

Report 2710



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An Archaeological Watching Brief at Kings House, Surrey Street, Norwich

ENF126713

Prepared for
NPS South East Ltd
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Location:	Kings House, Surrey Street, Norwich
District:	Norwich
Grid Ref.:	TG 623005 308065
HER No.:	ENF126713
OASIS Ref.:	108901
Client:	NPS South East Ltd.
Dates of Fieldwork:	9 June - 8 August 2011

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted for NPS South East Ltd. during groundworks associated with the conversion of the land around Kings House, Surrey Street, Norwich to create a Free School.

Due to the restricted scope of the works only limited evidence was found, but this did point to two distinct phases of activity - medieval settlement after the creation of Surrey Street in the 13th century and the redevelopment of the area for elite housing in the 18th century.

A small, undated, boundary ditch found close to the modern boundary of the plot may be one of the original 13th-century plot boundaries. It was located c.80m (four chains) away from St Stephen's Street, suggesting plot frontages based on the chain (a chain measures 21 yards, just over 19m).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief took place during groundworks associated with the conversion of land around Kings House on Surrey Street in Norwich for use as a Free School.

Norfolk Historic Environment Service has recommended that a programme of archaeological monitoring be carried out to identify and record any archaeological remains affected by the development, in accordance with the principals set out in Planning Policy Statement 5 (DCLG 2010).

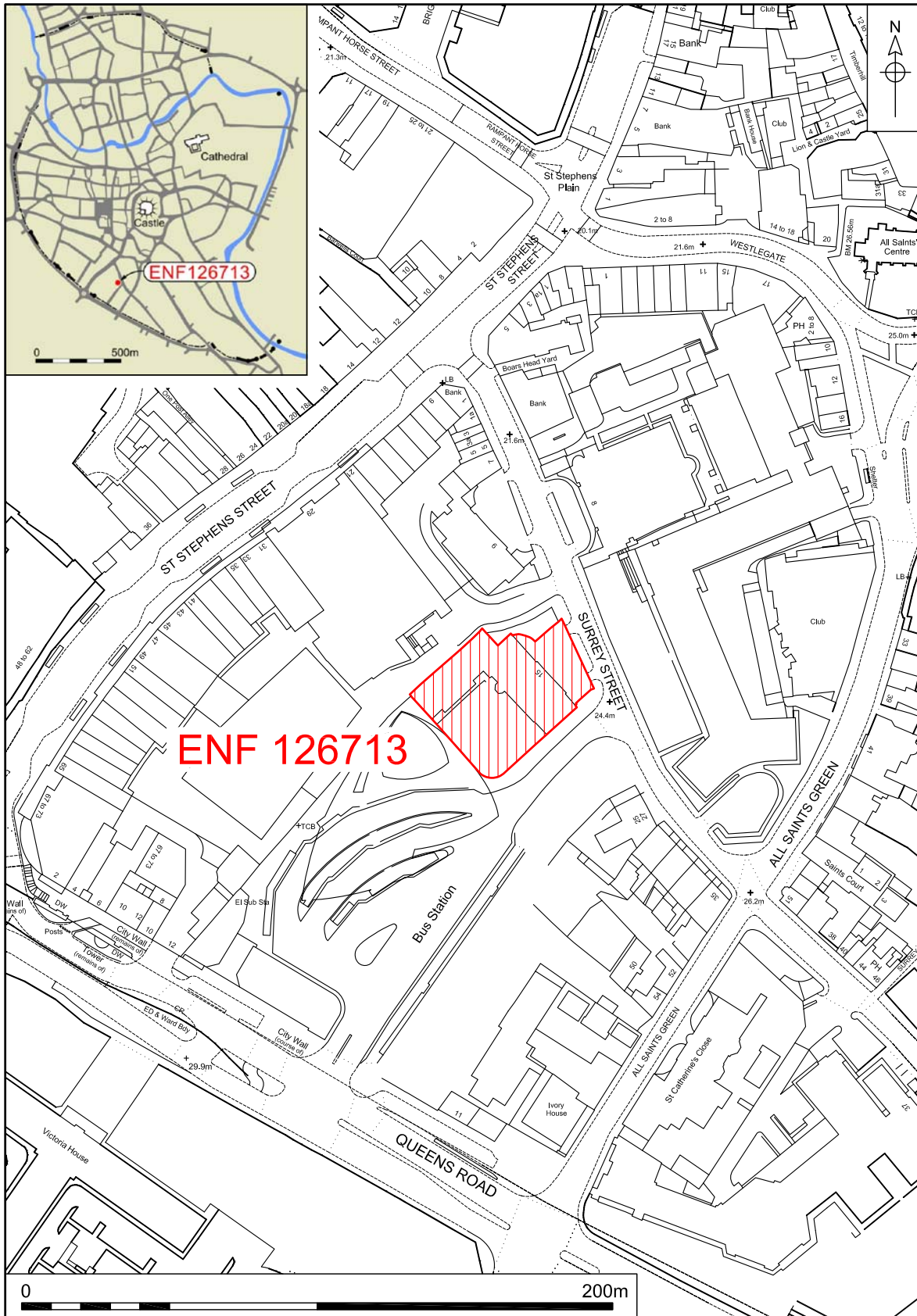
This work was commissioned and funded by NPS South East Ltd.

