ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES

HERITAGE CONSULTANCY

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK BASED ASSESSMENT:
BALMORAL WAY
HOLBEACH
LINCOLNSHIRE

Prepared For
ASHWOOD HOMES

Report Compiled by
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National Grid Reference: TF 3722 2536



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APS Report No:
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1. SUMMARY

A desk-based assessment was undertaken to determine the archaeological implications of a proposed housing development on land east of 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.

A site visit did not identify any artefacts or indications of archaeology visible on the land surface.

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*' (CIfA 2014).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Ashwood Homes to undertake a desk-based assessment of land to the east of Balmoral Way, Holbeach, Lincolnshire. The assessment was requested in support of a proposed housing 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 3722 2536 (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 3.5 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 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 data

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 and 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 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 to the west of 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). This shows that the Site straddled part of 5 fields.

The Ordnance Survey maps of 1886 (Fig. 5a) and 1906 (Fig. 5b) shows the situation persisted into the early 20th century. By 1956 the field boundaries had been changed somewhat, so that the narrow northwest-southeast aligned fields had been amalgamated into one field and several small pens introduced along the southern boundary.

5.3 Aerial photographic and lidar data

Aerial photographs obtained from Google Earth and did not reveal any features on the Site. 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.

The lidar data 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 Historic Environment Record (HER). Table 1 at the end of this text summarises the available records and Figure 6 shows the entries' locations. The numbers in brackets (No. 1) in the following discussion references these entries.

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.

Roman
Roman pottery was found during a programme of fieldwalking undertaken on fields 150m west of the Site (Fig. 6, No. 1). The quantity of pottery is too small to indicate an actual settlement, although it is possible 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) 760m 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. 7) and the cemetery with its chapel (No. 12).

A milestone (No. 10) is present along the former Spalding to Sutton Bridge turnpike formed in 1764.

Pottery, also suggesting manuring scatters, from adjacent fields (No. 6), 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. 8) and Redroofs Park (No. 9).

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.

The HER lists 7 farmsteads which existed in the 19th century, four of which are now demolished (Nos. 11, 12, 13 and 16) and two of which are extant with modifications (Nos. 14 and 15).

Modern
There are two 'resistance hides' west of the Site (Nos. 18 and 19). These were World War II

Auxiliary Unit Operational Bases that were intended as 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. 20).

Previous archaeological interventions

There have been no recorded 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 12th April 2021 in order to assess the ground conditions, to identify any potential archaeological features and to note any constraints to further work. The weather conditions were cold and bright. The results of the survey are shown on Figure 7.

Currently there are three points of access to the Site: Foxes Low Road, Chaffinch Way and Battlefield Lane. The site is split into five irregular areas:

Area	Plate	Visible surface archaeology?	Suitable for geophysical investigation?
Field with flower ridges	1	No	Yes, once the ridges are levelled
Unseeded field	1	No	Yes
Construction storage	2	No	No
Greenhouses	N/A	Could not investigate	No
Wooded area	3	Could not investigate	No



Plate 1. General view looking west over agricultural fields



Plate 2. General shot looking north to construction storage area



Plate 3. General shot of wooded area. Looking west.

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 2 listed buildings lying within the assessment area, all of which are Grade II. They are the Holbeach Union Workhouse on Fleet Road 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 (MHCLG 2019). The historic environment's 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.

7. ASSESSMENT OF IMPACT

Past impact appears to have been largely agricultural since the early post-medieval period and perhaps into the medieval period.

Proposed details regarding the development comprise 83 housing units of varying size across the Site. 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 low.

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.

The results of the walkover survey show no surface indicators of buried archaeological remains. Parts of the Site under an agricultural regime would be suitable for geophysical survey and fieldwalking.

The Site is unlikely to be able to contribute to the Regional Research Framework (Knight *et al*, 2012), although opportunities may present themselves as the project develops.

9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Andrew Riley of Ashwood Homes for commissioning the work. The work was coordinated by Paul Cope-Faulkner who edited this report along with Mark Dymond. The walkover survey was undertaken by Jonathon Smith. Richard Watts kindly provided the data from the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record. Thanks are also due to the staff of the Lincolnshire Archive Office.

