

# Archaeological Watching Brief

**Corner Farm  
Sherburn  
North Yorkshire**

## LS Archaeology



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**December 2014**

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**Site:** Corner Farm, Main Street, Sherburn, North Yorkshire

**Site Codes:** CFS 14

**County:** North Yorkshire

**NGR:** SE 9597 7682

**Planning Application No:** 13/00722/FUL

**Development:** Change of use, alteration and extension of former agricultural buildings to form a 6-bedroom holiday let with leisure facilities and formation of car park for visitor use

**Date of Issue:** 02/12/14

**Site Dates:** 01-07/11/14

**Project by:** LS Archaeology Whitwell on the Hill North Yorkshire  
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**Client:** Mrs. Joan Combs

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## Summary

A program of archaeological observation, investigation and recording at Corner Farm, High Street, Sherburn, North Yorkshire was undertaken during the ground works associated with the alterations and extension of former agricultural buildings to form a 6-bedroom holiday let with leisure facilities and formation of car park for visitor use. Two main areas were affected by the new development; the west wing, with new walls foundations and excavation for the installation of a spa and sauna, and a foundation for a new supporting wall set between the iron columns within the court yard area. The removal of top soil and windblown sand deposits along both foundation trenches of the spa area revealed the presence of a doubled phased ditch. No other archaeological remains were found during this investigation.

## Introduction

L S Archaeology was commissioned by Lifestyle Builders Ltd. on behalf of Mrs. Joan Combs, to undertake an archaeological program of observation, investigation and recording, requested by the building Contractor in accordance with the planning conditions set by Ryedale District Council dated September 2013. It complies with the guidance from Archaeology and Planning (NPPF), and Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief Institute for Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2001).

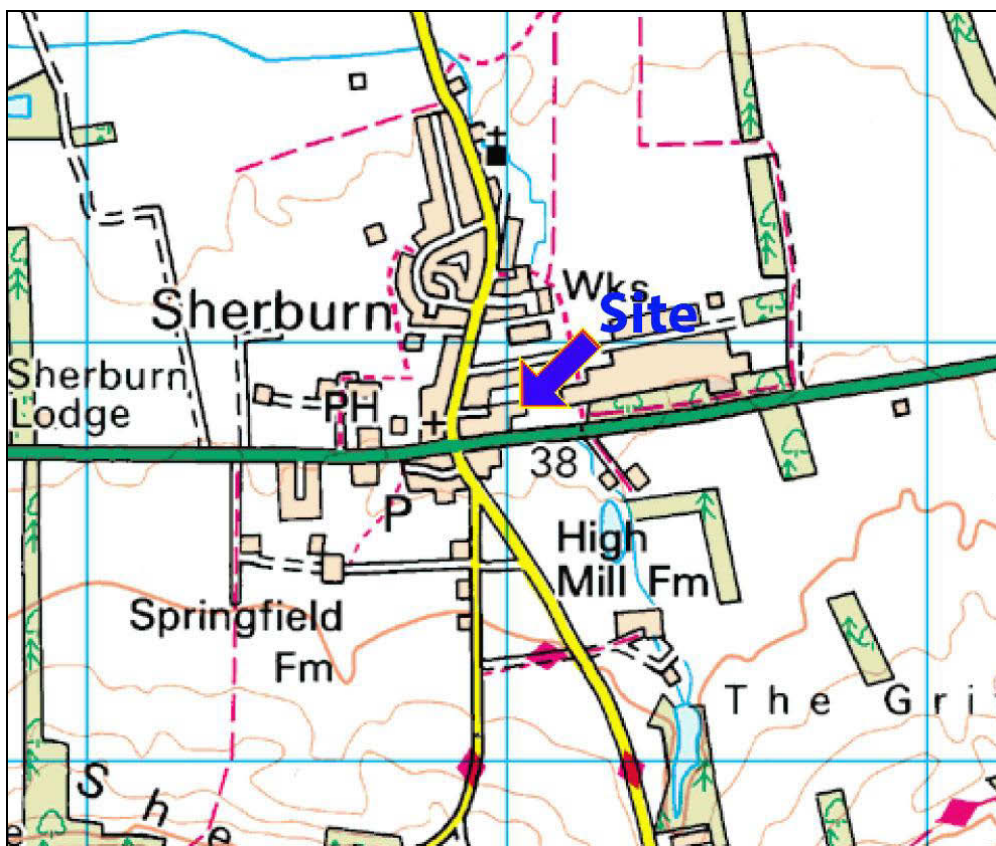


Figure 1: Corner Farm, location (copy from Streetmap.co.uk)

