

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

LAND ADJACENT TO THE KINGS HEAD, BECK ROW, MILDENHALL MNL 577

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007
(Planning app. no. F/2006/0328/OUT)

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Summary

Evaluation on land adjacent The Kings Head, Beck Row, Mildenhall, was required to investigate the archaeological potential of the site. Despite its location on a probable medieval road frontage, no evidence for concentrated occupation or other activity was identified. One ditch of unknown date was the only possible pre-modern feature recorded.

SMR information

Planning application no. F/2006/0328/OUT
Date of fieldwork: 31st January 2007
Grid Reference: TL694774
Funding body: Ben Warren Building Services

1. Introduction

Planning permission for the construction of new dwellings on land adjacent to The Kings Head, Beck Row, Mildenhall, required a programme of archaeological works as a condition of the consent. The site lies at TL 6945 7744 (Fig. 1), at a height of approximately 6m OD.

Archaeological interest in this site is due to its close proximity to the reported location of one or more Roman inhumation burials (MNL 243).

Evaluation of the site was carried out by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service based on an outline 'Brief and Specification' by Robert Carr. Field Team on 31st January 2007 and was funded by Ben Warren Building Services.

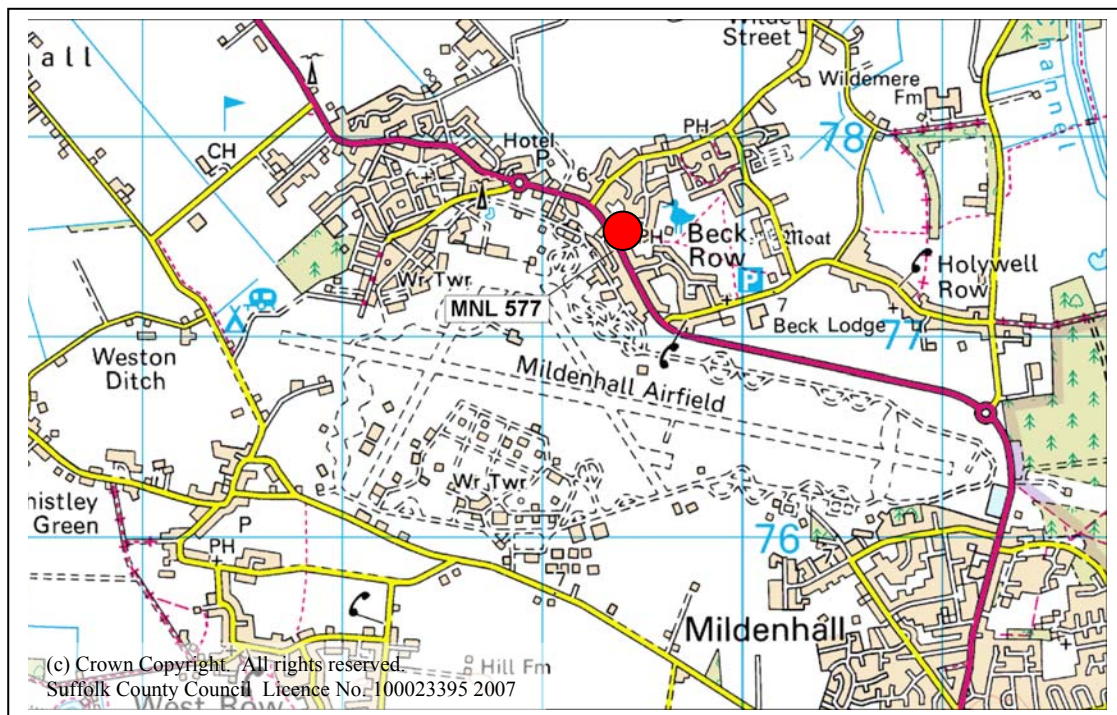


Figure 1. Site location

2. Methodology

The development area comprises 1,250 square metres within which two trial-trenches were opened in locations agreed by the Conservation Team at Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (Fig. 2). This was carried out by a mechanical excavator equipped with a 1 metre wide ditching bucket, under the supervision of an archaeologist. Overburden was removed from the trenches to the depth of the naturally occurring subsoil. In all, 31.5 metres of trench were opened over the evaluation area. Both the excavated topsoil and the exposed surfaces of trenches were examined visually for artefactual evidence and subjected to a metal detector survey. The site was recorded under the SMR code MNL 577. The evaluation archive will be deposited in the County SMR at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

