

# Archaeological Observation

**Stableton House  
Kingsland  
Herefordshire**

NGR: SO 44965 61310  
SMR No. 48123

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# 1. Non Technical Summary

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*A programme of archaeological observation of groundworks regarding the proposed development of an outbuilding range and adjacent yard at Stableton House, Kingsland was carried out between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008.*

*The archaeological observation revealed evidence of a post-medieval cobbled floor surface within a compartment of the existing outbuilding range, probably of 18<sup>th</sup> century date with extensive later 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century alterations.*

*During the topsoil strip of the yard area to the N of the outbuilding range, evidence of heavily truncated brick foundations was identified, relating to a recently demolished mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century rectangular brick structure, probably used as a barn or stable.*

*This programme of archaeological observation confirms that no archaeology predating the post-medieval period was damaged or disturbed during the works.*

## 2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by Mr & Mrs P. Vaughan to undertake a programme of archaeological observation (commonly known as a watching brief) of groundworks at Stableton House Kingsland Herefordshire HR6 9QS in regard of the conversion of part of the house and adjacent outbuildings into four dwellings (Planning Application Ref. DCNW2007/3375/F).

In a letter dated 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008, Mr J. Cotton, Archaeological Adviser to Herefordshire Council advised that a programme of archaeological observation was required during the principal groundworks (HCC Ref. B073375S2).

Copies of this report will be submitted to the client, Herefordshire Council and the Herefordshire Archaeology Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

