

**Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill,
Hartest, Suffolk**

Planning application: B/12/00360/FHA

HER Ref: HRT 029

Archaeological Monitoring Report

(© John Newman BA MIFA, 2 Pearsons Place, Henley, Ipswich, IP6 0RA)

(October 2012)

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Site details for HER

Name: Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill, Hartest, Suffolk, IP29 4EH

Client: Mr & Mrs M Feather

Local planning authority: Babergh DC

Planning application ref: B/12/00360/FHA

Development: Erection of extension

Date of fieldwork: 18 September, 2012

HER Ref: HRT 029

OASIS: johnnewm1-135429

Grid ref: TL 8320 5280

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Summary: Hartest, Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill (HRT 029, TL 8320 5280) monitoring of foundation trenches for an extension close to an area where evidence of Roman period activity, including pottery production, was found in the 1950s did not record any archaeological features. However a small number of Roman period pottery sherds were retrieved from the upcast top and subsoil (John Newman Archaeological Services for Mr & Mrs M Feather).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 Mr & Mrs M Feather commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological monitoring of ground works required under a condition for a programme of archaeological works of the planning decision notice for application B/12/00360/FHA. The monitoring requirements were set out in a Brief set by Dr J Tipper of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service to satisfy this condition and in response JNAS produced the relevant Written Scheme of Investigation (see Appendix II) in order that conditional discharge could be gained from the LPA and ground works commence on site. This development concerns the erection an extension to Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill, Hartest (see Fig. 1).

1.2 Hartest lies approximately midway between Bury St Edmunds and Sudbury in south Suffolk in a landscape historically characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern partly focused within parishes on the respective church but largely scattered round the numerous greens and along roads and lanes. Meadowcroft is a modern house located on what was a nursery garden c70m north of a small stream and to the south of Cross Green; it is also some 500m north west of the parish church. The site lies at c64m OD and has a southerly aspect in an area of generally heavy local soils derived from the underlying chalky Till. Prior to ground works starting the proposed extension area was part of the access drive on the south-western side of Meadowcroft leading to some ground truncation having already taken place at the site.

1.3 Archaeological interest in this development was generated by its close proximity to the recorded find spot of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery sherds (HER HRT 001) indicative of settlement type activity from the then eroding banks of the stream to the south of Meadowcroft (see Fig. 2). In the eroding side of the stream evidence for Roman period pottery production was also noted as structural elements indicative of the presence of two kilns was also recorded in c1957 in addition to a surface scatter of pottery sherds around the area then occupied by green houses between the house and the stream.

2. Monitoring methodology

2.1 A single visit was made to the site to observe the excavation of the foundations for the extension and related soakaway pit as they progressed using a medium sized 360 machine equipped with a 500mm wide toothed bucket on a bright, sunny day with site visibility good at all times. The foundation trenches and soakaway pit were entered to allow for closer inspection of the exposed soil profiles and hand cleaning of indistinct areas. Upcast spoil was stockpiled nearby allowing for a close inspection for stray finds. The foundations were recorded in relation to nearby mapped features and a small number of digital images were taken in order to record the monitoring (see Appendix I).

3. Results

3.1 In total nearly 20m of 500mm wide and 1100mm deep foundation trench were examined along the sides of the extension footprint (see Fig. 2) while the soakaway pit to the south was 1100mm square and 1200mm deep. The southern foundation trench for the extension revealed a profile comprising 300/400mm of topsoil over 300mm of a mid brown clay subsoil with the naturally occurring glaciofluvial deposit

across the site proving to be a stiff pale brown chalky clay with flints as anticipated. Adjacent to the house the topsoil had already been removed when a concrete drive was laid in the recent past and in this area of the extension footprint the hard surface was broken up and stripped away prior to the ground works starting so the exposed deposit in the relevant lengths of trench was 100mm of remaining drive make-up over 300mm of mid brown clay subsoil. The soakaway pit to the south, and down slope, from the extension footprint proved to have a greater depth of top and subsoil with 600mm of the former over 400mm of the latter. The only feature noted during the monitoring was a modern rubble filled soakaway pit in the central part of the southern foundation trench for the extension.

