

**Hockwold Heath,
Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk**

Planning application: NA

HER Ref: ENF 128566

Archaeological Evaluation Report

(© John Newman BA MIFA, 2 Pearsons Place, Henley, Ipswich, IP6 0RA)

(February 2012)

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Site details for HER

Name: Hockwold Heath, Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk, IP26 4NQ

Client: Butterfly Conservation

Local planning authority: Kings Lynn & West Norfolk DC

Planning application ref: NA

Project: Restoration of c0.8ha back to heath land

Date of fieldwork: 17 February 2012

HER Ref: ENF 128566

SM: immediately to the west of monument NF 51, the Fossditch (HER 1089)

HER: Burial mounds 32594, 33453 & 33454 to south & 4991, 33604, 33605 & 56274 to north

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-119860

Grid ref: TL 7587 8991

Site of Special Scientific Interest

Landowner: The Forestry Commission

Land management: Norfolk Wildlife Trust

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Summary: Hockwold cum Wilton, Hockwold Heath (ENF 128566, TL 7587 8991) evaluation trenching along the eastern edge of a proposed c0.80ha area of heath land restoration 7m west of the fence marking the limit of the scheduled area protecting the Fossditch did not reveal any archaeological features or any finds save one small secondary flint flake (John Newman Archaeological Services for Butterfly Conservation).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 Butterfly Conservation commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological evaluation works for an area of proposed heath land restoration at Hockwold Heath, Hockwold cum Wilton (see Fig. 1). The evaluation requirements were set out in a Brief (see Appendix II), following full consultation with English Heritage, the County archaeological advisory service and The Forestry Commission, by Mr D Robertson of the Historic Environment Service at Norfolk CC. The aim of the evaluation being to gain a representative sample by trial trenching of that part of the proposed works closest to the Fossditch, a Scheduled Monument of national importance under statutory protection. In addition there are four burial mounds recorded to the north of the area concerned and three to the south. The Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological evaluation was subsequently prepared by JNAS in order to allow the trenching to go ahead before any deep ploughing for the proposed restoration works.

1.2 Hockwold-cum-Wilton parish is located some 10 miles north-west of Thetford in south-west Norfolk with Hockwold Heath being on the eastern side of the parish running up to the Fossditch and Weeting-cum-Broomhill parish to the east. The area for the proposed environmental works is largely flat at c15m OD with well drained sandy soils and is under Forestry Commission ownership. Being a dry area with poor soils it is likely that historic use of the area prior to the 20th century was for extensive sheep grazing with some areas of heath also being used as rabbit warren. These generally low intensity and non-invasive uses leading to a landscape where earthworks from various periods; such as barrows and land boundaries, have survived.

1.3 As outlined in section 1.1 above the archaeological potential relates to the area for the proposed works being close to a number of burial mounds of Bronze Age and later date and very close to a major historic landscape feature, the Fossditch. The Fossditch has been examined in part where it crosses a Roman period site to the south in Weeting parish where it was found to have been constructed in the very late 4th century or later at this point (Clarke, 1955). As a major land boundary this linear feature therefore falls into a group consisting of various East Anglian 'Dark Age' or post-Roman monuments presumably constructed to mark tribal territories in the sub-Roman or Early to Middle Saxon period. While the concept of a large ditch and bank as a boundary is clear related features, such as subsidiary ditches, are known of elsewhere along the Fossditch and the proposed works had the potential to affect such features. The aim of the evaluation was therefore to examine the specified sample of the site under controlled conditions so, if archaeological deposits are revealed, a strategy could be formulated for their preservation in situ through modification and re-planning of the proposed works following examination and sampling of exposed features in order to fully characterise them.

1.4 At the time of the evaluation the area concerned was under a dense rough grass cover having been under coniferous tree cover up to a strip of ground c7m west of the fence marking the western limit of the Scheduled Monument area protecting the Fossditch from the early to mid 20th century until recent felling and de-stumping operations.

1.5 As outlined above the area of the proposed environmental enhancement works is therefore seen as having high potential for archaeological deposits to be present and the proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance. Therefore the HES at Norfolk CC advised that the planned works should be conditional upon an agreed programme of archaeological works taking place before deep ploughing and turf stripping begins in accordance with PPS 5 *Planning for the Historic Environment* and Natural England's *Impact of heathland restoration and recreation techniques on soil characteristics and the historic environment* (2008) to record and allow the assessment and study of any heritage assets at the site before they might be damaged or destroyed. The initial stage of this programme of works being the evaluation by trial trenching to a trench plan as attached to the relevant Brief from HES of three 30m long and 1.8m wide trenches. These trenches to be evenly spaced across the area concerned and parallel to the bank of the Fossditch with the eastern edge of each trench being 7m from the fence to the west of the bank of the Fossditch (see Fig. 2).

