

**Barns at Old Boyland Hall,  
Bressingham, Norfolk**

**Planning application: 2017/1266**

**HER Ref: ENF 145035**

**Report on Archaeological Mitigatory Works**

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

(September 2018)

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## **Site details for HER**

Name: Boyland Hall Barns, Old Boyland Hall, Common Road, Bressingham, Norfolk, IP22 2HD

Client: Nest Developments

Local planning authority: South Norfolk DC

Planning application refs: 2017/1266

Development: Erection of two footbridges

LPA Archaeological advisor: Norfolk CC Historic Environment Service

Date of fieldwork: 23 August, 2018

Norfolk CC ref: CNF47521

HER event ref: ENF 145035

OASIS: johnnewm1-327768

Grid ref: TM 0850 8436

Size: 5m<sup>2</sup>

Previous land use: grassed area adjacent to moat

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*Summary: Bressingham, Hall Barns, Old Boyland Hall, Common Road (ENF 145035, TM 0850 8436) the archaeological investigation of four pad bases for the construction of two footbridges across an arm of the garden moat associated with the adjacent medieval moated hall site did not reveal any archaeological features or finds except later Post medieval brick and tile fragments (John Newman Archaeological Services for Nest Developments).*

## 1. Introduction & background

1.1 Nest Developments commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological investigation of ground works required under conditions for a programme of archaeological works of the planning decision notice for application 2017/1266. The archaeological excavation mitigatory requirements were set in a Brief by the Norfolk CC Historic Environment Service (NHES) to satisfy this condition and in response JNAS produced the relevant Written Scheme of Investigation (see Appendix II) in order that conditional discharge could be gained from the LPA and ground works commence on site. This development concerns the erection of two footbridges across the western arm of the garden moat associated with the adjacent moated site at Old Boyland Hall (see Fig. 1).

1.2 Bressingham is located to the west of Diss in south central Norfolk in an area of historically dispersed settlement with Old Boyland Hall being some 3700m north of the parish church on what, as historically shown on Faden's 1797 map of Norfolk, was the western edge of Boyland Common. The hall is grade II listed and described as being of 16th century date, though a dendrochronological date indicates an early 15<sup>th</sup> century origin, on the site of a medieval moat with the likelihood that an earlier hall stood on this site. To the south of the hall the barns are located in an area of subsidiary moats surrounding associated garden/orchard areas with their eastern and southern arms now filled-in. However on the western side of the barns that are to be converted an arm of the former moat survives and this planned development proposed the erection of two footbridges across this arm adjacent to the barns.

1.3 The British Geological Survey indicates superficial deposits in the area of this site as being chalky till of the Lowestoft formation with it being at 55m OD in an area of gentle topography.

1.4 Archaeological interest in this development was generated by the record held by the Norfolk CC Historic Environment Record (NHER ref. 10894) that it lies within a moated complex of medieval and earlier Post medieval date with a moat that may date to the 13th century. Therefore the planned development may impact on an area of early gardens or orchards related to the main medieval hall/moat complex.

1.5 The Brief for this application confirms that while this development may reveal deposits of archaeological significance this potential disturbance to local heritage assets can be mitigated by their investigation and recording via a programme of prior archaeological mitigatory works involving full excavation and reporting of any deposits with subsequent full reporting. The ground works for the two planned footbridges being small scale with a pad base at each end of the two bridges.

## 2. Investigation methodology

2.1 A single site visit was made to investigate the excavation of the four pad base pits for the footbridge foundations. This work was undertaken using a medium sized

360 machine which was under continuous archaeological supervision with weather conditions being dry and sunny giving good site visibility. During the investigation the pad base pits were entered as the top and subsoil was removed and any indistinct areas were cleaned manually to aid the interpretation of the exposed deposits. In addition the upcast spoil was examined closely and scanned with a metal detector for archaeological finds. Finally the extent of the ground works was recorded in relation to nearby mapped features and a number of digital images were taken of the pad base pits in order to record the investigation (see Appendix I).

