

**Continuous Archaeological Recording  
at 176-177 High Street Gorleston On Sea Norfolk  
Medieval finds and a Nineteenth Century Crypt**

Grid Ref: TG 5268 0460  
Planning Application No: 06/15/0481/F  
HER No. ENF 142249  
Oasis No. 297475

**Prepared for:**  
Wetherspoon

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## Summary

Continuous archaeological recording was carried out in advance of the erection of a new public house for Wetherspoon's at 176-177 High Street Gorleston On Sea Norfolk. This project has been carried out in response to an archaeological brief written by Ken Hamilton and David Robertson, Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service.

Continuous archaeological monitoring under archaeological supervision and control was requested by the Norfolk Historic Environment Service to ensure any archaeology revealed was excavated and recorded in accordance to the Generic Written Scheme of investigation , issued in response to the NHES Brief.

The oversight of the site meant that the entire area was reduced by c.1.0m, reducing to c. 0.70m at the north-east corner down to 1.10m towards the entrance, next to the High Street. This reduction revealed an open plan area containing a series of medieval to late medieval pits with one possible post-medieval pit. The contents of some fills included high numbers of fish bones suggesting a fish diet as opposed to larger cuts of meat such as beef or pig.

A crypt, dating from the 19th century, was also discovered below what is now known to be the Methodist Chapel site. The crypt contained two burials within a brick-built, vaulted chamber. The bone remains were extremely poor, being highly degraded. These were removed by a specialist company to be re-interred at Gorleston Old Cemetery.

## 1. Introduction and Planning Background

1.1 Planning permission for the erection of a new public house for Wetherspoon was granted by Great Yarmouth Borough Council, conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (planning reference: 06/15/0481/F) and forms part of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (2012).

1.2 The planning application, (planning reference: (2016/0362) is subject to conditions of archaeological works and forms part of the planning application process of Great Yarmouth Borough Council, condition (5, 6 & 7) states:

*5). No development shall take place until an archaeological written scheme of investigation has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and 1) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording, 2) The programme for post investigation assessment, 3) Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording, 4) Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation, 5) Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation and 6) Nomination of a competent person or persons/organization to undertake the works set out within the written scheme of investigation. The reason for the condition is :- In order to enable investigation and recording of this site of archaeological interest to take place during the period of building or engineering works.*

*6). No development shall take place other than in accordance with the written scheme of investigation approved under condition 5. The reason for the condition is :- In order to enable investigation and recording of this site of archaeological interest to take place during the period of building or engineering works.*

*7). The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the archaeological written scheme of investigation approved under condition 5 and the provision to be made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured. The reason for the condition is :- In order to enable investigation and recording of this site of archaeological interest to take place during the period of building or engineering works.*

## 2. Site Location and Description

NGR: TG 5268 0460



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**Figure 1. Block plan and site location**

Gorleston is a coastal town to the south of Great Yarmouth in the county of Norfolk. Situated at the mouth of the River Yare, it was once a port town during the late Saxon period until the Norman conquest. Historically, the town was in the county of Suffolk. during the medieval period.

The site can be found in the centre of the town at 176-177 High Street. Gorleston-On-Sea. It is surrounded by modern and old buildings, some of which date to the 19th century or possibly even earlier.

### **3. Geology and Topography**

. The geology of the Great Yarmouth to Gorleston coast comprises of Holocene sand and subordinate gravel of the North Denes Formation. A coastal barrier is reported to have existed in the location of the Great Yarmouth spit since approximately 2000 years ago (*Arthurton et al., 1994*). The barrier has taken numerous forms throughout its existence, from an offshore sandbank to a coastal spit. Protection afforded by the development of these features is believed to be responsible for the re-establishment of terrestrial conditions between repeated Holocene marine inundations of a now-buried valley system in the area (Ashwin & Davison)

### **4. Archaeological and Historical Background**

#### **4.1 Monuments**

The immediate area of focus, being an area of a 250m radius of the development site, has produced very few archaeological finds of interest since records began. The NHES Historic Environment Records list mainly second world war monuments in the form of air raid shelters, dating from around 1940.

A stone mortar was recorded next to the development site, but the find could be as late as the nineteenth century (NHER 60530)..

Some 200m south of the development was the site of the former St Nicholas church (NHER 60522), here several finds of human remains have been found during a number of building works.

It is now known that the development site was once the site of a Methodist chapel. The site has been home to two Methodist chapels. The first was built in 1807 and was a Methodist New Connexion chapel. In 1812 it was bought by a river pilot called Mr Dawson and was re-designated as a Wesleyan Methodist chapel. Growing in popularity, this chapel was demolished in 1844, with foundation stones being laid for a new chapel. It is possible that the new chapel (1844) contained the crypt. In 1851, it was closed and sold to the Wesleyan Reform Movement - an alternative Methodist branch - and reopened. In 1907 it then became a United Methodist Chapel, before being made into a Methodist Chapel in 1932, following the merger of three branches - Wesleyans, Primitives and United. During the second world war it was damaged by bombing and fire and closed.

#### **4.2 Archaeological Background**

There have been a few interventions within the 250m search area of the development site, none of which have recovered much information about Gorleston's past.

## **4.2 Historical Background**

In the reign of Edward the Confessor, Earl Gurth held in Gorleston five carucates of land as a manor. There were then twenty villeins, or husbandmen; but at the period of the Domesday Survey (1086), these were reduced to twelve. During the conquest there were only ten acres of meadow in the parish, which now lie between Braydon and the town. The meadows were poor, frequently covered by the tides, and they formed boggy salt-marshes for most of the time.

Gorleston was a port throughout the late Saxon period until the 13th-14th centuries when neighbouring Yarmouth became more important. The focus for trade shifted to Yarmouth with the port being established there, which resulted in the demise of Gorleston. Meanwhile at Gorleston, fishing took over as the main form of production for the town and remained so until the late 19th to early 20th century when the main commerce at Gorleston was as a seaside resort.

## **5. Results**

### ***Fieldwork***

5.1 A plan of the site was drawn to a scale of 1:50; sections were drawn at 1:10 and individual features were drawn in plan at 1:20.

5.2 A metal detector survey was carried out at all stages of the project.

5.3 A digital photographic archive was produced of the work carried out at 10 million pixels resolution, and will form part of the site record to be curated at the Norfolk county Council.

5.4 Site plans and sections were digitized to archive standard, reduced versions of which are included in this report.

5.5 A crypt located in the east of the site was recorded in plan at 1:50 as part of the site plan, and photographed externally (where revealed) and internally whilst the burials within were still in-situ.

### ***The Archaeological Monitoring***

5.6 The site was reduced by machine under close archaeological supervision to a level which exposed the archaeology, which was at some points, above the desired strip level and were retained for full excavation and recording before further ground reductions were allowed to take place.

