

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

## SCHOOL SITE, CEDARS PARK, STOWMARKET (SMR ref. SKT 041)

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORK  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A NEW SCHOOL  
(Application No. OL/33/01)

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2005/139  
(OASIS Ref. suffolke1-10216)

**Summary:** Archaeological monitoring of the groundwork associated with the construction of a school within the Cedars Park housing development to the northeast of Stowmarket (NGR TM 0611 5882), was undertaken during September 2005. The monitoring followed on from a large scale evaluation across the development area which had identified evidence for Iron Age, Roman and medieval occupation although in the area of the school site no significant deposits or features were recorded. The initial soil strip for the school building and surrounding area was monitored but other than a post-medieval field boundary ditch, no archaeological features or deposits were present on the site. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference SKT 041. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team and funded by the Suffolk County Council, Property Division.



Figure 1: Location Plan

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## Introduction

An application for the construction of a new school within the Cedars Park development, Stowmarket (application no. OL/33/01), was approved but with an attached condition requiring a programme of archaeological works to be put in place prior to any construction work. The Cedars Park development is a large-scale residential scheme on land to the northeast of Stowmarket bounded by the A14 and the A1120.

The archaeological interest in the site was due to its location within the Gipping valley, an area of extensive archaeological activity from the prehistoric through to the medieval period. An archaeological evaluation of a large proportion of the Cedars Park development was undertaken during 2004 which confirmed prehistoric, Roman and medieval activity within the Cedars Park development area but not in the area of the proposed school site.

In the light of the evaluation results the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team, agreed that the area affected by the school could be adequately recorded under a monitoring condition.

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 0611 5882; for a location plan see figure 1 above. This monitoring event is recorded on the Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record under the reference SKT 041. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, with funding from the Suffolk County Council, Property Division.

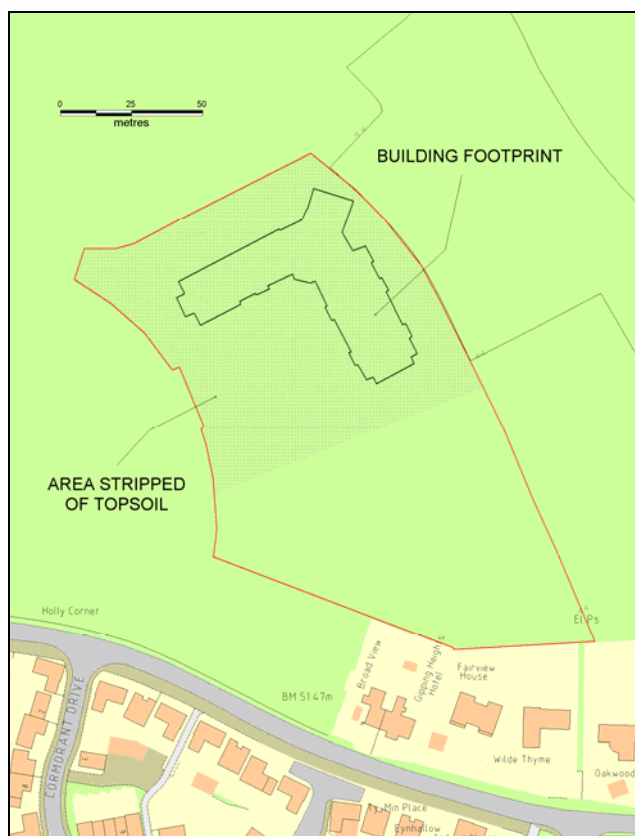


Figure 2: Site Detail

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## Results

The site was visited on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 2005 to observe the works then underway. An area surrounding and including the school building had been stripped of topsoil down to the surface of an underlying subsoil comprising a brown silt and sand. This surface was examined by walking regular transects but no archaeological features were noted. The actual footprint of the proposed school building had been further reduced revealing the underlying natural subsoil, which comprised a stiff grey boulder clay. This area was also walked and a single feature, consisting of a linear cut filled with dark loam, was recorded (Plate I). This was interpreted as a relatively recently filled boundary ditch and a boundary in this position is marked on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey maps of the area (figure 3).

