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Ritherdens Solar Development, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report



Accession code: TTNCN 10/2013 Report ref: 87642.03 July 2013

archaeology



Ritherdens Solar Development, Somerset

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by MS Power Projects Limited to undertake a programme of targeted archaeological trial trenching on land at Ritherdens, Taunton, Somerset (NGR 230800 101600), a 20.5ha site proposed for the construction of a solar farm.

The evaluation comprises the third phase of archaeological works, following a desk-based assessment (WA 2012) and geophysical survey (WA 2013a). This phase comprised of nine machine excavated trenches aimed to ground truth the results of the geophysical survey whilst identifying or confirming the absence of any previously unknown areas of archaeological activity at the Site. The evaluation was undertaken between the 15th and 19th July 2013.

The evaluation identified an area of Romano-British activity in the southwest part of the Site, initially identified from cropmark evidence (WA 2012) and geophysical survey (WA 2013a). This consisted of two parallel curvilinear ditches and a possible west-north-west – east-south-east orientated linear. Investigation suggests that the two north – south ditches are substantial features, both 2.6m wide and in one case confirmed to be over 1.2m deep. The exact nature of the activity was unclear but the depth of the features suggests a defensive function.

The diffuse and meandering geophysical responses seen in the eastern part of the north field were concluded to be the results of alluvial action and flooding.

An early 19th century field boundary was identified in the south-east part of the Site, it was relatively insubstantial and though to be the remains of two possible hedgerows either side of a raised bank. The results of both the geophysical survey and this fieldwork indicate that most of the other former field boundaries have not survived and where therefore likely to have been insubstantial.

A trench repositioned in the western part of the north field confirmed that the geophysical responses thought to be modern drainage had been correctly interpreted.

Following on-site discussions with the archaeological planning advisor to the LPA it has been suggested that further mitigation would be required in the area of Romano-British activity. This could either be from the removal of this area from the proposed development, therefore effecting preservation *in situ* or an open area excavation to investigate and understand the archaeological resource in this area (preservation by record). After further discussions with the client it is anticipated that this area, as defined by the topography and geophysical survey will be preserved *in situ*. This further archaeological mitigation should be secured by planning condition.

The final scale, scope and nature of any further archaeological mitigation works will be agreed through consultation with the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority.

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Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by MS Power Projects Limited and Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Chris Brake and Larry Mark in this regard. Wessex Archaeology would also like to thank Steven Membery (Senior Historic Environment Officer for Somerset County Council) for his advice and assistance and William Venn for allowing access to the Site.

The fieldwork was carried out by Naomi Brennan assisted by Amy McCabe, Alex Gikas, Martyn Cooper and Matt Blewett. This report was written and complied by Naomi Brennan with specialist reports by Lorraine Mepham (finds) and illustrations by Rob Goller. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Caroline Budd.



Archaeological Evaluation Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by MS Power Projects Limited to undertake a programme of targeted archaeological trial trenching on land at Ritherdens, Taunton, Somerset (Figure 1). The survey area comprises approximately 20.5ha of arable land centred upon National Grid Reference (NGR) 230800 101600 (hereafter 'the Site').
- 1.1.2 It is proposed by the Developer that a planning application be submitted to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) for the construction of a solar farm on the Site. This trial trenching was required as part of a staged programme of archaeological assessment which has been requested by the Senior Historic Environment Officer for Somerset County Council, acting on behalf of the LPA, in order to inform any decision on the application with regards to the potential archaeological resource within the Site. A Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared, submitted and approved by the Senior Historic Environment Officer in advance of the commencement of the trial trenching (WA 2013b). This document described the methodology to be employed and the location of the proposed trenches.
- 1.1.3 The trial trenches are the third phase of pre-application archaeological works, following a desk-based assessment (WA 2012) and geophysical survey (WA 2013a). They aimed to ground truth the results of the geophysical survey whilst identifying or confirming the absence of any previously unknown areas of archaeological activity at the Site.
- 1.1.4 The evaluation was undertaken between the 15th and 19th July 2013.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The Site is located in south-west Somerset, approximately 1.5km west of Taunton (Figure 1). The Site comprises an irregular parcel of agricultural land measuring c. 20.5ha, consisting of three large fields which are currently under arable cultivation.
- 1.2.2 The Site is bounded to the north, east and south by arable farmland and to the west by pasture land on the outskirts of the hamlet of Hele (**Figure 1**).
- 1.2.3 The Site is generally level, although the ground drops slightly in the south of the Site following a break of slope, and also near the northern Site limit. The highest point lies in the centre of the Site, at an elevation of *c*. 30m above Ordnance Datum (aOD)
- 1.2.4 The underlying geology is mapped as Branscombe Mudstone formation in the south of the Site, overlain in places by Head deposits of sands and gravels. In the northern half of the Site, the underlying geology is mapped as Sandstone or Mudstone and Halite-Stone formations of the Mercia Mudstone Group (BGS Online Viewer).



