

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING
BRIEF
AT
HARVINGTON SEWAGE
TREATMENT WORKS,
HARVINGTON,
WORCESTERSHIRE

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Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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Project 2617
Report 1281
WSM 33651

Archaeological Watching brief at Harvington Sewage Treatment Works, Harvington, Worcestershire

Alvaro Mora-Ottomano

Background information

<i>Client</i>	Severn Trent Water Ltd.
<i>Site address</i>	Harvington Sewage Treatment Works, Anchor Lane, Harvington, Worcestershire
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SP 0593 4850
<i>Sites and Monuments Record reference</i>	WSM 33651
<i>Planning authority</i>	Worcestershire County Council
<i>reference</i>	407584
<i>Brief</i>	HEAS 2004a
<i>Project design</i>	HEAS 2004b
<i>Project parameters</i>	IFA 1999

Previous archaeological work on the site

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site.

Previous archaeological work on associated sites

The site is situated just within the southern outskirts of the village of Harvington, on the western Warwickshire Avon flood plane, some 3 miles north of Evesham. The natural geology consists of dark greyish brown, mottled, stoneless clay over greyish brown with many ochreous mottles, stoneless clay with a strong coarse prismatic structure (Beard *et al.* 1986).

This area has extensive evidence for late prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval occupation in the vicinity. Detailed information of all the sites within the area of observation is documented in the Sites and Monuments Record of the Worcestershire County Council. The nearest and most significant sites, which may be affected by the sewage work, are two ring ditch enclosures (WSM 02785 and WSM 02787) situated at *c.* 500-600m south-east of the site observed. These ring ditches (recorded as crop marks) are probably of later prehistoric date. Further evidence for late prehistory occupation has been recorded at *c.* 600m of the site, which consists of a linear feature and may be part of an enclosure (WSM 21662). WSM 02786 situated at *c.* 1km eastwards consists of six overlapping rectangular enclosures of different sizes with two visible entrances, which may be Romano-British in date. More reliable Romano-British evidence comes from site WSM 02848, located at approximately 1km southwest of the site concerned, which yielded the remains of an early 2nd-Mid 3rd millennium A.D. Roman rural settlement (Jackson *et al.* 1995).

Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits and features during the excavation of five trenches associated with the construction of the new sewage treatment works, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible.

Methods

General specification for watching briefs	CAS 1995
Sources consulted	Worcestershire SMR; Jackson <i>et al.</i> 1995;

Beard *et al.* 1986; Ordnance Survey 1st and 2nd editions.

Date(s) of fieldwork

18-19 August, 6-9 September 2004

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during and after machine excavation. Trenching was carried out with a 360-degree excavator with a toothless bucket. Selected areas were cleaned by hand. The area observed consists of five trenches. Trench 1 is semi-oval in shape and 28m long, 5.25m wide and 0.43m deep. Trench 2 is in fact a large open area adjacent to the existing sewage work buildings in which further trenches were excavated. Its dimensions are c. 85m long, 85m wide and 0.30m deep. Trench 3 is a small square 3m² and 2.50m deep. Trench 4 is circular whose diameter is 15m and depth 1m. Finally trench 5 is a large square c. 18m² and 2.20m deep. The depth of trenches 3, 4 and 5 were measured from the base of trench 2, therefore their depth from the ground surface are 0.30m deeper than the measurement mentioned above.

Access to or visibility of deposits

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

The deposits recorded during the watching brief are summarised in the tables below. The areas consist of topsoil, subsoil and alluvial layers. During the excavation of the aforementioned deposits and layers, no signs of any significant archaeological site was found.

Trench 1.

Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (below ground level)
101	Dark yellowish brown hard silty clay with occasional sub-round stones	Topsoil	0-0.30m
102	Medium yellowish brown hard silty clay with occasional small to medium sub-round stones	Subsoil	0.30-0.43m
103	Large irregular crushed limestones	Modern road foundation	<0.43m

Trench 2.

Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (below ground level)
201	Dark yellowish brown hard silty clay	Topsoil	0-0.30m
202	Dark yellowish brown compact silty clay	Subsoil	<0.30m

Trench 3.

Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (below ground level)
301	Dark yellowish brown hard silty clay with occasional sub-round stones	Topsoil	0-0.30m
302	Compact dark yellowish brown silty clay	Subsoil	0.30-0.55m
303	Compact mid yellowish brown silty clay	Alluvial layer	0.55-1m
304	Compact dark blueish grey silty clay	Alluvial layer	1-2.5m

Trench 4.

Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (below ground level)
401	Mid brown clay loam	Topsoil	0-0.30m
402	Friable yellowish light brown silty clay	Alluvial layer	0.30-0.40m
403	Compact mid yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small sub-round white limestones	Alluvial layer	0.40-0.70m

Trench 5.

Context	Description	Interpretation	Depth (below ground level)
501	Compact dark yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small sub-round limestones	Subsoil	0.30-0.40m
502	Compact mid yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small white limestones	Alluvial layer	0.40-0.70m
503	Compact dark blueish grey silty clay with occasional flecks of degraded limestones	Alluvial layer	0.70-2.20m

Discussion

The ground works monitored by this watching brief were carried out prior to and during the proposed sewage re-development works. Although the site concerned here is situated in the vicinity of several late prehistoric and Romano-British settlements and/or enclosures, no evidence of human activities or occupations in the past was found. It is likely that the whole area observed has been limited to agriculture. Nevertheless, considering the flood plane location and the alluvial thick silt layers, it might be possible that some archaeological features may still survive in deeper layers.

Conclusions

The watching brief was able to demonstrate with confidence that no archaeological deposits or features are present on this site. Furthermore, no signs or activities or residual deposition of material from the nearby late prehistoric and Romano-British settlements and/or enclosures have been identified.

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.

A watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Severn Trent Water Ltd. at Harvington Sewage Treatment Works, Anchor Lane, Harvington, Worcestershire (NGR ref SP 0593 4850; SMR ref WSM 33651). The site, on the western flood plane of the Warwickshire Avon, lies within a landscape associated with extensive late prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval archaeology. Fieldwork concluded, however, that no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within the development area.

Archive

Context number catalogue AS5	1
Trench record sheet AS41	5
Fieldwork progress records AS2	5
Photographic records AS3	1
Site risk assessment sheet	1
Drawing and maps	6

The project archive is intended to be placed at: Worcestershire County Museum
Hartlebury Castle, Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
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Acknowledgements

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Bibliography

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HEAS 2004a *Brief for an archaeological watching brief at Harvington Sewage Treatment Works, Worcestershire*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished document dated 4 May 2004

HEAS 2004b *Proposal for an archaeological watching brief at Harvington Sewage Treatment Works*, Historic Environment and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 17 July 2004, **P2617**

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Plate 1. General view of trench 4, viewing west.



Plate 2. East facing section of trench 5.