



A.P.A.C. Ltd.

Archaeological Perspectives Analysis Consultancy

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

WATCHING BRIEF

WB/GD/11

Huntsham Court Farm, Entrance Barn



Natural England

Planning Application No: 08/2734/FUL

Dr. N. Phillips 2011
A.P.A.C. Ltd



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Cover Photo DSC00701. Entrance Barn, Huntsham Court.

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1 Non Technical Summary

On 20th April 2010, Dr N Phillips of A.P.A.C. Ltd was contacted by G Loader, acting for Mr Vaughn of Huntsham Crt Farm, in relation to proposed work to be undertaken at The Entrance Barn at Huntsham Crt Farm. The proposed works were to remove an existing flagstone floor from within the barn; currently an entrance way to the farmyard.

As the work involved excavation and there was a possibility that such work would impact upon archaeological resource expected to have been present on the site, the client was advised by Natural England, of the need to appoint an archaeologist to undertake a watching brief during excavation work.

Dr N Phillips from A.P.A.C. Ltd, accepted the contract and undertook the watching brief over a one day period in May 2010.

Archaeological resources were found relating to earlier floor surfaces.

2 Introduction

2.1 Location and scope of work

Huntsham Court Farm, HR6 6JN, NGR: SO 563171 can be found by taking the B4229 off the A40 at Symonds Yat east towards Goodrich, and turning right at Huntsham Bridge along the B4432, Fig 01. Huntsham Court Farm is on the left of the road behind a raised walled embankment. The site, of the entrance barn, is located to the rear of the property, forming the eastern entrance to the complex.

Huntsham Entrance Barn is associated with the Grade II* listing of Huntsham Court and Gate Piers. 9153854)

The barn is mainly constructed of dressed stone with some brick embellishments, Plate 01. The floor plan is 'T' shaped having an additional porch/cart shelter on the western side, fig 02, Plate 01. The external dimensions of the barn are approximately 21.5m x 7.4m for the main barn, (Hernon a 2075-EB08). The porch measures 5.3m x 3.1m. The area of excavation; the internal passage way through the barn, Plate 02, measures 4.2m x 9.5m giving an area of 40m².

The request for a watching brief was given verbally to the client by Natural England. No evidence of a written request has been supplied; however, the Hereford County Archaeologist has been contacted and apprised of the situation. The work has been undertaken within the codes and guidelines of the Institute of Archaeologists which will override any irregularities arising from the project's unusual instigation.

2.2 Geology and topography

The site lies on peninsula of land formed by a loop in the River Wye. The resulting flood plain is covered in superficial deposits of clay, silt and sand.

2.3 Archaeological and historical background

An excellent account of the archaeological and historical background to the site has been produced for this project by Hernon and Pinhorn 2009 *b* & Hernon *c*, and this should be sought out for more detail.

The general area of the site has bourn the effects of human intervention since Palaeolithic times and the plethora of resources available has ensured that human interaction has continued to present day.

The specific site of Hunsham Court Farm has visible dating and documentation to record it existence since the 17th century and there is reason to believe from a date stone high on the north gable that the Entrance Barn itself has a build date of 1706, (R. Hernon, 2011 *pers com*).



3 Aims and Objectives

3.1 Watching Brief & Recording Work

The aim of the watching brief and recording work was to preserve by record, within the resources available, any archaeological deposits uncovered during groundwork.

The watching brief sought to ensure that: in the event of archaeological resources of significance, being discovered and requiring treatment beyond the remit of the watching brief; then steps would be implemented to ensure that their treatment would be undertaken within the standards recommended by the IFA.

3.2 Recording Methodology

Fieldwork

Recording on pro forma record sheets was undertaken listing photographs, contexts and finds.

Photographs were taken using a digital camera set to 8 mp and stored as RAW data. Direction and scale was included where appropriate.

A simple survey of the site was made during the latter stages of the clearance work; in order to correctly locate the existing features.

