ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

THE OLD RANCH
LOW ROAD
HOLBEACH HURN
LINCOLNSHIRE

PREPARED FOR
Mrs P. Butler
By

Parker Heritage

DRAFT



August 2025
APS Report No: 34/25

Accession Number; LCNCC:2025.19

Planning Reference: H09-0130-24

National Grid Reference: TF 39330 26988

OASIS ID: archaeol1-536266

REGISTERED ORGANISATION CIfA

The Old School, Cameron St, Heckington, Sleaford, Lincs NG34 9RW

T: 01529 461618 **F:** 01529 469444
E: info@apsarchaeology.co.uk **W:** www.apsarchaeology.co.uk

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1. SUMMARY

A programme of historic building recording was required prior to the conversion of an outbuilding for family use at The Old Ranch, Low Road, Holbeach Hurn, Spalding, Lincolnshire. The building is an ancillary building, a former stable and part of a disused farmstead in a regular courtyard plan as indicated on historic mapping.

Examination of the building revealed it to be a mid - 20th century structure, built on the footprint of a previous building shown on the historic mapping. Very scant remains of the original building were present in some elements of the floor.

The building was surveyed externally and internally and plans and elevations were checked and measured on site, alterations and additions to these are reproduced as Figure 4.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of Archaeological Building Recording

Building recording is defined as: *'a programme of work intended to establish the character, history, dating, form and archaeological development of a specified building, structure, or complex and its setting, including its buried components on land or under water.'*[1]

2.2 Planning Background

Planning permission (H09-0130-24) has been granted for the conversion of this building as an annexe for family use. Permission was granted on the provision that archaeological mitigation comprising but not necessarily limited to a programme of Historic Building Recording, which should be undertaken prior to any alterations work taking place. The recommendation was that the building recording should be of a Historic England Level 3 standard in accordance with Historic England's document 'Understanding Historic Buildings: A Guide to Good Recording Practice'. The work was to be undertaken in accordance with an approved written scheme of investigation. The survey was undertaken on 15th August 2025

2.3 Site Location

Holbeach Hurn is located in the civil parish of Holbeach approximately 15km east of Spalding and 18km south of Boston in the South Holland district of Lincolnshire. The brick and slate building forms part of a disused farmyard located to the rear of existing residential properties situated off Marsh Road. Vehicular access is off Low Road. The building is located at National Grid Reference TF 39330 26988.

3. AIMS

In accordance with the written scheme of investigation, the aims of the work were to provide a record of the standing historic building on the site prior to its conversion conforming to the requirements of a Historic England Level 3 survey and in accordance with CIFA *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings and structures* (2019).

4. METHODS

Recording of the building was undertaken in accordance with Historic England guidelines 2016 and

[1] ClfA 2019

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ALGAO guidelines 1997.

The recording of the building included:

- A photographic survey showing the building in its context, general and detailed views of the exterior, interior views of the principal rooms and circulation areas and structural or decorative details.

- Dimensioned plans and elevations of the building as existing, which incorporate details of the form and location of any structural or decorative features of historic interest; supplemented by

- A written record providing an account of the building's location, type, materials and possible dates.

Photographic recording was undertaken with a digital camera. An index of the photographs was compiled on an annotated register. The photographic record comprises high-quality digital uninterpolated images taken with a Canon Eos 2000D with a resolution of 24.1 megapixels taken and an APS-C or larger sensor. Digital photographs intended for archive purposes comply with best practice available at the current time – i.e. high quality non-proprietary raw files (DNG) and TIFF images.



Plate 1. General view of the southwest elevation, looking northeast

5. HISTORICAL EVIDENCE

The place name Holbeach Hurn appears to be Anglo-Saxon in origin. Holbeach is interpreted variously as meaning 'hole' or 'hollow place' and Hurn appears to mean a corner of land. The village name may mean an island or peninsula (Cameron 1998).

The site is the remnant of a range of outbuildings forming a regular courtyard plan farmstead detached from its farmhouse and is included within the HER description for Vinery Cottage (MLI123377). The building to be altered is slightly detached and to the north from the rest of the buildings and is in the form of a stable. On the Ordnance Survey map of 1903, it can be seen as a stand-alone building, but by 1931 it has been extended to the north with the addition of an open fronted structure. By 1973 the open fronted structure has been extended further to the west.

