

Archaeological watching brief of pylon installation works, Southern Link Road, Temeside Way, Worcester

*for
Western Power Distribution plc*



Worcestershire Archaeology

August 2018

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Worcestershire Archaeology
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WR1 3PD

Local planning authority:	Malvern Hills District Council
Planning reference:	17/000036/REG3
Central NGR:	SO 8503 5158
Commissioning client:	Western Power Distribution plc
Client project reference:	052-19-01-03
WA project reference:	P5367
WA report reference:	2580
HER reference:	WSM 71478
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Museum accession number	n/a

Issue	Date	Status	Details/prepared by	Checked by
1	24/08/18	Client report	Graham Arnold and Tom Vaughan	Tom Vaughan
2	02/04/19	HER ref amended	Tom Vaughan	Tom Vaughan

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Graham Arnold and Tom Vaughan

Illustrations by Carolyn Hunt

Background Information

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken along the Southern Link Road, Temeside Way, Worcester (NGR SO 8503 5158). It was commissioned by Western Power Distribution plc, who were installing a new pylon. The project forms part of the wider Worcester Southern Link Road A4440 widening scheme for which planning consent has been granted (reference number 17/000036/REG3).

The development site was considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets associated with a Designated Battlefield, the significance of which may have been affected by the application (The Battle of Worcester, NHLE 1000042).

No specific brief was prepared by the Curator, but the project conforms to the model brief *Requirements for an Archaeological Watching Brief as a Condition of Planning Consent* (WCC 2014) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2018).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a), and *Standards and guidelines for archaeological projects in Worcestershire* (WCC 2010).

This phase of monitoring construction works followed on from archaeological valuation trenching (Bradley and Arnold 2017) on the southern side of the carriageway. A detailed environmental assessment has also been prepared for the scheme (WA 2017a and WA 2017b).

Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to observe and record archaeological deposits, and to determine their extent, state of preservation, date and type, as far as reasonably possible within the constraints of the developer's groundworks.

Methods

Worcestershire Archaeology attended site on 2 July, having been informed that the four pits for the pylon foundations had already been opened. All four pits were shuttered and partially backfilled, so there were no surfaces or sections visible to allow identification of potential archaeological layers or other activity. As agreed with Aidan Smyth (Archaeology and Planning Advisor, Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils), and Western Power Distribution a further pit, 3m by 2m, and 3m deep, was therefore opened under archaeological supervision to the immediate south-west of the original four (see Figure 2), and recorded appropriately.

In addition the spoil from all pits was scanned with a metal detector for artefacts.

Access to or visibility of deposits

The original four pits were not made available for monitoring. However full observation of the additional pit was undertaken during machine excavation. The exposed surfaces were sufficiently clean to observe well-differentiated archaeological deposits, though any less clear may not have been identified. The pit was not accessed beyond 1.20m depth, for reasons of health and safety.

Statement of confidence

Although the initial four pits were unavailable to observe and record, access to, and visibility of the deposits in the additional pit allowed a high degree of confidence that the aims of the project have been achieved.

Deposit description

Photographs of the general works, location shots and the additional test pit are included as Plates 1–5. Figures 1 and 2 show the area of the works overall, the pylon works and the location of a previous evaluation trenches adjacent (Bradley and Arnold 2017).

Test pit 1

Maximum dimensions: Length: 3.00m Width: 2.00m Depth: 3.00m

Main deposit descriptions

Context	Classification	Description	Depth below ground surface (b.g.s) – top and bottom of deposits
100	Topsoil	Friable mid grey brown sandy clay silt	0.00–0.30m
101	Subsoil	Mod compact light yellowish orange brown clay silt	0.30-0.50m
102	Alluvium	Firm mid reddish brown clay silt	0.50-1.20m
103	Alluvium	Firm dark reddish brown clay silt with frequent manganese	1.20- 2.90m
104	Natural	Sand gravel river terrace	2.90m +

Discussion

One test pit was opened up to record the stratigraphy in the area. A similar stratigraphic make up was found to the results during the evaluation stage of works (Bradley Arnold 2017). Evaluation Trench 6 was located to the north-west of the current works (Figure 2). This exposed the topsoil, subsoil and alluvial sequence above the natural strata. The natural river terrace sands and gravels were recorded at 2.90m and excavation stopped at 3.00m below ground level.

No metal finds or other evidence relating to the Civil War battle or any other human occupation activity was recorded during the works, nor was a defined horizon relating to the Civil War battle defined within the alluvium.

A small quantity of modern residual metal debris was found, but not retained. Otherwise no other artefacts were revealed.

Conclusions

No significant archaeological features, layers, structures, deposits or horizons were identified, not artefacts recovered. The Civil War battlefield level was not determined. It is considered unlikely that any significant archaeological deposits were disturbed during excavation of any of the pits related to the construction of the new pylon.

Publication summary

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on behalf of Western Power Distribution plc along the Southern Link road, Temeside Way, Worcester (NGR SO 8503 5158, WSM 71478) for

the installation of a new pylon. The site lies due south of the Designated Battlefield of the Civil war battle of Worcester, so evidence of the Civil War was considered possible.