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

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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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Ordnance Survey, 1952 *Lincolnshire. Sheet CXXV. S.E.,* 6" map

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11. ABBREVIATIONS

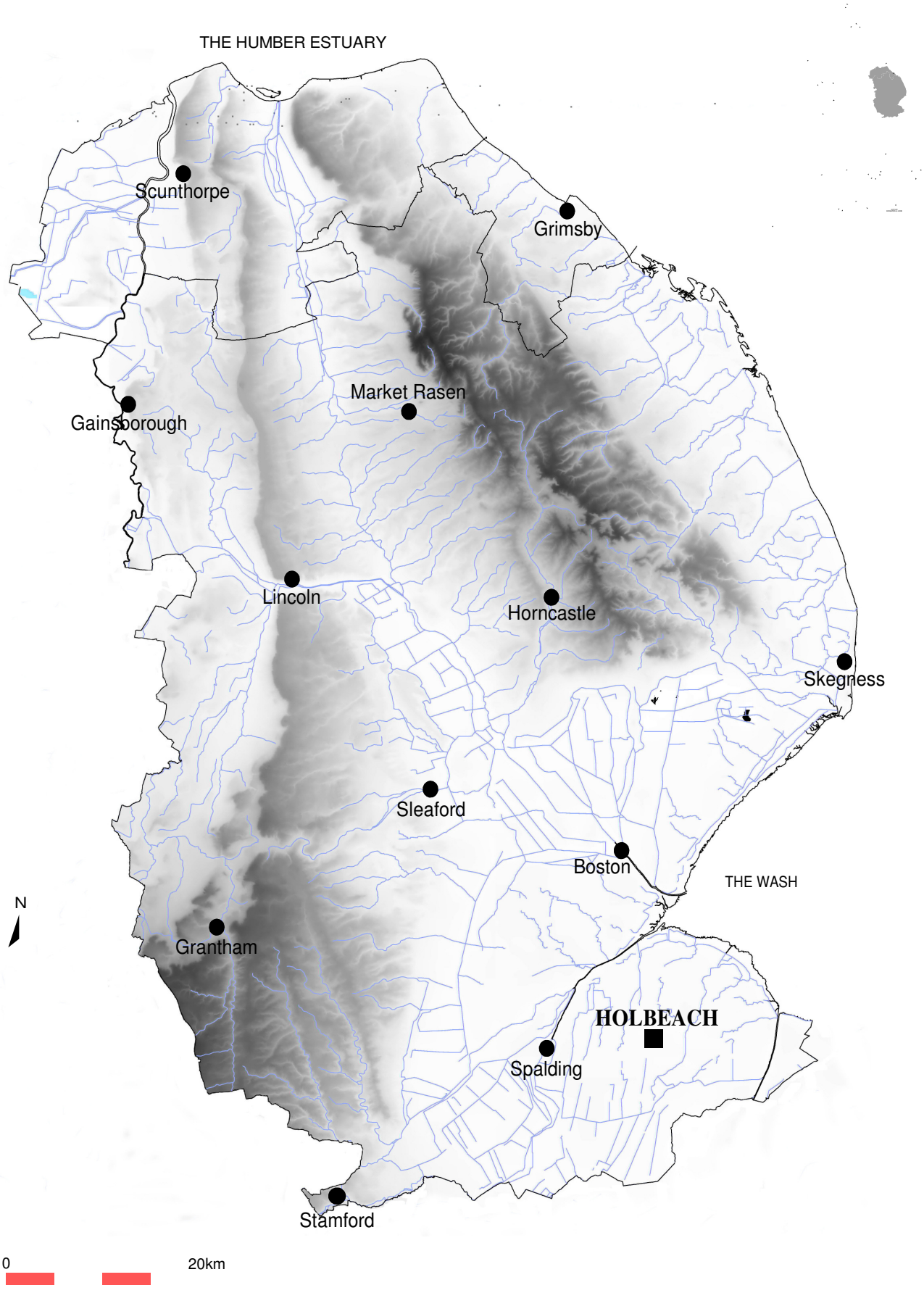
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum
APS	Archaeological Project Services
BGS	British Geological Survey
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

