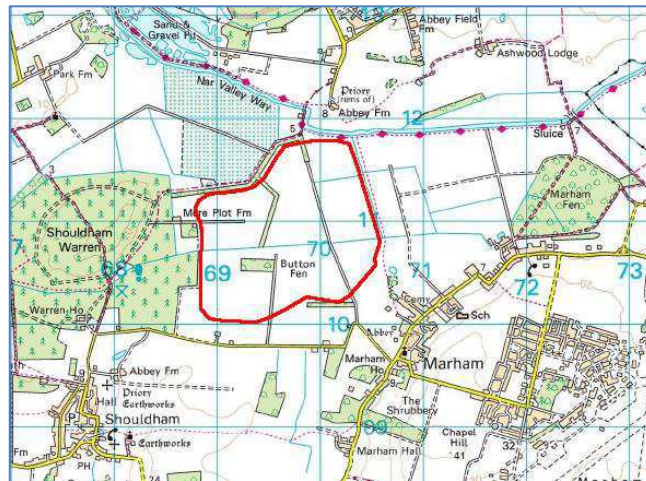




Proposed Silica Sand Allocation Button Fen Marham Norfolk



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Heritage Appraisal

August 2017

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1. Introduction

1.1 THE PROPOSED ALLOCATION

This Heritage Appraisal has been commissioned by Sibelco Europe Limited to provide an overview of archaeology and heritage to accompany a proposed allocation of a silica sand site on Button Fen, Marham, Norfolk.

The location of the proposed allocation area (PAA) is shown on **Figure 1**, centred at NGR TF 697 108.

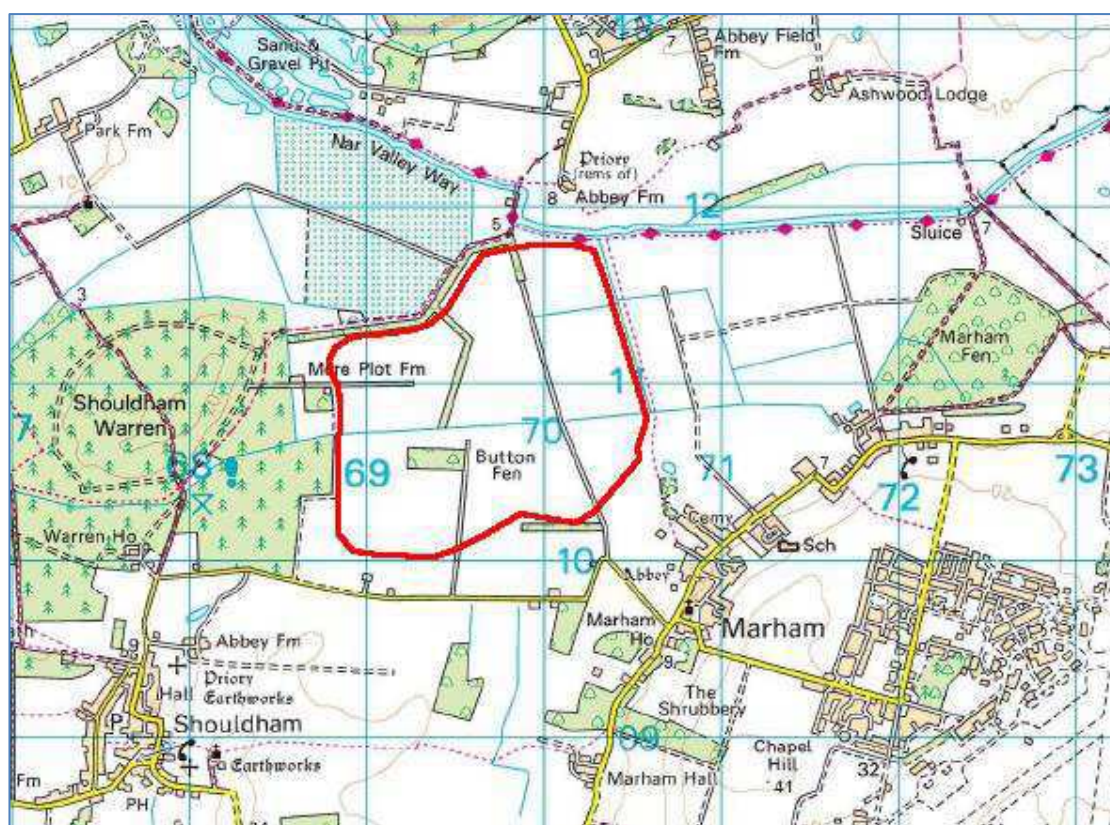


Figure 1 Location Plan © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100043831

1.2 SCOPE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

Cultural heritage is represented by a wide range of assets and features that result from past human use of the landscape. These include historic structures, many still in use, above ground and buried archaeological monuments and remains of all periods, artefacts of anthropological origin and evidence that can help reconstruct past human environments. In its broadest form cultural heritage is represented by the landscape and townscape itself.

1.3 RELEVANT POLICY AND GUIDANCE

1.3.1 National Planning Policy Framework

National planning policy on how cultural heritage should be assessed is given in National Planning Policy Framework, published in May 2012. This covers all aspects of heritage and the historic environment, including listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, battlefields and archaeology.

1.3.2 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)

Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in May 2014 as a companion to the NPPF, replacing a large number of previous Circulars and other supplementary guidance. In respect of heritage decision-making, the PPG stresses the importance of determining applications on the basis of significance, and explains how the tests of harm and impact within the NPPF are to be interpreted.

Certain assets that are deemed to be of particular importance are given legal protection through the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (Scheduled Monuments) and the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas).

1.3.3 Historic England Guidance

The key Historic England¹ publications relevant to mineral extraction are:

- Historic England 2008. *Conservation Principles: Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment*.
- Historic England 2015. *GPA 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets*. Historic England guidance.
- Historic England 2011. *Seeing The History In The View: A Method For Assessing Heritage Significance Within Views*.
- Historic England 2009. *Planning Mitigation and Archaeological Conservation – Resource Assessment*.
- Historic England 2008. *Archaeology and Mineral Extraction*.
- Historic England 2008. *Mineral Extraction and the Historic Environment*.

¹ Historic England includes publications by its preceding name English Heritage

2. Baseline

2.1 DESIGNATED HERITAGE ASSETS

Designated assets within 1.5km of the PAA are shown on **Figure 2** and listed in **Table 1**. Detailed descriptions of the scheduled monuments and churches are included in **Appendix A**.

Table 1 Designated Assets within 1km of the PAA boundary

Reference on Figure 2	List Entry number	Summary Description	Distance from PAA
1	1342419	Grade I. Pentney Priory Gatehouse, built late C14.	400m
	1077622	Grade II Abbey Farmhouse adjacent to Priory, early C18.	400m
2	1304912	Grade II* Remains of Abbey of Saints Mary Barbara And Edmund, Marham	750m
3	221506	Grade I Church of Holy Trinity, Marham	800m
4	221505	Grade II Vicarage, now private house. c.1820	1000m
	1077829	Grade II Outbuilding to north of entrance to Home Farm, Marham	
5	1077830	Grade II Home Farm, Outbuilding and Barn Model farm, 1861, Marham	900m
	1077831		
	1152160		
6	1152156	Grade II Garden Cottage, 1861, Marham	1100m
7	1423960	Grade II former national school, 1866, Shouldham	>1500m
8	1152184	Grade II, Colts Hall and Barn, 1830, Shouldham	>1500m
	1077834		
9	1152173	Grade I Church of All Saints, Shouldham and two Grade II headstones	1500m
10	1077839	Grade II* Church of St Michael, Wormegay	>1500m
	1019666	Pentney Priory scheduled monument	150m
	1016482	Marham Abbey scheduled monument	500m
	1009983	Medieval moated site scheduled monument	700m
	1010572	Shouldham Priory, Bronze Age urnfield and Roman road scheduled monument	600m
	1020446	Shouldham medieval village earthworks scheduled monument	1350m

Other Designated Cultural Heritage Sites

There are no World Heritage Sites, Registered Battlefields or Registered Historic Parks and Gardens within 1km of the PAA boundary.

