ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

EDF pole replacement at Icklingham
IKL 156

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF THE REPLACEMENT OF ELECTRIC POLES AT WEATHERHILL FARM ICKLINGHAM

Planning Application No.:Pre
NGR: TL7863 7193
Oasis Ref. Suffolkc1-22063

Funded by: EDF Energy

SCCAS Report no. 2007/001

Summary
Monitoring of the boring of three holes for new poles in the Scheduled Ancient Monument at Weatherhill Farm, Icklingham did not recover any finds but did allow the soil profiles to be recorded.

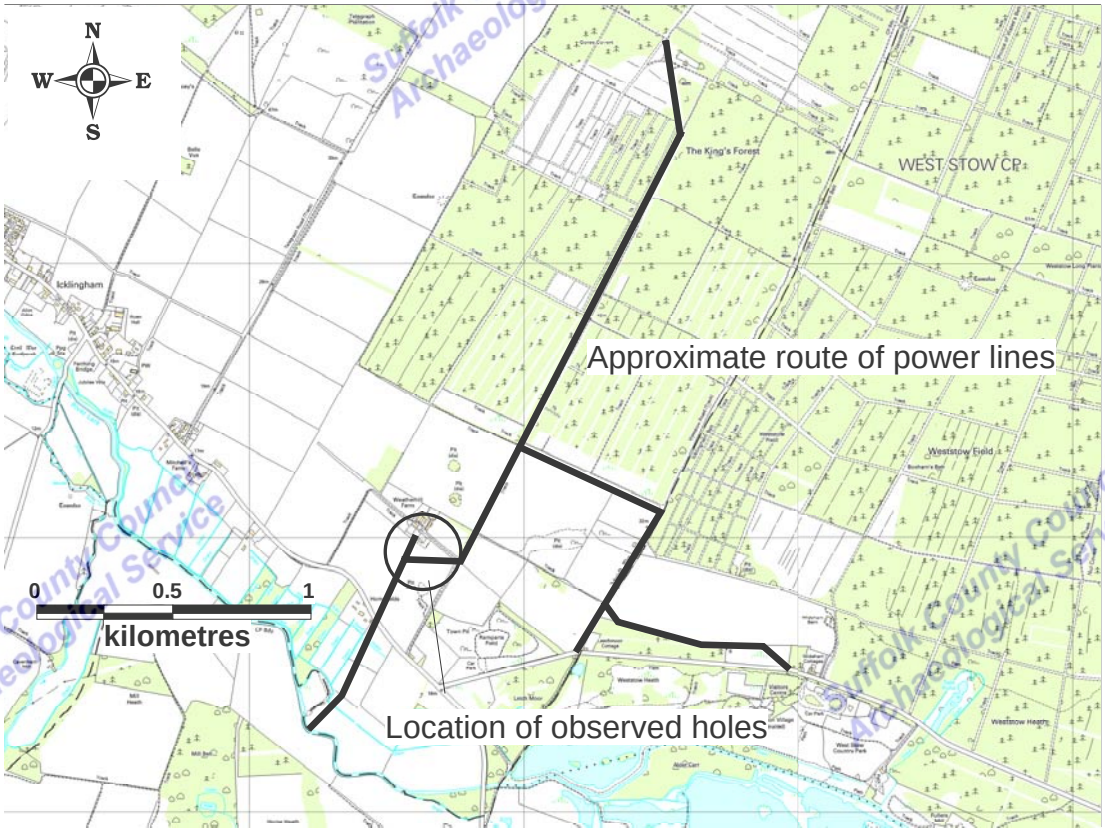

Figure 1. Site location

Introduction

EDF Energy are refurbishing the electricity line between Lodge Farm and Homefields Farm, Icklingham and West Stow Heath (Fig. 1). The route runs through several archaeologically sensitive areas, most notably the Roman settlement at Weatherhill Farm, Icklingham, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, (Suff 152). The refurbishment work will involve the replacement of some electricity poles and all groundworks in the archaeologically sensitive areas are subject to archaeological monitoring as defined in a letter issued by Dr Jess Tipper, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team, on 3rd November 2005. Any ground disturbance in the scheduled area also required Scheduled Monument Consent, which was obtained by EDF Energy from Mr John Ette, English Heritage.