5.7 A series of pits were encountered mainly in the western area of the site (see site plan, fig. 3); three postholes; a well (19th c.) re-used as a hearth; a cistern of 19th c. date; a possible quarry pit and the crypt. The area to the south of the crypt, close to the entrance was investigated by way of a series of test pits (plt . 17) to allow access to the site for vehicular access and soil removal. All three test pits revealed considerable made-up ground to a depth of over 1m with predominant 19th century finds of brick, tile glass and other cbm. The disturbance (made-up ground) was



caused by rebuilding at this location during the 19th century, most likely from the works for the later chapel of 1844. The natural was observed in these locations which did not contain any earlier archaeology (plts. 23-26).

5.8 The deposit model was an initial hard surface consisting of cbm and tarmac (1000); below this was a made-up layer (1001) created from modern disturbance, consisting of soil and cbm.

### **5.9 The Features**

A series of intercutting pits/features were excavated in the western end of the site; a possible quarry pit; foundation walls; a well reused as a hearth; a cistern and the crypt:

#### **5.91 Bonded foundation courses**

A flint and brickwork foundation course constructed with 19th century red brick (plt. 3) cemented with lime mortar [1003] was recorded across the site, orientated north-south, c. 3m in length within a wall cut . A further brick foundation wall (plt. 21) of sturdier construction appeared of later date than that of [1003] and could be late 19th c. to early 20th c., it too was constructed of red brick bonded with lime mortar, and was noted on a similar alignment, approximately in the centre of the site; all bricks in both courses appeared to be of seven and a half by two and a half inch size.

#### **5.92 Intercutting and discrete pits**

An amorphous-shaped feature, probably a pit [1005], contained a single fill (1004) with pottery and bone finds; a 10ltr environmental sample was retrieved from this fill for further analysis due to its organic content. Feature [1005] was cut by a further pit-like feature of sub-circular form [1007] containing a single fill (1006), which contained some oyster shell, pottery and bone. In the north-west corner of the site, a discrete pit-like feature [1009] with an uncertain extent, retained a single fill (1008) containing pottery and tile fragments. A further pit-like feature [1011], being very shallow at 0.08m depth, was recorded, cutting feature [1005] at its eastern extent, containing a fill (1010) which included pottery sherds and bone fragments. A sub-circular pit [1013] was recorded close to the above mentioned pits with a single fill (1012) containing pottery and bone fragments; an environmental sample of 10lt was retrieved from the fill for further analysis due to its organic content. Close to the pit complex above, a single pit [1023] was recorded containing three fills (1020, 1021, 1022). Fill (1020), the tertiary fill, but (1021) was much darker in colour due to its charcoal content and was selected for environmental analysis (10lt) for further study. Fill (1022) was a primary silty fill. A final pit [1025] with a very shallow, flat profile was recorded in the eastern end of the site, containing fill (1024). Finds from this feature contained a tile fragment and some brick fragments.

#### **5.93 Postholes**

Three postholes were recorded from the site, all at the eastern end: post hole [1015] contained a fill (1014) with no finds; posthole [1017] contained a fill (1016) with no finds; posthole [1019] contained a fill (1018) with no finds. No specific arrangement for a structure could be interpreted from the position of the postholes.

#### **5.94 The Crypt**

At the far eastern end of the site a barrel-vaulted crypt [1028] was discovered at 8.19m AOD, (top of structure) lying just at the limit of the reduced profile of the site (see plan, fig. 3). A large access pit (4m sq) was excavated and stepped to the north of the crypt entrance (plts. 15-19), which appeared as if it had been opened before and re-sealed, as the brickwork was quite crude; the entrance measured 0.50m by 0.50m and the overall dimensions of the crypt were 2.20m in length by 1.30m in width, depth 1.50m. A red brick-built entrance way [1029] was constructed to the east-end of the structure, which was coffin-shaped in plan, measuring 1.60m in length and 0.75m in depth tapering to its narrowest point of 0.45m. This had been backfilled with a white sand (1030). The crypt contained two burials consisting of wooden coffins with brass and ironwork fittings (plt. 20) ; two nameplates were extant but were too badly corroded to decipher. After an initial inspection of the crypt, the bone remains were found to be extremely poor and considered not worthy for further study. An exhumation licence was applied for and once received, a specialist company *Rowland Brothers* were engaged to carry out the exhumation. This was carried out under archaeological supervision to gain any further evidence as to the identity or gender of the human remains. Nothing could be deduced except that the burial to the left was taller than the right-hand burial and could have been male; this burial appeared to have worn some kind of hat, as during removal of the human remains their appeared to be a felt-like substance around the skull area; whilst the smaller skeletal remains (right hand side burial) appeared to have a wider pelvic area and appeared to be possibly female as a result. It is possible that we have a burial of a man and wife, (founding minister and wife ?) Perhaps interred at different times, their remains were re-interred at Gorleston Old Cemetery.

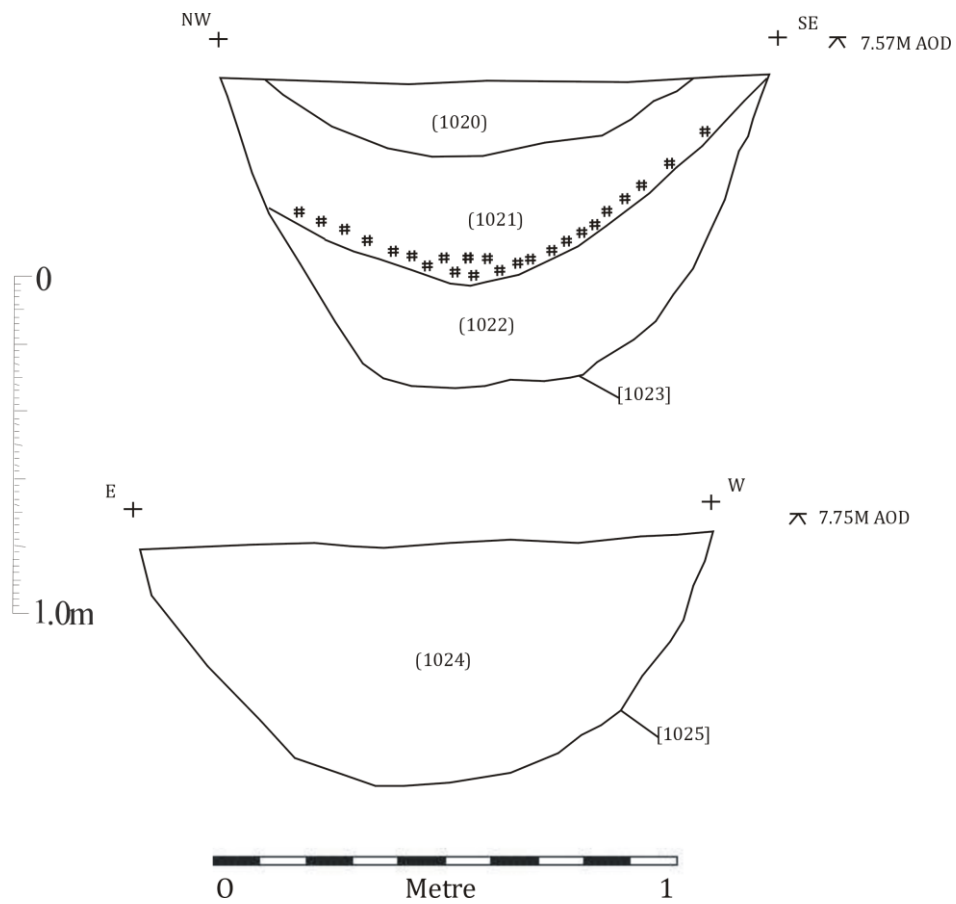
#### **5.95 A Brick-built 19th century soak-away**

