

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Welcombe, Torridge	National Grid Reference SS 2620 1793	Number:
Subject: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording on Land at Little Hollacombe, Welcombe, Devon.		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 1/1191/2015/FUL	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon	
OASIS ID: southwes1-235961	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: WHC16	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 25 th October 2016	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Archaeological recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Christopher Wilson of Wilson Architecture and Planning Ltd. (the Agent) on behalf of A. & S. Jeffrey (the Client) during groundworks associated with the construction of a poultry unit and new access routes on land at Little Hollacombe Farm, Welcombe, Torridge, Devon. Excavation had been already been carried out, and a site visit was undertaken by P. Webb on 25th October 2016 in consultation with Stephen Reed of the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).</p> <p>Little Hollacombe Farm is located approximately 33km south-west of Barnstaple, off the A39 on the road between Meddon (1.3km to the east) and Welcombe (3.7km to the west). The site is situated towards the summit of a moderately steep south facing hillside at a height of c.220m AOD (Figure 1). The site lies on the well drained fine loamy soils over rock of the Neath Association (SSEW 1983) overlying the sandstone of the Crackington Formation (BGS 2016). The site lies in an area of archaeological potential in a landscape containing evidence of prehistoric activity with Bronze Age barrows to the north-west, and within an area of medieval field systems.</p> <p>A roughly rectangular area orientated approximately east to west and measuring c.75m×30m had been stripped and excavated to a depth of between 0.16m and c.2m prior to arrival on site, revealing a stratigraphic sequence of topsoil (001), mid brown soft-friable clay-silt-loam 0.08-0.30m thick; overlying a former ploughsoil (002) of mid brown soft-friable silt mixed with natural 0.05-0.15m thick; which in turn overlay the natural (003), a brown-yellow silt-clay. A subsequent area measuring c.11.5m×5m was excavated under archaeological supervision through the southern hedgebank boundary to the road.</p> <p>Hedgebank {004} was orientated north-west to south-east and measured 4m wide×0.9m high with moderate to near vertical sides and slightly convex top. It appeared to have been constructed in three phases: an initial narrow bank (009) c.1.3m wide×0.40m high comprising mid brown soft-friable clay-silt; and (007), yellow-brown silt-clay re-deposited natural. Associated with this was linear ditch [010], orientated north-west to south-east measuring 1.2m wide×0.6m deep with moderate to steep sloping sides and concave base. This had been filled by (008), mid brown soft-friable slightly loam-clay-silt which is likely to have formed part of the second phase of bank construction, and overlain by (006), mid brown soft-friable clay-silt. Associated with this phase of bank was ditch [011], measuring 0.7m wide×0.35m deep with moderate to steep sloping sides and flat base. It had been filled by (012), mid grey-brown soft clay-silt. This was subsequently cut [014] during the construction of the modern tarmac road, prior to a final phase of bank construction (005), dark brown loose soft silt-clay forming the top of the bank built up around the base of the hedge. Finds recovered from included: a single sherd (16g) of post-medieval white refined earthenware from topsoil (001) and a modern clear glass milk bottle (372g) from (006). The finds were subsequently discarded.</p> <p>Conclusions</p> <p>A total of two features were identified during the archaeological monitoring, comprising three phases of hedgebank construction associated with two phases of roadside ditch, finds suggesting the second phase of hedgebank as being modern. It is unknown if any archaeological deposits or features were lost during the initial phase of works, but none were visible in section.</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p>British Geological Survey 2014: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i>. http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html. Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: <i>Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales</i>.</p>		
Recorder: P. Webb		Date sent to HER: 26.10.16

