

**Report on an Archaeological Watching
Brief at 'Land off Holt Road, Field Dalling,
Norfolk'**

ENF127736

Prepared for:
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on behalf of

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at 'Land off Holt Road, Field Dalling, Norfolk' (NHER ENF127736) 2011/12 during excavations associated with the construction of new housing. No remains of archaeological significance were present.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 An Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out during groundworks at 'Land off Holt Road, Field Dalling, Norfolk' (Grid refs. TG 0095 3899, centred at) and was requested by the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (James Albone, verbal).
- 1.2 Norfolk Historic & Environment Record ENF127736; OASIS ID: chrisbir1-132835.
- 1.3 This report, CB267R, details how Chris Birks undertook these works and summarises the results.

2.0 Project Background

- 2.1 A proposal for the construction of a new housing development was received subject to a condition for a Programme of Archaeological work. An Archaeological Watching Brief (constant attendance) was required to determine the presence/absence, date, extent, state of preservation and significance of any archaeological layers or subsoil archaeological features.
- 2.2 This archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a verbal instruction issued by the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service and a generic Project Design for Watching Briefs by Chris Birks (Birks 2004). Full details of research aims, methodology and standards are provided in the Project Design.
- 2.3 The site archive will be held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, in accordance with the relevant policy on archiving standards. An OASIS record has been raised – reference number chrisbir1-132835.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 A number of entries exist in the Norfolk Historic and Environment Record (NHER) for Field Dalling and the surrounding area and those within the immediate vicinity of the site are described in this report. Full details of these and all other entries can be seen at the NHER office based at Gressenhall, near Dereham, by prior appointment.
- 3.2 Fieldwalking of the development area in 1996 (NHER 32752) recovered 2 prehistoric flint flakes, sherds of Iron Age, Roman, Late Saxon, medieval and Post-medieval pottery and a Post-medieval tobacco pipe stem. Fieldwalking to the south of the development site since 1986 (NHER 24571) has recovered a wide variety of finds including over 1100 prehistoric flint artefacts, a possible Late Saxon finger ring, a medieval jetton and an undated lava quern. Sherds of Iron Age, Roman, Middle Saxon, Late Saxon, medieval and Post-medieval pottery have also been recovered. Sherds of medieval and Post-medieval pottery were recovered between 1987 and 1996 (NHER 24724). Fieldwalking to the northwest of the development site and north of Holt Road during 1995 (NHER 31537) recovered sherds of Iron Age, Middle Saxon, Late Saxon, medieval and Post-medieval pottery.
- 3.3 An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching (NHER 126075) was carried out on this site in March 2011. Pits and ditches dated to the medieval period (14th century) were identified.

