
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON LAND AT FARM COTTAGE,
WEST NEWTON,
NORFOLK
(NHER 53867)**

**Work Undertaken For
Sandringham Estate**

April 2010

Report Compiled by
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES**



**Quality Control
Farm Cottage,
West Newton, Norfolk
(NHER 53867)**

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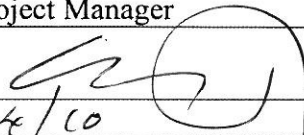
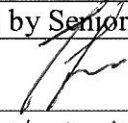
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1. SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at 66 Farm Cottage, West Newton, Norfolk. The watching brief monitored the reduction of ground over an area which is to comprise parking for three vehicles. The digging of a pipe trench and pit for an oil tank was also monitored.

The site lies in an area of archaeological potential with the remains of a Roman villa and bath house located approximately 120m to the south-east. The parish church of SS Peter and Paul lies 300m to the south-west and represents the medieval historic core of the village.

The watching brief revealed a single topsoil deposit with a thickness of at least 0.30m. Due to the shallowness of the excavations no archaeological remains were revealed.

A single cattle bone and a sherd of 17th to 18th century Blackware pottery were retrieved during the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as “*a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.*” (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Sandringham Estate to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the

construction of a parking area at 66 Farm Cottage, West Newton, Norfolk. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application 09/01676/F. The watching brief was carried out on the 8th of March 2010.

2.3 Topography and Geology

West Newton is situated 11km north-east of King’s Lynn and 60km north-west of the city of Norwich (Fig. 1) in the county of Norfolk.

The site lies approximately 300m north-east of the village centre as defined by the medieval parish church of SS Peter and Paul and comprises a roughly rectangular piece of land gently sloping down to the south centred on National Grid Reference TF 6987 2770.

Soils in the area are of the Newmarket II Association (SSEW), shallow well drained calcareous coarse loamy and sandy soils over chalk rubble associated with well drained deeper coarse loamy and sandy soils often in an intricate pattern.

2.4 Archaeological Setting

Numerous Romano-British remains have been found in close proximity to the development site. Excavations taking place between 1949 and 1951 revealed part of a Roman villa and bath house approximately 120m south-east of the site (NHER 3254) (Fig 2). The excavation uncovered tiled floors, a hypocaust, limestone chimney flue and bricks. A refuse pit containing pottery, oyster, mussel and cockle shells was also revealed. Other building materials recovered included coloured plaster, floor and roof tiles and window glass. Pottery fragments, iron slag, part of a shale bracelet and beads were also found at the site. The material that was dateable suggests a 3rd to 4th century date for the villa.

In 1995 during the digging of drains approximately 100m south-west of the development site (NHER 3253) (Fig 2), walling, flooring and a path of rammed flints, probably part of the villa, were uncovered. An almost complete Roman jug of Greyware pottery was also recovered during these works.

Work in the same area in 1989 produced numerous finds including a Roman coin of Commodus, tiles, iron slag, pottery, a whetstone and a quern. A single sherd of either Iron Age or early Saxon pottery was also recovered.

The village of West Newton dates at least to the Saxon period, as evidenced by the listing of the settlement in the Domesday survey of 1086 where it is included in Snettisham's complex entry and boasts 1½ carucates of land with 6 villagers, 3 small holders, 2 slaves and 20 acres of meadow. There are also 2 freemen on 16 acres of land (Brown 1984). The name 'Newton' is derived from the Old English *nēowa tūn*, probably the most common English place-name, meaning 'new homestead or village' (Ekwall 1989, 341).

The only extent remains of medieval West Newton is the 14th century parish church of SS Peter and Paul. The west tower, doors and arcades date to the 14th century. The church was extensively restored by Arthur Bloomfield in 1881 and Pesvner (2000) states that '...it seems now externally almost entirely Victorian'.

A number of buildings in West Newton underwent restoration in 1880 as the village was reconstructed after the Sandringham Estate was acquired for the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, in 1861. Several monarchs have used it for winter residence during the partridge shooting season and George VI died there in 1952.

