

ARCHAEOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT REPORT

Lawney's Farm, Rougham
RGH 055

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

Pre-Application
NGR: TL 9245 6135
Oasis Ref. Suffolkc1-15324
Funded by: Sir J Agnew

SCCAS Report no. 2006/062

Summary

A dwarf wall constructed in two phases of bonded flint and 17th century brick, was found during trenching at Lawney's Farm, Rougham. The farmhouse is a 16th century timber-framed building within a once moated enclosure, the wall was evidence of the former gable end and demonstrated that the end bay of the building had been removed. Only the bottom two courses of flint survived and nothing of the internal floor surfaces remained.

Introduction

The former farmhouse at Lawney's Farm is a timber-framed building dating to the 16th century; in form it consists of a main range with a cross-wing at the southern end and it is Grade II listed (Listed Building No 284453). The building stands within a moated enclosure that has now been largely infilled. Indications are that the building was once longer and is shown as such on the Ordnance Survey map of 1901. The owner has expressed a wish to extend the house as part of its refurbishment and rebuild, on the original footprint. In order that his plans can progress it was necessary to determine that the building was indeed once longer. The fieldwork was undertaken by D. Gill, S.C.C. Archaeological Service, on 10th May 2006.

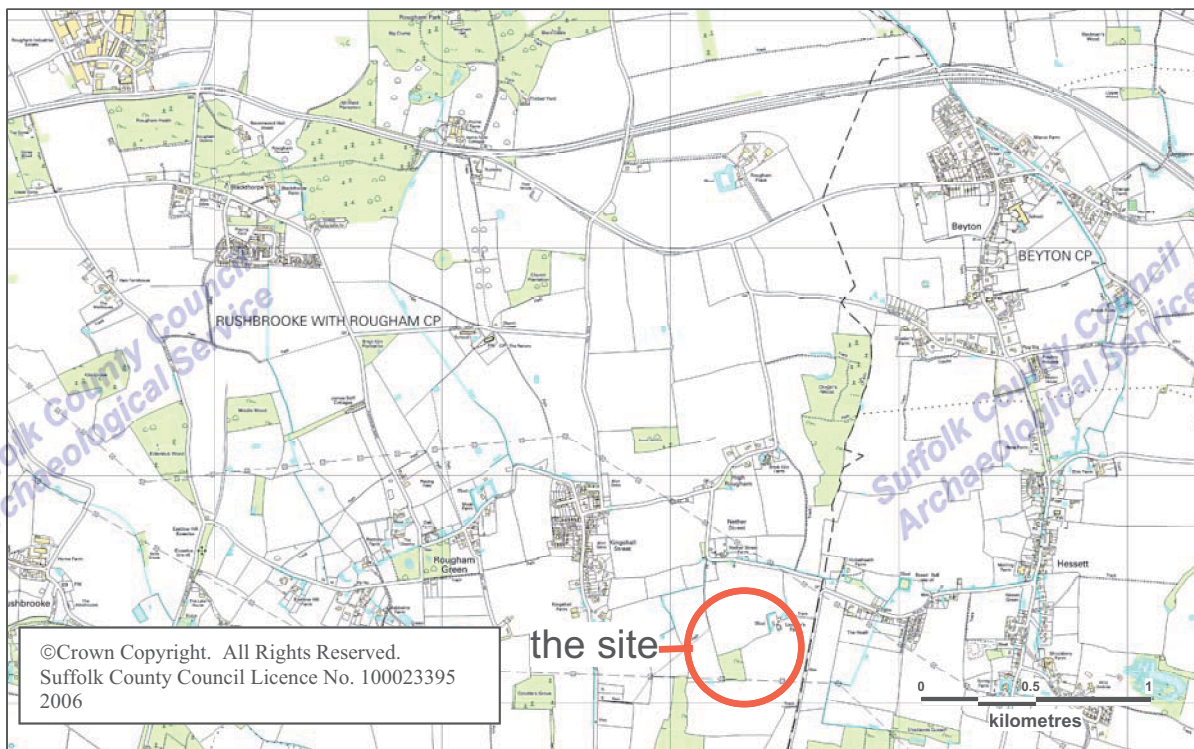


Figure 1. Site location

Results

A trench 5m long was excavated with a mini-digger fitted with a 1.5m toothless bucket working under the supervision of the archaeologist. The earlier edition OS map suggested that the building was approximately 7m longer than the present one and the trench was laid out so that the original end of the building, as suggested by the map, would occur at the mid trench; sampling both an area within and without the building. The garden had an undulating topography with a small plateau of high ground immediately adjacent to the house, which approximately describes the outline of the missing bay. A plan and sections were drawn of the trench and levels taken against an OS datum on the side of the house.

