

Land off Station Road North Thoresby



HERITAGE ASSESSMENT ©

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August 2015

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1. Introduction

A residential dwelling house is proposed for development on a plot of land to the NW of Westbrook Farm, a small Victorian farmstead built circa 1850, sited on Station Road, North Thoresby. The farmstead includes Westbrook House, a fine house in the Italianate style. To its north and east is a range of mostly red brick and Welsh slate farm buildings, and a large corrugated tin building and some modern sheds to its periphery. To the west of Westbrook House is a mature domestic garden, and beyond a small paddock.

2. Location and Site

North Thoresby is located approximately 8 miles south of Grimsby and 35 miles east of the city of Lincoln. The site is accessed through a paddock from Station Road, in the east of the village.

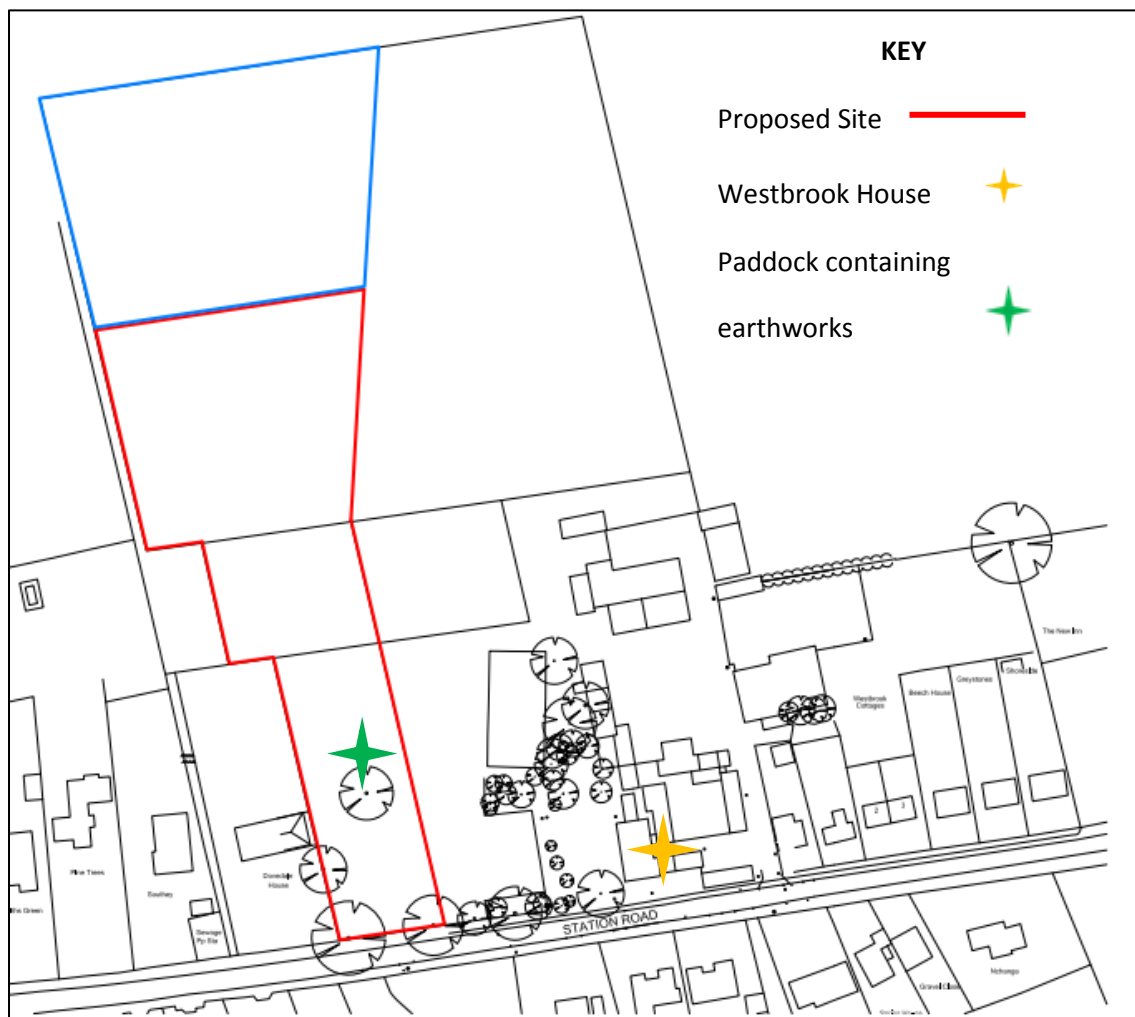


Fig 1 – Proposed site and heritage assets in close proximity.

