

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF  
ON LAND ADJACENT TO MOAT  
COURT, SHERRARD'S GREEN,  
GREAT MALVERN,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

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Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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Project 2613  
Report 1290  
WSM 33629



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## Archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to Moat Court, Sherrard's Green, Great Malvern, Worcestershire

**Tom Vaughan**

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### Background information

<i>Client</i>	Severn Trent Water
<i>Site address</i>	Land adjacent to Moat Court, Sherrard's Green, Great Malvern, Worcestershire
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 80074624
<i>Sites and Monuments Record reference</i>	WSM 33629
<i>Planning authority</i>	Malvern Hills District Council
<i>reference</i>	P99A0347
<i>Brief</i>	HEAS 2004a
<i>Project design</i>	HEAS 2004b
<i>Project parameters</i>	IFA 1999
<i>Previous archaeological work on the site</i>	

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site.

### *Archaeological, historical and topographical background*

Sherrard's Green lies 2.3km east of Great Malvern town centre, on the floodplain of the River Severn, 3.5km to the east. The site is located within a single flat sub-rectangular c 7.68ha field at approximately 31-36mAOD, presently under crops. It is bounded by Madresfield Road to the north, Chance Lane to the east, Moat Court to the west and a tributary stream to the south (Fig 1).

The predominant soil association within the area is the Brockhurst 1 series (711b) comprising slowly permeable waterlogged reddish fine loamy over clayey soils, some similar soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, over Permo-Triassic reddish mudstone and till (Soil Series of England and Wales 1983).

The name Sherrard's Green is thought to derive from *Shyrrold* (16<sup>th</sup> C) or the surname *de la Schirholte* (1275) meaning scir-holt or 'bright wood' (Mawer and Stenton 1927, 212). The earliest detailed cartographic source is the 1846 Tithe. This indicates the site to have comprised two adjoining but separate fields: Moat Field to the north-east and Rickyard Meadow to the south-west.

Moat Court, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 31949), lies adjacent to the west of the study area. It was a possession of Great Malvern Priory until the Dissolution when it was leased out privately (VCH IV, 126). It is a two-storey brick building with 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>/17<sup>th</sup> century elements (WSM 22536) and a red-brick dovecote with old tile roof and lantern. The moat is now only extant to the south and east (WSM 06716). An undated 12" diameter cannon ball has been discovered at the adjacent Moat Farm (WSM 07789).

The site of Baldenhall lies c 0.4km to the south-east. This medieval village is thought to have declined and disappeared by 1550. The church, which had been built before 1217, was pulled down in 1560 by Gaven Nicholls who farmed the churchyard. There are no visible earthwork remains and no finds have been recovered from the site (WSM 05732; VCH IV, 124).

## 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.

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## Methods

General specification	CAS 1995
Sources consulted	SMR Sources cited by the SMR 1846 Great Malvern Tithe Plan & Award (WRO BA 1572 x760 436 & f760 436)
Date(s) of fieldwork	21 <sup>st</sup> July – 4 <sup>th</sup> August 2004
Area of deposits observed	c 19,550m <sup>2</sup> . Indicated on Fig 2
Dimensions of excavated areas observed	Easement      length 391m Width 50m depth 0.25-0.35m Culvert trench   length 214m width 12-23m depth <2m

## *Statement of confidence*

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

The easement area was not always stripped down to the surface of the natural clay. The visibility of the natural matrix varied from 5% to 95%, although it probably averaged c 50% clean natural over the entire area. However full archaeological monitoring and the recovery of only minimal residual finds allows a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

