

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 756

Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief at
White Hart Street, East Harling, Norfolk

Peter Warsop

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Location: Land adjacent to 16 White Hart Street, East Harling
Grid Ref: TL 9945 8655
SMR No.: 35185
Date of work: 27th July and 30th September 2002

Summary

A watching brief was carried out on groundworks in advance of the building of a new property in White Hart Street, East Harling. Three modern pits were observed and a number of ceramic and metal objects were recovered.

1.0 Introduction

This archaeological watching brief was undertaken on land adjacent to 16 White Hart Street, East Harling (Fig. 1). It was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref: 05/04/02 ER), supplemented by a Method Statement for watching briefs prepared by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit. The work was commissioned by Mr Nigel Elson.

The objective was to record any archaeological evidence revealed during topsoil stripping and the excavation of footing trenches for a new property.

Spoil and exposed surfaces were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

Late Saxon (851 to 1065 AD) St Neots-type ware pottery was found embedded in the natural sand at a site across White Hart Street in 1982 (SMR 19833). However, watching briefs conducted in 2000 and 2001 during groundworks on a plot immediately to the east of the present site revealed no significant archaeological deposits, features or finds (SMR 35185).

The site archive is currently held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, in accordance with the relevant policy on archiving standards.

2.0 Observations

The work was conducted in two phases. In July 2002 the removal of overburden (approximately 0.5m deep) using a mechanical excavator was monitored. This work levelled an area that extended 23m to the south of White Hart Street to the same height as that of the road surface. Loam topsoil, to a depth of 0.15m, was seen to overlie a red-brown silty-sand buried soil with occasional chalk, charcoal, gravel and brick inclusions and a depth of 0.35m. This may have been associated with the former use of the site as allotments. It contained a copper alloy coin from the reign of Charles I (recovered by metal detecting) and was cut by two small pits that contained modern pottery and bottle glass. Insufficient material was removed for the naturally occurring deposits to be revealed.

The site was visited in September 2002 to monitor the excavation of footing trenches for the new property. These were 0.7m wide on the lines of the external walls, 0.4m wide for the internal walls and were excavated to an average depth of 1.1m. The buried soil was observed to a maximum depth of 0.6m above a subsoil that was, on average, 0.5m deep. Natural yellow sand was visible at a depth of 0.9m to 1m. At the south of the site a large modern rubbish pit, 1m deep and 1.7m wide, was observed to contain dark gritty soil with ash, clinker, brick fragments, ceramic and iron

artefacts. One fragment of medieval pot rim, two 17th-century buttons and a late 16th-century spur buckle were found within the subsoil.

3.0 Conclusions

Three modern pits were encountered during this watching brief. One piece of medieval pottery, a coin from the reign of Charles I, two 17th-century buttons and a late 16th-century spur buckle were found within the subsoil.

Acknowledgements

The archaeological field work was conducted by Ben Hobbs and Peter Warsop and the finds were identified by Julia Huddle. The illustrations were prepared by David Dobson. The report was edited by David Robertson and was formatted by Maggie Footitt. Thanks are extended to Mr Nigel Elson and to Mr David Bailey for carrying out the metal detecting.



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

Local Authority No. 076759

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 (04/11/2002) **Reference copy: no further copies to be made.**