

# COTTON LODGE, COTTON

## COT 020

### Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Planning Application No: 0703/05

Date of Fieldwork: 14/12/05

Grid reference: TM 0808 6565

Funding Body: Mr and Mrs R Newton

### Introduction

A Planning Application (0703/05) was granted for the construction of an extension to the rear (south-western side) of Cotton Lodge, Cotton. The proposed extension covers an area of *c.* 45m<sup>2</sup>. The site is centred approximately on NGR TM 0808 6565 and lies on generally level ground at *c.* 60m AOD. The site is bounded on all sides by open agricultural land.

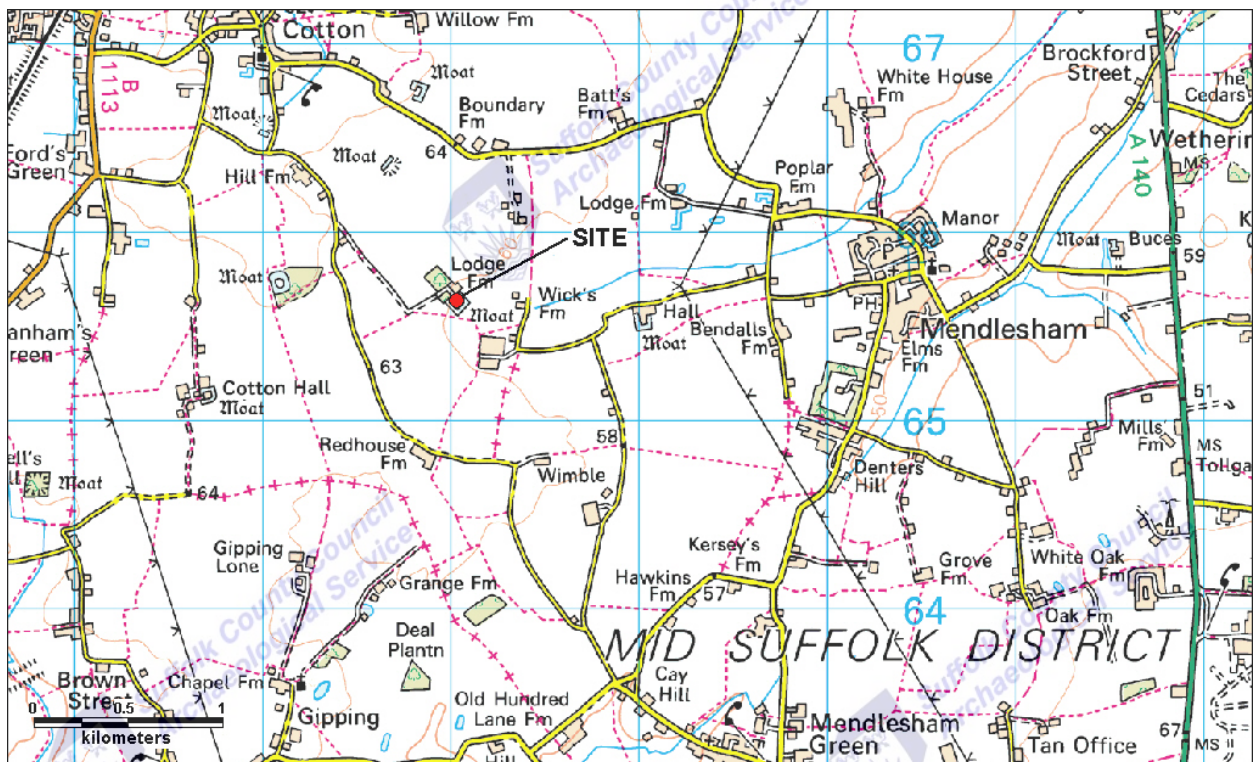


Figure 1. Site location

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With the exception of the moated enclosure on which the site stands (COT 004) no known archaeological sites lie in the vicinity of the development site. The only other sites of note in the locality lie across the parish boundary in Mendlesham. These include the similar moated site at Wick's Farm (MDS 038) and an associated 13<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century pottery scatter (MDS 037) *c.* 300m to the east. In addition, several medieval pottery scatters (MDS 084, 085 and 086) have been recorded along Potter's Lane, some 400m to the north-west.

