

border archaeology

archaeology & built heritage



Archaeological Field Evaluation

For

Collins Design & Build

Concerning

**Land to the N of Roman Road
& W of the A49 Holmer West
Hereford**

November 2018



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REPORT SPECIFICATION

Compilation:

Lyndsey Bromage BSc (Hons)

Artwork:

Holly Litherland BA (Hons)

Bryony Clarke BA (Hons)

Editing:

George Children MA MCI^fA

Approved for Issue:

George Children MA MCI^fA

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GENERAL ENQUIRIES

e: info@borderarchaeology.com

t: 01568 610101

Administration

The Plaza, Owen Way, Leominster Enterprise Park, Leominster, HR6 0LA

Post-Ex Facility – Leominster

Telephone 01568 610101

Email postex@borderarchaeology.com

Post-Ex Facility – Milton Keynes

Telephone 01908 533233

Email postexmk@borderarchaeology.com

REGIONAL OFFICES

Milton Keynes

Common Farm
Calverton Lane
Milton Keynes, MK19 6EU
t: 01908 533233

Leeds

No1 Leeds
26 Whitehall Road
Leeds, LS12 1BE
t: 0113 8187959

Shoreditch

The Old Fire Station,
140 Tabernacle Street,
London, EC2A 4SD
t: 02033 015670

Newport

Merlin House
No1 Langstone Business Park
Newport, NP18 2HJ
t: 01633 415339

Bristol

First Floor,
Citibase Bristol Aztec West,
Aztec Centre, Aztec West
Almondsbury,
Bristol, BS32 4TD
t: 0117 9110767

Winchester

Basepoint Business Centre,
Winnal Valley Road,
Winchester, SO23 0LD
t: 01962 832777



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1 Executive Summary

Border Archaeology (BA) was instructed by Russell Pryce Planning Manager Collins Design & Build to carry out a programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation of approximately 3ha of land to the north of Roman Road and west of the A49 Holmer West Hereford (NGR: SO 50225 42445) in connection with the conversion and extension of the Listed farmhouse to apartments, conversion of two traditional barns to residential use, demolition of more modern barns and new-build residential of up to 100 units.

Twenty-two trenches, each of 20m in length and 1.90m wide, were excavated to natural deposits to determine and record the nature and extent of any archaeological remains present on the site.

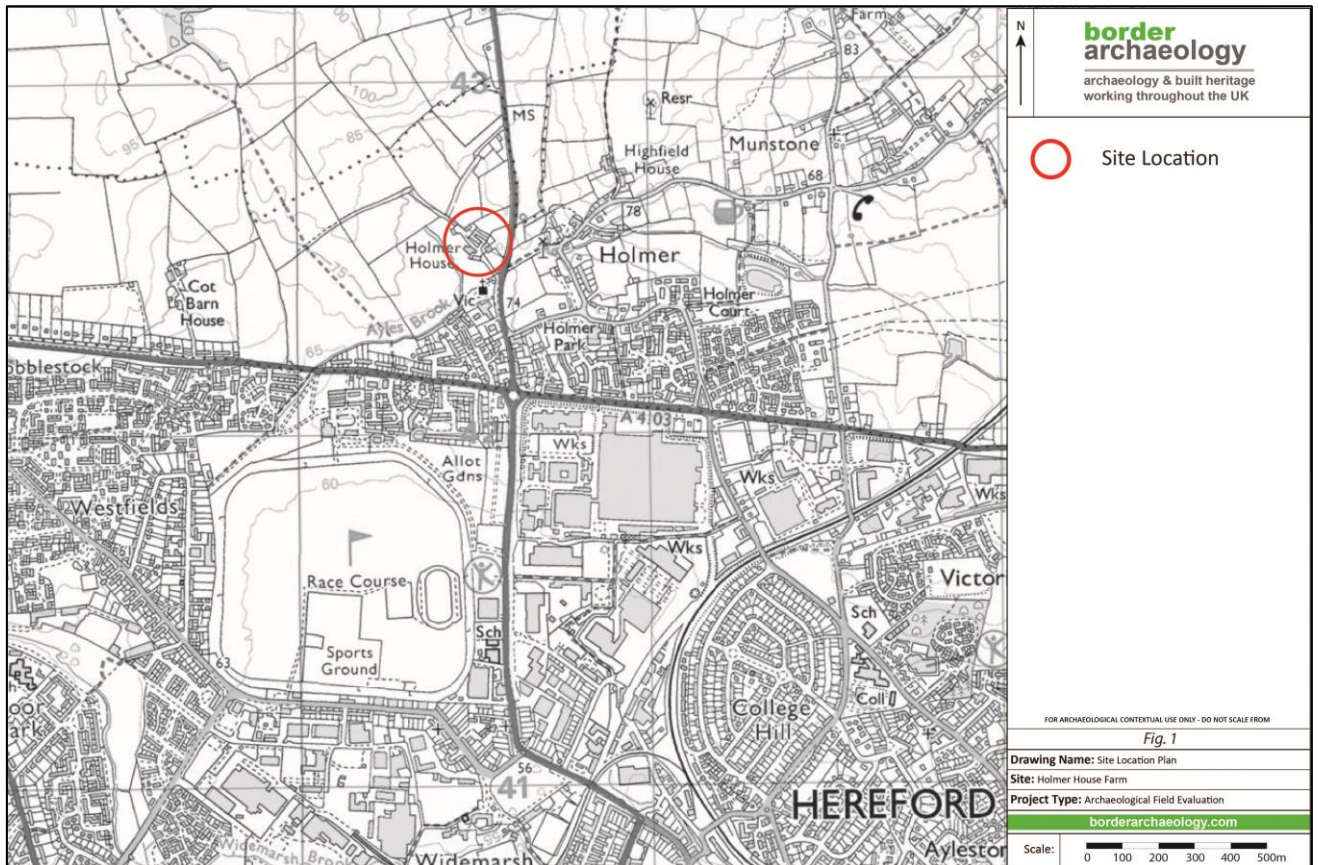
A possible linear feature running northeast-southwest was investigated in Trench 14 and was found to contain 13th Century pottery (Appendix 1) and bone representing cow, horse and sheep/goat, together with a vertebra of freshwater bream, the most popular freshwater food fish during this period (Appendix 4). No evidence was encountered within the trench to establish its function, although the character of the finds does strongly suggest a focus of medieval occupation somewhere in the vicinity.

A substantial fence-, gate- or marker-post was also recovered from this trench and subjected to specialist assessment (Appendix 3), which identified the wood as oak with an age in excess of 100 years. Evidence of sawing suggests a later medieval or post-medieval date. It is considered likely that there may be an association with orcharding, as shown on historic maps, or hop cultivation.

No further archaeological features were present within the remaining 21 trenches; however, there were areas of residual pottery and ceramic building material (brick, roof tile, floor tile etc.) dating from medieval to the post-medieval period (Appendix 1).

2 Introduction

Border Archaeology (BA) was instructed by Russell Pryce Planning Manager Collins Design & Build to carry out a programme of Archaeological Evaluation on land to the N of Roman Road and W of the A49 Holmer West Hereford (NGR: SO 50225 42445).



3 Aims

The aims of the project were:

- To determine and record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains likely to be threatened by the proposed development and to assess their significance in a local, regional, national or international context, as appropriate.
- To address, where applicable, some of the themes identified in *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011).

4 Site Description

The site comprised three fields, with intermittent farm buildings and established boundaries, located to the W of Holmer, approximately 2.4km N of Hereford city centre. Covering roughly 3ha, it lies immediately N of the Church of St Bartholomew and its associated Scheduled Churchyard Cross (List Entry Number: 1016345).

The soils are recorded as typical argillic brown earths of the BROMYARD series (571b), consisting of well-drained reddish fine silty soils over Devonian reddish silty shale, siltstone and sandstone (SSEW 1983).

5 Historical and Archaeological Background

A programme of Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Walsh 2013) and Archaeological Field Evaluation (Connolly 2014) was previously undertaken of land adjacent to the N and W of the present site.

The evaluation revealed shallow ditches, pits and postholes in the central and E part of the site which produced medieval pottery. A stone structure to the W was considered to be a corn-drying oven, with a cobbled surface interpreted as a possible trackway revealed to the E, close to the late 12th/early 13th Century Grade I listed parish Church of St Bartholomew. An assemblage of domestic ceramics was recovered together with evidence for crop-processing on a significant scale suggesting cultivation on or near the site. These remains were considered to represent a farm located on the fringes of the medieval settlement. Based on these results, it was considered that the medieval village of Holmer was probably more extensive than the present settlement.

