

Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

Local Authority No.100019340

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NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No. 1067

**An Archaeological Evaluation at The Rectory,
Scole, Norfolk**

41282 SCL

John Ames

May 2005

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Contents

Summary

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Geology and Topography
- 3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background
- 4.0 Methodology
- 5.0 Results
- 6.0 The Finds
- 7.0 Conclusions

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Appendix 2: Finds by Context

Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location
- Fig. 2 Trench locations
- Fig. 3 Location of archaeological features within Trench 1
- Fig. 4 Location of archaeological features within Trench 2
- Fig. 5 Location of archaeological features within Trench 4
- Fig. 6 Location of archaeological features within Trench 5
- Fig. 7 Trench 1, sections
- Fig. 8 Trench 2, sections
- Fig. 9 Trench 4, sections
- Fig. 10 Trench 5, sections

Location: The Rectory, Scole
District: South Norfolk
Grid Ref: TM 1519 7904
HER No.: 41282 SCL
Date of fieldwork: 31st March to 5th April 2005

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out within the footprint of a proposed residential development for eighteen houses at The Rectory, Scole, South Norfolk.

Five evaluation trenches were excavated, four of which contained archaeological features and deposits. The archaeological features were sealed by subsoil deposits and probably date from the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. The possibility, however, that some features may be the result of medieval settlement shift cannot be discounted.

1.0 Introduction

(Fig. 1)

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by Norfolk Archaeological Unit (NAU) within the location of the proposed residential development for eighteen dwellings at Scole, South Norfolk. The site comprised an area of 0.4 ha.

This project was commissioned by Rev. Canon J.C. Minns, Diocese of Norwich on behalf of Norwich Diocesan Board of Finance.

This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Method Statement prepared by NAU (Ref: WAB/1928/13/01/05) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref:05/11/04/ARJH).

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 lies within an area of the boulder clay plateau spanning the north to south central Norfolk watershed although the trial trenching proved that the higher grounds east of St. Andrew's church is comprised of a sand and gravel outcrop.

The site is situated on the higher grounds at c. 36.20m OD. To the south, the topography slopes towards the River Waveney at c. 22m OD. The nucleus of the present day settlement in Scole is located on the uplands and towards the Waveney valley.

3.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

The site was located in an area rich in archaeological evidence. It is immediately adjacent to the church where the earliest medieval settlement evidence can be expected. The site may also lie within the area of Romano-British settlement.

Scole is located on the Roman 'Pye Road' which linked Colchester to the *civitas* of *Venta Icenorum* at Caistor St. Edmund (Davis 2001). The existence of a significant Roman site at Scole, on the junction the River Waveney and the Pye Road, has been known since the 19th century. During the 20th century the Romano-British settlement at Scole has been the subject of numerous spot finds, surveys and archaeological interventions. The *Introduction* to the report on Rogerson's 1973 excavations (Rogerson 1977, 97-101) offers a useful summary of previous discoveries, which has been updated in Ashwin and Tester's (forthcoming) report on the excavations carried out in Scole between 1993 and 1994.

The name Scole derives from the old Norse *Skáli*, which means a temporary hut or shelter. By Domesday (1086 AD) the settlement name changed to *Osmondiston*, but appears to change back to its Scandinavian root by the 12th century when the settlement is recorded as *Escales* in a pipe roll of 1191 AD. The reason for these name changes are unknown.

The Norfolk Historical and Environmental Records (NHER) has been consulted and the most relevant entries are discussed in broad chronological order below.

Prehistoric

- NHER 29509: located to the west, a flint flake was recovered during a field survey in advance of construction of the Scole to Dickleburgh bypass.
- NHER 29511: situated to the north-west, a potboiler (burnt flint) spread was located during a field survey in advance of construction of the Scole to Dickleburgh bypass.
- NHER 30498: to the west, a potboiler (burnt flint) spread was located in advance of a borrow pit excavation.

