

Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5,000

Local Authority No.100019340

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Memorial Gardens

TR 12

Row H

TR 13+14

Row G

Row F

Row E

Row D

Row C

Row B

Row A

TR 11c

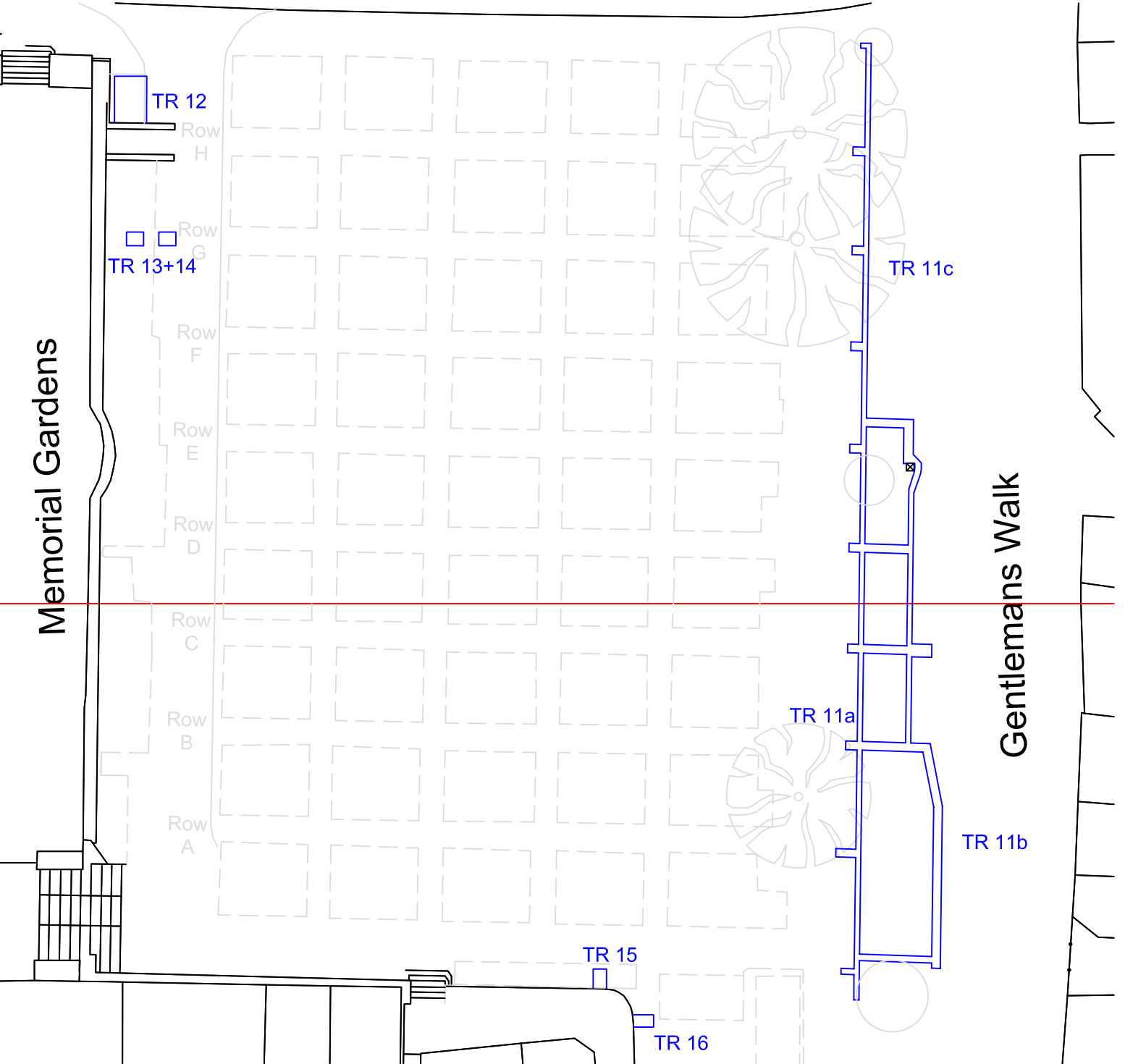
TR 11a

TR 11b

Gentlemans Walk

TR 15

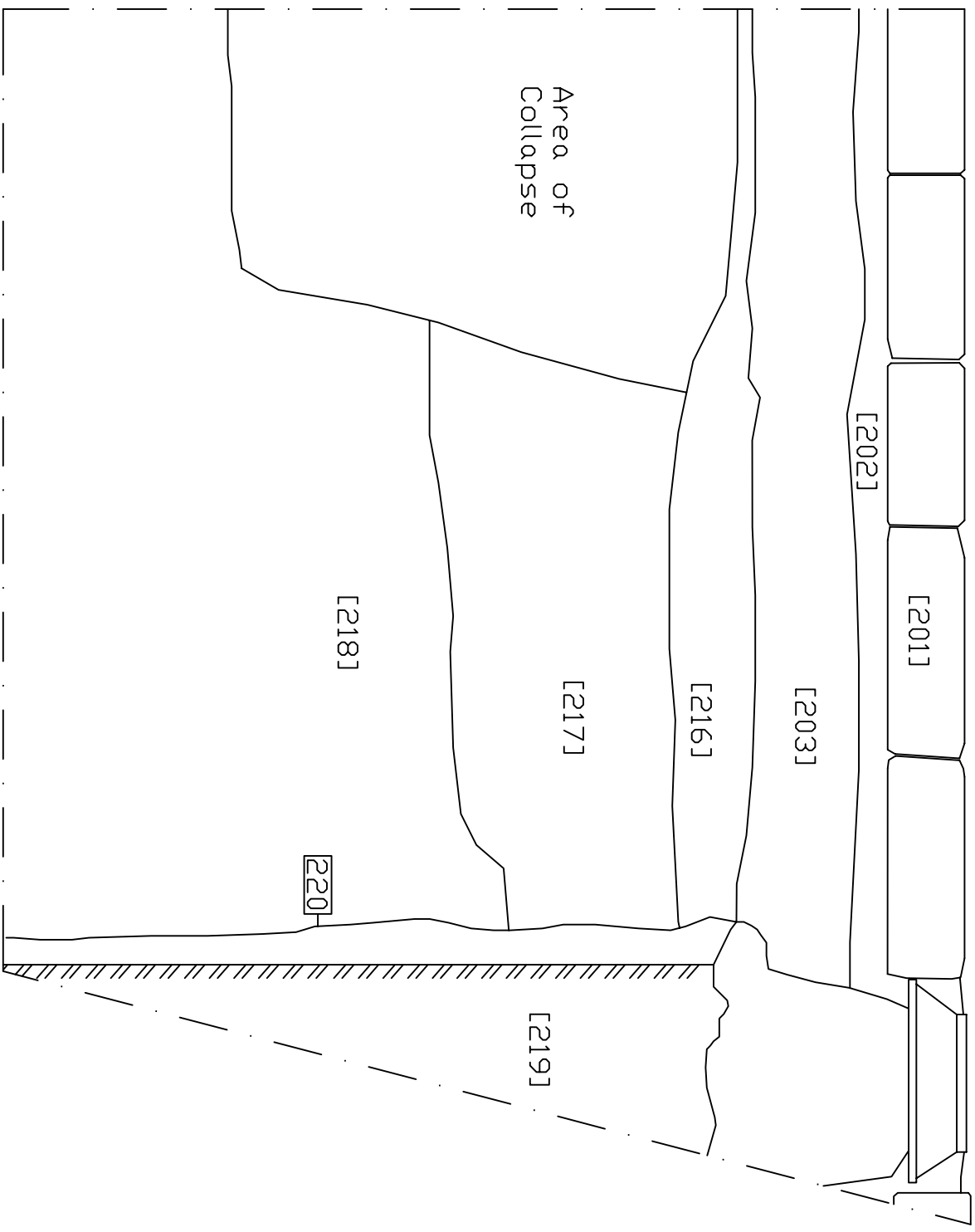
TR 16



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NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 1042

Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief at Gentleman's Walk, Norwich

[40773 N]

Project over seen by:	Please tick
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February 2005

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Location: Gentleman's Walk, Norwich
District: Norwich
Grid Ref: TG 2954 8053
HER No.: 40773 N
Date of fieldwork: January to February 2005

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was conducted on Gentleman's Walk in Norwich, in order to monitor the excavation of drainage trenches, services inspection trenches and various engineering and enabling works as part of an extensive programme of improvements to Norwich Provisions Market. Alterations to the ramped access to the public convenience below the Memorial Gardens were also monitored.

Although many of the deposits encountered had been disturbed by previous services (water, gas, electricity and sewerage) the deeper areas of trench 11 were observed to contain make-up deposits or colluvial fills of the Great Cockey Valley. No archaeological finds were recovered.

