

THE OLD FORGE, ST WEONARDS, HEREFORD

Archaeological Watching Brief

for e-on Central Networks

May 2011



HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY (UK) Ltd



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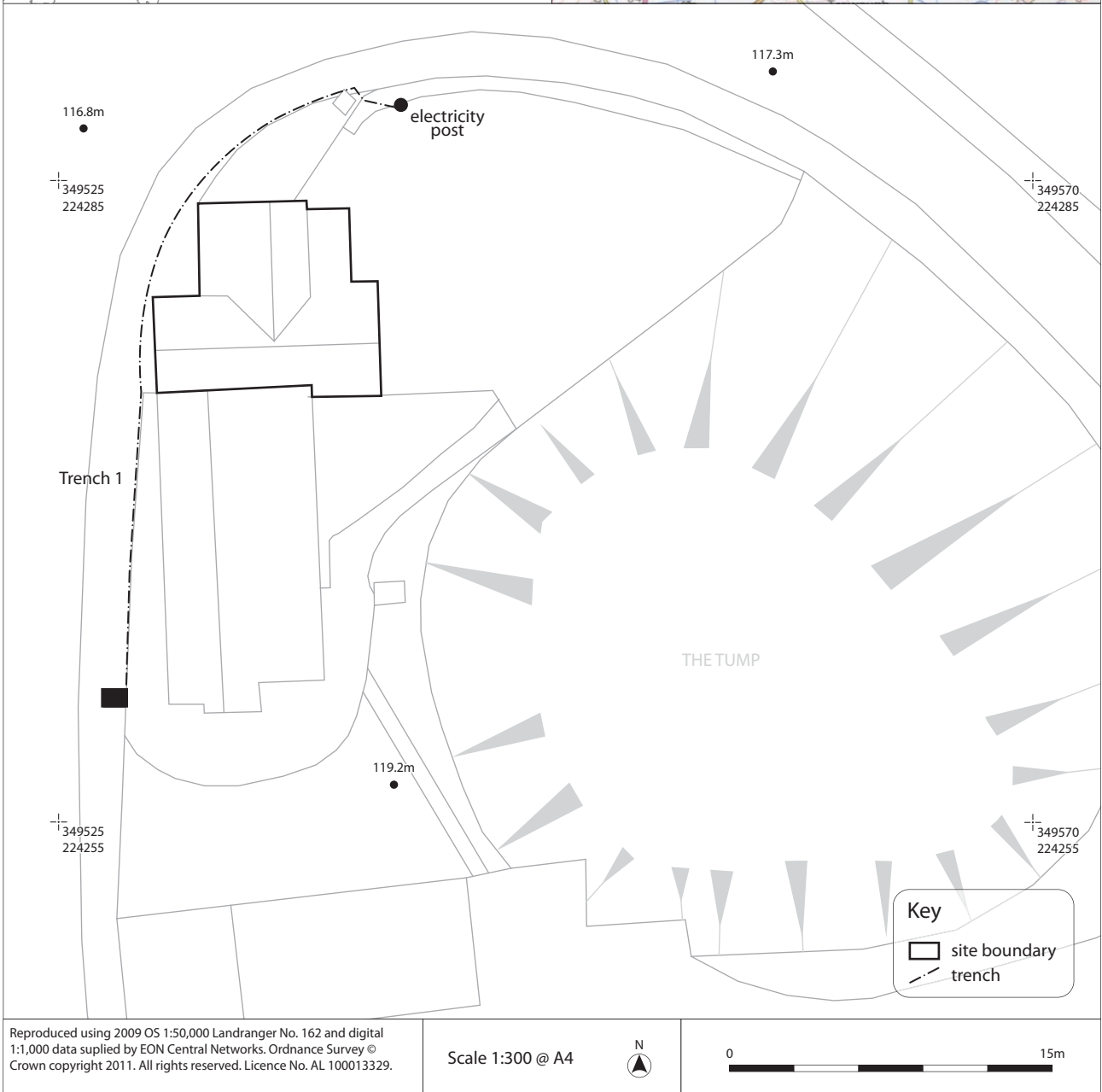
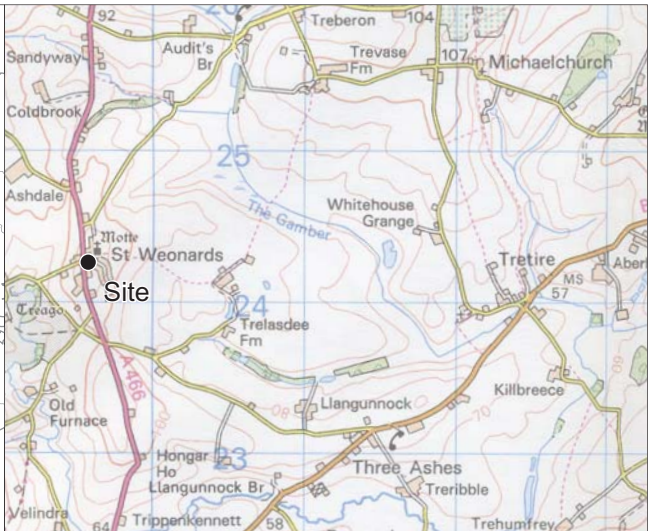
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Old Forge
St Weonards
Herefordshire
England