2.2 A search was also requested from the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) for the area within 500m of this site in order to place it in its local archaeological and historical setting. This search revealed evidence for past activity of Bronze Age, Roman, later Saxon, medieval and early Post medieval date close to Old Boyland Hall though at a low intensity. To the north, south-east and south-west thin scatters of Bronze Age, Roman, medieval and Post medieval artefacts have been recovered from the plough soil (NHER 36095, 59801 & 60473) plus a medieval pottery scatter (NHER 31183) 450m to the north-east. In addition single finds of prehistoric flint axes are recorded nearby (NHER 10885 & 12890). These recorded finds being indicative of past activity from as yet unlocated settlement foci though the relative paucity of recorded evidence for past activity suggests a lack of systematic field survey rather than a lack of archaeological sites. The nature of the historically dispersed settlement pattern in this area is also indicated by a number of scattered listed earlier Post medieval buildings along nearby roads and lanes (NHER 129801, 40709 & 48740).

### 3. Results

3.1 As noted above a pad base was mechanically excavated at each end of the two planned footbridge locations. These bases were 1.80m on their north-south alignment and 600mm wide. In summary the deposit profiles are described in the table below (see also Fig. 2 & Appendix I):

Pad base	Topsoil (mm)	Subsoil (mm)	Natural deposit	Archaeological features & finds
P1	400	400 mid brown sandy subsoil	Orange sand with flints with pockets of grey sand	No features, only finds small Pmed brick/tile frags
P2	300	350 as P1	Pale brown very silty sand with small flints	As P1
P3	300	400 as P1	Grey chalky clay	Pmed brick frags with extensive disturbance from a large tree stump
P4	600	400 as P1	As P2	As P1

## 4. Conclusion

4.1 While the planned locations for the two footbridges impact on the western arm of the garden moat associated with the medieval moated site of Old Boyland Hall no evidence was revealed in the four pad bases for past activity except a thin scatter of small fragments of later Post medieval brick and tile in the top and subsoil. Therefore it can be concluded that the small scale ground works for these footbridges will not affect any significant archaeological deposits.

*(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to Nick Glendinning and everyone on site for their close cooperation during the monitoring)*

