

Report 2783



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Archaeological Watching Brief at The Former Canary Public House, 107 Watling Road, Norwich, Norfolk

ENF127701



Prepared for
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December 2011



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Location:	The Former Canary Public House, 107 Watling Road, Norwich
District:	Norwich
Planning Ref.:	10/00339
Grid Ref.:	TG 2568 1039
HER No.:	ENF 127701
OASIS Ref.:	115786
Client:	Dove Jeffery Homes Ltd.
Dates of Fieldwork:	11 August – 15 September 2011 (intermittent)

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted for Dove Jeffery Homes ahead of the construction of new residential properties on the site of the former Canary Public House, 107 Watling Road, Norwich. The excavations for foundation trenches in four separate areas were monitored.

Sherds of Roman pottery were recovered in the vicinity of a pottery kiln identified during earlier evaluation trenching on the site. No other archaeological features or deposits were encountered during these works.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was conducted for Dove Jeffery Homes at the site of the former Canary Public House on Watling Road, Norwich (Fig. 1) during August and September 2011. The public house has been demolished and a number of private dwellings are to be built in its place. The excavations for the footings of these dwellings were monitored by an experienced archaeologist. The total area of the site covers 0.473 hectares.

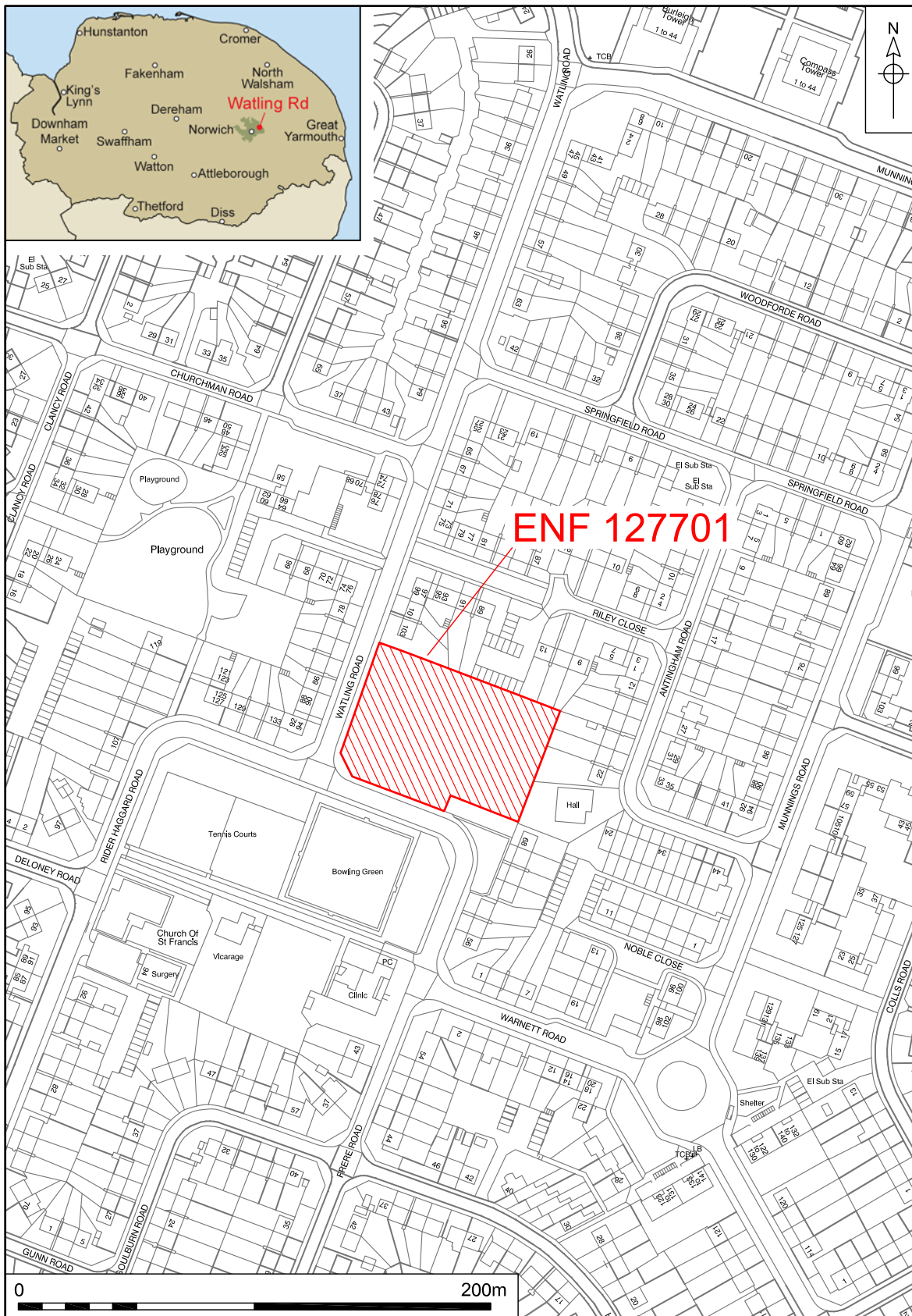
This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Norwich City Council (Ref. 10/00339) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (Ref. CNF42826). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU2783/NP). This work was commissioned and funded by Dove Jeffery Homes Ltd.

