

Scotia Archaeology

**REPORT
TO
SCOTTISH & SOUTHERN ENERGY**

**OVERHEAD POWER LINE
AT UPPER BORLAND,
AUCHTERARDER, PERTHSHIRE**

**Watching brief
November 2013**

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INTRODUCTION

This document describes the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during the replacement of a pole on an overhead power line at Upper Borland, Auchterarder, Perthshire. The original intention was to monitor the replacement of two poles but only one was changed during this exercise. The refurbishment was carried out by Scottish & Southern Energy (SSE) whose representative, Denise Oudney, commissioned the watching brief which was undertaken by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology on 25 November 2013, during cold but dry conditions.

Prior to the commencement of fieldwork a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), outlining proposals for this work, was presented to Perth & Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT), archaeological advisors to Perth & Kinross Council. The WSI described a programme intended to mitigate any action that might damage the surviving archaeological record. SSE agreed to the work outlined in that document and to funding it.

THE SITE

The 33kv overhead cable line runs roughly east/west where it passes through Upper Borland Park, in the angle between Castleton Road and Gallowhill Road towards the north-west corner of Auchterarder. Pole 32, which was replaced because of decay, stood towards the north side of a large field that sloped down gently towards the north and which was planted with a winter cereal crop at the time of the watching brief.

Aerial photographs of Upper Borland Park show remnants of the south sector of a curvilinear ditch that had probably surrounded a large prehistoric enclosure (NN91SW 59/MPK 9863). To the immediate south of the enclosure is another linear cropmark, running east/west, that partially obscures the ditch. No evidence of these features, or anything else of archaeological significance, is now visible above ground.

THE WATCHING BRIEF

The trench for the replacement pole was machine-excavated to the immediate east of the extant pole and was centred on NN 93669 12970. Its location is shown highlighted in blue on the accompanying map supplied by SSE. The trench measured approximately 2.4m east/west by 1m wide and was excavated to a total depth of 1.8m. In the west end of the trench the machine cut through only backfill for the old pole. The remainder of the trench cut through 0.3m of almost stone-free, red-brown ploughsoil which lay directly on clayey soil of similar character but containing a few fragments of angular, shattered bedrock. This material appeared to be of glacial origin.

No structures, features or deposits of archaeological significance were uncovered within this trench and no artefacts were retrieved from it.

CONCLUSIONS

Nothing of interest was uncovered during this excavation although it certainly appears that Pole 32 stands within the limits of a prehistoric enclosure and it is quite likely that archaeological features may exist elsewhere within Upper Borland Park.

PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE

- 1 Pole trench viewed from the south-west
- 2 Pole trench viewed from the south-east
- 3 Erecting the new pole, viewed from the west
- 4 Erecting the new pole, viewed from the east