

Land adjacent to Junction Road, Bow, Devon

NGR SS 72847 01779

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation,

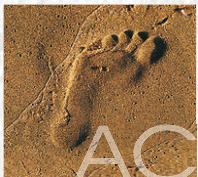
Planning ref. Mid Devon District Council 10/01715/FULL

Prepared by:
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On behalf of:
FGR Architects

Report No: ACD252/2/0

Date: January 2011



archaeology

LAND ADJACENT TO JUNCTION ROAD, BOW, DEVON

(NGR SS 72847 01779)

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

Planning ref. Mid Devon District Council: 10/01715/FULL

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Summary

An archaeological trench evaluation was carried out by AC archaeology during January 2011 on land adjacent to Junction Road, Bow, Devon, in support of a planning application for a proposed new medical centre (NGR SS 72847 01779). The site occupies an area of around 0.3 hectares and lies within the western part of a pasture field, in a general area where later prehistoric remains have been previously identified. An earlier geophysical survey carried out across the site identified possible prehistoric remains, including a potential roundhouse, an enclosure ditch and numerous pits.

The evaluation comprised the machine-excavation of four trenches with a combined length of 90m, with these located in areas to be affected by proposed development and targeting the geophysical anomalies. There were only two shallow linear features present within the trenches, which possibly represent early former boundary or drainage ditches. Two prehistoric flint flakes were recovered from one of these. The anomalies identified during the geophysical survey are likely to be mainly where there are variations within the natural geology.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of an archaeological trench evaluation carried out on land adjacent to Junction Road, Bow, Devon (NGR SS 72847 01779), in support of a planning application for a proposed new medical centre and associated works. The work was carried out by AC archaeology on 6th and 7th January 2011 and was commissioned by FGR Architects on behalf of clients, following consultation with Devon County Historic Environment Service (DCHES).
- 1.2 The site occupies an area of approximately 0.3 hectares and is situated on the east side of Bow, between Junction Road to the south and the A3072 to the north. It is located on generally level ground at around 140m OD and is currently under pasture (Fig. 1, Plate 1). The underlying geology comprises Breccia of the Bow Formation.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site lies in an area where later prehistoric remains have been previously discovered, including the site of a possible enclosure and trackway to the south and quantities of Neolithic worked flint and pottery to the west.
- 2.2 A magnetometer survey of the site (Substrata 2011) identified a number of anomalies interpreted as possible features relating to prehistoric settlement, including a possible roundhouse with central hearth, a possible enclosure ditch as well as numerous pits (Fig. 1).
- 2.3 The Bow parish tithe map of 1841 depicts the site boundaries as largely unchanged from the present day, although the road on the west side is not present at this time. It lies within an area of probable medieval strip fields extending north and south from the two roads.

3. AIMS

- 3.1 The aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site. The results of the work as set

