
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

**65, THE STREET, BECK ROW,
MILDENHALL**

MNL 576

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With contributions by R. Goffin
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Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

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SCCAS REPORT No. 2007/40
OASIS ID No. 24954

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Suffolk County Council

Environment and Transport

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Summary

Mildenhall, 65, The Street, Beck Row (TL692776; MNL 576) Evaluation on land at 65, The Street, Beck Row, was required to investigate the archaeological potential of the site. Colluvial deposits of up to 1.1m were present over much of the site, and sealed archaeological deposits in four of the ten excavated trenches. Two ditches and seven small pits were identified, all of which contained finds of a late medieval or post medieval date. One sherd from a 13th-14th century coarseware bowl was recovered from the base of Trench 7 as an unstratified find. (Linzi Everett for Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and CgMs Consulting; report no. 2007/40)

1. Introduction

Planning permission for the construction of new dwellings at 65, The Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall, required a programme of archaeological works as a condition of the consent. The site lies at TL 6918 7764 (Fig. 1), at a height of approximately 5m OD. Archaeological interest in this site is due to its close proximity to the reported location of one or more Roman inhumation burials (MNL 243) and a multi-period occupation site within 500m. The latter, MNL 502, was subject to evaluation and excavation, revealing Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman ditch systems and structures.

Evaluation of the site was carried out by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Field Team on 29th-30th January 2007 and was funded by CgMs Consulting.

