



## Appendix 3C – Walkover Survey Report



## **SITE WALKOVER SURVEY: PROPOSED SOLAR FARM, THOROTON, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE**



*Looking towards Thorton from the proposed development area.*

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## Thoroton Farm Site Inspection Results

A site inspection was conducted on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> and Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2022. The aim of the inspection was to identify any previously unrecorded archaeological features at the site of a proposal solar farm at Thoroton Farm, Thoroton, Nottinghamshire. The inspection also confirmed the location and current condition of visible features recorded by the Nottinghamshire HER. The surrounding area contains several designated assets, including listed buildings and scheduled monuments. The inspection also ascertained whether the setting of any nearby designated assets would be impacted by the proposed development.

Weather conditions were overcast and misty, and recent weather conditions had left much of the ground very wet and muddy. Most of the site consisted of either ploughed field or young, low crop unlikely to conceal any surviving above ground archaeological features but there were occasional small wooded copses and strips of denser woodland where the ground was more obscure/inaccessible. Electricity pylons extend north-east to south-west across the approximate centre of the Site, through fields 3, 4, 6, 9 and 10.

The Site lies between the villages of Thoroton and Hawksworth, totalling some 141.16 ha and consisting of ten fields at between c. 19.0 and 28.0m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) (Plate 1).



Plate 1 Plan of the site showing the site inspection areas.

### Field 1

Field 1 comprised a sub-rectangular area. To the north-west is Main Road, which leads into Hawksworth, and to the north-east are agricultural fields that are not part of the proposed development area (PDA). Agricultural buildings on the edge of Hawksworth are to the south-west, where it also is partially adjacent to the grounds of Hawksworth Manor [M10122] with fields to the south and south-east. Field 2 is to the west. The field is bounded by hedgerows and tress, with a stream or field drain and small patch of woodland to the south-east and east. At the time of inspection, the ground surface consisted of very low, young crop (Plates 1-3).

There are no non-designated assets recorded within this area, and no archaeological remains were observed with the exception of moderate sherds of post-medieval to modern pottery. This was principally comprised of white slip wares and coarse earthen wares and consistent with a midden scatter. The potential impact on the setting of Hawksworth Manor is considered in the relevant section below.



Plate 2 Looking north-east across Field 1. The hedge to the left marks route of Main Street, with that in the centre following Longhedge Lane.



Plate 3 Looking east across Field 1 along the brideway that transects the site. Field 2 is beyond the hedge line and copse in the centre of the image.



Plate 4 Looking south-west across Field 1 from close to the boundary with Field 2. The agricultural buildings on the edge of Hawksworth are discernible in the centre-right of the image.

#### Field 2

Field 2 formed a rectangular area between fields 1, 3 and 4, and is bounded on all sides by hedgerows and drains, with small woodland copses to the north-east and south. The field had a small area forming an approximate east to west 'lip' to the south-west.

The 'lipped' area consisted of denser uncultivated vegetation than the remainder of the field, which was comprised of a low young crop. Occasional sherds of post-medieval to modern pottery was observed on the surface, along with some fragments of ceramic brick material (CBM) (Plates 5-6).

The Nottinghamshire HER lists a non-designated heritage asset within this area [L1738] consisting of a purported pit-alignment and trackway identified via aerial photography. These were mainly concentrated to the south and centre of the site (Plate 7). No discernible remains pertaining to this asset were observable, but this does not preclude the possibility that remains survive below the surface. No other archaeological finds, features or deposits were recorded in Field 2.



Plate 5 Looking west across the lip of Field 2. To the right is a small woodland copse that forms the southern boundary of the field.



Plate 6 Looking south-east across Field 2.



Plate 7 Looking north-west across Field 2. The Nottinghamshire HER holds records of non-designated assets, observed via aerial photography, in this part of the field.

