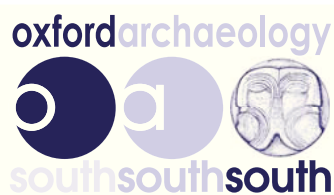


Power Line Pole
Replacement
near Charvil
Berkshire



**Archaeological
Watching Brief Report**



August 2012

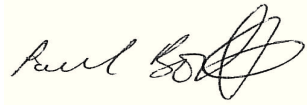
**Client: Scottish and Southern
Energy**

OA Job No: 5067
NGR: SU 7704 7683



Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Client Name: Southern and Southern Energy
Client Ref: Scheme 33kV 21005
Document Title: Power Line Pole Replacement, near Charvil, Berkshire
Document Type: Archaeological Watching Brief Report
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Receiving Museum: None available
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|-------|-------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---|
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Power Line Pole Replacement, near Charvil, Berkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Summary

On the 28th June 2011, Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during the replacement of two power line poles on behalf of Scottish and Southern Energy. The watching brief recorded a cultivation soil a overlying alluvial and valley gravel deposits. No archaeologically significant deposits or features were observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background and scope of work

- 1.1.1 As part of their responsibilities to maintaining the electricity supply, Scottish and Southern Energy Power Distribution (SSEPD) are undertaking refurbishment of the overhead power cables between Twyford and Reading, Berkshire.
- 1.1.2 The scheme and likely impacts were notified to Berkshire Archaeology, who identified an area of archaeological potential along the route to the north of Charvil (Fig. 1). Berkshire Archaeology subsequently requested an archaeological watching brief to accompany intrusive works at specified locations. A detailed formal brief was not issued by the Local Planning Authority.
- 1.1.3 SSEPD commissioned Oxford Archaeology South (OAS) to undertake the archaeological monitoring during the work in this area. Prior to the start of the site works OAS issued a Written Scheme Investigation (WSI), approved by Berkshire Archaeology, detailing how it would meet the requirements for archaeological recording.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The individual locations were identified as poles 39 and 40 and are situated in open farmland east of Milestone Drive and north-west of Park View Drive North, Charvil, Berkshire (Fig. 2). The poles are located at approximately SU 7693 7683 and SU 7704 7685 along the ENE-WSW alignment of the power line.
- 1.2.2 The site is generally level, but slight curvilinear depressions suggestive of old meanders or possible palaeochannels were noted within the surface of the field, although none were visible within the locale of the excavations.
- 1.2.3 The geology is recorded as Alluvium (Clay, Silt and Gravel) over Chalk (British Geological Survey web site http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The area to the south and east of the overhead power line route shows widespread evidence of multi-period occupation from cropmarks and findspots. Three Scheduled Monuments lie just to the south of the power line route around Charvil. These include a possible prehistoric or Roman settlement consisting of a rectangular ditched enclosure and a 20 m diameter ring ditch, possibly a Bronze Age round barrow. A number of findspots are also recorded in the surrounding area, including two middle Bronze Age bronze bracelets and a Neolithic flint arrow head both recovered from back gardens south-west of the pole replacement site. The Sonning Cursus, another Scheduled Monument lies approximately 870 m south west of the site.



2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The aims of the watching brief were to:

- (i) preserve by record any archaeological deposits encountered during the course of ground intrusions,
- (ii) seek to establish the extent, nature and date of any archaeological deposits encountered within the scope of the ground intrusion,
- (iii) to secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site,
- (iv) to disseminate results through the production of a grey literature report.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The watching brief observed all works that may disturb or destroy below ground archaeological remains at the specified locations. This comprised the machine excavation of two small trenches to the immediate west of the existing poles (Fig. 2).

2.2.2 Each trench was excavated under close archaeological supervision with material being removed in shallow spits until either an archaeological horizon or undisturbed natural geology was encountered. Machine excavation ceased upon the instruction of the attending archaeologist to allow proper investigation of the exposed deposits. Once geological deposits were encountered without the presence of archaeological deposits, machine excavation continued to the required depth.

2.2.3 All deposits were issued with unique context numbers, and recording was in accordance with established OAS practices as detailed in the WSI. Black-and-white negative photographs and a digital photographic record were taken of all excavations, general settings and features/sections.