Processing

The survey record was undertaken using a Leica A 6 Disto. Data collected was recorded in field notes and imported into Auto Cad for initial processing. The processed data was then imported into Adobe Illustrator along with plans supplied by Heron Associates. Figs 02 & 03 were generated during this process.

Contexts were listed the outcome being digitised in form Appendix 1. Context data was then processed to produce a stratification sequence; presented as a Harris Matrix.

All photographs were listed using digitised form Appendix 2 and those used within the text were included in the plates section.

Selected scaled photographs were processed in Adobe Photoshop to correct perspective distortion and allow their use for scaled drawings.

An annotated file of all photographs taken was also produced and these form part of the archive.

Finds were washed and weighed before being analysed and re-bagged. Details of the finds were added to the digitised form appendix 3

3.3 Watching Brief Methodology

Fieldwork

The watching brief consisted of an archaeological fieldworker being present during groundwork at the site.

All excavation was undertaken with a mechanical digger by the employees of the site owner.



A small section was explored using trowelling methods and the point of interest was brushed prior to photographic recording.

3.4 **Watching Brief Results**

Soils and ground conditions

Conditions for the watching brief were excellent and so did not adversely affect the work. Unfortunately, working in the open passage of a dark building with bright sunlight streaming in did have an effect on the clarity of the photographic recording.

The general stratigraphy over the site was one of redistributed soils arising from different phases of flooring.

Beneath the flooring episodes was a layer of river terrace deposit.

Description

Details of context numbers [###] can be found in Appendix 1.

The flagstones [100] had been removed from the passageway prior to the beginning of the watching brief. The exposed surface at the start of the excavation was therefore [101], a mixture of mortar and soil; the bedding for the former floor [100]. This can be seen to the left of Plate 03 which shows the first part of the soil removal. The main area of Plate 03 shows the underlying deposit [102] but to the left of the cut is the north edge of [103]. One of its characteristic chunks of lime can be seen just above the left shaft of sunlight.

The [101] [103] interface can be seen again in Plate 04 taken just after completion of the first layer of excavation.

Towards the north edge of the passageway and close to the corner of the internal wall, figs 02 & 03, Plate 05, were the remains of a floor, [104]; consisting of 3 squared, red sandstone blocks with 3 more smaller ones to the side, Plate 06. The stones were not mortared together but the intervening spaces were extremely compacted with a fill indistinguishable from [110] upon which [104] was situated.

Further towards the south, at less than a metre distance but deeper than the bottom of [104] was an area of compacted, green sandstone [105], figs 02 & 03, Plate 07. In Plate 07, the area of [104] is just outside the top left corner. The top left corner of the ranging frame rests on the surface [110] under [104]. Plate 08 shows the depth of [105] beneath [104] as approximately 0.2m. As the photograph is orientated west, the stratigraphy shows [103] not [110].

The east, west and north range of [105] continued beyond the extent of the excavated area and below the limit of the work being undertaken. The southern end however had a definite edge which did not mirror the alignment of the present barn, fig 03. Furthermore a large angular post hole, [106]: 0.14m x 0.10m < 0.38m depth, opened up to the south edge of [105] during digging. The posthole had a noticeable flat edge against the south edge of [105], Plate 07.

All of the above sequence was contained within the area of the porch on the west side of the building. To the east of the porch area, the stratigraphy was more simplified being [101] overlying [109]. The boundary line was difficult to distinguish exactly but appeared to run along the line of the inside wall, across the passageway. It also appeared that [109] was cut by the later west sequences.



Finds

Finds were limited to a few shards of glass bottle, one piece of china and a few animal bones which would be expected in a farmyard. Their dates were roughly 19th/20th century. If anything in such a situation the lack of finds is more unusual.

4 Discussion and Interpretation

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

Removal of the flag floor and its and presumably its mortar bedding from above the site was undertaken prior to the start of the watching brief. However, judging by the later work it is not likely that any significant archaeological resources were disturbed by this action.

