

*BIRMINGHAM UNIVERSITY  
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT*

**Hagley Severn Trent Engineering  
Abandonment**

**Staffordshire and Worcestershire**

**An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

**1998**

*B.U.F.A.U.*



Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit  
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by

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# Hagley Severn Trent Engineering Abandonment

## Staffordshire and Worcestershire

### An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment

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# **Hagley Severn Trent Engineering Abandonment**

## **Staffordshire and Worcestershire**

### **An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

**1998**

#### **1.0 Summary**

This desk-based assessment has demonstrated that the route of the Hagley Severn Trent Engineering Abandonment and proposed pumping main, which extends into Staffordshire and Worcestershire, may contain zones of archaeological survival. The identification of these zones is provisional and may be revised following archaeological mitigation fieldwork. The identified sites can be grouped into two distinct archaeologically sensitive zones. Zone A is centred on the point at which the pipeline route will transect the Roman road and a potential Roman crop-marked feature. Zone B comprises the remainder of the pipeline route. It is recommended that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during and following topsoil stripping of the pipeline route.

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The Hagley Severn Trent Engineering abandonment and proposed pumping main (hereafter the Survey Area) may result in the disturbance of buried archaeological remains. An assessment of the above and below ground archaeology was therefore required by the Department of Development Services, Staffordshire County Council (Wardle 1998). Worcestershire County Council placed a recommendation that a watching brief be carried out during the pipeline excavation (Atkin 1998; archaeological planning reference STW98/01).

The following report describes the results of an archaeological assessment of the route of the Hagley Severn Trent Engineering abandonment and proposed pumping main (NGR SO 870 839 - SO 897 799), based upon a search of documentary, cartographic and aerial photographic sources, published and unpublished written records. Sources of information are referenced in Appendix I. The report was produced by Birmingham University Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Severn Trent Engineering. The guidelines set down in the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994) were followed.

A general introduction will first place the Survey Area in context. It is followed by a gazetteer of historical and archaeological sites, an assessment of the archaeological resource, and recommendations for an archaeological response.

### **3.0 Location and Geology of the Survey Area (Figure 1)**

The northernmost point of the Survey Area is at a sewage works which is located between Gibbet Wood and Round Hill. The pipeline skirts around the southern boundary of the sewage works. It transects Whittington Sewage Farm which is located to the southeast and then continues southwest to Whittington Hall Sewage Farm. From there, it continues south across two open fields, before assuming a southeasterly alignment past Bunker's Hill Wood, across six open fields towards Iverley. From here it runs south, parallel to Iverley Lane. At a road junction immediately to the north of Common Farm, the pipeline crosses the county border from Staffordshire into Worcestershire.

Within Worcestershire, the pipeline runs parallel with a road leading to Brake Lane and transects three open fields. It skirts to the west of Palmers Hill before continuing southeast, across five open fields and under a railway line. The pipeline terminates at a sewage works located on the southwestern outskirts of West Hagley.

The geology of the Survey Area is Lower Keuper sandstone overlaid by Bridgnorth Association brown sand.

## **4.0 A Detailed Assessment of the Hagley Severn Trent Engineering Abandonment Survey Area**

### **4.1 Method and Definition of Terms**

The definition of 'archaeology' or 'archaeological sites' should be taken to include upstanding remains, earthworks, buried features, palaeoenvironmental evidence and artefact scatters that may indicate the location of an archaeological site in the vicinity.

Standing buildings are included because of the possibility of buried features being found in association. Their inclusion is also necessary for a full assessment of the multi-period archaeological value of related archaeological sites and landscapes.

Historic or Relic Landscape is included because of the need to set sites in a wider context. This landscape includes:

*'all the physical remains of human interaction with nature through time, or the pattern of field and farm.'* (PPG15, taken from English Heritage Archaeological Division Research Agenda, 1997, 25).

The archaeological 'Survey Area' comprises the route of the proposed abandonment. However, sites immediately outside the Survey Area have been included where the possibility exists that archaeological deposits may extend in part into the Survey Area.

### **4.2 Sources of Information**

- The Staffordshire and Worcestershire Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs). These are the primary sources of existing archaeological information.