3.2 As the ground works progressed the trench and soakaway sides and the upcast spoil were examined for archaeological finds and while only small fragments of Post medieval brick or tile were noted in the exposed sections a small number of pottery sherds were recovered from the soakaway pit spoil.

4. The Finds

4.1 As noted above a small number of pottery sherds (22/443g), in addition to a single fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem (4g), were recovered from the upcast spoil of the soakaway pit and the full report on this group by Stephen Benfield is included as Appendix III below. In summary the 22 sherds are all of Roman date with the majority being undiagnostic greywares with the few closely dateable sherds being indicative of activity in the area from the mid/late first century AD to the 3rd/4th century. Overall the composition and condition of the sherds in this small group is described as being typical of an unstratified assemblage 'reflecting various depositional histories.'

5. Conclusion

5.1 While evidence for Roman period activity at the site was confirmed during the monitoring by the small number of unstratified sherds recovered in the upcast spoil from the soakaway pit no archaeological features of any age were revealed and, similarly, no evidence for pottery production was recorded. However the ground works were on a small scale and it seems likely that Roman period features exist between the house and the stream, and in all likelihood beyond the house as well, with evidence from the soakaway pit excavation that the top and subsoil deposits increase in depth down the slope potentially giving good protection to any archaeology that is present.

5.2 In conclusion it is clear that the extent of the monitored strip foundations and related soakaway has had no affect on any archaeological deposits of significance. However the collection of an admittedly small group of unstratified pottery sherds has allowed a broad mid/late 1st to 3rd/4th century AD date bracket to be confirmed for Roman period activity at the site complementing the previous records.

(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to everyone on site for their close cooperation in relation to this site monitoring, to Esther Newman for processing the finds and to Stephen Benfield for his specialist report)

