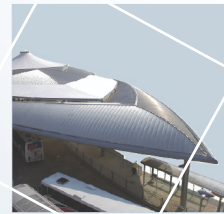


Report № 1880

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
15 King Street, King's Lynn**

NHER 51549



Steve Hickling

August 2008

BAU 1880

© NAU Archaeology



NAU ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT CHECKLIST		
Project overseen by	David Whitmore	
Draft completed	Steve Hickling	07/07/2008
Graphics completed	David Dobson	25/07/2008
Edit completed	Richard Hoggett	05/08/2008
Signed off	David Whitmore	08/08/2008

NAU Archaeology
Scandic House
85 Mountergate
Norwich
NR1 1PY

Contents

<i>Summary</i>	1
1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Geology and Topography	1
3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background.....	3
4.0 Methodology	3
5.0 Results.....	4
6.0 The Finds	7
6.1 Pottery	7
6.2 Ceramic Building Material.....	8
6.3 Clay pipe	8
6.4 The Bottle Glass	8
7.0 Conclusions	8
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	9
<i>Bibliography</i>	9
Appendix 1a: Context Summary	11
Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table	11
Appendix 2a: Finds by Context	11
Appendix 2b: NHER Finds Summary Table.....	12
Appendix 3: Pottery.....	12
Appendix 4: Ceramic Building Material	12
Appendix 5: Small Finds	12
Appendix 6: Glass.....	12

Figures

- Figure 1 Site location
Figure 2 Trench plan
Figure 3 Section drawings

Plates

- Plate 1 Wall (2) facing south, showing the doorway and external buttress
Plate 2 Ruin to the east of the trench showing similarities with wall (2)

Location:	15 King Street, King's Lynn
District:	King's Lynn and West Norfolk
Grid Ref.:	TF 6160 2010
HER No.:	51549
Dates of Fieldwork:	11–16 June 2006

Summary

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out on the site of a proposed development at 15 King Street, King's Lynn, during which evidence for post-medieval land reclamation and wharf-front development was found. One 4m x 4m trench was excavated revealing dumps of sorted rubble laid down in the 17th–18th centuries. Brick buildings, probably serving as warehouses and stores were built here shortly afterwards.

1.0 Introduction

The site was in an area of proposed development at the rear of 15 King Street, King's Lynn (Fig. 1). This archaeological programme was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by King's Lynn and West Norfolk Borough Council and a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (Hamilton 2008). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref: BAU1302/DW).

The 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 and Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

