

Plymouth City Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Plymouth, Plymouth	National Grid Reference: SX 5220 7533	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording at Plymbridge Woods, Plymouth, Devon.		Photo attached: Y
Planning Application no: n/a	Recipient museum: National Trust	
OASIS ID: oakforda1-159270	Museum Accession no: n/a	
Contractor's reference number/code: OA1104	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 04/06/2013	
<p>Description of works:</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Oakford Archaeology in June 2013 on land near Plymbridge Woods, Plymouth, Devon (SX 5220 7533). The work was commissioned by Dinsdale Moorland Services and undertaken as part of the 1 South West Off-Road Cycling Project. The site (Fig. 1) lies in an area of local and regional historic significance, containing the remains of stone quarries and associated engine houses and workshops dating from the late 17th century onwards, with extensive transport links connecting these to nearby Plymouth.</p> <p>The Plymouth and Dartmoor Railway (PDR) was a horse-drawn tramway which opened in 1823 to transport stone from Dartmoor to Plymouth, and was Devon's first iron railroad. The PDR, with a gauge of four and a half feet (1.4m) with chaired rails bolted to granite sets or sleepers, was used for the transportation of stone from the Dartmoor quarries for the construction of Nelson's Column and London Bridge.</p> <p>A watching brief was maintained during drainage works associated with the construction of the cycle trail. The ground reduction for the new drainage extended to a depth of 1.1m deep.</p> <p>Results:</p> <p>Inspection of the trenching provided a cross-section through the PDR embankment (Fig. 2, pls 1-4). The line of the railway was terraced into the slope between a series of hilly spurs, at a point where a natural stream crossed the tracks.</p> <p>The underlying natural subsoil (109), consisting of fine lenses of light greyish yellow clayey silt with occasional shillet inclusions, was encountered at a depth of 0.4m below current ground level. This was overlain by a series of large, made ground deposits (103-108), consisting of light brownish red silty clays with very frequent shillet inclusions. These deposits were originally revetted along the eastern edge by large limestone boulders (102). A number of these had been disturbed along the western edge, when a cast-iron pipe was inserted between the granite sets during the 20th century (100).</p> <p>Four railway sets, composed of roughly squared granite blocks, were disturbed by the groundworks. Measuring on average 0.4m long, 0.35m wide and 0.30m high these were set into the underlying made ground, and covered with a layer of limestone hardcore (101). Following completion of the re-medial works the granite sets were moved back to their original position.</p> <p>Project archive and OASIS entry</p> <p>The site records have been compiled into a fully integrated site archive which is currently held at Oakford Archaeology's offices under project number 1104, pending deposition with the National Trust. A summary of the investigations has been submitted to the on-line archaeological database OASIS (Online Access to the Index of archaeological InterventionS).</p>		

Recorder:

MFR Steinmetzer (Oakford Archaeology)

Date sent to HER:

