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**THE OLD RECTORY, SPORLE ROAD, LITTLE DUNHAM,
NORFOLK**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

CNF 48529
Museum Accession No. NWHCM.2019.213
OASIS ref. archaeol7-343495

Author: Vinny Monahan (Field work and report) Peter Thompson (background)	
NGR: TF 8639 1298	Report No: 5795
District: Breckland	Site Code: ENF145747
Approved: Claire Halpin MCI fA	Project No: 7916
	Date: 18 March 2019 Revised 8 May 2019

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CONTENTS

PROJECT SUMMARY

SUMMARY

- 1 INTRODUCTION**
- 2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE**
- 3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS**
- 4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**
- 5 METHODOLOGY**
- 6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS**
- 7 CONFIDENCE RATING**
- 8 DISCUSSION**
- 9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX 1 CONCORDANCE OF FINDS

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORT

PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET			
<i>Project name</i>	<i>The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk</i>		
<p><i>In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological excavation at The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk (NGR TF 8639 1298; Figs.1-2). The work was undertaken to provide for the requirements of a planning condition attached to Breckland District Council Planning Approval (3PL/2018/1209/HOU) for an outdoor swimming pool to be constructed in the garden of The Old Rectory.</i></p> <p><i>The site strip partially revealed an 18th – 19th century pit.</i></p>			
<i>Project dates (fieldwork)</i>	<i>26 February 2019</i>		
<i>Previous work (Y/N/?)</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Future work (Y/N/?)</i>	<i>N</i>
<i>P. number</i>	<i>7916</i>	<i>Site code</i>	<i>ENF145747</i>
<i>Type of project</i>	<i>Archaeological Excavation</i>		
<i>Site status</i>	<i>-</i>		
<i>Current land use</i>	<i>Old Rectory lawns</i>		
<i>Planned development</i>	<i>Outdoor swimming pool</i>		
<i>Main features (+dates)</i>	<i>Pit</i>		
<i>Significant finds (+dates)</i>	<i>None</i>		
<i>Project location</i>			
<i>County/ District/ Parish</i>	<i>Norfolk</i>	<i>Breckland</i>	<i>Little Dunham</i>
<i>HER for area</i>	<i>Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Record (NCC HER)</i>		
<i>Post code (if known)</i>	<i>PE32 2DE</i>		
<i>Area of site</i>	<i>0.7ha</i>		
<i>NGR</i>	<i>TF 8639 1298</i>		
<i>Height AOD (min/max)</i>	<i>c.80m AOD</i>		
<i>Project creators</i>			
<i>Brief issued by</i>	<i>Norfolk County Council (NCC) Historic Environment Service</i>		
<i>Project supervisor/s (PO)</i>	<i>Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>		
<i>Funded by</i>	<i>Mrs Barratt</i>		
<i>Full title</i>	<i>The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk. Archaeological Excavation</i>		
<i>Authors</i>	<i>Vinny Monahan & Peter Thompson</i>		
<i>Report no.</i>	<i>5795</i>		
<i>Date (of report)</i>	<i>March 2019; revised May 2019</i>		

THE OLD RECTORY, SPORLE ROAD, LITTLE DUNHAM, NORFOLK

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

SUMMARY

In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological excavation at The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk (NGR TF 8639 1298; Figs.1-2). The work was undertaken to provide for the requirements of a planning condition attached to Breckland District Council Planning Approval (3PL/2018/1209/HOU) for an outdoor swimming pool to be constructed in the garden of The Old Rectory.

The 17th century Old Rectory (NHER 44328) and adjacent medieval St Margaret's church (NHER 11351) stand in former parkland enclosed in the 18th century, but prior to that they appear to have been located in the medieval manorial enclosure. Banks and ditches are evident and Late Saxon and medieval pottery has been recovered from the site (NHER 11351, NHER 1150, NHER 1151). A possible medieval moat was located 320m to the north-west (NHER 4180), and evidence for a possible Roman settlement lies some 400m to the north (NHER 30277, NHER 30273). The 18th century Manor House is located 300m south-east. The former line of the Lynn and Dereham Railway (later Great Eastern) runs 65m north of the Old Rectory (NHER 13600).

The site strip partially revealed an 18th – 19th century pit.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological excavation at The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk (NGR TF 8639 1298; Figs.1-2). The excavation was undertaken to provide for the requirements of a planning condition attached to Breckland District Council Planning Approval (3PL/2018/1209/HOU) for an outdoor swimming pool to be constructed in the garden of The Old Rectory.