2.2.4 Site and location plans were drawn at an appropriate scale. Section drawings of the trenches were drawn at a scale of 1:20.

3 RESULTS

3.1 General trench description

3.1.1 The trench excavations for each new post hole measured 0.75 m wide and approximately 3 m long. Each trench sloped at one end to the surface level with a vertical side at the other to facilitate the placement of the new pole. The maximum depth of excavation was 1.8 m below ground level.

3.2 Pole 39

3.2.1 The natural gravel (13) was encountered at a depth of 1.15 m below ground level (Fig. 3, Section 1). This was overlain by a 0.78 m thick layer of grey reddish brown sandy silt clay alluvium (12) with inclusions of gravel, the frequency of which increased with depth. A 0.25 m thick layer of fine reddish brown sandy silt (11) which in turn was overlain by the present day ploughsoil, a 0.18 m deep layer of dark reddish silty soil (10), completed the sequence.



3.3 Pole 40

3.3.1 The natural gravel (24) was encountered at a depth of 1.4 m below ground level (Fig. 3, Section 2). This was overlain by a 0.3 m thick layer of fine off white clay silt (23) in turn overlain by a yellowish red-brown sandy clay (22) which measured 0.65 m in depth. A 0.45 m thick layer of fine reddish brown sandy silt (21), a probable continuation of layer (11) and a 0.2 m thick layer of dark reddish brown silty soil (20), the present day ploughsoil, completed the sequence.

3.4 Finds

3.4.1 No dating evidence was recovered during the course of the watching brief.

3.5 Environmental remains

3.5.1 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were observed.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 The majority of the deposits recorded were of alluvial origin. The underlying natural sand and gravel (13 and 24) was observed within the bases of both excavations. Within the area of Pole 40 the gravel was covered by a fine off white clay silt (23), a localised alluvial deposit composed of finely pulverised or weathered chalk.

4.1.2 Layers 12 and 22 are the same between the trenches and reflect the main period of floodplain alluvial accumulation in the sequence. Similarly layers 11 and 21 are continuations of the same alluvial deposit.

4.1.3 Layers 10 and 20, the present day ploughsoil, are likely to have been formed by reworking of layers 11 and 21. No dating evidence was recovered to suggest when this first occurred but the absence of visible ridge and furrow workings may indicate that this ploughing is of a more recent historical origin.



APPENDIX A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Context | Type | Thickness | Comments | Finds | Date |
|---------|-------|-----------|------------------------|-------|------|
| Pole 39 | | | | | |
| 10 | Layer | 0.18 m | Present day ploughsoil | - | - |
| 11 | Layer | 0.25 m | Alluvium | - | - |
| 12 | Layer | 0.78 m | Alluvium | - | - |
| 13 | Layer | > 0.6 m | Sand and gravel | - | - |
| Pole 40 | | | | | |
| 20 | Layer | 0.2 m | Present day ploughsoil | - | - |
| 21 | Layer | 0.25 m | Alluvium | - | - |
| 22 | Layer | 0.6 m | Alluvium | - | - |
| 23 | Layer | 0.28 m | Alluvium | - | - |
| 24 | Layer | > 0.4 m | Sand and gravel | - | - |



