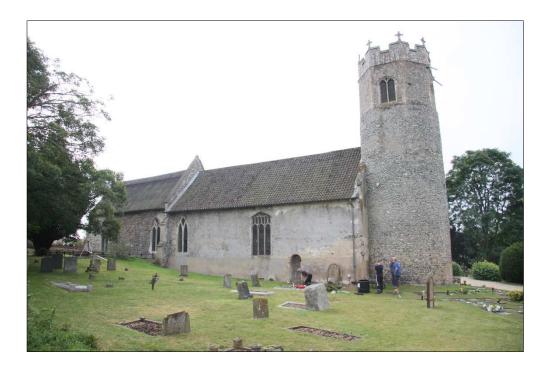
Archaeological Monitoring at St Edmund's Church, Costessey Road, Taverham, Norfolk.



Prepared on behalf of the PCC

Giles Emery BA, MCIfA October 2019

Report No: 132

NHES Event No: ENF146502 Job Ref: NVC19/505 OASIS ID: norvicar1-377262



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Archaeological Monitoring at St Edmund's Church, Costessey Road, Taverham, Norfolk. NR8 6SY.

Faculty No.	2019-030972*	OASIS ID	norvicar1-377262
NHES Event Number	ENF146502	Grid Reference	TG 1607 1381 (church)
CNF Number	CNF48688	Accession Number	NWHCM 2019.330
Contracting Unit Ref	NVC19/505	Date of fieldwork:	9 th September 2019
*Diocesan Advisory C	ommittee for Norfd	olk	

1.0 Introduction

Norvic Archaeology was commissioned by the PCC of St Edmund's Church, Taverham to undertake archaeological monitoring of groundworks under archaeological supervision and control during the installation of a waste-water pump and pipe.

The archaeological monitoring was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by the Historic Environment Service (HES Ref: CNF48688) on behalf of the Diocesan Advisory Committee for Norfolk (Faculty No. 2019-030972).

The church has Saxo-Norman origins and has an impressive round tower with an octagonal top. The west wall of the nave and part of the north wall may be contemporary with the early tower. The church was extended in the 13th and 14th centuries and altered after a fire in 1495. Late Saxon and medieval pottery and other Saxon artefacts have been found in the general vicinity suggesting occupation activity focused around the site.

The aim of the monitoring work was to record the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and features identified during groundworks during development of a c.500m² plot. This report presents a brief description of the methodology followed and an archaeological interpretation of the results

On completion of the project, the site archive will be offered for long term deposition with Norfolk Museums Service (Accession No. 2018.330).

2.0 Summary of Results

The archaeological monitoring recorded the presence of three graves of probable medieval date within the limited confines of the hand-dug pump chamber pit, positioned close to the north-west corner of the church. The graves were dug into the natural chalk, revealed at a depth of c.0.7m. One such grave was particularly small and contained the remains of a neonatal burial.

To the east of the pump chamber pit, the pipe trench cut across a partly collapsed subterranean brick vaulted tomb. This post-medieval tomb was infilled by rubble and soil, although a large void still remained inside. The bricks used in its construction are of a type typically manufactured in Norfolk from the late 18th to 19th century.

Remarkably low numbers of fragmentary human remains were collected for reburial during the course of the trenching work. Just three metal objects were collected, none of which can be attributed to the fills of archaeological features: a military coat button, a plain silvered button and a fragment of lead window came.

