

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL SECTION	
13 SEP 2013	
DATE RECEIVED	
Referred To	

for

Mr and Mrs Thompson
Clampitt Creek
Off Blackmore Lane
Haxey, North Lincolnshire

Site Development
Clampitt Creek, Haxey

Ecological
Assessment/Report

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Issued by **David Dunster**
Rev -
Date **August 2013**

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1.0 Introduction and Clients Brief

Dunster Consulting Limited have been instructed by Mr and Mrs Thompson to prepare and submit a "Planning Application for the retention of an existing log cabin, existing campsite toilets and the retention/extension of the existing timber verandah building".

The site is marked on the location plan 10-002/A3/200 and its relationship to the adjacent Walkabout Farm site on drawing number 10-002/A1/201, both of which are included in the Appendix Section 7.0.

Discussions have been held with North Lincolnshire Council over the period from April 2010 with regard to the requirements of such a planning application. It has been determined by the Planning Department of the Council that an Ecological Assessment be carried out and a Report on the Assessment/Proposed Works be submitted with the Planning Application.

2.0 Site

The site is located off Blackmore Lane, approximately 0.5km east of the A161 Epworth Road at the north edge of the village of Haxey. The National Grid Reference is SE78143 00531.

The site is an approximately rectangular shaped plot of land and occupies an overall area of approximately 2.6 hectares.

The site is located in open countryside with various hedgerows and fields. Access to the site is via an unmade road bounded by open fields, part of which is referred to as the Rush Furlong Nature Reserve which is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

The site is relatively flat and is at a high point in the surrounding area.

The proposed development of the site comprises an existing timber log cabin, existing campsite toilets and the retention/extension of the existing timber verandah building.

A proposed site layout on drawing number 10-002/A1/203 is attached in Appendix Section 7.0.

3.0 Potential Ecological Issues

The site is adjacent to the Rush Furlong Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Rush Furlong is an unfenced strip of hay meadow on base-rich Keuper Marl soils. It is species rich grassland which is a relic of the Isle of Axholme strip-farming system, under which the land was divided into many small individually owned and separately farmed strips with few well-defined field boundaries. It has a rich flora with over 60 species of flowering plants recorded. The grassland areas to the north and south of Rush Furlong SSSI are also of botanical interest.

The hedging and similar vegetation on the boundary of the site will be unaffected by the proposed development and will be left untouched so that fauna, flora and wildlife at such locations remain as they are at present.

The following parties have been contacted to discuss the proposals for the site in relation to the proposed development:

Natural England
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
North Lincolnshire Council Planning Department

Natural England's primary concern related to the increased numbers of people using the Clampitt Creek site and in particular the development of the camping/caravan site. They viewed that it could be harmful for the species rich grassland community within Rush Furlong SSSI. As the SSSI is not fenced, informal access by the caravan/campsite visitors and their dogs could cause disturbance to the ground vegetation and increased levels of soil nutrients due to dog fouling. Natural England were looking for reassurance that mitigation measures would be put in place to stop any disturbance to the grassland from such sources. They were of the opinion that possible measures could include adding "no entry" sign posts and/or fencing to prevent access to the SSSI. They requested that we had close consultation with

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust on this issue. This issue has been misunderstood and is referred to in detail under Section 5 of this Report.

In addition Natural England also requested consideration of breeding birds. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000). Therefore depending on when any proposed works within the Caravan and Caravanning Club site were to take place, they were concerned that impact on nesting birds and therefore the risk of committing an offence could be great. With this in mind they requested that any planning approval would need to caveat that any permission does not absolve the applicant from complying with the law and that appropriate care should be taken to avoid destruction of nesting sites while in use or being built. Again this issue is referred to in detail under Section 5 of this Report.

Vegetation clearance works will not be required and avoided completely. Where possible, hedges and shrubs will be allowed to flower and berry to provide maximum benefit to wildlife.

North Lincolnshire Council Planning Department concerns related to the same issues.

4.0 Ecological Assessment

A site inspection was carried out on 01.07.13. A Site Walkover Report Form was completed as per our standard procedure.