The south-eastern edge of Sandringham park, a landscape park, woodlands and

gardens attached to Sandringham House, lies approximately 400m to the west of the site. The gardens were laid out in 1771 and extended in the late 19th century to include gardens with lakes and rockwork designed by William Broderick Thomas and James Pulham in the 1870s. The gardens have been continuously developed throughout the 20th century and include a garden area designed in 1947 by Geoffrey Jellicoe, set in a park of 18th century origins and extensive woodlands enlarged during the 19th century.

3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed during the groundworks were recorded and if present, their date, function and origin determined.

4. METHODS

The area of the proposed parking lot was reduced by machine to a suitable depth. A pipe trench and shallow pit for an oil tank were also excavated (Fig 3). The stripped areas were examined for archaeological remains. Additionally, the sides of the excavated areas were then cleaned and rendered vertical where possible. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each 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 sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation finds were examined and a period date assigned where possible (Appendix 2). The records were checked and phasing was assigned based on the

nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them and supplemented by artefact dating.

5. RESULTS

Following post-excavation analysis one phase was identified;

Phase 1 Undated deposit

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

Phase 1 Undated deposit

The only deposit identified during the investigation was a friable dark brown sandy silt (001), up to 0.30m thick, containing frequent bramble roots and a moderate amount of ceramic building material (CBM) and brick fragments (Figs 4-5, Sections 1-2) (Plates 2-5). A cattle bone and single sherd of 17th to 18th century Blackware pottery were retrieved from this deposit.

6. DISCUSSION

The dark sandy silt deposit identified during the investigation represents the current topsoil layer. The brick fragments, CBM inclusions and 17th to 18th century Blackware sherd attest to activity associated with the farm.

7. CONCLUSION

A watching brief was undertaken at 66 Farm Cottage, West Newton, Norfolk, in order to monitor the reduction of ground over an area which is to comprise parking for three vehicles. The digging of a pipe trench and shallow pit for an oil tank were also monitored.

The work was required due to the sites close proximity to the medieval historic core of the village and to the remains of a Roman villa and bath house located approximately 120m to the south-east.

The excavation produced no remains of Roman or medieval date. However, the depth of the excavation did not exceed the thickness of the recent topsoil layer and any Roman or medieval features would exist at a greater depth than that observed during the investigation.

The topsoil layer revealed during the investigation contained brick fragments and CBM inclusions, probably associated with activity at the farm. A cattle bone and a single sherd of 17th to 18th century pottery were recovered from this deposit.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Andrew Holt of Sandringham Estate 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 Supervisor: Andrew Failes
 Finds processing: Denise Buckley
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Andrew Failes
 Post-excavation analysis: Andrew Failes

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, P. (ed.) 1984 *Domesday Book 33: Norfolk (Part One)* Chichester: Phillimore

Ekwall, E., 1989, *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-Names* (4th edition)

IFA, 1999, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Pevsner, N. & Wilson, B. 2000 *The Buildings of England, Norfolk 2: North-West and South Harmondsworth*: Penguin

