



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**Archaeological Trial Trenching on
Land North of Grange Farm,
Main Street,
Welney,
Norfolk**

NGR: TL 5257 9395

Andrew Hyam



ULAS Report No. 2018-188v2
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**Archaeological Trial Trenching on
Land to the North of Grange Farm,
Main Street, Welney,
Norfolk**

NGR: TL 5257 9395

A R Hyam

For: Lincoln Jack Ltd.

Planning Ref: 18/00195/FM

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Archaeological Trial Trenching on Land North of Grange Farm, Main Street, Welney, Norfolk.

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Summary

A programme of archaeological trial trenching was undertaken on land north of Grange Farm, Main Street, Welney, Norfolk between the 5th and 9th of November 2018 by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). The work took place in advance of a proposed residential development. There are a number of known archaeological sites within the vicinity of the development site and a geophysical survey produced results which were tentatively interpreted as possible archaeological features. Therefore the Norfolk Planning Archaeologist, as advisor to the local planning authority, requested that a staged programme of archaeological investigation take place to identify, locate and record any archaeological remains that may be affected by the development.

Four 50m long trenches and six 30m long trenches were excavated across the site. The geophysical anomalies were identified as being hay rick bases or stack stands of 19th century origin. Two former ditches or plot boundaries with late 19th century backfill were also found running from east to west and north to south across the site. The eastern end of the site, alongside Main Street, had been heavily disturbed by recently demolished modern buildings. No earlier archaeological features were found during the work.

The report will be archived under Event Number ENF145416

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (DCLG2018) this document forms the report for archaeological trial trenching on land to the north of Grange Farm, Main Street, Welney, Norfolk. Under planning application 18/00195/FM proposals have been submitted for the construction of a residential development consisting of seventeen houses with associated garages, roads and drainage infrastructure. Such work would have an impact upon any buried archaeological remains, should any be present. Therefore the draft planning conditions contain a requirement from the Planning Archaeologist for Norfolk that a phased programme of archaeological investigation commencing with trial trenching be undertaken prior to any construction work taking place. This archaeological work follows on from a geophysical survey of the site in September 2017.

Background

The village of Welney lies approximately 13km to the north of Ely and 11km to the south-east of March (Fig. 1).

The proposed site lies close to the historic core of Welney and is just to the north of the church (Fig. 2). The current application site covers approximately 0.98 hectares on the eastern side of the site (Fig. 3 Red outline); however the client has also chosen to look at a larger area within their ownership that comprises approximately 1.54ha (Fig. 3, red and blue outlines).

The A1101 (Main Street) forms the eastern boundary of the site and private houses on New Road lie to the north of the site. The Old Croft River runs along the eastern boundary between the site and Main Street. A dry drainage ditch runs along the western boundary of the site which follows the line of a track known as Back Drove. The site is mostly flat with a slight fall to the south. Prior to the trial trenching the site was covered in low scrub and grass with a mature willow tree near the centre. Shortly before trenching began the grass, but not the topsoil, was carefully removed as was the willow tree and the remains of a derelict metal-clad barn (Fig. 4).

The site lies at a height of around 2m aOD. The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, indicated that the underlying geology of the site was likely to consist of Solid Ampthill Clay Formation deposits of mudstone and Superficial Tidal Flat deposits of clay and silt (BGS 2017).

A geophysical magnetometer survey undertaken in 2017 by SUMO Geophysics Ltd (SUMO 2017 Report No. 11792) for ULAS did not identify any anomalies of definite archaeological origin but did pick up evidence of anomalies which warranted further archaeological investigation.



