

**Trenched Archaeological Evaluation at Dover House Farm
(Reeves Farm)
Stow Road Ixworth
Suffolk**

Grid reference: TL 931 702
Planning Application No SE/11/1071
HER No. IXW 111
Oasis No. 204073

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by two trial trenches on land at Dover House Farm (Reeves Farm) Stow Road Ixworth Suffolk, from the 16th-18th of March 2015. This was in advance of the erection of a new housing development. The work was carried out in response to an archaeological brief written by Jude Plouviez of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Services Conservation Team, dated the 29th of January 2014.

Thirteen linear trenches were excavated, which included nine trenches at 10m in length and four trenches at 20m in length, totalling 170m of linear trenching at 1.8m width. The trench plan was designed to sample the area within the limitations of the site and the proposed footprints of the new dwellings.

Evidence of previous yard surfaces, dating from the 19th-20th centuries were observed in trench 10. In trench 11 a single pit feature contained medieval pottery sherds with an average date range of the 12th century AD. along with a small quantity of animal bone; the remainder of the trenches contained no archaeology.

1. Introduction

As part of the planning application for the proposal of a new housing development at Dover House Farm, an archaeological evaluation was requested by the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team to ascertain if any below ground historical assets were at risk of damage by the current development. A written scheme of investigation was presented to the SCCA/CT by Archaeoserv and accepted as part of the archaeological process.

