

Witham Archaeology

A Report to Mr Ryan McNamara

September 2013



LESTER'S COTTAGE, CHURCH LANE, SOUTH CREAKE, NORFOLK

Archaeological Watching Brief

G Trimble

LESTER'S COTTAGE, SOUTH CREAKE, NORFOLK

Site Code: ENF 131744
Museum Accession No.: TBC
Planning Application No.: 12/01993/F
NGR: TF 85570 36235
OASIS ID.: withamar1-158639

Archaeological Watching Brief

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LESTER'S COTTAGE, SOUTH CREAKE, NORFOLK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks relating to the construction of an extension at Lester's Cottage, South Creake, Norfolk. The work was commissioned by Mr Ryan McNamara to satisfy the requirements of a condition of planning permission imposed by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council.

The watching brief did not identify any features, deposits or artefacts of archaeological interest. The recorded soil profile indicates that the ground level on the development site was built up with materials imported to the site from elsewhere. This may have occurred in the Victorian period when the row of cottages was built. Any archaeological features or deposits which may be present are therefore likely to be buried at greater depth than the foundation trenches for the extension.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Witham Archaeology during groundworks relating to the construction of an extension to Lester cottage at South Creake, Norfolk. The work was commissioned by Mr Ryan McNamara in order to satisfy the requirements of a condition of planning permission imposed by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council. Attendance on site was on Monday 8th July 2013.

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 Institute of Field Archaeologists.

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

The site lies at NGR TF 85570 36235 in the administrative district of King's Lynn and West Norfolk. The town of Fakenham is located 8km to the southeast.

Lester's Cottage is set to the northern edge of South Creake within gently undulating agricultural land. The site itself is situated on level ground. The new extension is located on the north side of the cottage, one of several adjoined Victorian cottages. The ground is currently lain to gravel.

The bedrock is formed of Cretaceous White Chalk Subgroup – Chalk whilst the superficial deposits are formed of Quaternary Head Till comprising Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel (British Geological Survey, England & Wales Sheet 147, Solid & Drift, 1:50 000).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The parish of South Creake is rich in archaeological remains represented by upstanding buildings, earthworks, sub-surface features visible as cropmarks and isolated findspots.

Prehistoric activity in the parish is mainly evidenced by what appears to be a ritual/funerary landscape including several barrow ring ditches (NHER 1971, 11713, 1946, 11712) of late Neolithic or Bronze

Age date. During the Iron Age a substantial hillfort was constructed on Bloodgate Hill. This fort, which has been explored through archaeological investigations (Penn 2004) represents just one of six known prehistoric earthwork forts in Norfolk.

Apart from isolated artefact findspots including the discovery of 1300-2000 silver coins (NHER 1948), no Roman sites are known although two Roman roads run through the parish (NHER 1791 and 1922).

The Saxon period is mainly represented by isolated artefact findspots, but parts of All Saints church at Waterden (NHER1976) have fabric constructed in Late Saxon style.

At the time of the Domesday Survey in AD1086 the lands of South Creake were held by Hugh of Montford. In addition to the village of South Creake, medieval settlement in the parish is attested by earthwork remains of Waterden deserted medieval village, which are visible along the southeast of the valley, with further earthworks having been ploughed out to the northwest (NHER 1071). Egmere deserted medieval settlement is also present within the parish (NHER 1955).

In close proximity to the development is the site of the medieval manor house of South Creake. No buildings survive above ground level but earthwork remnants of them (NHER 1017) are located 50m to the southeast of the current development. A map of 1630 refers to this location as the site of the manor of Bosshouse, which appears to confirm a manorial origin. Several associated features have been identified close by including a disused watercourse with retaining banks, tofts and a hollow way to the southeast of the site.