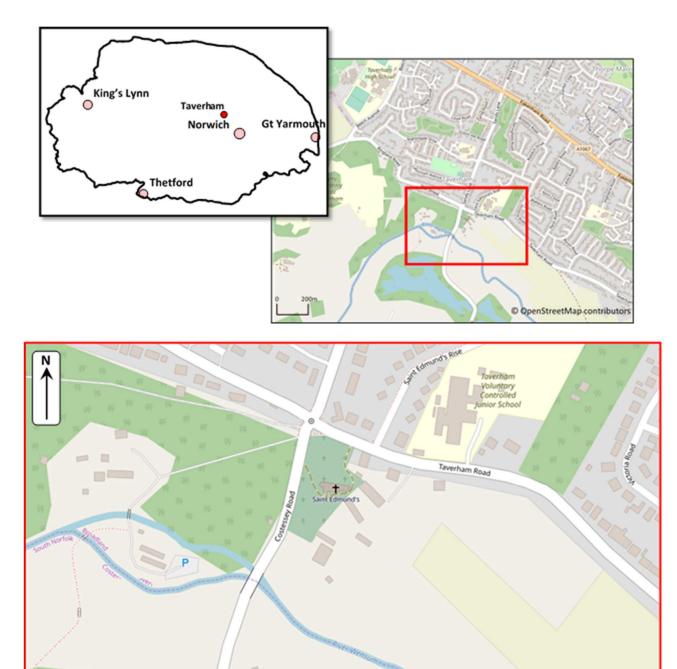


Figure 1. General Site Location Plan

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3.0 Geology and Topography (Figures 1 and 2)

Taverham lies c.6km to the north-west of the outskirts of Norwich, with St Edmund's church located on the southern edge of the modern extent of the village. The church is positioned at the junction of Taverham Road and Costessey Road on the northern slopes of the River Wensum valley; c.160m north of the river at c.14m OD. The church building is partly terraced into sloping ground which forms the cemetery area.

The underlying geology is Upper Chalk (Cretaceous Period), overlain by superficial Quaternary alluvium deposits of clays, silts and gravels - Geology of Britain Viewer at a scale of 1:50 000 (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

The sub-surface geology of the site encountered during the fieldwork can be characterised as a firm to hard white chalk drift, uncovered directly below the subsoil close to the northern side of the church.

4.0 Brief Archaeological and Historical Background (*Figures 1 and 2*)

The parish of Taverham is situated in the Broadland District of Norfolk and Taverham. The village is located adjacent to the River Wensum. This valley side location has yielded a particularly high concentration of evidence for prehistoric activity, with several find spots of flint objects recorded in relatively close proximity to the St Edmund's church.

The parish has a long history and the village was well established by the time of the Norman Conquest. Its population, land ownership and productive resources were detailed in the Domesday Book listings of 1086; the parish possessed a share in several mills and an established church, as well as numerous sheep and pigs. The patron saint of Taverham is St Walstan who according to legend lived and worked in the village in the 11th century.

St Edmund's Church in Taverham (NHER 7908) has Saxo-Norman origins and has an impressive round tower, now with an octagonal top and flushwork battlements. The west wall of the nave and part of the north wall and a north door may be contemporary Saxo-Norman fabric. The church was extended in the 13th and 14th centuries and altered after a fire in 1495. Inside, there is the head of a Late Saxon cross and various pieces of exceptional medieval woodwork, including a beautiful carved communion rail with flamboyant tracery.

The church is the only Saxon site or monument currently recorded in Taverham and several Saxon artefacts have been recovered relatively close by, possibly indicating localised settlement associated with the church. They include a Saxon whetstone and pottery sherds discovered during the development of the adjacent Rectory in 1948 (NHER 7842) and metal detected finds from open land and fields surrounding the church site. Evidence for Early Saxon activity is represented by an Early Saxon girdle hanger fragment, found to the south-east of the church (NHER 24896). Two Late Saxon disc brooches have been found to date, one at the playing field (NHER 23866) and another on land even closer to the church (NHER 23988). A late Saxon strap end was found close to the River Wensum (NHER 23987). The most intriguing find from this period is a particularly fine 10th century Viking trefoil brooch known locally as the 'Taverham Piece' (NHER 24649).

No medieval manor house survives in Taverham, although two possible manorial sites have been identified. The first is in Taverham Park and takes the form of several rectangular ditched enclosures (NHER 25715), while documents show that the second existed closer to the church to the rear of St Edmund's Middle School in an area covered by modern housing (NHER 13249).

