

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
WATCHING BRIEF
OF LAND OFF MALVERN ROAD
(A449), POWICK HAMS,
WORCESTER,
WORCESTERSHIRE

Graham Arnold

Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

29 August 2012

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Worcestershire Archaeology,
Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council,
The Hive,
Sawmill Walk,
The Butts,
Worcester, WR1 3PB

Project P3736
Report 1946
WCM 101895
& WSM 45815

Archaeological watching brief of land off Malvern Road (A449), Powick Hams, Worcester, Worcestershire

Graham Arnold

Background information

<i>Client</i>	AMEC Environment and Infrastructure UK Limited
<i>Site address</i>	Malvern Road (A449), Powick Hams, Worcester, Worcestershire
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 83620 52158
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WCM 101895 and WSM 45815
<i>Planning authority</i>	Worcester City Council and Worcestershire County Council
<i>Registered Historic Battlefield reference</i>	WSM 00249, WCM 91095 and 91096
<i>Brief</i>	Planning Advisory Section 2011
<i>Project design</i>	HEAS 2011
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2008

Background

The brief states that the proposed works may affect deposits of archaeological and palaeoenvironmental interest, registered on the County Historic Environment Record (reference WSM 00249) and the City Historic Environment Record (WCM 91095 and 91096), referring to the English Civil War battles of Powick Bridge (1642) and Worcester (1651). The site is within the Registered Historic Battlefield of Worcester. The greatest impact is likely to be the excavation of the access and egress pits for the directional drill, where there is considered to be a high potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits. There is circumstantial evidence relating to the potential for Civil War burial pits somewhere on these meadows, and while it is not possible to ascertain whether they occur within the development area, there remains a potential risk. The historical background to the site is also in a desk-based assessment completed prior to the works (AMEC 2011).

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	HEAS 2011
Sources consulted	AMEC 2011
Date(s) of fieldwork	14 - 22 August 2012

Dimensions of excavated areas observed:

South bank of the River Teme (HER reference WSM 45815)	
Trench 1	length 2.00m width 1.60m depth 1.00m
Trench 2	length 3.00m width 1.60m depth 1.00m
Trench 3	length 3.60m width 2.80m depth 1.10m

North bank of the River Teme (HER reference WCM 101895)

Trench 4	length 2.60m width 2.00m depth 1.90m
Trench 5	length 3.00m width 2.20m depth 1.50m
Trench 6	length 3.50m width 3.50m depth 1.20m

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. Selected areas were cleaned by hand.

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

Trenches south of the River Teme (Trenches 1, 2 and 3)

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
1000	Topsoil	Light brown friable silty clay with frequent rooting and occasional small rounded stone	0 – 0.30m
1001	Alluvium	Reddish brown moderately compact silty clay, redeposited over existing gas main in Trenches 1 and 2. Sterile alluvial deposit	0.30 – 0.90m
1002	Alluvium	Dark reddish brown compact alluvial clay. Sterile alluvial deposit	0.90 – 1.10m +

Trenches north of the River Teme (Trenches 4, 5 and 6)

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
2000	Made ground	Modern mixed topsoil, subsoil and clay with frequent concrete, metal and brick. Backfill for existing gas main valve, with redeposited blue and red clays. Directly over 2003. Only observed in Trench 5	0 - 1.50m
2001	Topsoil	Soft light orangey brown friable sandy silt loam with frequent rooting	0 – 0.30m
2002	Alluvium	Soft mid orangey brown clayey silty sand, redeposited over existing gas main in Trench 4. Clean sterile alluvial deposit	0.30 – 0.90m
2003	Alluvium	Compact dark reddish orange alluvial sandy clay. Sterile alluvial deposit	0.90 – 1.90m +

Discussion and Conclusions

The excavation of the trenches revealed uniform, sterile alluvial deposits on both sides of the river. Deposits within Trenches 1, 2 and 4 (Plates 2, 3, 4 and 6) contained existing gas mains, but no cut was visible and there was no obvious evidence that material had been redeposited. Trench 5 (Plate 7) excavated to expose the existing gas valve, consisted of modern mixed made ground and modern backfill. Trenches 3 and 6 (Plates 5, 8 and 9) excavated for the access and egress of the directional

drilling had sterile, clean alluvial sands and clays, overlain by topsoil. Neither features nor finds of archaeological significance, nor palaeoenvironmental deposits were found during the works.

