

# Humber Field Archaeology

*Archaeological Consultants and Contractors*



Archaeological Observation  
Investigation and Recording  
at  
Phase 1  
'The Bay'  
Filey



for

Essential Vivendi Limited

Watching Brief Report Number: 1204  
September 2010

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D. P. Rawson, September 2010

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## Summary

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A programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording was undertaken by Humber Field Archaeology during groundwork associated with the construction of residential properties and leisure facilities at 'The Bay' (formerly Amtree Park), Bridlington Road, Filey, North Yorkshire.

No archaeological features were observed and no finds collected during the programme of works.

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## 1. Introduction

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This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording undertaken by Humber Field Archaeology, on behalf of Essential Vivendi Limited, during groundworks associated with phase 1 of the construction of residential properties and leisure facilities at The Bay (formerly Amtree Park), Bridlington Road, Filey, North Yorkshire (*Figure 1, Plate 1*).

Site Code:	WB2006.029
National Grid Reference:	TA 0446 0186
Planning Reference:	03/01211/REM

The development site is located on the west side of the A165, close to the southern end of the Reighton by-pass. The site is bounded to the west by the aforementioned road; to the east by cliff tops and beach; the north by the Primrose Valley holiday park, and to the south by undeveloped land.

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## 2. Archaeological Background

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There has been substantial prehistoric activity in the area, with earthworks located nearby at Graffitoe Farm. Two burial mounds, Stir Heath Howe and Muscle Howe are sited immediately to the south, and a third, Eller Howe, to the north on what is now Filey Golf Course. Aerial photography revealed what may be the cropmarks of a prehistoric enclosure immediately east of the site, although these were adjacent to the site of a late 18th-century rabbit warren, and could also be related to the wartime or post-war use of the Camp.

Romano-British settlement in the area is likely, as pottery of 4th-century date was recorded eroding from the edge of Long Whin Gill on the north side of Primrose Valley in 1924.

During the medieval and early post-medieval periods, the site was part of Hunmanby Moor, an area of common waste. A small deserted township, Fowthorpe, lay to the north in Primrose Valley, with some old close boundaries still extant, but there is no indication that the development site was used for purposes other than grazing, and it was enclosed *c* 1809 along with the remainder of the area. There is an area of ridge-and-furrow immediately outside the northern boundary of the old Butlins site which may belong to this period, together with traces of several hedgebanks. The local lord of the manor, Humphrey Osbaldeston, built a rabbit warren on the eastern boundary of what became the camp site in the late 18th century, and this still appeared as Warren Hill on the mid 19th-century 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map.

The site of Amtree Park was formerly a Butlins Holiday Camp, under construction immediately before and during the early stages of World War II. During the war, it served as an RAF training camp (RAF Filey, later RAF Hunmanby Moor), before opening immediately at the end of the war in 1945 with its first holiday season. The camp — which had its own railway station — consisted of a series of entertainment and dining blocks, with a cinema, theatre, dining halls, indoor and outdoor swimming



pools and a boating lake, as well as a large number of chalets laid out in barrack-style blocks. Although some changes were made, and new chalet blocks opened in 1969, the infrastructure of the original camp remained in place when the Camp was closed in 1983. It reopened briefly as Amtree Park in 1986, after the northern part had been sold to the neighbouring Primrose Valley camp and demolished. The remainder was closed shortly afterwards and largely cleared between 1989 and 1990. Since then it has remained in a derelict condition, although further clearance took place in the 2000s.

In conclusion, archaeological remains of several periods may be present on the site, although the area was extensively landscaped during the construction of Butlins, with services, roads and foundations adding to the potential disturbance. Demolition and remediation (removal of soil containing asbestos from the levelled buildings) are also likely to mean that any archaeological resource has been damaged to a currently-unquantifiable degree.

