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Geophysical Survey

**Low Spinney Wind Farm
Ashby Magna
Leicestershire
Archaeological Evaluation**

Report No. Y001/10

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Low Spinney Wind Farm

Ashby Magna

Leicestershire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Low Spinney Farm, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire, during September 2010. Ten trenches were excavated on the locations of proposed wind-turbine bases, working areas and access roads. Other than the remains of furrows and land drains, no archaeological remains were encountered, and no finds were recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 General

- 1.1.1 This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd (CFA) between 20 and 22 September 2010, on land at Low Spinney Farm, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Broadview Energy to evaluate the archaeological potential of the proposed development area prior to the construction of four wind-turbine bases, associated working areas, access roads and compound.
- 1.1.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared for this programme of works by CFA on behalf of Broadview Energy. This WSI was produced in response to a brief from the Historic and Natural Environment Team (HNET) for Leicestershire County Council (LCC), revised 6 August 2010.

1.2 Site Location and Description

- 1.2.1 Low Spinney Wind Farm lies in the Parish of Ashby Magna, Leicestershire (NGR SP559 889, Fig. 1). The underlying bedrock consists of Blue Lias and Charmouth Mudstone, with Diamicon Till of the Mid Pleistocene forming the overlying superficial deposits. The site lies on undulating ground at approximately 150m above the ordnance datum (AOD) in the east, and 125m AOD in the west (Walford 2009).

1.3 Historical and Archaeological Background

The following is largely taken from a desk-based assessment of the site (ULAS 2008).

- 1.3.1 No archaeological sites were recorded within the application area itself. However, the wider environment is relatively rich in archaeological finds, particularly from prehistoric periods; including Mesolithic flint scatters, Neolithic flint tools, a pair of gold earrings, dated to the Late Neolithic, or 'Copper Age', and a Bronze Age spearhead. Bronze Age barrows have also been recorded in the vicinity.
- 1.3.2 For the Romano-British period; the Lutterworth Road, 600m to the west of the site is believed to have been Roman in origin and sherds of Roman pottery and tile have been discovered in the area, as have Roman bow-brooches.

- 1.3.3 Both Ashby Magna and Gilmorton have early medieval origins. There is also evidence for a moat and a hollow way. There is evidence of a motte and bailey castle and a moat at Gimorton. Cotes de Val, which lies 200m south west of the site, is the location of a deserted medieval settlement, containing earthworks relating to a hollow way, houses, and there appears also to have been a chapel, a dovecote and a moat.

1.4 Previous Archaeological work

- 1.4.1 A desk-based assessment (DBA) and walkover survey was undertaken on the site in 2008 (ULAS 2008), which formed part of an Environmental Statement (TNEI 2009). The conclusion of the DBA was that there were no recorded archaeological remains on the site, though there was extensive evidence of archaeological activity in the wider area. The site may not have changed since the medieval period or earlier, indicating that pre-medieval archaeological remains, should they be present on the site are likely to be fairly well preserved, though they may have suffered some plough erosion.
- 1.4.2 A geophysical Survey was undertaken in 2008 (Walford 2009). This concluded that there was little evidence of significant archaeological remains within the proposed development areas. The only remains detected were areas of ridge and furrow cultivation and the site of a post-medieval barn. A section of ditched track was also ‘tentatively’ identified. Other anomalies are attributable to geological features, field drains and ferrous debris, though these results were qualified by the limitations in the efficacy of magnetometry on clay subsoils.
- 1.4.3 No invasive archaeological fieldwork is known to have taken place within the proposed development area prior to this evaluation.

1.5 Objectives

- 1.5.1 The general objectives of the evaluation were to establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains; assess their character, and; produce a report to enable judgements to be made on the significance of those remains and any mitigation that may be necessary.
- 1.5.2 The research objectives were to interpret any archaeological remains according to their significance in contributing to the further understanding of whichever period they may relate to, and in the context of research frameworks for the period, area or region (e.g. ULAS 2006).

2. WORKING METHODS

2.1 General

2.1.1 All work was undertaken according to the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct, and relevant Standards and Guidance documents (IfA 1990, 1996, 2001), the Brief (LCC HNET 2010) and WSI (CFA 2010)

2.2 Evaluation

2.2.1 All machining was undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision. In the absence of archaeological remains the trenches were excavated to the top of natural geological deposits.