Figure 1 Welney village location

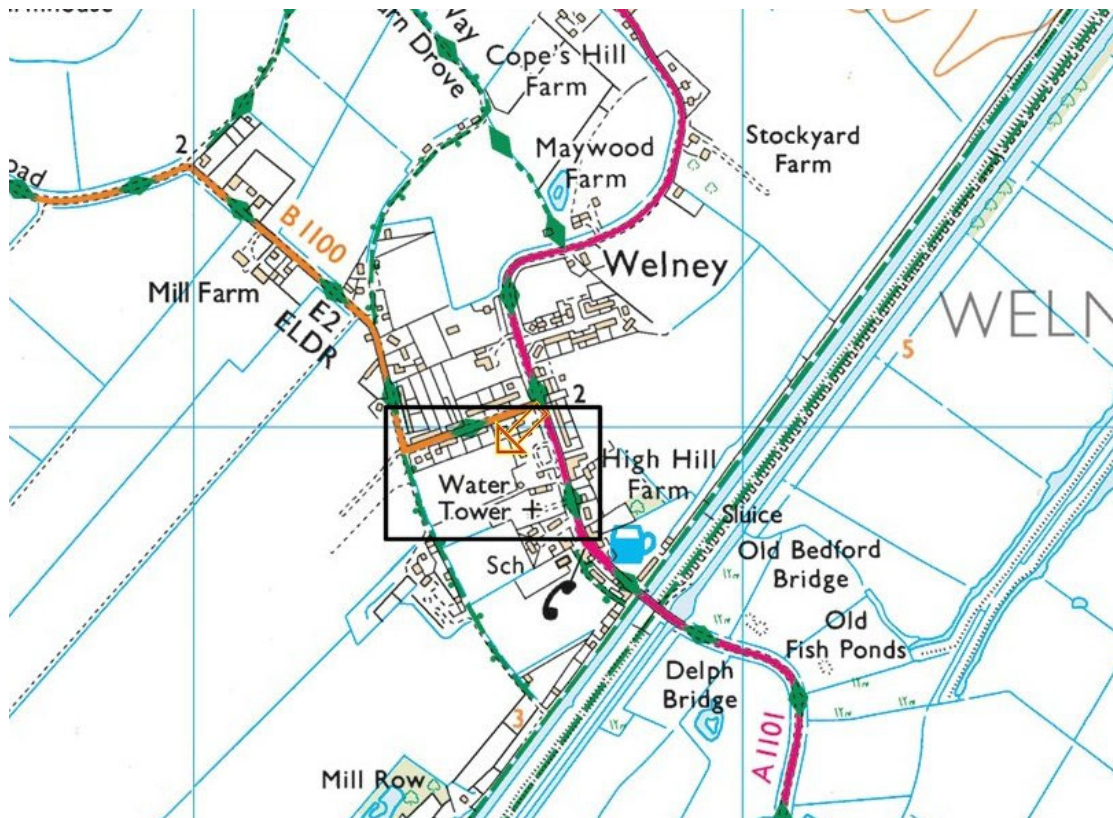


Figure 2 Site location

Reproduced from Landranger® 1:100 000 scale by permission of Ordnance Survey® on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright 2000. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100029495.

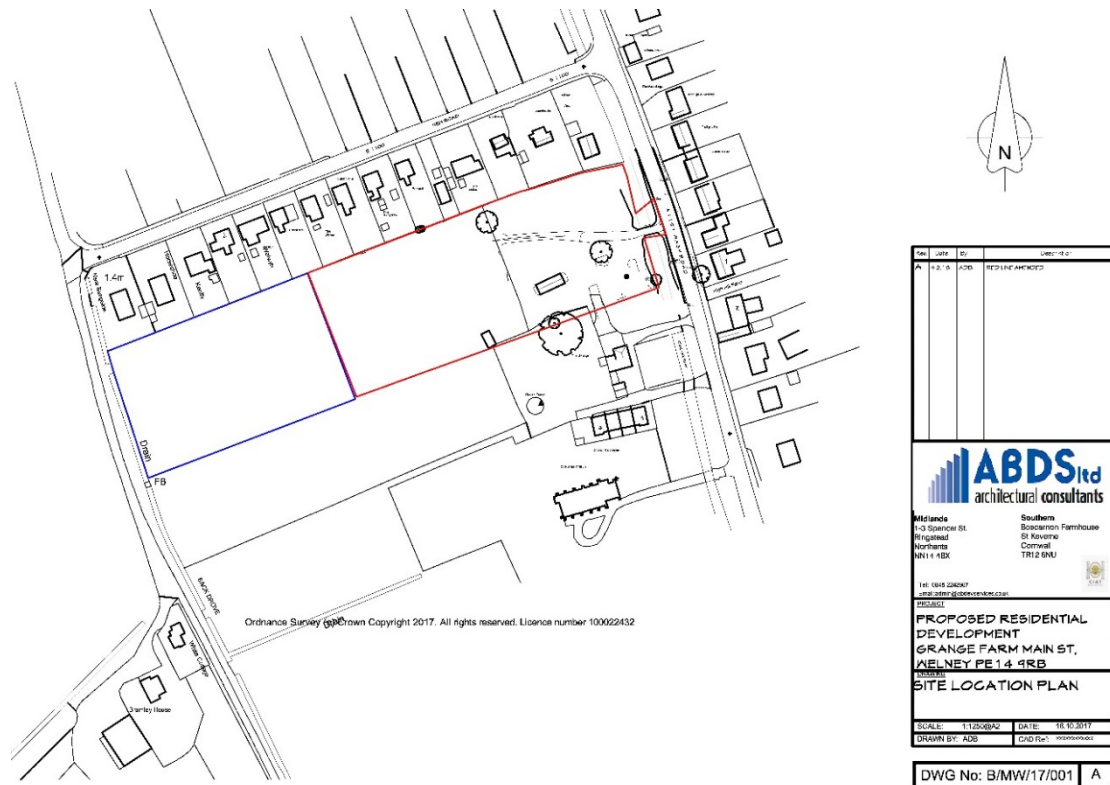


Figure 3 Site development boundaries
The red line shows the current proposed site, although trenching was carried out across the whole area (red and blue lines). Plan supplied by client



Figure 4 Site before trial trenching
Looking south-east from Back Drive. Main Street follows the line of the houses in the distance



Figure 5 Geophysical survey and interpretation
SUMO 2017 Report No. 11792

Objectives

The overall objectives and research agenda are detailed in the ULAS Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for *Archaeological Trial Trenching on land to the North of Grange Farm, Main Street, Welney, Norfolk* (ULAS 2018).

The specific objectives for this programme of work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results.
- To assess and sample any potential palaeoenvironmental remains.
- To produce an archive and report of the results.
- To ascertain the nature and extent of any further mitigation works required prior to development commencing.

Methodology

The trench excavation methodology used throughout the evaluation is discussed in detail in the ULAS WSI. Prior to excavation all trench positions were accurately located with a DGPS. For the trenching a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket was used under constant archaeological supervision.

The Planning Archaeologist requested that three 50m trenches and three 30m trenches be excavated within the red line area (comprising a 4.4% sample). In addition a further one 50 trench and three 30m trenches were excavated within the blue line area of the site (comprising a similar 4.5% sample) (Fig. 6). During the trenching work the position of the eastern end of Trench 7 had to be moved to avoid a ground gas monitoring valve. The remaining trenches were placed as specified in the WSI.

