

ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION

UPPER HOUSE

LYONSHALL

HEREFORDSHIRE

*NGR: SO 51186 39775
JOB N^o: BA1116UHL/02
SMR EVENT N^o: 1893*



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JULY 2011



CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY | 3 |
| 2. INTRODUCTION | 4 |
| 3. SITE DESCRIPTION | 4 |
| 4. METHODOLOGY | 5 |
| 5. RESULTS | 6 |
| 6. CONCLUSION | 9 |
| 7. CONTEXT REGISTER | 10 |

Cover: View of site, looking south

Report specification

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1. Non Technical Summary

Border Archaeology was instructed by Kinsey Hern Esq. to carry out archaeological observation of groundworks relating to the proposed redevelopment of a former cattle shed at Upper House Lyonshall Herefordshire as part of a more extensive redevelopment of the farm complex. This comprised a single trench running northwest-southeast and measuring 18.8m × 0.8m × 1m. The observation was carried out on June 29th 2011.

Groundworks revealed the natural glacial till at a depth of 0.5m below present ground level at the northwest extent of the trench, trending away to the southeast. Overlying this was a sterile silt deposit probably representing an accumulation of soil due to the effects of erosion and weathering (colluvium), which also trended southeast. Overlying this at the southeast extent of the trench was a substantial deposit of made ground deposit, probably contemporary with construction of the farm complex in the 1870s but possibly relating to an earlier phase of mid to late post-medieval building activity adjacent to the lane.

A brick drain extending east northeast-west southwest was identified in the southeast-facing section of the trench probably relating to the earlier phase of construction noted above; the drain had been truncated during the insertion of a stone foundation pad forming one of a series of structural supports underpinning the later cattle shed.



2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed in June 2011 by Kinsey Hern Esq to undertake archaeological observation during site works, as stated in the summary brief issued by Mr Julian Cotton Esq. Archaeological Advisor Herefordshire Council (Ref: DCNW2006/0975/F), in respect of a development at Upper House Lyonshall Herefordshire (NGR: SO 51186 39775) (*fig. 1*).

This report is part of a comprehensive programme of recording works that includes archaeological building recording, this being the subject of a separate report (BA1116UHL/01).



Fig. 1 Plan showing the location of Upper House

Copies of this report will be submitted to the client, Julian Cotton Esq. and to the Herefordshire Sites and Monuments Record.

3. Site description

Upper House (SMR No. 45850) lies on the western outskirts of Lyonshall in an area of argillic brown earths of the ESCRICK 1 series (571p). These deep and well-drained reddish soils overlie till deposits and are largely agricultural in character, exhibiting a coarse loamy composition.

The village has been designated as an 'Archaeologically Important Area' (Herefordshire Council 2010) and aerial photography has revealed possible traces of earlier settlement activity consisting of medieval burgage plot boundary banks, building platforms and field boundaries located within an area extending northeast from Upper House towards the church (Shoesmith 1999, 438).

A documentary reference to Upper House first appears in a marriage settlement of 1749 and the property was subsequently leased out to a succession of tenants during the course of the 19th

century. The present arrangement of outbuildings appears to have been established before 1887, as the historic map evidence reveals a marked difference in terms of layout between the complex as shown on estate plans of 1849 and 1860 and that depicted on the 1887 OS 1st edition map. It is likely that John Griffiths Beavan, owner of the Upper Farm estate from 1860 until his death in 1906, was responsible for the construction of the existing farmhouse and outbuildings, probably around 1870.

4. Methodology

The programme of archaeological observation was carried out in accordance with practices detailed by the Institute for Archaeologists in *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (2008). Border Archaeology adheres to the IfA *Code of conduct* (2010) and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology* (2008) and to Herefordshire Archaeology's *Standards for Archaeological Projects in Herefordshire (Issue 1)* (Herefordshire Council 2004).

The groundworks comprised a single northwest-southeast trench measuring 18.8m × 0.8m × 1m (*plate 1; fig. 2*), the excavation of which was subject to archaeological observation and recording. Full written, graphic and photographic records of any surviving deposits, features or structures of archaeological significance were made in accordance with Border Archaeology's *Field Recording Manual*.



Plate 1: View showing northwest extent of excavation trench

Plans and sections were produced on gridded, archivally stable polyester film at an appropriate scale and all drawings are numbered and listed in a drawing register, these numbers being cross-referenced to written site records.

