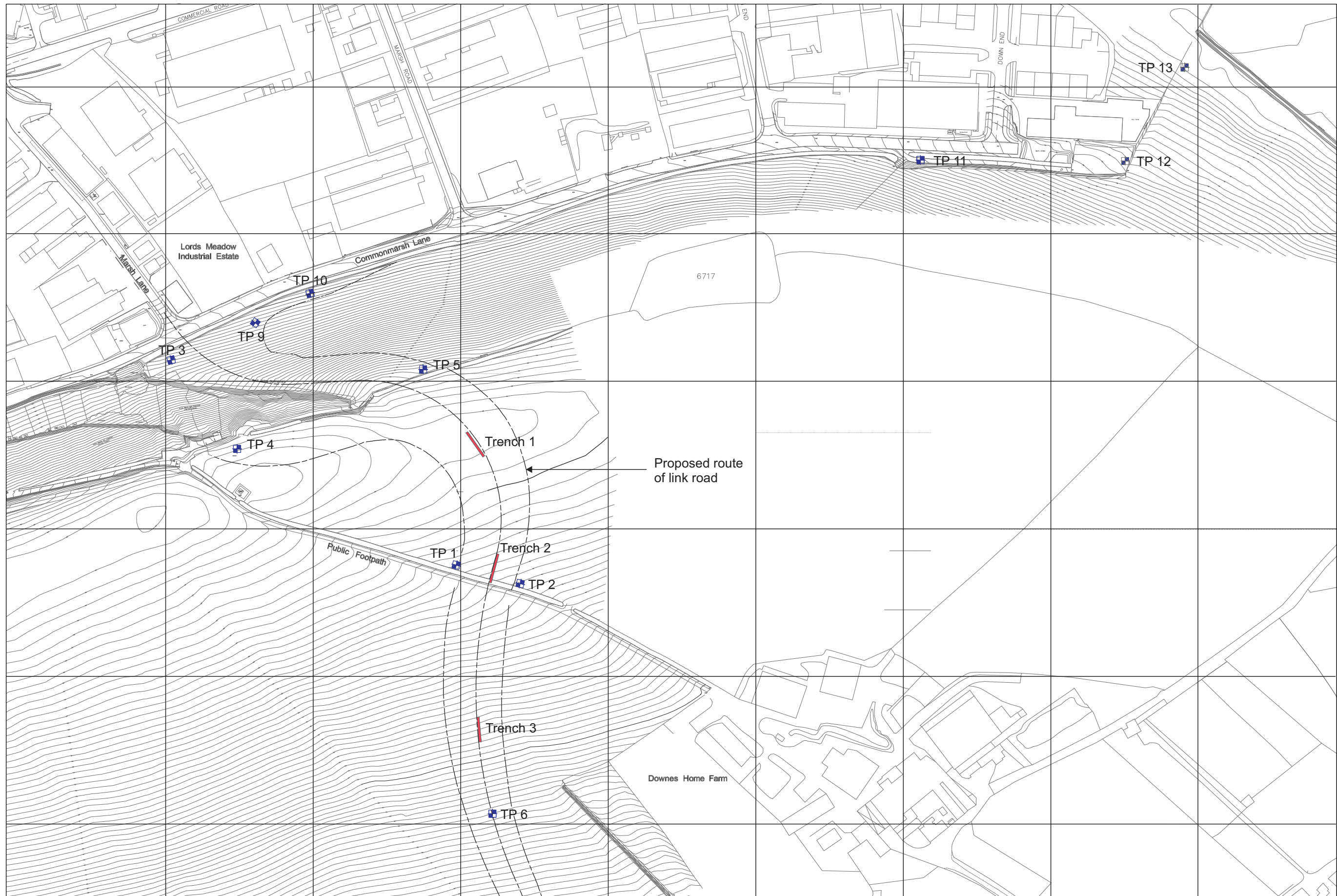
 Proposed new link road

PROJECT  
 CREDITON link road

TITLE  
 Fig 1: Site location







SCALE 1:25000



PROJECT

Crediton link road

TITLE

Fig 2: Location of trenches and trial pits (northern area)



SCALE 1:25000



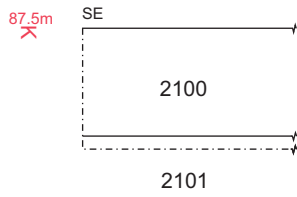
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Fig 3: Location of trenches and trial pits (southern area)

