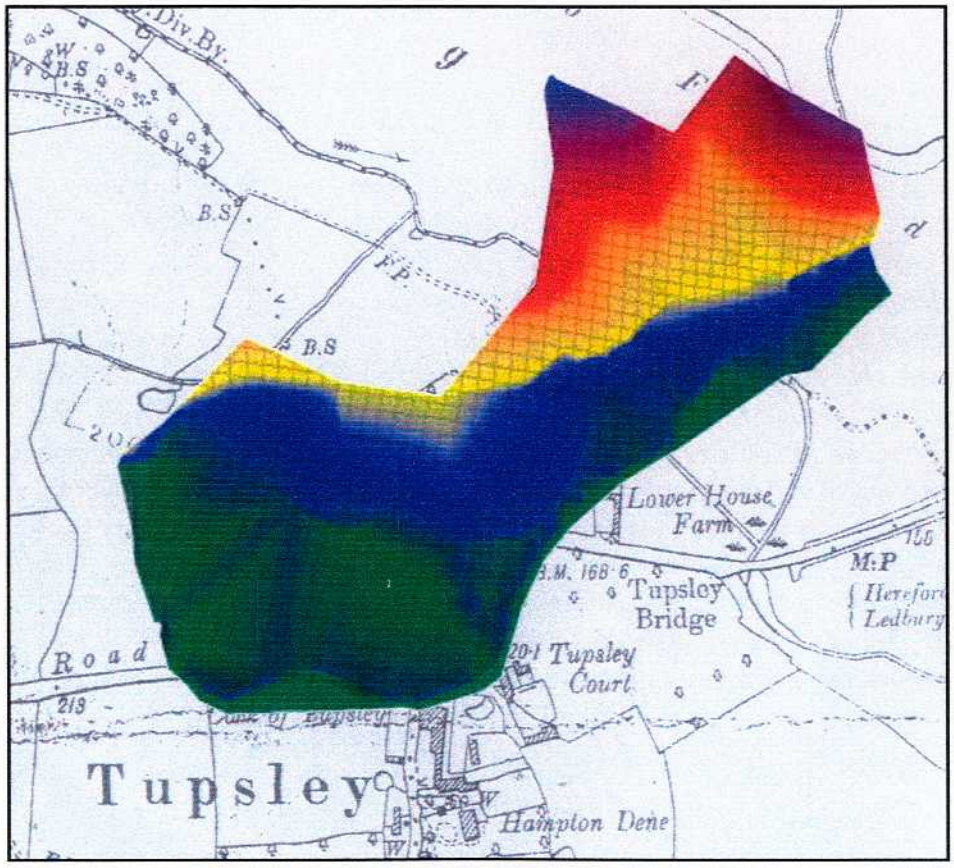
Lower House Farm
Tupsley
HEREFORD

Archaeological Evaluation
and
Earthwork Survey



November 2007

Hereford Archaeology Series 765

EXCAVATION•RESEARCH•GEOPHYSICS•ARCHITECTURAL SURVEY

This report is produced by

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Front cover: 3D model of the survey data.

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Lower House Farm,
Tupsley,
Hereford
Herefordshire

A Report on an Archaeological Evaluation
And
Rapid Earthwork Survey.

NGR SO 353600 240500

Site work
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Text and Illustrations
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A Report on an Archaeological Evaluation
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1. Summary

Archaeological Investigations Ltd was commissioned by Herefordshire Nature Trust to undertake an archaeological evaluation and rapid field survey at land to the rear of Lower House Farm, Tupsley, Hereford, prior to the construction of a series of reed beds and a pond.

An archaeological evaluation and rapid field survey was under taken in November 2007. A total of 5 trenches, with a total area of c.30m^2, were excavated within the site.

The archaeological evaluation of the site identified no evidence for industrial and or domestic activity within the confined extents of the evaluation trenches.

Although no archaeological features were identified during the excavation of the evaluation trenches, the rapid earthwork survey revealed that the study area contained evidence of activity in the form of terracing/lynchets, boundaries or run off channels, and modern flood defences.

2. Introduction

An outline planning application was submitted to Herefordshire Council on behalf of Herefordshire Nature Trust, proposing the construction of four reed beds and a pond, on land to the rear of Lower House Farm, Tupsley, Hereford.

The archaeological work took the form of a field evaluation and earthwork survey that Archaeological Investigations Ltd was commissioned to undertake. The work took place between the 5th and 6th of November 2007.