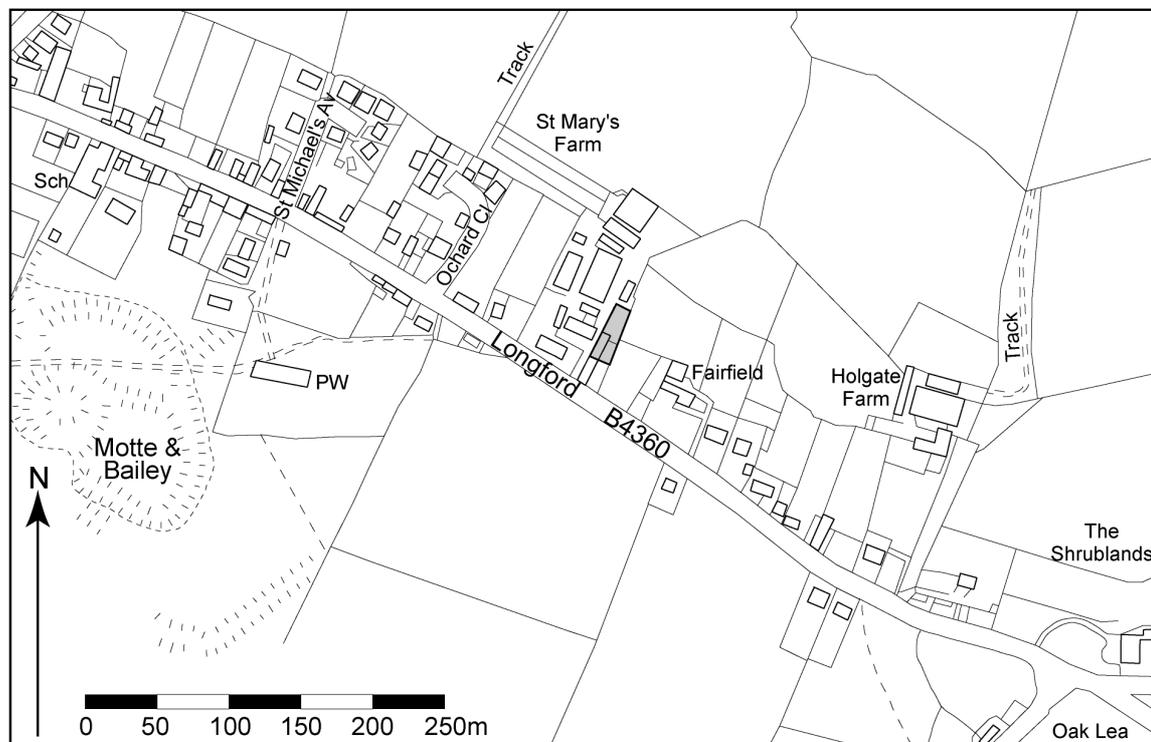


Figure 1: Site Location Map

### 2.1 Soils & Geology

The predominant soil type within the immediate vicinity of the site consists of the typical alluvial gley soils of the CONWAY series (811b), consisting of deep stoneless fine silty and clayey soils variably affected by groundwater, overlying river alluvium (SSEW, 1983).

## 3. Historical and Archaeological Background

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### 3.1 General

The site consists of an outbuilding range and adjacent yard originally belonging to St Mary's Farm, located at the E end of the village of Kingsland, a linear settlement dating back to the pre-Conquest period and documented in the Domesday Survey of 1086.

The earliest evidence for human activity in Kingsland is represented by an extensive series of cropmarks in the fields to the S of the River Lugg, which have been described as 'one of the largest cropmark complexes in the county' (Dinn, 1996; Hemingway & Dinn, 1996). These cropmarks, the nearest of which are located some 200m NW of the site, consist of sub-triangular and linear enclosure ditches, together with a number of ring ditches, which have been tentatively dated to the Bronze Age period.

A recent geoarchaeological survey carried out at neighbouring Holgate Farm, situated immediately to the E of the site, revealed evidence of several palaeochannels, which were investigated and sampled for material suitable for radiocarbon dating (Dorling, 2007, 58). One of the core samples yielded a radiocarbon date between 1320 and 1640, indicating that activity within the channel occurred as recently as the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century (Dorling, 2007, 58).



Plate 1: View looking SW of outbuilding range showing timber-framed upper storey with wagon entrances at ground floor level

Medieval occupation is attested by the parish church of St Michael and the extensive motte and bailey earthworks of Kingsland Castle, both situated approximately 150m SW of the site. The parish church was extensively rebuilt by the Mortimer family in the late 13<sup>th</sup>-early 14<sup>th</sup> century, contemporary with the establishment of a planned settlement at Kingsland. The remains of this settlement consist of rows of houses aligned NW-SE along the road called Longford, with the church as its focus. The Kingsland tithe map

shows long narrow strips of land to the rear of many of these houses, which may be indicative of medieval burgage plots.

### 3.2 Site Specific Information

The origins of St Mary's Farm date back at least to the 16<sup>th</sup> century and it is described as 'Mary House' on the Bateman estate map of Kingsland dated 1709. The earliest fabric of the farmhouse (listed as Grade II), situated to the W of the outbuilding range, dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> century; the original timber-framed house was refaced in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and further extended and remodelled in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century (RCHME, 1934, 84).

The earliest parts of the existing complex of farm buildings date from the 18<sup>th</sup> century and are first shown on the Kingsland tithe map of 1841; however, substantial additions were made during the 19<sup>th</sup>-early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The existing outbuilding range now known as Stableton House appears originally to have been built as a stable block/cartshed and evidently underwent considerable rebuilding in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.



View looking N showing box framing of 18<sup>th</sup> century date, probably representing original gable end of outbuilding range

The earliest fabric is represented by the middle bay of the barn (**Plate 1**), the lower storey being of regularly coursed rubble stone construction while the upper storey is timber-framed with plaster infilling. This appears to have been the southernmost bay of the original barn, indicated by the well-preserved box framing (**Plate 2**), which probably represents the original gable end. To the S of this gable end a further five bays were

added, probably in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the lower storey being of brick construction while the upper storey is timber-framed with brick infilling. The NW-facing elevation of the building was also extensively rebuilt in brick (**Plate 3**).



