GWFP11/003

GORES WINDFARM SITE, PETERBOROUGH

Met Mast Watching Brief

for West Coast Energy

November 2012

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IfA

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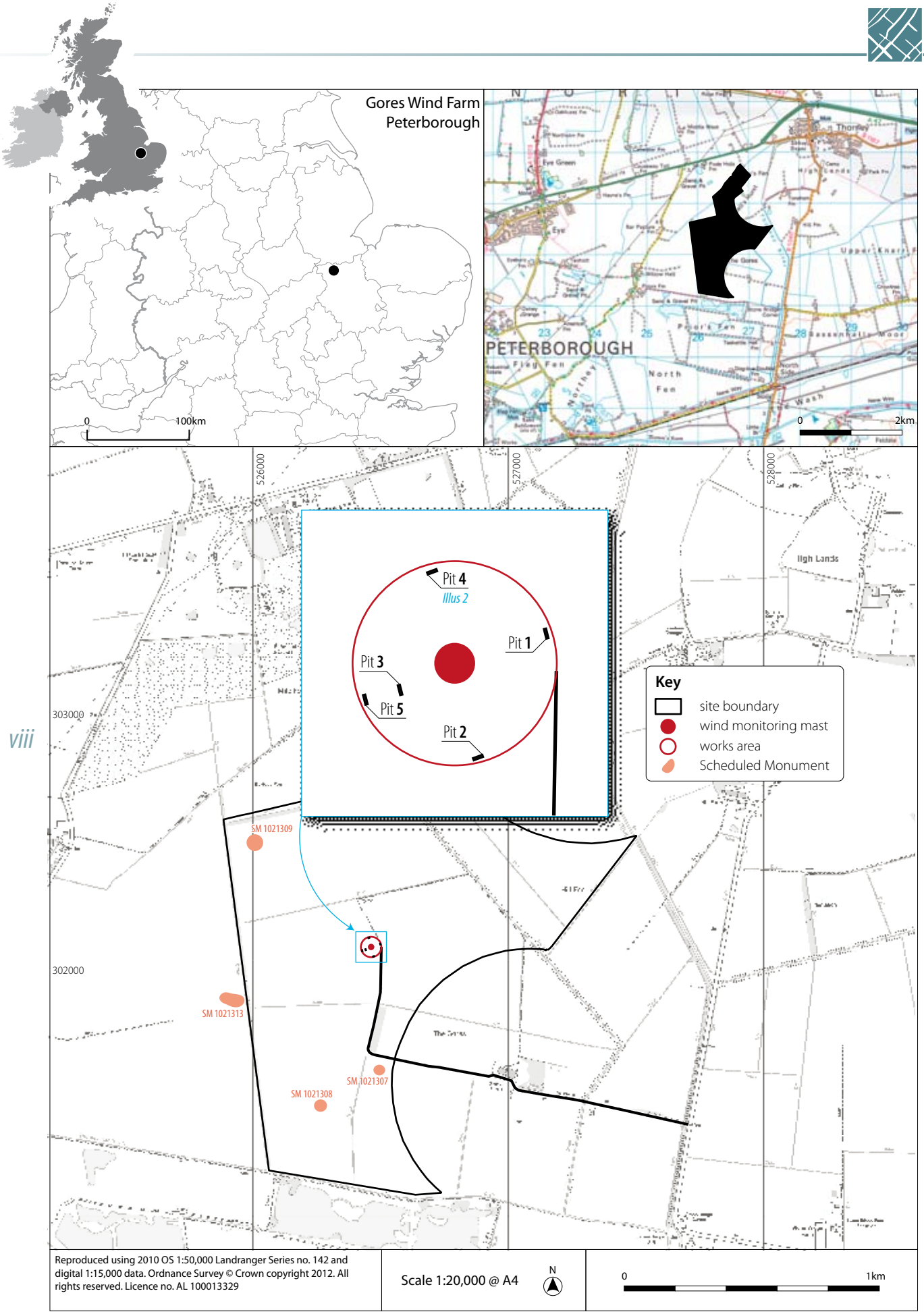


Illus 1

Site location

GORES WINDFARM SITE, PETERBOROUGH

Met Mast Watching Brief

Headland Archaeology Ltd conducted a watching brief on excavations required ahead of the construction of a Met Mast at Gores Farm, Peterborough in order to satisfy a requirement by Peterborough City Council. The work was commissioned by West Coast Energy and the watching brief resulted in no significant sub-surface archaeological remains being discovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning background

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by West Coast Energy to undertake a programme of archaeological observation at a proposed windfarm site (WF) at Gores Farm near Peterborough.