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During the medieval period Taverham may have had a Holy Well, a watermill and a Guildhall. St Walstan's Well was the supposed resting place of the saint's hearse, but its exact location in Taverham is uncertain (NHER 12254). Records also indicate that Taverham had a medieval guildhall (NHER 13257), no physical evidence of which has yet been found. The watermill is marked on maps in the area of Tunstall's yard to the south of the church (NHER 29022), and this could well have been one of the mills mentioned in the Domesday Book entry for Taverham.

Sites in the immediate proximity or of particular relevance or interest which fall in close proximity to the site include:

The following information has been sourced from the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER)

NHER 7908: St Edmund's Church, Taverham. This church has Saxo-Norman origins and has an impressive round tower with an octagonal top and flushwork battlements. The west wall of the nave, part of the north wall and a north door may be contemporary Saxo-Norman fabric. The church was extended in the 13th and 14th centuries and altered after a fire in 1495. Inside there is the head of a Late Saxon cross and various pieces of exceptional medieval woodwork, including a beautiful carved communion rail with flamboyant tracery. In 1996 a Resistivity Survey was carried out in order to locate a chapel on the north side of the church. This survey revealed anomalies that seem to be coincident with an existing burial plot (Unpublished Document: Cott, P. 1997.). In 2004, Archaeological Monitoring of service trenches recorded the base of a probable Victorian boiler and a deposit of bricks in the area of a new toilet building (Article in Serial: Gurney, D. and Penn, K. 2005. Excavations and Surveys in Norfolk in 2004. Norfolk Archaeology. p 760). Some of the bricks were identified as medieval in date and others were of post-medieval date.

NHER 7842: Saxon whetstone and Saxon or medieval pottery sherds. In 1948 traces of burnt earth, fragments of medieval or Saxon pottery and a Saxon whetstone were recovered at a depth of c.0.46m during the construction of a soakaway for the newly constructed Rectory. [c. 45m NE]

NHER 55262: Taverham Victorian School. A single-room school built in 1851 with attached schoolhouse; plain with restrained gothic features. Now part of a private house. [c. 50m NE]

NHER 41916: Church Farm Barn. This brick barn dates to the late 18th/early 19th century. The apparent cutdown cart porch in fact appears to be an original feature. Several later 19th century additions have been made. [c. 65m ESE]

NHER 13257: Possible site of a Medieval guildhall. Records show that Taverham had a medieval guildhall. No trace of the guildhall has been found but there is a Taverham Guildhall in Norwich. According to an informant, the guild house belonged to Costessey, then to Taverham then the court was transferred to Norwich, which may explain why the name was carried over into the Norwich building. [c. 85m N]

NHER 22989: Prehistoric flint flake, west side of middle school. In 1986, a single prehistoric flint flake in fresh condition was found in a flower bed on the west side of the school. [c. 100m NE]

NHER 24897: Late Saxon/ Early medieval copper alloy object. Metal detecting at Church Farm in 1988 recovered a Late Saxon/early medieval gilt bronze circular object. The object had a cast human face surrounded by pellets. No function or purpose was ascribed to this object. [c. 100m ESE]

NHER 23988: Late Saxon disc brooch. Metal detecting at Church Farm in 1987 recovered a Late Saxon disc brooch with Borre style decoration. The brooch showed signs of silvering or tinning and was missing its catchplate. [c. 130m SE]

NHER 29022: Site of medieval watermill, Tunstalls Yard. According to medieval documents, a watermill once existed on the river south of the church. [c. 150m SSW]

NHER 23987: Late Saxon strap end. Metal detecting close to the River Wensum in 1987 recovered a Late Saxon copper alloy strap end decorated with two rows of four ring-and-dot motifs. [c. 230m SE]

NHER 40550: Late Neolithic/Bronze Age flint arrowhead. At some time prior to June 2004, a Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age Barbed and tanged flint arrowhead was found at a property along Laburnum Avenue. [c. 230m NW]

NHER 23866: Late Saxon disc brooch. Metal detecting at the playing field in 1987 recovered a Late Saxon disc brooch with cast relief ornamentation in the form of tendrils. [c. 240m ESE]

