

HBKW/01



HOO BROOK, KIDDERMINSTER ELECTRICITY CABLE INSTALLATION

Archaeological Watching Brief

commissioned by Amec Foster Wheeler Environment & Infrastructure UK
on behalf of Western Power Distribution

May 2015

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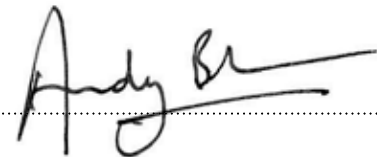
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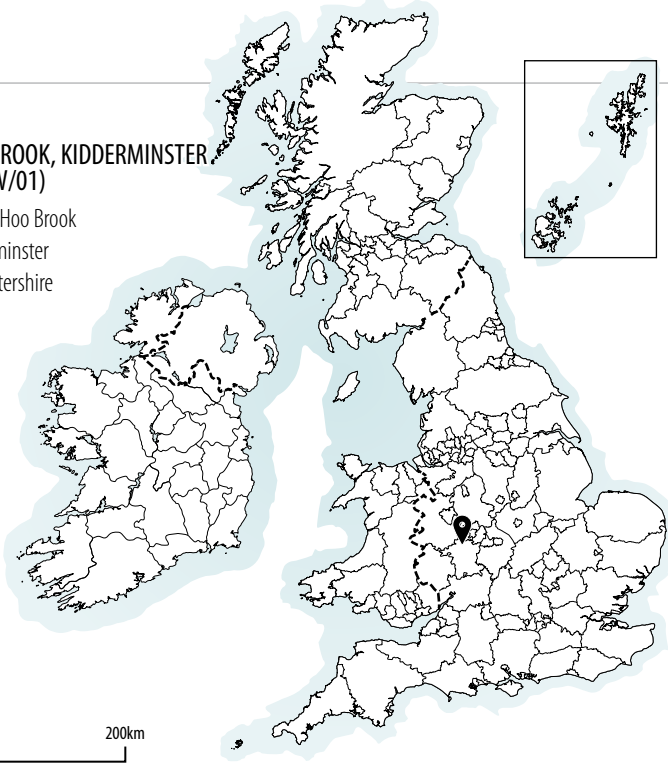
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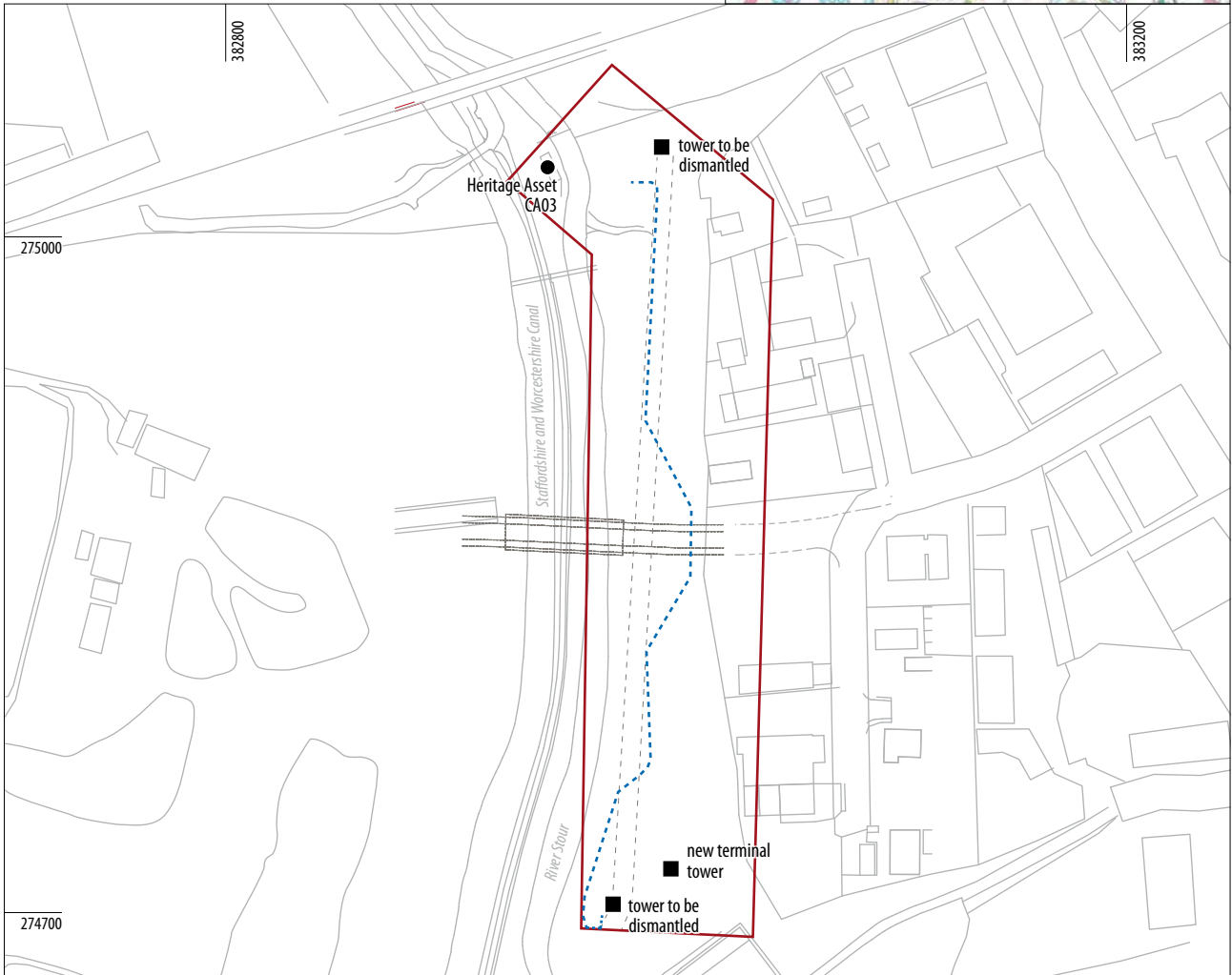
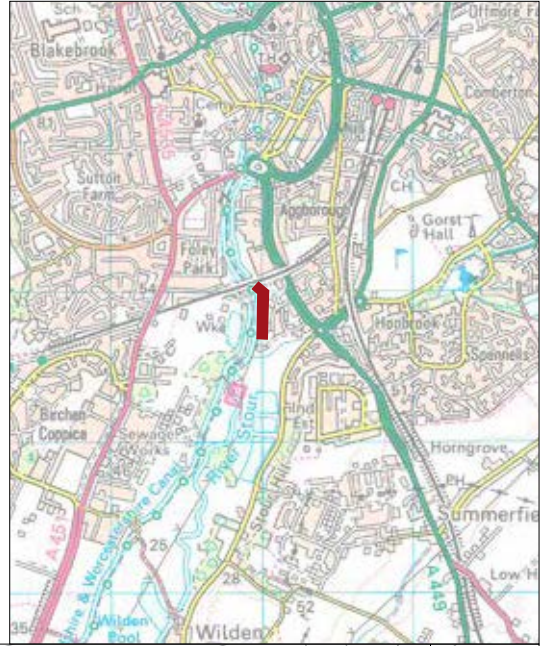
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**HOO BROOK, KIDDERMINSTER
(HBKW/01)**

