

Witham Archaeology

A Report to Fairhurst Engineering Solutions

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LAND AT WEST TOFTS TRAINING CAMP, WEST TOFTS, NORFOLK

Heritage Statement

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LAND AT WEST TOFTS TRAINING CAMP, WEST TOFTS, NORFOLK

HERITAGE STATEMENT

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LAND AT WEST TOFTS TRAINING CAMP, WEST TOFTS, NORFOLK

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Heritage Statement

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LAND AT WEST TOFTS TRAINING CAMP, WEST TOFTS, NORFOLK

HERITAGE STATEMENT

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of research carried out by Witham Archaeology in relation to the site of six new buildings at West Tofts Training Camp, West Tofts, Norfolk. The report, commissioned by Fairhurst Engineering Solutions on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, will form part of submission for a planning application for a scheme to demolish six extant Nissen huts and replace them with six new buildings.

The six Nissen huts form part of a wider group comprising brick building and eleven Nissen huts built either during the inter-war period or during World War II. These lie in the western and southern part of the site in an 'L' shaped arrangement, and a grassed area with scatter trees in the eastern part of the site.

The site is located within a functioning Ministry of Defence camp with origins dating back at least to 1925, when is mentioned as a Ministry of Labour camp. The buildings extant on the camp date for the most part either to the inter-war period or World War II and retain their historical character.

A potential for significant Prehistoric remains in the area of the site was identified during fieldwalking carried out as part of earthworks surveys, attested by several prehistoric worked flints, with the most closely dated finds dating to the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age period. Roman pottery and sherds were also found during fieldwalking suggesting the presence of some level of Roman activity in the area. To the north of the proposed area of development lies the site of the deserted West Tofts village. The village dates at least to the late Saxon period and was continually occupied until it was appropriated during the process that created the Stanford Training Area in the 1942, when its inhabitants were evicted. Earthwork remains of an undated brick kiln were also identified during a survey to the west of the site.

This study identified a significant potential for archaeological buried remains within the proposed area of development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This desk-based assessment, prompted by proposals for demolition and development at land at West Tofts Training Camp, West Tofts, Norfolk (hereafter referenced as the 'Site') includes a detailed account of known and potential historic environment assets in the area, and an assessment of the likely impact of the development upon both the historic built environment and sub-surface archaeological remains. The report was commissioned by Fairhurst Engineering Solutions on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, for submission as part of an application for planning permission for a scheme to demolish six extant Nissen huts and replace it with six new buildings.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. Witham Archaeology cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the Code of Conduct of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

2.0 SITE LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY & GEOLOGY (see Figs. 1 & 2)

The West Tofts Training Camp, in the civil parish of Lynford and the administrative district of Breckland is located approximately 9.7 km north of Thetford and 42km south-west of Norwich. The site of the proposed development of around 1.3 ha, lies within the West Tofts Training camp and its centred at NGR

TL 83640 92018. The site is occupied by twelve buildings located along the western and southern edges and is under grass over its eastern extent. The site of the proposed development is completely screened from the outside of the camp by buildings located elsewhere in the camp but outside of the proposed area of development. The camp retains many buildings dated either to the inter-war period or World War II period and is bordered by agricultural fields to the south-east, forest to the south-west and north-west and by the Stanford Training Area to the north-east.

The site is located upon solid geology of Cretaceous Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation, and although there are no records of superficial deposits on site, to the south and south-east there are records of superficial deposits of sand (British Geological Survey website).

3.0 RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND PLANNING POLICY

3.1 Legislation

The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 provides the legislative framework for the regulation of development in relation to archaeology.

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 gives statutory protection to any structure, building or work which is considered to be of particular historic or archaeological interest and regulates any activities which may affect such areas. Under the Act any work that is carried out on a Scheduled Ancient Monument must first obtain Scheduled Monument Consent.

The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 applies special protection to buildings and areas of special architectural or historic interest. Section 66 (1) states that: *in considering whether to grant planning permission for development which affects a listed building or its setting, the local planning authority or, as the case may be, the Secretary of State shall have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest it possesses.*

3.2 National Planning Policy

The Department of Communities and Local Government *National Planning Policy Framework* (hereafter referenced as NPPF) sets out current national planning policy with regard to development and the historic environment. The NPPF (as revised in February 2019) provides a framework for the development of local planning policy and must be taken into account in the preparation of local development plans. Policies relevant to the historic environment are set out in Section 16, *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*. The relevant provisions contained in NPPF, Section 16 are set out in the table below.

Policy Area	NPPF Policy Statement
Local plans and the historic environment (Para. 185)	<i>Plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay, or other threats.</i>
Responsibilities of applicants for planning permission (Para 189)	<i>In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.</i>
Responsibilities of the local planning	<i>Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal</i>

authority in assessing the implications of development (Para 190)	<i>(including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.</i>
Key factors to be considered in determining planning applications (Para. 192)	<i>In determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;</i> • <i>The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and</i> • <i>The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness</i>
Assessing the impact of development upon designated heritage assets (Para 193)	<i>When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.</i>
Assessing the impact of development upon non-designated heritage assets (Para. 197)	<i>The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.</i>
Encouraging development which makes a positive contribution to the settings of historic environment assets (Para. 200)	<i>Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably.</i>

Table 1: Relevant Statements in the National Planning Policy Framework

Definitions of the terms used in describing and assessing the historic environment implications of development are set out by the NPPF in Annex 2. These definitions are set out in the table below.

Term	Definition
Heritage Asset	<i>A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).</i>
Archaeological Interest	<i>There will be archaeological interest in a heritage asset if it holds, or potentially holds, evidence of past human activity worthy of expert investigation at some point.</i>
Setting	<i>The surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance or may be neutral.</i>

Table 2: Definitions of Terms used in the assessment of historic environment assets

Designated assets include World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and Conservation Areas.

3.3 Local Planning Policy

Local policy regarding conservation of the historic environment is directed by national policy, guided by the Breckland Local Plan (adopted November 2019). According to the plan, ‘Development that will affect any designated heritage asset will be subject to comprehensive assessment and should conserve or, wherever possible, enhance the architectural and historic character, appearance and setting of the asset.’ (Policy ENV 07 Designated Heritage Assets). Similarly, ‘Proposals that could affect previously unrecognised heritage assets will be expected, through agreement with the Council, to undergo an appropriate assessment, proportionate to the significance of the asset. The assessment must provide sufficient information for any impact to be fully assessed’ (Policy ENV 08 Non-Designated Heritage Assets).

Breckland Council take advice on archaeological matters from planning archaeologists of Norfolk County Council Environment Service. A summary of the criteria employed by the County Council Environment Service when considering proposed development is provided in the ‘Heritage and Archaeology Statement’ of the document *Local List for Validation of Planning Applications*, published in May 2016.

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal aims and objectives of the project were to:

- *collate information from documentary sources to place the site in its historical context*
- *record prevailing site circumstances.*
- *produce an assessment of the potential impact of development*
- *collate information sufficient to allow for the design of further archaeological investigation should this be required.*
- *produce a project archive for deposition with a designated museum.*

5.0 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Sources

A search was made at the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (hereafter, referenced as NHER) for information on all known heritage assets located within a radius of 1 km of the proposed development.

A search at the archives was not undertaken due to mandatory confinement associated with the Covid-19 epidemic, in place at the time of compiling this report. The historic maps and plans containing representations of the area affected by the proposed development were obtained from online sources or the Witham Archaeology archives. Extracts from the relevant maps are presented as a map regression in Figs. 6 – 10.

Internet sources consulted as part of the current study included:

- the National Heritage List
- The ‘grey literature’ library of archaeological reports held by the Archaeological Data Service
- Original drawings for the 1st Series Ordnance Survey held by the British Library On-line

5.2 Walkover Survey

A walkover survey of the Site and surrounding areas was carried out on 26th November 2020.

The walkover survey permitted assessments of:

- the nature of current and former land-use and the likely scale of disturbance to surface deposits
- features of potential archaeological significance

- any buildings or archaeologically significant earthworks extant on the site
- the likely impact of the development upon the settings of known historic environment assets located within the zone of inter-visibility around the site.

A photographic record of the Site compiled during the walkover survey includes general views of the area of the proposed development as well as specific views of potentially significant heritage assets. The record also includes views to and from historic environment assets located in the zone of intervisibility surrounding the site

6.0 RESULTS OF HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

6.1 Historical Background

An archaeological survey of the Stanford Training Area carried out in 2000 to 2002 recorded several spot finds of worked flint within the 1km HER search area, especially dated from the Late Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age, including a Middle Bronze Age tanged chisel.

