

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Conduit House, The Green, Long Melford LMD 164

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS ASSOCIATED WITH
EXTENSIONS TO THE REAR OF CONDUIT HOUSE, LONG MELFORD.

Planning Application No. B/05/00559
NGR: TL 8650 4642
OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-15369

Funded by: Mr & Mrs Pearson

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2006/72

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of footing trenches for extensions at Conduit House, Long Melford, located a post-medieval ditch marking a former garden boundary and rubbish deposits containing post-medieval CBM, both probably predating the early 19th century property.

Introduction

A series of visits was made to the site from 25th May to 30th June 2006 to monitor the excavation of footing trenches for two extensions to the rear of the property (Fig. 1). The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by R.D.Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team, Appendix 1) to fulfil a planning condition on application B/05/00559. The work was commissioned by W.A.Deacon & Sons Ltd on behalf of the developer, Mr & Mrs Pearson.

Interest in the site was based upon its general location, with the property fronting onto the medieval Melford Green. While Conduit House is a Grade II listed building (LBS No: 278184) of early 19th century date, other houses that form the green frontage date to at least the 16th century and so there was potential for the development to disturb archaeological deposits relating to medieval or post-medieval settlement.

Methodology and Results

Extension 1

The trenches were observed by David Gill (SCCAS Field Team) when fully excavated and each measured 0.6m wide and up to 1.5m deep (Fig. 2). Approximately 0.2m of modern material had been removed across the entire footprint.

The south wall foundation trench of the extension was cut through a ditch, 0001, which, being on the same alignment, ran along its length. Cut into the natural subsoil of silt/clay and gravel it was visible after the removal of the modern surface layer and was 0.8m+ wide. In section it had a

moderately sloping edge and a flat base, which was at a depth of c.0.9m. Its fill, 0002, was a fine, homogenous brown silt with occasional fragments of post-medieval ceramic building material (CBM).

The ditch was truncated in the eastern half of the southern trench, against the rear wall of the house, by a deposit of rubble, 0003, thought to be of 18th century date. This was c.0.45m thick and towards its base contained a spread of thin white bricks. 0003 directly underlaid a modern paved surface.

In the northern trench, underneath the surface layer of modern material, was a spread of post-medieval rooftiles and mortar, 0004. This was 0.1m thick and was thought to be of c.18th century date. This layer overlaid a c.0.3m thick deposit of clean, redeposited, yellow clay, 0005.

