


Site: Sydney House Car Park, Great Torrington, North Devon	National Grid Reference SS 49432 18978	 context one ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD
Client: Kimberley Developments plc	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
OASIS ID: contexto1-179386	Museum Accession no: NDDMS2014.43	
Contractor's reference number/code: C1/EVA/14/GTD	Dates fieldwork undertaken: September (Phase 1) and November 2014 (Phase 2)	
<p>Interim Report</p> <p>Context One Archaeological Services (COAS) carried out the first two phases in a programme of archaeological evaluation at Sydney House Car Park, South Street, Great Torrington, North Devon (the 'Site') in September and November 2014. The project is commissioned and funded by Kimberley Developments plc.</p> <p>The Site is provisionally allocated for development within the Torridge District Council local plan (TDC 2012). An archaeological evaluation was advised by Ms Ann Dick (Archaeologist, Devon County Historic Environment Team (HET)) in relation to a previous development proposal. Although the present development proposal is different, the impact to the Site is the same and, as such, the level and scope of archaeological works required by the Local Planning Authority (Torridge District Council (TDC) remain unaltered.</p> <p>During phase 1 and phase 2 a total of 11 evaluation trenches have been excavated by a machine equipped with a 1.60m wide toothless grading bucket. Nine of the trenches measured c. 1.60m x 20.00m while Trenches 8 and 10 were foreshortened for health and safety reasons and were investigated through sondages each measuring c. 1.60m x 5.00m.</p> <p>The first phase of archaeological work comprised the excavation of six trenches in the former market garden area within the western part of the Site (Figure 1; Trenches 1 to 6). No archaeological features or deposits were observed within Trenches 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 and no archaeological finds were recovered. The deposit sequence comprised topsoil measuring 0.20-0.50m deep, above subsoil measuring 0.10-0.80m deep, overlying natural crushed sandstone. The same sequence was observed in Trench 5 although the topsoil was very thin (0.02m) overlying 0.28m of subsoil which directly covered the natural crushed sandstone. An amorphous spread of material was recorded in Trench 5 at the horizon between the topsoil and subsoil, yielding a small assemblage of medieval pottery. This feature had no distinct cut edge but likely relates to medieval occupation either on or within close proximity to the Site.</p> <p>The second phase of work comprised the excavation of five further trenches located within the centre of the car park (Figure 1; Trenches 7 to 11) revealing a small number of archaeological features. The deposit sequence comprised modern made ground below the car park Tarmac, either directly overlying the crushed sandstone natural or the archaeological features. Two linear features (aligned approximately east-west) were identified in Trench 7 at a depth of 0.70m below the surface of the trench, with the northernmost of these features containing a single sherd of post-medieval (likely 17th century) pottery. Several features of archaeological interest have also been identified within Trench 11 at a depth of 0.70m below the surface of the trench, with a ditch (later cut by a pit) running across the eastern end. A number of finds have been recovered from the ditch, including a variety of pottery sherds, butchered animal bone, oyster and mussel shells, glass and ceramic clay pipe. Some of the pottery sherds are very large and diagnostic, with a variety of glazed finishes. Trenches 8, 9 and 10 contained no archaeological features or deposits, the deposit sequences dominated by modern made ground which in places was up to 2.00m deep.</p> <p>Trenches 12 to 16 within the south-east corner of the Site have not yet been excavated. However, the preliminary results of the evaluation indicate that a modest amount of further archaeological features and deposits may be expected in this area. The surface of any such features may be present at a depth of approximately 0.70m below the car park Tarmac, sealed beneath modern make-up layers. The southern edge of the Site appears to have been terraced prior to the deposition of the modern made ground, which is up to 2.00m deep in this area.</p>		

To conclude, the preliminary results of the evaluation in the western and central areas of the Site suggest that further exploratory trenches in the eastern area would not significantly alter the dataset. While modest archaeological remains are to be expected in the eastern area it is considered that these would not be significant enough to prevent development. However, any such remains exposed both within this area and across the remainder of the Site would require preservation by record. This would entail a further phase of archaeological works. Also, the pottery from Trench 11 warrants specialist analysis on the basis that a wide variety of wares are represented from a discrete area. The site of a 17th century pottery kiln (HER no. 55053) is located immediately west of the Site and it is possible that some of the pottery may have derived from the kiln. However, overall the finds are indicative of medieval or post-medieval domestic activity. Indeed, a 17th century pottery and domestic refuse scatter (HER no. 19232) lies immediately east of the Site. Such analysis should be carried out once the programme of archaeological works is complete so that any further wares are included within the report.