An early 18th century source mentions the find of a wooden coffin containing human remains ‘two furlongs off West Tofts church’, during the excavation of a ditch, which were interpreted as a Bronze Age burial. Thirty small beads, a black face made of Lancashire Coal, a golden funnel and a cipher were reportedly found with the burial.

Tofts derives from Old English and means curtilage or the plot of the ground in which a dwelling stands (Key to English Place-names website). West Tofts is mentioned in the Domesday Book, as belonging to Bishop William of Thetford and located in the Hundred of Grimshou (Open Domesday website). Because the village is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 it dates at least from the late Saxon period. Furthermore, during fieldwalks carried to the south of the site of the village were recorded shreds of Saxon pottery. St Mary’s Church, the last standing remain of West Tofts village, dates from the early 14th century, underwent alterations in the 15th century and was largely rebuilt in the 19th century.

The village of West Tofts was appropriated during an emparkment in the 18th century, which created the landscape park surrounding the West Tofts Rectory.

The proposed area of development is located within the MOD West Tofts Training camp. It is uncertain when the camp was first built, and it might have originated as a refugee camp, but by 1925 West Tofts was one of four work camps run by the Ministry of Labour as a ‘oversea training centre’ (Field 2009). During the 1930s the camp was functioning as an Instructional Centre for the unemployed. Transfer Instructional Centres, called Instructional Centres from 1931, were established by the Ministry of Labour, from 1929 to 1938, to ‘harden young men through heavy manual labour’ (Ibid). The camps housed between 150 to 200 men in Nissen huts, and had basic catering, entertainment, and medical infrastructure. They were predominantly based on Forestry Commission land (Ibid). Approximately two hundred thousand unemployed men, from parts of Britain considered to be ‘distressed areas’, were brought to these camps (Ibid).

With the outbreak of World War II, the West Tofts camp was repurposed as a military training base, function that still maintains to this day.

The village of West Tofts was evacuated by the War Office in July 1942 as part of the effort to create the Stanford Training Area, which comprised of 17.500 acres of land to the north of Thetford and is still extant.

6.2 Site Visit (Fig. 2)

A site visit was made on 26th November 2020, to establish the nature of current and previous land use, and to assess the potential for extant structures or other heritage assets such as earthworks.

The proposed area of development lies within the West Tofts Army Camp and is bordered on all sides by camp buildings and roads, built in the same style as the buildings occupying the site. The camp is

bordered by agricultural fields to the south-east, forest to the south and north-west, and the MOD Stanford Training Area to the north-east.

The proposed area is occupied by six Nissen huts forming part of a wider group of eleven Nissen huts and a brick building, laid out in L shape along its western and south edges, and a grassed area with sparse trees in the eastern area. No earthworks were visible during the site visit. Six of the Nissen huts extant on site are going to be demolished as part of the proposed development. These huts are located in the south-western corner of the site and were all inspected apart from one which at the time of the visit was locked.

The huts are all built in the same style, either during the interwar period or during World War II, with brick foundation, concrete blocks and half cylindrical corrugated iron skin covers. The interiors were lined with hardboard. The huts were used as classrooms for storage but were for the most part disused.

In the event of a requirement for archaeological trial trench evaluation, access to the site would not be problematic. However, an evaluation in the area of the Nissen huts affected by the proposed development could only be carried out after demolition. During a visual inspection of the site covers for buried services were identified, and therefore the site would need to be scanned to locate live services.



Plate 1: View of the grassed, eastern part of the site, from the road running along the site, looking north-west



Plate 2: View of the grassed, eastern part of the site, looking south south-west



Plate 3: View of the grassed, eastern part of the site, looking south-west



Plate 4: View of the grassed, eastern part of the site, looking north-west



Plate 5: South-west elevation of Blocks 35 (left) and 36 (right), looking north-east



Plate 6: Detail of south side of Block 35, looking north



Plate 7: Interior of Block 35, looking north-east



Plate 8: Interior of Block 36, northern room, looking south-west



Plate 9: Interior of Block 36, southern room, looking north-east



Plate 10: View of road running alongside the eastern edge of site, looking north north-west



Plate 11: View of Blocks 35, 36 (right), 47 and 48 (left), looking north-west



Plate 12: View south-western part of the site, looking north north-east



Plate 13: View of Blocks 47, 48 (right), 63 and 49 (left), looking north



Plate 14: View of road running alongside the western edge of site, looking north north-west



Plate 15: South-west elevations of Blocks 47 (right) and 48 (left), looking north-east



Plate 16: Interior of Block 47, looking south-west



Plate 17: Interior of Block 48 looking north-east



Plate 18: South-east facing elevation of Block 49, looking north-west



Plate 19: Interior of Block 49, south room, looking north west



Plate 20: Interior of Block 49, north room, looking south-east



Plate 21: South-east elevation of Blok 63, looking north-west



Plate 22: Interior of Block 63, south room, looking north-west



Plate 23: Interior of Block 63, central room, looking south-east



Plate 24: Interior of Block 63, north room, looking north-west



Plate 25: South-east elevation of Block 50, looking north-west



Plate 26: Interior of Block 50, looking north-west



Plate 27: Building north-west of Blocks 62 and 50, looking north



Plate 28: View of blocks at the north-west corner of the site, facing the north-west of blocks 62 and 50, looking north



Plate 29: View of buildings at the north-west corner of the site, looking east south-east

6.3 Designated Heritage Assets

The following entry descriptions will mention the HER reference number followed by the National Heritage List number in brackets.

Scheduled Monuments

The only scheduled monument within the search area is the site of West Tofts deserted village (MNF5149; 1003946) and the site of Caston Hall (MNF5148; 1003951), which as being part of an 'old county number' scheduling record are not reviewed under the Monument Protection Programme but can still be found in the National Heritage List (Historic England Website).

Listed Buildings (Fig. 4)

The only listed building identified within the search area is the Grade I St Mary's Church (MNF5156;1077249), located to the north of the proposed area of development, in the Stanford Training Area. The area is under the control of Ministry of Defence (MOD) and cannot be visited.

The church dates from the early 14th century but was altered in the 15th century and largely rebuilt in the mid 19th century by the architect Augustus Pugin in Gothic Revival style (Historic England website).

Registered Parks and Gardens

Although no registered parks and gardens were identified within the search area, immediately to the west lies the Grade II Lynford Hall park and garden (1000224). This garden, designed in the 1860s by William Burns and William Andrews Nesfield, contains an early 20th century Japanese water garden and is set within a landscape park and woodland originating in the 18th century and expanded in the mid 19th century. The first Lynford Hall dates from the early 16th century (Historic England website).

6.4 Previous Archaeological Investigations (Fig. 3)

There have been seven episodes of formal archaeological investigation within the 1 km radius HER search area. All were rapid earthwork identification surveys carried out to the west, north and east of the site.

Four of these surveys were carried out as part of a wider archaeological survey of the Stanford Training Area in 2000-20002 (Davison and Cushion 2003), and the remaining three were carried out by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, between 1997 and 2007.

6.5 HER Data (Fig. 4 and 5)

In the following account, information collated from the Norfolk Historic Environment Record is presented by period. For additional detail on specific sites, please refer to the table and accompanying map in Appendix A.

Prehistoric (AD43 and earlier)

Nine prehistoric heritage assets were identified within the search area.

The closest assets to the site were two worked flints found during fieldwalking carried out in 2000 (MNF40022), and further flint flakes found during fieldwalking in 2007 (MNF41477).

To the south-west of the proposed area of development, Palaeolithic hand axes were found on the site of a late 18th to early 19th century extraction pit (MNF65216), while two Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age flint flakes were recovered during fieldwalking in 2000 (MNF40503).

A Neolithic flint fabricator was found in 1975, in the driveway of Cedar Lodge (MNF19761) to the north-west of the area of the proposed development.

At the southern edge of the search area, a multi-period artefact scatter (MNF54723) was found during metal detecting carried out in 2006. Flint recovered dated to the Late Upper Palaeolithic or Early Mesolithic, a Middle Bronze Age tanged chisel and a 'moustache-shaped' object were also recovered from this site. All the other finds from the site date to the Roman and Saxon and Medieval periods.

To the north of the proposed area of development, a multi-period artefact scatter (MNF40431) recorded during a fieldwalking carried out in 2001. During the fieldwalk prehistoric worked flints, including an Early Neolithic laurel leaf, and fragments of Iron Age pottery, as well as Roman and post Roman pottery were recovered. Immediately to the west, further fieldwalking also carried out in 2001 revealed another multi-period artefact scatter (MNF41460). Prehistoric flint flakes, one Late Upper Palaeolithic flint blade, a Neolithic flint scrapper and an Iron Age pottery sherd, as well as Roman and post Roman finds. Further north, the site of a burial found in the early 18th century (MNF5137) may have been Bronze Age.

