

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 719

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Cherry Tree Farm,
Stanfield, Norfolk**

38132 STN

Chris Phillips

May 2004

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Local Authority No. 100019340

Fig.1 is based upon the Ordnance Survey 1:10,000 map with the permission of the Controller of H.M. Stationery Office © Crown Copyright 'Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings' Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Norwich (01/06/2004). **Reference copy: no further copies to be made.**

Location: Cherry Tree Farm, Stanfield, Norfolk.
Grid Ref: TF 9342 2055
HER No.: 38132 STN
Date of fieldwork: 18th July 2002

Summary

An archaeological evaluation at Cherry Tree Farm, Stanfield, in central Norfolk, revealed several pits from which a small number of medieval and post-medieval artefacts were recovered.

1.0 Introduction

(Fig. 1)

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in the grounds of Cherry Tree Farmhouse, Stanfield, in central Norfolk. A single evaluation trench, 15m by 1.6m, was excavated to an average depth of 0.6m within the 'footprint' of a proposed domestic dwelling.

This report was commissioned and funded by Mr and Mrs Caleb, of Cherry Tree Farmhouse, Church Lane, Stanfield.

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Method Statement prepared by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (1378/ JB) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref: 20/07/00/ARJH).

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 the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, following the relevant policy on archiving standards.

2.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

Documentary evidence indicates that the village of Stanfield (*Stanafelda*; the name simply means stony field) dates from at least the Late Saxon period, as it is mentioned in the Domesday book. The entry suggests a substantial settlement of around 200 people.

Before the Norman conquest the village was held by Stigand the Bishop of Canterbury, and after came under the auspices of William of Warenne, the 2nd Earl of Surrey, who was a significant land owner in Norfolk at that time and responsible for the construction of Castle Acre and New Buckingham.

The church of St. Margaret is medieval (13th century) but contains elements that are probably 10th- or 11th-century in date. A moated manor is located just to the south-east of the church that probably dates from the 14th or 15th century.

An archaeological survey in the village and surrounding area by Network Archaeology in 1998 (Norfolk Historic and Environment Record Sites 34112-5) has confirmed that Late Saxon and medieval occupation was significant.

The site of the proposed dwelling, therefore, is situated in an area which was intensively occupied during the Late Saxon and medieval periods.

3.0 Methodology

(Fig. 2)

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 10% of the total area to be developed should be investigated, which meant that a single east to west trench, measuring 15m by 1.6m, was excavated within the 'footprint' of the proposed development.

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 *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.

4.0 Results (Appendix 1)

(Fig. 2)

A group of three small east to west pits ([1], [3] and [5]) were observed in the eastern end of the trench, and a single similar sized north to south pit ([7]) was observed in the centre of the trench. Pit [1] was 0.5m wide and 0.33m deep, pit [3] was 0.45m wide and 0.29m deep and pit [5] was 0.6m wide and 0.33m deep. It was not possible to establish the lengths and precise shapes of these pits during excavation, although they have been shown as relatively regularly shaped in figure 2. Pits [1], [3] and [5] contained almost identical deposits ([2], [4] and [6] respectively) which consisted of a mid-orange/brown silty clay with an even mix of chalk flecks. The fills ([2] and [6]) of pits [1] and [5] both contained artefacts dating from the medieval to post-medieval period. Pit [8] was 0.55m wide and contained a mid-brown deposit ([7]) which was a silty/sandy clay. No artefacts were recovered from this pit.

5.0 The Finds (Appendix 2)

5.1 Pottery (Appendix 3)

Methodology

The ceramics were quantified by recording the number of sherds present in each context, the estimated number of vessels represented and the weight of each fabric. Other characteristics such as condition and decoration were noted, and an overall date range for the pottery in each context was established. The pottery was recorded on *pro forma* sheets by context using letter codes based on fabric and form. The ceramic information was recorded on a spreadsheet.

Pottery

A total of ten fragments of medieval pottery, weighing 0.082kg, was recovered during this evaluation.

This included two abraded fragments of pottery from pit [1] ([2]). These consisted of a single body sherd of medieval coarseware together with a sherd from a Grimston-type ware jug which had an iron-oxide vertical strip decoration, suggestive of a 13th to 14th century date.

Two further pottery sherds were found in pit [5] ([6]) and are of a similar date. They are a fragment of a thick-walled vessel, probably a bowl or storage vessel with a sagging base was made in a medieval coarseware fabric, and a small, abraded fragment of Grimston-type ware which dates between the late 12th to 14th century.