Analysis of the building showed it to be a mid – 20th century structure, which local knowledge has indicated was constructed to replace a pre-existing piggery on the same footprint as the current building. A former owner remembers this taking place during their early childhood in the mid – 20th

century. All materials forming the main structure are 20th century in origin.

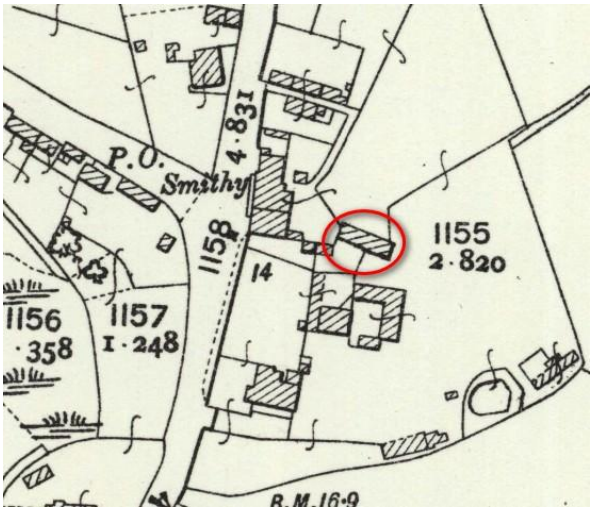


Fig. 1a. Extract from the 2nd edition 1903 Ordnance Survey 25" map

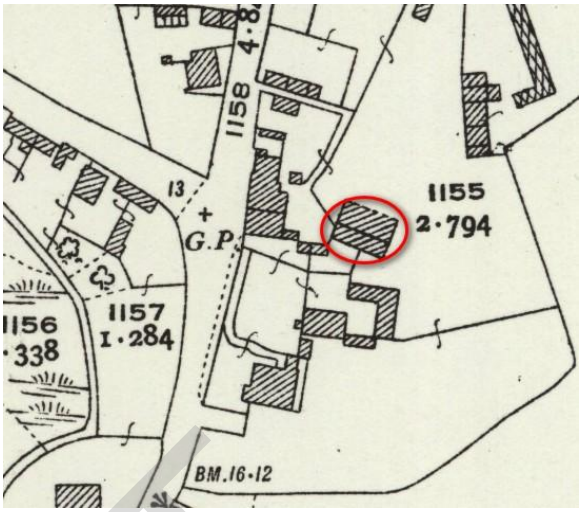


Fig. 1b. Extract from the 1931 Ordnance Survey 25" map

6. FABRIC EVIDENCE (Figs. 4 & 5)

The building will be described externally by elevation and internally. It has recently but not exclusively been used as a stable. Constructed from mid – 20th century machine – made brick laid in English Garden Wall bond [2], the building is a single storey aligned roughly northwest – southeast. The roof is slate with mismatched ridge tiles. Internally it is divided into two rooms each with its own access.

The main, working frontage is the southwest elevation.



The current layout at the southeast corner, is a stable door giving access to the southeast room with a window to the northwest. The bricks around the window indicate that this was once an infilled wider aperture into which the window was a later addition.

Plate 2. Door and window at the southeast end of the southwest elevation.

On the southeast side of the door are half header bricks called Queen Closers indicating the original

[2] Three courses of bricks laid long end on (stretcher) to one course laid short end on (header).

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extent of the door in this direction. Above the door and the window in the brick infill and extending further to the northwest along the elevation is an iron rail that would have held a sliding door. This and the infilled doorway suggest a possible prior use for this room as a machinery shed or garage.



The window to the northwest of the door is a three over three metal casement window with the top opening inwards.

To the southeast of the door is the remnants of a painted sign giving instructions as to what to do in case of fire in the yard. It was not possible to make out the complete wording of the sign.

Plate 3. The hand painted fire awareness sign on the southeast elevation.

The remaining apertures in the southeast elevation relate to the northwest room, the larger of the two internal spaces. The apertures comprise a window, an extant door, a blocked door with window and a partially blocked window.

The configuration of the apertures indicates that this part of the building served as two stables.



The current access to the northwest room is via a stable door to the southeast of which is a casement window. The southeast four over four panel is hinged to open from the centre, while the upper four panels on the northwest side open from the top. This is a "found" rather than purpose made stable window.

