ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT OF LAND AT BALMORAL WAY, HOLBEACH, LINCOLNSHIRE

Work Undertaken For
Studio 11 Architecture

January 2015

Report Compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons)

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

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1. SUMMARY

A desk-based assessment was undertaken to determine the archaeological implications of proposed development at Balmoral Way, Holbeach, Lincolnshire.

There are no prehistoric remains within the assessment area. Any such remains are likely to be buried beneath later alluvial deposits and lie at considerable depth from the ground surface.

Romano-British (AD 43-410) pottery has been found to the west of the Site, although settlements of this period lie beneath a covering of post-Roman alluvium. The pottery could have been brought to the surface by agricultural activities.

No Saxon (AD 410-1066) material has been recorded within the assessment area. However, place-name and documentary evidence indicates a Saxon precursor to the modern town and there is a possibility of contemporary sea-banks in the vicinity.

During the medieval period (AD 1066-1540), the site possibly lay within the open fields of Holbeach and maintained for agricultural purposes. There is also a possibility that the area may have been wooded as evidenced by early 19th century maps. Since then, the Site has been under an agricultural regime, although a greenhouse points to some horticultural exploitation in the later 20th century.

A site visit recorded the existence of overgrown earth bunds, dumped building materials and two dilapidated structures. These conditions would prevent non-invasive archaeological evaluation such as geophysical survey and fieldwalking.

2 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Desk-Based Assessment

An archaeological desk-based assessment is defined as an '*assessment of the known or potential archaeological resource within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. It consists of a collation of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely character, extent, quality and worth of the known or potential archaeological resource in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate*' (IfA 2008).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Studio 11 Architecture to undertake a desk-based assessment of land at Balmoral Way, Holbeach, Lincolnshire. The assessment is required in support of a planning application for residential development.

2.3 Site Location

Holbeach is situated 11km east of Spalding and 20km south of Boston, in the administrative district of South Holland District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1).

The proposed development site is located 1.34km northeast of the centre of Holbeach, as defined by the Market Place, at National Grid Reference TF 3715 2531 (Fig. 2). The site lies immediately east of Balmoral Way and north of Foxes Low Road.

2.4 Geology and Topography

Local soils are of the Wisbech Series, typically coarse silty calcareous alluvial gley soils, with coarse silty gleyic brown calcareous alluvial soils of the Romney Series in the southern part of the site (Robson 1990, 26, 36). These soils are developed upon a drift geology of younger marine alluvium which in turn seals a solid geology of Upper Jurassic Ampthill Clay mudstones (BGS 1992).

The local topography describes a generally flat area of land within the fens

of South Lincolnshire. The site lies at a height of *c*. 3m OD. The site encompasses some 1.76 hectares.

3. AIMS

The purpose of the desk-based assessment is to obtain information about the known and potential archaeological resource of the assessment area. In addition to the above, statutory and advisory heritage constraints are identified.

4. METHODS

In the following text, the term *Site* refers to the limits of the application site and the *Assessment Area* comprises an area of 1km radius from the centre of the application site.

The research undertaken in the compilation of this archaeological desk-based assessment involved the examination of all available sources relevant to the Site at Holbeach, and the immediate surrounding area. These sources consisted of:

- Historical documents, held in the Lincolnshire Archives.
- Enclosure, and other maps and plans, held in the Lincolnshire Archives
- Recent and early edition Ordnance Survey (OS) maps
- The Historic Environment Record, located at Lincolnshire County Council
- Archaeological and historical books and journals.
- Aerial photographs
- Lidar

A full list of the sources is contained within the bibliography.

This research was supplemented by a walkover survey of the Site, undertaken to assess the current ground conditions, land-use patterns and to ascertain the presence of any surface finds of an archaeological character, and of features that might indicate the presence of archaeological remains.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Historical Data

Holbeach is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey of *c*. 1086. Referred to as *Holobec*, *Holobech* and *Holebech*, the name is derived from the Old English and means the 'hollow (*hol*) back (*bæc*)', derived from the local topographic position of the town on raised ground (Cameron 1998, 64).

The Domesday Survey records that Holbeach was held by the King (as sokeland of Gedney), by Crowland Abbey (as a manor), Count Alan (as sokeland and a berewic) and Guy of Craon (also manorial) and contained 5210 acres of arable land and 182 acres of meadow, though the acreage was shared with Whaplode (Foster and Longley 1976, 1/32-3; 11/1; 12/83-4; 57/50).

