

**St. Mary's Church,  
Harkstead,  
Suffolk.  
HRK 041**

**Archaeological Monitoring Report**

**SCCAS Report No. 2013/72**

**Client: Nicholas Jacob Architects**

Author: Linzi Everett

September 2013

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## HER Information

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**Report Number:** 2013/72  
**Site Name:** St. Mary's Church, Harkstead  
**Planning Application No:** B/12/00635  
**Date of Fieldwork:** December 2012 - March 2013  
**Grid Reference:** TM 1940 3528  
**Commissioned by:** Nicholas Jacob Architects  
**Curatorial Officer:** Abby Antrobus  
**Project Officer:** Linzi Everett  
**Oasis Reference:** suffolkc1- 158645  
**Site Code:** HRK 041

Digital report submitted to Archaeological Data Service:  
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

Prepared By: Linzi Everett  
Date: September 2013

Approved By: Stuart Boulter  
Position: Senior Project Officer  
Date:  
Signed:



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## Summary

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Monitoring of works associated with an extension to St. Mary's Church, Harkstead, was carried out as a condition of the planning consent, in order to record any archaeological evidence present. One burial, an adult of unknown sex, likely to be pre-19th century in date, was recorded to the north of the church, but no other features were disturbed by the various groundworks. Removal of the material blocking the north door suggested that internal moulding around the doorway had been removed.





## 1. Introduction and methodology

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Planning permission for an extension to the north side of St Mary's Church, Harkstead, required a programme of archaeological works as a condition of the consent. The site lies at TM 1940 3528 (Figure 1), at a height of approximately 26m OD, above the eastern side of a north to south valley. The church is a grade II\* listed building (ref. 277435) with 12th century origins, recorded as HRK 041 in the County Historic Environment Record (HER). It occupies an isolated position approximately 800m north east of the modern core of Harkstead village.

Various visits were made to the site by a member of the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to inspect the excavated groundworks and oversee the unblocking of the north door. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work was produced by Abby Antrobus of the SCCAS Conservation Team. The fieldwork was commissioned by Nicholas Jacob Architects.

