

TAKERS LANE, STOWMARKET

SKT 042

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Planning Application No: 317/04

Date of Fieldwork: 27/09/05 – 4/10/05

Grid reference: TM 0533 5800

Funding Body: N/A

Introduction

A Planning Application (317/04) was granted for the construction of eighteen dwellings on land off Takers Lane, Stowmarket. The site encompasses *c.* 4300m² and lies on generally level ground at *c.* 30m AOD at the edge of a small floodplain on the northern bank of the Rattlesden River. The site is bounded to the north by Takers Lane; to the east by allotments; to the south by scrubland along the banks of the river; and to the west by extant residential development.

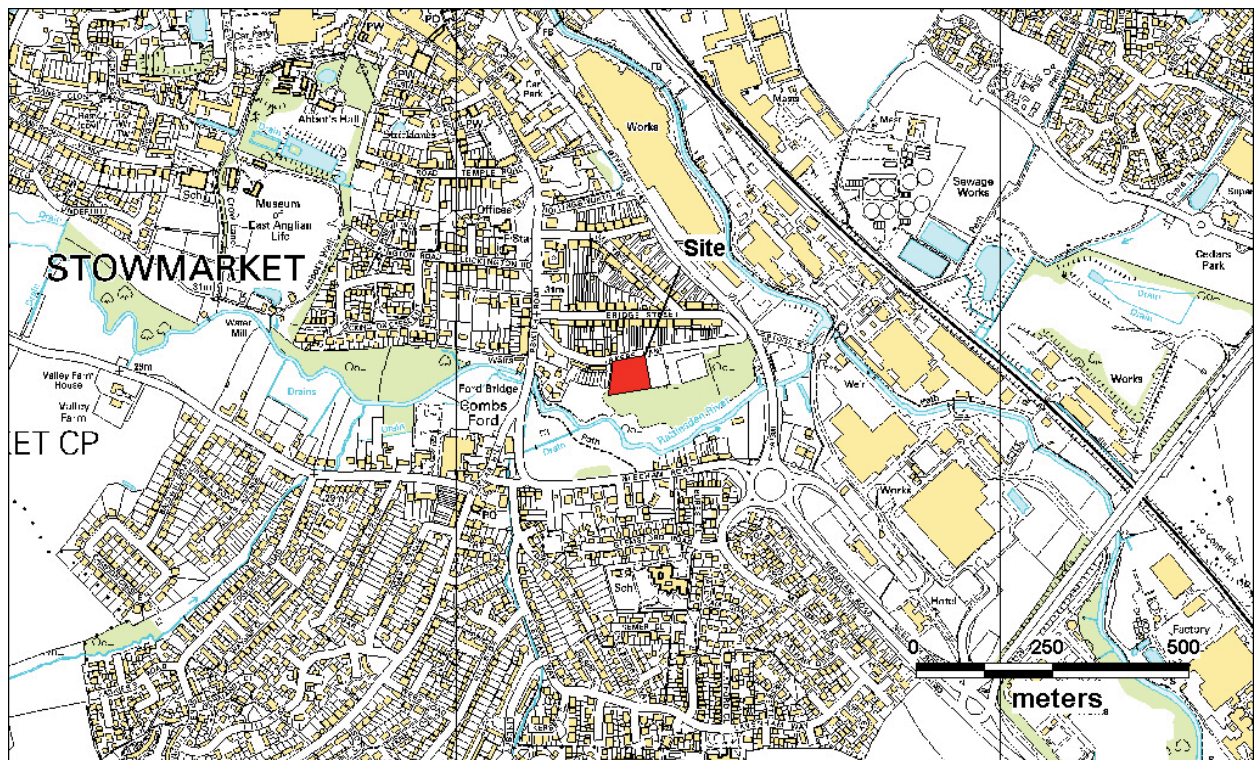


Figure 1. Site location

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No known archaeological sites are known to lie within the proposed development area. However, two findspots of Roman coins are known in the vicinity. These are SKT 002, which lies *c.* 200m to the north-east and SKT 007, which lies *c.* 220m to the south-south-west on the opposite side of the River Rattlesden. Its low-lying valley location means that the site also has the potential for the preservation of prehistoric remains. It was therefore decided by Judith Plouviez of the SCCAS Conservation Team that while the site's potential was too limited for a full archaeological condition to be recommended it should nevertheless be subject to a Watching Brief.

Methodology

A series of visits were made between the 27th of September and the fourth of October 2005 in order to observe some of the open strip foundation trenches.

The trenches were excavated using a 360^o tracked mechanical excavator (hymac) fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket. This necessitated brief hand cleaning of the base of the trench and the faces of the upstanding sections in some areas in order to clarify the nature of the deposits.

The site was allocated the SMR number SKT 042 and observed archaeological features and deposits were allocated OP (observable phenomena) numbers and recorded on *pro forma* context sheets.

