



CAMBRIAN  
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## Horse Yard Farm, Evenjobb, Powys

Archaeological Excavation



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Report No. 607

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Report No: **607**

Date: **May 2010**

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## **Non Technical Summary**

*This report results from work undertaken by Cambrian Archaeological Projects Ltd (CAP) for Mr Mike Edwards, McCartneys, Kington on behalf of Mr. David Thomas, Leominster.*

*The work involved an excavation of the area of proposed development. A desk based assessment and field evaluation carried out prior to the excavation highlighted the possibility of medieval and later occupation in the area. The excavation revealed that post-medieval activity on the site was extensive whilst no medieval activity was recorded.*

### **1 Introduction**

#### **1.1 Location and scope of work**

- 1.1.1 The site is located on land on the east side of the village of Evenjobb, Powys. The assessment area is centred on national grid coordinate SO 2642 6233 (Fig 1).
- 1.1.2 An archaeological desk based assessment and field evaluation were carried out in 2007 (Border Archaeology). The desk based assessment highlighted the fact that the assessment area previously contained agricultural outbuildings belonging to the nearby Horseyard Farm.
- 1.1.3 The field evaluation identified several features of unknown date and function. A single piece of medieval ceramic was also identified associated with an apparent wall.
- 1.1.4 Given the findings of the work carried out by Border Archaeology, an excavation prior to development was deemed necessary. A brief for excavation was drawn up by Mark Walters (CPAT), against which a specification was drawn up by Chris Smith (CAP).

#### **1.2 Geology and topography**

- 1.2.1 Evenjobb is a small village concentrated around a crossroads. It lies on reasonably flat land at approximately 196m AOD. The higher ground to the north and east rises to between 330 and 380m AOD. Woodland is present in isolated patches to the north and east but is mainly managed forest.
- 1.2.2 The solid geological formations beneath the assessment area are mainly composed of Wenlock limestone rock formations of the Silurian era (British Geological Survey 2001).

#### **1.3 Archaeological and historical background**

- 1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background to the area has been studied in detail by Border Archaeology as part of the desk based assessment carried out in 2007.

## 2 Aims and Objectives

### 2.1 Excavation

The main purpose of the excavation was:

- 2.2.1 To establish the presence/absence of intact archaeological remains within the assessment area;
- 2.2.2 To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.
- 2.2.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features
- 2.2.4 To preserve by record all archaeological features identified prior to the development of the area.

## 3 Excavation Methodology

### 3.1 Scope of Fieldwork

- 3.1.1 The excavation consisted of an area measuring approximately 40x20m being subject to investigation.
- 3.1.2 The area was stripped of topsoil and subsoil deposits using a 360° mechanical excavator under close archaeological supervision. Excavation ceased at the top of the natural or the top of the first intact archaeological horizon, whichever came first.
- 3.1.2 Project Manager Chris E Smith and Project Assistants Irma Bernardus and Keiran Phillips undertook the evaluation. The excavation area was cleaned by hand. Plans and sections were recorded and drawn at scales of 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate. All areas were photographed using high resolution digital photography.
- 3.1.3 All works were undertaken in accordance with both the IFA's *Standards and Guidance: for an archaeological excavation* and current Health and Safety legislation.

### 3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

### 3.3 Palaeo-environmental evidence

- 3.3.1 No deposits suited to environmental sampling were noted throughout the course of the excavation.

## 4 Excavation Results

### 4.1 Soils and ground conditions

4.1.1 The site and weather conditions were cold and wet; frequent rain and snow showers were experienced leading to flooding of some areas. The upper ground conditions were damp, whilst at the base of the excavated area water puddled in places as a result of overnight rain and snow. This was subsequently frozen.

### 4.2 Distribution of deposits

4.2.1 The topsoil (001) was comprised of a moderately compacted mid brown silt and reached a depth of around 0.4m on average. This deposit contained modern material associated with the areas previous use as a garden.

4.2.2 The subsoil (002) was a moderately compacted dark greyish brown silt sand. This measured approximately 0.2-3m deep on average and contained frequent sub-angular stone inclusions.

4.2.3 Natural yellow clay deposits were reached across the excavated area. The depth at which the natural was reached ranged from 0.5m to 1.5m below the current ground surface.

