

WEBSTER'S GARAGE, 9 LYME STREET, AXMINSTER,
DEVON

Centred on NGR SY 2973 9850

Results of an archaeological watching brief

East Devon District Council planning reference
13/2590/COU, condition 3

Prepared by
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On behalf of
Graham Barton

Document No: ACD918/2/0

Date: January 2016



AC archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Axminster	National Grid Reference SY 2973 9850	Number: (Leave blank for HES to fill in)
Subject: Webster's Garage, 9 Lyme Street, Axminster, Devon; Results of an archaeological watching brief		Photo attached? Y
Planning Application no: 13/2590/COU	Recipient museum: N/A	
OASIS ID: 236049	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD918	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 22 April 2015	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Introduction (Fig. 1) This document presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks associated with the change of use of land to a public car park at Webster's Garage, 9 Lyme Street, Axminster, Devon (SY 2973 9850). The scheme comprised the demolition of some existing buildings on the site followed by the creation of the car park. The work was required under condition 3 of the grant of Change of Use planning consent by East Devon District Council and was commissioned by Graham Barton.</p> <p>The new car park is located in the centre of Axminster and will be accessed from Lyme Street on the north side of the town (Fig. 1). The land use prior to the works commencing comprised a mixture of derelict buildings, including the now redundant Webster's Garage, as well as concrete and hardstanding yard areas to the rear. The site lies on generally level, elevated ground at around 44m aOD, with the underlying solid geology comprising Lower Lias.</p> <p>Archaeological Background The site is located within the historic core of the town. Axminster was established as a minster in the 7th or 8th century AD. The site of the new car park is likely to have been within the earliest part of the town. It is possible that this area was occupied as early as the Romano-British period since Roman coins have been found within the grounds of the parish church of St Mary the Virgin (DCHER ref. MDV11214), c. 25m to the west of the site. A Roman Fort at Woodbury Farm is situated to the south of the present town, whilst the Fosse Way Roman road is located to the east of the site within the present town.</p> <p>The earliest map found which depicts the site dates to 1776 and this shows the site enclosed by a series of buildings fronting onto Lyme Street, South Street and Silver Street. There are open areas and outbuildings to the rear of these, including structures in the southern part of the present site. However for much of the site the map depicts a blank area with no detail and annotated 'P of York' (presumably Property of York); the map only shows the landholdings of Lord Petre. On the 1888 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map street frontage buildings are still shown and the site is again occupied by a series of open plots and outbuildings. There are no changes on the second edition map of 1904.</p> <p>Aim The aim of the watching brief was to preserve by record any archaeological features or deposits exposed during groundworks associated with development, with particular reference to any evidence for medieval and later settlement.</p> <p>Methodology An archaeologist was present during all relevant groundworks. Groundworks for the new car park were to be very minor and localised, so attendance was limited to the monitoring of areas significantly reduced in level. All groundworks were carried out by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.</p> <p>Results (Fig. 1; Plates 1-4) The ground level was reduced by between 0.10-0.40m in Areas 1 and 2, which were both formerly garden plots. Area 1 was approximately 0.5m higher than the surrounding areas. In both areas the only deposits encountered consisted of a dark black-brown, sandy-loam topsoil, within which were patches of modern demolition material. This material was not fully removed.</p>		

Three linear bands of orange-yellow stony clay were exposed, all aligned south-southeast to north-northwest – two were in Area 1 and the third was located in Area 2 (Fig. 1). These correspond with paths depicted within the plots on the 1888 Ordnance Survey 25-inch map, and the features probably represent the make-up for the paths; no evidence for their surfaces survived.

Summary

The groundworks for the new car park were very limited, and in the areas monitored, where groundworks were deepest, they did not extend below the soils of two former garden plots. Any earlier, underlying deposits or features have been preserved *in situ*. The only exposed features were make-up deposits associated with paths of probable 19th-century date.

This report and the associated OASIS entry represent the archive for the project.

