

M1/19

**FINAL REPORT FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**  
**AT VINE HOUSE FARM, DEEPING ST NICHOLAS,**  
**LINCOLNSHIRE**

PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER: H03/0744/01

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Source L17146

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BY

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COMMISSIONED BY:

WIND PROSPECT DEVELOPMENT LIMITED

Conservation  
Services

25 OCT 2001

Highways & Planning  
Directorate

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## 1.0 Summary

- 10.2.3 F1 – the first trench filled in with concrete blocks
- 10.2.4 F2 – the second trench filled in with concrete blocks
- 10.2.5 F3 – the third trench filled in with concrete blocks
- 10.2.6 F4 – the fourth trench filled in with concrete blocks

## 10.3 APPENDIX C – PROJECT SPECIFICATION

Soko Archaeological Services Limited were commissioned by Wind Prospect Limited to carry out an archaeological evaluation in accordance with the brief set out by Lincolnshire County Council. This was specified to involve the monitoring of development works during the excavation of four 1m<sup>3</sup> trenches, to contain the concrete foundations of four supporting cables essential to the erection of a 40m mast.

Unfortunately, due to a breakdown in communication, no archaeologist was present during the excavation of these trenches, and they were subsequently filled in with concrete prior to the undertaking of a full archaeological investigation. The spoil from the excavations was analysed after these events, and no cultural material was found.

This report details the strategy proposed for the project, and gives a brief conclusion of the archaeological significance of the site using the evidence available under the conditions stated above.

## 2.0 Introduction

### 2.1 Planning Background

Planning permission for the erection of a 40m mast at Deeping St. Nicholas was granted to Wind Prospect Limited by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC). The mast necessitates four supporting cables, each of which will be fixed by concrete into foundation trenches measuring 1m<sup>3</sup>. Due to the intrusive nature of these proposed works, it was specified by LCC that an archaeologist be present to monitor any following development in order to assess the archaeological significance of the proposed site. Following this brief, Soko Archaeological Services were commissioned to undertake the evaluation and provided a specification outlining the archaeological strategy to be applied. A copy of the specification is included in this report as Appendix C.

### 2.2 Definition of an Archaeological Evaluation

The following is a statement provided by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), who describe an archaeological evaluation as being:

## 1.0 Summary

An evaluation was undertaken, on behalf of Wind Prospect Limited, at Vine House Farm situated in the parish of Deeping St. Nicholas, Lincolnshire. The site is located in the middle of Deeping Fen, a drained and enclosed peaty marsh. Previous archaeological investigations within Deeping Fen show the presence of settlement and other economic activity ranging from the Neolithic to the present, although evidence for such activity seems to be confined to the eastern and western boundaries of the fen.

Soke Archaeological Services Limited were commissioned by Wind Prospect Limited to carry out a site evaluation in accordance with the brief set out by Lincolnshire County Council. This was specified to involve the monitoring of development works during the excavation of four 1m<sup>3</sup> trenches, to contain the concrete foundations of four supporting cables essential to the erection of a 40m mast.

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## 2.0 Introduction

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Planning permission for the erection of a 40m mast at Deeping St. Nicholas was granted to Wind Prospect Limited by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC). The mast necessitates four supporting cables, each of which will be fixed by concrete into foundation trenches measuring 1m<sup>3</sup>. Due to the intrusive nature of these proposed works, it was specified by LCC that an archaeologist be present to monitor any following development in order to assess the archaeological significance of the proposed site. Following this brief, Soke Archaeological Services were commissioned to undertake the evaluation and provided a specification outlining the archaeological strategy to be applied. A copy of the specification is included in this report as Appendix C.

### 2.2 Definition of an Archaeological Evaluation

The following is a statement provided by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), who describe an archaeological evaluation as being:

'...a limited programme of non-intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present, field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national, or international context as appropriate.' (IFA, 1999:2).

### 2.3 Topography, Geology and Soils

The site for the proposed mast is located in the parish of Deeping St Nicholas, and lies approximately 2.25km north-west from the village and A16 trunk road. Centred at NGF TF 1897 1660, the area is situated within the bounds of Deeping Fen, a stretch of wetland which has been drained and enclosed. Beyond the fen, the geology consists of Flandrian marine clays overlying basal peat, while First Terrace river gravels are found along the fen margin (Hayes and Lane, 1992:164).

