

# Archaeological Watching Brief at Bow Brook, Mill Farm, Huddington, Worcestershire



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Worcestershire Archaeology  
Archive and Archaeology Service  
The Hive, Sawmill Walk,  
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## Watching brief at Bow Brook, Mill Farm, Huddington, Worcestershire

Tim Cornah and Tom Vaughan

### Background information

<i>Client</i>	Worcestershire Wildlife Trust
<i>National Grid reference</i>	SO 94251 56976
<i>Historic Environment Record reference</i>	WSM50205
<i>Planning authority</i>	Wychavon District Council
<i>reference</i>	W/13/02103
<i>Project design</i>	WA 2013
<i>Project parameters</i>	IfA 2012

#### *Previous archaeological work on the site*

There has been no previous archaeological work undertaken on site.

#### *Previous archaeological work on associated sites*

Little recorded archaeological work has taken place within a 500m area of the site, though various significant features are identified within the Historic Environment Record. These features are largely to the north of the site and are of medieval origin. 12<sup>th</sup> century remains can be seen within the standing structure of the St James and Michaels Church (WSM02323), while the shrunken village to its south-east (WSM03045) may also relate to this period. The present building that makes up Huddington Court is thought to date from around 1493 AD though has some earlier fabric within it that is likely to have been retained from an earlier building within the vicinity (Brooks and Pevsner 2007). The moat around it (WSM02324) is believed to have earlier origins along with the fish ponds to its north-west (WSM03046). Huddington Mill is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and is considered to be likely to be in broadly the same position as the surviving 19<sup>th</sup> structure (WSM08589). The later medieval period is characterised by the present Huddington Court building (WSM02321) as well as Priests Cottage to its north which is a cruck framed building of the late 15<sup>th</sup> century (WSM02322). The area around Huddington Court is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The village of Huddington continued through the post-medieval period, as shown by Pool Cottages (WSM45910) to the north of the site which comprises a detached timber framed structure, built in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The main activity in the area was agricultural through the medieval and post-medieval. Many of the existing fields are considered to have been formed by Parliamentary enclosure in the 18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>h</sup> centuries. Many of the farm buildings of Hall Farm within the north of village and those of Mill Farm relate to this time as well as the mill itself (WSM08589) which previously had a mill pond to its north and a race to its south, fed by Bow Brook. The historic mapping indicates that the course of Bow Brook has not changed significantly though the possibility of earlier alterations remains. Earlier channels could preserve archaeological remains of any time period.

### 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 the watching brief.

WA 2012

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**Sources consulted**

HER

Sources cited by the HER

1<sup>st</sup> edition 1884-1885 Ordnance Survey Map, 25":1 mile

1904 Ordnance Survey Map, 25":1 mile

**Date(s) of fieldwork**

25 and 26 March 2014

**Area of site**c 10,975m<sup>2</sup>

Sampling	area sampled	c 396m <sup>2</sup> . Indicated on Fig 2
	sample size	c 3.6%

**Dimensions of excavated areas observed –**

Trench 1	length 40.00m width 2.20m depth 0.35m
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Trench 2	length 13.00m width 2.20m depth 0.37m
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Trench 3	length 19.00m width 2.20m depth 0.30m
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Trench 4	length 16.50m width 2.20m depth 0.50m
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Trench 5	length 16.90m width 11.90m depth 0.80m
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***Access to or visibility of deposits***

Observation of the excavated areas was undertaken during machine excavation using a toothless bucket. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may have not been identified. Selected areas were cleaned by hand.

***Statement of confidence***

Five archaeologically controlled trenches were excavated over the area of the groundworks (Figs 1 and 2). This was agreed with the curator Mike Glyde and client as being preferable to a watching brief over all of the ground works which were to be excavated to varying levels. These trenches were placed primarily so as to identify previous courses of Bow Brook, within the deeper areas of the proposed works.

A portion of Trench 5 was not stripped to natural, but only into the subsoil/alluvium (501). Natural deposits were seen either side and the deposit was tested by hand excavation to ensure it was not masking other features (Plate 5). In all the other trenches, access to, and visibility of, deposits allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

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### *Deposit description*

Description of the deposit details is given in Appendix 1.

