

Report 2013/1225



nps archaeology

**Archaeological Watching Brief at  
The Priory, The Green, Banham, Norfolk**

ENF132535



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Location:	The Priory, The Green, Banham, Norfolk
District:	South Norfolk
Grid Ref.:	TM 0640 8810
Planning Ref.:	3PL/2012/1330/F
HER No.:	ENF132535
OASIS Ref.:	156840
Client:	RDB Construction (UK) Ltd
Dates of Fieldwork:	9-14 October 2013

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was conducted for RDB Construction (UK) Ltd during groundworks associated with the construction of a new house.*

*The western part of the site had been heavily truncated by the construction of a swimming pool to a depth of 1.5-2.0m below ground level hence only the strip foundations of the central and eastern parts of the building were monitored. Two features were identified; a large quarry pit of possible 19th-century date and a change in the depth of the subsoil, which coincided with an old property boundary and was probably caused by different horticultural regimes in the two gardens.*

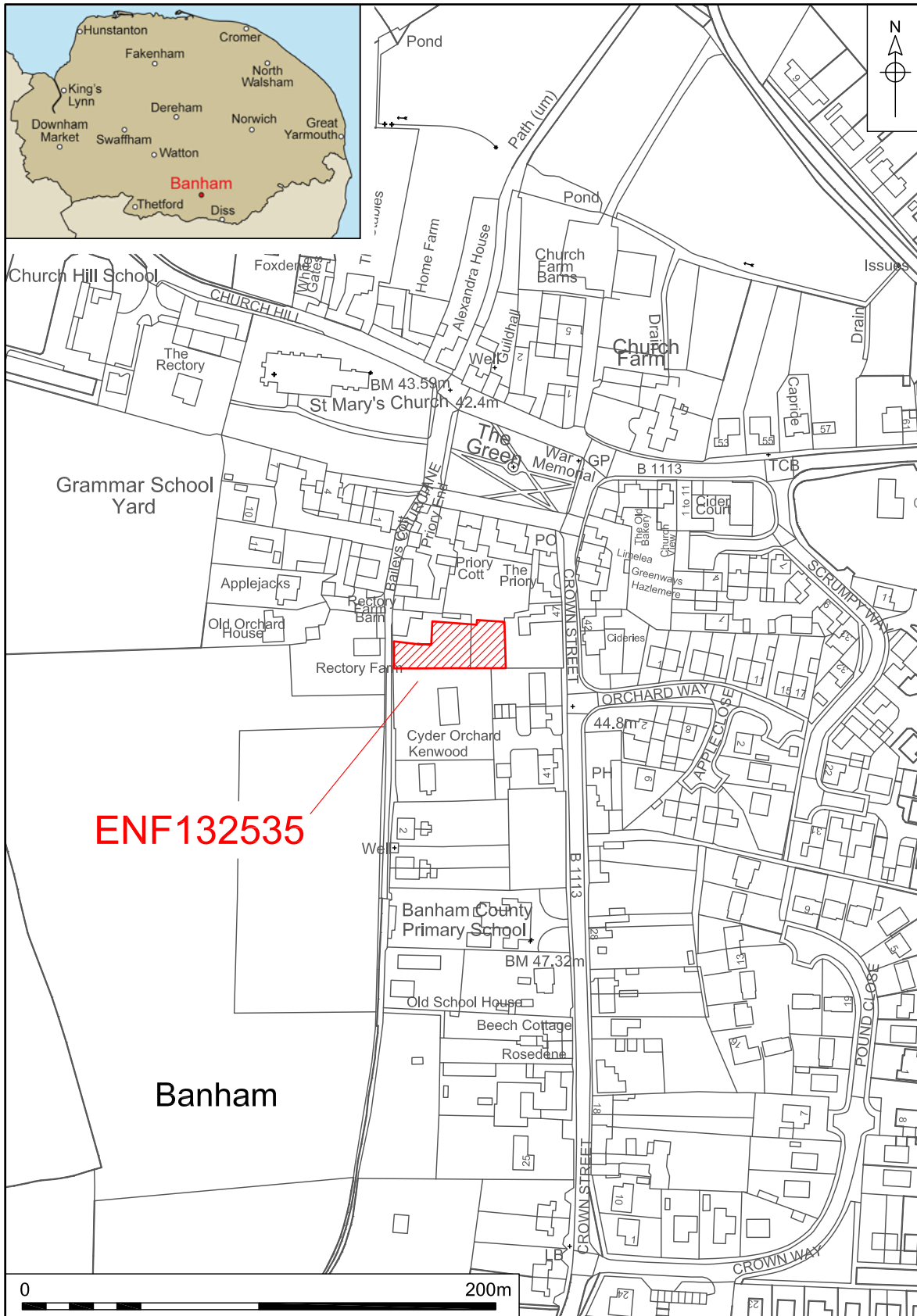
## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological watching brief took place on groundworks associated with the construction of a new house in gardens behind The Priory, Banham, due to its location in the posited medieval core of the village (Fig. 1). The range of foundations that were monitored was limited due to the new building being located partially on top of an old outdoor swimming pool which had severely truncated a third of the development area.

