

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION &
(LIMITED) PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY**

**Plough Farm
Ford Street
Wigmore
Herefordshire**

NGR SO 415 690
SMR No: 38257
Report No. BA0311CPWI

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REPORT SPECIFICATION

Archaeological observation carried out by Paul Jones BA
Historical research carried out by Stephen Priestley MA
Photographic survey by Stephen Priestley MA & George Children MA
Artwork by Paul Jones BA
Report Edited by George Children MA

The report has been produced according to guidelines issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and reflects legislation and guidance notices issued by English Heritage and local planning authorities

1. Non-Technical Summary

Wigmore lies within an important historic area and has evidence of settlement from the Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods.

Wigmore was a borough during the 11th-15th centuries and there are substantial remains of the street plan of the medieval urban settlement, including a significant number of medieval burgage plots, which can still be identified on old and modern maps and aerial photography.

Numerous buildings in the village are recorded as dating from the late medieval period, or the 16th-17th centuries, particularly along Ford Street, in the vicinity of Plough Farm.

With the exception of the remains of the 19th century stone plinth found within Trench 1, however, the archaeological observation revealed no significant archaeological deposits, features or structures

2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by Mr Charles Probert to undertake an archaeological observation of site works and a limited photographic survey of the extant barn at Plough Farm, Ford Street, Wigmore, Herefordshire (NGR SO 415 690) in conjunction with the development of two dwellings.

The purpose of the archaeological observation was to locate and record any sub-surface archaeological remains revealed during the ground works phase of development, while that of the photographic survey was to illustrate and briefly describe the Grade II listed barn situated to the W of Plough Farmhouse.

A copy of the report will be submitted to Mr Probert, Herefordshire Archaeology and the Regional Sites and Monuments Record.

3. Historical & Archaeological Background

There is no evidence, either in terms of archaeological sites or artefacts, indicative of human activity in the locality of Wigmore during the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic or Neolithic periods. No definite Bronze Age remains have been discovered in the locality of Wigmore, but a mound identified on Poor Land Field, Deerfold, at SO 3870 6876 might possibly be interpreted as remains of a barrow. However, more definite evidence exists of settlement activity in the vicinity of Wigmore during the Iron Age, consisting of a hillfort at Darvold Hill situated at SO 3760 6880 (SMR Record 2354), and a possible Iron Age circular camp in Deerfold Forest located at SO 3872 6636 about 3km SW of Wigmore (SMR Record 2357). Traces of a Roman marching camp have been identified at SO 4200 6900, situated immediately E of Wigmore, on the line of the Hereford-Leintwardine Roman Road (SMR Record 6350).

Considerable evidence exists of settlement activity in Wigmore throughout the medieval period. There appears to have been a substantial settlement at Wigmore around the time of the Norman Conquest, and it was recorded as a borough ('burgus') in the Domesday Survey of 1086, when it was held by Ralph de Mortimer. The borough was probably established during the Anglo-Saxon period, although no documentary records have been found to confirm this. The possibility should not be ruled out that the borough may have been founded shortly after the Conquest by William fitz Osbern Earl of Hereford (d.1071) who is recorded in Domesday as the original builder of Wigmore Castle (SMR Record 179).

Wigmore was given by William I to Ralph de Mortimer in 1076 and it remained as the *caput* or administrative centre of the Mortimer family's considerable Marcher estates (known as the lordship of Wigmore) until the early 15th century. The Mortimers considerably altered and enlarged the original motte and bailey castle, erecting a shell keep in the 12th century and providing the outer and inner baileys with elaborate stone defences during the 13th century. An extensive domestic range, including a great hall and chamber block, was constructed during the 14th century (Pevsner, 1963, 321; RCHME, 1934, 205). In 1179, Hugh de Mortimer founded an abbey of Augustinian Canons at Wigmore, which would serve as the mausoleum for successive generations of the Mortimer family (Remfry, 1995).

The borough of Wigmore appears to have increased in size and importance as the Mortimers steadily rose to a position of considerable power and influence in the Welsh Marches during the 13th and early 14th centuries, reaching its apogee with Roger Mortimer earl of March (d.1330), who successfully overthrew King Edward II in 1327 and ruled as virtual regent of England with Queen Isabella until his arrest and execution by Edward III three years later. Wigmore is recorded as having 140 burgages in 1304, which probably marks the peak of its expansion as an urban settlement (SMR Record 19441).

