

**99 – 101, FORE STREET, IPSWICH**

**SUFFOLK**

**An**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**Site code: IPS 467**

**National Grid Reference: TM 1682 4418**

*on behalf of*

**Braceforce Group**

**AOC**  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
GROUP



**June 2005**

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**Site code:** IPS 467

**On behalf of:** Braceforce Group

**Prepared by:** Chris Thatcher

**Watching Brief by:** Chris Thatcher

**Illustrations by:** Jon Moller

**Timing:** Watching Brief  
18<sup>th</sup> January 2005 – 1<sup>st</sup> February 2005  
  
Post-excavation and report production  
June 2005

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## **1 SUMMARY**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the site of 99 – 101 Fore Street, Ipswich between 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005 and 1<sup>st</sup> February 2005 during the construction of a block of 36 flats on the site. No archaeological features were exposed during the course of the watching brief. The watching brief demonstrated that the level of intrusion caused by the groundworks was not enough to be detrimental to the surviving archaeological deposits observed during the evaluation. The purpose of this document is to provide an archive report of the results of the watching brief carried out during ground works.*

## 2 INTRODUCTION

### Site Location (Fig. 1)

- 2.1 99 – 101 Fore Street is situated on the north bank of the River Orwell, Ipswich, Suffolk.
- 2.2 The development area was bounded to the south by Fore Street and by St Clements Church Lane to the north. To the east lay a Salvation Army Hostel whilst to the west the site was bounded by a short passage. The overall area of the site was approximately 1,115m<sup>2</sup> centred on National Grid Reference TM 1682 4418.

### Planning Background

- 2.3 Planning permission was granted for Braceforce Group to construct a block of 36 flats on the former garage site at 97–107 Fore Street, Ipswich (application IP/04/00849/FUL).
- 2.4 The site lay within an Area of Archaeological Importance, as defined by the Ipswich Local Plan (Ipswich Borough Council 2001). The development site was deemed to have high archaeological potential, possibly containing significant archaeological remains.
- 2.5 An evaluation was carried out by AOC Archaeology (AOC Archaeology Group 2004) to establish whether archaeological deposits survived along the Fore Street frontage. This identified evidence of medieval activity on the site but no archaeological deposits dating to the Anglo-Saxon or Tudor period were recorded.
- 2.6 In the light of the archaeological evaluation, and in accordance with the archaeological condition attached to the planning permission, it was deemed necessary to take precautionary measures to ensure that the construction groundworks were undertaken in a manner that avoided unnecessary disturbance to any artefact assemblages present and that enabled the recording of exposed archaeological features.

## 3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The majority of the historic core of Ipswich sits on the drift geology which was comprised of post-glacial alluvial sands and gravels overlying either Norwich crag or London clay. (BGS 2003)
- 3.2 Ipswich and its environs have been occupied since the Neolithic period. The Romans had settlements in the area, but in Ipswich itself this presence was limited to a Roman villa near the northern boundary of the medieval city.

- 3.3 The origins of Ipswich are thought to date to the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The earliest settlement, on the west bank of the River Gipping is thought to have been little more than a farmstead. The Saxon place-name *Gippeswic* is likely to refer to the ‘wic’ or trading settlement on the Gipping, although there have been suggestions of other derivations of the name.
- 3.4 The centre of Saxon Ipswich was located on a ridge of high ground running east-west some 500m north of Fore Street, on the roads now known as Westgate Street, Tavern Street and Carr Street. Previous excavations in the eastern part of the settlement have revealed kilns for pottery manufacture, using a technology imported from the Rhineland and Frisia in the early 7<sup>th</sup> century. Further excavations on the south side of Carr Street have revealed a wide scatter of pottery, indicating the scale of industry here.
- 3.5 Apart from the Carr Street settlement positioned on the ridge, most of the Saxon settlement was located southward of this, on low-lying land stretching down to the river. The northern bank of the river was supported by a series of revetments enabling ships to be docked rather than being drawn up on the foreshore. The success of the trading settlement can be seen from the attentions of the Kings of Mercia, who expanded into East Anglia in the late eighth century. A short period of decline was followed in the 9<sup>th</sup> century after the Danish conquest of East Anglia.
- 3.6 In the 10<sup>th</sup> century it is thought that Ipswich was a prominent economic centre, as evidenced by the number of coins minted there. The earliest coins date to AD 970, and continue into the eleventh century. By that time, there were Burgh defences at Ipswich, but the port remained a focus of the town’s commerce.
- 3.7 The medieval period saw the town dominated by monasteries including the Blackfriars, and the port continued to flourish. The town expanded, and by the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the town had rapidly grown due to the income from the wool industry. A few of the houses of these merchants still stand on Quay Street. The economic status of Ipswich rose and fell in response to the collapse of the wool trade and the arrival of the railways. The establishment of the Wet Dock in 1840 marks a further period of prosperity for the town. Fore Street lies some 100m north of the Wet Dock on the east side of town.
- 3.8 The historic character of Fore Street is shown by the number of listed buildings. Numbers 53-57, 71-81 (The Lord Nelson Inn), 89-91, 97, 119-127, 26-28, 42-54, 60-62, 84, 90-92 and 132-138 are all listed as Grade II, numbers 24 and 56-58 are Grade II\* and 80-80a including warehouses to the rear are considered Grade I. The listing applies not only to the buildings themselves but their curtilage, including outhouses, walls and attendant structures. The listed buildings span the years 1430-1750, and it is possible that the site contains foundations of buildings similar in date and style to those standing on Fore Street.