A baseline cultural heritage assessment was completed in early 2012 (Headland Archaeology 2012) and this recognised the high potential for archaeological remains of Bronze Age or Roman date within the WF. As a result of this potential, the Peterborough City Council Archaeologist (PCC) advised the Local Planning Authority (LPA) that any groundworks required ahead of construction should be subject to a programme of archaeological observation. This would ensure that opportunities were taken to learn about sub-surface potentials at the WF in advance of construction works.

On the basis of the PCC's advice, an archaeological watching brief was required during groundworks for the construction of a Met Mast. The fieldwork took place on 13th November 2012 and this report outlines the results.

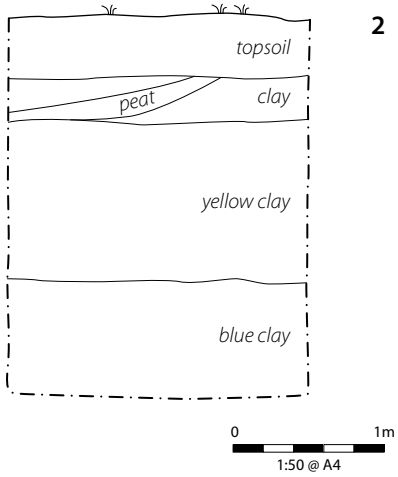
1.2 Site location and geology

The site is located in a group of fields to the south of Pode Hole Farm near Thorney. The Met Mast construction is located to the north-west of the Gores Farm buildings and is centred on NGR 526150, 302690. The geology of the area comprises Oxford Clay Formation – Mudstone, which is overlain by river terrace deposits comprising sands and gravels (British Geological Survey Website). The WF lies at a height of ***c.***2m AOD, is generally flat open arable fields divided by paths and tracks, and is in use as crop fields.

1.3 Archaeological background

The WF takes in an extensive area of arable land that has been subject to intensive drainage and cultivation since at least the 17th century. This land contains three bowl barrows indicative of a Neolithic or Bronze Age date (Scheduled Monument 1021307, 1021308 and 1021309). None of these known heritage assets would be directly impacted by the current turbine layout and may be readily avoided by tracks and other infrastructure.

Bronze Age and Neolithic artefacts (HER 03005 & 51915) have been found in the WF and a Bronze Age wooden trackway (HER 08785) has been excavated in the north of it. It is considered that across the proposed development area there is moderate potential for archaeological assets of Bronze Age date to be preserved beneath the peat deposits. If present, these remains could be well preserved and may include further waterlogged organic artefacts or timber structures such as the trackway. There is also potential for remains of Roman date, as a field system of this date is present at Pode Hole and these earthworks are part of a larger area of field systems known from cropmarks (SM 1015503).



2

Illus 2

Example of pit section (Pit 4)

Illus 3

Typical soil profile (Pit 2)

Illus 4

Site conditions and building the Met Mast

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the watching brief were:

- to record and enhance understanding of the significance of heritage assets before they are lost;
- to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any remains on the site, in their cultural and environmental setting; and
- to analyse any evidence retrieved during the works in light of the objectives contained in local, regional and national research contexts; which, in this case, are provided by Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (2000), Medlycott & Brown (2008), Medlycott (2011) and English Heritage (1991 & 1997).

Also, the specific objectives of the project were

- to ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of excavations required ahead of the Met Mast construction;
- to secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the Met Mast Construction programme; and
- to secure the analysis, conservation, and long-term storage of any artefactual/ ecofactual material recovered from the site.

2.2 Methodology

Five anchor foundation pits were excavated by specialist Met Mast construction contractors. A 360° excavator equipped with a flat bucket excavated the pits to the depth required by the construction team. All pits were excavated under continuous and constant archaeological supervision.

