

Witham Archaeology

A Report to BD Upton Builders Ltd.
January 2018



SIX NEW DWELLINGS, 47 – 49 BRIDGE STREET, DOWNHAM MARKET, NORFOLK

Monitoring of works under Archaeological Supervision and Control

N Jefferson

SIX NEW DWELLINGS, 47-49 BRIDGE STREET, DOWNHAM MARKET, NORFOLK

Site Code: ENF142222

Planning Reference: 16/01723/F

NGR TF 60880 03172

OASIS ID: withamar1-307528

Monitoring of Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control

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SIX NEW DWELLINGS, 47-49 BRIDGE STREET, DOWNHAM MARKET, NORFOLK. MONITORING OF WORKS UNDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUPERVISION AND CONTROL

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the monitoring of groundworks under archaeological Supervision and Control during construction of six new dwellings on land to the rear of 47-49 Bridge Street, Downham Market, Norfolk. The project was commissioned by BD Upton Builders Ltd. in response to a condition of planning permission granted by Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Council requiring a programme of archaeological works.

The Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service advised the local authority that the work was required due to the archaeologically sensitive location of the site within the historic core of the Downham Market. The town is listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 and the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Record contains records of finds in the vicinity of the site ranging in date from the prehistoric through to the post medieval period.

During the investigation an up to 0.8m deep mixture of topsoil and modern rubble was recorded over the western and northern parts of the site, suggesting extensive recent disturbance and deposition in those areas. Only in an area at the eastern edge of the site was a deeply buried subsoil layer recorded. The overlying mixed deposit is likely to derive from 19th century and later activity, including the construction and demolition of the building which stood on the site prior to the investigation.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of monitoring of groundworks under archaeological supervision and control during construction of six new dwellings on land to the rear of 47-49 Bridge Street, Downham Market, Norfolk. The project was commissioned by BD Upton Builders in response to a condition of planning permission imposed by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council, which required a programme of archaeological investigation during groundworks associated with the development. Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches on northern and western parts of the site. Due to the presence of deep overburden and modern overburden at the site it was agreed with the planning archaeologist that monitoring of the two plots on the southwest side of the site would not be required. Fieldwork was carried out on the 24th to 26th of May 2017, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Witham Archaeology and approved by Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service.

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 of Archaeologists.

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

Downham Market is a market town and civil parish located in northwest Norfolk on the River Great Ouse and on the edge of the Fens, 9.2 miles south of the centre of King's Lynn and 11 miles west of Swaffham. The area of development is located on the west side of the historic core of the town on land south of 47-49 Bridge Street and centred on TF 6003 8717. The proposed area of development is irregular in plan and covers 0.9 hectares extending between Bridge Street to the north and Priory Road to the south. As part of the development three buildings standing to the rear of 49 Bridge Street were demolished.

Local geology comprises Sandstone and Siltstone of the Wealden Group, formed approximately 125 to 146 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period (BGS).

3.0 HISTORICAL & ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

A reference to Downham Market in the Domesday Survey of 1086 suggests that the town has Late Saxon origins at least. There were multiple holdings at the time and there are five separate references to Downham in Domesday Book. A total number of twenty four and a half households were recorded (<http://opendomesday.org/place/TF6103/downham-market/>). The place-name is Old English in origin and is thought to have been formed from *dun*, meaning 'A hill' and *ham* for settlement or village (kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/map/place/Norfolk/Downham%20Market). The market suffix was probably added later as the earliest reference to a market dates to the 11th century (Crawley, 2011).

A small number of finds of prehistoric date have been recovered in the vicinity of the area of investigation. Approximately 500m to the southwest a Mesolithic or Early Neolithic axehead was recovered from the garden of 8 Finsbury Close and a second axehead of Neolithic date is known from the area of Fairfield Road, at a similar distance to the northwest. A number of worked flints of Mesolithic and Neolithic date were recovered in the area of The Towers, located 500m to the east of the proposed development.

