

HARD MASK PROCESS FOR MEMORY DEVICE WITHOUT BITLINE SHORTS

TECHNICAL FIELD

5 The present invention relates generally to semiconductor technology and more specifically to preventing bitline short circuits in MirrorBit® Flash memory.

BACKGROUND ART

10 Various types of memories have been developed in the past as electronic memory media for computers and similar systems. Such memories include electrically erasable programmable read only memory (EEPROM) and electrically programmable read only memory (EPROM). Each type of memory had advantages and disadvantages. EEPROM can be easily erased without extra exterior equipment but with reduced data storage density, lower speed, and higher cost. EPROM, in contrast, is less expensive and has greater density but lack erasability.

15 A newer type of memory called "Flash" EEPROM, or Flash memory, has become extremely popular because it combines the advantages of the high density and low cost of EPROM with the electrical erasability of EEPROM. Flash memory can be rewritten and can hold its contents without power. It is used in many portable electronic products, such as cell phone, portable computers, voice recorders, etc. as well as in many larger electronic systems, such as cars, planes, industrial control systems, etc.

20 In Flash memory, bits of information are programmed individually as in the older types of memory, such as dynamic random access memory (DRAM) and static random access memory (SRAM) memory chips. However, in DRAMs and SRAMs where individual bits can be erased one at a time, Flash memory must currently be erased in fixed multi-bit blocks or sectors.

25 Conventionally, Flash memory is constructed of many Flash memory cells where a single bit is stored in each memory cell and the cells are programmed by hot electron injection and erased by Fowler-Nordheim tunneling. However, increased market demand has driven the development of Flash memory cells to increase both the speed and the density. Newer Flash memory cells have been developed that allow more than a single bit to be stored in each cell.

30 One memory cell structure involves the storage of more than one level of charge to be stored in a memory cell with each level representative of a bit. This structure is referred to as a multi-level storage (MLS) architecture. Unfortunately, this structure inherently requires a great deal of precision in both programming and reading the differences in the levels to be able to distinguish the bits. If a memory cell using the MLS architecture is overcharged, even by a small amount, the only way to correct the bit error would be to erase the memory cell and totally reprogram the memory cell. The need in the MLS architecture to precisely control the amount of charge in a memory cell while programming also makes the technology slower and the data less reliable. It also takes longer to access or "read" precise amounts of charge. Thus, both speed and reliability are sacrificed in order to improve memory cell density.

35 An even newer technology allowing multiple bits to be stored in a single cell is known as "MirrorBit®" Flash memory has been developed. In this technology, a memory cell is essentially split into two identical

(mirrored) parts, each of which is formulated for storing one of two independent bits. Each MirrorBit Flash memory cell, like a traditional Flash cell, has a gate with a source and a drain. However, unlike a traditional Flash cell in which the source is always connected to an electrical source and the drain is always connected to an electrical drain, each MirrorBit Flash memory cell can have the connections of the source and drain reversed during operation to permit the storing of two bits.

The MirrorBit Flash memory cell has a semiconductor substrate with implanted conductive bitlines. A multilayer storage layer, referred to as a "charge-trapping dielectric layer", is formed over the semiconductor substrate. The charge-trapping dielectric layer can generally be composed of three separate layers: a first insulating layer, a charge-trapping layer, and a second insulating layer. Wordlines are formed over the charge-trapping dielectric layer perpendicular to the bitlines. Programming circuitry controls two bits per cell by applying a signal to the wordline, which acts as a control gate, and changing bitline connections such that one bit is stored by source and drain being connected in one arrangement and a complementary bit is stored by the source and drain being interchanged in another arrangement.

Programming of the cell is accomplished in one direction and reading is accomplished in a direction opposite that in which it is programmed.

A major problem with the MirrorBit architecture has been discovered as the memory cells are scaled down in size or shrunk and short circuits have started to occur between the bitlines leading to corrupted data and inoperable memory cells. This appears to be a result of switching from a "silicide" process to a "salicide" process.

