

Castle view, Culmstock Road, Hemyock, Devon

NGR ST 13554 13341

Results of an archaeological trench evaluation

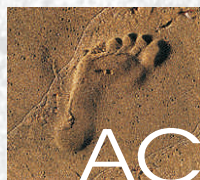
Planning ref. Mid Devon District Council 11/00056/FULL

Prepared by
Jerry Austin

On behalf of
Mr N. Barton

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AC archaeology

CASTLE VIEW, CULMSTOCK ROAD, HEMYOCK, DEVON

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CONTENTS

	Summary	
1.	Introduction	1
2.	Archaeological and historical background	1
3.	Aims	1
4.	Methodology	2
5.	Results	2
6.	Comments	2
7.	Archive and OASIS	3
8.	Acknowledgements	3
9.	Sources consulted	3

List of figures

Fig. 1: Location of site

Fig. 2: Trench location and detailed section

List of plates

Plate 1: Castle View house. Proposed access is to the right of the house

Plate 2: General view of trench, looking to northwest (Scale 1m)

Plate 3: Northwest facing section of trench (Scale 1m)

Summary

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by AC archaeology in May 2011 for a proposed new access and car parking/turning area at Castle View, Culmstock Road, Hemyock, Devon (NGR ST 13554 13341). The site is located in the historic core of the village, with recent investigations on land to the east at Castle Dene identifying evidence for an east to west aligned clay earthwork sealing medieval deposits. It is thought that the bank is associated with the construction of the castle in 1380-81 and may continue into the present site.

The evaluation trench was hand dug and was 2.4m long, 1m wide and excavated to the formation level depth for the new access road of 0.3m below ground level. With the exception of modern deposits, no archaeological features were exposed and no early finds recovered. It is still possible that buried archaeological remains are present below the formation level, but even if they are there will be no impact on these by groundworks for the new access.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 An archaeological trench evaluation carried out in support of a planning application for the formation of access and provision of hardstanding for the parking of vehicles at Castle View, Culmstock Road, Hemyock, Devon, was undertaken by AC archaeology during May 2011. The proposed access is situated to the east of the house (Plate 1). The work was commissioned by Mr. N. Barton.
- 1.2 The proposed development site is situated to the east of the main village centre approximately 30m to the north of Hemyock castle (Fig. 1). The site lies at around 135mOD, with the underlying solid geology comprising Triassic Mercia Mudstone.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located to the east of the historic core of the village, with a settlement at Hemyock likely to have been present during the Saxon period. Recent archaeological work within the village includes the excavation of a medieval ironworking and late-medieval/early post-medieval pottery production site at Churchills Farm, c. 280m to the south. Investigations at the Hemyock Motors site, c. 110m to the southwest, identified pits and layers containing waster sgraffito dishes dating to between 1580-1620 (Hughes 2009). The results from both sites indicate that pottery production was being undertaken in the vicinity of the village for a period of around 200-300 years in the late medieval and post-medieval periods, although no *in situ* kilns have yet been found.
- 2.2 Excavations at Castle Dene, 25m to the west of Castle View, identified a possible medieval yard surface, structural remains in the south of the site and ancillary buildings to the north (Allum 2009). It is thought these structures are associated with three east to west aligned ditches, which were sealed by a compact surface of a possible later farmstead. In the southern end of the site a bank constructed of red clay sealed a layer thought to be a rubbish deposit containing a large quantity of iron slag. It is possible that both deposits are associated with the construction of Hemyock Castle in 1380-81, and may continue into the present site.