The de Craon manor was being held by the main tenant-in-chief, the de Moulton family, from perhaps the early 12th century until the mid 14th century after which it was held by the D'Acre family until 1470. It then split into three smaller manors, Fitzwalter Manor, Harrington Manor and the Moiety of Dominorum (Allen 1834, 334). These had become united by the mid 19th century and were known as Holbeach Lord D'Acre (White 1856, 830).

The manor belonging to Crowland Abbey was the principal manor in Holbeach and seems to have formed part of the demesne lands of the abbey at the time of the dissolution in 1539 (Dugdale 1819, 124). The descent of the manor is generally unknown but was held by Sir Joseph Banks in the 18th century and was known as Holbeach Abbots.

A probable manorial chapel dedicated to

St Nicholas is recorded at Holbeach prior to 1300. It was founded by Laurence Holbeche and is believed to have been located one mile northeast of the church (Owen 1975, 18).

A substantial amount of early documentary material relates to the reclamation of the land from sea and fen. The nearest sea-bank that can be traced with confidence, *Saltnaygate* follows the line of the modern Washway Road and is believed to pre-date the Domesday Survey (Hallam 1954, 17).

5.2 Cartographic Data

The Site lies to the northeast of the centre of Holbeach. Appropriate maps of the vicinity were examined.

The earliest map examined was the Ordnance Survey 2" drawing of 1812 (Fig. 3a). It is of too small a scale to be useful, though does show the Site as occupying an area of open ground adjacent to woodland, named Primrose Holt. The Site occupies part of a larger field, whose boundaries are probably not depicted accurately, though show the area around Holbeach had been enclosed by this time. There are a number of buildings fronting Foxes Low Road.

Also of too small a scale is Bryant's '*Map of the County of Lincoln*, dating to 1828 (Fig. 3b). This shows a similar arrangement of buildings fronting the road, although the wooded area, Primrose Holt, is now shown partly occupying the Site. It is not known which of these two maps is the more accurate.

The first large scale and detailed map of the Site is the 1838 Tithe Award map (Fig. 4). The Site encompasses all of one field and smaller portions of two more to the northwest and southwest, the latter a very narrow strip field. There are a number of smaller enclosures along the road frontage which possibly mark the positions of homesteads.

The next available map is the 1st edition Ordnance Survey 6" map of 1887 (Fig. 5a). The rear southwest-northeast boundary has been removed and there are a collection of buildings located towards the southeast. These buildings have been enlarged by the time of the 2nd edition map of 1906 (Fig. 5b). The narrow strip field is no longer shown on the southwest of the Site, although it returns on the 1948 map (Fig. 5c) where it is shown as planted with trees, the style of which would suggest an orchard. This also shows changes in the arrangement of buildings within the Site as well as a number of larger structures built to the northeast. There are minor changes evident on the following map of 1952 (Fig. 5d), mainly alterations to the internal boundaries in the southeast corner of the Site and the buildings to the northeast.

Little change occurs on subsequent maps until 1977 when the strip field has disappeared and a large greenhouse occupies the central part of the southeast area of the Site and a further building is shown to the northwest in 1992. These had been removed by the turn of the century and the area returned to arable farming.

5.3 Aerial photographic Data

Aerial photographs of Holbeach, including those published or transcribed in secondary sources, were examined for evidence of archaeological remains.

Two aerial photographs are located within the parish files of Heritage Lincolnshire. These are undated, although they are likely to have been taken within the last 30 years. These depict Holbeach from a moderate altitude and are taken vertically to the ground. The Site is occupied by buildings towards its southern end with the area to the north showing as an arable field. No archaeological features are apparent within the Site or its immediate vicinity.

In addition, lidar (light detection and

ranging) for the area was examined. This did not reveal any noticeable archaeological features, though the Site did contain some features which are probably the result of vegetation clumps.

5.4 Archaeological Data

Records of archaeological sites and finds within the assessment area are held at the Lincolnshire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER).

Prehistoric
No prehistoric entries are recorded within the assessment area at the HER. Sites of this period are likely to be buried beneath later alluvium which could be several metres thick.

Romano-British
Romano-British pottery was found during a programme of fieldwalking undertaken on fields immediately west of the Site (Fig. 6, No. 1). The quantity of pottery is too small to indicate an actual settlement, although such sites are buried beneath alluvium and the pottery may have reached the surface through some agricultural activity.

