

The paucity and nature of the archaeological evidence resulting from these excavations led the archaeologist to revise the project design prior to the conclusion of the intended groundworks. It was decided not to observe the outstanding shallow excavations, these included the reduction of ground levels within the footprint of the extension and any related service runs.

The Natural sub-soil was encountered towards the base of the trench excavations at 29.15 m AOD. The surface of this layer of silty sand sloped on a very gentle gradient to the north, the slope of which was equal to that of the existing ground levels. With the exception of the removal of 0.10 m of this layer in the southern extent of the site the interface onto the natural formed the base of excavation.

Within the central section of Trench A a concentration of pink sandstone fragments were imbedded into the surface of the sub soil. The sandstone consisted of irregular shaped angular fragments, that measured less than 0.18m in size and showed no indication of having been worked. The stones were, apparently randomly deposited with no obvious alignment or form, and were a single course deep with a slight overlap. The surface of the stonework was uneven. No mortar or lime was identified with this feature.

This feature and the exposed surface of the sub soil was sealed by an overall layer of made up, ground. This deposit of loam accounted for the greater part of the stratigraphy across the site. The layer contained a small quantity of 19th / 20th Century pottery and glass together with animal bone fragments and a small assemblage of 3rd and 4th century Roman pottery (Appendix B). The finds of all ages were evenly mixed throughout this homogenous deposit.

The layer has been disturbed more recently during the construction of the existing dwelling, the foundation base was identified at 29.0 m AOD, the foundation trench's extended up to 1.50 beyond the gable elevation. The layer had also been cut and disturbed during the installation of modern ceramic drains and a gas service. The surface of the layer had been subjected to a high level of trampling associated with the construction of the existing dwelling, this activity resulted in the deposition of shallow sand and rubble lenses at the interface of this deposit with the overlying topsoils.

CONCLUSION

The recent archaeological watching brief conducted by Mr.K.J.Cale on behalf of Mr.&Mrs.Bailes at Hambleton View, Aldborough has provided a useful although relatively negative picture of the development of this site.

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

Phase 1:

The deposition of a pink sandstone fragments across a selected area at the western extent of the site. The size and form of the stone spread has the appearance of discarded construction debris, unfortunately, no accurate date can be attributed to the deposit other than to say it may be directly associated with the building activity attributed to the Roman period that was identified at comparable levels within the stratigraphic sequence during the 1987 archaeological works that were situated 15 metres to the south.

Phase 2:

The deposition or accumulation of a single deposit of loam across the entire study area. This layer measured up to 0.94 m deep and contained both Roman and 19th century finds. This deposit or one very similar has been identified across Aldborough during recent archaeological investigations, including those at the following properties; Rosedale - N.G.R. 440617 466238 (YAT 1988), Briarwood - N.G.R.440759 466328 (Cale, 1996) and The Ship Inn - N.G.R. 440638 466514 (Cale 1996-8), in each instance a considerable depth of well compacted homogeneous loam has been identified. During previous investigations this layer has been attributed to either;

i. medieval cultivation.

or more recently to

ii. imported spoil for fill and general landscaping purposes.

It would seem a more plausible third option is required.

Phase 3:

The groundworks associated with the construction of the existing semi-detached property, these included the excavation of foundation trench's and service trenches, the installation of an inspection chamber. The building works also generated waste material that was spread across the site on the surface of the "Phase 2" loam, these deposits were then sealed with a modern topsoil.

A small quantity of finds were recovered from these excavations, this assemblage was predominantly Late Roman pottery and is detailed within Appendix B.

Mr. Bailes has indicated that he does not wish to retain the artefacts and as such they will be offered to the Aldborough Museum / English Heritage Storage Facilities, Helmsley.

Kevin John Cale

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APPENDIX A

Foundation Trench Excavations

Trench A

Type: Foundation : strip :machine
N.G.R: 440619 466256

Length: 4.940 m
Width: 0.600 m
Depth: 1.300 m

Planform: Liner
Aligned: North North East
Area: 2.964 square metres

Context No's: 1000 - 1007
Plate No: 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 areas of the trench may have been previously disturbed during the installation of modern domestic drains.

The existing concrete (context 1000) paved footway was identified round the perimeter of the existing dwelling at 30.30 metres AOD. The majority of the trench line was formerly turf covered (context 1001), the lawn was bedded on a recently deposited topsoil (context 1003). This dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was dry and friable and contained a very low quantity of inclusions that were dominated by grass root, the topsoil measured up to 0.15m deep.

