

Report 2674



nps archaeology

**Archaeological Watching Brief at
Bowthorpe Youth and Community Centre,
Bowthorpe Hall Road, Bowthorpe, Norwich**

ENF126501



Prepared for
Children's Services, Norfolk County Council
c/o NPS South East Ltd.
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Location:	Bowthorpe Youth and Community Centre, Bowthorpe Hall Road, Bowthorpe, Norwich
District:	Norwich
Grid Ref.:	TG 617675 309075
HER No.:	ENF126501
OASIS Ref.:	104326
Client:	NPS South East
Dates of Fieldwork:	4–31 May 2011

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted for NPS South East Ltd during construction of an extension to the Bowthorpe Youth and Community Centre and associated landscaping of the grounds.

No significant archaeological features or finds were present.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was maintained over all groundworks associated with an extension to Bowthorpe Youth and Community Centre and landscaping of the immediate surrounds including car parking and a hard play area (Fig. 1).

This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Norwich City Council and a Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service. The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. NPS/2674DW). This work was commissioned by NPS South East Ltd and funded by Children's Services, Norfolk County Council.

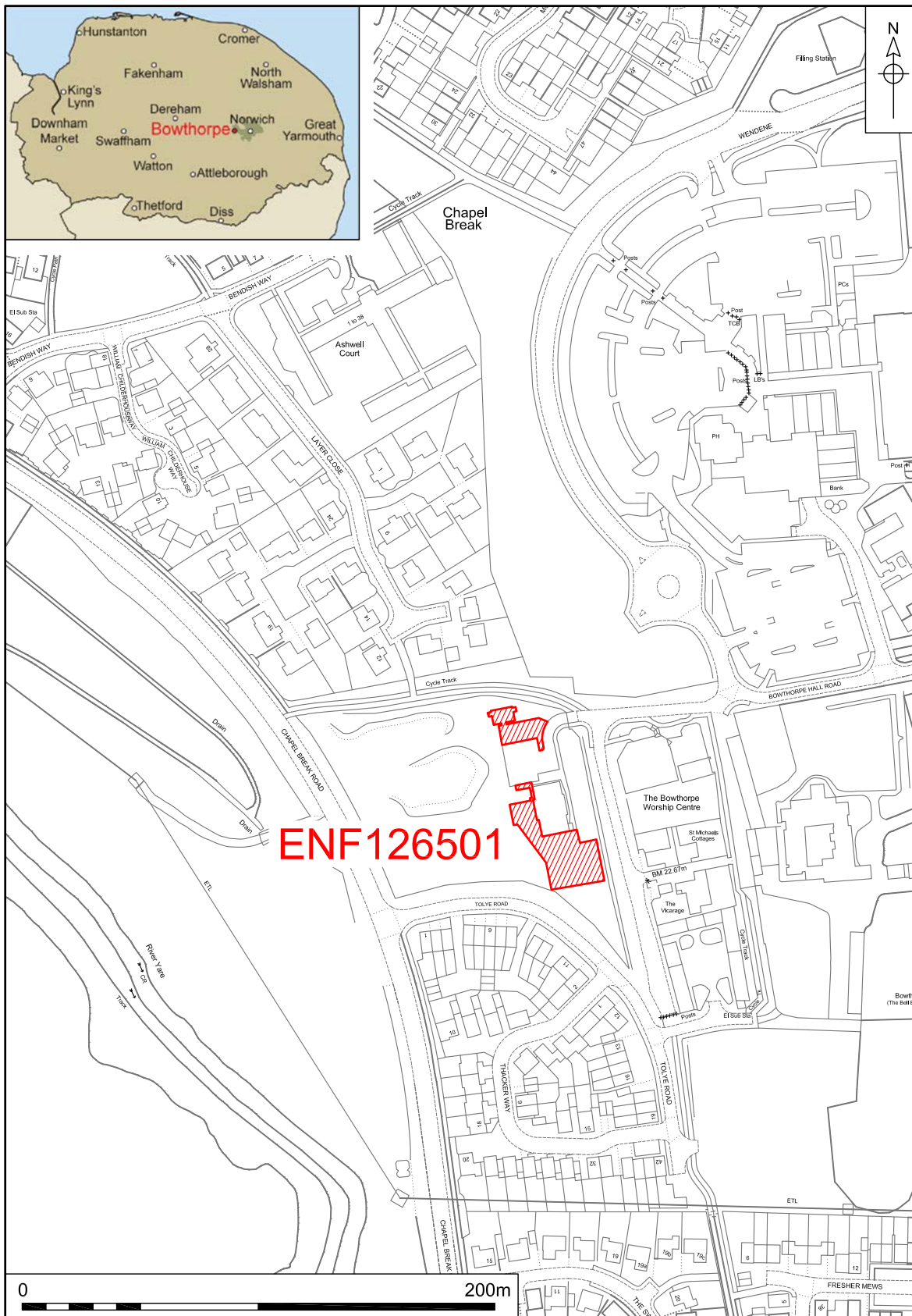
This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department of Communities and Local Government 2010).