Plate 3: View looking SE showing NW-facing elevation of outbuilding range with evidence of extensive rebuilding in brick and insertion of modern windows

The latest phase of activity is represented by the extensive rebuilding of the northernmost two bays in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century to accommodate a swimming pool, the SE-facing elevation being largely rebuilt and heightened and the original tiled roof replaced with corrugated iron sheeting (**Plate 4**).



Plate 4: View looking NW showing SE-facing elevation of outbuilding range with modern alterations

## 4. Methodology

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The programme of archaeological observation at Stableton House Kingsland took place between 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

The groundworks comprised two specific elements:

- The reduction of ground levels with four northernmost bays of the barn (subsequently referred to as Areas 1-4 respectively) to a hard natural or sub natural level in order to provide a suitable base for the installation of new concrete flooring.
- The reduction of ground levels to a maximum depth of 0.60m below existing ground level within an L-shaped area situated immediately to the N and E of the existing barn range.

A general photographic record of the extant buildings was also undertaken.

Full written, drawn and photographic records were made in accordance with archaeological practices set out in the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (1994 revised 2001) and Border Archaeology adhered throughout to the IFA *Code of conduct* and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology*.

Full written, graphic and photographic records were made. These included a detailed stratigraphic record, using *pro forma* record sheets and a context numbering system, plans and sections/elevations at scales of 1:20 or 1:50 of any identified archaeological deposits, features and structures, with significant features or structures recorded at 1:10, and 10.3 MPX digital photographs of all features and structures.

All spoil and removed material were visually scanned for artefacts, which were recorded and, where appropriate, retained.

A temporary benchmark was established on site with a value of 85.65m AOD.

## 5. Archaeological Observation

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### 5.1 Reduction of ground level within outbuilding range

The first part of the programme of works involved the reduction of ground levels within the four northernmost bays of the existing outbuilding range (referred to as Areas 1-4 respectively) to a hard natural or sub natural level in order to provide a base for the installation of new concrete flooring.