HER	Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office
LAO	Lincolnshire Archive Office
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
OS	Ordnance Survey

Table 1: Archaeological sites and findspots within the assessment area

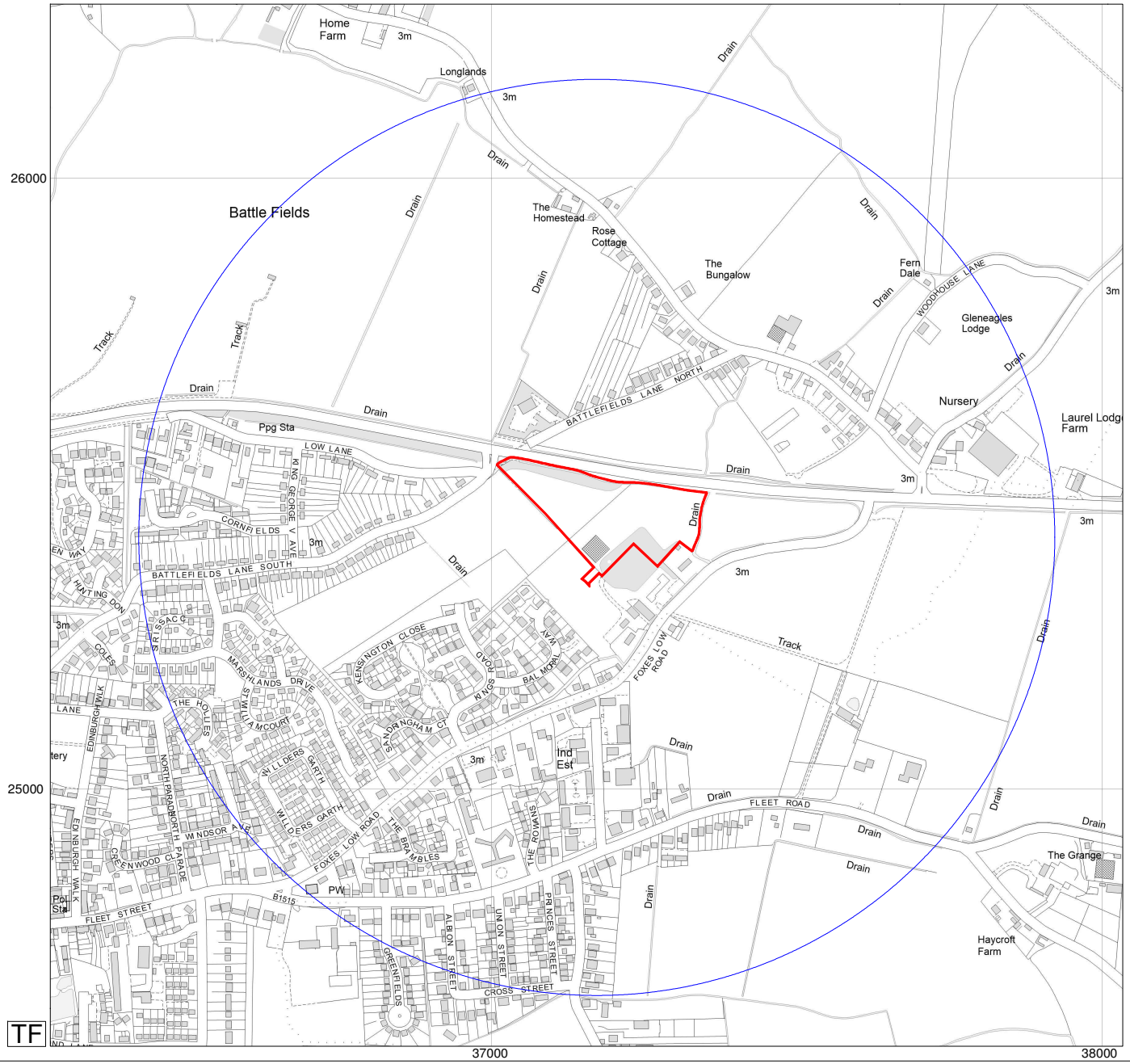
Map No.	HER No.	Description	Period	National Grid Reference
1	MLI89925	Pottery	Romano-British	TF 3700 2532
2	MLI20227	Settlement of Holbeach	Medieval	-
3	MLI89926	Pottery	Medieval	TF 3689 2534
4	MLI20536	Human bones	Post-medieval	TF 3772 2550
5	MLI20557	Settlement of Holbeach	Post-medieval	-
6	MLI89928	Pottery	Post-medieval	TF 3689 2534
7	MLI90079	Holbeach Union Workhouse*	Post-medieval	TF 3700 2490
8	MLI92297	Wood House Park	Post-medieval	TF 3774 2622
9	MLI92409	Redroofs Park	Post-medieval	TF 3672 2470
10	MLI94561	Milestone*	Post-medieval	TF 3696 2544
11	MLI123402	Former farmstead	Post-medieval	TF 3711 2602
12	MLI123401	Former farmstead	Post-medieval	TF 3719 2588
13	MLI123412	Former farmstead	Post-medieval	TF 3676 2483
14	MLI123400	Cornerways farmstead	Post-medieval	TF 3767 2556
15	MLI123399	Laurel Farm Lodge	Post-medieval	TF 3774 2555
16	MLI123403	Primrose Holt farmstead	Post-medieval	TF 3722 2528
17	MLI123494	Fir Cottage	Post-medieval	TF 3713 2484
18	MLI125212	Resistance Hide	Modern	TF 3659 2520
19	MLI125213	Resistance Hide	Modern	TF 3675 2516
20	MLI97858	Geophysical anomalies	Undated	TF 3689 2533

