

Report № 1895

An Archaeological Evaluation at 18 The Beck, Feltwell, Norfolk

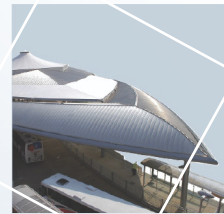
NHER 51622

Produced for

John Hobden

of

John Hobden Home Design



Matt Ratcliff

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BAU1895

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NAU ARCHAEOLOGY PROJECT CHECKLIST		
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Location:	18 The Beck, Feltwell, Norfolk
District:	West Norfolk
Grid Ref.:	TL 71582 90806
HER No.:	51622 FLW
Dates of Fieldwork:	7 July 2008

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at 18 The Beck, Feltwell. A single trench was excavated within the footprint of a proposed residential development, located within the present garden.

The trench revealed a subsoil and thin layer of grey silty clay, overlying a solid, clean chalk natural. Some modern finds were recovered from the subsoil and a small quantity of animal bone was recovered from the lower context, but no archaeological features were identified within the trench.

1.0 Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by NAU Archaeology in advance of a proposed residential development on land at 18 The Beck, Feltwell. The site comprised a lawn and gravel driveway to the rear of 9 Bell Street, measuring approximately 55m by 20m (1100m²).

The archaeological work was commissioned by John Hobden of John Hobden Home Design.

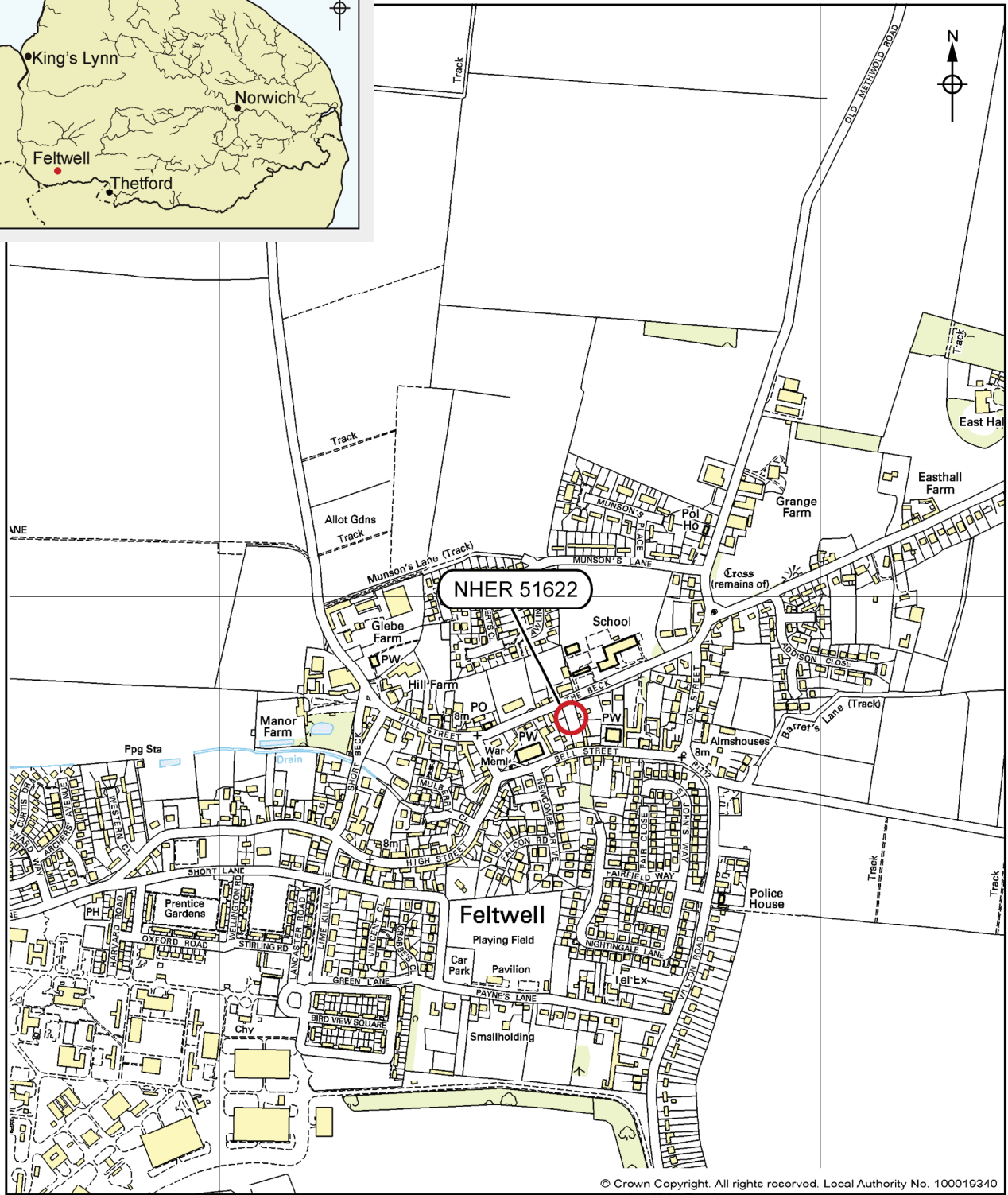
This archaeological programme was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by King's Lynn and West Norfolk council and a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA ref.: DG 28/05/2008). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref: BAU1302/DW).

