

Co-operative Retail Services Ltd., Church Plain, Loddon, Norfolk An Archaeological Evaluation Report

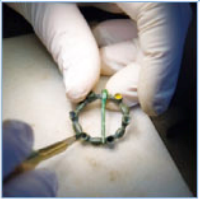
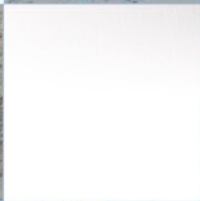
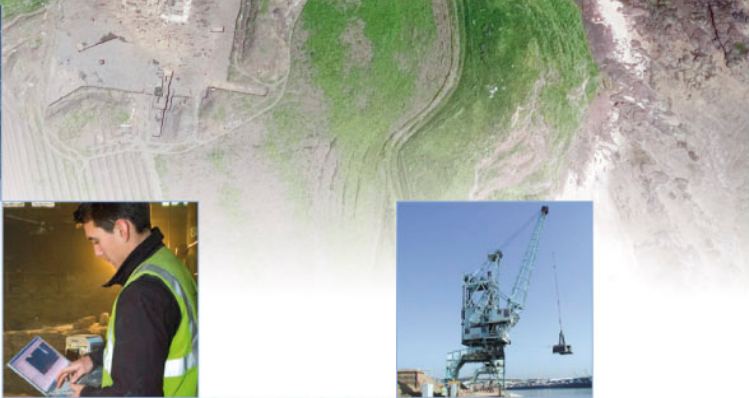
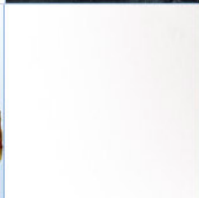
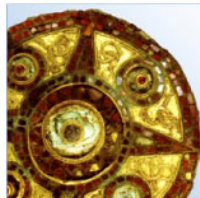
Planning Application Number: 2008/0009/F

National Grid Reference Number: TM 3619 9878

AOC Project no: 30127

Date: September 2008

NHER: 51572



ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Co-operative Retail Services Ltd., Church Plain, Loddon, Norfolk

An Archaeological Evaluation Report

On Behalf of:	Anglia Regional Co-operative Society
National Grid Reference (NGR):	TM 3619 9878
AOC Project No:	30127
Prepared by:	Les Capon
Illustration by:	Jonathon Moller
Date of Report:	September 2008

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Date: September 2008

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Date:

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Non-Technical Summary

AOC Archaeology Group was commissioned by RPS Planning and Development to conduct an Archaeological Evaluation at the site of the Co-operative Retail Store on Church Plain Loddon, on behalf of Anglia Regional Co-operative Society. The evaluation, early July 2008, consisted of a single trench 8.5m x 2m.

Three features, interpreted as robbed out construction cuts for building foundations, were present in the trench. They were probably of similar date, in the 18th century. A rounded pit cut two of these, and is of later date.

No evidence relating to the medieval market, known to have been on the site, was found. Any archaeological deposits relating to the market were destroyed by the 18th century building, and would only have survived if deep: truncation of the earlier ground surface was very extensive. In addition, the below ground impact of a market may have been only slight.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document is a report on an archaeological evaluation carried out to the rear of the Co-operative Retail Store that fronts onto Church Plain, Loddon, Norfolk. The work was carried out on behalf of Anglia Regional Co-operative Society and commissioned by RPS Planning and Development.
- 1.2 The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TM 3619 9878 and is within land bounded by buildings to the north and east, by Market Place Road to the south and Bridge Street to the west. The site is irregular in plan and covers 0.07 hectares. The buildings due for demolition were still standing during the evaluation.
- 1.3 The proposal for the site involves the demolition of one- and two-storey outbuildings and the erection of a new warehouse connected to the current Co-operative shop.
- 1.4 The evaluation consisted of the excavation of a single trench measuring 8.5m by 2m.

