

Homestead Farm Potterspury Northamptonshire

*Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation
and Recording*



for
Lydon Contracting Ltd

CA Project: 660403
CA Report: 15154

March 2015



Homestead Farm
Potterspury
Northamptonshire

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Investigation and Recording

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	Homestead Farm
Location:	Potterspury, Northamptonshire
NGR:	SP 7319 4562
Type:	Programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording
Date:	9–20 February 2015 (intermittent)
Planning Reference:	S/2014/1680/MAF
Location of Archive:	Currently held by Cotswold Archaeology (Milton Keynes Office)
Site Code:	POT 15

In February 2015, a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a solar farm at Homestead Farm, Potterspury, Northamptonshire.

A previous geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation recorded the remains of an Early to Middle Iron Age settlement in the southern part of the site, comprising a complex of enclosure and ring ditches plus associated pits, postholes and smaller ditches. As such, the development groundworks were restricted to the northern part of the site only.

The programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits is in line with the results of the previous geophysical survey and evaluation, both of which recorded no archaeological features in the areas of the monitored groundworks. This supports the evaluation conclusion that the Iron Age activity was largely confined to the southern part of the site.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In February 2015, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording for Lydon Contracting Ltd at Homestead Farm, Potterspury, Northamptonshire (centred on NGR: SP 7319 4562; Fig. 1).
- 1.2 Planning permission for the construction of a solar farm at the site (planning ref: S/2014/1680/MAF) was granted by South Northamptonshire Council (SNC; the local planning authority), conditional on a programme of archaeological work (Condition 10). The scope of this programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was defined subsequently by Liz Mordue, Northamptonshire County Council's Assistant Archaeological Advisor (the archaeological advisor to SNC).
- 1.3 The programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was carried out in accordance with a detailed written scheme of investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2014a) and approved by SNC acting on the advice of Liz Mordue. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006). It was monitored by Liz Mordue.

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development site lies on the eastern side of Watling Street (the A5), approximately 500m east of the village of Paulerspury and some 3km north-west of the village of Potterspury.
- 1.5 The development site as a whole comprises two distinct areas linked by an access track. The western area encloses approximately 14ha; prior to the current development, it comprised part of a single agricultural field. Watling Street forms the south-western boundary of this area and the south-eastern boundary was defined by a mature hedgerow. The other site boundaries were undefined, forming part of the open field. The eastern area of the site encloses approximately 20ha; prior to the current development, it comprised three large agricultural fields defined by mature hedgerows.

- 1.6 The site is generally flat and is located on a local high point, at approximately 115m above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The eastern area of the site is situated on a slight south-facing slope, descending to approximately 105m AOD along the southern boundary. The slope descends to a small stream (a tributary of the River Tove), which runs east/west approximately 250m south of the site.
- 1.7 The underlying bedrock geology of the site is mapped as Bilsworth Formation limestone, of the Jurassic Period. The superficial deposits are recorded as Oadby Member diamicton, of the Quaternary Period (BGS 2014).

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site has been the previous subject of a desk-based heritage statement (CA 2014b), a geophysical survey (GSB 2014) and an archaeological trial trench evaluation (CA 2014c). The following text is summarised from these sources.
- 2.2 The geophysical survey and the evaluation recorded a complex of Early to Middle Iron Age (700 BC–100 BC) enclosure and ring ditches in the southern part of the site's western field, plus associated pits, postholes and smaller ditches (Fig. 2). A series of substantial, intercutting Iron Age ditches was also present in the northern part of this field. It is probable that the enclosures and other features in the southern part of the field are the remains of an Iron Age settlement, with the intercutting ditches to the north representing an associated boundary.
- 2.3 The evaluation also recorded a limited number of minor, undated ditches in the site's eastern field.
- 2.4 The site lies on the eastern side of Watling Street, which was a major Roman road. There was the potential for roadside structures and burials along the south-western site boundary, although neither the geophysical survey nor the evaluation found evidence for any such remains.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:

- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record any significant buried archaeological deposits thus revealed;
- at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated project archive and a report setting out the project results and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 As stated in the WSI (CA 2014a), the programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was restricted to the central and northern parts of the site's western field. The site's eastern fields were excluded, as the evaluation and geophysical survey recorded no significant archaeological remains in this area. The main concentration of archaeological features in the southern part of the site's western field was also excluded, as this area of the site was marked for preservation *in situ* – solar panels were ground-mounted in this area, and ground disturbance was minimal (Fig. 2).
- 4.2 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2014a). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks (Fig. 2), which comprised the excavation of transformer station footprints (T1–T4) and cable trenches (T5–T7).
- 4.3 Written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.4 There is currently no depository accepting archives from archaeological sites in this region of Northamptonshire. The project archive will be held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes until such time as a depository becomes available. A summary of information from this project, as set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS

- 5.1 See Figure 2 for an overlay of the monitored groundworks on the geophysical survey and evaluation results. Figures 3–8 present a series of photographs of the monitored trenches.

