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Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation, at Land North of Mill Lane, Filby, Norfolk

ENF 128832



Prepared for **Charles Wharton Limited** Winsford Hall Stokesby Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR29 3DG







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Issue 1				

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Location: Land North of Mill Lane, Filby, Norfolk

District: Broadland

Grid Ref.: TG 4834 1440

Planning Ref.: n/a

HER No.: ENF128832

OASIS Ref.: 125414

Client: Charles Wharton Limited

Dates of Fieldwork: 2 – 4 April 2012

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted for Charles Wharton Limited ahead of proposals to construct a new reservoir.

Nine trenches were excavated at the site with four of them (Trenches 2, 3, 8 and 9) containing archaeological evidence. There were undated ditches present in Trenches 2 and 3, a very large possible extraction pit in Trenches 8 and 9 and a small undated pit in Trench 9.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A nine-trench archaeological evaluation was undertaken ahead of proposals to construct a new reservoir on land north of Mill Lane in Filby (Fig. 1).

This work was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU3047/DW). This work was commissioned by and funded Charles Wharton Limited.

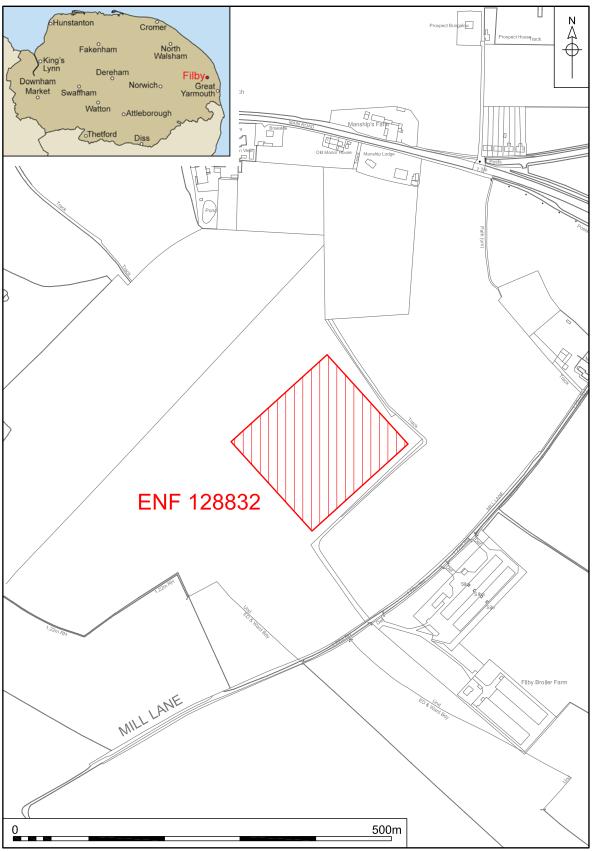
This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

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

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The bedrock geology in the vicinity of the new reservoir is Crag Group (sand and gravel). This sedimentary bedrock formed up to 5 million years ago in the Quaternary and Neogene periods in a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas.

The superficial deposits are Happisburgh Glacigenic Formation (diamicton. superficial deposits) formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period in a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. It consists of a range of diamictons, sands and gravels, sands and laminated silts and clays. The diamictons (Happisburgh Till, Corton Till and California Till members) are typically



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

sandy matrix-supported diamictons that contain a high abundance of flint and quartz relative to chalk, distinguishing them from the more chalky tills of the overlying Lowestoft Formation (http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyviewer_google/googleviewer.html).

The topsoil observed across the site consisted of a mid–dark brown (with some greyish hues) sandy silt with clay and varying amounts of small–medium flints. Evidence of subsoil was only seen in Trench 9; this consisted of mid orange brown sandy clayey silt with occasional chalk flecks and occasional small and medium flint c.0.85m deep. The natural deposits at the site were pale yellow brown clay with frequent numbers of creamy patches containing small and medium chalk lumps and small, medium and fairly large flints (both sub-angular and sub-round). Several trenches contained large areas of a mid brown slightly reddish silty clay which when excavated was revealed to have ephemeral edges with clay natural morphing gradually into silt undercutting and lamination of clay and silt also occurring. Due to the nature of the boulder clay on this site, patches of this mid brown slightly reddish silty clay could be seen throughout the trenches when machined.

