

Report 2665



nau archaeology

**Archaeological Evaluation at
Pristow Green Lane, Tibenham, Norfolk**

ENF126254

Prepared for
Saffron Housing
c/o Oxbury & Company
St Thomas House
14 Central Avenue
St Andrews Business Park
Norwich
NR7 0HR



Suzanne Westall MA AIfA

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www.nps.co.uk

PROJECT CHECKLIST		
Project Manager	Nigel Page	
Draft Completed	Suzie Westall	23/03/2011
Graphics Completed	David Dobson	06/04/2011
Edit Completed	Jayne Bown	11/04/2011
Signed Off	David Whitmore	11/04/2011
<i>Issue 1</i>		

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:	Land Adjacent to 14 Pristow Green Lane, Tibenham
District:	South Norfolk
Grid Ref.:	TM 1341 8917
HER No.:	ENF126254
OASIS Ref.:	98773
Client:	Saffron Housing Trust
Dates of Fieldwork:	10 March 2011

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted in March 2011 for Saffron Housing Trust ahead of work to construct new housing at Pristow Green Lane, Tibenham, Norfolk. Two modern boundary ditches and a large pit filled with modern rubbish were identified. The site is recorded in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record as being that of a possible moated site, but no evidence for this was identified.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The site at Pristow Green Lane, Tibenham (Fig. 1) is to be developed for residential purposes with five properties planned - four houses and one bungalow. The archaeological evaluation entailed the excavation of two trenches, each 27m long by 1.8m in wide, within an area of 0.2 hectares on which the new housing is to be erected.

The work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by South Norfolk Council (Ref. 2010/0685/F) and a Brief issued by Norfolk Historic Environment Service (Ref. CNF 42838). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NAU Archaeology (Ref. NPS/BAU26658/DW). This work was commissioned by Oxbury & Company and funded by Saffron Housing Trust.

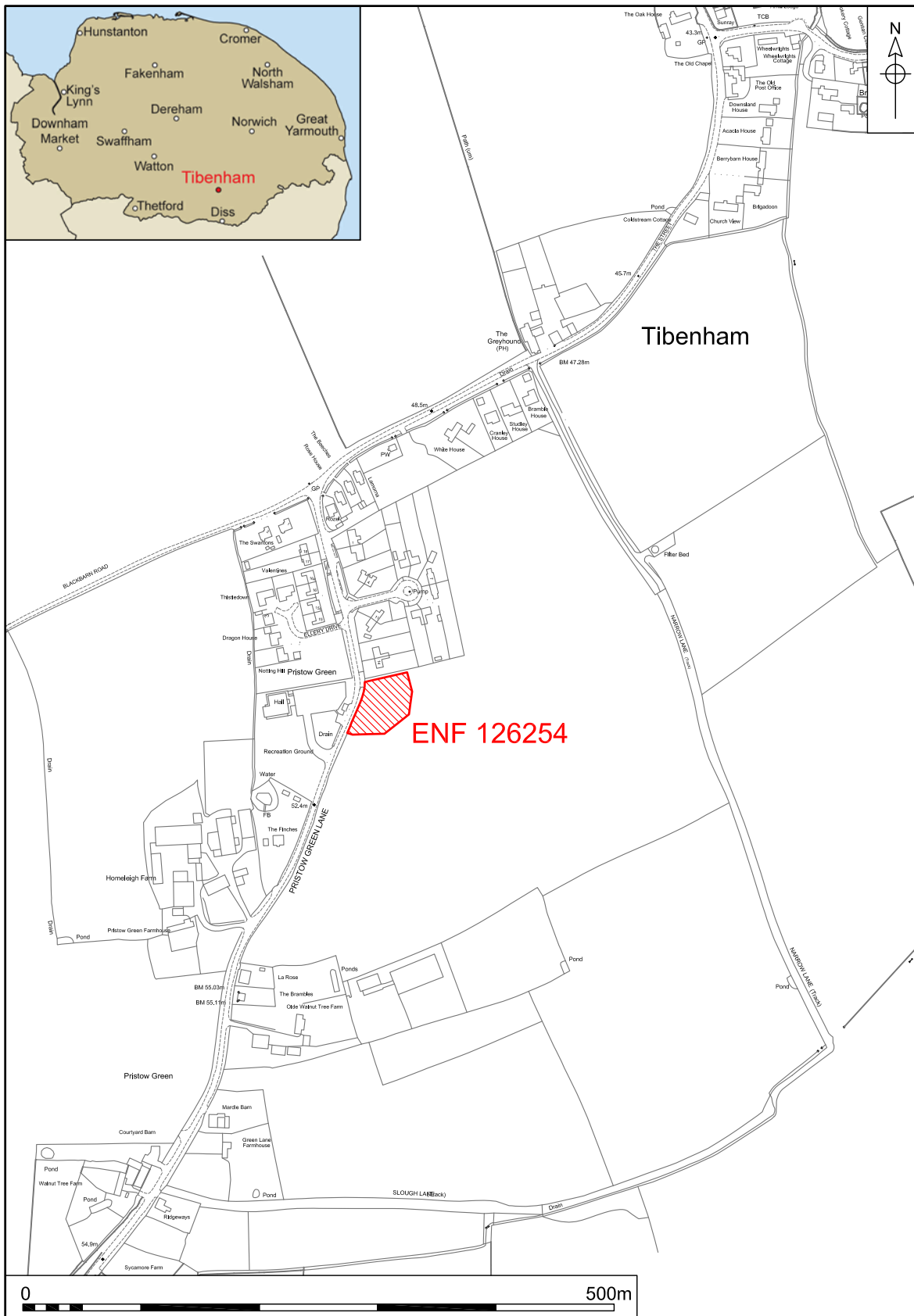
This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 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 Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service (NMAS), following the relevant policies on archiving standards.

