

NAU Archaeology

Report No. 1977

An Archaeological Evaluation at Lawn Farm, Wetherden, Suffolk

SHER: WDN 013

Produced for:

Andrew Josephs Ltd,
on behalf of their client S. Walsh and Sons Limited

Peter Crawley

November 2008

BAU1977

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NAU ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT CHECKLIST		
Project overseen by	Nigel Page	
Draft completed	Peter Crawley	28/10/2008
Graphics completed	David Dobson	23/10/2008
Edit completed	Richard Hoggett	03/11/2008
Signed off	Jayne Bown	03/11/2008

NAU Archaeology

Scandic House
85 Mountergate
Norwich
NR1 1PY

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Location: Lawn Farm, Wetherden
District: Mid-Suffolk
Grid Ref.: TL 99400 62700
SHER No.: WDN 013
Dates of Fieldwork: 29 September–3 October 2008

Summary

In October 2008 NAU Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation in advance of the preparation of the area for future gravel extraction at Lawn Farm, situated to the south-west of the village of Wetherden, Suffolk.

A total of 33 trenches was excavated on the site to sample 5% of the development area. Seven archaeological features were observed during the course of the work. These included three small shallow pits containing charcoal-rich fills, a shallow burnt patch on the surface of the gravel, a gully, a shallow ditch and a possible post-hole. One of the shallow pits contained prehistoric, probably Iron Age, pottery and the fill of the possible post-hole contained a moderate amount of burnt flint. The other features remain undated. The charcoal-rich pits formed a loose cluster towards the centre of the site and could indicate prehistoric activity.

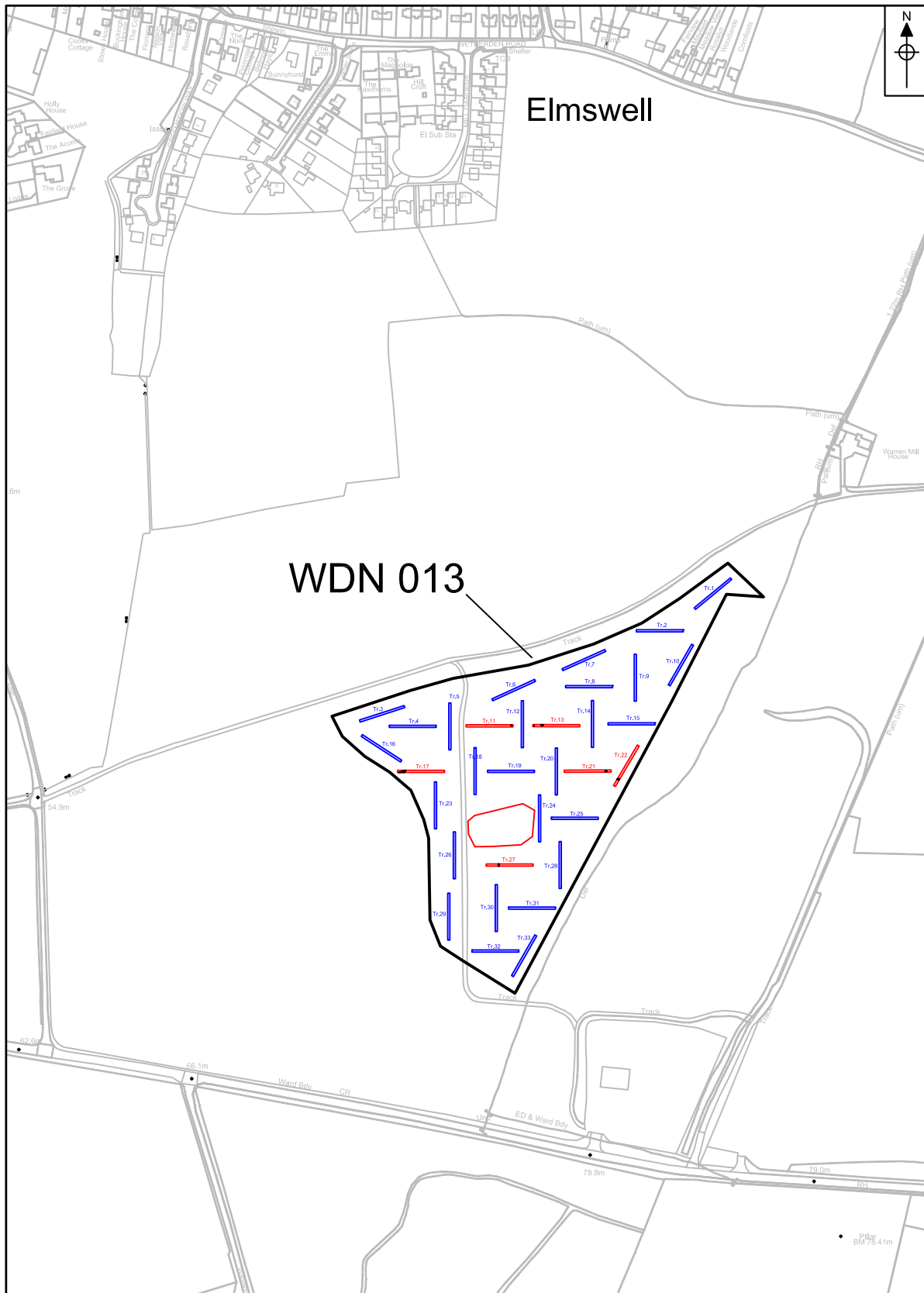
1.0 Introduction

The evaluated area was roughly triangular and was part of an overall proposed quarry area of around 21 hectares (Fig. 1). The original proposed limits of the quarry, situated to the east, were evaluated by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service in 2002. The present work followed an alteration to the area of the existing permission for mineral extraction.

This archaeological programme was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Suffolk County Council and a Brief issued by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (Edward Martin 18 July 2008). The work was carried out in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref: BAU1977/NP), following an invitation from Andrew Josephs Ltd. The work was funded by S. Walsh and Sons Limited.

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 Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service, following all appropriate guidelines and policies on archiving standards.



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0 500 m

Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

2.0 Geology and Topography

The site lies on an underlying solid geology of chalk (Wymer 1999a). The more recent surface geology consists of sand and gravel 'Till' deposited through ancient glaciations and water courses (Wymer 1999b). The parish of Wetherden appears to be located in an area where there are 'Glacial Outwash gravels' and ancient 'River Deposits' (Wymer 1999b). The area consists of gently rolling small and low hills, which, along with the gravel natural, aid drainage. The topsoil on the site is formed from loose mid-brown coarse sandy silt containing frequent small flints. A thin subsoil had been formed from the mixing of the natural and the topsoil by ploughing (Martin 1999).

