

# LAND AT ELEANOR'S BOWER, FOLLETT ROAD, EXETER, DEVON

(NGR SX 96423 88203)

Results of archaeological monitoring and recording

Planning Permission Reference: Exeter City Council  
16/0374/03 (Condition 3)

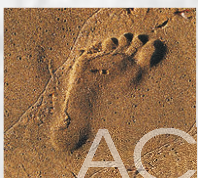
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Prepared by:  
Simon Hughes

On behalf of:  
David Burley Architects

Report No: ACD1422/2/0

Date: May 2017



archaeology

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# Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

<b>Civil Parish &amp; District:</b> Exeter	<b>National Grid Reference</b> SX 96423 88203	<b>Number:</b>
<b>Subject:</b> Land at Eleanor's Bower, Follett Road, Topsham, Exeter: Results of archaeological monitoring and recording		<b>Photo attached?</b> Plates 1-4
<b>Planning Application no:</b> Exeter City Council 16/0374/03	<b>Recipient museum:</b> N/A	
<b>OASIS ID:</b> 284634	<b>Museum Accession no:</b> N/A	
<b>Contractor's reference number/code:</b> ACD1422	<b>Dates fieldwork undertaken:</b> 12 December 2016 to 7 April 2017	

## Introduction

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out by AC archaeology during the construction of an extension and replacement of an existing garage on land at Eleanor's Bower, Follett Road, Exeter, Devon (SX 96423 88203). The site occupies an irregular-shaped plot of land bounded to the southeast by Follett Orchard and Follett Lodge properties and by the rear of plots fronting Follett Road to the northwest (Fig. 1). The new extension lay to the northwest of Eleanor's Bower on what was a lawn area while the new garage replaced an existing garage structure.

The site lies close to the river frontage and the position of the historic wharf. To the northwest, lying approximately 250m upriver is the site of a Roman military base. Here defensive double-ditches associated with 1st century finds were exposed during the construction of Topsham School in 2000. Activity was also exposed that was considered to date to the Civil War, perhaps related to a Royalist fortification.

Eleanor's Bower lies in the former grounds of Follett Lodge, a Grade II-listed house dating from late 18th century, but with 19th and 21st century additions. A building at Eleanor's Bower is mentioned in the Follett Lodge property deeds as 'Garden Cottage' in 1776, and again in 1811 as a two-storied building with a thatched roof. The house was extended to the northeast during the 1990's. Archaeological monitoring during these works recovered some post-medieval pottery.

## Results (Fig.2; Plates 1-4)

### *New Extension*

Monitored groundworks comprised the stripping of topsoil to a depth of 0.1m from the footprint of the new extension followed by the excavation of a 0.6m wide footings trench. The groundworks exposed a possible terrace cut (F106), a probable pit (F104) and a possible construction cut (F108).

Natural subsoil, which consisted of a light brownish-red clayey-sand with abundant gravels, was exposed at a depth of 0.73m below existing levels at the southeast end of the new extension. It was overlain by a thin mid reddish-brown silty-sand subsoil (102). The edge to a possible terrace (F106) was exposed on the southern side of the new extension that cut through subsoil 102. It had a steeply-sloping side and measured 1.05m deep below existing levels with a flat base that extended throughout the northwest portion of the monitored area. The terrace contained a mid brownish-red silty-loam subsoil (107) and a dark reddish-brown silty-loam buried soil (110). The terrace deposits were cut by probable pit F104 and possible construction cut F108.

Pit F104 measured 2.55m across and 0.78m deep with steep to moderately-steep sloping sides and a flat base. It contained a mid brownish-red silty-loam fill (105). Possible construction cut F108 was partially exposed, but was potentially square-shaped in plan. The exposed portion contained a large breccia block and some breccia rubble, which were within a mid brownish-red silty-loam deposit (109) that included mortar fragment and crushed slate fragment inclusions.

The overlying deposit sequence consisted of a made ground layer (101) of mid brown silty-sand with moderately-common breccia fragments and crushed mortar inclusions, which was beneath a dark greyish-brown sandy-loam garden soil (100).

