

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 816

**An Archaeological Evaluation at Rookery Farm Dairy,
High Street, Mundesley**

38145 MDY

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Location: Rookery Farm Dairy, High Street, Mundesley
Grid Ref: TG 3106 3606
HER No: 38145 MDY
Date of Fieldwork: 27th March 2003

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of proposed redevelopment at Rookery Farm Dairy, High Street, Mundesley, Norfolk. Three trenches were placed in the accessible areas between existing farm buildings and courtyard which constituted 5% of the sample area.

Examination of the trenches revealed that a substantial amount of soil removal, potentially including any deposits of archaeological interest and possibly the natural, had taken place during the levelling of the area prior to the construction of the present dairy farm buildings. No archaeological features or deposits had survived.

1.0 Introduction

Fig. 1

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU) at Rookery Farm, Mundesley. The work was commissioned by Mr C. Payne in advance of development proposal for four dwellings

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref: 07/03/03 ARJH) and a Method Statement prepared by the NAU (Ref: MS/Eval/JB/1508).

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 Geology and Topography

The site overlies the Norwich Crag Series which itself is overlain by rich deposits of well drained almost stone-free brown loam over sand, gravel and partial clay.

The site lies close to the north-east Norfolk coast and is situated north of a watercourse presently named Mundesley Beck. This watercourse flows in an east-to-west direction and runs through the village of Mundesley.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

Two sites of archaeological interest have been identified in the vicinity of this site:

- A Bronze Age spearhead (HER 4143) was discovered to the east of the proposed development site.
- A hamlet is shown within the vicinity of the site on *Fadens Topographical Map of Norfolk c.1797*.

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 stipulated that a 5% sample of the proposed development area should be archaeologically evaluated, which resulted in three trial trenches covering 48m² being examined.

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.

Site conditions were very good with clear access around the trenches and the weather conditions were also excellent.

5.0 Results (Appendix 1)

Fig. 2

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located in the north-west corner of the northern part of the site, aligned north-to-south. It measured 10m x 1.80m and was machined to a depth of 0.60m.

Prior to the machining a concrete surface with a depth of 0.10m was broken out. At a depth of 0.30m disturbed material was noted, associated with relatively modern drainage pipe ([01]) which was aligned north-east to south-west. The disturbed material consisted of redeposited natural sand and clay with occasional fragments of brick rubble and chalk ([02]). South of the drainage pipe a deposit of black cinders ([03]) and an unidentified white material ([04]) were encountered. This material was 0.30m deep and is believed to be waste from a gas-works adjacent to the site. Once the white deposit and black waste material was

removed a patch of soil was observed beneath which the natural sandy clay was recorded.

Truncation of the overburden, potentially including any deposits of archaeological interest and possibly the natural, had taken place during the levelling for the construction of the farm's dairy buildings.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was located between Trenches 1 and 3 and measured 4m x 4m in area with a maximum depth of 0.5m.

After the removal of surface make-up ([05]), which was 0.3m deep and consisted of compact rubble and rounded flint cobbles, the same black cinder deposits ([03]) as seen in Trench 1 were recorded. In this trench the observable deposits were slightly shallower, with a depth of 0.2m, and mixed with what appeared to be a possible cobbled surface ([06]). The possible cobbled surface was not recorded in detail because it was covered with an unidentified black waste material which could potentially have been a harmful contaminant. Below the cobbled surface and waste material was the sandy clay natural.

As for Trench 1, truncation of the overburden, potentially including any deposits of archaeological interest and possibly the natural, had taken place during the levelling for the construction of the farm's dairy buildings.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was located at the western end of the site, aligned east-to-west. It measured 8m x 1.80m and was machined to a depth of 0.50m.

The results were consistent with the deposits previously described for Trenches 2 and 3. Trench 3 was devoid of any humic soil layers which had been truncated away during the levelling prior to the construction of the site. The make-up deposit however, did slightly differ from the previous trenches and consisted totally of mixed building rubble and rounded flint cobbles ([07]), 0.50m deep. This more substantial make-up layer may have been designed as a surface to allow for heavy traffic in this area or was simply more compact because of its location within the courtyard. Below the make-up deposits the natural was a light-to-mid brown clayey sand.

