

# **Replacement Gas Main, Falkland Memorial, Andover Road, Newbury, West Berkshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Southern Gas Networks**

by Arkadiusz Gnas and Heather Hopkins

Thames Valley Archaeological Services

Ltd

Site Code FMN 09/86

**September 2009**

## Summary

**Site name:** Falkland Memorial, Andover Road, Newbury

**Grid reference:** SU 4597 6497

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 14th–16th September 2009

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Arkadiusz Gnas

**Site code:** FMN 09/86

**Summary of results:** No finds nor deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 30.09.09 Steve Preston ✓ 28.09.09
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# **Falkland Memorial, Andover Road, Newbury, West Berkshire An Archaeological Watching Brief**

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**Report 09/86**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at the Falkland Memorial, Andover Road, West Berkshire, SU 4597 6497 (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Jim Kelly of Southern Gas Networks, Scottish and Southern Energy Depot, Arrowhead Road, Theale, Berkshire. A replacement gas main was to be inserted across land adjacent to the Falkland Memorial. Due to the archaeologically sensitive location of the proposed trench a watching brief has been requested by the archaeological adviser to the National Trust. This is to take place during groundworks as a result of the possibility of damage or destruction of archaeological deposits.

This is in accordance with the Gas Act 1986 requiring Gas suppliers to have regard to protection of archaeological remains. The field investigation was carried out to a specification prepared by TVAS. The fieldwork was undertaken by Arkadiusz Gnas on 14th to 16th September 2009 and the site code is FMN 09/86.

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

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site lies in the suburbs of modern Newbury in a zone that was farmland until being engulfed by suburban expansion (WBAS 2006). The pipeline runs through land adjacent to the memorial to Lord Falkland who died during the 1st Battle of Newbury (Fig. 2). The area of the site is currently level, undeveloped land, surrounded by roads and located within a built up area in the south of Newbury. The underlying geology is plateau gravel (BGS 1947) at the site lies at approximately 125m above Ordnance Datum.

## **Archaeological background**

There is a modest range of sites and finds from the general area of the site (Lobb and Rose 1996). To the south on Wash Common is a round barrow cemetery (burial mounds) of Bronze Age date which are Scheduled Monuments. At more distance to the north at a former hospital site, a watching brief recorded two ditches and a possible pit, none of which were well dated (Jenkins 2005). Further to the west is the site of the First Battle of

Newbury in the Civil War which took place in 1643 (Smurthwaite, 1984). The memorial on the proposal site is that erected to honour Lord Falkland who died somewhere nearby at the beginning of the battle.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the construction of the new trench. In general the watching brief involved the monitoring of the pipe trench as it was dug. Finds from a wide range of types or periods could have been encountered, especially those relating to the First Battle of Newbury. Archaeological deposits which were threatened by the proposed development were to be excavated and recorded. A metal detector was to be employed to search for artefacts, in particular those that may have been a part of the battle. The groundworks associated with the digging of the pipe trench were to be observed where they traversed the monument site.

## **Results**

The trenching consisted of four lengths of trench dug in series along the route of the pipeline (Fig. 3). The trench was dug with a toothed bucket and was 0.6m wide and 0.7-0.8m deep. The stratigraphy observed comprised turf/topsoil which was between 0.20–0.26m deep, above a dark grey sandy silt with gravel subsoil which was 0.35m deep above the natural gravel which was noted at between 0.5–0.65m deep (Fig 4). No features of archaeological interest were encountered nor any artefacts of archaeological interest recovered. The only metal detector finds located were two 20th century pennies (not retained).