Additionally, a series of cremation pits were revealed in a trench at the northern extent of the site. Although no dating evidence was recovered, their form was suggestive of a prehistoric date, with an adjacent ditch likely forming an enclosure feature. A palaeochannel revealed to the SE was considered to have been an active watercourse during the later prehistoric period and may thus have formed a focus of activity at this time (Connolly 2014).

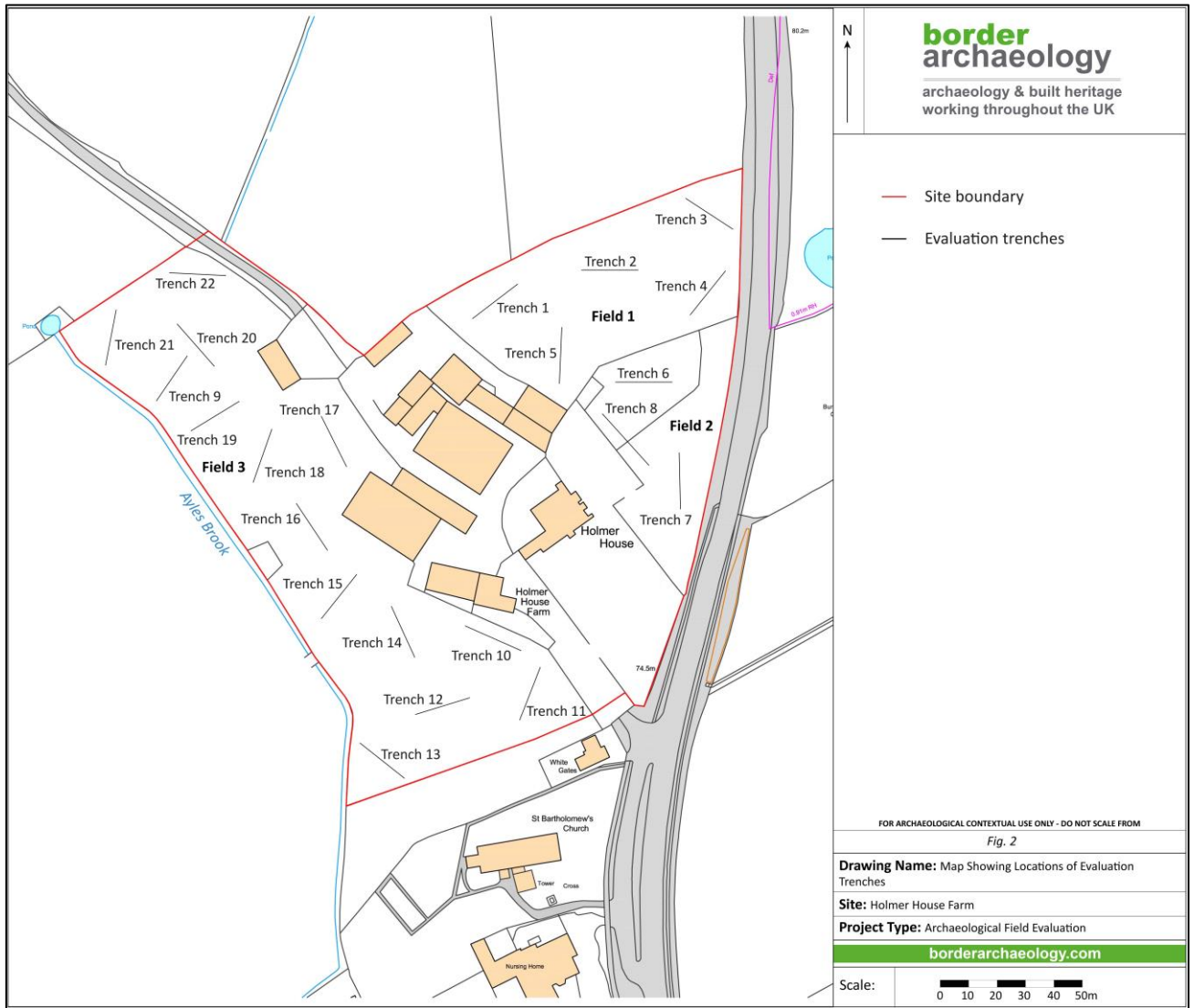
6 Methodology

A programme of archaeological work was carried out according to the *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014). BA adheres to project management advice set out in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The Project Managers' Guide* (Lee 2015) and *Requirements for Archaeological Projects in Herefordshire* (Herefordshire Council 2005, amended 2017). BA is also cognisant of *Archaeology & Development Supplementary Planning* (Herefordshire Council 2010).

A three per cent sample of the overall site area of approximately 3ha was subject to evaluation, this representing 22 20m × 1.90m trenches (*fig. 2*). Access issues necessitated relocation of Trenches 8, 9 & 10 prior to excavation. Trenching was opened by machine using a toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil or recent overburden was removed

in successive, level spits down to the first significant archaeological horizon and thereafter deposits were examined and troweled by hand.

Where no archaeological horizon was revealed, machining continued to natural deposits but did not exceed a depth of 1.20m. All excavated material ('spoil') was stored separate from other deposits and scanned for any archaeological material/finds.



7 Results

7.1 Trench 1

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|---|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (1000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Moderately compacted mid-dark brown silty clay, soft. c.0.19m thick. Overlying (1001). | - | ✓ | ✓ | - | - | 3 × post-med. pot. sherds 1 × CBM frag. 9 × animal bone |
| 2 | (1001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Moderately compacted light brown silty clay; no inclusion; c.0.36m thick. Overlying (1002). Underlying (1000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (1002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm greyish-blue clays (gravel patches throughout). Underlying (1001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.2 Trench 2

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (2000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft dark brown silty clay; occasional small stone; c.0.22m. Overlying (2001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (2001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm brownish-red clayey silt; c.0.18m. Overlying (2002). Underlying (2000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 3 | (2002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm reddish-brown clay, very occasional inclusions small stones. Underlying (2001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.3 Trench 3

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (3000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft dark brown silty clay; no inclusions; c.0.15m thick. Overlying (3001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (3001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-brownish-red clayey silt; c.0.41m thick. Overlying (3002). Underlying (3000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (3002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm greyish-blue clay; very frequent small grey gravels. Underlying (3001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.4 Trench 4

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (4000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-dark brown silty clay; very occasional small rounded stones; c.0.18m thick. Overlying (4001). | - | - | - | - | - | 3 × CBM frags. |
| 2 | (4001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Moderately compacted light brown silty clay; no inclusions; c.0.36m thick. Overlying (4002). Underlying (4000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 3 | (4002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm greyish-blue clay; occasional rounded gravels. Underlying (4001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.5 Trench 5

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|-----------------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|---------------|--|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (5000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-dark brown silty clay; c.0.17m thick. Overlying (5000). | - | - | ✓ | ✓ | - | 2 × animal bone 1 × Fe nail |
| 2 | (5001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Moderately compacted light brown silty clay; no inclusions; c.0.31m thick. Overlying (5002). Underlying (5000). | - | ✓ | - | - | - | 2 × post-med. pot. sherds 2 × CBM frags. |
| 3 | (5002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm greyish-blue clays (gravel patches throughout). Underlying (5001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4 | (5003) | Fill | Fill of feature | Loose mid-dark greyish-brown silty clay; very occasional small stones, animal bone; c.0.40m × c.0.42m × c. 0.08m. Fill of [5004]. | - | - | - | - | <2> | C18/C19 roof tile frag. |
| 5 | [5004] | Cut | Small pit or posthole | Circular in plan; sides moderately sloping, base near-flat; c.0.40m × c.0.42m × c.0.08m. Cuts (5002). Filled by (5003). | - | - | - | - | - | CBM & glass in sample <2> suggests modern |
| 6 | [5005] | Cut | Cut of animal burial | Irregular oval in plan; sides gradually sloping, base near-flat; c.1m × c.0.80m × c. 0.07m. Cuts (5001). Filled by (5006). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 7 | (5006) | Fill | Fill of animal burial | Loose mid-dark brown silty clay; frequent animal bone; c.1m × c.0.80m × c.0.07m. Fill of [5005]. | - | - | ✓ | - | <1> (void) | Bone & sample not retained |