The site is located towards the east of the city of Hereford and to the west of the River Lugg and lies to the back of Lower House Farm, which is adjacent to the A438, Ledbury Road. The study area is currently open pasture, bounded to the north and east by the Lugg Rhea stream.

It is situated at *NGR 353600/2040500* and can be described as open pastureland.

The underlying geology is Downtonian Lower Old Red Sandstone of the Ledbury group.

3. Archaeological and Historical background

Work conducted to the north of the site conducted by Archaeological Investigations within the area of the Lugg Bridge Quarry in 1998 revealed that the substratum of the area indicated that the fluvioglacial gravel floor of the Devensian valley was crossed by a number of river channels as the river flow reduced, rapid gravel deposition was followed by less rapid but sustained deposition of finer silt and clay and redeposited organic matter from slow moving over-bank flood waters, possibly during the early Holocene period.

4. Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date, significance and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site whilst ensuring that the work reflects ongoing research from previous published volumes and articles about Hereford City's archaeology and history.

The information will assist the local Planning Authority in making an informed judgment on the likely impact upon the archaeological resource by the proposed development.

5. Method

The project was divided into two phases of work, a topographical survey and trenching evaluation.

The topographical survey consisted of a rapid earthwork survey of the area affected by the proposed works and the areas designated for the deposition of spoil from the excavation of the reed beds. This was conducted to identify regions that should be avoided by the machines used during the construction (Fig. 2).

The fieldwork comprised the excavation of five evaluation trenches 3.0m in length and 2.0m in width. All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket.

The total area excavated was *c.*30m^2. The trenches were located within the grassed area of the site (Fig. 2.).

A system of context records was kept and numbered independently by trench and recorded in accordance with Archaeological Investigations Ltd's site manual. Registers for context cards, photographs, drawings and samples were kept.

All excavated trenches were tied into features shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 mapping and a base line was established in each trench for the purpose of planning.

All trenches and features were tied to a temporary benchmark located at the entrance to the main field.

Trench plans were produced at 1:50 and selected sections of the trenches were drawn at 1:20. All trenches and features were photographed, using 35mm B&W negative and colour print films.

The stratgraphic sequence and depth of the trenches was determined by the required maximum depth of the proposed construction of the reed beds, or on reaching the natural water levels.

A series of monolithic soil samples were retained should further soil analysis be required, but consultation with Mr J. Cotton of Herefordshire Archaeology confirmed that no further work on the soil samples would be required.

The code of conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists was adhered to.

6. Evaluation excavation (Fig.2)

The following sections provide an overview of the evaluation results from the excavated trenches: detailed summaries of the recorded contexts to be found in Appendix 1. Details of the relative heights of the principle deposits and features are expressed as metres in relation to the present ground level around each trench and will be refered to as below present ground level (*BPGL*).

6.1. Trench 1

This trench was located in the southern part of the site. It was orientated west to east and excavated to the west of the modern berm. It measured 3.0m x 2.0m in plan and was excavated to a depth of *c.*1.70m *BPGL*.

The natural substrate, 103, comprising grey gritty gravel was identified at a depth of approximately 1.70m *BPGL*.

Overlying 103 was a mid dark grey clay layer (102) which was sealed by the red silty clay of the subsoil which in turn was beneath the reddish grey brown friable top soil (100).

Examination of the topsoil showed no signs of plough disturbance within the make up.

6.2. Trench 2

This trench was located on the eastern edge of the modern berm. It measured 3.0m x 2.0m in plan and was excavated to a depth of *c.*1.80m *BPGL*. The trench was orientated north-west south-east.

The natural substrate consisted of a more complex geological arrangement than that recorded within Trench 1.

The natural red-grey gravels (209) were overlaid by a band of grey course sand (208), containing snail shells, this in turn was capped by a thin band of buff silty clay approximately 0.10m in thickness (207), upon which lay a multiple layered band of yellow and red sands (206), that turn was also sealed by a thin (0.01m) band of buff silty clay (205).

Layer 205 was beneath a mixed banded layer of red and yellow sands (204), similar in appearance to that of 206. 205 was sealed by a mixed organic dark layer, 0.03 to 0.04m in depth (203). 202 overlaid 203 and consisted of a mixed red silty clay loam differing from the layer above (201) through the inclusion of possible root penetration at the horizon between 202 and 203.

The reddish silty clay subsoil 202 was overlaid by the topsoil 200. Examination of the topsoil showed no evidence of plough disturbance within the make up.