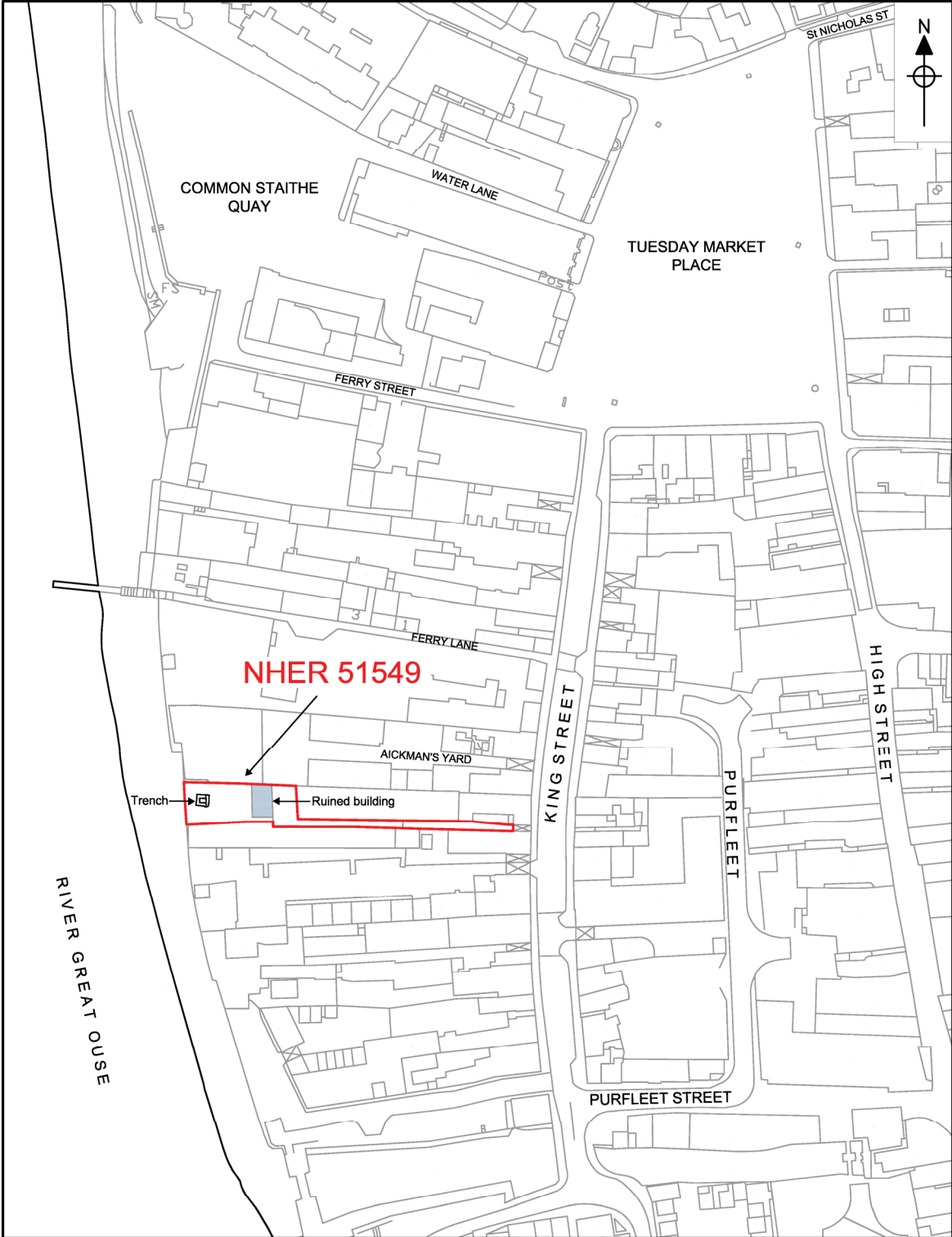
The site archive is currently held by NAU Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

This project was funded and the report commissioned by the landowner, Mrs Ing.

2.0 Geology and Topography

King's Lynn lies close to the eastern edge of the Norfolk silt fens and on the eastern bank of the River Great Ouse. Lynn and its surroundings are underlain by a complex sequence of marine clays, sands and peats up to 10m thick. The entire area was once marshland with creeks and streams flowed from the south. King's Lynn lay west of the ancient 'shoreline', represented by the high ground at Gaywood, with the road from Gaywood to Lynn resting on a causeway (Penn 2008, 2).

The development site lies adjacent to the modern river frontage, in an area which was reclaimed in the 15th–19th centuries, at a height of c.5m OD (Penn 2008, 8).



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Local Authority № 100019340



Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2000

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The development site has been subject to a desk-based assessment (Penn 2008). The full archaeological and historical background to this site can be found there. What follows is a summary of the results of that report:

Archaeological (and to some extent documentary) evidence shows that c.1100 King Street lay on the foreshore, with boats drawn up along the beach to the west. They would have unloaded into properties standing on the eastern side of King Street. During this period, the whole of the development area would have lain in the tidal river. This was still the case in the mid-13th century, when the Newland Survey was made, with houses standing only on the eastern side of King Street. During the period 1350–1500 reclamation pushed the river line back and by 1500 the river line was established halfway towards its present line. The present line was reached by 1800, as may be seen from Faden's map, but the main building frontages remained along King Street.

The sensitive areas of the site lie closer to King Street, in the area of the access lane, which transects early jetties. The proposed building will stand on the latest part of the reclaimed waterfront, belonging to the period between 1500 and 1800.

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.

The Brief required that a 5% sample of the development site be evaluated. After consultation with Ken Hamilton (Head of Archaeological Planning, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology) it was decided that a 3m x 4m trench should be excavated to the level of the water table and shored. However, in practice it was found to be impossible to drive in shoring sheets, so a 4m x 4m trench was excavated and sondage dug by hand in its centre to as great a depth as practicable.

