

Report 2015/1330



nps archaeology

**Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation at
The Grove, Gresham's School, Holt, Norfolk**

ENF 135850
ENF 135851



Prepared for
Hopkins Homes



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Contents

<i>Summary</i>	1
1.0 Introduction	2
2.0 Geology and Topography	5
3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background.....	6
3.1 NHER 15218	6
3.2 ENF 136032	6
3.3 NHER 34658	6
3.4 NHER 28285	6
3.5 NHER 41846	6
3.6 NHER 13584	7
4.0 Methodology	8
5.0 Results.....	9
5.1 Metal-detecting survey	9
5.2 Trial trenching.....	9
6.0 Artefacts.....	28
6.1 Ceramic building material	28
6.2 Metal finds	28
7.0 Environmental Evidence	29
7.1 Plant macrofossils	29
8.0 Conclusions	31
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	32
<i>Bibliography and Sources</i>	32
Appendix 1a: Context Summary	33
Appendix 1b: Feature Summary	33
Appendix 2a: Finds by Context	33
Appendix 2b: Finds Summary	34
Appendix 3: Plant Macrofossils	34
Appendix 4: OASIS Report Summaries	35

Figures

- Figure 1 Site location
- Figure 2 Trench locations with geophysical results
- Figure 3 Distribution of metal finds described in Section 6.0
- Figure 4 Trench 1, plan
- Figure 5 Trench 3, plan and section
- Figure 6 Trench 6, plan and sections

Plates

- Plate 1 Trench 1, looking west
- Plate 2 Trench 1, shallow hollow **01**, looking northeast
- Plate 3 Trench 2, looking north
- Plate 4 Trench 3, looking west
- Plate 5 Trench 3, ditch **03**, looking north
- Plate 6 Trench 4, looking west
- Plate 7 Trench 5, looking east
- Plate 8 Trench 6, looking north
- Plate 9 Trench 6, showing ditch slots **07** and **09**, looking south
- Plate 10 Trench 7, looking north
- Plate 11 Trench 8, looking north
- Plate 12 Trench 9, looking west
- Plate 13 Trench 10, looking west
- Plate 14 Trench 11, looking south

Location:	The Grove, Grove Lane, Holt, Norfolk
District:	North Norfolk District Council
Grid Ref.:	TG 0897 3916
Planning Ref.:	Pre-application
HER No.:	ENF 135850, ENF 135851
OASIS Ref.:	202930 and 202933
Client:	Hopkins Homes
Dates of Fieldwork:	20–23 January 2015

Summary

An archaeological evaluation (metal-detecting and trial trenching) was conducted by NPS Archaeology for CgMs on behalf of Hopkins Homes Ltd. The work was carried out ahead of development of residential housing on land at The Grove, Gresham's School, Holt, Norfolk.

A geophysical (magnetometer) survey of the site had previously been conducted in August 2010, and revealed a potential former field boundary and magnetic anomalies that could be of archaeological significance, or natural occurrences. An archaeological desk-based assessment undertaken in June 2013 highlighted the possible presence of a post-medieval gibbet site, but concluded that overall the development site lies within an area of low archaeological potential (Richmond 2013).

A two-stage evaluation programme was subsequently carried out by NPS Archaeology in January 2015. This was designed to provide additional information on the possible gibbet site, to identify any finds concentrations in the topsoil and subsoil deposits, and to investigate the potential for sub-surface archaeological features and deposits identified by the geophysical survey within the proposed development area.

A metal-detecting survey of the topsoil produced modern debris, which included cans and other nondescript metal fragments. Informed by the geophysical survey interpretations, 11 trial trenches were excavated. Two of these produced archaeological features and deposits while a third trench revealed a deeper stratified soil horizon that was likely to have been situated in a natural hollow. The archaeological features and deposits are likely to represent land and field boundaries, probably dated to the post-medieval period, and most likely to the 19th century.

Taken together, the results of the evaluation, the geophysical interpretations, and the desk-based evidence suggest that little reshaping of the landscape has occurred over a long time-span.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