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 The area of the proposed heath land restoration works was trenched to the suggested plan (see Fig. 2) using a wheeled 180 machine equipped with a 1.60m flat bucket on its back arm under continuous archaeological supervision with any indistinct areas being hand cleaned for better clarity. The three 30m long by 1.80m wide trenches giving an area examined of 162m² or c2% of the proposed heath land restoration area. The location of each trench was marked using tapes and a measuring wheel at the start of the evaluation.

2.2 The glaciofluvial deposits exposed in the base of the trenches, as outlined in the table below, varied between a pale brown to yellow sand with small flints and a degraded chalk 'putty'. The upcast spoil from the trenches was examined visually for any finds as the work progressed. Site visibility for features and finds is considered to have been good throughout the evaluation which was undertaken under dry and sunny conditions. As the evaluation progressed a full photographic record in digital format (see Appendix I) was taken of the trenching works.

3. Results

3.1 In this case the results are most easily summarised as in the table below as very little of archaeological interest was revealed:

Trench	Orientation	Length (m)	Topsoil depth (mm)	Subsoil depth (mm)	Drift geology	Archaeological /natural features
1	NE/SW	30	180	200 pale to mid brown sand	Yellow sand with small flints (30% of trench) & degraded chalk 'putty' (70%)	Evidence for recent de-stumping to depth of 400/450mm
2	NE/SW	30	150	200 pale to mid brown sand	Pale brown to yellow sand with small flints (85%) & degraded chalk 'putty' (15%)	Similar de-stumping evident
3	NE/SW	30	150	150 mid brown sand	Pale brown to yellow sand with small flints (40%) & degraded chalk 'putty' (60%)	Similar de-stumping evident

Table 1: Trench details (see Fig. 2 & Appendix I)

3.2 With no archaeological features being revealed the only ground disturbance revealed below the subsoil and penetrating into the local glaciofluvial deposits proved to have been caused by tree roots and recent de-stumping operations. Sections of tree roots and stumps were still present though in a moderately degraded state.

3.3 The only find recovered from the upcast spoil was a small (5g), stray, patinated secondary flint flake of probable Neolithic/earlier Bronze Age date.

4. Conclusion

4.1 With such negative results with regard to past activity along the western side of The Fossditch it can be concluded that the proposed deep ploughing for heath land restoration will not impact on associated archaeological features up to the evaluated strip 7m from the fence line along the western edge of the Scheduled Monument area.

4.2 It is suggested that this 7m 'buffer' zone be clearly marked prior to deep ploughing operations starting and that the machinery used operates on north-east/south-west lines to the west of this zone.

Archive- to be deposited with the Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service under the HER ref. ENF 128566.

Disclaimer- any opinions regarding the need for further archaeological work in relation to this proposed development are those of the author's alone. Formal comment regarding the need for further work and other matters must be sought from the relevant official Archaeological Advisors.

(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to Sharon Hearle from Butterfly Conservation and Tim Pankhurst from Plant Life for their help on site and to Kevin from W R Chapman & Sons for his skilful machine operation)

Clarke, R R 1955 'The Fossditch. A Linear Earthwork in South-West Norfolk,' *Norfolk Archaeol.* 31, 224-232

