

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

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| SCCAS REPORT No. 2013/089 | Parish: Long Melford |
| The Post House, Hall Street. LMD 220 | Planning Application No.: B/12/01295 |
| | HER Event No.: LMD 220 |
| Address: Cherry Tree Cottage, Long Melford | Grid Reference: TL 863 455 |
| | Number of Site visits: 3 on the 17-19/06/2013 |
| | Oasis ref: 1-1152397 |
| Recorded by: Andrew Tester | Date:26/06/2013 |

Introduction and background

Monitoring was carried out during the excavation of footing trenches for two extensions to the Post House, Long Melford; comprising a garden room and a utility room. The site is located within the heart of both Roman and medieval areas of settlement (HER entries LMD 172 and LMD 183 respectively). Other finds close by include a Roman inhumation east of hall Street (LMD 025) A Roman coin (LMD 026). Monitoring of building work at the Old Dairy Place to the south of the site produced Roman pottery (LMD 130) and monitoring on the western side of Hall Street and Peggs Yard uncovered Roman pits (LMD 024).

Results

The soil strip for the garden room consisted c.12m of footingc.1m deep with a topsoil strip over the site. The excavations were continuously monitored and the southern and eastern sections were drawn.

In section 1 dark brown silt with modern disturbances underlay recent concrete; in the eastern corner of the trench a steep sided post-medieval pit filled with dark brown silt and containing post medieval tile, 0002, was c. 0.9m deep. Pit 0002 was cut through a layer of

brown silt, 0004, which also contained charcoal and occasional post-medieval tile; at 0.75m was a layer coarse gravel containing stones up to 0.12m wide and below this was yellow sand to the base of the trench; both of these deposits appear to be natural.

Section 2 was cut from below the level of a concrete slab, which had been removed, below this was a layer of dark silt varying between 0.4 and 0.6m in depth with a c.19th century brick footing at the southern end. Below the footing was Pit 0002, which also appeared in section 1. Layer 0004 continued over the remainder of the trench varying between 0.1m and 0.4m in depth. Towards the southern end of the trench was a possible pit, 0003; this feature was very stony in a dark brown, silt, fill. It was sealed by layer 0004 but no finds were recovered and it is uncertain whether this was a cut feature or a natural phenomena related to the underlying glacial geology.

The excavations of the Utility room footings were monitored but found to be similar to those already recorded with topsoil and a brown silt layer over natural subsoil. A single sherd of medieval courseware was noted in the spoil from the utility room.

Discussion and conclusion

The sections were generally consistent across the trenching with several post-medieval features above an homogenous layer of brown silt containing charcoal and peg tile. Below this the natural geology varied between layers of coarse stones, shingle, sand and red brown silt. These mixed deposits are likely to be the result of erosion and deposition occurring during various periods of glaciation and the subsequent melting of ice. These processes can lead to sorted layers becoming mixed as pockets of ice melt and material is dropped from passing ice. There is insufficient evidence to establish whether feature 0003 is natural or man made.

Given the location of the site in an area of Roman activity the complete absence of any Roman features or finds requires explanation. The brown, homogenous, soil layer 0004 overlay the natural in all of the trenches and was, at the earliest, early post medieval in date based on the fragments of peg-tile observed. There would appear to be two explanations for the stratigraphy either there was a space within the Roman settlement and the evidence is a reflection of the Roman and Iron Age settlement pattern or the site has been truncated with

any Roman period soils eroded away, perhaps by post medieval ploughing. These questions cannot be answered with confidence from a single site with limited trenching.