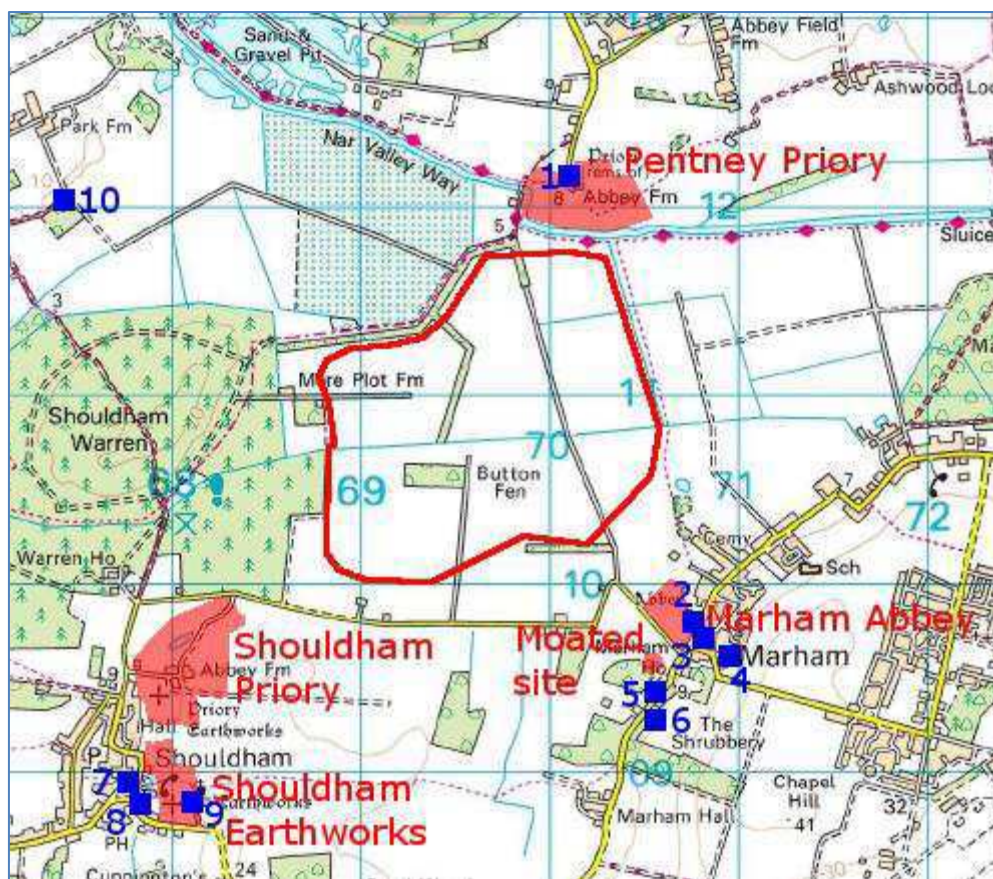


Figure 2 Designated Assets within 1.5km of PAA boundary

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2.2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

2.2.1 Archaeology within the PAA

Norfolk Historic Environment Records (NHER) accessed via Norfolk Heritage Explorer are shown on **Figure 3**.

The PAA was included the Fenland Survey and all the land parcels were subjected to fieldwalking at various levels. This fieldwork produced numerous finds of prehistoric flints of Mesolithic and Neolithic date (for example NHER 18562, 23637, 23197, 23041 and 24281) along with several finds of burnt flints (for example NHER 23195 and 23196), generally taken as an indicator of prehistoric occupation.

Most are general flint finds but one on the western margins of the PAA (NHER 23283) is described a Neolithic flint working site.

In addition to the recovery of flint from the PAA a number of locations have produced pot boilers (for example NHER 23284, 23361, 23282 and 24374) and in particular along the southern part of the PAA.

A site that has produced pot boilers and Roman pottery, as well as crop marks of possible round houses (NHER 24083), extends partially into the southwest corner of the PAA.

An undated human skull (NHER 3464) was recovered from near the middle of the PAA but it had no detailed provenance so it is unclear if it is part of a formal burial.



Figure 3 Norfolk HER entries within PAA

©Base mapping: Norfolk Heritage Explorer (NCC) and Bing

2.2.2 Archaeology in the vicinity of the PAA

The immediate vicinity of the PAA identified several isolated find spots of material ranging in date from the prehistoric to the medieval periods.

Prehistoric

The earliest was a lower Palaeolithic hand axe (NHER 40727) about 850m to the north of the PAA but it was found near a track and it was thought likely to have been brought in with gravel from elsewhere. Several Mesolithic flint blades were recovered immediately to the north of the PAA (NHER 19882). These finds were also associated with other later flints and some unidentified pottery.

A possible Mesolithic flint working site (NHER 24377) was identified about 350m east of the PAA on the edge of a former course of the river Nar during fieldwalking and was subsequently examined by trial trenching. Isolated Mesolithic flints have also been recovered to the immediate west of the PAA (for example NHER19878) perhaps reflecting a general activity in this area.

Many of the other entries around the PAA relate to burnt stones either as part of a defined burnt mound (NHER 23183) about 1.2km to the north of the PAA or as a few pot boilers associated

with worked flints (NHER 19874 and 23179), and as more substantial scatter (NHER 19880 & 19881) to the north of the PAA on the edge of Pentney Island.

Further evidence of prehistoric activity includes the finds of flints such as a blade to the northwest of the PAA (NHER 19875). What would seem to be a more extensive scatter of flints was identified to the east of the Priory (NHER 23012). About 2km to the southeast of the PAA a pair of possible Bronze Age ring ditches were identified on the 2006 Google earth images.

The number of finds of flints and pot boilers indicates that there was activity during the prehistoric period in this landscape, but the absence of coherent sites may suggest most activity was transient, exploiting the natural resources that the edge of the fen had to offer.

Roman

In addition to the sherds from within the southwest corner of the PAA, the Roman period is represented by the find of pottery sherds on the site of Pentney watermill (NHER 3471) a short distance to the north of the PAA. This apparent paucity of activity may reflect the marginality of much of the area around the PAA at that time.

Medieval

As well as the remains of the monastic and ecclesiastical buildings (see **Section 2.3**), a medieval shrunken settlement (NHER 4283) lies about 1.2km to the south west at Shouldham.

Undated and modern

A few crop marks are known from the vicinity of the PAA but they are undated. One group to the north (NHER 19182) included some parallel semi-circular marks, resembling part of a curving trackway. Adjacent to the northern edge of the PAA a large square enclosure (NHER 25774) was considered reminiscent of a Romano-Celtic temple but nothing was recovered from fieldwalking.

An undated crop mark of a possible trackway (NHER16149) is present immediately to the south of the PAA.

To the south east of the PAA lies RAF Marham around which several pill boxes dating from World War II are present (NHER32399, 32401, 19074).