Given the site's sensitive location within the moated enclosure and the intrusive nature of the groundworks (strip foundations), it was recommended by Jess Tipper of the SCCAS Conservation Team that the Planning Permission be granted on the condition that a programme of archaeological monitoring was carried out. A Brief and Specification for the work was

produced (by Jess Tipper, dated 14/06/05) and the SCCAS Field Team were subsequently commissioned by the client, Mr R Newton, to carry out the work.

## Methodology

A single visit was made on the 14<sup>th</sup> of December 2005 in order to observe the digging of the strip foundation trenches. The trenches were dug using a small 360<sup>0</sup> tracked mechanical excavator (minidigger) fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket. This necessitated some 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 COT 020 and observed archaeological features and deposits were allocated OP (observable phenomena) numbers and recorded on *pro forma* context sheets.

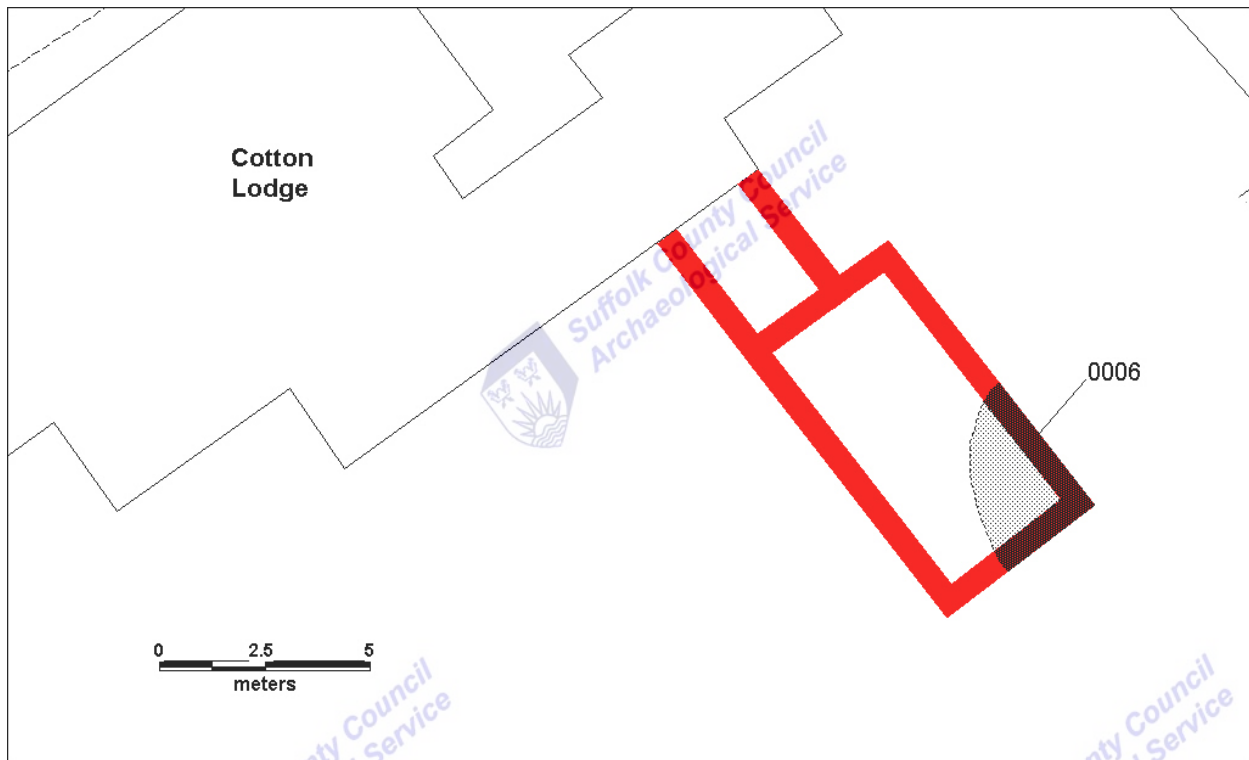


Figure 2. Location of strip foundations and feature 0006 (the part of 0006 'inside' the footing trenches is conjectured)

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## Results

With the exception of feature 0006, the following common stratigraphy was observed throughout:

