Meridian Solar Farm

EN010169

Volume 6

Environmental Statement

6.3 ES Appendix 8-2: Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment

APFP Regulation 5(2)(a)

Infrastructure Planning (Applications: Prescribed Forms and Procedure) Regulations 2009

March 2026

Contents

Abbreviations

BESS	Battery Energy Storage System
BGL	Below Ground Level
DBA	Desk-Based Assessment
DCO	Development Consent Order
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ES	Environmental Statement
ha	Hectare
HE	Historic England
HEDBA	Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment
HER	Historic Environment Record
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HLC	Historic Landscape Character
IHBC	Institute of Historic Building Conservation
km	Kilometre
LCC	Lincolnshire County Council
LSEs	Likely Significant Effects
m	Metre
MW	Megawatts
MWh	Megawatt hours
NGR	National Grid Reference
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
NPS	National Policy Statement
NPSE	National Policy Statement for England
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
OS	Ordnance Survey
OHL	Overhead (power) lines

PV	Photovoltaic
RLB	Red Line Boundary
SM	Scheduled Monument
SoS	Secretary of State
ZTV	Zone of Theoretical Visibility

1 Introduction

1.1.1 A Historic Environment Desk Based Assessment (HEDBA) was prepared by JBA Consulting on behalf of Meridian Solar Farm Limited (hereafter referred to as 'the Applicant') as part of its application for a Development Consent Order ('the DCO Application') for the construction, operation and decommissioning of the proposed Meridian Solar Farm ('the Scheme'). The DCO Application is for a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project ('NSIP') comprising the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of a solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generating station with associated infrastructure, including co-located Battery Energy Storage System (BESS), Inter-Array Connections to link the land parcels that form the Solar Development Areas, and an up to 13 kilometres (km) overhead line Grid Connection (with one short undergrounded section) which would run north towards a point of connection (PoC) at the proposed Weston Marsh B National Grid Electricity Transmission (NGET) substation, to the north of Weston. This HEDBA updates the April 2025 assessment presented with the Preliminary Environmental Information Report to include additional research that has since been completed within the Scheme and study area. It forms the appendix to **ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** (Doc Ref. 6.1) of the Meridian Solar Farm Environmental Statement and should be read in conjunction with that chapter.

1.1.2 This assessment has been prepared by JBA Consulting in line with the requirements in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments (CIfA 2020), and the Historic England Good Practice in Planning Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England 2017). The impact assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK (IEMA, CIfA and IHBC 2021).

1.1.3 In line with CIfA guidance, the aim of this HEDBA is to determine (as far as is reasonably possible from existing records) the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within the study area. This will allow the impact of the proposed Scheme on the significance of the historic environment to be identified (or to identify where further evaluation is required) and allow reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept the impact without further intervention. Specific objectives in relation to this HEDBA include to:

- Identify known heritage assets within the proposed Scheme area and assess their setting, cultural heritage significance and importance;
- Identify nearby designated heritage assets and their settings; and

- Identify whether there is potential for sub-surface archaeological remains to be present within the proposed Scheme area and their potential archaeological interest and significance.

1.1.4 The HEDBA is focused on delivering a comprehensive baseline assessment of known heritage assets and potential for previously unrecorded archaeological remains. An identification of archaeological zones within the Site and an assessment of potential for further unknown archaeological remains is also made. The detailed assessment of significance of affected heritage assets and the impact of the proposed Scheme will be undertaken within **ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** (Doc Ref. 6.1) and will be informed by further archaeological investigations within the Site.

1.1.5 The HEDBA is supported by the following appendices:

- Appendix A - Figures;
- Appendix B - Gazetteer;
- Appendix C - Aerial photograph and LiDAR Assessments;
- Appendix C.1 - Aerial photography and LiDAR assessment of the Solar Development Areas (Deegan 2024);
- Appendix C.2 - Aerial photography and LiDAR assessment of the Inter-Array Connections and Grid Connection Route (Air Photo Services 2025);
- Appendix D.1 - Phase 1 Geophysical Survey Reports;
- Appendix D.2 - Phase 2 Geophysical Survey Report;
- Appendix E - Archaeological Evaluation interim statement;
- Appendix F - Consolidation of Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections Baseline Data and Identification of Archaeological Zones;
- Appendix G - Site Visit and Walkover Photographs.

1.1.6 The HEDBA is supported by the following figures in Appendix A:

- Figure 1: Site Location Plan;
- Figure 2 - Designated Heritage Assets Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections;
- Figures 3a-3d - Non-designated Heritage Assets Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections;
- Figures 4a-4d - Previous Archaeological Investigations Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections;
- Figure 5: Historic Landscape Character;
- Figures 6a-6b - Designated Heritage Assets Grid Connection Route;
- Figures 7a-7c - Non-designated Heritage Assets Grid Connection Route;

- Figures 8a-8b - Previous Archaeological Investigations Grid Connection Route;
- Figure 9a-9d - Zones of Archaeological Potential - Solar Development Areas.

2 The Scheme

2.1 Site Location

2.1.1 The Scheme is located within south-east Lincolnshire, north of Crowland and east of Spalding. The location of the Scheme is shown on Figure 1. The Site constitutes the total land area within the Order Limits of the Scheme, including the Solar Development Area, Inter-Array Connections and Grid Connection Route. The total area of the Order Limits is approximately 1,615.9ha2

2.1.2 The Solar Development Areas cover an area of approximately 1067 ha and is formed of four Land Parcels the details of which can be seen on Figure 1. The Scheme is dominated by arable fields which are bounded by deep drainage ditches forming a distinctive linear drainage pattern (Plates 1–4). There are a number of farms and associated buildings across the landscape, and the eastern Land Parcel D of the Scheme is separated from the western Parcels by the settlement of Whaplode Drove. There is limited planting around the Scheme with trees and hedges limited to small groupings largely related to farms and houses.

2.1.3 The Grid Connection Route covers an area of approximately 510 ha and the Inter-Array Connections an area of 61 ha. Both are also largely formed of agricultural fields.

2.2 Scheme Description

2.2.1 The Scheme would comprise the construction, operation (including maintenance) and decommissioning of a solar PV electricity generating facility with associated infrastructure.

2.2.2 The key components of the Scheme include:

- The 'Solar Development Areas', comprising land parcels A, B, C and D, which would host the ground-mounted solar PV generation facilities (and associated supporting infrastructure), Battery Energy Storage System ('BESS') and On-Site Substation Compounds (including one 400 kilovolt (kV) substation and BESS compound at Land Parcel B, facilitating connection to the 400kV overhead line, and three 132kV substations compounds at the other land parcels). **ES Figure 1-2: Solar Development Area Field Numbers** (Doc Ref. 6.2) provides a further breakdown of the fields that make up the Solar Development Area land parcels;
- The 'Inter-Array Connections', comprising underground cabling with an operating voltage of 132kV between Land Parcels A and B and

a 132kV overhead line (via wooden H poles) between Land Parcels C and D; and

- The 'Grid Connection', predominantly a 400kV overhead line (via steel lattice style pylons), with one section of underground cable and associated cable sealing end compounds, to the planned NGET Weston Marsh B Substation, east of Spalding.

2.2.3 The Scheme includes the construction, operation and decommissioning of the infrastructure listed above. For the purposes of the assessment, it is assumed that construction would commence in 2029, with operation from 2033. The Scheme would have an operational life of 40 years. A full description of the Scheme can be found in **ES Chapter 2: The Scheme** (Doc Ref. 6.1).

3 Legislative and Policy Context

3.1.1 Full details of the legislative and policy context relating cultural heritage can be found in **Appendix 8-1: Cultural Heritage Legislation, Policy and Guidance** of **Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage of the ES** (Doc Ref. 6.1). The following legislation, policy and guidance has been identified as relevant to the assessment of Cultural Heritage. The following summarises key elements.

3.2 Legislation

Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

3.2.1 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (the AMAA Act) provides the principal legal framework for the protection of nationally important archaeological sites in England, known as Scheduled Monuments. Under the AMAA Act a monument includes any building, structure, work, cave or site containing the remains of such features, including movable objects like vehicles or vessels. Scheduled Monuments are designated by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (SoS) as selective examples of nationally important archaeological remains. Part 1, Sections 1 and 2 of the AMAA Act 1979 set out guidelines for the process of selection of sites to be included in the protected schedule. Part 1, Section 2 provides legal protection for Scheduled Monuments; it states that it is an offence to damage, disturb, or alter a Scheduled Monument without permission of the SoS. Although the Act does protect the ground below Scheduled Monuments, it does not protect the wider setting of the monument.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

3.2.2 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 sets out guidelines for designation, control of works and enforcement measures concerning Listed Buildings

and Conservation Areas. Section 1 states that the SoS shall compile lists, or approve lists compiled by Historic England, of buildings of special architectural or historic interest in order to guide local authorities in carrying out the functions set out by the Act. Section 66 of the Act states that when the Local Planning Authority (LPA), or in certain cases, the SoS, are considering whether to grant planning permission to developments affecting a Listed Building or its setting, they shall pay special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting, or any features of special architectural or historic interest which it may possess. Regarding Conservation Areas, Section 69 states that LPAs shall designate areas of special architectural or historic interest, the appearance of which should be preserved. Section 72 states that when considering developments affecting Conservation Areas, special attention should be paid to the benefit of preserving or enhancing the area's character or appearance.

Protection of Military Remains Act 1986

3.2.3 The Act safeguards the wreckage of military aircraft and vessels, particularly those considered war graves. It restricts any disturbance of such sites without proper authorisation, requiring a licence from the Ministry of Defence (MOD) before conducting surveys, excavations, or recovering artefacts. The Act designates sites as either Protected Places—where works are allowed but interference is prohibited without a licence—or Controlled Sites, which are entirely off-limits without explicit MOD permission. This ensures that work is conducted respectfully, especially where human remains may be present, and promotes responsible stewardship of military heritage.

Hedgerow Regulations 1997

3.2.4 The Hedgerow Regulations 1997 were introduced under the Environment Act 1995. They provide statutory protection to certain important hedgerows in the countryside, particularly to stop their removal without proper permission. The regulations including criteria for determining historically important hedgerows, alongside criteria covering physical characteristics and biodiversity.

3.3 National Policy

Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1)

3.3.1 The Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (EN-1) (published December 2025 and adopted January 2026) outlines national policy for energy infrastructure. The statement provides the definition of the historic environment and information on appropriate levels of assessment of energy proposals that have the potential to impact upon the historic environment. Paragraph 5.9.12 states that the applicant should ensure that the extent of the potential impact on the significance of any heritage asset as a result of the scheme must be adequately understood from the application. The applicant is also encouraged where opportunities exist to make a positive contribution to the historic environment through options such as sensitive design, public benefits and

enhanced access or interpretation (paragraph 5.9.15). EN-1 states (paragraph 5.9.19) "Where the loss of the whole or part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, the Secretary of State will require the applicant to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost (wholly or in part). The extent of the requirement should be proportionate to the asset's importance and significance and the impact." Where deemed appropriate the SoS will impose requirements on the Development Consent Order to ensure that the required works are undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation and the National Policy Statement (NPS) policies. The scope of this work is to be agreed with the LPA (paragraph 5.9.20).

National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3)

3.3.2 Within the NPS for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (EN-3) (published December 2025 and adopted January 2026) when considering the impact on the historic environment and whether it is satisfied that the substantial public benefits would outweigh any loss or harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, the SoS should take into account the positive role that large-scale renewable projects play in the mitigation of climate change, the delivery of energy security and the urgency of meeting the national targets for renewable energy supply and emissions reductions.

National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) 2023

3.3.3 The National Policy Statement for Electricity Networks Infrastructure (EN-5) (published December 2025 and adopted January 2026) outlines the Government's policy statement in regard to electricity networks infrastructure. The document requires that the potential effects on heritage assets as a result of overhead lines and buried cables contribute of the consideration of the options. Paragraph 2.9.25 also determines that an overhead line will take preference over a buried cable unless it can be demonstrated that the benefit of a buried option clearly outweighs the extra economic, social or environmental impacts it presents.

National Planning Policy Framework

3.3.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) sets out guidelines for achieving sustainable development, based on the core objectives: economic, social, and environmental. Protecting and enhancing the historic environment is just one element contributing to the realisation of these objectives. Section 16 details the policies for protecting and enhancing the historic environment during planning procedure and decision making. It states that any development decisions affecting heritage assets should be made with a thorough understanding of their significance, including any contribution made by their setting, with a level of detail proportional to their significance. In the case of a development affecting archaeological remains, a desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation will be required (paragraph 200). In the case of designated assets, substantial harm or loss to heritage assets and their settings should be exceptional for designated assets, including Grade II Listed Buildings and Grade II

registered parks and gardens. Substantial harm to assets of the highest significance, including World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Protected Wrecks, Registered Battlefields, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens, and Grade I and II* Listed Buildings, should be wholly exceptional (paragraph 206) and exceptional for other designated assets (including Grade II Listed Buildings and Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens) (paragraph 206). Harm to these assets must be weighed against the public benefit of development (paragraph 207). For non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement regarding the scale of harm or loss to the asset and its significance must be made (paragraph 209). Where development results in loss or harm to a heritage asset, developers will be required to record and advance understanding of the significance of the asset (paragraph 211).

National Planning Practice Guidance

3.3.5 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides further advice and guidance that expands the policy outlined in the NPPF. It expands on terms such as 'significance' and its importance in decision making and also provides advice on how proposals can avoid or minimise harm to the significance of a heritage asset. The Guidance also covers the setting of heritage assets, how the setting can contribute towards the significance of a heritage asset and how the proposed scheme can interact with the setting of an asset. The guidance also provides advice on various other matters including;

- Whether the deteriorated state of a heritage asset should be taken into account in reaching a decision on an application
- What is the optimum viable use for a heritage asset and how is it taken into account in planning decisions
- How can the possibility of harm to a heritage asset be assessed.

3.4 Local Policy

3.4.1 The following policies within the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan (SELLP) 2011-2036 are relevant to this Cultural Heritage assessment:

- Policy 2: Development Management;
- Policy 3: Design of New Development;
- Policy 29: The Historic Environment;
- Policy 30: Pollution;
- Policy 31: Climate Change and Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

3.5 Other Guidance

3.5.1 This HEDBA has also been prepared with reference to the following guidance documents:

- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments (CIfA 2020);
- Historic England Good Practice in Planning Advice Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England 2017);
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment (Historic England 2015a);
- Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance (Historic England 2019);
- Historic England Advice Note 15: Commercial Renewable Energy Development and the Historic Environment (Historic England 2021) Principles of Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment in the UK (IEMA, CIfA and IHBC 2021);
- Lincolnshire County Council (LCC) Archaeology Handbook (Lincolnshire County Council 2024);
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2025) Archaeology and Solar Farms: Good Practice Guide A toolkit for developers, archaeological advisors, consultants and contractors. Consultation Draft.

4 Assessment Methodology

4.1 Study Area

4.1.1 A study area has been adopted to enable all heritage assets potentially affected by the Scheme to be identified and assessed in their wider setting in accordance with best practice guidance set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Historic Environment Desk-based Assessments (CIfA 2020).

4.1.2 A study area of 1km around the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections has been set in order to assess the archaeology and heritage baseline of the Site (see Figure 1). A study area of 1km is considered appropriate and proportionate based on the nature of the proposed Scheme and the landscape to understand the heritage baseline of the Site and its surrounding landscape.

4.1.3 A 2km study area from the Grid Connection Route has been set to assess the heritage baseline (see Figure 1). This is considered appropriate and proportionate based on the proposed Grid Connection Route to understand its potential effects on built heritage and surrounding landscape.

4.1.4 The extent of the setting of an asset is not fixed and can vary asset to asset (Historic England 2017). Due to this the setting of designated heritage assets of the highest significance (heritage value) (Scheduled Monuments, Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings) and including Conservation Areas outside of the study areas have also been considered, up to 5km from the Site boundary. This is to ensure that potential impacts

on the setting of assets where the views and extended landscape contribute to their significance are appropriately assessed.

4.2 Data and Information Sources

4.2.1 This report has taken into consideration the historical and archaeological background of the study area. The key sources consulted are outlined below. A full list of sources consulted is included in the references section at the end of the HEDBA.

- The National Heritage List for England records covering World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings. Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas, Registered Battlefields and Protected Wrecks were obtained from Historic England. These assets have been mapped in relation to the Scheme (see Appendix A, Figures 2, 6a-6b), with further details to be found in a gazetteer of assets in Appendix B.
- LCC Historic Environment Record (HER) databases were consulted to identify known archaeological sites, monuments, and events. The HER monument records are mapped in Appendix A (Figures 3a-d, 7a-c). Their details are contained in a gazetteer in Appendix B. Records of archaeological investigations have been used to inform the baseline assessment and also mapped in figures for the Scheme (see Appendix A, Figures 4a-d, 8a-b). Details of these are included in Appendix B.
- Historic Landscape Character shapefiles and reports were obtained from the LCC website. Historic Landscape Character data has been mapped for the Scheme (see Appendix A, Figure 5).
- Historic mapping, including relevant Ordnance Survey (OS) maps were assessed from the National Library of Scotland map images resource and Lincolnshire Archives to identify past land use and settlement patterns.
- British Geological Survey (BGS) Geology of Britain Viewer (BGS 2025) was reviewed for information on the geological conditions within the Site.
- Soilscapes Viewer (Cranfield University 2025) for information on the soil conditions within the Site.
- Portable Antiquities Scheme online database for data relating to archaeological finds within the Site.
- Archaeology Data Service for information on previous cultural heritage assessments and archaeological investigations within the study area.
- East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework to provide regional context and understand the research priorities identified for the area and support interpretation of the archaeological potential.