2. Site Geology, Location and Description

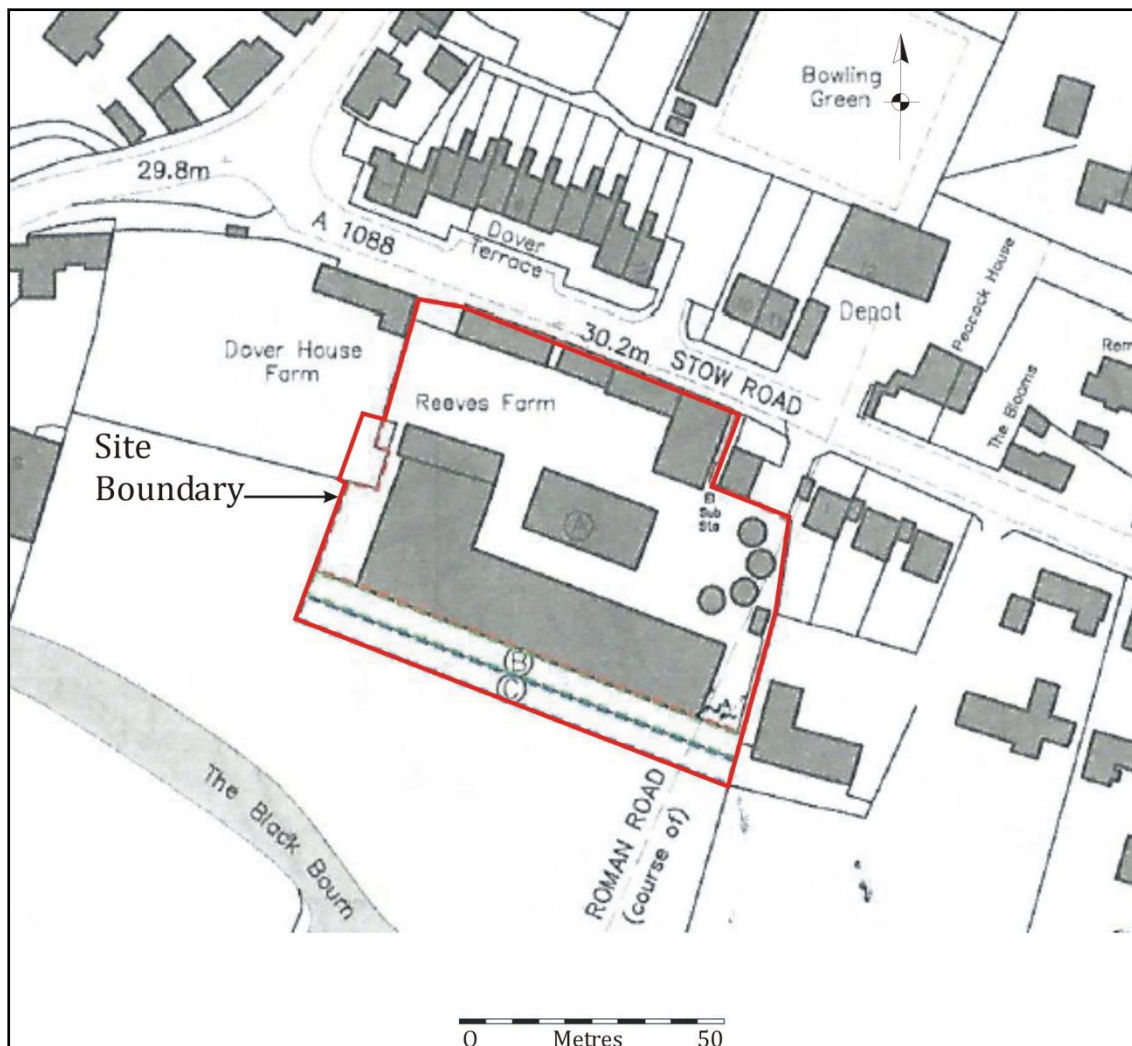
Grid Reference: TL 931 702



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Figure 1. Ixworth and site location

The site lies within the town of Ixworth along Stow Road, around 9 miles north-east of Bury St Edmunds; and is located on the north bank of a river valley on low-lying ground, within the southern part of the historic of Ixworth.



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Figure 2. Block plan of site, scale: 1:1250

3. Planning Background

3.1 There is high potential for archaeological deposits to be disturbed by this development. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.

3.2 The Planning Authority was advised that any consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of work taking place before development begins in accordance with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets (that might be present at this location) before they are damaged or destroyed. in accordance with the National Planning and Policy Framework (NPPF, DCLD 2012) which replaces Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5, DCLG 2010).

3.3 In order to ensure that satisfactory arrangements are made for the investigation, retrieval and recording of any possible archaeological remains on the site and to comply with Policy of the Council's Local Plan, the condition (7) states: *"No development shall commence within the whole site until the developer has carried out a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which first shall have been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority."*

The written Scheme of Investigation shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording*
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment*
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording*
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation*
- g. The site investigation shall be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

Reason: "To enable any remains of archaeological significance to be investigated and recorded in accordance with the provisions of Policy HC9 (Site and Features of Archaeological importance) of the Replacement Local Plan.

4. Archaeological Background

The proposal to erect two dwellings and garages fronting Stow Road affects an area of archaeological interest and potential. It is located in the immediate vicinity of Iron Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon and Medieval finds recorded during previous development (IXW 018, IXW 029 and IXW 033), and it is less than 100m to the east of the site of an early Anglo-Saxon cemetery (HER IXW 005). There is high potential for archaeological remains to be present at this location, given the proximity to known sites and the landscape setting immediately above The Black Bourne and Mickle Mere, which is topographically favourable for early occupation. Stow Road is also a historic route way. Groundworks associated with development have the potential to damage or destroy any archaeological deposits that may exist (SCCAS/CT Brief) .

5. Results

5.1 Fieldwork

5.11 Thirteen trenches were excavated to cover the footprints of the proposed dwellings and to sample the area, seven of the trenches were excavated on a NE-SW axis at 10m in length by 1.8m width (Tr's, 3, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13) and six on a NW-SE axis at 10m and 20m in length by 1.8m width (Tr's, 1, 2, 4, 7, 10, 11).

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

5.13 A digital camera was used at 10 million pixels resolution, black and white photographs and colour-slide photographs were taken of the features and will form part of the site record to be curated at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

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

5.15 The evaluation was carried out using standard practices in archaeology to ACIfA standards. The work was carried out in accordance with the *Eastern Counties Frameworks Standards* and in accordance with: Medlycott, M. 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revised: A Revised Framework for the East of England East Anglian*. Archaeology. Occ. Paper. 24.