1.2 The excavation was undertaken in accordance with an archaeological brief prepared by NCC HES: Brief for Open-Area Excavation as Part of A Programme of Archaeological Mitigatory Works at The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk (John Percival, dated 14/01/2019), and a written scheme of investigation (specification) prepared by AS (dated 18th January 2018) and approved by NCC HES. The excavation conformed to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation (2014), and the NCC document Standards for Development-led Archaeological Projects in Norfolk (Robertson et al, 2018).

1.3 The primary objective of the excavation was to preserve the archaeological evidence contained within the site by record and to attempt a reconstruction of the history and use of the site.

1.4 The research priorities comprised principally:

- Place the activity in context with the known activity of these dates in the surrounding area;
- Characterise the activity present within the site;
- Identify topographical/geological/geographical influences on the layout and development of the activity present within the current site and in the surrounding area; and
- Environmental reconstruction.

Planning Policy Context

1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.

1.6 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but non-designated heritage assets of demonstrably equivalent significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 Little Dunham is a small village located 15 miles south-east of Kings Lynn. The Old Rectory is at the north-west end of the village, beside St Margaret's Church in an area that was formerly parkland. The proposed new outdoor swimming pool is located in the garden of the property.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

3.1 The site is on gently undulating land at approximately 80m AOD. The local soils are deep fine loamy soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging. There are some similar fine or coarse loamy over clayey soils, and some well-drained fine and coarse loamy soils.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 St Margaret's Church, located some 25m west of the proposed swimming pool, is a Grade I listed 13th century medieval church with an Early English style nave, chancel, north aisle and demolished chapel. The tower is in Perpendicular style as is the south porch (NHER 4207). Earthworks of enclosures, pits, raised areas, early roadside banks and an early drive can be seen in parkland surrounding St Margaret's Church (NHER 11351). The enclosure banks and ditches probably include a road or park boundary partially enclosing an earlier manorial site which is called Manor Close on the 1838 tithe map (NHER 1150). If this is the site of an early manor it suggests the church may originally have been a manorial chapel. The causeway of an earlier drive leading to the Old Rectory (NHER 44328) passes to the east of the church. Metal-detecting has recovered a variety of Late Saxon, medieval and post medieval metalwork and pottery.

4.2 The Old Rectory dates from the 17th century and is Grade II listed (NHER 44328); pieces of medieval and post-medieval pot were found in its gardens (NHER 11350). This manorial enclosure may have extended to the north of the former railway line (below), following the line of the east-west drain south of Canister Hall. Medieval and post medieval pot was also recovered from fields northeast of Canister Hall (NHER 30272, NHER 17431 and NHER 16094). The Ordnance Survey records a possible medieval moat in the area of the Old Rectory, but the feature indicated is actually a road leading to the rectory. There is a slight depression suggesting a dry ditch outside it to the northwest (NHER 4187). Medieval and post-medieval finds have been made 320m north-west of the site when parts of a possible medieval moat were bulldozed. The finds include medieval to post-medieval building material, pieces of pot, a 17th or 18th century leather shoe and a circular brooch. Pits 'full of black soil' and a possible brick kiln were recorded when a pipe trench was cut (NHER 4180).

4.3 The current Manor House located 300m south-east of the Old Rectory is predominantly 18th century and the land to the west of St Margaret's church

may have been emparked at this time. Historic cartographic sources suggest that the parkland that survives today was surrounded by common land before inclosure in 1766. The former line of the Lynn and Dereham Railway (later Great Eastern) runs 65m north of the Old Rectory which opened in 1848 and was closed in 1968 (NHER 13600).

4.4 Approximately 400m to the north is a hypothesized area of Roman settlement where metal detecting and fieldwalking recovered a range of finds dating from the Bronze Age to the post medieval period. The finds include a large number of Roman objects in a concentrated area including coins, pieces of pottery, lava quern, brooches, brick and tile, a knife handle and finger rings, and so is probably part of the site of a small Roman settlement. Other finds include a Bronze Age awl, Iron Age coin, an Early Saxon brooch, medieval and post medieval coins and tokens and pieces of Bronze Age, Iron Age, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval pot (NHER 30277, NHER 30273).

