

# A Community Archaeological Investigation of Gardens to the rear of Nos. 11 to 12 Market Hill, Diss, Norfolk.




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February 2016

Report No: 73

NHES Event No: ENF136346  
Job Ref: NVC/2014/GE230  
OASIS ID: norvicar1-242666

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## A Community Archaeological Investigation of Gardens to the rear of Nos. 11 to 12 Market Hill, Diss, Norfolk.

<b>Location:</b>	Diss
<b>Grid Ref:</b>	TM 1160 7996
<b>NHES Event No:</b>	ENF136346
<b>Dates of fieldwork:</b>	13 <sup>th</sup> to 16 <sup>th</sup> of March 2015

### 1.0 Introduction

A community excavation project was undertaken by Dr Tom License of the Centre of East Anglian Studies in order to investigate an area of land to the rear of council offices at Nos. 11 to 12 Market Hill, Diss. The excavation formed part of a Heritage Lottery funded project to involve local people, University of East Anglia students, Diss High School pupils and the Waveney Valley branch of the Young Archaeologists Club. The aim of the project was to investigate the archaeological potential of the site whilst promoting local interest in the heritage of the town. The site is located to the rear of the Diss Heritage Triangle, which comprises of St Nicholas Street, Market Hill and Market Place.

The overall plot (c. 1140m<sup>2</sup>) has been proposed for development into a community space in the form of redeveloped terraced gardens leading to a modern boardwalk along the edge of the Mere. This forms part of a larger project proposal, which aims to restore and extend the Corn Hall, transform the streets around the Heritage Triangle, and create a Boardwalk and floating island on the Mere.

The site is currently an overgrown terraced garden located in an area of archaeological potential within the historic core of the town, on the northern slopes at the margins of the mere, to the rear of properties which form part of a medieval to post-medieval street frontage to the area of a former medieval market.

Norvic Archaeology was commissioned to assist in the fieldwork, make suitable on-site archaeological records and produce a report on the results of the investigation.

### 2.0 Summary of Results

Despite representing a relatively limited sample of the site, this archaeological investigation has provided a surprising volume of archaeological finds dating from the Roman, Middle Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval periods.

The evidence gained through trial trenching here has shown that rubbish pits from the 18th century can be found near the top of the gardens, directly to the rear of former outbuildings. Garden soils and subsoils further down the slope include 15th to 16th century pottery, possibly incorporated within spreads of night-soils and midden waste. The marginal land at the base of the slope includes dumped landscaping deposits of post-medieval to 19th century date, which have been used to consolidate the land here, an activity that appears to stretch back to at least the medieval period, as indicated by the deep deposits partly exposed in Trench 1. These layers contained pottery ranging from the 12th to 14th centuries. The medieval pottery assemblage is currently the largest to have been recovered from any site excavated in Diss town centre to date and the Middle Saxon pottery sherds are the first recorded from the centre of the town.

A 19<sup>th</sup> century tiled lined drain was uncovered below a former gravel path, which appears to date to a period of drainage improvements around the Mere, proposed in 1850.

The discovery of a human tooth with fragments of alveolar bone attached indicates the likely presence of a disturbed burial somewhere in the vicinity of the site. Other noteworthy finds include an early to mid-17<sup>th</sup> century clay tobacco pipe bowl, a medieval strap-end and a medieval decorative mount, possibly for adorning a wooden casket or other valued item.

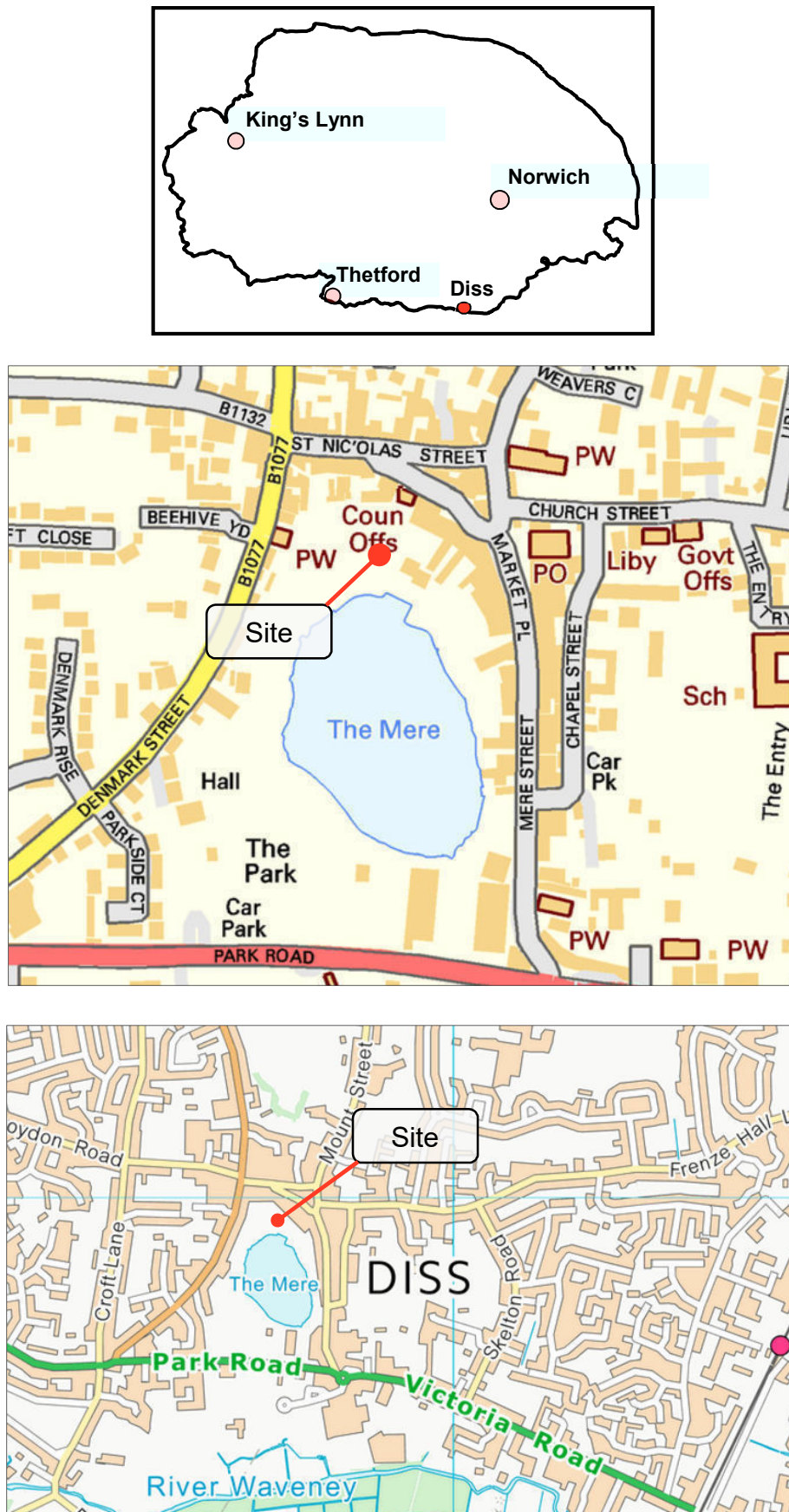


Figure 1: General site location plan



### 3.0 Project Background

The Diss Heritage Triangle project (DHT) is a £1.6 million Heritage Lottery Funded (HLF) development of the historic 'market triangle' in Diss. The project aims to convert the streets of the triangle into shared community space. The buildings behind the Corn Hall are proposed to be redesigned as a community area and heritage centre, with a formal garden created behind the council offices on 11-12 Market Hill and a boardwalk on the edge of the Mere. As part of the overall project, an initial archaeological investigation was required of the gardens to evaluate the archaeological potential of the site ahead of any proposed development. The DHT team formed a partnership with The Centre of East Anglian Studies (CEAS) to run a community dig on the terraced garden. In preparation, the site was cleared of much of the brambles and debris, and a team from the Suffolk Archaeological Field Group undertook a non-invasive magnetometry survey of the site, although the results were inconclusive due to the high concentrations of modern surface materials and landscaping across the site.



Plates 2: General shot showing Trench 3 (looking N) with a site talk taking place

A community dig was subsequently arranged to be held over a weekend in March, involving students from the UEA, local residents and school children from Diss High School and the Waveney Valley Young Archaeologists Club. The field work and on-site recording was overseen by Norvic Archaeology with all trenches supervised by experienced archaeologists.

Dr Tom Licence, director of CEAS, managed the dig and updated the public on its discoveries throughout each day and in update lectures held on both Saturday and Sunday evening in the Corn Hall. Richard Bacon, MP for South Norfolk, arrived on the Saturday along with the mayor to open Diss museum for a new season, and Helen Geake (of Channel 4's *Time Team*) kindly assisted in initial identification of some of the finds as they were collected on site. A team from UEA's School of Film and Television Studies also attended to create material for a short film of the dig, which will become a fixture in the new heritage centre.

As part of the CEAS project *What East Anglia Threw Away* (which formerly visited Bergh Apton and Castle Rising), one aim of the project was to uncover rubbish thrown away by the people who had lived in the properties on Market Hill as evidence for past lives and land use. During the three days, the team explained the historical importance of 'rubbish' to large numbers of the general public, while excavating deposits ranging from the medieval period up to the nineteenth and early twentieth century.

An exhibition of historic maps and shop fronts was set up in the Boilerworks, along with an on-site gazebo for finds trays and leaflets, and a 'Find the Finds' treasure hunt, with ten archaeological objects hidden in shop windows around the town. Children were given a list of the items and questions to answer, and the winner received a prize. News releases and coverage before, during and after the dig gained publicity for the project and included pieces in the Diss Express, Diss Mercury, Eastern Daily Press, a detailed feature on BBC Radio Norfolk, and BBC news. The BBC coverage noted in particular the historic impact of the dig in establishing that the northern slopes of the Mere were occupied much earlier than extant records show.

Over the weekend new visitors to the dig and lectures were counted in with a clicker. In total, over 850 visitors attended; 30 children were involved in digging; there were upwards of 20 volunteers, and more than 40 children took part in the Finds Trail. On-site archaeological training was provided for 30 children (ages 9-16) and 7 UEA students, and a tangible legacy is being provided in the form of a series of five-minute videos, a display collection of finds, and a comprehensive report - all of which will form part of the permanent exhibition in the newly designed Heritage Centre.



Plate 3: Finds washing & identification



Plates 4 & 5: Soil sieving for small finds and excavation training



#### 4.0 Geology and Topography (Figure 3)

Diss is a market town located in South Norfolk close to the border of Suffolk. The town is situated within the northern side of the River Waveney valley (at c. 38m OD) and is focused around an ancient mere of c. 6m water depth with over 17m of laminated sediment below (Bailey 2005). The lake has a surface area of 0.032 km<sup>2</sup>, with a roughly oval outline; it has little surface inflow and outflow and is primarily fed from ground water sources and springs.

The garden site is situated to the south of the former medieval market area on the northern side of the bowl shaped mere, to the rear of the properties off Market Hill. The site has a small car parking area at the top of the slope at c. 34m OD, this leads down to 20<sup>th</sup> century garden terracing as part of a large triangular north-south garden plot of over 50m in length. The garden tapers down to the edge of the mere at c. 24m OD. At the time of the work, the gardens were overgrown with brambles and much of the terraces paths on either side of the plot were buried from natural soil accumulation.



Plate 6: View of the terraced garden (looking S)

The mere is located at the edge of the Waveney Valley buried glacial meltwater channel, which was carved out of the Upper Chalk during the Anglian glaciation (c. 450,000 years ago). Borehole data has shown that the base of the mere's sediments sit above the Cretaceous chalk bedrock, the episodic erosion of which, at the margins of the buried glacial channel deposits, appear to be

responsible for the collapse of the softer glacial deposits and the long-term formation of the mere above. The mere contains substantial outwash deposits from the Lowestoft phase of glaciation.

Clay, sand and gravel outwash deposits of Lowestoft Till form the upper slopes to the north of the lake in the area of the site (the area of the medieval core of the town), with fine silty sediments associated with the mere at the base of the slope. The remainder of the sunken mere is encircled by further alluvium and peat deposits laid down by the meandering paths of the River Waveney - Geology of Britain Viewer at a scale of 1:50,000 (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

The sub-surface geology of the site encountered during the fieldwork can be characterised as a very firm/dense chalky clay.

## 5.0 Brief Archaeological and Historical Background

Diss is a market town (recorded as a royal vill in Domesday Book) and large parish in the south of Norfolk. The town is located around a large mere of c. six acres. The name derives from Anglo-Saxon and may relate to the term for a ditch or moat (Ekwall 145, 1974); possibly referring to either the mere or an early moated site. It may have originally served as an early land unit which evolved into the 10<sup>th</sup>-century half-hundred of Diss (Penn 1999).

Diss has provided evidence of human occupation from all historic periods and a parish summary of the large amount of information held for the town's Historic Environment can be viewed on the Norfolk Heritage Explorer website. The parish has generated over 240 records which give evidence of human occupation and activity of most periods in the form of find scatters, cropmarks, listed buildings and excavated sites.

Prehistoric activity is represented across the parish by worked flints found as surface scatters which include flint tools and axeheads of Mesolithic and Neolithic date. Metalwork from the Bronze Age has also been found, which includes copper-alloy axeheads and a knife. A collection of Mesolithic to Bronze Age flints were discovered as residual finds during archaeological work at No.2 Church Street on the north side of the mere (NHER 35981). Aside from the possible uncovering of two possible Bronze Age cremation urns below St Mary's Church in the town during the late 1700s, no significant evidence for prehistoric settlement has yet been identified.

The mere is one of the deepest inland lakes in England and preserved within its deep sediments is evidence for early prehistoric environments in the form of pollens, diatoms and other microfossils.

