

NAU ARCHAEOLOGY

Report No. 1228

**An Archaeological Evaluation at 48 to 50 Bacton Road, North Walsham,
Norfolk.**

HER 49705WLN

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Location: 48 to 50 Bacton Road North Walsham
Grid Ref: TG 628580 330525
HER No.: 49705WLN
Date of fieldwork: 7th November 2006

Summary

NAU Archaeology were commissioned to undertake an archaeological evaluation in advance of proposed development of a site at 48 to 50 Bacton Road North Walsham on behalf of P N Developments Ltd.

A single trench that measured 3m by 1m in plan was evaluated. No remains of archaeological significance were present within the evaluation trench, with a single small rectangular pit of probable 19th or 20th century date the only feature present. No artefacts were recovered from the evaluation. Deposits comprised a cultivated topsoil overlying a sterile subsoil.

1.0 Introduction

The site was located at 48-50 Bacton Road, North Walsham. A Programme of Archaeological Work (PoAW) at the site was requested by A.R.J Hutcheson (pers comm 14/08/06) former head of Archaeological Planning at Norfolk Landscape Archaeology. This work was in advance of proposed new residential development at the site. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref: DA/BAU1402).

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 following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

2.0 Geology and Topography

This part of Norfolk lies on Pleistocene Clay deposits with Norwich Brickearth. In higher areas gravels of the Anglian Glaciation cap the Brickearth. The site was located at approximately 30m OD.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

North Walsham is mentioned in Domesday (AD 1086) and was possibly part of an Early Saxon or Middle Saxon estate. The town was granted the right to hold a market in 1274-5. At the centre of the town is the medieval church of St Nicholas, believed to overlie a church of Late Saxon origin (Pevsner and Wilson 1997). The textile trade, particularly the production of woollen cloth, was the most important economic activity within the town and surrounding area during the medieval period. The town was also the local centre for the peasants revolt of 1381.

Though little previous archaeological investigation has taken place in North Walsham and its surrounding area, the potential exists in any historic town to uncover informative evidence relation to the development of the locality in the past. Although Roman finds of coins and pottery have been located within the town (NHER sites No.s 6839, 9759, 18375), none of these findspots are close to the current site (Emery 2006)

The present site was occupied by a windmill in 1883 and an iron workings might be present on the site or to the west (pers comm E Rose). The iron workings, the St Nicholas Works, is detailed on the Ordnance Survey 6 " map of 1885. A Corn Mill and post-medieval barn are recorded as NHER site No. 44314. Immediately north of the site is an extensive modern cemetery.

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. A 5% area of the proposed building footprint was evaluated.

Machine excavation was carried out with a /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* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.

Due to the lack of suitable deposits, no environmental samples were taken

5.0 Results

Trench 3

Natural deposits (03) were present across the base of the evaluation trench and comprised a pale brown yellow brown silt and fine sand. Overlying natural was a layer of pale brown sand-silt (02) with inclusions of occasional small stones. This was interpreted as a subsoil and measured 0.28m in depth. Cutting this subsoil in the west of the trench was a small flat-based pit (05) that was sub-rectangular in plan with a length of 0.70m, a width of 0.42m and a depth of 0.25m. Its single fill (04) was a pale brown sand-silt containing occasional small stones. Occasional small fragments of coal, not collected, were also present within this fill. This pit was aligned approximately northeast-to-southwest. Sealing the subsoil and fill of this pit was a heavily rooted dark brown topsoil (01) that measured 0.35m in depth. This completed the deposit sequence recorded in the evaluation trench

6.0 Discussion and Conclusions

This evaluation trench is one of 4 currently proposed for this site in advance of redevelopment. This trench was evaluated at the request of the client in order to address the planning condition in respect to a particular part of the proposed development.

The evaluation revealed no remains of archaeological interest and recovered no artefacts.

There was no indication as to the presence of the windmill thought to occupy the site.

The trench was located within a cultivated plot and this would explain the character of the deposits observed.

