River Roding Enhancement Scheme

LONDON BOROUGH OF
Redbridge

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

National Grid Reference: **TQ 4206 9238**

By**: AOC ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP**

Client**: Environment Agency**

February 2007

National Grid Reference:	TQ 4206 9238
Site Code:	RRR 07
On behalf of:	The Environment Agency For Redbridge Council
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Watching Brief by	Fitz
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Timing:	Watching Brief 20th February 2007 Post-excavation and report production February 2007

RIVER RODING ENHANCEMENT PROJECT

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF SUMMARY REPORT

1 ABSTRACT

1.1 *The following report details the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by AOC Archaeology on 20th February2007 at the area of Ashton Brook by the course of the River Roding.*

The watching brief was carried out with The Environment Agency on the excavation of eight trial pits each measuring approximately 1.70m x 0.60m at the top. Trenches were excavated to required depths by a 360 o mini-digger with a 0.60m wide bucket.

No archaeological remains were observed in any pit.

2 INTRODUCTION

Site Location

2.1 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TQ 4206 9238 (Figure 2), and is bounded by the M11to the east, Ray Park (Over the River) to the west and by treatment works to the North.

2.2 The proposed works on the site are for an enhancement scheme of the Ashton Brook area of the River Roding.

Scope of Works

2.3 The Watching Brief was conducted upon eight trial pits. Six were excavated in pre-determined locations, and the location of two further pits was determined on site.

2.4 All the test pits were approximately the same size, with variations in depth as determined.

3 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

3.1 The site lies within the 'London Clays' formation with underlying Woodford Gravel ('ancestral Thames river terrace gravels') laid in the Pleistocene period

3.2 The site itself lies on damp ground on the east side of the current Roding River. It is unclear how much, if any, ground disturbance occurred during the construction of the M11 passing nearby.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Prior to commencing the work a unique code for the project **RRR07** was obtained from the London Archaeological Archive & Research Centre. This acts as a site identifier for any fieldwork records and possible artefacts that are to be archived on completion of project

4.2 All excavations were carried out under the constant supervision and observation of an experienced archaeologist.

4.3 Eight n^0 trenches were excavated for analysis and samples.

4.4 Excavation continued until the required depth was reached

4.5 No trench went deeper than 2.50m from present ground surface.

4.6 As no archaeologically significant deposits were encountered, there was no excavation by hand. The separated spoil for each pit was scanned for finds.

4.7 The watching brief was undertaken by Fitz under the overall project management of Les Capon for AOC Archaeology.

5 RESULTS

Trial Pit A

5.1 TP A was excavated to a depth of 1.30 m. depth below surface (dbs)

Context	Description	Depth
A/001	Topsoil and grasses	0.00-0.20m
A/002	Brown-grey silt clays, subsoil beneath	-0.20-0.40m
A/003	Compact mid yellow- brown fluvial clays	-0.40-1.30m
	NFE	

Trial Pit B

5.2 TP B was excavated to a depth of -2.35m dbs..

Context	Description	Depth
B/001	Topsoil and grasses	0.00-0.20m
B/002	Firm silt clay mid yellow brown with a greyish hue. Natural subsoil	-0.20-0.40m
B/003	Compact, plasticy mid yellow-brown fluvial clays	-0.40-1.80m
B/004	Firm Bluish grey fluvial clay gravels. The clay matrix lessens the further down leaving a looser sorted mix of rounded/sub-rounded and sub-angular gravels	-1.80m -2.35m
	NFE	

Trial Pit C

5.3 TP C was excavated to a depth of -2.40m.

Context	Description	Depth
3/001	Topsoil and probable bioturbated interface with clay subsoil	0.00-0.30m
3/002	Compact yellow brown silt clays.	-0.30m-1.95
3/003	Blue grey clay matrix with gravels. Clay matrix lessens(c.20 %) and gravels become looser. Occasional orange and yellow thin sand lenses also observed	-1.95m-2.40
	NFE	

Trial Pit D

5.4 TP D was excavated to a depth of -1.85m.

Context	Description	Depth
D/001	Dark grey brown topsoil	0.00-0.25m
D/002	Mid brown clay silts not too dissimilar to topsoil	-0.25-0.40m
D/003	Loose gravels with a silty sand soil matrix with various lenses of orange/yellowish sands and grey clays. The relatively high levels of these gravels may suggest they are imported ballast to infill an earlier trial excavated or quarried pit , hence no fresh yellow brown silt clays being observed.	-0.40-1.85m
	NFE	

Trial Pit E

5.5 TP E was excavated to a depth of -2.05m.

Context	Description	Depth
E/001	Current topsoil	0.00-0.25m
E/002	Disturbed mixed yellow brown clay silts with occasional ceramic tile inclusion	-0.25-0.60m
E/003	Firm mid yellow brown clays	-0.60m-1.50m
E/004	Blue-grey slight sandy silt clays with c. 40% gravels	-1.50m-1.70m
E/005	Fresher River gravels with less clay silt matrix as depth greatens	-1.70-2.05m
	NFE	

Trial Pit F

5.6 TP F was only a partial excavation into the bank. Results are not relevant, since the upper formation of the bank is artificially created.

