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# SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

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**Hall Farm Marshes, Wenhaston**  
**WMH 032**  
**Archaeological Monitoring Report no. 2007/56**  
**OASIS ID No. 26660**

## **Summary**

Wenhaston, Hall Farm Marshes (TM/433748; WMH 032) Permission for the improvement of drainage ditches at Hall Farm, Wenhaston required a programme of archaeological monitoring during damming and re-profiling works. No features of archaeological significance were observed either in the ditch sections exposed by machining however one late medieval pot rim was recovered from the upcast spoil in the south east corner of the site.

(Linzi Everett for S.C.C.A.S. and the Mr. & Mrs. Jellicoe; report no. 2007/56)

## **1. Introduction**

Permission to carry out damming and re-profiling of drainage ditches at Hall Farm, Wenhaston, required a programme of archaeological monitoring. The site is centred on TM 4330 7480 at a height of c.4m OD, immediately south east of known Roman archaeology indicative of a small Roman town. The ditches to be monitored include a tributary of the River Blyth, a likely location for a wharf or river crossing, with the possibility of mills or maltings associated with the town on adjacent streams. This tributary also forms the parish boundary between Wenhaston and Blythburgh. Earthworks present to the front and rear of Hall Farm could be evidence of archaeological activity which may extend into the monitored area and a scatter of medieval pottery is recorded immediately south of the site. There is the potential for the survival of preserved organic evidence in waterlogged contexts.

