

Report 2020/1007

## Felbrigg Hall Estate: Marble Hill Lodge North

Monitoring of Works Under Archaeological Supervision and Control



Prepared for: The National Trust

OASIS Ref: norfolka1-405120

Grid Ref: TG 20324 38247

HER Event No.: ENF 150131

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Client: The National Trust  
Location: Felbrigg Hall Estate: Marble Hill Lodge North  
District: North Norfolk  
Grid Reference: TG 20324 38247  
HER Event Number: ENF 150131  
OASIS Reference: norfolka1-405120  
Date of Fieldwork: 11 July 2018, 26 February 2019, 27 February 2019, 05 March 2019 and 06 March 2019

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## **Summary**

*Archaeological monitoring was conducted by NPS Archaeology for The National Trust during the excavation of eight trial holes and groundworks associated with the installation of new soakaways and a replacement conservatory at Marble Hill Lodge North, on the Felbrigg Hall Estate.*

*The site occupies a rural setting. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded during the monitoring, and no finds were recovered. The watching brief observed and recorded the stratigraphic sequence within the trenches which consisted of topsoil, subsoil and natural geology.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1 NPS Archaeology was commissioned and funded by The National Trust to conduct archaeological supervision and controlled monitoring during the excavation of eight trial holes and the groundworks that followed at Marble Hill Lodge North on the Felbrigg Hall Estate.
- 2 The trial holes were excavated at the site in July 2018, for the retrieval of information on the design of new soakaways and to inform the foundation design for a replacement conservatory. In February and March 2019, the groundworks associated with the installation of the soakaway and conservatory foundations were carried out.
- 3 The site is situated in an area of historical importance, located on the Felbrigg Estate which has its origins in the Late Anglo-Saxon period. A 17th century grade I listed mansion with later alterations occupies the centre of the estate. Marble Hill Lodge North represents one of the two entrance lodges and is believed to have been constructed in 1844 (The National Trust 2018). Prehistoric, Romano-British and medieval period remains have been recorded within the parish, primarily through the recovery of artefacts as surface finds or by uncontrolled excavation. Consequently, the archaeological potential of the site is considerable.
- 4 The programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains identified during the archaeological monitoring, following a brief issued by The National Trust: *Brief for Archaeological Investigation and Report Felbrigg Hall Estate: Marble Hill Lodge North* (The National Trust 2018). The works conformed to the standards issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a).

## 2. GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5 The site is situated c.4.2km south-west of Cromer, at an elevation of c.63m AOD on a geological feature known as the Holt-Cromer ridge. The site is located c.4.4km from the modern coastline, with the River Mun located c.6.5km to the east, and the Scarrow Beck located c.6.9km to the south-west.
- 6 The site occupies an area of Wroxham Crag Formation sand and gravel bedrock geology, with overlying Briton's Lane Member superficial deposits of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey 2020).

