

**The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road,
Debenham, Suffolk**

Planning application: 1039/13

HER Ref: DBN 149

Archaeological Monitoring Report

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

(September 2013)

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Site details for HER

Name: The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road, Debenham, Suffolk

Client: Mr P Laflin

Local planning authority: Mid Suffolk DC

Planning application ref: 1039/13

Development: Erection of rear extension

Date of fieldwork: 6 September, 2013

HER Ref: DBN 149

OASIS: johnnewm1-158189

Grid ref: TM 1742 6298

Contents

Summary

1. Introduction & background
2. Monitoring methodology
3. Results
4. Conclusion

Fig. 1 Site location

Fig. 2 Monitored extension area

List of appendices

Appendix I - Images

Appendix II- Written scheme for monitoring

Appendix IV- OASIS data collection form

Summary: Debenham, The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road (DBN 149, TM 1742 6298) monitoring of ground works for a rear extension did not reveal any features or finds indicative of activity pre-dating the mid 20th century construction of the main structure as the town police station. While the site lies towards the southern edge of the historic core at Debenham, and close to the edge of what was Cherry Tree Green, topographically it is also low lying and close to a tributary stream that flows eastwards towards the nearby upper reaches of the River Deben (John Newman Archaeological Services for Mr P Laflin).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 Mr P Laflin of Build To Plans 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 1039/13. 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 of a rear extension to The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road, Debenham (see Fig. 1) which is a structure of mid 20th century date that is largely surrounded by hard surfaced driveways and parking areas.

1.2 Debenham is a small market town in central Suffolk to the north of Ipswich that had, in all probability been established by the late Saxon period at least, and flourished through the medieval period with the market being recorded from 1221. The town is focused on the area around the parish church and the main, north-south aligned, historic high street that runs parallel, and just to the west, of the upper part of the River Deben which rises just to the north of the town. The Old Police Station is located at c35m OD on the northern side of Low Road close to a small stream (now only seasonally wet) which flows in an easterly direction on the southern side of Low Road and joins the River Deben c100m to the east. The site also lies towards the southern edge of the historic town and is some 280m south-west of the parish church in an area that, historically, appears to be close to the edge of what was Cherry Tree Green which is shown, though not named, on Hodkinson's 1783 map of Suffolk. Soils in the area are mixed being derived from both glaciofluvial chalky clay Till deposits on the higher plateau areas and lighter silty sands and gravels in lower areas close to water-courses.

2. Monitoring methodology

2.1 A single visit was made to the site to observe the excavation of the foundations for the extension as they progressed using a medium sized 360 machine equipped with a 700mm wide toothed bucket under mainly fine weather conditions with site visibility good at all times. The foundation trenches were entered to allow for closer inspection of the exposed soil profiles and hand cleaning of indistinct areas. Upcast spoil was inspected visually and scanned with a metal detector as the work progressed. 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 The overall footprint area of the new build area was c42m² and in total 24m of 700mm wide and 1000mm foundation trench were excavated (see Fig. 2). Below the existing concrete yard and car park surface the deposit profile proved to be a 600mm to 700mm deep mid brown silty sand subsoil which contained a moderate number of small flints. This subsoil layer in turn lay directly over the local glaciofluvial deposit at the site which was a pale grey silty sand with flints and extensive areas of dark reddish-brown natural iron staining. While a small number of mid 20th century brick and tile fragments were present just below the yard surface the lower part of the

subsoil deposit was very clean with no evidence for any earlier activity at the site and the only finds seen in the upcast spoil were all of recent date.

4. Conclusion

4.1 While this site lies in an area of archaeological interest on the southern edge of the historic core to Debenham it not produce any evidence for activity of any type prior to the construction of the police station in the mid 20th century. In consideration of these negative results the character of the deposits revealed in the foundation trench give a clear clue as to past probable land use as both the iron stained natural sands and the silty component to the subsoil point to this area along Low Road having been wet in the past and it was noteworthy that the base of the excavated trench was at a similar level to the currently dry stream bed to the south. Therefore prior to better drainage in this part of Debenham it seems likely that the strip of land along the northern side of Low Road was left as pasture for grazing animals.

