

Report 2615



nau archaeology

**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
38 Pinbush Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk**

HER GSE 086

**Prepared for**  
Gisleham Industries Ltd  
c/o Anglia Design  
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BAU 2615

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Location:	38 Pinbush Road, Lowestoft, Suffolk
District:	Waveney
Grid Ref.:	TM 5248 8995
HER No.:	GSE 068
OASIS Ref.:	89906
Client:	Gisleham Industries Ltd
Dates of Fieldwork:	10-13 December 2010

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## **Summary**

*In December 2010 NAU Archaeology conducted an archaeological evaluation for Gisleham Industries Ltd at 38 Pinbush Road, Lowestoft. This work took place prior to the construction of an extension to an existing industrial unit.*

*Although previous work has shown this area to be one of high archaeological potential the only features present within the three trenches excavated were two ditches of probable post-medieval date. Very few finds were recovered, suggesting this particular location saw little in the way of activity during earlier periods.*

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

(Fig. 1)

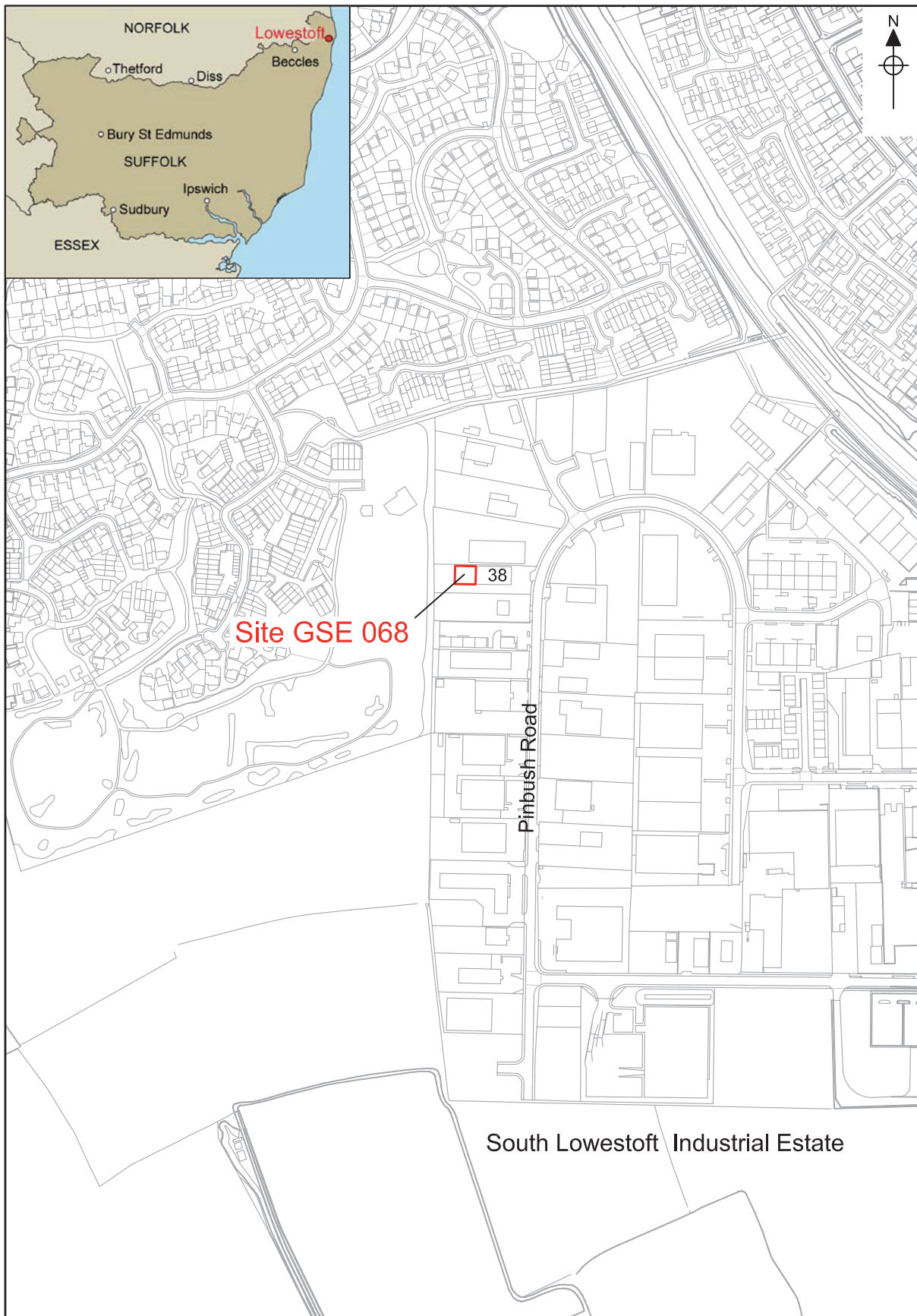
An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by NAU Archaeology at 38 Pinbush Road, within the South Lowestoft Industrial Estate. This work took place on an area of waste ground set back from the road, within the footprint of a proposed extension to the existing industrial unit (which will cover an area of approximately 290m<sup>2</sup>). Although it has a Lowestoft address the site lies within the parish of Gisleham.