5.2 The Evaluation Trenches

5.21 Trench 1 was located at the eastern end of the site, orientated NW-SE, measuring 10 m long by 1.8 m wide, to a maximum depth of 0.73 m. The single deposit (1001) formed a demolition layer of mixed sand, stone, brick and tile and other cbm, above the natural sandy, patterned ground containing common flint (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.22 Trench 2 was located at the south-eastern end of the site, orientated NW-SE, measuring 20m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.40m revealing the single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.23 Trench 3 was located at the southern end of the site, orientated NE-SW, measuring 10m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.40m revealing a single deposit (1001) demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was noted within this trench.

5.24 Trench 4 was located at the south-western end of the site, orientated NW-SE, measuring 20 m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.15m revealing a single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.25 Trench 5 was located at the western end of the site, orientated NE-SW, measuring 10 m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.25m revealing a single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.26 Trench 6 was located at the western end of the site, orientated NE-SW, measuring 10 m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.26m, revealing a single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.27 Trench 7 was located at the central-southern end of the site, orientated NW-SE, measuring 20m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.26 m, revealing a single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.28 Trench 8 was located at the centre of the site, orientated NE-SW, measuring 10m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.22m, revealing a single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.29 Trench 9 was located at the centre of the site, orientated NE-SW, measuring 10m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.25m, revealing a single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003). No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.30 Trench 10 was located at the north-western end of the site, orientated NW-SE, measuring 10m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.83m, revealing a gravel and tarmac surface (1000), below this a layer (1002) consisting of a clast deposit consisting of large sub-rounded flint cobbles with a dark grey sandy matrix above a further layer of chalk (1003). Below the chalk layer a post hole [1005] filled by (1004) of modern date, cut into a layer (1008) consisting of grey sand and occasional gravel and a further layer (1013) consisting of compacted chalk, cut by a further post hole [1011] filled by (1010) a mixed chalk with soil; the final deposit was a diffuse subsoil layer (1017). The last feature [1020] to be investigated at the western end of the trench cut through post hole [1011]; the upper fill of this feature began below layer (1002) (see fig. ; S. 2).

5.31 Trench 11 was located at the north-east end of the site, orientated NW-SE, measuring 20m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.57m, revealing deposit (1001), a demolition layer, which was above the natural (1003). A single ditch-like feature [1107] was recorded in the western end of the trench with no dating evidence, consisting of (1106), a mid-greyish-brown silty fill with small occasional stones; depth 0.15m by width 0.75m, exposed at the trench width of 1.8m. A single pit-like feature [1102], 2.20m in length by 0.60m width by 0.60m deep was located in the eastern end of the trench, which contained a fill (1101) of light brown slightly silty sand with occasional large flints, often angular with medieval pottery sherds and animal bone. On first inspection of this feature, a grave cut was suspected due to its overall shape and size being similar to that of a burial cut. As a result of this, the trench was extended to the south for a length of 6m by 3m width and excavated down to the same level as the existing trench; a further feature was recorded in this area, a small pit-like feature [1104], filled by (1103) a light sandy fill with yellow lenses with common cobbles of flint; no finds.

5.31 contd. A feature in the extreme left end of the trench containing demolition material; older than the residue over the whole site, but of a recent date (probably within the last 100 years).

5.32 Trench 12 was located at the north-east end of the site, orientated NE-SW, measuring 10 m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.44m revealing the single deposit (1001), demolition layer. A feature was investigated but was considered to be either geological or a tree throw and was not recorded. No archaeology was present within this trench.

5.33 Trench 13 was located at the east end of the site, orientated NE-SW, measuring 10 m in length by 1.8m width and to a depth of 0.30m, revealing a single deposit (1001), demolition layer above the natural (1003.) No archaeology was present within this trench except a probable tree bole or a natural glacial scar; it was recorded as such as cut [1104].