4.2 In conclusion it is clear that the monitored footings have not impacted on any deposits of archaeological significance.

(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to Mike Green for his close cooperation during the monitoring)

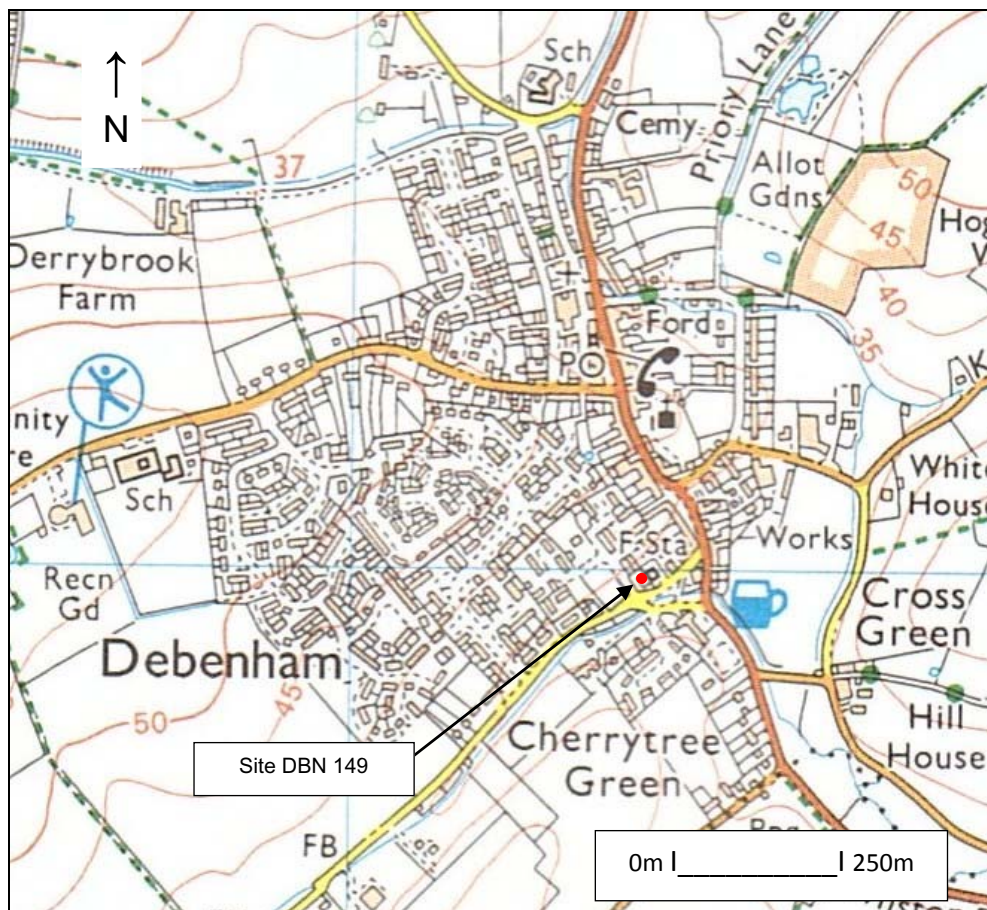