This evaluation was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Waveney District Council (Ref. DC/10/1384/FUL) and a Brief issued Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (38PinbushRoad\_Gisleham2010). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. BAU2615/NP).

This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with principles set out in Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). 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 Suffolk County Store, following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

This work was commissioned by Rob Swards of Anglia Design on behalf of their client Gisleham Industries Ltd.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000.

## **2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The South Lowestoft Industrial Estate lies 1km to the west of the Suffolk coast, occupying a slight ridge that extends from a bluff known as Bloodmoor Hill. The land in the vicinity of the site is relatively flat, with a maximum elevation of approximately 15m OD. To the north-west the ground drops away gently, towards a minor valley that runs between Carlton Colville and Lowestoft.

Although within the 'Sandlings' region of Suffolk the site's underlying geology consists of Lowestoft Till (silty and sandy clays), the glacial sands that give this region its name lying primarily in bands along the various minor valleys that bisect this area (BGS 1991). These various glacial deposits overlie chalk bedrock (BGS 1985). The soils within this area are a mix of brown sands and stagnogleys (Lucy, Tipper and Dickens 2009), the latter predominating within the areas of clay Till.

Immediately prior to the start of this evaluation the site was covered by fairly dense undergrowth and had clearly been waste ground for some time.

## **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Information on past archaeological discoveries near Lowestoft comes primarily from the Suffolk Historical Environment Record (HER). It is clear from these records that the site lies within an area of considerable archaeological potential, with significant prehistoric, Roman and Early Saxon remains having been found both during the construction of the various housing developments to the north-west of the site and within the South Lowestoft Industrial Estate itself.

Prehistoric activity appears to have been fairly extensive on and around Bloodmoor Hill, with various archaeological interventions having recovered material of Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age date. Significantly, prehistoric remains have also been discovered within the industrial estate itself, on the heavier soils to the east of Bloodmoor Hill. The earliest finds to be recovered from this area include a polished flint axe of Neolithic or Early Bronze Age date (GSE 006) and a Late Bronze Age socketed axehead (GSE 017). Evaluation and excavation of a site on Hadenham Road, at the southern end of the industrial estate, revealed a circular enclosure or ring-ditch of Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age date, within which a roundhouse and several other features were identified (CAC 035). Work near Ullswater Road, on the eastern edge of the industrial estate revealed roundhouses, pits, ditches and post-hole structures of probable Late Bronze Age date (CAC 042). An evaluation conducted between these two sites (CAC036) identified a buried soil associated with lithic implements and a burnt area associated with later, Iron Age pottery. A fairly recent evaluation at the southern end of Pinbush Road revealed a pit of potentially prehistoric date as well as a number of later prehistoric flints and sherds of Neolithic or Bronze Age pottery (GSE 065, Crawley 2006).

