

Report 2623



nau archaeology

**An Archaeological Evaluation at the Former
Cap and Gown Public House, Gorleston, Norfolk**

ENF125648



Prepared for
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Location:	Former Cap and Gown Public House, Gorleston
District:	Great Yarmouth
Grid Ref.:	TG 5180 0372
HER No.:	ENF125648
OASIS Ref.:	91902
Client:	Wellington Construction
Dates of Fieldwork:	10-11 January 2011

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted for Wellington Construction ahead of a planned new residential development on a plot of land on Magdalen Square in the southern part of Gorleston, Great Yarmouth. The site had formerly been the location of the Cap and Gown public house.

Two trenches were excavated across the plot within which several archaeological features (eight pits and two ditches) were found along with areas of modern disturbance. Although it was not possible to date the pits, their position below a thick layer of subsoil and the generally leached appearance of their fills suggested that they were possibly of prehistoric date. One pit at the south end of Trench 1 contained a charcoal-rich fill, the charcoal from which appears to have been created through burning at high temperatures; well-preserved plant macrofossils were also present. A ditch of probable prehistoric date which was similarly sealed by a thick layer of subsoil had been found at Peterhouse School, to the south-east of the site (NHER 52756).

The ditch in Trench 1, though it contained a fragment of Roman pottery may have been of later date, as it was observed to cut through the subsoil. However the ditch in Trench 2, like the pits, appeared to be sealed by subsoil and is possibly of an early date.

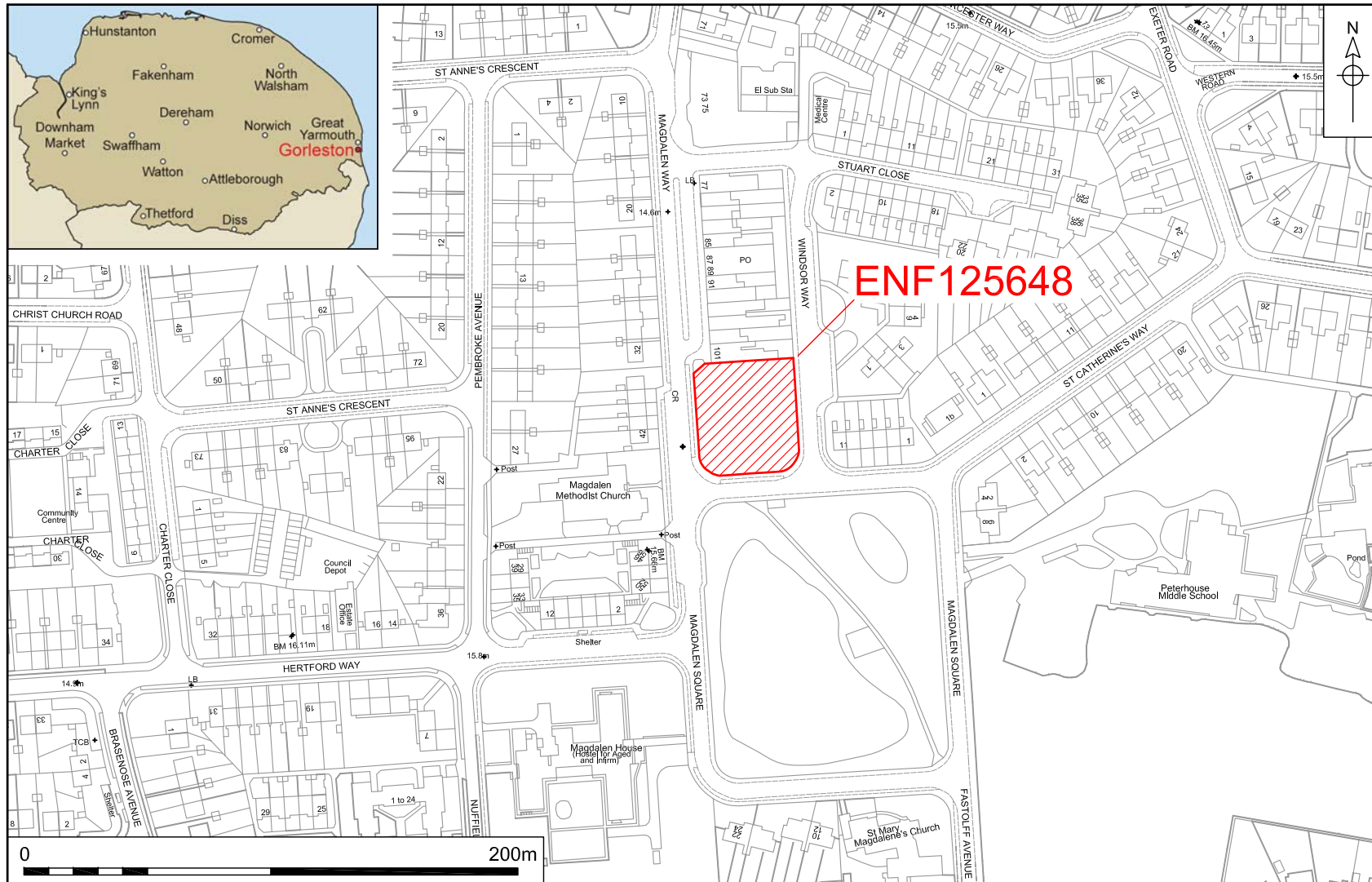
1.0 INTRODUCTION

(Fig. 1)

The project was undertaken on a plot of land encompassing the former Cap and Gown public house (now demolished) and its curtilage. The plot was around 1800m² and was situated on Magdalen Square between Magdalen Way and Windsor Way to the south of the central part of Gorleston. The plot of land has been earmarked for new housing.