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### **3. Methodology**

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The work associated with this project was carried out by staff from Humber Field Archaeology (HFA), in accordance with the project design produced by HFA, Date: 7th June 2006 (revised 24th July and 22nd August 2006), Planning Reference: 03/01211/REM, in response to a condition placed upon the planning application. The condition stated:

‘No development shall take place on the site until the application, or their agents or successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by the local Planning Authority. Development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details. (PPG 16, para. 30; Circular 11/95, Model Clause 55)’

The scheme of works for phase 1 comprised the monitoring of the excavation of a new drainage ditch/culvert; ground reduction and a sample of the foundation trenches for new buildings and other groundworks. A series of 21 visits were made to the site between the 21st September 2006 and 13th June 2008.

Any exposed areas of subsoil and lower stratigraphic units were examined for archaeological deposits. The excavated dimensions of the foundation trenches were recorded, as were the depth sequences of any exposed stratigraphy. Where archaeological deposits/features were identified, context numbers were assigned and detailed descriptions were made, plans and sections were drawn and a photographic record was maintained.

The intention is to deposit the archive in Scarborough Museum upon completion of the project.

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## 4. Results

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### Phase 1 groundworks

#### The drainage ditch and culvert

The development involved the diversion of an existing open drainage ditch and the excavation of a culvert. The open ditch was a dog-legged structure with an overall length of some 130m. It was up to 6m wide (*Figure 2, Plate 2*). Throughout the base of the ditch there was a layer at least 2.80m thick of dark brown clay containing sandy silt clay pockets of a lighter colour (1003). Above this there was a 1m thick layer of dark yellowish brown sandy silt clay containing very occasional small stones (1002) and a 0.20m thick layer of dark greyish brown topsoil (1001). The culvert trench was over 50m long and at least 0.60m wide and 2m deep (*Plate 3*). The same stratigraphy was observed here as in the open ditch and in neither excavation were any archaeological features observed.

#### Ground reduction in the western part of the site

Ground level in the western part of the site was reduced by up to 1.50m (effectively lowering a north-south running ridge). The area so reduced probably measured around 150m x 200m (30,000m<sup>2</sup>). A substantial amount of *in-situ* concrete was contained within the spoil – presumably dating from the 1940s to 1960s development of the site as a military camp/holiday facility (*Plate 4*). An area scheduled to be used as a temporary site compound, and measuring around 70m x 35m (2,450m<sup>2</sup>), was reduced by approximately 1.50m prior to being covered in hardcore (*Figure 2, Plate 5*). No archaeological features were observed in this area throughout which a uniform (1003) was observed.

#### Foul water pumping station

The excavation for the foul water pumping station measured approximately 60m x 20m (1,200m<sup>2</sup>) and was up to 3m deep (*Figure 2, Plate 6*). No archaeological features were observed in the excavated area and the stratigraphy was as previously recorded.

#### Foundation trenches

Phase 1 of the project contained over 140 new residences, concentrated along the south side of the western limb of the site, and its eastern end (*Figure 2*). A selection of plot foundation trenches were monitored, however, no archaeological features were observed.

The stratigraphy observed throughout this area was consistent. For example, in plots 39 and 40 (*Figure 2, Plate 7*), the trenches were 0.80m deep. Within the base of the trenches there was a layer at least 0.40m thick of the (1002) described above. Topping it was a 0.40m thick layer of very dark silty topsoil that had been heavily contaminated with demolition debris which included ceramic building material and fragments of *in-situ* cast concrete (1004) (*Plate 8*).

Plots 62-64 were excavated some 140m east of plots 39 & 40. Here, the foundation trenches were 1.20m deep, and within the base of the trenches there was again a layer of (1002) at least 0.40m thick. The (1002) was again topped by (1004), which was much thicker than to the west – here being some 0.80m thick (*Figure 2, Plate 9*).

### **The Replica of the North Bar, Beverley**

As part of the phase 1 works, a replica of the early 15th-century North Bar in Beverley, was constructed adjacent to the John Paul Jones public house. The replica was faithfully in scale and design, though it was built in a far darker brick. The opportunity was taken to photograph the new bar as a significant local landmark (*Plate 10*)

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## **5. Discussion**

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The following is solely the opinion of Humber Field Archaeology, and may not reflect that of Humber Sites and Monuments Record Office, archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

The absence of archaeological features in the western part of the site might be explained by the heavy development of the site for both leisure and military purposes in the mid-20th century. However, this assertion must be qualified by the fact that no archaeological features were observed in the deeper and more substantial excavations.