Context	Depth	Description
0002	0.00 – 0.45m	<b>Topsoil.</b> Very soft mid slightly brownish grey clay-heavy loam with occasional CBM flecks, modern plastic pipe runs etc.
0003	0.45 – 0.8m	<b>Earlier 'garden soil'/moated platform occupation layer.</b> Firm light brownish grey slightly silty clay with moderate chalk flecks, rare charcoal flecks and very rare CBM and ANBN fragments.
0007	0.8m+	<b>Natural drift (Boulder Clay).</b> Stiff light brown clay with occasional blue/grey gleyed patches. Rare poorly sorted medium sub-angular flint cobbles and medium 'blocky' sub-angular chalk nodules; moderate chalk flecks/small sub-rounded nodules.

A single large feature (0006) was recorded in the eastern corner of the foundation trenches (see Figs. 2 and 3). This was at least 3.7m long (north-west to south-east) and at least 2.6m wide (north-east to south-west). It was sealed beneath layer 0003 and was 0.68m deep with steep

smooth sides that broke fairly gently to a flat base. Its shape in plan could not be discerned due to its limited exposure. It contained two fills. The primary fill (0005) was a thin (0.25m max depth) layer of very soft dark grey/black slightly clayey silt with moderate oyster shell fragments, rare crushed CBM flecks and frequent charcoal flecks. No dateable finds could be recovered. This was overlain by a much more substantial secondary fill (0004) that was some 0.65m deep. It comprised firm mid brownish grey silty clay with occasional chalk and charcoal flecks as well as a significant amount of root disturbance/well rotted small roundwood fragments. Again, this yielded no dateable finds.

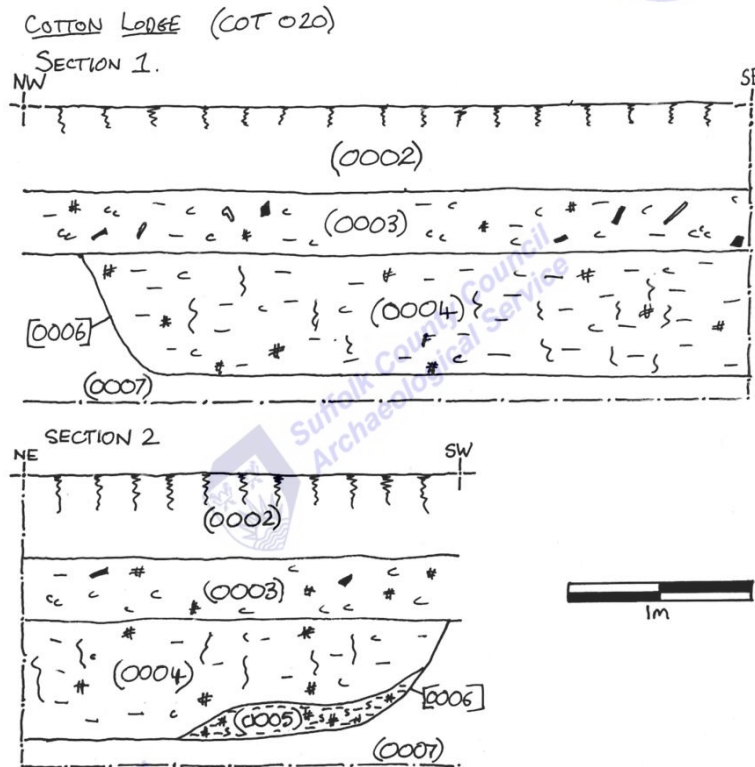


Figure 3. Section drawings including profile of feature 0006 (ground surface at top of sections @ c. 60m AOD)

No other archaeological finds or features were observed.

## Conclusions

The shape of feature 0006 in plan could not be determined, so it is not possible to say with any certainty whether a ditch or pit is represented. The character of the primary fill 0005 is perhaps suggestive of rubbish disposal but given the relatively sterile nature of the more substantial secondary fill the function of the feature must remain open to speculation. Its date also remains unknown. No significant feature can be traced on early Ordnance Survey maps in this location.

Some occupation within the moated enclosure is clearly indicated but its date and function remain unknown.

Report No. **2005/197**

Rhodri Gardner, for SCCAS, December 2005

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