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**Deposit description**

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
Area 1		Compound area to east	
100	Plough soil	Mid brown silty clay. Root activity from existing crop. Moderately loose but cohesive. Diffuse boundary with 101 below. c 1% small sub-angular granite fragments.	0.00-0.18m
101	Subsoil	Mid orangey brown silty clay. Compact and cohesive. Diffuse boundaries with 100 above and 102 below. c 1% small sub-angular granite fragments. Occasionally integrated into 100 due to plough action.	0.16-0.27m
102	Natural	Mid brownish/pinkish red clay. Compact and cohesive. Diffuse and irregular boundary with 101 above. c 2% small sub-angular granite fragments and c 1% (frost cracked) small rounded pebbles. NNW/SSE aligned plough scars in surface.	0.27m+
Area 2		North-east half of easement area	
200	Plough soil	Mid brown silty clay. Root activity from existing crop. Moderately loose but cohesive. Diffuse boundary with 201 below. c 2% small sub-angular granite fragments and c 1% charcoal flecks and fragments.	0.00-0.16m
201	Subsoil	Mid orangey brown silty clay. Compact and cohesive. Diffuse boundaries with 200 above and 202 below. c 5% small sub-angular granite fragments and c 1% charcoal flecks. Occasionally integrated into 200 due to plough action.	0.16-0.32m
202	Natural	Mid brownish/pinkish red clay. Compact and cohesive. Diffuse and irregular boundary with 201 above. <5% small sub-angular granite fragments and (frost cracked) small rounded pebbles. NNW/SSE aligned plough scars in surface.	0.28m+
Area 3		South-west half of easement area	
300	Plough soil	Mid brown silty clay. Root activity from existing crop. Moderately loose but cohesive. Diffuse boundary with 301 below. c 1% small sub-angular granite fragments.	0.00-0.15m
301	Subsoil	Mid orangey brown silty clay. Compact and cohesive. Diffuse boundaries with 300 above and 302 below. c 1% small sub-angular granite fragments. Occasionally integrated into 300 due to plough action.	0.15-0.25m
302	Natural	Mid brownish/pinkish red clay. Compact and cohesive. Diffuse and irregular boundary with 301 above. c 2% small sub-angular granite fragments and c 1% (frost cracked) small rounded pebbles. NNW/SSE aligned plough scars in surface.	0.25m+

## Artefacts

### *Artefact recovery policy*

All artefacts from the area of salvage recording were retrieved by hand and retained in accordance with the service manual (CAS 1995 as amended).

### *Method of analysis*

All hand retrieved finds were examined. A primary record was made of all finds on a Microsoft Access 2000 database. Artefacts were identified, quantified and dated.

Pottery was examined under x20 magnification and recorded by fabric type and form according to the fabric reference series maintained by the service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

### *Artefactual analysis*

A summary of the artefacts recovered can be seen in Table 1. The assemblage recovered from the watching brief came from a single context (201) and contained material from the medieval to modern periods. Flat roof tile made up the majority of finds totalling 83% of material recovered. The pottery recovered (12 sherds) was from the medieval-modern period (see Table 2) and exhibited some degree of abrasion.

Other finds consisted of a single sherd of roof tile, hand made iron nails, ceramic brick fragments, a piece of animal bone and an unidentified piece of iron which may possibly be a stretched out chain link.

Context	Material	Type	Total	Weight (g)
201	Bone	Animal	1	33
201	Brick	Modern	8	174
201	Iron	Nails	4	16
201	Iron	Unidentified	1	16
201	Pottery	Early post med.	2	16
201	Pottery	Medieval	2	49
201	Pottery	Modern	3	7
201	Pottery	Post medieval	6	49
201	Tile	Ridge	1	32
201	Tile	Roof	144	2000

Table 1: *Quantification of assemblage.*

Context	Fabric name	Fabric	Total	Weight (g)
201	Worcester-type sandy glazed ware	64.1	2	49
201	Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware	69	2	16
201	Red sandy ware	78.1	4	37
201	Nottingham stoneware	81.3	1	1
201	Porcelain	83	1	6
201	Creamware	84	2	12

Table 2: *Quantification of assemblage fabrics.*

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## Discussion of the artefacts

The discussion below is a summary of the finds and associated location or contexts by period. The importance of individual finds has been commented upon as necessary.