4.5 Soilmarks of a rectangular enclosure south of Sporle Road, possibly indicating levelled earthworks, can be seen on aerial photographs, the area of which contained finds of the Middle Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods (NHER 4199). An undated burnt mound was identified approximately 300m south-east of the site when pieces of medieval pot and prehistoric burnt flints were found across a vegetable garden. More medieval pot and post medieval brick and tile were found when the foundations for a new building were excavated (NHER 31203). In the same area, an archaeological watching brief carried out 280m south-east of the site, recorded post-medieval ditches and pits probably relating to land management. A number of small rubbish pits were dug there in the Victorian period (NHER 37318). Just to the south of these rubbish pits a north-south aligned earthwork of a causeway with flanking ditches is visible (NHER 31197). This could be a continuation of the Roman road NHER 3697.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 NCC advice required:

Controlled strip, map and excavation of the proposed new swimming pool footprint (12m x 6m), with the investigation, recording, and formal reporting of any archaeological remains present (Fig. 2).

The site strip to be carried out under archaeological supervision, with a back acting excavator fitted with a wide toothless ditching bucket.

5.2 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision and control using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. All subsequent excavation was undertaken by hand.

5.3 Exposed sections were cleaned and examined for archaeological features. Deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. The excavated area and spoil was

manually/ visually searched and scanned by metal detector to enhance the recovery of archaeological finds.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS Figs. 2 – 3

6.1 The encountered stratigraphy was recorded in the sample section presented below:

<i>Sample section 1</i> <i>0.00 = 83.71m AOD</i>		
0.00 – 0.28m	L1000	Topsoil. Friable, dark reddish brown silty sandy clay.
0.28 – 0.41m	L1001	Subsoil. Friable, mid grey brown silty sandy clay.
0.41m+	L1003	Natural Deposits. Firm, mid brown red sandy clay with occasional small to large angular flint

Description: The excavated area partially revealed Pit F1004, and it contained 18th – 19th century CBM.

Pit F1004 was sub-circular in plan (1.05+ x 0.65+ x 0.26m). It had moderately sloping sides and a flattish base. Its basal fill, L1005, was a friable, mid grey brown sandy silty clay with sparse small angular flint. It contained 19th – 20th century CBM. Its upper fill, L1006, was a friable, dark grey brown silty sand with frequent small angular flint. It contained CBM (194g).

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the identification of archaeological features or finds.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The 17th century Old Rectory (NHER 44328) and adjacent medieval St Margaret's church (NHER 11351) stand in former parkland enclosed in the 18th century, but prior to that they appear to have been located in the medieval manorial enclosure. Banks and ditches are evident and Late Saxon and medieval pottery has been recovered from the site (NHER 11351, NHER 1150, NHER 1151). A possible medieval moat was located 320m to the north-west (NHER 4180), and evidence for a possible Roman settlement lies some 400m to the north (NHER 30277, NHER 30273). The 18th century Manor House is located 300m south-east. The former line of the Lynn and Dereham Railway (later Great Eastern) runs 65m north of the Old Rectory (NHER 13600).

8.2 The excavation partially revealed Pit F1004, and it contained 18th – 19th century CBM.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited at Norwich Castle Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) would like to thank Mrs Hannah Barratt for funding the work and for all assistance. AS would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Ms Olivia Luckhurst of Claxton Hall Architectural Ltd.

AS is also pleased to acknowledge the advice of Mr John Percival of Norfolk County Council Environment Service Conservation Team

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, Reading, ClfA

Robertson *et al*, 2018. *Standards for Development-led Archaeological Projects in Norfolk*, NCC HES.

SSEW 1983 *Soil Survey of England and Wales: Soils of South East England (sheet 4)*. Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

SSEW 1983 *Soil Survey of England and Wales: Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales* Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

Appendix 1 - Concordance of Finds

ENF145747 - P7916, The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham

Feature	Context	Segment	Trench	Description	Spot Date (Pot Only)	Pot Qty	Pottery (g)	CBM (g)	A.Bone (g)	Other Material	Other Qty	Other (g)
1004	1006			Fill of Pit				194				

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORT

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

Pit F1004 (L1006) contained two small fragments (194g) of 18th-19th century CBM in a highly fragmented condition. They comprise single red-orange fragments of soft red brick and 18mm thick floor tile; the latter with traces of a clear-brown glaze, comparable to post-medieval glazed red earthen ware pottery.