Roman

- NHER 9868: found at Laburnum, Bungay Road, a very worn copper alloy Dupondius coin.
- NHER 24354: located to the south of the site, fieldwalking produced Romano-British pottery and coins.
- NHER 30650: Archaeological excavations and field surveys were undertaken in the parish of Scole during the construction of the A140 Scole to Dickleburgh Bypass which revealed evidence of prehistoric, Roman (including a temple) and medieval occupation.
- NHER 1007: Extensive excavations north of the River Waveney revealed archaeological features related to the outskirts of the Roman settlement of Scole. These features included an east-to-west metalled road, burials, property divisions and evidence of light industry and agriculture (Rogerson 1977; Ashwin and Tester forthcoming).

Saxon

- NHER 24354: located to the south of the site, metal detecting produced Early Saxon, late Saxon and medieval metalwork.

Medieval

- NHER 7957: St. Andrew's church built during Saxo-Norman period (851 AD to 1065 AD) evidenced by long and short work at the top of south-east quoin of original nave. Most of the extant fabric, however, dates from the 13th century. Parts of the church were burnt in 1964 and restored in 1965.
- NHER 7964: located north-east along Norwich Road, cropmarks indicate a probable medieval house and site.

Post-medieval

- NHER 7966: located north-east of the site, a windmill with the tower mill being built in 1799 and last used in 1883.

4.0 Methodology

(Fig. 2)

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 total of five evaluation trenches were excavated. Three trenches measured 25m by 1.80m and two trenches measured 10m by 1.80m (totalling 234 sq. m.) providing slightly more than a 5% sample (200 sq. m). 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.

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.

A level was transferred from an Ordnance Survey benchmark of 33.89m OD on the north-west corner of St Andrew's church. Although a non-permanent peg was used as a temporary benchmark on site, a level 36.20m OD was taken from within the eastern part of the site near Trench 5.

Due to the lack of suitable deposits, no environmental samples were taken.

Site conditions were very good with clear access and the weather conditions were favourable during the project.

5.0 Results

(Appendix 1)

Archaeological features were recorded in Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5. The survival of archaeological remains was very good because of a subsoil deposit overlying the natural sand and gravel.

The topsoil ([1]) measured between c. 0.20m to 0.50m over the whole area of the site and consisted of a humic dark brown sandy silt loam. The subsoil ([2]) measured c. 0.20m to 0.40m in depth and consisted of an orange gravelly silty sand.

All archaeological features were seen lying below the subsoil horizon and cutting natural sand and gravel.

Trench 1

(Figs 2, 3 and 7)

Trench 1 was located on the northern edge of the site and aligned north-east to south-west. It measured 10m in length by 1.80m in width and was excavated to c. 0.80m in depth. Two archaeological features were identified.

North-to-south aligned ditch [23] was visible throughout the trench (Fig. 7, sections 1, 2 and 3) and it measured (at least) 10m in length by c. 0.40m in width. The fill ([24]) consisted of a mottled mid brown-to-orange silty sand with occasional small-to-medium sized angular and sub-angular flint. One notched flint flake was recovered from this deposit.

In the north of the trench, ditch [23] was seen to cut an east-to-west ditch ([25]; Fig. 7, section 3) which measured (at least) 1.80m in length by 3m in width (Fig. 7, section 4). The fill ([26]) consisted of mixed orange-to-mid brown silty sand with occasional small-to-medium sized angular and sub-angular flint. No finds were recovered.

Trench 2

(Fig. 2, 4 and 8)

Trench 2 was located on the north-eastern edge of the site and aligned roughly north-west to south-east. It measured 8.20m in length by 1.80m in width and was excavated to a depth of 0.70m. During the machine excavation of this trench a concrete block of unknown function was exposed which was left *in situ* (Fig. 4). Either side of the concrete block five archaeological features were examined, however, no dating evidence was recovered.

