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**FOREST ENTERPRISE WOODLANDS  
IN LINCOLNSHIRE**

**TWYFORD WOOD  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

(wood)



**A P S**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL  
PROJECT  
SERVICES

EVENT 42622 Source L17229

MON Iron Age  
LI 33890  
33890

LI 33891  
33891

LI 33893  
33893

LI 33889  
33889

LI 34308  
34308 (wood)

LI 82375 wooded site  
35467

LI 82376  
35468

LI 82377  
35469

LI 82378  
35470

LI 82379  
35471

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

October 2001

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Conservation  
Services  
  
08 NOV 2001  
  
Highways & Planning  
Directorate



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# FOREST ENTERPRISE WOODLANDS IN SOUTH LINCOLNSHIRE

## Twyford Wood Archaeological Survey December 2000 - January 2001

### 1. INTRODUCTION

As part of a programme of archaeological survey within Forest Enterprise Woodland in South Lincolnshire, Twyford Wood was investigated for archaeological remains during December 2000 and January 2001. The wood covers an area of 195 hectares and is situated 12km south of Grantham and centred on National Grid Reference SK 947 230. The woodland generally overlies boulder clay, although Upper Lincolnshire Limestone outcrops on the east side of the wood (GSGB 1972).

The wood has received some previous investigations, primarily in advance of the construction of a Second World War airfield between 1942 and 1943 (summarised in O'Neil 1948). These investigations identified a Late Iron Age settlement and iron-working site (SMR 33890) that continued into the Romano-British period (SMR 33891) and two medieval moated enclosures (SMR 33893 and 33889). No trace of these remain. In addition, the woodland has been classed as recent plantation (SMR 34308).

This report has been prepared to provide information to ensure that any monuments discovered are managed for the future. The fieldwork and report were undertaken as part of the Forest Commission Ancient Woodland Project.

### 2. HISTORICAL NOTES

Woodland is mentioned in the parish of Twyford in the Domesday Survey of *c.* 1086, where 27 acres of underwood and wood for pannage measuring 9 furlongs and 9 perches long (*c.* 1.8km) by 6 furlongs (*c.* 1.2km) wide of which the underwood belonged to the Archbishop of York and the larger area to Countess Judith (Foster and Longley 1976, 2/35, 56/2). The larger area of woodland is possibly that of the present day Twford Wood although extensive changes to the layout of the wood have been recorded.

The earliest available large scale map of Twyford Wood, the Colsterworth Enclosure Award dating from 1808, shows a single area of woodland (LAO 2CC 70/9). This wood was subdivided between three owners, the northern and eastern portion belonged to Sir William Manners, the southwest portion to a Mrs Keppel and William Lowe and the southeast corner to the Trustees for Brown's Hospital (called the Beadhouse Wood). The latter possibly formed part of the original foundation of the hospital between 1485 and 1534 (Page 1906, 234). Several fields are depicted which are now incorporated into the main body of the wood and these have names such as Wood Close, Brethren's Close, Green Moat Close and Red Close.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century a small tract of the woodland was cleared possibly for a forest lawn, although any possible trace of the location of this has subsequently been removed (Fig. 3). Furthermore, by the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey plan of 1903 the Beadhouse Wood had been cleared and divided into four fields.

Later Ordnance Survey maps (1930) show the name Twyford Forest and when this was partly removed by the construction of an airfield in 1943, small remnants were still so called (Fig. 4). The airfield was a Tactical Air Depot and bomb store primarily for use by the American Army Air Force and was open until 1948, becoming an inactive station until 1956 and subsequently sold in 1960 (Blake *et al.* 1984, 141). Following the war, Twyford Forest is referred to as Twyford Wood.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

The methodology follows that previously used for the Northamptonshire woodlands as devised by David Hall (*e.g.* Hall 2000) and outlined in the project brief prepared by G. Cadman (Northamptonshire Heritage) and agreed to by G. Foard (County Archaeological Officer, Northamptonshire County Council) and Dr. B. Lott (Asst. County Archaeologist, Lincolnshire County Council). Current Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 scale maps were used for plotting with 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey maps of either the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> edition were used for reference. Each woodland compartment, i.e. the area separated by ridings, was walked at 50m intervals by two fieldworkers which ensured that all the ground was viewed within 30m of each fieldworker.