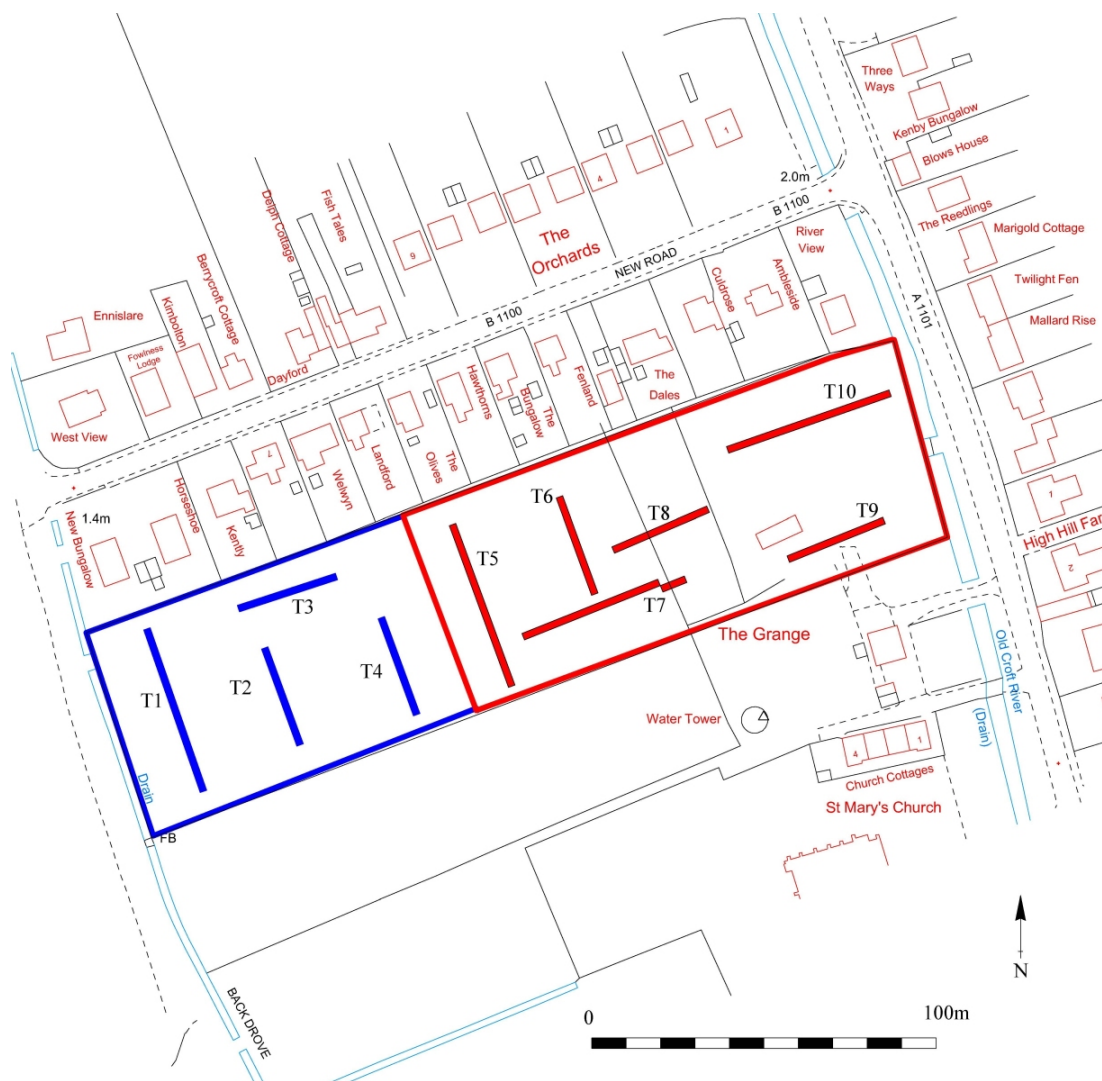


Figure 6 Trench locations
Note partial relocation of east end of Trench 7

Results

Cartographic and photographic Evidence

The earliest available map of the proposed development site is the Tithe Map produced around 1840 (Fig. 7). This shows the surrounding road system very much as it continues to the present day with a boundary running parallel to New Road showing where the current modern houses will eventually be built. A hedge line runs north-west to south-east across the site towards the eastern side of the site. An L-shaped building sits close to the position of Trench 9. No other features or structures are shown within the proposed site boundaries. The Grade II listed St Mary's Church to the south-east of the site has yet to be built.

The next available map is the First Edition County Series Ordnance Survey map published in 1887 (Fig. 8). This shows a shift to the north-east of the north-west to south-east hedge line running across the site and a change in the layout of the buildings close to the eastern corner of the site. The church has also appeared by this date. The 1905 edition shows the same details. Subsequent editions of the Ordnance Survey maps show a gradual increase in the number and size of the buildings on the eastern side of the site. The rest of the site remains as undeveloped land.

The current Ordnance Survey map shows only a single rectangular building remaining on the proposed development site. This was a partially collapsed corrugated sheet iron barn sitting on a concrete base which was removed shortly before the trial trenching began.

An aerial photograph taken by Google Earth in 1999 shows the full extent of the buildings shortly before they were removed (Fig. 9). This photograph shows a courtyard surrounded by farm buildings to the south and east. Another building is located on the northern edge of the site with an area of hardstanding connecting all of the buildings and the bridge across the river to Main Street. This photograph also shows, as a cropmark, the line of an infilled ditch running parallel to the northern boundary of the site. This is discussed in the trenching results below. A 1946 aerial photograph shows very similar results to the 1999 except that at this time not all of the houses along New Road have been built. The large water tower close to the site is also not present at this date. This photograph has not been included in the report due to its poor quality.