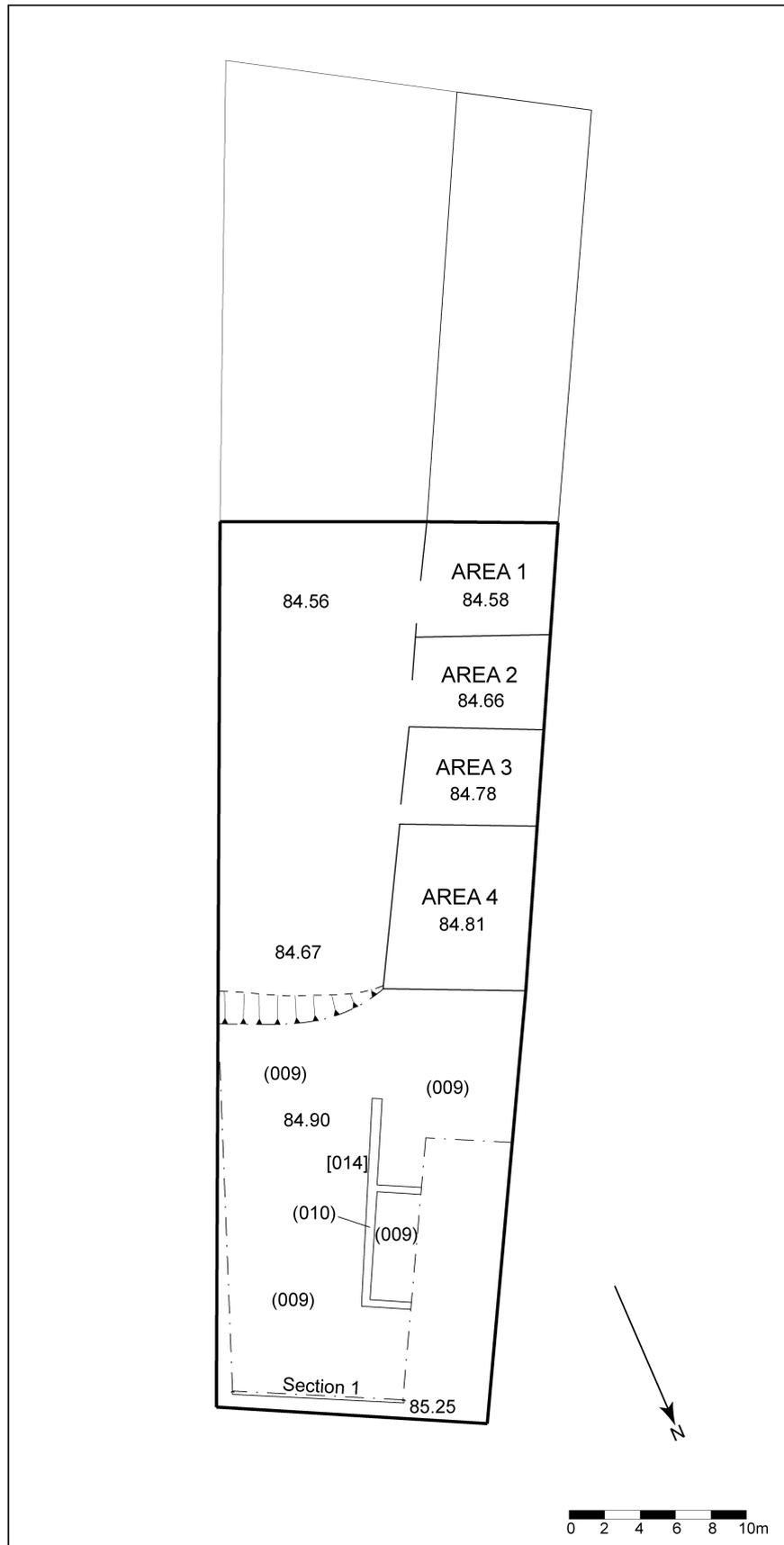


Fig. 2 Plan showing features revealed during observation of groundworks at Stableton House

Within the southernmost of the four bays (Area 1), the groundworks involved the removal of the existing indurated concrete flooring (001), measuring 0.07m thick, which revealed a compact light brown silty sand with very frequent gravel inclusions (002) extending to a visible depth of 0.18m and interpreted as a sub-base layer for (001). The reduction of ground levels within Area 2, the bay immediately N of Area 1, revealed the same two contexts as in Area 1; however, underlying (002), another deposit (003) was identified, consisting of compact light greyish-brown silty clay with moderate pebble inclusions, extending to a visible depth of 0.04m and interpreted as redeposited material. Underlying (003) was (009), a compact, stoneless greyish-brown silty clay, with lenses of yellowish-brown silt interpreted as natural deposition, measuring 0.38m in thickness.



Plate 5: View looking W showing cobbled floor surface in SW corner of Area 3

Within Area 3, the bay immediately N of Area 2, the partially intact remains of a cobbled surface were identified (004), comprising irregularly laid, rounded cobbles within a hard light greyish-brown silt (**Plate 5**). The cobbled surface, which was clearly heavily worn, covered an area measuring 7.50m × 5.50m × 0.14m within the central and western parts of Area 3; part of the surface appeared to have been removed within the eastern half of the compartment. Underlying (004) was (009), a well compacted yellowish-brown silty clay, identical to that encountered in Area 2, measuring 0.30m in thickness.

The groundworks in Area 4, the northernmost bay, involved the removal of modern stone slab paving (005) surrounding the former swimming pool, underlying which was loose reddish sand (006) forming a sub-base deposit for (005). (006) in turn overlaid a moderately compacted greyish sandy silt (007) with frequent subangular and rounded stone inclusions, forming a hardcore deposit for the concrete slab paving, underlying which was a greyish-brown silty clay deposit (009). Covering the area of the former swimming pool was a moderately to well compacted rubble deposit (008) measuring 0.54m in thickness and interpreted as demolition backfill overlying natural silty clay (009).