Immediately adjacent to the existing dwelling the paved concrete blockwork was bedded on a hardcore subbase (context 1002). This 0.15m deep layer of hardcore was bedded on a recently backfilled area immediately adjacent to the existing dwelling. This fill (context 1004) butted the foundations of the dwelling. The base of the foundations were identified at 1.30m below the existing ground level. The fill consisted of a single deposit of dark brown (7.5YR3/2) sandy loam that measured up to 0.95m deep, the matrix was moist and well compacted with a low to moderate quantity of inclusions, namely; crushed yellow and pink sandstone, modern brick fragments and modern building materials. The layer surrounds the existing foul drain, the invert of this drain was identified at 0.80m below the existing ground level, the layer had been cut and disturbed during the installation of the gas service pipe. This layer had the characteristics of re-deposited ground mixed with construction rubble and building materials, it would appear that it was deposited as backfill within the foundation trench associated with the 1970's build. The cut of the foundation trench was not identified as it's relationship with adjacent deposits had been disturbed during the installation of drainage runs.

To the north of the foul water drain the stratigraphy within the central and northern section of the trench was dominated by a buried top soil deposit (context 1005) that was sealed by the modern topsoil, the surface of which was identified at 0.16m below the existing ground levels at 30.15m AOD. This layer of dark brown (10YR3/1) loam had a similar matrix to the disturbed ground, context 1004, friable but with a very low quantity of inclusions, namely; pink sandstone flecking. The layer contained a low quantity of finds including animal bone, 19th pottery and glass.

Within the central area of the trench, extending for over a distance of 1.3m a concentration of pink sandstone fragments were identified (context 1006). The surface of this feature consisted of angular stones a number of which projected upwards, but was otherwise reasonably level and was identified at 1.08m below the existing ground level at 29.22m AOD. This feature consisted of irregular and angular fragments of sandstone measuring <0.08m in size that were tightly grouped, imbedded into the surface of the sub soil and were sealed by the dark brown loam, context 1005. The stone concentration was a single course deep and showed no indication of having been bonded with mortar or lime. The irregular nature of the feature had the appearance of building material discarded onto an exposed area of sub soil and then subsequently trampled and sealed. Establishing an accurate date for this stone spread is problematical but a Late Roman date can not be discounted.

The sub soil (context 1007) was identified in the base of the excavation along the entire length of the trench and sloped gently downwards to the north from 1.15m below the existing ground level at 29.15m AOD. This layer of orange yellow brown (7.5YR 4/4) silty sand was moist and loosely compacted. The layer contained a moderate quantity of inclusions dominated by water worn pebbles. 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: 440623 466260

Length: 4.265 m
Width: 0.600 m
Depth: 1.200 m

Planform: Liner
Aligned: East South East
Area: 2.559 square metres

Context No's: 2000 - 2003
Plate No: 3
Fig. No: -

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the north elevation of the proposed extension and was situated within the northern extent of the site. The existing ground levels sloped very gently downwards to the north north east. It was anticipated that the ground levels may have been previously disturbed during the installation of modern domestic drains.

The trench line was formerly turf covered (context 2000), the lawn was bedded on a recently deposited topsoil (context 2001). This dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was dry and friable and contained a very low quantity of inclusions that were dominated by grass root, the topsoil measured up to 0.15m deep.

The stratigraphy within the entire length of the trench was dominated by a buried top soil deposit (context 2002) that was sealed by the modern topsoil, the surface of which was identified at 0.23m below the existing ground levels at 30.09m AOD. This layer of dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was the same as context 1005, friable with a very low quantity of inclusions, namely; pink sandstone flecking. The layer contained a low quantity of finds including animal bone, 19th pottery and glass together with a small quantity of III and IV century Roman pottery.

The sub soil (context 2003) was identified in the base of the excavation along the entire length, the surface of which was relatively level at 1.16m below the existing ground level at 29.14m AOD. This layer of orange yellow brown (7.5YR 4/4) silty sand was moist and loosely compacted. The layer contained a moderate quantity of inclusions dominated by water worn pebbles. 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: 440624 466254

Length: 5.200 m
Width: 0.600 m
Depth: 1.200 m

Planform: Rectilinear
Aligned: North North East
Area: 3.120 square metres

Context No's: 3000 - 3004
Plate No: 3
Fig. No: -

The trench was excavated to contain the concrete foundations for the east elevation of the proposed extension and was situated within the eastern extent of the site. The existing ground levels sloped very gently downwards to the north north east. It was anticipated that the ground levels may have been previously disturbed during the installation of modern domestic drains and a brick inspection chamber associated with same.

The trench line was formerly turf covered (context 3000), the lawn was bedded on a recently deposited topsoil (context 3001). This dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was dry and friable and contained a very low quantity of inclusions that were dominated by grass root, the topsoil measured up to 0.15m deep.

