# Ironbridge Power Station, Shropshire

Archaeological Watching Brief



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Report No. 1431

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## **Non-Technical Summary**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out during the machine-excavation of a 90m long cable trench at the Sports and Social Club, Abbey House, Buildwas Abbey, Shropshire. The trench traversed the site of Buildwas Abbey (Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 1015813) that is currently in private ownership.

Scheduled monument consent for the cable trench was granted by Historic England in September 2015. The archaeological investigation was carried out by Archaeology Wales Limited at the request of E.ON Technologies (Ratcliffe) Limited.

The excavation of the cable trench revealed significant archaeology, which notably included two substantial stone walls identified in the northwest corner of the modern car park (03) (11). Lime wall plaster was recorded on the inner west face of wall 11. A possible floor surface (13) and degraded mortar deposit (14) extended between the walls, which suggests a building at this location. Two additional, less substantial stone walls (06) (12) were encountered near wall 11. A rough stone surface (05) was also identified between walls 06 and 12. These features (05) (06) (12) were interpreted as an annex-type structure attached to the eastern side of the building formed by walls 06 and 11. The buildings appeared to be medieval or early post-medieval in date.

To the north of the abbey infirmary wall, a truncated ceramic tiled surface (08) was discovered; this appeared to represent an intact medieval floor. The tiles may have originally extended up to a substantial structure (07) built in sandstone block, interpreted as a medieval wall or pier base. It is possible that the stone foundations (07) and the tile floor (08) are associated with the abbey infirmary.

Other features identified during the watching brief significantly include a stone structure (16) located in the northeast corner of the Transformer Room. This was built of roughly dressed but regularly sized sandstones, and most probably represents a footing for a wall or a buttress, potentially medieval date.

In addition to the features noted above, two extensive layers of disturbed or redeposited post-medieval demolition rubble were encountered near the electricity pylon, northwest of Abbey House (02), and between the northern car park boundary and the infirmary archway (09). The finds retrieved from the demolition deposits included a lead-glazed 13<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> century ceramic ridge tile, a glazed and patterned medieval floor tile in a Malvern fabric, as well as post-medieval pottery (Staffordshire / Buckley wares).

In summary, the watching brief on the cable trench revealed significant archaeology, especially in the northwest area of the car park and to the immediate north of the abbey infirmary wall. The results demonstrate that in situ medieval architectural remains survive in a good state of repair close to Abbey House.

#### 1 Introduction

#### 1.1 Scope of Work

- 1.1.1 In September 2015 Archaeology Wales Limited (henceforth AW) was commissioned by E.ON (Ratcliffe) Limited to carry out an archaeological watching brief on a cable trench at Abbey House, Buildwas Abbey, Shropshire (NGR SJ 64359 04341; Figures 1&2).
- 1.1.2 Buildwas Abbey (St Mary & St Chad's Abbey) is a designated Scheduled Ancient Monument (Historic England List Entry number 1015813) and comprises Grade I and Grade II listed buildings (Historic England List Entry numbers 1366862, 1175126 and 1055281). Scheduled monument consent was sought from Historic England under the terms of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979) and subsequently granted in September 2015. The consent relates to the excavation of a trench in order to install an electric cable for the Sports and Social Club, Abbey House.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological work was undertaken according to the Written Scheme of Investigations that was prepared by AW (Appendix III) and approved by Historic England.
- 1.1.4 The watching brief was undertaken during the machine excavation of the cable trench that was approximately 0.30-0.40m wide and varied in depth between 0.50m and 0.60m. The overall length of the trench from the electricity pylon to the transformer room was approximately 90m. The archaeological work included recording the interior wall of the Transformer Room prior to the installation of an electric meter box.
- 1.1.5 The archaeological investigation was undertaken between 1<sup>st</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> September 2015.
- 1.1.6 The AW project number for the work is 2207 and the site code is IPS/15/WB. The project details are summarised on the Archive Cover Sheet (Appendix V).

#### 1.2 Geology

1.2.1 The underlying solid geology of the development area is mapped by the British Geological Survey (2001) as comprising Wenlock Rocks of limestone and mudstone origin. There are superficial glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel and alluvial deposits associated with the River Severn.

#### 1.3 Site Location and Topography

- 1.3.1 Buildwas Abbey is located approximately 1.6 km to the west of Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site (SJ 64359 04341) on a relatively flat terrace of land at 45m OD (Ordnance Datum) on the southern bank of the River Severn. Earthworks associated with water management features and fishponds, which form part of the scheduled area, are situated to the northwest and south of the abbey complex.
- 1.3.2 The scheduled area comprises upstanding and buried remains of a Cistercian monastic site that passed into private ownership following the dissolution of the monasteries in

1536. The area of the watching brief is located along the line of a relatively flat gravel path that lies within gardens to the south of the Transformer Room of Abbey House (Figure 2). It is positioned close to garden buildings that were possibly laid out in the 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century. Historical sources and archaeological discoveries made at the abbey indicate that this area encompasses the former abbey church graveyard.

#### 1.4 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.4.1 In his article in 'A History of the County of Shropshire' (VCH, 1973) Gaydon notes that the abbey was founded by Roger de Clinton, Bishop of Chester, on 8<sup>th</sup> August 1135 as a daughter-house of Savigny.
- 1.4.2 Very little is known of the first twenty years of the history of the abbey, although during this period it appears to have been both poor and small. The name of the first abbot was Ingenulf and it is assumed that at this time the community lived in temporary wooden structures, as no trace of permanent buildings earlier than the 1150s have been discovered. Things changed rapidly under Abbot Ranulf, who ruled the house from 1155 until his death in 1187, during which time many of the principle buildings, including the church, cloisters and chapter-house were probably constructed. Gaydon notes that as a result 'the abbey was raised to a position of prominence among the Savigniac houses in the Cistercian Order.'
- 1.4.3 The Transformer Room of the present day Abbey House is a post-medieval structure located above the medieval remains of the eastern end of a long room that projected from the eastern range of the abbey. The room probably connected to a 'day room' in the west, with a dormitory above, and may have contained a chapel. As an integrated part of the abbey's eastern range, the room was probably constructed under Abbot Ranulf, or at least prior to 1220 (Robinson, 2003).
- 1.4.4 Some abbey buildings were still being constructed later in the thirteenth century, and in particular the South Chapel of the Church, the Infirmary Court and the Abbot's Lodging (Robinson, 2003). The postulated location of the Chapel (near the Transformer Room) is in the same area of both the Infirmary Court and the Abbot's Lodging, but it appears to date from an earlier phase of development.
- 1.4.5 Later abbots are lesser known figures. However, the prosperity of the abbey, which had characterised Ranulf's rule, probably continued until the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Revenues were never very large, but neither did the house suffer financially.
- 1.4.6 The abbey is known to have had a remarkable library and nearly forty books survive, largely at Trinity College, Cambridge, which preserve a record of the intellectual life of the monks. The books show that the library founded at Buildwas in the time of Abbot Ranulf acquired a fine collection of biblical texts and patristic works. Most of the volumes were written in the 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> centuries.
- 1.4.7 The abbey had a relatively troubled later history, partly due to its proximity to the Welsh border. In 1342 the abbot was murdered by a monk and in 1350 the abbot was abducted and imprisoned by raiders from Powys. In 1406 the abbey's lands were 'ruined' by

- supporters of Owen Glyndwr, although the full extent of the damage caused by the latter is not clear (Robinson, 2003).
- 1.4.8 A survey of 1535 and a report of commissioners appointed in April 1536 to survey the smaller monasteries provides a good picture of the financial condition of the abbey on the eve of the Dissolution (Gaydon, 1973). At this time, the gross value of its 'temporalities' was £123 6s 10d and its 'spiritualities' £10. Allowed expenses amounted to £18 7s 6½d leaving a net income of nearly £111. The total value of the abbey was calculated at £142 14s 6½d. In July 1539, following the dissolution, the site of the abbey and most of its property were granted to Edward, Lord Grey of Powys.
- 1.4.9 At a later date the abbot's house and parts of the infirmary court were incorporated in to a post-reformation building (Abbey House). This property remains in private hands.

