

Report 1922



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## Archaeological Watching Brief at Church Road, Postwick, Norfolk

HER 30475



Prepared for  
Anglian Water Services Limited



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August 2011



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<i>Issue 1</i>		

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Location: Church Road, Postwick, Norfolk  
District: Broadland  
Grid Ref.: TG 2955 0830  
HER No.: 30475  
OASIS Ref.: 106124  
Client: Anglian Water Limited  
Dates of Fieldwork: 8 September 2008, 4-5 March 2009 and 30 June 2009

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was conducted for Anglian Water Services Limited ahead of the construction of a haul road and temporary working area.*

*It was intended that these works be monitored as the site lay within a rich archaeological landscape and the potential for remains to be present was high. However, the works took place without any monitoring and the haul road and working area were constructed by the time archaeologists were notified of the start of works. Therefore, a revised strategy of metal detecting and surface collection of artefacts from stockpiled topsoil and subsoil and monitoring of the removal of the hard-standing within the working area was carried out to try to recover as much information as possible.*

*The later monitoring of the removal of the hard-standing from the temporary working area revealed no archaeological features or artefacts. Artefact collection from the removed topsoil and subsoil recovered a small collection of flint, pottery and metal objects of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval date. The nature of the assemblage was similar to many others recovered from the Postwick area. However, the fact that the finds were recovered from topsoil and subsoil that had already been removed from the site and stockpiled meant that no locative information could be obtained which reduced the archaeological value to providing an addition to the large corpus of similar material from the area around Postwick.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

A watching brief was intended to cover groundworks associated with the construction of a temporary haul road and working area at Church Road, Postwick. However, both areas had been stripped and covered in 200mm of hardcore before notice was given that the works were commencing. Therefore, a revised strategy was devised to recover as much information as possible given the extensive disturbance that had already occurred.

The strategy included metal detecting and surface collection to recover artefacts from the spoil that was generated during the construction phase and monitoring the removal of the temporary hard-standing prior to reinstatement of the area.

This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010).