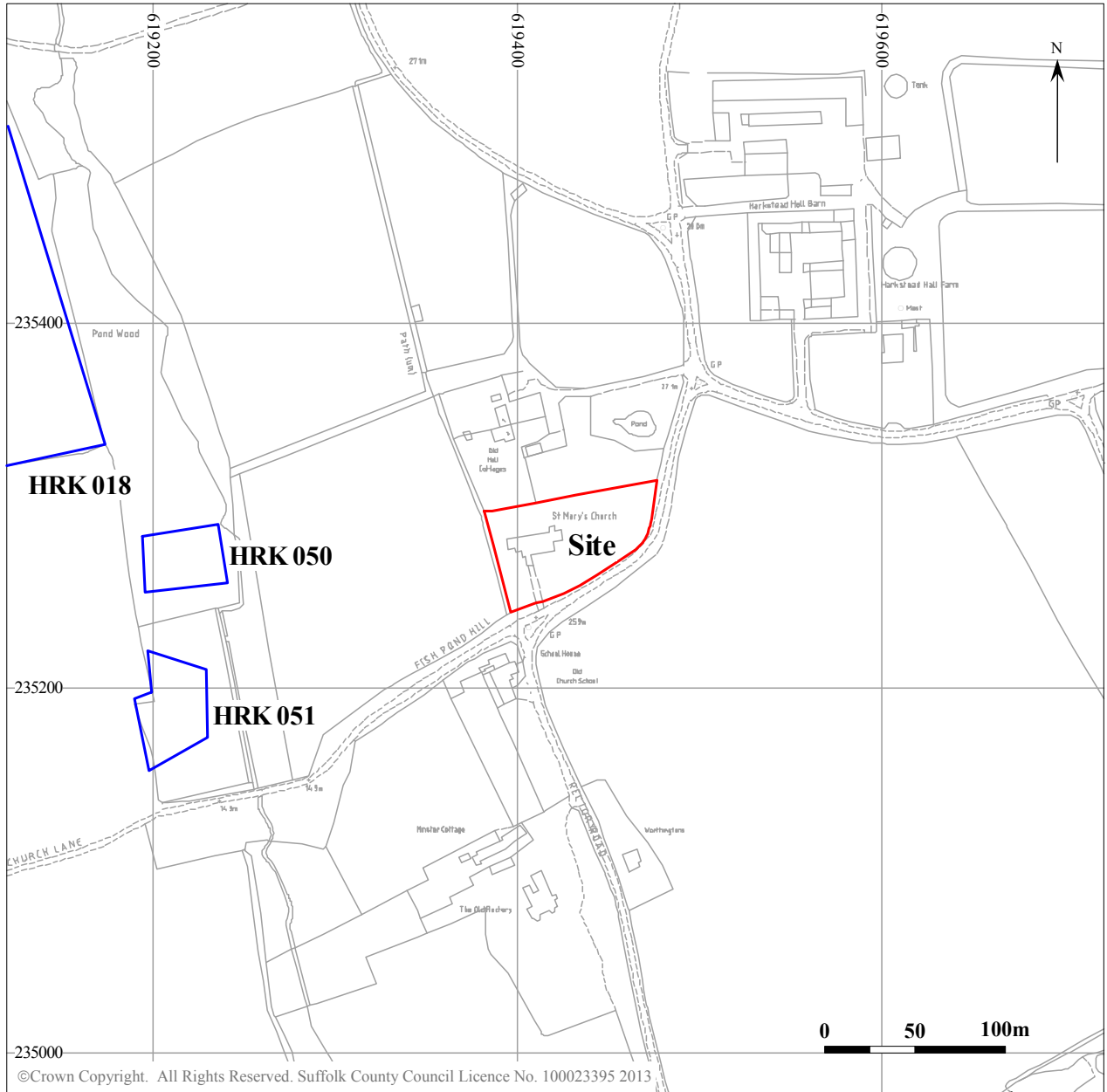
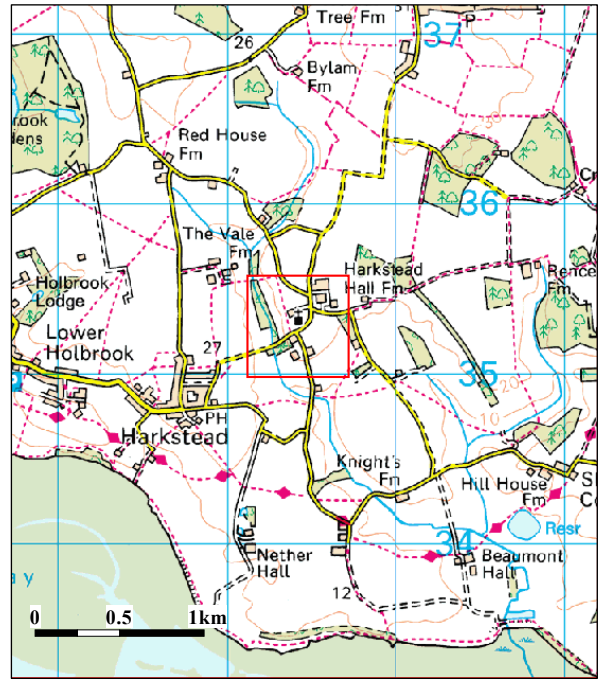
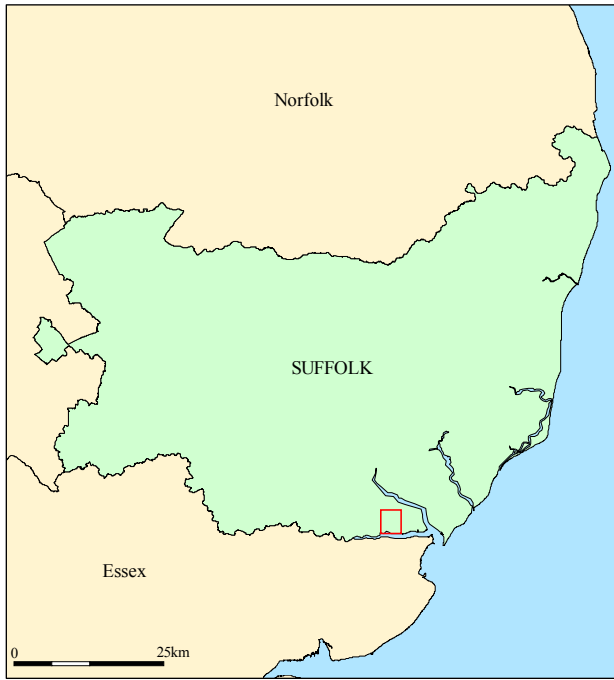