The street plan of the medieval borough is clearly shown on the Wigmore tithe map of 1845 and the OS 1st edition map of 1890, and can still be partially traced on subsequent OS maps. It is distinguished by long, narrow strips characteristic of burgage tenement plots, running E along Ford St, W along Castle Street and S along the line of the modern A4110 road. Most of the houses in the centre of Wigmore stand on the site of medieval burgage tenements and some incorporate medieval fabric, although many appear to have been rebuilt during the 16th and 17th centuries.

The 1845 tithe map also shows a square market place and a market hall in the centre of Wigmore which had disappeared before 1890 (SMR Record 19431). It is likely that the extant street plan of the medieval borough of Wigmore dates from either the 13th or early 14th century. The borough of Wigmore appears to have gradually contracted in the late medieval period, as the fortunes of the Mortimers waned. Wigmore became a possession of the Crown in 1461 and remained in royal hands throughout the late 15th and 16th centuries.

The earliest documentary record of the Plough Farm property appears in the Wigmore parish tithe map and apportionment of 1845, which shows a long oblong structure and a compact, square building immediately facing onto Ford Street, with two rectangular enclosures (presumably the farmyard) and another L-shaped enclosure (possibly used as meadow or orchard) situated to the rear. These two buildings appear to be identical with the surviving weatherboarded, timber-framed barn (of 17th century date) and brick farmhouse (of 18th-19th century date).

The 1845 tithe map and the 1890 OS map show the barn attached to the farmhouse; however the OS 2nd edition 25 inch map of 1907 shows the barn and farmhouse as two separate structures, with a pathway running between them. The weatherboarded barn has been listed in the English Heritage Listed Buildings Record as a Grade II structure of 17th century date with mid-19th century alterations, formerly in use as a cider mill, now as a store. Part of the cider mill still remains in the western bay of the barn (although part of the trough is missing). It is not known when the barn first came into use as a cider mill, although cartographic evidence does show apple orchards situated to the rear of Plough Farm in the middle of the 19th century (English Heritage LBS NO. 150250; Herefordshire Archaeology SMR Record 16478).

The 1845 tithe map also shows a small structure, probably a shed, immediately N of the barn on the opposite side of the yard. This structure had vanished by 1890; however the OS 2nd edition 25-inch map of 1907 shows that a large oblong barn aligned roughly E-W had been erected on the site. The stone foundations of this barn, formerly carrying a timber structure which has now been demolished, were uncovered in the course of the archaeological observation of the site carried out by Border Archaeology. The evidence of the OS maps of 1890 and 1907, taken together with the Land Valuation Survey of 1910 (which names the property as the 'Old Plough'), shows that the Plough Farm estate had expanded substantially between

1845 and 1900. By 1890, the property had expanded to include two long rectangular field strips (possibly medieval burgage plots) to the N of Plough Farm which were apparently in use as meadows in 1845, but which were converted to orchards by the late 19th century.

4. Geology

The solid geology of the surrounding area comprises [Palaeozoic] Pridoli Series mudstones and siltstones which directly relate to the Old Red Sandstone formation [massif] series. The related drift geology around Wigmore is an 813d FLADBURY 3 which consists of stoneless clayey, fine silty and fine loamy soils affected by groundwater (Soil Survey of England & Wales 1983).