### Field 3

Field 3 formed a roughly triangular shaped area of land, also recently planted and with a low crop on the surface. To the south was a wide strip of grass. This field was bounded by hedgerows and with Longhedge Lane to the north and Cliffhill Lane to the east; with fields 4 and 5 to the south, and Field 2 to the west. To the north-east is another agricultural field which is not part of the PDA. The field exhibits a gentle slope from the north-east to the south-west and west, with a deep drain along the southern edge (Plates 8-10).

Occasional post-medieval to modern pottery was observed on the surface, as well as CBM fragments. There were no non-designated assets recorded in this area by the Nottinghamshire HER, although aerial

photography suggesting occupational activity is held for the adjacent field 4 to the south; however no features were observed during the inspection (Plate 10).



Plate 8 Looking south-west across Field 3 and towards Field 4.



Plate 9 Looking west across the grassed southern part of Field 3 towards Field 4 and with Field 5 just visible at left.





Plate 10 Looking north-west across Field 3, giving a good indication of the slop up towards Longhedge Lane and Cliffhill Lane.

#### Field 4

Situated approximately in the centre of the Site, Field 4 formed a sub-rectangular piece of land bounded by fields 3, 5 and 6 to the north, east and south respectively, and by agricultural fields outside of the PDA to the west. The borders were principally formed of hedgerows, with a deep drain along the northern edge and a trackway to the south. This field was not planted, and had apparently been left since the harvest of the previous crop (Plates 11 - 13).

The Nottinghamshire HER holds records of three non-designated assets within the area of Field 4, consisting of an Iron Age pottery scatter [L1503] and features relating to a probable enclosure complex [L10764/L1502]. The latter were recorded by aerial photography of cropmarks. These features could not be ascertained during the inspection, but this does not preclude their existence below the surface. Consistent with other fields in the PDA, only post-medieval and later pottery sherds were observed during the inspection.



Plate 11 Looking north across Field 4. Cropmarks indicative of an enclosure complex have been recorded via aerial photography, but no remains could be ascertained on the surface.



Plate 12 Looking west across Field 4. The drain between fields 3 and 4 is indicated by the tree and hedge line to the right of the image.



Plate 13 Looking south-east across Field 4. No evidence for the enclosure complex can be seen at the surface.

#### Field 5

This field consisted of a small and essentially level square area, bounded by hedgerows on all sides and with fields 3, 4 and 7 to the north, west and south; and by Cliffhill Lane to the east. The ground was turned over but did not have a growing crop on the surface. Immediately opposite, off Cliffhill Lane, a double linear feature had been recorded via aerial photography [L1505], which partially intrudes into the south-east of the field. This could not be observed during the inspection but sub-surface remains may survive in this part of the field (Plates 14 and 15).



Plate 14 Looking north-east across Field 5, with Field 3 to the top of the image and a thick hedgerow indicating the line of Cliffhill Lane.



Plate 15 Looking north-west across Field 5 from Cliffhill Lane.

#### Field 6

Field 6, comprising a sub-rectangular area was bounded by fields 4, 7, 9 and 10 to the north, east, south-east and south respectively. Between this area and fields 7 and 9 were strips of woodland, with a further small woodland copse to the north-west of the field. The remainder was enclosed by hedgerows, with a large agricultural field to the west separating the PDA from the village of Hawksworth. The ground surface consisted of young, low crops. No significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed during the site inspection in this area (Plates 16 and 17).



Plate 16 Looking west along the thick hedge boundary separating fields 6 (right) and 10, showing the slope up to the western boundary of the PDA, indicated by the hedge and tree-line across the centre of the image.



Plate 17 Looking north-east across Field 6. Note the strip of woodland along the eastern boundary which completely screens this area from fields 7 and 9.

#### Field 7

Situated immediately to the east of Field 6, this area formed a narrow rectangular field aligned approximately north to south along Cliffhill Lane. Hedgerows separated this area from Field 5 to the north, and Field 9 to the south; the latter also divided by a stream. The thin strip of woodland noted above was to the west, separating this area from Field 6.



Plate 18 Looking north-west across Field 7. Field 6 is beyond the strip of woodland across the centre of the image.