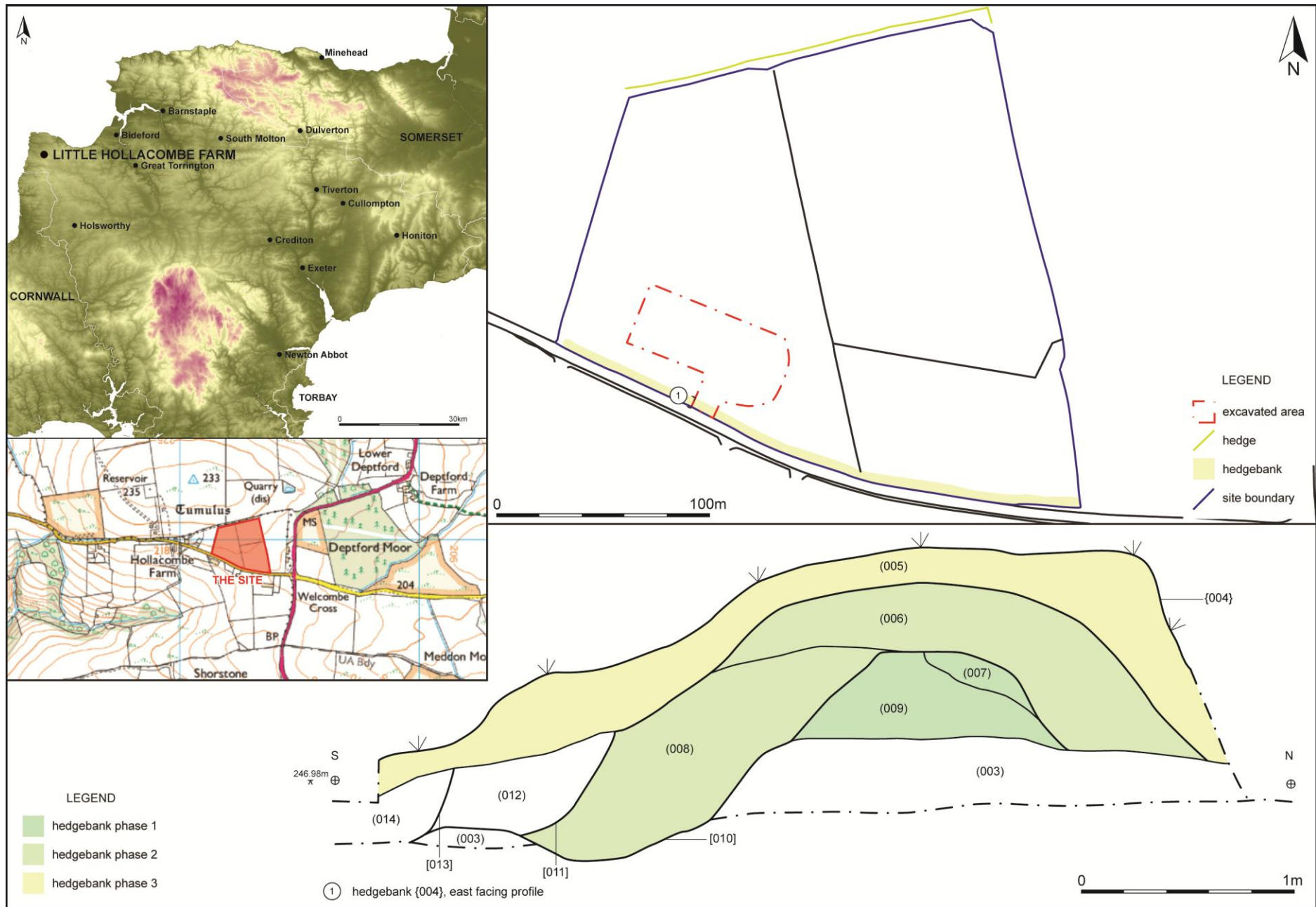


Figure 1: Site location, plans and sections.



Figure 2: Post-excavation site view; viewed from the east (1m & 2m scales).



Figure 3: Hedgebank {004} and ditch [010], east facing profile; viewed from the east (1m & 2m scales).