A Victorian brick-built soak-away [1031] was recorded in the south-west corner of the site (c.1.30m diameter) at the edge of the excavation area). It was constructed with seven inch by two and a half inch red bricks, bonded with lime

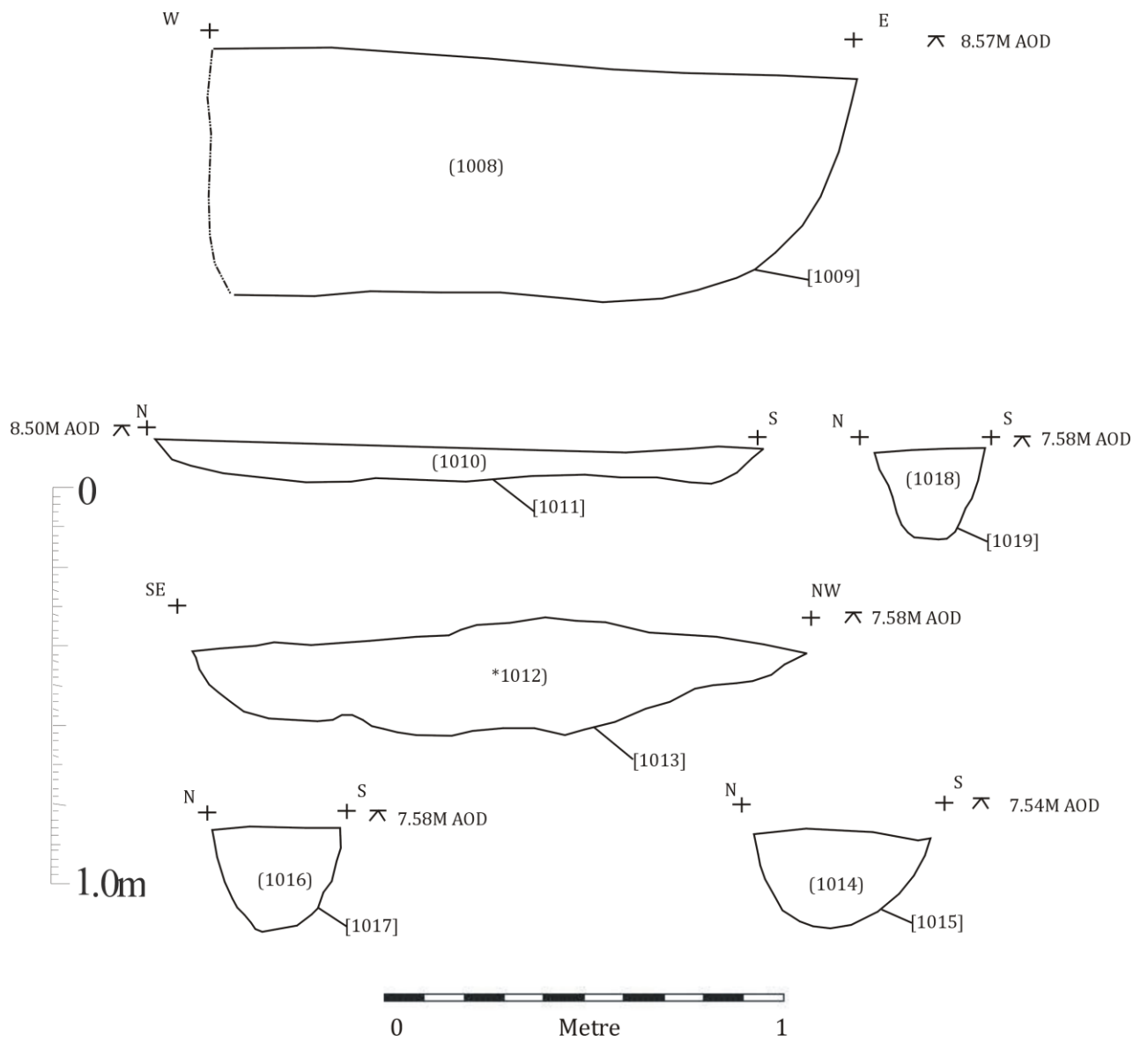
#### **5.96 A Well re-used as a hearth**

A well (1.30m in diameter) was noted just north of the crypt, built from red brick and appeared to have been re-used as a hearth as charcoal remains were seen in the top of the back-filled structure; the fill contained pattern, printed 19th century pottery sherds (plt.10). It was constructed with seven inch by two and a half inch red bricks, bonded with lime mortar.