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2006
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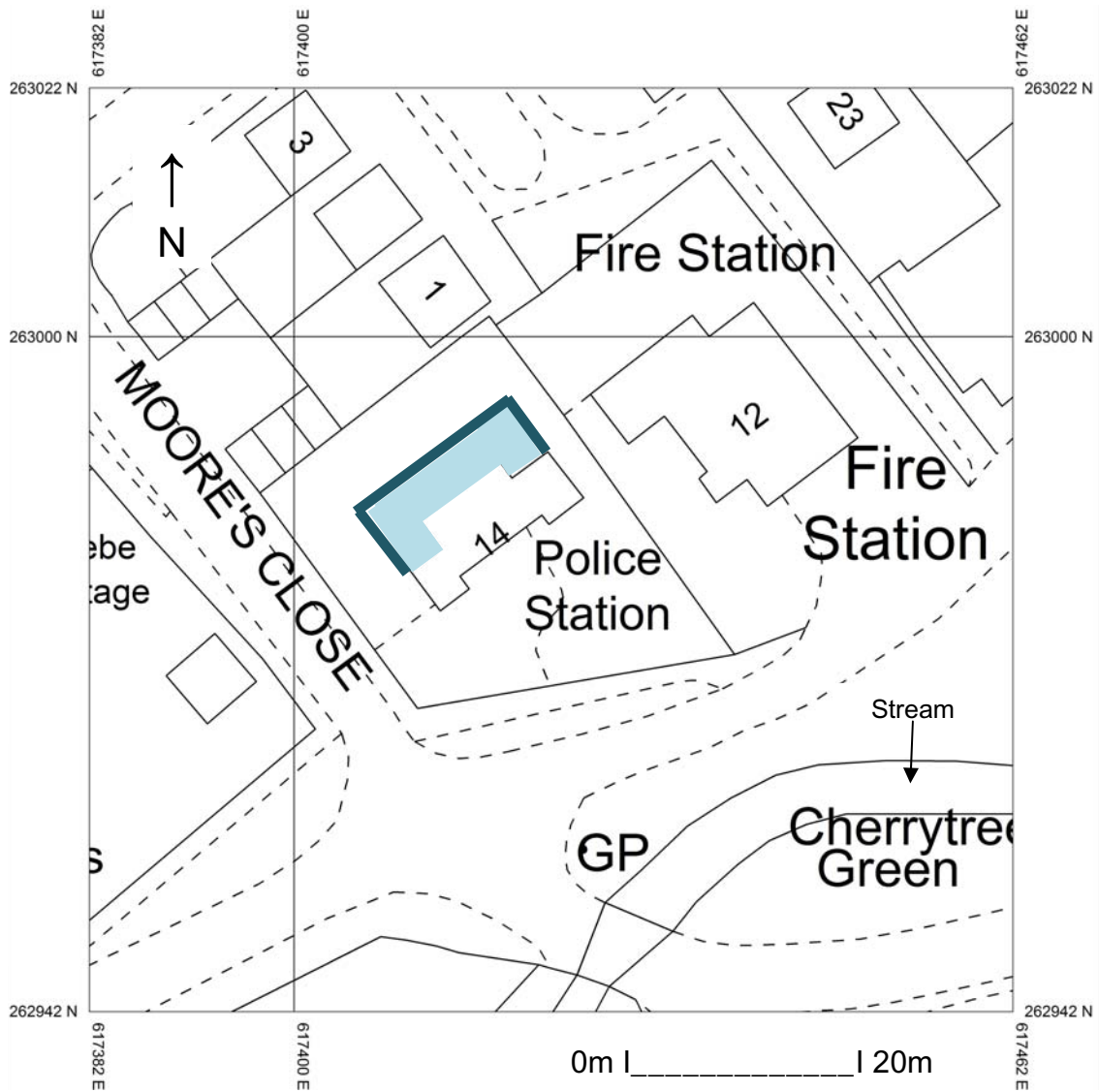


Fig. 2: Monitored extension area (trenches- dark blue)
 (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2013 All rights reserved Licence No 100049722)