2.3 THE MEDIEVAL LANDSCAPE

On the face of it, the PAA lies in an important medieval setting, surrounded by sites of national importance. In their Statement² following a Hearing Session on 15 March 2017 Historic England described Area of Search E as '*a well-preserved monastic Medieval landscape with high evidential, social and historical value*'.

The PAA lies within the eastern part of the Area of Search and it was recognised that in order to fully understand the importance of this landscape, to identify impacts and make an initial assessment of their significance, and reach a conclusion on the acceptability or otherwise of the PAA from a heritage perspective, an informed, expert opinion was required.

² Norfolk Minerals Site Allocations DPD: Single Issue Silica Sand Review. Statement by Historic England. Area of Search (AOS) E. (Statement following Hearing Session on Thursday 15 March 2017)

Dr Paul Stamper FSA, was asked to carry out a review of Historic England's assertion that this was 'a well-preserved monastic Medieval landscape.'

Dr Stamper left Historic England in 2016 after 19 years, mainly with what is now Listing Group. One of his principal responsibilities as Senior Adviser (alongside checking advice before it went to Government) was overseeing the drafting and production of Historic England's 43 Selection Guides, covering designation standards for listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and protected shipwrecks.

Prior to that he was Inspector of Ancient Monuments in the West Midlands Region.

He has researched and published extensively on England's rural landscapes and places, with the first 13 years of his career being spent writing and editing for the Victoria County History. His private research has focussed on medieval settlement, and for ten years was assistant director of excavations at Wharram Percy deserted village (North Yorkshire). In 2012, with Neil Christie, he jointly edited what is the standard national overview, Medieval Rural Settlement: Britain and Ireland, AD 800-1600.

His wider engagement with the scholarly community has included the Society for Medieval Archaeology (as Assistant Editor, Secretary and Vice President), the Royal Archaeological Institute (Council member and Vice President), the Medieval Settlement Research Group (President), the British Archaeological Awards (trustee and Book Panel chairman) and the journal Landscapes (Joint Editor 2005-15).

He was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1987.

Dr Stamper's report is attached at **Appendix A**.

His conclusion was:

"It can be stated with confidence that the proposed quarry within the PAA would not destroy a 'monastic landscape' in the sense that most people would understand such a descriptor: that is fields, woods and granges contemporary with, or associated with the various monasteries (and churches) around the periphery of the low land where the quarry would lie. Rather it would lie towards the centre of an extensive landscape of grid-like fields alongside the Nar landscape which was created by drainage and enclosure in the quarter century after 1790. That itself was but one part of a much wider transformation of Norfolk's landscapes by improvement at much the same time.

The actual medieval landscape, within – or rather around which - the several monasteries were established and existed throughout their histories was very different. This was extensive fenland either side of, and especially to the south of the Nar, almost certainly prone to seasonal flooding.

One of the principal issues likely to be faced with any application for quarrying would be the setting of designated sites and buildings, especially after the cessation of work. As has been established above, in the medieval period and until the end of the 18th century the PAA lay within a wider area of fenland, probably seasonally flooded. It can be argued, with some confidence, that a post-quarry restoration to a lake with a wetland margin would be a return to a more authentic historic landscape – looked at in the long term, and certainly in terms of the designated medieval sites and monuments around the Nar – than the current early 19th-

century fieldscape. It would also offer other potential benefits, not least in terms of biodiversity.”

This is borne out by examination of current floodzones recorded by the Environment Agency (**Figure 4**) that show how the designated monastic sites lie on higher land and that the PAA sits lower in an area that before flood defence schemes and drains would have been wet.

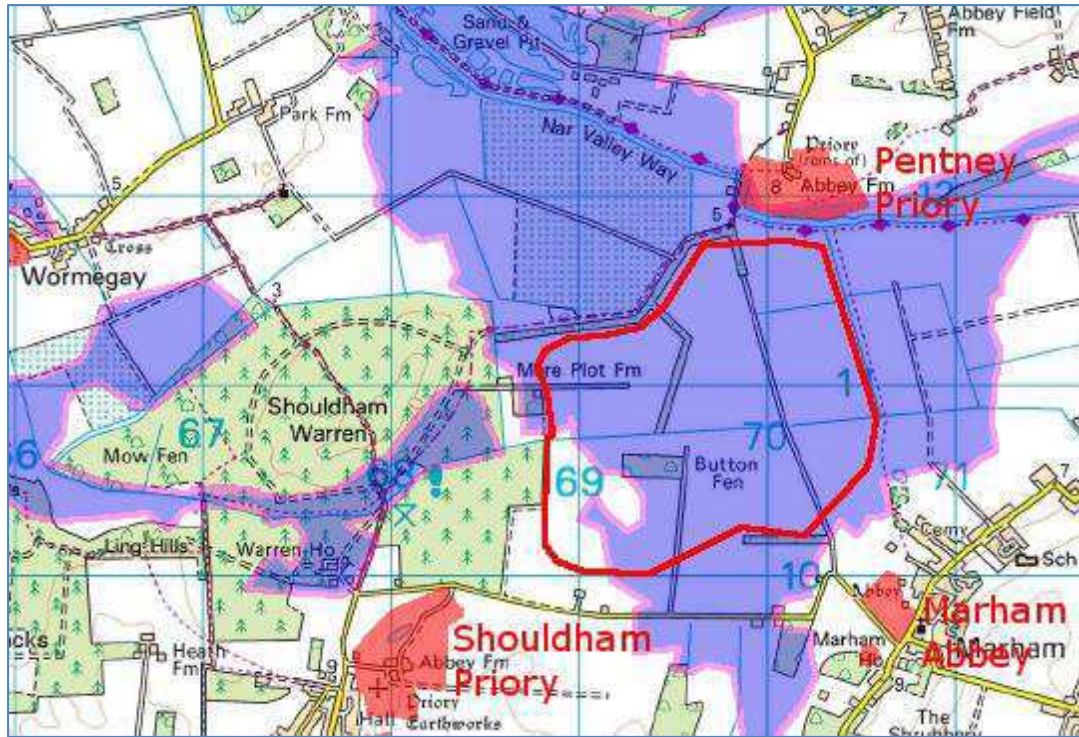


Figure 4 Flood zones (source data: <https://data.gov.uk/data>, accessed 07/07/17)

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3. Conclusion

The background data in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record, give a good indicator of the potential for archaeology within the PAA. Lying as it does within an area that would have been wet during history and prehistory, and probably under water for periods of time, it is not surprising that archaeology seems focussed on slight islands and higher ground within and at the peripheries of the fen. There is clear evidence for prehistoric activity, most likely transient rather than settlement.

Should the PAA come forward as a planning application further desk-based assessment and field-based evaluation would be required to inform that application and potential mitigation.

The historical and visual setting of the PAA has been assessed by Dr Paul Stamper, FSA. Historic England's claim that mineral workings within Area of Search E could destroy a '*well preserved monastic medieval landscape*' is '*simply not tenable*'. The PAA would lie towards the centre of an extensive landscape of grid-like fields alongside the Nar landscape which was created by drainage and enclosure in the quarter century after 1790. In the medieval period, the land of the PAA was extensive fenland almost certainly prone to seasonal flooding. He concludes that:

'It can be argued, with some confidence, that a post-quarry restoration to a lake with a wetland margin would be a return to a more authentic historic landscape – looked at in the long term, and certainly in terms of the designated medieval sites and monuments around the Nar – than the current early 19th-century fieldscape. It would also offer other potential benefits, not least in terms of biodiversity.'

On current evidence, and whilst further evaluation work would be required, there are no overriding constraints to the allocation of this site.

