

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

PROJECT REVOLUTION

For EDF Energy

Blair Poole MSc MifA

L~P:ARCHÆOLOGY

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

PROJECT REVOLUTION

Client: EDF Energy

Local Authority: Cheshire East Council

NGR: 369654,360986

Planning App: 7/2008/CCC/15

Author(s): B Poole

Doc Ref: 0746C-AWB-v2.2

Date: December 13

Site Code: WAR/HTPR 09

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

A trading name of the L – P : Heritage LLP

33 Lower Bridge Street | Chester | Cheshire, CH1 1RS | +44 [0]1244 313100 | chester@lparchaeology.com

www.lparchaeology.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Figures

Table of Plates

Abstract

1. Introduction
2. Site Background
3. Aims and Objectives
4. Methodology
5. Results
6. Conclusions

Sources Consulted

Figures

TABLE OF FIGURES

Figure 1 - Site Location

Figure 2 - Site Layout

Figure 3 - Northern Area

Figure 4 - East Facing Section of Pipeline

Figure 5 - Southern Area

Figure 6 - Sample Section

TABLE OF PLATES

Plate i - South facing section of Pad 14, 1m scale

Plate ii - Well head 4, looking east

Plate iii - Northeast corner of well head 4

Abstract

Permission has been granted for extension of a Gas Processing Plant and link to the Nation Gas Transmission System, electricity and manifold compounds, conversion of 10 brine cavities to gas storage and associated infrastructure at Hole House, Warmingham. As a condition of this planning permission an archaeological watching brief was required during topsoil stripping.

Fieldwork was carried out between May 2009 and November 2013 by Claire Statter and Blair Poole of L – P : Archaeology, on behalf of EDF Energy.

All works were carried out strictly in accordance with an approved specification of works.

Historic research suggested that although the site lay close to areas of Prehistoric and Roman activity, and fell close to the bounds of a medieval deer park, it had never been settled or developed. The site revealed a consistent stratigraphic sequence of a thin layer of topsoil overlying the natural sand subsoil and clay.

No finds were recovered from the site and no archaeological features were identified during the topsoil strip.

These results have given an important insight into the landscape of this area, showing that the area has never been developed and shows no sign of being settled in the past. With viewing such a wide part of the landscape, this can help in defining the area's character.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This document represents the final report with respect to an archaeological watching brief undertaken at Hole House, also known as Project Revolution, Warmingham for EDF Energy. This report will summarise the results previously submitted in interim reports as well as the results of the final phase of monitoring undertaken in November 2013.
- 1.2. The local authority is Cheshire East Council.
- 1.3. The fieldwork was carried out by Claire Statter and Blair Poole of L – P : Archaeology. Archaeological monitoring began on the site on 5th May 2009 and concluded on 1st November 2013.
- 1.4. The site is located outside Warmingham, Cheshire (FIGURE 1). The NGR is 369654,360986.
- 1.5. The site code allocated by L – P : Archaeology is WAR/HTPR 09.
- 1.6. The work was carried out in accordance with the Specification for Archaeological Works prepared by Blair Poole of L – P : Archaeology (POOLE 2009).

2. Site Background

2.1. PLANNING

- 2.1.1. Planning permission has been granted for the extension of the Gas Processing Plant and link to the Nation Gas Transmission System, electricity and manifold compounds, conversion of 10 brine cavities to gas storage and associated infrastructure. This was granted under application number 7/2008/CCC/15.
- 2.1.2. This planning application was submitted and agreed prior to the change in local authorities and national legislation. As such the site was governed by the now defunct Cheshire County Council and had to abide by the now superseded PPG16 legislation.
- 2.1.3. EDF and Cheshire County Council agreed to the methodology for this works prior to commencement as set out in Specification for Archaeological Works at Hole House Warmingham (POOLE 2009).

2.2. GEOLOGY

- 2.2.1. The excavations confirmed the British Geological Survey data showing that underlying the topsoil is a drift deposit of sand. This sand overlay a red-orange natural clay.
- 2.2.2. The underlying solid geology has been recorded around the site area as Triassic rock of undifferentiated mudstone, siltstone and sandstone (BRITISH GEOLOGICAL SURVEY).

2.3. TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.3.1. The site is located on an area of high ground in the heart of the salt producing area of Cheshire between Middlewich and Nantwich (FIGURE 1). The area is mainly used for dairy farming and pasture, however the site has been used for gas processing.
- 2.3.2. The site is made up of a series of large fields used for cattle grazing. There are several buildings on the site including two site offices and a large gas processing facility.