Illus 1
Site Location with trench excavation details

THE OLD FORGE, ST WEONARDS, HEREFORD

Archaeological Watching Brief

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd carried out a watching brief at The Old Forge, St Weonards, near to St Weonard's Tump (Scheduled Monument No: 27493), on behalf of e-on Central Networks. The watching brief was carried out during the ground works associated with the rerouting of an electricity cable and The removal of an existing electricity support post. This comprised the excavation of a trench 37m in length by 0.3m wide and a maximum of 0.6m deep running NNE on the public foot path in front of The Old Forge. No features of archaeological importance were revealed.

1. INTRODUCTION

The archaeological watching brief was carried out on the public footpath outside the The Old Forge, St Weonards, near to St Weonard's Tump (Scheduled Monument No: 27493). The work was undertaken following discussions between Headland Archaeology and English Heritage regarding the need for mitigation should the proposed work impact on features either forming part of, or associated with, the scheduled ancient monument. As a result, scheduled monument consent (Ref. S00006220) was obtained by Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd before any ground works took place. The work was carried out in accordance with a Project Design agreed in advance with English Heritage.

2. SITE DESCRIPTION

The site of excavation is located in the village of St Weonards, Herefordshire on the A466 Hereford to Monmouth road and lies to the north and west of the Old Forge and the large mound known locally as 'the tump' behind it. 'The tump' has previously been interpreted as a Bronze Age mound with later medieval occupation and possible later reuse as a castle site. The area in which the work was being undertaken currently forms a roadside and lies at a height of approximately 120m OD.

The underlying geology lies within what is referred to as the Lower Old Red Sandstone. It is predominantly sandstone of drab red-brown colour.

3. BACKGROUND (after HAS 856)

The site of excavation is located near to the historic St Weonards 'tump'. This feature was originally circular in plan, and measuring approximately 42m in diameter by 15m in height. Modern disturbance to the top of the mound means it is now lower than this. It was excavated in 1855 by Wright and two unaccompanied burnt burials were discovered in a vaulted chamber (Phillips 2005, 325). The impression left by this excavation is still visible. The mound also has the appearance of a motte, however, there is no evidence of a surrounding ditch or associated bailey. This may have been destroyed by the addition of new roads and drains in the area in 1967. The later interpretation of the 'tump' is that it was used as a base for a watchtower built on top of the pre-existing pre-historic burial mound (Phillips 2005, 326).

In 2010 Archaeological Investigations Ltd/Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd carried out a level 2 building survey and archaeological watching brief at The Old Forge, adjacent to the mound (Doyle & Mayes 2011). The building surveys revealed that The Old Forge comprised three phases of construction and although much altered, some of the original features associated with its industrial past still survived. The earlier watching brief exposed a section of the existing building's walls and a portion of its foundations on the sandstone bedrock. No evidence for a ditch associated with the mound was present and no features of archaeological interest were revealed.



Illus 2

North facing section of south end of Trench 1 showing 1960s–70s old road surface and modern services

4. OBJECTIVES

The aim of the project was to ensure that any features of archaeological or historic significance affected by the ground works were adequately recorded and reported on.

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5. METHOD

5.1 Watching Brief: Monitoring of ground work

All excavation was undertaken by the main contractor using a mechanical excavator and toothless bucket. A tarmac/road cutter was used to cut the existing tarmac surface and a jack hammer utilised when hard modern surfaces or concrete were encountered. The trench was excavated under direct archaeological supervision.