Traditionally, the silicide process has been used in the manufacture of the contact areas for the contacts to the polysilicon wordlines. The silicide process involves the co-deposition of a metal and silicon onto the polysilicon or the silicon substrate. The most commonly formed silicide is tungsten silicide (WSi). However, the electrical resistance of the tungsten silicide increases faster as the contact areas get smaller because to the grains of the material are large enough to cause resistance to electron flow. The relatively higher electrical resistance in smaller devices results in higher power requirements, and subsequent heat generation with reduced life expectancy, for the memory cell.

The higher electrical resistance has prompted a switch to different metal silicides, which have smaller grains sizes and so exhibit lower electrical resistance with smaller contact areas. The newest silicides are cobalt silicide (CoSi), titanium silicide (TiSi) and nickel silicide (NiSi). These silicides are deposited uniformly over the semiconductor wafer and the metal reacts with or "grows" on silicon. The process has the advantage that it will only form silicides on the polysilicon of the wordline or the silicon of the semiconductor substrate so the silicides are generally self-aligned without the need for masking. Thus, the process is called a "salicide" process for self-aligned silicide process.

Unfortunately, the salicide process advantage also creates a problem. It has been discovered that, since the metal is deposited uniformly over the semiconductor wafer the metal often leaks during deposition down to the silicon substrate and forms silicides where they are not desired. In particular, silicide between the bitlines causes short circuits and results in the corrupted data and inoperable memory cells.

A solution to this problem has been long sought but has long eluded those skilled in the art.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides a manufacturing method for semiconductor devices, which includes providing a semiconductor substrate and depositing a charge-trapping dielectric layer. First and second bitlines are implanted and a wordline layer is deposited. A hard mask layer is deposited over the wordline layer. The hard mask is of a material formulated for removal without damaging the charge-trapping dielectric layer. A photoresist is deposited over the wordline layer and used to form a hard mask. The photoresist is removed. The wordline layer is processed using the hard mask to form a wordline and the hard mask is removed. A salicide can be grown without short-circuiting the first and second bitlines.

The above and additional advantages of the present invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from a reading of the following detailed description when taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART) is a plan view of a conventional MirrorBit Flash EEPROM;

FIG. 2 (PRIOR ART) is a circuit schematic of a portion of one of the $M \times N$ array cores of FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART);

FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART) is a plan view of a portion of one of the $M \times N$ array cores 104 of FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART);

FIG. 4 (PRIOR ART) is a cross-sectional isometric view of a typical MirrorBit Flash memory cell along the line 4--4 of FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART);

FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view of a partially processed memory cell similar to a cross-sectional view along line 5--5 in FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART);

FIG. 6 is the structure of FIG. 5 after formation of a hard mask and removal of the photoresist and the optional ARC layer;

FIG. 7 is the structure of FIG. 6 after processing using the hard mask to form wordlines;

FIG. 8 is the structure of FIG. 7 after deposition of a spacer material;

FIG. 9 is the structure of FIG. 8 with saliciding; and

FIG. 10 is shown a simplified process chart of the present invention.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

Referring now to FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART), therein is shown a plan view of a MirrorBit® Flash EEPROM 100, which commonly includes a semiconductor substrate 102 in which one or more high-density core regions and one or more low-density peripheral portions are formed. High-density core regions typically include one or more $M \times N$ array cores 104 of individually addressable, substantially identical MirrorBit Flash memory cells. Low-density peripheral portions typically include input/output (I/O) circuitry and programming circuitry for selectively addressing the individual memory cells. The programming circuitry is represented in part by and includes one or more x-decoders 108 and y-decoders 110, cooperating with I/O circuitry 106 for connecting the source, gate, and drain of selected addressed memory cells to predetermined voltages or impedances to effect

designated operations on the memory cell, e.g., programming, reading, and erasing, and deriving necessary voltages to effect such operations.

The term "horizontal" as used in herein is defined as a plane parallel to the conventional plane or surface the semiconductor substrate 102 regardless of its orientation. The term "vertical" refers to a direction perpendicular to the horizontal as just defined. Terms, such as "on", "above", "below", "higher", "lower", "over", "under", "side" and "beside", are defined with respect to these horizontal and vertical planes. The term "processed" as used herein is defined to include one or more of the following: depositing or growing semiconductor materials, masking, patterning, photolithography, etching, implanting, removal, and/or stripping.