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NHER 19753: Neolithic flaked flint axehead. In 1983 a Neolithic chipped flint axehead was found in a soil heap near the newly completed Surgery and close to the Scout Hut, on soil that came from the nearby allotments. [c. 275m NNE]

NHER 24896: Early Saxon girdle hanger fragment. Metal detecting in fields close to the playing field in 1988 recovered an openwork terminal belonging to an Early Saxon girdle hanger. The terminal had punched decoration. Subsequent metal-detecting in 2011 recovered two post-medieval coins. [c. 320m]

NHER 7832: Neolithic polished flint axehead. In 1951 part of a Neolithic polished flint axehead was found on the ground surface on land close to the junction of Sandy Lane, and Nightingale Drive. [c. 350m]

NHER 13429: Possible site of medieval manor. According to a map of 1740 this is the site of a medieval manor. If this was the Prior's Manor, it had been rebuilt on an old site in 1342 with a new chapel, and had a vineyard established before 1263-1317. Sadly, it is hard to investigate the site further as the field here had been completely built over by around 1960. [c. 365m ESE]]

NHER 24649: Viking trefoil brooch, 'The Taverham Piece'. Metal detecting in fields close to the River Wensum during 1988 recovered a very fine 10th century Viking trefoil brooch. [c. 650m SE]

5.0 Methodology (Figure 3)

The objective of the archaeological monitoring was to record archaeological evidence revealed during the groundworks, conducted under archaeological supervision and control.

The trench to contain the pump chamber was excavated using spades, while the outflow pipe trench connecting to an existing manhole was excavated using a 1.5-ton 360[°] tracked machine fitted with a shallow toothed bucket. The pump trench was enlarged slightly due to the presence of an electric cable and reached a maximum depth of 0.75m, while the pipe trench was excavated to a depth of c. 0.5m.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector (Minelab XTerra 705). All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using Norvic Archaeology *pro forma* sheets. The trench location, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and digital images were taken of all relevant features and deposits.



Plate 2. Trenching works in progress, looking West.

All levels were tied to an OS benchmark of 13.8m OD located on the south-west corner of the church at c. 0.3m above ground level.

The weather was overcast, with occasional light showers throughout the day.

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6.0 Results (Appendix 1a) (Figures 3 to 5)

• 'Natural deposits'

Natural hard chalk (11) was reached at a depth of c. 0.75m within the confines of the pump chamber trench and only revealed again at a depth of c.0.5m at the base of sloping ground in the area of a subterranean vault c.4.5m to the east.

• Cemetery soils

Above the natural chalk was a cemetery subsoil (02); a firm, mid-yellowish-brown, very sandy-clay with occasional chalk patches of c. 0.35m depth. This lay below a well-mixed cemetery topsoil (01); a friable, mid-brownish-grey silty-sand with moderate chalk flecks and occasional pieces of late brick. The topsoil measured c.0.4m deep and contained frequent roots.

Fragmentary human skeletal remains

During the course of the groundworks, only a very small number of fragmentary skeletal elements were collected from the soils for



Plate 3. Chamber pit with grave cuts at base (looking South) [1x2m Scale]

reburial. They amounted to c.25 pieces and included small to medium sized fragments of mandible, long bones, ribs, foot bones and a single fragment of neonatal long bone. These remains were inserted into the burial vault 03 prior to the back filling of the pipe trench.

• Graves

Three graves were partly revealed, cut into the natural chalk within the very base of the hand-dug pump chamber trench at a depth of c.0.7m. The eastern and western end of two grave cuts of probable adult sized graves ([07] & [09]) were left undisturbed. A small and shallower grave ([04]) contained articulated neonatal remains (05), which were only partly uncovered. The remains were left in place and carefully sealed with a protective layer of soil. The base of the trench was then lined with a permeable textile membrane prior to the insertion of the pump chamber.

No evidence for any iron coffin fittings or nails was apparent and all three graves contained a similar sterile fill of very friable, chalk flecked mid-yellowish-brown silty-sand. The graves are therefore suggested to be of medieval date.