Evidence for Roman occupation near the proposed development is very limited, with the only finds comprising unstratified sherds of the period recovered during trial trenching at a site on Church Road in 2014. The pottery is thought to have been imported onto the site as it was derived from topsoil overlying 19th century make up layers. (HER 61659). To the south of Downham Market is the line of the Roman road known as the Fen Causeway (NHER 2796) which runs between Upwell and Denver. There are also 19th century reports of complete Roman pots (NHER 2441) being recovered from a brickyard in the town. Metal detectorists have found individual Roman finds such as coins (NHER 2442, 28054 and 40783) and Roman brooches (NHER 30224 and 31110) around the parish more widely. Roman ditches (NHER 37093) and a possible Roman pit (NHER 40378) were recorded during archaeological evaluations in the town.

Evidence from the Saxon period is sparse but an Early Saxon pottery bowl was found during the excavation of a drain for a new council house in 1955 (NHER 2443).

The parish church of St Edmund's (NHER 2471) was the probably the focus for the medieval settlement. The majority of the surviving structure is 15th or 16th century in date though parts of the Norman infrastructure survive. This Norman structure was probably cruciform in shape. Two undercrofts (NHER 12226 and 12227) in the town may date to the 13th or 14th century, although they could have been built any time up until the 17th century.

The First Edition 1:2500 County Series Ordnance Survey map of 1887 shows much of the site south of the High Street frontage to be open apart from a single building at the southern boundary.

4.0 AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The principal objectives of the project, as set out in a Witham Archaeology specification were to:

- ensure that an appropriate level of archaeological Supervision and Control was implemented during groundworks associated with the installation of the cabling.
- 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.
- Provide information for accession to the Norfolk County Council.

5.0 METHODOLOGY

A record of the site was compiled through plans drawn at scale 1:20 and sections at 1:10, colour digital photographs and individual written context records on *pro forma* recording sheets.

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches in the northern and western parts of the site. Due to the presence of deep modern overburden it was agreed with the planning archaeologist that monitoring of the two plots on the southwestern side of the site would not be required

6.0 RESULTS

Full context descriptions are provided in Appendix A and an overall plan of the site is provided in Fig. 3.

The earliest deposit was a light greyish brown sandy clay subsoil (101) recorded at the base of Section 4 (Fig. 4) close to the eastern edge of the site. This was overlain by mid greyish brown clayey sand topsoil mixed with modern rubble (100), up to 0.8m thick. This layer was identified in all of the recorded sections (Fig. 4 Sections 1-4) and in all instances extended below the lower limit of excavation.

7.0 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

The investigation identified a deeply buried subsoil (101) overlain by a mixture of topsoil and modern rubble 0.8m deep (100). The overlying deposit is likely to derive from 19th century and recent activity, including construction of the buildings which stood on the site prior to demolition in advance of the present development. These buildings are likely to have been of relatively recent date, as late 19th century Ordnance Survey maps show much of the area to have been open at the time.

8.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank Richard C.F. Waite Architect for their support in ensuring that the project was brought to a successful conclusion.

9.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

British Geological Survey, Solid & Drift, 1:50 000

Crawley, P.E., 2011. *An Archaeological Evaluation at Addaya, St Edmunds Road, Downham Market*. NAU Archaeology Report No. **2649**

Ordnance Survey 2016, 143 Ely and Wisbech, OS landranger map 1:50,000

10.0 PROJECT/ ARCHIVE DETAILS

10.1 Project Information

SITE CODE: ENF142222

PLANNING APPLICATION No.: 16/01723/F

FIELD OFFICER: N. Jefferson

NGR: TF 60880 03172

CIVIL PARISH: Downham Market

DATES OF INTERVENTION: 24th to 25th May 2017

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Supervision and Control

UNDERTAKEN FOR: BD Upton Builders Ltd.