2 Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is the South Norfolk County Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA).
- 2.2 A planning application has been approved to develop Site 1 (Application No 2008/009/F). NLA recommended that an archaeological condition be placed on any planning permission to secure a programme of archaeological work. This was due to the location of the site within a conservation area, as defined by the South Norfolk Local Plan (2003). The location of the site on Market Place Road locates it directly in the centre of medieval Loddon, and at 150m northeast of the church and its extensive graveyard puts this site in a central place in the village, an area of good archaeological potential.
- 2.3 The proposed scheme involves the demolition of existing 1 & 2 storey outbuildings and the construction of a warehouse connected to the east of the existing Co-op store
- 2.4 The results of this archaeological investigation will inform the planning decision regarding the need for any mitigation strategy in regard to the archaeological resource.
- 2.5 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by AOC Archaeology and approved by NLA (AOC 2008).

3. Geology & Topography

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey Map (sheet 255) indicates the site is located upon the solid geology of Norwich Crag, Red Crag & Chillesford Clay. Loddon lies on a low hill to the south side of the River Chet

4 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.0.1 The following information is drawn from the Norfolk Historic Environment Records.

4.1 The Prehistoric Period (c. 500,000 BP – AD 43)

- 4.1.1 Evidence of Prehistoric activity within the town of Loddon is restricted to occasional finds of flint tools. The tools include a barbed-and-tanged arrow head, and also a laurel leaf, of Neolithic date.

The bulk of remains from the prehistoric period date to the Iron Age, and come from fields outside the town. Three Iron Age settlements have been close to Transport Lane, a mile to the south of the site.

4.2 The Roman Period (AD 43 – 410)

4.2.1 It is believed that the established Iron Age settlements south of Loddon were expanded during the Roman period, and finds from the fields include coins, pottery, building material and other metalwork. One site has been interpreted as the location of a bathhouse, which may suggest a nearby villa. Within Loddon, evidence is much more sparse, with just a coin and a spearhead of unsure date recorded on the Historic environment Record.

4.3 The Saxon Period (AD 410-1066)

4.3.1 Finds of Saxon date have also been found from fields to the south of Loddon. These are swords, pins, brooches and rings and are typical of cemetery finds. No Saxon burial ground has been located, however.

4.3.2 It is believed that during the Middle Saxon period the focus of settlement began to shift towards the River Chet. This may have been due to the need for better land for agriculture and grazing, as well as opening better trade routes. Field walking has indicated several clusters of Middle Saxon pottery which may indicate more intensive settlement.

4.3.3 The Domesday Book states that Loddon was a fairly substantial settlement with the largest holding owned by one Frodo, who held it from the Abbey of St Edmund. This is testament to the establishment of Loddon during the Saxon period. However, later development is likely to have disturbed and obscured Saxon remains. The holding included a church with sixty acres of land, a mill, woods and meadows. It has been suggested that the church dates to around AD 630 and was founded by St Felix, Bishop of East Anglia.

4.3.4 An excavation carried out by the Norfolk Archaeology Unit in 2000, on a site close to 1 High Street, revealed the remains of a Late Saxon building and ditches.

4.4 Medieval Period (AD 1066-1550)

4.4.1 The site lies within an area previously occupied by an open market place of medieval date which was chartered in 1245. Redevelopment of the market place took place between 1629 and 1736. The market would have been a focus of activity for the town, as well as a trade route.

4.4.2 Evidence of the medieval settlement of Loddon and the local area has been recovered during field walking exercises. The settlements that date to the Iron Age and Roman periods may have continued in use until the medieval period, perhaps as farmsteads. Within Loddon itself, medieval remains were recorded during excavation at The Beeches and at 1, High Street.

4.4.3 Holy Trinity Church stands to the southeast of the site, and was built by Sir James Hobart, who lived at Hales Hall, and was Attorney General to King Henry VII. The church has an extensive graveyard, and excavations in the locale include a stone coffin with human remains that was discovered in 1878. Further evidence of burials through excavation were revealed on the south side of Church Plain, found with 11th-12th century pottery.

4.4.4 Several buildings in close proximity to the site date to the late medieval period. Sections of Bugdon House have been dated to late medieval period and the 16th century whilst The Swan Inn, despite

its current exterior view is actually a late medieval timber-framed building. Similarly, 15 to 21 Church Street are also examples of a late medieval timber framed buildings.

4.5 Post-Medieval (c. AD 1550 – 1900)

4.5.1 Also within Loddon are numerous 18th and 19th century brick houses and shops along the High Street and auxiliary streets. The growth of Loddon in the post-medieval period was facilitated by its location on the principal route between Norwich and Beccles. The town has since been bypassed, and spread southwards.

