

New Substation, Sherfield Road, Bramley Green, Basingstoke, Hampshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Scottish and Southern Energy Distribution Limited

by Natasha Bennett and Steve Ford

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code BGB06/87

September 2006

Summary

Site name: New Substation, Sherfield Road, Bramley Green, Basingstoke, Hampshire

Grid reference: SU 6744 5850

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 8th–11th September 2006

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Natasha Bennett

Site code: BGB06/87

Summary of results: Topsoil and subsoil was stripped from the site but no deposits or finds of archaeological interest were observed.

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited with Hampshire Museum Service in due course.

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Report 06/87

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on the site of a new substation, on Sherfield Road, Bramley Green, Basingstoke, Hampshire (SU6744 5850) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Ms Charlotte Dawson of Wardell Armstrong, Sir Henry Doulton House, Forge Lane, Etruria, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST1 5NN on behalf of Scottish and Southern Energy Distribution Limited.

A planning consent (BDB/63171) has been granted by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council to construct an additional electricity substation to the rear of the existing site. The consent was subject to a condition relating to archaeology which required a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Stephen Appleby, Archaeological Officer with Hampshire County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by Natasha Bennett between 8th and 11th September 2006 and the site code is BGB06/87.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Hampshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site lies on the south side of Sherfield Road, which lies to the north-west of Sherfield-on-Loddon and south-east of the hamlet of Bramley Green with Bramley further to the west. The existing substation stands adjacent to the road with the new site lying to the rear (south) (Fig. 2). The site is currently farmland. The underlying geology comprises London Clay (BGS 1981). The site lies at a height of c.62m above Ordnance Datum on ground that slopes gently down to the east towards the river Loddon.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been appraised by Ms Charlotte Dawson of Wardell Armstrong. (WA 2006). In summary the site lies just 200m to the east of Bulls Down, which is an Iron Age hillfort. It is

possible that contemporary settlement sites are present in its environs. The site also lies within an area surveyed by the Loddon Valley Fieldwalking Survey (Ford *et al.* forthcoming) which revealed a range of sites of prehistoric, Roman and medieval date in the area, although the specific area of the site itself was not examined.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the new construction work. This was to involve examination of all areas of topsoil stripping, landscaping, ground reduction and the digging of trenches for foundations and services for structures as necessary.

Results

Topsoil was stripped from the area of the site using a 360⁰ machine fitted with a toothless bucket (Fig. 2). The topsoil was 0.25–0.3m thick and exposed the natural geology which was a red/brown sandy gravel which is likely to be a relict patch of unmapped plateau gravel in the area. Deeper exposures were also observed for the foundation trench of the new building and revealed that the London Clay proper was present at a depth below 0.7m.

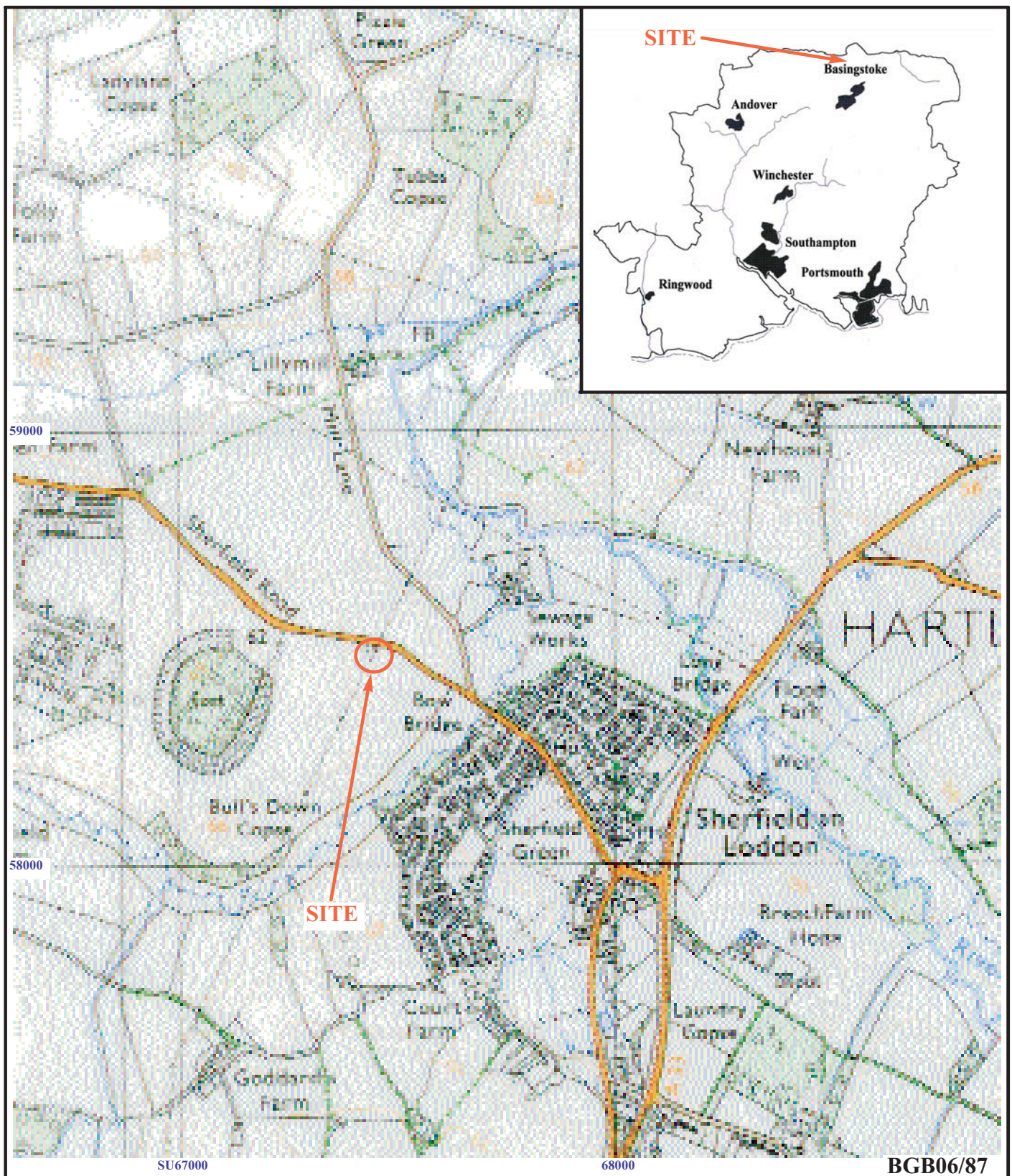
The stripped surface was examined for artefacts and archaeological deposits but none were observed.