2.3.3. Works carried out on the site comprised the stripping of well heads and pad, topsoil stripping for access roads and new site compounds, as well as service excavations and topsoil stripping for a new pipeline route (FIGURE 2).

2.3.4. The site has been divided into two area. The Northern area contained the new pipeline, access road and pad strips (FIGURE 3).

2.3.5. The southern area contained the well heads, compounds and service excavation work (FIGURE 5).

2.4.ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

2.4.1. The following is a summary of the history of the site and its surrounding area. The aim of this section is not to produce a full history of the site or its surrounding area. This section aims to place the site within an historical context.

PREHISTORIC

2.4.2. Prehistoric activity is known around the Middlewich area, with evidence from the Mesolithic period onwards. The closest identified Prehistoric evidence comes from unstratified discoveries of Mesolithic flint flakes and a Neolithic polished stone axe and flint blade 2km to the southeast of the study area.

2.4.3. Approximately 600m to the southwest of the study area, to the west of the railway line, there is evidence of a possible prehistoric circular earthwork identified from aerial photography (CSMR 249). No features are currently visible and a definitive date for the earthwork has not been determined, however, it is thought that this may date to the Bronze Age.

ROMAN

2.4.4. By the Roman period Middlewich had become one of the three important salt producing settlements of Cheshire (CROSBY 1996, 25). It is thought that brine from the flashes around Warrington was taken to Middlewich for processing at this time (CROSBY 1996, 110).

2.4.5. The main Roman road from Whitchurch to Middlewich (CSMR 1189/1/0) lies to the west of the study area. The agger, or bank associated with the road, still

exists as visible features in the landscape within the parishes of Minshull Vernon and Wimboldsley. The road line comes within 200m to the west of the main study area at grid reference SJ 68734 60873. This point is situated to the west of the railway line and as such is outside the main study area.

- 2.4.6. Associated with the road, to the northwest of the study area is a series of ditches at right angles to the Roman road (CSMR 1190/1). This site is a proposed Roman marching camp.
- 2.4.7. Approximately 800m to the east of the main study area is the location of a Roman industrial site, thought to have been used in the manufacture of bricks (CSMR 1091/1).
- 2.4.8. Although this industrial sites is some distance from the study area, its location to the east of the Roman road indicates that activity from this period was present in the surrounding area. Any field systems or cemeteries which are normally associated with Roman roads would be located adjacent to, or within a 200m skirt of the road.

EARLY MEDIEVAL

- 2.4.9. Within the study area there are no known early medieval features. Field systems of this date would have been of limited scale and later medieval and post medieval agricultural or industrial activities would have removed any traces of these.

MEDIEVAL

- 2.4.10. Although individually Warmingham is not recorded in the Domesday survey, it is included in the entry for Tetton, which would have existed as an earlier Saxon manor (MORRIS 1978, NO26). The presence of an early church and mill in the area may indicate that the village was present during the medieval period.
- 2.4.11. One kilometre to the northwest of the main study area a possible deserted medieval settlement (CSMR 829) has been identified by aerial photography. These settlements could have been deserted for any number of reasons, from disease to climatic incidents, however, surrounding the village there may have been a series of field systems that may survive in areas of the landscape or as

archaeological features, as identified in the Historic Landscape Characterisation survey of the area.

2.4.12. Around the study area, especially around Park House and Park Hall to the north, medieval activity has been recorded. The activity from this period relates to two manorial deer parks (CSMR 4028 & 4006). As only very wealthy individuals would be able to afford to receive a Royal license for a deer park, we can infer that the area around Warmingham housed several manors of high status.

2.4.13. Approximately 750m to the east of the study area lie the remnants of Warmingham Mill (CSMR 241/4). This mill dates to around 1289AD and although the building is now gone a series of earthworks including a dam, leat and pond still survive.

2.4.14. Within the village of Warmingham, 600m to the southeast of the study area, is a medieval stepped base cross dating to around 1298AD (CSMR 241/1/2, SAM 30361). This is a Grade II listed building and Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM). The base comprises three steps and a socket stone, with a later shaft set on top.

POST MEDIEVAL

2.4.15. Post medieval activity in the area is mostly represented by the built heritage with a number of listed structures around the study area, although no listed structures are within the study area itself. Post medieval agricultural activity can be seen throughout the area with field systems on and around the study area.

2.4.16. Park House is located 600m to the west of the study area and is a grade II listed structure (DCH3061). The farmhouse dates to the mid 19th century and is of red brick in a Flemish bond.