5 Aims and Objectives

5.1 The aims of the Evaluation were defined as being:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To specifically determine the presence of remains relating to the medieval market place of Loddon.

5.2 The regional research aims were also defined:

- How does the site contribute to an understanding of the establishment and development of towns in east Anglia from the Saxon period onwards?
- What can be learnt regarding topography and buildings of buried Saxon archaeological horizons?
- What evidence is there for relationships between the rural and urban communities?
- What is the evidence for development and changes in industry in the post-0medieval period?

5.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

6. Methodology

6.1 The evaluation consisted of the excavation of a single trench measuring 8.5m by 2m at base, located where space allowed between the standing buildings on site. Due to the presence of standing buildings, the trench did not target the street-front. The trench was excavated using a JCB 3CX with a 1.80m wide smooth-bladed bucket.

6.2 All machining was carried out under the constant supervision of the Archaeological Project Supervisor. Undifferentiated topsoil or overburden of recent origin was removed in successive level spits down to the natural geology, as significant archaeological horizons were not encountered above this.

6.3 The accession number **51572** was obtained from Norfolk Museum and Archaeology service. This number is used as an identifier on all records for the archive.

6.4 The trench was accurately located to the National Grid. A temporary benchmark were established on the site (Figure 2).

6.6 All recording was in accordance with the standards and requirements of the Museum of London's *Archaeological Field Manual* (MoL 3rd edition 1994).

6.7 A continuous unique numbering system was employed.

6.8 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardised sheets.

7. Results

7.1 Trench 1

7.1.1 Trench 1 was 8.5m x 2m.

Level (OD) (upper surface)	Depth (BGL)	Context Number	Description
9.53m	0.00-0.10 m	(1001)	Turfed grey brown silty sand. Topsoil
9.43m	0.10-0.18m	(1002)	Light brownish yellow clayey sand with frequent ceramic building material (CBM) fragments and flecks, charcoal, and flint gravel. Made Ground
9.35m	0.18-0.25m	(1005)	Mid grey sandy silt with frequent CBM flecks and charcoal, and occasional flint gravel. Made Ground
8.73m	0.80-1.90m	(1006)	Firm mid orange yellow clayey sand with moderate flint gravel. Natural Clayey Sand
No further excavation			

- 7.1.1 Four features were present in the trench that cut into natural sand (1006). Three of these were substantial, linear, vertical sided and had similar fills. They are interpreted as robbed out construction cuts for previous buildings on the site. The fourth feature was a pit.
- 7.1.2 Construction cut [1004] was filled by (1003), a mid grey brown clayey sand with post-medieval pottery and CBM.
- 7.1.3 Linear construction cut [1008] had vertical sides and a flat base. Its fill, (1007) was very clean, with very occasional inclusions of CBM flecks, as well as occasional flint gravel, but it was darker than the natural, being mid grey brown clayey sand.
- 7.1.4 Rectangular construction cut [1012] had vertical sides. The finds in its fill, (1011), include pottery, metal, glass and CBM, which appear to date to the 18th century. Otherwise it was relatively clean, with only moderate CBM fragments and flecks, and charcoal.
- 7.1.5 Rounded pit [1010] truncated construction cuts [1008] and [1012]. Its fill, (1009), contained post-medieval pottery and CBM, and was a mid grey brown clay sand with occasional CBM flecks and flint.
- 7.1.6 The similarity in form of the three construction cuts makes it likely that they are of similar date. The pit is of later date.

8. Finds

- 8.1 A small finds assemblage was recovered from a single context, fill (1011) in cut [1012]. This is assessed in Appendix B.

9. Conclusions & Recommendations

- 9.1.1 It is likely that all the construction cuts in the trench are of a similar date, and therefore the building activity that it represents dates to the 18th century.
- 9.1.2 The pit that cuts two of the construction cuts is later in date.
- 9.1.3 There was no evidence of archaeological activity relating to the market that was present over the site in the medieval period. This is because any remains earlier than the 18th century would have been truncated away, unless they were of exceptional depth. The archaeological impact of a market would be expected to be relatively shallow.
- 9.1.4 Publication of the results will be through the ADS OASIS form (Appendix B), unless there will be further archaeological work on the site, when the results of this phase will be integrated with the further work.

