

Report 2316



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## An Archaeological Evaluation at Honeypot Meadow, Bardolph Road, Bungay, Suffolk

BUN 091



**Prepared for**  
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BAU 2332

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Location:	Honeypot Meadow, Bardolph Road, Bungay
District:	Waveney
Grid Ref.:	TM 3380 8930
HER No.:	BUN 091
Client:	Wellington Construction Ltd
Dates of Fieldwork:	15th–16th February 2010

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## **Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the disused tennis courts in Honeypot Meadow, just to the north of Bardolph Road, Bungay. The archaeological evaluation was conducted in response to a planning condition set prior to a proposed small residential development. The work was conducted on behalf of Wellington Construction Ltd.*

*A single long evaluation trench was excavated through the centre of the old tennis court. Four features were observed and excavated: a large medieval pit was located at the northern end of the trench, while a small undated pit and two pits containing pig burials lay towards the southern end of the trench. The good condition of the bone in a sandy acidic environment suggested that the pig burials were reasonably recent, although they may have been buried prior to the 19th century, when the area was used for timber yards, before being used as a bowling club/tennis court in the 20th century.*

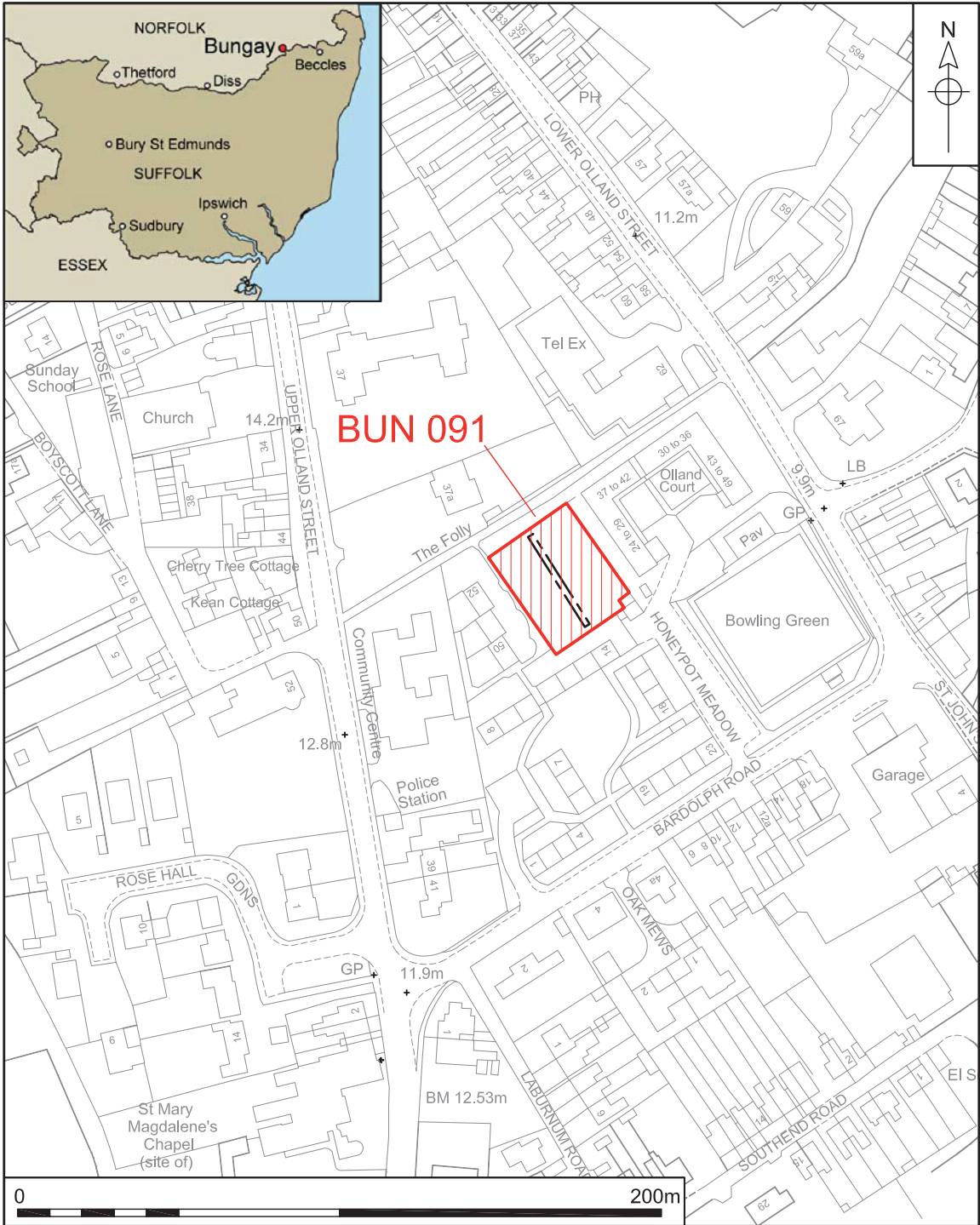
## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The site was situated on the site of the disused tennis courts at Honeypot Meadow immediately to the north of Bardolph Road, in the northern part of Bungay (Fig. 1). The site occupies an area of approximately a third of a hectare and the proposed development was to consist of five bungalows.

