

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF AT BADSEY ROAD AND  
BROADWAY ROAD, EVESHAM,  
WORCESTERSHIRE

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Illustrated by Carolyn Hunt

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# Contents

<b>Part 1 Project summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Part 2 Detailed report</b>	
<b>1. Background</b>	<b>2</b>
1.1 Reasons for the project	2
1.2 Project parameters	2
1.3 Aims	2
<b>2. Methods</b>	<b>2</b>
2.1 Documentary search	2
2.2 Fieldwork	2
2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy	2
2.2.2 Structural analysis	3
<b>3. Artefacts</b>	<b>3</b>
3.1 Artefact recovery policy	3
3.2 Method of analysis	3
3.3 Artefact analysis	3
3.4 Environment	4
3.4.1 Sampling policy	4
3.5 The methods in retrospect	4
<b>4. Topographical and archaeological context</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5. Description</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6. Discussion</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>7. Publication summary</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>8. The archive</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>9. Acknowledgements</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>10. Personnel</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>11. Bibliography</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>12. Abbreviations</b>	<b>6</b>



## **Archaeological watching brief at Badsey Road and Broadway Road, Evesham, Worcestershire**

**James Goad and Erica Darch**

### **Part 1 Project summary**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Badsey Road and Broadway Road, Evesham, Worcestershire (NGR SO 9410 3602 to 9456 3648). It was undertaken on behalf of Severn Trent Water, who intended the installation of a sewer pipe. The project was carried out because the proposed development was thought likely to disturb buried archaeological deposits.

Apart from a collection of finds from the stripped area the easement didn't uncover any significant archaeological sites.

## Part 2 Detailed report

### 1. Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between Badsey Road and Broadway Road, Evesham, Worcestershire (SO 9410 3602 to 9456 3648) on a sewerage pipeline installed by Severn Trent Water.

#### 1.2 Project parameters

The project conforms to the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IFA 1999).

The project also conforms to a brief prepared by the Planning Advisory Section (AS 1999a) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (AS 1999b).

#### 1.3 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were to locate archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type, vulnerability and documentation. The purpose of this was to establish their significance, since this would make it possible to recommend an appropriate treatment which may then be integrated with the proposed development programme.

### 2. Methods

#### 2.1 Documentary search

Prior to fieldwork commencing a search was made of the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). In addition the following sources were also consulted:

##### *Cartographic sources*

- Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> edition.

##### *Documentary sources*

- County histories (VCH II).
- Site archives (from earlier excavations, evaluations etc).

#### 2.2 Fieldwork

##### 2.2.1 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by the Service (AS 1999b).

Fieldwork was undertaken between 29<sup>th</sup> August and 18<sup>th</sup> September 2002.

Fieldwork took place between the points already mentioned (the cross country section of trench between Badsey and Broadway roads) and did not include any of the trenching along

public highways which occurred at several points in the area. The length of the pipeline easement as well as the area of the treatment plant, was stripped using a toothless ditching bucket as per the brief. The entire stripped area was inspected for features and artefacts and certain selected deposits were investigated by hand. The location of the pipeline is shown in Figures 1 and 2. Wherever artefacts were recovered from any position along the length of the easement, a note was made of their location in order to be present during excavation of the pipe trench. A soil profile and feature uncovered were located on a scale plan. Deposits were recorded according to standard Service practice (CAS 1995). On completion of excavation, the pipe was installed in the trench, which was then reinstated using the excavated material.

### 2.2.2 Structural analysis

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

## 3. Artefacts

### 3.1 Artefact recovery policy

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

### 3.2 Method of analysis

All hand-retrieved finds were examined. Artefacts were identified, quantified, dated and recorded on a Microsoft Access 1997 database. A *terminus post quem* (TPQ) date was assigned to each stratified context. The pottery was examined and recorded by fabric type according to the fabric reference series maintained by the Service (Hurst and Rees 1992).

### 3.3 Artefact analysis

The assemblage ranged in date from Roman to modern. The material was either unstratified or from the topsoil and was mostly quite abraded.

The largest group of material was tile. All tile was dated to the post-medieval or modern period, and included one piece of possible floor tile and two pieces of flat roof tile. The rest of the tile was an unidentified type that either had a lip, or was shaped like Roman box flue. It is probably modern in date. There was also 218g of highly abraded brick, probably medieval or post-medieval in date. Other materials from the assemblage were vessel glass, clay pipe stem, flower pot, slate, iron objects and pot, all dating to the post-medieval or modern period.

The pottery fabrics are quantified in the table below.

**Table 1**

Fabric Number	Fabric Name	Period	Total	Weight (grams)
85	Modern stone china	Modern	2	31
81	Stoneware	Post-medieval	1	2
78	Post-medieval red ware	Post-medieval	4	73
99	Miscellaneous medieval fabrics	Medieval	1	5
12	Severn Valley ware	Roman	1	3

### 3.4 **Environment**

#### 3.4.1 **Sampling policy**

The environmental sampling strategy conformed to standard Service practice (AS 1995; appendix 4). However, given the dearth of archaeological deposits along the route of the easement it was considered that there was no need to take any samples.