This work was undertaken to fulfil planning requirements set by South Norfolk District Council (3PL/2012/1330/F) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service. The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (01-04-14-2-1225). This work was commissioned by Ross Bailey and funded by RDB Construction (UK) 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 *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.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2500

## **2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The underlying geology consists of Quaternary Period clays and silts of the Banham Member above Cretaceous chalk (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

The development site is located within an area of back gardens of properties fronting on to Crown Street to the east and The Green to the north.

The parish church of St Mary lies a few metres to the north-west.

The development site is positioned on level ground at a height of c.45m OD.

## **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

A search of records held by the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) was undertaken for a 500m radius of the development site and the results, along with historic mapping sources, have been consulted during the preparation of this section of the report.

### **3.1 Data held in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record**

The most relevant record is that of the medieval Priory itself (NHER 10844) with perhaps the proximity of St Mary's church also being relevant.

#### **Prehistoric**

The only prehistoric material found in the vicinity was a collection of Neolithic flint cores and flakes (NHER 10854) found 435m north-east of the development site and a few sherds of Iron Age pottery (NHER 24627) 375m north-east of the development site.

#### **Roman**

The site of a possible Roman villa (NHER 24627) is located just 375m north-east of the development site. This was first spotted during a watching brief on a housing development and was subject to subsequent trenching and limited excavation. Large amounts of building material have been recovered, including roof tile and the remains of a hypocaust. Roman pottery, metalwork, wall plaster and tesserae have also all been found on the site.

Roman pottery and a tile (NHER 24836) have been found in a field across the road from villa site (NHER 24627) mentioned above.

Metal-detecting in 2009 and 2011 (NHER 52666), 550m west of the development site, recovered Roman pottery, Roman coins and a Roman ferrule.

#### **Anglo-Saxon**

Metal-detecting in 2010, 450m north-east of the development site, recovered a Middle-Late Saxon disc brooch (NHER 24836).

Metal detecting in 2009, 585m north-west of the development site, recovered a fragment of a Late Saxon trefoil brooch (NHER 52665).

Metal-detecting between 2009 and 2011, 550m west of the development site, recovered a Middle Saxon East Harling type ansate brooch and Middle Saxon pottery (NHER 52666).

Metal-detecting in 2009, 480m north of the development site, produced an Early Saxon wrist or sleeve clasp (NHER 58702).

### **Medieval**

The Priory (NHER 10844), 40m north of the development area, is a late medieval timber-framed hall house with 16th-century wall paintings. A 16th- or 17th-century copper alloy bowl was found inside a chimney here.

The parish church in Banham is St Mary's (NHER 10861), 120m north-west of the development site. The church is of mainly 14th-century date and contains an original medieval painted wooden tomb.

The King's Head Cottages (NHER 19471), 340m south of the development site, was originally one 14th-century timber-framed hall house with a crown post roof.

The Old Guildhall (NHER 19785) is located 105m north of the development site and is a late medieval timber-framed building which may date to around 1500. It has chequered brickwork and a crown post roof.

A medieval gaming piece (NHER 20567), made of bone, dating from the 11th or 12th century has been found 450m south of the development site.

Home or Spong Farm (NHER 21071) is on Church Hill, 125m north-west of the development site. It is a late medieval timber-framed hall house probably dating from the 15th century.

Medieval pottery and metal objects (NHER 24836) have been found in a field 450m north-east of the development site.

