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# SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

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## The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Sudbury (SUY 077) Planning Application No. B/06/01571 Archaeological Monitoring Report No. 2007/48 OASIS ID no. 25620

### Summary

Sudbury, The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Sudbury (TL/868410; SUY 077) Conditional planning consent for the construction of a garage at the Old Vicarage, Church Street, Sudbury required archaeological monitoring of the associated groundworks. Pits and layers of overburden were identified to a depth of 1.7m from the ground surface, however, as the trenches had to be shored to prevent collapse, very little of the trench sections were fully visible. Medieval pottery sherds and a fragment of human bone were recovered from the upcast spoil. (Linzi Everett for Suffolk County Council and Mr. and Mrs. W. Liddell; report no. 2007/48)

### 1. Introduction

Conditional planning consent for the construction of a garage at the Vicarage, Church Street, Sudbury, (Fig. 1) required archaeological monitoring of the excavated footings. The site is centred on TL 8684 4102 within the boundaries of both Saxon and medieval Sudbury. The site lies just above the 25m OD contour on east of the River Stour. There was high potential for archaeological deposits to be exposed in the course of excavation and the site is located approximately 250m south west of known medieval deposits excavated at the Old Granary, Mill Lane (SUY 073).

### 2. Methodology

One visit was made to the site on 8<sup>th</sup> January 2007 by Linzi Everett of the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service, in order to inspect the machine excavated trenches. The site was recorded under the SMR code SUY 077 and finds were collected for identification and dating. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work

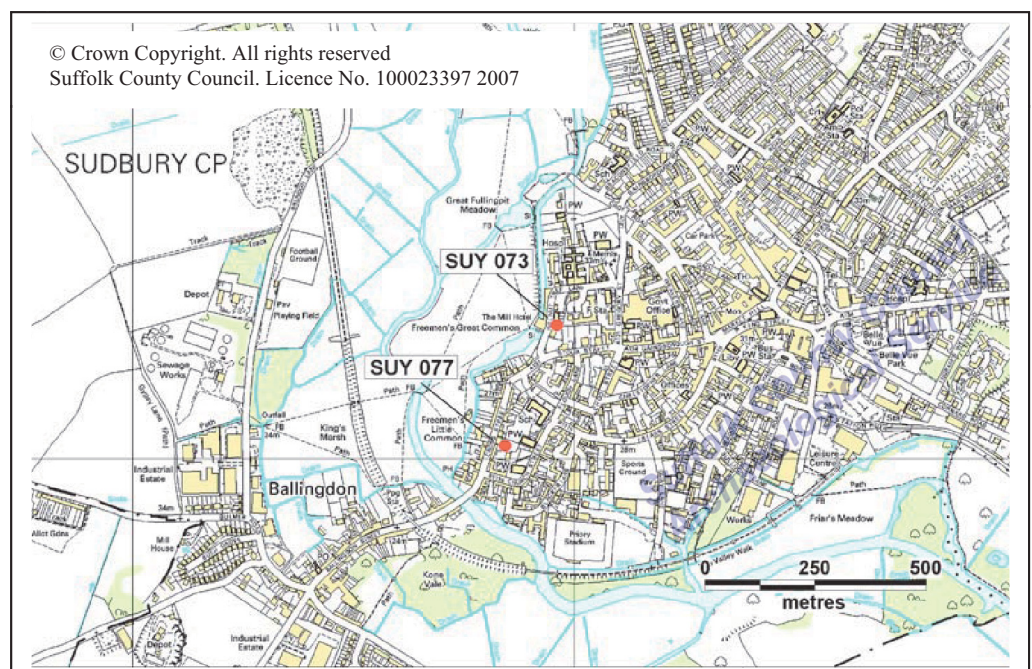


Figure 1: Site location

(Appendix I) was produced by Keith Wade of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team. The monitoring work was funded by Mr. and Mrs. W. Liddell and the archive is held in the county SMR in Bury St. Edmunds.

### 3. Results

At the time of the visit, the footprint of the garage had been stripped of up to 500mm of dark brown sandy loam topsoil and the footings excavated to a depth of 1.3m below the stripped surface. Due to the unstable nature of the trench sides, shoring was in place to prevent collapse and as such, only small areas of the trench sections were available to view. What was visible, however, showed a presence of overburden to a depth of 1.3m, at which point the natural subsoil, a pale yellowish brown sandy gravel, was visible at the trench base. A series of large pits of Post-medieval and possibly earlier date were visible throughout the sections but none were fully exposed or possible to access for closer inspection and detailed recording. The overburden comprised a loose dark-mid brown silty sand.

Upcast spoil from the groundworks was stockpiled on site and inspected for artefactual evidence. A mix of modern, Post-medieval and medieval pottery was present, as well as ceramic building material, animal bone and occasional oyster shell. As the material was unstratified, only the pre-modern pottery was collected, as well as a fragment of probable human femur.



Figure 2: Location of monitored area

#### 4. The Finds The Old Vicarage, Church Street, Sudbury (SUY 077): the finds

Richenda Goffin, January 2007.

##### Introduction

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

OP	Pottery		HSR		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0001	5	155	1	51	Unstrat, 16th-17th C pottery
Total	5	155	1	51	

##### Pottery

A total of five fragments of pottery was recovered from the monitoring (0.155 kg). Three sherds of medieval coarseware dating to the Late 12th-14th century were identified, including a fragment of a bowl with external sooting. The vessel has a thickened flat-topped rim which is typically found in the 12th – Early 13th century. It is similar to Hollesley ware, but is made of a slightly coarser fabric. In addition another coarseware body sherd is of a similar date and a smaller, more abraded and sandier sherd may be earlier, although still within the overall date range.

Two larger fragments date to the post-medieval period. A fragment of a glazed redware cauldron rim and handle was recovered, dating to the late sixteenth to seventeenth century. The vessel has a patchy orange glaze on the interior, with a slightly greener glaze on the outer surface. It is similar both in form and glazing pattern to West Norfolk Bichrome, a variant of Glazed Red Earthenware found in the region (Jennings 148). A fragment of the strap handle of a Frechen stoneware jug or bottle dates to 1550-1700.

##### Human bone

A single fragment from part of the head of a probable human femur was recovered. As it is so fragmentary, there is a possibility that it is mammalian, but the size suggests that it is human, and the location of the site near the church suggests that this is likely.

##### Discussion

All the finds from the monitoring were recovered from the tops of spoil heaps and were not stratified. Two out of the three sherds of medieval pottery were unabraded, which may suggest that they had been relatively undisturbed after their original deposition and come from nearby features. The presence of a single fragment of a probable human femur is not surprising given the proximity of the church and the burial ground.

##### 5. Discussion

Despite the limited visibility, the sections showed significant activity on the site in the form of large pits and made-up ground. This activity is likely to represent the excavation of pits for rubbish disposal behind the dwellings along Cross Street and Church Street, and possibly deeper pits may have been opened for the extraction of sand and gravel. It is unfortunate that no finds were recovered from secure contexts, however, given the sites location within the boundaries of the medieval town and close to known archaeology, it is not surprising to find medieval evidence, whether redeposited with later material or in a sealed medieval context.

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Field Team  
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March 2007

## References

Jennings, S., 1981. Eighteen centuries of pottery from Norwich, EAA Report No 13

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