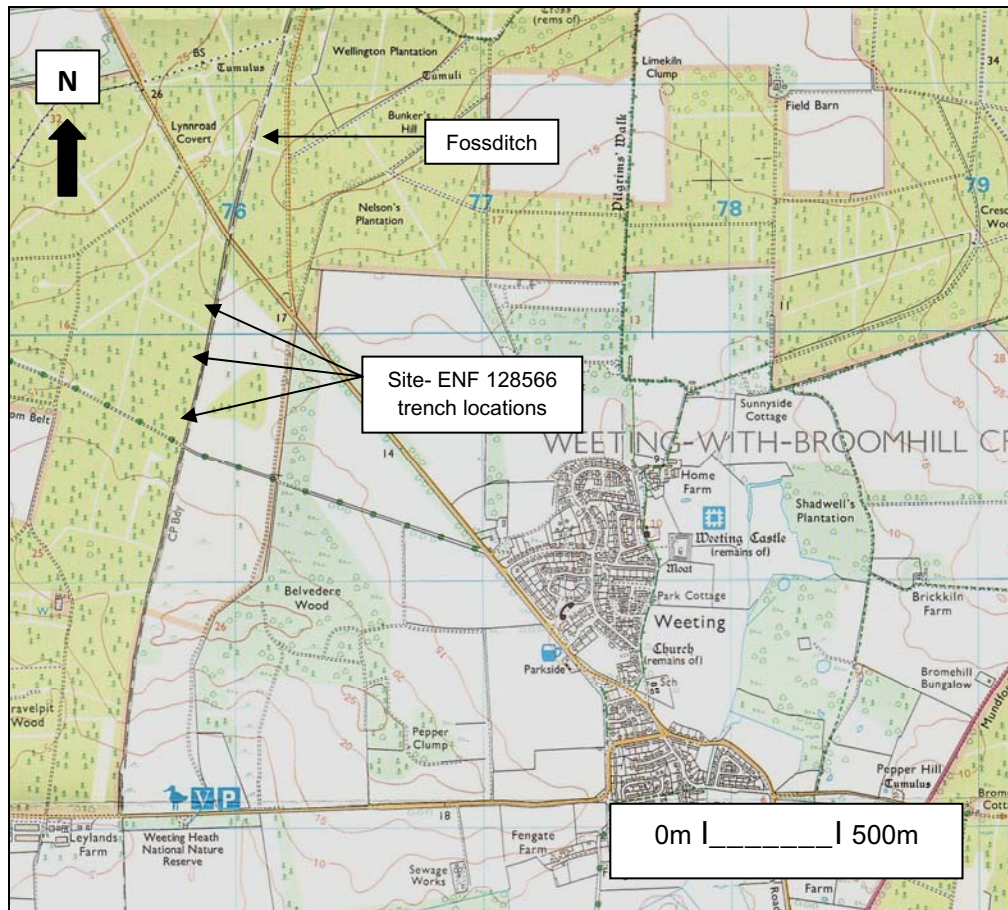


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2008
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Fig. 2: Location of trenches

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Appendix I- Images



General view of trenching with Fossditch behind



Trench 1 from south



Trench 2 from south



Trench 3 from south



Trenches from top of Fossditch bank looking north east



Trenches from top of Fossditch bank looking south west



BRIEF FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION BY TRIAL TRENCHING
AT

**HOCKWOLD HEATH
HOCKWOLD-CUM-WILTON
NORFOLK**

HES REFERENCE	CNF43859
ASSOCIATED.	Y
NHER NO. FOR THIS PROJECT:	To be arranged
GRID REFERENCE:	TL75878991
MAP EXTRACT ATTACHED:	Y
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:	Deep ploughing and/or turf stripping
CURRENT LAND USE:	Heath
ISSUED BY:	David Robertson Historic Environment Officer (Countryside) Historic Environment Service Environment, Transport and Development Union House, Gressenhall Dereham, Norfolk NR20 4DR Tel: 01362 869291 (direct) david.robertson@norfolk.gov.uk
DATE:	8 February 2012



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Summary

Butterfly Conservation is proposing deep ploughing and turf stripping in an area of Hockwold Heath immediately to the west of the Fossditch. There is a strong possibility that archaeological remains associated with the Fossditch survive below ground in this area. If so, they may be affected by the proposed ground disturbance works.

Butterfly Conservation has approached the Historic Environment Service for advice regarding deep ploughing and turf stripping immediately to the west of the Fossditch. Following best practice and Natural England's *Impact of heathland restoration and recreation techniques on soil characteristics and the historical environment* (2008), the Historic Environment Service has recommended an archaeological evaluation to establish whether archaeological remains survive below ground and how the proposed ground disturbance works could affect them.

Trial trenching is required to determine the presence/absence, date, extent, state of preservation and significance of any archaeological layers or subsoil archaeological features. This Evaluation may demonstrate that archaeological remains are well preserved and deep ploughing and/or turf stripping are not appropriate methods in this area. Alternatively it may indicate that they are suitable and can go ahead. If they are appropriate a further phase of archaeological investigation may be required.

Archaeological Contractors are reminded that they should submit a copy of their Method Statement or Specification to the Historic Environment Service for approval, *before* costs are prepared for commissioning clients, in line with the Institute for Archaeologists' guidance.

1. Guidance Background.

Relevant guidance can be found in :-

Natural England 2008 *Impact of heathland restoration and recreation techniques on soil characteristics and the historical environment* (Natural England Research Report NERR010).

and

The Department of Communities and Local Government *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (March 2010).