We would summarise the items noted from the inspection as follows :

- The current Clampitt Creek site is primarily occupied by an existing log cabin, campsite toilets and timber verandah inclusive of storage plus a restricted campsite. The site is almost entirely agricultural land/soft landscaped area.
- The location of the proposed extension to the timber verandah is shown on drawing number 10-002/A1/203. No livestock is currently located on this part of the site.
- The habitat can be classified as agricultural grassland bounded on to the north, west and part south by hedgerows and the occasional tree. The remainder of the south side is adjacent to the Walkabout Farm site, which is subject to a separate planning application.
- Long established hedgerows incorporate hawthorn and some young species of trees. Nests were observed for a number of small birds.
- Flowers, berries etc are prevalent in the hedgerows, being a vital food source for the bird, insect and small animal population.
- The Rush Furlong SSSI was inspected from its boundary and confirmed as hay meadow/grassland.
- Whilst undertaking inspection of other parts of the site, I was made aware of two people and their untethered dogs on this and the adjacent grassland. Inquiry confirmed that they were locals from the village who regularly used the area for recreation. This is an issue for the Local Council/Natural England/Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust to address and is unaffected by the development proposals.
- There was no evidence of bats on the site. The existing buildings are unsuitable and the few trees showed no signs of habitation.
- Although we were aware of the existence of Barn Owls on the adjacent site in the recent past, there was no evidence during our inspection on the Clampitt Creek site.
- The proposed extension to the timber verandah is the only new building in the proposals. It is evident that this will not alter the ecological balance of the site or the adjacent Rush Furlong SSSI.

5.0 Proposed Ecological Works

The current Clampitt Creek site comprises an existing log cabin, campsite toilets and timber verandah inclusive of storage plus a restricted campsite. Other than over the footprint of the proposed extension to the existing timber verandah, the agricultural land/soft landscaped area of the site will remain unchanged.

Other than the removal of the existing grass over the footprint of the verandah extension, there will be no vegetation clearance works proposed as part of the development. Likewise

the hedgerows and occasional trees will not be affected by the proposed works. As would be expected for such a rural development, the hedges and shrubs should be allowed to flower and berry before the primary construction work commences.

Nesting sites are not close to the proposed verandah extension and hence there will be no destruction of nests while in use or being built.

It is important that the SSSI and the adjacent grasslands are preserved in any proposals and are not impacted upon or destroyed by the development. To the contrary, it appears based on our inspection that the SSSI/adjacent grasslands are used by locals from the village and any reported damage relates to such use.

The proposals in Mr and Mrs Thompson's Planning Application for Clampitt Creek do not impact on the SSSI and adjacent grasslands. This has been discussed with Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust. They have no objection to the proposals as a result. Please find attached a copy of their letter dated 14.01.2013 confirming that they have no objection to the proposals. A copy of this letter is enclosed in the Appendix Section 7.0.

In summary the current habitat is therefore maintained.

The concerns that Natural England and the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust had initially related to the Clampitt Creek campsite, however it appears that they were unaware that the development does not include any increase in the number of caravan pitches than is currently agreed and certified. This by implication determines that there will be no increase in the number of visitors to the site and hence no more potential risk to Rush Furlong.

Mr and Mrs Thompson are committed to the maintenance of the countryside and have a good relationship with the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust wardens. Although the Caravan/Campsite does not impact on the Rush Furlong SSSI Site and the adjacent grasslands, they will still undertake the following:

- Erect signage at the site entrance to inform visitors that they are not to use the Rush Furlong SSSI Site and the adjacent grasslands for activities referred to above.
- This will also be emphasised to all campsite visitors when they register on arrival on the site.

However it is self-evident that the current damage from dog recreation and dog fouling is from locals from Haxey Village walking their dogs and not from anyone on the Clampitt Creek campsite.

In our opinion Mr and Mrs Thompson's proposals do not impact on the SSSI and adjacent grasslands. However we would be willing to meet with North Lincolnshire Planning Department, Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust and Natural England on site to discuss concerns/issues in further detail.

6.0 Conclusion

We would summarise our conclusions as follows :

- The proposals forming the development under the Planning Application do not alter the agricultural use of the land and assist in protecting the countryside.
- The proposed extension to the existing verandah is located on part of an unused agricultural field adjacent to the gravel hardstanding area used for vehicular parking. Hence not affecting the current agricultural land/soft landscaping.
- The proposals will not impact on the Rush Furlong SSSI or the adjacent grasslands or provide people who may use the land for dog recreation.
- The proposals will not involve vegetation clearance works or impact on the hedgerows/shrubs.