Figure 1. Site location showing Historic Environment Record entries

## 2. Results

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### Extension footprint

Initially, the extension footprint was stripped of c.0.25m of turf and topsoil (Plate 1), subsequently removing a further 0.15m, which exposed the subsoil. No cut features were observed at this depth but one sherd of medieval coarseware was recovered from the subsoil. A brick drain was seen cutting across the site from a downpipe on the north wall of the church in a north easterly direction. The bricks were soft red unfrosted and likely to be of 19th century date.

The footings were then excavated, showing the following soil sequence:

- *Topsoil* dark brown sandy clay loam with regular CBM fragments and pebbles, more frequent towards the base of the layer. 0.26m thick
- *Subsoil* mid orangey brown silty sand with regular to occasional pebbles and occasional chalk flecks. Graduates into a paler, grey brown silty sand with regular to occasional pebbles and gravel. 0.42m thick
- *Natural subsoil* mottled orange and grey silty sand

In the north east corner of the footings, a single grave cut was observed and excavated, revealing the almost complete skeletal remains of an adult, aligned approximately east to west (Plate 2). The feet had been cut away during the digging of the trench whilst the skull had been damaged by the brick drain which cut across it. The grave cut was not clearly defined but appeared to be a traditional six-sided coffin shape, tapering from the shoulders to the feet. However, no evidence of a coffin was present either in the form of staining, nails or coffin furniture. The grave fill was almost indistinguishable from the lower subsoil and no finds were recovered by which to date the burial. However, the fact that part of the skull had been removed by the brick drain suggests that it was an old, unmarked grave, at least by the time the drain was inserted.

### North door

The north door had been blocked with red brick, removal of which suggested that minimal damage had been caused during infilling besides the removal of some limestone moulding. The exposed fabric appeared consistent with the general fabric of the north wall (Plate 4). Removal of the concrete step of the internal side of the doorway revealed several pieces of worked limestone (Plate 5), some of which may have been removed from the internal moulding of the doorway when it was bricked up, and either utilised as a rubble core or possibly a rough step before a concrete version was inserted.