3. Methodology

This methodology is based upon advice set out in Conservation Principles 2008¹. Significance derives from a number of factors including:

- Understanding the evolution of a place through both research and physical evidence;
- Relate identified heritage values to the fabric of the place – identifying how particular parts of a place and different period in its evolution contribute to, or detract from heritage values;
- Consider the contribution made by setting and context;

Assigning grades of significance can sometimes assist assessments of significance, however, it must be remembered that many heritage assets have developed over time and that not every feature is necessarily original. This may mean that later features do not have the same level of significance, but a lower level of significance does not necessarily mean that a feature or element could be altered or removed. For example, a plain but intact fire surround of a later date than the original construction of a house might not hold the same level of significance as an original fire surround, but it may contribute greatly to the room as whole, or may be representative of later development of the building.

Exceptional Significance	An element, feature or grade of asset of more than national interest (e.g., a rare wall painting, grade I or II* listed building or its setting)
High Significance	A feature or element which contributes to the special architectural or historic interest of the building and / or its setting, or is indicative of its original features, plan form, layout or gives evidence of historic development. Compares directly with its counterparts in other listed buildings of the same age / type
Of Significance	A historic feature or element which may not be original but nevertheless make a contribution to significance of the special architectural interest of the building and / or its setting
Low Significance	A feature or element that makes a low or minimal contribution to the special architectural interest of the building and / or its setting
Neutral	A feature or element Insufficient to cause harm to or detract from any significance
Damage / Intrusion	Features or alterations that have removed earlier features of significance or elements where original features have been removed in entirety (e.g., exposing joists originally covered with lath and plaster, or replacement windows of an inappropriate design or material)

¹ Published by English Heritage in 2008.

4. History & Development

For a detailed analysis of the history of Westbrook Farm please refer to the Statement of Significance produced to support a previous planning application, ELDC reference: N/133/01530/14, by David Rawlins Ltd.

Map regression demonstrates the development of the site. Lincolnshire Archive Office (LAO) has an 1839 Tithe map of North Thoresby, and an Enclosure Map of 1846. These assist in charting the origins of the site.

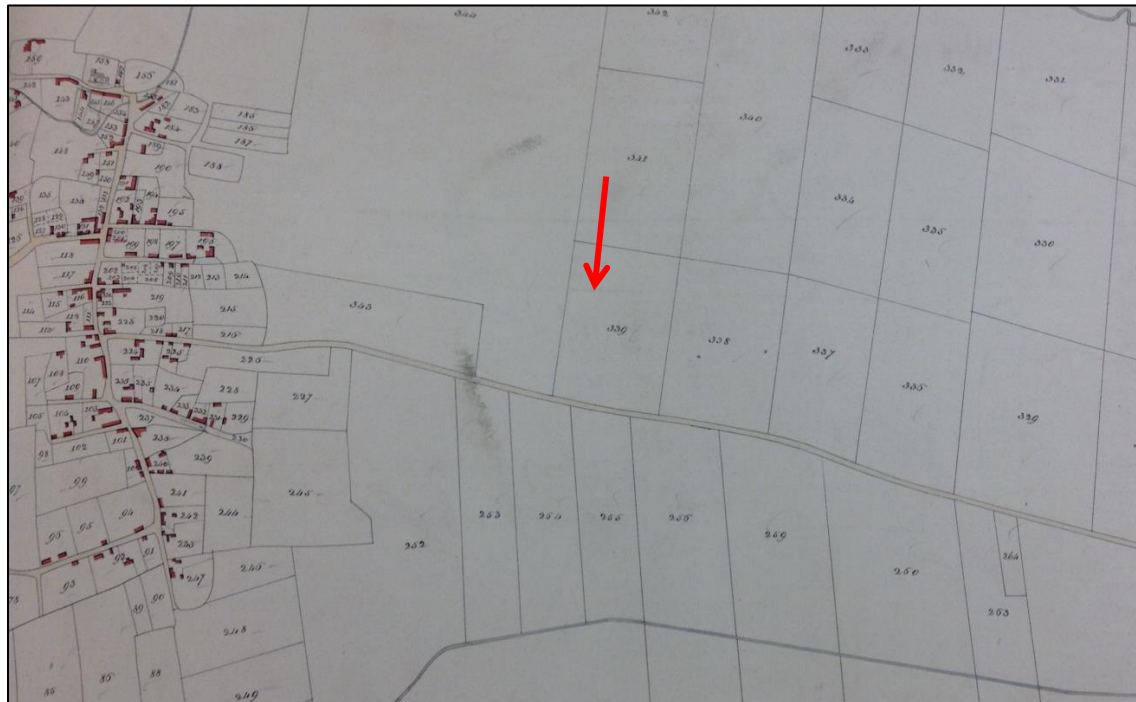


Fig 2, (above) extract of the 1839 Tithe Map for North Thoresby. Westbrook House and Farm have not yet been built. Plot No.339 is the site of the paddock and Westbrook House. In 1839, the site was in the ownership of Francis Bond, who also occupied the land (see **Fig 3** – below left). The land was used as arable land (**Fig 4**, below right)