Plate 4. Window and stable door entrance to the northwest room

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Plate 5 (above). Blocked window aperture with smaller window inserted, northwest end of the southeast elevation

Plate 6 (left). Blocked former stable door with window inserted in the southeast elevation

At the northwest end of the southeast elevation are the remains of the former entrance and window to the second stable. Originally these would have mirrored those apertures to the south but now comprise a doorway blocked with brick laid as stretchers with a four over four casement window inserted above and a partially blocked window aperture with a much narrower casement inserted.



Plate 7
The northeast elevation in a state of collapse

The northeast elevation is featureless apart from a single window aperture that serves the southeast room of the building. This wooden slatted window is more of a traditional stable widow, designed to allow ventilation. The scars of a since removed post barn as seen on historic mapping are present and the removal appears to have caused the instability resulting in the slippage to the roof tiles. Lead "tingles" are present where repairs have been made to the tiles.

The southeast elevation of the stable is featureless apart from the collapse of the northeast corner of this elevation, also due to the removal of the post barn.

Included as an example in the plates below is the 19th century gable end of another heavily altered building to the south of the stable. Here the difference between the handmade 19th century bricks

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and the machine-made 20th century brick of the stable can be seen.



Plate 8. The southeast elevation of the stable



Plate 9. 19th century handmade brick in a building adjacent to the stable

Internally, the southeastern of the two rooms is the smaller. Accessed by the door placed in the infilled larger aperture, it is divided by a brick and iron/steel bar stall separator.



The lower part of the walls, all made of 20th century brick have been painted black with white above to emulate the traditional bitumen below limewash that was designed to keep flies under control. The rear stable window is in the northwest corner of the room.

Plate 10. Internal view of the southeast room, looking northwest



The stalls are not divided evenly; the stall to the southeast is the larger of the two. The divider lines up centrally to the door to allow even separation of the animals. The door can be seen to be part of the previous larger opening suggesting the stall divider is a later addition.

Plate 11. The southeastern room, looking southwest



The floor of the southeastern room is, for the most part concrete, although in the northwest stall as currently divided are the scant remains of some 19th century bricks used as pavers. These appear to be all that remains of the original piggery that occupied the footprint of the current building. The southeast stall has a floor of poured modern concrete.

Plate 12. The remains of the original piggery floor in the southeastern room



The timbers of the roof in the southeastern room of the stable are indicative of the roof timbers throughout. All are machine – sawn and modern. There is no roofing felt with the slates hung directly onto the battens.

Plate 13. The machine sawn timbers of the roof



The northwest room of the stable block is divided into three stalls, none of which relate to its original construction as a stable.

The northwest stall is separated from the others by a concrete block divide which, at its southeast end buts against what was the original stable doorway's brick infill with a gap to allow animals, probably pigs into this stall.

Plate 14. Concrete block divide butting against an infilled doorway in the northwest room



The central stall is small by comparison to the others and divided on its northwest side by a brick structure similar to that in the southeast room. The purpose of this is unclear although it is likely to serve as some means of separating livestock.

Plate 15. The central stall in the northwest room



The northwest stall in the room, as with the rest of the internal walls has the black and white paintwork as seen in the southeastern room.

The presence of horse blankets indicate it has at least been partially used as a stable.

Plate 16. Horse blankets over the stall divide in the northwest room



An unusual feature within the northwest room is the partial blocking of the northwest window in the southwest wall. The original stable window may have either been fully blocked and then the smaller window inserted later, or simply made smaller. Neither the sequence or reason is clear.

Plate 17. Partially blocked northwest window in the northwest room



Within the northwest stall, on the concrete floor can be seen the scar of what was previously an earlier division of the space that may relate to its original construction as a stable. This scarring is present within a mid-20th century, poured concrete floor.

Plate 18. The scar of a previous stall division in the northwest stall of the northwest room

7. DISCUSSION

As seen from the historical evidence, provided mainly from historic mapping of the area, the recorded building lies within what was once a regular courtyard plan farmstead and is included within the HER description for Vinery Cottage (MLI123377). It is notable that the 1903 map shows a smithy to the east of the site as local knowledge indicates that throughout the 20th century the site was at least partially used for the breeding of heavy horses. It should also be noted that a smithy does not necessarily represent a farrier, dedicated to the shoeing of horses, although there is a potential connection with the two trades.

The mapping, and the partially extant 19th century handmade brick within an adjacent building indicate a full working farmstead that would have encompassed cattle, pigs and crops, although throughout the 20th century considerable changes and losses within this site have occurred.

The fabric evidence shows that, although it occupies the footprint of a building depicted on historic mapping, the current building is of mid-20th century construction. The fabric evidence also shows that it has undergone some considerable changes since it was built.