The development site is situated north of Mill Lane on a small hill/rise in the landscape. Trenches 8 and 9 were located in a large depression in the landscape at the top of this rise with Trenches 4, 5 and 7 on its periphery. The south-east end of Trench 9 measured 11.51m OD at the top of the depression whilst the south-western end of Trench 8 - which was fairly central to the base of the depression – was 1.74m lower at 9.77m OD. This depression in the landscape can be seen on the 1905 enclosure map which shows a large pit here.

Four of the trenches (Trenches 4, 5, 8 and 9) were positioned in an area set aside as grass whereas Trenches 1, 2, 3, 6 and 7 were excavated through plough soil.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A search was conducted of the data held Norfolk Historic Environment Records (NHER) records for 1km around grid point TG 4834 1440 (centred on the site).

Cropmarks (various periods)

Several of the results returned for the area surrounding the site were cropmarks identified from aerial photographs. Directly to the south (south-east) of the development area and alongside Mill Lane, site NHER 42052 contained results for possible medieval and post medieval field boundaries, ditches and enclosures. To the west of the NHER 42045 were undated parallel linear ditches on a similar alignment to the medieval field pattern. To the south-west of this, NHER 42044 records a cropmark of a curvilinear ditch of putative Bronze Age or Iron Age date. Further cropmarks are recorded to the south-west of the site on the corner of Mill Lane and Green Lane (NHER 27668, MNF47049) records undated ditch cropmarks which do not align with the modern field system but may represent field boundaries or drainage ditches with a suggested post-medieval date.

Medieval

To the north of the site NHER 35311 records metal detecting finds in 1998 including a coppery alloy shield-shaped horse harness pendant decorated with a pre-1340 English coat of arms with some of the enamel remaining.

On the south side of the development site, on the opposite side of Mill Lane in 1998 a metal detecting survey (NHER 35311) recovered a medieval cast bronze hexagonal seal matrix with the image of a rabbit or hare on it and a plain suspension loop. To the south-east of the site also on the opposite side of Mill Lane, metal detecting in 2011 (NHER 56260) recovered medieval coins and a lead weight.

Post-medieval

To the north-east of the site NHER 15627 represents the location of a post mill last in use in 1888 which burnt down in 1914 with no visible traces today.

Modern

To the south of the site behind the current broiler farm is 27662 the site of a WWII Royal Navy wireless telegraphy station which consisted of four masts around a small building which was cleared by 1964.

Undated

This evidence suggests a high potential for medieval and post medieval archaeology within the site area.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence or absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

Machine excavation was carried out with a hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision. Nine trenches (labelled 1-9) were arrayed across the development site (Fig. 2)

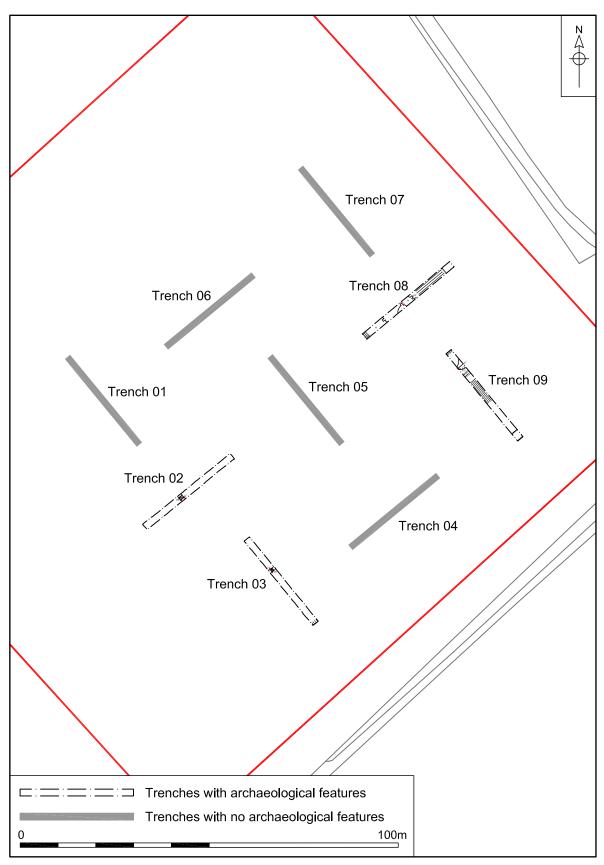
Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

Environmental samples were not taken as no suitable deposits were present.