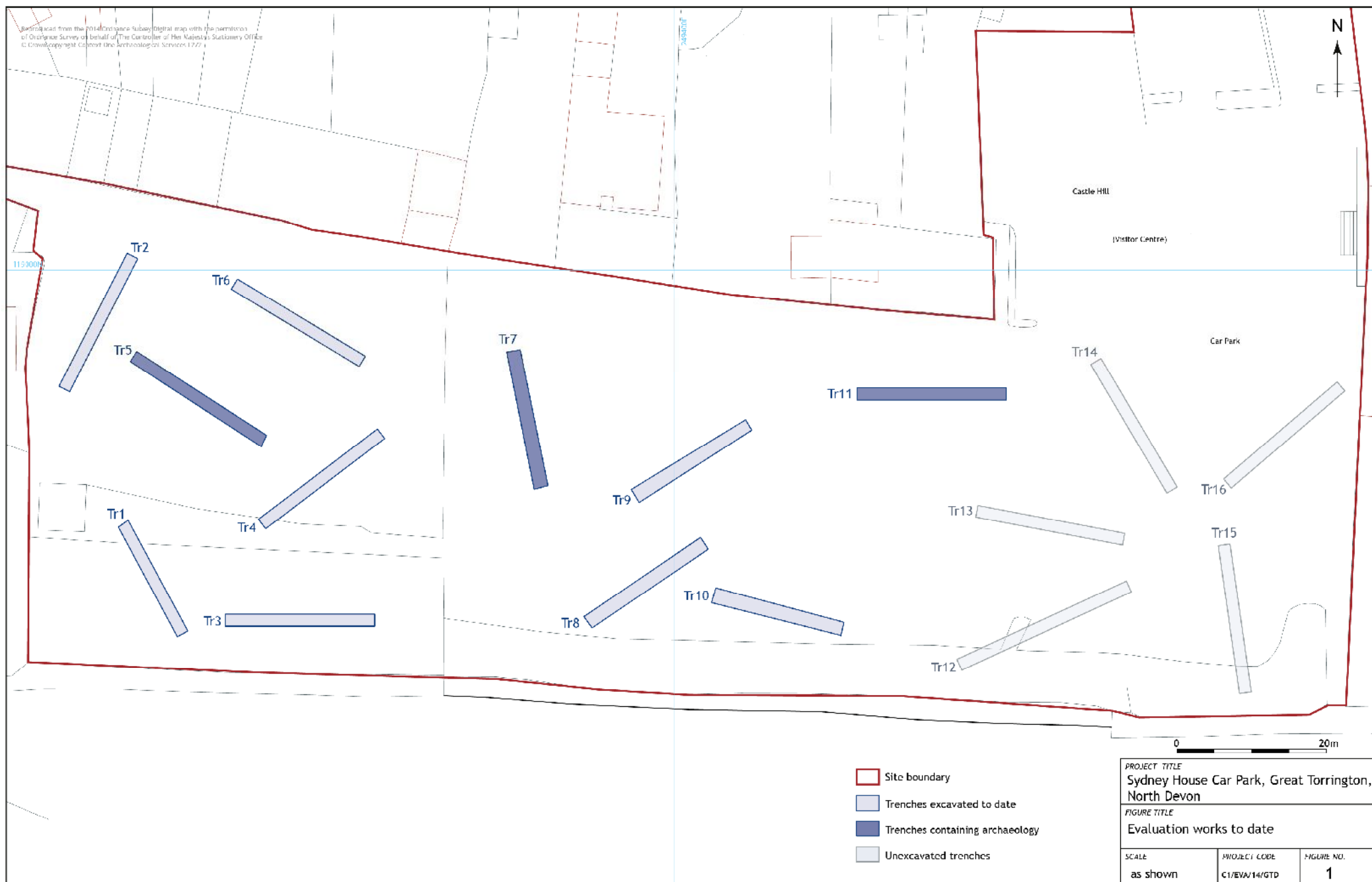
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Illustration: Tara Fairclough

Context One Archaeological Services Ltd.

Date of summary:

07/01/2015

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- Site boundary
- Trenches excavated to date
- Trenches containing archaeology
- Unexcavated trenches

PROJECT TITLE		
Sydney House Car Park, Great Torrington, North Devon		
FIGURE TITLE		
Evaluation works to date		
SCALE	PROJECT CODE	FIGURE NO.
as shown	C1/EVA/14/GTD	1