3. AIMS

- 3.1 The aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence or absence, extent, depth, character and date of any archaeological features, deposits or finds within the site, with particular reference to the red clay earthwork, and associated deposits identified at the southern end of the Castle Dene site. The results of the work as set out in this report will be reviewed and used to inform any subsequent mitigation as a condition of planning permission, if granted.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The evaluation was undertaken following consultation with the Archaeology Officer, Devon County Council. The anticipated ground disturbance of the new access is limited to the area between the site of a proposed gate and the extant highway and will be of a maximum depth of 0.30m. A trial trench was hand dug in this area 2.4m long by 1m wide to the formation depth of 0.30m (Fig. 2a). The parking/turning area in the north will be formed by the compaction of hardcore onto the existing ground surface.
- 4.2 The site was recorded in accordance with the AC archaeology pro-forma recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records, and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 1*. The plan was drawn at a scale of 1:20 and the section at 1:10. All levels have been related to Ordnance Datum. All spoil heaps were scanned for displaced finds.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 The results from the trench are described in detail below, with a section included as Fig. 2b and photographs as Plates 2 & 3.
- 5.2 Natural subsoil or *in situ* archaeological deposits were not exposed in the trench. There was heavy root disturbance present throughout from a nearby tree. At the northeast end of the trench a modern overburden layer of mid to light yellowish-brown friable silty clay, with frequent large sub-angular stone inclusions, was present (context 103). This was exposed at a depth of 0.10m and continued beyond the base of the trench. The layer contained modern finds such as coal, wire and plastic.
- 5.3 Layer 103 was truncated in the middle of the trench by a mixed dumped deposit (102), which consisted predominantly of yellow clay with red clay inclusions. Also within this deposit was wire, plastic, concrete blocks and ceramic field drain remnants. Deposit 102 was truncated at the southwest end of the trench by a vertical construction cut (F105) for the existing brick boundary wall (106). The wall and construction cut fill had been laid on a weak cement footing (104). The fill of the construction cut (101) was a friable mid to light brown silty clay.
- 5.4 Overlying 101, 102 and 103 was garden soil (100), which was a friable mid to dark greyish-brown silty clay with occasional quartz stone inclusions. This deposit also contained frequent modern finds such as plastic and wire.

6. COMMENTS

- 6.1 With the exception of modern layers and deposits, no archaeological features were exposed and no early finds recovered. As the trench was wholly excavated within modern overburden, it is possible that archaeological features and deposits are present below the 0.30m formation depth (135.10m OD).
- 6.2 Based on the results of the work, it is considered very unlikely that the construction of the new access will have an impact on any below ground archaeological remains.

7. ARCHIVE AND OASIS

- 7.1** The paper and digital archive is currently held at the offices of AC archaeology Ltd, at 4 Halthaies Workshops, Bradninch, near Exeter, Devon, EX5 4LQ.
- 7.2** The OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS) number for this project is 101475.

8. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The evaluation was commissioned by the site owner, Nick Barton. The site works were carried out by Jerry Austin, with the illustrations for this report prepared by Cain Hegarty. The advice and collaboration Stephen Reed, Devon Archaeology Officer, is duly acknowledged.