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

An extensive documentary survey of the site has been undertaken by Anthony Breen, the complete text of which is included here as Appendix 3. This survey concludes that the site was originally divided between the parishes of Wetherden and Elmswell. The earliest reference to the land in Wetherden is on the 16th-century estate map, which shows that the field was then known as 'Thirty Acre Field' and had been subject to an exchange between Thomas Scateron and Sir John Sulyard. Sir John Sulyard had been the lord of the manor of Wetherden from 1540. Thomas Scateron of Elmswell died in 1568. In the 16th century the part of the site that lay in Elmswell was shown on the same map as having been part of a warren of 40 acres. By the 18th century the warren had been broken up into smaller field units. There are no manorial or estate documents that could be used to follow ownership of this specific piece of land down to Charles Tyrell, who is mentioned as owner in the Wetherden Tithe apportionment of 1845. At this time the field was known as Mill Break and there was a loam pit in the south-western corner of the field.

The trackway which now forms the public right of way on the eastern side of the site is marked as a boundary on a 16th-century map and is known variously as 'The Old Ditch' and 'The Franchise Bank' (SHER EWL 016). It divided the Franchise of St Edmund from the Geldable (also known as the Hundred Mere). It was also known as the Procession Way and divided the parishes of Elmswell and Wetherden. It is probably of medieval origin, if not earlier.

To the south-east of the site there is evidence for a boundary/track marked on a 16th-century map and labelled as 'an ancient ditch dividing grass-field from Woolpit Heath' (SHER WPT 028). The boundary may represent a possible warren boundary bank connected with the site of the Warrener's Lodge to the immediate south of the present site (SHER EWL 015). Alternatively, the boundary may be associated with Haughley Park that extends to the south-east of the site.

A windmill is also shown on a map of c.1568, said to have been obliterated by a WWII army camp (SHER WPT 027). The date of the of the windmill is unknown.

A number of archaeological discoveries have been made in the vicinity of the site. A number of Neolithic flakes were discovered in a gravel pit 100m to the south-east of the site in 1956 (SHER WDN 002). Further Neolithic artefacts have been discovered in the same location since. The findspots of two Roman coins are recorded immediately to the east of the present site (SHER EWL 004).

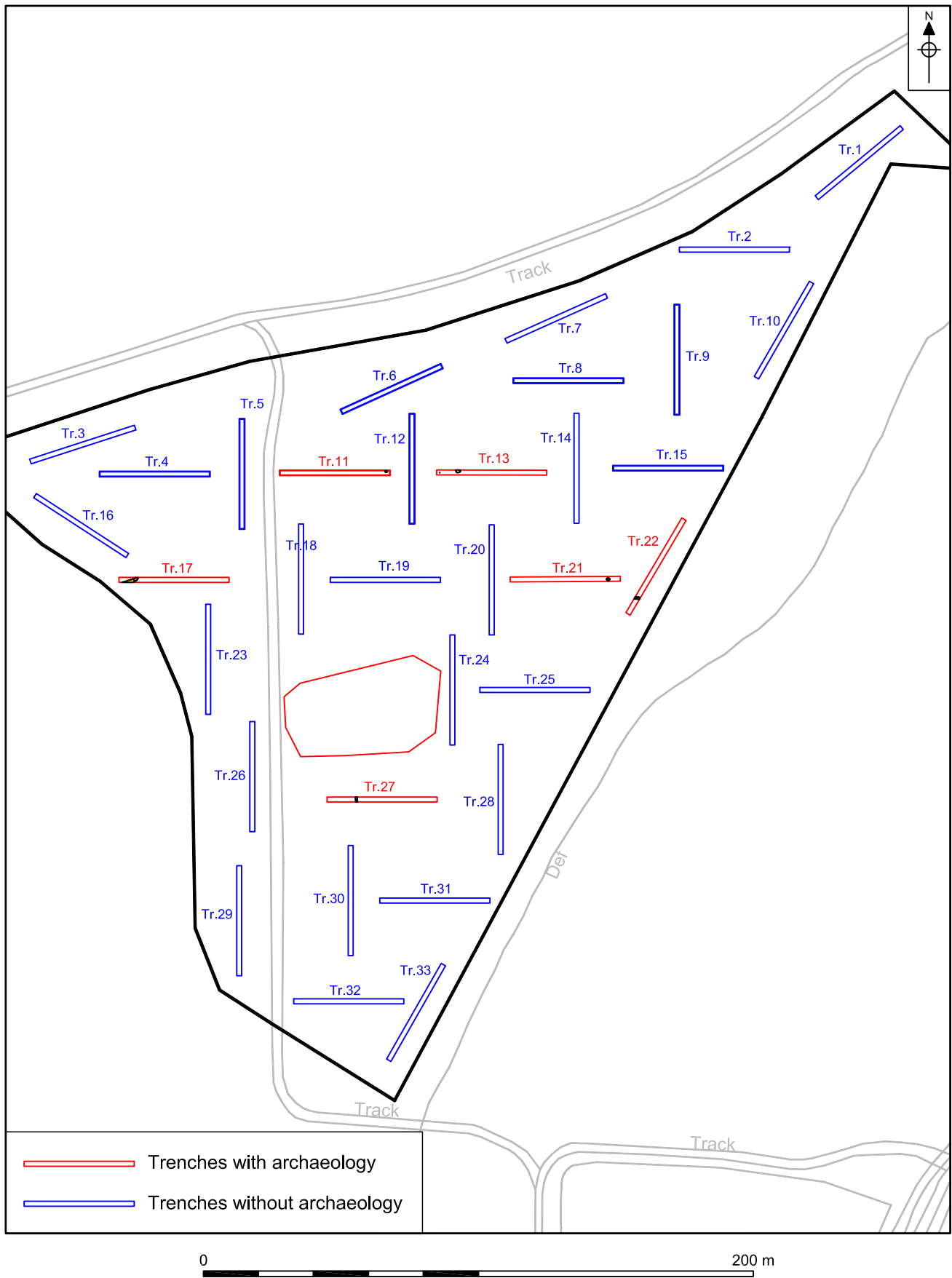


Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:2000

An archaeological evaluation as part of the original planning consent for the present site was carried out in 2002 (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report 02/118). This evaluation indicated that considerable areas of the site had been subject to soil disturbance, but there were still some areas with better preservation.

It is also clear from cartographic and aerial photographic sources that a quarry pit lay in the centre of the site, now filled in. The area of this pit is marked in pink in Figs 1 and 2 and was deliberately avoided during the current programme of works.



Plate 1. Machining the trenches, looking north-west.

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 5% of the development area be examined. Trenches were located with an electronic Total Station Theodolite. Thirty-three trenches were excavated by machine across the site in a regular pattern (Fig. 2). Machine excavation was carried out with a hydraulic 360° excavator using a toothless ditching bucket operated under constant archaeological supervision (Plate 1). The trenches were each 40m long and 1.80m wide. Their depth varied to between 0.30m and 0.70m, although the average depth was 0.40m. The depth varied considerably along the length of each trench due to ploughing and other relatively recent disturbance.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. No metal-detected finds of archaeological significance were found.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NAU Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales, and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits. No environmental samples were taken.