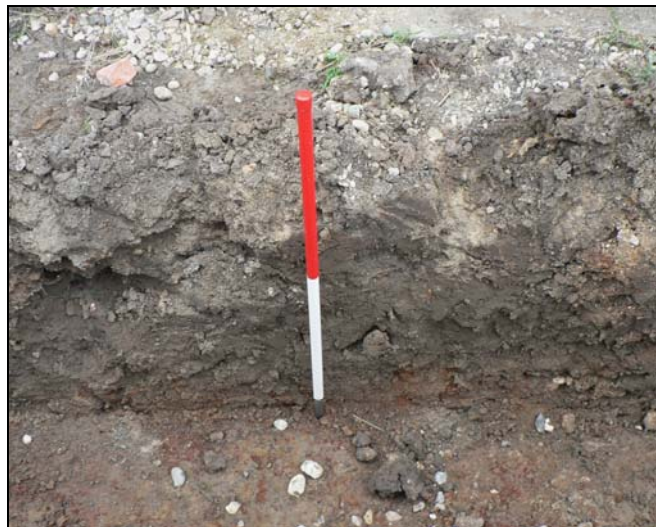
Appendix I- Images



General view from north-west (stream in front of tree in background)



Main trench from west



Deposit profile

**The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road,
Debenham, Suffolk**

Planning application: 1039/13

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

Site details

Name: The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road, Debenham, Suffolk

Client: Mr P Laflin, Build to Plans

Local planning authority: Mid Suffolk DC

Planning application ref: 1039/13

Proposed development: Erection of rear extension

Proposed date for ground works: tbc

Brief & Specification ref: Archaeological Monitoring Brief 14 Low Road Debenham

Grid ref: TM 1735 6294

Contents

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 P Laffin 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 1039/13. 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 rear extension to The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road, Debenham.

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 Debenham is a small market town in central Suffolk to the north of Ipswich that had, in all probability been established by the late Saxon period at least, and flourished through the medieval period with the market being recorded from 1221. The town is focused on the area around the parish church and the main, north-south aligned, historic high street that runs parallel, and just to the west, of the upper part of the River Deben which rises just to the north of the town. The Old Police Station is located at c35m OD on the northern side of Low Road close to a small stream which flows in an easterly direction on the southern side of Low Road and which joins the River Deben c100m to the east. The proposed development site (PDS) lies towards the southern edge of the historic town and is some 280m south-west of the parish church in an area that, historically, appears to be close to the edge of what was Cherry Tree Green which is shown, though not named, on Hodkinson's 1783 map of Suffolk. Soils in the area are mixed being derived from both glaciofluvial chalky clay Till deposits on the higher plateau areas and lighter silty sands and gravels in lower areas close to water-courses.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 To quote from the relevant Brief: 'This application, for the erection of a rear extension and change of use, lies in an area of archaeological interest recorded in the Suffolk Historic Environment Record, on the edge of the historic settlement core.'

3.2 The Brief then confirms that while this development may reveal deposits of archaeological significance and 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 medieval and earlier Post medieval 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 on the edge of the historic settlement core and possibly close to a green edge.

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 visually and scanned with a metal detector 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.

5.2 Site records will be made under a continuous and unique numbering system of identifiable contexts 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 PDS. 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. 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).

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 before works start on site 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. If appropriate 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.

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

John Newman Archaeological Services

7. Specialists

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

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OASIS ID: johnnewm1-158189

Project details

Project name	The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road, Debenham, Suffolk- Archaeological Monitoring Report
Short description of the project	Debenham, The Old Police Station, 14 Low Road (DBN 149, TM 1742 6298) monitoring of ground works for a rear extension did not reveal any features or finds indicative of activity pre-dating the mid 20th century construction of the main structure as the town police station. While the site lies towards the southern edge of the historic core at Debenham, and close to the edge of what was Cherry Tree Green, topographically it is also low lying and close to a tributary stream that flows eastwards towards the nearby upper reaches of the River Deben.
Project dates	Start: 06-09-2013 End: 06-09-2013
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	DBN 149 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	1039/13 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK MID SUFFOLK DEBENHAM THE OLD POLICE STATION, 14 LOW ROAD, DEBENHAM
Study area	46.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 1742 6298 52 1 52 13 17 N 001 11 00 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 33.00m Max: 34.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation John Newman Archaeological Services

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 Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Suffolk CC Archaeological Service

Digital Contents "none"

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

Paper Archive recipient Suffolk CC Archaeological Service

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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