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The land lies at an elevation of 52m OD in an area of loamy and clayey drift over chalky till (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1974). The solid geology across this area of Norfolk is Upper Chalk.

Despite the site's description in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) as the location of several former ponds, the land appeared to be well-drained and



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

was relatively dry. The topsoil was a mid grey-brown heavy clay silt 0.25m to 0.40m deep, the underlying 'natural' a pale yellow-brown clay with frequent flecks of chalk.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The proposed development is located on the site of a possible medieval moat (NHER 10936), although the Historic Environment Record does not provide any further data on this apart from to say that it is based on conjectural evidence. Another possible moated site is located in the grounds of the 17th-century Tibenham Farm some 1.4km to the south-west (NHER 10938).

There are a number of 17th-century buildings in the immediate vicinity of the site (NHER 39581, 42022, 42025 and 42612), and it may be that this part of the village once formed a separate hamlet.

Nothing is shown in this location on either Faden's 1797 map (Barringer 1989, 27) or Bryant's 1826 map of Norfolk (Barringer 1998, 27).

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 archaeological trial trenching to cover a 5% sample of the area.

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket under constant archaeological supervision.

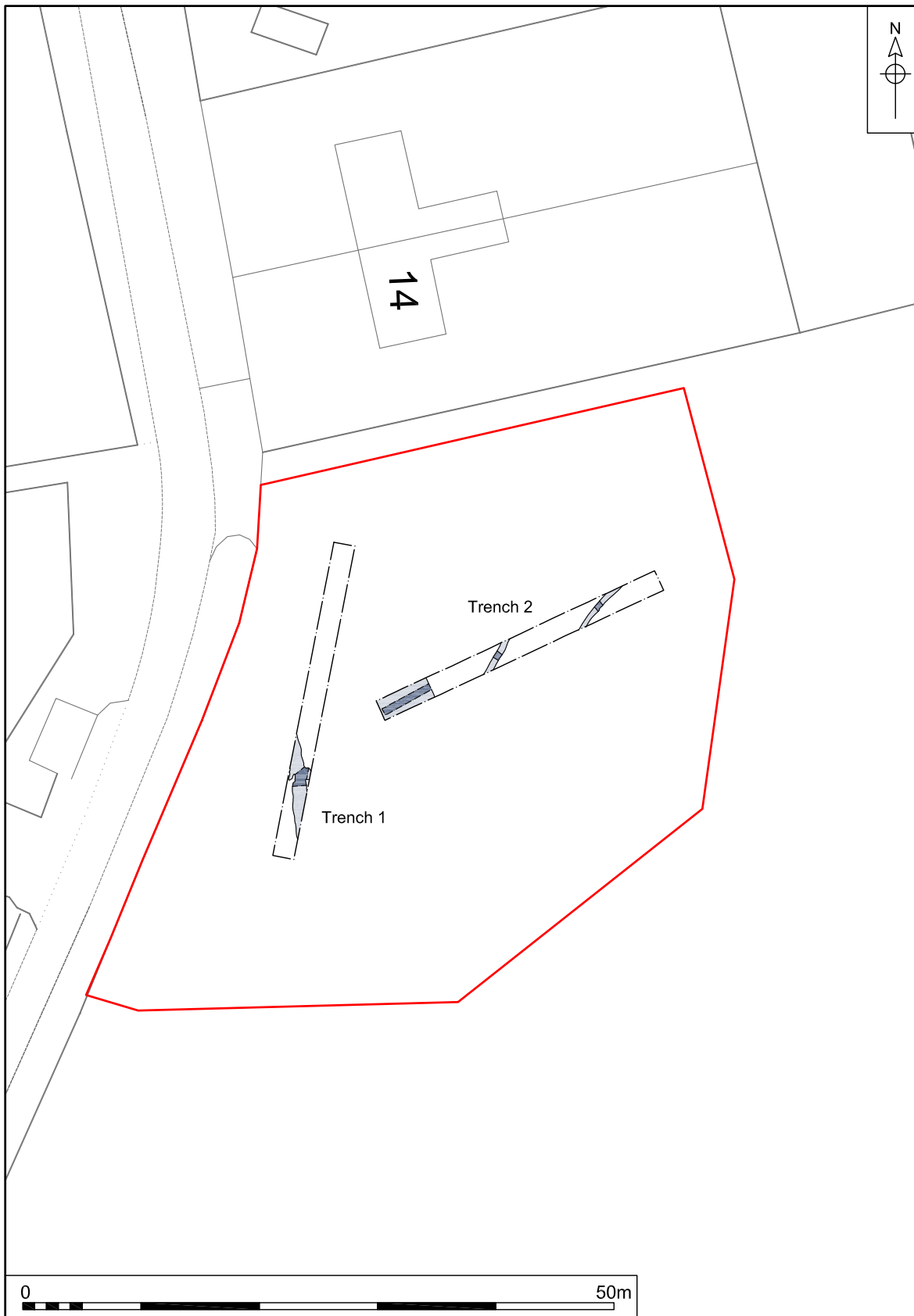
Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector.

No environmental samples were taken.

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.

The temporary benchmark used during the course of this work was transferred from an Ordnance Survey spot height with a value of 52.4m OD, located slightly to the south of the site on Pristow Green Lane.

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



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Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500

5.0 RESULTS

Two trenches, each measuring 27m by 1.8m, were excavated: one running in a north-north-easterly direction, roughly parallel with the road, the other in a north-east to south-westerly direction (Fig. 2).

Trench 1



Plate 1. Trench 1 (looking north-north-east)

Two interconnecting ditches ([01] and [04]) were revealed towards the southern end of Trench 1 (Fig. 3, Plate 2). The larger of the two, ditch [01], ran roughly north-south and was 1.2m wide by 0.5m deep. It contained two fills (02) and (03) (Plate 3). The primary fill, (02), contained animal bone but was very similar to the underlying natural clay and represented a natural silting up of the base of the ditch. The upper fill, (03), was dark brownish-grey in colour and more silty; it contained large amounts of modern rubbish, including plastics.

