
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND
RECORDING AT
CAISTER CASTLE FARM,
WEST CAISTER,
NORFOLK
(ENF129666)**

**Work Undertaken For
Philip Stacey Contracts Ltd**

September 2012

Report Compiled by
Gary Trimble BSc (Hons)

Planning Application No: 06/12/0322/F
National Grid Reference: TG 5034 1250
OASIS Record No: archaeo11-148728

APS Report No. **99/12**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



Quality Control

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING Castle Farm, West Caister, Norfolk (ENF129666)

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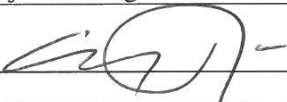
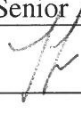
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1. SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during topsoil stripping to facilitate the construction of a 5 million gallon reservoir on land at Caister Castle Farm, West Caister, Norfolk. The site is within an area where cropmarks of Bronze Age, Roman and medieval remains have been identified.

Archaeological monitoring of the work did not identify any archaeological features or deposits. The area occupied by the reservoir has been disturbed in recent times by large scale infilling of pre-existing hollows by dumping of imported soils. Areas which were not subject to infilling were scarred by heavy machinery – presumably the dumpers bringing in the imported soils – causing deep wheel rutting across the natural sands.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Philip Stacey Contracts Ltd to undertake an archaeological investigation during the construction of a 5 million gallon reservoir on land at Caister Castle Farm, West Caister, Norfolk.

Planning permission (06/12/0322/F) to build the reservoir was granted subject to a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording. The investigation was carried out between the 31st August and 5th September 2012.

Extensive modern disturbance was observed during the monitoring. This was communicated to the archaeological curator at Norfolk Historic Environment Service. With their permission the investigation was terminated early.

2.2 Topography and Geology

West Caister is located 4km northwest of Great Yarmouth in Great Yarmouth Borough, Norfolk (Fig. 1). The site at Caister Castle Farm, West Caister is located 1.5km to the west of the town of Caister-on-Sea and approximately 600m to the northwest of the village of West Caister at National Grid Reference TG 5034 1250 (Fig. 2). The reservoir is being built on a field located immediately north of the farm buildings. It lies in an area of low, undulating land with the site located on the crest of a rise at 12.50m OD. The ground falls away to each side and is bounded to the south and west by tree belts. Beyond the southern tree belt are the buildings associated with Castle Farm. Castle Lane skirts the east side of the field whilst the Norwich Road (A1064) lies 400m to the north.

Soils are of the Wick 2 Association brown earths developed on glaciofluvial and aeolian drift and tills (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 346)

2.3 Archaeological Setting

The site lies in an area rich in archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric period through to post medieval times.

The ruins of Caister Castle are located just 150m to the south of the site. This moated brick built castle was constructed in about 1432 and stands on the site of an earlier manor house and chapel. Parts of the north wall and solar tower survive to full height whilst the remains of the hall and some domestic buildings are still standing.

Immediately to the south of the development site are cropmarks which probably represent field boundaries of medieval and/or post-medieval date whilst the west of the development area is bordered by further cropmarks of possible

Iron Age or Roman date. These also appear to have formed field boundary ditches.

On land south of the castle lies a cluster of three ring ditch cropmarks which probably represent Bronze Age barrows. In the same vicinity is a complex of cropmarks showing field systems and trackways of uncertain though possibly Roman date.

Cropmarks located 1km to the east of the development area mark the location of a mid to late Roman settlement. This is likely to be the 'vicus' associated with the Caister Roman Shore fort located further to the east within the town of Caister-On-Sea. Ditches recorded as cropmarks to the northwest of this site remain undated but may also be Roman. Archaeological excavations nearby in 1977 recorded Roman enclosure ditches and pits.

Immediately north of the development site is the southern extent of a large complex of cropmarks which spreads northwards towards Ormesby St Mary and occupies an area of around 1.5km². The cropmarks are likely to comprise elements of field systems of different periods possible having Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman components. A number of ring ditches which probably represent Bronze Age barrows are located in the southern area of the complex. A Roman road which runs southeast to northwest bisects this cropmark complex.

3. AIMS

The requirements of the investigation, as detailed in the brief, were to locate and record archaeological deposits and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The site was stripped of overburden using

a tracked 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a smooth ditching bucket. Groundworks were monitored and archaeological features and deposits were identified and recorded.