## 2 Aims and Objectives

#### 2.1 Watching Brief

- 2.1.1 The general aim of the archaeological watching brief was to make a record of all archaeological remains encountered during the excavation of the cable trench in order to enhance the understanding of the relationship of any identified remains with the monastic buildings, and, if possible, to better establish the dates and functions of the buildings.
- 2.1.2 The specific objectives of the watching brief were to:
  - record any evidence for the construction of ancillary buildings to the east of the abbey and to the south of Abbey House, such as post-holes, buried foundations, etc:
  - record and, if appropriate, sample any floor levels within the claustral and ancillary buildings for environmental and artefactual evidence to better understand the activities that took place there;
  - record any evidence for the layout and character of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century formal gardens and any later changes;
  - record any evidence for the extent of the monks' cemetery that is known to lie to the east of the church; and to
  - provide a photographic record of the wall of the transformer room during the works and to record any observations with regards to any constructional or architectural details, phasing evidence, etc.

## 3 Methodology

#### 3.1 General Procedures

- 3.1.1 The archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a cable trench from an existing electricity pylon which sits in a wooded area approximately 60m northwest of Abbey House, to a transformer room situated to the immediate south west of the Abbey House complex. The general location of the cable trench is shown on Figure 2.
- 3.1.2 The cable trench was approximately 0.30-0.40m wide throughout its length and varied in depth between 0.50m and 0.60m. The overall length of the trench from the electricity pylon to the transformer room was approximately 90m. The excavation of the trench was carried out using a 1.5 tonne mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.30m wide toothless ditching bucket.
- 3.1.3 The location of the trench was agreed following consultation between the client and Historic England. The trench was set out by the ground-works contractor.
- 3.1.4 The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with the approved Specification and the *Standards and Guidance* issued by The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), (*Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, 2014; *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures*, 2014).
- 3.1.5 The project was managed by Kate Pitt (ACIfA). Site work was undertaken by Ian Davies.
- 3.1.6 Identified archaeological features and deposits were photographed using high-resolution digital photography in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation. Site drawings were on drafting film and used recognised conventions and scales (1:10, 1:20, 1:50, as appropriate).
- 3.1.7 The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with AW's *Risk Assessment* and current Health and Safety legislation.

#### 3.2 Finds

3.2.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged and labelled by context (see Section 4.2).

#### 3.3 Palaeo-environmental Evidence

3.3.1 No deposits suitable for sampling were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

## **4 Watching Brief Results**

#### 4.1 Trench Excavation (Plates 1-15, Fig 2-3)

- 4.1.1 Excavation began at the base of the electricity pylon and continued westwards. From this point on, for a distance of approximately 20m, the excavation revealed 0.30m depth of topsoil, an organic woodland soil (01), which overlay a mid-grey fine sandy silt (20). The latter is possibly a river silt (20). From approximately 20m onwards, a substantial rubble deposit (02) was encountered beneath the topsoil, 01 (Plate 1).
- 4.1.2 Deposit (02) consisted of a very dry, powdery and loose mid whitish grey silt with very large amounts of irregular stones and decomposed mortar (Plate 2). A large fragment of medieval architectural stone and a complete (perhaps unused) medieval floor tile were recovered from this layer (02). Fragments of 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire or Buckley ware pottery, and fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> century Broseley roof tiles were also retrieved from layer 02. This very mixed deposit continued underneath the woodland soil (01) up to the stone steps leading to a (woodland) footpath from Abbey House (a distance of approximately 15m). The rubble deposit (02) extended below the limit of excavation of the cable trench (some 0.60m deep).
- 4.1.3 As the excavation continued to the south, a substantial stone wall (03) was encountered below the woodland soil (01) (Figure 2a). The wall (03) was built in large, semi-dressed sandstone blocks some 0.40m long, 0.20m wide and 0.20m tall. A 0.50m high elevation of the wall was exposed across the cable trench; the structure extended below the limit of excavation. Overall the structure was 0.70m wide. The stonework was bonded by a mid greyish/pinkish-white powdery lime mortar and was aligned east-west. Further investigation of the area immediately to the west of the exposed elevation revealed more of this wall (03) above ground level, but covered with undergrowth and a large tree stump (which seemed to have caused extensive damage). The 1m wide stone steps some 2m west of the exposed elevation appeared to have been built into this wall, or at least on the same alignment. A further 1m wide stretch of overgrown and ruinous wall continued to the west of these steps before disappearing into an earthen bank (Plates 3&4).
- 4.1.4 Beyond wall 03, the overlying material changed as the work progressed into the car park. Below the initial surface of tarmac and stone sub-base (10) there was a very mixed deposit comprising a friable, dry mid reddish brown/grey sandy silt (09). This layer appeared continuous within the cable trench across the car park, and covered all of the revealed archaeological features from the northern car park boundary hedge up to the abbey infirmary archway, some 25m to the south. From deposit 09 a large number of complete medieval floor tiles and incomplete roof tile fragments were recovered as well as a smaller number of 19th century Broseley roof tile fragments, floor tiles and 18th to 19th century Staffordshire and/or Buckley Ware pottery fragments.
- 4.1.5 Approximately 0.60m to the south of wall 03, a substantial red brick culvert (04) was identified, aligned north-south (Figure 2a). This culvert was 0.80m wide, built in red bricks 0.22m long by 0.12m wide. The bricks were bonded in very hard white cement.

- The construction trench [15] for culvert 04 was irregular; the trench [15] truncated a loose, mid greyish white mortar rich deposit 14 between culvert 04 and wall 03 (Plate 5).
- 4.1.6 A probable stone floor (13) was identified to the immediate south of culvert (04); this consisted of semi-dressed rounded sandstone blocks and irregular small stone fragments that ranged in size from 0.15m to 0.30m across. Floor (13) had been truncated by the construction trench [15] for brick culvert 04 so was incomplete and damaged. In consequence, context 13 was difficult to interpret; this was compounded by the general lack of space within the narrow cable trench to investigate the deposit. Context 13 may alternatively be interpreted as a demolition or dereliction deposit from wall 11, immediately to the south.
- 4.1.7 Wall 11 was difficult to characterise due to the large number of tree roots growing over the wall and obscuring the cable trench (Figure 2a). However, with careful widening of the trench by hand it was ascertained that wall (11) was aligned north-south and consisted of blocks of well-dressed sandstone up to 0.30m long by 0.20m wide, all bonded with a mid greyish-white powdery lime mortar. What remained of this structure was 0.70m wide and approximately 0.15m tall (Plate 6).
- 4.1.8 A thin and very fragmentary layer of white lime wall plaster, some 1cm thick, was noted on the inner west face of wall 11, close to the interface between wall 11 and floor/demolition deposit 13. Wall 11 was very similar, if not identical in character, to wall 03, which indicated that both walls are part of the same structure or building. The walls potentially intersect approximately 3m to the north of the trench, near the car park boundary hedge. The alignment of the brick culvert (04) indicates this structure may truncate walls 03 and 11 beyond the cable trench.
- 4.1.9 Immediately to the south of wall 11, and possibly bonded to this structure, was a much narrower wall (12) (Figure 2a). This was built in regular dressed sandstone, up to 0.20m across, bonded with a mid greyish-white lime mortar. The structure was aligned east-west and was 0.50m wide and 0.15m tall. Another wall (06), almost identical in character, was encountered approximately 4m south of wall 12 (Plates 7&8 and Figure 2a).
- 4.1.10 Between walls 06 and 12 appeared to lay a rough stone surface (05) consisting of flat and irregular mid yellowish-grey sandstones, varying between 0.10m and 0.20m across. The layer of flat stones (05) may have formed a floor surface within a building defined by walls 06 and 12. However, some of these stones were rather loose, so this context (05) may alternatively be interpreted as another demolition or dereliction layer similar to deposit 13 (Plates 7&8).
- 4.1.11 Approximately 10m south from wall 06, a substantial and well-constructed stone structure (07), some 1m wide, was revealed 0.30m below the existing tarmac surface (10) (Figure 2a). Structure 07 comprised large, flat irregularly shaped sandstones ranging in size from 0.15m to 0.30m across and bonded with a mid whitish-pink lime mortar. Further examination revealed this structure to be at least two courses tall (Plates 9&10).