### Field 8

Field 8 was the only part of the PDA on the eastern side of Cliffhill Lane. This formed a sub-rectangular area, essentially level, and bounded by hedgerows. To the north, east and south were agricultural fields beyond the PDA. This field had a young crop on the surface (Plates 19 and 20).

The Nottinghamshire HER holds records of four non-designated assets in this area. Three consist of pottery and flint finds dating from the Prehistoric [L8132], Romano-British [L8131] and Early Medieval periods [L7365]. No finds pertaining to these periods were observed during the site inspection, but moderate amount of post-medieval to modern pottery and CBM fragments were noted. The fourth asset consists of enclosures observed during aerial photography [L1506]. These could not be seen during the site visit, but this does not preclude their survival below the surface.



Plate 19 Looking north-east across Field 8.



Plate 20 Looking south-east across Field 8. Enclosures recorded by aerial photography in this area were not visible during the inspection.

#### Field 9

Field 9 was sub-rectangular in shape, with a curved northern edge following the line of a stream/drain separating it from fields 6 and 7. To the east, a hedgerow formed the boundary with Cliffhill Lane and to the south with Thoroton Road which separated this area from Field 10 to the south-west and a modern housing development to the south. The area was level, and had a new crop at the surface which obscured much of the ground. No heritage assets were recorded as being present in this area – a map depiction of a Pinfold [M1707] lay beyond the south-east corner of the field across Cliffhill Lane but this area is now within a private residence.



Plate 21 Looking north along the hedgerow boundary between Field 9 (left) and Cliffhill Lane (right). Field 7 is just visible to the top and left of the image. A small stream curves across the centre of the image between the two fields. The small wooded area centre-right screens a small water works that is accessed from Cliffhill Lane that is not part of the PDA.



Plate 22 Looking west towards the woodland strip between Field 9 (foreground) and Field 6 beyond. The hedgerow seen to the left of the image marks the path of Thoroton Lane. Field 10 is to the south of this road.

#### Field 10

This area formed the southernmost section of the PDA, comprised of a large sub-rectangular field with a strip of woodland across the south and centre of the field. This field was turned over and the topography was gently undulating, but with a discernible slope up to the north-east corner of the field (Plates 23-24).

The Nottinghamshire HER holds documentary evidence for a mill [L1718] at the south-east corner of the field, but no surviving remains could be observed at the surface (Plate 24). To the north of the area prehistoric flints were recovered during field walking [L1498], but no finds pertaining to this period were observed during the site inspection. Moderate quantities of post-medieval to modern pottery were observed, consisting of white slip and coarse earthen wares. No significant archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed during the inspection of Field 10.





Plate 23 Looking south-west across Field 10. The strip of woodland is in the centre of the field which continues beyond.



Plate 24 Looking north-east across Field 10 to the south-west of the site and strip of woodland across the centre of the field. Documentary evidence suggests a mill existed in this area, but no remains could be discerned at the surface.

#### Setting of Designated Assets

The Site is located in a rural setting on undulating ground, with the highest points being to the north and west. Parts of the Site are effectively screened from each other by patches of woodland, and the whole is bounded by hedge and tree lines. The surrounding countryside demonstrates the same characteristics, and there are no direct uninterrupted views to or from the PDA and any designated heritage assets. The Site lies between, and effectively adjacent to, the villages of Thoroton and Hawksworth and the greatest potential for the proposed development to impact on nearby designated assets lay in these two areas.

Additionally, within a 2km radius of the PDA are five further groups of designated assets, located off Hawksworth Road, and at Sibthorpe, Shelton, Flawborough and Orston.

#### *Thoroton*

The designated assets (listed buildings) at Thoroton are located on the opposite side of the village to the development, with the exception of Field 8 to the north, meaning that the buildings along the eastern side of the village lie between the heritage assets and the PDA. Substantial new development has already been built and is occurring along the eastern edge of the village to the north forming an additional screen (Plates 25-28). In closest proximity to the Site are the Grade II listed Manor Farm [M10152] and the Grade I listed Church of St Helena [M1595], situated on Church Lane. There are no views to or from the PDA and these assets, through a combination of buildings, and floral screening from surrounding gardens and woodland patches (Plates 29-31). The tower of the church is the only visible designated asset from the PDA (Plates 26 and 27).



