

Report 2875



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**Archaeological Watching Brief at Bussey's,
Bedding Lane, Norwich Norfolk**

ENF 127703



Prepared for
Bussey and Sabberton Ltd
c/o Chaplin Farrant
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Location:	Land Adjacent to Pigg Lane, Palace Street and Bedding Lane, Norwich (former Bussey's Site)
District:	Norwich
Planning Ref.:	08/00712/F
Grid Ref.:	TG 2340 0905
HER No.:	ENF 127703
OASIS Ref.:	113510
Client:	Bussey and Sabberton Ltd
Dates of Fieldwork:	28 September 2011

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by NPS Archaeology during the construction works on the former Bussey's Site in Norwich. The development site is located in the historic core of the city and previous archaeological work in the vicinity has identified prehistoric remains as well as structures of Late Saxon and medieval date.

The watching brief monitoring observed the excavation of a foundation trench at the site and recorded soils of modern date to the base of the foundation (c.0.70m below current ground level) with no remains of archaeological interest revealed.

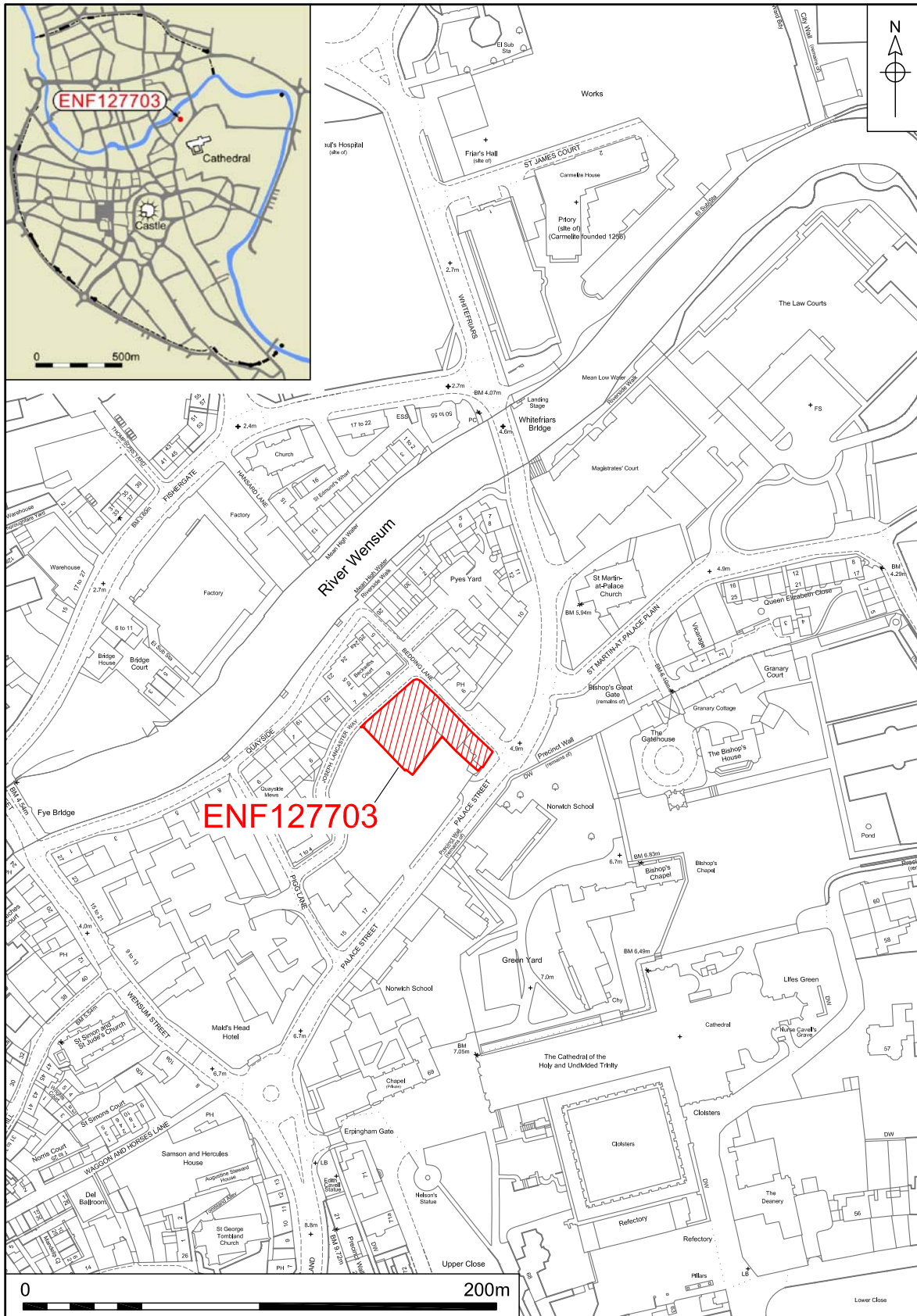
1.0 INTRODUCTION

This archaeological watching brief and report were undertaken to fulfil a planning condition applied to the development of land adjacent to Bedding Lane in Norwich (Application 08/00712/F) (Fig. 1). The condition was set by Norwich City Council with a supporting Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (NHES) (Ref: CNF 41606) that recommended a programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out to monitor a foundation trench dug at the site so that any archaeological remains exposed can be recorded.

The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref: NPSA/BAU2875/JB). In order to comply with the condition Chaplin Farrant Limited contracted NPS Archaeology on behalf of their client to undertake a programme of monitoring to fulfil the requirements of the archaeological brief.

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). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found. This watching brief constitutes a first phase of works and a further brief for mitigation works will be issued at a later date.

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.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2500

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site is bounded to the south by Palace Street, (a new street) Joseph Lancaster Way to the north, and Bedding Lane to the east.

Located on the south bank of the River Wensum, the natural topography of the site slopes gently down from south to north towards the River Wensum. Along the frontage with Palace Street the modern ground level is at c.5.50m OD. Natural chalk has been observed during previous archaeological works at the site at a depth of c.1.80m OD (Adams 2008). This chalk is overlain by gravels and sands of the river terrace.