This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Waveney District Council (Ref. DC/09/0816/FUL) and a brief issued by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (Ref. Keith Wade 24/11/09). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. NAU/NP/BAU2316). This work was commissioned and funded by Wellington Construction Ltd.

This programme of 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 Note 16: Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about 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 the appropriate Suffolk County Council museum store following the relevant policies on archiving standards outlined in SCC Archive Guidelines (2008).



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2000

## **2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The natural substratum present at the site was a glacial till lying over Liocene and Pleistocene Crag, a marine deposit of shelly sands (Wymer 1988). The soils are the wet alluvial soils, influenced by the River Waveney (Wymer 1988).

The plot is situated at a height of 10m OD within 500m of the river Waveney. Due to landscaping prior to the creation of the original tennis court the land surface was very flat. The alluvial nature of the soils allowed for reasonable drainage.

The topsoil (16) was a loose, dark brown silty sand, with a subsoil which varied between 0.60m and 0.70m. It had probably been subject to some landscaping prior to the laying of the tennis court. A thin subsoil (17), comprising a light to mid-brown silty sand, covered the site. It was patchy and often 0.10m thick. The natural substratum (18) was a very loose light yellow sand which became more gravel rich towards the southern part of the site.

## **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

A 1km radius search of the Suffolk Historic Environment Record was undertaken, centred on the proposed development area. No previous archaeological investigations had been undertaken on the site, and the most relevant HER entries are presented below by period.

### **3.1 Prehistoric**

There have been some prehistoric finds in the vicinity of Bungay, but none near to the current site. The majority of the sites and finds appear to have been closer to the River Waveney. An evaluation at Nethergate Street (BUN 045), north-east of Honeypot Meadow, revealed a peat layer which has the potential to contain further evidence of prehistoric activity in the area (Robertson 2004).

### **3.2 Romano-British**

To the north of Bungay, the village of Ditchingham is thought to have had a Roman antecedent and there have been at least ten Roman coins found within the confines of modern Bungay (BUN 002, 014, 015, MISC 1009, MISC 1010, MISC 1011 and MISC 1015). These probably represent Roman activity within fields or open land.

### **3.3 Early Saxon**

To the south of the site two Early Saxon furnished graves have been excavated which may have formed part of an inhumation cemetery (BUN 003). A glass cup (BUN MISC 1017) found at an uncertain location in Bungay could also have come from this possible cemetery. Other Early Saxon finds have been found closer to the river Waveney.

### **3.4 Middle Saxon**

Some evidence for Middle Saxon activity has been found within modern Bungay. A pit with Ipswich-ware pottery was found 0.5km north of the site at the site of the old bus station (BUN 040).

### **3.5 Late Saxon**

The town of Bungay had its foundation in the Late Saxon period. A settlement was established with a planned grid of streets prior to the Norman Conquest (Penn 1998; Wade and Dymond 1999) and, although it was not classified as a borough by Domesday, the presence of three churches suggests that it was an urban centre by this date. The surviving Church of the Holy Trinity (BUN 020) has long-and-short work which may be Late Saxon. Before the Conquest the Burgh was the property of Godric, and the Soke was held by Archbishop Stigand (VCH 1846).

Thetford ware pottery has been collected from a site immediately north of Honeypot Meadow (BUN 023).