The site archive is currently held by NPS Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS), following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The natural geology in this area consists of glacial sands and gravels (BGS 1991) above Upper Cretaceous Chalk (BGS 1985).

The site lies on the northern bank of the River Yare, above the flood plain, at a height of c.22m OD. The ground is quite flat until it slopes away dramatically to the west towards the valley bottom.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2500

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Historic maps and the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) were consulted during the preparation of this section.

The development site is located between the Bowthorpe Conservation Area to the east (which contains the Grade II Listed Buildings of Bowthorpe Hall and the ruins of the church) and the Bowthorpe Riverside County Wildlife Site to the west.

Prehistoric

This area appears to have been settled and utilised from the Late Neolithic period onwards, for example the NHER shows

- An area of intensive Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age occupation, including pits, flint debris and tools and pottery (NHER 9304) was found 200-600m south of the community centre.
- An Early Bronze Age dagger was found in 1934 (NHER 9309), 535m to the south-south-east of the community centre.
- Amongst other finds, an Iron Age Icenic coin (NHER 15458) was found 275m north-west of the community centre

Roman

This area appears to have been settled and farmed in the Roman period and quite close to a Roman road, but at present there is no evidence of settlement.

A possible Roman road (NHER 5244) leading from Bawburgh to Bishopgate, Norwich passes within 475m to the north of the community centre.

A large number of Roman coins and a smaller amount of Roman pottery has been found in this part of Bowthorpe, for example a collection of Roman (and later) pottery sherds was found close to the possible Roman road (475m north-north-west) in 1965. Subsequent metal detecting has found two Roman coins, a Saxon Sceatta and more pottery (NHER 9311).

Elements of a Roman fieldsystem were found overlaying prehistoric occupation (NHER9304) 200-600m south of the community centre.

Anglo-Saxon

A significant Early Saxon settlement has been located to the south of the area (NHER 35757), and a scattering of Early to Late Saxon material has been found throughout the area.

A Late Saxon scabbard mount (NHER 15057) was found by metal detecting in 1979 520m north-east of the present site.

A Late Saxon garment hook (NHER 17034) was found 400m north-west of the Community Centre.

An Early Saxon settlement (NHER 35757) was found 350m south-east of the community centre, consisting of sunken featured buildings and post-built halls dated by pottery to the 4th-7th centuries.

Medieval

The medieval settlement of Bowthorpe appears to have been located in the area of the church which is adjacent to the community centre. Medieval material has been found throughout the area, perhaps representing manuring associated with arable field adjacent to the village.

The community centre lies within the bounds of the deserted medieval village of Bowthorpe (NHER 5352), which dates back to the Saxon period, but was slowly deserted throughout the post-medieval period. Also present are the ruins of the parish church of St Michael, dating from the 11th-12th century onwards.

A lead ampulla (NHER 13924), possibly from Little Walsingham was found 315m north-east of the community centre in 1982.

A medieval bronze buckle (NHER 15058) was found 360m to the east-north-east of the development site.

An abandoned flint-lined medieval well (NHER 15296) was found during construction work, 390m north of the community centre.