- Cartographic sources were consulted at the William Salt Library, Staffordshire, Staffordshire County Record Office, Lichfield Joint Record Office and the Worcestershire County Record Office. The examination and transcription of title maps, First Edition Ordnance Survey (OS) maps and an estate map of the whole route to identify all mapped sites of archaeological interest, or possible archaeological interest, not otherwise recorded, and to identify areas of archaeological importance, or possible archaeological importance from the field or place name evidence.
- The examination of vertical and oblique aerial photographs within the Survey Area. Aerial photographs were consulted at the Staffordshire and Worcestershire SMRs.
- Secondary historical and archaeological sources comprising the published reports of fieldwork and synthetic works.

#### **4.3 Assessment of Site Value**

The assessment criteria employed in determining the importance of those sites affected by the proposed abandonment route are those laid out in the non-statutory criteria for the scheduling of ancient monuments. These are as follows:

- period;
- rarity;
- documentation;
- group value;
- survival and / or condition;
- fragility and / or vulnerability;
- diversity
- potential.

The archaeological sites affected by the route are categorised according to importance, or potential importance, as follows:

- sites of national importance, usually Scheduled Ancient Monuments;
- sites of regional importance;
- sites of local importance; and
- sites of limited importance, including those sites so badly disturbed or poorly documented, that too little now remains to justify their inclusion at a higher grade.

Sites presently undated are considered to be of at least potential local importance.

#### **4.4 Assessment of Potential Impact**

The following criteria are used to determine the effects of the proposed pipeline route upon archaeology, in respect of buried remains:

- direct physical damage;
- changes in the water table affecting palaeoenvironmental evidence;

- disturbance which reduces the value of the site as an historic record, such as the severance or destruction of linked features which form part of the historical landscape;

As the proposed pipeline will be located below ground there will be no long term visual intrusion on archaeological sites in the vicinity.

The assessment criteria employed to determine the potential impact of the proposed pipeline route upon individual sites, or groups of associated archaeological features are as follows:

- the value of the individual site, or group of associated archaeological sites, affected;
- the extent to which each site, or group of associated archaeological sites, is affected
- in respect of archaeological sites only partly affected, the importance of that part affected by the route;
- whether the effect is permanent or temporary; and
- professional judgement.

For clarity the effects of the abandonment upon each archaeological site, or group of sites, are divided according to their significance into three potential impact categories, namely low, moderate and high. The term potential impact is preferred for two reasons. Firstly, the value of many sites will not be known until further field assessment is undertaken. Secondly, extent to which each individual site and its immediate vicinity is not always apparent.

A low potential impact may be defined as:

- a site of local importance which is only partially affected by the route of the pipeline.

A moderate potential impact may be defined as:

- a site of regional importance which is partially affected by the route of the pipeline
- a site of local importance which is traversed by the route of the pipeline but not completely destroyed.

A high potential impact may be defined as :

- a site of national importance which is at least partially affected by the route of the pipeline
- a site of regional importance which is traversed by or largely destroyed by the pipeline or
- a site of local importance which will be largely destroyed by the route of the pipeline

## 5.0 A Gazetteer of Historical and Archaeological Sites

### Prehistoric

#### *Racecourse Farm, spot find and crop-marked features.*

**Site Number:** BUFAU 6 (WM SMR 2703)

**Grid reference:** SO 896 810

**Source:** West Midlands SMR

**Description:** Neolithic Stone Axe found at Racecourse Farm. Recent aerial photographs show clusters of crop-marked features characteristic of prehistoric enclosures within the immediate vicinity.

**Value:** Local importance

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs to the west and southwest of the spot find and does not directly affect the area.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

#### *Stakenbridge Lane, Bronze Age burial mounds*

**Site Number:** BUFAU 13 (WSM 3148/7213-6)

**Grid reference:** SO 894 794

**Source:** Worcestershire SMR, aerial photographs, secondary sources.

**Description:** Excavations by Bishop Lyttleton in 1766 produced one urn and three cremations. The urn, which was made of coarse, poorly-fired clay, was broken by workmen and was subsequently lost. The urn was buried at a depth of 2 feet and was located at the centre of the second barrow. Nash (1799) recorded that two barrows survived out of a group of five which originally existed on the former Clent Heath area, on the crest of a west-facing slope. They contained burnt wood and ashes. Three of the barrows were removed during the enclosure of the heath in 1788. A site visit in 1970 recorded that the area was under pasture and that there were two barely recognisable tumuli which survived to a height of 1-2 feet. Aerial photographs show the remains of ploughed-down mounds at SO 901 795, with one mound showing quite distinctly in the northeast corner of the field as a white soil-marked feature (SO 8945 7947). The original diameter of the barrow is given as c.36m with a height of 1-2m.

