

**Blaby Solar Farm, Land
East of Countesthorpe
Road, Leicestershire
Archaeological Field
Evaluation**

Client: ESCO NRG LTD.

AB Heritage Project No:10695

Date:27/11/2015

Blaby Solar Farm, Land East of Countesthorpe Road, Leicestershire

Archaeological Field Evaluation

Client	ESCO NRG Ltd.
Project Number	10695
Prepared By	Richard Coe
Illustrated By	Jonathan Miller
Approved By	Daniel Dodds

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Enquiries To:

AB Heritage Limited (Head Office)
Caerus Suite, 150 Priorswood Road,
Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8DU
Email: info@abheritage.co.uk
Tel: 03333 440 206



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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out on land east of Countesthorpe Road, Leicestershire, on behalf of ESCO NRG Ltd. The archaeological investigations were carried out in support of a planning application to Oadby & Wigston Borough Council for the development of a ground mounted solar array and associated infrastructure.
- 1.1.2 An archaeological desk-based assessment had been carried out on the site previously (Garwood 2015). This report identified no overriding historic environment constraints which are likely to prohibit development (ibid). However the Local Planning Archaeologist has highlighted that the archaeological potential of the site may have been underestimated in this report.
- 1.1.3 Subsequent to the assessment report a programme of geophysical survey and evaluation trenching was recommended by the Local Planning Archaeologist (Teresa Hawtin) and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council. AB Heritage Ltd were commissioned by the client to undertake these works. A number of features of archaeological potential were identified as a result of the geophysical survey and a series of evaluation trenches.
- 1.1.4 Rubicon Heritage Services Ltd were then commissioned by AB Heritage to carry out a series of trial trenches to determine the nature of these anomalies and to better define the archaeological potential of the site.
- 1.1.5 The layout of the trial trenches was agreed in advance with Oadby & Wigston Borough Council. All work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by AB Heritage Ltd. and Rubicon Heritage (Hourihan 2015)
- 1.1.6 A total of 20 trenches were excavated totalling 600 linear metres. A number of trenches were positioned to intersect with geophysical anomalies and all were located as indicated in the WSI.
- 1.1.7 The evaluation trenching, confirmed what the geophysical survey suggested, in that there is a concentration of archaeology in the northwest quadrant of the site. Over all there are 3 possible foci of activity within this area, with a main probable enclosure to the north, a possible second enclosure and outlying linear features to the west and another area less well defined but consisting of linear features to the south of the quadrant.
- 1.1.8 Pottery recovered during the evaluation indicated that the remains were of Roman date. Specifically, where datable, most, or all, the material seems to be of 2nd-century currency. The group mainly comprises coarse wares of local origin with just two imported pieces and no recognisable regional traded wares.

- 1.1.9 If piled solar arrays were located in the northwest area over these features then there would be a significant cultural heritage impact. There is currently low potential for a cultural heritage impact on the east or south sides of the site as no archaeology was detected.
- 1.1.10 It is recommended that given the presence of significant sub-surface remains in the northwest of the site that the design of the development be reviewed with a view to preserving these features *in situ*.

Please note that all recommendations are subject to consultation with and approval by Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project Background

- 2.1.1 AB Heritage Limited (herein AB Heritage) was commissioned by ESCO NRG Ltd., to undertake a programme of archaeological investigations at land east of Countesthorpe Road, Leicestershire (Figure 1).
- 2.1.2 An archaeological desk-based assessment has been carried out on the site previously (Garwood 2015). This report identified no overriding historic environment constraints which are likely to prohibit development (*ibid*). However the Local Planning Archaeologist has highlighted that the archaeological potential of the site may have been underestimated in this report.
- 2.1.3 Subsequent to the assessment report a programme of geophysical survey and evaluation trenching was recommended by the Local Planning Archaeologist (Teresa Hawtin) and Oadby & Wigston Borough Council. AB Heritage Ltd were commissioned by the client to undertake these works.
- 2.1.4 A number of linear anomalies of archaeological potential were identified on the geophysical survey (Rose 2015) (Figure 2).
- 2.1.5 The Archaeological Evaluation works were then carried out to determine the nature of these anomalies, and to better define the archaeological potential of the site. Rubicon Heritage Services Ltd. were commissioned by AB Heritage to carry out the field work.
- 2.1.6 The Evaluation was carried out in accordance with a WSI (Hourihan 2015) which was prepared in consultation with and approved by the Local Planning Archaeologist (Teresa Hawtin).
- 2.1.7 A total of 20 trenches totalling 600 m in length were excavated (Figure 2). Fieldwork was carried out between the 11 and 17 November 2015.

2.2 Site Location & Description

- 2.2.1 The Proposed Development site is situated c. 700m to the north of the small settlement of Countesthorpe and c.6.5 km south of the Leicester city centre. It lies to the east of the Countesthorpe Road, the main thoroughfare between Countesthorpe and South Wigston, and adjacent to the road junction of Countesthorpe Road and Hospital Lane at NGR SP 59021 96711 (Figure 1).
- 2.2.2 The proposed development site is a sub square agricultural field covering 5.6 hectares; situated to the north of the Meadows Sports Ground, and access road to the Wigston sewerage treatment works located immediately to the east. The site is bounded by mature hedged field boundaries to the south, east and west and by a ditched boundary to the north.

2.3 Geology and Topography

- 2.3.1 The British Geological Survey (BGS) indicates the superficial geology comprises Wigston Member, a sand and gravel deposit formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period, and part of the Wolston Formation. It overlies a solid geology of Wilmcote Limestone Member, a mudstone and limestone, interbedded sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 197 to 204 million years ago in the Jurassic and Triassic Periods. This lies on the boundary of change to Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2015).
- 2.3.2 The overlying soils are slowly permeable seasonally wet but base-rich loamy and clayey soils (Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Industry 2015).
- 2.3.3 The topography of the site has a slope running down from the western side of the site is at a height of c.85m Above Ordnance Datum, with a drop to the east of c.7m. The average height of the site is c.82m AOD.

3. AIMS & METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims of Works

3.1.1 The archaeological evaluation trenching had a number of aims. Principally to establish the archaeological significance of anomalies identified during the geophysical survey and to collate information on the known and potential below ground archaeological resource. In addition it was hoped to establish (where possible) the character, nature, date, and extent of any surviving archaeological remains. This information will be used to inform any potential need for archaeological mitigation works (e.g. full excavation). In summary the aims of the evaluation were:

- Establishing the presence/absence of archaeological remains that may affect the detail of the development proposals.
- Determining the extent, condition, nature, character, date and significance of any archaeological remains encountered.
- Establishing the nature of the activity on the site.
- Identifying any artefacts relating to the occupation or use of the site.
- Providing further information on the archaeology of the site from any archaeological remains encountered.

3.2 Methodology of Works

3.2.1 The trial trenching was carried out between the 11 and the 17 November 2015 by a 13 tonne excavator equipped with a 1.8 m wide flat-bladed grading buckets, under constant archaeological supervision. Soil was removed in shallow spits until the first archaeological horizon or undisturbed geological levels were exposed. Any identified deposits were cleaned by hand to define their extent, nature, form and, where possible, date.

3.2.2 A total of 20 trenches comprising 600m were excavated (Fig 3) in line with the WSI. The rationale for the location of each trench was based on information gathered during the geophysical survey results. There were no above ground traces of archaeology.

3.2.3 All information identified in the course of the site works was recorded stratigraphically, with sufficient pictorial record (plans, sections and photographs) to identify and illustrate individual features. It should be noted that, where possible, data was collected and stored digitally and in a format suitable for long term storage by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

3.2.4 The recording included where appropriate:

- The recording of individual contexts on pro-formas

- Overall excavation plans at 1:50 scale; planning and section drawing of single contexts and features (usually at 1:20 scale for plans and 1:10 scale for sections)
- Photographs; and other drawn and written records

3.2.5 The survey and recording works adhered to the following requirements:

- All levels were recorded and reduced to OS datum
- All trench locations were electronically surveyed with National Grid references
- The locations of trenches were plotted on appropriate scale plans related to the National Grid and labelled with six figure eastings and northings
- The electronic survey record is retained with the project archive.

3.2.6 Discrete features were half-sectioned in the first instance; linear features were sampled at a minimum of 10% along their exposed length (each sample section not less than 1m), or a minimum of a 1m sample section if the feature is less than 10m long, with the excavation concentrating on any terminals and intersections with other features which would provide important stratigraphic information.

3.2.7 Archaeological features were excavated and recorded according to the normal principles of stratigraphic excavation, and were accurately located on a site plan and recorded by photographs, summary scale drawings and written pro forma sheets. Sufficient EDM/Total Station survey was taken to allow all features to be located accurately with relation to the National Grid and Ordnance Datum. Sections and profiles of each feature sampled were drawn at 1:10 or 1:20, depending on the size of the feature. All plans, sections and profiles were related to Ordnance Datum, in metres.

3.2.8 Site photography was by high resolution (7 megapixel or greater) colour DSLR photography. Photography includes general site shots, shots of each trench, and shots of individual features and groups of features. All photographs include a suitable photographic scale and will be recorded on a photographic register detailing as a minimum the subject, feature number, location and direction of each shot.

3.2.9 All artefacts that were observed were retrieved and retained.

3.2.10 All retained finds are treated and conserved in accordance with the English Heritage guidance document A Strategy for the Care and Investigation of Finds (English Heritage, 1995) and the UKIC's document Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC, 1990). Finds and sample storage will be at Rubicon Heritage's Office in Edinburgh.

3.2.11 Finds were treated in the following way:

- All finds have been retained from each archaeological context excavated.
- All finds have been washed.
- Finds work is undertaken in line with the Institute for Archaeologists Guidelines for Finds Work.

- 3.2.12 Where appropriate contexts were sampled in accordance with the guidelines provided by English Heritage (2011).
- 3.2.13 The site falls within the collection area of the Leicestershire County Council Museum and an accession code NO. X.A113.2015 has been obtained for the material.
- 3.2.14 The deposition of a properly ordered and indexed project archive in an appropriate repository is considered an essential and integral element of all archaeological projects by the IfA in that organisation's code of conduct (IfA, 2010). The final deposition of the archive will be placed with Leicestershire County Museum Services.
- 3.2.15 Once the final report has been accepted, AB Heritage Limited will complete an OASIS fieldwork summary form and submit it to the Archaeology Data Service. The form and related guidance can be found at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/first.html>.

3.3 Limitations

- 3.3.1 It should be noted that the weather during the evaluation was at times very wet and it made identifying cut features in the trenches difficult, even though the trenches were scraped back in an attempt make it clearer.
- 3.3.2 It should be noted that the report has been prepared under the express instruction and solely for the use of ESCO NRG Ltd. and associated parties/agents they elect to share this information with.
- 3.3.3 All the work reported in this document was carried out based upon the professional knowledge and understanding of AB Heritage on current (November 2015) and relevant United Kingdom standards and codes, technology and legislation. Changes in these areas may occur in the future and cause changes to the conclusions, advice, recommendations or design given. AB Heritage does not accept responsibility for advising ESCO Ltd. or associated parties of the facts or implications of any such changes in the future.