Ditch [27] was located in the northern part of the trench and aligned east-to-west (Fig. 4, section 5) and measured (at least) 2m in length by 0.55m in width and was c. 0.25m deep. It contained a mid brown silty sand ([28]) with occasional small sub-rounded, angular and sub-angular flint. No finds were recovered.

Ditch ([29]) was located just to the south of ditch [27] however it was on a very different alignment (north-west to south-east) and measured (at least) 1.50m in length by c. 0.20m in width (Fig. 8, section 6). It contained a mid brown silty sand ([30]) with very occasional small rounded and sub-rounded flint from which no finds were recovered.

Two ?related curvilinear ditches or bedding trenches ([31] and [33]) and a post-hole ([35]) were located in the southern part of the trench. Considering, the close proximity of these features it is possible that they were contemporary and may represent evidence for a structure.

Ditch or bedding trench [31] was aligned east-to-west and measured c. 1m in length by 0.65m in width and was 0.15m deep (Fig. 8, section 7). It contained a mid ginger brown silty sand ([32]) with frequent medium-to-large angular and sub-angular flint, from which no finds were recovered.

Ditch or bedding trench [33] was aligned c. north-east to south-west and measured c. 1m in length by c. 0.55m in width and was 0.15m deep (Fig. 8, section 8). It contained a mid brown silty sand ([34]) with frequent medium-to-large angular and sub-angular flint from which no finds were recovered.

To the east of ditch or bedding trench [33] lay a circular post-hole ([35]) which measured c. 0.20m in diameter by c. 0.20m deep and contained a mid brown silty sand (Fig. 8, section 8).

South of ditch or bedding trench [31] lay a ditch *terminus* or pit [37]. This feature was aligned c. north-to-south and measured (at least) 1.5m in length by (at least) 0.60m in width by c. 0.20m in depth (Fig. 8, section 9). It contained a mid orange-to-brown silty sand ([38]) with moderate medium sized flints. No finds were recovered.

Trench 3

(Fig. 2)

Trench 3 was located on the south-western part of the site and aligned c. north-east to south-west. It measured 25m in length by 1.80m in width by c. 0.60m in depth. The topsoil ([1]) measured c. 0.35m in depth, while the subsoil ([2]) measured c. 0.25m in depth. No archaeological features or deposits were seen within this trench.

Trench 4

(Fig. 2, 5 and 9)

Trench 4 was located in the central-to-south eastern edge of the site and aligned c. east-to-west. It measured 25m in length by 1.80m in width by c. 0.80m in depth. Five, possibly six parallel linear features were examined, with one producing prehistoric evidence.

Ditch ([7]) was located in the eastern side of the trench and measured (at least) 1.80m in length by (at least) 1.10m in width by c. 0.20m in depth and contained two deposits (Fig. 9, section 10). The lower fill ([8]) measured c. 0.28m deep and consisted of a light orange-to-mid brown fine silty sand with occasional small sub-angular flint and redeposited natural. The upper fill ([9]) measured c. 0.35m in depth and consisted of a mid brown fine sandy silt with occasional sub-angular flint. No finds were recovered from these deposits.

Two probable double-ditched systems were located to the west of ditch [7].

Ditch [10] measured (at least) 1.80m in length by 0.90m in width by 0.30m in depth and contained two deposits (Fig. 9, section 11). The lower fill ([11]) measured c.

0.15m in depth and consisted of a light brown fine silty sand with occasional sub-angular flint. The upper fill ([12]) measured c. 0.18m in depth and consisted of a mid brown fine sandy silty with occasional small-to-medium sized flint. Ditch [13], located to the west of ditch [10] and parallel to it, measured (at least) 1.80m in length by 0.70m wide, by c. 0.22m in depth (Fig. 9, section 11). It contained a light-to-mid brown fine silty sand ([14]) with occasional small angular and sub-angular flint. A fragment of flint from deposit [14] may have been utilised as a point or piercer at one end.