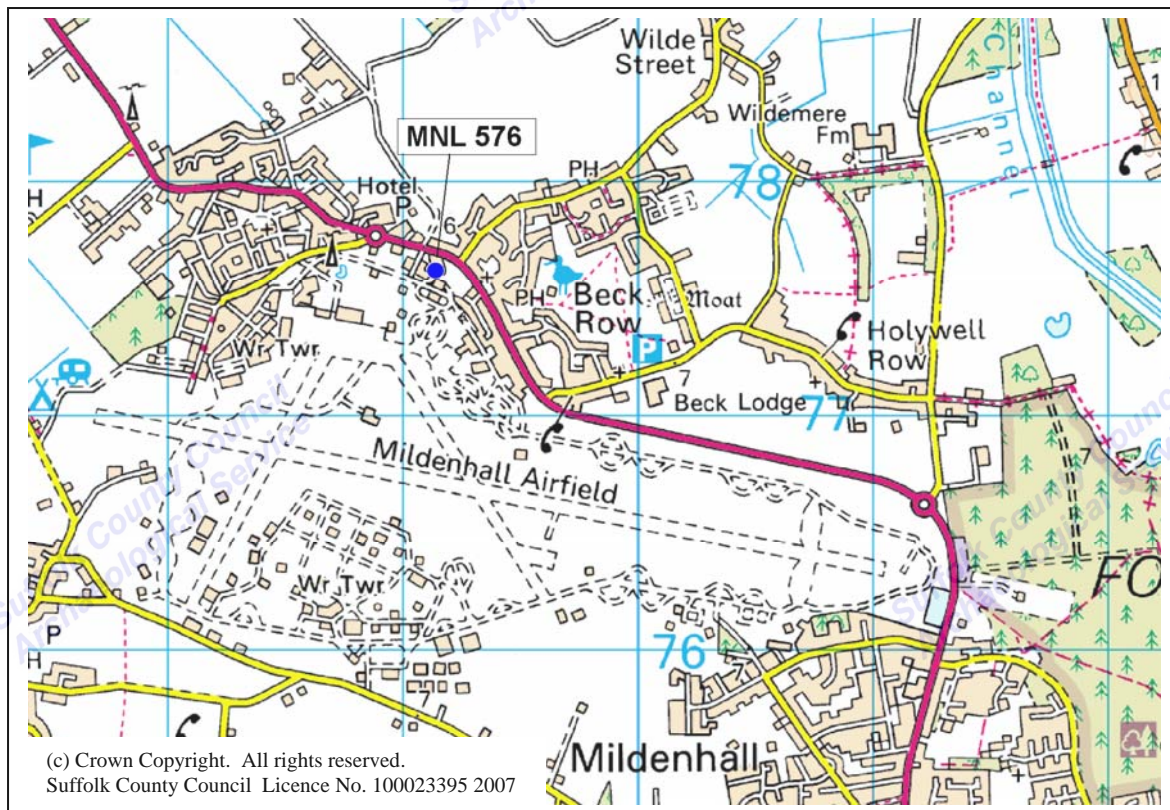


Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

The development area comprises 6,900 square metres within which ten trial-trenches were opened in locations agreed by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (Fig. 2). This was carried out by a 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.8 metre wide ditching bucket, under the supervision of an archaeologist. Overburden was removed from the trenches to the depth of the naturally occurring subsoil. In all, 145 metres of trench were opened over the evaluation area, representing a sample of approximately 2% of the site, in linear terms, and 3.75% by area. Both the excavated topsoil and the exposed surfaces of trenches were examined visually for artefactual evidence and subjected to a metal detector survey. The site was recorded under the SMR code MNL 576. The evaluation archive will be deposited in the County SMR at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds. Trench location and extent was constrained by trees and buildings on the site. Most of the buildings were agricultural and of nineteenth or twentieth century date but the house itself may be older.

All finds were washed and marked before being quantified, identified and dated by the finds management staff of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

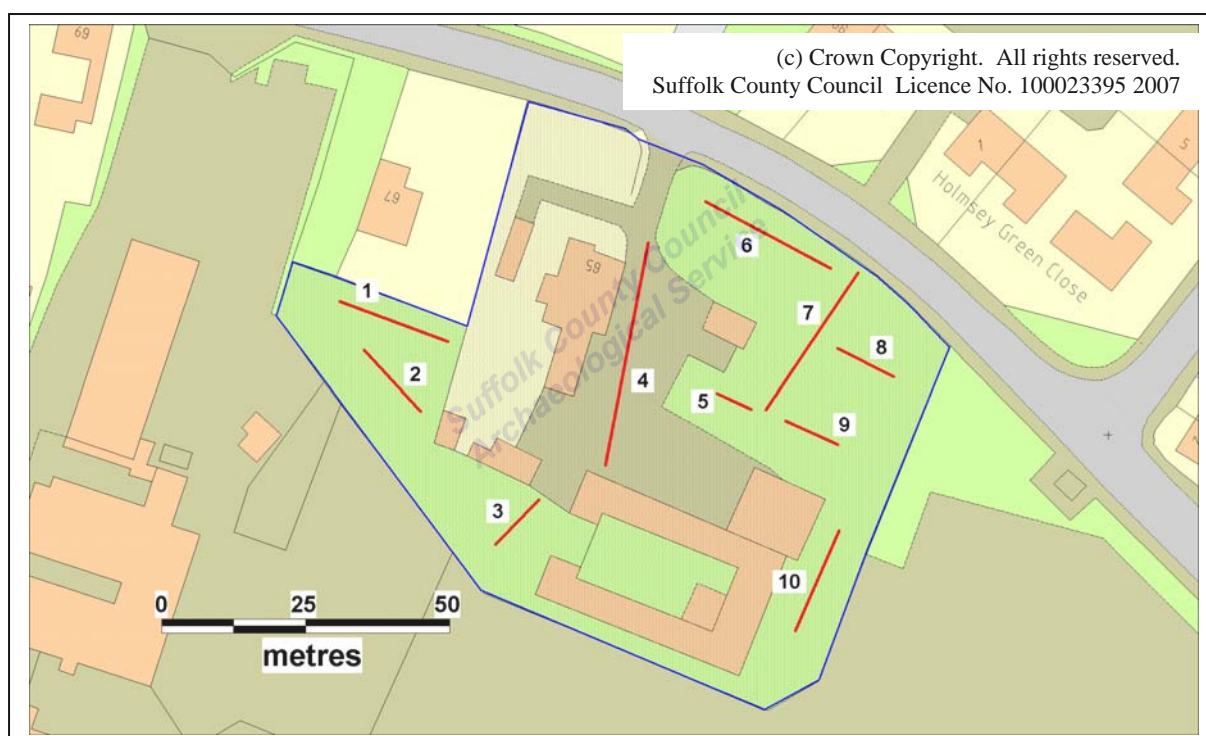


Figure 2: Trench locations within evaluation area

3. Results

Trench	Description	Cut	Fill
1	19m SE-NW. 400mm dark brown loamy sand topsoil; 200mm mid-dark brown loamy sand subsoil; 400mm mid brown sand subsoil with occasional chalk flecks; 100mm dirty natural subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises orangey yellow sand with chalk patches and occasional flints. Root and worm action present.		
2	20m NNW-SSE. 400mm dark brown loamy sand topsoil; 200mm mid-dark brown loamy sand subsoil; 400mm mid brown sand subsoil with occasional chalk flecks; 100mm dirty natural subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises orangey yellow sand with chalk patches and occasional flints. Root and worm action present.		
3	7.5m NE-SW. 900mm rubble and modern rubbish mixed with dark-mid brown silty sand; 200mm mid-pale brown chalky sand subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises chalk with yellow sand patches.		