In the north-eastern part of the search area Mesolithic flint backed blade was found during a 1976 field survey (MNF7615). Post Roman finds and features were found on the same site.

Romano-British

Three Roman heritage assets have been identified within the search area.

At the southern edge of the search area, pottery, a composite plate brooch and coins dated to the Roman period were found (MNF54723).

During fieldwalking carried out in 2001 to the north of the site, Roman pottery shreds were recovered (MNF40431 and MNF41460).

Saxon

There are three Saxon heritage assets identified within the search area.

Fragments of Late Saxon pottery were found during two episodes fieldwalking carried out in 2001, to the north of the proposed area of development (MNF40431 and MNF41460).

Further Late Saxon pottery was found on a site in the north-eastern corner of the search area (MNF7615).

Medieval

Nine medieval heritage assets were identified within the search area.

During a fieldwalking, carried out in 2000, immediately to the east of the site sherds of medieval pottery were recovered (MNF40022).

At the southern edge of the search area, a silver coin dating to the reign of Edward II and a medieval thimble were found (MNF54723).

Fieldwalking carried out in 2001, to the north of the proposed area of development, recovered medieval pottery sherds and roof tile (MNF40431 and MNF41460).

In the northern part of the search area lies the site of the deserted medieval village of West Tofts and the site of a great house, Caston Hall (MNF5149). The village was emparked in the 18th century (MNF57280). The house was built before 1797 to replace the original Caston Hall (MNF5148), which

was located to the east of the village and built in the 14th century. The replacement building later became a rectory. The village and the house were demolished after World War Two. East of the site of Caston Hall lies the site of an undated rectangular enclosure (MNF31035) considered to be medieval.

In the north-eastern corner of the search area, earthworks banks forming a possible medieval field system and trackway have been identified (MNF7615). Medieval pottery, including a fragment of Stamford ware, as well as Late Saxon pottery and prehistoric flint were found on the same site.

Post Medieval

There are nine post medieval heritage assets within the assessment area.

To the south-east of the proposed area of development, the site of a possible post medieval extraction pit (MNF44856) was recorded during a rapid earthwork identification survey carried out in 2004 (ENF97061, Fig. 3).

Approximately 200m to the east of the proposed area of development, a possible post medieval system of ridges and ditches runs parallel to a stream in Watering Carr (MNF41284). This feature probably marks the site of a floated water meadow.

To the north of the proposed area of development, is the site of a landscape park surrounding West Tofts Rectory (MNL57280). The park was identified from a late 19th century map. Within the park, fieldwalking carried out in 2001 resulted in the recovery of post medieval pottery (MNF40431). To the east of the park lies the site of a 19th century charity school (MNF5147), built with reused medieval material and demolished in 1977, and the site of the Horseshoes Inn (MNF50016), a 16th or 17th century timber framed building which burnt down in 1986.

In the northern part of the search area, are the sites of an early 17th century timber framed building (MNF57151), the site of Hall Farm (MNF57152), a timber framed building dated from the 17th century but altered in the 18th and 19th century, and the site of West Tofts Hall (MNF57153), which dated to the early 18th century and went through alterations in the 19th century. These three buildings were surveyed by the Royal Commission in 1970 before being demolished.

Modern

The proposed area of development is located within the West Tofts Army Camp (MNF25239). The camp was possibly built to house Belgian refugees and was used from 1935 to 1939 as a labour camp to house unemployed from northern England. It was converted into an army camp in 1939 and is still in use for the same purpose. The camp had two large World War Two air raid shelters which were infilled in 2000 because of safety issues.

Undated

Two undated heritage assets were identified within the search area.

The site of a brick kiln and associated features (MNF41285) recorded in a 2000-2002 rapid earthwork identification survey, and the site of a north to south aligned ditched causeway (MNF31036), interpreted as a possible road or an irregularly shaped toft.

6.6 Cartographic Information

Faden's Map of Norfolk, 1797 (not reproduced)

Faden's map is drawn at a scale of one inch to the mile and consequently lacks detail. It shows the site area as relatively open ground bounded by roads to the north-east, north-west and south-west. The roads appear to follow approximately the same lines as their modern successors. Small areas of woodland are depicted at the north-west end of the parcel of land within which the site is located (Faden's Map of Norfolk website).

First Series Ordnance Survey of 1824 (Fig. 6)

This map, drawn at a scale of one inch to the mile, lacks detail and, like Faden's map, shows the site as located in relatively open ground. The drawing depicts more woodland than was present in 1797, particularly along the road west of the site, and shows a narrow north-west to south-east aligned band of woodland just south-west of the site.

Tithe Map, 1845 (not reproduced)

A version of the map is available for review on the Norfolk County Council Historical Maps of Norfolk viewer (Norfolk County Council. Historical Maps of Norfolk website). It is drawn at a scale of one inch to six chains and shows the site area in reasonable detail. The general parcel of land within which the site is located is shown as sub-divided, and that part occupied by the development area is identified by the apportionment list as Plot 129 ('Fox Tail Covert'), described as 'plantation' (The National Archives website). Plot 131 ('Singley's Piece') north-west of the site and Plot 128 ('Gravel Pit Break') to the south-east are both described as 'arable' areas (The National Archives website).

Revised New Series Ordnance Map of 1898 (Fig. 7)

The map, drawn at a scale of one inch to the mile, indicates continuation of 'plantation' land use as described by the tithe apportionment documents. The areas immediately north-west and south-west of the development site appear more thickly wooded than those to the east.

Ordnance Survey 25 Inch to One Mile Map of 1905 (Fig. 8)

The map shows variations in the detail of land use within Foxtail Covert and depicts the south-western part of the development site as more thickly wooded than the north-eastern part. The more thickly wooded area contains a regular pattern of parallel rectilinear north-west to south-east aligned tracks. A 'pheasantry' is drawn in the less thickly wooded area just north-west of the development site.

Aerial Image, 1946 (not reproduced)

A vertical aerial image, available for review on the Norfolk County Council Historical Maps of Norfolk viewer, indicates that by 1946 the site had been developed, and a regular arrangement of buildings constructed aligned parallel with the road north-east of the site. Several irregular sinuous pathways are visible through the more thickly wooded area south-west of the site. A broad loop of sub-rectangular trackway has been cleared on the southern side of the road at the north-western end of Foxtail Covert (Norfolk County Council. Historical Maps of Norfolk website).

Ordnance Survey 1 to 2500 scale map of 1976 (Fig. 9)

Post-World War II mapping depicts the further expansion of the camp complex. Within the development area, many of the structures visible on the 1946 aerial image (see above) are recorded on the six inches to the mile scale Ordnance Survey map from 1952. They continue to show on subsequent mapping, as illustrated on Fig. 9, and some of the structures remain as elements of the present day.

Lidar Height data, 2017 (Fig. 10)

A plot of 2m horizontal resolution LIDAR height data processed and studied for the assessment revealed topographic anomalies, most of which could be interpreted as the results of 20th century development of the camp. Parallel anomalies south-west of the development site correlated with tracks mapped in the 'plantation' woodland, which were probably related to 19th century woodland management.

7.0 ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The criteria for assessing the significance of heritage assets identified in the present study follow those set out in the Department for Transport document *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB). The DfT scheme, which employs five categories to assign value ranging from Negligible to Very High, is set out in the table below.

Rating	Asset Type
Very High	Very high importance and rarity, international scale and very limited potential for substitution.
High	High importance and rarity, national scale, and limited potential for substitution.
Medium	Medium or high importance and rarity, regional scale, limited potential for substitutions.
Low	Low or medium importance and rarity, local scale.
Negligible	Very low importance and rarity, local scale.

Table 1. Schedule of DMRB criteria for assigning value to heritage assets

7.1 Designated Heritage Assets

Although there are no designated heritage assets located in the proposed area of development, there are three designated assets within the search area, all related to the West Tofts village site located to the north of the proposed area of the development. The Grade I listed building St Mary's Church, and the scheduled monuments covering the sites of the village and the Caston Hall. All these assets are considered to be of high significance.

7.2 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

The site is located within an area with some potential for prehistoric remains, with several worked flints being recorded during fieldwalking surveys carried out to the north, east and south of the proposed area of development. A possible Bronze Age burial is mentioned to have been found within the search area in an early 18th century source. Although it is not certain that the burial dates to this period, any burial remains dating to the Prehistoric period would be considered of high significance.

