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**PROPOSED SOLAR FARM, DECOY FARM, SPALDING,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Zbigniew Pozorski	
NGR: TF 2627 1278	Report No: 4972
District: South Holland	Site Code: DFCR14
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 5946
Signed:	Date: 23 October 2015

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details			
Project name	<i>Proposed solar farm, Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire</i>		
<p><i>In October 2015 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 2627 1278). The monitoring was commissioned by Push Energy in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a new solar farm.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies to the north-east of the historic town of Crowland, which includes the ruins of a medieval abbey, within the Historic Landscape Character (HLC) zone of The Eastern Fens (FEN2). The latter is characterised by isolated farmsteads and ragged linear settlements along main roads. Also evidence of Iron Age and Roman salt-making in the form of salterns and occupation, are known some 1km to the east and include three Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Therefore the site had a potential for prehistoric, Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.</i></p> <p><i>The ground disturbance associated with the construction of the solar farm was minimal. The principal element of the project, the solar panels, were constructed on thin stilts using a single pile system, 120mm x 60mm. Access was gained using a temporary trackway. The principal element monitored was the mechanically-excavated trench for a new electricity supply for the solar farm. The trench was a substantial length (c.450m) and no archaeological features or finds were present.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>02/10/2015</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>5946</i>	Site code	<i>DFCR14</i>
Type of project	<i>Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Site status	<i>Within the Historic Landscape Character (HLC) zone of The Eastern Fens (FEN2)</i>		
Current land use	<i>Farmland</i>		
Planned development	<i>Solar farm</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>-</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Lincolnshire</i>	<i>South Holland</i>	<i>Crowland</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Lincolnshire HER</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>c.10ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TF 2627 1278</i>		
Height AOD (min/max)	<i>c.2m AOD</i>		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>LCC PA</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Zbigniew Pozorski</i>		
Funded by	<i>Push Energy</i>		
Full title	<i>Proposed Solar Farm, Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire: Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>		
Authors	<i>Pozorski, Z.</i>		
Report no.	<i>4972</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>October 2015</i>		

PROPOSED SOLAR FARM, DECOY FARM, SPALDING, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

SUMMARY

In October 2015 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 2627 1278). The monitoring was commissioned by Push Energy in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a new solar farm.

The site lies to the north-east of the historic town of Crowland, which includes the ruins of a medieval abbey, within the Historic Landscape Character (HLC) zone of The Eastern Fens (FEN2). The latter is characterised by isolated farmsteads and ragged linear settlements along main roads. Also evidence of Iron Age and Roman salt-making in the form of salterns and occupation, are known some 1km to the east and include three Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Therefore the site had a potential for prehistoric, Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval archaeological remains.

The ground disturbance associated with the construction of the solar farm was minimal. The principal element of the project, the solar panels, were constructed on thin stilts using a single pile system, 120mm x 60mm. Access was gained using a temporary trackway. The principal element monitored was the mechanically-excavated trench for a new electricity supply for the solar farm. The trench was a substantial length (c.450m) and no archaeological features or finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In October 2015 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological monitoring and recording at Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire (NGR TF 2627 1278; Figs. 1 & 2). The monitoring was commissioned by Push Energy in compliance with a planning condition attached to planning permission for the construction of a new solar farm (South Holland District Council Planning Ref. H02-0454-14).

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken in accordance to a brief issued by the Planning Archaeologist of Lincolnshire County Council (LCC PA; dated 17/09/2014), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 09/04/2015), and approved by LCC PA. The project conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for An Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014), *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (2014), and the guidelines set down in the document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook*

(Standard Briefs for Archaeological Projects in Lincolnshire) (1997, revised 2012).

1.3 The objectives of the project of archaeological monitoring and recording were:

- initial clearance of overburden and subsoil under archaeological supervision
- observation of all groundworks associated with the proposed development and mitigation by a programme of archaeological recording, as necessary
- examination of spoil derived from the excavation for archaeological material
- post-excavation analysis, archiving and publication, as appropriate to the results of the project.

Planning policy context

1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.5 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site was in arable use and formed part of Decoy Farm, located to the north west of the village of Crowland (Fig. 1). It lies 5km south of Spalding and c.9km north-north-east of Peterborough.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site is on reclaimed marine alluvial deposits within an area of former creeks, at c.2m above sea level. The solid geology of the area is of mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation (British Geological Survey 1978). Soils on the site are clayey soils of the Wallasea 2 association, described as deep stoneless clayey soils, calcareous in places (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The site lies within a general area of archaeological interest with roddons of former creeks well-known, potential for evidence of Iron Age and Roman salt-making in the form of salterns and occupation, both of which are known some 1km to the east and include three Scheduled Ancient Monuments. Earlier prehistoric and Roman land surfaces may be buried here under later alluvium/peat. The village of Crowland occupies a raised gravel peninsula, which was an important focus of settlement and other activity in the Saxon period. Decoy Farm likely originated in the later 18th or 19th century.

