

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF  
AT  
CHADWICH MANOR HOUSE,  
REDHILL LANE,  
BROMSGROVE,  
WORCESTERSHIRE



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Worcestershire Archaeology  
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## **Archaeological watching brief at Chadwich Manor House, Redhill Lane, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire**

Tom Vaughan and Tim Cornah

### **Summary**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of the National Trust at Chadwich Manor House, Redhill Lane, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire (NGR SO 97390 76075; WSM 49628). It was undertaken on behalf of the National Trust, whose tenant intends to install a new sewage treatment plant to service the needs of the property.

The investigations comprised the observation of a linear service pipe trench and a discrete square excavation for a septic tank.

No significant archaeological horizons, structures, layers or deposits were recorded. Artefacts noted during the investigations were all of later post-medieval and modern date, and comprised very occasional building debris and a single 18<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire ware pottery sherd.

The spread of slag and ash noted within the topsoil is considered to relate to a tennis court which is understood to have occupied this part of the garden in the 1930s (pers. comm. Peter Dyer).

Though a significant potential for remains dating from the medieval period was identified, no medieval activity was seen within the observed areas. The lack of the presence of the medieval village in such close proximity to the south of the remains of St Stephens chapel does suggest its presence could lie to the west of the chapel as to its north and east are medieval fish ponds, though this hypothesis remains untested. Though no other activity of this period was recognised, the area observed was relatively small, therefore it is possible that archaeological remains could extend within other areas of the site.

## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Chadwich Manor House, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire (NGR SO 97390 76075). It was undertaken on behalf of the National Trust, whose tenant intends to install a new sewage treatment plant to service the needs of the property.

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets the significance of which may be affected by the application (WSM 06608).

The project conforms to a brief prepared the National Trust and for which a proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2013).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008) and *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

The event reference for this project, given by the HER is WSM 49628.

### 2 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were to determine the presence or absence of archaeological deposits or remains and to produce an appropriate record of and to assessment of the character, date, location and preservation of any archaeological remains identified.

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The fieldwork was undertaken by Simon Woodiwiss (BA, MIfA) who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 1982 and has been practicing archaeology since 1980, Andy Walsh (Dip, MSc, BS, AlfA) who joined WA in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 2004. The report was prepared by Tom Vaughan (MA, AlfA), who joined WA in 2001 and has been practising archaeology since 1991 and Tim Cornah (BA) who joined WA in 2006 and has been practising archaeology since 1999. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Vaughan. Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc, MIfA).

#### 3.2 Documentary research

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Historic Environment Record (HER).

#### 3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2013).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 17 and 19 June 2013. The site reference number and site code is WSM 49628.

Site works involved two elements: a 50m long pipe trench and a small discrete area to accommodate a septic tank. The area excavated to accommodate the septic tank was 4.4m<sup>2</sup>. The location of the investigations is indicated in Figure 2.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked excavator, employing a toothless bucket and under archaeological supervision. Subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand. Where possible, clean surfaces were inspected and selected deposits were excavated to retrieve artefactual material and environmental samples, as well as to determine their nature. Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012).

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### 3.4 Structural analysis

All fieldwork records were checked and cross-referenced. Analysis was effected through a combination of structural, artefactual and ecofactual evidence, allied to the information derived from other sources.

### 3.5 Statement of confidence in the methods and results

The methods adopted allow a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

## 4 The application site

### 4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context

Chadwich Manor lies in an area of soft sandstone with free draining base-poor soils and variable topography. The surrounding area is a generally pastoral landscape with patches of woodland. The settlement pattern is one of farmsteads and wayside dwellings associated with moderate to high level dispersal. In 1904 a large area of land including the Chadwich Manor Estate was purchased by the Cadbury family. The bulk of this was then given to the National Trust.

The HER contains a number of records with information about archaeological activity within the area of the site. There is some evidence for occupation in the area from the Romano-British period in the form of a field name. The field to the south-west of the site is called the Black Grove (WSM 30855). The "black" element of the name is often associated with Romano-British period occupation deposits.

