

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

## 541-543, WHERSTEAD ROAD, IPSWICH (SMR refs. IPS 519 / IAS 9317)

A REPORT ON THE MONITORING OF GROUNDWORK ASSOCIATED  
WITH A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT  
(Application Nos. IP/06/00061/FUL)

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2006/227  
(OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-20819)

*Summary: Archaeological monitoring of groundwork at 541-543 Wherstead Road, Ipswich (NGR; TM 1619 4222), was undertaken during December 2005 and November 2006. The site lies close to the site of an 18<sup>th</sup> century shipyard but no archaeological features or artefacts of any period were identified. The natural subsoil comprised clean pale yellow sand at a depths ranging from 0.5m to 1m. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the references IPS 519 and IAS 9317. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, who were commissioned and funded by the developer, Brownfield Asset Developments Limited.*

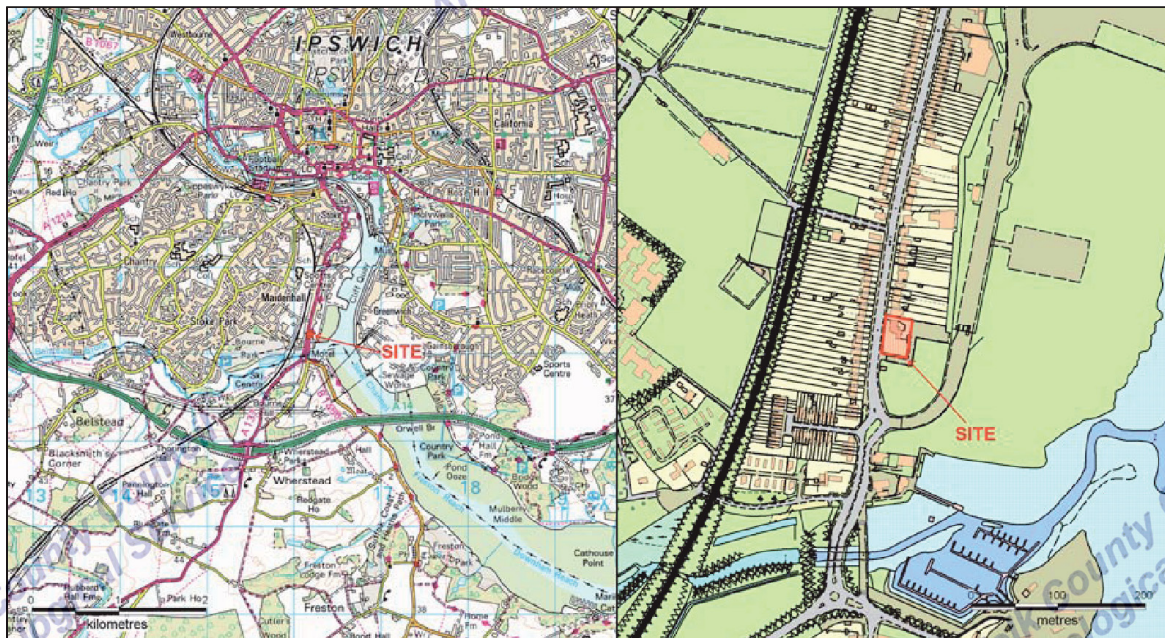


Figure 1: Location Plan

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## Introduction

Archaeological monitoring of groundwork associated with the construction of two apartment blocks in the grounds of 541-543, Wherstead Road, Ipswich, was undertaken during two separate periods, the first in December 2005 during remediation works and the second in November 2006 during the excavation of foundations. Interest in the site is due to it being located adjacent the site of the Halifax Shipyard, which operated from at least the 18<sup>th</sup> century, parts of which were still recognisable when the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map was produced c.1900 (see figure 2). It is recorded on the County Sites and Monuments record under the reference IPS 265.

The site also formed part of a tar works from at least the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century and this has resulted in one particular area of the site being contaminated. Consequently a programme of remedial works was put in place in order to remove the contaminated material. This entailed the excavation and disposal of all soil to a depth of c.1m from an area in the northeast corner of the site. The existing house on site was to be retained (after demolition of extensions and outhouses) and a pair of apartment blocks built in the grounds to the south. The proposed apartment blocks were to be constructed on piles linked by groundbeams.

Both the remedial work and the excavation of trenches for the groundbeams would involve significant ground disturbance with the potential to destroy any archaeological deposits or features that may be present. Consequently an archaeological condition was placed upon the planning consent to allow for archaeological monitoring of the work in order to provide a record of any archaeological features or deposits that may be revealed. To detail the archaeological work required a Brief and Specification was produced by Mr K. Wade of the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team (see Appendix).

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 1619 4222 (for a location plan see figure 1); the site lies at a height of approximately 4.0m OD. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference IPS 519 and on the Ipswich SMR under the reference IAS 9317. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, who were commissioned and funded by the developer, Brownfield Asset Developments Limited.