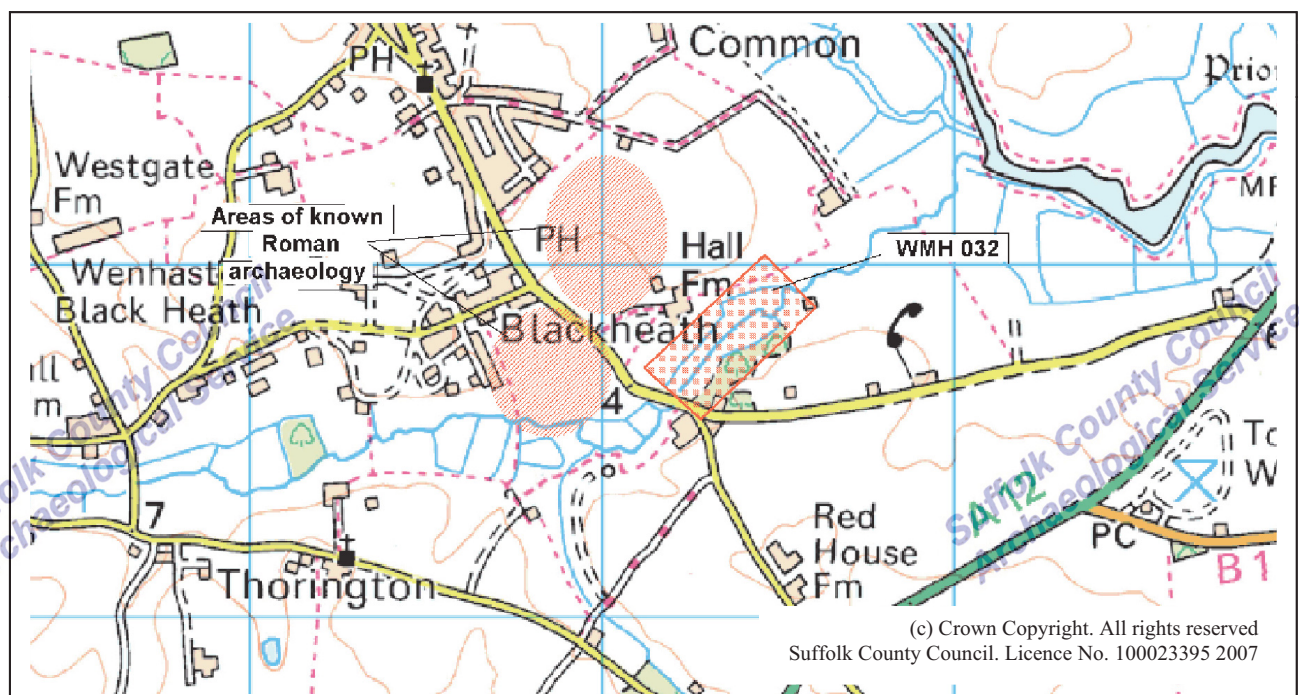


Figure 1: Site location

## 2. Methodology

Vists were made to the site by the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to inspect the works in progress. Groundworks were carried out by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, leaving a clean section to be inspected for archaeological interventions. Spoil from machining was cast onto the banks of the ditches where it was available to check for artefactual evidence. The site was recorded under the SMR code WMH 032. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work was produced by Jude Plouviez of the SCCAS Conservation Team (Appendix I). The monitoring work took place in February 2007 and was funded by Mr. & Mrs. Jellicoe. The monitoring archive is held in the county SMR in Bury St. Edmunds.