10. Bibliography

AOC Archaeology Group (2008). *Co-operative Retail Services Ltd., Church Plain, Loddon, Norfolk: a Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished Report

British Geological Survey map (BGS Sheet 257)

Council for British Archaeology (1987). *First Aid For Finds* (Second Edition).

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South Norfolk Local Plan (2003) <http://www.south-norfolk.gov.uk/planning/287.asp> (accessed 21/8/08)



Based on the Ordnance Survey's 1:50 000 Landranger map of 1997 with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, © Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 100023757



Figure 1: Site Location

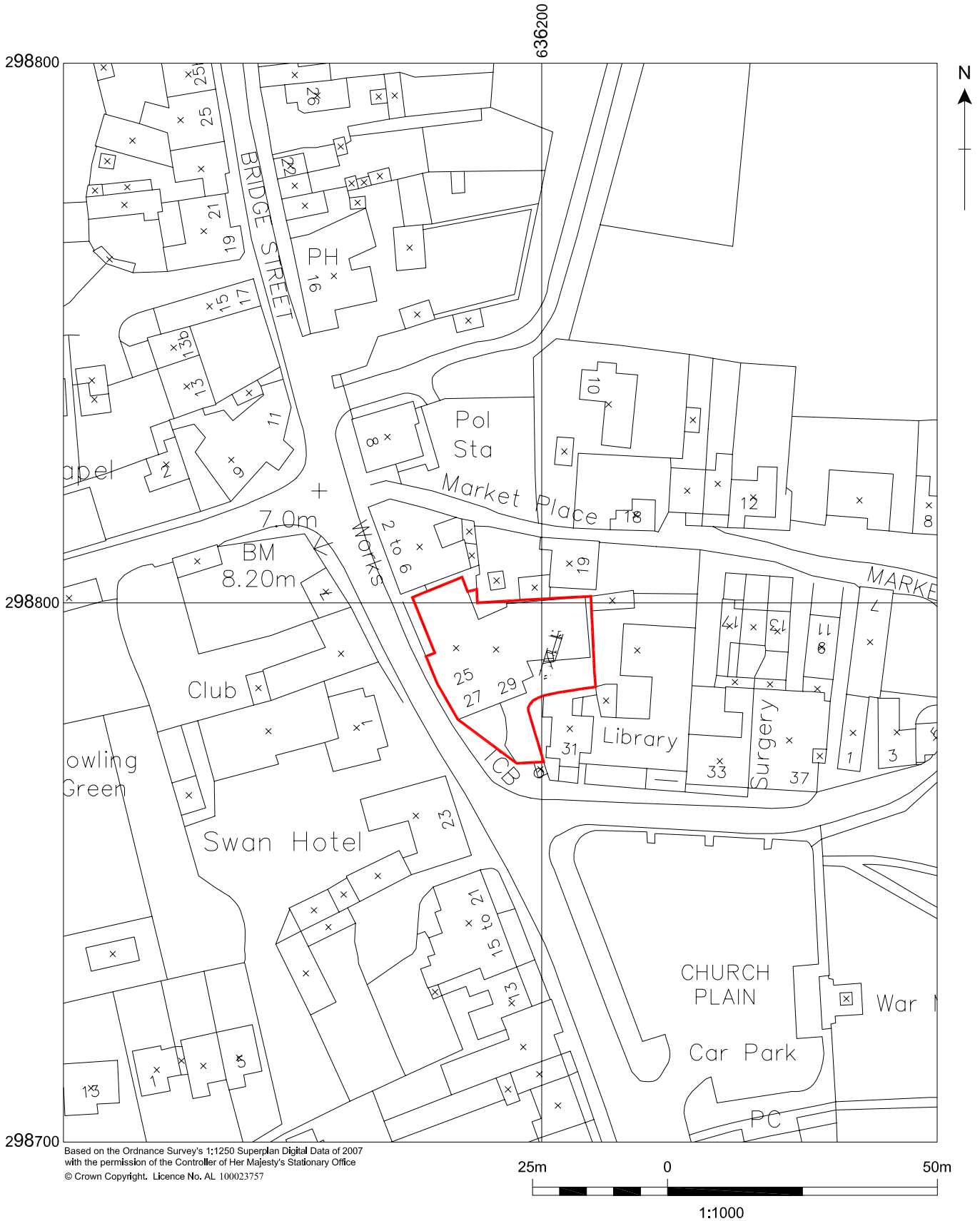


Figure 2: Detailed Site Location Plan

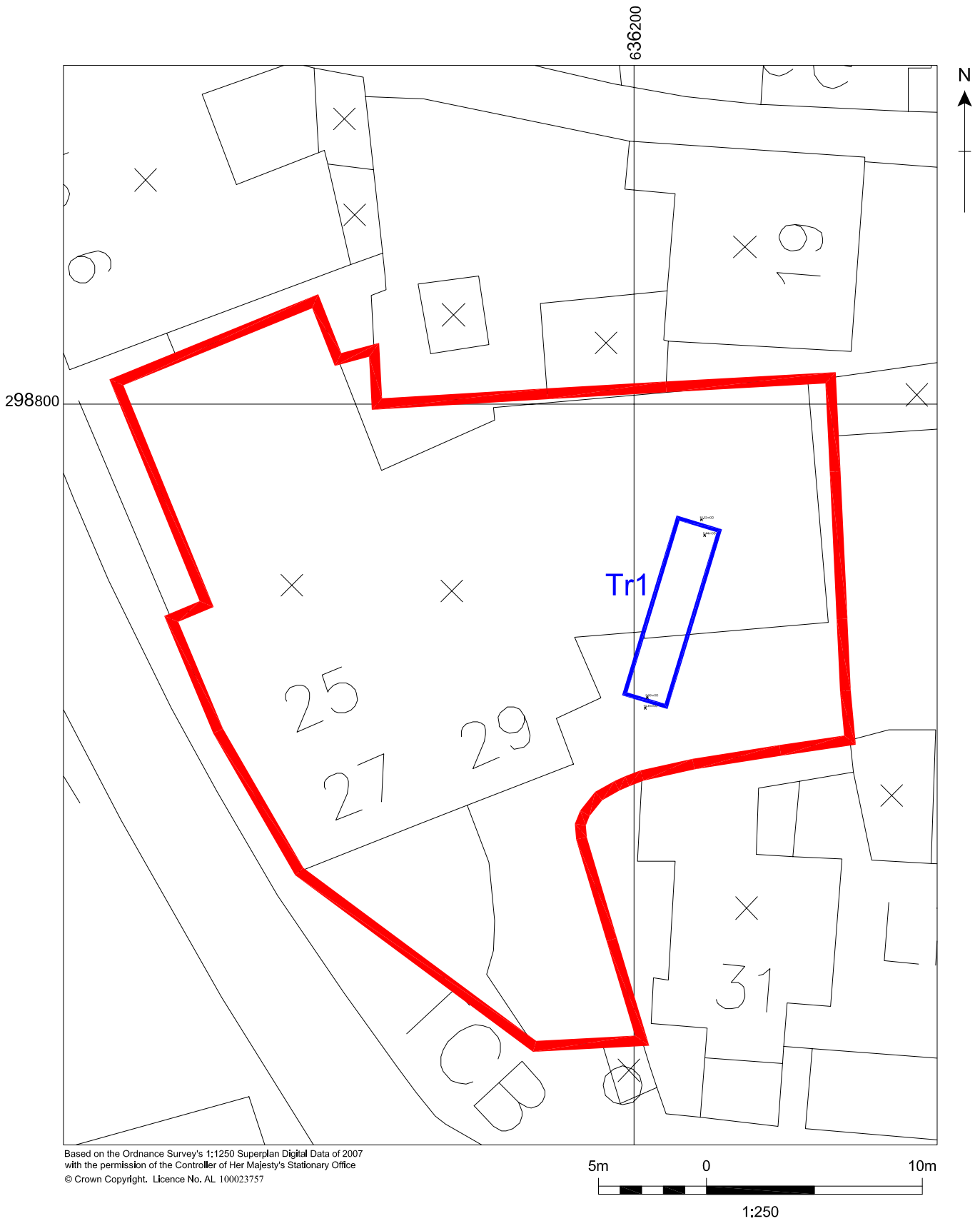


Figure 3: Evaluation Trench Location Plan

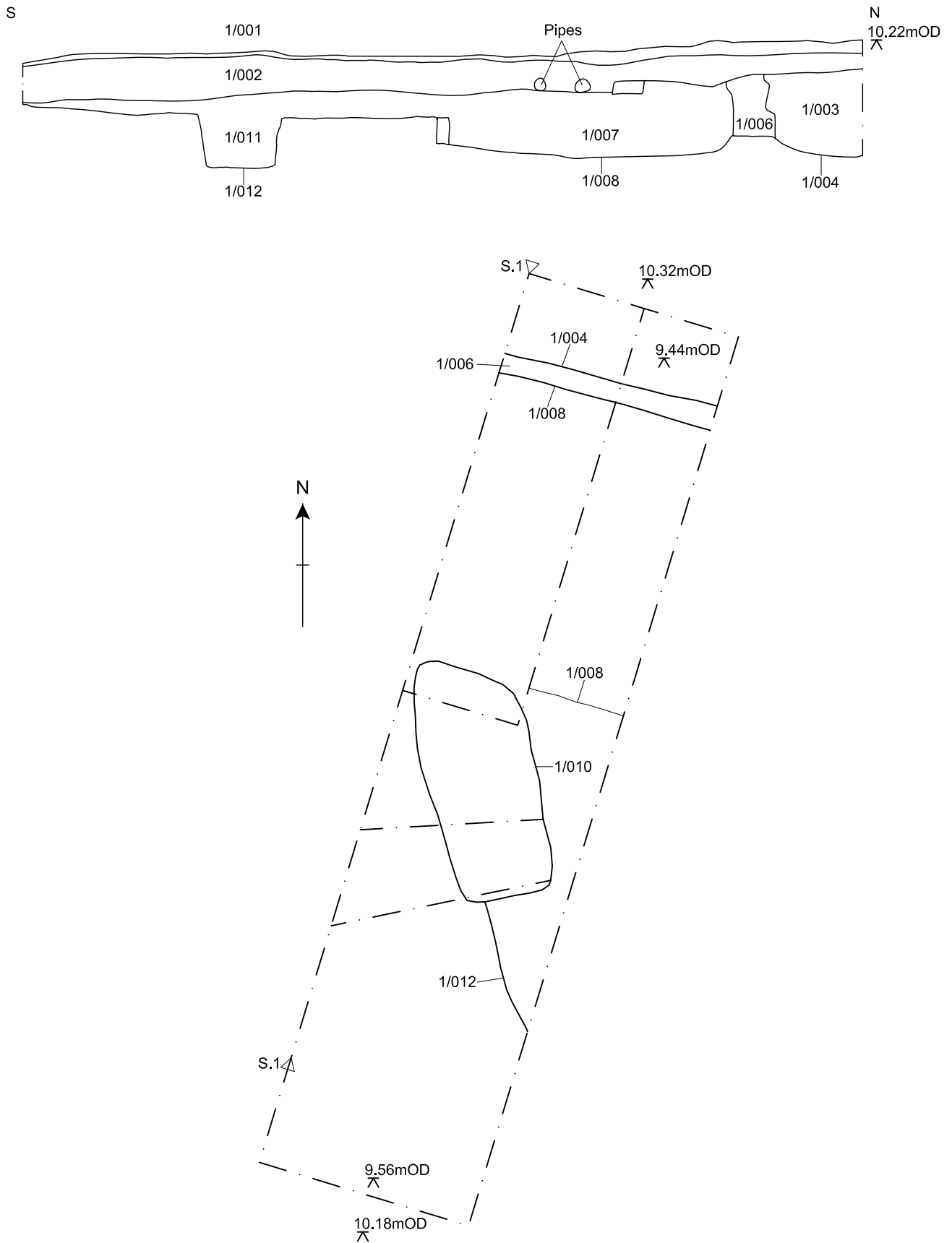
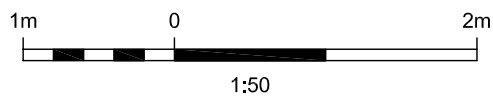