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OASIS ID: archaeol7-343495

Project details

Project name	The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, PE322DQ (EXC)
Short description of the project	In February 2019 Archaeological Solutions Limited (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological excavation at The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk (NGR TF 8639 1298; Figs.1-2). The work was undertaken to provide for the requirements of a planning condition attached to Breckland District Council Planning Approval (3PL/2018/1209/HOU) for an outdoor swimming pool to be constructed in the garden of The Old Rectory. The site strip partially revealed an 18th - 19th century pit.
Project dates	Start: 26-02-2019 End: 28-02-2019
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	P7916 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ENF145747 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	PITS Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Full excavation"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORFOLK BRECKLAND LITTLE DUNHAM The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham
Postcode	PE322DQ
Study area	0.7 Hectares
Site coordinates	TF 8639 1298 52.681983335468 0.757702202806 52 40 55 N 000 45 27 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 80m Max: 80m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeological Solutions Ltd
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Project brief originator NCC

Project design originator Jon Murray

Project director/manager Jon Murray

Project supervisor Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Name of sponsor/funding body Mrs Barratt

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Norwich Castle Museum

Physical Contents "Ceramics"

Digital Archive recipient Norwich Castle Museum

Digital Contents "Ceramics"

Digital Media available "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Text"

Paper Archive recipient Norwich Castle Museum

Paper Contents "Ceramics"

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Drawing","Map","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham, Norfolk. Archaeological Excavation

Author(s)/Editor(s) Monahan, V

Author(s)/Editor(s) Thompson, P

Other bibliographic details 5795

Date 2019

Issuer or publisher Archaeological Solutions

Place of issue or publication Bury St Edmunds

Entered by Hollie Wesson (admin@ascontracts.co.uk)

Entered on 14 May 2019

OASIS:

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX (P7916)