The medieval church of St Mary's (NHER 1975) also lies close to the development site. The east end of the chancel is situated 28m to the southwest of Lester's Cottage. The earliest feature of this church is the Norman stoup outside the porch, but the majority of the fabric dates to the 13th and 14th centuries. Inside, it has a 15th century rood screen and pulpit along with various early medieval coffin slabs. Several medieval burials were found at Church End (NHER 1954) during the laying of drains along the track which skirts the east side of the church. They were found approximately 6m east of the present churchyard boundary wall at a distance of around 20m from Lester's Cottage. The discovery suggests that the churchyard might, in the past, have extended beyond the present eastern boundary, possibly into the area of the current development.

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project were to:

- *allow the preservation by record of any surviving archaeological deposits and artefacts exposed by the development groundwork within the constraints imposed by the contractor's working methods, programme and development design.*
- *produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum together with a client report.*
- *provide information for accession to the County Historic Environment Record.*

5.0 METHODOLOGY

Excavations for the extension foundations (see *Plate 3*), by a tracked 360° excavator, were closely monitored for archaeological features, deposits and artefacts. One site visit was made, coinciding with these works.

Sequences of colour digital and black and white film photographs detail the stratigraphy present on the site as well as the progress of groundwork operations. Section drawings were produced at scale 1:10, while written context descriptions on individual *pro forma* recording sheets were made for each unit of stratigraphy.

6.0 RESULTS (Figs 2 & 3)

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were recorded during the watching brief and no artefacts were found. Owing to a considerable depth of made up ground, present throughout the area of the foundation trench, underlying geological deposits were not revealed. The soil profile exposed during the course of the works consisted of dumped soils and hardcore of relatively recent date. The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.85m and a width of 0.65m.

Section 1 (see Fig. 3 and *Plate 4*) illustrates deposits on the east side of the extension. The lowest deposit (01) consisted of light to mid orange brown silty sand, whose light colour and sandy texture suggested that it might represent in situ subsoil located just above the natural sands. It measured 0.08m in depth although the full depth was not seen.

The postulated subsoil (01) was buried by dumped make-up layers, which together were recorded as (02). This composite deposit was formed by a sequence of tipped soils comprising lenses of dark brown sandy silt and mid brown sandy silt, together measuring 0.40m in depth. The deposit included modern brick and mortar fragments.

Above (02) was a 0.30m thick layer of rubble (03) composed of modern brick fragments, rounded stones and mortar. The uppermost layer (04) in Section 1 consisted of a layer of gravel, 0.05m thick, which formed the existing ground surface.

Section 2 (see Fig. 3 and *Plate 5*) illustrates the soil profile on the west side of the extension, showing a similar sequence of deposits to those recorded in Section 1. The earliest deposit (05) was composed of light to mid brownish grey sandy silt which measured 0.40m in maximum depth. This was sealed by a dark brown sandy silt (06), 0.50m in maximum depth, which included modern brick and tile fragments. The sloped horizon between deposits (05) and (06) indicates that they were formed by dumping to build up the ground level as suggested above. A layer of hardcore, 0.05m thick and made of modern building rubble, lay beneath the uppermost deposit of gravel (04). The latter deposit was 0.05m thick.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

No significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were recorded during the watching brief at Lester's Cottage. The recorded soil profiles indicate that the area north of Lester's Cottage was built up through the dumping of soil. While there is uncertainty about where the soil was brought in from, the inclusion of modern ceramic building material suggests that the dumping occurred relatively recently, perhaps in the Victorian period when Lester's Cottage was built. The dumping of material would have had the effect of masking archaeological remains, burying them at a deeper level. It is, therefore, possible that archaeological remains are present on the site, at a level deeper than that reached during excavations for the extension foundations.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank the owner of the property Mr Ryan Mcnamara for interest and support in ensuring the successful, completion of this project.