A record of the visibility of each compartment was produced (Fig. 1). Details of the visibility are indicated in Table 1.

Table 1: Detail of visibility and ground cover

Visibility	Colour on Figure 1	Details
Good	Red	Clear visibility
Fair	Blue	Some ground cover, low relief features may be missed
Poor	Green	Moderate ground cover, substantial linear features possibly traced
Very poor	Purple	Not walked due to extensive ground cover

A handheld GPS (Global Positioning by Satellite) receiver was used to provide National Grid References for features found. Depending on satellite coverage, a degree of accuracy of approximately plus or minus 5m can be obtained using this system, which was regarded as sufficient for dense woodland where no line of sight, necessary for standard surveying techniques, is generally available and pacing is unsuitable.

#### 4. CURRENT CONDITION

Most of Twyford Wood contained large tracts suitable (either in good or fair condition) for woodland survey (Fig. 1). Areas not walked include a fenced area at the north end of the north-south runway and other, generally overgrown, compartments located along the western side of the wood but also present elsewhere. Poor visibility is recorded within the areas of former RAF bomb stores and a compartment within the eastern portion of the wood.

#### 5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

##### 5.1 Sites and features recorded (Fig. 2)

###### *Site 1*, SK 9479 2366

Part of a moated enclosure on the edge of the woodland. This originally would have extended into the adjacent field where it had been ploughed away. The ditch is 2-3m wide and approximately 30m in length, turning to the east at the southern end for a length of c. 10m. The ditch is generally less than 0.5m deep and at its northern extent contains standing water. Although not recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record, the existence of this was previously known by Hilary Healey and it is also clearly marked on the Enclosure map of 1808.

###### *Site 2*, SK 9541 2360

Mounded pile of limestone forming a linear arrangement. This measures approximately 10m in length and 2m wide. While this could be tumble/demolition debris from a short length of formerly upstanding wall, its position alongside the track may indicate that it was brought in as hardstanding. There are some roughly hewn fragments, although most is small rubble.

###### *Site 3*, SK 9548 2332

Stone rubble pile, 2m by 1m extent and 0.3m high and oval in shape. Again the position of this rubble pile is adjacent to the riding.

###### *Site 4*, SK 9384 2267

Intermittent stone rubble alignment. This is located alongside the access route to the former airfield and could, therefore, be upcast from the road's construction.

###### *Site 5*, SK 9538 2329

Previously unknown moated enclosure. Square platform measuring approximately 30m by 30m with two parallel linear bands of limestone rubble, possibly indicating an internal structure. Moat comprises a c. 2-3m wide ditch, parts of which still hold water. There is a trace of an external bank on the north and western sides which is 2m broad and up to 0.7m high. A small ditch runs from the southwest corner of the moat and drains southwards towards an area of swallow holes and a ditch runs north to where it meets a ditch alongside an east-west riding.

There is now no trace of the Iron Age (SMR 33890) and Romano-British (SMR 33891) settlements and the two medieval moated sites (SMR 33893 and 33889) excavated by W.F. Grimes in the 1940s in advance of the airfield construction. The Iron Age enclosure is said to have survived as very slight earthworks damaged by recent drainage and both medieval sites were readily visible (manuscript in the parish files maintained by the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist).

### ***Banks and ditches***

External banks and ditches tend to be very intermittent or non-existent. A bank with an accompanying stream is evident along the parish boundary on the eastern side of the wood. This turns into the wood, where it is visible as a bank with a ditch on its northern side, and runs parallel but 40-60m south of the Colsterworth to Bourne road. It is possible that this return represents a survival of an anti-highwayman trench where trees and undergrowth were removed on either side of the road to provide travellers with a sense of security (Rackham 1990, 270). This was common from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards and in places pre-conquest examples are recorded (*ibid.*). This bank and ditch also define an east-west valley which lies to the south. Due to heavy vegetation cover the bank and ditch were not traceable further west. A part of this ditch and bank appear to have formed the northern boundary of the wood at the time of enclosure (LAO 2CC 70/9).

