

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

Monitoring Report

15 Cavendish Road, Clare
Planning Application SE/06/1479

SMR- CLA 047

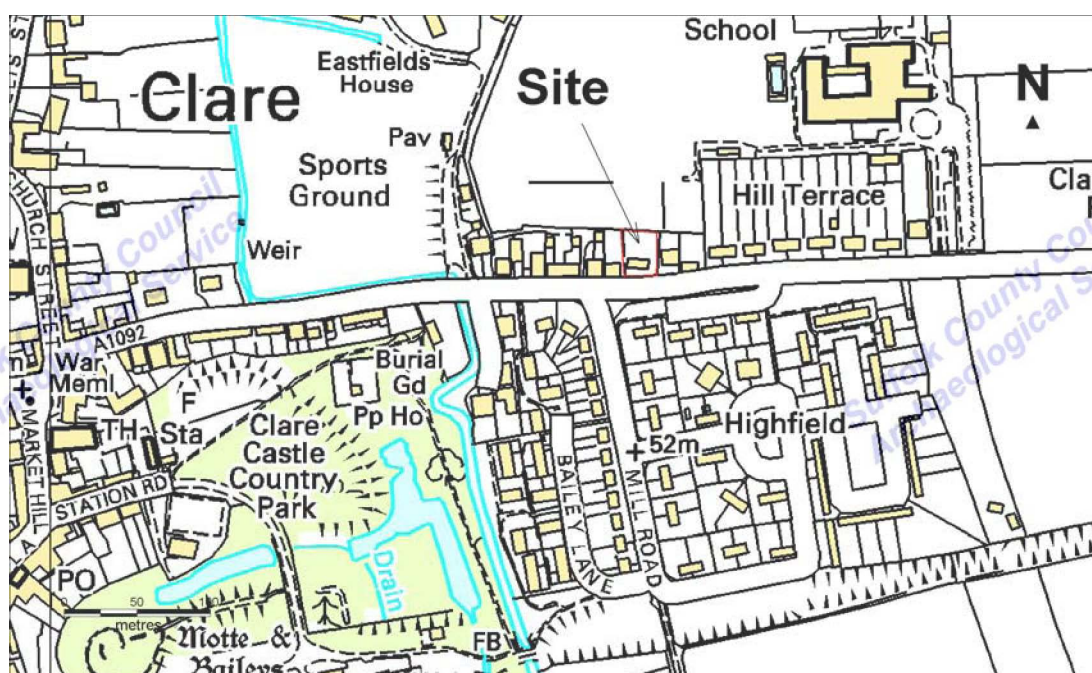
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Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at 15 Cavendish Road Clare as a condition of planning application SE/06/1479; the monitoring is funded by Maple Building Services. The site, which is centred on TL 7740 4546, is situated on a south-west facing slope which has a frontage onto the main historic routeway east from Clare. The development will see the construction of three dwellings, with in an area of around 850 square metres. A bungalow, which had formerly occupied the site, was demolished to make way for the new development. Two visits were made to the site, the first on 31st May and the second on 5th June 2006 when it was possible to examine the entire site after the removal of all of the topsoil. The site did not produce any archaeological features or finds.



Introduction

The site lies within 150 metres of the outworks of Clare Castle and the river crossing point. The area has also previously produced possible evidence of Roman occupation in the form of quern fragments (County Sites and Monuments Record CLA 003). (Carr: 2006). Clearly there was considerable potential for this site to reveal additional archaeological evidence of earlier occupation. However, in spite of good conditions, which provided favourable visibility, along with full co-operation from the building contractors, the site failed to provide any further archaeological evidence. The reasons for this can only be speculated upon. The land may have been reserved for entirely agricultural use, or perhaps the only structures or land divisions consisted of shallow or surface features, which may have left minimal traces.

Methodology

The site area was recorded using a sketch plan in order to locate any ground disturbance, localised soil profiles and any observable features. The site was reduced progressively towards the north in order to create a level construction area. A 360° tracked digger was used, fitted with a 1.20metre toothed bucket. The extensive reduction in levels enabled good progressive views of the site deposits in plan and also two near complete deep sections. The northern limit of the reduced area produced a section of around 1.0metre in depth, while to the east, where the natural hill contours increased further, a section of 1.20metres was left after levelling had ceased. After some hand cleaning, details of soil profiles were recorded at three representative points within the site area (see plan). During the second visit to the site the south and south-west areas were stripped of topsoil allowing a clear view of the lower levels. A thorough search was also made of a large quantity of the upcast soils for any datable finds.



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Conclusion

Details of the soil profiles revealed within the north and east edge of site sections were recorded at three points (see plan). At Location 1 the topsoil was around 0.35m. deep and consisted of a dark greyish brown clayey silty loam, typical of garden soil. The subsoil consisted of two distinct layers, the upper of which was 0.20m. deep and of orange-brown clay, while the lower layer consisted of 0.25m. of orange clayey gravel and sand. The natural deposits were only just exposed at a depth of 0.80m. and consisted of pale brown-grey heavy clay with frequent chalk lumps. Location 2 revealed a similar structure, but lacked the gravel deposit seen at Location 1; the gravel appears to occur sporadically in lenses across the site. Location 3 was very similar to 1 except that the deepest natural deposit, revealed at 1.20m., contained increasingly large quantities of flints ranging from 30-50mm in size.

The lack of any archaeological features or finds may suggest that the location has only relatively recently seen dense occupation. Unfortunately, no additional information can be contributed to the discussion of how this location may have functioned in relation to Clare Castle. The markedly intact natural soil profiles may indicate that the hillside has seen little heavy cultivation and may have served primarily as pastureland.

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References

Carr, R., 2006 'Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring: 15 Cavendish Road, Clare' SCCAS Conservation Team, Bury St Edmunds.