The photographic record comprises high-resolution digital images indexed by frame number and cross-referenced to the written record. Other than general shots of work in progress, all photographs contain a scale.

5. Results

The uppermost of 30 contexts revealed was an accumulation of straw/manure (001), beneath which was a firm light reddish-brown silt deposit (007) of some 0.5m thickness containing occasional fragmentary animal bone.

A series of tapered masonry supports, each with a pin set into its upper face (*plate 2*), were dispersed at regular 2m intervals along the western elevation of the cattle shed. These measured approximately 0.5m × 0.5m × 0.5m and were set in foundation pits cut from (007); these pits were levelled and packed with sandstone rubble.



Plate 2: Stone supports for timber uprights

The pit at the southeast extent of the trench [028] truncated a brick drain/culvert running east northeast-west southwest (012) which comprised four courses of unfroged brick and a sandstone capstone. This was also cut from (007) but probably related to an earlier phase of construction.

Underlying (007) was a substantial deposit of made ground (010) consisting of cohesive, dark brownish-red gritty clay, which contained frequent angular stones and CBM and measured >1.2m in thickness. Underlying (010) was (009), a firm light orangey-brown silt containing occasional large rounded and sub angular stones, extending to a thickness of >1.05m, beneath which was (008) a firm dark reddish-brown clay with moderate small and frequent large rounded stones and pebbles.



Plate 3: View southwest of drain (012) and associated cut [011]



Plate 4: View southwest of centre of trench showing interface between (009) and (008)

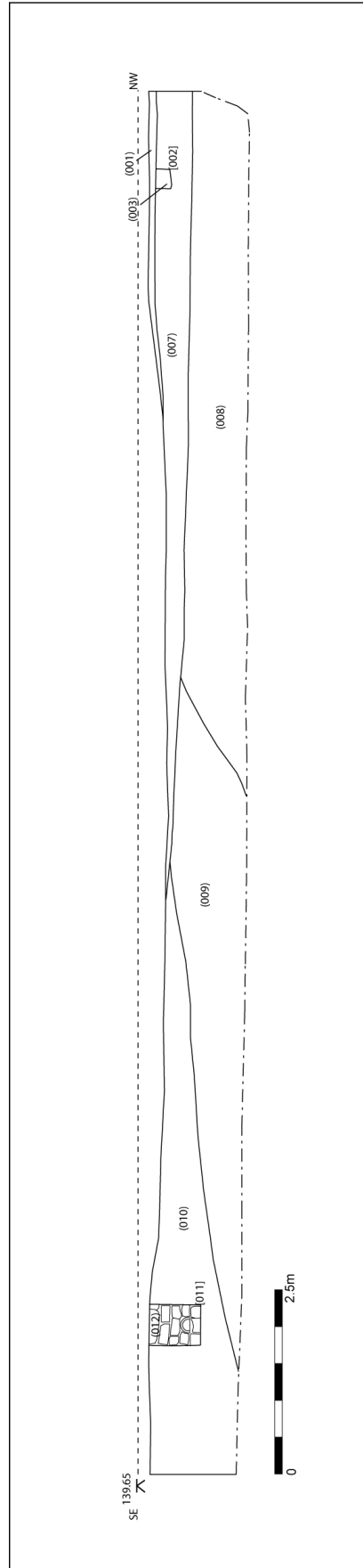


Fig. 2: Southwest-facing section showing features & deposits identified during the course of the groundworks



6. Conclusion

The groundworks revealed natural glacial till (008) at a depth of 0.5m below present ground level at the northwest extent of the trench, trending away to the southeast. Overlying this was sterile silt (009), possibly colluvium, also trending in this direction. Overlying this in the southeast extent of the trench was a thick deposit of made ground (010), probably contemporary with the construction of the farm complex in the 1870s but possibly related to an earlier phase of mid to late post-medieval building activity adjacent to the lane.

An east northeast-west southwest brick drain/culvert (012) probably relating to an earlier construction phase was identified in the southeast-facing section of the trench and had evidently been truncated by the insertion of a stone support, comprising one of a series of similar features running along the western elevation of the cattle shed.



