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archaeology & built heritage



## Archaeological Observation

On behalf of

**Kinsey Hern Esq**

Concerning

**The Royal George  
Lyonshall  
Herefordshire  
HR5 3JN**

December 2018



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*Cover: View southwest showing The Royal George Inn and red brick barn/outbuilding*

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## 1 Executive Summary

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*Border Archaeology was instructed by Kinsey Hern Esq to undertake Archaeological Observation (archaeological watching brief) during development groundworks largely comprising basement excavations at The Royal George Lyonshall Herefordshire HR5 3JN, a Grade II listed 17<sup>th</sup> Century inn.*

*An initial visit was carried out by Border Archaeology to assess the site following commencement of preparatory groundworks.*

*The subsequent removal of a temporary surface under Archaeological Observation revealed no evidence for archaeological features.*

*Basement excavations were substantial, measuring c.25m × 16m × 4m (maximum depth), and revealed natural deposits throughout, with no surviving evidence for deeply cut archaeological features, such as pits, and no finds.*

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## 2 Introduction

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Border Archaeology Ltd (BA) was instructed by Kinsey Hern Esq to undertake Archaeological Observation (archaeological watching brief) of groundworks at The Royal George Lyonshall Herefordshire HR5 3JN (*fig. 1*), these forming part of the redevelopment of the site comprising alterations and extensions to the public house and a detached red brick barn, including a new basement, to accommodate a new cinema/exhibition space, shop, lavatories, entrance hall, children's soft play area, general storage and cafe.

Additional works (*fig. 1*) included conversion of land on the opposite side of the C1031 road from agricultural to A3/A4 use class to accommodate a carpark and free-standing storage building with pedestrian shelter (Planning Ref. P171686/F) (NGR SO 33780 55606). No Archaeological Observation was undertaken in this area.

Work on site took place between October 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> 2018 following a site visit on July 19<sup>th</sup> 2018.

### 2.1 Site Description

The site lies within the medieval settlement of Lyonshall (MHE7360) laid out on a linear plan extending to the SE of the Castle and 12<sup>th</sup> Century Church of St Michael and All Angels; much of the area between the Castle and the present village focus appears subsequently to have been abandoned following the Black Death.

No medieval archaeology has been found on the site but its location adjacent to an historic crossroads within the boundary of the medieval settlement indicated significant potential.

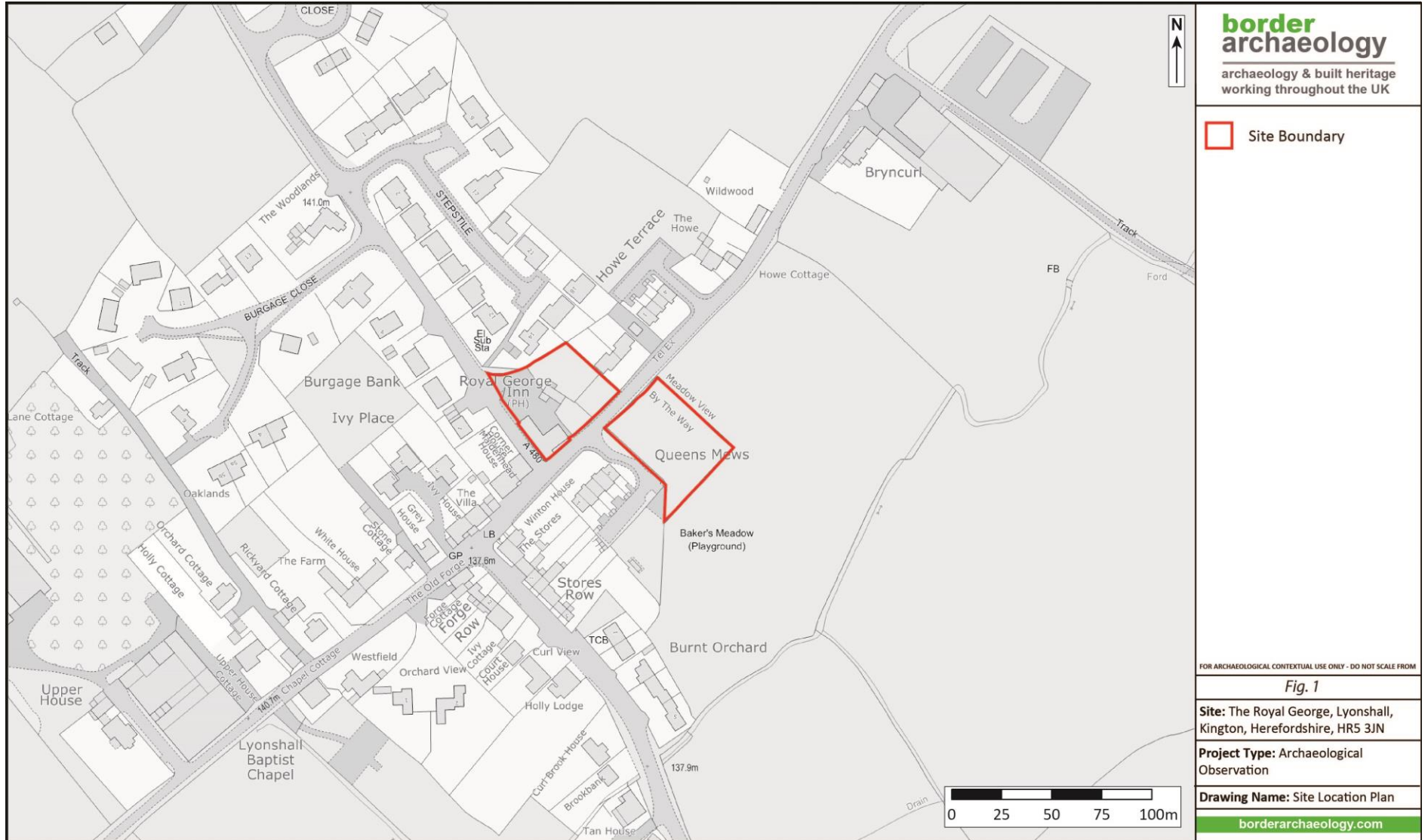
The Royal George Inn itself is a 17<sup>th</sup> Century Grade II listed building, with late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century alterations and additions (MHE4194; DHE923), and is currently disused. The timber-framed construction with both wattle-and-daub and part painted brick panels sits on a sandstone rubble plinth and is rendered on the street-front elevation. The inn was probably originally jettied along its street frontage but this has since been underbuilt.