The site is directly adjacent to agrarian land, and at the time of the evaluation was overgrown and was set with a number of bee hives. The farmer produces organic food and operates an elaborate set-aside system of high ecological value. This area is doubtless part of this system.

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

As established in the *Archaeological and Historical Background* provided in the initial specification (Appendix C), evidence for settlements and other human activity seems to be concentrated along the eastern and western edges of Deeping Fen, and date from the Neolithic to Roman periods. For much of its history and prehistory, much if not all of Deeping Fen has been too waterlogged for any settlement to have been firmly established for a long period of time. However, medieval documents attest to exploitation of the fen as an economic resource and it is likely that this periodical pattern of activity extends into prehistory (*ibid.* p173).

While it was surmised, therefore, that the probability of *settlement* evidence within this area of the fen was unlikely, the low archaeological visibility of those transient activities which may have taken place at or near the site may also be undetectable.

### 3.0 Project Aims

The aims and objectives of the archaeological strategy are stated in the specification, Appendix C, in accordance with the requirements of the LCC brief. The primary aim of this investigation is to assess the significance and character of archaeological remains retrieved from the site in question, and to use such material to augment existing knowledge of the history of human activity at within Deeping Fen.

## **4.0 Methodology**

### **4.1 Trench Placement**

Four trenches measuring 1m<sup>3</sup> each were excavated corresponding to the positions of the proposed four supporting cable foundations. No further trenches were necessary, as intrusion into potential archaeology was limited to these four areas.

### **4.2 Timetable**

The work was due to start on the week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> September 2001, and was expected to last for one day only. Excavation during this week was delayed, however, and did not take place until Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September. Unfortunately, due to a breakdown in communication the excavation was not monitored on this day, and the site was visited and assessed independently of ongoing work at the beginning of the following week, 25<sup>th</sup> September.

## **5.0 Results**

As mentioned above, a breakdown in communication between the parties involved caused the four trenches to be excavated and subsequently filled in with concrete without concomitant archaeological monitoring. Observation of the contents of the four trenches was therefore impeded, and no results are available.

Upon later examination of the site, the spoil from the excavated trenches was recorded as consisting of a moist, silty-clay, alluvial deposit containing no finds.

## **6.0 Conclusions**

Due to the lack of archaeological material retrieved from the excavations, it is not possible at this time to make any conclusions concerning the presence, date, or nature of human activity at Vine House Farm. The spoil examined did not contain any items of material culture and it can be concluded that, in these four 1m<sup>3</sup> areas at least, there appears to be no evidence for settlement or human activity. However, both the low visibility of potential archaeological discoveries, and the small size of the investigations held, imply that these results cannot, and should not, be taken as evidence for absence of activity in the remainder of the site.

## **7.0 Acknowledgements**

Soke Archaeological Services Limited would like to thank Mr Richard Barker, from Wind Prospect Development Limited, for commissioning the project. David Britchfield, of Soke Archaeological Services Limited, co-ordinated the project. Maisie Taylor, of Soke Archaeological Services Limited, edited this report.

## 10.0 Appendices

### 8.0 Personnel

Project Director: Francis Pryor MBE PhD MA FSA MIFA

Project Manager: David Britchfield BA (Hons)

Fieldstaff: David Britchfield BA (Hons)

Illustrations: Lavinia Ferrante di Ruffano BSc (Hons)