- 5.2 The natural geological substrate comprised yellow-brown silty clay with gravel inclusions and was exposed in all of the monitored trenches at a depth of 0.3m–0.43m below the pre-development ground level. The natural substrate was sealed directly by the topsoil.
- 5.3 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see *Archaeological background*, above), the programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks.
- 6.2 The absence of archaeological deposits is in line with the results of the previous geophysical survey (GSB 2014) and evaluation (CA 2014c), both of which recorded no archaeological features in the areas of the monitored groundworks. This supports the evaluation conclusion that the Iron Age activity at the site was largely confined to the southern part of the western field.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by James Coyne. This report was written by Derek Evans. The illustrations were prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Derek Evans.

8. REFERENCES

- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2015 *Geology of Britain* Viewer <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 24 October 2014



CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014a *Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014b *Homestead Farm, Potterspury, Northamptonshire: Heritage Statement* CA Report No. **14162**

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014c *Homestead Farm, Potterspury, Northamptonshire: Archaeological Evaluation* CA Report **15147**

GSB Prospection Ltd 2014 *Homestead Farm, Paulerspury: Geophysical Survey Report* GSB Report No. **G1422**

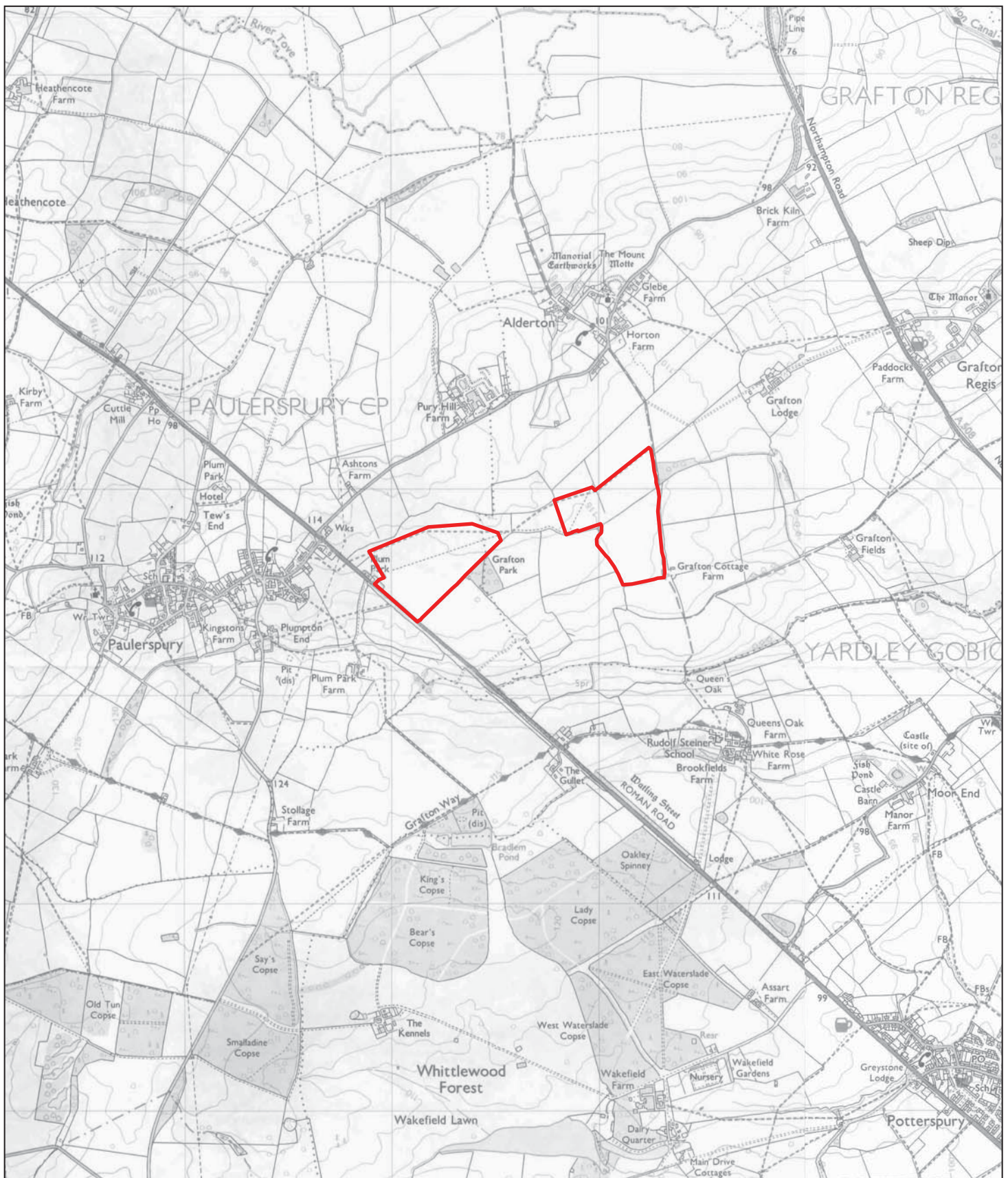


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Context interpretation	Description	Depth/ thickness (m)
1	100	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	0.35
1	101	Layer	natural	yellow brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions	
2	200	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	0.4
2	201	Layer	natural	yellow brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions	
3	300	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	0.4
3	301	Layer	natural	yellow brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions	
4	400	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	0.34
4	401	Layer	natural	yellow brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions	
5	500	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	0.43
5	501	Layer	natural	yellow brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions	