This report serves as a short report on the result of the monitoring of all ground works at Corner Farm, Main Street, Sherburn, North Yorkshire, related to the area impacted by the new alteration and extension of the property.

The archaeological evaluation was carried out in order to characterize the archaeological potential of the development areas in accordance with the criteria set out within PPS5. The work was carried out in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) Produced by Luigi Signorelli from LS Archaeology.

The condition states: *'No development shall take place until the application has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with the written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details (cf. PPG16, para.30; Circular 11/95, Model Clause 55).*

From March 2010, PPG16 planning guidance was cancelled and replaced by PPS5 (Planning Policy Statement) *Planning for the Historic Environment*. The Watching Brief has been carried out in accordance with section HE12 of this new policy, and it also complies with the Guidance for an Archaeological Field Evaluation Institute for Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2008).

PPS5(Planning Policy Statement 5) states that:

*"Where the loss of the whole or a material part of a heritage asset's significance is justified, local planning authorities should require the developer to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is lost..."* (PPS5, HE 12.3).

PPS5 has been replaced in 2012 by the National Planning Policy Framework, this report also complies with the Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Field Evaluation Institute for Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2008), and guidance from NPPF 2012. Section 12 of the NPPF; 'Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' provides guidance on the treatment of heritage assets.

Corner Farm is situated immediately adjacent to the A64 at the east end of Sherburn village. The site lies at approximately 38.5m above Ordnance Datum ([Figure 1](#)[Figure 2](#)).

The geology comprises; of *Speeton Clay Formation - Mudstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 100 to 146 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. Settings; shallow seas. These rocks were formed in shallow seas with mainly siliciclastic sediments (comprising of fragments or clasts of silicate minerals) deposited as mud, silt, sand and gravel.* (British Geological Survey).

## Archaeological Background

The proposed development lies within an area of high archaeological potential and significance within the historic core of Sherburn village. Previous archaeological work in Sherburn has revealed evidence for former medieval occupation of 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century, in addition to earlier material of the prehistoric, Roman and Anglo – Saxon periods.

In advance of housing development at West Garth, in 1957/58 and 1968/69, two large archaeological excavations uncovered evidence for a large medieval building complex interpreted as that of the medieval manor (Brewster, Yorkshire Archaeological Journal, 1994).

Medieval remains were also encountered more recently during an extension to the village hall and at The Old Vicarage.

## Development

The planned development is for the change of use, alteration and extension of former agricultural buildings to form a 6-bedroom holiday let with leisure facilities and formation of car park for visitor use.

Some of the former agricultural buildings will require new foundations and new services.

Consequently all the ground works including the excavation of the remaining services will be monitored by a qualified archaeologist.



Figure 2: Site location, outlined in red (picture from Google Earth)

## Aims and Objectives

Considering that the development lies within an area of high archaeological sensitivity, the

key of the evaluation is to understand the impact that the development may have upon any archaeological remains. Specifically the evaluation sought to recover information revealing that:

- To establish the depth of topsoil and confirm the presence of a layer of wind blown sand
- The presence or absence of any medieval features
- The presence or absence of any evidence of early activity on site

## Methodology

The objectives were met by monitoring the foundations for the new west wing serviced with pool and spa, the foundations for the new open windows for the dining areas and all foundations related to manholes and associated service trenches (Figure 3). The removal of top-soil and any other deposits within the trench limits were conducted under the supervision of a qualified archaeologist, and the whole operation was done by using a mechanical excavator fitted with a back-actor and straight edged ditching blade/bucket.

The ground surface consisted of a mixture of compacted topsoil and buildings debris.