The confined nature of the site caused problems but the digger driver was quite adept at his task and the spoil was never a problem.

4.2 Overall interpretation

There is a difference in sequence within the main area of the barn and that of the area of the porch. This is shown by the dividing line which falls roughly along the inside of the barn wall fig 03. It is possible that the dividing line was a cut made for the original barn foundation but subsequent development has blurred the edge of the sequence.

Within the porch area are two phases of earlier surfaces: [104] & [105].

The nature of the alignment to each other of the stones in [104] would tend to suggest that this had once been a floor, Plate 06. The fact that the stones stood in isolation; the rest of the surrounding area having been reduced in depth, show that these few stones were all that remained of this previous surface.

The compacted floor of [105] however cannot be concluded so succinctly. [105] would appear to have an edge that at some time had an association with a post hole Plate 07. Whether the post hole was a single event or part of a defining structure cannot be understood. It is likely however that the surface [105] had no direct association with the present barn due to the misalignment of its edge with any standing walls.

As this structure was below the depth needed for the proposed work the structure remains *in situ* for future investigation.

It is possible that the present barn stands on a pre existing compacted surface containing wooden structures. However, from the limit of the evidence uncovered it is not likely that much of this previous structure remains, neither is it possible to make anything more than extremely tentative interpretations.

5 Acknowledgements

Thanks to the digger driver for his expertise and patience and Gill for her help with the admin.



6 Bibliography and references

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© Crown Copyright 2000.
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- Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials. 2001 *revised* October 2008.



ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

Site Name: Entrance Barn, Huntsham Court.

Site Code: WB/GD/11

PRN: -

NPRN : 40081

SAM: -

Other Ref No: A.P.A.C. Ltd Report No. 130

NGR: SO 56244 17205

Site Type: Post Med

Project Type: Watching Brief

Project Officer: Neil Phillips

Project Dates: May 2011

Categories Present: N/A

Location of Original Archive: A.P.A.C. Ltd

Location of duplicate Archives: Hereford SMR

Number of Finds Boxes: 1

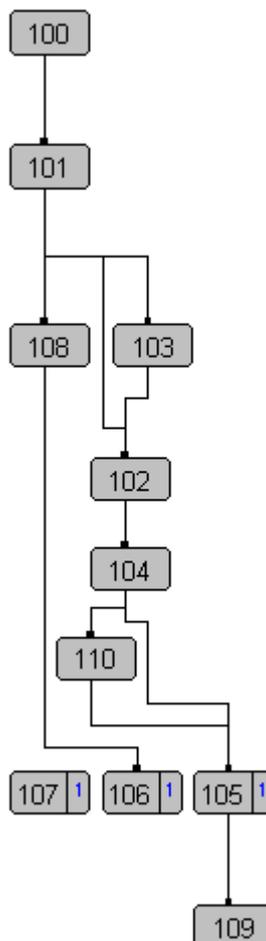
Location of Finds: Huntsham Court

Museum Reference: -----

Copyright: A.P.A.C. Ltd

Restrictions to access: None

Site: Entrance Barn Huntsham Court Farm		Grid Ref: SO5624417205	Site No: WB/GD/11	Alternate No:	
CONTEXT	AREA	FEATURE	DESCRIPTION	FINDS	PHOTOGRAPHS
100		Flagstone	Lifted prior to watching brief		
101		Lime mortar	Areas of cream/white lime mortar related to bedding for [100]	Nos:1&2	DSC00687
102		Deposit	Red sand. Western extent of entrance floor only. Cut through with [103] . Maximum depth 0.3m feathered to west		DSC00687, DSC00690, DSC0693, DSC00694, DSC00695, DSC00697, DSC00698, DSC00699,
103		Deposit	Layer of lime mortar with large chunks of consolidation	3	DSC00690, DSC00690, DSC00695, DSC00696, DSC00698, DSC00699,
104		Surface	Stone floor constructed of squared stone blocks		DSC00693, DSC00694, DSC00698,
105		Surface	Compacted floor of small green sandstone, angular stone. Partial exposure only. Edged along south side and beyond the depth of soil removed to the north west and east.	4	DSC00695, DSC00696, DSC00697,
106		Feature	Angular post hole at edge of [105]. Exposed as a void and extending over 0.45 beneath floor.		DSC00695, DSC00697,
107		Cut			
108		Fill	Sandy mix with mortar		
109		layer	Red clay loam		DSC00690, DSC00693, DSC00694, DSC00697, DSC00700
110		layer	Compacted red sandy clay		DSC00693, DSC00695, DSC00697,