Trial Pit G

5.7 TP G was excavated to a depth of 2.35m.

Context	Description	Depth
G/001	Topsoil	0.00-0.30m
G/002	Firm mid yellow brown/mid brown clay subsoil	-0.30-1.80m
G/003	Blue grey clays containing a dark brown organic lens with c. 20% twig, bark and leaf. This organic lens, whilst never rich enough in organic flotsam to form a peat horizon does indicate that the water level at some time in this area was allowed to settle and stagnate	-1.80m-2.35m
	NFE	

Trial Pit H

5.8 TP H was excavated to a depth of -2.20m.

Context	Description	Depth
H/001	Topsoil with suggestion of a previous topsoil horizon, though not too distinct.	0.00-0.30m
H/002	Firm mid yellow brown silt clays. Natural subsoil	-0.30-1.45m
H/003	Blue grey clays	-1.45m-1.90m
H/004	Fresher gravels. Silt clay matrix has decreased	-1.90m-2.20m
	NFE	

6 CONCLUSIONS

6.1 .Whilst River flood plains can yield some important archaeological discoveries, especially from the prehistoric period, there appears to be very little potential in this particular area.

6.2 The stratigraphic sequence was identical in most of the trenches. The lowest deposits were terrace gravels in a silty clay soil matrix. These were sealed by layers of bluish grey silty sandy clay alluvium. Trial Pit G contained a thin organic formed horizon within the blue-grey clays. This is most likely a localised event and will not be seen over the whole site.

6.3 Above the clays were further alluvial deposits, yellowish brown clay resembling brickearth and developing into subsoil. Each pit was sealed by topsoil.

6.4 Excluding Trial pit F (see above) Trial pit D was the only one that strayed from the regular stratigraphic sequence. This is most likely caused by imported gravels used to backfill an area previously excavated, either specifically examining the clays or possibly a trial pit around the time of the M11 construction.

6.5 It is the author's view that archaeological attendance on the further phases of this project will not be required. The final decision rests with the archaeological advisor to Redbridge, David Divers of the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service.

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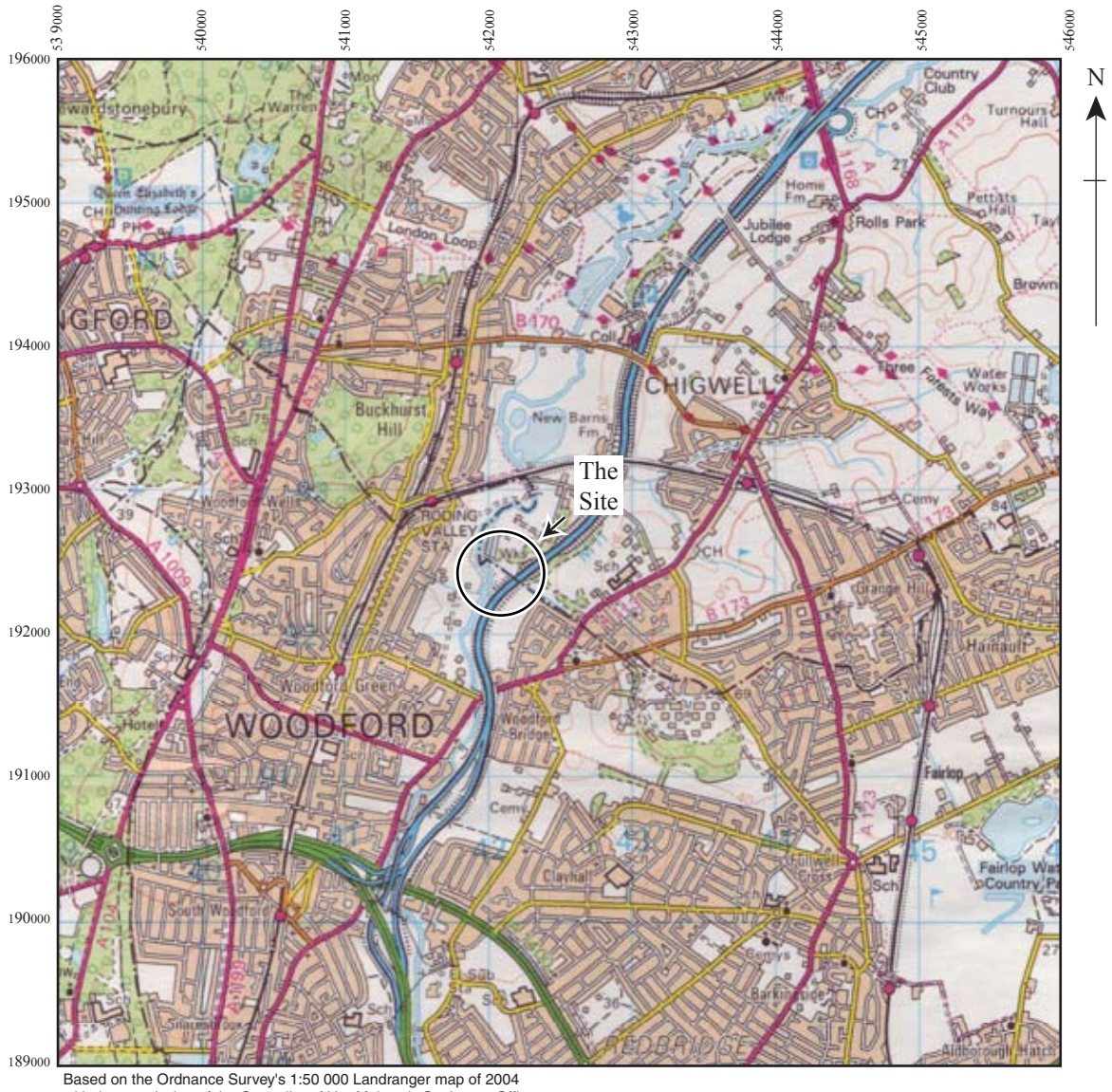