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

Kings House lies towards the western edge of the medieval city, just within the city walls and south of St Stephens' Street (Fig. 1). The site lies at a height of c.25m OD, on a slope rising to the west.

Anglian glacial sands and gravels (BGS 1991) over Cretaceous Upper Chalk (BGS 1985).



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2000

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

This section is drawn from the Heritage Statement for the development compiled by Rebecca Sillwood and David Whitmore in early 2011.

Kings House (NHER 26208) is an 18th-century red brick building with 20th-century additions located halfway along Surrey Street on its western side. The house was designed by the noted architect Matthew Brettingham (1699-1769) who was born in Norwich and who championed the Palladian style of architecture.

Surrey Street itself is a medieval road, although in the medieval period it was known as Great Newgate (first mentioned in 1257) before which it was known as '*terram de thedwardscroft*' a name which may indicate enclosed land between the city and open fields. Surrey Street lies within the parish of St Stephen and the area is generally thought to have been part of a pre-Conquest settlement known as Needham, before being amalgamated into the city of Norwich in later centuries. The city's late 13th-century walled defences, Scheduled Monument (NHER 384; SM 10), are located close to the site at a distance of less than 150m to the south. It is believed that an earthen bank and ditch pre-date the masonry walls, of which several stretches are still extant today. Houses in Norwich were generally not built outside this city limit until the late 18th century.

An Archaeological Impact Assessment was carried out by Norfolk Archaeological Unit (now NPS Archaeology) in 1996 and focussed on the site of Norwich Bus Station, which lies in close proximity to the current site. The study showed that the area of 15 Surrey Street (Kings House) is likely to have been unoccupied during the early medieval period - one of the areas of open land still to be found within the city walls up to the 15th century and beyond. It is not until a little before 1513 that the Earl of Surrey built Surrey House here, and the street was then re-named Surrey Street. The mapping for this assessment showed that, from the mid 16th century Surrey Street was built up, mostly along its frontage.

An archaeological evaluation in 1992, also by Norfolk Archaeological Unit, on what was then 11 Surrey Street (now 15 Surrey Street, the current site) located several features of medieval and post-medieval date (NHER 26400). This site lies within what is now the car park of 15 Surrey Street and the finds that were recovered support the idea that the area was not developed until later in the medieval period. Evidence of activity including post-holes, layers and a gully, all probably relating to a building that would have fronted onto Surrey Street were recorded.

Another evaluation conducted by NAU Archaeology in 2006-7 at All Saints' Green (NHER 49706) recorded further evidence of medieval activity. Several pits were recorded which were likely to have been originally dug for sand and gravel extraction and subsequently infilled with domestic refuse. This evidence further bears out the idea that this area of Norwich was not developed until later on in the medieval period. It also shows that the area was targeted for mineral extraction, with at least two or more sites in the vicinity showing evidence of quarrying.

Further archaeological evaluation of the area was undertaken in 2004, with the redevelopment of Norwich Bus Station (NHER 40192) which lies close to the city wall on Bull Lane. This evaluation found the medieval bank associated with the defensive wall and also the 'Way under the Walls', a roadway mentioned on

mapping of the 16th-century, and of likely medieval origin. Mineral extraction pits of 16th-century date were also recorded.