This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Great Yarmouth Borough Council (Ref. 06/10/0052/F) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (Ref. Ken Hamilton 6 December 2010: ref CNF42738) It was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. NAU/BAU2623/NP). This work was commissioned and funded by Wellington Construction.

This programme of work was generally designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:2500

area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning For The Historic Environment (March 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 Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS), following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The underlying solid geology is described as Crag Group (also known as Norfolk Crag) surmounted by Happisborough Glacial Formation Sand. The soils are described as typical loamy brown earths. (British Geological Survey)

Specifically the topsoil ([1]) was a light grey sandy silt, 0.30m thick on average and which had a diffuse boundary with subsoil [2]. The subsoil was a light orangey-brown silty sand which ranged in thickness between 0.30m and 0.40m. The natural substratum was observed to be generally a loose light yellow sand with occasional flint nodules and gravel.

The current work indicated that the deposits were reasonably free of truncation around the edges of the site whereas within the footprint of the demolished public house there had been considerable truncation due to the presence of large cellars presumably used for the storage of beer kegs.

The site lay in a generally flat area, around 16m OD in a suburban location.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A search of the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) was undertaken and the most relevant entries are presented below.

Prehistoric to Roman

The site lay within a heavily-developed suburban location yet despite this the current site lay within an observed archaeological landscape. One of the closest and most relevant NHER entries, on the edge of the land belonging to Peterhouse School to the east is a late Bronze Age hoard (NHER 10556) comprising 118 copper-alloy objects and fragments, including axes, swords and a looped guide ring. It was found in a sewer trench during the construction of the school. The hoard is one of the largest to have come from East Anglia, and is one of two hoards of Bronze Age metalwork found in Gorleston. The hoard could have represented a metalworker's collection destined for recycling (Clough and Green 1978). A further Bronze Age copper-alloy axehead has been recovered from a spot approximately 100m to the north of the current site (NHER 28721). NAU Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation (NHER 52756) within the grounds of Peterhouse School to the east of the site and a ditch of probable prehistoric date was found at the same location as a known cropmark.

The area around the site has been extensively surveyed by the Norfolk National Mapping Programme and a number of HER entries around the current site pertain to cropmarks which have subsequently been obscured by the expansion of the built-up area of Gorleston. The most relevant entry to this project is NHER 43466 which comprises multi-phase cropmarks. The elements of a fragmentary field

system and ditched boundaries are thought to be predominantly of Iron Age to Roman date. One of these field boundaries appears to run in a north-west to south-east direction just 50m north and east of the current site. Further to the south NHER 43551 records the presence of a small Bronze Age barrow group which may have represented a small barrow cemetery.

It is thought that in the Roman period the advantageous position of the area that would become Gorleston (overlooking the large estuary at the mouth of River Yare) was probably utilised by a small Roman signal station or perhaps a fortress (The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk)

Other find spots in the area hint at Roman activity for example a Roman coin of Constantine I or II was discovered in 1955 (NHER 10559). Further away from the site a Roman brooch was found (NHER 16556) and two other Roman coins (NHER 10560 and 12433).

Saxon to Medieval

It is recorded that in the reign of Edward the Confessor, Earl Gurth held the manor of Gorleston which comprised five carucates (areas of ploughland). The land supported twenty villeins, but by the time the Domesday survey had been compiled and the manor had become part of the royal estates, the number of villeins had been reduced to twelve. The picture is one of the decline of the estate here which is indicated in various ways. Under the authority of the Earl there had been five slaves on the land, but by the time of the Domesday survey the king supported only four slaves here. Earl Gurth had employed two ploughs on the demesne lands, but the King used only one. The Saxon tenants had five ploughs, but the Normans kept only three. The former had possessed two draught horses, but by the time of the Survey there were none (The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk).

Later in the medieval period Gorleston had two manors; Gorleston main manor and a smaller manor called Bacons. In 1511 Gorleston was united with the hamlet of Southtown, whose parish church of St Mary was demolished in 1548, the stone being used to build a pier (The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk). There are a limited amount of NHER entries pertaining to the medieval period close to the site and few that are considered to be relevant to the current work. A large Augustinian friary and church (NHER 10562) is one of the most important references. It was founded in the 13th century, dissolved in 1538 and is located over 1 km to the north.

