

# ***Offa's Dyke Path 2012***

***A Watching Brief on the Installation of New Path Furniture  
at Lymore Park, Montgomery***

by  
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Archaeology Service



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**OFFA'S DYKE PATH 2012  
A WATCHING BRIEF ON THE INSTALLATION OF NEW PATH FURNITURE AT  
LYMORE PARK, MONTGOMERY**

by  
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A report for  
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## SUMMARY

*In 2012-3 the Archaeology Service carried out a watching brief on the installation of new path furniture at 3 sites along the Offa's Dyke Path at Lymore, Montgomery, in southwest Shropshire (Lymore B – D). These sections of Offa's Dyke were scheduled Ancient Monuments, and it was part of the scheduled monument consent for the work that it should be carried out under archaeological supervision. The Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council, carried out the watching brief on the work. The excavations were all carried out by hand by the Shropshire Council Outdoor Recreation Service Countryside Recreation Team. The excavations were carried out with minimal disturbance to the ground. Possible bank deposits were observed at Lymore B and C. Otherwise, no significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered in the excavations for the new path furniture.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

**1.1** In 2012-3 improvements were made to footpath furniture on a section of the Offa's Dyke Path National Trail at Lymore Park in Chirbury with Brompton in southwest Shropshire. The locations of these works (see Fig. 1) lay within a section of the linear monument, Offa's Dyke which has been scheduled as an ancient monument as defined by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

**1.2** In accordance with the scheduled monument consent for this work, the Archaeology Service, Shropshire Council was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief on the excavation of post-holes for new stiles at three of these sites:

<b>NGR</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Mon. no.</b>	<b>Mon. name</b>
SO 2399/9631	Lymore B (ODP12 L-B)	SA 85	Offa's Dyke: section one mile 750yds (2290m) from Dudston Covert to a point 300yds (274m) N of Lack Brook - Also in Powys: Wales
SO 2396/9635	Lymore C (ODP12 L-C)	SA 85	Offa's Dyke: section one mile 750yds (2290m) from Dudston Covert to a point 300yds (274m) N of Lack Brook - Also in Powys: Wales
SO 2378/9677	Lymore D (ODP12 L-D)	SA 85	Offa's Dyke: section one mile 750yds (2290m) from Dudston Covert to a point 300yds (274m) N of Lack Brook - Also in Powys: Wales

The excavations were all carried out by hand by the Shropshire Council Outdoor Recreation Service's Countryside Recreation Team.

**1.3** The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to allow for the preservation by record of any archaeological remains that were encountered during the excavations for the new path furniture.

**1.4** A schedule of work was prepared for the work on each of the sites and submitted to English Heritage with the application for scheduled monument consent, and a written scheme of investigation was prepared by the Archaeology Service for the watching brief (Hannaford, 2012b).

**1.5** The only known previous work in the vicinity of these sites was carried out by David Hill and Margret Worthington of the Extra-Mural Department of the University of Manchester, who are understood to have opened a small trench at Dudston Covert close to the current site at Lymore D to investigate a possible gate within the Dyke (Hill & Worthington, 2003).

## **2 THE WATCHING BRIEF**

**2.1** The sites at Lymore lay on a section of the Dyke running through Lymore Park. The bank and ditch sections here are relatively well preserved, though the western face of the bank and the ditch lie on the edge of woodland and are overgrown with trees and scrub. There is an active badger set on this section of the dyke (between sites A and B).

**2.2 Lymore A:** NGR: SO 2407 9608; SAM: SA 85. The work here comprised the replacement of a single slam post for a gate, and did not require archaeological monitoring.

**2.3 Lymore B:** NGR: SO 2399 9631; SAM: SA 85; Site Code: ODP12 L-B. Lymore B was situated on the line of the Dyke 250m north of the track from Lymore to Whitley. The work here comprised the removal of an old stile and its replacement with a new stile and dog gate. The stile was situated on the bank element of the dyke, about 3.5m down from the summit on its eastern side. Three postholes were excavated by hand for the stile frame. The westernmost one, on the higher part of the bank, was 0.9m deep by 0.4m x 0.3m in diameter; the central hole was 0.85m deep by 0.3m in diameter, and the eastern hole on the tail of the bank was 0.8m deep by 0.4m x 0.3m in diameter. Six postholes were excavated for the stile tread supports, each 0.25m in diameter, with four excavated to a depth of by 0.65m, two to 0.6m depth. The top of the subsoil, a light yellowish brown sandy silty clay (Fig. 2; 11), was seen at a depth of between 0.2m and 0.3m below the ground surface. Although it was clean, the friable consistency of this layer suggested that it was not natural and may have been part of the fabric of the bank. This deposit lay beneath a layer about 0.2m thick of light yellowish brown sandy silty clay (10) mottled with loam and with root disturbance. This was covered by a thin layer of topsoil (9) of very dark grey humic loam up to 0.05m thick.

**2.4 Lymore C:** NGR: SO 2396 9635; SAM: SA 85; Site Code: ODP12 L-C. The Lymore C site lay 40m north of the Lymore B site, on the tail of the bank of the dyke. The work here comprised the removal of an old stile and its replacement with a new stile and dog gate. Three postholes for the stile frame were excavated by hand to a depth of 0.85m. The outer holes were 0.4m x 0.3m in diameter; the central hole was by 0.3m in diameter. Four postholes were excavated for the stile tread supports, each 0.25m in diameter by 0.6m in depth. As at site B, the top of the subsoil, a yellowish brown sandy silty clay (Fig. 2; 7 & 8), was seen at a depth of about 0.3m below the ground surface. In the westernmost of the postholes this deposit (8) contained a few cobbles and pebbles; in the remaining holes it was clean. This deposit lay beneath a layer about 0.2m thick of light yellowish brown sandy silty clay (6) mottled with loam and with root disturbance. This was covered by a thin layer of topsoil (5) of very dark grey humic loam up to 0.15m thick.

