

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF
AT THE
WATERMILL, PARK LANE,
KIDDERMINSTER,
WORCESTERSHIRE

Jonathan Webster

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council,
Woodbury,
University of Worcester,
Henwick Grove,
Worcester WR2 6AJ

Project 3703
Report 1892
WSM 45767

Archaeological Watching Brief at the Watermill, Park Lane, Kidderminster, Worcestershire

Jonathan Webster

Background information

<i>Client</i>	Anglo Holt Construction Ltd
<i>Site address</i>	The Watermill, Park lane, Kidderminster
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 8278 7587
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM 45767
<i>Planning authority</i>	Wyre Forest District Council
<i>Reference</i>	WF/10/0523
<i>Brief</i>	HEAS 2011a
<i>Project design</i>	HEAS 2011b
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2008, HEAS 2008

Previous archaeological work

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on the site or its immediate surroundings.

Archaeological background

The site currently comprises a car park associated with the Watermill public house. The Stourport Road bounds the south of the development area and Park Lane forms the limit to the west. The east of the site is bounded by the Staffordshire and Worcestershire canal whilst to the north the site butts against the existing Park Lane industrial estate. The site lies at roughly 34m AOD (above Ordnance Datum) dropping gradually to the north and north-west. The underlying geology is mapped as interbedded sandstone and conglomerates of the Early Triassic Kidderminster formation overlain by glacial alluvium, silty clays, sand and gravels (BGS 1976).

Despite a search of the Historic Environment Records (Russell 2011) the first known event to have occurred at the site was the formation of the Bradley and Turton iron founders and hydraulic engineering company, known also by the names Caldwell Works and the Kidderminster Foundry. The factory was originally founded in 1831 when two companies F. Bradley & Co of Clensmore and George Turton & Co of Caldwell joined forces. Originally focussing on the development and construction of water wheels the company diversified into supplying drainpipes, drains, manhole covers, cast iron support pillars and even the pedestrian spiral staircase on the Stourport-on-Severn bridge constructed in 1870. The company continued until 1973, by which time it was constructing equipment used in the moulding of plastic components (Bragginton and Beddoes 2010).

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 Archaeological Watching Brief CAS 1995, HEAS 2008

Sources consulted	HER
Sources cited by the HER	1 st edition 1884-5 Ordnance Survey 1902 Ordnance Survey 1924-7 Ordnance Survey 1938 Ordnance Survey

Date(s) of fieldwork between 15 June and 21 July 2011

Area of proposed building		c 513m ²
Sampling	area sampled	c 272m ² . Indicated on Fig 2
	sample size	c 53%
Dimensions of excavated areas observed		
	Foundations	Length 152.50m Width 2.50m Depth average 1m max 1.56m
	Services	Length 49.40m Width 0.80m Depth 1m

Access to or visibility of deposits

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken both during and after machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified.

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	Type Colour Texture	Description	Date	Interpretation	Depth (below ground level)
Tr 1					
1001	Tarmac	Tarmacadam Surface	Mod	Surface	0.00-0.20m
1002	Stone crush	Modern stone crush	Mod	Bedding layer for surface	0.21-0.35m
1003	Mid dark grey brown coarse silty sands	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made- ground	0.36-0.60m+
Tr 2					
2000	Tarmac	Tarmacadam Surface	Mod	Surface	0.00-0.20m
2001	Stone crush	Modern stone crush	Mod	Bedding layer for surface	0.21-0.32m
2002	Mid dark grey brown coarse silty sands	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made- ground	0.33-0.54m
2003	Light orange grey sands, loose compaction	Deposit	Mod	Sand bedding layer that contained modern services	0.55-0.65m+
Tr 3					
3000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore layer	0.00-0.08m
3001	Clinker ash mix with CBM and concrete throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made- ground	0.09-0.54m
3002	Light greyish brown silty loam with occ sub-round pebbles	Deposit	Mod	Possible former ground surface	0.55-1.14m
3003	Light orange brown sands with occ sub- round pebbles	Deposit	Nat	Natural substrate	1.15-1.56m+
Tr 4					
4000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore layer	0.00-0.20m
4001	Clinker ash mix with CBM and concrete throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made- ground	0.21-0.69m