2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 An initial Desk-based Assessment (WA 2012) identified the potential for buried features of prehistoric, Romano-British and Saxon date to occur within the Site. In addition it was considered that there may be some potential for Mesolithic artefacts. However, the lack of previous archaeological investigations within the Study Area meant that the archaeological potential of the Site was largely untested. Evidence suggests that the Site was likely to have formed part of the agricultural hinterland of Taunton since the early medieval period. As such it was considered probable that buried features relating to medieval and post-medieval agriculture would be present within the Site. However, with the exception of former field systems was not anticipated that significant or substantial features of post-Saxon date would be present within the Site.
- 2.1.2 The principal heritage interest of the Site comprises cropmarks identified within the Site from aerial photographs. Many of the marks can be matched with field boundaries depicted on early 19th century mapping, and are thus thought to be of earlier post-medieval or medieval date. However an earlier origin for some of the cropmarks cannot be ruled out. A single oval cropmark in the south of the Site was thought to be consistent with a prehistoric enclosure.
- 2.1.3 In light of this a geophysical survey was requested by the Senior Historic Environment Officer for Somerset County Council, in order to further ascertain the potential for buried archaeological remains to be present on the Site.
- 2.1.4 The results of the geophysical survey (WA 2013a) confirmed the presence of curving ditches in the location of the previously identified cropmarks in conjunction with other linear anomalies in the north and east of the Site which may relate to archaeological features. Groups of small sub-oval pit-like features were also revealed (**Figure 1**). The remaining features which were identified appeared to fit with the former field boundaries which were visible in the early maps consulted in the archaeological desk-based assessment, suggesting that the features identified were of post-medieval or earlier date

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The specific aims of the programme of archaeological works were to:
 - ground truth the results of the geophysical survey;
 - clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the Site;
 - *identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the Site;*
 - assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits; and
 - produce a report which will present the results of the geophysical survey and trail trenching in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the Site's archaeological potential.



3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 The full detailed methodology of the archaeological works was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2013b) and is summarised below.
- 3.2.2 Ten evaluation trenches were proposed, measuring approximately 30m by 2m and targeted on the results of the geophysical survey. Following discussions at the monitoring meeting with the Senior Historic Environment Officer the most northerly of these were not excavated due to the low potential of the previous trenches. Rather, as requested by the Senior Historic Environment Officer, a single trench was targeted on anomalies in the western part of this field.
- 3.2.3 The trenches were excavated using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a wide toothless bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. Mechanical excavation continued in spits through topsoil and subsoil down to either the uppermost archaeological features or natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. Any topsoil was separated from subsoil and any other arisings, and stored at a minimum of 1m from the trench edge. The spoil from the trenches was scanned for artefacts.
- 3.2.4 Where archaeological features were encountered they were investigated by hand, with a sufficient sample of each layer/feature type excavated in order to establish, as may be possible, their date, nature, character, extent and condition.
- 3.2.5 Any archaeological deposits and features were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system with a unique numbering system for individual contexts. Archaeological features and deposits were hand-drawn at either 1:10 or 1:20, including both plans and sections; these were referred to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The Ordnance Datum (OD) height of all principal features and levels were calculated. A representative section of each trench was recorded showing the depth of the overburden deposits.
- 3.2.6 A photographic record was compiled using black and white film, colour slides and digital images. The record illustrates both the detail and the general context of the principal features and the site as a whole. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.
- 3.2.7 The survey was carried out with a Leica Viva series GNSS unit using the OS National GPS Network through an RTK network with a 3D accuracy of 30mm or below. All survey data was recorded using the OSGB36 British National Grid coordinate system.
- 3.2.8 Upon completion of the fieldwork and recording the trenches were backfilled with the excavated spoil, topsoil last in order to preserve the soil stratigraphy.
- 3.2.9 A unique accession code **TTNCM 10/2013** was allocated to the Site, and was used on all records and finds.

3.3 Health and Safety

- 3.3.1 Health and Safety considerations were of paramount importance in conducting all fieldwork. Safe working practices override archaeological considerations at all times.
- 3.3.2 All work was carried out in accordance with the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety Regulations 1992, and all other relevant Health and Safety legislation, regulations and codes of practice in force at the time.