- Available published works and academic papers were reviewed to provide further information and context to support interpretation of archaeological potential and assessment of the significance of heritage assets.
- Relevant plans, maps, journals and books belonging to the Lincolnshire Archives were consulted to supplement the documentary record.
- Site visit and walkover survey (discussed in more detail below).
- Aerial Photograph and LiDAR Assessments (see Appendix C.1 for aerial photography and LiDAR assessment of the Solar Development Areas; and Appendix C.2 for the aerial photography and LiDAR assessment of the Inter-Array Connections and Grid Connection Route).
- Geophysical survey of the Solar Development Area and Inter-Array Connections (Appendix D) to locate and map buried archaeological features.

4.3 Site Visits and Walkover Survey

4.3.1 A walkover survey and setting assessments were conducted of the Site and the surrounding study areas on the following dates:

- 8 - 9 November 2023 (weather overcast, misty, poor visibility);
- 21 - 22 February 2024 (weather overcast, cold, clear but grey);
- 30 - 31 July and 1 August 2025 (weather warm, dry, good visibility);
- 22 - 24 September 2025 (first two days weather dry, good visibility; third day drizzly and overcast).

4.3.2 The objectives of the site visits were to:

- Identify known archaeological sites within the Site.
- Identify assets not previously recorded.
- Establish the setting of heritage assets within the study areas.
- Identify areas of modern ground disturbance to inform the assessment of archaeological potential.
- Assess suitability of the Site for future investigations and mitigation.

4.3.3 Photographs from the site visit and walkover survey can be viewed in Appendix G. Plates 5-53 illustrate heritage assets discussed in the text. Plates 54-84 provide a selection of views of heritage assets, and views within and across the Solar Development Areas and the Grid Connection Route. These assets were visited as part of the walkover survey to determine if the area of the Scheme contributes to their significance.

4.3.4 The Solar Development Areas were accessed to photograph views towards nearby heritage assets and assess the potential for previously unrecorded archaeological remains. The Inter-Array Connections were viewed from public roads and from within

the Solar Development Areas. No previously unrecorded archaeological features were identified during the walkovers.

4.3.5 The most significant designated heritage assets within 5km of the Scheme, as well as potentially affected non-designated assets within 1km of the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections, and within 2km of the Grid Connection Route, were visited as part of the walkover survey. These visits were undertaken to assess potential impacts of the Scheme on the setting and significance of these assets.

4.4 Archaeological Investigations Undertaken for the Scheme

Aerial Survey Report

4.4.1 An aerial survey and LiDAR assessment of the Solar Development Areas was produced by Alison Deegan (Deegan 2024). A second report has been produced by Air Photo Services that covers the Inter-Array Connections and Grid Connection Route (AP Services 2025). These reports map and interpret archaeological and palaeoenvironmental features identified from air photos and LiDAR imagery for the Scheme. Sources consulted as part of the survey include EA LiDAR data, Google Earth imagery, the Historic England air photo archive, and the Lincolnshire HER. In the report, the aerial photography for the Solar Development Areas is described by scheme field numbers, and for the Grid Connection and Inter Array Connections, by Aerial Survey numbers prefixed GC or IA respectively. Where relevant, GC field numbers are also accompanied by the proposed transmission tower numbers (i.e. 4SV01, etc.).

4.4.2 The full reports are available in Appendix C (see Appendix C.1 for aerial photography and LiDAR assessment of the Solar Development Areas; and Appendix C.2 for the aerial photography and LiDAR assessment of the Inter-Array Connections and Grid Connection Route).

Geophysical Survey

4.4.3 A geophysical survey was carried out by AOC Archaeology in two phases between November 2024 and September 2025. The scope of this survey was developed in consultation with LCC and limitations in the results are set out in section 4.9. A magnetometry survey was carried out across survey areas, including across the two Scheduled Monuments located within the Site. The survey has identified extensive archaeological activity across the Scheme, which is considered within the baseline assessment below.

4.4.4 The survey reports for the Solar Development Areas and other areas surveyed are available in Appendix D.

Archaeological and geoarchaeological field evaluation

4.4.5 Archaeological and geoarchaeological evaluation of the Solar Development Areas was undertaken by York Archaeology. The interim evaluation report for the Solar

Development Area is available in Appendix E. Limitations in the results are set out in section 4.9. The full evaluation report will be available post-DCO submission and prior to the end of examination timetable.

4.4.6 The archaeological evaluation comprised a majority of trenches measuring 50m x 2m, with a number of broader but shorter trenches (e.g. 7m x 7m) excavated to investigate possible saltern features. The geoarchaeological evaluation comprised machine-excavated test pits measuring up to 2m x 2m. The summary report is available in Appendix E.

4.4.7 The results of all the archaeological investigations within the Solar Development Areas are summarised by field in Appendix F.

4.5 Previous Archaeological Investigations

4.5.1 There are no event records within the HER for previous archaeological investigations that lie within the Site. Archaeological evidence identified from other archaeological events within the study area has been incorporated into the archaeological and historic baseline as appropriate.

4.6 Significance and Importance of Heritage Assets

Significance

4.6.1 This HEDBA identifies key archaeological zones within the Solar Development Area based on the desk-based assessment, non-intrusive and intrusive field surveys. The identification of these zones includes a preliminary assessment of the significance and importance of these zones (Appendix F). This assessment will be fully developed and assessed in Chapter 8 of the ES, alongside the impact assessment. The assessment of significance and importance of other affected heritage assets outside of these zones, including those which may experience effects on their setting, is presented within ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage (Doc Ref. 6.1).

4.6.2 To identify a heritage asset's cultural significance, analysis is made of what is valued about the asset and the contribution made by its setting, leading to a statement of cultural significance. Cultural significance is not scaled but can be expressed in terms of four key 'heritage interests' as outlined in NPPF Annex 2, Glossary, NPS EN-1 and Historic England Advice Note 12 (HE Advice Note 12). These interests include archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic:

- Archaeological: Where a heritage asset holds or potentially holds evidence about past human activity that is considered worthy of expert investigation (NPPF, Annex 2, 2024).
- Architectural: Interests in the design of a place. This can arise from conscious design or fortuitously from how the heritage asset has evolved. Architectural interest can lie in the art or science of the design, construction, craftsmanship and decoration of the building or structure (HE Advice Note 12).

- Artistic: Where other human creative skills which contribute to the interest of the asset. This can arise directly or fortuitously from an association (e.g. depicted in a work of art or literature) (HE Advice Note 12).
- Historic: The ways in which past people, events and aspects of life can be connected through a place to the present. Heritage assets can either illustrate, or be associated with, past people and events. Heritage assets with historic interest provide a material record as well as providing meaning for communities with collective experience and can embody aspects of local and cultural identity (HE Advice Note 12).

4.6.3 The terminology used in this HEDBA reflects that used in NPPF, NPS EN-1 and HE Advice Note 12, referring to significance in terms of heritage interest and not heritage values.

Importance

4.6.4 In addition to cultural significance, each potential affected asset will be assigned a level of importance.

4.6.5 The attribution of importance (sometimes termed "value") is a measure of the degree to which cultural significance of the asset is sought to be protected. A judgement on importance is scaled and can be attributed in accordance with the criteria set out in table 1 below. As well as the criteria providing guidance, professional judgement, regional variation and individual qualities are also considered in all cases to determine the importance of each asset. Not all the component parts of the asset may have the same importance and this is discussed where appropriate in the accompanying text.

Table 1: Criteria for attributing importance

Importance	Examples
Very High	World Heritage Sites Places of international importance due to their 'outstanding universal value'.
High	Scheduled Monuments Grade I or II* Listed Buildings Grade I or II* Registered Parks and Gardens Registered Battlefields Places or structure of national importance Non-designated heritage assets of equivalent national importance or potential to contribute significantly to national research objectives
Medium	Grade II Listed Buildings Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens Conservation Areas Non-designated assets of regional or high local importance with potential to contribute significantly to regional and local research objectives. This includes assets which have particular regional associations or may have important associations at a local level (e.g.

Importance	Examples
	they have significance to local population or embody something of the special identity of a locality)
Low	Locally Listed Buildings Non-designated assets which are relatively poorly preserved or have limited importance at a local level and low potential to add to local and regional research objectives.
Negligible	Assets that have very limited or no archaeological, historical or cultural importance.
Uncertain	Sites where there is evidence that a heritage asset may exist, but where there is insufficient information to determine its nature, extent and degree of survival given current knowledge.

4.6.6 The significance and importance of the heritage assets have been determined by professional judgement guided by designations, national and local policy and other available guidance and research frameworks.

4.6.7 The assessment of significance and importance of heritage assets outside of the Solar Development Areas archaeological zones and other stages of the environmental impact assessment which will determine the potential impact to a heritage asset and the effect can be found in **ES Chapter 8: Cultural Heritage** (Doc Ref. 6.1).

4.7 Archaeological Potential

4.7.1 As part of this assessment the potential for previously unrecorded archaeological remains to survive within the Site will be considered. The available information and research will allow for professional judgment to be used to assess the potential for unrecorded archaeological remains to be present. The level of disturbance to buried archaeological remains caused by historic development or farming practices will also be considered when establishing potential.

4.7.2 The potential for an area to hold previously unrecorded archaeological remains is rated 'high'. 'medium', 'low' 'negligible', or 'unknown'. This rating combines an understanding of the known archaeological resource, the Sites geological and topographical setting and previous disturbance.

4.8 Consultation

4.8.1 To establish the methodology and approach to assessment for the Scheme, a scoping exercise was completed in Spring 2024. The results of this were formally presented within the Scoping Report submitted to the Planning Inspectorate on 30 May 2024. A Scoping Opinion was received from the Planning Inspectorate on 10 July 2024. Statutory Consultation on the Preliminary Environmental Information Report was undertaken in April 2025.

4.8.2 To date consultation has been undertaken, and is ongoing, with key stakeholders with specific focus on the historic environment, specifically LCC and Historic England. The following matters have been discussed:

- Evaluation works – including geophysical survey, aerial photograph and LiDAR survey and evaluation trenching;
- The significance of the historic landscape;
- The development of the design within the Solar Development Areas;
- The development of the design for the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections; and
- Areas of evaluation deferred to the post consent phase of the Scheme development.

4.8.3 Advice in relation to the known World War II crash sites within the Scheme has been sought from the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre at the Ministry of Defence and the Lincolnshire Aircraft Recovery Group (LARG).

4.9 Limitations and Assumptions

4.9.1 The following baseline assessment has been undertaken based on information available at the time of writing. This information has been provided by third parties, and it is assumed that this information is accurate and up to date at the time of writing.

4.9.2 During development of the transportation and access options it has been determined that traffic management measures will be required along Holbeach Drove Gate and Langary Gate Road resulting in an extension of the Order Limits along these roads compared to that used to set the 1km study area and data collection. While these areas of extension are within the 1km study area, the study area does not extend a further 1km from the most southern point of the revised Order Limits. Review of the extension of the Order Limits and the nature of the proposed works within these areas determined that the existing 1km study area provided adequate baseline data to allow an assessment of the potential effects on the historic environment within these areas to be undertaken. The extension of the baseline data and study area a further 1km would not be proportionate when considered against the potential effects.

4.9.3 There are a limited number of fields that have to date not been accessed for geophysical survey within the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections due to access restrictions. These fields are detailed in the Appendix D and are:

- A-1-09
- B-1-12 (Part)
- C-2-01 (Part)
- C-2-01 (Part)
- C-1-08 (Part)

- C-1-07 (Part)
- D-1-01 (Part)
- D4-1
- D-8
- Inter-Array Connection 7
- Inter-Array Connection 10
- Inter-Array Connection 12
- Inter-Array Connections 14 - 19
- Inter-Array Connection 22

4.9.4 The Grid Connection Route has been the subject of an Aerial Photography and LiDAR Assessment (Appendix C.2). In consultation with LCC it has been determined that three areas of geophysical survey and, if required archaeological evaluation trenching, will be undertaken within the Grid Connection Route in fields where areas of potential impact are greatest: particularly the section of underground cabling, substantial areas of topsoil stripping and an area of design constraint at the northern end of the cable route. Assess constraints have meant that it has not been possible to survey these areas prior to the submission of the DCO Application. Due to current proposed limits of deviation for flexibility in the detailed design process all other archaeological evaluation will be undertaken once the detailed design locations are determined post consent.

4.9.5 Archaeological evaluation trenching has been undertaken following a Project Design (commonly referred to as a Written Scheme of Investigation - WSI), produced following CIfA guidance, and developed in consultation with LCC and Historic England. The interim results of the evaluation have been used to inform this assessment. However, the full evaluation report, including post excavation analysis is not yet available. When the full report is available it will be used to inform further understanding of the potential effects of the Scheme on the historic environment to inform the Outline Archaeological Mitigation and Management Strategy. This information is expected to be provided to the Examining Authority by Deadline 1.

4.9.6 Three fields at the northern extent of Parcel D have been excluded from evaluation trenching at this stage due to health and safety concerns. Local knowledge and an assessment of unexploded ordnance risk identified a potential for munitions dating from World War II within fields D-1-01 - 03. In addition, a 150m buffer has been maintained around the location of buried remains of two Lancaster Bombers which are believed to be within field A-1-11. Any further evaluation in this area will be undertaken under a 1986 Protection of Military Remains Act (POMRA86) licence. Further details about these events can be found in section 5.4.10 of this report.

4.9.7 Archaeological evaluation has not been undertaken within the Inter-Array Connections at this stage. The underground cabling within the Inter-Array Connection between Land Parcel A and B will be within a corridor detailed within the design information. Evaluation

of this area will be undertaken once the details of the excavation required for the underground cable is known. This approach has been taken in consideration of the archaeological potential informed by desk-based research and non-intrusive survey techniques and is considered to be proportionate. The overhead line within the Inter-Array Connection between Land Parcels C and D will be above ground and suspended from wooden H poles. A programme of evaluation trenching would not be proportional to the impact of constructing these H poles and therefore appropriate mitigation will be included in the Outline Archaeological Management and Mitigation Strategy.

4.9.8 The assessment has been based on the design details as outlined in **ES Chapter 2: The Scheme** (Doc Ref. 6.1) and the maximum likely extents of land required for its construction, operation, maintenance and decommissioning.

5 Baseline Assessment

5.1 Scheme Conditions

Fenland Geography and Topography

5.1.1 The Site lies entirely within the fenland basin of South Lincolnshire, the largest single area of wet lowland in the United Kingdom (Coles and Hall 1994, viii). The fenland forms what is in essence an inland extension of 'The Wash', England's largest bay (Pryor 2019). The fenland basin emerged as a result of erosion from major regional rivers flowing towards the North Sea. Rising sea levels and submersion of land has resulted in complex sequences of silt and peat layers laid down over the last millennia (Coles and Hall 1994, viii). The fenland is generally separated into two areas: the silt fens to the north and the peat fens to the south (Pryor 2019, xiv). The silt fens are mostly located in Lincolnshire around the wash and were deposited by tidal waters of the North Sea, whilst the peat fens to the south lie mostly in Cambridgeshire and were formed in a freshwater environment. In Lincolnshire peat is predominantly found in Crowland, the Deeping and Bourne Fens in South Lincolnshire (Lane 1988, 315). The central fens around Peterborough and Spalding can feature successive episodes of freshwater and saltwater deposition (Pryor 2019). In South Lincolnshire the soils are formed on sediments deposited since during the Flandrian period. Jurassic rocks of the Lincolnshire uplands dip eastwards and gradually disappear under these Flandrian deposits (Hayes and Lane 1992, 5). Near the fen-edge these earlier pre-Flandrian land surfaces can be found quite close to the surface, whilst further out into the fens this earlier land-surface is usually much more deeply buried (Hayes and Lane 1992, 5). Records of a borehole beneath the site of the Pode Hole Pumping Station near Spalding shows nearly 9m of Flandrian Deposits. The deepest Flandrian deposits normally consist of basal peat, which likely began forming in the area as early as the Mesolithic, becoming widespread in the south of the area during the Neolithic to early Bronze Age and in the north during the Bronze Age to early Iron Age (Hayes and Lane 1992, 5). A thin and variable layer of marine alluvium overlies this peat, mostly comprising clay, and within the clay are predominantly

silty features known as roddons. Roddons are the remains of former creeks and form dendritic networks throughout the fenland, they are sometimes topped with clay and can cut down into the pre-Flandrian deposits. The roddons are generally higher than the surrounding clay, and this fact along with their composition means that almost all settlement and saltern sites occur on the tops or sides of roddons (Hayes and Lane 1992, 6). Roman occupation on the clays between Bourne and Billingborough is almost exclusively on the roddons (Lane 1988, 315) and this evidence is supported by the results of surveys undertaken in support of the Scheme (see details in section 5.2). Silt, peat and freshwater alluvium generally sit atop the marine clays. Peat is now rare on the surface due to being exploited for fuel during the medieval period, drainage causing large scale shrinkage of peat and wind erosion resulting in loss of surface peat (Hayes and Lane 1992, 6).