Entrance Barn,
Huntsham Court Farm
WB/GD/11

Appendix 2



Digital Photographic Record

Photo No	Date	Time	Camera	RAW	Size	MB	Area	View	Description	Drawing
DSC00687	31/05/2011	8.3	DSC-F828	JPG	3264x2448	2		W	Initial scrape west edge of former threshing floor	
DSC00688	31/05/2011	8.32	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		E	General view of barn, west edge	
DSC00689	31/05/2011	8.33	DSC-F828	√	2448x3264	17		W	General view of barn, east edge	
DSC00690	31/05/2011	8.55	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		W	Completed initial scrape of former threshing floor	
DSC00691	31/05/2011	8.55	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		SW	Second scrape west edge of former threshing floor contexts [101] & [103]	
DSC00692	31/05/2011	8.56	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		E	Second scrape threshing floor contexts [101], foreground [108] in sunlight	
DSC00693	31/05/2011	10.16	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		V	Vertical shot of earlier block floor [104]	Fig 02
DSC00694	31/05/2011	10.16	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		W	Position of [104]	Fig 02
DSC00695	31/05/2011	10.17	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		V	Vertical shot [105] & [106]	Fig 02
DSC00696	31/05/2011	10.24	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		W	Section of [103] above [105]. Depth of [106] 0.38m	
DSC00697	31/05/2011	11.47	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		V	Extent of clearing for recording around area [105] [106]	Fig 02
DSC00698	31/05/2011	11.48	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		E	Position of [104] & [105], [106]	Fig 02
DSC00699	31/05/2011	13.08	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		SW	South west corner of barn entrance. Depth of soil removal 0.36m	
DSC00700	31/05/2011	13.09	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		SW	South east corner of barn entrance. Depth of soil removal 0.42m	
DSC00701	31/05/2011	13.17	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		E	General view of barn, west edge	
DSC00702	31/05/2011	13.18	DSC-F828	√	3264x2448	17		SW	External view of barn, north east side	

Entrance Barn Huntsham Court Farm		Grid Ref: SO5624417205	Site No:	Alternate No:	Site No: WB/GD/11	
Find no:	Area	Context	Description		Init	Date
1		101	1 shard D green bottle base 0.01kg. 19 th C 1 sherd white china 0.1kg 19 th /20 th C		NP	31/05/2011
2		101	4 large fragments of animal bone (Cattle) 0.38kg		NP	2/03/2011
3		103	1 sherd green glass bottle 19 th /20 th C 0.02kg		NP	2/03/2011
4		105	2 shards green glass bottle 19 th /20 th C 0.2gk		NP	2/03/2011