2.4.17. The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1881 shows the study area as it appears on the 1841 tithe map of Warmingham. It is clearly a rural environment, predominately encompassing fields. This layout can be seen to continue on all the subsequent Ordnance Survey maps from the late 19th century through to the present, 2007, edition.

2.4.18. A systematic review of the aerial photographs of the study area from surveys dating to between 1945 and 2000 revealed no other possible archaeological features other than those already identified, forming part of the Cheshire Historic Environment record discussed above (POOLE 2007).

3. Aims and Objectives

3.1. The general aims of the archaeological watching brief were to observe and record any archaeological deposits including their presence or absence, character and extent, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality.

4. Methodology

4.1. For a full description of the archaeological methodology please refer to section 4 of the Specification of Works (POOLE 2009).

5. Results

5.1. The results will be discussed by area. Deposit numbers are given in (parentheses). All measurements are given below ground level (BGL). The site is relatively flat and lies at an elevation of approximately 50mOD.

5.2. Northern Area (FIGURE 3)

5.2.1. The work in the northern area comprised the topsoil stripping for pads 13, 14 and 15, with associated access roads, and excavation along the length of a new pipeline route.

5.2.2. All excavations for the access roads and pads extended to a maximum depth of 0.4m below ground level (PLATE I). The upper deposit (100) was a humic loam topsoil of varying depths across the site from 0.1m to 0.25m thick. Below (100) lay a light brown sandy subsoil (101) measuring between 0.1m and 0.2m thick. This sandy subsoil sealed the natural red brown sandy clay (102).



Plate i - South facing section of Pad 14, 1m scale

5.2.3. In the area of the pipeline excavations, the majority of work entailed topsoil stripping. However, where the pipeline crossed field boundaries the excavations could extend deeper, reaching a maximum depth of 0.7m below ground level. In these areas the same stratigraphic sequence was seen (FIGURE 4), with a thin layer of topsoil (100), overlying the natural sandy subsoil (101), which in turn overlay the natural clay (102).

5.3.Southern Area (FIGURE 5)

5.3.1. The excavations in the southern area comprised the topsoil stripping of well heads 3 to 12, with associated service excavations, and the topsoil stripping of four compound areas.

5.3.2. The excavations for the well heads and compounds measured approximately 0.4m below ground level (FIGURE 6). In this area the dark humic topsoil (100) extended to between 0.2m and 0.25m thick and overlay the natural sandy subsoil (101).



Plate ii - Well head 4, looking east

5.3.3. In the majority of well head and compound excavations no features were encountered (PLATE II), showing that the area has never been developed, and can be characterised as an agricultural landscape. However, at the northeastern corner of well head 4 a large 20th century waste pit was encountered. This measured 0.5m deep by approximately 10m in diameter. The fill was a soft dark sandy loam (103), which contained plastic and metal waste material from the local farm. This material included toys, food containers, and agricultural machine parts (PLATE III).



Plate iii - Northeast corner of well head 4

- 5.3.4. The location of the pit, close to Hill Top Farm, suggests that this was a waste pit created by the farm in order to dispose of its excess material.
- 5.3.5. The service excavations penetrated slightly deeper than the topsoil strip for the well heads and compounds. The services were excavated to a depth of 0.6m below ground level and showed the same stratigraphic sequence as noted above. The dark humic topsoil (100) extended between 0.2m and 0.25m thick. Underlying this was a 0.2m to 0.3m thick layer of natural sandy subsoil (101). Below (101) was the natural sandy clay (102).
- 5.3.6. No archaeological features were encountered during the works on the site.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1. Permission has been granted for the extension of the Gas Processing Plant and link to the Nation Gas Transmission System, electricity and manifold compounds, conversion of 10 brine cavities to gas storage and associated infrastructure at Hole House, Warmingham. As a condition of this planning permission an archaeological watching brief was required during topsoil stripping.
- 6.2. Historic research indicated that the site lay close to areas of Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval activity.
- 6.3. The site revealed a simple, yet consistent, stratigraphic sequence across all areas, which was made up of a thin layer of topsoil overlying the natural sand subsoil and clay drift deposits.
- 6.4. No finds were recovered from the site and no archaeological features were identified during the topsoil strip.
- 6.5. The results of this piece of work have given an important insight into the landscape in this area. As the works covered such a large extent it has shown clearly that this area has never been developed and shows no sign of being settled in the past.

SOURCES CONSULTED

BIBLIOGRAPHIC

CHESHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

CROSBY, A. 1996. *A History of Cheshire*, Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd

MORRIS, J. 1978. *The Domesday book: Cheshire*, Chichester: Phillimore & Co. Ltd

POOLE B 2007. *Environmental Impact Assessment for land at Hilltop Brinefield, Warmingham*. L – P :
Archaeology unpublished archive report.