A full photographic record comprising colour slide, black and white print and digital photographs was taken. All recording was in accordance with the Code of Conduct Institute of Field Archaeologists 2010; and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994, rev 2008). All contexts were given unique numbers, were required, and all recording was undertaken on *pro forma* record cards that conform to accepted archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

3. RESULTS

In general, the soil profile comprised 0.40m of dark brown (peat-like) silty clay topsoil overlying natural deposits of pale yellow and blue clays. Within pit (3), mixed blue and yellow gravel was present below the clay (Appendix 1.1). Peat was observed in two pits; directly below the topsoil in pit (1) (0.20m) and as a lens contained within the clay in pit (4) (*Illus 2*). Peat was not observed within the remaining pits.

No archaeological remains were revealed in any of these pits.

3.1 Description of the significance of the Heritage Assets

The local and regional research contexts that are provided by Medlycott (2011), Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (2000) and Medlycott & Brown (2008) outline various gaps in knowledge in the Peterborough area. Due to no archaeological remains being identified during this phase of observation, the site does not contribute to these research aims (at this stage).

4. DISCUSSION

No significant archaeological features were recorded during this phase of observation suggesting this small area of the WF has a relatively low potential (at this stage) to contain significant archaeological remains.

The WF, as a whole, is known to contain archaeological remains (three prehistoric bowl barrows which are designated heritage assets). However, the site has been subject to intensive cultivation and drainage since at least the 17th century. The lack of subsoil present within the pits observed confirms this and it may be that this regime of ploughing has effected the preservation of archaeological remains, particularly in this part of the site.

However, given the narrow confines and depth of the pits monitored during this phase, the observations made in this report are best utilised as part of a series of results becoming available via evaluation works at the site. The results of all these evaluation techniques will be presented to the LPA in an Environmental Statement.

5. REFERENCES

5.1 Bibliography

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English Heritage 1991 *Exploring Our Past,* English Heritage.

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Headland Archaeology 2012 *Gores Wind Farm: Cultural Heritage Baseline,* (GWFP11).

Headland Archaeology 2012 *Programme of Archaeological Observation (ahead of Met Mast construction), Investigation, Recording, Assessment, Analysis and Publication at the proposed Gores Wind Farm Site, Peterborough: Written Scheme of Investigation,* (GWFP11).

Medlycott, M 2011 (ed.) *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England,* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.

5.2 Websites

British Geological Survey Website www.bgs.ac.uk Accessed: 15·11·2012

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Site records

Appendix 1.1 Pit descriptions

Pit	Dimensions (m)	Depth (m)	Results
1	0.50 x 2	2.3	Dark Brown (peat-like) silty clay topsoil (0.35m) overlying a band of peat (0.15m). Below the peat is natural yellow clay overlying pale blue/grey clay
2	0.50 x 2	2.3	Dark Brown (peat-like) silty clay topsoil (0.40m) overlying natural yellow clay overlying pale blue/ grey clay
3	0.50 x 2	2.4	Dark Brown (peat-like) silty clay topsoil (0.45m) overlying natural yellow clay overlying pale blue/ grey clay. A layer of blue and yellow mixed gravel was observed at the base of the pit.
4	0.50 x 2	2.5	Dark Brown (peat-like) silty clay topsoil (0.35m) overlying a band of clay with lenses of peat (0.35m). Below this is natural yellow clay overlying pale blue/grey clay
5	0.50 x 2	2.5	Dark Brown (peat-like) silty clay topsoil (0.4m) overlying natural yellow clay overlying pale blue/ grey clay

Appendix 1.2 Photographic register

Photo	Direction	Description
001	SW	Location of mast (pre-condition)
002	W	Location of mast (pre-condition)
003	N	lLooking North to other current mast
004	SW	Base 2 section
005	SW	Base 2 section
006	SE	Base 3 section
007	NE	Working shot
008	NW	Base 4 section
009	W	Base 4 section
010	NW	Base 4 section
011	E	Mast on the ground
012	SW	Base 5 (poor light)
013	E	Building a mast'

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