5.34 Plans

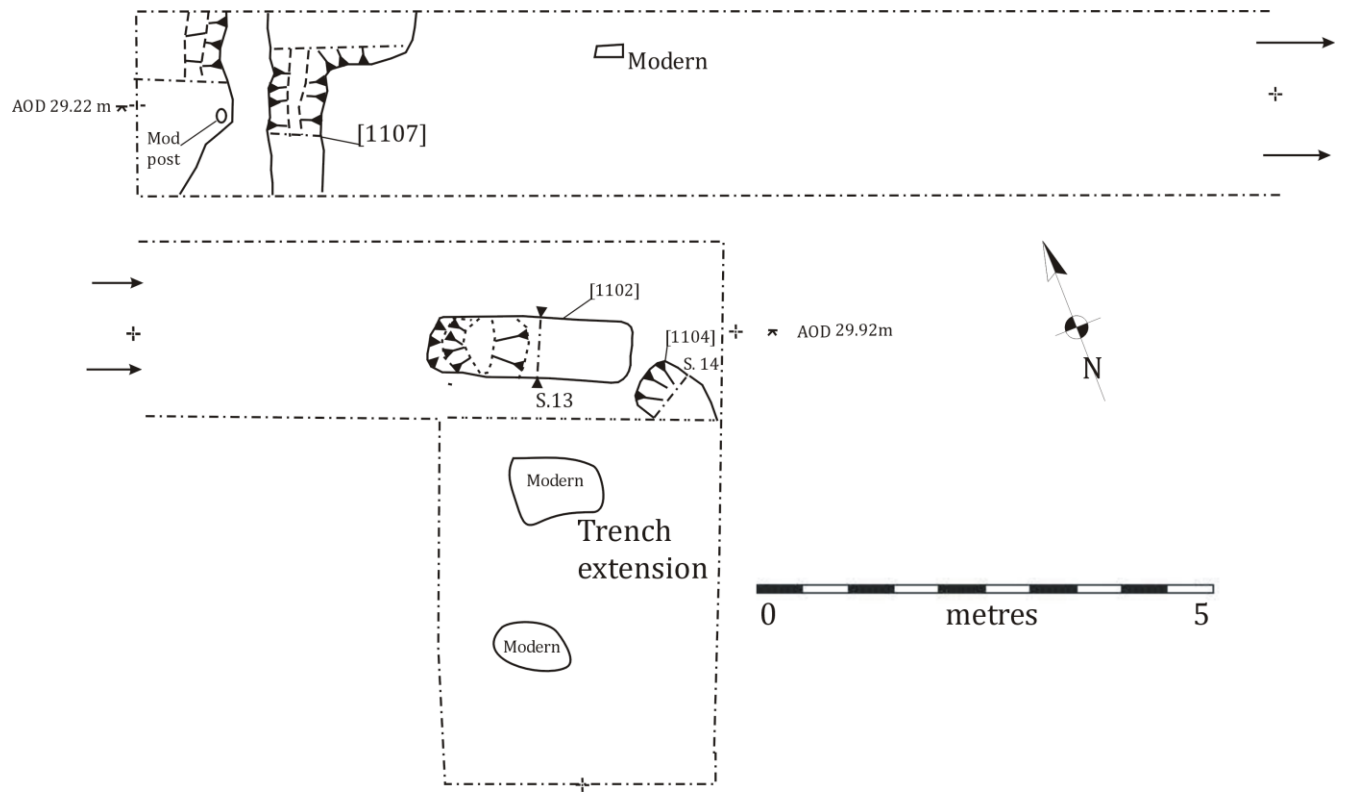
