

Power Line Renewal Middleton Stoney Oxfordshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report

oxfordarchaeology



May 2009

Client:
Scottish Southern Energy Plc

Issue No: 1
OA Job No: 3924
NGR: SU 51742471 to SU 52022419

Client Name: Scottish and Southern Energy plc

Client Ref No: n/a

Document Title: Power Line Renewal, Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire

Document Type: Watching Brief Report

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: SU 51742471 to SU 52022419
Planning Reference: n/a

OA Job Number 3924
Site Code: MISTPL 08
Invoice Code: MISTPLWB
Receiving Museum: Oxfordshire County Museum
Museum Accession No: OXCMS 2008.13

Prepared by: Mike Simms
Position: Project Officer
Date: 18th January 2008

Checked by: Steve Lawrence
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: 28th May 2009

Approved by: Steve Lawrence
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: 28th May 2009

Document File Location: \\Server1\Smallworks\PROJECTS\Oxfordshire OX\Cherwell
CH\8311 Middleton Stoney Powerlines WB

Graphics File Location: n/a
Illustrated by: n/a

Disclaimer:

This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.

Oxford Archaeology
© Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd 2009

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES
t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496

e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk

Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627

Power Line Renewal, Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire

SUMMARY

On January 28th 2008, Oxford Archaeology (OA) undertook an archaeological watching brief near Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire (NGR: SU 5174 2471 to SU 5202 2419). The work was commissioned by Scottish and South Eastern Electricity Plc in advance of the renewal of overhead power cable poles within the region of an earthwork known as "Ave's Ditch". The watching brief revealed deposits of colluvium overlying weathered limestone. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) undertook an archaeological watching brief on 28th January 2008 near Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire (NGR: SU 5174 2471 to SU5202 2419). The work was commissioned by Scottish and South Eastern Electricity Plc in response to the requirement to replace overhead power cable poles close to the earthwork known as "Ave's Ditch".

1.1.2 The line of poles was located both to the north and south of the B4030, approximately 1.8 km north-west of the village of Middleton Stoney, 5 km west of Bicester. The area under consideration was predominately pasture with some arable land.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

2.1 Topography

2.1.1 The site lies between 110 m and 116 m above OD, with the southern end roughly level at 110 m rising to 116 m high at the northern end.

2.2 Geology

2.2.1 The underlying geology is Oxford clay over Great Oolite Limestone (Geological Survey of Great Britain, sheet no 218).

3 AIMS AND METHODS

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 The work observed comprised the excavation of 8 holes for replacement electricity poles. These were excavated using a machine mounted 0.5 m diameter auger. The holes were typically excavated to a depth of 1.8 m below the current ground level.

3.1.2 The watching brief aimed to establish if the pole locations impacted upon below ground potential archaeological deposits within the vicinity of Ave's Ditch. To establish this each auger hole and the resultant spoil were examined after excavation for the presence of artefacts and potential archaeological/palaeo-environmental deposits.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Description of deposits

4.1.1 The observed stratigraphy was similar throughout the site and a general description can be applied. The underlying bedrock, a weathered and fractured oolitic limestone in a yellow clay matrix (3), was encountered at a depth of between 0.55 m and 1.85 m below ground level. This was overlain by a layer of orange-brown sandy silt clay (2), that varied in depth between 0.3 m and 1.6 m below the modern ground level. This deposit was deepest within the lowest parts of the area and probably represents a colluvial deposit. Overlying this was a layer of grey-brown clay loam (1), the present day topsoil, of between 0.25 m and 0.35 m in depth.

4.2 Finds

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

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 No evidence for any archaeologically significant deposits or features were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

5.1.2 Two of the post holes straddled the line of Ave's Ditch. The stratigraphy exposed was of geological origin and it is probable that they were excavated outside the impact area of the ditch and bank.

APPENDICES**APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Layer	0.25 m - 0.35 m	Present day topsoil	-	-
2	Layer	0.3 m - 1.6 m	Colluvium	-	-
3	Layer	> 1.25 m	Weathered natural oolitic limestone	-	-

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

IFA, 2001 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

OA, 1992 *Field Manual* (ed. D. Wilkinson)

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Power Line Renewal, Middleton Stoney, Oxfordshire

Site code: MISTPL 08

Grid reference: SU 51742471 to SU 52022419

Date and duration of project: 28th January 2008

Area of site: eight circular auger holes each c. 0.5 m diameter

Summary of results: The watching brief exposed a layer of colluvium overlying the natural bedrock. No significant archaeological deposits or features were encountered.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course under the accession number OXCMS 2008.13.



Head Office/Registered Office

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@thehumanjourney.net
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850 500
f: +44 (0) 1223 850 599
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net/oaeast>

OA Méditerranée

115 Rue Merlot
ZAC La Louvade
34 130 Mauguio
France

t: +33 (0) 4.67.57.86.92
f: +33 (0) 4.67.42.65.93
e: [oamed@oamed.fr](mailto: oamed@oamed.fr)
w: <http://oamed.fr/>



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

*Oxford Archaeological Unit is a
Private Limited Company, N^o: 1618597
and a Registered Charity, N^o: 285627*