One of the few medieval or early post-medieval find spots close to the site is that of a gold bandolier (shoulder belt with cartridge loops or ammunition pouches) fastener (NHER 17949). It was found whilst metal detecting around 200m to the north-west of the site.

Post medieval to Modern

As a part of the Parliamentary Reform Act of 1832, the parish of Gorleston-on-Sea was included in Great Yarmouth for electoral purposes, and in 1835 became part of the Municipal Borough of Great Yarmouth, although remaining associated with the county of Suffolk until 1891. Since April 1974, Gorleston has formed part of the urban area of Great Yarmouth, which is itself part of the larger Borough of Great Yarmouth (The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk).

There are some post-medieval structures within the Gorleston area recorded on the NHER, but they mostly lie towards the seafront and are generally linked with fishing and maritime activities. An ice house for example is recorded as NHER 17200 and was used to store ice from the ships that docked at Gorleston. Around 300m north of the site is an early 19th-century farmhouse (NHER 42922), built in 1810 and now used as a community centre.

Post-war aerial photographs record a number of air-raid shelters in the gardens of the houses immediately south-east of the current site (NHER 42310). Further air-raid shelters were located to the east of the site (NHERs 42306, 42309 and 42311) and to the north (NHER 42254, 42253 and 42249). A Second World War barbed-wire enclosure (NHER 42312) was also recorded to the east of the site, although its function is unknown. This part of the coast was heavily defended during the Second World War and there are many other NHER entries recording defensive works closer to the coast.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

(Fig. 2 and Plates 1 and 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.



Plate 1. The site looking north

The Brief required that 5% of the development plot be sample excavated via trial trenching. This was achieved by using two 25m by 1.80m trenches. The trenches were generally targeted on the footprints of proposed new buildings on the west and south side of the plot. Situating the trenches at the edge of the site also avoided the area in the middle of the site that had been subjected to a large

amount of truncation from the building that had stood there. Test holes excavated by Wellington Construction indicated that large cellars belonging to the Cap and Gown public house were at the centre of the site. It had originally been planned to locate Trench 2 nearer to the centre of the site but it was relocated further to the south after one of these large cellars was encountered.

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB-type excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision. The machine was supplied by the developer Wellington Construction.