A known height with a value of 63.69m was located at the base of a tree adjacent to the site and next to the public right of way running by the site.

Site conditions were good, access was excellent and the work took place in generally overcast, windy and occasionally wet weather.



Plate 2. Sample trench showing plough marks.

5.0 Results

Only six of the 33 excavated evaluation trenches contained archaeological features. The results are presented here on a trench-by-trench basis in numerical order.

5.1 Trenches 1–10

Trenches 1–10 contained no archaeological features. A few traces of recent activity such as plough-marks and quarrying were noted (Plate 2).

5.2 Trench 11

This trench contained a possible post-hole [13] at its eastern end (Fig. 3 and Plate 3). The feature was roughly circular and had a diameter of 0.60m. It was 0.20m deep at its deepest point. It had good and relatively even concave edges and a concave base, with a very gradual break of slope at the base. The fill (14) consisted of slightly friable dark grey-brown fine and coarse sandy silt. It contained occasional small flints 1–20mm in size. There were some fragments of burnt flint within the fill, which could indicate a prehistoric date. The fill was probably deliberately deposited into the feature, after the removal of any post. If the feature was a post-hole it could have been an isolated post though any related post-holes could lay beyond the edge of the trench.

5.3 Trench 12

This trench contained no archaeological features.

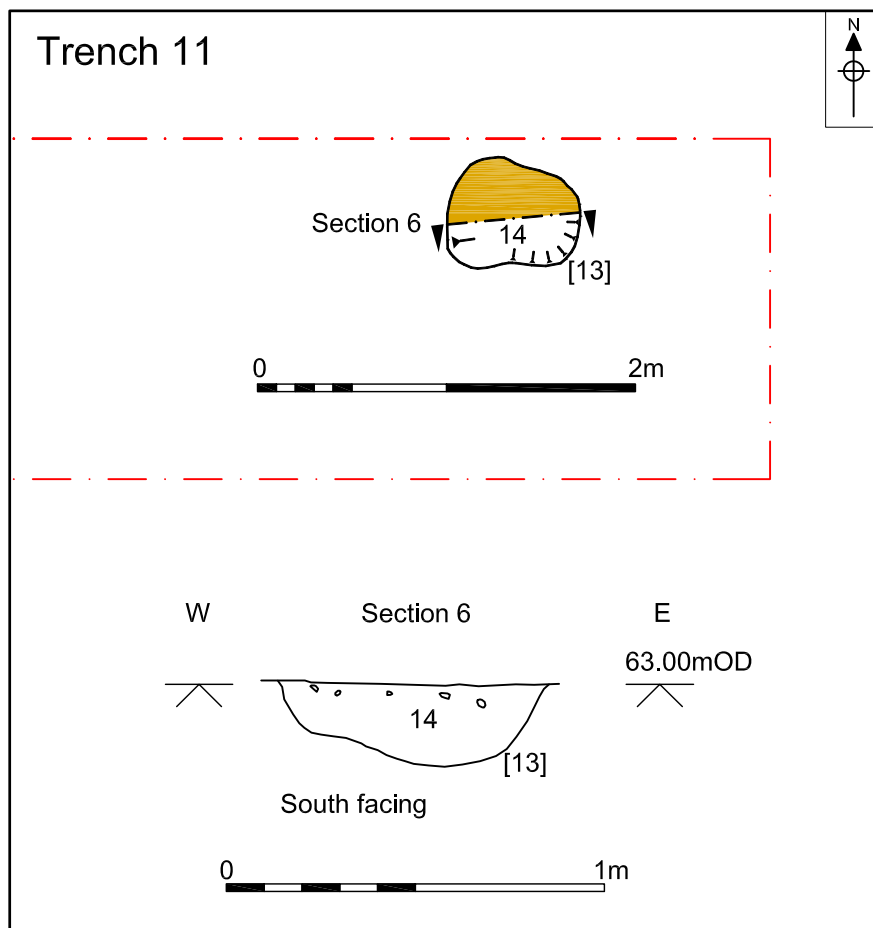


Figure 3. Trench 11, plan of Post-hole [13], scale 1:40.
Section 6 scale 1:20



Plate 3. Section 6, post-hole (13).

5.4 Trench 13

Trench 13 contained a pit [7], a possible stake-hole [9] and a burnt patch [15] (Fig. 4 and Plate 4).

Pit [7] was roughly square and could be seen to extend beyond the northern edge of the trench. It measured 1.65m east–west and at least 1m north–south. It had a roughly flat base, generally convex edges and a very gradual break of slope at the base. The single fill (8) was an orangey-brown silty sand, which contained frequent charcoal flecks, occasional charcoal lumps and occasional small rounded flints 1–20mm in size. The fill contained some fragments of prehistoric pottery and a struck flint. The natural edges of the feature appeared to have been slightly bunt, which may indicate that a fire had been started in the pit. The charcoal was concentrated in the western half of the pit (Fig. 4) and the fill appeared to have been deliberately dumped into the feature.



Plate 4. Section 3, pit [7].

The possible stake-hole [9] was 0.12m across and 0.16m deep. It was oval and contained a single fill. The fill (10) consisted of friable mid-greyish-brown silty sand. It contained occasional small rounded flints and frequent charcoal in the top 20mm (Fig. 4). There were no finds within the fill. The edges of the feature were almost vertical and slightly irregular.

