

Land at Long Park, Talaton Road, Feniton, Devon

NGR SY 10495 98601

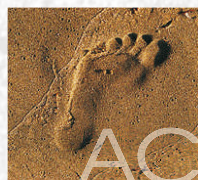
Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

Prepared by
Simon Hughes
and
John Valentin

On behalf of
Mr Pyle

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AC archaeology

LAND AT LONG PARK, TALATON ROAD, FENITON, DEVON

(NGR SY 10495 98601)

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Planning ref. East Devon District Council: 10/0890/MFUL

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Summary

An archaeological trench evaluation was carried out by AC archaeology during January 2011 on land at Long Park, Feniton, Devon (NGR SY 10495 98601), in support of a planning application for a proposed new poultry house and associated works. The site occupies an area of around 0.4 hectares within a pasture field, in a general area where archaeological excavation on the line of the A30 Trunk Road identified extensive evidence for prehistoric settlement and field systems.

The evaluation comprised the machine-excavation of 12 trenches with a combined length of 260m, with these located in areas to be affected by proposed development. On the level higher ground in the northwest part of the site a possible Bronze Age settlement enclosure with internal features was identified, with this seemingly delineated by a large curvilinear ditch. Elsewhere on the site more localised archaeological features were present, although two ditches located towards the southeast corner may be part of a Bronze Age field system identified during excavations on the line of the present A30.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trench evaluation carried out in support of a planning application for a proposed new poultry house and associated works on land at Long, Park, Talaton Road, Feniton, Devon (SY 10495 98601), was undertaken by AC archaeology during January 2011. The work was commissioned by Sheamus Machin on behalf of the landowner, Mr Pyle.
- 1.2 The site of the new poultry farm and associated access track occupies an area of approximately 0.4 hectares of land to the south of the railway line and northeast of the A30 dual carriageway (Fig. 1). The current land-use is pasture (Plate 1) and the site is generally level in the western part at around 75m OD, with then a gradual slope down to the south in the remaining area of the field. The underlying layer sequence comprises river terrace sands and gravels above a solid geology of sandstones of the Otter Sandstone Formation.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The main archaeological interest in the site is that it is located in an area where extensive evidence for prehistoric activity has been identified, mainly during improvements to the A30 Trunk Road in the 1990s (Fitzpatrick *et al* 1999). Excavations along the route immediately to the southeast of the site at Castle Hill recorded a Bronze Age enclosure relating to early land division, as well as associated settlement features including pits and postholes. Further to the south along the new road were ditched enclosures dating to the Neolithic period. On the present site fieldwalking has identified a worked flint scatter towards the southeast corner (Devon County Historic Environment Record ref. 43260), while immediately to the north a Bronze Age ring ditch is recorded from aerial photographs (38872).
- 2.2 The Ottery St Mary parish tithe map of 1843 depicts the site prior to the construction of the new road and railway, and it lies within parts of three fields. The accompanying apportionment names the owner of these as Sir John Kennaway and the occupier James Miller. The land use is described as pasture and the fields are named as Path Field, Long Four Acres and Ware's Field. By 1888, the Ordnance Survey 25-inch map shows that the railway line had been constructed (opened in 1860) and the site is then part of a single larger field. This is still the case in 1903.

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, if granted.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief for the work provided by Devon County Historic Environment Service (Reed 2010) and subsequent project design prepared by AC archaeology (Valentin 2011). It comprised the machine-excavation of 12 trenches totalling 260m in length, with each trench 1.6m wide. The trenches were positioned in areas to be affected by the proposed development (Fig. 2). 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, while levels have been related to a temporary benchmark allocated a nominal value of 100m. All spoil heaps were scanned for displaced finds.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 A number of trenches (2, 3, 5, 7 & 12) contained negative archaeological results and these are described in tabulated form in Appendix 1. The trenches with archaeological features or deposits are described in more detail below. Relevant plans and sections are included as Figs 3 and 4 and photographs as Plates 1-4.

5.2 Trench 1 (Plan Fig. 3a, sections 3b & c)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (106), which comprised a light brownish-red clayey-sand with abundant gravel inclusions, present at a depth of around 0.4m below ground level. This was beneath a colluvial subsoil (101) and topsoil (100). There were two linear features present (F102 and F104) beneath the colluvial subsoil.

Approximately NE to SW aligned linear feature F102 was 1.63m wide and 0.37m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a mid brown clayey-loam fill (103) with occasional sub-angular stone inclusions. Two prehistoric worked chert flakes were recovered.

ENE to WSW aligned linear feature F104 was 1.4m wide and 0.3m deep, with irregular moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a heavily root-disturbed mid brown clayey-loam fill (105) and no finds were recovered.

5.3 Trench 4 (Plan Fig. 3d, section 3e)

This trench was excavated through topsoil and colluvial subsoil layers (400 and 401) onto natural subsoil (406), which comprised a light yellowish-brown sand with abundant gravels present at a depth of 0.4m. The trench contained two parallel NE-SW aligned linear features (F402 and F404), which were 1.8m apart and cut through the colluvial subsoil.

F402 was 1.48m wide and 0.34m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a shallow concave base. It contained a light brown sandy-silt fill (401) and no finds were recovered.