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Figure 1: Site Location

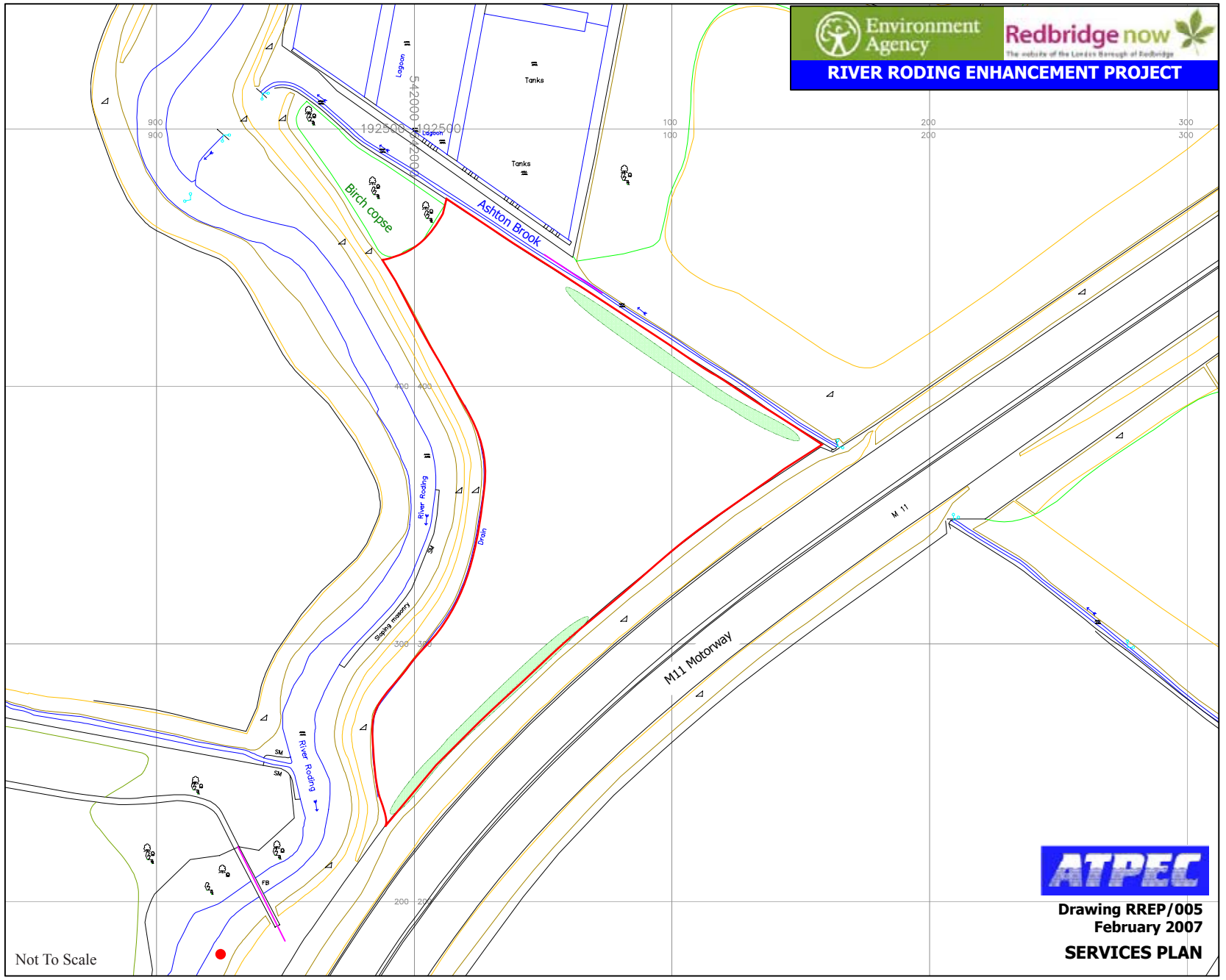

Figure 2: Detailed Site Location