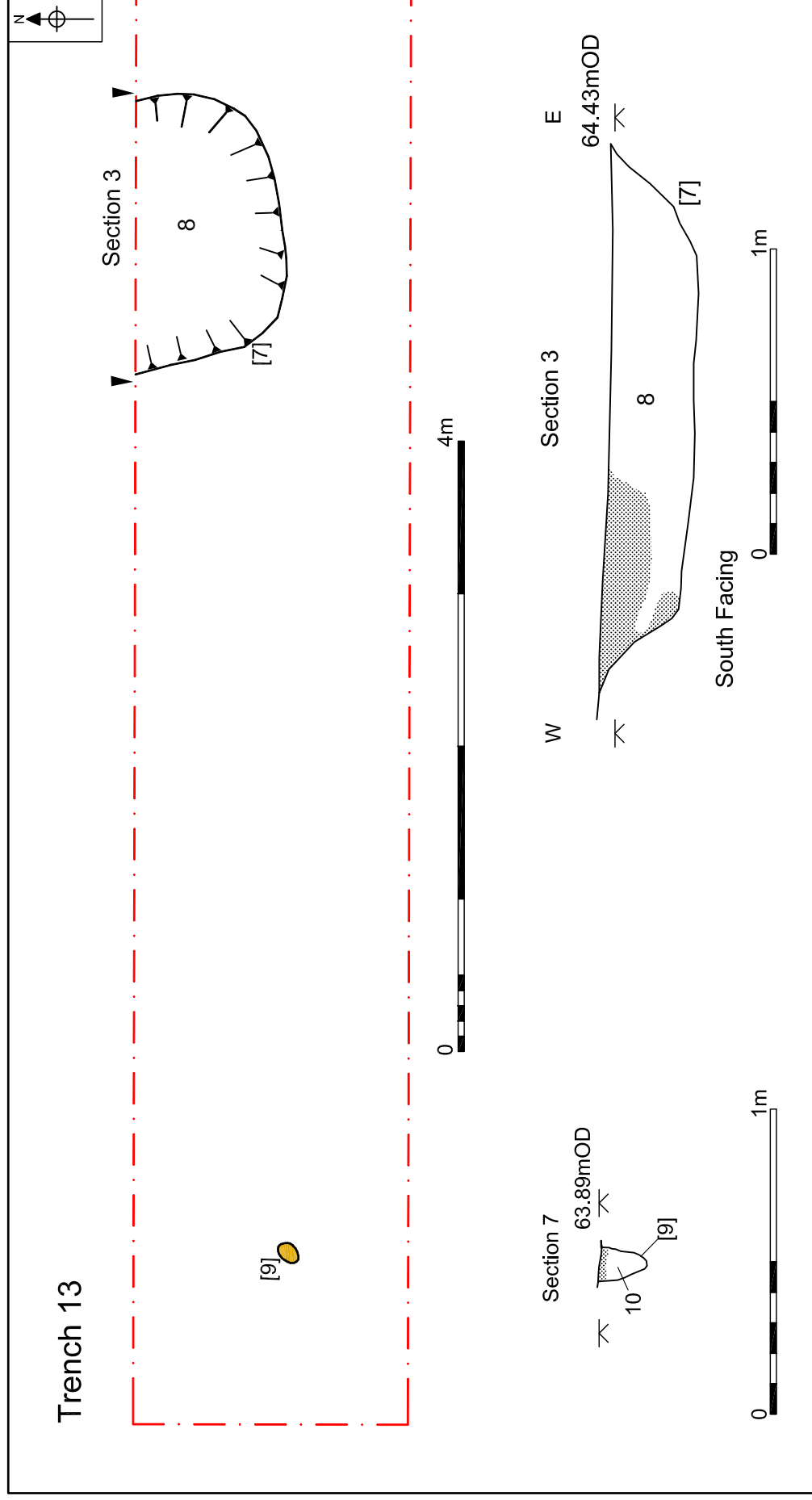


Figure 4. Trench 13, plan of Post-hole [9] and Pit [7], scale 1:40.
Sections 7 and 3 scale 1:20

Trench 17

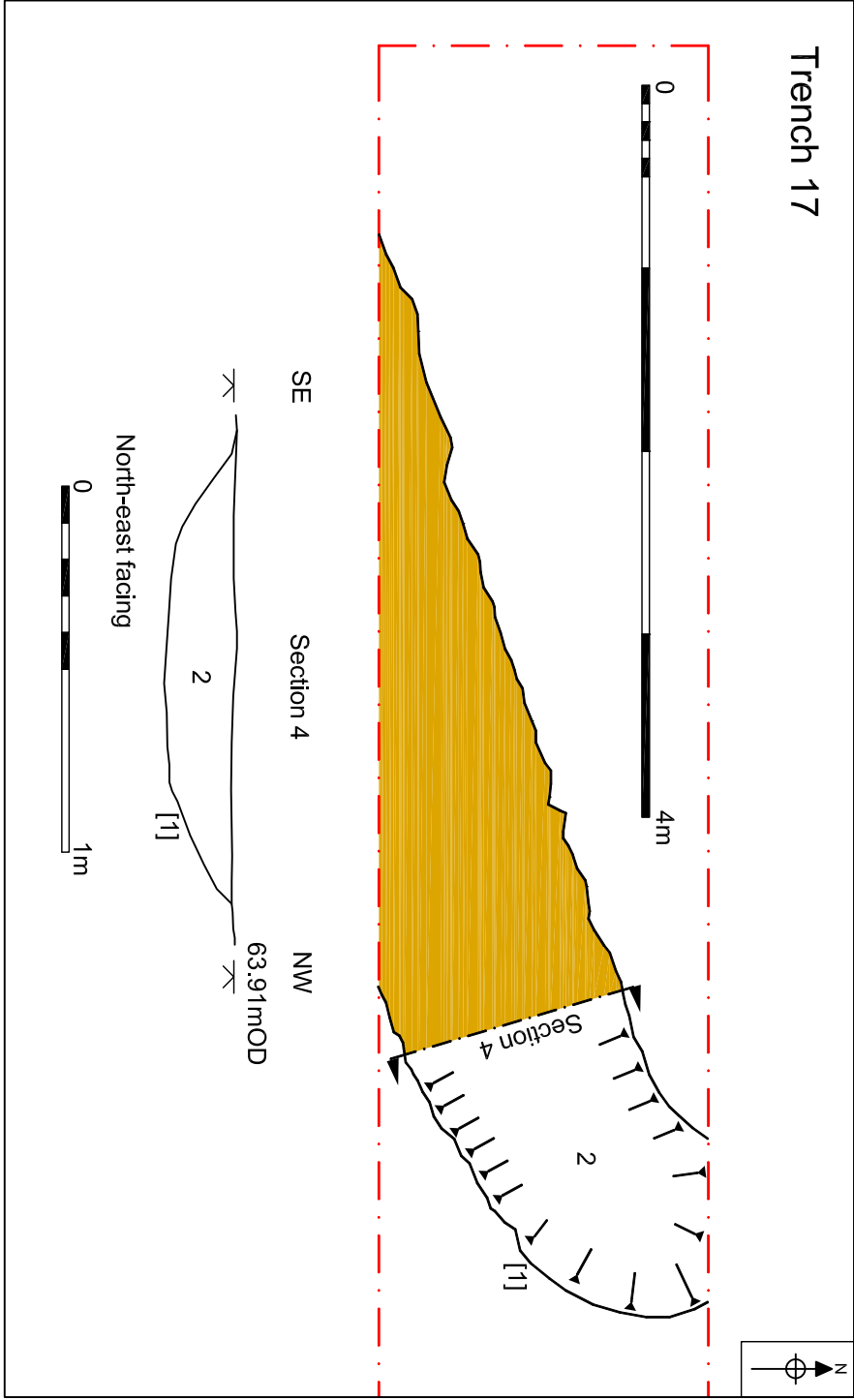


Figure 5. Trench 17, plan of Ditch [1], scale 1:40.
Section 4 scale 1:20

5.5 Trenches 14–16

Trenches 14–16 contained no archaeological features. A few elements recent activity such as plough-marks and quarrying were examined in the course of the work.

