

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

‘ELBANK’, VICARAGE LANE, BRAMFORD (SMR ref. BRF 071)

A REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF GROUNDWORK ASSOCIATED
WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EXTENSION TO ‘ELBANK’
(Application No. 1813/05)

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2006/023
(OASIS Ref. Suffolke1-13655)

Summary: Archaeological monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction of an extension to the rear of ‘Elbank’, Vicarage Lane, Bramford (NGR; TM 1262 4624), was undertaken during March 2006. A series of footings to the rear of the house were examined but only undisturbed natural deposits were seen and no archaeological artefacts recovered. The natural subsoil, which did not appear to be truncated, comprised yellow sands and gravels and lay under 0.35m of garden soil. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference BRF 071. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, who were commissioned and funded by the owner, Mr Virr.

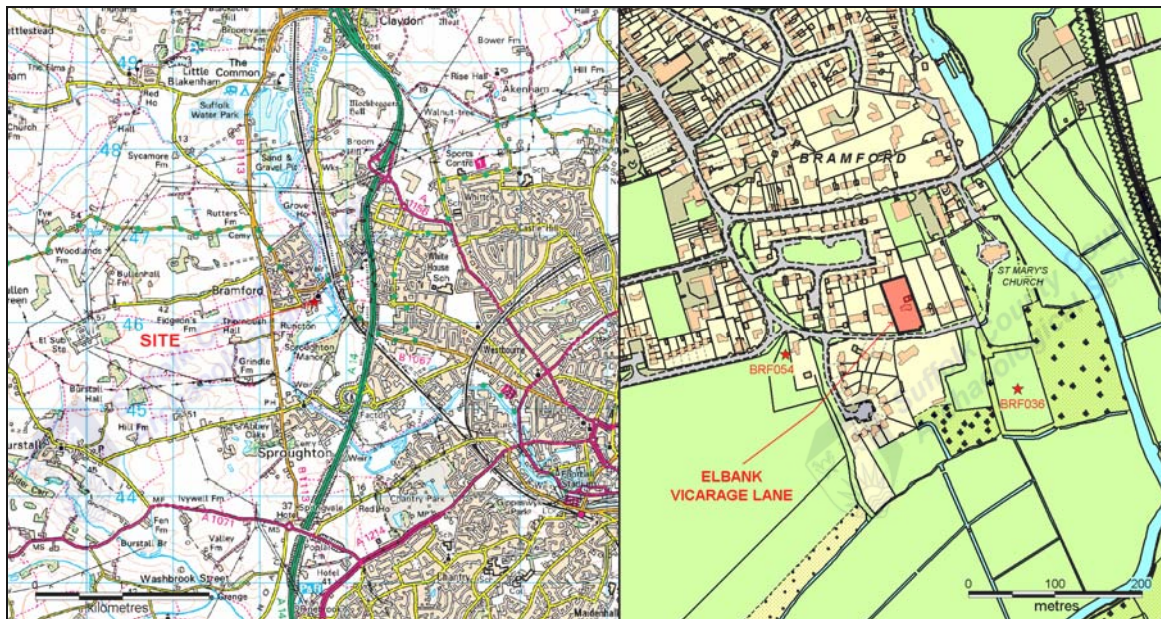


Figure 1: Location Plan

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Introduction

Archaeological monitoring of groundwork associated with construction of an extension to ‘Elbank’, Vicarage Lane, Bramford, was undertaken during March 2006. Interest in the site is due to its location close to the medieval church of St Mary (SMR ref. BRF 024) in an area thought to be within the historic core of the settlement. It also lies close to a series of medieval finds scatters which situated to the southeast and southwest (see figure 1, SMR refs. BRF 036 & 054) recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

The proposed extension is to be constructed to the rear of the existing house and it is to be built on strip foundations. These will involve limited ground disturbance but have the potential to reveal and damage any archaeological deposits or features that may be present. An archaeological condition was placed upon the planning consent to allow for archaeological monitoring of the groundworks in order to provide a record of any archaeological features or deposits revealed. To detail the archaeological work required a Brief and Specification was produced by Jess Tipper of the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team (see Appendix I).

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 1262 4624; for a location plan see figure 1 above. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference BRF 071. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, who were commissioned and funded by the owner, Mr Virr.

Methodology

The footings for the extension were visually examined for archaeological deposits or cut features after they had been mechanically excavated by the building contractors. The revealed soil profile was recorded with the depths and thickness of any layers identified noted. The surfaces of any spoil tips present on site during the monitoring visits were quickly examined for archaeological artefacts and a small number of digital photographs of the work were taken. The location of the footings relative to the existing house is illustrated in Figure 2.

Results

The site was visited on the 7th March 2006, to inspect the groundworks then underway during which all footings for the rear extension were seen.

The trenches were cut c. 0.9m deep. In profile, as revealed by the footing trenches, it could be seen that the garden topsoil was c. 0.35m thick and immediately overlay a natural deposit of yellow sands and gravels. The interface between the topsoil and the natural subsoil was uneven and there was no evidence for any previous truncation to the surface of the natural subsoil.