Trench	Description	Cut	Fill
4	28m N-S. 240mm concrete and hardcore dark brown sandy loam; 80mm yellow gravelly sand; 200mm dirty chalk subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises pale brown and orange chalky sand. 500mm deep at N end, 950mm deep at S end.	0001, 0003, 0005, 0007, 0009, 0011, 0013	0002, 0004, 0006, 0008, 0010, 0012, 0014
5	4.5m WNW-ESE. 200mm dark brown loamy sand mixed with sand and hardcore; 100mm ashy, gravelly material; 300mm mid greyish brown silty sand subsoil; 300mm dirty natural subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises greyish brown-orangey brown sand with chalk flecks.	0015	0016
6	18m SE-NW. 400mm dark brown loamy sand topsoil; 400mm mid brown sand subsoil; 200mm dirty natural subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises bright orange sand with chalky patches and occasional flints. 850mm deep at SE end, 1m deep at NW end.		
7	20m SW-NE. 400mm dark brown loamy sand topsoil; 400mm mid brown sand subsoil; 150mm dirty natural subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises pale brown-orangey brown sand with chalk patches and occasional flints. 950mm deep at SW end, 850mm deep at NE end.		
8	7.5m NE-SW. 400mm dark brown loamy sand topsoil; 300mm mid-pale brown chalky sand subsoil; 200mm dirty orange sand subsoil at W end, dirty pale brown chalky sand subsoil at E end. Natural subsoil comprises pale orangey brown sand with chalk flecks and occasional flints.	0018	0019
9	7.5m WNW-ESE. 200mm dark brown loamy sand mixed with sand and hardcore; 300mm mixed hardcore and gravelly sand; 200mm mid brown sand subsoil; 300mm ashy gravelly material; 100mm dirty natural subsoil. Natural subsoil comprises pale yellowish brown-orangey brown chalky sand with occasional chalk patches.	0015	0017
10	13m NNE-SSW. 300mm dark brown sandy loam topsoil, quite stony; 150mm gravelly silty chalk; 300mm mid brown silty sand subsoil; 150mm dirty natural subsoil (sandy at the S end, chalky at the N end) Natural subsoil comprises bright orange sand flecked with chalk at the S end, solid chalk at the N end.		

Trench 4 revealed seven features, all of which were small pits containing Post medieval finds.

Trench 5 contained one E-W ditch, 0015. It was quite steep sided with a rounded base and measured 660mm wide and 360mm deep. It was filled by 0016, a pale-mid brown loose sand with chalk flecks and lumps and occasional stones, from which one sherd of pottery was recovered. This ditch was also present in Trench 9 where its fill, 0017, comprised a pale-mid brown loose sand with chalk flecks and lumps and occasional stones over a thin lens of mid brown slightly humic silty sand. Pottery, animal bone and CBM were recovered from this fill and indicated a Post medieval date for the ditch.

Trench 8 contained one E-W ditch, 0018, measuring 1.8m wide and 320mm deep. It was steep sided with a slightly concave base and was filled by 0019, a pale greyish brown loose silty sand. A single sherd of pottery recovered indicates an early Post medieval date for this feature.

One sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil in Trench 7 as an unstratified find (0020).