5.6 Trench 17

A single feature was located within this trench: a short segment of probable ditch at the western end of the trench [1] (Fig. 5 and Plate 5). The ditch was observed to extend beyond the southern limit of the trench and possibly had a termination within the trench. It was at least 6m long and 1.30m wide. It had reasonably good quality, slightly concave edges and a depth of 0.18m. The base of the sides had a gradual break of slope and the base was roughly flat. The single fill (2) was a loose mid-brown coarse sandy silt with moderate small flints 1–20mm in size and had probably built up through natural deposition over time. No dating evidence was found within this feature.



Plate 5. Section 4, ditch [1]

5.7 Trenches 18–20

Trenches 18–20 contained no archaeological features. A few elements recent activity such as plough-marks and quarrying were examined in the course of the work.

5.8 Trench 21

A single very shallow depression [5] was located within this trench (Fig. 6 and Plate 6). It was roughly circular and had a diameter of 1.20m, but was only 0.05m deep. The edges and base of the hollow were concave and there was a imperceptible break of slope at the base. The natural edges of the feature appeared to have been burnt, suggesting that there had been a fire within the hollow. The feature contained mid-greyish-brown silty sand (6), which included frequent charcoal flecks, occasional charcoal lumps and small rounded flints. The fill had been deliberately dumped into the hollow.

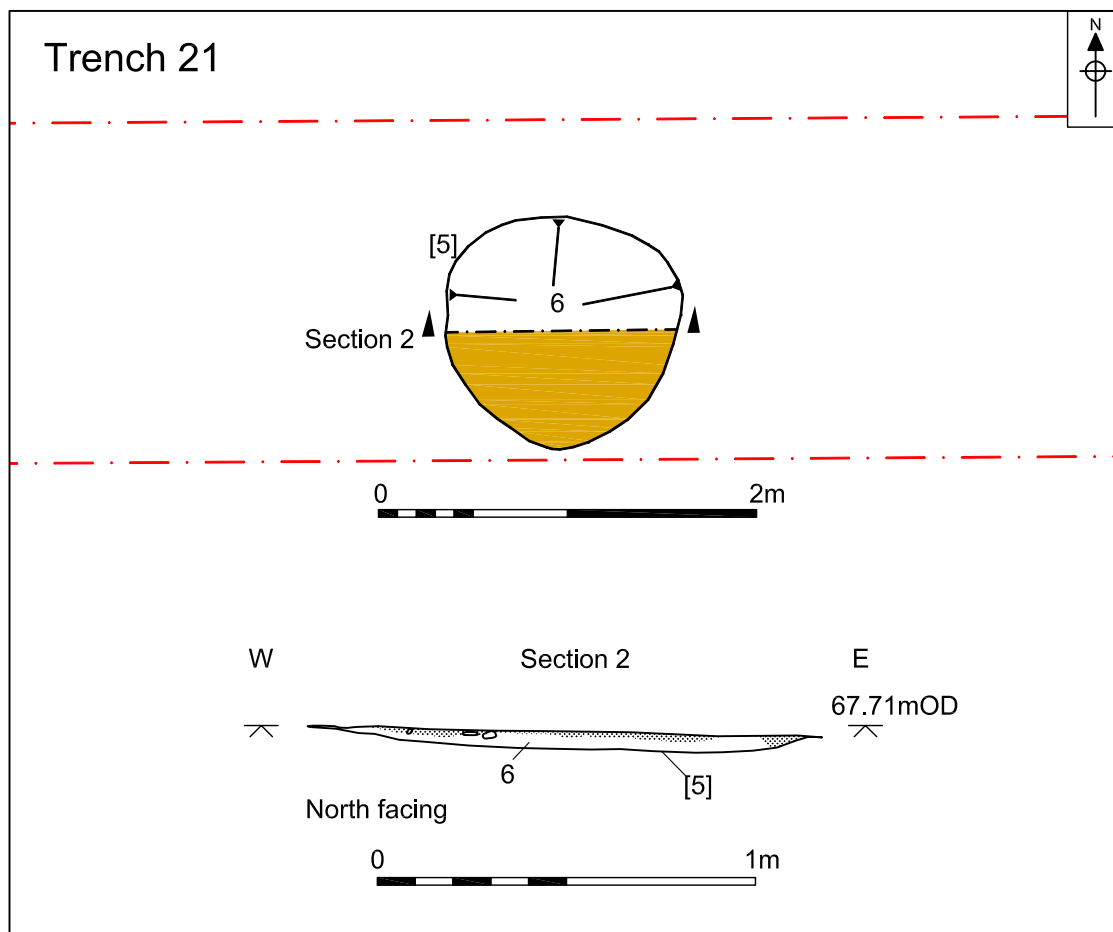


Figure 6. Trench 21, plan of Shallow Pit [5], scale 1:40.
Section 2 scale 1:20



Plate 6. Section 6, shallow pit [5].

5.9 Trench 22

Trench 22 contained an elongated shallow pit [3] (Fig. 7 and Plate 7). The feature was 1.75m long, 1m wide and was oriented north-west–south-east. It was 0.20m deep. The edges had a regular and steep angle of slope and a gradual break of slope at the base. The single fill (4) was a friable mid-orangey-brown silty sand which contained frequent charcoal flecks, occasional charcoal lumps and occasional small round flints. The natural edges of the feature appeared to have been slightly burnt, which may indicate that a fire had been started in the pit. The fill was particularly charcoal-rich its northern end and had been dumped into the feature (Fig. 7).



Plate 7. Section 1, pit [3].

5.10 Trenches 23–26

Trenches 23–26 contained no archaeological features. A few traces of recent activity such as plough-marks and quarrying were examined.

5.11 Trench 27

This trench contained a short gully [11] at its western end (Fig. 8 and Plate 8). The gully was at least 1.80m long, 0.80m wide and 0.30m deep. The gully appeared to run north–south and extended beyond the limit of the trench in both directions. The feature had good even edges, which were generally convex, and a roughly flat

base. The fill (12) was composed of a loose light greyish-brown fine sandy silt which contained very occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small flints. The fill had probably built up slowly through natural deposition. No dating evidence was recovered from the gully.



Plate 8. Section, gully [11].

5.12 Trenches 28–33

Trenches 28–33 contained no archaeological features. A few traces of recent activity such as plough-marks and quarrying were examined.