**Value:** Regional importance.

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs to the northeast of the burial mounds and does not directly affect the area.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

### Roman

#### *Roman Road*

**Site Number:** BUFAU 4 (WSM 3149/3152)

**Grid reference:** SO 893 792 - SO 887 817

**Source:** Worcestershire SMR

**Description:** Line of a Roman road which was subsequently used as a medieval saltway. The road led from Droitwich to Greensforge. The line of the road is, in part, still used as a footpath, bridleway and as an unadopted road, called County Lane. The road itself is visible as a crop-marked feature on a number of aerial photographs at SO 8908 8038, just south of Palmers Hill and at SO 8900 8082 north of Palmers Hill. The crop-marked feature shows a metalled *agger* surface, with a pair of parallel ditches along each side. Fieldwalking along the line of the road in 1992, between SO 8915 8003 and SO 8912 8044, produced only post-medieval finds, whilst monitoring of a trench excavated alongside the A450 in 1992 recorded no surviving evidence of the Roman road.

**Value:** Regional importance

**Potential impact:** Moderate. The pipeline transects the Roman road at SO 891 803.

**Minimum recommendation:** *The stripping of the topsoil and any groundworks in this area (Zone 1 on Fig. 2) should be monitored by an archaeologist with a contingency for further archaeological excavation if significant evidence for the road and any associated deposits or features are identified.*

#### *Roman Road*

**Site Number:** BUFAU 5 (WSM 3149/3152)

**Grid reference:** SO 889 814

**Source:** Worcestershire Archaeological Service Report Number 125, Worcestershire SMR.



**Description:** An archaeological evaluation was carried out as part of the Kidderminster, Blakelown and Hagley Bypass and A449 Link. Two trial-trenches and a total of ten test-pits were excavated on the eastern and western sides respectively, of a modern trackway which was thought to follow the projected road line. No deposits or features associated with the Roman road were identified. No metalled road surface was identified. It has been suggested that continued use of the Roman road in the medieval and post-medieval periods was responsible for eroding away the earlier deposits and surfaces, creating a holloway. The holloway is 9.5m wide and has a maximum depth of 3.5m.

**Value:** Regional importance

**Potential impact:** Low. The pipeline runs across fields to the west of the Roman road at this point. However, it is possible that it may transect settlement features which extend westwards from the line of the Roman road.

**Minimum recommendation:** *Site inspection following topsoil stripping.*

#### ***Coin Hoard***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 12 (WSM 3147)

**Grid reference:** SO 893 796

**Source:** Worcestershire SMR

**Description:** Roman coin hoard found to the north of Stakenbridge Lane.

**Value:** Regional importance

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs to the northeast of the area and does not transect the site of the coin hoard.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

#### **Medieval**

##### ***Brakemill Plantation***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 9

**Grid reference:** SO 890 800

**Source:** Hagley Tithe map, 1838.

**Description:** An area of woodland which is located immediately to the southwest of the pipeline route, and which is likely to have formed part of the medieval landscape around Brake Mill itself (BUFAU 11).

**Value:** Local.

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs to the northeast of the plantation, and does not transect the area.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

##### ***Mill Pond***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 10 (WSM 3144)

**Grid reference:** SO 893 798

**Source:** Hagley Tithe map, 1838, Staffordshire AP6523, Worcestershire SMR.

**Description:** Mill pond associated with Brake Mill. Truncated on its southern side by Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton railway. Shown on aerial photographs dating to 1960s to be marshy and overgrown with willow trees.