Fieldwalking carried out within the assessment area recorded Roman pottery sherds and coins to the north and south of the site, and Saxon pottery sherds to the north of the site. Considering the relative rarity of finds from these periods it seems likely that the finds originated from activity near to the find places. This suggests a low to medium potential for low level Roman activity, possibly including occupation in the wider landscape around the proposed area of development. This would have possible medium significance. The Saxon finds could relate to the now deserted village of West Tofts which had at least late Saxon origins. The potential for occupation remains of this period are therefore relatively low within the proposed area of development but there is still a medium potential for low level activity and remains of medium significance.

Cartographic evidence shows the site within undeveloped agricultural fields in the post medieval period. This suggests that the site was located within open fields in the medieval period. It is therefore considered that there is a medium to low potential for low to medium significance remains of medieval and post medieval agricultural activity within the proposed area of development.

The site is located within a labour camp built for the unemployed, latter converted to a MOD camp, which dates from at least 1925, and the modern development within the site is dated either to the inter-war period or World War II. The camp might have been built originally to house refugees although it is uncertain. Despite being a low potential for buried remains relating to the camp within the proposed area of development, due to the good preservation of the camp, these remains would be considered of medium significance. Any remains dating to the time when the camp was used as a labour centre would be

particularly interested, as they would be evidence of labour and unemployed policies carried out by the government in the early 20th century. The potential for buried remains dating to this period are considered to be higher than for the war period, however it is possible that all the buildings might have been re-used by the army and are still extant. An archaeological monitoring carried out at Cranwich Camp, located c. 6.5km to the west of the proposed area of development provides an example of the type of buried remains that may survive on site. Cranwich was a labour camp that similarly to West Tofts was converted to military use during World War II, and during the monitoring was recorded a concrete slab foundation interpreted to date to the labour camp phase of the site (Brooks 2011).

8.0 IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MITIGATION

The criteria for assessing the scale of impact of the proposed development upon heritage assets identified in the present study are drawn from Department for Transport document *Design Manual for Roads and Bridges* (DMRB). The DfT scheme employs five categories to assess scale of impact, ranging from No Change to Major Adverse. The criteria are set out in the table below.

Rating	Description
Major adverse	Loss of resource and/or quality and integrity of resource; severe damage to key characteristics, features or elements
Moderate adverse	Loss of resource, but not adversely affecting the integrity; partial loss of/damage to key characteristics, features or elements
Minor adverse	Some measurable change in attributes, quality or vulnerability; minor loss of, or alteration to, one (maybe more) key characteristics, features or elements
Negligible	Very minor loss or detrimental alteration to one or more characteristics, features or elements
No Change	No loss or alteration of characteristics, features or elements; no observable impact in either direction

Table 2. DMRB criteria for assessing the magnitude of the impacts of the proposed development

Current proposals envisage the demolition of six Nissen huts and therefore their complete loss. This will have a major adverse impact on the specific buildings, however the overall character of the camp will remain, as many Nissen huts will survive within and outside the site boundaries. Furthermore, there are a significant number of other later buildings within the camp and the proposed new modular type buildings will not have a major adverse impact to the character of the camp.

In the absence of further information concerning the foundations it is not possible to assess the level of disturbance of the proposed development. However, activities such as general landscaping, excavation for foundations, installation of services and enabling works could have a major adverse impact on buried archaeological remains.

The site is located within an area of prehistoric potential, with several worked flints being recorded during fieldwalking carried out to the north, east and south of the proposed area of development. There is also a medium Roman and Saxon potential, a medium potential of medieval and post medieval low significance remains, and low potential for modern or World War II remains. Although any buried remains might already have been affected by construction of the extant Nissen huts, this can only be confirmed during an intrusive archaeological evaluation.

The impact of the proposed development on the designated heritage assets within the search area is non-existent or negligible due to distance and the screened character of the site, with no intervisibility between the area of the development and adjacent areas beyond the boundaries of the camp.

The impact of the proposed development could be mitigated by the implementation of a historic building survey of the affected Nissen huts and a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation before the construction of the new buildings.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

HER data assessed as part of the current study indicates that there is a medium potential for the presence of buried prehistoric remains, low to medium of Roman, Saxon, medieval and post medieval remains and high potential for modern and World War II dated buried remains. The proposed area of development lies within a functioning MOD camp located to the south of the deserted possible late Saxon village of West Tofts. The village was appropriated first within a landscaped park in the early 18th century and later in 1942, as part of the process that establish the Stanford Training Area, which result in the eviction of the local population. The only standing remnant of the village is the 14th century St Mary's church. Most of the heritage assets identified as part of this study were located to the north of the proposed area of development, in the area around the site of the deserted village. Cartographic evidence shows the site located within a field surrounded by woodland in the early 19th century, which suggests that the site was clear of development and possible within agricultural fields in the medieval and post medieval periods. The camp within the site is located dates to the 1930s, when it may have originated has a camp to house refugees or as an instructional centre for the unemployed during the inter-war years. It was later converted into an army camp during World War II. The site is occupied mostly by Nissen huts dating to the war or to the period of the labour camp.

Although the proposed development envisages the demolition of six Nissen huts extant on the site, the overall character of the camp will not be completely lost, and because there is no direct view of the site from the outside of the camp and the site there will be no loss in the aesthetic value of the World War II camp. The development might have a major impact in any present buried remains where the groundworks will occur. However, it is possible buried remains could have sustained a major adverse impact during construction of the existing structures.

The impacts of the development can be mitigated through an appropriate programme of historic building survey and archaeological trial trenching before construction ground works take place.

10.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Chris Moulis for contributions for this report, to Russell Trimble for editing this report, and to staff at Norfolk Historic Environment Record for providing relevant information.

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Norfolk XC111NW (1884, 1906, 1929, 1952)

25in Norfolk XC111.2 (1884, 1905, 1928)
Norfolk XC111.3 (1884, 1905, 1928)

1:2500 1884, 1905, 1928, 1975-76, 1975-77, 1995

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12.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

12.1 Project Details

EVENT NO.: ENF1580590

PLANNING APPLICATION NO.: Predetermination

FIELD OFFICER: Filipe Santos

NGR: TL 83640 92018

CIVIL PARISH: Lynford

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 26/11/2020

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Heritage Statement

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Fairhurst Engineering Solutions

12.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: 2 High Street, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 9DT

DESIGNATED REPOSITORY: Norfolk Museum Services

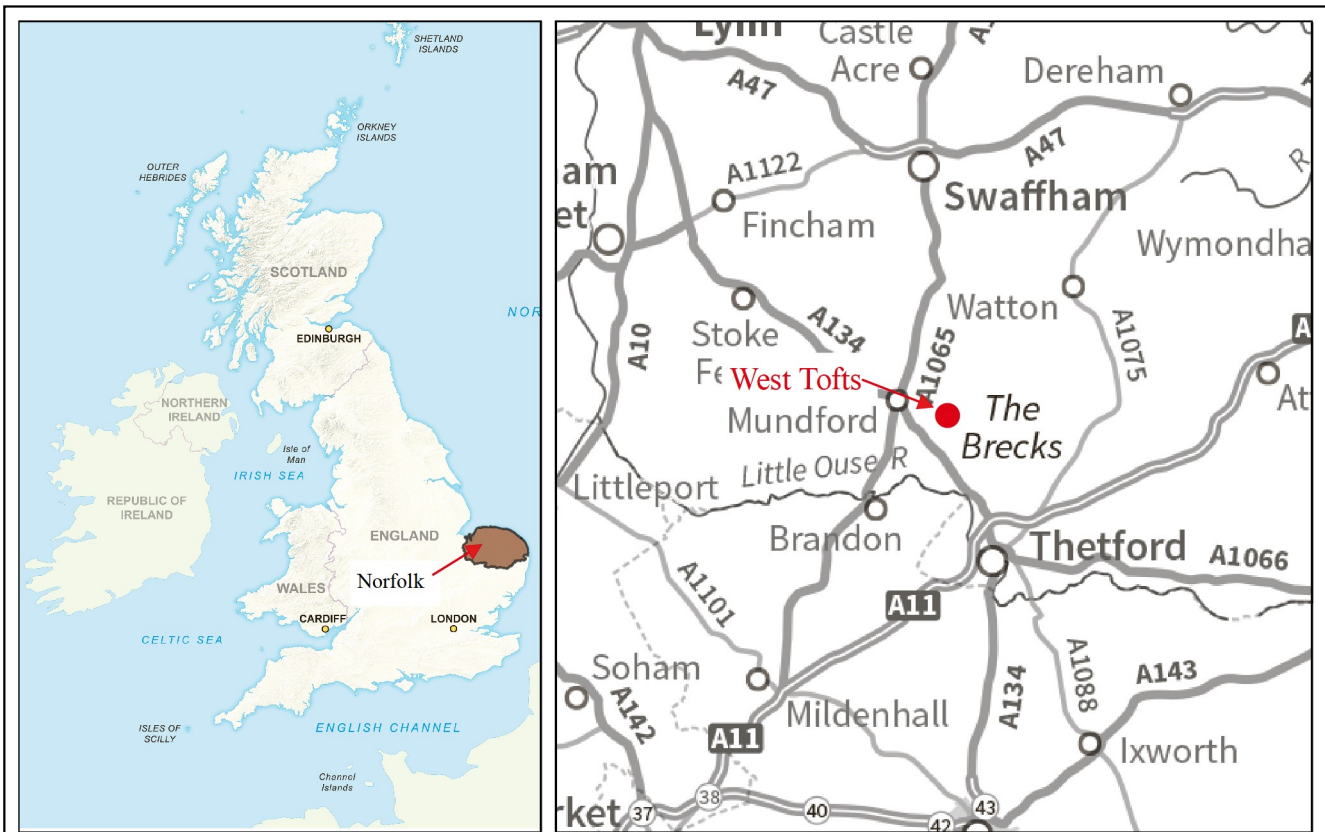
MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: TBC