2.2.2 The trenches were located in order to sample the areas affected by the development, these were namely the location of the four turbines, the access road and the compound (Fig. 2). In accordance with the brief, the level of trenching was as follows:

Trench	Location	Targeting	Area
1	Turbine 1	-	50m ²
2	Turbine 2	-	50m ²
3	Turbine 3	-	50m ²
4	Turbine 4	Linear geophysical anomalies	30m ²
5	Turbine 4	Linear geophysical anomalies	30m ²
6	Turbine 4	Linear geophysical anomalies	30m ²
7	Turbine 4	Linear geophysical anomalies	30m ²
8	Turbine 4	-	50m ²
9	Access Road	Linear geophysical anomalies	40m ²
10	Access Road	Linear geophysical anomalies	30 m ²

2.2.4 A contingency of c. 40m², was reserved in the event that archaeological remains were encountered that required further exposure in order to establish their date, character and significance. This contingency was not used.

2.2.5 Due to the presence of a badger sett (Plate 4), four of the trenches (4, 6, 7, 8 and 9) were relocated to respect a 30m buffer. Three of the trenches moved were targeted on geophysical anomalies; however, these anomalies were sampled by other trenches. In addition the opportunity was taken to sample anomalies not originally within the scope of the trenching (Fig. 3).

2.2.6 All excavation and on-site recording was carried out according to standard CFA procedures, principally by drawing, photography and by completing standard CFA recording forms.

2.2.7 The stratification of all excavated areas was recorded whether or not significant archaeological deposits were identified.

2.2.8 Trench positions were surveyed using industry standard electronic surveying equipment and all trenches were backfilled on completion of the fieldwork.

2.3 Standards and Guidance

- 2.3.1 CFA Archaeology is a registered organisation (RO) with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). All work was conducted in accordance with relevant IfA Standards and Guidance documents (IfA 1990, 1996, 2001), English Heritage guidance (EH 2002, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008a, 2008b and 2008c), and CFA's standard methodology.

2.4 Monitoring

- 2.4.1 The trial trenching was monitored by the Leicestershire Council Planning Archaeologist who was informed in advance of the works taking place.

2.5 Archiving

- 2.5.1 The project archive, comprising all CFA record sheets, finds, plans and reports, will be deposited with the relevant museum. The Accession number X.A140.2010 has been issued for the project. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service (LMARS) according to an agreed timescale, will be ordered according to LMARS' current guidelines (2000 and Pollard 2008) and to nationally recognised standards (UKIC 1990, MGC 1994, SMA 1995, Ferguson and Murray 1997, UKIC 2001 and Brown 2007).

3. RESULTS

No significant archaeological remains and no finds were recovered from any of the trenches, though land drains were common in the areas of arable around Turbines 3 and 4 (Trenches 3-9) as was modern plough scarring. Furrows were evident in areas of current pasture around the compound area (Trench 10) and Turbine 1 (Trench 1). The targeted geophysical anomalies, where identified were determined to be entirely agricultural in origin. The tables below summarise the results for each trench. See Plate 7 for photographs for each excavated trench and Figs 2-3 for trench locations. A context summary forms Appendix 2.

Trench 1		
Orientation: East – West		
Dimensions: Length 25m, Depth 0.28m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
100	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey/ brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
101	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 1 contained four NW to SE running furrows, remnants of ridge and furrow visible in the field		
Photograph Numbers: 52-53 (pre-ex), 54 – 57 (post-ex)		

Trench 2		
Orientation: East – West		
Dimensions: Length 25m, Depth 0.24m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
200	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
201	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 2 contained no archaeological remains		
Photograph Numbers: 7-9 (pre-ex) 12-14 (post-ex)		

Trench 3		
Orientation: Southeast – Northwest		
Dimensions: Length 25m Depth 0.32m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
300	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
301	Subsoil	Mid-light grey/brown, friable, sandy silty clay. Moderate pebbles.
302	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 3 contained a modern field drain at its western end but otherwise no archaeological remains. A thin layer of subsoil was present at the western end of the trench (0.04m thick).		
Photograph Numbers: 15-16 (pre-ex) 20-21 (post-ex)		
Drawing Numbers: 3.1, 3.2		