**Value:** Local.

**Potential impact:** Low. The pipeline runs to the northeast of the mill pond and does not transect the area.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

##### ***Brake Mill, Mill Meadow and Mill Pond***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 11 (WSM 3144)

**Grid reference:** SO 891 795

**Source:** Hagley Tithe map, 1838, Staffordshire AP6523, Worcestershire SMR.

**Description:** Mill used to grind corn from the 16th century up to the beginning of the 20th century. Historical sources document the granting of permission to create the mill ponds in 1543. A dam for the mill ponds is within the immediate vicinity of the Roman road. The mill pond shown on aerial

photographs dating to 1960s appears to be overgrown and marshy. Brake Mill itself is currently used as a domestic residence.

**Value:** Local.

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs to the northeast of the mill and millpond and does not transect the area.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

#### ***Mill Pond***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 14 (WSM 3146)

**Grid reference:** SO 899 800

**Source:** Hagley Tithe map, 1838, Worcestershire SMR.

**Description:** Mill pond referred to as Sweet Pool.

**Value:** Local.

**Potential impact:** Low. The pipeline runs immediately to the northeast of the mill pond and may transect deposits associated with its use in the medieval period.

**Minimum recommendation:** *Site inspection following topsoil stripping.*

#### **Post-Medieval**

##### ***The Birches***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 7 (WSM 3137)

**Grid reference:** SO 896 810

**Source:** Worcestershire SMR

**Description:** 18th-century buildings and land.

**Value:** Local importance

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs through the fields to the west and southwest of the site.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

#### **Undated**

##### ***Iverley Heath***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 1

**Grid reference:** SO 876 828

**Source:** Ordnance Survey, 1884.

**Description:** Area of open land located to the east of the pipeline.

**Value:** Local importance.

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs through the fields immediately to the west of Iverley Heath and does not directly affect the area.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

##### ***Bunkers Hill Wood***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 2

**Grid reference:** SO 876 821

**Source:** Ordnance Survey, 1884.

**Description:** Area of woodland located to the east of the pipeline route.

**Value:** Local importance

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline runs through the fields immediately to the west and south of the wood and does not directly affect the area.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

##### ***Whittington Common***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 3

**Grid reference:** SO 872 832

**Source:** Tithe map, 1837.

**Description:** Area of commonland and heathland which is transected by the pipeline route.

**Value:** Local importance

**Potential impact:** Low. The pipeline transects the land, part of which has already been developed as one part of Whittington Hill Sewage Farm.

**Minimum recommendation:** *Site inspection following topsoil stripping*

#### ***Unidentified feature***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 8

**Grid reference:** SO 891 803.

**Source:** Worcestershire AP6642/6643.

**Description:** This feature appears as a dark soil-marked feature immediately to the east of the projected line of the Roman road (BUFAU 4 and 5). It may represent an enclosure associated with Roman use of the landscape, but may also belong to an earlier or later phase of activity.

**Value:** Not determined.

**Potential impact:** Low-Moderate. The pipeline may transect this feature.

**Minimum recommendation:** *The stripping of the topsoil and any groundworks in this area (Zone A on Fig. 2) should be monitored by an archaeologist with a contingency for further archaeological excavation if significant archaeological deposits are encountered.*

#### ***Boggy Meadow***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 15

**Grid reference:** SO 897 799

**Source:** Tithe map, 1838.

**Description:** Field-name included in award which accompanied tithe map. Located within an area upon which a sewage farm is built.

**Value:** Local importance

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline terminates immediately to the west of the former Boggy Meadow.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation*

#### ***Sweet Pool***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 16

**Grid reference:** SO 896 801

**Source:** Tithe map, 1838.

**Description:** Field-name included in award which accompanied tithe map, located to the north of the pipeline. Field-name is later allocated to pond associated with Brake Mill (BUFAU 14).

**Value:** Local importance

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline does not transect this site.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

#### ***Spring Close***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 17

**Grid reference:** SO 899 801

**Source:** Tithe map, 1838.

**Description:** Field-name included in award which accompanied tithe map, located to the northeast of the pipeline.

**Value:** Local importance

**Potential impact:** None. The pipeline does not transect this site.

**Minimum recommendation:** *No further archaeological mitigation.*

#### ***Unidentified Features***

**Site Number:** BUFAU 18

**Grid reference:** SO 885 805

**Source:** Aerial photographs

**Description:** Lightly-coloured, soil-marked, circular and oval features within a field immediately to the south of the pipeline.

**Value:** Not determined.

**Potential impact:** Low. The pipeline does not transect the soil-marked features, but may affect deposits associated with them which are located within the northernmost part of the field.

