

PLATES 1 AND 2



The site following demolition works and prior to trench excavations, facing north east.



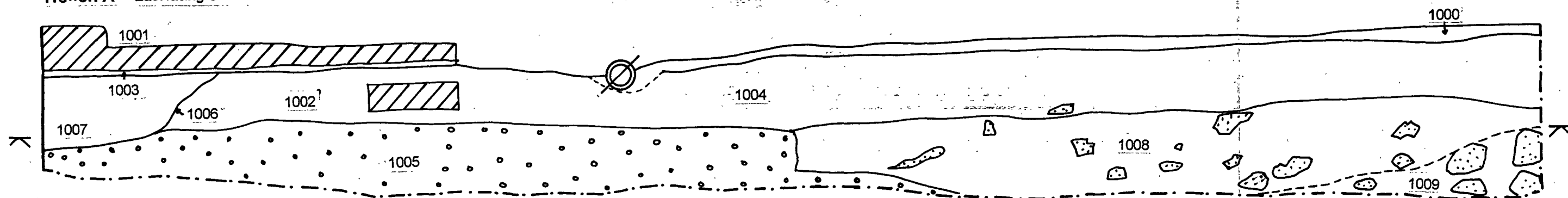
The site on the completion of groundworks, facing south east.

PLATE 3

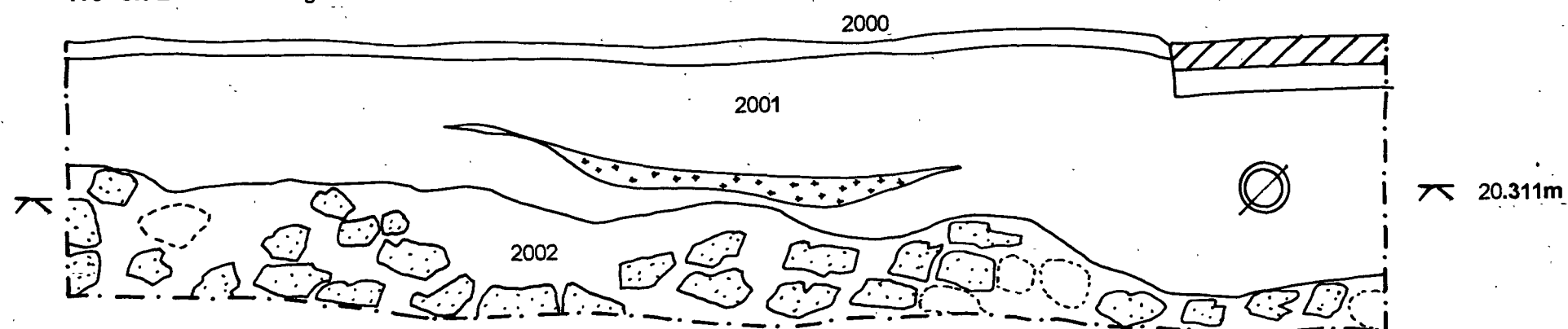


Detail of Trench A, depicting the make up of the buried road surface.