3.4.1 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the relevant guidance given in the Institute for Archaeologist's *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Details of individual excavated contexts and features are retained in the project archive. Summaries of the excavated sequences and details of the archaeological features can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 4.1.2 A total of nine trenches were excavated (**Figure 1**), although ten trenches were originally proposed following discussions at the monitoring meeting the mostly northerly two were not excavated. Instead a single trench (**Trench 9**) was positioned in the western area of the northern field over geophysical responses interpreted as drainage.
- 4.1.3 In general the stratigraphic sequence recorded was between 0.25-0.40m of modern topsoil overlying between 0.10-0.30m of a very compact subsoil which may include colluvial material. The natural geology was a mottled red and blue grey clay which overlies the mudstones however in a number of trenches other localised clay deposits were also encountered.

4.2 Romano-British

- 4.2.1 Trenches 1 and 2 were targeted on a series of linear responses identified on the geophysical survey (WA 2013a) (Figure 1) and also visible on oblique aerial photographs taken in 2010 (WA 2012). The indications are of at least one, possibly two, concentric oval enclosures and a possible rectilinear enclosure. Within Trench 1 two ditches (104 and 107) were encountered, corresponding with the geophysical anomalies. These apparently parallel north south features were situated approximately 5m apart and were both around 2.6m wide. Following hand-excavation of the upper 0.5m of the features a machine slot was excavated through ditch 104 to establish its full depth and profile revealing that it was over 1.2m deep (Figure 2, Plate 1 and Section 1).
- 4.2.2 The upper secondary deposits of both ditches had similar characteristics being a dark grey-black silty clay containing frequent pottery and animal bone. The pottery was dated to the Romano-British period. Beneath this within ditch **107** was a deliberate deposit **109**, this contained patches of charcoal and abundant large stones (Figure 2, Section 2). The lower secondary fills in both ditches (**105** and **108**) contained very few finds and are suggestive of gradual silting and erosion. A primary fill was encountered at the base of ditch **104** (**113**).
- 4.2.3 The contrast between the artefact rich upper deposits and the relatively sterile lower fills suggests that either domestic activity in the area post-dates the main phase of ditch use or, more likely, that other features and above ground deposits and structures have been eroded and possibly ploughed into the top of these features once the area was put to less intensive agricultural use. The form of the ditches may suggest an Iron Age origin.
- 4.2.4 A single pit or posthole **111** was located at the east end of **Trench 1** (**Figure 2, Plate 2**). This contained a single mixed fill **112**. Although undated it is likely to be contemporary with the other activity in this area.



4.2.5 At the west end of Trench 2 a possible linear was investigated and shown to be a shallow depression. Within the central part of the trench was a large, apparently homogeneous deposit 206 extending for some 9.7m. A machine slot at the eastern edge of this showed this to be the upper fill of a deep feature 204 (Figure 2, Plate 3). A lower possible primary fill was also identified 205. Pottery from the upper fill 206 is comparable with that located within the ditches within Trench 1 and indicates a Romano-British date. The geophysical survey (WA 2013a) suggests that it is in fact the intersection of three features, the continuation of the two ditches seen in Trench 1 and a third west-north-west – east-south-east aligned linear.

4.3 Post-medieval

- 4.3.1 Both **Trenches 3 and 4** were situated over geophysical responses thought to correspond to field boundaries noted on early 19th century maps (WA 2012). Within **Trench 3** two small irregular linear features were noted (**304** and **306**) (**Figure 2, Plate 4**). Running parallel on a north south alignment and around 3.7m apart this may be the remnant of two hedgerows situated either side of a raised bank forming the boundary observed on a map dating to 1802.
- 4.3.2 Although the present day fields were once sub-divided in many smaller fields most of these boundaries were not observable on the geophysical survey. This suggests that many of them were fairly insubstantial consisting of hedgerows, banks and gullies rather than deep drainage ditches. No features were observed in **Trench 4**, though a colluvial filled linear depression was observed in the eastern end of the trench.

4.4 Modern

4.4.1 The repositioned **Trench 9** confirmed that the north – south anomaly detected during the geophysical survey (WA 2013a) was a modern drainage feature. A possible north-west – south-east linear **904** was also located, this was very shallow and may in fact be a natural depression.