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

The temporary benchmarks used during the course of this work were transferred from the surveyed points at the ends of each trench.

Site conditions were okay, with the work taking place in predominately wet weather.



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Figure 2. Location of trenches. Scale 1:1000

5.0 RESULTS

A description and summary of results is shown below in tabulated form for each trench. The location of the trenches and their position in relation to each other is shown on Figure 2.

Plans of trenches where features were encountered (Trenches 2, 3, 8 and 9) are shown after the relevant trench table.

Trench 1



Plate 1. Trench 1

Fig. 2; Plate 1			
Location			
Orientation	North-west to south-east		
North-west end	648229.355 314432.514		
South-east end	648248.423 314409.34		
Dimensions			
Length	30m		
Width	1.80m		
Depth	0.40m		
Levels			
North-west top	10.82m OD		
South-east top	11.87mOD		

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Medium/dark brown silt with small amounts of clay and silt with occasional small and medium flints.	0.35–0.40m	0.00-0.40m
-	Deposit	Natural. Pale yellow brown clay with frequent creamy patches containing small and medium chalk and small medium and fairly large flints both sub-round and sub-angular.	-	0.40m

Discussion

This trench contained no archaeological features or artefacts.



Plate 2. Trench 2

Figs 2 and 3; Plates 2 and 3			
Location			
Orientation	North-east to south-west		
North-east end	648273.103 314406.552		
South-west end	648249.922 314387.524		
Dimensions			
Length	30m		
Width	1.80m		
Depth	0.33m		
Levels			
North-east top	12.14m OD		
South-west top	12.00m OD		

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Medium/dark brown silt with small amounts of clay and silt with occasional small and medium flints.	0.33m	0.00-0.33m
-	Deposit	Natural. Pale yellow brown clay with frequent creamy patches containing small and medium chalk and small medium and fairly large flints both subround and sub-angular.		0.33m
08	Cut	Ditch. Oriented NW–SE and linear in plan with fairly steep even sides which break gradually–subtly at the base with a sloping–concave base.	0.58m	0.00-0.00m
09	Deposit	Secondary ditch fill. Compact sticky cohesive mid brown with mid-dark grey hue silty clay containing occasional—moderate flint with charcoal and chalk flecks.	0.58m	0.00-0.00m
10	Deposit	Primary ditch fill. A moderately compact sticky pale grey (greenish) yellowy beige brown clay with a small amount of silt with chalk flecks.	0.45m	0.00-0.00m

Discussion

Trench 1contained a single ditch oriented north-west-south-east.

Ditch [08] is interpreted as a potential field boundary or drainage ditch.



Plate 3. Trench 2, Ditch [08]