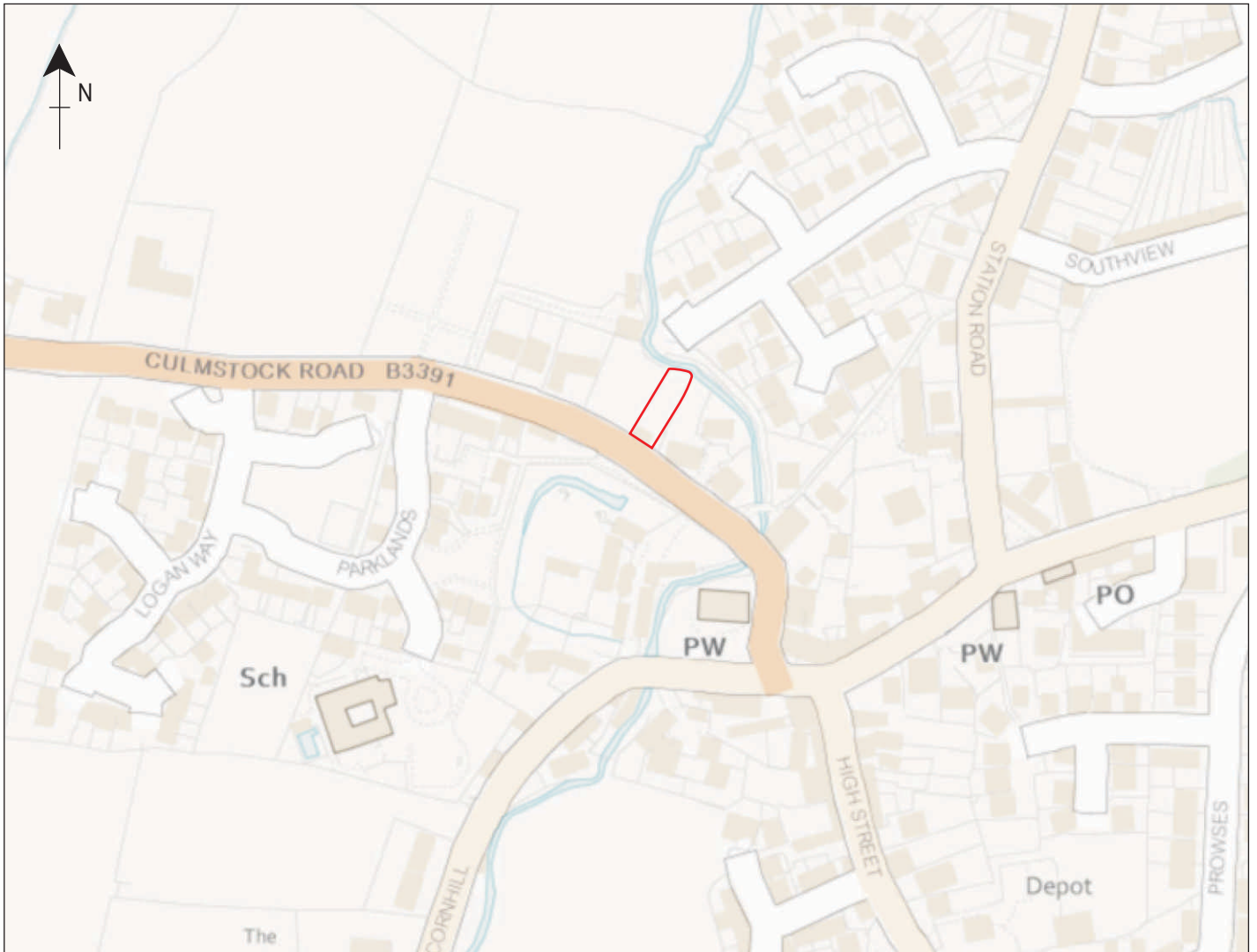
9. SOURCES CONSULTED

Allum, C., 2009, *Land to the east of Castle Dene, Culmstock Road, Hemyock, Devon: An Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief Assessment Report*. Unpublished Context One Archaeological Services report for client

Devon Record Office, Hemyock parish tithe map, 1843

Hughes, S., 2009, *Results of a trench evaluation on land at Hemyock Motors, Culmstock Road, Hemyock, Devon: Interim Archaeological Statement*. AC archaeology unpublished report, ref. ACD44/2/0

Ordnance Survey 25-inch Devonshire sheet 47.3, surveyed 1888, published 1889, revised 1903, published 1905