The stratigraphy within the entire length of the trench was dominated by a buried top soil deposit (context 3002) that was sealed by the modern topsoil, the surface of which was identified at 0.23m below the existing ground levels at 30.09m AOD. This layer of dark brown (10YR3/1) loam was the same as context 1005, friable with a very low quantity of inclusions, namely; pink sandstone flecking. The layer contained a low quantity of finds including animal bone, 19th pottery and glass together with a small quantity of III and IV century Roman pottery. This layer had been cut and disturbed during the installation of foul water drains and a brick inspection chamber (context 3004).

The sub soil (context 3003) was identified in the base of the excavation along the entire length, the surface of which was relatively level at 1.30m below the existing ground level at 29.0m AOD. This layer of orange yellow brown (7.5YR 4/4) silty sand was moist and loosely compacted. The layer contained a moderate quantity of inclusions dominated by water worn pebbles. No finds were identified within this layer. The required excavation depth for the foundations was achieved within this layer.

APPENDIX B

The Roman Pottery

In total six sherds were recovered from this recent programme of excavations from a layer of buried loam (contexts 2002 / 3002). However due to the nature of the excavations it is anticipated that a number of sherds were transported off site with the spoil, unfortunately the where whereabouts of the spoil is unknown.

Furthermore it should be noted that together with the Roman material a moderate quantity of 19th century pottery and glass was identified within the same deposits, these artefacts were not retained.

The assemblage included :-

Nene Valley Ware

Object Ref: AAA
Context: 3002
Figure: 2
Plate: 6

Type: Mortaria: rim & body sherd
Decoration: Reeded Flange
Black Iron-Stone Trituration Grits (Internal surface only)

Manufactured: Stibbington Kilns, Cambridgeshire ?
Date: III - IV

Fabric: Core - Pink (5YR8/4)
Surface - Buff - (10YR7/3)
Slip: External Only - Yellow Pink (10YR8/6)

Size: length - 145mm
width - 62mm
body thickness - 13mm
estimated diameter - 264mm

Condition: Slightly abraded.
Quantity: 1

Other Comments: None

Dales Ware

Object Ref: AAB
Context: 2002
Figure: 2
Plate: 5

Type: Cooking Pot: rim and body sherd
Decoration: Coarse shell gritted

Manufactured: York Area Kilns ?
Date: III - IV

Fabric: Core - Medium Grey (10YR5/1) reduced in places to
Orange Grey (7.5YR4/2).
Surface - Dark Grey (10YR3/1) reduced in places to
Orange Grey (7.5YR3/1).

Slip: None

Size: length - 116mm
width - 40mm
body thickness - 8mm
rim thickness - 19mm
estimated diameter - 366mm

Condition: Moderate
Quantity: 1

Other Comments: None

Dales Ware

Object Ref: AAC
Context: 3002
Figure: 2
Plate: 5

Type: Cooking Pot: rim and body sherd
Decoration: Coarse shell gritted

Manufactured: York Area Kilns ?
Date: III - IV

Fabric: Core - Medium Grey (10YR5/1) reduced in places to
Orange Grey (7.5YR4/2).
Surface - Dark Grey (10YR3/1) reduced in places to
Light Grey Brown (10YR5/2).

Slip: None

Size: length - 117mm
width - 36mm
body thickness - 07mm
rim thickness - 9mm
estimated diameter - 218mm

Condition: Moderate
Quantity: 1

Other Comments: Internal surface largely reduced to light grey brown.

Dales Ware

Object Ref: AAD
Context: 3002
Figure: 2
Plate: 5

Type: Cooking Pot: rim and body sherd
Decoration: Coarse shell gritted

Manufactured: York Area Kilns ?
Date: III - IV

Fabric: Core - Dark Grey (7.5YR2/0) reduced in places to
Light Grey Brown (10YR5/2).
Surface - Dark Grey (7.5YR2/0).

Slip: None

Size: length - 75mm
width - 29mm
body thickness - 07mm
rim thickness - 9mm
estimated diameter - 172mm

Condition: Moderate
Quantity: 1

Other Comments: A very slight carbon / soot deposit present on external surface under the lip of the rim.

Crambeck Ware

Object Ref: AAE
Context: 3002

Type: Bowl: foot and body sherd
Decoration: Burnished

Manufactured: Malton Kilns
Date: IV

Fabric: Core - Lead Grey (10YR6/1).
Surface - Lead Grey (10YR6/1).

Slip: None

Size: length - 50mm
width - 52mm
body thickness - 09mm
foot thickness - 6mm
estimated diameter -

Condition: Good
Quantity: 1

Other Comments: None.

Crambeck Ware

Object Ref: AAF
Context: 3002

Type: Bowl: body sherd
Decoration: Burnished

Manufactured: Malton Kilns
Date: IV

Fabric: Core - Light Grey Brown (10YR7/3).
Surface - Lead Grey (10YR6/1).

Slip: None

Size: length - 48mm
width - 32mm
body thickness - 7mm
estimated diameter -

Condition: Heavily Abraded
Quantity: 1

Other Comments: None.