There is also significant evidence of medieval activity within the vicinity of the site. A deserted medieval village (WSM 06608), thought to have existed from at least the 11<sup>th</sup> century, as well as a hollow or track way (WSM 35587) dating from this period are located to the south. A number of fishponds (WSM 37866, 37868, 37869 and 37870) lie to the north of the site, all of which have potential medieval origins. The remains of St Stephen's Chapel (WSM 03379) were observed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to the north of the site. This chapel is thought to have origins in the 13<sup>th</sup> century and along within the remains of a possible moat (WSM 06609) suggest that there was extensive archaeological activity in the area during the period.

Activity continued in the area into the post-medieval period as can be seen by the possible presence of a watermill (WSM 06609) on the site of the former moat. Most of the surviving buildings on the site also date from this period with Chadwich Manor itself (WSM 06610) potentially dating from the late 17<sup>th</sup> century with many of the other buildings dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and later.

The farm buildings to the south-west of the manor house are of 18<sup>h</sup> century date and are Grade II listed (ref. 1258022; <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1258022> ). The barns were the subject of building recording investigations by WA in advance of their conversion for residential use (Robson 2000).

### 4.2 Current land-use

The site is currently owned by the National Trust but is under leasehold and is currently residential. The gardens comprise grass lawns with shrubs and surrounding trees.

## 5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Fig 2.

Within the areas excavated, four deposits were recorded. The natural geology consisted of red sand at a depth of 0.90m below the current surface (102). This was only observed within Trench 1. The subsoil overlying comprised greyish brown and reddish sandy silts with variable pebbles, to a depth of approximately 0.90m below the current surface (101 and 201). Topsoil overlay this, comprised of dark greyish brown and brown sandy silts with occasional pebbles, brick, roof tile,

rare slag and furnace waste, to a maximum depth of 0.40m (100 and 200). From (200) was recovered a single sherd of Staffordshire ware pottery which dated from the 18<sup>th</sup> century (pers. comm. Dennis Williams). A spread of slag and ash was noted within the topsoil within the western portion of the service pipe trench (202).

## **6 Synthesis**

No significant archaeological horizons, structures, layers or deposits were recorded. Artefacts noted during the investigations were all of later post-medieval and modern date, and comprised very occasional building debris and a single 18<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire ware pottery sherd. None of this was retained.

The spread of slag and ash noted within the topsoil is considered to relate to a tennis court which is understood to have occupied this part of the garden in the 1930s (pers. comm. Peter Dyer).

Though a significant potential for remains dating from the medieval period was identified, no medieval activity was seen within the observed areas. The lack of the presence of the medieval village in such close proximity to the south of the remains of St Stephens chapel does suggest its presence could lie to the west of the chapel as to its north and east are medieval fish ponds, though this hypothesis remains untested. Though no other activity of this period was recognised, the area observed was relatively small, therefore it is possible that archaeological remains could extend within other areas of the site.

## **7 Publication summary**

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology 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 at Chadwich Manor House, Redhill Lane, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire (NGR SO 97390 76075; WSM 49628). The investigations comprised the observation of a linear service pipe trench and a discrete square excavation for a septic tank.*

*No significant archaeological horizons, structures, layers or deposits were recorded. Artefacts noted during the investigations were all of later post-medieval and modern date, and comprised very occasional building debris and a single 18<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire ware pottery sherd.*

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## **8 Acknowledgements**

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Keith Challis, Alex Morley, Anna Parkin and Olivia Bonna (National Trust), Peter Dyer (leaseholder, Chadwich Manor) and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning officer, Worcestershire County Council).



