

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

Monitoring Report

Apartment 3, Millicent House, Uplands, Victoria Road, Aldeburgh
(Planning Application C06/1439/FUL)

SMR- ADB 167

SCCAS Report No. 2006/218

Oasis ID. No. suffolkc1-19938

Robert Atfield: Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Field Team (Report)

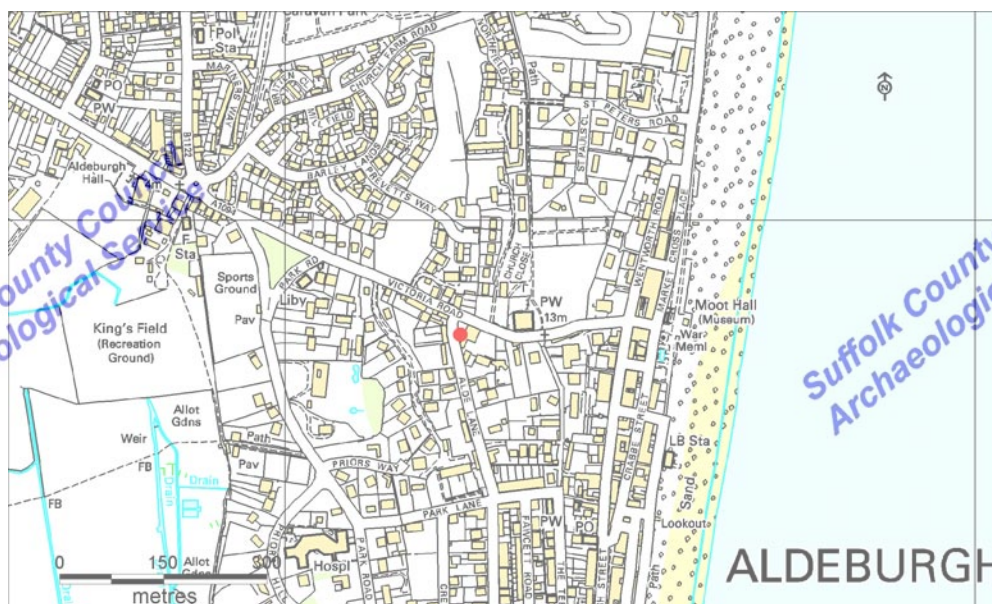
Jess Tipper: SCCAS Conservation Team (Brief and Specification)

John Newman: Field Officer/Contracts Manager

Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Apartment 3, Millicent House, Uplands, Victoria Road, Aldeburgh as a condition of planning application C06/1439/FUL; the monitoring is funded by Mr J. Harari. The site is immediately adjacent to the former Uplands Hotel centred on TM 4625 5683 where a small extension to the west rear wing of the existing Grade II listed building is to be constructed. This entailed digging around 9.5 linear metres of building footings. A single visit was made to the site on the morning of 31st October 2006. It was possible to examine the entire open trench, in bright dry conditions along with most of the upcast soil. However, in spite of a thorough examination of all deposits under the full co-operation of the landowners and contractors, the monitoring failed to produce any evidence of archaeological features or finds.