A medieval lead seal matrix was found in 1981 (NHER 17933), 275m north-east of the present development.

Post-Medieval and Modern

A complete 16th-century imported Raeren jug (NHER 16259) was found 425m to the west of the development site.

The present Bowthorpe Youth and Community Centre was opened in 1998.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

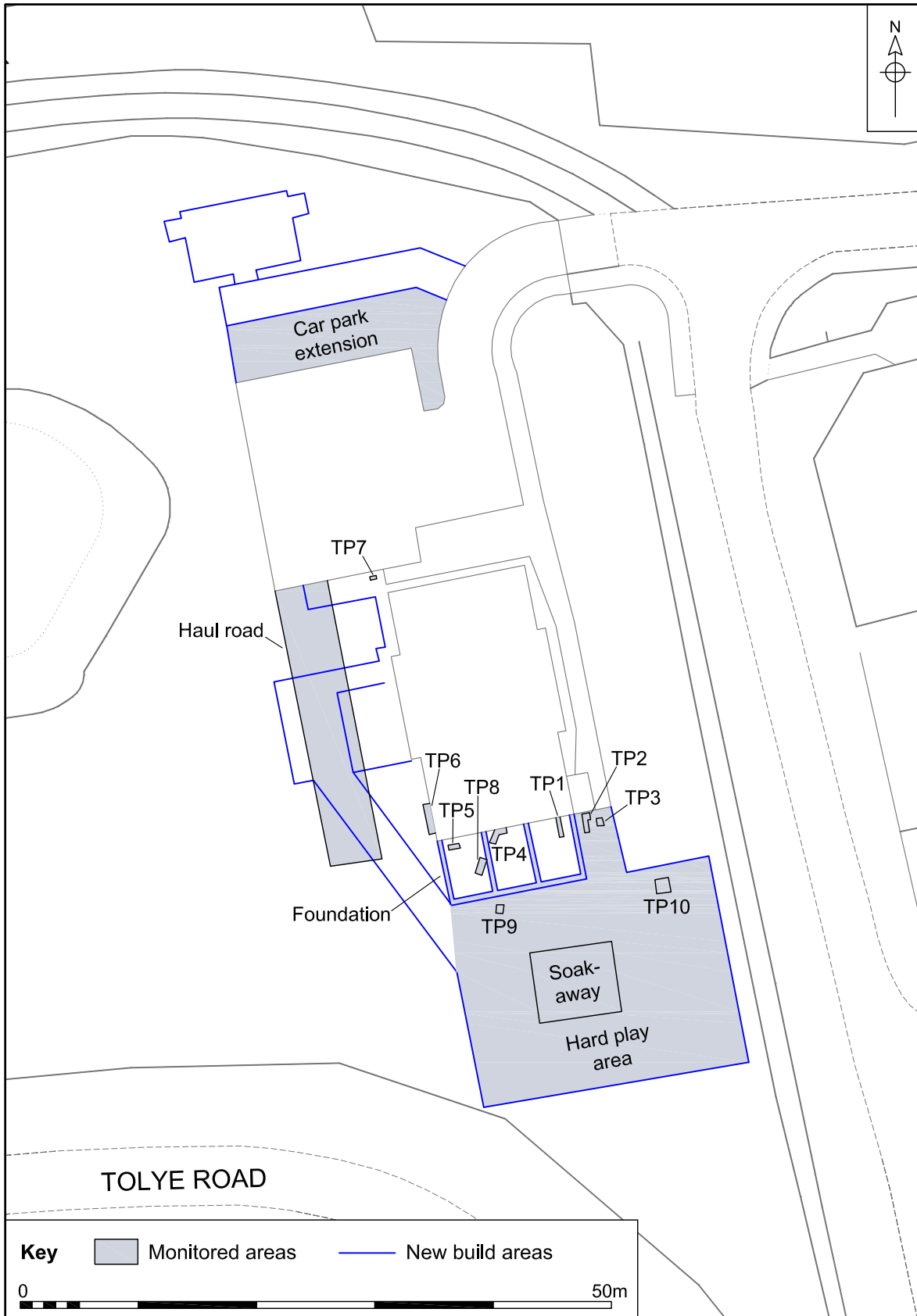
The objective of the watching brief monitoring is to mitigate the impacts of the proposed works in line with the Archaeological Brief. Where archaeological remains are identified, and these cannot be preserved *in situ*, the potential impact of the scheme is minimised by appropriate levels of archaeological excavation and recording. The Brief required that all groundworks be monitored by a qualified archaeologist.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds, other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

No environmental samples were taken as no suitable deposits were encountered.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour, monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.