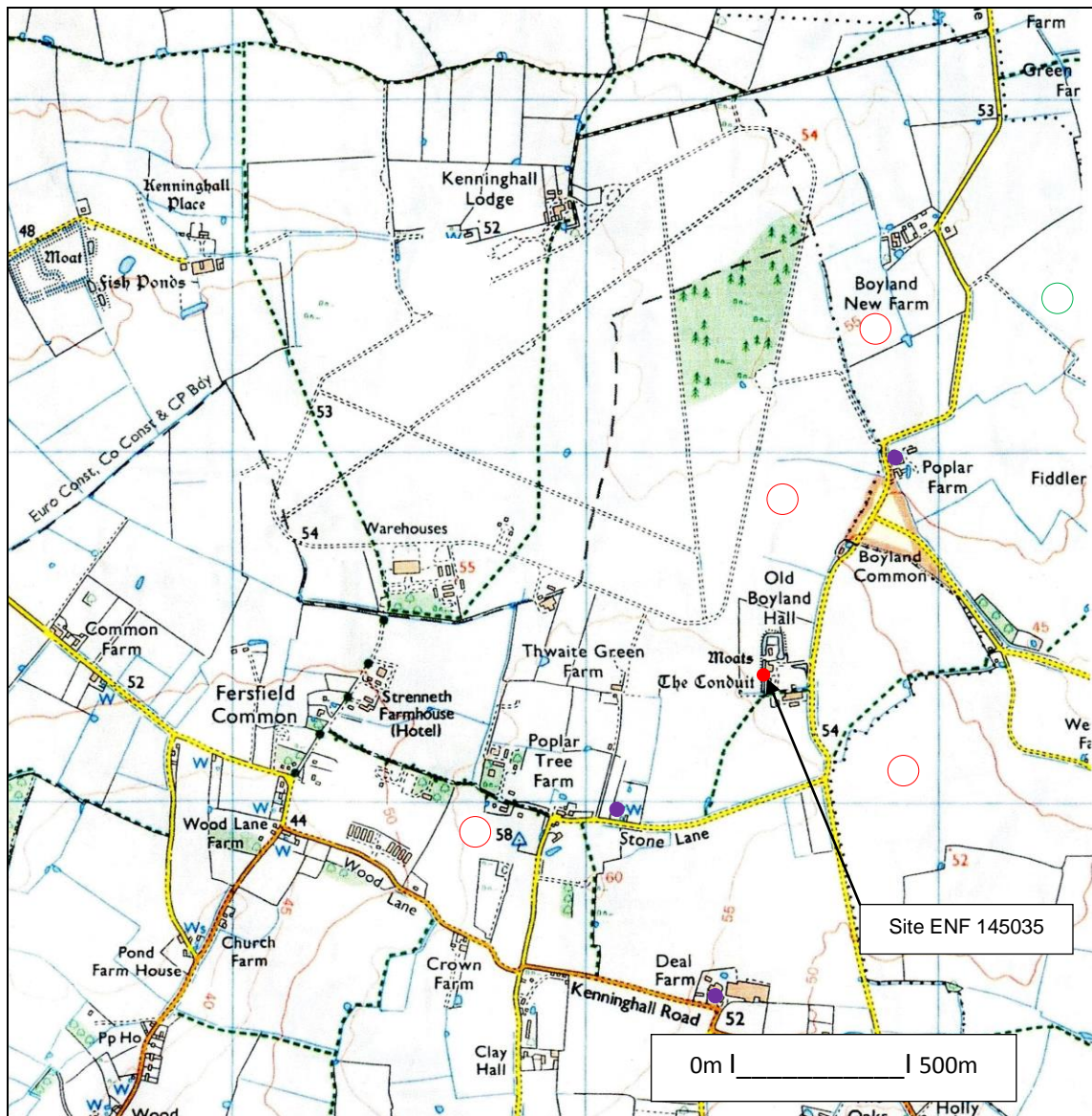
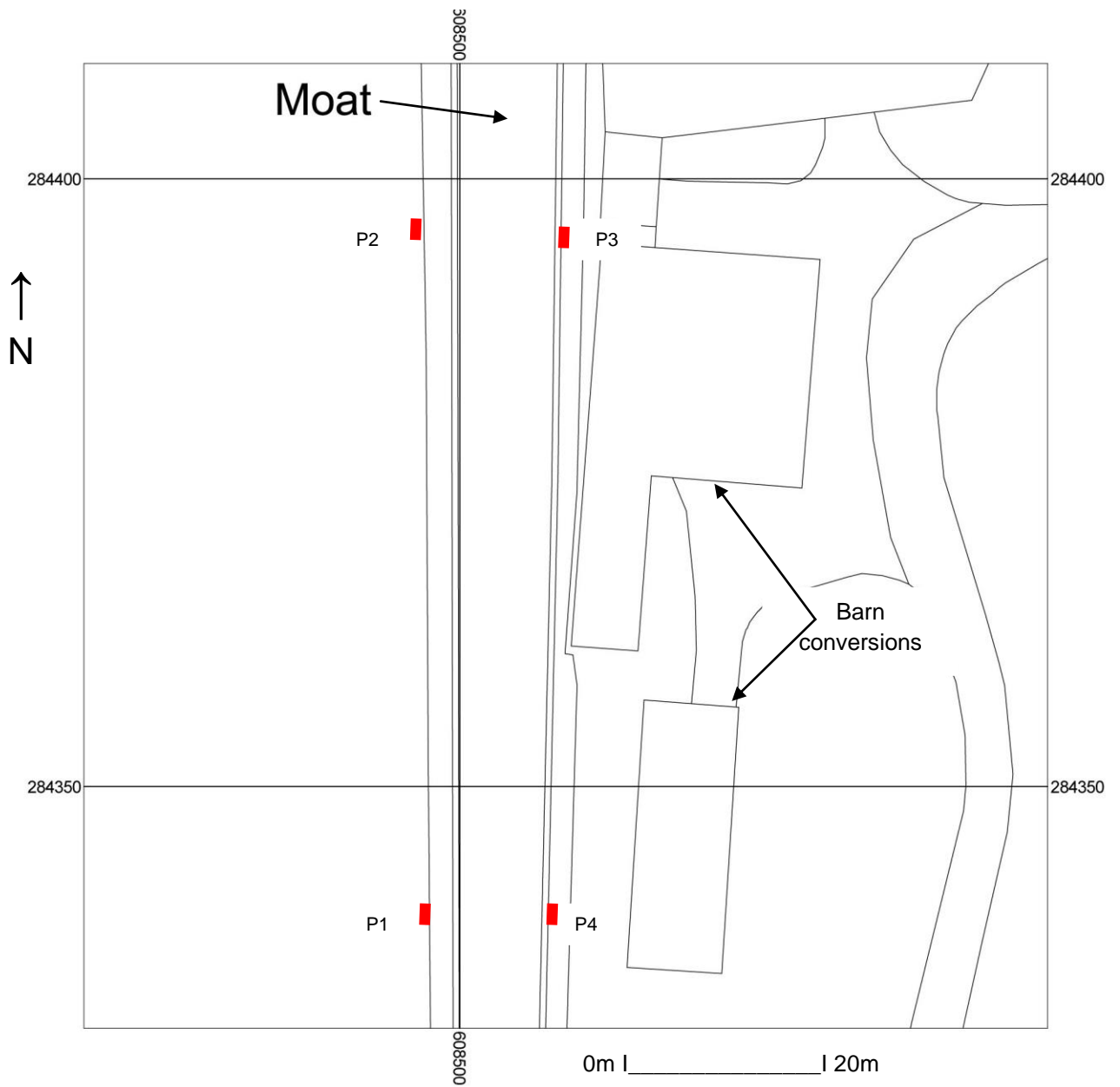