- 3.4 The following is based on the Parish Summary by David Robertson (2005), relevant to Field Dalling, reproduced from the online record at <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/>.
- 3.4.1 A considerable amount of fieldwalking and metal detecting has been carried out. This has provided a large and valuable amount of information about past activities. However, most work has concentrated on the areas around the two villages (of Field Dalling and Saxlingham). This means that there is a high concentration of findspots in two sections, with very few sites recorded in the far west, south centre and east. As a result, the arrangement of sites reflects archaeological investigation more than past behaviour. Nonetheless, the intensive fieldwalking and metal detecting does mean that a lot can be said about the archaeology of Field Dalling.
- 3.4.2 A large number of prehistoric flint artefacts have been found. Unfortunately many of these cannot be more closely dated than to the 'prehistoric period' in general. The artefacts include blades, scrapers, flakes and knives. One site (NHER 24571, above) close to Field Dalling village has produced over 1100 flint artefacts, whilst others have produced several hundred. Two prehistoric stone querns and the sites of five possible prehistoric burnt mounds have also been discovered. One of the possible burnt mounds (NHER 21489) survives as an earthwork about 0.5m high.
- 3.4.3 Some of the prehistoric flint artefacts can be dated more securely than to the 'prehistoric period'. A few of these are Mesolithic and include a Late Mesolithic microlith (NHER 25945) found to the west of Field Dalling village. More Neolithic objects are known and include at least seven polished axeheads, five flaked axeheads, an arrowhead and a laurel leaf tool. Two flint knives (from different sites) are either Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age in date.
- 3.4.4 Until it was destroyed in 1979, a Bronze Age barrow (NHER 3203) stood close to the B1156 in the south east of the parish. No artefacts or features were found during its destruction. One or two ring ditches are visible as cropmarks on aerial photographs of the area south of Field Dalling village. They could be the remains of Bronze Age barrows and a Late Bronze Age copper alloy socketed spearhead (NHER 21317) has been collected close by. An Iron Age terret has been found to the north of Saxlingham village, while a Iron Age bracelet has been recovered to the east of Field Dalling village. Iron Age pottery has been found at fifteen sites.
- 3.4.5 Roman artefacts have been found at forty one sites. Pottery, tiles and metalwork (including over 100 coins) collected at one of the Iron Age pottery findspots suggest that there was a settlement (NHER 21317) on the site during the Roman period. While this possible Roman settlement is located in the southwest, a second possible settlement (NHER 25251) is situated in the northwest. Roman brooches, over 100 coins (including about ten coins fused together) and a large amount of pottery have been found at this site. At a location between the two possible settlements material that may have come from a kiln (NHER 25945) has been found. This suggests that there was industrial activity during the Roman period.
- 3.4.6 Early Saxon objects have been found at fifteen sites. Early Saxon pottery, brooches and a wrist clasp recovered on the southern Roman settlement (NHER 21317) indicate that occupation may have continued beyond the end of the Roman period. The same may have been true at the northern settlement. Early Saxon metalwork (NHER 31558), including a buckle, a brooch and part of a sword belt, has been discovered close by, suggesting settlement and burial in the vicinity during the Early Saxon period.

- 3.4.7 The discovery of large amounts of Middle and Late Saxon pottery (NHER 25699) close to Field Dalling village suggests that there was a settlement near to or on the site of the modern village during these periods. Middle Saxon pottery has been found at fourteen sites, with Late Saxon pottery collected from twenty four (including the possible settlement site). Middle to Late Saxon metal objects found include strap fittings and three 10th century brooches.
- 3.4.8 Field Dalling is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 as 'Dallinga'. This is an Old English place name meaning 'Place of Dalla's people'. In 1272 the name 'Fildedalling' was used, with the word 'filden' (meaning 'open country') having been attached. In 1086 the vill was held by King William I, Count Alan, Roger Bigot and Robert of Verly. The King's land was an outlier from estates at Holt.
- 3.4.9 St Andrew's Church (NHER 3192) is located in Field Dalling village. It is a medieval church with 19th and 20th century restorations and there is a stone cross in the churchyard. Close by two medieval moated sites survive as earthworks. In the south of the modern settlement is a moat (NHER 3199). In the west are a moat, a hollow way and possible fishponds (NHER 11338 and 31536).
- 3.4.10 Post-medieval buildings in Field Dalling village include Manor Farm, Church Farm, Tudor Cottage, Crossways, The Old School House and Mountgrace Manor. The Hall (NHER 43973) was built in 1906 by Edward Boardman. Two windmills once stood to the north of the settlement. One appears on a map of 1797, whilst the other was built in 1837 and demolished in the 1890s. A third windmill stood to the east of the village and is marked on a map dating to 1826. To the northwest is the site of a late 19th or early 20th century floated water meadow (NHER 31890). During World War Two, two spigot mortar emplacements (NHER 24569) were constructed close to Manor Farm.