Mapping for the area goes back as far as the mid 16th century, with a plan by Cunningham in 1558 showing Surrey Street with houses fronting onto the street, gardens behind, and some divided fields. A later plan, by Hoefnagle in 1581, shows a similar layout. Cleer's map of Norwich from 1696 is more detailed, although it only shows a row of houses along the edge of Surrey Street and an open area behind. Hochstetter's plan of Norwich in 1789 is the first detailed map of the area, and shows Surrey Street, again with houses fronting onto the street, but these houses appear to be of some size, and have formal gardens laid out to their rear. The 1880 Ordnance Survey map shows a similar layout as before mentioned, although an addition is the presence of a Militia Barracks and Parade Ground to the south of the site, lying within the corner presented at the junction of Bull Lane and Upper Surrey Street. The Barracks is present all the way through the late Victorian period and into the 20th century, and on the 1928 OS map is named as a Drill Hall. The area of the site still depicts a large house on it, with formal gardens to the rear. It is not until the 1950s that the Drill Hall is replaced by a T.A. Centre and the Bus Station is built, the site still contains the large house, which is obviously the listed building that forms part of the current site and the Bus Station occupies an area that was once the formal gardens belonging to the house. The Bomb Damage map of Norwich, relating to the Second World War shows that a 50lb bomb fell very close to the Bus Station, and another in the vicinity of Surrey Street. These may have caused damage to the site, although no mention of damage to the listed building is known.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this watching brief was to mitigate the impact of development by monitoring groundworks and recording any archaeological remains exposed during the site works.

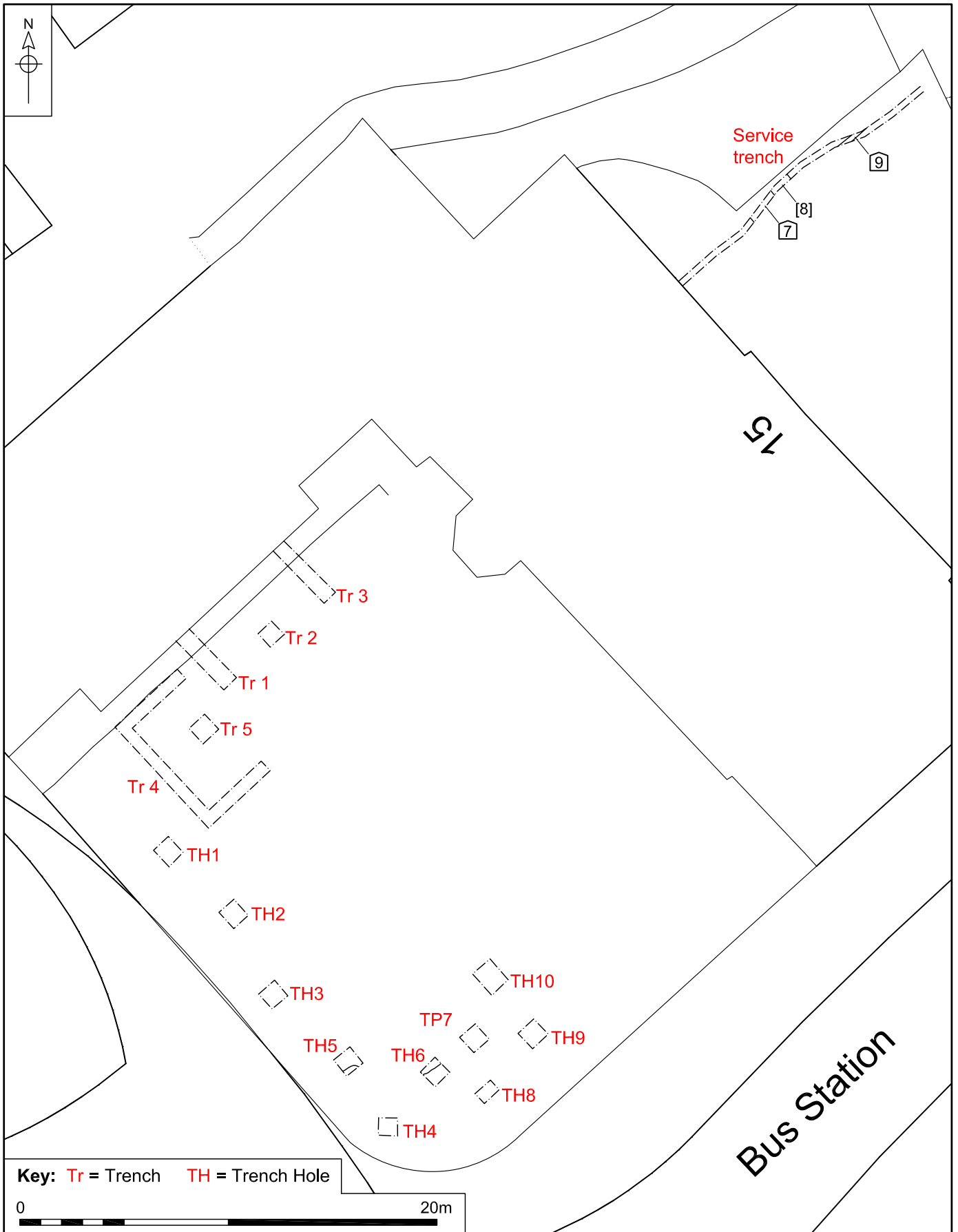
Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB-type excavator/hydraulic 360° excavator using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds, other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

No environmental samples were taken.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour, monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.