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 AMEC Environment and Infrastructure UK Limited on land off Malvern Road (A449), Powick Hams, Worcester (NGR ref SO 83620 52158; HER refs WCM 101895 and WSM 45815). Four trenches were excavated to expose the existing gas main, whilst an access and egress pit was excavated on the north and south bank of the river Teme to a maximum depth of 1.50m). Only sterile deposits of alluvial clays and silts were observed, overlaid by topsoil. Neither finds nor features of archaeological interest, nor palaeoenvironmental deposits were observed.

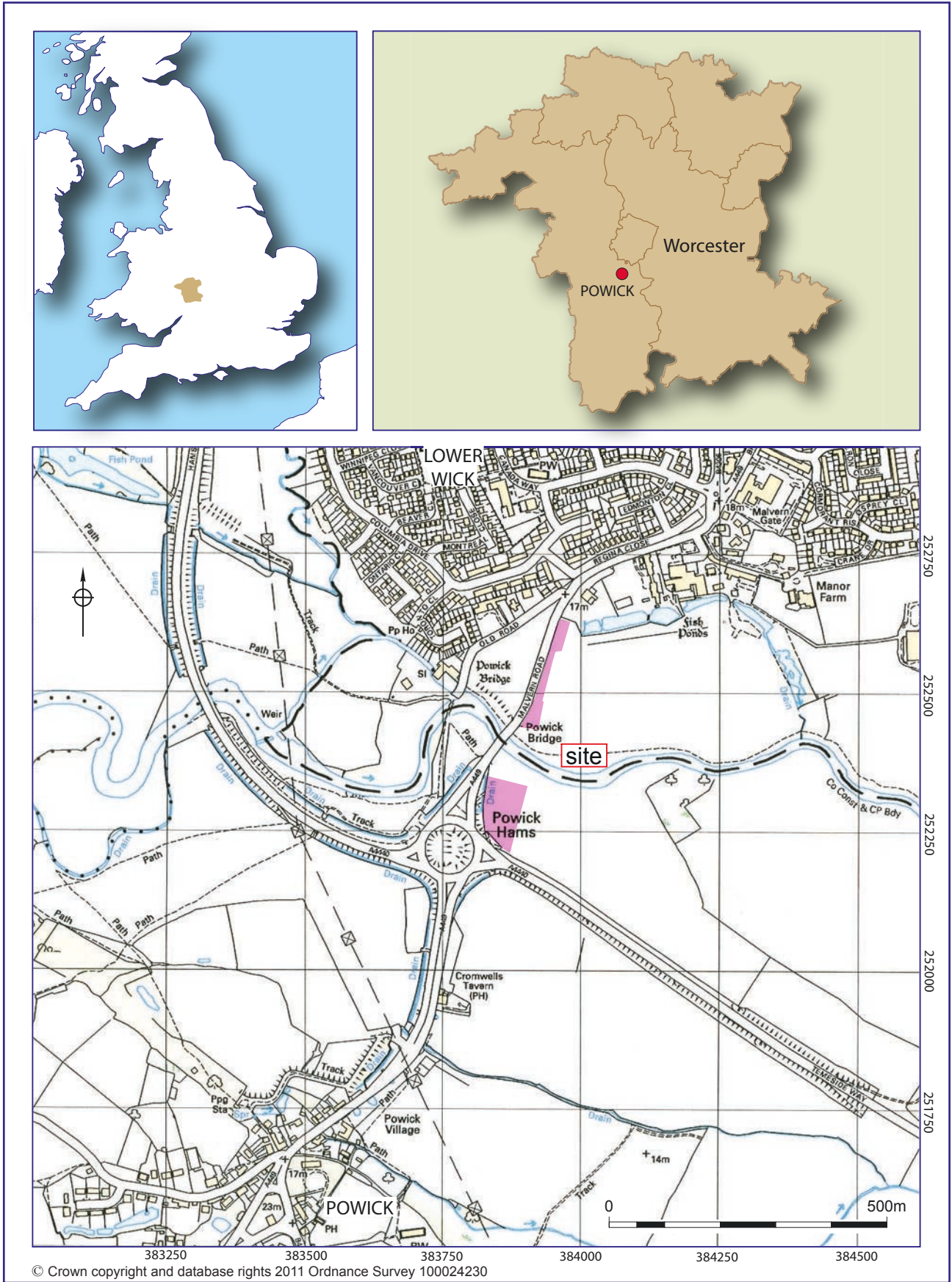
Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Dr Stephen Townend (AMEC Historic Environment Consultant, AMEC Environment & Infrastructure), Chris Ashmore (West Midlands Gas Alliance), James Dinn (Archaeological Officer, Worcester City Council) and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