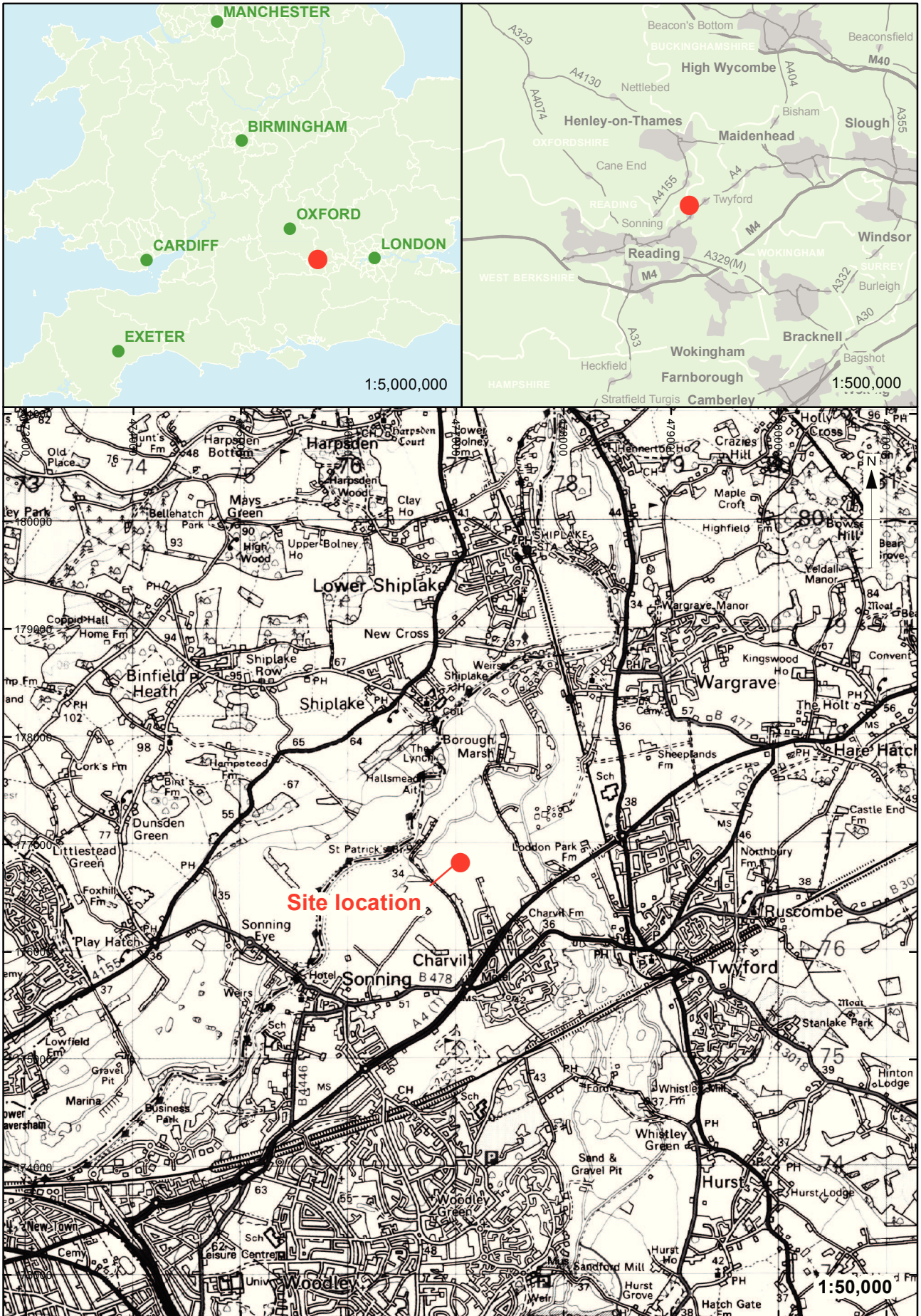
APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- English Heritage, 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*
- IFA, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs.*
- OA, 2011 *Power Pole Replacement, near Charvil, Berkshire: Written Scheme of Investigation*
- OAU, 1992 *Field Manual (1st Edition, edited Wilkinson D)*