Soil Survey of England and Wales (SSEW) 1:250,000 Map

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

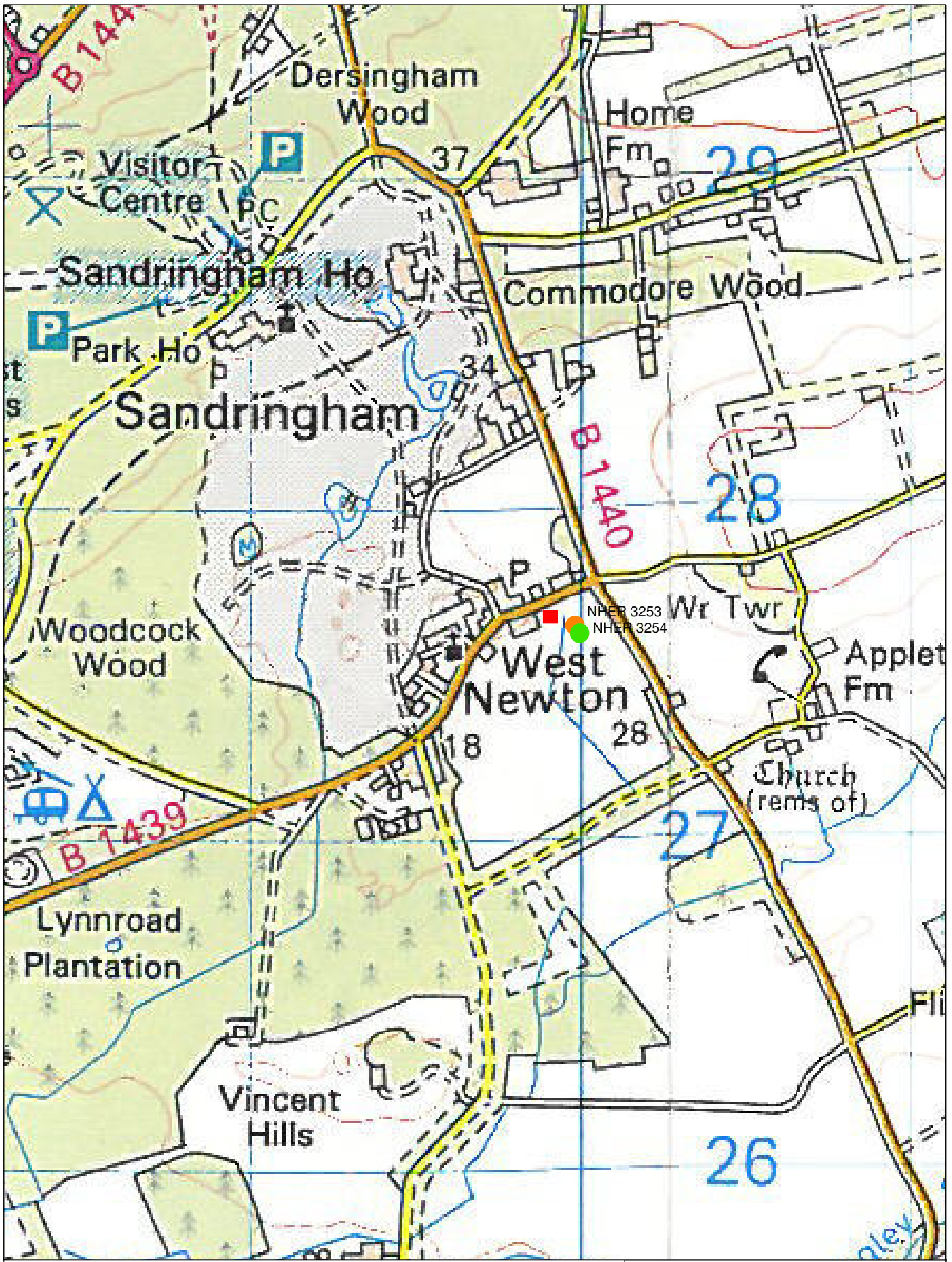
CBM Ceramic Building Material

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

SSEW Soil survey of England and Wales



Figure 1 General Location Plan



<p>Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. © Crown Copyright. NTL LTD Licence No AL2641A0001</p>	<p>68</p> <p>0 500m</p>	<p>■ - Site location</p> <p>● - Roman finds</p> <p>● - Roman villa site</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>69</p>	<p>Archaeological Project Services</p>
<p>Scale 1:15000</p>		<p>Drawn by:AF</p>		<p>Report No: 27/10</p>	