Fig. 1: Site location

(Purple- early Post medieval buildings, green circle- medieval pottery scatter, red circles- multi-period finds scatters)  
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**Fig. 2: Location of footbridge pad bases**

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## Appendix I- Images



Western arm of garden moat from south



Pad base 1



Pad base 2



Pad base 3





Pad base 4

**Barns at Old Boyland Hall,  
Bressingham, Norfolk**

**Planning application: 2017/1266**

**(CNF 47521\_5)**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for Open-Area Excavation  
as part of a Programme of Archaeological Mitigatory  
Works**

## **Site details**

Name: Boyland Hall Barns, Old Boyland Hall, Common Road, Bressingham, Norfolk, IP22 2HD

Clients: Nest Developments

Local planning authority: South Norfolk DC

Planning application ref: 2017/1266

Proposed development: Erection of two footbridges

Norfolk CC ref: CNF47521 excav brief

Proposed date for ground works: tbc

Grid ref: TM 0850 8436

LBS: 1049686 (Grade II, Old Boyland Hall)

NCC ref: CNF 47521\_5

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2. Location, Topography & Geology
3. Archaeological & Historical Background
4. Aims of the Site Monitoring
5. Methodology
6. Risk Assessment
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## 1. Introduction

1.1 Nest Developments have commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological mitigatory open area excavation works required under a condition for a programme of archaeological works of the planning decision notice for application 2017/1266 prior to any other works starting. This written scheme of investigation (WSI) details the background to the archaeological condition and how JNAS will implement the requirements of the Brief set by Mr S Hickling of the Norfolk CC Historic Environment Service (NHES) to satisfy the condition. The WSI will also set out how potential risks will be mitigated. This proposed development concerns the erection of two footbridges at the barns south of Old Boyland Hall, Common Road, Bressingham.