### 4.3 Description of excavation area

(Fig 3) (Plates 1-4)

4.3.1 The excavation area formed a rough rectangle aligned north south. It measured approximately 40x20m (Plates 1-4).

4.3.2 Removal of turf and topsoil (001) across the whole area revealed a reasonably consistent subsoil deposit (002). This was a moderately compacted dark greyish brown silt sand, present across the majority of the excavation area. No features appeared to be cut into the subsoil horizon. Removal of subsoil (002) in the northern third of the excavation area revealed the natural yellow clay (005) at a depth of approximately 0.5m below the current ground surface. The natural yellow clay appeared to butt against a second natural deposit made up of yellow clay with frequent small stone inclusions. In this northern third of the site a total of 15 features were identified. For ease of reporting these are classed as Group 1 and will be discussed later. The 15 features comprised eleven postholes, one gully, a pit, a possible trench and a stone 'trough' (Fig 3).

4.3.3 Removal of subsoil (002) in the central third of the site revealed a densely compacted stone deposit (004). This measured up to 1.2m thick in the centre of the site. The stone deposit was made up of random shaped stones of varying size located within a dark brown black silt soil matrix. The stones represented approximately 90% of the context. Removal of the stoney layer revealed a continuation of the natural yellow clay, although at a significantly lower level, in the centre of the site.

- 4.3.4 Located beneath the rubble (004) and subsoil (002), adjacent to the western edge of the assessment area, were the remains of a stone building. The remains consisted of two intact rooms, a damaged third room, two areas of external cobbling and a length of wall with associated postholes possibly acting to enclose an area to the rear. For ease of reporting, the walls, floors and postholes associated with the building are classed as Group 2 and will be discussed later.
- 4.3.5 Removal of subsoil (002) in the final, southern, third of the assessment area revealed a total of 15 separate features consisting of stakeholes, postholes, a pit and a wall. All were cut into the natural (005). For ease of reporting these are classed as Group 3 and will be discussed later. In the final third of the excavation area the natural was located approximately 0.5m below the current ground surface. Modern land drains have been inserted into this area in recent times.

***Group 1 – Northern section of excavated area*** (Fig 3) (Plates 5-12)

- 4.3.6 Group 1 was comprised of 15 separate features, eleven of which were postholes. In each of the postholes the actual post was still present, and in some cases these survived in reasonably well preserved conditions. (Plates 5-7). The posts are therefore not expected to be more than 100 years old. There is some hint of alignment within the group of posts. They are likely to represent fence/boundary lines to the rear of the agricultural outbuilding located in the central third of the site.
- 4.3.7 A very faint and ephemeral gully [016] (Plate 8) was located projecting at a 90° angle from the road at the western edge of the site. The remains of this gully were less than 3cm deep and no dating evidence was recovered. Function is therefore difficult to imply, though its angle of projection from the road may indicate it was a boundary.
- 4.3.8 Feature (014) (Plates 9-10) was an apparent trough of stone construction. Stone slabs made up its north, east and west edges though the southern edge was missing. The stone slabs, each approximately 0.4m high, were stood on end to act as walls for the trough. Excavation of the fill (015) revealed rotted timbers, possibly from a wooden base, as well as late 19<sup>th</sup>/early 20<sup>th</sup> century glass bottles and the blade from a scythe.
- 4.3.9 Feature [043] (Plate 11) was a vertically sided deep cut and is most likely to be a mechanically excavated trench. The cut was a constant width all the way along its 3m length, consistent with excavation by a 2 foot bucket. In the southern face of the possible trench were three vertical grooves, most likely from the teeth of a bucket. The feature extended to over 1m deep and, owing to its narrow width, was not bottomed. Modern material, most likely redeposited from backfilling, was recovered from within the fill (044).
- 4.3.10 Feature [045] (Plate 12), the final feature in Group one, was a possible pit, which was partially obscured by the section edge. Excavation revealed a 45° sloping edge cut into the natural and filled with a single fill (046). The fill was a sandy yellow clay with infrequent charcoal specks. No dating evidence was recovered.



