

Archaeological watching brief at Meadow Corner, Childswickham, Worcestershire



© Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire Archaeology
Archive and Archaeology Service
The Hive, Sawmill Walk,
The Butts, Worcester
WR1 3PD

Date: 22nd July 2015
Author: Graham Arnold – garnold@worcestershire.gov.uk
Contributors: Laura Griffin
Illustrator: Carolyn Hunt
Project reference: P4533
Report reference: 2237
HER reference: WSM 67014

Contents
Summary

1

Report

1 Background.....	2
1.1 Reasons for the project	2
2 Aims.....	2
3 Methods.....	2
3.1 Personnel.....	2
3.2 Documentary research	2
3.3 Fieldwork strategy	2
3.4 Structural analysis	3
3.5 Artefact methodology and analysis, by Laura Griffin.....	3
3.5.1 Artefact recovery policy and analysis	3
3.5.2 Discard policy	3
3.6 Statement of confidence in the methods and results	3
4 The application site	3
4.1 Topography, geology and archaeological context.....	3
4.2 Current land-use	3
5 Structural analysis.....	3
5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits	3
5.2 Artefact analysis, by Laura Griffin.....	3
6 Synthesis	4
7 Publication summary	4
8 Acknowledgements	4
9 Bibliography.....	4

Archaeological Watching brief at Meadow Corner, Childswickham, Worcestershire

Graham Arnold (project leader)

With contributions by Laura Griffin

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at land off Broadway Road, Childswickham, Worcestershire (NGR SP 0782 3885). It was undertaken on behalf of Mr M Taylor (the Client), who intends to erect a barn and construction a menage for which a planning application has been submitted (ref W/14/01940/PN).

Previous works on an adjacent site in 2002 during monitoring of a Severn Trent Water pipeline uncovered evidence of Iron Age and Romano-British settlement including a Roman villa and a series of ditches. The curator considered that there was a potential for heritage assets to extend into the development area and permission was granted subject to conditions including a programme of archaeological works.

The soil strip and drainage trenches in the footprint of the menage and associated drainage trenches were monitored, covering an area of 925m². A typical soil profile was encountered, with natural clays and gravels reached at between 0.50 – 0.60m below ground level.

Unstratified finds were retrieved from the topsoil during the soil strip but no further archaeological deposits were encountered demonstrating that settlement activity recorded to the north of the site does not extend into the development area.

Due to the negative results of the monitoring for the menage, it was deemed by the curator that archaeological monitoring of limited groundworks associated with the barn was not necessary.

Report

1 Background

1.1 Reasons for the project

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at land off Broadway Road, Childswickham, Worcestershire (NGR SP 0782 3885). It was undertaken on behalf of Mr M Taylor (the Client), who intends to erect a barn and construction a menage for which a planning application has been submitted to Wychavon District Council (ref W/14/01940/PN).

The proposed development site was considered to have the potential to affect an archaeological site (HER ref WSM33743), and permission was granted subject to conditions including the provision of an archaeological watching brief.

The project conforms to a generic brief prepared by Worcestershire County Council (WCC 2014) and accompanied by a letter from Mike Glyde Historic Environment Planning Officer to Gavin Greenhow, the Case Officer for the application, dated 21st October 2014. A project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2014).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

The event reference for this project, given by the HER is WSM 67014.

2 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. The brief indicated that significant deposits may be defined as those likely to be of an Iron Age or Romano-British date.

3 Methods

3.1 Personnel

The project was undertaken by Graham Arnold (BA (hons.); MSc), and Peter Lovett (BSc (hons.)), who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2009 and 2012 respectively and have been practicing archaeology since 2002 and 2004. The project manager responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers (BA (hons.); MSc). Illustrations were prepared by Carolyn Hunt (BSc (hons.); PG Cert; MCIfA); Laura Griffin (BA (hons.); PG Cert; ACIfA), contributed the finds report.

3.2 Documentary research

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

Documentary sources

Published and grey literature sources are listed in the bibliography.

3.3 Fieldwork strategy

A detailed specification has been prepared by Worcestershire Archaeology (WA 2014). Fieldwork was undertaken between 4 June 2015 and 8 June 2015. The site reference number and site code is WSM 67014.

The ground reduction for one large area was monitored archaeologically. This amounted to just over 925²m in area, was excavated over the site area of 0.5ha. The location of the trench is indicated in Figure 2. The shed footings for the barn were not monitored due to the negative results of the initial menage as agreed with the curator.

