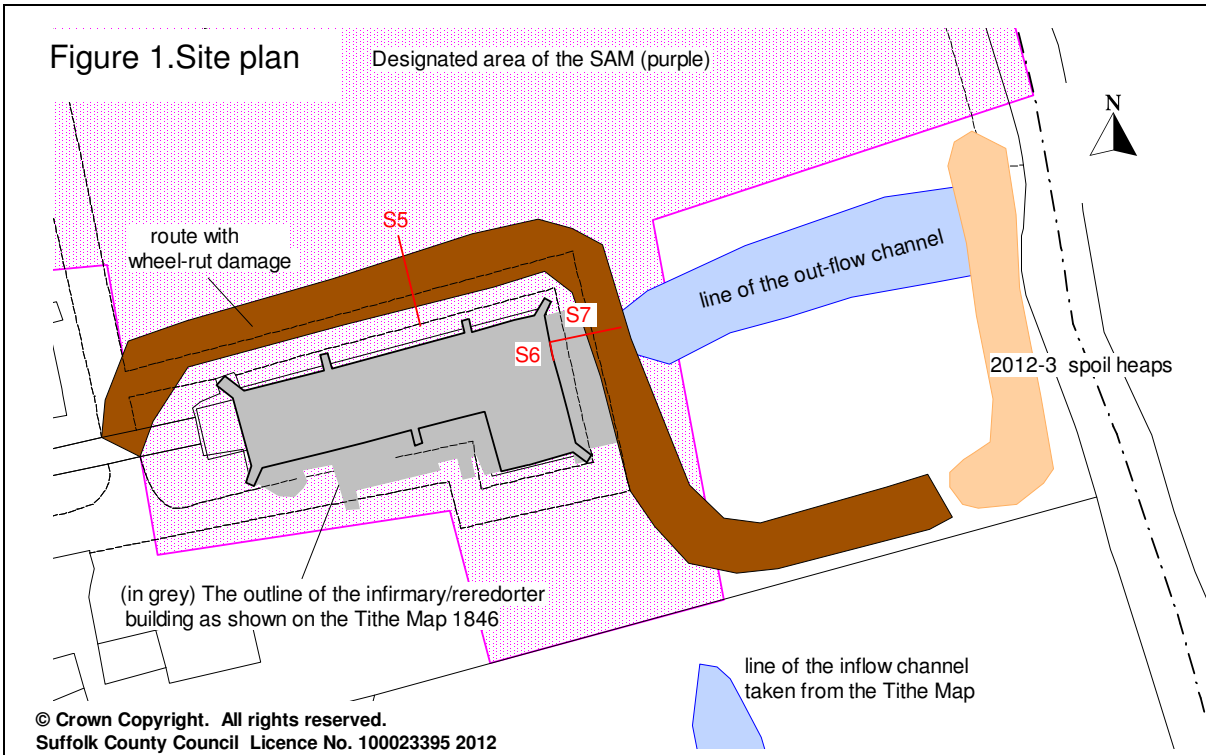


ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2013/112	Parish: Clare
Assessing the effects of building contractors, potential damage to the Clare Priory grounds	Planning App No: SE/08/0398
	SAM consent ref: HSD 9/2/8757
	HER Event No: CLA 037
Address: Ashen Road, Clare, Suffolk CO10 8NX	Grid Reference: TL 7699 4500
	Number of site visits: 1
	Date of visits: July 2013
<p><i>Background</i></p> <p>An archaeological monitoring visit was made to Clare Priory to assess the impact of construction traffic tracking through the designated area of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Deep wheel ruts had been created within the area of the priory's medieval cloister as a result of vehicle (dumper truck) movements relating to building work for the extension to the priory church. The visit was prompted by an instruction from John Ette, English Heritage's regional Inspector of Monuments who had identified the damage to the monument's landscape during a site inspection. This document is an addendum to the monitoring report already completed for the monitoring of the ground works of the church extension (SCCAS report no 2013/039)</p>	
<p><i>What was seen - nature of the work, condition of trenches etc.</i></p> <p>The wheel ruts encircled the north and east sides of the church en route to a linear spoil heap that was being created on the east edge of the site (Fig.1). The spoil was being used to create an embankment alongside the river to alleviate the flooding of the grounds that frequently occurs. The river's channel is a man-made cut (presumably medieval in date) which carries the River Stour and formed part of the boundary of the priory precinct.</p> <p>A machine cut trench was excavated across, and to the full depth of the ruts, in the presence of the monitoring archaeologist to access the potential damage to any underlying archaeological deposits. A service trench was re-excavated at the east end of the church which had been missed due to an oversight in the original monitoring.</p>	



Results

Wheel ruts (see plan above and Fig. 2, S5)

The soil profile within the excavated section showed that the ground here was made up of relatively recent deposits; these were more than 500mm deep and in excess of the depth of the excavated section. The deposits included the remains of the gravel path which once lead to the north door, and its rubble sub-base (0120) laid over a homogenous layer of re-worked dark soil (0121). Layer 0120, possibly a dumped imported soil, contained modern detritus including broken glass, china, brick fragments and coal. The date of this material indicated that it had been re-worked or imported since the beginning of the 20th century; possibly as the result of previous construction works or landscaping associated with the return of the Priory to the Order of Friars in the 1950's. The dumper's wheels had sunk into the ground by as much as 300mm but this was wholly within these late deposits and no archaeological horizon had been affected. A programme of remedial work was agreed with the main contractors to restore the ground to its previous level and condition.