**Group 2 – Central section of excavated area** (Fig 3) (Plates 13-21)

- 4.3.11 The central third of the site was occupied by the remains of the Horseyard Farm outbuilding (Plate 13) as identified by the Border Archaeology desk based assessment. The desk based assessment records the building as being demolished relatively recently. The demolition rubble from the building accounts for the deep stone deposit beneath the subsoil and above the natural.
- 4.3.12 The remains of the outbuilding show two separate construction phases. The room on the north end of the building appears to have been constructed first. The two rooms to the south clearly butt against this northern room (Plate 14). The north and west walls of the northern room are not present and appear to have been completely removed during demolition. A damaged, partially cobbled, partially rammed earth/stone floor was present in the northern room (Plate 15). No doorway or hearth was noted. The remaining wall masonry was composed of thin faced limestone slabs (Plate 16). No mortar appears to bind the masonry together.
- 4.3.13 The two rooms to the south appear tacked on to the northern room. The walls are again composed of thin limestone slabs though the facing is not as well finished in these rooms (Plates 17-18). Again, no mortar was observed. In the middle room a cobbled stone floor was noted whilst in the end room no floor was observed. A single doorway into the middle room appears to be located within the east wall, butting against the northern room.
- 4.3.14 The end room at the south of the building had no floor level present. Five stakeholes were noted within the room, though no discernible pattern was evident. A likely doorway is visible within the south wall though this appears damaged (Plate 19).
- 4.3.15 The south wall of the south room continues to the east forming a possible garden or enclosure wall to the rear of the building (Plates 20-21). The wall terminates suddenly after running for ten metres. The wall is flanked on both sides by parallel posthole alignments. On the north side of the wall a total of seven postholes form an east to west alignment, whilst on the southern side of the wall three postholes also run east to west. Given the similar alignments, it is possible that the wall and the posts are contemporary.
- 4.3.16 Two areas of pitched cobbles were located either side of the outside of the structure.
- 4.3.17 Dating evidence recovered from the walls of the building and the postholes in Group 2 appear to confirm a 19<sup>th</sup> century date. This is consistent with that suggested by the desk based assessment.

**Group 3 – Southern section of excavated area** (Fig 3) (Plates 22-29)

- 4.3.18 The features in Group 3 consisted of 15 separate features comprising stakeholes, postholes, a pit and a wall. The natural appeared to vary in this area from the yellow clay seen elsewhere to a grey brown gravel and silt. A series of narrow linear trenches were

excavated in order to assess the levels of the natural.

- 4.3.19 Five large postholes, each over 0.4m in diameter, were observed cut into the natural on an east west alignment. The fill of each of the postholes suggested a 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century date as they contained brick and modern ceramic fragments (Plates 22-25). Located to the south of the alignment were a further group of three, smaller, postholes. Rather than have packing stones placed around the post, in one instance a cement or plaster mix appears to have been poured around the post, thus only shaped cement/plaster remained (Plate 26). Late 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century material was also recovered associated with these postholes. Four stakeholes also appear associated with the posthole alignment.
- 4.3.20 A single pit [061] (Plate 27) was located to the north east of the Group 3 post alignment. This measured approximately 1.8m in diameter, had roughly 60° sloping sides and had a single fill (062) containing occasional 19<sup>th</sup> or early 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramics as well as a fragment of burnt flint.
- 4.3.21 Located against the southern edge of the excavation area, and running beneath the edge of the section, was a section of wall foundation (071) (Plate 28). The stones of the wall appeared to sit within a very narrow cut in the natural, and differed in appearance and construction technique to that seen elsewhere on site. No mortar was present within the wall and no dating evidence was recovered. Immediately adjacent to the end of the wall was a posthole [064] (Plate 29). Whilst no dating evidence was located within the posthole, the post itself was still present, as with similar features in Group one.
- 4.3.22 A series of land drains/soak-aways appear to have been recently inserted into the area between the remains of the building (group two) and the southern edge of the site.

## **5 Finds**

- 5.1.1 Very few finds were recovered from the excavation. From amongst the top and subsoil deposits fragments of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> century material were recovered.
- 5.1.2 A small amount of fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramic and CBM were recovered from the two post alignments (in groups 2 and 3) as well as from the stone building.
- 5.1.3 A general lack of finds was noted from the excavation which, given the obvious activity in the area, seemed somewhat anomalous.

## **6 Palaeo-environmental**

- 6.1.1 No deposits suited to palaeo-environmental sampling were located during the course of the excavation.

## **7 Discussion and Interpretation**

### **7.1 Reliability of field investigation**

7.1.1 The assessment was hampered by the wet and freezing conditions arising from snow/rain showers. The puddling of water within features during excavation did slightly hamper the excavation.

### **7.2 Excavation interpretation**

7.2.1 The excavation was designed to examine those features previously identified by the desk based assessment and field evaluation (Border Archaeology, 2007).

7.2.3 The desk based assessment highlighted the presence of post medieval activity within the excavation area associated with the adjacent Horseyard Farm. This was reinforced by the excavation of large amounts of post-medieval features of this date.

7.2.4 The majority of the features located during the excavation are likely to be associated with this post-medieval activity on site.

7.2.5 The field evaluation carried out by Border Archaeology in 2007 suggested medieval occupation/activity in the area. This was not backed up by the excavation; indeed no features of confirmed medieval date were observed within the excavated area.

7.2.6 The post medieval structure located during the excavation is likely to be the same structure as is depicted on both the 1840 Tithe map and the 1889 six inch OS map, as shown in the desk based assessment. On both maps a structure aligned roughly north south, with a long wall projecting to the east, is shown. This reflects almost exactly what was located during the excavation. The structure acted as an agricultural outbuilding belonging to Horseyard Farm.

