

Report 2886



nps archaeology

**Archaeological Watching Brief
at Bridge Road, Stoke Ferry, Norfolk**

ENF127897

Prepared for
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Location: Bridge Road, Stoke Ferry, Norfolk
District: Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Grid Ref.: TF 7069 9961
Planning Ref.: 08/02466/F
HER No.: ENF127897
OASIS Ref.: 123093
Client: James Browning c/o Richard C F Waite
Dates of Fieldwork: December 2011

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted on preliminary excavations for the footings of a new garage at Bridge Road, Stoke Ferry, Norfolk.

The trenches were dug through what was largely made up ground and no archaeological features were present.

This is the first phase of a larger development and further monitoring work at the site will be required.

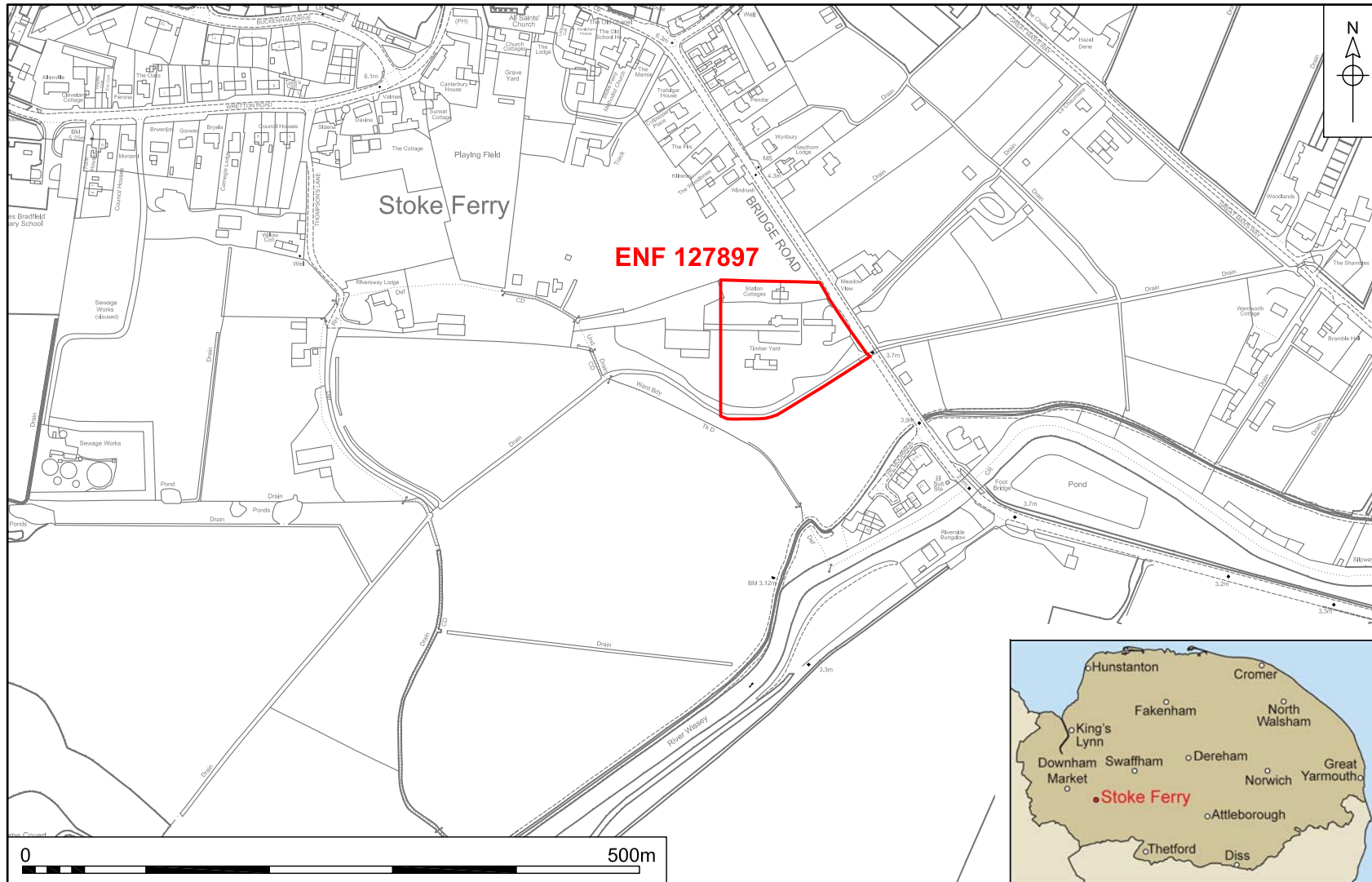
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Proposals to redevelop the site of the former Stoke Ferry Railway Station require a supporting programme of archaeological works. The first stage of which was the monitoring of the excavations for a new garage on alongside the site entrance on Bridge Road (Fig. 1: Plate 1).