• Brick vaulted tomb

The subsurface remains of an unmarked brick vaulted tomb (03) were encountered c.5m east of the pump chamber pit. Part of the vaulting had been previously broken or collapsed and was infilled by rubble and soil, although a large void remained inside. The bricks used in its construction are of a type typically manufactured in Norfolk from the late 18th to 19th century, which in this case were bonded with a hard lime rich mortar. The remains of an east-west dividing wall were also present, although it is possible that this could also mark a series of buried access steps.

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Plate 5. Brick tomb (03), internal image. (looking NNE)

Plate 4. Brick tomb (03). (looking East) [1x1m Scale]

7.0 Finds Analysis (Appendix 2)

Metal Objects

Very few residual finds were present within the disturbed cemetery soils, a few pieces of early to mid-20th century glass bottle and ceramics within the surface topsoil were noted at the far north-east end of the pipe trench and thought to be the result of rubbish burning.

Three metal objects were collected during the monitoring, none of which can be attributed to the fills of archaeological features: a military coat button, a plain silvered button and a fragment of lead window came.

Context No.	Material	Object	Object Date	
01	Copperalloy	Button	C18 th -19 th	
A complete plain discoidal button retaining its silvering, and rear suspension loop – soldered to a conical				
mount. Diameter of 18mm. Weight 3.2g				
01	Copper-alloy	Military button	C19th	
A small hollow-cast military cuff button. Marked W.T.WIGG & Co. Ltd. BIRMINGHAM.on reverse. Obverse				
design is the United Kingdom coat of arms with lion and unicorn rampant. Diameter 17mm, Weight 1.78g.				
01	Lead	Window came	Post-medieval	
A piece of window came twisted around a smaller scrap of came, probably intended to be kept as scrap for				
reuse. This a milled piece with a typical profile and deep web 15g.				

8.0 Conclusions

The archaeological monitoring recorded the presence of three graves of probable medieval date within the limited confines of the hand dug pump chamber pit, positioned close to the north-west corner of the church. The graves were dug into the natural chalk, revealed at a depth of c.0.7m. One such grave was particularly small and contained the remains of a neonatal burial. To the east of the pump chamber pit, the pipe trench cut across a partly collapsed subterranean brick vaulted tomb. This post-medieval tomb was infilled by rubble and soil, although a large void remained inside. The bricks used in its construction are of a type typically manufactured in Norfolk from the late 18th to 19th century

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9.0 Acknowledgements

The author is grateful to Reverend Paul Seabrook and Susan Beevor (Church warden) who commissioned Norvic Archaeology to carry out this work. Thanks are also due to Nick Barran and the team of Drainage Solutions for their assistance and cooperation on site. All stages of the monitoring and post-excavation analysis work were carried out by the author. NHER and data was supplied by the Historic Environment Service

10.0 Bibliography

Ashwin, T. & 2005 *An historical atlas of Norfolk.* (3rd edition). Phillimore press Davidson, A.(ed.)

Appendix 1a: Context Summary

Context	Category	Fill of	Brief Physical Description	Interpretation	Period
01	Deposit		Well-mixed, friable, mid brownish-grey silty-sand, mod. Chalk flecks, occ. stones, occ. late cbm pieces, mod. roots. c. 0.4m deep	Cemetery topsoil	Post-med. To Modern
02	Deposit		Firm, mid-yellowish-brown very sandy-clay with moderate silt content, occ. chalk patches, mod stones, occ. rootlets c. 0.35m deep	Cemetery subsoil	Medieval to post- medieval
03	Masonry		Brick vaulted structure with E-W longitudinal division, of typical L18th to 19 th hard fired, sandy red Norfolk brick bonded with a hard, white lime rich mortar. C. 1.95m L and >1.1.5m W.	Vaulted tomb	L18-19 th century
04	Cut		The base of a small grave, c. E-W, 0.25m W.	Grave	?Medieval
05	Skeleton	04	Remains of a neonatal burial with moderate preservation - only partly uncovered.	Neonatal burial	?Medieval
06	Deposit	04	V.friable, mid-yellowish-brown silty-sand, mod. chalk flecks, mod stones	Grave fill	?Medieval
07	Cut		Eastern end of a grave	Grave	?Medieval
08	Deposit	07	V.friable, mid-yellowish-brown silty-sand, mod. chalk flecks, mod stones	Grave fill	?Medieval
09	Cut		Western end of a grave	Grave	?Medieval
10	Deposit	10	V.friable, mid-yellowish-brown silty-sand, mod. chalk flecks, mod stones	Grave fill	?Medieval
11	Deposit		Firm to hard white chalk drift at c.0.7m below GL.	Natural chalk geology	-
12	Deposit		Brick rubble, plus a hard stone slab fragment above a soft, silty looking soil with a void above of c. 0.5m	Fill of 03	Modern