## **Discussion**

Four main deposits were observed during the watching brief. These were topsoils created by ploughing, labelled as (100), (200), (300), (400) and (500) respectively. Below this in Trenches 2, 4 and 5 were deposits (201) and (501). These are silty deposits that may represent a former subsoil that was ploughed out elsewhere, but are more likely to be siltation from past flooding events from Bow Brook. The silt within Trench 5 at the north end of the site lay to a depth of 0.72m. These layers were above the natural deposit, consisting of compact yellow clay (101), (202), (301), (401) and (502). Within Trench 4, natural gravels were seen below this clay at the southern end.

No previous courses of the Bow Brook were observed. No significant archaeological deposits, structure or layers were seen within the five trenches, nor artefacts recovered.

## **Conclusions**

Though the centre of the hamlet of Huddington to the north of the site has longstanding history which is likely to have left significant below ground remains, these remains clearly do not extend as far south as the development site. Similarly, the course of Bow Brook can be seen not to have changed significantly along its western edge. No significant archaeology was revealed.

## **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 on behalf of Worcestershire Wildlife Trust at Bow Brook, Mill Farm, Huddington, Worcestershire (NGR ref (SO94251 56976); HER ref WSM50205). Five trenches were observed across the total area of the groundworks. The existing plough soil lay to 0.22-0.28m depth. There was no indication of any earlier channels of the Bow Brook, although alluvial subsoils were noted in three of the trenches. At the north end of the site this lay to 0.72m depth, although elsewhere was much shallower. No significant archaeological deposits, structures or layers were observed, nor artefacts recovered.

## **Acknowledgements**

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Peter Case (Worcestershire Wildlife Trust), Jonathan Boaz (Mill Farm, Huddington Estate), Adam Mindykowski (Historic Environment Countryside Advisor, Worcestershire County Council), and Mike Glyde (Historic Environment Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council).