In section it was noted that ditch [13] cut the eastern part of ditch [10].

Ditch ([15]) measured (at least) 1.80m in length by 0.80m in width by 0.30m in depth and contained two deposits (Fig. 9, section 12). The lower fill ([16]) measured c. 0.05m in depth and consisted of a light yellowish brown fine sandy clay with occasional small-to-medium sized sub-angular flint. The upper fill ([17]) measured c. 0.26m deep and consisted of a light brown fine sandy loam with occasional sub-angular flint. Ditch ([18]), located to the west of ditch [15] and parallel to it, measured (at least) 1.80m in length by c. 0.48m in width by c. 0.30m deep and contained two deposits (Fig. 9, section 12). The lower deposit ([19]) measured 0.09m in depth and consisted of a mixed light brown-to-yellow fine silty sand with occasional small sub-rounded flints. The upper fill ([20]) measured c. 0.18m in depth and consisted of a mid brown fine sandy silt with occasional small sub-rounded flint. No finds were recovered from deposits [19] and [20].

As observed in plan (Fig. 5) ditches [10] and [13] are comparable to ditches [15] and [18] with the narrower of the ditches being located to the west of the larger ditches. This gives the impression of a double ditched track or road system although the arrangement of the ditches is unconvincing. Only one worked flint was recovered from the fill of these features, therefore dating is uncertain.

West of ditch [18] lay the *terminus* of a linear ditch [21].

Ditch [21] was aligned c. north-to-south and measured (at least) 1.50m in length by c. 1m in width by c. 0.06m in depth (Fig. 9, section 13). It contained a light-to-mid brown fine silty sand ([22]) with occasional small sub-rounded flint. No finds were recovered from deposit [22].

Trench 5

(Fig. 2, 6 and 10)

Trench 5 was located in the eastern edge of the site and aligned c. north-east to south-west. It measured 25m in length by 1.80m in width and ranged between 0.70m-to-1.20m in depth. One archaeological feature was present which produced a prehistoric worked flint and a sherd of pottery assigned to the Romano-British period.

Pit [4] measured (at least) 4.20m in length by (at least) 1.20m in width by c. 0.50m in depth and contained two deposits (Fig. 10, sections 14 and 15). The lower fill ([5]) measured c. 0.30m in depth and consisted of a mid greyish brown fine silty sand with moderate small sub-rounded flint. The upper deposit ([6]) measured c. 0.25m in depth and consisted of a mid brown fine sandy loam with very occasional sub-angular flint. A utilised flint flake and a large piece of a ceramic mortarium dated to the mid 2nd century AD was recovered from deposit [6].

Two subsoils ([2] and [3]) were noted in section with pit [4] cutting subsoil deposit [3] which consisted of a mid-to-dark brown fine sandy loam.

6.0 The Finds

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

Pottery

By Alice Lyons

A single Romano-British mortarium sherd, weighing 0.133kg, was recovered from the upper fill ([6]) of pit [4] in Trench 5. This is a bead and flange type mortaria, although only half the spout and no complete rim profile survives, which makes assigning an individual rim type impossible. The spout, however, is quite large indicating a mid 2nd century date. The body of the vessel is formed in a self-coloured Colchester or Ellingham Fabric B (Hartley and Gurney 1997, 21-23), with small black, white and red flint trituration grits.

This vessel is severely abraded suggesting it has been subject to post-depositional disturbance, perhaps repeated flooding. It is possible therefore that this pottery is residual within the deposit from which it was retrieved.

Flint

By Sarah Bates

Four pieces of flint were found during the evaluation of the site.

They include two flakes, both possibly utilised or slightly retouched, from the fill ([6]) of pit [4]. One relatively large flake has a hinge fracture and its edges are irregular – partly due to edge damage. One edge of the other, smaller, piece has also probably been utilised.