7.6 Trench 6

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|--------------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|--|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (6000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft dark brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.33m thick. Overlying (6001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (6001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm brownish-red clay silt; no inclusions; c.0.22m thick. Overlying (6000). Underlying (6001). | - | ✓ | - | - | - | 2 × post-med. pot. sherds |
| 3 | (6002) | Deposit | Natural | Compact reddish-brown clay silt. Overlying (6003). Underlying (6002). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4 | (6003) | Fill | Fill of tree-throw | Moderately compact dark brown silty clay; c.0.76m × c.0.51m × c.0.06m. Overlying (6003). Fill of [6004]. | - | ✓ | ✓ | - | - | 2 × post-med. pot. sherds 1 × animal bone |
| 5 | [6004] | 'Cut' | Tree-throw | Irregular in plan; sides & base irregular; c.0.76m × c.0.51m × c.0.06m. Cuts (6002). Filled by (6003). | - | - | - | - | - | Cut of rooting |

7.7 Trench 7

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|------------------------------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (7000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft dark brown silty clay; occasional small stones, tile; c.0.32m thick. Overlying (7001). | - | - | - | - | - | Small dump of post-med. tile |
| 2 | (7001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-brownish-red clay silt; c.0.41m thick. Overlying (7002). Underlying (7000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (7002) | Deposit | Natural | Compact mid-reddish-brown clay silt. Underlying (7001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.8 Trench 8

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|---------------------------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (8000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft dark brown silty clay; occasional small stones. c.0.38m thick. Overlying (8001). | - | ✓ | - | - | - | 4 × post-med. pot. sherds |
| 2 | (8001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-brownish-red clay silt; c.0.31m thick. Overlying (8002). Underlying (8000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (8002) | Deposit | Natural | Compact mid-reddish-brown clay silt. Underlying (8001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.9 Trench 9

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (9000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-dark brown silty clay; occasional stones; c.0.25m thick. | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (9001) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones. | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.10 Trench 10

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (10000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-dark greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.21m thick. Overlying (10001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (10001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-greyish-brown clay silt; very occasional small stones c.0.10m. Underlying (10000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (10002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones. Underlying (10001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.11 Trench 11

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|------------------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (11000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-dark brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.26m thick. Overlying (11001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (11001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm light-mid-brown clay silt; very occasional small stones; c.0.17m. Overlying (11001). Underlying (11000). | - | - | ✓ | - | - | 11 × animal bone |
| 3 | (11002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay silt; very occasional inclusions of small stones. Underlying (11001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.12 Trench 12

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (12000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Loose mid-dark greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.23m thick. Overlying (12000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (12001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.15m thick. Overlying (12002). Underlying (12000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (12002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones. Underlying (12001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.13 Trench 13

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (13000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Loose mid-dark greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.22m thick. Overlying (13001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (13001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm light greyish-brown clay silt; occasional small stones; c.0.15m thick. Overlying (13002). Underlying (13000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (13002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay silt; very occasional small stones. Underlying (13001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.14 Trench 14

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|------------------------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|---|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (14000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Loose mid-dark greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.23m thick. Overlying (14001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (14001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.26m thick. Overlying (14002). Underlying (14002). Cut by [14009]. | - | ✓ | ✓ | - | - | 2 × medieval pot. sherds 4 × CBM frags. 27 × animal bone frags. |
| 3 | (14002) | Deposit | Subsoil | Moderately compacted mid-reddish-brown clay silt; very occasional small stones; 0.19m. Overlying (14003). Underlying (14001). | - | - | ✓ | ✓ | - | 1 × animal bone |
| 4 | (14003) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; frequent large natural stones. Underlying (14002). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 5 | [14004] | Cut | Cut of posthole | Cut not visible in section. Cuts (14003). Filled by (14005), (14006). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 6 | (14005) | Fill | Fill of posthole | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; frequent small stones. Fill of [14004]. | - | ✓ | - | - | <3> | 1 × C18 pot. sherd |
| 7 | (14006) | Fill | Fence-, gate- or marker-post | Blackened & heavily degraded sawn timber. Fill of [14004]. | - | - | - | - | - | Oak (<i>Quercus</i> sp.) |
| 8 | [14007] | Cut | Function unknown | Linear in plan; oriented NE-SW; 1.88m × 1.25m × 0.48m. Cuts (14003). Filled by (14008). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 9 | (14008) | Fill | Fill of cut | Firm mid-greyish-brown, silty clay; occasional stones, frequent pottery. Fill of [14007]. | - | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | <4> | Med. pot. 2 × CBM frags. 7 × animal bone |
| 10 | [14009] | Cut | Cut of modern dump | Cuts (14001). Filled by (14010). | - | - | - | - | - | Sealed by topsoil |

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|------|--|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 11 | (14010) | Fill | Redeposited natural stone & broken ceramic land drain. | Loose to moderately compacted mid-brown silty clay. Fill of [14009]. | - | - | - | ✓ | - | - |

7.15 Trench 15

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (15000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Loose mid-dark greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.25m thick. Overlying (15001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (15001) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-brown clayey silt; very occasional small stones. Underlying (15000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.16 Trench 16

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (16000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Loose mid-dark greyish-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.16m thick. Overlying (16001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (16001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid reddish-brown clayey silt; very occasional small stones; c.0.12m thick. Overlying (16002). Underlying (16000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 3 | (16002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones. Underlying (16001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.17 Trench 17

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|--------------------------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (17000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-brown silty clay; occasional small stone; c.0.20m thick. Overlying (17001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (17001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-brownish-red clay silt; c.0.23m thick. Overlying (17002). Underlying (17000). | - | ✓ | - | - | - | 1 × post-med. pot. sherd |
| 3 | (17002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; occasional chalk flecks. Underlying (17000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.18 Trench 18

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (18000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft dark brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.15m thick. Overlying (18001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (18001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Moderately compacted mid-brownish-red clay silt; occasional small stones; c.0.30m thick. Overlying (18002). Underlying (18000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 3 | (18002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones; c.0.31m thick. Underlying (18001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 4 | (18003) | Deposit | Natural | Firm bluish-grey clay. Underlying (18002). | - | - | - | - | -- | - |

7.19 Trench 19

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|-------------------------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (19000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-dark brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.25m thick. Overlying (19001). | - | ✓ | - | - | - | 1 × medieval pot. sherd |
| 2 | (19001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-brownish-red light clay silt; occasional small stones. c.0.15m thick. Overlying (19002). Underlying (19000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (19002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones. Underlying (19001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.20 Trench 20

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (20000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft dark brown, silty clay; occasional small stones; 0.17m thick. Overlying (20001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 2 | (20001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-brownish-red silty clay; 0.17m thick. Overlying (20002). Underlying (20000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (20002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones. Underlying (20001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.21 Trench 21

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (21000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-dark brown silty clay; occasional stones; c.0.20m thick. Overlying (21001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 2 | (21001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; very occasional small stones; c.0.16m thick. Overlying (21002). Underlying (21000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (21002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm greyish-blue clay. Underlying (21001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

7.22 Trench 22

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|---|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 1 | (22000) | Deposit | Topsoil | Soft mid-brown silty clay; occasional small stones; c.0.17m thick. Overlying (22001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

| Item | Context No. | Type | Interpretation | Discussion | Finds | | | | | Comments |
|------|-------------|---------|----------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|----------|
| | | | | | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. | |
| 2 | (22001) | Deposit | Subsoil | Firm mid-brownish-red clay silt; very occasional small stones; c.0.11m thick. Overlying (22003). Underlying (22000). | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| 3 | (22002) | Deposit | Natural | Firm mid-reddish-brown clay; occasional small stones. Underlying (22001). | - | - | - | - | - | - |

8 Discussion

8.1 Field 1

Five trenches were opened in Field 1 and excavated to natural, which occurred at depths of 0.40–0.56m, with the greater depths at the brow of the field. Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4 showed no evidence of disturbance within the subsoil or natural, with finds of modern tile and brick restricted to the topsoil.

A small circular pit or posthole [5004] containing a fragment of 18th/19th Century roof tile was revealed near the NW baulk of Trench 5 at a depth of 0.48m. A palaeoenvironmental sample revealed undatable bone, charcoal and indeterminate seeds; the presence of CBM and glass suggested a more modern date (*Appendix 2*).



Plate 1: View E showing small pit/posthole [5004] in Trench 5, Field 1.

An animal burial [5005] found at a depth of c.0.50m was provisionally identified as sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) and considered to represent livestock; however, potential contamination of samples and bones precluded processing or retention.

No further disturbance or archaeology was found within Field 1.

8.2 Field 2

Three trenches were opened in Field 2, with natural encountered at depths of 0.55–0.73m, the greater depths achieved at the garden boundary and hedge-line of Trench 7 and Trench 8. Trench 6 contained a land drain at its E end and a small tree-throw [6004]. The fill of [6004] contained animal bone and a modern brick together with 18th/19th Century willow-pattern pottery.

