

Wray Valley cycle trail, Moretonhampstead, Devon

NGR SX 7560 8570

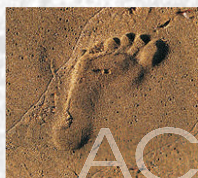
Results of an archaeological watching brief

Prepared by
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On behalf of
Devon County Council

Document No: ACD236/1/0

Date: March 2011



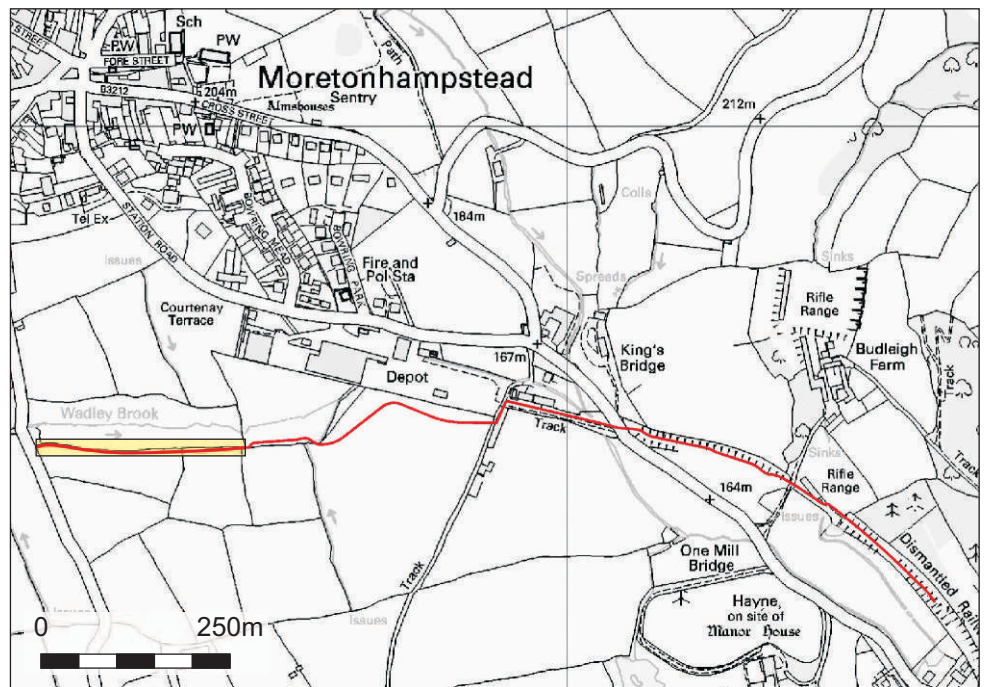
archaeology

Dartmoor National Park Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Moretonhampstead, Dartmoor National Park	National Grid Reference: SX 7560 8570	Number:
Subject: Wray Valley cycle trail, Moretonhampstead, Devon: Results of an archaeological watching brief		Photo attached: Plates 1-2
Planning Application no: 0462/08	Recipient museum: Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter	
OASIS ID: 97304	Museum Accession no: TBC	
Contractor's reference number/code: ACD236	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 30th November 2010 – 28th January 2011	
<p>Introduction</p> <p>An archaeological watching brief was carried out on land off Station Road, Moretonhampstead, Devon, during groundworks associated with the construction of a new cycle path forming part of the Wray Valley Trail from Moretonhampstead to Lustleigh. The work was carried out on behalf of Devon County Council.</p> <p>The cycle path extends over a distance of approximately 1.4km and commences from a dismantled railway line at Steward Farm, off the A382, where it continues along the course of the former railway line for 0.5km before cutting across a number of pasture fields and following a course parallel to Wadley Brook (Fig. 1). The route terminates at an unnumbered minor road 0.4km to the south of Moretonhampstead.</p> <p>The site lies within an area where there is potential for prehistoric activity and also in close proximity to the historic core of Moretonhampstead. It is situated on superficial alluvial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravels, over a solid geology of granite bedrock along ground that varies from between 170-175m OD.</p> <p>Methodology</p> <p>The watching brief was carried out during topsoil stripping for a temporary site compound off Station Road, measuring approximately 65m long by 35m wide, and during ground reduction and drainage trenching for the new cycle path (Plate 1). The cycle path measured 4m wide and, as part of the watching brief, only the western extent of the route was monitored, approximately 0.3km in length. The work was carried out using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket and working under archaeological supervision.</p> <p>Results</p> <p>The area of the site compound was excavated to a depth of around 0.3m through a dark brown sandy silt topsoil (100), onto a near identical dark brown sandy silt subsoil (101) containing frequent pea grit. Natural subsoil was not exposed.</p> <p>The area of the cycle path was reduced to a depth of between 0.15-0.20m, onto and within topsoil deposit (100). The subsequent drainage trench located alongside the southern edge of the path was 0.4m wide and was excavated to a depth of between 0.5-0.6m below ground surface. The layer sequence comprised 0.4m of topsoil (100) over a light yellow brown clay sand natural subsoil (102) containing common small gravels (Plate 2).</p> <p>Two sherds of unglazed and coarse-gritted medieval sandy ware pottery and one piece of worked flint were recovered from topsoil (100). Numerous sherds of 19th-20th century industrial whiteware and blue and white transfer printed ware were also present, but not retained.</p> <p>Comments</p> <p>No <i>in situ</i> archaeological deposits or features were exposed during the watching brief. The worked flint recovered is a waste flake and is undiagnostic to period. The medieval pottery recovered from the topsoil is small and abraded and likely to have been deposited through the agricultural process of manuring.</p>		
Recorder: Richard Sims, AC archaeology		Date sent to DNPA HER: 24 March 2011



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- Area of cycle route monitored
- Compound area
- Route of cycle path

PROJECT

Wray Valley cycle trail, Moretonhampstead

TITLE

Fig.1: Site location and groundworks monitored



Plate 1: General view of site along cycle path, facing northeast



Plate 2 Section through drainage trench, facing south (scale 1m)

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