F404 was 1.25m wide and 0.44m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a narrow concave base. It contained a dark brown sandy-silt fill (403) and no finds were recovered.

5.4 Trench 6 (Plan Fig. 4a, sections 4b &c)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (604) which was present at a depth of 0.26m below colluvial subsoil and topsoil layers (601 and 600). The trench contained a single east to west-aligned linear feature (F602) which was sealed by colluvial subsoil.

Linear feature F602 was 0.48m wide and 0.15m deep, with a shallow concave profile. It contained a mid reddish-brown clayey loam fill (603) and no finds were recovered.

5.5 Trench 8 (Plan Fig. 4d, sections 4e-g; Plate 2)

This trench was excavated through topsoil (800), colluvial subsoil (814) and an interface layer (801) onto natural subsoil (802), which comprised a light red clayey-sand with abundant gravel inclusions present at a depth of 0.5m. The trench contained a small pit or possible posthole (F803) and possible linear terminal (F805), both of which were cutting through interface layer 801.

Oval-shaped small pit or possible posthole F803 was 0.33m long, 0.23m wide and 0.13m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a flattish base. It contained a mid brown sandy-silt fill (804) and no finds were recovered.

Adjacent possible linear terminal F805 extended east into the trench with a blunt point terminal. The feature was 0.94m wide and 0.19m deep, with moderate sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a mid brown sandy silty-clay fill (806), with moderately common sub-angular stone inclusions. No finds were recovered.

5.6 Trench 9 (Plan Fig. 5a, sections 5b-d; Plates 3 & 4)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (902), which was present at a depth of 0.47m under an interface layer (902), a colluvial subsoil (914) and topsoil (900). The trench contained an approximately north to south-aligned curving linear feature (F903), a possible pit or linear terminal (F910) and a linear terminal (F912), all of which cut through interface layer 901.

Linear feature F903 was 1.64m wide and 1.07m deep, with a steep to vertical southwest side, a steep northeast side and a narrow flat base. The sides were slightly irregular due to disturbance from root or possible animal disturbance. This probable ditch contained a sequence of six fills. These comprised a basal fill of light brownish-red redeposited clayey-sand (904), below two similar accumulation deposits of light greyish-red to brownish-red clayey silty-sand (905 and 907) that were divided by a redeposited natural subsoil tip fill (906). Fill 907 was overlain by a further redeposited natural subsoil tip fill (908), which was sealed by an upper fill of mid brown clay loam (909) similar to the overlying subsoil. Three worked chert flakes were recovered from fill 904 and two were found in 905.

Rounded possible pit or linear terminal F910 was 0.66m wide and 0.22m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a flat base. The feature contained a mid brown clayey silty-sand fill (911) and no finds were recovered.

East to west aligned probable linear feature F912 was slightly curved in plan and had a rounded terminal. It was 0.33m wide and 0.08m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. The feature contained a mid reddish-brown sandy silty-clay fill (913) and no finds were recovered.

5.7 Trench 10 (Plan Fig. 5e, sections 5f-g)

This trench was excavated onto natural subsoil (1004) which was present at a depth of 0.39m below colluvial subsoil (1001) and topsoil (1000). The trench contained a single irregular possible pit feature (F1002).

Sub-oval shaped possible pit F1002 was irregular in plan along its southeast side due to likely root disturbance. It was 0.7m long, 0.4m wide and 0.18m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. The feature contained a mid brown clayey silty-sand fill (1003) and no finds were recovered.

5.8 Trench 11 (Plan Fig. 5h, section 5i)

Trench 11 was excavated onto natural subsoil (1104), which comprised light yellowish-brown sand with abundant gravel inclusions present at a depth of 0.42m below ground level. This was beneath colluvial subsoil (1101) and topsoil (1100). The trench contained an irregular partially exposed possible pit feature (F1103).

Feature F1103 was 0.49m wide and 0.16m deep, with moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a light yellowish-brown sandy-silt fill (1102) and no finds were recovered.

6. THE FINDS

6.1 Introduction

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

Table 1. Finds quantifications (weight is in grams)

Trench	Context	Description	Prehistoric pottery		Worked flint/chert	
			No	Wt	No	Wt
1	101	Subsoil Trench 1	2	<1	1	1
1	103	Fill of ditch F102			2	13
9	904	Upper fill of ditch F903			3	41
9	905	Secondary fill of ditch F903			2	37
9	907	Tertiary fill of ditch F903				
Totals			2	<1	8	92

6.2 Pottery

Two very small abraded fragments of probable prehistoric pottery were recovered from the colluvial subsoil layer in Trench 1. These are tentatively ascribed a Bronze Age date.

6.3 Worked flint and chert

A total of eight pieces of worked flint and chert was recovered which comprise the following:

Context 101	Broken waste flake in probable 'Beer' flint
Context 103	Two broad waste flakes in gravel chert
Context 904	Three waste flakes in poor quality gravel chert
Context 905	Two broad and squat waste flakes in poor quality gravel chert, one with hinge fracture

With such a small assemblage it is difficult to allocate the material to a particular period, but the broad and squat nature of the flakes from F903 in Trench 9, indicates a later prehistoric probably Bronze Age date.

7. DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The evaluation has established the presence of archaeological features in some of the trenches, although very few associated artefacts were recovered. Perhaps of most interest were the large curvilinear ditch and associated features in Trench 9, as well as the probable ditch terminal and posthole in Trench 8. All these features were sealed by the colluvial/agricultural subsoil and are therefore likely to be early in date. The profile of ditch F903 is also characteristic of an early feature. Based on the proximity of these features to those at Castle Hill (Fitzpatrick *et al* 1999) and the small quantity of finds recovered, it is likely that they are prehistoric, probably middle Bronze Age in date. F903 is likely to represent part of a larger ditched enclosure located on the higher ground in the northern part of the site, with the other feature types present in this trench and Trench 8 indicating a settlement rather than funerary function.
- 7.2 The two ditches recorded in Trench 1, located in the southeast corner of the field, were also sealed by the colluvial subsoil. Their alignments, similar profiles and very close proximity to a middle Bronze Age ditched field system recorded at Castle Hill, indicates that they may be part of this and possibly forming its northwest extent.
- 7.3 The two parallel linear features recorded in Trench 4 both cut through the colluvial subsoil and a field boundary in this location is depicted on the modern 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map (see Fig. 1), but not on 19th century historic maps. The two linear features are likely to represent flanking ditches either side of a now removed hedgebank, with both certain to be of 20th century date.
- 7.4 The remaining features identified on the site comprised a linear feature in Trench 6 (F602) and two irregular root-disturbed features in Trench 10 and 11 (F1002 & F1103). F602 is likely to be a former boundary or drainage ditch, with its presence below the colluvial subsoil and differing alignment from the present field pattern indicating an early, possibly prehistoric date. The two features identified in Trenches 10 and 11 could be archaeological features, but it is considered more likely that they were naturally formed, perhaps tree throws. No artefacts were recovered.

8. IMPACT OF DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 It is likely that the evaluation has identified the presence of a probable Bronze Age settlement enclosure in the northwest part of where the poultry house is proposed. The orientation of the probable large boundary ditch to this enclosure indicates that it surrounds an area of settlement situated on the higher ground to the northwest. Elsewhere on the site more localised features were present, including possible remnants of a Bronze Age field system identified in Trench 1.
- 8.2 Current development proposals indicate that the new poultry house will be 'cut in' to a depth of 450mm and then a concrete ground slab will be laid at this level, with the building then constructed on this. The spoil generated from the excavation will be used to create a landscape bund to be located on the southeast side of the poultry house. Where the possible Bronze Age enclosure is located, soil overburden cover is around 0.4m, with excavations for the new poultry house therefore clearly impacting on buried archaeological remains. However, it is understood that there is some flexibility in the depth of excavations needed, as the poultry house will not need substantial foundations. If it is possible to re-design a scheme with only minimal below ground impact, then it is suggested that a suitable buffer of 0.2m to 0.3m of soil cover would be sufficient to enable the prehistoric features identified to be preserved *in situ*.
- 8.3 Elsewhere where development is proposed only limited evidence for archaeological activity was identified, with the possible exception of the southeast corner of the site where the two early ditches were recorded. The proposed access track enters the field in this location and as

this is only 4m wide, there is only limited scope for further exposure of these features and for any so far unknown buried archaeological remains.

9. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 9.1** 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 196/2010 along with any archive generated by any subsequent work on the site.
- 9.2** The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 92455.

10. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The evaluation was commissioned by Sheamus Machin on behalf of the landowner, Mr Pyle. The site trial trenching was carried out by Simon Hughes, Naomi Hughes and Richard Sims, with the illustrations for this report prepared by Cain Hegarty. The advice and collaboration of Stephen Reed, Devon Archaeology Officer, is duly acknowledged.

11. SOURCES CONSULTED

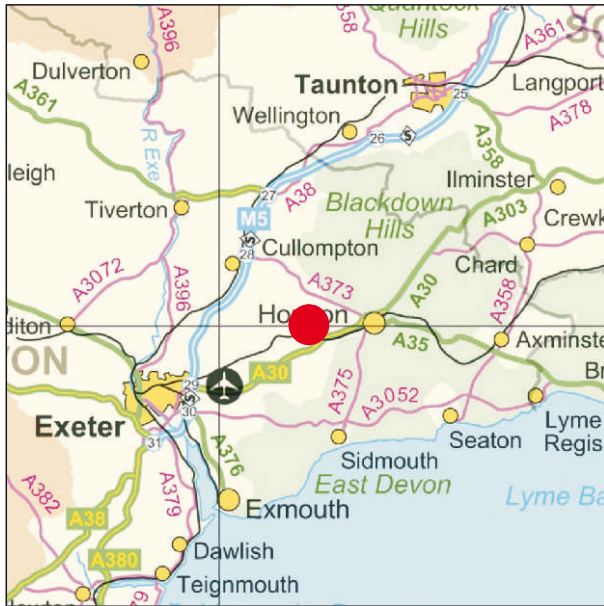
DRO, Ottery St Mary tithe map, 1841

Fitzpatrick, A.P., Butterworth, C.A. and Grove, J., 1999, *Prehistoric and Roman sites in East Devon: the A30 Honiton to Exeter Improvement DBFO Scheme, 1996-1999, Volume 2*. Wessex Archaeology Monograph 16