4.2 The site lies c.3km to the north-east of the historic town of Crowland, which includes the ruins of a medieval abbey, within the Historic Landscape Character (HLC) zone of The Eastern Fens (FEN2). The latter is characterised by isolated farmsteads and ragged linear settlements along main roads. There is little evidence for settlement within this zone in the prehistoric to early medieval periods, except in and around Crowland and Stickney/Sibsey, though much evidence may have been obscured by the repeated fenland inundations. Crowland abbey was established in the 8th century and limited fenland reclamation occurred in the medieval period, but large scale fenland reclamation utilising new drainage channels, wind and steam powered engines did not occur until the 18th and 19th centuries. This reclamation allowed the establishment of farms within rectilinear field systems separated by drains, such as the post-medieval Decoy Farm (HER 25631; ELI9392), probably named after a former decoy pond once located there (HER 23226). The land drainage also allowed the exploitation of other natural resources, such as for a brickworks c.1km to the south (HER 20531). A geophysical survey, test pit and trial-trench investigations along the line of the A1073 Relief Road did not locate any evidence of historic landscapes or occupation (HER ELI3480, ELI3258, ELI5016 & ELI11136).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The ground disturbance associated with the construction of the solar farm was minimal. The principal element of the project, the solar panels, were constructed on thin stilts using a single pile system, 120mm x 60mm. Access was gained using a temporary trackway. The principal element monitored was the mechanically-excavated trench for a new electricity supply for the solar farm (Fig. 2).

5.2 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, the inspection of the subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the excavated area was scanned by metal detector.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

6.1 Deposits located within area of investigation were recorded in sample sections presented below.

<i>Sample Section 1 (DP 6)</i> <i>Service trench, east end, facing south-south-west</i> <i>0.00 = 2.05m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.38m	L1000	Topsoil. Mid to dark grey, friable, sandy silt
0.38m+	L1002	Natural light yellow, compact, clay

<i>Sample Section 2 (DP 7)</i> <i>Service trench, central part, facing north-north-east</i> <i>0.00 = 2.17m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.40m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.40m+	L1002	Natural clay. As above.

<i>Sample Section 3 (DP 8)</i> <i>Service trench, west end, facing south-south-west</i> <i>0.00 = 2.22m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.30m	L1000	Topsoil. As above.
0.30m+	L1002	Natural clay. As above.

Description: No archaeological features or finds were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 The groundworks commenced before the archaeological monitoring was put in place; that said the service trench was of a substantial length.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

8.1 The site was commonly overlain by Topsoil L1000, a mid to dark grey, friable, sandy silt (0.30 – 0.40m thick). It overlay natural clay, L1001, comprising of light yellow, compact, clay.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 The site had a potential for archaeological remains, in particular for the prehistoric, Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval archaeology. Evidence of Iron Age and Roman salt-making in the form of salterns and occupation, are known some 1km to the east and include three Scheduled Ancient Monuments. The surrounding landscape is characterised by isolated farmsteads and ragged linear settlements along main roads.

9.2 In the event no archaeological features or finds were revealed. No indication of any previous development of the site was identified. Little evidence of previous truncation appeared to have taken place, and no residual finds were recovered.

9.3 The service trench which was monitoring was of a substantial length (c.450m) and no archaeological features or finds were present.

10 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

10.1 Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at the City & County Museum, Lincoln, under Site Code DFCR14, Accession No LCNCC: 2014.249, Accession Window August 2015. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Push Energy for funding the project and for assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Ms Louise Jennings of Lincolnshire County Council.

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APPENDIX 1 CONTENTS OF THE ARCHIVE

Records	Number
Brief	Y
Specification	Y
Registers	1 (Digital Photo)
Context Sheets	2
Site drawings A1	0
Site drawings A3	0
Site drawings A4	1
Site photographs b/w	0
Site photographs colour slides	0
Digital Photographs	10

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1. Service trench, east end. Looking west.



DP 2. Service trench, west end. Looking south.



DP 3. Service trench, central part. Looking west.



DP 4. Service trench, central part. Looking south-east.



DP 5. Service trench, east end. Looking east-south-east.