- 4.1.12 Approximately 4m further south of structure 07, a 1.80m long area of ceramic tiled floor (08) was uncovered some 0.35m below the tarmac surface (10). The tiled floor consisted of well-set square orangey-red tiles 0.10m across and 0.03m thick (Plates 9&11).
- 4.1.13 The removal of one tile from floor 08 for examination revealed that whilst the top of the tile was unglazed, the sides were partially covered with a mottled mid-dark brown glaze. The tiles had been laid on a bed of mid pinkish-white powdery mortar and a mid greenish-brown silty clay. The tiled floor had an uneven character to it, perhaps suggesting that it had seen frequent footfall over its life.
- 4.1.14 The northern end of tile floor 08 appeared to have been truncated. This indicated that it may have originally extended up to structure 07. A modern service also trench truncated the tile floor 08 to the south, so it was not possible to ascertain the overall extent of this floor and whether or not it had respected the alignment of the triple archway of the abbey infirmary wall approximately 1m to the south. In addition, it could not be ascertained if there were any structural remains of a wall between the infirmary arch columns, which the tile floor 08 may have been laid against. Of note was the large number of scattered identical floor tiles found within deposit 09 in this immediate area, suggesting they had been disturbed and re-deposited here, possibly in the recent past.
- 4.1.15 From the location of the infirmary archway, south through the cobbled courtyard to the threshold of the transformer room, a distance of approximately 21m, the cable trench followed the route of existing services. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered along this previously disturbed section of the cable trench.
- 4.1.16 Within the transformer room, the 0.10m deep modern concrete floor (17) was cut using a Stihl circular saw. The concrete was then removed by hand to reveal an earlier 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century brick floor (18) approximately 0.15m deep. This brick floor disintegrated upon removal revealing a very mixed, dry and powdery soil deposit 19 (Plate 12).
- 4.1.17 A stone structure (16) was encountered below soil deposit 19 in the northeast corner of the transformer room (Figure 2a). This consisted of roughly dressed but regularly sized sandstone blocks, 0.30m across by 0.20m tall, with no mortar evident. Two unbonded courses were revealed, with the bottom course stepping out by approximately 0.06m. Although no dating evidence was found in soil deposit 19 or within structure 16, the character of the latter suggests a potential medieval date. Structure 16 may have formed the footing for a wall, a buttress, or some other structure (of more formally dressed stone) which has subsequently been lost (Plate 13).
- 4.1.18 The wall in the transformer room was photographed prior to a board being fitted for an electric meter box. The board was fitted on brackets, thereby minimising any potential impact to the building fabric (Plates 14&15). This area of wall was recorded as predominantly of brick construction beneath a timber lintel; interpreted as a blocked-up opening.

#### 4.2 Finds

#### **Summary**

4.2.1 A total of twenty eight pieces of tile weighing 18.55 kg, three pieces of pottery weighing 452g, and one fragment of clay pipe, were recovered during the watching brief. The finds were retrieved from demolition deposits 02 and 09.

#### **Tile**

4.2.2 The tile assemblage (see Table 1) consists of a stone roof tile and a variety of ceramic roof and floor tiles. Medieval, post-medieval and modern items are represented. Items that could have formed part of the monastic buildings include the stone roof tile, two unglazed earthenware tiles, fifteen unglazed medieval earthenware floor tiles in Malvern fabric, and five unglazed earthenware roof tile fragments. Items that are very likely to have formed part of the monastic buildings include a lead-glazed 13th/14th century ceramic ridge tile, and a glazed and patterned medieval floor tile in a Malvern fabric.

**Table 1: Finds Catalogue** 

	Context	Description	Amount	Weight (grams)	Kept / Discarded
Γile					
	2	Medieval floor tile	1	484	Kept
	9	Tile 'Crown Brosell'	1	363	Kept
	9	Tiles, including some medieval tiles	25	17 KG	Kept
	9	Roof tile	1	705	Kept
⁄lisc					
	9	Tobacco clay pipe	1	4	Kept
	9	Pottery: glazed red earthenware 18 <sup>th</sup> / 19 <sup>th</sup> century	3	452	Kept
		Total finds			
		Total finds	20		
		Tiles	28		
		Miscellaneous  Total:	4 32		

#### Other Artefacts

4.2.3 Other material recovered included three fragments of tin-glazed post-medieval pottery (Staffordshire/Buckley wares), a clay pipe fragment and two fragments of lime wall plaster. The plaster could have come from the Abbey.

#### 5 Discussion & Conclusions

#### 5.1 Discussion

- 5.1.1 Between the existing electricity pylon and stone wall 03, a woodland soil (01), a possible natural river silt (20) and a very mixed rubble deposit (02) were encountered within the cable trench. The rubble deposit 02 largely contained fragments of lime mortar and sandstone. The finds from this deposit (02) comprised one large fragment of medieval architectural stone and an intact medieval floor tile, as well as 19<sup>th</sup> century Staffordshire or Buckley ware pottery and fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> century Broseley roof tiles. Rubble deposit 02 appeared to butt up against stone wall 03 and continue westwards for approximately 15m. It is highly likely that this deposit also continues to the east, beyond the confines of the cable trench.
- 5.1.2 The presence of 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century ceramics in layer 02 indicates this is likely to be very late, and probably deposited or re-deposited in the last hundred years. This deposit possibly dates to the Ministry of Works period of clearance and conservation of the abbey remains from 1925 onwards. This may also account for the inclusion of the later ceramic material waste, such as the Broseley roof tiles, as the Moseley family renovated the Abbey House in the late 1800s.
- 5.1.3 The alignment of walls 03 and 11, with a possible floor surface (13) and degraded mortar deposit (14) extending between these structures strongly suggests the existence of a building in the northwest corner of the modern car park and underneath the footpath slightly to the west. Wall 03 extended above ground to the west and appeared to incorporate stone steps that lead to a woodland trail. It then continued for 1m further west into an earthen bank. Wall 11, on a north-south alignment, had exactly the same robust and well-built character and dimensions as wall 03, although the large tree roots growing over wall 11 and the limited width of the cable trench made closer examination very difficult. The walls may have intersected beyond the cable trench.
- 5.1.4 A small section of *in situ* white wall plaster on the inner western face of wall 11 suggests this structure did not form part of a utilitarian building. The position of wall 12 indicates the existence of another smaller annex-type building attached to the eastern side of the building formed by walls 06 and 11. Although no direct and secure dating evidence was recovered, the character of the construction of the walls indicates these are probably medieval or early post-medieval in date. If there are two buildings at this location, their origin and purpose was not ascertained during the archaeological investigation.
- 5.1.5 The tiled surface (08) discovered to the north of the abbey infirmary wall was heavily truncated, but appeared to be an intact medieval floor, or least a floor made up entirely of medieval ceramic floor tiles. The tiles may have originally extended up to foundation structure 07.

- 5.1.6 Structure 07 was solidly built in sandstone blocks, and appeared intended to support a substantial structural weight. If this represents a continuous and solid stone wall base in an east-west alignment, then visually structure 07 did not appear to respect the alignment of the infirmary wall, and this would most likely mean that the buried foundation (07) did not form part of the same building. Alternatively, if structure 07 formed a sub-square pier base for a lost arch column then it is possible that the stone blocks (07) and the tile floor 08, noted above, are part of the abbey infirmary.
- 5.1.7 No archaeological remains or deposits were revealed in the cable trench across the cobbled courtyard to the west of Abbey House, as the excavation extended along the line of a previous service trench (which contained a blue plastic water pipe and the electrical cable). The backfill of this section of trench, up to the threshold of the transformer room, was entirely modern.
- 5.1.8 What appeared to be a buttress or buried foundation structure (16) was identified during excavations within the transformer room. The discovery was not unexpected, as there are thought to be older abbey remains beneath the current upstanding buildings in this immediate area.

#### **5.2** Overall Conclusions

- 5.2.1 The excavation of the cable trench revealed significant archaeology, especially in the northwest area of the car park and to the immediate north of the abbey infirmary wall. The discoveries demonstrate that despite considerable later ground disturbance *in situ* medieval architectural remains survive in a good state of repair close to Abbey House.
- 5.2.2 The buried structures discovered in the transformer room can be identified on the site plan by Historic England as lying close to the south-eastern corner of the long room that projects from the eastern range of the Abbey. It is worth noting that this is the location of the Chapel postulated by Robinson (2003).
- 5.2.3 The main period of building work at the Abbey appears to have been from AD 1160 up to the early thirteenth century. As an integrated part of the Abbey's eastern range, the long room and its postulated chapel were probably constructed at this time. This suggests that the structures located during the watching brief to the north of the infirmary wall are likely to be 13<sup>th</sup> century in date or later.
- 5.2.4 The results of the watching brief may be used to inform future mitigation measures during work in and around the eastern (privately owned) part of Buildwas Abbey. Ecclesiastical remains clearly survive immediately under the ground surface in this area, both around and below the buildings that now occupy the site.