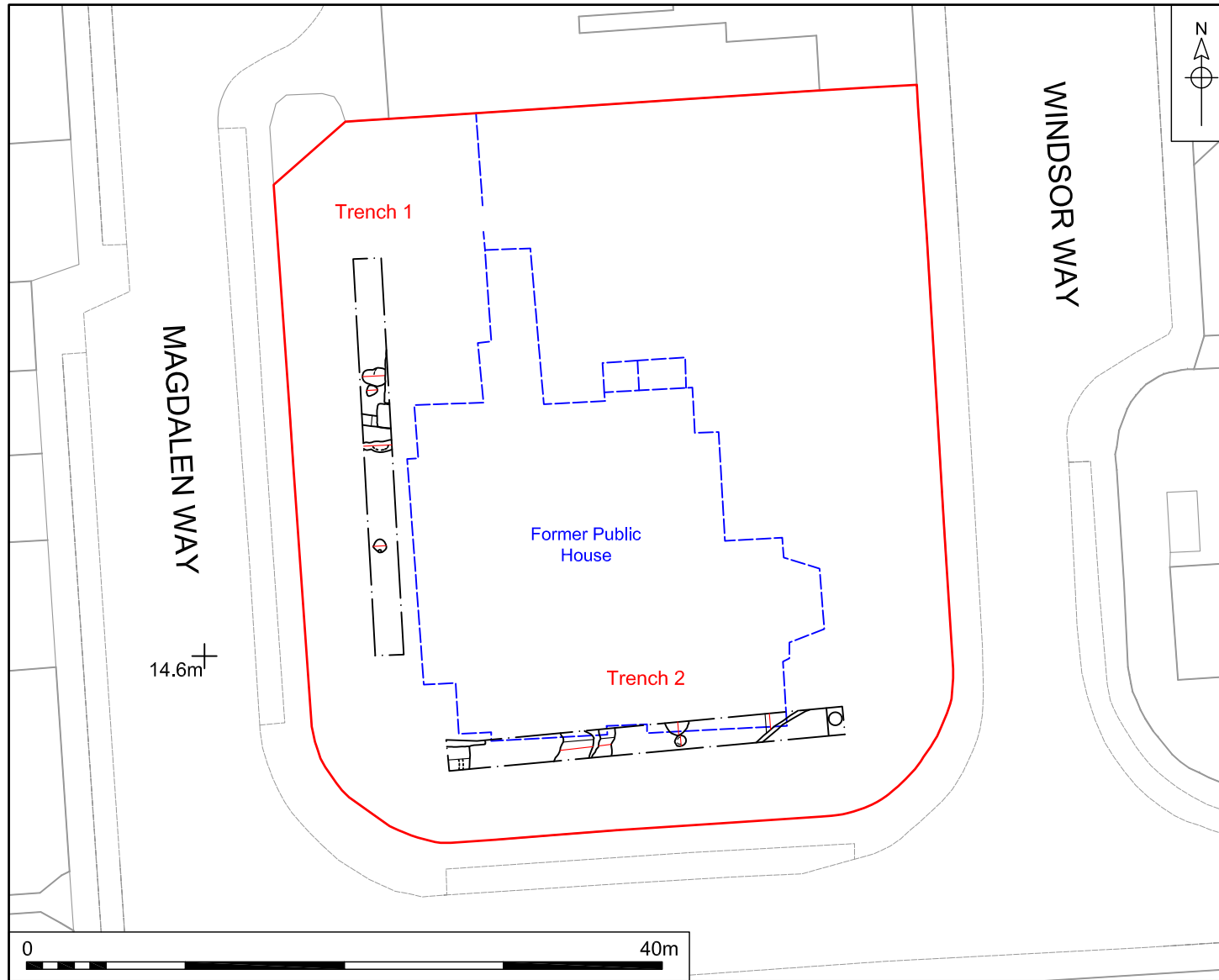


Plate 2. Machining Trench 1, looking south

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. There were no finds found whilst metal detecting although a worked flint core was recovered from the subsoil during the machining of Trench 1.

A single sample was taken from deposit [22] and examined by Val Fryer during the post-excavation phase of the project.

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 1:400

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from a known height taken on the entrance to Peterhouse School which was in turn based on an Ordnance Survey benchmark with a value of 15.65m OD, located on the north-east corner of a residence on the opposite side of Magdalen Square.

Site conditions were good, though the work took place in cold and slightly damp weather.

5.0 RESULTS

Trench 1

(Fig. 3 and Plates 3-9)

Trench 1 measured 25m by 1.80m and was situated on the western edge of the plot in the footprint of a proposed new building. It was orientated north to south and was machine excavated to a depth of between 0.50m and 0.60m. There were six possible small pits and one ditch observed in the trench. The ditch appeared to cut through subsoil [2] whereas all of the pits were sealed by the subsoil.