## 5.2 Topsoil strip to N of outbuilding range



Plate 6: View looking S showing strip-back area to N of outbuilding range, with footings of demolished 19<sup>th</sup> century brick structure in foreground

This phase of the groundworks involved the reduction of ground levels to a depth of 0.60m below existing ground level within an L-shaped area (formerly used as a farmyard) immediately to the N and E of the existing outbuilding range, measuring approximately 54m (N-S) × 12m (E-W) (**Plate 6**).

The uppermost context identified was modern hard standing (013) occupying the northern end of the yard, consisting of a well compacted gravel deposit with greyish-brown sandy inclusions, its visible extent measuring 11.5m × 3.0m × 0.05m.



Plate 7: View N showing deposits revealed in section in NE corner of site following topsoil strip

Underlying (013) was topsoil deposit (011), a moderately compacted mid greyish-brown silty sand with occasional rounded and subangular stones, with moderate CBM and occasional pottery fragments, uniformly of late post-medieval (19<sup>th</sup> century) date, covering an area measuring 54m (N-S) × 5.5m (E-W) and gradually petering out towards the western edge of the site (**Plate 7; Fig. 3**).

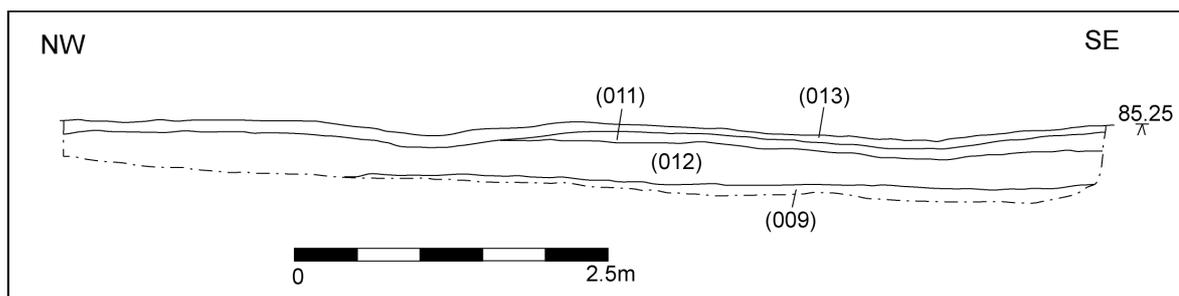


Fig. 3: SW-facing section showing deposits revealed during topsoil strip phase

(011) in turn overlaid (012), a moderate to well compacted mid brown silty sand with frequent pebbles and subangular stones with moderate CBM and occasional wood fragments and metal nails, which extended over an area measuring 54m (N-S) × 12m (E-W) to a depth of 0.22m and was interpreted as a heavily disturbed subsoil deposit. Underlying subsoil deposit (012) was (009), which covered an area measuring 8.5m × 7.5m × 0.10m and was interpreted as natural deposition.

Directly to the NE of the existing outbuilding range, cut from subsoil deposit (012), were the heavily truncated foundations of a rectangular structure (010) of unfrogged red brick bonded with cement (average brick size 22mm x 11mm x 7mm).

The visible structural remains consisted of a brick wall (a single course in depth and two courses wide) aligned NE-SW measuring 11.8m x 0.42m x 0.07m, with a return at the NE end, extending NW-SE for a distance of 2.80m (**Plate 8; Fig. 2**). Evidence of another return was identified some 6.20m SW of the NE end of the wall, which also extended NW-SE for 2.80m; these walls appeared to frame three sides of a rectangular compartment with another smaller compartment partitioned off to the SW.