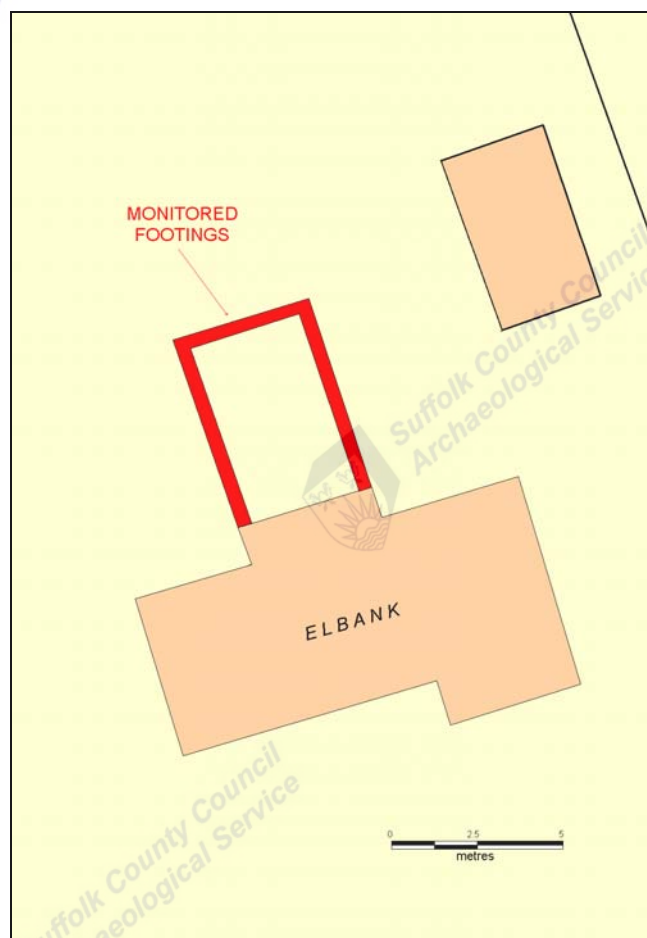


Figure 2: Location of Footings

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A portion of the spoil was still on site and this was quickly examined but no artefacts of any period were recovered.

The monitoring archive from this project will be deposited at the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service offices in Bury St Edmunds under the SMR reference BRF 071, it is also recorded on the OASIS, online database, reference: suffolkc1-13655.

Conclusion

No archaeological deposits or features were noted. The observed footings were cleanly cut and had any archaeological features or deposits been present it is highly likely they would have been identified. It is thought that Vicarage Lane formerly led to an earlier river crossing although there is no evidence for this other than the road alignments themselves. If this were the case the medieval settlement would be expected to centre on the church and river crossing with the lane acting as a main thoroughfare. No evidence to support this was recovered during the monitoring of the groundwork although the area examined is over 30m from the road edge and would have lain in the rear yard of any medieval properties that may have fronted the roadway.

Mark Sommers
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Field Projects Team

22nd March 2006

APPENDIX

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

ELBANK, VICARAGE LANE, BRAMFORD, IP8 4AE

Although this document is fundamental to the work of the specialist archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that certain of its requirements are likely to impinge upon the working practices of a general building contractor and may have financial implications, for example see paragraphs 2.3 & 4.3.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to erect two extensions to the existing dwelling at Elbank, Vicarage Lane, Bramford, IP8 4AE (TM 1262 4624) has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application 1813/05). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by development can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The development is situated to the west of the medieval church and churchyard (BRF 024) and it is thought to be in the historic core of the settlement. It lies within close proximity of known archaeological activity, with medieval find scatters to the south-east (BRF 036) and south-west (BRF 054) recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 1.3 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Project Design or Written Scheme of Investigation (PD/WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/WSI will *provide the basis for measurable standards* and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.
- 1.4 Before commencing work the project manager must carry out a risk assessment and liaise with the site owner, client and the Conservation Team of SCCAS in ensuring that all potential risks are minimised.

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are 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 medieval occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of building footing trenches and the provision of services. These, and the upcast soil, are to be observed after they have been excavated by the building contractor. Adequate time is

to be allowed for archaeological recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following excavation (see 4.3).

3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the archaeological contractor) who must be approved by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) - see 1.3 above.
- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of SCCAS five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to previously agreed locations and techniques upon which this brief is based.
- 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 time-table.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered the Conservation Team of SCCAS must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4. Specification

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Council Conservation Team archaeologist and the contracted 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity must 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 and main service trenches unimpeded access at the rate of **two 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 must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.6 Archaeological contexts should, where possible, be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from J. Heathcote, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy, P.L. and Wiltshire, P.E.J., 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.
- 4.7 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, including palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. 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*, must be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 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: Jess Tipper

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Environment and Transport Department
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Tel. : 01284 352197

Date: 16 November 2005

Reference: /ElbankVicargeLaneBramford2005

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.