Conclusion

No finds nor deposits of archaeological interest were observed during the watching brief.

References

BGS, 1981, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50,000, Sheet 284, Drift Edition, Keyworth
Ford, S, Weaver, S and Bellamy R (forthcoming), 'Loddon Valley (Hampshire) Fieldwalking Survey 1994/95',
in S Preston (ed), *Fieldwork in the environs of Silchester*, Thames Valley Archaeological Services Monogr 9
PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
WA 2006, 'Proposed extension to Bramley Green 33/11Kv substation, ecological and cultural heritage appraisal', Wardell Armstrong, Stoke-on-Trent.



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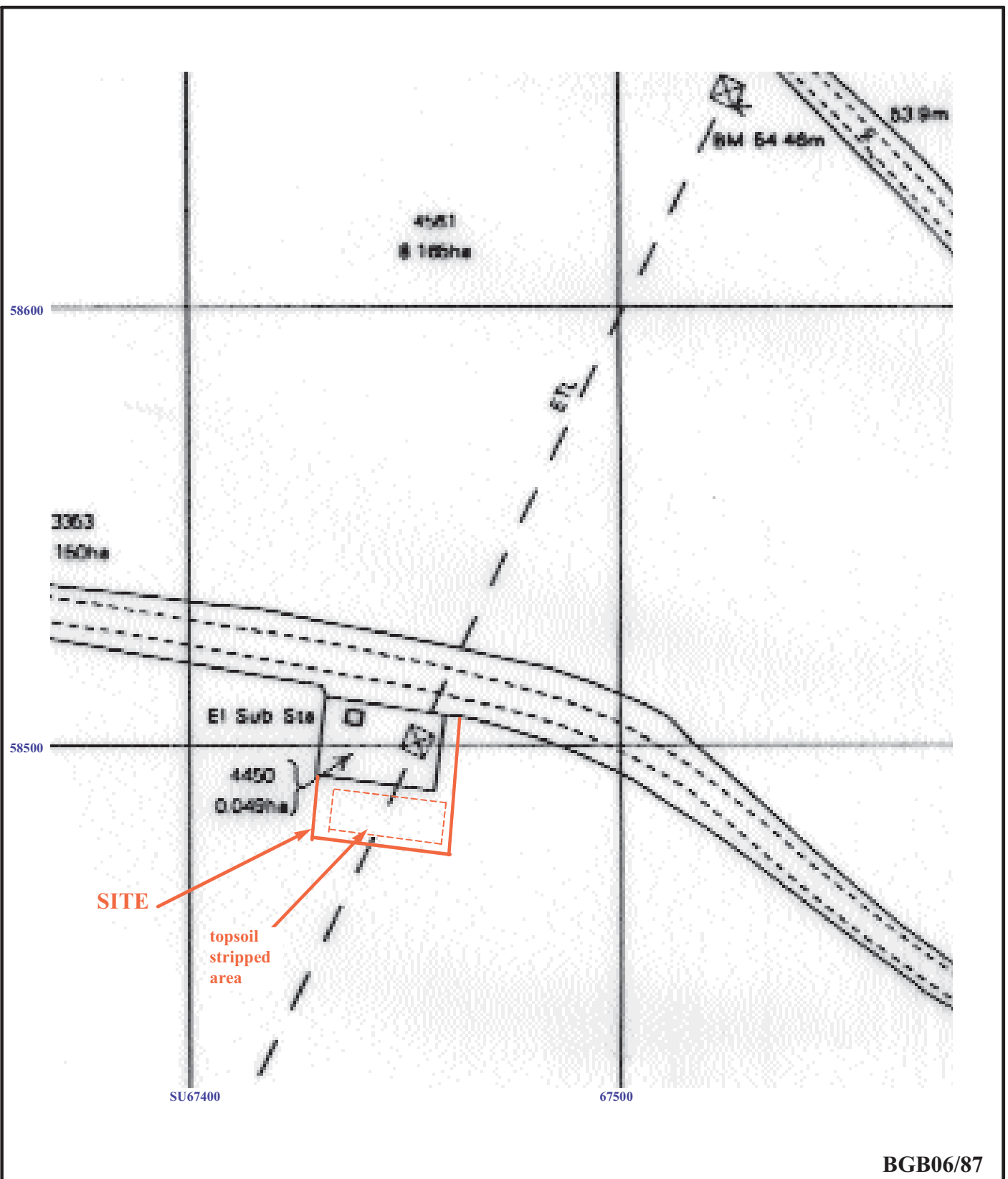
Figure 1. Location of site within Bramley and Hampshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site and watching brief.

Scale: 1:1250

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