Plate 8: View S showing brick wall foundations of recently demolished rectangular structure situated to N of existing outbuilding range

The structure appeared to have been recently demolished and may be identified with a small freestanding building first shown on the Bateman estate plan of 1870, situated just to the NE of the existing outbuilding range. This building is also shown on the OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25 inch map of 1885; however, by that date a substantial L-shaped barn range had been constructed immediately to the NW of it, forming three sides of a large farmyard enclosure.

## 6. Conclusion

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The programme of archaeological observation undertaken at Stableton House identified evidence of a post-medieval cobbled floor surface within a compartment of the existing outbuilding range, probably of 18<sup>th</sup> century date with extensive later 19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century alterations.

Also identified were footings relating to a recently demolished rectangular brick outbuilding of mid-late 19<sup>th</sup> century date, situated to the NE of the existing outbuilding range and first shown on the Bateman estate plan of Kingsland dated 1870.

## 7. Copyright

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## 8. Bibliography

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## 9. Cartography

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*(All maps were obtained from the Herefordshire Record Office unless otherwise stated)*

1709 Bateman Estate Map of Kingsland

1816 Plan of the Parish of Kingsland (HRO Ref. D26/1)

1841 Kingsland Tithe Map (HRO Ref. AM84/2)

1870 Bateman Estate Plan (HRO Ref. K68/39)

1885 OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition 25 inch map (Herefordshire 12.9)

1888 OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition 6 inch map (Herefordshire 12 SW)

1903 OS 2<sup>nd</sup> edition 25 inch map (Herefordshire 12.9)

1930 OS 3<sup>rd</sup> edition 6 inch map (Herefordshire 12 SW)

1952 OS provisional edition 6 inch map (Herefordshire 12 SW)

## 10. Context Register

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION
(001)	Indurated concrete surface extending 6.5m NE-SW x 7.5m NW-SE x 0.07 thick. Overlies (002).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Modern concrete floor surface in Areas 1 &amp; 2</i>
(002)	Well compacted light brown silty sand, very frequent gravels, extending 6.5m NE-SW x 7.5m NW-SE x 0.18m. Overlies (003). Underlies (001)
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Sub-base deposit for modern concrete floor surface in Areas 1 &amp; 2</i>
(003)	Well compacted light greyish-brown silty clay, moderate pebble inclusions, extending 5m NE-SW x 7.5m NW-SE x 0.04m. Overlies (009). Underlies (001)
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Redeposited natural subsoil visible in Area 2</i>
(004)	Small to medium rounded cobbles, irregularly laid, in hard light greyish-brown silt matrix. Visible extent 7.50m x 5.50m x 0.14m. Overlies (009).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Partially intact post-medieval cobbled surface identified in Area 3</i>
(005)	Concrete slabs measuring 0.30m x 0.58m x 0.06m average. Visible extent 8.5m x 7.5m x 0.05m. Overlies (006).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Modern concrete slab paving surrounding swimming pool in Area 4</i>
(006)	Loose reddish sand extending 7.5m x 8.5m x 0.08m. Overlies (007). Underlies (005).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Sub-base deposit for concrete slab paving in Area 4</i>
(007)	Moderately compacted greyish-brown sandy silt, with frequent subangular and rounded stones, extending 7.5m x 8.5m x 0.07m. Overlies (009). Underlies (006).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Sandy hardcore deposit under paving slabs in Area 4</i>
(008)	Moderately to well compacted reddish-brown sand with frequent large rounded and subangular stones and CBM, extending 6.50m x 9.50m x 0.54m. Overlies (009).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Demolition rubble deposit used to backfill swimming pool feature in Area 4</i>
(009)	Well compacted stoneless greyish-brown silty clay, lenses of yellowish-brown silt, occurring at a depth of between 0.14 and 0.50m.
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Natural deposition identified during reduction of ground levels within outbuilding range and topsoil strip in farmyard</i>
(010)	Linear brick structure oriented NE-SW, visible extent 11.80m x 0.42m x 0.07m, with return at NE end, oriented NW-SE and measuring 2.80m x 0.42m x 0.07m. Materials consisted of unfrogged red brick (average size 0.22m x 0.11m x 0.07m), cement bonded, two courses wide and one course deep. Fills [114]. Underlies (112).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Foundations of rectangular brick structure of probable mid-late C19 date</i>
(011)	Moderately compacted mid greyish-brown silty sand, occasional rounded and subangular stones & pottery fragments of late post-medieval (C19) date, moderate CBM, extending 54m (NE-SW) x 5.5m (NW-SE) 0.17m. Overlies (012). Underlies (013).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Topsoil deposit</i>
(012)	Moderate to well compacted mid brown silty sand, frequent pebbles and subangular stones, moderate CBM, occasional wood fragments and Fe nails of late post-medieval (C19) date, extending 54m (NE-SW) x 12m (NW-SE). Overlies (009). Underlies (011) (013). Cut by [014]
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Heavily disturbed subsoil deposit</i>
(013)	Compact greyish gravel, greyish-brown sandy inclusions, visible