5. Methodology

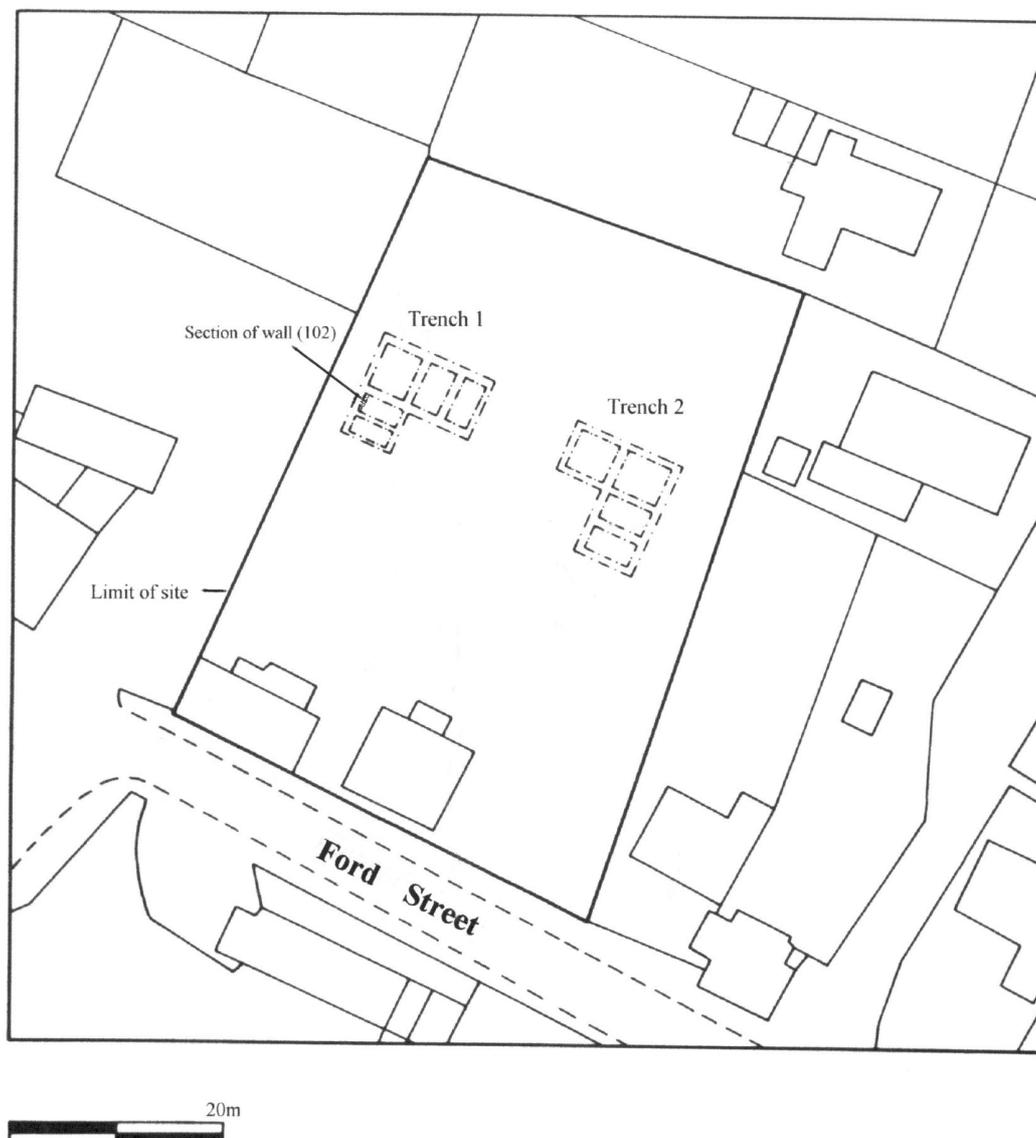
The area of the proposed development was excavated by mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision.

All spoil was scanned for artefacts, any artefacts recovered from the spoil being recorded but not retained.

The depth and complexity of deposits was assessed. Written records of all machine-excavated areas were made in accordance with best archaeological practice. Records included an overall trench and site plan. A Temporary Bench Mark (value 137.51m OD) was established on the site.

The photographic survey of the extant barn situated to the W of Plough Farmhouse combined a written description of the building with a visual record.

Fig. 1: Site and trench location



6. Archaeological Observation

The area of excavation extended 34m NW/SE by approximately 30m NE/SW. Two areas of the site were excavated for individual house footings. Trench widths varied between 0.5m and 0.8m. The depth of the trenching ranged between 0.85m and 1.05m.

The excavation areas comprised a series of deposits, the lowest of which appeared to be associated with the underlying parent geology. These soil deposits were found within both trenches and appeared to be uniform throughout the site.

Trench 1 (Figs. 1 & 2)

Located within the W area of the site a continuous trench was excavated. In plan this formed an L-shape measuring c.11.6m x 12.2m. Oriented roughly NW/SE by NE/SW this formed the footprint foundation of the first of the two proposed new dwellings.

