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EXCAVATIONS AND SURVEYS IN NORFOLK IN 2008

edited by David Gurney and Richard Hoggett

This annual report comprises summaries of significant archaeological excavations, fieldwork and surveys carried out in Norfolk during 2008. It is often several years before post-excavation work on larger projects is completed and a full report is published, while many smaller projects are the subject of 'grey reports' for the client, the Local Planning Authority and the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) without further publication/dissemination. These summaries provide a useful guide to 'highlights' of recent archaeological research in the county.

The NHER is maintained at Gressenhall by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology and may be consulted by appointment (01362 869281 or heritage@norfolk.gov.uk). An online version of the NHER database, the *Norfolk Heritage Explorer*, is available at <http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk>.

Barsham, All Saints' church, East Barsham (NHER 12243; TF 9164 3372)

by Thomas Bradley-Lovekin, Archaeological Project Services
Investigations for Nicholas Warns Architects and East Barsham PCC were carried out at the Norman and later church, probably on the site of one recorded in Domesday. The chancel and a side chapel were demolished, perhaps during the Dissolution. The investigations revealed the north wall of the chancel and mortar bedding for a floor, which retained

impressions of tiles. Stub walls indicating the positions of internal features within the chancel were also recorded. A wall revealed immediately west of the nave indicates an earlier structure on a slightly different alignment. This wall potentially belongs to an earlier church, perhaps that mentioned in Domesday Book. Other walls revealed that the nave previously extended further to the west. APS Report 75/08.

Binham, Binham Priory (NHER 2081; TF 9817 3994)

by Paul Cope-Faulkner, Archaeological Project Services

Excavations of stanchion pits for new interpretation panels were monitored for English Heritage. The north wall of the cloister alley was encountered, as was a foundation wall beneath the pillars of the presbytery. Demolition deposits were also identified with 14th–15th-century Grimston-type pottery and roof tile. APS Report 77/08.

Breckland Society Warrens Project

by Anne Mason, Heritage Consultant

One of the region's foremost conservation groups, The Breckland Society, is conducting research into a highly important aspect of the Brecks' heritage, the area's famous rabbit warrens. The Society was awarded a Regional Capacity Building Grant from English Heritage to help resolve gaps in current understanding of how warrens were established and managed. There were over twenty such warrens scattered across the Brecks, and while some, such as Mildenhall, have



Plate 1 Binham Priory.
©David Gurney.



Plate 2 Breckland Warrens Project: a section of the perimeter warren bank of Beachamwell Warren.
©Sue Pennell.

been studied on a limited basis, others have not been visited or assessed in recent years, if ever. A team of volunteers is searching for surviving features on the ground and carrying out documentary research. Discoveries have included sections of warren banks that were hitherto unrecorded or thought lost, and two totally 'new' warrens, previously unrecorded by historians. In addition, the research has revealed at least one new lodge site and information about warren management practices.

Burnham Market, 9 Beacon Hill (NHER 49125; TF 8360 4177)

by Ben Hobbs, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was carried out for Richard CF Waite Architects. Footing trenches and associated drainage works for a residential development revealed a ditch containing animal bone and medieval pottery. A second ditch was observed in the base of the footings and is thought to be a continuation of a Roman ditch located during an earlier phase of work. Medieval and post-medieval pottery were also recovered from the topsoil. NAU Archaeology Report 1323.

Caistor St Edmund, Queen Anne House (NHER 51654; TG 2369 0385)

by Ben Hobbs, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken for Willow Builders Ltd to the rear of the 18th-century Queen Anne House. The excavation of an area approximately 800m² for an insulated geo-thermal heating system was monitored and several linear features and small pits were exposed. These contained numerous sherds of Roman pottery, as well as several medieval and post-medieval sherds. A small drainage channel, possibly contemporary with the original house, was observed within the footings and a well was uncovered at the front of the house. Several pieces of flint and mortar masonry were observed to the rear of the house, which may have been part of a late medieval or early post-medieval boundary wall. NAU Archaeology Report 1863.

Castle Acre, Castle Acre Castle (NHER 3449; SM 21441; TF 8182 1505)

by Ben Hobbs, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken for English Heritage to monitor the repair of a large erosion scar and a smaller scar in the outer bailey mound of Castle Acre castle. The base of a flint and mortar wall had been uncovered by the erosion damage, along with the upper deposit of the bailey mound and the base of a possible buttress. Five pieces of architectural stonework were retrieved from the mound during the repairs along with a smaller piece of worked stone. A fragment of calcined flint and an animal bone were also recovered. NAU Archaeology Report 2007.