A bank and external ditch occupies a similar position parallel to the road and adjacent to the picnic area. This area was occupied by 19<sup>th</sup> century buildings before they were demolished to make way for the 1940s airfield.

There are no banks or ditches within the wood with the exception of obviously modern drains associated with the airfield.

### ***Second World War remains***

Twyford Wood is dominated by the concrete runways of the former RAF North Witham which are coloured yellow on Figure 2. These still survive and many of the ancillary tracks are also visible as are the earthen banks of the bomb stores and concrete foundations of other buildings. Most buildings of this airfield have been removed apart from the watch tower which is situated along the southern boundary of the surveyed area. The layout of the airfield is shown on Figure 4.

### ***Quarries***

Located within a dry east-west valley towards the northeastern corner of Twyford Wood are irregular mounds that may represent upcast from limited quarrying. The nearest of the rubble alignments (Site 2) lies 100m to the south.

### ***Swallow holes***

A band of swallow holes exists in the eastern part of the wood forming a linear arrangement of sunken conical hollows, often about 3-4m deep and 10-15m across. These are formed when cavities within the Upper Lincolnshire Limestone collapse or are dissolved by the action of rain water on the limestone. In many places small streams are still visible disappearing into these hollows. Another swallow hole is indicated on the RAF airfield plan in the northeast corner of the site (SK 9408 2349) although this is less

convincing as there are greater depths of boulder clay at this point and therefore this feature may have been a pit or pond.

## **5.2 Comments on the remains**

The incidence of moats within Twyford Wood is unusually high for such a small area, although such densities are known from elsewhere in Lincolnshire (i.e. Screddington). The reason for this is not immediately clear, although the wood was once called Twyford Forest and therefore may have been subject to forest laws. The moated enclosures in Twyford Wood may have been administrative centres for a forest or park. Similar examples are known from Corby and Cottingham, in Northamptonshire, and these had a role in the administration of Rockingham and Benefield Parks (RCHME 1979, 24; 26). Furthermore, two of the Twyford moats each fall into the two larger subdivisions of Twyford Wood recorded on the Enclosure Award and therefore may have administered to these separate divisions.

The significance of the limestone rubble piles is at present not known.

## **6. RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Archaeological remains**

The most important extant remains are the two moated enclosures. These need marking out to prevent future damage by machinery and forestry operations. In due course both moats should be reviewed by English Heritage for the purpose of scheduling.

### **6.2 Further work**

Archaeological remains are noticeably absent from the area in which the airfield was constructed. However, portions of woodland outside of this area which were not walked or where conditions were poor, may need to be surveyed again when conditions permit to enhance the archaeological data so far recorded.

## **7. BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### *Abbreviations*

GSGB	Geological Survey of Great Britain
LAO	Lincolnshire Archive Office
RCHME	Royal Commission on Historic Monuments



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## **8. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

Archaeological Project Services would like to thank Mr K.G. Stannard of Forest Enterprise who commissioned this assessment and survey. The work was coordinated and edited by Tom Lane. Dr. Beryl Lott, of the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council, kindly provided information and maps from the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). Information was also gained from parish files maintained by Gail Smith, the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist, and the library of Heritage Lincolnshire. Hilary Healey made available notes and drawings on the excavated sites. Plans of RAF North Witham were kindly provided by the Royal Air Force Museum at Hendon.

Special thanks go to David Hall for his assistance and expertise throughout this project.