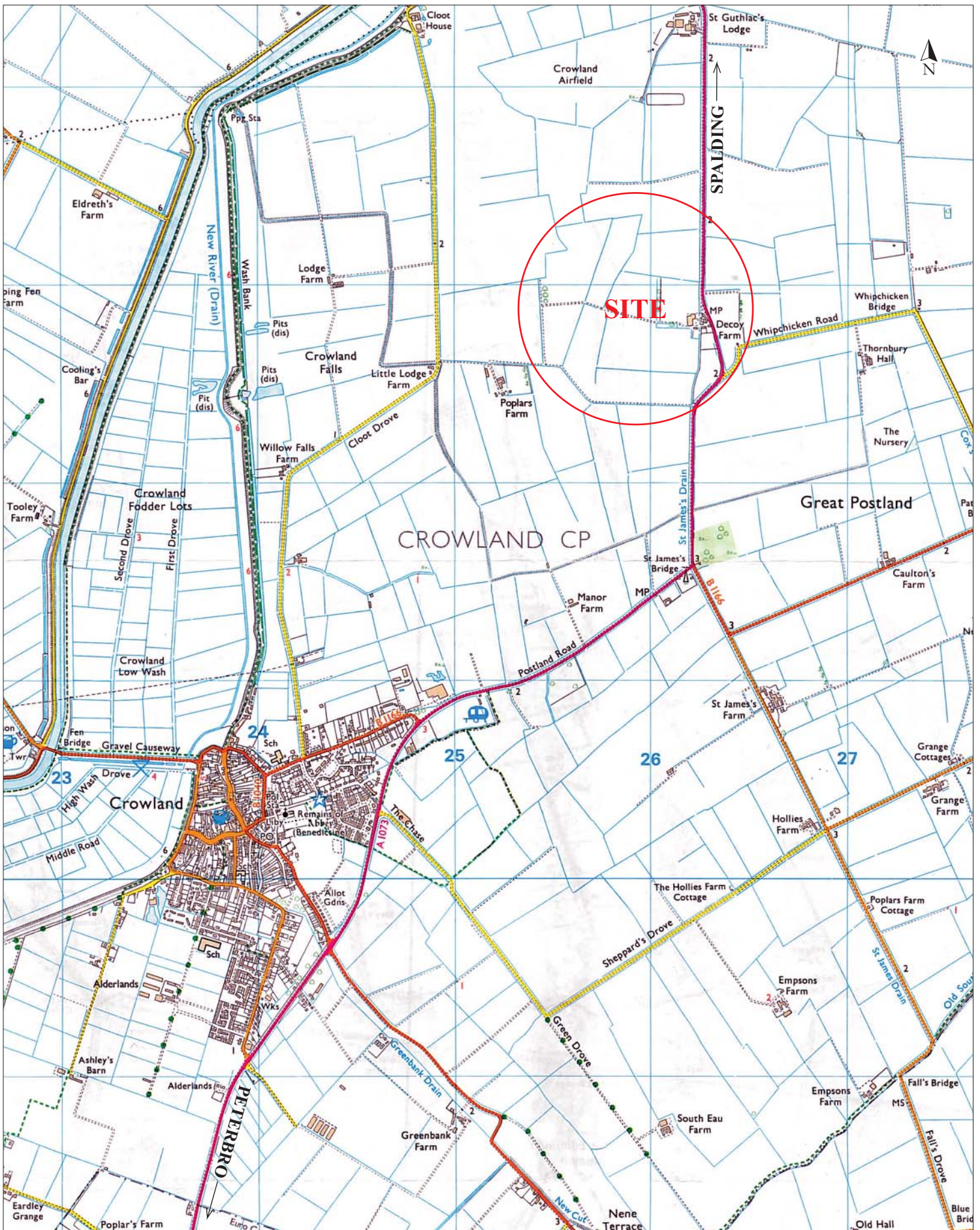
DP 6. Sample section 1. Looking north-north-east.



DP 7. Sample section 2. Looking south-south-west.