Appendix 1b: OASIS feature summary table

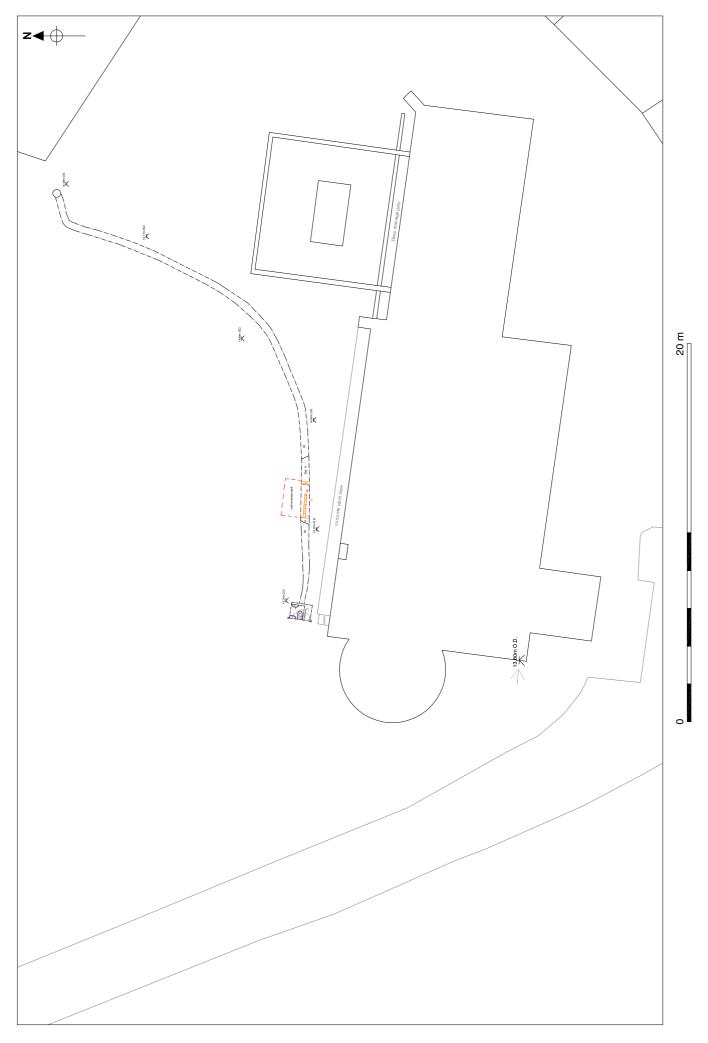
Period	Feature type	Quantity
Medieval (1066 to 1539AD)	Grave	3
Wedleval (1006 to 1559AD)	Inhumation – neonatal	1
Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)	Tomb	1