Machine excavation was carried out with a 1.5 tonne hydraulic 360° excavator using a toothless ditching bucket 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.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NAU Archaeology pro forma. Where necessary, trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from an Ordnance Survey benchmark with a value of 5.63m, located on the side of the Customs House on King Street.

No environmental samples were taken.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.

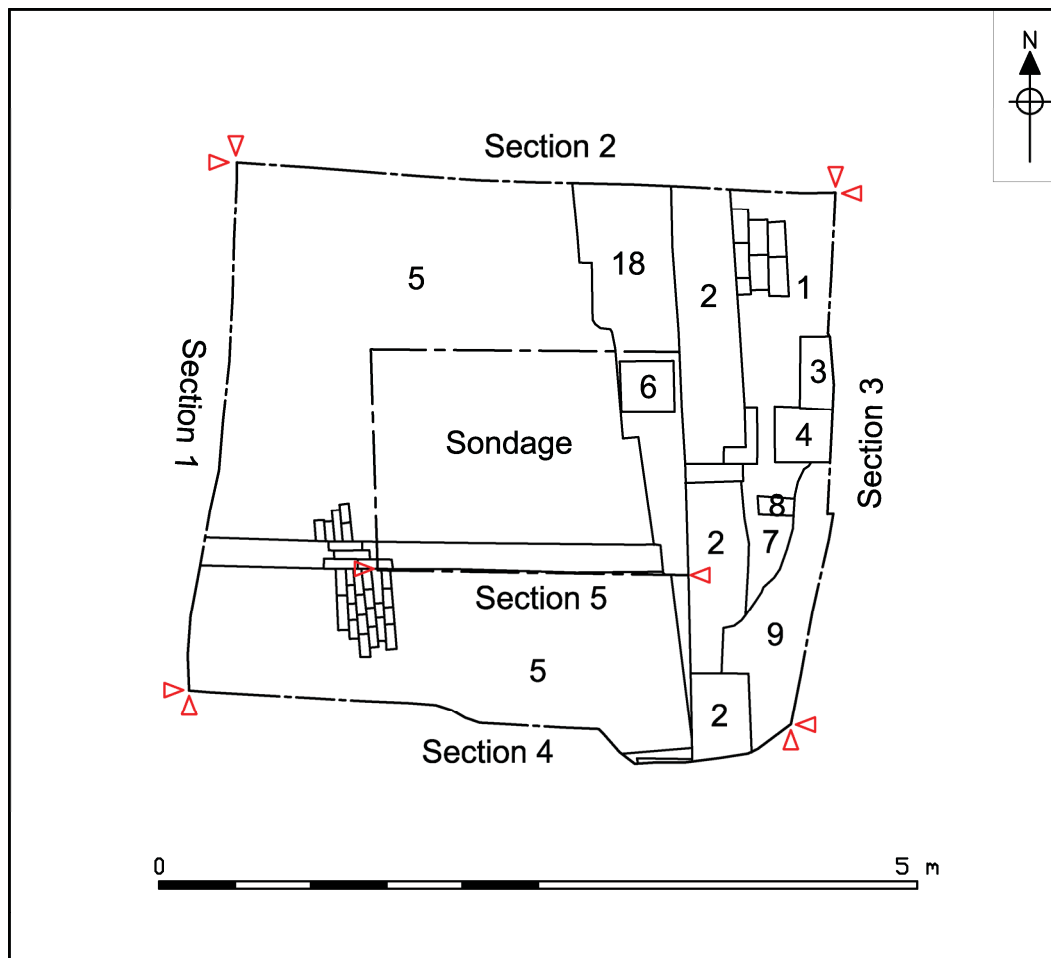


Figure 2. Trench plan. Scale 1:50

5.0 Results

The results of the evaluation are outlined below. Deposits are given in round brackets (), while archaeological cut features are given in square brackets []. The plan of the trench is given in Fig. 2, the sections in Fig. 3.