### 5.97 Sections

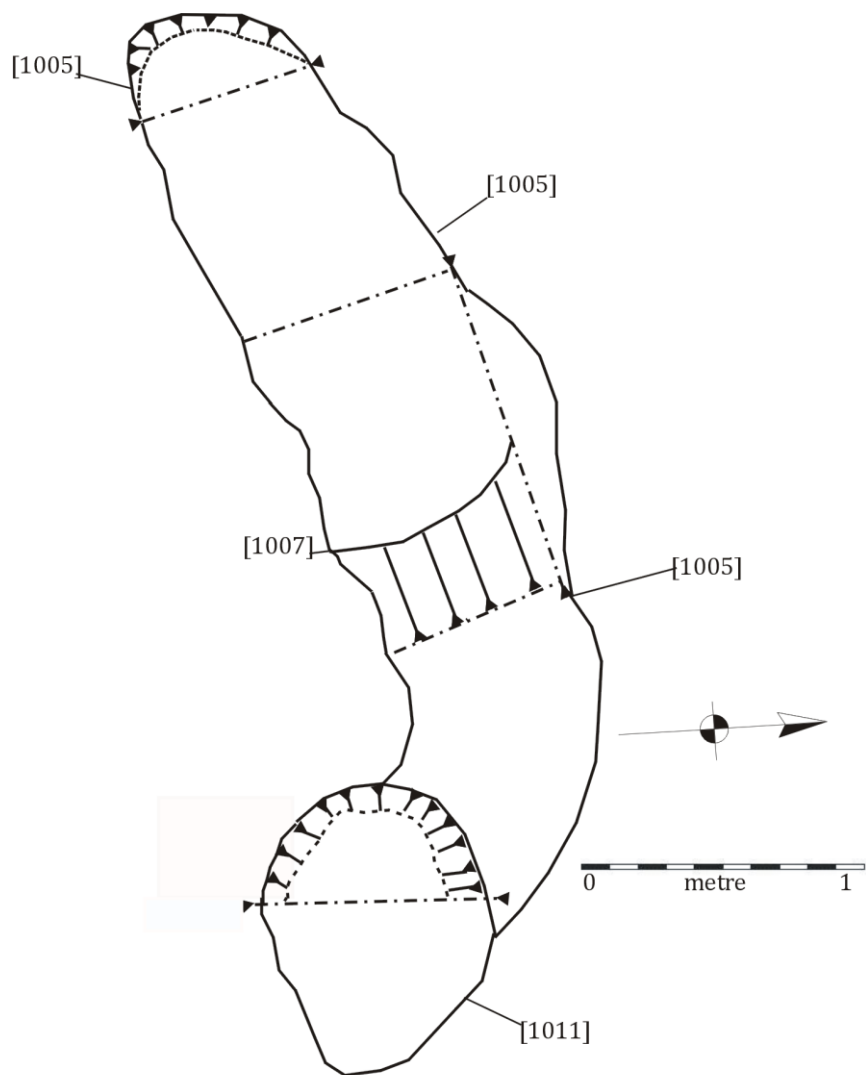


**Figure 2. Sections of pits, scale, 1:10**



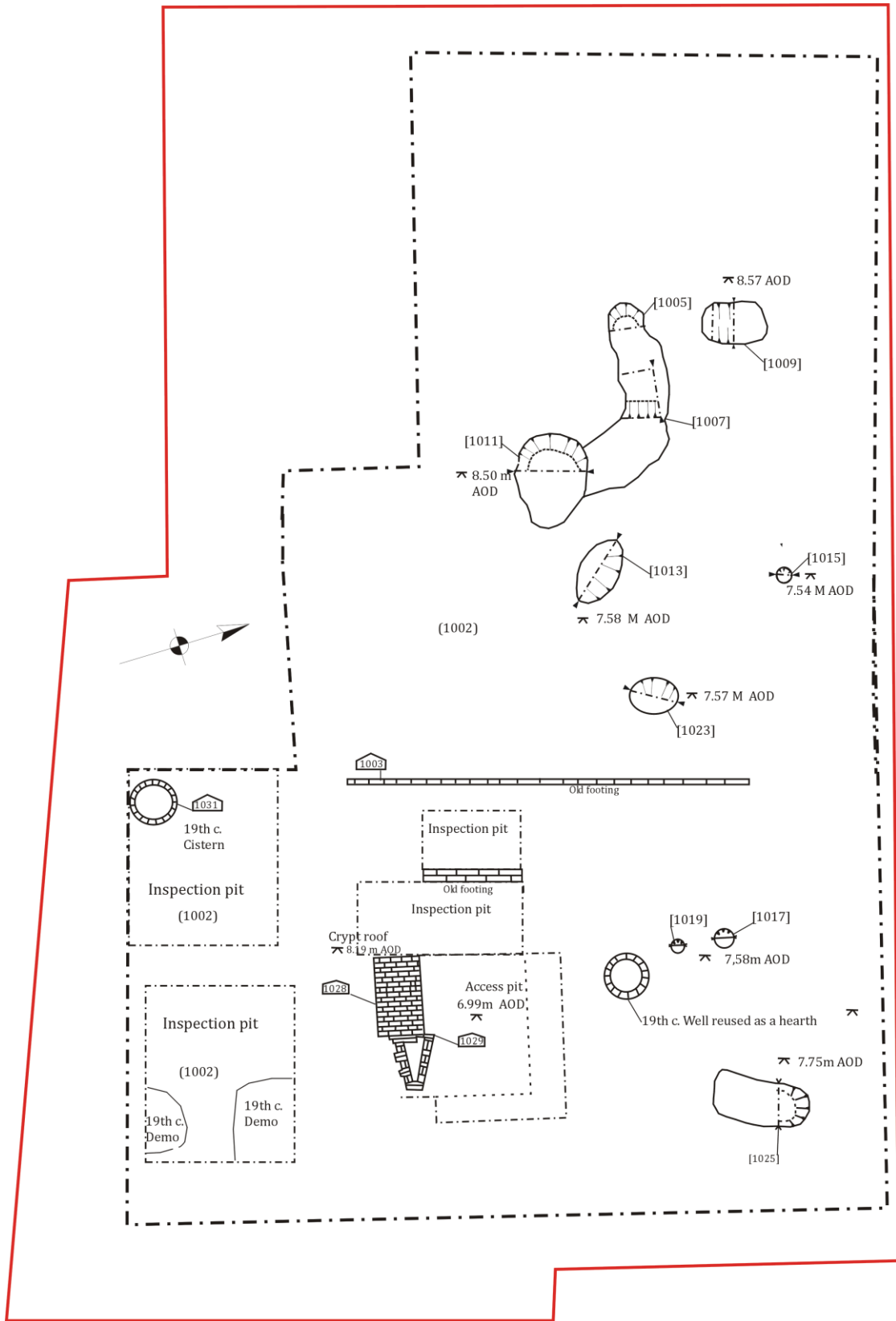
**Figure 2A. Sections of pits and postholes, scale, 1:10**

**5.98 Plans**



Plan of intercutting pits, scale 1:20

**Figure. 3 Plan of Intercutting pits, scale, 1:20**



0 Metres 10

**Figure 4. Site plan showing site boundary in red and the excavation area , scale, 1:50**

**6. Table1: Context Descriptions**

Context	Type	Description/Dimensions	Interpretation	Find-Types, comments
(1000)	Layer	Tarmac. cbm	Surface	n/a
(1001)	Layer	Modern make-up	Sub-surface	n/a
(1002)	Layer	Sandy clay deposit	Natural	n/a
1003	Structure	Bonded brick and flint course, 3m long	Foundation wall	
1004	Fill of [1005]	Mid-brown silt with small stones occasionally; width, 0.90m, depth 0.30m	Disuse	Pottery sherds, animal bone
1005	Cut	Pit; width, 0.90m, depth 0.30m	Refuse	n/a
1006	Fill of [1007]	Mid-brown silt with small stones; width 0.77m, depth 0.21m	Disuse	Pottery sherds, oyster shell
1007	Cut	Pit; width, 0.77m, depth 0.21m	Refuse	n/a
1008	Fill of [1009]	Mid-light brown silt;; width, 1.60m, depth, 0.60m	Disuse	Pottery sherds, brick
1009	Cut	Pit; width, 1.60m, depth, 0.60m	Refuse	n/a
1010	Fill of 1011]	Pit; mid-brown silt; width, 1.80m, depth, 0.08m	Refuse	Pottery sherd and animal bone
1011	Cut	Pit; width, 1.50m, depth, 0.08m	Refuse	n/a
1012	Fill of [1013]	Pit; mid-brown silt; width, 1.50m, depth, 0.28m	Disuse	Pottery sherd and animal bone
1013	Cut	Pit; width 1.50m, depth, 0.28m	Refuse	n/a
1014	Fill of [1015]	Posthole; mid-brown silt; width, 0.45m, depth, 0.25m	Disuse	n/a
1015	Cut	Posthole; ; width, 0.45m, depth, 0.25m	Structure	n/a
1016	Fill of [1017]	Mid brown silt; , 0.30m, depth, 0.29m	Disuse	n/a
1017	Cut	Posthole; , 0.30m, depth, 0.29m	Structure	n/a
1018	Fill of [1019]	Mid-brown silt; width, 0.25m, depth 0.20m	Disuse	n/a
1019	Cut	Posthole; ; width, 0.25m, depth 0.20m	Structure	n/a
1020	Fill of [1023]	Mid-brown silt; width, 0.85m, depth o.17m	Disuse	n/a
1021	Fill of [1023]	Dark brown-black silt and charcoal; width, 1.20m, depth, 0.27m	Fire deposits?	Pottery sherds and animal bone
1022	Fill of [1023]	Mid-brown silt; width, 1.08m, depth, 0.20m	Disuse	Pottery sherds and animal bone
1023	Cut	Pit; width, 1.20m, depth 1.17m	Refuse	n/a