## **Finds**

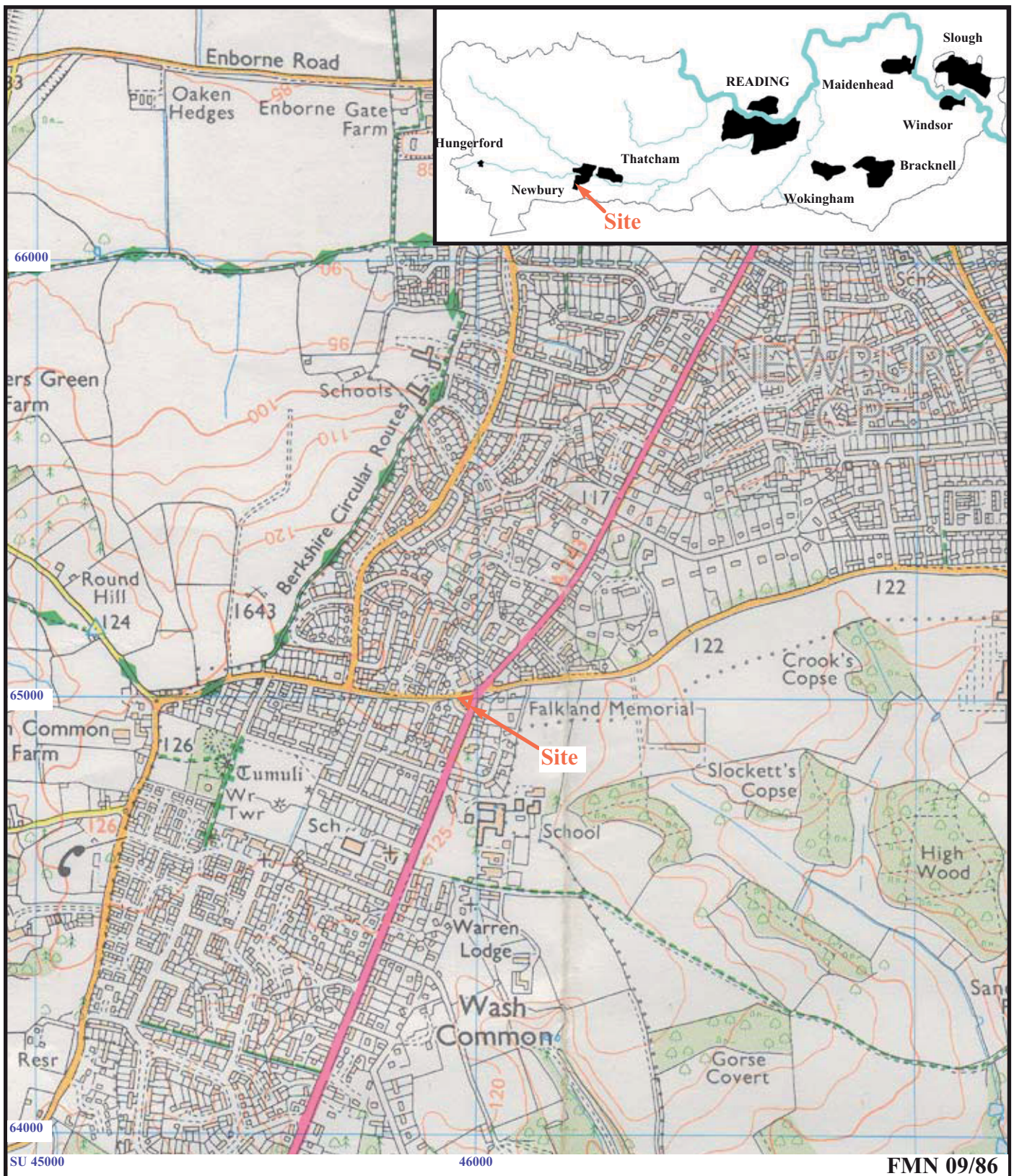
No finds of archaeological interest were discovered.

## **Conclusion**

No finds or features of archaeological interest were discovered during this watching brief.

## References

- BGS, 1947, *British Geological Survey*, 1:63,360, Sheet 267, Keyworth
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- Lobb, S J and Rose, P G, 1996, *Archaeological Survey of the Lower Kennet Valley, Berkshire*, Wessex Archaeol Rep **9**, Salisbury
- PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO
- Smurthwaite, D, 1984, *The complete guide to the Battlefields of Britain*, Harmondsworth
- WBAS 2006, *Historic Newbury, fit for the future; The Newbury Historic Character Study*, West Berkshire Archaeology Service, Newbury