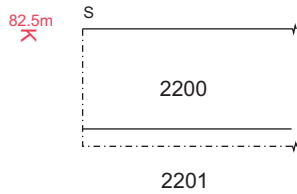




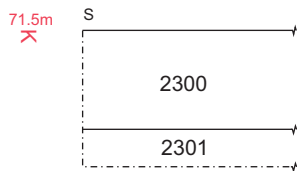
### Trench 1



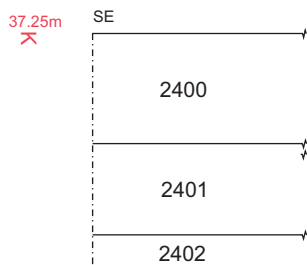
### Trench 2



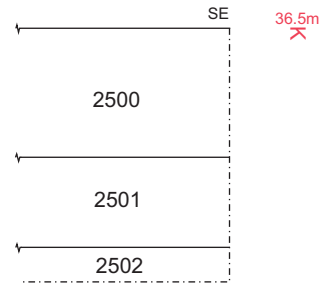
### Trench 3



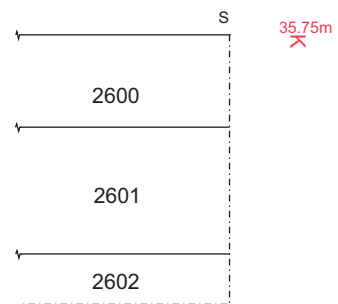
### Trench 4



### Trench 5



### Trench 6



PROJECT

Crediton link road

TITLE

Fig 4: Representative sections

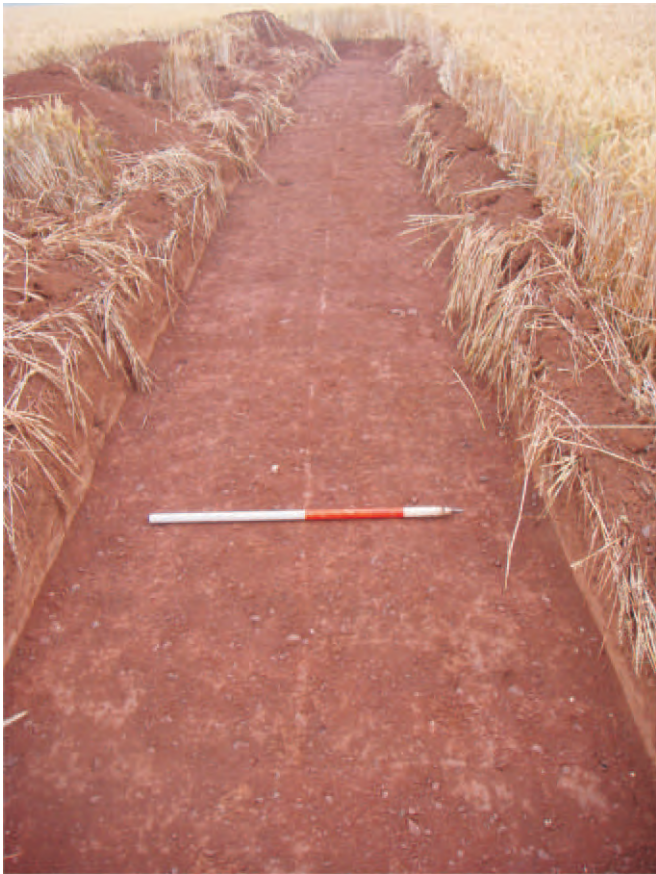


Plate 1: View of Trench 2 from the south (scale 1m)



Plate 2: View of section at the south end of Trench 2, looking to west (scale 1m)



Plate 3: View of Trench 6 from the south (scale 1m)



Plate 4: View of section at the south end of Trench 6, looking to west (scale 1m)



## Appendix 1: Trench and trial pit summaries

### Trenches

Trench 1			Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
2100	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.27m	Ploughsoil		
2101	Mid red friable gravelly clay	0.27m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 2			Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
2200	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.27m	Ploughsoil		
2201	Mid red friable gravelly clay	0.27m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 3			Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
2300	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.27m	Ploughsoil		
2301	Mid red friable gravelly clay	0.27m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 4			Length 13m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
2400	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.31m	Topsoil		
2401	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay	0.31-0.53m	Colluvial layer		
2402	Mid yellow to grey friable clay	0.53m+	Natural subsoil		
2403	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay friable		Fill of 2404		
2404	Linear feature with shallow sloping sides and round base	0.46m wide, 0.17m deep	Cut of ditch, filled by 2403, modern drainage ditch		
2405	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay		Fill of 2406		
2406	Linear feature with shallow sloping sides and round base	0.39m wide, 0.24m deep	Cut of ditch, filled by 2404, modern drainage ditch		

Trench 5			Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
2500	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.34m	Topsoil		
2501	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay	0.34-0.60m	Colluvial layer		
2502	Mid yellowish-red friable gravelly clay	0.60m+	Natural subsoil		