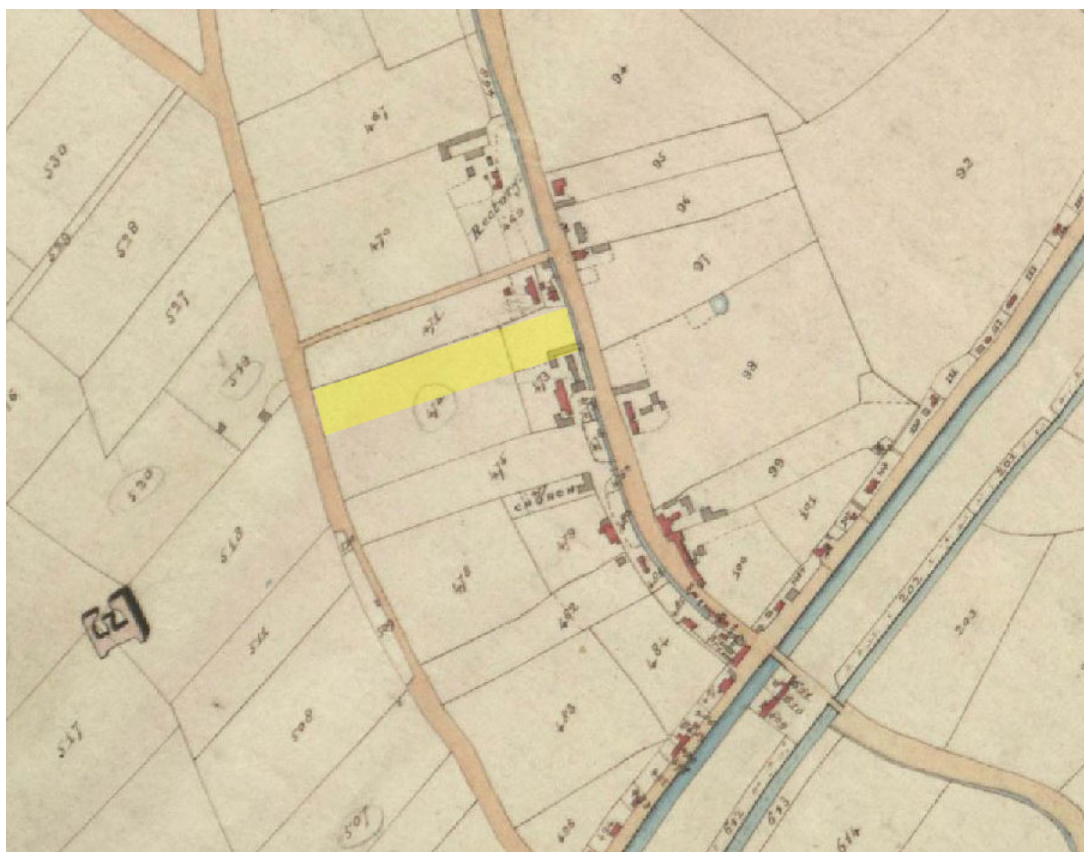


Figure 7 Detail from c.1840 Tithe map
Site highlighted in yellow
Source: Norfolk County Council: Historic Maps



Figure 8 Detail from First Edition Ordnance Survey 1887
Site highlighted in yellow. Source: Norfolk County Council: Historic Maps



Figure 9 Aerial view of site in 1999

Source: Infoterra & Bluesky 2018

Red arrow points along an infilled ditch which is discussed below

HER Information

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Norfolk was consulted prior to the commencement of the trial trenching work. This revealed the presence of a number of sites around the site but nothing has been noted within the site boundaries. The HER has identified 24 separate records within a 1km radius of the site some of which are from the Roman and medieval period (see Appendix 1). These include a Roman settlement site with the remains of two timber buildings, a kiln and several human skeletons (**NHER 4438**) and an area with potential medieval fish ponds (**NHER 15760**) as well as the earthworks of a possible medieval field system (**NHER 32120**). Fragments of medieval pottery (**NHER 4434, 23470**) have also been found. A test-pitting programme following a pipeline from Welney to Christchurch identified post-medieval features but nothing earlier.

Trial Trenching Results

As noted above ten trial trenches were excavated across the site to give an approximate 4.5% sample. Four 50m long by 1.8m wide trenches and six 30m long by 1.8m wide trenches were excavated. Trench 5 was positioned to target the geophysical anomaly with the remaining trenches being placed at regular intervals across the site. The trenches were numbered in excavation order from west to east as shown in Figure 10 below.