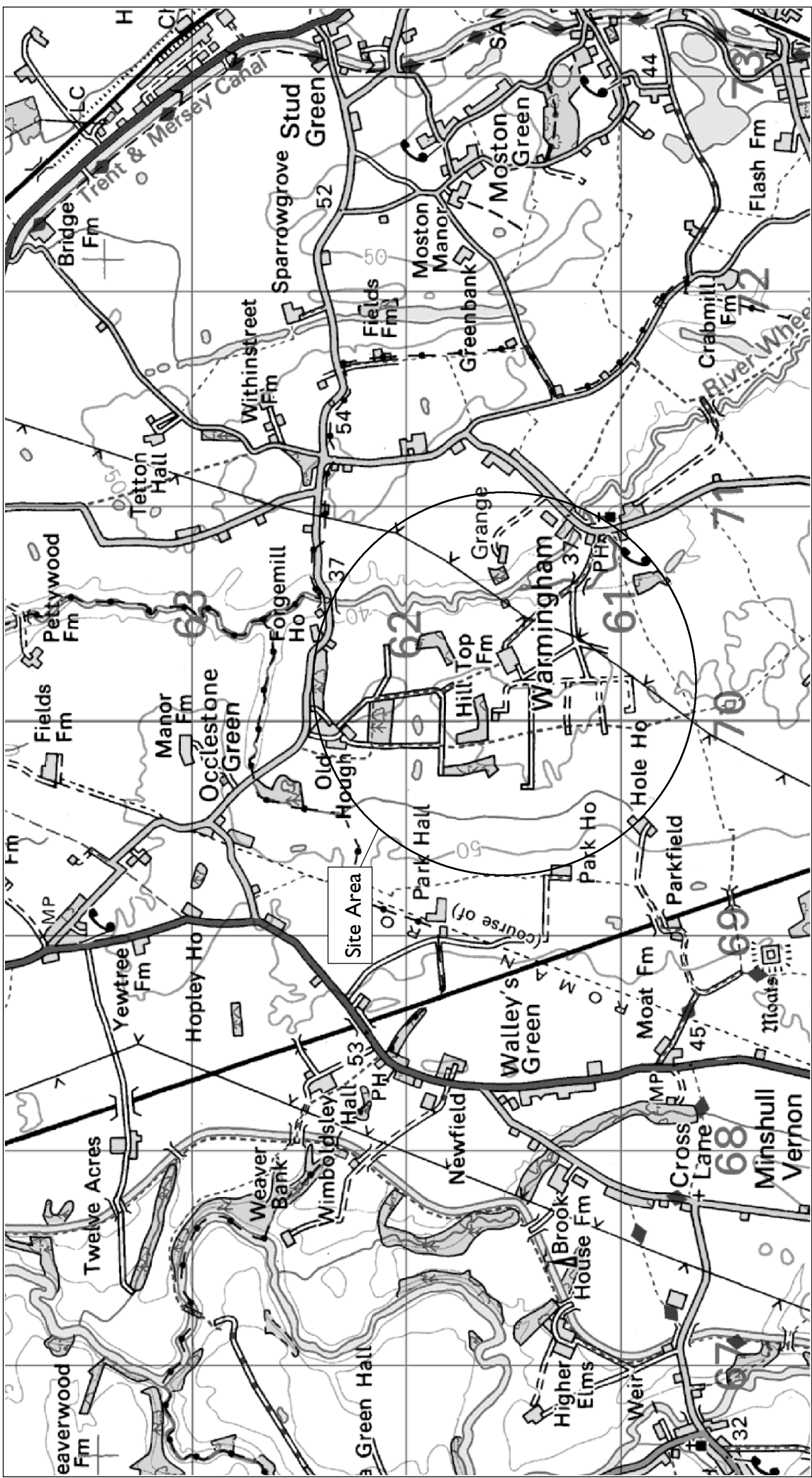
POOLE B 2009. *Specification for Archaeological Works at Hole House Warmingham*. L – P : Archaeology
unpublished archive report.

POOLE B 2010. *Interim report for Archaeological Watching Brief at Project revolution Warmingham*. L – P :
Archaeology unpublished archive report.

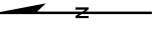
STATTER C 2011. *Interim report for Archaeological Watching Brief at Project revolution Warmingham*. L –
P : Archaeology unpublished archive report.