Spoil heaps

The spoil heaps created on the east edge of the site are to be landscaped and retained and they were therefore plotted to record them as a new feature. The heaps impinge on the outlet of a former channel, which once linked the priory's reredorter to the Stour river and have impacted partly on the reading of this historic feature. The channel was filled in sometime after the publication of the 3rd Edit OS map in 1922 but still exists as a visible linear depression. The spoil heaps are however outside the designated monument area.

Drains (see Fig. 2, sections S6 and S7)

By way of mitigation for the failure to notify the monitoring archaeologist of the drainage works for the church extension, a narrow slot was excavated alongside a newly installed drain run close to the infill of the northernmost arch of the reredorter's east wall and within the line of the former outflow channel.

The excavation exposed a well-made footing (0115) beneath the arch; identical in form to the one seen below the south wall of the building (SCCAS report no 2013/039). The top of the footing was 500mm below the current ground surface and demonstrated that a bonded footing ran in a continuous, unbroken line between the arch openings. The footing was buried under a tumble of Dissolution rubble (0118) made up of large building flint and tiles. The fact that the rubbles lies directly on top of the footing suggests that at the Dissolution, when the reredorter was functioning, this seemingly below ground wall was exposed and therefore must have formed a revetment to the west end of the outflow channel. The rubble had spilled over the footing and into the end of the channel, which was still an open feature at this time and at least 900mm deep. The rubble is not closely dated, but the age-range of tile and pottery collected from beneath the flints includes the end of the medieval period and they are likely to be contemporary with the monastic use of the building. The pottery which was dated broadly to 1480-1600AD was coated with, what is possibly, limescale. This implies that the vessels were once water containers and potentially directly related to the functioning of the reredorter (see finds report below).

Sealing the rubble and infilling the channel to the east of the building was a muddy silt backfill (0117) that produced medieval and post-medieval brick and glazed floor-tiles together with large sherds of glazed earthenware pottery. The assemblage dates to the 16th-18th centuries and included ceramics imported from the low countries representing the most fashionable style of the period. The cut-off date for the finds strongly suggests that the segment of the channel nearest to the building was infilled before the beginning of the 19th century and this is supported by the tithe map evidence (SCCAS report no 2013/039, Fig. 2) which shows the otherwise open E-W channel terminating about 10m short the building in 1846.

At the top of the section was a horizon of green clay (0116). This layer was flat and level suggesting the ground had been prepared once this section of the channel had been filled in. The top of the clay coincided with the base of the flint infilling the arch suggesting that the two may have been contemporary. A layer of similar clay was recorded on the south

side of the building which was associated with the post-18th century barn conversion. The tithe map shows the building with both a southern and eastern extension at this time and it is possible that the clay layers made up the floors of these added ranges.

The infill for the arches is built off the post dissolution rubble layer that overlies the medieval footing rather than the footing and confirms that the blocking of the arches, which is believed to have occurred in the 19th century, is a late modification to the building.

The Finds

Layer 0117

Pottery: Four joining sherds (wt 222g) of a large Glazed red earthenware pancheon or very large bowl dating to the 16th-18th century. The vessel has a rim diameter of c. 480mm.

A single fragment of a heavily rilled, redware jug in a fine buff fabric with a lead glaze on the outside and covering the upper part of the internal surface. There is a Dutch 'feel' to the appearance of this fragment and it seems likely that it is a Netherlandish lead-glazed redware of 14th-17th century date.

A small sherd of a redware strap handle (wt 5g) with a partial lead glaze and a slight curvature suggesting it does not come from a jug, but a more complex vessel such as a chafing dish (16th-18th C).

CBM: Roof-tiles

6 fragments fully oxidised roofing tile, some fully post-med fabrics.

2 fragments of roofing tile with partially reduced cores, 13th-15th century.

CBM: Floor tiles

Black glazed medieval floor-tile, probably Flemish, height 35mm.

Slipped and glazed (late) medieval floor-tile. Height 20-25mm. Grey core with oxidised margins, mortar on base. Red ceramic scars on top of lead glaze, perhaps through redeposition. Flemish, c.early 16th century.

Large abraded fragment of unglazed floor-tile, height 45mm, prob. L16th C or later.

Layer 0118

Pottery: Two sherds from a slightly sagging base of a cistern or jar (wt 323g). Made in a sandy, slightly micaceous redware which has a partially reduced core and splashes of lead glaze externally.

A sherd from a second similar larger vessel with a slightly sagging base (wt 280g); also a redware but is less micaceous and has a fabric which contains moderate red inclusions, probably clay pellets.

Both vessels could broadly be catalogued as early post-medieval redwares (c.1480-1600) and both are heavily coated with calcareous deposits internally which is probably limescale, suggesting that they were used as containers of water perhaps for washing through the reredorter.