Appendix A

Assessment of the medieval and later landscape



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PAUL STAMPER HERITAGE

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Marham Proposed Silica Sand Allocation Assessment of the medieval and later landscape

Introduction

The Proposed Allocation Area (PAA) lies to the south of the River Nar, centrally placed within a wider area of low-lying land embracing parts of the historic parishes of Wormegay, Pentney, Shouldham, Marham and Narborough. This lies towards the centre of a band of low-lying land down the western side of central Norfolk's Boulder Clay Plateau.

The Landscape of the Nar Valley

Before the later 18th century

Detailed research has yet to be undertaken on the central reaches of the River Nar in the Middle Ages and the earlier post-medieval centuries. However, Susan Oosthuizen's recent study *The Anglo-Saxon Fenland* (2017) firmly establishes the wider regional context, that this was a landscape – like many others across England, such as the Somerset Levels, and the Weald Moors in Shropshire - which was rich in resources: grazing for cattle, hay, fish and eels, wildfowl and reeds. Management of these resources, and their allocation between communities, was complex, sophisticated and well-developed over many centuries.

Along the Nar, and notably around the PAA, the location of historic villages and other sites, including monasteries, clearly shows how settlement – as was typical on the fenlands - was confined to the slightly higher land, including 'islands', at the edges of the low-lying land either side of the river. Until the end of the 18th century evidence shows this low-lying land was wetland, generally termed 'fen', which probably included a limited amount of wet woodland or carr.¹ Modelling of the modern flood zone (**Figure 1**) suggests that much of this land would have been flooded during the winter months.

Oosthuizen shows how such flooding was greatly to the benefit of the fen pastures. She writes (page 11), 'communities were able to make good livings from this watery landscape only because they had mastered the detailed expertise required to manage wetlands and marshes, lakes and meadows sustainably. They knew where the flood line lay above which permanent settlement was safe from flooding; they knew that the different types of rich grazing that fed their herds depended on episodic winter flooding, to different depths, of the fen's natural water meadows – and how to maintain them; they managed stands of reed and sedge to prevent natural succession to woodland; they extracted peat without exhausting turbaries; and they snares sustainable volumes of fish and water in small and larger watercourses, ditches and lakes.'

William Faden's *Map of Norfolk* (1797) provides a detailed overview of the county just at the point when the wholesale transformation of its landscape was starting with the enclosure of open fields, commons and fens (**Figure 2**). It shows a broad swathe of fenland extending west from Narborough, principally although not exclusively extending south of the river, for

up to 2.5km around Marham. This probably gives an accurate impression of landscape character in the preceding millennium.

Enclosure of the wetlands

The fenlands along this section of the River Nar were enclosed, allotted, drained and improved following a series of Acts passed in the 25 years after 1790, part of the great wave of enclosure of open fields, commons and fens seen across Norfolk at this time largely precipitated by rising corn prices.² The present landscape, a grid-like network of fields now largely under arable cultivation, was created at that time. References to the various bills and Acts which facilitated this provide a chronology, even if detailed local research has yet to establish the details of who drove the process, or its mechanisms and costs.

Taken in chronological order, in 1794 5,570 acres were enclosed in Shouldham and Shouldham Thorpe (otherwise known as Garboise Thorpe).³ In the same year a petition was presented to Parliament on 20 February 1794 for the enclosure of wastes at Marham, said to total 3,700 acres,⁴ this being engrossed on 28 March 1794.⁵ At enclosure approximately 60ha was left unenclosed to provide resources for the poor of the parish. This survives today as Marham Fen, which is owned by the Marham Pools Trust. Income from the site is derived from a leasehold to Anglian Water which abstracts drinking water from the aquifer to supply King's Lynn.⁶ The legalities associated with enclosure began for Wormegay in 1806⁷, apparently with enclosure in 1811.⁸ The common lands of Pentney were enclosed in 1809.⁹ The date of enclosure in Narborough has not been found.

In 1815 an Act was passed to drain Wormegay, Shouldham, Marham, Middleton, Pentney, East Winch and (West) Bilney¹⁰ and it may have been after this that the greater part of drainage and land re-allotment along the Nar was undertaken.

The new landscape, probably still under construction, was mapped in 1815 by the Ordnance Survey (**Figure 3**) as part of its national survey at two inches to the mile which formed the basis for the later published one-inch map. The two-inch drawing shows the new grid fields, although there may have been a degree of extrapolation – with work on the landscape perhaps in progress – as in places there is a lack of a precise correlation in terms of field layouts with those shown on the first edition 6-inch map of 1884 (**Figure 4**). Be that as it may, comparison of the two-inch map with Faden's map of just 16 years earlier shows what a radical transformation there had been over this period along the reaches of the Nar.

Monasteries in the Norfolk landscape

Leaving aside preceptories and hospitals, there were 38 monasteries founded in Norfolk between 1066 and c.1200, and 31 in Suffolk. By 1215 the Diocese of Norwich contained about a tenth of all English monasteries.¹¹ The number of religious houses in East Anglia continued to grow in the 13th century and later – in part because of the popularity of the reforming orders – and by the end of the Middle Ages there were 70 monastic houses in Norfolk alone.¹² Mapping of these shows that, rather than being an exceptional cluster, the several monastic houses in the countryside around the PAA – Pentney Priory, Marham Abbey, Shouldham Priory, Wormegay Priory and Blackborough Priory - form part of a swathe of monasteries extending across north-western Norfolk, broadly north-west of a

line from south of Downham Market to Cromer (**Figure 5**).¹³ These share the soils of the Good Sands region and the fringes of the western escarpment on the edge of the Fens.¹⁴

As has been seen above, the landscape, within – or rather around which - the several monasteries were established was an extensive fenland either side of and especially to the south of the Nar, almost certainly prone to seasonal flooding. While settlements, too, of necessity took advantage of the ridges and islands of higher ground around the periphery, some of the monasteries chose sites – or were placed by patrons – in isolation: Pentney is one example. There is, however, a caveat, that what today may appear an isolated site may not, in fact, have been so in the Middle Ages. All Saints' church at Shouldham is one example of a religious building which now stands alone but which, when established, archaeology suggests may have lain within or alongside a settlement (see below, Gazetteer).

Setting this last caveat aside, it is undeniable that that many of the monasteries in this part of Norfolk did occupy relatively isolated sites. This was recognised by contemporaries; for instance, writing in the early 12th century the Peterborough monk Hugh Candidus suggested of the islands of the Fens: 'I believe God himself raised [the islands], with the intention that it should be the habitation of those servants of God who had chosen to dwell there.'¹⁵

The fundamental question – alluded to in the above paragraph - remains why isolated locations, separated from the secular world, were favoured. As is well known, many monastic orders looked to the eremitic traditions, seeking solitude to bring them nearer to God. There were also practical considerations. Looking back before the Conquest Tim Pestell has observed that 'In the Middle Anglo-Saxon period both *monasteria* and secular centres were located on islands or peninsulas next to navigable waterways – the occupants of both types of site had much to gain from being conspicuous in the countryside (and with good transport links).'¹⁶ Some of these locations may already have been thought of as 'special', with holy or ritual associations, as has recently been suggested for various monastic sites in Lincolnshire which lie on or close to waterways and their crossing points.¹⁷ The aspirations – and practical thinking - of patrons, too, will have played their part, as Tom Williamson notes: 'The frequent association [of monasteries] with wetlands presumably reflects the desire of noble or royal founders to provide both isolated locations and extensive estates, which were of comparatively little value but which could be improved by careful management and investment.'¹⁸

Oosthuizen's work supports that conclusion, but offers one important corrective: while perhaps of comparatively low value in rental terms, these were landscapes which had already been carefully and extensively exploited for many centuries, with management systems carefully attuned to their local ecosystems.