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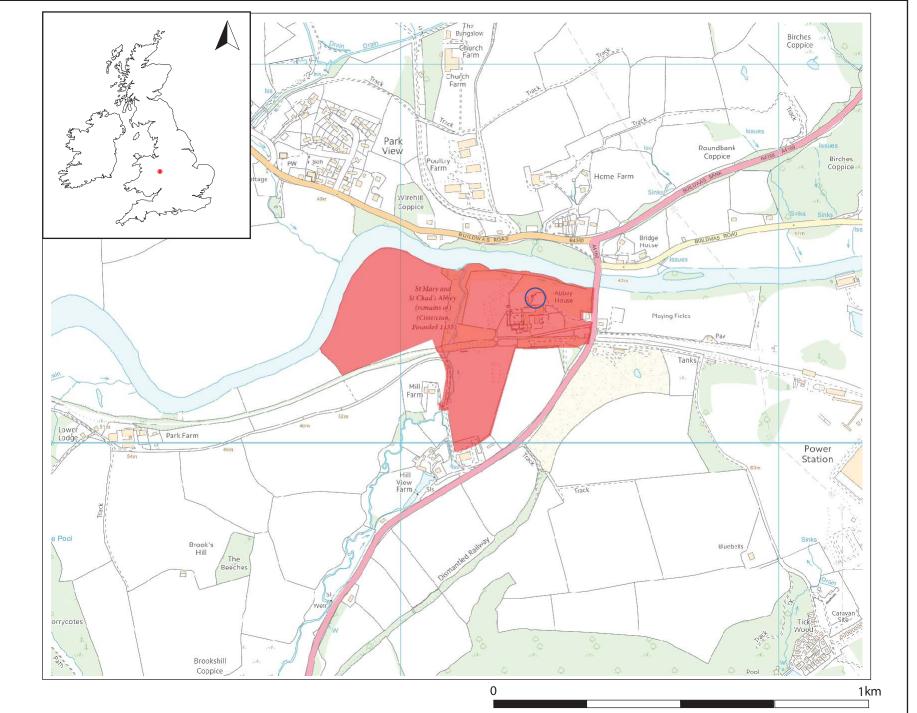
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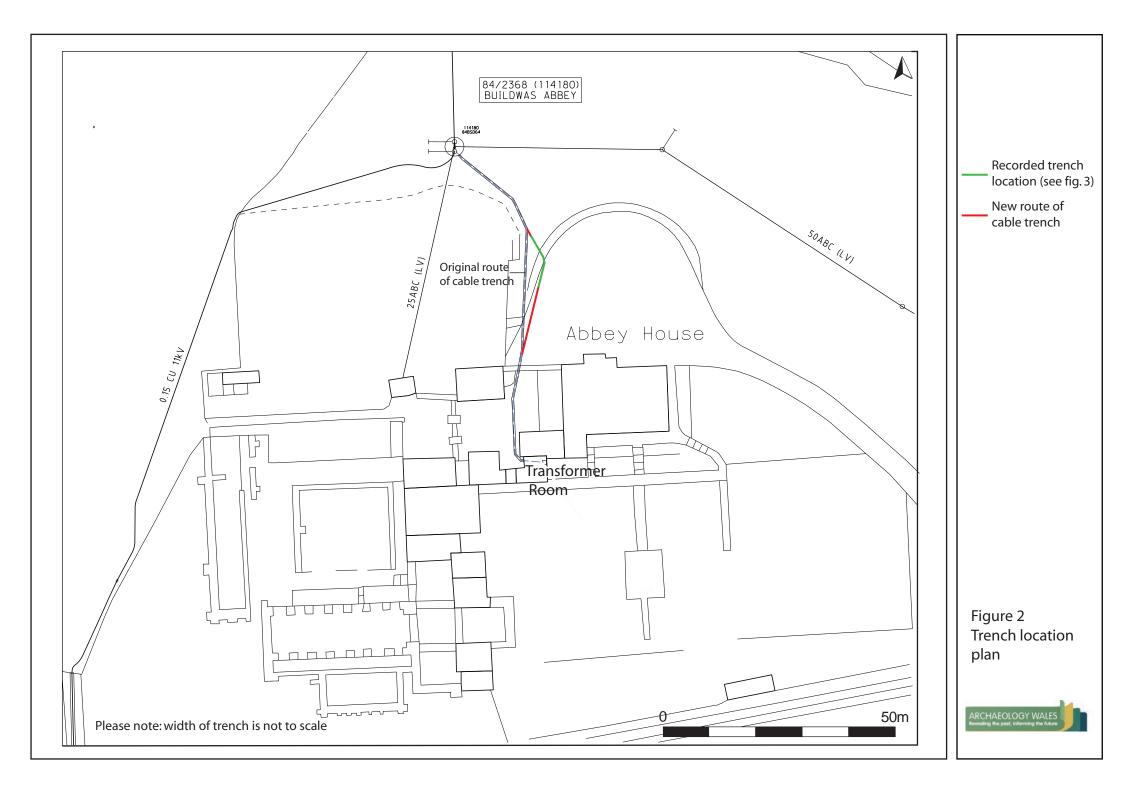
# **APPENDIX I:** Figures