2. Archaeological Background.

The Fossditch (HER 1089, Scheduled Monument NF51), a nationally significant Iron Age and/or Anglo-Saxon bank, is located immediately to the east of the proposal area. To the north of Hockwold Heath there is a ditch to the east of the bank, suggesting this would have also been the case at Hockwold/Weeting Heath. There is also the possibility that there was a ditch to the west of the bank. If this was the case, it has infilled at Hockwold Heath.

There are seven burial mounds close to the proposal area (HER 4991, 33604, 33605 and 56274 to the north and HER 32594, 33453 and 33454 to the south).

In 1998 Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service identified a north-east to south-west aligned bank to the west of the proposal area. This no longer survives as an earthwork.

3. Requirement for Work.

Butterfly Conservation is hoping to deep plough and/or strip turf close to the Fossditch. This work may come as close as 7m from the fence to the west of the bank. The Historic Environment Service has recommended evaluation of the area between 7m and 20m to the west of the fence (the 'proposal area' for the purposes of this brief).

Trial trenching is required to recover as much information as possible on the extent, date, phasing, character, function, status and significance of the proposal area. The states of preservation of archaeological features or deposits within the area indicated should be determined.

Three trenches 30m long by 1.8m wide are required (giving an approximate 2% sample of the proposal area). The trenches should be evenly spaced across the proposal area, with one each in the north, centre and south (possible locations for the trenches are shown on the attached map).

All three trenches must be aligned parallel to the bank of the Fossditch. The eastern edge of each trench must be 7m (and no further) from the fence to the west of the bank of the Fossditch. English Heritage has advised that trenches closer than this would require Scheduled Monument Consent; Scheduled Monument Consent has not been applied for or secured.

Contractors should note that no element of this brief should be treated as a contingency unless agreed in advance with the Historic Environment Service.

The trenches must characterise the full archaeological sequence down to the natural deposits. In the interests of reproduction of the results, a single context planning methodology must be used and a matrix of the sequence created on

site.

Project Designs must confirm that relevant health and safety considerations have been built in. The potential of the area being contaminated by toxins must have been adequately investigated or plans for a pre-project investigation of ground conditions outlined. Appropriate tools for the job must be utilised and consideration for this shown in the Project Design.

The relevant experience of the project team must be articulated within the Project Design. In particular the person leading the project in the field must have significant experience of rural archaeological methods, theory and safe practice.

The Archaeological Contractor will prepare a Method Statement or Specification for this phase of the PoAW and submit this to the Historic Environment Service for approval *before* costs are prepared for the commissioning client. The PoAW will include, as appropriate, background research, fieldwork, assessment, analysis, preparation of report, publication and deposition of the project archive.

The Archaeological Contractor will contact the HER Officer of the Historic Environment Service in advance of work starting to obtain a HER number for the site or, if a number is already given on the Brief, to ensure that it is still applicable.

The archaeological research aims and objectives of the project will be clearly stated, and the Method Statement or Specification will demonstrate how these will be met. Appropriate reference will be made to the following documents:-

Glazebrook, J. (ed) 1997, *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 1. Resource assessment* (E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 3).

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J. (eds), 2000, *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. Research agenda and strategy* (E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 8).

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.

When the project is completed, all parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the Norfolk Historic Environment Record. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report.

A copy of the OASIS form must be included in the final report.

Hard copies of the report must also be provided, as specified below.

4. Standards.

Method Statements or Specifications prepared by Archaeological Consultants or Contractors should state that all works will be carried out in full accordance with the appropriate sections of Gurney, D., 2003, '**Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England**', as adopted by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers for the East of England Region and published as *East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14*. This is available as a PDF file on the web at www.eaareports.org.uk

Archaeological Contractors should note that the **Standards** document stipulates basic *methodological* standards. It is considered axiomatic that all contractors will strive to achieve the highest possible *qualitative* standards, with the application of the most advanced and appropriate techniques possible within a context of continuous improvement aimed at maximising the recovery of archaeological data and contributing to the development of a greater understanding of Norfolk's historic environment. Monitoring officers will seek and expect clear evidence of commitment to the historic resource of Norfolk, with specifications being drawn up within a context of added value.

5. Other matters

If archaeological remains are discovered during the evaluation, the Historic Environment Service will provide Butterfly Conservation with further advice on the suitability of turf stripping and deep ploughing in the area immediately to the west of the Fossditch. The advice could be that turf stripping and deep ploughing are not appropriate methods of ground disturbance in this area. Alternatively, it may be that they are suitable provided they are subject to further archaeological investigations.