### **3.6 Medieval**

By the time of the Domesday Survey, Bungay was divided into several manors and estates, which were retained as royal land by William I, under the stewardship of William de Noiers. The tenants were rich in swine, sheep, and poultry. Roger Bigod was granted much of the settlement by the king soon after 1086 (VCH 1846).

Bungay continued to be a successful market town during the medieval period. The southern, western and eastern parts of the town, which were not protected by the River Waveney, were surrounded by a ditch and a bank. In places the town ditch (BUN 018, 025 and 040) was at least 18m wide and 4m deep. There is no evidence for the date of its construction and it was likely to have been filled in during 13th or 14th centuries. As Honeypot Meadow lies approximately 500m south of the medieval defences there are far fewer relevant HER entries.

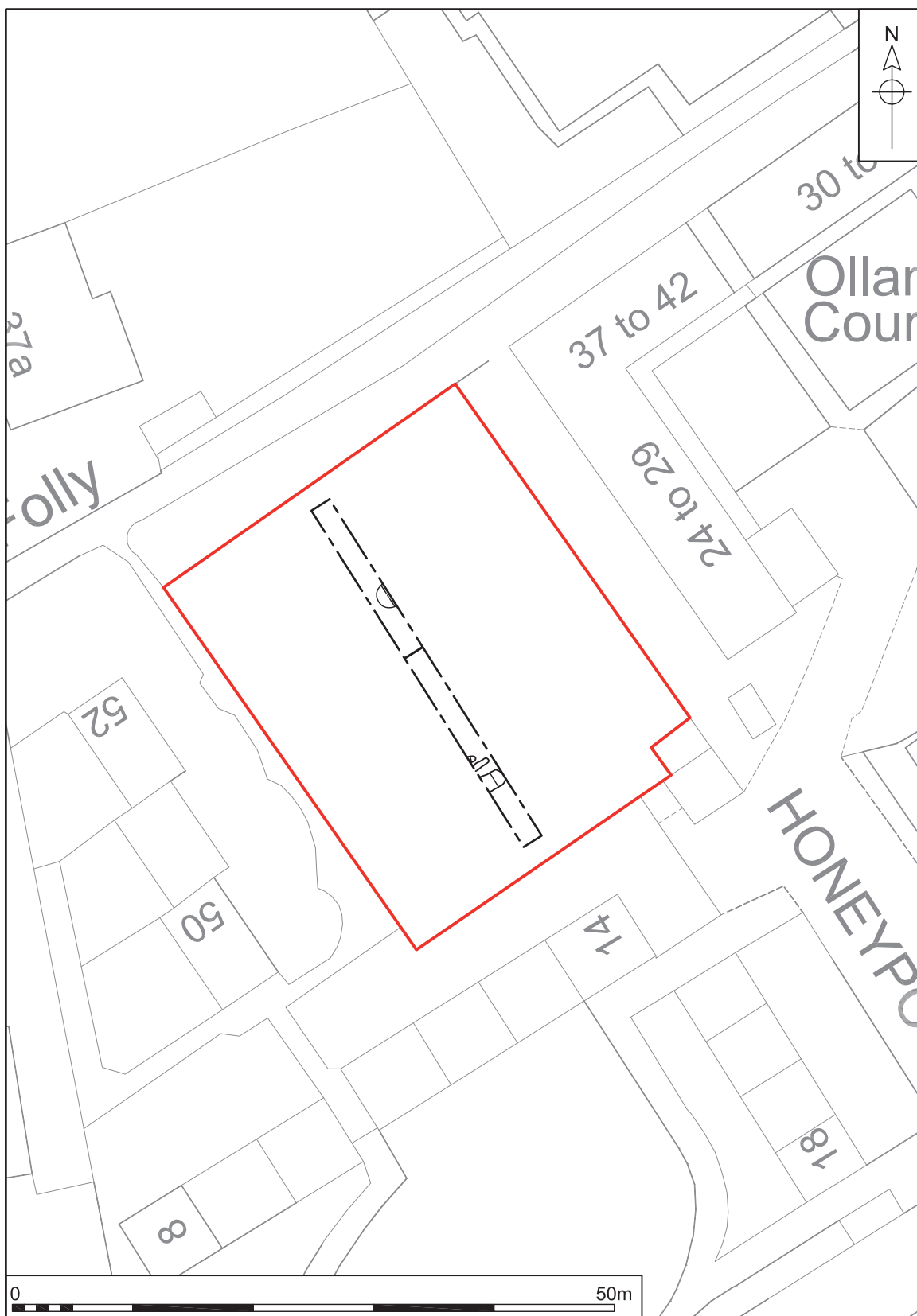
During the 12th century a motte and bailey castle was constructed on the western side of the defended settlement by the Bigod family (BUN 004 and 012). There was a recorded medieval chapel and leper hospital (BUN 005) reasonably close to the present site. It stood beside the road leading south from the defended town. This, along with medieval finds (BUN 023) south of the town defences, suggest the existence of suburbs.

