

Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station Wyre Piddle Worcestershire

Archaeological Evaluation



for
Danwood Homes Ltd

CA Project: 5732
CA Report: 16025

January 2016

WSM Reference WSM67624



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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station
Location:	Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire
NGR:	SO 9624 4754
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	14 January 2016
Planning Reference:	W/11/01698/PN
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Worcester County Museum
WSM Reference:	WSM67624
Site Code:	PID 16

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in January 2016 on land adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire. Three trenches were excavated.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during the evaluation. Evidence of modern truncation of the site was identified in all of the excavated trenches.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January 2016 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation on land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire (centred on NGR: SO 9624 4754; Fig. 1) at the request of Danwood Homes Ltd. The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application (W/11/01698/PN) for the construction of a residential development.

1.2 Planning permission for a residential development was granted by Wychavon District Council (WDC; planning reference 11/01689), conditional on a programme of archaeological work being completed. Following consultation with Adrian Scruby (Historic Environment Advisor, Worcestershire Archive & Archaeology Service), the archaeological advisor to WDC, it was determined that this should comprise archaeological trial trench evaluation. The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2015) and approved by Adrian Scruby. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014) and the *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire* (WHEAS 2010).

The site

1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 0.13ha in extent, and comprises a roughly grassed and shrub-covered parcel of land. It is bounded to the west by Piddle Brook, the north by Worcester Road and to the east and south by further grassed areas. The site lies at approximately 21m AOD, and is broadly level.

1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Lias Group Mudstone, Siltstone, Limestone and Sandstone of the Jurassic and Triassic Periods. No superficial deposits were noted (BGS 2016). The natural substrate, comprising clay with patches of sand and gravel, was identified in Trenches 1 and 2. In Trench 3 the natural substrate was not encountered due to the depth of modern overburden encountered.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site has not been subject to previous archaeological assessment; however the nearby area has been subject to desk based assessment (CA 2013). A search of the county Historic Environment Record (HER), covering a 500m radius from the centre of the site, has also been undertaken. The following is a summary of the available archaeological evidence.
- 2.2 No known Neolithic features are noted in the locality but a Bronze Age cremation cemetery, containing at least four burials in cinerary urns, has been identified at Furzen Farm c. 750m to the north-west of the site (CA 2013).
- 2.3 Bronze Age and Iron Age activity was identified c. 700m to the north-east of the site during an archaeological excavation at George Lane. The excavation revealed a substantial enclosure ditch with an entrance in one corner and evidence of at least three roundhouses. A substantial ditch, forming the northern boundary of an enclosed area dating from the 2nd century BC onwards, was also identified. Much of this settlement lies to the north of the Wyre Piddle Bypass (Worcestershire Hub 2001).
- 2.4 Evidence for Roman period occupation was found during the construction of the Wyre Piddle Bypass at Furzen Farm and at George Lane. Excavation to the east of the Bronze Age cemetery area revealed the remains of a Romano-British farmstead, which was occupied from the 1st through to the 3rd or 4th century AD. It was believed that the focus of the settlement lay to the north of the bypass route and north-east of the focus of Iron Age activity. During the 2nd century AD, the Romano-British settlement seems to have expanded with fields being subdivided into small plots marked out with shallow ditches. A yard surface was also found with evidence for smithing, an activity which often took place on the edges of settlement (Worcestershire Hub 2001). Two Roman graves were also identified at George Lane, dug into the top of two infilled Iron Age ditches. Further Roman remains were uncovered in the churchyard of St Annes Church c. 250m to the south of the site (CA 2013).
- 2.5 Two Early Saxon burials, complete with shield bosses, are recorded in St Anne's Churchyard c. 250m to the south of the site. In addition, Anglo-Saxon masonry preserved in St. Anne's Church could indicate that a stone building was present on

the site considerably before the Norman Conquest (Hammond, 1981, 6). The route of an early medieval road also passes through the village following the line of the Wyre Hill Road, which forms the southern boundary of the site (CA 2013).

