

# Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Monitoring Report

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12 Hillcrest Road, Beccles,  
Planning Application W/17464/1

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## Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out as a condition of planning application W/17464/1 at the above address. Funding for the monitoring is to be provided by Mr. A.J. Oakley. The proposal consists of a small extension to the east end of the present house, this entailed the excavation of around fourteen metres of footing trenches. The area which contains the trenches is approximately twenty square metres in area and is centred on TM 4234 8928. A single visit was made to the site on 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2006 when it was possible to examine all of the recently dug, open trenches and also a quantity of the upcast soil. The site lies within an area that has previously produced evidence of Roman occupation; unfortunately, no further archaeological evidence was obtained as a result of this monitoring.



## Introduction

The Brief and Specification for the monitoring (dated 14-11-2005) was composed and issued by Jess Tipper of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team. The development is adjacent to the location of Roman occupation material (BCC 001), defined during gravel quarrying, and it is also situated c.140m. to the north of two inhumation burials (BCC 037), which indicates the presence of a probable cemetery site (Tipper: 2005). Air photographs dating from 1945 indicate a quarry pit immediately to the east of the site location, between the present Hillcrest Road and the rail line. Only the houses that border Kemps Lane were in existence at that time. The 1920 Ordnance Survey shows that the site, at this date, lay within open fields. The priority of the archaeological monitoring was to try and locate and interpret evidence for the Roman occupation of the area.

## Methodology

The site area was recorded using a sketch plan, which enabled the extent of the ground disturbance, localised soil profiles and any features to be plotted and identified. All faces of the footing trenches were examined after a small amount hand cleaning was carried out. Details of soils and the depths of the deposits were recorded at six points along the trenches (see plan overleaf). A search of the trenches and also a small quantity of remaining upcast soil was made in order to retrieve any available dating material.

## Conclusion

The trench width was consistent throughout the length of the footings at 0.60m.. Depths varied in response to building specifications which require greater depth for footings within disturbed or unstable deposits. The deepest area, at around 1.40m. was located at point 4, while the shallowest section was at point 3. The surface of the site area had been previously covered by a thin concrete yard surface of around 0.10m.. Below this surface was topsoil consisting of sandy garden loam with occasional charcoal and red brick fragments to a depth of around 0.20m at point 5, increasing to 0.50m. at point 1. The subsoil consisted of yellow to orange sand variably exposed to depths of between 0.10 to 0.30m.. Both the topsoil and subsoil contained very few stones apart from occasional small (5-10mm.) rounded pebbles. The only ground disturbance which was evident lay between points 4 and 5 (south-east corner) where a series of interleaving layers of concrete, sand and topsoil suggested an area of made up and consolidated ground. The primary layer in this sequence contained inclusions of clinker and brick fragments. Lenses of yellow sand were also incorporated within this deposit which was predominantly made up of mixed mid-dark brown silty sand. It is likely that this area of made up ground relates to attempts to widen the garden area by reclaiming part of the northwest edge of the adjacent disused gravel pit. Beyond the present garden fence, the ground level drops away sharply by around 2.00m., along a two tier terrace situated between the site and the rear or properties along Firfield Close (see plan overleaf).

The monitoring visit was carried out in excellent bright and dry conditions allowing clear visibility within the trenches. Unfortunately, no archaeological features or finds were observed or retrieved as a result of this monitoring.

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May 2006

### References

Tipper, J., 2005 'Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development: 12 Hillcrest Road, Beccles'. SCCAS (Conservation Team), Bury St. Edmunds.