out in this report will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent mitigation as a condition of planning permission.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The evaluation comprised the machine-excavation of four trenches totalling 90m in length, with each trench 1.6m wide. The trenches were positioned to target possible features identified from the geophysical survey; Trenches 1-2 were positioned to target possible short linear and pit-like features, Trench 3 was located across the possible roundhouse feature and central hearth, while Trench 4 was positioned across a possible enclosure ditch (Fig. 1). Each trench was excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket and working under constant archaeological supervision.
- 4.2** The site was recorded in accordance with the AC Archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*. All plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50 and sections at 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate. All levels have been related to Ordnance Datum. All spoil heaps were scanned for displaced finds.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1** The trenches were excavated to a depth of between 0.43-0.70m below ground level onto mixed clay sand and gravel natural subsoil. The overlying layer sequence comprised between 0.10-0.40m of mid/dark red brown soft sandy clay silt topsoil over between 0.08-0.28m of light/mid reddish-brown friable silty sand agricultural subsoil (Plate 2). Archaeological features were present within Trenches 1 and 4, and possibly Trench 2. The results of the evaluation are presented in tabulated form in Appendix 1 and summarised below. Relevant detailed plans and sections are included on Fig. 2 and photographs as Plates 2 – 4.
- 5.2 Trench 1** (Plan Fig. 2a, section 2b; Plates 2 & 3)
This trench contained a single NW-SE aligned linear feature (F103), located towards the southwest end of the trench and present at a depth of 0.60m below ground level. It was 0.50m wide and 0.18m deep, with 45° sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled with a mid reddish-brown friable silt sand (102) and no finds were recovered.
- 5.3 Trench 2**
This trench contained a single sub-oval shaped feature (F203), located towards the northwest end of the trench and present at a depth of 0.35m below ground level. It was 1.30m wide by 0.27m deep, with 30-45° sloping sides and a concave base and was filled with a light reddish-brown soft sand silt (202). No finds were recovered.
- 5.4 Trench 4** (Plan Fig. 2d, section 2c; Plate 4)
This trench contained a single NE-SW aligned linear feature (F402), located towards the southern end of the trench and present at a depth of 0.40m below ground level. It was 0.55m wide and 0.10m deep, with 30-40° sloping sides and a concave base and was filled with a light brown red soft sand clay (403). Two pieces of prehistoric worked flint were recovered.

6. THE FINDS

- 6.1** A total of two prehistoric worked flint flakes was recovered from fill (403) of linear feature F402, Trench 4. These are small (3g in total) and one is broken. They are not diagnostic to a particular period. Several finds of 19th and 20th century pottery, including industrial whitewares, and blue and white transfer-printed wares, were present within the topsoil but were not retained.

7. COMMENTS

- 7.1** The evaluation has established that there is only limited evidence for archaeological activity on the site. Features identified comprised two shallow but well-defined linear features recorded within Trench 1 (F103) and Trench 4 (F402), which may represent former drainage or field boundary ditches. Boundaries in this location are not depicted on the parish tithe map of 1841, so they may relate to earlier field division in the area. The presence of two struck flint flakes recovered from F402 might indicate a prehistoric date for this particular feature, although they could conceivably be residual finds. A third pit-like feature recorded in Trench 2 (F203) was more ephemeral and may have formed from natural geological processes.
- 7.2** The magnetic anomalies identified as possible archaeological remains from the geophysical survey have been largely proven to be the result of geological variation between the sand and gravel banded natural subsoil. The circular feature interpreted as a possible roundhouse and targetted by Trench 3 might also be geological in origin or, more likely, the result of recent agricultural activity, for instance, the ground disturbance caused by the presence of a circular cattle feeder.
- 7.3** Based on the results of the work it is considered unlikely that the proposed development will impact upon any significant buried archaeological remains.

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 190/2010 along with any archive generated by any subsequent work on the site.
- 8.2** The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 91553.

9. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The evaluation was commissioned by Andrew Saunders of FGR Architects. The site trial trenching was carried out by Richard Sims and Naomi Hughes 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

Bow parish tithe map, 1841
Substrata, 2011, *Land at Bow gradiometer survey*

An Archaeological Geophysical Gradiometer Survey

Land at NGR 272847 101779
Bow
Devon
Report: 231210

Legend

- survey data limits
- potential archaeology**
- possible heated deposit
- possible archaeology, positive anomaly
- possible archaeology, negative anomaly
- ferrous material (2, 4)

