

Report BAU2553



nau archaeology

An Archaeological Evaluation at Weybread House, Weybread, Suffolk

WYB072

Prepared for
Magnus Opus
Rose Cottage
Upper Street
Billingford
Diss
Norfolk
IP21 4HP



Andy Phelps BA

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www.nps.co.uk

PROJECT CHECKLIST		
Project Manager	Nigel Page	
Draft Completed	Andy Phelps	19/01/2011
Graphics Completed	David Dobson	20/01/2011
Edit Completed	Jayne Bown	21/01/2011
Signed Off	David Whitmore	21/01/2011
Revisions complete	David Whitmore	02/03/2011
Signed Off	Jayne Bown	30/03/2011
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NAU Archaeology

Scandic House
85 Mountergate
Norwich
NR1 1PY

T 01603 756150

F 01603 756190

E jayne.bown@nps.co.uk

www.nau.org.uk

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Location:	Weybread House, Weybread, Suffolk
District:	Mid Suffolk
Grid Ref.:	TM 214 818
HER No.:	WYB072
OASIS Ref.:	91831
Client:	Magnus Opus
Dates of Fieldwork:	22 December 2010

Summary

In December 2010 an archaeological evaluation was carried out on behalf of Magnus Opus at Weybread House, Suffolk ahead of the construction of a swimming pool within the garden to the south-west of the house. The single 15m by 1.8m wide trench uncovered three ditches of probable medieval or post medieval date aligned parallel with Mill Road and a modern, clay filled, pit. The ditches were probably part of a drainage system used to reclaim land from the river margins. A single piece of 13th– to 14th-century pottery was recovered from the northernmost ditch.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

In December 2010 NAU Archaeology excavated a single evaluation trench 15m long by 1.8m wide in the grounds of Weybread House, Weybread, Suffolk. The evaluation took place ahead of the proposed construction of an indoor swimming pool immediately to the south-west of the house (Fig. 1).

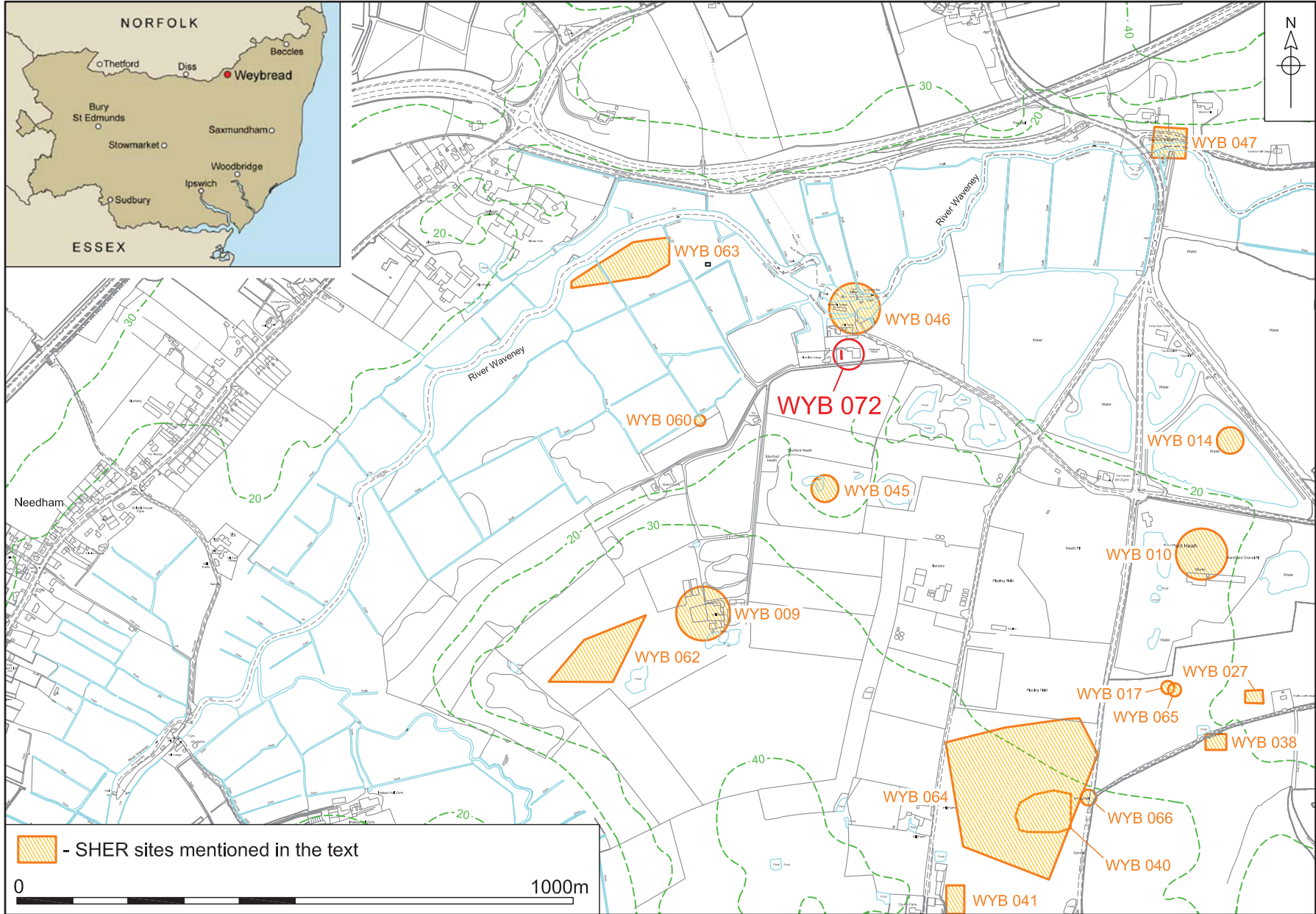
This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Mid Suffolk District Council acting under the advice of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team and following a brief issued by Dr Jess Tipper (Ref. WeybreadhouseWeybread2010). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU2553/NP). This work was commissioned and funded by Magnus Opus.

