ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING AT LONDON LODE FARM, THREE HOLES, UPWELL, NORFOLK

(ENF 129455)

Work Undertaken For
Green Power Solutions UK Limited

September 2012

Report Compiled by
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National Grid Reference: TL 5234 9877
Planning Application No: 12/00672/F
OASIS Record No: archaeol1-131996

APS Report No. **60/12**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

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1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken at London Lode Farm, Upwell, Norfolk. The investigations monitored the excavation of pits for three wind-turbines and their associated service trenches.

The site lies close to the Fen Causeway, a Romano-British (AD 43-410) thoroughfare that once connected Peterborough to Norfolk. A branch road which connected the Fen Causeway to nearby salterns and settlement of the period, traverses the area of the site.

The investigations revealed a sequence of natural marine alluvium overlain by the current topsoil. No archaeological features were recorded and no finds were retrieved.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Green Power Solutions UK Limited to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during groundworks associated with new wind turbine works at London Lode Farm, Three Holes, Upwell, Norfolk. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application 12/00672/F. The work was carried out on the 26th July 2012 in accordance with a brief prepared by the Historic Environment Service, Norfolk County Council.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Upwell is approximately 20km southwest of King's Lynn and 10km west of Downham Market in the administrative district of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (Fig. 1).

London Lode Farm is located 4km southeast of the centre of Upwell as defined by the parish church of St Peter at National Grid Reference TL 5234 9877 (Fig. 2). The site lies to the west of London Lode Farm at a height of *c*. 2m OD on generally level ground.

Local soils are of the Wisbech Association, typically gleyic brown calcareous soils (Seale and Hodge 1976, 74). These soils are developed on a drift geology of marine alluvium which seals a solid geology of Jurassic Ampthill Clay Formation (BGS 1995).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

London Lode Farm is located in an area of known archaeological remains dating from the Romano-British period. Some 175m to the north of the site is the Romano-British thoroughfare, the Fen Causeway, which once connected the Roman town of *Durobrivae*, near Peterborough to Denver and beyond to the east coast of Norfolk (Margary 1973, 230, 271).

A track identified from aerial photographs branches off the Fen Causeway and crosses the immediate vicinity of the site. It appears to heads towards enclosures, also identified from cropmarks, which may indicate settlement (Phillips 1970, 234). One of these enclosures, to the south of the site, has produced briquetage, pottery and human remains and has been identified as a Romano-British saltern (salt-making site) with an accompanying settlement. To the west of the site, but in the same field, two spreads of pottery and briquetage were noted by the Fenland Survey, one of 2nd century date, the other of the 3rd century (Silvester 1991, 109).

Upwell is first mentioned in a charter of AD 970 as *Uuyllan*, later as *Wella*, and in 1251 as *Upwell*, the place-name meaning 'upper well' (Ekwall 1989, 488). The early charter details the granting of a gift of 10,000 eels instead of military service from the people of Upwell and Outwell by

King Edgar to the monastery at Ely (Hart 1966, 42).

Upwell (still grouped with Outwell) appears in the Domesday Book of *c*. 1086 as *Wella* and was held by the King, Hermer, and Reginald fitzIvo and contained a fishery and 8 acres of meadow (Williams and Martin 1992, 1071, 1125, 1146, 1147, 1182).

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks should be recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

Trenches for the wind turbine bases and associated service/cable trenches were excavated by machine to depths required by the development. The sides of the excavated trenches were inspected for archaeological remains and then cleaned and rendered vertical where the depth of trench permitted. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation the records were checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit encountered was a layer of yellowish brown sandy silt (101). Identified as natural, this measured in excess of 1.05m thick.

This was sealed by a o.46m thick layer of topsoil comprising brown sandy silt (100).

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits of sandy silt relate to the underlying drift geology of marine alluvium. This was sealed by the current topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed during the investigation indicating that the site lay outside the main occupied areas of nearby Romano-British settlement. No artefacts were observed or retrieved during the work.

7. CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at London Lode Farm, Upwell, as the site lay in close proximity to a number of Romano-British settlement and salt-making sites and close to known routes of the period.

However, the investigations revealed only natural marine alluvium overlain by topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were recorded from this work.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr M Peukert of Green Power Solutions UK Limited for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work

was coordinated by Dale Trimble who edited this report along with Gary Taylor. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Dale Trimble
Site Supervisor: Bob Garlant
Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Phillips, CW, 1970 *The Fenland in Roman Times*, Royal Geographical Society Research Series No. **5**

Seale, RS and Hodge, CAH, 1976 *Soils of the Cambridge and Ely District*, Soil Survey of England and Wales Special Survey No. **10**

Silvester, RL, 1991 *The Fenland Project Number 4: The Wissey Embayment and the Fen Causeway, Norfolk*, East Anglian Archaeology **52**

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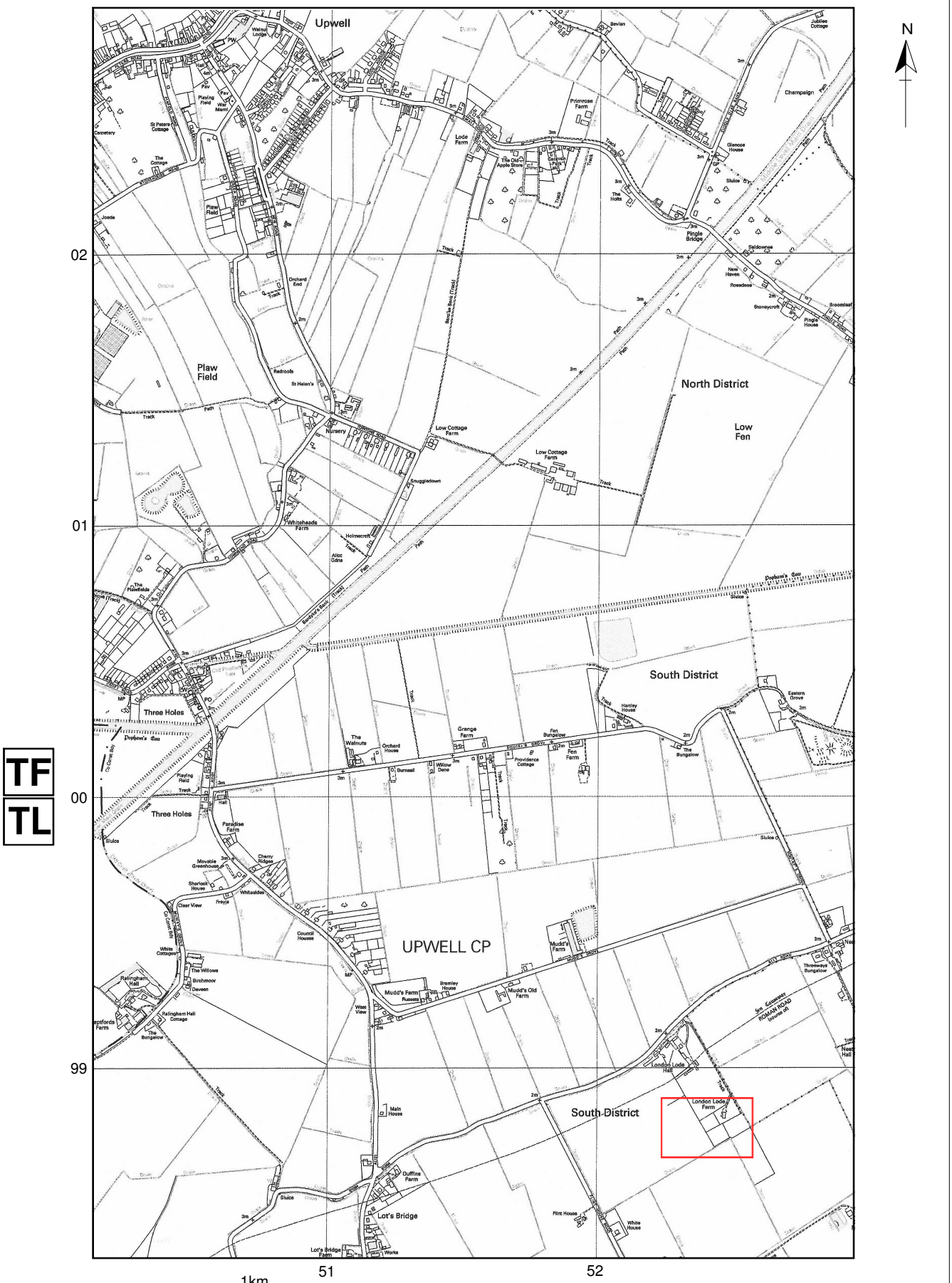
11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