Saxon
No Saxon sites are recorded as falling within the assessment area. However, some of the local roads fossilise sea-banks which may be Saxon in date, including Foxes Low Road (BGS 1992).

Medieval
The principal medieval site is represented by the historic core of Holbeach (Fig. 6, No. 2) to the southwest of the Site. During this period the Site would have lain within the open fields of the town as evidenced by pottery representing manuring scatters in fields to the west (No. 3).

Post-medieval
The principal post-medieval entry at the HER is the settlement of Holbeach (Fig. 6, No. 5). Associated with the expansion of the town is the construction of Holbeach Union Workhouse (No. 9) and the cemetery with its chapel (No. 12). To the south of the town was an area of clay extraction pits for manufacturing bricks (No. 7).

Transport through the town includes the course of the Great National Railway (No. 6) through the southern part of the assessment area and a milestone (No. 13) along the former Spalding to Sutton Bridge turnpike formed in 1764.

Pottery, also suggesting manuring scatters, from adjacent fields (No. 8), indicates that the Site itself was still in the open fields of the town. Other open areas had been turned into small parks, such as Wood House Park (No. 10) and Redroofs Park (No. 11).

Located on the eastern side of the Assessment Area, on the parish boundary with Fleet, is the findspot of a number of human skeletons (No. 4). These were discovered during the construction of the A17 and comprised several bodies in a possible east-west alignment. The HER assigns them to the post-medieval period where they may have been associated with a gibbet. It is also possible that they are medieval suicides (such individuals were not permitted burial in consecrated ground) or perhaps from the chapel of St Nicholas, which was located northeast of the town, though it would be unusual for a manorial chapel to have burial rights.

Modern
No modern sites are recorded at the HER. However, two World War II Auxiliary Unit Operational Bases are recorded as lying to the west of the Site. These were underground shelters for specially trained Home Guard personnel to mount attacks on an invading German army.

Undated
Undated anomalies were recorded by geophysical survey to the west of the Site (Fig. 6, No. 14).

Previous archaeological interventions
There have been no below ground

archaeological interventions (evaluations, excavations and watching briefs) within the assessment area. Geophysical and fieldwalking surveys were undertaken on the fields to the west of the Site (Hall 2006), the results of which are mentioned in the previous section.

5.5 Walkover Survey

The site was visited on the 11th December 2014 in order to assess the ground conditions, to identify any potential archaeological features and to note any constraints to further work. The conditions were cold and fair after overnight rain. The results of the survey are shown on Figure 7.

Access to the site was gained through a gap in the wooden fence at the end of Balmoral Way (Plate 1). The fence forms the southwest boundary to the Site. The fence had previously been broken through, and a heap of garden waste deposited on site.

The northwest boundary of the site is marked by a line of sizeable conifer and poplar trees (Plate 2). The northeast boundary is partially obscured by an earth bund, by the farm buildings towards the south and by an overgrown hedge towards the northern end (Plate 3). The southeastern end of the field runs into the collection of farmyard buildings, with a fence separating them from the occupied bungalow on the road frontage. A rough track runs through the site near to the northeast boundary, and gives access to the derelict glasshouses in the adjoining field to the northeast.

On the day of the visit vegetation on the site consisted of rough grassland, with a scattering of small trees and shrubs. The site had been grazed in the recent past. Towards the northeast was a more rough and tangled area covered with brambles. No bare earth was exposed and no artefacts were recovered during the course of the survey.

The central part of the site is occupied by an extensive low bund, generally less than 1m high (Plate 4). The composition of the bund is not known. Other, higher, spoil heaps are evident. One emanates from the north corner of the low bund and extends towards the northwest. Further dumps can be seen around the southeast and southwest fringes of the low bund. Another higher bund fills the space between the rough track, the northeast boundary, and the building at its southeastern end.

At the southeastern end of the site there is a yard area, consisting of tracks, partially overgrown areas of hard standing and two modern buildings (Plate 5). Both buildings are in a poor state of repair, with a partially collapsed roof on the northernmost. The open areas around the buildings have been used to store and dump various building site materials (Plate 6). There is a second access point to the Site, leading on to Foxes Low Road (Plate 7).

No services were apparent across the Site, although there may be some leading to the buildings located in the southeast corner of the Site.