A fragment of thermal origin from the fill ([14]) of ditch [13] may have been utilised as a point or piercer at one end.

A small flake from the fill ([24]) of ditch [23] has retouch of its broad distal edge forming a slight notch which results in a protruding ‘spur’ on its left side.

All the flint is irregular in nature. It is most likely to date to the later prehistoric period (Later Neolithic onwards).

7.0 Conclusions

The archaeological features and deposits below a depth of c. 0.50-to-0.70m from the ground surface remain relatively undisturbed as they were sealed by one or more subsoil deposits. Archaeological features were seen to cut into natural sand and gravel, with the exception of those in Trench 4 which in part contained deposits of natural clay.

The lack of dating evidence has made interpretation of the archaeological features very difficult. One would normally expect to find more material finds associated with Romano-British and medieval archaeological remains.

Although two of the ten ditches recorded produced prehistoric flint it, it is possible that this material is not contemporary with the construction and use of these features. The sherd of mortaria, which also may be residual, indicates Romano-British activity of 2nd century AD date. Evidence of Romano-British activity of this date was anticipated due to the presence of a significant Roman settlement that existed in this area (Ashwin and Tester forthcoming).

The evaluation results suggest that these higher grounds within the parish of Scole were utilised during the prehistoric and Romano-British periods. It is possible, however, that some of the undated features may be the result of medieval settlement shift from around St. Andrew's church.

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

Acknowledgements

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Andy Hutcheson, Senior Archaeologist (Planning) (NLA) and Jan Allen (NLA) for supplying the NHER data.

The following NAU staff were involved with this project. The site works were undertaken by the author and Steve Morgan. Finds processing was undertaken by Lucy Talbot, the worked flint was analysed by Sarah Bates and the Romano-British pottery was analysed by Alice Lyons.

The illustrations were digitised and formatted by the author and produced by David Dobson. The report was edited by Alice Lyons.