### 9.0 References

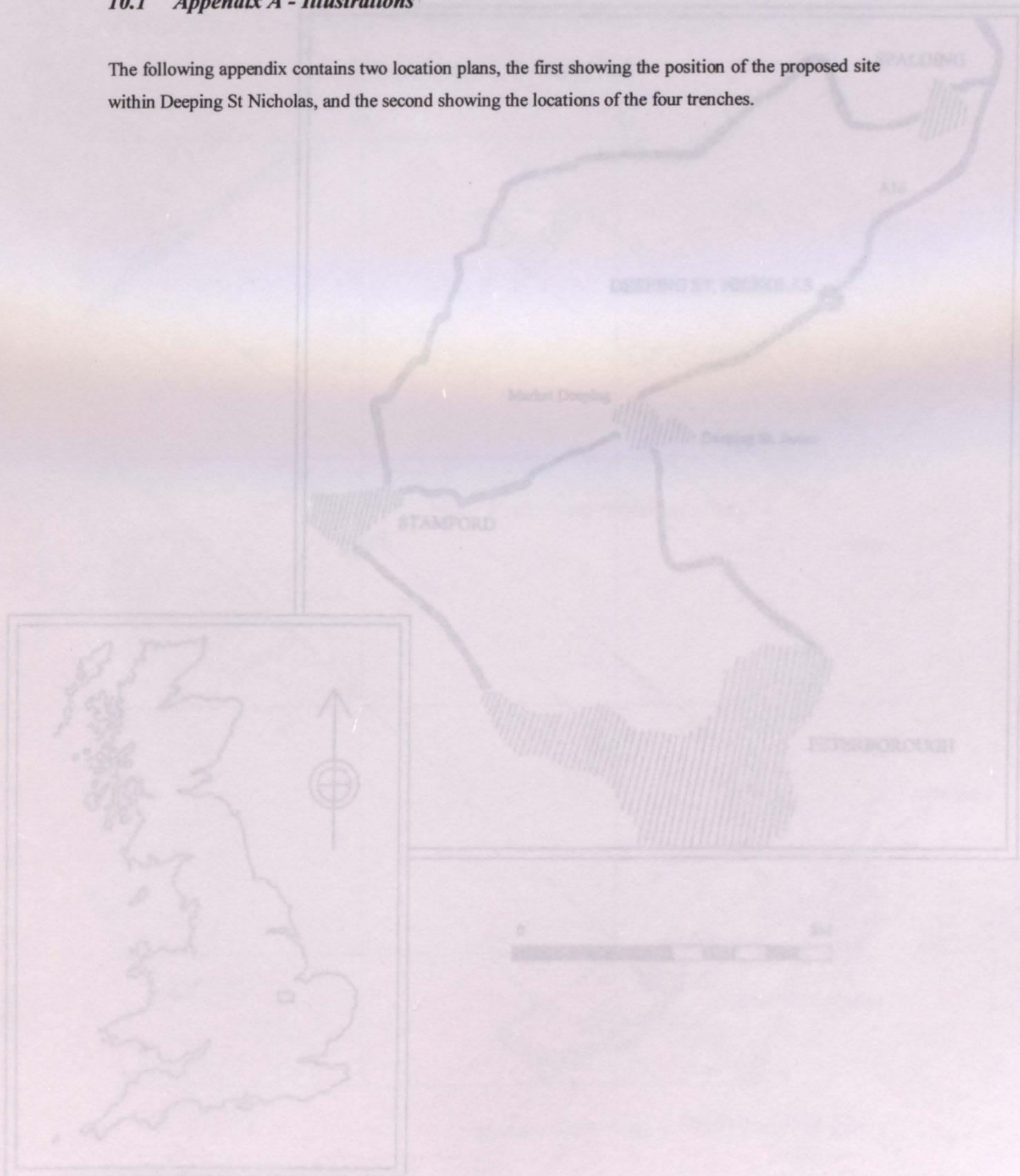
Hayes, P P and Lane, T T (1992). *The Fenland Project No. 5. Lincolnshire Survey, The South-West Fens*. East Anglian Archaeology 55.

Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999). *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.

## 10.0 Appendices

### 10.1 Appendix A - Illustrations

The following appendix contains two location plans, the first showing the position of the proposed site within Deeping St Nicholas, and the second showing the locations of the four trenches.