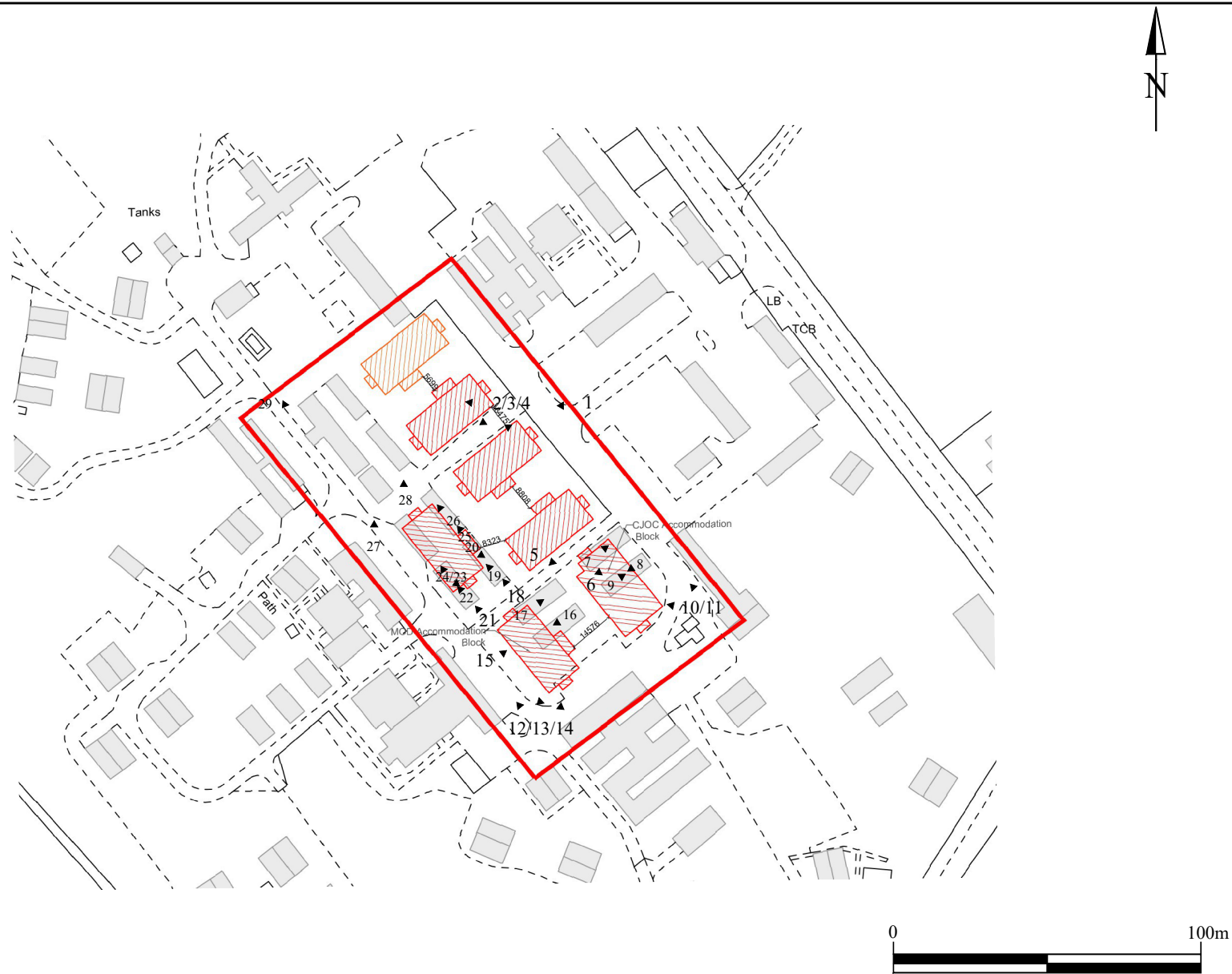
PROPOSED ACCESSION DATE: TBC

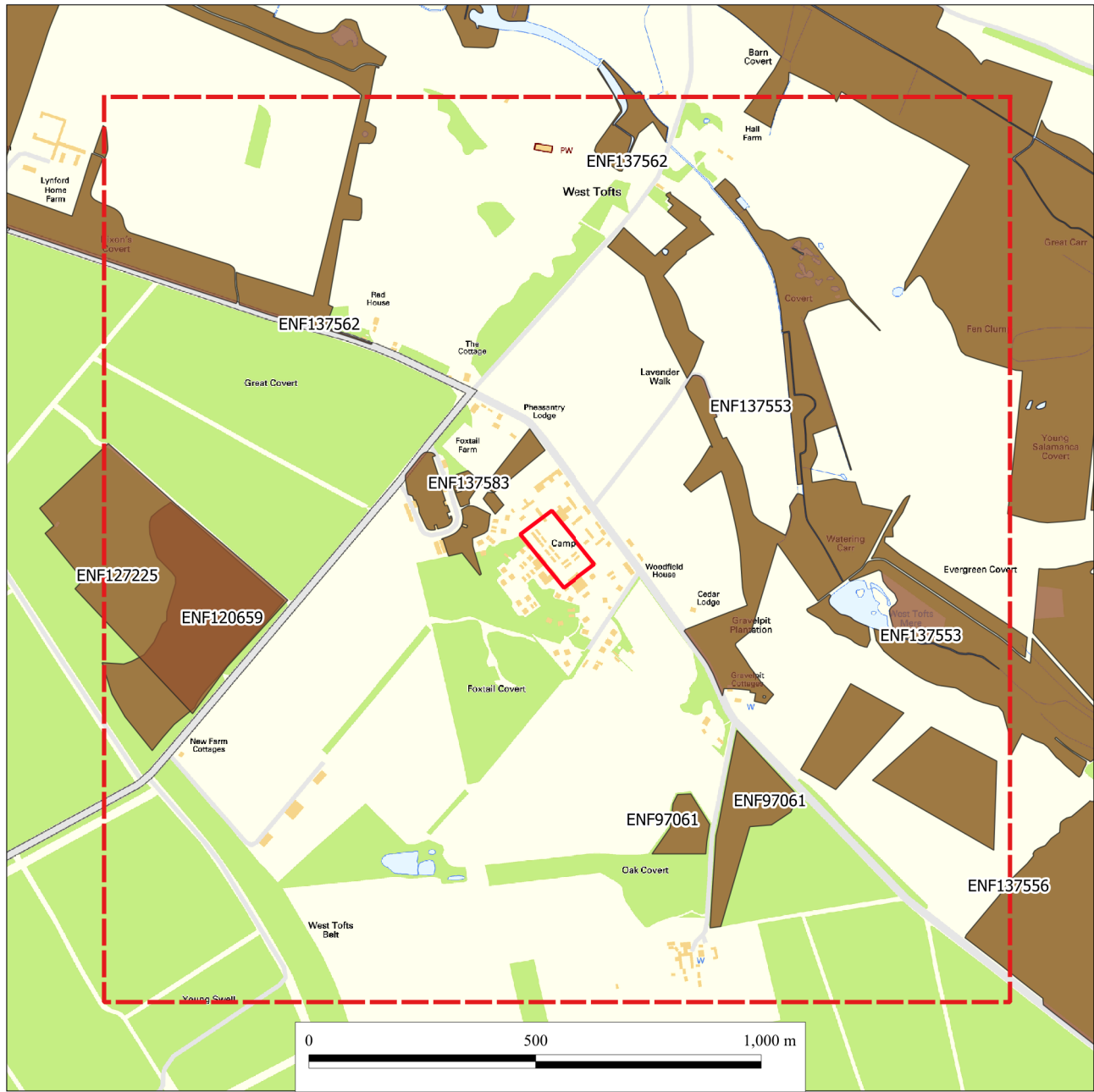
The Site Archive Comprises:

Digital Photographs	29
Site Notes	1

It is intended that transfer of the archive in accordance with current published requirements will be undertaken following completion of this project.







