

LAND AT BRANNAMS MEDICAL CENTRE, BRANNAMS SQUARE, BARNSTAPLE, DEVON

(Centred on NGR SS 5607 3290)

Results of an Archaeological Trench Evaluation

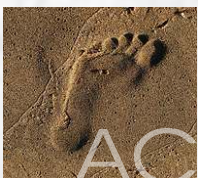
Planning Reference: North Devon District Council 65658
(Condition 3)

Prepared by:
George Gandham

On behalf of:
Brannams Medical Centre

Report No: ACD2108/2/0

Date: September 2019



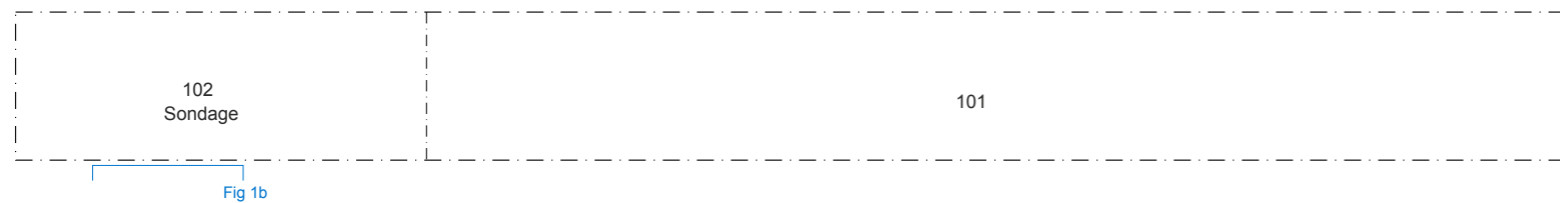
archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