1
General site overview looking south-east



2
Open area looking north-west



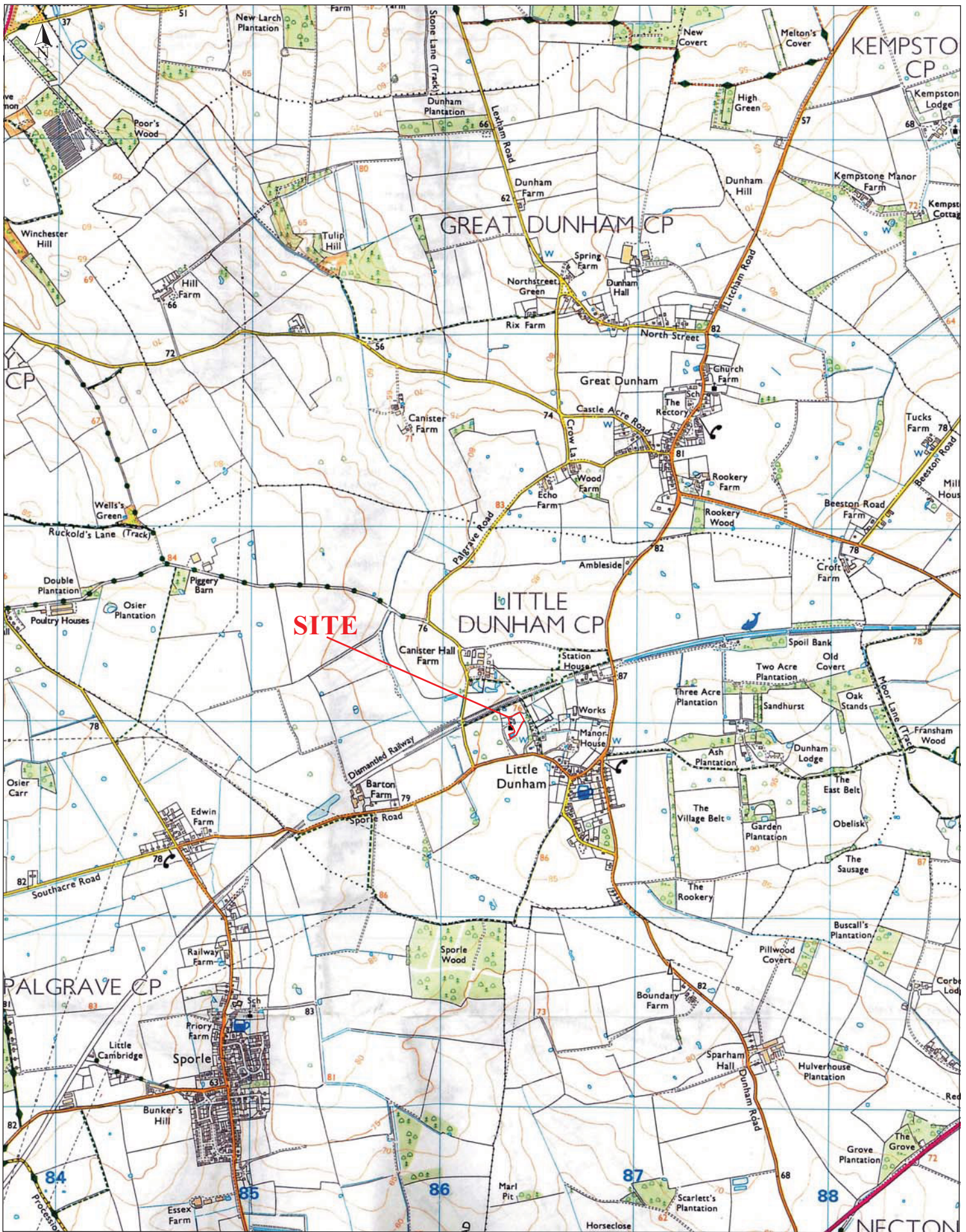
3
Sample section 1 looking north-east



4
Pit F1004 looking north-east

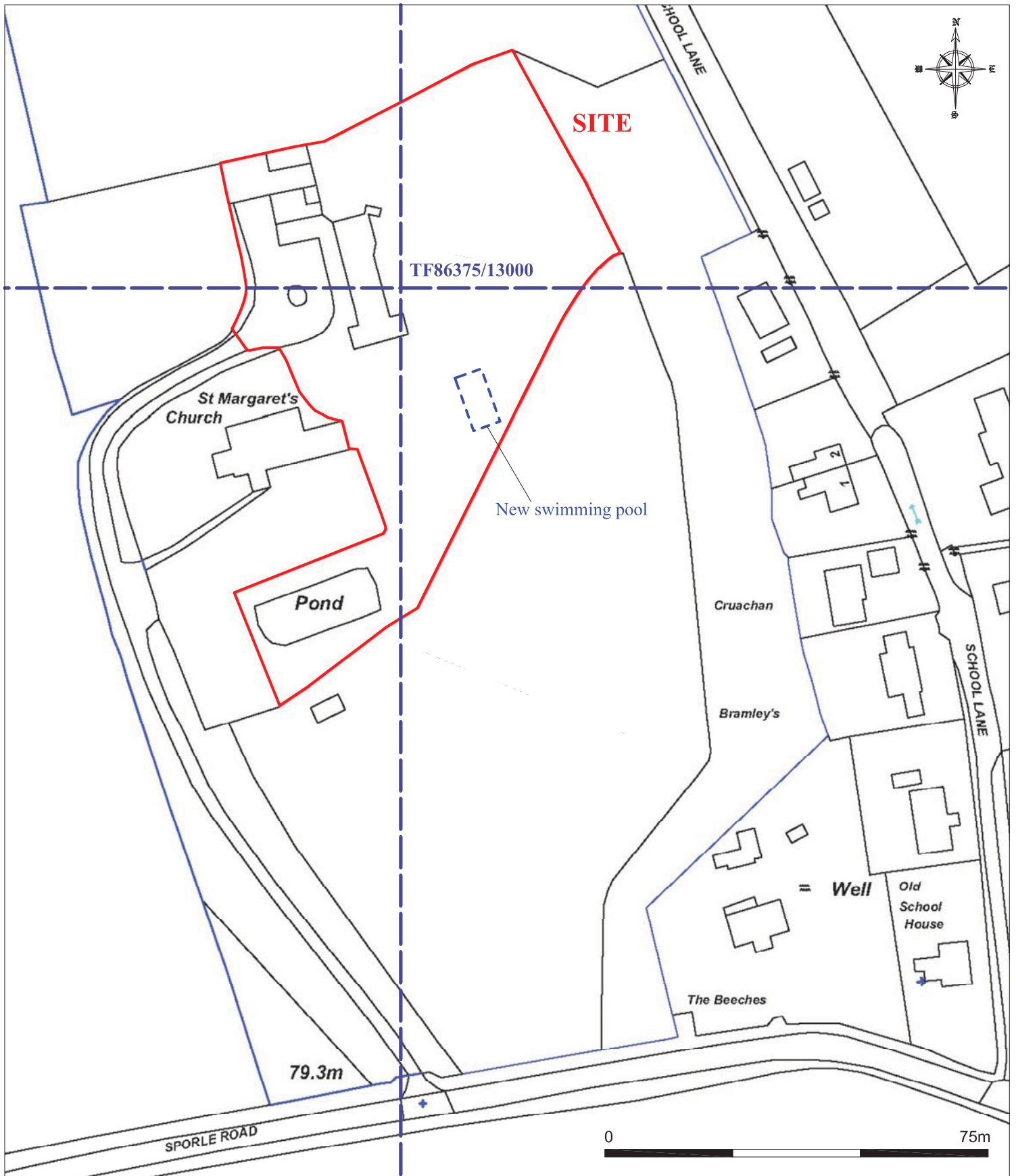


5
Pit F1004 looking north-west

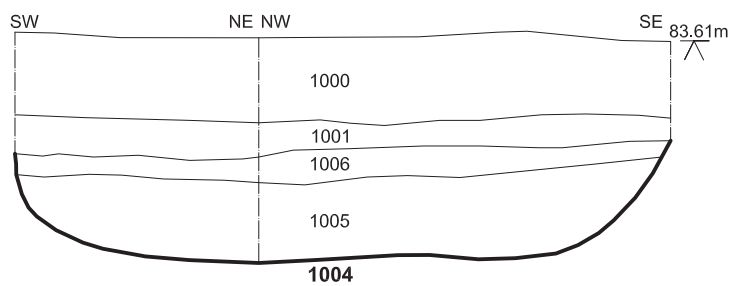
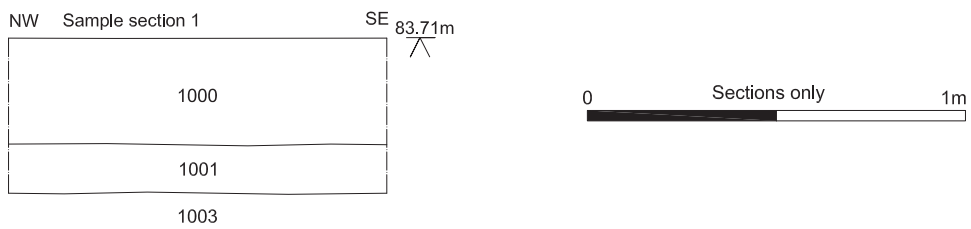
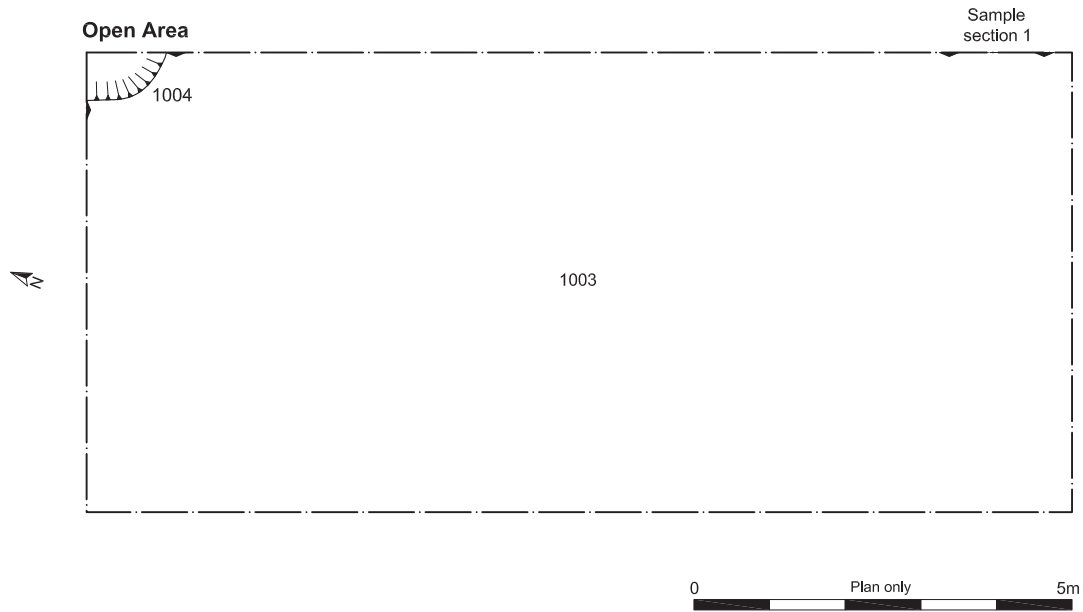


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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000 at A4
 The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham (P7916)



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Fig. 2 Detailed site location plan
 Scale 1:1000 at A4
 The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham (P7916)



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Fig. 3 Trench plan and sections
Scale Plans 1:100, sections 1:20 at A4
The Old Rectory, Sporle Road, Little Dunham (P7916)