4.0 Geology and Topography

- 4.1 The parish of Field Dalling lies upon a solid geology of Upper Chalk (Funnell 2005) with overlying glacial sands and gravels (Funnell 1994). The British Geological Survey mapping describes the underlying geology as Lowestoft Formation of Diamicton sand which is situated above chalk bedrock.
- 4.2 The soil landscape of Field Dalling borders on the Central Norfolk Claylands and North Norfolk Heathlands (Williamson 2005).
- 4.3 The site lies to the south of Holt Road on the eastern side of Field Dalling village on reasonably level ground at an elevation of c. 50m OD.

5.0 Observations

- 5.1 Monitoring was carried between 04 October 2011 and 23 January 2012 during excavations associated with the new housing development (*Fig. 2*).
- 5.2 Site conditions were good and access was gained from Holt Road to the north of the site. The weather was mostly dry with occasional rain showers.
- 5.3 All deposits, exposed surfaces and spoil arising were scanned with a metal detector. No context numbers were allocated during the course of the work due to the lack of archaeological remains.
- 5.4 Foundation trenches for the housing blocks (*Fig. 2*) measured c. 0.43m wide and were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.6m from present ground level. Initially, c. 0.3m of dark grey sandy silt topsoil was removed that overlay c. 0.2m of light brown silty sand subsoil. Subsoil overlay yellowish coarse sand undisturbed 'natural' deposits. No archaeological remains were identified.

- 5.5 Trenches towards the west and east sides of the site were excavated to provide rain water soakaways for the development (*Fig. 2*). They measured c. 36m and c. 47m long by 1m wide and were excavated to a depth of c. 1m from present ground level. Initially, c. 0.3m of dark grey sandy silt topsoil was removed that overlay c. 0.2m of light brown silty sand subsoil. Subsoil overlay yellowish coarse sand undisturbed 'natural' deposits. No archaeological remains were identified.
- 5.6 A trench for mains services was excavated from the north edge of the development site to the south side of Holt Road (*Fig. 2*). It measured c. 31m long by 0.3m wide and was excavated to a depth of c. 0.6m from present ground level removing disturbed modern deposits only as this area had previously been excavated for services to properties immediately east of this location. No archaeological remains were identified.

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation in 2011 identified pits and ditches dated to the medieval period (14th century). Despite the potential for archaeological remains to have been present on this site, none were encountered. The exact reasons for this are unknown – it may have been that any archaeological remains simply existed outside of the excavated areas
- 6.2 The results of the evaluation were interpreted to represent 'backyard' activity typical at the rear of a medieval tenement and there seemed to be a recurring land division present in the ditches and quarry pits (Crawley 2011). A large ditch orientated east-west probably represented a medieval field boundary which may have marked a change from the tenements closer to Holt Road and agricultural land further south (Crawley 2011).

Acknowledgments

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Appendix 1 OASIS Record

OASIS ID: [chrisbir1-132835](#)

Project details

Project name	Field Dalling
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring was carried out during groundworks associated with a new housing development. No archaeological finds, feature or deposits were present.
Project dates	Start: 04-10-2011 End: 23-01-2012
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ENF127736 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK NORTH NORFOLK FIELD DALLING Land off Holt Road, Field Dalling, Norfolk
Study area	4800.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TG 0095 3899 52 0 52 54 37 N 000 59 19 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 49.00m Max: 50.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Chris Birks
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Chris Birks
Project director/manager	Chris Birks
Project supervisor	Chris Birks
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums Service
Paper Archive ID	ENF127736
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Plan","Report","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief at 'Land off Holt Road, Field Dalling, Norfolk'
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Birks, C.
Other bibliographic details	Report Number CB267R
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	Chris Birks
Place of issue or publication	Contractor's Report
Description	Bound A4 single-side printed report with text, site location plan and site plan drawing.
Entered by	Chris Birks (chris@chrisbirksarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	26 August 2012

OASIS:

