

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

St. HELEN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL WOODBIDGE ROAD, IPSWICH (SMR ref. IPS 484)

A REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF GROUNDWORK ASSOCIATED
WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EXTENSION TO THE SCHOOL
(Application Nos. IP/04/00807/FPC)

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2005/156
(OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-10639)

Summary: Archaeological monitoring of groundwork associated with the construction of an extension to St. Helen's Primary School, Woodbridge Road, Ipswich (NGR; TM 1706 4462), was undertaken during November 2004. It revealed c.1m of made ground over a possible buried topsoil which in turn overlay a natural subsoil of yellow silty clay. The possible buried topsoil contained numerous fragments of brick and tile and the natural subsoil appeared to be truncated suggesting the area has been previously disturbed, presumably during the original construction of the school. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference IPS 484. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, with funding from SCC Estates Management Dept.

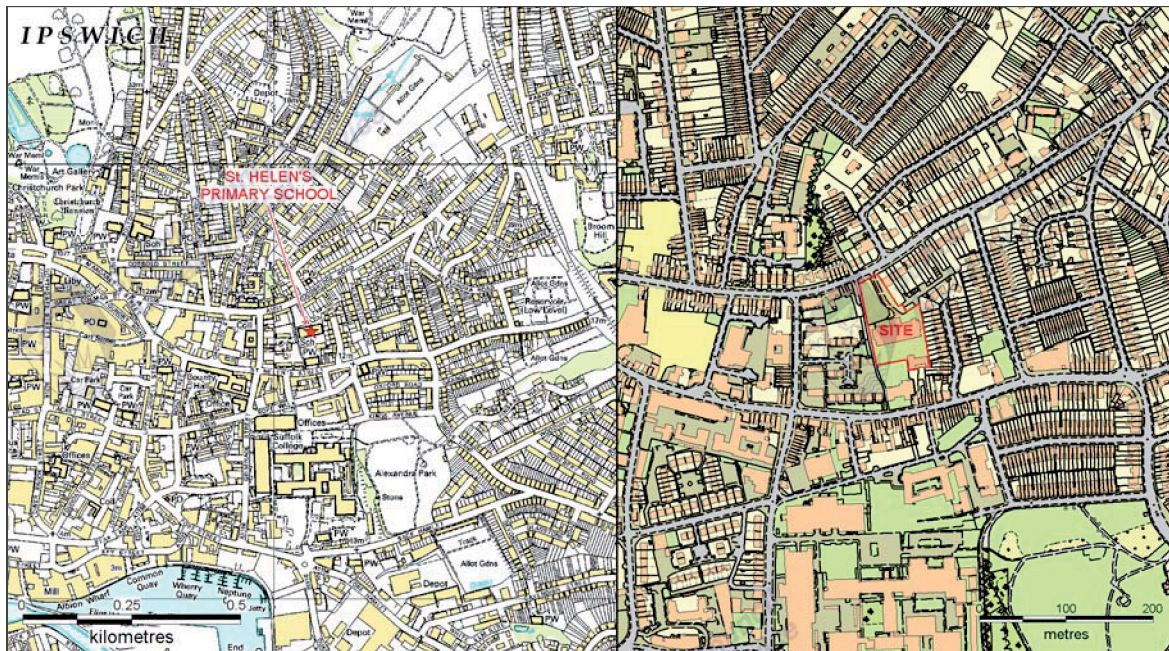


Figure 1: Location Plan

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Introduction

Archaeological monitoring of groundwork associated with construction of a small extension to main building of St. Helen's Primary School, Woodbridge Road, Ipswich was undertaken during November 2004. Interest in the site is due to the fact it lies immediately adjacent to the 'Area of Archaeological Importance' of Ipswich as defined in the Ipswich Local Plan.

Construction of the proposed extension is likely to involve significant ground disturbance with the potential to destroy any archaeological deposits or features that may be present although as only a low-level of archaeological activity was expected within the site an archaeological monitoring condition was considered adequate. The aim of monitoring was to provide a record of any archaeological features or deposits revealed by the groundworks associated with this development. To detail the archaeological work required a Brief and Specification was produced by the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team (see Appendix).

Unfortunately, due to a communication mix up, the excavation of the foundations for the extension were missed although the excavation of two test pits was archaeologically monitored. The test pits had been excavated to inspect the existing foundations of the school and to assess the local ground conditions in advance of the construction of the extension and the 'soak-away' was excavated as the extension neared completion. The results are discussed below.

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 1706 4462; for a location plan see figure 1 above. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference IPS 484. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, with funding from SCC Estates Management Dept.

Methodology

Site visits were made to inspect the test pits after they had been hand excavated by the building contractors. The revealed soil profile was then recorded with the depths and thickness of any layers identified being noted. The location of the test pits was planned and a small number of digital photographs were taken. The resultant spoil was then quickly examined for archaeological artefacts. Figure 2 illustrates the location of the test pits, the 'soak-away' and the extension.