The initial pylon foundation pits were opened without archaeological supervision, but to compensate for this an additional pit was excavated. The natural stratigraphy of topsoil, subsoil, and sterile alluvial deposits was recorded overlying the natural river terrace sand and gravels at 2.90m below ground level. All of the spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector for finds. No significant archaeological features, layers, structures, deposits or horizons were identified, not artefacts recovered. The Civil War battlefield level was not determined. It is considered unlikely that any significant archaeological deposits were disturbed during excavation of any of the pits related to the construction of the new pylon.

Acknowledgements

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project, Martin Southall Mark Edwards (Western Power Distribution plc), Mark Broomby (Strategic Projects, Worcestershire County Council) and Aidan Smyth (Archaeology and Planning Advisor, Wychavon and Malvern Hills District Councils).

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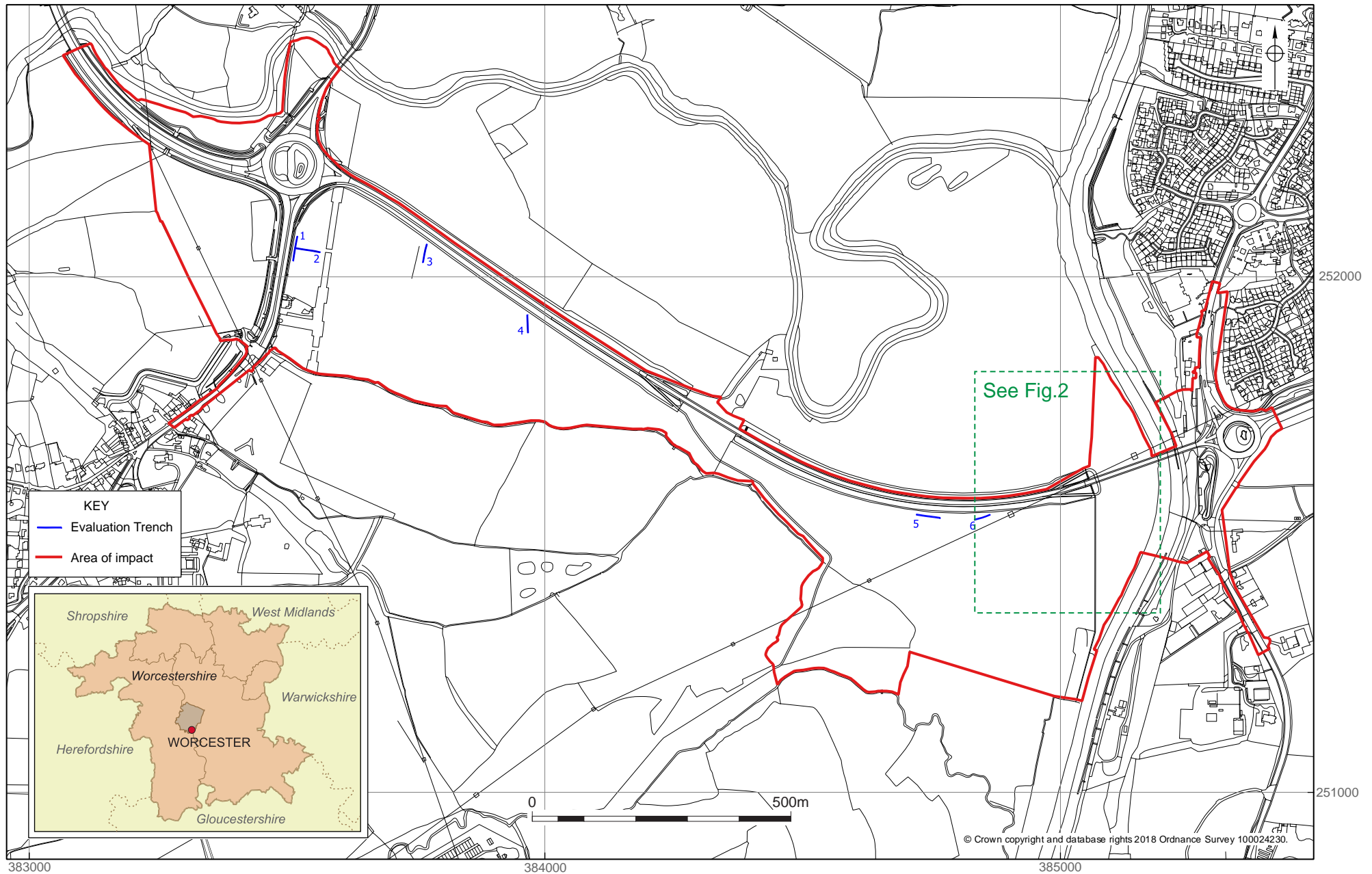
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WCC 2014 *Requirements for an Archaeological Watching Brief as a Condition of Planning Consent*, Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document, Version 1, dated September 2014

WCC 2017a *Worcester Southern Link Road Phase 4, Environmental Statement, 2017 Volume 1, Technical Assessment Report* October 2017