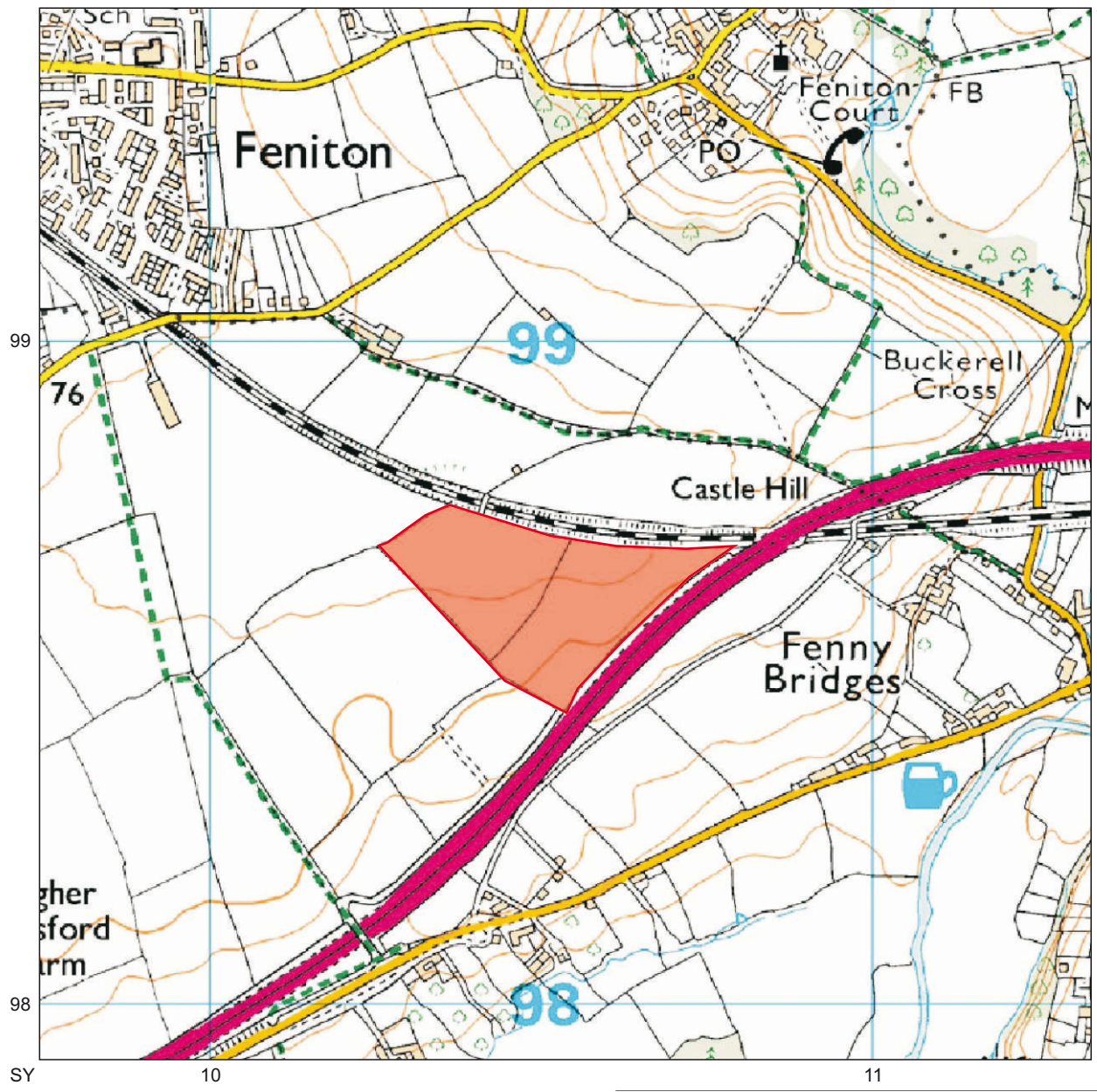
Ordnance Survey 25-inch map sheets 70.5 and 70.6, surveyed 1888, published 1889, revised 1903, published 1905

Reed, S., 2010, Brief for archaeological evaluation undertaken in support of a planning application: Long Park, Talaton Road, Feniton, Honiton. DCHES document, ref. Arch/dc/ed/16619

Valentin, J., 2010, *Land at Long Park, Talaton Road, Feniton, Devon: Project Design for an archaeological trench evaluation*. Unpublished AC archaeology document for client, ref. ACD250/1/0