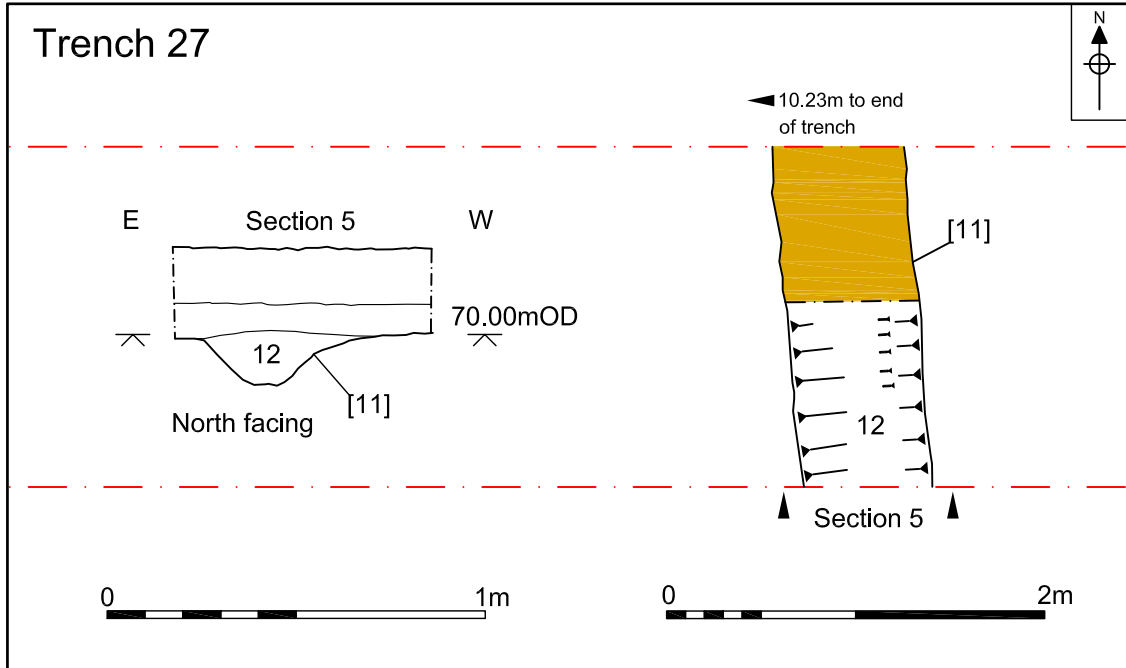


Figure 8. Trench 27, plan of Gully [11], scale 1:40.
Section 5 scale 1:20

6.0 The Finds

The finds from the site are 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 below.

6.1 Pottery

By Sarah Percival

Five small scraps of pottery weighing 10g were recovered from a single context, the fill of pit [7] (Table 1). The sherds are made of a dense sandy fabric with no visible inclusions (Q1) and are not decorated. Dating of the pottery is uncertain, but the fabric type suggests a possible Iron Age date for the sherds.

Context	Ctxt sherd count	Ctxt sherd wt (g)	Fabric	Form	Qty	Wt (g)	Date
8	5	10	Q1	Body sherd	8	10	Iron Age

Table 1. Pottery by context.

6.2 Flint

By Sarah Bates

A single struck flint came from the site [8]. It is blade-like in shape, although asymmetrical.

Nine pieces of burnt flint, weighing 306g, were also found [14].

The flint is not closely dateable, but the struck flake represents activity in the vicinity of the site during the prehistoric period. The burnt flint might be of prehistoric or later date.

Context	Type	Quantity
8	Blade-like flake	1
14	Burnt fragment	9

Table 2. Flint by context.

7.0 Conclusions

A total of 33 trenches was excavated on the site to sample 5% of the development area. Seven archaeological features were observed during the course of the work spread across six trenches. These comprised three small shallow pits containing charcoal-rich fills, a shallow burnt patch on the surface of the gravel, a gully, a shallow ditch and a possible post-hole. One of the shallow pits contained prehistoric, probably Iron Age, pottery and the fill of the possible post-hole contained a moderate amount of burnt flint. The other features remain undated. The charcoal-rich pits formed a loose cluster towards the centre of the site and could indicate prehistoric activity.

Further recommendations based on this work will be made by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

Acknowledgements

Access to the site was provided by PDE Consulting of Bury St Edmunds. The consultant, acting on behalf of the client Walsh and Sons, was Andrew Josephs. Edward Martin monitored the project on behalf of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team.

The fieldwork was undertaken by the author and Jon Cousins. The machine excavator was supplied by Bryn Williams Civil Engineering and Carl was the machine operator. Lucy Talbot processed the finds. The pottery was examined by Sarah Percival and the flints were examined by Sarah Bates. The illustrations were prepared by David Dobson. The report was edited by Richard Hoggett.

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- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-------|---|
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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Period
1	Cut	Ditch	Unknown
2	Fill	Fill of (1)	Unknown
3	Cut	Pit	Unknown
4	Fill	Fill of (3)	Unknown
5	Cut	Pit	Unknown
6	Fill	Fill of (5)	Unknown
7	Cut	Pit	Prehistoric
8	Fill	Fill of (7)	Prehistoric
9	Cut	Possible Stake-hole	Unknown
10	Fill	Fill of (9)	Unknown
11	Cut	Gully	Unknown
12	Fill	Fill of (11)	Unknown
13	Cut	Possible Post-hole	Prehistoric
14	Fill	Fill of (13)	Prehistoric

Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table

Period	Feature type	Quantity
Unknown	Ditch	1
	Gully	1
	Stake-hole	1
	Pit	2
Prehistoric	Post-hole	1
	Pit	1

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Wt (g)	Period
8	Pottery	5	11	Prehistoric
8	Flint - worked	1	-	Prehistoric
14	Flint - burnt	9	306	Prehistoric

Appendix 2b: HER Finds Summary Table

Period	Material	Quantity
Prehistoric	Flint - worked	1
	Flint - burnt	9
Iron Age	Pottery	5

Appendix 3: Documentary Report

By Anthony Breen

This site is divided between the civil parishes of Wetherden and Elmswell, though the buildings of Lawn Farm are in the parish of Woolpit. The county records offices in Suffolk were established before the creation of a single council for the entire county in 1974. The distribution of the records held in the respective offices in Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds reflects the former division of the county between East and West Suffolk. Wetherden was formerly in East Suffolk and Elmswell in West Suffolk. The division of the records for these two parishes continues through all levels of local administration whether civil or ecclesiastical. The division of the county has its origins in the late Saxon period when most of West Suffolk was under the Liberty of St Edmunds and part of the estates of the former abbey of Bury St Edmunds. Part of East Suffolk had been granted to the abbey of Ely in 970 and formed a separate Liberty of St Etheldreda, the remaining parts of the county 'called Geldable or 'taxable' remained under royal jurisdiction. Following the dissolution circa 1539 both parts of the county fell under the jurisdiction and administration of a single quarter sessions until the establishment of county councils in 1888. Though a single quarter session was held for the entire county apart from the boroughs, in later records such as those for highways the county was divided between eastern and western divisions.