Archaeological Contractors are reminded that they should submit a copy of their Method Statement or Specification to the Historic Environment Service for approval, *before* costs are prepared for commissioning clients, in line with the Institute for Archaeologists' guidance.

The Method Statement or Specification should indicate the number of person days allocated to the fieldwork stage of the project

The Historic Environment Service will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project. The Archaeological Contractor will give the Historic Environment Service not less than two weeks' written notice of the commencement of the work, so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.

Any subsequent variation to a Detailed Project Specification or Method Statement must be agreed with the Historic Environment Service prior to its

implementation.

This brief is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue. After that time, it may need to be revised to take account of new discoveries, changes in policy or the introduction of new working practices or techniques.

Three hard copies and a PDF copy on CD of the Report should be supplied to the Historic Environment Service for the attention of the Historic Environment Officer (Countryside) within eight weeks of the completion of the fieldwork on the understanding that this will become a public document after an appropriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months). Two hard copies and the PDF file will be deposited with the Norfolk Historic Environment Record. The third copy will be retained by the Norfolk Monuments Management Project.

A fourth copy of the report should be sent directly to the Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science, English Heritage, Brooklands House, 24 Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge CB2 2BU.

6. Notes

The Historic Environment Service is responsible for safeguarding the County's archaeological heritage. The Historic Environment Service is consulted by Local Planning Authorities and provides specialist information and advice on the archaeological implications of development and conservation proposals.

An Archaeological Project will usually consist of one or more of the following:-

Desk-based assessment: a report drawing together existing information about a site from a wide range of sources.

Survey: usually fieldwalking and metal-detecting, sometimes non-intrusive geophysical surveys (e.g. magnetometer survey)

Evaluation: survey and/or trial-trenching or test-pitting.

Excavation: larger-scale excavation

Watching brief or monitoring: the presence of an archaeologist during the development to record any features exposed

Post-excavation: analysis, and the preparation of a report and archive of records and finds at the end of any archaeological project

A phased approach to fieldwork is frequently adopted, with one stage leading on to another (if necessary) after each phase is reported upon and reviewed.

7. What You Need To Do

You should ask one or more Archaeological Contractors to prepare a **Method Statement** or **Specification** which will detail how the project is to be undertaken, and how the brief will be fulfilled. This will be sent to the Historic Environment

Service for approval, after which the Contractor will give you details of costs.

Details of archaeological contractors based in Norfolk and beyond may be found in the Institute for Archaeologists Yearbook & Directory, available from the I.F.A., University of Reading, 2 Earley Gate, PO Box 239, Reading RG6 6AU. Tel: 0118 931 6446. Fax: 0118 931 6448. Email: admin@archaeologists.net. Website: www.archaeologists.net.

The Historic Environment Service does not see Contractors' costings, nor do we give advice on the costs of archaeological projects. This is between you and the archaeological contractor(s). You may wish to obtain a number of quotations or to employ the services of an archaeological consultant.

For further information or advice on any archaeological matters please contact the person issuing this report whose details are on Page 1.