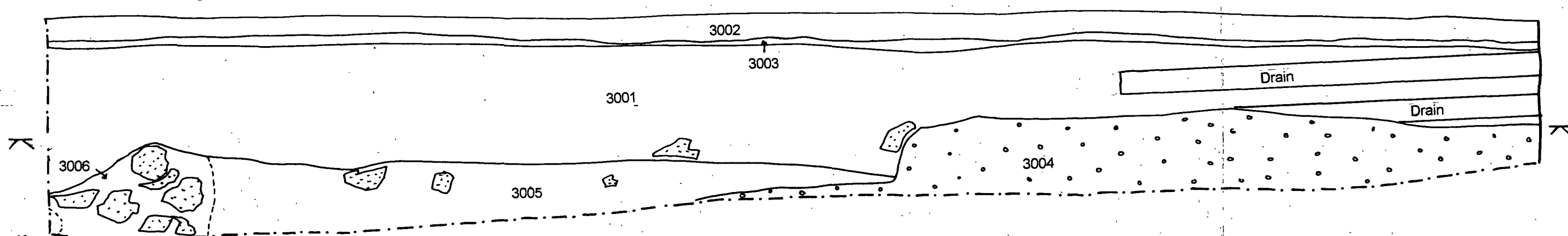
Trench A East facing Section







Trench B South facing section



Trench C West facing section



Key

-  Pink/Red Sandstone
-  Concrete
-  Lime
-  Gravel and Sand

All heights given above ordnance datum



No artefacts were identified within layer, this together with its other characteristics suggested that it was undisturbed sub soil. However, there are striking comparisons of this matrix, degree of compaction and colour with the Roman road surfaces identified at the Ship Inn, Aldborough (Cale 1998, pers com.). Furthermore, the sloping surface of the layer could be interpreted as the Aggar of the road.

Within the northern extent of the excavation at 20.300 metres AOD a concentration of red sandstone fragments were identified. The sandstone fragments varied in size, measuring <0.28m in size and appeared to be suspended within a layer of sandy loam. The sandstone was soft and in an advanced state of decay. The fragments were angular and disarranged. The concentration was suggestive of construction / demolition material. No finds were identified within the layer.

These two structural features were sealed by a layer of made up ground. This deposit of dark/medium brown (10YR3/3) sandy loam was dry, well compacted and contained a low quantity of inclusions, namely red sandstone fragments and fired clay pan tile fragments. The layer contained a small quantity of 18th and 19th Century pottery and glass together with clay tobacco pipe stems. The surface of the layer was identified at 20.391m AOD and bedded relatively level. Its surface had been subjected to a high level of disturbance and trampling associated with the construction of the former extension and the installation of a drainage trenches.

The overall area of the site was sealed by a dark brown (10YR3/2) sandy loam. The layer was moist, well compacted and contained a moderate quantity of inclusions. These included brick, concrete, gravel and were well mixed throughout the layer, together with shallow lenses of lime. The layer contained 19th century pottery, bottle glass. The layer increases in depth towards the north east, measuring up to 0.70m in depth. The layer had been cut and disturbed during the construction of the former extension and installation of the drains.

CONCLUSION

The recent archaeological watching brief conducted by Mr.K.J.Cale on behalf of Ms.N.Williams at Pear Tree Cottage, Aldborough has provided a useful picture of the development of this site.

The watching brief identified four main phases of activity on the site:-

Phase 1:

The construction of a thoroughfare aligned east south east across the southern extent of the study area. This compact layer of gravel and sand has a well-defined camber with a removed kerb line on its northern side.

The width of the road exceeded 4.5m in width, by projecting the camber of this surface it can be estimated that the road had measured up to 6 metres in width.

Comparison of its form and nature with a similar structure identified within a recent programme of archaeological fieldwork at the Ship Inn (Cale 1998, pers com) would suggest that the feature forms part of the Late Roman road network. The location and the alignment of the road would suggest that it had originally formed part of the principal east/west road through the Roman town, extending to a junction with the principal north/south road into the Roman town at N.G.R 440628 466461.

The identification of these sections of road allows transects to be projected towards the perimeter defences of the Roman town, establishing the location of the four gates, namely;

North – N.G.R.440694 466722
East – N.G.R.440803 466440
South – N.G.R.440546 466142
West – N.G.R.440442 466520

This road configuration has little in common with the present road network within the village, supporting C.Dobinson's comments on the development of the transport network at Aldborough. It is interesting to note that the main east/west road through the town is situated to the north of Low Lane passing beneath and behind the existing dwellings on the street frontage.

Phase 2:

The deposition of red sandstone fragments within the northern extent of the site. It would appear that at the time of the accumulation of this deposit the adjacent road surface was still in use. It is possible that the sandstone may well be attributable to Early Medieval demolition / construction activity on the site. Unfortunately, no finds were identified to support this date.

Phase 3:

The deposition or accumulation of a sandy loam across the northern half of the site. This layer was characteristic of buried topsoil and contained finds of the 18th and 19th century. This deposit post dated the usefulness of the road across the site and is suspected to originate as landscaping associated with the construction of the existing dwelling.

Phase 4:

During the 19th century further deposits of topsoil were imported onto site for landscaping purposes. The layer being later disturbed during the construction of a rear extension and detached ancillary buildings, together with the installation of foul water drains.