*The lake inhabits a natural basin developed by chalk solution of the underlying Chalk bedrock. It is one of a group of similar features which include Bosmere at Creting, Suffolk, and Quidenham Mere and Seamere in Norfolk. It is unclear when the lake first developed, but pollen analysis has demonstrated that its 40 ft (12 m) thickness of sediments have been accumulating for at least 10,000 years. It is fed by a group of powerful springs arising from the Chalk bedrock. Periglacial processes in the last Ice Age, such as thermokarst (hollows produced by the selective melting of permafrost), are thought to have shaped the crater-like basin in which the Mere is situated. Diss Mere contains the most complete sedimentary record of any Holocene site in Britain, and has a long history of scientific research. Notably, it contains a sequence of mid-Holocene laminated muds which contain c. 3,000 annual layers of light and dark sediment. From this, scientists have been able to calculate that the 'elm decline' event noted in pollen profiles across Europe c.3000 BC took place over a seven-year period, suggesting it was caused by an elm disease. The pollen sequence retrieved from the upper sediments has allowed a detailed reconstruction of the timing of the arrival of agriculture in the Diss area, and the various phases of crop introductions in the prehistoric and historic periods. The development of Diss in Medieval times, and its hemp industry between 1600 and 1800 AD is attested by a sequence of polluted, black muds.*

[http://www.geoeast.org.uk/geoimap/norfpdf/diss\\_mere.pdf](http://www.geoeast.org.uk/geoimap/norfpdf/diss_mere.pdf)

It is generally believed that the mere acted as a focus for Roman activity or settlement with small numbers of Roman coins, metalwork and pottery found within the area of the modern town. Preserved timbers were discovered at the eastern margins of the mere during work for a Woolworths store in 1939, which were suggested to be some form of Roman wharf (NHER 7932) or villa. A single Roman coin and a stag skeleton were also reportedly found.



Evidence for a Saxon settlement at Diss is just as fragmentary, with a small number of Early Saxon to Middle Saxon finds recorded for the Parish. To date, only a single sherd of possible Early Saxon pottery has been collected within the area of the modern town, found on the northern side of the mere during archaeological work at No.2 Church Street (NHER 35981).

In the Domesday Book, Diss is listed under Suffolk, and seems to have been a relatively small but valuable settlement. A church is also mentioned and the medieval church of St Mary's (NHER 11005) may be positioned on the site of a Late Saxon church, although no architectural evidence for such an early church has survived.

The market was established by 1274 and probably much earlier (Ashwin & Davison 72, 2005). The triangular shaped market place is now entirely urbanised, with St Mary's Church and the former Guildhall (NHER 12054) located at the eastern end.

Diss benefited greatly from the cloth and wool trade in the medieval period, with regional importance as a cloth town retained into the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Dymond 163, 1985). The wealth of the growing medieval town is reflected in the size and decorative detail of St Mary's church and the number of late medieval and early post-medieval buildings that have survived in the core of the town. These include the 15<sup>th</sup> century timber-framed house at No.1 Mere Street and the unusual 16<sup>th</sup> century building of Dolphin House, which has a first floor open hall, possibly for use by a wool merchant. St Nicholas' Chapel (NHER 12056) was constructed in the 15<sup>th</sup> century within the market place, although no standing remains survive. A large number of 17<sup>th</sup> century buildings are still standing in the town, and although many have been altered in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, original features have survived.

The town was a producer of tanned goods throughout the medieval to late post-medieval periods (Ashwin & Davison 164, 2005) with two large malting & brewery sites also sites established at the town by the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

As a direct consequence of the towns growth and industry, the waters of the mere have received run-off and dumped waste from the town for c. 1000 years. Heavy metals relating to local industry are present in the sediments of the mere and a recent contamination survey has shown how changes in these levels can be linked to the growth of the local textile industry (Hang 2010). Mercury was used as a dyeing agent in the wool and linen industry and also as a pesticide to prevent insect damage in the weaving industry. Three weaving factories were once situated at Diss, employing over 200 people prior to 1800 (<http://disscommunity.net/2010/06/04/deadly-secrets-of-diss-mere>).

The local hemp industry also made use of mercury from the 15<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, with the manufacture of hemp cloth a principal industry of the town by the 18<sup>th</sup> century until its decline in the mid-1800s, when contamination levels were dangerously high – possibly peaking as a direct consequence of the dumping of stored materials such as pesticides, fibre treating reagents and dyeing materials. Mercury contamination is still present within the uppermost sedimentary muds and continues to affect the lake.

**Sites in the immediate proximity or of particular relevance or interest which fall in close proximity to the site include:**

*The following information has been sourced from the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER)*

**NHER 34559: Post medieval track and late medieval/post-medieval finds.** An archaeological evaluation carried out by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit in 1999 revealed a post-medieval track leading down to the Mere, and medieval and late medieval/post medieval pottery, post medieval roof tile and a clay pipe. This area was probably once at the edge of the Mere. [c. 25m SE]

**NHER 12056: Site of St Nicholas's Chapel.** This is the presumed site of St Nicolas's Chapel at the junction of St Nicholas Street with Market Hill, built in the early 15<sup>th</sup> century, and dissolved in about 1549. [c. 75m N]

**NHER 34893: Post-medieval token.** A post medieval token from Great Yarmouth, dated 1667, and inscribed 'for the use of the poor', found within a property off Denmark Street. [c.90m W]

**NHER 7932: Possible Roman villa or wharf.** During the construction of a new branch of Woolworth's in 1939, workmen uncovered a timber structure, which has been suggested as a ?Roman villa or wharf. The skeleton of a stag and oyster shells were also found on the site along with a single Roman coin. [c. 100m SE]

**NHER 11005: St Mary's Church, Diss.** A medieval parish church, dating mainly to the early 14th century, with later alterations and extensions. The church is said to stand on the site of a Late Saxon or Norman church, although there is no surviving architectural evidence from this period. In 1773, two urns were uncovered which from their description could be Bronze Age or Early Saxon cremation burials. [c. 130m NE]

**NHER 31788: Site of a post-medieval Glasshouse, 18<sup>th</sup> century pottery and human skull fragments.** Archaeological monitoring in 1996 at No.2 Mount Street by Howard Brooks Archaeological Services revealed 18th century pottery, part of a human skull of unknown date and the foundations of a 19th century greenhouse. [c. 160m NE]

**NHER 33464: Garden of The Nunnery.** A 19th century garden, shown on 19th century Ordnance Survey maps with a lawn, mature trees, and a large greenhouse. This garden forms part of a circle of 19th century gardens surrounding the Mere. [c. 175m SW]

**NHER 29453: Post-medieval finds.** In 1993 a collection of 18<sup>th</sup> century household waste was found while digging foundations for a conservatory against a large 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup> century brick house (Brewery House – No.6 Roydon Road NHER 39837). Clay pipe fragments included pieces stamped with a crowned 'T.P'. (probably a Thomas Parsley of Redenhall). The pottery included Delft, Staffordshire combed ware; cream ware; white salt glazed ware (teapot); lead glazed earthenware; stonewares, probably Staffordshire and Westerwald handle and porcelain. [c. 180m NW]

**NHER 50559: Animal bone refuse in the backyard of 9-10 Mere Street.** Cow (or possibly horse) longbones and ribs found in a pit, probably of late Post-Medieval date. [c. 185m SE]

**NHER 12055: Lost Medieval Moat.** This is the site of a medieval moat that is depicted on the 1838 Tithe Map but has now been destroyed. [c. 200m NW]

**NHER 10979: Medieval Coin Hoard.** In 1871 a hoard of over three hundred medieval gold and silver coins of Edward IV dating to c. 1465 were found within a pottery vessel in a house in Mount Street. [c. 200m NE]

**NHER 12054: Site of a medieval guildhall.** This is the presumed site of the medieval guildhall of St Nicolas and Corpus Christi, who maintained the chapel (site NHER 12056), known through documentary records. [c. 200m ENE]

**NHER 33462: Park Field.** A park, created in 1848 from an arable field. The park was known as Diss Arboretum, and 19th century maps show the park with paths running through mature trees. The park remained in private ownership until 1960, when it was transferred to the Town Council. [c. 200m SW]

**NHER 43283: Post-medieval garden wall and boundary to a former former Brewery Site.** The north boundary wall of a garden established by Robert Sheriffe, a local brewer, in the mid-19th century. The garden wall has an arched gateway and evidence of earlier buildings, including a glass house. [c.200m N]

**NHER 21190: Post-medieval smoke house.** A brick floor and steps, found in 1985 in the garden of Chapter House, 1 Church Street (a 17th century timber framed house, with a 19th century brick façade, NHER 40812), are the remains of a post medieval smoke house, c. late 18th or early 19th century. [c. 230m ENE]

**NHER 35981: Potentially Roman/Early Saxon linear features & prehistoric flints.** An archaeological evaluation carried in the rear garden of No. 2 Church Street, out by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit in 1999 revealed several linear features of uncertain, but potentially Roman or Early Saxon date. Finds recovered included a Mesolithic/Early Neolithic flint blade, an assemblage of 74 cruder flints of probable Bronze Age date (including several irregular cores), two sherds of Roman pottery, a single ?Early Saxon pottery sherd and post-medieval brick and tile. [c. 250m ENE]

**NHER 33463: The Cedars and The Lawn.** The only example of a detached landscape park within a town in Norfolk. The Cedars are across the road from the park and The Lawn, accessed by an entrance flanked by walls that mirror the walls surrounding The Cedars. By the late 19th century the park was surrounded by belts, as well as a number of other mature trees. The park may have created in the late 18th century after The Cedars was rebuilt in 1781, or in the 19th century. [c. 300m N]

**NHER 16400: Post-medieval Windmill.** This is the site of a post medieval windmill, marked on an Ordnance Survey map of 1836. The mill was demolished in 1860. [c. 300m SE]

*Listed Buildings in close proximity to the site include:*

**NHER 41783: Nos. 11 & 12 Market Hill.** An 18th century house with later alterations (Grade II Listed Building). The building is now used as the Urban District Council offices. [Northern limit of the site]

**NHER 48351: No. 13 Market Hill.** 19th century stuccoed house with a central pedimented window and a cast iron lamp with a scroll bracket (Grade II Listed Building). [[NE limit of the site].

**NHER 41703: Nos. 14 & 15 Market Hill.** Two 17th century timber framed houses, later joined together by an 18th or 19th century carriage arch (Grade II Listed Building). [c. 60m ENE]

**NHER 45853: No. 22. Coffee Tavern on St Nicholas Street.** An 18th century house with a central pedimented entrance (Grade II Listed Building). [c. 65m NNW]

**NHER 48492: Nos. 17 & 18 St Nicholas' Street.** A 17th century stuccoed house, converted into a bank in 1918. The ground floor is now mostly modern (Grade II Listed Building). [c. 100m NW]

**NHER 40074: Nos. 19 & 20 St Nicholas' Street.** A 17th century timber framed and stuccoed building, with an ornate early 19th century shop front, decorated with fluted cast iron columns (Grade II Listed Building). [c. 80m NW]

**NHER 45548: No. 21 St Nicholas' Street.** An early 19th century brick house with a late 19th or 20th century wooden shop front (Grade II Listed Building). [c. 80m NW]

The excavation site lies to the rear of medieval tenement plots which were probably well established by the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century, fronting the former market place. The tapering nature of the current triangular plot is believed to be a remnant of these medieval land divisions, where even limited access to the mere's edge was a valued local asset.

Faden's plan of 1797 shows little detail of the town, with the earliest detailed map depicting the town centre being the Tithe Map of 1838 (NRO DN/TA 45) with plots that compare well with those of a map of 1637 produced for John Duke, Lord of the Manor of Diss, who commissioned the surveyor William Tampon to produce a map of over 200 plots of land, their area and the names of each tenant. The map was probably compiled for the purpose of determining the rents payable to the Manor (NRO MC 2382). Tampon's map shows the various long plot divisions to the rear of antecedents of the present four houses at the street frontage of Market Hill. The area relating to the current garden appears to be divided into several plots, at least two of which run down to the mere.

Together these maps demonstrate that the post-medieval town centre and the building plots behind the Market Hill which make up the street frontage of the site have changed little, with the general shape of the Mere also showing little variation, with the margins of the Mere on all sides occupied by gardens open to the water (Figure 2).

Pigot's Directory (1820-22) records that by 1820, nos. 11 and 12 were owned by Thomas Leach, a manufacturer of Worstead and woollens. The tithe map of 1838 shows that the site (recorded as Plot 857) was no longer divided and that Leach owned all of it, attached to nos. 11 and 12. It also shows a series of stables and outhouse buildings behind the two properties, which are depicted on the 1st edition OS plans of 1884-5 and which remain unaltered in to the early 20th century. Before 1851, Leach was letting one of the properties to a lodger. He was described at this date as a 'collector of taxes', and is last recorded living at the property with his son-in-law, Joseph Pennington, a commercial traveller in the spirits and wine trade, in 1871.

Leach was born in 1800 and probably died in the 1870s. In 1881, the houses were occupied by Pennington and Susan Dix, a schoolmistress (in no. 11). Pennington sold up in 1887 to a group of three landlords, including Thomas Gostling, a local chemist. The tenant at no. 11 before 1891, and still in 1901, was the chemist and druggist John Cadge, who might have worked for Gostling, his landlord.

The OS map of 1906 shows that, by that time, the site had been divided into two plots. It seems likely that this division may relate to the letting out of the properties as separate houses with separate gardens since c. 1850. By 1911, no. 11 was empty. In 1920, this house was sold to Albert James Cooper, a greengrocer and commercial gardener who erected greenhouses to the rear of the stables. He may have been responsible for the present terracing of the garden; and he installed small lawns, rose and flower beds and a vegetable garden. In 1936 he was still resident, but in 1938 both properties were sold to



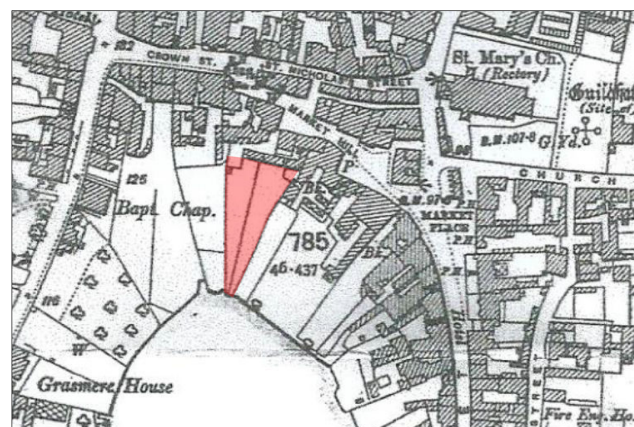
DUDC, for £800. The old division of the garden was then done away with, and it returned to being a single plot, as it was in 1838. The stables, outhouses, greenhouses etc. were subsequently demolished and covered with the present car park. The site is now an overgrown terraced garden, seldom used, belonging to the council offices.



