

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

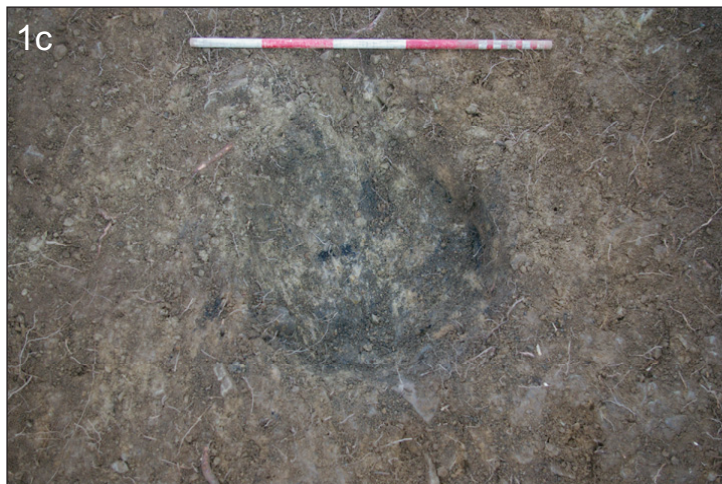
Civil Parish & District: Kings Nympton, North Devon	National Grid Reference 268501.119451	Number:
Subject: archaeological evaluation excavation in advance of the construction of 8 dwellings at Steeple Meadow on the eastern edge of King's Nympton.		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 41842 Arch/dc/nd/10414	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon	
OASIS ID: southwes1-76242	Museum Accession no: NDDMS: 2010.14	
Contractor's reference number/code: KNSM10	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 10.03.10	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by South West Archaeology (SWARCH) at the request of Ms. Harriet Wilson (the Client) prior to the construction of eight dwellings in Steeple Meadow on the eastern edge of Kings Nympton. The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) approved by DCHES. This work was undertaken by B. Morris and L. Bray.</p> <p>Four evaluation trenches were dug, with a combined length of approximately 115m. These trenches were opened by a tracked mechanical excavator using a 1.2m wide toothless grading bucket under strict archaeological supervision. The location of the trenches was determined with reference to the brief issued by DCHES, modified by conditions on the ground (trees/roots and car park hard-standing) (see Fig. 1a).</p> <p>The site was mainly under grass, with some recent (the last 20-30 years) tree planting to the south west, north west and east (see Fig. 1a). Part of the land had been used as a builder's yard, and there was a considerable amount of metal and plastic waste. The topsoil was 0.4-0.5m deep, except on the northern and eastern edges, where it was shallower, at c. 0.25m deep. The topsoil consisted of two distinct layers: an upper turf layer up to 100mm in thickness, and a lower deposit consisting of a mid-brown friable silt containing common small, sub-angular stone inclusions of up to 10mm in size. Stone inclusions were abundant and larger in size at the base of this layer, reaching diameters of 100mm. The natural subsoil consisted of a heterogeneous yellow/orange silt-clay containing frequent angular to sub-angular stone inclusions up to 150mm in size.</p> <p>Trench #1 contained a single feature towards its western end: an elongated pit [101], approximately 1m long, 0.6m wide and 0.3m deep at maximum. This feature had an irregular, 'crescent moon'-shaped morphology and was orientated approximately north-south. This is likely to have been a tree throw, and produced no finds. No features were observed in Trenches #2 and #3. Trench #4 contained a small feature at its western end, a circular pit [404] with a diameter of approximately 0.4m and a maximum depth of 0.15m with steep sides and a concave base (see Figs. 1b & 1c; Plates 1a-1c). The fill of this feature (405) was a grey-black clay-silt containing fragments of charcoal. A 100% sample of this material was taken and processed, examination of which revealed abundant charcoal fragments averaging between 2mm and 8mm in size, but occasionally reaching 15mm.</p> <p>No stratified finds were recovered but a small amount of pottery (37 sherds, 0.348kg) was collected during the topsoil strip and from molehills on the site. This comprised a fairly unremarkable range of material dating from the medieval period through to the 19th century, as might be expected in the ploughsoil of a field adjacent to a medieval settlement. The finds were: 13 sherds of white refined earthenware (post 1720), 1 other sherd of 19th century pottery, 7 sherds of 18th century pottery, 12 sherds of 16th-17th pottery (North Devon wares), and 3 sherds of medieval pottery (North Devon wares). The one unusual find was a single small sherd of maiolica, probably Anglo-Dutch (17th century). Two clay pipe stems were also recovered.</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.		
Recorder: L. S. Bray		Date sent to HER: 27.04.10

Please email completed form to: archaeol@devon.gov.uk or post to County Archaeology Service, Environment Directorate, Matford Lane Offices, County Hall, Topsham Road, Exeter EX2 4QW. Information recorded on this form will be added to the Historic Environment Record, and made available to all researchers.

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Fig. 1: Kings Nympton Steeple Meadow: (a) Location map 1:10,000 (Promap image OS licence no. 100020449); (b) trench layout; (c) plan of feature [404]; (d) west-facing section of [404].



Plates:

- 1a. Feature [404], pre-excavation, from the east (scale 0.5m).
- 1b. West-facing section of [404] (scale 0.5m).
- 1c. Feature [404], post-excavation, from the west (scale 0.5m).