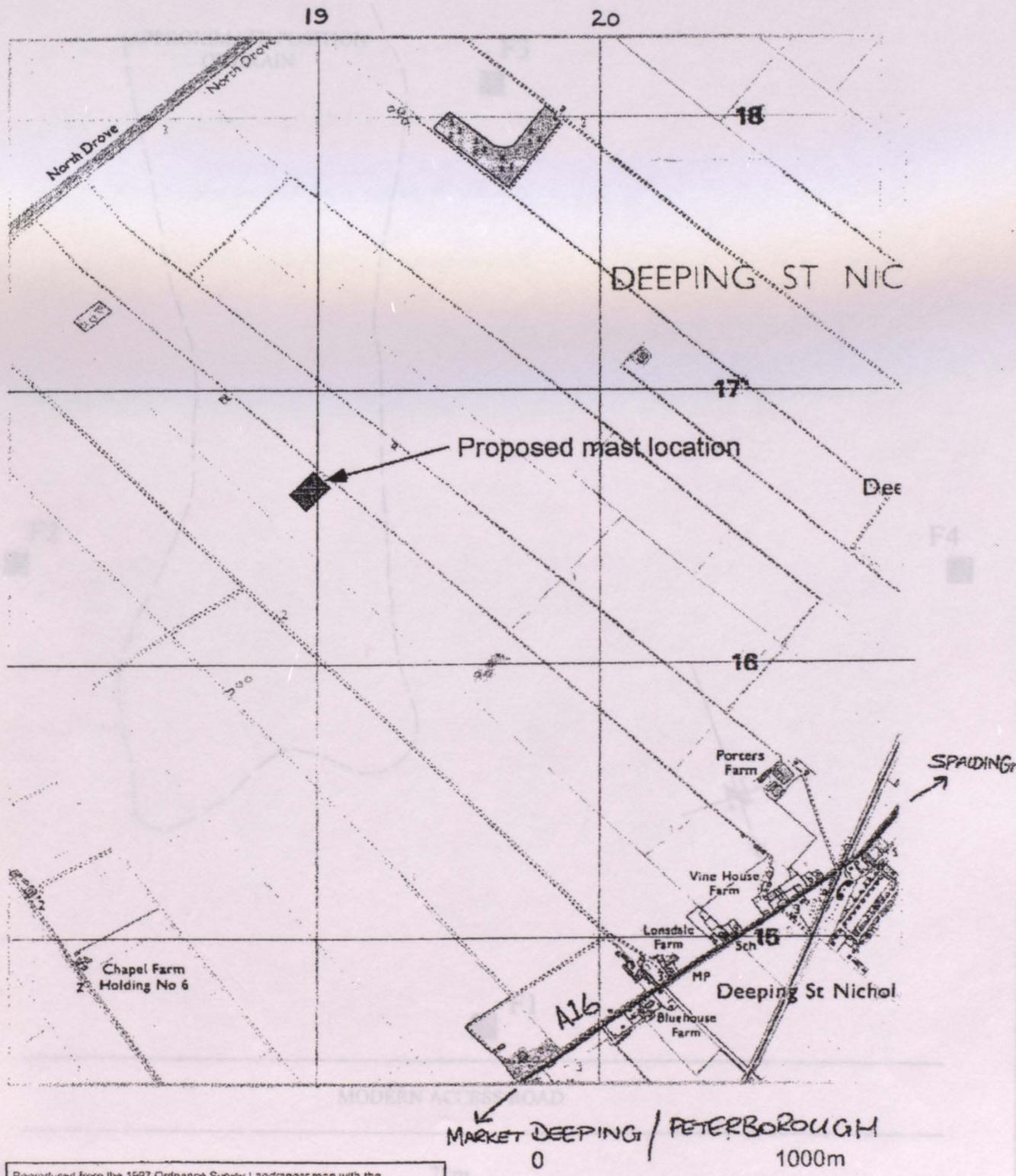
Proposed Location of 40m High Wind Monitoring Mast  
Deeping St Nicholas



