

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

LANDGUARD FORT, FELIXSTOWE, SUFFOLK (Suffolk SMR ref. FEX 064)

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORK ASSOCIATED WITH THE INSTALLATION OF AN ELECTRIC CABLE DUCT WITHIN THE FORT COMPLEX

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2006/121

Summary: Archaeological monitoring of the excavation of trenches for an electric cable duct within Landguard Fort, Felixstowe, did not reveal any significant features or deposits although a number of existing services, in the form of pipes and cable were noted. This site is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference FEX 064. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, with funding from English Heritage.

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring of the excavation of trenches for the installation of a new electric cable duct at Landguard Fort, Felixstowe was undertaken on the 30th May 2006. Landguard Fort is a brick built coastal defence work, constructed around 1750, partially overlying the site of an early 17th century fort. It was extensively remodelled and rearmed during the 1870s and remained in military use until the 1950s. It is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM no.21407) under the guardianship of the Secretary of State and is managed by English Heritage. The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 2839 3191; for a location plan see figure 1 overleaf.

The installation of a new electrical supply was required in order to upgrade the visitor facilities and as part of ongoing improvements to the fort's electrical system. The work entailed the installation of new cable duct to link into the existing system of ducting. This required the excavation of two short trenches across a grassed area within the fort and one short trench across a concrete surface. As there was a potential for the loss of archaeological evidence the excavation of trenches was subjected to archaeological monitoring. For the remainder of the cable's route it was possible to use existing ducts.

The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team who were commissioned and funded by English Heritage.

Methodology

The monitoring was undertaken through observation of the trenches during their excavation, to observe for cut features and any significant deposits. The spoil was also examined for artefacts. The trench locations and depths were recorded and the revealed soil profile was noted. A small number digital photographs were taken as part of the

record of the works undertaken (reproduced as Plates I-VI). A few fragments of ceramic building material (brick and tile, etc.) and other relatively undiagnostic objects were recovered but these were not retained and all excavated material, spoil, artefacts and all, was returned to the trenches. Had any significant artefacts been identified during the monitoring these would have been retained for further analysis.