7.2.7 The agricultural nature of the building would appear to account for the lack of domestic features and finds associated with it. A lack of hearths and substantial floors, as well as material culture associated with domesticity (ceramics, glass, clay smoking pipe etc), was notable during the excavation.

7.2.8 The depth of stone rubble on site is likely to be a result of the structure being demolished and the resulting stone material being levelled prior to the area's use as a garden.

7.2.9 A flint scatter is recorded for the area in the local HER, this is also referenced in the desk based assessment. A single flint find was made during the excavation, a fragment of burnt tool (likely scraper) from pit [061]. This is likely to represent residual prehistoric material.

### **7.3 Significance**

7.3.1 The excavation undertaken at Evenjobb is significant in that it has confirmed that medieval activity in the village appears not to continue as far from the site of the motte as

was originally thought.

- 7.3.2 The fact that no medieval features appear to have been located within a street frontage plot definitely suggests that the medieval village did not extend into this area.

## 8 **Acknowledgements**

- 8.1.1 Thanks to: Irma Bernardus and Keiran Phillips for their assistance with the excavation and Mark Walters at CPAT for monitoring the work.

## 9 **Bibliography & Sources**

British Geological Survey 2001. *Solid Geology Map. UK South Sheet. 1:625000 Scale.* 4<sup>th</sup> edition

Border Archaeology. 2007. *Horseyard Farm, Evenjobb, Powys. A Desk Based Assessment and Archaeological Field Evaluation.* Border Archaeology Report No. BA0712EDHHE