Trench 4

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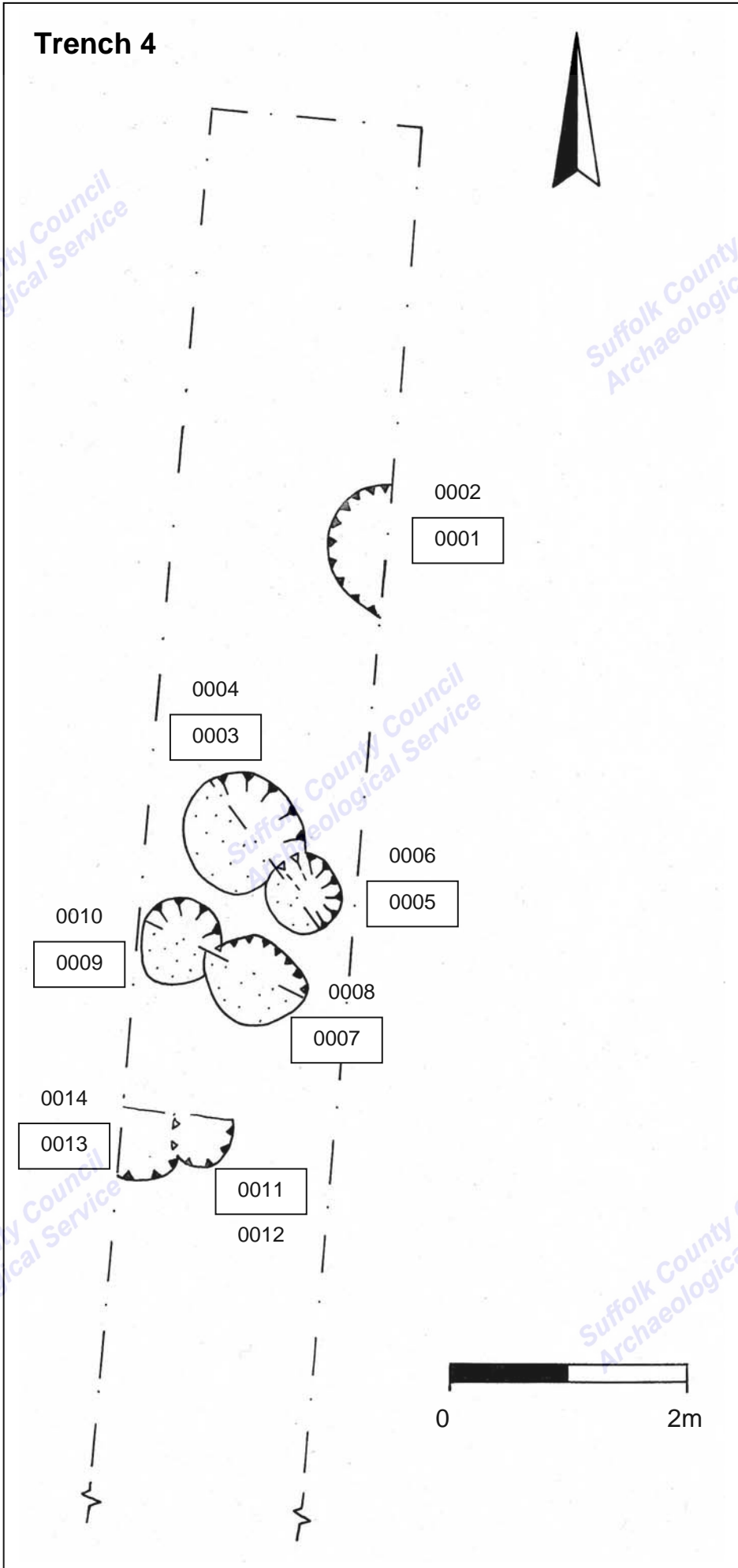