William Tampon's plan of 1637



Tithe Map of 1838



OS Plan of 1906

Figure 2. Cartographic extracts showing the relative position of the garden

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in 1999, ahead of the construction of a new housing block (Nos. 1 to 4 Mallard Court) on land adjacent to the eastern side of the site (c. 20m to the south-east of Trench 1), to the rear of No. 15 Market Hill (Penn 1999). This investigation exposed waterlogged lacustrine silts with preserved twigs and woody fragments, below mottled silts of a late 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century date. A post-medieval trackway of 16<sup>th</sup> century or later date was recorded running down toward the mere. Above this was a later build-up of 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century soils and dumped material that appears to have gradually raised ground levels here allowing for the conversion from marginal wetland at the water's edge, to gardens running down to the northern edge of the mere.

## 6.0 Methodology (Figure 4)

The objective of the archaeological investigation was to evaluate the potential for archaeological deposits on the site through a series of archaeologically controlled hand dug trenches, primarily to identify any evidence of medieval to post-medieval land use and to assess the terraced areas for midden deposits associated with nearby houses.

Prior to the start of works, thick brambles were hand cleared from the areas to be investigated and modern topsoil deposits removed by spade and shovel. Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned by an experienced metal-detectorist. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern. During the excavation, sieving was undertaken of archaeologically significant deposits in order to maximise finds recovery rates.

All trenches were hand backfilled following suitable photographic, drawn and context recording. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Norvic Archaeology *pro forma* sheets. The trench location, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and digital images were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

All levels were taken using a temporary benchmark of 33.99m OD located on the southern edge of the carpark surface at the top of the gardens, which was tied to an OS Spot Height of 37.5m OD close to the junction of St Nicholas Street and Market Hill.

## 7.0 Results (Figures 4 to 8, Appendix 1a)

### • Trench 1 (Figure 5)

This L-shaped trench was positioned in the north-east corner of the second main garden terrace (Terrace D) in order to assess whether any late post-medieval rubbish tipping was present behind the terrace wall, close to the pathway.

The modern topsoil/garden soil deposits (100) and (101) contained occasional fragments of late post-medieval brick rubble and mortar and modern rubbish (glass, pottery and metal waste). A thin spread of rubble was noted in the central area of the trench (109) which was primarily of Norfolk-red brick (sandy fabric) and occasional 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century roof-tiles.

The natural geology was shown to be well-sloping and comprised of a very firm pale to mid-yellowish chalky-clay (110), at a depth of c. 0.6m at the eastern end of the trench but found to be dramatically deeper in the western part, where it was only reached by hand auger testing at a depth of c. 2.25m. Above the natural here was a deep deposit (c. 1.3m) of dense and sticky dark-greyish-brown sandy-silt, with rare flecks of charcoal noted (107). Six sherds of exclusively medieval pottery of a 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century date range were collected from a small sondage dug into its surface. This deposit was relatively homogenous and appears to reside either within a deep hollow or against a terrace in the natural clay. It could be a naturally accumulated colluvium, or possibly redeposited subsoil material, used to



build-up marginal ground here in the medieval period, close to the former edge of the waters of the mere

Above the deep deposit (107) was a probable subsoil layer (c. 0.3m deep) of mid-orangey-brown sandy/silty-clay (104). An assemblage of twenty sherds of medieval pottery with a 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century date range was recovered from this layer, which included fragments of domestic storage/cooking jars and jugs. A single residual sherd of Romano-British



Plate 7: T1 General view of progress (looking NE)  
[2x1m & 1x0.5m scales]

pottery and two unabraded sherds of Middle-Saxon pottery were also found within this deposit, which provide rare evidence of local activity from these periods within the area of the medieval town.

The gently sloping surface of (104) seemed to have been disturbed by an irregular edged shallow cut, with an undulating base ([103]), which contained a thin basal deposit of well-mixed silty-clay with lumps of yellow clay (102) buried below a mid-greyish brown silty clay flecked by occasional pieces of mortar and brick. This irregular feature is thought to be the base of a late post-medieval garden feature, from which a mixed assemblage of pottery sherds was retrieved; including medieval and post-medieval fabrics and a single piece of plant pot.

Above the natural clay in the eastern part of the trench was a trace of subsoil (108), buried below a well-mixed lower garden soil of late post-medieval date (105), which contained frequent examples of late Victorian to early 20<sup>th</sup> century rubble and rubbish.

Two examples of medieval metalwork were produced from this trench, a copper-alloy strap-end from the fill (102) of the probable garden feature ([103]) and a copper-alloy decorative mount collected from the modern topsoil (100).



Plate 8: T1 Deep medieval deposits revealed by sondage (looking E)  
[1x1m & 2x0.5m scales]



• **Trench 2** (Figure 6)

This trench was located on the western side of lowest terrace, where ground probing revealed that the landscaped deposits here appeared to contain higher quantities of brick and refuse.

The trench was step excavated to a maximum depth of 1m, with water saturated deposits at this level rapidly flooded by the current water table. The deepest deposits uncovered included a layer of soft/dense mid-grey clay-silt (201) which contained a few small abraded lumps of post-medieval brick. This material is likely to be a waterline build-up of alluvium mud mixed with post-medieval dumped deposits to assist in land reclamation and consolidation at the margins of the mere. The latest pottery collected from this layer was a single small sherd of Raeran/Aachen German Stoneware of late 15th to 16th century date.



Plate 9: T2; C19th Drain (looking NE) [2x1m scales]

Cut into the clay-silt was a buried land drain running down with the sloping ground from north to south, which was lined with thick pavement tiles and on-edge brick (204). Within the backfill for the drain's construction was a mix of silty-clay (202) containing mortar debris, a high volume of late post-medieval brick & tile, along with domestic refuse in the form of mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century household ceramics, bottle glass and oyster shell. Overall, the pottery assemblage and glass suggest a late 18<sup>th</sup> century date range of c. 1850-75.

The drain was sealed below a c. 0.3m make-up layer of silty-clay mixed with silty-loam, which contained occasional fragments of 19<sup>th</sup> century brick and tile (200). Traces of a buried gravel path running north to south were set above this (205), which was buried by a relatively modern topsoil (206) of c. 0.3m depth. The topsoil here contained frequent fragments of late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century refuse in the form of rusted metal fragments, glass, ceramic building material and pottery and also a few large fragments of mid-Victorian rope decorated edging tiles (of the type commonly used for bordering garden features and pathways).

**Discussion**

In April 1850, the Sanitary Inspector, William Lee, published a report addressed to the Board of Health on improving the sewerage, drainage and supply of water in Diss. He recommended lowering the level of water in the mere via enhanced outflow and installing a system of drains for the town, for channelling sewerage away from the mere. The earthenware drains *'would commence with from 4 to 6 inches diameter'* and would gradually converge and become larger until the whole drainage was united into one pipe of 10 or 12 inches in diameter. Every house, court, privy and rainwater pipe was to be conducted into the street drains. With the lowering of the Mere, Lee suggested that *'there would be sufficient room to construct public walks entirely round it, which would cost a very trifling sum for shrubs, gravel, and labour'*. *'The entrance would be from Mere Street, where the present filthy watering place is'*. *'I have also estimated that a drainage-pipe shall be laid under such public walks, entirely round the Mere, to receive the drainage from all the premises upon its banks, and prevent the future pollution of the water'*.

In view of this report, it is possible to identify the drain discovered in Trench 2 as one of the smaller outflow pipes built to convey foul water from the houses at the top of the hill down to the drainage pipe around the mere. The excavated example appeared to be a relatively well constructed drain buried below a gravel path, matching the description of proposed 'public walks' with 'gravel' in Lee's report. The rope edging present in context 406 (and which appears to have been recycled for use in other parts of the garden) was contemporary with the drain and may originally have formed the border for the public gravel paths or shrubberies.

The assemblage of rubbish collected from the drain cut is typical of domestic waste of the era and can be dated to the third quarter of the nineteenth century by the ceramic and glass objects (c. 1850-75). By the early 1900s, the gravel path seems to have fallen into misuse, as a layer of garden soil containing brick, tile and domestic waste was dumped over the top, as landscaping for the current path running down the edge of the garden.

The various terrace walls were constructed of rough coursed flint & cementitious mortar with brick capping and appear to date from the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

- **Trench 3** (Figure 8)

This trench was excavated by the Waveney Valley Young Archaeologists Club. It was positioned on the uppermost of the main garden terraces (Terrace C) which slopes from north to south. A large area was stripped of c. 0.3m of modern rooty topsoil to form a working area of c. 3m by 5m.

The Victorian to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century garden soils (301) were investigated more deeply by two keyhole test-pits, dug to depths of between 0.4m and 0.6m from this level. These revealed a make-up or subsoil deposit of fairly sterile silty-clay/clay-silts (302), with occasional flecks of charcoal and chalk, which appears to predate the later post-medieval terracing activity. A single sherd of late medieval transitional ware of 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century date was collected from this layer, alongside two residual sherds of medieval pottery.

- **Trench 4** (Figure 7)

This trench was located in the north-east corner of the third terrace down (Terrace C), close to the eastern pathway that originally ran from the top of the garden all the way down to the mere's edge. It was placed in an area of ground suspected to have received dumps of ashy waste from rubbish burning, as indicated by ground probing.

Just below the topsoil was the south-west corner of a rubbish pit ([407]) of c. 0.6m depth, which contained three main episodes of infill. The primary fill was an ash laden soil, rich in charcoal pieces. All three fills contained residual evidence of rubbish burning or hearth clearance in the form of charcoal, along with fragments of butchered animal bone, oyster shells and numerous sherds of 18<sup>th</sup> century pottery. The pottery assemblage contains basic kitchen and household vessels along with commonly imported stoneware drinking vessels of Frechen and Westerwald wares. These dumped refuse laden soils also contained a pieces of post-medieval roof and floor tile.



Plate 10: T4; C18th Rubbish pit [407] (looking N)  
[1x1m & 1x0.5m scales]



Overall the assemblage of pottery finds indicates a likely date range of c.1720-1740, with the pit located to the rear of outbuildings serving No. 11 Market Hill, which were shown on a later plan of 1838 and which could have been present in a similar form at this time.

The pit was dug through a thin subsoil (404) and into a natural deposit of very dense chalky-clay (405).

- **Trench 5** (Figure 9)

This trench was located on the southern side of the lowest terrace against the terrace wall, to investigate whether any 18<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century rubbish tipping had taken place here. The trench was step excavated to a limit of c.0.6m, which only exposed a waterlogged silty-clay containing occasional fragments of late post-medieval brick (502) buried below a make-up deposit of Victorian to early 20<sup>th</sup> century date (502).



Plate 11: T5 (looking N) [1x1m scale]

## 8.0 Finds Analysis (Appendix 2a)

High numbers of late 19<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> century fragments of household rubbish were present in the topsoils, which included modern pottery sherds, tobacco pipe pieces, broken window glass, ferrous rubbish, brick & tile and parts of a gas fire. The majority of this material was cleaned and examined on site. Only artefacts of post-medieval or earlier date, with the potential to assist in characterising earlier phases of land use, were retained for more detailed analysis.

The artefacts reported on here were analysed by Dr Tom License, aside from the non-post-medieval pottery and human bone (reported on by Sue Anderson) and the copper-alloy artefacts (Andy Barnett and Giles Emery).

- **The Pottery (excluding the majority of post-medieval material)**

By Sue Anderson

### Introduction

Fifty-six sherds of pottery weighing 417g were collected from nine contexts. This does not include post-medieval glazed red earthenwares or modern wares from topsoil contexts. A few post-medieval and modern wares were recorded where these were found in otherwise medieval groups. Table 1 shows the quantification by fabric; a summary catalogue by context is included as Appendix 3.

Description	Fabric	Date Range	No	Wt/g	Eve	MNV
Roman micaceous greywares	RBGM	Roman	1	7		1
Gritty Ipswich Ware	GIPS	650-850	2	52	0.15	2
Early medieval ware	EMW	11th-12th c.	5	24	0.05	5
Yarmouth-type ware	YAR	11th-12th c.	1	5	0.05	1
Early medieval sparse shelly ware	EMWSS	11th-13th c.	1	4		1



Description	Fabric	Date Range	No	Wt/g	Eve	MNV
Medieval coarseware	MCW	L.12th-14th c.	6	28		6
Waveney Valley coarsewares	WVCW	L.12th-14th c.	23	164	0.18	22
Unprovenanced glazed	UPG	L.12th-14th c.	1	10		1
Waveney Valley glazed wares	WVGW	13th-14th c.?	1	3	0.05	1
Late medieval and transitional	LMT	M/L.14th-16th c.	7	73		7
Raeran/Aachen Stoneware	GSW3	L.15th-16th c.	3	16		3
Iron-glazed blackwares	IGBW	16th-18th c.	2	8		1
Cologne/Frechen Stoneware	GSW4	16th-17th c.	1	17		1
Late p-med. unglazed earthenwares	LPME	18th-20th c.	1	3	0.04	1
Unidentified	UNID	?modern	1	3		1
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>56</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>54</b>

Table 1. Pottery quantification by fabric.