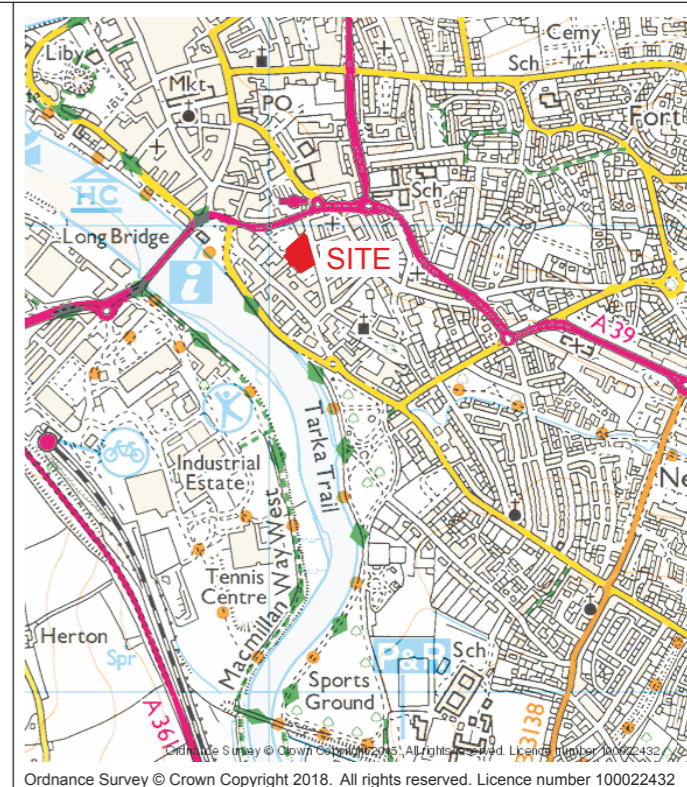
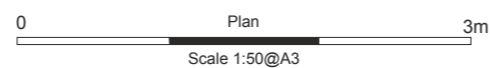
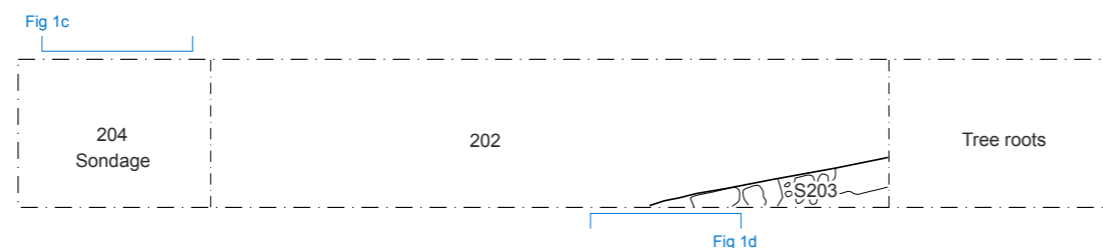
Civil Parish & District: Barnstaple, North Devon	National Grid Reference SS 5607 3290	Number:
Subject: Land at Brannams Medical Centre, Brannams Square, Barnstaple: Results of an archaeological trench evaluation		Photo attached: Plates 1-3
Planning Application no: 65658 (condition no. 3)	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
OASIS ID: 361694	Museum Accession no: 13.2019a	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD2108	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 23 August 2019	
<p>Introduction</p> <p>An archaeological trench evaluation was carried out by AC archaeology ahead of construction of a new extension to Brannams Medical Centre, Brannams Square, Barnstaple (Fig. 1). The area for the extension is positioned on generally level ground at 10m above Ordnance Datum, with the underlying solid geology comprising mudstone of the Pilton Mudstone Formation beneath a superficial deposit of clay, silt, sand and gravel alluvium (British Geological Survey Online Viewer 2019).</p> <p>The site is located within an area associated with historic pottery production dating from the 17th century onwards, (Devon Historic Environment Record ref. MDV813). In 1840, Thomas Brannam's pottery fronted Litchdon Street, which backs onto the site. By 1904 it had expanded into the area now covered by the medical centre where a brick-built kiln has been retained (MDV104805). Recent archaeological work on a previous extension to the centre exposed a brick footing that probably formed part of a late 19th century former factory building (MDV813). Evidence for demolition and levelling dating to the late 19th to early 20th century was also present, which included the use of pottery wasters and kiln furniture as levelling material.</p> <p>Results</p> <p>The archaeological works consisted of the machine-excavation of two trial trenches, totalling 16m long by 1m wide, which were excavated across the footprint of the proposed extension (Fig. 1a; Plate 1). Each trench was initially excavated to a depth of 650mm, which is the formation depth of the development, with further sondages at the west end of each trench to a depth of 1.2m. Trench 1 revealed a topsoil (100) and modern made ground (101) to a depth of 0.7m below ground surface and underlying this was a pottery-rich deposit (102) (Fig. 1b). Trench 2 revealed topsoil (200/201) and made ground (202) to a depth of 0.85m below ground surface and underlying this a pottery-rich deposit (204) equivalent to (102) in Trench 1 (Fig. 1c; Plate 2). At the east end of the trench a modern concrete wall footing (S203) was exposed on a northeast-southwest alignment (Fig. 1d; Plate 3).</p> <p>Note on finds by Naomi Payne</p> <p>The finds include post-medieval pottery, a few items of kiln furniture, a clay pipe stem fragment, a small quantity of fuel ash slag and some modern brick and tile. 131 sherds (5956g) of post-medieval pottery were recovered from 6 contexts. This material comprises locally-made earthenwares, mainly late 19th to early 20th-century date, but also including small quantities of 17th/18th century North Devon Gravel-Tempered pottery. The remainder of the pottery is likely to have been made at the site (indeed, two vessels are stamped "ROYAL BARUM WARE ENGLAND C. H. BRANNAM LTD on the base) and includes some obvious waster material, such as a near-complete shallow dish from deposit 204, which has only been biscuit-fired, presumably due to the piece of kiln lining which has fallen onto the dish and adhered to it. There is quite a lot of material which has only been biscuit fired, some of which is certainly flower pot and therefore would never have been glazed, but some is likely to be waster material which it was not felt to be of sufficient quality to bother to glaze. The kiln furniture present (four items, 266g) comprises three incomplete spurs from topsoil (101), Trench 1 subsoil, and a hollow cylinder from deposit (204). All three of the spurs, which are all of the same size, are marked 'A 05'.</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>The results from the archaeological trench evaluation correspond with the previous archaeological work on the site in that there has been significant demolition and levelling on the site. The deepest deposits in each trench contained modern material meaning that these deposits and those above have resulted from recent landscaping following the abandonment and demolition of the pottery. The purpose of the modern footing (S203) could not be ascertained. The sample of pottery collected is predominantly late 19th the early 20th-century in date and comparable to that reported in detail following the previous archaeological works. The proposed depth of the groundworks at 650mm depth will be above layer (102/204) and wholly within modern made ground. No further work is therefore proposed on the site, but the sample of pottery recovered will be deposited with the Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon.</p>		
Recorder: George Gandham, AC archaeology		Date sent to HER: 4 September 2019