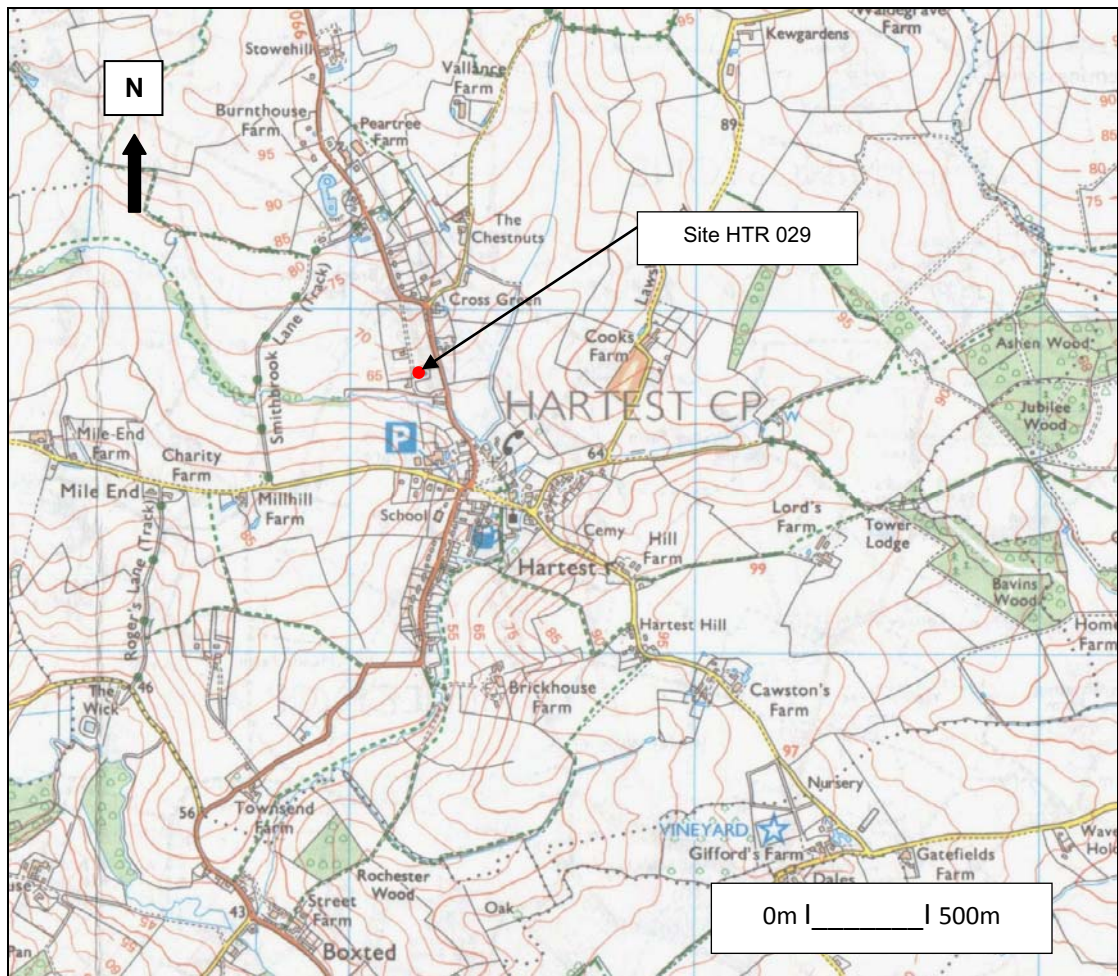


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2006
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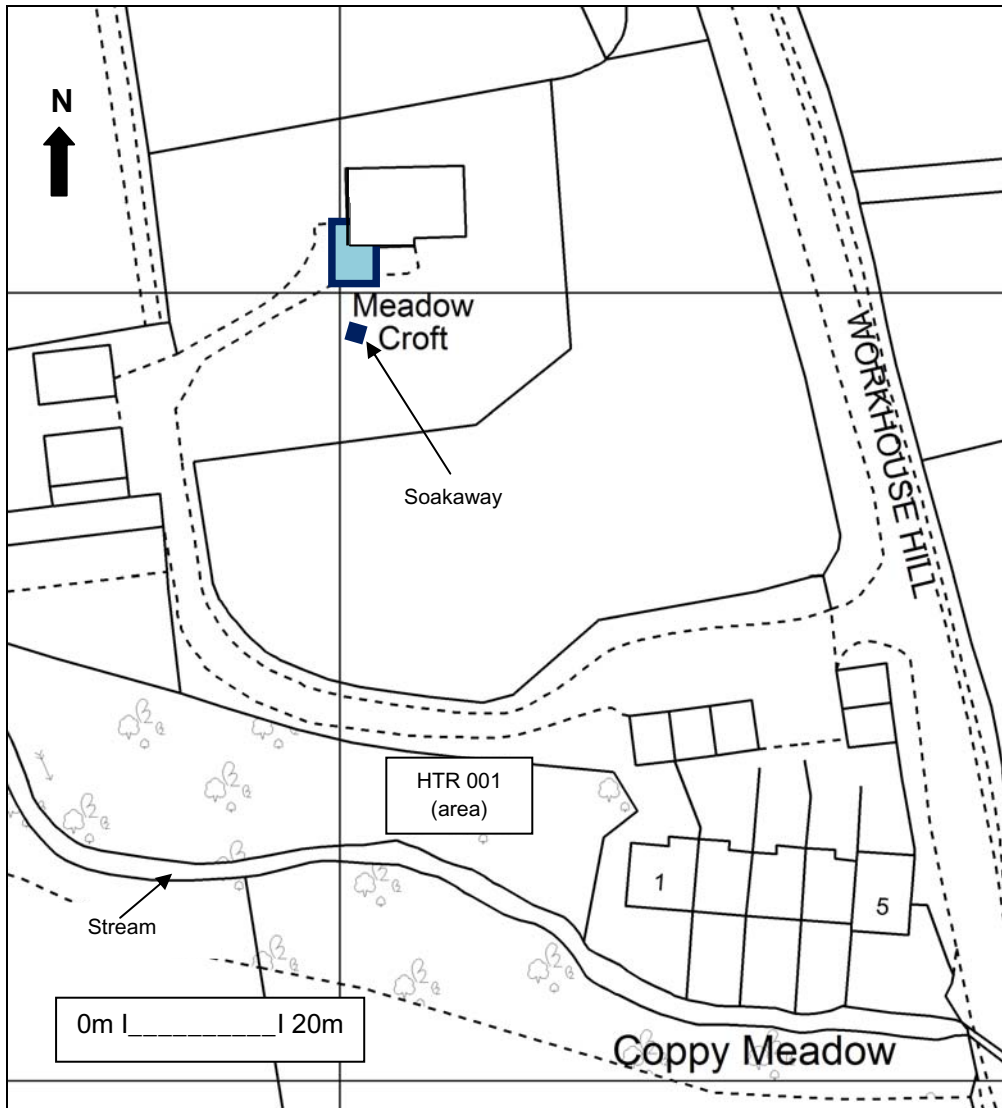