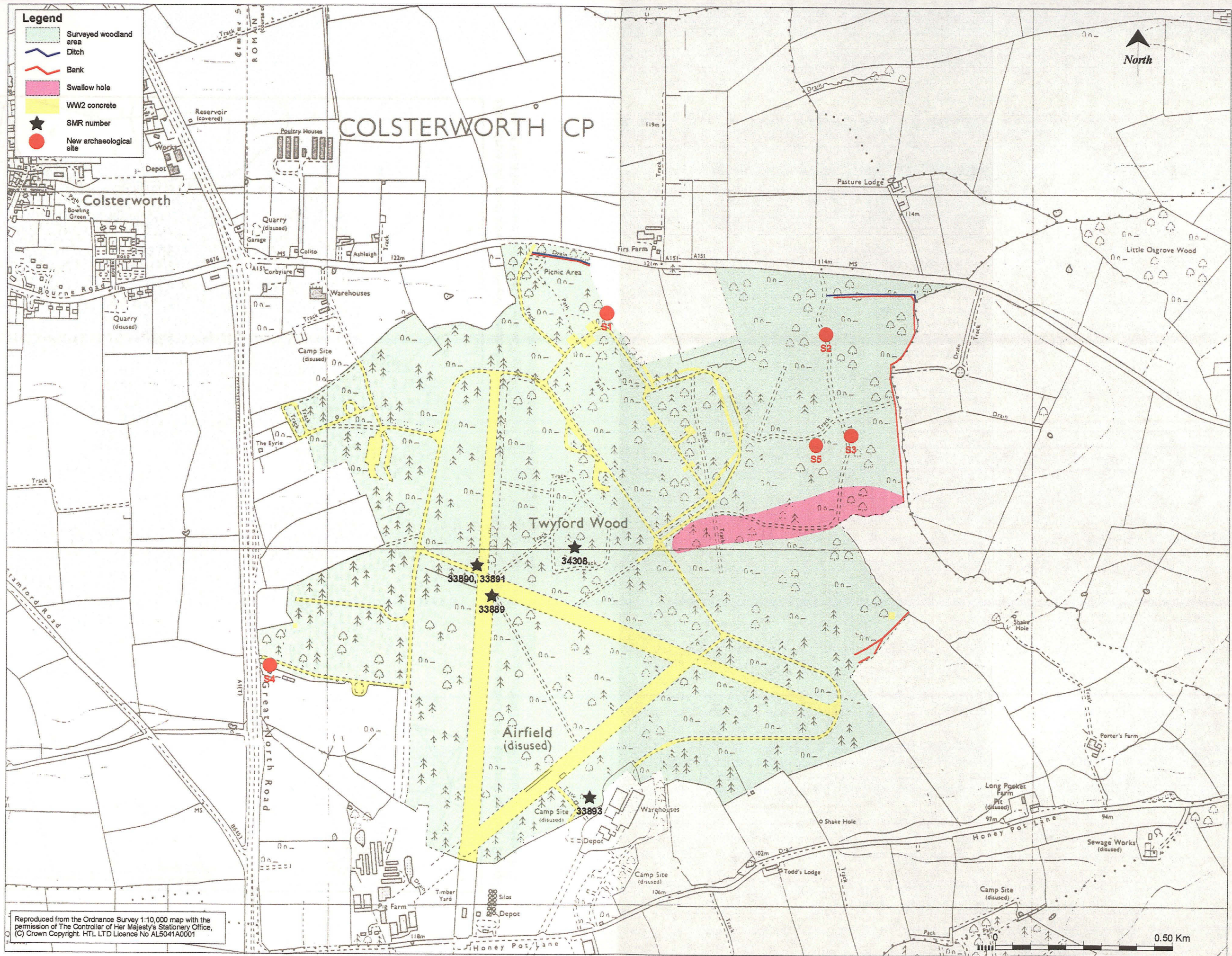


Figure 2 Archaeological remains in Twyford Wood



Figure 3 - Extract from the 1930 Ordnance Survey 25 inch map. This shows the area of cleared woodland, possibly a forest lawn, the earthworks of the medieval moat (SMR 33889) and a range of buildings alongside the Colsterworth-Bourne Road prior to the construction of RAF North Witham. The wood extended approximately 100m to the south