FIGURES

FIGURE 1 // Site Location General



Scale 1:25,000 @ A4



PROJECT // LP0746C - EDFT Project Revolution

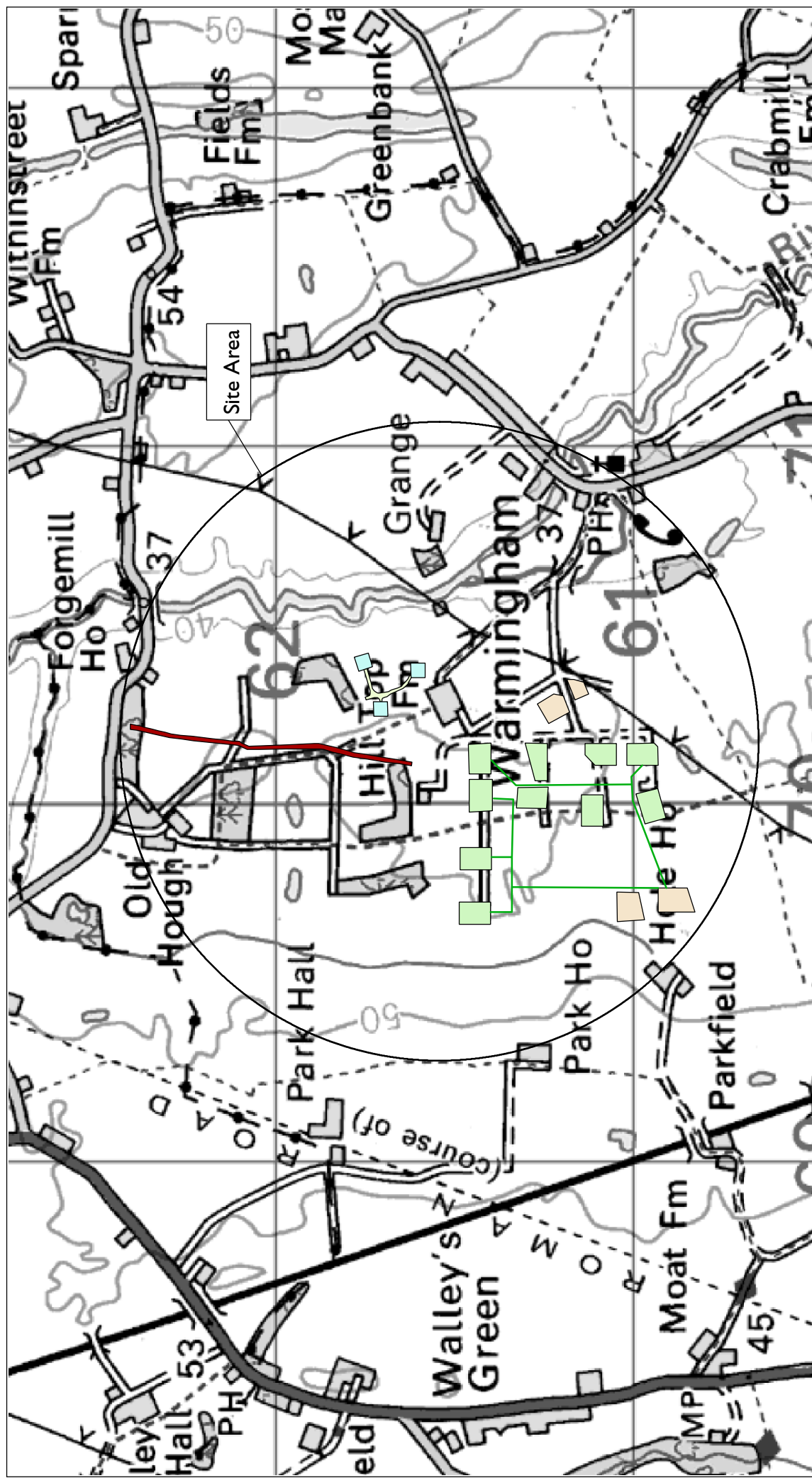
DESCRIPTION // Site Location General

Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 100030862





DOC REF: LP0746C-AWB-v2

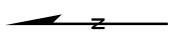
L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 2 // Site Layout



Scale 1:15,000 @ A4

	Service excavations		Pad area excavations
	Well head excavations		Compound excavations
	Pipeline excavations		Access road excavations