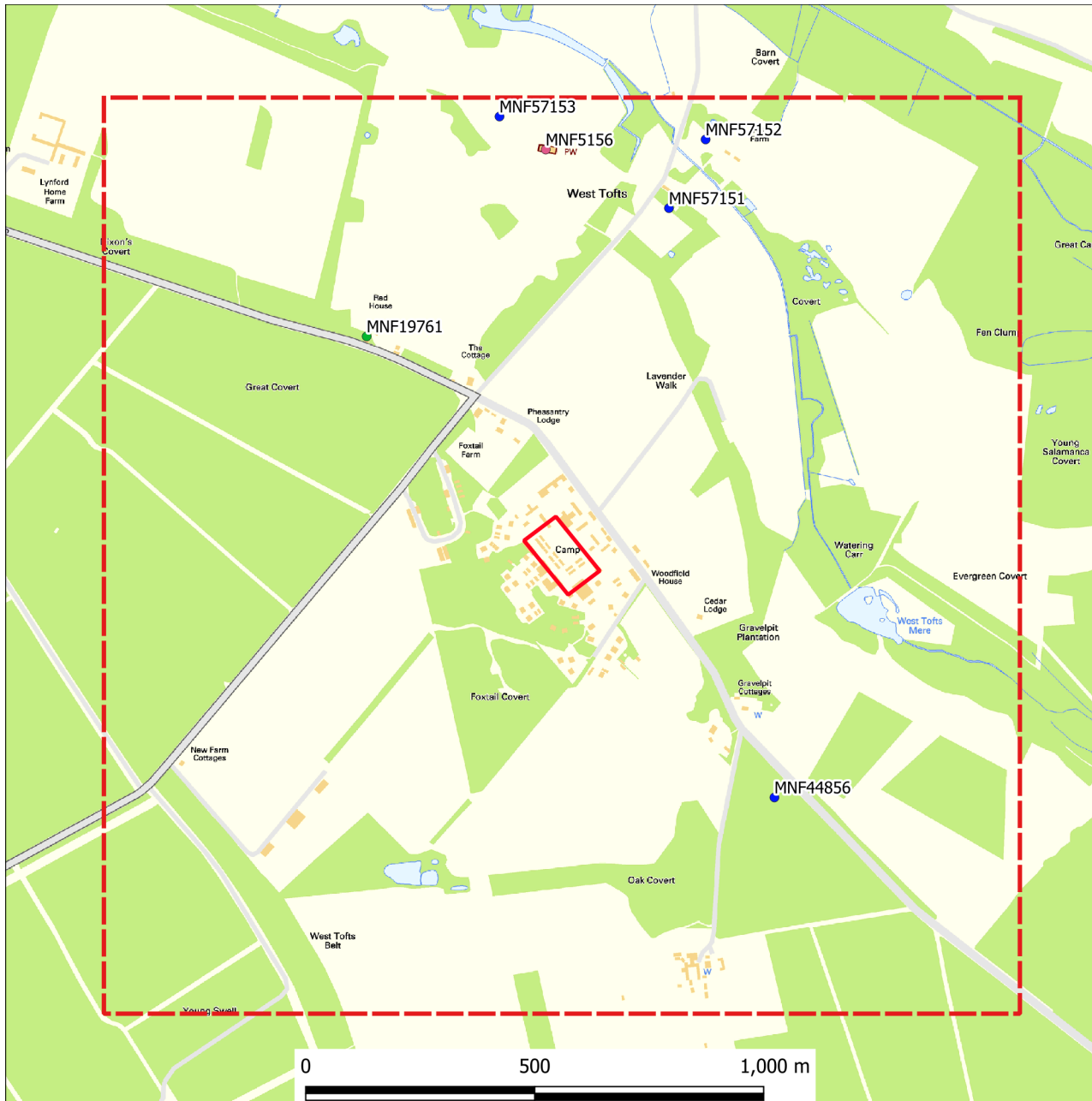
Region Data - Archaeological Recording Events (NHER)

EVID	EventName
ENF97061	Wallover Survey (Rapid Earthwork Identification Survey) by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Lynford, August 2004
ENF120659	Wallover Survey (Rapid Earthwork Identification Survey) by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service in south-west Norfolk, November 2007
ENF127225	Wallover Survey (Rapid Earthwork Identification Survey) by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Breckland, December 1997-February 1998
ENF137553	Earthwork Rapid Identification Survey by B. Cushion at Lynford/Stanford, 2000-2002 (Stanta Management Unit K)
ENF137556	Earthwork Rapid Identification Survey by B. Cushion at Lynford/Stanford/Sturston/Wretham/Tottingham, 2000-2002 (Stanta Management Unit L1)
ENF137562	Earthwork Rapid Identification Survey by B. Cushion at Standord/Lynford, 2000-2002 (Stanta Management Unit M)
ENF137583	Earthwork Rapid Identification Survey by B. Cushion at Lynford, 2000-2002 (West Tofts Camp)

Key

- HER Search Area
- Archaeological Recording Events (Region)

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Point Data - Historic Building (NHER)

HER Ref.	Period	Description
MNF5156	Medieval to 19th Century	St Mary's Church, West Tofts

Point Data - Find Spot (NHER)

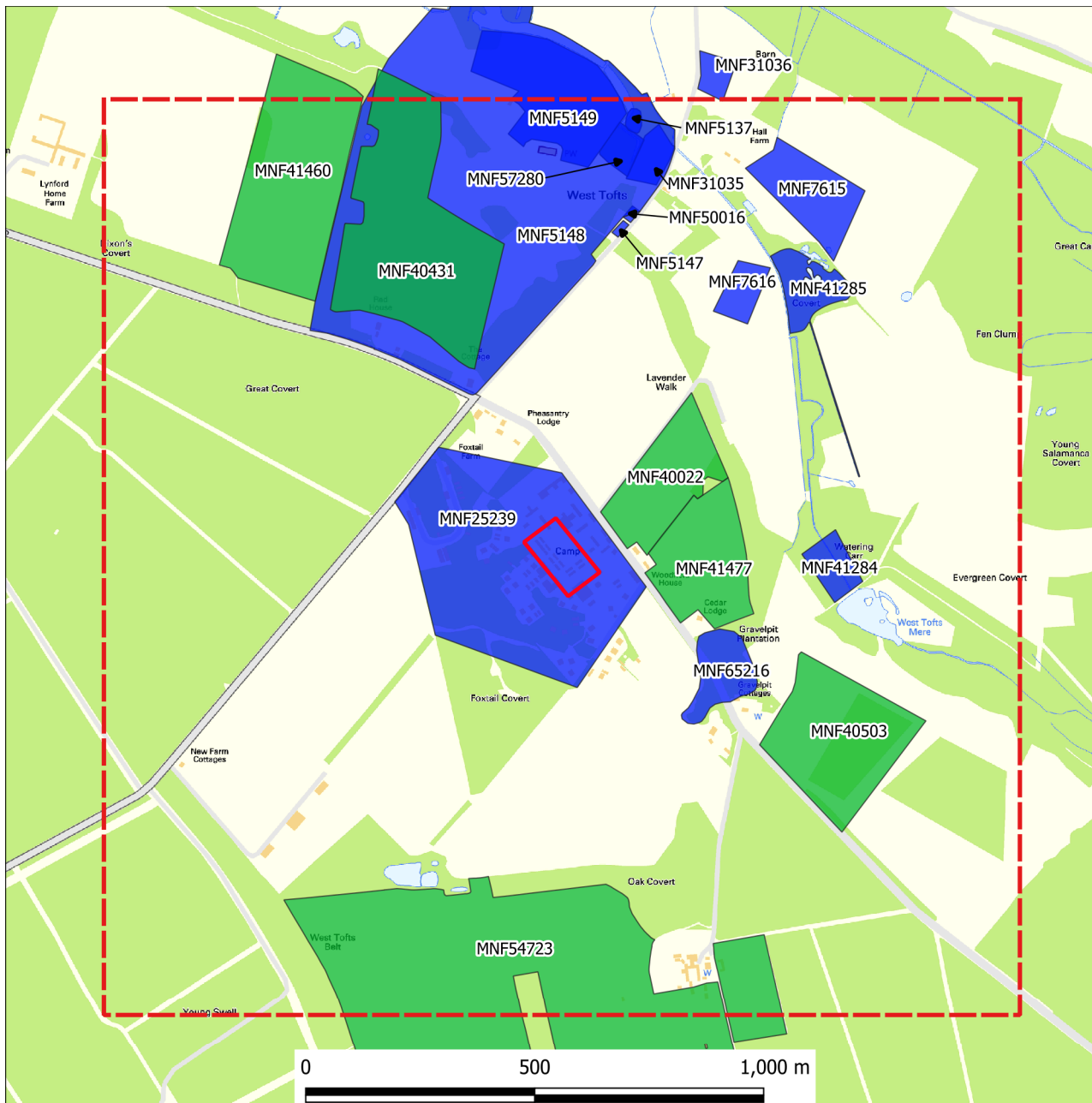
HER Ref.	Period	Description
MNF19761	Neolithic	Neolithic fabricator from driveway of Cedar Lodge