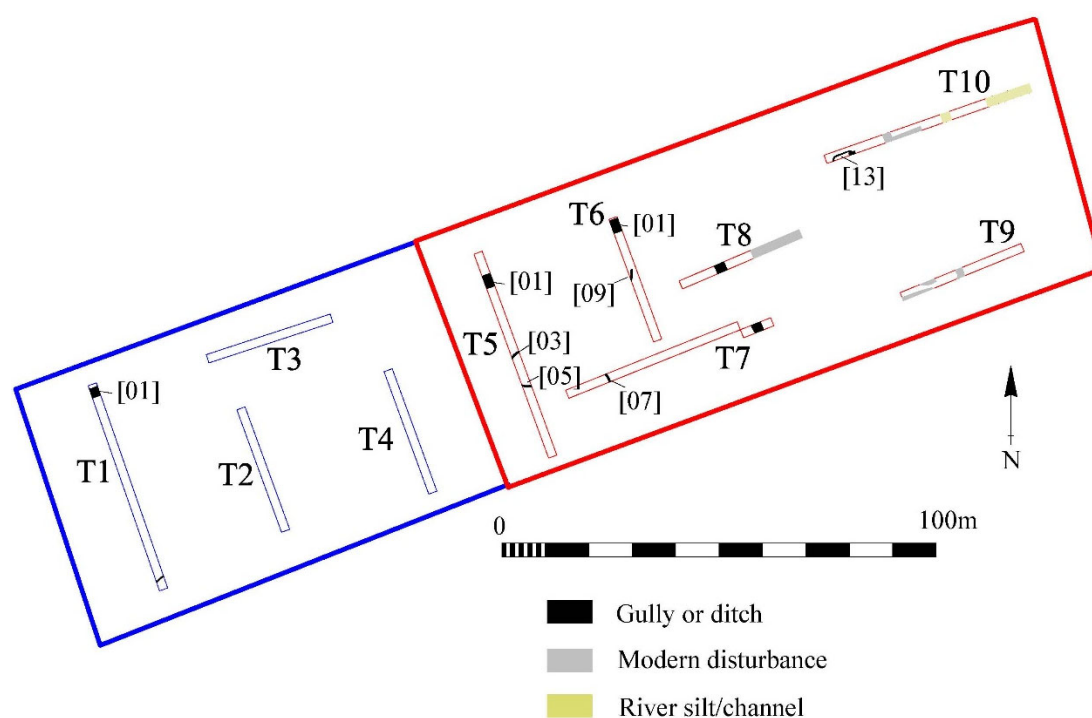


Figure 10 Trench results

Trench 1

The 50m long Trench 1 was placed to run alongside the trackway known as Back Drove. Prior to the trenching work some of this part of the site was covered with low vegetation and semi-mature willow trees. Between 0.2m and 0.29m of dark brown clayish sand was removed to reveal a pale orange-yellow silty sand subsoil between 0.34m and 0.4m in thickness. The natural substratum consisted of a fine silty sand with a clean but mottled pale yellow and grey colour (Fig. 11). At the northern end of the trench was a north-east to south-west oriented ditch running across the trench (Fig. 12). The ditch [01] (02) was 2m wide and contained a mid-yellow brown sandy silt with fragments of red brick and white-glazed pottery visible in the surface and throughout the fill. The line of the ditch can still be seen as an earthwork depression running across the site in the direction of Main Street (see Figure 9 above). This feature was also seen in Trenches 5 and 6. In this trench the ditch was partially machine excavated down to a depth of 0.5m below the top of the natural substratum in order to verify that it contained the same type of fill and that it was the same feature as in the other two trenches.

Towards the southern end of the trench was a curving feature approximately 0.3m wide with a rich loamy fill. Excavation revealed this to be a modern tree root and was therefore not recorded.

Trenches 2 and 3

Both 30m long Trenches 2 and 3 contained the same topsoil, subsoil and natural substratum as seen in Trench 1. No features or deposits of archaeological origin were found in either trench (Figs 13 and 14).

Trench 4

Trench 4 was the last of the trenches placed within the area of the site which currently does not have development planning permission. Topsoil, subsoil and natural substratum were all as was previously seen in the earlier trenches. When initially excavated three irregularly shaped gullies of approximately 0.3m wide were noted running across the trench in a number of directions (Fig. 15). Sample excavation revealed that two of these features were caused by root activity whilst the other was caused by animal burrowing. None of the gullies had an archaeological origin.

Trench 5

The 50m long trench was placed to target the geophysical anomaly identified as a possible rectangular archaeological feature (Fig. 16). At the northern end of the trench the ditch [01] was exposed again as were two curving gullies [05] and [06] (see Fig. 10 above). Excavation of the ditch showed it to contain a mid-yellow brown sandy silt fill (02) with modern brick fragments throughout (Figs. 17 and 19). Sherds of late 19th or early 20th century white and brown glazed pottery along with glass and clay pipe stems were recovered throughout the fill which indicated a relatively recent backfill date.

The curving gullies [03] and [05] could be seen to cut through the subsoil and extend as high as the topsoil. Both contained a similar fill to each other which consisted of a dark brown sandy silt with large lumps of pale yellow and grey sandy silt natural substratum dispersed throughout which appeared to indicate a rapid excavation and backfilling episode (Figs 18 and 19). The gullies followed a curve which could be projected round to join each other and form a circular feature approximately 11m in diameter. No finds were recovered from either feature. The possible rectangular anomaly seen in the geophysical survey seems likely to have been caused by the two gullies.

No further features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 6

The same topsoil, subsoil and natural substratum as in the previous trenches was observed in this 30m long trench. Beneath the topsoil a large area of disturbance was observed covering the northern 10m of the trench (Fig. 20). The fill of this disturbed area consisted of a dark brown clayish sand with lots of modern building rubble with brick and concrete fragments dispersed throughout. Fragments of glazed drainpipe were also recovered. Removal of the 0.5m thick disturbed layer revealed a continuation of ditch [01] running from Trenches 1 and 5 across the northern end of this trench. The ditch was not excavated in this trench but more white-glazed 19th or 20th century pottery was observed during excavation of the trench.

Another curving gully [09] was seen approximately half way along Trench 6. The north-eastern end of the gully had been truncated by the later disturbance which indicates a late date for the disturbed area (Figs 21 and 22). As with the other gullies the fill (10) consisted of a dark brown sandy silt with large lumps of pale yellow and grey sandy silt natural substratum dispersed throughout. No finds were recovered from the excavated feature.