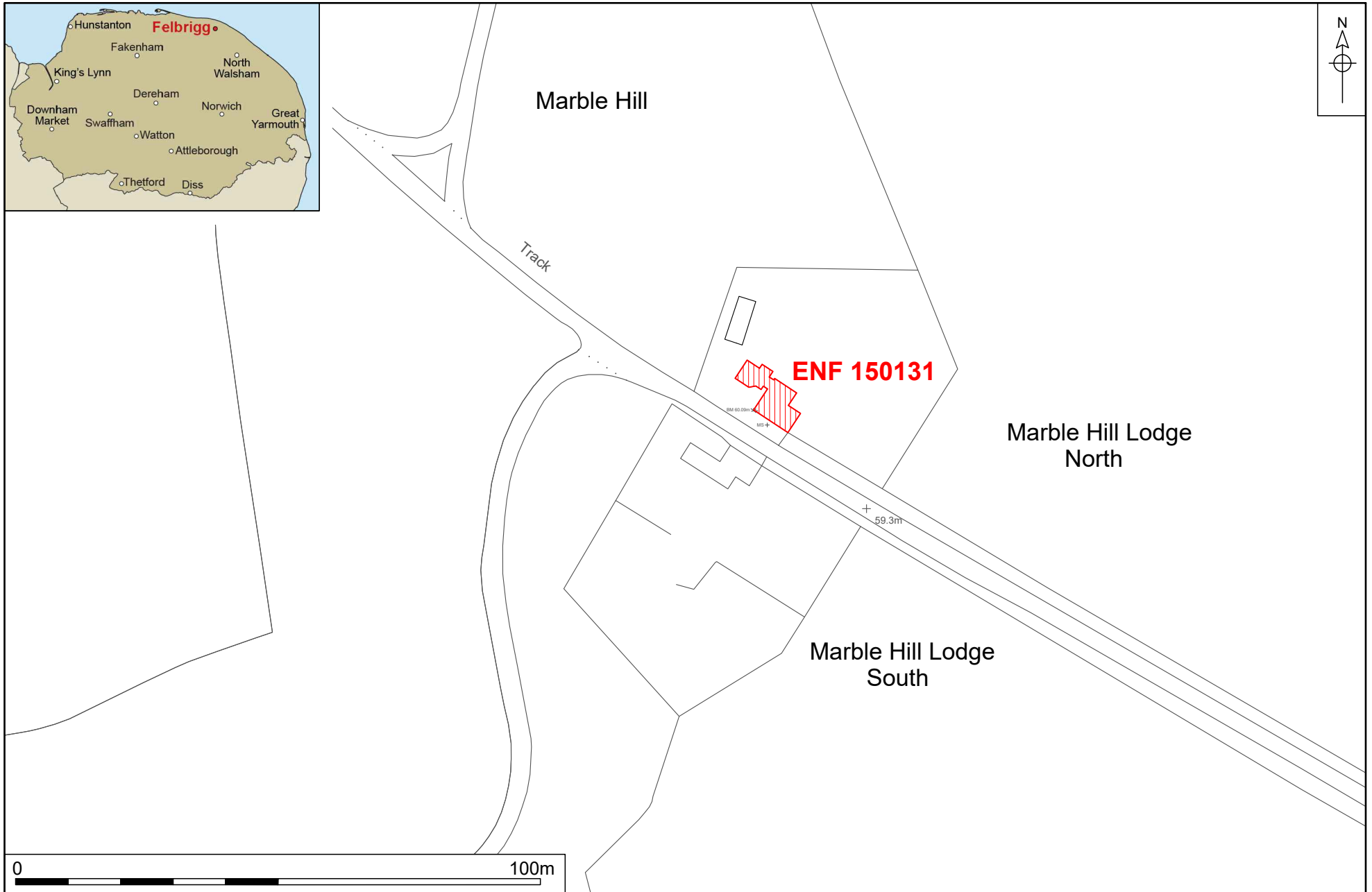


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:1000

### 3. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 7 The site and its environs are of historical importance, falling in the curtilage of the Grade I listed building of Felbrigg Hall, a 17th century mansion with later alterations that occupies the centre of the Felbrigg estate. Marble Hill Lodge North is a tenanted dwelling and one of the two entrance lodges in the south-east of the estate. The building is shown on the 1843 tithe map, however 'local tradition' dates its construction to 1844 (The National Trust 2018).
- 8 Prehistoric remains are known from the Felbrigg parish, with the cropmarks of possible Neolithic and Bronze Age barrows having been identified in the vicinity of the site. Several Neolithic axes have also been discovered in the parish. Romano-British remains are rare within the parish, with only a few finds such as a coin and brooch having been recovered, which probably originate from casual losses in antiquity.
- 9 The Felbrigg estate has its origins in the Late Anglo-Saxon period, but to date no Anglo-Saxon remains have been found in the parish, despite Felbrigg being recoded as a fairly substantial and wealthy settlement in the Domesday Book (Brown 1984).
- 10 However, medieval remains are abundant. The parish church of St Margaret's dates from the 14th century, and around the parish numerous cropmarks of activity from this period have been identified. Additionally, on the grounds of the estate, a medieval iron working site has been identified through the collection of large quantities of slag.
- 11 As previously discussed, it is the remains from the post-medieval period that are most prevalent in the parish. In addition to Felbrigg Hall and its associated estate, cropmarks of former field boundaries from this period are abundant across the area. The remains of a brickworks with kilns and clay pits has also been recorded from aerial photographs nearby, as well as references to this activity in local names such as 'Brickfields' to the south of the estate.

#### Cartographic Evidence

- 12 Faden's *Map of Norfolk* dated 1797 depicts details of the Felbrigg estate, along with Metton Road which runs north-to-south, to the east of the site. The map depicts the site as a roughly circular, forested area, with a 'Lime Kiln' marked to the immediate south-west. On Bryant's 1826 *Map of Norfolk* Marble Hill Lodge North is specifically depicted, but details of the buildings on the site are obscured by the illustration of the forested area.
- 13 The enclosure map dating from the mid – late 19th century only depicts the boundary of the estate in its southern half, showing few details within it. The tithe map of the parish from the same period depicts Marble Hill Lodge North and South, and gives details on the division of the surrounding fields and land.
- 14 On the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map dating to the late 19th century, few changes to the layout of the agricultural fields, roads and boundaries are recorded. The most significant addition to this later map in the presence of a track/road through the forested area to the west of the site called 'The Belt'.