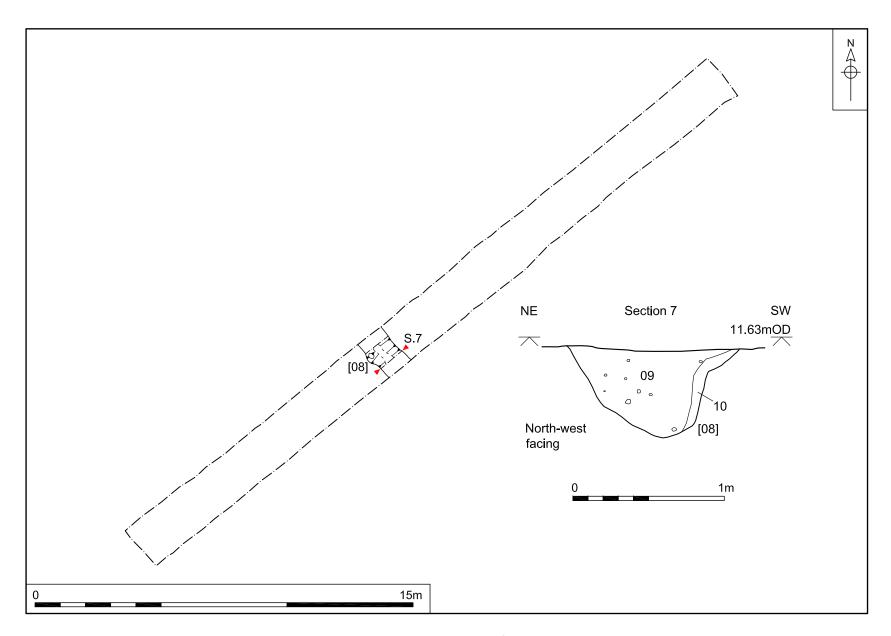


Figure 3. Trench 2, plan and section. Scale 1:150 and 1:25



Plate 4. Trench 3

Figs 2 and 4; Plates 4 and 5		
Location		
Orientation	North-west to south-east	
North-west end	648275.998 314385.255	
South-east end 648295.007 314362.097		
Dimensions		
Length	30m	
Width	1.80m	
Depth	0.36m	
Levels		
North-west top	12.17m OD	
South-east top	11.93m OD	

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Medium/dark brown silt with small amounts of clay and silt with occasional small and medium flints.	0.36m	0.00-0.36m
-	Deposit	Natural. Pale yellow brown clay with frequent creamy patches containing small and medium chalk and small medium and fairly large flints both sub-round and sub-angular.	0.00m	0.36m+
06	Cut	Ditch. Orientated NE–SW and linear in plan with fairly steep even sides with a gradual break of slope at base with a concave base.	0.40m	0.00-0.00m
07	Deposit	Single fill of ditch. Moderate—compact sticky cohesive mid brown with a grey hue silty clay containing occasional—rare flint.	0.40m	0.00-0.00m

Discussion

Trench 3 contained a single ditch orientated north-east to south-west.

Ditch [06] is interpreted as a potential field boundary or drainage ditch which contained fragments of abraded animal bone in its single fill.



Plate 5. Trench 3, Ditch [06]

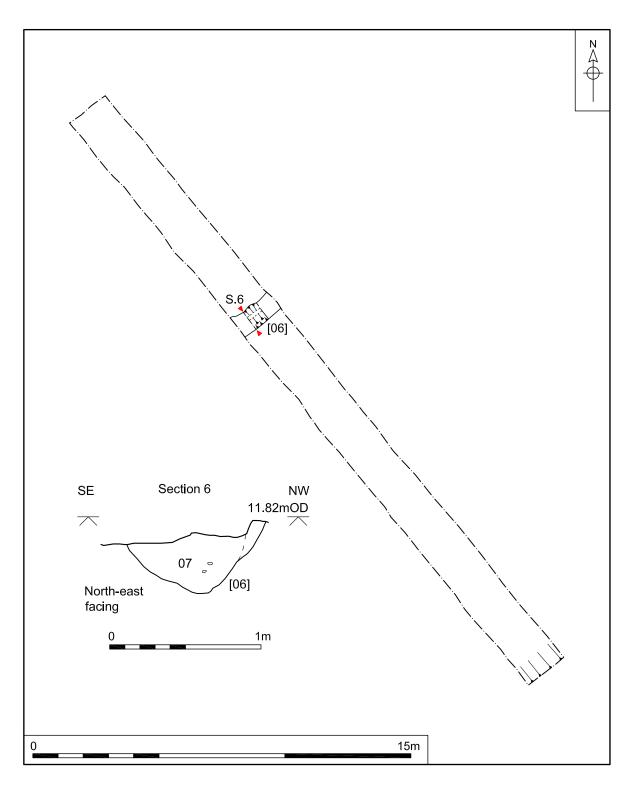


Figure 4. Trench 3, plan and section. Scale 1:150 and 1:25



Plate 6. Trench 4

North-east to south-west		
648327.39 314401.159		
648304.184		
30m		
1.80m		
0.45–1.20m		
Levels		
11.65m OD		
12.12m OD		