Deposits considered not to be significant were removed using a 360° tracked excavator under archaeological supervision (Plates 1 and 2). Clean surfaces were inspected and artefactual material was retrieved from the topsoil. Drainage channels were then excavated within the stripped

area, under archaeological supervision (Plates 3-5). Deposits were recorded according to standard Worcestershire Archaeology practice (WA 2012). No significant archaeological deposits were encountered during the works.

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 Artefact methodology and analysis, by Laura Griffin

3.5.1 Artefact recovery policy and analysis

Finds were collected from the topsoil and subsoil strip of the works.

Finds from the site were all unstratified and consisted of two fragments of medieval pottery (5g), two sherds of modern pottery (2g) and four fragments of modern ceramic building material (68g).

3.5.2 Discard policy

The finds will be discarded after a period of 6 months after the submission of this report, unless there is a specific request to retain them.

3.6 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

The solid geology is recorded as Charmouth Mudstone with superficial deposits of varying sand, gravel, silt and clay (BGS 2015). The ground is made up of generally flat agricultural fields to the north of the main road through the village of Childswickham, Worcestershire.

Iron Age and Romano-British settlement activity has been found in the surrounding area. Specifically a Roman Villa site found 500m to the northwest of the site (WSM30773; Patrick and Hurst 2004) at Perrins Farm, adjacent to the site. The site proved a remarkably intense area of activity from the late Iron Age/early Roman period until the end of the Roman period.

4.2 Current land-use

The site is currently used as agricultural meadow and pasture for animals.

5 Structural analysis

The trenches and features recorded are shown in Fig 1 and 2. The results of the structural analysis are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1.1 Phase 1: Natural deposits

The typical soil profile for a field as meadow and pasture was encountered with a firm reddish brown sandy gravel and areas of blue grey clay overlain by a gravelly sandy clay subsoil and a topsoil including occasional ceramic building material, charcoal flecks and rare abraded pottery fragments. This is typical of agricultural practices including manuring and ploughing over a long period of time. The subsoil was cut by modern ceramic land drains running east – west across site.

5.2 Artefact analysis, by Laura Griffin

Finds from the site were all unstratified and consisted of two fragments of medieval pottery (5g), two sherds of modern pottery (2g) and four fragments of modern ceramic building material (68g) retrieved from the topsoil.

6 Synthesis

No significant archaeological deposits, features or finds were encountered during the works. The negative evidence demonstrates the Romano-British settlement activity, including a Villa site, located 500m to the Northwest of the site, does not extend into the development area. All finds were unstratified, from the topsoil and relate to common agricultural practices of manuring pasture and meadow land over time.

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 on behalf of Mr M Taylor at Land off Broadway Road, Childswickham, Worcestershire (NGR SP 0782 3885; WSM 67014). The soil strip and drainage works for a menage paddock were monitored but no significant archaeological deposits, finds or features were encountered during the works. Unstratified finds within the topsoil included heavily abraded medieval pottery fragments along with post-medieval ceramics and modern building material, typical of farming practices including manuring over time. There was no evidence that the Iron Age and Romano-British settlement activity including a villa site recorded during a water pipeline route in the adjacent site, extended into the area for the current development. Due to the negative results of the monitoring for the menage, it was deemed by the curator that further archaeological monitoring of the remaining groundworks was not necessary.

8 Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Mr M Taylor and Aisling Nash, (Historic Environment Advisor, Worcestershire County Council).

9 Bibliography

BGS 2014 *Geology of Britain Viewer*, British Geological Survey, accessed 24 June 2015

ClfA 2014 *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief*, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Patrick, C., and Hurst, J. D., 2004 *Archaeological survey and excavation along the Cotswold Spring Supply Trunk Main: archive report*, Worcestershire County Archaeological Service rep1140

WA 2012 *Manual of service practice, recording manual*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, report **1842**