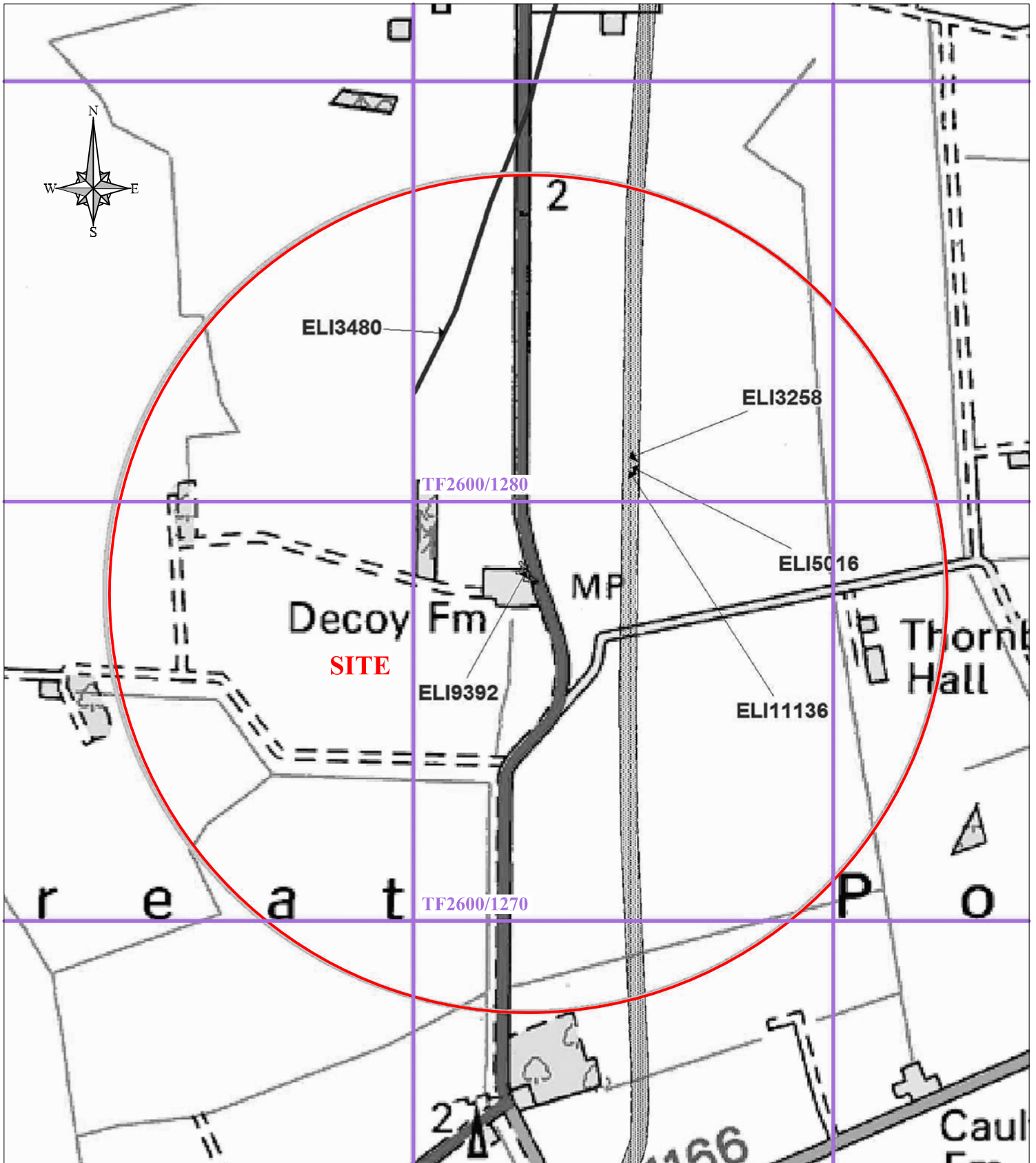


DP 8. Sample section 3. Looking north-north-east.