9.0 REFERENCES

Penn, K., 2004 *An Archaeological Evaluation at Bloodgate Hill, South Creake, Norfolk*. NAU Report 913

10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Details

SITE CODE: ENF131744

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: 12/01993/F

FIELD OFFICER: Gary Trimble

NGR: TF 85570 36235

CIVIL PARISH: South Creake

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 8th July 2013

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Mr Ryan Mcnamara

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology, Unit 6, Sleaford Station Business Centre, Station Road, Sleaford, Lincolnshire, NG34 7RG

FINAL LOCATION: Norfolk Museums Service

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: TBC

ACCESSION DATE: TBC

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Records	7
Section Drawings at Scale 1:10	2
Site Report	1
Day sheet	1

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

COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1: General view of the site. Saint Mary's church to the right. Facing South



Plate 2: View showing site during excavation of foundations. Facing Southeast.



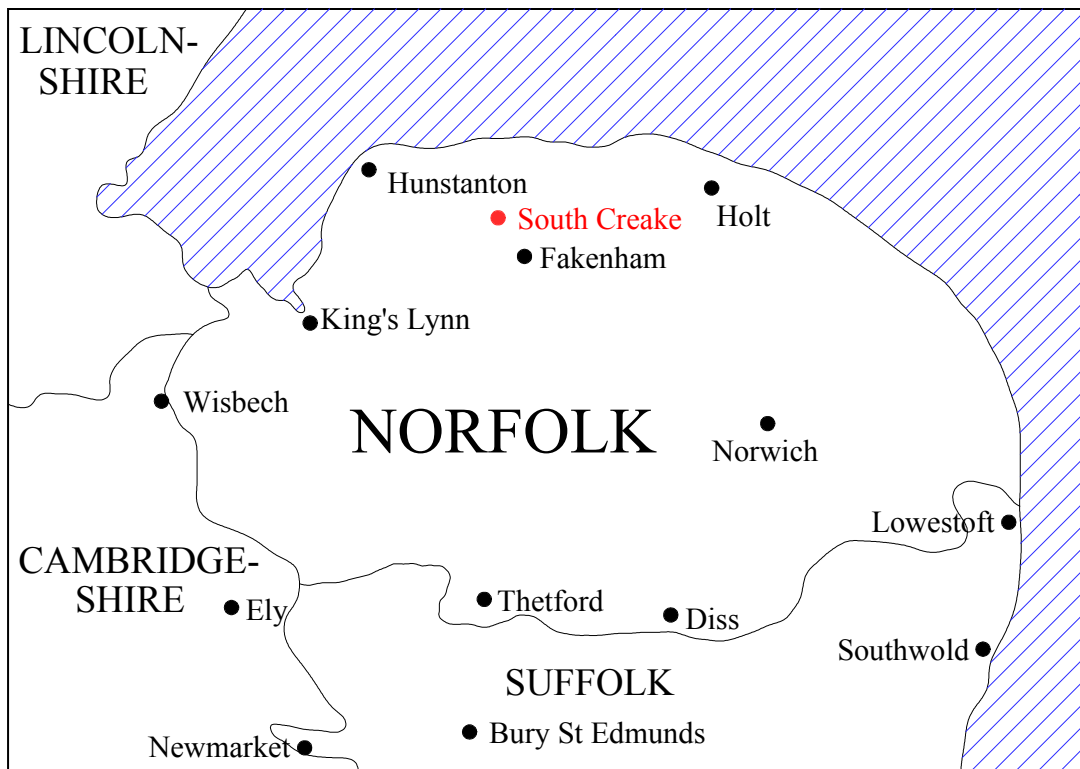
Plate 3: View showing fully excavated foundations. Facing South.