Trench 7 revealed a small dump of post-medieval tile within the topsoil and residual 18th/19th Century pottery in the cut of the land drain at the S end of the trench (not retained). Trench 8 (*Plate 2*) contained only residual 18th Century pottery within the topsoil.



Plate 2: View SE of Trench 8 within Field 2, post-ex.

8.3 Field 3

Fourteen trenches were opened in Field 3 with natural encountered at depths of 0.28–0.49m. Field 3 occupies a gradual slope, with water draining from higher ground to the E and NE (Field 2) into the Ayles Brook, a watercourse running parallel at the SW boundary hedge; as a result, with the exception of Trenches 11, 13, 15, 17 and 21, extensive disturbance associated with modern drainage was encountered.

Trench 9 showed a modern drain cut at the SW end for a large pipe which routed the Ayles Brook through from the NE boundary to the SW; no finds or archaeological disturbances were found within this trench.

Trench 10 revealed a modern drain cut at the SE section, with a shallow area of tree-rooting towards the NW end. Trench 11 revealed modern electricity bricks within the natural clays and no further work in this trench was undertaken.

Trench 12 revealed a NE-SW orientated pipe cut into the natural at 0.38m. No further features or cuts were identified within this trench. Trench 13 contained only a small area of rooting cut into the natural at 0.37m.

Trench 14 was excavated to a depth of 0.44m and revealed that the natural clays were cut by a large modern gravel drain at the SSW end, with a smaller stone-filled drain to its N running roughly parallel to the larger drain in a NE-SW direction. A *sondage* opened at the NNE end of Trench 14 revealed a substantial blackened timber (14006) and a linear [14007] underlying a modern dump of material [14009] (*Plate 3; fig. 3*). The timber was identified as oak, probably *Quercus robur*, native English Oak, and its size suggests a degraded fence-, gate- or marker-post. The base of the timber was cut flat using a metal saw suggesting a late medieval or post-medieval date (*Appendix 3*) and had been set into the ground within a posthole [14004], from which a sherd of 18th Century creamware was recovered.

Palaeoenvironmental sampling revealed pieces of oak probably associated with (14006), in addition to CBM fragments and coal/coke which suggests rapid backfilling consistent with a post-setting (*Appendix 2*).



Plate 3: View NW showing section of [14007] within Trench 14, mid-ex.

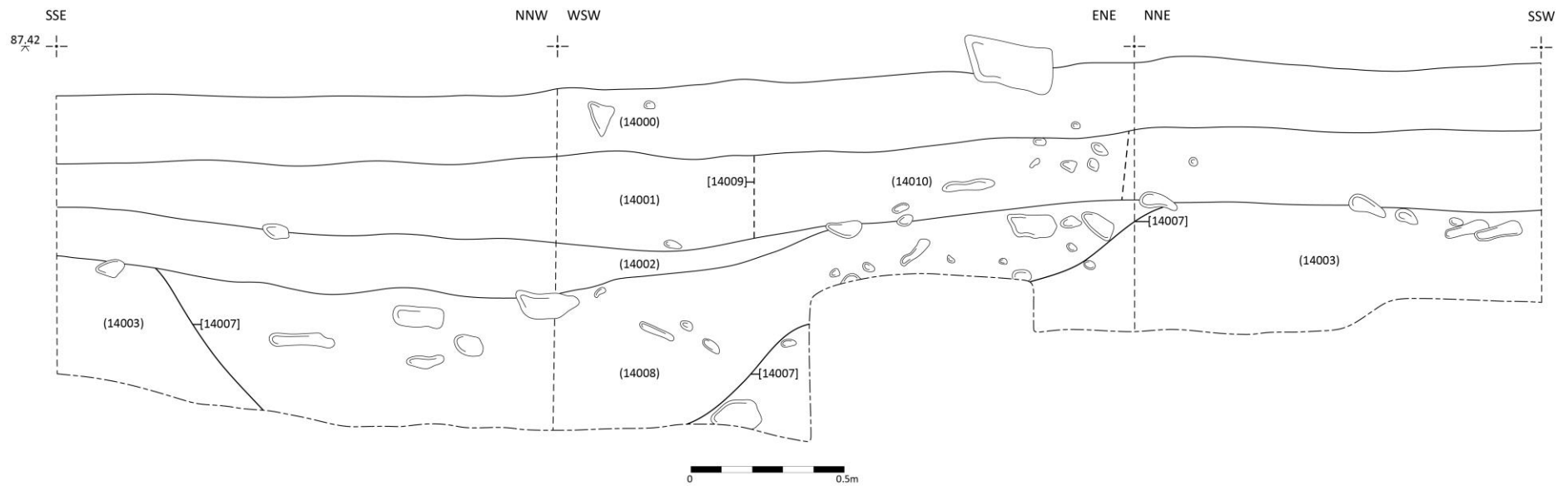


Fig.3: Section (S009) of Trench 14.

The linear feature [14007] ran NE-SW and contained a single fill (14008) of natural silting. The linear was partially exposed within the NNW end of Trench 14, continuing into the baulk and its full extent is thus unknown. The fill contained 14 fragments of 13th Century pottery (*Appendix 1*). A palaeoenvironmental sample contained traces of charred remains, bone and slag, the latter likely due to field spreading rather than domestic waste (*Appendix 2*).

Trench 15 was excavated to 0.47m to reveal natural clays (15001) at 0.25m below topsoil (15000); no cuts or features were present within the trench and no finds recovered.

Trench 16 revealed two modern drainage cuts within the natural (16002). The SE extent of the trench revealed substantial modern disturbance containing frequent fragments of modern ceramic drain. The NW end of the trench revealed no further disturbance; no finds were recovered.

Trench 17 was located adjacent to the NE field boundary and modern agricultural buildings; the ground in this area was flooded. The natural was revealed at a depth of 0.43m and contained two areas of rooting. The subsoil contained very frequent post-medieval pottery, typical of a domestic dump. No further finds or features were identified.



Plate 4: View SSW of Trench 21 sondage

Trench 18 revealed natural reddish-brown clay (18002) at a depth of 0.45m, with a *sondage* at the SSW extent of the trench encountering bluish-grey clay (18003) at 0.76m. No finds or archaeological features were identified.

Trench 19 was excavated to a depth of 0.60m and revealed natural at a depth of 0.40m. A modern N-S drainage cut was noted at the NE end.

Trench 20 revealed a modern land drain and linear cutting through the natural (20002) at a depth of 0.34m. The NE-SW linear revealed a modern fill of brick fragments and glazed interior tiles, this feature was not recorded further.

Trench 21 revealed the natural at a depth of 0.36m with bluish-grey clays (21002) revealed at a depth of 0.73m within a *sondage* at the NW end of the trench. No finds were recovered.

Trench 22 revealed the natural at a depth of 0.28m (22002), with a *sondage* excavated to 1.20m; no further finds or archaeological features were revealed.

9 Conclusion

A general paucity of archaeological features and deposits precludes detailed characterization of the site in terms of pre-modern activity.

A possible linear feature revealed in Trench 14 extending beyond the trench limits was found to contain 13th Century pottery in sufficient quantity to suggest contemporary occupation somewhere in the immediate vicinity. This is supported by the presence of cattle (*Bos*), horse (*Equus*), sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) and freshwater bream (*Abramis brama*) remains.

However, no evidence of a medieval settlement focus was revealed, the dominant signature being that of modern agriculture. Land drains were encountered across the site interspersed with surface and subsoil dumps of modern building materials and domestic waste, reflecting the location of the site close to modern farm buildings and the likely dispersal of material through ploughing. Additionally, the sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*) burial in Trench 5 attests to modern livestock farming.

These results offer little potential to address themes identified in *The Archaeology of the West Midlands: A Framework for Research* (Watt 2011).

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12 Appendix 1: Pottery and Ceramic Building Material

*K. H. Crooks
Border Archaeology*

12.1 Summary

A total of 32 sherds (343.2g) of pottery was recovered from the site. Of these, 17 sherds were medieval in date, all but one of which was recovered from Trench 14. The remaining pottery all dated to the later post-medieval and modern periods. A further small sherd of medieval date was recovered from soil sample <4>, also from Trench 14.

12.2 Method

The pottery was washed and examined by eye using a hand-lens. It was classified by fabric and form according to work by Vince (1985, 2002) and Bryant (2004).

12.3 The pottery

12.3.1 The medieval pottery

With the exception of a single sherd of later Herefordshire ware (Fabric A7B) from Trench 19, all medieval pottery was recovered from Trench 14.