Figure 3: Trench 4

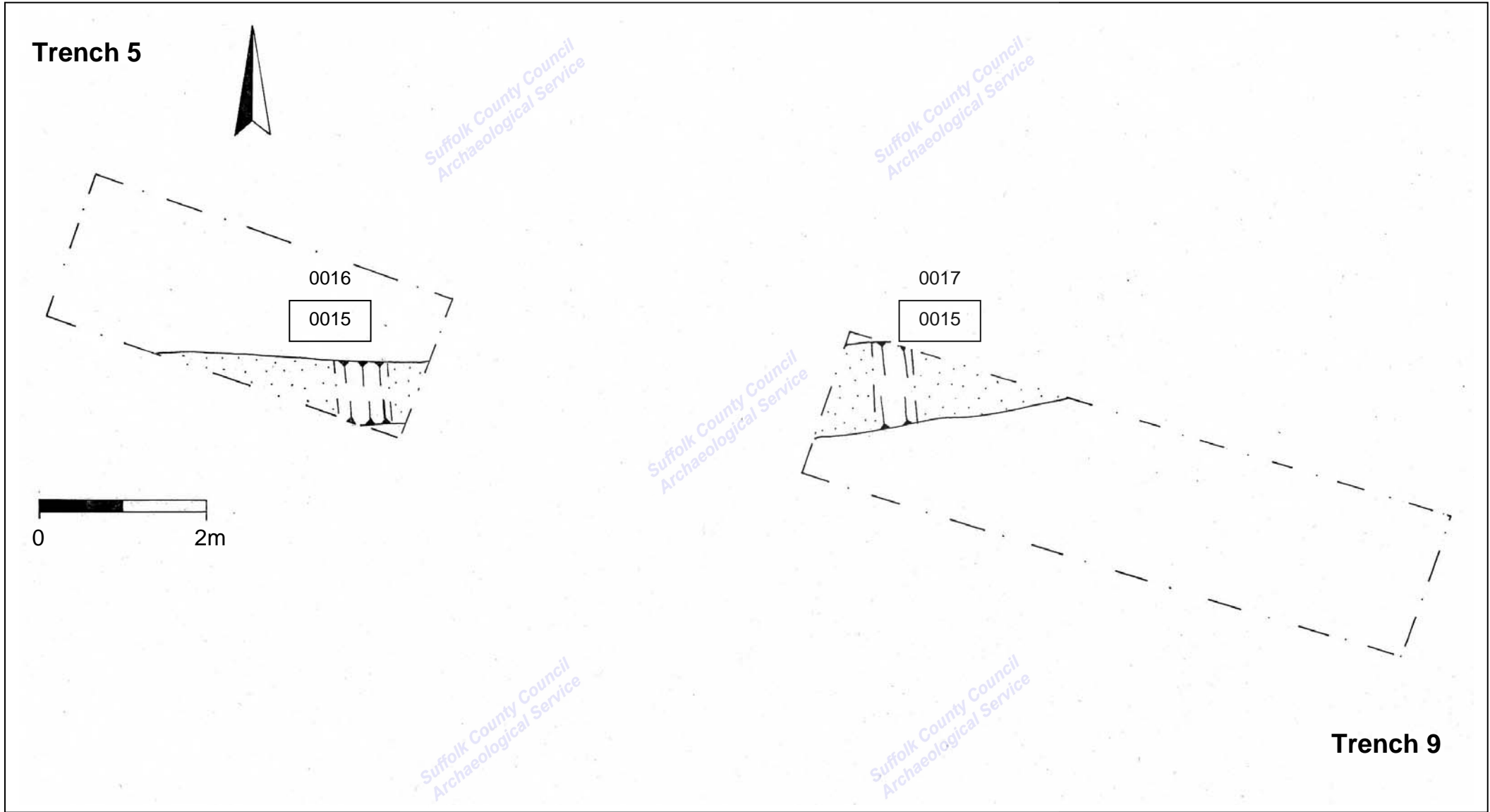


Figure 4: Trenches 5 and 9

Trench 8

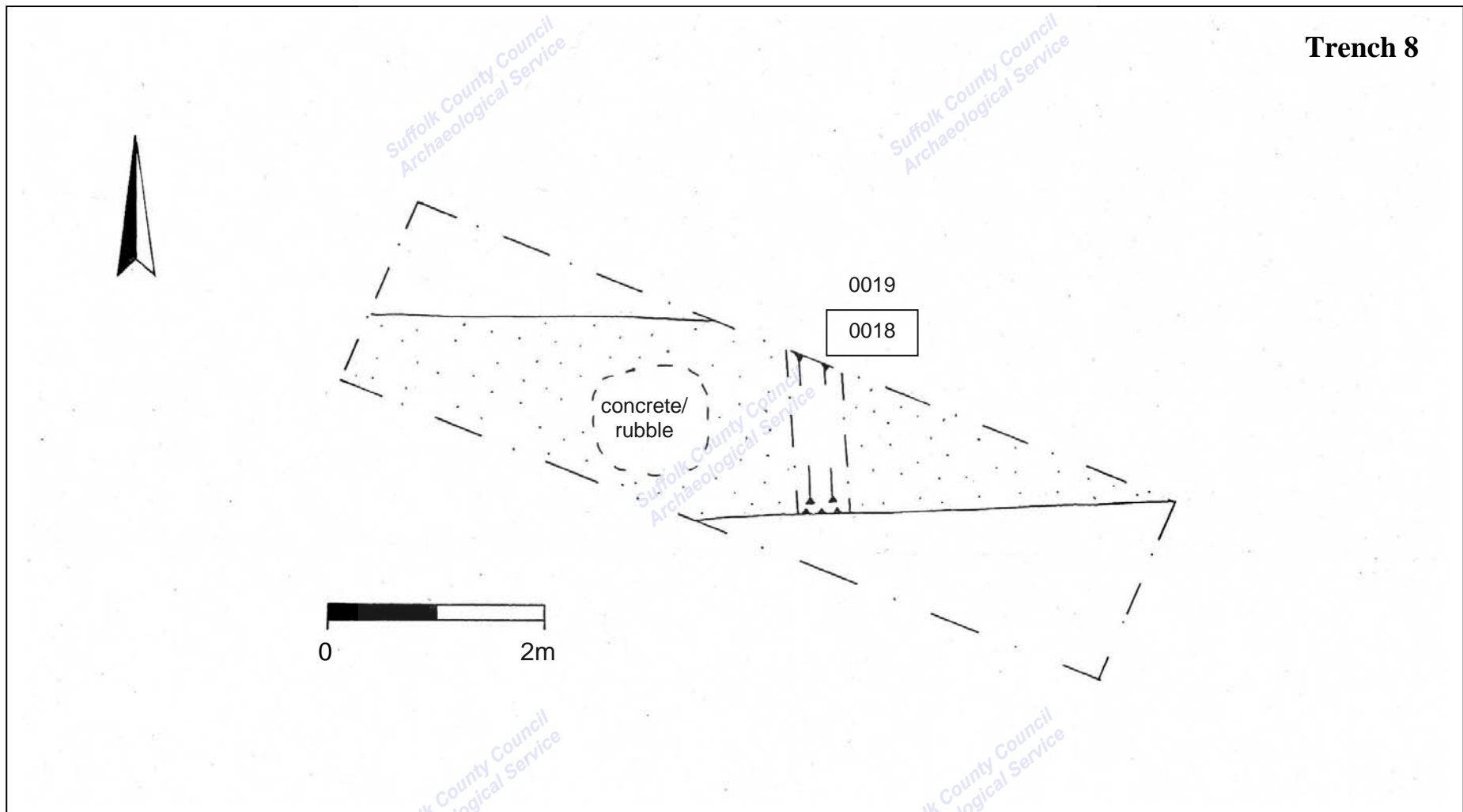


Figure 5: Trench 8

4. 65 The Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall (MNL 576): the finds

Richenda Goffin, March 2007.

Introduction

Finds were collected from 11 contexts, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		CBM		Animal Bone		Clay Pipe		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0002	7	33	1	71	3	17	1	6		18th C
0004	6	56			1	3	1	1		18th C
0006			5	298						L17th-18th C
0008			12	652	2	45			Fe 1 @ 24g	L17th-18th C
0010					6	32				
0012	4	27	5	144	1	18			Fe 2 @ 68g	16th-18th C
0014	8	79	2	44	1	6			Fe 2 @ 18g	18th C
0016	1	46								15th-16th C
0017			2	103						Post-med
0019	1	1			2	331				16th C
0020	1	43								13th-14th C
Total	28	285	27	1312	16	452	2	7	Fe 5 @ 110g	

Table 1: Bulk finds

Pottery

A total of 27 fragments of pottery was recovered from the evaluation. The assemblage is almost exclusively post-medieval in date, although a single medieval sherd was collected.

Fragments of Staffordshire white salt-glazed stoneware, dating to the 18th century were found in pitfills 0002 and 0014, together with fragments of Staffordshire-type slipware, tin-glazed earthenware and Glazed red earthenwares. Fill 0004 was of a similar date as it contained a sherd of Speckle-glazed ware dating to the late 17th to early 18th century. All this pottery was collected from Trench 4.

A single fragment of an abraded LMT ware jug was found in ditchfill 0016 in Trench 5, and a small sherd of LMT/LEPM was identified from another ditchfill 0019 in Trench 8. A fragment of a medieval coarseware bowl dating to the 13th-14th century was the only find from 0020, a number given for finds recovered from the base of the subsoil in Trench 7. The vessel is made from a coarse sandy fabric with very sparse flint and chalk inclusions. It has an inturned rim and shallow applied strip, and is buff/light brown in colour with a reduced core.

Ceramic building material

Twenty-eight fragments of ceramic building material were collected (0.242kg). Fragments of late medieval and post-medieval roof tile were present in pitfills 0006, 0012 and 0014 in Trench 4. The corner of a white-firing clay paving brick or square tile (Drury Fabric FT24-27) was recovered from pitfill 0006, dating to the late 17th to 18th century, together with other fragments of post-medieval bricks made of red-firing clay. A similar range of abraded fragments of building material was collected from pitfill 0008, and in addition three fragments of unglazed tile, made in a buff to orange pink fabric with red and buff streaks (Drury Fabric FT22-23). These are post-medieval but are not closely dated. Two fragments of burnt post-medieval sandy red-firing brick were present in ditchfill 0017 in Trench 9.