Plate 25 Looking north-west from close to the Thoroton Dovecote [M1722], with new developments adjacent to Field 10 visible above the hedge to the right of the image.



Plate 26 Looking south-west towards Thoroton from western boundary of Field 6. Field 10 is to the right. This is the highest point of the PDA. Note the new development to the right of the image.



Plate 27 Looking south towards Thoroton from the high ground to at the north of Field 3. The tower of the Church of St Helena is visible above the trees.



Plate 28 Looking north-west from the entrance to Church Lane. Fields 10 and 9 are behind the new developments in the foreground.



Plate 29 Looking west in the direction of Fields 9 and 10 from St Helena's churchyard, with Manor Farm on the right. The modern developments adjacent to the PDA are just visible to the left of the building through the trees.



Plate 30 Looking north in the direction of Field 8, which is out of sight beyond the second tree line just visible through those in the immediate foreground to the right of the image. The field immediately adjacent to the churchyard is not part of the PDA. Manor Farm is out of view to the left of the image.



Plate 31 Looking south from the southern edge of Field 8 towards Thoroton.

### Hawksworth

The designated assets at Hawksworth are concentrated in the centre of the village, where there are no clear views to or from the PDA. However, the Grade II listed Hawksworth Manor [M10122] lies to the east of the village. A field which is not part of the PDA lies between the grounds of the manor and fields 2, 4 and 6, with some screening provided by the boundary hedge and tree lines. The southern tip of Field 1 is adjacent to the northern grounds of the manor house, where there are further tree and hedge lines which

appear to form a thick screen. However, it is possible that parts of the proposed development will be at least partially visible from the upper floors of the manor house (Plates 32-35).



Plate 32 Looking north-west from the Church of St Mary and All Saints, Hawksworth [M1594], towards the PDA area.



Plate 33 Looking south-west across the part of Field 1 adjacent to the grounds of Hawksworth Manor, marked by the thick line of trees.



Plate 34 Looking north along the northern boundary of Field 6. There is a further field, not part of the PDA, to the west between this area and Hawksworth Manor.



Plate 35 Looking towards Hawksworth Manor from the bottom of Field 2, with Field 1 partially visible to the right of the image. The field in the foreground is not part of the PDA. The grounds of the manor are indicated by the trees in the centre of the image.

#### Hawksworth Road

Situated some 1.30km south of Hawksworth village are three designated heritage assets (listed buildings) associated with Scarrington House. These are set approximately 170m to the west off Hawksworth Lane and within landscaped grounds that effectively screen the assets from the road. There are no clear views to or from these assets and the PDA (Plate 36).



Plate 36 Looking in the direction of the PDA, situated some 1.25km from this point, from the entrance to Scarrington House off Hawksworth Lane.

### Sibthorpe

The designated assets at Sibthorpe consist of medieval earthwork remains and listed buildings concentrated to the south-east of the village adjacent to, and including the Church of St Peter. There are no clear, uninterrupted views to or from the PDA and the designated assets at Sibthorpe (Plates 37 and 38).



Plate 37 Looking in the direction of Sibthorpe across Field 1 towards the north-western boundary of the PDA. The ground level drops beyond the field boundary, indicated by the thick hedgerows.





Plate 38 Looking south in the direction of the PDA from the designated medieval remains at Sibthorpe, between the Church of St Peter and the Grade I listed Pigeoncote.

### Shelton

The designated assets at Shelton, some 1.30km to the north-east of the PDA, are grouped to the south-east within the historic core of the village. A number of hedgerows and tree lines marking field boundaries exist between the village and the PDA, which also sits on slightly lower ground. There are no views to or from the Site and designated assets at Shelton village.