4002	Light orange brown sands with occ sub-round pebbles	Deposit	Nat	Natural substrate	0.70-1m+
4003	Mid brown-orange clay and sand mix	Deposit	Mod	Made-ground seen in south facing section only	0.30-0.41m
Tr 5					
5000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore layer	0.00-0.20m
5001	Clinker ash mix with CBM and concrete throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.21-0.74m
5002	Mid greyish brown compact silty loams with occ sub-round pebbles	Deposit	Mod	Possible former ground surface	0.75-1.05m
5003	Light orange brown sands with occ sub-round pebbles	Deposit	Nat	Natural substrate	1.06-1.10m+
5004	Mid blue-grey shale and gravels	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground noted below 5000	0.21-0.36m
Tr 6					
6000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore layer	0.00-0.20m
6001	Tarmac	Tarmacadam Surface	Mod	Former car park surface	0.21-0.28m
6002	Stone crush	Stone crush	Mod	Bedding layer for surface	0.29-0.58m
6003	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore surface	0.59-0.75m
6004	Light orange brown sands with occ sub-round pebbles	Deposit	?	Possible Natural substrate	0.75m+
6005	Mid blue-grey shale and gravels	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made ground noted at south end of trench.	0.21-0.36m
Tr 7					
7000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore layer	0.00-0.20m
7001	Mid blue-grey shale and gravels	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.21-0.70m+
Tr 8					
8000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore surface	0.00-0.30m
8001	Mid blue-grey shale and gravels	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.31-0.72m
8002	Clinker ash mix with CBM and concrete throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.73-1m+
Tr 9					
9000	Tarmac	Tarmacadam surface	Mod	Surface	0.00-0.05m
9001	Stone crush	Stone crush	Mod	Bedding layer for surface	0.06-0.19m
9002	Tarmac	Tarmacadam surface	Mod	Former surface	0.20-0.27m
9003	Mid brown-orange silty sand occ clinker and root action throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.28-0.90m+
Tr 10					
10000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore surface	0.00-0.10m
10001	Mid dark grey brown coarse silty sands with freq CBM and metal throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.11-0.35m
10002	Dark grey brown silty loam with frequent CBM	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.36-0.90m+
Tr 11					
11000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore surface	0.00-0.20m

11001	Mid blue-grey shale and gravels	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.21-0.48m
11002	Tarmac	Tarmacadam surface	Mod	Former surface	0.49-0.52m
11003	Mid green-yellow sandy gravels	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.21-0.26m
11004	Dark brown-grey silty loam with CBM throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.53-1.20m+
Tr 12					
12000	Hardcore	Hardcore	Mod	Hardcore surface	0.00-0.10m
12001	Mid dark grey brown coarse silty sands with freq CBM and metal throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.11-0.35m
12002	Dark brown-grey silty loam with CBM throughout	Deposit	Mod	Deliberately imported made-ground	0.36-1m+

Discussion

The intrusive works that were monitored over the course of the development revealed that the site had been subjected to a large amount of reworking in the latter part of the 20th century, and although the natural undisturbed substrate was revealed in a number of places, no archaeologically significant deposits or features were noted. The remains of the former brass and iron foundry was not found although it is believed that the high percentage of brick and ceramic building material (CBM) noted in the deposits probably originate from the demolition of these structures. This demolition was clearly done in a very thorough way as not even the base of foundations or lines of former walls could be ascertained.

It is believed at present that the areas of deep infilling correspond with the former footprint of the building complex and it is possible that cellar floor surfaces or wall foundations may survive at these lower depths, however given the quality of the demolition seen across most of the site this would seem unlikely. Given the scalped nature of the natural substrate revealed, combined with the truncations caused during both the construction of the foundry and its later demolition, the chances of earlier archaeologically significant deposits or features surviving below the present impact levels is considered to be very low.

Conclusions

Little can be ascertained from this site that would provide further information to an archaeologist wishing to study any period. The site was first subjected to a series of truncations during the developments throughout the 19th century as the brass and iron foundry grew and evolved removing possible evidence of earlier occupation of the site. Whilst the evolution of such a foundry would in itself have provided a good study in the development of industrial processes during this important phase of the Country, it was itself removed in its entirety during the latter part of the 20th century by a thorough demolition that not only removed the building complex down to ground level, but also the foundations, floor surfaces and underlying features that may have provided indications of the processes, methodologies and equipment used. It is also at this time that the natural substrate seen during the current works was probably scalped, removing any chance of small discrete features surviving.