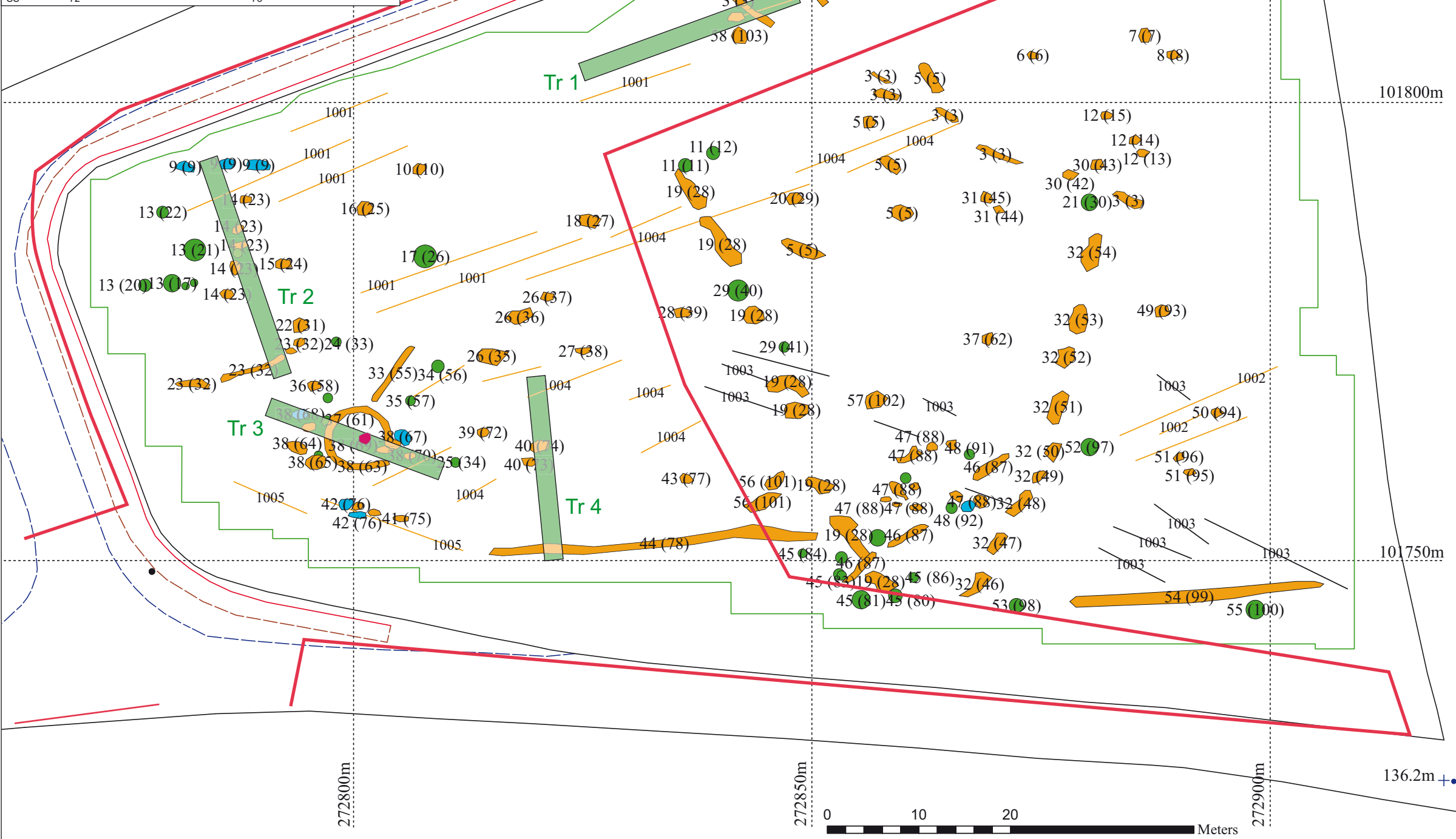
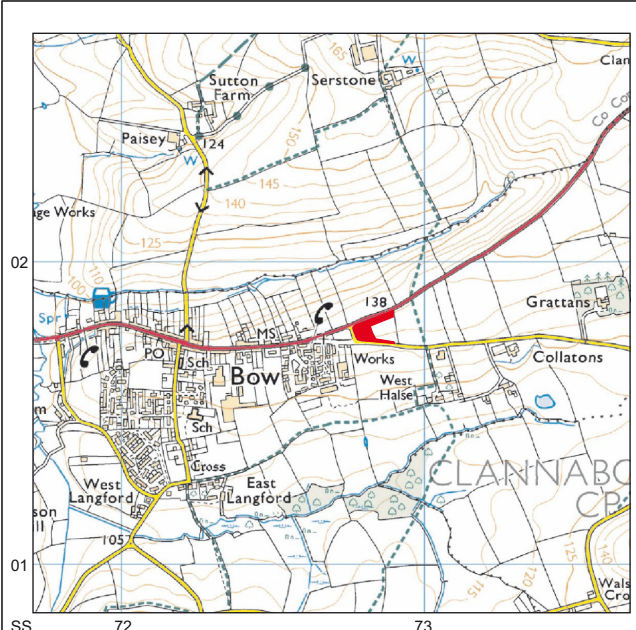
data trends and services