The earliest layer encountered in the hand-dug sondage in the centre of the trench was (23), a pale cream layer in excess of 0.5m thick which contained mortar with frequent small fragments of peg tile and red brick (Fig. 3, Section 5). A fragment of pottery recovered from this deposit dated from the 15th–17th centuries. It was obvious that any usable brick or tiles had been removed from this deposit before it was laid down, presumably so that they could be reused. Also found in this layer was a fragmentary copper alloy coin. This was in a poor state of preservation and could not be dated more closely than post-medieval.

Above (23) was layer (22) a 0.09m-thick layer comprising compacted sand and coal dust with frequent coal fragments and occasional brick or tile fragments (Fig. 3, Section 5). This was overlain by layer (21), a compact pale cream mortar powder up to 0.18m deep containing moderate small brick and tile fragments.

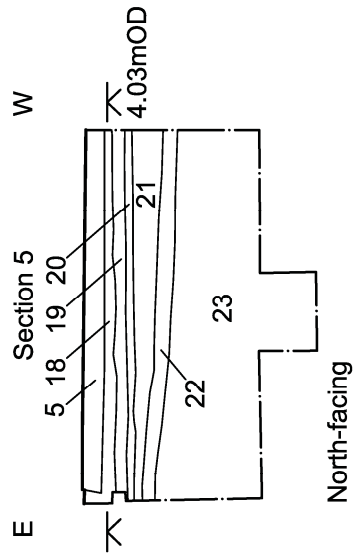
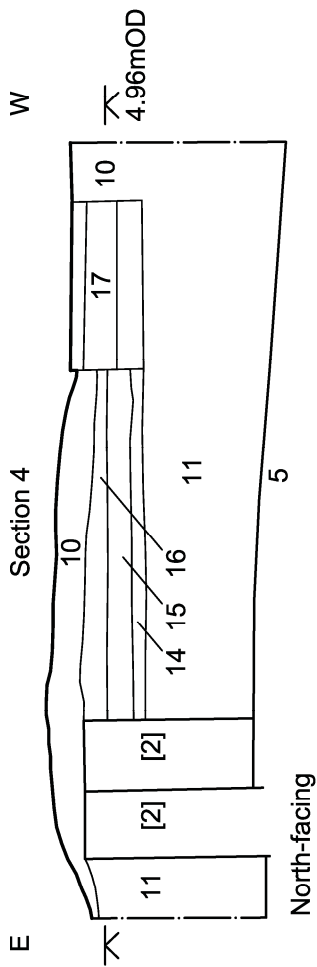
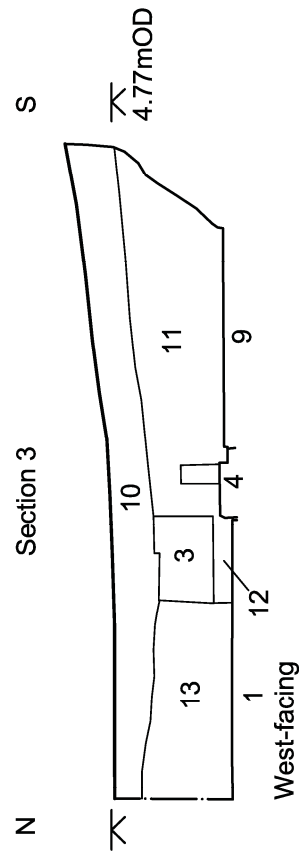
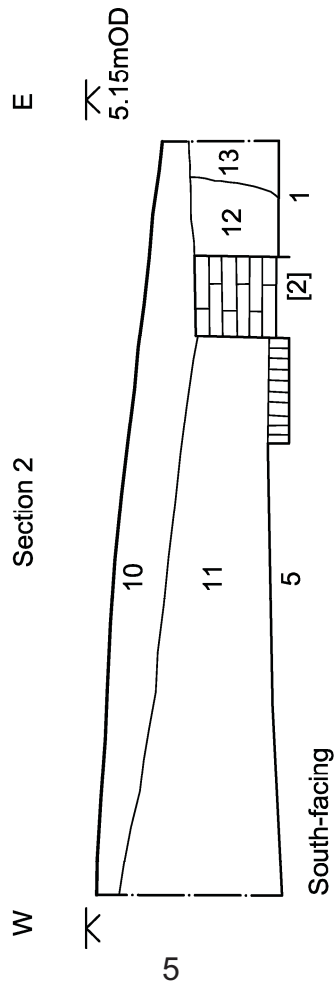
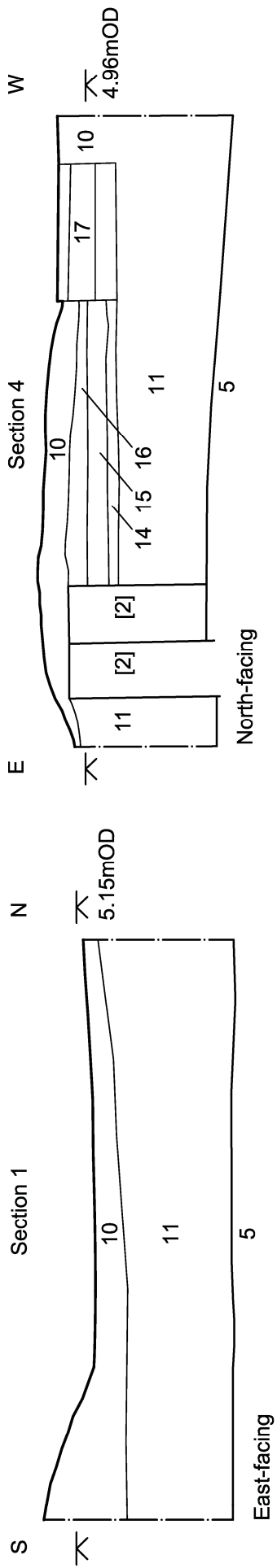