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 Anglo Construction Ltd at the Watermill, Park Lane, Kidderminster, Worcestershire (NGR ref SO 8278 7587; HER ref. WSM 45767). The archaeological investigations revealed that the former 19th century Bradley and Turton brass and iron factory that was situated on the site had been removed in the latter part of the 20th century by a thorough demolition event that removed all traces of the former industrial complex, before dumping substantial deposits comprising demolished building materials and industrial residues back into the void to bring the level of the site up to its present height. No significant archaeological deposits or remains were identified, nor artefacts recovered.

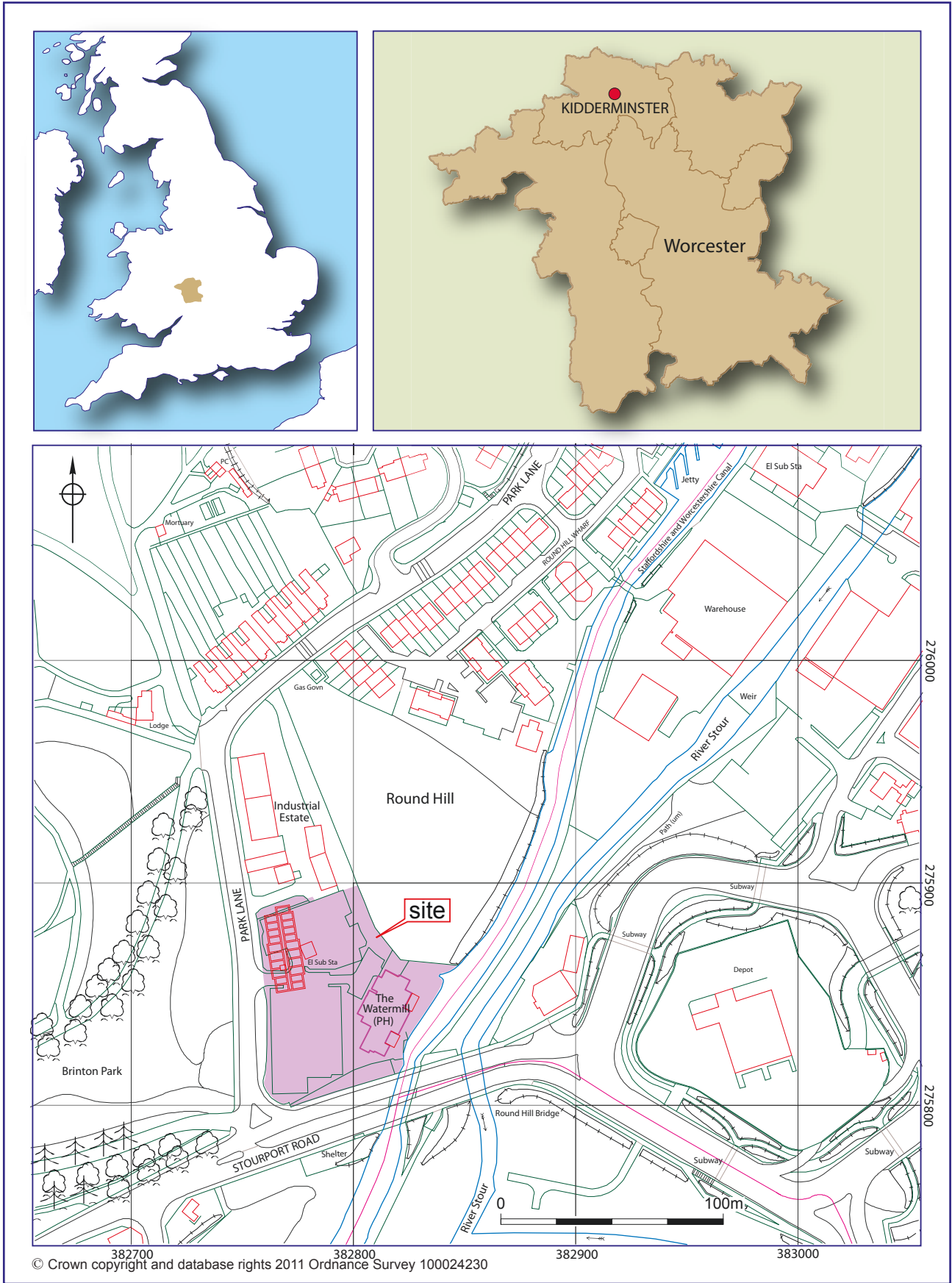
Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Andy Clayton (Anglo Holt Construction Ltd) and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