OWNERS	OCCUPIERS	Value in the Place
Alston, Edward	himself	225
		226
		227
Alston, Richard	himself	227
Alston, Thomas	himself	228
Alston, Thomas	himself	229
Bond, Francis	himself	230
		231
		232
		233
		234
		235
		236
		237
		238
		239
		240
		241
		242
		243
		244
		245
		246
		247
		248
		249
		250

99	Paddock	Grass
100	House and garden	
101	House Buildings and grass	
102	Garden and orchard	
103	Grass and trees	Grass
104	House and grass	
240		Grass
338		Grass
339		Grass
340		Grass
341		Grass
342		Grass

Boundaries changed slightly, in 1846 when North Thoresby was enclosed. Francis Bond was still the owner of the site, but there were still no buildings on this site in 1846. So although the list description for Westbrook House states circa 1840, the house was constructed after 1846.

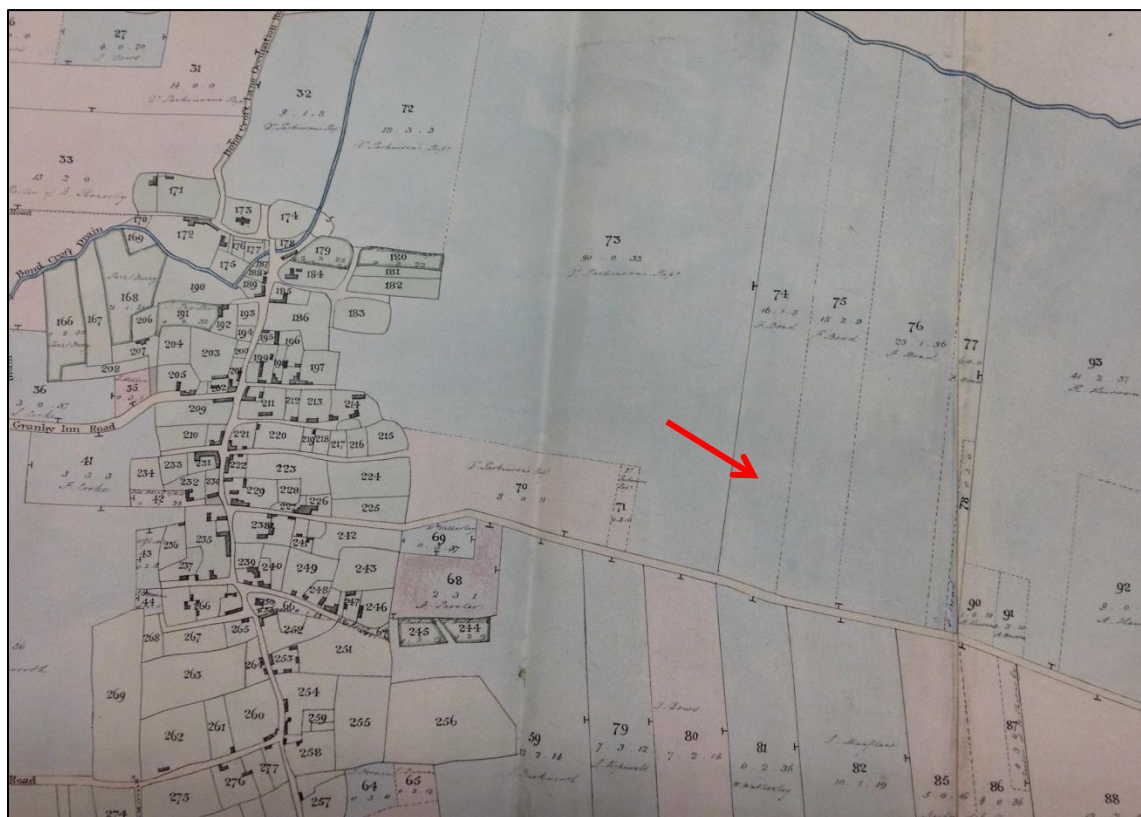


Fig 5, above, shows the 1846 Enclosure map for North Thoresby, the site is plot no. 74 and possibly a part of no.75. Both are noted as being in the ownership of F. Bond, as are the plots to the east.