Point Data - Heritage Assets (NHER)

HER Ref.	Period	Description
MNF44856	Post Medieval	Post medieval extraction pit
MNF57151	Post Medieval	Site of 17th century timber-framed building
MNF57152	16th Century to Late 20th Century	Site of Hall Farm
MNF57153	18th Century to Late 20th Century	Site of West Tofts Hall

Key

- HER Search Area
- Historic Building
- Find Spot
- Heritage Assets



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Region Data - Find Spots (NHER)

HER Ref.	Period	Description
MNF40022	Lower Palaeolithic to Medieval	Prehistoric flints and medieval pot
MNF40503	Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age	Prehistoric flint flakes
MNF41460	Lower Palaeolithic to 19th Century	Multi-period finds
MNF41477	Prehistoric	Prehistoric flint flakes
MNF40431	Late Neolithic to Medieval	Multi-period finds
MNF54723	Upper Palaeolithic to Medieval	Multi-period finds scatter

Region Data - Heritage Assets (NHER)

HER Ref.	Period	Description
MNF25239	Early 20th Century to 21st Century	West Tofts Army Camp
MNF31035	Medieval	Undated rectangular enclosure
MNF31036	Unknown	Undated causeway
MNF41284	Post Medieval	Possible post medieval water meadows at Watering Carr
MNF41285	Unknown	Undated brick kiln in Brick Kiln Covert
MNF50016	Post Medieval	Site of The Horseshoes Inn, West Tofts
MNF5147	Post Medieval	Site of 19th century charity school
MNF5148	Medieval to 19th Century	Site of Caston Hall
MNF5149	Medieval to 19th Century	West Tofts deserted medieval village and site of great house
MNF5137	Bronze Age	Possible Bronze Age burial
MNF57280	18th Century to 21st Century	Landscape Park surrounding West Tofts Rectory
MNF65216	Lower Palaeolithic to 19th Century	Site of post-medieval gravel pit (possible source of Palaeolithic handaxes)
MNF7615	Early Mesolithic to Medieval	Mesolithic and post Roman finds and earthworks possible representing a medieval field system and trackway
MNF7616	Medieval	Medieval field system and hollow way

Key

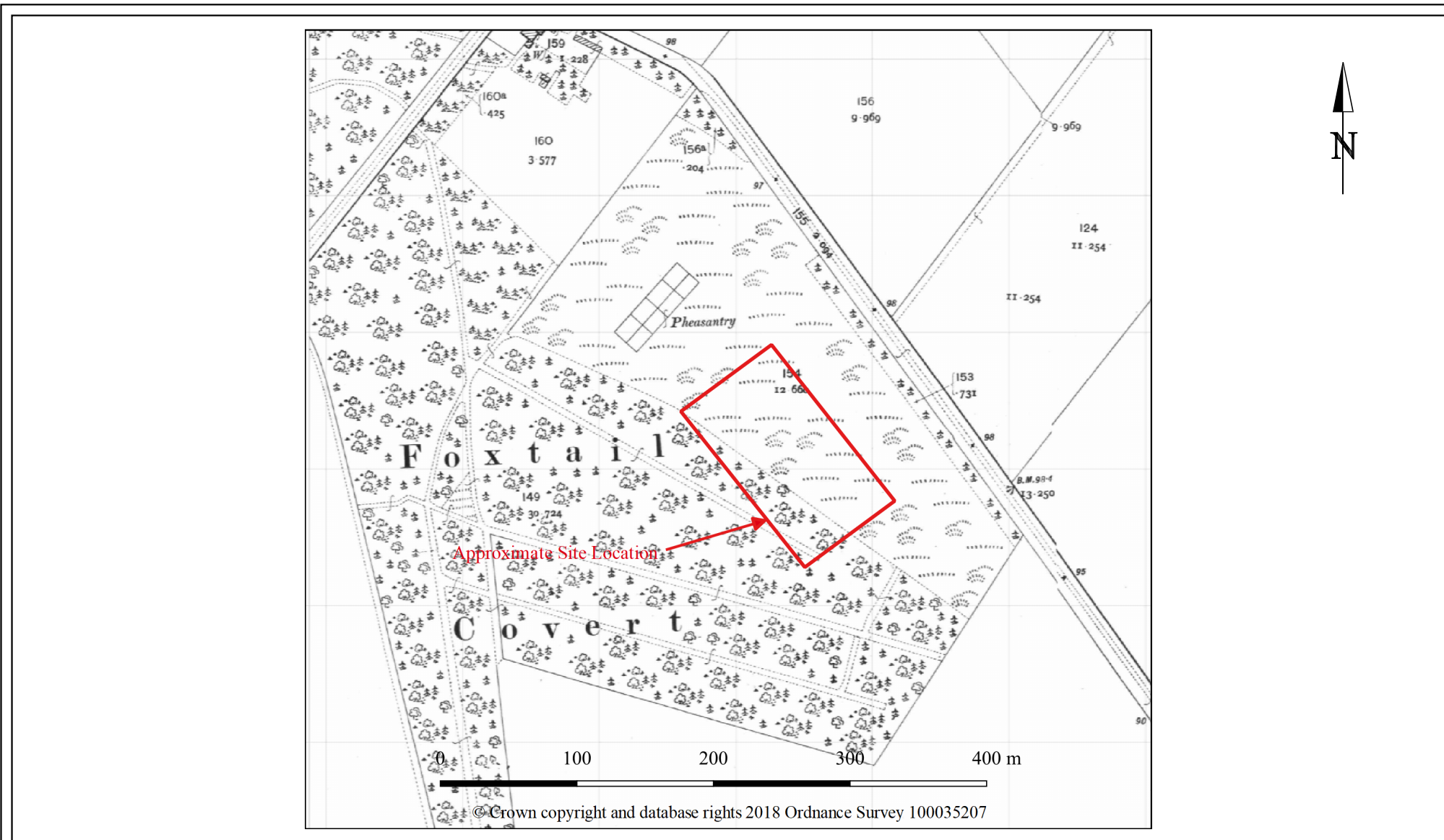
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- Find Spots
- Heritage Assets