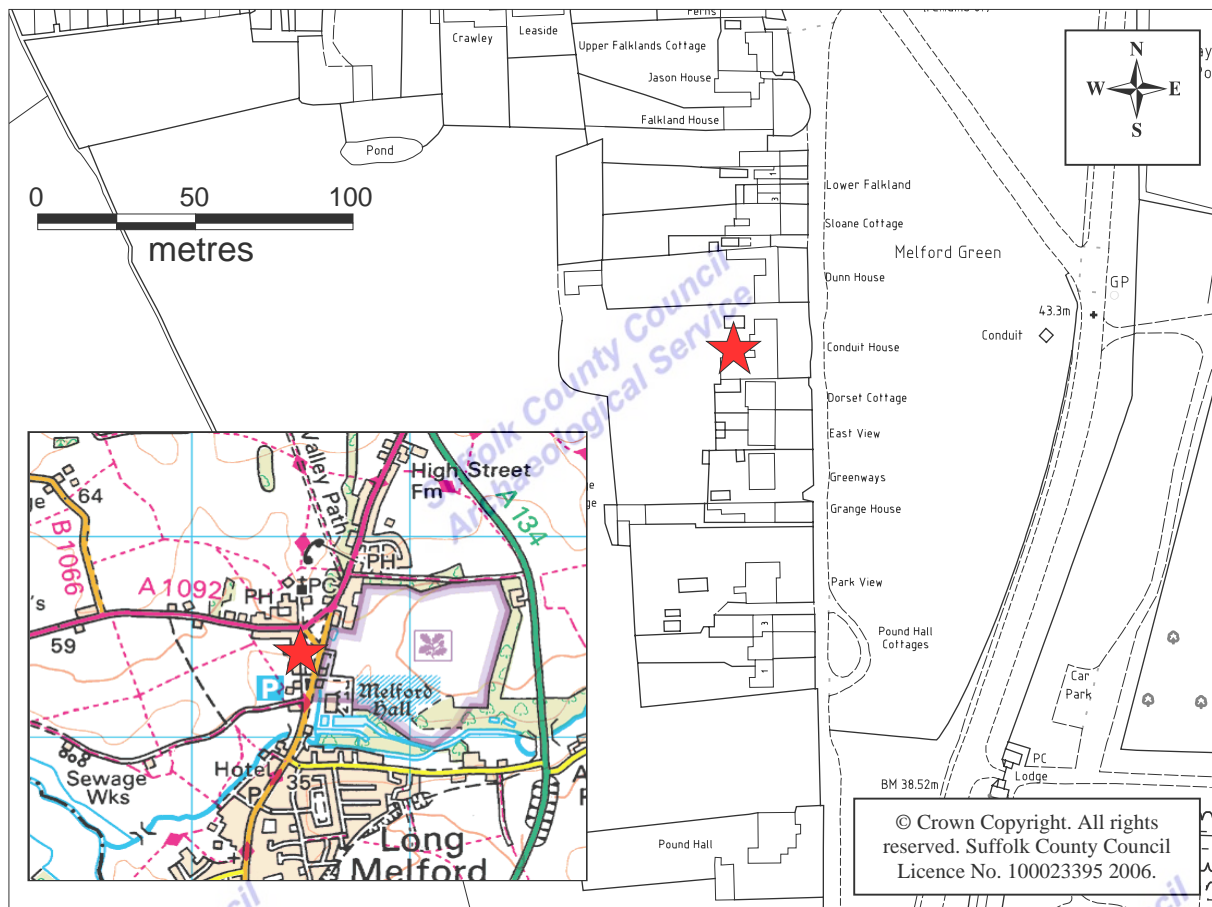


Figure 1. Site location plan

Extension 2

The trenches were observed when fully excavated. Each trench measured 0.6m wide and up to 1.5m deep and showed 0.2m of modern material overlying a layer of mid orange/brown clay/silt that varied from 0.2m to 0.6m thick. Beneath this layer was the natural clay and mixed chalk subsoil. No archaeological deposits were seen within the trenches.

Discussion

The ditch 0001, which appears to align directly with the southern wall of Conduit House, is most likely a former garden boundary. The garden of Conduit House now extends to the south, behind

several of the other properties fronting the green, but was probably once divided further into separate plots during the medieval or post-medieval periods. The ditch was probably infilled prior to the construction of Conduit House in the early 19th century and was certainly no longer visible by the late 19th century as it is not shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey of c.1880.

The rubble deposit 0003, together with the spreads of post-medieval rooftiles, 0004 or redeposited clay, 0005, could not be fully seen in the trenches and their extent remains unclear. They indicate activity in the post-medieval period and are probably rubbish deposits relating to the demolition of any buildings prior to the construction of Conduit House. As 0003 lay above ditch 0001 this also demonstrates that the ditch was infilled prior to this phase of development.