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) and followed on from trial trench evaluation of the site earlier in the year.

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 site is located in the suburbs of Norwich, to the north-east between Salhouse Road and Plumstead Road East. The geology in this area consists of the



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2500

Happisburgh Glacigenic Formation and Lowestoft Formation (undifferentiated) superficial deposits of sand and gravel, over the Norfolk Crag Group bedrock of sand and gravel sand (www.bgs.ac.uk) somewhat disturbed by the previous development on this site.

The foundation trenches were excavated in dry weather with occasional showers. The site lies at a height of approximately 37m OD and, as indicated by the sandiness of the deposits, is well drained.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

As part of the prior evaluation of the site old maps and the Norfolk Historic Environment Records (NHER) were consulted for information on any known sites of historic significance in this area. The following section reproduces information from the evaluation report (Westall 2011) supplemented by the trial trenching results.

In 1797 when Faden's map of Norfolk (Barringer 1989) was printed, the development site was located in part of Mousehold Heath, which covered an area of over 5,000 acres (NHER 53082). The Enclosure Acts of the early 1800s significantly reduced the size of the heath however and by 1838 only the area still preserved as common today has survived (NHER 53083).

A boundary line on Bryant's 1826 map of Norwich (Barringer 1998) runs from north-east to south-west across what is now the south-eastern side of the development site. This boundary is also shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of this area (www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk).

A 1929 map indicates that the current site once formed part of a Cavalry Drill Ground, and it lies adjacent to the site of the Mousehold Aerodrome (NHER 12415). An anti-aircraft battery was built on the site of the aerodrome during the Second World War (NHER 12415), and anti-landing trenches are recorded all across this area (NHER 51903).

From a more ancient archaeological perspective, the site lies immediately adjacent to, and may even overlie, a series of cropmarks identified from aerial photographs (NHER 51910). These are assumed to be medieval and/or post-medieval in date due to their location along the line of the parish boundary, as can be traced on the Ordnance Survey first edition map of this area. On a map of Mousehold Heath from 1585 this boundary is recorded as the route of a medieval road - the Ranworth Way (NHER 8166); but a note in the NHER states that no trace of this road has been found either on aerial photographs or on the ground. However a parish boundary ditch (or roadside ditch) was observed in 1979 in a gas pipe trench (NHER 8166).

In 1958 a late Roman copper alloy coin was recovered about 350m to the west of the site (NHER 11195), as well as undated cropmarks recorded 100m further west (NHER 51909); more Roman coins may have been found 300m to the north-west of the site (NHER 8197) but the HER record is confusing and the two coin sites may be the same. Fragments of Roman pottery (representing three to four pots) were found around 480m to the south-east of the site in the 1950s (NHER 9630), and another possible Roman coin was recovered from a site adjacent to that in 2009 (NHER 41906). A Roman road from Brampton to Thorpe St Andrew is thought to have run approx. 400-500m east of the development site (NHER 7598),

although little evidence of the road itself has been found. Roman and Iron Age material has apparently also been found in the general vicinity of the site.