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## **6. Acknowledgements**

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Thanks are accorded to Wayne Low of Essential Vivendi Limited for help and co-operation during the course of this project.

The work was carried out in accordance with a specification prepared by the Humber Sites and Monuments Record Office.

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## **7. References**

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Atkinson, D., Brigham, T. and Steedman, K. 2006. Land at Amtree Park, Filey, North Yorkshire: Project Design for a Programme of Monitored Topsoil Stripping, Archaeological Observation and Recording

Brigham, T. 2001, Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment on Land at Amtree Park, Filey, North Yorkshire, Humber Archaeology Report 76

Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2), English Heritage, 1991

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## 8. Appendices

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### Appendix 1

#### Context list

- (1000) U/S, Unstratified.
- (1001) Dark greyish brown topsoil, 0.20m thick
- (1002) Dark yellowish brown sandy silt clay containing very occasional small stones, 1m thick
- (1003) Dark brown clay containing sandy silt clay pockets of a lighter colour, at least 2.80m thick
- (1004) Very dark silty topsoil that had been heavily contaminated with demolition debris which included ceramic building material and fragments of *in-situ* cast concrete, up to 0.80m thick

## **Appendix 2**

### **Archive**

#### **Project Details:**

Archaeological observation, investigation and recording at Phase 1, 'The Bay', Filey Road, Filey, North Yorkshire

**Site Code:** WB2006.029

**National Grid Reference:** TA 0446 0186

**Planning Reference:** 03/01211/REM

**Author** David Rawson **Date of fieldwork** 21.09.06 – 13.06.08

**Report Number.** Humber Field Archaeology Report Number: 1204  
September 2010

#### **Quantity**

There were no finds

1x A4 ring binder contains the paper archive

#### **Summary of work**

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- 1.1 Project Design
- 1.2 Correspondence