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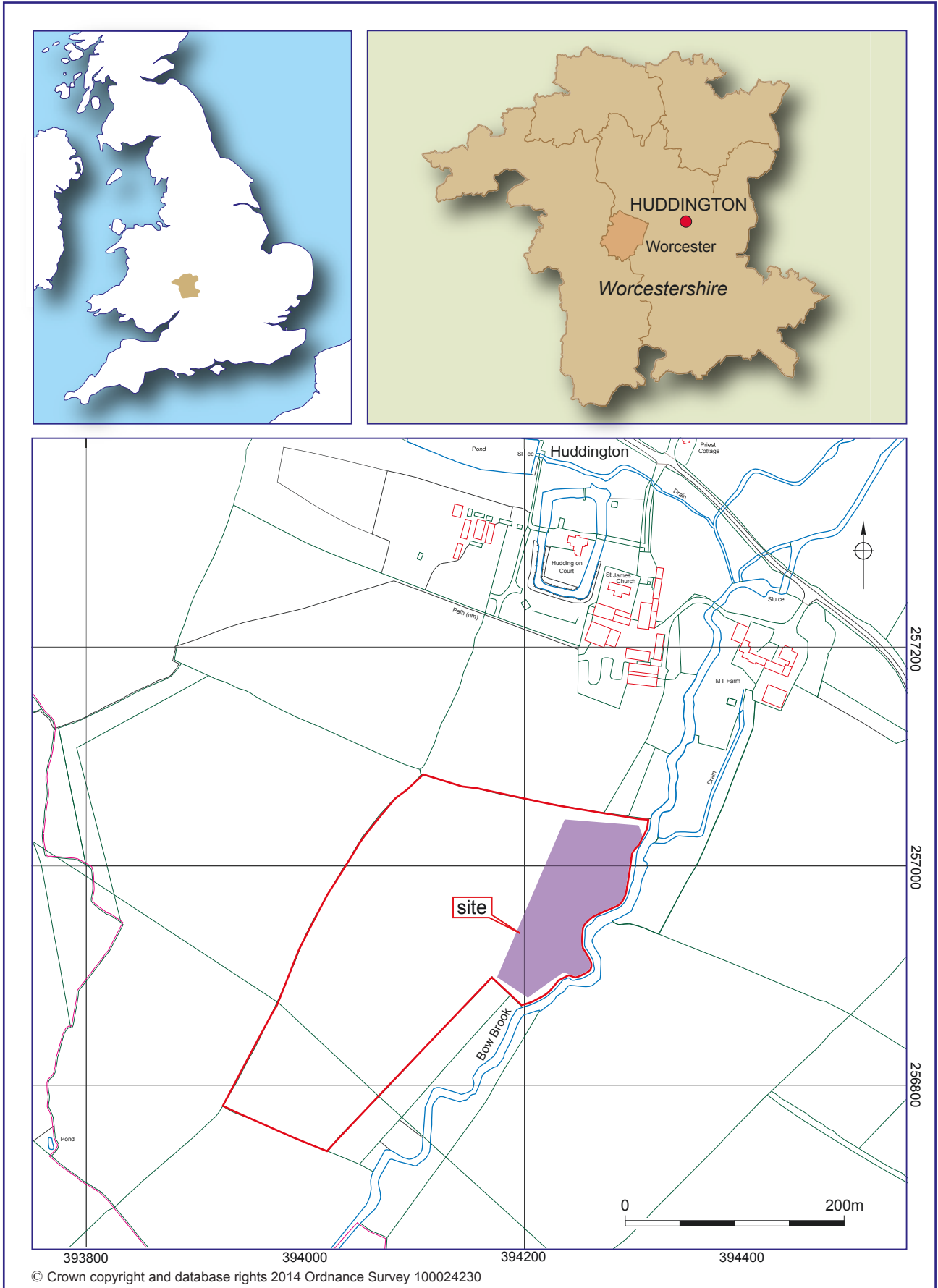
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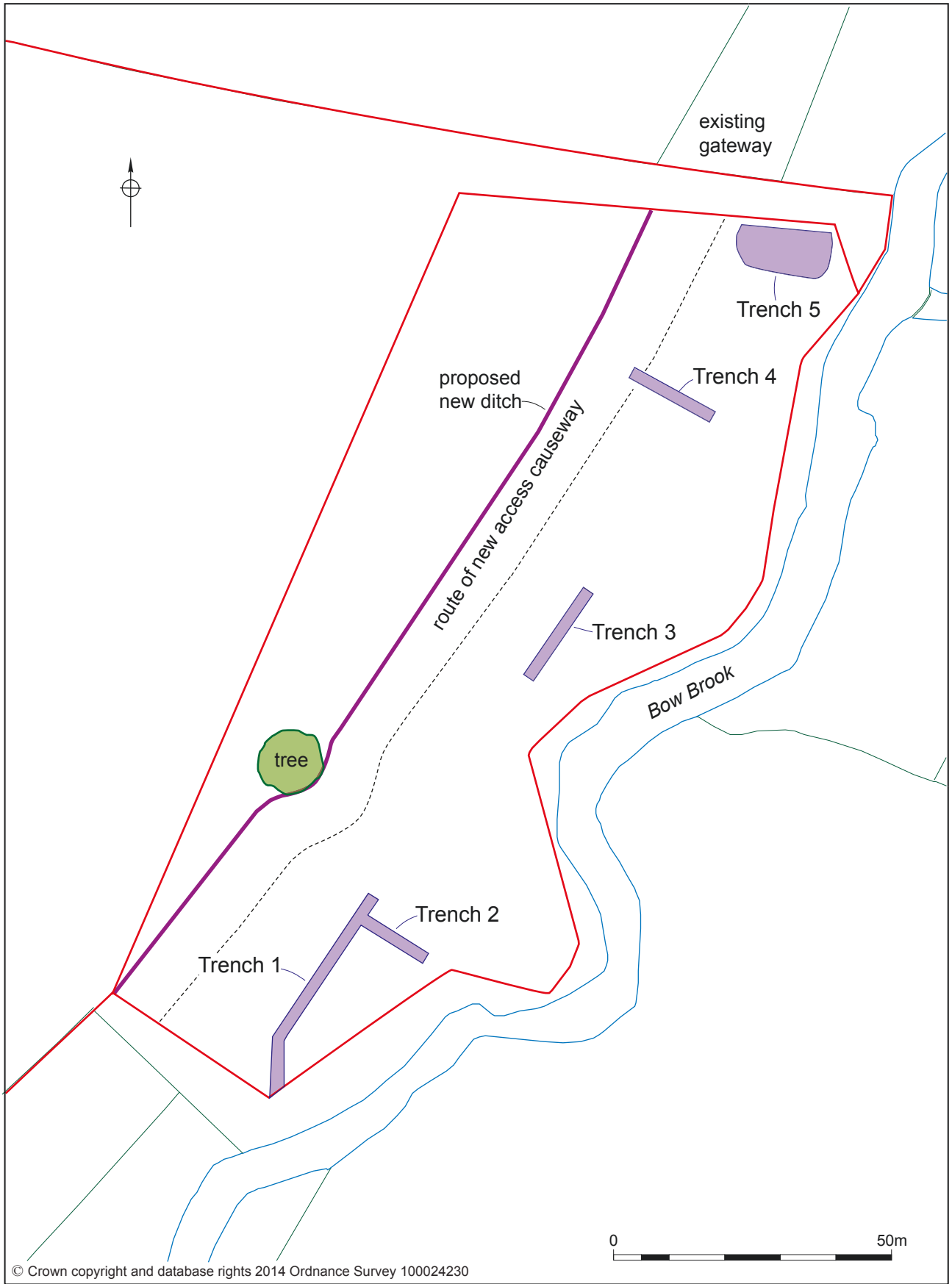
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**Figures**