Setting and views

The key Historic England guidance documents on setting and views are its Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3, *The Setting of Heritage Assets* (2015), and *Seeing the History in the View* (2011).

The definitions of setting and views therein are extremely broad, and following these it is acknowledged that the general area of the PAA is visible from some of the designated heritage assets in the surrounding countryside, albeit from afar and often with woods and

plantations at least partially obscuring lines of sight. However, a comprehensive field visit on 11 July 2017 to assess views and setting from publicly accessible sites and rights of way suggested that the only designated asset which the proposed quarry would have an impact upon in terms of setting and views would be Pentney Priory and its gatehouse which stands on a low bluff north of the river.

Careful boundary treatments could be employed to screen views from the other designated assets, which in any case are greater than 0.5km distant.

However, as established above, the modern landscape of the PAA and its surrounds is of a completely different character from what it was until the later 18th century, when the fenland – almost certainly liable to extensive seasonal flooding – was drained, enclosed and the modern grid-field arable landscape created. The notion that the ecclesiastical heritage assets stand within a ‘well preserved monastic medieval landscape’ as stated by Historic England in its Statement following Hearing Session on Thursday 15 March 2017 is simply not tenable.

The Setting of Heritage Assets (page 5) states that ‘Settings of heritage assets change over time. Understanding this history of change will help to determine how further development within the asset’s setting is likely to affect the contribution made by setting to the significance of the heritage asset. Settings of heritage assets which closely resemble the setting in which the asset was constructed are likely to contribute to significance but settings which have changed may also themselves enhance significance, for instance where townscape character has been shaped by cycles of change and creation over the long term.’

In the case of the landscape within which the PAA lies neither of those scenarios applies, as the changes wrought to the landscape from the 1790s were sufficiently radical to utterly transform its essential character from fenland to topographically regimented farmland – and therefore to change fundamentally the setting of sites around its periphery. In this respect there is a complete dislocation between the setting experienced by the sites and monuments in the medieval period and their modern setting.

Conclusion

It can be stated with confidence that the proposed quarry within the PAA would not destroy a ‘monastic landscape’ in the sense that most people would understand such a descriptor: that is fields, woods and granges contemporary with, or associated with the various monasteries (and churches) around the periphery of the low land where the quarry would lie. Rather it would lie towards the centre of an extensive landscape of grid-like fields alongside the Nar landscape which was created by drainage and enclosure in the quarter century after 1790. That itself was but one part of a much wider transformation of Norfolk’s landscapes by improvement at much the same time.

The actual medieval landscape, within – or rather around which - the several monasteries were established and existed throughout their histories was very different. This was extensive fenland either side of, and especially to the south of the Nar, almost certainly prone to inundation and seasonal flooding.

One of the principal issues likely to be faced with any application for quarrying would be the setting of designated sites and buildings, especially after the cessation of work. As has been

established above, in the medieval period and until the end of the 18th century the PAA lay within a wider area of wet fenland, often flooded. It can be argued, with some confidence, that a post-quarry restoration to a lake with a wetland margin would be a return to a more authentic historic landscape – looked at in the long term, and certainly in terms of the designated medieval sites and monuments around the Nar – than the current early 19th-century fieldscape. It would also offer other potential benefits, not least in terms of biodiversity.

FIGURES

Marham Proposed Silica Sand Allocation

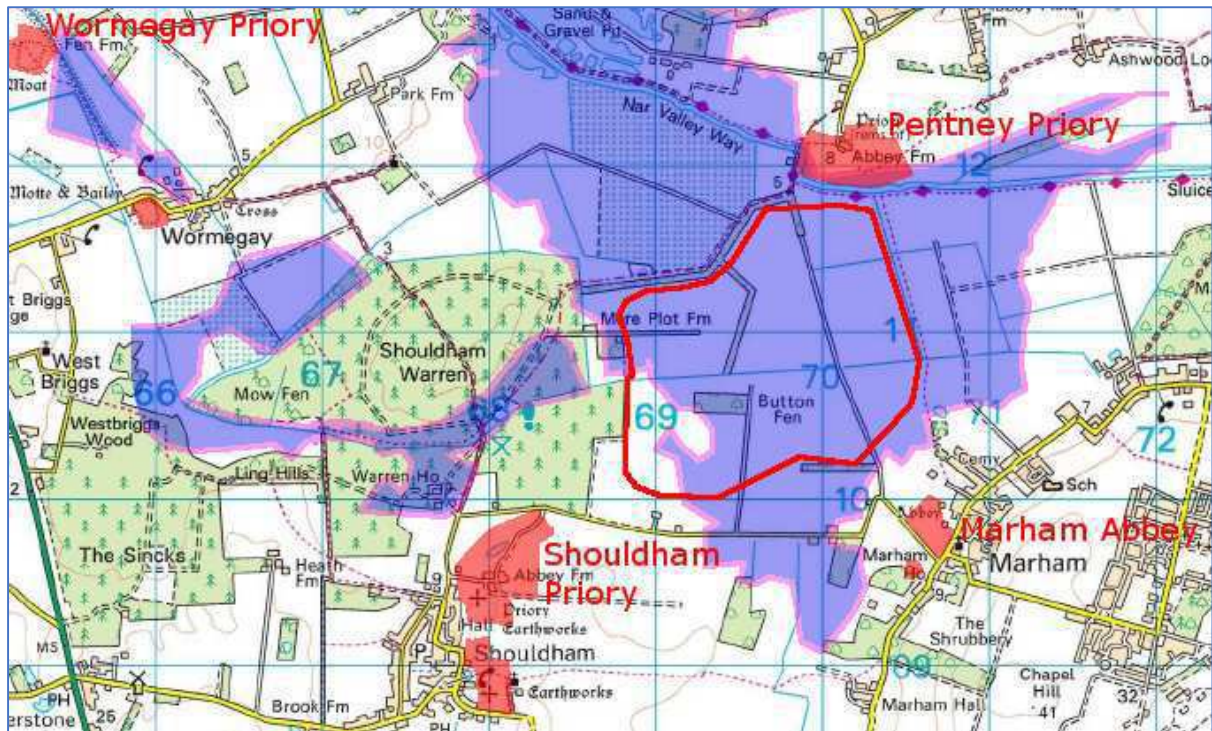


Figure 1 Flood zones (source data: <https://data.gov.uk/data>, accessed 07/07/17)