Archaeological evaluation at the site of the former Canary Public House in 2011 exposed a pit filled with Roman pottery on the western side of the site. It was considered that this pit may have represented the remains of a Roman kiln. A large ditch crossed the eastern side of the site and was interpreted as the remains of a boundary of medieval or post-medieval date which is recorded on several late post-medieval maps (Westall 2011).

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this watching brief was to identify archaeological remains, and where these could not be preserved *in situ*, the impact of the scheme was to be minimised by appropriate levels of archaeological excavation and recording.

The Brief required that the all ground disturbance works be monitored by an archaeologist and if previously unrecorded archaeological features and deposits were encountered, deemed to be of significance, appropriate levels of excavation and recording would be required. Specifically the watching brief was to monitor any works that may directly impact on any below ground deposits in Building Plots 1-19 only (Fig. 2).

Machine excavation was carried out with a tracked hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with a toothed ditching bucket and operated 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 because no suitable deposits were encountered, apart from those that had been extensively sampled during the evaluation.

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.

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from a survey point marked as S103 in the pavement outside the entrance to the site. The value of this point is 37.636 OD.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in generally dry weather interspersed with occasional heavy showers.

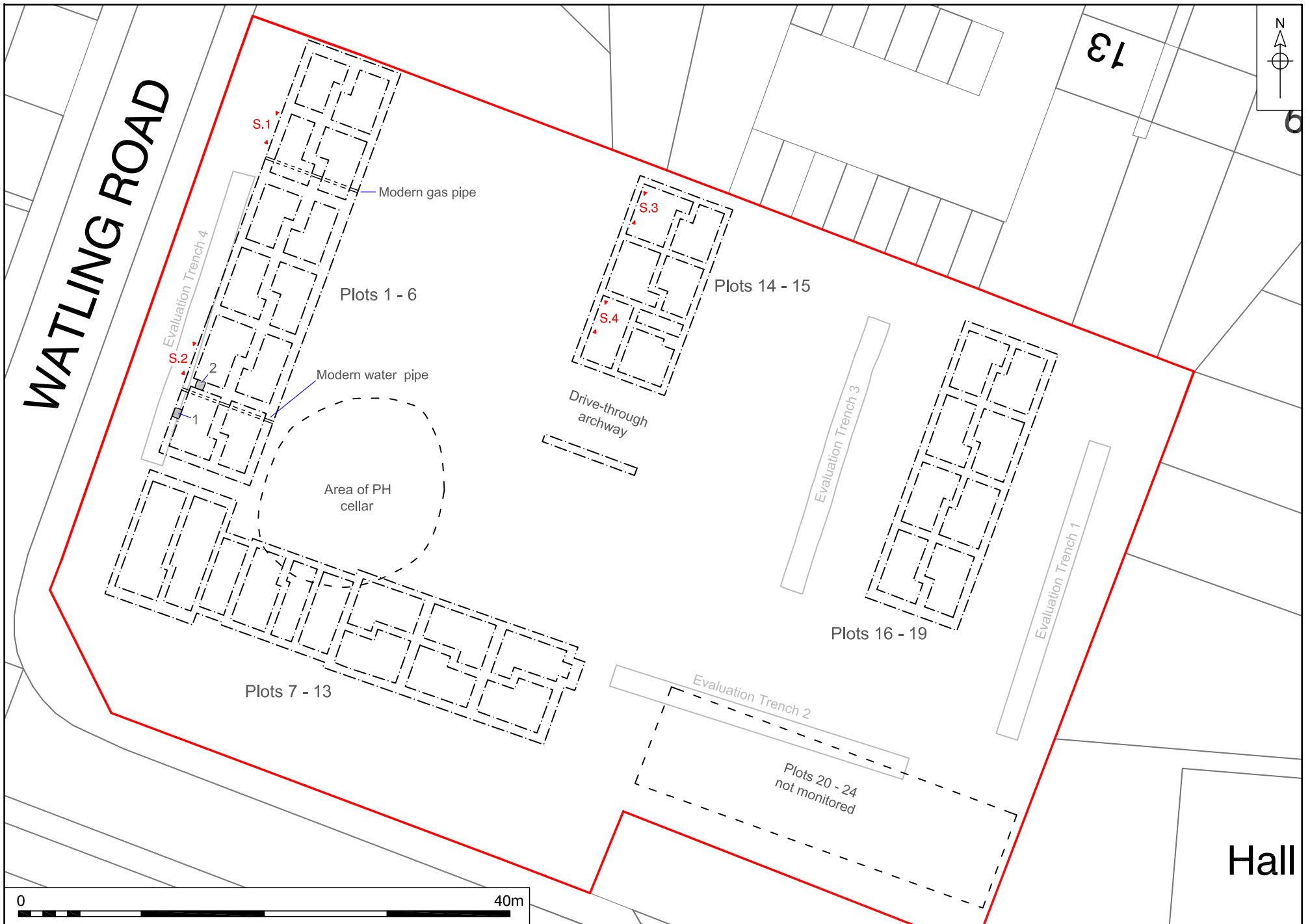


Figure 2. Trenches location. Scale 1:400

