



Herefordshire Archaeology
Conservation and Environmental Planning
Planning Services
Environment Directorate
Herefordshire Council

**Hogg's Mount Steps,
Castle Green,
Hereford,
Herefordshire:
An Archaeological Watching
Brief**

NGR: SO 51356 39595

Herefordshire Archaeology Report No 242

Report prepared by
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Herefordshire Archaeology is Herefordshire Council's county archaeology service. It advises upon the conservation of archaeological and historic landscapes, maintains the county Sites and Monument Record, and carries out conservation and investigative field projects. The County Archaeologist is Dr. Keith Ray.

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Herefordshire Archaeology Report No 242

Herefordshire Archaeology, November 2007.

Summary

This watching brief was undertaken by staff of Herefordshire Archaeology during October and November 2007. The brief was concentrated with the area of Hogg's Mount that forms the northeast corner of the Castle Green, Hereford. The investigation centred on the works associated with the reconstruction of existing steps that link Mill Street with a path that runs along the top of the rampart that enclose Castle Green. The aim of the watching brief was to provide coverage of the construction works and record any archaeologically significant deposits which might be encountered.

Disclaimer: It should not be assumed that land referred to in this document is accessible to the public. Location plans are indicative only. NGR's are accurate to approximately 10m. Measured dimensions are accurate to within 1m at a scale of 1:500, 0.1m at 1:50, and 0.02m at 1:20.

Figures contained within this report contain material from the Ordnance Survey. The grid in this material is the National Grid taken from the Ordnance Survey map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (100024618 2006). This material has been reproduced in order to locate the site in its environs.

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Introduction

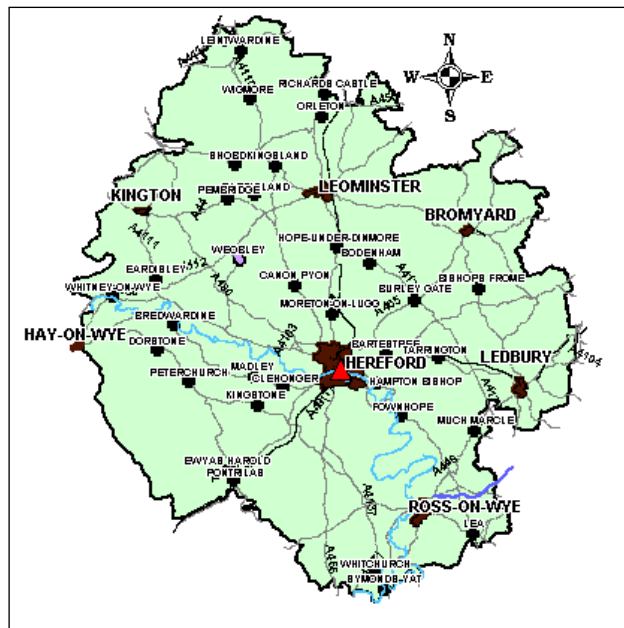
The Castle Green (HSM 429) is designated a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 00152), as such consent for work to be carried out on the monument was applied for through English Heritage. The investigation described in this report concerns the renewal of the Hogg's Mount steps (HSM 45155) within the northeast of the Castle Green, Hereford. The ground works for this project involved the removal of the present steps and revetment wall and the insertion of a new set of steps a new wall and the excavation of a stanchion base and cable trench for a new lamp post.

Due to the archaeological importance of the Castle Green and the location of the construction works on the course of the ramparts an archaeological watching brief was required in order to monitor the works and record the archaeological resource. This was performed by staff of Herefordshire Archaeology during October and November 2007. The watching brief was concerned with the demolition of the original steps and the preparation of foundations for the replacement structure.