Roman finds appears to have been relatively scarce within the vicinity of the industrial estate although a number have been found on and around Bloodmoor Hill to the west. Extensive excavations to the north-west of the site identified a trackway and part of a field system of Roman date. These features were associated with significant quantities of Roman pottery, suggesting that some form of settlement focus was likely to have lain nearby (CAC 016, Lucy, Tipper and

Dickens 2009). These excavations also revealed a well-preserved and largely complete Anglo-Saxon settlement. Remains associated with this settlement, which appeared to have been occupied between the 6th and early 8th centuries AD, included several dozen sunken-feature buildings, several post-hole structures and numerous pits. A mid-to-late 7th-century cemetery was also found. These remains, which lay on an area of sand and gravel, were preserved beneath hillwash deposits (Lucy, Tipper and Dickens 2009). Other Saxon discoveries within the vicinity of Bloodmoor Hill include various brooches and other metal objects (GSE 012 etc) and a barrow associated within an inhumation burial (GSE 003).

Few significant remains of Late Saxon, medieval or post-medieval date have been found within vicinity of the site, which lies close to the northern edge of Gisleham parish, some distance from any of the known settlements sites.

Cartographic sources suggest that prior to the construction of the South Lowestoft Industrial Estate in the latter part of the 20th century the site lay within open arable land.

During WWII lines of anti-tank ditches and anti-tank cubes (GSE 045, GSE 046) were constructed to the south of Pakefield. These features, which have been identified on aerial photographs, appear to have lain at least 200m to the east of the site.

#### **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 the excavation of trenches with a total length of 30m. It was decided, in consultation with the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team, that three trenches would be excavated; one 15m long and two 7.50m long, the latter aligned perpendicular to the longer trench (Fig. 2).

Machine excavation was carried out with a mini-digger-type excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and operated 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 Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Monochrome and digital photographs were taken of all archaeologically significant features and deposits.

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from an Ordnance Survey benchmark with a value of 15.77m OD, located on an industrial unit at the junction of Pinbush Road and Harvest Drive.

Although two environmental samples were taken, they were not processed, having come from features that proved to be of relatively recent date.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine, dry weather.