Trench 7

The presence of a ground gas monitoring point meant that Trench 7 had to be excavated in two stages with the easternmost 6 metres being offset to one side (see Figure 10). At the eastern end of the trench a disturbed former hedge line and ditch could be seen extending from north-west to south-east across the trench (Fig. 23). This clearly lined up with an existing hedge line continuing past the water tower to the south of the site. This maybe the hedge line shown on the 1840 tithe map although there is a 15m or more discrepancy in the position on the map and what was measured during the evaluation. The location of the ditch is a slightly better match for the feature shown on the 1887 First Edition Ordnance Survey map (Figs 7 and 8). This feature was not excavated.

Ten metres from the western end of the trench was another curving gully [07] with dark brown sandy silt with large lumps of pale yellow and grey sandy silt natural substratum dispersed throughout the fill (08) (Figs 22 and 24). A single sherd of later 19th century brown-glazed pottery was recovered from the base of the gully.

Trench 8

A continuation of the former hedge line and ditch in Trench 7 was seen running across the western end of Trench 8. Beneath the topsoil, to the east of the hedge line, the ground had been heavily disturbed by modern activity (Fig. 25). Excavation down to 0.95m below current ground level showed that the disturbance continued well beyond this depth. As the surrounding natural substratum was only 0.3m below current ground level it was decided to stop excavating at 0.95m. The fill of the disturbed material contained a large amount of brick rubble which may relate to the building seen in this position on the 1999 Google Earth photograph shown in Figure 9 above.

No further features or deposits were found in this trench.

Trench 9

Trench 9 was excavated in an area occupied by a number of farm buildings many of which remained in place until fairly recently. A concrete base had been removed the week before trial trenching work leaving only a thin skim of subsoil over the natural substratum at the eastern end of the trench (Fig. 26). Other modern disturbance with modern glass, wood, metal and brick within the backfill was seen towards the western end of the trench.

No features or deposits of archaeological origin were found in this trench.

Trench 10

The eastern end of the 50m long Trench 10 contained a large area of waterlogged dark brown sandy silt and appeared to be part of the river bed of the Old Croft River which is now much narrower. Further west along the trench were areas of disturbance caused by modern buildings. At the far western end of the trench was a rectangle of light greyish sand (12) surrounded by a halo of mid-brown silty sand (11) sitting within cut [13] (Figs 27, 28 and 29). The natural substratum beneath [13] appeared to have been disturbed and was noticeably dirtier than the natural seen elsewhere on site suggesting

a staining or leeching effect from farming activity. Modern glazed pottery was recovered from fill (11).



Figure 11 Trench 1
1m scales. Root disturbance seen as a dark band in the foreground



Figure 12 Trench 1
Ditch [01] partially machine excavated. 1m scales



Figure 13 Trench 2
Looking towards houses on New Road. 1m scales



Figure 14 Trench 3
Looking towards Back Drove, New Road on right. 1m scales



Figure 15 Trench 4
Modern features visible across the trench. 1m scales



Figure 16 Trench 5
Ditch [01] in foreground



Figure 17 Trench 5 ditch cut [01]
1m and 0.4m scales



Figure 18 Trench 5 gullies
Left: [03] Right: [05]
1m and 0.4m scales

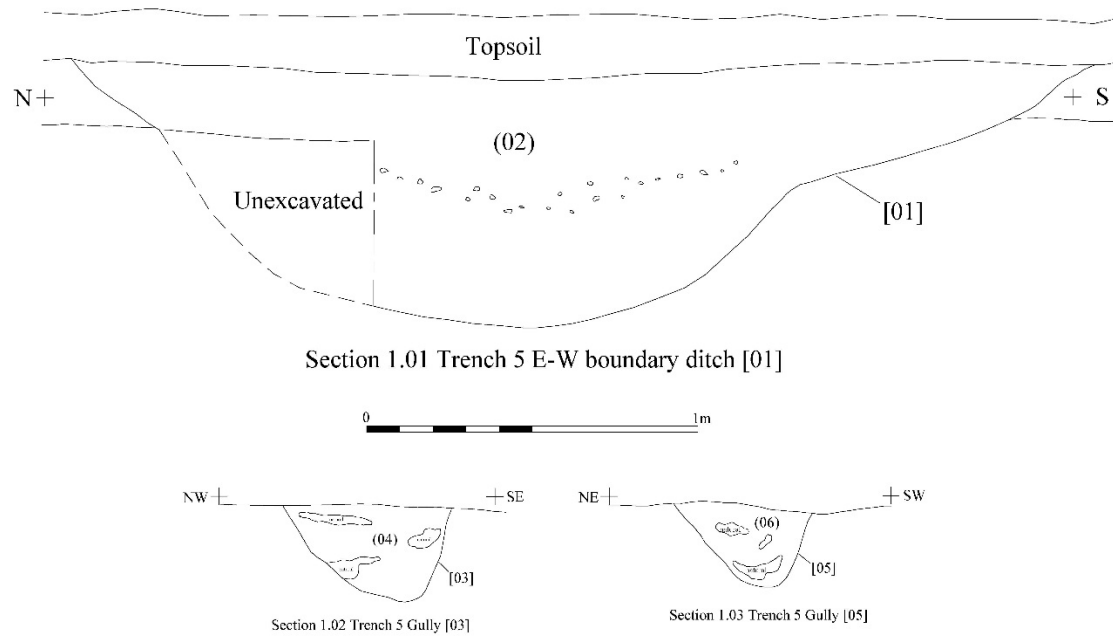


Figure 19 Trench 5 sections



Figure 20 Trench 6
Ditch [01] and some of the disturbed area in foreground. 1m scales