5.1.2 Clay soils with roddons were mapped at Crowland, deposited during marine flooding and derive from two distinct phases separated by several centuries (Lane 1998). The earliest phase has a mid-2nd millennium BC origin, and as the marshes became inactive peat formed on their surface during the Iron Age, rendering them uninhabitable (Lane 1998). Iron Age settlement occurred close to the peat on both the landward and seaward side, and it may be possible that Iron Age communities settled close to the fen in order to seasonally exploit the fish/fowl resource (Lane 1998).

5.1.3 Lincolnshire is predominantly a rural area. Farming has influenced the character of what is visible today across the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections. However, prior to the extensive reclamation much of the southern section of the study area was fenland and formed part of the precinct of Crowland Abbey.

5.1.4 The site lies within the parish of Crowland, famous for containing the remains of Crowland Abbey. The Abbey sat on the north-east edge of a long, narrow promontory, surrounded by fen deposits, in which the Site now sits. The Abbey sits on the terminal of a peninsula that is marginally higher and wider, giving rise to the notion of Crowland as an island (Hayes and Lane 1992, 192). The site lies within a 'Great Postland' a large tract of marine silty clay sediment which contains an intricate network of extinct creeks (Hayes and Lane 1992, 192). The soil here is humus and the extensive peat that blanketed the area in the Iron Age to Middle Ages has completely eroded (Hayes and Lane 1992, 192).

5.1.5 The drainage of the Fens in the 17th century onwards resulted in rich soils providing opportunity for large-scale cultivation of arable and horticultural crops (Natural England 2015). The drainage channels cut during this period continue to contribute to the distinctiveness of the landscape. Fenland farming has been the focus of the landscape since the early post-medieval period and remains nationally important for agricultural production. The aerial survey noted that most features across the landscape have been levelled or truncated by modern mechanised ploughing. The cropmark record appears less extensive in the northern part of the Grid Connection Route potentially due to environmental factors.

5.1.6 The Site lies within the historic landscape character areas of The Fens, specifically the Eastern Fens, for the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections and the southern two thirds of the Grid Connection Route and The Wash, specifically the Townlands and the Reclaimed Wash Farmlands, for the northern third of the Grid Connection Route (see Appendix A, Figure 5) (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 92).

5.1.7 The Eastern Fens landscape contains some nucleated and linear settlements, with all other settlements being either isolated farmsteads or ragged linear settlements located along the main roads. An attribute of the Eastern Fens is that 'it is quite possible to see several farmsteads or other houses in every direction from any position within the character zone' (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 92). Much of the post-medieval planned enclosure landscape survives within the Eastern Fens, partly due to the necessity of retaining field boundary drains. Throughout the Eastern Fens there is a strong feeling of openness as there are few hedgerows demarcating fields.

5.1.8 The Townlands Character Zone is agricultural, features nucleated settlements and smaller, primarily residential settlements with smaller industrial areas on the outskirts of towns (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 105). Field morphology consists of a combination of early medieval irregular enclosures subdivided by straight field boundaries along the seaward edge of the zone (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 105). A dominant feature within the Character Zone is the 'Roman Bank', a sea defence constructed around 1300 AD that defines the seaward edges of many of the field boundaries. The Townlands is considered to be the oldest Character Zone within the reclaimed marsh and fen landscape, however in the modern period the subdivisions that characterised the medieval and post-medieval field morphologies were removed to create large field sizes for increased productivity and mechanised farming (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 107).

5.1.9 The Reclaimed Wash Farmlands Character Zone is predominantly agricultural with large-scale farmsteads considered to be industrial sized (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 100). The zone was reclaimed from semi-natural and natural saltmarsh between 1660 and 1811, resulting in a modern landscape that emerged out of smaller enclosures that were incorporated into larger fields from the 1950s onwards (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 100-102). The zone consists of semi-regular field enclosures and rectilinear field divisions, narrow and shallow wet dykes, and embanked natural watercourses used to form long linear boundaries. The western edge is formed by the canalised river channel of the River Welland while the eastern edge is characterised by the large drainage channel of the North Level Main Drain and the canalised River Nene. Settlement is dispersed within the zone except where it becomes grouped along linear road infrastructure, for example along the course of the 'Roman Bank', a sea defence constructed around 1300 AD. The zone represents successive reclamations of coastal marsh from the 13th century onwards and the 18th and 19th century freshwater drainage channels show episodic landscape evolutions that has led to satellite villages, industrialised farming, and drained fen landscapes further inland (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 102).

5.1.10 Traditional hedgerows are not widespread within the fens (Natural England 2015) and tend to appear on 'clay islands' and in areas of later drainage. Surveys undertaken to understand the ecology and biodiversity of the Scheme identified a limited number of important native species hedgerows within the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections (Further details can be found in **ES Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity** (Doc Ref 6.1)). These hedgerows have been reviewed for historic importance as detailed in the Hedgerow Regulations 1997. This review identified that there are six hedgerows that are located next to an archaeological feature recorded on the HER: MLI20442, MLI20444, MLI22262, MLI22036, MLI22213 and MLI20424. However, all of these assets are cropmarks of unknown or Romano-British date and the hedgerows do not correspond with their boundaries or contribute to their historic significance. The recorded hedgerows do not meet any of the other criteria in the Hedgerow Regulations and are therefore not considered to be historically important.

5.1.11 As with the Solar Development Areas, important hedgerows are limited across the Grid Connection Route. The hedgerows within the Grid Connection Route identified in the ecology and biodiversity assessment (**ES Chapter 9: Ecology and Biodiversity (Doc Ref 6.1**)) have been reviewed. One was found to be located next to an archaeological feature (MLI89822). This has been considered against the criteria for historic importance and found not to be historically important.

Findings from the walkover survey and setting assessment

5.1.12 A walkover survey and setting assessments of the Scheme (as detailed in section 4.3) and the surrounding study area were conducted to identify known heritage assets within the Scheme and areas of likely archaeological potential. The visit was also used to establish the nature of the landscape and the potential relationship between these assets. The visit determined that the Scheme is dominated by large, flat, low-lying fields which is characteristic of the fens. The network of large drainage ditches and dykes along field boundaries and roads are also a distinct feature of the area. Vegetation is very sparse with minimal interruptions which contributes to the long, open views of The Fens.

5.1.13 The villages of Shepeau Stow, Whaplode Drove, Holbeach Drove and Gedney Hill are in the south-east of the study area, containing several historic elements such as mills and churches. Cowbit, Moulton Chapel and Weston Hills are located in the north-west of the study area. These settlements contain similar historic elements such as mills, churches and farmhouses. Spalding and Moulton are located in the north of the study area, both containing Conservation Areas and numerous Listed Buildings. The setting of these assets are largely defined by the settlement. The landscape is also interspersed with farmhouses and supporting buildings, some of which are historic and hold architectural interest. The setting of these is largely defined by the agricultural land in which they are located.

Geoarchaeology and Stratigraphic Sequence

5.1.14 The archaeological evaluation trenching and geoarchaeological test pits have provided initial results enabling understanding of the stratigraphy of the Solar Development Areas (see Appendix E). Throughout the entirety of the Solar Development Areas, the overall stratigraphy is relatively uniform and typical of the deposits recorded within fenland contexts.

5.1.15 The lowest superficial geological deposit recorded is pale yellow/grey coarse sand with very frequent flint recorded in two test pits in Parcel B at a maximum depth of 4.08m BGL. This gravel was found to overly weathered bedrock. Outside these two test pits, the lowermost deposits within most test pits is blue silty clay which is considered to be related to tidal deposition during marine inundation. The lower tidal clay is overlain by peat between 2.00 and 3.00m BGL within Parcel A and in smaller numbers of test pits in Parcel B which became less the further west the test pits were located in the Solar Development Areas. This is described as being a very dark brown/black herbaceous peat with abundant woody inclusions including twigs and branches. This peat is likely to be related to the 'lower peat' as defined by the general fenland sequence; however, this will be confirmed through radiocarbon dating undertaken as part of the post excavation analysis of archaeological field evaluation trenching. Overlying the peat are further deposits of tidal clay which extend up to either the modern topsoil or roddon deposits. Historic boreholes also reflected these findings (BGS 2025).

5.1.16 Across Parcel A the highest deposits of the stratigraphic sequence had limited variation across the area and sediments were recorded forming the roddons, marine alluviums, subsoils and topsoils. The topsoil was recorded as between 0.08m and 0.63m in depth. Silty blueish subsoils measuring between 0.12m and 0.4m in depth, indicating water inundation, was found overlying the roddons and the features present. It is likely that these periods of inundation followed the formation of the roddon and any later archaeological activity. Further geoarchaeological study will be undertaken to understand and refine the results.

5.1.17 Within Parcels B and C, the stratigraphy is largely compiled of marine alluvium, tidal clay and roddons with overlying layers across the Parcels. Evidence of the wetland landscape or water inundation is widespread and roddons were found to be overlying marine alluvium with further evidence of deposition of the same following the formation of the roddons. In one trench (Trench 2038 in field B1-03) marine alluvium was found to overly the roddon. The roddons are composed of silty clays occasionally mottled with whiteish sand.

5.1.18 Variation in the recorded deposits from redder oxidised alluvial layers, bluer non-oxidised alluvial layers and browner alluvial layers indicated a complex and changing environment. Across Parcels B and C topsoil was found to be between 0.23m and 0.57m in depth. Subsoils of marine alluvium clay measuring between 0.12m and 1.4m in depth were also recorded between the roddons. Historic borehole records also show that silty clay is encountered down to a depth of approximately 6 metres, with a layer of peat preserved below this (BGS 2024).

5.1.19 In Parcel D, a similar pattern of roddons and marine alluvium has been recorded. The topsoil across Land Parcel D is consistently 0.3 – 0.5 m thick, composed mainly of grey-brown silty or clayey silt, directly overlying roddon or marine alluvium deposits. Historic boreholes within Parcel D borehole records show that silty clay or clayey silt was encountered down to a depth of 6.55m, sometimes with peat or other organic material encountered amongst this material.

5.2 Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections Archaeological and Historic Baseline

5.2.1 The heritage assets discussed within this assessment, including designated and non-designated heritage assets, are identified by their unique identification number assigned by the NHLE for designated assets and by the HER for non-designated heritage assets.

5.2.2 Assets identified within the Site are discussed in the Archaeological and Historical Background and are identified within the text using their unique identifier. They can be cross-referenced to the gazetteer in Appendix B and viewed in Appendix A (Figures 2, 3a-d, and 4a-d). The rows with green text in the gazetteer in Appendix B are those asset records located within the Order Limits for the Solar Development Area, Inter-Array Connections and Grid Connection Route.

Designated Assets

5.2.3 There are no World Heritage Sites, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Protected Wreck Sites in the 1km study area.

5.2.4 Within 5km of the Site boundary there are two Conservation Areas - Crowland Conservation Area, approximately 1.8km to the south of field A-1-04; and Parson Drove Conservation Area, approximately 4.5km to the south-east of the Site boundary and 4.8km south-west of field D-5-02.

Scheduled Monuments

5.2.5 There are six Scheduled Monuments within the 1km study area, two of which are within the Site and one of which is adjacent to the Site, as summarised below:

- "Settlement W (west) of Cate's Cove Corner" (1004979) is located within fields C-1-01, C-1-03 and C-1-08 (Plates 9 and 10).
- "Settlement NE of Whitebread Farm" (1004978) is located within fields C-2-01 and C-2-03 (Plate 11).
- "Medieval boundary earthworks at Queen's Bank, 100m south-east of Providence House" (1009980) is located adjacent to the Site, on the north side of the 'Settlement W of Cate's Cove Corner' (1004979) (Plate 12).
- 'Settlement in Moulton West Fen' (1002944) is located approximately 500m north of C-2 (Plate 13).

- 'Romano-British settlement S (south) of Shell Bridge' (1004982) is located approximately 300m west of D-3-01 (Plates 14 and 15). Trial trenching (ELI231) was undertaken to assess the damage to the Scheduled Monument as a result of ploughing. Archaeological monitoring undertaken adjacent to the monument also identified Roman briquetage and burnt stone (MLI97511, ELI9788). Both these events support the dating of the Scheduled Monument to the Romano-British period.
- "Saint Guthlac's Cross" (1005052) is situated at the crossroads of Queens Bank, Washbank, Spalding Road and Peak Hill, approximately 650 north-east of the nearest Parcel (A-1-12), 550m west of the Grid Connection Route, and 1km north of Crowland Airport (Plates 16 and 17). It is a boundary cross dating to c.1200 marking the boundary of land formerly owned by Crowland Abbey. The cross is additionally protected as a Grade II Listed Building (1359254).

5.2.6 Out to 5km from the Site there are eight Scheduled Monuments that are closer to the Solar Development Areas than to the Grid Connection Route. They are as follows:

- 'Fleet settlement site near Lambert Drain' (1004950) located approximately 1.2km south-west of the Site.
- Kenulph's Stone (1005040) is located approximately 4.4km south-west of the Site.
- Trinity Bridge (1005051) is located in Crowland approximately 2.6km south-west of the Site. It is additionally protected as a Grade I Listed Building (1064508) (Plate 7).
- 'Roman drove, enclosures and building platform at Chestnut Farm' (1009990) is located approximately 3.5km south-west of the Site. It ranges from 6m to 10m in width and includes upstanding earthworks which form part of a droveway of Roman date and associated rectangular ditched enclosures, sited on the raised surface of an earlier, silted tidal creek.
- The 'Boundary cross, Old Fen Dike' (1010672) is located near its original position on a former boundary of the parish of Sutton St James approximately 1.7km east of the Site. It is positioned on the eastern edge of the Old Fen Dike to the south-west of the village of Sutton St James. The cross is additionally protected as a Grade II Listed Building (1359248).
- The 'Boundary cross, Manor Hill Corner' (1010688) is situated at the former south-eastern corner of the parish of Sutton St James at Manor Hill Corner and is believed to stand in or near its original position, approximately 4.3km east of the Site.
- St Ives Cross (1010689) is located at the road junction on the western edge of the village of Sutton St James and is believed to stand in or near its original position, approximately 2.6km north-east of the Site. The local name 'Butter Cross' may indicate it was the site of a market.

- The 'Ruins and site of Crowland Abbey' (1012410) is located in Crowland approximately 2.2km south of the Site (Plate 5). It is additionally protected as a Grade I Listed Building (1064550). The monastery was first founded in the early eighth century on the site of the hermitage of the Anglo-Saxon saint, Guthlac. Its baseline is discussed in section 5.2.8.

Listed Buildings

5.2.7 There are eight Listed Buildings within the 1km study area, including St Guthlac's Cross mentioned above. They consist of one Grade II* Listed Building and seven Grade II Listed Buildings. None are located within the Site.

5.2.8 The closest Listed Building to the Site is the Grade II Listed Building 'Gedney Hill Mill' (1146795) located approximately 30m east of the Site boundary (highways works) but over 1km south-west of D-5-02 (Plate 18). It is a 19th century tower mill with a 20th century extension and has been converted to a residential property. All of the tower mill machinery has been removed.

5.2.9 To the east of the Grade II Listed Building 'Gedney Hill Mill' (1146795) are three Listed Buildings as follows within the village of Gedney Hill:

- The Grade II* Listed Building 'Church of Holy Trinity' (1146771) is the rebuilt 14th century parish church of Gedney Hill, located approximately 650m south-east of the Site boundary for the highway works, and over 1km south of the nearest PV Land Parcel D (D-5-02).
- The Grade II Listed Building 'Cross, Approximately 4 Metres to South of Church' (1064525) is the restored 15th century cross located adjacent to the Grade II* Listed Building Church of Holy Trinity (1146771). It is located approximately 655m south-east of the Site boundary for highway works and over 1km south of the nearest PV Land Parcel D (D-5-02). It is not known if the cross is within its original position.
- The Grade II Listed Building 'The Red Lion Public House' (1359240) off Hillgate is a late 17th century public house with later 19th and 20th features, located approximately 645m south-east of the Site boundary for highway works, over 1km south of the nearest Land Parcel D (D-5-02).

5.2.10 The remaining Listed Buildings within the 1km study area are as follows:

- The Grade II Listed Building 'Church of St John the Baptist' (1147611) is located approximately 170m south of the Site boundary, approximately 200m south of the Inter-Array Connection, and is positioned over 1km from the nearest Land Parcels (C-1 and D-6) (Plates 19 and 20). It is a 19th century church of red brick and ashlar designed by Jeptha Pacey and Swansborough.
- The Grade II Listed Building 'Windmill' (1147706) is located approximately 100m south-west of the Site boundary for highway works and 500m south-east of the nearest Land Parcel C (C-1). The windmill is a tower mill of late 18th century date constructed of red brick (Plates 21 and 22).

- The Grade II Listed Building 'Yarwood House' (1204813) is located approximately 975m to the east of D-4. It is a late 17th or early 18th century cottage constructed of red brick with corrugated iron roofs.

5.2.11 Up to 5km from the Site boundary, there are a further 51 Listed Buildings, including two Grade I Listed Buildings (previously discussed as the two Scheduled Monuments Crowland Abbey and Trinity Bridge) and two Grade II* Listed Buildings. Details of the 49 Grade II Listed Buildings can be found in the gazetteer in Appendix B. The Grade II* Listed Buildings are as follows.