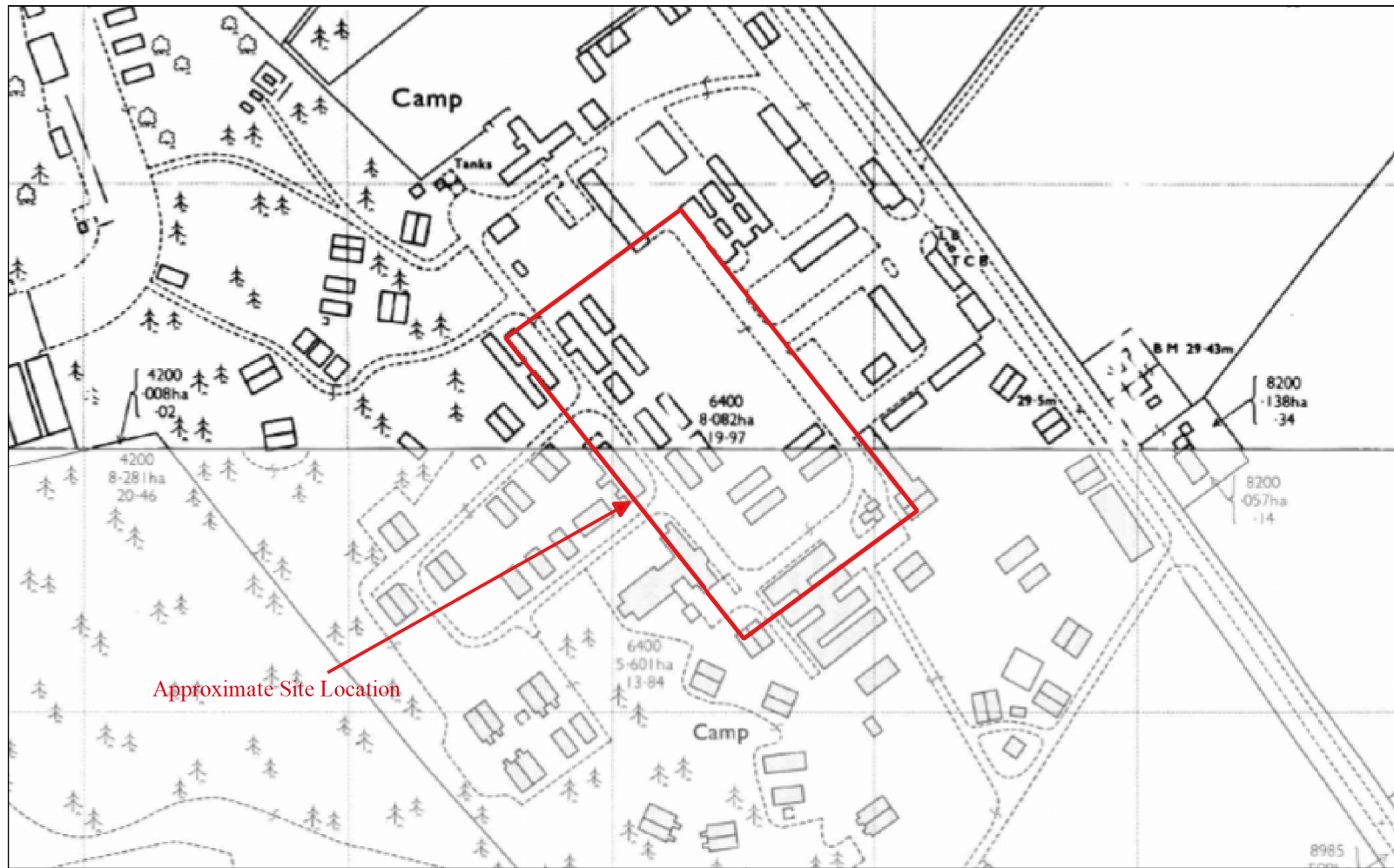


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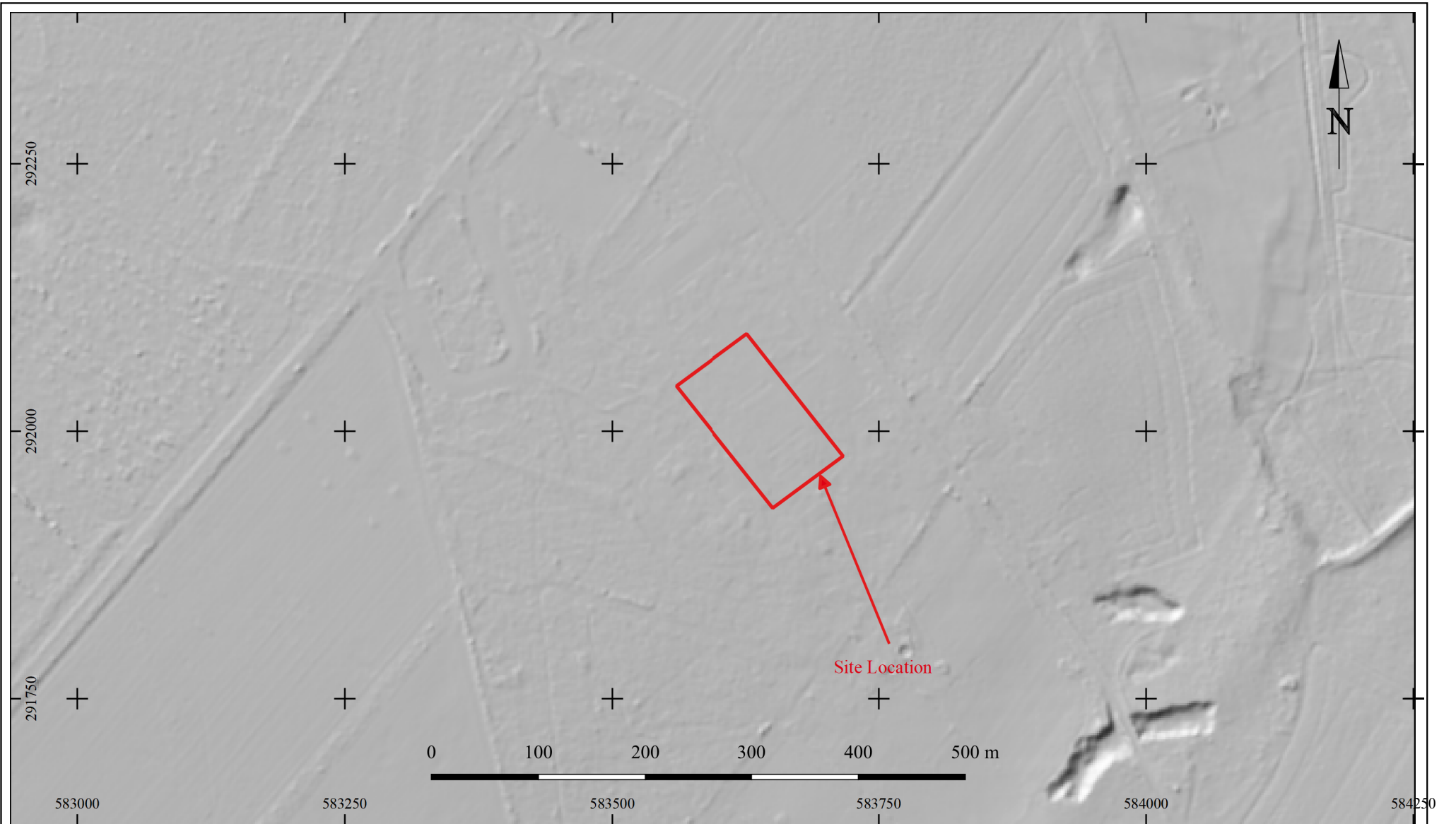
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APPENDIX A
OASIS SUMMARY FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: withamar1-410571

Project details

Project name	Land at West Tofts Training Camp, West Tofts, Norfolk. Heritage Statement
Short description of the project	<p>This report presents the results of research carried out by Witham Archaeology in relation to the site of six new buildings at West Tofts Training Camp, West Tofts, Norfolk. The report, commissioned by Fairhurst Engineering Solutions on behalf of the Ministry of Defence, will form part of submission for a planning application for a scheme to demolish six extant Nissen huts and replace them with six new buildings. The six Nissen huts form part of a wider group comprising brick building and eleven Nissen huts built either during the inter-war period or during World War II. These lie in the western and southern part of the site in an 'L' shaped arrangement, and a grassed area with scatter trees in the eastern part of the site. The site is located within a functioning Ministry of Defence camp with origins dating back at least to 1925, when is mentioned as a Ministry of Labour camp. The buildings extant on the camp date for the most part either to the inter-war period or World War II and retain their historical character. A potential for significant Prehistoric remains in the area of the site was identified during fieldwalking carried out as part of earthworks surveys, attested by several prehistoric worked flints, with the most closely dated finds dating to the Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age period. Roman pottery and sherds were also found during fieldwalking suggesting the presence of some level of Roman activity in the area. To the north of the proposed area of development lies the site of the deserted West Tofts village. The village dates at least to the late Saxon period and was continually occupied until it was appropriated during the process that created the Stanford Training Area in the 1942, when its inhabitants were evicted. Earthwork remains of an undated brick kiln were also identified during a survey to the west of the site. This study identified a significant potential for archaeological buried remains within the proposed area of development.</p>
Project dates	Start: 26-11-2020 End: 26-11-2020
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ENF150590 - HER event no.
Type of project	Desk based assessment
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Aerial Photography - interpretation","Documentary Search","Visual Inspection"
Prompt	Voluntary/self-interest
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK BRECKLAND LYNFORD Land at West Tofts Training Camp, West Tofts, Norfolk
Postcode	IP26 5EP
Study area	1.3 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 83640 92018 52.494672953691 0.705438400689 52 29 40 N 000 42 19 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Witham Archaeology Ltd
Project brief originator	Self (i.e. landowner, developer, etc.)
Project design originator	Russell Trimble
Project director/manager	Russell Trimble
Project supervisor	Filipe Santos
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Fairhurst Engineering Solutions, on behalf of the Ministry of Defence

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums Service
Digital Archive ID	ENF150590
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive Exists?	No

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land at West Tofts Training Camp, West Tofts, Norfolk. Heritage Statement
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Santos, F.
Other bibliographic details	412
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	Witham Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Ruskington
Description	A4 comb binder

Entered by Filipe Santos (info@withamarchaeology.co.uk)

Entered on 11 December 2020

OASIS:

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