

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Monitoring Report

SCCAS Report No. 2006/020

SMR- HTC 063

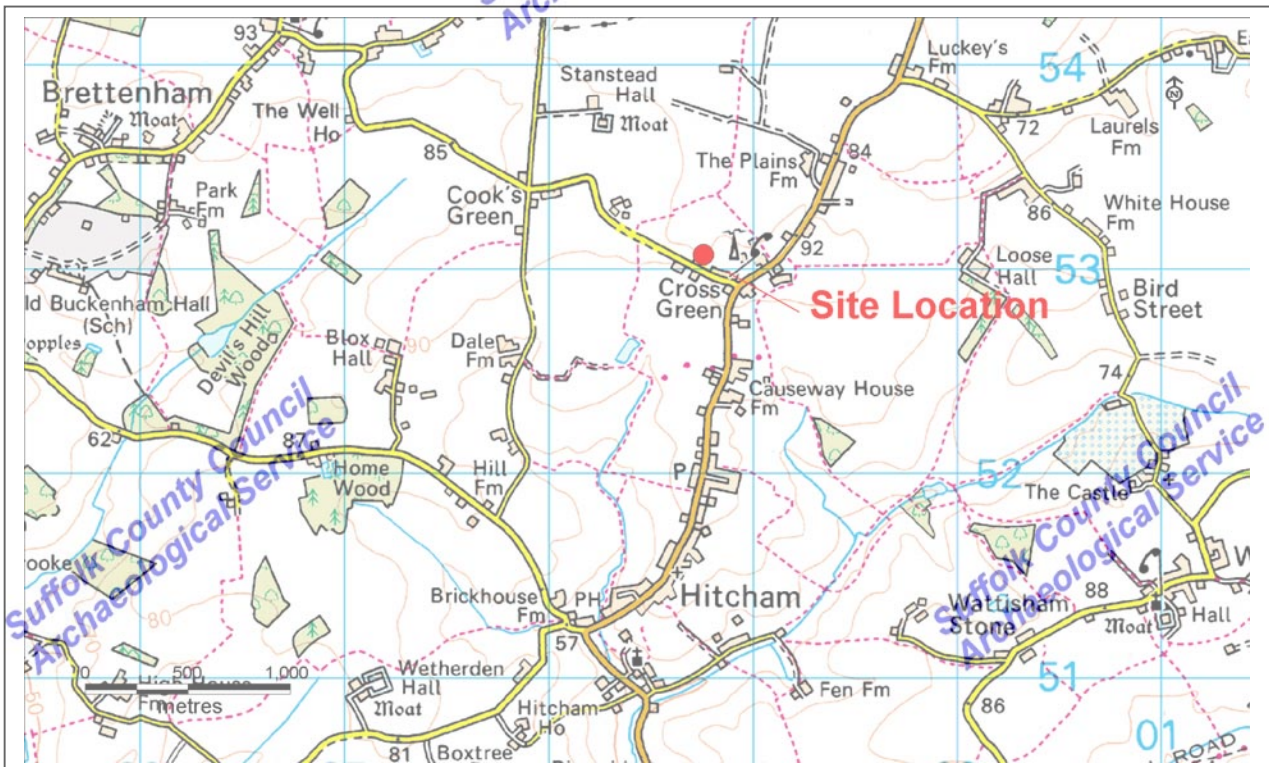
Oasis ID No. suffolk1-13554

Oak Cottage, Brettenham Road, Hitcham

Robert Atfield, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Senior Archaeological Officer: Robert Carr
Field Officer/Contracts Manager: John Newman