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Mid/dark brown silt with slight addition of sand and clay, occasional small and medium flint.	0.35m	0.00-0.35m
-	Deposit	Subsoil. Slightly reddish medium brown slightly clayey silt with frequent chalk flecks and small lumps of pale yellow brown clay.	0.65m west end 0.10m middle 0.85m east end	0.35-1.20m
-	Deposit	Natural. Pale yellow brown clay with frequent small chalk fragments, occasional flint mostly medium nodules and some rare large flints.	-	1.20m+

Discussion

Trench 4 contained no archaeological features or artefacts.



Plate 7. Trench 5

Fig. 2; Plate 7			
Location			
Orientation	North-west to south-east		
North-west end	648282.912 314432.691		
South-east end	648301.977 314409.454		
Dimensions			
Length	30m		
Width	1.80m		
Depth	0.35m		
Levels			
North-west top	11.80m OD		
South-east top	11.85m OD		

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Mid/dark brown silt with slight amounts of sand and clay and occasional small and medium flints.	0.35m	0.00-0.35m
-	Deposit	Natural. Pale yellow brown clay with frequent small and medium chalk. Occasional flint, small and medium nodular and sub-angular.		0.35m+

Discussion

Trench 5 contained no archaeological features or artefacts.



Plate 8. Trench 6

Fig. 2; Plate 8					
Location	Location				
Orientation	North-east to	south-west			
North-east end	648278.577	314454.193			
South-west end	648255.426	314435.117			
Dimensions					
Length	30m				
Width	1.80m				
Depth	0.40m				
Levels					
North-east top	11.36m OD				
South-west top	11.39m OD				
nterpretation	Thickness	Denth BGI			

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Mid/dark brown silt with slight addition of sand and clay with occasional small flints.	0.40m	0.00-0.40m
-	Deposit	Natural. Pale yellow brown clay with frequent small and medium chalk and occasional medium nodular and sub-angular flint.		0.40m+

Discussion

Trench 6 contained no archaeological features or artefacts.



Plate 9. Trench 7

Fig. 2; Plate 9				
Location				
Orientation	North-west to south-east			
North-west end	648290.968 314482.544			
South-east end	648310.007 314459.372			
Dimensions				
Length	30m			
Width	1.80m			
Depth	0.35m			
Levels				
North-west top	11.21m OD			

10.58m OD

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Mid/dark brown slightly clayey, slightly sandy silt with rare small and medium flints.	0.35m	0.00-0.35m
-	Deposit	Natural. Pale yellow brown clay with frequent chalk inclusions.		0.35m+

South-east top

Discussion

Trench 7 contained no archaeological features or artefacts.

Two areas of mid brown slightly reddish clayey silt were investigated, both of which had ephemeral edges with clayey 'natural' morphing gradually into silt. Undercutting and lamination of clay and silt was also noted.



Plate 10. Trench 8

Figs 2 and 5; Plate 10					
Location					
Orientation	North-east to south-west				
East end	648331.079 314456.975				
West end	648307.871 314437.937				
Dimensions					
Length	30m				
Width	1.80m				
Depth	1.06m				
Levels	Levels				
North-east top	11.02m OD				
South-west top	9.77m OD				

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Med/dark slightly clayey silt with occasional flints.	0.17m	0.00-0.17m
-	Deposit/Cut	Natural. Yellow sand.	-	0.17m
03	Cut	Large pond/pit (quarry). Orientated NE-SW and sub-oval in plan with a bowl shaped profile with a flat base and concave sides and a subtle break of slope at the base.	2.50m+	0.17-2.67m+
04	Deposit	Pond sediment in feature [03]. Firm stiff plastic dark grey brown sandy silt charcoal rich at the top with very rare small flints and Victorian pottery.	0.17m	0.17-0.34m
05	Deposit	Backfill of feature [03]. Mid orange brown sandy clay with frequent chalk and medium sub-angular flints with decreasing amounts of chalk and stone towards the bottom of the deposit.	0.75m	0.00-0.00m

Discussion

Trench 8 contained evidence for a large pit or pond which had been deliberately backfilled.