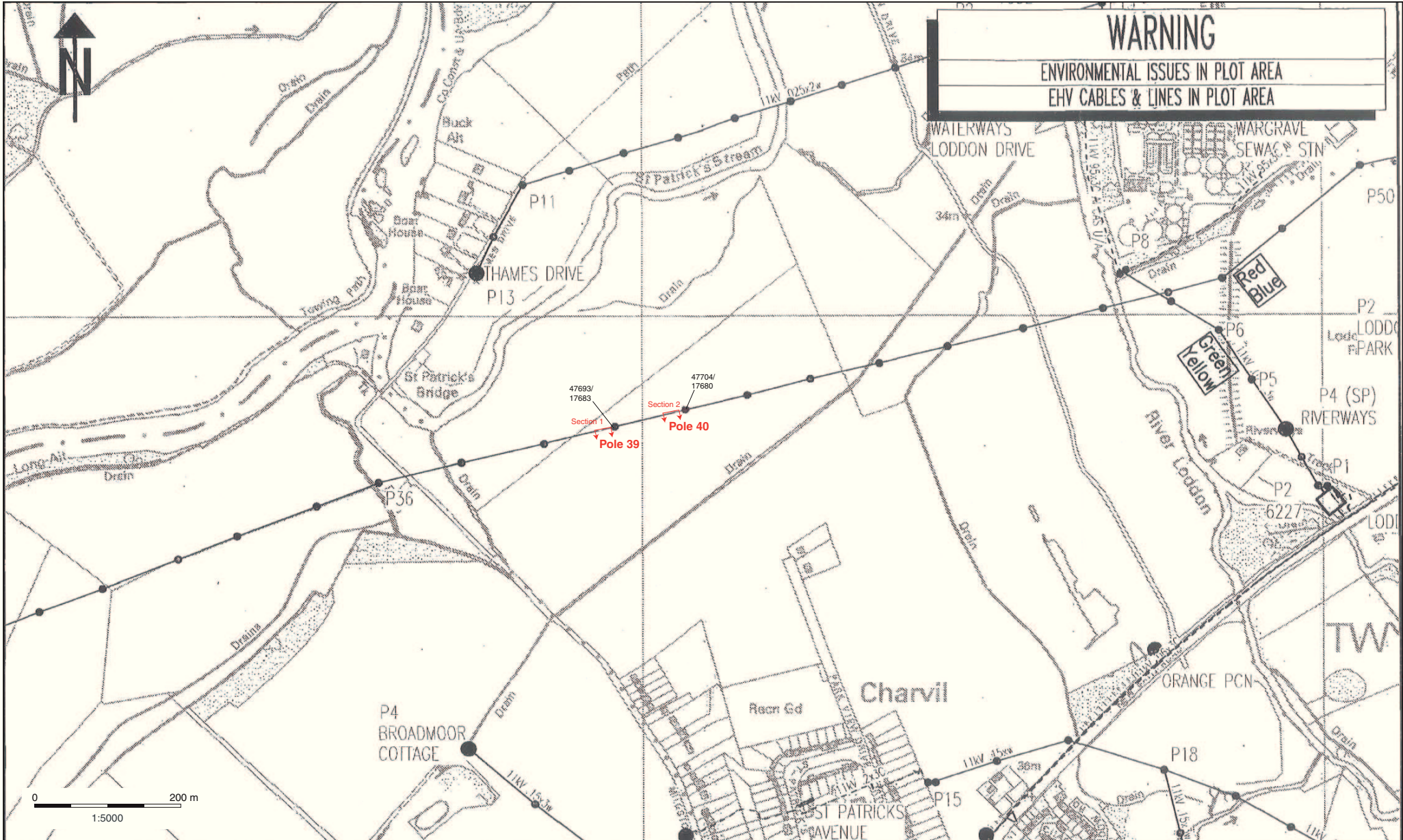
APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Site name: | Power Line Pole Replacement, near Charvil, Berkshire |
| Site code: | CHATWY 11 |
| Grid reference: | Centred at NGR SU 7704 7683 |
| Type of watching brief: | Machine excavation of two post hole trenches for the replacement of electricity poles |
| Date and duration of project: | 28 th June 2011, 1 day |
| Area of site: | Approximately 5 m ² |
| Summary of results: | On the 28 th June 2011, Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during the replacement of two power line poles on behalf of Scottish and Southern Energy. The watching brief recorded a cultivation soil a overlying alluvial and valley gravel deposits. No archaeologically significant deposits or features were observed. |
| Location of archive: | Museum space not available at this time. The archive will remain in storage at Oxford Archaeology until a suitable deposition location is available. |