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## **APPENDIX I:**

Figures

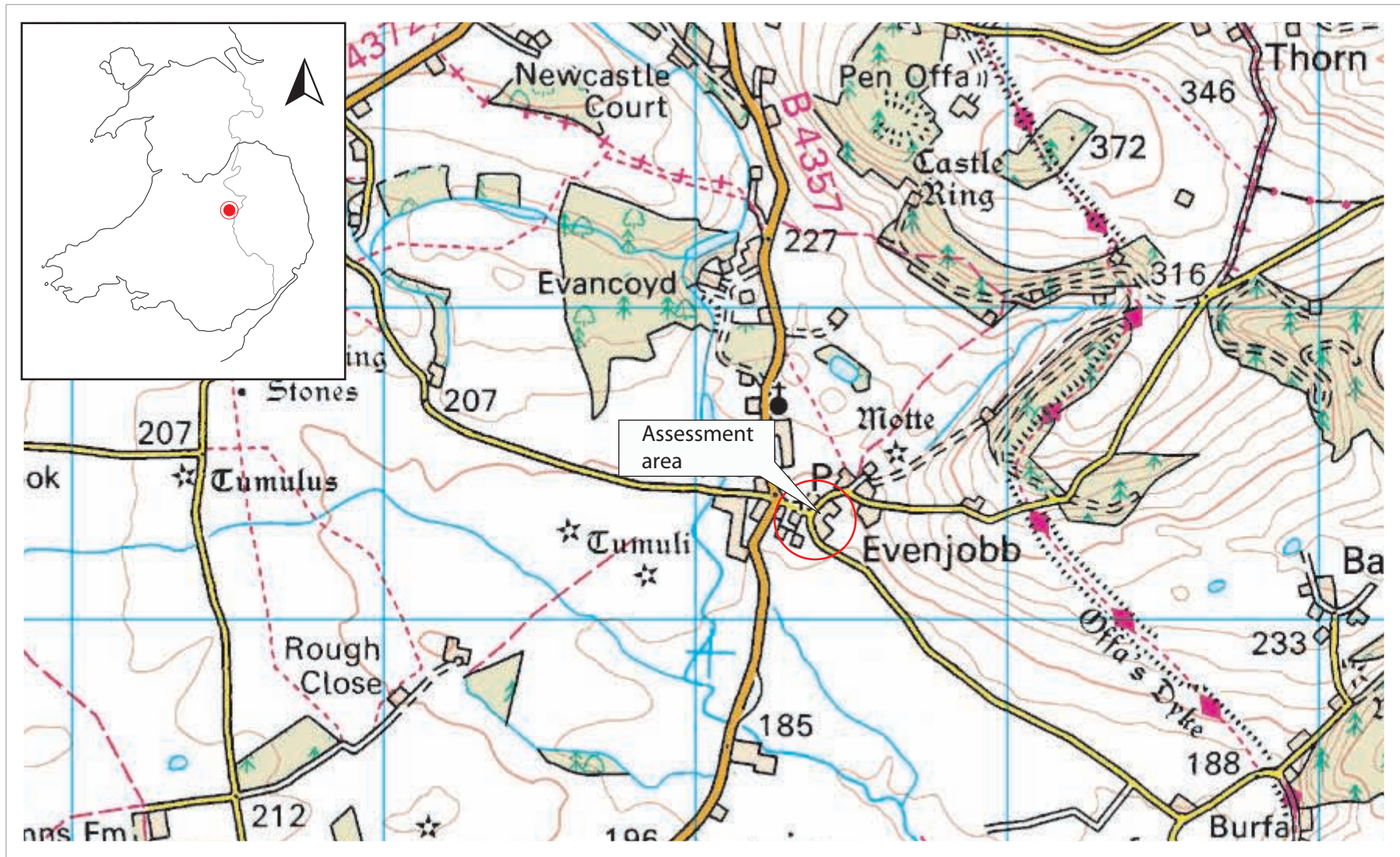


Fig 1: Map showing general location of assessment area

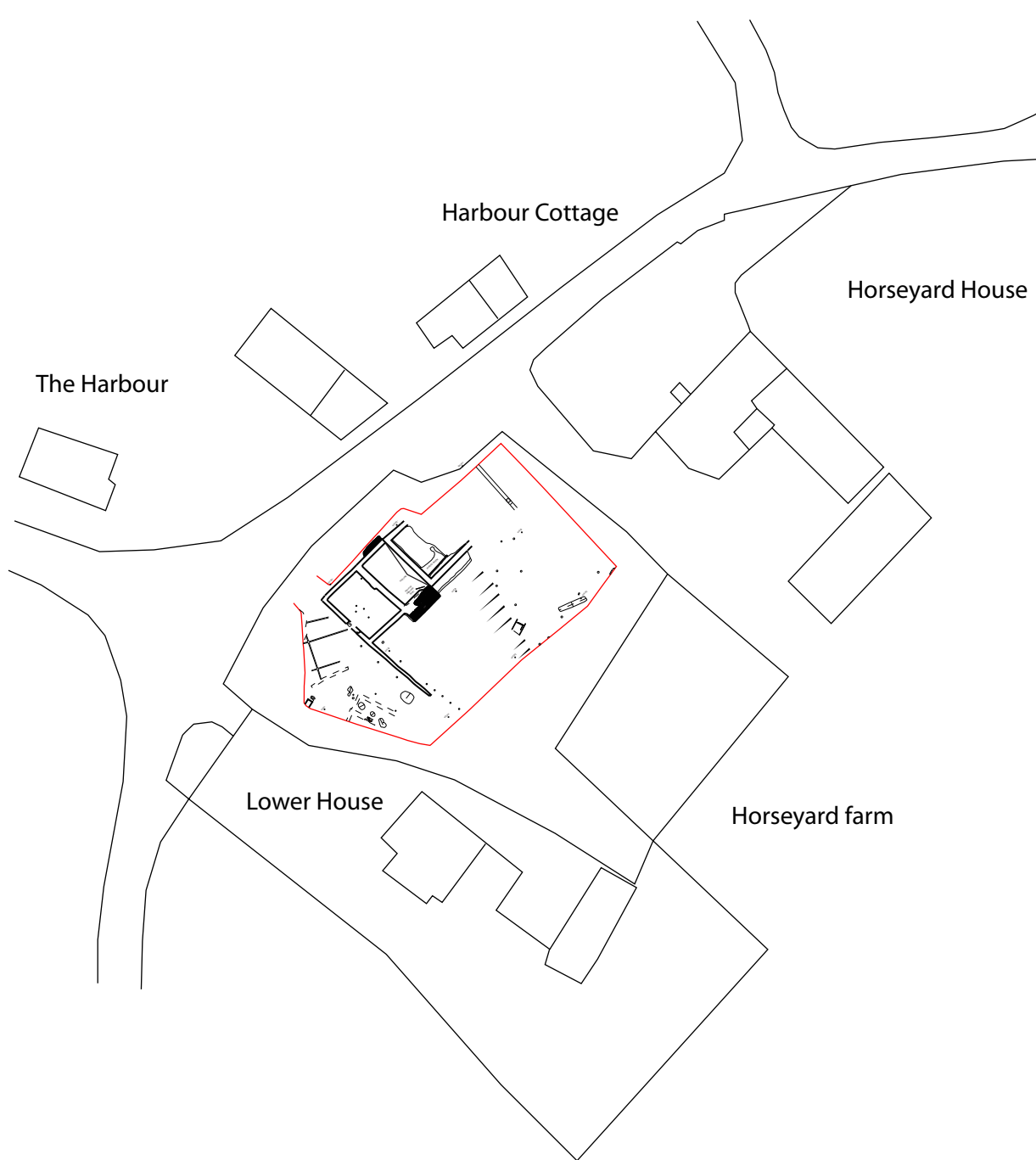