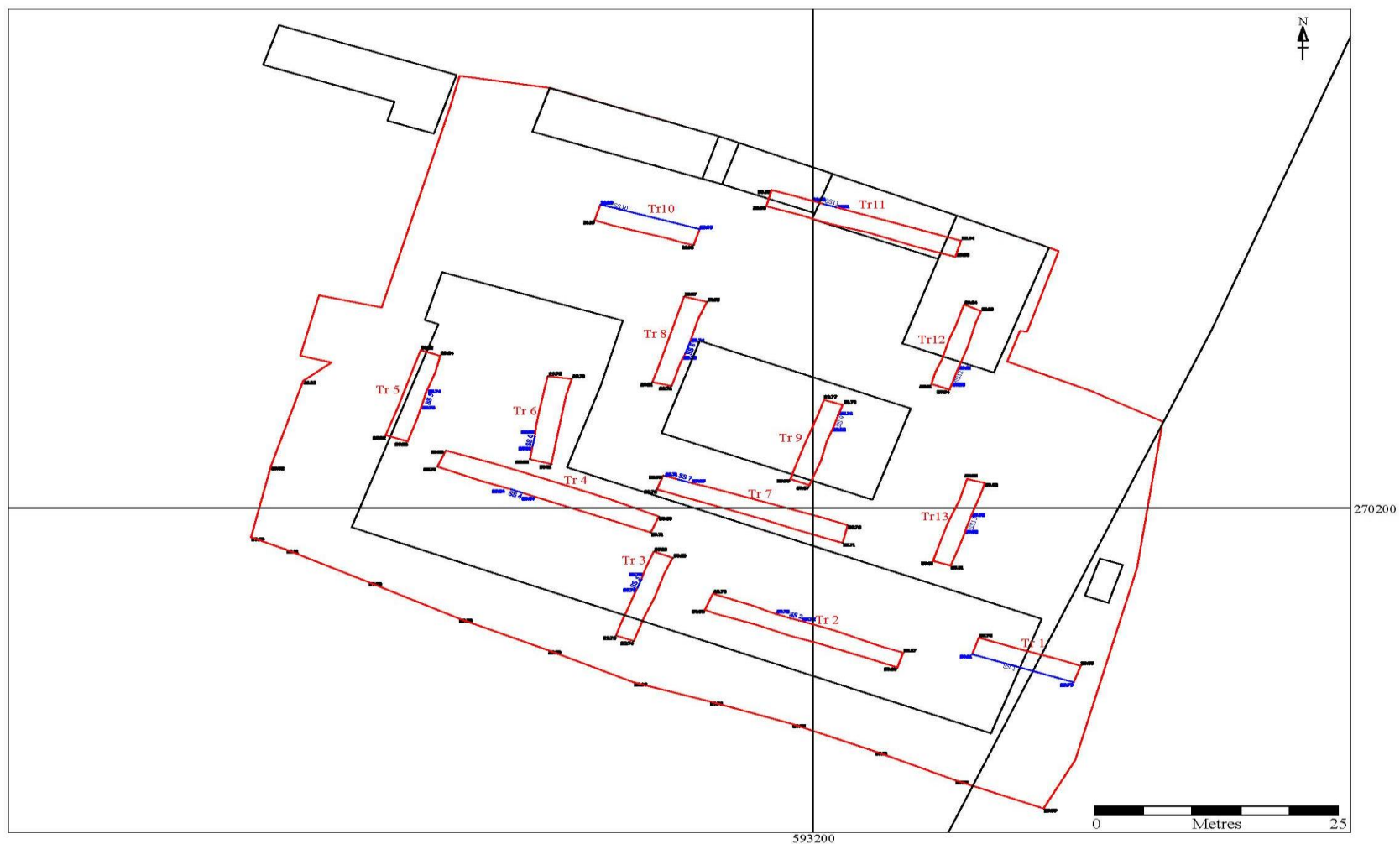