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Figure 2. Location of trenches. Scale 1:250

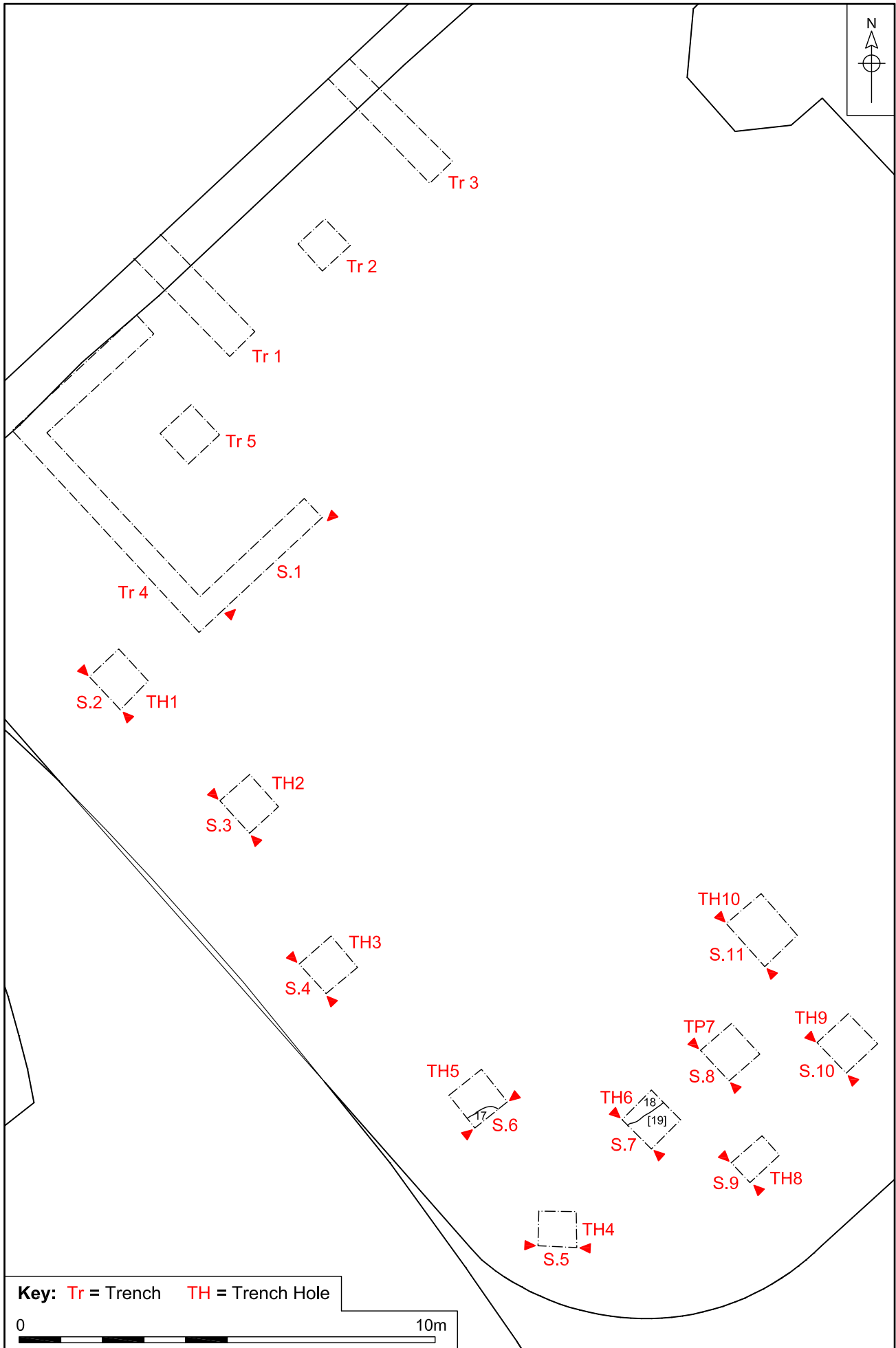


Figure 3. Plan of Trenches. Scale 1:125

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was 3.25m long and 0.85m wide (Figs 2 and 3).

