

**Archaeological Watching Brief Report
Manor Farm Solar Park
Shripney, West Sussex**

NGR: SU 9289 0255

Planning Ref: BE/63/14/PL

**ASE Project No: 7841
Site Code: SOP 15**

**ASE Report No: 2016085
OASIS id: archaeol6-245653**



By Ed Blinkhorn

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Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at the Manor Farm Solar Park, Shripney, West Sussex between 11th December 2015 and 3rd February 2016. The fieldwork was commissioned by The Landmark Practice in advance of the construction of a Solar Farm at the site.

No archaeological remains were identified in the areas impacted by the development. The deposits exposed during trenching conformed to those described by the British Geological Survey.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East was commissioned by The Landmark Practice acting on behalf of BNRG Renewables to undertake an archaeological watching brief on a solar photovoltaic park development at Manor Farm, Shripney, West Sussex. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SU 9289 0255 and its location is shown in Figure 1.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site comprises two large fields divided by a trackway running westwards from Shripney Lane to a reservoir. To the south-east the site is bounded by Shripney Lane and elsewhere by hedged field boundaries and drainage ditches.

1.2.2 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping available online (BGS 2015), the site lies on the Lewes Nodular, Seaford, Newhaven and Culver Chalk Formations overlain by river terrace deposits of sand, silt and clay. The site lies on the West Sussex Coastal Plain and rises northwards from 2m aOD to 5.5m aOD.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission was granted for solar arrays, transferers, equipment housing, security fencing, internal tracks and ancillary equipment (Planning Ref. BE/63/14/PL) (Figure 2), subject to conditions, including a requirement for a programme of archaeological work (Condition 10). The archaeological condition is as follows:

10. An archaeological recording and monitoring exercise shall be carried out at the expense of the developer in accordance with a specification (WSI – written scheme of investigation) to be submitted to and agreed by the Local Planning Authority in writing before the commencement of building works.

Reason: To ensure appropriate investigation and recording of archaeological heritage assets on the site prior to the commencement of new building works.

1.3.2 Consultation between ASE and James Kenny, Archaeology Advisor Chichester District Council (CDC) (who acts as Archaeology Advisor to Arun District Council) confirmed that an archaeological watching brief would be required during the proposed development.

1.3.3 A comprehensive *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) for an archaeological watching brief (ASE 2015) was submitted to the Archaeology Advisor to Arun District Council for approval. All work was undertaken in accordance with this document and with the *Sussex Standards for Archaeological Fieldwork*, (2015), hereafter the Sussex Standards and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and their *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014b).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The broad aims of the watching brief, in keeping with previous similar projects are:

- To assess the character, extent, preservation, significance, date and quality of any archaeological remains and deposits
- To assess how they might be affected by the development of the site
- To establish the extent to which previous groundworks and/or other processes have affected archaeological deposits at the site
- To assess what options should be considered for mitigation

1.4.2 Investigation of the site also has the potential to address the following research questions:

- Does the extensive prehistoric and Romano-British landscape identified to the south-west extend into the site?
- Do any traces of the World War II decoy site survive?

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report details observations made during the watching brief at the site.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Overview

- 2.1.1 An Archaeological Assessment (Archaeology & Planning Solutions 2014) was prepared which collates the archaeological and historic background of the site, relevant historic maps and HER data. The information presented below is drawn from that document.

2.2 Period Summaries

Prehistoric and Roman

- 2.2.1 Fieldwalking has recovered Roman pottery from the southern field on Site (HER MWS2385) and further pottery of a similar date with burnt flint and oyster shells is recorded from directly north of the site boundary (MWS5683). Archaeological evaluation c.400m south-west of the site boundary revealed an extensive buried prehistoric (Bronze Age) and Romano-British landscape including occupation areas and small enclosures set amongst ditched field systems. A middle Bronze Age cremation urn and a late Iron Age burial with pottery vessels, a sword, shield boss and helmet were also discovered (MWS7987).
- 2.2.2 Further evidence of prehistoric and Roman activity from within 500m of the western boundary of the Site includes Roman pottery at the intersection of two cropmarks (possibly part of a field system, MWS2391); Roman artefacts, dark soil and burnt flints (MWS2201); and fire-cracked flint (MWS6971).

Medieval

- 2.2.3 In the medieval period a park owned by the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1328 may have included part of the Site (MWS2390).

