

**The Old Bear and Crown,
20, Market Hill, Clare
(CLA 045)
Planning application no. SE/03/2826/P
Archaeological Monitoring Report, 2005/144
OASIS ID No. 10373**

Summary

Clare, The Old Bear and Crown, 20, Market Hill, Clare (TL/7745; CLA 045) An application to build a conservatory to the rear of The Old Bear and Crown, Market Hill, Clare required archaeological monitoring of the groundworks. The site had been subject to considerable disturbance but beneath this was a layer of what may be a medieval deposit. No features were seen cutting the subsoil or the exposed natural. One sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the upcast spoil.

(Linzi Everett for S.C.C.A.S. and Mr. P. Gooderham; report no. 2005/144)

Introduction

Conditional planning consent for a conservatory to the rear of The Old Bear and Crown, 20, Market Hill, Clare, required a programme of archaeological monitoring. The site is centred on TL7701 4531, at a height of c.49m OD and lies within the medieval village core, 125m south of the church and within 50m of Clare Castle. There is high potential for the site to contain occupational debris associated with earlier activity on the site.

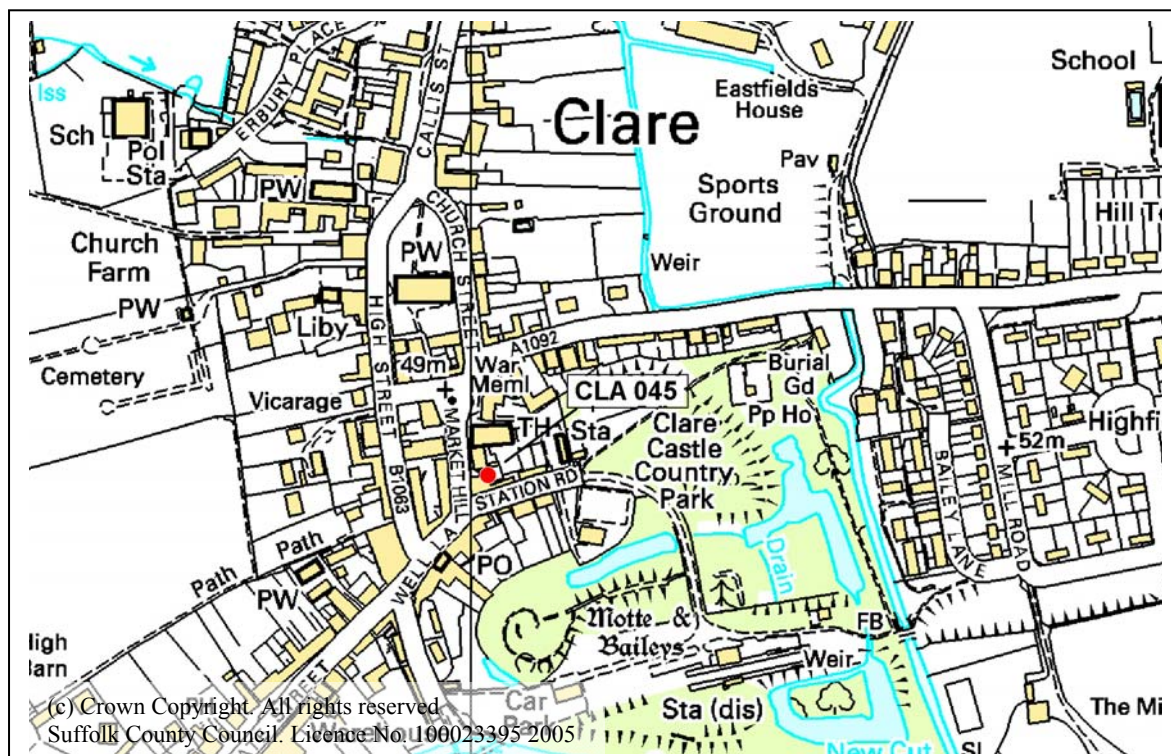


Figure 1: Site location

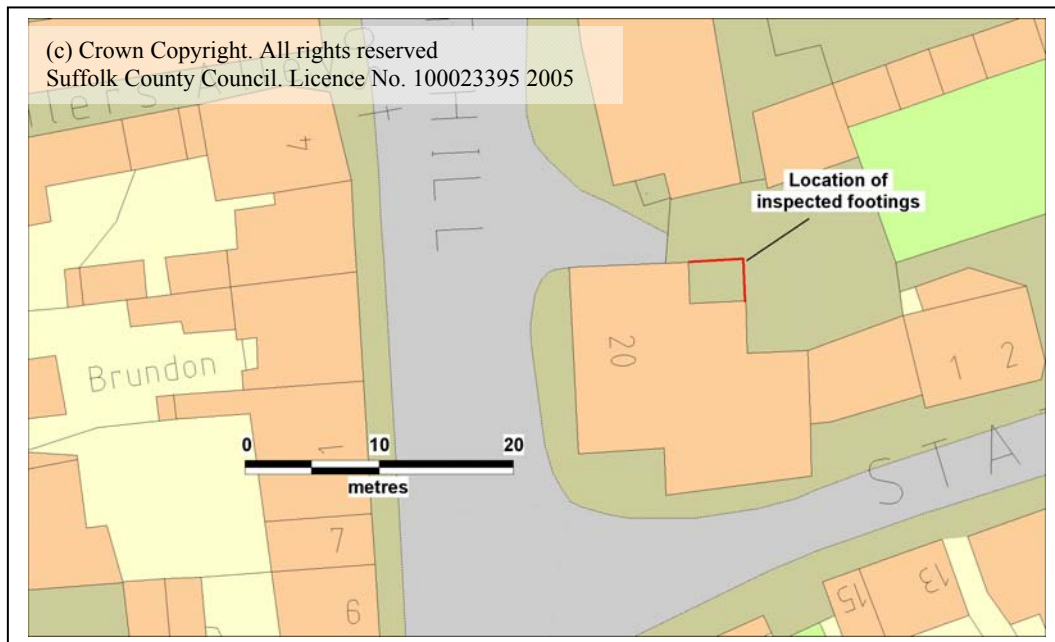


Figure 2: Location of trenches

Methodology

One visit was made to the site by the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to inspect the machine excavated foundation trenches. The site was recorded under the SMR code CLA 045. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work was produced by Keith Wade of the SCCAS Conservation Team. The monitoring work took place on September 22nd 2005 and was commissioned by the owner, Mr. P. Gooderham. The monitoring archive is held in the county SMR in Bury St. Edmunds.

Results

Trenching was undertaken to a depth of c.850mm, revealing the composition of the soil in the exposed sections. The top 450mm comprised various layers of concrete and rubble, representing various phases of significant post-medieval disturbance. This sealed a 400mm thick layer of mid brown homogenous loamy sand with occasional oyster and animal bone fragments. At the base of the trench, a clean, orange gravelly sand was just exposed, and assumed to be the natural subsoil. One pot sherd was recovered from the upcast spoil from the trenches.

The Finds

One medieval coarse ware body sherd was recovered as an unstratified find. It weighs 15g and its fabric is a Bury Sandy Ware, possibly a Bury Sandy Fine Ware, dating from the late 12th - 14th century.

Discussion

Over half of the depth of the exposed sections comprised modern disturbance which may have destroyed any shallow archaeological evidence once present. Whilst the single sherd of medieval pottery recovered was not found in situ, it is believed to have come from the soil beneath the modern disturbance. Whilst the footings only represent a small area for study, it is not surprising to find medieval evidence on a site fronting the medieval market place.

Linzi Everett
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September 2005