6.3. Trench 3

This trench was located towards the centre of the site and approximately orientated north to south. It measured 3.0m x 2.0m in plan and was excavated to a depth of *c.*2.20m *BPGL*.

The natural substrate, 305, at an excavated depth of 2.20m *BPGL* consisted of a band of grey gritty sand with traces of fragmented mussel shell. Layer 305 was sealed by 304, a brown silty clay loam containing preserved stick and wood fragments. Sealing 304 was a 0.01m thick layer of dark grey sand which in turn was capped by 302, mottled grey clay layer (0.25-0.30m) the reddish clay subsoil (301) overlay 302 and was as recorded in previous trenches sealed by the topsoil (300).

Examination of the topsoil showed no evidence of plough disturbance within the make up.

6.4. Trench 4

This trench was located towards the northern extent of the first field and was orientated approximately east to west. The evaluation trench was located in the centre of the proposed pond development. It measured 3.0m x 2.0m in plan and was excavated to a maximum depth of *c.*1.0m BPGL, reflecting the maximum designed depth of the proposed pond feature.

The natural subsoil, 401, consisted of a reddish silty clay loam with inclusions consisting of flecks of mica, 401 was sealed by the topsoil 400, examination of the topsoil showed no evidence for any disturbance through ploughing.

6.5. Trench 5

This trench was located towards the eastern corner of Field two and approximately orientated east-west. It measured 3.0m x 2.0m in plan and was excavated to a depth of *c.*1.95m the stratgraphic make up was consistent with the other evaluated trenches and comprised of a grey clay (502) overlaid by the reddish subsoil 501 and sealed by the topsoil 500.

Examination of the topsoil showed no evidence of plough disturbance within the make up.

7. Earthwork survey (Fig.2)

7.1. Method

The earthwork survey was conducted using a Leica TCR 1105 R with the data being processed through Terra-model to create a point data set; the results were then further

edited within AutoCAD 2009 to produce a zoned landscape survey. Only major features (200mm ±) within the study area (fig. 2) were recorded in line with the requirements of the archaeologist/ planning advisor for Hereford Council.

7.2 Results

7.2.1 Features A and F

Features A and F, comprises of an earthen and rubble constructed berm approximately *c*.0.40m in height and varying in width (*c*.2.0 to 3.0m).

The berm is located approximately 3.0 to 4.0m from the southern edge of the Lugg Rhea stream in field 1 and forms a modern flood defence.

With in Field 2 the berm diverts from the line of the Lugg Rhea stream at its western end and eventually disappears.

7.2.2 Feature B

Feature B, forms a raised flat-topped S shaped anomaly within the middle of Field 1, approximately 100m in length and 20m in width.

7.2.3 Feature C

Feature C, forms an L shaped raised enclosure, bounded by the modern berm on the northern edge. Within in the confines of feature C and located centrally are the possible remains of a pond or sunken anomaly.

7.2.4 Feature D

Feature D, forms a linear channel, approximately 45m in length and 0.3m in depth, aligned north/south and butting up to the berm (F).

7.2.5 Feature E

Feature E, forms a similar channel as to that of Feature D, aligned approximately north/south and 35m in length (running parallel to that of Feature D).

At the southern end the channel flattens out at the base of feature G.

7.2.6 Feature G

Feature G, comprises of a large tapering terraced lynchet, aligned approximately east west and measuring approximately 85m in length.

7.2.7 Feature H

Feature H, forms a linear channel aligned north/south measuring approximately 60m in length and connecting to the end of feature G

7.2.8 Feature I

Feature I, forms a mirrored terrace or lynchet to that of G, measuring approximately 100m in length

7.2.9 Feature J

Feature J, although not a physical earthwork, when viewed towards the Lugg Rhea stream from the upper slopes, this area gave the impression of ploughed out ridge and furrow. Although no clear physical evidence remains of this feature, it is recommend that a certain caution should be used when moving heavy machinery across it.

8. Discussion

Although no Archaeological features were identified during the excavation of the evaluation trenches, the rudimentary earthwork survey revealed that the study area contained evidence of activity in the form of terracing/lynchets, boundaries or run off channels, and modern flood defences.

Towards the southern side of Field 2 and uphill of the flat flood plains of the Lugg Rhea the possible existence of ridge and furrow was seen in the form of variance in the colours of the vegetation. The features associated with the area E, D and C may indicate that the regular flooding of this area was controlled forming a water meadow or flood-meadow.

