

Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit

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**Kingsland, Herefordshire  
An Archaeological Evaluation 1992**

by  
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# Kingsland, Herefordshire

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### 1.0: INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The evaluation

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation of an area of land at Kingsland, Herefordshire (centred on NGR SO 44306130) and its archaeological implications (Figs. 1A and 1B). Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU) was commissioned by the Worcestershire Housing Association Ltd. in September 1992 to undertake the evaluation in advance of the proposed construction of sheltered housing.

The evaluation site covers an area of 0.412 ha. and occupies the eastern half of a field, currently under pasture, belonging to Mr & Mrs Schenk (Fig. 1B). The area is registered on the County Sites and Monuments Record (reference HWCM 15461) as a site of archaeological interest. The evidence is circumstantial. The site lies to the west of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Kingsland Castle (County Monument No. Here. and Worc. 103; HWCM 340). The earthworks of this motte-and-bailey castle (Fig. 1B) are known to extend to the west of the modern boundary, although how far is not known. To the southeast of the site, evidence of presumed medieval stone buildings has been noted in the grounds of the Rectory (HWCM 9363, Fig. 1B). The site occupies a relatively high point of ground with regard to areas to the south, which are prone to waterlogging and would have been so also in the past. There are no visible remains of earthworks or previous structures on the site.

The aims of the evaluation were to assess the survival, quality, condition and significance of any archaeological features found and to make, if appropriate, recommendations for further archaeological input.

#### 1.2: Method

Four trenches (A,B,C and D; Fig. 1C) were opened by JCB excavator, removing the overlying topsoil and subsoil to a depth of 1.00m and exposing the natural clay surface beneath. These trenches, 10m long and 1.5m wide, were positioned to sample those areas where the proposed buildings and roads, during their construction, would be most likely to damage or remove any extant archaeological remains. Within trenches A and D, sondages were dug to a depth of 1.5m to assess the lower natural deposits. All trenches were cleaned by hand, in section and plan, and recorded. All presumed archaeological features were sample excavated.

Recording was by means of pro-forma recording sheets, supplemented by plans, sections and photographs, comprising the archive. Subject to the consent of the landowner this will be deposited with Hereford and Worcester County Council.

### 2.0 THE SITE AND ITS SETTING

The site is located 200m south of the centre of modern Kingsland (Fig. 1B). The soils are of the Bromyard Association, well-drained, reddish fine silty soils over Devonian, reddish silty shale, siltstone and sandstone (Soils of England and Wales, 1:250,000, sheet 3, Midland and Western England).

The first major historical reference to Kingsland is in the Domesday Survey of Herefordshire of 1086 AD. It is referred to as the "Lene Hundred [Kingsleane]", being an area of land well-drained by surrounding rivers, in this instance the Lugg and Arrow, and part of a royal estate. The estate included 16 ploughs and 2 mills, with its value being twice that of the estate

in the reign of Edward (1042-1065 AD) (Victoria County History 1908, 313). This would have been an important medieval estate on the Marches, and accounts for the presence of a motte-and-bailey castle. Little is known of the working life of the castle, the first surviving historical reference being a brief mention by the antiquarian Leland in 1529 AD (HWCM 340).

An archaeological survey of the castle (Sterling-Brown 1988, 44) noted that 12th-14th-century pottery could be seen on the motte, and possible outlying buildings in the nearby Rectory grounds.

The field in which the site is located was known as the Harbour Field in the 19th century, taking its name from Harbour House set at the field's western limit (Field no. 713, Kingsland 1841 Tithing Map, Woolhope Nat. Field Club). This two-storeyed, 17th-century timbered structure has been subsequently demolished (HWCM 15461).

### **3.0 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS**

#### **3.1 Trench A**

Natural silt, clays and shingle were exposed over the entire length of the trench. A series of four sub-linear areas of light grey silty clay, irregularly spaced and running across the trench, seemed to overlie, or were cut into, the natural deposits. These were partially excavated, found to have a shallow U-shape in section (max. depth 0.30m), and are assumed to represent periglacial activity. A number of circular areas (max. dia. 0.45m) of loose subsoil were found to contain such grey clay. These were found to be bowl-shaped in profile, with only one (F17) appearing to have acted as a post setting (max. depth 0.23m). A single, very small piece of abraded pottery/fired clay was recovered in the trench from the interface of the subsoil with the natural clays.

#### **3.2 Trench B**

Only two features were found to cut into the natural clays. One was found to represent a rodent burrow. The other was a sub-oval area in plan (max. dia. 1.00m) which, on excavation, was revealed to be bowl-shaped with a post setting in its centre (F3) (max. depth 0.25m). No archaeological material was recovered.

#### **3.3 Trench C**

A series of ten small circular areas of loose subsoil (max. dia 0.05m) were found to run along the length of the trench in an irregularly spaced, north-south-orientated line. They were found to be of a uniform depth of 0.1m with smooth vertical sides. They contained no archaeological material. They are presumed to be a series of post-medieval stakeholes.