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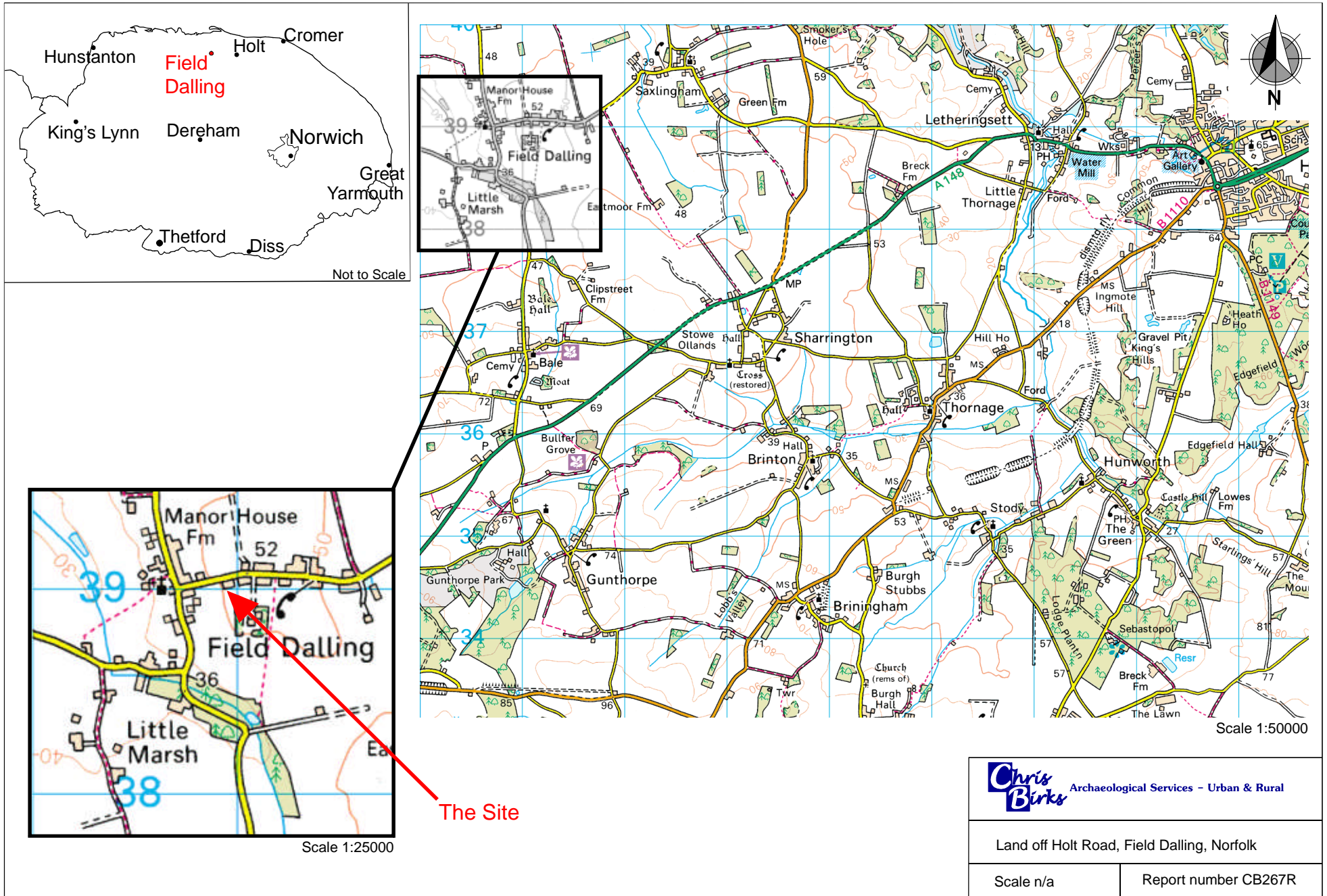
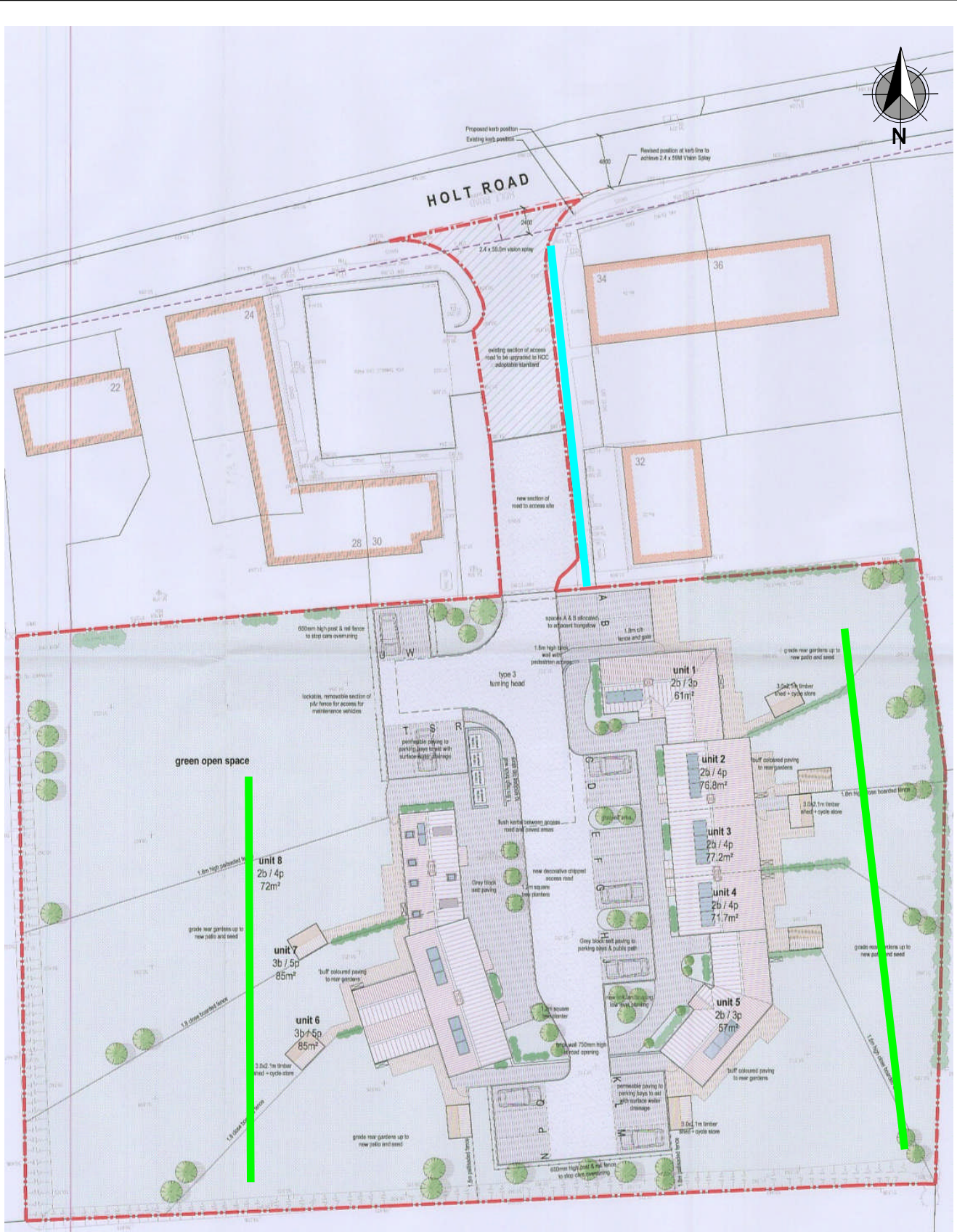


Figure 1. Site location



- Location of service trench
- Location of soakaway trenches

Locations are approximate

Chris Birks Archaeological Services - Urban & Rural

Land off Holt Road, Field Dalling, Norfolk

Scale 1:500 Report Number CB267R

Figure 2. Site plan