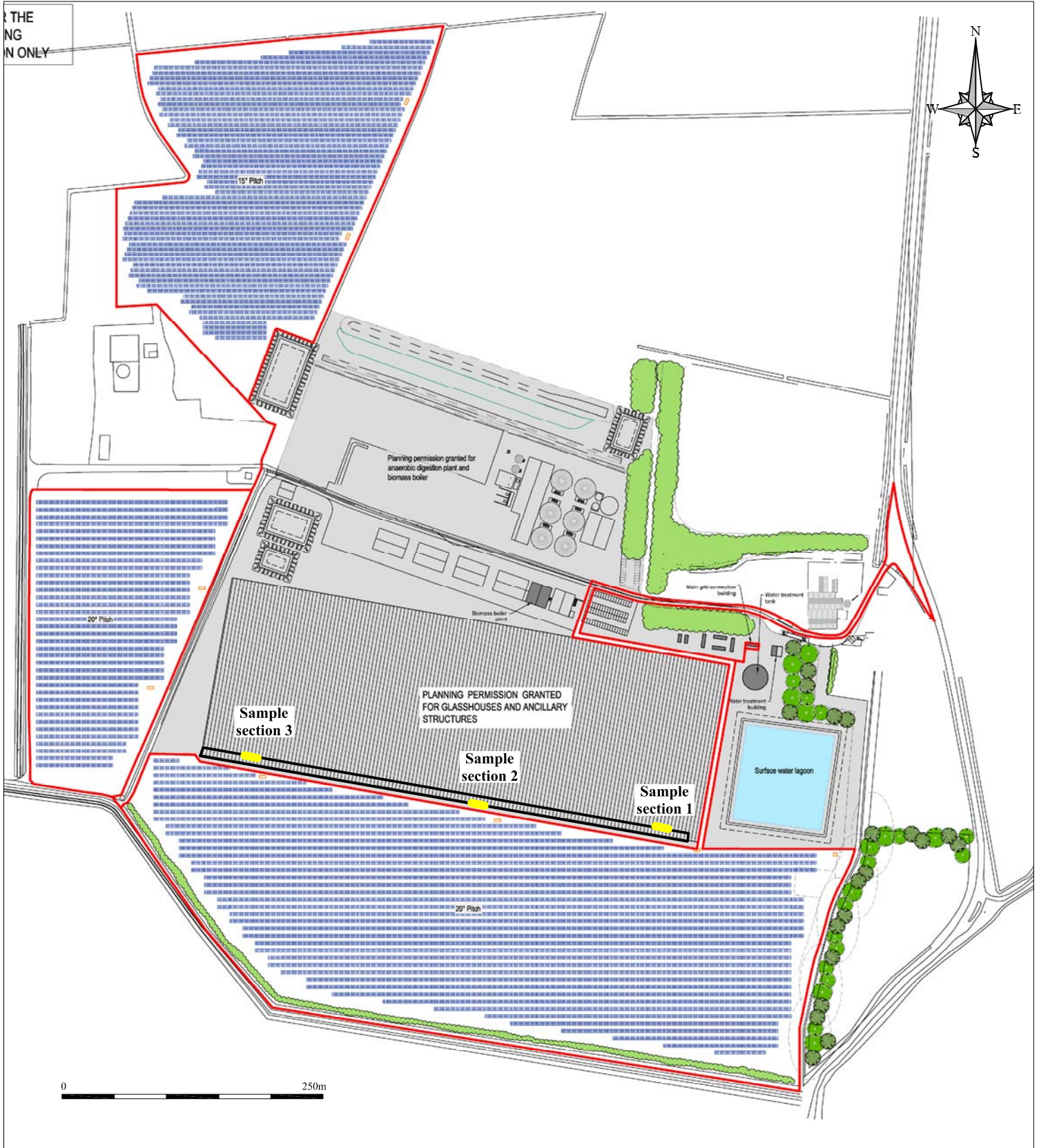
Reproduced from the 2012 Ordnance Survey 1:25000 map with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright Archaeological Solutions Ltd Licence number 100036680

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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire (P5946)

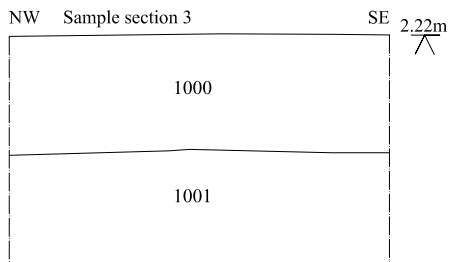
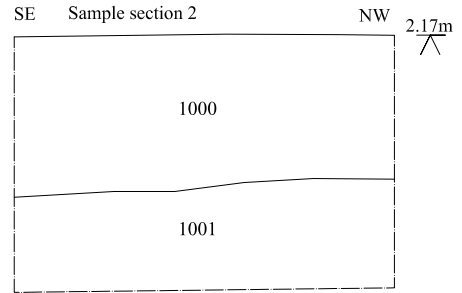
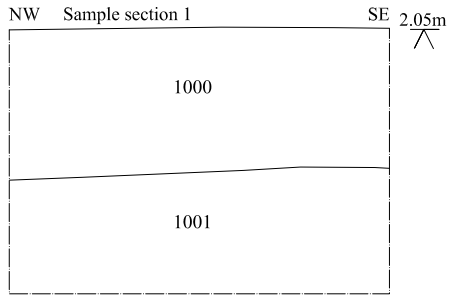


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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:12,500 at A4
 Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire (P5946)



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Fig. 3 Sample section location plan
 Scale 1:5000 at A4
 Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire (P5946)



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Fig. 4 Sample sections
Scale 1:20 at A4
Decoy Farm, Spalding, Lincolnshire (P5946)