* denotes a listed building



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Figure 1 - General location plan



Proposed development site

The assessment area

0 500m

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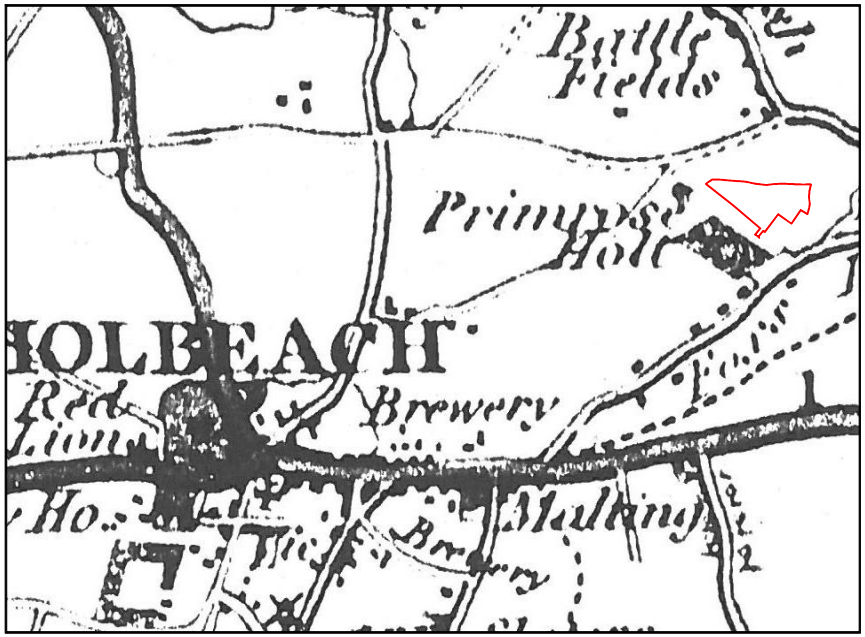
Project Name: Balmoral Way, Holbeach

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Figure 2 - The assessment area showing the proposed development site