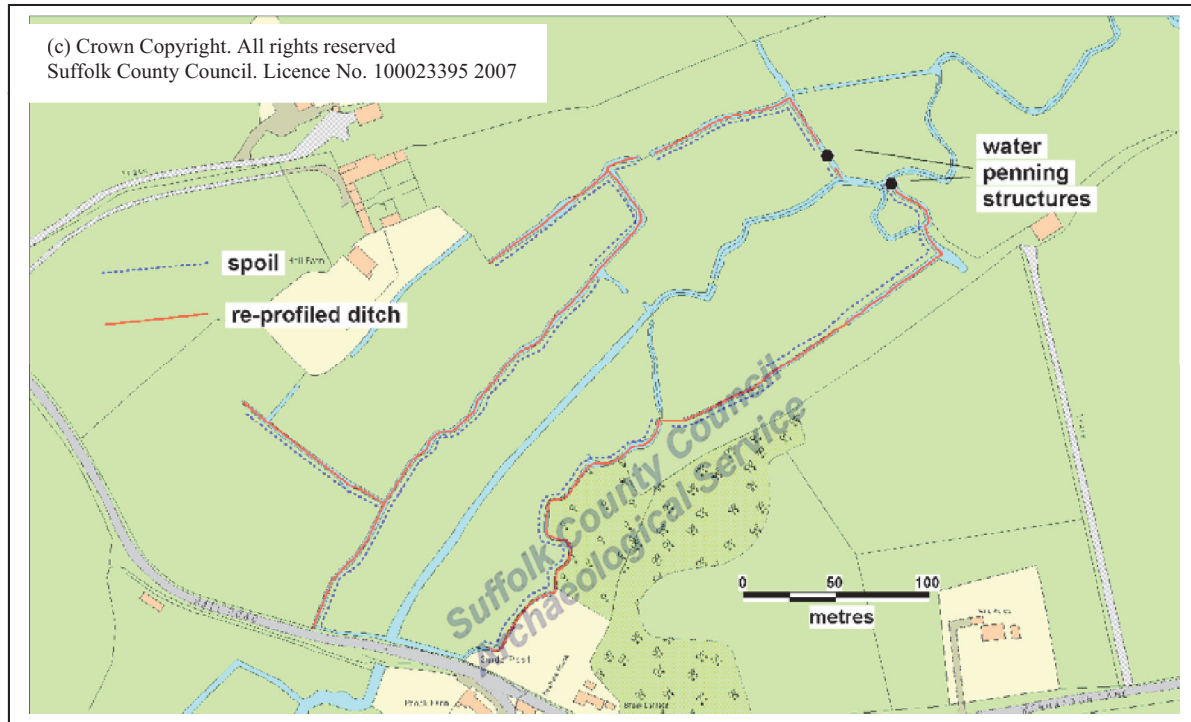


Figure 2: Location of monitored ditches showing location of spoil tipping

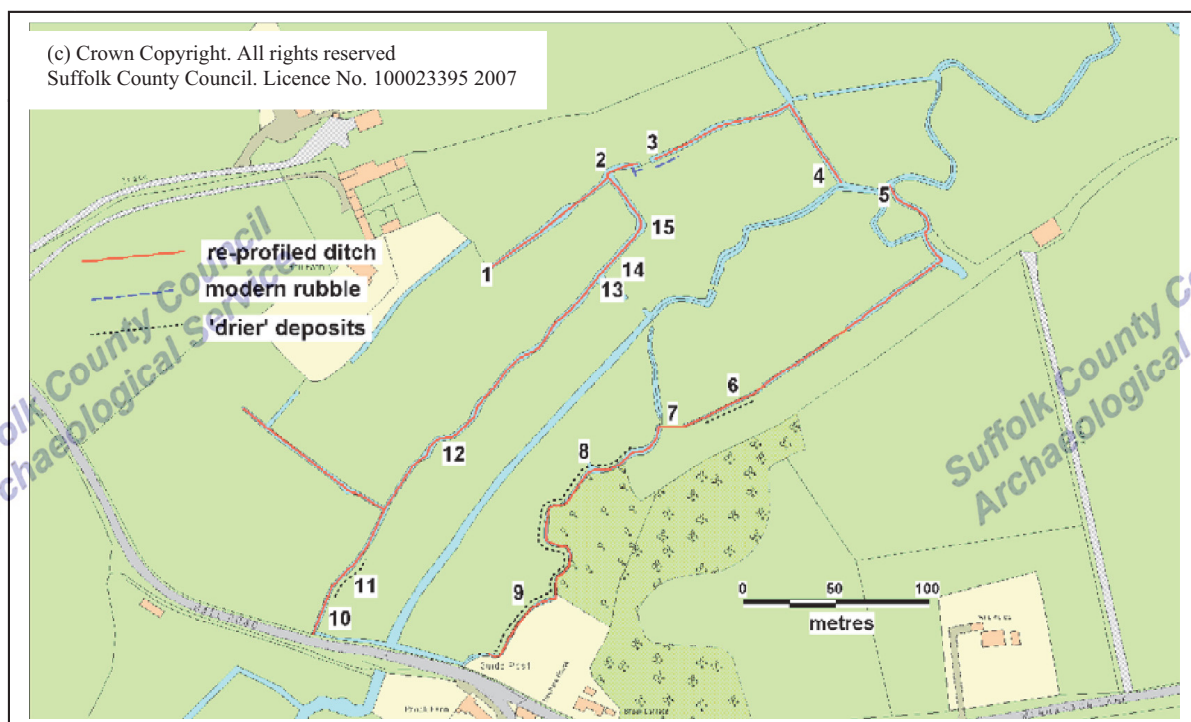


Figure 3: Location of soil profile variations and photographic plates

### 3. Results

The soil profiles revealed by machining comprised were mostly a dark, blackish brown peaty silt, which was heavily reed rooted and typical of water meadows or river valley deposits. Drier, gravelly sand deposits were present towards the south of the monitored area (Plates 8 & 9), particularly so where the modern road crosses the river. The 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS map from c.1884 shows a footbridge and a ford where the road now crosses a drainage ditch which is a diversion of the original course of the river. (Figure 4). This was also the established crossing point in 1783, according to Hodkinson's map of Suffolk.