## **Photographic Evidence**

- 15 Aerial photographs from 1946 and 1988 show no changes to the site or to the land divisions of the surrounding fields from those depicted in the first edition of the Ordnance Survey map.

## **Previous Archaeological Investigations**

- 16 A number of archaeological watching briefs have been carried out on the Felbrigg Estate, usually in relation to intrusive conservation measures and repairs. However, most of these have not identified any archaeological features, finds or deposits of significance (Rose 1992; Phelps 2008; Hickling 2015; Hodges and Hanson 2016).
- 17 One episode of monitoring did identify a dump of bricks of 15th – 16th-century date, however these were most likely redeposited in the 19th century (Clare 2017). In another watching brief, a 17th – 18th century brick drain was identified (Bates 1993).
- 18 During an evaluation at Felbrigg Hall in 2007, numerous phases of drainage were identified, along with the probable roof of a medieval undercroft (Boyle 2008).
- 19 A geophysical survey around the parish church of St Margaret's was conducted in 2012 and 2013 to identify the presence of medieval activity in its surrounds, but none was identified (Webb 2013).

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

- 20 The programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains identified during the archaeological monitoring, following a brief issued by The National Trust: *Brief for Archaeological Investigation and Report Felbrigg Hall Estate: Marble Hill Lodge North* (The National Trust 2018). The works conformed to *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching briefs* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014a) and *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003). The excavation was conducted within the context of the relevant regional archaeological framework (Medlycott 2011).
- 21 All groundworks were monitored by a qualified and experienced archaeologist.
- 22 The objective of the watching brief was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence (and thus the location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance) or absence of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.
- 23 Machine excavation was carried out by a hydraulic 360° excavator with a toothless ditching bucket.
- 24 Spoil and exposed surfaces were scanned with a metal-detector. No finds were recovered.
- 25 Environmental samples were not taken due to a lack of suitable deposits.
- 26 Digital photographs were taken of the archaeological works where appropriate.
- 27 Site conditions were largely good with occasional light rain.
- 28 The site archive is currently held at the offices of NPS Archaeology. Upon completion of the project, the documentary archive will be prepared and indexed following relevant national guidelines (CIfA 2014b). The archive, consisting of all paper elements created during recording of the archaeological site, including digital material, will be deposited with The National Trust.
- 29 A summary form of the results of this project has been completed for Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigationS (OASIS) under the reference norfolka1-405120, and this report will be uploaded to the OASIS database.
- 30 The contents of the site archive are summarised in Table 1.

Item	No.
Contexts	0
Paper record sheets	2
Plan and section sheets	2
Photographs	14
Finds	0

Table 1. Site archive quantification

## 5. RESULTS

- 31 Across all of the monitored areas, a moderately compact topsoil was present which consisted of a dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional sub-rounded medium-sized pebble inclusions, measuring between 0.4m – 0.6m thick. This deposit overlay a subsoil of mid-yellowish brown sandy silt, with rare sub-rounded medium-sized pebble inclusions measuring between 0.2m – 0.35m thick.
- 32 The subsoil was deposited over the natural which consisted of a yellowish-orange silty sand with varying sized frequent flint inclusions.
- 33 No archaeological features or deposits were recorded across the monitored areas of the site. No artefacts were retrieved from the site, despite intensive metal detecting being carried out.