1024	Fill of [1025]	Light-mid brown silt; width, 1.27m, depth, 0.55m	Disuse	Brick & tile fragments
1025	Cut	Pit; width, 1.27m, depth, 0.55m	Refuse	n/a
1026	Cut	Pit for crypt; length, c. 1.30m, width c. 1.80m, depth, c. 1.50m	Pit excavated to build the crypt	Extent uncertain
1027	Fill of [1026]	Dark brown mixed silt and cbm Extent uncertain, see (1026)	Back-fill	cbm
1028	Structure	Crypt of barrel-vaulted form, constructed with un-frogged red bricks in lime mortar	Inhumations	2x coffins with human remains
1029	Structure	Red brick-built entrance to crypt; length 1.40m, depth, 0.75m, width, 1.10m tapering to 0.45m	Enclosed entrance porch to crypt	n/a
1030	Fill of [1029]	White sand; length 1.40m, depth, 0.75m, width, 1.10m tapering to 0.45m	Backfill to seal entrance to crypt	Wood fragments
1031	Structure	Cistern with domed roof, built entirely of red brick set within lime mortar	Drainage system-19th century	Not excavated

## 7. The Finds

### 7.1 Finds and environmental evidence

*By Richenda Goffin*

#### **Introduction**

Small quantities of finds were recovered from the excavation which are mainly medieval and late medieval in date. The finds were collected from a number of pits, some of which were intercutting, most of which had only a single fill. The material was hand-collected and also retrieved through environmental samples.

#### **The Pottery**

*By Sue Anderson*

#### **7.12 Introduction**

Fifty-seven sherds of pottery weighing 554g were collected from seven contexts. Table 1 shows the quantification by fabric; a summary catalogue by context is included as Appendix 1.



Description	Fabric	Date range	No	Wt/g	Eve	MNV
Early medieval ware	EMW	11th-12th c.	2	6		2
Pingsdorf Ware	PING	10th-13th c.	1	5		1
Medieval coarseware	MCW	12th-14th c.	35	374	0.31	28
Medieval coarseware micaceous	MCW M	12th-14th c.	2	13		1
Grimston-type ware	GRIM	L.12th-14th c.	1	9		1
East Norfolk glazed wares	ENGW	13th-15th c.?	13	120		9
French Wares	FREN	Med/LMed	1	16		1
Late medieval and transitional	LMT	15th-16th c.	1	4		1
Glazed red earthenware	GRE	16th-18th c.	1	7		1
<b>Totals</b>			<b>57</b>	<b>554</b>	<b>0.31</b>	<b>45</b>

Table 2. Pottery quantification by fabric

### ***Methodology***

Quantification was carried out using sherd count, weight and estimated vessel equivalent (eve). A full quantification by fabric, context and feature is available in the archive. All fabric codes were assigned from the author's post-Roman fabric series, broadly based on Jennings (1981). Form terminology follows MPRG (1998). Recording uses a system of letters for fabric codes together with number codes for ease of sorting in database format. The results were input directly onto an Access database, which forms the archive catalogue.

### ***Pottery by period***

#### ***Medieval***

The early medieval (11th–13th c.) period is represented by two small body sherds of EMW, both in pit fill (1004), and an undecorated fragment of Pingsdorf ware (or possibly NE English buff gritty ware) from pit fill (1006).

The majority of pottery in this assemblage is of high medieval date and included a variety of medieval coarsewares. These are in fine sandy fabrics with occasional inclusions such as mica, ferrous particles or clay pellets. Several sherds are similar to Norwich-type local medieval unglazed wares. Rims of two vessels were found, a

thickened everted bowl rim which occurred in pit fills (1004) and (1022), and a thickened everted jug rim also in (1022). These forms have parallels in the Norwich corpus (Jennings 1981, no. 257 and no. 302) and are of 13th/14th-century date.

Glazed wares comprise a body fragment of Grimston-type ware and several body sherds of 'East Norfolk glazed ware'. These hard, fine to medium sandy sherds are variable in colour, some appearing almost white and others grey with oxidised surfaces, generally with green or orange/green glaze. They are comparable with samples recovered from Haven Bridge in Great Yarmouth (NHER17802; Green 1982), a group which Jennings referred to as 'East Norfolk Glazed wares' in subsequent work in Norwich (Jennings 1985, 201; 2002, 213), but which was never formally published. They are similar to Grimston ware, but their source is currently unknown.

An imported whiteware sherd from pit fill (1008), in a fine fabric with sparse fine/medium sand and occasional fine red clay pellets, is likely to be of French origin. It is decorated with thick brown slip chevrons under green glaze.

One small body sherd of late medieval and transitional ware was recovered from pit fill (1004).

### ***Post-medieval***

One body sherd of GRE with internal orange glaze was recovered from pit fill (1008).

### ***Pottery by context***

Table 3 shows the distribution of fabrics by context, with spotdates.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Identifier</b>	<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Spotdate</b>
1005	1004	Pit	EMW MCW MCWM GRIM ENGW LMT	L.14th-16th c.
1007	1006	Pit	PING MCW MCWM ENGW	13th-15th c.
1009	1008	Pit	MCW ENGW FREN GRE	16th c.+
1011	1010	Pit	MCW	12th-14th c.
1013	1012	Pit	MCW	12th-14th c.
1023	1021	Pit	MCW	12th-14th c.
1023	1022	Pit	MCW ENGW	13th-15th c.

Table 3. Pottery by context

All six pits contained medieval pottery, but in some cases this appears to be residual, with late medieval and post-medieval pottery occurring in two. Cross-links between sherds/vessels were noted between 1004-1006-1022, and 1008-1022, suggesting either disturbance of some earlier pits with redeposition of artefacts in the later features, or deposition of single vessels in pits which were all in use at the same time.

**Discussion**

The pottery from this site is similar to other medieval assemblages from Yarmouth and Gorleston, comprising medieval wares in forms comparable with those found in Norwich and elsewhere in the county, but in slightly different fabrics. The ‘East Norfolk’ glazed ware sherds are comparable with examples from Yarmouth but are not common elsewhere in the county, where Grimston wares tend to be dominant. Most of the wares in the assemblage were probably of local origin, therefore, the main exceptions being the imported whitewares of probably Rhenish and French origin. Such imports are common at sites close to the east coast ports and do not necessarily indicate status.

**7.13 Ceramic building material**

**By Richenda Goffin**

**Introduction**

A total of 104 fragments of ceramic building material and fired clay was recovered from the excavation, including a small amount of material from the samples. The overall weight of the two groups of finds is 863g.