### *Medieval*

Two adjoining sherds of Worcester-type sandy glazed ware (fabric 64.1), constituting a part strap handle with stabbing decoration, were the only medieval sherds present. While the exact form of vessel from which they originated is unknown their size suggests that it would have been a large jug or pitcher dating from around the 12<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### *Post-medieval*

The post-medieval assemblage consisted of eight pottery sherds, flat roof tile fragments and a single fragment of ridge tile. The most common type present (four sherds) was Red sandy ware (fabric 78). Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware (fabric 69) and Creamware (fabric 84) were equally represented with two sherds of both fabric types. Creamware has a fairly specific manufacturing date of 1760-80 and, while the Oxidized glazed Malvernian ware was produced during the medieval period, the glaze exhibited on these sherds is more typical of 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> century manufacture. A large quantity of flat roof tile fragments (144 fragments) was examined but, being undiagnostic, they can only be broadly dated as being produced between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. The scarcity of medieval material within the assemblage suggests that they are most likely of latter date and produced during the post-medieval period.

### *Modern*

The modern artefacts recovered consisted of only two sherds of porcelain (fabric 84) and a single sherd of Nottingham stoneware (fabric 81.3). The small fragments of porcelain originated from either a domestic tea or dinner service while the Nottingham stoneware sherd is too small to attribute to a form, but generally date to the mid to late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

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## Discussion

No archaeological features or horizons were identified within the easement strip. The thin topsoil was often integrated into the subsoil, the result of modern deep ploughing. Linear plough scars within the surface of the natural clay are also testament to the recent disturbance of the soil horizons.

The small assemblage of finds is consistent with that to be expected during general discard or during agricultural field manuring from the medieval period onwards.

It is therefore considered that the field, although adjacent to attested medieval occupation activity, has been given over solely to agricultural use from this time and has thus not been utilised for other activities.

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## 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 Severn Trent Water on land adjacent to Moat Court, Sherrard's Green, Great Malvern, Worcestershire (NGR: So 80074624; HER ref WSM 33629). No significant archaeological features or horizons were observed. The finds recovered are indicative of general discard or agricultural manuring from the medieval period onwards.

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## Archive

Fieldwork progress records AS2	6
Trench record sheets AS41	3
Photographic records AS3	1
Digital photographs	23
Drawing number catalogues AS4	1
Permatrace drawing sheets	3
Boxes of finds	1
Computer disks	1

The project archive is intended to be placed at:	Worcestershire County Museum Hartlebury Castle, Hartlebury Near Kidderminster Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
telephone	01299 250416

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## Acknowledgements

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Julian Plumbley (Severn Trent Water), Damian King (Haswell), Dave Sidaway (Forkers Limited) and Mike Glyde (Worcestershire Historic Environment Planning Advisor).

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## Bibliography

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*Plate 1: Area 1 Compound Area strip (in progress), view south.*



*Plate 2: Area 2 middle, north-east side of Easement strip (in progress), view south-east.*





*Plate 3: Area 2 south-east end of Easement strip (in progress), view south-east.*



*Plate 4: Area 3 west side of Easement strip (in progress), view west-north-west.*

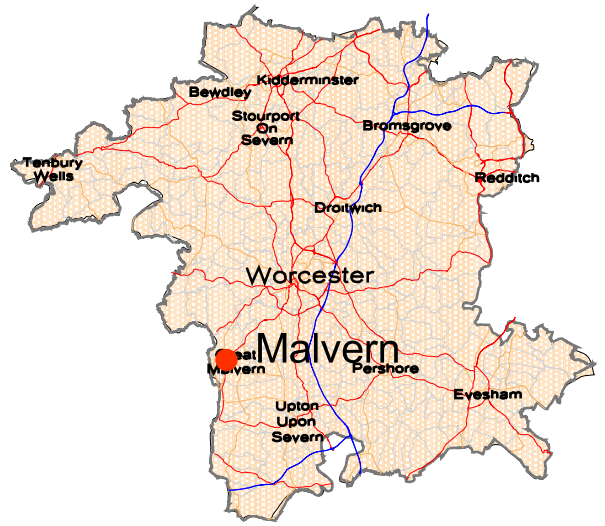




*Plate 5: Culvert excavation (in progress), view north-west.*



*Plate 6: Culvert excavation (in progress), view south-east.*



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Location of site

Figure 1