Pond [08] could be seen as a large depression in the surrounding landscape.

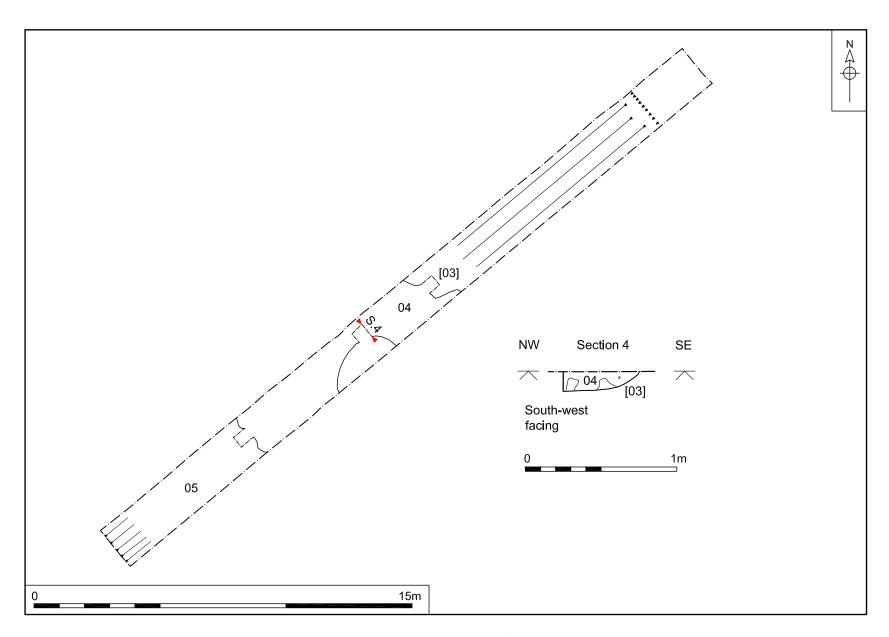


Figure 5. Trench 8, plan and sections. Scale 1:150 and 1:25



Plate 11. Trench 9

Figs 2 and 6; Plates 11-13					
Location					
Orientation	North-west to south-east				
North-west end	648330.163 314433.879				
South-east end	648349.182 314410.728				
Dimensions	3				
Length	30m				
Width	1.80m				
Depth	1.20m				
Levels					
North-west top	9.81m OD				
South-east top	11.51m OD				

Context	Туре	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
-	Deposit	Topsoil. Dark grey brown sandy silt with some clay and occasional small and medium flints.	0.35m	0.00-0.35m
-	Deposit	Subsoil. Mid orange brown sandy clayey silt occasional chalk fleck and occasional small and medium flints.	0.85m	0.35-1.20m
-	Deposit	Natural. pale grey brown clay with frequent chalk.	-	1.20m+
01	Cut	Pit. Irregular in plan with a shallow irregular concave profile and an imperceptible break of slope at base.	0.17m	1.20-1.37m
02	Deposit	Single fill of pit [02]. Firm mouldable mid brown clayey silt with very rare small flints	0.17m	1.20-1.37m

Discussion

Trench 9 was excavated across much of its length to a safe working depth of 1.20m until it began to rise towards the north-west end where natural deposits began to appear and pit [01] was revealed.

The south-eastern end of the trench was excavated as a sondage by machine and reached a depth of c.2.30m before natural was exposed. The substantial depths of materials seen in this trench may represent another pond or large quarry pit similar to [03] in Trench 8.