The Site is not suitable for geophysical survey, due to the extensive bunds, dumped material and tree cover, and fieldwalking, as the area has not been ploughed.

6. CONSTRAINTS

6.1 Heritage Constraints

There are no Scheduled Monuments protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Area Act of 1979 (HMSO) present within the assessment area.

There are 3 listed buildings lying within the assessment area, all of which are Grade II. They comprise the Holbeach Union Workhouse on Fleet Road, the cemetery chapel to the southwest of the Site and a milestone situated to the

southeast. There is no inter-visibility between the listed structures and the Site.

Holbeach Conservation Area lies beyond the Assessment Area. The proposed development would not directly impact upon the setting of the Conservation Area. Views of All Saints church, the focal point of the Conservation Area, from the A17 will incorporate some of the development. However, there is some existing vegetation and buildings which will lessen the impact.

All other archaeological remains within the assessment area are protected only through the implementation of the National Planning Policy Framework which identifies the historic environment as a non-renewable resource (DCLG 2012). Its fragile and finite nature is a particularly important consideration in planning. The effect of an application on the significance of a heritage asset or its setting is a material consideration in determining the application.

6.2 Other Constraints

No specific checks were carried out to determine the presence of services (gas, water, electricity *etc.*) at the site. However, no buried or overhead services were noted within the Site's bounds during the walkover survey.

If further archaeological intervention is required, the excavation of trenches would entail a certain degree of risk which would be enhanced by the use of a mechanical excavator.

7. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Past impact appears to have been largely agricultural since the early post-medieval period and perhaps into the medieval period. The principal impact at the Site is the recent construction of two buildings and the creation of earth bunds.

Proposed details regarding the development comprise 32 units of varying size across the Site with layout and massing similar to that at present along Balmoral Way. A single open space would be located in the centre of the development. Aspects of the development most likely to impact buried archaeological remains, if present, are foundation trenches and service trenches.

The development will not have a visual impact on nearby listed buildings and Holbeach Conservation Area is currently screened from the proposed development by existing housing and vegetation.

8. ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND SIGNIFICANCE

Information collated in the production of this document has allowed an assessment of the known and potential archaeological resource.

Prehistoric sites are absent from the assessment area and are likely to only be encountered at considerable depth due to the deposition of alluvium. Potential is therefore considered to be low to negligible.

Roman pottery has been recovered in very small quantities from an area to the west of the Site. Sites of this period are generally buried beneath later alluvium. Potential is considered low.

No Saxon entries are recorded at the HER, although adjacent roads may fossilise former sea-banks of the period. Potential is considered to be negligible.

During the medieval period, the Site probably lay within the open fields of Holbeach. Manuring scatters, when rubbish from the town was spread on the land to improve fertility, have been identified to the west of the Site. Settlement remains of this period are unlikely to fall within the Site and potential is also low.

Cartographic evidence suggests that the

proposed development area has been open agricultural land since at least the early 19th century, though may have been partly wooded prior to this. Later maps indicate buildings being constructed in the mid 20th century which possibly were associated with greenhouses.

The results of the walkover survey show no surface indicators of buried archaeological remains. The present conditions at the Site preclude geophysical survey and fieldwalking.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The HER data used in the production of this report is copyright of Lincolnshire County Council.

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

All of the following references were consulted in the research. However, as some of them duplicated evidence given in others, or proved not to be relevant to the assessment, not all of them have been specifically referred to in the text.

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS	Archaeological Project Services
BGS	British Geological Survey
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government
HER	Historic Environment Record
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LAO	Lincolnshire Archive Office
OS	Ordnance Survey

Table 1: Archaeological sites and findspots within the assessment area

Map No.	HER No.	Description	Period	National Grid Reference
1	MLI89925	Pottery	**Romano-British**	TF 3700 2532
2	MLI20227	Settlement of Holbeach	**Medieval**	-
3	MLI89926	Pottery	**Medieval**	TF 3689 2534
4	MLI20536	Human bones	**Post-medieval**	TF 3772 2550
5	MLI20557	Settlement of Holbeach	**Post-medieval**	-
6	MLI20232	Great National Railway (course of)	**Post-medieval**	-
7	MLI22201	Claypits/brickworks	**Post-medieval**	TF 3629 2453
8	MLI89928	Pottery	**Post-medieval**	TF 3689 2534
9	MLI90079	Holbeach Union Workhouse*	**Post-medieval**	TF 3700 2490
10	MLI92297	Wood House Park	**Post-medieval**	TF 3774 2622
11	MLI92409	Redroofs Park	**Post-medieval**	TF 3672 2470
12	MLI94348	Cemetery Chapel*	**Post-medieval**	TF 3620 2508
13	MLI94561	Milestone*	**Post-medieval**	TF 3696 2544
14	MLI97858	Geophysical anomalies	**Undated**	TF 3689 2533