A) Ordnance Survey 1812



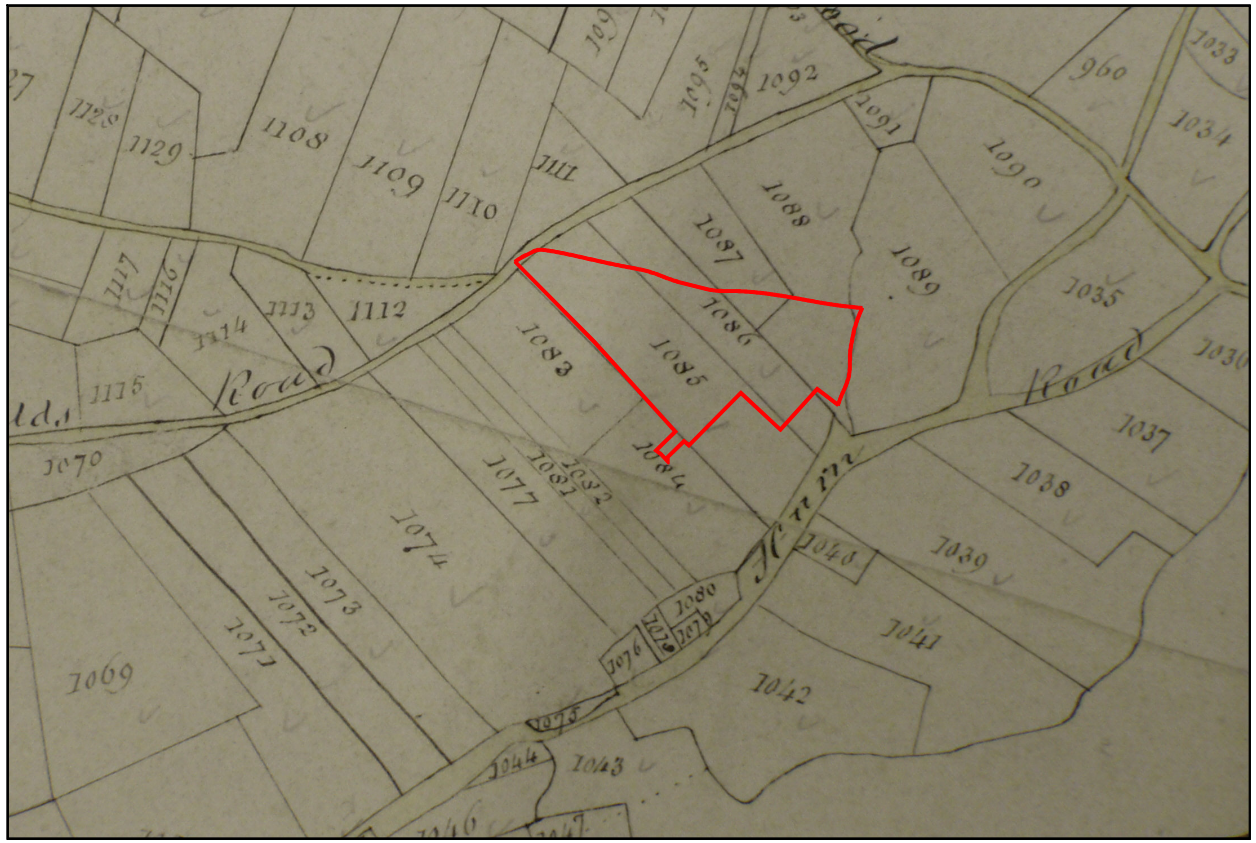
B) Bryant 1828

N

0 1km

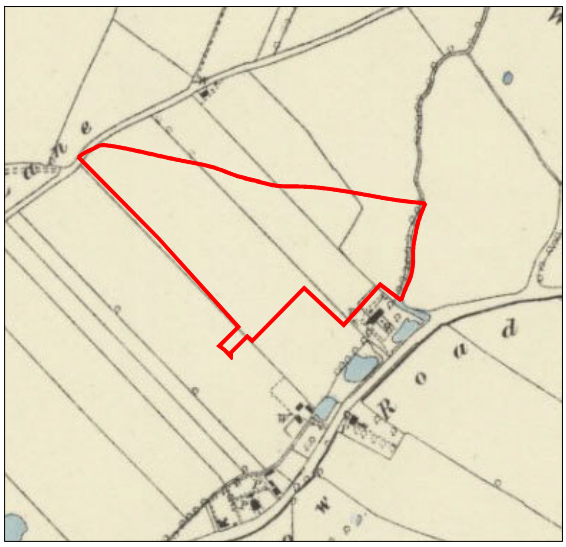
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Figure 3 - Extracts from maps of 1812 and 1828