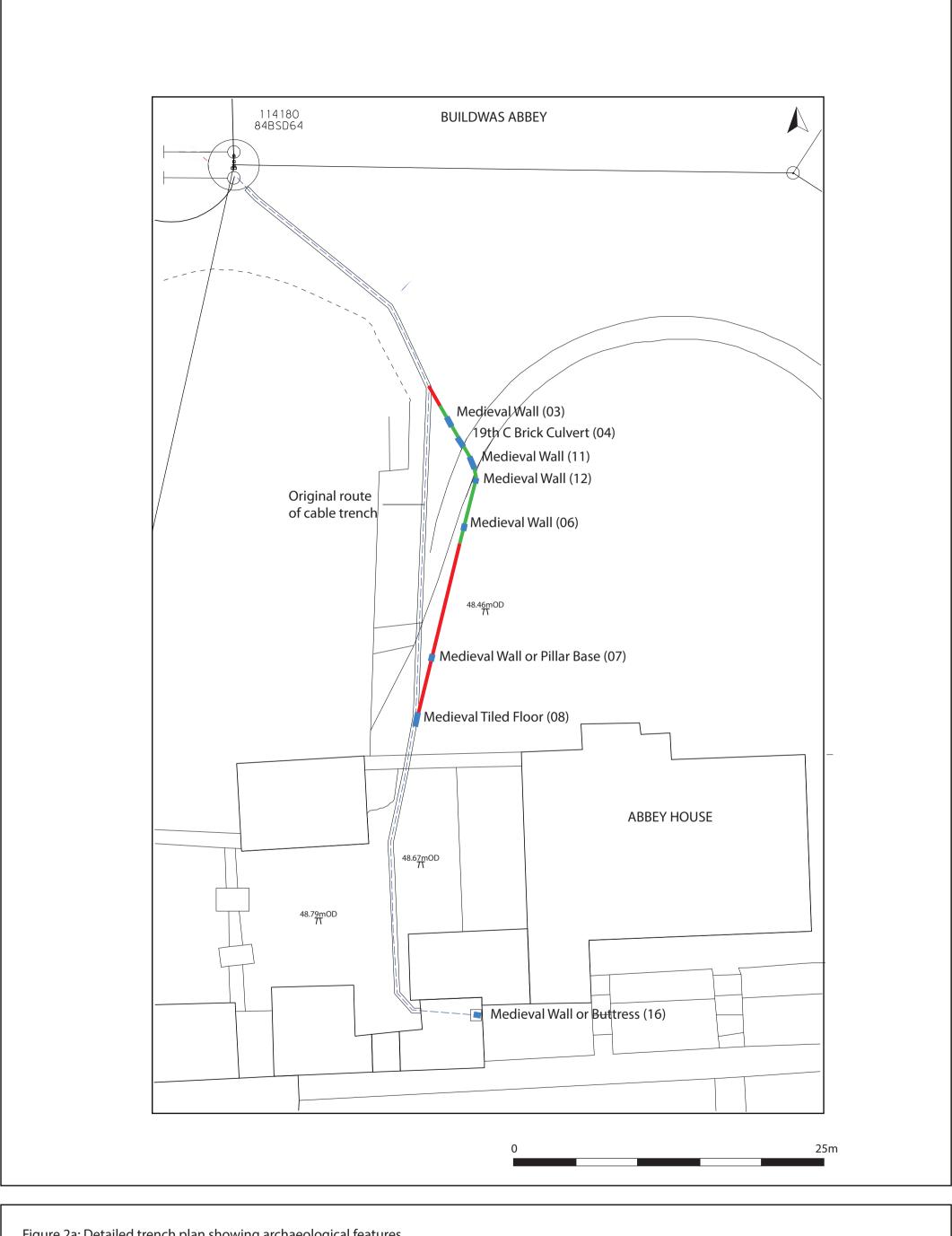


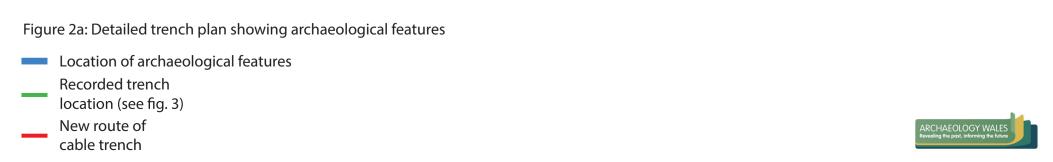
 Watching Brief Area Historic England's Scheduled Area 1015813 Figure 1. Site Location

Plan









## North facing section showing elevation of wall [03] 47.98mOD Plan of medieval tiled floor (08) ◀ 01 47.69mOD 03 48.55mOD 04 47.9<u>8m</u>OD **Job Title:** Ironbridge Power Station Drawing Title: Plans & section of cable trench Post-excavation plan of part of cable trench in car park Date: March 2016 Drawn By: ILB Scale: 1:10 & 1:20 @ A3 48.22mOD Figure 3 ARCHAEOLOGY WALES Revealing the past, informing the future

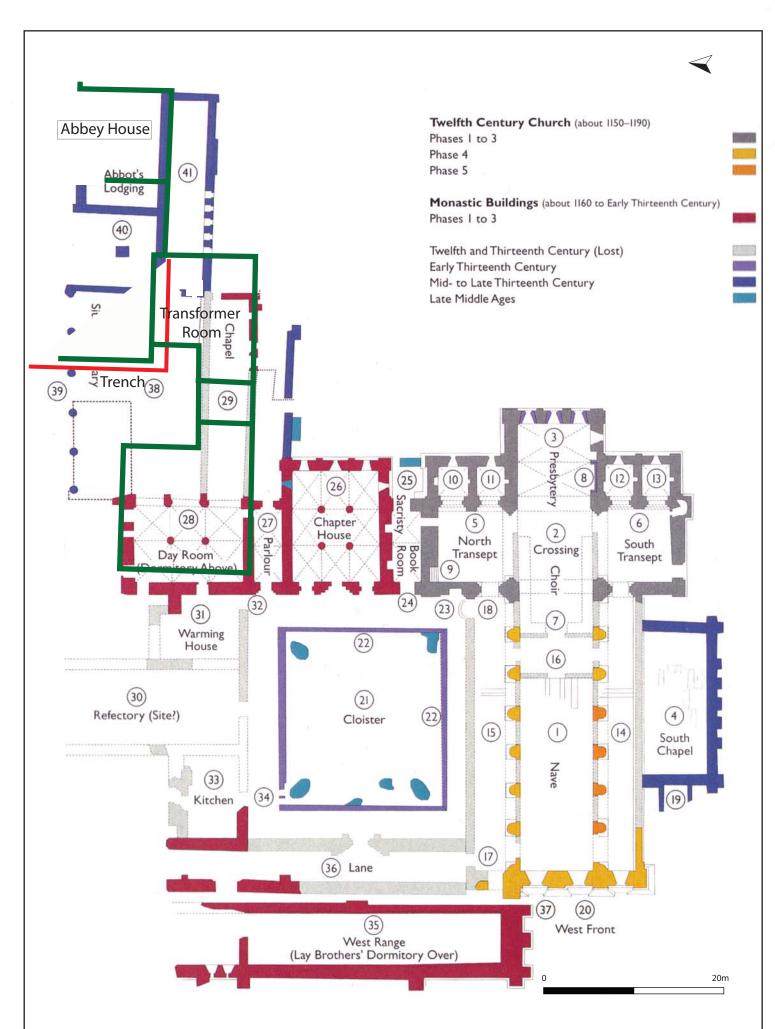


Figure 4: English Heritage plan of Buildwas Abbey showing the approximate location of the WB trench (bright red), Abbey House and the Transformer Room building (green)

copyright English Heritage 2003, from the guidebook by David Robinson

## **APPENDIX II:** Plates



Plate 1. Rubble Deposit (02) in Woodland. Note Pylon Post in Background. Looking West. Scale 1x1m



Plate 2. Rubble Deposit (02). Looking South. Scale 1x1m





Plate 3. Overall Shot, Wall 03 on Left, Steps on Right. Looking South. Scale 2x1m



Plate 4. Wall 03. North Facing Elevation. Scale 1x1m



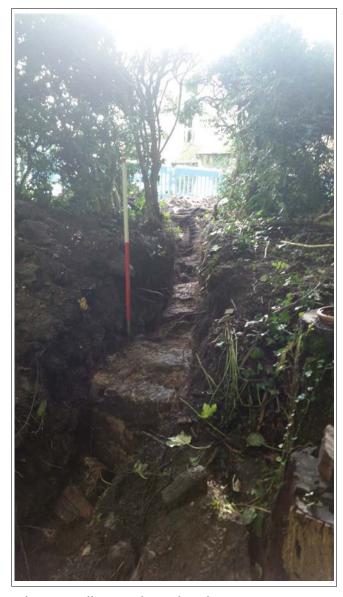


Plate 5. Wall 03, with Brick Culvert 04 behind. Looking Southeast. Scale 1x1m



Plate 6. Wall 11. Looking North. Scale 1x1m





Plate 7.Overhead shot of Walls 06, 11 & 12. Scale 2x1m



Plate 8. Wall 06 and Floor 05. Looking Southeast.





Plate 9. Possible Pillar Base (07) in Foreground and Tiled Floor (08), in Centre and Infirmary Archways in Background. Looking South. Scale 1m



Plate 10. Overhead Shot of Possible Pillar Base (07). Scale 1m





Plate 11. Overhead Shot of Tile Floor (08).



Plate 12. Transformer Room Threshold. Looking West.





Plate 13. Possible Buttress (16) in Transformer Room. Looking East. Scale 1x1m



Plate 14. Transformer Room Wall with Brackets Fitted. Looking East.





Plate 15. Transformer Room Wall with Board Fitted. Looking East.



## **APPENDIX III:**

Specification for Archaeological Mitigation

## **ARCHAEOLOGY WALES LIMITED:**

# Specification for Archaeological Mitigation

## On Land at Ironbridge Power Station, Shropshire

## **Prepared for:**

E.ON Technologies (Ratcliffe) Limited

**Project No: 2207** 

24 August 2015

Archaeology Wales Limited
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#### NON TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This Specification details the proposal and methodology to be employed for a program of archaeological mitigation associated with the replacement of a pylon and associated underground cabling at Buildwas Abbey. This includes an area of Evaluation and an area of Watching Brief. It has been prepared by Archaeology Wales Ltd on behalf of E.ON Technologies (Ratcliffe) Limited.

#### 1. Introduction

The proposed development comprises plans to replace an electricity pylon and underground cabling (site centred on NGR: SJ 64148 04218); Figure 1).

The proposed archaeological investigations shall be undertaken at Buildwas Abbey (St Mary & St Chad's Abbey) which is a designated scheduled ancient monument (English Heritage List Entry number 1015813 – Buildwas Abbey) and grade I and grade II listed building (List Entry numbers 1366862 'Abbey House with attached five bay arcade, incorporating dovecote', 1175126 ' – Buildwas Abbey comprising guardianship monument and part of claustral ranges in the grounds of Abbey House' – and 1055281 'Remains of wall approximately 175 metres south-west of west end of Buildwas Abbey. The abbey is located in Shropshire, c.1.6 km to the west of the western edge of the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage site, on the southern bank of the River Severn.