Natural sand was visible at a depth of 0.65m.

Above natural was the old garden soil [1], a dark brown silty sand 0.55m thick with occasional flint gravel and rarer fragments of charcoal. It contained medieval and post-medieval pottery and ceramic building material (CBM).

The uppermost deposit was a layer of modern rubble 0.1m thick.



Plate 1. Trench 1, facing south (mis-numbered on board)

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 1m long and 1m wide (Figs 2 and 3).

Natural sand was visible at a depth of 0.65m.

Above natural was the old garden soil [1], a dark brown silty sand 0.55m thick with occasional flint gravel and rare charcoal and CBM fragments.

The uppermost deposit was a layer of modern rubble 0.1m thick.



Plate 2. Trench 2 facing north-east

5.3 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 3.25m long, 0.85m wide and c.1m deep (Figs 2 and 3)

Natural sand was not reached.

The earliest deposit visible was the old garden soil [1], a dark brown silty sand with occasional flint gravel and rare charcoal and CBM fragments.

The uppermost deposit was a layer of modern rubble 0.3m thick



Plate 3. Trench 3 facing south-west

5.4 Trench 4

Trench 4 was the foundation trench of a small shelter, 0.6m wide and 1.6m deep (Figs 2 and 3).

The stratigraphy consisted of natural sand at a depth of 0.6m, with the old garden soil layer [1] 0.3m thick above it.

Cutting deposit [1] was pit [3], which measured 1.45m wide by 1.2m deep with steep sides and a concave base (Fig. 4 Section 1). Its fill [4] appeared to be a dark brown clayey sand with occasional flint gravel and moderate lumps of redeposited natural sand. It is thought likely that this may have been a tree planting hole.

Pit [3] was sealed by modern hardcore and tarmac 0.3m deep.



Plate 4: Trenches 4 and 5 facing west with pit [3] visible in the trench

5.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 was a test pit dug prior to the excavation of Trench 4 (Figs 2 and 3).

It measured 1m long and 1m wide and revealed 0.3m of tarmac and hardcore above 0.3m of old garden soil (1).