10.1.1 Regional plan

10.1.2 Site location plan

# Proposed Location of 40m High Wind Monitoring Mast Deeping St Nicholas



10.2 Appendix B - Plates

10.2.1 The southern end of the site, facing west, showing the approximate location of the four trenches

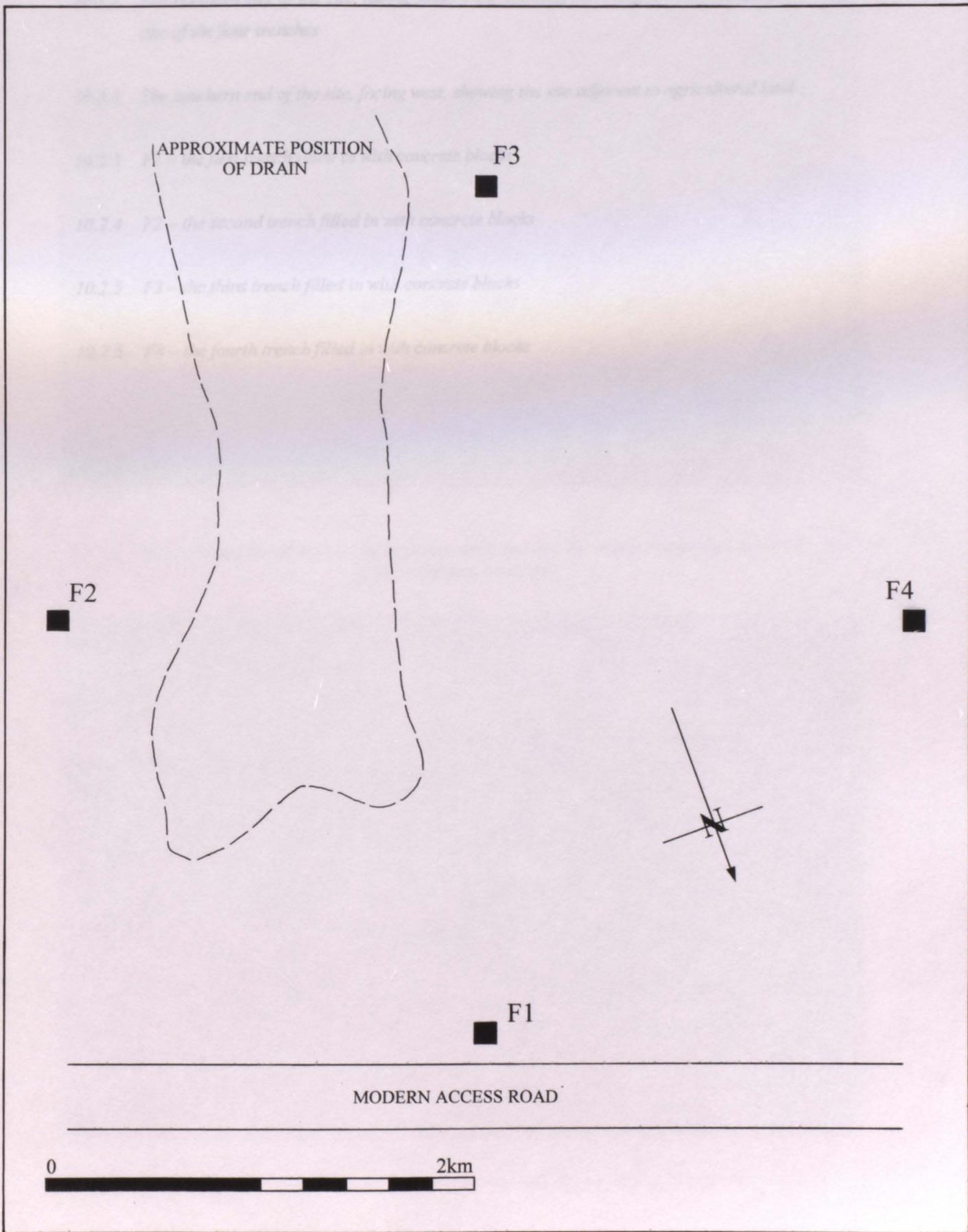
10.2.2 The southern end of the site, facing west, showing the site adjacent to agricultural land

10.2.3 F1 - the first trench filled in with concrete blocks

10.2.4 F2 - the second trench filled in with concrete blocks

10.2.5 F3 - the third trench filled in with concrete blocks

10.2.6 F4 - the fourth trench filled in with concrete blocks



10.1.3 Location plan of four trenches: F1, F2, F3, F4

## **10.2 Appendix B - Plates**

10.2.1 *The northern end of the site, facing south-west, showing the overgrown landscape containing one of the four trenches*

10.2.2 *The southern end of the site, facing west, showing the site adjacent to agricultural land*