Site Location

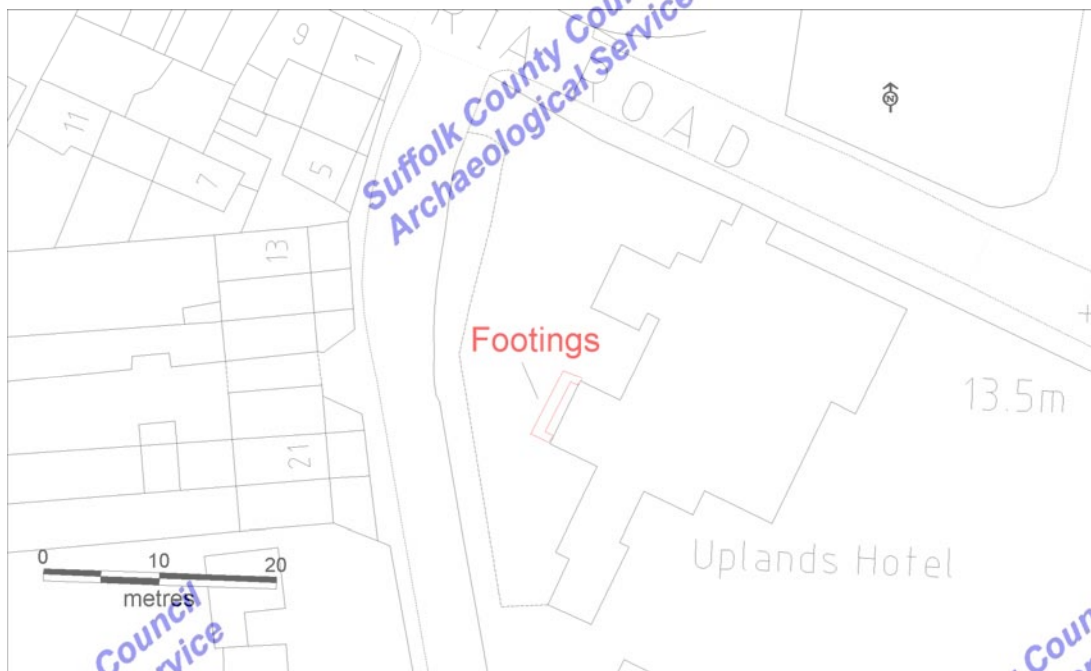


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Introduction

Jess Tipper of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team produced the Brief and Specification for the monitoring (dated: 09-10-2006). The site lies south-west of the medieval church of St. Peter and St. Paul's (ADB 018). This area is likely to lie within the historic settlement core of Aldeburgh and there is high potential for encountering medieval occupation deposits at this location (Tipper 2006). The original house dates from the early nineteenth century with an extension added around 1900. The house was lived in by Elizabeth Garrett Anderson (1836-1917), the first woman to qualify as a physician and surgeon in Britain and Britain's first female mayor, of Aldeburgh, in 1908. The poet George Crabbe (1754-1832) also lived here. The house was converted into a hotel in the mid-twentieth century during which time a large conservatory was added during the later 1900s. The building is constructed of whitewashed brick, with a black-glazed pan-tile roof. The ground disturbance ensuing from the present development consists of a small footing trench that abuts the north-west wall of the south-west wing. This area had formerly formed part of the hotel car park, while during the nineteenth century was covered by the driveway and formal wooded gardens of the original house.

Trench Location

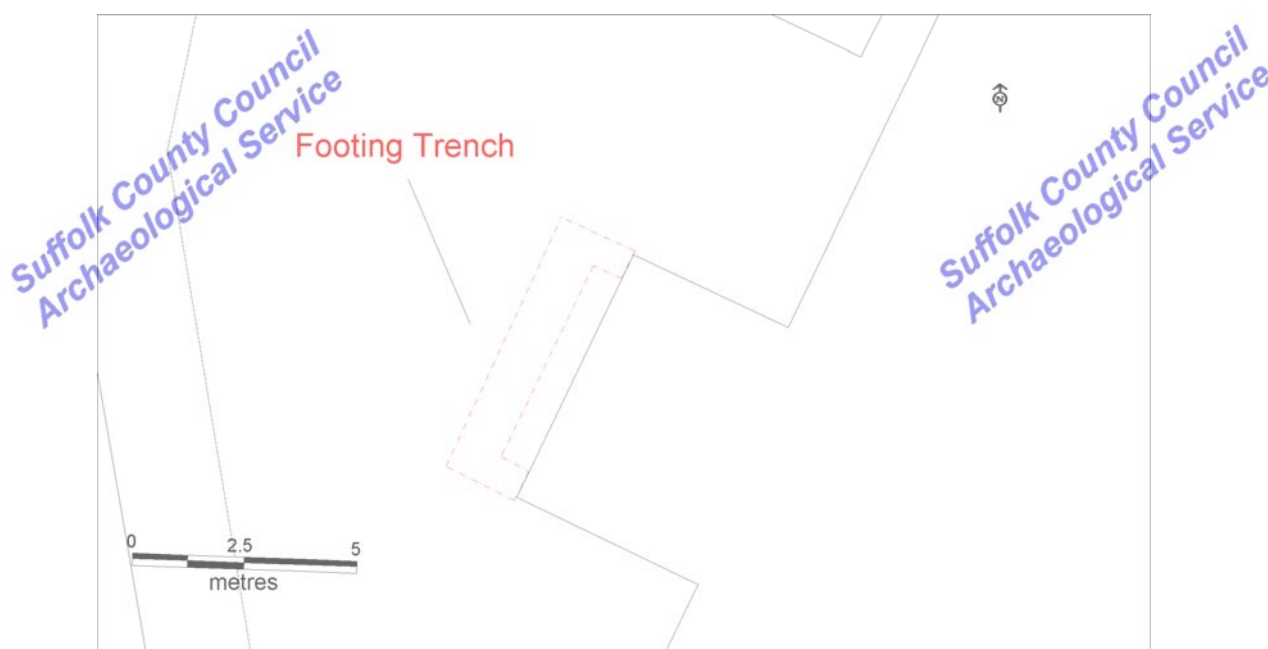


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Methodology

The area, within which the ground disturbance took place, measured around 6.10m. by 1.70m.. The main trench run was 1.00m. wide and the return sections, which met the existing wall, were 0.70m. in width. The depth of the footings consistently measured around 1.30m., although some collapse had already begun to occur. For this reason, no hand cleaning was carried out within the confines of the trenches. A sketch plan was made on site, which allowed the accurate recording of localised soil profiles, features or finds. Most of the soil from the excavated footings remained next to the trench and allowed a close search for any finds.

Detail of Trench Configuration



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Conclusion

Soil profiles were recorded at two locations within the trench and both were of similar characteristics. The uppermost layer consisted of 0.10m. of tarmac which had been laid on a bed of building sand and rubble up to 0.50m. in depth. Below these clearly modern deposits, a deep loosely compacted layer of mid-pale brown silty sand was seen which was between 0.50-0.80m. deep. This deposit was virtually free of stones, but did contain very occasional fragments of ceramic building materials, probably mainly tile, which had modern hard cement mortar adhering to the surfaces. Below this rather homogeneous layer was clean pale orange natural sand, seen to a depth of between 0.30-0.40m. but clearly deeper than the trench limit. No significant features or archaeological finds were observed within the trench faces or base and none were retrieved from the upcast soil. This area of ground was small, and quite possibly unrepresentative in terms of the site in general. From the characteristics that were recorded it seems evident that this particular area has seen considerable previous deep disturbance. This may be a result of previous garden or landscaping activity associated with the original house; or less possibly an earlier agriculturally developed deposit.

Robert Atfield
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Field Team
November 2006

References

English Heritage 2006 'Uplands Hotel, Aldeburgh (LBS Number 460501)' Listed Buildings Online, <http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk/BuildingDetailsForm>

Tipper, J. 2006 'Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development: Apartment 3, Millicent House, Uplands, Victoria Road, Aldeburgh' Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team. Bury St Edmunds.

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