The assemblage from Trench 14 was closely datable (to the early-to-mid-13th Century) and of sufficient size (16 sherds) to suggest nearby occupation rather than the spreading of midden material/rubbish to fertilize fields. The majority of the sherds were recovered from either (14008), the fill of a ditch or pit extending beyond the N end of the trench, or from the subsoil in the vicinity of that feature. The only later pottery from this trench was from the fill (14005) of a fence- or gatepost.

The postulated early to mid-13th Century date for (14008) is supported by the rim of a Worcester jar or cooking pot (Fabric C1), Bryant's Type 3, manufactured between the mid-12th and mid-14th Century (Bryant 2004, 290). This particular material becomes less common in Hereford from the end of the 12th Century onwards (Vince 1985, 53).

Locally manufactured fabric A2, probably made to the S of Hereford, also dates to the earlier part of the 13th Century in the city, where it can form up to 20% of an assemblage (Vince 1985, 39). Two sherds were present, one of which had recently been broken into three smaller fragments. The rim of a jar or cooking pot from the Malvern region (fabric B1) dated to the late 12th to early 13th Century. Malvernian cooking pots largely replace those of local Herefordshire manufacture through the 13th Century, forming as much as 77% of assemblages (Vince 1985, 48). The presence of later glazed fabric A7B would indicate at least a mid-13th Century date; this became the most common jug fabric during the 14th to 15th Century at the expense of regionally imported wares.

A single decorated sherd of a jug in Worcester fabric C2 from (14008) had a dark green external glaze and a square roller-stamped pattern. It was first introduced to Hereford in the 13th Century, probably slightly earlier than A7B.

From the subsoil/natural interface (14001/14002) in the same trench, a rim of a jar or cooking pot in Malvernian fabric B1 is of slightly later, 14th Century, date than those from (14008) (*Table 1*). The sherd was found with a sherd of a jug in fabric A7B and fragments of roof tile in the same fabric.

12.3.2 The post-medieval pottery

All the post-medieval pottery from the site was of 18th Century or later date. No earlier post-medieval pottery (16th to 17th century) was recovered.

From Trench 8 was a sherd of Staffordshire or Bristol slipware (STSL) with marbled slip decoration. This decorative scheme most probably dates to the middle of the 18th Century. Three sherds of creamware, also 18th century, were recovered from the same trench, including a plate with a royal rim.

The sherd of creamware (Crea) in the fill (14005) of the socket for a probable fencepost would suggest a date for this feature in the 18th Century. Remaining pottery from this trench was of medieval date.

The creamware from (5001) was roughly glazed and with a streak of cobalt in the glaze. This may have been intended to lessen the cream colour, producing 'pearlware' of whiter hue. The roughness of the glaze, however, suggests lower quality material.

The remaining pottery consisted of wares dating to the 19th to 20th Century, including two joining sherds of 'willow pattern' transfer printed ware (TPW) from (6003) and from the topsoil/subsoil interface in Trench 1 (1001) a sherd of Cornish Blue and white ware which dates to after 1864.

12.3.3 The ceramic building material (CBM)

While the majority of the 13 fragments (772g) of CBM from the site were of post-medieval or modern date, four small fragments (total 172g) of glazed tile in Herefordshire fabric A7 (13th to 15th Century) were found in Trench 14. A tiled roof is generally thought to suggest a high-status building in the vicinity. While this may be the case, it should also be remembered that building material would be reused wherever possible.

The remaining tiles from the site, with the exception of modern building rubble probably used as consolidation or levelling, was of Herefordshire fabric A10 and dated from the middle of the 16th Century onwards, becoming common in the 17th and 18th Century.

Further CBM recovered from three environmental samples (<2>, <3> & <4>) is catalogued below (*Table 3*) but the small size of the fragments meant that further identification was not possible.

12.4 Discussion

The medieval pottery was all produced in Herefordshire or the Malverns and Worcestershire; non-regional imports are not common in Hereford in the medieval period and the presence of such wares on a rural site would be unusual.

The pottery comprises part of a normal domestic assemblage including jars or cooking pots with evidence for sooting on the exterior and three glazed sherds almost certainly from jugs.

The predominance of unglazed jars or cooking vessels would tend to suggest a date in the early to middle part of the 13th Century, as would the presence of Worcestershire unglazed vessels. Unglazed wares predominate in earlier medieval assemblages, although the proportion declines into the 14th Century. It is thought that, by the end of the 14th Century, most households would have had a brass cooking pot, reducing the need for ceramic cooking vessels.

Herefordshire fabric A7B is first found in the middle part of the 13th Century. A date in the earlier part of the 13th Century is supported by the fact that no Malvernian Oxidised Glazed ware was present on the site.

Malvernian Oxidised Glazed Ware (B4) first appeared in the 13th Century and, by the later part of the 15th Century, it comprised almost half of the pottery found in Hereford (Vince 2002, 71). It is almost certain that material of this type would be present in a later or more mixed assemblage. However, the very small size of the assemblage must be borne in mind when attempting such analysis.

The closely dated nature of the assemblage suggests that the abrasion noted throughout might be a result of soil conditions on the site, in addition to, or instead of, the material being subject to wear prior to secondary deposition in and around pit or ditch [14007]. A similar degree of abrasion was present on all the medieval sherds.

The rooftile may suggest a relatively high-status structure in the area, although it should be noted that rooftiles were reused wherever possible following the demolition of the original structure with which they were associated.

12.4.1 Recommendations

The medieval pottery should be added to the corpus of material from previous evaluations on the site and retained as part of the site archive.

| Context | Fabric | No. Sh. | Wt. g | Comments |
|---------|--------|---------|-------|---|
| 14001/2 | A7B | 1 | 1.7 | Abraded; trace external gl. |
| 14001/2 | B1 | 1 | 7.8 | Rim Vince 1985 Fig.38.6 – 22cm diam C14. |
| 14008 | B1 | 2 | 22.2 | Abraded; however, traces sooted exterior. |
| 14008 | A7B | 1 | 9.8 | Ext; abraded mottled green gl. |
| 14008 | C1 | 3 | 32.5 | One rim 20cm diam approx.; abraded. rim Bryant type 3 fig. 177.5. |
| 14008 | B1 | 2 | 44.9 | Jar. Rim Vince 1985 fig. 53.12. Diam 26cm; LC12-EC13. |
| 14008 | B1 | 1 | 12.6 | Very abraded. |
| 14008 | B1 | 1 | 0.86 | Very abraded. From soil sample <4>. |
| 14008 | C2 | 1 | 6.4 | Green gl.; square roller-stamp. |
| 14008 | A2 | 4 | 9.4g | Jar. Three fragments recent breaks. C13. |
| 19000 | A7B | 1 | 8.6 | Green glaze; much abraded; oxid. through. |

Table 1: The medieval pottery

| Context | Fabric | No. Sh. | Wt. g | Comments |
|---------|--------------|---------|-------|--|
| 8000 | Crea | 3 | 17.7 | One royal edge plate – C18. |
| 8000 | STSL | 1 | 15.1 | White body, trailed black and white slip. C18. |
| 6001 | TPW | 2 | 8.5 | White; trademark on one. |
| 6003 | TPW | 2 | 2.6 | Joining sherds. Willow pattern Late C18-C19. |
| 5001 | Crea | 2 | 43.8 | Plate; 2 joining sherds; rough glaze with cobalt streak – C18. |
| 1000 | Cornish blue | 1 | 5.6 | Blue and white – 1864 + |
| 1000 | china | 1 | 30.7 | Bone china eggcup; fluted – recent. |
| 1000 | Engs | 1 | 7.1 | Stoneware C19. |
| 14005 | Crea | 1 | 4.2 | Plain creamware – C18. |
| 17001 | Engs | 1 | 52 | Brown teapot spout C19 to C20. |