Figure 3. Plan of Trench 11, scale 1:50



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Figure 4. Plan of trenches, showing sample section locations in blue and levels in black

5.35 Sections

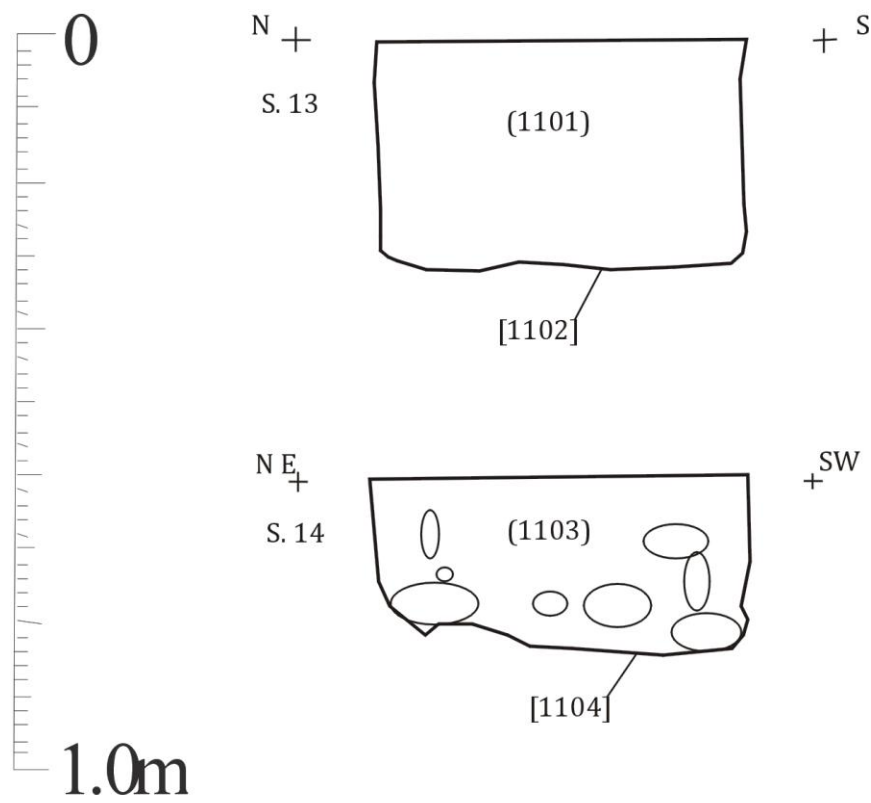


Figure 5. Sections at 1:20 (Tr 11)

6.1 Finds and Environmental Evidence

The Pottery

By Richenda Goffin

6.12 Four fragments of pottery were recovered from fill 1101 of pit 1102, weighing 50g. The ceramics were quantified using the recording methods recommended in the MPRG Occasional Paper No 2, Minimum standards for the processing, recording, analysis and publication of Post-Roman ceramics (Slowikowski et al 2001).

The sherds present in the context were recorded by fabric, along with the estimated number of vessels represented and the weight of each fabric. Other characteristics such as form, decoration and condition were recorded, and a date range for the pottery fabrics provided as well as an overall spotdate. The pottery was recorded using letter codes based on fabric and form and the information shown in Appendix 1.

6.13 The codes used are based mainly on broad fabric and form types identified in *Eighteen centuries of pottery from Norwich* (Jennings 1981), and additional fabric types established by the Suffolk Unit (S Anderson, unpublished fabric list).

6.14 The rim of a medieval jar or cooking vessel was present in the pit fill (29g). It is made in an early medieval fabric with shell and chalk. It has an upright beaded rim with shallow thumbing along the top dating to the Mid 11th-12th century. The sherd is slightly sooted externally and is abraded. Two smaller and less abraded body sherds of medieval coarsewares (10g) dating to the 12th-14th century were identified, one of which is heavily sooted. Another unglazed ware made in a fully oxidised fabric was also recovered. It has a dense sandy fabric with fine silver mica and was provisionally identified as an Essex Sandy Orange Ware of a similar date to the coarsewares.

Faunal Remains

Identified by Laszlo Lichtenstein

6.15 Three fragments of animal bone were collected. They consist of a fragment of a bovine shoulder blade and two fragments of sheep tibia.

Bibliography

Jennings, S., 1981, *Eighteen Centuries of pottery from Norwich*. EAA 13, Norwich Survey/NMS.

Slowikowski, A., Nenck, B., and Pearce, J., 2001, Minimum standards for the processing, recording, analysis and publication of post-Roman ceramics, MPRG Occasional Paper No 2.

Discussion of the finds

6.16 The pottery assemblage was quite small, but was considered to be from a secure context. The pottery spot-dates fall within the average of the 12th century, giving the rim sherd of a jar or cooking vessel with decoration a later end-date of the date range in line with the earliest start-date of the date range for the other sherds mentioned, therefore placing the assemblage during the later Norman period of the 12th century.