1.2 The archaeological mitigatory open area excavation works will be carried out to the standards set locally in *Standards for Development-led Archaeological Projects in Norfolk* (Robertson *et al* 2018), regionally in the *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (EAA Occ. Papers 14, 2003)* and nationally in *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 1994, revised 2001 & reissued 2014)*.

## 2. Location, Topography & Geology

2.1 Bressingham is located to the west of Diss in south central Norfolk in an area of historically dispersed settlement with Old Boyland Hall being some 3700m north of the parish church on what, as historically shown on Faden's 1797 map of Norfolk, was the western edge of Boyland Common. The hall is grade II listed and described as being of 16<sup>th</sup> century date on the site of a medieval moat. To the south of the hall the barns are located in an area of subsidiary moats surrounding associated garden/orchard areas with their eastern and southern arms now filled-in. However on the western side of the barns that are to be converted an arm of the former moat survives and this planned development proposed the erection of two footbridges across this arm adjacent to the barns.

2.2 The British Geological Survey indicates superficial deposits in the area of this site as being chalky till of the Lowestoft formation with it being at 55m OD in an area of gentle topography.

## 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 Archaeological interest in this development was generated by the record held by the Norfolk CC Historic Environment Record (NHER) that it lies within a moated complex of medieval and earlier Post medieval date with a moat that may date to the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore the planned development may impact on an area of early gardens or orchards related to the main medieval hall/moat complex.

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3.2 The Brief for this application confirms that while this development may reveal deposits of archaeological significance this potential disturbance to local heritage assets can be mitigated by their investigation and recording via a programme of prior archaeological mitigatory works involving full excavation and reporting of any deposits with subsequent full reporting. The ground works for the two planned footbridges being small scale with a pad base at each end of the two bridges.

## 4. Aims of the Site Archaeological Investigation Works

4.1 As outlined in section 3 above the site has the potential to reveal archaeological deposits and finds related to the construction and use of the subsidiary moats at Old Boyland Hall. Site investigation arrangements with the relevant contractor will allow for unimpeded access to the pad base areas to allow for detailed investigation and recording work once the top soil layer has been removed under close supervision. This archaeological investigation will aim to record all possible details of the exposed overburden and depth of exposed deposit as revealed within the pad base areas and evidence for the character and date of any past activity that is revealed.

## 5. Methodology

5.1 The construction method to be used on the site for the two footbridges as indicated above will be a pad base pit at the end of each bridge giving 4 pad bases in total. The date of site works starting and any findings will be reported back to the relevant NHES Officer as the investigation progresses. A search will also be commissioned from the NHER for the area within 250m of the PDS in order to set the site within its local archaeological and historic setting.

5.2 Site records will be made under a continuous and unique numbering system of contexts under an overall site event number requested from the NHER beforehand. All contexts will be numbered and finds recorded by context. Conventions compatible with the NHER will be used throughout the monitoring. Site plans will be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and related to the proposed development, and sections at 1:10 or 1:20 (all on plastic drawing film) and related to OS map cover. Sections will be levelled to a datum OD. A photographic record of high resolution digital images and monochrome film will be made of the site and any exposed features.

5.3 As necessary and to define archaeological deposits exposed surfaces and sections will be trowelled clean before recording within the constraints imposed by health and safety considerations in areas of excavation going below 1.30m. Archaeological deposits will be fully hand investigated and recorded within the constraints of the pad base foundations with sections at appropriate points. Even if no archaeological deposits are revealed every effort will be made to gain a record of the natural occurring deposits and overburden that could help in the understanding of the general history of land use. Where appropriate 40 litre palaeoenvironmental deposit samples will be taken for processing and assessment by a specialist conversant with regional archaeological standards and research agendas if

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archaeological deposits are revealed. If human burial evidence is revealed the NHES Officer will be informed and a Ministry of Justice licence obtained before excavation, recording and removal of the remains. Any such work will incur an additional cost. The possibility of modifying the ground work design to leave any such remains in situ will also be examined (in this case the possibility of finding burials is assessed as being low).