The second ditch, [04], was about 0.8m wide by 0.3m deep and contained two similar fills ((05) and (06)) (Plate 4). No finds were recovered from the fills of ditch [04] but neither ditch appeared to cut the fills of the other and the two are thus thought to have been contemporary.

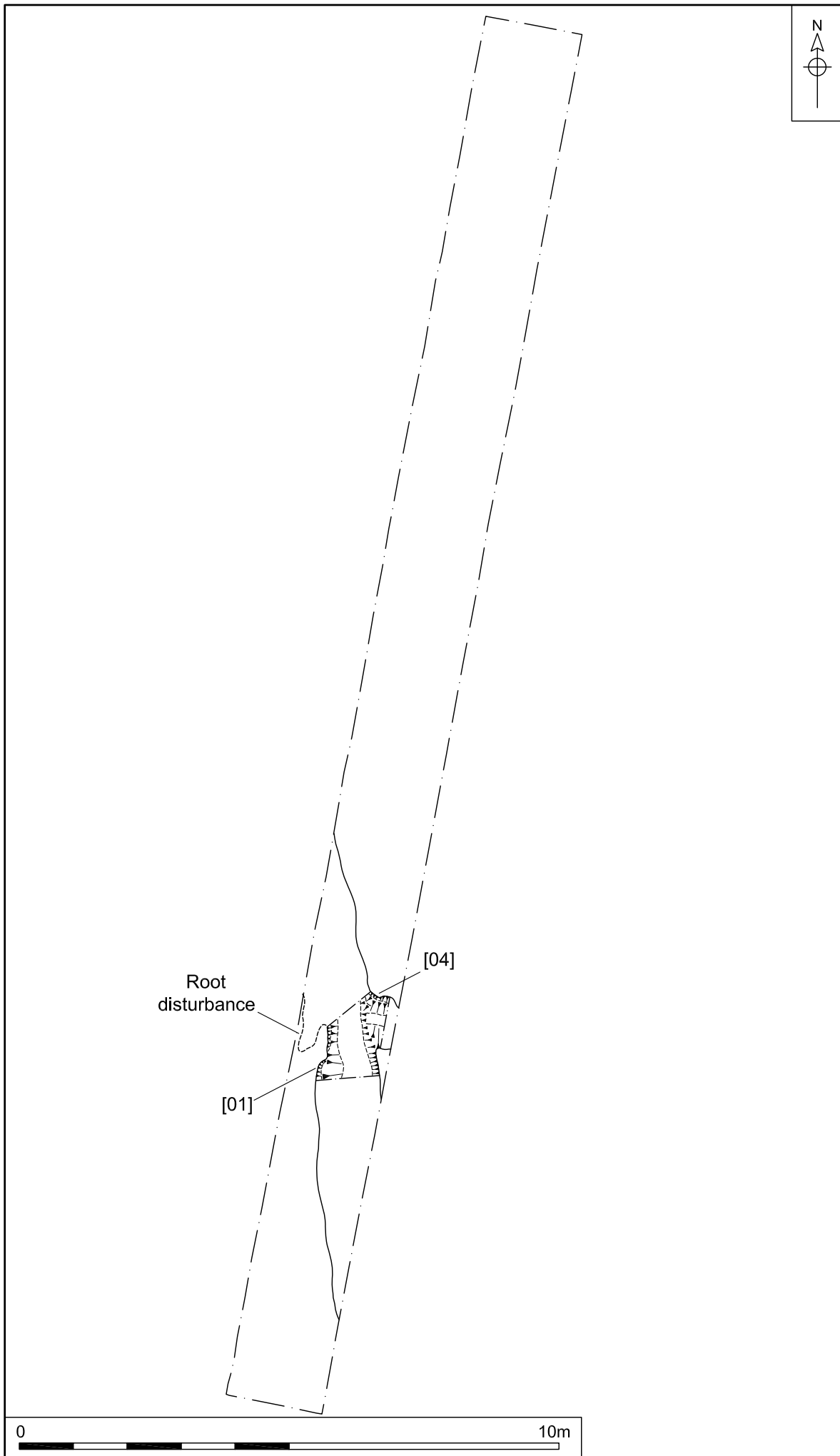


Figure 3. Plan of Trench 1. Scale 1:100



Plate 2. Ditches [01] and [04] in Trench 1 (looking south-south-west)



Plate 3. Ditch [01] in profile (looking north)



Plate 4. Ditch [04] in profile (looking east-south-east)

Trench 2

At the south-western end of Trench 2 (Fig. 4, Plate 5) a slot was excavated through a large area of dark silt revealing it to be a pit ([8]) filled with modern rubbish (Plate 6).



Plate 5. Trench 2 (looking south-west)

The vast majority of objects recovered from the fill of this pit (9), were glass bottles – many of them with their lids and contents still intact – but there were also a number of metal objects, twentieth century crockery, and occasional plastics (Plate 7).

Two narrow gullies [10] and [12] running north-south across Trench 2 appeared to be machine-cut ‘mole’ drains (Plates 8 and 9) and are of modern date. The fill of one produced a lump of copper alloy waste.

A sherd of modern white china and an iron gate latch were recorded as unstratified finds but were then discarded. None of the finds from this site were retained for analysis as all of the material was modern.