Table 2: The post-medieval pottery

| Context | Fabric | No. Sh. | Wt. g | Comments |
|---------|--------|---------|-------|--|
| 4000 | Modern | 2 | 83 | One glazed; C20. |
| 4000 | A10 | 1 | 81 | Oxidized throughout. C17-C18. |
| 14001 | A7 | 1 | 91 | Traces clear tan gl. Thin Very abraded and micaceous C13-C15. |
| 14001 | A10 | 1 | 17 | Trace of reddish glaze. C18 or later. |
| 14001/2 | A7 | 2 | 64 | One has thin green glaze, other a patch of green speckled gl. Abraded C13-C15. |
| 14008 | A7 | 1 | 26 | Green glaze; Abraded. |
| 14008 | A10 | 1 | 124 | Sanded one side. |
| 14008 | | 35 | 0.88 | From soil sample <4>. Too small to identify. |

| Context | Fabric | No. Sh. | Wt. g | Comments |
|---------|--------|---------|-------|---|
| 5001 | | 1 | 85 | Bathroom, kitchen type glazed tile C19/C20. |
| 5001 | A10 | 1 | 123 | Nib; sanded surface C18. |
| 5003 | | 20 | 0.12 | From soil sample <2>. Too small to identify |
| 1000 | A10 | 1 | 22 | Sanded surface. |
| 1000 | ? | 1 | 56 | Reduced glaze; v coarse white fabric; drain? 5 cm bore and 2.2cm thick. |
| 14005 | | 7 | 0.05g | From soil sample <3>. Too small to identify. |

Table 3: The ceramic building material

12.5 References

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13 Appendix 2: Palaeoenvironmental Remains

Amy Bunce
Border Archaeology

13.1 Non-Technical Summary

This report has been prepared by the Palaeoenvironmental Department at Border Archaeology (BA) to facilitate and elucidate the palaeoenvironmental, palaeoeconomic and palaeodietary interpretations of a sequence of features discovered during Archaeological Field Evaluation of land designated for the construction of housing at Holmer House Farm Hereford.

A total of three samples, comprising 60ℓ of material, were processed by flotation, having originated from a sequence of features of largely unknown date and function but appearing rural in nature.

In addition, a separate wood report (BA 2018) addresses a recovered timber.

The assemblage was largely inconclusive, with minimal archaeobotanics recovered. However, the abundance of modern botanical material, in addition to probable post-medieval finds, may suggest the features were of comparatively recent date. This would be in keeping with a post-medieval or later medieval (at the earliest) date for the timber.

13.2 Introduction

This report details the results derived from three samples, constituting a total of 60ℓ of soil, from a small pit, a posthole and a linear.

In accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (BA 2018), at least 40ℓ or 100% of the deposits were sampled. This resulted in three samples comprising 60ℓ of material being received by the Palaeoenvironmental Department and processed through flotation, with the resultant archaeological and archaeobotanical material sorted and identified.

The samples were processed by means of flotation and any potential archaeobotanical remains from both the floating element and the heavier residue/retent were sorted and visually identified. The nature and interpretative significance of the recovered remains is detailed in Section 13.4.1 below.

The three samples were taken in multiples of 10ℓ sample buckets from three contexts from three features, from which between 10ℓ and 40ℓ were taken, dependent on the ability to sample secure contexts. The results are presented by context in Section 13.4.2 below.

13.2.1 Site Description

The land comprising the evaluation covered farmland surrounding Holmer House Farm at Holmer West Hereford. The total area of the evaluation was approximately 30000m² and intended for the construction of approximately 100 residential units. The area comprised fields shown as orchard on the historic mapping but more recently as open fields.

Archaeological Field Evaluation comprising 22 trenches was undertaken in early 2018.

The site generally sloped up to the E, with a steep slope beyond the A49. A watercourse occupied the W perimeter of the site, which drained the land.

- Soils and Geology

The underlying geological deposits were well-drained, although clay predominated (SSEW 1983). Such conditions could create variable taphonomic influences on the material, although the predominance of partially waterlogged and uncharred modern material would suggest that preservation was extremely good.

13.3 Methodology

13.3.1 Objectives of analysis

The purpose of the palaeoenvironmental sampling strategy implemented during archaeological evaluations is the retrieval of non-specific palaeoenvironmental remains and the further characterisation of features that cannot be fully investigated due to the confines of the evaluation parameters. An additional purpose to palaeoenvironmental reporting in the case of archaeological evaluations is the recommendation of further, potentially specific, palaeoenvironmental sampling in further archaeological mitigation.

13.3.2 Sampling methodology

Sampling methodology followed the *Palaeoenvironmental Department Manual* (BA 2017) for environmental sampling and processing and with reference to Historic England guidance (Campbell *et al.* 2011). On site, the samples were collected in sample buckets and identified by context and sample number. Following receipt into the Palaeoenvironmental Department, they were assigned bucket numbers for tracking purpose. The samples were not subject to subsampling and their entirety was processed by means of flotation.

Flotation was undertaken in Siraf-style tanks (Williams 1973) with a 500µm retent mesh and 250µm flot sieve. No refloating was required for these samples. Retents were initially scanned by magnet to retrieve any archaeometallurgical debris and a sieve bank was used to facilitate visual sorting, with the smaller fractions sorted by means of magnifying lamp and/or illuminated stereo zoom microscopy ($\leq \times 10$). The flots were sorted entirely by means of illuminated stereo zoom microscopy ($\leq \times 10$). The results of this analysis are reported with the flot and retent data recombined due to limited to no variance in the species being reported.

13.3.3 Personnel

Flotation and primary analysis were undertaken by staff within BA's Palaeoenvironmental Department managed under the post-excavation remit of Janice McLeish MA and supervised by Robin Putland BSc MSc. The department consists of a minimum of 10 members of staff, predominantly with postgraduate palaeoenvironmental qualifications. This work was further assisted by BA's field staff as part of a programme of Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Analysis and identification were only undertaken by the palaeoenvironmental department under the guidance of Robin Putland BSc MSc and Amy Bunce BSc MA ACIfA, who additionally maintains directorial control.

External and internal specialists were consulted for all archaeological finds and faunal material recovered from palaeoenvironmental samples. Archaeological, archaeometallurgical and archaeozoological assemblages from the palaeoenvironmental material were recombined with the full site assemblages to ensure unbiased and broader specialist reporting on those materials.

13.4 Description of Results

13.4.1 Description and implications of materials recovered

Detailed below are the general implications of the discovery of certain materials within the palaeoenvironmental samples. Section 13.4.2 details such information by context. Of particular note is the presence of fragments of charred legumes.

- Finds

Archaeological finds within palaeoenvironmental samples are fairly common and help confirm that the sampling of the material was not biased in any manner.

In this case, pottery, CBM and glass were present and suggestive of a date of limited antiquity. In addition, mortar and coal/coke are likely to be post-medieval.

- Bone

Both burnt and unburnt bone may be present within palaeoenvironmental samples, with taphonomic conditions occasionally proportionately affecting their preservation. Burnt bone is reasonably conclusively of anthropogenic origin, deriving from domestic activities, as well as some industrial and funereal practices. Unburnt bone may additionally have become incorporated due to animal death in the vicinity of the context while it was forming and therefore cannot always be used as an indicator of human activity. Incidences of the inadvertent inclusion of unburnt bone from decomposed individuals, especially of small mammals and reptiles, can highlight specific ecological niches. However, it is by no means the case that all unburnt bone derives from such cases and unburnt bone from large mammals is a good indicator of nearby settlement and potential butchery.

Unburnt mammal bone was present in significant quantities, although fragmentary; the presence of small mammal bone may suggest that the bone largely derived from natural as opposed to anthropogenic sources.

- Shell

Terrestrial shell comprises that from snails that may have been present in the area during deposition of the fills. Identification of the species represented highlights any ecological niches preferred by certain species in the environments they inhabited.

Archaeomalacological identification is undertaken inhouse by Robin Putland BSc MSc, additionally utilising reference texts (Cameron 2008; Evans 1972; Kerney & Cameron 1979; Welter-Schultes 2012). Environmental interpretations were based upon a combined autecological and synecological approach as advised by Davies (Davies 2008), using ecological groups for terrestrial and freshwater species, as designated by Evans (Evans 1972) and Sparks (Sparks 1961), respectively. The ecological preferences of each species were inferred by reference to Kerney and Cameron (Kerney & Cameron 1979) and Welter-Schultes (Welter-Schultes 2012).

Interpretations of palaeoenvironments using mollusca are limited by taphonomic uncertainty due to the effects of gravity, bioturbation and redeposition by hydrological processes affecting the distribution of shells within sediments, processes which are understood only superficially (Lowe & Walker 1997). Additionally, only well-preserved shells are suitable for identification; therefore, the recovered fauna may not be representative of the true fauna. Limitations of autecology and synecology, relating to uniformitarianist assumptions, the poorly understood factors influencing the distribution of a particular species, the broad ranges of environments inhabited by many molluscan species (Davies 2008), unknown associations between past molluscan fauna (Bush 1988) and the lack of applicable modern analogues for past environments limits the extent with which palaeoenvironments can be reconstructed using this method.

One incidence of indeterminate terrestrial shell was identified and is therefore not statistically viable.