Fig 2: Plan showing location of excavated area within Evenjobb





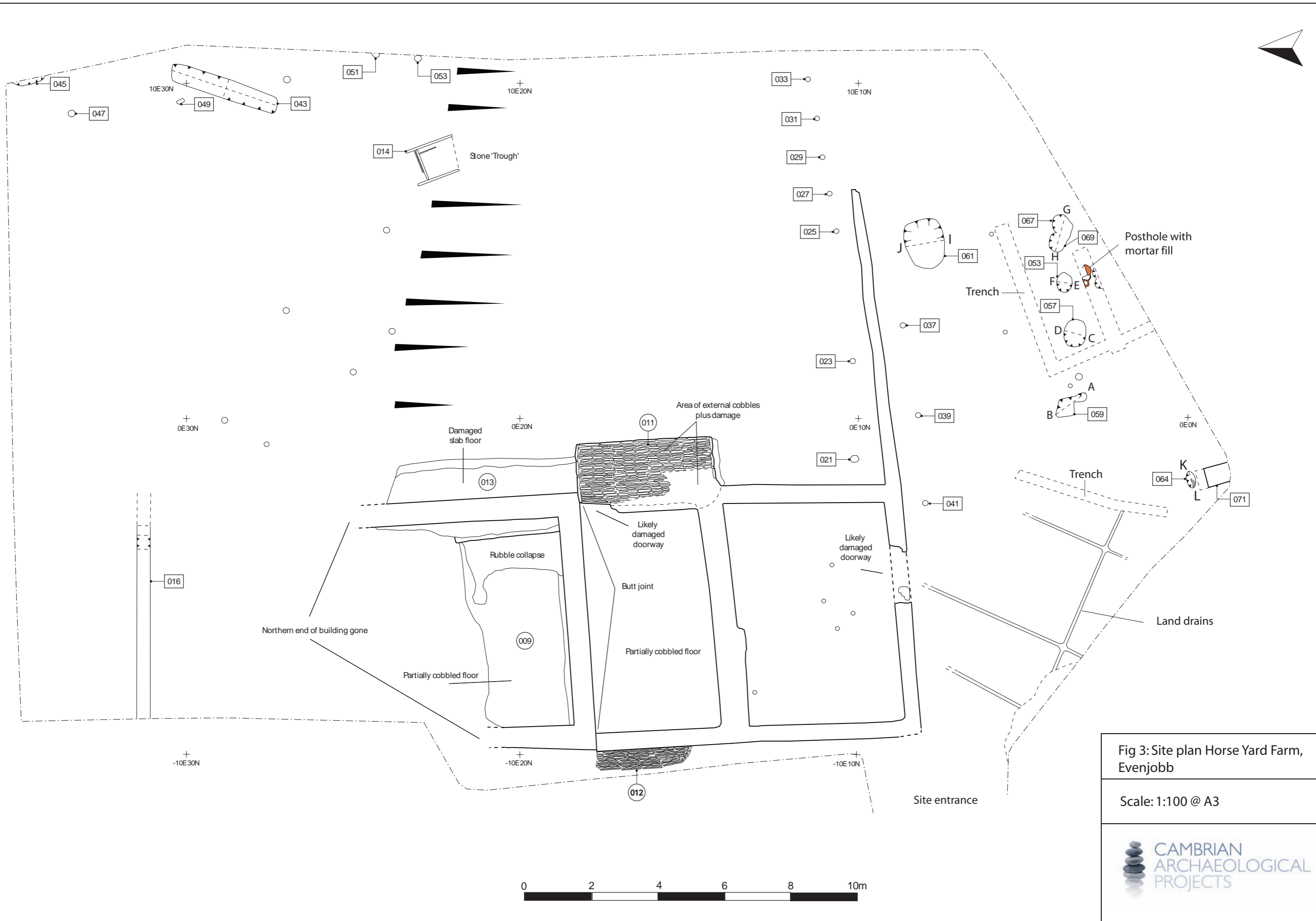


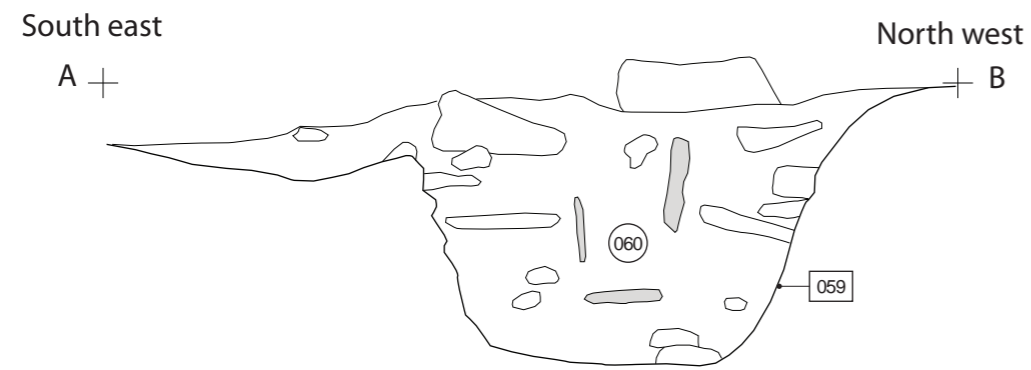
Fig 3: Site plan Horse Yard Farm, Evenjobb

Scale: 1:100 @ A3

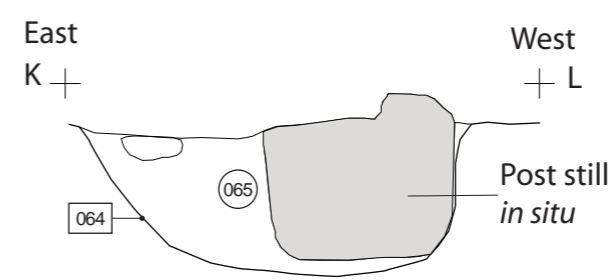