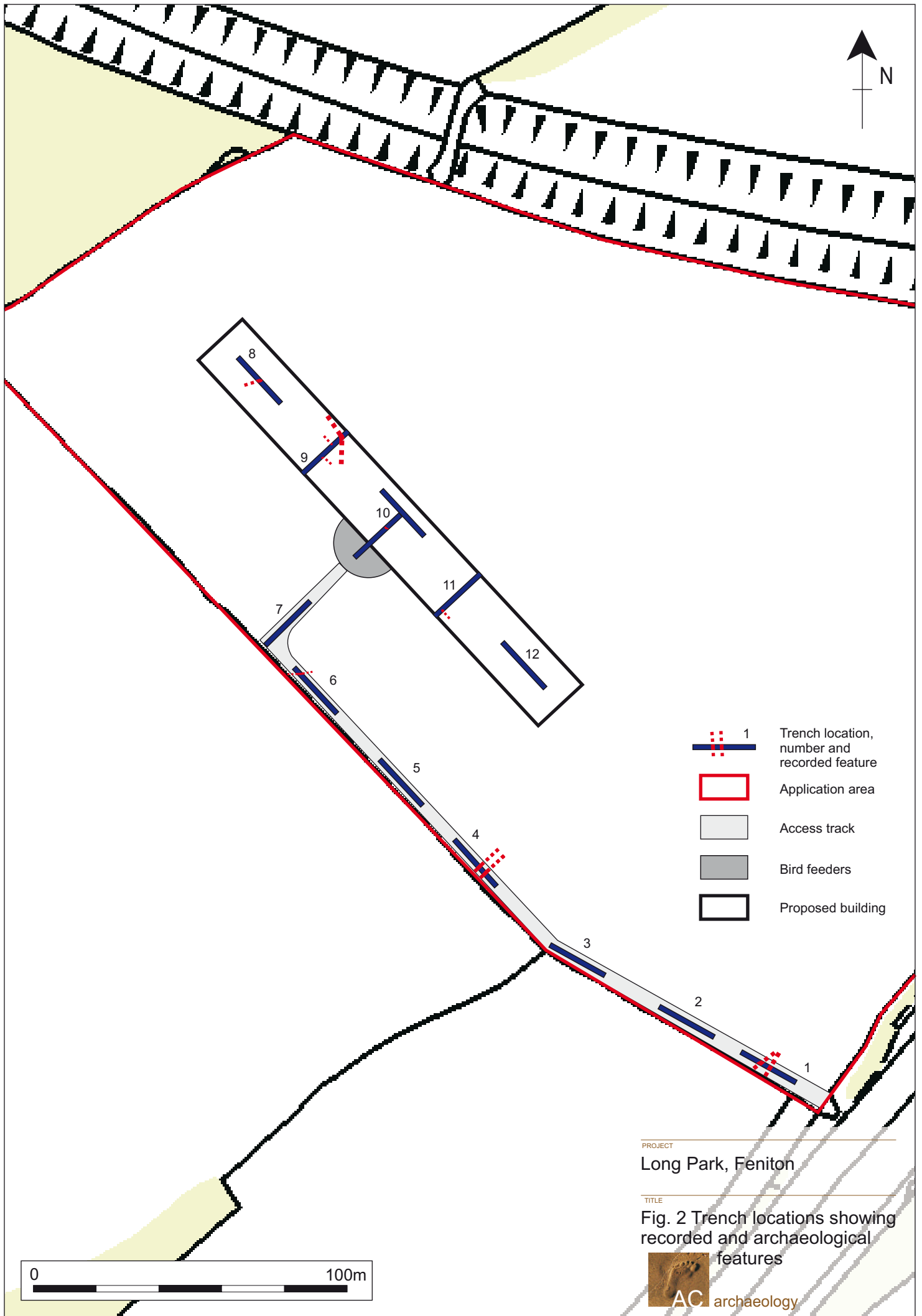
Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright AC archaeology, Chicklade, Wiltshire. Licence No AL100016452








PROJECT
Long Park, Feniton

TITLE
Fig. 1 Location of site





-  1 Trench location, number and recorded feature
-  Application area
-  Access track
-  Bird feeders
-  Proposed building