land at Hoo Brook
Kidderminster
Worcestershire



0 200km



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KEY
 survey area
 underground cable route

N
 0 100m
 scale 1:3,200 @ A4



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ILLUS 1
 Site location

HOO BROOK, KIDDERMINSTER ELECTRICITY CABLE INSTALLATION

Archaeological Watching Brief

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd undertook an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of a cable trench over a 400m route at Hoo Brook, Kidderminster, Worcestershire. The route was within the vicinity of a post-medieval rolling mill and was predicted to cross a former relief channel. No archaeological finds, deposits or features were identified during the watching brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd was commissioned by Amec Foster Wheeler Environment & Infrastructure UK Ltd to undertake a watching brief during the excavation of an electrical cable trench in the outskirts of Kidderminster (**Illus 1**).

Although no planning conditions were attached to this work, in line with best practice, the client sought advice from the archaeological advisor to Worcestershire County Council. Amec Foster Wheeler were advised that the route of the electricity cables passed through an area of archaeological interest and archaeological monitoring would be required.

The development site is located on an area of wooded marshland that forms part of the floodplain of the River Stour. It lies to the west and southwest of an industrial estate off Worcester Road (A442) approximately 1.6km to the south of the town of Kidderminster, Worcestershire.

The works comprised underground re-routing the overhead 132kV cables with new connections to existing 132kV underground cables (to the south of the existing Tower 12) and to a new cable tower in the south. The cable was laid as a 132kV double circuit with fibre duct. The cable trench was a single open cut between the two connection points of approximately 400m in length, 1m in width and between 0.60 and 1.40m in depth.

Archaeological monitoring of the site commenced on 15th March 2015 and was completed on 4th April 2015.

1.2 GEOLOGY

The underlying bedrock geology of the site is Wildmoor Sandstone Formation. This is a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 246 to 251 million years ago in the Triassic Period.

The superficial deposits overlying the bedrock is alluvium (clay, silt, sand and gravel).

1.3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Assets within the study area include former industrial sites such as a rolling mill (HER Ref. SWM34444), the sugar beet factory (HER Ref. SWM36596), a number of factories and works (e.g. HER Ref. SWM31382 and WSM37042), and the two medieval settlement sites of Oldington (HER Ref. SWM15020) and de Hoo (HER Ref. SWM15021). There is also an area of palaeoenvironmental potential within Wilden Marsh (HER Ref. SWM38018). There are a few records of prehistoric occupation including polished Neolithic axes, a Bronze Age Palstave and Axe Hammer (HER Ref. SWM04042), as well as earlier lithics and Iron Age finds of coins and metal (HER Ref. SWM38453). In addition, there are a number of records relating to the defence of Britain in WWII (eg SWM36446).



ILLUS 2

W facing section of natural clay deposit (1002)

ILLUS 3

W facing section of modern deposit (1003)

ILLUS 4

E facing section of organic deposit (1004)

Deposits were mechanically excavated as necessary for the installation of the electricity supply – the depth of the trench varied between 0.60m and 1.40m. All recording followed ClfA Standards and Guidance. Recording was undertaken on pro forma record sheets. Photographic images were taken on 35mm black-and-white film; with a graduated metric scale clearly visible. Digital photographs on a 7.2mp camera were taken for illustrative purposes only and do not form a part of the site archive.

Stratigraphy in areas where no archaeological deposits were identified was recorded on trench recording sheets and context sheets – the depth of topsoil/subsoil/geological deposits was recorded at intervals of 20m or where significant changes occurred.

4 RESULTS

Continuous archaeological monitoring was undertaken along the length of the cable trench, with deposits generally consistent throughout. A dark black-brown clay silt (1001) measuring between 0.13m and 0.20m in depth overlay a natural yellow clay deposit (1002) that continued to a depth of 1m below ground level (Illus 2).

At sporadic intervals along the course of the cable trench and for the final 50m to the south end a dump of mixed dark brown/yellow material (1003) consisting of sand, clay and silty topsoil was present between (1001) and (1002). Visible tip lines were present in the sections along with large quantities of plastic, brick, steel and glass (Illus 3). These were possibly rubbish dumps associated with the adjacent industrial estate.