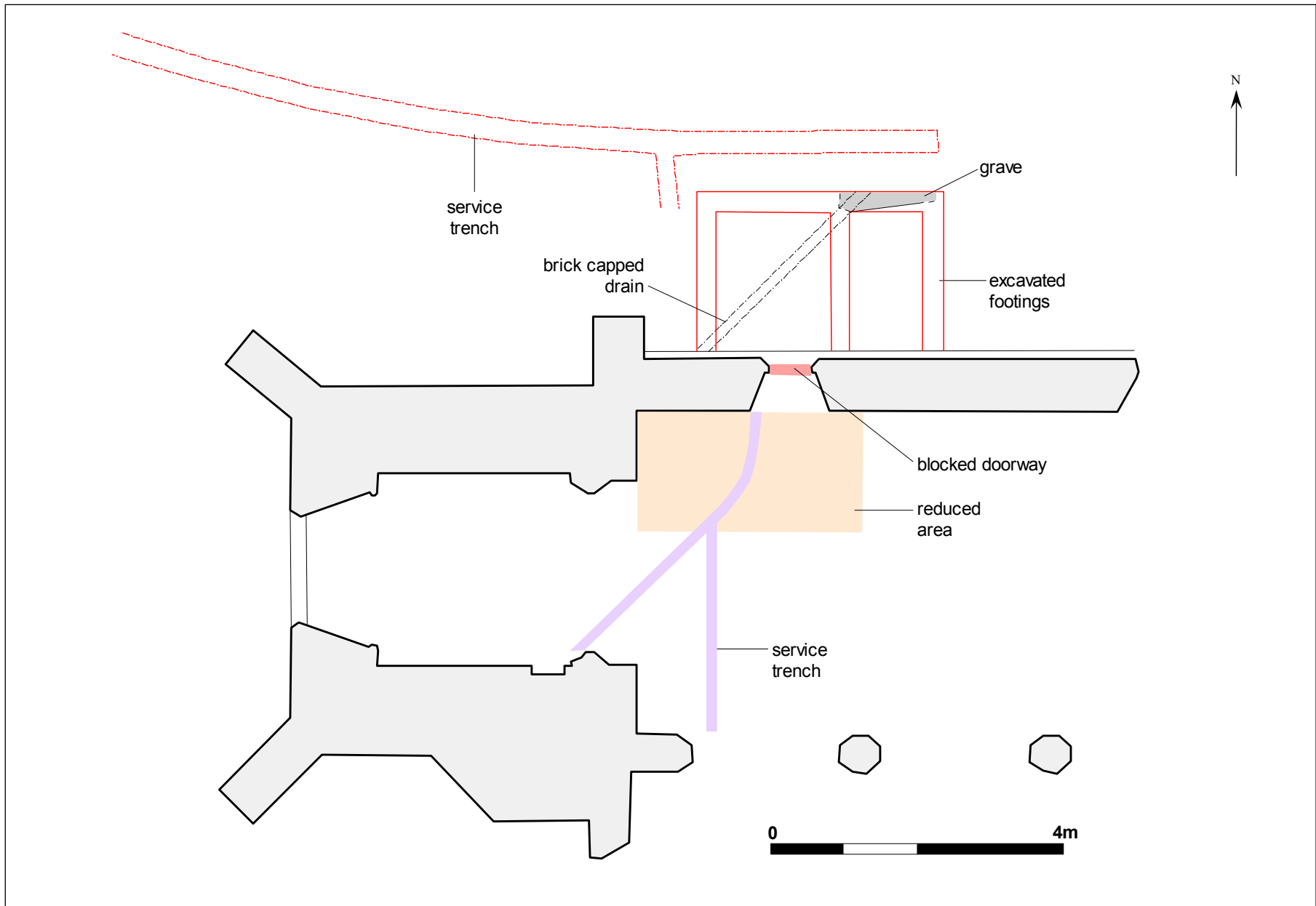


Figure 2. Location of monitored groundworks



Plate 1. Stripped extension footprint, looking SE



Plate 2. Excavated grave, looking S





Plate 3. The north doorway, looking S. The worked limestone was recovered from the void just inside the doorway, in front of the red bricks

