

Historic Environment Record

Subject: Archaeological monitoring during the backfilling of drainage ditches at Great Wood, Holnicote, Selworthy, Exmoor

National Grid Reference: SS 91785 46326	Civil Parish: Selworthy	Monument Number: N/A
Planning Application Number: N/A	Event Number: N/A	Recorder and Organisation: S. Stevens, SWARCH
Date of Site Visit(s) or Fieldwork: 03-04.10.19		Date of Report: 17.10.19

Description of Works, Monitoring and Results:

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by South West Archaeology Ltd. (SWARCH) at the request of the National Trust (the Client). The works consisted of monitoring the backfilling of drainage ditches on the outskirts of Great Wood on the Holnicote Estate. Great Wood is located c.0.61km south of Selworthy.

The first ditch being monitored was located c.0.43km slightly south-east of Selworthy and c.22m north of the Great Wood treeline at a height of c.70m AOD (Figure 1). The soils at the site are the well-drained coarse loamy soils over rock, of the Rivington 2 Association (SSEW 1983); which overlie the mudstone and limestone of the Langport Member and Blue Lias Formation (BGS 2019). The archaeological monitoring was carried out in accordance with CifA guidelines.

The ditch being monitored extended c.0.15km from the south-eastern corner of the southern field to the west, where it ended at a small reservoir and bank, which retained water to help control the flow of drainage. The entire length of this ditch was backfilled by using the surrounding topsoil, during which the machine created a natural looking environment (see Figures 7-9). The topsoil consisted of a mid-reddish-brown silt-clay, no other deposits were encountered.

Some finds were retrieved from the exposed topsoil, all post-medieval or modern, however due to the position of the ditch at the bottom of a hill, it is likely these finds were due to hillwash. These included: x2 animal bone fragments, x14 sherds of White Refined Earthenwares, x2 modern green glass shards; x1 black glass shard, and x2 Pantile fragments.

No archaeological features or deposits were visible and there were no discernible archaeological features were identified. The archive will be deposited with the national trust.

Conclusions

While monitoring the ditch backfilling, it was clear that the depth of the topsoil being stripped wouldn't disturb any archaeology, as the stripped depth revealed no indication of archaeological features.

Bibliography

Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983: *Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales (a brief explanation of the constituent soil associations).*

British Geological Survey 2019: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

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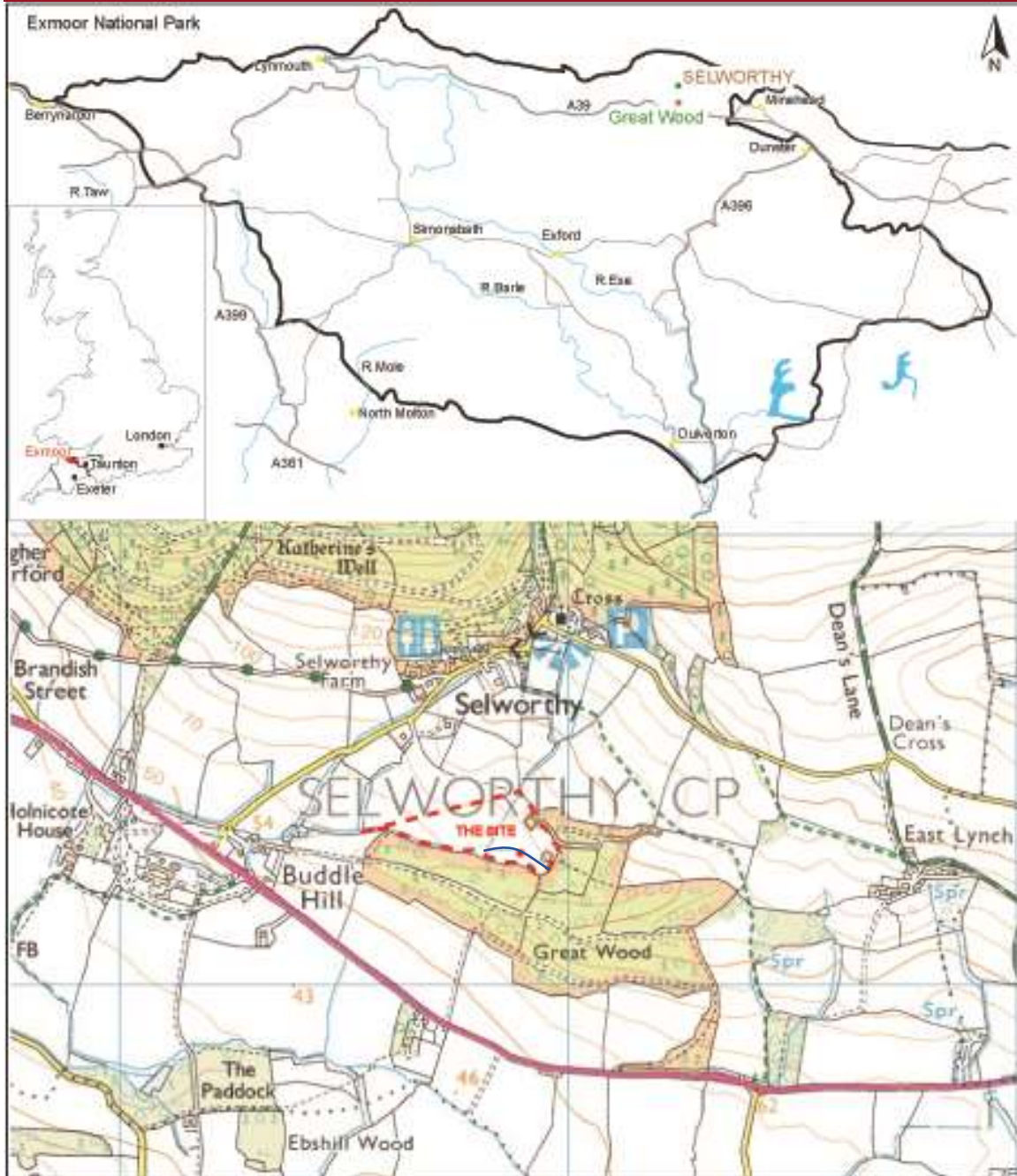


FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION. THE INFILLED DITCH IS SHOWN AS A BLUE LINE.

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FIGURE 2: PRE-BACKFILL DRAINAGE DITCH RUNNING EAST-WEST; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (NO SCALE).



FIGURE 3: START OF BACKFILLING; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (NO SCALE).

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FIGURE 4: BACKFILLING PROGRESS; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-EAST (NO SCALE).



FIGURE 5: AS ABOVE (NO SCALE).

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FIGURE 6: BACKFILLING PROGRESS AND AREA SHOT; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH (NO SCALE).



FIGURE 7: AS ABOVE; VIEWED FROM THE NORTH-WEST (NO SCALE).

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FIGURE 8: BACKFILLING PROGRESS; VIEWED FROM THE SOUTH (NO SCALE).



FIGURE 9: AREA SHOT, POST-BACKFILL; VIEWED FROM THE WEST (NO SCALE).