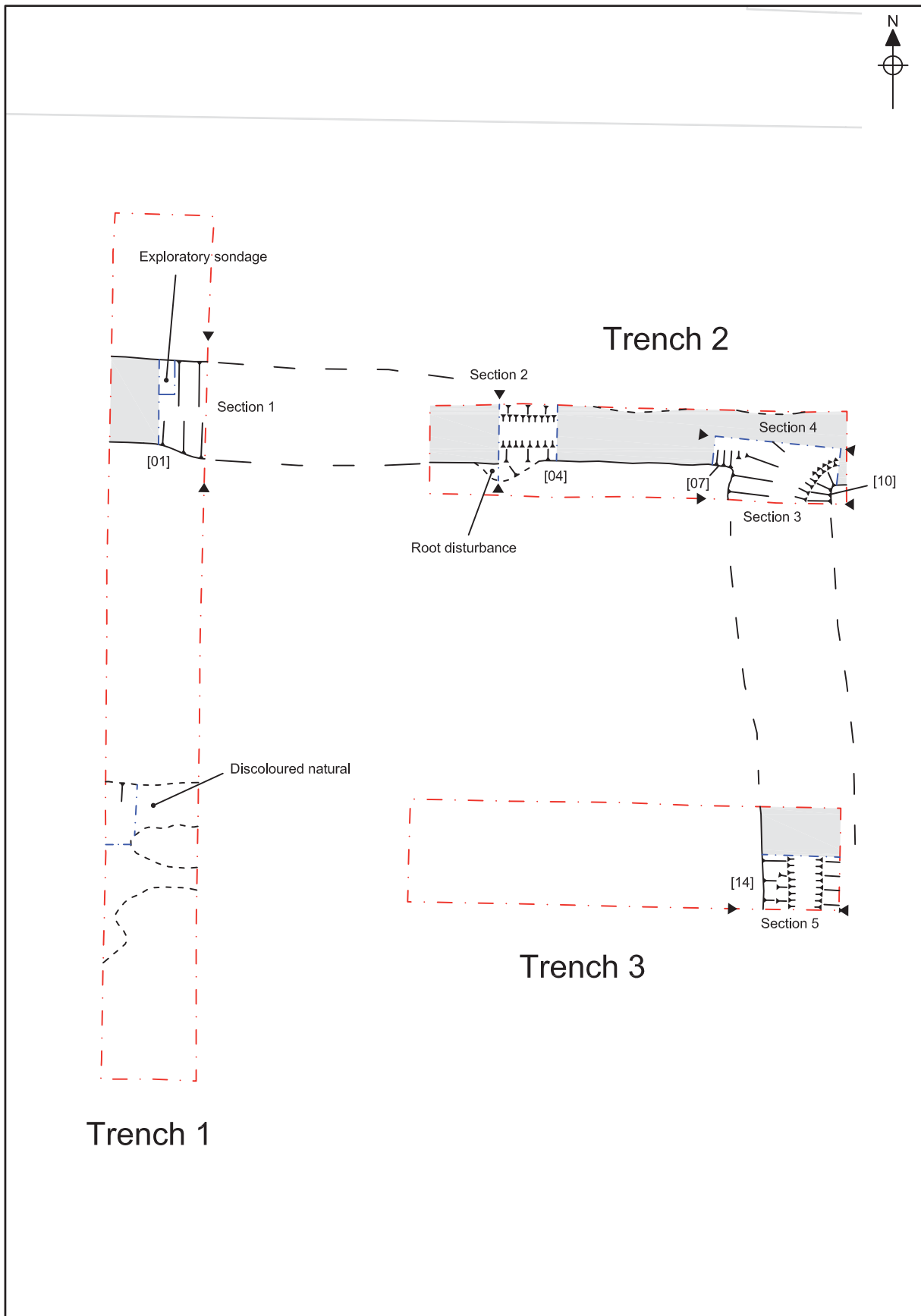


Figure 2. Trench plans. Scale 1:100.