Bibliography

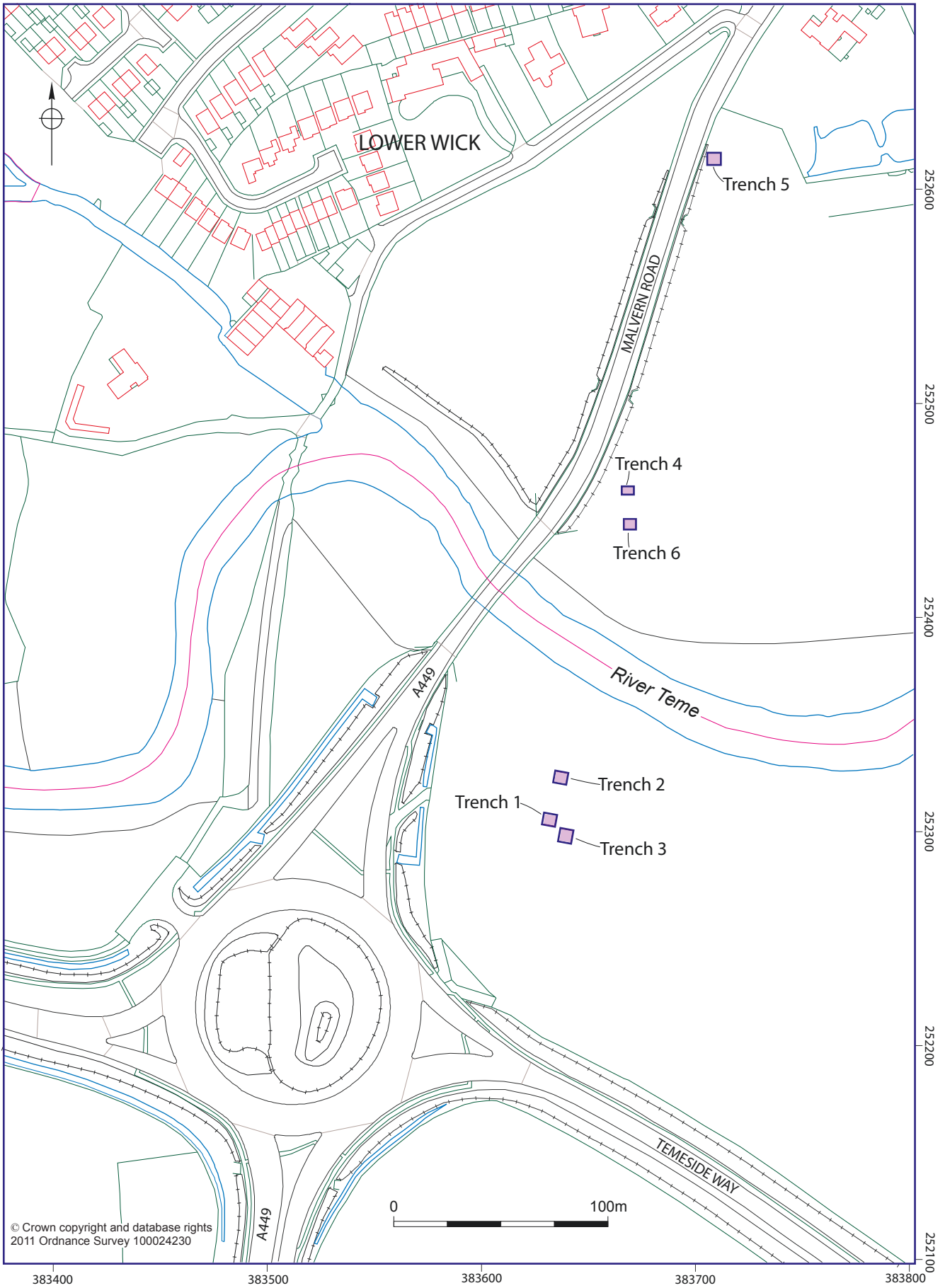
- AMEC 2011 *Directional Drilling at Powick Hams, Worcester: Historic Environment Desk-Study*, AMEC Environment and Infrastructure UK Ltd, unpublished report dated 14 July 2011
- HEAS 2008 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated November 2008
- HEAS 2011 *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief of land off Malvern Road (A449), Powick Hams, Worcester, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 14 July 2011, **P3736**
- IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists,
- Planning Advisory Section 2011 *Requirements for a programme of archaeological work at Powick Hams, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 21 June 2011
- WCC 1999 *Statement of standards and practices appropriate for archaeological fieldwork in Worcester, Appendix 3 in Supplementary Planning Guidance Number 8: Archaeology and Development*, Worcester City Council, document revised June 1999
- Worcestershire Archaeology 2012 *Manual of Service Practice: recording manual*, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished report, **1842**
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Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