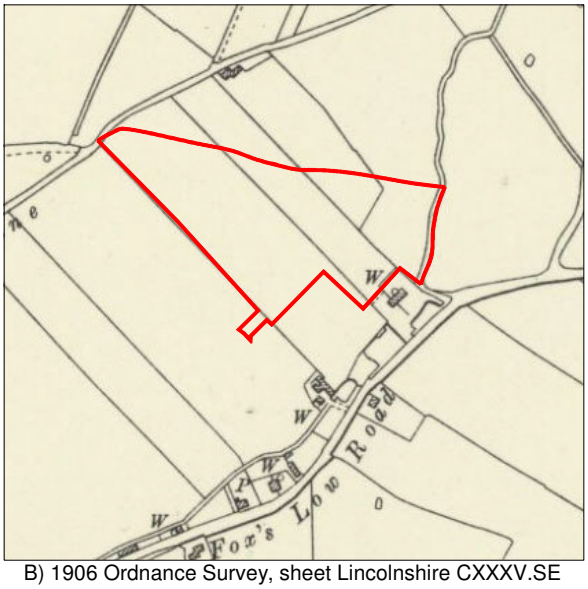


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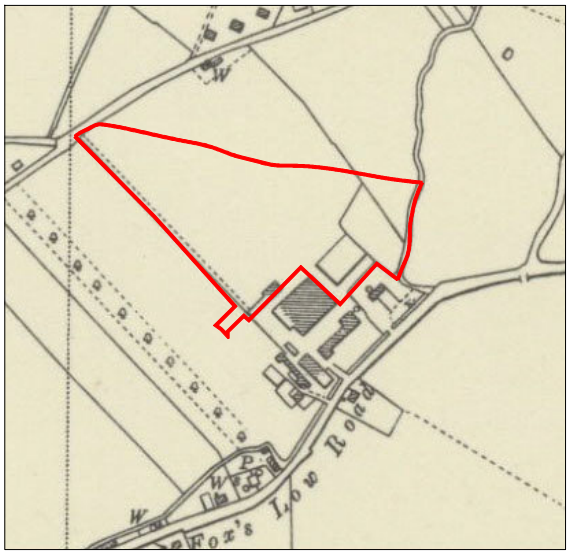
Figure 4 - Extract from the Holbeach Tithe Apportionment map, 1838



A) 1887 Ordnance Survey, sheet Lincolnshire CXXXV.SE



B) 1906 Ordnance Survey, sheet Lincolnshire CXXXV.SE



B) 1952 Ordnance Survey, sheet 1887 Lincolnshire CXXXV.SE

N

0 500m

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Figure 5 - 1886, 1906 and 1952 Ordnance Survey maps