Six further fragments of a similar date were identified from unstratified deposits. Two joining fragments of a medieval coarseware bowl with an everted rim and a horizontal applied strip were present, together with additional fragments of this fabric and two sherds of glazed Grimston-type ware.

5.2 Ceramic Building Material

The site produced a single fragment, weighing 0.008kg, of post-medieval flat roof tile from an unstratified context.

5.3 Faunal Remains

A single fragment of sheep/goat metapodal, weighing 0.002kg, was recovered from an unstratified context.

5.5 Small Finds

An illegible post-medieval copper alloy coin (SF1 [unstratified]) was collected.

5.6 Glass

A single fragment of post-medieval window glass was recovered from pit [5] ([6]).

6.0 Conclusions

Evidence for cultural activity on this site could be anticipated, given that areas of Stanfield have been occupied since Saxon times. The presence of three east to west aligned pits tightly grouped at the eastern end of the trench and another pit north to south aligned in the centre of the trench are indicative of domestic occupation nearby. The artefacts found within these features suggest they were back-filled during the post-medieval period, although a significant amount of residual medieval pottery was included in their fill.

No function for these pits can be suggested, however they are unlikely to have formed part of any structures that may have been present on the medieval street frontage, but could possibly have been associated with such structures. The dimensions and alignment of pits 1, 3 and 5 would have suggested that they were graves if the eastern limits of the features had been more distinct and if any evidence of human bone had been present.

Acknowledgements

This report was commissioned and funded by Mr and Mrs Caleb, of Cherry Tree Farmhouse, Church Lane, Stanfield. The author would also like to thank Simon Underdown, who assisted with the work on this site. The pottery was identified by Richenda Goffin and all other finds were identified by Lucy Talbot. The report was illustrated by Steve Tatler and edited by Alice Lyons.

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Period
1	Cut	Linear cut	Medieval
2	Deposit	Deposit	Medieval
3	Cut	Linear cut	?
4	Deposit	Deposit	?
5	Cut	Linear cut	?Medieval
6	Deposit	Deposit	?Medieval
7	Deposit	Deposit	?
8	Cut	Linear cut	?

Appendix 2: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
Unstratified	Pottery	6	0.061	Medieval
Unstratified	Ceramic building material	1	0.008	Post-medieval
Unstratified	Copper alloy (SF1)	1	-	Post-medieval
2	Pottery	2	0.009	Medieval
2	Animal bone	-	0.002	-
6	Pottery	2	0.016	Medieval
6	Window glass	1	-	Post-medieval

Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Date
Unstratified	Medieval coarse ware	Body	2	0.017	11th to 14th century
Unstratified	Grimston glazed ware	Body	2	0.022	Late 12th to 14th century
Unstratified	Medieval coarse ware	Bowl	2	0.02	11th to 14th century
2	Medieval coarse ware	Body	1	0.005	11th to 14th century
2	Grimston glazed ware	Body	1	0.004	Late 12th to 14th century
6	Grimston glazed ware	Body	1	0.001	Late 12th to 14th century
6	Miscellaneous	Body	1	0.013	Medieval?