Trench 4		
Orientation: Northeast – Southeast		
Dimensions: Length 15m Depth 0.28m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
400	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
401	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 4 contained no archaeological remains		
Photograph Numbers: 43-44 (pre-ex), 49-51 (post-ex)		

Trench 5		
Orientation: Northeast – Southwest		
Dimensions: Length 20m Depth 0.30m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
500	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
501	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 5 contained no archaeological remains		
Photograph Numbers: 31-33 (post-ex)		

Trench 6		
Orientation: Northeast – Southwest		
Dimensions: Length 16m Depth 0.28m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
600	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
601	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 6 contained no archaeological remains		
Photograph Numbers: 35-37 (post-ex)		

Trench 7		
Orientation: Southeast – Northwest		
Dimensions: Length 15m Depth 0.28m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
700	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
701	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 7 contained no archaeological remains		
Photograph Numbers: 38-40 (pre-ex), 45-46 (post-ex)		

Trench 8		
Orientation: Northeast - Southwest		
Dimensions: Length 15m, Depth 0.28m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
800	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
801	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 8 contained no archaeological remains		
Photograph Numbers: 38-40(pre-ex) 41-42 (post-ex)		

Trench 9		
Orientation: Northeast – Southwest		
Dimensions: Length 15m, Depth 0.34m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
900	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
901	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
Trench 9 contained no archaeological remains		
Photograph Numbers: 47-48 (post-ex)		

Trench 10		
Orientation: South East – North West		
Dimensions: Length 26m, Depth 0.28m (max)		
Context Numbers:	Context Type:	Description:
1000	Topsoil	Mid-dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
1001	Subsoil	Mid-light grey/brown, friable, sandy silty clay. Moderate pebbles.
1002	Natural	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles.
1003	Fill of Plough Furrow	Mid-light brown, friable, sandy silty clay. Moderate pebbles.
1004	Cut of Plough Furrow	Linear. Shallow Sides 15-200. Slightly rounded base. N.E. - S.W. alignment. Length 1.60m+ Width 1.90m Depth 0.08m (max).
Trench 10 contained three North-South running furrows, remnants of ridge and furrow. The central furrow was excavated but no dating evidence was recovered. The trench also contained a modern field drain towards its SE end but no other archaeological remains were encountered		
Photograph Numbers: 5-6 (post-ex)		
Drawing Numbers: 10.1, 10.2, 10.3		

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 No archaeological remains were encountered during the course of the trenching and no finds were recovered from the trenches, the spoil or the ploughed fields themselves. Plough scars were evident in the arable fields (Trenches 3-9), where the topsoil was thin. No evidence resembling a ditched track, or ‘hollow way’ was identified. It may have been the case that this area was exploited during the medieval and post-medieval periods, but that ploughing has removed all evidence. This contrasts with the relatively well preserved furrows (Plate 1) in the fields used for pasture (Trenches 2 and 10).
- 4.2 Although archaeological remains are present in the wider landscape, none were encountered during the course of the evaluation at the proposed locations of the turbines, associated working areas and access roads and no further archaeological work is recommended.

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APPENDIX 1: Photographic Register