The aim of water-meadow irrigation was not to flood the ground, but to keep it continuously damp – there is no standing water in a working water-meadow. Irrigation was used in early spring, to keep frosts off the ground to allow the grass to grow several weeks earlier, and in dry summer weather to keep the grass growing. It also allowed the ground to absorb any plant nutrients or silt carried by the river water – this both fertilised the grassland, and helped reduce eutrophication of the river water by nutrient pollution. The grass was used both for grazing by livestock, and for making hay.

This possible previous use of the land is further emphasised through the lack of evidence indicating any ploughing within the evaluation trenches.

9. Conclusion

The results of the evaluation trenches have demonstrated that no archaeological evidence of occupation exists within the make up of the observed stratigrapy, while the earthwork survey identified features and areas that indicate the study area possibly once contained a managed landscape. Former water meadows are found along many river valleys, where the sluice gates, channels and field ridges may still be visible. The drains in a derelict water-meadow are generally clogged and wet, and most of the carrier channels are dry, with the smaller ones often invisible. The complex mixture of wet and drier ground often gives derelict water-meadows, high wetland biodiversity.

The ephemeral nature of the some of the features observed within the study area may be enhanced by a further investigation of the landscape using geophysical methods, which would enhance the understanding of this area and its history.

10. Site archive

5 Context/trench record sheets
Drawings on 1 sheets of film
35mm photographic record of black and white and colour prints
Site registers of contexts, photographs, and AutoCAD earthwork survey
1 correspondence file
This document