Figure caption

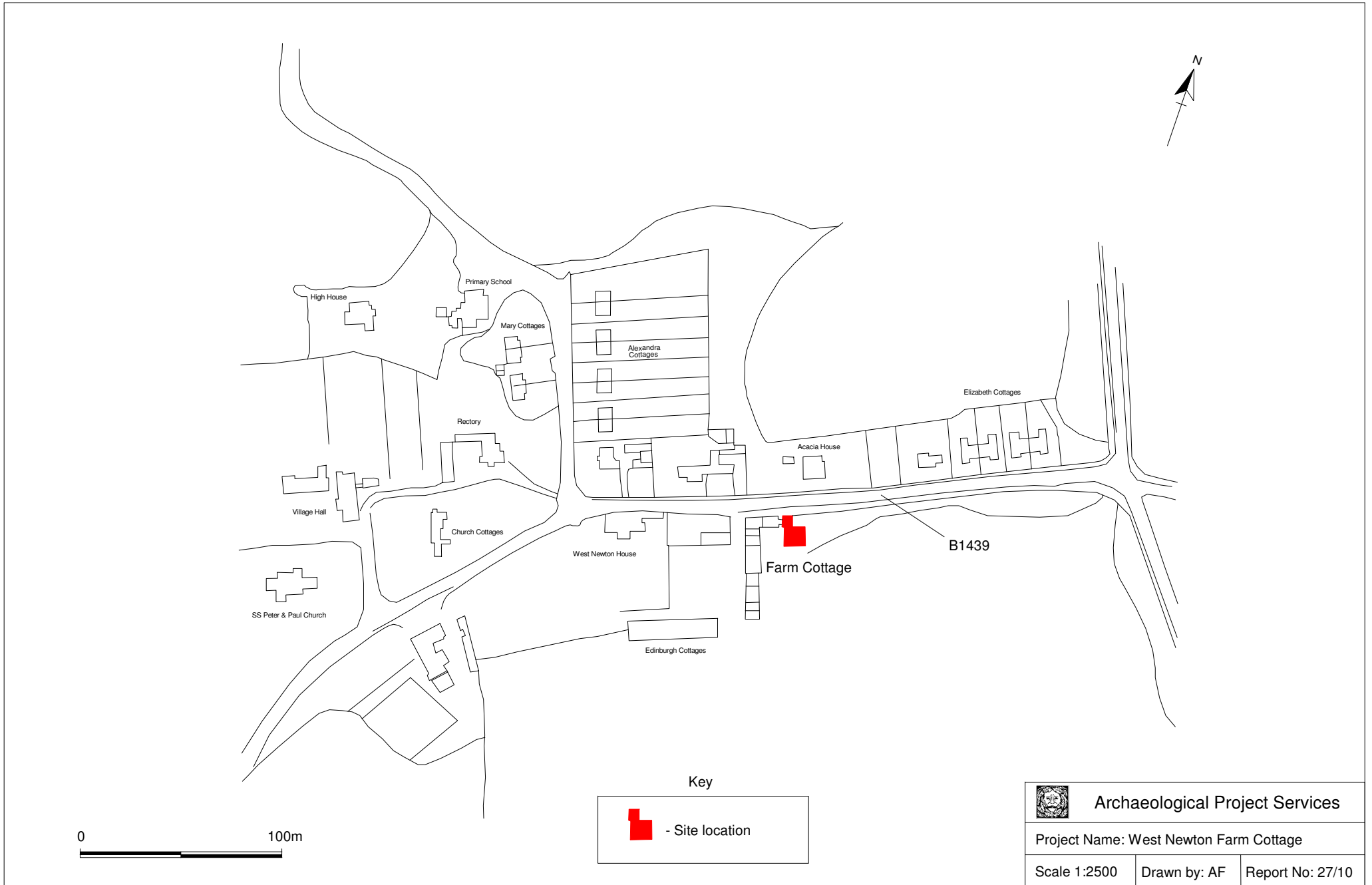


Figure 3 - Site location plan