Shot	Description	Facing
1	General shot / JCB	NE
2	Trench 10 (Compound) pre-excavation	N
3	Trench 10 pre-excavation	S
4	Trench 10 working shot, during excavation	N
5	Trench 10 post-excavation	SE
6	Trench 10 post-excavation	NW
7	Trench 2 (Turbine 2) pre-excavation	W
8	Trench 2 pre-excavation	E
9	Trench 2 pre-excavation	E
10	General Shot from Trench 2	NE
11	General Shot from Trench 2	NW
12	Trench 2 post-excavation	W
13	Trench 2 post-excavation	E
14	Trench 2 post-excavation	E
15	Trench 3 (Turbine 3) pre-excavation	SE
16	Trench 3 (Turbine 3) pre-excavation	NW
17	General working shot	E
18	General working shot	W
19	General Working shot	-
20	Trench 3 post-excavation showing Land drain in foreground	SE
21	Trench 3 post-excavation showing Land drain in foreground	NW
22	General shot	-
23	Badger set	N
24	Badger set	N
25	Turbine 4 (trenches 4-9) pre-excavation	N
26	Turbine 4 (trenches 4-9) pre-excavation	NE
27	Turbine 4 (trenches 4-9) pre-excavation	E
28	Turbine 4 (trenches 4-9) pre-excavation	SW
29	Turbine 4 (trenches 4-9) pre-excavation	E
30	Turbine 4 (trenches 4-9) pre-excavation	NE
31	Trench 5 post-excavation	SW
32	Trench 5 post-excavation	N
33	Trench 5 field drains in the foreground	N
34	Deleted	-
35	Trench 6 post-excavation	SW
36	Trench 6 post-excavation	SW
37	Trench 6 post-excavation	NE
38	Trenches 7 and 8 (new locations) pre-excavation	N
39	Trenches 7 and 8 (new locations) pre-excavation	NE
40	Trenches 7 and 8 (new locations) pre-excavation	E
41	Trench 8 plough scarring	NE
42	Trench 8 post-excavation	SE
43	Trenches 4 and 9 (new locations) pre-excavation	N
44	Trenches 4 and 9 (new locations) pre-excavation	NE
45	Trench 7 post-excavation	NW
46	Trench 7 post-excavation	SW
47	Trench 9 post-excavation	NE
48	Trench 9 post-excavation	SW
49	Trench 4 post-excavation	SE
50	Deleted	-
51	Trench 4 post-excavation	NW
52	Trench 1 (Turbine 1) pre-excavation	E
53	Trench 1 (Turbine 1) pre-excavation	W
54	Trench 1 post-excavation	E

Shot	Description	Facing
55	Trench 1 post-excavation	E
56	Trench 1 post-excavation	W
57	Trench 1 post-excavation	W
58	General shot Turbine 1	S
59	General shot Turbine 1	N
60	General shot Turbine 1	W
61	General shot Turbine 1	E

APPENDIX 2: Context Register

Context	Area	Trench	Description
100	Turbine 1	1	Mid-dark grey/ brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
101	Turbine 1	1	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
200	Turbine 2	2	Mid-dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
201	Turbine 2	2	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
300	Turbine 3	3	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles.
301	Turbine 3	3	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
400	Turbine 4	4	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
401	Turbine 4	4	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
500	Turbine 4	5	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
501	Turbine 4	5	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
600	Turbine 4	6	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
601	Turbine 4	6	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
700	Turbine 4	7	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
701	Turbine 4	7	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
800	Turbine 4	8	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
801	Turbine 4	8	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
900	Turbine 4	9	Dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
901	Turbine 4	9	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
1000	Compound	10	Mid-dark grey/brown, friable, silty loam with occasional pebbles
1001	Compound	10	Mid-light grey/brown, friable, sandy silty clay. Moderate pebbles
1002	Compound	10	Light brown, friable, sandy silty clay with frequent pebbles
1001	Compound	10	Mid-light brown, friable, sandy silty clay. Moderate pebbles
1002	Compound	10	Linear. Shallow Sides 15-20°. Slightly rounded base. NE. - SW. alignment