6	600	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	0.3
6	601	Layer	natural	yellow brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions	
7	700	Layer	topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	0.33
7	701	Layer	natural	yellow brown silty clay with occasional gravel inclusions	

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Homestead Farm, Potterspur, Northamptonshire: Programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording	
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>In February 2015, a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the development of a solar farm at Homestead Farm, Potterspur, Northamptonshire.</p> <p>A previous geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation recorded the remains of an Early to Middle Iron Age settlement in the southern part of the site, comprising a complex of enclosure and ring ditches plus associated pits, postholes and smaller ditches. As such, the development groundworks were restricted to the northern part of the site only.</p> <p>The programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits is in line with the results of the previous geophysical survey and evaluation, both of which recorded no archaeological features in the areas of the monitored groundworks. This supports the evaluation conclusion that the Iron Age activity was largely confined to the southern part of the site.</p>	
Project dates	9–20 February 2015 (intermittent)	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation, etc.)	Watching brief	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers, etc.)	Desk-based assessment (Cotswold Archaeology 2014) Geophysical survey (GSB Prospection 2014) Trial trench evaluation (Cotswold Archaeology 2014)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Homestead Farm, Potterspur, Northamptonshire	
Study area (M ² /ha)	14ha	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SP 7319 4562	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Derek Evans	
Project Supervisor	James Coyne	
MONUMENT TYPE		
None		
SIGNIFICANT FINDS		
None		
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, etc.)
Physical	N/A	N/A
Paper	Currently held by Cotswold Archaeology (Milton Keynes Office)	Trench sheets, registers
Digital	Currently held by Cotswold Archaeology (Milton Keynes Office)	Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Cotswold Archaeology 2015 <i>Homestead Farm, Potterspur, Northamptonshire: Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording</i> CA typescript report 15154		