Site outline

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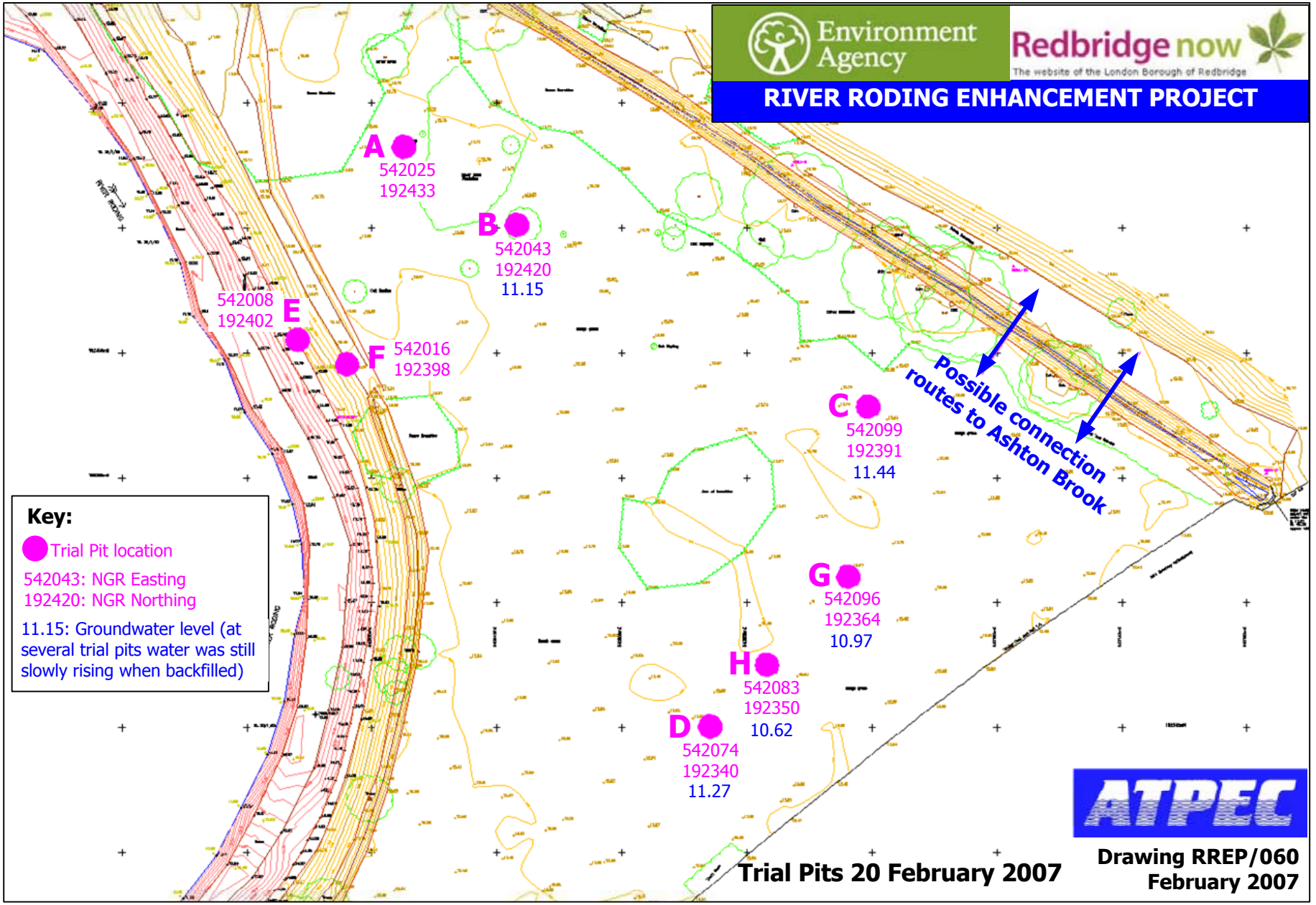

Figure 3: Trial Pit Locations