- 2.6 A scheduled monument comprising a bridge over the Piddle Brook, c. 50m to the north of the site, is known to contain elements of built fabric dating to the 11th-century.
- 2.7 The evidence from the early medieval and medieval periods indicates that the proposed development site was not likely to have been a place of settlement. The site is likely to have formed part of the agricultural hinterland of Wyre Piddle or the hamlet of Pinvin, and any potential remains would reflect this use (CA 2013).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014). This information will enable WDC to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of 3 trenches, measuring 10m by 1.8m, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*.
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. In Trench 3 machine

excavation was halted at a depth of 2.5m below the present ground level, prior to encountering the natural substrate, due rapid water ingress and the identification of modern services leading from the nearby pumping station, with the approval of Adrian Scruby. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.

- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with CA Technical Manual 2: *The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. No deposits were identified that required sampling.
- 4.4 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with Worcester County Museum. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The natural substrate, comprising clay with patches of sand and gravel, was exposed at between 0.32m–0.4m below the present ground level (bpgl) in Trenches 1 and 2. Its surface showed signs of being heavily disturbed by modern activity (Fig. 3). The natural substrate was sealed by modern overburden/make-up, containing brick fragments and modern glass and typically measuring 0.2m in thickness, which was in turn overlain by modern topsoil.
- 5.3 The natural substrate was not exposed in Trench 3 due to the substantial depth of modern overburden/make-up encountered and the rapid ingress of groundwater. The modern overburden/make-up (Fig. 4) was encountered throughout the trench and contained large quantities of plastic, metal and glass. It typically measured 2.3m in thickness. The modern overburden was in turn overlain by modern topsoil.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the evaluation.
- 6.2 The substantial depth of modern overburden encountered in Trench 3 and the disturbed upper surface of the natural substrate encountered in Trenches 1 and 2, along with an absence of *in situ* subsoil and topsoil deposits in all of the excavated trenches strongly suggest that the ground level across the proposed development area has suffered substantial and widespread truncation at some point in the past. The exact cause of this truncation remains unclear. However, it may be related to the construction or development of the existing pumping station, located immediately to the east of the site.
- 6.3 Whatever the cause of the truncation encountered during the evaluation, it is almost certain that any potential archaeological deposits, had they existed, would have been removed by this truncation.

9. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Christopher Leonard and Danielle Adams. The report was written by Christopher Leonard. The illustrations were prepared by Lucy Martin. The archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Steven Sheldon.

10. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer*
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Hammond, C M 1981. *Wyre Piddle: The Passing Years* (Second Edition). Privately Published.