##### **2 Site Data:**

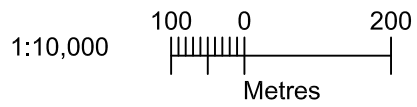
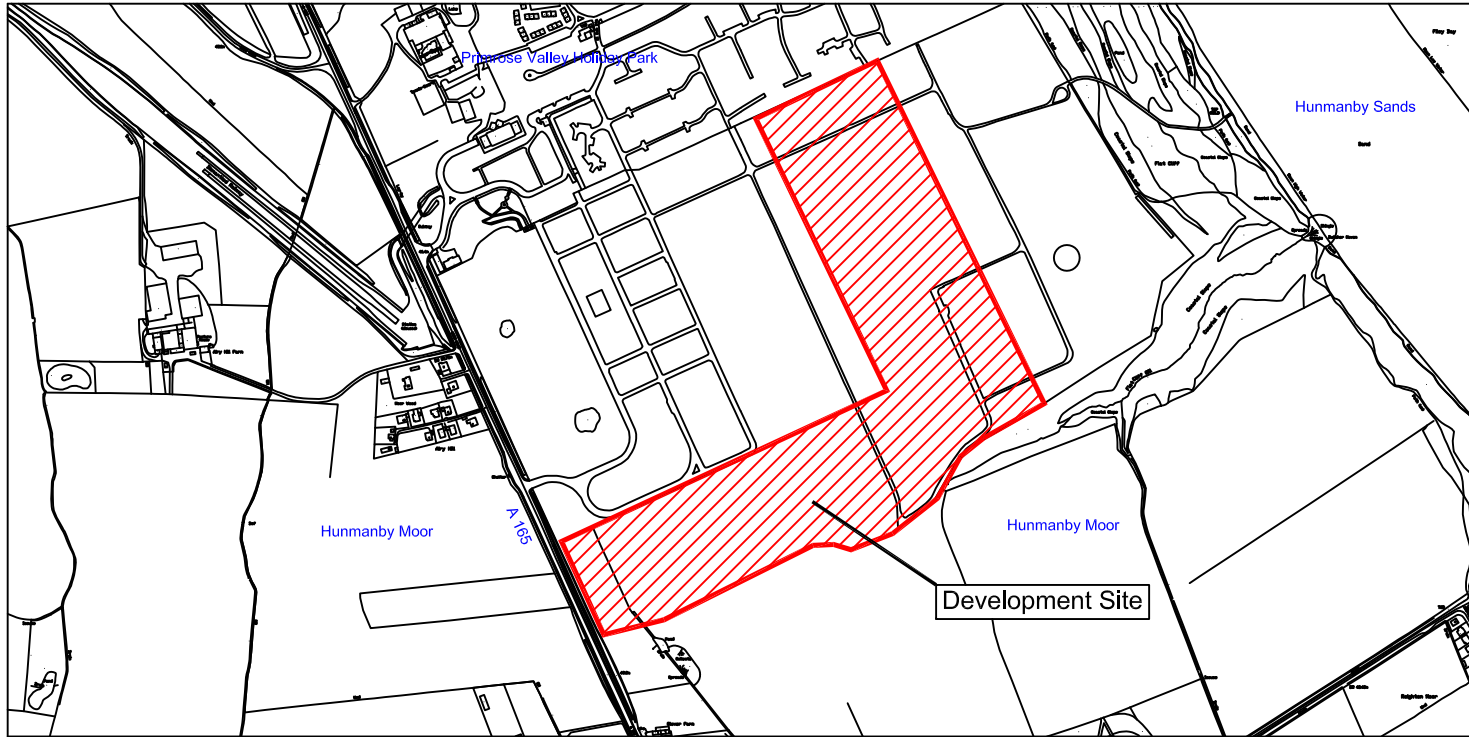
- 2.1 Site notes
- 2.2 Staff site visit log
- 2.3 Site plans

##### **3 The Photographic Record:**

- 3.1 Photographic Catalogue
- 3.2 Contact Sheets
- 3.3 Reference Prints

##### **4. Final Report:**

Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording at Phase 1, 'The Bay', Filey, Humber Field Archaeology Watching Brief Report Number 1204, September 2010



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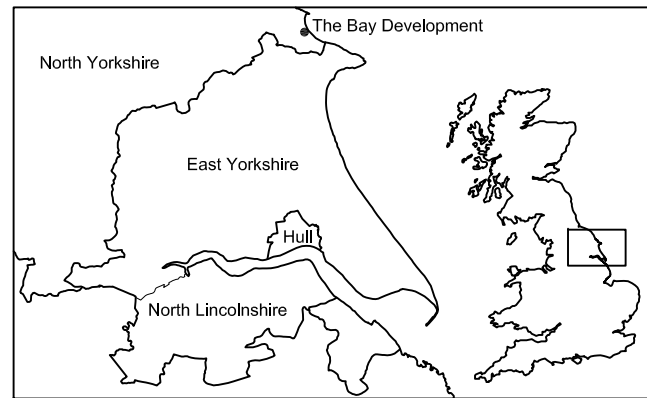