* denotes a listed building



Figure 1 - General location plan

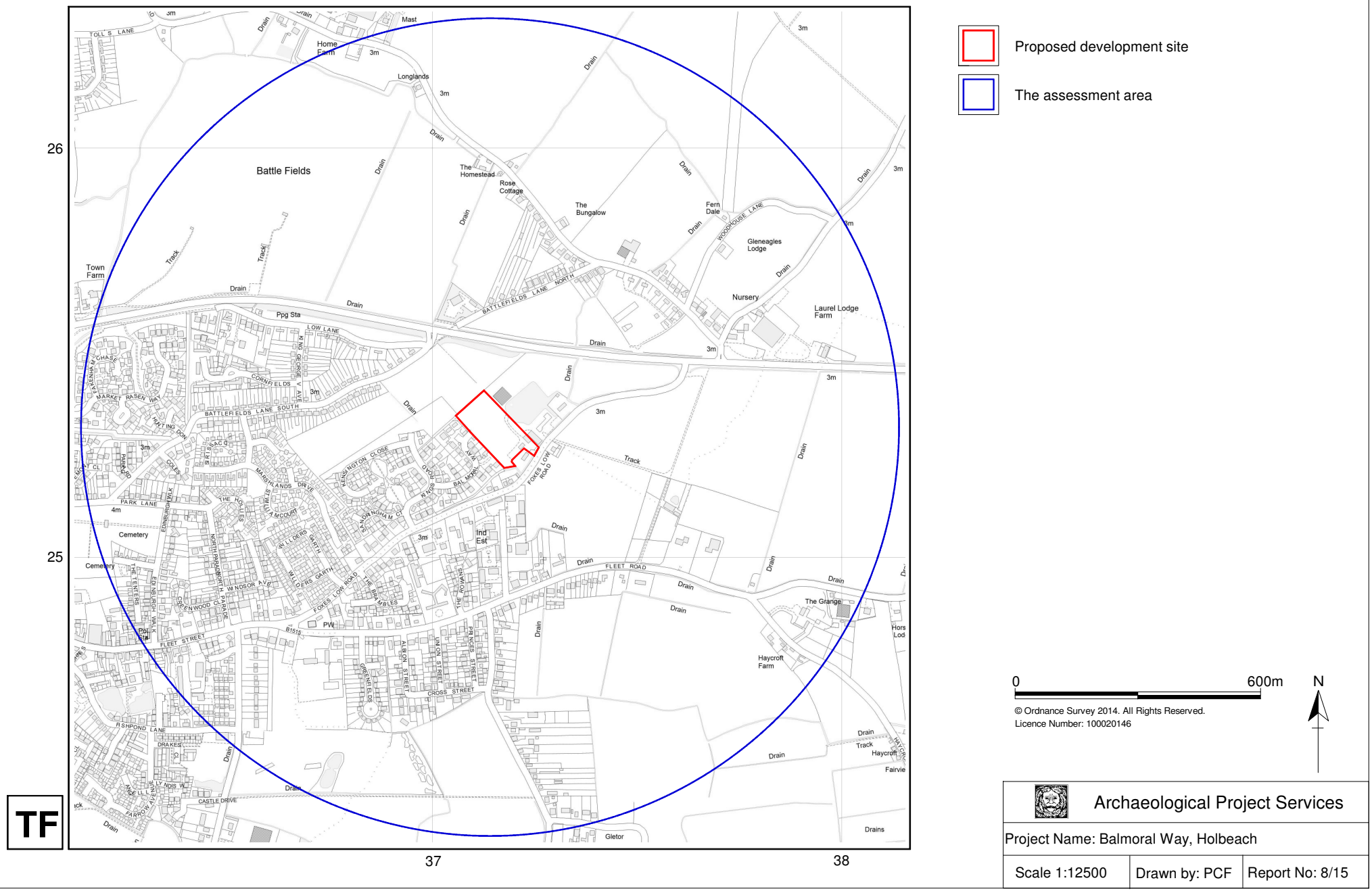