Each feature or deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 1. A photographic record was compiled and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Following the field work, the records were checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

The investigation did not record any features or deposits of archaeological interest. Much of the site (c 60%) was obscured by the dumping of imported soil material which filled pre-existing hollows and depressions (Fig. 3). This was done in order to make the field more usable for agriculture. The owner of the land, Mr David Cargill, provided information which established that the infill material is upcast brought from the excavation of the Bacton to Great Yarmouth gas pipeline project which was undertaken in 1998. The dumped material comprised a mixture of yellowish orange sand, mid grey sand (presumably topsoil) and boulder clay (002). This contrasted with the undisturbed *in situ* natural sands which consisted of mid orange coarse sand (003). The dumped material also included some rubbish likely to have been derived from the pipeline construction process which included plastic sheet, concrete fragments and twisted metal.

The areas of the site not covered with this

dumped material were heavily disturbed by wheel rutting caused by heavy plant – presumably the dumpers - which transported the material from the pipeline project to the site.

The topsoil (001) averaged 0.55m in depth and consisted of brownish grey silty sand with a moderate quantity of flint fragments.

6. DISCUSSION

Although a density of archaeological features recorded as cropmarks is located in the very near vicinity of the development site, none were recorded during the investigation. However, as much of the site was obscured by dumped material or disturbed by wheel rutting, the chance of detecting any features was slight. The original topography of the undulating site area has been changed, by dumping of material, from deep hollows and depressions to one which is flat and regular.

7. CONCLUSION

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at Caister Castle Farm, West Caister, Norfolk. The site is in an area with an extensive cropmark complex of remains of prehistoric and later date. However, no archaeological features were recorded during the investigation. Much of the site was found to be masked by modern dumped material which filled pre-existing hollows. Additionally, much of the remainder of the site was disturbed by wheel rutting from heavy plant which brought the infill to the site.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Philip Stacey Contracts Ltd for commissioning

the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
 Site Supervisors: Gary Trimble
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Gary Trimble
 Post-excavation analysis: Gary Trimble

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Hodge, CAH, Burton RGO, Corbett, WM, Evans, R and Seale, RS, 1984 *Soils and their Use in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales **13**

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
 OD Ordnance Datum (height above sea level)

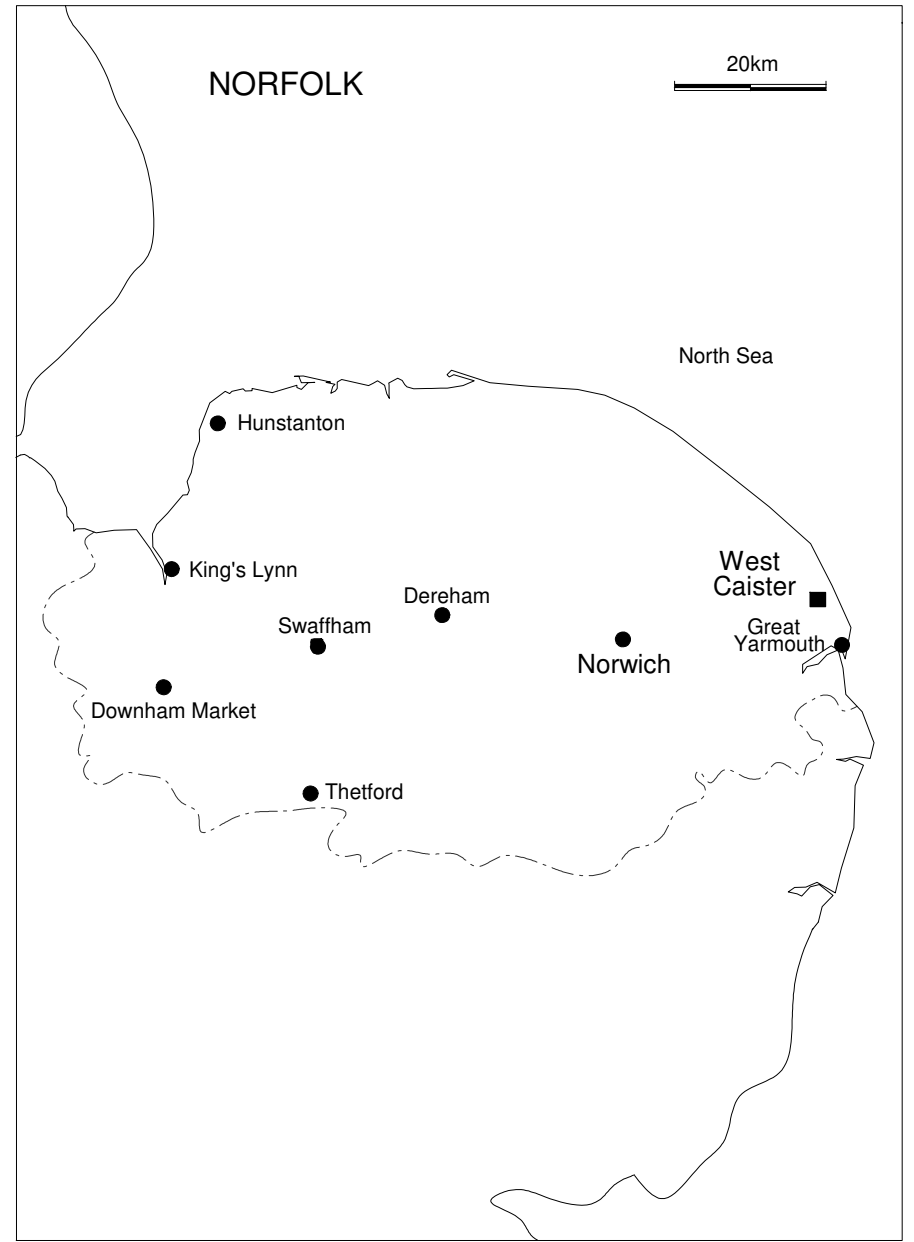
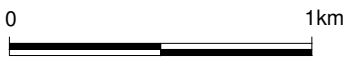