Metalwork

Five iron nails were recovered, all from pitfills in Trench 4. A complete copper alloy dress pin was also identified (1000). It measures c30mm in length and has a spherical wound head. The pin dates from the late medieval to post-medieval period (Margeson 1993, 13).

Clay tobacco pipe

Two fragments of clay pipe stem were recovered from pitfills 0002 and 0004 in Trench 4. The pipes were found with pottery dating from the 17th-18th century.

Animal bone

Sixteen pieces of animal bone were collected from the evaluation (0.452kg). Most of this material is very fragmentary, with few diagnostic features remaining. The most identifiable bone fragments were from the ditchfill 0019 in Trench 8, and include the distal end of a bovine humerus and a slender longbone shaft without terminals, probably a metacarpus or metatarsus of a sheep.

Discussion

The pottery and ceramic building material recovered from Trench 4 is all post-medieval in date, with the fills of several pits dating to the 18th century. A small number of sherds from ditchfills in Trench 5 and Trench 8 are earlier, and span the late medieval to the early post-medieval period. The sherd of medieval coarseware with sparse chalk inclusions found in Trench 7 is likely to be a local product from the fens, although it is made from a coarser fabric than Ely Coarseware.

5. Discussion

Trenching revealed very little archaeological evidence and of that, only parallel ditches 0015 and 0018 were of any antiquity, their fills containing finds dating back as far as the late medieval period. It is, however, noteworthy that ditch 0015 was not identified in Trench 4 and ditch 0018 was not present in Trench 7. This makes any overall interpretation of the enclosure pattern very difficult based on present evidence.

Most of the site was sealed by up to 1.1m of overburden which seems to have accumulated since some point after the late medieval period. The presence of this layer means that modern deep ploughing and other recent disturbance cannot have destroyed any archaeological features once present so it is likely that this area was not subject to intensive activity in antiquity.

6. Recommendations

As the density of archaeology was low and what was present was not of a great age and sealed by a significant depth of overburden, no further intensive archaeological study of the site is recommended. However, a programme of monitoring of the groundworks would be advisable as further evidence for late medieval/early Post medieval activity may be revealed. In addition, parts of the site were impossible to sample during the evaluation due to various obstructions.

Linzi Everett
Field Team
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
March 2007

References

Margeson, S., 1993, Norwich Households; the medieval and post-medieval finds from Norwich Survey Excavations 1971-1978, EAA Report No 58.

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. The need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its archaeological advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting service cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.