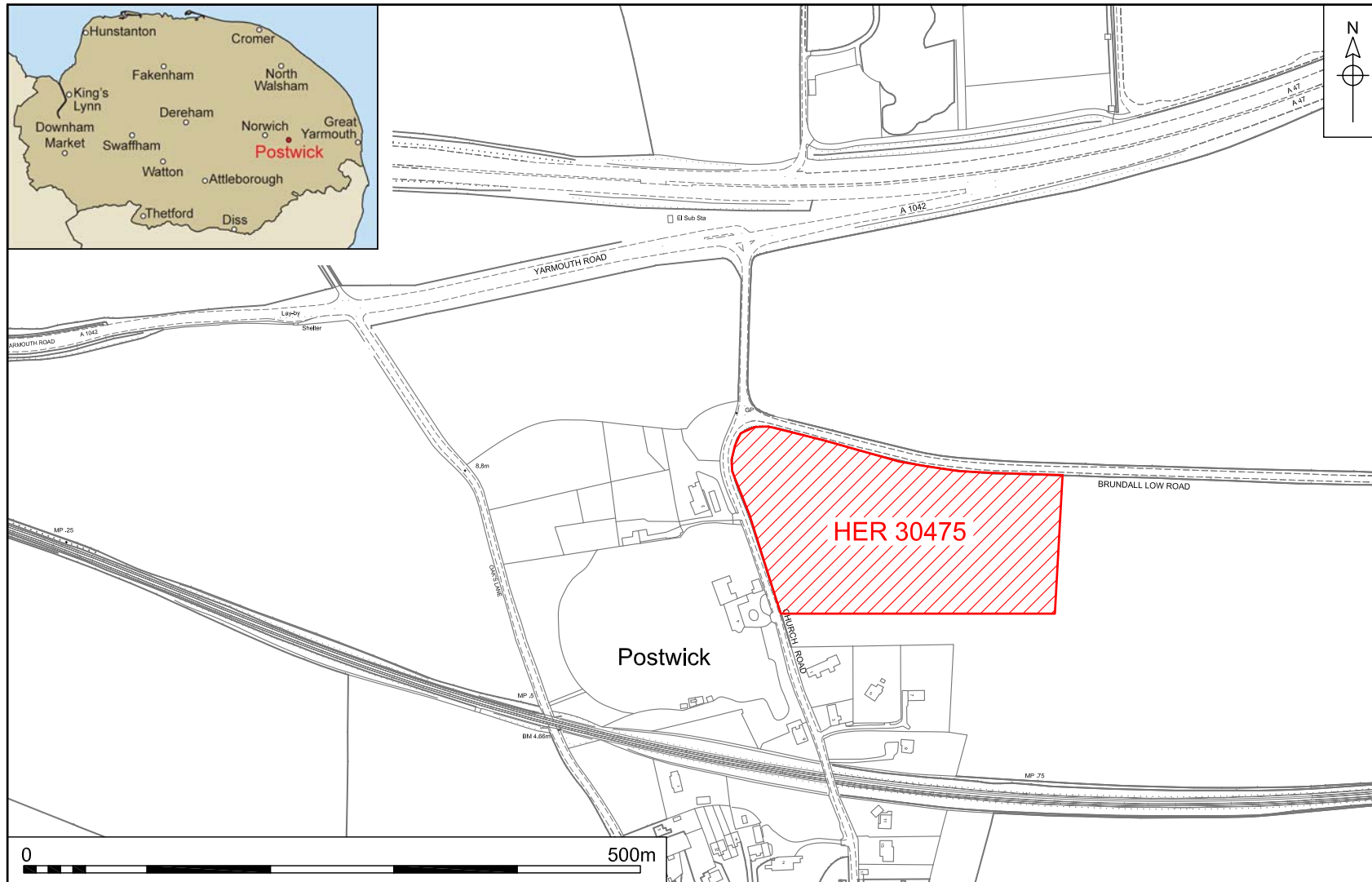


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

The site archive is currently held by NPS Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS) following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

## **2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The natural geology of the area is Norwich Crag<sup>1</sup>, with the site lying 2km north of the River Wensum.

## **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The area of the watching brief was located within a rich archaeological landscape that has been settled and utilised since the prehistoric period. Extensive cropmark sites of prehistoric, Roman and later dates are known from all around the Postwick area.

The haul road and working area occupied the north-west corner of a field that has been subjected to regular metal detecting since the 1980s, revealing a large number of metal objects including coins, brooches, horse harness fittings of Roman, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval date (NHER 30475). The coins recovered include a Roman silver denarius of the Emperor Vespasian (NHER 23777) and a long cross cut silver farthing of the reign of Henry III, 1216 - 1272 (NHER 16847). Other artefacts picked up from the same field and the surrounding fields include prehistoric worked flints and pottery of prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval date (NHER 31097, NHER 29868 and NHER 50468). The large amounts of artefacts that have been recovered from around Postwick reflect the long history of use and settlement of the area.

The possible site of a medieval chapel, St. Ethelred's Chapel (NHER 17402), is sited c.200m north of the watching brief area although the exact location is uncertain.

## **4.0 OBSERVATIONS**

Metal detecting and surface artefact collection was undertaken from soil upcast and the exposed section of the site. A fairly small, but potentially significant assemblage of prehistoric, Roman and medieval pottery along with a number of prehistoric worked flints were recovered from soil upcast [1] and subsoil [2]. The metal detector survey recovered a small collection of largely undiagnostic metal objects and one decorative fitting of probable post-medieval date.

A site visit to monitor the removal of the gravel hard-standing during the reinstatement works revealed no archaeological features or artefacts.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience/>

## 5.0 THE FINDS

Finds were recovered from upcast soil and subsoil at an area designated as a temporary working area and haul road at Postwick. A complete list of finds in context number order can be found in Appendix 2a and the find are described in more detail below in order of material.

### 5.1 Pottery

by Lucy Talbot and Sarah Percival

A small assemblage of thirty-three sherds of pottery weighing 129g was recovered from spoil and subsoil removed during stripping of the site (Appendix 3, Table 1). The sherds are all small and most are heavily abraded.

Period	Quantity	Weight (g)
Late Neolithic/ Early Bronze Age	1	8
Early Iron Age	19	87
Romano-British	2	2
Late Saxon	1	16
Medieval	8	14
Late medieval/ post-medieval	1	1
Post-medieval	1	1

Table 1. Pottery

#### 5.1.1 Later Neolithic to Earlier Bronze Age

A single sherd of grog tempered Beaker with fingertip-impressed decoration was recovered from the subsoil. The rusticated Beaker is typical of vessels found in domestic contexts and probably dates towards the end of the Beaker period which spanned the period from around 3600 to 1800BC.

#### 5.1.2 Earlier Iron Age

Nineteen undecorated body sherds weighing 87g in flint tempered fabric were found on the surface of the topsoil and in subsoil. Two fabrics were identified, one with numerous pieces of angular flint, the second with moderate angular flint in a sandy matrix. The sherds are not closely datable but have been assigned a tentative earlier Iron Age date on the basis of the flint tempered fabrics, perhaps the 8th to 5th centuries BC.