Figure 1 Site location plan

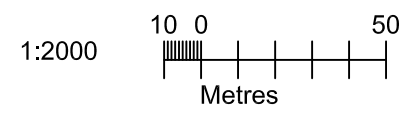
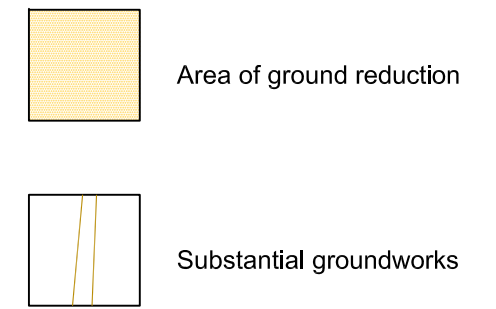
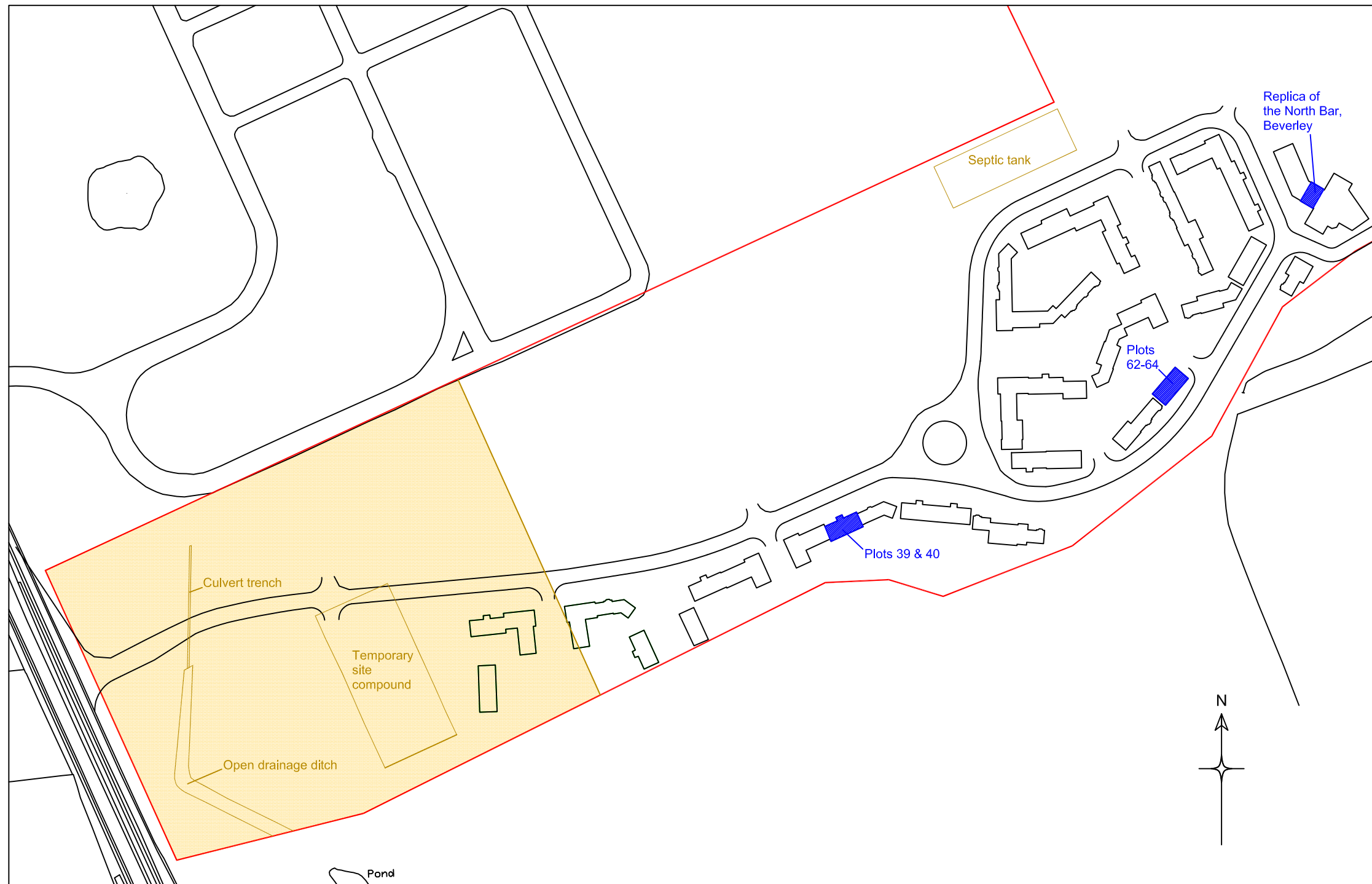


Figure 2 Plan showing the phase 1 groundworks





*Plate 1 View east across the site from the A165 prior to development starting*



*Plate 2 The diverted open drainage channel, looking south*





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