4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND (AFTER GARWOOD 2015)

4.1 Prehistoric (450,000 BCE – CE 43)

- 4.1.1 Given the sites close proximity to the course of the River Sence as it meanders north and west to flow into the River Soar, some 4km to the west, the relative proximity of that river valley and the character of a landscape recognised as conducive to settlement during the prehistoric periods, that records of the prehistoric activity would occur close to the proposed site.
- 4.1.2 The HER data records four sites, including two identified during archaeological investigations carried out in 2010, a field-walking scatter and a large earthwork.
- 4.1.3 Fieldwalking carried out by Kay Gowland and Group on land adjacent to the River Sence and c.700m to the south of the site, uncovered multi-period finds including a small assemblage of well scattered worked flint and medieval pottery (ELE 2274 site 1) at the Northern Close site. The prehistoric flint included a single scraper and a Mesolithic blade.
- 4.1.4 Further evidence of early prehistoric Mesolithic activity was discovered to the west of the fieldwalking site and on land to the north of Ladbroke Grove or Leicester Road (MLE19035 site 2) during an archaeological investigation by Wessex Archaeology in 2010. This site, also located at some distance (c.700m) south of the proposed development site, uncovered a large oval pit that appeared to have originally contained a large upright timber post and worked flint tools, dating to the late Mesolithic and early Neolithic period (c.5000 – 3500 BCE). Additionally a large broken stone object worn smooth by grinding cereal grain or polishing activities and a series of undated pits and a possible ditch were also revealed.
- 4.1.5 The discovery of these features were made during a strip and map exercise which followed on from an initial 18 trial trench evaluation. The latter, in part targeting geophysical anomalies, discovered the remains of three urns, all heavily truncated as a result of medieval and later agricultural land-uses (MLE 19036 site 3). Two of the urns contained the cremated human remains of two individuals, one adult male and a subadult. Only the base of a third urn survived. The vessels were all probably of Early Bronze Age date, in the Collared Urn tradition typically dating from c. 2200 – 1400 BCE. Nine small features containing charcoal were also noted in the vicinity as well as a larger pit and a ditch. Radiocarbon dating was carried out on the two cremations. They were dated to 1500-1390 BCE and 1500-1310 BCE (95% probability).
- 4.1.6 A very large sub-circular enclosure (MLE 161 site 4) was noted at Northern Close, a site situated c. 900m to the south-east of the proposed development. For part of the circuit of the enclosure it lies beneath ridge and furrow, although the latter respects it to the

south-east. It is clearly a substantial earthwork of probably later pre-historic date, which predates the later medieval ridge and furrow.

4.2 Roman (CE 43 – CE 410)

4.2.1 Despite the proximity of Roman Leicester, believed to have been established around CE 47, during their conquest of southern Britain and the relative proximity to the probable Roman road linking Leicester and Lutterworth to the west. There is very little evidence of Roman activity recorded within the search area or within the immediate area of Countesthorpe. Both records within the search area are unstratified and out of context. They comprise a Roman openwork ornament, which is possibly a buckle plate, (MLE MLE7682 site 5) found along with two other metal objects (one indexed at MLE6619) in 1989 by a metal detectorist, and a single sherd of Roman pottery, found along with prehistoric flint and medieval pottery during field-walking in 1985 by Northern Close (ELE2274 site 6). In addition to two these sites, five not closely located metal detectorist finds of Roman coins have been found within the general area of the site in both Blaby and Oadby & Wigston districts.

4.2.2 However, further consultation from the Local Planning Archaeologist (Teresa Hawtin), with ESCO NRG Ltd has highlighted a varying level of (Roman) potential to that highlighted above.

The finds of Roman coins and metalwork from within the site and in close proximity to it indicate a potential for high-status activity from this period within the site. The assessment has also identified a possible trackway within the site, but without further investigation it is not possible to ascertain the date and significance of this feature. Roman roads, for example, attracted roadside settlement and burial activity. (Hawtin 2015).

4.3 Saxon / Early Medieval (CE 411 – 1066)

4.3.1 The evidence of Anglo Saxon activity in the area of the site is also scarce. No mention is made to Countesthorpe in the Domesday Book (1086) and no evidence of early medieval activity or archaeological finds, apart from an early medieval spear and a brooch, found by metal detectorists (PAS refs: 393680 & 456660) has been discovered in the area. These two artefacts were not closely located.

4.4 Medieval (AD 1067 – 1539)

4.4.1 The first records of the village, dating from the late 11th and early 12th centuries, refer to it simply as 'torp' or 'thorp(e)', a Danish term for a secondary settlement or outlying farmstead. In 1276 it was referred to as 'thorpcontasse', the 'countes-' element is said to derive from the Countess Judith, niece of William the Conqueror, who was a major

landowner in Leicestershire (and elsewhere) post conquest. The first record of the prefix 'countes' dates from 1242 when it was spelt 'cuntassethorp', and the first modern spelling in a record of 1395. Variations in spelling continued into the 17th century. The parish church of St Andrew dates from the early 13th century when the lord of the manor was William de Lodbrok. It was rebuilt in 1841 and again almost entirely in 1907, although the 14th-century tower still remains.

- 4.4.2 The proposed site lies outside the boundaries of the present settlement of Countesthorpe and at a distance from its historic core and focus for settlement, located in the area of Church Street and Main Street. The site appears to have been farmland cultivated as large open fields since the medieval period. Medieval ridge and furrow cultivation (as seen on Fig. 4) was until recently extensive across this area, shown across the fields either side of the river floodplain and importantly within the site boundary. A trial trench evaluation on land west of Leicester Road, Countesthorpe (ELE 8682 site 20), though mainly negative, did uncover evidence of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation. This has also been identified elsewhere in the area, such as at Northern Close, where it overlay a substantial earthwork of probably later pre-historic date (see site 4) and in geo-physical surveys to the south, at sites 17 and 18.
- 4.4.3 This agricultural use, distinct from settlement, is perhaps reflected in the number and type of data recovered from within the search area. In addition to the evaluation (above) only two sites, both finds spots, appear in the HER data. A small assemblage (6 sherds) of medieval sandy ware pottery was found during field-walking at Northern Close in 1985 (ELE 2274 site 7) and a curved arm from a copper alloy buckle (possibly late medieval in date) was found along with two other metal objects (one indexed at MLE7682) in 1989 by a metal detectorists (MLE6619 site 8) at a distance of c. 600m to the south of the proposals.

4.5 Post-Medieval (CE 1540 – 1900)

- 4.5.1 The post medieval period is principally represented by extraction sites, industry and transport. No post-medieval listed buildings or buildings of local interest fall within the search area and few, apart from a probable late 16th or early 17th century house in the Main Street, survive within Countesthorpe.
- 4.5.2 The cottage industry of stocking knitting started in the first half of the 18th century in Countesthorpe and developed with the building of several frame-knitting shops. The village remained surrounded by good agricultural land and the open fields of the village were enclosed as planned enclosure in 1766, but many of the old furlong names survived as field names today, including Scalborough, Galloway and Leysland. Hospital Lane and Foston Road were incorporated as part of the Barlestone to Foston turnpike (MLE MLE21277 site 12) which (later B582) was used to bring coal into this area. The

agricultural use of the area is reflected by the site of a windmill, Crow Mill, (demolished) first shown on 18th century and early 19th century maps (Prior's map of 1777 and the OS 2" drawing of 1814) just west of the proposed site boundary (MLE55 site 9). This lies close to two gravel extraction sites, one at Green Acres, Hospital Lane (MLE21957 site 10) marked as 'Old Clay Pit' on the late 19th century OS mapping, and one next to Countesthorpe Lodge (MLE21958 site 11) referred to as the Old Sand Pit on OS maps.

4.5.3 Leicestershire & Northamptonshire Grand Union Canal (MLE 16300 site 13) first started in the late 18th century lies to the north-east of the site. By 1797 the canal had been built from Leicester to Debdale Wharf, but as money ran out, a proposal was made to reroute the canal via Market Harborough. The canal was extended to the town by 1809 but there construction once again ceased. The Midland Counties Railway, Leicester to Rugby branch was opened in 1840, to the west of the site boundary (MLE16079 site 14). It formed part of the 'pioneering phase' of railway development (up to 1841) and was built to supply Leicester with coal from the Nottinghamshire coalfields.

4.5.4 In 1870-72, John Marius Wilson's Imperial Gazetteer of England and Wales described Countesthorpe as a chapelry in Blaby parish, Leicestershire; on a branch of the river Soar, and on the Midland railway, 5½ miles S by W of Leicester. It has a station on the railway, and a post office under Leicester. Acres, 1, 920. Real property, £2, 940. Pop., 975. Houses, 219. Some of the inhabitants are stocking-makers. The church was built in 1842, but has the tower of a previous edifice. There are chapels for Independents, Baptists, and Primitive Methodists.

4.5.5 Before the mid-1960s growth of the village was slow and in 1961 the population was 2,249. Since that time growth has been rapid with several large estates being developed from the 1970s onwards. By the later 2000s the population of Countesthorpe reached c. 7000.

4.6 Cartographic Evidence

4.6.1 Please find the mapping described below in the Desk Based Assessment carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (Garwood 2015).

4.6.2 The cartographic evidence supports a picture of a rural community. The earliest available mapping, the first edition Ordnance Survey dates to 1887-1889 shows the proposed site as a group of three small enclosed agricultural fields to the east of Countesthorpe Lodge. The field is bordered to the west by an orchard to the Lodge and to the east by pasture/meadow fields along the western bank of the River Sence. A sand pit is shown on adjacent land to the north, but no evidence of similar extraction activities is shown within the site.

- 4.6.3 The next available Ordnance Survey edition of 1930-1 shows little change within the proposed development area apart from the loss of a N-S field boundary within the northern half of the site, removed to combine two small enclosed fields into one larger field. Evidence of filter beds and sewage treatment tanks, of the Wigston sewage treatment works, first appear by this date, built as a consequence of a nationwide drive for improved sanitation to rural areas initiated during the interwar period with the Public Health Acts. Countesthorpe Lodge is marked as Rose Farm.
- 4.6.4 The Ordnance Survey map of 1955 shows very little change to the general area and the site specifically. The two fields which comprise the site remain as farmland and unaffected by development. The next Ordnance Survey map of 1967 shows further development within the sewage treatment works and is the first to show the boundary, between Blaby and Oadby and Wigston districts, which follows the southern site boundary. The latest Ordnance Survey map of 1982 shows further development of the sewage treatment works site to the east and to the south east and the use of the fields to the south as recreational playing fields. The site boundaries remain unchanged.

4.7 Geophysical Survey Results (after Rose 2015)

- 4.7.1 A geophysical survey was undertaken by AB Heritage Limited at the proposed site for Blaby Solar Farm, taking place over 2 days, from the 26th to the 27th of October 2015.
- 4.7.2 The geophysical survey identified high amount of magnetic disturbance [GP 3-4], likely due to modern agricultural activity. It also identified archaeological potential [GP 1] within the site, in the form of multiple linear and sub-rectangular features, which could relate to possible enclosures. Along with a known former field boundary identified in the 1887-1889 Ordnance survey map.
- 4.7.3 The majority of possible archaeological features [GP 1] identified within the site are mainly situated to the northwest. These features have been identified as mainly positive linear features [GP1-(1, 3, 5, 7-8)], with sub-rectangular features [GP1-(2,4,6,9,10)] also noted within the area.
- 4.7.4 Features [GP1 (1-6)] identified in the northern area of the site; could relate to possible rectangular enclosures covering a fairly substantial area (c. 125m). There is a moderate confidence that these features represent possible archaeology; while some linears could relate to agricultural activity, sub-rectangular features warrant further investigation along with the linear features.
- 4.7.5 From the eastern side of the site to the western side of the site there appears to be a change in the amount of di-polar anomalies [GP 4] this could be caused by a variation in the geology of the site, with possible geological features identified in the eastern side of the site [GP2 (11- 13)]. The confidence of this interpretation though is low to moderate

due to the mapping of a geological change on the British geological viewer (BGS 2015) outside of the boundary of the site; the feature could be also due to a change in the topography of the site.