### **3.7 Post-medieval**

During the post-medieval area the suburbs of Bungay grew and buildings were constructed in the immediate vicinity of the site for the first time. By the 1730s, a watermill (BUN 037) was constructed 0.5 km to the north-east, while to the south a six-storey tower mill was built in 1830 (BUN 026). It ceased working in 1918 after being struck by lightning and was later converted into a house. A trade directory reference lists the presence of a lime kiln at Lower Olland Street (BUN 060).

Honeypot Meadow was described as lying between Lower Olland Street and Upper Olland and at this time was used in part as a wood yard, builders' yard and boatyard for building wherries. Later it became Charles Early's cricket bat factory. There is also mention of tanneries along the Upper Olland Street (Edwards 2010). The 1885 Ordnance Survey map shows that the area between Lower and Upper Olland Street was free of development, which may suggest that the meadow was common land or possibly part of the estate of Rose Hall, located on the opposite side of Upper Olland Street.





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Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500



Plate 1. The site, looking south.

## 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 at least 5% of the development area be sample excavated via trial trenching. To achieve this a single trench, measuring 33m by 1.80m was machine excavated through the centre of the disused tennis court (Fig. 2; Plate 1).

Machine excavation was carried out with a two and half tonne tracked mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision. The machine and driver were provided by the client, Wellington Construction Ltd.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NAU Archaeology pro forma recording sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour, monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

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 to be retained for inspection. No metal objects were found.

Two environmental samples were taken from fills (04) and (06) within pit [01].

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from a known height of 9.90m OD, located on St John's Road to the north-east of the site. A TBM with a value of 12.06m OD was located at the gateway into the tennis court.

