

Land at Nymphayes Lane, Down St Mary, Zeal Monachorum, Devon

NGR SS7297705156

Results of an archaeological watching brief

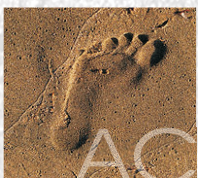
Planning ref. Mid Devon District Council 10/01083/FULL

Prepared by:
John Valentin

On behalf of:
Mr and Mrs Harris

Document No: ACD215/2/0

Date: September 2010



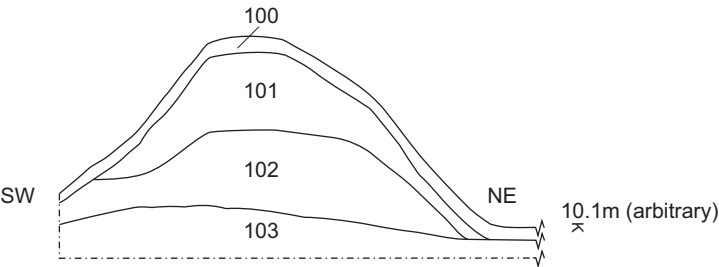
archaeology

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Zeal Monachorum & Mid Devon	National Grid Reference SS7297705156	Number:
Subject: An archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to Nymphayes Lane, Down St Mary, Zeal Monachorum, Devon		Photo attached: Plates 1 and 2
Planning Application no: 10/01083/FULL	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter	
OASIS ID: 85168	Museum Accession no: 178/2010	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD215	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 30/09/2010	
<p>Introduction</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AC archaeology during the removal of a section of hedgebank, as part of groundworks associated with the construction of an agricultural building on land adjacent to Nymphayes Lane, Down St Mary, Zeal Monachorum, Devon. The work was commissioned by the site owners, Mr and Mrs Harris.</p> <p>The site is located on agricultural land to the northeast of the farm complex and adjacent to existing farm buildings (Fig. 1). It is situated at around 85m OD and the underlying solid geology is Permian Breccia. A farmstead is likely to have been located at Nymphayes since 1333. At this time it was owned by Henry de <i>Nymethia</i> of nearby Winkleigh. It is likely that a number of local hedgebanks were constructed during the medieval period when it is probable that the surrounding fields were laid out.</p> <p>Aim</p> <p>The aim of the watching brief was to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any <i>in situ</i> archaeological deposits beneath the hedgebank, with particular reference to any associated buried soils, artefacts or ditches.</p> <p>Methodology</p> <p>The section of hedgebank was removed by mechanical excavator using a 2m wide toothless grading bucket. All artefacts or deposits revealed were recorded using the standard AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and digital photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's <i>General Site Recording Manual, Version 1</i>.</p> <p>Results</p> <p>The hedgebank was 2.70m wide and 1.18m high and was constructed directly onto natural subsoil (103), which was composed of medium orange-brown compact sandy clay with common small sized slate inclusions. Above this was a 0.55m thick bank deposit of light orange-brown compact sandy silty clay with substantial root penetration (102). This was below a 0.53m thick bank deposit of light orange-brown, loose sandy silty clay, also with substantial root penetration (101). The final layer sealing the bank was a 0.10m thick, very dark greyish-brown humic layer of hedgebank topsoil and vegetation (100).</p> <p>Comment</p> <p>There were no ditches (at least on the northeast side) or buried soils associated with the hedgebank revealed during the work. Two pieces of prehistoric worked chert (50g) were recovered from the spoil of the removed hedgebank. These comprise one primary waste flake of dark grey chert and one multi-platform core of light grey chert, with the latter characteristic of the later Neolithic period. These are likely to be residual.</p>		
Recorder: Kerry Dean, AC archaeology		Date sent to HER: 29 October 2010



a) Representative section through hedgebank



PROJECT

ACD215 Nymphayes Lane

TITLE

Fig. 1 Site location and representative section





Plate 1: General view of removal of the hedgebank, looking northwest



Plate 2: Oblique view of hedgebank section, looking northwest (scale 1m)

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