Figure 3. Sections. Scale 1:40

Above this was layer (20), a 0.01m-thick, highly compacted and laminated, dark brown or black ashy sand with occasional coal flecks. Layer (20) was overlain by layer (19), a reddish-brown silty sand with frequent chalk fragments and occasional pegtile fragments. This layer was heavily iron panned and dated by two sherds of pottery to the 17th–18th centuries. Layer (18) overlain layer (19) and comprised a layer of pale to dark brown silty sand with occasional glass and charcoal fragments. This was probably a bedding layer for brick floor (5).

Wall (2) and floor (1) were found to be resting on top of layer (19) (Fig. 2; Fig. 3, Section 2; Plate 1). Wall (2) was built of soft red bricks (each 235mm long, 110mm wide and 55mm deep) laid in English bond and was three bricks thick. The mortar was soft, yellow and sandy. To the east of the trench was a ruined building with walls built of similar bricks in a similar bond (Plate 2). Wall (2) survived to a height of 0.95m at its southern end, with what appeared to be a small buttress against its western face. There was evidence for a doorway through the centre of the wall (Plate 1). Floor (1) appeared to be the internal floor of the building whose western wall was wall (2). This floor was made of hard red bricks, each 220mm long, 110mm wide and 45mm deep, set in a bed of grey ashy lime. The bricks from wall (2) and floor (1) have been dated to the 15th–16th centuries.

Floor (5) was bedded in layer (18) and was composed of reused brick of varying sizes, set on edge (pitched) (Fig. 2). These bricks were not mortared, but many had traces of old mortar on them. This floor sloped gently to the west to aid drainage and there was also a small drainage gully of identical bricks laid at 90° to the rest of the floor built into it. Cut through floor (5), but resting on bedding layer (18), was what appeared to be the bottom course of a brick plinth (6), 0.36m long and 0.34m wide (Fig. 2). It was composed of soft red bricks 0.235m long, 0.11m wide and 0.073m deep with no bonding material.



Plate 1. Wall (2) facing south, showing the doorway and external buttress



Plate 2. Ruin to the east of the trench showing similarities with wall (2)

Above floor (5) and plinth (6) was a layer of loose rubble (11) up to 0.88m deep (Fig. 3, Sections 1–4). The rubble was made up of early modern and modern brick, pegtile and pantile with mortar lumps and occasional stone fragments. Above this, visible in the southern face of the trench, was layer (14), a layer of mid-grey ash with moderate charcoal and fuel slag 0.07m deep (Fig. 3, Section 4). Above this was layer (15), a dark brown silty sand with occasional brick, tile and mortar fragments, 0.13m deep. This was probably a buried garden soil. Cut through these deposits was a set of brick and concrete steps (17) of recent date and identified by the landowner as part of a former summerhouse.