Local knowledge has indicated that the building on the historic maps was a piggery, but it is not certain that this was the original purpose of that 19th century building as uses can change frequently within farmsteads. This is further indicated by the current building.

It is said to have been built as a stable, and this is at least partly the case as can be seen from the original configuration of the apertures in the northwest part of the southeast elevation. Here we have what would have been a traditional layout for a double stable, each with its own entrance and window. This did not remain the case for long as the northwest entrance was bricked up in favour of the current window arrangement and the smaller window fitted within the bricked-up opening of the northwest window.

None of the windows in this northwest room conform to traditional stable windows, this can only be found in the rear wall of the southeast room. Instead, they are all mismatched casement windows and may all be later additions. It is probable, looking at the type of divisions within the room, and also the lack of any evidence of feed troughs, mangers or hayracks, that this was given back over to pigs quite soon after it was built. The later concrete division that butts against the infilled door

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aperture, and the brick dividing wall each have an entrance that appears awkward to turn a horse in but would correspond to the size and height of pigs.

The original purpose of the southeast room can also be surmised as being something other than that of a stable. The wide aperture which has been infilled to provide the current entrance is suggestive of either farm machinery, vehicles, or both. Another indicator is the fire warning sign on the outer wall which may suggest that fuel was kept in there. This would again indicate that the brick structure dividing the stalls is a later addition as this part was given back over to animal sheltering.

8. CONCLUSION

Historic building recording has been undertaken on a farm building at The Old Ranch, Holbeach Hurn, Lincolnshire. Although the building has been shown to be of mid-20th century date, it still provides important information on the changing use of farmsteads and the buildings within them, This building shows the expedience of demolition of an obsolete building and its replacement, which in this case rapidly changed in its usage from what was originally intended when it was constructed. It is a very good indicator of how a 19th century mixed farmstead has been changed and adapted throughout the 20th century as the needs of the owners changed. As a historical record, this understanding is valuable, and although it does not contribute specifically to local research agendas, it still contributes to the understanding of local changes within this area of rural Lincolnshire.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to thank Patricia Butler who commissioned the work. The project was coordinated and undertaken by Neil Parker of Parker Heritage on behalf of Archaeological Project Services. The report was edited by Jenny Sanderson and Paul Cope-Faulkner.

10. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Neil Parker
Building Recording: Neil Parker
Photographic reproduction: Neil Parker
CAD Illustration: Neil Parker
Analysis: Neil Parker

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Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands

Ordnance Survey 1903 *Lincolnshire Sheet CXXXV.8, 25"*

Ordnance Survey 1931 *Lincolnshire Sheet CXXXV.8, 25"*

Ordnance Survey 1974 TF*3827-TF3927 - AA*

12. ABBREVIATIONS

AOD Above Ordnance Datum

CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

OS Ordnance Survey

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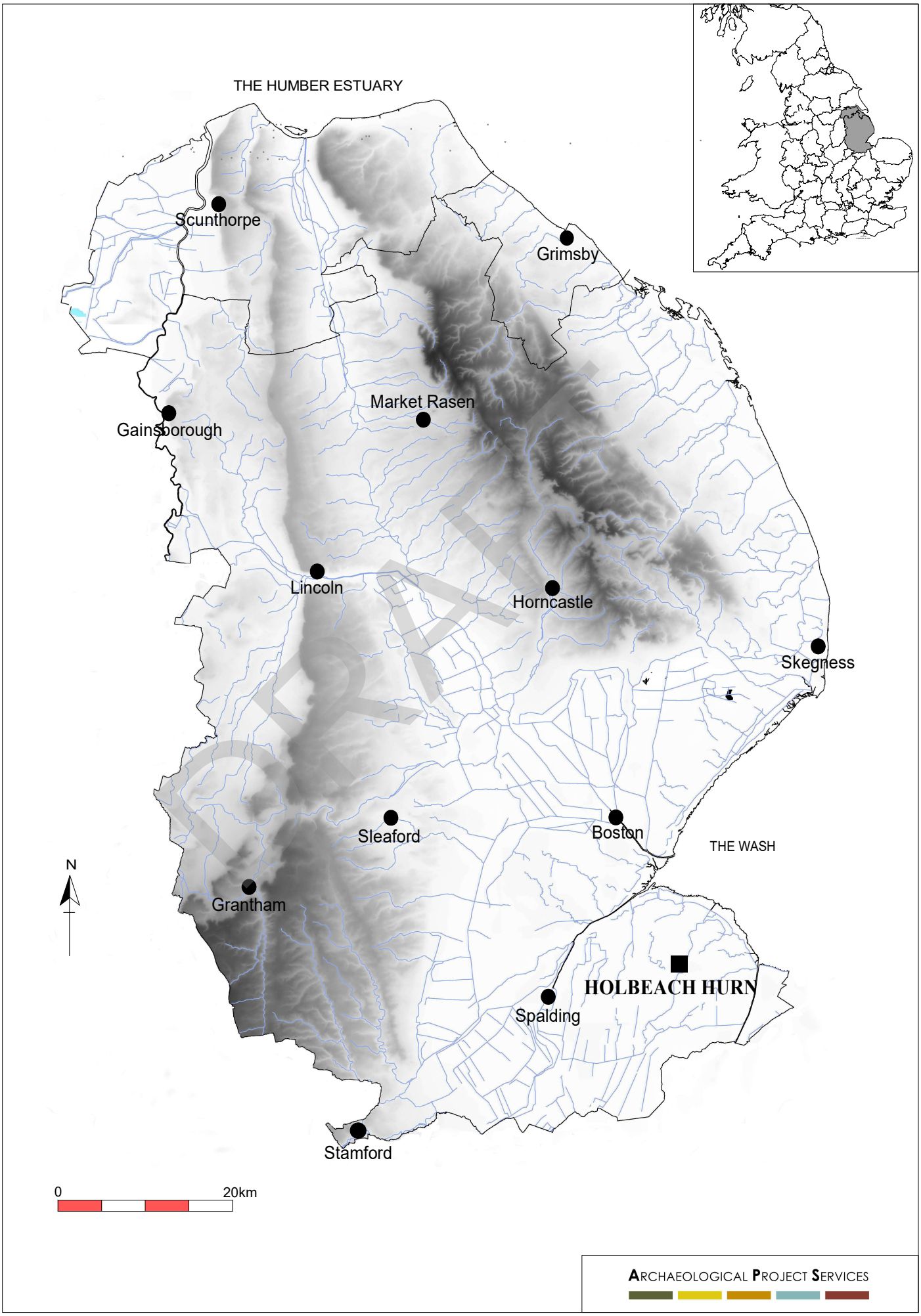
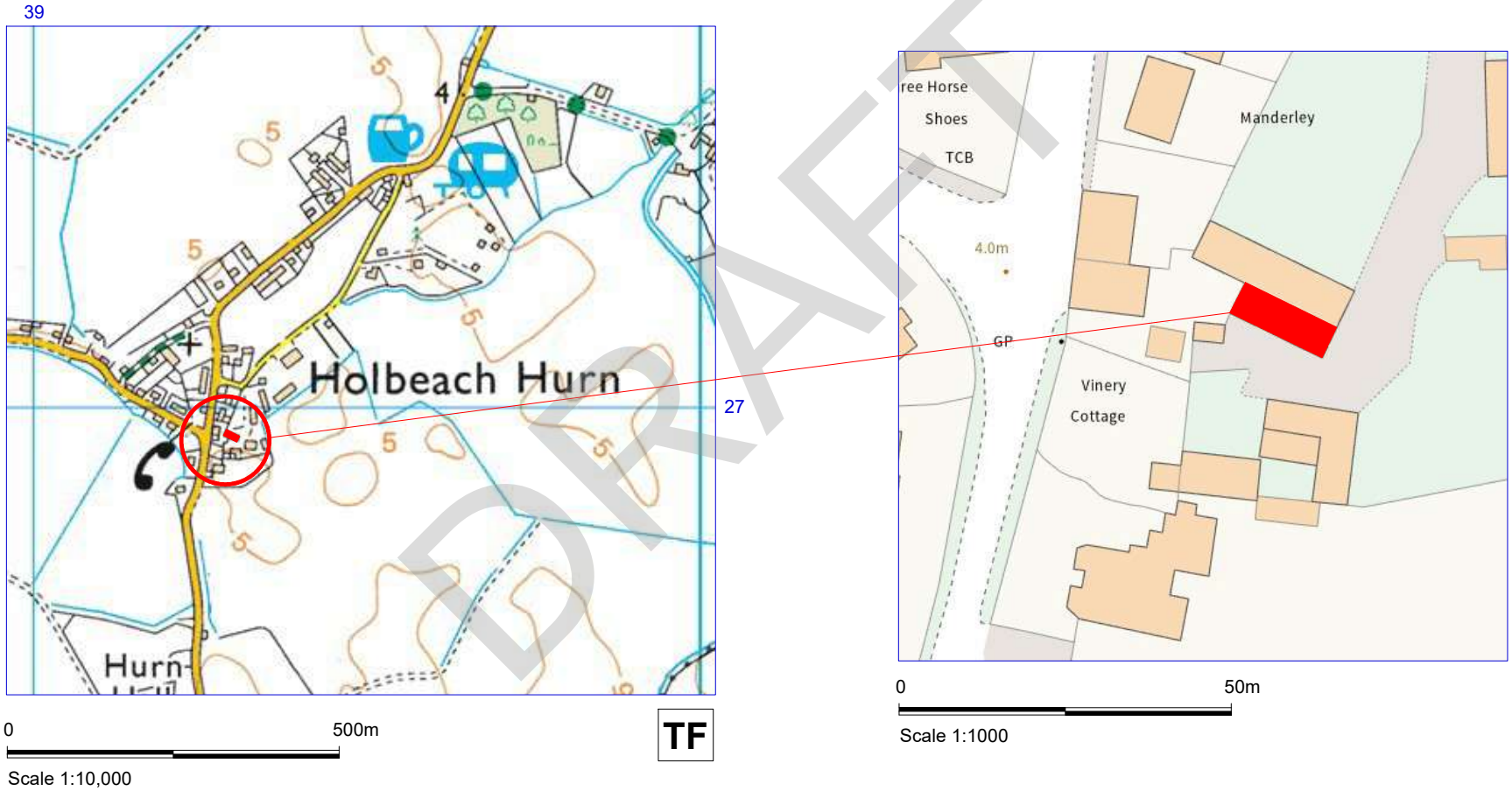


