

Archaeological Observation

(Land adjoining)
The Old Stables
Dorstone
Herefordshire

NGR: SO 31178 41759
SMR No: 44567

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Contents

1. NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY	3
2. INTRODUCTION	4
3. BRIEF HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	4
4. METHODOLOGY	5
5. RESULTS	5
5.1 Trench 1	5
5.2 Trench 2	7
6. CONCLUSION	8
7. COPYRIGHT	8
8. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT REGISTER	8
8.1 Trench 1	8
8.2 Trench 2	8

Report specification:

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Approved: Neil Shurety

1. Non Technical Summary

The Old Stables lies within the medieval form of Dorstone, close to the location of Dorstone Castle (ref HSM 1559).

Two sample trenches were excavated by machine in the proposed access area at The Old Stables but no significant archaeological deposits were revealed.

Each trench revealed three contexts, with topsoil overlying two subsoil deposits. No natural deposits were exposed on the site and there is thus a possibility that archaeological deposits may be present below the required 0.5m trench depth. A significant height difference evident between the proposed parking area and the adjacent garden, suggests that that the deposits encountered may represent redeposited materials excavated during the original construction of the property.



Plate 1: Site overview looking S, with Dorstone Castle visible in the background

2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by Mr & Mrs K & G Lewis The Old Stables Dorstone Herefordshire (SO 31178 41759) to carry out archaeological observation of two sample trenches within a proposed parking area at The Old Stables (Planning Ref. DCSW2006/2445/F) in pursuance of guidance issued by Julian Cotton Archaeological Advisor Herefordshire Council.

The site is located at the western end of Dorstone on land adjoining The Old Stables (**Fig. 1**).

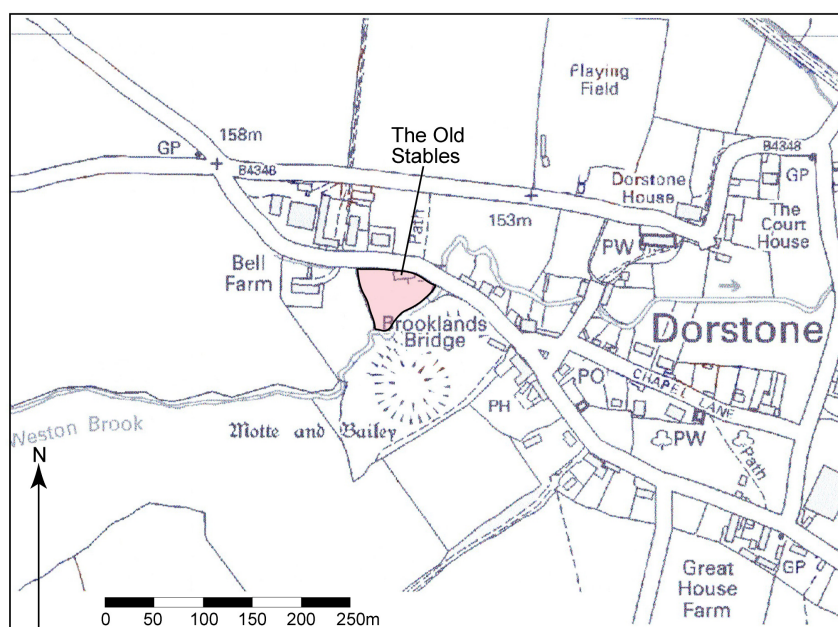


Fig. 1: Site Location Map

2.1 Soils & Geology

The predominant soils in this area of Dorstone are typical argillic brown earths of the ESCRICK 1 series (571p), consisting of reddish till overlain by deep well-drained reddish coarse loamy soils, some similar soils with slow permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging and some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged reddish fine silty soils.

3. Brief Historical & Archaeological Background

Cartographic evidence, specifically the OS 1st edition 25-inch map of 1887, indicates that the structure now known as The Old Stables had already been constructed by that date, forming an outbuilding attached to the rear of a substantial two-storey house called 'Brooklands'. Architectural evidence indicates a probable mid 19th century date for the construction of the present house, although internal features suggest that it could incorporate an earlier structure of 17th-18th century origin.

4. Methodology

Two trenches were excavated by machine under archaeological supervision in the centre of the proposed parking area. Trench 1 measured 7m x 1.5m 0.5m and Trench 2 was 5m x 1.5m x 0.5m (**Fig. 2**), the latter measurement being the designated engineering depth.