## Methodology

Quantification was carried out using sherd count, weight and estimated vessel equivalent (eve). The minimum number of vessels (MNV) within each context was also recorded, but cross-fitting was not attempted unless particularly distinctive vessels were observed in more than one context. A full quantification by fabric, context and feature is available in archive. All fabric codes were assigned from the author's post-Roman fabric series, which includes East Anglian and Midlands fabrics, as well as imported wares. Medieval and later wares were identified following Jennings (1981). Methods follow MPRG recommendations (MPRG 2001) and form terminology follows MPRG classifications (1998). The results were input directly into an MS Access database, which forms the archive catalogue.

## Pottery by period

### *Roman*

One body sherd of Roman micaceous greyware was residual in ?subsoil (104). It was burnished externally and had a lime deposit internally. The closest known pottery production site for this fabric was in Wattisfield, Suffolk (c. 10km to the south-west).

### *Middle Saxon*

Two large, unabraded sherds of Ipswich Ware, both in the 'pimply' or gritty fabric, were recovered from ?subsoil (104). One was a rim fragment from a small jar (110mm diameter) and the other was a base sherd.

### *Medieval*

Thirty-eight sherds were of early or high medieval date (11<sup>th</sup>–14<sup>th</sup> C.).

Handmade early medieval wares of broadly 11<sup>th</sup>–13<sup>th</sup> Century date were recovered from layer (107) and ?subsoil (104), and included two jar rims. One was a typical EMW form, a jar with a simple everted rim which was decorated with thumbing along the edge. The other was a beaded everted rim in Yarmouth-type ware.

High medieval coarsewares were dominated by the fine sandy greywares which occur frequently in north-east Suffolk and were probably made at production sites along the Waveney Valley. Other medieval coarsewares were unprovenanced sandy wares, some of which were similar to early medieval ware but wheelmade, and others which have parallels in rural sites in east Norfolk. Three forms were identifiable, a bowl with a square beaded rim typical of 13th/14th-century Suffolk wares (103), a jar with an upright flat-topped rim (105) and a jug with an upright thickened rim (104), both of probable 13th-century date.

Only two medieval sherds were glazed, both very sparsely. One was probably a Waveney Valley product and comprised a small fragment of collared rim with light green or yellowish spots of glaze internally. The other was an oxidised body sherd in a fabric similar to the medieval coarsewares in this assemblage. There were a few spots of clear glaze on both surfaces. It is likely to be a local product and may be of later medieval date.

*Late medieval*

Seven sherds of late medieval and transitional ware were recovered, all body fragments. The majority were from garden soil. Most sherds were green-glazed, although one from garden soil (101) was unglazed and could be an earlier greyware. A body sherd from (101) was decorated with a brown slip stripe under green glaze. Only one form was identifiable, a bung-hole cistern in (101), represented by part of the bung-hole which was decorated with thumbing and spots of green glaze. Pottery of this type was made at a number of production sites, many of which are located along the Waveney Valley and around Wattisfield.

Three sherds of Raeren stoneware were found in the upper levels of the trenches. All were probably from mugs or small jugs and were brown glazed.

*Post-medieval and modern*

Only a small quantity of post-medieval pottery is included here, the rest being reported on elsewhere (Licence, this volume). One sherd of Frechen stoneware was found in make-up layer (200), there was a rim fragment from a small plant pot (LPME) in ?garden feature (103), and a heavily burnt but probably modern sherd (UNID) was found in ?subsoil (104), where it may have been intrusive.

**Pottery by context**

A summary of the pottery by context is provided in Table 2. Much of this assemblage was recovered from topsoil and subsoil layers.

Context	Interpretation	Fabric	Ceramic spot date
101	Garden soil	LMT GSW3	L.15th–16th c.
103	?Garden feature	WVCW IGBW LPME	19th/20th c.
104	?Subsoil	RBGM GIPS EMW YAR MCW WVCW UPG UNID	13th/14th c.
105	Lower garden soil	WVCW	13th c.
107	Colluvium/subsoil	EMW EMWSS MCW	12th-13th c.
200	Make-up	GSW3 GSW4	16th c.+
201	Waterline build-up	WVCW GSW3 LMT	L.15th-16th c.
300	Topsoil	WVCW	13th/14th c.+
301	Garden soil	WVCW LMT	M.14th-16th c.+

Table 2. Pottery types present by context.

**Discussion**

The presence of a Roman sherd may indicate occupation close to the mere at some point in the 2nd–4th centuries, although it is possible that a single sherd might have been deposited during manuring. The two unabraded sherds of Ipswich Ware are of importance in showing that there was a Middle Saxon presence in the town, despite being redeposited in a medieval context.

Of greatest value in this small assemblage is the group of medieval pottery, which is the largest to have been recovered from any site excavated in Diss town centre to date. The range of wares is limited and comprises fine and medium sandy wares, with a few of the earlier wares containing sparse calcareous inclusions. All sherds, despite their fabric names, are of unknown provenance as no production sites of either Yarmouth-type ware or Waveney Valley coarseware have yet been identified. Very little medieval pottery has been recovered from the south-east of Norfolk so far, but sites in the north-east of Suffolk have produced similar vessel forms and fabrics to those identified in the Diss assemblage. No Norwich-type local medieval unglazed (LMU) ware was present, and it seems likely that the town was being supplied by more local potters.

Unsurprisingly, the later medieval assemblage is dominated by LMT, the majority of which was probably made at the Suffolk production sites. A few imported wares are present, but these German salt-glazed stonewares were ubiquitous in East Anglia in the 16th century and later.

- **Post-medieval Pottery** (*Appendix 4*)

High numbers of late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century factory made sherds were present in topsoil deposits. Only ceramic sherds collected from stratified contexts were identified individually by fabric type with the minimum number of vessels noted per type/context (MNV) and a combined pottery sherd weight recorded per context.

Fifty-two sherds of post-medieval pottery with a combined weight of 1130g were analysed from five contexts. The sherds represented a minimum of c. 26 vessels (MNV), with generally moderate levels of abrasion.

Table 1 shows the quantification by fabric; a summary catalogue by context is included as Appendix 4.

Description	Fabric Date Range	No	MNV
Glazed red earthenware	16-18th	9	5
Late glazed red earthenware	18-19th	5	1
English Stoneware	17-19th	1	1
Staffordshire creamware	M18-M19th	5	1
Finewares/Transfer printed	18-19 <sup>th</sup>	9	2
Whitewares	18-19 <sup>th</sup>	5	3
Creamware	Mid-C18th	1	1
Pearlware	L.18th-M.19th c.	1	1
Yellow ware	L18-19 <sup>th</sup>	5	2
Refined white earthenware	L18-19 <sup>th</sup>	1	1
Banded ware	L18th-M19th	2	1
English stoneware – Staffordshire type	L.17th-M.18th c	1	1
Frechen stoneware	16-17 <sup>th</sup>	5	4
Westerwald stoneware	E.17th-19th c.	2	2
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>52</b>	<b>26</b>

Table 1. Post-medieval pottery quantification by fabric.

Fill of	Context	Interpretation	No.	MNV	Spot date
Drain cut [203]	202	Fill	34	13	L.18-19th
-	205	Gravel Path	1	1	19th
Pit [407]	401	Pit-fill	2	2	M18th
Pit [407]	402	Pit-fill	11	9	17-18th
Pit [407]	403	Pit-fill	4	4	16-18th

Table 2. Pottery types present by context.

The assemblage of post-medieval pottery collected from Trench 2, represents an assemblage of typical domestic waste for an urban site, incorporated into the backfill of a probable mid-19<sup>th</sup> century drain and the make-up deposits above it. The pottery includes a typical range of common household ceramics, which includes tablewares, bottles and kitchenwares with a later 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century date range. A single sherd of 19<sup>th</sup>-century white ware was collected from the gravel path above the run of the drain.

A domestic midden pit ([407]) containing kitchen and yard waste (located with the rear plot for No.11 Market Hill) received three successive layers of tipping, deposited at close intervals. The ceramics sample amounted to 17 sherds with a minimum vessel count of 15. Local earthenwares predominate (9 vessels), followed by imported German stonewares from Frechen (4 vessels) and Westerwald (2 vessels). Context (401), the uppermost fill level, contained one sherd of Staffordshire dipped white stoneware, which came in c. 1720.



The overall assemblage is perhaps consistent with a date in the 1720s or soon after. By the 1740s one might expect a higher proportion of Westerwald ware, Staffordshire saltglaze stoneware, and some bottle glass to be appearing. The vessels represented are all ordinary kitchen/ pantry vessels of that era.

A few pieces of the are soot blackened externally, but this is residue from use in cooking, not from the burning of rubbish - at least, the broken edges (which look like old breaks) show no burning as one might expect if fragments were being burned. Nor are there any two or more sherds from the same vessel where one sherd is burned and another is not.

• **Faunal Remains**

An assemblage shellfish and fragmentary/butchered animal bone and was examined from stratified post-medieval contexts. The animal bone was identified to species and element where possible and has been summarised by context.

The animal bone is in reasonable condition, although most elements are fragmentary from butchery and wear. No examples of gnawing damage were seen on the remains, suggesting that much of it was quickly buried

Context	Total Quantity	Wt (g)	Species	Qty	Elements Present	Comments
202	1	2	Sheep/goat	1	Tooth	
401	12	231	Sheep/goat	2	Ribs, Limb	Inc. juvenile
			Cattle	5	Ribs, Tibia	
			Bird – goose	1	Limb	
			Unidentified	2	Skull	
402	33	773	Pig - neonatal	1	Jaw	Neonatal
			Sheep/goat	2	Jaw, limb	Inc. juvenile
			Cattle	19	Ribs, pelvis, tibia	
			Bird – goose	1	Limb	
			Pig & Sheep	7	Rib	
			Unidentified	3		
403	19	283	Sheep/goat	1	Jaw, limb	Inc. juvenile
			Cattle	4	Rib	
			Pig and Sheep	8	Rib	
			Pig	2	Limb (distal)	
			Bird – goose	1	Limb	
<i>Totals</i>	<i>65</i>	<i>1289</i>				

Table 1. Animal bone.

Context	Total Quantity	Wt (g)	Species	Comments
202	9	101	Common Oyster	49mm-70mm
401	7	40	Common Oyster	37mm-57mm
402	15	113	Common Oyster	44mm-64mm
403	8	24	Common Oyster	32mm-53mm
403	4		Mussel	
<i>Totals</i>	<i>44</i>	<i>278</i>		

Table 2. Shellfish.

The animal bone collected from the rubbish pit ([407]) reveals the protein-rich diet of eighteenth-century townfolk. Many of the bones bear both cleaver and saw marks from butchery, and knife cuts from carving. All the cuts are ordinary, of the sort consumed by tradespeople and artisans. Ribs and shin of beef, legs of mutton, sheep’s head and goose were consumed. Pork knuckle would have been used for making jelly to set shin of beef, or to thicken stews etc.

The oysters, probably local Norfolk oysters, are on the small side: smaller ones were less expensive. They often went into beef and oyster pies or mutton and oyster puddings.

The jaw bone from a piglet was kindly identified by faunal remains expert Julie Curl, which shows very minimal tooth wear and is probably neonatal.

- **Ceramic Building Materials**

The ceramic building materials retained for examination are all of locally made post-medieval sandy-clay fabrics in mid-orange to red hues.

A few examples of the pavement tiles and red-bricks used to construct the 19<sup>th</sup> century drain (204) were collected from Trench 2, a few pieces of terracotta tubular sectioned land drain (of 6" diameter) were also noted in associated contexts.

A total of 32 fragments of ceramic building materials were collected from the fills (403) and (402) of the rubbish pit ([407]) investigated in Trench 4. These include an assortment of post-medieval roof tiles (two examples retaining square nail holes) and rough/worn floor-tiles with mortar adhering to the under surface. A ceramic drain fragment was also collected.

- **Miscellaneous**

Two fragments of later post-medieval bottle glass were collected from the infill (202) of a 19<sup>th</sup> century drainage cut in Trench 2. One piece was amber-brown in colour, the other a dark green – probably beer and wine bottle fragments. A single large lump of coke was also collected from this context, a common household fuel. The plain bowl of a mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> century clay tobacco and a single stem piece (possibly sourced from the same pipe) were collected from this same deposit.

The bowl of an unmarked clay tobacco pipe with weak rouletting of an early to mid-17<sup>th</sup> century date was collected as a stray find from the garden soil (301) of Trench 3.

Part of the body of a post-medieval hand-brush was collected from the topsoil of the lower terrace (01).

- **Metal Objects**

A small number of metal finds were collected from the 18<sup>th</sup> century rubbish ([407]) recorded in Trench 4:

- A copper-alloy strip measuring 86mm by 21mm with a row of three holes at one end and a single at the other was collected from the upper fill (401). This may be a simple tie, mount or strengthening piece from a basic wooden or leather object.
- Five ferrous metal objects were collected from the fill (402). Four were unidentified fragments whilst one was identified as a 91mm long blade from a pair of post-medieval candle scissors (wick trimmers).
- Three iron nails were collected from the primary fill of the pit (403).
- A near complete cast copper-alloy medieval strap-end was recovered from the fill (102) of a post-medieval garden feature ([103]) in Trench 1 (see below)
- A complete medieval copper-alloy punch decorated mount or fitting was found in the topsoil of the same trench (101), which may have embellished a valued object, such as a casket, book cover or leather item (see below)

Context	Feature	SSD	Material	Object	Object Date	Context Period
102	[103]	T1	Cu Alloy	Strap-end	Medieval	Post-medieval
<p>A near complete cast copper alloy tongue shaped strap-end constructed from two thin plates. The terminal is a small solid and flat tri-lobed knob and the two thin plates split from 17mm behind this to leave a gap for the strap to fit into. At the top there is a single circular copper alloy rivet which would hold the strap end onto the strap. No decoration present. This strap-end probably dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century and is similar to several recorded on the PAS database e.g. Glenn, H (2015) <i>WMID-E7E1C9: A MEDIEVAL STRAP END</i> <a href="https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/716246">https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/716246</a> [Accessed: Feb, 2016]</p> <p>Moderate condition. 42mm L, 12mm max W, tapers to 10mm, 1mm to 2mm thickness. 3.73g</p>						

Context	Feature	SSD	Material	Object	Object Date	Context Period
100	-	T1	Cu Alloy	Strap end	Medieval	Modern
<p>A complete cast copper alloy punch decorated mount or fitting, possibly for augmenting a box/casket, leather object (as a poss. strap stiffener or book cover. In plan it is a broad tongue shaped plate of metal with a small nib at its end and a wide bar shape along its edge. Three small rivets or tacks held the plate in position, one at the apex of the tongue shape and another at each end of the flat arms forming the bar. One of the small iron rivet/tacks is still partly in place. The surface design has a border with minimal punch decoration – set in clusters of 3 or 4. The main design has a very worn simple foliate pattern defined by the hand punched background which may indicate a later medieval date (14<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century). The mount is bent and may have been prised off with some force, probably indicating that it was mounted onto something more solid than a leather strap (i.e. wood).</p> <p>Moderate condition. 47mm L, 43mm W, 0.5mm thickness. 6.85g</p>						



Plates 12: Medieval mount  
(50mm scale)



Plate 13: Medieval strap-end  
(50mm scale)



- **Human Skeletal Remains**

A single fairly worn human molar with fragments of alveolar bone was collected from the garden soil (301) at Trench 3, indicating the likely presence of a disturbed burial somewhere in the vicinity. This find is intriguing, particularly as fragmentary human remains have been found previously in the general area, with fragments of human skull of unknown date found previously at No.2 Mount Street (c. 160m to the north-east).