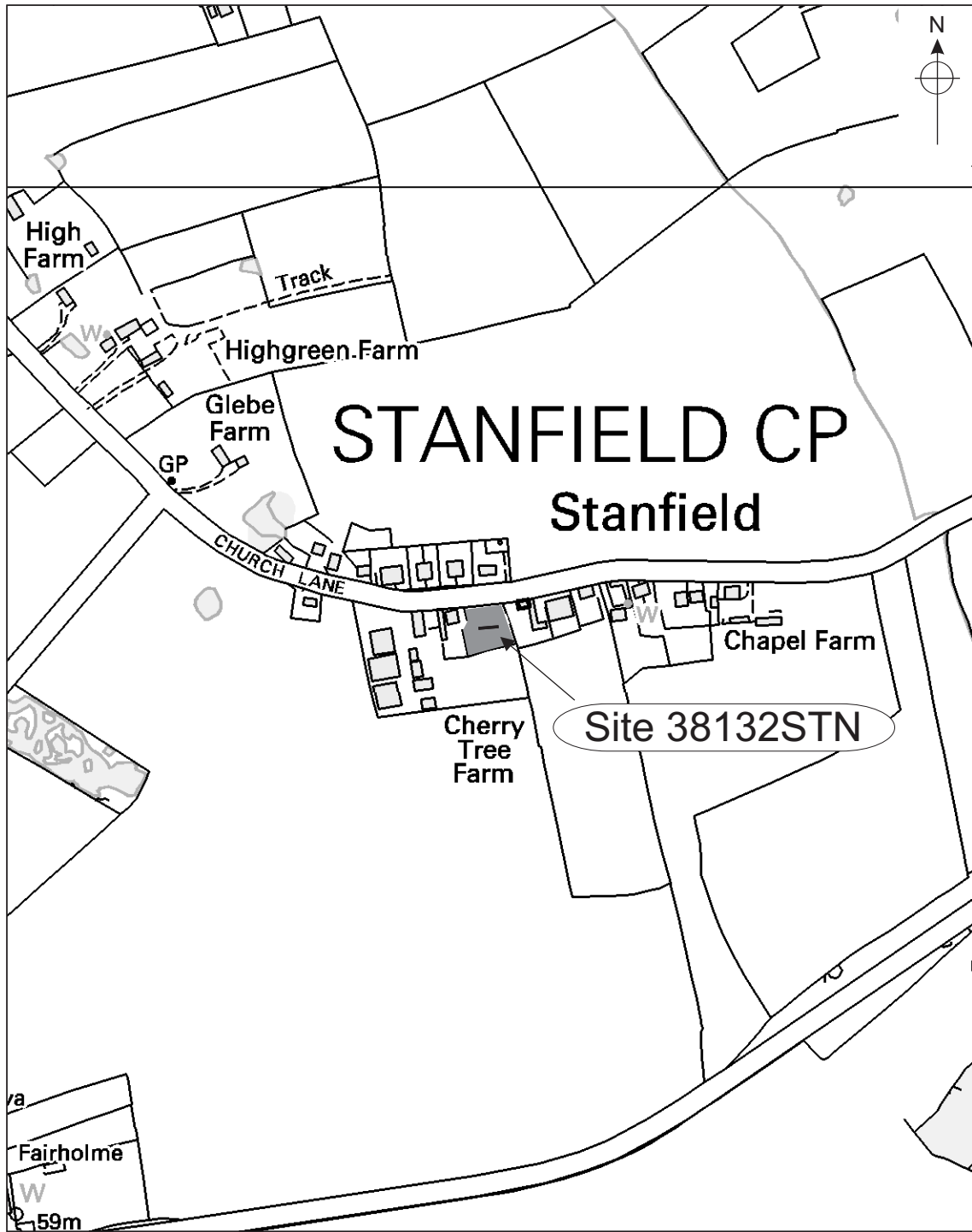


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

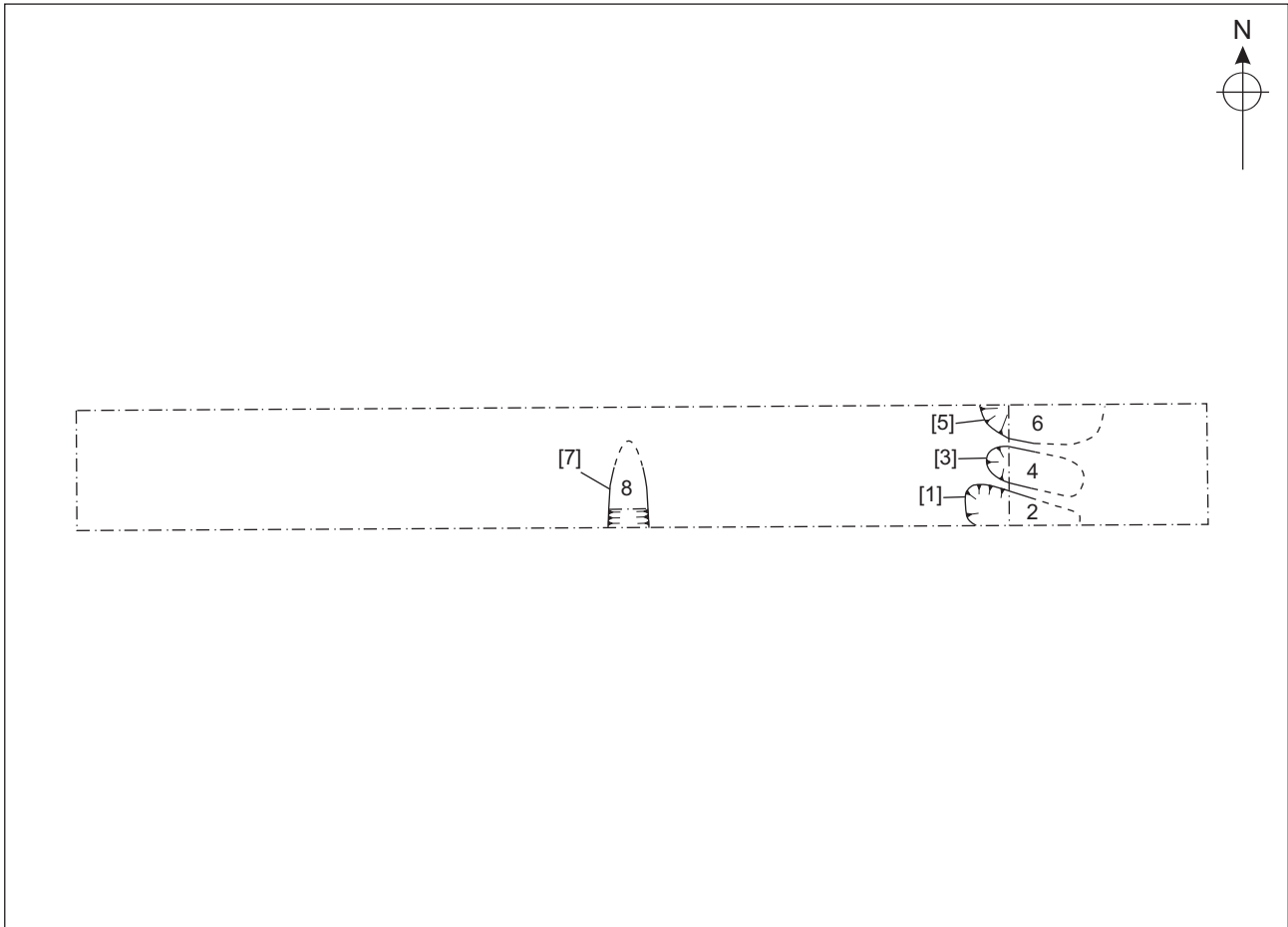
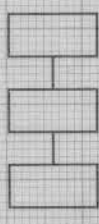
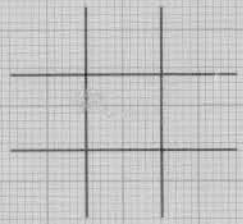


Figure 2. Plan of trench. Scale 1:100



↑ Church Lane ↓

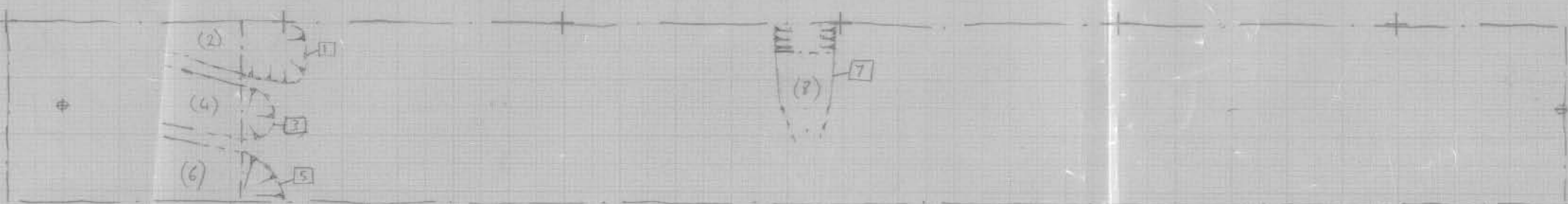


NOTES

CHERRY TREE FARM
STANFIELD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

SITE 38132 STN



TOP OF
LEVEL AT SECTION 0.50 m BELOW TOP OF TRENCH

REMAINS 1 + 5 MAX DEPTH 0.08m BELOW SURFACE
" 3 " " 0.04m " "



50.018 + 0.56 m BELOW CHANGED LEVEL.

REMAINS BELOW 0.25m OF DARK LOAMY TO

(2)+(4)+(6) ALL PILLS OF 'MODERN' ? CERAMIC REMAINS.

MID ORANGE BROWN SILTY CLAY
WITH OCCASIONAL CHALK PIECES + SMALL FRAGMENTS
& OCCASIONAL SMALL - MEDIUM SUB-ANGULAR FLINTS.