7. Context register

| Context | Description |
|-----------------------|--|
| (001) | Loose, mid brown, silt, straw, animal waste, extends 4.2m × >0.8m by 0.25m. Overlies (003) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Modern occupation deposit</i> |
| [002] | Square cut measuring 0.25m × 0.25m by 0.2m. Break of slope (top) sharp. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base flat. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (003) Overlies (006) (015) (018) (021) (024) (027) and (030). Cuts (007) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for modern fence post</i> |
| (003) | Indurated, concrete, incorporates steel fence post, extends 0.25m × 0.25m by 0.2m. Underlies (001). Fills [002] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Modern fence post</i> |
| [004] | Square cut measuring 0.45m × 0.5m by 0.5m. Break of slope (top) diffuse. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base uneven. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (006) and (005). Cuts (007) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for stone pad for timber support</i> |
| (005) | Loose stone rubble, extends 0.45 × 0.5m × 0.2m. Underlies (006) Fills [004] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Packing fill for stone pad (006)</i> |
| (006) | Stone, worked, squared base, tapered sides, flat base, flat top, incorporates iron locating peg in top. Underlies [002] Overlies (005) Fills [004] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Stone support pad for timber upright</i> |
| (007) | Well compacted light reddish-brown silt, contains occasional animal bone, extends 10.7m × >0.8m by 0.5m. Cut by [004] [011] [013] [016] [019] [022] and [025]. Overlies (010) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Silt deposit possibly post medieval ploughsoil</i> |
| (008) | Well compacted dark reddish-brown, clay, small rounded stones, frequent large rounded stones and pebbles, extends 9.3m × >0.8m by >0.8m. Underlies (009) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Naturally derived glacial till deposition</i> |
| (009) | Firm, light orangey-brown silt, occasional large rounded and sub angular stones, extends 9.3m × >0.8m by >1.05m. Underlies (010) Overlies (008) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Sterile silt, possibly naturally derived colluvial deposit</i> |
| (010) | Cohesive, dark brownish-red, gritty clay, contains frequent angular stones and CBM, extends 8.25m × >0.8m by >1.2m. Underlies (007) Overlies (009) |



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| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Pre 1870 soil deposit, probably levelling deposit associated with the construction of the farm complex</i> |
| [011] | Linear cut, measuring >0.1m × 0.5m by 0.8m. Break of slope (top) sharp. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base flat. Oriented ENE-WSW. Cuts (007) Filled by (012) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut of drain in SE extent of trench, predating the farm complex constructed in the 1870s</i> |
| (012) | Linear drain constructed of 4 courses of unfrogged brick (110mm × 70mm × 210mm) with a sandstone capstone, probably running bond, no mortar discernible, extends >0.1m × 0.5m by 0.8m. Truncated by [028] Fills [011] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Brick built drain channel</i> |
| [013] | Square cut measuring 0.45m × 0.5m by 0.5m. Break of slope (top) diffuse. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base uneven. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (015) and (014). Cuts (007) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for stone pad for timber support</i> |
| (014) | Loose, stone rubble, extends 0.45 × 0.5m × 0.2m. Underlies (015) Fills [013] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Packing fill for stone pad (015)</i> |
| (015) | Stone, worked, squared base, tapered sides, flat base, flat top, incorporates iron locating peg in top. Underlies [002] Overlies (014) Fills [013] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Stone support pad for timber support</i> |
| [016] | Square cut measuring 0.45m × 0.5m by 0.5m. Break of slope (top) diffuse. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base uneven. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (018) and (017). Cuts (007) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for stone pad for timber support</i> |
| (017) | Loose, stone rubble, extends 0.45 × 0.5m × 0.2m. Underlies (018) Fills [016] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Packing fill for stone pad (018)</i> |
| (018) | Stone, worked, squared base, tapered sides, flat base, flat top, incorporates iron locating peg in top. Underlies [002] Overlies (017) Fills [016] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Stone support pad for timber support</i> |
| [019] | Square cut measuring 0.45m × 0.5m by 0.5m. Break of slope (top) diffuse. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base uneven. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (018) and (017). Cuts (007) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for stone pad for timber support</i> |
| (020) | Loose, stone rubble, extends 0.45 × 0.5m × 0.2m. Underlies (021) Fills [019] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Packing fill for stone pad (021)</i> |
| (021) | Stone, worked, squared base, tapered sides, flat base, flat top, incorporates iron locating peg in |



