
SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

Stanley House, Alderton

ADT 065

Planning application no. C/05/0410

Archaeological Monitoring Report, 2005/136

OASIS ID No. 10794

Summary

Alderton, Stanley House (TM/344416; ADT 065) The construction of a new dwelling on land south east of Stanley House, Alderton, required archaeological monitoring of the various groundworks. Whilst much of the building footprint had been disturbed by the presence of an earlier building, where this was not the case, a layer of subsoil rich in pottery was revealed. This was mostly medieval and locally made, but also included a few sherds of Roman and Middle Saxon wares. No pre-modern features were observed.

(Linzi Everett for S.C.C.A.S. and Mr. C. Gingell; report no. 2005/136)

1. Introduction

Conditional planning consent for a dwelling at Stanley House, Alderton, required a programme of archaeological monitoring. The site is centred on TM 3442 4162, on the site of a former telephone exchange building, and at a height of c.10m OD. It is also located within what may be the medieval village core, and c.50m south east of the medieval church. In addition, known Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation recorded nearby means that there is high potential for the site to contain occupational debris associated with earlier activity.

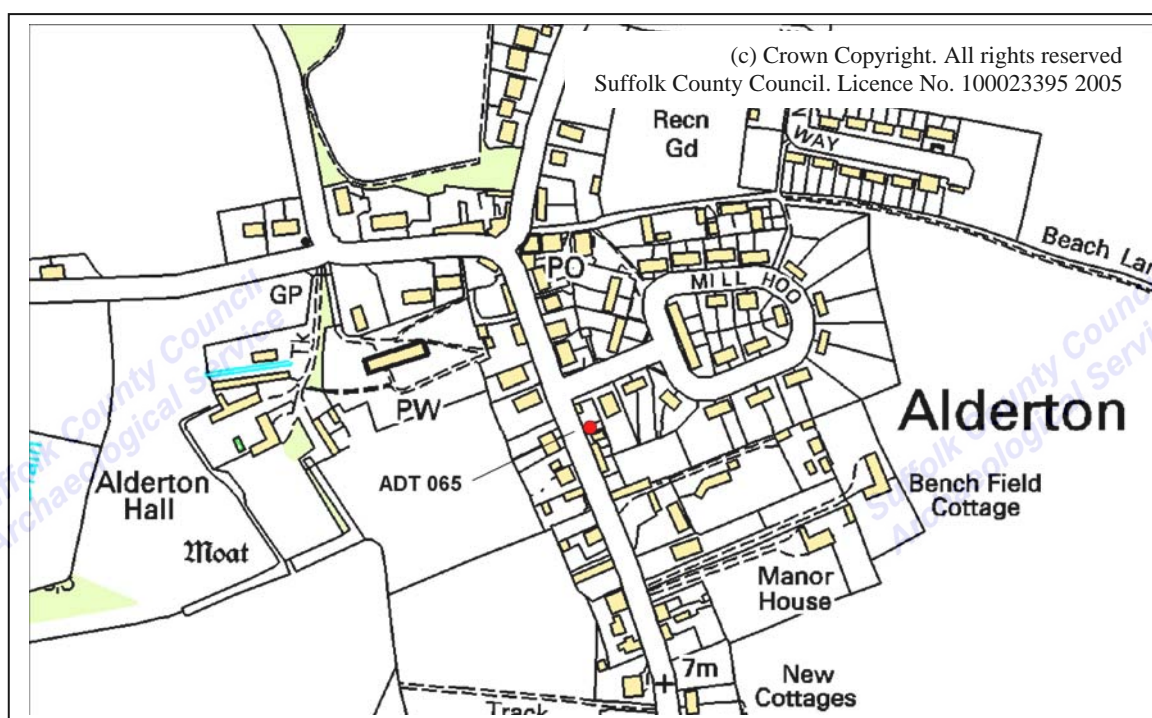


Figure 1: Site location

2. Methodology

Visits were made to the site by the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to inspect stripped areas and foundation trenches. The site was recorded under the SMR code ADT 065. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work was produced by Jess Tipper of the SCCAS Conservation Team. The monitoring work took place during August 2005 and was commissioned by the owner, Mr. C. Gingell. The monitoring archive is held in the county SMR in Bury St. Edmunds.

3. Results

The telephone exchange building had been demolished and the footprint of the new building stripped of a dark brown sandy loam topsoil to a depth of 500mm. The topsoil sealed a homogenous layer of mid orangey brown silty sand subsoil which contained frequent pottery sherds throughout, as well as occasional bone, charcoal and oyster shell fragments. The exposed surface was trowelled clean to look for features but no pre-modern features were present.

In the western half of the building footprint it was clear that construction and removal of the exchange building had caused disturbance to levels below which archaeology could have