Fig 6, above, extract of the 1887 OS Map, shows that Westbrook House and farm have now been constructed.

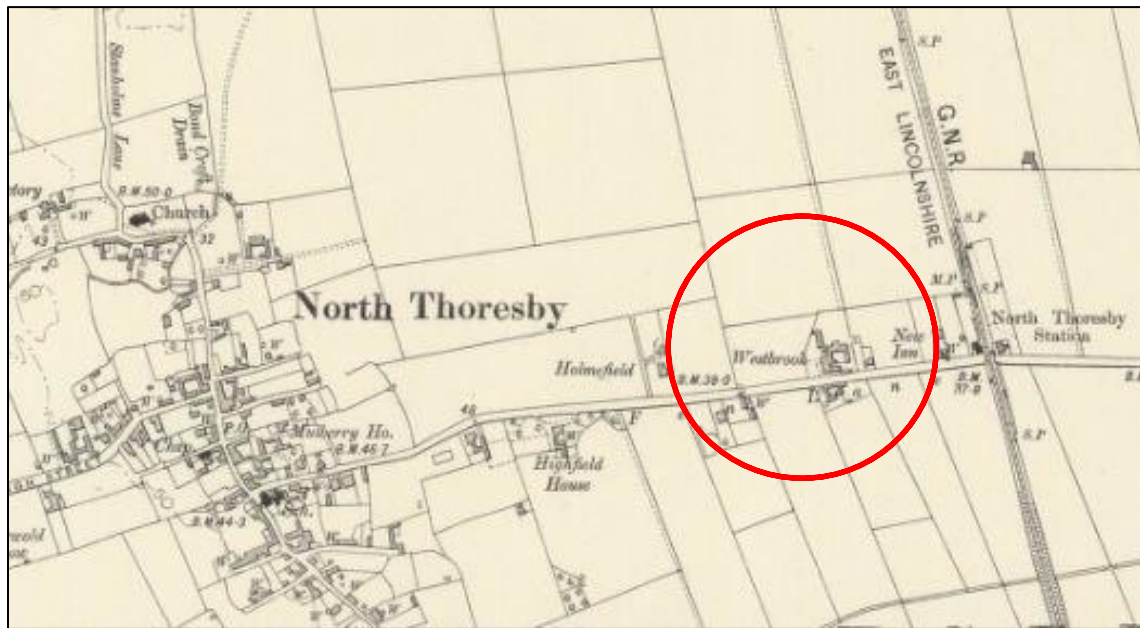


Fig 7, extract of 1907 OS Map, shows little change to the site or its environs since 1887.



Fig 8, extract of 1978 OS Map, shows a change to the garden boundary of Westbrook House and the addition of a large new building to its NW (source of image, Old OS Maps). Since 1978, the paddock has been subdivided and plot created on the western side, this now contains a large modern house.

5. Assessment of Significance - Setting of Heritage assets

The Historic Environment Record (HER) shows one designated heritage asset in direct relation to the proposed site, this is Westbrook House, a grade II listed, a designated heritage asset (protected by specific legislation)².

Westbrook House, of circa 1840, is constructed of red brick with contrasting painted stucco dressings, set beneath a Welsh slate roof, punctuated by four sets of paired cornice topped chimney stacks. Long Georgian paned vertical sliding sash windows to the ground floor are set within recessed, plain classical stucco surrounds, topped with a cornice. To the first floor, recessed Georgian paned windows have wedge and cambered stucco arch above. The house has two principal frontages. The south elevation is symmetrical, with a plain classical porch, and is set back behind a small formal frontage facing Station Road. The east elevation is asymmetric, with five architectural bays, and faces a garden and paddock beyond. There is a lower two storey service range set back, to the north elevation. **Westbrook House is of high significance.**



Fig 9, west elevation of Westbrook House

Mature domestic garden forms the immediate setting to the west of Westbrook House, contained by a low timber fence. Beyond, is a paddock, now the only undeveloped field in Station Road between the village core and the New Inn, and forms a part of the historic farmstead. The paddock forms a significant green setting to one the principal west front of Westbrook House and is of **high significance**.

² Designated heritage assets are protected by specific legislation, in this case, the Planning (Listed Buildings & Conservation Areas) Act 1990, which requires the Local Planning Authority to have 'special regard' to preserving the setting of a listed building when considering planning applications.