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 Plots 1-6

The excavations for the foundations of Plots 1-6 were the first to be dug. This area lies to the extreme south-west of the site (Fig. 2), and encompasses the area in which Trench 4 (the location of the Roman kiln-type feature) was located during the earlier evaluation. The trenches were approximately 0.40m wide and 0.90m deep. The stratigraphy in this area consists of a layer of modern, moderately compact, brownish-grey stony overburden [3] containing hardcore and debris which had presumably resulted from the demolition of the public house. Underneath deposit [3] was a layer of hardcore of a sandier, more orange nature [4], which was fairly loose and probably represents a layer of modern make-up for the levelling of the site for a previous phase of construction (most likely for the pub itself or the surrounding pub car-park). Underneath this was subsoil layer [5], a soft dark brown sandy-silt with occasional flint nodules, which overlay natural layer [6] consisting of loose orange gravelly sand (Fig. 3 Section 1 and Plate 1).



Plate 1. South-east facing section, Plots 1-6

As the excavations in this area moved towards the south along the development plot a layer of dark-brown silty-clay subsoil [7] was encountered. This deposit was similar in nature to that observed during the evaluation to contain pottery sherds. The surface of natural layer [6] became deeper here (also noted during the evaluation) (Fig. 3 Section 2). Two small groups of pottery sherds were found (recorded as [1] and [2] to assist in identifying the location they were discovered in) as no cut for a related feature could be identified (Figs 2 and 3). Modern services crossed the site in this area showing that it has been highly disturbed in recent times. No other archaeological features were recorded.

