

An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation and trench evaluation on land at Matworthy House, Deepdene Park, St Leonard's, Exeter, Devon

NGR SX9319091670

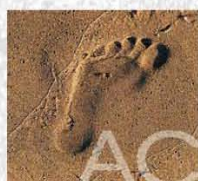
Planning references: Exeter City Council 02/0381/01 (outline) and 08/0707/02 (reserved matters)

Prepared by:
Richard Sims

On behalf of:
Wainhomes (South West) Holdings Ltd

Document No: ACD22/2/0

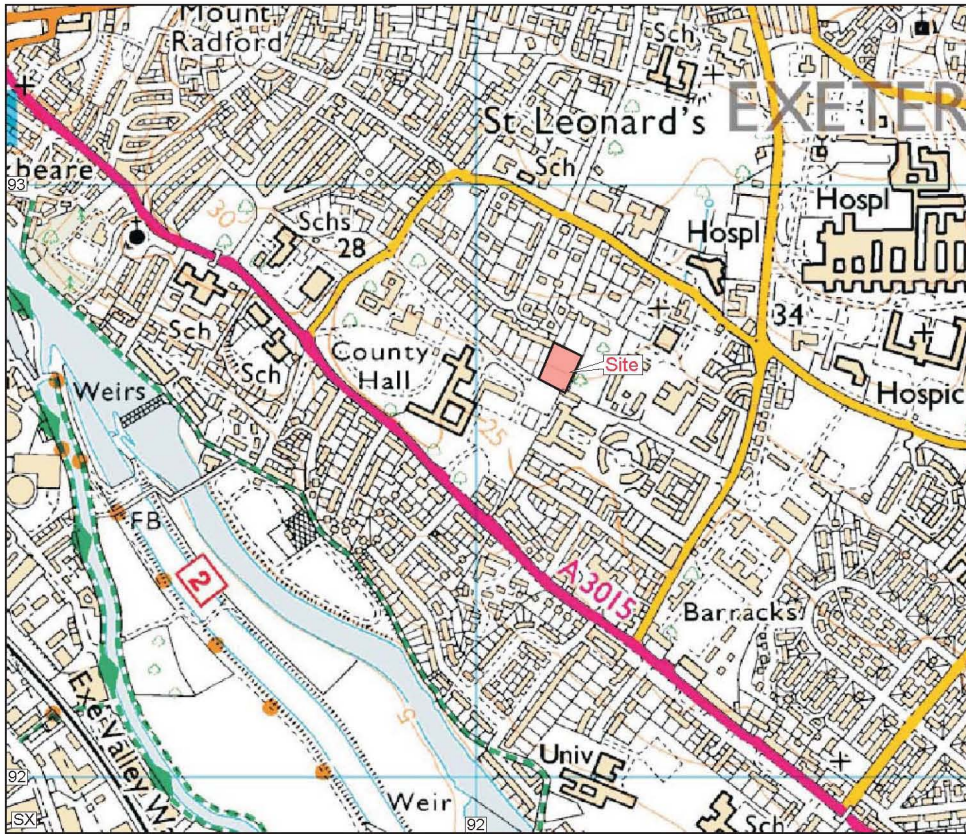
Date: June 2009



archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: St. Leonard's, Exeter	National Grid Reference SX9319091670	Number:												
Subject: An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation and trench evaluation on land at Matworthy House, Deepdene Park, St. Leonard's, Exeter, Devon		Photo attached? Yes – Plates 1 and 2												
Planning Application nos: Exeter City Council 02/0381/01 (Outline) and 08/0707/02 (Reserved matters)	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter													
OASIS ID: N/A	Museum Accession no: 23/2009													
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD22	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 27th-29th May 2009													
<p>Introduction (Location of site Fig. 1) An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation and subsequent trench evaluation on land at Matworthy House, Deepdene Park, St. Leonards, Exeter, Devon, was carried out by AC archaeology in advance of groundworks associated with a residential development. The investigations were commissioned by Wainhomes (South West) Holdings Ltd.</p> <p>The site covers an area of approximately 0.6 hectares and is situated in an area where limited evidence for prehistoric and Romano-British activity has been previously identified. It is located on land which slopes gently down to the south and the underlying solid geology of the area comprises Breccia of the Dawlish Sandstone Formation.</p> <p>Methodology The footprint of approximately 40% of the development area was initially stripped of topsoil onto a mixed cultivation subsoil, present at a depth of 0.40m below ground level. No evidence for <i>in situ</i> archaeological features or deposits was present at this level, so eight evaluation trenches were subsequently excavated down to natural subsoil in the area of the site to be affected by development (Fig. 1). The trenches were all 2m wide and had a total length of 145m. All excavations were carried out by a 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket and working under constant archaeological supervision.</p> <p>Results The overlying layers had a total thickness of 0.70m above an undisturbed natural subsoil. This is summarised in Table 1 below and shown on Plate 2 (the area around Trench 7 was not initially stripped of topsoil, so the full layer sequence is shown in this photograph). No <i>in situ</i> archaeological features or deposits were present within any of the trenches, although a large quantity of 19th to 20th-century pottery within the topsoil, a small sample of which has been retained (12 sherds/347 grams). These include mainly plain, unglazed red earthenware body sherds, although two pieces do have an internal brown lead glaze. A single fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem was also recovered.</p> <p>Table 1: The recorded layer sequence</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Depth (below ground level)</th> <th>Interpretation</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>0-0.40m</td> <td>Topsoil</td> <td>Dark brown soft clay silt, with moderate-frequent small to medium sub-rounded stones</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0.40-0.70m</td> <td>Cultivation subsoil</td> <td>Light yellowish-brown firm sandy clay silt, with frequent small-medium sub-rounded stones</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0.70m +</td> <td>Natural subsoil</td> <td>Mid to pale red and light yellowish-brown firm sandy clay, with frequent medium-large stones</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Comment The investigations have established that there was no evidence on the site for post-medieval or earlier archaeological features, deposits or finds and that it is unlikely groundworks associated with the development will impact upon even highly localised buried archaeological remains.</p>			Depth (below ground level)	Interpretation	Description	0-0.40m	Topsoil	Dark brown soft clay silt, with moderate-frequent small to medium sub-rounded stones	0.40-0.70m	Cultivation subsoil	Light yellowish-brown firm sandy clay silt, with frequent small-medium sub-rounded stones	0.70m +	Natural subsoil	Mid to pale red and light yellowish-brown firm sandy clay, with frequent medium-large stones
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Recorder: R.I.Sims, AC archaeology	Date sent to HER: 10th June 2009													



