

Negative Watching Brief: Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Corfe, Somerset	National Grid Reference ST 24254 19112	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording of the excavation of a woodland bank for access purposes.		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: 12/12/0003	Recipient museum: Museum of Somerset	
OASIS ID: southwes1-242754	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: CCE16	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 29 th January 2016	
<p>Description of works.</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Julian Ohlsen of Tilhill Forestry (The Client), during the creation of an access route through a boundary in the woodlands of the Corfe Estate, Corfe, Somerset (Figure 1). This work was undertaken by J. Bampton on 29th January 2016 in accordance with best practice as outlined in the Somerset County Council Heritage Service Archaeological Handbook (2011) and in consultation with Stephen Membury, Senior Historic Environment Officer of the South West Heritage Trust (supported by Somerset County Council).</p> <p>The development lies 1.16km south-east of St. Nicholas church in Corfe, immediately east of the Taunton and Pickridge Golf Course. It is located on the ancient parish boundary of Corfe and Staple Fitzpaine within the Corfe Estate woodlands (on the south-west boundary between Piddle Wood and Lime Ridge Wood. Access into the woodland is granted from Staple Hill Road, 1.8km to the east and via Wych Lodge. The site is located on the steep wooded south facing slope of a ridge/stream combe at a height of c.120m AOD. The soils of the area are the slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils of the Evesham 1 Association which overlie the mudstones and limestones of the White Lias Formation, Westbury Formation and Cotham Member (undifferentiated).</p> <p>Corfe is in the Hundred of Taunton and Taunton Dean and paid its tithes to the Bishop of Winchester. It takes its name from the Old English <i>corf</i> meaning 'a cutting, a pass, or a gap' and refers to the natural route through the Blackdown Hills between Taunton and Honiton. The woods <i>Piddle</i> and <i>Lime Ridge</i> refer to the 'marshy stream' (Old English: <i>pidele</i>) and the ridge of limestone respectively on either side of the site.</p> <p>An area c.12m×4m was excavated, including the removal of a c.4m length of a north-south bank, and c.3-5m on the downslope side of the excavated area was made-up with the excavated ground (Figures 1-4). An active ditch ran along the west side of the bank. West of the ditch was Topsoil (100), a mid-dark brown grey, soft humic/organic clay-silt, 0.10m thick. It overlaid Subsoil (101), a light yellow-brown, soft-friable clay-silt, 0.15m thick, which overlaid Subsoil (102); a light yellow-brown, compact clay with occasional blue mottling and silt, 0.20m thick, which overlaid Natural (103); a mid grey-blue with light reddish-brown, compact clay with occasional large (<2400mm dia.) angular rocks. Linear Ditch [104], aligned north-south, cut Subsoil (102), 1.35m wide with very steep concave slopes and a concave base. It contained lower fill, (109), a mid grey, firm silt clay, 0.20m thick and, upper fill (110), a dark grey, soft organic clay-silt active layer. Fill (110) abuts the boundary bank <111>. On the east side of the bank Topsoil (100) overlaid Subsoil (102), which Overlaid Natural (103). The material dug from the ditch was used to build up Bank <111>; make-up layers (105), (106), (107) and (108), which was c.2m wide and c.0.5m in height. Layers (105) and (106) were similar to Subsoil (102) and made-up of either disturbed or re-deposited subsoil overlaying natural. These were overlaid by layer (107), which was overlaid by layer (108), both of which were mid yellow-blue, compact clays (re-deposited natural), although (108) was more silty and root disturbed. The bank material was overlaid with topsoil and heavily disturbed by tree roots.</p> <p>No finds were recovered during the monitoring and recording.</p> <p>No archaeological deposits or features were revealed during the monitoring and recording.</p>		
Recorder: J. Bampton		Date sent to HER: 16/02/2016