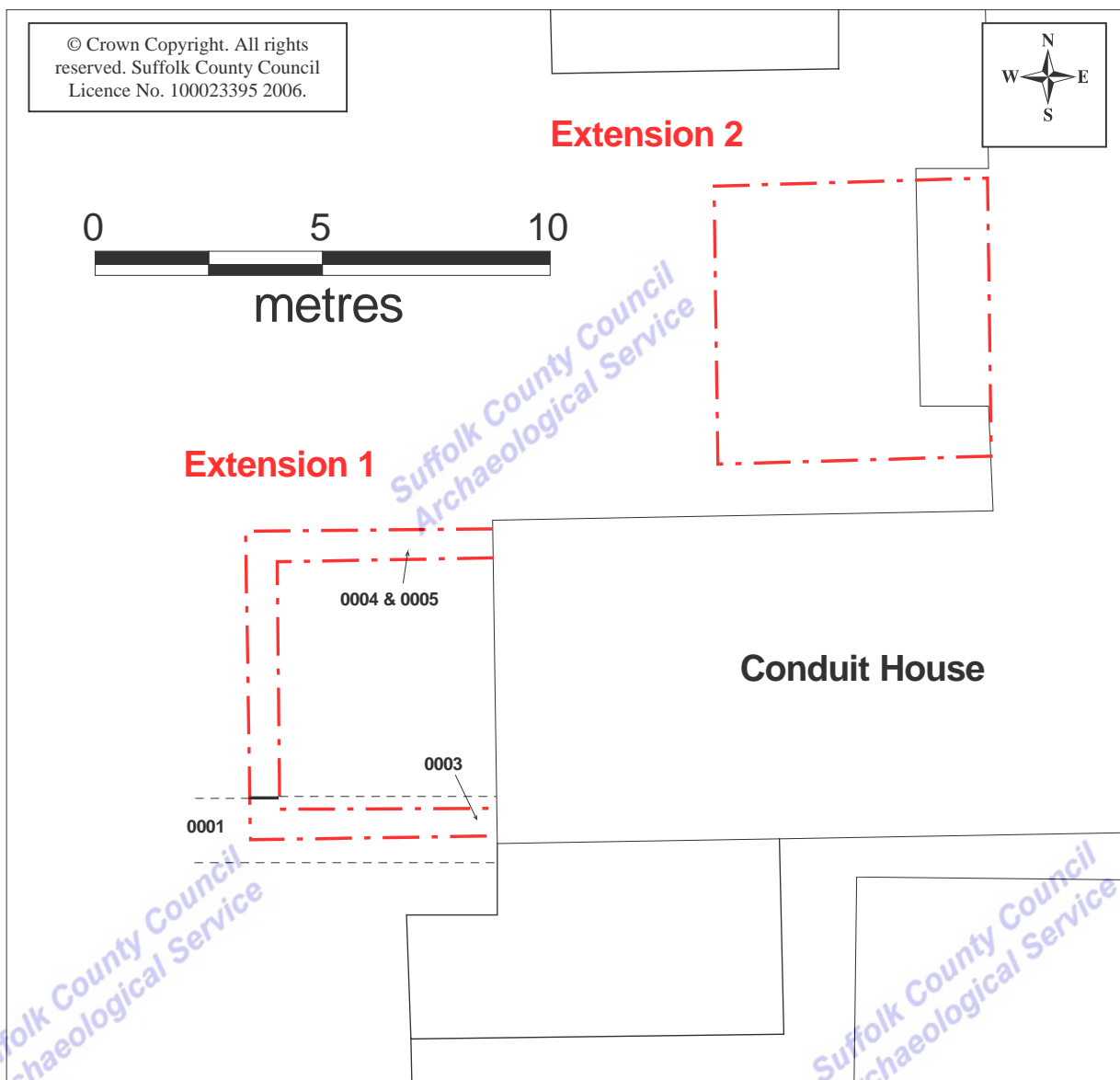


Figure 2. Site plan

Conclusions

Monitoring of the footing trenches did not identify any evidence of medieval settlement despite the site's proximity to the medieval green. Post-medieval features consisting of a garden

boundary ditch and rubbish deposits were identified however and demonstrate activity on the site prior to the construction of Conduit House. It is possible therefore that evidence of medieval settlement may have been removed by later activity.

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September 2006

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Appendix 1

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM



Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

CONDUIT HOUSE, THE GREEN, LONG MELFORD

Although this document is fundamental to the work of the specialist archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that certain of its requirements are likely to impinge upon the working practices of a general building contractor and may have financial implications, for example see paragraphs 2.3 & 4.3. The commissioning body should also be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities, see paragraph 1.5.

1. Background

- 1.1 A planning application (B/05/00559) has been made to add extensions to the rear of the property and widen gateposts at the front. The local planning authority have been advised that the site has high archaeological potential and that any consent should be conditional on a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition. Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal affects an area of frontage onto the medieval green. There is high potential for medieval and early post medieval settlement and associated deposits at this location. (The existing house is a Listed Building of early 19th century date, but other houses on the rest of the green date to at least the 16th century).
- 1.3 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Project Design or Written Scheme of Investigation (PD/WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/WSI will *provide the basis for measurable standards* and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.
- 1.4 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in “Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England” Occasional Papers 14, East Anglian Archaeology, 2003.

- 1.5 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. . The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with this office before execution.

2. **Brief for Archaeological Monitoring**

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for earlier occupation of the site and the location of the green edge ditch at the frontage.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activities in this proposal are likely to be the excavation of footing trenches.

In the case of footing trenches the excavation and the upcast soil, are to be observed **after** they **have been** excavated by the building contractor. Adequate time is to be allowed for the recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following excavation (see 4.3).

3. **Arrangements for Monitoring**

- 3.1 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the archaeological contractor) who must be approved by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) - see 1.3 above.
- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of SCCAS five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to previously agreed locations and techniques upon which this brief is based.
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover archaeological costs incurred in monitoring the development works by the contract archaeologist. The size of the contingency should be estimated by the approved archaeological contractor, based upon the outline works in paragraph 2.3 of the Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and time-table.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered the Conservation Team of SCCAS must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4. **Specification**

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Council Conservation Team archaeologist and the contracted 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity must be given to the 'observing archaeologist' to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary.
- 4.3 In the case of footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of **one and a half hours per 10 metres** of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 4.6 Developers should be aware of the possibility of human burials being found. If this eventuality occurs they must comply with the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857; and the archaeologist should be informed by '*Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England*' (English Heritage & the Church of England 2005) which includes sensible baseline standards which are likely to apply whatever the location, age or denomination of a burial.

5. **Report Requirements**

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*, particularly Appendix 3. This must be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*. The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County SMR if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.

- 5.3 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of MAP2, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.4 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, must be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.6 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 5.7 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Robert Carr

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service Conservation Team
Environment and Transport Department
Shire Hall
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Suffolk IP33 2AR

Date: 12 April 2006

Reference: /2005_Long Melford_Conduit House

This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.

If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.