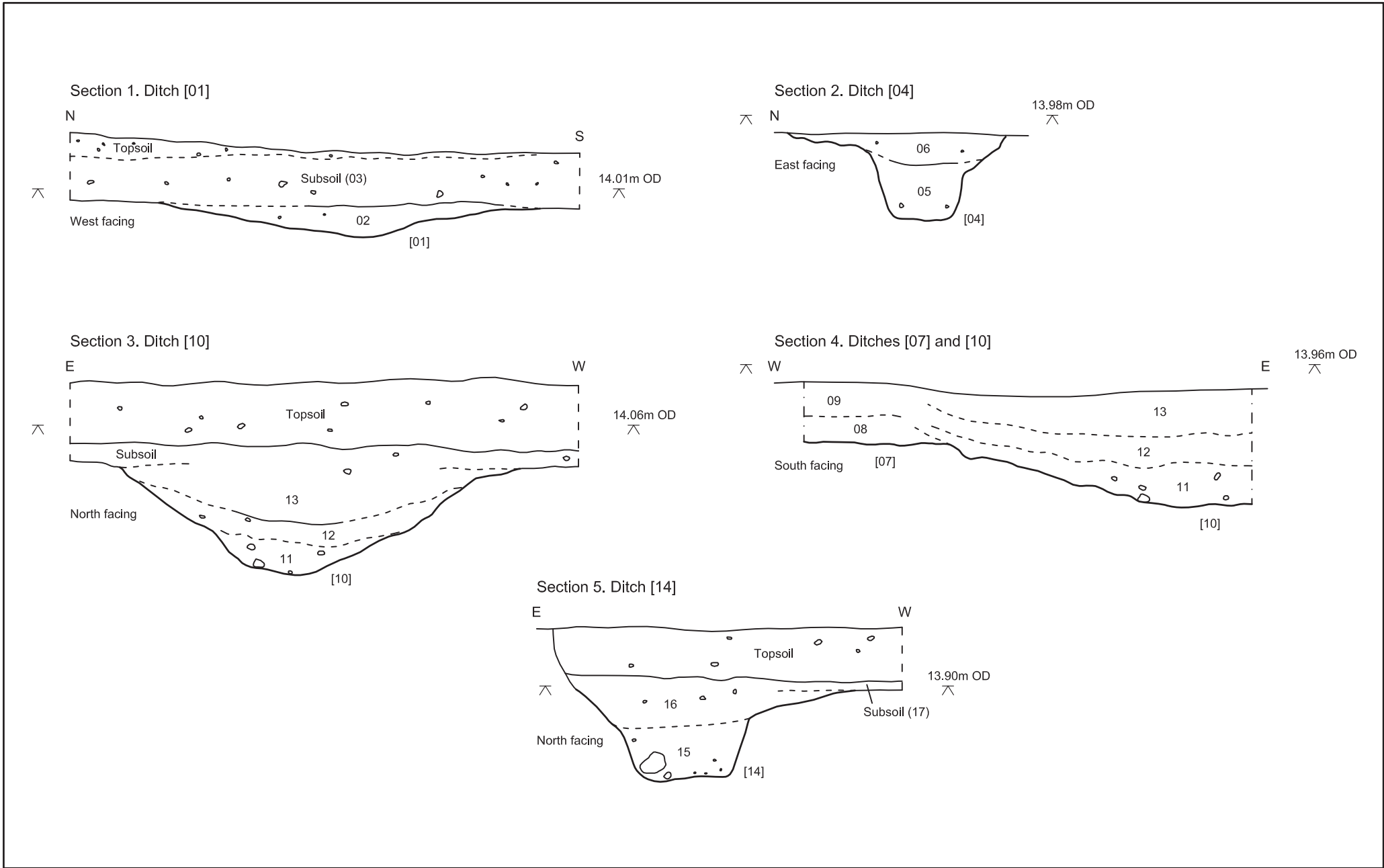


Figure 3. Sections of excavated features. Scale 1:25.

## 5.0 RESULTS

(Figs 2-3)

The site's heavy, clay loam topsoil proved to be between 0.30m and 0.1m deep, although in places its depth had clearly been reduced when the site was recently stripped. In all three trenches this topsoil layer sealed a much paler subsoil, this silty clay deposit being at its deepest within Trench 1. In spite of careful observation and metal detecting during the removal of these deposits only a small number of artefacts were recovered. The small assemblage of unstratified finds, all of which came from the subsoil layer, included a single struck flint, fragments of post-medieval tile and a sherd of modern pottery.



Plate 1. Trench 1, prior to excavation, looking north

Removal of these soils exposed natural geological deposits of mottled, pale grey orange and yellow grey clay. At the southern end of Trench 1 these clays became increasingly flecked with manganese, with bands of slightly browner material running across the trench (Plate 1). A small hand-excavated sondage confirmed that these patches of darker material were simply variations in the natural clay. Apart from slight traces of plough-scarring at the northern end of Trench 1 there was no evidence for recent disturbance at this depth. Towards the bases of the

deeper excavated slots the clays were found to contain an increasing number of chalk lumps, as well as patches of brown orange clay sand.