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Fig. 1:
Site and trench location

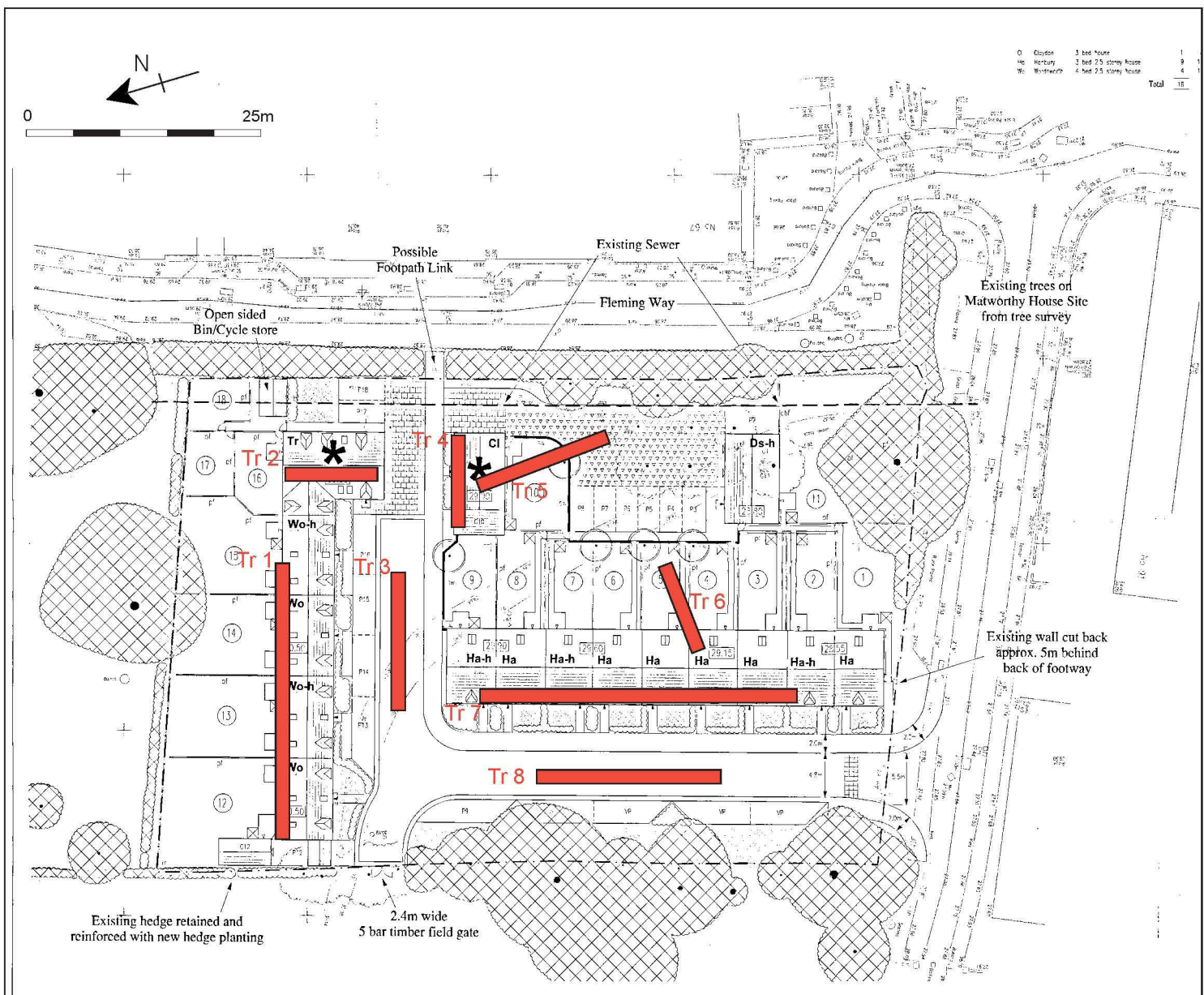




Plate 1: General view of site, looking to north



Plate 2: Sample section NE end of Trench 7, looking to east (Scale 1m)

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