Plate 1: Proposed Compound Area (Trench 10) Looking North



Plate 2: Proposed Turbine Location 2 Looking East



Plate 3: From Proposed Turbine Location 2 Looking Northeast



Plate 4: Badger Sett, adjacent to Proposed Turbine Location 4



Plate 5: Proposed Turbine location 4 Looking North



Plate 6: Proposed Turbine 1 Location, Looking North



Trench 1



Trench 2



Trench 3



Trench 4



Trench 5



Trench 6



Trench 7



Trench 8

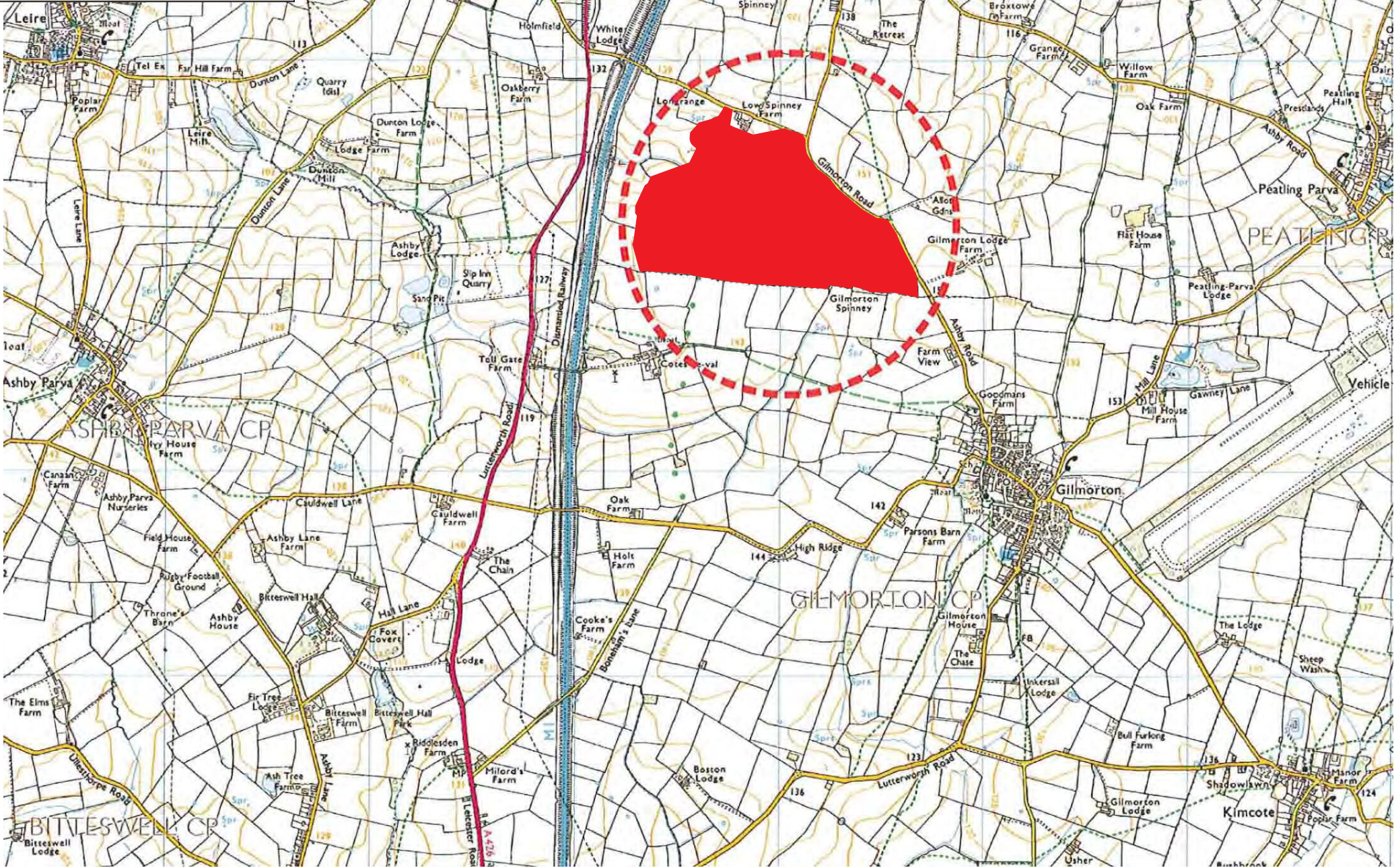


Trench 9



Trench 10

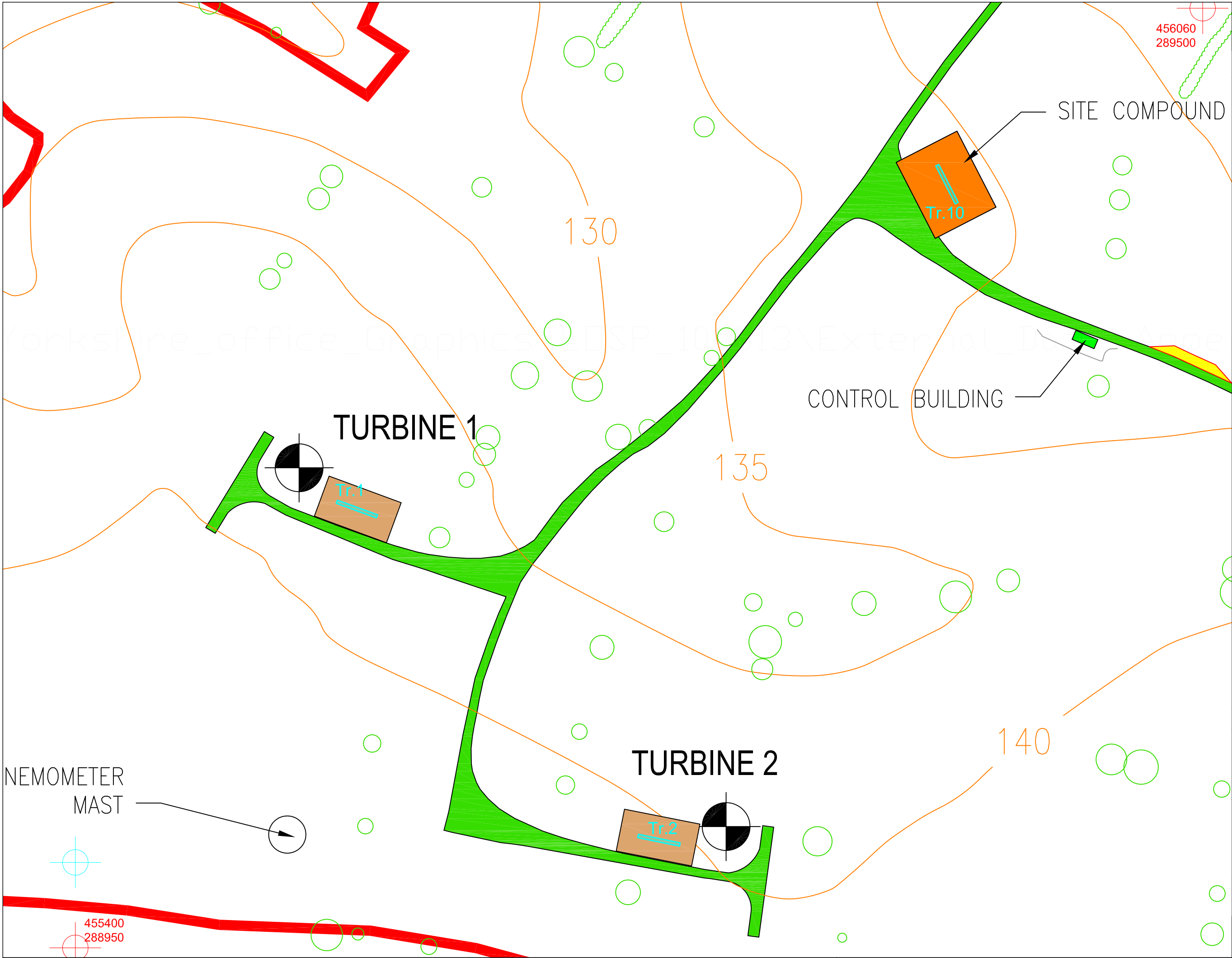
Plate 7: Excavated Trenches



Key:
■ Proposed Wind Farm site



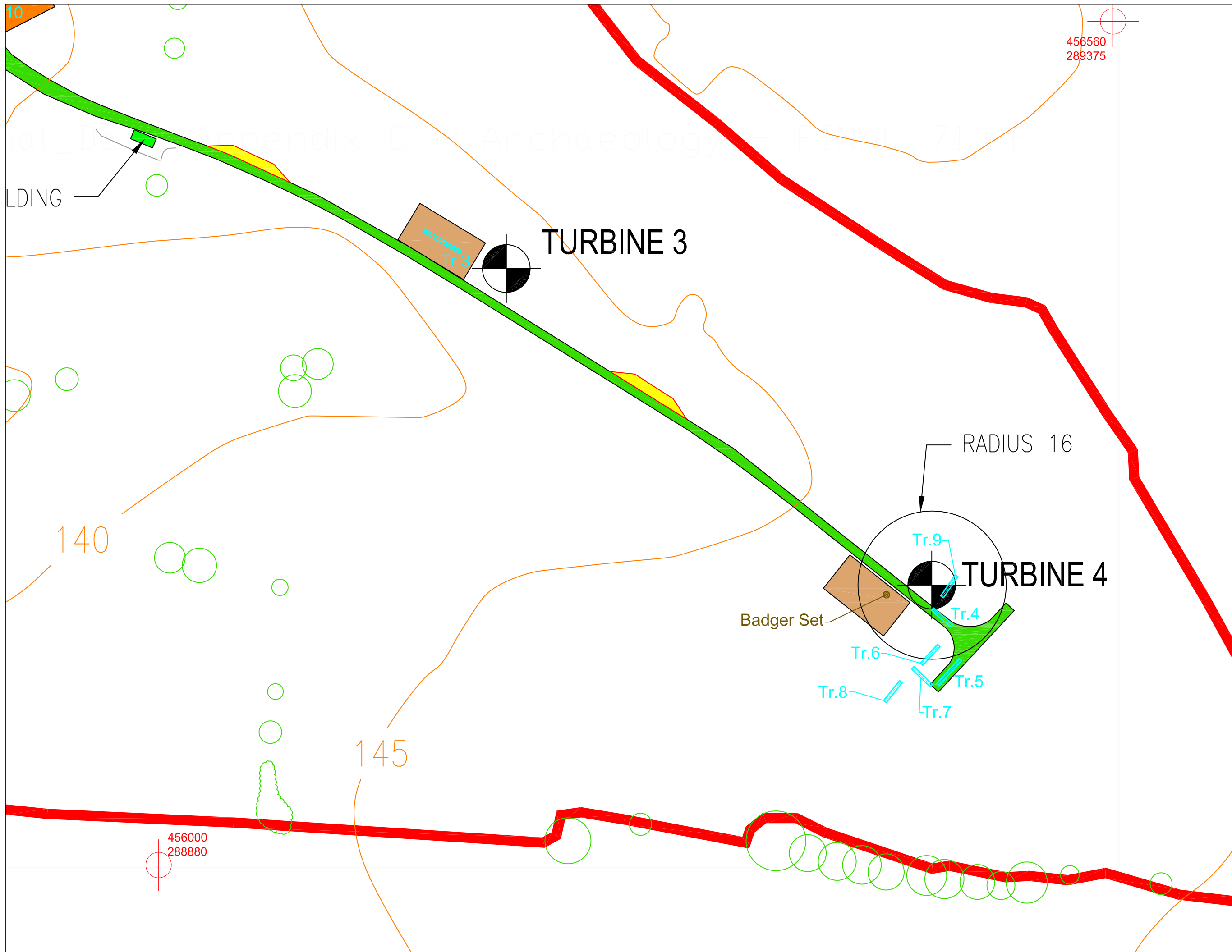
Fig. No:	1	Revision:	A
Title:	Site location		
Project:	Low Spinney Wind Farm		
Scale:	1:25,000 @ A3		