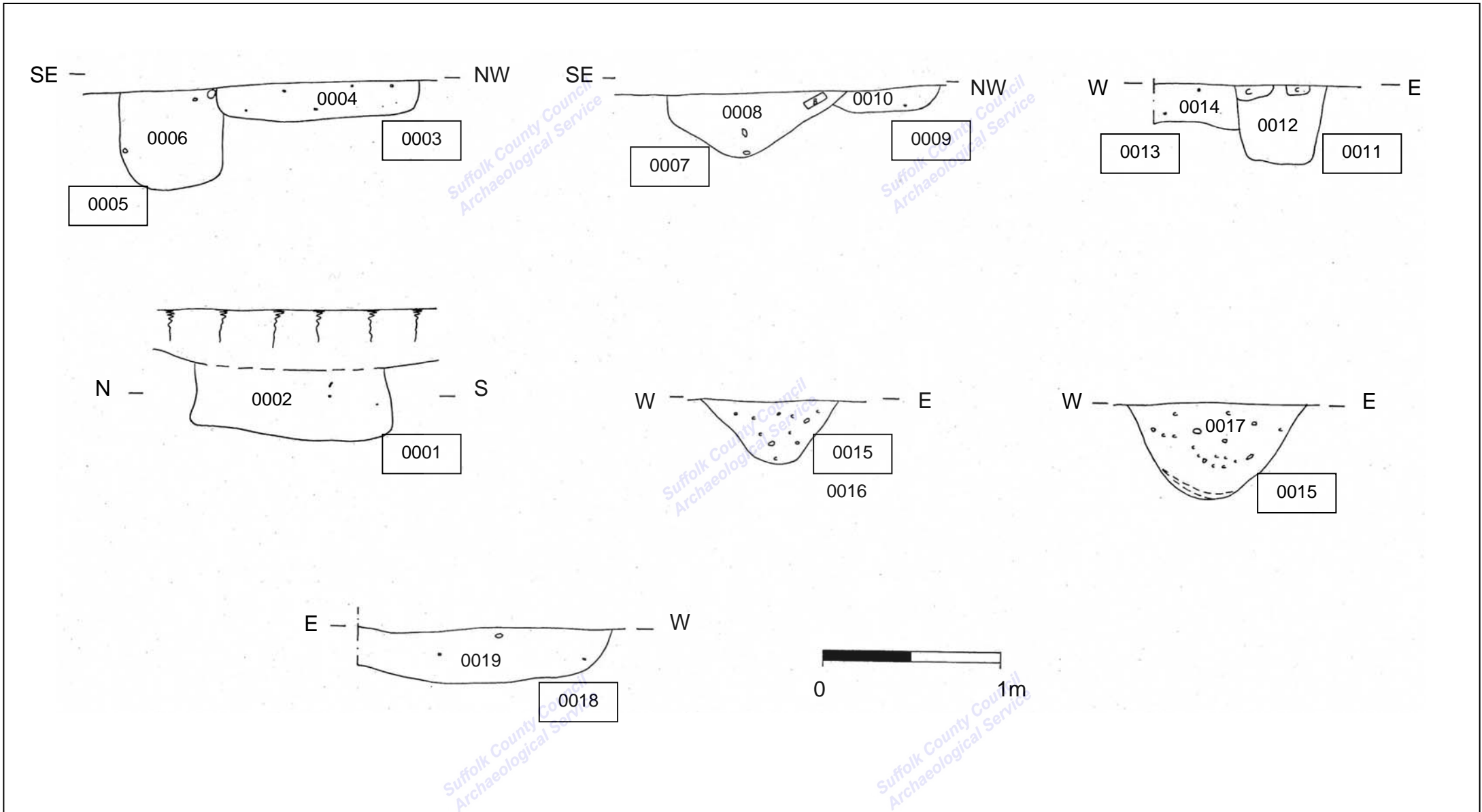


Figure 6: Sections

Appendix I: Context list

OPNO	CONTEX	TRENCH	IDENTIFIE	DESCRIPT	CUTS	OVER	CUTBY	UNDER	FINDSY	SMFYN
0001	0001	4	Pit cut	Small, shallow, circular pit in east side of Tr 4. Almost vertical sides, flat base						
0002	0001	4	Pit fill	Mid brown silty sand from which pottery, bone and tile recovered					Y	
0003	0003	4	Pit cut	Small, shallow, oval pit. Steep sided, flat base	0005					
0004	0003	4	Pit fill	Pale greyish brown loose silty sand					Y	
0005	0005	4	Pit cut	Small oval pit. Steep sided, flat base			0003			
0006	0005	4	Pit fill	Pale yellowish grey loose sand with frequent small lumps of chalk and chalk flecks					Y	
0007	0007	4	Pit cut	Small, shallow, oval pit. Open 'V' shaped profile, rounded base, steeper SE side	0009					
0008	0007	4	Pit fill	Pale yellowish grey loose sand with frequent small lumps of chalk and chalk flecks					Y	
0009	0009	4	Pit cut	Small, shallow, oval pit. Steep sided, flat base			0007			
0010	0009	4	Pit fill	Mid greyish brown loose silty sand mottled with pale yellow loose sand					Y	
0011	0011	4	Pit cut	Small oval pit, steep sided, flat base	0013					
0012	0011	4	Pit fill	Pale yellowish grey loose sand with frequent small lumps of chalk and chalk flecks					Y	
0013	0013	4	Pit cut	Small, shallow pit, flat base			0011			
0014	0013	4	Pit fill	Mid brown silty sand					Y	1000
0015	0015		Ditch cut	E-W ditch, open 'v' shaped profile, steepish sides, rounded base. Visible in SE corner of Tr 5 and NW corner of Tr 9						
0016	0015	5	Ditch fill	Pale-mid brown sand with chalk flecks and lumps, occasional stones					Y	
0017	0015	9	Ditch fill	Pale-mid brown sand with chalk flecks and lumps, occasional stones. Thin lens of brown slightly humic silty sand at the base of the section					Y	
0018	0018	8	Ditch cut	Wide, shallow E-W ditch with quite steep sides and a slightly concave base						
0019	0018	8	Ditch fill	Pale greyish brown loose silty sand, very occasional flints					Y	
0020	0020	7	Finds	Single medieval pot rim sherd from base of subsoil					Y	