Post-medieval

- 2.2.4 The Portsmouth-Arundel canal (MWS5754) runs east/west c.50m to the north of the northern edge of the Site and was constructed in 1823, not long after the first known cartographic evidence from the Site. The Ordnance Survey First Series map of 1813 shows a small complex of buildings close to or within the footprint of the current reservoir. On the South Bersted tithe map of 1842 these are shown as three buildings around an open courtyard facing east. In the tithe apportionment this is described as a farmyard and buildings, with Barn Field being the name allocated to the field to the south. This was one of nine fields entirely contained within the Site at this date, parts of another three fields also being included. Consolidation had taken place by the Ordnance survey map of 1876; only five fields being present within the Site, all contained within its boundaries. The farm complex remained but in 1898 the Ordnance Survey showed that the southern range had gone and the remainder was labelled "Poplars Barn". This name was marked on Ordnance Survey mapping up to 1947.

Modern

- 2.2.5 In World War II a night decoy site was set up at Poplars Barn (MWS7135), but slightly later aerial photographs show few details. Poplars Barn survived until at least 1989 (Ordnance Survey aerial photograph), but has since been replaced by a reservoir.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 Cable trenching machine and excavations for a substation were monitored by an archaeologist.

3.2 Fieldwork Constraints

3.2.1 The width of the monitored cable trenches (c.0.5m) forming the bulk of the archaeological monitoring did not afford optimal visibility conditions.

3.2.2 Due to wet weather conditions, in some areas visibility was particularly poor due to surface run-off, infilling by liquid sediment, and trench collapse.

3.3 The Site Archive

3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Chichester Museum in due course.

Context sheets	3
Section sheets	0
Plans sheets	0
Colour photographs	0
B&W photos	0
Digital photos	42
Context register	0
Drawing register	0
Watching brief forms	9
Trench Record forms	1

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box)	0
Registered finds (number of)	0
Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples	0
Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides)	0
Waterlogged wood	0
Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples	0

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Cable trenches monitored between 11/12/15 and 03/02/16

4.1.1 No archaeology was identified in the cable trenches monitored at the site.

4.1.2 [01] was a dark brownish-grey clay-silt with a sticky consistency due to weather conditions. This capped [02] a mid-orangey-brown friable, structureless, clay-silt with very occasional <250mm nodular flints, concentrating towards the base of the deposit.

Context	Type	Interpretation	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m
01	Layer	Ploughsoil	Trench	Trench	0.30
02	Layer	Superficial geology	Trench	Trench	0.30-0.90
03	Layer	Degraded Chalk	Trench	Trench	0.60+

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

4.2 Substation excavation monitored on 18/01/16

4.2.1 An area 4.8m x 4.8m with a 4.8m x 1.2m extension to the north provided an opportunity to examine deposits in better conditions. No archaeology was identified and the sequence of deposition was confirmed to be as detailed in Table 3.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 No archaeology was impacted upon during trenching at Manor Farm Solar Park. The sequence of deposition exposed in the trenches is in agreement with BGS data (2015).
- 5.2 Although all groundworks were monitored, these comprised a small area of the site and the results of this watching brief should perhaps not, therefore be considered as an accurate a characterisation of the archaeological potential of the site.
- 5.3 Archaeological work did not identify any prehistoric, Romano-British, or later remains relating to those found to the south-west or east. Nor were remains of a Second World War decoy site identified.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank the client for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and James Kenny County Archaeologist West Sussex County Council for his guidance and monitoring. The watching brief was led by Ed Blinkhorn, with secondary cover provided by Greg Priestley-Bell, Simon Stevens, and Suzie Westall. Lauren Gibson produced the figures for this report; Neil Griffin project managed the excavations and Dan Swift the post-excavation process.

HER Summary

Site code	SOP15					
Project code	7841					
Planning reference	BE/63/14/PL					
Site address	Manor Farm, Shripney, West Sussex					
District/Borough	Arun					
NGR (12 figures)	492890 102550					
Geology	Chalk, overlain by river terrace deposits (brickearth)					
Fieldwork type	Eval	Excav	WB	HBR	Survey	Other
Date of fieldwork	11/12/2015 – 03/02/2016					
Sponsor/client	The Landmark Practice					
Project manager	Neil Griffin					
Project supervisor	Ed Blinkhorn					
Period summary	Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age	Iron Age	
	Roman	Anglo-Saxon	Medieval	Post-Medieval	Other	
Project summary (100 word max)	An archaeological watching brief was conducted at Manor Farm Solar Park, Shripney, West Sussex NGR 559820 104967, between the 12 th December 2015 and 3 rd February 2016. All substantial intrusive works were monitored but no archaeological remains were identified.					
Museum/Accession No.	CHCDM: 2016.1					

Finds summary

Find type	Material	Period	Quantity
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-245653

Project details

Project name An Archaeological Watching Brief at Manor Farm Solar Park, Shripney, West Sussex

Short description of the project This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at the Manor Farm Solar Park, Shripney, West Sussex between 11th December 2015 and 3rd February 2016. The fieldwork was commissioned by The Landmark Practice in advance of the construction of a Solar Farm at the site. No archaeological remains were identified in the areas impacted by the development. The deposits exposed during trenching conformed to those described by the British Geological Survey.