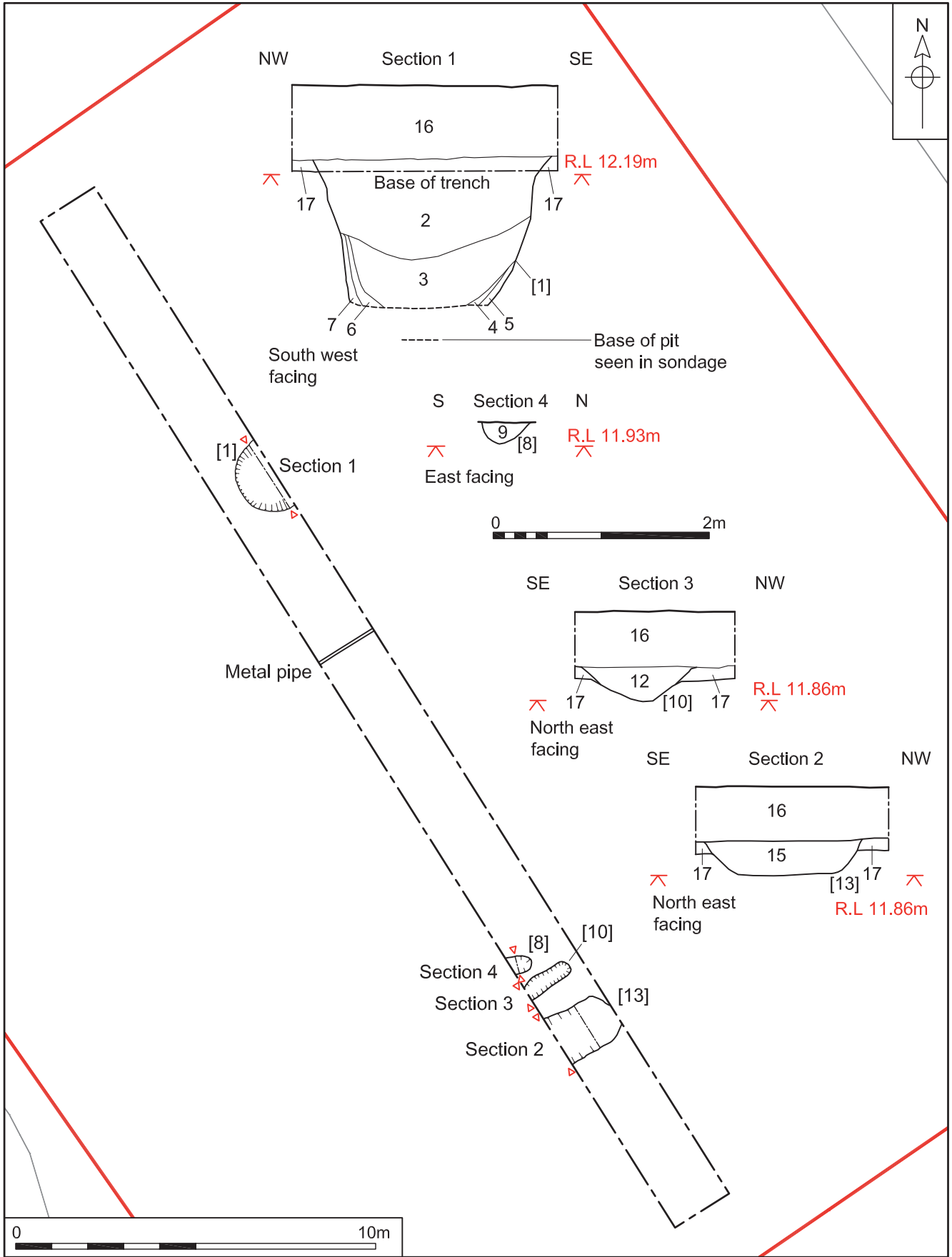


Figure 3. Trench plan and sections. Scale 1:150 and 1:50

## 5.0 RESULTS

The single trench was oriented roughly north–south through the centre of the disused tennis court and measured 33m by 1.80m (Fig. 2; Plate 1). A large pit of possible medieval date, a small pit and two further pits containing pig skeletons were found. All four of the features were sealed by the topsoil (16) and were observed to cut through the subsoil (17).

The large pit [01], which was found towards the northern end of the site, measured 2.20m by at least 1.40m and had an excavated depth of 1.20m from the base of the trench (Fig. 3; Plate 2). The upper 0.10m was only observed in section. Full excavation stopped at a depth of 1.20m and a small sondage was excavated which indicated that the pit was a further 0.30m deep. The total depth of the pit was 1.60m.

Pit [01] appeared to have filled up episodically and contained six fills. The primary fill (07) was 0.10m loose light brown slightly silty sand. This was probably the initial collapse of material from the sides of the pit. The secondary fill (06) consisted of fine white silt which was probably a lime-rich deposit. It may have been placed in the bottom and lower sides of the pit as a disinfecting layer. At its thickest, at the centre of the pit, it had a depth of 0.20m. The next layer (05) in the sequence was a loose light brown silty sand. The deposit may have collapsed down the sides of the pit or been thrown in. The next layer (04) was a loose light grey silt 0.10m thick. The appearance of the deposit indicated that it may have originally have been a layer of cess. Filling the majority of the centre of the pit was a loose brown silty sand (03). It appeared to have been formed from a series of lenses of similar material which was probably the result of deliberate backfilling. The final fill (02) was a loose brown silty sand, which appeared to have accumulated naturally. This uppermost fill contained a sherd of medieval pottery.

Further to the south was a small pit [08] of unknown date (Fig. 3). It measured at least 0.60m by 0.43m and was 0.20m deep. The sides were reasonably steep and regular. The feature was undated. It contained a loose brown silty sand (09) which had probably built up naturally.

Less than a metre to the south was a rectangular pit [10], measuring at least 1.30m by 0.45m and 0.30m deep. The pit had been dug for to accommodate the body of a pig (11), which was laid on its side with its head to the west (Plate 3). The bone was in very good condition, suggesting that it was of post-medieval origin. The pit was sealed by the undisturbed topsoil, indicating that the burial was not modern. The fill (12) was composed from a loose brown silty sand which was probably deliberately thrown into the pit after the pig had been buried. A sherd of medieval pottery was found within the fill, although this seems likely to have been residual.