Results

The site was visited on the 17th and 19th November 2004 to inspect the two test pits, identified as Test Pit 1 and Test Pit 2.

Test pit 1 was excavated to a depth of *c.*0.5m and revealed that immediately underneath the tarmac surface was a 0.45m thick deposit of loose concrete fragments and brick rubble which immediately overlay the natural subsoil. The surface of the natural subsoil, which comprised yellow silty clay, appeared to have been truncated.

Test Pit 2 was excavated to a depth of *c.*1.1m. This revealed that underneath the tarmac surface was a layer of hardcore which in turn overlaid a thin layer of dark yellow sand and gravel, both of which provided a foundation for the tarmac surface. Immediately beneath this was a *c.*0.85m thick deposit of brown loam with occasional thin lenses of yellow sand

and flecks of charcoal and crushed brick and tile. The bottom 0.2m of this was slightly darker and contained some slightly larger fragments of brick and tile. The interface between this and the subsoil was quite abrupt indicating the subsoil had been truncated.

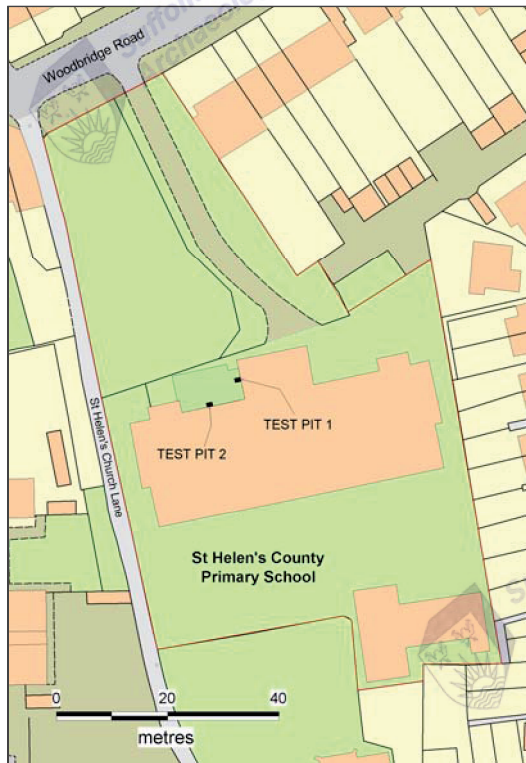


Figure 2: Detailed Location Plan

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Plate I: Test Pit 2 (camera facing SW)

The monitoring archive from this project will be deposited at the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service offices in Bury St Edmunds under the reference IPS 484, it is also recorded on the OASIS, online database, reference: suffolkc1-10639.

Conclusion

Despite both test pits being immediately adjacent existing walls of the school there was no evidence of a cut for a foundation trench indicating that the deposits seen in both pits had occurred after the construction of the school. The site slopes to the south and it is likely that a terrace has been cut into the slope which has heavily truncated the area of the school building, particularly on the northern side.

The test pits were cleanly cut which would have made the identification of any archaeological features reasonably straightforward.



APPENDIX

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring

ST HELEN'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, WOODBRIDGE ROAD, IPSWICH

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to extend St Helen's Primary School has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (IP/04/00807/FPC). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence and the proposed foundation methods indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal lies immediately adjacent to the Area of Archaeological Importance for Ipswich as defined in the Ipswich Local Plan and will involve significant ground disturbance.
- 1.3 As strip foundations are proposed there will only be limited damage to any archaeological deposits, which can be recorded by a trained archaeologist during excavation of the trenches by the building contractor.

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which would be damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for the medieval occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of building footing trenches. These, and the upcast soil, are to be observed during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor.

3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 The developer or his archaeologist will give the County Archaeologist (Keith Wade, Archaeological Service, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR. Telephone: 01284 352440; Fax: 01284 352443) 48 hours notice of the commencement of site works.
- 3.2 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the observing archaeologist) who must be approved by the Planning Authority's archaeological adviser (the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover archaeological costs incurred in monitoring the development works by the contract archaeologist. The size of the contingency should be estimated by the approved archaeological contractor, based upon the outline works in paragraph 2.3 of the Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and timetable.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered, the County Archaeologist should be immediately informed so that any amendments deemed necessary to this specification to ensure adequate provision for recording, can be made without delay. This could include the need for archaeological excavation of parts of the site which would otherwise be damaged or destroyed.

4. Specification

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Archaeologist and the 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.

- 4.2 Opportunity should be given to the 'observing archaeologist' to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary.
- 4.3 In the case of footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of one and half hours per 10 metres of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed should be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts should be numbered and finds recorded by context as far as possible.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*, particularly Appendix 3. This must be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*. The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County SMR if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.3 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.4 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, should be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets should be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.6 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 5.7 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Keith Wade

Suffolk County Council
 Archaeological Service Conservation Team
 Environment and Transport Department
 Shire Hall
 Bury St Edmunds
 Suffolk IP33 2AR

Date: 15 October 2004

Reference: /Ipswich-StHelensSchool10

This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.

If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.