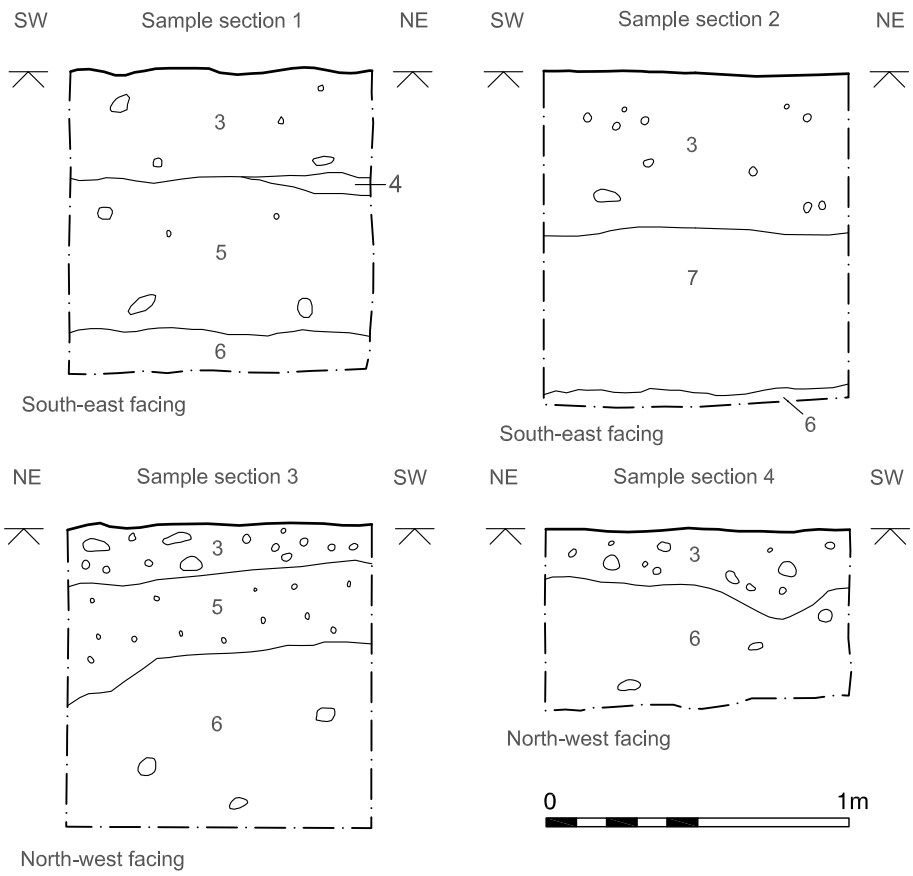
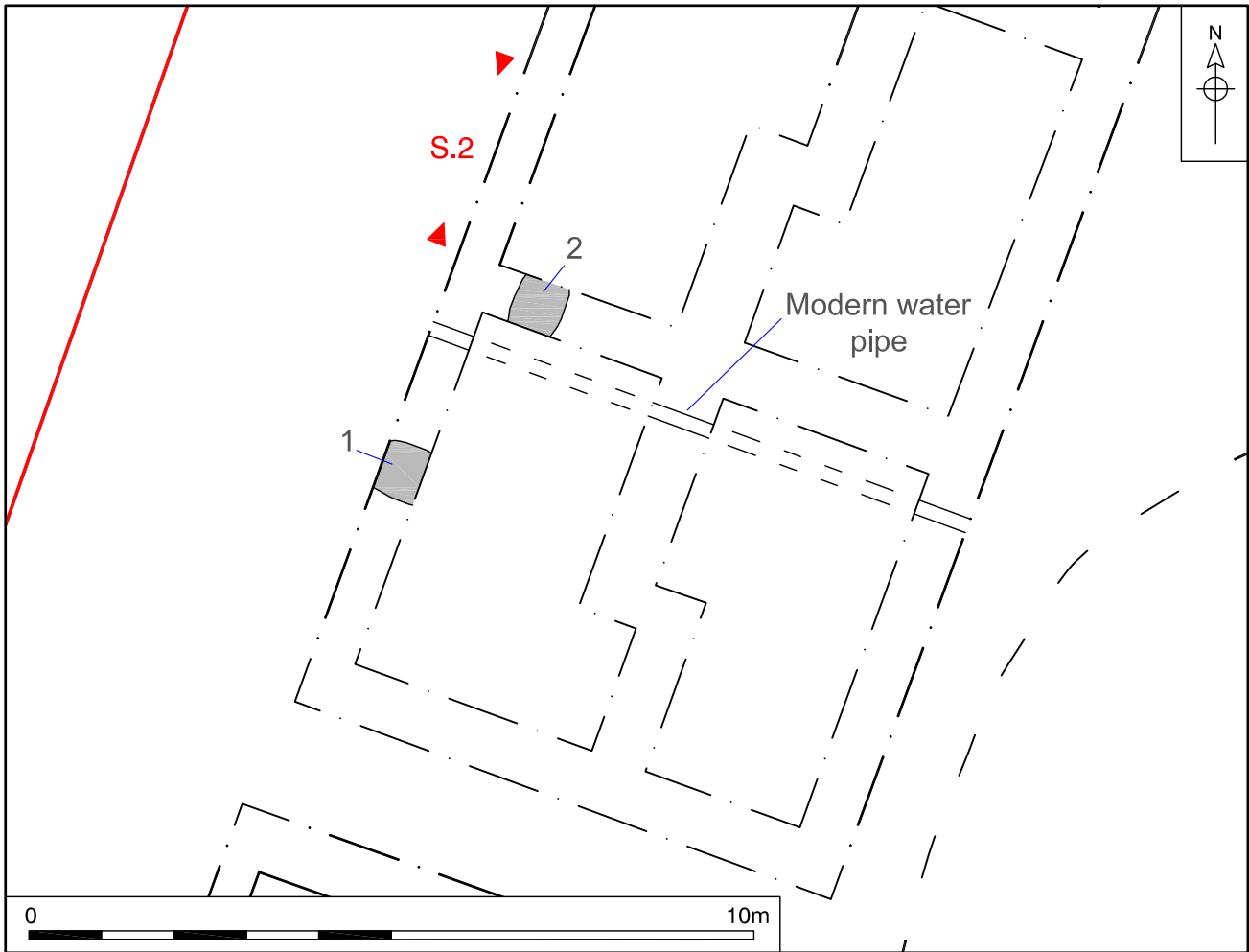