Plate 3. Trench 1, looking south

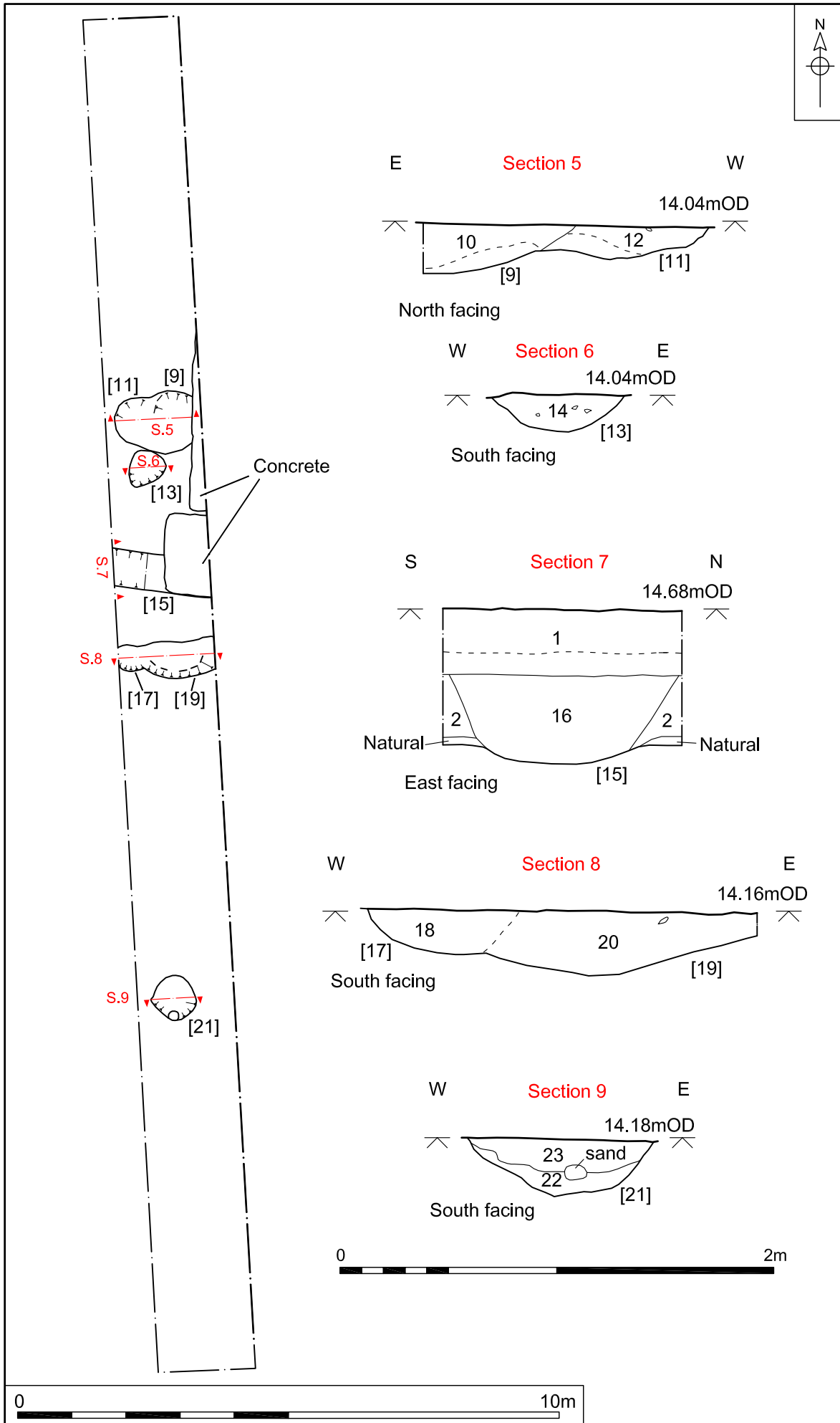


Figure 3. Trench 1, plan and sections. Scale 1:100 and 1:25



Plate 4. Pits [9] and [11], looking south



Plate 5. Pit [13], looking north

Pit [11] had an oval shape in plan, was 0.15m deep and measured 0.76m by 1.19m with slightly irregular and diffuse sides and base. It was filled with a light grey silty sand ([12]) which may have accumulated naturally. The pit appeared to

be truncated by pit [9] and on its eastern side by a modern concrete foundation, presumably part of the public house (Fig. 3, Section 5; Plate 4).

Pit [9] appeared to truncate pit [11], although the cut was slightly diffuse and hence the relationship was difficult to define clearly. It was 0.23m deep and measured 0.70m by 0.86m. It had a more regular appearance than pit [11] with a rounded base. The fill ([10]) was a mid greyish brown sandy silt which had probably also built up through natural deposition.

A similar pit ([13]) was located almost immediately to the south (Fig. 3; Section 6; Plate 5). It was sub-circular with a diameter of 0.68m; it was 0.17m deep and had a rounded base. The single fill ([14]) was formed from a naturally-deposited mid brown sandy silt.

Just over one metre to the south of the pits was ditch [15] which had been truncated on its eastern side by a concrete foundation which had probably formed part of the public house. The ditch appeared to cut through subsoil [2] and was at least 1.05m long and 1.0m wide, with a concave base and regular and steeply sloped sides (Fig. 3, Section 7; Plate 6). The ditch may have been deliberately infilled with deposit [16], a mid greyish brown sandy silt which contained a single sherd of Roman pottery and a small fragment of ceramic building material. It should be noted that these finds may be residual within the fill of the ditch.



Plate 6. Ditch [15], looking north

Two intercutting small pits ([17] and [19]) were situated roughly a metre further south than ditch [15]. Pit [17] appeared to truncate pit [19] although the relationship was not very clear (Fig. 3, Section 8; Plate 7)



Plate 7. Pits [17] and [19], looking north

Pit [17] measured 0.70m wide and was 0.20m deep with a rounded base. The fill ([18]) was composed of a mid brown sandy silt which had probably accumulated through natural silting.

Oval pit [19] measured 1.25m by 0.71m and was 0.30m deep with a flattened V-shaped base and evenly sloping sides. The fill ([20]) had a mottled appearance and was a mixture of orange sand and light greyish brown sandy silt which may have accumulated naturally.

Pit [21] was the only feature located in the southern half of the trench and was some 4.50m south of pits [17] and [19]. It was a small circular feature with irregular rounded sides and base and contained two fills (Fig. 3, Section 9; Plates 8 and 9). The lowest fill ([22]) was a dark greyish brown sandy silt, the colour of which probably owed itself to the presence of a large amount of fine charcoal (very few individual fragments were visible to the naked eye). The deposit was sampled (Sample <1>) and contained charcoal which had formed through burning at high temperatures. The deposit may have represented efforts to bury the waste products of a fire. The upper fill ([23]) was a clean mid greyish brown sandy silt.



Plate 8. Pit [21] (with fill [22] *in situ*), looking north



Plate 9. Pit [21], looking north

Trench 2

(Fig. 4 and Plates 10-12)

Trench 2 measured 25m by 1.80m and was located on the south side of the area within the proposed footprint of a new building. It was orientated east to west and was machine excavated to a depth of 0.50m to 0.60m. The trench contained two pits and a ditch and several patches of modern disturbance which were examined but not recorded.



Plate 10. Trench 2, looking east

Ditch [3] was located at the western extremity of Trench 2 (Fig 4, Section 10; Plate 11). It measured at least 1.53m long, 0.25m deep and was 1.38m wide although it could be observed to extend just beyond the western limit of the trench. The sides and base were slightly irregular. The single fill ([4]) was a light brown silty sand which may have accumulated through natural processes. The ditch was truncated on its northern side by a concrete foundation which had probably formed part of the public house that previously occupied the site.

