



Archaeological Observation

**Sunnydale
Floodgates
Kington
Herefordshire**

**NGR: SO 28870 56953
SMR No.44552**

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGY

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Approved: Neil Shurety



1. Non Technical Summary

The site at Sunnydale Floodgates is situated on the NW outskirts of the historic town of Kington, approximately 100m to the W of the earthworks of a 12th century motte and bailey castle. Evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation has previously been identified to the E of the site.

Despite the proximity of these remains, the groundworks revealed no remains of archaeological significance. A U-shaped cut feature interpreted as a pit associated with post-medieval agricultural or landscaping activity was revealed in the NE corner of the site, sealed by topsoil containing late 19th/20th century pottery.

2. Introduction

Border Archaeology was instructed by Dean Oliver, Esq. on behalf of KBS Ltd to undertake an archaeological programme of work in regard of groundworks at Sunnydale Floodgates Kington Herefordshire (NGR SO 28870 56953) in pursuance of a planning condition/permissions issued by Herefordshire Council (Ref: DCNW2005/2006/F). A Written Scheme of Investigation was submitted to and approved by Julian Cotton, Archaeological Advisor to Herefordshire Council.

Copies of this report will be submitted to KBS Ltd, Julian Cotton and the Herefordshire Sites & Monuments Record.

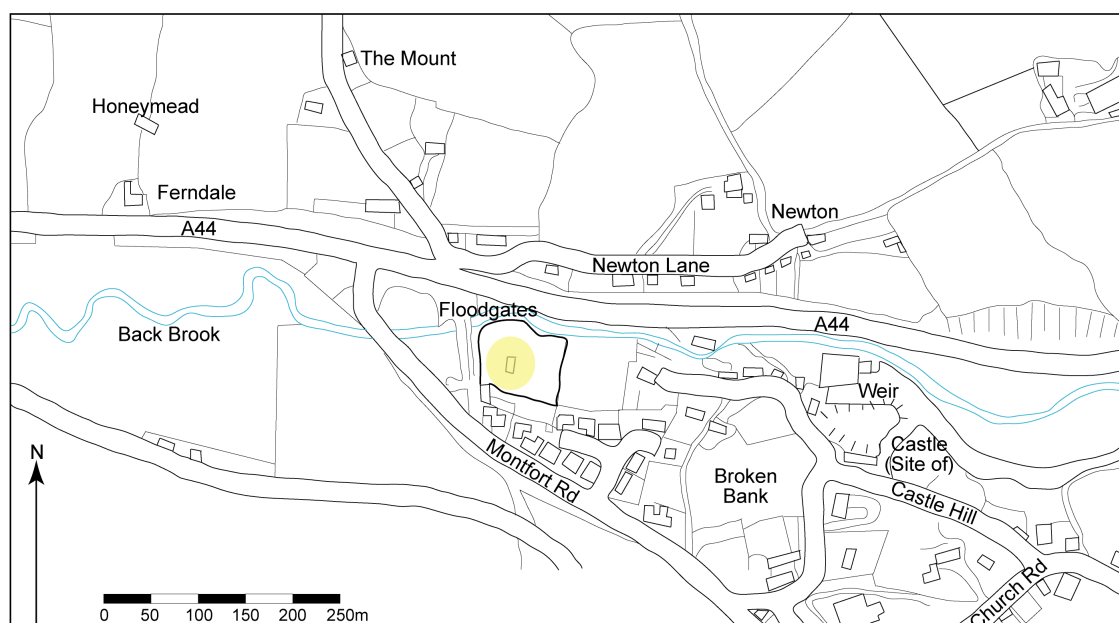


Fig. 1: Site location plan

2.1 Soils & Geology

The predominant soil type in the immediate vicinity of the study area consists of typical brown earths of the EAST KESWICK (541x) series, comprising deep well drained fine loamy soils and similar soils and slowly permeable subsoils with slight seasonal waterlogging and some coarse loamy soils affected by groundwater. The underlying geology consists of drift from Palaeozoic sandstone and shale.