**Minimum recommendation:** *Site inspection following topsoil stripping.*

## 6.0 Archaeological Potential

With the exception of the Roman Road (BUFAU 4), no significant archaeological sites are likely to be affected by the proposed works. However, the pipeline may transect deposits and features associated with a number of the Roman, prehistoric and medieval sites identified on either side of the pipeline. The identification of these sites suggests that there may be a potential for further archaeological remains within the vicinity.

*Prehistoric* - No principal prehistoric sites will be directly affected by the proposed route of the pipeline. However, it is possible that other prehistoric sites, not yet identified, may be affected by the pipeline, especially as an increasing number of crop-marked features are being identified within the vicinity of the Neolithic stone axe (BUFAU 6). These are characteristic of prehistoric settlement features (Hilary White *pers. comm.*).

*Roman* - One Roman site, a Roman Road (BUFAU 4 and 5) will be directly affected by the route of the pipeline. It is possible that a second site (BUFAU 8) may also contain features relating to the use of this road in the Roman period.

*Medieval* - Only one medieval site (BUFAU 14) will be partially affected by the pipeline route. The majority of the sites of medieval date do not have a high archaeological potential in their own right. However, they do tend to cluster in groups indicating important relic medieval landscapes.

*Post-Medieval* - No post-medieval sites will be directly affected by the pipeline route.

The sites can be grouped into two distinct zones. These zones are indicated on Figure 2. Zone A is an archaeologically sensitive zone which is centred on the point at which the pipeline route will transect the Roman road and a potentially Roman crop-marked feature. Zone B comprises the remainder of the pipeline route and is defined because it does not appear to be archaeologically sensitive.

## 7.0 Recommendations for an Archaeological Response

The recommendations below provide an outline of the stages of archaeological mitigation which may be required for the two zones defined above. Each of the identified zones require a different level of response. However, the precise nature of such mitigation would need to be approved by Staffordshire and Worcestershire County Councils.

Recommended levels of archaeological mitigation are as follows:

### *Stage 2 - Watching brief*

Topsoil stripping for the casement of the pipeline in the archaeologically sensitive Zone A, as defined in the assessment, will be carried out under archaeological supervision with a contingency for excavation. Topsoil stripping will be carried out

with a toothless ditching bucket, and a period of up to 21 days uninterrupted access should be made available for the archaeological recording of the Roman road and any associated deposits and features. This recording will be carried out prior to any excavation of the Severn Trent Engineering pipe trench. All archaeological features should be recorded in plan and a minimum 2m wide section should be cut across the Roman road (Atkin 1998).

In addition, it is recommended that a walkover survey of the remainder of the pipeline, Zone B as defined in the assessment, be undertaken following topsoil stripping and prior to the excavation of the pipeline trench.

It should be noted that the list of archaeologically sensitive zones might increase following the Stage 2 fieldwork. Sufficient time should be allowed within the overall programme of works to allow for the completion of any necessary excavation.

### *Stage 3 - Contingency Excavation*

If significant archaeological deposits or features are identified during the Stage 2 watching brief, an allowance should be made for contingency excavation.

On completion of the mitigation fieldwork, it may be appropriate to prepare an assessment of the significance of the findings, in accordance with the recommendations of Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991), with a view to further analysis and publication of the results in a local archaeological journal.

## **8.0 References**

- Atkin, M. 1998 *Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief along the route of the proposed sewage water pumping mains between Hagley STW and Roundhill STW, Hagley, near Stourbridge, Worcestershire*. Archaeological Planning Reference STW98/01.
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- Hagley Society Survey 1992-1993 *Brake Mill, Hagley, Clent and Churchill*.
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Wardle, C. 1998 Letter to Mr. L. Christian, Severn Trent Water, dated 20 August, 1998, Reference H6EP/CW/EC3410.

## **9.0 Acknowledgements**

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*Appendix 1*

## **Appendix 1: Cartographic and Aerial Photographic Sources**

Tithe map and award for the parish of Whittington, 1837 (Lichfield).

Tithe map and award for the parish of Hagley, 1838 (St. Helen's: R760/292 BA 1572).

Tithe map and award for the parish of Kinver, 1850 (Lichfield).

Ordnance Survey, 1844.