A little over 5 metres away to the east were two shallow irregular linear features (Fig. 4, Section 4) measuring 2.16m and 1.22m wide respectively. They were established to be of recent date - their fills contained fragments of modern rubble - and were not recorded in detail.

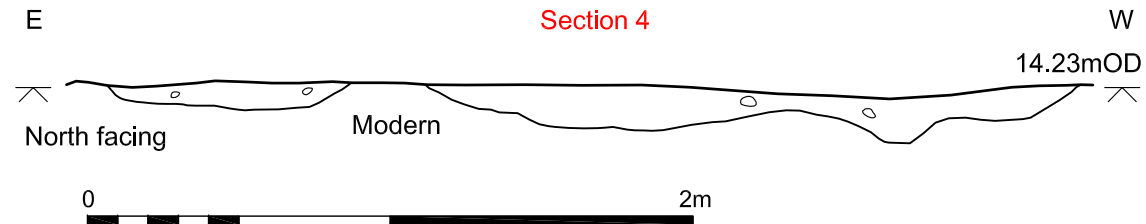
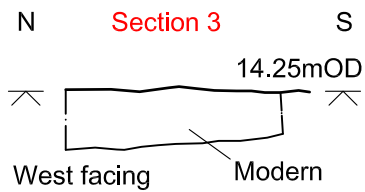
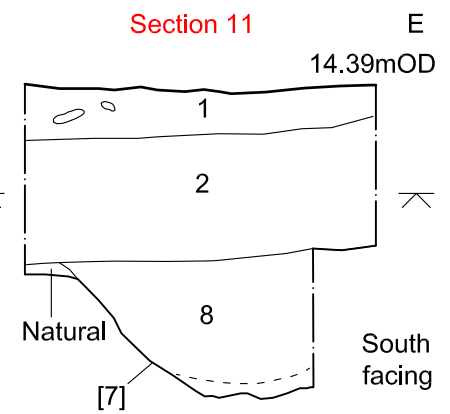
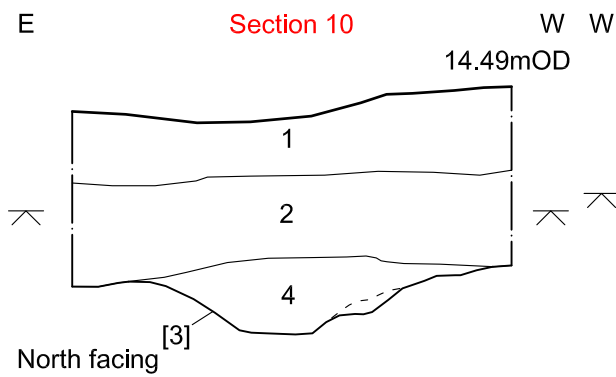
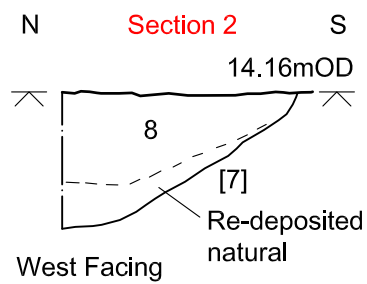
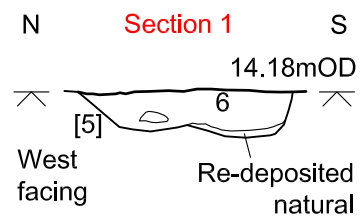
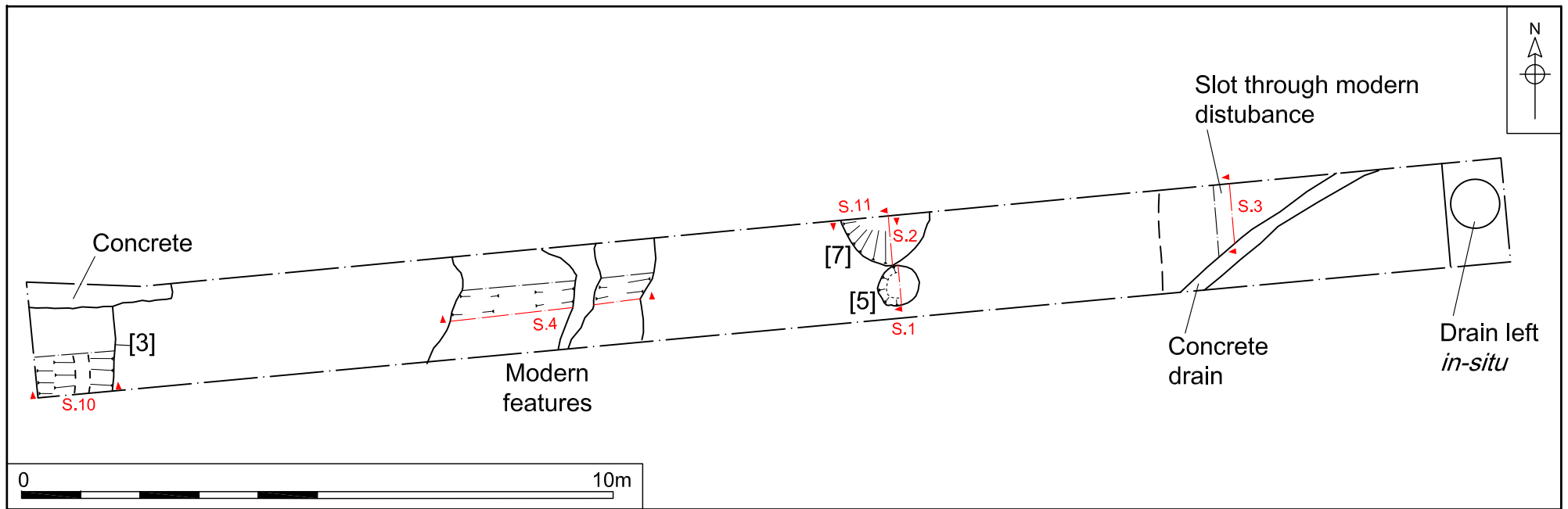


