

*BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT*

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Minworth Sewage Treatment Works,
Minworth, Birmingham. 1997.**

B.U.F.A.U.



Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit
Project No. 433.02
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**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Minworth Sewage Treatment Works,
Minworth, Birmingham. 1997.**

by
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1.0 Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at land adjoining the south side of the A4097 Kingsbury Road, at Minworth Sewage Treatment Works, Birmingham, prior to the enlargement of the existing sewage works in April 1997. A previous archaeological evaluation immediately to the south failed to reveal any archaeological features associated with the medieval settlement at Minworth Greaves to the northwest of the site. No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified during the watching brief.

2.0 Introduction (Fig. 1)

This report describes the results of an archaeological watching brief, undertaken by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit (BUFAU), of land adjoining the south side of the A4097 Kingsbury Road, to the northeast of the existing sewage treatment works at Minworth, Birmingham (NGR: SP 171 926). The work was commissioned by Severn Trent Water Ltd. in advance of the excavation of service trenches for pipes serving a new activated sludge unit to the south. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (1990) and conforms to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by BUFAU (Jones 1997). The watching brief follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs prepared by the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

3.0 Archaeological Background

A desk-based assessment by BUFAU (Ellis 1996) outlined the archaeological potential of the site. Finds of prehistoric and Roman artefacts in the vicinity suggested some form of settlement or activity of this date nearby. There is also evidence of medieval settlement at Minworth Greaves to the northwest of the site, and along Wiggins Hill Road. It was thought possible that elements of the medieval settlement may have extended southwards into the site. Cartographic evidence also suggested that structural remains of an unknown date may be present within the site. Cropmarks plotted from aerial photographs, possibly associated with archaeological features, were also recorded within the site.

The archaeological evaluation (Roberts 1997) revealed a sequence of natural gravel and alluvial deposits, disturbed by modern activity in places. No significant archaeological features were identified.

4.0 Aims

The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were to identify and record any archaeological features revealed during the contractors groundworks, paying particular attention to the potential of the site to contain features associated with the medieval settlement recorded adjoining the north side of the Kingsbury Road.

5.0 Method

The watching brief was concentrated on an area to the north of the area tested by the preceding the evaluation (Roberts 1997), and located immediately to the south of the Kingsbury Road. The topsoil was removed by a 360 degree mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket, prior to the excavation of service trenches connected with the new activated sludge plant to be constructed to the south. Any archaeological features identified were to be recorded by means of scale drawings, photographs and written records.

6.0 Results

The natural reddish brown slightly sandy, clay subsoil was revealed, sealed in places by a yellow sand containing small rounded pebbles, 0.10m deep. This was overlain by topsoil, 0.30m deep to the north, becoming deeper to the south. Modern land drains were observed cutting the natural subsoil, spaced 10m apart, and aligned northwest-southeast. Some modern disturbance was also observed. No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified and no finds were recovered.

7.0 Discussion

No features of archaeological interest or possible archaeological interest were identified during the watching brief. The absence of medieval and early post-medieval artifacts could suggest that medieval settlement did not extend to the south of the present Kingsbury Road.

8.0 Acknowledgements

The project was sponsored by Severn Trent Ltd. The watching brief was carried out by the author. The illustration was prepared by Nigel Dodds. Alex Jones monitored the project. Thanks are due to Richard Webber and Andy Foster of Severn Trent.

10.0 References

Ellis, P. 1996. *Land at Minworth Sewage Treatment Works: Stage 1 Archaeological Assessment*. BUFAU Report No. 433.

Jones, A. 1997. *Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief, Sewage Treatment Works, Minworth, Birmingham*. BUFAU.

Roberts, H.M. 1997. *Sewage Treatment Works, Minworth, Birmingham. An Archaeological Evaluation 1997*. BUFAU Report No.433.01.

