

Alderbrook Road, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report





**ALDERBROOK ROAD,
DROITWICH SPA, WORCESTERSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief

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QUALITY ASSURANCE

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* I= INTERNAL DRAFT E= EXTERNAL DRAFT F= FINAL

**ALDERBROOK ROAD,
DROITWICH SPA, WORCESTERSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief

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Front Cover Working shot of Trench 7 excavation, looking east

Back Cover Trench 7 fully excavated, looking west

Figure 1 Site Location

Figure 2 Trench Locations

**ALDERBROOK ROAD,
DROITWICH SPA, WORCESTERSHIRE**

Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Severn Trent Water to undertake an Archaeological Watching Brief on the excavation of a trial trench to locate a sewer pipe at Alderbrook Road, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire (centred on NGR 388288, 262468).

The watching brief consisted of monitoring the excavation of a 2.00 x 0.60m trench to a depth of 0.75m

No archaeological features were uncovered during the groundworks.

**ALDERBROOK ROAD,
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Archaeological Watching Brief

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by Severn Trent Water and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Paul Petherick in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Darren Ford of Forkers Ltd.

The watching brief was carried out by Sam Fairhead. The report was researched and compiled by Sam Fairhead and Michael Hartwell. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Richard O'Neill.

ALDERBROOK ROAD, DROITWICH SPA, WORCESTERSHIRE

Archaeological Watching Brief

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Severn Trent Water ('the Client') to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Alderbrook Road, Droitwich Spa, Worcestershire ('the Site') (**Figure 1**). The work was carried out at National Grid Reference (NGR) 388288, 262468.

1.1.2 The watching brief consisted of the monitoring of a trial trench, dug to locate the top of an existing surface water sewer in the location of proposed outfall.

1.1.3 A formal Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2010) which set out the methodologies and standards employed by Wessex Archaeology during the watching brief. Worcestershire County Council had indicated that a watching brief was only required on TP7 of the investigation works in the proposed location of an outfall (**Figure 2**).

1.1.4 The scope of the watching brief was to monitor all groundworks that may have impacted upon archaeological deposits.

1.1.5 The watching brief took place on 18th February 2010.

1.2 The Site, Location and Geology

1.2.1 The Site is located immediately south of the Droitwich Canal, on land adjacent to No.9 Alderbrook Road. Ground cover consisted of grass and scrub throughout, with mature trees at the south. The terrain within the Site is largely flat, though does slope downwards slightly from north to south. The groundworks were conducted at the top of the canal bank.

1.2.2 The Site is approximately 30m above Ordnance Datum (m aOD). The underlying geology consists of mudstones on the Mercia Mudstone Group.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological background of the Site and its location was detailed in the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2010) commissioned by Severn Trent Water and is summarised below.

2.2 Medieval (AD 1066-1499)

2.2.1 The Site is located within an area that had been recorded as 'Celvestune' in the 1086 Domesday survey and as 'Chawston' in the 16th century. A house at 'Chauson' appears to have been constructed as a country residence by the Richardsons of Worcester during the late 16th or early 17th centuries (Victoria County History). This property is likely to have been that known as 'Chawson Farm' during the 18th century.

2.3 Post-medieval to Modern (AD 1500-present)

- 2.3.1 The Site was part of the Chawson Farm Estate from at least 1759, when it was recorded in the will of Dorothea Fortescue. Fields listed within the estate at that date included the Slip; Pitchcroft; Shutcott Piece; and the Hopyard (Worcestershire Record Office 705:35/8851/43/ii/1-23). It is not known if the Site was located within any of these plots.
- 2.3.2 Droitwich Canal was constructed immediately north of the Site between 1768 and 1771. No archaeological finds are known to have been recovered during the excavation of this section of the canal. The Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Branch of the Great Western Railway was constructed approximately 0.25 km to the south of the Site between 1845 and 1854.
- 2.3.3 The Site was shown within a sub-rectangular plot to the north of Chawson Farm on the 1885 Ordnance Survey map. Mature trees were depicted along the plot's south and east perimeters, suggesting that these were long-established boundaries by this date. Several further mature trees were aligned in two rows in the centre of the plot. This feature, along with the Site's proximity to the farm, suggests that the plot may not have been in agricultural use and may have been a paddock or possibly a garden area, with the rows of trees demarcating a walkway. No buildings were marked within the plot in 1885, although a large pond was shown at the south-west. To the north-east of the Site, a swing bridge over the canal was accessible via a footpath that ran along the eastern plot boundary.
- 2.3.4 Little substantial development occurred within the vicinity of the site prior to the 1980s. The plot boundaries and the rows of trees had been removed by the time of the 1927 Ordnance Survey map, while the pond was not shown after 1970. No change was shown on the 1979 Ordnance Survey map, although the Alderbrook Road housing development had been constructed by the time of the 1986 map.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