Figure 4. Trench 2, plan and sections. Scale 1:100 and 1:25



Plate 11. Ditch [3], looking south



Plate 12. Pits [7] and [5], looking east

Two pits ([5] and [7]) were recorded just to the east of the centre of the trench. The most northerly of the two ([7]) extended beyond the limits of the trench and measured 1.51m by 0.83m and was 0.46m deep with slightly irregular, steeply-

sloping sides (Fig 4, Sections 2 and 11; Plate 12). The fill ([8]) consisted of light brown silty sand which had probably accumulated naturally.

Immediately to the south of pit [7] was pit [5], a roughly circular small feature with a diameter of 0.68m and a depth of 0.13m (Fig 4, Section 1; Plate 12). The sides sloped and the base was uneven, appearing to rise in the centre. It had a single fill ([6]) consisting of a light brown silty sand which was probably the result of natural build up.

At the eastern end of the trench was a concrete drain. A dark area next to the concrete was sample excavated and this proved to be modern disturbance; no record was made apart from its extent and a section through the deposits (Fig 4, Section 3).

6.0 THE FINDS

by Sarah Percival

Finds are listed by context in Appendix 2a and described in more detail below, order by material type.

6.1 Pottery

A small body sherd of Hadham Red-Slipped Ware (Tomber and Dore 1998, 151) weighing 1g, was recovered from the fill of ditch [15]. The sherd, which may be residual within the back fill of the ditch, dates to the 3rd to 4th centuries AD.

6.2 Ceramic Building Material

A very small splinter of ceramic building material in fine silty, orange fabric with red grog inclusions was also found in the fill of ditch [15]. The ceramic building material is not closely datable.

6.3 Flint

A multi-platform short blade core with a small patch of cortex on one surface is probably of later prehistoric date. The flint, which was found in subsoil [1], weighed 45g.

7.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

by Val Fryer

7.1 Plant Macrofossils

7.1.1 Introduction and method statement

The features recorded at the site, although mostly undated, did include some materials of possible prehistoric and Roman date. A single sample (<1>) for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblage was taken from the charcoal rich fill of pit [21].

The sample was processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flot was collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flot was scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed below in Appendix 3. All plant remains were

charred. The non-floating residue was collected in a 1mm mesh sieve to be sorted when dry. Any artefacts/ecofacts will be retained for further specialist analysis.

7.1.2 Results

The recovered flots from Sample <1> was large (c.2 litres in volume) and although only a percentage was sorted it appeared to be entirely composed of charcoal/charred wood fragments, many of which were very large (i.e. >20mm). Although some flaking had occurred, probably as a result of combustion at high temperatures, the remains were otherwise extremely well preserved, probably indicating that they had been buried soon after burning and had suffered little or no subsequent disturbance. The only other material recorded was a single small piece of black porous material, which was a probable residue of the burning process.

7.1.3 Conclusions

In summary, although this assemblage is very limited in composition, it clearly illustrates that well-preserved plant macrofossils are present within the archaeological horizon in this area of Gorleston. Therefore, if further interventions are planned, it is suggested that additional plant macrofossil samples are taken from any dated and well-sealed contexts recorded during excavation. The current assemblage almost certainly contains material suitable for species identification and radiocarbon dating. After dating, analysis of the assemblage by a wood/charcoal specialist may provide valuable data about the local environment and resource management.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

The project has demonstrated that although situated within a semi urban area, there are relatively undisturbed deposits around the edges of the development plot which are located where the footprints of the new build are proposed.