Plate 3 Ditchingham Maltings: the western elevation of the loading bay and plant room.

©NAU Archaeology.

Ditchingham, Ditchingham Maltings (NHER 23024; TG 3400 9060)

by Bernie Bartrum, NAU Archaeology

Historic building recording was undertaken at the former silk mill and Simpson's maltings prior to the partial demolition and redevelopment of the buildings and site by Gladedale Ltd. These works began c.1832 as a single-block Silk Mill. The site continued to develop until the business was sold and the buildings converted to maltings in 1894. In 1902 another purpose-built maltings was constructed to the immediate north, on the opposite bank of a small stream. In 1999 a serious fire destroyed much of the silk mill building and the works closed. NAU Archaeology Report 1760.

Drayton, David Rice Hospital (NHER 51058; TG 1915 1267)

by Giles Emery, NAU Archaeology

An evaluation was carried out for Les Brown Associates Ltd at the former site of the David Rice Hospital. Fifty test-pits and fifteen trenches were excavated across the site, the large majority of which encountered disturbance associated with the construction and demolition of the

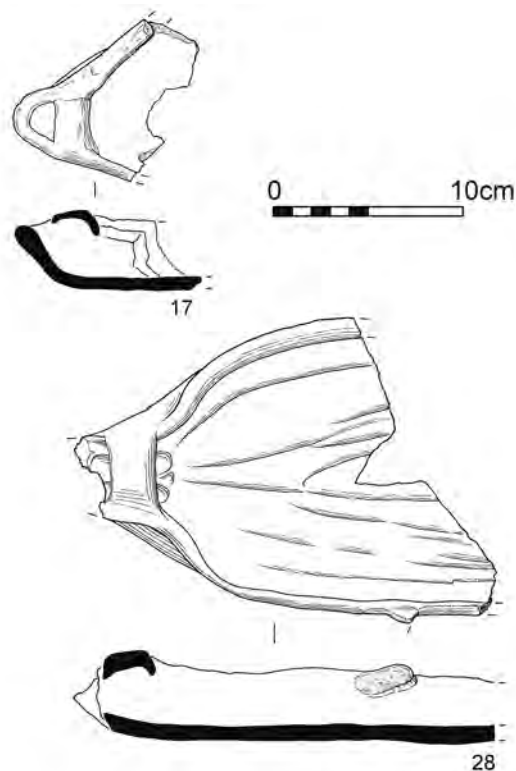


Fig. 1 Marks & Spencer, King's Lynn: 14th–15th-century dripping dishes (17) and (28)

©NAU Archaeology.

former hospital. A small number of earlier features was discovered, including a tree-throw which produced numerous Neolithic/Bronze Age flints and a prehistoric pit which contained large quantities of burnt flint and stone. A large assemblage of prehistoric flints was collected from the site, much of it is likely to be later prehistoric, although a small number of pieces may be Upper Palaeolithic. These artefacts include a crested blade and an end scraper, although no in-situ Palaeolithic artefacts or deposits were encountered. NAU Archaeology Report 1759.

Great Yarmouth, 55–57 North Quay (NHER 51512; TG 5210 0775)

by Heather Wallis, freelance archaeologist

A watching brief for Wellington Construction Ltd within the western limits of the Carmelite Friary precinct recorded robber trenches and walls probably relating to the Friary. These may indicate terracing or reclamation of land on the western side of the Great Yarmouth spit towards the River Yare. In addition, a number of post-medieval walls and floor surfaces were recorded. These were elements of buildings and yards which once formed part of the Yarmouth Rows. Numerous clay tobacco pipes were recovered reflecting the presence of pappermakers on Row 47 which once crossed the site.