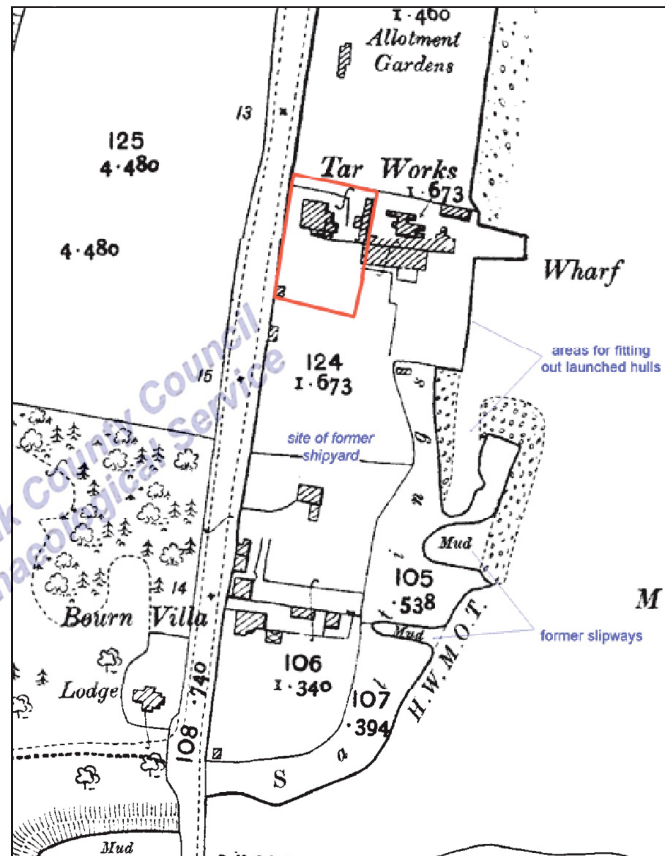


Figure 2: extract from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map  
Site outlined in red, features associated with the former  
shipyard are marked in blue



## Methodology

Site visits were made to inspect the remediation works and the groundbeam trenches once they had been excavated by the onsite contractors. These excavations were then examined for cut features and archaeological deposits which, if located, were to be sampled through hand excavation in order to assess their shape, depth and to recover datable artefacts. The revealed soil profiles were recorded, with the depths and thickness of any layers identified noted. A small number of digital photographs were also taken. The surfaces of any spoil tips present on site during the monitoring visits were quickly examined for archaeological artefacts. The location of the monitored excavations are illustrated in Figure 2.



Figure 2: Monitoring Details

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## Results

The site was initially visited on the 5<sup>th</sup> December 2005 to inspect the remediation work underway. This revealed a deposit of mid to dark grey silty sand containing crushed fragments of building rubble and modern debris which was up to 1m in thickness. This overlay the natural subsoil, which consisted of a pale yellow sand. The interface between the overburden and the natural subsoil was very abrupt suggesting the surface of the natural subsoil has been previously truncated.

The site was later visited on two occasions on 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November 2006 to inspect the trenches excavated for the connecting groundbeams between the piles. These were cut to a depth of c.0.8m and in all areas examined they cut the natural subsoil but no cut features or archaeological deposits were noted in the excavated trenches (see Plate III). In the area of the proposed structures it appeared from observation of the sides of the excavated trenches that at some point the overburden had been stripped to the top of the natural subsoil and a piling mat laid prior to replacing the overburden. See figure 2 for the location of the monitored areas.

The spoil from the groundbeams trenches was temporarily stored on site and this was examined during the monitoring visits but no significant finds were present.

The monitoring archive from this project will be deposited at the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service offices in Bury St Edmunds under the existing reference IPS 519 (IAS 9317). The event is also recorded on the OASIS, online database under the reference; suffolkc1-20819.

## Conclusion

No significant archaeological deposits or features appear to have been destroyed by this development as no significant features or deposits, either associated with riverside activities or otherwise, were noted in the monitored excavations. All observed excavations were cleanly cut and had any archaeological features or deposits been present it is highly likely they would have been identified.

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Mark Sommers  
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team

7<sup>th</sup> November 2006



Plate I: the existing house (17<sup>th</sup> March 2005)



Plate II: excavations for groundbeams underway  
(7<sup>th</sup> November 2006)



excavated groundbeam trench  
(7<sup>th</sup> November 2006)

# APPENDIX

## SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

#### Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring

#### 541-543 WHERSTEAD ROAD, IPSWICH

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission for housing development on this site has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (IP/04/00720/OUT). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence and the proposed foundation methods indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal lies in an area of high archaeological potential, adjacent to the River Orwell and was the site of Halifax Shipyard from a least the 18<sup>th</sup> century.
- 1.3 As piled foundations are proposed there will only be limited damage to any archaeological deposits, which can be recorded by a trained archaeologist during excavation of the trenches by the building contractor.

#### 2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which would be 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 multi-period activity associated with the River Orwell.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of building footing and service trenches. These, and the upcast soil, are to be observed during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor.

#### 3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 The developer or his archaeologist will give the County Archaeologist (Keith Wade, Archaeological Service, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR. Telephone: 01284 352440; Fax: 01284 352443) 48 hours notice of the commencement of site works.
- 3.2 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the observing archaeologist) who must be approved by the Planning Authority's archaeological adviser (the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).
- 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 timetable.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered, the County Archaeologist should be immediately informed so that any amendments deemed necessary to this specification to ensure adequate provision for recording, can be made without delay. This could include the need for archaeological excavation of parts of the site which would otherwise be damaged or destroyed.

#### 4. Specification

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Archaeologist and the 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity should 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 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 should be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts should be numbered and finds recorded by context as far as possible.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

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*, should be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets should 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: Keith Wade  
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team

Date: 15 March 2005

Reference: /Ipswich-WhersteadRd03

**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.**