

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Newton St Cyres	National Grid Reference SX 8845 9775	Number: (Leave blank for HES to fill in)
Subject: Watching Brief During Construction of a New Pre-School Unit		Photo attached? N
Planning Application no: N/A	Recipient museum: RAMM	
OASIS ID: exeterar1-82807	Museum Accession no: 155/2010	
Contractor's reference number/code: EA 7134	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 3 August 2010 – 14 September 2010	
<p>Description of works</p> <p>A watching brief was undertaken during construction of a new pre-school unit within the playing field to the south of the school buildings. Prior to fieldwork commencing a rapid documentary appraisal was undertaken, which included consulting an archaeological assessment of a proposed extension of the school grounds to the east of the present site (Exeter Archaeology report number 06.13). The only identified archaeological site within the grounds of the school (which was constructed 1876-7) was a barn and associated enclosure depicted on the surveyors' drawing (1801) and tithe map (1843). A building shown on a plan of 1782 (DRO 64/12/21/2) may represent the same building, although its position appears to be east of where the barn was depicted.</p> <p>The topsoil strip for the new building and associated landscaping, excavations for the foundation pads of the new building, and some excavations for new services, an access ramp, and the removal of play equipment was monitored.</p> <p>The playing field is level, and has been terraced into the west side of the hillslope. The site lies at the head of a small coombe and the underlying natural (weathered breccia) was observed to slope downhill from west to east. Accordingly, deposits above natural were deeper towards the east end of the site.</p> <p>The deposit sequence was generally as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 – topsoil: 0.15m thick layer of mid red-brown very loose very slightly clayey silt with occasional stones. 2 – subsoil: between 0.30-0.70m thick compact purple-brown gravelly slightly clayey silt with small stones, abundant small coke, clinker and 19th-century ceramic ridge tile fragments, as well as rarer, glass, clay pipe stem fragments, and sherds of industrial china and a single sherd of medieval pottery. 3 – natural: some light red gravelly clay (east end of site) overlying firm dark red-brown gravelly clay, overlying weathering breccia. <p>No features were observed during the watching brief and the only find retained was a single sherd of 14th- or 15th-century pottery – probably North Devon ware – was retained. The relatively late date of the subsoil may be indicative of mid-19th-century agricultural activity or could suggest that the material has been brought in as levelling for the school playing field which was created in the 20th century.</p>		
<p>A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.</p>		
Recorder: Andrew Passmore (Exeter Archaeology)		Date sent to HER: 23 September 2010

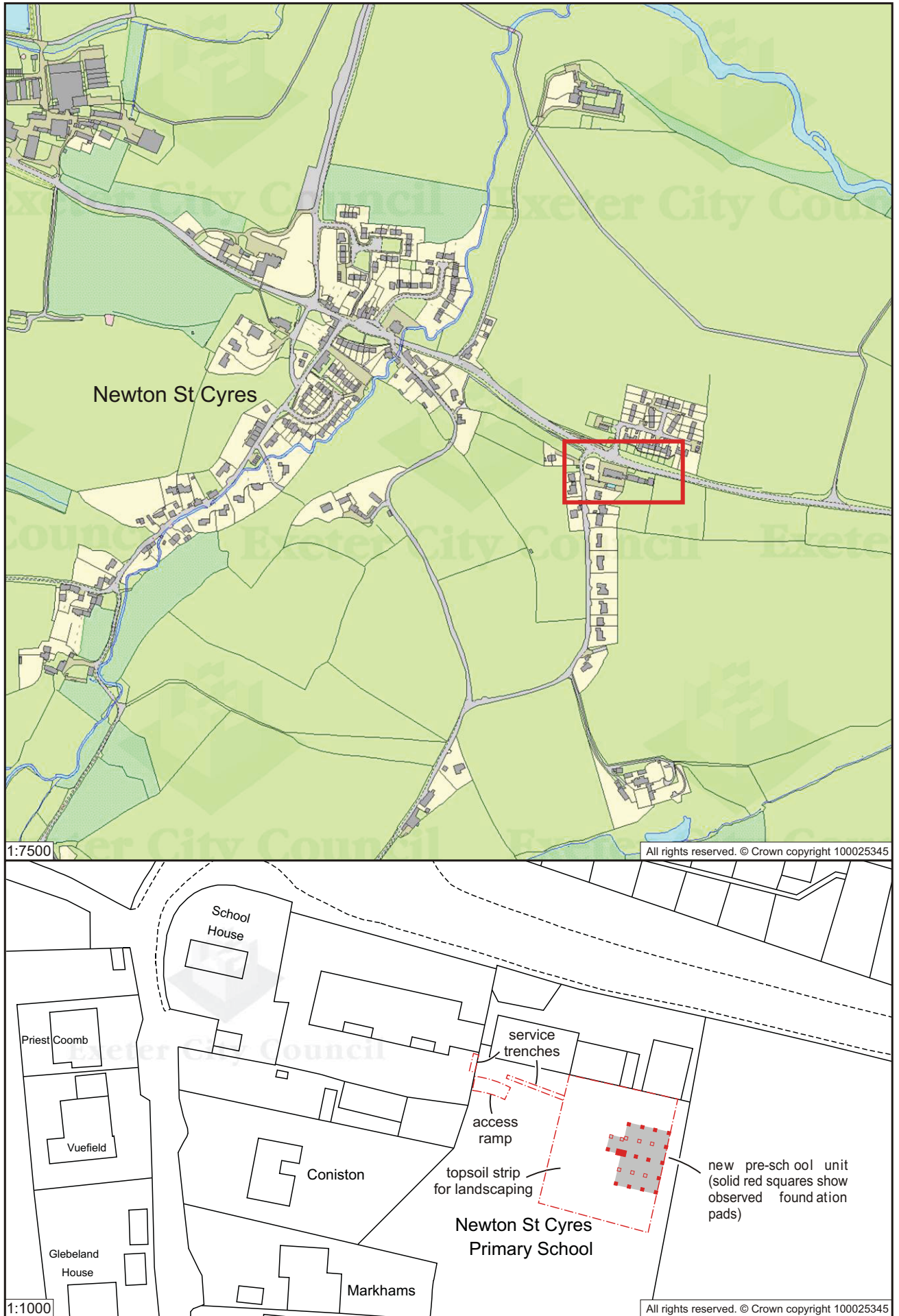


Fig. 1 Location of site and observations.