The watching brief was carried out between 1<sup>st</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

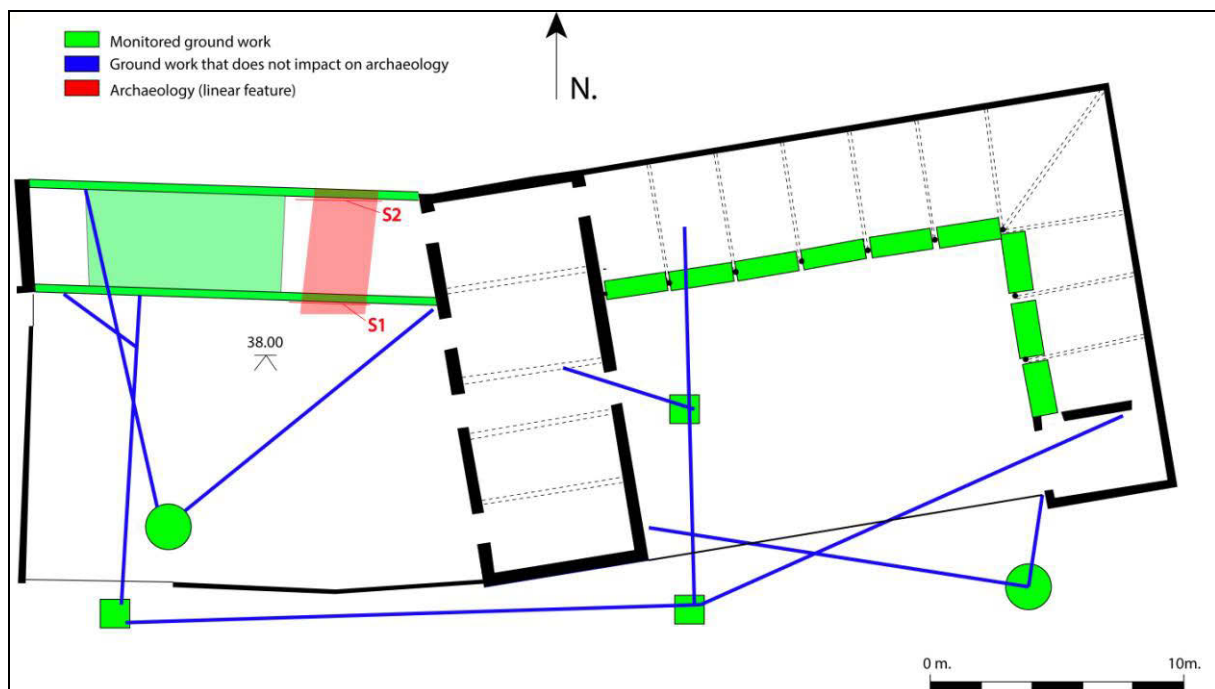


Figure 3: Site plan



## Results

The site was formerly occupied by a small farmstead. All the new foundations and service trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a small toothless bucket.

The excavation of all service trenches to a depth of 0.20m only impacted the top-soil, as a result no archaeology was recorded within the limits of any of these trenches (Figure 3).

The foundations comprises of a total of eleven trenches; two parallel foundation trenches associated with the new west wing, running on an east to west direction measuring circa 15.00m in length, were excavated to a depth of 0.90m. Further nine small trenches were excavated between the supporting columns of the court yard roof, in order to create foundations for the installation of large window panels. In addition five manholes were excavated as part of the new services network. joined by three trenches of 7.50m in length set on an east to west alignment (Figure 3 **Error! Reference source not found.**).

All the trenches measuring 0.80m in width were excavated to an average depth of 0.90m into the natural, an orange clay-sand firm deposit (context 8).

The top soil (context 1), a very dark brown clay silt sand material mixed with small pebbles and gravel measuring 0.30m in depth appeared to overlay a reddish brown sandy silty deposit (context 9) interpreted as the windblown sand deposit which is a common archaeological feature and occurs along the whole of the Vale of Pickering.