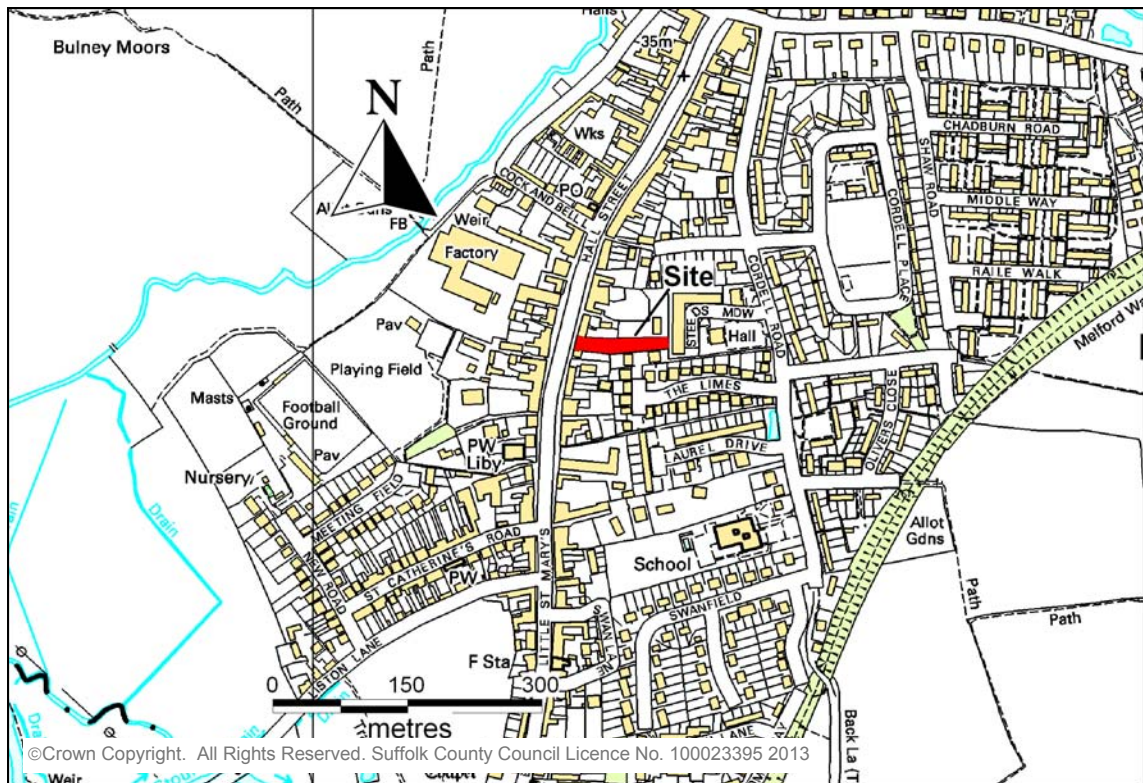


Figure 1. Site location plan

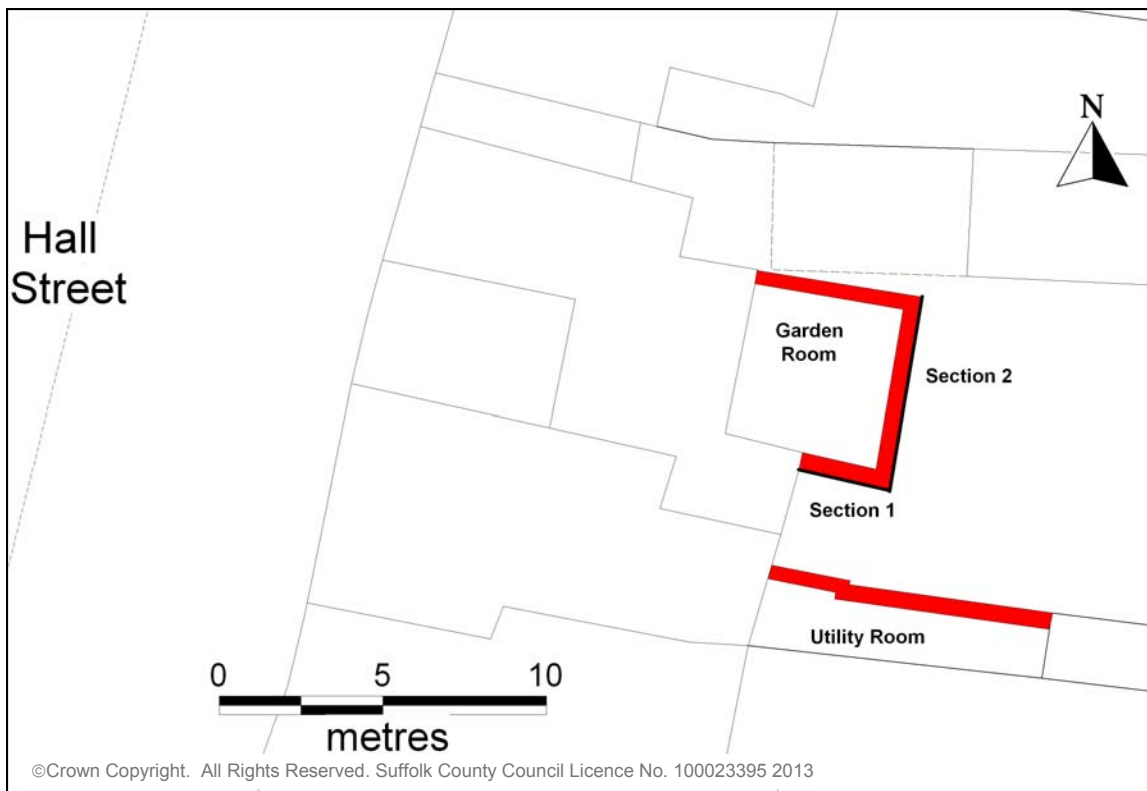


Figure 2 Excavated footings with sections 1 and 2 indicated.