- 4.7.6 The site has been extensively farmed, with a high level of magnetic disturbance [GP 3] and di-polar anomalies [GP 4] likely associated with agricultural activity. The site at one point also noted on the 1887-89 Ordnance survey map was split into two fields, with the known former field boundary also identified within the geophysics results extending in an east to west direction across the centre of the site.

5. RESULTS

5.1.1 In total 20 trenches totalling 600m linear meters were excavated within proposed development site (Fig. 2). The location of these trenches was determined by AB Heritage and agreed to by the Leicestershire County Archaeological Advisor in consideration of the results of the desk-based assessment, the geophysical survey, the below-ground impact of the proposed development and the site topography.

The conditions for the evaluation were poor with wet weather. Some trenches were re-cleaned by machine after exposure to the weather and re-checked for archaeology. These excavations adequately investigated the possible archaeological anomalies that have been identified in the geophysical survey, and found the geophysical survey results to be an accurate picture of the below ground archaeology

5.2 Trial Trench evaluation

5.2.1 A number of archaeological features were identified during the evaluation (Figure 3). The results of trial trench evaluation are outlined in the text below. Summaries of archaeological features and deposits identified within each trench are included in tabular form in the Appendices.

5.2.2 The topsoil was characterised by a layer of dark grey sandy silt between 0.30m and 0.35m deep. The subsoil was characterised by a layer of brown sandy clay between 0.29m and 0.48m deep. Natural was orange silty clay with occasional sandy pockets and frequent rounded sub-rounded stones.

5.2.3 Trench 1

Trench 1 measured 30m long and aligned E-W (Plate 1). The trench was located to target a single linear anomaly aligned N-S identified on the geophysical survey. Linear [0103] measured 0.64m wide and 0.31m deep. The sides were concave and it had a flat base and straight and parallel edges (Figure 4). The fill of the ditch (0104) was a greyish brown firm clay.

5.2.4 Trench 8

Trench 8 measured 30m long and aligned NE-SW. The trench was located to target a rectangular feature identified on geophysical survey. A ditch was uncovered at the SW end of the trench. The ditch [0803] was aligned E-W measured 1.80m wide and 0.60m deep (Plate 8; Figure 4). The sides were steep and it had a flat base and straight and parallel edges. The fill of the ditch (0804) was a firm dark brown clay. This ditch was not fully excavated because of flooding.

5.2.5 Trench 9

Trench 9 measured 30m long and aligned NW-SE (Plate 3). The trench was located to target a possible enclosure identified on geophysical survey. Three ditches were

uncovered in the middle of the trench. Ditch [0903] was aligned E-W measured 1.00m wide and 0.20m deep. The sides were of a gradual slope and concave, the base was flat. The fill (0904) was a light brown sandy clay with the occasional rounded stones, a small possible Romano-British pottery sherd was re-covered from the fill (RFCL15:904:001).

Ditch [0905] was aligned SE-NW measured 2.15m wide and 0.50m deep. The sides had a regular slope and the base was V-shaped. The fill (0906) was a light brown sandy clay with occasional rounded stones. The relationship between ditches [0905] and [0907] is uncertain, but they abut each other.

Ditch [0907] was aligned E-W measured 1.75m wide and 0.50m deep. The sides were concave and the base was U-shaped. The fill (0908) was a light brown sandy clay with the occasional rounded stones. Large pottery sherds (2nd Century Roman) were re-covered from the fill (RFCL15:908:001-025).

5.2.6 Trench 11

Trench 11 measured 30m long and was aligned N-S. The trench was located to target the SE end of an L-shaped linear identified on geophysical survey, plus further anomalies of less certain archaeological potential to the south. Five ditches were uncovered in the trench.

Ditch [1103] was aligned E-W measured 1.80m wide and 0.40m deep (Plate 4). This ditch corresponded with the L-shaped geophysical anomaly. The sides were sharply sloping and had a flat base. The fill (1104) was a firm greyish brown sandy silt with rounded and sub-rounded stones. A single shard of 2nd Century Roman pottery was re-covered from the fill (RFCL15:1104:001).

Just over 5m to the south of [1103], ditch [1108] was aligned E-W and measured 1.40m wide and 0.30m deep (Figure 5). The south side of ditch had a sloping concave side, while the north side was truncated by a similar linear feature [1105]. The base of [1108] was flat. Fill (1109) was a firm greyish brown sandy silt with the occasional rounded sub-rounded stones.

Ditch [1105] was aligned E-W and measured 1.90m wide and 0.65m deep (Figure 5). The north side of the ditch had a sloping concave side with a gradual slope to the base, the south side was concave with a gradual break of slope to a flat ledge then a 2nd sharp break of slope with a gradual concave side down to the base. The base was a U-shaped in profile. Fill (1106) was a firm light grey sandy silt with frequent small rounded stones, overlain by (1107). One early Roman pottery shard was recovered, (RFCL15:1106:001). Fill (1107) was a firm greyish brown silty sand with the occasional rounded stones.

Ditch [1110] was 10 m to the south of [1108] and was aligned E-W and measured 1.45m wide and 0.30m deep (Figure 5; Plate 5). The side of the ditch had a sloping concave side with a flat base cut by ditch [1112]. Fill (1111) was a firm mid grey sandy silt with moderate rounded and sub-rounded stones and fragment of animal bone.

Ditch [1112] which truncated the previously described ditch, was also aligned E-W and measured 0.96m wide 0.43m deep (Figure 5; Plate 5). The sides had a gradual slope and a flat base. Fill (1113) was a firm greyish brown sandy silt with frequent rounded and sub-rounded stones one fragment of 2nd Century Roman pottery was recovered (RFCL15:1113:001).

5.2.7 Trench 12

Trench 12 measured 30m long and was aligned NE-SW (Plate 6). The trench was located to target the western side of the same L-shaped linear geophysical anomaly as that in Trench 11, plus an additional N-S aligned linear anomaly to the east. Only one ditch was uncovered in the trench, corresponding with the L-shaped anomaly. Ditch [1203] was aligned N-S and measured 0.50m wide and 0.50m deep (Figure 5). The sides of the ditch had a gradual slope and it had a concave base. Fill (1204) was a firm light brown sandy clay with rounded stones with two sherds of 2nd Century Roman pottery (RFCL15:1204:001-2).

5.2.8 Trench 13

Trench 13 measured 30m long and was aligned E-W. The trench was positioned to target the northern end of the same two linear features as Trench 12. As in Trench 12 only the northern end of the L-shaped ditch was uncovered. Ditch [1303] was aligned N-S and measured 0.70m wide and 0.70m deep. It had a gradual sloping sides and a relatively flat base. Its fill (1304) was friable dark brown sandy clay with large rounded stones. There were three sherds of 2nd Century Roman pottery recovered from this context (RFCL15:1304:001-3).

5.2.9 Trench 15

Trench 15 measured 30m long and was aligned E-W. The trench was located to target part of a possible enclosure identified on the geophysics. Two ditches, probably part of the same enclosure, were uncovered in the trench. Ditch [1503] was aligned NW-SE and measured 0.95m wide and 0.58m deep. It had gentle slightly concave sides with a U-shaped base. The primary fill (1504) was a firm brown sand clay. Overlying this was fill (1505) which was a brown sandy clay with frequent rounded stones. This ditch narrowed and terminated on its western end within the trench, which was immediately adjacent to the second ditch [1506].

Ditch [1506] was aligned N-S and measured 0.28m wide and 0.24m deep. It had a gradual sloping side with a concave base. Its fill (1507) was a firm brown sandy clay with fragments of animal bone.

5.2.10 Trench 16

Trench 16 measured 30m long and was aligned E-W (Plate 8). It was positioned to investigate the northern end of the western side of a possible enclosure identified in the geophysical survey. A total of four N-S aligned ditches, [1603] [1605] [1607] [1611], were identified in the trench, one of which [1607] corresponded with the possible enclosure. The other 3 linear features did not appear on the geophysical survey.

The westernmost linear feature was [1611] which measured 1.20 m wide and 0.5 m deep (Plate 9). The sides of the ditch were near vertical with a flat base. It was filled by light greyish brown sandy silt (1612) which contained a sherd of decorated Samian Ware and red ceramic building material (RFCL15:1612:001-2).

Just over 3.7 m to the east was ditch [1607] which was 1.57 m wide and 0.76 m deep (Figure 6). The sides of the ditch were near vertical and the base flat. It contained two fills. Basal fill (1608) was dark grey brown sandy silt with medium stone inclusions. Upper fill (1609) was light grey brown sandy silt with frequent stone and 2 fragments of ceramic building material.

Ditch [1603] was 2 m to the east of this and it was 0.68 m wide and 0.18 m deep. It had gradual sloping sides with a U shape base. It was filled with brown sandy clay (1604) with some stone and organic inclusions.

The eastern most ditch [1605] was 0.88 m wide and 0.19 m deep. The sides of ditch were sloping gradual and slightly convex with a U shape base. Its fill was brown sandy clay with occasional stone. It contained 11 sherds of black Roman pottery (RFCL15:1606:001-11).

5.2.11 Trench 17

Trench 17 measured 30m long and was aligned E-W (Plate 10). The trench was located to target the east side of the possible enclosure identified in this area on the geophysical survey, and an additional 'branch' off the main linear to the west. Also a possible large pit at the centre of the enclosure. Only the east side of the possible enclosure was detected. The N-S aligned ditch [1703] measured 1.36 m wide and 0.30 deep. The sides of the ditch had a gradual slope to the base, and the base was concave. The fill (1704) was a compact dark reddish brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded stones. Three sherds of early Roman pottery and a fragment of ceramic building material was recovered from the fill (1704) (RFCL15:1704:001-4).

5.2.12 Trench 18

Trench 18 measured 30m long and was aligned NE-SW. It was positioned in order to examine the southeast corner of the possible enclosure and also a possible southern annex to the enclosure. Five ditches were identified in the trench, all of which more or less corresponded to the geophysical anomalies.

Ditch [1803] was located on the NE end of the trench and seemed to correspond to the eastern side of the enclosure, possibly the same ditch as [1703] in Trench 17. It measured 1.36 m wide and 0.40 m deep. The sides of the ditch had a gradual slope to the base, the base was concave. Its fill was a compact greyish brown clay sand with the occasional rounded stones (1804) which contained 3 sherds of Roman pottery (RFCL15:1804:001-4).

