

# Scotia Archaeology

**REPORT  
TO  
SCOTTISH AND  
SOUTHERN ENERGY**

**POLE 94  
AUCHNAGARRAN  
GLENDARUEL**

**Archaeological  
watching brief  
May 2010**

*5 Bank Street  
ABERFELDY  
Perthshire  
PH15 2BB  
Tel & Fax No: 01887-820880  
email: scotarc@o2.co.uk*

## **INTRODUCTION**

This document describes the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during excavations by Scottish & Southern Energy plc (SSE) to replace a wooden pole during the refurbishment of the 33kv overhead power line between Striven and Otter Ferry in Glendaruel, Argyll. The watching brief was commissioned by Max Bigham of SSE and undertaken on 27th May 2010 by John Lewis of Scotia Archaeology. It was intended to mitigate any action that might damage the surviving archaeological record during the replacement of the pole.

## **THE SITE**

The pole, one of many to be replaced on this line, stands in a pasture field some 250m SSW of Auchnagarran, on the south side of the A886 towards the south end of Glendaruel. Approximately 10m to the north of the pole is a standing stone for which the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) has allocated the catalogue number NS08SW 8. The stone measures approximately 1m high and has a girth of 3.15m at its base. Its grid reference is given as NS 0064 8215.

## **THE WATCHING BRIEF**

A trench, measuring 2m east/west by 0.4m wide and 1.6m deep, was dug by a mechanical excavator, under close archaeological supervision, to the immediate east of the existing pole (no 94 on this line). The intention is to remove the old pole once the new one is in place. Thereafter, the power line is to be transferred to the new pole and the old one removed without disrupting the materials surrounding it.

The trench cut through grass and 0.25m of topsoil comprising pale brown, slightly sandy loam, which lay directly on fluvio-glacial deposits of sand, gravel and boulders. No features or deposits of archaeological significance were uncovered within this trench and no artefacts retrieved from it.

It proved impossible to obtain an accurate grid reference on a hand-held GPS monitor during the excavation, probably because of disruption to satellite signals as a result of the heavy rain that fell throughout this operation. Furthermore, there is some confusion as to the geographical relationship between the pole and the standing stone as depicted in existing records. A map supplied by SSE depicts Pole 94 as being at approximately NS 0062 8216, placing it some 20m west and 10m north of the standing stone whereas it actually stands 10m to the south of it.

This anomaly probably resulted either from an inaccurate reading for the stone or, perhaps more likely, because the positions of the power lines shown on the SSE map are more indicative than precise.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The discrepancy concerning the precise locations of the standing stone and Pole 94 has no bearing on the findings of this watching brief, both the stone and the pole being easily visible.

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More relevant is the fact that no features or deposits of archaeological significance were uncovered within the pole trench. However, it would not be surprising if such features and deposits remain undiscovered within the area around the stone, as has been found at other, similar monuments. As a consequence, it is recommended that any future ground-breaking activities within the close vicinity of standing stone NS08SW 8 should also be covered by an archaeological watching brief.

### **PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE**

The photographs listed below form part of the project archive and are not reproduced in this report.

- 1-2 Trench on east side of existing Pole 94, viewed from the east
- 3 The standing stone, viewed from the south
- 4-5 The standing stone, pole and trench, viewed from the north.