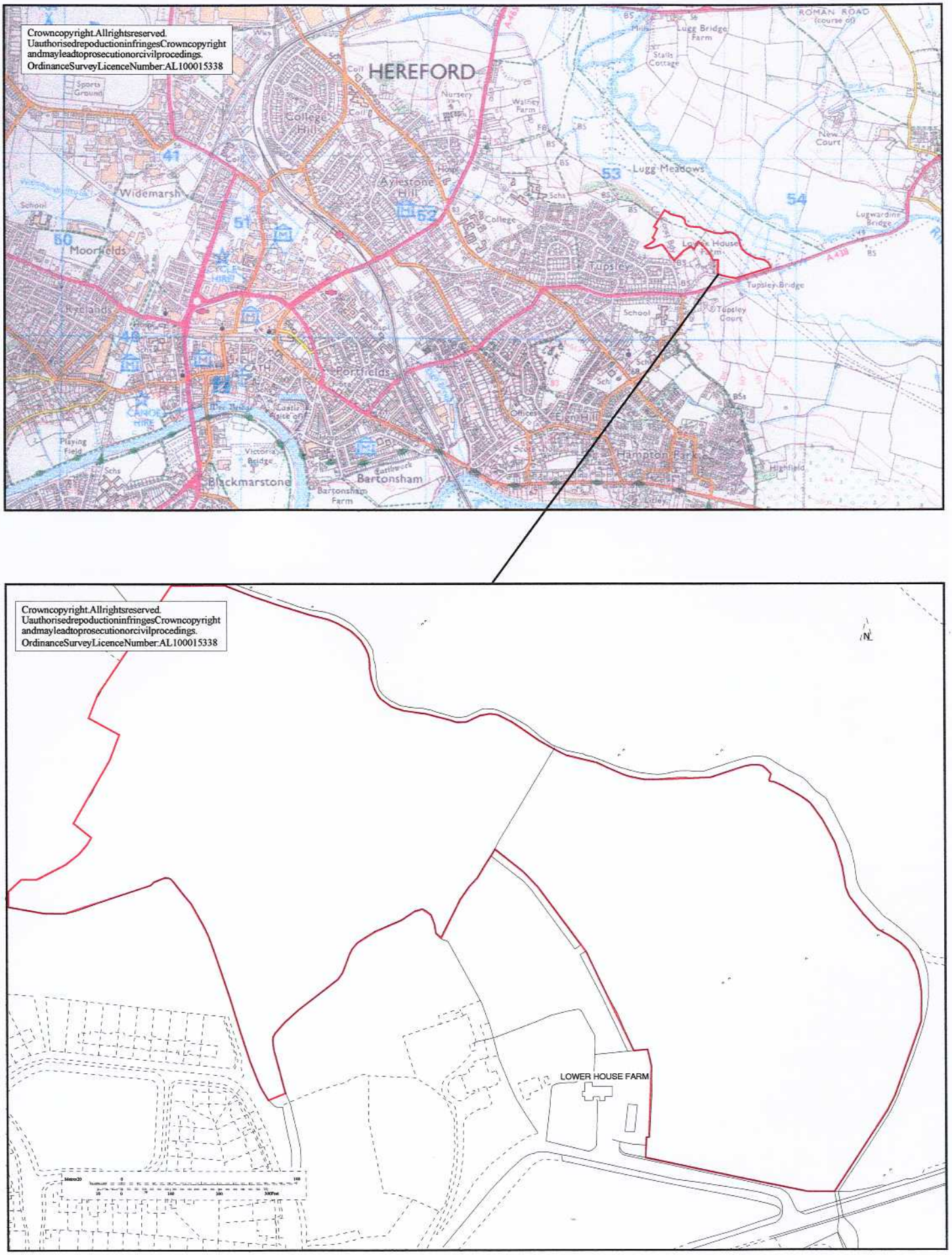
11. Bibliography

Boucher. A, Jordon. D 2001 Lugg Bridge Quarry, Hereford**:** *Archaeological Assessment. HAS 510*

Hoverd, T., 1993 Land off Gorsty Lane, Tupsley Hereford*: Archaeological Evaluation HAS* 182

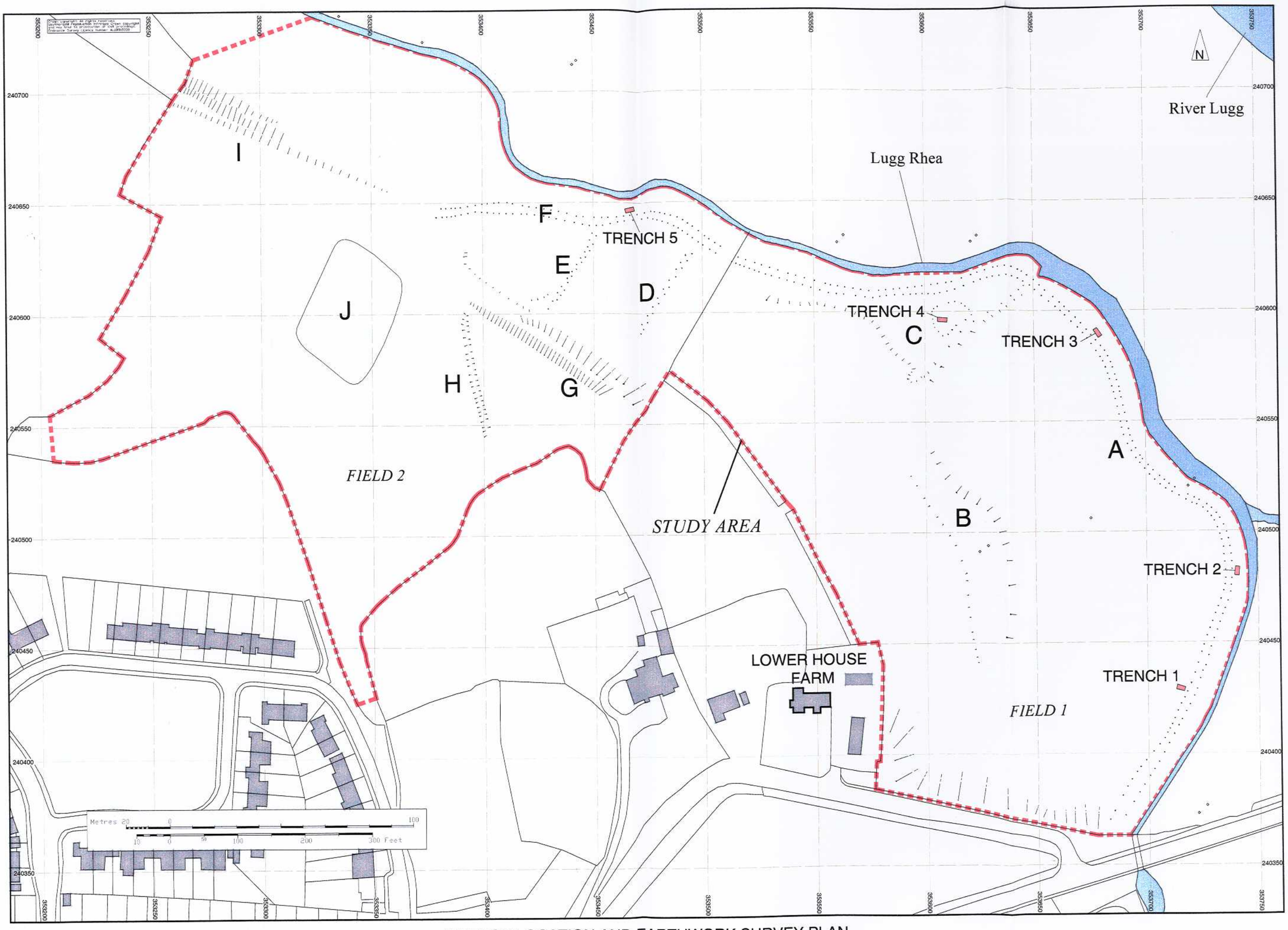
Stone. R., 1994 Lugg Meadows, Hereford: *Archaeological Evaluation, HAS 203*