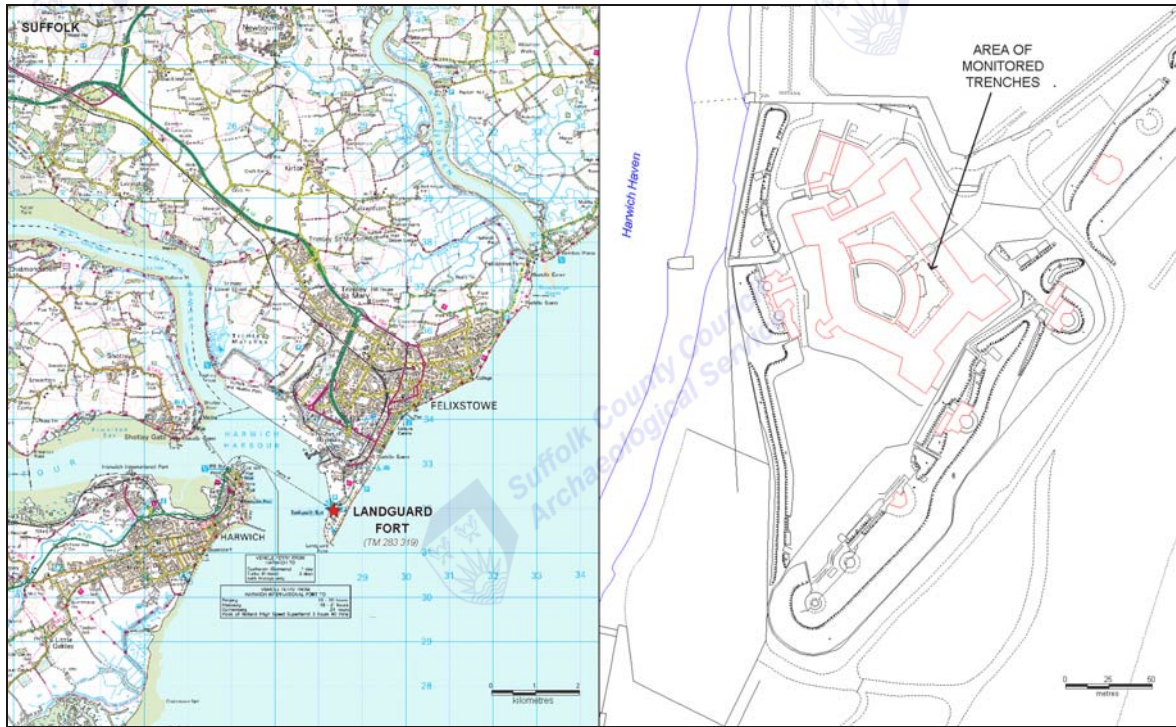


Figure 1: Location Plan

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Results

Three separate trenches were excavated to install the new cable, the locations of which are illustrated in figure 2. The trenches were hand excavated by a local contractor, who is also a member of the Fort Trust, and his team, although for Trench 1, across a concrete surface, a mechanical breaker was initially used. The new cabling was to run from an existing, free-standing electrical box located in the open area close to the eastern bastion to a new electrical box mounted on the wall in the guardroom immediately south of the fort entrance.

Trench 1 was excavated from the rear wall of the guardroom south of the fort entrance. It measured 0.3m in width, was cut to a depth of *c.*0.25m and ran to a point some *c.* 2.2m to the southwest. In order to excavate this trench it was necessary to break out a small portion of the concrete pathway. A scar was visible where the concrete had been previously broken out, presumably to install an earlier service (Plate III), and the trench was excavated at this location.

The concrete surface was relatively thin at only *c.* 65mm thick and immediately overlay a brown sandy shingle. Located within the excavated trench was a cable duct, *c.* 90mm diameter and formed from ceramic pipes, within which were two thick cables. Running alongside the duct were two ?steel pipes, *c.* 25mm across, which were believed to contain

electrical cabling (Plate IV). Both continued into the guardroom where one was cut flush with the wall whilst the other continued up the wall before terminating at a point where it turned to run horizontally (Plate I). Two further cables were noted in this trench. Each was armoured with steel ribbon and sealed with a tarry substance. Both had been cut at a point c. 0.6m from the brick wall.

The existing services seen in the trench passed into the guardroom via a hole cut through the wall of the guardroom. This had been sealed by a thin skin of cement on the inner face of the wall and, as the hole was inclined at an angle running down to the southwest, it was below ground level upon reaching the outer face of the wall. An iron (?steel) grating of similar dimensions to a single brick was present on the outer face of the wall immediately above the hole suggesting an existing vent may have been utilised to fit the earlier cables although probably with some alteration as the vent was likely to have originally been to allow air to circulate under the floor space in the guardroom. A small fragment of a broken grating was located within Trench 1 (not retained) which could be remains of a further section of vent removed to allow the earlier service cables to pass. The new cable was installed by passing it through this hole and into the existing duct in trench 1.

Trench 2 was excavated in order to locate a cable duct seen during previous cable installation in 2004 (SCCAS Report No. 2004/94). Unfortunately the duct was not immediately located and consequently it was necessary to excavate an irregular, but roughly rectangular, shaped hole approximately 2.7m in length and 0.8m wide to a depth of approximately 0.6m, before it was found. No obvious layering was noted in the material removed and it would appear that this trench was excavated entirely within an area previously disturbed during the installation of earlier services, primarily the existing cable duct and a similar duct running alongside. An existing hole in the duct, created during cable works in 2004, was used to pass the cable into the duct, which ran to an existing access point sealed beneath concrete slabs some 8.6m to the southeast.