A medieval coin (NHER 29892) was found by metal detecting 500m south of the development area.

Metal-detecting in 2009, 550m west of the development site, recovered various multi-period objects including a medieval jetton, pottery, coins, buckles and strap-end (NHER 57758).

Metal-detecting in 2011, 410m south-east of the development site recovered medieval pottery and buckles (NHER 55870).

### **Post-medieval**

Banham itself has a rich collection of post-medieval buildings.

Close to the development site is a 17th-century timber-framed house 'Baileys Cottage' (NHER 22780) located 40m north-west of the development site and 30m north-west of the site is site NHER 22781 - a late 17th-century barn known as 'The Barn'.

Other post-medieval structures in the vicinity of the development site include The Old Rectory (NHER 12220) which is a 16th-century house rebuilt in 1665, Church Farm House (NHER 18858) - an early 17th-century timber-framed house, Hill Farmhouse (NHER 22784) - another 17th-century timber-framed house, Mill Cottages (NHER 29399) - a row of 18th-century timber-framed cottages, Hillcrest



(NHER 35807) - a 17th-century timber-framed house and 14 Crown Street (NHER 53115) which is a timber-framed house dating to 1630.

Later buildings of interest include Alexandra House (NHER 44686) which is a mid 19th-century brick house, Norfolk House (NHER 44687) which is a late 18th-century brick-built shop, The Old Grammar School (NHER 44688) which is an early 19th-century brick built school, the Red Lion public house (NHER 44689) which is an early 18th-century brick and clay lump building, Stinton Lodge (NHER 44690) which is a brick house dating to 1800, Banham Board School (NHER 56440) built in 1878 and still in use as a primary school, the former Wesleyan Methodist Chapel (NHER 58037) dated to 1822 and now a private cottage and the Primitive Methodist Chapel (NHER 58038) dated to 1837.

Faden's map of 1797 shows a windmill (NHER15306), 425m north-east of the development site, which was blown over in 1915.

There is the site of a 16th- or 17th-century timber-framed house (NHER 20206), 460m north-east of the development site, which was probably a late open hall house. The structure has been demolished.

A padlock (NHER 29893) dating from the 18th century was found by metal detecting 495m south-east of the present development.

A post-medieval jaws harp (NHER 31312) was found by metal detecting 545m south-east of the development site.

Post-medieval tokens, and fragments of post-medieval pottery (NHER 36247) have been found 120m north-east of the present development.

### **Undated**

Human remains (NHER 10853) were found in excavations for a pipe trench in the driveway of the Old Rectory in 1975, 205m north-west of the development site.

## **3.2 Cartographic Sources**

The information for this section has been researched on-line and comes from <http://historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk/>.

The Banham Tithe Award Map (1838) shows the development area as an orchard. Banham was important for the local cider industry with Gaymers being based there until moving to Attleborough in 1896.