7.0 Appendix

Site Location Plans/Development Proposals
Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust letter dated 14.01.2013

For and on behalf of Dunster Consulting Limited

Name : David Dunster
Qualifications : BSc , CEng , MICE

notes :

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Clampit Creek

rev	amendments	by	date
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Dunster
Consulting
civil & structural engineering

Client: Mr Carl Thomson

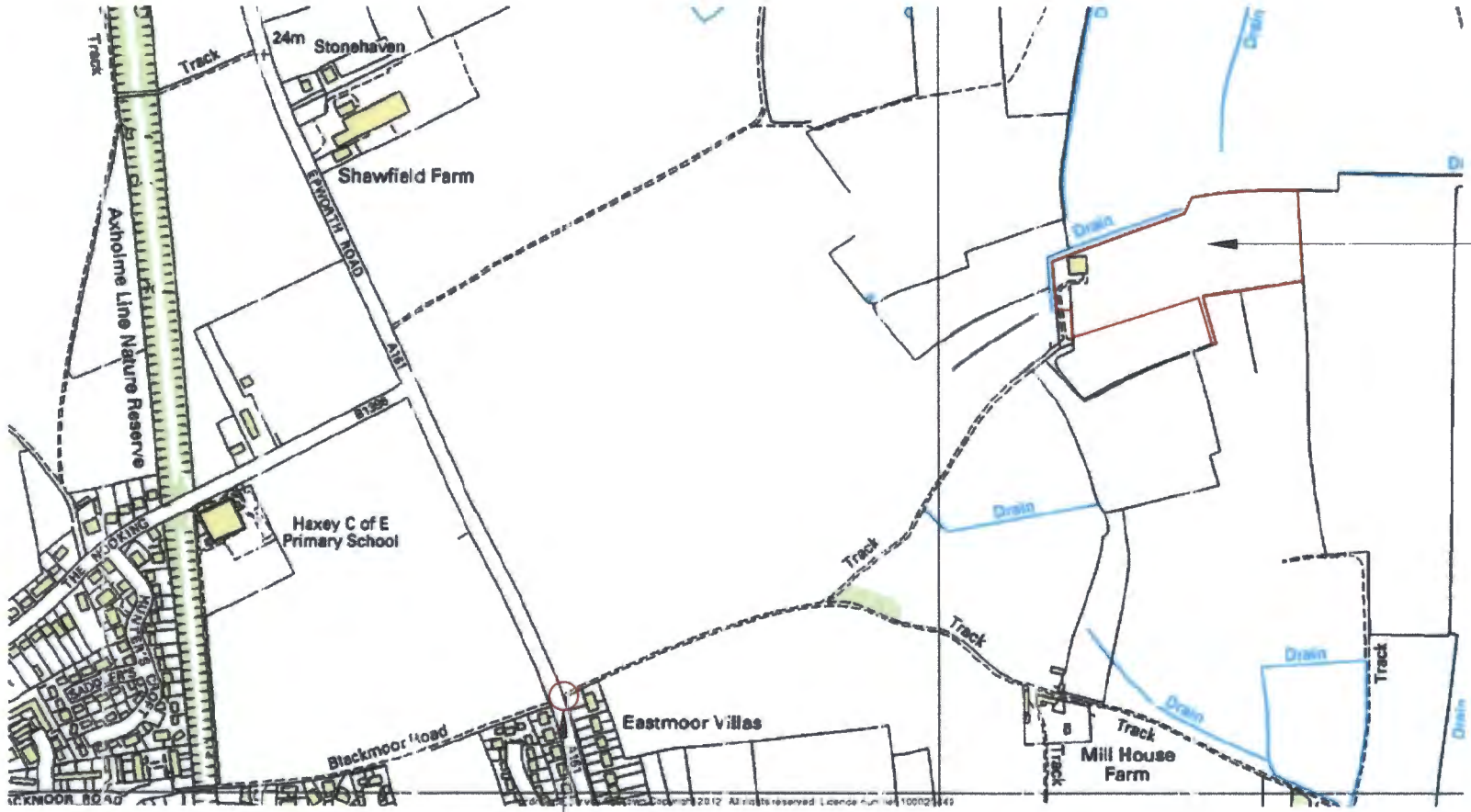
Project: Clampit Creek Haxey

Title: Site Location Plan

Drawing Status: Planning	Date Created: June 2013	Drawing Scale: 1 : 5000
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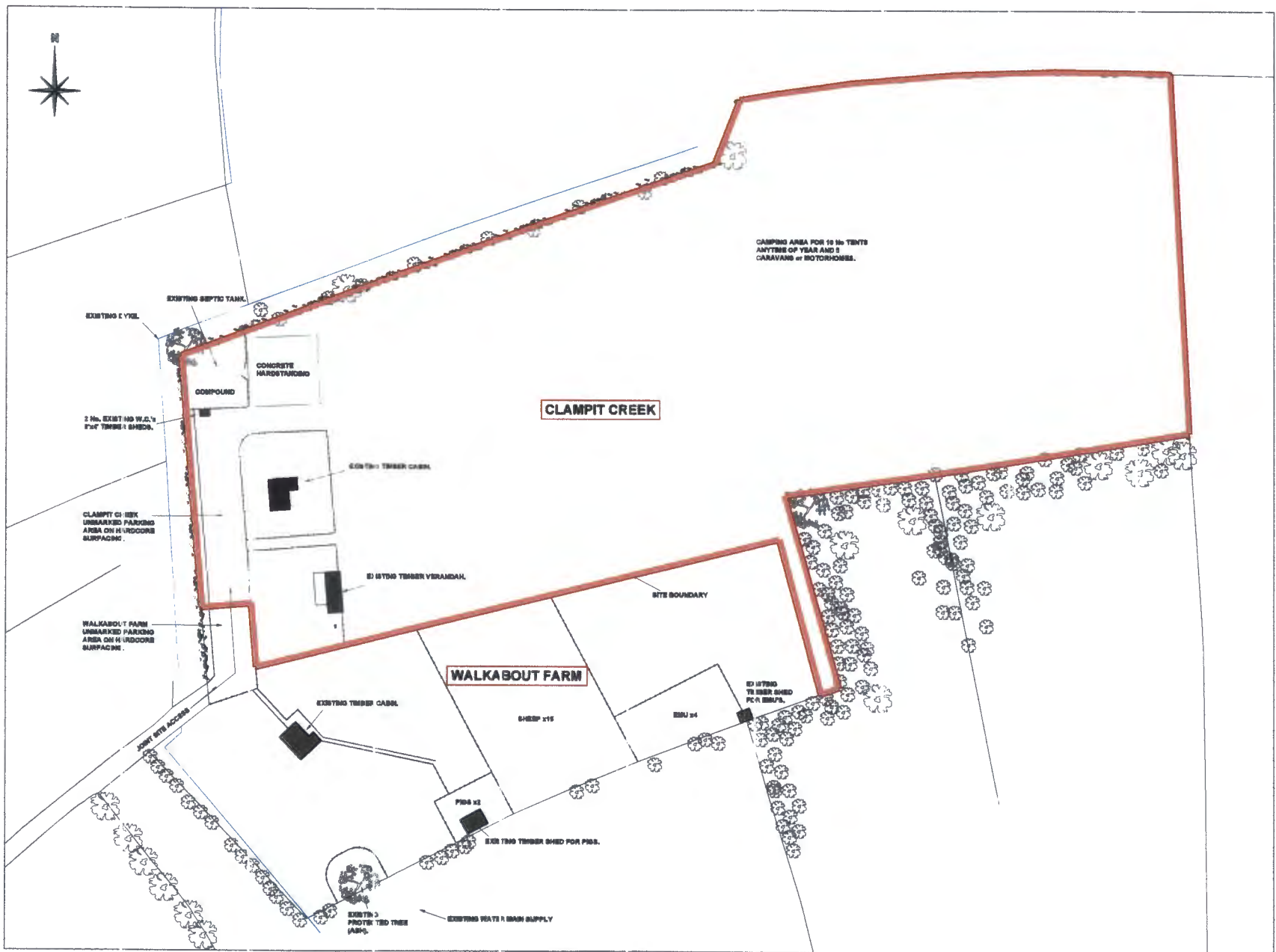
10-002 / A3 / 200