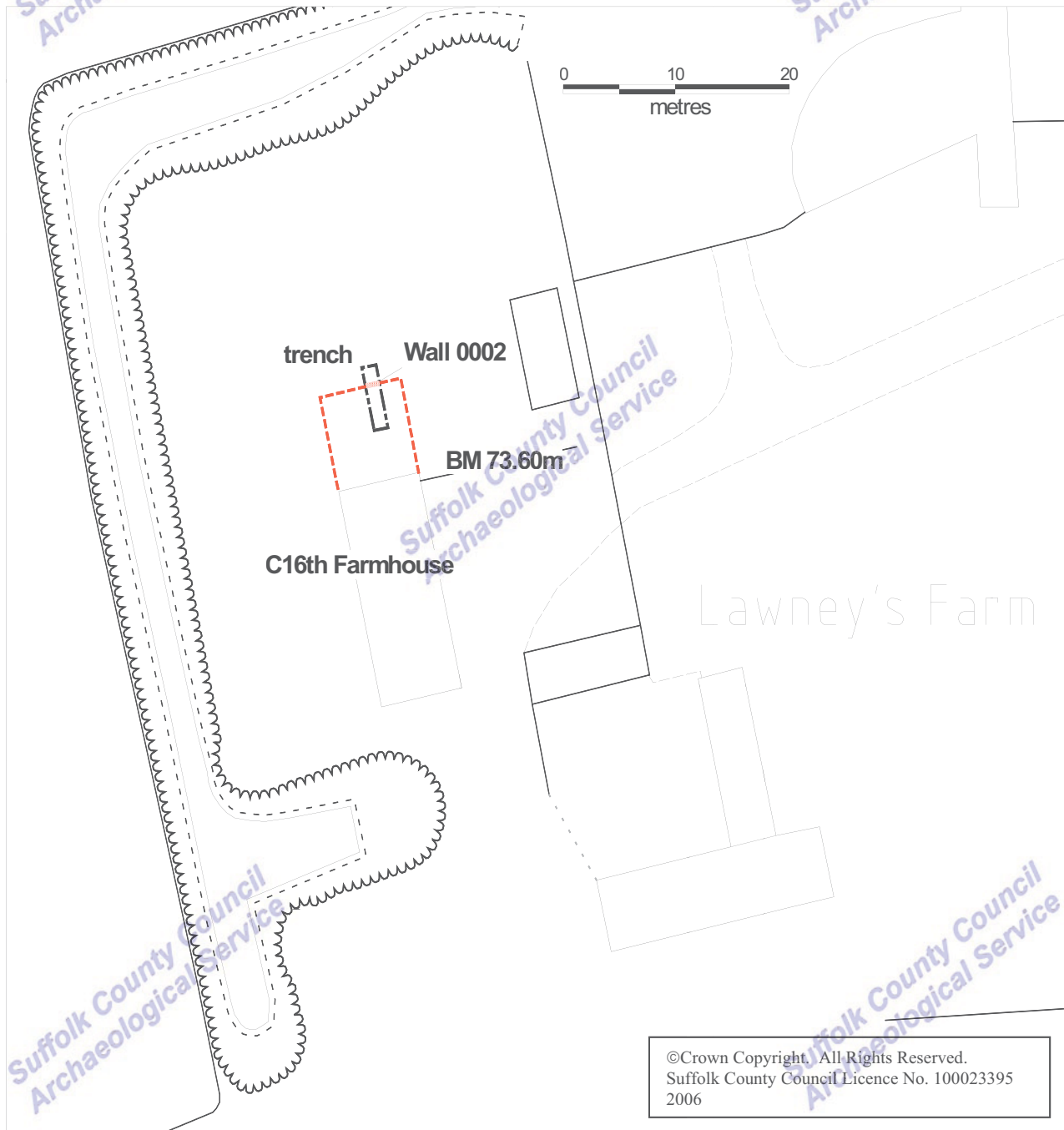


Figure 2. Site plan

At the southern end of the trench, within the area of the supposed missing bay, the machine removed c. 25cm of well worked garden loam exposing a clay subsoil 0005 (72.84m). Fragments of crushed hand-made brick and lime mortar were observed within the topsoil, this material was also compressed into the clay surface but below this the clay was clean (Figure 3).