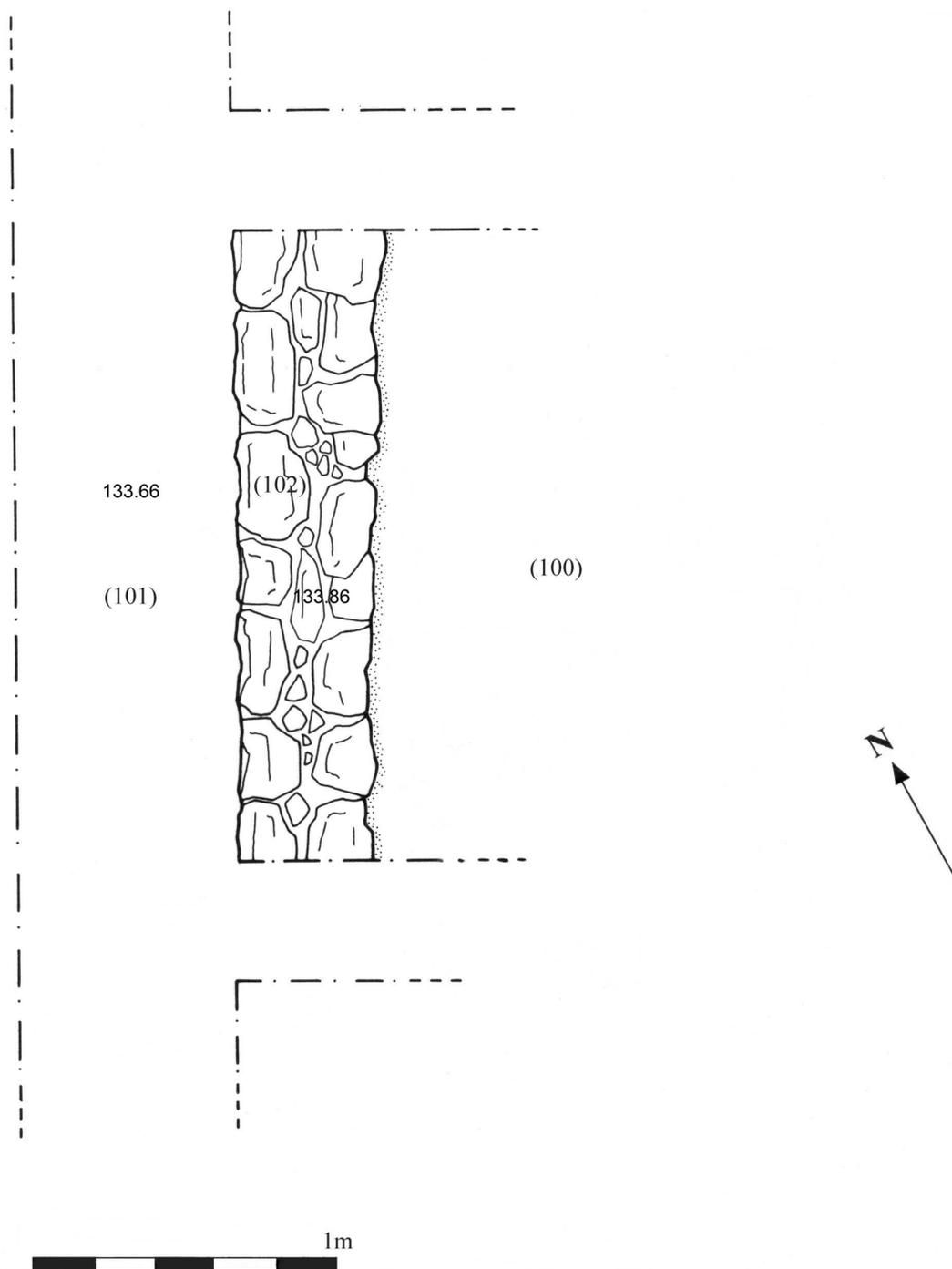
The uppermost deposit (100) extended to a depth of 0.35m below existing ground level. Consisting of a moderately compacted, black to brown coarse sandy clay, this deposit contained frequent CBM fragments (unfrogged red brick etc), with occasional 19th century pottery fragments and represented a build-up of 19th/20th century garden detritus interspersed with debris from a recently demolished structure. The deposit partly sealed the remains of wall feature (102). Located within the W area of the trenching, extending along the NW facing section and oriented NE/SW, the wall was constructed of randomly coursed mudstone fragments. It measured 2.1m x 0.4m in plan and stood to a height of two courses, approximately 0.2m. Forming a plinth base for a timber structure, the feature was probably associated with the recently demolished building. Underlying this feature and deposit (100) were natural subsoils (101) consisting of yellow to brown sandy clays.

Trench 2 (Fig. 1)

A continuous trench was excavated within the E area of the site. Forming an L-shape oriented roughly NW/SE by NE/SW the trench measured approximately 12.2m x 13m and formed the footprint foundation of the second of the two proposed new dwellings.