During the archaeological watching brief of the west wing, a modern pit (context 2) and a double phased linear feature (context 4 and 6) were discovered within the limits of the foundation trenches.

These two features were the only archaeological evidence encountered on site, while feature 2 dates to the modern period the north south ditch (context 4 and 6) could date to the medieval period.

## Features 2

Located towards the northeast side of the west court yard, this feature measuring 1.0m in depth and 1.70m in width, was recognized and recorded from section, having vertical edges, and uneven base. The fill consisting of a brown sandy silty clay deposit, contained sporadic fragments of modern rubble and stones (Figure 4 Figure 5).

This pit (context 2) appeared to cut through all the deposits, modern topsoil, windblown sand and partially impacted on feature 4.

## Features 4 and 6

Feature 4 with both edges cutting the natural at about 50° degree angle and a concaved base, appears to be a north to south aligned ditch measuring 1.90m in width and 0.60m in depth, filled by a single deposit (context 3) which consists of an orange brown sandy silt material mixed with small angular and rounded small limestone gravel (Figure 4 Figure 5).



Figure 4: Section showing modern pit (context 2) cutting through feature 4

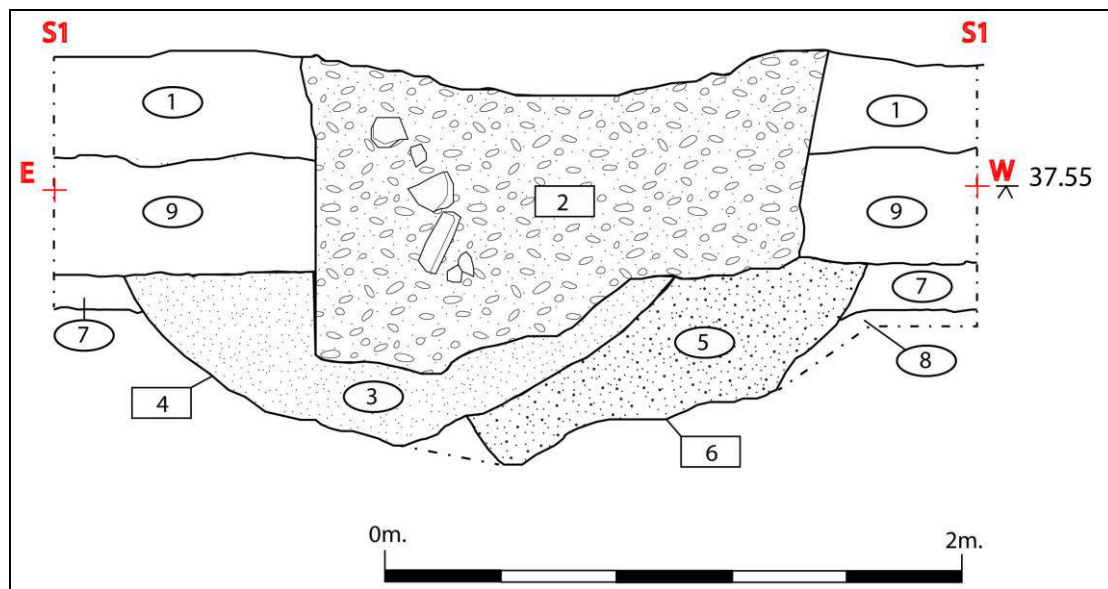


Figure 5: Drawing of section 1, showing the modern pit and the double phased ditch seen in the south foundation trench