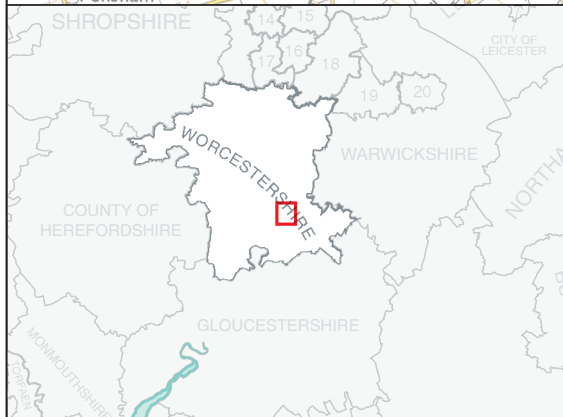
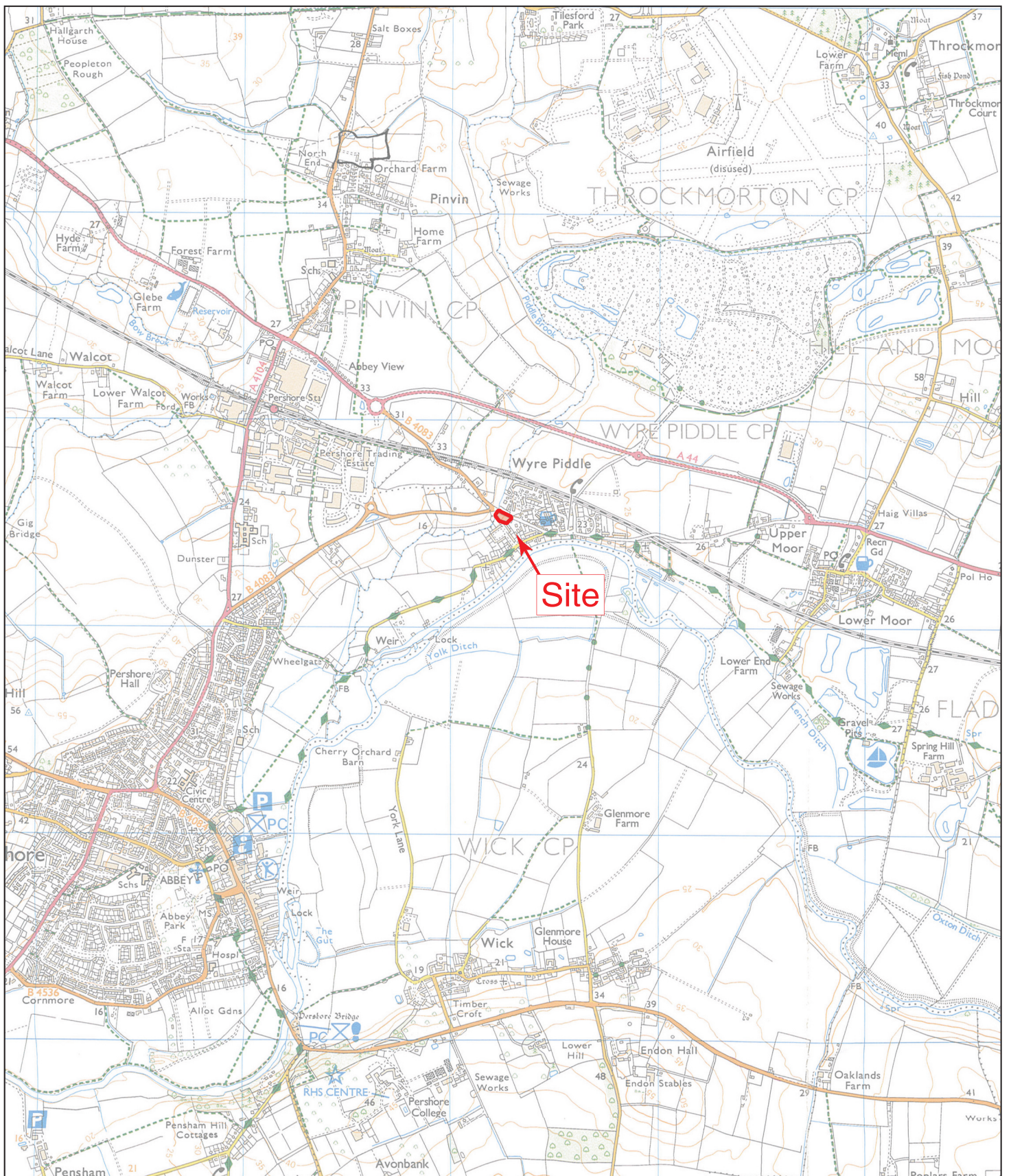
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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	D (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown clay silt	0.1	
1	101	Layer		Modern overburden/make-up	Dark grey brown clay silt containing red brick fragments and modern glass	0.12	Modern
1	102	Layer		Natural	Blue clay with gravel patches		
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark grey brown clay silt	0.24	
2	201	Layer		Modern overburden/make-up	Dark grey brown clay silt containing red brick fragments and modern glass	0.16	Modern
2	202	Layer		Natural	Blue clay with gravel patches		
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Same as 100	0.1	
3	301	Fill		Modern overburden/make-up	Dark grey brown clay silt containing quantities of plastic, metal and glass	2.3	Modern

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in January 2016 on land adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire. Three trenches were excavated.</p> <p>No features or deposits of archaeological interest were encountered during the evaluation. Evidence of modern truncation of the site was identified in all of the excavated trenches.</p>	
Project dates	14 January 2016	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	None	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire	
Study area	0.13ha	
Site co-ordinates	SO 9624 4754	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Steven Sheldon	
Project Supervisor	Christopher Leonard	
MONUMENT TYPE	None	
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	Worcester County Museum	Trench recording forms
Digital	Worcester County Museum	Digital photographs
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2106 Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire: <i>Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report 16025		