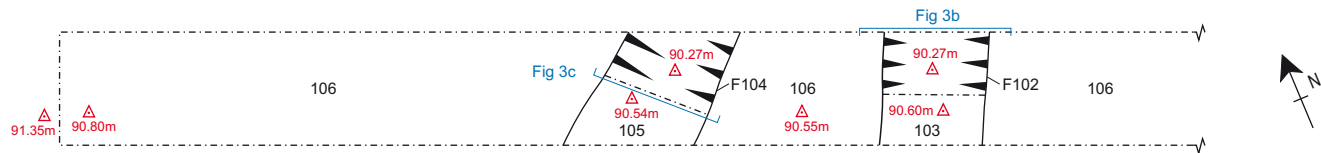
PROJECT
 Long Park, Feniton

TITLE
 Fig. 2 Trench locations showing recorded and archaeological features

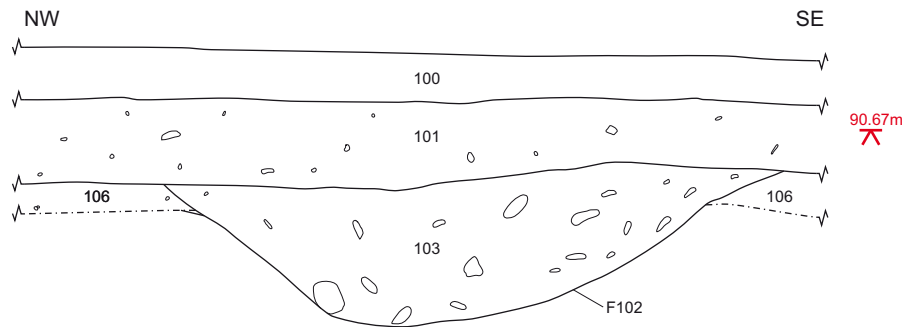


0 100m

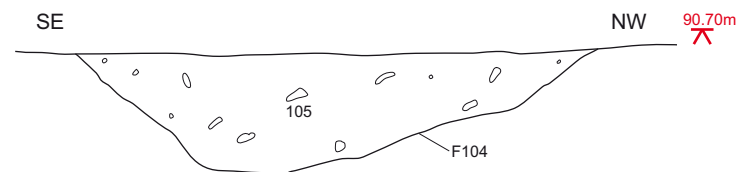
a) Trench 1 plan



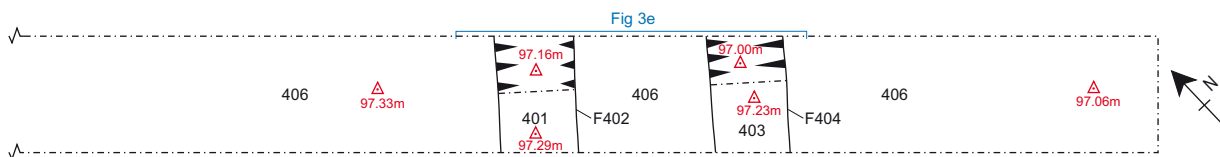
b) Section of ditch F103



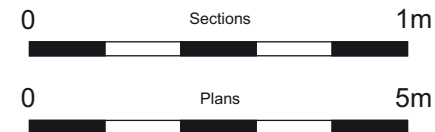
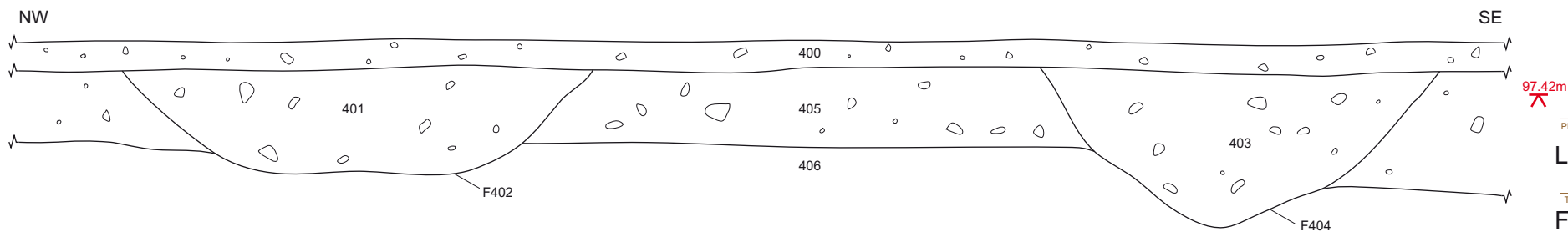
c) Section of ditch F104



d) Trench 4 plan



e) Sections F402 and F404

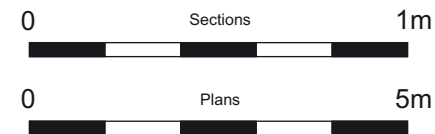
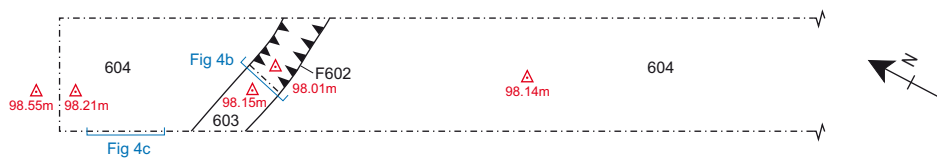


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Long Park, Feniton

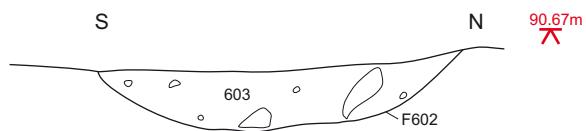
TITLE
Fig. 3 Plans and sections, Trenches 1 and 4