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

A stratigraphic record was made using a context numbering system and trench plans and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. The photographic record was made using a high-resolution 10.3MPX digital camera. All spoil and removed material were visually inspected for artefacts, which were recorded and, where appropriate, retained.

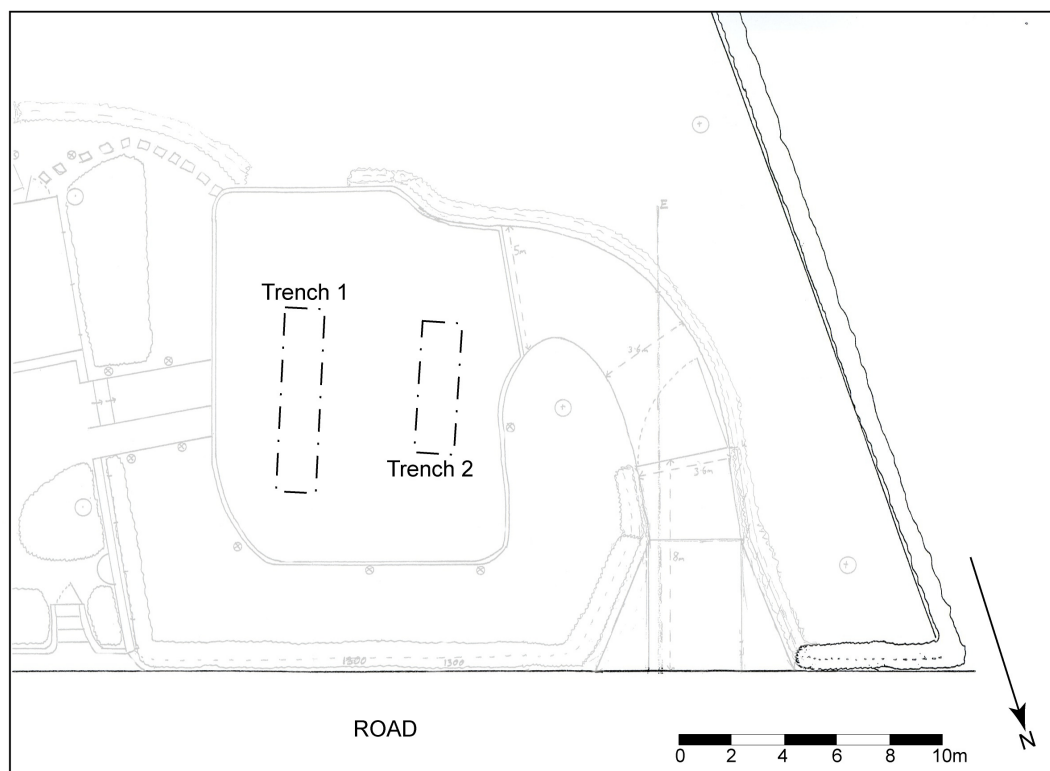


Fig. 2: Trench location plan

5. Results

5.1 Trench 1

The uppermost deposit within Trench 1 was a loose mid brown silty sand topsoil with occasional post-medieval pottery and small angular sandstone fragments (101). Underlying (101) was a moderately compact greyish-brown silty sand with frequent gravel type stones and one fragment of post-medieval CBM (102). This overlay a

moderately compact to firm orangey-red sandy clay with occasional angular sandstone fragments, charcoal flecking and coal lumps (103). No natural deposits were revealed within Trench 1.



Plate 2: Trench 1 overview, looking NE



Plate 3: View NW showing SE-facing section of Trench 1

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 revealed a loose mid brown silty sand topsoil with occasional post-medieval pottery and small angular sandstone fragments and a single fragment of green glazed ware (201). Underlying (201) was a moderately compact greyish-brown silty sand with frequent gravel type stones (202), which overlay a moderately compact to firm orangey-red sandy clay with occasional angular sandstone fragments and charcoal flecking (203). No natural deposits were identified.