- Charcoal

Charcoal is ubiquitous in palaeoenvironmental samples, as it is used in domestic, funerary and industrial settings or may be present as a result of accidental firings. Identification of the wood species making up the charcoal assemblage can add valuable data as to wood selection for the varying purposes.

While often relied upon for dating, in particular C^{14} , charcoal is not the best material to use. Charcoal is subject to the 'Old Wood problem', whereby wood is known to be frequently reused and charcoal redeposited. In addition, wood grows over many years and it is not possible to know precisely where within the tree a charcoal fragment has derived.

Anthracological analysis is undertaken inhouse by Amy Bunce BSc MA ACIfA, additionally utilising reference keys (Hather 2000; Schweingruber 1990, Schweingruber 1990). Anthracological analysis was generally undertaken at $\times 100$ magnification, although higher magnifications to $\times 400$ were used where necessary. Lighting was by incident

lighting, with transmitted lighting where necessary. Charcoal was transversally sectioned with tangential or radial sectioning undertaken where required. Any waterlogged or otherwise preserved wood present would be presented in a separate Wood Identification and Technology report.

Growth-ring curvature and diameter size was classified by reference to Ludemann-Nelle (L-N) templates (Ludemann 2002; Nelle 2002), whereby classes I, II, III, IV & V represented diameters <20mm, 20-30mm, 30-50mm, 50-100mm and >100mm, respectively. Growth-ring curvature was additionally classified by reference to Marguerie-Hunot (M-H) test cards (Marguerie & Hunot 2007), whereby weak, moderate and strong curvature were categorised 1, 2 and 3, respectively.

The charcoal was largely fragmentary and too small for identification. However, a few pieces were identified as oak. As the most obviously identified species, oak has a bias and the identifiable occurrence solely of oak is therefore disregarded.

- Slag

Archaeometallurgical debris may be present in the form of unspecific slag fragments, diagnostic slag fragments, vitrified structures and, more commonly for environmental samples, as hammerscale of the spheroidal or flake variety. Slag may be retrieved from both the flot and retent; this apparent contradiction, in that slag would normally be too heavy to float, is due to vesicles containing air in the spheroidal hammerscale and the smaller fragments of slag. Droplets of slag become spheroidal if they cool while travelling through the air after having been propelled during ironworking.

Small quantities of slag were present in (14008) and are likely the result of field-spreading incorporation, as opposed to proximity to metalworking.

- Uncharred archaeobotanical material

In the vast majority of instances of uncharred archaeobotanical material in palaeoenvironmental samples, it must be disregarded as of potentially modern origin. However, waterlogged conditions and some other preservational conditions can allow uncharred archaeobotanical remains or certain archaeobotanical remains within the assemblage to be considered.

Significant quantities of uncharred material were recovered and recognised as clearly modern. This included *Plantago major* (plantain) seeds and other ground-dwelling grassland species. Such species have not been recorded in the results table and are discounted.

- Charred archaeobotanical material

Charred archaeobotanical material is generally the most illustrative palaeo-economic remnant. Charring is generally accepted to be almost solely of anthropogenic origin and the material can therefore be used to directly reconstruct the past agricultural or consumer economy and diet. It should be noted that there is an intrinsic bias

towards the survival of charred assemblages with respect to uncharred plant remains; however, such variance is built into the study of charred plant remains.

Archaeobotanical identification is undertaken inhouse utilising reference texts that include the most valid to the British assemblages (Anderburg 1994; Berggren 1969; Berggren 1981; Groningen Institute of Archaeology 2006-present; Jacomet 2006; Martin & Barkley 2000; Renfrew 1973; Schoch *et al.*, 1988) with classification following Stace (Stace 2010).

Charred legumes were present in fragmentary form and therefore undiagnostic; however, their presence in quantity is significant. In addition to the legumes, barley rachis and grass seeds suggest cereal-drying in the vicinity, with accidental burning of the chaff and inadvertent crop inclusions.

13.4.2 Description of palaeoenvironmental remains by selected context

Detailed below are the palaeoenvironmental remains from each context; an assessment of the localised palaeoenvironment reconstruction is attempted. Results for all contexts can be observed in the table in Section 13.5 below.

- (5003)

(5003) was the fill of a small pit and contained CBM and glass suggestive of a more modern date, in addition to undatable bone, charcoal and indeterminate seeds. As such, it exhibits no palaeoenvironmental signature to assist interpretation.

- (14005)

(14005) was the fill of a posthole that contained timber reported on separately (*Appendix 3*). It too contained uncharred wood, of which some was identifiable as oak, in keeping with the identification of the timber, and therefore likely to be pieces sheared-off from the main post. In addition, (14005) contained only CBM and coal/coke, which may suggest that it was a rapidly backfilled deposit, with limited opportunity for the inclusion of archaeobotanics or other materials.

- (14008)

(14008) was the fill of a linear and the most diverse sample; it was possible to fully sample this deposit within the confines of the trenching. However, the results merely suggest a rural origin, with the potential for crop-drying (of legumes and barley) in the vicinity. This is suggested by charred remains that may be the result of accidental firings. The presence of slag may be the result of field-spreading and not suggestive of metalworking nearby. Likewise, the presence of bone is more likely to represent native populations than domestic waste.

13.5 Table of results

The following table details the abundance results from both the archaeobotanical material and archaeological finds. Weight and quantity records are recorded but are not presented here due to variation between materials.

Abundance key: + = rare; ++ = occasional; +++ = common; ++++ = abundant.

| Context no. | | | 5003 | 14005 | 14008 | | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Sample no. | | | 2 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 |
| Sample part | | | 1/1 | 1/1 | 1/4 | 2/4 | 3/4 | 4/4 |
| Bucket no. | | | E15075 | E15076 | E15077 | E15078 | E15079 | E15080 |
| Sample vol. (mℓ) | | | 50 | 600 | 250 | 300 | 900 | 300 |
| % sample analysed | | | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| Waterlogged? | | | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Refloated? | | | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Latin name | Common name | Plant part | | | | | | |
| Carbonised cereal | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Hordeum</i> sp. | Barley | rachis | | | | 1 | | |
| <i>Poaceae</i> spp. | Grass | caryopsis | | | 1 | | | |
| Carbonised taxa | | | | | | | | |
| Legume indet. | Indeterminate | seed | | | | + | + | |
| Indeterminate | Indeterminate | seed | 1 | | 1 | | | |
| Uncarbonised wood | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Quercus</i> sp. | Oak | stemwood | | + | | | | |
| Indeterminate | Indeterminate | fragments | | + | | | | |
| Charcoal | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Quercus</i> sp. | Oak | stemwood (10+ years) | | | 1 | | | |
| <i>Quercus</i> sp. | Oak | stemwood | | | 4 | | 2 | |
| Indeterminate <2mm | Indeterminate | fragments | + | | + | + | + | + |
| Archaeometallurgical | | | | | | | | |
| Slag | - | - | | | + | + | | |
| Artefactual | | | | | | | | |
| Ceramic/pottery | - | - | | | | + | | |
| CBM | - | - | ++ | + | ++ | + | + | ++ |
| Glass | - | - | + | | | + | | |
| Mortar | - | - | | | ++ | | | |
| Coal/coke | - | - | | + | + | | | |
| Faunal | | | | | | | | |
| Mammal (unburnt) | Indeterminate | - | + | | ++ | ++ | | |
| Small mammal (unburnt) | Indeterminate | - | + | | ++ | + | | |
| Fish (unburnt) | Indeterminate | - | | | + | | | |

| | | Context no. | 5003 | 14005 | 14008 | | | |
|-------------|---------------|-------------|------|-------|-------|--|--|--|
| Molluscan | | | | | | | | |
| Terrestrial | Indeterminate | - | | | + | | | |

13.6 Conclusions and recommendations

The intention of the non-specific palaeoenvironmental sampling was largely successful when considered in terms of the likelihood of disparate rural features giving meaningful palaeoenvironmental results. It is probable that the material represented is post-medieval in date and this is further supported by the survival of modern uncharred material amongst the samples. The timber (BA 2018), interpreted as an agricultural gatepost or support-post, may indicate that the other features on site are associated with an intensification of agriculture in the post-medieval period.

13.6.1 Recommendations

Due to the nature of the materials recovered and full analysis undertaken, no further work is recommended.

Retention of the materials detailed above as an incorporation of the site archive for deposition with the museum is recommended.

13.7 Copyright

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14 Appendix 3: Wood

Amy Bunce
Border Archaeology

14.1 Non-Technical Summary

This report has been prepared by the Palaeoenvironmental Department at Border Archaeology (BA) to inform on the use of wood discovered during Archaeological Evaluation at land designated for residential development at Holmer House Farm Hereford.