Figure 2. General location plan



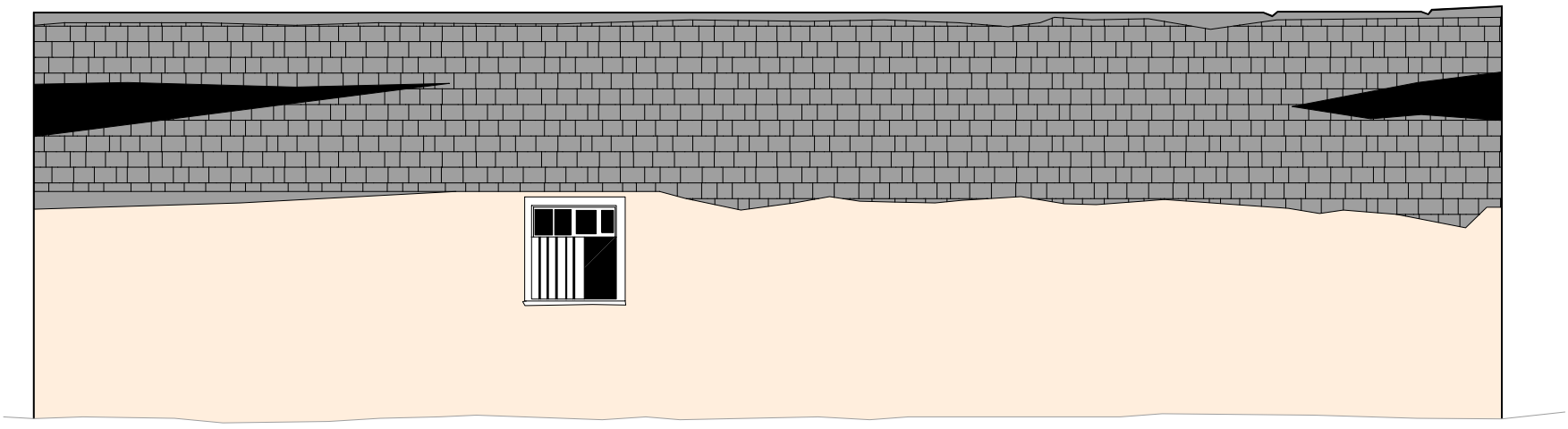
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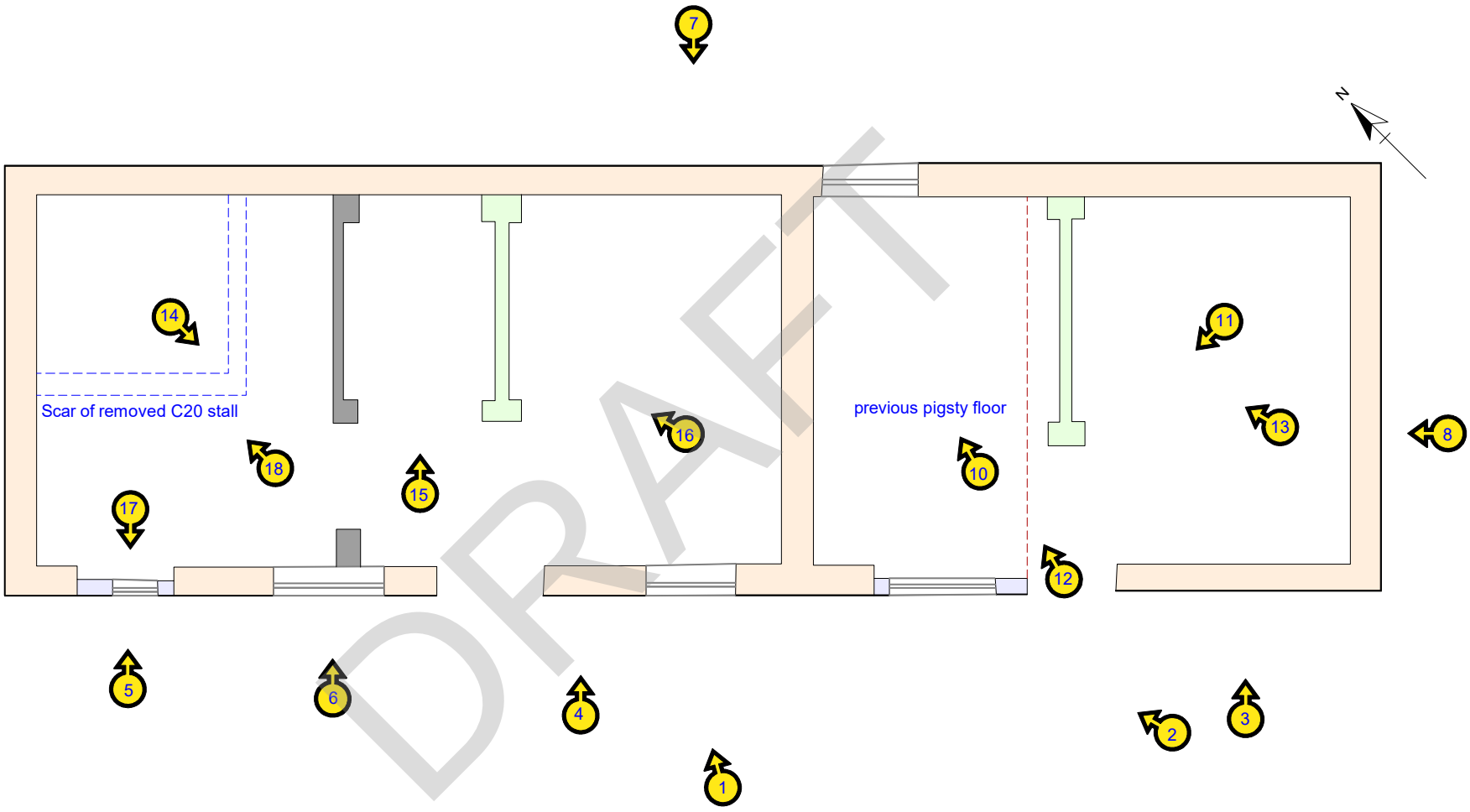
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Project Name: Holbeach Hurn, Low Road		
Scale various	Drawn by: NP	Report No: 34/25