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

2.0 Geology and Topography

The site comprised of a long north–south lawn, with a gravel driveway situated along the western side of the garden (Fig. 1). The lawn sloped slightly downhill to the north, from a height of 7.34m OD at its southern limit to approximately 6.16m OD at the north. The garden was bordered by walls to the east and west, and by the property at 9 Bell Street to the south. The northern end of the site was walled, with a gateway giving access to The Beck.



0 1000m

Figure 1. Location map showing NHER 51622. Scale 1:10,000

The garden topsoil was shallow (0.30m) and overlay a slightly chalky subsoil that deepened to the north (1.20m at the deepest point). Below this subsoil was a narrow (0.10m) band of grey silty clay, which was lying directly above the Lower and Middle Cretaceous chalk bedrock (Funnell 2005.) The chalk was encountered at a depth of 4.96m OD.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Prehistoric (700,000 BC–AD 43)

Two possibly Neolithic flint blades were found to the west of the site, in a private garden (NHER 24142).

3.2 Roman (AD 43–410)

There are several areas within the village which have provided evidence for Roman activity. The most significant of these was at Glebe Farm, just north-east of St Nicholas' church (NHER 4921). This site contained a number of Roman features, including pits and ditches, and evidence for Roman buildings, including a villa and bathhouse hypocaust. A series of Roman boundary or drainage ditches was found during an evaluation at 1 Bell Street in 2005 (NHER 41934). Additionally, some sherds of Roman pottery were among the finds when a garden at the east end of The Beck was landscaped (NHER 16271).

3.3 Anglo-Saxon (AD 410–1066)

An excavation at the Old School, on the north side of The Beck, revealed numerous archaeological features, including Roman pottery and tile contemporary with the villa (NHER 40913). Evidence for Saxon and early medieval structures, including a sunken-featured building, post-holes and other settlement features were also identified. Finds included a small quantity of Early–Late Saxon pottery. This evidence suggests occupation within this area of the present village during the 10th–11th centuries.

3.4 Medieval (AD 1066–1550)

The village of Feltwell was established before the Norman conquest, as charters demonstrate that it was granted to the monastery of Ely in the late 10th century. The church just to the west of the proposed site is dedicated to St Mary (NHER 4940) and is first recorded in 1494, when a fire damaged a large part of the building.

Evidence for Medieval activity has been found at a number of locations in Feltwell. Medieval pottery was found during the Bell Street evaluation and a small quantity was also identified at the Old School evaluation.

3.5 Post-medieval (AD 1550–1900)

The remains of a post-medieval, triangular pound are located in the north-west of the village (NHER 16601).

