

Archaeological Field Evaluation

White Lion Meadow  
Lyonshall  
Herefordshire HR5 3LF

July 2015



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*Cover: View of the site looking south towards White Lion Cottage*

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## Contents:

1	Executive Summary .....	1
2	Introduction.....	2
	2.1 Soils and Geology .....	3
3	Methodology .....	3
4	Historical and Archaeological Background .....	4
5	Results .....	5
	5.1 Trench 1.....	5
	5.2 Trench 2.....	6
	5.3 Trench 3.....	6
	5.4 Trench 4.....	7
6	Discussion.....	8
7	Copyright.....	10
8	Bibliography .....	11

## 1 Executive Summary

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*Border Archaeology Ltd was commissioned by Bryan Thomas Esq Architectural Design Ltd on behalf of H. L. Pugh Jones & E. M. Kinsey Jones to undertake a programme of archaeological field evaluation in advance of proposed development at White Lion Meadow Lyonshall Herefordshire HR5 3LF (NGR: SO 33860 55396). Site work took place on July 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2015.*

*The site lies at a distance of approximately 900m south of the planned medieval settlement of Lyonshall and approximately 500m to the east of Offa's Dyke. Four trenches were excavated to natural deposits. A number of sherds of pottery of post-medieval date were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil but these were not from securely stratified deposits. No disturbance to the natural soil deposits was detected in any of these trenches.*

*No deposits, features or finds of archaeological significance were present on the site.*

## 2 Introduction

Border Archaeology Ltd (BAL) was commissioned by Bryan Thomas Esq Architectural Design Ltd on behalf of H. L. Pugh Jones & E. M. Kinsey Jones to undertake a programme of archaeological field evaluation at White Lion Meadow Lyonshall Herefordshire HR5 3LF (NGR: SO 33860 55396) (Planning ref. P151909/F) in advance of a proposed development (fig. 1). It should be noted that the site is referred to by Herefordshire Council as 'Land adjacent to Burnt Orchard Lyonshall Herefordshire HR5 3LF'. Site work took place on July 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> 2015. An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Border Archaeology 2015) was previously submitted as part of the present programme of work.



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Fig. 1: Site location

Copies of this report will be sent to the Client and to Julian Cotton Esq. Archaeological Advisor Herefordshire Council.

The study area lies immediately E of the A480 road on a NNW-facing slope rising from an elevation of approximately 138m AOD at its northern extent, adjacent to Stores Row, to approximately 142m AOD at the southern boundary with White Lion Cottage. The site occupies a roughly rectangular area of approximately 0.45 ha, which includes amenity land at its northern extent.

## 2.1 Soils and Geology

The soils consist of typical argillic brown earths of the ESCRICK 1 series (571p) comprising deep well-drained reddish coarse loamy soils overlying reddish till (SSEW 1983).

## 3 Methodology

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The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (Lee 2015) and practices set out by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) in *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014) and *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014).

Border Archaeology adhered to the CIfA *Code of conduct* (2014), *Standards for Archaeological Projects in Herefordshire (Issue 1)* (Herefordshire Archaeology 2004) and *Archaeology and Development: Supplementary planning document* (Herefordshire Council 2010).

Four trenches (*fig. 1*) were excavated using a wide-blade toothless ditching bucket. Undifferentiated topsoil and overburden of recent origin were removed by machine to natural deposits. No significant archaeological deposits found.

### 3.1 Recording

Full written and photographic records were made in accordance with Border Archaeology's *Field Recording Manual* (2014). The written record comprised a *pro-forma* context record for each stratigraphic unit. A sample section was drawn of each trench at a scale of 1:20. A temporary benchmark (TBM) was established.

A photographic record of all stratigraphic units was made using a high-resolution digital camera. Included in each photograph was an appropriate scale and all photographic records were indexed and cross-referenced to written site records. Details concerning subject and direction of view were maintained in a photographic register, indexed by frame number.

No deposits or features of archaeological significance were present on the site. No finds were recovered and no deposits considered suitable for palaeoenvironmental/palaeoeconomic sampling purposes were encountered.

## 4 Historical and Archaeological Background

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An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been previously submitted by BAL (Border Archaeology 2015) and this provides a detailed account of the site's historical and archaeological background. In summary, consultation of the historic map evidence, including the Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> –and 2<sup>nd</sup> -Edition 25-Inch maps of Herefordshire (1887 & 1904, respectively) and the 1842 tithe survey, shows that the site has been unoccupied and known as 'White Lion Meadow' since at least the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The field was used as meadow and surrounded 'White Lion Cottage' which lies to the SE.