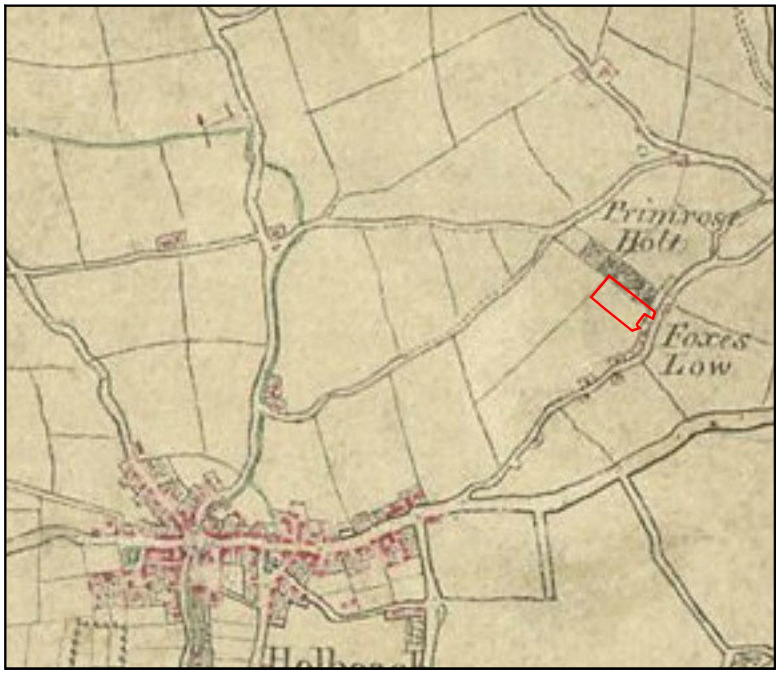
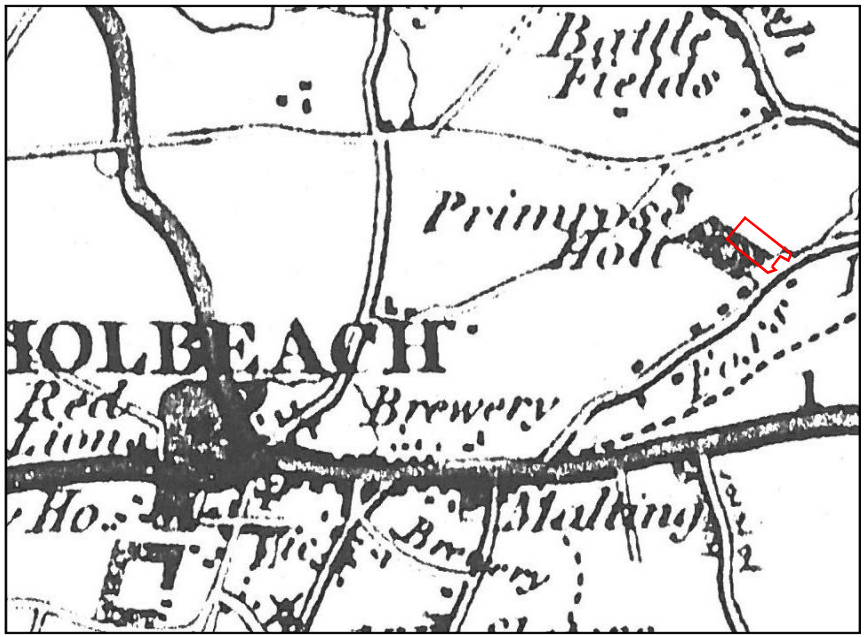