## **4 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

- 4.1 To monitor groundworks to mitigate impact on archaeological deposits revealed during the groundworks.
- 4.2 To record and sample excavate any such archaeologically important material.
- 4.3 To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

- 5.1 A unique site code, IPS 467, was obtained from the Suffolk County Museums Service prior to the evaluation work. This was maintained for the watching brief.
- 5.2 The watching brief involved the monitoring of machine- and hand-dug foundation trenches between the piles for steel and concrete ground beams.
- 5.3 The watching brief was carried out initially by one experienced archaeologist under the overall direction of Ron Humphrey, Project Manager for AOC Archaeology Group.
- 5.4 A toothless ditching bucket was used during the groundwork as far as was practical. Where necessary, for the removal of modern made ground, concrete and modern intrusions a toothed bucket was used.
- 5.5 All of the work was carried out in line with Archaeological Guidance Paper (AGP): 3, Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (English Heritage June 1998).
- 5.6 A full written, photographic and drawn record was completed during the watching brief. Context numbers were allocated to relevant deposits starting from 001.

## **6 WORK PROGRAMME**

- 6.1 The monitoring commenced on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005. The sequence of ground works are detailed below.
- 6.2 18<sup>th</sup> January 2005 - the excavation of ground beam trenches in the southern part of the site and two environmental test pits to the north east of the development area were monitored.
- 6.3 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> January 2005 - the excavation of the north-eastern section of the foundations was monitored.

- 6.4 31<sup>st</sup> January 2005 - a portion of the central ground beam foundations were excavated but the majority of the day was given over to pouring concrete for the ground beams.
- 6.5 1<sup>st</sup> February 2005 – the continuing excavation of the central ground beam foundations was monitored.

## **7 RESULTS**

- 7.1 No archaeology was observed in the development area. The ground beam trenches were approximately 0.65m in width and between 0.40m - 0.60m in depth.
- 7.2 The top/subsoil (001), a mixed dark grey brown silty sand 0.40m – 0.60m thick, contained modern building debris including bricks, concrete and metal fragments. These finds illustrated the probable disturbance caused by the construction and demolition of the garage previously occupying the site.
- 7.3 Two environmental test pits were dug in the north east area of the site down to a depth of between 3.50m – 4.00m. The top of the natural deposits (002) were revealed at a depth of between 0.60m – 0.70m below ground level. These consisted of light orange yellow sands, approximately 2.50m thick, overlying mid grey clay (003). Towards the south of the area the natural deposit rose to approximately 0.30m below ground level.
- 7.4 To the north of the area of development the depth of the ground beam trenches increased to a maximum 0.80m in places, which revealed a sequence as above of top/subsoil (001) over lying naturally deposited sands (002) above grey clay (003), no archaeological features or finds were present in any of the deposits.

## **8 CONCLUSIONS**

- 8.1 The watching brief demonstrated that the depth of impact of the ground beam trenches was not enough to disturb the surviving archaeological deposits observed during the evaluation.

## **9 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 9.1 It is recommended that no further work to mitigate impact on the site is necessary to satisfy the planning condition.
- 9.2 It is proposed that no publication beyond this document will be issued.