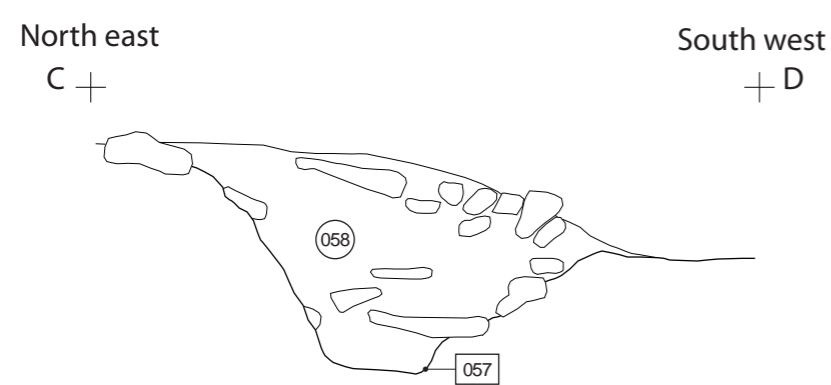
Section of posthole [059]



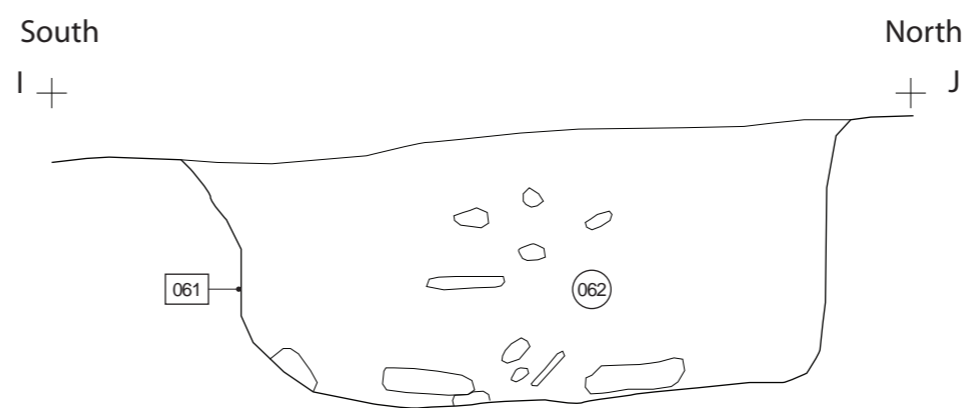
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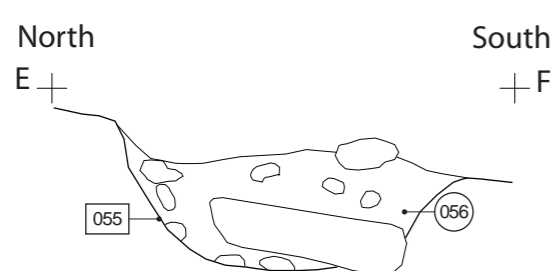
Section of posthole [057]