Figure 2 - The assessment area showing the proposed development site



Ordnance Survey 1812



Bryant 1828

0 1km

Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Balmoral Way, Holbeach		
Scale 1:25000	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 8/15

Figure 3 - Extracts from maps of 1812 and 1828



Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Balmoral Way, Holbeach		
Scale 1:7500	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 8/15

Figure 4 - Extract from the Holbeach Tithe Apportionment map, 1838



Figure 5 - Extracts from the 1887, 1906, 1948 and 1952 Ordnance Survey 6" maps

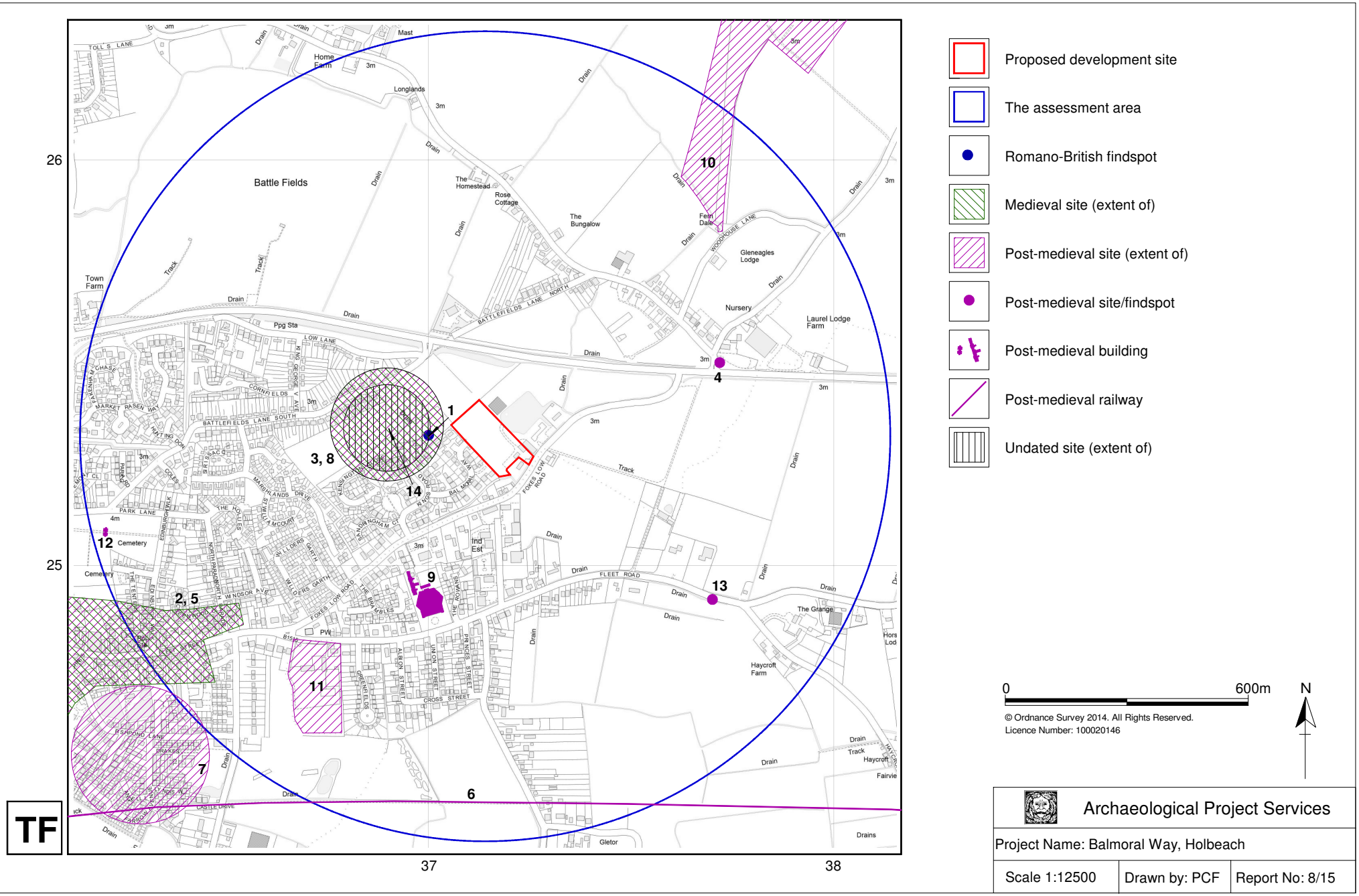


Figure 6 - Archaeological sites and findspots from within the assessment area

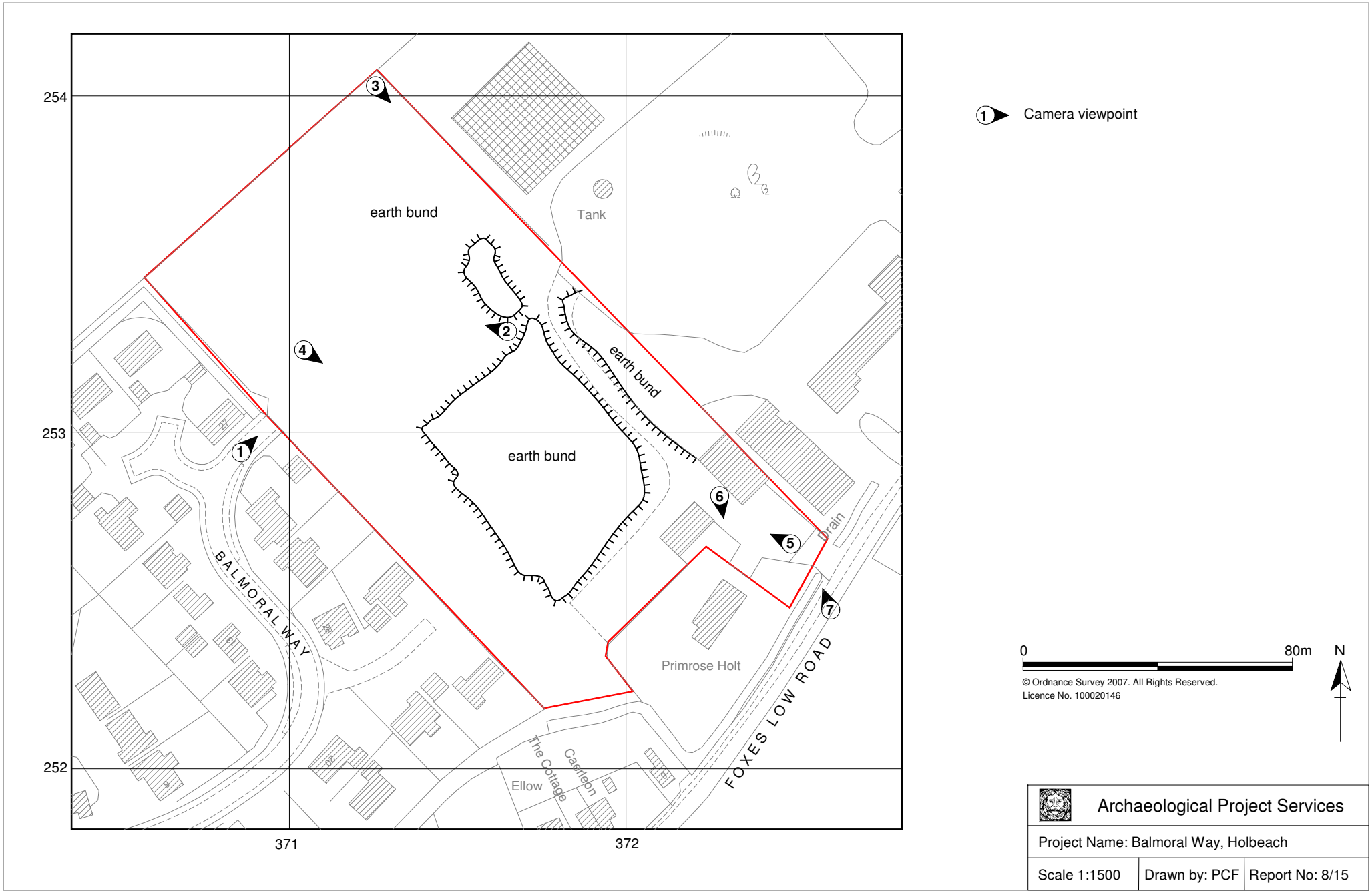


Figure 7 - Results of the walkover survey



Plate 1 – View showing the end of Balmoral Way where access was gained to the Site, looking northeast



Plate 2 – The northern part of the Site showing the conifer and poplar trees forming the northwest boundary



Plate 3 – View along the hedged boundary along the northeast side of the Site, looking southeast



Plate 4 – View showing the earthen bund in the centre of the Site, looking southeast



Plate 5 – The two modern buildings located in the southeast corner of the Site, looking northwest



Plate 6 – Dumped building material at the Site



Plate 7 – The gated access to the Site from Foxes Low Road

Appendix 1

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	A deposit (usually clay, silts or sands) laid down in water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea and freshwater alluvium by streams, rivers or within lakes.
Cropmark	A mark that is produced by the effect of underlying archaeological features influencing the growth of a particular crop.
Geophysical Survey	Essentially non-invasive methods of examining below the ground surface by measuring deviations in the physical properties and characteristics of the earth. Techniques include magnetometry and resistivity survey.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
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.