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| | top. Underlies [002] Overlies (020) Fills [019] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Stone support pad for timber post</i> |
| [022] | Square cut measuring 0.45m × 0.5m by 0.5m. Break of slope (top) diffuse. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base uneven. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (024) and (023). Cuts (007) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for stone pad for timber support</i> |
| (023) | Loose, stone rubble, extends 0.45 × 0.5m × 0.2m. Underlies (024) Fills [022] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Packing fill for stone pad (024)</i> |
| (024) | Stone, worked, squared base, tapered sides, flat base, flat top, incorporates iron locating peg in top. Underlies [002] Overlies (023) Fills [022] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Stone support pad for timber post</i> |
| [025] | Square cut measuring 0.45m × 0.5m by 0.5m. Break of slope (top) diffuse. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base uneven. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (027) and (026). Cuts (007) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for stone pad for timber support</i> |
| (026) | Loose, stone rubble, extends 0.45 × 0.5m × 0.2m. Underlies (027) Fills [025] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Packing fill for stone pad (027)</i> |
| (027) | Stone, worked, squared base, tapered sides, flat base, flat top, incorporates iron locating peg in top. Underlies [002] Overlies (026) Fills [025] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Stone support pad for upright timber</i> |
| [028] | Square cut measuring 0.5m × 0.5m by 0.5m. Break of slope (top) diffuse. Sides vertical. Break of slope (base) sharp. Base uneven. Oriented NW-SE. Filled by (030) and (029). Cuts (012) |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Cut for stone pad for timber support</i> |
| (029) | Loose, stone rubble and CBM, extends 0.5 × 0.5m × 0.2m. Underlies (030) Fills [028] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Packing fill for stone pad (030)</i> |
| (030) | Stone, worked, squared base, tapered sides, flat base, flat top, incorporates iron locating peg in top. Underlies [002] Overlies (029) Fills [028] |
| <i>INTERPRETATION</i> | <i>Stone support pad for timber upright</i> |



Site summary

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| Report Name & Title | Archaeological Observation: Upper House Lyonshall Herefordshire |
| Contractor Name & Address | Border Archaeology PO Box 36 Leominster Herefordshire HR6 OYQ |
| Site Name | Upper House Lyonshall Herefordshire |
| Grid Reference (8 fig) | SO 51186 39775 |
| Planning App. No: | DCNW2006/0975/F |
| SMR Event No. | 1893 |
| Date of Field Work | June 29 th 2011 |
| Date of Report | July 11 th 2011 |
| | NUMBER AND TYPE OF FINDS |
| Pottery | Period: N/A Number of sherds: N/A |
| Other | Period: N/A Quantity: N/A |
| | NUMBER AND TYPE OF SAMPLES COLLECTED |
| Sieving for charred plant remains | No of features sampled: N/A No of buckets: N/A |
| C¹⁴/scientific dates | No and Type: N/A Result: N/A |
| Pollen | No of columns/spot samples: N/A Name of pollen specialist: N/A |
| Bone | Number of buckets sieved for bone: N/A Quantity Recovered N/A Period N/A |
| Other | Type and specialist N/A |
| Summary of the report | <p>Archaeological observation of groundworks relating to a complex of late 19th century farm buildings at Upper House, Lyonshall revealed natural glacial till (008) at a depth of 0.5m below present ground level at the northwest extent of the trench, trending away to the southeast. Overlying this was sterile silt (009), possibly colluvium, also trending in this direction. Overlying this in the southeast extent of the trench was a thick deposit of made ground (010), probably contemporary with the construction of the farm complex in the 1870s but possibly related to an earlier phase of mid to late post-medieval building activity adjacent to the lane. An east northeast-west southwest brick drain/culvert (012) probably relating to an earlier construction phase was identified in the southeast-facing section of the trench and had evidently been truncated by the insertion of a stone support, comprising one of a series of similar features running along the western elevation of the cattle shed.</p> |



Document control

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|--------------------------|---|---------------|--------------------------------------|
| Job title | Archaeological Observation: Upper House Lyonshall Herefordshire | Job No | BA1116UHL/02 |
| Report written by | <i>Will Logan BA Dip</i> | | |
| Report edited by | <i>George Children MA MjFA</i> | | |
| Issue No | Status | Date | Approved for issue |
| 1 | Final | July 2011 | <i>Neil Shurety Dip M.GM Inst. M</i> |