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L
1	**Conext No**	**Type**	**Description**	**Length (mm)**	**Width (mm)**	**Depth (mm)**	**Film No**	**Sample No**	**Below**	**Above**	**Same as**	**EXCAVATED DEPTH (BPDGL)**
2	204	Layer	Red and Yellow sand, mixed dumping layers.	3000	2000	200	(218), 35 & 36 (235), 12 & 15		203	205		1.78m
3	205	Layer	Buff brown sticky clay loam.	3000	2000	10	(218), 35 & 36 (235), 12 & 15	1,2,3	204	206		1.78m
4	206	Layer	Red yellow sand, mixed dump .	3000	2000	100	(218), 35 & 36 (235), 12 & 15	1,2,3	205	207		1.78m
5	208	Layer	Sticky ,buff brown clay loam	3000	2000	10	(218), 35 & 36 (235), 12 & 15	1,2,3	207	209		1.78m
6	209	Layer	Grey sand, very course and gritty, small snails	3000	2000	260	(218), 35 & 36 (235), 12 & 15	1,2,3	208	210		1.78m
7	210	Layer	Red grey brown gravell Natural	3000	2000		(218), 35 & 36 (235), 12 & 15	1,2,3	209			1.78m
8	100	Layer	Topsoil	3000	2000	270	(218) 33 & 34, (235) 10 & 11			101		1.70m
9	101	Layer	Subsoil, red silty clay becoming more clayish to base	3000	2000					0		1.70m
10	300	Layer	Topsoil	3000	2000	300	(218),18 & 19 (240) 4 &5			301	100,200,400,500	2.20m
11	301	Layer	Subsoil	3000	2000	1500	(218),18 & 19 (240) 4 &5		300	302	101,201,401,501	2.20m
12	302	Layer	Grey clay and charcoal	3000	2000	250	(218),18 & 19 (240) 4 &5		301	303		2.20m
13	303	Layer	Sand- Dark/mid grey	3000	2000	10	(218),18 & 19 (240) 4 &5		302	304		2.20m
14	304	Layer	Brown to Dark mid grey clay	3000	2000	100	(218),18 & 19 (240) 4 &5		303	305		2.20m
15	305	Layer	Band of grey gritty sand, containing shells	3000	2000		(218),18 & 19 (240) 4 &5		304			2.20m
16	400	Layer	Topsoil	3000	2000	300	(235), 20,21 &22 (240) 6,7, & 8			401	100,200,300,500	1.00m
17	401	Layer	Subsoil	3000	2000	700	(235), 20,21 &22 (240) 6,7, & 8		400		101,201,301,501	1.00m
18	500	Layer	Topsoil	3000	2000	300	(235) 23,24 (240) 9 & 10			501	100,200,300,400	1.95m
19	501	Layer	Subsoil	3000	2000	1350	(235) 23,24 (240) 9 & 10		500	502	101,201,301,401	1.95m
20	200	Layer	Topsoil	3000	1900	300	(218)-35 &36, (235) 12 & 15			201	100,300,400,500	1.70m
21	201	Layer	Subsoil	3000	1900	1250	(218)- 35 & 36, (235) 12 & 15		200	202	101,301,401,501	1.70m
22	202	Layer	organic interface between subsoil and lower layers	3000	1900	150	(218) 35 & 36, (235), 12 & 15	1,2,3	201	203		1.70m
23	203	Layer	Mixed dark organic layer	3000	1900	30	(235) 12-15, (218), 35, 36		202	204		1.70m
24	502	Layer	Grey Clay, includes tree roots	3000	2000		(235) 23,24 (240) 9 & 10		501	0		1.95m
25						0			0	0		



Lower House Farm location plan.

Fig. 1



TRENCH LOCATION AND EARTHWORK SURVEY PLAN

Fig.2