Two perpendicular ditches were the only archaeologically significant features to be exposed within the three trenches excavated. The first ditch ([01]/[04]/[07]) was aligned east-to-west and ran through the northern end of Trench 1 and down the length of Trench 2. At the western end of Trench 2 this ditch was approximately 0.4m deep with a steep-sided 'U'-shaped profile ([04], Fig. 3 Section 2). To either side of this slot the ditch proved to be much shallower, particularly within Trench 1 ([01], Fig. 3 Section 1), where it appeared to be considerably broader and little more than 0.15m deep (it is possible that the ditch was under-excavated at this point, although a small exploratory sondage revealed no trace of the lower deposits seen to the east). Within Trench 2 this ditch contained two deposits, the lower of which was a mid grey silty clay with frequent brown orange mottles (05/08). This primary fill was sealed by a mid grey brown silty clay (06/09). Two sherds of abraded post-medieval Glazed Red Earthenware pottery recovered from this upper fill were the only finds recovered from ditch [01]/[04]/[07].



Plate 2. Ditch [14], looking south

The second ditch ([10]/[14]) was perpendicular to the first and was observed at the eastern end of both Trench 2 and Trench 3. Within Trench 3 this feature had a similar profile to that of ditch [01]/[04]/[07] ([14], Fig. 3 Section 5, Plate 2). At the point where the two features met, ditch [10]/[14] became much broader and appeared to turn to the east, onto the same alignment as ditch [01]/[04]/[07] ([10], Fig. 2, Plate 3). Within Trench 2 the lowest fill of ditch [10]/[14] was a mid yellowish grey brown clay (11). This primary silting deposit was overlain by a mid-dark brown grey silty clay of much more soil-like appearance (12). The uppermost fill (13) was similar in character to the subsoil, although it contained a significant amount of redeposited grey yellow clay. This redeposited clay suggests the upper

portion of this ditch may have been deliberately infilled, possibly with material from an adjacent bank that had been formed from the original upcast material.



Plate 3. Ditch [10], looking south



Plate 4. Ditches [07] and [10], looking north

A broadly similar deposit sequence was observed within Trench 3, although here only a single lower fill could be identified (15). Despite only a single sherd of

medieval pottery being recovered from the uppermost fill of ditch [10]/[14] its alignment and position suggests that this feature was probably of a broadly similar date to ditch [01]/[04]/[07]]. If anything the slot excavated at their intersection suggested that ditch [10]/[14] may have been slightly later in date (Plate 4).

## **6.0 THE FINDS**

### **6.1 Pottery**

A small pottery assemblage was recovered from two trenches (Appendix 3). The sherds represent 'background noise' of occupation from the medieval to modern periods.

#### **6.1.1 Medieval**

A single body sherd of micaceous Waveney Valley coarseware was recovered from the fill of ditch [10], Trench 2. The sherd is not closely datable within the high medieval period, the 12th to 14th centuries (S Anderson *pers. comm.*).

#### **6.1.2 Post Medieval**

A total of two sherds of Glazed Red Earthenware weighing 11g were found in the upper fill of ditch [04], Trench 2. The small abraded rim sherds are from a bowl (Jennings 1981, Fig.66, 1136) and perhaps a jug (Jennings 1981, Fig.75, 1279) and date to the 16th to 18th centuries.

#### **6.1.3 Modern**

A single sherd of transfer-printed Earthenware with a blue and white Willow Pattern design was found in subsoil in Trench 3. The sherd, which weighs 7g, is of 19th- or 20th-century date.