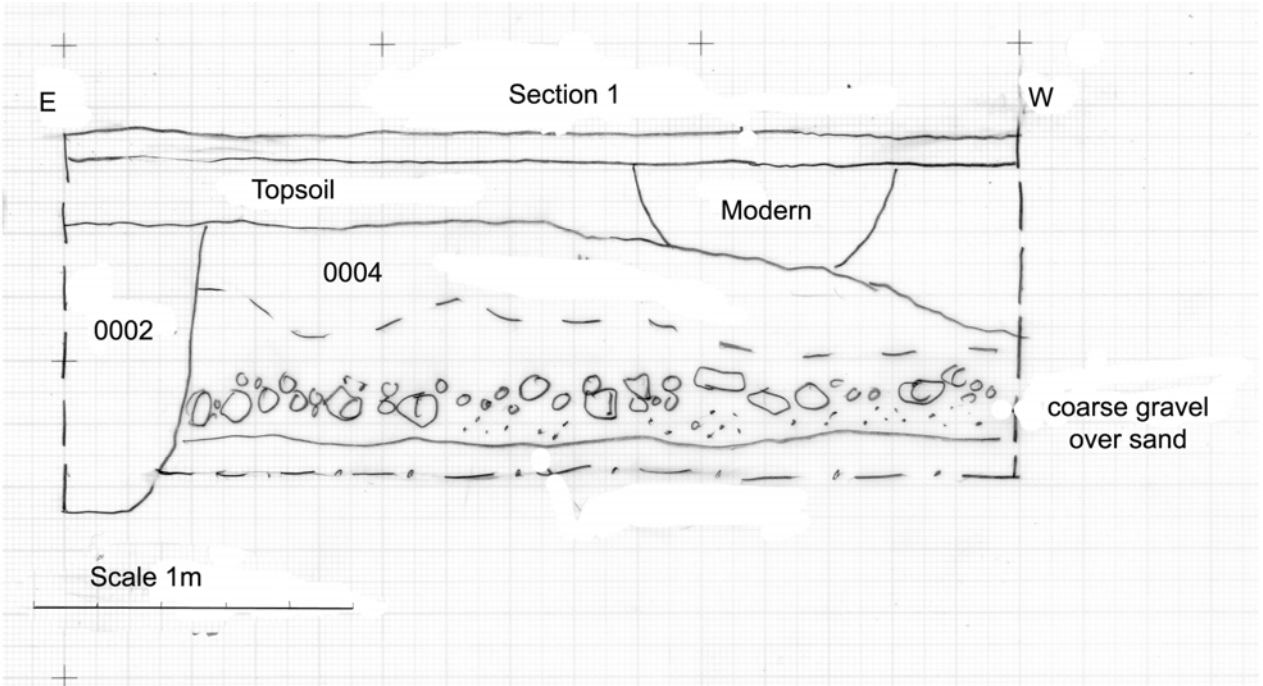


Figure 3 Section 1

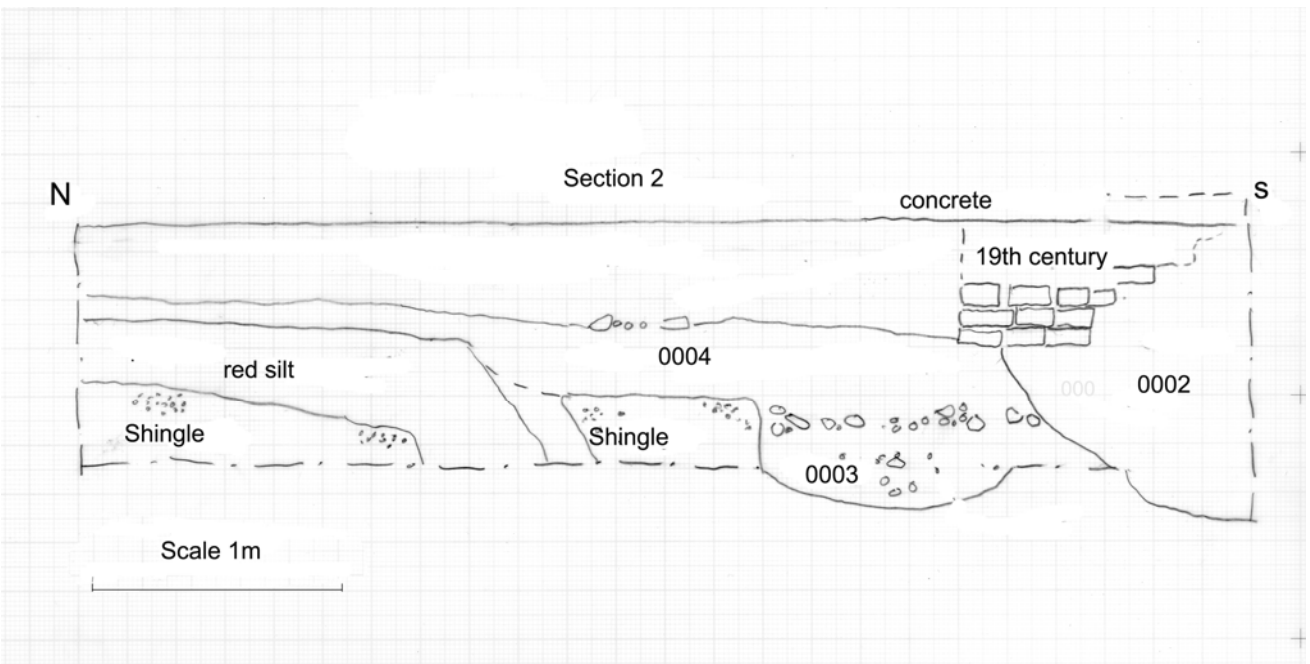


Figure 4 Section 2

Andrew Tester 06/12/2013