4.5 Features of uncertain date

4.5.1 **Trenches 5 to 8** were situated over a long intermittent, curvilinear anomaly identified in the geophysical survey (WA 2013a). This had an irregular and diffuse outline but is thought to coincide with field boundaries marked on early 19th century maps. Within these trenches was a succession of clay layers and occasional stony deposits overlying the natural geology. These were not consistent with any archaeological cut feature but were more suggestive of alluvial action. The stony deposits (**504** and **604**) encountered are suggestive of deliberate deposits to consolidate soft and muddy ground. The watercourse which runs along the southern boundary of this field then runs underground northwards and exits in the north-east part of the field (W. Venn *pers. comm.*). Though now conduited, presumably this watercourse would have in the past naturally meandered northwards through the field. Such a natural boundary would also explain the shifting and winding field boundaries in this part of the field.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The evaluation produced a small quantity of finds, consisting largely of pottery, with a smaller amount of animal bone.
- 5.1.2 Finds were recovered from two of the trenches excavated (**Trenches 1 and 2**). The majority came from a single context, the secondary fill (**106**) of ditch **104**. Much smaller



amounts came from another secondary fill (105) of ditch 104, ditch 107 (secondary fills 108, 110), pit/posthole 111 (fill 112) and context 206 (feature 204). Quantities by context are given in Table 1.

5.2 Pottery

- 5.2.1 The condition of the pottery is fair; sherds are relatively small (mean sherd weight 7g), and sherd edges and surfaces are moderately abraded.
- 5.2.2 All of the pottery is Romano-British, consists entirely of coarsewares. The assemblage is dominated by greywares, the majority of which appear to fall within the tradition of 'South-western greywares'. The emphasis here is on the finer, thinner-walled variants of this ceramic tradition, with a much smaller proportion of the coarser greywares generally used for large, thick-walled storage jars. There are also oxidised variants present here. Everted rim jars predominate amongst the vessel forms represented, with a few lids. The presence of fragments of soft, speckled, silvery-grey or pink rock fragments, visible in hand specimen but only definitively identifiable under magnification, serve to correlate a high proportion of the greywares with 'Norton Fitzwarren ware', as defined at Exeter (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, 175, fabric 107; Timby 1989, 54), and produced from the 2nd to the 4th centuries AD. The lack of large storage jars could be a chronological indicator, as the form is generally absent from 1st and 2nd century assemblages in the region (Seager Smith 1999, 314).
- 5.2.3 The only other identifiable ware type present is south-east Dorset Black Burnished ware, of which five sherds were recovered from context **206**.

5.3 Animal bone

5.3.1 The condition of the bone is fair to poor, and most fragments are small, abraded and unidentifiable to species. Sheep/goat and cattle are the only identifiable species represented.

Context	Animal Bone	Pottery
105	3/78	
106	9/19	477/3336
108	4/26	
110	16/76	28/218
112	4/2	
206		9/47
TOTAL	36/201	514/3601

Table 1:	All finds by context	(number /	weight in grammes)
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6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1.1 A single environmental sample was taken from deliberate deposit **109** from ditch **107**. This has not been processed but is retained in the project archive for further analysis in the event of any further fieldwork.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1.1 An area of Romano-British activity was located in the southwest part of the Site (**Trenches 1 and 2**), initially identified from cropmark evidence (WA 2012) and geophysical survey (WA 2013a). This area forms a slight but discernible oval outcrop. The



archaeology located within it consisted of two parallel curvilinear ditches and a potential west-north-west – east-south-east linear. Investigation suggests that the two north – south ditches are substantial features, both 2.6m wide and in the case of **104** confirmed to be over 1.2m deep. The exact nature of the activity was unclear but the depth of the features suggests a defensive function.

- 7.1.2 The geophysical responses seen in the eastern part of the north field have been concluded to be the results of alluvial action and flooding (**Trenches 5-8**).
- 7.1.3 While an early 19th century field boundary was identified in **Trench 3** it was relatively insubstantial and thought to be the remains of two possible hedgerows either side of a raised bank. The results of both the geophysical survey and this fieldwork indicate that most of the other former field boundaries have not survived.
- 7.1.4 The repositioned **Trench 9** confirmed that the geophysical responses thought to be modern drainage had been correctly interpreted.

8 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 8.1.1 The northern and eastern parts of the Site have very low archaeological potential containing features of an agricultural, modern or natural origin and therefore no further work is proposed in these areas.
- 8.1.2 Following on-site discussions with Steven Membery of Somerset County Council, the archaeological planning advisor to the LPA it has been suggested that further mitigation would be required in the area of activity centred on **Trenches 1 and 2**. This could either be from the removal of this area from the proposed development, therefore effecting preservation in *situ* or an open area excavation to investigate and understand the archaeological resource in this area (preservation by record).
- 8.1.3 After further discussions with the client it is anticipated that the area indicated in **Figure 1**, as defined by the topography and geophysical survey will be preserved *in situ*. This method of archaeological mitigation would be secured by a condition of planning permission.
- 8.1.4 The final scale, scope and nature of the finalised archaeological mitigation works will be agreed through consultation with the archaeological advisor to the local planning authority.

