

ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF
AT THE
FLOOD DEFENCE SCHEME,
WRIBBENHALL, BEWDLEY,
WORCESTERSHIRE

Graham Arnold

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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Project P3722
Report 1865
WSM 45812

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Background information

<i>Client</i>	Environmental Agency
<i>Site address</i>	Wribbenhall, Bewdley, Worcestershire
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 3791 2763
<i>Planning authority</i>	Wychavon District Council
<i>Project design</i>	HEAS 2011
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2008

Previous archaeological work on the site

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on geotechnical works carried out prior to the flood alleviation scheme (WSM43245). No archaeological finds or features were recorded.

Previous archaeological work on associated sites

Bewdley has been the subject of a survey undertaken as part of the Central Marches Historic Towns Survey (Buteux, V. 1996). A search of the Historic Environment Record was carried out prior to works commencing. The site lies immediately west of an area which was subject to a metal detector survey in 1984 (WSM05446) in which two Roman coins and two copper alloy rings were recovered. To the north of the site, the line of the Trimpley to Blackstone Aqueduct was subject to a watching brief in 1992 (WSM29963). Archaeological finds included a Romano-British farmstead at Hoarstone Farm (WSM29914) to the north west of the subject site on which two ovens and an enclosure ditch were recorded. Unstratified flint artefacts were also recorded in an orchard north west of Hoarstone Farm (WSM39754).

Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible.

Methods

General specification for fieldwork	CAS 1995, IfA 2008
Sources consulted	Worcestershire HER Search Central Marches Historic Towns Survey: Bewdley and Wribbenhall
Dates of fieldwork	01-16/08/2011
Area of site	c 1 hectare
Sampling area sampled	c 255m ² . Indicated on Fig 2
Dimensions of excavated areas observed	Foundations
	Trench 1 length 23.00m width 7.00m depth 1.32m
	Trench 2 length 2.40m width 1.75m depth 1.32m
	Trench 3 length 73.00m width 1.50m depth 1.27m
	Trench 4 length 60.00m

width 1.50m
depth 1.00 – 1.40m

Access to or visibility of deposits

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits. Some sections were cleaned for better clarity between contexts.

Statement of confidence

Access to, and visibility of, deposits allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

Deposit description

Context	Description	Date	Interpretation	Depth (OD or below ground level)
100	Loose greyish brown silty sand with occasional small angular stones and rare charcoal flecks, some modern cbm brick fragments, not retained	Modern	Topsoil	0 – 0.30m
101	Moderately compact orange sandy silt with rare small angular stones and occasional pieces of modern cbm	Modern	Subsoil	0.12 – 0.50m
102	Compact mid orange sandy clay with occasional rounded stone	Natural	Alluvium	0.50 – 1.32 +
103	Firm mid orange sandy clay	Natural	Alluvium	0.50 – 1.00m +
104	Loose mid orange medium sand		Natural	0.40 – 1.00m +
105	Compact sandstone geology		Natural	0.55m +

Discussion

Four trenches were excavated during the Flood defence groundworks (See Figure 2). Only natural alluvial and geological deposits were identified (see Plates 1-11). Modern services were identified within Trench 1 (Plate 3) and a land drain was identified running across Trench 4 cut through the subsoil (Plate 9). All other deposits comprised natural geology and alluvium. A small sample of late medieval pottery and other ceramic material was retained from the topsoil and dated to the late 17th – 19th Century. Modern brick fragments within the topsoil were not retained.

Conclusions

No archaeological deposits were identified during the works apart from a scatter of ceramic material likely to be associated with manuring of the field.

Publication summary

The Service has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, the Service intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Ed Wilson of the Environment Agency at Wribbenhall, Bewdley, Worcestershire (NGR ref SO 791763; SMR ref WSM 45812). Four trenches were excavated for the creation of headwalls, wing walls and to key in an L-shaped clay bund protecting the housing estate to the east as a permanent flood defence. No archaeological deposits were identified during the works in which only natural sandstone, sands and alluvial clay deposits were exposed.

Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Ed Wilson, Senior Archaeologist at the Environment Agency..

Bibliography

Buteux, V 1996 *Archaeological assessment of Bewdley (and Wribbenhall), Hereford and Worcester*, Central Marches Historic Town Survey

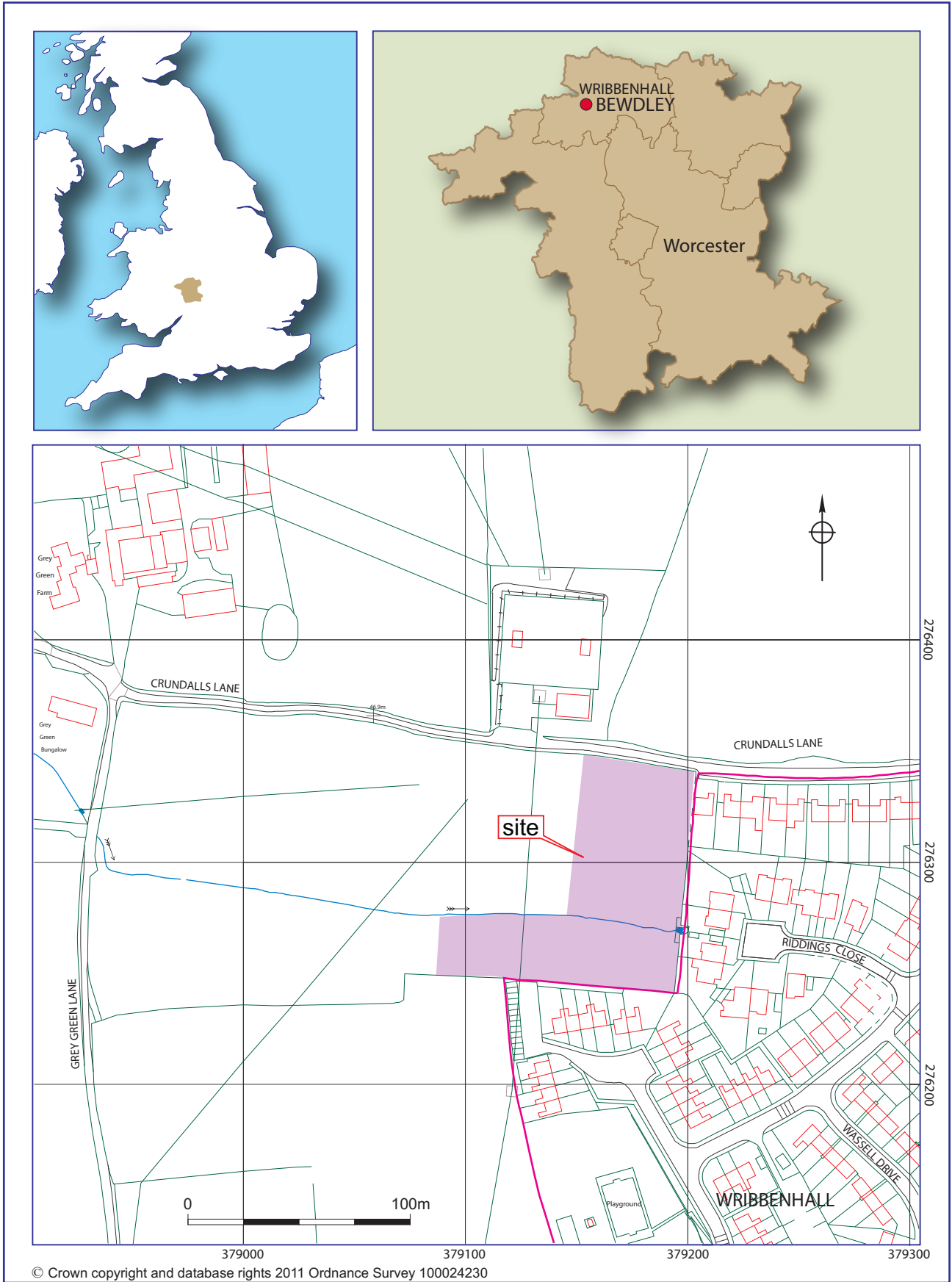
CAS 1995 (as amended) *Manual of Service practice: fieldwork recording manual*, County Archaeological Service, Hereford and Worcester County Council, report, **399**