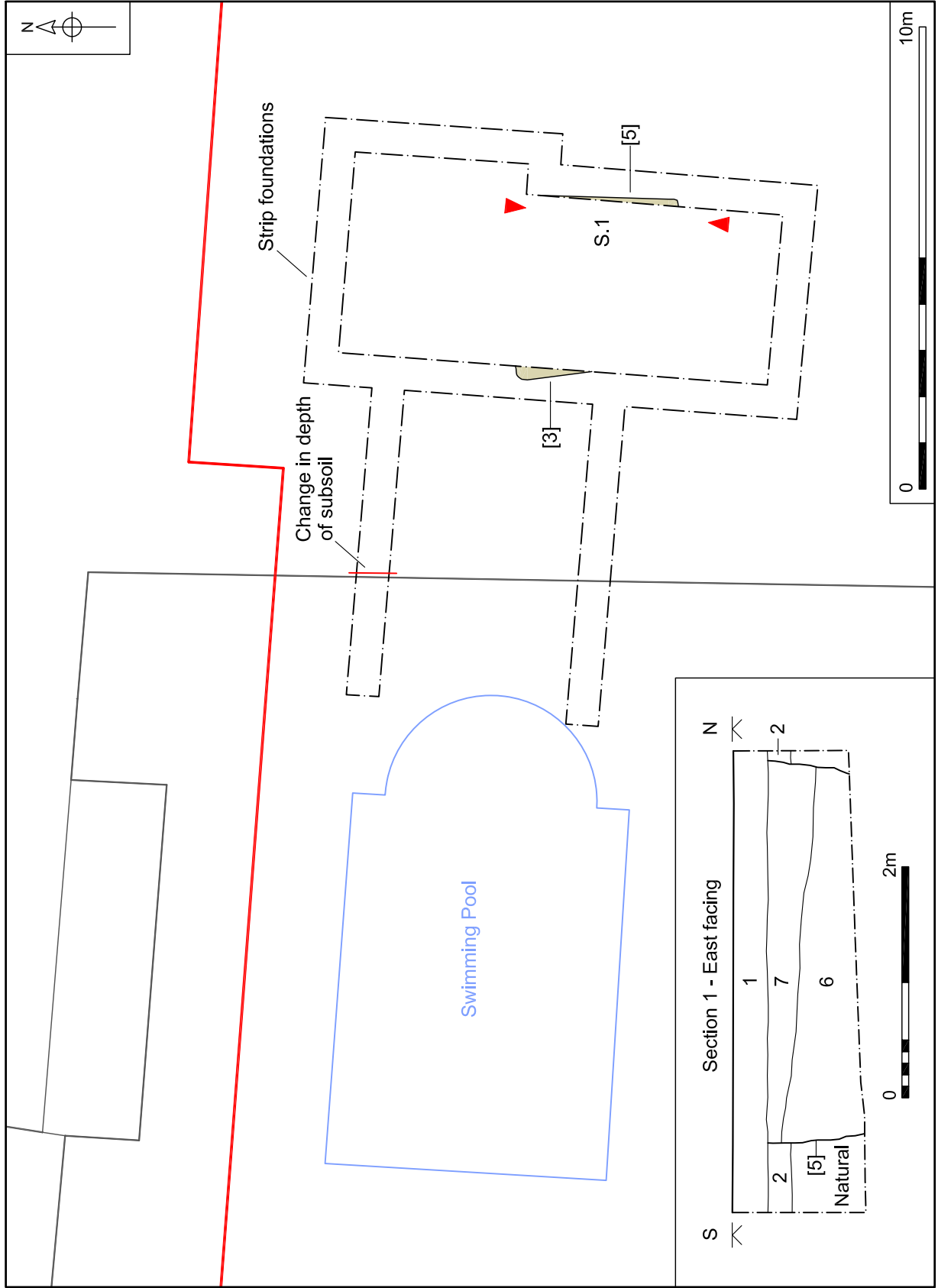
The First Edition Ordnance Survey map (1883) shows the development area as being in a back garden of one of the properties fronting onto Crown Street, with the orchard still lying to the south.

An aerial photograph of 1988 shows the development area as a back garden containing apple trees and a small swimming pool.

## **4.0 METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this watching brief was to record archaeological deposits encountered during groundworks undertaken within the development area (Fig. 2).

The Brief required that all groundworks be monitored by a qualified archaeologist.



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Figure 2. Site plan and section. Scale 1:125 and 1:50

Machine excavation was carried out with a small hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with a toothless 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.

Due to the absence of suitable deposits, environmental samples were not 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.

## **5.0 RESULTS**

At the first site visit on 9 October 2013, it was seen that the location of the western half of the new house coincided with the site of a swimming pool. The foundations for this end of the building were to be a ring beam on piles in already heavily truncated ground therefore no monitoring took place in this part of the site.

The excavation of the strip foundations in the eastern and central portions of the new building was monitored on 14 October 2013. The foundation trenches were 0.7m wide and c.1.1m deep.

The overlying stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of dark brown sandy topsoil [1] above 0.3m of mid greyish brown sandy subsoil [2]. The layer of subsoil [2] was 0.7m thick at the western end of the north-western foundation trench (see Figure 2). The change of depth was sudden and coincides with a property boundary marked on the Ordnance Survey map.

Two features were seen in the eastern portion of the foundations, which may represent two sides of a large pit.

Feature [3] was unexcavated, apart from that part truncated by the evaluation trench. It was sealed by topsoil [1], cut through subsoil [2] and had vertical sides. Its fill ([4]) was brownish grey clayey sand with rare flint gravel, but no artefacts.