### *New garage*

Groundworks for the new garage comprised the excavation of a perimeter footings trench that measured 0.6m wide and 1.15m deep. Natural subsoil was exposed at a depth of 1.05m below existing levels. It was overlain by a mid brown sandy-loam buried topsoil, which was overlain by a redeposited natural-subsoil rich made ground layer. This

was then sealed by a dark brown silty-loam topsoil. No archaeological features or deposits were exposed and no finds recovered from the exposed soil sequence.

#### **Finds by Charlotte Coles**

An assemblage of finds were recovered from the monitoring and recording that consist of Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe, iron slag, animal bone and shell.

The piece of Roman pottery (286g) is a body sherd of amphora with slight internal ribbing and very faint ribbing on the external surface, this was residual within made ground layer 101. A single sherd of medieval Saintonge green glazed pottery (4g) dating from the middle of the 12th century to the 14th century was also recovered from context 101. This is a small fragment of jug base.

A total of 26 sherds of post medieval pottery (543g) was recovered from six contexts, this includes North Devon and South Somerset wares, Delft, Staffordshire wares, Westerwald and English stoneware as well as a sherd of white ware possibly border ware. These date from the late 17th through to the 19th centuries.

Six pieces of clay tobacco pipe (16g) were retrieved from three contexts, these are four stem fragments and two bowl pieces. The pieces are only small sections and are therefore not closely datable. A single piece of slag (131g) was recovered from context 105. Three pieces of glass (43g) were recovered, which include two fragments of Façon de Venise wine glass from contexts 101 and 105. These are a knob with vertical ribbing and the folded edge of a wine glass foot. Façon de Venise was produced from the middle of the 16th century to the end of the 17th century, the main production centres at the time for this type of glass were in the Netherlands and London. The other piece of glass is a fragment of green bottle glass from context 109. Fourteen pieces of animal bone (631g) were recovered from three contexts (101, 105 and 107). These include: three cattle teeth; two butchered cattle femurs; a cattle radius; a cattle scapula; a pig tibia; and a sheep/goat radius. Four pieces of shell (19g) were recovered from contexts 105 and 107 and consist of cockle and oyster.

