

Distance: about 1/2 a kilometre

⑦ Opposite the end of the playground I heard dripping, dry leaves dropping, and wind roaring in the great trees. Can you still hear the A30 exhaling 'hahhhhh' 2km over the hill? Standing here in darkness I couldn't see the source of any sounds I could hear.



④ I heard cars reversing into driveways (proximity sensors trilling), and cars driving fast uphill (engines straining). If you wait for the cars to stop, local quiet may enclose people sounds: someone speaking on their phone, a wheelie bin trundle, footsteps, the muffled sound of someone's TV hidden within a house.

② Pause opposite the shops to catch the ding-dong doorbell of the Chinese takeaway. Cars pull up, keys jingle, doors slam. Ignition-engine-radio. Cars pull away. Over and over. A broadband cabinet sings an endless gentle chord.

TRAFFIC  
to  
TREES  
(UPHILL),  
EXETER  
A Sound Walk  
September 2020

① Standing here, can you see the source of each sound you hear?

Cars stop, then move away. The broadband cabinet next to the post box sings an endless minor 9th chord. If the pub and takeaway are open there are hums, fans, music, people greeting, doors opening.

Engines idling.

⑤ Hillside sounds. At regular intervals water echoes metallicly from drains. It sounds a long way down.

In a lull, I stepped on a snail. The shocking crack ricocheted off the brickwork.

③ Further up the hill, is it quiet? During a lull I heard dogs and people inside their houses. Higher up, a continuous outbreath of traffic emerges from the dark hill above and the valley below. A train's rhythm breaks in momentarily, like chattering teeth.

⑥ At the entrance to Canterbury Road, turn to face the city and gather its sounds. A bus will thunder down and up Gloucester Road like a rollercoaster.

I walked in the dark, about 8.30 pm. The single bird I heard was a pigeon, bashing through branches. I waited for an owl, but none came. Perhaps you'll hear one.