Plate 1. View south-east showing location of new watching brief area

This work was undertaken to fulfil planning requirements set by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk (planning ref: 08/02466/F) and an



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

Archaeological Brief for the Monitoring of Works under Archaeological Supervision and Control issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (Ken Hamilton 22 March 2011 – ref: CNF43393). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (NAU/BAU2886/NP). This work was and funded by James Browning and commissioned by Richard C F Waite.

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 for Communities and Local Government 2010) and the *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

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

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The development site is located in an area of chalk overlain by peat (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

The site occupies a plot on the west side of Bridge Road on the southern outskirts of Stoke Ferry that was once occupied by buildings associated with Stoke Ferry Railway Station. It lies just inside the parish boundary. The River Wissey, which also forms part of the parish boundary, flows some 200m to the south of the site

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The proposed development covers the site of the former Stoke Ferry Railway Station (NHER 51548), which opened in 1882 and finally closed in the 1980s. It was opened as the Downham and Stoke Ferry Railway (NHER 13598), later part of the Great Eastern Railway, and had four trains a day, although passenger services ceased as early as 1930. Freight continued to be carried until the early 1980s.

Excavation works during the construction of the railway in 1881 uncovered a hoard of six Bronze Age torcs (NHER 4726) and further Bronze Age and Iron Age items, including an Iron Age sword (NHER 4729), were recovered from close to the River Wissey, c.320m to the south-east.

A sawn and split red antler deer (NHER 11940) was found in one of the railway sheds in the 1970s and although it is not certain where it was from it may have been dredged up during the clearing of nearby dykes. This seems likely as other items have been recovered from the surrounding area during the clearing of dykes. A fragment of a human skull (NHER 12582) was recovered from the material dredged from a dyke approximately 200m to the west of the site. The skull is thought to have been of some antiquity, but it had evidence of scarring from air gun pellets. Other human remains have also been recovered from around the area with a femur found in mud alongside the River Wissey, c.295m south-east of the site (NHER 15739).

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of the watching brief was to provide a record of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB-type excavator equipped with a narrow toothed bucket.

No artefacts were recovered during the monitoring visit.

Environmental samples were not taken as no suitable deposits were present.

Black and White 35mm and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

5.0 RESULTS

Excavation of trenches for the foundations of the new garage was monitored and the trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.6-0.9m through a single deposit of brown/orange silty loam that contained modern material, such as building rubble (Plate 2).



Plate 2. View south along the east foundation trench

The south-west corner of the garage's foundations had cut through a soakaway, which drained water from the adjacent building (Plate 3).



Plate 3. The south-west corner of the new foundation trenches showing modern soakaway

No other deposits were encountered at this depth and no archaeological features or artefacts were present.

It is thought that the site was dug out to remove a thick layer of peat prior to the construction of the railway in 1881, which, if correct, would probably mean that the site was at least partially made up to construct the buildings and lay the tracks. The cottages on the north part of the site are set lower than the rest of the site, perhaps supporting the idea that the site had been dug out.

6.0 FINDS

No finds were retained.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

No environmental samples were taken as there were no suitable deposits

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The excavations for the foundations of the new garage revealed no archaeological features, but they did show that the front of the site alongside Bridge Road at Stoke Ferry has been built up

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank James Browning who funded the work and Darren French at Richard C F Waite who commissioned it.

The fieldwork was carried out by the author.

This report was illustrated and produced by David Dobson and edited by Jayne Bown.

Bibliography and Sources

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Department for Communities and Local Government 2010 *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* TSO, Norwich

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