- The Grade II* Listed Building 'Tower to Church of St James' (1204853) is located in a churchyard adjacent to the Grade II Listed Building Chancel to Church St James (1064541). The tower and chancel building are both positioned over 3.5km to the north-east of D-1-03. Both the tower and chancel are restored 15th century buildings of ashlar, red brick and rubble. The tower was once connected to the chancel via the nave, but the nave was destroyed during the English Commonwealth period (c. 1649-1660).
- The Grade II* Listed Building 'The Manor House' (1359273) is located in Crowland over 2.2km to the south of field A-1-04. It is a late 17th century manor house, possibly updated c.1775 by Williams Sands the Younger of Spalding. It is located on East Street in a densely urbanised area of Crowland.

Conservation Areas

5.2.12 Within 5km of the Site boundary there are two Conservation Areas - Crowland Conservation Area, approximately 1.8km to the south of field A-1-04; and Parson Drove Conservation Area, approximately 4.8km south-west of field D-5-02.

Crowland Conservation Area

5.2.13 Crowland is first recorded around c. 745 AD by Felix, biographer of St Guthlac, and the town was established before the Norman Conquest. Its abbey was founded by Æthelbald King of Mercia in 716 AD after Guthlac's death in 714 AD. The abbey was a wealthy and substantial landowner within the study area by the time of the Domesday Survey and was the only known monastery at that time in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire (APS 1998, 3 and 12). Its ruined remains are now the Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building Crowland Abbey (1012410, 1064550). The Crowland Conservation Area straddles North Street, South Street, West Street and encompasses East Street, Abbey Walk and the area surrounding the abbey. The abbey is a key focal point of the town set back from the town core (APS 1998, 11). However, the main focal point of the town is the Scheduled Monument and Grade I Listed Building Holy Trinity Bridge (1005051, 1064508) located at the junction West Street, North Street and South Street (APS 1998, 11).

Parson Drove Conservation Area

5.2.14 Parson Drove Conservation Area is a small area along the west end of The Bank/ B1187 and the Main Road/ B1166. At the time of writing there was no Conservation Area appraisal available. The Conservation Area's Listed Buildings include two 19th century houses, The Nurseries (1310220) and The Hollies (1125925), a K6 telephone kiosk (1224887), a First and Second World War Memorial (1125918), and the 'Former Lockup, About 50 Yards South West of Swan Inn' (1310221). The character of the Conservation Area is a linear settlement set within a wider agricultural landscape.

Period discussion

Palaeolithic (c.800,000 - 10,000 BC)

5.2.15 The Palaeolithic spans the years 800,000-10,000 BC, from initial settlement in Britain to the end of the last ice age. It was characterized by a cycle of dramatic changes in climate including periods of warming and cooling that corresponded to the glacial-interglacial cycles (Wenban-Smith et al. 2007, 3). Although Britain saw occupation throughout this period, it is likely that more continuous, although seasonal, occupation took place when further warming occurred during the Upper Palaeolithic (40,000-10,000BC). The presence of widespread glacial till across Lincolnshire indicates that Anglian glaciation covered most, if not all, of the county (Membery 2000a, 1). During the Wolstonian it is also possible that icesheets were widespread across the region and most of the eastern area of Lincolnshire was glaciated during the Devensian (Membery 2000a, 1). The majority of the known record of the Palaeolithic of the east Midlands has come from organic-rich sedimentary sequences preserved within palaeochannels and backswamp areas of floodplains (Howard 2022). Generally, across Lincolnshire there is a lack of records of Palaeolithic date, and there are no records of Palaeolithic date within the study area.

5.2.16 The aerial survey and geophysical survey of the Solar Development Area and Inter-Array Connections indicated that there are roddons and palaeochannels throughout all Parcels of sections A, B, D, and in 11 out of 13 Parcels of section C (see Figures 5, 6, 7.1, 7.2, 8.1, 8.2, 11-14 of the aerial survey report in Appendix C and the figures of the geophysical survey reports in Appendix D). Sedimentary sequences with organic materials preserved within palaeochannels and roddons that formed in the Palaeolithic period may have preserved evidence from the Palaeolithic to Mesolithic periods (Myers 2012).

Mesolithic (10,000 BC - c.4000 BC)

5.2.17 As climate improved at the end of the last glacial period, the Mesolithic period sees the start of continuous occupation of the British Isles (Conneller and Warren 2006). Like the preceding Palaeolithic period, the Mesolithic is characterised by seasonal transhumance processes, and sites are principally recognised from concentrations of lithics, as the temporary settlements used by these mobile communities left little trace

in the landscape. During the Mesolithic period Lincolnshire would have been located far inland as Britain was connected to the mainland via Doggerland which sat in what is now the North Sea (Swinnerton and Kent 1981, 101). There are few records of Mesolithic sites in Lincolnshire, and most represent lithic scatters. Excavations that have revealed in situ evidence of Mesolithic activity are exclusively found on the upland limestone and chalk ridges, which appears to have been the focus of activity during this period (Membery 2000b, 1). However, work along the fen edge has shown that activity did occur on lowland areas, although inundation of marine deposits from the wash has buried Mesolithic landscapes up to 10m deep (Membery 2000b, 1). There are no records of Mesolithic date within the study area.

Neolithic (c.4000 BC - 2500 BC)

5.2.18 The Neolithic period is marked by a transition from the Mesolithic that includes a gradual adoption of agricultural activities including the domestication of certain plants and animals, the creation and use of ceramics, the adoption of permanent location-based settlement activities (as opposed to seasonal or transitional settlement patterns), the introduction of monument building (cursus monuments, long-barrows, cairns, causewayed enclosures) in certain parts of the landscape, and new forms of lithic technology (narrow blades, leaf-shaped arrowheads, end scrapers, and polished stone axes) that coincided with the abandonment of the previous microlithic technology. The Neolithic is also associated with wide scale deforestation. In South Lincolnshire in the low lying areas it is possible that this deforestation took place more gradually, with some areas continuing to maintain tree coverage until the Bronze Age peat formation (Membery 2000, 1). Settlements are typically found located on upland areas as well as on the fen edge. Ritual and mortuary monuments, such as long barrows, are primarily encountered on the Wolds (Membery 2000c, 1), although examples have been found on lowland areas such as at Haddenham (Pryor 2019, 45). Finds are common across the county, with ceramic assemblages containing Grimston bowl pottery recovered from numerous sites alongside flint and stone axes (Membery 2000c, 1).The Fenland Project found that in Crowland, monument building activity during the late Neolithic and into the Bronze Age would have been restricted to the gravel peninsula on which Crowland town sits, which would have been a dry, well-defined feature elevated above the surrounding boggy, inhospitable landscape (Hayes and Lane 1992, 197).

5.2.19 The aerial survey (see Appendix C.1) identified that the Neolithic and subsequent Bronze Age were absent from the identified landscape, with the land surface for these periods being buried by later deposits. There are no records of Neolithic date within the study area, although peat identified in test pits in Area A during the current investigations was considered to be of possible late Neolithic date, and the creek systems that later became roddons probably developed during this period (Appendix E).

Bronze Age (2500 BC - 800 BC)

5.2.20 The Bronze Age (from around 2,500 BC) is marked by the continuation of agricultural activities first introduced in the Neolithic period, but with new behaviours that define the era. This includes the emergence and use of bronze and ceramics, new monument forms such as round barrows (now represented mostly by ring ditches), and new types of settlement forms, including roundhouses in different sizes and groupings. In the same way as the Neolithic, Bronze Age funerary monuments such as round barrows are primarily found on upland areas or along the fen edge. The geophysical survey of the Solar Development Areas indicated a likelihood of ring-ditches across Land Parcels A, B and C. In Land Parcel B, it was noted that the ring-ditches were annular in shape, but some were located in a wider context of external enclosures and internal features, which may indicate settlement functionality. However, others were positioned in isolation with visible 'breaks' in the annular ring shape. A funerary landscape, perhaps related to a wider settlement context, was therefore not excluded from the interpretation. Over 800 ring-ditches of the later Neolithic to earlier Bronze Age are known in the east Midlands, represented by surviving mounds or cropmarks (Clay 2012). Many of Lincolnshire's round barrows have been ploughed out or otherwise destroyed but many are still visible in the landscape and from aerial photographs (Membery 2000c). Flat cremation cemeteries are also known in this period, often found on the river terraces or on the fen edges as with the barrows (Membery 2000c, 3).The earlier Bronze Age settlement patterns generally feature unenclosed settlements with metalwork traditions that indicate trade patterns within the region and beyond, including Continental Europe. Bronze Age settlements are found along the fen edges or at the southern foot of the Wolds. Excavation of a Bronze Age settlement in Billingborough found four phases of occupation during the early to mid Bronze Age and abandoned during the Late Iron Age to Roman period (Membery 2000c, 4). The greatest evidence for human activity in the later Bronze Age is metalwork, often found in areas devoid of settlement activity. This may represent votive deposition of metalwork in watery places (Membery 2000c, 5). While there are no previous records of Bronze Age activity within the study area, the archaeological trenching in Field C-2-02 recovered some potentially Bronze Age pottery, and Field B-1-03 produced 'worked stone' of prehistoric date (Appendix E).

Iron Age and Roman (800 BC - AD 420)

5.2.21 In the Iron Age and the early Roman period, the building of ceremonial barrows and stone circles ceased, while people turned to constructing enclosed settlements, particularly hillforts. Lincolnshire does not feature the massive hill forts of some of its neighbouring counties, and evidence of Iron Age activity is largely identified along the fen edges resulting from inundations by the sea in the Later Bronze Age making large areas unsuitable for settlement.

5.2.22 Most of the evidence for Iron Age activity in Lincolnshire comes from salt production sites (Membery 2000d, 4). One concentration of sites runs down the edge of, and well into, the southern fens, the biggest concentration being in the parish of Cowbit, where

sites identified during the Fenland Survey yielded both briquetage and domestic pottery. A total of 13 salterns of Iron Age date were identified at Cowbit during the Fenland Survey, two of which (COW 25 and 26) were subject to excavation (Lane 2001, 13). The saltern at Cow 25 consisted of a hearth/oven situated within a circular ditch that either defined the working area or might have been for drainage (Lane 2001, 23). Key components of salt production sites include:

- Feeder channels which deliver the supply of brine at a controllable rate
- Storage tanks/pits to enable preliminary concentration of the brine
- Artificial heating units (hearths/ovens) (Lane 2001, 90).

5.2.23 Other evidence of salt production in Lincolnshire comes from sites at Helpringham, where groups of salterns containing hearths were discovered (Bell et al 1999). At Shell Bridge, Holbeach St Johns, excavations of a Romano-British salt production site discovered briquetage and pottery (Bell et al 1999, 21). Despite evidence of salt production known from multiple sites in Lincolnshire, there is still uncertainty as to the actual process of how the salt was made and there is a lack of evidence regarding how the salt was stored, where it was taken, and how it was used (Bell et al 1999). The historic understanding of Roman settlement in the fens of Lincolnshire has been that it took place on unsettled land under the direction of the Imperial Government but recent work has shown a continuation of usage of Iron Age sites (Bennet 1998-2000, 1). Roman villas are one of the most excavated sites in Lincolnshire, with dating evidence suggesting they existed from the 2nd century onwards. The villas are almost exclusively located on the upland areas or on the fen edges. Within the fens settlement sites are known, typically enclosed settlements featuring round houses and frequently linked by trackways and field systems (Mattingly 2006, 392-393). Drainage of the fenlands is known to have begun taking place during the Romano British period and the fens have been permanently or intermittently settled from this time (Hayes and Lane 1992, 1).The archaeological surveys and evaluation have confirmed substantial evidence for both Iron Age and Roman-period activity within the Solar Development and Inter Array Areas, demonstrating a long sequence of occupation and land use within the fenland landscape. The results indicate a pattern of continuity from the late prehistoric period into the Roman era, with settlement and agricultural practices adapting to the dynamic environmental conditions of the Lincolnshire Fens. Across the site, particularly within Land Parcels B, C and D, the focus of occupation lay on the roddons.

5.2.24 The aerial survey (Appendix C.1) identified numerous features dated to the Iron Age or Roman period including settlements, salt production sites, boundaries, trackways, drove roads and field systems, many of which are recorded as monuments in the HER (e.g. MLI23196, MLI23166, MLI22032, MLI23180, MLI22036, MLI23189, MLI23191, MLI23196, MLI22043, MLI23199, MLI23202, MLI20246, MLI22045, MLI23177, MLI23185, MLI22045, MLI22262, MLI20444, MLI22296, MLI22263, MLI20443, MLI22251, MLI20446, MLI22250) or have been protected through scheduling (e.g. 1004978). This work has been further supported by geophysical survey of the site, which

has identified anomalies correlating to those features identified during the aerial survey, as well as additional anomalies of probable archaeological origin.

5.2.25 The archaeological evaluation has confirmed that the earliest recorded activity dates to the Iron Age and that the ring gullies detected by the geophysical survey are of this period. Other features of Iron Age date such as pits, and ditches, interpreted as roundhouse foundations and associated domestic or agricultural features were also recorded. These features are typically positioned on the higher ground of the roddons and reflect small-scale, possibly seasonal or semi-permanent settlements. The pattern of discrete clusters of occupation and field boundaries suggests the presence of multiple small farmsteads exploiting the surrounding fen resources. Water management appears to have been a key aspect of land use even at this early stage, with numerous linear features aligned to roddon contours, likely serving as drainage or access routes. Artefactual material, including later prehistoric pottery, supports this interpretation of Iron Age habitation.

5.2.26 During the Roman period, settlement activity intensified and expanded across the same landscape. Many of the Iron Age features were reused, adapted, or replaced by new ditches, enclosures, and trackways. Artefacts such as Roman pottery, ceramic building material, animal bone, and metalwork confirm sustained occupation and land management through this period. The presence of multiple ditch recuts and occupational layers suggests that the landscape was intensively managed and maintained over time.

5.2.27 The archaeological evidence suggests a rural landscape comprising domestic occupation, and agricultural use, with limited evidence for the salt production initially anticipated from earlier survey interpretations. Further details of the archaeological evaluation results by field can be found in Appendices E and F.

Land Parcel A

5.2.28 Within Land Parcel A, evidence of Iron Age or Romano-British activity is less well represented. A number of small circular features, that may have been salterns, ring ditches or round houses, have been identified in fields A-1-07, A-1-08, A-1-10 and A-1-11 from the geophysical survey. The archaeological evaluation identified ring gullies representing possible roundhouses within these fields which corresponds with the geophysical survey results; none of the excavated ring gullies were considered to be salterns. In addition, linear features believed to represent water management and drainage features were also noted. The date of these are currently unknown but could represent features from the Romano-British period or may represent later phases of farming. Little dating evidence was found within Land Parcel A. However, the form of the features indicates they are likely to be Romano-British.

Land Parcels B and C

5.2.29 In Land Parcel C a swathe of Iron Age or Roman settlement or salt production features flank a trackway that runs through the centre of a broad roddon that runs south-west to

north-east through the Site. The densest concentration of Roman remains was identified in the northern section of Land Parcel C, adjacent to the Scheduled Romano-British settlement west of Cate's Cove Corner (NHLE 1004979). The aerial and geophysical surveys of the Solar Development Areas indicated the presence of two possible Iron Age to Roman trackways. This trackway runs through fields C-2-02, B-1-13 and B-1-09, with associated features extending into B-1-10 and B-1-14 and has been identified in a number of the evaluation trenches.

5.2.30 The geophysical survey confirmed the findings of the aerial survey (see Appendix C.1 and C.2), identifying sub-rectangular enclosures, circular features and linear features. These were interpreted as being consistent with components of salt production sites, including feeder channels, storage tanks and salterns, as identified through previous work in Lincolnshire, including at sites such as Cowbit (Lane 2001, 90). The results of the archaeological trenching have confirmed the presence of some salt production but also indicates greater evidence of settlement. Further assessment of the evaluation of the trenching results is ongoing and will be included in the final report.

5.2.31 The western limit of these features in Land Parcel B coincide with a substantial linear feature that runs north to south through B-1-09, B-1-10 and B-1-11. This feature was found to follow the edge of the roddon by the evaluation trenching and may have been a boundary between the fen and settled areas or a route along the fen edge.

5.2.32 The geophysical survey has identified features interpreted as salt production features to the west of this possible boundary, primarily circular features lying atop of the less roddons that meander through fields B-1-09, B-1-07, B-1-08, B-1-06, B-1-05, B-1-01, B-1-02 and B-1-03. The evidence for activity seems to lessen westward across the site, but features were present in B-1-01. The geophysics in the roddon in the southern part of B-1-08 identified a sub-rectangular enclosure, an internal curvilinear feature and associated discrete feature, as well as circular and sub-circular external features representing ring ditches/ring gullies. These features were targeted during the evaluation trenching, which confirmed the presence of the enclosure, internal curvilinear feature and one of the external ring ditches/gullies. None of the ring-gully features in Area B were considered likely to have been salterns.

5.2.33 There are multi-foci settlement, trackways and other features on the western flank of the wide silt ridge in C-1-06, C-1-07 and C-1-08. A possible medieval drove road cuts through these features on a north-east to south-west orientation. In C-1-01, C-1-03 and C-1-08 features correlating with Scheduled Monument 1004979 were identified by the aerial survey and geophysical survey (see Appendix C). These features appear to extend beyond the boundaries of the Scheduled Monument, extending into C-1-01, C-1-03, C-1-08 C-2-03 and C-2-01. These features appear to extend outside of the boundaries of the Scheduled Monument into C-2-03 and C-2-01. A double ditched linear feature, likely a trackway, appears to lead out from the Scheduled Monument to a T-junction, before turning south-west towards the features described above within C-2-02, B-1-13, B-1-09, B-1-10 and B-1-14. In Fields C-1-10 and C-1-03, features related to salt production were identified in two trenches. While neither had the settlement tanks that would have

confirmed their purpose, the density of briquetage and burnt material in a range of features indicated a saltern in the immediate proximity.