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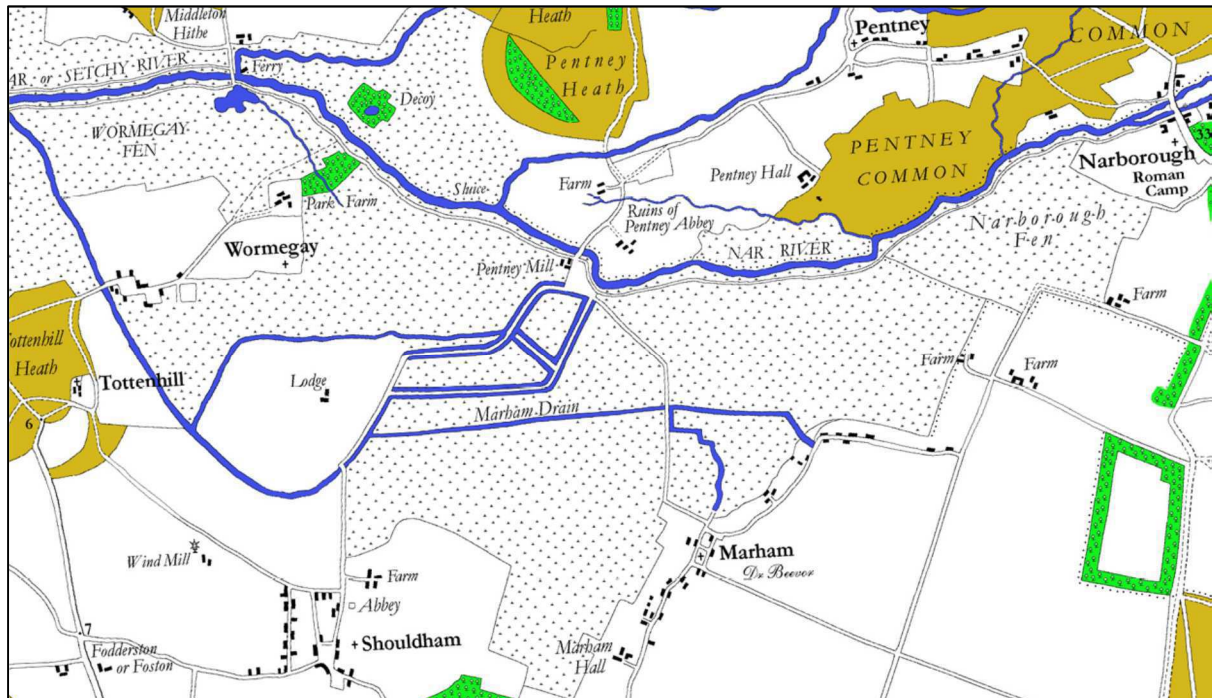


Figure 2 William Faden, *Map of Norfolk* (1797)

From A. Macnair and T. Williamson, *William Faden and Norfolk's 18th-Century Landscape*, 2010

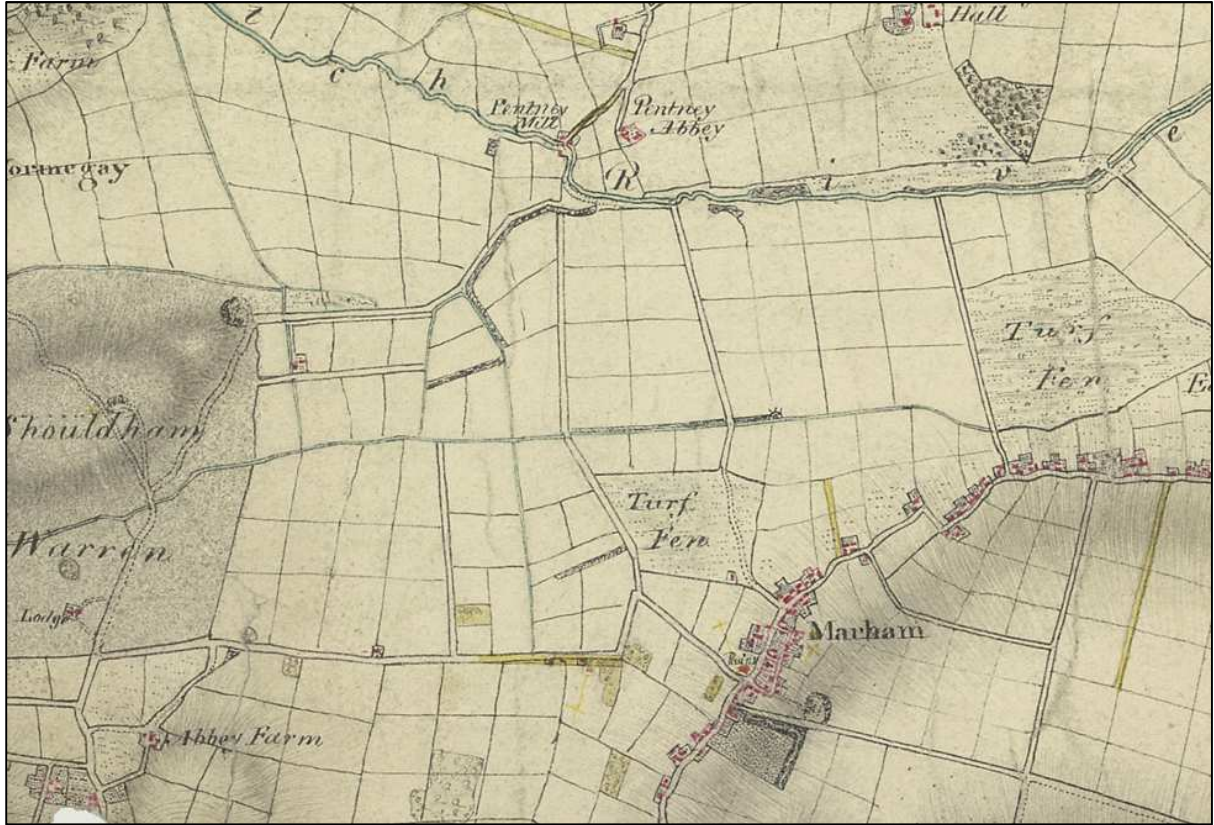


Figure 3 Ordnance Survey Drawing (1813)



Figure 4 Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 6 inch (1884)

Marham Proposed Silica Sand Allocation

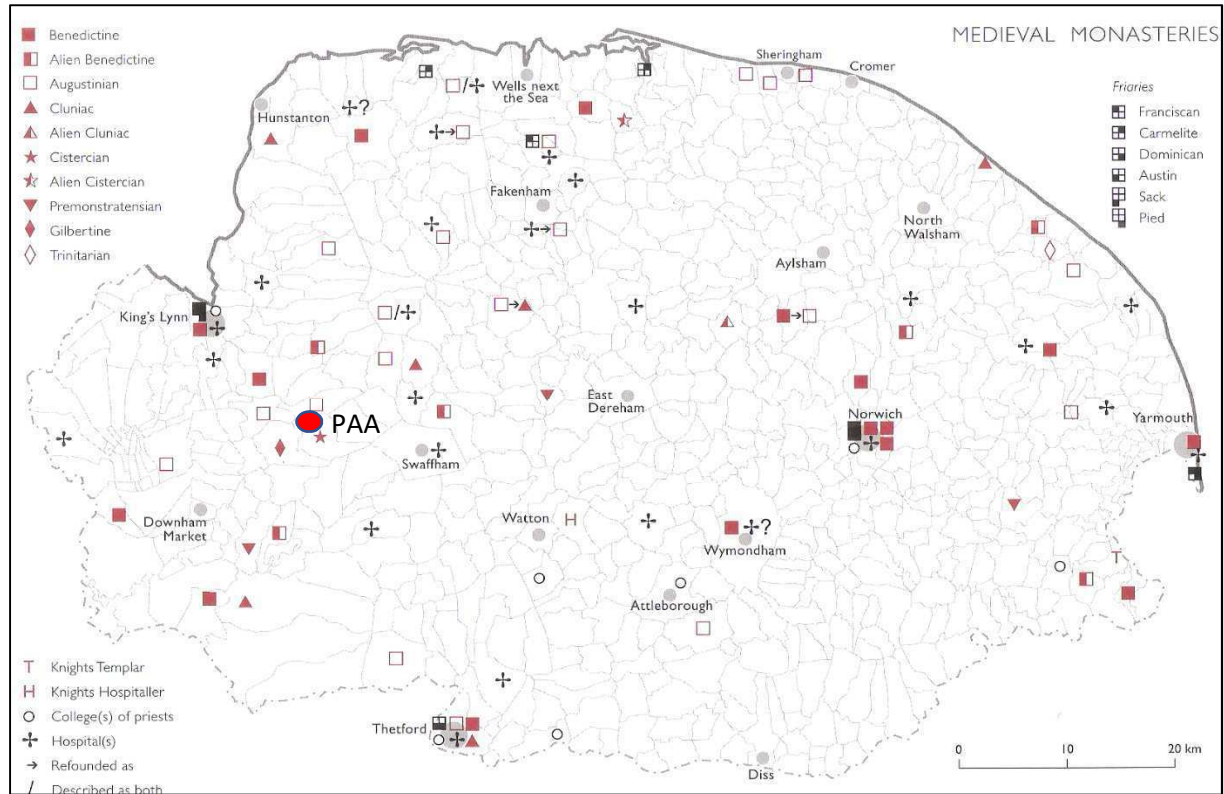


Figure 5 Medieval Monasteries in Norfolk

From T. Ashwin and A. Davison, *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk* (2005)