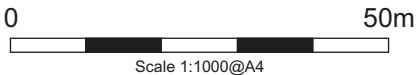
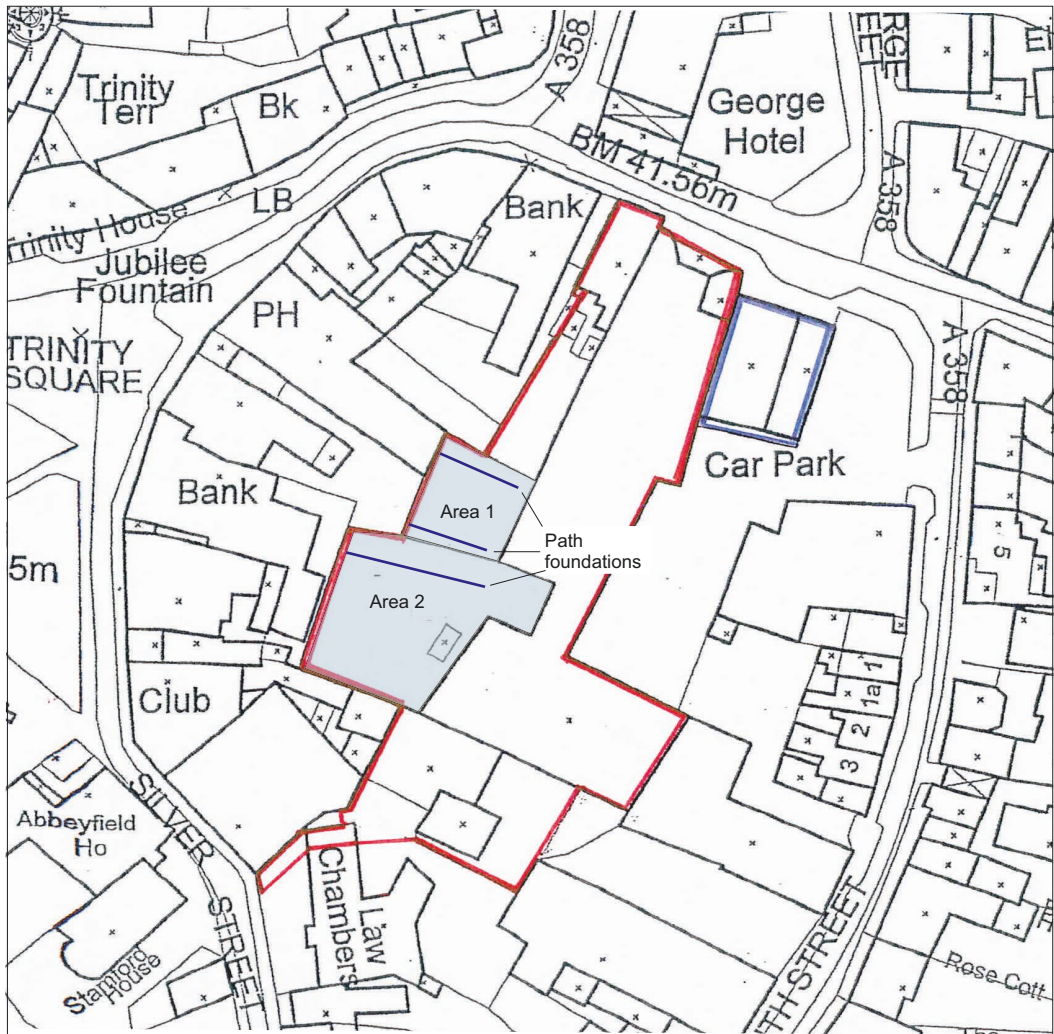
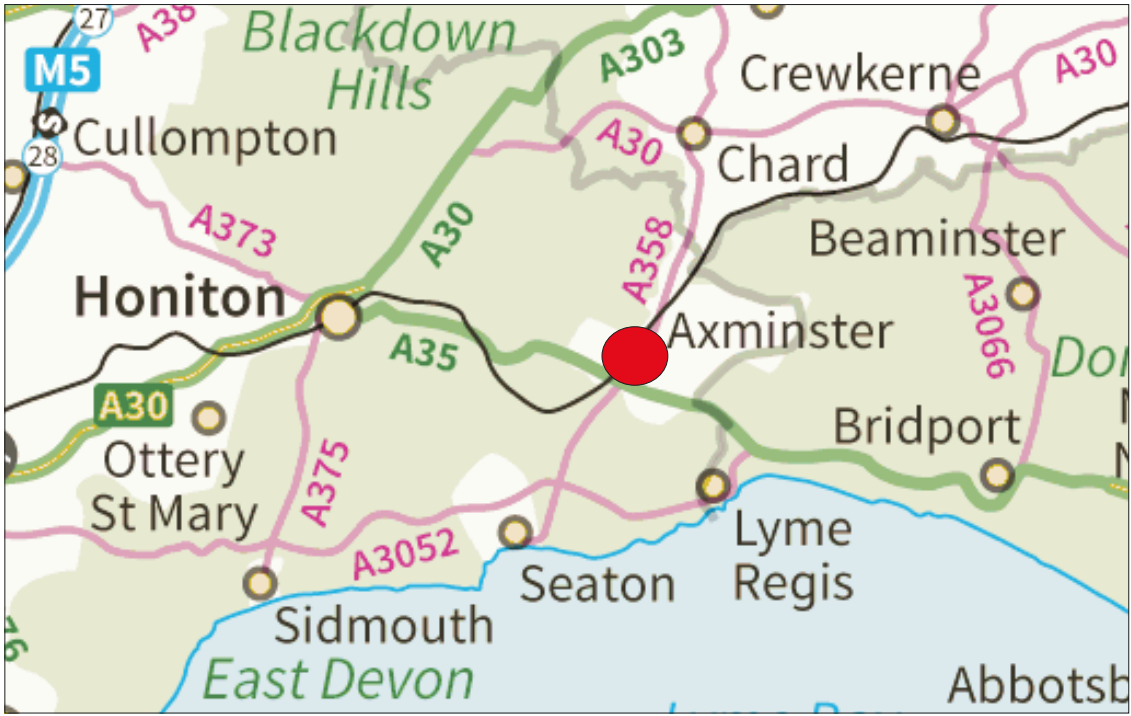
A plan as well as any other relevant drawings must be attached showing the location and extent of site, areas investigated and features exposed.


Recorder:

Stella De-Villiers. AC archaeology

Date sent to HER:

4 January 2016



 Areas monitored

PROJECT

Webster's Garage, 9 Lyme Street,
Axminster, Devon

TITLE

Fig. 1: Location of site and
areas monitored





Plate 1: General view of Area 1, looking southwest



Plate 2: General view of Area 2, looking northwest



Plate 3: General view of Area 1 after reduction, looking southwest



Plate 4: General view of Area 2 after reduction showing path foundation, looking east

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