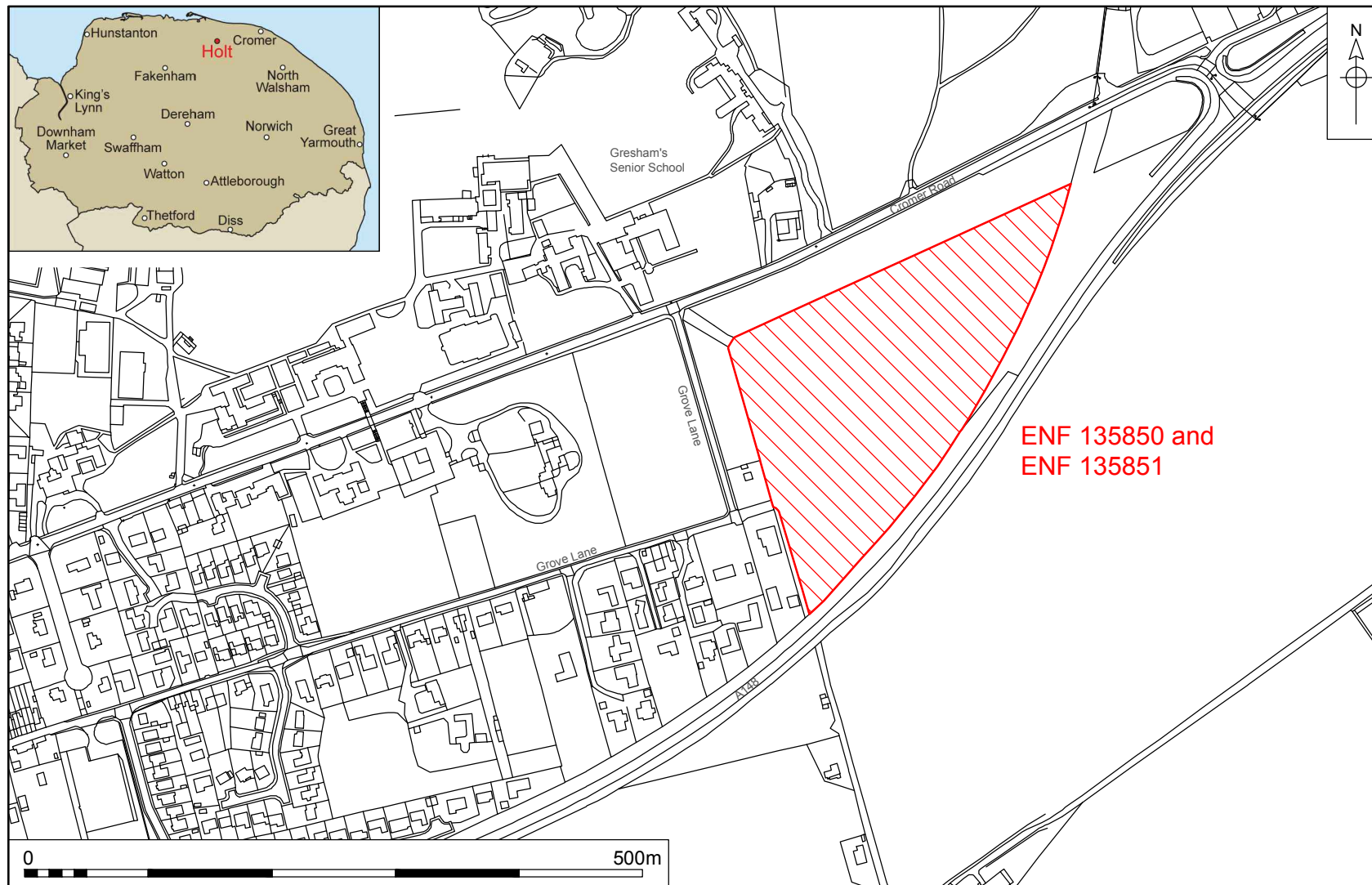
Figures 1, 2

A proposal to construct residential housing on land east of Grove Lane, Holt in Norfolk required a programme of archaeological works to assess the potential effects of the development on archaeological resources. Following a metal-detector survey of the area, eleven trenches were excavated and provided an approximate 2.5% (c. 792m²) sample of the site.

The work was undertaken to fulfil planning requirements set by North Norfolk District Council (pre-planning). The scope and strategy of the work was determined in discussion with Norfolk Historic Environment Service. The work was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref: 01-04-15-2-1330). The work was commissioned by CgMs and funded by Hopkins Homes Ltd.

The programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed development area, following 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 Service.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

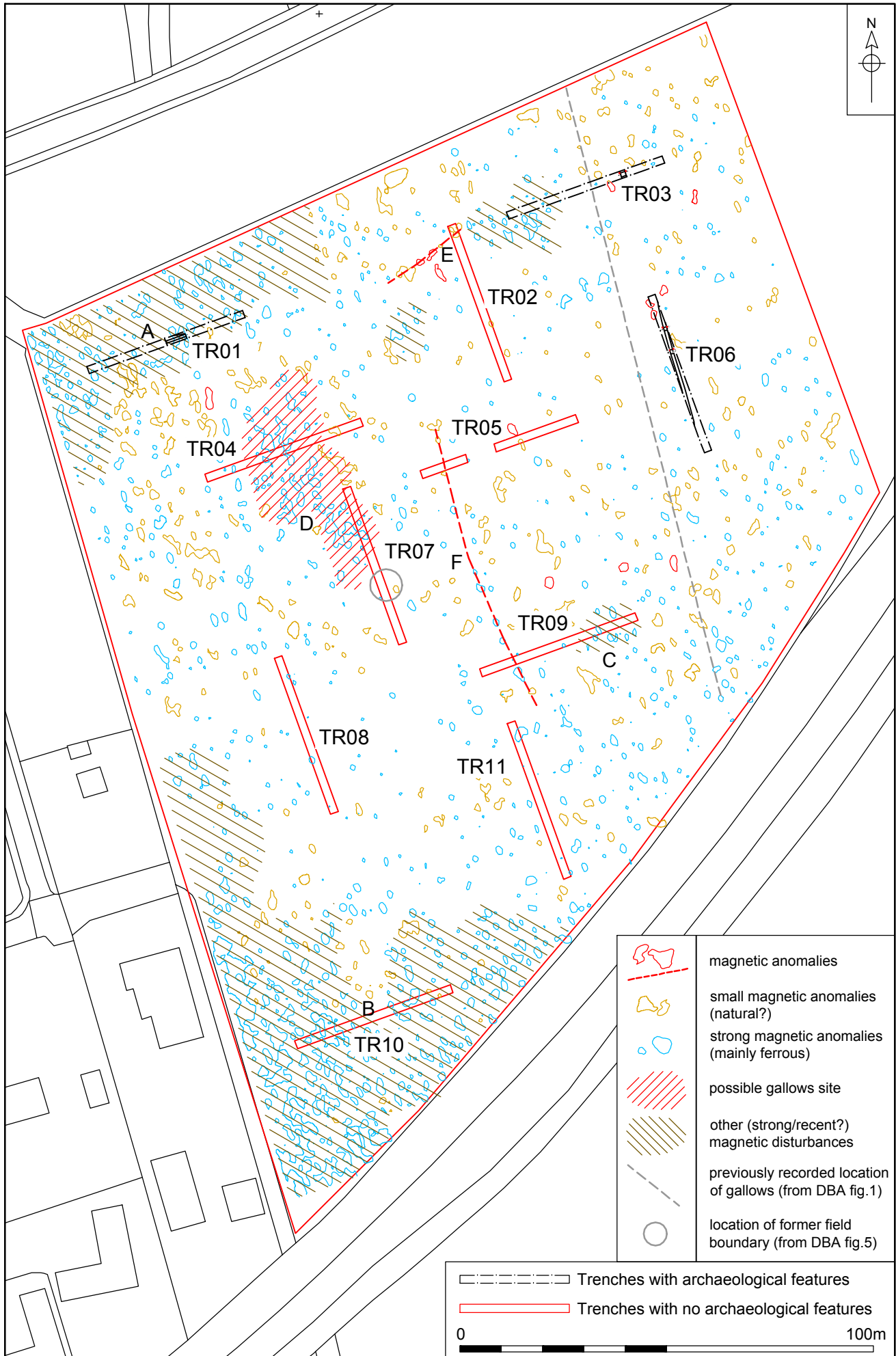


Figure 2. Trench locations with geophysical results. Scale 1:1250

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

Local solid geology consists of White Chalk Subgroup – Chalk, sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 66–100 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period in a local environment previously dominated by warm chalk seas. These rocks were formed in shallow Chalk-shelf seas, with little sediment input from land. They often consist of a calcareous ooze of the microscopic remains of plankton, especially the disc-shaped calcite plates or coccoliths that make up spherical coccolithophores.¹

The solid geology is overlain by superficial deposits of glacial sand and gravel formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period in a local environment previously dominated by ice age conditions. These deposits were formed in cold periods with ice age glaciers scouring the landscape and depositing moraines of till with outwash sand and gravel deposits from seasonal and post-glacial meltwaters.²

The site is located to the east of the market town of Holt, 6km southeast of Cley Next the Sea and 5km southwest of Weybourne. It is situated on a flat plateau and lies between 63m OD at the south end of the site and 64m OD at the north end. The parish of Holt is situated at the west extent of the Cromer Ridge and The Chalk Scarp, with the latter delineating the north and west boundary of ‘High Norfolk’.