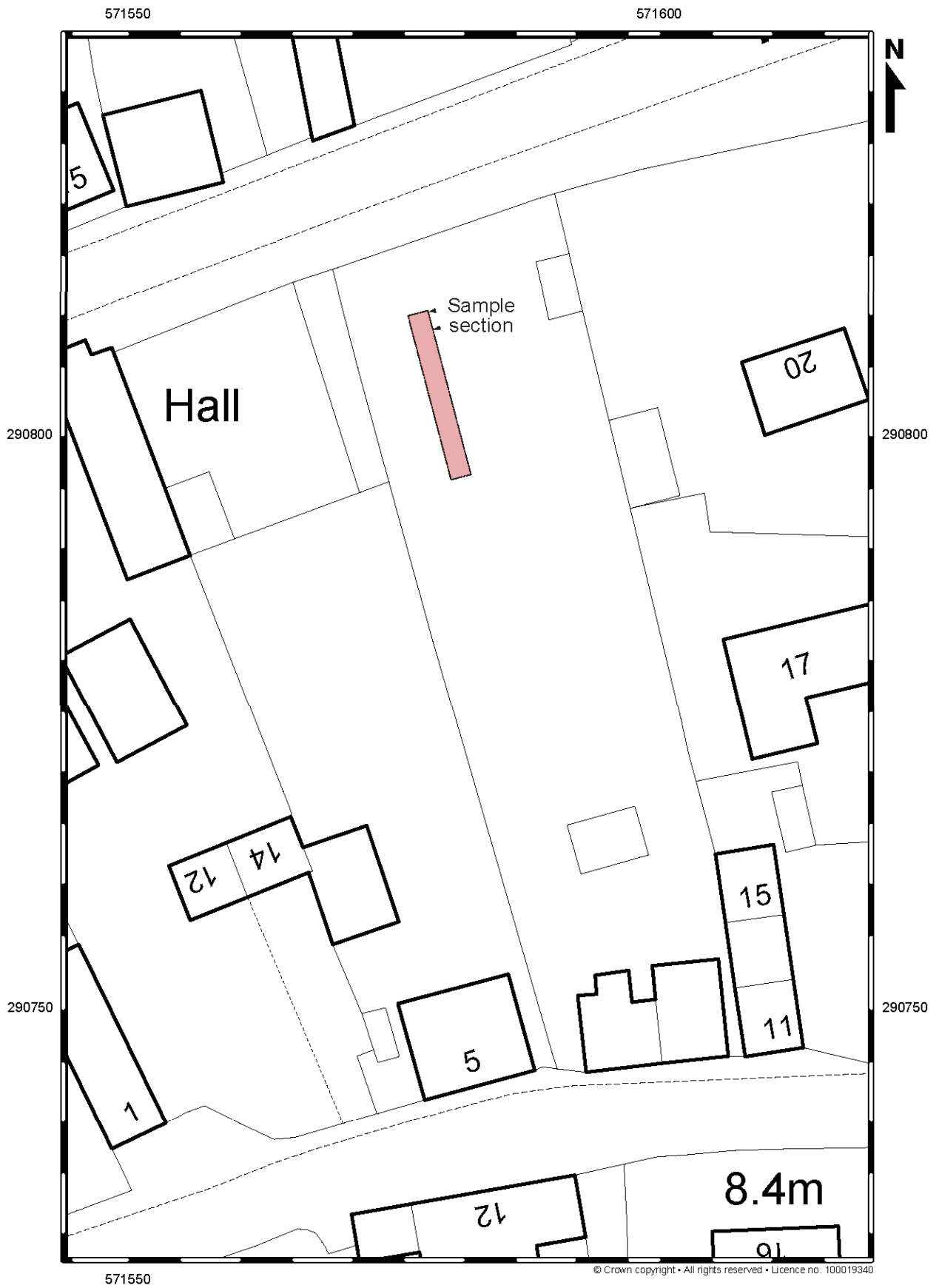


Figure 2. Location of Trench 1.

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 a single linear trench measuring 15m x 1.80m be excavated within the foundation area of the proposed building, along its longest edge. As this would have disturbed the existing gravel drive and disrupted access, the trench was relocated (with permission from NLA) at the time of the excavation, to run north–south across the midline of the floor plan.

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB-type 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. No environmental samples were taken.

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.

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from an Ordnance Survey benchmark with a value of 7.92m OD, located on the north-western corner of St Mary's church.

Site access was good, while the weather was mostly overcast and wet, with periods of heavy rain.