King's Lynn, Marks & Spencer (NHER 51547; TF 6176 2021)

by Michael Boyle, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological excavation was carried out for Marks & Spencer Plc in advance of the construction of a new elevator and lift within their King's Lynn store. The excavation revealed that settlement on the site began in the 11th–13th centuries, with evidence for make-up deposits, refuse pits and a probable drainage channel. Two probable hearths and associated deposits provided evidence for occupation of the site in the 15th century. Pottery sherds representing three 14th–15th-century dripping or fish dishes were recovered (Fig. 1). These and the dominance of domestic fowl in the faunal remains assemblage raise the possibility of a commercial enterprise selling prepared, cooked birds and other meats (including fish). The collection of two horncores from probable 15th-century deposits also suggests some small-scale hornworking at this time. NAU Archaeology Report 1732.

Little Cressingham, Watton Sewage Treatment Works (NHER 4697; TF 8860 0016)

by Matt Ratcliff, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological evaluation was carried out for Anglian Water. Six trenches were excavated across an area of levelled ground to the north of the existing treatment works. The trenches in the central area of the site revealed alternating bands of fine grey silt and peaty organic deposits, suggesting phases of flooding. Roman features and finds indicate the close proximity of a substantial structure, which included a hypocaust or bathhouse. The size and type of Roman tiles and ceramic building material suggest the presence of two different buildings or at least a single building with two phases of construction. Combined with the close proximity of the river, it seems likely that this building was a bathhouse. The pottery and coins indicate settlement between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. Small quantities of Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery was recovered, perhaps indicating activity on the site during these periods, although they may have been introduced via manuring. NAU Archaeology Report 1950.

Loddon, Old Police Station (NHER 51710; TM 3617 9880)

by Helen Stocks, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological evaluation was carried out for Norfolk Constabulary in the car park of the Old Police Station. One 4m x 4m trench was excavated revealing one undated pit and one Late Saxon pit cut into the natural. The finds from these pits indicate that they were used to dispose of domestic rubbish. Although the excavated features are quite modest, little archaeological work has been done within the core of the village and these pits add to our understanding of Late Saxon Loddon. NAU Archaeology Report 1905.



Plate 4 Hoveton Hall, Neatishead: the glasshouse from the south-east.
©NAU Archaeology.

Mautby, near Scare Gap Farm (NHER 52758; TG 4960 0960)

by Heather Wallis, freelance archaeologist

Monitoring of excavations associated with new flood defences to the south of the River Bure for Broadland Environmental Services Ltd revealed a series of naturally accumulated deposits from which Roman pottery sherds were recovered. The presence of these finds was somewhat surprising, as during the Roman period this area lay within the 'Great Estuary'. The presence of post-medieval pottery at a higher level is also difficult to account for. It can be suggested that this part of the marsh remained as a pond or depression for several centuries and on occasions was used for the disposal of material.

Neatishead, Hoveton Hall (NHER 8297; TG 3158 2004)

by Andy Phelps, NAU Archaeology

An historic building survey was undertaken of the glasshouse at Hoveton Hall for Purcell Miller Tritton ahead of work to restore the Grade II* listed structure. Three test-pits were also excavated. The survey identified several likely phases of construction beginning with an early 19th-century cast-iron lean-to with possible hypocaust heating system. Ancillary buildings were also constructed to the north, with two concealing walls being constructed to the east and west. Towards the end of the 19th or beginning of the 20th century the addition of flanking walls containing symmetrical semi-circular headed doorways either side of the southern façade superseded these earlier walls. Finally, at some point between 1919 and 1929, an extension was inserted into the centre of the southern façade by Messenger and Co. of Loughborough

thus creating the building's current T-shaped plan. NAU Archaeology Report 2019.

New Buckenham, Marsh Lane (NHER 51520; TM 0868 9028)

by Michael Boyle, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken for RDB Construction UK Ltd. The Norman defensive town ditch was located and found to be oriented NNW–SSE making it the western arm of the enclosure, the ditch having already turned from the southern east–west arm a short distance to the south. Partial excavation of the ditch revealed a series of tips of material in the upper portion of the feature and medieval and post-medieval artefacts were recovered. A second trench located to the east of the ditch contained late post-medieval features and one possible medieval pit. NAU Archaeology Report 1833.

