

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Report No.1053

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at 11 Church Road,
Reedham, Norfolk**

41146 RED

B. Hobbs

July 2005

© Norfolk Archaeological Unit

Contents

Summary

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Observations
- 3.0 Conclusions

Acknowledgements

Figures

- Fig.1 Site location
- Fig.2 Plan of footing trenches

Appendix

- Appendix 1: Context Summary

Location: 11, Church Road, Reedham, Norfolk
District: Broadland
Grid Ref.: TG 4249 0259
HER No.: 41146 RED
Date of fieldwork: 8th February and 8th March 2005

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken to observe footings for a residential development on Church Lane, Reedham. No evidence of archaeological features was found. Some modern pottery sherds were recorded from a modern drain cut.

1.0 Introduction

(Fig. 1)

An archaeological watching brief was carried out to observe footing trenches for a residential development consisting of two bungalows on land at 11, Church Road, Reedham, Norfolk. The archaeological work was commissioned by the landowner, Mr N. Farrow, in connection with an application processed by Broadland District Council Planning Authority.

The site was located approximately 1km to the north-east of the village of Reedham in an area surrounded by farmland. The site covered an area of c. 400 sq. m and was located between property boundaries of existing houses, fronting onto Church Road. A pre-fabricated bungalow with attendant garden and garage that had previously occupied the site had been demolished and removed.

This archaeological watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology (NLA Ref.: EJR 29/10/04).

The watching brief was carried out to ascertain the presence or absence of archaeological features or finds relating to possible Romano-British occupation of the area and to record this information. The brief required that an archaeologist attend and observe all areas of below-ground disturbance and complement this work with the use of a metal detector.

The site archive is currently held by the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, in accordance with the relevant policy on archiving standards.

The excavations on site were carried out by a JCB-type machine excavator following a ground plan of footing trenches, all 0.70m wide, and removing soil to a maximum depth of 1.2m for the purpose of erecting a suspended floor for the proposed building.

Spoil, and exposed surfaces were scanned with a metal detector.

Site conditions were wet with a saturated ground surface.

2.0 Observations

(Fig. 2; Appendix 1)

Surface strip

An initial visit to the site monitored soil removal over the proposed development area before the footing trenches were excavated. Approximately 0.50m of sandy subsoil ([2]) was removed which overlay the natural yellow sand. The subsoil was removed over the whole area, excluding a c. 13m strip at the rear of the site which was intended to be used as a garden.

Near the west boundary, where the tree line of the adjacent property boundary was exposed, a dark grey brown topsoil ([1] c. 0.20m deep) could be seen in section. The topsoil contained modern ceramic tile and drain pipe. To the north of the site the sand at the surface was mixed with the remnants of a thin garden soil containing evidence of manuring, roots and root traces.

All surfaces and spoil from the surface strip were metal detected, however, only modern debris was found which consisted of iron sheet, drainpipe fragments and roofing nails. Several disused service ducts and pipes were also uncovered during the stripping indicating previous extensive ground disturbance in the southern half of the site. No features of archaeological interest were observed during the stripping.

The site of an abandoned well, located in the centre of the site, which was lined with post-medieval or modern brick and containing building rubble. This was machine excavated and backfilled with sand to consolidate the area. Investigation determined the visible remains of the well to be quite shallow in depth, no more than 1.0m to 1.5m.

Footing trenches

The subsequent visit to the site observed the excavation of footing trenches on the west side of the site. Six trenches running east-to-west bounded by two trenches running north-to-south were excavated, along with spaces for a doorway, bay window and attached garage. The depth of the trenches varied from 1m at the south end, to 1.2m in the north end. This variation in depth was made to ensure that a suitable surface for the foundations was reached.

The ground surface through which the footings were excavated consisted entirely of natural sand ([3]) as the overlying subsoil had been removed previously (see above).

In the northernmost east-to-west footing trench a shallow pit, that contained a dark silt, was observed. Fragments of modern pottery and a length of drainpipe were seen within the dark silt (these were not retained).

No other features were observed in any of the footing trenches.

3.0 Conclusions

The initial visit to the site observed a relatively thin subsoil that had been, on the west side of the site, disturbed by service trenches and concrete footings of the previous dwelling. The soil contained modern building rubble and other debris probably pertaining to this building.

Directly below the subsoil was clean yellow natural sand. The yellow natural sand was observed in all the footing trenches with no other deposits visible, apart from a thin layer of natural iron pan at the base of the trench.

The absence of topsoil and the remaining thin subsoil deposit suggest that the ground level of the site had already been reduced prior to the current development. Probably to accommodate the siting of the bungalow which stood on the plot previously.

Acknowledgements

The author thanks Mr Ian Young, builder, and his crew for their co-operation and support on site during the watching brief. Thanks also to Andy Barnett for metal detecting the site. Historic Environment Record information was provided by Jan Allen at Norfolk Landscape Archaeology. The report was illustrated by David Dobson, produced by Julie Curl and edited by Alice Lyons.

Appendix 1: Context Summary

Context	Category	Description/ interpretation	Period
1	Deposit	Topsoil	Modern
2	Deposit	Subsoil	Post-medieval/modern
3	Deposit	Yellow sand	Natural

