

NORTH DEVON IN THE GREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL LITERATURE

REPORTS COVERING NORTH DEVON DISTRICT 2008

Table 1 sets out the reports filed with ADS relating to 2008. The reports are then discussed in a little more detail, in alphabetical order of parish. A brief synthesis of the findings of 2008 completes the document.

Table 1: Summary of reports for 2008

Parish	Site	Grid Ref	Report Producer	Type of Report	Nature of Development
Barnstaple	29 Bear Street	5616 3334	AC Archaeology	HBR*	Renovations & alterations
Braunton	Brannoc Fibres	4860 3600	Exeter Archaeology	Watching brief	Development of supermarket
Brayford	Little Bray Lane	6867 3478	Exeter Archaeology	Watching brief	Residential development
Brendon	Farley Water	7537 4421	Exmoor Nat Park	Survey & recording	None
Fremington	Yelland Sewer Replacement	2485 1317	Exeter Archaeology	Watching brief	Construction of sewer
Kentisbury	Water Main Route	6144 6354	Exeter Archaeology	Watching brief	Construction of water main
Knowstone	Three Moors Wind Farm	8050 2450	Cotswold Archaeology	Trench evaluation	Construction of wind farm
Lynton	The Cleave	7168 4947	Exeter Archaeology	Watching brief	Construction of terrace
West Down	Mullacott Cross Ind Estate	2510 5940	Exeter Archaeology	Watching brief	Industrial development
Witheridge	Pilliven Farm	2834 1153	SWARCH	Trench evaluation	Agricultural development

*HBR - Historic Building Recording

In 2008, 10 site reports were posted in 10 parishes. A total of 4 commercial organisations were involved, with Exeter Archaeology producing 6 reports, South West Archaeology producing 1 report, Cotswold Archaeology 1 report and AC Archaeology 1 reports. One report was produced by Exmoor National Park Authority.

1. Barnstaple: 29 Bear Street

29 Bear Street, also known as Portland House, is a landmark listed building that sits at the junction of Bear Street and Gaydon Street (now the Urban Relief Road). It has an ornate single-storey corner frontage that was added in 1891 to the early 19th century building. It was occupied for many years by W Youings & Sons, stone masons.

The recording survey describes the buildings occupying the site, their origin and evolution and the features that now adorn the walls, including a number of apprentice stone carvings. Three of the buildings retain their original layout and design. The fourth was formerly an unenclosed yard. The apprentice pieces have value as a group.

2. Braunton: Brannoc Fibres factory site (now Tesco)

This watching brief was of the groundworks associated with the construction of a Tesco store, car park and service yard. The site had previously been in industrial use. No archaeological features or deposits were identified; the few finds were typical of late 18th/19th century domestic articles.

3. Brayford: Little Bray Lane

This watching brief was commissioned by a housing association for groundworks associated with the construction of five houses. Previously the site was a pasture field. Despite evidence of Romano-British iron-smelting having been found in the near vicinity, no archaeological features or deposits were present on this site.

4. Brendon: Farley Water

This report is of the recording by the Exmoor National Park's archaeologist of a Bronze Age burial cairn discovered on the east bank of Farley Water. The cairn comprises a circular flat-topped mound, with its western downslope edge defined by a ragged edge of large blocks of stone. There is an arc of three small edge-set stones in the north-west quadrant, which may be part of an internal structure.

5. Fremington: Yelland Sewer Replacement

This watching brief was carried out along the nearly 1km length of a replacement sewer pipe between Yelland sewage works and Lower Yelland Farm, on the south bank of the River Taw. The pipe trench was about 4m wide, narrowing to 1m, and was excavated to a depth of 1.5m. Ditches, gullies and hedgebanks were observed, with unstratified pottery finds comprising mediaeval and post-mediaeval sherds. There was no evidence

of associated archaeological features or deposits and the sherds were considered to have derived from manuring rather than on-site deposits.

6. Kentisbury: Water Main route, Kentisbury Ford

A watching brief was carried out as a new length of water main was laid across fields to the south of Kentisbury Ford. The area has known archaeological features in the vicinity of the pipeline route. However, no features, deposits or dating evidence were found that might indicate archaeological activity.

7. Knowstone: Three Moors Wind Farm site

Nine trenches were excavated across the site of a proposed wind farm development that was to comprise nine turbines; the excavation followed a magnetometry survey. The site lay to the north-east of the North Devon Link Road, to the north of the Crooked Oak stream. During the evaluation four undated ditches and four undated pits were identified. Two of the pits were considered possibly to have been prehistoric storage pits, from their fills which were charcoal rich but shallow.

8. Lynton: The Cleave

This watching brief was undertaken on groundworks to create a deep terrace for a building and yard, at the north end of Bakers Court Lane and below the steep slope of Hollerday Hill. No features of archaeological significance were observed and no finds pre-dating the 19th century were recovered.

9. West Down: Mullacott Cross Industrial Estate

This watching brief was on a site at the southern end of the existing industrial estate. There are known archaeological features in the vicinity, including a standing stone. However, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were observed.

10. Witheridge: Pilliven Farm

A trench evaluation was carried out on the site of a proposed wind farm, following a previous geophysics survey. Eleven trenches were excavated on the site, which lies on high ground to the east of Witheridge. Most of the trenches revealed either no features or those that could be attributed to modern farming activity. However, three trenches contained features that could be prehistoric, possibly as part of a barrow group.

Discussion

Of the ten reports posted this year, only three contained worthwhile findings: these were the historic building recording at Portland House, which recorded the evolution of a landmark building in Barnstaple, albeit of 19th century origin, and the recording of the Bronze Age burial cairn near Farley Water on Exmoor. The third was the report on Pilliven Farm, Witheridge which contained a tantalising glimpse of a possible, previously unknown, barrow group.

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