GAZETTEER OF PRINCIPAL HERITAGE ASSETS

MARHAM

Marham Abbey

Marham was an abbey of Cistercian nuns, founded in 1249 by Isabel, widow of Hugh de Albini, earl of Arundel.¹⁹ The original endowment was the lands of the foundress at Marham, together with the manor and all its services.

Although at least two churches were appropriated to the abbey, overall its early endowments were modest and as a consequence it was excused payment of tenths in the taxation of 1291. Four churches were appropriated to it later on, and in 1385 the abbess and nuns received grants from Richard Holdyche and John Clenchewarton of the manor of Beleter, in Marham, and of 160 acres of land, forty of meadow, and 10s. in rent, of the yearly value of ten marks.

A lease of the site of the abbey and its demesne lands was granted in 1537 to Thomas Bukworth, serjeant-at-arms. On 3 July 1546 this property was granted to Sir Nicholas Hare and John Hare, citizens of London.

Marham Abbey stood on the western fringe of Marham village, a little to the west of its parish church, Holy Trinity, which has Norman fabric. There was a second parish church in the village, dedicated to St Andrew, 200m to the south-east of Holy Trinity where the post-medieval Vicarage stands. That church was still standing in 1485, but only fragments remain today.²⁰

The abbey precinct is known to have been enclosed by a wall which is referred to in a document of 1627, and in the 18th century was recorded as still standing.²¹ Its line is marked by a bank. All that is now visible of the monastic church is the south wall of the aisleless nave which has been dated to the 13th century. The conventual buildings were ranged around a three-sided cloister about 31 metres square which abutted the south side of the nave. To the north the ruined walls of the outer parlour, dated to the 14th century, still stand in places to a height of 5 metres. The remainder of the west range and the south and east ranges are marked by earthworks up to 1.5 metres high. Adjoining the main claustral complex to the south was a smaller court measuring 20 metres east-west by 14 metres, enclosed on the east side by the projecting southern end of the east range and on the west by a building which abutted the western end of the south claustral range. This is likely to have been part of the kitchen complex. About 64 metres WNW of the abbey church are the well-defined, turf-covered footings of a group of buildings ranged around three sides of a courtyard. These were probably agricultural buildings. The monastic fishponds with their associated water management features lie to the west of the claustral complex and east of the agricultural buildings.

The site and ruins of Marham Abbey are a Scheduled Ancient Monument²² and the ruins are listed Grade II*.²³

Church of Holy Trinity

Adjoining the site of the Abbey to the east is the 14th-century and later parish church of Holy Trinity (listed Grade I).²⁴ To the south-east is the undesignated site of the village's second parish church, St Andrew's.

PENTNEY

Pentney Priory

It is believed that Pentney Priory was founded late in the reign of Henry I (d. 1135) as a house of the Augustinian canons.²⁵ The Augustinians were regular canons, that is ordained priests, living a quasi-monastic, regular life (i.e. life according to a rule) in a community. The Gregorian Reform Movement rekindled an interest in the communal life for canons and recognised the need for a new rule, which would cater for the needs of those communities of priests who lived together and *had all things in common*, but who were also deeply involved with the world outside the cloister. The largest of the orders was the Augustinian canons, so-called on account of their adherence to St Augustine's 'Rule' and also known as Austin canons, or 'black canons' after the colour of their habits. They took vows of poverty, chastity and obedience and lived according to a monastic *horarium*, much as monks did. Unlike monks, however, their routine included a range of extra-claustral activities, such as the servicing of parish churches (they were, after all, ordained priests), the staffing and maintenance of pilgrims' hostels and hospitals, and other, similar duties, which brought them into close contact with the lay community. The regular canons were the numerically strongest religious group in the medieval British Isles, with around 170 houses in England.

Pentney was one of the larger Augustinian houses, probably with over 20 canons before the Black Death (1348), but only 12 in 1381. The number of canons fluctuated a little in the late Middle Ages, but their number (alongside the prior) suggests a relatively prosperous and successful house: 17 in 1492, at least 12 in the early 16th century, and up to 15 at the priory's dissolution in 1537.

Pentney appears to be one of the earliest examples of a monastery established – in this case in 1135 - on an 'island' site.

Other than a fine late 14th-century gatehouse the remains of the priory now consist of little more than foundations.²⁶ Material from the priory has been re-used in Abbey Farm and its outbuildings which now occupies the site. Cropmarks to the south seen on air photographs may be associated with the site. Excavation has revealed pits apparently for burning stonework for lime production at the time of the dissolution. Geophysical survey has located the nave and transepts of the church.

The site of the priory is a Scheduled Ancient Monument;²⁷ the priory gatehouse is listed Grade I²⁸ and the 18th-century Abbey Farmhouse alongside Grade II.²⁹

SHOULDHAM

Shouldham Priory

Shouldham, a double-house Gilbertine priory, was founded by Geoffrey FitzPiers, earl of Essex, in the reign of Richard I (1189-99).³⁰ The founder granted it his manor of Shouldham, the churches of All Saints' and St. Margaret's in Shouldham, and those of Carbaysthorp, Stoke Ferry, and Wereham. By a further charter Geoffrey bestowed on this priory twelve shops, with the rooms over them, in the parish of St. Mary's Colechurch, London, for the purpose of sustaining the lights of the church and of providing the sacramental wine. Other endowments followed later, and the taxation roll of 1291 showed that this priory had an annual income of £207 7s. 9½d., holding property in twenty-six Norfolk parishes, in addition to the shops in the city of London.

Robert de Syvington occurs as prior in 1387, when his signature was appended to a deed securing a pension of 23s. 4d. to the bishop of Norwich on the appropriation of the church of Holy Trinity, Caister. Pope Boniface in 1392 confirmed the appropriation of Caister church, valued at 40 marks, the priory being valued at 200 marks. The confirmation states that the other priory buildings had been recently overthrown, almost from their foundations, by floods of river and sea (*aquarum et maritimorum fluctuum*), by fires, and a great gale, and its possessions in great part destroyed. A fitting portion was to be assigned for a vicar, who was to be a secular clerk.

In 1535 when the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* was drawn up the clear annual value of the priory was £138 18s. 1d. The house was surrendered on 15 October 1538. Its complement then comprised on the one hand a prior, sub-prior and eight other canons, and on the other a prioress, a sub-prioress and five other nuns.

After the dissolution the priory and its possessions remained in the hands of the Crown until 1553, when it was sold to Thomas Mildmay for £1,049.