Though both parishes were part of the diocese of Norwich and in the archdeaconry of Sudbury, Elmswell was in Thedwastre deanery Wetherden in Stow. The deanery boundaries were used in the main for the former divisions of the county, the hundreds, with Elmswell in Thedwastre Hundred and Wetherden in Stowe Hundred. When district councils were established in 1894 Elmswell remained with Thedwastre District Council and Wetherden with East Stow. In 1934 East Stow District Council was replaced with Gipping District Council. It was not until 1974 that both parishes came under the same county and district council. Further explanations of the divisions of the county can be found in 'An Historical Atlas of Suffolk' (Dymond & Martin 1999).

The records for this area are divided between the two offices, however because the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich holds a significant collection of manuscript maps relating to both Elmswell and Wetherden, the research for this report has concentrated on the records held in Ipswich.

Maps

This site is to the north of Old Bury Road and to the west of a footpath that extends northwards from the road to join a track way at point east of Warren Mill House. The track way that in part forms the northern boundary of the study area with a smaller area to the north continues to the southwest to a site that was formerly part of the works connected with the extensive Woolpit brickfields.

On the modern, 1980s edition of 1:10,000 Ordnance Survey map this site is shown on sheet number TL 96 SE with a small embankment along the greater part of the eastern side of the site against the footpath this continues in part on the southern side extending to the west from the southeast corner of the study area. The land here forms a gentle slope facing to the northwest. Two small pits within the study area are shown on the map. On the 1964 edition of the same map, both the

embankment and smaller pits are absent, instead two small roadside pits are shown on the north side of Old Bury Road, though at this date it was the main trunk road (A45) between Bury St Edmunds and Ipswich. In the area to the east, there were far more extensive gravel pits to the south of Warren Farm. The record office in Ipswich does not hold a copy of the early 1950's Provisional Edition of this map. The National Grid was superimposed on the Provisional Edition, though the basis for the map was the earlier county series. On the earlier county series the eastern side of this site is shown on sheet number XLIV. SW. and the western half on sheet number XLV. SE. Maps for only the eastern part of the site are available in Ipswich; copies of sheet number XLV. SE are available in Bury St Edmunds. On the first edition of 1889 and second edition of 1905 the outline of a small pit is shown on the edge of the map described in the 1889 edition as 'Old Gravel Pit'. On the 1905 map the Rural District Council Boundary is shown following the footpath. The position of 'Warren Windmill', a corn mill is marked on both maps.

Both pits are shown on a map prepared for the sale of the Haughley Park estate in 1961, though the lands themselves were not part of the sale (ref. SC198/2). The land is shown on a map prepared as part of the sale of the 'Tyrell Estates' in 1892 (ref. EG34/7/32).

The track-way, windmill and parish boundary are all shown on the earlier 1846 tithe map for Wetherden (ref. P461/282). The tithe map for Elmswell is in Bury St Edmunds. The site was then just one field, numbered 98 on the map and a pit numbered 98a. The field was described in the apportionment (ref. FDA282/1A/1a) as '98 Mill Break, Arable 21 acres 3 roods 27 perches' under the ownership of Charles Tyrrell and in the occupation of his tenant Philip Baker. Baker occupied 109 acres 2 roods 28 perches in this parish. Included in this total was a cottage and garden in the occupation of Thomas Peck, however Philip Baker does not appear to have been a resident on the lands of this holding in Wetherden. The field appears to have extended across the parish boundary and included an area in Elmswell. The pit was part of this landholding and described as '98a Loom Pit 1 acre and 24 perches'.

The Tyrell family lived at Gipping, Suffolk and sold their estates in 1892. Their estates were divided into two main areas, the lands in Gipping and part of Cotton and their other main residence Plashwood Hall in Haughley the adjoining lands in the parishes of Wetherden, Rockylls Hall in Shelland, and other lands in Woolpit and Elmswell. They were also lords of the manor of Thorney Hall situated in the parishes of Stowupland and Stowmarket. The sale particulars are in the Stowupland Civil Parish collection. This site is shown as part of Lot 5 described in the particulars as 'Woolpit Lawn and Warren Farms' situate in the Parishes of Woolpit, Wetherden and Elmswell ... containing 361a 0r 4p of mixed soil and Light Land, adjoining the Estate of the Woolpit Brick and Tile Company and containing very valuable and probably inexhaustible veins of the Famous Woolpit Brick Earth which are being worked at the present time, both White and Red Brick Earth abounding, and also veins of excellent stone, gravel and sand'. Though the schedule of lands was 'From Ordnance Survey' their descriptions have probably been drawn from respective tithe apportionments for each parish. The sale particulars state 'there is a Free Rent of 5s 9d payable to the Manor of Woolpit and also a Queen's Rent of 1s 1d'.

The western end of this site is shown on an estate map of Elmswell Hall in the Isaac Johnson Collection (ref. HD11:475/625). This is a draft map prepared in the late eighteenth century even though the estate is described as late the property of Robert Oneby, who died in 1721. The fields forming the western end of this site were then divided between 'R Ray' and Edward Sulyard. The map shows the parish boundary and the site of the windmill but not the adjoining lands in Wetherden.

This site is shown on a photocopy of an undated late sixteenth century map of 'An Estate in Elmswell, Wetherden and Woolpit' (ref. HD417/13). The Suffolk Record bought the map as part of a collection of miscellaneous maps in 1979. The map is 'apparently a late copy of a pre-reformation map'. This site can be easily identified on this map. To the south there is a Latin inscription on the road which when translated reads 'The Queen's Highway leading from Bury St Edmunds towards Ipswich'. Running northwards from the highway, the English inscription states 'Devidinge the Franchise and the Gyldable otherwais called the hundred mere and it is called the Procession Waie'. The franchise was the former abbot's 'Liberty of St Edmund'. The 'Gyldable' was that part of East Suffolk which unlike the franchise was subject to the payment of geld to the Crown. The hundred mere was a bank dividing the hundred of Stow and Thedwastre. It was also a procession mere as the churchwardens of the respective parishes were required to go in procession to 'beat the bounds' during rogation tide. To the east of the hundred mere, the English inscription states 'This pece lyethe in Wetherden and is in the tenure of John Sulyarde knyghte by reason of an exchange made betwene the saide Sir John Sulyarde and one Thomas Scateron late of Elmswell husbände to Johan Scateron widowe and is called 30 acres'. To the east of the 30 acres another path in the same position as the trackway shown on the later Ordnance Survey maps is marked 'A Path called Lannham Pathe'. In East Anglia, it is quite common to find both place and personal surnames in an abbreviated form. This form Lannham is undoubtedly an abbreviated form of Lavenham. The area to the west darkened with colouration of the original map has a further inscription in Latin and Middle English, translated as 'Free Warren of the Lord Abbot called Le Connyger containing 40 acres lying in Elmyswell'. Within this rabbit or coney warren at the southeast corner and within this study area there is 'The Warreners Lodge' a substantial building on what appears to be a raised mound. It is likely that this entire warren was embanked.