5.0 Results

Trench 1 was investigated to the depth of the natural chalk bedrock, which was revealed at 1.20m at the northern end of the trench (Fig. 3). The natural was a solid, clean white chalk (04) which sloped slightly upwards to a depth of 1.10m at the southern end of the trench.

Above the natural was a narrow band of grey silt (03), which was approximately 0.07m thick and contained frequent small angular chalk fragments and a small quantity of animal bone.

This silt was overlaid by a light greyish-brown subsoil (02), which was approximately 0.80m thick and contained frequent small pieces of chalk with occasional charcoal flecks. This deposit contained one piece of Roman ceramic building material (possibly a piece of tegula), one piece of medieval CBM and one sherd of post-medieval pottery.

Above this was a thin topsoil (01), which consisted of a mid-greyish-brown sandy silt. This was 0.30m thick and contained frequent very small stones and a single iron object.

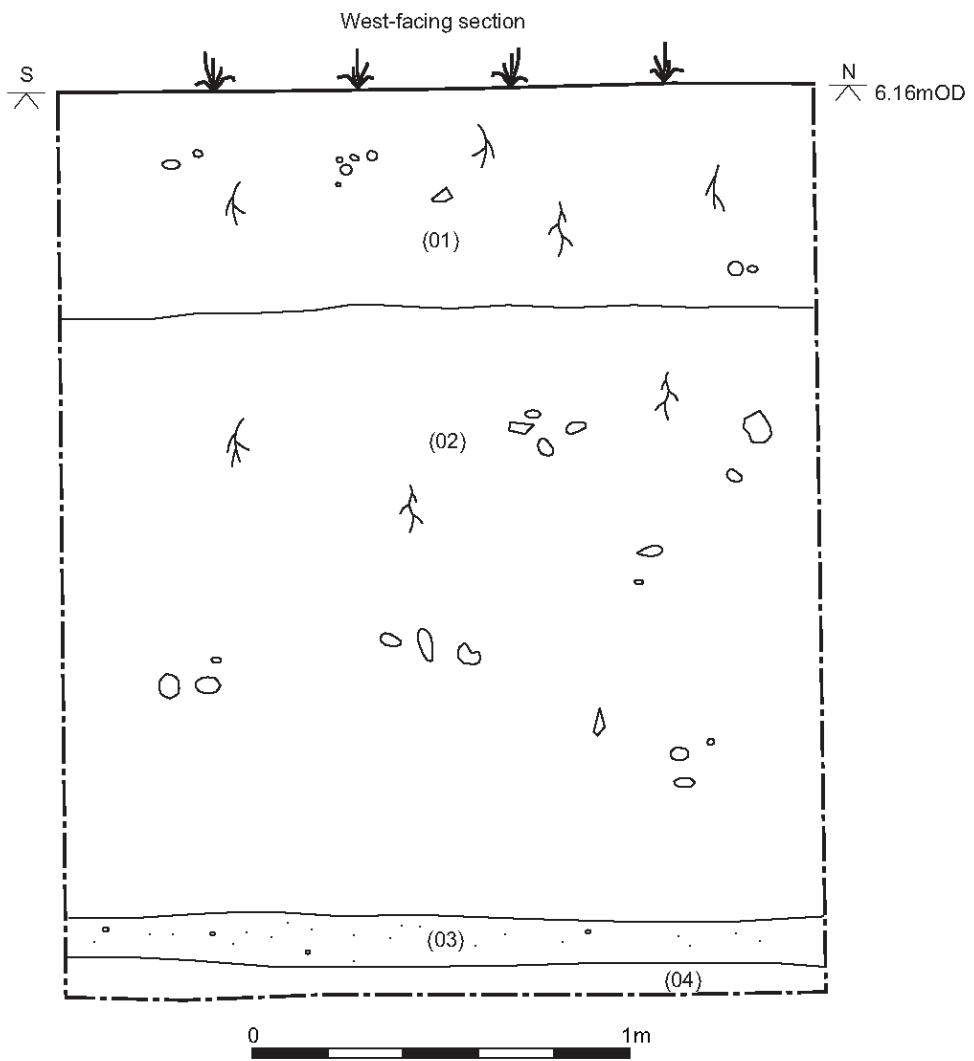


Figure 3. Sample section in Trench 1. Scale 1:10

6.0 The Finds

6.1 Pottery

A single body sherd of 16th–18th-century Glazed Red Earthenware, weighing 36g, was recovered.