The abbey consists of the extensive upstanding and buried remains of a Cistercian monastic site which passed into private ownership and continued to be occupied and developed following the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536. The area of the archaeological watching brief is located within buildings to the immediate east of the Abbey House and on land to the north. There is the potential of encountering stone drainage culverts associated with the abbey in this area.

This Specification has been prepared by Kate Pitt (ACIfA), Project Manager, Archaeology Wales (Henceforth - AW). It provides information on the methodology that will be employed by AW during an Archaeological Evaluation and area of Watching Brief (AW Project Number 2207). The archaeological works are to take place, prior to and during ground-works associated with the development to mitigate the potential impact of the development on archaeological remains.

The archaeological work has been recommended by Bill Klemperer, Principal Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Historic England.

The archaeological manager in overall charge of the project will be Kate Pitt (ACIfA)(AW). Kate Pitt and Ian Davies will be the principle authors of the final report. The Supervisor in charge of the excavation will be Ian Davies. All work will be undertaken by suitably qualified staff and in accordance with the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation (CIfA 2014) and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (CIfA 2014).

#### 2 Site specific objectives

The aims of the evaluation and watching brief, as defined by the CIfA (2014) are:

- To allow a rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological features that are uncovered during the proposed groundworks within the application area.
- To provide the opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief are not sufficient to support the treatment to a satisfactory or proper standard.

#### 3 The proposed archaeological work

The proposed archaeological work relates to all of the development area.

The work will include the following elements:

- Stage 1 An Evaluation Trench
- Stage 2 A Watching Brief
- Stage 3 The production of an illustrated report and the deposition of the site archive.

#### 4 Method statement for an Archaeological Evaluation Trench (Stage 1)

#### Preliminary work

An electricity pylon to the north west of the abbey will be replaced by Western Power Distribution. This will involve the pile driving of two holes approximately two metres deep. Prior to this intrusive process, an evaluation trench of four square metres will be excavated. The location of the evaluation trench is shown on Figure 2, by the location of the pylon.

The supervisor in charge of the Evaluation will liaise with the groundworks contractor to ensure that all live services and other obstructions are identified prior to the start of works. The site will be completely fenced off prior to excavation commencing.

#### **Evaluation**

The trench will be excavated initially using a machine fitted with a wide toothless ditching blade. Thereafter all identified archaeological contexts will be excavated manually unless otherwise agreed with the curator in advance. All modern overburden and non-archaeological subsoils will be removed down to the level of the first recognisable archaeological horizon. All archaeological contexts subsequently located will be adequately sampled in order to define their function, date, and relationship to adjacent features.

Sample percentages of each feature will include up to 50% of all linear features, 50% of postholes and sub-1m pits through half sectioning and 50% of pits over 1m in diameter through opposing quadrant excavation.

All trench sides and bases must be cleaned manually by trowelling to reveal contexts in plan and profile. This must be completed even if the trench apparently reveals only natural deposits. Spade or shovel cleaning only of trench bases and sides will not be acceptable. The level of natural soils below the archaeology should be tested for in at least one trench section location in each trench by means of machine/manual excavation or auguring.

Recording will be carried out using AW recording systems (pro-forma context sheets etc), using a continuous number sequence for all contexts.

Written, drawn and photographic records of an appropriate level of detail will be maintained throughout the course of the project. Digital photographs will be taken using cameras with resolutions of 14 mega pixels or above.

Plans and sections will be drawn to a scale of 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 as required, and these will be related to Ordnance Survey datum and published boundaries where appropriate.

#### Monitoring

Historic England will be contacted as soon as the work is underway.

Any changes to the specification that AW may wish to make after approval will be communicated to Historic England for further approval.

Bill Klemperer or a representative of Historic England will be given access to the site so that he may monitor the progress of the evaluation. The trench will not be back-filled until he has had the opportunity to inspect it, unless permission has been given in advance. He will be kept informed about developments, both during the site works and subsequently during post-excavation.

Historic England will be informed of the discovery of any potentially significant archaeological features prior to their excavation so that a monitoring visit can be arranged and/or an excavation strategy agreed. In the event of complex deposits being discovered AW will prepare an additional Specification for the work.

#### Artefacts

Archaeological artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation will be cleaned and labelled using a unique site code. A single number sequence will be allocated to all finds. The artefacts will be stored appropriately until they are deposited with the Shropshire Museum Service.

All artefacts recovered during the project will be retained and related to the contexts from which they were derived. All typologically distinct and closely datable finds will be recorded three-dimensionally.

Any finds which are considered to be in need of immediate conservation will be referred to a UKIC qualified conservator (Phil Parkes of Cardiff Conservation Services).

A catalogue by context of all artefactual material found, quantified by number, weight, or both, will be compiled.

Pottery will be analysed to the standards outlined in "Guidelines for the Preparation of Pottery Archives" as prepared by the Study Group for Roman Pottery in consultation with the CIfA. All other material will be analysed following the advice given in the Institute of Field Archaeologists: Guidelines for Finds Work.

The requirements for the conservation of artefacts will be unpredictable until after the completion of the fieldwork. The archaeological contractor will ensure, however, that at least minimum acceptable standards are achieved (the UK Institute of Conservation's Guidelines for the Treatment of Finds from Archaeological Site should be used as

guidance).

#### Environmental and technological samples

Samples will be taken where necessary if significant deposits are located. These will be retained for processing. The level of post-excavation processing will be dependent on the results of assessment of potential and following discussion with an environmental specialist and Historic England.

Any features with potential to contain deposits of environmental or technological significance will be sampled. If required, the project manager will arrange, through a suitably qualified expert the assessment of the environmental potential of the site through examination of suitable deposits. The assessment of potential should consider the guidelines set out in the English Heritage publication 'Environmental Archaeology' August 2011.

#### **Human remains**

Human remains will be left in situ, covered and protected when discovered. No further investigation will normally be permitted and Historic England and the local Coroner must be informed immediately. After discussion, it may be appropriate to take bone samples for C14 dating. If removal is essential it can only take place under the appropriate Ministry of Justice and Environmental Health regulations.

#### Conservation

All archaeologically recovered artefacts, building materials, industrial residues, environmental material, biological remains (including human remains) and decay products (collectively referred to as 'finds') will be conserved following the guidelines set out in 'Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials' (CIfA, 2014).

#### **Specialists**

In the event of certain finds/features etc. being discovered, the site archaeologist may have to seek specialist opinion for assistance. Such specialists will be accessed either internally within AW itself or from an external source. A list of external specialists is given in the table below.

Туре	Name	
Animal bone	Jen Kitch	
CBM, heat affected clay, Daub etc.	Rachael Hall	
Clay pipe	Hilary Major	
Glass	Andy Richmond	
Cremated and non-cremated human bone	Malin Holst	
Metalwork	Kevin Leahy	
Neo/BA pottery	Dr Alex Gibson	
IA/Roman pottery	Jane Timby	
Post Roman pottery	Paul Blinkhorn	
Charcoal (wood ID)	John Carrot	
Waterlogged wood	Nigel Nayling	

Molluscs and pollen	Dr James Rackham
Charred and waterlogged plant	Wendy Carruthers
remains	

#### 5 Method statement for the watching brief (Stage 2)

The blue line of the cable route seen in Figure 1 indicate the main coverage for a watching brief programme of works.

A cable trench measuring 0.30m wide by 0.60m deep will be machine dug from the replaced pylon, running approximately 90m to the transformer room in the Abbey House. This trench will be cut through the cobbled courtyard to the immediate west of the Abbey House and the floor of the Abbey House itself. Extra care must be taken when working beneath archways or in the vicinity of stone structures.

Within the transformer room in the Abbey House a meter/isolator box c.1m square will be mounted onto the eastern wall into which the cable will go, the location is seen in Figure 2. The design of this box is seen in Figure 3. Any sections of stone wall that are affected or covered by the insertion of this box will be photographed prior to works being undertaken.

#### General

The archaeological watching brief will be undertaken by AW staff using current best practice.

All work will be carried out by a suitable qualified archaeologist with relevant level membership of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and will follow the CIfA Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief (2014).