Referring now to FIG. 2 (PRIOR ART), therein is shown a circuit schematic of a portion of one of the $M \times N$ array cores 104 of FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART). The circuit schematic shows a line of memory cells 200, which includes memory cells 201 through 204 and which together can form an 8-bit word. Each of the memory cells 201 through 204 is connected to a wordline 206, which acts as a control gate. Each of the memory cells 201 through 204 has two associated bitlines with most of the memory cells having a common bitline. The memory cell 201 has associated bitlines 208 and 209; the memory cell 202 has associated bitlines 209 and 210; the memory cell 203 has associated bitlines 210 and 211; and the memory cell 204 has associated bitlines 211 and 212.

Depending upon a signal on the wordline and the connection of the bitlines in a memory cell to an electrical source or drain, the memory cells 201 through 204 are capable of writing, reading, and erasing bits at locations 215 through 222. For example, control of the bit at location 215 is achieved through connection of the drain to the bitline 208 and the source to the bitline 209. Similarly, control of the bit at location 216 is achieved through connection of the drain to the bitline 209 and the source to the bitline 208. Although adjacent memory cells share common bitlines, the adjacent memory cells do not interfere with each other because the memory cells are programmed one at a time and only one memory cell is active at a time while programming.

Referring now to FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART), therein is shown a plan view of a portion of one of the $M \times N$ array cores 104 of FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART). The semiconductor substrate 102 has a plurality of implanted bitlines 304 extending in parallel with a plurality of formed wordlines 302 extending in parallel and at right angles to the plurality of implanted bitlines 304. The wordlines 302 and bitlines 304 have contacts and interconnections (not shown) to the programming circuitry represented in part by x-decoders 108 and y-decoders 110 of FIG. 1 (PRIOR ART).

Referring now to FIG. 4 (PRIOR ART), therein is shown a cross-sectional isometric view of a typical MirrorBit Flash memory cell along the line 4--4 of FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART), such as a memory cell 400. The semiconductor substrate 102 is a p-doped silicon substrate with a threshold adjustment implant 402 of a p-type material, such as boron. The threshold adjustment implant 402 provides a region that is more heavily doped than the semiconductor substrate 102 itself and assists in the control of the threshold voltage of the memory cell 400.

A charge-trapping dielectric layer 404 is deposited over the semiconductor substrate 102. The charge-trapping dielectric layer 404 generally can be composed of three separate layers: a first insulating layer 406, a charge-trapping layer 408, and a second insulating layer 410. The first and second insulating layers 406 and 410 are of an oxide dielectric such as silicon dioxide (SiO_2) and the charge-trapping layer 408 is of a nitride dielectric such as silicon nitride (Si_3N_4). The oxide-nitride-oxide configuration is frequently referred to as a

matter of convenience as an "ONO layer".

The bitlines 304 of FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART) are implanted under the charge-trapping dielectric layer 404 in the semiconductor substrate 102 as typified by first and second conductive bitlines 412 and 414. They are typically of an implanted n-type material, such as arsenic, and can include an oxide portion (not shown) in some embodiments. The first and second conductive bitlines 412 and 414 are spaced apart and define a volume between them with the threshold adjustment implant 402, which is a channel 416.

A material, such as polysilicon, is deposited over the charge-trapping dielectric layer 404, patterned, etched, and stripped resulting in a wordline 418. The wordline 418 is one of the wordlines 302 in FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART).

It is understood that the implementation of each step in manufacturing has associated processing steps.

The locations 420 through 422 indicate where bits can be stored in the memory cell 400 and locations 424 and 426 are adjacent locations, which are independent of the memory cell 400.

As explained briefly earlier, major problem with the MirrorBit architecture has been discovered as the memory cells are scaled down in size or shrunk and short circuits have started to occur between the bitlines leading to corrupted data and inoperable memory cells. This appears to be a result of switching from a "silicide" process to a "salicide" process.