One sizable timber was recovered from deposit (14006) from Trench 14. It presented a transversal base cut with possible tangential trimming and considerable damage leading up the trunk. The species was identified as oak and growth-rings showed an age far exceeding 100 years. Preservation was by waterlogging externally with solid wood towards the centre.

It is suggested that the wood recovered represents a substantial degraded fence-, gate- or marker-post that may date to the late medieval or post-medieval period.

14.2 Introduction

This report details the results of wood technology and species ID analysis.

In accordance with the WSI (BA 2018), the wood was recovered and received by the Palaeoenvironmental Department for analysis.

14.2.1 Site Description

The land comprising the evaluation covered farmland surrounding Holmer House farm at Holmer West, Hereford. The total area of the evaluation was approximately 30000m² and intended for the construction of approximately 100 residential units. The area comprised fields formerly utilised as orchards but more recently comprising open fields.

Archaeological evaluation comprising 22 trenches was undertaken in early 2018.

The site generally sloped up to the E with a steep slope beyond the A49. A water course occupied the W perimeter of the site, which drained the land.

- Soils and Geology

The underlying geological deposits were well drained although clay predominated (SSEW 1983). It is probable that the inclusion of clay allowed for conditions that partially preserved the wood by waterlogging although the considerable damage to one end strongly suggests this waterlogging was seasonal.

14.3 Methodology

14.3.1 Objectives of analysis

The purpose of wood technology and species ID analysis for an evaluation is the further characterisation of features and/or deposits from which the wood derived. In addition, wood analysis may support the regional research frameworks. In the case of evaluations, wood analysis can inform on strategies for wood or anthracological analysis during any potential archaeological mitigation.

14.3.2 Sampling methodology

Sampling and recovery methodology followed the *Palaeoenvironmental Department Manual* (BA 2017) for environmental sampling and processing and with reference to Historic England guidance (Campbell *et al.* 2011).

14.3.3 Analysis methodology

Waterlogged wood was identified for species determination by transversal sectioning with tangential or radial sectioning undertaken when required. The thin slices were water mounted for examination under magnification from $\times 100$ to $\times 400$ with incident lighting and transmitted lighting when required. Identification followed reference keys (Hather 2000; Schweingruber 1990; Schweingruber 1990) with classification following Stace (Stace 2010).

Wood technology was identified by cleaning of all surfaces and macroscopic examination.

14.3.4 Personnel

Anthracological, wood technology and species ID analysis was undertaken within BA's Palaeoenvironmental Department by Amy Bunce BSc MA ACIfA.

14.4 Description of Results

14.4.1 Wood species ID

As this report concerns only one timber, no table is displayed. Genus ID for the singular timber from (14006) was conclusively of *Quercus* sp. and, although the species cannot be determined because differentiation between *Quercus robur*, *Quercus petraea*, and *Quercus pubescens* cannot be made anatomically (Schweingruber 1990), it is highly likely to be *Quercus robur* as the native British species. *Quercus robur* is known as English Oak or Pedunculate Oak.

Growth rings numbered in excess of 100 and growth was generally slow and regular however some growth rings showed wide earlywood and limited latewood growth. Tyloses were noted although degradation was generally of external desiccation and rewetting with no noticeable fungal growth.

14.4.2 Wood technology

As this report concerns only one timber, no table is displayed. The timber derived from (14006) from Trench 14 and measured in excess of 200mm radially with an excess of 400mm along the length of the trunk. No bark or sapwood was present as the external surfaces were heavily degraded.

Conversion consisted of straight transversal cutting to create a flat base with tangential trimming on one side although no tool-markings were observable for the tangential trimming. It is highly probable that the transversal cut was made by a metal saw, which would date the working to medieval or post-medieval periods. All other surfaces were too degraded to identify toolings, workings or surface treatments.

14.5 Conclusions and recommendations

The age of the wood (in excess of 100 years) and size of the timber suggests that this was a significant timber required for a probable post. The toolings and workings strongly suggest that this was of later medieval or post-medieval date. It is therefore postulated that this represents an agricultural gate-, fence- or marker-post. It is possible that this relates to the use of the fields as orchards, as evidenced in the historic mapping, or hop-farming, whereby substantial support timbers are required at the end of each row. The timber was likely left in place as evidenced by the degradation of the upper parts.

14.6 Recommendations

Due to the full analysis conducted, no further work is recommended.

Retention of the materials recovered is not recommended due to the condition and probable later date of the wood.

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15 Appendix 4: Faunal Remains

Chris Faine
Border Archaeology

15.1 Introduction

1.1kg of faunal material was recovered from the evaluation yielding 14 'countable' bones (see below). A further 33 bones were classed as 'Large or Medium sized mammal', with 22 fragments being unidentifiable. All bones were collected by hand and from environmental samples. Only identifiable fragments are considered in the tables below.

Faunal remains were recovered from features dating from the medieval (13th Century) and post-medieval/modern periods. No information regarding residuality or contamination is available to the author at this time.

The bones are washed and bagged by context and stored at the Border Archaeology Office Milton Keynes.

15.2 Methodology

All data was initially recorded using a specially written MS Access database. Bones were recorded using a version of the criteria described in Davis (1992) and Albarella & Davis (1994). Criteria for ageing mandibles were taken from Payne (1973, 1987) for sheep, Grant (1982) and Halstead (1992) for pigs, Grant (1982) and Halstead (1985) for cattle and Levine (1982) for horses. Completeness was expressed in terms of percentage and zones present (after Dobney & Reilly 1988). Epiphyseal fusion data was also noted (after Silver 1969). The entire identifiable assemblage was quantified in terms of number of individual fragments (NISP) and number of individuals (MNI).

15.3 The Assemblage

Tables 1-3 below show the assemblage in its entirety and by phase. Sheep/goat is the dominant taxon, along with equal numbers of cattle and horse remains. A single fragment of freshwater bream vertebra was also recovered. Medieval remains were entirely recovered from Trench 14. Cattle is the dominant taxon, consisting of two adult tibia fragments and a portion of radius from (14001) and a single maxillary molar from (14008). Horse remains were recovered from subsoil in the form of an adult tibia and cervical vertebra. As mentioned above, (14008) contained a fragmentary precaudal vertebra of freshwater bream. Bream was one of the most popular freshwater food fish during this period, being kept in fishponds and caught commercially (a practice that increased during the 13th Century) until supplanted in popularity by carp in the 16th/17th Century (Currie 1989).

All post-medieval/modern sheep remains were recovered from topsoil in the form of a group of juvenile femora and tibiae, from animals no older than 1 ½ years at death. No butchery was observed on any specimen. A single portion of cattle innominate was recovered from (6003). The specimen was sawn through the neck of the ischium and showed cutmarks indicative of disarticulation of the pelvis. A single portion of horse calcaneus was also recovered from (5001).

| Species | NISP | NISP % | MNI | MNI % |
|---|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|
| Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>) | 7 | 50 | 5 | 45.5 |
| Cattle (<i>Bos</i>) | 3 | 21.5 | 3 | 27.3 |
| Horse (<i>Equus</i>) | 3 | 21.5 | 2 | 18.2 |
| Freshwater Bream (<i>Abramis brama</i>) | 1 | 7 | 1 | 9 |
| Total: | 14 | 100 | 11 | 100 |

Table 1: Species distribution for the assemblage

| Species | NISP | NISP % | MNI | MNI % |
|---|----------|------------|----------|------------|
| Cattle (<i>Bos</i>) | 2 | 33.3 | 2 | 40 |
| Horse (<i>Equus</i>) | 2 | 33.3 | 1 | 20 |
| Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>) | 1 | 16.7 | 1 | 20 |
| Freshwater Bream (<i>Abramis brama</i>) | 1 | 16.7 | 1 | 20 |
| Total: | 6 | 100 | 5 | 100 |

Table 2: Species distribution for the medieval assemblage

| Species | NISP | NISP % | MNI | MNI % |
|----------------------------------|----------|------------|----------|------------|
| Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>) | 6 | 75 | 4 | 66.6 |
| Cattle (<i>Bos</i>) | 1 | 12.5 | 1 | 16.7 |
| Horse (<i>Equus</i>) | 1 | 12.5 | 1 | 16.7 |
| Total: | 8 | 100 | 6 | 100 |

Table 3: Species distribution for the post-medieval/modern assemblage

15.4 Conclusions/recommendations

This is small assemblage, most likely representing general settlement waste. No further work is required.

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