0 250m

PROJECT

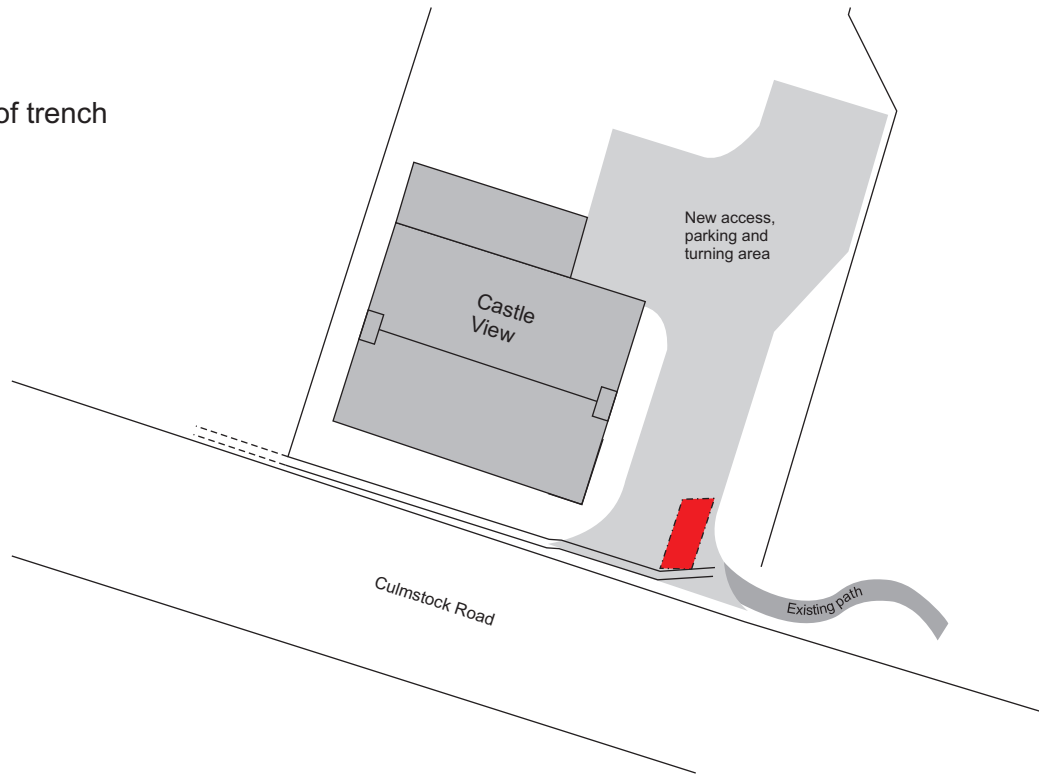
Castle View, Hemyock

TITLE

Fig.1: Location of site



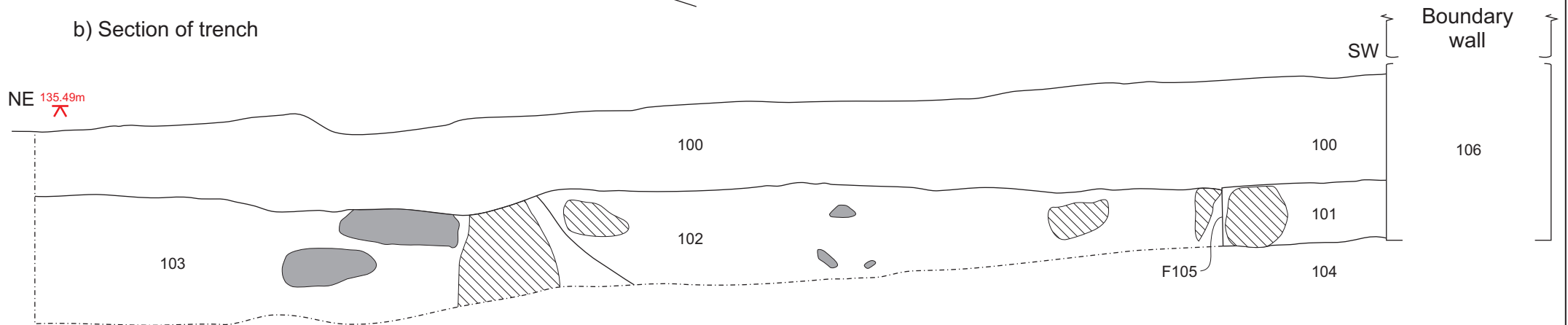
a) Location of trench





0 Plan 10m

0 Section 0.5m

b) Section of trench



 Roots/root disturbance
 Stone



PROJECT
Castle View, Hemyock

TITLE
Fig.2: Trench location and detailed section



Plate 1: Castle View house. Proposed access is to the right of the house



Plate 2: General view of trench, looking northwest (Scale 1m)



Plate 3: northwest facing section of trench (Scale 1m)

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