A dwarf wall was recorded running E-W across the trench at mid length and 7.8m from the end of the house (Figures 2 and 3). It was constructed within a footing trench and was truncated so that the surviving top of the wall (72.61m) was below the surface of the adjacent clay 0005. The observed length demonstrated two phases of build. The earliest part, 0002, was constructed of medium sized flint cobbles bonded with a fine pale brown lime mortar, two courses of flints survived and within the build were fragments of hand-made brick suggesting either a medieval or early post medieval date for the wall. A second phase of build, 0003 had been completed in brick, this build extended outside the footing trench and continued along the inside face of the earlier wall 0002. The bricks here had been removed but were evidenced by their mortar bed, 0004. The bricks were well made and fine textured (2 1/8" thick x 4" wide) and bonded with a white lime mortar and were post medieval in date ((?)16th-17th century).

On the outside edge of the wall (N. side) the topsoil was deeper and the clay subsoil recorded west of the wall was not seen. The topsoil over-lay a deposit of made up soil, 0006 which contained brick and peg-tile fragments and two small sherds of LMT pottery (Late Medieval Transitional, 15 -16th century) the layer was at least 10cms deep, extending to the base of the dwarf wall. A sondage was excavated into 0006 but this immediately filled with ground water.

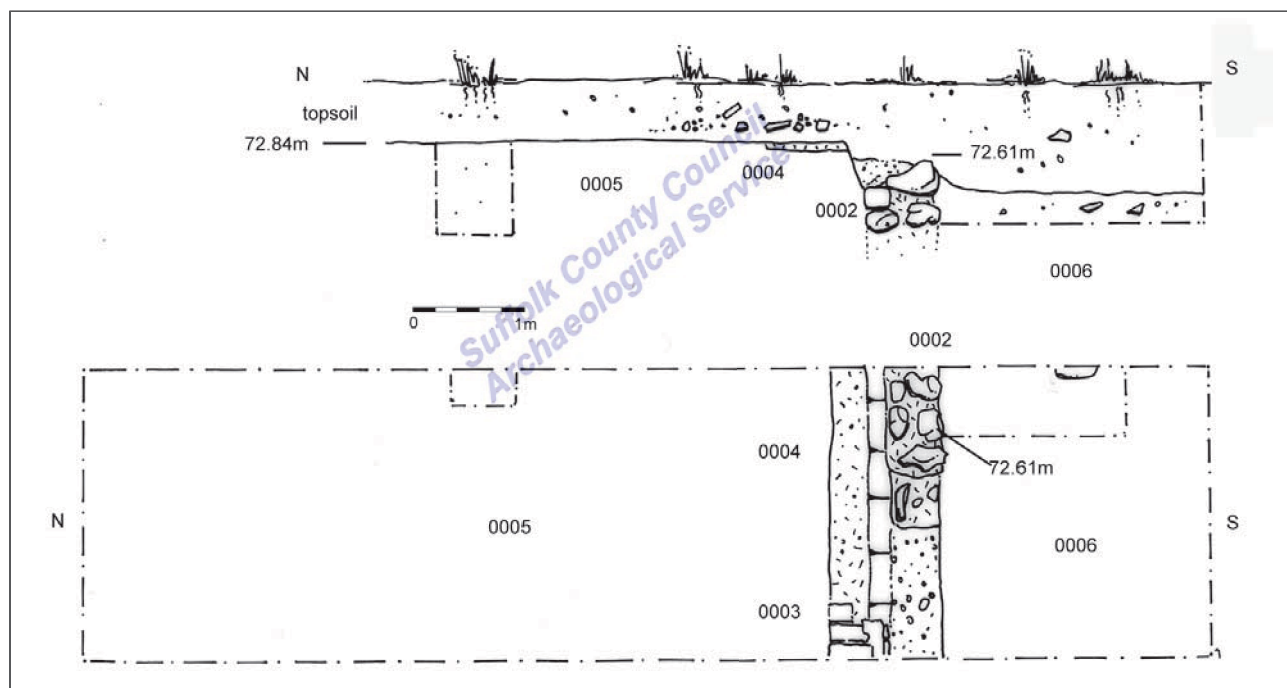


Figure 3 Trench plan and section

Conclusion

The test trench shows that the building was once longer and suggests that the earlier OS map was an accurate representation of the building's footprint when the map was drawn. The work suggests that the building was demolished to ground level and most of the material removed and there was no indication of surviving floors or their level within the building. The trench shows different ground levels either side of the wall, outside the wall the soil profile is made up of re-deposited fill and suggest that the ground has at one time been excavated. There was no indication to the extent of this within the trench and further investigation was beyond the remit of the work. The discovery of the missing bay suggests that the chimney was originally intended to be in the centre of the building, and it is possible that the building was symmetrical around it. The southern end of the building has a cross wing and it is therefore possible that this was repeated at the northern end although the OS map does not show it as so.

The remains of the missing bay of the building are close to the present ground surface and any development in this area would impact upon them. An archaeological excavation of the footprint would be necessary if the owner intended build over the lost bay.

David Gill
22 May 2006

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service