The Castle Green represents the original site of the 7th century St. Guthlac's Priory and later the Bailey attributed to the early 11th century, pre-Norman conquest castle associated to Earl Ralph of Hereford in 1052. It is probable that at least the east-facing rampart of the Castle Green was established during the late 9th century when the Anglo-Saxon settlement of Hereford was encapsulated by a timber-faced turf and clay rampart constructed during the time of King Alfred (871-903). By the early 14th century the castle green was enclosed by a mixed earthwork and stonewall rampart, forming the bailey of the castle with the keep/motte located to the west. Prior to the 14th century Hereford and the castle was defended by a single circuit of earthen rampart supported by a timber revetment.

The defences of the medieval castle were strengthened during the 17th century and the Civil War, following an extended period of neglect up to this point. It was expected that any archaeology uncovered associated to the defences during the time of the watching brief would most likely date to the 17th century.

Location and Geology



The Castle Green (NGR SO 51269 39558) is located within the centre of Hereford, 184 metres east-southeast of St Mary & St Ethelbert Cathedral Church. The Castle Green sits upon a natural sand and gravel terrace on the north side of the River Wye. The natural terrace was formed as a result of Late Devensian glacial and fluvial activity. The Castle Green encloses an area of 2.8 hectares, which currently serves as parkland.

The area of works described in this report was located within the northeast corner of the monument

upon the east face of the rampart.

Figure 1: Location of castle green within Herefordshire

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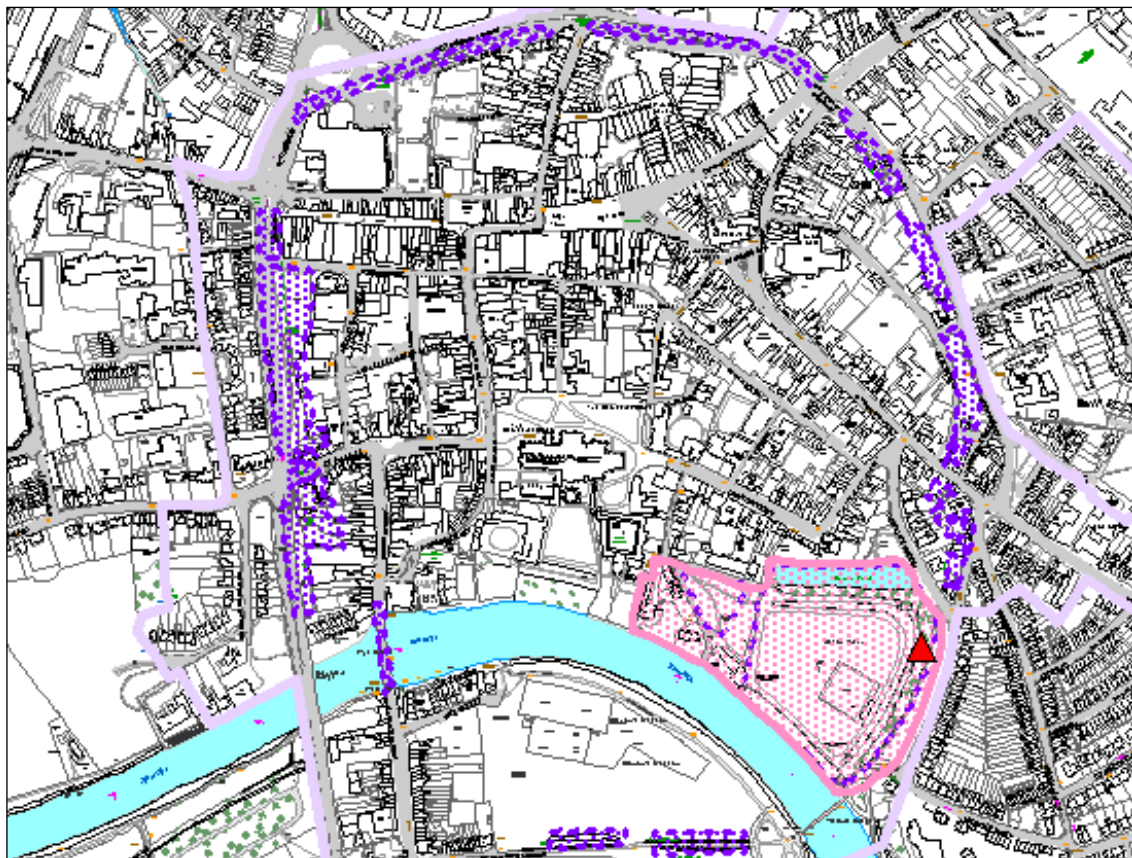