Client:	Broadview Energy Developments Ltd		
Drawn by:	GC	Report No:	0000



Key:
Evaluation Trench



Fig. No:	2	Revision:	A
Title:	Location of Evaluation Trenches		
Project:	Lowspinney Wind Farm		
Client:	Broadview Energy		
Scale:	1:2000 @ A3		
Drawn by:	KH	Report No:	100813



Key:
Evaluation Trench



Fig. No:	3	Revisior:	A
Title:	Location of Evaluation Trenches		
Project:	Lowspinney Wind Farm		
Client:	Broadview Energy		
Scale:	1:2000 @ A3		
Drawn by:	KH	Report No:	100813

LOCAL AUTHORITY:	Leicestershire County Council
PROJECT TITLE/SITE NAME:	Low Spinney Farm
PROJECT CODE:	LOSP
PARISH:	Ashby magna
AUTHOR	Martin Lightfoot
NAME OF ORGANISATION:	CFA Archaeology Ltd
TYPE(S) OF PROJECT:	Evaluation
NMRS NO(S):	N/A
SITE/MONUMENT TYPE(S):	N/A
SIGNIFICANT FINDS:	None
NGR	SP559 889
START DATE	20 September 2010
END DATE	22 September 2010
PREVIOUS WORK (incl. <i>DES</i> ref.)	N/A
MAIN (NARRATIVE) DESCRIPTION: (May include information from other fields)	An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Low Spinney Farm, Ashby magna, Leicestershire, during September 2010. Ten trenches were excavated on the locations of proposed wind-turbine bases, working areas and access roads. Other than the remains of furrows and land drains, no archaeological remains were encountered, and no finds were recovered.
PROPOSED FUTURE WORK:	None
SPONSOR OR FUNDING BODY:	Broadview Energy
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ARCHIVE LOCATION (intended)	Leicestershire Museums Service