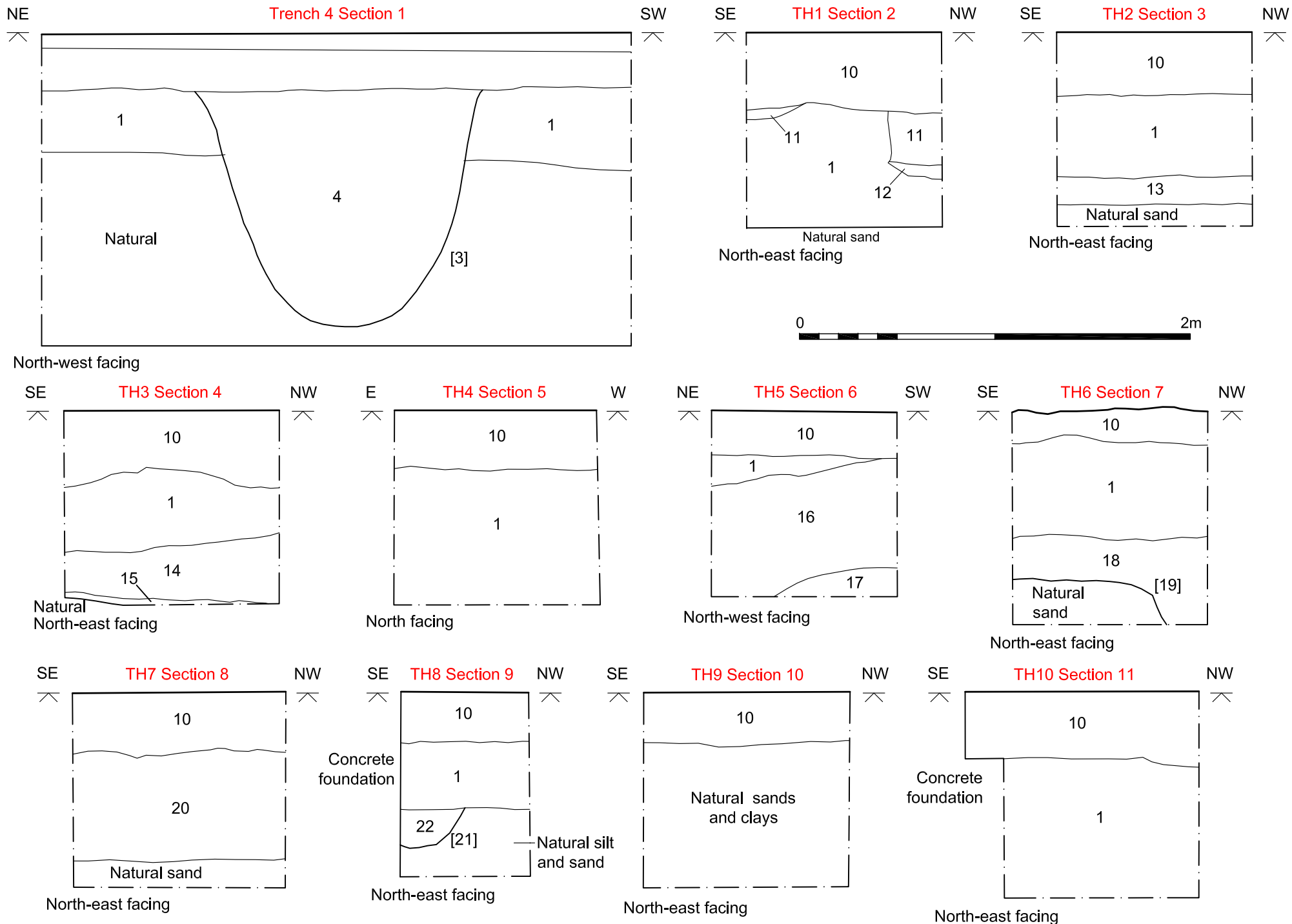


Figure 4. Trench sections. Scale 1:25

5.6 Tree Hole 1

TH 1 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1m deep and hit natural sand at the base.

The earliest deposit was layer [1] an old garden soil which was a mid-dark brown silty sand with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks, occasional CBM fragments and moderate amounts of flint gravel. It was 0.6m deep and at the top was a small lens of orange course sand [11] and a small feature which was 0.36m deep with concrete [12] at the base and a fill of [11] above (Fig. 4 Section 2).

This feature and deposits were sealed by a 0.4m deep deposit of modern imported topsoil [10].



Plate 5. Tree Hole 1 facing south-west

5.7 Tree Hole 2

TH 2 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1m deep and hit natural sand 0.1m above the base.

The earliest deposit [13] appeared to be a coarse mix of natural sand and old garden soil [1] and was 0.15m thick.

Above [13] was the old garden soil [1] 0.48m thick and above that the recently imported garden soil [10] (Fig. 4 Section 3).

It is likely that layer [13] was caused by deep digging of garden soil [1].



Plate 6. Tree Hole 2 facing south-west

5.8 Tree Hole 3

TH 3 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1m deep and hit natural sand in places at the base.

The earliest deposit [15] was a thin layer (0.04m thick) of ashy charcoal material lying directly above the natural sand (Fig. 4 Section 4).

Above this was layer [14], a mid brown silty sand with occasional flint gravel and chalk flecks, up to 0.36m thick.

Above this was the old garden soil [1], up to 0.42m thick and the imported garden soil [10] up to 0.4m thick.



Plate 7. Tree Hole 3 facing south-west

5.9 Tree Hole 4

TH 4 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1m deep with no sign of natural sand at the base.

The earliest visible deposit was the old garden soil [1] which had the modern imported soil [10], 0.3m thick, above (Fig. 4 Section 5).



Plate 8. Tree Hole 4 facing south

5.10 Tree Hole 5

TH 5 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1m deep, with no sign of natural sand at the base.

The earliest deposit encountered [17] was a mid brown clayey sand with occasional charcoal flecks and one sherd of 11th- to 14th-century pottery.

Above this was rubble layer [16]. The interface between [16] and [17] was very uneven, suggesting the presence of archaeological features (Fig. 4 Section 6). Rubble layer [16] was in excess of 0.6m thick and was composed of very fine, almost powdered pale cream sandy mortar with chalk lumps, occasional pegtile fragments and small to medium flints. This was dated by pottery and tile to the early post-medieval period.

Above this was a small amount of old garden soil [1] up to 0.17m thick, with a layer of the new imported soil [10] up to 0.24m thick.

Rubble layer [16] appears very well sorted, and may represent the processing of demolition material for reuse.



Plate 9. Tree Hole 5 facing south-east

5.11 Tree Hole 6

TH 6 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1.1m deep, with natural sand visible 0.24m above the base.

The earliest feature encountered was the edge of a cut feature [19] (Fig. 4. Section 7) aligned south-west to north-east. This was filled with layer [18] which also extended as a layer 0.2m deep away from the feature; it was a dark brown clayey sand with moderate amounts of oyster shell, occasional charcoal and rare pieces of flint gravel. The date, form and function of feature [19] could not be established.