PROJECT // LP0746C - EDFT Project Revolution

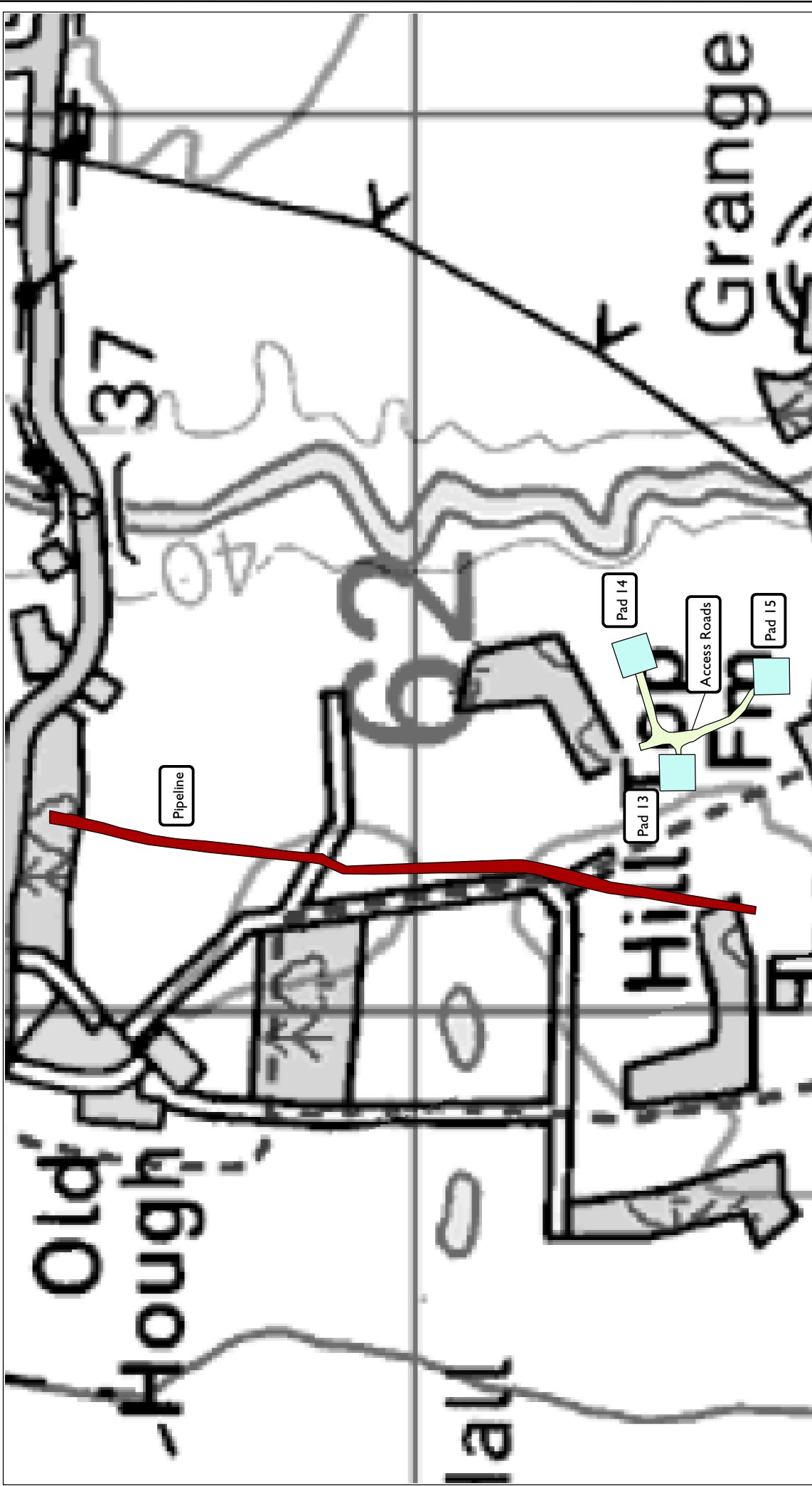
DESCRIPTION // Site Layout

Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 100030862

DOC REF: LP0746C-AWB-v2

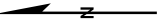
L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 3 // Northern Area