The parish of Holt lies on an interfluvium bounded by a stream valley/river watershed to the north and to the south. The unnamed valley to the north follows the alignment of Water Lane and flows in a northeast–southwest direction where the relief ranges from 52m OD at The Hangs to the northeast and discharges to the southwest into the river Glaven at Letheringsett at 10m OD. To the south, the Glaven valley forms an oxbow around the parish with Holt positioned to the north of the u-shaped bend. The river Glaven discharges into the North Sea at Blakeney Eye, which lies 7km northwest of Holt.

The land-use of the site at the time of the work was rough grassland with the topsoil measuring 0.30–0.40m deep and the subsoil measuring up to 0.10m deep.

¹ <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

² <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site is positioned in an area that has potential to contain archaeological evidence. Data held by the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) has been appraised and the most relevant entries are presented below along with other pertinent archaeological information. The information that is sourced from NHER remains the copyright of Norfolk Historic Environment Service/Norfolk County Council. Individual contributors to the NHER records are accredited where appropriate.

3.1 NHER 15218

(after E. Rose, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, 1979)

NHER 15218 is located within the proposed development area. This may have been the site of a post-medieval gibbet, which is marked on *Faden's Map of Norfolk* (Barringer 1989) (first printed in 1797).

3.2 ENF 136032

A geophysical survey of the area of the proposed development undertaken in 2010 produced evidence of magnetic anomalies with different characteristics across the site (Bartlett 2010). It was considered that anomalies recorded in the central western part of the field may correspond to the location of the gibbet site (NHER 15218).

3.3 NHER 34658

(after K. Sussams, Norwich Castle Museum, 1998; M. Dennis, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, 2006)

To the north of the site, a prehistoric flint flake was found. Roman, medieval and later coins were also collected by metal-detecting. Perhaps of more interest, are finds from the Saxon period, including an Early Saxon brooch, a Middle Saxon hooked tag, and two Late Saxon strap-ends. Part of a post-medieval spur was also collected.

3.4 NHER 28285

(after E. Rose, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, 1991)

Two prehistoric flint flakes and two post-medieval pottery sherds were collected during field-walking to the southeast of the site.

3.5 NHER 41846

(after E. Rose, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, 2005)

A brickyard to the east of the site is shown on the Second Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886. It is not shown on the First Edition map of 1880, and from this there seems to be a good possibility that it was associated with the adjacent railway line (NHER 13584).

3.6 NHER 13584

(after D. Robertson, Norfolk Landscape Archaeology, 2006)

To the south of the site, and following in-part the alignment of the current A148, is the line of the late 19th-century Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway from Norwich to Cromer, via Holt. The line from Melton Constable to Holt opened in 1884 and the extension to Cromer in 1887. The line was closed to trains in 1964, with the Holt to Sheringham section re-opening as the North Norfolk Railway in the 1980s.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of the metal-detecting and trial trench evaluation was to establish the location of a gallows and to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence or absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The methodology adopted for the metal-detecting was to survey 10m transects and to plot and record the finds using pro forma sheets.

The Brief required that linear trenching be placed across the proposed development area to provide a total sample of 2.5% (c. 792m²) of the site. The trenches were placed to assess the location of the posited gallows and to test magnetic anomalies recorded by the geophysical survey (ENF 136032; Bartlett 2010). In siting the trenches, a minimum 1m buffer zone along the field boundaries and woodland areas was observed to protect hibernating slow worms. Footpaths that run along the perimeter of the site were also avoided. Final trench size and location was determined in respect to overhead power lines. All of the trench locations were subjected to a CAT-scan prior to excavation, but no sub-surface cables were detected.

Machine excavation was carried out by a hydraulic 360° excavator equipped with 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 that were obviously modern were retained for inspection.

Environmental soil samples were taken from two contexts, deposits **04** and **08**.

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 trenches and relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

The metal-detecting survey was undertaken by an experienced operator using a Minelab CTX3030 metal-detector with built-in GPS. All trenches were located using a Leica CS10 GPS.

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

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 Metal-detecting survey

Figure 3

The metal-detecting survey was undertaken prior to the trial trenching to attempt to identify the location of the site of the gallows and any concentrations of archaeological material that might influence the positioning of the trenches.

More than 120 cans, alongside other nondescript metal objects, were collected. Only few finds were retained for identification. These are described in Section 6.0 *Artefacts* and their locations are plotted in Figure 3. It was noted by the metal-detector operator that concentrations of modern finds often corresponded to the magnetic anomalies identified by the geophysical survey.

The metal-detecting survey therefore proved inconclusive in locating the gibbet site marked on *Faden's Map of Norfolk* (Barringer 1989).

5.2 Trial trenching

Figures 2, 4, 5 and 6

Archaeological features and deposits were present in three of the eleven trenches excavated.

The survival of sub-surface archaeological remains was limited across the site. The topsoil measured 0.30–0.40m deep. Subsoil up to 0.10m deep was identified in all trenches, except for in Trench 8.

The results for each trench are tabulated below in number order. A photograph of each trench accompanies the trench description with additional images of features where appropriate. Plans of trenches are only provided where archaeological features were present.



Figure 3. Distribution of metal finds described in section 6.0. Scale 1:2000

Trench 1



Plate 1. Trench 1, looking west

Figures 2, 4; Plates 1, 2

Location

Orientation	East-west
West end	609130, 339268
East end	609168, 339281

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.55m

Levels

West top	63.13m OD
East top	63.35m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
01	Cut	A shallow hollow	0.02m-0.08m	0.55m-0.63m
02	Deposit	Fill of 01	0.02m-0.08m	0.55m-0.63m
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.45m	0-0.45m
06	Deposit	Mid-orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.45m-0.55m

Discussion

Trench 1 was placed to test a strong/recent magnetic disturbance feature (**A**, Fig. 2; Pl. 1) located in the northwest corner of the site (Bartlett 2010, 4).

A shallow surface or feature **01** that was either barely cut into the natural sand and gravels or occupied a superficial hollow was identified (Figs 2 and 4; Pl. 2).

The feature was not fully exposed as it continued beneath the north limit of excavation, and was therefore not excavated in its entirety. The limited excavation demonstrated that the feature was very shallow and did not exceed 0.08m deep. It contained a single fill **02** that consisted of dark brown sandy silt intermixed with probable redeposited natural. No finds were recovered from the feature.