#### **Comments**

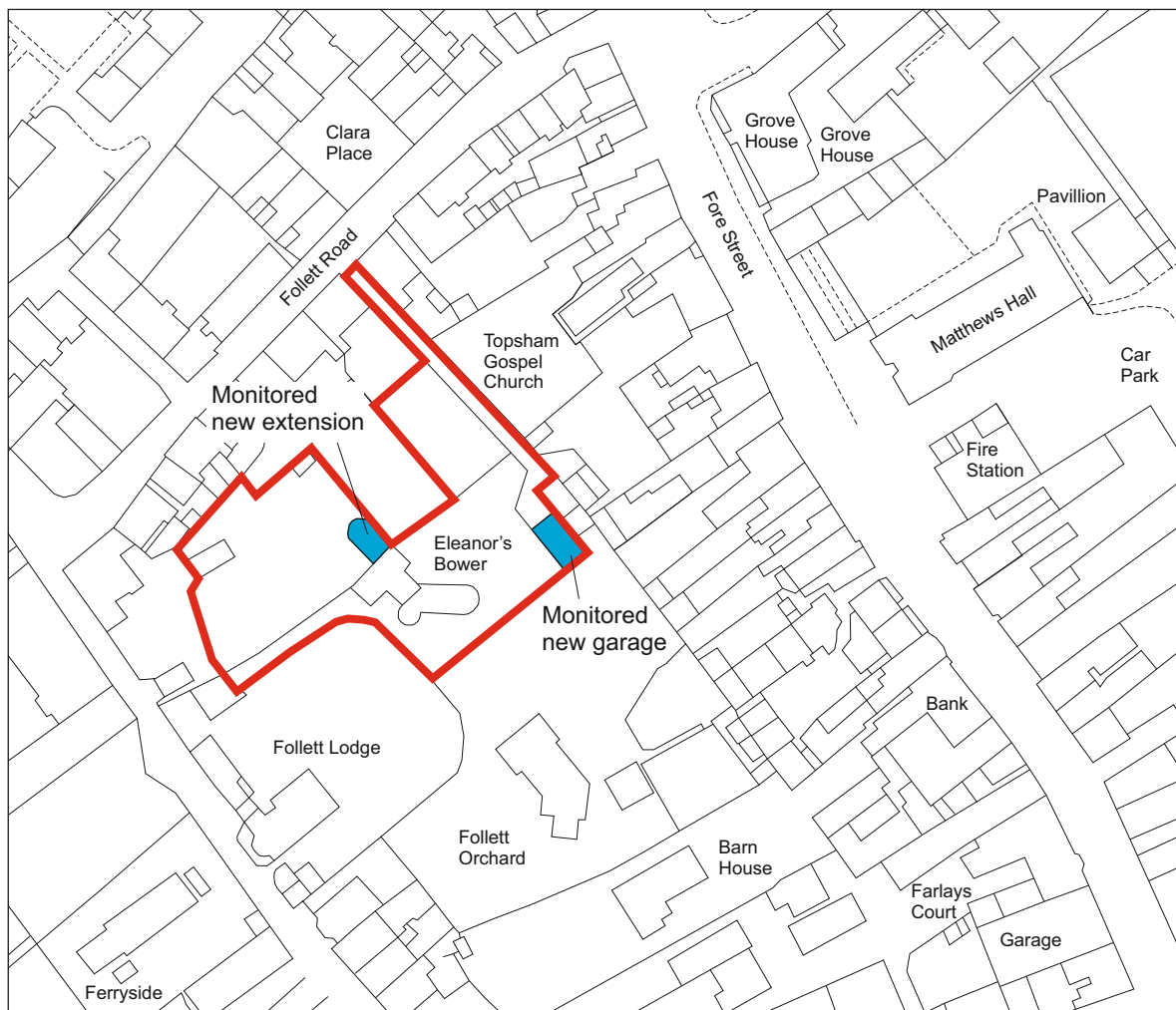
The monitored groundworks exposed relatively deep soil sequences in both the position of the new extension and garage. Much of this was the result of 19th to 20th century made ground that sealed existing soil layers.

Within the new extension area, terrace F106 was likely to have been a landscaping feature that contained probable garden soils (107 and 110). Finds recovered from these deposits date to the 18th century, while pit F104 was dated to the late 17th to 18th century, and contained finds indicative of domestic refuse. These features are likely to have been associated with the grounds of Follett Lodge. The function of construction cut F108 was not clear from the exposed portion. Earlier finds dating to the Roman and medieval periods are consistent with the background of activity in the vicinity of the site.

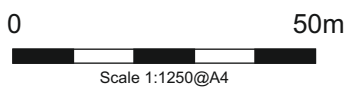
<b>Recorder:</b>	<b>Date sent to HER:</b>
Simon Hughes, AC Archaeology	May 2017



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Based on plans prepared by David Burley Architects