The interior of the building represented by wall (2) and floor (1) presents a complex developmental history. The initial phase comprised floor (1) and wall (2), the western wall of the building, which had an external buttress and a doorway. The second phase of the building's development saw the insertion of an internal east–west wall (4) just to the north of the doorway (Fig. 2).

Wall (4) only survives to a height of one course, but is of a similar style to wall (2) and abuts it (Fig. 3, Section 3). The interior of the building to the north of wall (4) appears to have subsequently been backfilled, first with a dark brown silty sand with brick, tile and mortar fragments (13) and later with a dark greyish-brown silty sand with frequent 18th–19th-century glass bottle fragments (12) (Fig. 3, Section 2).

Wall (3) was constructed on top of this glassy layer. It was aligned east–west, was 0.46m wide, 0.32m high and made of pitched bricks bonded with a hard, grey mortar. The bricks were soft reds measuring 220mm long, 110mm wide and 65mm deep. Wall (3) respected wall (2). Rubble layer (11) overlay this wall.

Wall (8) was built on top of floor (1) (Fig. 2). Only one course remained and this was one brick thick. It was composed of brick fragments, not whole bricks. This was sealed by surface (9), a concrete skim on top of wall (8) and the southern part of floor (1) (Fig. 3, Section 3).

The latest deposit encountered was the topsoil (10), a generally thin layer of dark brown silty sand with occasional brick or tile fragments. This layer is reportedly of very recent origin (Hazel Ings, pers. comm.).

6.0 The Finds

The finds material from the site is presented in tabular form with basic quantitative information in Appendix 2. In addition to this summary, more detailed information on specific finds and environmental categories is included in separate reports below. Supporting tables for these contributions are included in the Appendices.

6.1 Pottery

By Sue Anderson

Three sherds of pottery were collected from two contexts. Fragments from levelling layer (19) comprised a body sherd of Raeren stoneware (late 15th/16th century) and a small piece of Westerwald stoneware (17th/18th century). A sherd of glazed redware from layer (23) contained fine gold mica and may be of Iberian origin, possibly Merida Ware from Portugal (?15th–17th century).

6.2 Ceramic Building Material

By Sue Anderson

Two complete bricks were recovered as samples:

[01] was collected from a brick floor. It measured 225 x 105 x 55mm and appeared to be in a fine red fabric, which may be of estuarine origin. The brick was roughly made, but did not have sunken margins to the struck surface. It was covered in a cream medium sandy mortar containing occasional pieces of carbonised material and lumps of chalk.

[02] was in the same fabric as [01] and showed a purplish tinge consistent with estuarine clay. It measured 225 x 107 x 50mm. The same type of mortar was present on the struck face and in patches on the base. One corner showed signs of weathering.

Both bricks appear to be transitional between early and late types and may be of 15th/16th-century date.

6.3 Clay pipe

By Lucy Talbot

Two fragments of post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stem, weighing 6g, were recovered from context (19).

6.4 The Bottle Glass

By Mick Boyle

Twelve shards of bottle glass recovered from context (12). These were only a sample and the context produced a much larger amount of glass of the same type. The shards consist of four bases with the lower walls attached, four necks and rims with partial shoulders attached, and four assorted body shards (two of which are near base shards).

The fragments represent four English utility bottles in black glass dating from c.1790–1810. The bottles are of the cylindrical form and were used to contain wine, beer, spirits, oil, vinegar and other purposes.

7.0 Conclusions

The trench was rich in post-medieval remains. The deposits beneath the brick floors ((1) and (5)) may represent some of the deposits used to reclaim the land from the river. They appear to comprise sorted rubble (with all of the reusable brick removed) and may have been laid down in the 17th–18th centuries.

Of more recent date were the remains of a building, represented by floor (1) and wall (2). Despite the apparent date of the bricks (15th–16th century), the building was probably constructed in the 17th–18th centuries, as the underlying levelling deposit (19) was of this date (17th-18th century). There was no evidence that these bricks were reused from an earlier building, as there was no earlier mortar adhering to them. It is possible that the bricks were archaic types either imported from the continent as ballast or the results of a one-off commission.