#### 5.1.3 Late Saxon

A single base sherd from a Thetford type ware jar weighing 16g was recovered from spoil. The base is typical of coarseware vessels made in Norwich in the 10th to 11th centuries.

#### 5.1.4 Medieval

A heavily abraded rim from a late 12th- to 14th-century Grimston type jug was recovered. The rim sherd may once have been glazed but this has not survived. Seven body sherds in an unprovenanced local unglazed ware were recovered from the topsoil and subsoil.



### 5.1.5 Late Medieval and Post-medieval

A single sherd of unprovenanced later medieval ware and one sherd of late post-medieval earthenware, perhaps from a flowerpot, were found in the subsoil.

## 5.2 Metal Finds

by Lucy Talbot

Ten metal objects were recovered of which only two are considered worth reporting on in any detail one of lead and one of iron (Find Nos 1 and 2 respectively). These two objects along with the rest of the metal artefacts are summarised below in Table 2.

Find No.	Material	Qty	Wt (g)	Description	Period
1	Lead	1	-	Pot mend	?Medieval
2	Iron	1	-	?Fiddle key	Undated
-	Copper Alloy	1	-	?Cast vessel foot fragment	Undated
-	Iron	1	-	Ring	Modern
-	Lead	1	102	Tabulated fragment	Undated
-	Iron	1	-	?Nail/Rod	Modern
-	Copper alloy	1	-	Decorative fitting	?Post-Medieval
-	Copper alloy	1	-	Wire fragment	Undated
-	Copper alloy	1	-	Tack	Undated
-	Iron	1	-	Rod fragment	Undated

Table 2. Metal Finds

### 5.2.1 Special Finds

Find 1 is a lead pot mend, used to repair pottery however it is undatable as no distinguishing fragments of pottery adhering to the lead are present.

Find 2 is of iron and may be a fiddle key type horseshoe nail which comprises a semi-circular head tapering to a point. Both objects are unstratified, and come from soil upcast [1].

### 5.2.2 Other Metal Finds

The small assemblage from the site produced several copper alloy, iron and lead objects of post-medieval or modern date, and some undatable objects. The objects comprise a copper alloy tack, a wire fragment, a possible foot from a cast vessel, a decorative U-shaped fitting, an iron ring, two iron rod/nail fragments and a tabular piece of lead.

All of these finds are unstratified, and came either from soil upcast [1] or subsoil [2].

## 5.3 Flint

by Sarah Bates

### 5.3.1 Introduction

Twenty-nine struck flints were recovered from the site. A single fragment of burnt flint was also found which has been discarded and is no longer considered here. The flint is summarised in Table 3 and listed by context in Appendix 4. A full catalogue is included in the project archive.

Type	Quantity
multi platform flake core	2
flake used as core	1
tested piece	1
flake	12
blade-like flake	1
spall	3
end scraper	1
scraper	1
piercer	1
retouched flake	5
utilised flake	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>

Table 3. Flint

### 5.3.2 Description

A small chunky multi platform flake core, another broken flake core and a tested piece are present. A broad thick flake may also have been tested for use as a core as it has had some flakes struck from its ventral face.

Thirteen flakes and three spalls were found; one flake is a longish pointed piece, the others are mostly small and irregular, some of them were clearly struck by hard hammer. There is no evidence for careful preparation of the cores. A fragment from the proximal part of a flake is of a smooth good quality dark grey flint. This piece may possibly be part of a broken tool – although no evidence for this occurs on the surviving piece.

Two pieces are classified as scrapers. There is an ovate flake with rough dark cream coloured cortex of its distal part which is neatly, and minimally retouched [1]. An irregular broad hard hammer struck flake from a previously patinated fragment has slight retouch of two blunt squarish 'corners' [2].

A small pointed flake [2] may have been used as a piercer.

There are also five miscellaneous retouched, or probably retouched, flakes and an utilised flake.

### 5.3.3 Discussion

All of the flint was recovered from topsoil or subsoil contexts and most of it is edge damaged to some degree. It represents activity in the vicinity of the site during the prehistoric period and although there are no really diagnostic pieces, its generally

irregular nature, use of hard hammer technology and utilisation of patinated flint all point to a later prehistoric date (Later Neolithic or later).

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

No archaeological features were revealed during the removal of the hard-standing.

The artefact assemblage was collected from the topsoil and subsoil which had been removed prior to any monitoring taking place. Therefore, the original distribution and any depositional relationships of the artefacts remain unknown, making the assemblage of little archaeological value beyond adding to the large corpus of similar multi-period artefact assemblages from the Postwick area.