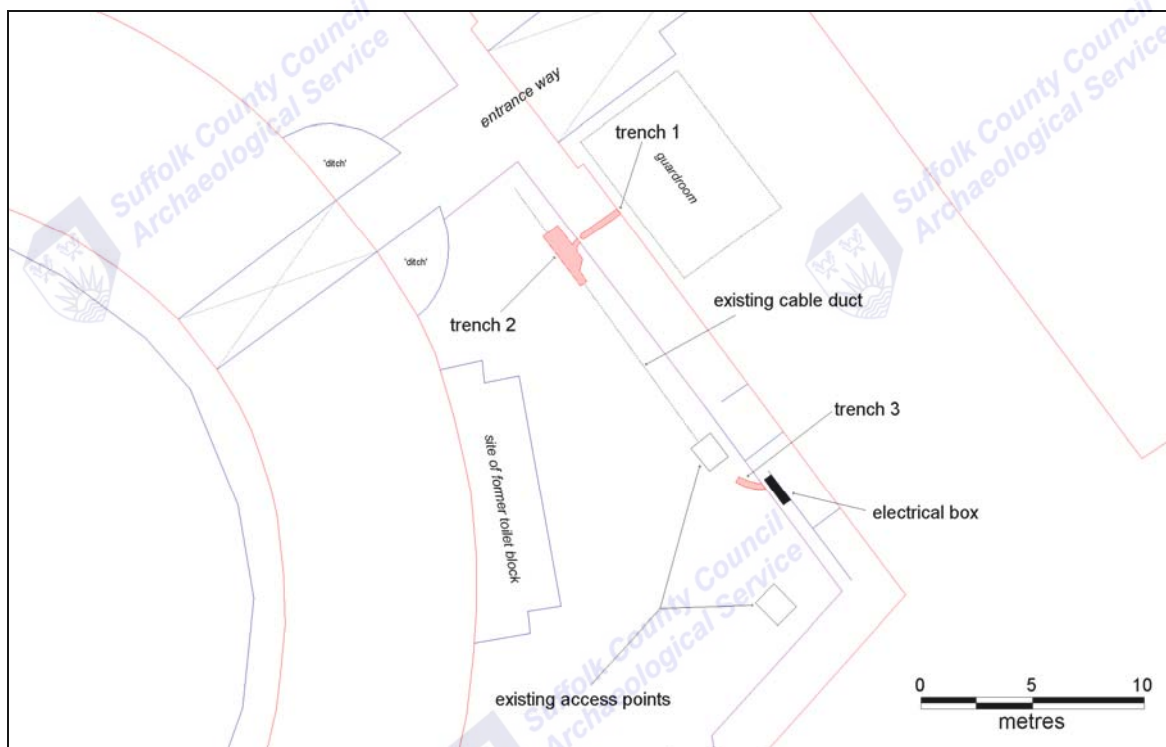


Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

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A gutter made from narrow pre-formed concrete slabs with a shallow trough running along the top face ran alongside the pathway. This was not disturbed and the cable was passed from Trench 1 to Trench 2 through a short hand dug tunnel beneath the slabs.

From the access point a further length of ducting ran towards the electrical box although this stopped c. 1m short of the box. Consequently it was necessary to excavate a short length of trench from the electrical box to the end of the duct, identified as **Trench 3**. This entailed the re-excavation of a portion of a trench excavated during the cable installation undertaken in 2004. It was also necessary to again break out a small patch of concrete in front of the electrical box as it had been in 2004.

Conclusion

No significant archaeological deposits appear to have been damaged or destroyed by these works as all three trenches were excavated through areas previously disturbed by existing services.

The numerous services noted in the trenches all appear to be associated with electrical supply and suggest that the system has seen numerous alterations and expansions, with the severed cables indicating that certain sections have been entirely replaced. All undoubtedly date to the 20th century and are associated with the later military phases of the fort.



Plate I: View inside Guardroom. The new electrical box is to be fitted in the location of the white notice adjacent the window

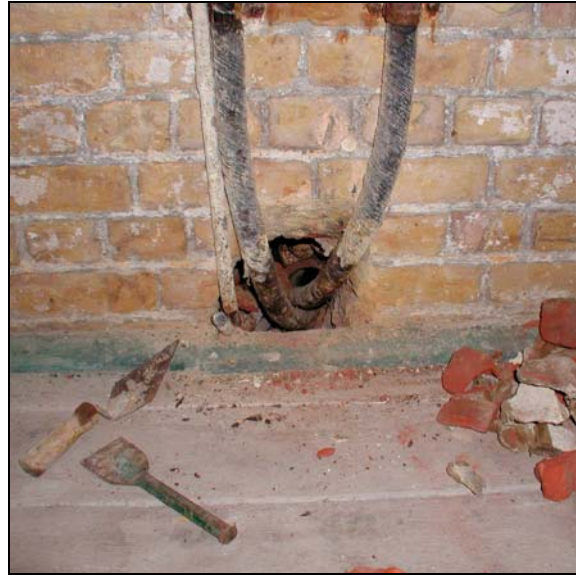


Plate II: View of hole through wall from within Guardroom



Plate III: Site of Trench 1
Illustrating 'scar' from previous excavation



Plate IV: Trenches 1 after excavation



Plate V: Trench 2, backfilled



Plate VI: General view of Trenches 1 and 2