#### **Detailed**

The Watching Brief will be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist during the excavation of all foundation trenches, service trenches and/or reductions in ground level associated with the proposed developments.

If archaeological features, finds or deposits are uncovered, work will be stopped in the area of the exposed feature in order that the supervising archaeologist can clean and identify the extent and nature of the feature and for excavation and recording to take place.

All archaeological deposits that are identified will be mapped, cleaned, recorded and fully excavated. The developer will provide a safe working area and sufficient time to record and excavate all features to the satisfaction of AW and Historic England. Full excavation of identified features will not be compromised by the construction programme.

#### **Contingency Arrangements**

In the event of significant archaeological features being discovered all activities in this area of the site can be temporarily suspended. This will allow a period of consultation with the Historic England and if required the opinion of specialists.

Following such consultation, recommendations will be presented to the Developer and Historic England.

The methodology and timescale of additional archaeological work to investigate such features will be presented and included in the Developers Programme; the feature will be fenced off and secured thus allowing the site programme to continue

#### Recording

Recording will be carried out using AW recording systems (pro-forma context sheets etc), using a continuous number sequence for all contexts.

Plans and sections will be drawn to a scale of 1:50, 1:20 and 1:10 as required and related to Ordnance Survey datum and published boundaries where appropriate.

All features identified will be tied in to the OS survey grid and fixed to local topographical boundaries and related to the developer's site plan.

Photographs will be taken in digital format, using a 14MP camera.

The archaeologist undertaking the watching brief will have access to the AW metal detector and be trained in its use.

#### **Monitoring**

Any changes to the specification that the contractor may wish to make after approval will be communicated to Historic England for approval.

Representatives of Historic England will be given access to the site so that they may monitor the progress of the watching brief. Historic England will be kept regularly informed about developments, both during the site works and subsequently during any potential post-excavation.

#### **Artefacts**

Archaeological artefacts recovered during the course of the excavation will be cleaned and labelled using an accession number, which will be obtained from the local museum. A single number sequence will be allocated to all finds. The artefacts will be stored appropriately until they are deposited with a suitable local museum.

All finds of gold and silver will be removed to a safe place and Historic England and the local coroner informed, within the guidelines of the Treasure Act 1996.

Any finds which are considered to be in need of immediate conservation will be referred to a UKIC qualified conservator (Phil Parkes at Cardiff University).

#### **Human remains**

In the event of burials or cremations being found all work will be halted in the area of the burials and their extent and nature established. The client, Historic England and the Ministry of Justice will be informed and a methodology of excavation agreed which will adhere to Ministry of Justice Guidelines.

#### Environmental and technological samples

Environmental samples will be taken where necessary when significant deposits are located. Technological samples will be taken where necessary when significant deposits are located.

#### **Specialists**

In the event of certain finds/features etc. being discovered, the site archaeologist may have to seek specialist opinion for assistance. Such specialists will be accessed either internally within AW itself or from an external source. A list of external specialists is given in the table below.

Туре	Name
Animal bone	Jen Kitch
CBM, heat affected clay, Daub etc.	Rachael Hall
Clay pipe	Hilary Major
Glass	Andy Richmond
Cremated and non-cremated human bone	Malin Holst
Metalwork	Kevin Leahy
Neo/BA pottery	Dr Alex Gibson
IA/Roman pottery	Jane Timby
Post Roman pottery	Paul Blinkhorn
Charcoal (wood ID)	John Carrot
Waterlogged wood	Nigel Nayling
Molluscs and pollen	Dr James Rackham
Charred and waterlogged plant remains	Wendy Carruthers

#### 6 Post-Fieldwork Programme (Stage 3)

#### Conservation

After agreement with the landowner arrangements will be made for the long term conservation and storage of all artefacts in an appropriate local or county museum.

#### Archive

The site archive will be prepared in accordance with Morphe (English Heritage 2006). It will comprise all the data recovered during the fieldwork and shall be quantified, ordered and indexed and will be internally consistent. The archive will be deposited with the finds in a suitable local museum.

#### Reporting

The results of the watching brief will be submitted in an illustrated and bound report, which will include the following material:

- Non-technical summary
- Location plan showing the area/s covered by the watching brief, all artefacts, structures and features found
- Plan and section drawings with ground level, ordnance datum and vertical and horizontal scales.
- Written description and interpretation of all deposits identified, including their character, function, potential dating and relationship to adjacent features. Specialist descriptions and illustrations of all artefacts and soil samples will be included as appropriate.
- An indication of the potential of archaeological deposits which have not been disturbed by the development
- Statement of local, regional and national context of the remains

 A detailed archive list at the rear listing all contexts recorded, all samples finds and find types, drawings and photographs taken. This will include a statement of the intent to deposit, and location of deposition, of the archive.

#### **Archive Format & Deposition**

The full site archive will be deposited within one month of the completion of the client report.

The paper/drawing/digital/finds archive will be deposited with the appropriate local museum. AW will agree the location and timing of the deposition of the archive before the contract commences.

The archive will include all site notes, finds, documents, drawings, photographs, digital data and a copy of the final report and any prior draft versions. All of these items will be clearly quantified in tabular from in an 'archive deposition statement' located at the rear of the clients report, and their ultimate location and proposed date of deposition stated.

An OASIS record will also be established and uploaded for the site.

#### 5 Resources and timetable

#### Standards

The watching brief will be undertaken by AW staff using current best practice.

All work will be undertaken to the standards and guidelines of the CIfA.

#### Staff

The project will be undertaken by suitably qualified AW staff.

#### **Equipment**

The project will use existing AW equipment.

#### <u>Timetable of archaeological works</u>

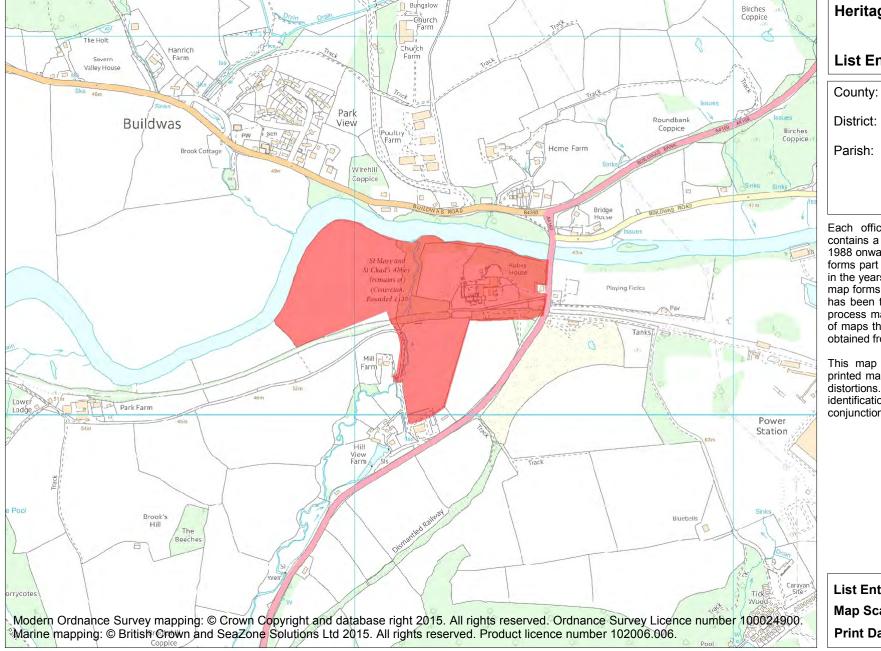
The watching brief will be undertaken at the convenience of the client; works are scheduled to commence on Tuesday  $1^{st}$  September.

#### Insurance

AW is an affiliated member of the CBA, and holds Insurance through the CBA insurance service.

#### Health and safety

All members of staff will adhere to the requirements of the *Health & Safety at Work Act*, 1974, and the Health and Safety Policy Statement of AW.



This is an A4 sized map and should be printed full size at A4 with no page scaling set.

Name: Buildwas Abbey

Heritage Category:

Scheduling

1015813

**List Entry No:** 

District: Shropshire

Parish: Buildwas

Each official record of a scheduled monument contains a map. New entries on the schedule from 1988 onwards include a digitally created map which forms part of the official record. For entries created in the years up to and including 1987 a hand-drawn map forms part of the official record. The map here has been translated from the official map and that process may have introduced inaccuracies. Copies of maps that form part of the official record can be obtained from Historic England.