Scale 1:6,000 @ A4

250m



PROJECT // LP0746C - EDFT Project Revolution

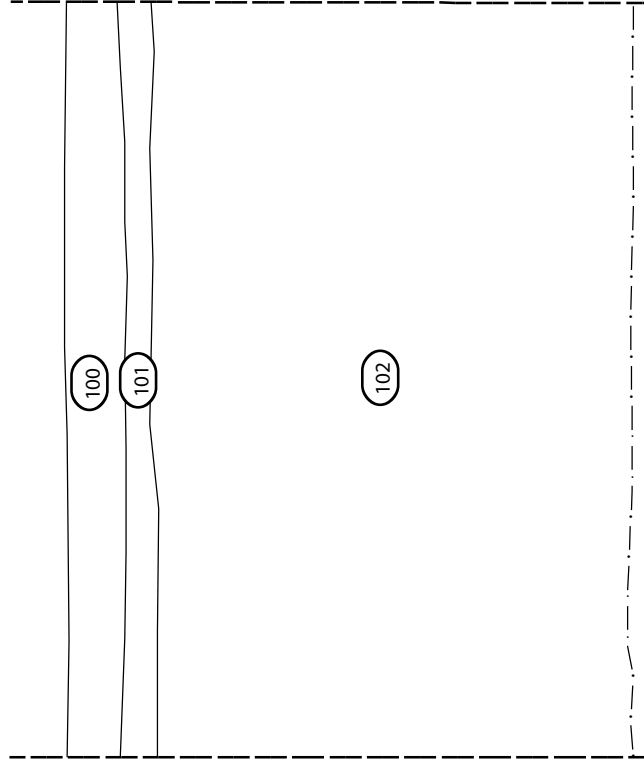
DESCRIPTION // Northern Area

Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 100030862

DOC REF: LP0746C-AWB-v2

L-P: ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 4 // East Facing Section of Pipeline



Scale 1:10 @ A4

0 0.5m

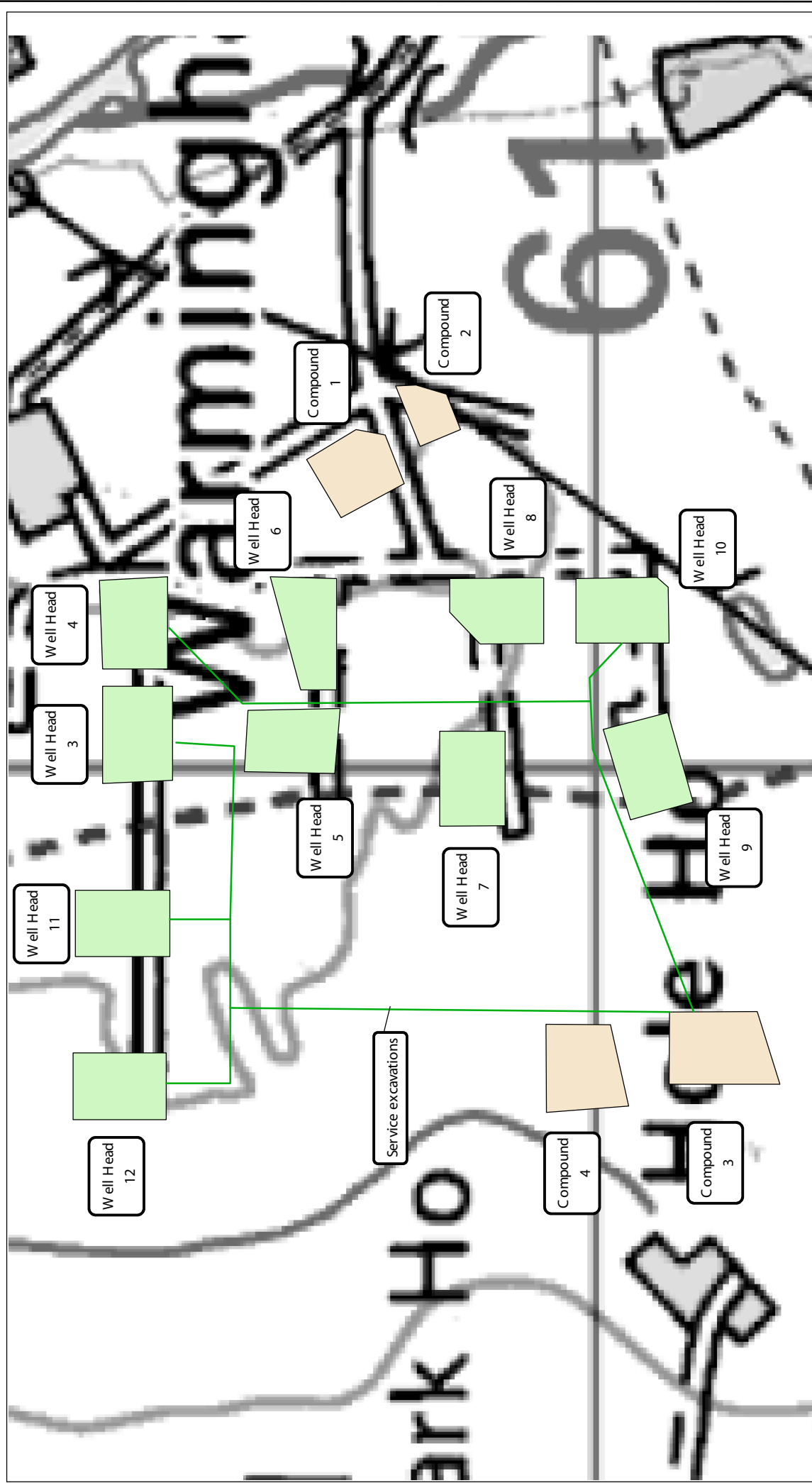
PROJECT // LP0746C - EDFT Project Revolution