### **6.2 Ceramic building material**

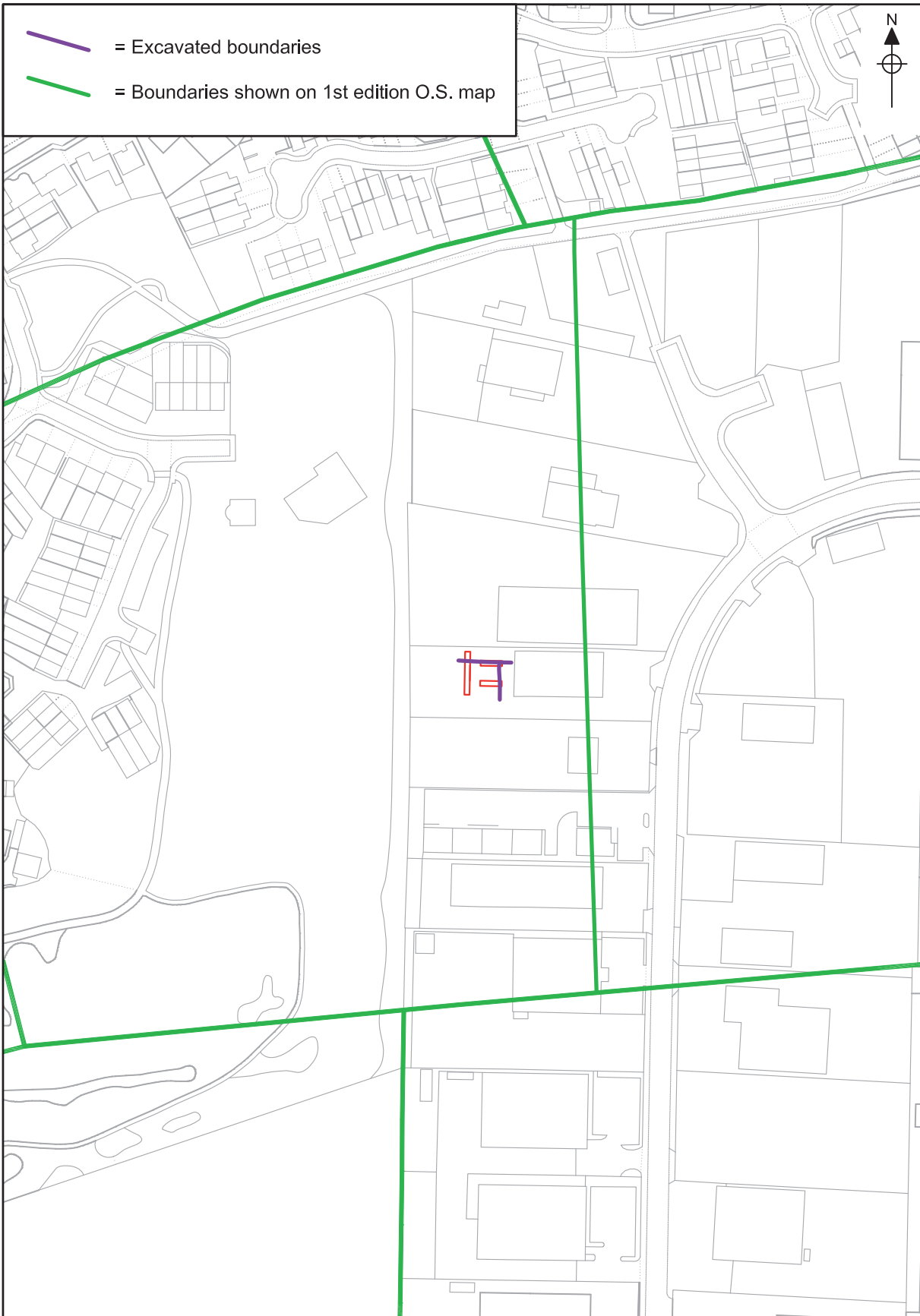
A total of three pieces of post medieval roof tile in coarse red sandy fabric weighing 100g were recovered from subsoil in Trench 1.

### **6.3 Flint**

A struck flake with some retouching along one edge was found in subsoil in Trench 1. The flint is of later prehistoric date.

### **6.4 Iron**

A large iron rod, almost certainly derived from modern agricultural machinery was collected from subsoil in Trench 1. The iron rod was discarded following analysis.