1.0 Introduction

The area of the watching brief was positioned on Gentleman's Walk, along the base of the slope on which the Provisions Market stands, and in various places within the area of the market itself. Six trenches were monitored and form the basis of this report.

This archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with an instruction from Norwich City Council as part of the Norwich Provisions Market redevelopment. Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology forthcoming.

The work was carried out by Youngs builders and R G Carter (Civil).

The site archive is currently held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

The area of the watching brief was on Gentleman's Walk, along the base of the slope on which the Provisions Market stands, and in various places within the area of the market itself (Fig. 1). Six trenches were monitored and form the basis of this report.

2.0 Geology and Topography

The site was located in central Norwich and comprises extensive cultural deposits over colluvial and alluvial deposits associated with the River Great Cockey, a tributary stream of the River Wensum

The underlying geology is characterised by an outcrop of Norwich Crag to the west of the site, which overlies Cretaceous Upper Chalk.

The market site slopes downwards from the west to the east, and to a lesser degree from the south to the north. Gentleman's Walk follows the down profile northward and

is a paved, pedestrianised thoroughfare. It forms one of the main shopping areas of the city.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

It is likely that Norwich Market was established by the Normans during the late 11th century as part of their 'New Borough'. Two dates 1086 and 1096 are suggested for this, by (Priestly 1987, 7) and (Campbell 1975, 9), respectively.

On current understanding the 'New Borough' was established to the west of the Late Saxon Town and beyond the Great Cockey, which is believed to form the western limit of the Late Saxon town in this area.(Ayres 2003, fig. 17).

A Market Cross was built between 1501 and 1503 by Mayor John Rightwise. It reached between 60 to 70 ft. tall and stood on a 30 ft. wide plinth.(Priestly 1987, 12). Elements of this structure have since been uncovered during phased area excavation of the market (Adams in prep.). A programme of evaluation in advance of the market redevelopment was undertaken by Norfolk Archaeological Unit in autumn 2004 (Shelley 2004).

The western limit of the market is defined by the Memorial Gardens (designed by *C.H. James and S.R. Pierce*, 1938) and the War Memorial (by *Edwin Lutyens*, 1927) which was moved here from the Guildhall.(Pevsner and Wilson 1997, 312-313)

Gentleman's Walk forms the eastern extent of the market, and was known throughout the medieval period as Nether Rowe, or variations thereof (Sandred and Lindstrom 1989, 107). It had become known as Gentleman's Walk by 1720, following the habit of the lesser gentry and others of the higher classes to promenade along its length.

4.0 Methodology

A network of drainage trenches, collectively known as Trench 11 (Fig. 2), were excavated along Gentleman's Walk. Two parallel trenches (Tr.11a and Tr.11b) which each measured c. 0.6m wide were excavated from a point located between The Royal Arcade and the former wet fish stalls northwards for approximately 30m. These incorporated a gentle fall in order to discharge into a sewer beneath Gentleman's Walk. A continuation of Tr.11a (Tr.11c) was excavated to a point at the north-east corner of the market, this time with a gentle fall to the south, to discharge into the same sewer.

An additional five spur trenches (unnumbered), also 0.6m wide were positioned to connect the two parallel trenches. In addition a series of ten small spurs were located at the west end of each market row in advance of connection to new service pipes in the refurbished market.

A new access ramp, Trench 12, leading to the public conveniences beneath the Memorial Gardens was also excavated.(Tr 12) This trench measured 3m by 2.2m and graded down from north to south reaching a depth of 0.8m.

Two services inspection trenches, (Tr 13 and Tr 14) measuring 1m by 1m and 1.2 m deep were excavated approximately 5m to the south of Trench 12. Two further service inspection trenches (Tr 15 and Tr 16) were located in the south-eastern corner of the market. Both measured 1m by 1.5m and were excavated to a depth of 1.2m.

The objective of this watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed whilst contractors excavated trenches for drainage pipes. This enabled a visual inspection of the trench sides and the bases.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the NAU *pro forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits during regular visits by an archaeologist.

The presence of reinforced concrete along the line of the western trench required that the contractors employ a mini excavator with a breaker attachment to break the concrete. All other excavation was manually conducted. Paving slabs and setts were replaced after completion, the trenches were backfilled with concrete. Consequently all the soil and hardcore extracted from the trenches was skipped from the site for disposal elsewhere.

The temporary ramp access to the public convenience was also manually excavated. The existing ramp, which is to be reinstated, was carefully dismantled and placed on pallets for storage.