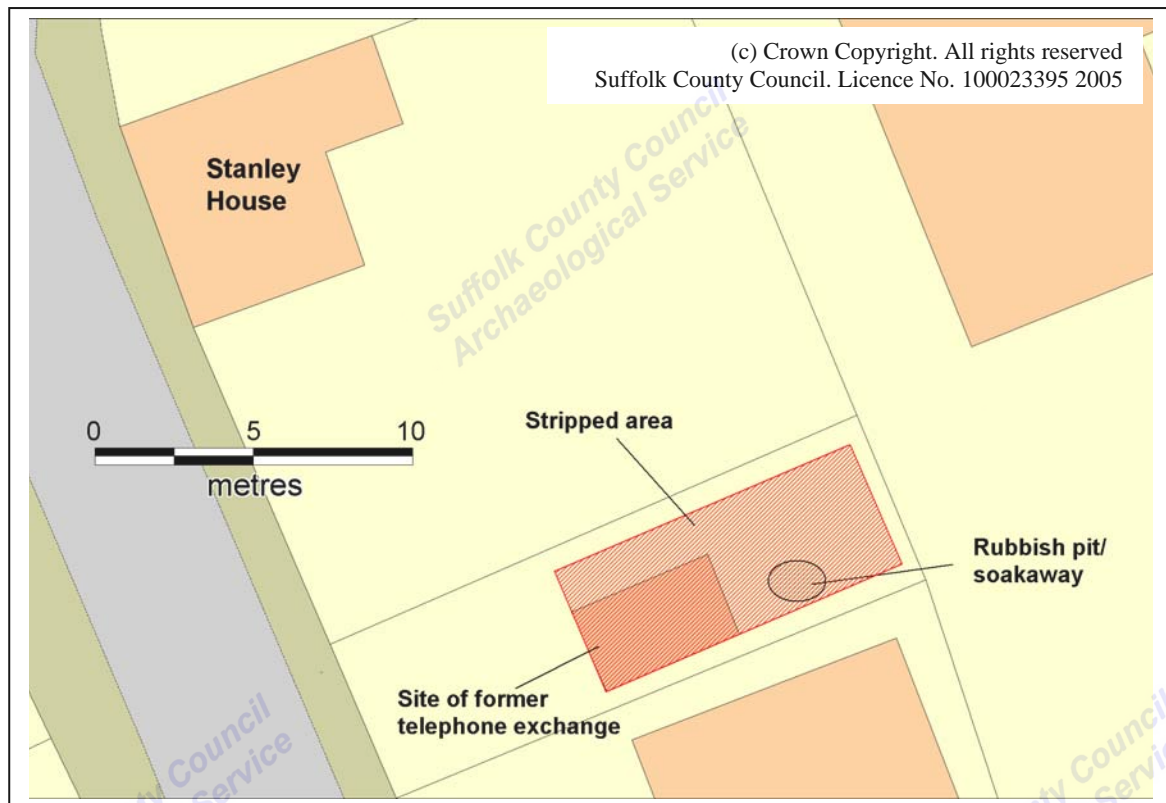


Figure 2: Development area showing main areas of disturbance

been expected. Footings were excavated within the stripped area, exposing the natural subsoil, a clean dark orange sand, very similar to the finds-rich subsoil layer above. There was no clear change from subsoil to natural. No features were visible in the trench sections.

4. The Finds

Stanley House, Alderton (ADT 065)

AW /CT/RG 10/05

Introduction

Finds were collected from two contexts from the monitoring, as shown in the table below.

Context	Pottery		CBM		Iron		Copper Alloy		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0001					3	110			Unstratified
0003	34	374	1	34	1	2	1	1	Mixed in subsoil
Total	34	374	1	34	4	112	1	1	

Table 1. Finds quantities.

Pottery

Thirty-four sherds of pottery were recovered from subsoil layer 0003. Four fragments of local or regional coarsewares are Roman in date (65g). The pottery includes the chamfered base from a black-surfaced ware (BSW) dish, two base sherds and a hooked rim from sandy grey ware (GX) jars. The sherds are all abraded and are 2nd century or later.

A total of 30 fragments are Post-Roman in date (309g). Two joining fragments of an Ipswich ware jar of Middle Saxon date were identified. The vessel is made from a sandy fabric and is sooted both internally and externally. It has a simple, slightly everted rim which is similar to West's Group 1 Type C classification, which has an external bevel (West 1963).

The remainder of the pottery is made up of medieval coarsewares, dating from the late 12th to the 14th century. Most of the pottery is made up of Hollesley type coarsewares, including a fragment of a curfew. This vessel has a large diameter in the region of 360mm, and is sooted internally, indicating that it was used as a cover over a fire. Examples of curfews are relatively rare, but are found in other greywares produced in East Anglia (Jennings 42-43). Hollesley-type ware belongs to the later part of the coarseware tradition, dating from the late 13th to the 14th century.

Ceramic building material

A single fragment of a roof tile was recovered from the subsoil 0003. The tile is made in a fully oxidised relatively fine fabric, which also shows the remains of mortar, possibly indicating re-use. Although possibly later, the tile contains no ferrous inclusions and probably dates to the 13th-15th century.

Metalwork

A complete iron horseshoe was recovered as an unstratified find. It is the shoe from a small horse or pony, and the remains of 6 nails are still attached. The shoe is of uniform width and has no calkins. It is likely to be post-medieval in date.

A single small iron nail was also present from subsoil deposit 0003, together with a small fragment of a copper alloy strip.

Discussion

The small quantity of finds recovered from the monitoring includes some material of interest. The condition of the Roman pottery dating from the second century is very abraded,

indicative of considerable redeposition, but the Ipswich ware and the medieval coarsewares are in relatively good condition. The presence of so much Hollesley coarseware is unsurprising as Alderton is not far from this production centre.

5. Discussion

A relatively large finds assemblage was recovered from what is quite a small stripped area. Although no features were visible, the majority of the pottery from this site comprised quite large pieces with fresh, sharp breaks, suggesting little movement since deposition. Only the few Roman sherds showed significant signs of abrasion. It seems likely that subsoil layer 0003 represents a medieval topsoil and the condition and quantity of finds suggests that medieval occupation was nearby. The presence of Ipswich ware in particular is of interest as this may indicate an eighth/ninth century date for the foundation of the settlement that was later to become Alderton.

Linzi Everett
Field Projects Team,
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.
September 2005.

References

- Jennings, S., 1981, Eighteen centuries of pottery from Norwich, EAA Report No 13
- West, S. E., 1963, 'Excavations at Cox Lane (1958) and at the town defences, Shire Hall Yard, Ipswich (1959)', Proc. Suffolk Inst. Archaeol. XXIX, pt. 3, 233-303