Two NE-SW aligned ditches [1805] (Figure 6) and [1808] were located in the middle of the trench and they were in the area of a linear geophysical anomaly, though it is not clear which of them, or if both of them, constitute the anomaly. They may both be part of the same feature.

Ditch [1805] measured 1.80m wide and 0.90m deep. The sides of the ditch were steep and had a flat base. Fill (1806) was a compact dark grey clayey sand with the occasional rounded stones and overlies fill (1807). Fill (1807) was a compact dark brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded stones.

Ditch [1808] measured 0.75m wide 0.40m deep. The west side of the ditch had a gradual slope to the base, the east side of the ditch was stepped then gradually sloped to the base, and the base of ditch was concave. Fill (1809) was compact a dark reddish brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded and well-rounded stones.

Pottery sherds of early Roman date were recovered from the fills of both (RFCL15:1806:001-2 and RFCL1809:001- 5).

Ditches [1812] and [1810] was located at the SW end of the trench, in an area which appeared to be the SE corner of a possible annex to the main enclosure. The earlier ditch [1812] was truncated on the northeast side, but 0.55 m of it survived. It was 0.4 m deep and filled by (1812). The later ditch [1810] measured 1.9 m wide and 0.75 m deep and was filled by (1811) greyish brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded stone.

- 5.2.13 No archaeology was detected in trenches 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 14, 19 or 20, even though there were geophysical anomalies of archaeological potential in several of them (Figure 2; Plate 11 and 12). It is thought the linear geophysical anomalies in trenches 19 and 7 may be geological in origin. Similarly the point anomalies in trenches 2, 4, 5, 6, and 20 did not turn out to be archaeological in nature. Further details of these trenches are given in Appendix 7.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE & MITIGATION

- 6.1.1 The evaluation trenching, confirmed what the geophysical survey suggested, in that there is a concentration of archaeology in the northwest quadrant of the site. Overall there are 3 possible foci of activity within this area, with a main probable enclosure to the north, a possible second enclosure and outlying linear features to the west and another area less well defined but consisting of linear features to the south of the quadrant.
- 6.1.2 While the geophysical survey results were found to be on the whole reliable, there were some cases where additional archaeology was detected (e.g. Trench 16) and other cases where the geophysical anomalies were not detected as archaeology. It is assumed that in the case of the latter that the anomalies were natural geological responses but the very wet weather may have had an effect on visibility within the trenches.
- 6.1.3 The evaluation resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of 66 sherds of pottery weighing 1931 g dating to the Roman period. More specifically, where datable, most, or all, the material seems to be of 2nd-century currency. The group mainly comprises coarse wares of local origin with just two imported pieces and no recognisable regional traded wares.
- 6.1.4 A possible rectangular enclosure has been identified in Trenches 15-18, with a further smaller rectangular annex to the south. The exact dimensions are difficult to determine from the available information but it is roughly 28 m N-S by 35 m E-W, and the annex to the south is approximately 19 m E-W and 13 m N-S. Pottery was found in many of the linear features in this area. No associated internal features were identified in the evaluation, with a possible pit from the geophysical survey not being found. Two linear features in Trench 16 would be within the enclosed area if they are contemporary.
- 6.1.5 Two sides of a possible second enclosure were found in Trenches 13, 12 and 11. A strong geophysical anomaly to the west of this was not found to be archaeological. Linear features to the south of it in Trench 11 did appear to be archaeological, with both containing Roman pottery. These linear features may be associated with a field system associated with the main enclosure, however more investigation would be required to determine the exact nature and extent of the feature in this area.
- 6.1.6 Ditches identified in Trenches 8 and 9 suggest that there is archaeology present in this area but the possible enclosure identified on the geophysical survey was not fully confirmed, with the predicted return on the south side of Trench 9 not materialising. Pottery recovered from Ditches [0903] and [0907] confirms they are archaeological in nature and dates them to the Roman period.
- 6.1.7 Overall the significance of the archaeology identified on the site in the northwest corner is considered to be of regional significance.

6.2 Predicted Impact of Proposed Development

- 6.2.1** The evaluation trenching has confirmed the presence of sub-surface remains of Roman date (possibly 2nd century), in the northwest quadrant of the site. If piled solar arrays were located in the north-west area directly over these features then there would be a significant cultural heritage impact.
- 6.2.2** There is currently low potential for a cultural heritage impact on the east or south sides of the site as no archaeology was detected.

6.3 Outline Recommendations

- 6.3.1** It is recommended that given the presence of significant sub-surface remains in the northwest of the site that the design of the development be reviewed with a view to preserving these features *in situ*.
- 6.3.2** Please note that all recommendations are subject to consultation with and approval by Oadby & Wigston Borough Council.

7. REFERENCES

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Garwood, 2015. Blaby Solar Farm, Land East of Countesthorpe. An Historic Desk-Based Assessment. Pre-Construct Archaeologist.

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Rose, G 2015 Proposed Solar Farm at Blaby, Leicestershire. Geophysics report. Unpublished client report by AB Heritage for ESCO NRG Ltd.

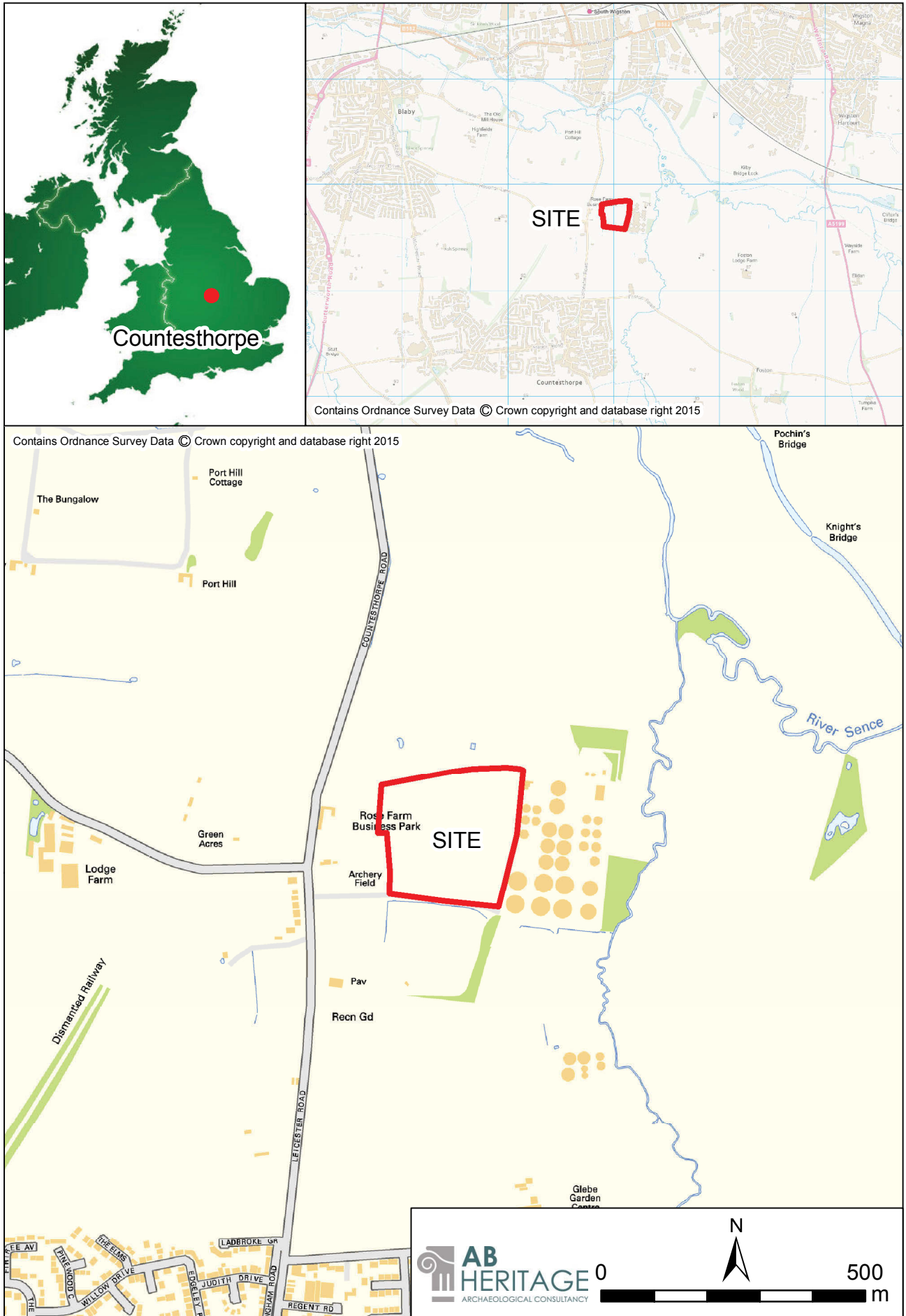


Figure 1 - Blaby Solar Farm, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire: Site location.

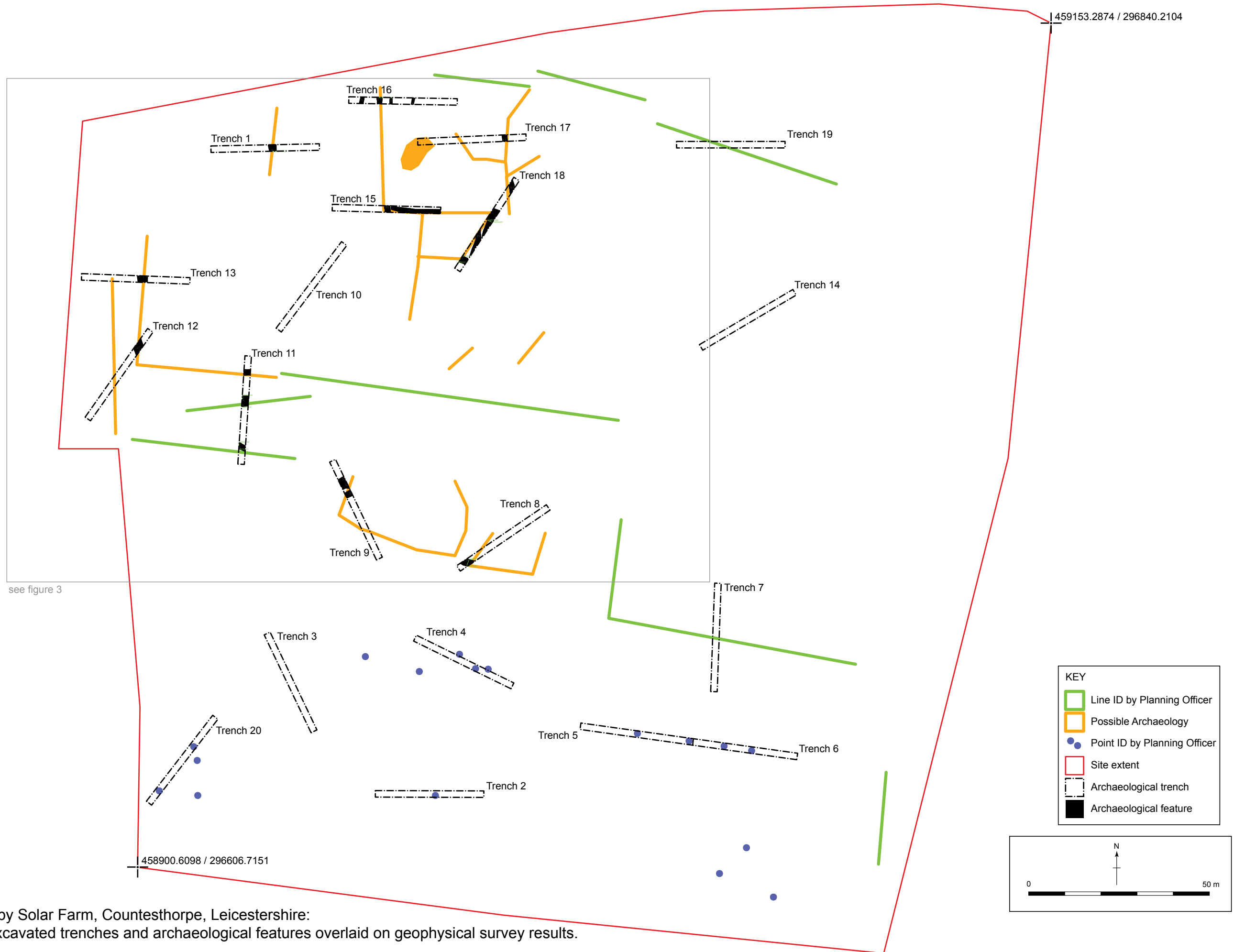


Figure 2 - Blaby Solar Farm, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire:
 Site extent, excavated trenches and archaeological features overlaid on geophysical survey results.