Bibliography

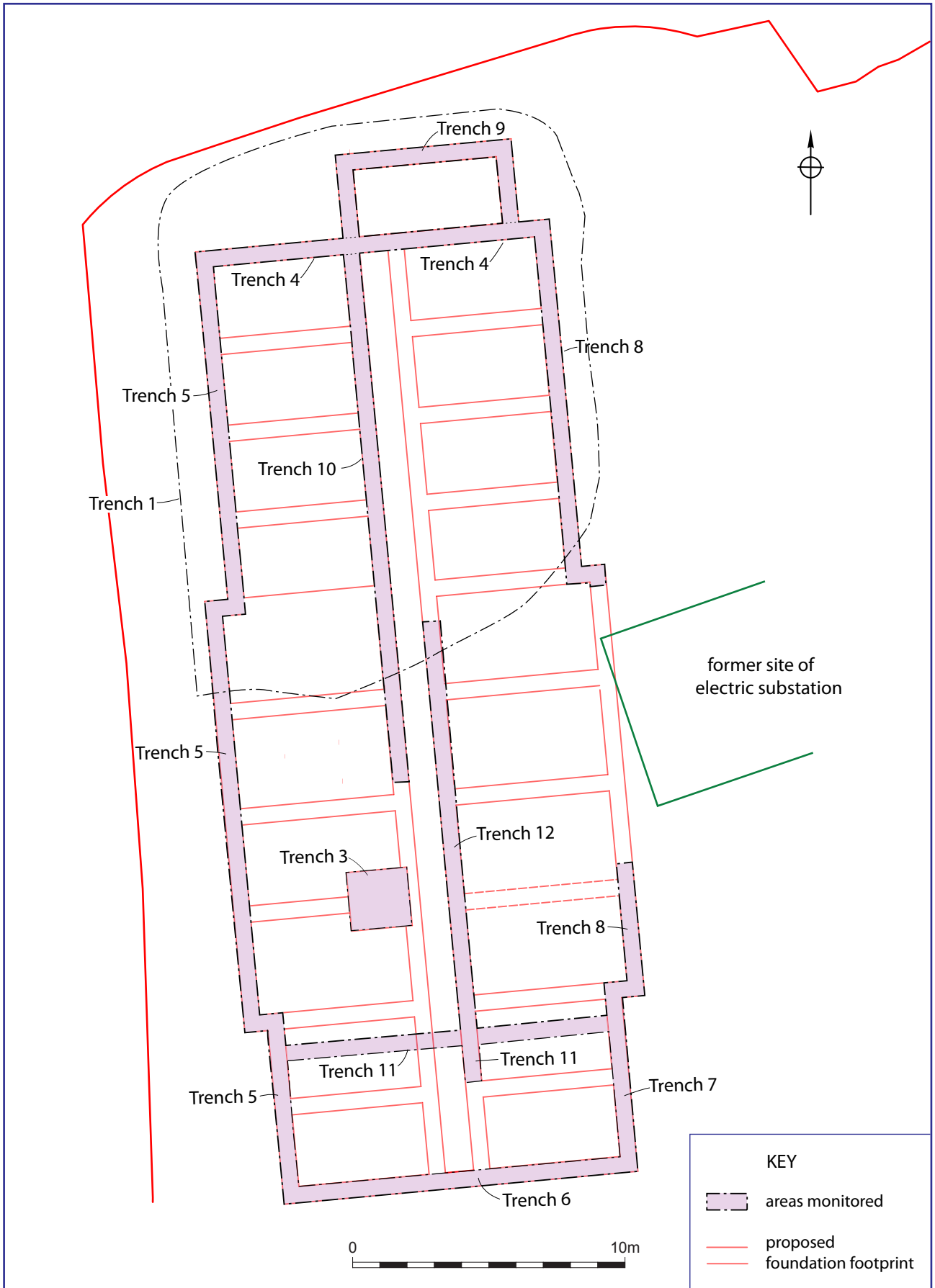
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- Russell, O, 2011 *Historic Environment Record Search; The Watermill, Park Lane, Kidderminster*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 27 May 2011, **WSM 45767**
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Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan (based upon Anglo Holt Drg. No. 2095-005-03c)

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 General view of development site, looking south-east



Plate 2 General view of development site, looking north-east



Plate 3 Trench 3, south facing section showing tip lines from large dumped deposits

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 45767)

The archive consists of:

- 7 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 60 Digital photographs
- 1 Scale drawings
- 12 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

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