Fig. 2: Monitored extension footprint & soakaway (excavated areas- dark blue)
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Appendix I- Images



General view from south



Southern foundation trench from east (modern soakaway feature in foreground)



New soakaway pit from west

**Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill,
Hartest, Suffolk**

Planning application: B/12/00360/FHA

**Written Scheme of Investigation for
Continuous Archaeological Monitoring**

Site details

Name: Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill, Hartest, Suffolk, IP29 4EH

Client: Mr M Feather

Local planning authority: Babergh DC

Planning application ref: B/12/00360/FHA

Proposed development: Erection of extension

Proposed date for ground works: tbc

Brief & Specification ref: 2012_06_14_SCCAS_Archaeological Monitoring
Brief_Meadowcroft, Hartest

Grid ref: TL 8320 5280

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1. Introduction
2. Location, Topography & Geology
3. Archaeological & Historical Background
4. Aims of the Site Monitoring
5. Methodology
6. Risk Assessment
7. Specialists

1. Introduction

1.1 Mr M Feather has commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological monitoring of ground works required under a condition for a programme of archaeological works of the planning decision notice for application B/12/00360/FHA. This written scheme of investigation (WSI) details the background to the archaeological condition and how JNAS will implement the requirements of the Brief set by Dr J Tipper of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service to satisfy the condition. The WSI will also set out how potential risks will be mitigated. This proposed development concerns the erection of a new extension to Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill, Hartest.

1.2 The monitoring will be carried out to the standards set regionally in the *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (EAA Occ. Papers 14, 2003)* and nationally in *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (Institute for Archaeologists 1994, revised 2001)*.

2. Location, Topography & Geology

2.1 Hartest lies approximately midway between Bury St Edmunds and Sudbury in south Suffolk in a landscape historically characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern partly focused within parishes on the respective church but largely scattered round the numerous greens and along roads and lanes. Meadowcroft is a modern house located on what was a nursery garden c70m north of a small stream and to the south of Cross Green, it is also some 500m north west of the parish church. The site lies at c64m OD and has a southerly aspect in an area where heavy local soils derived from the underlying chalky Till can be anticipated. At present the proposed extension area is currently part of the access drive on the south-western side of Meadowcroft so some ground truncation may have already taken place.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 To quote from the relevant Brief: 'The site is located within a known archaeological site (Roman occupation features including two kilns) recorded in the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER no. HRT 001). Any ground-works associated with the proposed development has the potential to cause significant damage or destruction to any underlying heritage assets'

3.2 The Brief then confirms that while this development may reveal deposits of archaeological significance this potential disturbance to local

heritage assets can be mitigated by their investigation and recording as ground works progress through a programme of continuous monitoring by an archaeologist with subsequent full reporting.