Trench 1



Plate 2. Trench 1, shallow hollow **01**, looking northeast

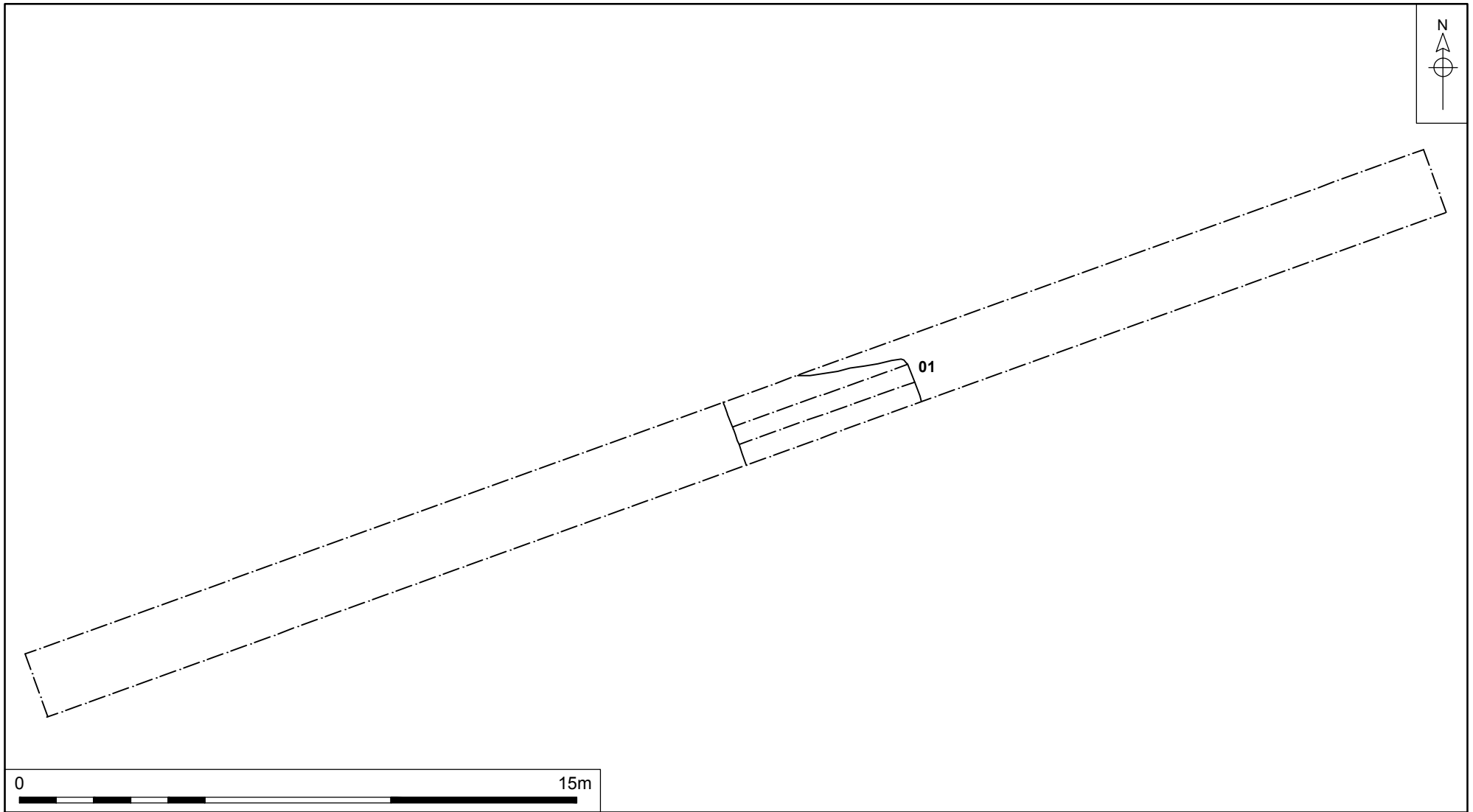


Figure 4. Trench 1, plan. Scale 1:150

Trench 2



Plate 3. Trench 2, looking north

Figure 2; Plate 3

Location

Orientation	North–south
North end	609218, 339302
South end	609231, 339264

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.50m

Levels

North top	63.75m OD
South top	63.76m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.40m	0-0.40m
06	Deposit	Mid-orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.40m-0.50m

Discussion

Trench 2 was placed to test the location of a field boundary depicted on the Ordnance Survey map of 1928, but not on earlier maps (E, Fig. 2) (Richmond 2013, 22 fig. 7). The feature was partially, but inconclusively detected in the geophysical survey (Bartlett 2010, 4).

The trench was moved to the east to avoid an overhead electricity power line and a public footpath (Fig. 2). The trench was negative of archaeological features and deposits (Pl. 3), and it is considered likely that the boundary indicated on the 1928 map consisted of a hedge line only, rather than a ditch.

Trench 3



Plate 4. Trench 3, looking west

Figures 2, 5; Plates 4, 5

Location

Orientation	East–west
West end	609232, 339304
East end	609269, 339318

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.50m

Levels

West top	63.85m OD
East top	64.25m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
03	Cut	Ditch	0.35m	0.50m-0.85m
04	Deposit	Fill of 03	0.35m	0.50m-0.85m
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.40m	0-0.40m
06	Deposit	Mid-orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.40m-0.50m

Discussion

Trench 3 was placed to test a strong/recent magnetic disturbance feature (immediately to the east of **E**) in the northeast corner of the site (Fig. 2; Plate 4). It was also sited to intersect the location of a former field boundary identified by Richmond (2013, 20).

Nothing in the excavation corresponded with the geophysics results, but there is a strong probability that ditch **03**, located at the east end of the trench, may represent the redundant field boundary depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 (Richmond 2013, 20).

Ditch **03** was 1.20m wide x 0.35m deep and contained a single fill **04** (Fig. 5, section 1; Pl. 5). Deposit **04** consisted of mid-greyish brown sandy silt that contained plant matter including roots. Although no finds were recovered from this feature, an environmental sample <2> was taken to fulfil the requirements of the evaluation.

The results from the environmental sample taken from deposit **04** were inconclusive. Charcoal fragments from the sample were abraded, which indicated that they had been present in the surrounding environment before being incorporated in the ditch fill. Remains of burnt roots and stems of heather and other heathland plants may be evidence for use of a common historical fuel, but equally may result from more recent burning of scrub. Similarly, fragments of coal may derive historically from a hearth, but may also have been deposited in night soil spread on the land.

The land boundary represented by ditch **03** is not shown on the 1810 Inclosure Award map of Holt (Richmond 2013, 18). It does appear on the Holt Tithe map of 1839 (Richmond 2013, 19),

Trench 3

however, and given the equidistant spacing of this boundary and others to the east it is logical to perceive this as part of a later enclosure event.