All finds were washed and marked before being quantified, identified and dated by the finds management staff of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

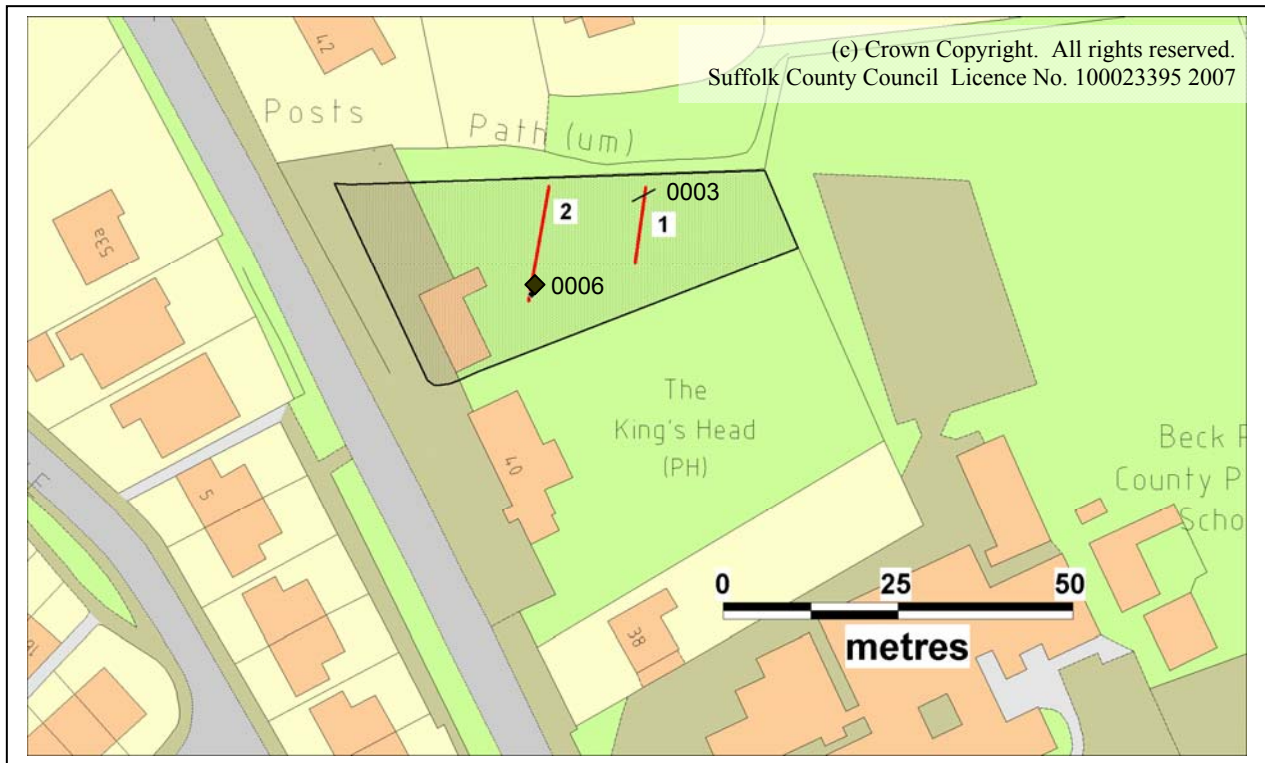


Figure 2. Trench locations within evaluation area showing features 0003 and 0006

3. Results

Trench 1 was orientated NNE-SSW with a total length of 14m. 450mm of overburden was removed to the depth of the naturally occurring subsoil, a clean orangey yellow sand. The overburden comprised c.300mm of mid-dark brown sandy loam topsoil (0001) sealing c.150mm mid orangey brown silty sand subsoil (0002).