Plate 39 Looking towards Shelton from Longhedge Lane at the top of Field 3. The buildings just visible in the centre are still some 700m south of the village itself and the closest designated assets, which are hidden by the flora surrounding the village.



Plate 40 Looking south-west from the edge of Shelton towards the Site which is obscured by the hedgerows and a drop in the landscape beyond the hedge in the foreground.

#### Flawborough

Flawborough is located on a ridge of high ground some 1.7km west of the PDA. Between the site and the village are a number of fields with hedgerow and tree boundaries as well as occasional woodland copses. The fields of the PDA are not discernible from the village. The assets (listed buildings) are within the core of the village which is screened by trees. Subsequently there are no direct views to or from the designated assets at Flawborough and the proposed development (Plates 41 and 42).



Plate 41 Looking west towards the PDA from the south of Flawborough. The Site is not discernible.



Plate 42 Looking towards Flawborough showing the trees screening the core of the village, where the designated assets are located. The church is behind the houses just visible through the trees in the centre of the image.

### Orston

Situated some 1.38km south-east of Thoroton, the designated assets (listed buildings) at Orston were contained within the core of the village, with the exception of Orston Hall situated just on the western edge. Thoroton village was not discernible from any point close to the hall, and the remaining assets were contained within the village itself. There were no views to or from the PDA and the designated assets at Orston (Plates 43 and 44).



Plate 43 Looking north-west in the direction of the Site from the top of the High Street, Orston. The trees across the centre are to the south-east and east of Thoroton village, and the PDA is not visible.



Plate 43 Looking north-west in the direction of the Site the eastern side of Orston, with the grounds of Orston Hall marked by the trees to the right.

A further six designated assets were situated within a 5km radius of the PDA. There were no clear views to or from the assets and the Site, which was not discernible. The landscape was predominantly interrupted by extensive hedges, tree lines and woods with undulating ground levels. These consisted of the edge of Stoke Battlefield (Plate 44), a timber circle recorded off Moor Lane (Plate 45), Flintham Hall and grounds (Plate 46), Kilvington Medieval Settlement (Plate 47), Cranmer's Mound and medieval remains at Aslockton (Plate 48) and the extensive medieval and Romano-British remains at Car Colston (Plate 49).



Plate 44 Looking south-east in the direction of the Site from the edge of Stoke battlefield across the A46. The PDA is not visible from this distance.



Plate 45 Looking south in the direction of the Site across the field (in the foreground) where a timber circle has been recorded.  
The Site is not visible.



Plate 46 Looking south-east in the direction of the Site from a point close to the grounds of Flintham Hall. The Site is not discernible from this distance.



Plate 47 Looking west-south-west in the direction of the Site from Kilvington Medieval Settlement. This monument is screened by trees on all sides. The PDA is not discernible from this distance.



Plate 48 Looking south into Aslockton. Cranmer's Mound is within the trees in the centre of the image. Designated medieval remains are further into the village itself to the south-west within the core.



Plate 49 Looking north-east in the direction of the Site from the scheduled monument at Car Colston (earthworks visible in the foreground). The PDA is not visible.

### Summary

No archaeological features were noted on the surface during the site inspection. Pottery on the surface of the plough soil was post-medieval to modern in date.

The results presented suggest that views to or from the Site and designated assets within the Study Area are effectively screened by the topography and hedgerow/tree lined field boundaries and areas of woodland. Additionally, the majority of the assets are contained within village cores where they are surrounded by other buildings. The possible exception is the upper floors of Hawksworth Manor, from which at least some part of the development may be perceived, although the grounds themselves have extensive floral screening.

The current landscape is characterised by villages surrounded, and separated, by agricultural land. The Nottinghamshire Historic Landscape Characterisation records the fields as “Modern, modified field patterns”. This category is used for fields where earlier patterns shown on 19<sup>th</sup> century mapping is no longer present or has been radically reorganised. Although post-medieval pottery indicates agricultural use, the current configuration of fields would appear to be modern. The change in land use from agricultural land to use as a solar farm would constitute a change to the landscape character.