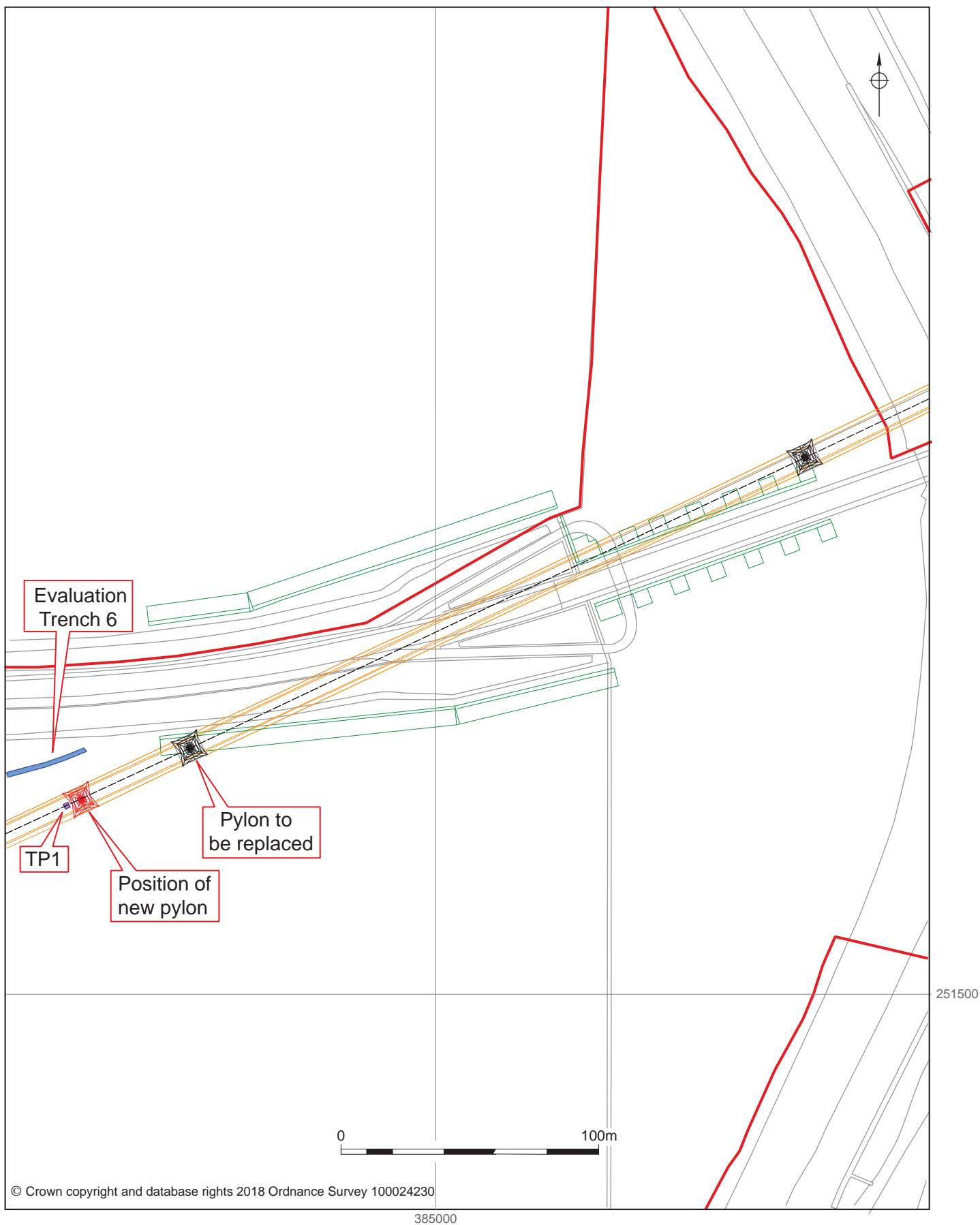
WCC 2017b *Worcester Southern Link Road Phase 4, Environmental Statement, Additional Information* October 2017

Figures



Location of archaeological works

Figure 1



Location of Trenches and new pylon

Figure 2

Plates



Plate 1 The pylon area showing machine in area of TP1 and existing works, view west



Plate 2 Example of one of pylon base pits shuttered and filled with concrete



Plate 3 Example of one of the spoil heaps that was metal detected after flattening



Plate 4 Test Pit 1 at 1.2m depth, view east, 2x 1m scales



Plate 5 Test Pit 1 excavated to full depth of 3.00m showing sterile homogenous alluvial deposits above sand and gravel river terrace at base, measuring staff as scale, view south-west

Appendix 1 Technical information

The archive (site code: WSM 71478)

The archive consists of:

- 1 Field progress reports AS2
- 1 Photographic records AS3
- 33 Digital photographs
- 1 Trench record sheets AS41
- 1 Copy of this report (bound hard copy)

The project archive is intended to be placed at:

Worcestershire County Museum
Museums Worcestershire
Hartlebury Castle
Hartlebury
Near Kidderminster
Worcestershire DY11 7XZ
Tel Hartlebury (01299) 250416

A copy of the report will be deposited with the appropriate Historic Environment Record (HER).