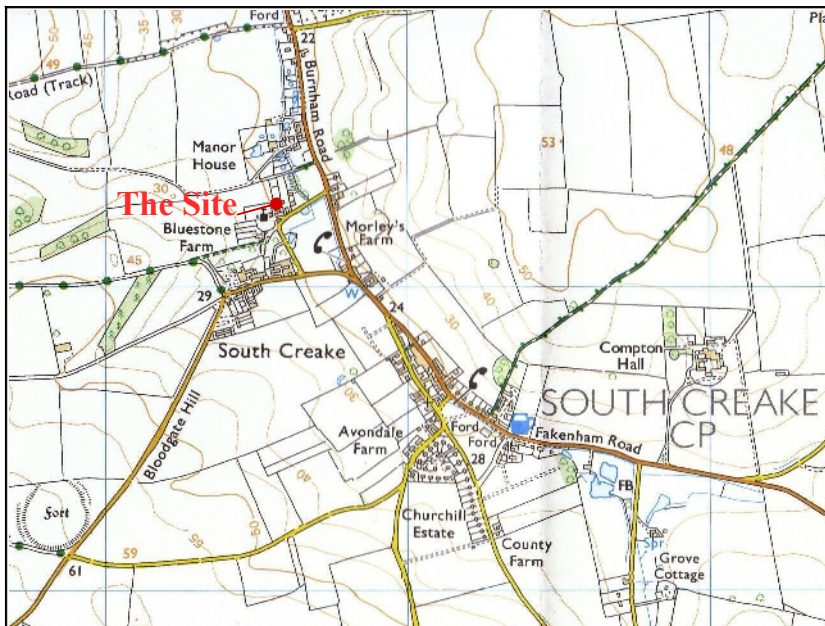
Plate 4: View of Section 1. Scales 1 x 1m. Facing East



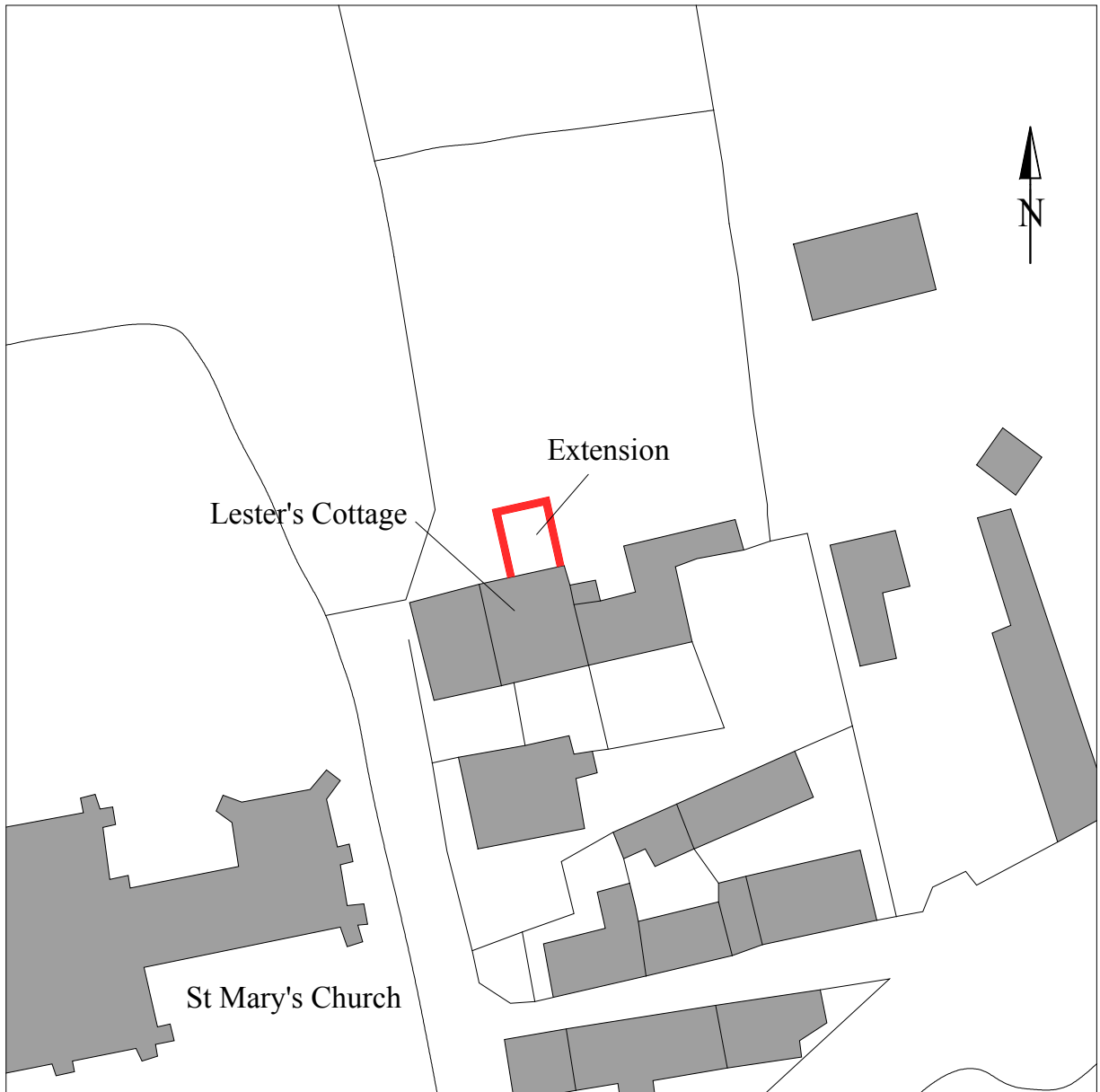
Plate 5: View of section 2. Scales 1 x 1m. Facing West