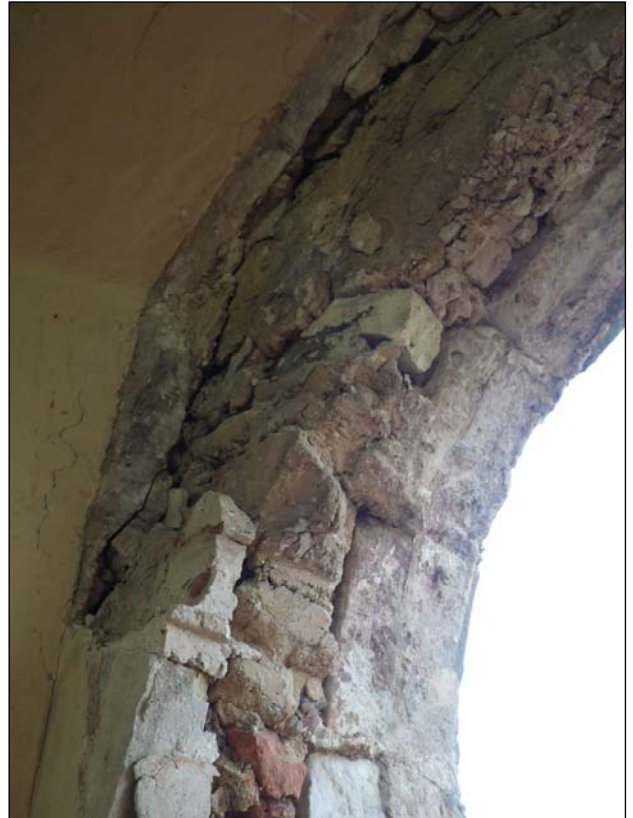


Plate 4. Exposed wall fabric in the north doorway



Plate 5. Worked limestone fragments recovered from the step inside the north door

### Internal ground reduction

Following the removal of pews and their associated wooden platform, an area of approximately 3m x 2m was reduced by c.0.25m through a general rubble layer onto a fairly compact sandy mortar layer with occasional peg tile fragments, which could have been the setting for a former floor surface.

### Internal service trenches

Two narrow, shallow trenches were cut below the quarry tile floor and through associated sub base. These measured 0.2m-0.3m wide and 0.2m deep and revealed a uniform mid greyish brown sandy clay. Modern disturbance from old water pipes was noted but no other features or finds were present.



Plate 6. General view of internal service trenches

### External service trenches

A service trench to the north of the church was excavated to a depth of 0.6m through the same soil sequence seen in the footings, described above. No



archaeological features were visible in the trench sections or base and no pre-modern finds or disarticulated bone were recovered from the spoil.

Plate 7. General view of external service trenches, looking E

### 3. Discussion

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Monitoring of the various works associated with construction of the new extension proved the work to have had very little archaeological impact. The north door, possibly of Norman origin but likely to have been re-set, had been both bricked up and re-opened with very little damage to the doorway other than the removal of the internal stone moulding when it was originally closed. Whether the north wall is original or when, if at all, the door was re-set, was not clear as there was nothing diagnostic in the wall fabric or facing. Groundworks undertaken within the church were shallow and did not impinge on any cut features or significant deposits. The only two features recorded in the external footprint strip, footings and service trench were a brick drain likely to have been added during Victorian restoration work, and an unmarked grave which pre-dates the drain. The skeletal remains in the grave were carefully lifted, bagged and reburied in the north east corner of the churchyard, within the excavation for a new soakaway.



## OASIS ID: suffolkc1-158645

### Project details

Project name	HRK 041 St. Mary's Church, Harkstead
Short description of the project	Monitoring of works associated with an extension to St. Mary's Church, Harkstead, was carried out as a condition of the planning consent, in order to record any archaeological evidence present. One burial, likely to be pre-19th century was recorded to the north of the church, but no other features were disturbed by the various groundworks.
Project dates	Start: 01-12-2012 End: 05-09-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HRK 041 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	B/12/00635 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Current Land use	Other 4 - Churchyard
Monument type	BURIAL Uncertain
Significant Finds	CERAMIC Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK BABERGH HARKSTEAD HRK 041 St Mary's Church
Study area	200.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 1940 3520 51 1 51 58 16 N 001 11 40 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 25.00m Max: 26.00m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body

Project design originator	Abby Antrobus
Project director/manager	Stuart Boulter
Project supervisor	Linzi Everett
Type of sponsor/funding body	Architect
Name of sponsor/funding body	Nicholas Jacob Architects

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Physical Archive ID	HRK 041
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	AHDS
Digital Archive ID	HRK 041
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
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Paper Archive ID	HRK 041
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Correspondence","Photograph","Unpublished Text"

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