Figure 2: Location of Castle Green (highlighted) within the city of Hereford. The red triangle indicates the site of the watching brief. © OS Crown Copyright (OS Licence 100024168) & Herefordshire Archaeology

Methodology

The reconstruction of the existing steps within the northeast of the Castle Green was monitored during October and November 2007. The watching brief was centred on the removal of the original steps and the establishment of foundations for the replacement structure. The investigation consisted of a detailed examination of the exposed soils and archaeological features through a photographic, written and drawn record. Any artefacts retrieved from the investigation were recorded, labelled and stored appropriately.

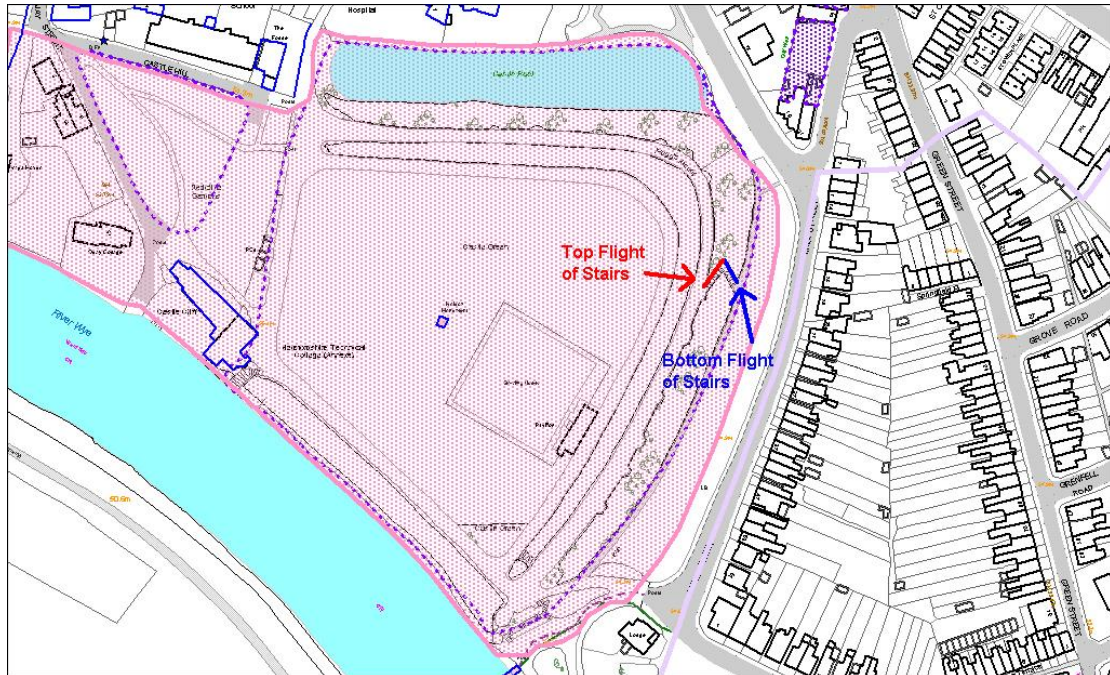


Figure 3: Location of works upon the eastern ramparts of the Castle Green (highlighted). © OS Crown Copyright (OS Licence 100024168) & Herefordshire Archaeology

Results

The extraction of the original steps and the establishment of the foundations for the new structure had only minor impact upon the underlying archaeology due to the shallowness of the excavations. The underlying archaeology was exposed within the base of the cut, excavated to support the new retaining wall. The foundations excavated for the replacement steps were too shallow to disturb any archaeology associated to the castle ramparts. A written and photographic record was made of the exposed soils linked to the steps.