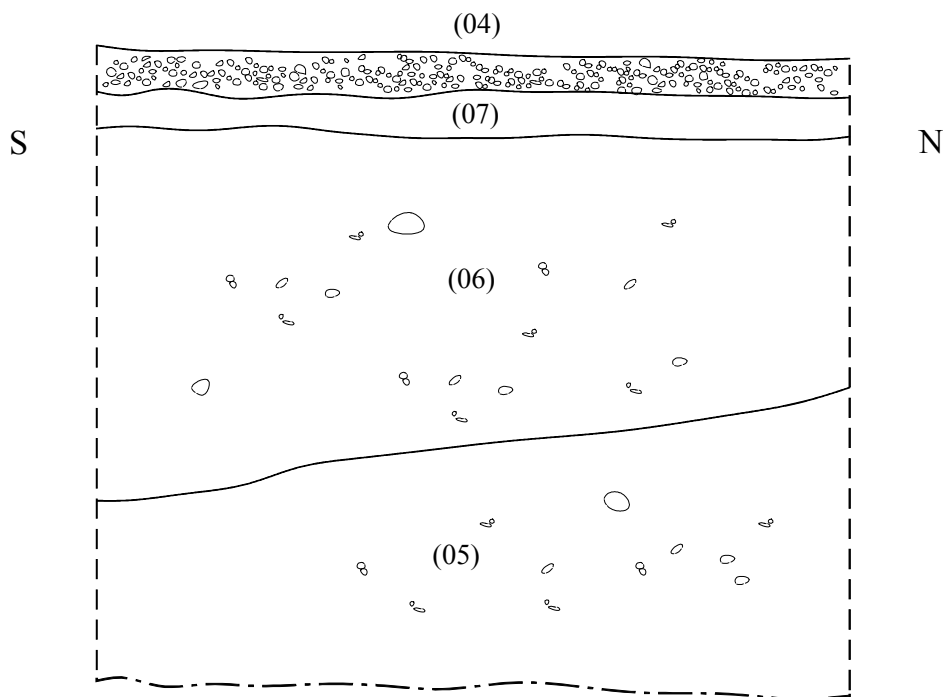
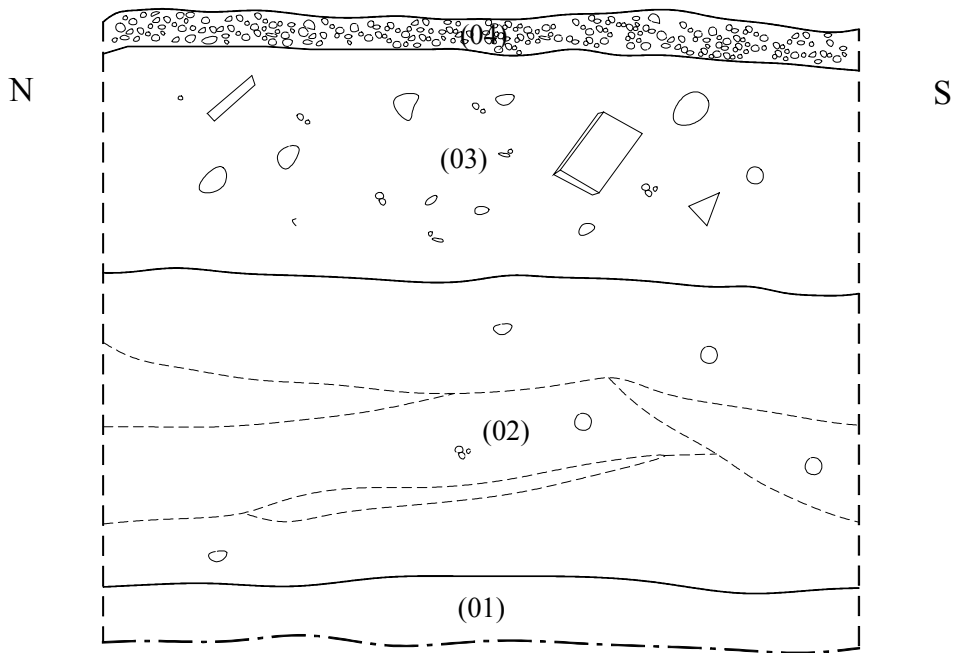
0 Km 20 Km