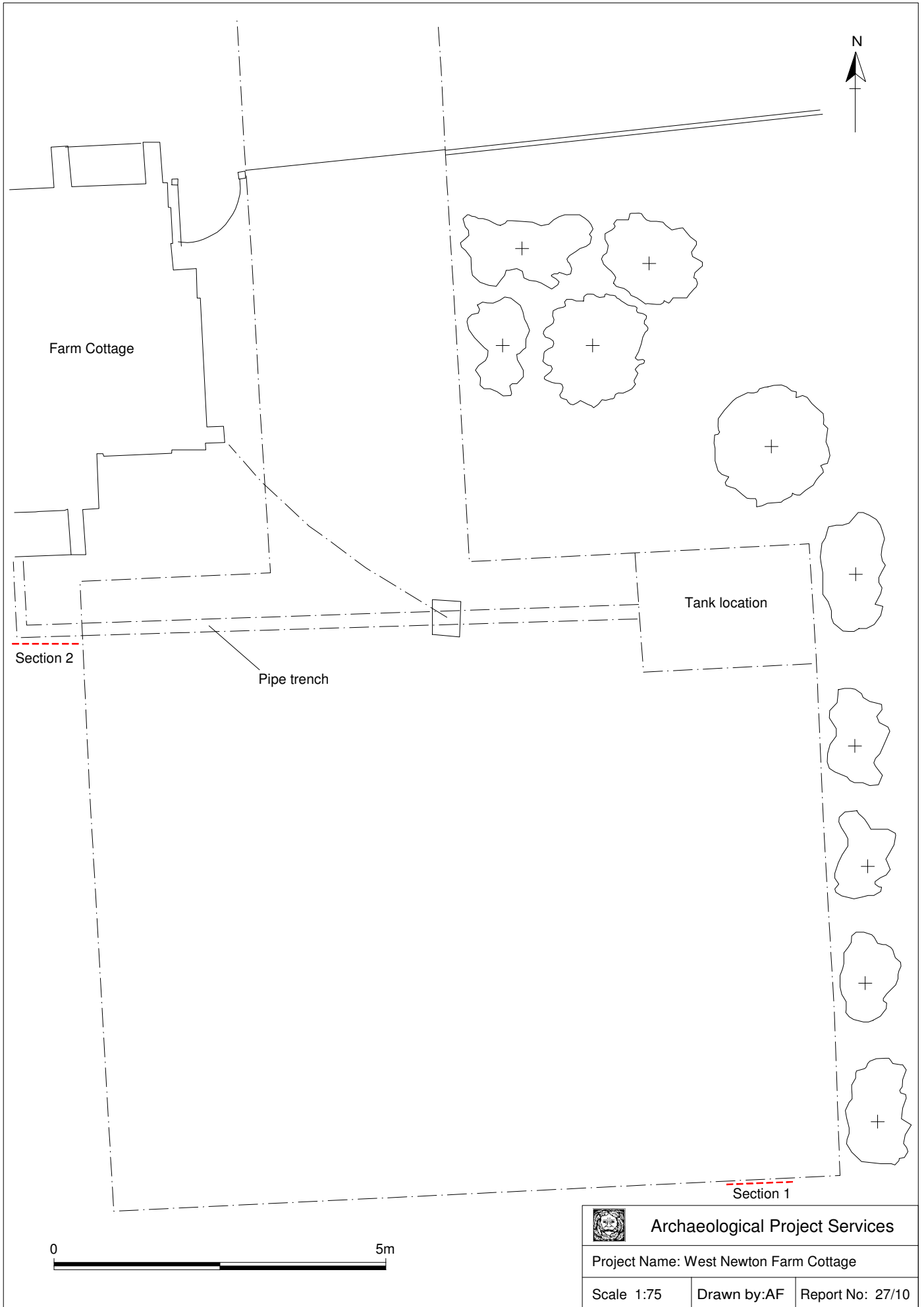
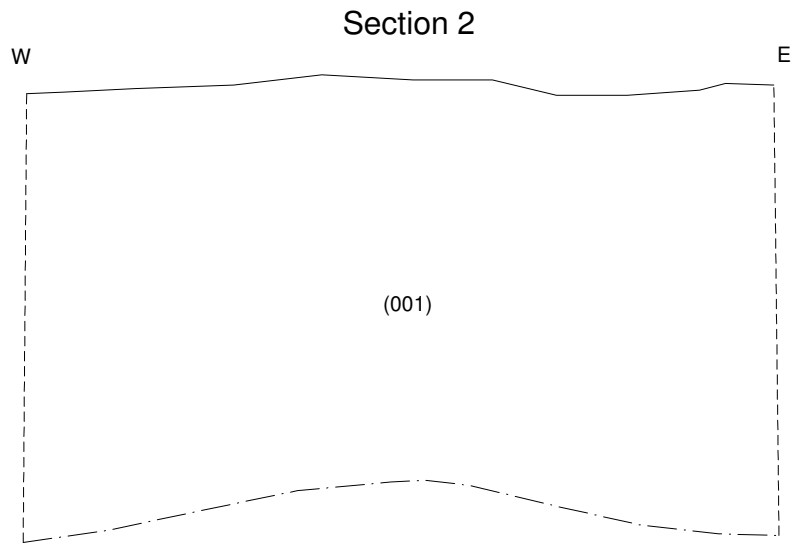
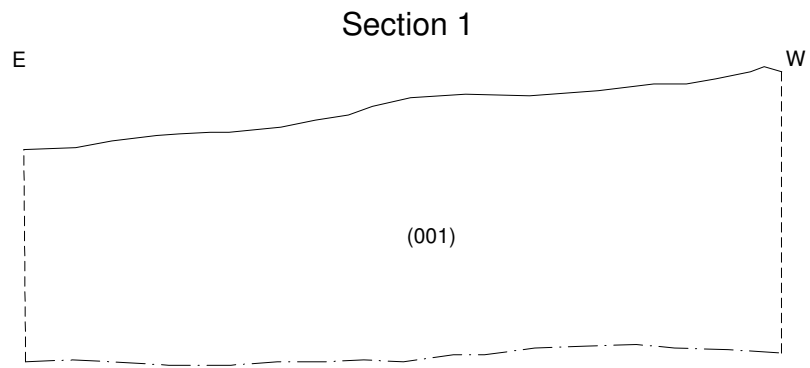