## 10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**Figure 1:** Site Location

12 - 28 ST CLEMENTS CHURCH LANE

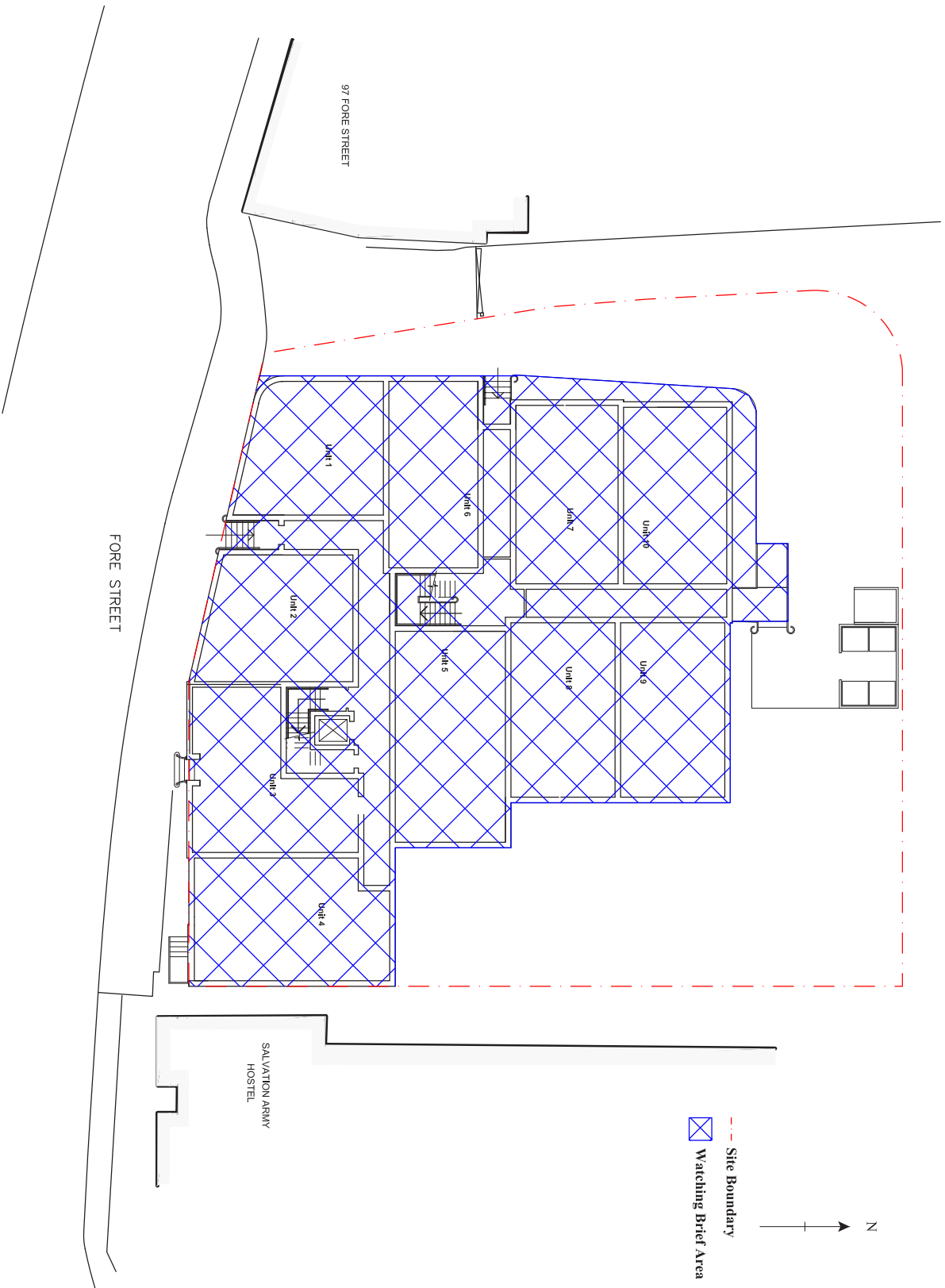


Figure 2: Watching Brief Location Plan

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**APPENDIX A – CONTEXT REGISTER**

<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Context Description</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Thickness</b>
1/001	Topsoil. Mixed dark grey-brown soils. Inclusions – Modern brick, concrete, glass, metal fragments	Trench	Trench	0.30m – 0.60m
1/002	Natural deposit. Light orange yellow sands, approximately 2.50m thick	Trench	Trench	2.50m
1/003	Natural deposit. Mid grey Clay Norwich Crag	Trench	Trench	To L.O.E



# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

**OASIS ID: aocarcha1-8585**

Project details

Project name 99-101 Fore Street, Ipswich

Short description of the project An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on the site of 99 □ 101 Fore Street, Ipswich between 18th January 2005 and 1st February 2005 during the construction of a block of 36 flats on the site. No archaeological features were exposed during the course of the watching brief. The watching brief demonstrated that the level of intrusion caused by the groundworks was not enough to be detrimental to the surviving archaeological deposits observed during the evaluation. The purpose of this document is to provide an archive report of the results of the watching brief carried out during ground works.

Project dates Start: 18-01-2005 End: 01-02-2005

Previous/future work Yes / No

Any associated project reference codes IPS 467 - SM No.

Type of project Recording project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Other 13 - Waste ground

Monument type MADE GROUND Modern

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK IPSWICH 99-101, Fore Street, Ipswich
Postcode	IP3
Study area	1115.00 Square metres
National grid reference	TM 1682 4418 Point
Height OD	Min: 2.57m Max: 3.05m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	AOC Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	AOC Archaeology
Project director/manager	Ken Whittaker
Project supervisor	Chris Thatcher
Sponsor or funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	n/a

Physical Archive  
Exists? No

Digital Archive  
Exists? No

Paper Archive  
recipient Suffolk County SMR

Paper Archive ID IPS 467

Paper Archive  
Exists? No

Project bibliography  
1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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