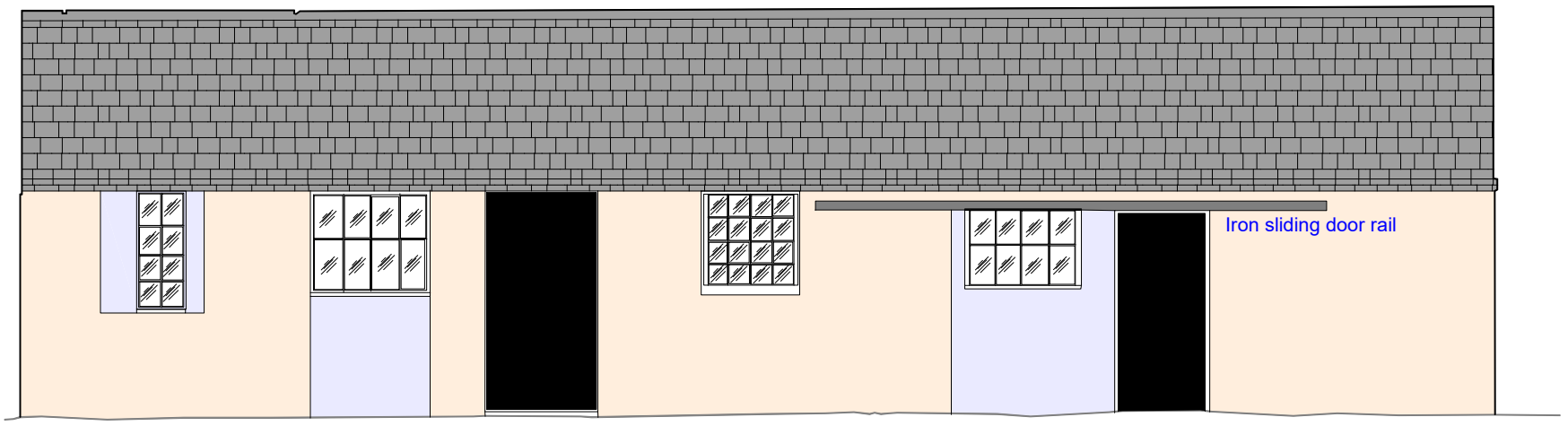
Figure 3. Site location

Northeast Eelevation





Southwest elevation



C20 main phase

Later infill

Brick stall divide

Breeze stall divide

Camera viewpoint

2.5 0 5 metres

5 0 15 feet

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

Project Name: Holbeach Hurn, Low Road

Scale 1:75 | Drawn by: NP | Report No: 34/25

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Figure 6. Plan and elevations with plate locations

Appendix 1

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

1 Daily record sheet

2 Photographic record sheets

3 Annotated field drawings

All primary records and finds 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: Lincoln Museum, Danes Terrace, Lincoln. A copy of the report will be put on OASIS and the digital archive deposited with Archaeology Data Service

Accession Number	LCNCC:2025.19
Archaeological Project Services Site Code:	HHLR24
OASIS Record Number:	archaeol1- 536266

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 Summary for archaeol1-536266

OASIS ID (UID)	archaeol1-536266
Project Name	Analytical Buildings Record (level 3) at The Old Ranch, Low Road, Holbeach Hurn, Lincolnshire
Sitename	The Old Ranch, Low Road, Holbeach Hurn, Lincolnshire
Sitecode	HHLR24
Project Identifier(s)	The Old Ranch, Holbeach Hurn, Lincolnshire
Activity type	Analytical Buildings Record (level 3)
Planning Id	H09-0130-24
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Archaeological Project Services
Project Dates	15-Aug-2025 - 15-Aug-2025
Location	The Old Ranch, Low Road, Holbeach Hurn, Lincolnshire NGR : TF 39330 26988 LL : 52.82242277433007, 0.066276240196225 12 Fig : 539330,326988
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Lincolnshire Local Authority District : South Holland Parish : Holbeach
Project Methodology	Measured analytical survey, photographs and field sketches with annotated description of the building
Project Results	The mapping, and the partially extant 19th century handmade brick within an adjacent building indicate a full working farmstead that would have encompassed cattle, pigs and crops, although throughout the 20th century considerable changes and losses within this site have occurred. The fabric evidence shows that, although it occupies the footprint of a building depicted on historic mapping, the current building is of mid-20th century construction. The fabric evidence also shows that it has undergone some considerable changes since it was built. Although the building has been shown to be of mid-20th century date, it still provides important information on the changing use of farmsteads and the buildings within them, This building shows the expedience of demolition of an obsolete building and its replacement, which in this case rapidly changed in its usage from what was originally intended when it was constructed. It is a very good indicator of how a 19th century mixed farmstead has been changed and adapted throughout the 20th century as the needs of the owners changed. As a historical record, this understanding is valuable, and although it does not contribute specifically to local research agendas, it still contributes to the understanding of local changes within this area of rural Lincolnshire.
Keywords	Stable - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	Private individual
HER	Lincolnshire HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Neil Parker
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - LCNCC:2025.19
Archives	

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