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0 200 m

Figure 4. Later 19th-century boundaries. Scale 1:2000.

## 7.0 CONCLUSIONS

(Fig. 4)

It would appear that the site was largely unaffected by the construction of the adjacent industrial estate, the natural geological deposits being sealed by a largely undisturbed subsoil.

The two ditches revealed by this evaluation were likely to have been broadly contemporary, with the available dating evidence suggesting these features were most likely post-medieval. Although these features could not be linked to any of the boundaries marked on the readily available cartographic sources their alignment is broadly similar to that of the field boundaries marked on the late 19th-century 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map (see Fig. 4). Given that all of the pottery recovered was heavily abraded it seems likely that both ditches were associated with later post-medieval field boundaries. The sterile nature of the fills would also indicate that they were field boundaries rather than property divisions. As such, the archaeological significance of the features is considered to be limited.

The likelihood of the ditches being of an earlier date (possibly medieval) has been considered but discounted, due mainly to the reasons stated above and the relative paucity of evidence of medieval date in the vicinity.

Although work undertaken elsewhere within the South Lowestoft Industrial Estate has shown that the clays of this particular interfluvium saw significant activity during earlier periods this does not appear to have been the case with this particular site, there being no features present and a single flint flake being the only prehistoric object recovered.

Recommendations for future work based upon this report will be made by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (SCCAS/CT).



## **Acknowledgements**

The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Barnett, Lilly Hodges and the author. The finds were washed, processed and analysed by Sarah Percival. Information from the Suffolk HER was provided by Dr Colin Pendleton. This report was edited by Jayne Bown and produced by David Dobson. The illustrations were created by the David Dobson and the author.

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## Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Trench	Type	Description	Date
1	1	Cut	Cut of ditch	Post-medieval
2	1	Deposit	Fill of ditch [1]	Post-medieval
3	1	Deposit	Trench 1 subsoil	-
4	2	Cut	Cut of ditch	Post-medieval
5	2	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [4]	Post-medieval
6	2	Deposit	Upper fill of ditch [4]	Post-medieval
7	2	Cut	Cut of ditch	Post-medieval
8	2	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [7]	Post-medieval
9	2	Deposit	Upper fill of ditch [7]	Post-medieval
10	2	Cut	Cut of ditch	Post-medieval
11	2	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [10]	Post-medieval
12	2	Deposit	Fill of ditch [10]	Post-medieval
13	2	Deposit	Uppermost fill of ditch [10]	Post-medieval
14	3	Cut	Cut of ditch	Post-medieval
15	3	Deposit	Primary fill of ditch [14]	Post-medieval
16	3	Deposit	Upper fill of ditch [14]	Post-medieval
17	3	Deposit	Trench 3 subsoil	-

## Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Feature type	Quantity
Post-medieval	Ditch	2

## Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period	Notes
3	Ceramic Building Material	3	100g	Post-medieval	Roof tile
	Flint – Struck	1	25g	Prehistoric	
	Iron	1	215g	Modern	Farm machinery. Discarded
6	Pottery	2	11g	Post-medieval	
13	Pottery	1	14g	Medieval	
17	Pottery	1	7g	Modern	

## Appendix 2b: OASIS Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Prehistoric	Flint – Struck	1
Medieval	Pottery	1
Post-medieval	Ceramic Building Material	3
	Pottery	2
Modern	Iron	1
	Pottery	1

## Appendix 3: Pottery

Context	Fabric	Form	Quantity	Weight	Period	Spotdate
6	GRE	Bowl rim	1	6g	Post-medieval	16th – 18th
6	GRE	Jug rim	1	5g	Post-medieval	16th – 18th
13	WVCW	Body sherd	1	14g	Medieval	12th – 14th
17	TPE	Body sherd	1	7g	Modern	19th – 20th

**Key:** WVCW Waveney Valley coarseware; GRE Glazed Red Earthenware; TPE Transfer Printed Earthenware.