Land Parcel D

5.2.34 In Land Parcel D there is a concentration of features likely to represent Iron Age or Roman settlement or salt production remains. In D-1-01 and D-1-02 there is an arrangement of sub-rectangular enclosures and linear boundary features which may represent an Iron Age or Roman settlement. In D-2-01 similar features are seen coinciding with the course of a lesser roddon that crosses east to west through this field. Features of potential Iron Age or Roman date, including field boundaries, settlement salt production remains and boundary banks are also seen in Fields D-3-01, D-2-01, D-2-02, D-2-04, D-3-02, D-3-03, D-3-04, D-3-05, D-3-06 and D-4. An evaluation trench in Field D-5-01 identified the most convincing evidence for salt making. Several settlement tanks and ditches were excavated and produced a large quantity of briquetage and burnt material. The density of briquetage recovered from trenches in Fields D-1-03, D-3-02 and D-6 suggests that further salterns lay close by.

5.2.35 In D-6 the aerial survey identified field boundaries and a potential trackway of Iron Age or Roman date. The geophysical survey identified additional features including sub-rectangular enclosures as well as circular features, indicating a potential settlement or salt production site (see Appendix C). Enclosures, trackways and boundaries were also identified within D-5-01 via geophysical survey were found to have been recut on multiple occasions. This recut was found to be more prevalent on the edge close to the marine alluvium suggesting that one site may have been more frequently flooded and therefore required greater maintenance. Further archaeological evaluation in Land Parcel D has been deferred to the preconstruction phase due to the risk of unexploded ordnance form the Second World War.

Inter-Array

5.2.36 The geophysical survey within accessible areas of the Inter-Array identified features consistent with those found within the Solar Development Area. Features, including a potential ring ditch approximately 9.5m in diameter identified in Area 20, are suggested to coincide with one of the roddons and reflect later prehistoric or Romano-British settlement activity. However, these features were found to be less defined than in other areas of the Scheme.

Early medieval (420 AD - 1066 AD)

5.2.37 By 420AD Britain had been all but abandoned by Rome, following years of economic decline as a result of Germanic attacks elsewhere in the empire, leading to the abandonment of villas and towns. Lincoln may have been one of the few urban centres to have continued on as a British community through this period, partially evidenced by a lack of Saxon cemeteries in the vicinity of the city and the continued survival of the Roman name Lindum Colonia in its modern form as Lincoln (Albone 2021, 2). Around

this time Germanic peoples were making their way into eastern Britain, mostly from north Germany, Frisia and southern Scandinavia.

5.2.38 In Lincolnshire the main source of information for the settlement of Lincolnshire by Germanic peoples comes from large cremation cemeteries, which appear to suggest that no substantial settlement occurred in Lincolnshire before the middle of the fifth century (Albone 2021, 2). Evidence from this time period seems to suggest that the incoming migrants settled alongside the native British, rather than warring with them, and that the two communities eventually inter-mixed and the local peoples may have adopted some of the customs of the newcomers (Fleming 2010, 59).

5.2.39 During the late fifth century and sixth century Lincolnshire was likely occupied by a number of small tribal units, and in the north of the county these eventually joined together to form the Kingdom of Lindsey in the 7th century (Albone 2021, 2). The first documented Viking attack on Lincolnshire was in 841, and subsequent raiding and attacks caused instability throughout the region. Lincolnshire passed between Viking and English control up to the middle of the 10th century when the region finally came under control of Edward the Elder (c. 874–924).

5.2.40 The early medieval period is poorly represented within the HER data, with no records being assigned to this period. Finds of medieval pottery from within Romano-British settlement sites may indicate a continuation of the use of these sites through the early medieval period and into the medieval period. Compared to the preceding Iron Age and Roman periods, very few salterns are known from this period (Bell et al 1999, ix).

5.2.41 In the wider area Crowland Abbey was known to be in existence by at least the mid-10th century, supposedly having been founded in part due to the pilgrimage of a monk called Guthlac, who sought out solitude in the Fens (Wright 2024). Modern parish boundaries still reflect the medieval abbey precinct, and the surrounding settlements—such as Dowsdale and The Engine—evidencing the continuation of reclamation and habitation efforts into the post-medieval and modern periods (Hayes and Lane 1992). Land Parcels A, B and C fall within the historic precinct area. The early spiritual significance of Crowland is rooted in the life of St. Guthlac, who established his hermitage there around AD 700 (Wright and Wilmott 2024). The Vita Sancti Guthlaci, written shortly after his death, portrays Guthlac's retreat into the fens as an act of sacred isolation that later inspired the site's development into a major Benedictine centre. Archaeological investigation at Anchor Church Field, long associated with Guthlac and his sister Pega, has revealed continuous activity from the late prehistoric to post-medieval periods, including a substantial Neolithic or Early Bronze Age henge. These findings highlight layers of occupation and sanctity in the Crowland landscape, linking spiritual and pilgrimage traditions that flourished from the 10th century onward.

5.2.42 The aerial survey and geophysical survey of the Solar Development Areas indicated a likelihood of field systems or possible associated drains within the following fields: B-1-13, D-3-06, D-4 and D-6 (see Appendix C). The indicated dates for these features extends from the early medieval to post-medieval. Landscape survival is well evidenced

from the early medieval period as fields were largely abandoned when they had served their purpose, allowing surviving remains to be identified through aerial photography. Field boundaries and associated drainage features are typically indications that there were settlements nearby utilising these field systems (Lewis 2012).

5.2.43 The archaeological evaluation identified limited evidence from the early medieval period. Some evidence of continued or renewed use of the fenland landscape following the end of Roman occupation was found. The evaluation revealed that, although direct evidence for early medieval features was scarce, there is a pattern of landscape reorganisation and renewed agricultural use beginning in this period and continuing into the later medieval era. This corresponds with wider regional trends of fenland reclamation and settlement expansion during the early medieval period.

5.2.44 No datable evidence of early medieval structural features was identified within the trial trenches. However, several areas contained features such as ditches and furrows that may represent early phases of land management and drainage established during this time. The reuse of roddons appears to have persisted, with evidence for continued activity in their vicinity, including boundaries and cultivation features. These are consistent with early medieval efforts to exploit and manage the increasingly reclaimed fen environment.

5.2.45 The geoarchaeological evidence suggests that major environmental change took place following the late Roman period, marked by renewed marine inundation and subsequent peat development, before large-scale drainage resumed from the Saxon period onwards. Historical and environmental data together imply that early medieval communities began to reclaim and cultivate parts of the fens during this time, establishing the framework of agricultural land division and drainage systems that later medieval and post-medieval farmers would inherit.

Medieval (1066 AD - 1500 AD)

5.2.46 Following the Norman invasion, Lincolnshire, as with the rest of England, came under the control of William I. This impact is visible in the appearance of castles and renewed number of monastic foundations. Agrarian production and settlement also saw significant changes around this time. Dispersed settlements were widely abandoned at this time, and populations relocated to nucleated villages often associated with a manor house and church. However more thinly populated pastoral landscapes of dispersed settlements and mixed economies continued to prevail in the fenland of South Lincolnshire (Lewis 2012). In the peat fens water transport would have remained dominant through the medieval period, and the natural watercourses would have been altered and augmented by artificial waterways known as 'lodes' (Christie and Stamper 2012, 208).

5.2.47 Reclamation accelerated during this period, driven by population pressure and the increasing need for enclosed agricultural land. Crowland Abbey played a central role in this transformation, extending its demesne through the appropriation of previously

common marshland such as Goggisland and Alderland, which tradition claims were granted to the Abbey by King Æthelbald in 716 (Roffe 2011). Though documentary evidence for this early endowment is uncertain, by the time of Domesday Book the Abbey controlled extensive lands across several counties. Charters issued under King Stephen and Henry II further formalised the Abbey's claims, establishing Crowland's precinct as corresponding closely to the area of the modern parish. The boundaries described in medieval documents defined the island of Crowland and its surrounding marshes with precision, showing a complex relationship between natural features, early administrative divisions, and ecclesiastical jurisdiction (Roffe 2011).

5.2.48 Crowland Abbey, formerly Croyland is located on a terrace and is marginally higher than the surrounding landscape resulting in the notion than Crowland is an island within the fens (Hayes and Lane 1992). This initial description as an island comes from Felix, the 8th century biographer of St Guthlac. Felix describes the fen as having 'immense marshes, now a black pool of water, now foul running streams, and also many islands, and reeds, and hillocks, and thickets, and with manifold windings wide and long' (Darby 1940, 8). Felix tells of a man named Tatwine who knew of a particular island 'especially obscure' within the 'wide wilderness' that was the fenland at that time. The Abbey church buildings remain an imposing landmark in the generally level landscape. During this period the landscape would have been used for salt production and grazing due to its wet nature.

5.2.49 Crowland's modern parish boundaries almost precisely follow those set out to delimit the precinct of the Abbey, therefore maintaining a relationship between the Abbey and its precinct. This boundary encompasses all of the Solar Development Areas of the Scheme and the northern boundary follows the line of Queen's Bank and is included in the Scheduled earthwork boundary (1009980) which is located just to the northern side of Queen's Bank outside of the Solar Development Areas. Two ditches are shown on historic mapping, running along the northern side of Queens Bank. They are labelled 'Asen Dyke' on the 1950s map. The label is in gothic script, indicating their antiquity. Geophysical and aerial survey also detected the continuation of this boundary in field B5. St Guthlac's Cross which is both Scheduled and Grade II listed is also believed to have once marked the northern boundary of the Abbey but is no longer positioned in its original location. Although the fenland was drained and the landscape character changed from this period, the historic relationship between the Abbey and its precinct is still understood and some long-range views of Crowland Abbey have survived across the wider landscape. Uninterrupted views of the boundary of the precinct from the Abbey, and in particular the earthworks at Queen's Bank and St Guthlac's cross, were not a designed part of this landscape.

5.2.50 The fenland continued to be exploited throughout the medieval period, with the siltlands in particular being intensely occupied (Coles and Hall 1994, 2). Salt making was a major industry in this period, although this is not represented within the HER data for the study area. There are no records for medieval salterns within the study area, although medieval

pottery has been found on the site of Romano-British salt-making sites, potentially indicating that these were in continuous use or that sites were re-occupied (MLI23178).

5.2.51 Throughout the post-conquest period the population of the region continued to grow and many new nucleated settlements were laid out and an increasing number of farms and small hamlets continued to be carved out of existing fields and woodland (Lewis 2012). There are around 221 medieval rural settlements recorded in Lincolnshire. In the fenland of South Lincolnshire medieval settlement was likely dispersed, but few dispersed medieval settlements are included on the HER and archaeological investigations of such sites have been minimal.

5.2.52 Wide scale drainage would have begun during this period, with the digging, embanking and maintenance of drains and watercourses being undertaken by the local inhabitants and landowners (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 107). The enclosure of marginal meadow and grazing land enabled the ploughing of marsh and silt fen, resulting in thousands of miles of field drainage being laid out (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 107).

5.2.53 Within the study area the medieval period is represented primarily by features relating to rural settlement or rural activities. A potential medieval settlement is known from documentary sources (MLI20244), as well as a monastic grange (MLI22164). Scatters of medieval pottery have been recovered, often from within Romano-British settlement sites (MLI23025, MLI23167, MLI23173, MLI23178, MLI23186). Other medieval records within the study area include the site of Fen Hall, a medieval manor (MLI20539), a medieval drove road (MLI20544), the churchyard of the Church of St John the Baptist in Whaplode Drove (MLI116165) and two large pits containing medieval pottery of 15th to 16th century date (MLI97378).The aerial survey (see Appendix C) identified a triple ditched linear feature that traversed C-1-06 and C-1-08 and interpreted as the potential remains of a medieval drove road. Other long straight ditches run parallel to this road and may be of a similar date. In field B-5 a long linear feature crosses the site parallel to Queen's Bank, which is identified as a drove road in the HER (MLI20346). However, the feature is also aligned to a Scheduled feature to the east which is described as the northern boundary of the monastic lands of Crowland Abbey. Elsewhere in the site the aerial survey also identified features representing medieval strip fields and ridge and furrow. The geophysical survey of the Solar Development Areas, which indicated a likelihood of field systems, has been discussed in the early medieval period baseline above. The evaluation trenching provided little evidence datable to the medieval period. The remains securely dated to the medieval period identified largely represent agricultural activity, drainage, and field organisation rather than settlement, reflecting the continued gradual reclamation and management of the wetlands that characterise this part of Lincolnshire from the medieval period onwards.

5.2.54 The archaeological evaluation trenching within Land Parcel A identified features attributable to the medieval or post-medieval periods, including ditches, furrows, and field boundaries that align with mapped features visible on the 1st edition OS map. In particular, in field A-1-09, a ditch following the contour of a roddon, and associated

furrows were recorded, indicating that the raised ground of former watercourses continued to be exploited for cultivation. These features are thought to relate to early phases of agricultural reclamation, where drier roddon ground was enclosed and ploughed while the surrounding lower-lying areas remained marshy. The persistence of these boundaries into the 19th century suggests long-term continuity in field layout established during the medieval period.

Post-medieval (1500 AD - 1900 AD)

5.2.55 From the period c.1500 - 1750 the rural landscape of Lincolnshire took on a different form as the enclosure of open fields took place and open field arable farming gave way to pastoral farming of sheep and cattle, and the historically open landscape being enclosed by hedges and ditches (Historic England 2015b, 6). The fens may also have remained more open compared to elsewhere in the county, being dominated primarily by open pasture farming.

5.2.56 Saxton's 1576 map of Lincolnshire depicts the area of the Site as dry land located to the south of 'The Wasshe' and labelled 'Flete fen'. The settlements of Spalding, Crowland, Weston, Moulton, Waplode Drove (Whaplode Drove), and Cowbit are all depicted on the map.

5.2.57 Following the Industrial Revolution a major change was the introduction of improved infrastructure in the area, including a network of roads and railways (Wright 2000, 3). During the 18th century rural Lincolnshire was a supplier of food and raw materials to London. Rural locations feature wind and water mills, brickyards and stone quarries (Wright 2000, 3). During this period the enclosure of open field systems was fully completed and all open fields and common land disappeared (Wright 2000, 8). In the 18th and early 19th centuries the fens were drained on a larger scale than previously and were then fully enclosed and turned from pastoral farming to more intensive arable farming (Wright 2000, 8). Within the study area the post-medieval period is primarily represented by rural farmsteads of 19th century date, many of which survive as partially redeveloped structures that are still in use on operational farms, though many have also been demolished. Full details of these farmsteads are available within the gazetteer in Appendix B. Post-medieval pottery scatters have commonly been found recorded alongside Romano-British settlement sites (MLI23168, MLI23174, MLI23179, MLI23187). It is considered that this is likely the result of ongoing regional research focused on the known Romano-British settlements within the study area and post-medieval material that has been part of the rural landscape, which has become disturbed in ongoing agricultural activity including ploughing, turning and manuring. The Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections are covered by the tithe maps of Weston (1838), Fleet and Holbeach (1839), Gedney (1841) and Whaplode (1845) parishes. Each of these tithe maps depict a fieldscape similar to the corresponding first edition OS maps of 1886 and 1887. The differences are slight and usually occur when the enclosures of smaller strip fields, or medium sized fields have been amalgamated to

larger fields. Fields are recorded as arable or pasture, with gardens and occasional orchards attached to houses, cottages or tenements.

5.2.58 The first edition OS map of 1887 depicts Area A-1 located just to the south of the 'Wash Bank', a drainage channel running along the north edge of the Site. This area features more, smaller fields than compared to present. A group of buildings annotated as 'Cloot House Farm' is depicted within the Site at approximately TF 25430 14640 (MLI23854, A-1-12). Modern aerial imagery shows that these buildings are no longer extant but foundations associated with these structures may survive. Other structures identified within the Site include a small structure annotated as 'Old Barn' located at approximately TF 24272 13727 (MLI123863, A-1-02, A-1-05) and another small structure annotated 'Bottom Yard' located at approximately TF 25089 13408 (MLI123862, A-1-11). No remains of these were visible during the site walkover. Another farmstead 'Lodge Farm' is shown within A-1-08 at TF 2439 1300 (MLI123864), of which only a single cart shed survives (Plate 23). The archaeological evaluation trenching within Parcel A identified features attributable to the medieval and post-medieval periods, including ditches, furrows, and field boundaries that align with mapped features visible on the 1st edition OS map. In particular, in Field A-1-09, a ditch following the contour of a roddon and associated furrows were recorded, indicating that the raised ground of former watercourses continued to be exploited for cultivation. These features are thought to relate to early phases of agricultural reclamation, where drier roddon ground was enclosed and ploughed while the surrounding lower-lying areas remained marshy. The persistence of these boundaries into the 19th century suggests long-term continuity in field layout established during the medieval period.