Figure 21 Trench 6 Truncated gully [09]
1m and 0.4m scales

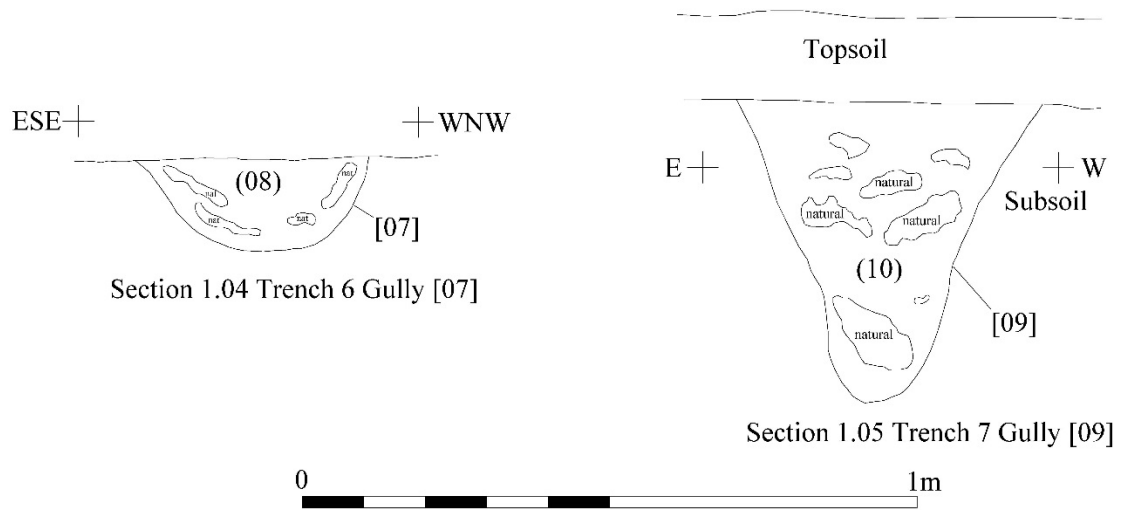


Figure 22 Trench 6 and 7 sections



Figure 23 Trench 7 eastern end
Remainder of trench can be seen at top right of picture
Hedge line beneath 1m scales



Figure 24 Trench 7
Gully [05]. 1m and 0.4m scales



Figure 25 Trench 8
Hedge line in front of 1m scales. Disturbed area beyond scales



Figure 26 Trench 9
1m scales



Figure 27 Trench 10
1m scales



Figure 28 Trench 10 pit/feature [13]
1m scales

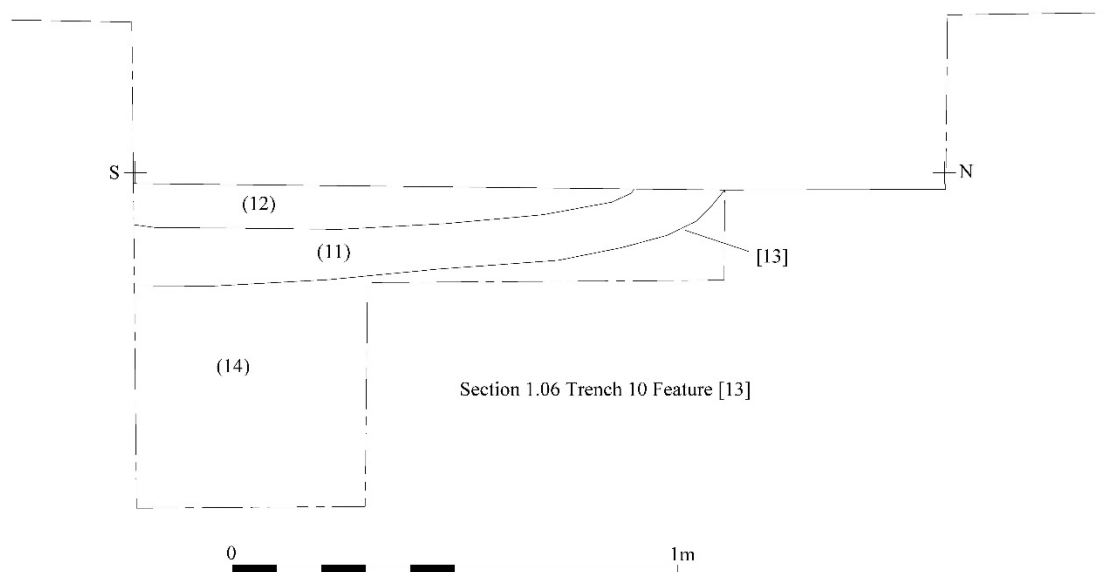


Figure 29 Trench 10 section of [13]

Discussion

Although a number of features were identified during the trial trenching work nothing found was older than 19th century in date. The large ditch [01] running close to the northern boundary is not shown on the 1840 tithe map but was clearly backfilled around this time as it contains building rubble and pottery from around this period. The fact that it still shows as a depression in the ground also suggests a relatively recent backfilling date. It seems likely to be a forerunner of the present boundary which marks the plot boundaries of the houses fronting onto New Road. The ditch [01] may point to minor boundary changes possibly associated with the selling off of residential land along New Road.

The hedge line seen in Trenches 7 and 8 was backfilled and moved between the publication date of the tithe map in 1840 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey map in 1887. The type of building rubble in the backfill would seem to confirm this date too.

All of the curving gullies all appear to relate to hay rick bases or stack stands of 19th century origin which are a common feature in low-lying regions of Eastern England. Their backfill with large lumps of natural substratum indicate a rapid opening and closing of the feature rather than a slow silting up. It seems likely that the gullies seen in Trench 5 are responsible for the geophysical anomaly identified prior to the trenching work.

All of the disturbance seen on the eastern side of the site relate to the farm buildings and hardstanding areas which have only been removed in the last ten to twenty years. Much of this disturbance has cut into the natural substratum.