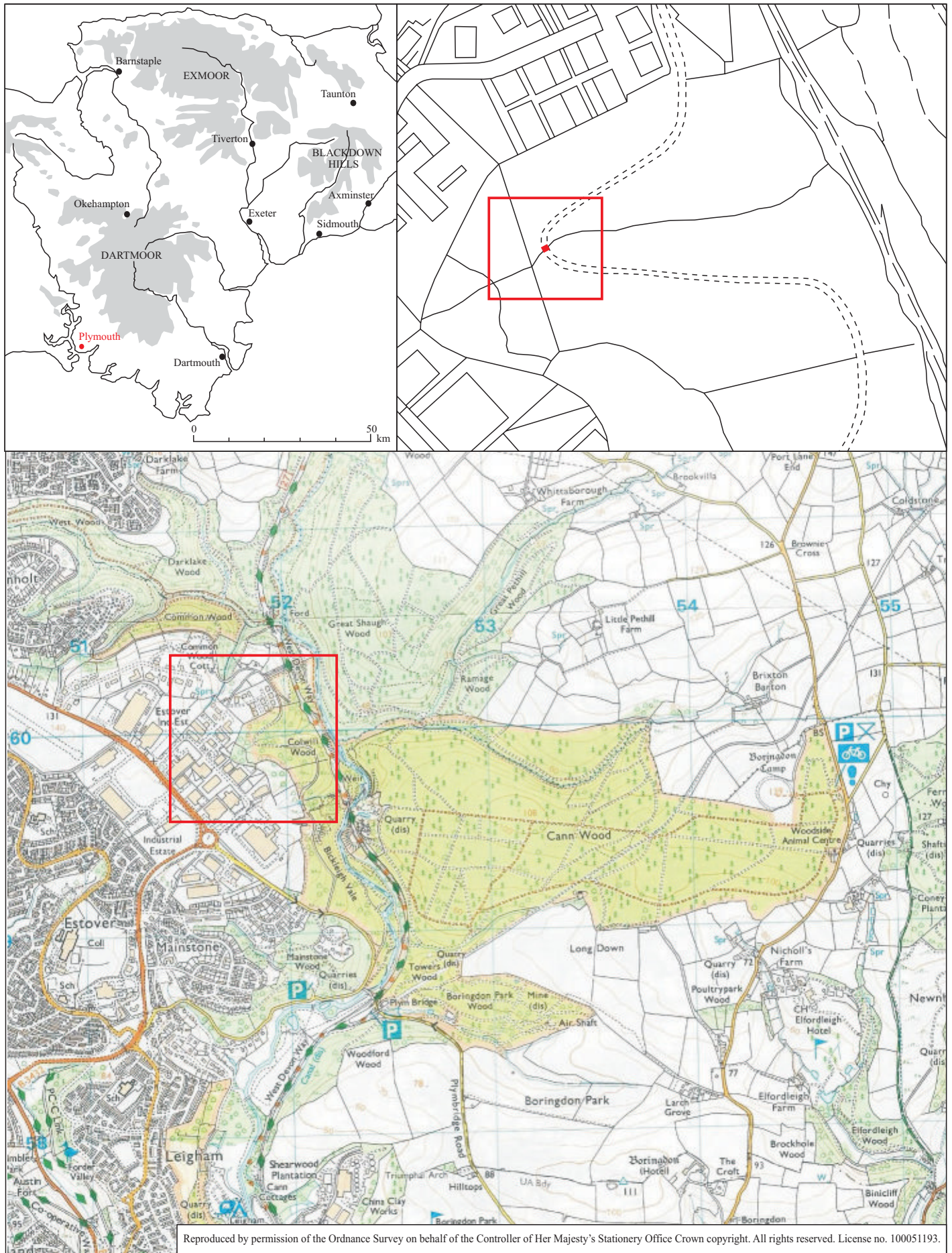
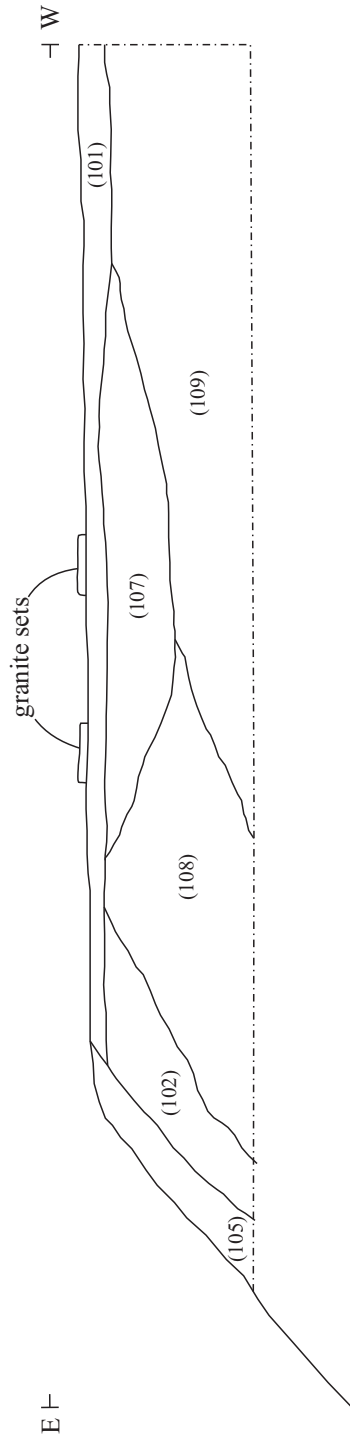


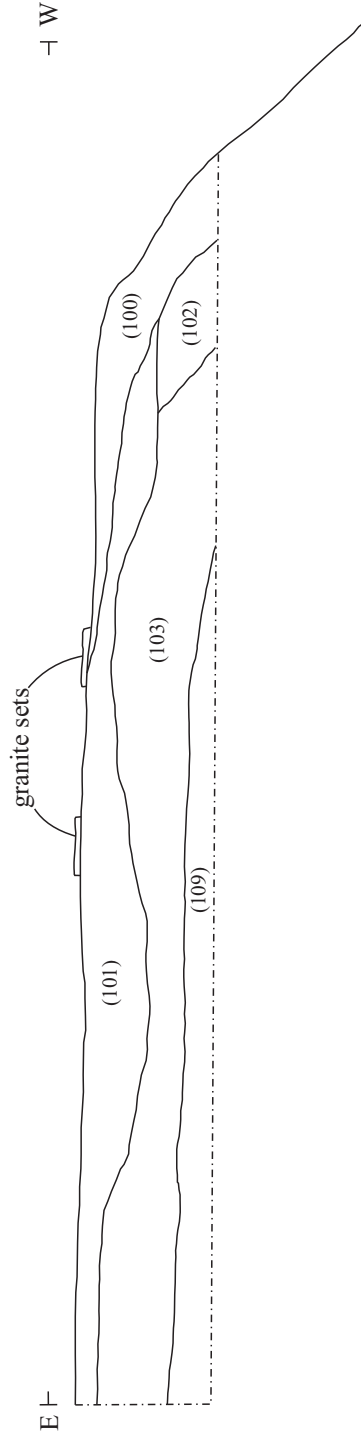
Fig. 1 Location of site.

Sections

1



2



all datums are arbitrary



Fig. 2 Sections through Plymouth-Dartmoor Railway.



Pl. 1 General view of granite sets. 2m scale. Looking east.



Pl. 2 Close-up of granite set showing boltholes. 0.5m scale. Looking south.



Pl. 3 Section through Plymouth-Dartmoor Railway. 2m scale. Looking southeast.



Pl. 4 Section through Plymouth-Dartmoor Railway. 2m scale. Looking northeast.