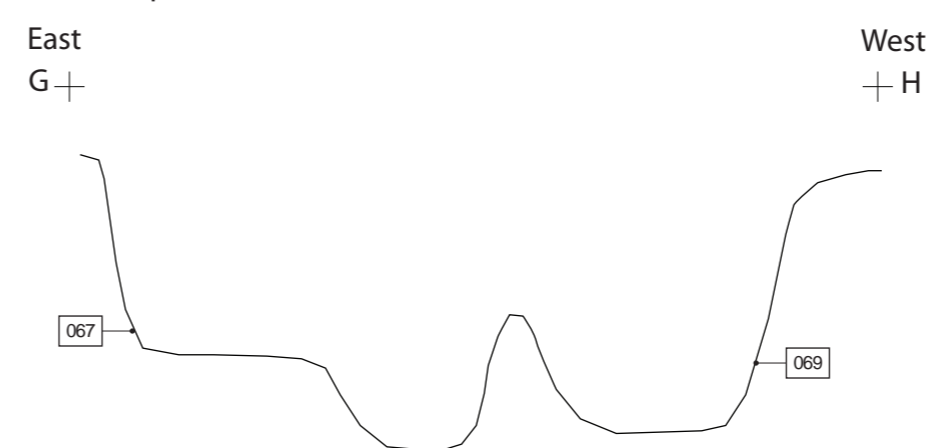
Section of pit [061]



Section of posthole [055]



Profile of postholes [067] and [069]



Job Title: Horse Yard Farm

Drawing Title: Sample Sections

Date: 01/03/2010

Drawn By: Irma Bernardus

Scale: 1 : 10 @ A3

Figure 04:





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## **APPENDIX II:**

Plates



Plate 1: General overview of the excavation area, Scales 2x2m



Plate 2: General overview of the excavation area, Scale 1x2m





Plate 3: General overview of excavation area, Scale 1x2m



Plate 4: General overview of excavation area





Plate 5: View of posthole with post, Scale 1x0.2m



Plate 6: View of posthole with post, Scale 1x0.2m





Plate 7: View of posthole with post, Scale 1x0.2m



Plate 8: View of ephemeral gully [016], Scale 1x2m





Plate 9: View of stone 'trough', Scales 1x2m & 1x0.2m



Plate 10: View of stone 'trough', Scales 1x2m & 1x0.2m





Plate 11: View of likely machine cut trench feature [043], Scales 1x2m & 1x0.2m



Plate 12: View of pit [045], Scales 1x2m & 1x0.2m





Plate 13: General overview of post medieval stone structure, Scales 2x2m



Plate 14: South wall of northern half of stone structure being clearly butted against (foreground) by later southern half of structure, Scale 1x2m





Plate 15: View of partially cobbled/partially rammed floor, Scale 1x2m



Plate 16: View of faced masonry on first phase (northern end) of post medieval structure, Scale 1x2m





Plate 17: View of less well faced masonry on southern end of post medieval structure  
Scale 1x2m



Plate 18: View of less well faced masonry on southern end of post medieval structure  
Scale 1x2m





Plate 19: View of damaged doorway into southern end room of post medieval structure  
Scale 1x2m



Plate 20: View of 'enclosure' wall projecting eastwards  
from post medieval structure, Scale 1x2m





Plate 21: View of enclosure wall projecting eastwards from post medieval structure  
Scale 1x2m



Plate 22: Example of a post medieval posthole from southern alignment  
Scale 1x0.2m





Plate 23: View of post medieval posthole from southern alignment  
Scale 1x0.2m



Plate 24: View of post medieval posthole from southern alignment  
Scales 1x0.2m & 1x2m





Plate 25: View of post medieval posthole from southern alignment, Scale 1x0.2m



Plate 26: View of posthole with cement/plaster setting (left), Scale 1x0.2m





Plate 27: View of pit [061], Scales 1x2m & 1x0.2m



Plate 28: View of wall section at southern edge of the site  
Scales 1x2m & 1x0.2m





Plate 29: View of posthole [064] with post still remaining, Scale 1x0.2m



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**APPENDIX III:**  
Archive Cover Sheet

## ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

Site Name:	Horse Yard Farm, Evenjobb, Powys
Site Code:	HFE/10/EX
PRN:	-
NPRN :	-
SAM:	-
CAP Report No:	CAP Report 607
Project No:	CAP Project 992
NGR:	SO 26417 12849
Site Type:	Urban
Project Type:	Archaeological Excavation
Project Manager	Chris Smith
Project Dates:	March –May 2010
Categories Present:	Post medieval
Location of Original Archive:	-
Number of Finds Boxes:	0
Location of Finds:	N/A
Museum Reference:	-
Copyright:	CAP Ltd.
Restrictions to access:	None



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