Traditionally, the silicide process has been used in the manufacture of the contact areas for the contacts to polysilicon wordlines. The contact areas act as the bonding transition from the conductive polysilicon to the metal of the contact. The silicide process involves the co-deposition of a metal and silicon onto the polysilicon. As the co-deposition occurs, the metal and silicon form the silicide and also bond to the polysilicon. The most commonly formed silicide is tungsten silicide (WSi). However, the electrical resistance of the tungsten silicide increases faster as the contact areas get smaller because the grains of the material are large enough to cause resistance to electron flow. Essentially, the smaller tungsten silicide contact areas are about the same size as the grains of tungsten silicide and the grains resist the flow of electrons. The higher electrical resistance results in higher power requirements, and subsequent heat generation, for the memory cell.

The higher electrical resistance has prompted a switch to different metal silicides, which form smaller size grain as they are deposited. With the smaller grain size, they exhibit lower electrical resistance than tungsten silicide at the same contact size. The newest silicides are cobalt silicide (CoSi), titanium silicide (TiSi) and nickel silicide (NiSi). These silicides are not formed by co-deposition, but instead, just the metal is deposited. The metal is deposited uniformly over the semiconductor wafer and the metal reacts with or "grows" on silicon. The process has the advantage that it will only form silicides on the polysilicon of the wordline or the silicon of the semiconductor substrate so the silicides are generally self-aligned without the need for masking. Thus, the process is called a "salicide" process for self-aligned silicide process.

Unfortunately, the salicide process advantage also creates a problem. It has been discovered that, since the metal is deposited uniformly over the semiconductor wafer the metal often leaks during deposition into the silicon substrate and forms silicides where they are not desired. In particular, silicide between the bitlines causes short circuits and results in the corrupted data and inoperable memory cells.

After much investigation, it was discovered that the metal is able to leak down to the semiconductor substrate 102 because the charge-trapping dielectric layer 404 is sometimes "damaged" during the manufacturing process. The damage often consists of small openings all the way through to the semiconductor

substrate 102. The charge-trapping dielectric layer 404 normally covers and protects the silicon of the semiconductor substrate 102 from metal contact during the salicidation process for wider spaced wordlines 302.

In the conventional process, an organic photoresist is used to pattern polysilicon, which is formed into the wordlines 302 over an ONO charge-trapping dielectric layer. As the wordlines 302 become more tightly spaced, the stripping process or removal process for the photoresist sometimes caused damage to the oxide and nitride layers of the ONO layer adjacent to the wordlines 302.

More specifically, the photoresist is organic and contains carbon. Near the end of the etching of the polysilicon, the carbon combines with the top oxide layer and sometimes creates openings in the top oxide layer. Because the selectivity between the polysilicon etchant and nitride is not high, the middle nitride layer is also sometimes etched through the openings in the top oxide layer.

Where an optional inorganic ARC (anti-reflective coating) layer, which uses a nitride removal process, is used to reduce standing waves and reflection in the photoresist, the situation is worse. The nitride removal process acts more strongly through the openings in the top oxide layer to more strongly form openings through the middle nitride layer.

Subsequently, a pre-metal deposition oxide strip is performed to clean the ONO layer and, possibly, a spacer etch photoresist strip. These stripping processes sometimes cause further openings, under the previously created openings in the top oxide layer and middle nitride layer, and through the bottom oxide layer.

During the metal deposition for the salicidation process, as a result of the damage through the ONO layers, the metal sometimes leaks through to the silicon of the semiconductor substrate 102 between the wordlines 302. Since the bitlines 304 are perpendicular to the wordlines 302, silicide on the silicon substrate between the wordlines 302 will short-circuit the bitlines 304.

Further, it was discovered that the use of the inorganic ARC caused the wordlines 302 to shrink and therefore the spaces to widen. The reason is that the inorganic ARC is difficult to remove and the removal process is isotropic so it removes the edges of the inorganic ARC and the sides of the polysilicon of the wordlines 302. This resulted in higher resistance wordlines 302 than desired.

Referring now to FIG. 5, therein is shown a cross-sectional view of a partially processed memory cell 500 similar to a cross-sectional view along line 5--5 in FIG. 3 (PRIOR ART). A p-type silicon substrate 501 has been implanted or processed with a p-type threshold adjustment implant 502.

A charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 is deposited over the silicon substrate 501. The charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 generally can be composed of three separate layers: a first insulating layer 506, a charge-trapping layer 508, and a second insulating layer 510. The first and second insulating layers 506 and 510 may be of an oxide dielectric such as silicon dioxide (SiO_2) and the charge-trapping layer 508 may be of a nitride dielectric such as silicon nitride (Si_3N_4) to form an ONO layer. It will be noted that the present invention is not limited to specific dielectric or charge-trapping materials.

The bitlines, as typified by a first n-type bitline 512, are implanted under the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 in the silicon substrate 501 and a wordline material 515, such as polysilicon, has been deposited over the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504. Again, it will be noted that the present invention is not limited to specific bitline or gate materials. For example, NPN structures are shown but the structures can also be PNP.

A hard mask layer 516 has been deposited over the wordline material 515 and has not been processed. The hard mask layer 516 can act as an ARC or an ARC can be deposited as a separate layer, such as an optional

ARC layer 517, but more importantly, the hard mask layer 516 is formulated to be a material that can be stripped off the wordline material 515 without the stripping process damaging any exposed portion of the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 at the same time.

5 In order to be strippable without damaging the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504, the hard mask layer 516 should be properly formulated to not affect the middle layer of the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504. For example, where the nitride layer is the middle layer, an oxide such as silicon oxide would be the proper formulation. For different combinations of materials in the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 and processing modifications, other materials could be used, for example a nitride such as silicon nitride or a silicon oxynitride.

10 In addition, in order to be strippable without damaging the nitride, the hard mask layer 516 is made thinner than the optional ARC layer 517 so that the etch can remove the hard mask layer 516 before significant openings can be formed through the middle layer. A hard mask layer 516 could be made having a thickness less than the middle layer.

15 A photoresist 518 has been deposited over the hard mask layer 516 or the optional ARC layer 517. The optional ARC layer 517, the hard mask layer 516 and the photoresist 518 have been processed to form openings 521 through 523 to expose the wordline layer 515.

In FIG. 5, both the photoresist 518 and the optional ARC layer 517 have been processed (i.e., the materials have been deposited, masked, patterned, exposed, and etched) for processing the hard mask layer 516.

20 Referring now to FIG. 6, therein is shown the structure of FIG. 5 after formation of a hard mask 519 and removal of the photoresist 518 and the optional ARC layer 517. The hard mask 519 alone is used to create the structure of FIG. 7.

It should be noted that in the past, the photoresist and ARC would be used to create the wordlines 525 through 528 (without the hard mask layer 516) of FIG. 7 so the ONO layer would be exposed between the wordlines and the problems noted above would occur.

25 Referring now to FIG. 7, therein is shown the structure of FIG. 6 after processing using the hard mask 519 to form wordlines 525 through 528. The processing using the hard mask 519 exposes the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 at exposed areas 530 through 532. However, since the hard mask layer 516 material is specifically formulated so as to not damage the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 during removal, the charge-trapping dielectric layer 504 will not be damaged at the exposed areas 530 through 532 when the hard mask 519 is removed.

30 For example, where the hard mask 519 is of silicon oxide, its removal would only cause openings in the top oxide layer of the ONO layers and not of the nitride layer. Thus, the subsequent pre-metal deposition oxide strip and oxide spacer etch photoresist strip would not penetrate the nitride layer. This would leave the nitride layer and the bottom oxide layer to protect the semiconductor substrate. With no access for metal to the semiconductor substrate, there will be no short-circuiting of the bitlines.

35 Referring now to FIG. 8 therein is shown the structure of FIG. 7 after removal of the hard mask 519. An inorganic spacer material 534 has been deposited because it is required for the peripheral portions of the Flash EEPROM 100 of Figure 1.

Referring now to FIG. 9, therein is shown the structure of FIG. 8 after etching of the spacer material 534 to form spacers 535 through 538 around the respective wordlines 525 through 528. If the spacers 535

through 538 are not formed, an additional masking step of the entire core is required or additional processing steps to provide access to the bitlines.