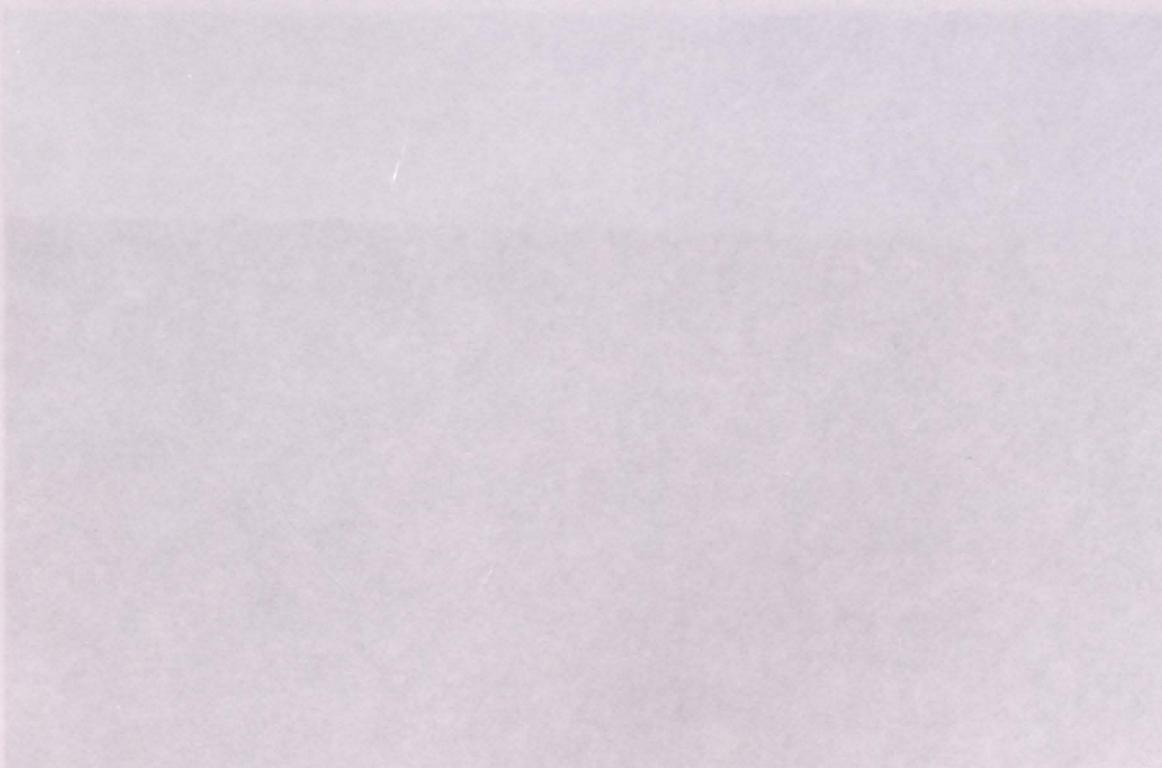
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10.2.6 *F4 – the fourth trench filled in with concrete blocks*

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10.2.4 F2 – the second trench filled in with concrete blocks



10.2.5 F3 – the third trench filled in with concrete blocks



10.2.6 F4 – the fourth trench filled in with concrete blocks

## **1.0 Summary**

*An application for planning permission has been made to Lincolnshire County Council, for the erection of a 40m mast, by Wind Prospect Limited (Planning Application Number H03/0744/01). Lincolnshire County Council Highways and Planning Directorate have requested that an archaeological watching brief be carried out during any ground penetrating works, in order to monitor the levels of disturbance to any potential archaeological remains. Soke Archaeological Services Limited have been commissioned by Wind Prospect Limited to carry out the monitoring in accordance with guidelines and recommendations as specified by LCC (1998).*

*This specification provides details of the archaeological strategy that will be adopted during the course of the project, which is subject to the approval of LCC, prior to work commencing.*

## **2.0 Planning Background**

### **2.1 Reasons and circumstances of the project**

The client, Wind Prospect Limited, have commissioned Soke Archaeological Services Limited, to meet the archaeological requirements of a watching brief, as specified by LCC (1998), during the excavation of four 1m<sup>3</sup> foundations for a proposed mast at Deeping St. Nicholas. The mast is to be approximately 40m in height, supported by four cables, fixed into concrete. Due to the potential for archaeological remains within the development area, LCC have requested that all works involving ground disturbance be monitored by an archaeologist.

## **3.0 Topographical and Archaeological Background**

### **3.1 Description of the area to be examined**

The site is situated within Deeping Fen centred at NGR TF1897 1660. The surrounding landscape consists of Flandrian deposits comprising 'a basal peat overlain by marine clay' (Hayes & Lane 1992:164). Approximately 1km to the east the fen margin consists of First Terrace gravel deposits 'derived principally from the outwashes of the Rivers Glen and Welland' (1992:164).

### **3.2 Archaeological and historical background**

Documentary evidence, derived from fieldwalking and landscape studies, suggest that, should archaeological deposits be encountered, they will most likely date to the prehistoric periods. The western part of Deeping St Nicholas parish was too wet for settlement during the Roman and later times. Even in the Bronze Age the area was traversed by tidal creeks. However, evidence for settlement does occur to the west, with six probable round barrows potentially dating to the Neolithic/Early

Bronze Age (1992:171). Iron Age and Roman settlement and saltern sites do occur on the gravel terrace to the east, evident from pottery scatters and aerial photographs.

In summary, the potential for archaeological deposits would appear to be relatively low, as settlement seems to have been focused to the areas east and west of the site. However, fen settlement is rarely so predictable. It is possible that prehistoric waterlogged deposits may exist, possibly in the form of riverside structures, or other features associated with wetlands.

## 4.0 Archaeological Strategy

### 4.1 Aims and objectives

The aims and objectives will be as follows:

- 4.1.1 To provide intensive monitoring of all ground penetrating works, to ensure that any potential archaeological deposits are fully investigated prior to any destructive techniques taking place.
- 4.1.2 To determine the survival rate of any *in-situ* buried soil, as well as the levels of truncation to buried deposits.
- 4.1.3 To supplement and improve existing information, to a level of confidence at which the archaeological potential of the site can be assessed.
- 4.1.4 To determine the location, extent, date, character condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological material remains, liable to be threatened by the proposed development. The results will be subsequently placed in their local, regional and national contexts.

### 4.2 Timetable

The work is due to start in the week commencing 17<sup>th</sup> September 2001. Excavation is expected to last one day. Depending on the results, a final report will be submitted to LCC within three weeks of the completion of fieldwork. This is assuming that no further archaeological excavation is required.

### 4.3 Fieldwork methodology

#### 4.3.1 General considerations

All fieldwork will be carried out, following the regulations and guidelines, as set out by LCC (1998) and the IFA (1999). If any changes in methodology need to be adopted on site, during the course of the watching brief, LCC will be consulted prior to doing so. Health and Safety regulations, as set out in English Heritage (1993), will be adopted on site.

#### 4.3.2 Archaeological monitoring

The Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) define the objective of a watching brief as aiming 'to establish and make available information about the archaeological resource existing on a site (1999:2)'. While this will be the case, should any potential archaeological features or structures become visible, it will be necessary to explore them using manual techniques.

#### 4.3.3 Archaeological Excavation

Should manual excavation be necessary, standards and guidelines set out by LCC (1998), MoLAS (1994) and the IFA (1999b: Annex 1) will be adhered to.

#### 4.4.4 Metal detecting

Regular metal detector scanning of topsoil, horizons, spoil or contexts will be undertaken by experienced and competent operators.

#### 4.4.5 Palaeoenvironmental sampling

All sampling, should it be necessary, will be in accordance with Murphy and Wiltshire (1994), the Association for Environmental Archaeology (1995), and English Heritage (1996).

#### 4.4.6 Recording

All written records will be on Soke Archaeological Services Ltd, pro-forma, MoLAS based context sheets. All archaeological features will be recorded in single context.

Also:

- a) Sections will be drawn at 1:10; plans at 1:20; burials at 1:10; trench location plans at a suitable scale for publication.
- b) All plans will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- c) All surveying levels will be tied into the Ordnance Datum.
- d) Trenches will be surveyed, using an EDM or equivalent.
- e) All small finds will be 3D co-ordinated.
- f) A photographic record, including both monochrome and colour prints or slides, will form part of the final report and archive. Particular attention will be given to archaeological relationships, specific features, spatial relationships and general ongoing site views etc.

If any changes in recording methodology need to be adopted on site, LCC will be consulted prior to doing so.

### 4.5 *Post-fieldwork methodology*

#### 4.5.1 General considerations

Provision has been made for the identification of artefacts, with a list of specialists in section 7.0. All finds processing will be in line with recommendations made by the IFA (1992).

During the fieldwork stage, all finds will be immediately labelled with site codes and context numbers, and kept in secure accommodation. Fragile material, such as wood, will be temporarily housed at Flag Fen, Peterborough, which has adequate facilities for such storage. The treatment of any archaeological wood will be in accordance with standards set out in English Heritage (1996).

Any items of gold or silver will be forwarded to the local coroners office, under the Treasure Trove Act (1996).

## 7.0 Staff

### 4.5.2 Cataloguing and packaging

All cataloguing and packaging will be carried out, as specified by LCC (1998: Chapter 13).

### 4.5.3 Dating techniques

It is assumed, at this point, that the majority of dating, should it be required, will be carried out using the typological sequence of artefacts. It is, however, recognised that scientific dating techniques may be required. The costs for such techniques have been incorporated within a contingency.