- archaeological
- cultivation
- 17 (5) anomaly group (anomaly id.)

Notes:

1. All interpretations are provisional and represent potential archaeological deposits.
2. Representative of trends; only anomalies relevant to potential archaeology are recorded.
3. Anomalies likely to represent very recent ground disturbance are not highlighted.
4. Filled circles used to define anomalies are symbols and do not indicate possible circular archaeological features unless specifically indicated in the text.

— Application area

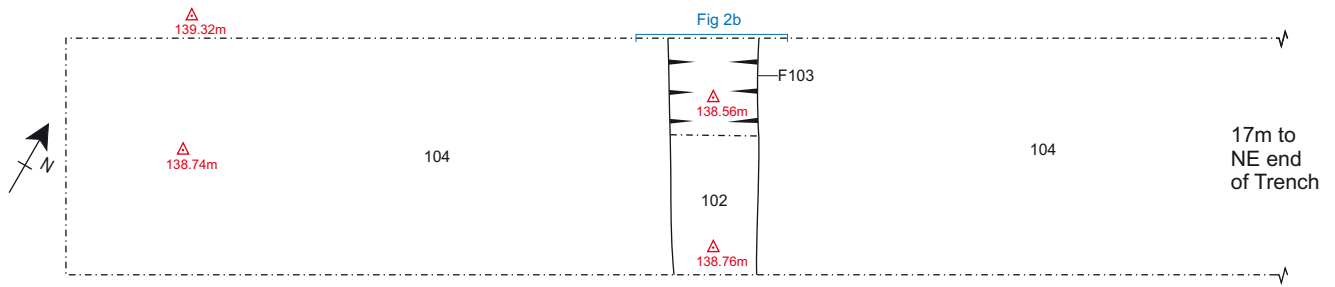


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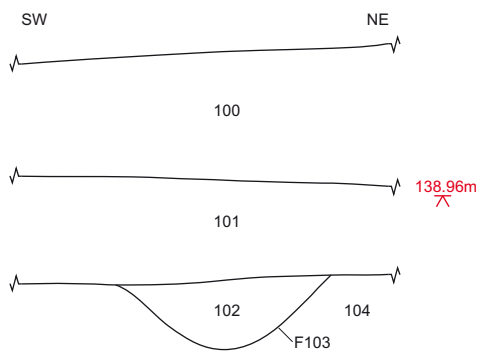
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Fig. 1: Site and trench locations



