

Devon County Council Historic Environment Record

Civil Parish & District: Fremington / Tawstock, North Devon	National Grid Reference SS 53975 31202	Number:
Subject: Archaeological monitoring and recording for the A39 cycle bridge, Fremington, Devon		Photo attached? YES
Planning Application no: DCC/3830/2016	Recipient museum: Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon	
OASIS ID: Southwes1-259557	Museum Accession no: N/A	
Contractor's reference number/code: RCB16	Dates fieldwork undertaken: 17 th October 2016	
<p>Description of works</p> <p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of Mark Coleville of Devon County Council (the Client) during the breach of the Fremington and Tawstock parish boundary as part of groundworks associated with the construction of the A39 cycle bridge at Roundswell, Barnstaple, Devon. The monitoring was carried out by P. Webb on 17th October 2016. This work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Boyd 2016) drawn up in consultation with Stephen Reed of the Devon County Historic Environment Team (DCHET).</p> <p>The site lies in an area of limited archaeological potential. It is located within an area of post-medieval enclosure with medieval elements; with medieval enclosures to the south. There has been limited archaeological works in the area, though that which has occurred and the majority of stray finds recorded on the Devon Historic Environment Record (HER) has identified features likely associated with these field systems. However, prehistoric stone tools have also been recovered, and Prehistoric and Romano-British activity is known in the wider landscape.</p> <p>The site is located approximately 3km south-west of Barnstaple, to the south of Bickington and to the immediate south of the A39 (Figure 1). The site lies on the seasonally waterlogged clayey, fine loamy and fine silty soils of the Hallsworth 2 Association (SSEW 1983) overlying superficial till deposits and mudstone and siltstone of the Crackington Formation (BGS 2016).</p> <p>Excavation comprised the removal of a c.6m wide section of the parish boundary between the parishes of Fremington and Tawstock. The works were carried under archaeological supervision by tracked 360° excavator using a toothless grading bucket to a depth of up to 0.1m, this being the depth of final groundworks. The stratigraphy of the site comprised a mid-brown soft friable silt-loam topsoil 0.10+m thick.</p> <p>Two features were identified during the groundworks: hedgebank {002} and ditch [009]; both associated with the parish boundary. Hedgebank {002}, orientated approximately north to south, comprised an earth-built bank c.1.9m wide × 0.60m high with a moderate sloping east side and moderate to steep sloping west side, with convex top. Its construction comprised: (004), (005), (006), (007), (008); brown soft friable silts and clay-silts with heavy root disturbance. A layer of loose mid-dark brown friable silt (003) had collected at the base of the hedge, which itself stood to 1.70m above the ground surface. Running along the western side of the bank was a linear ditch [009] measuring 2.10m wide × 0.60m deep with moderate to steep sloping sides and flat base. This feature was still in use as a drainage ditch and subsequently filled with water. No finds were recovered during the excavations.</p> <p>Conclusions</p> <p>Monitoring of the breach of the Fremington and Tawstock parish boundary identified it as a low earth-built bank structure with hedge on top, the roots of which have heavily disturbed the bank. Whilst no artefacts were recovered to date the existing structure it is likely to have originally formed part of the surrounding medieval field system.</p> <p>Bibliography</p> <p>Boyd, N. 2016: A39 Cycle Bridge, Roundswell, Fremington, Devon: Written Scheme of Investigation.</p> <p>British Geological Survey 2014: <i>Geology of Britain Viewer</i>. http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html [accessed 18.10.2016].</p> <p>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: 18.10.2016



Figure 1: Site location and feature drawings.



Figure 2: South facing section of hedgebank {002}; viewed from the south (scales 0.3m & 2m).