Norwich, Barrack Street, Plot H, Jarrolds (NHER 51751; TG 2357 0936)

by Chris Birks, Chris Birks Archaeology

This area outside the city walls was marginal and probably often waterlogged during the medieval period. It was probably little inhabited and used as pasture. It is known that during the 13th/14th century the ground level had been built up above the marsh and that further raising occurred during the post-medieval and modern periods. The earliest activities on site were indicated by the recovery of a small quantity of late medieval/early post-medieval pottery from the subsoil. Remains of the medieval city wall and the defensive ditch were observed. A 19th-century malthouse wall associated

with Pockthorpe Brewery had been built upon the medieval wall, evidently using it as foundations (Plate 5). Post-medieval structural remains were identified and relate to the rear, or an outbuilding, of a property fronting Barrack Street. Part of this structure had almost certainly been used as a coal store and successive relaying of the chalk surface was evident. Chris Birks Archaeology Report CB111R.

Norwich, 4–8 Ber Street (NHER 51618; TG 2324 0821)

by Tom Woolhouse and Adam Dyson, Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Evaluation trenching revealed a deep, stratified sequence of remains dating from the 12th century onwards. A range of well-preserved 12th–14th-century ‘backyard’ features including burgage plot boundary ditches, rubbish pits and wells was encountered. More significant were the flint and brick foundations of a substantial high-status late medieval building, located towards the rear of the site. The building was probably constructed around AD 1400 and contained a sequence of beaten clay floors, partition walls and occupation layers. Two probable bronze smelting furnaces were also

present, the earliest of which was located inside one room of the medieval building. Abundant fragments of re-deposited furnace lining indicate that bronze-working also took place in other areas of the site. This industrial activity probably spanned the 14th–16th centuries. AS Report 3188.

Norwich, land between Calvert Street and St George’s Street (NHER 51566; TG 2301 0909)

by Heather Wallis and Thomas Lyons, Oxford Archaeology East

Evaluation revealed a sequence of archaeological deposits, the earliest of which took the form of ditches and pits which probably date from the 12th century. Evidence of at least two sequential 13th–14th-century buildings was recorded. These were followed by a series of 14th–16th-century pits. Post-medieval remains included further pits and suggested the presence of buildings along the St George’s Street frontage. OA East Report 1039.

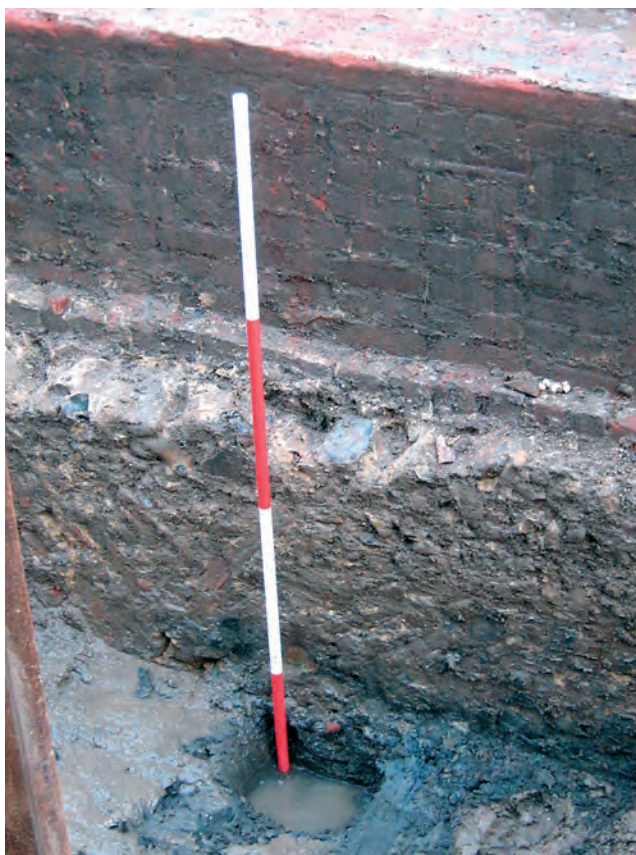


Plate 5 Norwich, Barrack Street showing the malthouse wall overlying the medieval City Wall. Scale 2m.
©Chris Birks



Plate 6 Excavations at Calvert Street/St George’s Street, Norwich.
©Oxford Archaeology East

Norwich, Daynes Sports Hall, St Faith's Lane (NHER 51338;TG 2343 0869)

by David Adams, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological excavation was carried out for the Norwich School. The earliest evidence for human activity at the site comprised a small number of post-holes. Though possibly structural, no coherent building plan could be discerned in the arrangement of these features. The artefacts and stratigraphy suggest a possible Late Saxon date for them. A pit containing metalworking debris was associated with these features. Sealing this phase of activity was a north-south road with a metalled surface and wheel ruts. Pottery recovered from this feature dates its use to the 10th–11th centuries. Projecting the line of this road northwards would have brought it close to where the Late Saxon church of St Ethelbert is thought to have stood. The slighting of other Late Saxon features hints at a planned approach to the setting out of this road. Antler-working debris had been disposed of on this road, and a cellared Late Saxon building to the west of this road might have been used for activities such as antler-working.