a) Plan of Trench 1



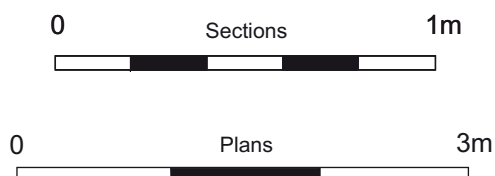
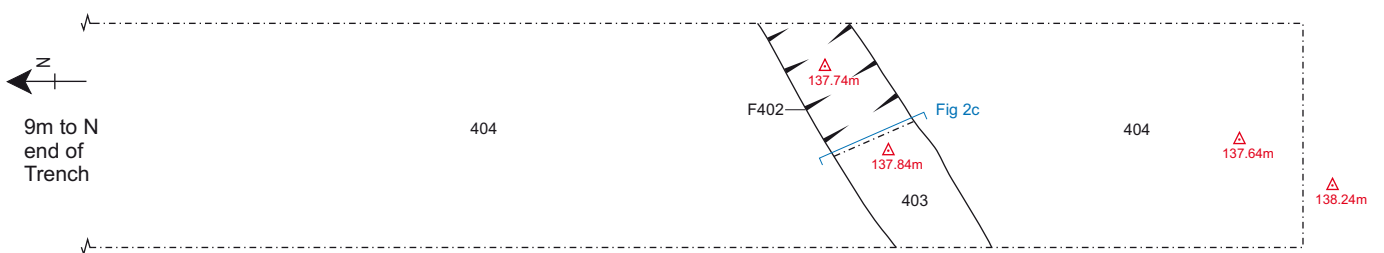
b) Section of ditch F103



c) Section of ditch F402



d) Plan of Trench 4



PROJECT
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TITLE
Fig 2: Plans and Sections,
Trenches 1 and 4