Plate 12, Trench 9, Pit [01]



Plate 13. Trench 9, sondage at south-east end

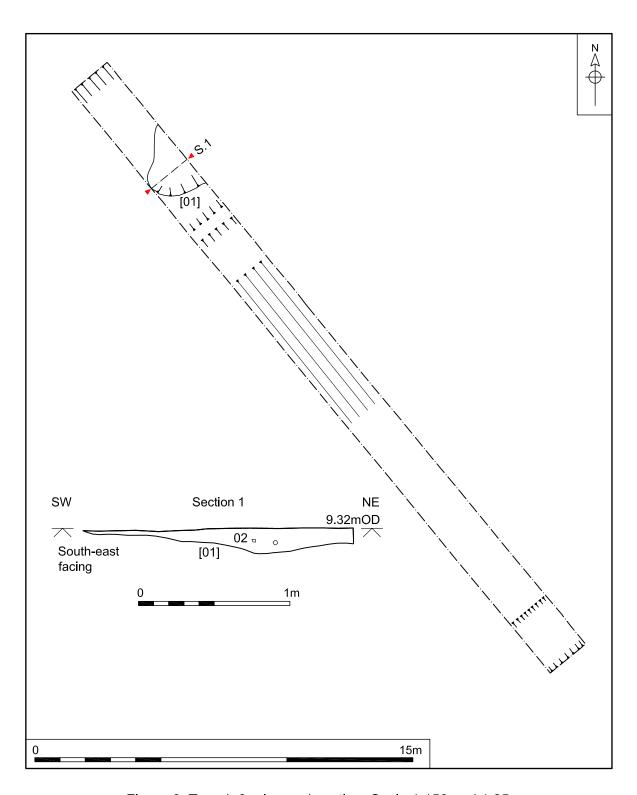


Figure 6. Trench 9, plan and section. Scale 1:150 and 1:25

6.0 FINDS

by Rebecca Sillwood

All finds were processed and recorded by count and weight; an Excel spreadsheet was produced outlining broad dating. Each material type has been considered separately and is included below organised by material.

A list of finds in context number order can be found in Appendix 2a.

It is notable that very few finds were recovered during the evaluation and those that were collected were generally relatively modern (Victorian or later) and from few deposits (mainly the sediment in pond [03]).

6.1 Pottery

The site produced 39 sherds of modern pottery, weighing 356g; all from a single deposit –possible pond sediment (04) from pond [03] in Trench 8.

The pottery consists almost entirely of Victorian and later transfer-printed whitewares, including blue and white, purple and white and green and white patterned ware. Two fragments of an earthenware vessel were also found in the same context, and are likely to derive from a mixing bowl, with clear cream glaze on the interior and a speckled brown glaze on the exterior of the rim and upper part of the vessel.

6.2 Ceramic Building Material

A single fragment of post-medieval roof tile (92g) was recovered from possible pond sediment (04) from feature [03].

6.3 The Glass

A total of nine fragments of modern glass were recovered from possible pond sediment (04) from feature [03]; these consist of four pieces of dark green bottle glass, two thick flat clear pieces (which may be window glass) and three further clear fragments which may come from other vessels. All of the pieces are likely to be modern and have subsequently been discarded.

6.4 Faunal Remains

A total of seven fragments of animal bone were recovered from two contexts. One piece (40g) came from the fill of pit [01] (fill (02)) in Trench 9, and the remainder came from the fill of ditch [06] (fill (7)) in Trench 3.

All of the pieces are likely to derive from food waste, however they are very fragmentary, and the pieces from ditch [06] are especially abraded.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The nine trenches excavated within the proposed development site contained limited archaeological evidence - linear features, a large pond and few artefacts – all of which are considered to be of relatively recent date

Large pit [03] excavated in Trench 8 on the eastern side of the site is present as a large depression visible in the surrounding landscape (see also the aerial photograph taken in 1988 (Plate 14)). Deposit (05) recorded within feature [03] indicated deliberate backfilling. Deposit (04) located below deposit (05) contained 39 sherds of pottery - both Victorian and later transfer-printed whitewares. This deposit had the appearance of a pond sediment and probably resulted from water retention in this pit rather than its deliberate use as a pond feature. This large pit can also be seen on Bryant's Map of Norfolk in 1826 (Barringer 2004) where it appears as a large oval marked 'Pit'. It is feasible that this pit was a large quarry pit perhaps for extracting clay.

