

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Monitoring Report

SCCAS Report No. 2006/112

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Rear of 128a High Street, Bildeston

Planning Application B/05/01756

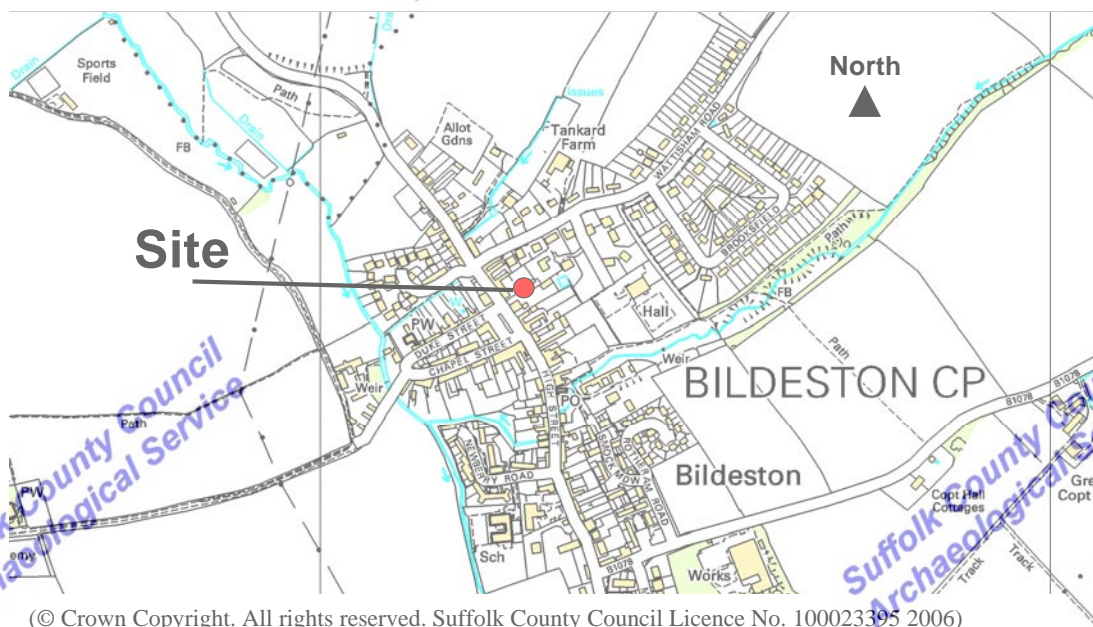
Robert Atfield: Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (Report)

Keith Wade: SCCAS Conservation Team (Brief and Specification)

John Newman: Field Officer/Contracts Manager

Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out as a condition of planning application B/05/01756 at the above address. Funding for the monitoring is to be provided by Mr. I. Howieson. The proposal consists of replacing an existing outbuilding with a new structure in order to provide living accommodation, annexed to the existing property. The construction requires footing trenches to be dug in similar locations to the walls of the existing outbuilding. The area which contains the footing trenches measures around 90m.² and is centred on TL 9927 4952. A single visit was made to the site on the morning of 5th May 2006, when it was possible to examine all of the recently dug footing trenches along with a quantity of the upcast spoil. The site lies within an area which is regionally important in terms of medieval archaeology and within a long standing property boundary associated with a listed timber framed building (Wade: 2006). Unfortunately, no archaeological features or datable finds were located or retrieved as a result of this monitoring.



Introduction

The site lies at the north corner of the village market place and within the rear yard area of the Kings Head public house. Bildeston is a large village or small town, which may represent an example of medieval settlement shift. This results in the church becoming isolated in relation to the present heart of the village. It is suggested that this phenomenon is frequently associated with the establishment of green-side settlements during the thirteenth century (Martin:1988). The church at Bildeston presently lies nearly a kilometre to the west of the present settlement core. The Kings Head is a substantially built listed timber framed building, possibly dating to the early sixteenth century. The area to the rear of the public house has probably seen a long succession of outhouses, stables and other light structures associated with the Kings Head. The outhouses which were demolished to make way for the development are probably typical of such structures and were constructed against the southeast boundary wall of the property.

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. Measurements, and descriptions of the observed deposits were noted at five specific locations along the run of footing trenches (see plan overleaf). All faces of the footing trenches were examined after a small amount of hand cleaning was undertaken. The spoil from the trenches was also available for inspection and a thorough search was made for any datable finds material. The trenches averaged around 0.50m. in width, while depths ranged from between 1.10m. (locations 1&2) 1.30m. (3), 1.40m. (4), increasing to 1.50m. at location 5. The Footings were dug using a tracked 360° mini-digger fitted with a 0.50m. wide, toothed bucket.

Conclusion

Due to the fact that the footing trenches closely corresponded with those of the previous outbuilding the deposits which were encountered had been very heavily disturbed. The outbuildings are shown to be in existence on the Ordnance Surveys of 1880 and 1890 and are likely to have been constructed at some time during the nineteenth century. Topsoil, of dark brown garden loam, was present only at locations 3,4 and 5, but had recently been re-deposited; modern surfacing materials such as tarmac. lay beneath. The upper 1.0m. of ground which was exposed in section by the trenches was entirely disturbed. This very variable layer was made up of a mixture of coarse and fine ceramic building material, including brick rubble, broken peg tiles, flints, lime based mortar, sand and occasional lenses of loam. Perhaps slightly surprising, was the very low quantities of obvious domestic refuse, the deposits consisted almost entirely of building debris. The natural deposits were only partially revealed, generally at around 1.0 to 1.10m. below the present ground surface. They were of mid-brown silty clay with few stones. At location 4, a natural deposit of sticky orange sandy silt was also seen in the base of the trench. The footing trenches failed to reveal any archaeological features which are likely to date to before

the nineteenth century. Similarly, the only finds observed were of corresponding nineteenth or even early twentieth century dates; none were retained.

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May 2006

References

Wade, K. 2006 'Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring: Rear of 128a High Street, Bildeston' (Dated: 23-02-2006), SCCAS (Conservation Team), Bury St. Edmunds.

Martin, E., 1988 'Deserted and Sparsely populated Settlements' (p72-73) in: Dymond, D. & Martin, E., *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk*, S.C.C./Suff. Inst. Arch. & Hist., Ipswich.