A small assemblage of 18th and 19th century finds were identified during these works, none of which were removed from the site.

Kevin John Cale

July 1999

APPENDIX A

Foundation Trench Excavations

Trench A

Type: Foundation : strip : machine
N.G.R: 440562 466482

Length: 7.30 m
Width: 0.80 m
Depth: 0.90 m

Planform: Liner
Aligned: North North East
Area: 5.84 square metres

Context No's: 1000 - 1009
Plate No: 2,3
Fig. No: -

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the west elevation of the proposed extension and was situated within the south western corner of the site. The existing ground levels sloped very gently downwards to the north north east. It was anticipated that the southern half of the trench would have been previously disturbed during the construction of the former single storey extension and the installation of modern domestic drains.

The turf (context 1000) was removed from the northern half of the trench exposing a recently deposited topsoil (context 1004). This dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was moist and friable and contained a low to moderate quantity of inclusions that were dominated by grass root, brick, red sandstone fragments, water worn cobble and gravel. The inclusions measured < 0.14m, the topsoil measured up to 0.45m deep. The layer had been cut and disturbed during the installation of a foul water drain. The line of the drain traversed the site on an east south east alignment.

Immediately adjacent to the existing dwelling the concrete slab foundations (context 1001) and sub base (context 1003) of the former single storey extension were identified and measured up to 0.30m deep. The foundations were broken out and removed. Beneath which a 0.38m deep layer of disturbed ground (context 1002) was exposed. This dark brown (10YR3/3) sandy loam was moist and well compacted with a moderate quantity of inclusions dominated by gravel with some brick, concrete and gravel. The layer contained 19th and 20th century pottery, glass and metalwork. The southern extent of this recent deposit had been cut and disturbed by a pit like excavation. The pit (context 1007) is situated adjacent to the foundations of the existing dwelling, the feature has a shallow rounded profile and has been filled with a deposit that is similar if not the same as the disturbed ground (context 1002).

Upon the excavation of the disturbed ground, a layer of compacted gravels (context 1005) was identified. This layer of yellow orange brown (2.5YR5/4) sand and gravel was identified at 20.351m AOD; the layer was highly compacted with a slightly cambered surface. The layer contains 70 % inclusion of gravels measuring < 0.08m in size with less frequent angular limestone fragments of a similar size. Traces of iron panning were noted within the layer. Up to 0.38m of the layer was excavated. The layer passes beneath the foundations of the existing dwelling. During the initial excavation, it was felt that the layer had the characteristics of a previously undisturbed sub soil, however this was soon revised and the layer was interpreted as a compacted road surface. Towards the north the surface is sealed by topsoil, here the surface slopes down on a gradient that is slightly more acute than the existing ground levels. At it's northern extent the surface was stepped, this vertical cut indicated the site of a removed kerbstone.

The topsoil was excavated to reveal a layer of buried topsoil (context 1008), the surface of which was identified at 20.431 m AOD. This layer of dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was fine grained, dry and well compacted. The interface between the two deposits of topsoil was subtle with the early deposit containing a moderate quantity of inclusions, these were dominated by red / pink sandstone fragments and flecking. The layer contained a low quantity of finds including animal bone, 18th and 19th pottery, glass and tobacco pipe stem.

Within the base of the excavation, a layer of medium brown (10YR4/2), disturbed, sandy silty loam (context 1009) was identified. The surface of which was found to rise to the north on a gentle gradient to 20.311m AOD. The layer was sealed by the buried topsoil. This moist and well-compacted layer contained a moderate quantity of inclusion, these were dominated by red/pink sandstone fragments < 0.18m in size, the quantity of which increase towards the northern extent of the trench. No finds were identified within this layer. The required excavation depth for the foundations was achieved within this layer.

Trench B

Type:	Foundation : strip : machine
N.G.R:	440564 466486
Length:	7.30 m
Width:	0.80 m
Depth:	0.95 m
Planform:	Liner
Aligned:	East South East
Area:	5.84 square metres
Context No's:	2000 - 2004
Plate No:	2
Fig. No:	-

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the north elevation of the proposed extension and was situated within the southern area of the site. The existing ground levels sloped very gently downwards to the north north east. This area of the site had not been disturbed during the excavations for the former extension. The eastern extent of the trench had been previously disturbed during the installation of a domestic drain.