- 3.1.1 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced by Wessex Archaeology (2010) and was based on industry best practice and current IfA (2008) and English Heritage (MoRPHE 2006) guidelines. All work adhered to the standards outlined in the WSI.

3.2 Aims and scope

- 3.2.1 The principal aim of the watching brief was to provide information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains, and to investigate and record archaeological features revealed during the excavations and groundworks.

3.3 Groundworks

- 3.3.1 The groundworks consisted of the excavation of a 2m x 0.6m trench to a maximum depth of 0.75m.
- 3.3.2 Excavation was carried out by hand under constant archaeological supervision from a suitably qualified member of Wessex Archaeology staff. The trench was located and numbered according to engineers' plans.

3.4 Recording

- 3.4.1 All recording was undertaken using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system, supported by a photographic record. The photographic record comprised three digital images.

3.5 Health and Safety

- 3.5.1 All work was carried out in accordance with the *Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974* and the *Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992*, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.

3.6 Copyright

- 3.6.1 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Summary

- 4.1.1 An outline of the results of the archaeological monitoring during the excavation of the pipeline is presented below. A table describing the individual contexts can be found in the **Appendix**.

- 4.1.2 A trench 2m in length was excavated to a width of 0.6m and a maximum depth of 0.75m (Trench 7). The site was covered with thick, mid-brown silty loam topsoil **(701)**. This was 0.4m in depth and was underlain by a mid-greenish grey gravel made-ground deposit **(702)**. The sewer pipe was located at 0.6m. Overlying the pipe was a mid-reddish brown silty deposit with moderate rubble inclusions **(703)** **(Figure 2)**.

5 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Discussion

- 5.1.1 No archaeological remains were identified during the watching brief. Previous ground disturbance had occurred within the Site, with the made ground **[702]** being deposited in association with the construction of the 20th-century sewer pipe.

5.2 Conclusion

- 5.2.1 Archaeological monitoring during the excavation of the trench did not identify any evidence of past land use or activity relating to the construction of the Droitwich Canal or earlier activity. The existing sewer pipe is a modern feature. This structure and its associated deposits are not significant in relation to the cultural heritage of the surrounding area.

6 ARCHIVE

6.1 Preparation

- 6.1.1 The project archive, consisting of all primary written documents, plans, sections, photographs, and electronic data, will be prepared by Wessex Archaeology staff in accordance with the requirements of the repository museum and in line with guidelines published by the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation (1990), Museums and Galleries Commission (1992), and English Heritage (1991).

6.2 Deposition

- 6.2.1 It is anticipated that the physical Site archive will be deposited with Worcester County Museum under an accession number to be confirmed.
- 6.2.2 A digital copy of the report will be prepared for the Client and additional copies will be submitted to English Heritage, and to WCC for inclusion within the Historic Environment Record (HER). An OASIS form will be completed at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> for inclusion in the ADS database. This will include an electronic copy of the report in PDF format.