DESCRIPTION // East Facing Section of Pipeline

DOC REF: LP0746C-AW B-v2

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

FIGURE 5 // Southern Area



Scale 1:5,000 @ A4

0 200m

PROJ ECT // LP0746C - EDFT Project Revolution

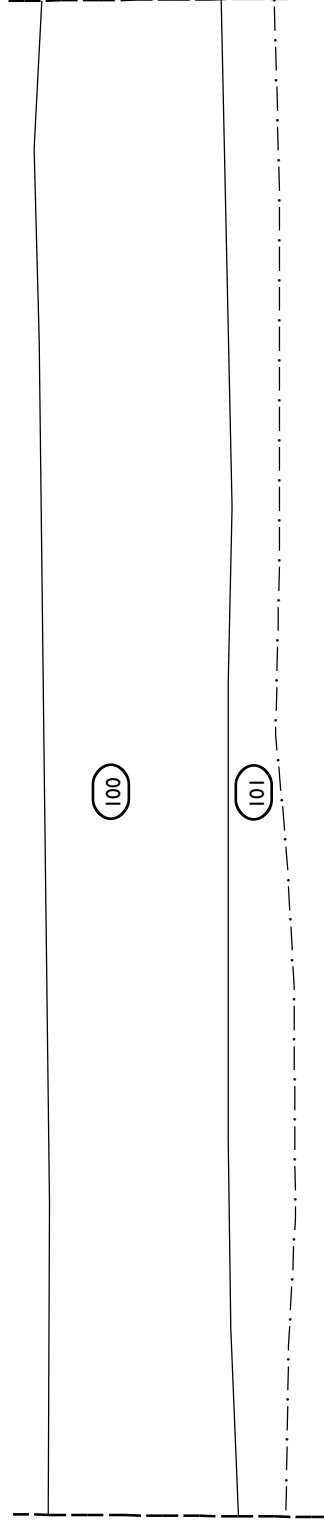
DESCRIPTION // Southern Area

Reproduced by permission of the controller of HMSO, Licence 100030862

DOC REF: LP0746C-AW B-v2

L-P:ARCHAEOLOGY

FIGURE 6 // Sample Section



Scale 1:10 @ A4

0 0.5m

PROJECT // LP0746C - EDFT Project Revolution

DESCRIPTION // Sample Section - From strip at Well Head 4

DOC REF: LP0746C-AWB-v2

L-P:ARCHÆOLOGY

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

Printable version

OASIS ID: lparchae1-166154

Project details

Project name	Project revolution
Short description of the project	Archaeological watching brief on topsoil stripping at EDF Energy site at Hole House, Warmingham.
Project dates	Start: 05-05-2009 End: 01-11-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WAR/HTPR 09 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 5 - Mineral extraction
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CHESHIRE CREWE AND NANTWICH WARMINGHAM Hole House
Postcode	CW11 3QN
Study area	0.10 Hectares
Site coordinates	SJ 369654 360986 52 -2 52 55 05 N 002 56 15 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 48.00m Max: 51.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	L - P : Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)

Project design originator	L - P : Archaeology
Project director/manager	Blair Poole
Project supervisor	Claire Statter
Type of sponsor/funding body	Electricity Authority/Company
Name of sponsor/funding body	EDF Energy

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Grosvenor Museum
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Watching Brief Report, Project Revolution
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Poole, B.
Other bibliographic details	LP0746C-v2.1
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	L - P : Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Chester
Description	Results of archaeological monitoring of topsoil stripping at Hole House. Warmingham.
Entered by	B. Poole (chester@lparchaeology.com)
Entered on	4 December 2013

OASIS:

Please e-mail English Heritage for OASIS help and advice

© ADS 1996-2012 Created by Jo Gilham and Jen Mitcham, email Last modified Wednesday 9 May 2012

Cite only: /export/home/web/oasis/form/print.cfm for this page