Towards the northern extent of the site a dark grey-black silty organic deposit (1004) was noted at 1.20m below the ground surface. This extended for 24m along the cable trench beyond the areas of excavation to the east and west. The remains of brick, steel wire and an iron pipe were found in the deposit suggesting a modern date, the organic nature of the deposit could suggest a dump of material over a previous drainage channel (Illus 4).

2 AIMS

The objectives of the watching brief were as follows:

- To ensure the excavation and recording of any archaeological remains that would be disturbed by the excavation of the service trench;
- To produce and deposit a satisfactory archive and disseminate the results of the work via grey-literature reporting and publication as appropriate.

3 METHOD

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken by an archaeologist of ACIFA equivalent experience or higher. The main contractor excavated a 1m wide trench along the cable route using a 360° machine using a flat edged ditching bucket.

ILLUS 4

E facing section of organic deposit (1004)



ILLUS 5

Former relief channel ending before excavated area



A former relief channel had been identified as crossing the path of the cable trench prior to commencement of the site work. However, upon excavation the channel was found to not extend that far on the surface or within the limits of excavation, a possible reason for this is the presence of modern waste material that could have filled the relief channel down to the extent of excavation. (Illus 5). This meant that a full profile of the channel was not recorded and a sample for environmental assessment/processing was not undertaken.

5 CONCLUSION

No archaeological finds, deposits or features were identified during the course of the watching brief. It is possible that below the modern organic deposit (1004) there is a backfilled drainage channel. However, this was outside the limits of excavation. No evidence for the post-medieval rolling mill identified near the site prior to work commencing was found within the monitored area. No new heritage assets were identified during the course of the works.

6 BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS 2015 *British Geological Survey* [online] www.bgs.ac.uk

Townend, S 2015 *Kidderminster to Stourport 132kV Diversion: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Mitigation*, AMEC Foster Wheeler, MS.



7 APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 PHOTOGRAPHIC REGISTER

Photo	C/S	B&W	Digital	Direction Facing	Description
01	–	37	001	S	General view of Pylon
02	–	–	002	S	General view of Pylon
03	–	36	003	N	General view of Pylon
04	–	–	004	N	General view of Pylon
05	–	35	005	W	Cable junction area, section
06	–	34	006	N	Cable junction area and cable run
07	–	33	007	W	Section near cable junction
08	–	32	008	S	View along cable trench showing black dump
09	–	31	009	W	Section along cable trench
10	–	–	010	N	View along cable trench
11	–	30	011	W	Section in black dump deposit
12	–	29	012	N	View along cable trench
13	–	28	013	W	Section change of black deposit
14	–	–	014	N	View along cable trench
15	–	27	015	W	Section through second change
16	–	26	016	S	Change on surface
17	–	–	017	W	General shot
18	–	25	018	W	Section showing dump deposits
19	–	24	019	W	Section after turn showing bottle dump
20	–	23	020	S	Section showing deposit around southern Pylon
21	–	22	021	E	Section showing change in deposits
22	–	21	022	E	Section showing bottle dump
23	–	–	023	E	Section showing bottle dump
24	–	–	024	S	General Shot
25	–	–	025	N	General Shot
26	–	–	026	N	Shot along completed cable trench
27	–	–	027	SE	General shot of completed cable trench

APPENDIX 2 CONTEXT REGISTER

SECT1	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Av. Depth (m)
	N/S	–	1.00	1.30
Context	Context Description			Depth of deposit (mBGL)
1001	Topsoil. Dark black-brown clay silt, sharp deposit interface, mouldable, modern mixed rubbish inclusions.			0–0.20
1002	Natural clay deposit, yellow, sharp interface, mouldable, no inclusions.			0.20–1.00
1003	Dump of modern mixed material – sand/clay/silty topsoil, dark brown/yellow. Very mixed interface, mouldable, inclusions of plastic, brick and steel.			1.00–1.20
1004	Silty, grey-black organic deposit. Good interface, mouldable with damp and dry areas. Inclusions of steel wire, iron pipe and fragments of modern brick.			1.20–1.40



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