HEAS, 2008 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished document dated November 2008

IfA, 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists

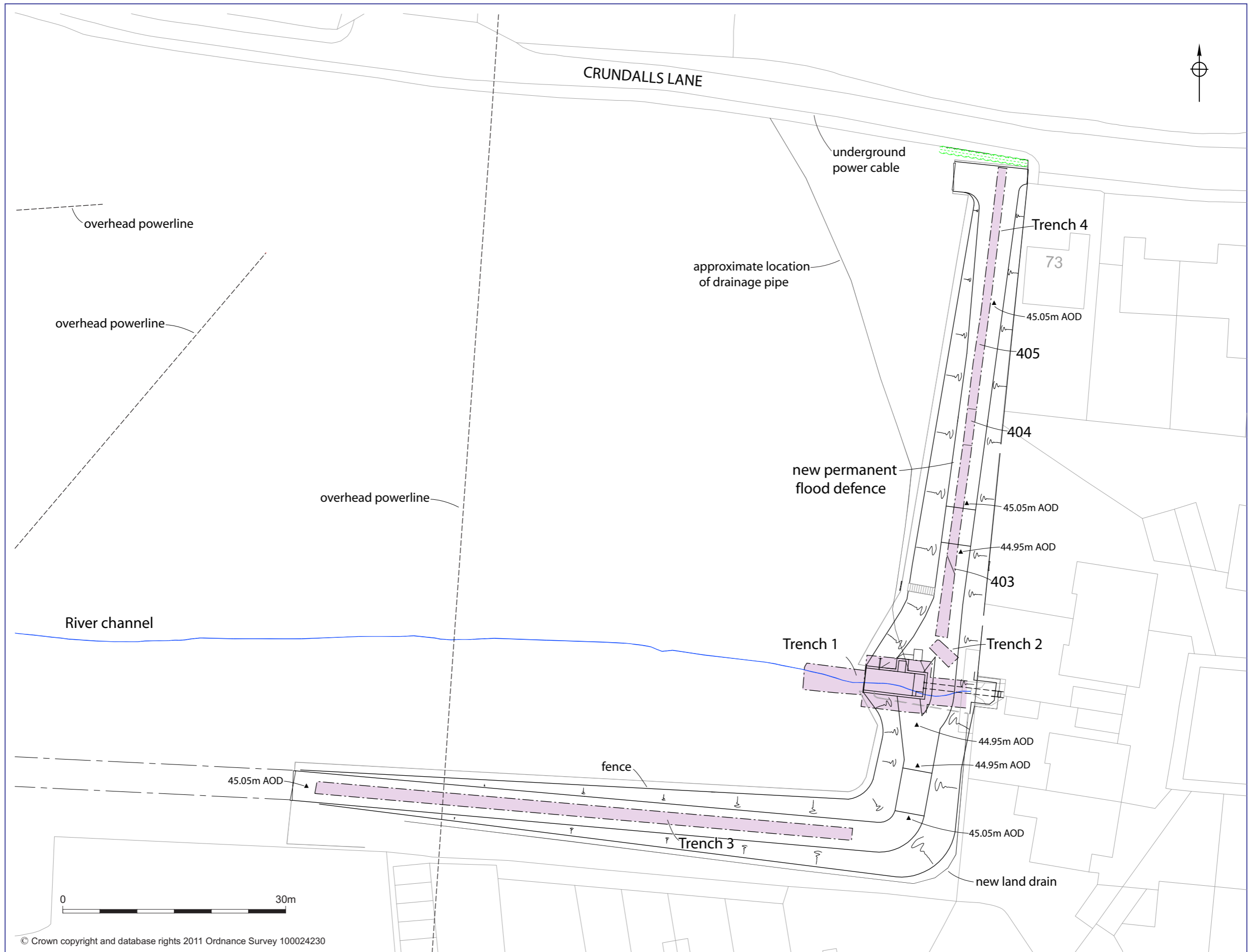
HEAS 2011 *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at Wribbenhall, Bewdley, Worcestershire*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 17 June 2011, **P3722**

Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan (based upon Halcrow Dwg No WNWAP/DD/002)

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 Trench 1 looking west



Plate 2 Trench 1 East facing section



Plate 3 Trench 2 looking east showing modern service pipe



Plate 4 Trench 3 after excavation, looking east



Plate 5 Trench 3 south section in the west end of the trench



Plate ,6 Trench 3 north facing section in the centre of the trench



Plate 7 Trench 3 south facing section at the east end of the trench



Plate 8 Trench 4 excavated looking north



Plate 9 Trench 3 east facing section showing land drain and alluvial deposits

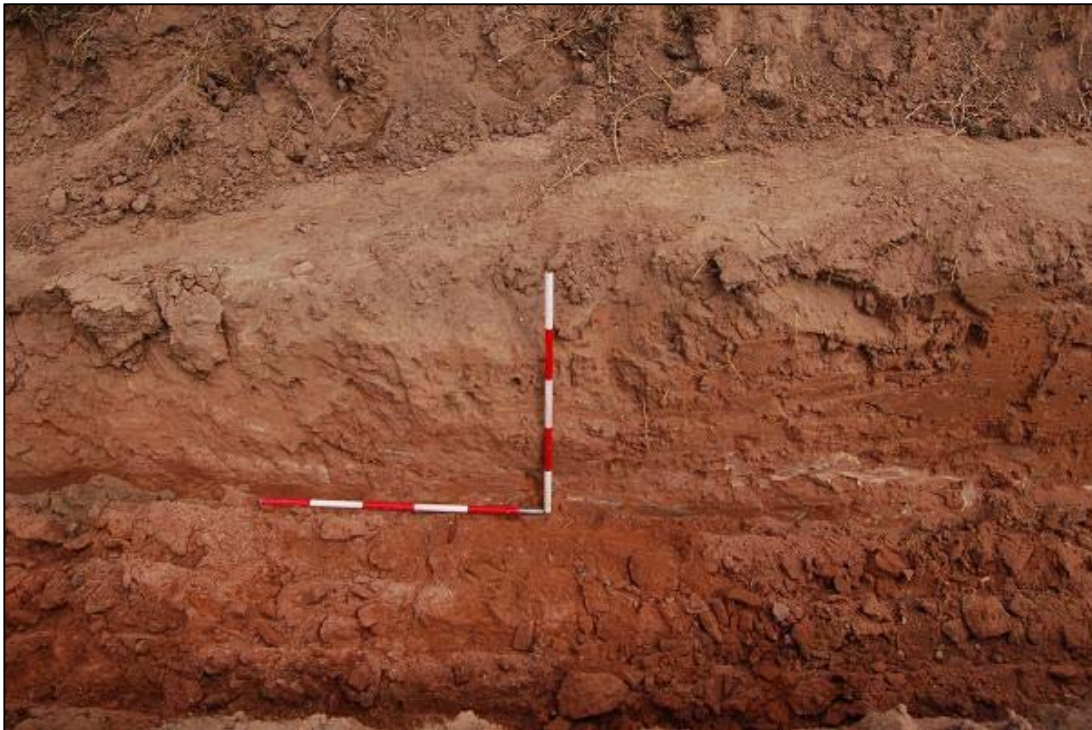


Plate 10 Trench 4 west facing section at centre of trench showing solid sandstone geology at base



Plate 11 Trench 4 east facing section showing topsoil, subsoil and natural sands



Plate 12 General shot of site showing Trench 4 excavated looking south and clay pile for creating the bank

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: P3722 WSM 45812)

The archive consists of:

3	Field progress reports AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
21	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
2	Scale drawings
4	Trench record sheets AS41
1	Computer disk
1	Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416