Plate 1. Monitored groundworks at Marble Hill Lodge North

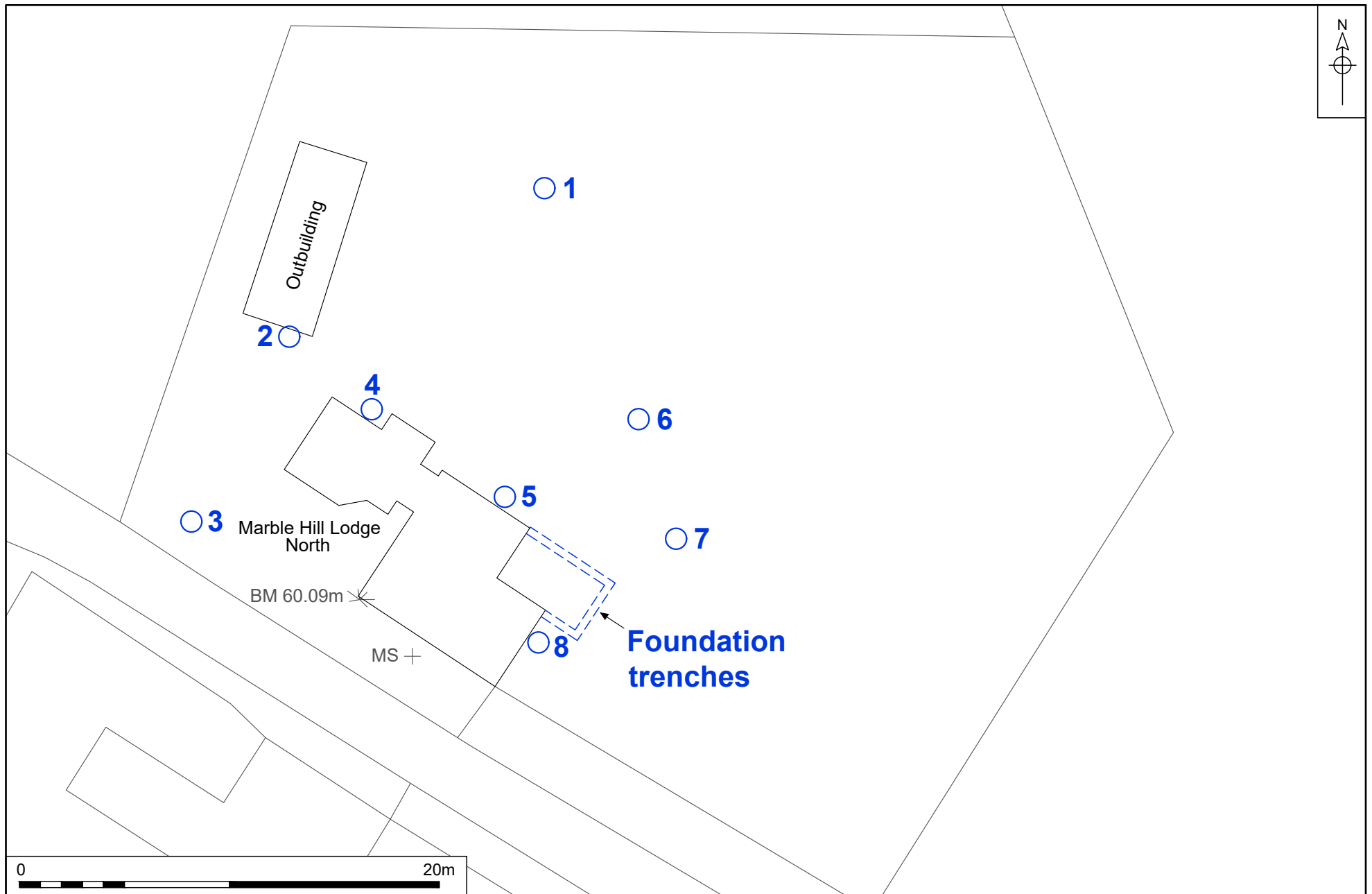


Figure 2. Location of the monitored groundworks and trial holes. Scale 1:250



Plate 2. Monitored groundworks at Marble Hill Lodge North

## 6. DISCUSSION

- 34 The archaeological supervision and controlled monitoring during the groundworks at Marble Hill Lodge North identified no features, deposits or finds, despite the apparent archaeological potential of the site. It is likely that the limited scope of the groundworks is largely responsible for no archaeological remains being discovered.



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Fieldwork was carried out by Gary Collyer and Mick Boyle. David Adams managed the project on behalf of NPS Archaeology.

The report was authored by Joshua White, illustrated by David Dobson and edited by David Adams.

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**Appendix 1: Periods**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Date From</b>	<b>Date To</b>
Prehistoric	-500,000	42
Early Prehistoric	-500,000	-4,001
Palaeolithic	-500,000	-10,001
Lower Palaeolithic	-500,000	-150,001
Middle Palaeolithic	-150,001	-40,001
Upper Palaeolithic	-40,000	-10,001
Mesolithic	-10,000	-4,001
Early Mesolithic	-10,000	-7,001
Late Mesolithic	-7,000	-4,001
Late Prehistoric	-4,000	42
Neolithic	-4,000	-2,351
Early Neolithic	-4,000	-3,001
Middle Neolithic	-3,500	-2,701
Late Neolithic	-3,000	-2,351
Bronze Age	-2,350	-701
Early Bronze Age	-2,350	-1,501
Beaker	-2,300	-1,700
Middle Bronze Age	-1,600	-1,001
Late Bronze Age	-1,000	-701
Iron Age	-800	42
Early Iron Age	-800	-401
Middle Iron Age	-400	-101
Late Iron Age	-100	42
Roman	42	409
Post Roman	410	1900
Saxon	410	1065
Early Saxon	410	650
Middle Saxon	651	850
Late Saxon	851	1065
Medieval	1066	1539
Post-medieval	1540	1900
Modern	1900	2050
World War One	1914	1918
World War Two	1939	1945
Cold War	1945	1992
Unknown	--	--

after *English Heritage Periods List*, recommended by *Forum on Information Standards in Heritage* available at: <http://www.heritage-standards.org.uk/chronology/>