Figure 3. Detail of Plots 1 - 6 showing location of pottery sherds and sections 1 - 4. Scale 1:100 and 1:25

5.2 Plots 7–13

Plots 7-13 were the last to be monitored due to access to this area being made difficult by the large open pit in the middle of the site that used to be the pub's cellar (Fig. 2, Plate 2).



Plate 2. Area of disturbance from the old pub's cellar



Plate 3. Slippage caused by excavations close to the old cellar

This pit was over three metres deep and needed to be shored before any construction work could commence. The whole area was very unstable and collapsed on at least one occasion (Plate 3) and close examination of deposits was not feasible. Footings in this location needed to be over 3m deep in places here. Stratigraphy was the same as that observed in Plots 1-6 apart from the heavily disturbed area of the former cellar where modern brick could be seen mixed with the sandy natural layers. No archaeological features were recorded.

5.3 Plots 14–15

Plots 14 to 15 were located slightly north-west of the centre of the site (Fig. 2), and excavation of these footings took place during a heavy shower of rain. The only deposits disturbed here were the layer of stony modern overburden [3], subsoil layer [5] and the orange sandy natural [6] (Fig. 3 Section 3). Further to the south-west this subsoil layer disappeared entirely and the surface of the natural ground appeared to rise, although this may have been illusory as the developer's formation level was much higher here as well, indicating that the actual height of the ground surface dips in this area, (although this was not immediately apparent from the surface); the trenches here were only 0.60m deep (Fig. 3 Section 4). No archaeological features were encountered in this area.

5.4 Plots 16–19

Plots 16-19 were located on the north-east side of the site (Fig. 2). The footings here were approximately 0.50m wide and 1.10m deep. The only deposits disturbed in this area were the modern heavy overburden [3] and the orange gravelly sand natural [6] (Plate 4). The only feature encountered during the excavation of these footings was a drain pipe associated with the earlier building (Plate 5). No archaeological features were encountered.



Plate 4. Plots 16-19, looking north-east



Plate 5. Modern services in trenches for Plots 16-19

6.0 FINDS

6.1 Pottery

by Andrew Peachey

Watching-brief excavations recovered a total of 25 sherds (148g) of early Roman pottery, consistent with that recorded in a putative kiln deposit during previous trial-trench archaeological investigation (Peachey 2011). The pottery was recovered in a moderately abraded condition and diagnostic sherds are limited to generic everted bead rims from Roman jars; however the fabric parallels with the sherds from previous investigations suggests a date between c.AD60 to AD80/90 (Neronian to Flavian).

6.1.1 Methodology

The pottery was quantified by sherd count, weight and R.EVE. Fabrics were examined at x20 magnification and assigned a code from the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1998), or assigned an alpha-numeric code based on this system. All data was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that will be deposited as part of the archive.