Plate 5. Trench 3, ditch 03, looking north

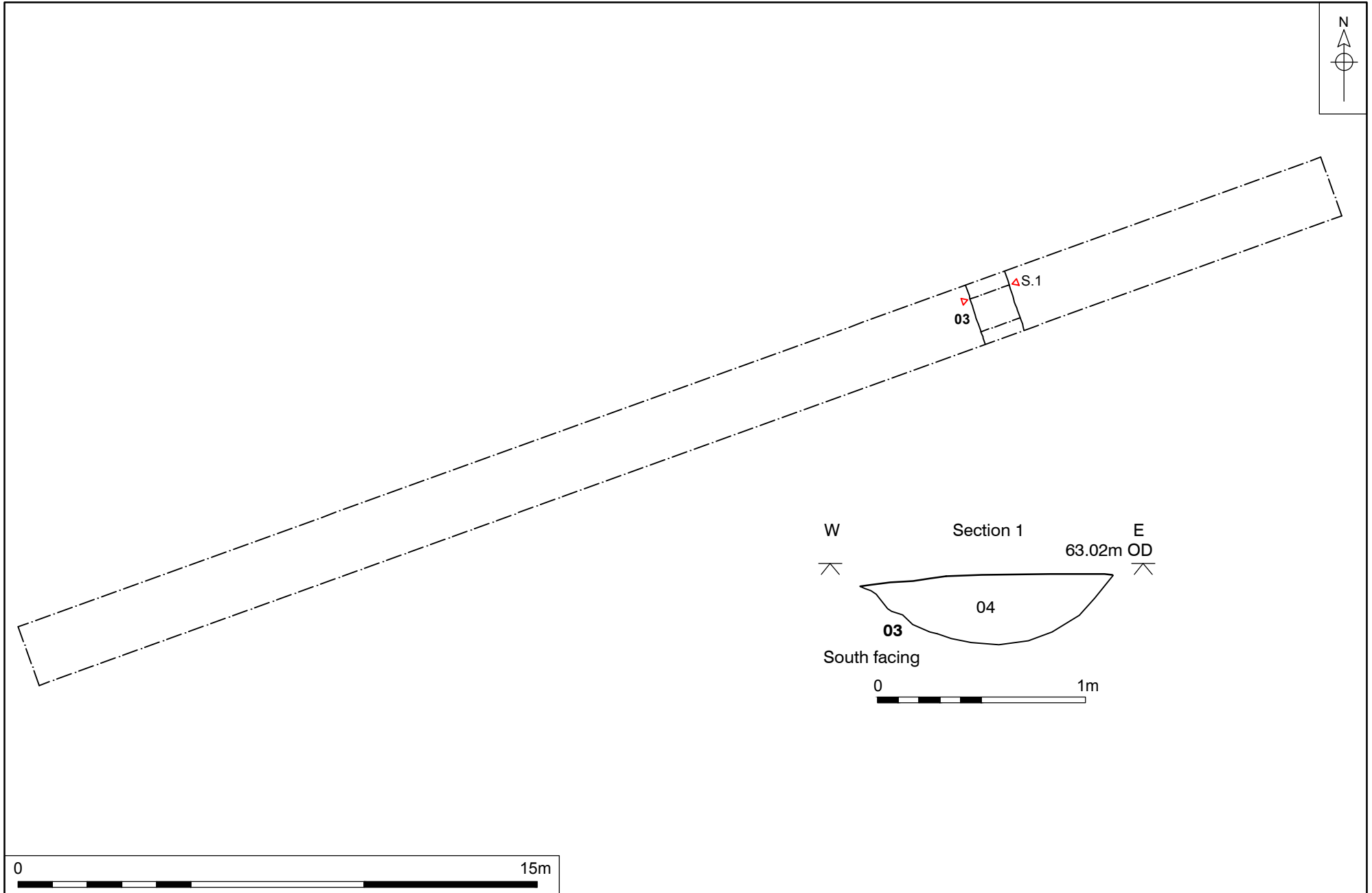


Figure 5. Trench 3, plan and section. Scale 1:150 and 1:25

Trench 4



Plate 6. Trench 4, looking west

Figure 2; Plate 6

Location

Orientation	East-west
West end	609156, 339241
East end	609196, 339254

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.50m

Levels

West top	63.55m OD
East top	63.67m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Topsoil	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.40m	0-0.40m
06	Deposit	Mid-orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.40m-0.50m

Discussion

Trench 4 was placed to test a strong/recent magnetic disturbance feature, which may represent the site of the possible gibbet (D, Fig. 2), (Bartlett 2010, 4).

The trench contained no archaeological features or deposits (Pl. 6).

Trench 5



Plate 7. Trench 5, looking east

Figure 2; Plate 7

Location

Orientation	East–west
West end	609210, 339242
East end	609248, 339255

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.45m

Levels

West top	63.95m OD
East top	63.95m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.35m	0-0.35m
06	Deposit	Mid-orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.35m-0.45m

Discussion

Trench 5 was placed to test a linear magnetic feature located in the centre of the site (F, Fig. 2), (Bartlett, 2010, 4), which did not correspond to the north–south field boundary recorded on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 (Richmond 2013, 20).

The trench did not contain any archaeological features or deposits (Pl. 7). The north–south alignment of feature F through the approximate centre of the site appears as a convincing location for a division/boundary. As it does not appear on any of the historical maps it is possible (as suggested for feature E) that it represents the remnants of a hedge line, or possibly even sub-surface drainage.

Trench 6



Plate 8. Trench 6, looking north

Figures 2, 6; Plates 8, 9

Location

Orientation	North–south
North end	609266, 339285
South end	609286, 339247

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.50m

Levels

North top	64.85m OD
South top	64.68m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.40m	0-0.40m
06	Deposit	Mid-orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.40m-0.50m
07	Cut	Ditch	0.25m	0.50m-0.75m
08	Deposit	Mid- to dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.25m	0.50m-0.75m
09	Cut	Ditch	0.28m	0.50m-0.78m
10	Deposit	Mid- to dark greyish brown sandy silt	0.28m	0.50m-0.78m

Discussion

Trench 6 was placed on the east side of the site (Fig. 2; Pl. 8). It is possible that a ditch recorded in this trench may correspond to a former field boundary depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1887 (Richmond 2013, 20), (Fig. 2). Although the position of the trench does not correspond directly to the line of the mapped field boundary, the alignment of the excavated feature makes a compelling argument that the two are one and the same. The feature was recorded to the north as ditch **03** (see interpretation under Trench 3).

Ditch **07=09** ran obliquely through the trench on a northeast–southwest alignment. Two slots were placed across the ditch in locations where full ditch profiles could be achieved (Fig. 5; Pl. 9).

The excavated portion of slot **07** to the south measured 1m long x 0.80m wide x 0.25m deep (Fig. 5, section 1). Ditch slot **07** had a u-shaped profile and contained a single deposit of mid- to dark greyish brown sandy silt **08**. A single piece of ceramic building material was recovered from deposit **08**.

Environmental soil sample <1> was taken from deposit **08**. It contained a comparable range of macrofossils to sample <2> from ditch **03**, and the results of the analysis were equally inconclusive. Charcoal fragments from the sample were abraded, which indicated that they had

Trench 6

been present in the surrounding environment before being incorporated in the ditch fill. Remains of burnt roots and stems of heathland plants may be evidence for use of a common historical fuel, but equally may result from more recent burning of scrub. Sample <1> contained fewer large pieces of charcoal than sample <2>, but more charred roots and stems. Fragments of coal may derive historically from a hearth, but may also have been deposited in night soil spread on the land. It is not certain whether fragments of marine mollusc shell and charred bone are contemporary with the deposits or later contaminants, and are too few to be otherwise informative.