**2.5 Lymore D:** SO 2378 9677; SAM: SA 85; Site Code: ODP12 L-D. Site D was located 450m north of site C. The earthworks of the Dyke have been levelled at this point. The work here comprised the removal of an old stile and its replacement with a new stile and dog gate, and the insertion of a new rail adjacent to the stile. Three postholes for the stile frame were excavated by hand to a depth of 0.85m. The outer holes were 0.4m x 0.3m in diameter; the central hole was by 0.3m in diameter. Four postholes were excavated for the stile tread supports, each 0.3m in diameter by 0.6m in depth. Two further holes 0.3m in diameter by 0.75m deep were excavated for the new rail running at right angles to the stile. The top of the subsoil, a grey to buff sandy silty clay

(Fig. 2; 4), was seen at a depth of about 0.25m below the ground surface. This deposit lay beneath a layer about 0.25m thick of greyish brown sandy loam topsoil (3).

**2.6 Discussion** At sites B and C the postholes were cut into the tail of the earthwork bank component of the Dyke, and were cut into a deposit of sandy silty clay, probably representing clean natural subsoil upcast from the cutting of the Dyke's ditch. Otherwise, no other significant archaeological features or deposits were seen in the excavations at any of the three sites monitored during these works on the line of the Dyke. The site archive, comprising the written, drawn, and photographic records form the watching brief, will be deposited with the Shropshire Museum Service.

### **3 REFERENCES**

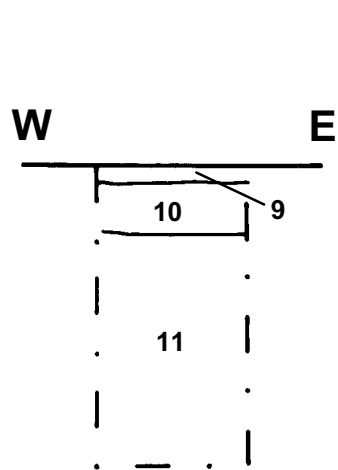
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### **ABBREVIATIONS**

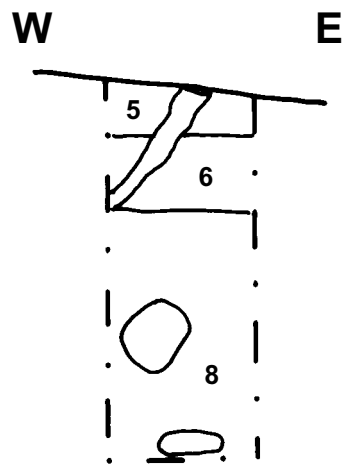
<b>CBA</b>	Council for British Archaeology
<b>HER</b>	Historic Environment Record, Shropshire Council
<b>NGR</b>	National Grid Reference
<b>OS</b>	Ordnance Survey
<b>SAM</b>	Scheduled Ancient Monument
<b>TSAHS</b>	Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society



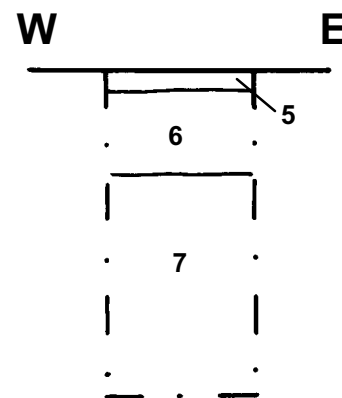




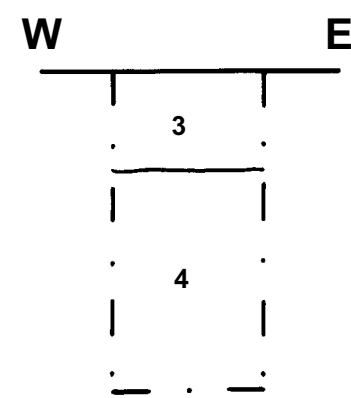
Lymore B  
Post-hole on west side  
of stile



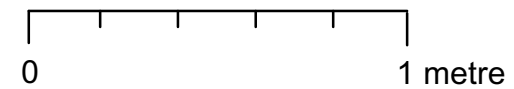
Lymore C  
Post-hole on west side  
of stile



Lymore C  
Post-hole on east side  
of stile



Lymore D  
Post-hole on west side  
of stile



LYMORE PARK, MONTGOMERY 2012  
Figure 2: Sections through post-holes at sites Lymore B, C, & D

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Photo 1: The old stile at Lymore B, looking N, with the Dyke to the left



Photo 2: New posthole at Lymore B, looking NW (scale bar 1m)



Photo 3: The new stile and dog gate at Lymore B, looking NW

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Photo 4: The old stile at Lymore C, looking S, with the Dyke to the right



Photo 5: New posthole at Lymore C, looking N (scale bar 1m)



Photo 6: The new stile at Lymore C, looking S towards Lymore B

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Photo 7: The old stile at Lymore D, looking SE, with the Dyke to the right



Photo 8: New posthole at Lymore D, looking E, (scale bar 1m)



Photo 9: The new stile at Lymore D, looking SE