**Methodology**

The assemblages were counted and weighed by fabric type and where possible form and complete dimensions were noted. Other features such as condition and mortar evidence was also recorded. Where possible brick and other forms were compared with Drury’s work in Norwich (Drury 1993). Fabric codes are those used within the county of Suffolk (Sue Anderson, unpublished fabric code list). This data was inputted onto a database which is shown in Appendix 1.

**Ceramic building material and fired clay by period**

A breakdown of the ceramic building material and fired clay by major period is shown below.

<b>Fabric type</b>	<b>No of fragments</b>	<b>Weight (g)</b>
Med fired clay	86	274
Med/Late med	4	458
Late med/Post-med	2	84
Post-medieval	10	20

Med-Post-med	2	27
<b>Total</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>863</b>

Table 4. Breakdown of cbm and fired clay by period

As can be seen from the table above, many of the fabrics could only be broadly dated and span different periods such as medieval/late medieval and late medieval/post-medieval. Some fabrics contained yellow and red grog for example, demonstrating the presence of medieval characteristics which could continue into the later medieval period. Some fully oxidised medium sandy fabrics are more likely to belong to the post-medieval period.

Many pieces of fired clay made from a fine sandy fabric with chalk inclusions with organic voids were present in one feature. This kind of fabric type was commonly used to make the superstructure of oven domes and is often medieval.

### ***Ceramic building material and fired clay by feature***

Table 4 shows the broad dating of the ceramic building material and fired clay by feature type. Nearly all of the assemblage derives from the fills of four different pits, with an additional two fragments coming from a possible quarry pit 1025.

<b>Feature</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Feature type</b>	<b>CBM description</b>	<b>Spotdate</b>
1005	1004	Pit	msfe ?Late brick	P-med
1007	1006	Pit	cs, pink estuarine	Med-post-med
1009	1008	Pit	Ms and msf roof tile, 1 fsg earlier brick	Late med-pmed
1013	1012	Pit	Msc unident, med fired clay	Med-pmed
1025	1024	Pit	Grog temp fabrics, 1 possible floortile, v abraded	Med-late med

Table 5. CBM and fired clay by feature with broad dating

### ***Discussion***

The ceramic building material assemblage is for the most part fragmentary, with few diagnostic forms being identifiable with certainty. The earliest fabrics are likely to date to the medieval and late medieval periods (13th-15th century). One of the fragments found is a possible piece of floortile from fill 1024. This has a coarse sandy fabric, and is very abraded and possibly burnt. It has slightly chamfered edges with an upper surface which is rough and worn. Some small fully oxidised sandy roofing tiles are likely to be early post-medieval or fully post-medieval.

#### ***7.14 Iron objects***

Six small fragments of iron weighing 14g were recovered from Sample 3 of fill 1021 of pit 1023. These are probably the remains of nails. A larger iron object in 1012 has a shaft or shank which is sub-rectangular in section broadening out to the terminal. It is very corroded and cannot be identified before radiography.

### **7.15 Burnt flint**

A fragment of burnt flint weighing 12g was recovered from fill 1004 of pit 1005. This is not datable and could be the result of burning through many processes.

### **7.16 Stone and coal**

Fragments of coal or coal-type rock were collected from fill 1008 of pit 1009 (4 fragments weighing 125g). A piece of micaceous sandstone weighing 302g was recovered from fill 1024 of possible pit 1025

### **7.17 Shell**

A single piece of oyster shell weighing 10g was present in charcoal enriched layer 1021, with further fragments recorded from the sample taken from this layer.

### **7.18 Animal bone**

**By Julie Curl**

#### **Methodology**

This assessment was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis, 1992). All of the bone was scanned to determine range of species and elements present. A note was also made of butchering and any indications of skinning, hornworking and other modifications. When possible a record was made of ages and any other relevant information, such as pathologies. Counts and weights taken and additional counts were made for each species identified. Information was recorded into Excel for analysis and table preparation, the full recording, with additional counts of taxa groups and elements, is available in the digital archive.

#### **The faunal assemblage**

##### **Quantification, provenance and preservation**

A total of 268g of faunal remains, consisting of 260 elements, was recovered from this site. The totals include hand-collected and sample collected remains. The faunal assemblage was recovered from six pits, with one pit fill having basal and secondary fills. Quantification of the faunal assemblage is presented by feature number, context, weights and counts in Table 6. A fuller catalogue can be seen in Appendix 2.

<b>Context</b>	<b>Feature Numbers, weights and counts</b>						<b>Totals</b>
	1005	1007	1009	1011	1013	1023	
1004	58g/143						58g/143
1006		36g/5					36g/5
1008			36g/2				36g/2
1010				9g/1			9g/1
1012					44g/38		44g/38
1021						26g/66	26g/66

1022						59g/5	59g/5
<b>Totals</b>	<b>58g/143</b>	<b>36g/5</b>	<b>36g/2</b>	<b>9g/1</b>	<b>44g/38</b>	<b>85g/71</b>	<b>268g/260</b>

Table 6. Quantification of the faunal remains by feature, context, weights and counts

The assemblage is generally in good condition, although many larger elements are heavily fragmented from butchering. The sieved samples have produced numerous small elements of fishes in particular, with additional remains of bird and rodent. One bone, a pig radius from 1022, the basal fill of pit 1023, showed some canid gnawing, suggesting that some meat waste was available for scavengers or it may be from waste given to domestic dogs and disposed of with other rubbish.

### **Species and discussion**

A total of twelve species were identified in this assemblage, with quantification by context, species and NISP in Table 6.

In terms of the count of the number of elements/NISP, the majority of the elements (83%) are derived from fish. Five species of fish were identified, with herring, eel, rays, cod and plaice, most of marine origin, but with eel from lakes and rivers.

The most significant sea fish in this assemblage is the herring, which is the most abundant in this assemblage. Herrings were probably the most important fish in the medieval period and once seen as a food for the poor (Smyle, 2004). There are even records of a Herring Fair being held in Norfolk (Yarmouth) in 1611 and a 'last' (a last = c.1300 fish) of herring being sold for £15.6s. Nets are likely to have been the most common method of catching herring and they were probably caught on night-time fishing trips as this is when the herring come to the surface of the water to feed. Nearby Yarmouth was recorded as the herring capital in the Domesday Book, with twenty-four fishermen based there and Norfolk overall was known for its herring as early as the Roman period (Smylie, 2004)

The dermal denticles are most likely to be from the Thornback Ray (*Raja clavata*), which is the most commonly found of the rays and is a common inshore fish, found in shallow waters around Britain and reaching sizes of around 100 to 120 cm in length. Although commonly named Thornback Ray, this species is also known as skate and, in East Anglia, as 'Roker' which is a name of Danish Origin. This fish is known to be caught with both line and net. Other marine fish are likely to have been line-caught.

Eels were a commonly consumed fish and most often caught with woven basket eel traps, which would have been baited with meat (even a fleshed skull) or dead fish.

Fairly sparse remains of cattle were seen in pits 1005 and 1009, suggesting their remains were not that commonly eaten. Likewise, relatively few bones of sheep/goat were recorded, mostly with foot bones or poorer cuts of meat. One pig bone was found in pit 1023, fill 1022, which had also been gnawed. The gnawing might indicate scavenging, but meat remains are likely to be given to domestic or working dogs.