PROJECT

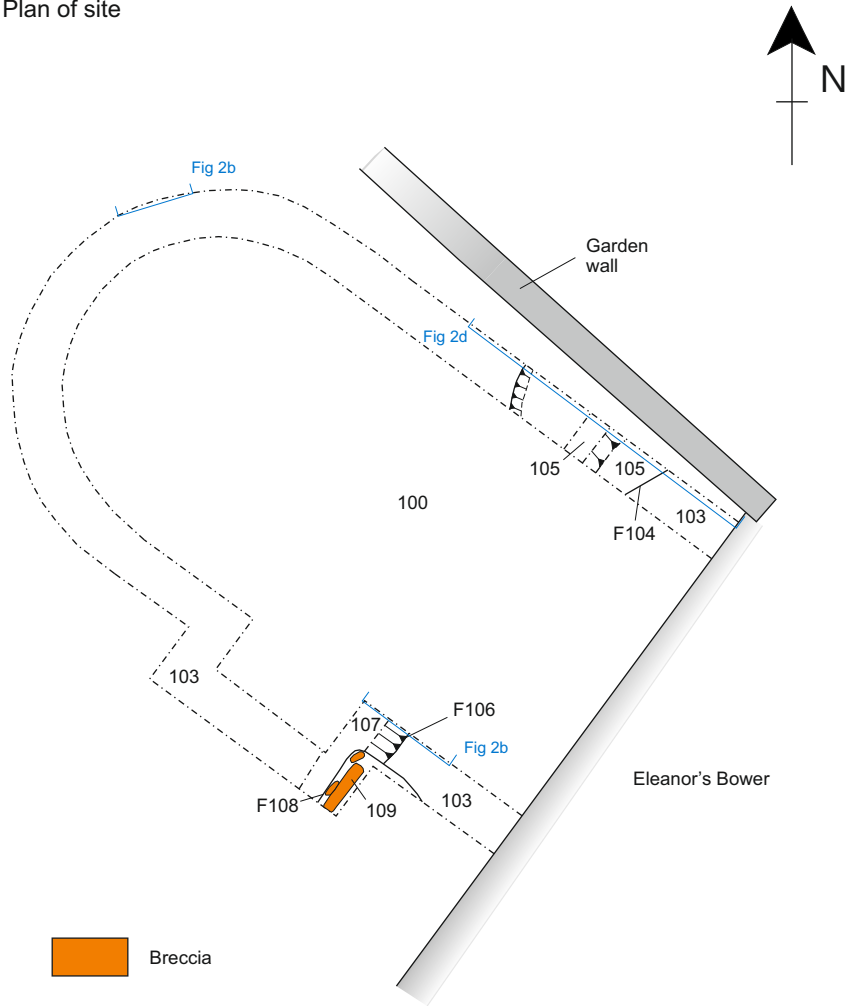
Land at Elanor's Bower, Follett Road, Topsham, Devon

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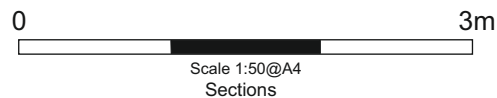
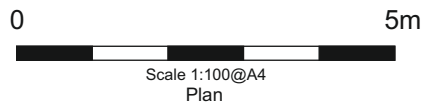
Fig. 1: Location of site and areas monitored



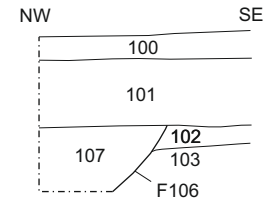
a) Plan of site



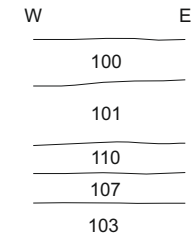
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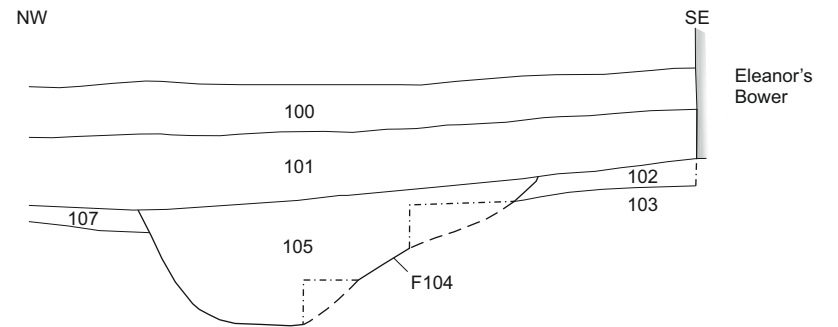
b) Section of terrace F106



c) Representative section



d) Section of pit F104



PROJECT

Land at Elanor's Bower, Follet Road,  
Topsham, Devon

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Fig. 2: Detailed plan and sections of  
new extension area







Plate 1: Working view of new extension area looking east



Plate 2: Showing footings trench for new extension. View to east (scale 1m)



Plate 3. Probable terrace F106 and breccia stone setting 109. View to southeast (scale 1m)



Plate 4: Pit F104, view to north (scale 1m)

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