Archaeological deposits close to the Palace Street frontage have been truncated down to undisturbed geological deposits by construction works associated with the building of garages that previously occupied the site. A number of post-medieval cellars and modern fuel storage tanks have also truncated deposits.

An informative topographic study has been undertaken by Phillip Emery when he brought together the data of previous archaeological works and geotechnical borehole logs date. The mapping of these results suggested the presence of a potential tributary valley to the immediate west of Pigg Lane.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site of the current watching brief is within an area of known archaeological potential. Previous archaeological evaluations and excavations on various parts of this large site have recorded remains of prehistoric date (Emery 2000, Emery and Ashwin 2001) located on sands and gravels of the river terrace, as well as limited evidence of Middle Saxon activity (Adams 2008 and Percival 1996). Occupation of urban character in the Late Saxon period has also been indicated from the excavation of two cellared buildings of this date and their associated artefacts (Adams *ibid*). The area seems to have been extensively quarried for sands and gravels of the river terrace from perhaps the Late Saxon to early medieval period, though this activity did not appear to disrupt the setting out of a medieval street with associated buildings running along both its frontages. This street was aligned approximately north-south through the centre of the former Bussey's site. This road is identified in documentary references in the late 13th century.

A nationally important collection of early post-medieval vessel glass was recovered from a well during a watching brief associated with the excavations in 2006 (Adams *ibid*) and this glass seems to be a collection that had been disposed of in the late 16th century. Also recovered from the site was the largest assemblage of post-medieval lead cloth seals recorded in Norwich from a single site.

For most of the latter half of the 20th century the site was occupied by garages and car showrooms of Bussey and Sabberton Ltd; the site was cleared for redevelopment in 2005.

This watching brief report covers the most recent (small-scale) phase of works at the site.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological brief required the monitoring of

'...all areas of below-ground disturbance, including excavations, foundation trenches, service trenches, drains and soakaways, above-ground remains when the development affects a building of historic importance, pipeline and cable trenches' (Albone 2011).

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Monochrome contact prints were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate. Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.

The groundworks to be monitored were excavated by contractors with a 5 tonne tracked hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with a toothed bucket.

No environmental samples were taken.