Top Flight

The underlying archaeology was best observed within the section of the cut made for the retaining wall along the upslope flight of stairs that links the top of the ramparts with the landing. This east-facing section revealed the most information regarding the rampart's composition and the method in which the original Hogg's Mount steps were constructed.

The topsoil (001) consists of a dark grey/black leaf mould of loose compaction with inclusions of root (2mm), this overlay's both 005 and 002. The deposit 005 represents a layer of material attributed to the construction of the rampart trackway. The grey deposit measures 5-10cm thick and has inclusions of gravel, concrete and tarmac. The layer 002 consists of a grey-brown organic soil with occasional pebble; it has a loose compaction with some root inclusions (5mm). Its measures 30-50cm thick and most likely represents a build up of organic materials from tree coverage.



Plate 1: foundation cut for the retaining wall looking southwest toward the summit of the Castle Green ramparts. © Herefordshire Archaeology

The deposit 003 has been interpreted as the material associated to the original Hogg's Mount step construction and was employed as packing material into the original cut made for the retaining wall. The deposit consists of red-brown pebble gravel of moderate compaction; its thickness varies from 10-40cm. Underlying this deposit is a layer of red-brown compacted gravel (004) with pebble inclusions. Due to the

undisturbed nature of the soil and relative compaction with inclusions of bone, the surface 004 is likely to represent bank material associated with the bailey defences. Beneath this layer is a sand deposit (006), suggesting that the rampart was constructed through layers of local gravel and sand.



Plate 2: Section indicating the exposed bank material 004 & 006. The sandy deposit 006 is visible within the base of the trench within the left of this photograph. © Herefordshire Archaeology

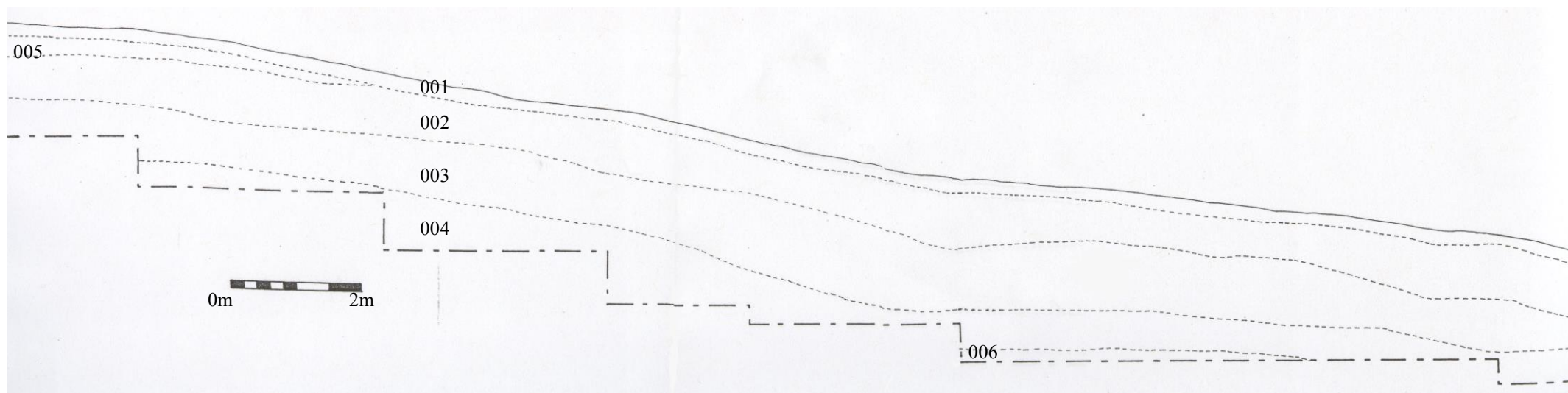


Figure 4: Plan of the exposed east-facing section excavated along the top flight of steps. © Herefordshire Archaeology

Bottom Flight

The foundation cut for the retaining wall on the lower flight of steps was less productive in terms of archaeology. The top layer was a continuation of leaf mould (001) that measured 5cm thick. This overlay the organic, grey-brown 002 that gradually formed into a layer 80cm thick toward the bottom of the rampart suggesting it to represent a wash-material. The deposit 003 that relates to the original Hogg's Mount step construction gradually disappears within the exposed section, as does the deposit of possible bank material (004) that falls away into the base of the revetment wall cut upon the landing.



