

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document reports on a scheme of archaeological evaluation undertaken by Field Archaeology Specialists (FAS) Ltd at Ladybridge Farm, North Yorkshire, on behalf of Mike Griffiths and Associates, for Tarmac Northern Ltd, in support of a planning application to extend Nosterfield Quarry. The fieldwork was carried out between October 2003 and October 2004.

1.1 LOCATION AND LAND USE

The application area (NGR: SE 293 806 centred) is situated to the east of Nosterfield Quarry, and to the north of the village of Thornborough, occupying two separate areas of land north of Thornfield road (B6267) (Figure 1). The larger tract of land is bounded to the south by the B6267, to the west by the road to Carthorpe, and to the east by a winding track leading to Upsland. The northern boundary of the site is represented by the east-west line of Ings Goit, and a central track runs west-east across the centre of the area, dividing a large northern field from three smaller fields to the south. Two further fields form a second parcel of land within the application area, and are situated directly to the west of Ladybridge Farm, adjacent to Nosterfield Quarry. In total, the application area occupies approximately 44 hectares.

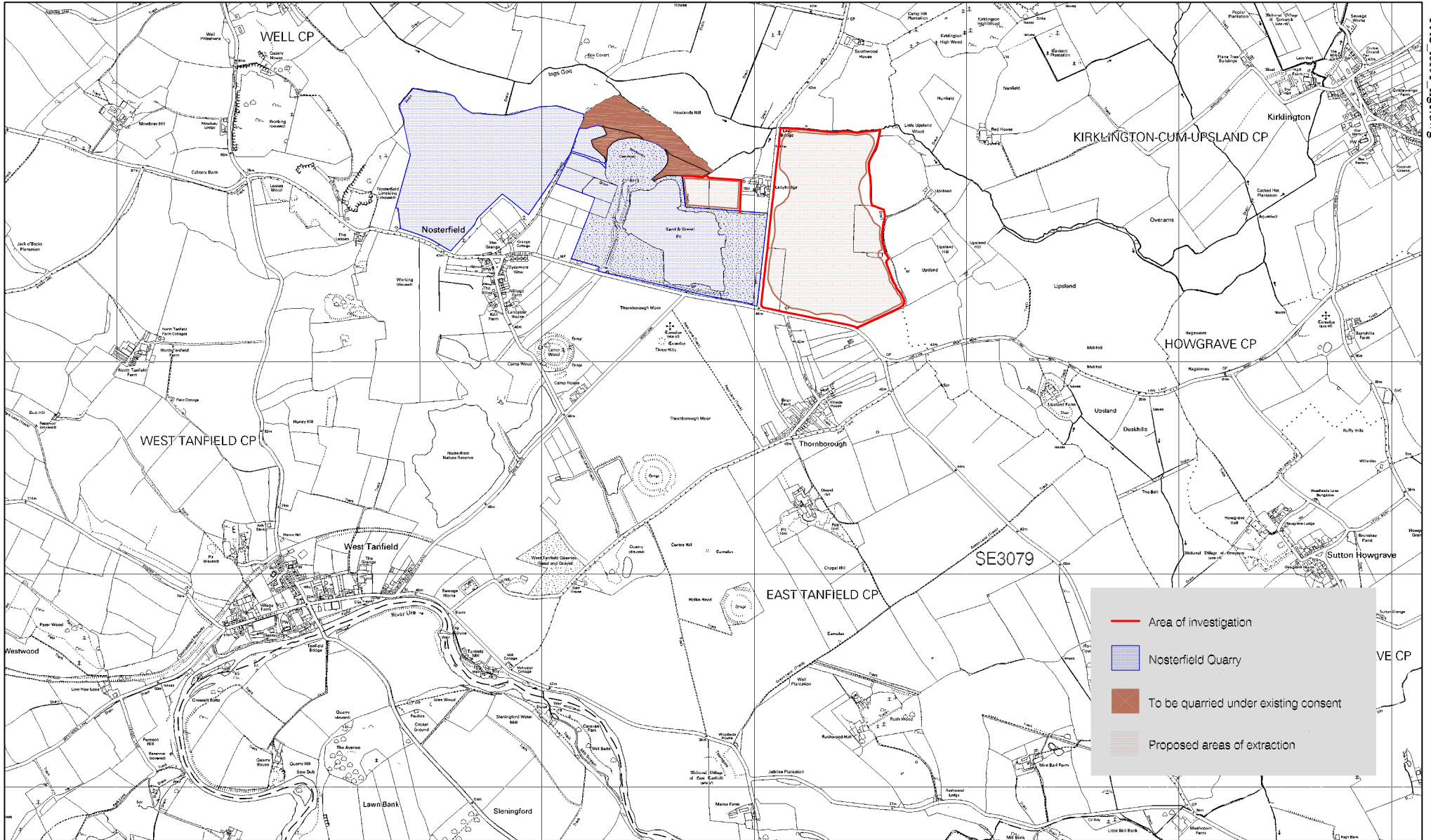
There is a known area of peat deposits on the eastern side of the application area which has been left under pasture in a separate field and holds surface water during wet weather conditions. A small pond to the south of this field is thought to be fed by a natural spring. The western half of the area to the west of Ladybridge Farm is also used for pasture, with the remainder of the application area given over to arable farming.

The underlying geology of the site represents the fluvio-glacial gravels that characterise land north of the River Ure. Within the larger part of the application area, the ground slopes gently down from the southwestern corner at *c.*43m AOD towards the small pasture field on the centre of the eastern boundary, which lies at approximately 40m AOD. The northern part of the area is relatively level at *c.*41m AOD, but slopes down in both the northeastern and northwestern corners to approximately 40m AOD. The smaller part of the application area to the west of Ladybridge Farm lies on two levels divided by a steep slope. The eastern side of this area is relatively flat at *c.*41m AOD, rising to approximately 42m AOD in the southeastern corner. The western side is also fairly level, lying at *c.*40m AOD.

1.2 PLANNING BACKGROUND

This archaeological investigation forms a pre-determination evaluation in support of a planning proposal to extend sand and gravel extraction at Nosterfield Quarry eastwards over an approximately 42 hectare area to the east and west of Ladybridge Farm. An archaeological desk-based assessment (FAS 2003) has also been prepared and submitted as part of the planning application, along with an interim report (FAS 2005) on the preliminary results of the on-going archaeological watching brief at Nosterfield Quarry.

A Method Statement outlining evaluation the programme was prepared by FAS and approved by North Yorkshire County Council Heritage Unit (Appendix A). The details of each fieldwork phase of the evaluation were agreed with the Heritage Unit prior to the commencement of fieldwork.



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Location map

Scale 1:25000



Figure 1

1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the evaluation was to identify, characterise, and assess any archaeological remains within the proposed extension to Nosterfield Quarry, in order to establish the archaeological potential of the application area. The evaluation comprised a staged investigative programme, wherein the results of the early stages were used to inform the detailed design of subsequent stages of investigation. The scheme of evaluation consisted of both non-invasive and invasive investigations, which commenced with a review of existing information, and was followed by fieldwalking, an auger and topographic survey, geophysical survey, and culminated in test pitting, hand-excavated trenches and machine excavated evaluation trenches.

The purpose of the evaluation was to gather sufficient information to enable informed planning decisions, and the formulation of an appropriate archaeological mitigation strategy for the proposed extension of sand and gravel extraction at Nosterfield Quarry. The evaluation sought to provide the necessary information, while minimising damage to the archaeological resource, particularly in light of the significant quantity of information available from the archaeological investigation at the existing quarry.