9 STORAGE AND CURATION

- 9.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Somerset County Museum. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the accession code TTNCN 10/2013. Deposition of the finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.
- 9.1.2 An OASIS online record <u>http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/</u> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms. All appropriate parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the SHER. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy will also be included with the archive).



9.2 Archive

9.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts and ecofacts, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Somerset County Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990; SMA 1995; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2007).

9.3 Copyright

- 9.3.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The recipient museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking, and conforms with the Copyright and Related Rights regulations 2003.
- 9.3.2 This report may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferrable by Wessex Archaeology. You are reminded that you remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report

9.4 Security Copy

9.4.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of a pdf/a file, which will form part of the project archive.

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11 APPENDICES

11.1 Appendix 1: Trench Summaries

bgl = below ground level

TRENCH 1						
Dimensio	ns: 29.8x1	9m Max. dep	th: 0.4m	Ground level: 36.22-36	.33m aOD	
Easting: 3	318920		Northing	; 123991		
Context	Descripti	n			Depth (m)	
101	Topsoil	Modern topsoil/ ploug sub-rounded, <1-2 Bioturbated. Under g	phsoil. Mid grey silty cm. Friable but rass. Clear interface	clay. 1% stone, sub-angular – compact. Homogeneous. with 102. Overlies 102.	0.00-0.25 bgl	
102	Subsoil	Modern subsoil. Mid 3cm. Very compact. 103.	. 1% stone, sub-angular, <1- ar interface with 103. Overlies	0.25-0.40 bgl		
103	Natural	Mid green clay. 1% n	nudstone flecks. Cor	npact.	0.40+ bgl	
104	Cut	North – south align 113. Runs parallel convex, moderate s	ned curvilinear dit to and is likely re ides, concave base	ch filled with 105, 106 and elated to ditch 107. Slightly e. 2.6m wide. Cuts 103.	1.22 deep	
105	Deposit	Secondary fill of ditch 104 . Mid green-brown clay. 5% mudstone, sub- angular, <1cm. Fairly homogenous. Compact. Similar deposit observed for vast majority of ditch when machining but may contain sub- divisions. Overlies 111.				
106	Deposit	Secondary fill of ditch 104 . Mid grey-black silty clay. <1% stone, sub- angular, <1-5cm. Fairly homogeneous. Moderately compact. Clear interface with 105. Overlies 105.				
107	Cut	North – south align 110. Runs parallel moderate sides. Bas	ned curvilinear dit to and is likely re se unexcavated. 2.	ch filled with 108, 109 and lated to ditch 104. Straight, 6m wide. Cuts 103.	0.64+ deep	
108	Deposit	Secondary fill of dito angular, <1-2cm. Fai	h 107 . Mid grey-gr rly homogenous. Co	een clay. 5% mudstone, sub- mpact. Not fully excavated.	0.50+ deep	
109	Deposit	Deliberate deposit w (chert and mudstor charcoal concentrate Overlies 108.	ithin ditch 107 . Dar ne), sub-angular - ed in patches. Slig	k grey-green clay. 40% stone angular, 4-22cm. Abundant ghtly mixed. Fairly compact.	0.47+ deep	
110	Deposit	Secondary fill of ditcl angular, <1-3cm. Ve 109.	h 107 . Dark grey-bla ery slightly mixed. I	ack silty clay. <1% stone, sub- Moderately compact. Overlies	0.18 deep	
111	Cut	Sub-circular pit or flat base. 0.32 wide,	posthole filled witl 0.36 long. Cuts 10	n 112. Straight, steep sides, 3.	0.18 deep	
112	Deposit	Secondary fill or pos grey-black clay. <1 flecks. Slightly mixed	sible deliberate bac % stone, sub-angu . Compact. Overlies	kfill of pit/ posthole 111 . Dark Ilar, <1-5cm. Rare charcoal 111 .	0.18 deep	
113	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch inclusions. Very sligh	n 107 . Pale grey- tly mixed. Overlies 1	green silty clay. No visible 07 .	0.10 deep	

TRENCH	2					
Dimensions: 29.4x1.9m Max. depth: 1.5m				Ground level: 36.28-36	.35m aOD	
Easting: 3	318979			Northing: 1239	985	
Context Description						Depth (m)
201	Topsoil	Modern to – sub-ro Bioturbate	Modern topsoil/ ploughsoil. Mid grey silty clay. <1% stone, sub-angular – sub-rounded, <1-2cm. Friable but compact. Homogeneous. Bioturbated. Under grass. Clear interface with 202. Overlies 202.			0.00-0.30 bgl
202	Subsoil	Modern su compact.	Modern subsoil. Mid orange clay. <1% stone, sub-angular, <1cm. Very compact. Homogeneous. Clear interface with 203. Overlies 203.			
203	Natural	Pale gree	n-blue clay. Compact	. Slightly mottled	I.	0.30+ bgl