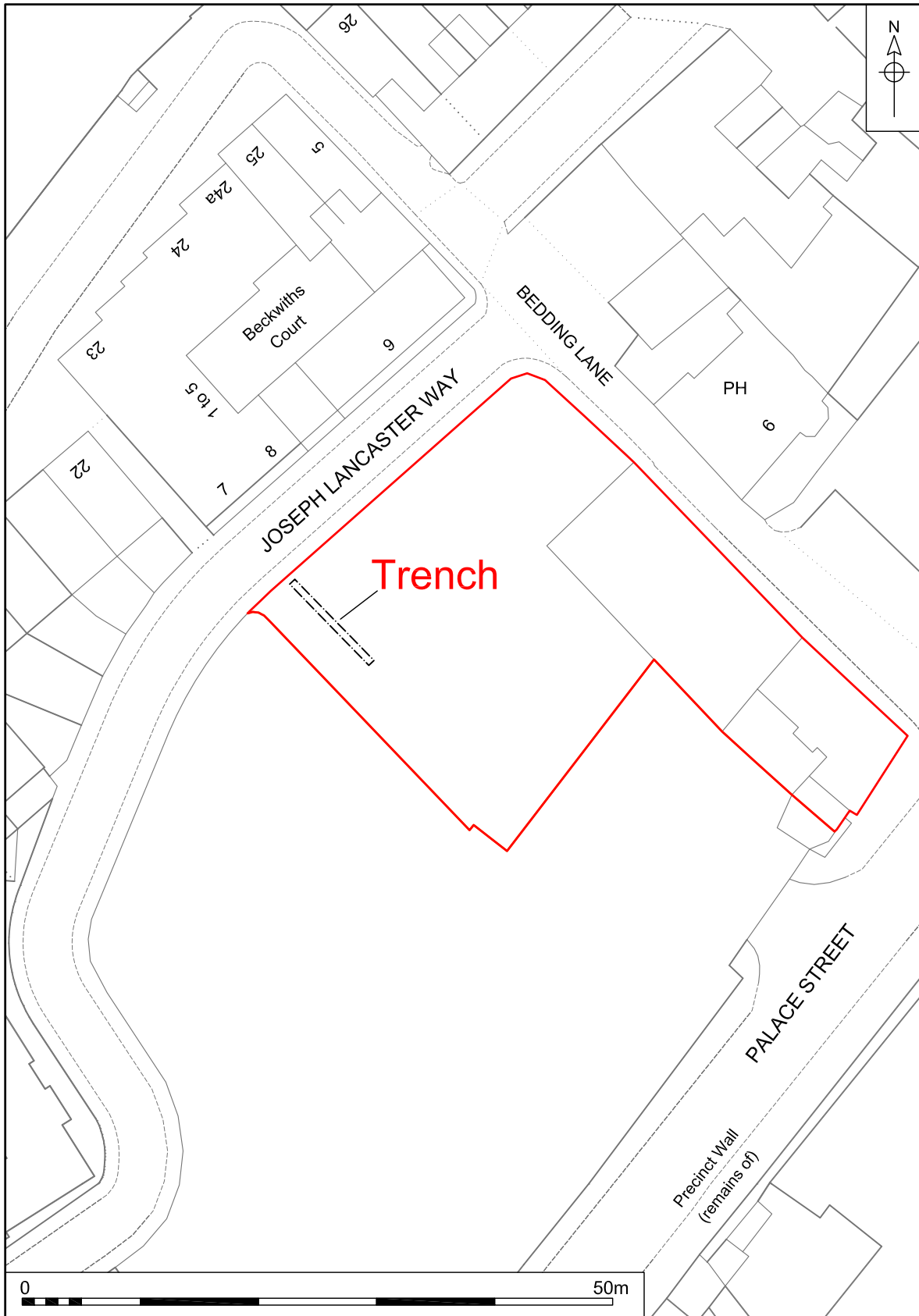
The monitoring was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (Institute for Archaeologists 2008) and the guidelines set out in the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).



Plate 1. Location of foundation looking north-west

5.0 RESULTS

The foundation trench to be monitored was aligned approximately north-south and located at the northern end of the site adjacent to Joseph Lancaster Way (Fig. 2, Plate 1).



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Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500

The trench measured 9.60m long and 0.60m wide with a maximum depth of 0.70m.

A single deposit was present (Plate 2) which was visible in the sides of the trench. It consisted of a dark grey soil with frequent building rubble and modern inclusions suggesting it had been redeposited in the very recent past.



Plate 2. Section of foundation trench looking east, 1m scale

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

From what is known of the site's typical topography and deposit sequence based on previous archaeological investigations at the site it is likely that any significant archaeological remains would lie considerably deeper than the depth achieved for this foundation.

Observations during the watching brief revealed only modern soils likely to have been relocated during the early phase of construction works at the site from 2005 onwards.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Jerene Irwin of Chaplin Farrant Ltd who commissioned NPS Archaeology on behalf of Bussey and Sabberton Ltd who funded it.

The author undertook the fieldwork.

Sarah Howard of NHES provided an event number for the site and James Albone monitored the site on behalf of NHES. The project was managed for NPS Archaeology by David Whitmore.

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

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