5.4 All finds will be collected and processed unless any variation is agreed with the relevant NHES Officer. Finds will be assessed by recognised period specialists and their interpretation will form an integral part of the overall report. Finds will be stored according to ICON guidelines with specialist advice/treatment sought for fragile ones. Every effort will be made to gain the deposit of the site finds to the Norfolk Museums Service. If this is not possible then the NHES Officer will be consulted over any requirements for additional recording. Any discard policy will be discussed and agreed with the relevant NNHES Officer.

5.5 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared consistent with the guidelines in *MoRPHE* and this will be deposited with the NHER within 4 months of work finishing on site under the relevant NHER number. As necessary the site digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) within the agreed allowance for the monitoring and reporting works.

5.6 The report will be consistent with the principles in *MoRPHE* and this report will summarise the methodology employed. The report will also give an objective account of the deposits and stratigraphy recorded and finds recovered with an inventory of the latter. Any interpretation of the site investigation results will be clearly separated from the objective account of the site results. The report will give a clear statement regarding the results of the site investigation in relation to both the more detailed aims in section 2 above and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (EAA Occ. Papers 3, 8 & 24, 1997, 2000 & 2011) and local NHER search results if required. A pdf draft copy of the report will be presented to the relevant NHES Officer within 3 months of the completion of the site works. Once accepted a hard copy and the final pdf version and associated site file will be sent to the NHER in addition to a pdf version for the client for submission to the relevant LPA. The site investigation will be registered on the OASIS online archaeological record before field work starts followed by submission of the final draft in .pdf format. An NHER summary sheet will be completed and a summary prepared of any positive results for inclusion in the annual round-up. The reporting will be commensurate with the findings from the site investigation and at its most basic level will detail the location, circumstances and characteristics of the deposits exposed and any finds that are revealed.

## 6. Risk Assessment

6.1 Protective clothing will be worn on site (hard hat, high visibility vest/coat, steel-toe cap boots, and ear muffs if required). A safe working method will be agreed with the contractors on site in order to maximise access to disturbed ground and up cast spoil. Suitable clothing will be available to mitigate against extremes of weather.

6.2 Vehicles will be safely parked away from work areas and lines of access.

6.3 Before work on site starts any special requirements regarding potential site contamination will be discussed with the client's agent and ground test reports examined. Gloves and hand wash/wipes be available and any information on possible ground contamination will be passed to finds and environmental specialists. The potential for services in the area will be discussed with the client and their contractor.