## ***Acknowledgements***

The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Barnett and Nigel Page.

Lucy Talbot reported on the pottery with Sarah Percival and also provided the report on the metal objects; Sarah Bates reported on the flints.

The report was edited by Jayne Bown, and the figures produced by David Dobson.

### Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Period
1	Deposit	Spoil	Unknown
2	Deposit	Subsoil	Unknown

### Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt (g)	Period
(1) Spoil	Pottery	1	9	Earlier Iron Age
		1	16	Late Saxon
		3	7	Medieval
	Flint - worked	14	-	Prehistoric
	Flint - burnt	1	16	Prehistoric
(2) Subsoil	Pottery	1	8	Later Neolithic to earlier Bronze Age
		18	78	Earlier Iron Age
		2	2	Romano-British
		5	7	Medieval
		1	1	Late Medieval transitional
		1	1	Post Medieval
	Flint - worked	16	-	Prehistoric

### Appendix 2b: OASIS Finds Summary

Period	Material	Quantity
Prehistoric	Flint	21
	Pottery	20
Roman	Pottery	2
Medieval	Pottery	9
Post-medieval	Pottery	2

### Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Qty	Wt (g)	Date
1	F2	Undecorated body sherd	1	9	C8-C5BC
	THETN	Base	1	16	C10-C11
	GRIM	Rim	1	3	LC12-C14
	LMU	Undecorated body sherd	2	4	C11-C14
2	F1	Undecorated body sherd	16	74	C8-C5BC
	F2	Undecorated body sherd	2	4	C8-C5BC
	G1	Decorated body sherd	1	8	3600-1800BC
	SGW	Undecorated body sherd	2	2	C2-C4
	LMU	Undecorated body sherd	5	7	C11-C14
	LMT	Undecorated body sherd	1	1	C15-C16
	LPME	Undecorated body sherd	1	1	C16-C17
<b>Total</b>			<b>33</b>	<b>129</b>	

#### Appendix 4: Flint

Ctxt	Cat	Type	s/b	No.	Wt(g)	Comp.	Cort.	Prim.	Pat.	E.dam.	Hinge	Non-str	Comment
1	flak	flake	s	8	0	4	3	0	4	mostly	1	0	various - 1 prox frag of poss qu nice thick fl, others mostly v sm
1	burn	burnt fragment	b	1	16	0	0	0	0		0	0	discarded
1	unsk	non-struck fragment		0	0	0	0	0	0		0	1	discarded
1	core	tested piece	s	1	38	0	1	0	0	yes	0	0	v sm chunky and battered frag - my have been sm core/tested
1	core	flake	s	1	23	0	0	0	0	some	0	0	broad thick irreg fl with fls from dist end of ventral face..?tried as core
1	scpf	end scraper	s	1	0	1	1	0	1		0	0	ovate with rough dark cream cort of dist part which is neatly ret - just around end
1	retf	retouched flake	s	3	0	2	1	0	1	yes	0	0	1 irreg pat fl with damaged edges - some prob ret, 1 v sm fl with ret of ?truncated or broken edge, 1 sm squat fl, nice dark grey flint, with neat edge/abrupt ret of slightly concave dist edge
1	utfl	utilised flake	s	1	1	0	1	0	0	slight	0	0	sm thick fl with slight poss ut - tho cld be damage
2	flak	flake	s	4	0	2	3	0	1	slight	0	0	all qu sm, 2 def hh
2	flak	blade-like flake	s	1	0	1	1	0	0	slight	0	0	jagged pointed long fl, qu sm
2	core	multi platform flake core	s	1	63	1	1	0	0		0	0	sm qu chunky with some incipient perc cones, qu thick dirty cream cort
2	core	multi platform flake core	s	1	68	0	1	0	1		0	0	has two plats but one side prob broken, incipient perc cones, thickish dirty cream cort
2	flak	spall	s	3	0	0	0	0	0		0	0	
2	retf	retouched flake	s	2	0	1	1	0	1	some	0	0	both hh fls, 1 sm with poss ret part of edge, 1 larger with cort plat and short length ret one edge - accentuated a concave edge to a slight notch
2	scpf	scraper	s	1	0	1	1	0	1		0	0	irreg broad hh fl from pat frag - on its wide palt, has thin brown cort and slight ret of 2 blunt squarish 'corners'
2	pecr	piercer	s	1	0	1	0	0	0	slight	0	0	sm pointed fl with v slight poss wear and ut of point