6.17 The animal bone assemblage was also quite small and of little value to the overall interpretation of the context.

Table 1. Spotdates for the pottery (finds appendix 1)

I D	Feat ure	Cont ext	Cera mic peri od	Fabr ic	For m	Decor ation	No of she rds	Wei ght	E N V	Abra sion	Soot ing	Bur nt	Resi due	Illust rate	Comm ents	Fabri c spotd ate	Over all spotd ate
7 3	1102	1101	MED	EMS C	CP/J AR	THUM BED RIM	1	29	1	A	S				Uprigh t rim with beadin g, thumb ed on top	M11th- 12th C	
7 4	1102	1101	MED	MC W	BOD Y		2	10	2		S				2 differe nt sandy wares, one sooted	12th- 14th C	12th- 14th C
7 5	1102	1101	MED	ESO W?	BOD Y		1	11	1						Hd oxid dense sandy fabric, v fine silver mica	L12th -14th C?	

7. Interpretation and Discussion

The site at Dover House Farm (Reeves Farm) had the potential for revealing significant remains relating to all periods, but yielded very little in the way of archaeological evidence. The site, mainly to the southern extent had been truncated at some point, thus removing any possible archaeology that may have existed there. Demolition work on the site, also caused some damage to underlying ground surfaces but may not have impacted that much due to the prior truncation of the site.

In the north of the site, trench 10 revealed a sequence of make-up layers forming successive farm yard surfaces, all of a modern or recent date. (last 200 years). The north east corner of the site (Tr 11), did reveal however some evidence from the medieval period of the 11th-12th centuries, in the form of a pit with pottery sherds, (see ceramics evidence Goffin, R; p12). A further feature, a further pit did not contain any finds. Apart from the above archaeology, no other evidence of previous occupation was noted throughout the site.

8. Conclusions

The evaluation was successful in demonstrating that although some archaeology was present on a very small scale within the area sampled, it is considered that the current development should have very little impact on any further possible surviving historical assets.

9. Archive Deposition

The paper and photographic archive will be held at the County Store, Suffolk County Council Archaeology, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

A digital record and copies of the report can be viewed at The Historic Environment Record office, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds and online at:
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>.

10. Acknowledgements

10.1 The author would like to thank Daniel Lucas of Valedane Ltd who commissioned and funded the archaeological work.

10.2 This report for archaeological evaluation was written by: Dennis Payne BA (Hons) ACIfA (Archaeoserv), who also managed the project and carried out part of the field-work, assisted by Tim Schofield Bsc (Britannia); Marc Berger Msc who assisted with the fieldwork.

10.3 Jude Plouviez of the SCCACT produced the brief for this project.

Bibliography

British .Geological. Survey. 1990; sheet 189

Medlycott, M. 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revised: A Revised Framework for the East of England* East Anglian. Archaeology. Occ. Pap. 24

ONLINE REFERENCES

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

Appendix I: Digital Images



Plate 1. Pre-excavation, general site view, from the south-west



Plate 2. . Pre-excavation, general site view, from the north-east



Plate 3. Pre-excavation, general site view, from the south



Plate 4. Trench 10, showing yard surfaces, from the south-west



*Plate 5. Tr 12, post-excavtion view from
the north and section through tree bole*



*Plate 6. Tr 9 from the north
the north and section through tree bole*



Plate 7.. Trench 13, patterned ground created by drive overs by machines



Plate 8, Tr 2, to the south of the site showing truncation and disturbance of the natural land surface, from the east



Plate 8. Tr 7. from the east, showing further run-over scarring by machines



Plate 9. Trench 2, Post excavation of [1102] pit, from the west, containing medieval pottery sherds



Plate 10. Trench 4 general shot (north end)



Plate 11. Trench 8, sample section (8), showing typical demolition spread over natural ground surface, from the west



Plate 12. Trench 11. pit [1102] with further feature [1104] in the foreground



Plate 13. Trench 11 extension, revealing only modern disturbance, from the south-west



Plate 14. Trench 11 extended to the south, showing modern disturbance only, viewed from the south



Plate 15. Post-excavation view of the site from the north-east