Above [18] was the old garden soil layer [1], 0.54m deep with the modern imported soil [10], 0.17m thick, above.



Plate 10. Tree Hole 6 facing south-west

5.12 Tree Hole 7

TH 7 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1m deep, with natural sand visible 0.14m above the base.

Above the natural sand was a layer of loose rubble [20] 0.56m thick (Fig. 4 Section 8) and composed of very pale chalky mortar fragments with frequent brick fragments, pegtile fragments and rare flints. This appeared to be well-sorted, with the best masonry cleaned and removed for reuse.

Above layer [20] was a 0.3m thick layer of the imported garden soil [10].



Plate 11. Tree Hole 7 facing south-west

5.13 Tree Hole 8

TH 8 (Figs 2 and 3) was 0.65m wide by 1m long by 1m deep, with natural sand present 0.4m above the base.

TH 8 was narrow due to the presence of the concrete foundation of the adjacent modern boundary wall. The earliest archaeological feature was ditch [21] which was parallel to the modern boundary wall. It was 0.2m deep, and although truncated by the modern foundation, may have originally been 0.4-0.5m wide, with steep sides and a concave base (Fig. 4 Section 9). Its fill [22] was a dark brown clayey sand with moderate flint gravel and no finds. This fill was relatively devoid of cultural material, perhaps suggesting an early date.

Above ditch [21] was the old garden soil [1] 0.35m thick with the modern imported soil [10] 0.25m thick above.

The alignment of ditch [21] (perpendicular to Surrey Street), its position (close to the modern boundary) and the lack of cultural material within its fill, suggests that this ditch may be a property boundary dating to the initial division into plots in this area of Norwich.



Plate 12. Tree Hole 8 facing south-west

5.14 Tree Hole 9

TH 9 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1m long by 1m deep, with natural sand appearing 0.73m above the base.

The only deposit present was the newly-imported soil [10], 0.27m thick lying above natural sands and clays (Fig. 4 Section 10).



Plate 13. Tree Hole 9 facing south-west

5.15 Tree Hole 10

TH 10 (Figs 2 and 3) was 1m wide by 1.2m long by 1.05m deep, with no sign of natural sand at the base. The hole had to be relocated to 0.2m north-west of its original position due to the presence of concrete at a depth of 0.34m.

The earliest feature encountered was the old garden soil [1], with the modern, imported garden soil [10], 0.35m thick, above (Fig. 4 Section 11).



Plate 14. Tree Hole 10 facing south-west

5.16 Service Trench

The service trench was 15m long (south-west to north-east), 0.3-0.4m wide and 0.7m deep (Fig. 2) and linked Kings House to Surrey Street.

Natural sand was visible at the base of the service trench. The earliest visible deposit was [6] a 0.5m thick mid brown sand with occasional CBM and charcoal and rare pieces of flint gravel. Within this deposit were three masonry features (walls [7] and [9] and masonry rubble [8]) (Fig. 2).

Wall [9] was aligned perpendicular to Surrey Street and consisted of two courses of 2-2½ inch soft red brick in a pale grey chalky mortar.

Wall [7] was parallel to Surrey Street and was 1.3m wide, composed of flints in a pale cream chalky mortar. The absence of CBM in its construction perhaps suggests an early date.

To the east of wall [7] was a deposit of masonry [8], which was established to be CBM rubble, including 2½ inch soft red bricks, suggesting a 19th- to 20th-century date.

Features [6], [7], [8] and [9] were all sealed by deposit [5] which consisted of layers of modern hardcore.



Plate 15. Service Trench facing north-east

6.0 THE FINDS

by Lucy Talbot

Finds were processed and recorded by count and weight, and an Excel spreadsheet was produced outlining broad dating for each object. Each material type has been considered separately and is described below in date order. A list of all finds in context order can be found in Appendix 2a.

6.1 Pottery

Four sherds of pottery weighing 179g were collected from three contexts. The assemblage was recorded by count and weight and fabrics and forms were identified (Jennings 1981)

6.1.1 Medieval

A single body sherd of 11th- to 14th-century Local Medieval Unglazed ware (LMU) weighing 17g was recovered from context [17], a clayey sand below rubble layer [16]. The form is undiagnostic.

6.1.2 Late medieval / early post-medieval

Two body sherds of Late Medieval Transitional ware (LMT) of 15th- to 16th-century date and weighing 74g, were collected from contexts [1] (garden soil) and [16] (rubble). Although the sherds are undiagnostic, the thinness of both fragments suggests it is likely they are from one of the hollow-ware forms, probably jugs.