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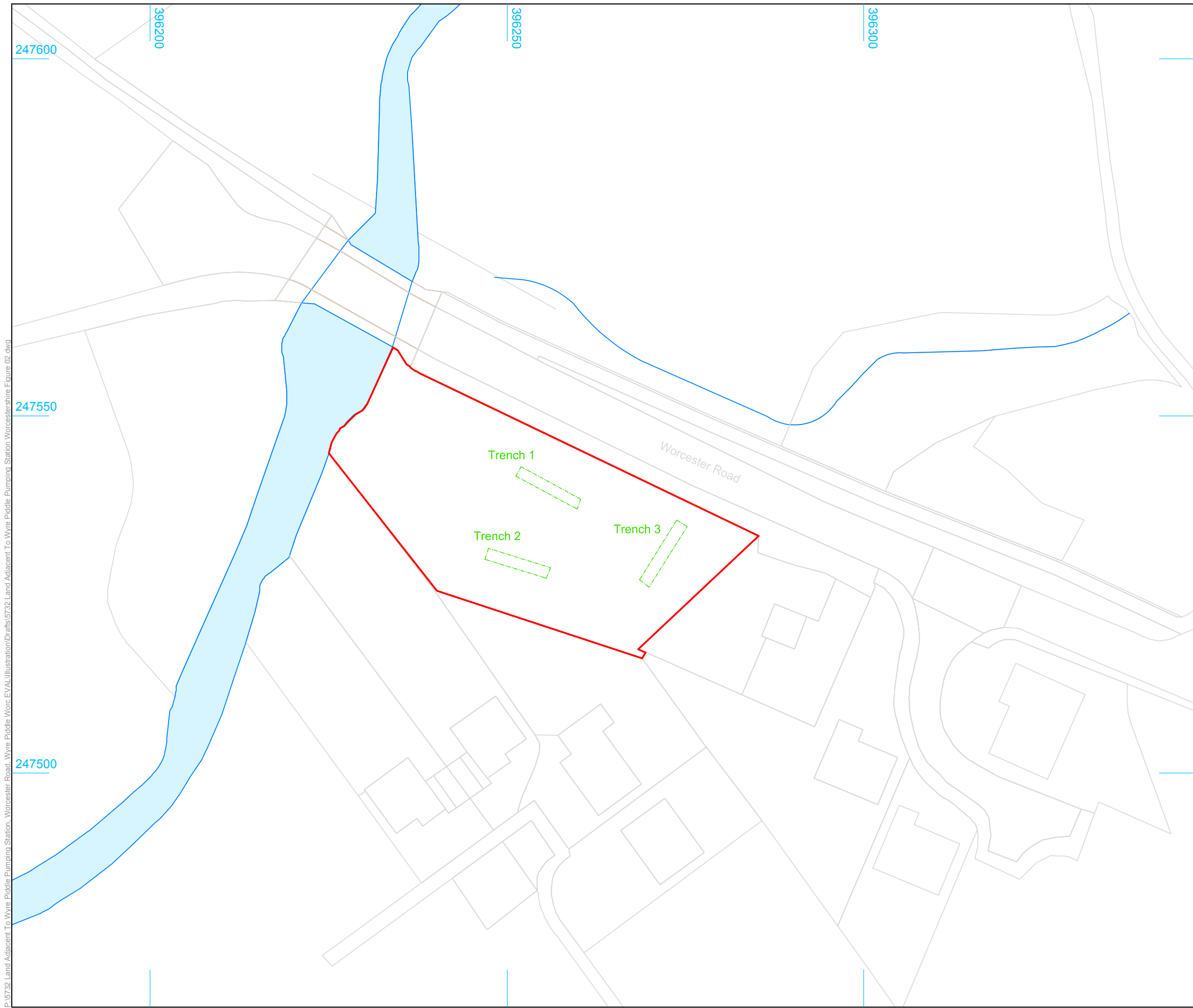
PROJECT TITLE
 Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire

FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan



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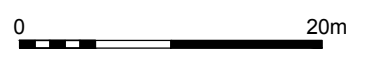
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P:\5732 Land Adjacent To Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Worcester Road, Worcester, Worc E\VA\Illustration\Drafts\5732 Land Adjacent To Wyre Piddle Pumping Station Worcestershire Figure 02.dwg



- site boundary
- evaluation trench



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PROJECT TITLE
 Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire

FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan

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3



4

- 3 Trench 2, looking north-west (1m scales)
- 4 Trench 3, modern dumped deposit, looking south-east (2m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land Adjacent to Wyre Piddle Pumping Station, Wyre Piddle, Worcestershire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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CHECKED BY	DB	DATE	26-01-2016	3 & 4
APPROVED BY	SS			

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