6.0 The Finds

No finds were recovered during the evaluation.

7.0 Conclusions

No stratified soil horizons survived within the three trial trenches examined, only make-up deposits directly overlying natural sands and clays. It is apparent that severe truncation had taken place prior to the construction of the existing farm buildings, to provide a suitable surface for construction. This evaluation was negative of archaeological features and deposits.

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

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by John Ames and Danny Voisey. Many thanks to Mr C. Payne who commissioned the evaluation, supplied and drove the machinery. The illustrations were prepared by the author and by David Dobson who also produced the report. The report was edited by Alice Lyons.

Bibliography

- Barringer, J.C., 1989 *Fadens Topographical Map of Norfolk c.1797*
Dereham: Lark Press
- Department of the Environment 1990 *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning*
London: Department of the Environment

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Trench	Category	Description	Period
01	1	Cut	Modern drainage pipe	Modern
02	1	Deposit	Fill of [01]	Modern
03	1	Deposit	Black cinders	Modern
04	1	Deposit	White waste material	Modern
05	2	Deposit	Brick rubble make-up	Modern
06	2	Deposit	Cobbled surface	Modern
07	3	Deposit	Brick rubble make-up	Modern

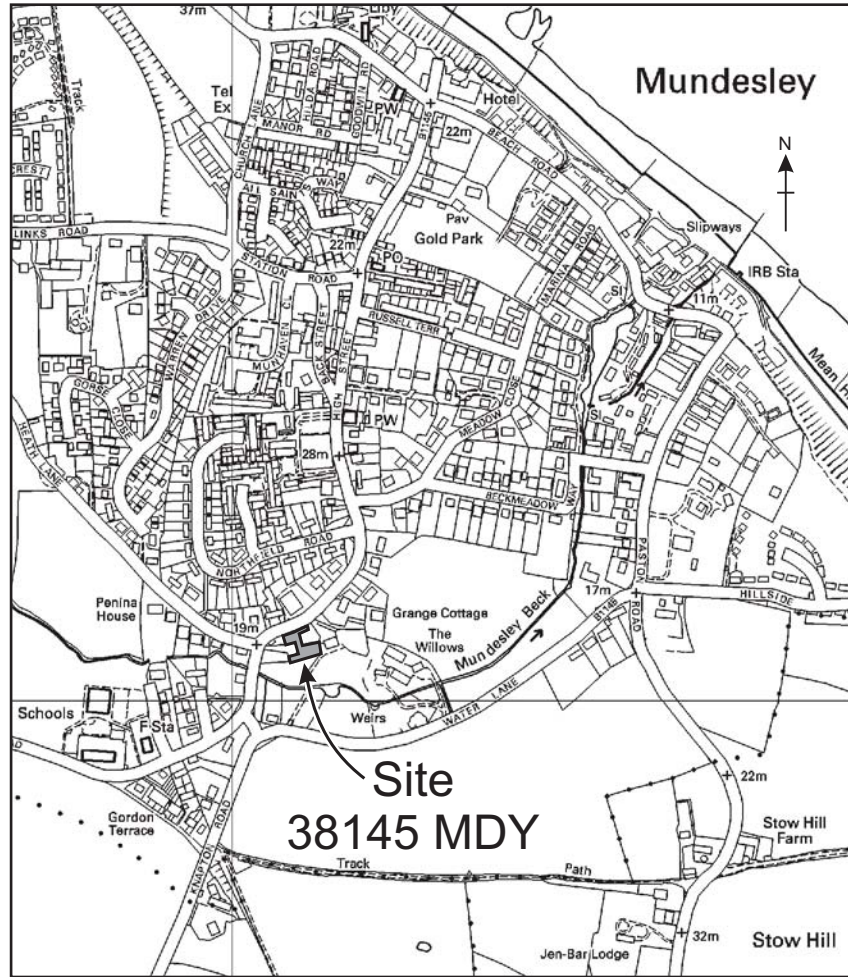


Figure 1, Site Location. Scale 1:10,000

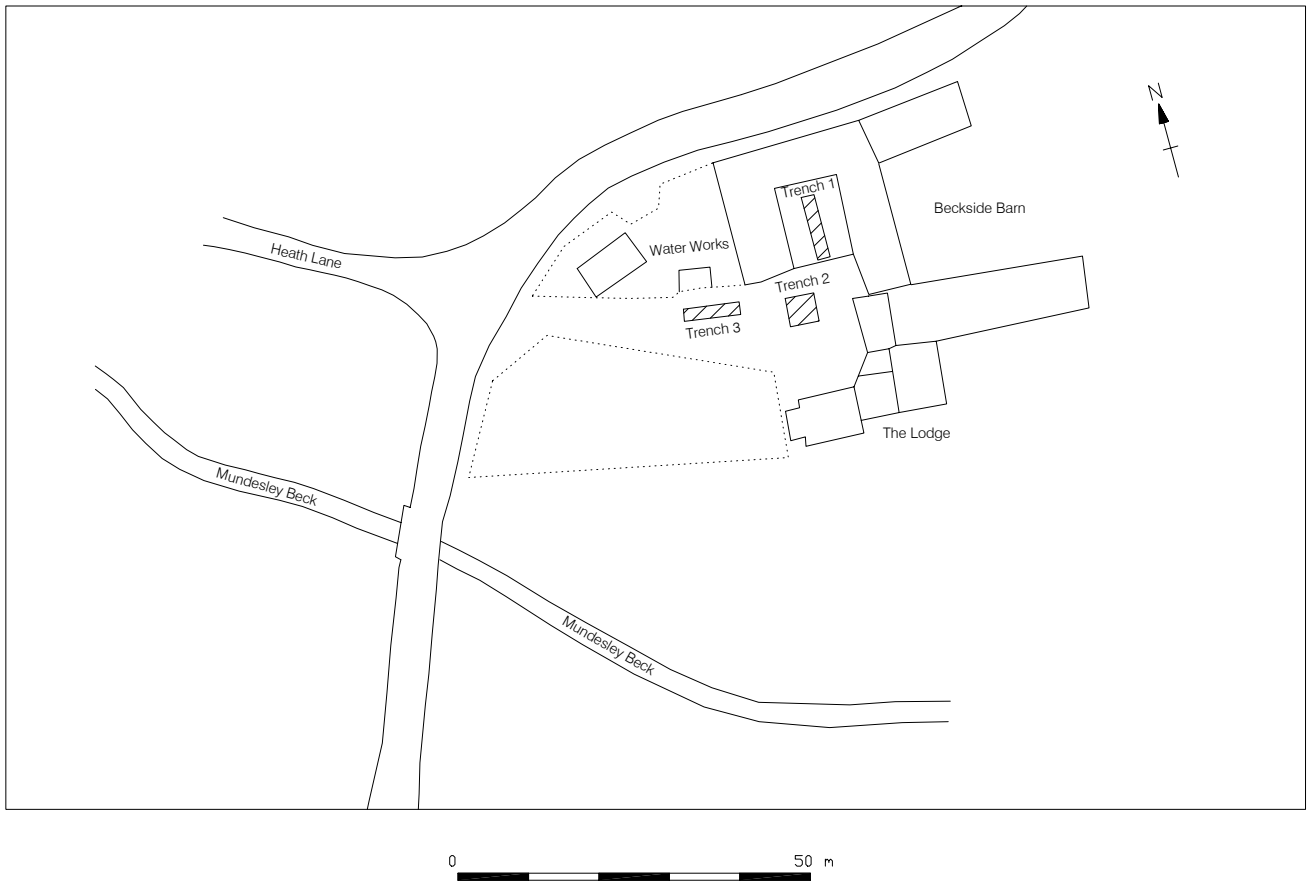


Figure 2, Trench Location. Scale 1:1000