6.1.2 Fabric Descriptions

Both (related) fabrics were previously recorded in association with kiln [9] (fill [10]) during the trial-trench archaeological investigation of the site (Peachey 2011, 14). The intended product of the early Roman potters at this kiln appears to have been a relatively smooth reduced (grey) ware, with or without a thin white slip. The kiln at Pound Lane, Thorpe St. Andrew produced a reduced grey ware fabric closely comparable to GRS1a (Gregory 1979, 205: fabric A). The earliest kilns, ranging from the mid 1st to early 2nd centuries AD at Postwick, Spong Hill, Brampton, Lyng and Upper Sheringham all appear to be firing reduced grey wares (Lyons 2003, 45; Gurney 1995, 104), although only at Brampton do slipped grey wares occur in kiln deposits (i.e. Green 1977, 65: vessel 21).

GRS1a Sandy grey ware 1a (Kiln Product). Surfaces range from pale to mid grey but are consistently one shade, fading to a core that is slightly darker. Inclusions comprise common fine sub-rounded/sub-angular quartz (<0.1mm), sparse quartz and iron ore/iron rich grains (0.1-0.25mm, occasionally larger), and sparse-common fine mica. The fabric is moderately hard with a powdery feel.

GRS1b Sandy grey ware 1b (Kiln Product), as GRS1a but with a thin white slip that exhibits fine turning marks (possible burnishing)

6.1.3 Discussion

Dark brown silt layer [1] contained a total of 19 sherds (19g) of GRS1a and GRS1b, including an everted bead rim of a jar in each fabric, while dark brown silt layer [2] contained six body sherds (39g) of GRS1a. Jars that may have had everted bead rims, with roulette-decorated bodies, s-shape profiles or plain-shouldered forms were previously recorded in kiln [9] (fill [10]), but were predominantly represented by lower body and basal sherds (Peachey 2011, 16). Therefore it would appear that the sparse body sherds recovered during this watching brief are contemporary with the early Roman (c.AD60 to AD80/90) pottery recorded during the trial-trench archaeological investigations.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The pottery sherds recovered from Plots 1-6 during this watching brief were from the vicinity of a feature recorded during the previous archaeological evaluation in April 2011. This feature has been identified as a pottery kiln deposit of Roman date. The pottery recovered during the watching brief is contemporary with and a similar type to the pottery recovered during the evaluation and therefore is most likely also to be associated with this feature. Both groups of pottery sherds [1] and [2] came from dark silty layer [7] however a piece of (discarded) modern flower pot was also recovered from the same area. Whilst it is likely that these pottery sherds were linked to the kiln identified during the evaluation the presence of a sherd of modern flower pot suggests, unsurprisingly, that disturbance has occurred in this area.

Other than the finds, no other archaeological deposits or features were encountered during these works.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Dove Jeffery Homes for commissioning the report and the contractors for Dove Jeffery Homes who undertook the groundworks.

The author would also like to thank Suzie Westall for her previous work on the earlier evaluation fieldwork and report and Nigel Page for producing the project design and managing the project.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Michelle Bull, David Adams, Suzie Westall and Lilly Hodges. The finds were washed and recorded by Lucy Talbot. The Roman pottery was analysed by Andrew Peachey.

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

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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Fill Of	Description	Period
1	Deposit		Dark Brown silt layer	Unknown
2	Deposit		Dark Brown silt layer	Unknown
3	Deposit		Stony overburden	Modern
4	Deposit		Layer of hardcore	Modern
5	Deposit		Subsoil	Unknown
6	Deposit		Natural	Unknown
7	Deposit		Dark Brown silt layer	Unknown

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period
1	Pottery	19	109g	Roman
2	Pottery	6	39g	Roman

Appendix 2b: Oasis Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Roman	Pottery	25

Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Total		GRS1a		GRS1b		OXS1a		OXS1b	
	<i>f</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>w</i>
1	19	109g	16	85	3	24				
2	6	39g	6	39						
	25	148g	22	124	3	24				