A similar pig burial was located a further metre to the south (Fig. 3). The burial pit [13] measured at least 1.80m by 1.40m and was 0.30m deep. The pig (14) was laid on its side and was oriented with its head to the north. The bone was in very good condition and the two burials were probably relatively contemporary. The fill (15) was a loose brown silty sand.



Plate 2. Pit [01], looking east.

## 6.0 THE FINDS

The finds and environmental material from the site is presented in tabular form with basic quantitative information in Appendix 2: Finds by Context.

In addition to this summary, more detailed information on specific finds and environmental categories is included in separate reports below. Supporting tables for these contributions are included in the Appendices. The semi-complete pig skeletons were examined and are discussed below however the bone was not washed or quantified as they are relatively recent and may have represented a health hazard.

### 6.1 Pottery

By Sarah Percival

Two small sherds of pottery weighing a total of 8g were found in the fills of pits [01] and [10] the latter associated with a post medieval/ modern pig burial (Appendix 3). Pit [01] produced a small unprovenanced unglazed body sherd and pit [10] an abraded sherd of glazed Grimston ware. Both are medieval, dating broadly to the 12th to 14th centuries.

### 6.2 Ceramic Building Material

By Sarah Percival

A large fragment of medieval to post medieval brick in coarse sandy fabric with large flint inclusions was found in topsoil.



Plate 3. Pit [10], showing pig skeleton (11), looking north.



Plate 4. Pit [13], showing pig skeleton (14), looking west.

### 6.3 Animal Bone

By Julie Curl

Context (02) produced a single bone weighing 0.035kg; this fragment is the distal end of a juvenile cattle femur, which has been heavily chopped on the distal shaft. The butchered cattle femur is evidence of meat waste.

Two pig skeletons were found during the evaluation (11) and (14). One was found lying on its right side with forelegs folded under the body and rear legs stretched out, the other lying on its left side with forelegs stretched out under the head and the rear legs folded under the body. The two pig skeletons and other finds were removed from site for examination. The skeletons were not washed due to a possible risk of diseases as they may be of a comparatively modern date.

The skeletons were examined for any signs of butchering or pathology and minimal measurements and tooth wear patterns were taken to estimate breed and age at death. Due to time limits, the completeness of the skeletons and because the finds were unwashed, no weights or quantities were taken for the pigs. Other finds were weighed and quantified as normal. The bones are in good condition and recovery was good, with most parts of the animal seen, showing the animals were buried whole.

Both of the pig skeletons – (11) and (14) – were from sub-adult animals. Pig (14) was a slightly larger animal with more robust teeth, which might indicate this individual was a male. Pig (11) was slightly smaller and less robust and so may be a female. Neither pig showed any signs of butchery and neither had been skinned prior to burial. No pathological conditions were seen on any of the bones. The size and shape of the skull suggests a modern breed of pig, maybe a cross-breed; the shape of the skull suggests a breed such as a Tamworth-cross.

Complete pig remains were found during excavations at The Laurels, Fleggburgh (Curl 2007), where the unbutchered remains of a sub-adult pig and neonatal piglets were discovered. A pig burial was also seen at Minstergate in Thetford (Andrews and Penn 1999). A complete pig burial is also known from a later medieval to post-medieval burial ground at St Martin's Field, Canterbury (Diack, pers. comm.). A young pig with her neonatal piglets were also buried complete and unbutchered at Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk (Curl 2008). A young adult pig that showed a visible infection that could have caused blood poisoning and the animals death was found at Mildenhall, Suffolk (Curl 2008).

Although no signs of pathology was seen, not all infections leave a trace on the bone and many diseases cause death before any evidence can be left on the skeleton. Pigs are known to have problems with birthing and diseases and infections at this time, as well as many other diseases which can render the animals unfit for human consumption (Field 1957; Taylor 1981).

## **7.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE**

Two samples for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from fills within pit [01]. The samples were processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed below in Appendix 5. All plant remains were charred. Modern fibrous roots were present within both assemblages.