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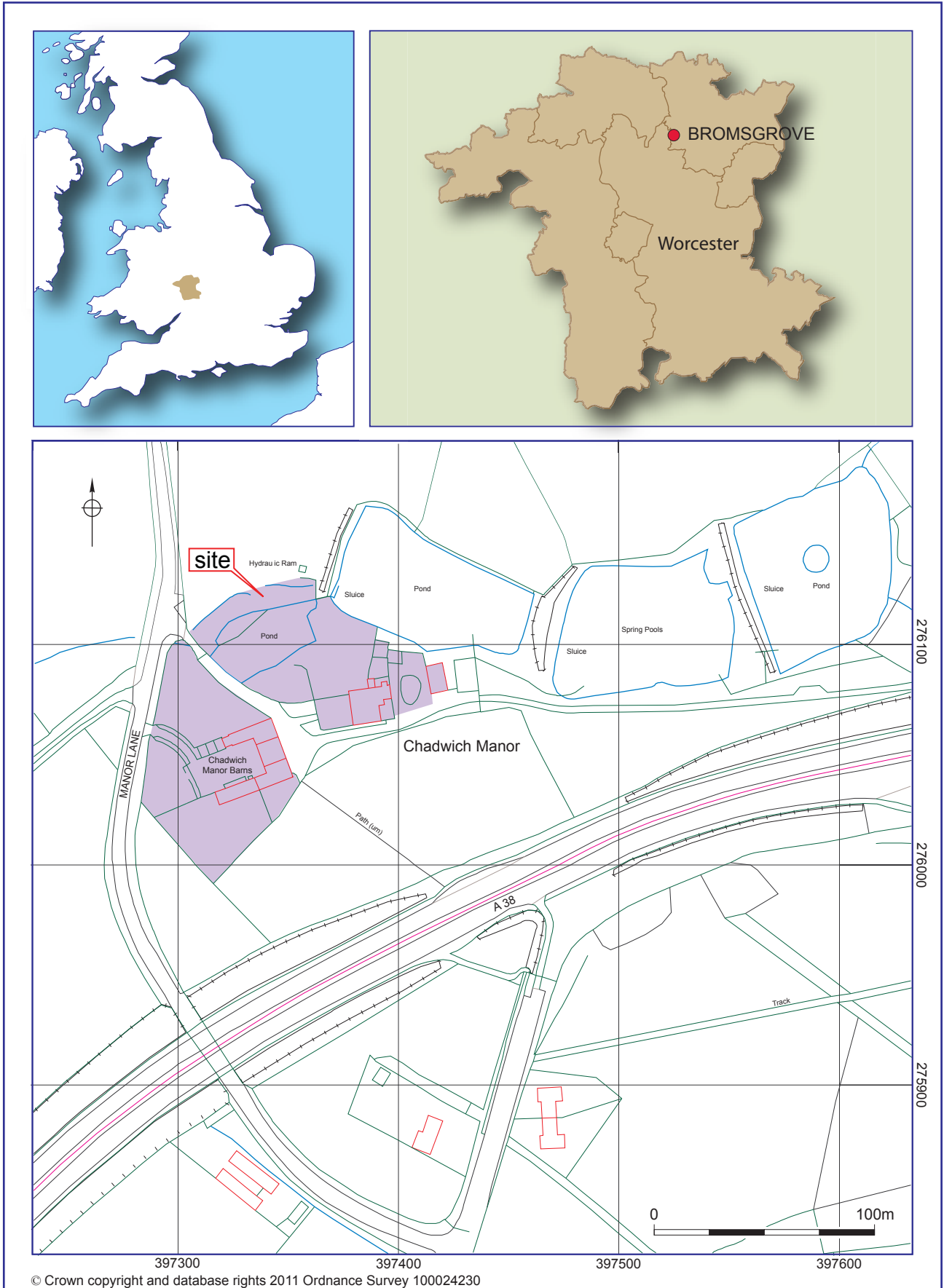
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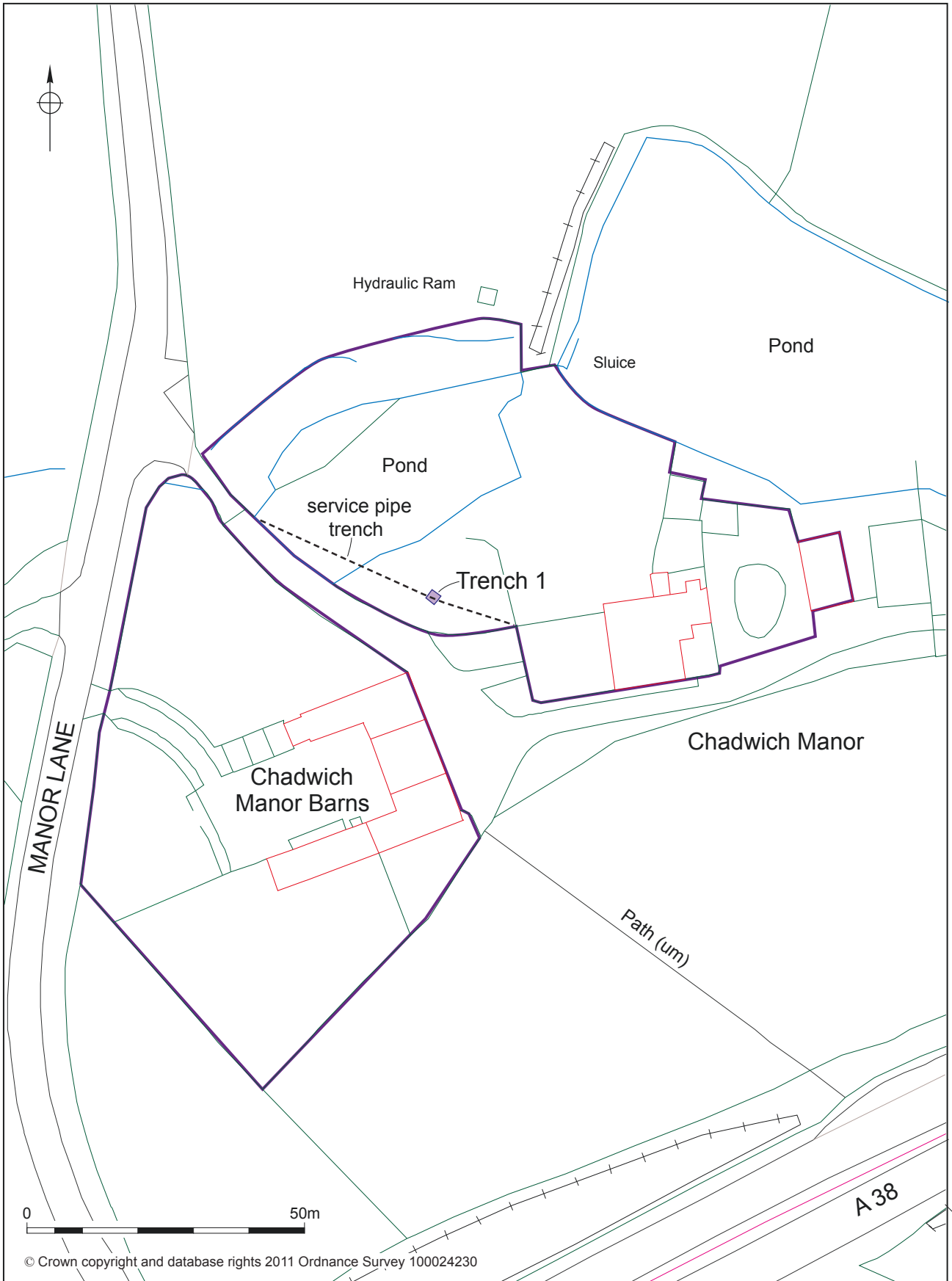
**Figures**





Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench location plan

Figure 2

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## Plates



*Plate 1 The site looking east during the excavation of Trench 1*



*Plate 2 The area excavated for the septic tank (Trench 1), looking west*

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## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 2.2m Width: 2m Depth: 2.4m

Orientation: north-west to south-east

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Dark slightly greyish brown sandy silt with occasional pebbles. Disturbed by two service pipe trenches and tree roots.	0.00-0.30m
101	Subsoil	Greyish brown sandy silt with frequent pebbles. Disturbed by two service pipe trenches and tree roots.	0.30-0.90m
102	Natural	Red sand.	0.90m +

### Service pipe trench

Maximum dimensions: Length: c50m Width: 0.40m Depth: 0.80-0.90m

Orientation: west-north-west to east-south-east

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Dark brown humic sandy silt, inc occasional brick, roof tile, rare slag and furnace waste. Inc a sherd of 18 <sup>th</sup> century pottery.	0.00-0.40m
201	Subsoil	Reddish brown sandy silt; increasingly red with depth, inc occasional small/medium pebbles. Disturbed by tree roots.	0.30-0.90m +
202	Dump deposit	Slag and ash within topsoil, area approx 10m long, within western portion of the trench. Probable domestic dump. Disturbed by tree roots.	0.30-0.40m

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## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: WSM 49628)**

The archive consists of:

- 3 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic record AS3
- 9 Digital photographs
- 1 Trench record sheet AS41
- 1 CD-Rom/DVDs
- 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

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