Figure 4: Trench 1: Plan & Section



Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
1/001	Topsoil	Trench	Trench	0.10m
1/002	Made Ground	Trench	Trench	0.08m
1/003	Fill of [1004]			1.65m
1/004	Construction cut			1.65m
1/005	Made Ground			0.07m
1/006	Natural	Trench	Trench	
1/007	Fill of [1008]			
1/008	Construction cut			
1/009	Fill of [1010]			0.60m
1/010	Pit			0.60m
1/011	Fill of [1012]			1.40m
1/012	Construction cut			1.40m

Appendix B – Finds Assessment

Paul Fitz

The single evaluation trench produced a small assemblage of finds from one single context (1011). Four sherds of pottery, one of which is residual late medieval, two brick pieces, one iron wire and one small sherd of plain window glass.

The pottery consists of two pieces of the same pale cream glazed dinner plate from the late 18th -19th century, one sherd of English stoneware (18th-19th century) and one green- glazed medieval earthenware rim collar.

The brick pieces consist of one red and one pale yellow fabric. The yellow piece is a shallow coursing or edging piece (weight 350 grams).

The clear window glass is very small (20mm x 12mm x 1mm. weight 1 gram) and must be considered to be relatively modern.

The wire piece is partially folded into a hook at one end, is 76mm in length, and weighs 3 grams.

POTTERY			
type	No. of sherds	grams	spot date
cream ware	2	37	1770-1900
English stoneware	1	21	1700-1900
Glazed earthenware	1	62	'medieval'
total	4	120	

CBM					
	length mm	width mm	depth mm	grams	comments
brick	40	37	38	87	no complete dimensions
other/tile	100	71	24	254	complete depth
TOTAL				341	

Appendix C – OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-47217

Project details

Project name	Co-operative Retail Services, Church Plain, Loddon
Short description of the project	AOC Archaeology Group carried out an Archaeological Evaluation at the site of the Co-operative Retail Store on Church Plain Loddon, on behalf of RPS Planning and Development. The evaluation consisted of a single trench 8.5m x 2m. Three features, interpreted as robbed out construction cuts for building foundations, were present in the trench. They were probably of similar date, in the 18th century. A rounded pit cut two of these, and is of later date. No evidence relating to the medieval market, known to have been on the site, was found. Any archaeological deposits relating to the market were destroyed by the 18th century building, and would only have survived if deep: truncation of the earlier ground surface was very extensive. In addition, the below ground impact of a market may have been only slight.
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any project codes associated with NHER	51572 - HER event no.
Any project codes associated with	30127 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Monument type	BUILDING Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Methods techniques	& 'Sample Trenches'

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK SOUTH NORFOLK LODDON Church Plain, Loddon, Norfolk
Postcode	NR14 6
Study area	0.07 Hectares
Site coordinates	TM 3617 9876 52.5348587085 1.482734603940 52 32 05 N 001 28 57 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 9.20m Max: 9.50m

Project creators

Name	of AOC Archaeology
Organisation	
Project	brief Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body

originator

Project design AOC Archaeology
originator

Project Chris Pole
director/manager

Project supervisor Catherine Edwards

Type of Developer
sponsor/funding
body

Name of RPS Planning and Development
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive Norfolk Museums and archaeology Service
recipient

Physical Archive ID NHER:51572

Physical Contents 'Ceramics','Glass','Metal'

Physical Archive 4 sherds of pot (one residual medieval), 2 CBM, 1 small window glass, 1 wire
notes

Digital Archive Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
recipient

Digital Archive ID NHER:51572

Digital Media 'Text'
available

Paper Archive Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service
recipient

Paper Archive ID NHER:51572

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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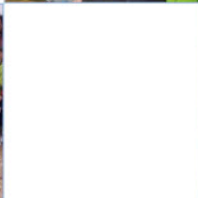
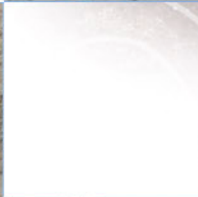
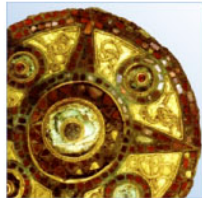
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