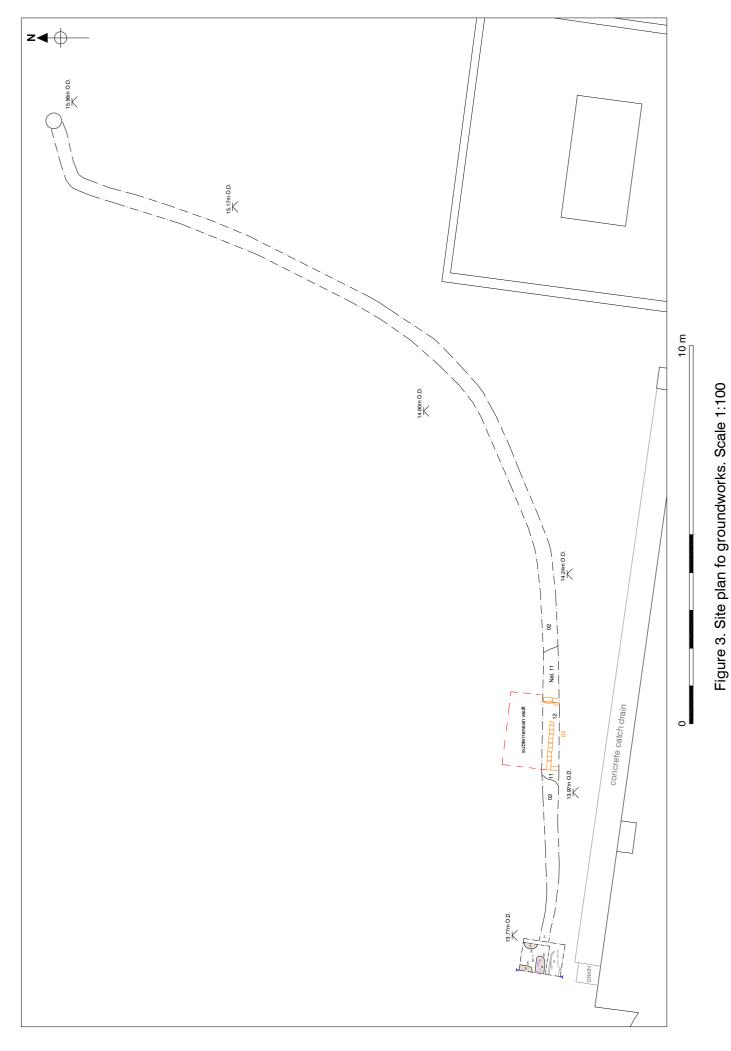
Appendix 2: Finds by Context and period

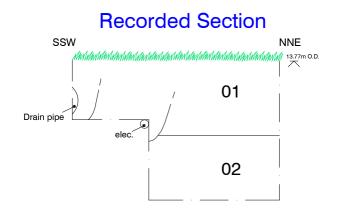
Context	Material/Object type	Wt (g)	Period
01	Copper-alloy; Military Button	3.2	Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)
01	Copper-alloy; Button	1.78	Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)
01	Lead; window came	15	Post-medieval (1540 to 1900AD)

Appendix 3: Factual Archive summary table

Factual Type	Quantity
Site diary sheets	1
Permatrace drawing sheets	1
Combined context and photo register sheet	1
Context Sheets	12
Digital Images	11
Dwg. CAD file	1