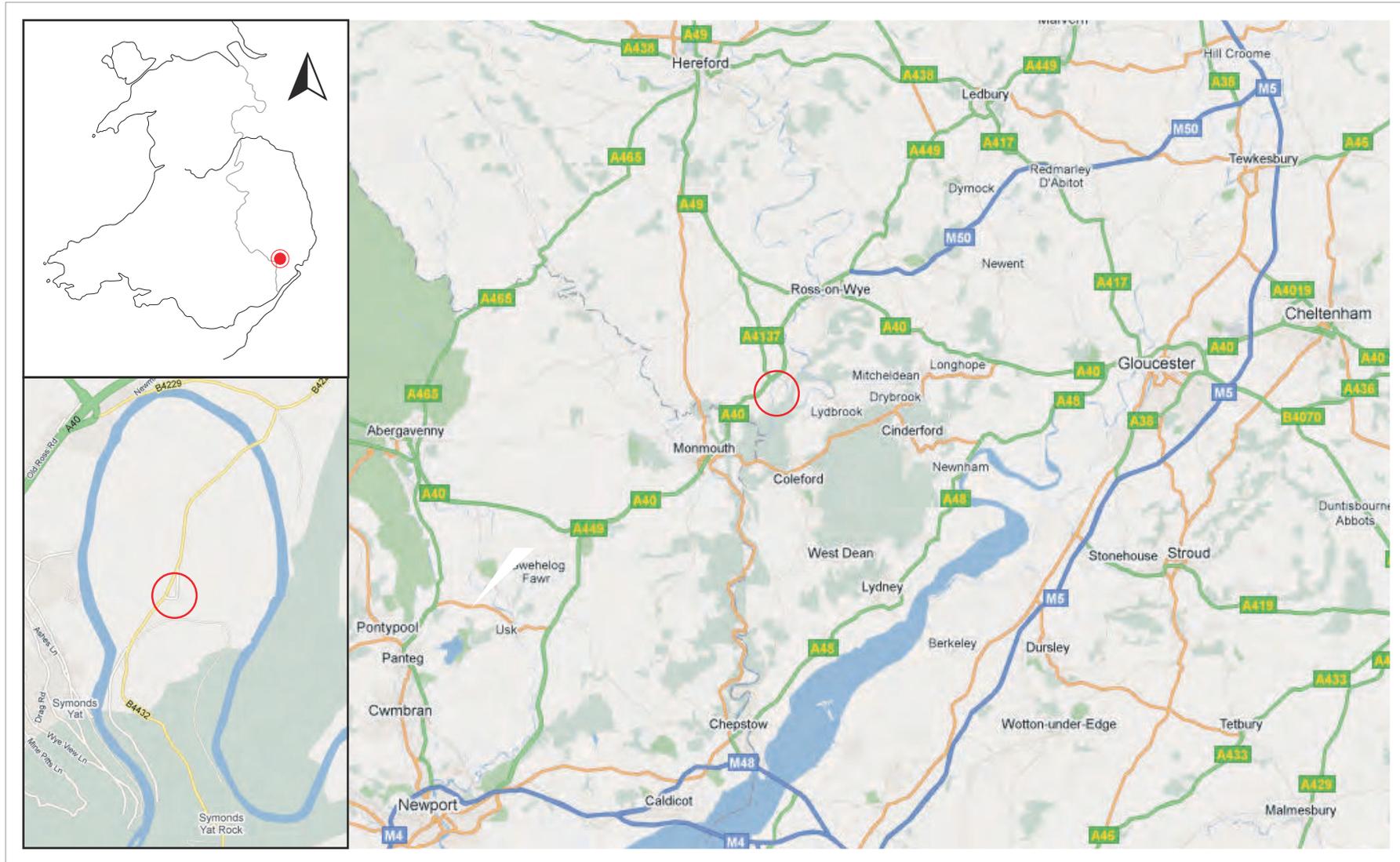