4. Aims of the Site Monitoring

4.1 As outlined in section 3 above the site lies in a location with high archaeological potential where evidence for Roman period deposits in particular might be found and continuous monitoring of ground works as they progress can best record what may be revealed. This monitoring will aim to record all possible details relating to depth of overburden and evidence, character and date of any past activity that is revealed with the primary aim of gaining more information relating to past activity in this location within an area where Roman period settlement evidence has been recorded. More information regarding the known evidence for pottery production would be of particular value in helping to better understand this site.

5. Methodology

5.1 The construction method to be used on the site will be strip foundations. The excavation of the strip foundations and any service trenches, soakaways or landscaping works will be observed as they are undertaken and any up cast spoil examined for finds. Notice of ground works starting and then any unexpected findings will be reported back to the relevant Suffolk CC Archaeological Office. Time will be available to hand clean sections as necessary and investigate by hand any possible archaeological deposits within the foundation trenches. If substantial features, such as a pottery kiln, are revealed the possibility of leaving such a structure in situ will be discussed with the client and contractor.

5.2 Site records will be made under a continuous and unique numbering system of 'observable phenomena' (OPs) under an overall site HER number supplied by Suffolk CC. All contexts will be numbered and finds recorded by context. Conventions compatible with the county HER will be used throughout the monitoring. Site plans will be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and sections at 1:10 or 1:20 (all on plastic drawing film) and related to OS map cover with the monitored footings shown. Sections will be levelled to a datum OD. A photographic record of high resolution digital images will be made of the site and exposed features.

5.3 As necessary and to define archaeological deposits exposed surfaces will be trowelled clean before recording. Archaeological deposits will be fully hand investigated and recorded within the constraints of the trench foundations with sections recorded in relation to

the trench sides, if possible, and with levels OD. Even if no archaeological deposits are revealed every effort will be made to gain a record of the natural occurring deposits and overburden that could help in the understanding of the general history of land use and topography at the site. Where appropriate palaeoenvironmental samples will be taken for processing and assessment by a specialist conversant with regional archaeological standards and research agendas if relevant archaeological deposits are revealed, in this case the potential for such samples to inform the overall understanding of any past industrial processes at the site will be considered. If human burial evidence is revealed the SCC Archaeological Officer will be informed and a Ministry of Justice licence obtained before excavation, recording and removal of the remains which would incur an additional cost. The possibility of modifying the ground work design to leave any such remains in situ will also be examined (the potential of this site to contain burials is assessed as being low though burial on the periphery of rural settlement areas in the Roman period is known).

5.4 All finds will be collected and processed unless any variation is agreed with the relevant SCC Archaeological Officer. Finds will be assessed by recognised period specialists and their interpretation will form an integral part of the overall report. Finds will be stored according to ICON guidelines with specialist advice/treatment sought for fragile ones. Every effort will be made to gain the deposit of the site finds to the SCC Archaeological Store under their relevant HER code and site numbering for future reference. If this is not possible then the SCC Archaeological Officer will be consulted over any requirements for additional recording. Any discard policy will be discussed and agreed with the relevant Archaeological Officer at Suffolk CC.

5.5 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared consistent with the principles in *Management of Archaeological projects* (MAP2) and particularly Appendix 3 and this will be deposited with the Suffolk CC HER within 3 months of working finishing on site under the relevant HER number. As necessary the site digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) within the agreed allowance for the monitoring and reporting works.

5.6 The monitoring report will be consistent with the principles of MAP2 (particularly Appendix 4) and this report will summarise the methodology employed and relate the archaeological record directly to the level of visibility allowed by the operation of plant given the nature of the underlying natural deposits. The report will also give an objective account of the deposits and stratigraphy recorded and finds recovered

with an inventory of the latter. Any interpretation of the monitoring results will be clearly separated from the objective account of the monitoring and its results. The report will give a clear statement regarding the results of the site monitoring in relation to both the more detailed aims in section 2 above and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (EAA Occ. Papers 3, 8 & 24 1997, 2000 & 2011). An unbound draft copy of the report will be presented to the Archaeological Service at Suffolk CC within 3 months of the completion of the site works. Once accepted a bound hard copy will be provided plus another for the County HER, a copy will be sent to the client so they can gain discharge of the relevant condition. The project will be registered on the OASIS online archaeological record followed by submission of the final draft in .pdf format. An HER summary sheet will be completed and a summary prepared of any positive results for inclusion in the annual PSIAH round-up. A dxf type vector plan of the area examined will be supplied for inclusion into the County HER map base.