The detached red brick barn to the rear dates from the 19<sup>th</sup> Century but features possible earlier masonry at its base. This outbuilding shows evidence of various usages, including stabling, barn, and storage.

#### 2.1.1 Soils and geology

Lyonshall lies within an area 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

The programme of archaeological work was carried out according to the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014b) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014c). BA adheres to the *ClfA Code of conduct* (2014a), to project management advice set out in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The Project Managers' Guide* (Lee 2015) and to *Requirements for Archaeological Projects in Herefordshire* (Herefordshire Council 2017). BA is also cognizant of *Archaeology and Development Supplementary Planning* (Herefordshire Council 2010).

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA) defines an archaeological watching brief (Archaeological Observation) as a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (ClfA 2014, 4).

- To allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.
- To provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

#### 3.1 Scheme of works

A site visit took place following commencement of preparatory groundworks and prior to the basement excavations, which were carried out by machine under Archaeological Observation. The work involved removal of a temporary surface followed by the excavation of an area measuring c.25m × 16m × 4m (maximum depth).

#### 3.2 Recording

Written, graphic and photographic records were made in accordance with BA's *Archaeological Field Recording Manual* (2017). The level of recording was of necessity subject to on-site engineering constraints.

No archaeological features or deposits were present on the site. A single drawing on gridded, archive-stable polyester drafting film recorded photographic locations.

The photographic record itself was made using a high-resolution digital camera. Generally, no scale could be used due to excavation depth and consequent substantial H&S issues.



### 3.3 Recovery, processing and curation of archaeological data

No archaeological features or deposits were present and no finds were recovered.

### 3.4 Palaeoenvironmental sampling

No deposits suitable for sampling were encountered during the course of the work.

## 4 Results

| Item | Context No. | Matrix Phase | Type    | Interpretation                | Discussion   | Finds      |     |      |       |            | Comments                            |
|------|-------------|--------------|---------|-------------------------------|--|------------|-----|------|-------|------------|-------------------------------------|
|      |             |              |         |                               |  | Small Find | Pot | Bone | Misc. | Sample No. |                                     |
| 1    | 001001      |              | Deposit | Modern consolidation surface. | Moderately compacted building rubble & stone. 25m NE-SW × 16m NW-SE × c.0.30m. Overlying (001002).   | -          | -   | -    | -     | -          | -                                   |
| 2    | 001002      |              | Deposit | Natural.                      | Very firm strongly reddish-brown silt clay; frequent water-rolled cobbles & larger stones; gravel patches; manganese flecking. >3.0m thick. Underlying (001001). | -          | -   | -    | -     | --         | Present throughout excavation area. |

## 5 Discussion

Removal of the temporary stone and rubble consolidation surface (001001) was carried out under Archaeological Observation and revealed no evidence for archaeological features.

The natural deposits (001002) beneath continued to the base of the excavation.

Whilst observation was constrained by the substantial depth of the basement excavation (*Plate 1*), it is confirmed that no deeply-cut archaeological features or finds were present.



*Plate 1: View SW of basement excavations nearing completion*



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## 6 Copyright

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## 7 References

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