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2011 Ordnance Survey 100024230

383400 383500 383600 383700 383800 252100 252200 252300 252400 252500 252600

Trench location plan

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 Location of Trench 1 and 2 looking east, Trench 3 excavated on the north side of the drilling machine; south bank of the River Teme



Plate 2 Trench 1 west facing section, showing existing gas main at base, 1m below ground level; south bank of the River Teme



Plate 3 Trench 2 west facing section; south bank of the River Teme



Plate 4 Close up of Trench 2 showing existing gas main at base, 1.00m below ground level; south bank of the River Teme



Plate 5 Trench 3 overall looking north showing alluvial deposits. 1.10m at maximum depth below ground level; south bank of the River Teme

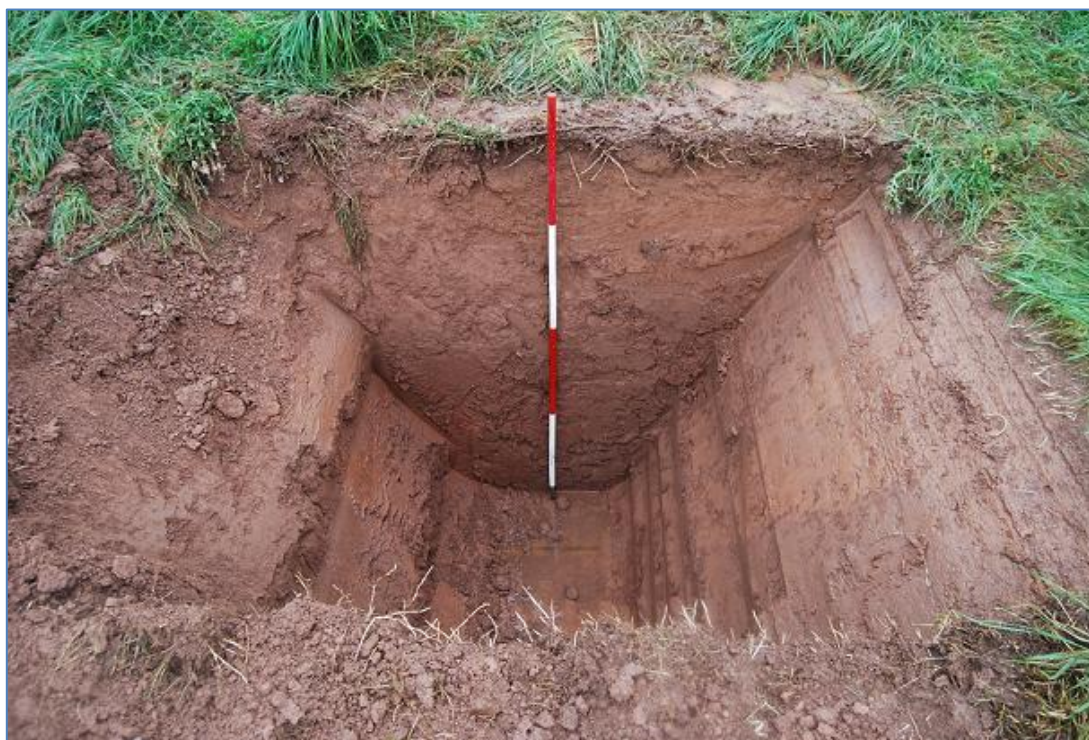


Plate 6 West facing section of Trench 4 showing sterile alluvial deposits and existing gas pipe at the base and ground water; Trench 4 was a maximum depth of 1.9m below ground level; north bank of the River Teme



Plate 7 East facing section of Trench 5 valve all mixed made ground and modern backfilling; north bank of the River Teme



Plate 8 Trench 6 drilling egress pit looking south-west towards Powick New Bridge; north bank of the River Teme



Plate 9 East facing section of Trench 6 which was 1.20m in depth and demonstrates sterile alluvial deposits; north bank of the River Teme



Plate 10 Trench 6 after excavation looking south; north bank of the River Teme

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WCM 101895)

The archive consists of:

3	Field progress reports AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
56	Digital photographs
1	Drawing number catalogues AS4
1	Scale drawings
6	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
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416