The assemblage was quantified (counted and weighed) by form and fabric (see Appendix 3). Identification of the fabrics was based on the typology of Norwich ceramics established by Jennings (1981).

6.2 Ceramic Building Material

The site produced two fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 57g.

The assemblage was quantified (counted and weighed) by form and fabric (see Appendix 4). The fabrics were identified by eye and the main inclusions noted. Fabric descriptions and dates are based on the provisional type series established by Sue Anderson formerly of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

The assemblage consists of a single fragment of possible Roman tegula and a piece of over-fired, yellow medieval brick.

6.3 Faunal Remains

All of the bone was examined to determine range of species and elements present and the amount of material that could produce measurable, ageable bone. Bone was scanned to determine if bone-, horn- or antler-working were present in the assemblage. Butchering and any indications of skinning, horn-working and other modifications were recorded. When possible a record was made of ages and any other relevant information, such as pathologies. Counts and weights were noted for each context and each species identified. The assessment was carried out following a modified version of guidelines by English Heritage (Davis 1992). A catalogue of the assemblage is included as Appendix 6.

Faunal remains consisting of four fragments, weighing 0.142kg, were recovered from a single grey silty fill. Two fragments were identifiable as juvenile cattle, with one metatarsal showing knife cuts from skinning and a fragment of mandible. The remaining two pieces of bone are from a large mammal, but not identifiable to species; these fragments have been butchered.

7.0 Conclusions

The trench excavated at 18 The Beck has revealed few finds and no features of archaeological significance. The single piece of possible Roman tegula is not unexpected considering the close proximity to the previously excavated Roman settlement to the north of the site. The small quantity of medieval ceramic building material is also fairly unremarkable and does not necessarily indicate a structure within the site's limits, although it is indicative of some kind of medieval activity within the vicinity.

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

Acknowledgements

This work was commissioned by John Hobden of John Hobden Home Design.

The excavation was undertaken by Matt Ratcliff and Michelle Kirk. The client provided the machine excavator.

The finds processing was undertaken by Lucy Talbot (pottery and CBM) and Julie Curl (faunal remains). The NHER information was supplied by Alice Cattermole and Heather Hamilton of Norfolk Landscape Archaeology.

The plans and sections were digitised by Julie Curl and Michael Feather. The report was edited by Richard Hoggett.

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Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description	Period
01	Layer	Topsoil	Modern
02	Layer	Subsoil	Post-medieval
03	Layer	Grey Silt	Undated
04	Natural	Chalk Bedrock	Undated

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Wt (g)	Period
02	Pottery	1	36	Post-medieval
02	Ceramic Building Material	1	40	? Roman
02	Ceramic Building Material	1	17	Medieval
03	Animal bone	4	142	Undiagnostic

Appendix 2b: NHER Finds Summary Table

Period	Material	Quantity
Unknown	Animal Bone	4
Roman (42 to 409AD)	CBM	1
Medieval (1066 to 1539AD)	CBM	1
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	Pottery	1
Modern (1900 to 2050 AD)	Heel Iron	1

Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Quantity	Weight (g)	Period
02	GRE	Body sherd	1	36	Post-medieval

GRE = Glazed Red Earthenware

Appendix 4: Ceramic Building Material

Context	Form	Quantity	Wt (g)	Period
02	? Tegula	1	40	?Roman
02	Brick	1	17	Medieval
	<i>TOTAL</i>	2	57	

Appendix 5: Small Finds

SF No.	Context	Material	Qty	Wt (g)	Description	Period
–	01	Iron	1	–	Heel iron	Modern

Appendix 6: Faunal Remains

Context	Ctxt Qty	Ctxt Wt (g)	Species	NISP	Comments
03	4	142	Cattle	2	Cut metatarsal, jaw fragment. Juvenile
			Mammal	2	Large fragments, butchered