5 The memory cell 500 is also shown after application of the saliciding process to grow metal silicides 540 through 543, such as cobalt silicide, titanium silicide, or nickel silicide contacts on top of the respective wordlines 525 through 528.

Since the metal silicide will not form on the exposed ONO layer or the nitride spacers, which do not contain silicon, the metal silicide will be self-aligned on the tops of the polysilicon wordlines; i.e., silicide will be grown.

10 Referring now to FIG. 10, therein is shown a simplified process chart 600 of the present invention which includes: providing semiconductor substrate 602; implanting threshold adjustment implant 604; depositing charge-trapping dielectric layer 606; implanting bitlines 608; depositing wordline layer 610; depositing hard mask layer 612; depositing ARC layer 614; depositing photoresist and forming photomask 616; forming hard mask 618; removing photomask (and optional ARC layer) 620; forming wordline 622; removing
15 hard mask 624; forming spacer 626, and growing silicide 628. Various alternative sequences, additions, and deletions to this process chart would be obvious to those skilled in the art from a detailed reading of the present disclosure.

Various implementations of the method may be used in different electronic devices and especially the dual bit memory cell architecture may be achieved according to one or more aspects of the present invention. In particular, the invention is applicable to memory devices wherein both bits in a dual bit cell are used for data or
20 information storage.

While the invention has been described in conjunction with a specific best mode, it is to be understood that many alternatives, modifications, and variations will be apparent to those skilled in the art in light of the foregoing description. Accordingly, it is intended to embrace all such alternatives, modifications, and variations that fall within the spirit and scope of the included claims. All matters hither-to-fore set forth or
25 shown in the accompanying drawings are to be interpreted in an illustrative and non-limiting sense.

CLAIMS

1. A method of manufacturing an integrated circuit comprising:
 - providing a semiconductor substrate (102) (602);
 - 5 depositing a charge-trapping dielectric layer (504) over the semiconductor substrate (102) (606);
 - forming first and second bitlines (512) in the semiconductor substrate (102) (608);
 - depositing a wordline layer (515) over the charge-trapping dielectric layer
 - 10 (504) (610);
 - depositing a hard mask layer (516) over the wordline layer (515) (612) the hard mask layer of a material formulated for removal by a process which does not damage the charge-trapping dielectric layer;
 - depositing a photoresist layer (518) over the wordline layer (515) (616);
 - 15 processing the photoresist layer (518) to form a photomask (517) (616);
 - processing the hard mask layer (516) using the photomask (517) to form a hard mask (519) (618);
 - removing the photomask (517) (6202);
 - processing the wordline layer (515) using the hard mask (519) to form a
 - 20 wordline (525-528) (622);
 - removing the hard mask (519) (624) without damaging the charge-trapping dielectric layer (504); and
 - growing a salicide (628).
- 25 2. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 wherein removing the photomask (620) is performed before processing the wordline layer (515).
- 30 3. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 wherein depositing the hard mask layer (516) deposits a material selected from a group of consisting of oxides, nitrides, and oxynitrides.

4. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 including depositing an anti-reflective coating layer (517) after depositing the hard mask layer (516) wherein the hard mask layer (516) is less than the thickness of the anti-reflective coating layer (517).

5. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 including depositing an anti-reflective coating layer (517) and removing the anti-reflective coating layer (517) before processing the wordline layer (515).

6. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 including performing a pre-metal deposition strip.

7. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 wherein growing the salicide layer (540 (543) includes growing a metal silicide on the wordline (525-528) (628).

8. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 including depositing a spacer layer (534) and forming spacers (535-538) around the wordline (525-528) (626) before growing the salicide layer (540-543) on the wordline (206) (418) 525.

9. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 including implanting a threshold adjustment implant (502) into the semiconductor substrate (102) (608).

10. The method of manufacturing an integrated circuit as claimed in claim 1 wherein the charge-trapping dielectric layer (504) is composed of:
a first dielectric layer (506);
a charge-trapping layer (508) over the first dielectric layer (506); and
a second dielectric layer (510) over the charge-trapping layer (508).