Sparse evidence of prehistoric, Roman and Saxon activity has been found on the north side of the mere in the general area of the medieval settlement and these human remains may hint that either some form of unidentified cemetery or isolated burials could be located here of an as yet unidentified historic or prehistoric period.

## 9.0 Conclusions

The excavation site lies to the rear of medieval tenement plots which were probably well established by the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century, fronting the former market place. The tapering nature of the current triangular plot is believed to be a remnant of these medieval land divisions, where even limited access to the mere's edge was a valued local asset.

The edge of a deep hollow or man-made cut was found in Trench 1, from the surface of which 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery was collected. Above this was a probable subsoil layer from which 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds were retrieved. The pottery appears to have been produced locally and includes fragments of domestic storage/cooking jars and jugs. A single residual sherd of Romano-British pottery and two unabraded sherds of Middle-Saxon pottery were also found within this deposit, which provide rare evidence of local activity from these periods within the area of the medieval town. The Middle Saxon pottery sherds are the first recorded from the centre of the town.

The medieval pottery assemblage is currently the largest to have been recovered from any site excavated in Diss town centre to date and demonstrates that the edge of the mere received mixed deposits of midden waste throughout the medieval period, either as dumped waste or incorporated into material used to consolidate and reclaim marginal land. This practice appears to have been ongoing into the 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries and again in the 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, as demonstrated by an archaeological evaluation trench dug in 1999 at Nos. 1 to 4 Mallard Court, where soils and dumped material appears to have gradually raised ground levels, allowing for the conversion from marginal wetland at the water's edge to gardens running right down to the northern edge of the mere.

Trench 2 discovered the remains of a 19<sup>th</sup> century tile-lined drain sealed below a former gravel pathway leading down to the mere. The assemblage of rubbish collected from the drain cut is typical of domestic waste of the era and can be dated to the third quarter of the nineteenth century by the ceramic and glass objects (c. 1850-75). By the early 1900s the gravel path seems to have fallen into misuse, as a layer of garden soil containing brick, tile and domestic waste was dumped over the top, as landscaping for the current path running down the edge of the garden. This drain may very well date to a period of proposed improvement works which followed a report published in April 1850 by the Sanitary Inspector William Lee addressed to the Board of Health on improving the sewerage, drainage and supply of water in Diss. He recommended lowering the level of water in the mere via enhanced outflow and installing a system of drains for the town, for channelling sewerage away from the mere. The main drain was to encircle the mere below a public walk set with gravel.

The various terrace walls were constructed of rough coursed flint & cementitious mortar with brick capping and appear to date from the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Trench 3 was positioned on the uppermost garden terrace and showed that post-medieval subsoils were present below the Victorian to early 20<sup>th</sup>-century garden soils.

Trench 4 uncovered a rubbish pit of early to mid-18<sup>th</sup> century date, which contained evidence of rubbish burning or hearth clearance in the form of charcoal, along with fragments of butchered animal bone, oyster shells and pottery. The pottery assemblage contains basic kitchen and household vessels along with commonly imported stoneware Germanic drinking vessels of Frechen and Westerwald wares. Overall, the assemblage of pottery indicates a likely date range of c.1720-1740, with the pit located to the rear of outbuildings serving No. 11 Market Hill which were shown on a later plan of 1838 and which could have been present in a similar form at this time.

The surface of waterlogged post-medieval deposits was encountered by Trench 5, located closest to the mere at the base of the slope off the lowest terrace. The various terrace walls were constructed of rough coursed flint & cementitious mortar with brick capping and appear to date from the early half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A single fairly worn human molar with fragments of alveolar bone was collected from the garden soil of Trench 3, indicating the likely presence of a disturbed burial somewhere in the vicinity. This find is intriguing, particularly as fragmentary human remains have been found previously in the general area, which may hint that either some form of unidentified cemetery or isolated burials could be located here of an as yet unidentified historic or prehistoric period.

Noteworthy finds include, an early to mid-17<sup>th</sup> century clay tobacco pipe bowl, a medieval strap-end and a medieval decorative mount, possibly for adorning a casket or other valued item.

Despite representing a relatively limited sample of the site, this archaeological investigation has provided a surprising volume of archaeological finds, dating from the Roman, Middle Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval periods. The evidence gained through trial trenching here has shown that further rubbish pits from the 18<sup>th</sup> century are likely to be found near the top of the gardens, directly to the rear of former outbuildings, while the garden soils and subsoils further down the slope include 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century pottery, possibly incorporated within spreads of night-soils and midden waste. The marginal land at the base of the slope includes dumped landscaping deposits of post-medieval to 19<sup>th</sup> century date, which have been used to consolidate the land here, an activity that appears to stretch back to at least the medieval period, as indicated by the deep deposits partly exposed in Trench 1 which contained pottery ranging from the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries.

*A copy of this report will be submitted to the Norfolk Historic Environment Record to form part of their permanent archive and a digital copy will also be uploaded as an online digital archive on the OASIS website of the archaeology data service (ads).*

## 10.0 Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by students of the University of East Anglia (Mike Schmoelz, Allie Gibson, Adam Stone, Tom Lucking, Megan Ward, and James Barnaby) along with local volunteers (including Ben Ross and Chris Brown) and the children of the Waveney Valley Young Archaeologists Club. Sophie Cabot and Lizzie Stewart supervised the children at Trench 3 and Lawrence Storey supervised the team at Trench 1.

The post-excavation analysis work was carried out by the author and Dr Tom Licence, Post-medieval finds were analysed by Dr Tom Licence, the non-post-medieval pottery and the human tooth by Sue Anderson and the copper-alloy objects by Andy Barnett and the author. NHER and cropmark data was kindly supplied Alice Cattermole on behalf of the Historic Environment Service. The author is grateful to Tim Holt-Wilson for sharing his knowledge of the mere's formation and history. Plates 3 to 5 were kindly provided by Sonya Duncan.

Special thanks are also due to the people of Diss for their assistance and genuine interest in the project.

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### Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Fill of	Brief Physical Description	Interpretation	Period
01	u/s	-	Surface/sub-surface finds from lower terrace	-	-
<b>Trench 1</b>					
100	Deposit		c. 0.2m of bramble root infested loose soil. Soft, dark-greyish-brown sandy loam. Freq. C19th-20th cbm	Topsoil	Modern
101	Deposit		V.friable, dark-brownish-grey silty-loam, occ. cbm, occ. charcoal	Garden soil	Late Post-Med
102	Deposit	[103]	Firm, mid-brownish-grey silty-clay, mod. chalk flecks, mod. mortar flecks, rare cbm flecks	Upper fill	
103	Cut		Undulating sloping edge of possible garden feature	?Garden feature	Post-medieval
104	Deposit		Friable, mid-orangey-brown sandy/silty-clay, occ. chalk flecks	?Subsoil	Uncertain
105	Deposit		Friable, dark-brownish-grey silty-loam, occ. cbm, occ. charcoal	Lower garden soil	Post-medieval
106	Deposit	[103]	Similar to (102) but mid-orangey-brown and mod. yellow clay lumps, occ. chalk pieces (well-mixed)	Lower fill	
107	Deposit		Sticky/dense, dark-greyish-brown v.sandy-silt. Rare chalk flecks. 'damp'.	Colluvium/subsoil	?Medieval
108	Deposit		Dense/friable, mid-brownish-grey silty-clay, occ. chalk flecks	Subsoil	Uncertain
109	Deposit		Thin amorphous spread of Norfolk Red (sandy) brick, occ. roof-tile frag. C19-20th	Rubble spread	Late Post-Med
110	Deposit		V.firm, pale to mid-yellow chalky clay	Natural geology	
<b>Trench 2</b>					
200	Deposit		V.friable, dark-greyish-brown silty-clay/silty-loam mix, freq. roots, mod. stones, occ. cbm.	Make-up	Late Post-Med
201	Deposit		Wet - Soft/dense, mid-grey clay-silt, occ. stones, occ. chalk flecks, rare cbm frags	Waterline build-up	Late Post-Med
202	Deposit	[203]	Wet - Soft/dense, mid-orangey-brown silty-clay, freq. roots, freq. mortar lumps (chalky/coarse), mod. cbm. Well-mixed.	Fill	
203	Cut		Linear N-S drainage cut c. 0.45m wide, c. 0.4m deep	Drain channel	Late Post-Med
204	Masonry	[203]	Unbonded pamment frags. and bricks on edge to line a narrow drainage cut	Drain	Late Post-Med
205	Deposit		Friable, light spread of well-sorted gravel (max 20mm), c. 80mm thick	Gravel path	Late Post-Med
206	Deposit		V.friable, dark-greyish-brown silty-loam, freq. roots, mod. stones, occ. cbm. c. 0.3m deep	Topsoil	Modern
<b>Trench 3</b>					
300	Deposit		c. 0.2m of bramble root infested loose soil. Soft, dark-greyish-brown sandy loam	Topsoil	Modern
301	Deposit		V.friable, dark-brownish-grey silty-loam, occ. cbm, occ. charcoal	Garden soil	Late Post-Med
302	Deposit		Friable/sticky, mid-brown silty-clay/clay-silt mix, occ. chalk, occ. stones	Make-up/Subsoil	Post-medieval
<b>Trench 4</b>					
400	Deposit		c. 0.2m of bramble root infested loose soil. Soft, dark-greyish-brown sandy loam. Freq. C19th-20th cbm	Topsoil	Modern
401	Deposit	[407]	V.friable, mid-grey silty-clay, rich in charcoal pieces, occ. cbm	Fill	
402	Deposit	[407]	Friable, well-mixed mid-brownish-grey silty-clay, mod. cbm, occ. charcoal/animal bone/chalk, rare charcoal	Fill	
403	Deposit	[407]	Soft/dense 'ashy' textured silty-loam, rich in charcoal pieces, occ. animal bone, occ. cbm	Primary fill	
404	Deposit		Friable, mid-brown silty-clay, occ. chalk, occ. stones	Subsoil	Post-medieval
405	Deposit		V.dense/v.firm chalky clay (chalk pieces up tp 50mm), mottled yellowish-grey to mid-yellow	Natural geology	

Context	Category	Fill of	Brief Physical Description	Interpretation	Period
406	Deposit	[407]	Lens of mid-orangey-brown silty-clay within base of (402)	Fill	
407	Cut		Corner of a pit containing ash and charocal laden fills, which also contain rubble frags. and household waste	Pit	Late Post-Med
<b>Trench 5</b>					
500	Deposit		c. 0.10m of bramble root infested loose soil. Soft, dark-grey silty-loam, occ. cbm	Topsoil	Modern
501	Deposit		Friable, dark-grey silty-loam, freq. roots, occ. cbm, occ. stones	Garden soil	Late Post-Med
502	Deposit		Wet - friable/sticky, mid-brownish-grey silty-clay, mod. stones, occ. cbm, occ. charcoal	Garden soil/make-up	Late Post-Med

### Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table

Period	Feature type	Quantity
Medieval (1066 to 1539AD)	Hollow	1
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	Drain	1
	Garden feature	1
	Gravel path	1
	Pit	1
Modern (1900 to 2050AD)	Garden terrace	4

### Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (g)	Comment
01	Bone object – brush	1	11	Post-medieval
100	Copper-alloy object – mount	1	6.85	Medieval
101	Pottery	6	64	
102	Copper-alloy object – Strapend	1	3.73	Medieval
102	Pottery	12	66	
104	Pottery	22	166	
105	Pottery	1	20	
107	Pottery	6	26	
200	Pottery	2	29	
201	Pottery	3	13	
202	Animal bone	1	2	
202	Ceramic building material	54	8512	
202	Clay tobacco pipe	2	13	
202	Coke	1	-	
202	Glass – bottle	2	9	
202	Pottery – Post-medieval only	34	910	
202	Shell	9	101	Oyster
204	Ceramic building material	3	4727	
205	Ceramic building material/slate	26	1859	Inc. sourced from brick drain
205	Pottery – Post-medieval only	1	1	
300	Pottery	1	17	
301	Clay tobacco pipe	1	15	
301	Human Remains – tooth	1	2.42	Molar with frags of alveolar bone
301	Pottery	3	16	
401	Animal bone	12	231	
401	Copper-alloy object	1	-	Strip
401	Pottery – Post-medieval only	2	58	
401	Ceramic building material	17	1132	Roof tile/floor tile
401	Shell	7	40	Oyster
402	Animal bone	33	773	

Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (g)	Comment
402	Ceramic building material	24	1622	Roof/floor tiles plus drain fragments
402	Ferrous object – candle scissors (wick trimmers)	1	-	Post-medieval
402	Ferrous objects	4	-	Unidentified
402	Pottery – Post-medieval only	11	9	
402	Shell	15	113	Oyster
403	Animal bone	19	283	
403	Nails – ferrous	3	-	C18th
403	Pottery – Post-medieval only	4	35	
403	Shell	12	24	Oyster & mussels

**Appendix 2b: Finds summary table**

Period	Material	Quantity
Unknown	Human skeletal remains	1
Roman (42 to 409AD)	Pottery	1
Middle Saxon (651 to 850AD)	Pottery	2
Medieval (1066 to 1539AD)	Copper-alloy object – mount	1
	Copper-alloy object - strapend	1
	Pottery	45
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	Animal bone	65
	Bone object – brush	1
	Ceramic building material	124
	Clay tobacco pipe	3
	Pottery	59
	Copper-alloy object – strip	1
	Ferrous fragments	5
	Ferrous nails	3
	Ferrous object – wick trimmers	1
	Shell	44

**Appendix 3: Pottery (excluding the majority of the post-medieval material)**

Context	Fabric	No	Wt/g	MNV	Form	Rim	comments	Sherd date range
101	LMT	1	5	1				15th-16th c.
101	LMT	1	4	1			fine greyware, poss earlier	15th-16th c.
101	LMT	1	8	1			part of rim, burnt glaze int	15th-16th c.
101	LMT	1	18	1			reduced, poss slightly earlier (WVGW?)	15th-16th c.
101	LMT	1	26	1	cistern		reduced	15th-16th c.
101	GSW3	1	3	1				L.15th-16th c.
102	WVCW	6	37	6				L.12th-14th c.
102	WVCW	1	6	1			oxid surfaces	L.12th-14th c.
102	WVCW	1	9	1	bowl?	square-bead		L.12th-14th c.
102	WVGW	1	3	1	jug	collared		13th-14th c.?
102	IGBW	2	8	1				16th-18th c.
102	LPME	1	3	1	Plant-pot	beaded		18th-20th c.
104	RBGM	1	7	1			poss later?	Romano-British



Context	Fabric	No	Wt/g	MNV	Form	Rim	comments	Sherd date range
104	GIPS	1	24	1				650-850 (M.Saxon)
104	GIPS	1	28	1	jar	West type E		650-850 (M.Saxon)
104	EMW	1	9	1				11th-12th c.
104	MCW	2	7	2			fine, oxid with grey/black surfaces	L. 12th-14th c.
104	MCW	3	14	3			partly oxid f/ms, 1 sim to MCW3 from N Norfolk	L. 12th-14th c.
104	UPG	1	10	1			f/ms, oxid surfaces, v little glaze, local fabric	L. 12th-14th c.
104	WVCW	7	43	7				L. 12th-14th c.
104	WVCW	2	11	1			oxid surfaces	L. 12th-14th c.
104	WVCW	1	5	1	jug	upright thickened		L. 12th-14th c.
104	YAR	1	5	1	jar	everted beaded		11th-12th c.
104	UNID	1	3	1			heavily burnt, poss porcelain or refined whiteware?	19/20?
105	WVCW	1	20	1	jar	flat-topped everted	upright rim with short flat-topped section, squared edge	L. 12th-14th c.
107	EMW	3	10	3			2 oxid	11th-12th c.
107	EMW	1	5	1	jar	simple everted		11th-12th c.
107	EMWSS	1	4	1				11th-13th c.
107	MCW	1	7	1			thick, sim to MCW3	L. 12th-14th c.
200	GSW3	1	12	1				L. 15th-16th c.
200	GSW4	1	17	1				16th-17th c.
201	WVCW	1	5	1			int surface lost, poss earlier, or undec LMT?	L. 12th-14th c.
201	LMT	1	7	1				15th-16th c.
201	GSW3	1	1	1				L. 15th-16th c.
300	WVCW	1	17	1			fs greyware, ext surface lost, v dense, could be earlier	L. 12th-14th c.
301	WVCW	2	11	2			fs greywares, could be earlier	L. 12th-14th c.
301	LMT	1	5	1				15th-16th c.

Notes: f/ms – fine/medium sandy; fs – fine sandy

## Appendix 4: Post-medieval Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	No	MNV	comments	Sherd date range
202	Late glazed red earthenware	Bowl	5	1	Interior lead glazed	18-19th
202	English stoneware	Bottle (porter)	1	1		c. 1850-1880
202	Staffordshire creamware	Plate	5	1	Wavy edged	M18th-M19th
202	Fine whiteware/transfer printed ware	Saucer	9	2	Blue 'willow pattern' transfer print	18-19th
202	Whiteware	Plate	1	1	Blue 'willow pattern' transfer print	18-19th
202	Whiteware	Bowl	1	1	Pudding/mixing bowl	18-19th
202	Creamware	Creamer	1	1	Sprig moulded bullock in white on blue-slip body	Mid-C18th-19th
202	Pearlware	Cup	1	1	Transfer printed (blue) teacup	>1850
202	Yellow ware/Slipware		3	1	Dark-brown slip, manganese glaze	L.18-19 <sup>th</sup>
202	Bandedware	Bowl	2	1	Buff with blue stripes	c.1770-1840
202	Whiteware	Jug	3	1	Blue 'willow pattern' transfer print	18-19th
202	Yellow-ware	Jug	2	1	Brown slip, lead glaze exterior, incised ribbing	L.18-19 <sup>th</sup>
205	White earthenware	Pot	1	1	Grooved to take a lid	19 <sup>th</sup>
401	English Stoneware Staffordshire-type	Mug	1	1	White dipped, base fragment	L.17th-M.18th c. (c. 1720-1760)
401	Glazed red earthenware	Bowl	1	1	Rim, lead oxide exterior glaze	18-19th
402	Glazed red earthenware	Inc. Bowl	5	4		16-18th
402	Frechen Stoneware	Jug/bottle	4	3	Inc, body/neck sherd	16-17th
402	Westerwald Stoneware	Mug/jug/bottle	2	2	Base sherds	E.17th-19th c.
403	Glazed red earthenware		3	3	One may match with one in 402	16-18th
403	Frechen Stoneware	Jug/bottle	1	1		16-17th
Totals			52	29		