Overall, the trial trenching work indicates that there are unlikely to be any features on the site which are more than around 200 years old. However, the features which have

been identified do give a useful insight into land use during this period. The presence of hay-rick bases indicates that the field was used for growing crops.

Archive

The archive consists of:

This report,
10 A4 pro-forma trench recording sheets,
1 A4 context register,
1 A3 drawing sheet,
1 A4 photo record sheet,
14 A5 context record sheets,
86 digital photographs in both jpeg and tiff format,
1 DVD of digital images

Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

Acknowledgements

The work was project managed by V Score. The site director was A Hyam. Thanks are due to Gary Bowes and Trevor for trench excavation and associated site work

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ULAS, 2018. *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Trail Trenching on Land to the North of Grange Farm, Main Street, Welney, Norfolk*.

Websites:

<http://www.historic-maps.norfolk.gov.uk/mapexplorer/>

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ULAS
26.11.2018

Appendix 1 HER record within a 1km radius of the site

MonUID	Name	Monument Type	Location (NGR)
PREHISTORIC			
MNF22133	Cropmark of ring ditch	RING DITCH, RING DITCH, SITE	TL 5192 9470
ROMAN			
MNF4433	Roman pottery	FINDSPOT	TL 529 947
MNF4435	Site of Roman settlement and salt works	INHUMATION, SETTLEMENT, SALT WORKS	TL 52 94
MNF4437	Site of Roman settlement and salt works	SETTLEMENT, SALT WORKS, FIELD SYSTEM, RECTANGULAR ENCLOSURE, SITE, RING DITCH, FINDSPOT, FINDSPOT	TL 52 94
MNF4438	Site of Roman settlement	SITE, SETTLEMENT, RECTILINEAR ENCLOSURE, ROAD, KILN, HOUSE	TL 533 939
MNF15806	Cropmarks of possible Roman enclosures	SITE, ENCLOSURE, TRACKWAY, TRACKWAY, SITE, ENCLOSURE	TL 534 933
MNF21699	Earthworks of unknown date and Roman and medieval finds	SITE, ENCLOSURE, LINEAR FEATURE, DRAINAGE DITCH, POND	TL 527 932
MNF57684	Roman burial	INHUMATION	TL 52 94
MEDIEVAL			
MNF4441	St Mary's Church, Welney	CHURCH, PARISH CHURCH	TL 5262 9384
MNF15737	Medieval Coin	FINDSPOT COIN	TL 5189 9472
MNF15760	Fishponds of possible medieval date	SITE, WATERCOURSE, FISHPOND	TL 5299 9367
MNF23470	Medieval finds	FINDSPOT	TL 526 938
MNF32120	Earthworks of medieval field system	CAUSEWAY, DRAINAGE DITCH, BANK (EARTHWORK), CAUSEWAY, RECTILINEAR ENCLOSURE, BANK (EARTHWORK), FIELD SYSTEM, DRAINAGE DITCH, RECTILINEAR ENCLOSURE	TL 5307 9302
POST-MEDIEVAL			
MNF13529	Old Bedford River	Water Course	TL 522 969
MNF16194	Site of post medieval drainage mill	WIND PUMP, DRAINAGE MILL	TL 5249 9332
MNF28954	Post medieval sledge runner from Old Bedford River	FINDSPOT	TL 5326 9434
MNF33778	Copes Hill Farmhouse	HOUSE	TL 5270 9474
MNF59311	Early 20th century water tower, off Main street	WATER TOWER	TL 52599 93890
MNF63392	William Marshall Church of England Primary School	SCHOOL, TEACHERS HOUSE	TL 5267 9375
UNDATED			
MNF16618	Cropmarks of unknown date	SITE, LINEAR FEATURE, RECTILINEAR ENCLOSURE, CIRCULAR ENCLOSURE	TL 5189 9495
MNF20026	Cropmark of enclosure of unknown date	SITE, TRACKWAY, LINEAR FEATURE, RECTANGULAR ENCLOSURE, SITE	TL 5175 9424
MNF21700	Earthworks of unknown date	SITE, TRACKWAY, WATERCOURSE, ENCLOSURE, LINEAR FEATURE, DRAINAGE DITCH	TL 5278 9391
MNF57137	A site with no archaeological finds or features.		TL 52628 94728
MNF57741	Unidentified Feature		TL 52604 94451

Appendix 2 OASIS Information

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-334946		
	Project Name	Archaeological Trial Trenching on Land North of Grange Farm, Main Street, Welney, Norfolk.		
	Start/end dates of field work	05-11-2018 - 09-11-2018		
	Previous/Future Work	Geophysical survey/ No		
	Project Type	Trial trenching		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Cultivated Land		
	Monument Type/Period	Haystack bases/Post medieval Ditch/Post medieval		
	Significant Finds/Period	Pottery / Post medieval		
	Development Type	Residential		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
Planning Ref.	18/00195/FM			
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Main Street, Welney, Norfolk. PE14 9RA		
	Study Area	1.54ha		
	Site Coordinates	TL5257 9395		
	Height OD	2m OD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (Borough of King's Lynn and West Norfolk)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	V Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	A Hyam		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Developer / Lincoln Jack Ltd		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	NA	Norfolk Mus Service	Norfolk Mus Service
	ID (Event No.)		ENF145416	ENF145416
	Contents		Photos	Field Notes
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	Archaeological Trial Trenching on Land North of Grange Farm, Main Street, Welney, Norfolk.		
	Author	A Hyam		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2018-188		
	Date	2018		
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	Description	Developer Report A4 pdf		



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