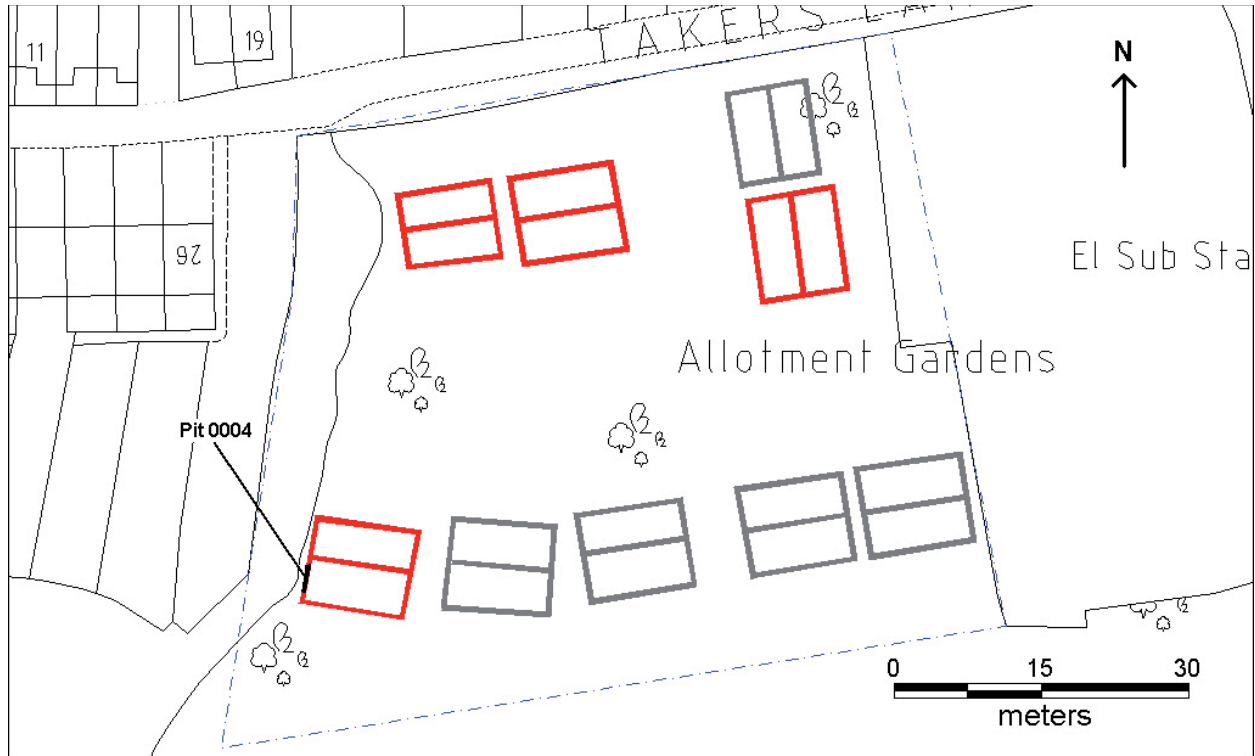


Figure 2. Location of monitored (red) strip foundations and pit 0004 (unobserved foundations shown in grey)

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Results

The three plots occupying the street frontage all displayed the following common stratigraphy:

Context	Depth	Description
0002	0.00 – 0.65m	Scrubland soil. Loose/soft light yellowish greyish brown slightly silty sand with moderate to frequent small sub-rounded to sub-angular flint pebbles. Some root disturbance.
0003	0.65 – 1.2m+	Redeposited terrace gravels/floodplain deposits. Very loose 'dirty' light greyish brown silty sand with occasional poorly sorted rounded flint pebbles and rare medium sub-rounded flint cobbles. Very rare small CBM flecks.

No typical topsoil deposit could be identified, as the site had been partially stripped/levelled prior to the monitoring visits.

No archaeological finds or features were recorded in the strip foundations along the Takers Lane frontage.

The strip foundations for the plot in the south-western corner of the site were slightly deeper at 1.4m and at this depth clean terrace gravel deposits (0007) were encountered. These have been

described as loose mid orangey brown sharp sand with frequent small to medium sub-angular to rounded flint pebbles and cobbles.

The only archaeological feature recorded on the site was observed in the plot in the south-western corner (see Figures 2 and 3). This was pit 0004. This was only partially revealed but was 3m long (north to south) by at least 0.6m and was some 0.9m deep. It had gently sloping slightly concave sides with an imperceptible break to a rounded base. Its primary fill (0005) was 0.5m thick and comprised soft dark greyish brown sandy peat with occasional heavily decayed roundwood/root fragments. No dateable finds could be recovered from this deposit. The secondary fill (0006) was a very soft mid brownish grey silty clayey sandy with occasional small clay lumps, chalk flecks and are small sub-rounded flint pebbles. Again this contained no dateable finds. The upper fill was sealed by a 0.5m thickness of deposit 0002.

Conclusions

No significant archaeological finds or features were recorded. A single undated pit with a peat-like primary fill attested to the low-lying nature of the site and its potential for waterlogging in the past.

Report No. **2005/152**

Rhodri Gardner, for SCCAS, October 2005

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