Slot **09** to the north was directly comparable to ditch slot **07** in size, depth, and profile, and contained a deposit **10** similar in composition to **08** (Fig. 5, section 2). No finds were recovered from ditch slot **09**.



Plate 9. Trench 6, showing ditch slots **07** and **09**, looking south

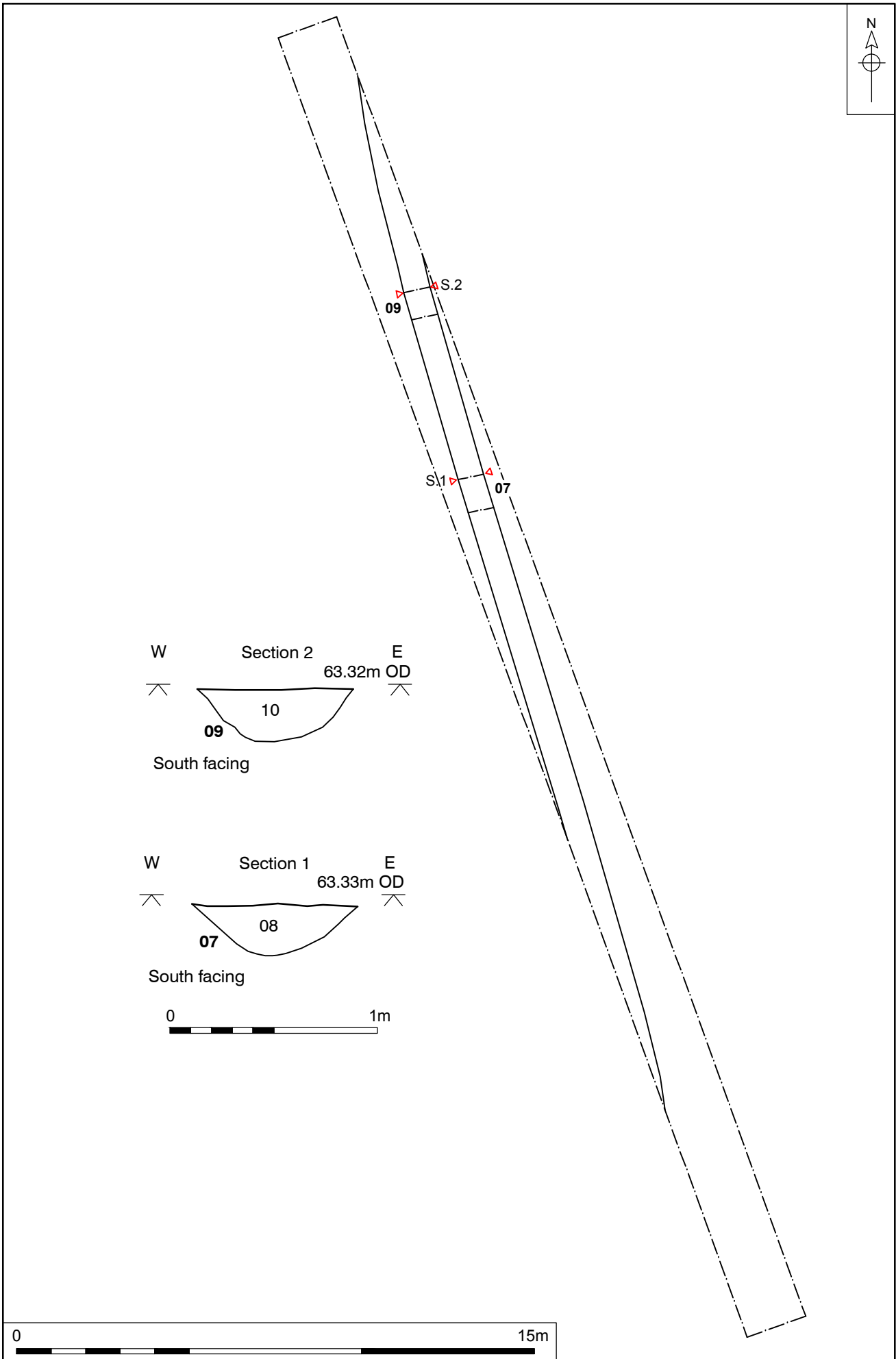


Figure 6. Trench 6, plan and sections. Scale 1:150 and 1:25

Trench 7



Plate 10. Trench 7, looking north

Figure 2; Plate 10

Location

Orientation	North-south
North end	609193, 339238
South end	609206, 339201

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.50m

Levels

North top	64.22m OD
South top	64.24m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Topsoil	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.40m	0-0.40m
06	Deposit	Mid- orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.40m-0.50m

Discussion

Trench 7 was placed to test a strong/recent magnetic disturbance feature, which may have represented the site of the gibbet (D, Fig. 2), (Bartlett 2010, 4). The central and northern part of the trench were located over the feature.

No archaeological features or deposits were recorded in the trench (Pl. 10).

Trench 8



Plate 11. Trench 8, looking north

Figure 2; Plate 11

Location

Orientation	North–south
North end	609176, 339198
South end	609189, 339160

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.40m

Levels

North top	63.95m OD
South top	64.22m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.40m	0-0.40m

Discussion

Trench 8 was placed on the west side of the site in an area that was shown as negative in the geophysical results as a control measure (Fig. 2).

This trench was negative of archaeological features and deposits (Pl. 11).

Trench 9



Plate 12. Trench 9, looking west

Figure 2; Plate 12

Location

Orientation	East–west
West end	609176, 339198
East end	609189, 339160

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.50m

Levels

West top	63.83m OD
East top	64.25m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.40m	0-0.40m
06	Deposit	Mid orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.40m-0.50m

Discussion

Trench 9 was placed to test strong/recent magnetic disturbances (C, Fig. 2) and the location of a former field boundary (F, Fig. 2) which were encompassed by the east and west parts of the trench respectively (Bartlett, 2010, 4). However, Trench 9 revealed no evidence of the field ditch or any other archaeological features or deposits that might account for the geophysics interpretations (Pl. 12).

Trench 10



Plate 13. Trench 10, looking west

Figure 2; Plate 13

Location

Orientation	East-west
West end	609180, 339104
East end	609218, 339117

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.40m

Levels

West top	64.43m OD
East top	64.55m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.30m	0-0.30m
06	Deposit	Mid-orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.30m-0.40m

Discussion

Trench 10 was placed to test strong/recent magnetic disturbances (**B**, Fig. 2), which were situated throughout the extent of the trench (Bartlett, 2010, 4).

No archaeological features or deposits were identified (Pl. 13).