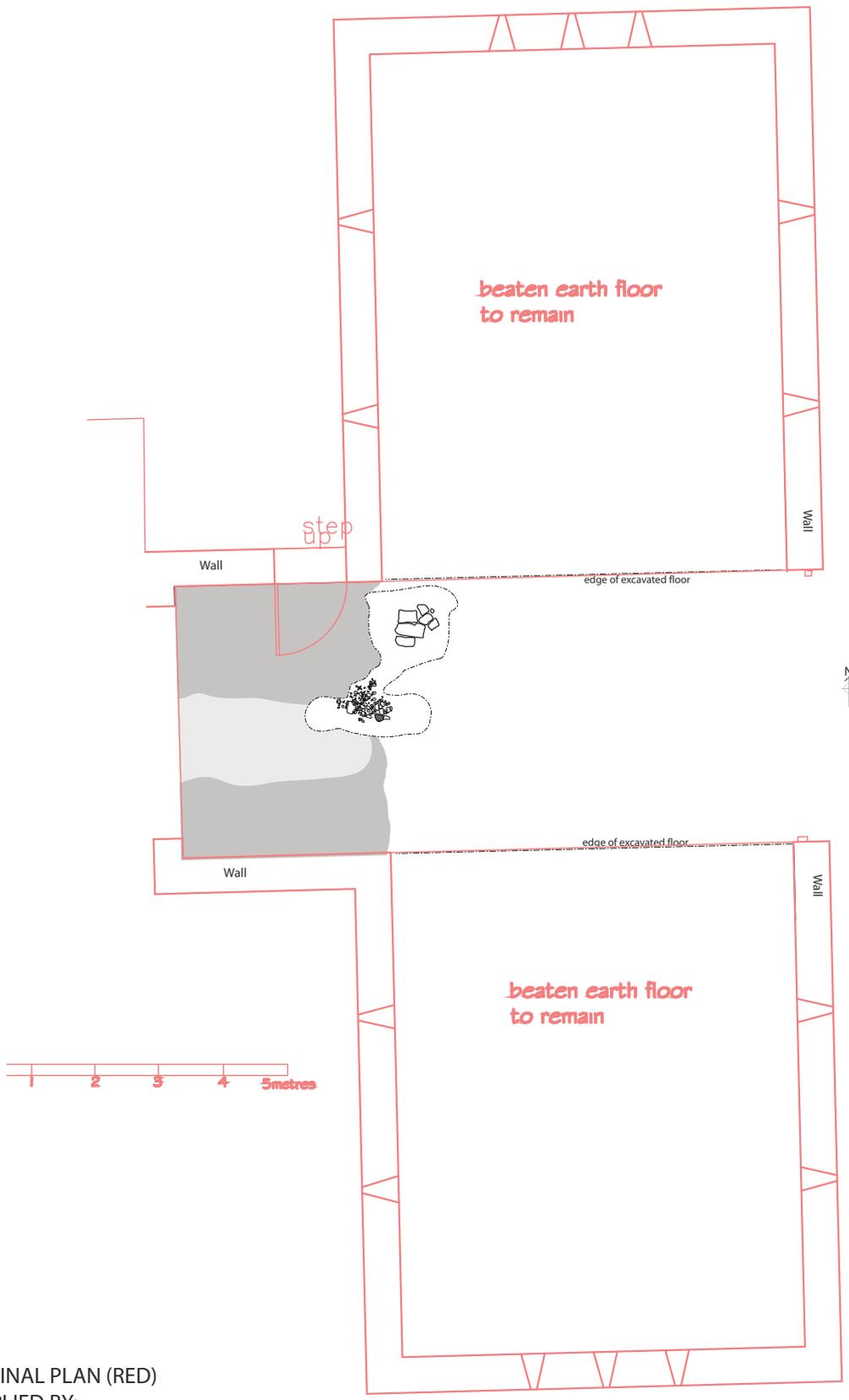