Project dates Start: 11-12-2015 End: 03-02-2016

Previous/future work No / No

Any project codes associated reference 2016085 - Contracting Unit No.

Any project codes associated reference SOP15 - Sitecode

Any project codes associated reference 7841 - Contracting Unit No.

Type of project Recording project

Current Land use Cultivated Land 4 - Character Undetermined

Monument type N/A None

Significant Finds N/A None

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country England

Site location WEST SUSSEX ARUN BERSTED Manor Park Solar Farm

Postcode PO22 9UP

Study area 0 Square metres

Site coordinates SU 493245 102436 50.889015460631 -1.298668212967 50 53 20 N 001 17 55 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 5m Max: 5m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South-East

Project originator brief Chichester District Council

Project design
originator Archaeology South-East

Project
director/manager Neil Griffin

Project supervisor Ed Blinkhorn

Type of
sponsor/funding Client
body

Project archives

Physical Archive
Exists? No

Digital Archive
recipient Chichester Museum

Digital Contents "none"

Digital Media
available "Images raster / digital photography","Text"

Paper Archive
recipient Chichester Museum

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media
available "Miscellaneous Material"

Project bibliography
1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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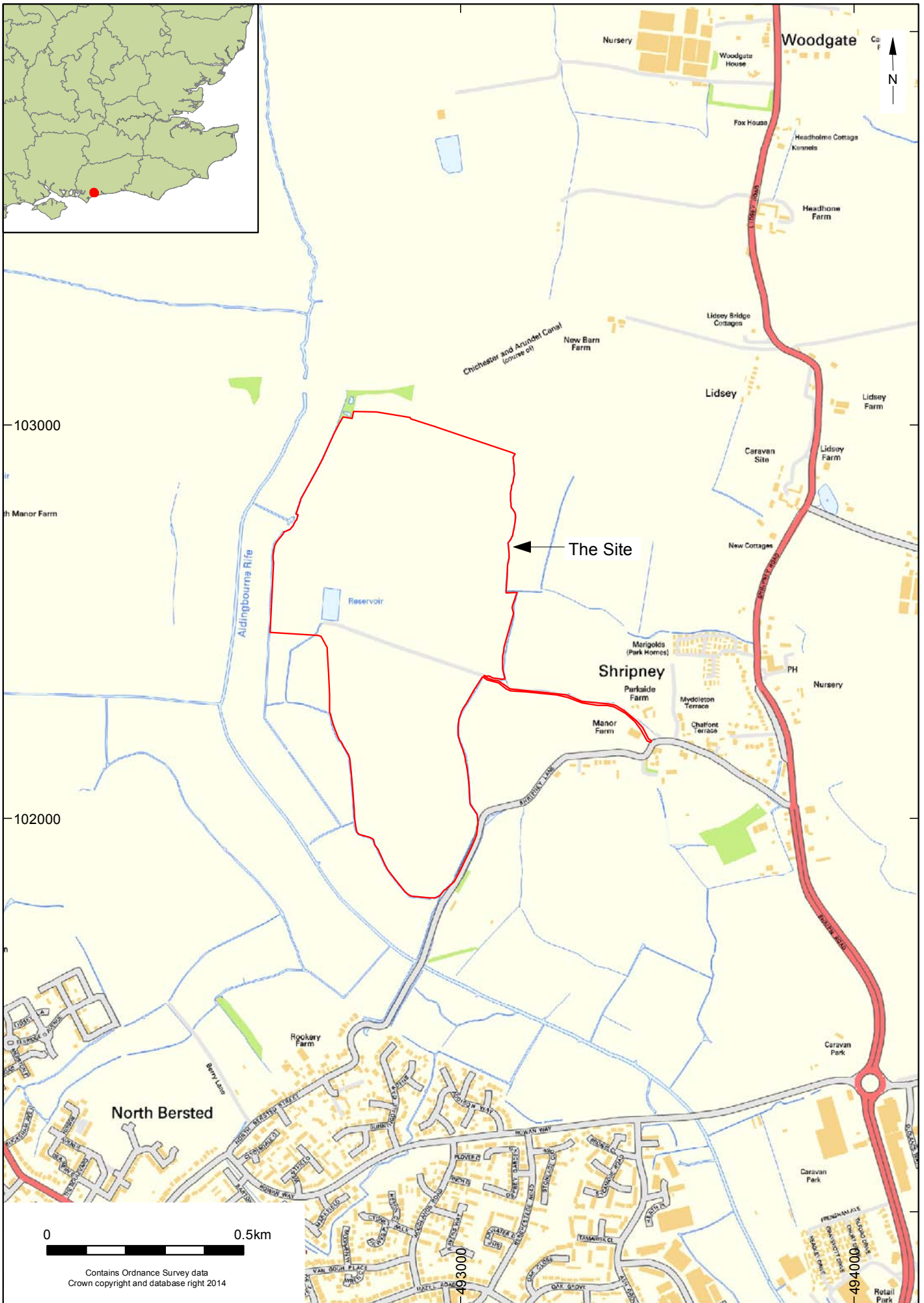
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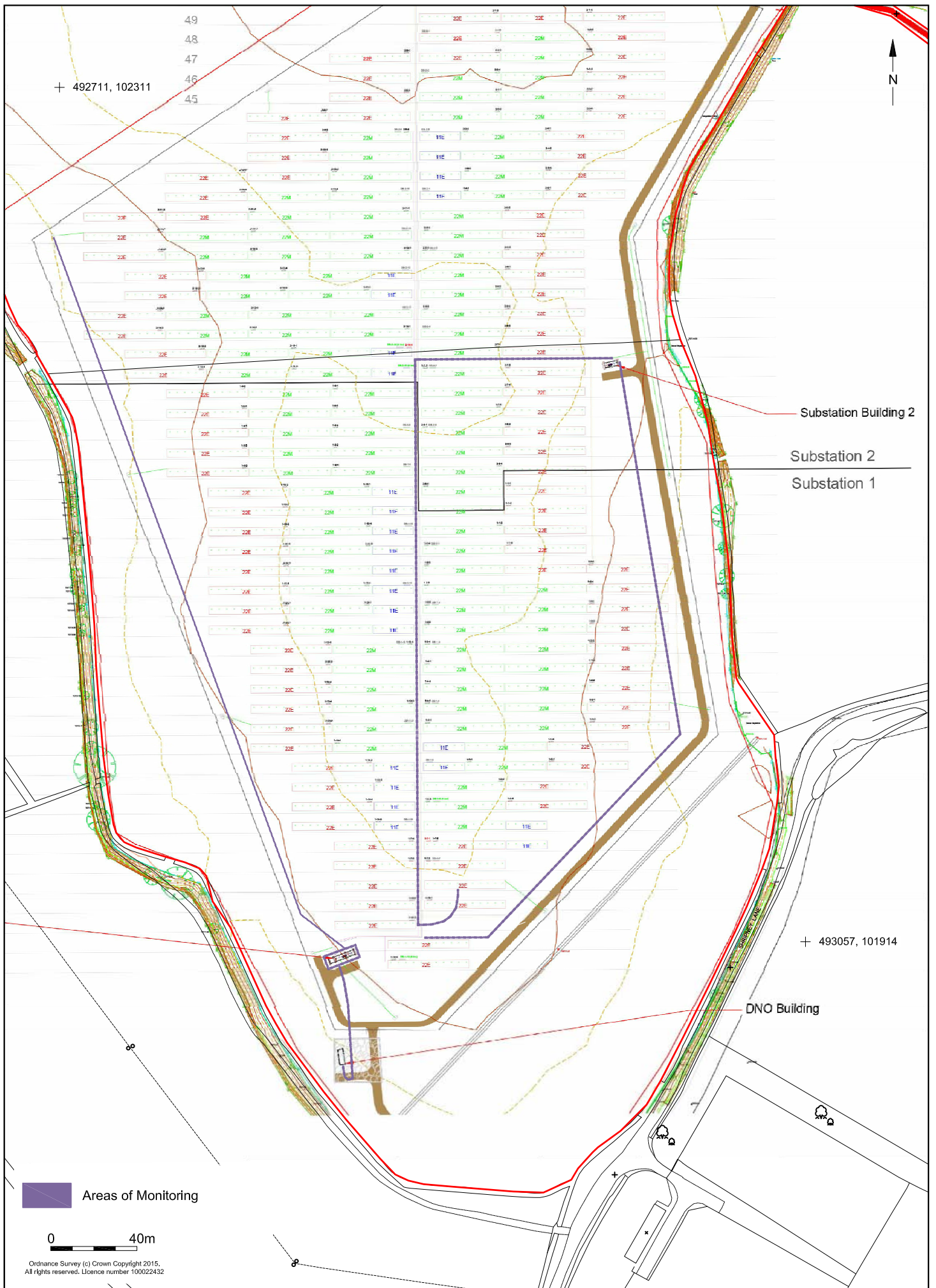


© Archaeology South-East		Manor Farm Solar Park, Shripney	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 7841	March 2016	Site location	
Report Ref: 2016085	Drawn by: LG		



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© Archaeology South-East		Manor Farm Solar Park, Shripney	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 7841	March 2016	Site plan	
Report Ref: 2016085	Drawn by: LG		



© Archaeology South-East		Manor Farm Solar Park, Shripney		Fig. 3
Project Ref: 7841	March 2016	Areas of Monitoring		
Report Ref: 2016085	Drawn by: LG			



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