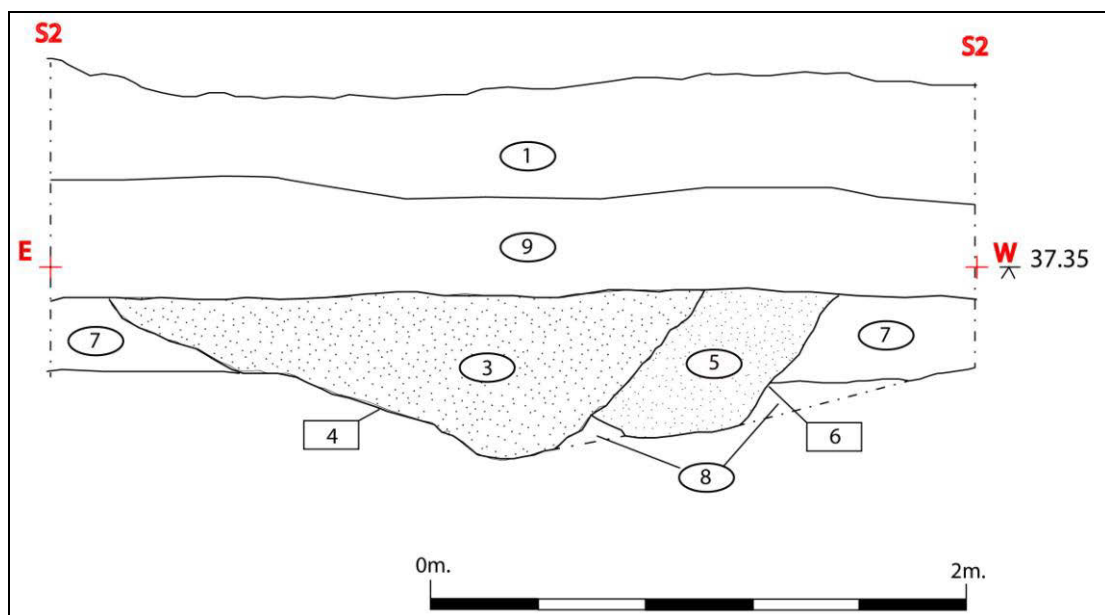
Although in plan Feature 4 was thought to be a single linear structure running on a north to south direction between both the foundation trenches, in section it clearly appeared of a later phase, cutting an earlier linear feature (context 6) set on a similar alignment.

Feature 6, filled by a single brown sandy silt deposit mixed with rounded and angular chalk gravel, measures approximately 1.30m in width and 0.50m in depth. Although the eastern edge of this feature has been truncated by ditch 4, the western edge cuts the natural at about 45° degree angles towards an uneven base.

Both features were overlaid by the windblown sand deposit (context 9). No dating material was recovered during the excavation and recording of these features.



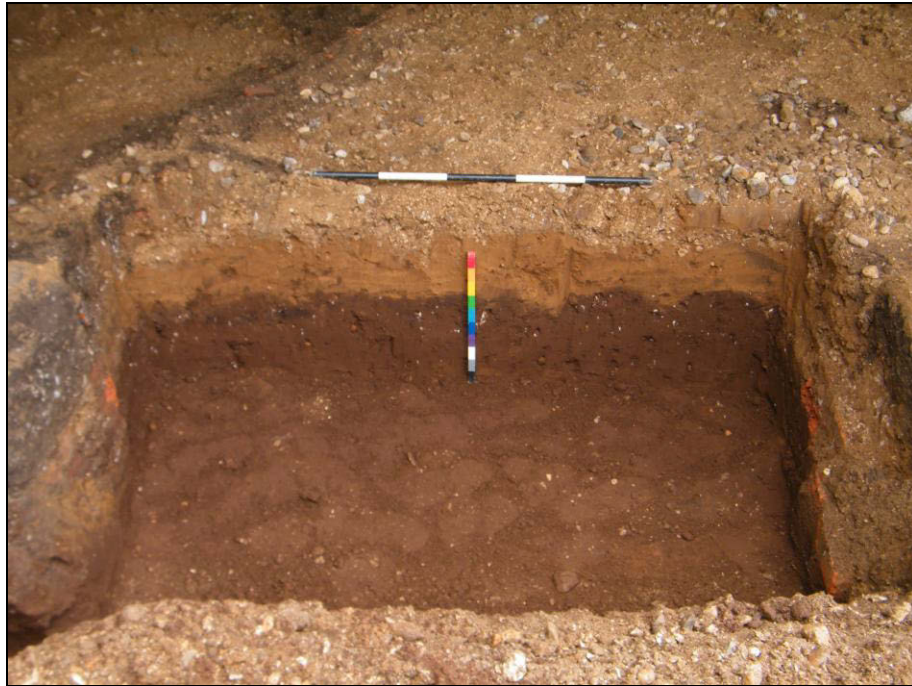
**Figure 6: Section showing feature 4 and 6**



**Figure 7: Drawing of section 2, showing the double phased ditch seen in the north foundation trench**

All the remaining nine foundation trenches excavated to a maximum depth of 0.70m, along the supporting structure of the court yard roof, only impacted the windblown sand,

as consequence no archaeological features were identified within the limits of these foundations (Figure 3).