Trench 11



Plate 14. Trench 11, looking south

Figure 2; Plate 14

Location

Orientation	North-south
West end	609233, 339182
East end	609246, 339144

Dimensions

Length	40.00m
Width	1.80m
Average depth	0.40m

Levels

North top	64.66m OD
South top	64.65m OD

Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Thickness	Depth BGL
05	Deposit	Homogeneous dark brown sandy silt topsoil	0.30m	0-0.30m
06	Deposit	Mid orange brown silty sand subsoil	0.10m	0.30-0.40m

Discussion

Trench 11 was placed in the central southern section of the site in an area that contained no geophysical anomalies (Fig. 2, Pl. 14).

The trench proved negative of archaeological features and deposits.

6.0 ARTEFACTS

By Louise Weetman

6.1 Ceramic building material

A single piece of ceramic building material (4g) was recovered from the trial trench evaluation ENF135851. The fragment is small with one flat edge and white inclusions measuring 24mm x 13mm. As it was found in ditch fill **07**, and there is no evidence for earlier occupation on the site, it is conceivable that the fragment may be of post-medieval date.

6.2 Metal finds

Figure 3

6.2.1 Introduction

The metal-detecting survey ENF135850 recovered more than 120 cans, amongst other modern metal debris, none of which were retained. Five metal objects and fragments of indeterminate date were kept for identification. These are reported below. Identification numbers given in the text correspond to those used in Figure 3.

Four pieces are of copper alloy and one is of lead. All of the pieces are of post-medieval–modern date, but not precisely datable. All of the metal finds from the metal-detecting survey are unstratified **1**.

No metal finds were collected during the trial trenching ENF135851.

6.2.2 Copper alloy

21. A D-shaped object 18mm x 20mm.
23. A flat circular disc of 2.5g, diameter 21mm with no further identifying characteristics.
24. A rectangular strip, slightly bent, with a pierced hole and one end that has broken off.
25. A circular object (ring) with a diameter of 35mm.

6.2.3 Lead

22. The only piece of lead recovered from the site is a cylindrical fragment with one end broken or sheared off.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Plant macrofossils

7.1.1 Introduction and method statement

The evaluation excavations at The Grove recorded two ditches of probable post-medieval date along with other features that were not securely dated. Soil samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from the post-medieval contexts (ditches **03** and **07**), and two were submitted for assessment.

The samples were processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Appendix 3. Nomenclature in the table follows Stace (2010). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots, seeds and fungal sclerotia were also recorded.

The non-floating residues were collected in a 1mm mesh sieve and will be sorted when dry. Any artefacts/ecofacts will be retained for further specialist analysis.

7.1.2 Results

Both assemblages are extremely small (<0.1 litres in volume) and are very limited in composition. Charcoal/charred wood fragments are recorded at a moderate density, although most pieces appear rounded and abraded, possibly indicating that they were exposed to the elements for some considerable period prior to incorporation within the ditch fills. It is possibly of note that both assemblages also include a number of fragments of burnt root or stem (including one possible fragment of heather (*Ericaceae*) stem).

Other remains are also scarce. Black porous and tarry residues are recorded, but as all are distinctly hard and brittle, it is thought most likely that they are by-products of the combustion of coal, small pieces of which are also present within both assemblages. A small fragment of burnt bone and a piece of indeterminate marine mollusc shell are also noted, but it is unclear whether these are contemporary with the features from which the samples were taken, or later contaminants.

7.1.3 Plant macrofossil conclusions

In summary, the paucity of material in the assemblages somewhat precludes the possibility of identifying any activities which may have generated the few remains recorded. Heather (and other heathland plants) were often utilised as fuel, but it is equally likely that the current remains are derived from localised burning of scrub for ground clearance. The coal and black porous and tarry residues are most likely to be derived from hearth waste, but such material, incorporated in night soil from the nearby towns and cities, was also frequently spread on the land as a means of disposal. Therefore, these assemblages remain somewhat inconclusive.

On the basis of the current assemblages, it is difficult to make recommendations for a future sampling strategy should further interventions be anticipated. However, it is suggested that additional samples of approximately 20–40l in volume could be taken from any dated features which appear to have a specific purpose (i.e. pits,

post-holes, cess pits). Further sampling of ditch fills is probably not recommended unless the fills appear to contain high densities of either charred or mineralised plant materials.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The trial trenching has demonstrated that a limited range of archaeological remains is present on the site.

The desk-based assessment identified perpendicular land divisions in the north and east part of the development site (Richmond 2013, 19-22, figs 4-7) 5). That to the east was not identified by the geophysical survey, but it was recorded as a ditch feature in Trench 3, and probably also in Trench 6. Conversely, linear features interpreted from the geophysics results (shown as **E** and **F** on Figure 2) did not appear in the archaeological record. Feature **E** perhaps corresponds to a boundary first marked by the Ordnance Survey in 1928 (Richmond 2013, 22, fig. 7), and it is suggested that both **E** and **F** represent hedge lines or drainage features. To judge from the map evidence and the absence of earlier finds, it can be said with a degree of confidence that the ditch recorded on the east side of the site dates from no earlier than the 19th century, and it is suggested that it relates to a wider pattern of (now defunct) field boundaries laid out as an enclosure event.

The geophysical survey identified four areas of magnetic disturbance **A**, **B**, **C** and **D** (Fig. 2). Magnetic anomaly **D** was located over the suspected site of the gibbet identified during the desk-based assessment (Richmond 2013). Anomaly **D** was intersected by two trenches (Trenches 4 and 7; Fig. 2), which demonstrated that there were no surviving archaeological features or deposits at this point. An absence of archaeological features and deposits was also noted in the other areas of magnetic disturbance **A**, **B** and **C**. Area **B** is situated close to the line of the Midland and Great Northern Joint Railway, and it is conceivable that activity associated with the railway is responsible for the presence of magnetic debris in this area. Area **A** lies against a field boundary, and may have been subject to similar non-archaeological disruption. These observations are borne out by the metal-detector survey, which recovered more than 120 cans, amongst other modern metal detritus, from the topsoil in the areas of magnetic disturbance. The correlation between the modern metal finds and Areas **A-D** perhaps clarifies the magnetic enhancements recorded by the geophysical survey.

Although the results from analysis of the environmental samples were deemed to be inconclusive, the notion that charred heathland plants may have been burnt during scrub clearance may tie in with the idea that the excavated ditch was a land enclosure boundary (which might succeed or precipitate clearance of the land). The coal and black porous and tarry residues found in the samples may result from night soil spreading from Holt, but the proximity of the late 19th-century railway (NHER 13584) to the south of the site might provide an alternative origin.

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

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Surveying was undertaken by Martin Gould of Survey Solutions.

The finds were processed, recorded and reported on by Louise Weetman of NPS Archaeology.

The environmental samples were processed by Rob Fryer and analysed by Val Fryer.

Machining and reinstatement of trenches was undertaken by Wordingham Plant Hire.

This report was illustrated by David Dobson and edited by Andrew Crowson.