Bird remains were seen in five fills. Goose bones were produced from 1010, 1021 and 1022. The larger size of the goose bones indicates domestic or the wild Greylags, which might have been abundant in the area. One fowl (chicken/pheasant)

bone was found in sample <3>, pit fill 1021. Birds would have been kept in the area for a supply of eggs, feathers and meat.

Small mammals consisted of a cat tibia in pit 1009, fill 1008, which is quite robust and probably from a male cat. One bone from a water shrew was found in the remains from sample <3> from pit 1023, fill 1021. Water shrews are found in rivers, ditches and other freshwaters; it is interesting that this bone was found with bone from eel and it may be possible that the shrew had been consumed by the eel. The shrew may have also arrived at the site as prey of a cat or bird.

Species	Context and NISP							Species Totals
	1004	1006	1008	1010	1012	1021	1022	
Bird	1							1
Bird - Fowl						1		1
Bird - Goose				1		1	1	3
Cattle	1		1					2
Fish	110				22	41		173
Fish - Cod					1			1
Fish - Eel	2				1	2		5
Fish - Herring	15				7	12		34
Fish - Place	1							1
Fish - Ray	3					1		4
Mammal	6	5			6	6	2	25
Pig/boar							1	1
Sheep/goat	4				1	1	1	7
SM - Cat			1					1
SM - Watershrew						1		1
<b>Totals by context</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>260</b>

Table 7. Quantification of the faunal assemblage by context, species and NISP

### **Conclusions**

Preservation at this site was good for bone survival, leading to the recovery and identification of many small bones. The assemblage is dominated by the remains of butchering and food waste, with the most notable feature of the assemblage being the number of fish. Coastal areas such as Gorleston would have had ready supplies of fish from the productive fishing industry. Fish clearly played an important part of the diet here and the herrings in particular would have been readily available for rich and poor alike. It is possible that this waste, which is dominated by fish, was from people observing a religious diet. The relatively low numbers of the main domestic meat animals and the scarcity of evidence of good quality cuts of meat might suggest that these pits were filled with waste from less wealthy, less high-status individuals.

## 7. 19 Plant macrofossils and other remains

**By Anna West**

### **Introduction and methods**

Three 10 litre bulk samples were taken from archaeological features during this monitoring. The samples were all processed by Suffolk Archaeology CIC in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of the archaeological investigations.

The samples were processed using manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned using a binocular microscope at x10 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or artefacts are noted on Table 7. Identification of plant remains is with reference to New Flora of the British Isles (Stace, 1997).

The non-floating residues were collected in a 1mm mesh and sorted when dry. All retents were scanned with a magnet to retrieve any ferrous material present. All artefacts/ecofacts were retained for inclusion in the finds total.

### **Quantification**

For the purpose of this assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded quantitatively according to the following categories:

# = 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance:

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

### **Results**

Table 8 shows the plant macrofossils and other remains recovered from the flots.

<b>S S N o</b>	<b>Context No</b>	<b>Feature/ cut no</b>	<b>Feature type</b>	<b>Approx date of deposit</b>	<b>Flot contents</b>
1	1004	1005	Pit	Lmed- Pmed	charred cereal grains ##, charred nutshell #, charred seeds #, charcoal +++, fish bones ##, uncharred seeds #, ferrous flakes/spheroids #
2	1012	1013	Pit	Med	charred cereal grains #, charred legumes #, charred seeds #, charcoal +, insect remains #, ferrous flakes #
3	1021	1023	Pit	Med	charred cereal grains #, charred seeds ##, fish bones #, snails #, metal flakes #



All the flots were relatively small in size. Sample 1, pit fill 1004 produced 50 ml, however both Sample 2 and 3 produced less than 5 ml each. The preservation was through charring and is generally poor. Samples 1 and 2 contained small quantities of wood charcoal which was generally highly comminuted and of little use for species identification or radiocarbon dating. Modern rootlet fragments and weed seeds were also present in small quantities and are considered intrusive within the archaeological deposits.

Cereal grains were present in low numbers in all the samples. Many of the grains were fragmented and friable, most likely as a result of being exposed to high temperatures, making identification of some fragments difficult or impossible.

Barley (*Hordeum* sp.) grains were present in Sample 1, pit fill 1004 and Bread wheat (*Triticum* sp.) type grains were present in Sample 2, pit fill 1012 and Sample 3, pit fill 1021. The majority of grains were too fragmented to identify to species, if identifiable, fragments were included in the count along with whole caryopses. No chaff elements were observed within any of the samples.

Charred peas (*Pisum sativa* L.) were present in low numbers within Samples 1 and 2. Pulses provide an important source of protein within the diet, however as they do not require processing with heat in the way cereals often do, they are less likely to be exposed to chance preservation through charring and are often under-represented in the archaeological record.

Charred Hazel (*Corylus* sp.) nutshell fragments were observed in small numbers within Sample 1. Hazel nutshells within domestic waste pits may represent gathered food or material incorporated within wood collected as fuel.

Charred weed seeds in the form of cabbage family (*Brassica* sp.) were present in Sample 2 and made up the majority of the material present in Sample 3. Grass family (Poaceae) caryopses were present within Sample 1 in low numbers.

Small quantities of ferrous spheroids and flakes were recovered from the non-floating residues of all three samples. Ferrous spherules are produced when molten material is expelled during hot welding and the presence of this spheroids could suggest the presence of metal working in the vicinity, although these small remains can easily be subject to movement through the soil by bioturbation or other processes. This possible metal-working debris was observed during scanning under a microscope and although their presence has been recorded here, their sparse and fragmented nature means further work by a specialist is not required.

Insect remains were observed within Sample 2, pit fill 1012. These remains are considered modern contaminants within the archaeological deposit sampled.

### **Conclusions and recommendations for further work**

In general the samples were poor in terms of identifiable material. Charcoal is common in all the samples in small quantities, but was probably too fragmented to

be useful for species identification or radiocarbon dating, charred cereal grains could however be used for this if any contexts remain undated.

The charred cereals and legumes could represent either processing, storage or domestic waste. The ferrous spheroid suggests metal working taking place nearby. As the remains were so sparse though it is difficult to say anything conclusive beyond the fact that agricultural, light industrial and domestic activities were taking place in the vicinity. It is possible that the waste material was deliberately deposited within the features sampled, however, material of a fragmented nature could have been moved through the action of wind or water before becoming incorporated into the archaeological deposits.

It is not recommended that any further work is carried out on the flots material as they contain insufficient material to quantify, at less than 100 specimens each. The flots should however, be retained as part of the site archive.

### ***7.20 Discussion of the finds evidence***

A small but rich assemblage of artefactual material was recovered from the fills of the seven pits. A few residual sherds of early medieval pottery were identified in pit 1005, but the pottery belongs mostly to the high medieval period, although two sherds of later pottery were present, including a fragment of Glazed red earthenware in pit 1009 which dates from the 16th-18th centuries. Pottery joins between some of the fills of the different pits were identified, suggestive of some degree of redeposition. The ceramic building material from these features is mostly late medieval to post-medieval with a few fragments which are probably medieval in date. Fragments of fired clay may be from the remains of oven domes or hearths and also belong to the medieval period.