Historic farm buildings which form a group with Westbrook House, its garden and paddock (despite its post-1978 sub division) form a setting that is little changed since circa 1847. **This group value is of significance.**

The paddock has been subdivided for residential development since 1978. There is evidence of earthworks on the remaining paddock, which appear to be ridge and furrow, visible on aerial photographs. This is not currently visible on site due to vegetation. Although a search of the HER has been undertaken, there is no record for this site, which is beyond the medieval core of North Thoresby. However, there is a possibility that the earthworks may be medieval ridge and furrow which once served the settlement.



Fig 10, paddock west of Westbrook House, containing earthworks. The proposed site is beyond the paddock, behind the line of trees in the centre of the photograph.

Another explanation has been provided for these earthworks. John Hewson, a former employee of the Butt family who farmed Westbrook Farm, worked for the family from 1957 until 2009. John provided a verbal reference advising that the land was re profiled under instruction from the War Agricultural Executive Committee in the early years of WWII to prevent gliders landing in coastal areas. In the late 1950's permission was granted to remove the glider defences and Mr Hewson removed most of them over a period of 3 years, however the paddock adjacent to Westbrook was left at the insistence of Mrs Butt. Mr Hewson can remember this causing a heated argument between Mr and Mrs Butt. This latter explanation is very interesting, and this use of the land holds a social significance as a remnant of Second World War earthworks.

The paddock was subdivided post-1978, and a large residential dwelling house constructed.

The paddock is an undesignated heritage asset, but nevertheless holds significance as part of the historic setting of Westbrook House, but also for the earthworks it contains (whether these are medieval or WWII coastal defences) and is **of significance**.

In addition, the HER also holds records for:

- HER Number 41204 – Roman Coin Hoard - Twenty five roman bronze coins Gallienus to Constans found in garden of Highfield House prior to 1943. Recorded by the British Museum as part of a scattered hoard;
- HER Number 45993 – Probable Iron Age farmstead and field system cropmarks east of North Thoresby

There have also been a range of portable antiquities found in a field to the east of the village dating from the Anglo-Saxon to the medieval periods.

None of the above will be affected directly by the proposed development, but indicate a possibility of earlier human activity prior to the installation of Westbrook Farm.

6. Impact of Proposed Works on Heritage Significance

The proposed development is a large new residential dwelling house, with ancillary buildings, designed in a contemporary style. This research demonstrates that the location of the proposed dwelling is beyond the historic curtilage of Westbrook House and its farmstead. Due to existing tree planting, the proposed residential dwelling house and its ancillary buildings are unlikely to be seen directly from the formal gardens of Westbrook House at all. The new development is therefore likely to have a **very limited impact upon the historic curtilage and wider setting of Westbrook House.**



Fig 11, view over the paddock, right, post-1978 development; the post and rail fence bounding the formal garden of Westbrook House is seen in the bottom right corner. A yellow arrow indicates approximate location of the proposed new residential dwelling.



Fig 12, view of the paddock from the formal gardens of Westbrook House

The proposed development is set away from Westbrook House and its historic farm buildings to avoid intruding upon the traditional plan form and grouping of the historic farmstead. There will be a **very limited impact** upon the group value of Westbrook House and its farmstead.



Fig 13, the paddock, as seen from Station Road entrance, panoramic view looking north, yellow arrow indicates approximate location of proposed new dwelling, beyond trees and hedge, red arrow shows Westbrook House.

A new entrance and driveway to access the proposed new dwelling would be located in the paddock containing the earthworks. Fig's 11 and 12 show the impact is **unlikely to be harmful to the setting of Westbrook House**; however, there will be a directly physical impact on the paddock. The proposed driveway will be constructed of Grass Crete blocks **to mitigate and minimise any visual impact to the paddock and the setting of Westbrook House**.

7. Conclusion

This assessment demonstrates that the setting of Westbrook House and its farmstead holds a high level of significance for both the listed building and its setting. Significance is also found in the group value of the farmstead, and the undesignated paddock. The proposed development is beyond the historic curtilage of Westbrook House, and its paddock, and has a very limited impact upon setting and group value. There is some direct physical impact upon the paddock, but mitigation (through the use of Grass Crete blocks) will limit visual intrusion.

8. Resources and references (in alphabetical order)

Assessment of Significance, Chapter on history and development, Rawlins, D
Heritage Gateway
Historic Environment Record (HER) – Lincolnshire County Council
Lincolnshire Archive Office (LAO)
Pastscape
THE LIST – Historic England

9. Acknowledgements

Thanks to John Hewson who has provided a valuable verbal reference in respect of the earthworks in the paddock at Westbrook Farm. John is a resident of North Thoresby.