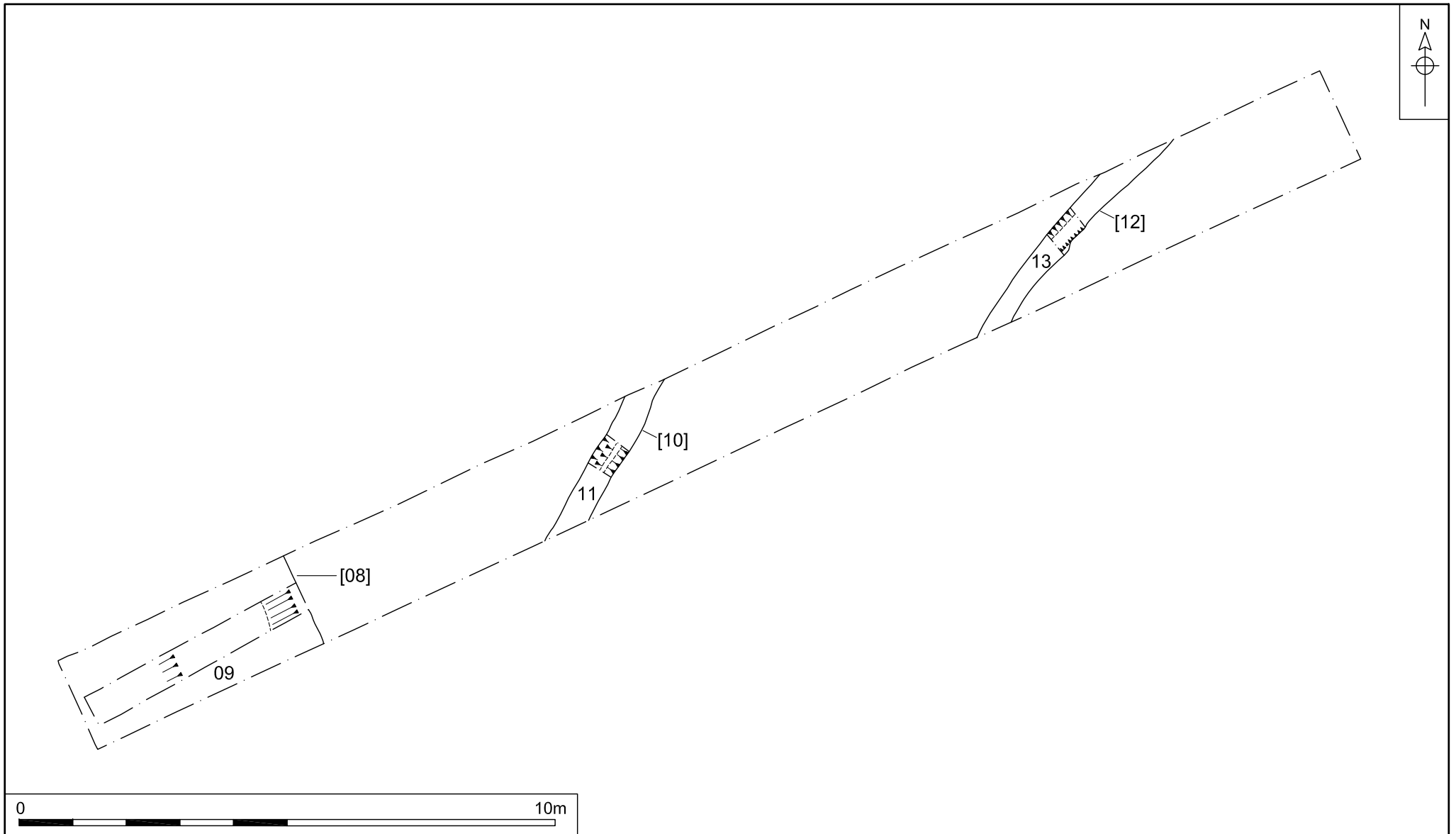


Figure 4. Plan of Trench 2. Scale 1:100



Plate 6. The 'bottle dump' in Trench 2 (looking north-east)



Plate 7. Contents of the bottle dump



Plate 8. Machine-cut drainage trench [10] in profile (looking south-west)



Plate 9. Machine-cut drainage trench [12] in profile (looking south-west)

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation work exposed two, interconnecting, modern boundary ditches, two machine-cut modern field-drains and a large pit or back-filled pond containing only modern material.

No evidence of the moat recorded in the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER 10936) could be seen on the field surface and no evidence of it was identified in the trenches that were opened as part of this evaluation. It is possible, but considered unlikely, that the backfilled pond or pit [8] once formed part of a moat - there was no evidence to suggest this in the limited area that was excavated, and the only finds recovered were of modern date. It is possible that pond/pit [8] and boundary ditches [1] and [4] have been misinterpreted as part of a moated site in the past, when their outlines were still visible on the field surface. No finds other than modern ones were recovered from any of the features or from the overlying ploughsoil. No finds were retained. The fills of pit/pond [8] were very dry and well-drained suggesting that the feature was a pit rather than a backfilled pond, but it may be that the land is better drained now than in the past.

Recommendations for future work based upon this report will be made by Norfolk Historic Environment Service.

Acknowledgements

Field work was carried out by Suzie Westall and Pete Watkins. The report was edited by Jayne Bown and illustrated and produced by David Dobson.

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|---|------|--|
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Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Cut Type	Fill Of	Description	Period
1	Cut	Ditch		Modern ditch / boundary	Modern
2	Deposit		1		Modern
3	Deposit		1		Modern
4	Cut	Ditch		Modern ditch / boundary	Modern
5	Deposit		4		Modern
6	Deposit		4		Modern
7	U/S Finds			Unstratified finds	Modern
8	Cut	Pit / Pond		Modern rubbish pit or old pond	Modern
9	Deposit		8		Modern
10	Cut	Gully		Modern drainage gully	Modern
11	Deposit		10		Modern
12	Cut	Gully		Modern drainage gully	Modern
13	Deposit		12		Modern

Appendix 1b: OASIS Feature Summary

Period	Cut Type	Number
Modern	Ditch	2
	Gully	2
	Pit/Pond	1