The sherd from context [1] is unglazed, pale orange in colour throughout, but with a thin lens of reduced core on one broken edge.

The fragment from context [16] is grey, with traces of sooting and with vitrified glaze on the external surface.

6.1.3 Post-medieval

Context [1] also produced a single rim sherd of a 16th- to 18th-century Glazed Red Earthenware (GRE) storage jar. With a medium sandy, dark orange fabric and thick covering of clear lead glaze, this sherd also has the partial remains of a thumbed, applied strip under the rim, presumably to aid transportation of the vessel.

6.2 Ceramic Building Material

The ceramic building material (CBM) assemblage was recorded by count and weight and identified using Drury's typology (1993).

Three examples of CBM were collected from contexts [1] and [16], weighing 2953g. The assemblage consists of a late brick [1] (which although damaged in one corner has complete dimensions), the corner of a worn, unglazed floor tile also from context [1] and a fragment of medium sandy, plain roof tile from deposit [16]. The brick and roof tile are of post-medieval date (c.17th to 19th century) whilst the floor tile is of uncertain date.

6.3 Conclusions

All of these finds were derived from relatively modern deposits however they are typical of the types of objects found medieval and post-medieval deposits in Norwich.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

There appear to have been two main phases of activity on site:

- 1) **Medieval** as exhibited by the archaeological features found at the base of some of the Tree Holes directly above the natural sand
- 2) **Post-Medieval**, in the form of Kings House and its gardens

The medieval phase probably is associated with the creation of Surrey Street (then known as Great Newgate) in the 13th century. This road between St Stephens Street and All Saints Green is c.200m long and may have been planned, with plots on the south-western side appearing to be two chains wide. The features found during this watching brief suggest that masonry buildings and cut features, including a possible boundary ditch, were present at a distance of four chains from St Stephens Street.

Development in the area in the 18th century was probably associated with elite housing, as evidenced by Kings House itself, with large gardens stretching south-west as far as the city walls. Garden soil, a probable tree planting hole and possible walls were found dating from this phase.

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The fieldwork was conducted by the author and Pete Crawley.

The finds were washed, recorded and analysed by Lucy Talbot.

Thanks must also be given to David Dobson for completing the illustrations and to Jayne Bown for editing this report.

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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period
1	Deposit			Old garden soil	Post-medieval
2	Deposit			Rubble	Modern
3	Cut	Pit		?Tree planting hole	Post-medieval
4	Deposit		3	Pit fill	Post-medieval
5	Deposit			Hardcore	Modern
6	Deposit			Garden soil	Post-medieval
7	Masonry			Wall	Post-medieval
8	Masonry			Masonry rubble	Post-medieval
9	Masonry			Wall	Medieval
10	Deposit			Imported garden soil	Modern
11	Deposit			Orange sand	Modern
12	Masonry			Concrete	Modern
13	Deposit			Mix of garden soil [1] and natural sand	Modern
14	Deposit			Layer	?Medieval
15	Deposit			Charcoal layer	?Medieval
16	Deposit			Rubble	Post-medieval
17	Deposit			Clayey sand below (16)	?Medieval
18	Deposit		19	Clayey sand	Uncertain
19	Cut	Uncertain		Feature	Uncertain
20	Deposit			Rubble	Post-medieval
21	Cut	Ditch		Boundary	?Medieval
22	Deposit		21	Clayey sand	?Medieval

Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Feature	Total
Medieval	Wall	1
	Ditch	1
Post-medieval	Wall	1
	Pit	1
Uncertain	Uncertain	1

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period	Notes
1	Pottery	1	30g	Medieval	LMT; body sherd; C15th-16th
1	Pottery	1	91g	Post-medieval	GRE: Storage Jar Rim; C16th-18th
1	Ceramic Building Material	1	2,750g	Post-medieval	Late Brick; L:255 x W:120 x Th:53mm
1	Ceramic Building Material	1	107g	Unknown	Floor tile frag
16	Pottery	1	44g	Medieval	LMT; body sherd; C15th-16th
16	Ceramic Building Material	1	98g	Post-medieval	Roof tile frag
17	Pottery	1	14g	Medieval	LMU; body sherd; C11th-14th

Key: LMU—Local Medieval Unglazed Ware, LMT—Late Medieval Transitional Ware, GRE—Glazed Red Earthenware

Appendix 2b: Oasis Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Medieval	Pottery	3
Post-medieval	Ceramic Building Material	2
	Pottery	1
Unknown	Ceramic Building Material	1