

Figure 2. Location of watching brief area. Scale 1:1000.



**NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT**

Report No. 1086

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at Gissing Hall,  
Gissing, Norfolk**

41822 GSS

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July 2005

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Location:	Gissing Hall Hotel, Gissing, Norfolk
District:	South Norfolk
Grid Ref:	TM 1430 8551
NHER No.:	41822 GSS
Date of fieldwork:	11th to 12th July 2005

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Norfolk Archaeological Unit in the grounds of Gissing Hall Hotel, Gissing, during the excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a new dwelling. Although medieval occupation was known to be present in the vicinity no archaeological features or deposits were observed during the works.*

## **1.0 Introduction**

(Figs 1, 2 and 3)

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU) in order to monitor groundworks associated with a proposed development in the grounds of the Gissing Hall Hotel, Gissing, South Norfolk (Fig. 1). The development area measured 17.73m by 14.33m (254m<sup>2</sup>) and was rectangular in shape (Fig. 2).

The fieldwork and subsequent report were commissioned and funded by the owner of the property, Mr William Brennan.

This archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref: EJ/30.07.04). The site archive is currently held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service in accordance with the relevant policy on archiving standards.

The objective of this watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed during the excavation of seventeen foundation trenches (Fig. 3) of varying dimensions (between 1.20m and 4.20m in length, 0.60m wide and 3.0m deep) prior to the building of a new domestic dwelling. The contractors excavated these trenches using a JCB digger with a 600mm wide toothed bucket. The Brief required that an archaeologist was to be in constant attendance during these works.

The site was quite level and had previously been an area of immature woodland and shrubs which had been cleared before work commenced. The solid geology in this part of South Norfolk is white chalk of the Upper Cretaceous period (Funnell 1994, 12). The site lay at elevation of 48.50m OD.

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

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NAU *pro forma* sheets. Plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

Ground conditions were good although the site displayed signs of having been churned up by machinery in a recent wet spell. Access was gained *via* the adjacent

Chequers Lane. The weather was dry and warm during the period of the watching brief.

## 2.0 Observations

The majority of the trenches displayed a similar sequence of deposits. A dark grey loam topsoil ([04]) with an average depth of 0.25m, very humic in nature and in keeping with the vegetation type which had been removed, directly overlay natural deposits, no sub-soil was observed anywhere on the site. Natural deposits were of a Lowestoft Till ([03]) consisting of a pale to mid greyish green marly clay which contained occasional flint cobbles and boulders. This deposit extended to the base of all the excavations observed (3.0m below current ground level). The only variance to this sequence occurred in a narrow north-to-south aligned strip along the eastern edge of the area where the present land owner had created a trackway by laying down 0.5m of building rubble ([02]) topped with 0.09m of coarse gravel ([01]).

## 3.0 Conclusions

Although the site was in the vicinity of the 17th-century Gissing Hall and lay on the line of a street frontage with probable medieval origins no archaeological evidence to suggest any occupation or activity within the proposed development area was observed.

### **Acknowledgements**

Thanks to Mr Brennan for his helpfulness and co-operation on site and to Jan Allen of Norfolk Landscape Archaeology for providing the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) information. The fieldwork was carried out by the author. The report was illustrated by Julie Curl and edited by Alice Lyons.

### **Bibliography**

Funnell, B., 1994 'Solid Geology' in Wade-Martins, P., *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk*, Norfolk Museums Service

### **Appendix 1: Context Summary**

Context	Category	Description	Period
01	Deposit	Gravel track surface	Modern
02	Deposit	Rubble make-up layer	Modern
03	Deposit	Natural clay	
04	Deposit	Topsoil	





Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:10,000

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Area of watching brief

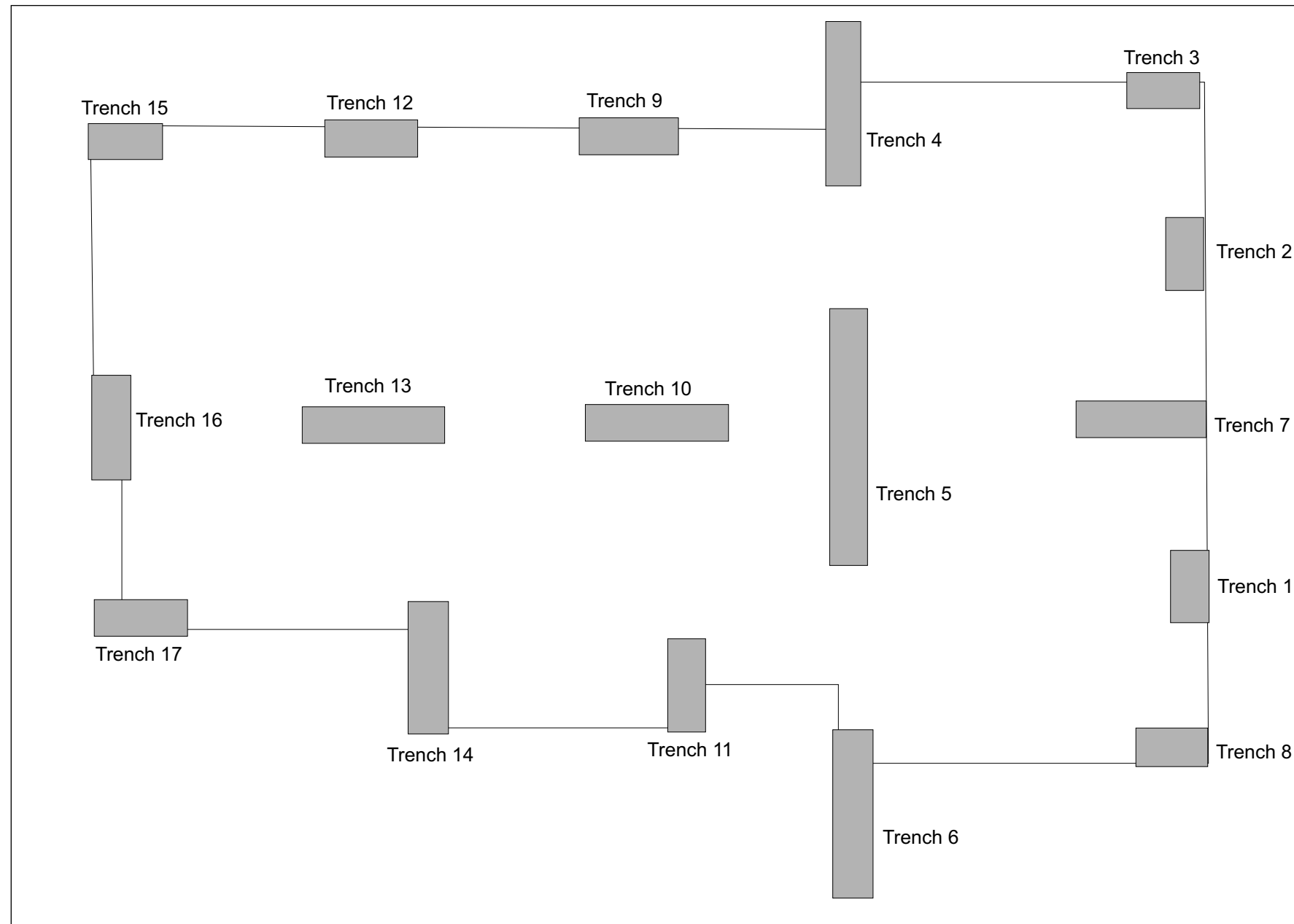


Figure 3. Trench locations. Scale 1: 500