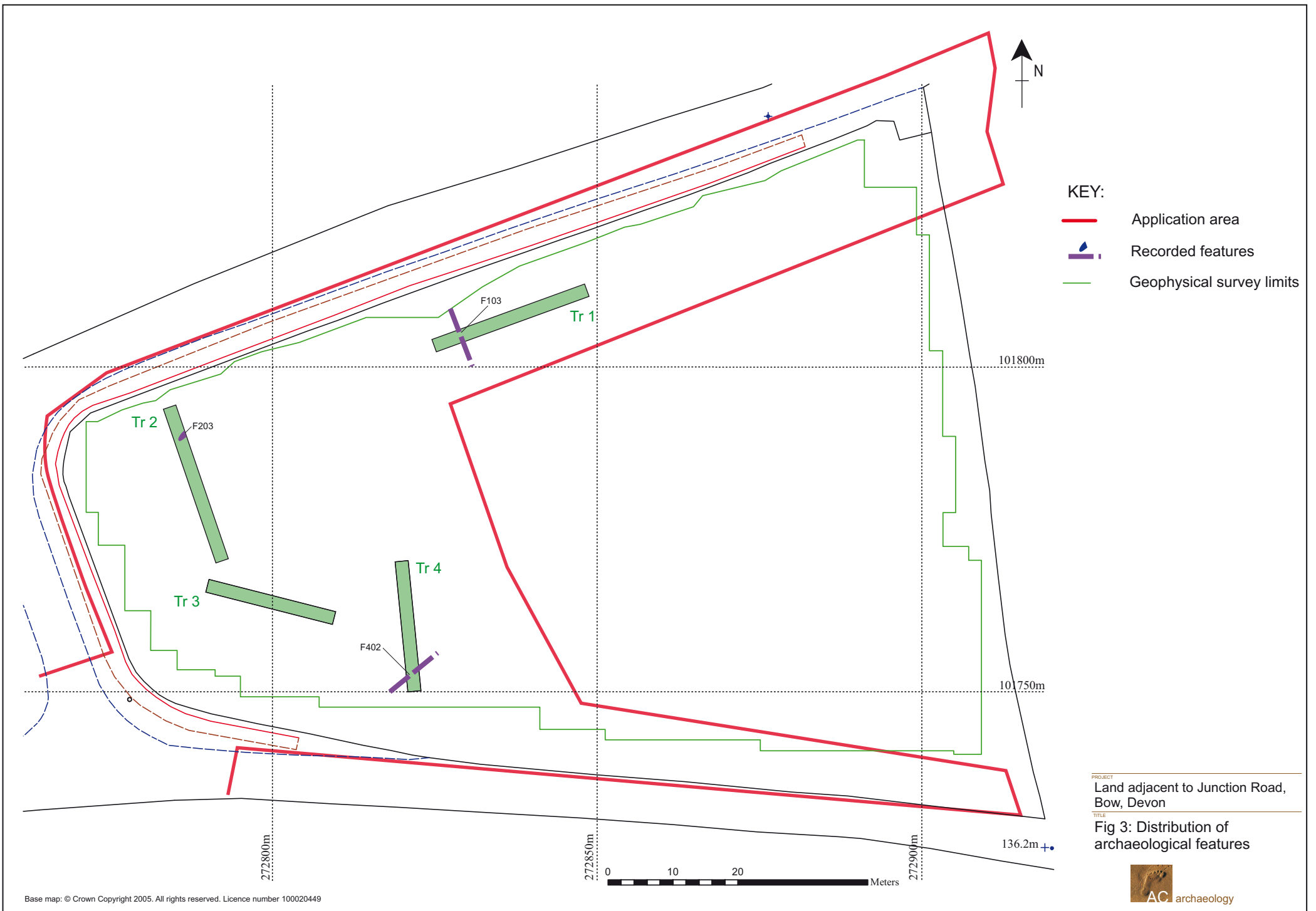




Plate 1 General view of site, view to southwest



Plate 2 Representative section northeast end Trench 1, view to northwest (Scale 1m)



Plate 3 Feature F103, Trench 1, view to northwest (Scale 1m)



Plate 4 Feature F402, Trench 4, facing southwest (Scale 0.25m)

Appendix 1:
Tabulated trench descriptions

Appendix 1: Tabulated trench descriptions

Trench 1			Length: 25m	Width: 1.60	Alignment: NE-SW
Context	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation		
100	0-0.38	Mid/dark red brown soft sand clay silt with moderate small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Topsoil		
101	0.38-0.66	Light/mid red brown friable silt sand with frequent small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Agricultural subsoil		
102	0.66-0.84	Mid red brown friable silt sand with common small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Fill of F103		
103	0.66-0.84	Linear feature, NW-SE aligned measuring 0.50m wide and 0.18m deep with 45° sloping sides and a concave base	Possible drainage/boundary ditch		
104	0.66+	Light/mid brown red friable and loose clay sand and gravel	Natural subsoil		

Trench 2			Length: 25m	Width: 1.60	Alignment: NW-SE
Context	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation		
200	0-0.35	Mid/dark red brown soft sand clay silt with moderate small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Topsoil		
201	0.35-0.43	Light/mid red brown friable silt sand with frequent small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Agricultural subsoil		
202	0.43-0.70	Light red brown soft sand silt with occasional small sub-angular stones <0.02m	Fill of F203		
203	0.43-0.70	Sub-oval feature 1.30m wide by 0.27m deep with slightly irregular edges, 30-45° sloping sides and a concave base	Probable natural feature		
204	0.43+	Light/mid brown red friable and loose clay sand and gravel	Natural subsoil		

Trench 3			Length: 20m	Width: 1.60m	Alignment: NW-SE
Context	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation		
300	0-0.10	Mid/dark red brown soft sand clay silt with moderate small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Topsoil		
301	0.10-0.30	Light/mid red brown friable silt sand with frequent small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Agricultural subsoil		
302	0.30+	Light/mid brown red friable and loose clay sand and gravel	Natural subsoil		

Trench 4			Length: 20m	Width: 1.60m	Alignment: N-S
Context	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation		
400	0-0.15	Mid/dark red brown soft sand clay silt with moderate small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Topsoil		
401	0.15-40	Light/mid red brown friable silt sand with frequent small-medium sub-angular stones <0.05m	Agricultural subsoil		
402	0.40-0.50	Linear feature, NE-SW aligned measuring 0.55m wide by 0.10m deep with 30-40° sloping sides and a concave base	Possible drainage/boundary ditch		
403	0.40-0.50	Light brown red soft sand clay with occasional sub-angular stones <0.05m. Contained two flint flakes	Fill of F402		
404	0.40+	Light/mid brown red friable and loose clay sand and gravel	Natural subsoil		

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