In the 11th century the road seems to have fallen out of use and this abandonment might reflect post-11th-century changes to the urban topography following the Norman Conquest, in particular the construction of the Cathedral precinct. During the medieval period the site was owned by a Franciscan friary – the Greyfriars – and construction of a substantial building took place, with a large wall up to 1.10m wide erected to the south of the site. This building formed part of a previously unknown friary building. Documentary

evidence provides a plausible terminus post quem for its construction, as the parcel of land on which the excavation took place was not owned by the friary until after 1292. The site was expected to lie within the Greyfriars cemetery, but apart from a single skull probably redeposited in modern times, no evidence for the cemetery was recovered. NAU Archaeology Report 1775a (Assessment).

Norwich, The Fleming Building, The Close (NHER 51413; TG 2341 0897)

by David Adams, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological excavation was carried out for the Norwich School. The most significant archaeological remains uncovered were a possibly Middle Saxon pit or working hollow containing antler- and horn-working debris and a small number of Late Saxon pits. Domestic waste, such as pottery sherds, oyster shells and animal bones, was recovered from these features, and the presence of residual metalworking debris within some of them suggests iron smelting took place nearby. The peak of activity on the site seems to have occurred in the 10th–11th centuries. Enclosure of the site within the precinct of the Cathedral Priory by, at the latest, 1318 prevented further secular development of the site. Later truncation had removed much of the archaeological sequence and the site was overlaid by a depth of post-medieval garden soils. A disarticulated human skull recovered during the excavation is considered to be a reburial of remains perhaps disturbed in post-medieval or modern times. NAU Archaeology Report 1774a (Assessment).



Plate 7 Norwich School, Daynes Sports Hall: view of the excavation looking north-west with the road on the right. Scale 2m.

©NAU Archaeology

Norwich, St Andrew's Hall (NHER 428; TG 2316 0881)

by David Adams, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken for Norwich HEART in advance of proposed changes to the St Andrew's Hall complex. Two trenches in the car-park north-east of St Andrew's Hall revealed several pits, the earliest of which perhaps dated from the mid-11th century, although the majority of these pits dated from the late 12th–14th centuries. Sealing these pits were dumps of chalk and clays interpreted as a construction raft for the friary. Further clay deposits overlay this raft and trading tokens recovered from them suggested they had been laid down in the 16th century or possibly slightly earlier. A further two trenches to the south of St Andrew's Hall recorded a small number of pits thought to be no earlier than the 16th century. The area currently occupied by gardens had been truncated to the depth of the underlying chalk, possibly during the laying out of the friary. A small number of post-medieval pits were also identified. A Ground Penetrating Radar survey was also undertaken which appears to have identified the eastern wall of the chapterhouse. NAU Archaeology Report 1414; Arrow Geophysics Report 104-08).

Norwich, St Benedict's Street (NHER 51320; TG 2244 0883)

by Gary Trimble, Archaeological Project Services

An evaluation for Ingleton Wood on land just within the city wall and near to the site of St. Benedict's Gate recorded 13th–14th-century pits, probably quarries for the extraction of sand or chalk. In the later medieval or early post-medieval period a timber structure with a chalk floor was built fronting an intramural road. In the 18th century this timber building was replaced by a flint and brick structure, which was demolished in the early 20th century. APS Report 73/08.

Norwich, St Faith's Lane and Cathedral Street (NHER 49074; TG 2362 0868)

by Matt Hobson, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken for Hopkins Homes on foundations for residential flats. The construction site lay just inside the former medieval Greyfriars precinct. A prior archaeological evaluation had found little evidence for medieval activity on the site, but the watching brief recorded evidence for a possible medieval churchyard, with a quantity of human bone representing at least three adult individuals being recovered. A flint and mortar-built medieval structure was also found to the east of the possible graves and may have formed one boundary of the burial area. NAU Archaeology Report 1790.