Figure 4 - Area of excavation and Section locations




 Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: West Newton Farm Cottage		
Scale 1:10	Drawn by:AF	Report No: 27/10

Figure 5 - Sections 1 and 2



Plate 1 – General view looking south



Plate 2 – General view of excavated area looking south



Plate 3 – Section 1



Plate 4 – View of pipe trench, looking east



Plate 5 – Section 2

Appendix 1

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Friable dark brown sandy silt with frequent bramble roots and a moderate amount of brick and CBM fragments, at least 0.30m thick	Topsoil

Appendix 2

THE FINDS**POST ROMAN POTTERY***By Anne Boyle and Ross Kendall***Introduction**

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski *et al.* (2001). The pottery codenames (Cname) are in accordance with the Post Roman pottery type series for Lincolnshire, as published in Young *et al.* (2005) which also covers surrounding counties. A total of one sherd from one vessel, weighing 499 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Sherds were counted and weighed by individual vessel within each context. The pottery was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the pottery is included in Table 1.

Condition

The sherd is in fairly fresh condition although heavily worn glaze on the inner-surface of the vessel indicates use.

Results*Table 1, Post Roman Pottery Archive*

Cxt	Cname	Full Name	Form	NoS	NoV	W (g)	Part	Comment	Date
001	BL	Blackware	Pancheon	1	1	499	Rim	Abraded inner glaze; discarded	Mid 17th-18th

Provenance

The sherd was recovered from topsoil deposit (001).

Potential

The disturbed nature of the topsoil limits the potential of this pottery. No further analysis is required and the sherd is suitable for discard.

Summary

The watching brief yielded a single sherd of 17th to 18th century Blackware from the topsoil.

FAUNAL REMAINS*By Paul Cope-Faulkner***Introduction**

A single fragment of animal bone was retrieved from (001).

Condition

The overall condition of the bone was good.

Results*Table #, Fragments Identified to Taxa*

Cxt	Taxon	Element	Side	Number	W (g)	Comments
001	cattle	metatarsus		1	126	

Summary

As a single bone, it is of limited potential and could be discarded.

SPOT DATING

The dating in Table 3 is based on the evidence provided by the finds detailed above.

Table 3, Spot dates

Cxt	Date	Comments
001	Mid 17th to 18th	Date on a single sherd

ABBREVIATIONS

CXT	Context
NoS	Number of sherds
NoV	Number of vessels
W (g)	Weight (grams)

REFERENCES

- Slowikowski, A. M., Nenk, B., and Pearce, J., 2001, *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2
- Young, J., Vince, A.G. and Nailor, V., 2005, *A Corpus of Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln* (Oxford)

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Carucate	A unit of land, originally based on the amount that could be ploughed annually by a team of eight oxen. Generally taken to be about 120 acres.
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].
Cut	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Fill	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
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.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

1	Context record
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Section record sheet
1	Plan record sheet
1	Daily record sheet
1	Sheets of scale drawings

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:

Norfolk Museums Service
Union House
Gressenhall
Dereham
Norfolk
NR20 4DR

Norfolk Historic Environment Record Site Code: NHER53867

OASIS Project Identity Code: archaeo11-75695

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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