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 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 Council Archaeological Service, following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The underlying solid geology of Weybread and the surrounding area is of upper chalk lain down in the cretaceous with Nar Valley clays, glacial and river terrace sands and gravels deposited across the valley floor above (BGS 1985, 1991). It is



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

on these river terrace gravels some 70m to the south of a bend in the line of the River Waveney that Weybread House appears to have been built.

Weybread House is located 1.5 kilometres north of the centre of Weybread village along Mill Road at a height above sea level of approximately 25.4m OD.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following information has been compiled with reference to the Suffolk County Council Historic Environment Record and summarises the known archaeological sites within 1 km of the proposed development site.

Prehistoric

A small Neolithic flint axe was ploughed up in fields surrounding Hill Farm some 500m to the south of the development site (WYB009).

A small triangular Palaeolithic hand axe was found 680m to the east of Weybread House during initial stripping ahead of the excavation of a gravel quarry pit (WYB014).

A ring ditch, possibly from a Bronze Age barrow has been identified from aerial photography some 830m to the south east of the present development site on Shotford Heath (WYB017).

Gravel extraction located 250m to the south of Weybread House led to the recovery of five Neolithic flint cores and two scrapers (WYB045).

A series of field boundaries, a track way and a ring ditch of possible prehistoric date appear as crop marks from aerial photographs taken of land 800m to the south-east of Weybread House (WYB065).

Roman

The base of a large possibly Romano British vessel was recovered by workmen at Shotford Heath Pit 750m to the east of the present evaluation (WYB010).

Field walking carried out in fields to the west of Harleston Road 900m to the south of the present site recovered numerous pottery sherds dating from the 2nd-4th centuries (WYB040).

A possible Roman strap fitting has been found on land 250m to the south-west of Weybread House along with finds of medieval and post medieval date (WYB060).

Medieval

Numerous sherds of late medieval pottery including some kiln wasters and tile fragments were found in a small 10m square area 900m to the east of the development site (WYB027).

Fieldwalking some 900m to the south of Weybread House, west of Harleston Road recovered medieval and post medieval pottery scatters (WYB040).

The possible location of a medieval kiln has been postulated immediately to the east of Corner Farm, one km to the south of the development site. This is based upon the recovery of pottery sherds including kiln wasters observed during field walking activity (WYB041).

Various finds of medieval and post-medieval date have been recovered from land 250m to the south-west of the development site including pottery sherds, a harness mount and a round bottomed cast bronze vessel (WYB060).

Post-medieval

Further scatters of post medieval and medieval pottery were recovered just to the south of WYB027 possibly reflect the site of a demolished cottage (WYB038).

A water mill is known from cartographic evidence to have operated in very close proximity to the present development site, probably just to the north (WYB 046).

The site of a bridge linking Harleston and Weybridge across the Waveney river is known from cartographic evidence to lay some 700m to the north-east of Weybread House (WYB047).

An aerial photographic survey of land 700m to the south west of Weybread House revealed a series of probably post medieval field enclosures visible as cropmarks (WYB062).

Aerial photographs have identified an earthwork interpreted as a causeway crossing reclaimed land 450m to the north-east of Weybread House (WYB063).