Location of the site

Figure 1



Approximate trench locations

Figure 2



**Plates**



*Plate 1 Trench 1, looking south*



*Plate 2 Trench 2, looking west*





*Plate 3 Trench 3, looking south*



*Plate 4 Trench 4, looking west*



*Plate 5 Trench 5 (soil strip), looking west*



## Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

### Main deposit descriptions

#### Trench 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 40.00m Width: 2.20m Depth: 0.35m

Orientation: North south

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Mid grey brown moderately compact silty clay with frequent rooting and occasional small and medium rounded gravels.	0.00-0.28m
101	Natural	Compact mid to light yellowish grey clay with some manganese flecking.	0.28m+

#### Trench 2

Maximum dimensions: Length: 13m Width: 2.20m Depth: 0.37m

Orientation: East west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
200	Topsoil	Mid grey brown moderately compact silty clay with frequent rooting and occasional small and medium rounded gravels.	0.00-0.27m
201	Siltation deposit	Compact mid orange brown silty clay with some occasional rooting	0.27-0.37m
202	Natural	Compact mid to light yellowish grey clay with some manganese flecking.	0.37m+

#### Trench 3

Maximum dimensions: Length: 19m Width: 2.20m Depth: 0.30m

Orientation: North south

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
300	Topsoil	Mid grey brown moderately compact silty clay with frequent rooting and occasional small and medium rounded gravels..	0.00-0.25m
301	Natural	Compact mid to light yellowish grey clay with some manganese flecking.	0.25m+

**Trench 4**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 16.50m Width: 2.20m Depth: 0.50m

Orientation: East west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
400	Topsoil	Mid grey brown moderately compact silty clay with frequent rooting and occasional small and medium rounded gravels.	0.00-0.22m
401	Subsoil	Compact mid to light yellowish grey clay with some manganese flecking.	0.22m+
402	Natural	Compact orange sand with very frequent small and medium rounded gravels. Extensive gravels to south end of trench	0.22m+

**Trench 5 (soil strip)**

Maximum dimensions: Length: 16.90m Width: 11.90m Depth: 0.80m

Orientation: East west

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
500	Topsoil	Mid grey brown moderately compact silty clay with frequent rooting and occasional small and medium rounded gravels.	0.00-0.22m
501	Subsoil	Compact mid to light yellowish grey clay with some manganese flecking.	0.22-0.72m
502	Natural	Compact mid to light yellowish grey clay with some manganese flecking.	0.72m+

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## **Appendix 2 Technical information**

### **The archive (site code: WSM50205)**

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 23 Digital photographs
- 5 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)
- 1 Cdr disc

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