The only feature recorded of note within the boundaries of the site was a former field boundary running NE/SW across the middle of field, but which does not appear to cross the site. A rapid consultation of the Herefordshire Historic Environment Record has revealed that no sites or monuments, or archaeological events, are recorded within the site boundary.

## 5 Results

### 5.1 Trench 1

The trench was located on the N side of the site at a height of 39.92m OD (W end) and 39.46m OD (E end). It measured 20m × 2m × 0.86m (maximum depth).

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	101		Layer	Existing turf	Firm mid-brown silt clay; 0.10m thick. Overlying (102).	-	-	-	-	-	Slightly darker but similar to soils below
2	102		Layer	Natural deposition	Firm sand, brown silty clay. Underlying (101), overlying (103)	-	-	-	-	-	
3	103		Layer	Natural deposition at base of Trench	Clay with brown silt; natural pebbles, cobbles & gravel. Underlying (101), (102)	-	-	-	-	-	



## 5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 ran N/S to Trench 1 at a height of 139.38m OD. It measured 20m × 2m × 1.10m (maximum depth).

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	201		Layer	Existing Turf	Firm mid greyish-brown silty clay. Overlying (202)	-	-	-	-	-	
2	202		Layer	Natural subsoil deposit	Firm mid brown silty clay. Underlying (201), overlying (203).	-	-	-	-	-	Slightly paler than (201)
3	203		Layer	Natural Deposit	Firm, slightly red/brown clay & natural stone. Underlying (202).	-	-	-	-	-	

## 5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 (*Plate 1*) measured 10m × 2m × 0.53m (maximum depth) and extended N/S to the S of Trench 2 at a height of 139.97m OD.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	301		Layer	Existing turf (topsoil)	Firm & compact mid brown silty clay. Overlying (302)	-	-	-	-	-	
2	302		Layer	Natural subsoil deposit	Very compact mid brown silty clay. Underlying (301), overlying (303).	-	-	-	-	-	
3	303		Layer	Natural deposit	Slightly darker shiny clay & patches stone. Underlying (302).	-	-	-	-	-	

## 5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 (*Plates 2 & 3*) measured 5m × 2m × 0.75m and was aligned N/S at a height of 139.91mOD. It was the southernmost of the four trenches.

Item	Context No.	Matrix Phase	Type	Interpretation	Discussion	Finds					Comments
						Small Find	Pot	Bone	Misc.	Sample No.	
1	401		Layer	Existing turf	Firm & compact mid brown silty clay. Overlying (402)	-	-	-	-	-	
2	402		Layer	Natural deposit	Clean, compact mid brown silty clay. Underlying (401), overlying (403).	-	-	-	-	-	
3	403		Layer	Natural deposit	Pale brown silty clay, patches of natural stone. Underlying (402).	-	-	-	-	-	Higher silt content than Trenches 1-3

## 6 Discussion

Each of the four trenches was excavated down to natural deposits. No archaeological features or deposits were present on the site. The natural and subsoil deposits were very similar to the topsoil, suggesting that little ploughing or working of the soil had taken place.



*Plate 1: View NE of Trench 3 showing natural deposits in base of trench*

The site lies at a distance of some 500m to the E of Offa's Dyke and no evidence of activity associated with that feature was anticipated or found. The distance of over 1km from the Castle and the absence of features or deposits of medieval date confirm that the site lay outside the core of the medieval planned town. No evidence of development on the frontage of the A480 was revealed.

Natural deposits varied slightly over the site from N to S. It is possible that this was the result of hillwash from the higher, southern extent of the site (approximately 142m OD) to the lower, northern part (approximately 138m OD).



*Plate 2: View SE of Trench 4 showing natural deposits in base of trench*



*Plate 3: View E of Trench 4 showing sample section*

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## 8.1 Cartographic Records

Thomas Budgen's Ordnance Survey surveyor's drawing of Presteigne (1815)

Lyonshall Tithe Map (1842)

Boundary Commissioners' Map of Herefordshire (1885)

OS 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 25-Inch Map of Herefordshire (1887)

OS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 25-Inch Map of Herefordshire (1904)

OS 1<sup>st</sup> Edition National Survey (1974)

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