CBM: Roof-tiles

2 joining fragments of roofing tile with reduced core and sparse calcareous inclusions (13th-15th century)

1 fragment of abraded fully oxidised roofing tile, early post-medieval fabric. White mortar on 3 sides but not on broken edges.

Recorded by: David Gill/Richenda Goffin

Date: Sept 2013

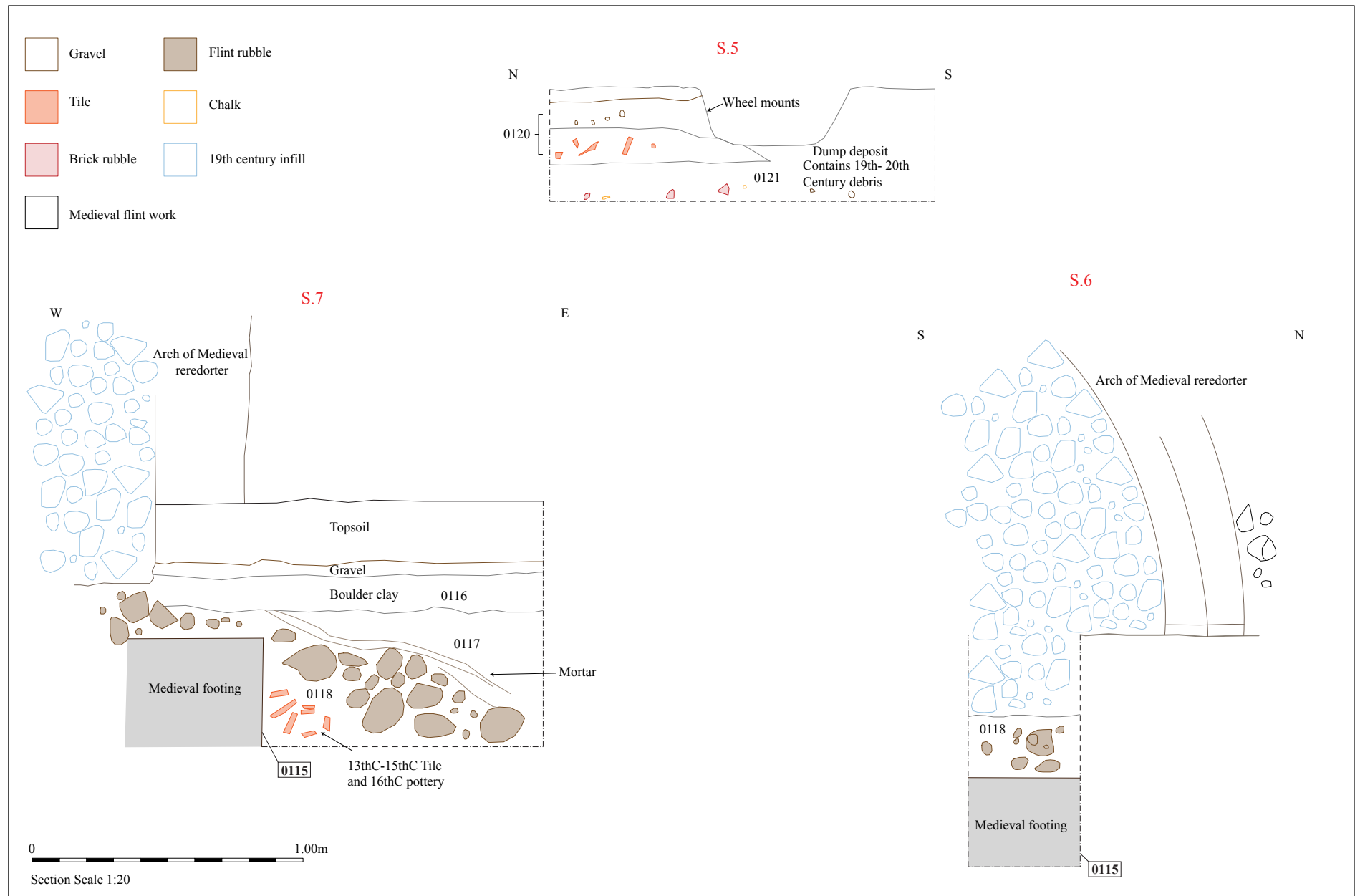


Figure 2. Trench sections



- A) Wheel ruts running across the area of the former cloister north of the church (medieval infirmary/reredorter)
- B) Wheel ruts at the east end of the building crossing the line of the channel with the arches of the reredorter seen behind
- C) Spoil heaps along the east side of the site (behind the trees). The edge of the channel is the un-mown grass in the foreground
- D) Section 5 across the wheel ruts north of the church. The banded soils on the left are the former path and the dark soil at the base of the trench contained material from the first half of the 20th century.
- E) Section 7 in the line of the outflow channel alongside the arch of the reredorter 1) Lime dressing, haunch of the reredorter arch 2) C19th flint blocking of the arch 3) Medieval footing 4) Dissolution rubble 5) Clay layer 0116. 6) Infill of the channel 0117



Plates: Clare Priory, monitoring construction works damage