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

Acknowledgement

The site was evaluated by the author and Pete Crawley. This report was illustrated by David Dobson

Bibliography

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|------------------------------|------|--|
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| Emery, G., | 2006 | <i>A Summery Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for 55 Hall Road, North Walsham, Norfolk.</i> NAU Archaeology Report No. 1201 |
| Pevsner, N., and Wilson, W., | 1997 | <i>The buildings of England, Norfolk 1: Norwich and the North –East,</i> Yale University Press, Second Edition |

Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Period
01	Deposit	Topsoil	Modern
02	Deposit	Subsoil	Undated
03	Deposit	Natural	Undated
04	Deposit	Fill	Post-medieval
05	Cut	Pit Cut	Post-medieval

Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table

Period	Feature type	Quantity
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	pit	1

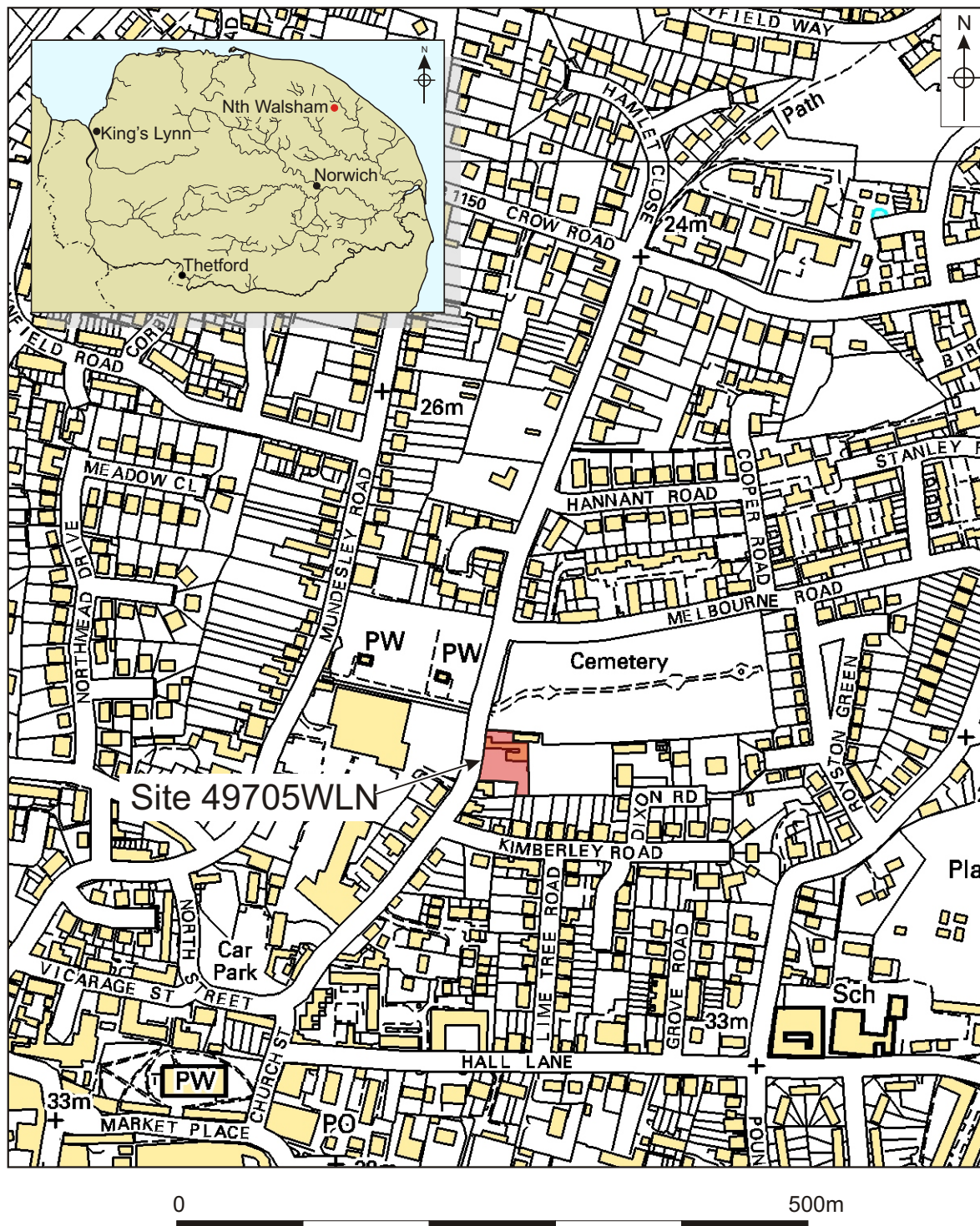


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

Local Authority No.100019340

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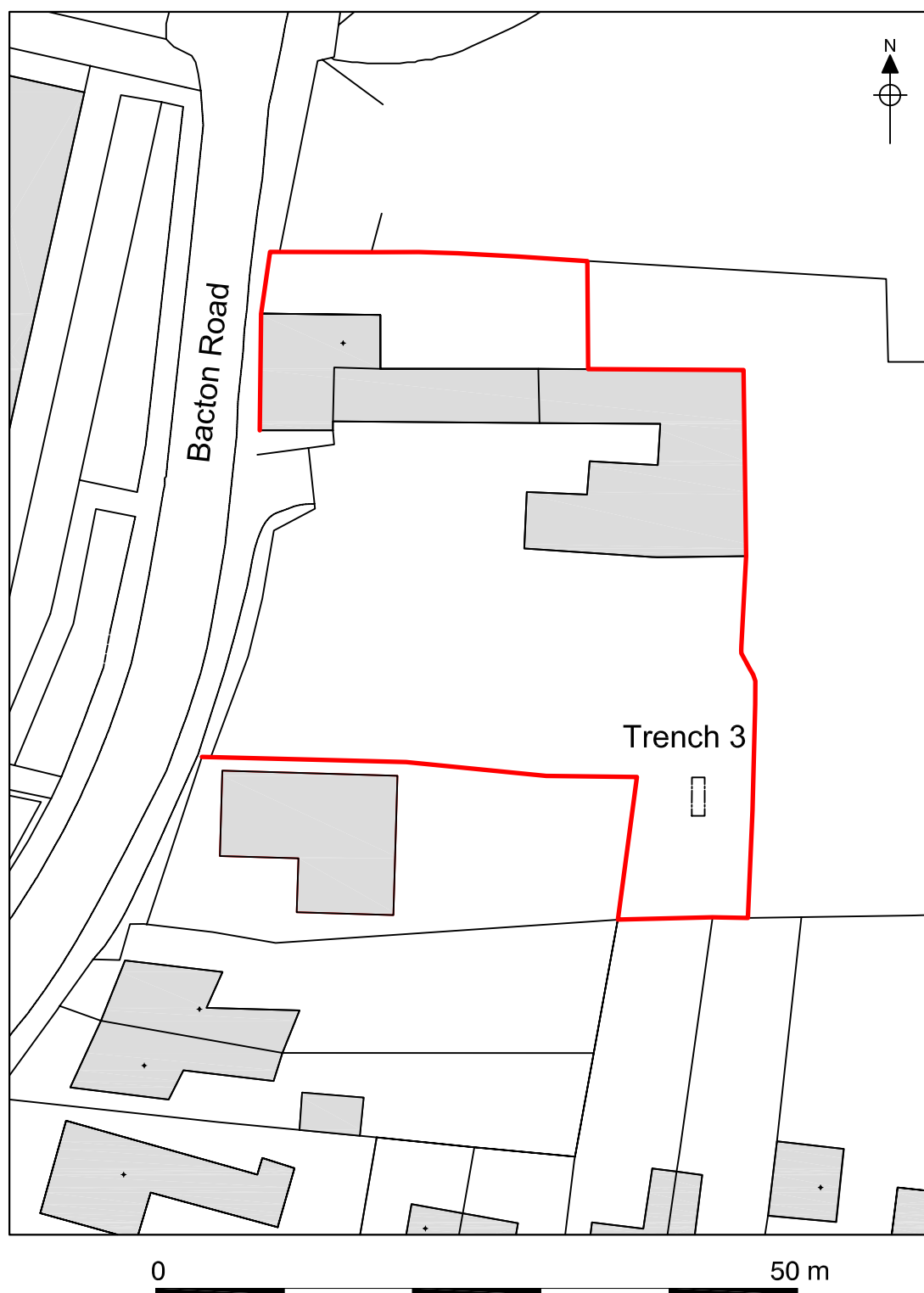


Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500

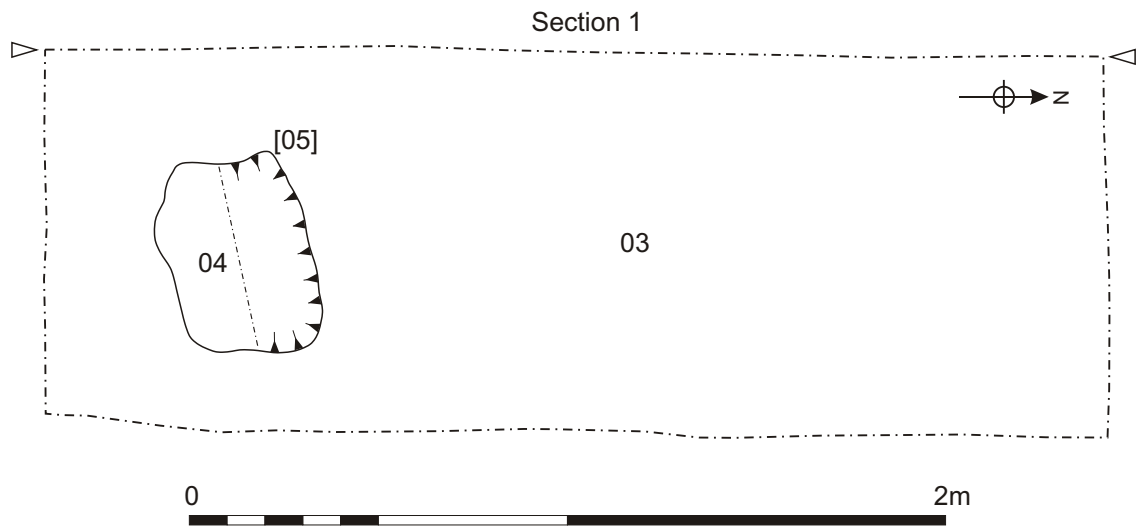


Figure 3. Trench 3, plan. Scale 1:20

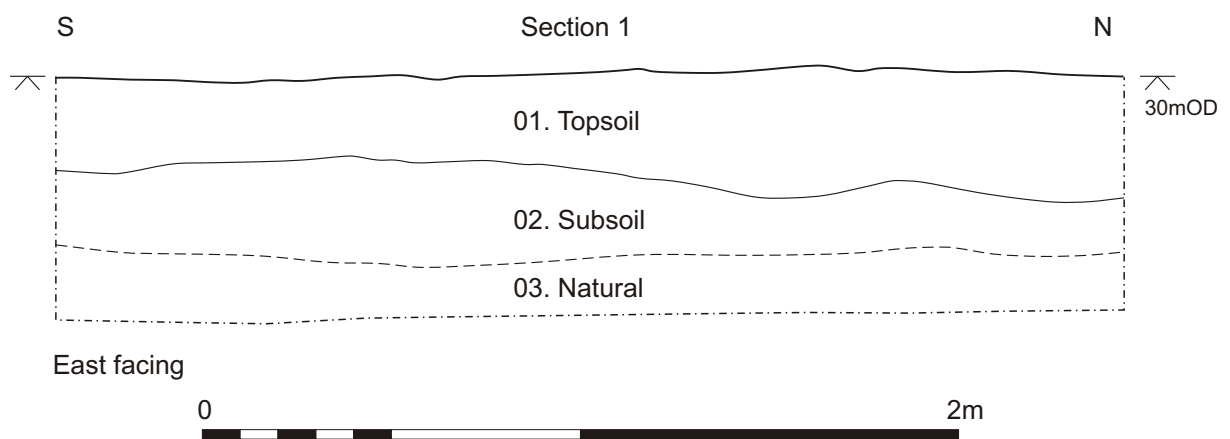


Figure 4. Trench 3, east facing section. Scale 1:20