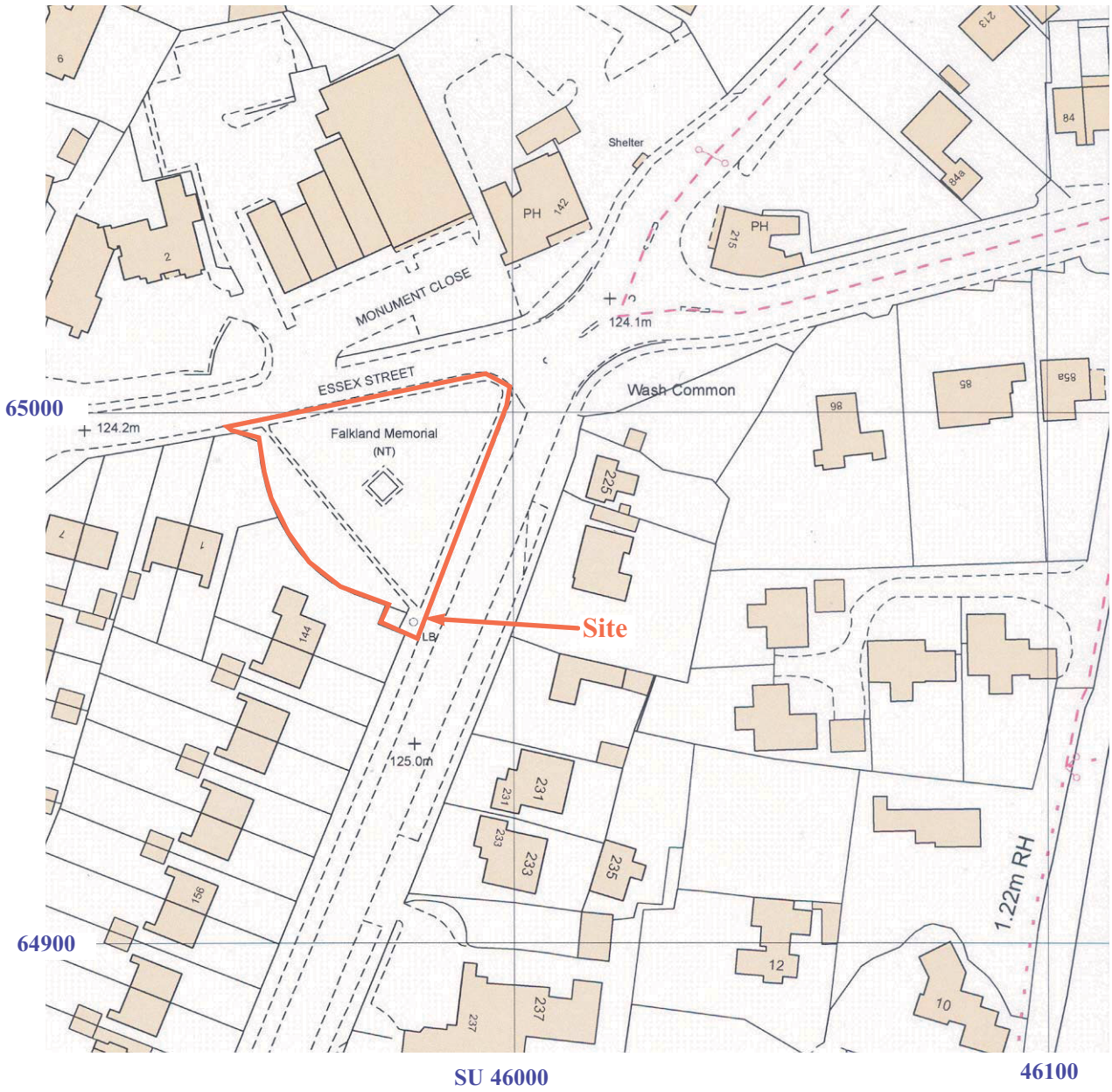


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Figure 1. Location of site within Newbury  
and Berkshire.

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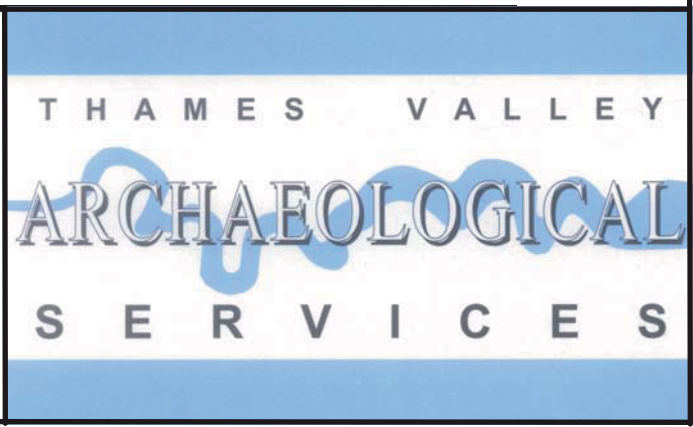