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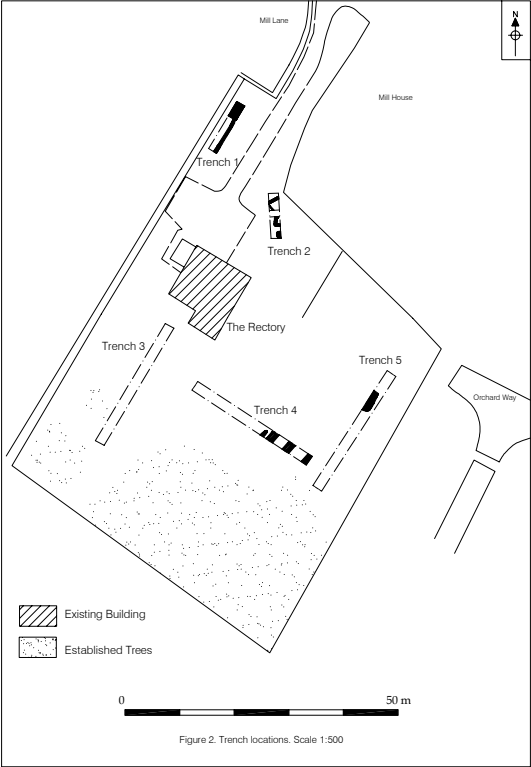
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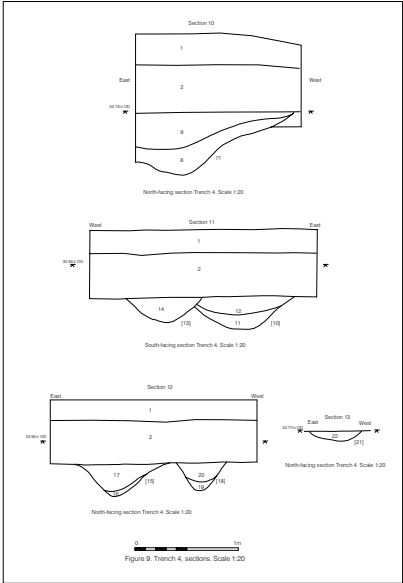
Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Trench	Category	Description	Period
1	1-5	Topsoil	Mid brown sandy silt loam	
2	1-5	Subsoil	Light-to-mid brown sandy loam	
3	5	Subsoil	Mid-to-dark sandy loam	
4	5	Cut	Pit	Prehistoric/Romano-British
5	5	Deposit	Primary fill of [4]	
6	5	Deposit	Upper fill of [4]	Prehistoric/Romano-British
7	4	Cut	North-to-south linear ditch	
8	4	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [7]	
9	4	Deposit	Upper fill of ditch [7]	
10	4	Cut	North-to-south linear ditch	
11	4	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [10]	
12	4	Deposit	Upper fill of ditch [10]	
13	4	Cut	North-to-south linear ditch	Prehistoric
14	4	Deposit	Fill of ditch [13]	Prehistoric
15	4	Cut	North-to-south linear ditch	
16	4	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [15]	
17	4	Deposit	Upper fill of ditch [15]	
18	4	Cut	North-to-south linear ditch	
19	4	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [18]	
20	4	Deposit	Upper fill of ditch [18]	
21	4	Cut	North-to-south ditch terminus	
22	4	Deposit	Fill of ditch [21]	
23	1	Cut	North-to-south linear ditch	Prehistoric
24	1	Deposit	Fill of ditch [23]	Prehistoric
25	1	Cut	Probable east-to-west linear ditch	
26	1	Deposit	Fill of ? ditch [25]	
27	2	Cut	East-to-west linear ditch	
28	2	Deposit	Fill of ditch [27]	
29	2	Cut	North-east to South-west linear ditch	
30	2	Deposit	Fill of ditch [27]	
31	2	Cut	East-to-west linear ditch or bedding trench	
32	2	Deposit	Fill of [31]	
33	2	Cut	North-to-south linear ditch or bedding trench	
34	2	Deposit	Fill of [32]	
35	2	Cut	Post-hole	
36	2	Deposit	Fill of post-hole [35]	
37	2	Cut	Linear ditch terminus or pit	
38	2	Deposit	Fill of ditch [37]	

Appendix 2: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Quantity	Weight (kg)	Period
06	Pottery	1	0.133	Roman
06	Flint - utilised flake	2	-	Neolithic
06	Animal bone	-	0.007	-
14	Flint - utilised fragment	1	-	Neolithic
24	Flint - notched flake	1	-	Neolithic





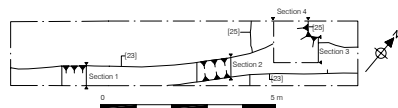


Figure 3. Location of archaeological features within Trench 1. Scale 1:100

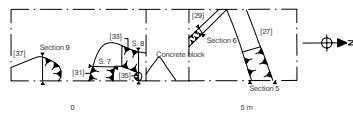


Figure 4. Location of archaeological features within Trench 2. Scale 1:100

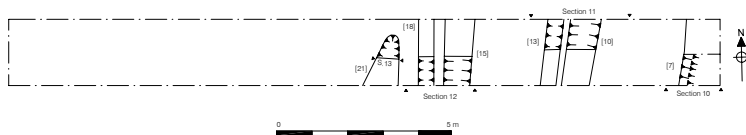


Figure 5. Location of archaeological features within Trench 4. Scale 1:100

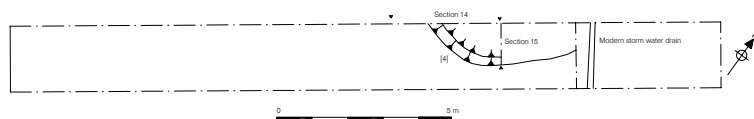


Figure 6. Location of archaeological features within Trench 5. Scale 1:100