Trench 6			Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment N-S
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
2600	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.26m	Ploughsoil		
2601	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay	0.26-0.61m	Colluvial layer		
2602	Mid yellow clay	0.61m+	Natural subsoil		

## Trial Pits

Trial Pit 3				Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
300	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0-0.46m	Ploughsoil		
301	Dark red silty clay	0.46-0.83m	Colluvial layer		
302	Dark red gravelly clay friable	0.83-1.42m	Natural subsoil		
303	Mid red clayey sand firm	1.42-3.00m	Natural subsoil		
304	Red sandstone	3.00-3.10m+	Bedrock		

Trial Pit 4				Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
400	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.37m	Ploughsoil		
401	Mid red gravelly clay	0.37-2.83m	Natural subsoil		
402	Red sandstone	2.83-2.90m+	Bedrock		

Trial Pit 5				Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
500	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.23m	Ploughsoil		
501	Mid red gravelly clay	0.23-2.54m	Natural subsoil		
502	Red sandstone	2.54-3.00m+	Bedrock		

Trial Pit 6				Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
600	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0-0.19m	Ploughsoil		
601	Dark red clay	0.19-0.49m	Natural subsoil		
602	Dark red gravelly clay	0.49-2.09m+	Natural subsoil		

Trial Pit 7				Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
700	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0-0.27m	Ploughsoil		
701	Dark red clay	0.27-1.35m	Natural subsoil		
702	Dark red gravelly clay	1.35-3.50m+	Natural subsoil		

Trial Pit 8				Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
800	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0-0.42m	Ploughsoil		
801	Dark red clay	0.42-3.05m	Natural subsoil		
802	Dark red gravelly clay	3.05-3.30m+	Natural subsoil		

Trial Pit 9				Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation		
900	Dark brownish-red silty clay	0-0.57m	Ploughsoil		
901	Dark red friable silty clay	0.57-1.07m	Colluvial layer		
902	Dark red gravelly clay	1.07-1.42m	Natural subsoil		
903	Mid red clayey sand firm	1.42-2.90m	Natural subsoil		
904	Red sandstone	2.90-3.05m+	Bedrock		

Trial Pit 10			Length 1.34m	Width 1.20m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1000	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0.00-0.37m	Ploughsoil	
1001	Dark red clay	0.37-0.71m	Natural subsoil	
1002	Dark red gravelly clay	0.71-1.39m	Natural subsoil	
1003	Mid red clayey sand firm	1.39-2.91m	Natural subsoil	
1004	Red sandstone	2.91-3.07m+	Bedrock	

Trial Pit 11			Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1100	Mid greyish-red friable silty clay friable	0-0.22m	Ploughsoil	
1101	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0.22-0.40m	Colluvial layer	
1102	Dark red gravelly clay	0.40-2.10m+	Natural subsoil	

Trial Pit 12			Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1200	Mid greyish-red friable silty clay	0-0.24m	Ploughsoil	
1201	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0.24-0.59m	Colluvial layer	
1202	Dark red gravelly clay	0.59-2.03m	Natural subsoil	
1203	Red sandstone	2.03-2.15m+	Bedrock	

Trial Pit 13			Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1300	Mid greyish brown friable silty clay	0-0.30m	Ploughsoil	
1301	Mid reddish-grey friable clay	0.30-0.55m	Colluvial layer	
1302	Mid red clayey gravelly sand moderately compact	0.55-1.60m+	Natural subsoil	

Trial Pit 14			Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1400	Mid greyish-red friable silty clay friable	0-0.40m	Ploughsoil	
1401	Dark brownish-red friable silty clay	0.40-1.60m	Colluvial layer	
1402	Dark red gravelly clay	1.60-2.04m+	Natural subsoil	

Trial Pit 15			Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1500	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.36m	Topsoil	
1501	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay	0.36-0.80m	Alluvial layer	
1502	Mid yellow to grey clay	0.80-1.30m+	Natural subsoil	

Trial Pit 16			Length 2m	Width 0.40m
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1600	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.42m	Topsoil	
1601	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay	0.42-0.78m	Alluvial layer	
1602	Mid yellow to grey clay	0.78-1.30m+	Natural subsoil	



<b>Trial Pit 17</b>				<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>
				2m	0.40m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>		
1700	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.40m	Topsoil		
1701	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay	0.40-0.75m	Alluvial layer		
1702	Mid yellow to grey clay	0.75m+	Natural subsoil		

<b>Trial Pit 18</b>				<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>
				2m	0.40m
<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>		
1800	Mid reddish-brown friable silty clay	0-0.38m	Topsoil		
1801	Mid yellowish-brown friable silty clay	0.38-0.70m	Alluvial layer		
1802	Mid yellow to grey clay	0.70m+	Natural subsoil		

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