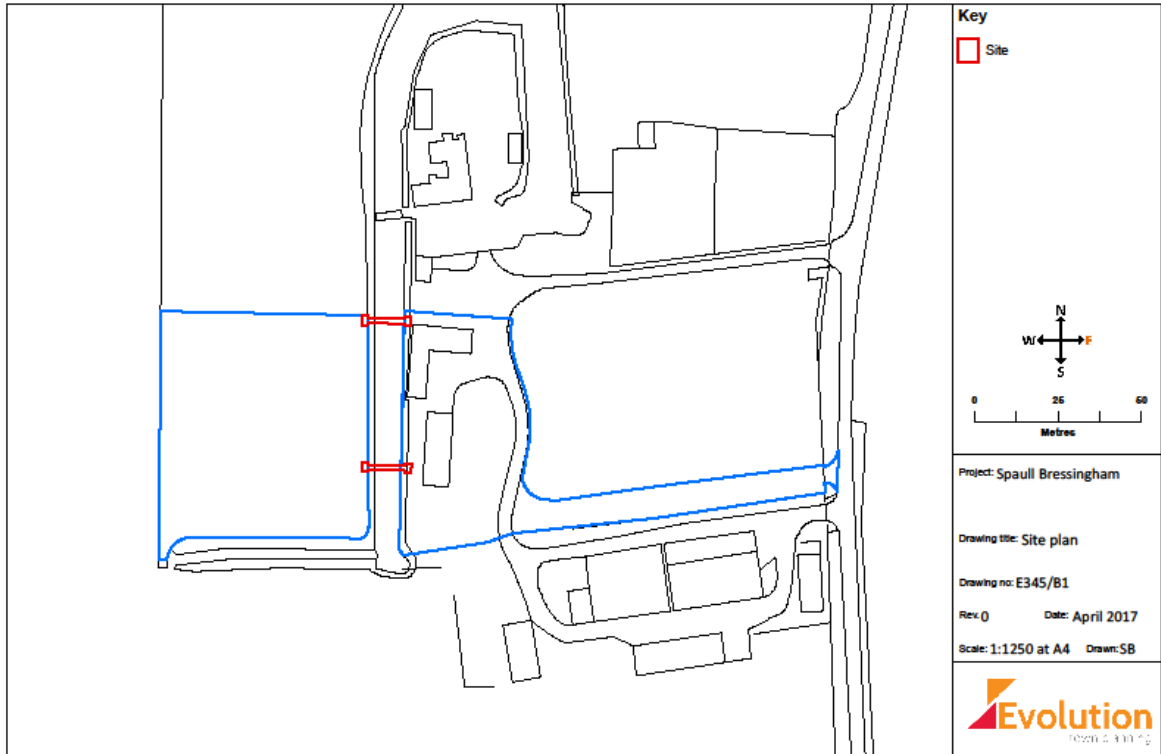
6.4 A fully charged mobile phone will be carried and a first aid kit will be taken to site.

6.5 Close liaison will be maintained with the contractor on site with regard to the depth and stability of the footing trenches and any potential health and safety considerations.

6.6 JNAS holds full insurance cover for archaeological site works from the specialist provider Towergate Risk Solutions covering Public & Products Liability, details can be supplied on request.

## 7. Specialists

Conservation:	Conservation Services
Faunal remains:	J Curl (Sylvanus Archaeology)
Human remains:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Palaeoenvironmental samples:	V Fryer (Freelance)
Pre-historic flint:	S Bates (Freelance)
Metal detector search	J Armes
Pre-historic pottery:	S Percival (Freelance)
Post Roman ceramics & CBM:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Roman small finds:	N Crummy (Freelance)
Roman pottery & CBM	S Benfield (CAT)
Post Roman small finds:	JNAS



Planned development (red- footbridge locations)



# OASIS ID: johnnewm1-327768

## Project details

Project name	Old Boyland Hall Barns, Common Road, Bressingham, Norfolk- Archaeological Investigation Report
Short description of the project	Bressingham, Hall Barns, Old Boyland Hall, Common Road (ENF 145035, TM 0850 8436) the archaeological investigation of four pad bases for the construction of two footbridges across an arm of the garden moat associated with the adjacent medieval moated hall site did not reveal any archaeological features or find except later Post medieval brick and tile fragments.
Project dates	Start: 23-08-2018 End: 23-08-2018
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENF 145035 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	2017/1266 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 3 - Disturbed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Recorded Observation""
Prompt	Planning condition
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK SOUTH NORFOLK BRESSINGHAM OLD BOYLAND HALL BARNs, COMMON ROAD
Postcode	IP22 2HD
Study area	5 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 0850 8436 52.416941806093 1.066362705976 52 25 00 N 001 03 58 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 55m Max: 56m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	John Newman Archaeological Services
Project brief	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning

originator	Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	John Newman
Project director/manager	John Newman
Project supervisor	John Newman
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Services
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museum and Archaeology Services
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"
Project bibliography	
1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Barns at Old Boyland Hall, Bressingham, Norfolk-Archaeological Mitigatory Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Newman, J
Date	2018
Issuer or publisher	John Newman Archaeological Services
Place of issue or publication	Henley, Suffolk
Description	Loose bound client report and pdf
Entered by	John Newman (johnnewman2@btinternet.com)
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