#### **3.4 Trench D**

Only natural clays and shingle were exposed in this trench. The natural subsoil deepened towards the road to the south. No archaeological features were discernible.

### **4.0: DISCUSSION**

Despite the proximity of important medieval monuments such as Kingsland Castle, and the evidence of medieval stone remains within the Rectory, this evaluation indicates that no medieval remains or archaeological remains of other periods survive on the site.

The features excavated are either the result of periglacial striping through the natural clays (Trench A), undatable stake and postholes (Trench A, B and C) or tree/animal action.

### **5.0: IMPLICATIONS**

The results of the evaluation indicate that there is no archaeological constraint upon the proposed development.

### **6.0: ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## 7.0: REFERENCES

- Sterling-Brown, J. 1988 'Preliminary results of a survey of Castles in Herefordshire' in *Herefordshire Archaeological News*, 50, 41-46.
- Victoria County History 1908 A History of Herefordshire, Volume 1.
- Woolhope Naturalist's Field Club: Archacol. Research Section nd. The Herefordshire Fieldname Survey - From the Tithe map.

# KINGSLAND HEREFORDSHIRE

## Evaluation 1992

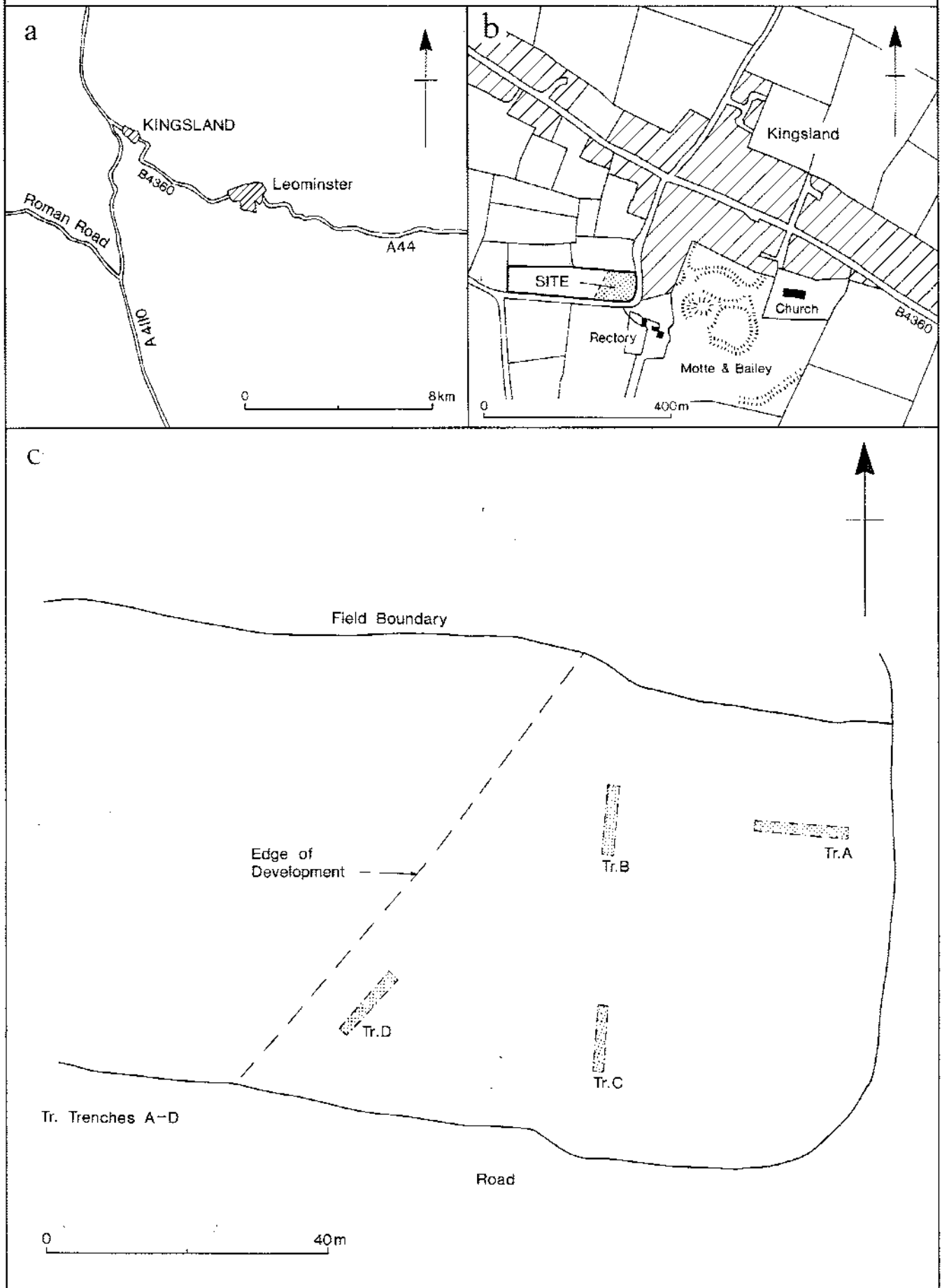


Fig. 1