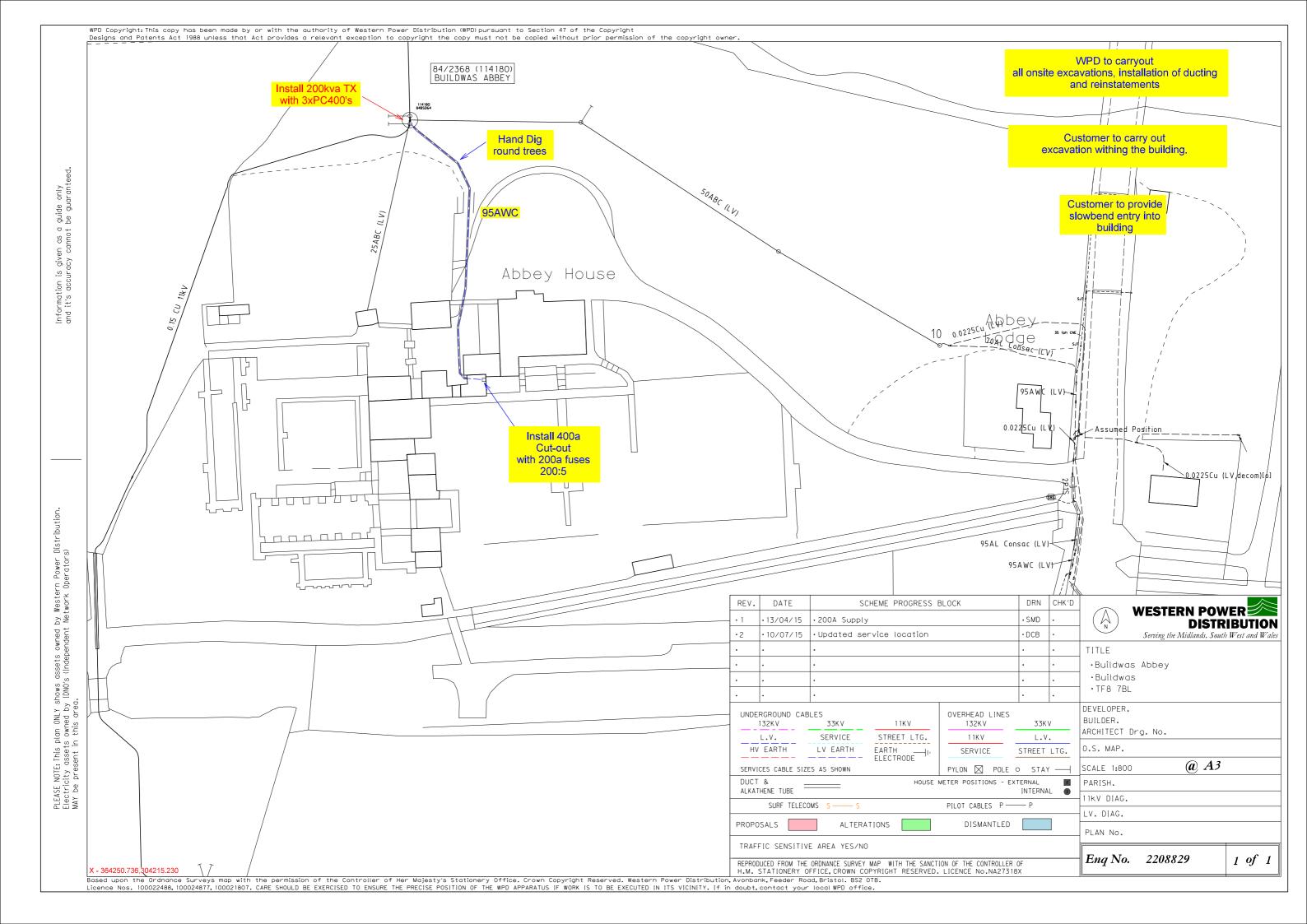
This map was delivered electronically and when printed may not be to scale and may be subject to distortions. All maps and grid references are for identification purposes only and must be read in conjunction with other information in the record.

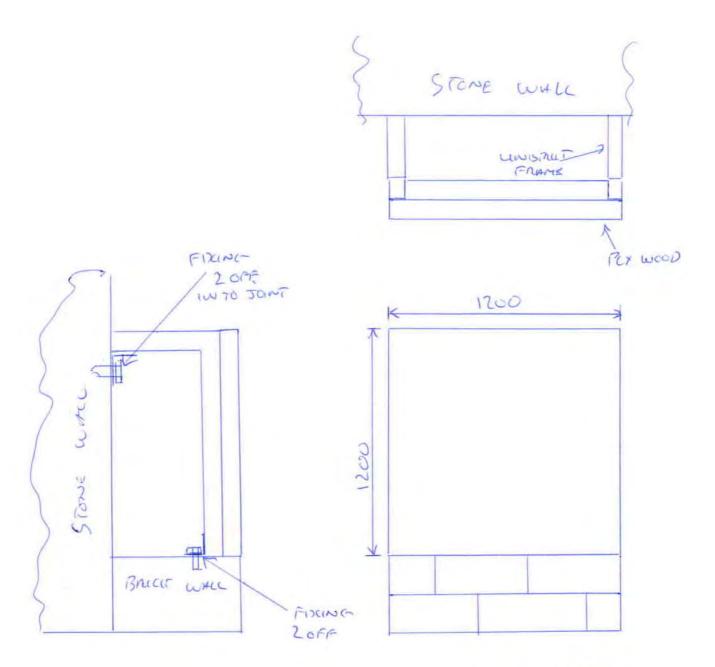
**List Entry NGR:** SJ 64148 04218

**Map Scale:** 1:10000

Print Date: 14 July 2015







# Archaeology Wales

## **APPENDIX IV:**

**Context List** 

#### **CONTEXT LIST**

Context	Identifier	Туре	Description	Period
01	Deposit	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
02	Deposit	Layer	Demolition material	Medieval / Modern
03	Structure	Wall	Stone wall	Medieval
04	Structure	Culvert	Brick culvert	19 <sup>th</sup> Century
05	Structure	Floor	Most probably a stone floor (or perhaps rubble demolition)	Medieval / Post Medieval
06	Structure	Wall	Stone wall	Medieval
07	Structure	Wall / Pillar Base	Stone wall or stone base for pillar	Medieval
08	Structure	Floor	Tiled surface	Medieval
09	Deposit	Layer	Demolition material	Medieval / Modern
10	Deposit	Layer	Tarmac and stone sub-base	Modern
11	Structure	Wall	Stone wall	Medieval
12	Structure	Wall	Stone wall	Medieval
13	Structure	Floor	Stone surface	Medieval / Post Medieval
14	Deposit	Layer	Demolition deposit (mortar)	Medieval / Post Medieval
15	Cut	Construction Trench	Construction trench for culvert 04	19 <sup>th</sup> Century
16	Structure	Wall / Buttress	Probable base of stone buttress	Medieval
17	Structure	Floor	Concrete floor	Modern
18	Structure	Floor	Brick surface	$19^{th}$ / $20^{th}$ Century
19	Deposit	Layer	Bedding layer for brick floor 18	$19^{th}$ / $20^{th}$ Century
20	Deposit	Layer	Silt subsoil (Natural)	Geological Deposit

## Archaeology Wales

### **APPENDIX V:**

**Archive Cover Sheet** 

#### ARCHIVE COVER SHEET

#### **Ironbridge Power Station, Shropshire**

Site Name:

Ironbridge Power Station

Site Code:	IPS/15/WB
SAM:	HE List No. 1015813 (Buildwas Abbey)
Listed Building/s:	HE List Nos. 1366862, 1175126 & 105528 (Buildwas Abbey)
NGR:	SJ 64148 04218
Site Type:	Scheduled Ancient Monument / Greenfield
Project Type:	Watching Brief
Project Manager:	Kate Pitt
Project Dates:	September 2015
Categories Present:	Medieval - Modern
Location of Original Archive:	AW
Recipient of Archive:	Shropshire Museum Service
Number of Finds Boxes:	1
Location of Finds:	AW
Museum Reference:	-
Copyright:	AW
Restrictions to Access:	None

# Archaeology Wales

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