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0m 25m



APPENDIX A - CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

<i>Context</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Description</i>
01	Possible subsoil	Light to mid brownish grey sandy silt
02	Make up material	Lenses of dumped comprising alternate dark brown silty sand and mid brown silty sand. Includes frequent CBM, plaster and cement fragments.
03	Levelling material	Rubble hardcore including modern brick fragments and flint nodules.
04	Surface layer	Gravel
05	Make up material	Light to mid brownish grey sandy silt
06	Make up material	Dark brownish grey sandy silt
07	Levelling material	Rubble hardcore

APPENDIX B
OASIS FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: withamar1-158639

Project details

Project name	Archaeological Watching Brief at Lester's Cottage, Church Lane, South Creake, Norfolk
Short description of the project	A watching brief was undertaken during excavations for a new extension on the north side of Lester's Cottage on Church Lane, South Creake. The site lies close to the eastern boundary of the parish church, at the core of the village. Excavations for services in the adjacent road had previously located burials thought to be associated with the church. The excavations at Lester's Cottage produced significant evidence of archaeological remains, the stratigraphy encountered in the foundation trenches apparently being entirely composed of Victorian and later dump deposits.
Project dates	Start: 08-07-2013 End: 08-07-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENF131744 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	LAYER Post Medieval
Significant Finds	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK KINGS LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK SOUTH CREAKE Lester's Cottage, Church Lane, South Creake
Postcode	NR21 9LX
Study area	25.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TF 85570 36235 52 0 52 53 27 N 000 45 31 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Witham Archaeology

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

Project design originator Russell Trimble

Project director/manager Gary Trimble

Project supervisor Gary Trimble

Type of sponsor/funding body Landowner

Name of sponsor/funding body Mr Robert McNamara

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media available "Text"

Paper Archive recipient Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Drawing", "Notebook - Excavation", ' Research', ' General Notes', "Photograph", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Lester's Cottage, Church Lane, South Creake, Norfolk. Archaeological Watching Brief

Author(s)/Editor(s) Gary, T

Other bibliographic details Report No. 47

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