To the north of Weybread village, 900m south of the present development a field system has been identified from aerial photography of medieval or post medieval date (WYB064).

Modern

A Second World War pillbox is located at the junction of Harleston Road and Water Lane approximately 900m to the south east of the present development site (WYB066).

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.

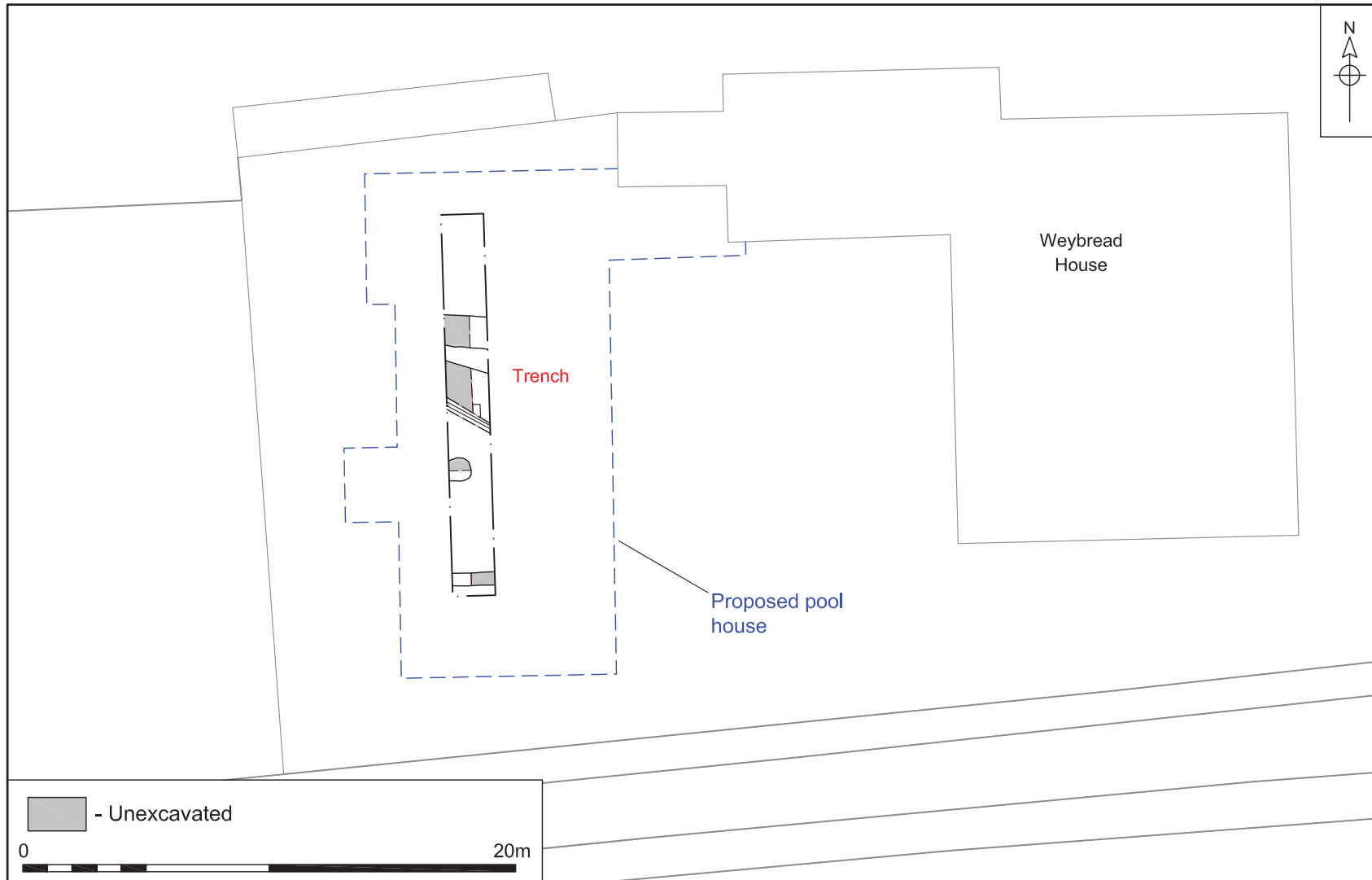
The Brief required that a single trench 15m long and 1.8m wide be excavated within the foot print of the proposed development (Fig. 2).

Machine excavation was carried out with a three tonne tracked hydraulic 360° 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.

Environmental samples were taken from the fills of each of the ditches in consultation with Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team.

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 relevant features and deposits where appropriate.



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Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:250