Plate 4: View NE showing overview of Trench 2

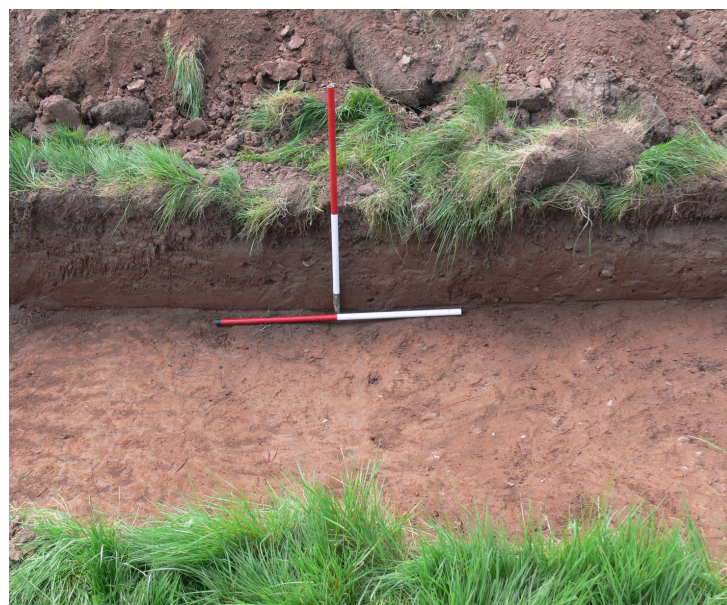


Plate 5: View NW showing SE-facing section of Trench 2

6. Conclusion

No significant archaeological features or materials were located within either trench. One fragment of green glazed medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil (201) of Trench 2. No natural deposits were revealed, with charcoal flecking present throughout (103) and (203), and it may be that archaeological materials are located below the required 0.5m maximum depth. Owing to a significant height difference between the proposed parking area and the adjacent garden, it is possible that the deposits encountered represent redeposited materials excavated during the original construction of the property.

7. Copyright

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8. Appendix 1: Context Register

8.1 Trench 1

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION
(101)	Loose mid brown silty sand, occasional post-medieval CBM & small angular sandstone fragments. 1 x iron furnace slag and 1 x animal bone. Dimensions – 7m x 1.5m x 0.1m.
<i>INTERPRETATION</i>	<i>Modern topsoil</i>
(102)	Moderately compact greyish-brown silty sand, frequent gravel type stones. 1 x post-medieval CBM. Dimensions – 7m x 1.5m x 0.1m.
<i>INTERPRETATION</i>	<i>Post-medieval subsoil</i>
[103]	Moderately compact to firm orangey-red sandy clay, occasional angular sandstone fragments, charcoal flecking & coal. Dimensions 7m x 1.5m x 0.3m.
<i>INTERPRETATION</i>	<i>Clay subsoil</i>

8.2 Trench 2

CONTEXT	DESCRIPTION
(201)	Loose mid brown silty sand, occasional post-medieval pottery, one fragment of green glazed medieval pottery, CBM & small angular sandstone fragments. 1 x slag. Dimensions – 5m x 1.5m x 0.1m.
<i>INTERPRETATION</i>	<i>Modern topsoil</i>
(202)	Moderately compact greyish-brown silty sand, frequent gravel type stones. 1 x post-medieval CBM. Dimensions – 5m x 1.5m x 0.1m.
<i>INTERPRETATION</i>	<i>Post-medieval subsoil.</i>
(203)	Moderately compact to firm orangey-red sandy clay, occasional angular sandstone fragments, charcoal flecking & coal pieces. Dimensions 5m x 1.5m x 0.3m.
<i>INTERPRETATION</i>	<i>Clay subsoil.</i>

Summary table

Report Name & Title	Archaeological Observation	
Contractor's Name and Address	Border Archaeology Chapel Walk Burgess Street Leominster Herefordshire HR6 8DE	
Site Name	The Old Stables Dorstone Herefordshire	
Grid Reference (8 fig)	SO 31178 41759	
Planning Application Number	DCSW2006/2445/F	
SMR Number/s of Site	44567	
Date of Fieldwork	April 2007	
Date of Report	May 2007	
NUMBER AND TYPE OF FINDS		
Type	Period:	Quantity
Pottery	Medieval; post-medieval	1 medieval; 8 post-medieval
CBM	Post-medieval	3 pieces
Clay pipe	N/A	-
Animal bone		1 fragment
Metal finds	N/A	-
Other	Iron furnace slag	1 piece
NUMBER AND TYPE OF SAMPLES COLLECTED		
Sieving for charred plant remains	No of features sampled	N/A
	No of buckets	N/A
C ¹⁴ /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
		N/A
Summary of the report:		
<p>No significant archaeological features or materials were located within either trench. One fragment of green glazed medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil (201) of Trench 2. No natural deposits were located, with charcoal flecking present throughout (103) and (203), and it is quite possible that archaeological materials may be located below the required 0.5m maximum depth.</p>		