Estate Records

Partly as a result of the early sale and division of the Tyrell Estates in 1892 very few of their estate and family papers have passed to the record office in Ipswich. The family had been lords of the manor of Gipping from the fifteenth century onwards, but only acquired the Plashwood Estate in Haughley through the marriage of Charles Tyrell to Elizabeth Baker in June 1801. She was the daughter and heir of Richard Ray of Plashwood. Charles died in 1811 when his estates passed to his heir also Charles Tyrell who was at one time High Sheriff of Suffolk in 1815 and M.P. for the county in 1830 and 1834. The last of the Tyrell family Walter Tyrell died unmarried in June 1891, aged 80 (Copinger 1910).

The Plashwood Estate was not a manor in its own right but part of the manor of Haughley or 'Hawleigh cum Membriis'. This manor included lands in Haughley, Stowmarket, Old Newton, Gipping, Wetherden and other parishes but not

Elmswell or Woolpit. R. Ray is mentioned in a published 1731 rental for this manor as paying £1 18s 2d for Plashwood. The Sulyarde family had been lords of this manor from 1540 onwards. The family included Sir John Sulyard who succeeded to the lordship in 1540 following the death of Andrew Sulyard. Sir John Sulyard was buried on 24 March 1575 at Wetherden Church. He was rather unkindly described by a nineteenth century local historian as 'A stiff Roman Catholic, and his loyalty was tainted with the bigotry of his religion'. As with many Catholic families of this period his estates would have been subject to heavy fines for non-attendance of Anglican services. The family remained Catholic until the death of Edward Sulyard in 1799. Following his death an act of Parliament was passed in 1811 to enable his co-heiresses to inherit. The estate then consisting of over 2,442 acres was sold in that year. Copyhold, that is land held of the manor was ended on this estate in the late 1860's. Unfortunately the Sulyard family were also lords of the manor of Wetherden Hall and second manor of Pulham Hall in Wetherden and had obtained free warren, which is the right to hunt, there from 1468 (Copingier 1910). In the absence of contemporary manorial records it is difficult to distinguish whether the land forming the Thirty Acre field was part and parcel of the manor of Wetherden or Haughley.

The land forming this site may not have been under either manor. In a sixteenth century 'Extent and rental of the manor of Elmswell', there are references to the lands of 'Johanna Skateron widow' (ref. HD1538/211). The extent is incomplete with all the initial pages missing. It begins on folio 17 and the descriptions of the lands appear to have been gathered from earlier records, these appear to have been arranged in a geographic sequence with the names of the contemporary owners entered in the margin against each descriptions. Most of the pieces described are small and represent former strips of the former open fields. Johanna is first mentioned on folio 18 verso. The description translated here begins with

'Alice Smythe holds three roods of land of the free lands of Peter Austen late Stephen Pulham lying in the field called East Field between the lands of William de Herste on the west and the land of John de Well on the east and abut in the meadow of William de Herste towards the south and the lands land of Walter de Buriswaye towards the north'.

The rent for this piece was 3d and the tenant was bound to attend the manorial court. Stephen de Pulham is then mentioned in the next piece also owned by Johanna. Johanna is again mentioned on folio 21 verso as holding land formerly

'William and John Marten half an acre of free land of the fee of the hundred lying at Esterwell ... abutting on the 'Hundrid Meare'

Tenants holding land from the hundred would have paid 'Queen's Rent' and this ancient rent was still chargeable on part of Lawn Farm when it was sold in 1892.

There are further references to her on other pages, but no references to her late husband Thomas Skateron. It appears to be the case that he had died in 1568 as the will of Thomas Skateron, yeoman of Elmswell was proved at the archdeaconry of Sudbury Court in that year. This document is in Bury St Edmunds (ref. W1/29/54).

The demesne lands of the manor, that is land in the direct control of the lord of the manor, are also described in this extent. These include the following on folio 28 verso

'The Lord holds one pasture called Le Conyngger containing 40 acres of land all enclosed with a ditch/bank (fossat) and lying there on the west of the Hundrid Meare in Elmeswell and is valued yearly as it appears in an old extent as 6s 8d'.

The description does not mention the warrener's lodge.

There are no references to Sir John Sulyard in this extent.

The descriptions of these lands appear to be at least late fourteenth century as many of the tenants do not have fix hereditary surnames. The document is likely to be a copy of an earlier document from the archives of the former abbey (see Thomson 1980).

The rents for lands held from the hundred were the property of the Crown and during the Interregnum following the execution of Charles 1 in 1649, all the former property of the Crown passed to the Commonwealth. The lands were surveyed and the rents listed and though the original surveys are held at the National Archives in London, there is an antiquarian copy at the record office in Ipswich (ref. HD 1538/83). Unfortunately the survey gives only the total for the rents for this hundred without further details.

Conclusion

This site is divided between the parishes of Wetherden and Elmswell. The earliest reference to the land in Wetherden is on the sixteenth century estate map and shows that the field was then known as Thirty Acre field and had been subject of an exchange between Thomas Scateron and Sir John Sulyard. Sir John Sulyard, who died in 1575 had been lord of the manor of Wetherden from 1540. Thomas Skateron of Elmswell died in 1568. There are no manorial or estate documents that could be used to follow ownership of this specific piece of land down to Charles Tyrell, who is mentioned as owner in the Wetherden tithe apportionment of 1845. One of his main residences was Plashwood Hall in Haughley formerly the property of Robert Ray. Robert Ray is named as the owner of the adjoining lands in Elmswell on an undated late eighteenth century map of the Elmswell Hall estate. At the tithe apportionment this field was known as Mill Break and there was a loam pit in the southwest corner of the field.

Documentary sources for the land in Elmswell have not been fully explored as many of the records for this parish are in Bury St Edmunds. On the same sixteenth century map, the land is shown as part of a warren of 40 acres, with a warrener's lodge built in or close to the study area. Later the warren was broken up and divided into those fields shown on the undated late eighteenth century map of the Elmswell Hall estate. Robert Ray was then the owner of most of the land. This land has not been traced on the Elmswell tithe map as this document is in Bury St Edmunds. The warren is mentioned in an extent of the manor of Elmswell. This document is a sixteenth century copy of an earlier extent possibly from the late fourteenth century.

Between these two parishes the parish boundary is described as both a hundred mere and Procession Way in sixteenth century sources. This boundary is likely to have existed from the late Saxon Period that is before 1066 and is an ancient boundary.

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HD417/13 Map of an Estate in Elmswell, Wetherden and Woolpit undated late sixteenth century

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