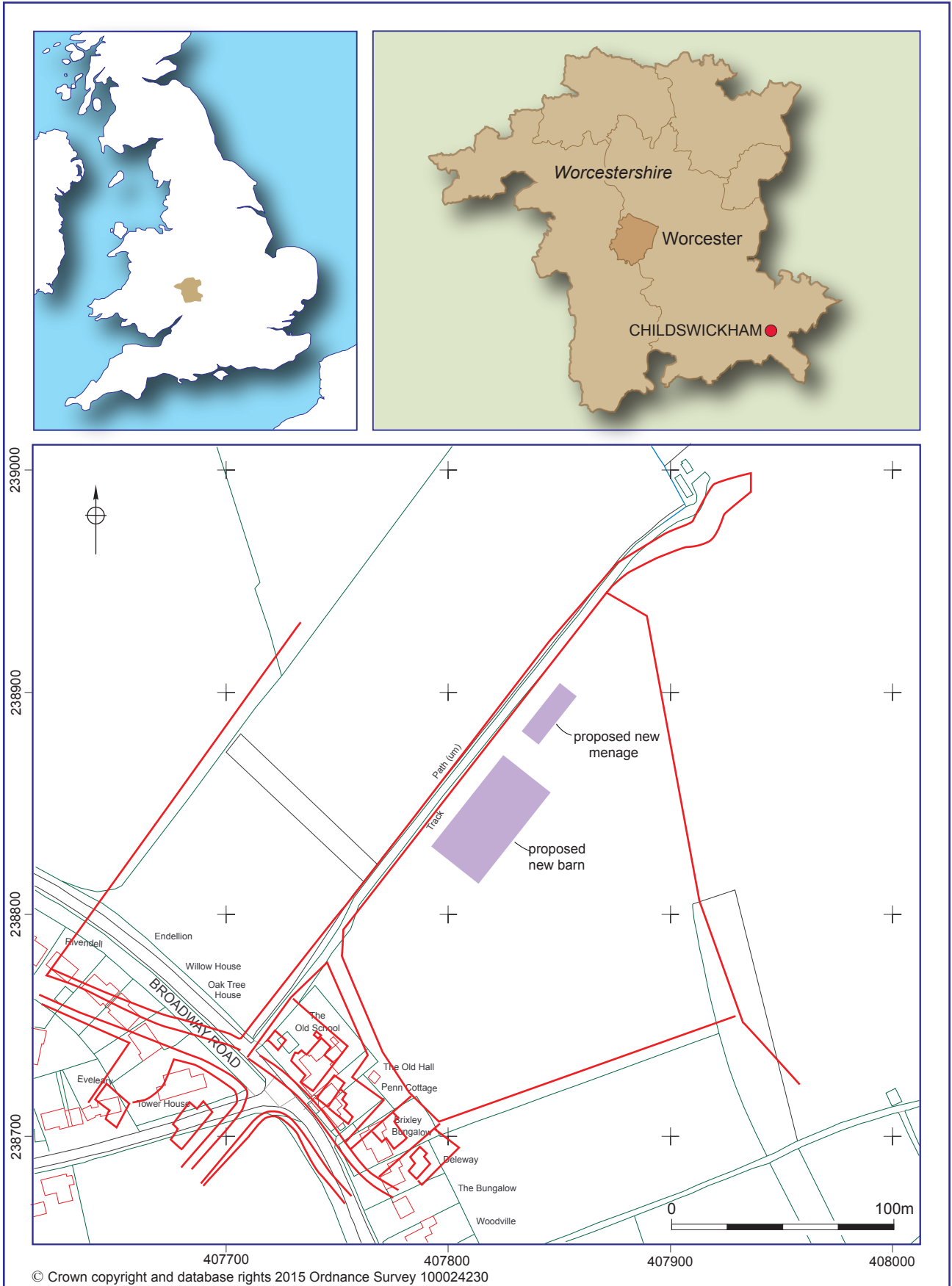
WA 2014 *Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief at Land off Broadway Road, Childswickham, Worcestershire*, Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 5 March 2015, **P4533**

WCC 2010 *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire*, Planning Advisory Section, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished report **604**, amended July 2012

WCC 2014 *Requirements for an Archaeological Watching Brief as a Condition of Planning Consent. Version 1* Information and Advisory Section, Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council unpublished document dated September 2014