204	Cut	Possible feature edge filled with 205 and 206. Straight, steep. Area 9.7m wide but geophysics suggests intersection of three features. Cuts 203.	1.00+ deep
205	Deposit	Secondary or possible primary fill of feature 204 . Pale green-blue clay.	0.35+ deep
		Compact. No visible inclusions. Overlies 204 .	
206	Deposit	Secondary fill of feature 204. Mid green-grey clay. 5% stone, sub-	0.70 deep
		angular, 2-8cm. Occasional manganese flecks. Compact. Overlies 205.	

TRENCH	3						
Dimensio	ns: 29.5x	I.9m	Max. depth: 0.7m		Ground level: 33.2	20-33	.90m aOD
Easting: 3	319109			Northing: 1240	45		
Context	Descripti	on					Depth (m)
301	Topsoil	Modern to	psoil/ ploughsoil. Mid g	grey silty clay. ´	% stone, sub-angul	ar –	0.00-0.30
		sub-round	ed, <1-2cm. Friab	ole but com	pact. Homogene	ous.	bgl
		Bioturbate	d. Under grass. Clear	interface with 3	02. Overlies 302.		
302	Subsoil	Modern s	ubsoil/ colluvium. Mi	d red-orange	clay. 1% stone, s	sub-	0.30-0.60
		angular, <	<1-3cm. Very compact	t. Homogeneou	s. Clear interface	with	bgl
		303. Over	lies 303.				
303	Natural	Mid green	-yellow clay with some	e mid red and	pale green mottled	clay	0.60+ bgl
		at east e	end. Frequent manga	anese flecks.	No visible inclusion	ons.	
		Compact.					
304	Cut	Possible	north - south align	ed linear fille	d with 305. Irregu	ılar,	0.13 deep
		moderate	sides, irregular base	e. 0.55m wide.	Cuts 303.		
305	Deposit	Secondary fill of linear 304 . Mid grey-brown silty clay. Fairly					0.13 deep
		homogeneous. Compact. Overlies 304 .					
306	Cut	Possible north – south aligned linear filled with 307. Irregular,					0.08 deep
		moderate	moderate sides, irregular base. 0.70m wide. Cuts 303.				
307	Deposit	Secondar	y fill of linear 306 . Mid	grey-brown silt	y clay. <1% stone, s	sub-	0.08 deep
		rounded,	<1cm. Fairly homogene	eous. Compact	Overlies 306.		

TRENCH	4					
Dimensio	ns: 28.7x1	1.8m	Max. depth: 0.8m		Ground level: 31.66-32	.02m aOD
Easting: 319042 Northing: 124159						
Context Description						
401	Topsoil	Modern to sub-round Bioturbate	psoil/ ploughsoil. Mic ed, <1-2cm. Fria d. Under grass. Clea	l grey silty clay. 1 able but com r interface with 4	1% stone, sub-angular – npact. Homogeneous. 02. Overlies 402.	0.00-0.28 bgl
402	Subsoil	Modern s angular, < 403. Over	ubsoil/ colluvium. 1 1-4cm. Very compa lies 403.	Mid red-orange loct. Homogeneou	clay. 1% stone, sub- us. Clear interface with	0.28-0.58 bgl
403	Natural	Mid green at east e Compact.	-yellow clay with sor end. Frequent man	ne mid red and ganese flecks.	pale green mottled clay No visible inclusions.	0.50+ bgl

TRENCH	5								
Dimensio	ons: 29.4x1	l.8m	Max. depth:	0.6m		Gro	ound leve	I: 30.87-31	.10m aOD
Easting: 318989 Northing: 124221									
Context	ext Description							Depth (m)	
501	Topsoil	Modern to	Modern topsoil/ ploughsoil. Mid grey silty clay. 1% stone, sub-angular –						0.00-0.30
		sub-round	sub-rounded, <1-3cm. Friable but compact. Homogeneous.						bgl
		Bioturbate	 Under gras 	s. Clear	r interface	with 502.	Overlies 5	502.	
502	Subsoil	Modern su	Modern subsoil. Mid yellow-brown clay. <1% stone, sub-angular – sub- 0.25-0.52						
		rounded,	rounded, <1-2cm. Compact. Homogeneous. Clear interface with 503. bc						
		Overlies 5	03.						
503	Natural	Mid green	clay with son	ne mid r	red and pa	ale green i	mottled cl	ay at east	0.42+ bgl
		end. No vi	sible inclusior	is. Comj	pact.				_
504	Layer	Mid grey	green clay.	15% s	stone, sub	o-angular,	<1-4cm.	Frequent	0.52+ bgl



manganese flecks. Compact.