A single NE-SW ditch, 0003, was identified, measuring 1.3m wide and 600mm deep. It was steep-sided with an irregular, flattish base, and filled by 0004, a mid yellowish brown silty sand. No finds were recovered.

Trench 2 was orientated NNE-SSW with a total length of 17.5m. The overburden profile was the same as that identified in Trench 1.

A large pit, 0006, was present in the southern end of Trench 2. It was quite square, with steep sides and appeared to be of some depth but was not fully excavated. Its fill, 0005, was a mid brown silty sand in which fragments of modern brick were observed and a small horseshoe was recovered. These dated the feature to the post-medieval period.

4. The Finds (Richenda Goffin)

Introduction

Finds were collected from a single context, as shown in the table below.

OP	Oyster shell No.	Wt/g	Miscellaneous	Spotdate
0005	1	13	1 iron @ 42g	Post-medieval
Total	1	13	1 iron @ 42g	

Metalwork

A complete small iron horseshoe was recovered from the pitfill 0005 in Trench 2. The shoe has a fullering, a groove around the ground surface of the shoe in which the nails sit, a feature which is post-medieval in date (Clark 1995, 82). It has no calkins and the nails are not visible before radiography. The shoe is small, and presumably comes from a pony, unless it a miniature made by the blacksmith to bring good fortune.

Shell

A single fragment of oyster shell, also from pitfill 0005 was later discarded.

Discussion

The single datable find recovered from the evaluation is post-medieval in date.

5. Discussion

The results of the evaluation showed an absence of the concentrated archaeology which might have been expected on what is believed to be medieval street frontage, nor was there any sign of truncation or disturbance which may have destroyed any deposits once present. The single ditch was not datable and in isolation, does not contribute to the understanding of any enclosure patterns in the area.

6. Recommendations

In view of the evaluation results, no further intensive archaeological study of the site is recommended. However, a programme of monitoring of the groundworks would be advisable as buildings and a car park area prevented trenching of the western part of the site closest to the street frontage.

Linzi Everett
March 2007

References

Clark, J., 1995, *The medieval horse and its equipment c1150-c1450*, Medieval Finds from Excavations in London: 5, London HMSO

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. The need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its archaeological advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting service cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.

Appendix 1: Context list

OPNO	CONTEXT	TRENCH	IDENTIFIER	DESCRIPTION	CUTS	OVER	CUTBY	UNDER	FINDS	SMF Y/N
0001	0001		Topsoil	mid-dark brown sandy loam topsoil, moderate flint pebble inclusions, occasional chalk flecks					N	
0002	0002		Subsoil	mid orangey brown silty sand, occasional chalk flecks and flint pebbles					N	
0003	0003	1	Ditch cut	NE-SW ditch, 1.3m wide, Steep, almost vertically sided, sharp break of slope to flattish, uneven base						
0004	0003	1	Ditch fill	mid yellowish brown silty sand, slightly darker at the base. Worm and root activity present. Occasional chalk flecks and flints					N	
0005	0006	2	Pit fill	mid brown silty sand, occasional stones, coal and brick fragments					Y	
0006	0006	2	Pit cut	large pit, partially exposed in S end of Trench 2. Cut by, and possibly associated with, a brick lined manhole. Steep sided, quite deep, not fully excavated due to depth and modern appearance						