### 4.5.4 Specialist input

Specialists may be required to provide individual analysis' on specific deposits/artefacts. These will be incorporated within the final report and add to the overall interpretation of the site. A list of specialists likely to be used is covered in section 7.0.

## 5.0 Working Standards

Work will be conducted in accordance with the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (LCC 1998), by competent and experienced staff, familiar with local archaeological and geological deposits. All work will be undertaken to a standard acceptable to LCC and the client.

## 6.0 Miscellaneous Requirements and Considerations

### 6.1 Risk assessment

Prior to any fieldwork, it is necessary to prepare a risk assessment, in order to describe any possible hazards, along with the effect, severity and likelihood, to provide the degree of risk (see Appendix B). The analysis suggested that the highest risk is caused by the presence of the machine and trenches. However, all involved in the project have experience in such conditions, and are familiar with all the relevant health and safety procedures. These will be reinforced by the Site Supervisor.

### 6.2 Communication

Protocols in communication should be established prior to any onsite works taking place in order to establish timetables, methodology etc. Similarly, in order to avoid accidental damage to the buried

archaeological layers, it is important that anyone likely to dig or to authorise the digging of holes or trenches, must be aware of their possible existence and importance. LCC will be kept up to date on any progress during the course of the project.

### 6.3 Public relations

If archaeological finds are of such significance that news/PR coverage is required, this will be handled by Francis Pryor.

## 7.0 Staff

The Project Director is Francis Pryor MBE, MA, PhD, FSA, MIFA; the Project Managers will be Maisie Taylor BA, FSA, Cert.Ed, and David Britchfield BA (Hons) HNC OND.

### 7.1 Fieldwork staff

All onsite work will be managed by either Maisie Taylor or David Britchfield, with fieldwork support, if necessary, being provided by the following members of staff:

Michael Bamforth – A supervisor at Flag Fen for four years, overseeing the research excavations carried out as part of university training digs, as well as two years in the employment of SAS, overseeing watching briefs and evaluations. Also, six months experience working for MoLAS, on a variety of sites comprising Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval deposits.

Lavinia Ferranti de Ruffano – A graduate from University College, London, with 1 years excavation experience including: Supervising training excavations and teaching UEA approved courses in Human Osteology.

Eleanor Vincent – On placement from the University of Bradford, Department of Archaeological Sciences.

### 7.2 Specialist staff

Any waterlogged deposits will be seen by Maisie Taylor BA, Cert.Ed, MIFA. Dr. Charly French at Cambridge University, will be the consultant regarding soils, sediments and macrofossils. Dr Malcolm Lillie and his team at the University of Hull, Wetland Archaeology and Environments Research Centre, will provide environmental support on topics (such as pollen) which are not covered by Dr French, including support in the field if necessary.

## 8.0 Report and Archive

The evaluation report will be in accordance with English Heritage guidelines (1989) and guidelines set out by LCC (1998).

The final report will include maps, plans, sections and photographs, which will accompany the narrative. Selected artefact drawings (should there be any) will also form part of the final report, along with the comments from appropriate specialists.

## 9.0 References

AEA (1995) Association of Environmental Archaeologists – recommendations concerning the Environment Archaeology component of archaeological evaluations in England. Working papers of AEA paper No. 2.

English Heritage (1989) *The Management of Archaeological Projects*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed, London: English Heritage.

English Heritage (1993) *Health and Safety Policy*.

English Heritage (1996) *Waterlogged Wood: guidelines on the recording, sampling, conservation and curation of waterlogged wood*. English Heritage, London.

Hayes, P. P., & Lane, T. T., (1992) *The Fenland Project No. 5*. Lincolnshire Survey, The South-West Fens. *East Anglian Archaeology* 55.

Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999a) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*.

Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999b) *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Field Excavation*.

Lincolnshire County Council (1998) *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook. A Manual of Archaeological Practice*. V 1.0

Murphy, P. and Wiltshire, P. 1994. *A Guide to Sampling Archaeological Deposits for Environmental Analysis*.

## 10.0 Abbreviations

AEA	Association of Environmental Archaeologists
IFA	Institute of Field Archaeologists
EH	English Heritage
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council (Highways and Planning Directorate)
SAS	Soke Archaeological Services limited
MoLAS	Museum of London Archaeology Service