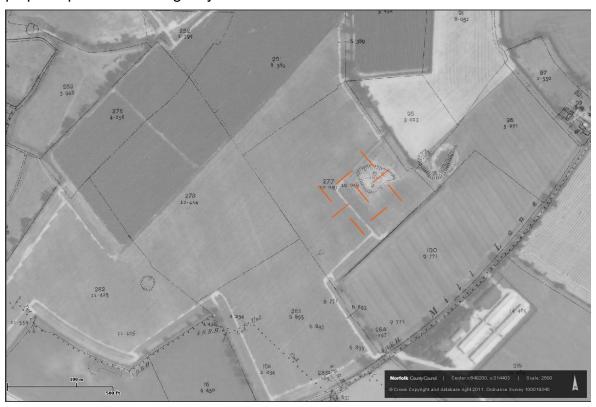


Plate 14. 1988 aerial photograph showing trench locations and 1905 Ordnance Survey mapping

Small pit [01] in Trench 9 was undatable and does not appear to relate to the large pond or pit [03] recorded in Trench 8 to the north. The change in the depth of the natural at the south-east end of Trench 9 suggests that pond or pit [03] may have been larger when it was originally excavated.

Ditch [06] in Trench 3 and ditch [08] in Trench 2 run parallel to a track seen on the 1988 aerial photograph of the site (Plate 14) and perhaps form earlier boundary or drainage ditches. Collation of the NHER data produced an entry for the field directly to the south (south-east) of the site (NHER 42052) which recorded possible medieval and post medieval field boundaries, ditches and enclosures seen as cropmarks on aerial photographs. These are described as running north-

west to south-east and south-west to north-east i.e. the same alignment as ditches [06] and [08]. It is possible therefore that ditches [06] and [08] form part of the same group of linear features.

Recommendations for further mitigation work (if required, based on the evidence presented in this report) will be made by Norfolk Historic Environment Service.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank those listed below for their contribution to this project.

The project was funded and commissioned by Charles Wharton Limited.

Excavation was undertaken by Stuart Calow and the author.

Machining of the trenches was undertaken by Karl of Bryn Williams Digger Hire.

The evaluation was monitored on behalf of Norfolk Historic Environment Service by James Albone.

The finds were processed, recorded and reported on by Rebecca Sillwood.

This report was illustrated and produced by David Dobson and edited by Jayne Bown.

Bibliography and Sources

Barringer, J.C. 2004 Bryant's Map of Norfolk in 1826

Department for Communities 2012 National and Local Government

2012 National Planning Policy Framework

Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period	Trench
1	Cut	Pit		Irregular pit	Uncertain	9
2	Deposit		1	Single fill of pit	Uncertain	9
3	Cut	Pond/pit		Very large pit or pond	?Post-medieval	8
4	Deposit		3	Possible pond sediment	?Post-medieval	8
5	Deposit		3	A deliberate backfill of [3]	?Post-medieval	8
6	Cut	Ditch		North-east to south-west orientated boundary/drainage	?Post-medieval	3
7	Deposit		6	Single fill of ditch	?Post-medieval	3
8	Cut	Ditch		North-west to south-east orientated boundary/drainage	?Post-medieval	2
9	Deposit		8	Secondary fill of ditch [08]	?Post-medieval	2
10	Deposit		8	Primary slumping in ditch [08]	?Post-medieval	2

Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Category	Total
?Post-medieval	Ditch	2
	Pond/pit	1
Uncertain	Pit	1

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context.

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period	Notes
02	Animal Bone	1	40g	Unknown	
04	Ceramic Building Material	1	92g	Post- medieval	Roof tile
04	Glass	9	76g	Modern	DISCARDED
04	Pottery	39	356g	Modern	
04	Shell	3	80g	Unknown	Oyster - DISCARDED
07	Animal Bone	6	8g	Unknown	

Appendix 2b: OASIS Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Post-medieval	Ceramic Building Material	1
Modern	Glass	9
Modern	Pottery	39
Unknown	Animal Bone	7
Unknown	Shell	3