Trench 1 was located on the public footpath to the west of The Old Forge curving to the north east in front of the junction box and towards the cable support post which was subsequently removed. The trench measured 37m by 0.25m and was excavated to a depth of 0.55m except at the south end where a previous tarmac pavement and modern intrusions were uncovered when locating the existing power supply resulting in excavation to a depth of 0.9m.

5.2 Recording

All recording followed standard archaeological guidelines as set out by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). All contexts were given unique numbers. All recording was

undertaken on pro forma record cards. Trench plans were annotated at 1:500. Selected representative trench sections were produced at 1:20. Photographs of the excavated areas were taken using 35mm monochrome and colour slide film. Digital photographs on a 7.2mp digital camera were taken for illustrative purposes. Registers were kept for context records, photographs and drawings. All trenches were tied into features shown on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 mapping.

6. RESULTS

6.1 Trench 1

Along most of the trench the exposed soil profile comprised a red silty clay subsoil [003] beneath a brown silty loam topsoil [002] with the modern path [001] above. There were pockets of redeposited clay/bedrock in the north of the trench. The north eastern end of the trench only revealed topsoil to a depth of 0.55m around the cable support post. There was evidence for heavy disturbance by modern activities at the south end of the trench. Here an area of 1.45m by 0.8m had to be excavated to a depth of 0.9m due to the need to uncover the existing power supply cable which lay at 0.8m below ground. This revealed the previous road surface,



Illus 3

Trench 1 looking north from south end

kerbing and concrete possibly from 1960s–1970s directly below the current ground level along with a ceramic pipe (Illus 2). This area was very heavily disturbed and there was no evidence of subsoil or sterile geological deposits. The remainder of the trench also contained a number of services throughout. No features of archaeological interest were present in the trench (Illus 3).

7. DISCUSSION

No archaeological features or finds were uncovered in the trench. The area was heavily disturbed by previous road resurfacing and services.

8. REFERENCES

- Doyle, D & Mayes, S, 2011, *The Old Forge, St Weonards, Hereford. Archaeological Watching Brief and Historical Building Survey*, Archaeological Investigations Ltd, HAS 875.
- IfA, 2008, *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*.
- Phillips, N, 2005, *Earthwork Castles of Gwent and Eryng AD 1050–1250*, University of Sheffield.



9. APPENDICES

9.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Trench register

Trench no.	Orientation	Length & width	Excavated depth (max)	Average depth
Trench 1	Located in front of The Old Forge curving from the south to the north east.	37 by 0.25m	0.9m	0.55m

Context register

Context no.	Trench no.	Description	Max depth
001	Trench 1	Modern tarmac footpath.	0.18m
002	Trench 1	Moderately stony, sandy loam, mid brown, dry loose compaction, small abundant stones, modern debris such as crisp packets and plastic bottles. Modern topsoil within trench.	0.55m
003	Trench 1	Silty clay, reddish brown, plastic, rare small stones. Subsoil.	0.15m
004	Trench 1	Hard clay/ stone, red to yellow, gradual, very hard, large sandstone inclusion. Redeposited geological deposit.	Unknown

Drawing register

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Drawing no.	Section	Plan	Description
1	–	Surveyed site plan	Annotated location plan and details.
2	1:20	–	Section of disturbed south end of trench. South facing.
3	1:20	–	General section of Trench 1. West Facing.

Photographic register

Photo no.	Colour Slide	Black & White	Digital	Direction facing	Description
1	515/1	514/1	001	N	Plan of Trench 1 showing old road surface
2	515/2	514/2	002	N	General plan of Trench 1
3	515/3	514/3	003	S	Section showing modern disturbance and road surface
4	515/4	514/4	004	N	Plan of Trench 1
5	515/5	514/5	005	E	Section of Trench showing soil profile
6	515/6	514/6	006	SW	Plan of Trench 1
7	515/7	514/7	007	S	Plan of Trench 1
8	515/8	514/8	008	N-NE	Plan of Trench 1
9	515/9	514/9	009	W	Section near electricity support pole
10	515/10	514/10	010	E	Plan of Trench 1
11	515/11	514/11	011	E	Plan of cable location near electricity support pole
12	515/12	514/11	012	–	Film ID shot



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