TRENCH	6							
Dimensio	ns: 29.1x1	.8m	Max. depth: 0.7m		Ground level: 30.66-30	.74m aOD		
Easting: 3	Easting: 318971 Northing: 124244							
Context	Descripti	on				Depth (m)		
601	Topsoil	Modern topsoil/ ploughsoil. Mid grey silty clay. <1% stone, sub-angular						
		– sub-ro	unded, <1-3cm. F	riable but con	mpact. Homogeneous.	bgl		
		Bioturbate	d. Under grass. Clea	r interface with 6	02. Overlies 602.			
602	Subsoil	Modern s	Modern subsoil. Mid yellow-brown clay. <1% stone, sub-angular, <1-					
		2cm. Com	2cm. Compact. Homogeneous. Clear interface with 603. Overlies 603. bgl					
603	Layer	Pale gree	0.60-0.70					
		oxide fleck	ks. Homogeneous. C	lear interface wit	h 604. Overlies 604.	bgl		
604	Layer	Deliberate	e deposit. Dark gre	y black clay. 3	0% stone (some heat	0.70-0.98		
		affected),	angular, <1-5cm.	Compact. Clea	ar interface with 605.	bgl		
		Overlies 6	05.					
605	Layer	Possible	alluvium. Mid browr	n clay. Compac	t. No inclusions. Clear	0.86-1.12		
		interface v	vith 606. Overlies 60	6.		bgl		
606	Natural	Mid red ar	nd pale green mottled	d clay. No visible	inclusions. Compact.	0.70+ bgl		

TRENCH	7						
Dimensio	ons: 28.8x1	1.8m	Max. depth: 1.0m		Ground level: 30.32-30	.55m aOD	
Easting: 318985 Northing: 124258							
Context	Descripti	on				Depth (m)	
701	Topsoil	Modern to	psoil/ ploughsoil. Mic	l grey silty clay.	<1% stone, sub-angular	0.00-0.30	
		– sub-ro	unded, <1-2cm. F	riable but con	mpact. Homogeneous.	bgl	
		Bioturbate	d. Under grass. Clea	r interface with 7	02. Overlies 702.	_	
702	Subsoil	Modern subsoil. Mid yellow-brown clay. <1% stone, sub-angular, <1-				0.25-0.50	
		2cm. Compact. Homogeneous. Clear interface with 703. Overlies 703. bgl					
703	Layer	Possible re-deposited natural. M <id 0.30-0.<="" and="" green-grey="" mottles.="" pale="" red="" td=""></id>					
		No inclusions. Compact. Clear interface with 704. Overlies 704. bgl					
704	Layer	Possible alluvium. Pale yellow-brown clay. Compact. No inclusions. 0.50-0.58					
	-	Clear interface with 705. Overlies 705. bgl					
705	Layer	Pale gree	n clay. Compact. N	o inclusions. Cl	ear interface with 706.	0.58-0.890	
		Overlies 7	06.			bgl	
706	Layer	Mid red	clay. No inclusions	. Compact. Cle	ar interface with 707.	0.80-1.00	
		Overlies 7	07.			bgl	
707	Natural	Mid red ar	nd pale green mottled	l clay. No visible	inclusions. Compact.	1.00+ bgl	

TRENCH	8							
Dimensio	Dimensions: 28.2x1.8m Max. depth: 0.8m				Ground level: 29.82-29	.95m aOD		
Easting: 3	Easting: 319015 Northing: 124353							
Context	Descripti	on	n					
801	Topsoil	Modern to – sub-ro Bioturbate	Modern topsoil/ ploughsoil. Mid grey silty clay. <1% stone, sub-angular0.00-0.40- sub-rounded, <1-2cm. Friable but compact. Homogeneous.					
802	Subsoil	Modern si 2cm. Ra interface v	Modern subsoil. Mid yellow-brown clay. <1% stone, sub-angular, <1- 2cm. Rare manganese flecks. Compact. Homogeneous. Clear interface with 803. Overlies 803.					
803	Natural	Mid red a patches a	nd pale green mottle nd patches of stony r	ed clay with occ naterial. Compac	asional mid grey-green st.	0.55+ bgl		
804	Cut	Possible concave	south – north ali sides, flat base. 0.94	gned liner, fille 4m wide. Cuts 8	ed with 805. Shallow 03.	0.18 deep		
805	Deposit	Secondar Homogen	y fill of linear 804 . eous. Compact. Over	Mid brown clay flies 804.	. No visible inclusions.	0.18 deep		

