

Geology Exposure Goodrich Dry Arch

Grid Reference: SO 57508 19196  
Latitude: 51.869706      Longitude: -2.6185605  
Date: December 2018

Description of exposure

In 1828 a new bridge (Kerne Bridge) over the Wye between Goodrich and Bishopswood was completed. It replaced an old ferry crossing near Flanesford Priory and eventually put paid to the ancient ferry below Goodrich castle. A new road was built between the bridge and the road from Goodrich which led to the ferry over the Wye at Huntsham and also to Old Forge and Whitchurch.

The new road necessitated making a deep cutting through a ridge which carried the Goodrich to Welsh Bicknor road. A viaduct to carry the road was built and is known locally as the Dry Arch. The cutting, overgrown with small trees and scrub, recently became unstable and had to be cleared. In the process the sandstone strata became visible and could be photographed while a protective barrier ran along the cutting – it is not usually accessible to pedestrians as the road is dangerous. It is not possible to photograph the exposure from the other side of the road.

The LIDAR image on the right (Figure 2) shows Kerne Bridge to the east and the road running westwards (left) and passing under the Dry Arch.



Figure 1. The exposure on the north (right) of the road between the digger and the buttress of the Dry Arch.

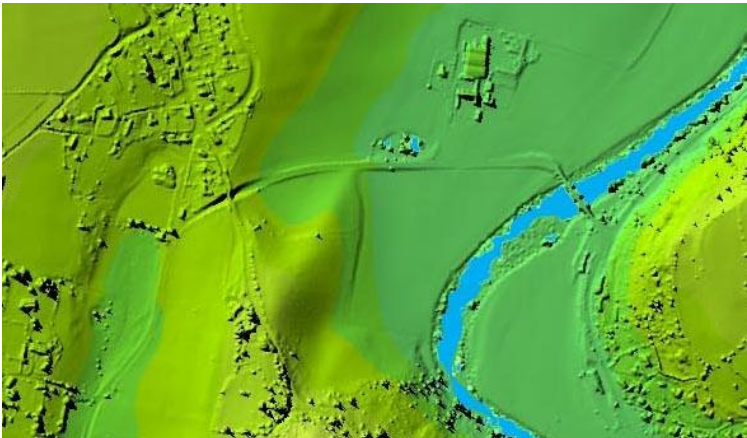


Figure 3. Exposures of north bank of cutting from west to east.

The work was completed in early 2019. As well as several places where missing sections of strata were supported by sandbags a cement(?) spray was fired at the strata and wire mesh was fixed to bolts fired into the bank. A rubberised mat was placed just above road level and as at April 2019 vegetation is already growing through this, as at other places on the bank. It remains to be seen whether this costly exercise will last. The rocks here are the Brownstones Formation, the highest part of the Lower Devonian. Massive red sandstone beds dip at a low angle to the south east. There are also muddier layers on which slippage takes place when they become lubricated after heavy rain. There was a similar slip on the minor road from Crocker’s Ash to Little Doward some years ago.