The turf (context 2000) was removed from the entire length of the trench exposing a recently deposited topsoil (context 2001). This dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was moist and friable and contained a low to moderate quantity of inclusions that were dominated by grass root, brick, red sandstone fragments, water worn cobble, gravel and lenses of lime. The inclusions measured < 0.14m, the topsoil measured up to 0.60m deep. The layer had been cut and disturbed during the installation of a foul water drains. The invert of the drain was calculated at 0.50m below the existing ground level.

The topsoil was excavated to reveal a layer of disturbed sandy silty loam (context 2002). This medium brown (10YR 4/3) moist and well-compacted layer contained a high quantity of inclusion, dominated by red/pink sandstone fragments < 0.18m in size. The sandstone was soft suggestive of decay. The quantity of sandstone was suggestive of building or demolition material. No finds were identified within this layer. The required excavation depth for the foundations was achieved within this layer.

Trench C

Type: Foundation : strip : machine
N.G.R: 440568 466481

Length: 4.30 m
Width: 0.80 m
Depth: 0.94 m

Planform: Linear
Aligned: North North East
Area: 3.44 square metres

Context No's: 3000 - 3006
Plate No: 2
Fig. No: -

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the east elevation of the proposed extension and was situated within the south eastern corner of the site. The existing ground levels sloped very gently downwards to the north north east. It was anticipated that the southern half of the trench would have been previously disturbed during the construction of the former single storey extension and the installation of domestic drains.

The turf (context 3000) was removed from the northern half of the trench exposing a recently deposited topsoil (context 3001). This dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was moist and friable and contained a low to moderate quantity of inclusions that were dominated by grass root, brick, red sandstone fragments, water worn cobble and gravel. The inclusions measured < 0.14m, the topsoil measured up to 0.58m deep. The layer had been cut and disturbed during the installation of a foul water drains and inspection chamber. The line of the drains ran the entire length of the excavation on a north north east alignment. The invert of the drains were calculated at 0.30m and 0.65m below the existing ground level.

Immediately adjacent to the existing dwelling the concrete slab foundations (context 3002) and sub base (context 3003) of the former single storey extension were identified and measured up to 0.28m deep. The foundations were broken out and removed.

Beneath which a layer of compacted gravels (context 3004) was identified. The layer was the same as that identified within Trench A (context 1005). This layer of yellow orange brown (2.5 YR 5/4) sand and gravel was identified at 20.361m AOD; the layer was highly compacted with a slightly cambered surface. The layer contains 70 % inclusion of gravels measuring < 0.08m in size with less frequent angular limestone fragments of a similar size. Traces of iron panning were noted within the layer. The surface of the layer had been previously disturbed during the installation of a foul water drain. To the south the layer passes beneath the foundations of the existing dwelling. Towards the north the surface is sealed by the topsoil, here the surface slopes down on a gradient that is slightly more acute than the existing ground levels. At it's northern extent the surface was stepped, this vertical cut indicated the site of a removed kerbstone.

The topsoil was excavated to reveal a layer of buried topsoil (context 3005), the surface of which was identified at 20.131m AOD. This layer of dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was fine grained, dry and well compacted. The interface between the two deposits of topsoil was subtle with the early deposit containing a moderate quantity of inclusions, these were dominated by red / pink sandstone fragments and flecking. The layer contained a low quantity of finds including animal bone, 18th and 19th pottery, glass and tobacco pipe stem.

Towards the northern extent of the trench the buried topsoil gave way to a layer of disturbed sandy silty loam (context 3006) was identified. The interface between the buried topsoil and this layer was abrupt, almost vertical, this may suggest an unconfirmed cut. The layer was sealed by topsoil. This medium brown (10YR 4/3) moist and well-compacted layer contained a moderate quantity of inclusion; these were dominated by red/pink sandstone fragments < 0.18m in size. No finds were identified within this layer. The required excavation depth for the foundations was achieved within this layer.