Plates 3(left) & 4(above): plate 3 is of the foundation cut for the retaining wall that lines the stairs from the landing, down toward Mill Street. The section (plate 4) indicates where the bank material (004) disappears on the landing. © Herefordshire Archaeology

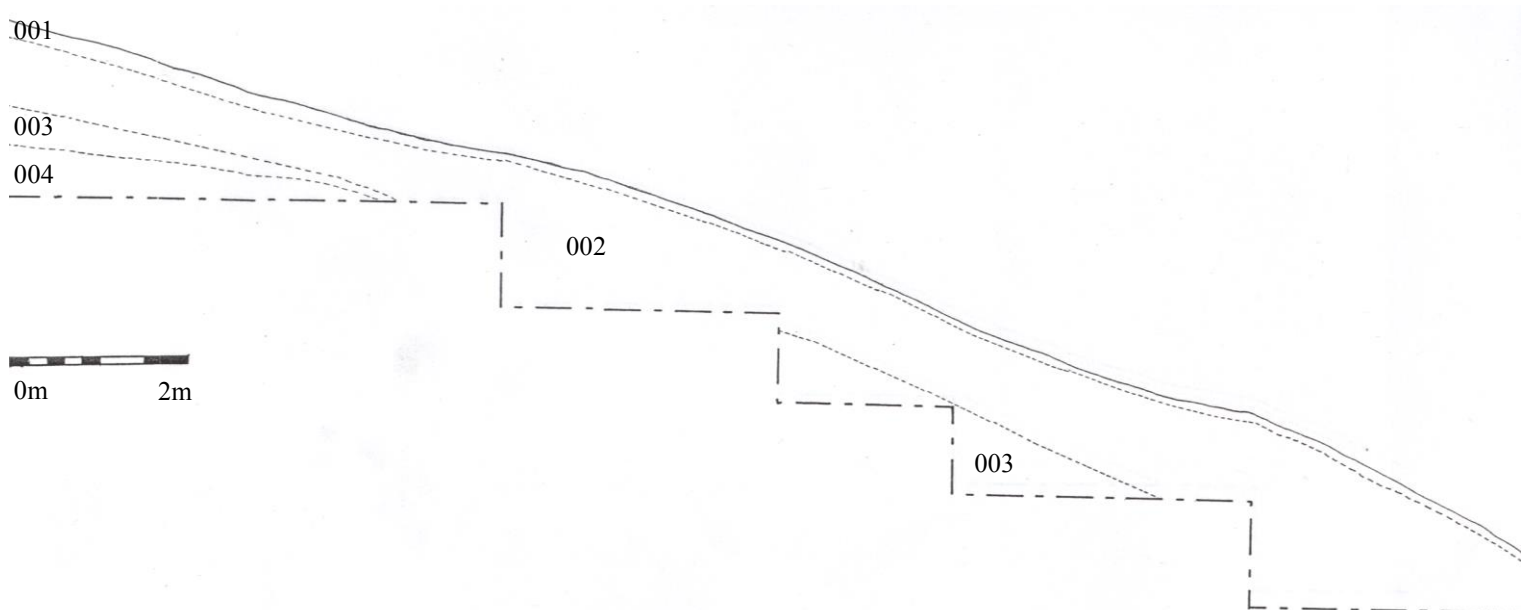


Figure 5: Plan of the exposed south-facing section excavated along the bottom flight of steps. © Herefordshire Archaeology

Discussion

The intrusion by the construction works on the monument was minimal; as a result the archaeological resource uncovered was limited. It was within the base of the foundation cut for the retaining wall that the archaeology relating to the defensive rampart was exposed to a depth of c.40cm. The material employed in the construction of the rampart was of gravel and sand extracted from the defensive ditch that supported the rampart.