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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

ENF 135850 Metal-detecting survey

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period	Location
01	Deposit			Topsoil finds collection	Unknown	Entire site

ENF 135851 Trial trenching

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period	Location
01	Cut			Shallow hollow	Unknown	Trench 1
02	Deposit		01	Fill of 01	Unknown	
03	Cut	Ditch		Ditch	Unknown	Trench 3
04	Deposit		03	Fill of 03	Unknown	
05	Deposit			Topsoil	Modern	Trenches 1-11
06	Deposit			Subsoil	Modern	Trenches 1-11
07	Cut	Ditch		Ditch	?Post-medieval	Trench 6
08	Deposit		07	Fill of 07	?Post-medieval	
09	Cut	Ditch		Ditch	?Post-medieval	Trench 6
10	Deposit		09	Fill of 07	?Post-medieval	

Appendix 1b: Feature Summary

ENF 135851 Trial trenching

Period	Category	Total
Post-medieval	Ditch	2

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

ENF 135850 Metal-detecting survey

Ctxt	Material	Qty	Record No.	Wt (g)	Period	Notes
01	Copper alloy	1	21	2.5	Unknown	D-shaped object
01	Lead	1	22	33.6	Unknown	Circular waste
01	Copper alloy	1	23	2.5	Unknown	Flat, circular disc
01	Copper alloy	1	24	10.7	Unknown	Rectangular strip with circular hole
01	Copper alloy	1	25	4.2	Unknown	Circular ring

ENF 135851 Trial trenching

Context	Material	Qty	Wt (g)	Period	Notes
08	Ceramic building material	1	4	Post-medieval	

Appendix 2b: Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Unknown	Copper-alloy	4
Unknown	Lead	1

Appendix 3: Plant Macrofossils

Sample No.	1	2
Context No.	8	4
Feature No.	7	3
Plant macrofossils		
Ericaceae indet. (stem)		xcf
Charcoal <2mm	xx	xx
Charcoal >2mm		x
Charcoal >5mm		x
Charred root/stem	xx	x
Other remains		
Black porous 'cokey' material	xx	xx
Black tarry material	x	
Bone	xb	
Marine mollusc shell	xpmc	
Small coal frags.	x	xx
Sample volume (litres)	10	10
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%

x = 1 – 10 specimens xx = 11 – 50 specimens

cf = compare b = burnt pmc = possible modern contaminant

Appendix 4: OASIS Report Summaries

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: norfolka1-202930

Project details

Project name	The Grove, Gresham's School
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (metal-detecting [OASIS 202930] and trial trenching [OASIS 202933]) was conducted by NPS Archaeology for CgMs on behalf of Hopkins Homes Ltd. The work was carried out ahead of an application for planning permission for the development of residential housing on land at The Grove, Gresham's School, Holt, Norfolk. A geophysical (magnetometer) survey of the site was conducted in August 2010 and revealed a potential former field boundary and magnetic anomalies that could be of archaeological significance, or natural occurrences. An archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken in June 2013 which concluded that the site lies with an area of low archaeological potential (Richmond 2013). A two-stage evaluation programme was subsequently carried out by NPS Archaeology in January 2015. This was designed to provide additional information on possible finds concentrations in the topsoil and subsoil deposits, and to investigate the potential for sub-surface archaeological features and deposits identified by the geophysical survey within the proposed development area. A metal-detecting survey of the topsoil produced modern debris, which included cans and other nondescript metal fragments. Informed by the geophysical survey interpretations, 11 trial trenches were excavated. Two of these produced archaeological features and deposits while a third trench revealed a deeper stratified soil horizon that was likely to have been situated in a natural hollow. The archaeological features and deposits are likely to represent land and field boundaries, probably dated to the post-medieval period, and most likely to the 19th century. Taken together, the results of the evaluation, the geophysical interpretations, and the desk-based evidence suggest that little reshaping of the landscape has occurred over a long time-span.
Project dates	Start: 20-01-2015 End: 23-01-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	135850 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	135851 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	136032 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project

Monument type NONE None
 Significant Finds 4 X CUA OBJECTS Post Medieval
 Significant Finds 1 X PB OBJECT Post Medieval
 Investigation type "Systematic Metal Detector Survey"
 Prompt National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country England
 Site location NORFOLK NORTH NORFOLK HOLT The Grove, Gresham's School
 Study area 31680.00 Square metres
 Site coordinates TG 0897 3916 52.9087302915 1.10800167741 52 54 31 N 001 06 28 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation NPS Archaeology
 Project brief originator Norfolk Historic Environment Service
 Project design originator NPS Archaeology
 Project director/manager John R. Ames
 Project supervisor NPS Archaeology

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Norfolk Museums Service
 Physical Contents "Metal"
 Digital Archive recipient NPS Archaeology
 Digital Contents "other"
 Digital Media available "Spreadsheets"
 Paper Archive recipient Norfolk Museums Service
 Paper Contents "other"
 Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Plan", "Report"

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OASIS ID: norfolka1-202933

Project details

Project name	The Grove, Gresham's School
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (metal-detecting [OASIS 202930] and trial trenching [OASIS 202933]) was conducted by NPS Archaeology for CgMs on behalf of Hopkins Homes Ltd. The work was carried out ahead of an application for planning permission for the development of residential housing on land at The Grove, Gresham's School, Holt, Norfolk. A geophysical (magnetometer) survey of the site was conducted in August 2010 and revealed a potential former field boundary and magnetic anomalies that could be of archaeological significance, or natural occurrences. An archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken in June 2013 which concluded that the site lies with an area of low archaeological potential (Richmond 2013). A two-stage evaluation programme was subsequently carried out by NPS Archaeology in January 2015. This was designed to provide additional information on possible finds concentrations in the topsoil and subsoil deposits, and to investigate the potential for sub-surface archaeological features and deposits identified by the geophysical survey within the proposed development area. A metal-detecting survey of the topsoil produced modern debris, which included cans and other nondescript metal fragments. Informed by the geophysical survey interpretations, 11 trial trenches were excavated. Two of these produced archaeological features and deposits while a third trench revealed a deeper stratified soil horizon that was likely to have been situated in a natural hollow. The archaeological features and deposits are likely to represent land and field boundaries, probably dated to the post-medieval period, and most likely to the 19th century. Taken together, the results of the evaluation, the geophysical interpretations, and the desk-based evidence suggest that little reshaping of the landscape has occurred over a long time-span.
Project dates	Start: 20-01-2015 End: 23-01-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	135851 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	135850 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	136032 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation

Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK NORTH NORFOLK HOLT The Grove, Gresham's School
Study area	31680.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TG 0897 3916 52.9087302915 1.10800167741 52 54 31 N 001 06 28 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 63.00m Max: 64.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	NPS Archaeology
Project brief originator	Norfolk Historic Environment Service
Project design originator	NPS Archaeology
Project director/manager	John R. Ames
Project supervisor	NPS Archaeology

Project archives

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