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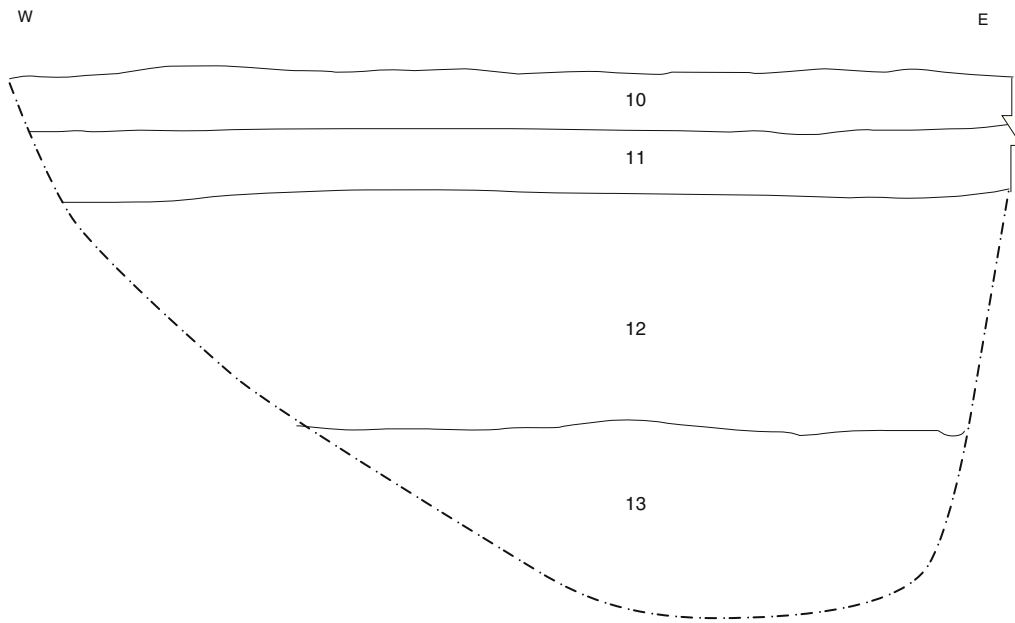
Figure 1: Site location



Taken from a plan by Scottish and Southern Energy, May 2011

Figure 2: Site plan and pole locations

Pole 39
Section 1



Pole 40
Section 2

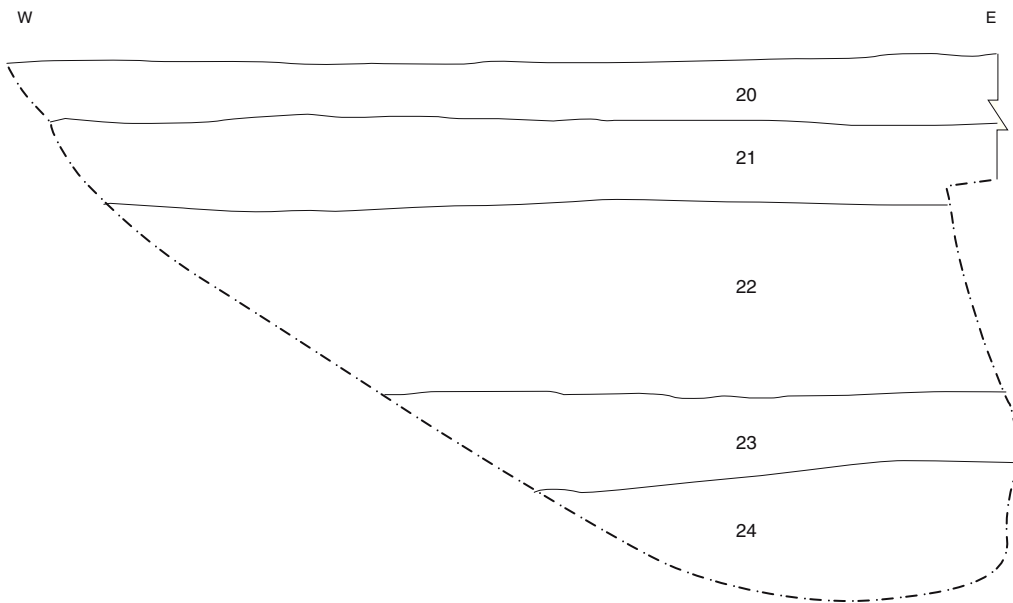


Figure 3: Sections



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