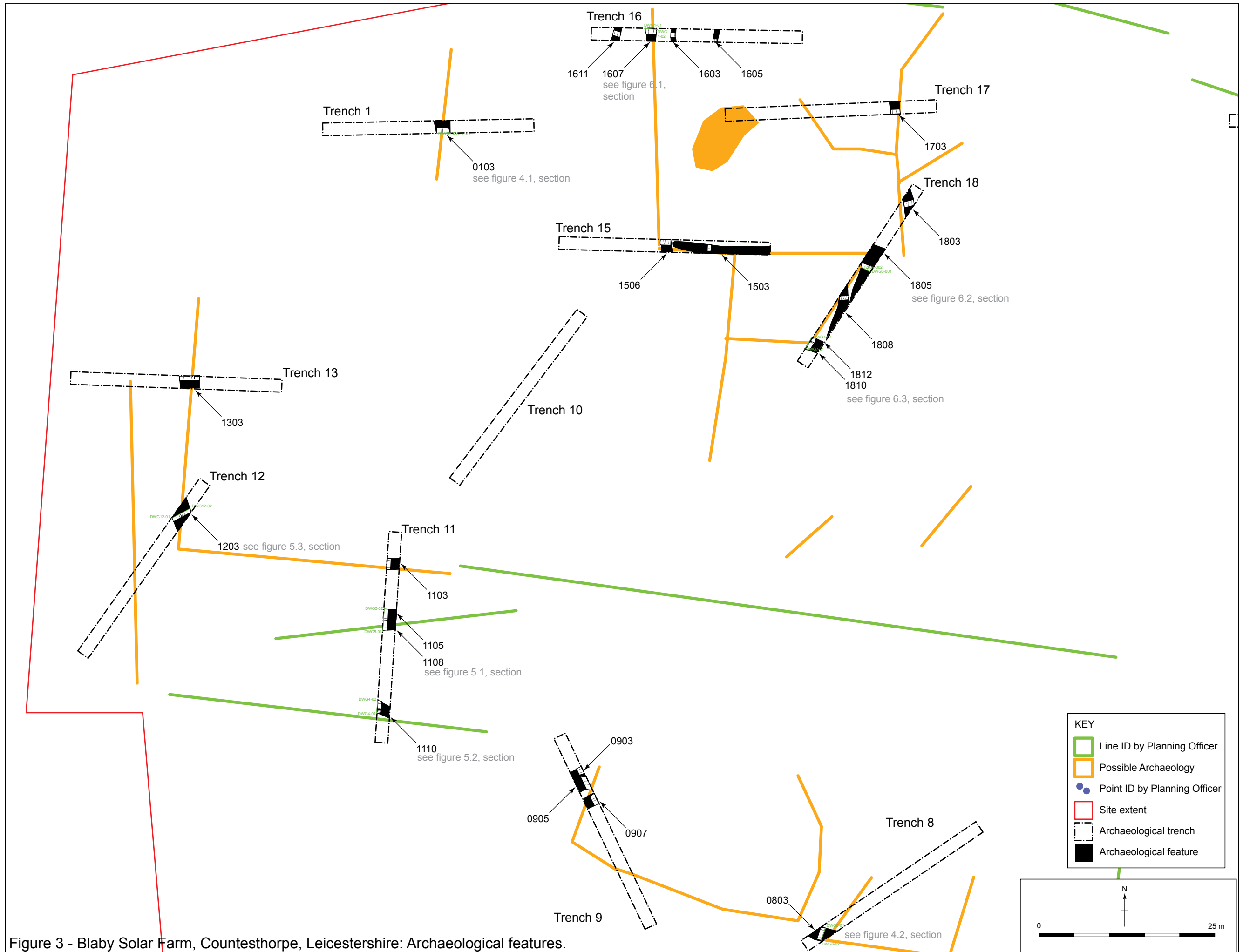
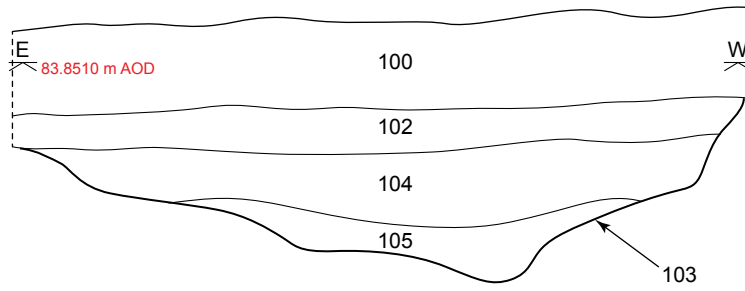


Figure 3 - Blaby Solar Farm, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire: Archaeological features.

Trench 1, North-facing section of (103).



Trench 8, West-facing section through (803).

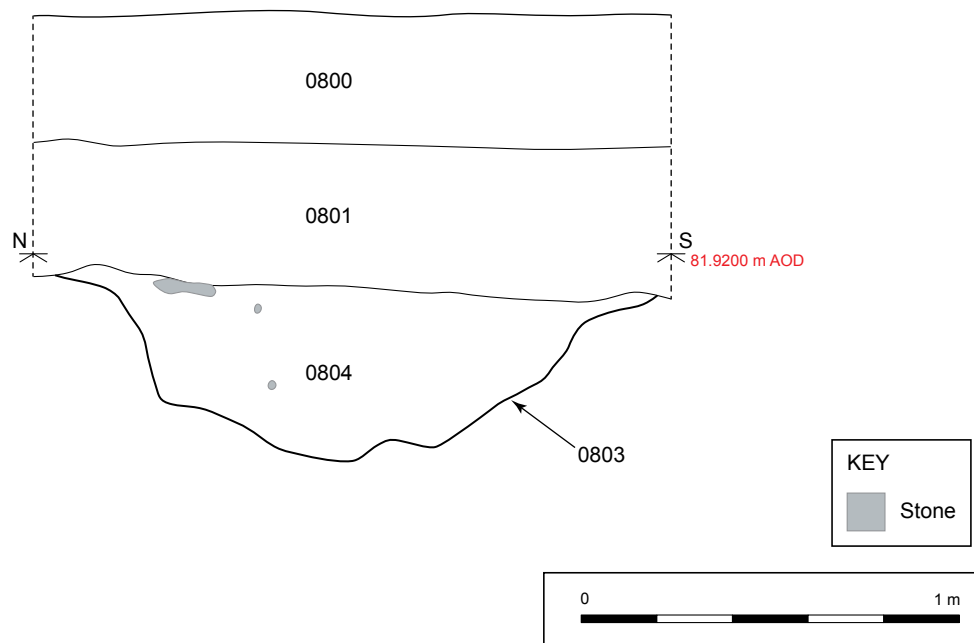
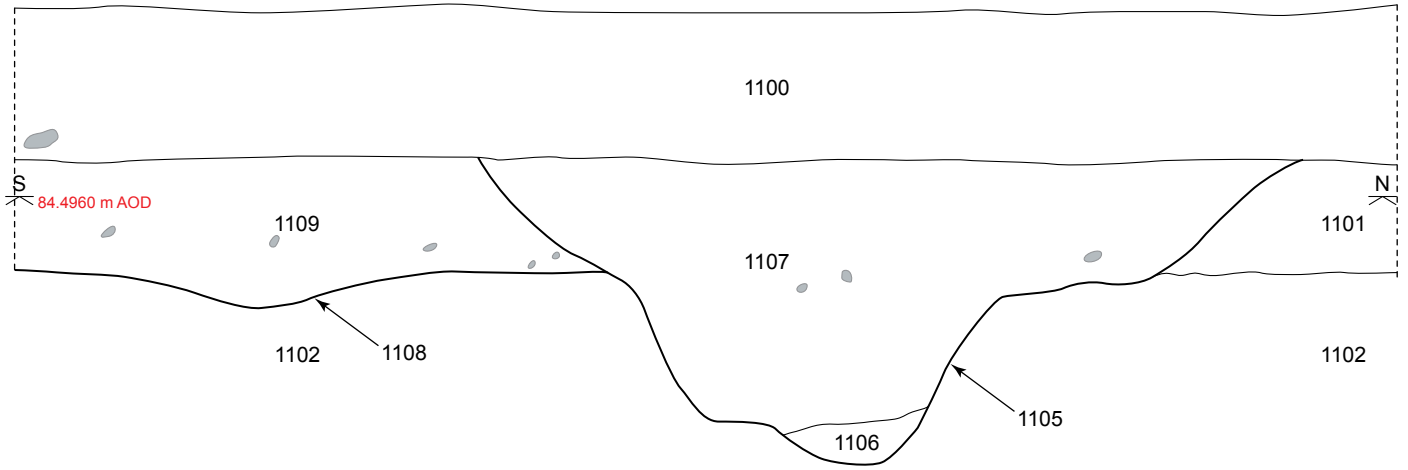
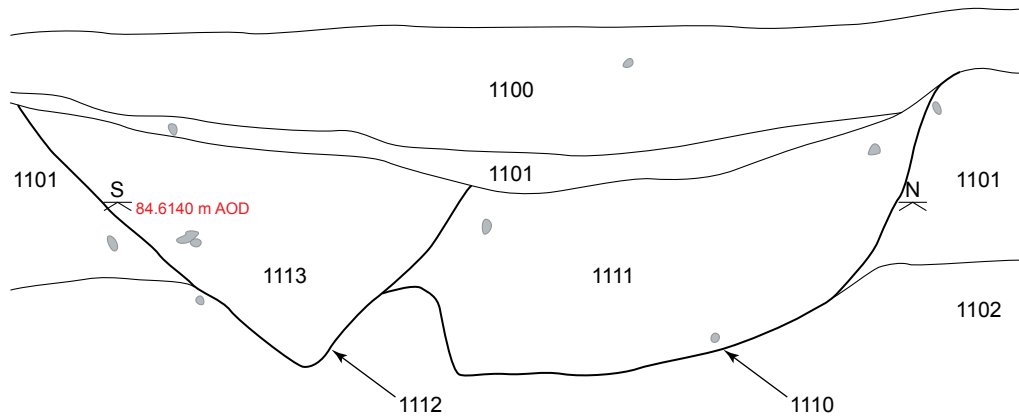


Figure 4 - Trench 1 and Trench 8 sections.