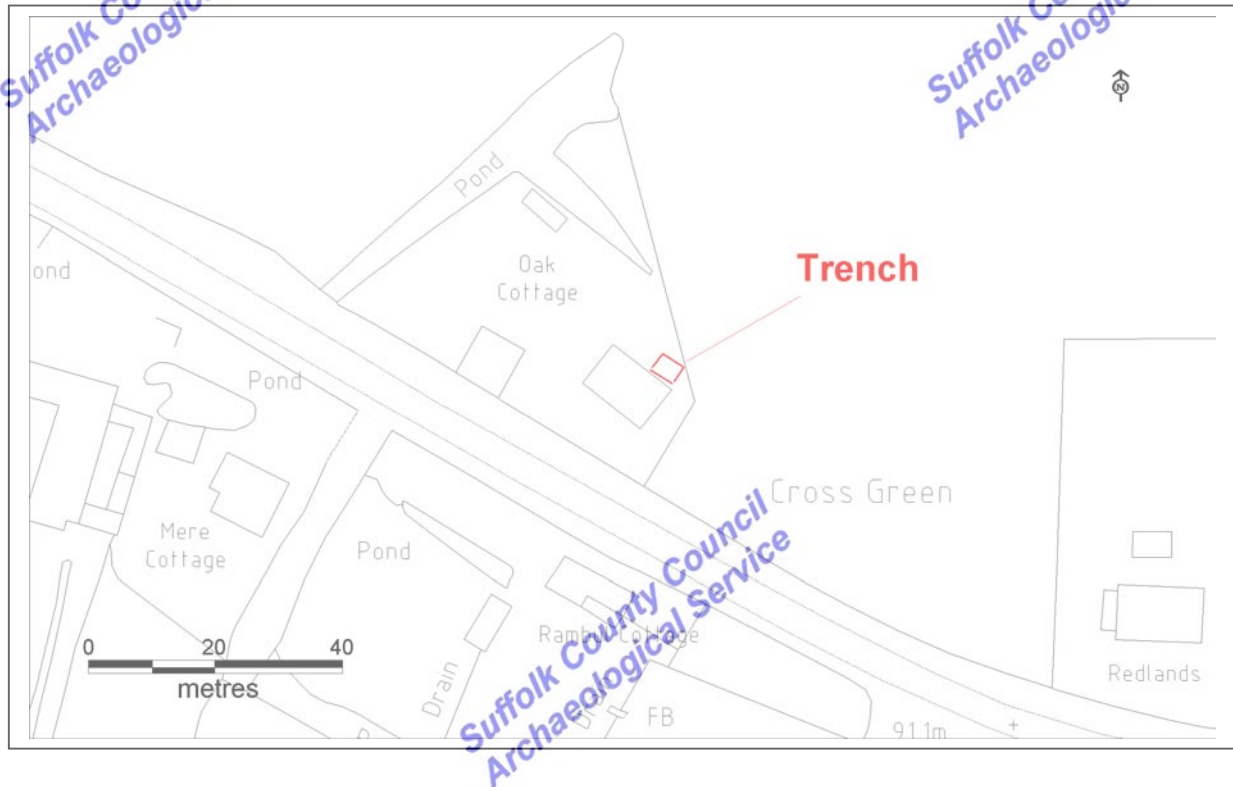
Summary

Archaeological monitoring was required as a condition of planning application B/05/01351/FHA for a rear extension to the above property. As a result of likely ground disturbance to the rear of the listed building, a site visit was made on the morning of 15th march 2006. The location is thought to have had much earlier origins as a settlement and may represent an early medieval croft. The footing trenches failed to reveal any archaeological features. The trench layout and soil profiles were recorded, together with a search of any spoil for finds which may offer dating evidence. This also failed to provide any additional evidence.



Introduction

The development consisted of a small rear extension to Oak Cottage, a grade II listed timber framed building dating to the seventeenth or eighteenth centuries. The house stands within a ditched enclosure which is likely to represent an early medieval croft. Other adjacent houses also lie within ditched boundaries which suggests that the group may potentially be an early hamlet.



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Methodology

The footing trenches were 0.5m. wide and surrounded an area measuring 6.2m. by 3.7m.. They were dug to a depth of between 1.5 to 1.8m. revealing clearly defined soil types. The topsoil was between 0.40-0.60m. in depth and was a dark loam mixed with silty clay. The subsoil was around 1.2m. in depth and was of brown clay with fine chalk particles. The subsoil contained frequent sand pockets which were rapidly eroding as a result of groundwater movement. Underlying this was an extremely heavy pale blue-grey boulder clay. All faces of the trenches were carefully examined for archaeological deposits. The spoil had been widely spread, allowing a good opportunity to recover any visible finds.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, no archaeological features or datable finds were observed or collected during this procedure. Although the trenches covered a small area, it was possible to gain an impression that this specific part of the site had undergone very little disturbance, other than root penetration. There was no indication of any yard surfaces, paths or structures; it therefore seems most likely that this area has seen long term use for garden cultivation.