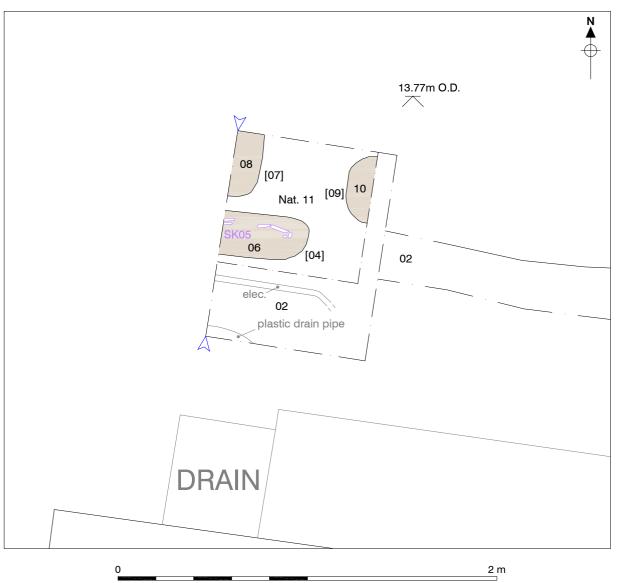


Figure 5. Pump Trench. Scale 1:20

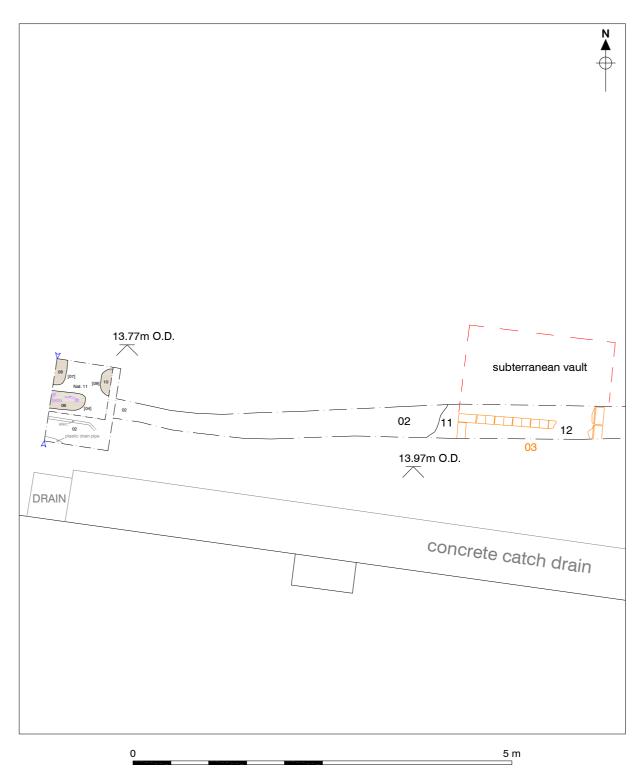


Figure 4. Plan of encountered features. Scale 1:50

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: norvicar1-377262

Project details

Project name	Archaeological Monitoring at St Edmund's Church, Costessey Road, Taverham, Norfolk.
Short description of the project	The results of archaeological monitoring of groundworks under archaeological supervision and control during the installation of a waste-water pump and pipe. The church has Saxo- Norman origins and has an impressive round tower with an octagonal top. The west wall of the nave and part of the north wall may be contemporary with the early tower. The church was extended in the 13th and 14th centuries and altered after a fire in 1495. Late Saxon and medieval pottery and other Saxon artefacts have been found in the general vicinity suggesting occupation activity focused around the site. The archaeological monitoring recorded the presence of three graves of probable medieval date within the limited confines of the hand dug pump chamber pit, positioned close to the north-west corner of the church. To the east of the pump chamber pit the pipe trench cut across a partly collapsed subterranean brick vaulted tomb. Remarkably low numbers of fragmentary human remains were collected for reburial during the course of the trenching work. Just three metal objects were collected, none of which can be attributed to the fills of archaeological features: a military coat button, a plain silvered button and a fragment of lead window came.
Project dates	Start: 09-09-2019 End: 09-09-2019
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENF142911 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	NVC19/505 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	GRAVE Medieval
Monument type	INHUMATION Medieval
Monument type	TOMB Post Medieval
Significant Finds	COPPER ALLOY BUTTONS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	LEAD WINDOW CAME Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Faculty jurisdiction

Project location

Country

England

12/16/2019

OASIS FORM - Print view

Site location	NORFOLK BROADLAND TAVERHAM St Edmund's Church, Costessey Road, Taverham
Postcode	NR8 6SY
Study area	500 Square metres
Site coordinates	TG 1607 1381 52.678356573821 1.19667992779 52 40 42 N 001 11 48 E Point

Project creators

· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	
Name of Organisation	Norvic Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Norvic Archaeology
Project director/manager	Giles Emery
Project supervisor	Giles Emery
Type of sponsor/funding body	Parochial Church Council
Name of sponsor/funding body	Taverham PCC

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	NMAS and Norvic Archaeology
Physical Contents	"Metal"
Digital Archive recipient	NMAS
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	NMAS
Paper Contents	"Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Diary","Drawing","Photograph","Report"

Project bibliography 1

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