BGS British Geological Survey

Figure 1 - General location plan



Area detailed in Figure 3

Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: London Lode Farm, Upwell		
Scale 1:20000	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 60/12

Figure 2 - Site location plan

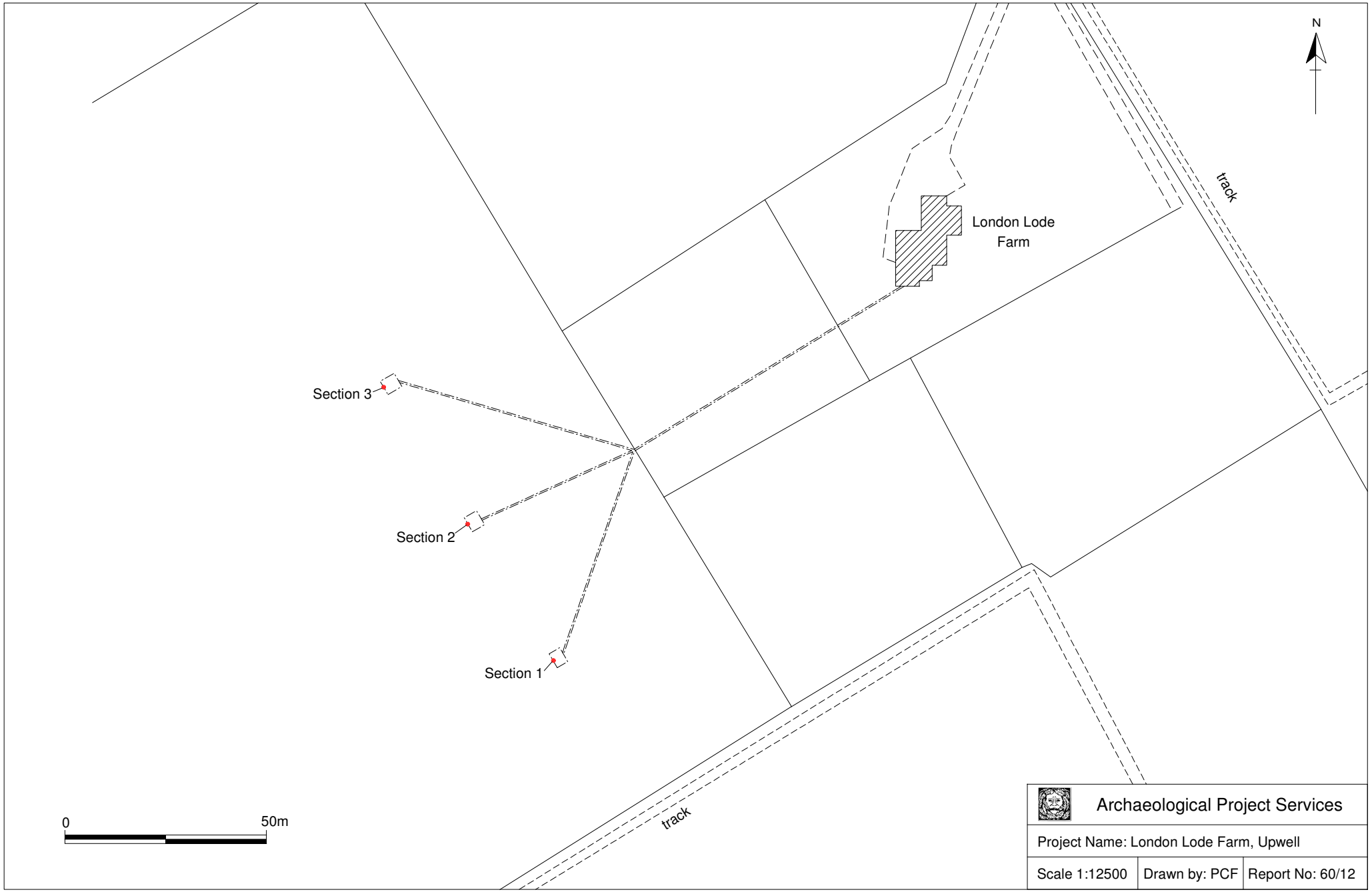
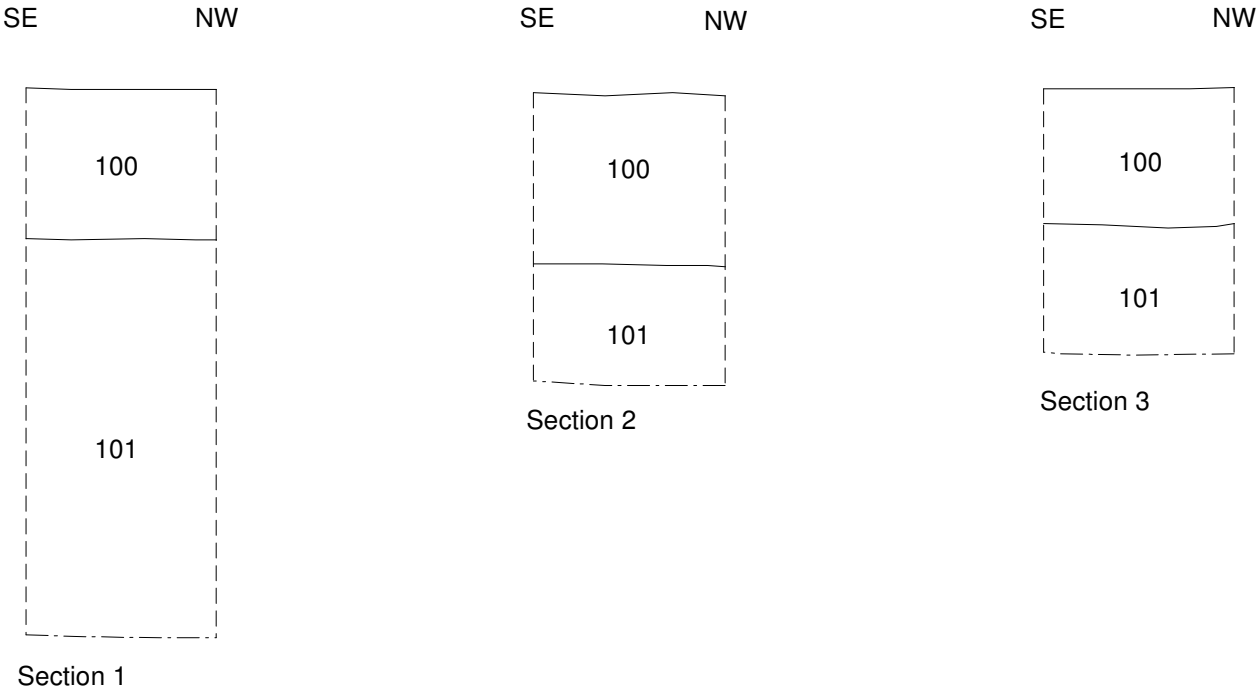


Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing section locations



Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: London Lode Farm, Upwell		
Scale 1:20	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 60/12