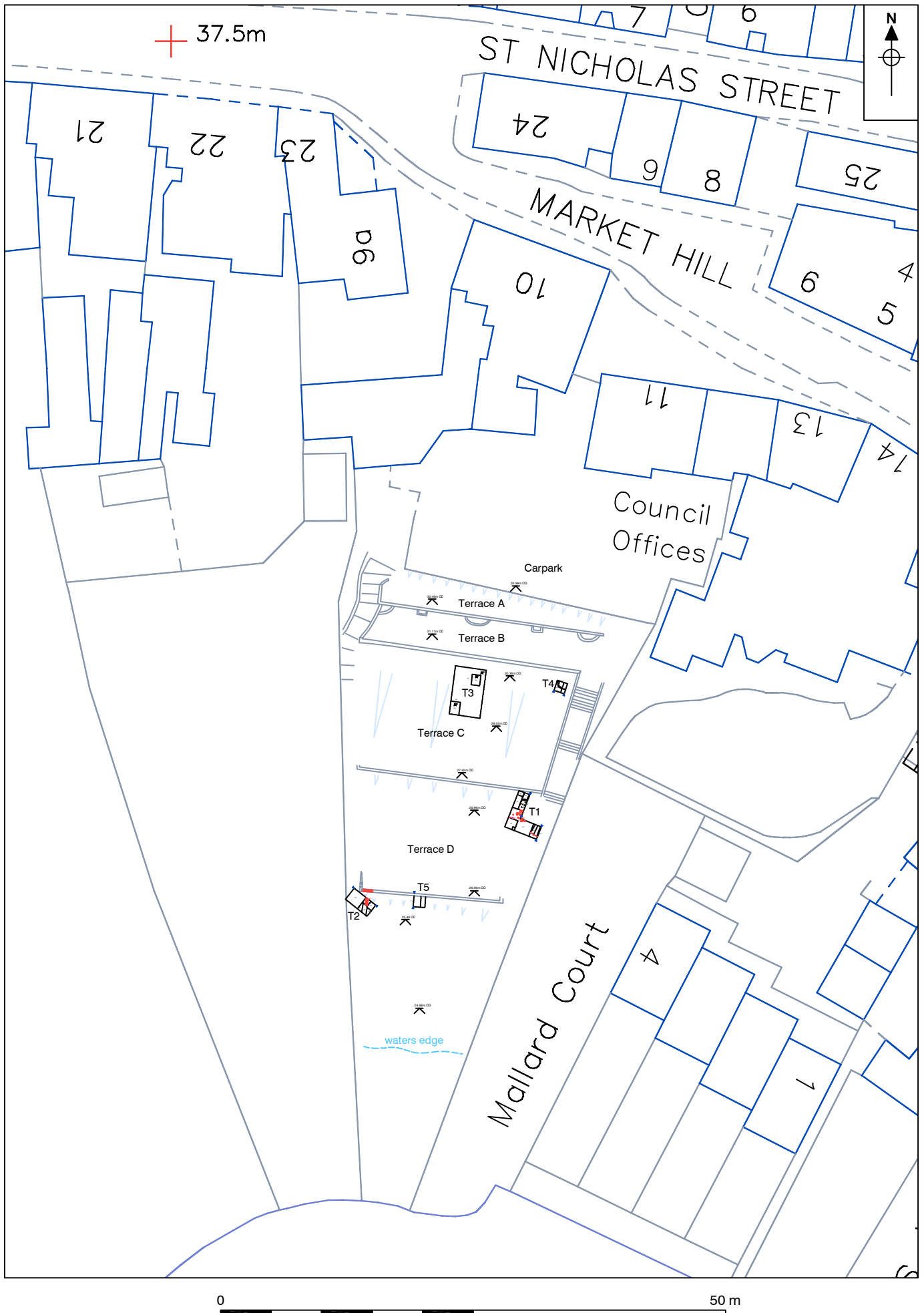


Figure 3. Site plan. Scale 1:500



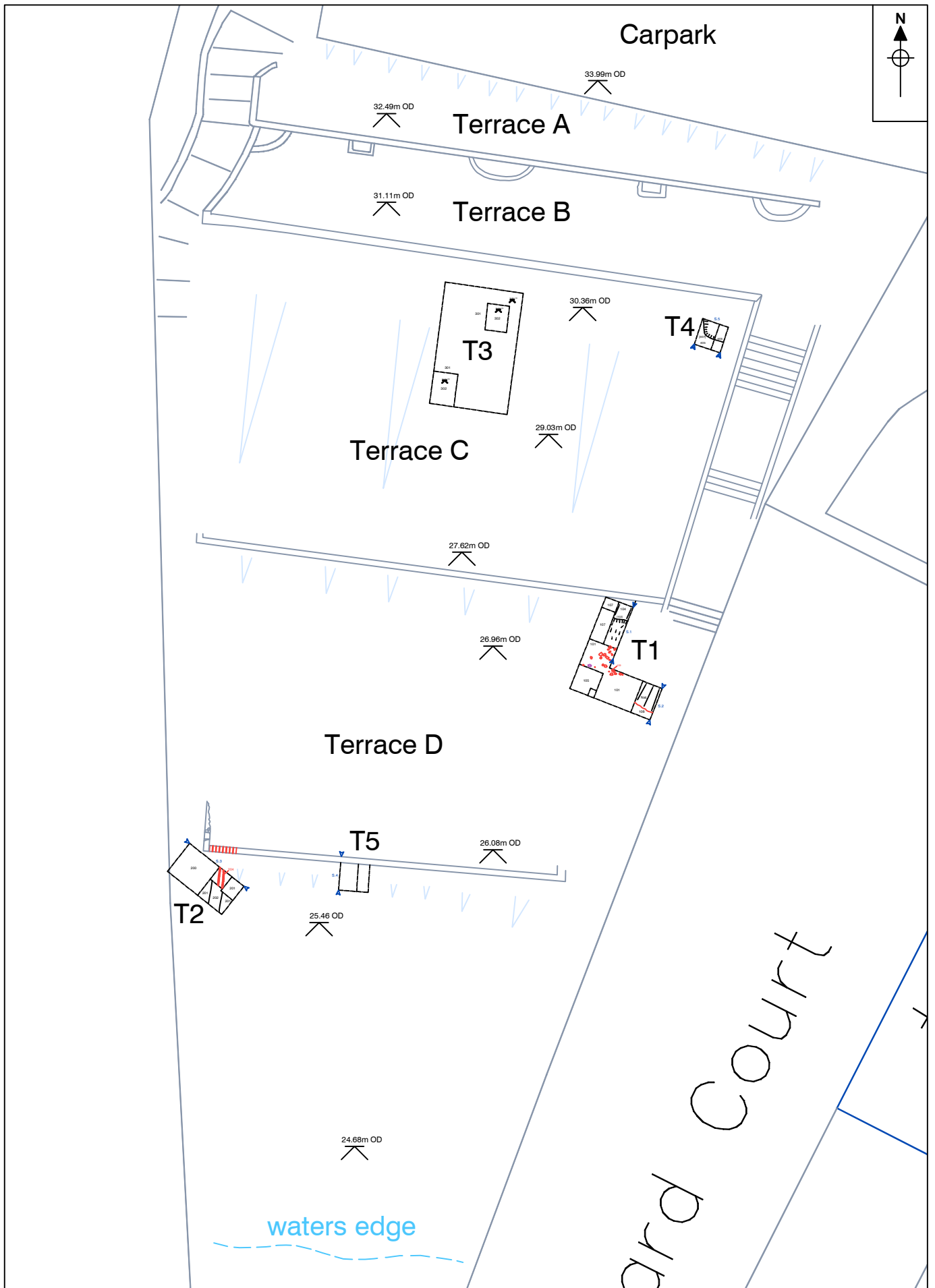
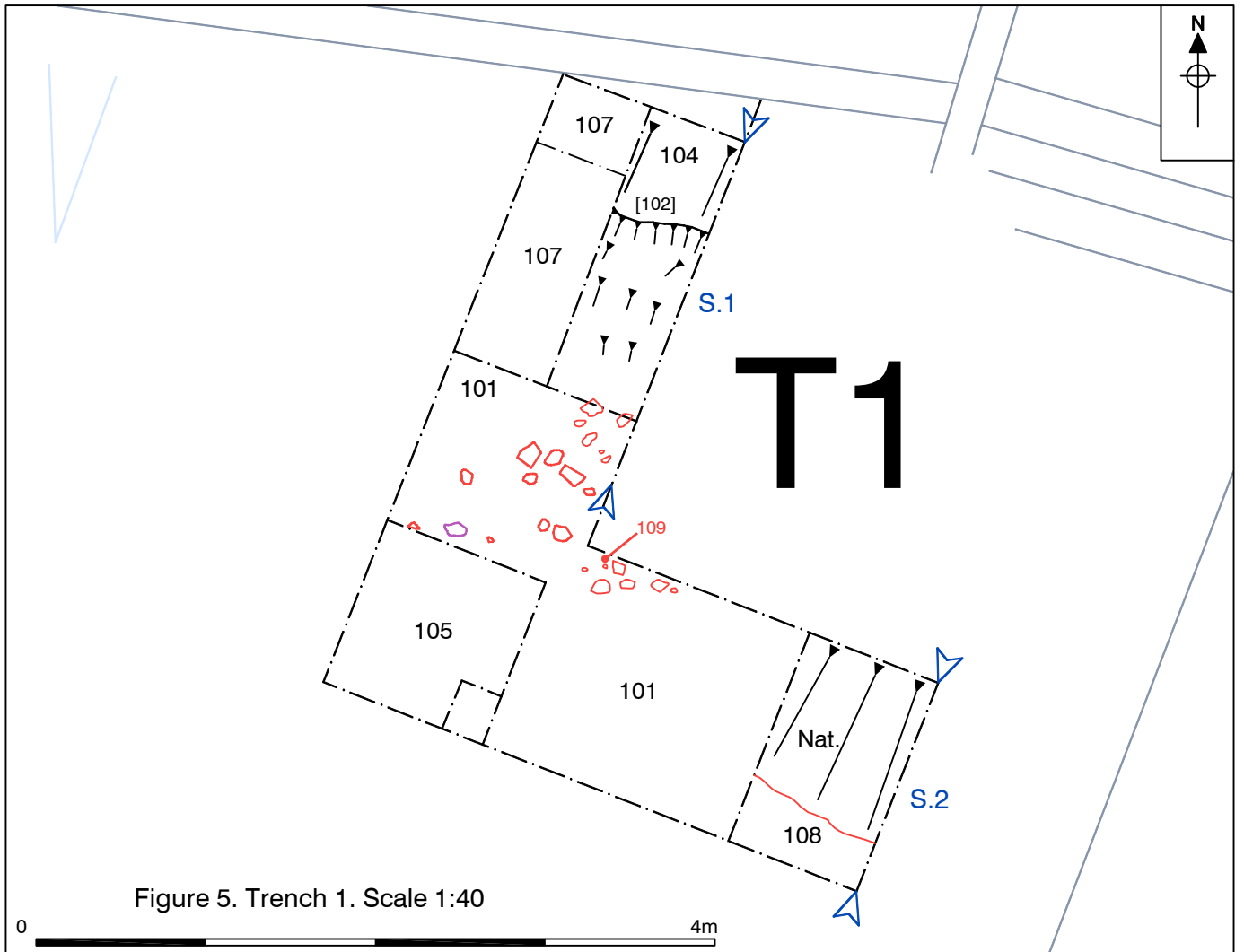
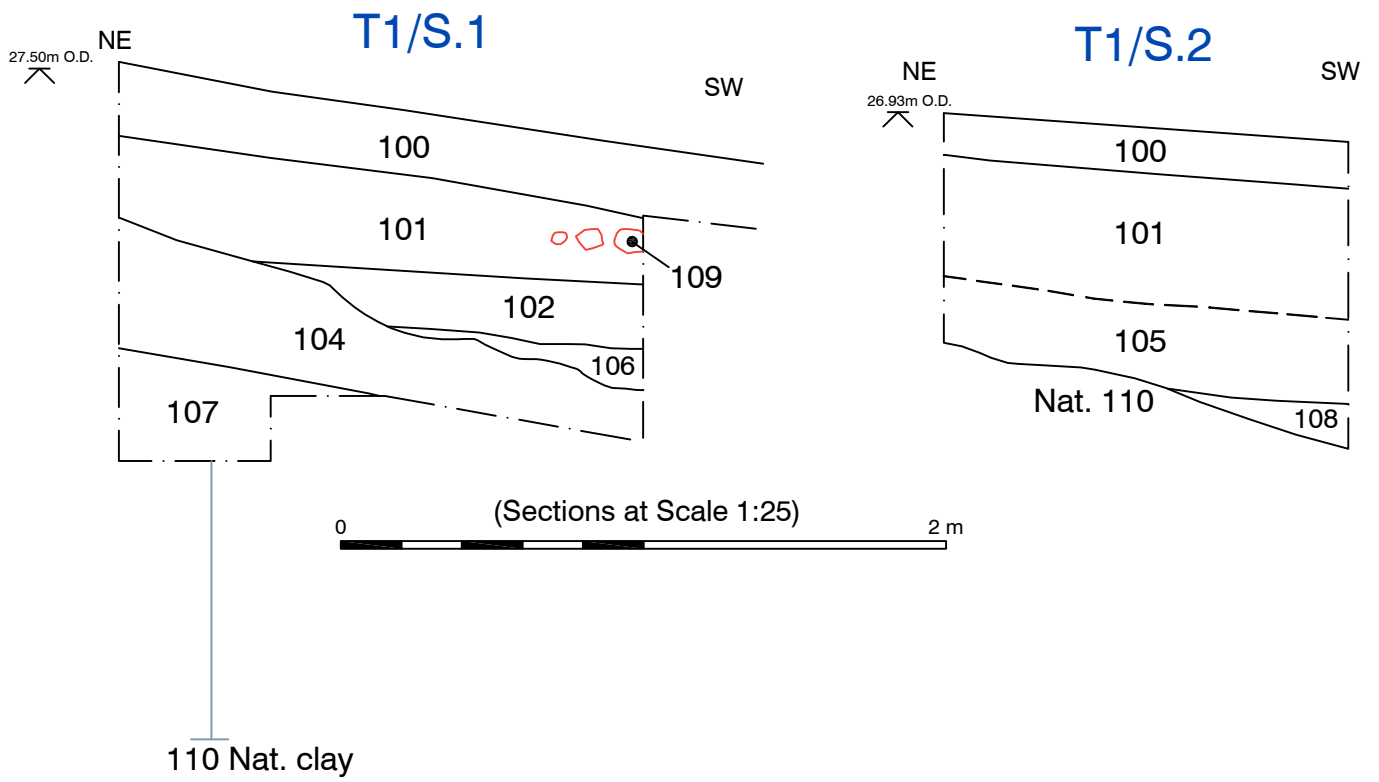
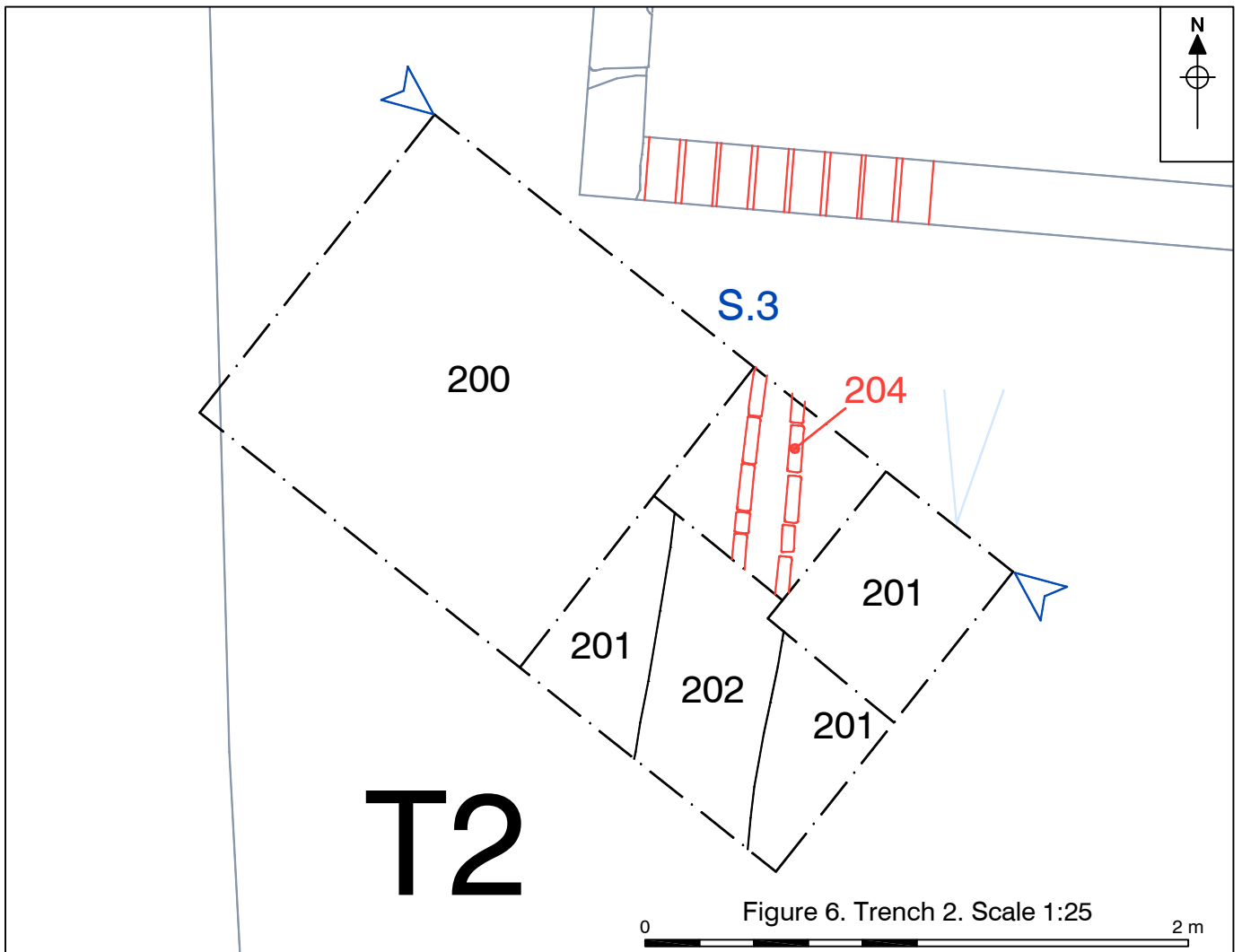
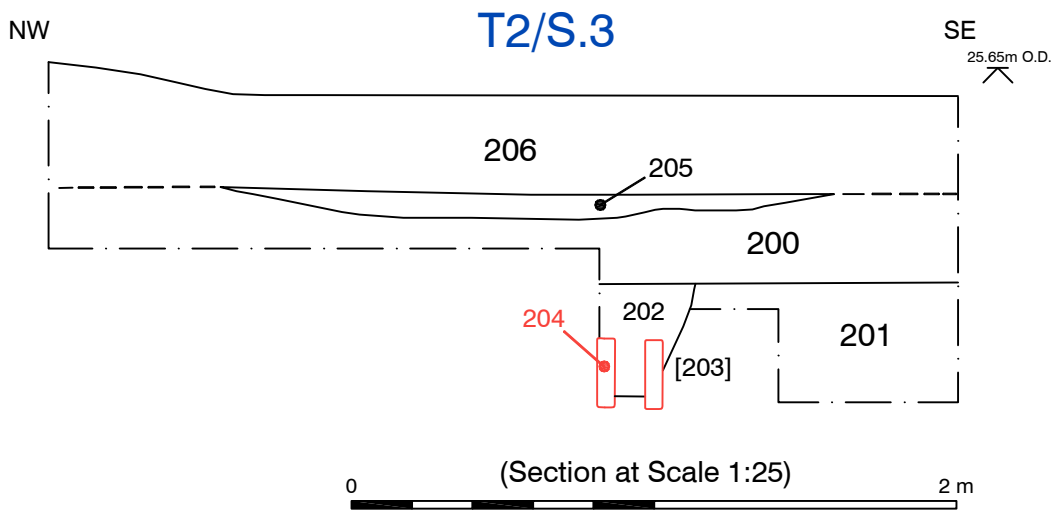
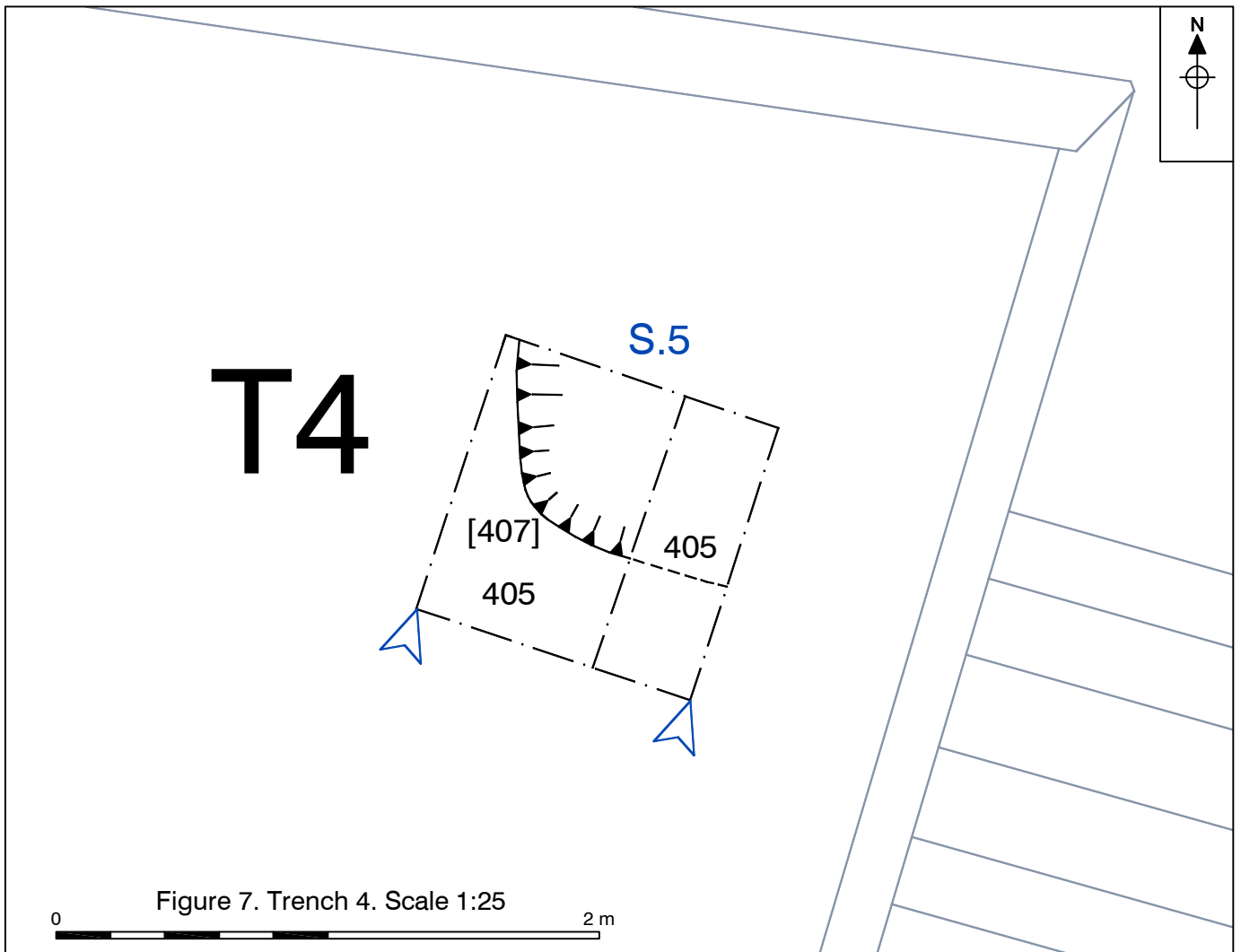
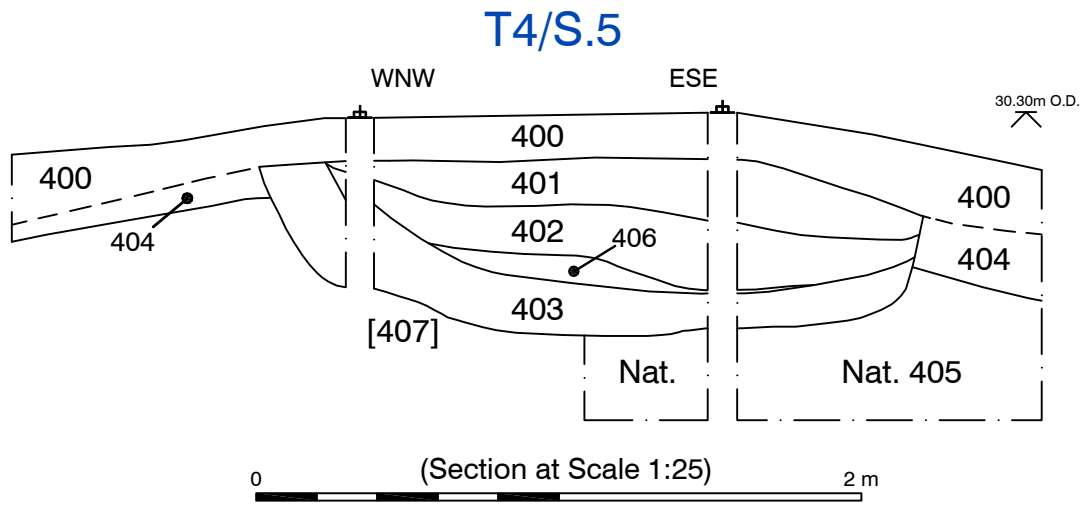