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PROJECT TITLE

Homestead Farm, Potterspurty,
Northamptonshire

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

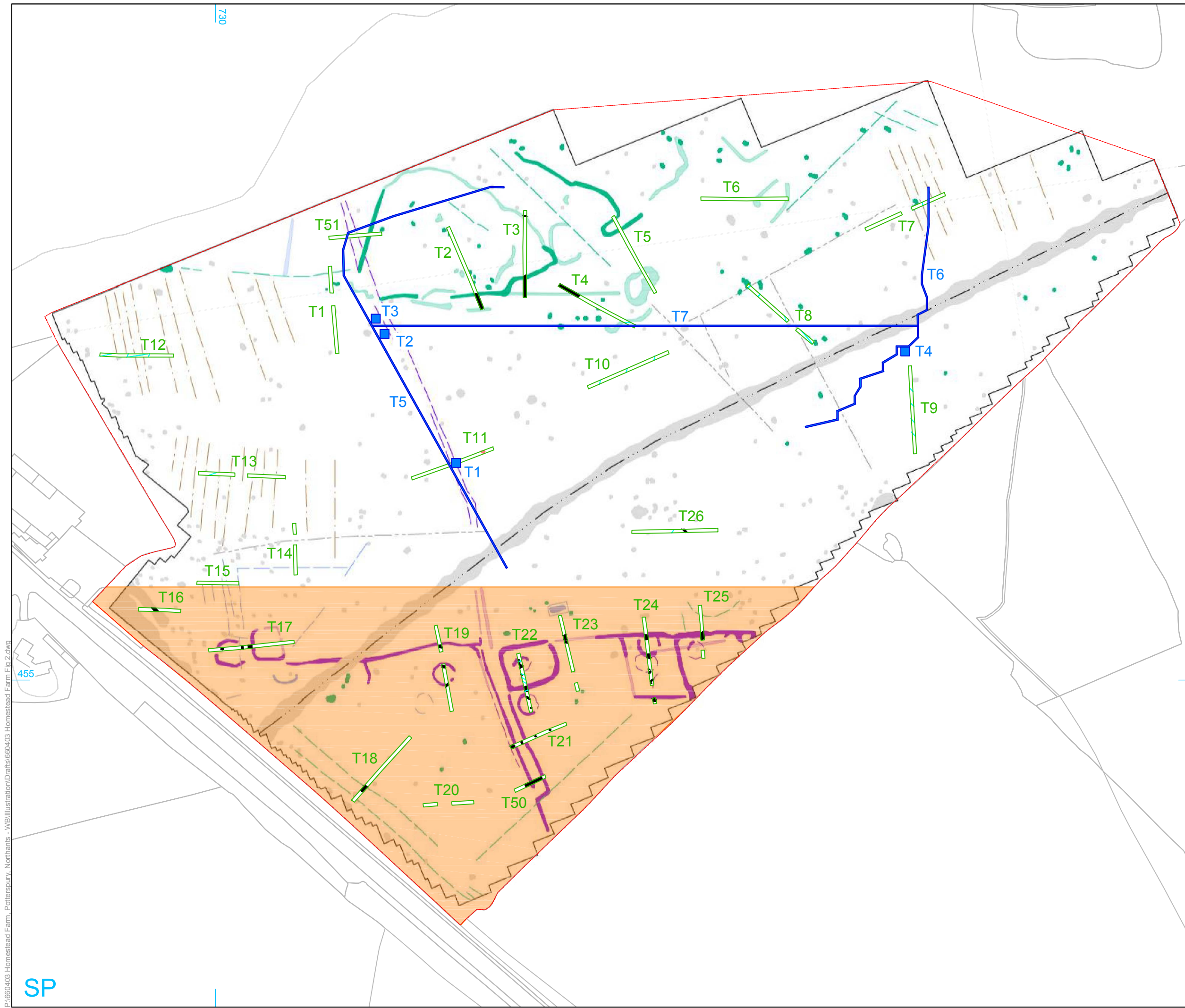


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FIGURE NO.

1



- ▬ site
- ▬ evaluation trench
- ▬ monitored groundworks
- ▬ archaeological feature
- ▬ modern
- ▬ treethrow
- ▬ Archaeological Protection Area

Geophysical Survey Results
(GSB Prospection LTD)

- ▬ Archaeology
(discrete / weak anomaly / trend)
- ▬ ?Archaeology
(discrete / weak anomaly / trend)
- ▬ Uncertain Origin
(discrete / weak anomaly / trend)
- Ridge & Furrow
- Field Drain / Pipe
- Ferrous



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PROJECT TITLE
Homestead Farm, Potterspury, Northamptonshire

FIGURE TITLE
The site, showing locations of monitored groundworks overlain on geophysical survey and evaluation results

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SP



3



4

3 Trench 5, looking south-east

4 Trench 5, section (scale 1m)



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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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5



6

5 Trench 6, looking south

6 Trench 6, section



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PROJECT TITLE

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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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7



8

7 Trench 7, looking west

8 Trench 7, section (scale 1m)



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PROJECT TITLE

Homestead Farm, Potterspur, Northamptonshire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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