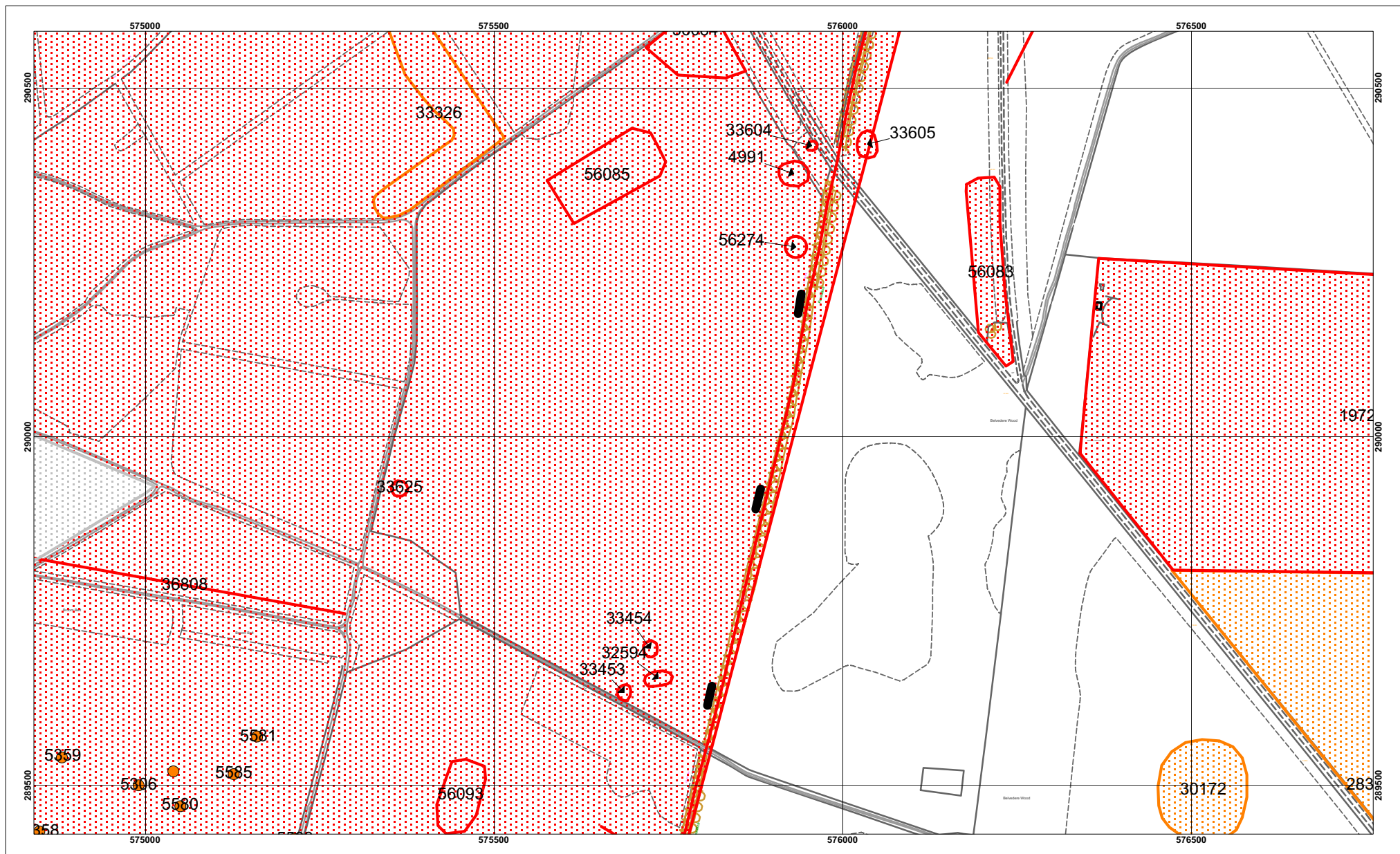
Hockwold Heath

Location of evaluation trenches (black), with HER records

Compiled by Historic Environment Service on 8 February 2012



Union House, Gressenhall, East Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 4DR



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OASIS ID: johnnewm1-119860

Project details

Project name	Hockwold Heath, Hockwold-cum-Wilton, Norfolk- Archaeological Evaluation Report
Short description of the project	Hockwold cum Wilton, Hockwold Heath (ENF 128566, TL 7587 8991) evaluation trenching along the eastern edge of a proposed c0.80ha area of heath land restoration 7m west of the fence marking the limit of the scheduled area protecting the Fossditch did not reveal any archaeological features or any finds save one small secondary flint flake.
Project dates	Start: 17-02-2012 End: 17-02-2012
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ENF 128566 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Site of Special Scientific Importance (SSSI)
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 3 - Disturbed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Not recorded
Development type	Heathland restoration
Prompt	Conservation/ restoration
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK KINGS LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK HOCKWOLD CUM WILTON Hockwold Heath
Postcode	IP26 4NQ
Study area	8000.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 7587 8991 52.4783104695 0.589985226911 52 28 41 N 000 35 23 E
Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 23.00m Max: 24.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation John Newman Archaeological Services

Project brief originator Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body

Project design originator John Newman

Project director/manager John Newman

Project supervisor John Newman

Type of sponsor/funding body Other Charitable Trust

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Norfolk Museum Service

Digital Contents 'none'

Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'

Paper Archive recipient Norfolk Museum Service

Paper Contents 'none'

Paper Media available 'Report'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Hockwold Heath, Hockwold cum Wilton, Norfolk- Archaeological Evaluation Report

Author(s)/Editor(s) Newman, J

Date 2012

Issuer or publisher John Newman Archaeological Services

Place of issue or publication Henley, Suffolk

Description Loose bound client report

Entered by John Newman (johnnewman2@btinternet.com)

Entered on 7 March 2012