6. Risk Assessment

6.1 Protective clothing will be worn on site (hard hat, high visibility vest/coat, steel-toe cap boots & ear muffs if required). A safe working method will be agreed with the contractors on site in order to maximise access to disturbed ground and up cast spoil while at the same time allowing efficient use of plant. Suitable clothing will be available to mitigate against extremes of weather.

6.2 Vehicles will be safely parked away from work areas and lines of access.

6.3 Before work on site starts any special requirements regarding potential site contamination will be discussed with the client and any ground test reports examined. Gloves and hand wash/wipes be available and any information on possible ground contamination will be passed to finds and environmental specialists. The potential for services in the area will be discussed with the client and their contractor.

6.4 A fully charged mobile phone will be carried and a first aid kit will be taken to site.

6.5 Deep holes/trenches going below c1.30m will only be entered if assessed to be safe and after consultation with the contractor on site, they will not be entered if no-one else is in the vicinity.

John Newman Archaeological Services

6.6 JNAS holds full insurance cover for archaeological site works from the specialist provider Towergate Risk Solutions covering Public & Products Liability, details can be supplied on request.

7. Specialists

Conservation:	Conservation Services
Faunal remains:	J Curl (Sylvanus Archaeology)
Human remains:	S Anderson (CFA Archaeology)
Palaeoenvironmental samples:	V Fryer (Freelance)
Pre-historic flint:	S Bates (Freelance)
Pre-historic pottery:	S Percival (Freelance)
Post Roman ceramics & CBM:	S Anderson (CFA Archaeology)
Roman period ceramics	S Benfield (CAT)
Post Roman small finds:	JNAS

Appendix III- The Finds

Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill, Hartest (HER- HTR 029)
Stephen Benfield, Colchester Archaeological Trust

Introduction

A small quantity of Roman pottery (22 sherds weighing 443 g) and a single piece of abraded post-medieval/modern clay pipe stem (4 g) were recovered. All of the finds are unstratified (0001) from the upcast spoil of a soakaway pit excavated at the site.

Roman pottery

The pottery is listed by fabric in Table 2 and the pottery fabrics are listed in Table 1. The pottery was recorded using the Suffolk Roman fabric types series (unpublished). The Roman vessel forms refer to the Suffolk type series (unpublished), supplemented by the Colchester Roman pottery type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947, Hull 1958) and Essex (Chelmsford) type series (Going 1987).

Fabric name	Code	No	Wt(g)	broad date range
Roman fabrics:				
Grey micaceous wares (black-surfaced)	GMB	7	72	Roman
Grey micaceous wares (grey-surfaced)	GMG	9	33	Roman
Miscellaneous sandy grey wares	GX	1	5	Roman
Nene Valley colour-coated wares	NVC	1	6	E/M3C-4C
Storage jar fabrics	STOR	4	327	Roman
<i>Total</i>		22	443	

Table 1: Roman pottery fabric quantities

Ctxt	Ctxt type	Fabric	No	Wt(g)	Eve	Abr	Form	Notes	Spot date
0001	unstratified	GMB	7	72				Base and three body sherds	Rom
		GMG	8	27		*		Body sherds	Rom
		GMG	1	6			Beaker 3.3	Body sherd from a folded or indented beaker, probably 3-4C	3-4C
		GX	1	5		*		Sandy greyware	Rom
		NVC	1	6	0.08	*	bowl 5.3	Bowl with small, curved rim, retains part of original colour-coating below (red-brown, degrading to grey) and two grooves around body also retaining part of the original colour-coating, dirty white fabric, quite abraded	M/L3-4C
		STOR	4	327			Storage jar 4.2	Rim (damaged) and shoulder sherds (stab decorated), the fabrics (which contain common fine mica) indicate the sherds are from a minimum of two vessels.	Rom (M1-3C)