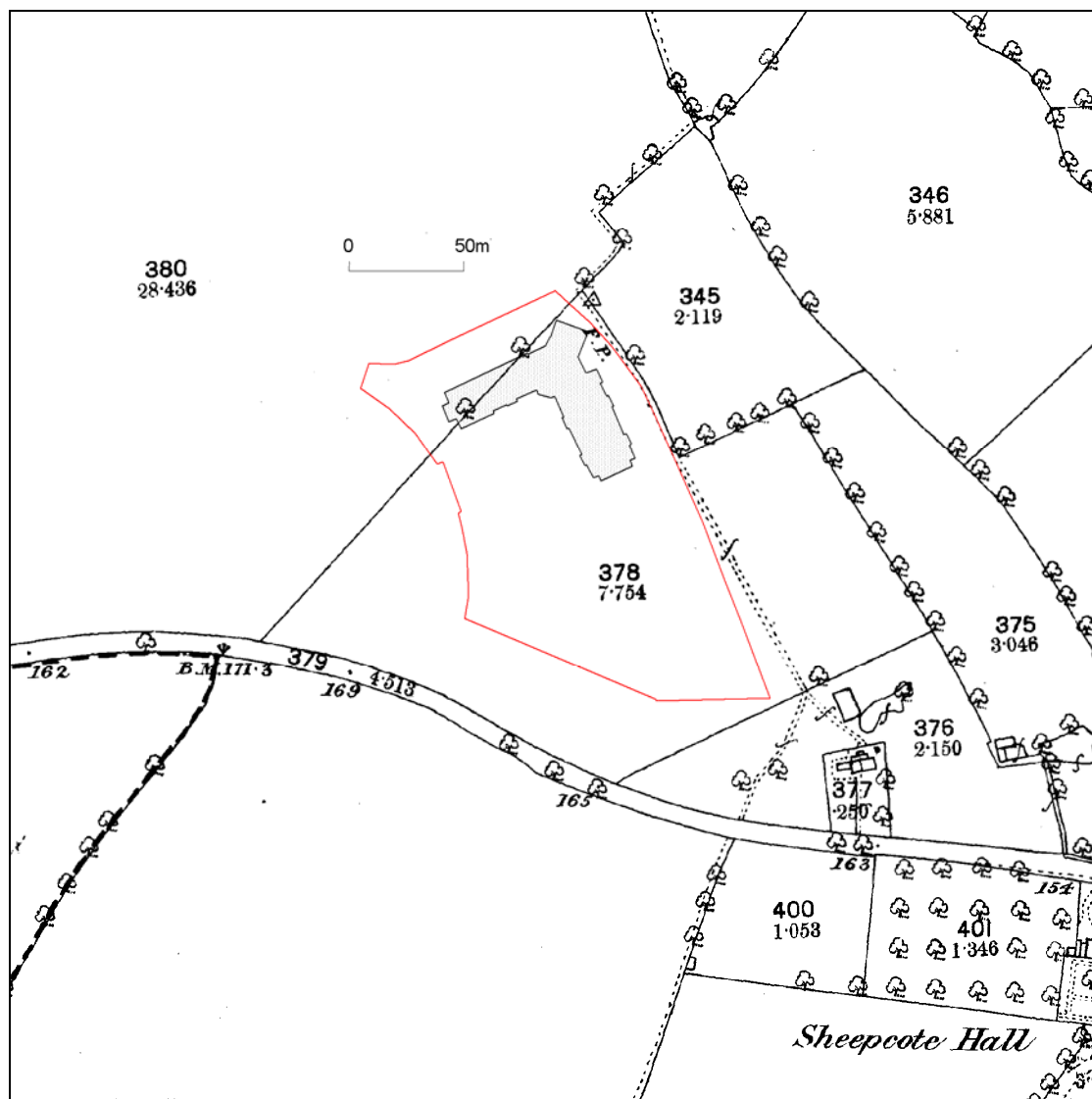


Figure 3: 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey, c.1885 (extract)

The topsoil removed was c.0.35m thick whilst the underlying subsoil was c.0.2m thick.

Large spoil tips were present on site, one of topsoil and another for the subsoil. Both were rapidly examined for artefacts but none were recovered.

The monitoring archive from this project will be deposited at the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service offices in Bury St Edmunds under the reference SKT 041, it is also recorded on the OASIS, online database, reference: suffolk1-10216.



## Conclusion

No significant archaeological deposits or features appear to have been destroyed by this development. Only a post-medieval field boundary was recorded and of this only a small proportion will be completely destroyed.

The stripped surface within the building's footprint was cleanly cut and monitoring of this area gave a good opportunity to observe for archaeological interventions into the natural subsoil. In the area surrounding the building's footprint only topsoil was removed revealing the brown silty sand subsoil which is likely to be a hillwash deposit that may be masking any early features that may be present although if they do exist they should not be threatened by this development.

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24<sup>th</sup> September 2005



Plate I: View of the Stripped Building Footprint (camera facing NE).  
The backfilled boundary ditch is clearly visible in right foreground running towards the machine.