5.2.59 Part of the east border of B-1 is defined by what was once the Great Northern & Great Eastern Joint Railway, the route of which is still visible on aerial photographs. A complex of buildings annotated as 'Whipchicken Farm' is shown on the first edition OS within the Site at TF 27408 13103 (MLI123861, B-1-10). A semi-derelict building set within a small coppice of trees is all that remains of this historic farmstead (Plate 24). Other buildings have been demolished although remains may exist below ground. A second farmstead is also shown within B-1-13 on the first edition OS, annotated as 'Whitebread Farm', located at approximately TF 28369 13537 (MLI123860). The farmstead appears to have been completely demolished as no remains are visible, although below ground remains were identified during the archaeological evaluation.

5.2.60 At C-1 and C-2 a cluster of buildings (likely a farmstead) annotated as 'Shepherd's House' is located at TF 30448 12919 (MLI123880, C-1-08), no features associated with this farmstead are now visible and the complex appears to have been demolished.

5.2.61 Within field D-2, the field boundaries depicted on the first edition OS are mostly the same as present, with only D-2-04 being more enclosed than present, but the other fields have not been combined as in some of the other areas discussed. At the north edge of D-2-01 a small building is depicted on the first edition OS that partly crosses with the Site (MLI123531). This building is no longer extant but remains may exist below ground level.

5.2.62 Within field D-3 field boundaries survive in broadly the same pattern as shown on the first edition OS, although fields are further subdivided on that map. A body of water and a small structure labelled as 'Sheepfold' are shown within D-3-01, both of which no longer exist. Two small buildings are also shown within D-5-01 located at TF 33750 13084 and TF 33787 13148, neither of which survive. Between D-5 and D-6 two farmsteads are shown, Fleet Coy Farm (MLI123534) and Waltons Farm (MLI123535), both of which are still extant.

5.2.63 There are no significant changes in any of the areas between the first edition OS and the 1950-1952 edition OS.

5.2.64 The aerial survey (see Appendix C.1) also identified various post-medieval features within the Site including strip fields, ridge and furrow and post-medieval field boundaries removed in the 20th century. The aerial survey and geophysical survey (see Appendix C.2) of the Solar Development Areas results indicating medieval to post-medieval field systems has been discussed above. Fields A-1-04, A-1-11, B-1-01, B-1-02, B-1-03, B-1-08, B-1-09, B-1-10, B-1-14, C-1-02, D-2-01 and D-2-02 were also recorded as having possible post-medieval field boundaries and drainage features. Field D-2-01 also contained small post-medieval rectilinear enclosures, a pond and further field boundaries, and short sections of ditches associated with trackways were also recorded as being present in this field.

5.2.65 In addition to the features identified in Land Parcel A the evaluation trenching observed comparable patterns to those recorded in other Parcels, with ditches respecting roddon alignments and furrows distributed across higher ground, indicating an organised and evolving field system. These features likely formed part of the wider fenland reclamation landscape in which drainage, controlled flooding, and managed pasture played key roles in supporting agricultural expansion.

Modern (1900 AD - Present Day)

5.2.66 During the Second World War Lincolnshire was a militarily significant region, particularly related to aviation through its association with the RAF in both the First and Second World Wars (Campion 2012). Lincolnshire still maintains numerous airfields at sites such as East Kirkby, Bracebridge Heath and Lincoln (Campion 2012). Various anti-invasion defences constructed as part of the Defence of Britain project are known within the county, including a vast network of pillboxes, though these were primarily located along the coastline (Campion 2012, Defence of Britain Archive 2023). Two memorials relating to the First and Second World War (MLI25317, MLI35333) are located at Sutton St Edmund and Whaplode Drove respectively.

5.2.67 Research has identified that a German Dornier 217 bomber aircraft (F8+CN 4279) crashed within PV field D4 during the Second World War (JBA1). Consultation with the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre established that the aircraft crashed in flames but the crew were able to bail out and survived the crash. The geophysical survey within this field identified a spread of highly elevated magnetic responses that may potentially

be linked to this event. On review of the records, it was determined that the risk of unexploded ordnance within this field is high (6 Alpha 2025a).

5.2.68 A second crash site is recorded within Land Parcel A (JBA2). On 23 June 1944 two Lancasters (ND981 and ME625) collided mid-air during a training exercise with the loss of all but one crew member. Aircraft ME625 crashed within Land Parcel A close to Cloot House Farm, but debris from the incident was recovered from a large area. The Lincolnshire Aircraft Recovery Group (LARG) undertook a project over a three-year period from 1979 to recover three engines and other articles, such as propeller blades, from the bottom of the dyke which were buried at a considerable depth (approximately 10 feet / 3m). The project concluded that part of the undercarriage and possibly another engine remain at a greater depth as it was not feasible to recover them using the mechanical diggers available at the time. The wreckage is on display at the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre. A plaque commemorating the incident was unveiled at Cloot House Farm on the 70th anniversary.

5.2.69 A third wartime air crash was identified by the UXO desktop survey (6 Alpha 2025b) (JBA3). In July 1942, a British Spitfire crashed into a Hampden during a training exercise. The crash report stated that the Spitfire crashed at Holmes Farm, Cloot Drove – potentially near or within Land Parcel A – while the Hampden struggled back to its base.

5.2.70 Local knowledge has also suggested that fields at the northern end of Land Parcel D were subject to bomb offloading during the Second World War. This refers to the deliberate dumping of bombs by German aircraft to lighten their load on the return flight from raids on Britain. This was a common occurrence along the east coast of Britain resulting in an increased risk of unexploded ordnance. No specific records of bombs being dropped within the Scheme area have been identified.

5.2.71 In the early months of 1947 a combination of high tides, meltwater and high winds resulted in a breach in the flood defences around the River Welland leading to 20 square miles of farmland being flooded, including Parcel A (Crowland Buffalo Association). The breach was 54m wide and very difficult to access so a quarter mile stretch of light railway was laid from Crowland to allow stone to be transported to the site. However, due to the size of the breach the decision was made to bring in amphibious "Water Buffalo" tanks to speed up the sealing of the breach. Sixteen tanks were placed at the extremes of the stone causeway to close the gap in the defences. Once sealed further works were carried out to strengthen the rampart. However, a second breach washed away several of the Water Buffalo with one being lost at the bottom of a deep hole created by the force of the water. In 2020 following research into the breach a project was undertaken to recover the lost tank which is now subject to restoration.

5.2.72 Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on land at Decoy Farm (ELI12835), situated to the south of the Underground Inter-Array Connection between Land Parcels A and B which uncovered a modern pit and gullies as well as a smaller undated pit (MLI24840).

5.2.73 The aerial survey and geophysical survey of the Solar Development Areas (see Appendix C.1 and C.2) has confirmed the location of Whitebread Hall (MLI123860), a 19th century

farmstead in the south-west corner of B-1-13 that was extant in the 1950s prior to demolition. It is visible as cropmarks in aerial photographs and the geophysical survey detected an amorphous spread of strong magnetic anomalies with several linear forms at its former location.

5.2.74 The geophysical survey returned positive responses of modern agricultural trends across the entire Solar Development Areas, including ploughing, which is linear and regularly spaced. This trend also aligns closely to the edges of the field A-1-01, reflecting agricultural headland runs. Throughout Land Parcels A and B the geophysical survey detected regular intervals of field drains, some of which have been created out of historic field boundaries visible on historic mapping (A-1-02, A-1-03, A-1-05, A-1-07, A-1-03, B-1-2, B-1-3, B-1-6, B-1-8, B-1-12, B-3-01, B-3-02). The results of the archaeological evaluation reflect the continuation of land reclamation, drainage, and mechanised agriculture noted in the post-medieval period.

5.2.75 A monument known as the Meridian Stone is adjacent to Langary Gate Road in Land Parcel D (TF 3511715545). The stone was erected in 2000 and funded by the Millennium Festival to mark the line of the Greenwich Meridian and celebrate the new millennium.

5.3 Grid Connection Route Archaeological and Historic Baseline

Designated Assets

5.3.1 The baseline assessment covers the Grid Connection Route shown in Appendix A (Figure 1). Assets identified within the Grid Connection Route are discussed in the baseline that follows. They can be identified within the text using their unique identifier that can be cross-referenced to the gazetteer in Appendix B and located in Appendix A, Figure 6a-b, Figure 7a-c, and Figure 8a-b.

5.3.2 There are no World Heritage Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields or Protected Wreck Sites in the Grid Connection Route 2km study area or within 5km of the Grid Connection Route.

Scheduled Monuments

5.3.3 There are fifteen Scheduled Monuments within 5km of the Grid Connection Route (1002944; 1002945; 1005052; 1004963; 1004966; 1004978; 1004979; 1005037; 1005052; 1009980; 1010673; 1012410; 1013529; 1017217; 1019096). Of these, six Scheduled Monuments (1002944; 1004978; 1004979; 1009980; 1012410; 1005052) have been discussed above as they are also within the Solar Development and Inter-Array Connections study area. There are seven Scheduled Monuments located within the 2km study area and two Scheduled Monuments within 5km of the Grid Connection Route.

- The Scheduled Monument 'Settlement between Broadgate Farm and Lower Delgate Farm' (1004963) is located 50m east of the Grid Connection Route at

TF 27643 16891, and c.100m from proposed tower 4SV6 (Plate 39). The aerial survey of GC_02, which contains part of this Scheduled Monument, identified fragmentary crop-marked ditches, indicating buried droveways and likely enclosures within an area of Roman settlement between Broadgate and Delgate Fens. The landscape continues beyond the scheduled area.

- A second Scheduled Monument is just to the south-east of the above monument, 'Settlement SE of Lower Delgate Farm' (1002945) (Plate 40). This is outside the aerial survey area, and so there is no additional evidence associated with this Scheduled Monument.
- The Scheduled Monument 'Wykeham Chapel: a moated monastic grange and retreat house' (1019096) is approximately 400m west of the northern end of the Grid Connection Route (Plates 41-44). The monument includes a 12th century monastic grange, together with the remains of a retreat house and chapel. The grange was associated with Spalding Priory, which once housed a Benedictine order and is located 5km to the south-west. It is additionally protected as a Grade I Listed Building, Wykeham Chapel of St Nicholas (1064471).
- The Scheduled Monument 'Churchyard cross, St Mary's churchyard' in Weston (1013529) is approximately 1km east of proposed tower 4SV38. The monument is additionally protected as a Grade II Listed Building 'Cross 9 Metres South of South Aisle' (1064473). It is a 14th century cross with modern additions believed to be standing in or near its original position within the churchyard of the restored 12th century Grade I Listed Building Church of St Mary (1064475) (Plates 45 and 46). As a churchyard cross, it may have served as a location for outdoor processions.
- At the crossroads of Queens Bank, Washbank, Spalding Road and Peak Hill, 1km north of Crowland Airport, is the Scheduled Monument 'St Guthlac's Cross' (1005052) (Plate 16), situated approximately 1km west of the Grid Connection Route and substation, and approximately 650m north-east of the nearest PV Parcel (A-1-12). It is a boundary cross dating to c.1200 marking the boundary of land formerly owned by Crowland Abbey. The cross is additionally protected as a Grade II Listed Building (1359254).
- The Scheduled Monument 'Pinchbeck engine' (1004966) is located 1.8km west of the Grid Connection Route. It is a restored beam engine situated off the A16 at Pinchbeck and is located in a former pumping station building.
- The Scheduled Monument 'King's Hall moated site, 480m east of Broadwater House Farm' (1017217) is 1.8km east of the Grid Connection Route (Plate 47). It is a series of earthworks and buried deposits of a former moated manor house thought to have once been the residence of the de Moulton family around AD1086. The island is 'D'-shaped in plan, measuring approximately 85m by 80m, and stands up to 1.5m above the surrounding ground level.

- The Elloe Stone (1005037) is located at Spalding Gate, approximately 3.4km east of the Grid Connection Route. It may date from the 10th or 11th century AD and its original purpose was to mark the site where the men of Elloe Wapentake held their Hundred Court. It was removed from its original position by 1889 and re-erected on a new base inscribed to commemorate the coronation of King George IV. The stone is also Grade II Listed (1147728).
- The medieval 'Churchyard cross, St Mary's churchyard' in Whaplode (1010673) is considered to be in its original location at TF 32383 24032 and is positioned approximately 3.6km north-east of the Grid Connection Route (Plate 48). The cross is also Grade II Listed (1308443).

Listed Buildings

5.3.4 Within the 2km study area there are 30 Listed Buildings, including four Grade I Listed Buildings (1064471; 1064475; 1064482; 1306702) and three Grade II* Listed Buildings (1359293; 1359567; 1392209). The remaining 23 Listed Buildings within the study area are all Grade II Listed.

5.3.5 The four Grade I Listed Buildings within the 2km study area are:

- Wykeham Chapel of St Nicholas (1064471) is within the scheduled area of the Scheduled Monument 'Wykeham Chapel: a moated monastic grange and retreat house' (1019096) (Plate 41). It is located approximately 470m from the Grid Connection Route.
- The Church of St Mary (1064475) is a restored 12th century church within the village of Weston and is located approximately 1km from the Grid Connection Route (Plate 49). It was restored in the 19th century by Scott and Pearson.
- The 'Church of St Paul Including Attached Former Sunday Schoolroom' (1306702) is a 19th century church within Spalding, located approximately 1.6km west of the Grid Connection Route (Plate 50). It is on Holbeach Road, outside of the Spalding Conservation Area and west of the A16 roundabout. The church and adjacent Grade II* Listed Vicarage (see below) were built to the designs of Sir George Gilbert Scott.
- The Church of St Mary (1064482) is a restored 14th century church within the north-west corner of Cowbit, approximately 1.6km north-west of the Grid Connection Route (Plate 51).

5.3.6 The three Grade II* Listed Buildings within 2km of the Grid Connection Route are:

- The Chapel of St James (1359293) is 900m east of the Grid Connection Route on Roman Road in Moulton Chapel at TF 29348 18231 (Plates 52 and 53). It is an early 18th century Chapel of Ease by William Sands Senior of Spalding and contains later 19th and 20th century additions.

- The 'Old Office Block of Land Settlement Association' (1359567) is an 18th century house with medieval origins on Mallard Road, approximately 1.2km south-west of the Grid Connection Route in the Low Fulney Estate of Spalding.
- The 19th century Vicarage to Church of St Paul (1392209) is located on Holbeach Road in Spalding, approximately 1km south-west of the Grid Connection Route.

5.3.7 Up to 5km from the Grid Connection Route there are a further eight Grade I Listed Buildings (1064002; 1064403, 1147325; 1308557; 1359295, 1359532, 1359547) and 21 Grade II* Listed Buildings (1063947; 1063953; 1063959; 1063971; 1063983; 1063991; 1063993; 1063999; 1064006; 1147529; 1147578; 1169039; 1306654; 1307194; 1359518; 1359519; 1359524; 1359525; 1359534; 1359539; 1359545). Details of these can be found in the gazetteer (Appendix B).

Conservation Areas

5.3.8 Within 5km of the route there are three Conservation Areas - Moulton Conservation Area, approximately 1.9km to the east; Spalding Conservation Area, approximately 2.1km to the west; and Pinchbeck Conservation Area, approximately 2.5km to the west.

Moulton Conservation Area

5.3.9 This Conservation Area includes the Moulton Harrox Playing Field to the west of the village, the village centre, properties alongside Church Lane extending c. 360m northward from the church, and Moulton Park, forming a 'J' shaped area of land (APS 2000, 2) (Plate 25). The village is recorded to have originated in 1100 AD. Moulton Conservation Area includes two Grade I Listed Buildings: the 12th century Church of All Saints (1147325) and the 19th century 'Windmill' (1308557) (Plates 26 and 27). The windmill is the highest in the country and located to the south of the church. Built in 1822 and measuring 97ft high, it is one of two 19th century windmills known in Moulton, and the only extant example. A modern housing development has been built behind the windmill. The local topography is a relatively flat landscape and may be associated with the probable Saxon coastline.

5.3.10 The Grid Connection Route 2km study area crosses the western side of the Moulton Conservation Area, specifically between Bell Lane and Moulton Park, and the western side of Moulton Harrox Cricket Club off Broad Lane. The Moulton Conservation Area Appraisal (APS 2000) identifies Moulton Park as having been enclosed before 1812 with some ridge and furrow earthworks, indicating a moderate to high potential of archaeological remains within the park (APS 2000, 9). The Moulton Harrox Playing Field is identified as currently enclosed by a line of mature trees, but in the 19th century it was open land (APS 2000, 9). The playing field is considered to have a moderate to high potential for surviving archaeological deposits. The western edge of Moulton Harrox is the only part of the Conservation Area with views towards the Grid Connection Route

(Plate 28). At a distance of over 2.6km, the Grid Connection will be beyond the houses and trees on Broad Gate, and will not be visible.

Spalding Conservation Area

5.3.11 The Spalding Conservation Area appraisal is currently under review by the LPA, but the 2007 Conservation Area appraisal has been used to inform this assessment (South Holland District Council 2007). The town has its origins in the Roman period and its earliest documentary reference dates to 716 AD. The area derives its main character from the River Welland that physically divides the town, with the 13th century Grade I Listed Building Parish Church of St Mary and St Nicholas (1359547) (Plate 29), the 15th century Grade I Listed Building Ayscoughfee Hall (1359532) (Plate 30) and the Grade I Listed Building Spalding War Memorial (1064002) to its east, and the historic commercial area to its west (South Holland District Council 2007, 4). The river is key to the setting to the numerous Grade II Georgian terrace houses that line it along London Road, Double Street and the High Street, while the riverbanks provide important open green spaces within the Conservation Area. The historic warehouses in the riverside port and trade area north of High Bridge are now residential (Plate 31).