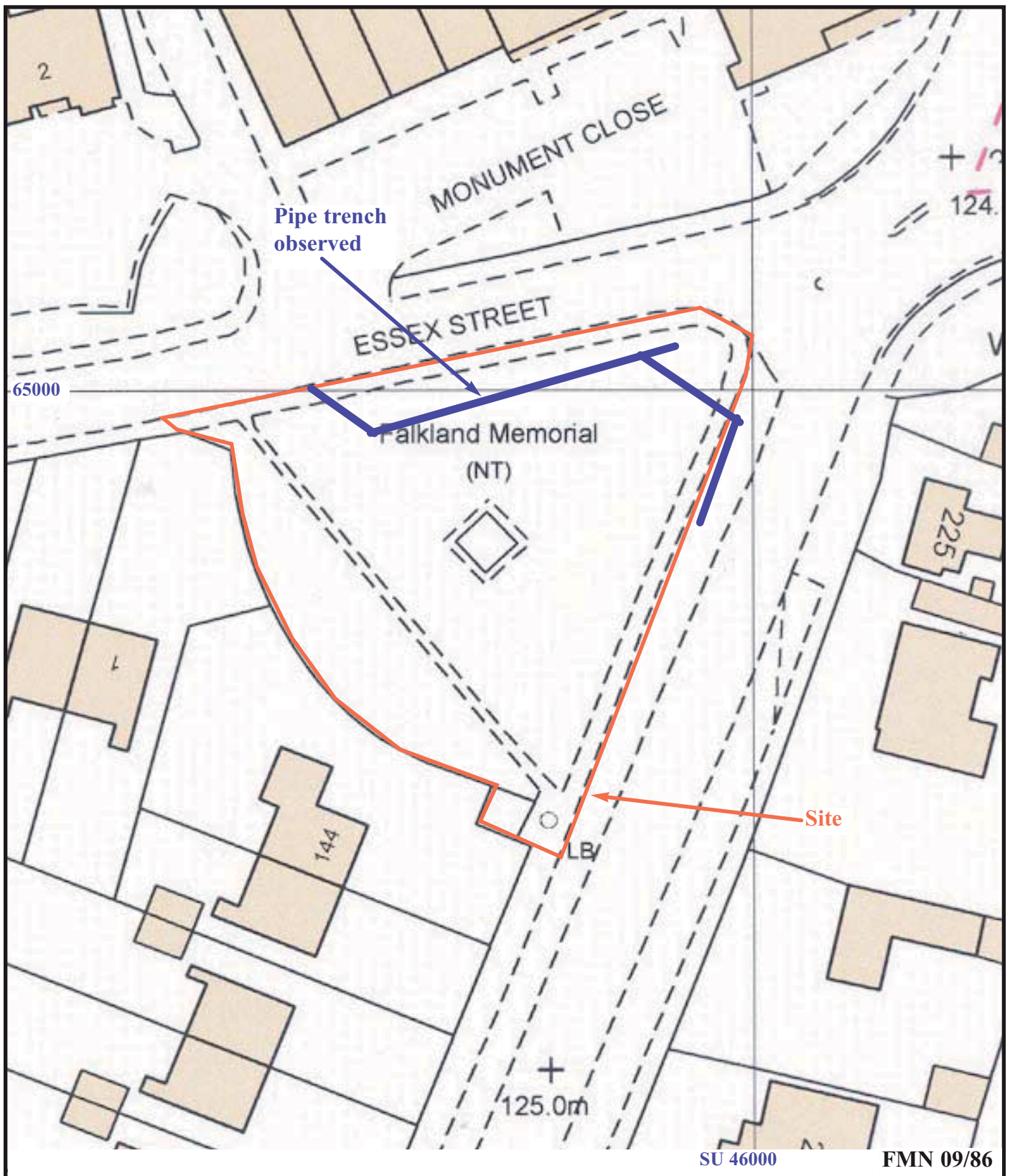
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Figure 2. Location of site at the junction of Andover Road and Essex Street

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Figure 3. Location of watching brief. Pipe trenches shown in blue. Site boundary shown in red.

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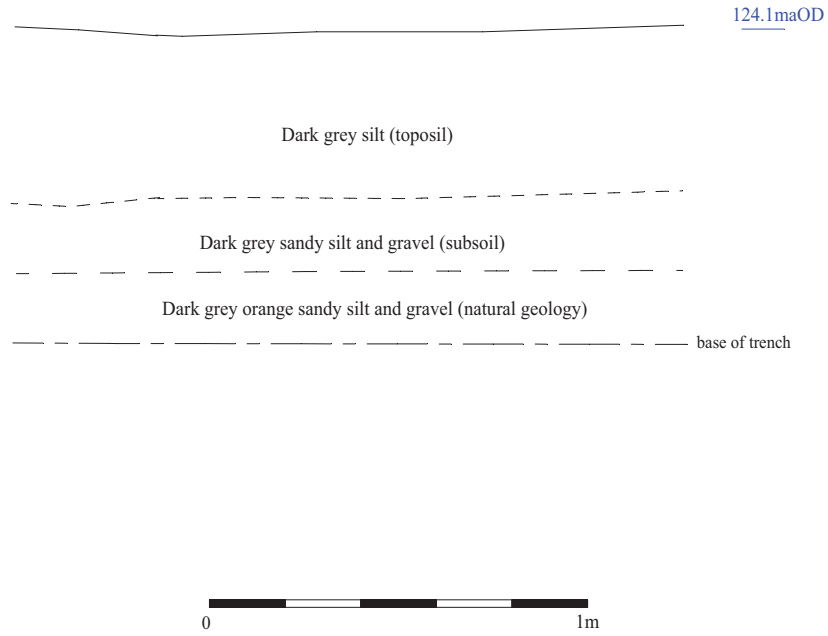


Figure 4. Representative section.