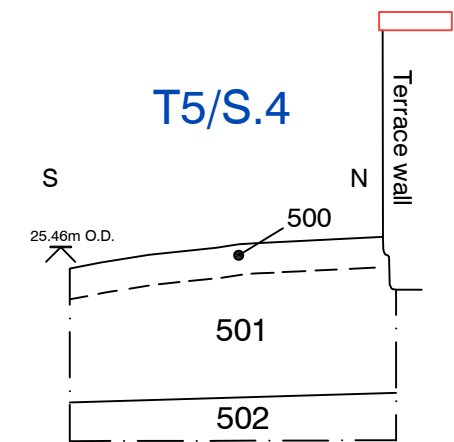
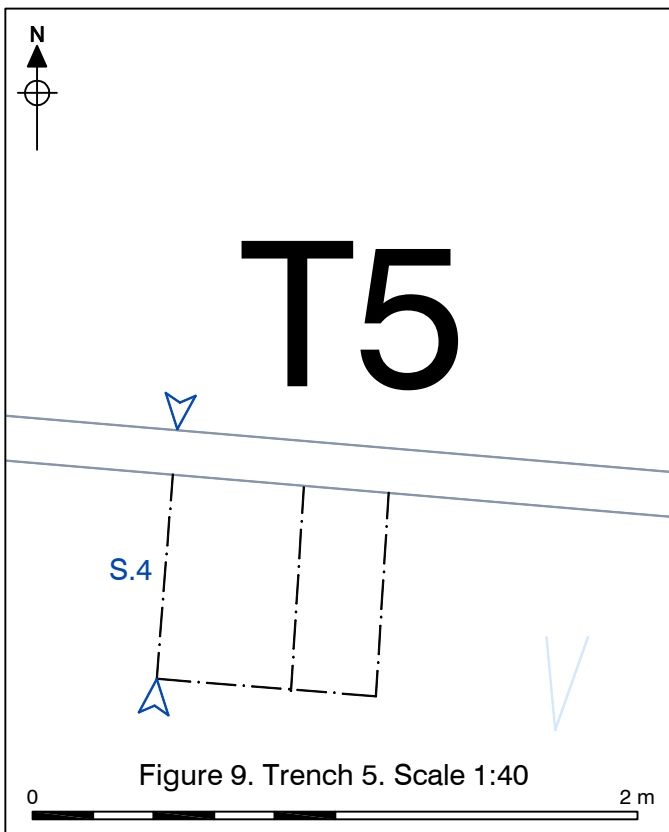
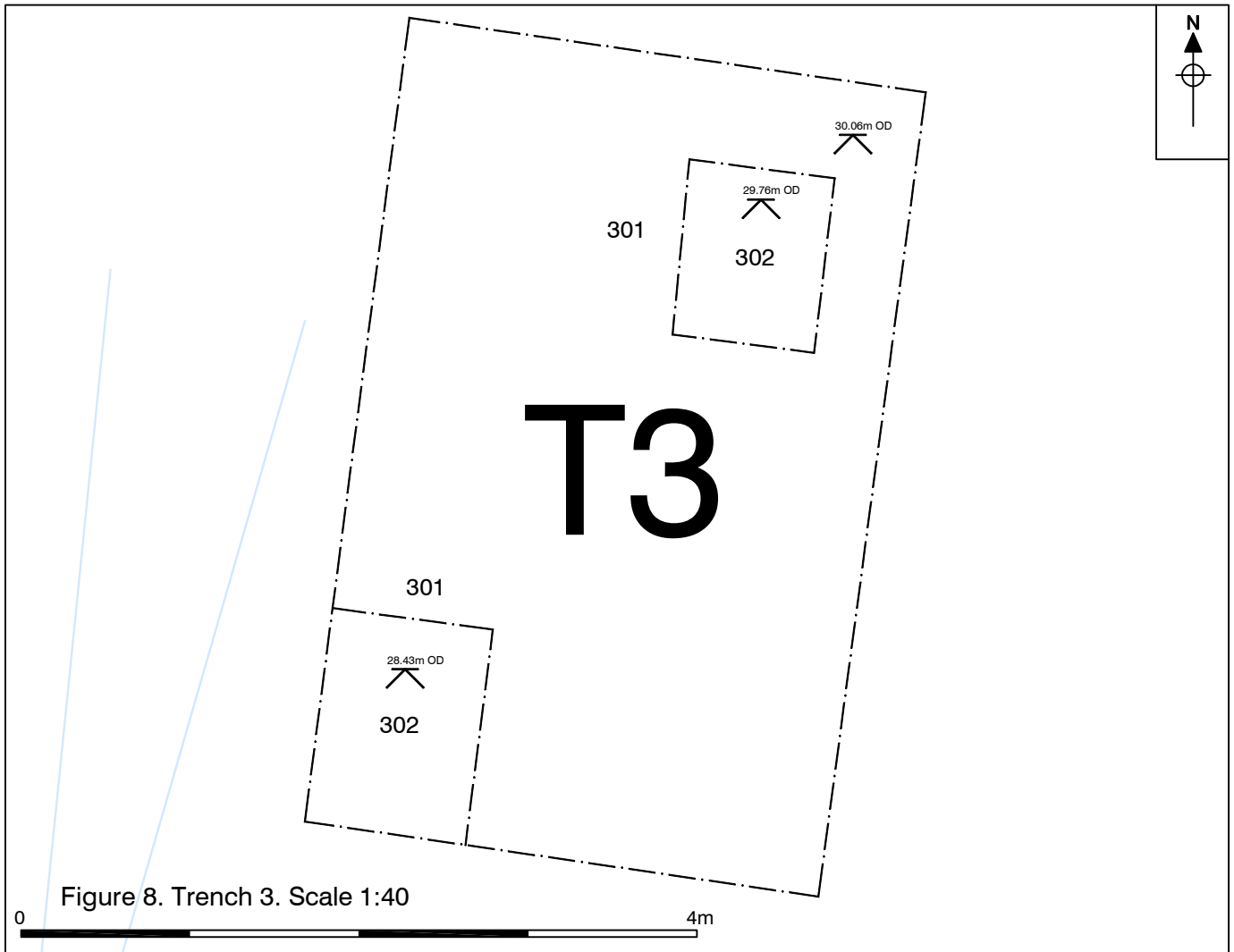
Figure 4. Trench location plan. Scale 1:200











(T5 Plan & Section at Scale 1:25)

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**OASIS ID: norvicar1-242666**

## Project details

Project name	A Community Archaeological Investigation of Gardens to the rear of Nos. 11 to 12 Market Hill, Diss, Norfolk.
Short description of the project	The results of a community excavation project to investigate an area of land to the rear of council offices at Nos. 11 to 12 Market Hill, Diss. The excavation formed part of a Heritage Lottery funded project to involve local people, University of East Anglia students, Diss High School pupils and the Waveney Valley branch of the Young Archaeologists Club. The aim of the project was to investigate the archaeological potential of the site whilst promoting local interest in the heritage of the town. The site is located to the rear of the Diss Heritage Triangle, which comprises of St Nicholas Street, Market Hill and Market Place. Despite representing a relatively limited sample of the site, this archaeological investigation has provided a surprising volume of archaeological finds dating from the Roman, Middle Saxon, Medieval and Post-Medieval periods. The evidence gained through trial trenching here has shown that rubbish pits from the 18th century can be found near the top of the gardens, directly to the rear of former outbuildings. Garden soils and subsoils further down the slope include 15th to 16th century pottery, possibly incorporated within spreads of night-soils and midden waste. The marginal land at the base of the slope includes dumped landscaping deposits of post-medieval to 19th century date, which have been used to consolidate the land here, an activity that appears to stretch back to at least the medieval period, as indicated by the deep deposits partly exposed in Trench 1. These layers contained pottery ranging from the 12th to 14th centuries. The medieval pottery assemblage is currently the largest to have been recovered from any site excavated in Diss town centre to date and the Middle Saxon pottery sherds are the first recorded from the centre of the town.
Project dates	Start: 13-03-2015 End: 16-03-2015
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ENF136346 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	NVC/2014/GE230 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Research project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices

<http://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm>

1/3

Monument type	HOLLOW Medieval
Monument type	DRAIN Post Medieval
Monument type	GARDEN FEATURE Post Medieval
Monument type	GRAVEL PATH Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	GARDEN TERRACE Modern
Significant Finds	HUMAN SKELETAL REMAINS Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Medieval
Significant Finds	COPPER ALLOY OBJECT Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BONE BRUSH Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CLAY TOBACCO PIPE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	COPPER ALLOY OBJECTS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	FERROUS FRAGMENTS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	FERROUS NAILS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	FERROUS OBJECT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	SHELL Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Test-Pit Survey"
Prompt	Research
Prompt	Community project

## Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK SOUTH NORFOLK DISS Gardens to the rear of Nos. 11 to 12 Market Hill, Diss
Postcode	IP22 3JZ
Study area	1140 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 1160 7996 52.376242795963 1.109101166516 52 22 34 N 001 06 32 E Point

## Project creators

Name of Organisation	Norvic Archaeology
Project brief originator	Self (i.e. landowner, developer, etc.)
Project design originator	Norvic Archaeology
Project director/manager	Giles Emery
Project supervisor	Giles Emery
Type of	Other Charitable Trust

<http://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm>

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sponsor/funding body

## Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	NMAS and Norvic Archaeology
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Human Bones","Industrial","Metal"
Digital Archive recipient	NMAS
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	NMAS
Paper Contents	"Survey"
Paper Media available	"Diary","Drawing","Plan","Report","Section"

## Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	A Community Archaeological Investigation of Gardens to the rear of Nos. 11 to 12 Market Hill, Diss, Norfolk.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Emery, G.
Other bibliographic details	Norvic Archaeology Report No. 73
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Norvic Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Norwich
Description	Spiral bound
Entered by	Giles Emery (giles.emery@norvicarchaeology.com)
Entered on	15 February 2016

# OASIS:

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