5.3.12 Spalding also contains many unlisted commercial and residential buildings of Local Historic Interest dating from the 18th century to 1930s. The 19th century tallest residences of London Road were built around High Bridge, while buildings become lower as they move away from the town centre (South Holland District Council 2007, 6). Spalding is centred around its three open historic market areas - Market Place, Hall Place and the Sheep Market, which are surrounded by narrow streets that provide access towards the market area and other parts of town.

5.3.13 The Grade I Listed Building Parish Church of St Mary and St Nicholas (1359547) is not always visible from London Road, across the River Welland when looking eastwards towards the Site. The church spire is visible at Hall Place, the historic commercial area to the west, and from footbridges over the River Welland on Cowbit Road. There are no views of the Church of St Mary and St Nicholas looking west from the A16, although the spire can be glimpsed from roads within the wider area and parts of the Grid Connection Route (Plate 32). The only part of the Conservation Area that is not enclosed by buildings is the south-east edge, but there are no views of the Site due to intervening vegetation and distance (Plate 33).

Pinchbeck Conservation Area

5.3.14 The Pinchbeck Conservation Area contains a number of Listed Buildings including the 12th century Grade I Listed Church of St Mary (106443) (Plate 34). The village is first recorded in the Domesday Survey, c.1086 AD. Though a village with a strong medieval core, it is considered a polyfocal or dispersed settlement due to a number of manorial centres evidenced in documentation (APS 2002, 10). The Conservation Area features a number of Grade II Listed Buildings around the church, including a War Memorial (1064441), Stables and Traphouse to the Vicarage (1359313) (Plate 35), The Vicarage

(1146762) and the Store at the Vicarage (1308805) (Plate 36). All of these are screened by mature trees and bushes and their settings are related to the Church of St Mary. Further Listed Buildings along Church Street and Knight Street (1064432; 1308859; 1064431; 1146713; 1064438; 1359314; 1064434) are surrounded by residential or commercial properties, presenting a closely knit, inward-looking 18th to 19th village focused on the parish church, Church Street, and looping around Church Walk (Plates 37 and 38). At the south of the Conservation Area, the 19th century Grade II Listed Otway House (1359279) off Spalding Road is screened by mature trees and bushes. The focal points of the village include the Church of St Mary and the Vicarage complex, Otway House to the south, and the garden of remembrance to the west (APS 2002, 9).

Palaeolithic to Bronze Age

5.3.15 There are no records of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic or Bronze Age date within the Grid Connection Route study area.

5.3.16 The aerial survey of the Grid Connection Route indicated that there are roddons and/ or palaeochannels in 22 of 31 Parcels. The fields that do not contain roddons and/ or palaeochannels are GC_01, GC_02, GC_03, GC_15, GC_16, GC_22, GC_24, GC_25, GC_30. In these fields it is possible that later activity truncated the evidence of roddons and palaeochannels that might otherwise dominate the broader Fens region. However, it was noted that roddons and palaeochannels also form part of a complex of features including ditches, enclosures and tracks in GC_23 (tower 4SV35) between Wool Hall Farm and the A151/Holbeach Road. Aerial photographs (RAF 1946; Aerofilms 1948a-i) covering areas outside of the aerial survey undertaken by Air Photo Services (AP Services 2025) show additional roddons and/ or palaeochannels of a similar nature.

5.3.17 There are a number of enclosures indicated by the aerial survey (AP Services 2025) with potential to date to the late Neolithic or Bronze Age. In each area, further features indicate later land-use that may date to the Iron Age, Roman period, or into the medieval and post-medieval periods. Curvilinear ditches and enclosures suspected to be from the late Neolithic or Bronze Age may be of much later date.

5.3.18 In GC_08 (towers 4SV10 and 4SV11), adjacent to Broad Gate and approximately 700m east of the A16/B1357 Crowland Bypass roundabout, there are two curvilinear ditched enclosures, each with an internal ditch, and a penannular enclosure with a terminal-defined entrance. This area overlaps with recorded asset MLI116037. The HER entry notes a low possibility for a large Bronze Age cemetery if the large number of circular cropmarks represent Bronze Age barrows. However, the aerial survey interprets most of the circular cropmarks, with the exception of the three defined as potential archaeological features, as fen circles possibly caused by haystacking or similar agricultural activities that are particular to the silt Fenlands during the medieval or post-medieval periods (Riley 1946).

5.3.19 Fragments of curvilinear ditches are recorded in GC_12 and GC_13, north-west of Moulton Chapel and the B1357. A penannular enclosure with a terminal-defined

entrance is also identified in GC_12, along with further potential fen circles. These features may be related to features seen in the cropmarks of GC_09, the field to the west through which the Grid Connection Route crosses. In GC_09, cropmarks show potential evidence of a settlement in the form of buried ditches and a double-ditched linear feature. In GC_21 (4SV27 and 4SV28), three sub-circular ditched enclosures have been identified between Long Lane and Belgate Bank, north of the B1165/ Austendike Road at Ashgrove Farm and Whittington Farm.

Iron Age

5.3.20 There are few records within the Grid Connection Route study area attributed to the Iron Age. Seven records relate to saltern sites (MLI23116, MLI23125, MLI23131, MLI23133, MLI23135, MLI23142, MLI23146). There is limited evidence related to settlement activity (MLI23144) and pottery findspots (MLI20319, MLI20320).

5.3.21 Salterns are known to have flourished on the wide levees of the Welland (Hayes and Lane 1992, 177). Three major groups produced briquetage and domestic pottery of recognised middle Iron Age type. Two of the sites were protected by silts from the now defunct medieval Welland, whilst the third appears to remain reasonably intact under peaty alluvium. The saltern site MLI23125 is one of three major Iron Age saltern groups in the area and it produced domestic pottery of recognised Middle Iron Age style, animal bones, an iron nail, and small fragments of burnt stone with briquetage. All of the sites of Iron Age date are found in relatively close proximity to one another around Cowbit, on the western edge of the study area. These sites were identified as part of the Fenland Project (Hayes and Lane 1992).

5.3.22 Two assets were assigned an early Iron Age to Roman date (MLI90792, MLI80793). These were both related to settlement sites identified from cropmarks and consist of enclosure ditches, boundary ditches and ring ditches.

5.3.23 Three records within the study area assigned a late Iron Age to early Roman date were identified from cropmarks. These comprise records for ring ditches identified by cropmarks just to the north-east of the Cowbit Wash (MLI116037, MLI116038, MLI116039). In addition, there is a late Iron Age pottery scatter (MLI23138) within an area of undated cropmarks (MLI20314) also north-east of Cowbit Wash, which have been interpreted as an area of potential saltern activity that may date from the Iron Age to the Romano-British period.

5.3.24 The aerial survey of the Grid Connection Route did not result in interpretations of definitive evidence of Iron Age activity. Cropmarks within the Cowbit area, which the HER assigned to Iron Age settlement and saltern activity, have been interpreted by the aerial survey as evidencing a wider Roman archaeological rural landscape containing ditches, pits, enclosures and droveways.

Romano-British

5.3.25 There are many records in the Grid Connection Route study area assigned to the Roman or Romano-British period. The vast majority of these records are located in the southern half of the study area. Two records are recorded in the northern half of the study area, where one is just to the west of Weston village. Here, trial trenching and open area excavation discovered Roman deposits including a large amount of pottery (MLI92281). The other is east of the Festival Hill roundabout (MLI80615) north-east of Spalding, where finds consisted of Roman pottery of the first and second century AD, along with late Iron Age pottery.

5.3.26 Large areas of cropmarks displaying potential evidence of Romano-British occupation and field systems are common across the study area (MLI22117, MLI22115, MLI20342, MLI20336, MLI20335, MLI22081, MLI20313, MLI20334, MLI20342). Within the Cowbit area evidence of Romano-British activity is found in association with earlier Iron Age remains and includes settlements, salterns and pottery (MLI23137, MLI116037, MLI116038, MLI116039, MLI20314).

5.3.27 The aerial survey of the study area indicated that there are a number of settlements, enclosures, ditches and tracks that likely date to the Romano-British period. In GC_02 the interpretations from the aerial survey coincide with the record for the Scheduled Monument 'Settlement between Broadgate Farm and Lower Delgate Farm' (1004963). The cropmark ditches indicate buried droveways and likely enclosures within an area of Roman settlement between Broadgate and Delgate Fens.

5.3.28 Within GC_03 (tower 4SV7) there are parallel buried ditches indicative of a trackway, possibly part of a wider Roman landscape that may be contemporary with the recorded Roman settlement remains at MLI20338, approximately 300m east of Cowbit.

5.3.29 Within GC_04 light-toned cropmarks that may have been a former silt mound and other possible mounds correlate with the Roman salt-making site and occupation debris to the east at MLI20333, north of South Holland Main Drain and east of Whitehouse Farm. GC_04 also contains a complex of ditch-defined access ways and enclosures that are interpreted as part of a wider domestic and industrial Roman salt-making landscape, in association with the record at MLI22105. It is likely that these are features are related to and consistent with the features seen in GC_01 to the northwest and GC_05 to the west, which are crossed by the Grid Connection Route.

5.3.30 Within GC_05 (4SV3 and 4SV4) the aerial survey interpretation is consistent with the record of Roman salt-making debris (MLI22110) and occupation (MLI22032), as areas of dense and dark-toned soil marks indicate possible buried cut features, some of which are located on roddons and palaeochannels.

5.3.31 As GC_04 and GC_05 are adjacent land Parcels presenting similar patterns of buried archaeological remains, together they represent part of a large, complex, domestic and industrial Romano-British landscape containing multiple phases of occupation. There is also a potential for contemporary activity between these parcels and the two nearby Scheduled Romano-British settlement sites 'Settlement between Broadgate Farm and

Lower Delgate Farm' (1004963) and 'Settlement SE of Lower Delgate Farm' (1002945). The Scheduled Monuments are located between 275m and 400m north-east of the cropmark remains visible in GC_04 and GC_05.

5.3.32 The aerial survey interpretation of the cropmarks in GC_08 (4SV10 and 4SV11) to the north of Delgate Farm aligns with the record for MLI116037 potentially representing a Roman settlement or salt-making activity. In the aerial survey in GC_10 east of Delgate Farm and south of the B13257 there is a visible linear buried ditch that forms part of a system of likely field boundaries where Roman remains have also been recorded by the HER (MLI20546). These may be part of a larger complex of features seen in the adjacent fields GC_07, GC_08 and GC_09, into which the Grid Connection Route crosses.

5.3.33 Within the Grid Connection Route to the north of High Road a complex of cut features, likely relating to an area of Roman settlement but this was not evident on the available images. These features were recorded by the aerial survey in GC_31 (4SV38 and 4SV39).

Early medieval

5.3.34 The early medieval records in the Grid Connection Route study area are limited, and the aerial survey of the Grid Connection Route did not identify any definite early medieval activity.

5.3.35 Archaeological evaluation on the proposed route of the A1073 close to Cowbit identified pottery dated to 975 to 1150 AD (MLI86341).

5.3.36 The settlement of Weston is recorded as an early medieval settlement (MLI20331), due to a large assemblage of pottery assigned the earliest date of 10th century. Weston is recorded in the Domesday book as having 41 households in 1086 (Palmer et al 2025). Also at Weston, evidence of late Saxon activity was revealed during trial trenching to the north of the village, comprising 9th to 12th century pottery (MLI92282, MLI92283, MLI92284).

5.3.37 Close to Spalding on the far western edge of the study area, a scatter of pottery including 12 sherds of late Saxon date was found during fieldwalking (MLI80614). To the north of Spalding, a further scatter of late Saxon or early medieval pottery was found just to the west of the A16 during fieldwalking (MLI83935). The field has since been converted into residences off Wardentree Lane.

Medieval

5.3.38 There are a number of records of medieval date within the Grid Connection Route study area. During the medieval period there was an expansion of settlement within the fens as reclamation of saltmarsh and freshwater fen took place during the 12th and 13th centuries (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 106). Occupation took place alongside sea defence banks such as the 'Roman Bank' that runs close to Moulton and Weston (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 106). Alongside the settlement and reclamation, droveways and trackways would have been established during this period which

influence the modern day pattern of infrastructure (Lincolnshire County Council 2011, 106).

5.3.39 The aerial survey of the Grid Connection Route confirmed the broad presence of medieval dylings (ridge and furrow) and cultivation marks throughout Parcels GC_01 (4SV5 and 4SV6) and GC_12, with further potential dylings in GC_12, GC_13, GC_21 (4SV27 and 2SV28) and GC_34. A group of undated ditches found at Woodhall Farm was interpreted as either remnants of medieval dylings or post-medieval drainage (MLI86088).

5.3.40 Cowbit is recorded as a medieval settlement within the HER (MLI23106), though this is only tentatively evidenced by a scatter of pottery assigned a date of 11th to 15th century. Cowbit is not recorded as a settlement in the Domesday book (Palmer et al 2025), and it seems more likely to have developed in the 13th century.

5.3.41 Close to Cowbit various features of medieval date are recorded including a pond (MLI26064), a stock enclosure (MLI98453), a ditch (MLI86342), drainage ditches and pits at Backgate (MLI85680), and dylings (strips of cultivated land) near the Stonegate railway crossing (MLI20323). Archaeological evaluation of land at Backgate, Cowbit (MLI85682) identified potential medieval ditches or field/property boundaries. The site also recovered early post-medieval pottery in form and quantity suggesting an inn or similar establishment close to the site.

5.3.42 To the south of Cowbit the medieval settlement of Peakhill (MLI23090) sits adjacent to the boundary of the Grid Connection Route. Peakhill developed alongside Goldyke and by 1396 had its own chapel. Goldyke is a medieval dyke that partially overlaps with the boundary of the Grid Connection Route (MLI20324). South-west of Clark's Farm adjacent to 'Roman Road' possible medieval enclosures and field boundaries are recorded (MLI20549).

5.3.43 A saltern known from documentary sources to have existed in the 13th century is located to the south of Pinchbeck Marsh Pumping Station (MLI89837). The area is now part of the A16. Further medieval salterns with artefacts dating to the 12th and 13th century were uncovered at the Spalding Golf Club, approximately 1.3km north-east of the Grid Connection Route, during evaluations undertaken prior to the determination of a planning application for the construction of an irrigation reservoir (MLI23633, ELI2260, ELI3293, ELI1610).

5.3.44 A medieval ditch containing 11th or 12th century pottery was found at a development at Camel Gate and Marsh Road in Spalding (MLI116278). Medieval activity in Weston is evidenced by deposits identified during investigations on the north-east side of the village (MLI92285).

5.3.45 In Spalding two residences (MLI22382; MLI22390) associated with the medieval Spalding Priory located are approximately 1.2km and 1.5km west of the Grid Connection Route. Ash Tree House, a small fen-type cottage (MLI22382) is located on the site of a medieval chapel said to have been connected with Spalding Priory. A medieval grange of Spalding Priory is now occupied by Red House (MLI22390), a 19th century farmstead.

Fragments of medieval architecture were incorporated in the construction of the farmstead.

5.3.46 Evaluations at Surfleet were undertaken approximately 1.1km north-west of the Grid Connection Route in advance of a proposed residential development at 61-71 Sea Ends Road (EI3378, EI3379, ELI3380, ELI13453, ELI13465). These produced the remains of a late medieval ditch, a post-medieval ditch, an undated ditch, a small assemblage of ceramic material dating from the 12th century to 16th century onwards, and animal bone from the ditches. The post-medieval ditch may have been associated with water management due to the proximity of the River Glen. Other finds of medieval date in the study area include a pottery fragment found at Moulton Chapel (MLI22119), a seal found at Moulton (MLI22136), pottery found near Whittington Farm (MLI23575), and a hoard of gold coins found southwest of Surfleet Seas End (MLI23632). The hoard contained 99 14th century gold nobles of Edward III and Richard II and was found near the medieval salterns discovered at the Spalding Golf Club, approximately 1.3km north-east of the Grid Connection Route (MLI23633, ELI2260, ELI3293).

5.3.47 A sea bank (MLI98445) runs broadly east to west to the north of Weston and approximately 200m north of the Grid Connection Route, crossing through the north section of the study area. The bank is marked as Roman on the OS 1905 map but it is considered more likely to be medieval. The sea bank survives as an earthwork and is visible in modern Environment Agency LiDAR data.

5.3.48 Towards the south end of the Grid Connection Route the site of Goll Grange is recorded (MLI22093). Likely built around 1318, investigations within this area have uncovered broken stone, brick tile and pottery. Two silty mounds are located within this area, one of which contained medieval pottery. At TF 269168 are the likely remains of the grange buildings. Partly overlapping with the Goll Grange monument is a second monument recording brick production near Goll Grange (MLI98506).

Post-medieval

5.3.49 There are many records assigned a post-medieval date within the Grid Connection Route study area. Full details of these assets are available in the gazetteer in Appendix B. The majority of post-medieval records in the study area relate to isolated historic farmsteads.

5.3.50 An enclosure map for the Parish of Moulton in 1809 survives in the Lincolnshire Archives ('Map of the Parish of Moulton in the County of Lincoln', within the Holbeach and Whaplode enclosure mapping) and covers part of the Grid Connection Route. It shows that the current road layout and field pattern were already established by 1809, although several fields have been consolidated by the time of the 1st Edition OS map. Someone in antiquity has also added the line of the later railway.