Trench 11, East-facing section of (1105) and (1108).



Trench 11, South-southeast-facing section of (1110) and (1112).



Trench 12, South-southeast-facing section of (1203).

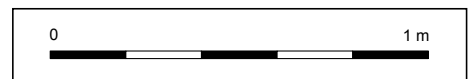
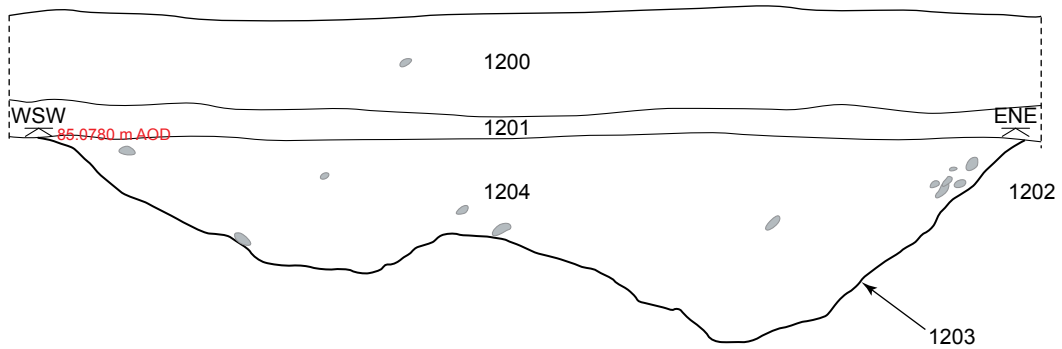
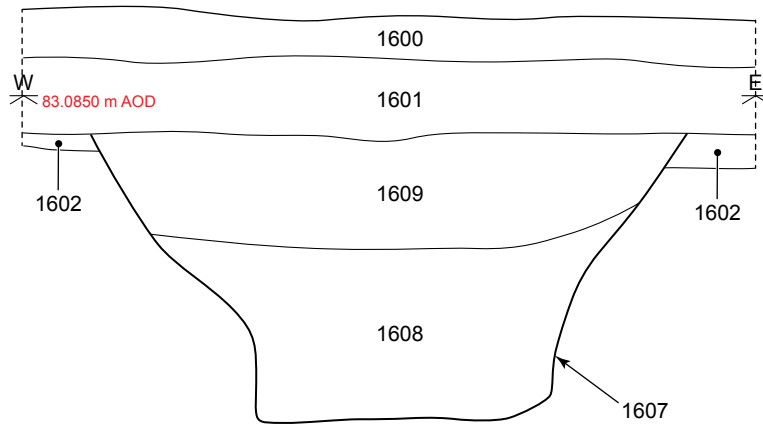
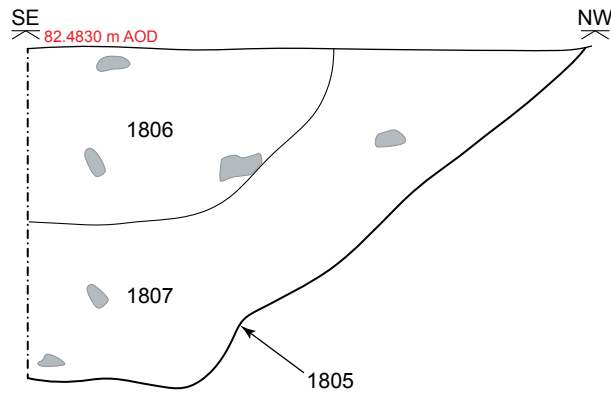


Figure 5 - Trench 11 and Trench 12 sections.

Trench 16, South-facing section of (1607)



Trench 18, Northeast-facing section of (1805)



Trench 18, Southeast-facing section of (1810) & (1812)

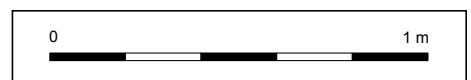
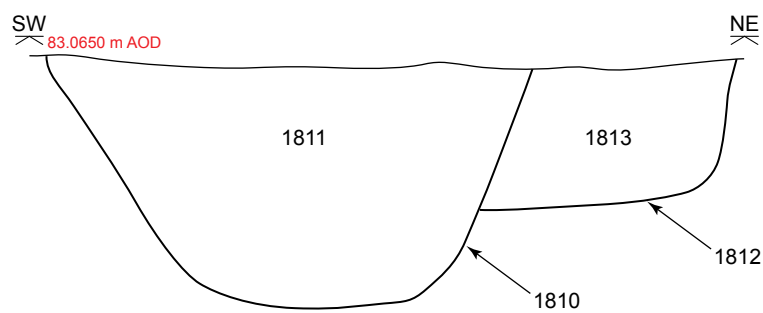


Figure 6 - Project Name, County: Figure description.



Plate 1 - Trench 1, facing west.

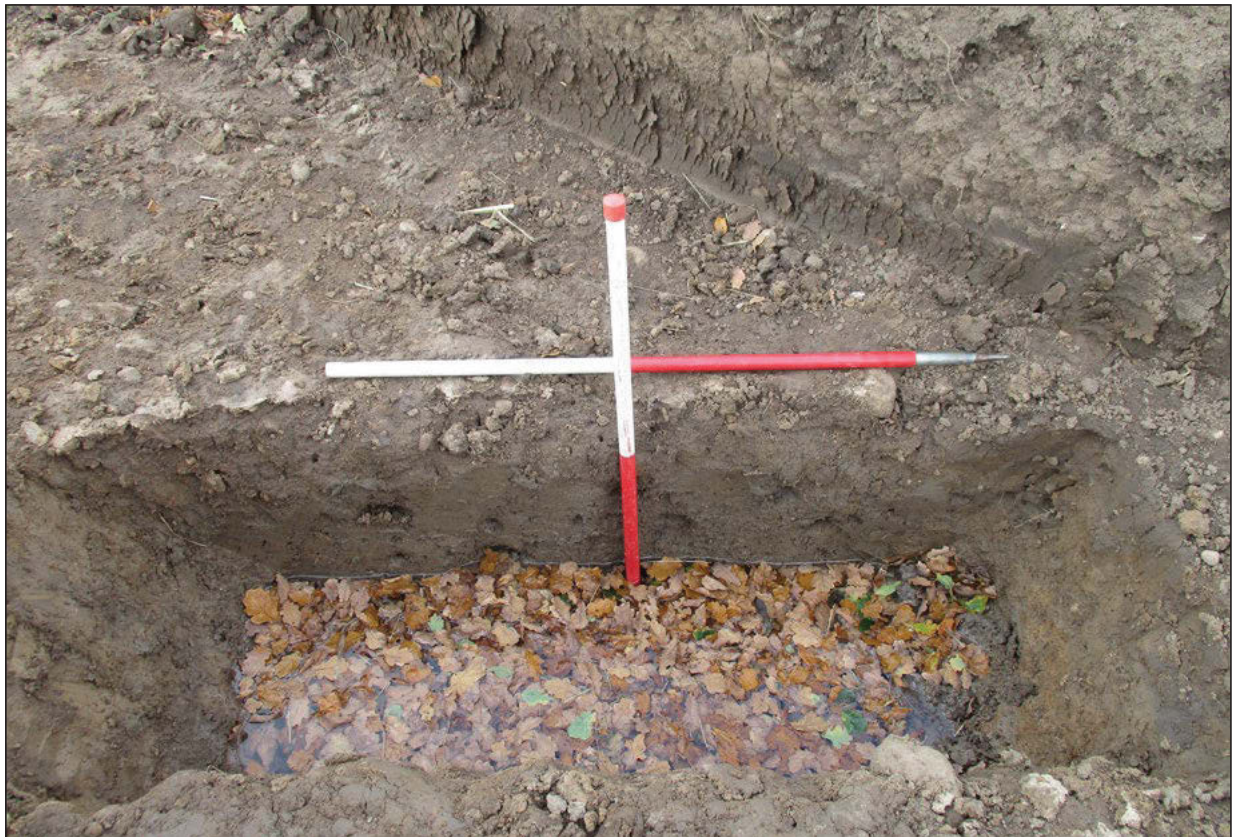


Plate 2 - South-facing section of Ditch [0803], in Trench 8 .



Plate 3 - Trench 9, facing southeast.



Plate 4 - East-facing section of Ditch [1103], in Trench 11.



Plate 5 - SSE-facing section of Ditches [1112] and [1110], in Trench 11.



Plate 6 - Trench 12, facing southwest.



Plate 7 - Trench 13, facing west.



Plate 8 - Trench 16, facing east.



Plate 9 - Southwest-facing section of Ditch [1611], in Trench 16.



Plate 10 - Trench 17, facing east.



Plate 11 - Trench 10, facing southwest.



Plate 12 - Trenches 5 and 6, facing east.

8. APPENDIX 1 ARCHIVE STATEMENT

The site archive is comprised of the following materials:

Item	Quantity
Trenching and field recording sheets	20
Plans	GPS
Sections	8
Photographs	48
Registers (Context, photo, drawing, finds, samples)	5
Notebooks	1

The archive material is contained within one box.

The archive is currently stored in the offices of Rubicon Heritage Services UK Ltd.

9. APPENDIX 2 CONTEXT REGISTER

Context no.	Trench Number	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
1	All	Deposit	-	-	-	-	0.30 to 0.35	Dark grey sandy silt	Topsoil
2	All	Deposit	-	-	-	-	0.29 to 0.48	Brown sandy clay	Subsoil
3	All	Deposit	-	-	-	-	-	Orange silty clay with occasional sandy pockets and frequent rounded sub-rounded stones	Natural
803	8	Cut	-	804	Unknown	1.8	0.7	Linear in plan with sharp breaks of slope, steep sides and a flat base	Cut of ditch
804	8	Fill	803	-	Unknown	1.8	0.7	Dark brown stony clay	Fill of ditch [803]
903	9	Cut	-	904	Unknown	1	0.2	Linear in plan with gradual breaks of slope, gently sloping sides and a flat base	Cut of ditch
904	9	Fill	903	-	Unknown	1	0.2	Light brown sandy clay	Fill of ditch [903]
905	9	Cut	-	906	Unknown	2.15	0.5	Linear in plan with steep flat sides and a V-shaped base	Cut of ditch
906	9	Fill	905	-	Unknown	2.15	0.5	Light brown sandy clay	Fill of ditch [905]
907	9	Cut	-	908	Unknown	0.75	0.5	Linear in plan with sharp to gradual breaks of slope, convex sides and a U-shaped base	Cut of ditch
908	9	Fill	907	-	Unknown	0.75	0.5	Light brown sandy clay	Fill of ditch [907]
1103	11	Cut	-	1104	Unknown	1.8	0.4	Linear in plan with sharp to gradual breaks of slope, sloping sides, and a flattish base	Cut of ditch
1104	11	Fill	1103	-	Unknown	1.8	0.4	Firm, greyish brown sandy silt	Fill of ditch [1103]