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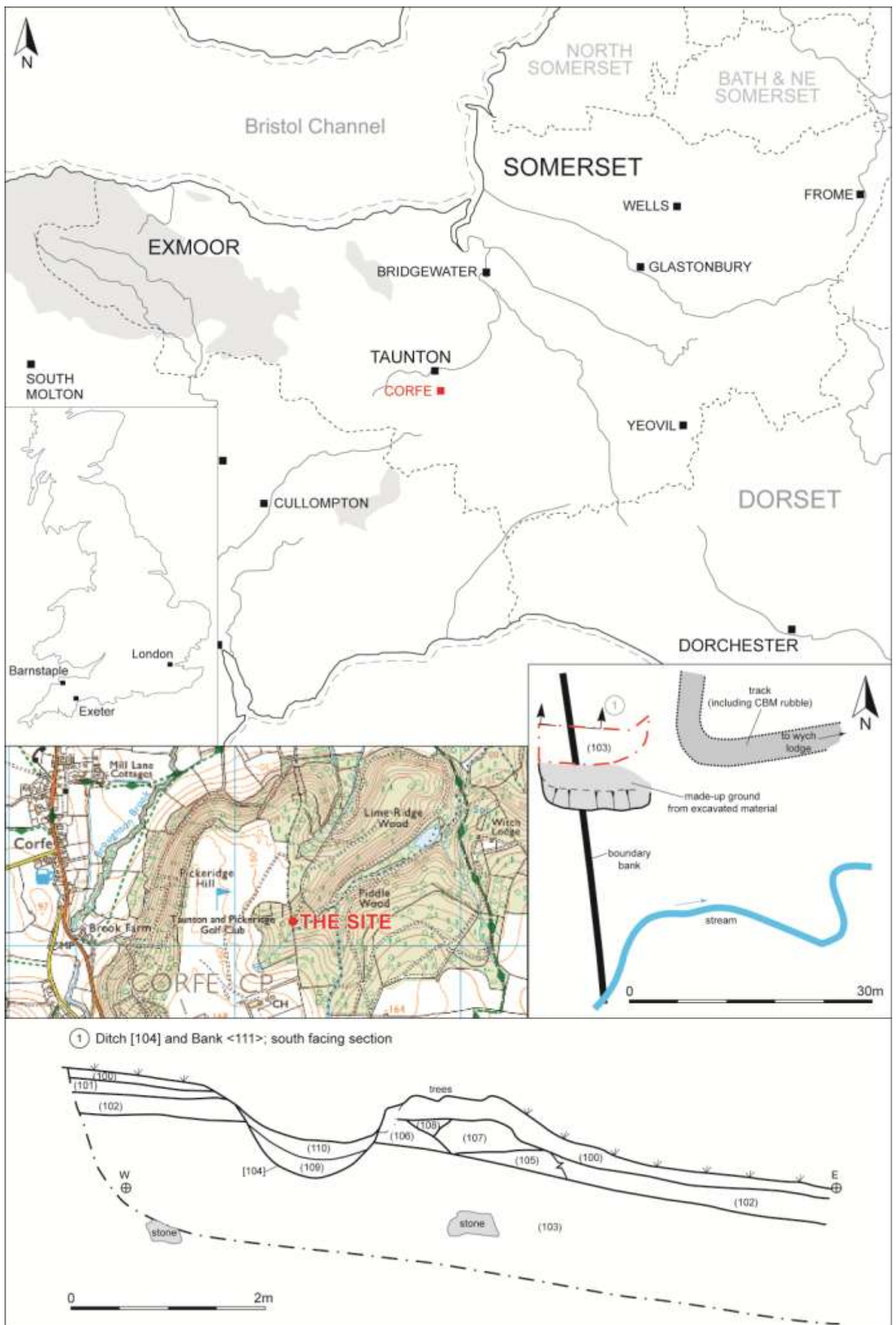


Figure 1: Site location, plan and section drawing through the excavated bank and ditch.



Figure 2: Ditch [104] and Bank <111>, excavated and drawn at an oblique angle; viewed from the south (2m scale).



Figure 3: Ditch [104] and Bank <111>, true section; viewed from the south-south-east (2m scale).



Figure 4: Excavated access area and made-ground; viewed from the west (1m and 2m scale).