Levels referred to in the report were reductions from an Ordnance Survey spot height of 15.31m on the pavement immediately outside what is presently 'Café Nero', located on the corner of Davey Place and Gentleman's Walk.

Site conditions were generally cold with frequent sleety showers. Soil conditions were consequently moist with shallow puddles forming in the base of the trenches periodically.

5.0 Results

(Figs 2 and 3)

Trench 11, has been sub-divided into trenches 11a, 11b and 11c. All thicknesses are general.

Trench 11a, was excavated to a depth of 0.7m through approximately 0.5m of paving ([201]), sand bedding ([202]), and concrete ([203]), and 0.2m of mixed brown, silty loam bedding material ([204]).

Only one archaeological layer was observed. A compact mortar and flint surface ([210]), beneath the silty loam ([204]), was observed in the base of the southern most spur to the west of Trench 11a. This surface ([210]), did not extend beyond the spur and into the trench proper, and as such may be a surface specific to the market place rather than Gentleman's Walk.

Trench 11b, was excavated to a depth of 0.7m through approximately 0.45m of paving ([201]), sand bedding ([202]), and concrete ([203]), and 0.15m of redeposited tarmac ([211]).

Beneath the tarmac a 0.1m thick layer of redeposited flint and mortar ([212]), overlay a grey silt ([213]) with lime mortar inclusions.

The northern end of Trench 11b, was deepened to 2.5m to enable the drains to discharge into a storm drain beneath Gentleman's Walk. This part of the Trench was recorded in section (fig.3).

Trench 11c, was excavated with a fall from north to south. The depth of the trench increased from 0.9m to a maximum depth of 1.4m at the southern end. Deposits encountered included; paving ([201]), sand bedding ([202]) and concrete ([203]), to a depth of 0.85m.

Beneath these deposits a 0.1m thick layer of dark-brown, organic soil ([214]) was recorded, which overlaid an orange grey, rubble and silt-sand deposit ([215]), which was approximately 0.25m thick. The base of the trench exposed a very fine pale orange silt and chalk deposit ([216]) with ginger-brown marbling of at least 0.2m thickness.

Trench 12, encountered no archaeological finds or deposits.

Trenches 13 and 14, encountered no archaeological finds or deposits.

Trenches 15 and 16, encountered no archaeological finds or deposits.

6.0 Conclusions

The area covered by this watching brief was mostly beneath a major and ancient thoroughfare, Gentleman's Walk, and many of the deposits encountered had been disturbed by services (Water, gas, electricity and sewerage). Reinforced concrete covered the more recent of these services.

The deeper areas of the Trench 11, revealed horizontal deposits which can be categorised as either make-up deposits or colluvial fills of the Great Cockey Valley. Perhaps the value of this watching brief lies, however, in its demonstration that natural soils (sands and gravels in this area) lie at a greater depth than the base of the new services trenches, a fact which will contribute to future modelling of the natural landscape in this area of the city.

Acknowledgements

The watching brief was generously funded by Norwich City Council. Access was provided by Youngs builders and R G Carter (Civil), who also undertook the groundworks. The watching brief was prepared by Neil Moss, Andy Shelley and David Whitmore. The report was prepared for publication by Sandy Shelley and Alice Lyons and produced by Julie Curl.

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Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Upper level (m OD)	Period
201	deposit	Paving	16m OD	20th
202	deposit	Sand bedding	15.7m OD	20th
203	deposit	Concrete	15.5m OD	20th
204	deposit	Brown silt	15.2m OD	Post-med.
205	deposit	Grey silt	15m OD	Post-med.
206	deposit	Grey chalk / silt	14.8m OD	20th
207	cut	Services trench	14.8m OD	20th
208	deposit	Grey chalk / silt	14.6m OD	20th
209	cut	Services trench	14.6m OD	20th
210	masonry	Flint+mortar surface	15.9m OD	Post-med.
211	deposit	Crushed tarmac	15.8m OD	20th
212	deposit	Flint+mortar rubble	15.5m OD	Post-med.
213	deposit	Grey silt+mortar	15.3m OD	Post-med.
214	deposit	Humic soil	14.35m OD	20th
215	deposit	Silty rubble	14.25m OD	Post-med.
216	deposit	Sand bedding	14.8m OD	20th
217	deposit	Silty rubble	14.6m OD	Post-med.
218	deposit	Colluvial natural	14m OD	Unknown
219	masonry	Brick shaft, sewer	14.8m OD	19th
220	cut	Cut for 219	14.8m OD	19th