BLABY SOLAR FARM, LAND EAST OF COUNTSTHORPE ROAD, LEICESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

Context no.	Trench Number	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
1105	11	Cut	-	1106, 1107	Unknown	1.8	0.65	Linear in plan with sharp to gradual breaks of slope, sloping sides, and a flattish base	Cut of ditch
1106	11	Fill	1105	-	Unknown	0.3	0.2	Firm, light grey sandy silt	Fill of ditch [1105]
1107	11	Fill	1105	-	Unknown	1.8	0.45	Firm, greyish brown silty sand	Fill of ditch [1105]
1108	11	Cut	-	1109	Unknown	1.4	0.3	Linear in plan with sharp to gradual breaks of slope and a flattish base	Cut of ditch
1109	11	Fill	1108	-	Unknown	1.4	0.3	Greyish brown sandy silt	Fill of ditch [1108]
1110	11	Cut	-	1111	Unknown	1.45	0.5	Linear in plan with sharp breaks of slope, steep sides and a flat base	Cut of ditch
1111	11	Fill	1110	-	Unknown	1.45	0.5	Mid-grey sandy silt	Fill of ditch [1110]
1112	11	Cut	-	1113	Unknown	0.96	0.43	Linear in plan with sharp breaks of slope, gradually sloping sides and a flat base	Cut of ditch
1113	11	Fill	1112	-	Unknown	0.96	0.43	Greyish brown sandy silt	Fill of ditch [1112]
1203	12	Cut	-	1204	Unknown	2.7	0.5	Double linear feature with gradual breaks of slope, gradually sloping sides and U-shaped bases	Cut of double ditch
1204	12	Fill	1203	-	Unknown	2.7	0.5	Light brown sandy clay	Fill of double ditch [1203]
1303	13	Cut	-	1304	Unknown	3	0.7	Linear in plan, with sharp to gradual breaks of slope. The east side of the cut was stepped and the west side was gradually sloped. The base was flat.	Cut of ditch
1304	13	Fill	1303	-	Unknown	3	0.7	Mid-brown sandy silt.	Fill of ditch [1303]

Context no.	Trench Number	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
1503	15	Cut	-	1504, 1505	Unknown	0.95	0.58	Linear in plan with gradual breaks of slope, gently sloping sides and a U-shaped base	Cut of ditch
1504	15	Fill	1503	-	Unknown	0.5	0.32	Mid-brown sandy clay	Fill of ditch [1503]
1505	15	Fill	1503	-	Unknown	0.4	0.32	Dark brown stony clay	Fill of ditch [1503]
1506	15	Cut	-	1507	Unknown	1.92	0.24	Linear in plan with gradual breaks of slope, gently sloping sides and a U-shaped base	Cut of shallow ditch
1507	15	Fill	1506	-	Unknown	1.92	0.24	Mid-brown sandy clay	Fill of ditch [1506]
1603	16	Cut	-	1604	Unknown	0.68	0.18	Linear in plan with sharp to gradual breaks of slope, slightly concave sides and a U-shaped base	Cut of ditch
1604	16	Fill	1603	-	Unknown	0.68	0.18	Dark brown sandy clay	Fill of ditch [1603]
1605	16	Cut	-	1606	Unknown	0.88	0.19	Linear in plan, with gradual breaks of slope, gently sloping sides and a concave base	Cut of ditch
1606	16	Fill	1605	-	Unknown	0.88	0.19	Mid-brown sandy clay	Fill of ditch [1605]
1607	16	Cut	-	1608, 1609	Unknown	1.57	0.76	Linear in plan with sharp breaks of slope, near vertical sides and a flat base	Cut of ditch
1608	16	Fill	1607	-	Unknown	1.28	0.46	Dark greyish brown sandy silt	Primary fill of ditch [1607]
1609	16	Fill	1607	-	Unknown	1.57	0.3	Light greyish brown sandy silt	Secondary fill of ditch [1607]
1611	16	Cut	-	1612	Unknown	1.2	0.5	Linear in plan with sharp breaks of slope, near vertical sides and a flat base	Cut of ditch

BLABY SOLAR FARM, LAND EAST OF COUNTSTHORPE ROAD, LEICESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

Context no.	Trench Number	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
1612	16	Fill	1611	-	Unknown	1.2	0.5	Light greyish brown sandy silt	Fill of ditch [1611]
1703	17	Cut	-	1704	Unknown	1.36	0.3	Linear in plan, the sides of the ditch had a gradual slope to the base, and the base was concave	Cut of ditch
1704	17	Fill	1703	-	Unknown	1.36	0.3	Dark reddish brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded stones	Fill of ditch [1703]
1803	18	Cut	-	1804	Unknown	1.36	0.4	Linear in plan, the sides of the ditch had a gradual slope to the base, the base of the ditch concave.	Cut of ditch
1804	18	Fill	1803	-	Unknown	1.36	0.4	Greyish brown clay sand with the occasional rounded stones	Fill of ditch [1803]
1805	18	Cut	-	1806, 1807	Unknown	1.8	0.9	Linear in plan, the sides of the ditch were steep and had a flat base	Cut of ditch
1806	18	Fill	1805	-	Unknown		0.5	Dark grey clayey sand with the occasional rounded stones	Fill of ditch [1805]
1807	18	Fill	1805	-	Unknown		0.4	Dark brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded stones	Fill of ditch [1805]
1808	18	Cut	-	1809	Unknown	0.75	0.4	West side of the ditch was gradual slope to the base, the east side of the ditch was step then gradual sloped to the base, the base of ditch was concaved	Cut of ditch
1809	18	Fill	1808	-	Unknown	0.75	0.4	Dark reddish brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded and well-rounded stones	Fill of ditch [1808]

Context no.	Trench Number	Type	Fill of:	Filled by:	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Interpretation
1810	18	Cut	-	1811	Unknown	0.9	0.75	The sides of the ditch had gradual slop to the base, the base of ditch was flat	Cut of ditch
1811	18	Fill	1810	-	Unknown	0.9	0.75	Greyish brown clayey sand with the occasional rounded stone	Fill of ditch [1810]

10. APPENDIX 3 PHOTO REGISTER

Photo No.	Camera No.	Direction Facing	Description
444	Cam 5	E	Tr.16
446	Cam 5	N	Working shot 1
447	Cam 5	E	Working shot 2
448	Cam 5	W	Tr.1
449	Cam 5	E	Tr.17
450	Cam 5	E	Tr.19
451	Cam 5	W	Tr.15
452	Cam 5	SW	Tr.10
453	Cam 5	W	Working shot 3
454	Cam 5	SW	Tr.18
456	Cam 5	E	Tr.15 [1503]
458	Cam 5	S	Ditch [1605] Tr.16
459	Cam 5	S	Ditch [1603] Tr.16
460	Cam 5	N	Ditch [1607] Tr.16
461	Cam 5	NE	Ditch [1611] Tr.16
462	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1503] Tr.15
463	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1607] Tr.16
466	Cam 5	N	Fill of [1506] Tr.15
467	Cam 5	SSE	Tr.3
468	Cam 5	SW	Tr.20
470	Cam 5	E	Tr.2
471	Cam 5	E	Tr.4
472	Cam 5	E	Tr.5&6
473	Cam 5	S	Tr.7
474	Cam 5	NE	Tr.14
475	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1103] Tr.11
476	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1105] & [1108] Tr.11
477	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1105] Tr.11
478	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1108] Tr.11
479	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1110] & [1112] Tr.11
480	Cam 5	W	Ditch [1110] & [1112] Tr.11
481	Cam 5	W	Tr.13
483	Cam 5	N	Ditch [1303] Tr.13
484	Cam 5	N	Ditch [1003] Tr.1 (with scales)
485	Cam 5	N	Ditch [1003] Tr.1 (w/o scales)
486	Cam 5	E	Tr.1
487	Cam 5	S	Ditch [1203] Tr.12
488	Cam 5	S	Ditch [1203] Tr.12

Photo No.	Camera No.	Direction Facing	Description
490	Cam 5	SW	Tr.12
491	Cam 5	S	Ditch [1703] Tr.17
492	Cam 5	SE	Tr.9
493	Cam 5	SW	Tr.8
494	Cam 5	N	Ditch [803] Tr.8
495	Cam 5	S	Tr.11
496	Cam 5	S	Ditch [1803] Tr.18
497	Cam 5	N	Ditch [1805] Tr.18
498	Cam 5	N	Ditch [1808] Tr.18
499	Cam 5	E	Ditch [1810] / [1812] Tr.18

11. APPENDIX 4 DRAWING REGISTER

Drawing No.	Type	Scale	Description
1	Section	1:10	Section of N-S ditch [1607] in Tr.16
2	Section	1:20	Section of N-S ditch [1003] in Tr.1
3	Section	1:20	Section of ditch [1805] in Tr.18
4	Section	1:10	Section of ditch [1110] & [1102] in Tr.11
5	Section	1:10	Section of E-W ditch [1105] & [1108] in Tr.11
6	Section	1:10	Section of ditch [803] in Tr.8
7	Section	1:20	Section of ditches [1810] & [1812] in Tr.18
8	Section	1:20	Section of N-S ditch [1203] in Tr.12

12. APPENDIX 5 FINDS REGISTER

Find no.	Context No.	Material	Type	Identification	Description
RFCL15:904:001	904	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey pottery sherd, possibly Romano-British (R.B)
RFCL15:908:001	908	Pottery	Pottery	Rim Sherd	Grey rim sherd, poss. R.B.
RFCL15:908:002	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Large grey body sherd with some black/d. grey burnish, poss. R.B.
RFCL15:908:003	908	Pottery	Pottery	Rim Sherd	Grey rim sherd, poss. R.B.
RFCL15:908:004	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment likely body sherd, poss. R.B
RFCL15:908:005	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment likely body sherd, poss. R.B
RFCL15:908:006	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:007	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:008	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:009	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:010	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:011	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, black, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:012	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:013	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, black, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:014	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Red pottery sherd, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:015	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small grey fragment, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:016	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small grey fragment, abraded, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:017	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, black with red surface
RFCL15:908:018	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Brown with black surface
RFCL15:908:019	908	Pottery	Pottery	Base	Base of pottery, black with red inner and outer surface
RFCL15:908:020	908	Pottery	Pottery	Base	Base of pottery, black with brownish-black and outer surface
RFCL15:908:021	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, poss R.B

Find no.	Context No.	Material	Type	Identification	Description
RFCL15:908:022	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:023	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, black, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:024	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, black, poss R.B
RFCL15:908:025	908	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small fragment, grey, poss R.B
RFCL15:1104:001	1104	Pottery	Pottery	Base	Grey base fragment, poss R.B
RFCL15:1106:001	1106	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Body sherd, black with brown surface
RFCL15:1113:001	1113	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Single sherd of Samian
RFCL15:1204:001	1204	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1204:002	1204	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1304:001	1304	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1304:002	1304	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small grey fragment, poss R.B
RFCL15:1304:003	1304	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small grey fragment, poss R.B
RFCL15:1304:004	1304	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Small grey fragment,
RFCL15:1504:001	1504	Pottery	Pottery	Rim Sherd	Small grey rim sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:001	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:002	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:003	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:004	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:005	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:006	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:007	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:008	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:009	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:010	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1606:011	1606	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Thin grey body sherd, poss R.B