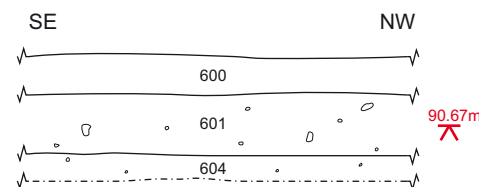
a) Trench 6 plan



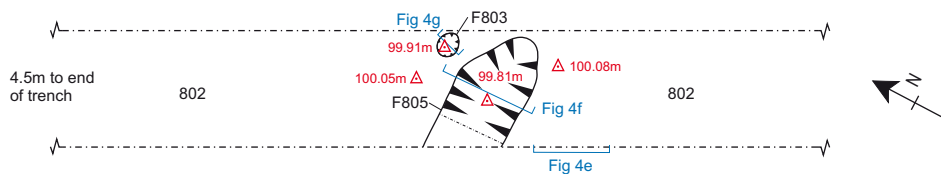
b) Section of F602



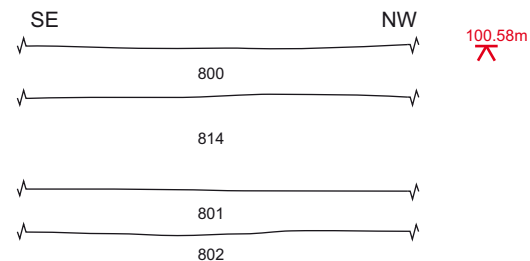
c) Representative section of Trench 6



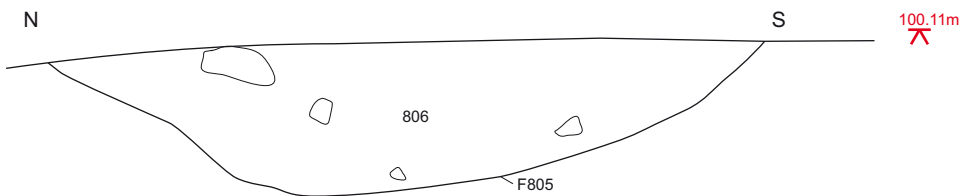
d) Trench 8 plan



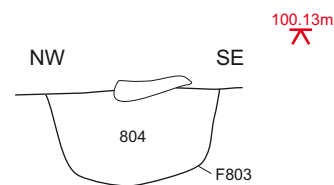
e) Representative section of Trench 8



f) Section of F805



g) Section of F803



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Long Park, Feniton

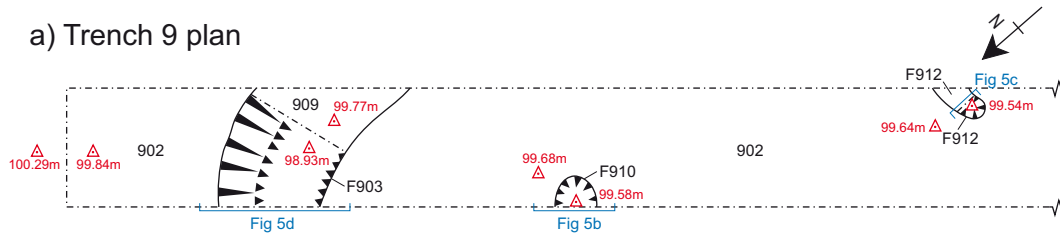
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Fig. 4 Plans and sections, Trenches 6 and 8

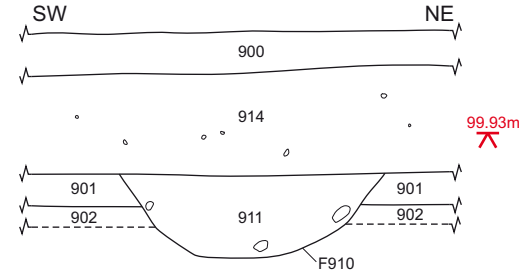


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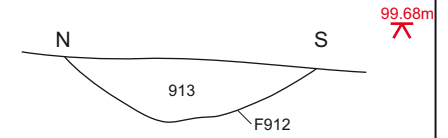
a) Trench 9 plan