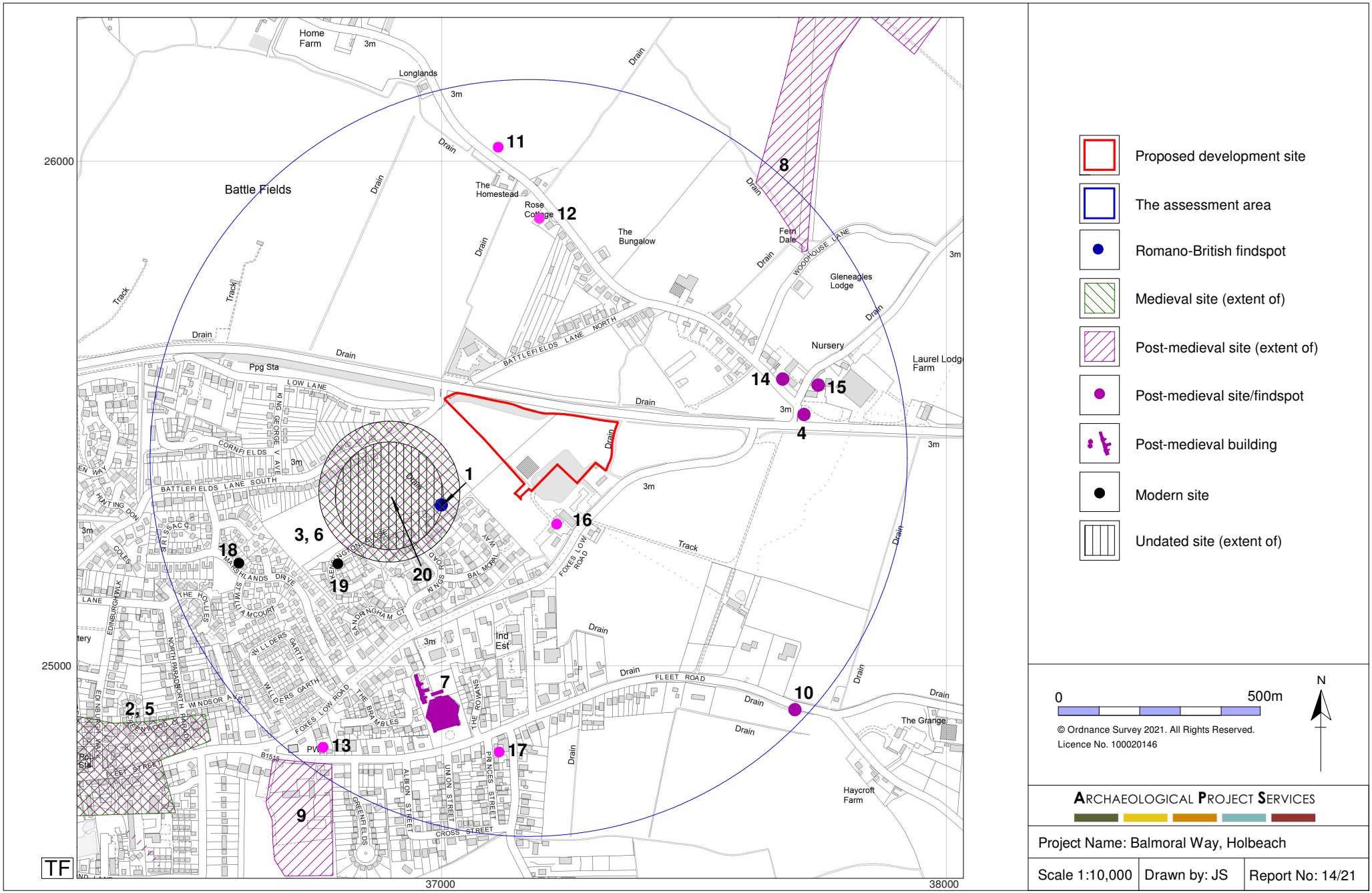


Figure 6 - Archaeological sites and findspots from within the assessment area



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1 Plate number and direction

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Figure 7 - Walkover survey

Appendix

GLOSSARY

Alluvium	Deposits laid down by water. Marine alluvium is deposited by the sea, and fresh water alluvium is laid down by rivers and in lakes.
Berewick	An outlying estate (to a larger manor).
Bronze Age	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Drift	Material that has been eroded, transported or deposited by glaciers (or their melt water). The term 'drift' is commonly used to describe any deposits of Quaternary age.
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.
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
Lidar	An aircraft-based method of survey using analysis of pulses of laser light reflected from the surfaces of the ground and buildings. It is cable of identifying subtle differences in topography.
Manuring Scatter	A distribution of artefacts, usually pottery, created by the spreading of manure and domestic refuse from settlements onto arable fields. Such scatters can provide an indication of the extent and period of arable agriculture in the landscape.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Modern	The current period, dating from around AD 1900 to the present time.
Neolithic	The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500 - 2250 BC.
Old English	The language used by the Saxon (*q.v.*) occupants of Britain.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1900.
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.
Roman	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, Denmark and adjacent areas.
Scheduled Monument	A monument protected by the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

Sokeland	Land that, although within one manor, came under the jurisdiction of a separate manor.
Turnpike Roads	Turnpike trusts were established for many principal roads. An Act of Parliament of 1663 allowed them to levy tolls to pay for their maintenance.

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CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

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