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION
	extent 11.5m × 3.0m × 0.05m. Overlies (011).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Modern hard standing occupying N end of farmyard</i>
[014]	Rectilinear cut, visible extent 11.8m (NE-SW) × 2.8m (NW-SE) × 0.42m × 0.07m. Break of slope at top sharp, sides vertical, break of slope at base not determined, base not determined. Cuts (012) (009). Filled by (010).
<i>INTERPRETATION</i>	<i>Presumed foundation cut for C19 brick walls (010)</i>



## Document Control

<b>Job title</b>	Stableton House Kingsland Herefordshire	<b>Job No</b>	BA0813PVSHK
<b>Report written by</b>	<i>Stephen Priestley MA</i>		
<b>Report edited by</b>	<i>George Children MA</i>		
<b>Issue No</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Approved for issue</b>
1	Final	May 2008	<i>Neil Shurety</i>

## 11. Site Summary

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<b>Report Name &amp; Title</b>	Archaeological Observation at Stableton House Kingsland Leominster Herefordshire HR6 9QS
<b>Contractor's Name and Address</b>	Border Archaeology, PO Box 36, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 OYQ
<b>Site Name</b>	Stableton House Kingsland Herefordshire
<b>Grid Reference (8 fig)</b>	NGR: SO 4496 6131
<b>SMR number of site</b>	48123
<b>Date of fieldwork</b>	May 2008
<b>Date of Report</b>	May 2008
	<b>NUMBER AND TYPE OF FINDS</b>
<b>Pottery</b>	<b>Period:</b> Post-medieval <b>Number of sherds:</b> Not retained
<b>Other</b>	<b>Period:</b> Post-medieval <b>Quantity:</b> Not retained
	<b>NUMBER AND TYPE OF SAMPLES COLLECTED</b>
<b>Sieving for charred plant remains</b>	<b>No of features sampled</b> N/A <b>No of buckets</b> N/A
<b>C<sup>14</sup>/scientific dates</b>	<b>No and Type</b> N/A <b>Result</b> N/A
<b>Pollen</b>	<b>No of columns/spot samples</b> N/A <b>Name of pollen specialist</b> N/A
<b>Bone</b>	<b>Number of buckets sieved for bone</b> N/A  <b>Quantity Recovered</b> N/A <b>Period</b> N/A
<b>Other</b>	<b>Type and specialist</b> N/A
<b>Summary</b>	The programme of archaeological observation undertaken at Stableton House identified evidence of a post-medieval cobbled floor surface within a compartment of the existing outbuilding range, of C18 date, with extensive later C19-C20 alterations. Also identified were footings relating to a recently demolished rectangular brick outbuilding of mid-late C19 date, situated immediately NE of the existing outbuilding range.