Figure 1 General Location Plan



TG



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	Archaeological Project Services	
Project Name: West Caister, Castle Farm		
Scale 1:25000	Drawn by: GT	Report No: 99/12

Figure 2 Site location map

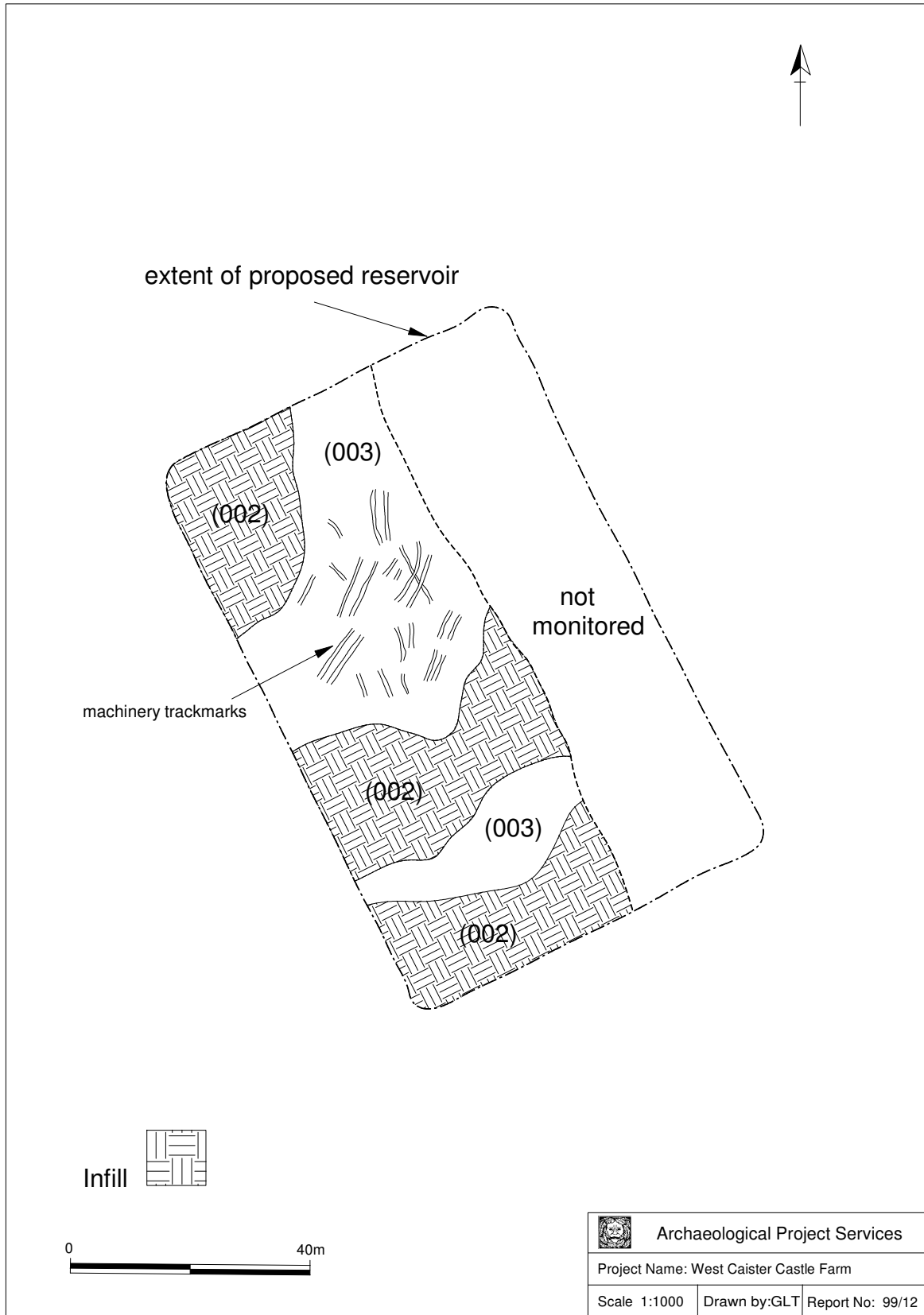


Fig. 3. Plan of site



Plate 1. View of the site during topsoil stripping facing south. The castle solar tower in the background.



Plate 2. View of the south end of the site facing southeast. Infill material is the darker deposit to the right of the picture



Fig. 3. View of site facing southeast. Infill is the darker material in the foreground. The natural undisturbed orange sands lie beyond.



Plate 4. General overview of site facing north.

Appendix 1

CONTEXT SUMMARY

Context	Description	Interpretation
001	Brownish grey silty sand, moderate flints	Topsoil
002	Mixed deposit comprising yellowish orange sand, mid grey sand and grey/white boulder clay	Imported dumped material used to infill hollows
003	Mid orange coarse sand with flints	Natural deposits

Appendix 2

GLOSSARY

Aeolian	Deposits laid down by wind, usually comprising fine sands and silt grains.
Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, e.g. [004].
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological or geological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Glaciofluvial Drift	Materials (eg, clays, silts, gravels, <i>etc.</i>) deposited by the combined action of rivers and glaciers, or from streams from glacial ice.
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Solar	A room, usually on an upper storey of a major house (manor, castle, <i>etc.</i>) designed as the family's private living and sleeping quarters.
Till	A deposit formed after the retreat of a glacier. Also known as boulder clay, this material is generally unsorted and can comprise of rock flour to boulders to rocks of quite substantial size.
Vicus	Romano-British civilian settlement established around a Roman fort.

Appendix 3

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

3	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Plan record sheet
4	Daily record sheets
1	Sheets of scale drawing

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Norwich Castle Museum
Castle Meadow
Norwich
Norfolk
NR1 3JU

Norfolk Historic Environment Service Event Code

ENF 129666

OASIS Record Number

archaeo11-148728

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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OASIS ID: archaeol1-148728

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Caister Castle Farm, West Caister, Norfolk
Short description of the project	Monitoring of development groundwork in an area of cropmarks of prehistoric and later remains identified that the ground had suffered much disturbance and infilling in the relatively recent past and, as a result, no archaeological remains were identified.
Project dates	Start: 31-08-2012 End: 05-09-2012
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENF129666 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK GREAT YARMOUTH WEST CAISTER Caister Castle Farm
Study area	0.63 Hectares
Site coordinates	TG 5034 1250 52 1 52 39 06 N 001 42 05 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeological Project Services
Project brief originator	Norfolk Historic Environment Service

Project design originator	None
Project director/manager	Gary Taylor
Project supervisor	Gary Trimble
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums Service
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector"
Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums Service
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Correspondence","Map","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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