Three holes for replacement poles (Fig. 2) were seen within the scheduled area within the field immediately south of Weatherhill Farm (Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record number IKL 020). These lie at TL 7863 7193 at the top of the hill on the north side of the Lark Valley at c.25m OD.

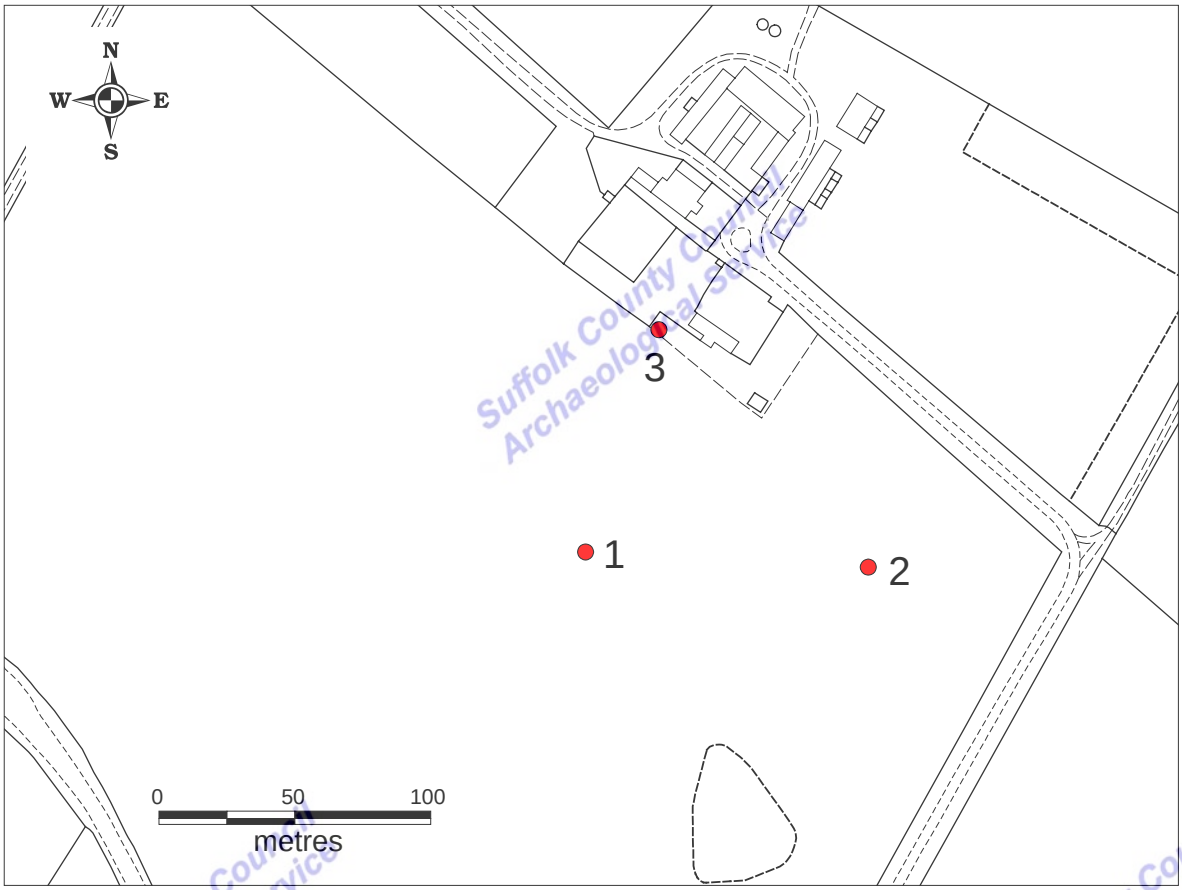

Figure 2. Hole location

Results

The three holes were all excavated using a spiral borer of c.0.5m diameter. The upcast soil was examined for finds, but none were found, although Roman pottery and Roman and post-medieval brick and tile were apparent on the field surface. The soil profile exposed within each hole was recorded. All holes were dug immediately adjacent to the existing poles and were 2.1m deep.