At some point before the late 18th/early 19th century the building was divided by wall (4) and the northern portion of the building backfilled with deposits (12) and (13). During the 20th century concrete floor (9) was added to the southern portion of the building. The outside surface (5) may have been added in this phase as a large proportion of the brick used in its construction is of a type that may have originated in the northern portion of wall (2). A ruined building to the west of the trench uses the same kind of brick, mortar and coursing as wall (2) and may be contemporary (Plate 2).

These discoveries and their dating are in line with the conclusions of the previous desk-based assessment, which stated that this part of the plot was probably reclaimed from the river at some point between 1500 and 1800 (Penn 2008).

Recommendations for future work based upon this report will be made by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Glenn Bailey and Matt Ratcliff, who assisted with the fieldwork. Thanks must also be given to Richard Waite for commissioning the work and the landowner, Hazel Ings, for funding it. Ken Hamilton of Norfolk Landscape Archaeology wrote the brief and monitored the archaeological works. The finds were processed by Lucy Talbot and examined by Sue Anderson, Mick Boyle and Lucy Talbot. This report was illustrated by David Dobson and edited by Richard Hoggett.

Bibliography

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|------|--|
| Department of the Environment | 1990 | <i>Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning</i> . London: HMSO. |
| Hamilton, K. | 2008 | <i>Brief for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching at 15 King Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk</i> . Norfolk Landscape Archaeology. |
| Penn, K. | 2008 | <i>An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment of 15 King Street, King's Lynn, Norfolk</i> . NAU Archaeology Report 1819. |

Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Period
1	Masonry	Brick floor	15th–16th c?
2	Masonry	Brick wall	15th–16th c?
3	Masonry	Brick wall	
4	Masonry	Brick wall	
5	Masonry	Brick floor	
6	Masonry	Brick plinth	
7	Masonry	Brick floor, same as (1)	
8	Masonry	Brick floor	
9	Masonry	Concrete floor	20th c.
10	Layer	Topsoil	
11	Layer	Unsorted rubble	
12	Deposit	Rich in broken bottles	Late 18th–early 19th c.
13	Deposit	Levelling deposit	
14	Layer	Ashy	
15	Layer	Buried topsoil	
16	Layer	Loose unsorted rubble	
17	Masonry	Steps	20th c.
18	Layer	Bedding for floor (5)	
19	Layer	Levelling	17th–18th c.
20	Layer	Laminated trample	
21	Layer	Sorted rubble	
22	Layer	Trampled coal dust	
23	Layer	Sorted rubble	15th–17th c.

Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table

Period	Feature type	Quantity
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900)	Wall	1
	Floor	1
Modern (1900 to 2050)	Floor	1
	Steps	1
Undated	Wall	3
	Floor	2

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (g)	Period
01	Ceramic Building Material	1	2.306	Post-medieval
05	Ceramic Building Material	1	2.026	Post-medieval
12	Glass - Bottle	12	–	Post-medieval
19	Pottery	2	0.013	Post-medieval
19	Clay Pipe - stem	2	0.006	Post-medieval
23	Pottery	1	0.009	Post-medieval

Appendix 2b: NHER Finds Summary Table

Period	Material	Quantity
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	Ceramic building material	4.332kg
	Bottle glass	12 shards
	Pottery	0.022kg
	Clay tobacco pipe	0.006kg

Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Ceramic date
19	GSW3	Mug	1	0.011	L.15th/16th c.
19	GSW5		1	0.002	17th/18th c.
23	MERI?		1	0.009	15th–17th c.?

Appendix 4: Ceramic Building Material

Context	Form	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
1	EB/LB?	1	2296	15th/16th c.
2	EB/LB?	1	2019	15th/16th c.

Appendix 5: Small Finds

SF	Ctxt	Qty	Material	Description	Date
1	23	1	Copper alloy	?Coin in five fragments	Undiagnostic
2	23	1	Glass	Vessel rim	Post-medieval

Appendix 6: Glass

Context	Material	Quantity	Period
12	Bottle Glass	12	18th–19th c.