Table 2: Pottery by context

Discussion

The pottery recovered is all clearly Roman. The condition of the sherds is variable in terms of size and degree of abrasion, although most of the sherds are of small or moderate size. The

average sherd weight is approximately 20 g, but this is influenced by a few moderately large, thick storage jars sherds and without these the average weight falls to approximately 6 g. The small average sherd weight reflects that much of the pottery is broken to a point where further breakage would probably require excessive force and this also true for the thicker storage jar sherds. Overall, the condition of the pottery reflects its nature as an unstratified collection possibly reflecting various depositional histories.

The majority of the pottery consists of undiagnostic body sherds in greywares (Fabric GMB, Fabric GMG and Fabric GX) most of which are not closely dated. Three sherds can be more closely dated, although the combined date ranges of these potentially span the whole of the Roman period. There is a body sherd from a folded or indented beaker (Fabric GMG), which probably dates to the late 2nd/3rd-4th century and a rim sherd from a bowl in Nene Valley colour-coated ware (Fabric NVC) which can be dated to the mid/late 3rd-4th century. With these is a broken rim sherd from a storage jar (Fabric STOR) which is probably of early-mid Roman date. The rim is squared/oval (not flared or hooked) which indicates a vessel similar to form Cam 273, which is dated Claudian-2nd/3rd century (CAR 10, 479-480) and Going Type G44, dated mid 1st-3rd/early 4th century (Going 1987, 27).

It is noted that there is a record of Late Iron Age (Belgic) pottery, Roman pottery and remains of two pottery kilns found at Hartest and reported in 1957 in the county (Suffolk) Historic Environment Record (HER) (HRT 001-MSF6170). None of the pottery here dates to the Late Iron Age. Almost all of the Roman pottery contains various quantities of fine silver mica in the fabric, which is typical of pottery from assemblages in East Anglia (Swan & Bidwell 1998, 23) and especially products associated with kilns in the Wattisfield area (Tomber & Dore 1996, 184). Some of the Roman pottery recovered could possibly have been produced in a local kiln, but there is no clear indication of this in the form of any kiln wasters or kiln seconds among the sherds in the assemblage.

References

CAR 10 1999, Robin Symonds and Sue Wade *Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86*, Colchester Archaeological Report 10

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OASIS ID: johnnewm1-135429

Project details

Project name	Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill, Hartest, Suffolk- Archaeological Monitoring Report
Short description of the project	Hartest, Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill (HRT 029, TL 8320 5280) monitoring of foundation trenches for an extension close to an area where evidence of Roman period activity, including pottery production, was found in the 1950s did not record any archaeological features. However a small number of Roman period pottery sherds were retrieved from the upcast top and subsoil.
Project dates	Start: 18-09-2012 End: 18-09-2012
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HRT 029 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK BABERGH HARTEST Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill
Postcode	IP29 4EH
Study area	30.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 8320 5280 52 0 52 08 33 N 000 40 39 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 63.00m Max: 64.00m

Project creators

John Newman Archaeological Services

Name of Organisation	
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	John Newman
Project director/manager	John Newman
Project supervisor	John Newman
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Landowner
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Suffolk CC Archaeological Service
Digital Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Suffolk CC Archaeological Service
Paper Contents	"Ceramics"
Paper Media available	"Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Meadowcroft, Poorhouse Hill, Hartest, Suffolk- Archaeological Monitoring Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Newman, J
Date	2012
Issuer or publisher	John Newman Archaeological Services
Place of issue or publication	Henley, Suffolk
Description	Loose bound client report
Entered by	John Newman (johnnewman2@btinternet.com)
Entered on	26 October 2012

OASIS: