

**Report No. 1831**

## **An Archaeological Watching Brief at Caister-on-Sea Roman Fort, Norfolk**

NHER 8675 CBY



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July 2008

BAU number

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<b>Project checklist</b>		<b>Date</b>
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## **Contents**

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### ***Summary***

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Observations
- 3.0 Conclusions

### ***Acknowledgements***

### ***Bibliography***

### **Figures**

- Fig. 1 Site location.
- Fig. 2 Plan of the site, showing location of the information panels

### **Plates**

- Plate 1 Building 1 of the Roman fort, looking south towards the road
- Plate 2 Removal of the old panel
- Plate 3 The excavated hole, prior to installation of the new panel
- Plate 4 The new panel installed



Location:	Caister-on-Sea, Norfolk
District:	Great Yarmouth
Grid Ref.:	TG 51821 12226
NHER:	8675 CBY
Date of fieldwork:	1 May 2008

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## ***Summary***

*This report records the negative results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken on the installation of an information panel for English Heritage at Caister-on-Sea Roman Fort, Norfolk. No archaeological features or finds were recorded during the watching brief.*

## **1.0 Introduction**

The archaeological watching brief was commissioned by Sue Barnard of English Heritage to monitor the installation of replacement information panels at Caister-on-Sea Roman Fort, Norfolk (NHER 8675; Figs 1 and 2). It was decided that the installation of one of the panels, Panel 1, required archaeological supervision. A methodology was designed by NAU Archaeology and approved by Philip Walker of English Heritage. The archaeological supervision of the installation took place on 1 May 2008.

Caister-on-Sea Roman Fort was built during the early 3rd century AD and appears to have been constructed on a previously unoccupied location on the edge of a large estuary, which has now silted up (Darling with Gurney 1993, 240–2; Gurney 2002, 21). The site continued to be occupied until the later 4th century. There is a lack of coin evidence on the site for the period after AD 364–78, which suggests its abandonment, or at least a change of function, at this time (Darling with Gurney 1993, 250).

Today modern housing covers around 90% of the area of the fort itself. Prior to the construction of this estate, major excavations took place during the 1950s, which examined a large Anglo-Saxon cemetery close-by to the south, as well as the area of the fort now open to visitors (Darling with Gurney 1993; Plate 1).

## **2.0 Observations**

The removal of the previous panel, situated at the entrance to the site, first required the destruction of a concrete foot (Plate 2). After this had been achieved, the hole was widened slightly by the archaeological supervisor and the spoil was metal-detected and examined for artefacts. The position of the panel, on made up ground and well above the foundations of the Roman fort, meant that the archaeological impact of the work was negligible. No artefacts were recovered from the spoil and no significant stratigraphy was observed in the section, the only observable deposit being a heavily rooted mid-brown sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded stone inclusions (Plate 3). Once the hole had been widened and recorded the sub-contractors continued with the installation of the panel (Plate 4).



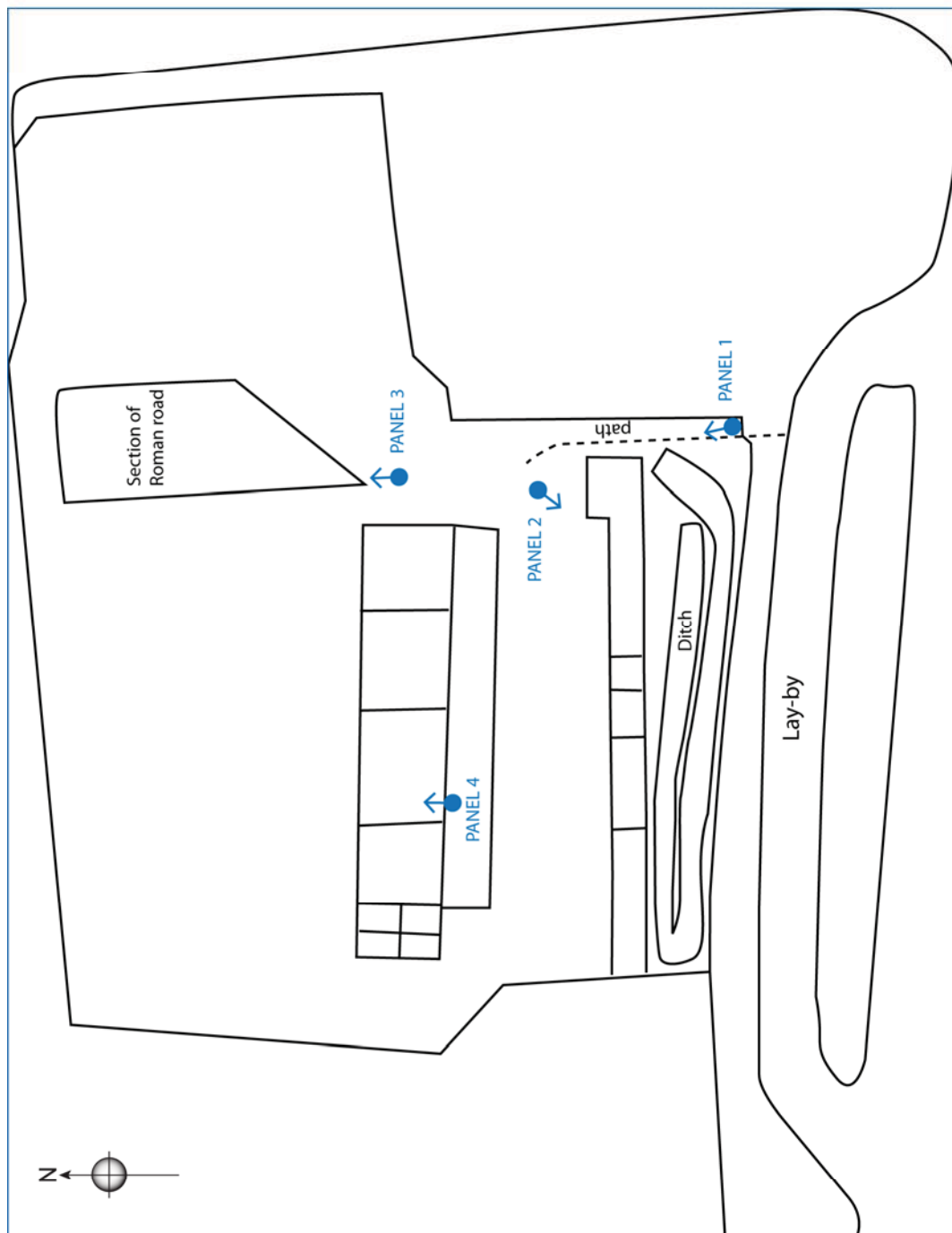


**Figure 1** Site location

Local Authority No.100019340

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**Figure 2** Plan of the site, showing location of the information panels

Figure supplied by English Heritage

### 3.0 Conclusions

The archaeological supervision of the installation of the new interpretation panel was undertaken successfully and no significant archaeological impact resulted from the work. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

### ***Acknowledgements***

The author is grateful for the help of Sue Barnard of English Heritage. Kenneth Penn and Richard Hoggett helped to assemble the relevant bibliographic information. The figures were prepared by the author and Michael Feather, and the report edited by Richard Hoggett.

### **Bibliography**

- |                            |      |   |
|----------------------------|------|---|
| Darling, J. and Gurney, D. | 1993 | <i>Caister-on-Sea Excavations by Charles Green, 1951–55.</i> East Anglian Archaeology 60.   |
| Gurney, D.                 | 2002 | <i>Outposts of the Roman Empire: A Guide to Norfolk's Roman Forts at Burgh Castle, Caister-on-Sea and Brancaster.</i> Norfolk Archaeological Trust. |





**Plate 1** Building 1 of the Roman fort,  
looking south towards the road



**Plate 2** Removal of the old panel



**Plate 3** The excavated hole, prior to installation of the new panel  
Scale bar = 1m



**Plate 4** The new panel installed