Find no.	Context No.	Material	Type	Identification	Description
RFCL15:1609:001	1609	CBM	CBM		Single unidentifiable fragment of CBM. Red with dark grey/brown surface
RFCL15:1612:001	1612	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Decorated fragment of Samian
RFCL15:1612:002	1612	CBM	CBM		Large fragment of red CBM
RFCL15:1704:001	1704	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Red pottery sherd
RFCL15:1704:002	1704	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Red pottery sherd
RFCL15:1704:003	1704	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Black pottery sherd with red surface
RFCL15:1704:004	1704	CBM	CBM		Small fragment of unidentifiable CBM. Red colour with black burning
RFCL15:1804:001	1804	Pottery	Pottery	Base & Body	Grey body sherd with part of base, poss R.B
RFCL15:1804:002	1804	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey body sherd with decoration, poss R.B
RFCL15:1804:003	1804	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey body sherd, poss R.B
RFCL15:1806:001	1806	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Brown body sherd with cross hatching decoration
RFCL15:1806:002	1806	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Brown body sherd with cross hatching decoration
RFCL15:1809:001	1809	Pottery	Pottery	Rim Sherd	Grey sherd with remnants of black burnishing
RFCL15:1809:002	1809	Pottery	Pottery	Rim Sherd	Grey sherd with remnants of black burnishing
RFCL15:1809:003	1809	Pottery	Pottery	Rim Sherd	Red rim sherd
RFCL15:1809:004	1809	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey pottery sherd with decoration
RFCL15:1809:005	1809	Pottery	Pottery	Body Sherd	Grey pottery sherd

13. APPENDIX 7 TRENCH REGISTERS

Field No.	Trench No.	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Orientation	Description
1	1	30	1.8	0.68	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features identified: N-S linear ditch [103]
1	2	30	1.8	0.81	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features identified: None
1	3	30	1.8	0.76	SSE-NNW	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Features identified: None
1	4	30	1.8	0.83	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: None
1	5 & 6	30	1.8	0.78	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: None
1	7	30	1.8	0.76	N-S	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: None
1	8	30	1.8	0.76	NE-SW	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: Linear Ditch [803]
1	9	30	1.8	0.75	SE-NW	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange sand
						Features Identified: Three Linear Ditches [903] [904] [907]
1	10	30	1.8	0.85	NE-SW	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: None
1	11	30	1.8	0.58	N-S	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay

Field No.	Trench No.	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Orientation	Description
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features identified: Five Linear ditches [1103] [1105] [1108] [1110] [1112]
1	12	30	1.8	0.58	NE-SW	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: Linear Ditch [1203]
1	13	30	1.8	0.52	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: Linear Ditch [1303]
1	14	30	1.8	0.79	NE-SW	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: None
1	15	30	1.8	0.79	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: Two linear ditches [1503] [1507]
1	16	30	1.8	0.3	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: Four linear ditches [1603] [1605] [1607] [1611]
1	17	30	1.8	0.65	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features identified: Ditch [1703]
1	18	30	1.8	0.68	NE-SW	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: Four linear ditches [1803], [1805], [1808], [1810]
1	19	30	1.8	0.84	E-W	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: None
1	20	30	1.8	0.76	SW-NE	Topsoil: Dark grey sandy silt
						Subsoil: Brown sandy clay
						Natural Subsoil: Orange silty clay
						Features Identified: None

14. APPENDIX 8 POTTERY ASSESSMENT

Author: Jane Timby BA Ph D FSA MCIfA

1 Introduction

- 1.1. The archaeological work carried out at Blaby Solar Farm, Leicester, resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of 66 sherds of pottery weighing 1931 g dating to the Roman period. In addition one fragment of semi-vitrified fired clay and one fragment of stone were included with the pottery.
- 1.2. In general terms the assemblage is in very good condition, reflected in the overall average sherd weight of 29.3 g. The sherds have fresh edges and there are examples of multiple sherds from single vessels. Surface finishes have been preserved.
- 1.3. Pottery was recovered from cut features located in eight trenches. In total this amounts to some 14 contexts. The quantity of material present per context was thus generally very low which must be borne in mind when considering the dating. In nearly all cases the quantity of pottery recovered is not sufficient to permit accurate dating with a high level of confidence. In cases where no diagnostic rim sherds are present and the fairly ubiquitous local grey sandy wares are the only sherds present, dating can only be very broad.
- 1.4. At this stage no detailed research work has been carried out to determine whether there has been other material from the immediate locality, or to link the fabrics in with any pre-existing local fabric or form series.
- 1.5. Following a comment on the methodology used, the assemblage is briefly described. A section follows on the potential of the group and any recommendations for further work.

2 Methodology

- 2.1 The assemblage was sorted into broad fabric groups based on inclusions present, the frequency and grade of the inclusions and the firing colour. For the Roman sherds known regional or traded wares were coded following the system advocated for the National Roman reference collection (Tomber and Dore 1998) [codes in square brackets].
- 2.2 The sorted assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. A summary is presented in Table 1 along with the likely date of the context.

3 Roman: composition

- 3.1 The entire assemblage dates to the Roman period and more specifically, where datable, most, or all, the material seems to be of 2nd-century currency. The group mainly comprises coarse wares of local origin with just two imported pieces and no recognisable regional traded wares.
- 3.2 The two imported sherds are of Central Gaulish samian from Lezoux [LEZ SA]. One piece from cut [1611] is from a decorated bowl Dragendorff form 37. The decoration is slightly worn. The second sherd from cut [1112] is from a plain bowl. Both would have been imported in the 2nd century.
- 3.3 The local wares largely comprise grey or black sandy wares, grog-tempered ware and shelly ware. Two sherds from a handmade storage jar from (1806) are tempered with what may be a calcareous sandstone.
- 3.4 In terms of forms there are both handmade and wheel-made vessels most of which appear to consist of large storage jars and other jar forms. Several sherds from a wide-mouthed jar in a fine grey ware with a red-brown core came from [907] and 11 bodysherds from a thin-walled grey sandy ware jar were the only finds from [1605]. Context (1809) produced rims from a storage jar, grey sandy lid-seated jar with exterior ridging and a sharply everted, neckless jar.
- 3.5 Four handmade black sandy ware jar sherds from (908) decorated with an acute burnished line lattice appear to be copying a BB1 jar. Other decorated wares include two storage jar sherds from cxt (1806) with two directional combing partially overlapping and one bodysherds from (1809) is decorated with a zone of combed diamonds.

4 Potential and recommendations

- 4.1 The assemblage documents the presence of early Roman activity within the area investigated. As far as it can be ascertained from such a small group the pottery appears to broadly belong to one phase of activity dating to the 2nd century.
- 4.2 Pottery was recovered from eight trenches with the highest quantity, some 32 sherds, coming from Trench 9. In the absence of further site information it is difficult to assess the density of finds for the area investigated but suffice it say that the preservation of the material is very good.
- 4.3 The low incidence of traded wares in the assemblage along with the high incidence of local reduced coarsewares and limited repertoire of forms might suggest this is a fairly low status rural assemblage. The decorated samian bowl is a slight anomaly as this is more of a prestige item but overall the proportion of samian is compatible with what might be expected from a rural establishment. With such a small group it is difficult to know how much this is a quirk of the sample size.
- 6.1 The limited nature of the excavations and the generally small size of the Roman assemblage would suggest that it does not merit further detailed analysis at this stage. If further work is

undertaken at the site the material should be included with future work and for this reason should not be discarded at this stage. Any future detailed analysis should link the pottery to a local / regional fabric series if it exists. It may also be appropriate if there is a later stage which goes to publication to have the decorated samian identified in more detail by an appropriated specialist.

Reference

Tomber, R, and Dore, J, 1998 *The National Roman fabric reference collection: a handbook*, Museum of London / English Heritage/ British Museum

Tr	Cxt	Cut	Type	samian	grog	shell	greysy	other	Tot No	Tot wt	Date	Non-pot
9	904	903	?	0	0	0	1	0	1	28	Roman	
9	908	907	?	0	3	1	27	0	31	1152	C2	
11	1104	1103	?	0	1	0	0	0	1	24	C2	
11	1106	1105	?	0	1	0	0	0	1	62	early Ro	
11	1113	1112	?	1	0	0	0	0	1	7	C2	
12	1204	1203	?	0	1	0	1	0	2	25	C2	
13	1304	1303	?	0	0	0	3	0	3	45	C2	stone x1
15	1504	1503	?	0	1	0	0	0	1	8	C2	
15	1606	1605	?	0	0	0	11	0	11	31	Roman	
16	1612	1611	?	1	0	0	0	0	1	38	C2	
17	1704	?	?	0	0	0	0	3	3	24	early Ro	fc x1
18	1804	?	?	0	0	0	3	0	3	82	Roman	
18	1806	?	?	0	0	0	0	2	2	192	early Ro	
18	1809	?	?	0	0	1	4	0	5	213	C2	
TOT				2	7	2	50	5	66	1931		

Table 1

Tr	Cxt	Fabric	Form	Wt	No	Rim	Comment
9	904	GY		28	1	0	
9	908	GY		8	1	0	
9	908	GYF	expanded rim jar	711	19	2	mainly/ all 1 vessel
9	908	GYFSY		13	1	0	
9	908	BWSY		103	4	0	x1 dec acute lattice
9	908	SHELL		36	1	0	handmade
9	908	GRSA	base	281	3	0	handmade
11	1104	GYGR	base	24	1	0	
11	1106	GR		62	1	0	handmade
11	1113	LEZSA		7	1	0	
12	1204	GYGR		18	1	0	
12	1204	GYF		7	1	0	
13	1304	GYF		40	2	0	
13	1304	GY		5	1	0	
13	1304	STONE		0	0	0	
15	1504	GYGR	jar	8	0	1	
16	1606	GYGR		31	11	0	1 vessel
16	1612	LEZSA	37 dec	38	1	0	sl abraded
17	1704	FCLAY		21	1	0	
17	1704	OXIDSY		24	3	0	handmade, occasional calc inclusions
18	1804	GY	base x1	82	2	1	x1 burnished
18	1806	SST		192	2	0	all-over combed decoration
18	1809	SHELL	storage jar	104	0	1	
18	1809	GY	lid-seated jar	48	0	1	ridged exterior
18	1809	GY	everted rim jar	29	0	1	
18	1809	GY		32	2	0	x1 combed diamonds decor

Table 2

Fabric code	Description
BWSY	black medium sandy ware
FCLAY	fired clay
GR	soapy grog-tempered
GRSA	sandy with sparse grog
GY	hard grey sandy
GYF	fine grey sandy with a red-brown core
GYFSY	fine grey slightly sandy
GYGR	fine grey with sparse grog
LEZSA	Central Gaulish samian (Lezoux)
OXIDSY	oxidised sandy (ferruginous) and sparse calcareous
SHELL	shelly wae (voids)
SST	?calcareous sandstone

Table 3



AB Heritage Limited
Caerus Suite, 150 Priorswood Road
Taunton, Somerset, TA2 8DU
Tel: 03333 440 206
e-mail: info@abheritage.co.uk