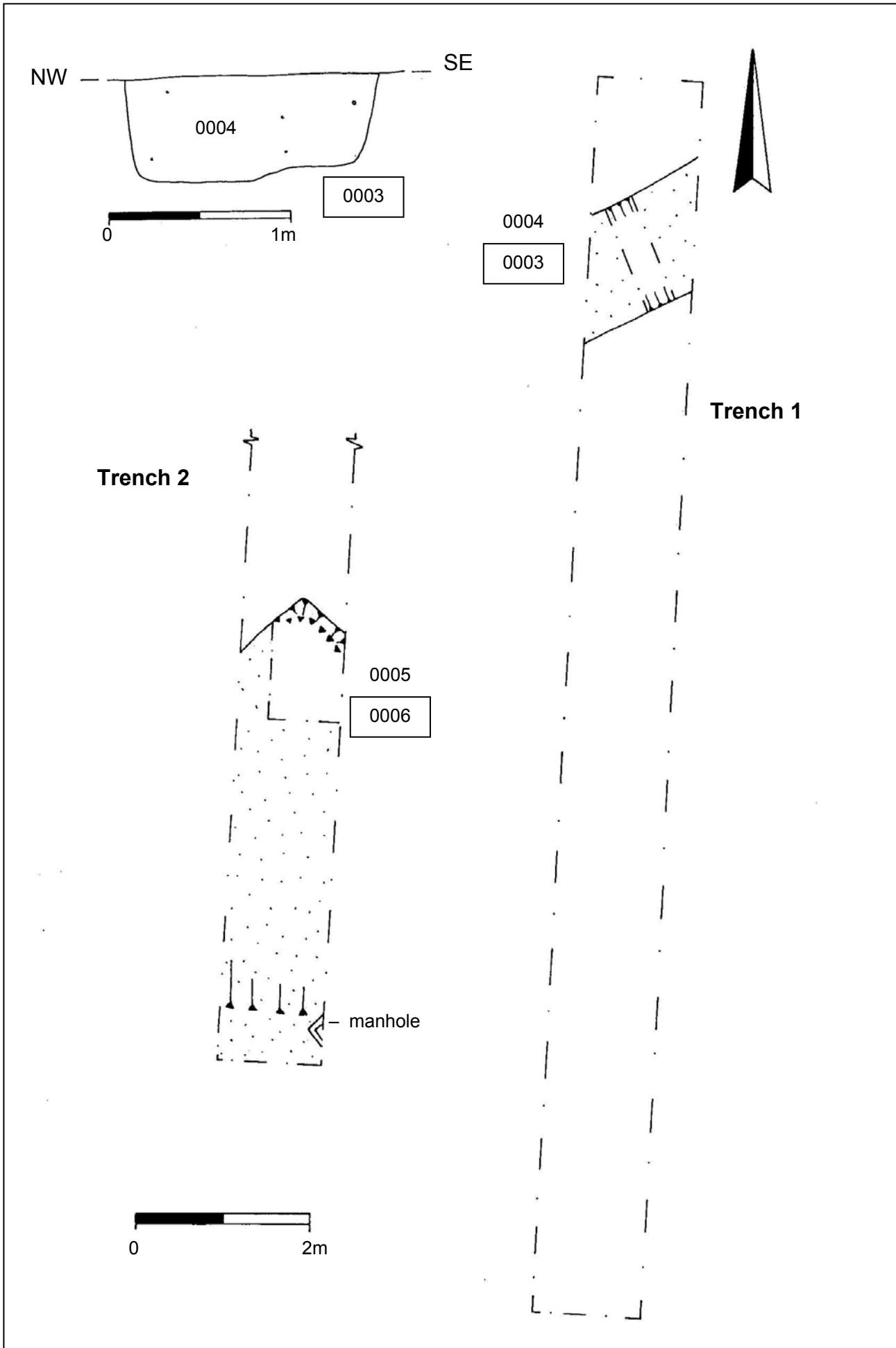


Figure 3. Trench plans and section of ditch 0003