The other significant components of the overall assemblage are the faunal remains and the plant macrofossils. The bone assemblage is a particularly interesting one, and substantially augmented by the remains in the samples. It is dominated by a harvest of sea fish, especially herring and the presence of eel from rivers and lakes, rather than the predominance of domestic mammals that are commonly found on more inland sites. The plant macrofossils and other remains show the presence of cereal grains, nuts and pulses in small quantities, along with some ferrous material. These are all typically found as evidence of domestic waste.

The finds overall reflect the coastal location of the site, with a typical assemblage of pottery which has a broader range of fabrics than is usually found for inland sites, and faunal remains which shows evidence of a diet which is much more orientated towards marine and riverine species rather than land animals.

## **8. Interpretation**

### **8.1 Medieval - post-medieval**

This site provided a rich source of information and evidence from the archaeological resource that was available, which was from relatively few features, an exception to the norm. The survival of animal bone was good allowing for an interpretation of the bone evidence which allowed for an understanding of diet, including a rich fish diet, that is not normally seen in any great quantity on inland sites. Here at Gorelston though a ready supply of fish from the proximity of the fishing industry that existed during the medieval period would have made this foodstuff cheaper than normal. The absence of larger cuts of meat, as usually discovered on inland sites, was noticeably absent at Gorelston, which leads to the conclusion that it was more expensive than usual. The inhabitants of this location seemed to be impoverished when considering the food remains evidence and were of lower status perhaps.

Evidence for industry was represented by fragments of fired clay, found in a number of features, suggesting that ovens and kilns were in use very close by. Cooking of fish/meals in ovens with clay domes on a commercial basis is quite possible. The firing of local pottery in kilns was perhaps carried out, possibly nearby. Spheroids or minute metallic fragments from smelting showed metalworking was carried on close by as well.

The finds as a whole reflect the coastal location of the site, with a typical assemblage of pottery from this region, which has a broader range of fabrics than is usually found for inland sites. The faunal remains shows evidence of a diet which is far more orientated towards marine and riverine species rather than the larger animals that are found on inland sites.

Evidence for structures on the site was found by way of a few post holes, unfortunately un-dateable due to the lack of finds within them. The pits discovered were the main source of finds evidence and the environmental samples gave a wider view of the harder to see items that made up the flora and fauna of the site.

### **8.2 The Nineteenth century**

This site had been extensively occupied during the 19th century and particularly by the Methodist chapel that once stood on the site which was then rebuilt during the middle of the century. The most important find being the brick-built, barrel vaulted crypt containing the two inhumations. This was located towards the front of the site, closest to the high street and had been built below one of the chapel's, possibly the later chapel of 1847. The bricks used in the construction of the crypt were of an unfrosted variety and were used extensively throughout the 19th century, and indeed may have been re-used from a former structure. The two inhumations could not be dated accurately, but were most likely to be mid-late Victorian. The survival of the human bone was extremely poor with little evidence for survivable organic materials such as fabrics, although some horse hair was noted as a form of lining. The caskets had two iron plaques, so badly corroded that they could not be deciphered for any inscriptions that they may have held. There was however some surviving fabric which may have originally been a kind of hat, perhaps a ministers hat as this belonged to the larger skeleton on the left side when facing the entrance, with the

smaller skeletal remains placed on the right. It appears that the crypt may have been re-opened at some time after the first interment to deposit the right hand burial as the brickwork to the opening was of a rough coursework (plts: 18, 19).

The remains were removed by a professional undertaker and reburied at Gorleston Old cemetery.

## **9. Conclusion**

This site, for the Wetherspoon public house, has revealed much about its past and has been most informative about medieval life in Gorleston. The archaeology has allowed a glimpse into the medieval period through diet and the kinds of activities carried on such as cooking and possibly firing of pots and metalworking. The remarkable and unexpected discovery of the crypt, with only one other known parallel of this type in Norfolk has given an in-site into Methodist burial practice, perhaps for a founding minister of the chapel and his wife.

The archaeological monitoring and recording was therefore successful, in preserving by record, the archaeological evidence from this site and adding to our knowledge of activities here for the past 850 years or so.

## **10. Archive deposition**

8.1 The paper and photographic archive will be held at the Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service.

8.2 The physical finds will be processed and deposited with the Norfolk County Council archive depository

8.3 A digital record and copies of the report can be viewed at the Norfolk County Council Council Historic Environment Service.

8.4 The digital report may also be viewed at the following site:  
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>.

## **11. Acknowledgements**

9.1 The author would like to thank the Wetherspoon company who commissioned and funded this work. Methodist minister Mark Attwood. Methodist minister Katy Dunn. Site manager Mr Jason Molnar of Sandersons. Mr Michael Gill of Rowland Brothers.

9.2 This report for archaeological continuous monitoring and recording was written by Dennis Payne BA (Hons) ACIfA (Archaeoserv), who also managed the project and carried out the field-work.

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*PastScapes* <http://www.pastscape.org/homepage/index.htm>



## APPENDIX I: Digital Images



*Plate 1. Pre-excitation view of site, from the south*



*Plate 2. Site view during stripping, looking south-west*





***Plate 3. Foundation wall (1003) as exposed, from the south***



***Plate 4. Pit [1004] from the west***





***Plate 5. Section through intercutting pits at [1007] from the north-east***



***Plate 6. Section of pit [1009] from the south***



***Plate 7. Section of pit [1013] from the north-east***



***Plate 8. Posthole [1015] from the west***





***Plate 9. Sections through intercutting pits [1005; 1007; 1011]  
from the north-west***



***Plate 10. Nineteenth century well, re-used as a hearth***





**Plate 11. Posthole [1017] from the west**



**Plate 12. Posthole [1019] from the west**





**Plate 13. Pit [1023] from the west**



**Plate 14. Pit [1025] from the west**





***Plate 15. Brick entrance to crypt, from the south-east***



***Plate 16. Brick entrance to crypt, from the south***





***Plate 17. Brick entrance to crypt, from above***



***Plate 18. Crypt with entrance, one wall removed revealing entrance bricked-up with rough brickwork***





***Plate 19. Overview of crypt, from the north-east, with access pit in the foreground***



***Plate 20. Caskets as removed from crypt with some of the horse hair lining***





***Plate 21. Wall footing to rear of crypt (part of later chapel)***



***Plate 22. Area stripped to the back of the crypt showing extent***





***Plate 23. Trial pit showing nineteenth century build-up in the south-east of the site***



***Plate 24. Trial pit showing 19th century demolition layers in the south-east of the site***



*the site*



**Plate 25. Trial pit showing 19th century build-up in the south-east of the site**



**Plate 26. The area inspected with trial pits (south-east corner of site) the crypt site to the centre of field**





***Plate 27. Interior of crypt showing barrel-vaulted ceiling, from the entrance (looking west)***



***Plate 28. The cistern [1039], late 19th century***