Both flots are very small (considerably less than 0.1 litres in volume) and extremely limited in composition. Both contain a low density of small charcoal/charred wood fragments and the assemblage from Sample 2 (context (04)) also includes pieces of charred root/stem and two very poorly preserved indeterminate grain fragments. Otherwise, Sample 2 is largely composed of black porous and tarry residues, both of which appear to be bi-products from the combustion of coal. Coal fragments are present within both assemblages. Sample 2 also contains small pieces of bone.

In summary, neither assemblage contains a sufficient density of material for close interpretation. However, the remains from Sample 2 would appear to be relatively recent and are almost certainly intrusive within the feature.

## **8.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The probable medieval pit [01] lay at the northern end of the site, reasonably close to where some Thetford ware and medieval sherds were found previously at 37 Upper Olland Street (BUN 023). There is some evidence of medieval occupation to the south of the medieval town ditch and this could relate to that activity. The pit appears to have been used for refuse, although it may have started life as a quarry pit, designed to extract sand for building.

The pig burials – [10] and [13] – were probably of a similar date, as is suggested by their proximity to each other. The good survival of the bone suggests that they are not very old, and a small sherd of medieval pottery within one of the fills is probably residual. Both of the pits were sealed by the topsoil, although this may have been landscaped prior to the creation of the tennis court. Due to the ownership of the land since the 1920s by the Bungay bowls club, the burial of the pigs was probably undertaken prior to the 20th century, and they may have had some connection with the tanning industry that was possibly located on Upper Olland Street in earlier centuries (Edwards 2010).

Recommendations for future work based upon this report will be made by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team.

### ***Acknowledgements***

The fieldwork was undertaken by the author. Thanks are due to the operatives of Wellington Construction Ltd for their help on site and interest in the project.

The pottery was examined by Sarah Percival who also coordinated the finds process, and the animal bone was reported on by Julie Curl. The report illustrations were prepared by David Dobson after initial digitising by the author. The report was edited by Richard Hoggett.



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Date accessed: 18 February 2010.

## Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Type	Fill Of	Description	Period
1	Cut	Pit		Pit	Medieval
2	Deposit		1	Fill	Medieval
3	Deposit		1	Fill	Medieval
4	Deposit		1	Fill	Medieval
5	Deposit		1	Fill	Medieval
6	Deposit		1	Fill	Medieval
7	Deposit		1	Fill	Medieval
8	Cut	Pit		Pit	Unknown
9	Deposit		8	Fill	Unknown
10	Cut	Pit		Pit	Med./Post-Med.
11	Deposit		10	Pig Skeleton	Med./Post-Med.
12	Deposit		10	Fill	Med./Post-Med.
13	Cut	Pit		Pit	Med./Post-Med.
14	Deposit		13	Pig Skeleton	Med./Post-Med.
15	Deposit		13	Fill	Med./Post-Med.
16	Deposit			Topsoil	Unknown
17	Deposit			Subsoil	Unknown

## Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Type	Total
Medieval	Pit	1
Med./Post-Med.	Pit	2
Unknown	Pit	1

## Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period
2	Pottery	1	7g	Medieval
2	Animal Bone	1	35g	Unknown
12	Pottery	1	1g	Medieval
16	Ceramic Building Material	1	200g	Med./Post-Med.

## Appendix 2b: OASIS Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Medieval	Pottery	2
Med./Post-Med.	Ceramic Building Material	1
Unknown	Animal Bone	1

### Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Qty	Wt (g)	Date
2	Local Medieval unglazed	U	1	7	C11th to C14th
12	Grimston glazed	U	1	1	LC12th to C14th

### Appendix 4: Faunal Remains

Context	Qty	Weight	Species	Comments
2	1	0.035kg	Cattle	Juvenile femur, butchered
11	-	-	Pig	Complete, unbutchered skeleton, sub-adult
14	-	-	Pig	Complete, unbutchered skeleton, sub-adult

### Appendix 5: Plant Macrofossils and Other Remains

Key: x = 1–10 specimens; xx = 11–50 specimens; xxx = 51–100 specimens

Sample No.	1	2
Context No.	6	4
Plant macrofossils		
Cereal indet. (grain frags.)		X
Charcoal <2mm	X	X
Charcoal >2mm	X	
Charred root/stem	X	
Other remains		
Black porous material		XXX
Black tarry material	X	
Bone	X	
Small coal frags.	X	XX
Sample volume (litres)	20	20
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%