Fig 01: Location



ORIGINAL PLAN (RED)
SUPPLIED BY:
HERNON ASSOCIATES
2075-FB08 jULY 09

Fig 02: Site plan



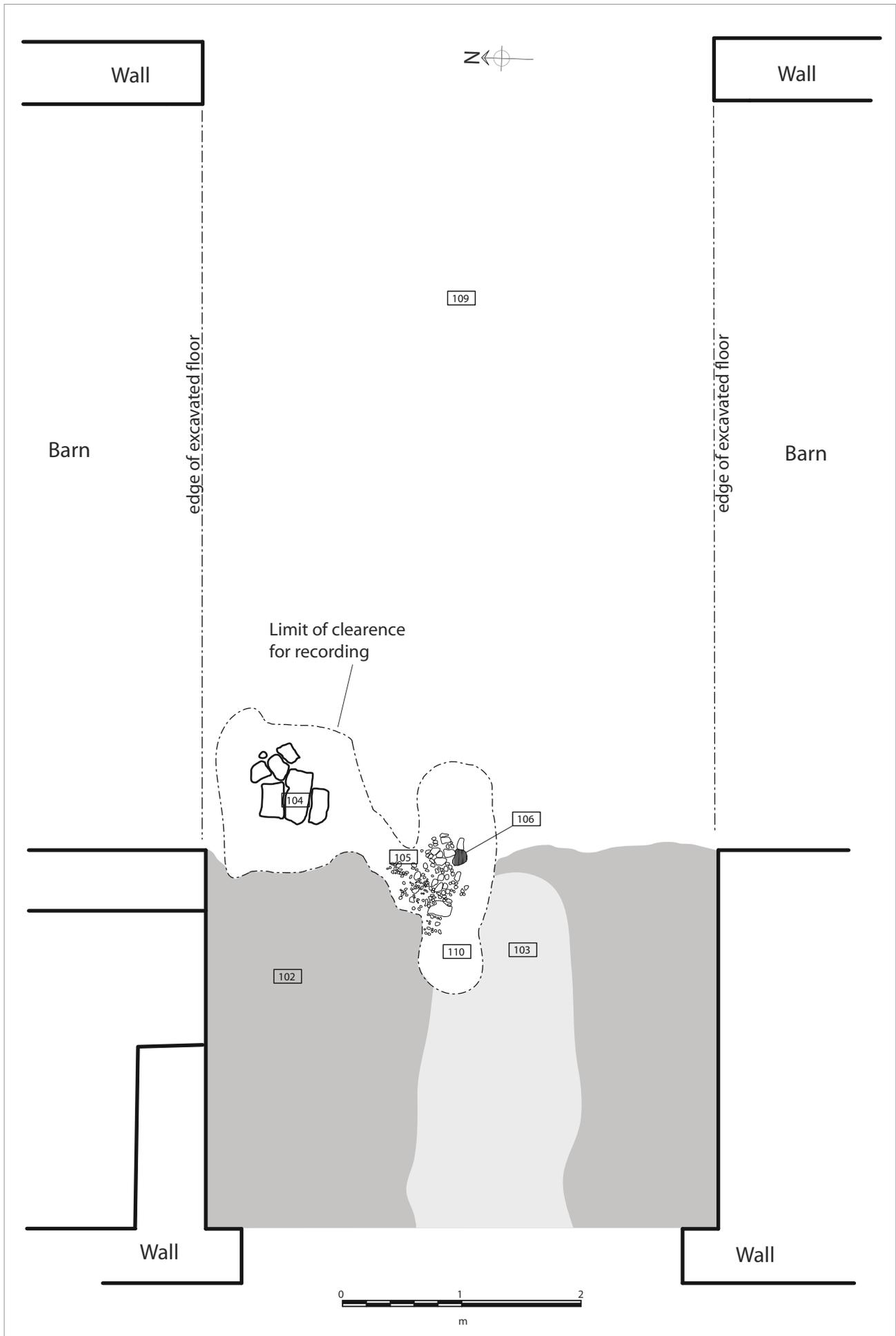


Fig 03: Plan of archaeology





Plate 01: General view of barn, west edge



Plate 02: Completed initial scrape of former threshing floor



Plate 03: Initial scrape west edge of former threshing floor



Plate 04: Second scrape west edge of former threshing floor contexts [101] & [103]



Plate 05: Position of [104]



Plate 06: Vertical shot of earlier block oor [104]



Plate 07: Extent of clearing for recording around area [105] [106]



Plate 08: Section of [103] above [105].
Depth of [106] 0.38m