10.2 Archive Details

PRESENT LOCATION: Witham Archaeology, 2 High Street, Ruskington, Sleaford, Lincolnshire

FINAL LOCATION: Norfolk Museums Service

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: TBC

ACCESSION DATE: TBC

The Site Archive Comprises:

Context Records	2
Plans at Scale 1:50	0
Section Drawings at Scale 1:20	1 Sheets
Digital Photographs	29
Set of Site Notes	3

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: Section 1, looking South. Scale 1 x 1m



Plate 2: Section 2, looking north. Scale 1 x 1m



Plate 3: Section 3, looking west. Scale 1 x 1m



Plate 4: Section 4, looking east. Scale 1 x 1m



Plate 5: General working shot. Scale 1 x 1m



Plate 6: General working shot. Scale 1 x 1m



Figure 1 General location plan

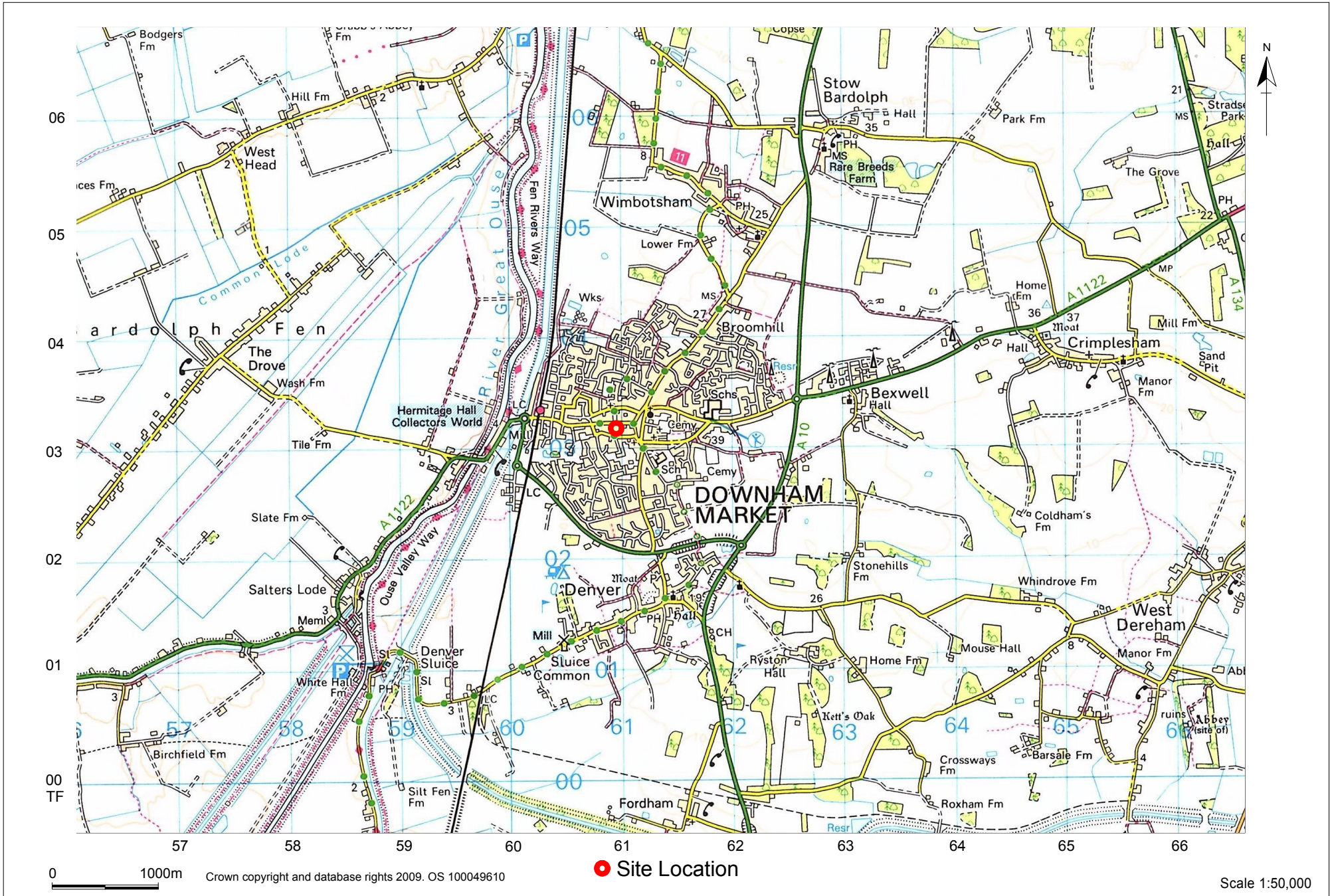
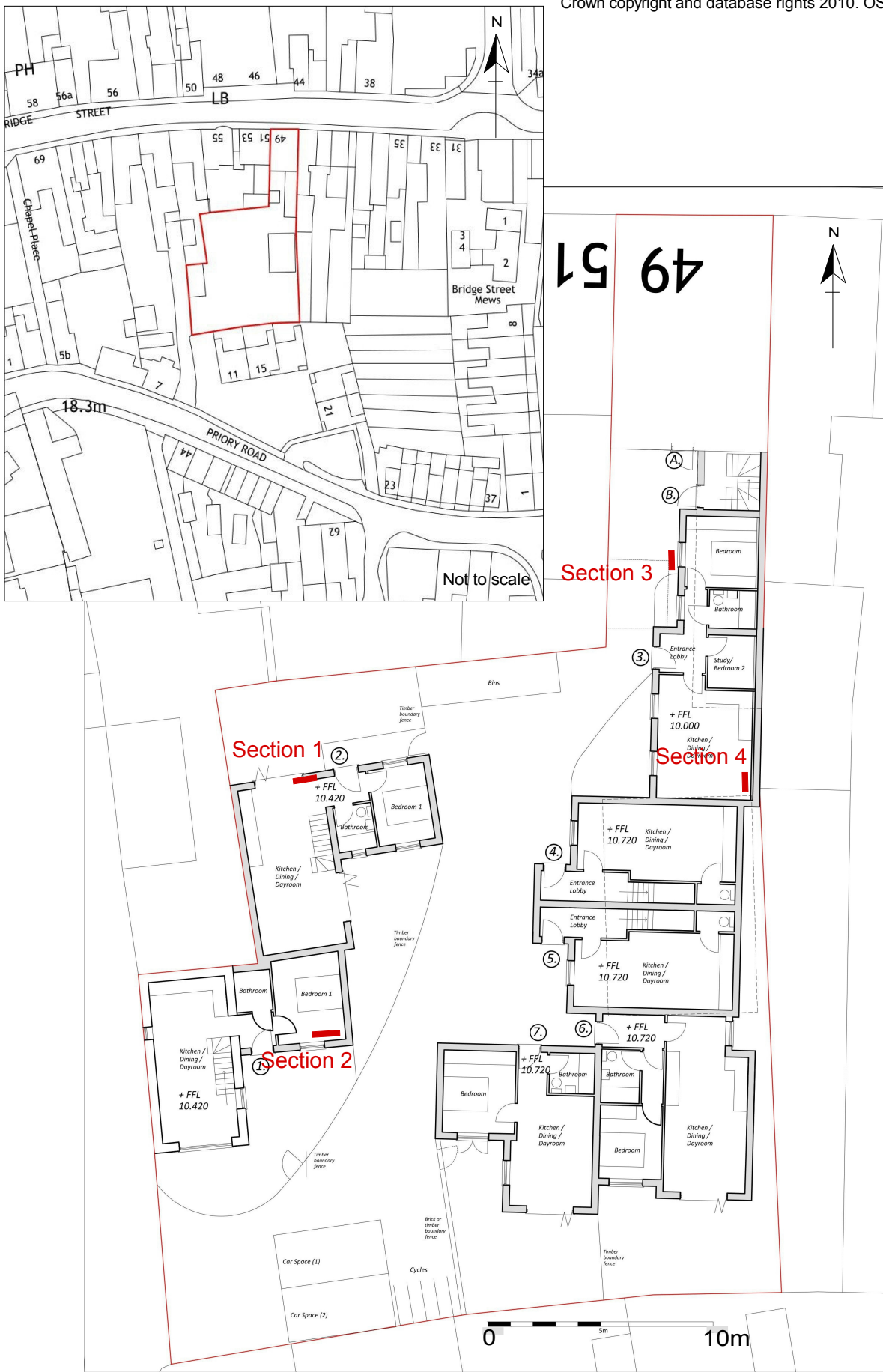
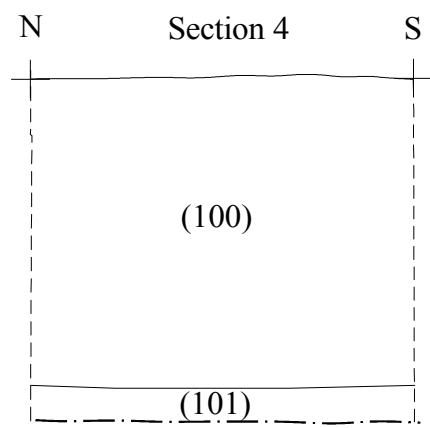
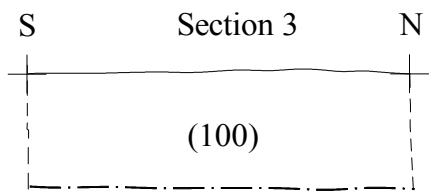
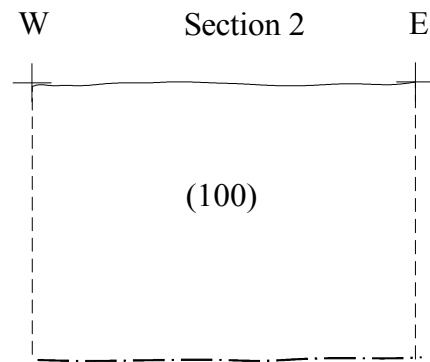
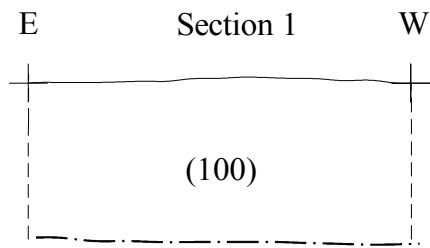