Norwich, St Peter's Street/Market Place (NHER 26202; TG 2292 0851)

by John Percival, NAU Archaeology

A metric survey and historic building recording were undertaken for NPS Property Consultants Ltd at the Memorial Gardens, between City Hall and Market Place. The recording

took the form of a measured CAD survey achieved via rectified photography. Each element of the monument and gardens was then numbered and its condition recorded. An archaeological watching brief was also undertaken during geotechnical investigations below the concrete floor of the undercroft/store below the gardens. This work indicates that all archaeological remains below the undercroft appear to have been destroyed during its construction. NAU Archaeology Report 1520.

Reedham (NHER 52759; TG 4153 0153)

by Heather Wallis, freelance archaeologist

New flood defences at Limpenhoe marshes have been constructed as part of the Broadland Flood Alleviation Scheme. A watching brief, carried out on behalf of Broadland Environmental Services Limited, identified and recorded the presence of a post-medieval brick clamp which has been preserved in situ. Recent study of aerial photographs has revealed evidence of adjacent clay pits.

Salhouse, Former Service Station (NHER 51770; TG 3070 1421)

by Fiona Wooler, for NAU Archaeology

Historic building recording was carried out of redundant buildings to the rear of the former service station for Cator + Co. The service station is located on the site of a 19th-century windmill which stood until the 1930s. Between 1883 and 1906, other buildings were constructed to the north-west of the windmill, which may have related to a maltings. The recorded buildings included three brick-built structures which appear to have been some form of industrial buildings and modern garage buildings which utilised the earlier buildings. NAU Archaeology Report 1899.

Shipdham, Church Close (NHER 42664; TF 9650 0720)

by John Ames, Steve Hickling and Stephen Morgan, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological excavation was carried out for Abel Homes, during which a prehistoric burnt flint spread was examined and revealed to be very shallow and heavily disturbed in places. The most significant excavated features were two probably Middle Saxon post-built structures (Plate 8). Although a limited amount of pottery was recovered from the structures, associated pits produced timbers radiocarbon dated to Cal AD 650–890, Early Saxon pottery and Middle Saxon Ipswich Ware. Further Middle Saxon pottery was recovered from several ditches, but it is uncertain whether these ditches were actually of Middle Saxon origin. Significant evidence for Middle Saxon trading was found in the form of a number of coins: four sceattas (AD 710–765) and two cut dirhams (AD 754–775 and 813–825).

Two Late Saxon structures and associated ditch systems produced 10th–11th-century pottery, while the nearby presence of a moated medieval manor suggests that a reshaping of the landscape occurred during the medieval period. The other medieval and post-medieval evidence consisted of field boundaries. Other undated post-holes and beam-slots were



Plate 8 Church Close, Shipdham: Middle Saxon post-hole structure looking east.
©NAU Archaeology

located, while an undated linear arrangement of posts and a semi-circular post-hole group are suggestive of animal stockades or a palisade. NAU Archaeology Report 1367b.

Stoke Ferry, The Old Railway Station (NHER 51548; TL 7064 9961)

by Andrew Corrigan, Oxford Archaeology East

Stoke Ferry Station was the terminus of the Stoke Ferry Branch and was a small station designed to serve the local community through the provision of a passenger service and transportation into and out of the village for freight. Three of the original station buildings survive on the site, providing a good example of a small Victorian country train station. OA East Report 1028.

Terrington St Clement, Churchgate Way (NHER 51397; TF 55176 20802)

by Matt Hobson, NAU Archaeology

An archaeological evaluation was carried out for Mansell Construction Services Ltd. Six rubbish pits, six drainage

ditches or land boundaries, and eight animal burials, mostly of pigs and piglets, were revealed. All of the features were medieval or post-medieval and suggest the existence of a smallholding or farm on this location during the later medieval period. The faunal remains provide evidence for the consumption of beef, mutton and pork, and perhaps a later specialization in pig farming during the post-medieval period. NAU Archaeology Report 1231.

Thetford, Thetford Priory Security Project (NHER 5748; TL 8653 8336)

by Jon House and Paul Spoerry, Oxford Archaeology East

Improvements to the perimeter fencing, a new gateway, and strategic tree planting were undertaken to improve security at Thetford Priory. In the vicinity of the new gateway archaeological remains were encountered, including a portion of potential medieval wall. OA East Report 1073.