Project Leader: DJD	Drawn By: DJC	Initial Reviewer: DJD
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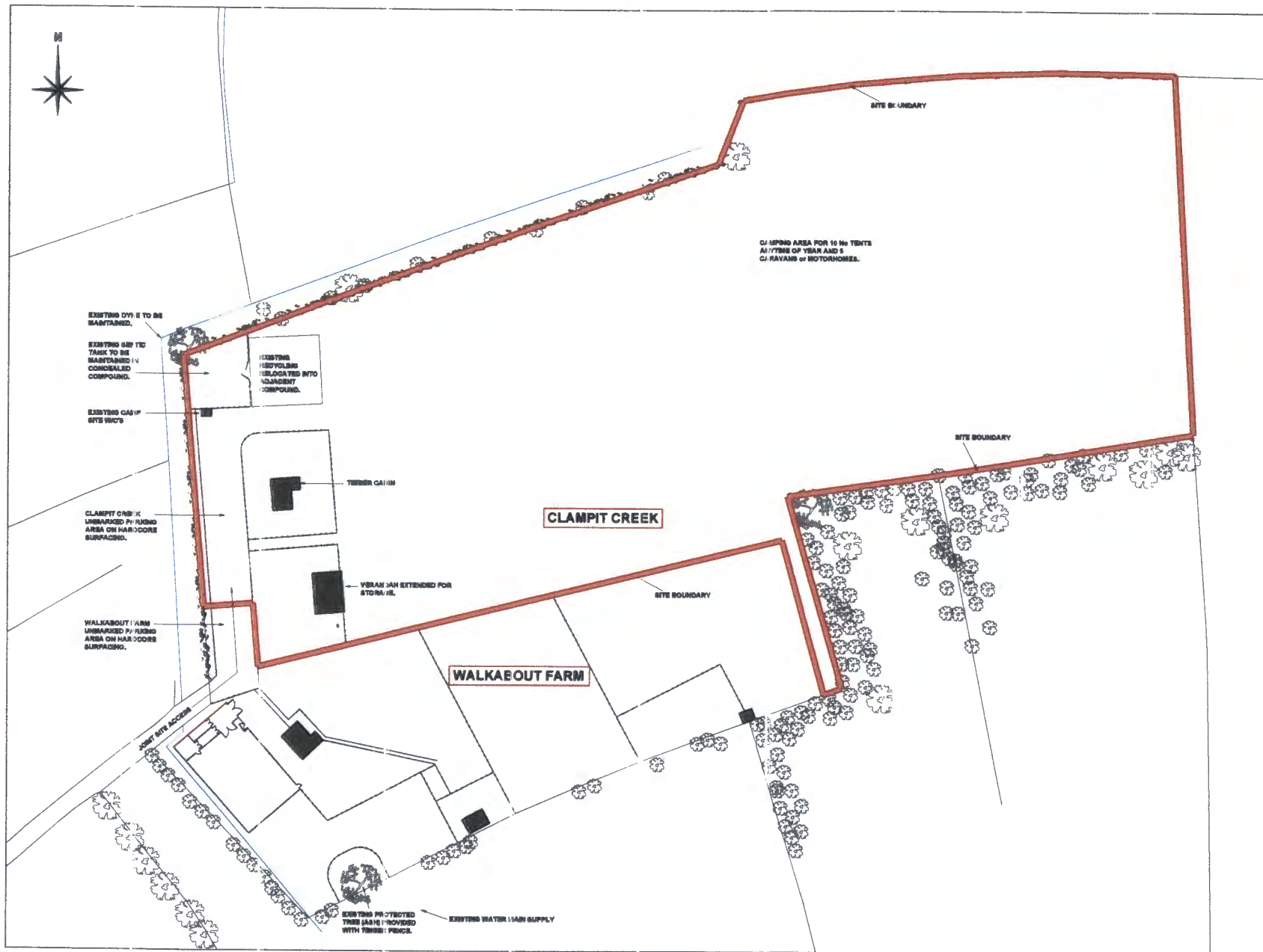
Site Access. Refer to drawing no. 202.

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Dunster		
civil & structural engineering		
Mr Carl Thomason		
Clampit Creek		
Mainly		
Relating Site Layout		
Drawing Title: Planning	Date Issued: June 2015	Drawing No: 11-009
10/00 / A1 / 201		
Prepared by: DJD	Drawn by: DJD	Issued by: DJD



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REFER TO THE FOLLOWING DRAWINGS:
 204 - LD-3 CABIN
 205 - VERANDAH



Existing WC's



Existing Yard & Recycling Area



Existing Yard & Recycling Area

Dunster		civil & structural engineering	
Client: Mr Carl Thomson			
Project: Clampit Creek Mastery			
Title: Proposed Site Arrangement			
Drawing Title: Planning	Drawn By: James DJD	Drawing Scale: 1 : 500	
10-00 / A1 / 203			
Project Lead: DJD	Drawn By: DJC	Initial Review: DJD	

Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust



Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust
Banovallum House
Manor House Street
Horncastle
LN9 5HF

14/1/13

Dear Angela,

Thank you for contacting the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust in connection to your planning application adjacent to our Rush Furlong Nature Reserve at Haxey. After meeting with you on the 19th November 2012, to look at your proposal to extend the barn with no increase in its height, I see no reason to object to the application.

Regards

Matthew Blissett

North West Warden
07717 660226
nwlincs@lincstrust.co.uk