TRENCH 9								
Dimensio	ons: 29.1x ⁻	1.8m	Max. depth: 0.5m		Ground level: 29.38-30	.32m aOD		
Easting: 318890 Northing: 124416								
Context	Descripti	on	n					
901	Topsoil	Modern to – sub-ro Bioturbate	psoil/ ploughsoil. Mic unded, <1-3cm. F d. Under grass. Clea	d grey silty clay. Friable but count rinterface with 9	<1% stone, sub-angular mpact. Homogeneous. 102. Overlies 902.	0.00-0.32 bgl		
902	Subsoil	Modern su of trench) Clear inter	Modern subsoil. Mid orange clay (more pronounced in south-west part of trench). <1% stone, sub-angular, <1cm. Compact. Homogeneous. Clear interface with 903. Overlies 903.					
903	Natural	Mid red ar west. No v	Mid red and pale green mottled clay, mostly pale green towards south- west. No visible inclusions. Compact.					
904	Cut	Possible Shallow 1.16m wid	south-east – nortl concave to straigh de. Cuts 903.	n-west aligned t sides, very s	liner, filled with 905. lightly concave base.	0.13 deep		
905	Deposit	Secondar angular, <	y fill of linear 904 . 1-4cm. Slightly mixe	Mid green-grey d. Compact. Ove	clay. 1% stone, sub- rlies 904 .	0.13 deep		



11.2 Appendix 2: OASIS Form

Ritherdens Solar Development, Somerset - Wessex Archaeology

OASIS ID - wessexar1-156014

12 OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: ENGLAND

OASIS ID: wessexar1-156014

Project details

Project name	Ritherdens	Solar	Development,	Somerset
1				

Short description of Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by MS Power Projects Limited to the project undertake a programme of targeted archaeological trial trenching on land at Ritherdens, Taunton, Somerset (NGR 230800 101600), a 20.5ha site proposed for the construction of a solar farm. The evaluation comprised of nine machine excavated trenches aimed to ground truth the results of the geophysical survey whilst identifying or confirming the absence of any previously unknown areas of archaeological activity at the Site. The evaluation identified an area of Romano-British activity in the southwest part of the Site, initially identified from cropmark evidence and geophysical survey. This consisted of two parallel curvilinear ditches and a possible west-north-west - east-south-east orientated linear. Investigation suggests that the two north - south ditches are substantial features, both 2.6m wide and in one case confirmed to be over 1.2m deep. The exact nature of the activity was unclear but the depth of the features suggests a defensive function. The diffuse and meandering geophysical responses seen in the eastern part of the north field were concluded to be the results of alluvial action and flooding. An early 19th century field boundary was identified in the south-east part of the Site, it was relatively insubstantial and though to be the remains of two possible hedgerows either side of a raised bank. The results of both the geophysical survey and this fieldwork indicate that most of the other former field boundaries have not survived and where therefore likely to have been insubstantial. Project dates Start: 15-07-2013 End: 30-07-2013 Previous/future work Yes / Not known Any associated 87640 - Contracting Unit No. project reference codes Any associated 87641 - Contracting Unit No. project reference codes Any associated 87642 - Contracting Unit No. project reference codes

Significant Finds	POT Roman
Significant Finds	ANIMAL REMAINS Uncertain
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Solar Farm
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	Pre-application
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	SOMERSET TAUNTON DEANE BRADFORD ON TONE Ritherdens Solar Development, Taunton
Study area	20.50 Hectares
Site coordinates	ST 230800 101600 50 -3 50 53 06 N 003 05 37 W Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Caroline Budd
Project supervisor	Naomi Brennan
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Somerset County Museum
Physical Archive ID	TTNCN 10/2013
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones", "Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Somerset County museum
Digital Archive ID	TTNCN 10/2013
Digital Media	"Geophysics","Images raster / digital photography","Text" 15



available

Paper Archive recipient	Somerset County Museum
Paper Archive ID	TTNCN 10/2013
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Plan","Report","Section"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Ritherdens Solar Development, Somerset: Archaeological Evalution Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	N Brennan
Other bibliographic details	report reference 87642.03
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Wessex Archaeology - Salisbury
Description	A4 bound client report
Entered by	Naomi Brennan (n.brennan@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	30 July 2013



Location of Site and trenches in relation to previous geophysical survey and showing proposed mitigation











Section 1: North facing section of ditch 104







		Date:	29/07/13
111		Scale:	sections 1: @ A3
	This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction.	Path:	Y:\PROJECTS\87642\Drawing

Sections and plates





salisbury rochester sheffield edinburgh

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