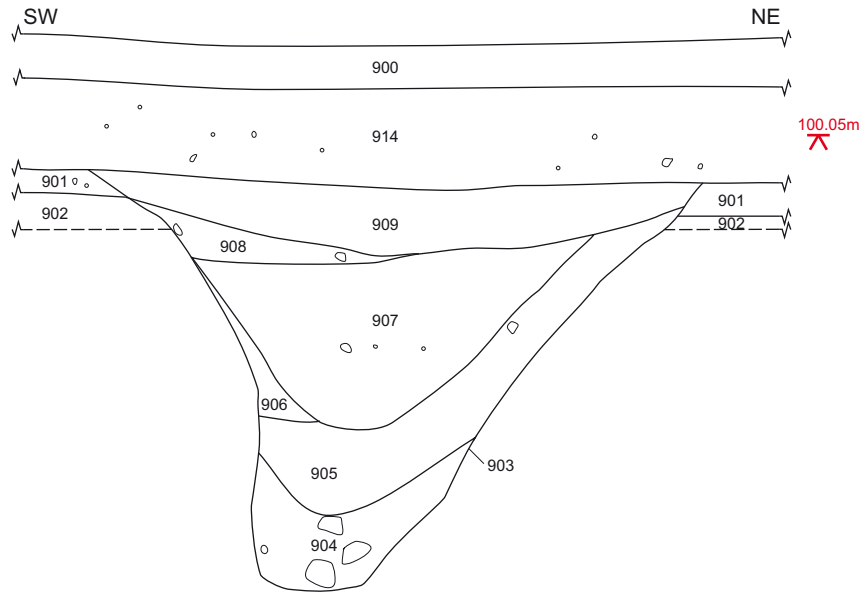
b) Section of F910



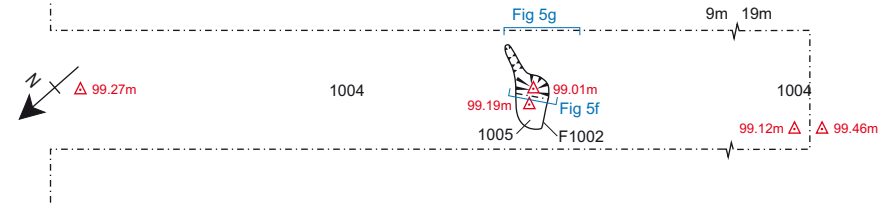
c) Section of F912



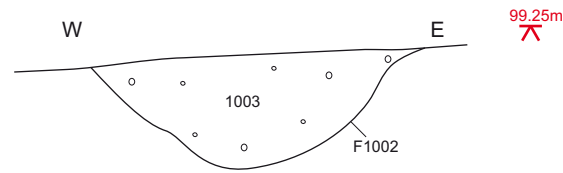
d) Section of ditch F903



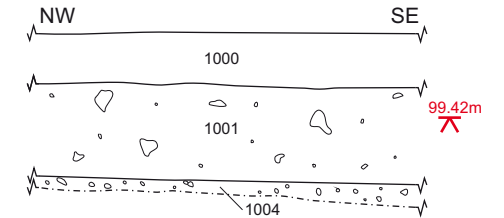
e) Trench 10 plan



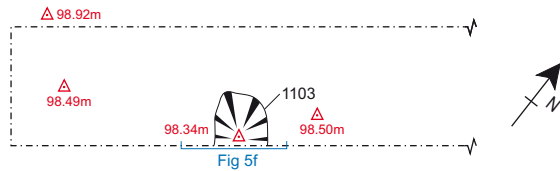
f) Section of F1002



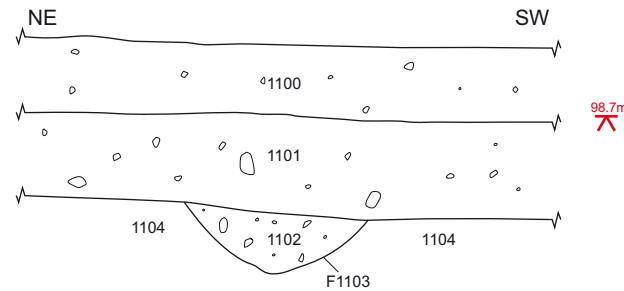
g) Representative section of Trench 10



h) Trench 11 plan



i) Section of F1103



0 All Plans 5m

0 Sections b,d, g & i 1m

0 Sections c & f 1m

PROJECT

Long Park, Feniton

TITLE

Fig. 5 Plans and sections, Trenches 9, 10 and 11





Plate 1. General view of site from Trench 5, looking to southeast



Plate 2. Trench 8, possible posthole F803 and ditch terminal F805, view to southeast (scale 1m)



Plate 3. Trench 9, general view showing ditch F903 (scale 1m)



Plate 4. Trench 9, ditch F903 southeast facing section. View to northwest (scales 2m & 1m)

Appendix 1: Descriptions of negative trenches

Trench 2		Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
200	Mid brown friable sandy-loam with occasional sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0-0.15m	Topsoil	
201	Mid brown friable sandy-silt with common sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0.15-0.5m	Colluvial/agricultural subsoil	
202	Light yellowish-red clayey-sand with abundant gravels	0.5m +	Natural subsoil	

Trench 3		Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
300	Mid brown friable sandy-loam with occasional sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0-0.15m	Topsoil	
301	Mid brown friable sandy-silt with common sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0.15-0.35m	Colluvial/agricultural subsoil	
302	Light yellowish-red clayey-sand with abundant gravels	0.35m +	Natural subsoil	

Trench 5		Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
500	Mid brown friable sandy-loam with occasional sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0-0.10m	Topsoil	
501	Mid brown friable sandy-silt with common sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0.1-0.25m	Colluvial/agricultural subsoil	
502	Light brownish-red clayey-sand with abundant gravels	0.25m +	Natural subsoil	

Trench 7		Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NE-SW
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
700	Mid brown friable sandy-loam with occasional sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0-0.15m	Topsoil	
701	Mid brown friable sandy-silt with common sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0.15-0.4m	Colluvial/agricultural subsoil	
702	Light brownish-red clayey-sand with abundant gravels	0.4m +	Natural subsoil	

Trench 12		Length 20m	Width 1.6m	Alignment NW-SE
Context	Description	Depth	Interpretation	
1200	Mid brown friable sandy-loam with occasional sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0-0.15m	Topsoil	
1201	Mid brown friable sandy-silt with common sub-angular stone inclusions <0.05m	0.15-0.4m	Colluvial/agricultural subsoil	
1202	Light reddish-brown clayey-sand with abundant gravels	0.4m +	Natural subsoil	

Devon Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Unit 4, Halthaies Workshops
Bradninch
Nr Exeter
Devon
EX5 4LQ

Telephone/Fax: 01392 882410

Wiltshire Office

AC archaeology Ltd
Manor Farm Stables
Chicklade
Hindon
Nr Salisbury
Wiltshire
SP3 5SU

Telephone: 01747 820581
Fax: 01747 820440

www.acarchaeology.co.uk