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Figure 2. Location of monitored watching brief areas. Scale 1:500

5.0 RESULTS

Test pits (1-10) were hand dug to check the location of gas, water and electricity.

Test Pit 1

Most of the area of this test pit was taken up by the backfill of a service trench; however at the south end the service trench cut was visible as well as undisturbed ground. The topsoil (a mid brown sandy loam with brick and mortar flecks) was c.0.17m deep below ground level (bgl) and was cut by the service trench. The natural subsoil was an orangey brown silty clay with occasional chalk flecks. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Test Pit 2

The topsoil was 0.12m thick, covering the natural subsoil of orangey brown clayey sand with occasional chalk flecks and flint gravel. This deposit probably represents service trench backfill as a gas pipe was present at the base. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Test Pit 3

The topsoil was 0.13m deep and was a mid brown clay loam with occasional flint gravel. At the base of this layer was a sheet of teram geotextile with a mid brown clayey sand with occasional fine flint gravel below; this deposit probably represents the backfill of a service trench. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Test Pit 4

This test it was 0.4m deep and was entirely located within the fill of a service trench. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Test Pit 5

This test pit was 0.15m deep and was wholly topsoil. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Test Pit 6

This was heavily disturbed by the foundations of the existing hall, but natural subsoil was visible.

Test Pit 7

This pit was 0.5m deep with topsoil and natural subsoil present. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Test Pit 8

This test pit contained topsoil and the fill of a service trench measuring 1.1m deep. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Test Pit 9

Only the fill of the service trench was visible. No significant archaeological features were noted.

Test Pit 10

This test pit revealed topsoil (a greyish brown clay loam with frequent brick and mortar fragments) 0.5m deep above a 0.2m deep layer of dark brown silty sand with occasional flint gravel and two oyster shells. At a depth of 0.7m the natural subsoil was present. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Car Park Extension

This area was stripped to a depth of 0.3m bgl. The stratigraphy consisted of a thin layer of topsoil (0.05-0.075m) laying on top of compacted orange gravel and rubbly soil, probably associated with the building of the community hall in 1998. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Haul Road

This was excavated to a depth of 0.15m. The topsoil was only 0.05-0.075m deep with below it a layer of soil containing frequent building rubble, metal and plastic, probably dating from construction works in 1998, when the hall was built. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Hall Extension Foundations

The trenches were 0.4m wide and up to 1.2m deep. The natural subsoil was visible at the base of all the trenches but the modern topsoil was visible at varying depths due to disturbance associated with the construction of the hall in 1998 and various service trenches. No significant archaeological features were visible.

Soakaway

This was a large square pit measuring 6m by 7m by c.1.5m deep. Several services were crossing the area, and a concrete strip foundation was visible on the northern edge. The upper level of the topsoil had already been stripped and only 0.15m of rubbly topsoil was visible in the sides of the soakaway. No significant archaeological features were noted.



Plate 1. The hard play area facing west

Hard Play Area

This area was stripped to a depth of 0.6m bgl at its east end and 0.2m bgl at its west end (due to the slope of the ground surface at the time of construction). At this level the natural subsoil was visible. There was considerable disturbance caused by service trenches, especially near to the community centre. The topsoil contained a large proportion of building rubble.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

No significant archaeological features or finds were present in any of the excavated areas.

Small areas of possibly original topsoil had survived the disturbance of the building works in 1998, but no dating evidence was recovered.

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned by NPS South East Ltd and funded by Children's Services, Norfolk County Council.

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The illustrations for this report were completed by David Dobson and the finished report edited by Jayne Bown.

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