### 3.5 **The methods in retrospect**

Having undertaken the project the following comments may be made with regard to the methods adopted. The stripping of the topsoil along the length of the easement was generally rather variable. The natural soil, in which archaeological features can be most easily spotted, only showed through in patches, making the spotting of any archaeological deposits unlikely. However, a reasonable degree of confidence can be attached to the results of the project.

## 4. **Topographical and archaeological context**

The study took place along the route of the sewer through fields adjacent to the Bengeworth Brook between NGR SO94103602 and NGR SO94563648.

The area is low lying and the local soil seems to belong mostly to the Lawford Series. These are known as surface water gley soils which are slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged, as well as displaying prominent mottling (Barclay *et al* 1988).

The general area of the project has been subject to archaeological investigation in the past. Crab Farm in Evesham was subject to an evaluation which yielded finds from several periods, namely early prehistoric, Roman and medieval. The farm has also produced a Palaeolithic hand axe (Edwards and Hughes 1988).

The pipeline also passed close to other sites containing Romano British pottery (Edwards and Hughes 1988) and other finds/sites include two Romano British buildings with medieval ridge and furrow agriculture also being present in the area (Edwards and Hughes 1988).

Approximately one mile from Badsey church, in a field called Foxhill, human and animal bone were found together with dark, coarse, gritty pottery. In addition to this "rude slabs of stone occasionally laid kiln-wise and bearing marks of fire. Roman coins and Edward I pennies have also been discovered in the parish." (VCH II, 353)

## 5. **Description**

The trenches and features recorded are located in Figs 1 and 2 with table 1 listing the artefacts recovered. Table 2 lists the deposits recorded.

## 6. **Discussion**

There is little evidence here for any settlements or anything of significance along the route of the pipeline easement. This lack of significant remains is tremendously surprising given the amount of activity discovered in the general area in the recent past. However, artefactual material retrieved seems to point to activity in the vicinity from the Roman period up to the present day. The presence of pottery and tile in manuring scatters in the topsoil indicates at least that the land has been worked here, no doubt to support the people living in as yet unlocated settlements.



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Since the artefact assemblage is small, and entirely unstratified, it is difficult to draw many conclusions from it. The pottery, clay pipe, glass and flowerpot may indicate domestic activity, while the tile and brick are evidence of a structure. However, the material may have been re-deposited from another location, for instance as a result of manuring surrounding fields with domestic waste to improve productivity. It is therefore not unusual to find a small number of Roman or medieval pottery sherds on any site, but they do not necessarily indicate activity in the area during those periods.

The topsoil strip of the easement and the subsequent pipe trenching seemed to cut through purely natural deposits and therefore did not have any affect on any significant archaeological sites.

## 7. **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 at Badsey Road and Broadway Road, Evesham, Worcestershire (NGR SO 9410 3602 to SO 9456 3648; WSM 31959).*

*The topsoil strip of the easement and the subsequent trenching did not disturb any significant archaeological deposits. A number of artefacts in the form of pottery sherds and tile were recovered from unstratified contexts and topsoil which hinted at the presence of settlements in the general area. This is supported by findspots and previous archaeological work in the vicinity which has supported evidence for continuity of settlement and activity from the Palaeolithic through to the modern day.*

## 8. **The archive**

The archive consists of:

6	Fieldwork progress records AS2
1	Photographic records AS3
1	Colour print film
1	Abbreviated context records AS40
1	Box of finds
1	Computer disk

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum

Hartlebury Castle

Hartlebury

Near Kidderminster

Worcestershire DY11 7XZ

Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

9. **Acknowledgements**

The Service would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Severn Trent Water and Charles Haswell and Partners Ltd.

10. **Personnel**

The fieldwork was led by Paul Williams. The report preparation was led by James Goad. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Simon Woodiwiss. Fieldwork was undertaken by Paul Williams and James Goad, finds analysis by Erica Darch and illustration by Carolyn Hunt.

11. **Bibliography**

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12. **Abbreviations**

WSM Numbers prefixed with 'WSM' are the primary reference numbers used by the Worcestershire County Sites and Monuments Record.

WCRO Worcestershire County Records Office.

NMR National Monuments Record.

SMR Sites and Monuments Record.

**Table 2****Deposits recorded**

Maximum dimensions: Length: Approximately 1450m Width: up to 20m Depth: 0-040m

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

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Machine strip and unstratified finds		
101	Topsoil	Yellowish brown silty clay with abundant small sub-rounded pebbles and occasional to moderate small and medium lias fragments. Occasional brick and tile, glass. Occasional rooting.	0-0.30m
102	Subsoil	Dark yellowy brown silty clay with the same inclusions as 101.	0.30-0.40m
103	Natural	Yellowish clay. Plastic with occasional iron flecking and rare gravel flint.	0.40m-
104	Fire/burning	Large area of burning on natural. Around 6m in diameter but seen only in part due to variable topsoil stripping. Composed of a thin lens of reddish fired clay with occasional charcoal and soot. Occasional brick fragments. Possibly eighteenth or nineteenth centuries. Most likely to be fairly modern burning of trees and foliage for cultivation purposes.	