**Figure 8: Section through one of the courtyard foundation trench**

The stratigraphy within the courtyard foundations area, consisted of a 0.30m of made-up ground mostly formed by a mixture of chalk rubble, old mortar, sand and gravel, overlaying a 0.40m of reddish brown windblown sand deposit (context 9).

## Conclusion

The only archaeological evidence encountered on site consisted of a doubled phase north south orientated linear feature, interpreted as possible boundary field ditch of no date, although considering that it appears to have been buried by the windblown sand deposit, it is more likely to be of an early date, most likely to be either Iron Age, Romano British or Early Medieval.

No other archaeological features were observed during this archaeological investigation.

## Bibliography

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December 2014

## Appendix A

### Contents of the Site Archive;

The archive consists of digital photographs and two section drawings.

Contest No	Type	Description
1	Deposit	1, consisted of s very dark brown sandy silt deposit 0.30m deep, identified as topsoil.
2	Modern Feature	2, consisted of a brown sandy silt deposit mixed with small and large chalk fragments, infilling a large pit with vertical edges and uneven base.
3	Fill	3, consisted of an orange brown sandy deposit, mixed with chalk gravel. Fill of ditch 4.
4	Cut	4, re cut of a large linear feature with a large U shaped profile and concaved base, running on a north to south direction.
5	Fill	5, consisted of an orange brown sandy silt material with pockets of dark brown sand and sporadic concentration of charcoal and small gravel. Fill of ditch 6.
6	Cut	6, early boundary ditch 4, similar shape in profile as ditch 4 and follows on the same alignment.
7	Subsoil	Yellow brown silt sand material overlay natural deposit, 0.15m deep.
8	Natural	Natural deposit, which consists of a reddish brown clay mixed with chalk bloks.
9	Windblown sand	Reddish brown windblown sand deposit 0.040m deep.

**Table 1: List of contexts**

## Appendix B

### OASIS entry:

**OASIS ID: *Isarchae1-198654***

#### Project details

Project name	Watching Brief at Corner Farm, Sherburn, N Yorks
Short description of the project	A program of archaeological observation, investigation and recording at Corner Farm, High Street, Sherburn, North Yorkshire was undertaken during the ground works associated with the alterations and extension of former agricultural buildings to form a 6-bedroom holiday let with leisure facilities and formation of car park for visitor use. Two main areas were affected by the new development; the west wing, with new walls foundations and excavation for the installation of a spa and sauna, and a foundation for a new supporting wall set between the iron columns within the court yard area. The removal of top soil and windblown sand deposits along both foundation trenches of the spa area revealed the presence of a doubled phased ditch. No other archaeological remains were found during this investigation.
Project dates	Start: 01-11-2014 End: 07-11-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	AGRICULTURAL Modern
Monument type	AGRICULTURAL Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Visual Inspection"
Development type	Building refurbishment/repairs/restoration
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

#### Project location

Country	England
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Site location	NORTH YORKSHIRE SCARBOROUGH BROMPTON Corner Farm, Sherburn
Postcode	YO17 8QB
Study area	0 Kilometres
Site coordinates	SE 9597 7682 54.1780002654 -0.529443622267 54 10 40 N 000 31 46 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 37.00m Max: 38.00m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	LS Archaeology
Project brief originator	Contractor (design and execute)
Project design originator	L Signorelli
Project supervisor	L Signorelli
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive Exists?	No
Paper Media available	"Diary", "Report", "Section"

Entered by	I. Signorelli (lsarchaeology@gmail.com)
Entered on	22 December 2014