5.3.51 Part of the Grid Connection Route is depicted on the Weston parish tithe map of 1838, which runs from north of the Queen's Bank to north of Weston. The tithe maps of the area known locally as The Moultons (Moulton, Moulton Chapel) did not include the Grid Connection Route. As with the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections,

the landscape depicted in the tithe map of 1838 is very similar to the corresponding first edition OS maps of 1886 and 1887. Most fields are recorded as arable or pasture, and where there are gardens or orchards these are attached to isolated houses or cottages. Apart from the Great Northern & Great Eastern Joint Railway which had not been constructed at this time, the most notable difference between the first edition OS maps of 1886 and 1887 to the earlier tithe map is where smaller fields have been amalgamated into larger fields through removal of field boundaries.

5.3.52 The first edition OS map of 1887 depicts the Grid Connection Route as being occupied primarily by enclosed fields laid out in a similar pattern to the modern landscape. Generally across the study area, fields are smaller compared to the present day landscape, with many of the boundaries shown on this map no longer surviving.

5.3.53 The aerial survey of the Grid Connection Route confirmed the broad presence of post-medieval activity in the form of boundaries, often with associated drainage, ditches or cultivation marks, throughout fields GC_01, GC_03, GC_04, GC_11, GC_12, GC_25, GC_28 and GC_34. In addition there were circular enclosures found in GC_08, GC_11 and GC_12 that were interpreted as fen circles, a medieval or post-medieval hay stacking activity particular to the Fenland region (Riley 1946).

5.3.54 An archaeological evaluation of the Spalding Energy Project Gas Pipeline for a distance of 7.4km was undertaken between Spalding and Wragg Marsh, crossing the Site, and included systematic fieldwalking followed by a watching brief (ELI4354, ELI9314, ELI9378, Oxford Archaeology 2003a-b). No archaeological features were noted in the topsoil stripping, but post-medieval artefacts recovered from both fieldwalking and the watching brief included ceramic building material and blue-transfer porcelain consistent with the 18th to 20th centuries. No artefacts were recovered below the topsoil. It is likely that the artefacts recovered from the topsoil are from manuring activities from the 17th century onwards that were dispersed by ploughing (Oxford Archaeology 2003b, 4).

5.3.55 An archaeological evaluation including trial trenching and test pits in advance of the construction of an electricity line in South Holland, approximately 1.2km north-east of the Grid Connection produced no archaeological finds or features. Evidence of flood inundation at 1.8m was seen across the trenches and excavators suggested that archaeological deposits could potentially survive below this depth (Oxford Archaeology East 2012, 10).

5.3.56 There are a number of post-medieval farmsteads that have been recorded between 1-2km of the Grid Connection Route. Where these farmsteads are still extant, they have been grouped into the following categories:

- Partially extant 19th century farmstead with partial loss (less than 50%) of the traditional buildings. These are represented by Hill Marsh Farm near Pinchbeck (MLI122741), Pickwell House near Moulton (MLI123184), Broadwater House Farm near Moulton (MLI123196), two farmsteads in Weston (MLI122928; MLI122956), a farmstead in Moulton (MLI123195), and Glen Rowan Farm in Surfleet (MLI122573).

- Partially extant 19th century farmstead with significant loss (greater than 50%) of the traditional buildings. This is represented by Crown Hall Farm near Moulton (MLI123227), The Ship Inn (MLI87121) near Surfleet Seas End, and Welland House Farm near Weston (MLI122918).
- 19th century farmsteads where the detached farmhouse is the only surviving historic structure remaining of the original farmstead. This is represented by properties near Weston (MLI122932; MLI122959; MLI122961; MLI122916), Moulton (MLI123183; MLI123186; MLI123197; MLI123226; MLI123228), and one location south-west of Cowbit (MLI123773).

5.3.57 The HER notes that all of these farmsteads are in isolated locations, likely reflecting the limited availability of land suitable for settlement in the Fens (Historic England 2015b, 10). These historic non-designated buildings reflect societal changes that followed the medieval period when common land and open fields were enclosed (Historic England 2015b, 10). In the Fens the farmsteads were purposefully isolated away from the village centres to enable the farmstead to become the centre of newly consolidated land holdings. This cemented a new way of living into the post-medieval period, where farmers lived distant from the traditional village centre, but still retained close community ties to their respective villages via drove roads, trackways, new roads, and ever-increasing drained fens and marshes. Where a 19th century detached farmhouse has become the only surviving structure remaining of a post-medieval or earlier farmstead, they are more likely to have become part of modern residential housing developments. Historic England research has determined that farmsteads in the Fens are much more likely to be situated in landscapes of modern fields (57%) than is typical for the Lincolnshire County as a whole (45%), reflecting dramatic changes in the landscape from the post-medieval period into the modern era (Historic England 2015b, 12).

5.3.58 The Great Northern Railway crosses the study area and a station at Cowbit (MLI23554) including a station house, crossing cottage, and goods shed (MLI126584) was built in 1867. The goods shed (MLI126584) was used to export the area's agricultural produce until 1964, after which the rails were removed after 1982. Postland Station (MLI23587) is also recorded within the south of the study area. The Spalding to Holbeach Railway (MLI20232) was in use from 1858 until 1965, after which it ceased operations and was dismantled. Its former alignment crosses the Grid Connection Route from the east of Spalding to the south of Moulton.

Modern

5.3.59 There are few records in the study area assigned to the period 'mid-20th century to late 20th/21st century', all of which are related to the Low Fulney Land Settlement Association Settlement (MLI25508), some 700m south-west of 4VC31. This is a designed settlement built in a modern style influenced by more traditional cottage styles, with each house provided with farmland to support agriculture, horticulture and animal husbandry. Four records are for houses built in 1936 on the Low Fulney estate (MLI25512, MLI25515, MLI25516, MLI25517). There is one record is for a 20th century

agricultural building on the estate (MLI25518). The estate office also survives and is Grade II Listed (1359567).

6 Assessment of Baseline

6.1 Assessment of Archaeological Potential

6.1.1 This section assesses the potential for previously unrecorded below ground archaeological deposits to survive within the Scheme boundary. The assessment of archaeological potential is based on the data available at the time of writing. The aerial survey and geophysical survey have identified the potential for extensive remains of roddons and palaeochannels throughout all fields of Land Parcels A, B and D, and in 11 out of 13 fields of Land Parcel C.

6.1.2 Peat has been recorded within historic boreholes close to or within the site, encountered at depths of 4.5 to 6m BGL. Archaeological evaluation works to date have also identified peat deposits which are discussed in brief in section 5.2.5 and in Appendix E. Further details of these deposits can be found with the detailed results of the evaluation works. These deposits are of high geoarchaeological and archaeological potential, as they have the potential to preserve archaeological remains which can inform on the past environment and human activity. This will add further information, landscape and environmental context to the interpretation of assets from the corresponding periods.

Solar Development Areas

6.1.3 The results of the Solar Development Areas baseline studies and surveys have been summarised in Appendix F. The table summarises each field within the Solar Development Areas and assigns potential as follows (these areas of potential are also presented in Figures 9 a-d):

- Archaeological Zone - an area where archaeological remains have been identified in the baseline study and confirmed through intrusive archaeological evaluation (trial trenching).
- High Potential - an area where archaeological remains have been identified in the baseline study and subsequently there was found to be strong correlation in the non-intrusive archaeological evaluations (aerial survey and LiDAR assessments and/ or geophysical survey). This assessment of potential has also been informed by the results of the intrusive archaeological evaluation.
- Medium Potential - an area where archaeological remains have been identified in the baseline study and there was found to be limited correlation in the non-intrusive archaeological evaluations (aerial survey and LiDAR assessments and/ or geophysical survey). This assessment of potential has been informed by the results of the intrusive archaeological evaluation.

- Low Potential - an area where no or poorly preserved archaeological remains have been identified in the baseline study and there was poor or no correlation found in the non-intrusive archaeological evaluations (aerial survey and LiDAR assessments and/ or geophysical survey). This assessment of potential has been informed by the results of the interactive archaeological evaluation. These areas are largely off the roddons.

6.1.4 There is considered to be a low potential to encounter organic-rich sedimentary sequences dating from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic buried in roddons and palaeochannels located within the Solar Development Areas and Inter-Array Connections indicating periods of water inundation which could provide evidence of the prehistoric environmental changes.

6.1.5 There is an absence of recorded human activity from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age within the study area. In B-1-09, the geophysical survey indicated a potential for ring-ditches of later Neolithic to earlier Bronze Age to be present that could represent a cemetery group, monument complex or funerary landscape. However, the archaeological evaluation in the surrounding fields has confirmed that the earliest recorded activity belongs to a later period (the Iron Age) and relates to settlement activity and associated domestic or agricultural features. Trenching in B-1-09 and the surrounding fields, shows that the features are of a later date and consistent with findings across Parcels C and C. It is considered that potential to identify evidence for archaeological activity from these periods is low.

6.1.6 The desk-based research, and non-intrusive archaeological surveys, identified potential for extensive remains of Iron Age and/or Roman date to survive within the Solar Development Areas. The earliest archaeological deposits identified through evaluation trenching are believed to be Iron Age in date and have generally been located on the roddons crossing the Site. These areas of slightly raised ground would have provided a preferable location for settlement within the fenland landscape. This assessment has identified seven Archaeological Zones where deposits of Iron Age and/or Roman date are known to survive and are detailed on Figures 9a - d.

6.1.7 Within archaeological zone 3 there is high potential for archaeological deposits relating to the Medieval boundary earthworks at Queen's Bank Scheduled Monument. Geophysical and aerial survey results indicate that the boundary of Crowland Abbey extends west from the Queen's Bank Scheduled Monument, towards Saint Guthlac's Cross.

6.1.8 The non-intrusive surveys for the Solar Development Areas indicated a likelihood of field systems or possible associated drains. Features such as potential drove roads and areas of ridge and furrow have also been recorded. These features have been found to overlay both roddons and paleochannels and indicate the date for these features extends from the early-medieval to post-medieval following the progressive draining of the fens. The fields were extensively utilised in later periods and intensification of agriculture from the medieval period into the post-medieval period will have greatly impacted the survival of

some archaeological deposits, but there is potential for features of medieval and post-medieval date, largely relating to agricultural practices to survive across the Solar Development Areas.

6.1.9 Three aircraft crash sites from World War II and an area of munitions dumping are known within the Solar Development Areas. The Solar Development Areas is well documented through historic mapping and photographs from the later years of the post-medieval period through the modern. The documentary records and the evaluation work undertaken make the potential for finding heritage features not previously recorded low.

Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections

6.1.10 No archaeological evaluation trenching has been undertaken within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections. As a result, the assessment of potential is based on the available desk-based information, the Aerial Photography Survey and the geophysical survey undertaken of fields accessible within the Inter-Array Connections.

Palaeolithic to Bronze Age

6.1.11 There is an absence of previously recorded activity from the Palaeolithic to the Bronze Age within the Grid Connection Route study area.

6.1.12 As with the Solar Development Areas, the aerial survey has identified the potential for extensive remains of roddons and palaeochannels. There is potential to encounter organic-rich sedimentary sequences dating from the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic buried in roddons and palaeochannels located within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections. The depth of these deposits is undetermined at this stage. The recorded features following the trend of potential archaeological assets being located on the roddons is evident across the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections, consistent with the landscape potential of the Solar Development Areas. The aerial survey recorded a complex of features including ditches, enclosures and tracks extending from the Solar Development Areas and in GC_23 between Wool Hall Farm and the A151/Holbeach Road. The aerial survey has also indicated a likelihood of Neolithic or Bronze Age curvilinear ditches and enclosures in GC_08, GC_12, GC_13 and GC_21. However, as the morphology of these features are not exclusive to the prehistoric period, further field investigation may result in later dates, including the Iron Age to post-medieval periods. There is considered to be a moderate to low potential to encounter remains from these periods within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections.

Iron Age and Roman

6.1.13 The desk-based research identified potential for extensive remains of Iron Age and/or Roman date to survive within the Grid Connection Route, Inter-Array Connections and Solar Development Areas. The aerial survey indicates a density of archaeological features within the Overhead Inter-Array Connection between Parcels C and D hold a

potential for similar archaeological deposits as the adjacent Solar Development Areas. The aerial survey also indicates limited potential for Iron Age or Roman settlement activity, only identifying the Iron Age settlements and salterns recorded in the HER near the A16 to the north of Cowbit as an area of potential saltern activity for these time periods. When considered with the results of previous archaeological evaluation works undertaken within and adjacent to the Grid Connection Route this indicates that the potential for archaeological deposits from these periods decreases in the northern sections.

6.1.14 As previously discussed, the aerial survey indicated a likelihood of Neolithic or Bronze Age curvilinear ditches and enclosures in GC_08, GC_12, GC_13 and GC_21, but as the morphology of these features are not exclusive to the prehistoric period, further field investigation may result in later dates, including the Iron Age to post-medieval periods. Features, including a potential ring ditch approximately 9.5m in diameter identified in Area 20 are suggested to coincide with one of the roddons and reflect later prehistoric or Romano-British settlement activity.

6.1.15 There is considered to be a medium potential to encounter remains from the Iron Age and Roman period within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connection. This decreases to low in the northern sections of the Grid Connection Route.

Early Medieval and Medieval

6.1.16 The desk-based research identified limited early medieval activity within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections in the form of pottery scatters and documentary records of salterns. There is considered to be a low potential for previously unknown remains of early medieval date to survive within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections.

6.1.17 The research for the medieval activity within the study area identified records of medieval settlements, trackways and droveways that would have developed out of the early medieval period. Salt-making south of Pinchbeck Marsh Pumping Station (MLI89837) is attested in the 13th century and at Spalding Golf Club between the 12th and 13th centuries (MLI23633; ELI2260; ELI3293; ELI1610).

6.1.18 The aerial survey and additional historical aerial photographs did not distinguish between early medieval and medieval activity but instead confirmed the broad presence of medieval dylings (ridge and furrow) and cultivation marks extending from the Solar Development Area into the Inter-Array Connections and throughout fields GC_01 and GC_12, with further potential dylings in GC_12, GC_13, GC_21 and GC_34. As with the Solar Development Areas, these features were found to overlie both the roddons and palaeochannels indicating these features post-date the draining of the fens.

6.1.19 There is considered to be a low potential to encounter remains from the early medieval and medieval period within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections. However, it is likely that many of the agricultural and drainage features from these periods continued in use into the post-medieval period.

Post-Medieval

6.1.20 The post-medieval period in the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections is represented by the large number of isolated historic farmsteads in enclosed fields with associated drainage and ditches. The aerial survey confirmed the presence of post-medieval activity in the form of boundaries, often with associated drainage, ditches or cultivation marks. Post-medieval remains within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections are likely to relate to the agricultural exploitation, and may include isolated buildings, historic field boundaries, ridge and furrow, and fen circles.

6.1.21 The northern end of the Grid Connection Route was subject to archaeological evaluations including fieldwalking (ELI9314, ELI4354) and a watching brief (ELI9378) in advance of the construction of a gas pipeline that resulted in pottery, brick, clay pipe, glass fragments and iron nails consistent of the 18th to 20th century (Oxford Archaeology 2003a-b). Finds within the topsoil during the watching brief were consistent with the fieldwalking and it was concluded that the material was likely the result of manuring carried out in the area from the 17th century onwards and where deposited below the topsoil were likely of alluvial origin (Oxford Archaeology 2003b, 4).

6.1.22 The Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections are well documented through historic mapping and photographs from the later years of the post-medieval period through the modern. The documentary records and the evaluation work undertaken make the potential for finding heritage features not previously recorded low.

Modern

6.1.23 Within the Grid Connection Route and Inter-Array Connections records of modern date are represented by the 20th century Low Fulney Land Settlement Association Settlement (MLI25508). As with the post-medieval period the modern period is well documented and therefore the potential to identify heritage features not previously recorded is low.

7 Summary

7.1.1 The HEDBA was prepared to provide a detailed understanding of the historic environment baseline for the Scheme and its study area. The assessment utilised desk-based research and consulted various data sources including designated asset records, HER data, historic maps, grey literature, aerial photographs and other documentary sources. An aerial photography and LiDAR assessment has been completed for the Scheme to identify cropmark evidence of possible archaeological remains.

7.1.2 A geophysical survey of the Solar Development Areas, the Inter-Array Connections between Parcels A and B. The results of this survey have been used to inform this assessment and the methodology of the archaeological evaluation trenching.

7.1.3 Archaeological and geoarchaeological evaluation of the Solar Development Areas is currently ongoing. At the time of writing only an interim, summary report of the findings is available, and the assessments within this report have been based on this.

7.1.4 The work has identified a complex historic landscape with multiple phases of occupation and exploitation of natural resources such as salt production. High potential for previously unrecorded archaeological deposits has also been identified in some locations across the Scheme. The HEDBA has also established the presence of numerous built heritage assets and a modern, drained, agricultural landscape which retains some character elements that have not change since the fens were drained in the 17th century. Archaeological zones and identification of potential for further unknown archaeological assets within the Solar Development Area have been mapped. Heritage assets in the wider landscape which have a setting which may encompass elements of the Site or Scheme have also been identified and considered.

7.1.5 A full assessment of the significance of affected heritage assets and potential effects on the historic environment as a result the Scheme are presented in **ES Chapter 8: Cultural** Heritage (Doc Ref. 6.1).

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