Figure 4 - Sections 1 to 3

Plate 1 – General view across the development area, looking north

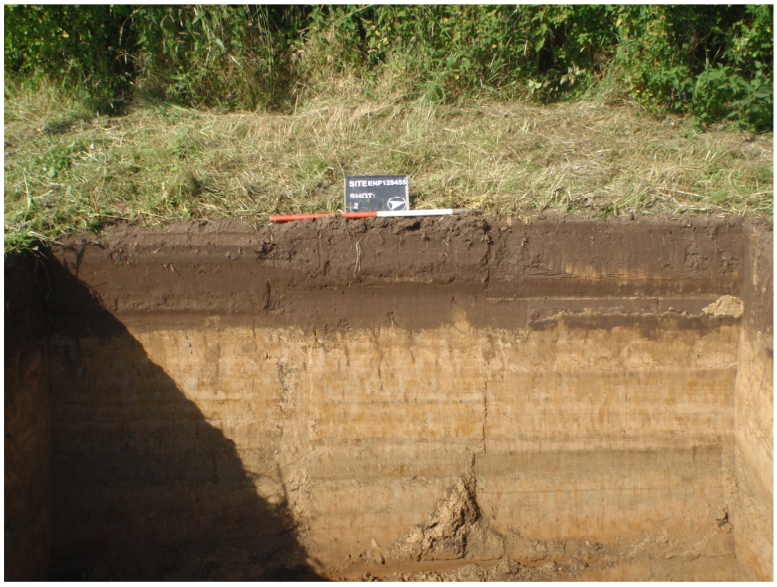


Plate 2 – Section 1, looking southwest

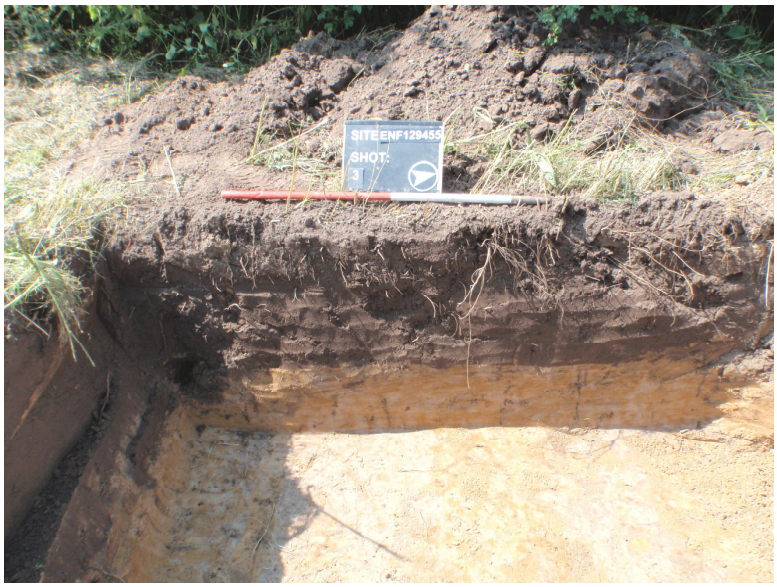


Plate 3 – Section 2, looking southwest

Plate 4 – Section 3, looking southwest

Plate 5 – General view along the southernmost cable trench, looking northeast

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
100	Soft to friable mid brown sandy silt, 0.46m thick	Topsoil
101	Soft to friable light yellowish brown sandy silt, >1.05m thick	Natural deposit

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	A deposit (usually clay, silts or sands) laid down in water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea and freshwater alluvium by streams, rivers or within lakes.
Briquetage	A term given to fragments of ceramic equipment and hearth/oven remains from the processing of salt.
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, *e.g.*(004).
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saltern	Salt producing site typified by ash, derived from fuel needed to evaporate sea water, and briquetage.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

1	Daily record sheet
1	Section register sheet
1	Photographic register sheet
1	Context register sheet
2	Context record sheets
4	Sheets of scale drawings

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Norfolk Museums Service
Union House
Gressenhall
Dereham
Norfolk
NR20 4DR

Norfolk Historic Environment Service Site Code: ENF 129455

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.