The small finds excavated from the site consisted of animal bones most likely sheep and dog. No other artefacts were retrieved to provide an interim date for the archaeology uncovered, though it is unlikely that the material pre-dates the 17th century. During the English Civil War the decaying defences of Hereford, completed initially during the early 14th century were repaired. It is understood that at this point in time a stonewall had been built into the earlier rampart, however the excavation failed to uncover the structure, most likely due to the shallowness of the operations.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the help and co-operation of Hereford Building Property services, Hereford Parks and Gardens and Amey Wye Valley services for assistance with access for this survey.

Dr. Keith Ray, County Archaeologist, for his editorial input into this report.

Tim Hoverd, Projects Archaeologist, for his editorial input into this report.

Illustrations

Figure 1: Location of castle green within Herefordshire. © OS Crown Copyright (OS Licence 100024168) & Herefordshire Archaeology

Figure 2: Location of Castle Green within the city of Hereford. © OS Crown Copyright (OS Licence 100024168) & Herefordshire Archaeology

Figure 3: Location of works upon the eastern ramparts of the Castle Green (highlighted). © OS Crown Copyright (OS Licence 100024168) & Herefordshire Archaeology

Figure 4: Plan of the exposed east-facing section excavated along the top flight of steps. © Herefordshire Archaeology

Figure 5: Plan of the exposed south-facing section excavated along the bottom flight of steps. © Herefordshire Archaeology

Plate 1: Exposed foundation trench for revetment wall. © Herefordshire Archaeology

Plate 2: Exposed foundation trench for revetment wall. © Herefordshire Archaeology

Plate 3: Exposed foundation trench for revetment wall. © Herefordshire Archaeology

Plate 4: Exposed foundation trench for revetment wall. © Herefordshire Archaeology

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Appendix

CONTEXT CATALOGUE			
SITE CODE: HOGG'S MOUNT, CASTLE GREEN (HMC07)			
TRENCH NO.	CONTEXT NO.	TYPE.	DESCRIPTION.
T1	001	LAYER	Topsoil/Leaf mould, dark grey/black, fine grain sandy loam, clear horizon, abundant root/grass, loose compaction. Covers 002 and 005. Depth/height of 5-10cm.
T1	002	LAYER	Hill wash , grey brown, fine grain gravel, loose compaction with root inclusions (5mm). Clear both above and below the horizon. Covered by 001 and 005, covers 003. Depth/height of 30-50cm.
T1	003	DEPOSIT	Deposit of red/brown gravel, likely associated to the original step construction. Deposit is compact with root inclusions (8mm). Clear horizon. Covered by 002, covers 004. Depth/height of 10-40cm
T1	004	DEPOSIT	Deposit of red/orange gravel, may represent bank material due to inclusions of animal bone. The deposit is very compact with root and occasional chalk inclusions. It measures 10-30cm thick. Covered by 003, covers 006.
T1	005	DEPOSIT	Grey gravel deposit with inclusion of concrete, tarmac and root. Deposit is excess waste material from the rampart track constructed at the summit. It measures 5-10cm thick and runs c.3m within the section. Covers 002, covered by 001.
T1	006	DEPOSIT	Red/brown sand deposit with moderate compaction. The material may represent some of the make-up of the rampart. The deposit was within the very base of the foundation cut, total depth unknown. It measures 10cm thick. Covered by 004.

FINDS CATALOGUE			
SITE CODE: HOGG'S MOUNT, CASTLE GREEN (HMC07)			
TRENCH NO.	CONTEXT NO.	TYPE.	FINDS
T1	004	DEPOSIT	7 fragments of bone (animal) and one iron object (unknown). All the finds were retrieved within an area of 2 metres, within the section above the stair landing.