3. Historical & Archaeological Background

The origins of the existing settlement at Kington can be traced back to the Anglo-Saxon period. The earliest documented reference to Kington (*Chingtune*) occurs in the Domesday Survey of 1086, in which it is listed as a manor comprising four hides of land in the possession of King William I. The place name Kington is of OE origin, meaning 'royal manor or estate' (Coplestone-Crow, 1989, 114).

The original urban settlement at Kington appears to have been centred upon the hilltop site occupied by the 12th century castle and parish church and was referred to in property deeds and census records as 'Old Kington' until as late as c.1900. During the early 13th century, the present town of Kington was established to the SW of the old hilltop site, immediately to the N of the crossing of the River Arrow (Buteux, 1996, 2).

The site at Sunnydale is situated on steeply rising ground (from 176m-182m AOD) approximately 100m to the E of the castle site, overlooking the Back Brook to the N and immediately to the E of a road marked as a holloway on the OS 1st edition map of 1889 (Herefordshire 17 NE). The roadway crosses the Back Brook via a single span masonry bridge constructed by the County Surveyor, John Gethin, in 1810 (SMR Ref. 42009).

The area extending W from the castle down to the bridge at Floodgates is marked on historic maps of Kington as 'Broken Bank' (which could denote the presence of earthwork features associated with the old settlement adjoining the castle) and evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation has been identified from aerial photography approximately 30m to the E of the site at NGR SO 2907 5687 (SMR Ref. 36703).

The Kington tithe map of 1845 shows that the present boundaries of the site were already well established at that date, forming a rectangular enclosure marked as a 'plock' or small field which was then under cultivation as arable. The tithe apportionment records that this 'plock' (listed as No. 340) was then owned by James Davies of Ridgebourne House. The enclosure is shown on the tithe map as flanked by two small cottages to the N and S, corresponding to the existing Nos. 15 & 16 Floodgates respectively.

By 1889, the site is shown on the OS 1st edition 6 inch map as having been converted to orcharding. Cartographic evidence indicates that the enclosure remained heavily planted with trees until the mid 1970s, when the single storey bungalow known as 'Sunnydale' was built.

4. Methodology

The aim of the programme of archaeological observation was to locate and record any archaeological deposits revealed during the course of the groundworks and to confirm that no impact on the archaeological resource occurred without recording.

4.1 Engineering methodology

The groundworks were carried out using a machine fitted with a grading bucket and comprised ground reduction works and the demolition of a modern single storey bungalow.

4.2 Archaeological methodology

Archaeological observation was carried out in accordance with *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (October 1994, revised September 2001). Border Archaeology adheres to the IFA *Code of conduct* (September 2002) and *Code of approved practice for the regulation of contractual arrangements in field archaeology* (September 2002).

All ground-disturbing works within the designated area was observed to the requisite engineering depth and associated spoil was examined for artefacts.

Full written, graphic and photographic records were made using *pro forma* record forms and sheets, these being in accordance with Border Archaeology's Field Recording Manual. The photographic record was made using a 4.2MPX digital camera and a 35mm camera using colour print film.