Feature [5] was also sealed by the topsoil and had vertical sides. It had two visible fills; a layer of redeposited natural sand ([7]) above dark brown sand with sparse chalk and flint gravel ([6]). The fills contained no artefacts.



Plate 1. Feature [3], facing south-east



Plate 2. Feature [5] facing south-west

## **6.0 THE ARTEFACTS**

by Rebecca Sillwood

Very few finds were encountered during the watching brief – six sherds of pottery, all from topsoil deposits.

The pottery was processed and recorded by count and weight and information entered onto an Excel spreadsheet. A list of the pottery can be found in Appendix 2a.

### **6.1 Pottery**

Six sherds of post-medieval/modern pottery, weighing a total of 122g, were recovered from the topsoil ([1]).

The earliest sherd is a much-abraded body sherd of 16th- to 18th-century glazed red earthenware. This piece has very little of its dark orange glaze remaining.

Four of the pieces are body sherds from modern stonewares.

A rim sherd of a modern jar covered in a thick brown glaze was also found.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

There were two features (of limited interest) discovered during the fieldwork phase of this project; a differentiation in subsoil depth and a quarry pit.

The difference in the depth of the subsoil was observed in the north-western foundation trench (Fig. 2) and coincided nicely with a property boundary seen on Ordnance Survey mapping. The change may be due to dissimilar horticultural regimes in two gardens; the garden to the west perhaps having been subject to double digging.

The probable large pit represented by features [3] and [5] could have been up to 4m wide and 4m long, squarish in shape and with vertical sides (Fig. 2). It is likely that it was a quarry pit dug to extract sand however it is difficult to date this feature. It was earlier than topsoil [1] which sealed it and was later than subsoil [2] which it cut through. The subsoil is undated, but the topsoil was probably late 19th- to early 20th-century in date. The subsoil was probably created by intensive horticulture and therefore probably does not date to before this area's conversion from an orchard (1838 Tithe Map) to gardens (First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1883).

## ***Acknowledgements***

The author would like to thank Ross Bailey of RDB Construction (UK) Ltd for his help and cooperation during the fieldwork phase of this project.

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

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

## ***Bibliography and Sources***

Department for Communities      2012   *National Planning Policy Framework*  
and Local Government

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>   Accessed 09.10.2013

<http://historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk/>   Accessed 09.10.2013

### Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period
1	Deposit			Topsoil	Post-medieval/ Modern
2	Deposit			Subsoil	Unknown
3	Cut	Pit		Quarry pit, probably same as [5]	Unknown
4	Deposit		3	Brownish grey clayey sand	Unknown
5	Cut	Pit		Quarry pit, probably same as [3]	Unknown
6	Deposit		5	Dark brown sand	Unknown
7	Deposit		5	Redeposited natural sand	Unknown

### Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Category	Total
Post-medieval	Pit	1

### Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period
1	Pottery	6	122g	Post-medieval

### Appendix 2b: OASIS Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Post-medieval	Pottery	6

**Appendix 3: OASIS Report Summary**



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**OASIS ID: norfolka1-156840**

### Project details

Project name	THE PRIORY, THE GREEN, BANHAM
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was conducted for RDB Construction during groundworks associated with the construction of a new house. The western part of the site had been heavily truncated by the construction of a swimming pool to a depth of 1.5-2.0m below ground level. Hence only the strip foundations of the central and eastern parts of the building were monitored. Two features were identified; a large quarry pit of possible 19th-century date and a change in the depth of the subsoil, which coincided with an old property boundary and was probably caused by different horticultural regimes in the two gardens.
Project dates	Start: 09-10-2013 End: 14-10-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENF132535 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POT Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK BRECKLAND BANHAM THE PRIORY, THE GREEN,
Study area	800.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 0640 8810 52 1 52 27 04 N 001 02 16 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	NPS Archaeology
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Project brief originator	Norfolk Historic Environment Service
Project design originator	NAU Archaeology (Jayne Bown)
Project director/manager	Nigel Page
Project supervisor	Steve Hickling
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	RDB Construction

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	NPS Archaeology
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "other"
Digital Media available	"Images vector", "Spreadsheets", "Text", "Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
Paper Contents	"Ceramics", "other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Section"

### Project bibliography 1

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