Ordnance Survey, 1923 and 1924.

Ordnance Survey, 1969.

Ordnance Survey, 1996.

### Aerial Photographs

1961-1963, Run 1, Film 70 (Staffordshire SMR).

1976 AP82/149, 82/036, 82/037, 82/148 (Worcestershire SMR).

1980 West Midlands Cartographic Service Limited, No. 892, Frame 6660 (Worcestershire SMR)

August 1961, RAF 58 4652 0180-2 (Worcestershire SMR).

1980 AP6642, 6643, 6644, 6645, 81/178, 81/179, 81/180 (Worcestershire SMR).

1989 23/0594 (Worcestershire SMR).



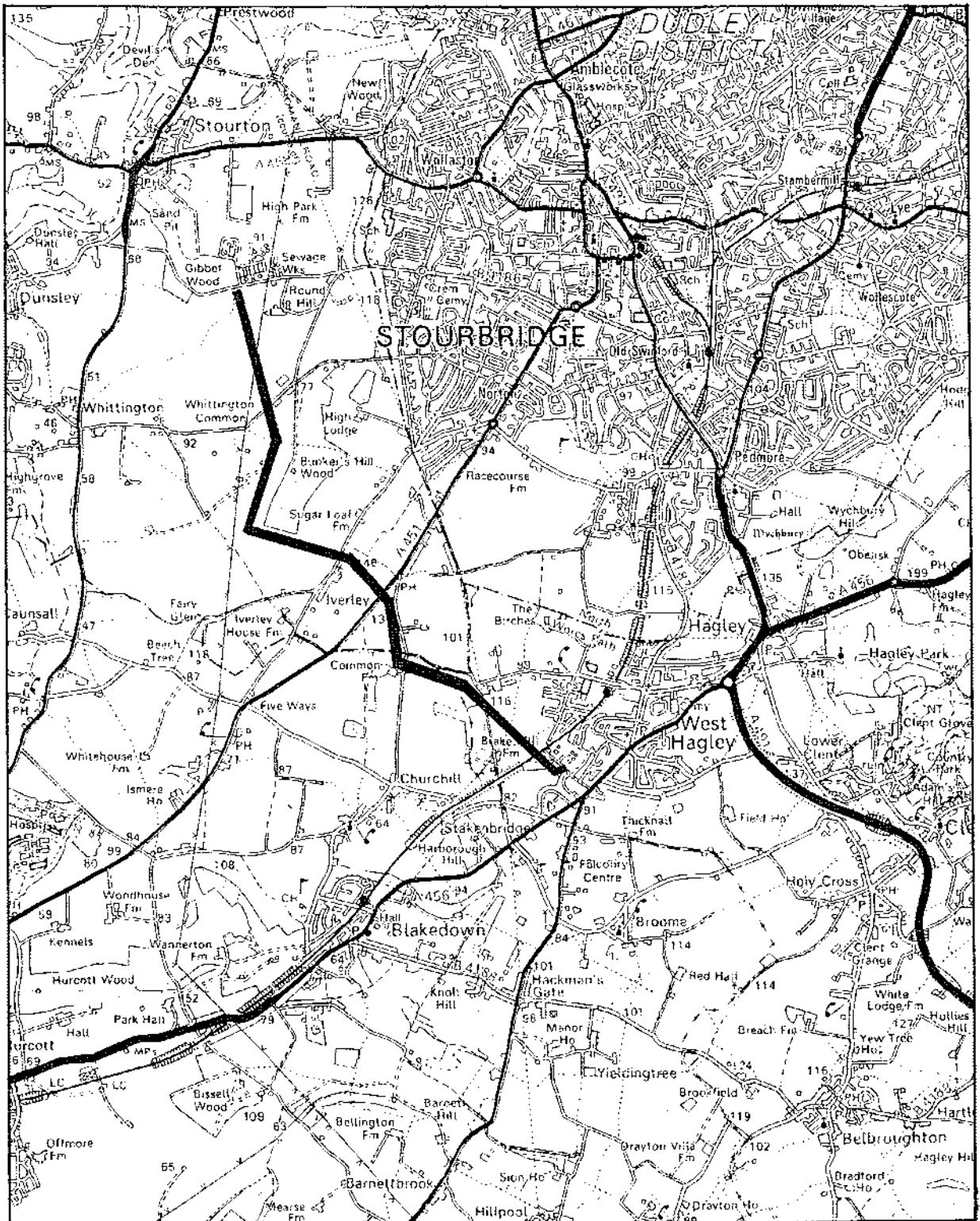


Figure 1

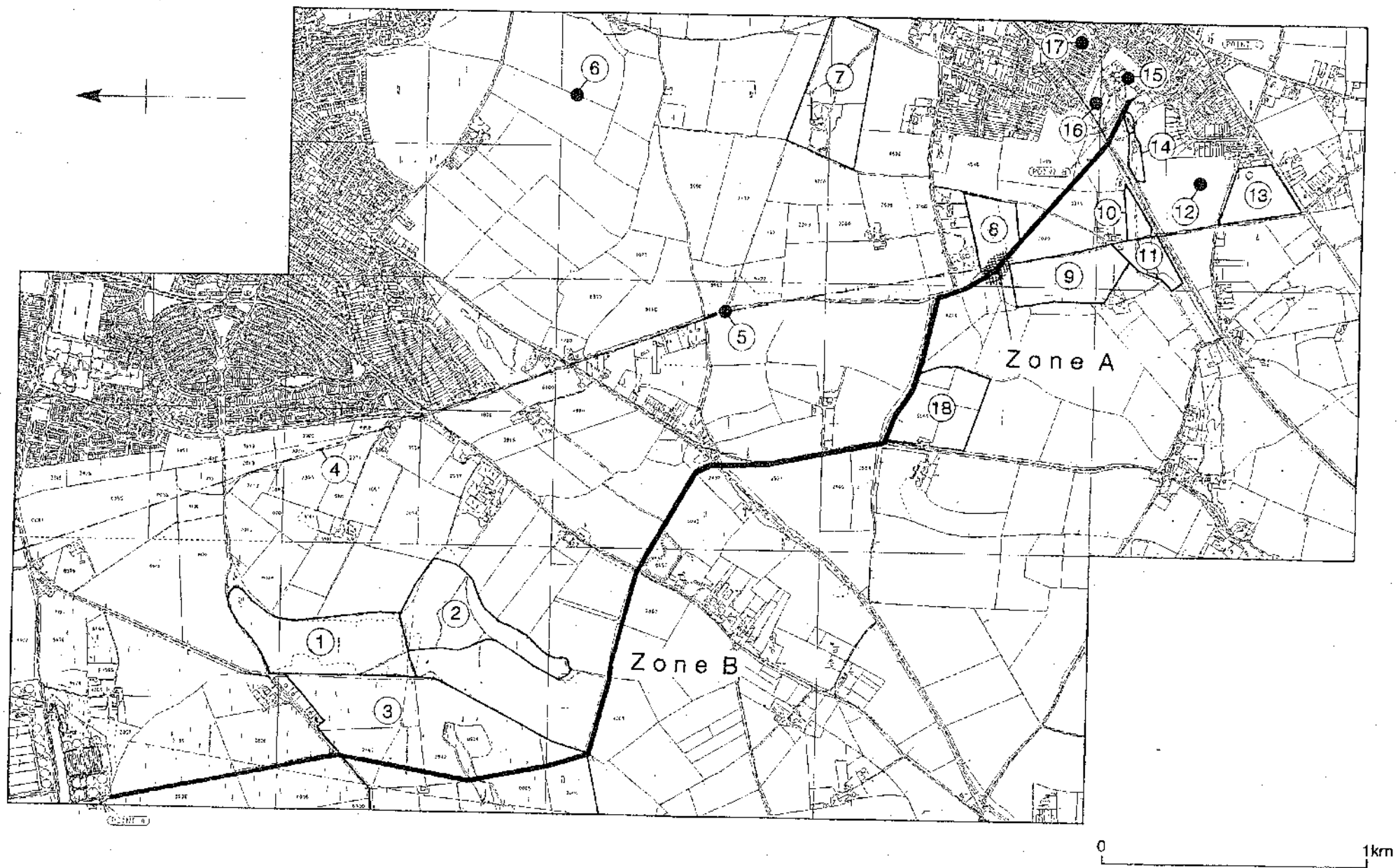


Figure 2