The presence of the late prehistoric flint core within subsoil [2] hints at a general 'background noise' of prehistoric activity in the area. As noted in Section 3.0 above there is a complex of crop marks (NHER 43466) nearby which are thought to represent elements of field systems of prehistoric to Roman date and the notable hoard (NHER 10556) found a few metres to the east (Clough and Green 1978)

The eight small pits sealed below the subsoil tended to be located in groups in close proximity to each other (except pit [21]) and in a couple of cases they were intercutting. Unfortunately there was little evidence to suggest what the purpose of these pits might have been (again apart from pit [21], see below) Two of the pits, [11] and [19] in Trench 1, appeared to be shaped more irregularly than the others and had diffuse edges and it is possible that these features may represent tree throws rather than pits. The fills of these pits appear to have undergone a degree of leaching following their burial and their pale colour and presence below the subsoil suggests that they are prehistoric in date. The pits can be compared with a possible prehistoric ditch found at Peterhouse School, to the south-east of the site (NHER 52756) which was similarly sealed by a thick layer of subsoil. It was in the same location as one of the cropmarks recorded as NHER 43466 (Crawley 2009)

Small pit [21] was perhaps the most significant feature on the site, and though not directly dated it was typical of the types of small pits with charcoal rich fills which

are often of prehistoric date in the county and was sealed by a thick layer of subsoil. The pit appeared to contain waste material from a wood fire which seems to have been dumped whilst still hot as evidenced by the interpretation of the material from environmental Sample <1> and a small patch of reddened natural sand at the edge of the pit. A fire within the pit itself would probably have resulted in more substantial evidence. It can be surmised that the hot charcoal was rapidly deposited in the pit before cooling could take place. The absence of pottery and other material such as animal bone within the fills of the pits may reflect a singular purpose and rapid infilling and could equally suggest that this feature may have been some distance away from any settlement.

Ditches [15] and [3] appear to represent two different periods of activity; ditch [15] truncated subsoil [2] whereas ditch [3], like the pits was sealed by it. Ditch [3] appears to be orientated north to south, co-incidentally on the same alignment as the surrounding road system (it is unlikely to have been influenced by the layout of the relatively modern street pattern). The ditch was sealed by subsoil and may even be of prehistoric date. Ditch [15] was created after the formation of the subsoil indicating that the 3rd- to 4th-century Roman pottery sherd found in its fill is residual. Moreover this ditch appears to be on the same alignment as the field system observed on the 1st edition of the Ordnance Survey map of the area. Despite the potential difference in age it is likely that both ditches represent some form of boundaries. Neither ditch shares the north-west to south-east alignment of the cropmark recorded just to the north and east of the site which forms part of site NHER 43466.

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

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by the author and Lilly Hodges. Thanks to Tony the machine driver and Wellington Construction for their interest in the project and help towards its completion.

The finds were washed by Rebecca Sillwood and analysed by Sarah Percival. The illustrations were prepared by David Dobson after initial digitising by the author. Val Fryer reported on the environmental samples after processing by Rob Fryer. The report was edited by Jayne Bown and formatted by David Dobson.

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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period
1	Deposit			Topsoil	Unknown
2	Deposit			Subsoil	Unknown
3	Cut	Ditch		Ditch	Unknown
4	Deposit		3	Fill of ditch [3]	Unknown
5	Cut	Pit		Small Pit	Unknown
6	Deposit		5	Fill of small pit [5]	Unknown
7	Cut	Pit		Medium pit	Unknown
8	Deposit		7	Fill of medium pit [7]	Unknown
9	Cut	Pit		Small pit	Unknown
10	Deposit		9	Fill of [9]	Unknown
11	Cut	Pit		Small pit	Unknown
12	Deposit		11	Fill of [11]	Unknown
13	Cut	Pit		Small pit	Unknown
14	Deposit		13	Fill of [13]	Unknown
15	Cut	Ditch		Shallow Ditch	Post medieval?
16	Deposit		15	Fill of [15]	Post medieval?
17	Cut	Pit		Small pit	Unknown
18	Deposit		17	Fill of [17]	Unknown
19	Cut	Pit		Small pit	Unknown
20	Deposit		19	Fill of [19]	Unknown
21	Cut	Pit		Small pit	Unknown
22	Deposit		21	Fill of [21]	Unknown
23	Deposit		21	Fill of [21]	Unknown

Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Feature	Total
Post medieval	Ditch	1
Prehistoric	Pit	8
	Ditch	1

Appendix 2a: Finds by Context

Context	Material	Qty	Wt	Period	Notes
2	Flint – Struck	1	45g	Prehistoric	Core
16	Pottery	1	1g	Roman	Hadham Red Ware
16	Ceramic Building Material	1	1g	Unknown	

Appendix 2b: OASIS Finds Summary

Period	Material	Total
Prehistoric	Flint – Struck	1
Roman	Pottery	1
Unknown	Ceramic Building Material	1

Appendix 3: Environmental Evidence

Sample No.	1
Context No.	22
Feature No.	21
Feature type	Pit
Charcoal <2mm	xxxx
Charcoal >2mm	xxxx
Charcoal >5mm	xxx
Charcoal >10mm	xx
Black porous 'cokey' material	x
Sample volume (litres)	12
Volume of flot (litres)	c.2
% flot sorted	c.12.5%

Key:

x = 1–10 specimens xx = 11–50 specimens xxx = 51–100 specimens xxxx = 100+ specimens