Hole 1

The soil profile here was c.0.3m of topsoil over 1.1m of an homogeneous brown sandy loam with frequent stones and flints (Fig. 3). Some modern cable and wire was found during the

excavation of this material. Natural was found at 1.4m and was yellow-orange stony sand overlying chalk, found at c.1.5m.

Hole 2

This had a c.0.6m deep layer of worked brown loam with few stones over yellow-orange stony sand (Fig. 3). No chalk was apparent.

Hole 3

This lay just beyond the field, and outside the scheduled area. The soil profile was topsoil, 0.3m deep over yellow-orange stony sand (Fig. 3). The shallower topsoil is probably because this lies within a garden and has never been ploughed.

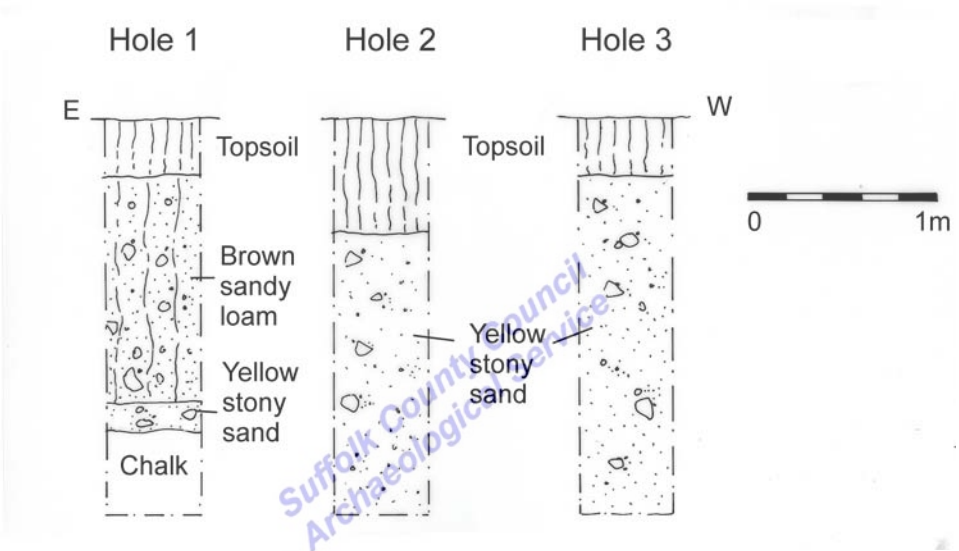

Figure 3. Sections of soil profiles in each hole

Conclusion

Whilst no finds were recovered from the upcast spoil of the holes, Roman pottery and Roman and post-medieval brick and tile were visible scattered on the surface testifying to the presence of Roman deposits beneath the ploughsoil. The three holes all showed varying soil profiles, none of which positively identified archaeological deposits. Hole 1 was the deepest but the presence of modern wire and cable within the deposit suggests that this represents a modern hole rather than an archaeological one and may in fact be the fill of the hole dug for the original erection of the pole. No stratigraphic changes were noticeable in the 0.6m depth of deposit over natural in Hole 2 and this may represent the deep working of ploughsoil and/or soil movement as a result of agricultural activity. It is possible that the base of this represents an archaeological deposit but this could not be confirmed. Hole 3 had only a typical depth of topsoil, 0.3m to natural and this is probably due to it being within a garden and not having been subject to modern ploughing.

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