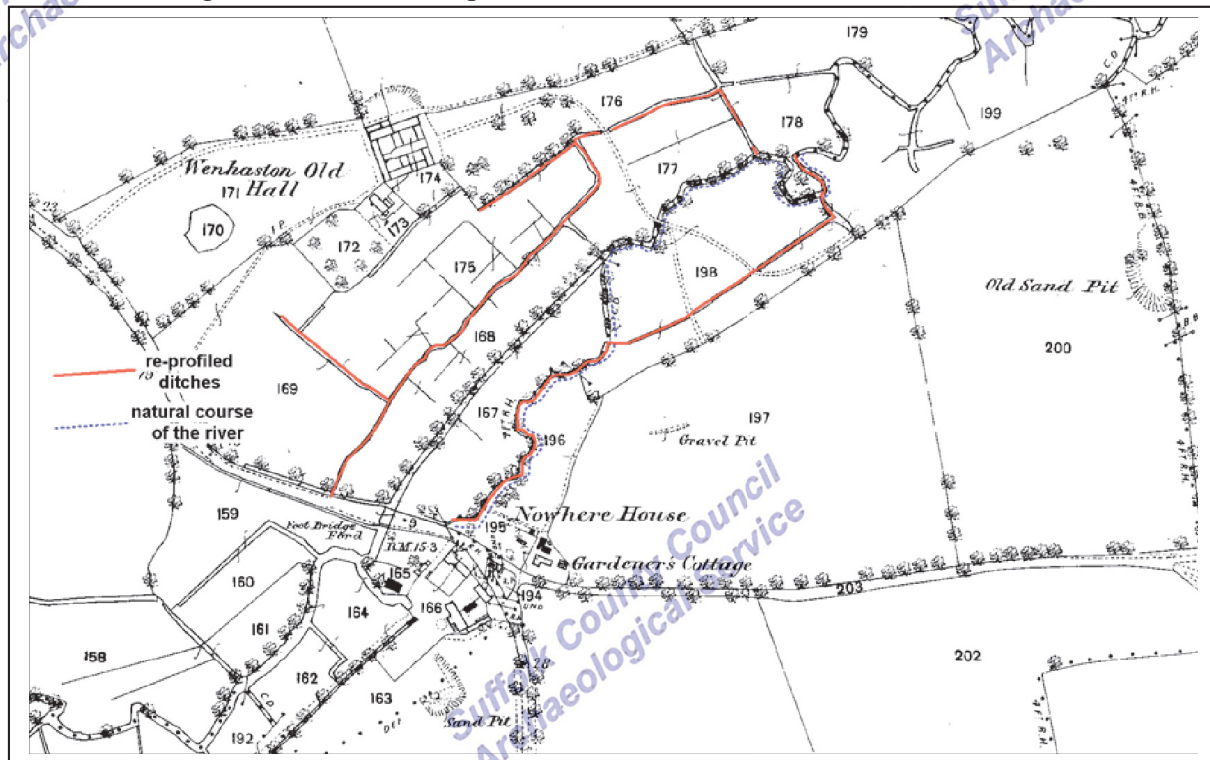


Figure 4: 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map

No interventions or occupation layers were seen in any of the exposed sections and the only artefactual evidence was a single sherd of late medieval pottery from the spoil in the south eastern part of the site where the sandy gravel deposits were present. No structural wooden piles or planks were present within the upcast spoil or in situ within the ditches. The spoil comprised a black, humic silty deposit typical of water-borne silts and decomposing organic material.

### 4. Discussion

The site produced a single unstratified sherd of late medieval pottery from the drier deposits in the southern part of the site, but no archaeological interventions were observed at any point during the re-profiling and damming works. Such negative evidence could suggest a lack of riverside activity in this location, however, regular de-silting and other maintenance to keep the drainage ditches active may have destroyed any features once present.

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Plate 1: Looking north east

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Plate 2: Looking south south west



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Plate 3: Looking south east

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Plate 4: Completed water penning structure, looking north west

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Plate 5: Completed water penning structure, looking east



Plate 6: Looking south south west



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Plate 7: New culvert, looking east



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Plate 8: Looking north east



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Plate 9: Looking north east



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Plate 10: Looking west north west



Plate 11: Looking north north east



Plate 12: Looking south west



Plate 13: Machining in progress, showing silty deposits removed during reprofiling, Looking south west

Plate 14: Looking west



Plate 15: Looking north north west



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