Figures

1: Site Location

2: Watching Brief Location

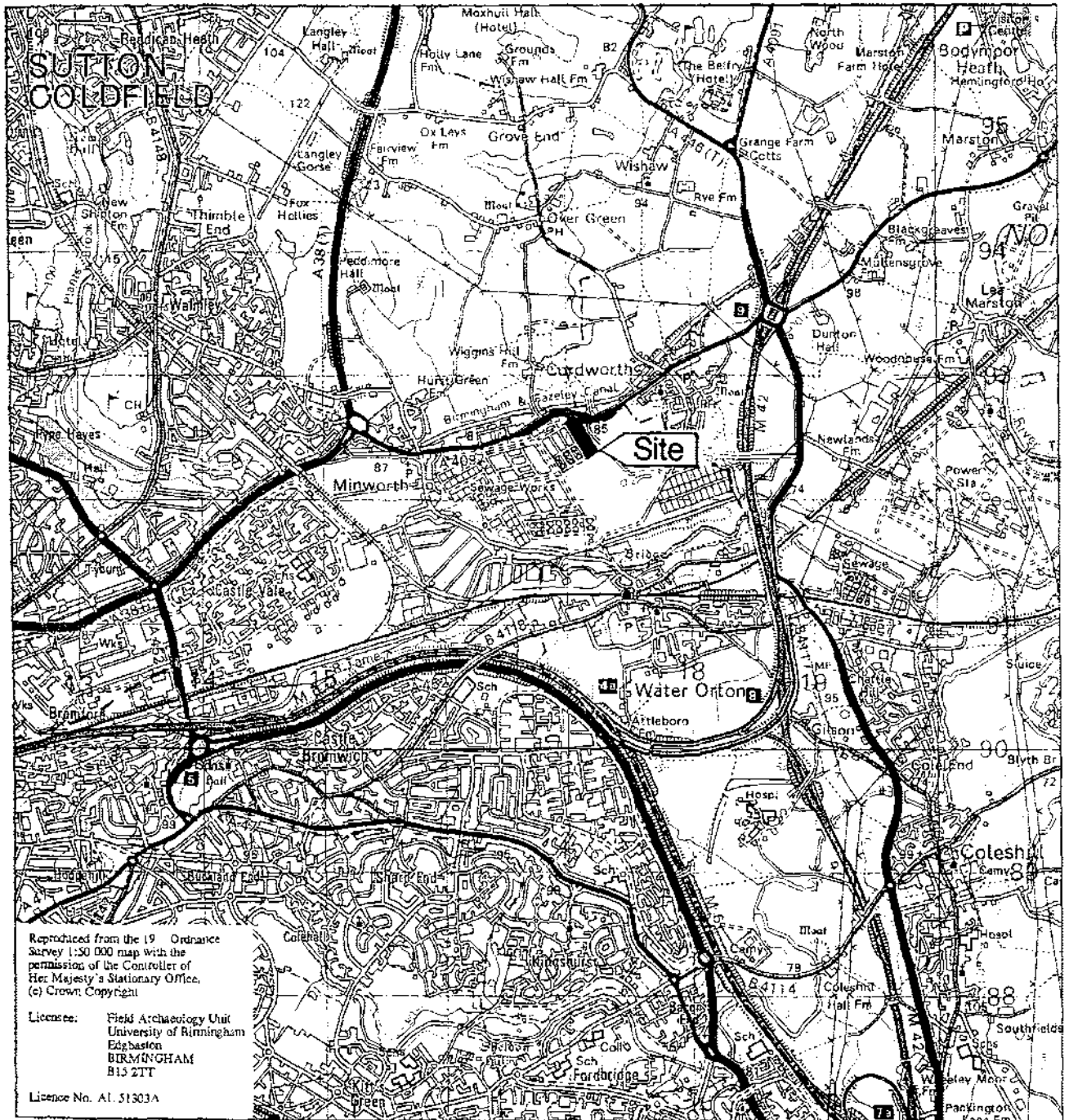


Fig 1