a) Plan

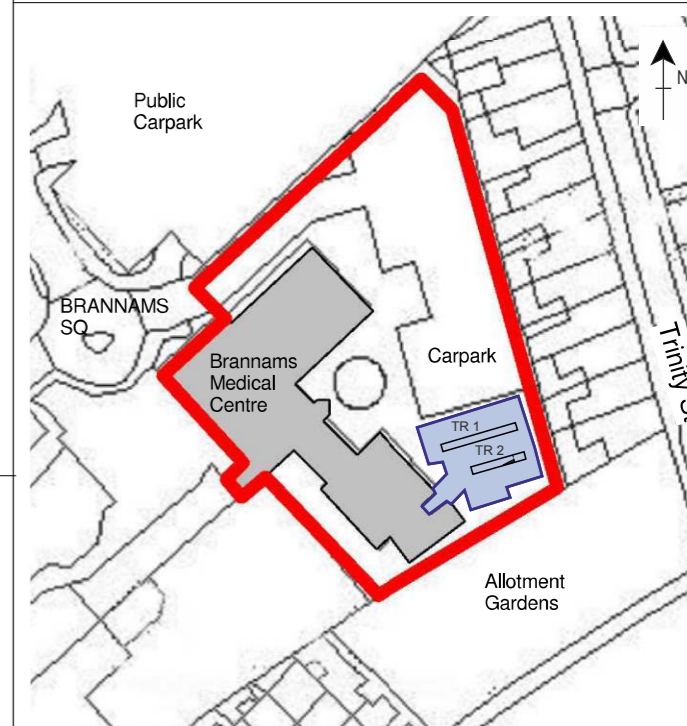
Trench 1



Trench 2



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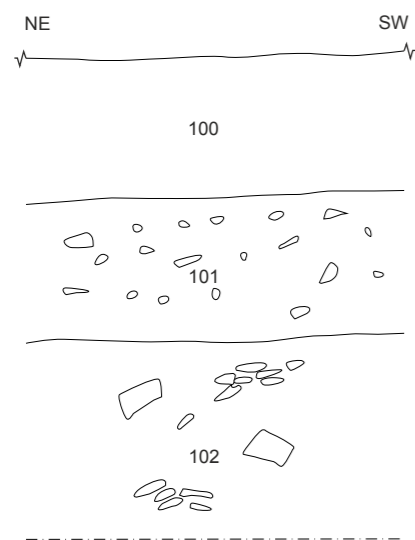
Drawing supplied by Gareth Edwards Architect



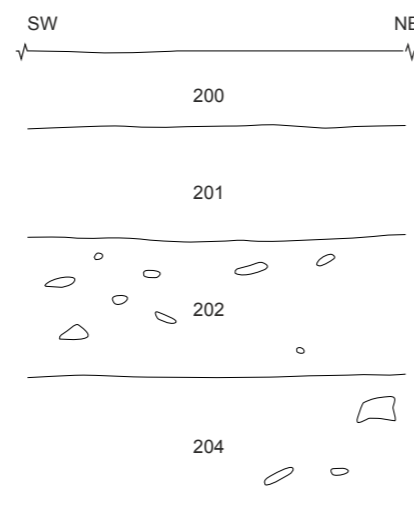
Legend

- Site
- New extension
- Trenches 1-2

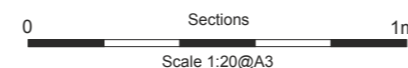
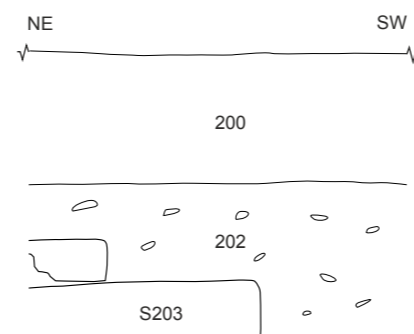
b) Trench 1, sondage, representative section



c) Trench 2, sondage, representative section



d) Trench 2, wall footing S203, representative section



PROJECT
Land at Brannams Medical Centre, Brannams Square, Barnstaple, Devon

TITLE
Fig. 1: Location of site, trenches, plans and sections





Plate 1: General view of the site with Trench 1 in the foreground, with standing kiln behind tree, looking west



Plate 2: Trench 2, section of sondage, showing modern pottery-rich deposit (204) at base, looking south (1m scale)



Plate 3: Trench 2, modern wall footing S203, looking south (1m scale)

Devon Office

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

Telephone: 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