Pestell notes that the house's location was an isolated one, to the north of Shouldham village.³¹ The upstanding ruins of the priory were demolished c.1831. Clear cropmarks seen in 1986 showed the priory to have had three east chapels and a plan like that of Whatton (Yorks.).³² Abbey Farm stands on the site of the nave.³³ A complex of water management channels forms part of the scheduled site.

The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.³⁴

All Saints' church

Fieldwalking has demonstrated that All Saints' parish church (listed Grade I³⁵), standing on high ground near the priory site, was surrounded by Anglo-Saxon occupation. However, the absence of diagnostic pottery of 12th- to 14th-century date indicates that by the time of the priory's foundation settlement had moved away, probably in the 12th century, to the site of the present village green site in a nearby valley, 700m to the south.³⁶ A large area of medieval settlement earthworks below the church to the west, between it and the village, are scheduled.³⁷

Shouldham Warren

From the Middle Ages until the 19th century rabbit warrens were established in large numbers in many parts of the country, notably uplands and heaths. Rabbits were bred for meat and fur, and the larger warrens produced thousands of 'coney' each year. The

number of warrens grew markedly in the post-medieval centuries, peaking in the 19th century. In Norfolk there was a particular concentration of warrens on the sandy soils of its Brecklands, and the Breckland Society reported on 26 of these in a report published in 2010.³⁸

The date when Shouldham Warren was established is currently unknown. It was, however, in existence by 1634 when a lease stipulated the numbers of rabbits that had to be supplied to its owner alongside an annual rent.³⁹ Mapped by the Ordnance Survey in 1813, with its warrener's lodge towards its south-east corner (Warrener's House remains today), the warren remained in operation in 1845 when it belonged to Sir Thos. Hare, Bart., the lord of the manor.⁴⁰ It is today mixed woodland managed by the Forestry Commission with amenity features for walkers.

WORMEGAY

Wormegay Priory

The Augustinian priory of Wormegay was founded 1166 x 75 by Reginald de Warenne, who had come into the barony of Wormegay by marriage to his wife Alice. He was probably responsible for the foundation of both the castle in the village and the priory a kilometre to the north-west.⁴¹ As Pestell notes this appears to be a classic, if late, example of the twinning of these features as part of a wider redevelopment of the landscape.⁴² There is some evidence that there was a small, pre-existing, religious community here which was refounded as a fully constituted priory.

Its endowments were modest, and probably never more than seven canons. In 1468 its poverty was such that the bishop of Norwich united it to the priory of Pentney, of which, from that date, it was reckoned a cell. It was dissolved in 1537.

The priory stands on a narrow spur of land extending into the marshland, according with a pattern seen elsewhere, as at Mendham, of an extant community being removed from its original church to an island-like location. Nevertheless, the priory remained intervisible with its lord's castle,⁴³ a Scheduled Ancient Monument.⁴⁴

The only remains of the priory are the surrounding moat and two fishponds. The site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.⁴⁵

Parish church of St Michael

Wormegay's 13th-century and later parish church, dedicated to St Michael, stands in an isolated position a kilometre east of the village. It occupies a slight spur of land, looking across the floodplain of the Nar although the view is entirely screened by trees along the north-east boundary of the churchyard. The church is listed Grade II*.⁴⁶

Dr Paul Stamper, FSA

19 July 2017

¹<http://www.norfolkbiodiversity.org/pdf/reportsandpublications/Historical%20evidence%20report.pdf>

² T. Ashwin and A. Davison, *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk* (2005), 131-2

³ Arthur Young, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Norfolk* (1804), 161; William White, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of Norfolk* (1845)

⁴<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=qXZIAQAAMAAJ&pg=PA229&lpg=PA229&dq=marham+inclosure&source=bl&ots=f24IANSQYw&sig=qiMLKtGoAmziaEnkOgKfyusWaZM&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwimycPQuO3UAhUBDcAKHQUNAAUQ6AEIKzAA#v=onepage&q=marham%20inclosure&f=false>

⁵https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=BRpDAAAACAAJ&pg=PA463&lpg=PA463&dq=marham+inclosure&source=bl&ots=N26v-WWctD&sig=ETy50acJlk0o_Ay5BRvxR8N4JgM&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwimycPQuO3UAhUBDcAKHQUNAAUQ6AEIPzAF#v=onepage&q=marham%20inclosure&f=false

⁶ <http://www.norfolkwildlifetrust.org.uk/news/all-news/2013-06-28-the-magic-of-marham>

⁷<https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=xRpDAAAACAAJ&pg=PA720&lpg=PA720&dq=wormegay+enclosure&source=bl&ots=RHCI9AYSUV&sig=ejMC5TdV97XtBS6U9m2Y88im35s&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0ahUKEwiF04uomlbVAhUpDcAKHe97BQAQ6AEIVDAI#v=onepage&q=wormegay%20enclosure&f=false>

⁸ <http://www.origins.org.uk/genuki/NFK/places/w/wormegay/white1883.shtml>

⁹ <http://apling.freesevers.com/Villages/Pentney54.htm>

¹⁰ <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/6c12fcd2-798b-43d0-a22d-92c7313f36fe>

¹¹ T. Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c.650-1200* (2004), 154-5

¹² T. Williamson, *England's Landscape: East Anglia* (2006), 132

¹³ T. Ashwin and A. Davison, *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk* (2005), 66-7

¹⁴ T. Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c.650-1200* (2004), 163-4

¹⁵ T. Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c.650-1200* (2004), 1

¹⁶ T. Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c.650-1200* (2004), 64

¹⁷ Various publications by Paul Everson and David Stocker, e.g., 'The Witham Valley; A Landscape with Monasteries?', *Church Archaeology* 13 (2009), 1-15; *Custodians of Continuity? The Premonstratensian Abbey at Barlings and the Landscape of Ritual* (2011)

¹⁸ T. Williamson, *England's Landscape: East Anglia* (2006), 132

¹⁹ Account based on <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/norf/vol2/pp369-370>

²⁰ <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?MNF4501-Site-of-St-Andrew%27s-Church-in-vicarage-garden-Marham&Index=4120&RecordCount=57339&SessionID=7bdb4d0f-a0a6-4c9e-8982-cc26215888a6>

²¹ Para based on http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=356853

²² <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1016482>

²³ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1304912>

²⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1077832>

²⁵ Account based on <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/norf/vol2/pp388-391>

²⁶ Para based on http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=357214

²⁷ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1019666>

²⁸ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1342419>

²⁹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1077622>

³⁰ <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/norf/vol2/pp.412-14>

³¹ T. Pestell, *Landscapes of Monastic Foundation: The Establishment of Religious Houses in East Anglia, c.650-1200* (2004), 202-3

³² http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=356025

³³ N. Pevsner and B. Williamson, *Buildings of England: Norfolk2: North-west and South* (2002), 651

³⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1010572>

³⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1152173>

³⁶ Pestell 2004, 202-3

³⁷ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1020446>

³⁸ http://www.brecsoc.org.uk/breckland_warrens%20FINAL.pdf; T. Ashwin and A. Davison, *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk* (2005), 94-5

³⁹ [http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF2329-Rabbit-Warrens-\(Article\)](http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/record-details?TNF2329-Rabbit-Warrens-(Article))

⁴⁰ William White, *History, Gazetteer, and Directory of Norfolk* (1845)

⁴¹ Account based on http://www.pastscape.org.uk/hob.aspx?hob_id=356380

⁴² Pestell 2004, 207-8

⁴³ Pestell 2004, 207-8

⁴⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1018651>

⁴⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1009987>

⁴⁶ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1077839>