The uppermost deposit (200) extended to a depth of 0.3m below existing ground level. Similar to deposit (100) within Trench 1, this consisted of a moderately compacted, black to brown coarse sandy clay containing frequent CBM fragments and occasional 19th century pottery fragments. The deposit represented a build-up of 19th/20th century garden detritus interspersed with debris from the recently demolished structure. Underlying this deposit were natural subsoils (201) consisting of yellow to brown sandy clays.

Fig. 2: Plan of stone plinth (102)



7. Summary

With the exception of the remains of the 19th century stone plinth found within Trench 1, the archaeological observation revealed no significant archaeological deposits, features or structures

8. Bibliography

Primary Sources:

Herefordshire Record Office

1785-1830 Wigmore Land Tax Assessments

1841-1901 Census Returns for Wigmore

1845 Wigmore Tithe Map & Apportionment

1910 Wigmore Land Valuation Survey

OS 1st edition Herefordshire VI NE (1890)

OS 2nd edition Herefordshire VI.8 (1905)

OS Provisional Edition 6 inch Herefordshire VI NE (1903 rev 1948 & 1952)

Secondary Sources:

Herefordshire Archaeology: Sites and Monuments Record

Children, G. & Nash, G.H. (1994) *Prehistoric Sites of Herefordshire* Logaston Press Vol. 1

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9. Limited Photographic Survey

9.1 Introduction

The barn, situated about 5.47m W of Plough Farm farmhouse, was formerly used as a cider mill, but is currently used as a store. It has been listed in the English Heritage Listed Buildings Record as a Grade II structure of 17th century date with mid-19th century alterations (LBS No. 150250). There is also some evidence of more recent alterations. The barn consists of a timber framed, weatherboarded structure of three framed bays aligned E-W, erected on a rubble base, with a modern, corrugated metal roof. The S elevation of the barn, facing onto Ford St, displays evidence of a much larger opening in the central bay, apparently intended for the use of wagons, now blocked up with a small double doorway inserted at a later date. The lean-to shed at the rear of the barn also appears to be a later addition.

In the interior of the barn, the timber-framed construction of the roof is clearly visible, consisting of collar and tie beam trusses with struts at the ends and two intermediate tie-beam trusses with raking struts. Several of the trusses appear to be modern replacements. Part of the cider mill, including the cider press, survives in the western bay of the barn, although a section of the trough is missing.

Plate 1: South elevation and western gable end of barn



Plate 2: South elevation of barn showing blocked cart entry and inserted double doorway



Plate 3: North elevation showing lean-to structure



Plate 4: Western gable end of barn



Plate 5: Eastern gable end showing collapsed weatherboarding



Plate 6: Western bay of barn showing part of cider mill



Plate 7: Detail of internal timber frame construction



Plate 8: Detail of roof construction showing trenched purlins and part of tie-beam truss with raking struts



Plate 9: Western end of barn showing gable construction comprising collar and tie beam trusses with struts and external weatherboarding



Plate 10: View along the length of the barn showing roof construction and partially collapsed weatherboarding at the eastern gable end



Plate 11: Remains of cider mill located in the western bay, including part of trough



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11. Appendix1: Site Summary

Title of Report	Archaeological Observation and Limited Photographic Survey at Plough Farm, Ford Street, Wigmore, Herefordshire		
Contractor	Border Archaeology, PO Box 36, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 OYQ		
Site Name	Plough Farm		
	Grid Ref. NGR SO 415 690	Planning App. No: N/A	
SMR number(s) of site	38257		
Date of Field Work	November 2003		
Date of Report	April 2004		
NUMBER AND TYPE OF FINDS			
Pottery	Period N/A	Period N/A	
Other	Number of sherds N/A	Quantity N/A	
NUMBER AND TYPE OF SAMPLES COLLECTED			
Sieving for charred plant remains	No of Features sampled	N/A	
	No of buckets	N/A	
C14/scientific dates	No and Type	N/A	
	Result	N/A	
Pollen	No of Columns/spot samples	N/A	
	Name of pollen specialist	N/A	
Bone	Number of buckets sieved for bone	N/A	Quantity Recovered N/A
			Period N/A
Insect	No of Columns/spot samples	N/A	
	Name of pollen specialist	N/A	
Other	Type and specialist	N/A	
REPORT SUMMARY			
With the exception of the remains of a 19th century stone plinth found within Trench 1, no significant archaeological deposits, features or structures were found.			