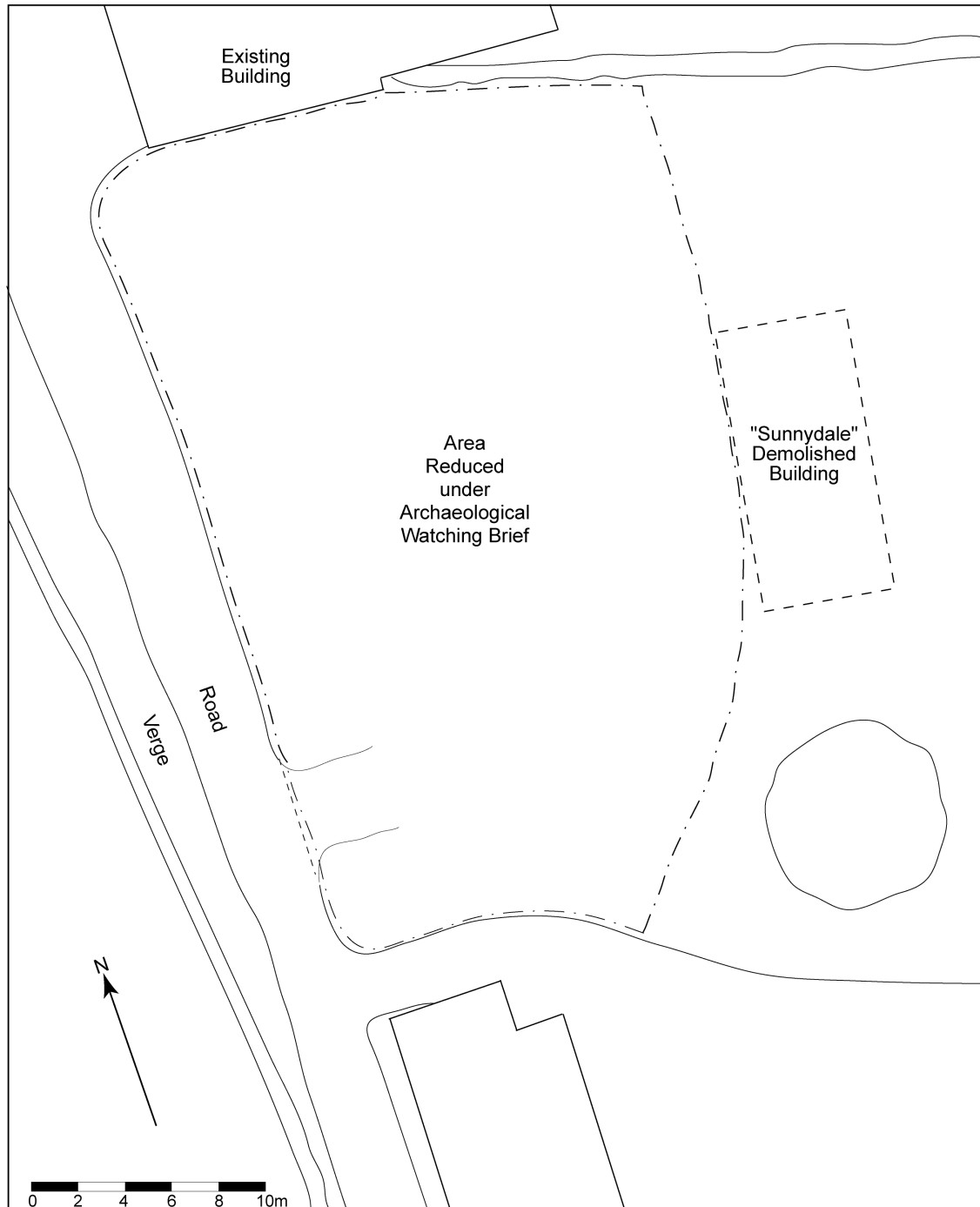


Fig. 2: Site plan

5. Results

The groundworks comprised the reduction of ground levels within an irregular quadrilateral shaped area immediately to the W of the 1970s bungalow, the area measuring approximately 35m (N-S) × 17.50m (E-W). The bungalow was also demolished as part of the same programme of groundworks.

Natural deposits were identified towards the base of the excavated area and thus no further observation of the subsequent foundation trenching for the construction of the houses was considered necessary.



Plate 1: View looking E showing deposits revealed in W facing section

The uppermost context (001) consisted of a moderately compacted dark brown sandy clay topsoil with evidence of frequent root disturbance, containing occasional subangular stones and a small number of residual pottery fragments comprising late 19th-20th century china and blue & white transfer ware. The depth of (001) varied between 0.4m (as visible in the W-facing section) to a maximum depth of 0.85m (in the S-facing section).