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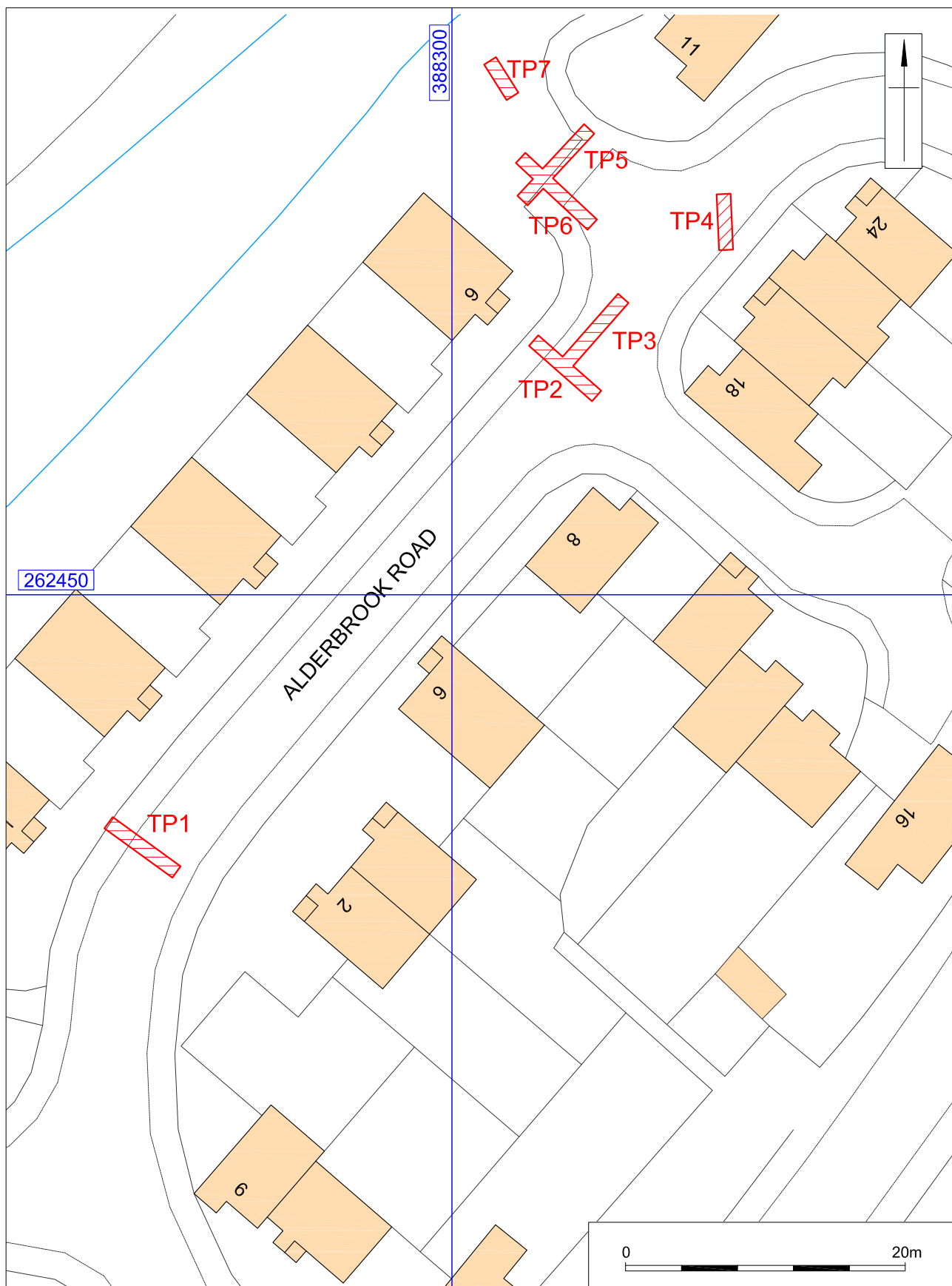
8 APPENDIX: CONTEXT DESCRIPTION

Trench 7			
Depth bgl	Context	Description	Interpretation
0-0.4m	701	Mid-brown silty loam with occasional small stones	Topsoil
0.4-0.5m	702	Mid-greenish grey gravel/aggregate.	Made Ground
0.5-0.75m	703	Mid-reddish brown clayey silt with moderate rubble inclusions.	Made Ground



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Site Investigation Test Pit Location Plan

Figure 2



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