Figure 2 Site location map



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APPENDIX A - CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

<i>Context</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>	<i>Description</i>
100	Topsoil	Mid greyish brown clayey sand with modern building rubble inclusions 0.80m deep.
101	Subsoil	Light greyish brown sandy clay +0.09m deep

APPENDIX B – OASIS FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: withamar1-307528

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Bridge Street, Downham Market, Norfolk
Short description of the project	Monitoring of groundworks under archaeological Supervision and Control was undertaken during construction of six new dwellings on land to the rear of 47-49 Bridge Street, Downham Market, Norfolk. The project was commissioned by BD Upton Builders Ltd. in response to a condition of planning permission granted by Kings Lynn and West Norfolk Council requiring a programme of archaeological works. The Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service advised the local authority that the work was required due to the archaeologically sensitive location of the site within the historic core of the Downham Market. The town is listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 and the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Record contains records of finds in the vicinity of the site ranging in date from the prehistoric through to the post medieval period. During the investigation an up to 0.8m deep mixture of topsoil and modern rubble was recorded over the western and northern parts of the site, suggesting extensive recent disturbance and deposition in those areas. Only in an area at the eastern edge of the of the site was a deeply buried subsoil layer recorded. The overlying mixed deposit is likely to derive from 19th century and later activity, including the construction and demolition of the building which stood on the site prior to the investigation.
Project dates	Start: 24-05-2017 End: 26-05-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENF142222 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	16/01723/F - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	OVERBURDEN Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK KINGS LYNN AND WEST NORFOLK DOWNHAM MARKET 47-49 Bridge Street

Postcode	PE38 9DW
Study area	0.9 Hectares
Site coordinates	TF 60880 03169 52.602059551417 0.375871994894 52 36 07 N 000 22 33 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Witham Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Dale Trimble
Project director/manager	Dale Trimble
Project supervisor	Neil Jefferson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
Digital Archive ID	TBC
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
Paper Archive ID	TBC
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Six new dwellings, 47-49 Bridge Street, Downham Market, Norfolk. Monitoring of works under archaeological supervision and control.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Jefferson, N
Other bibliographic details	236
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Description	A4 Comb Bound
Entered by	Dale Trimble (dale.trimble@withamarchaeology.co.uk)

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9 February 2018

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