Underlying (001) was (002), interpreted as redeposited natural subsoil, consisting of a friable light yellowish-brown sandy clay with frequent gravel and small to medium degraded sandstone fragments, extending to a maximum visible depth of 2.5m.



Plate 2: View looking NE showing U-shaped pit feature [003] at N end of W facing section

Located in the far NE corner of the excavated area, at the northernmost end of the W facing section, (**Plate 1**) sealed by (001) and cutting into subsoil layer (002) was [003], a roughly U-shaped cut feature which was filled by (004), a friable, dark yellowish-brown sandy clay with frequent small to medium rounded and subangular stones with occasional charcoal flecking (**Plate 2**). [003] was interpreted as a debris pit presumably associated with post-medieval agricultural or landscaping activity on the site.



Plate 3: View looking N showing deposits revealed in S facing section

Underlying (002) was (005) a moderate to well compacted dark greyish-brown sandy clay with frequent gravel and fragments of heavily degraded sandstone and shale of assorted sizes. (005) extended to the base of the excavated area (maximum depth 3.8m) and was interpreted as natural deposition.

6. Conclusion

During the observation of groundworks, a U-shaped cut feature interpreted as a pit associated with post-medieval agricultural or landscaping activity was revealed in the NE corner of the site, sealed by topsoil containing late 19th/20th century pottery. No artefactual material was recovered from the fill of this feature, which was considered to be of low archaeological significance.

Consequently, this programme of archaeological observation confirms that no significant archaeological features, structures or deposits were impacted by the groundworks.

7. Copyright

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8. Bibliography

Herefordshire Archaeology: Sites and Monuments Record

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9. APPENDICES

9.1 Context register

CONTEXT	INTERPRETATION
(001)	Moderately compacted dark brown sandy clay, frequent root disturbance, occasional subangular stones, very occasional fragments of late C19/C20 china and blue & white transfer ware. Depth 0.4-0.85m. Overlies (002), (004)
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Topsoil</i>
(002)	Friable light yellowish-brown sandy clay, frequent gravel and small to medium degraded sandstone fragments, extending to a maximum visible depth of 2.5m. Underlies (001). Cut by [003]
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Redeposited natural subsoil</i>
[003]	Cut, oriented N-S, U-shaped in profile, moderate break of slope at top, concave sides, visible at N end of W-facing section. Underlies (001). Cuts (002)
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Cut for probable pit feature associated with post-medieval agricultural or landscaping activity</i>
(004)	Friable dark yellowish-brown sandy clay, frequent small-medium rounded and subangular stones, occasional charcoal flecking. Fills [003]. Underlies (001).
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Fill of pit feature [003]</i>
(005)	Moderate to well compacted dark greyish-brown sandy clay, frequent gravel & fragments of heavily degraded sandstone and shale of assorted sizes. Extending to base excavated area. Underlies (002)
<i>INTERPRETATION:</i>	<i>Natural deposition</i>

9.2 Summary table

Report Name & Title	Archaeological Observation: Sunnydale, Floodgates, Kington, Herefordshire	
Contractor's Name and Address	Border Archaeology Chapel Walk Burgess Street Leominster Herefordshire HR6 8DE	
Site Name	Sunnydale, Floodgates, Kington, Herefordshire	
Grid Reference	SO 28870 56953	
Planning Application Number	DCNW2005/2006/F	
SMR Number/s of Site	44552	
Date of Fieldwork	February 2007	
Date of Report	February 2007	
NUMBER AND TYPE OF FINDS		
Type	Period:	Quantity
Pottery	Post-medieval; modern	Not retained
CBM	None	N/A
Clay pipe	None	N/A
Animal bone	None	N/A
Metal finds	None	N/A
Other	None	N/A
NUMBER AND TYPE OF SAMPLES COLLECTED: None		
Summary:		
A U-shaped cut feature identified as a pit associated with post-medieval agricultural or landscaping activity was revealed in the NE corner of the site, sealed by topsoil containing late C19 th /20 th pottery. No archaeologically significant features, deposits or structures were revealed during the observation of groundworks.		