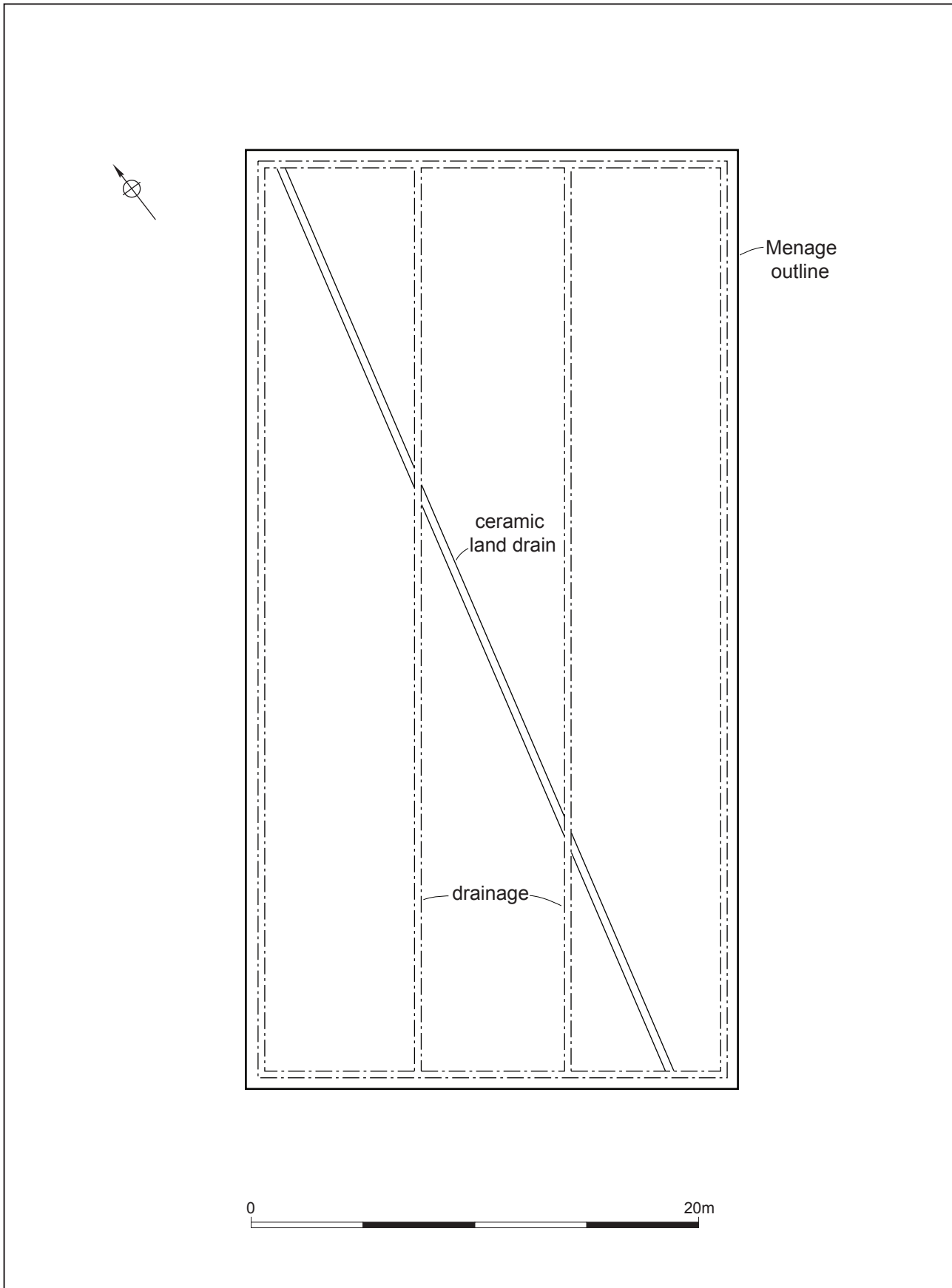


Figures



Location of the site

Figure 1



Trench plan

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 Topsoil strip of menage looking Southwest



Plate 2 Topsoil strip of horse menage looking East



Plate 3 Drainage channels excavated looking Northeast



Plate 2 Drainage run looking north-east



Plate 2 Example section of drainage run into gravel and clay looking northwest

Appendix 1 Trench descriptions

Trench 1

Site area: Menage

Maximum dimensions: Length: 42.00m Width: 22.00m Depth: 0.45 – 0.60m,

Internal drainage trenches 0.30m wide

Orientation: NW-SE

Main deposit description

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Firm mid yellowish brown silty clay with occasional sub-angular limestone pebbles and charcoal flecks and rare cbm and pottery fragments. Cut by modern ceramic land drains.	0 – 0.45m
101	Subsoil	Firm mid brown yellow sandy clay with occasional gravels	0.20 – 0.50m
102	Natural	Firm mid reddish brown sandy clay with abundant gravels and pockets of blue grey clay with occasional large cobbles	0.50 – 0.60m

Appendix 2 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 67014)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 14 Digital photographs
- 1 Scale drawings
- 2 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416
