

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Burnt House Farm, Langham Road, Farnham FNM 016

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, November 2006
(Planning app. no. C/05/1770/FUL)



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Contents

List of Figures
List of Tables
List of Contributors
Acknowledgements
Summary
SMR information

Introduction
Methodology
Results
Finds evidence
Summary and Conclusion

References

Appendix 1: Brief and specification

List of Figures

1. Location plan
2. Location of site in relation to Sites and Monuments Record
3. Hodskinson's map of 1783
4. Typical trench profile
5. Trench configuration

List of Tables

1. Finds Quantities

List of Contributors

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Mr. Giles de Bertodano and was monitored by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Division). The fieldwork was carried out by Robert Atfield of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The project was managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

Finds processing was carried out by Gemma Adams. Other specialist identification and advice was provided by Richenda Goffin and Cathy Tester.

Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Burnt House Farm, Farnham as a condition of planning application C/05/1770/FUL. The site lies c.250m north east of a Roman bath house (FNM 001) which was excavated in 1971. The present development includes a series of deep trenches required for the installation of a geothermal heating facility. The development had previously been monitored in February 2006 (Everett, 2006) during the construction of the new dwelling towards the eastern area of the site (see Figure 5). Around 400m of geothermal heating trenches were examined during two visits to the site on the 28th and 30th of November 2006. However, the trenches failed to reveal any further archaeological features and only a small number of unstratified finds were retrieved from the upcast spoil.

SMR information

Planning application no.	C/05/1770/FUL
SMR No.	FNM 016
Date of fieldwork:	28-11-06/30-11-06
Grid Reference:	TM 3738 5849
Oasis ID No.	Suffolkc1-26147
Funding body:	Mr G. de Bertodano

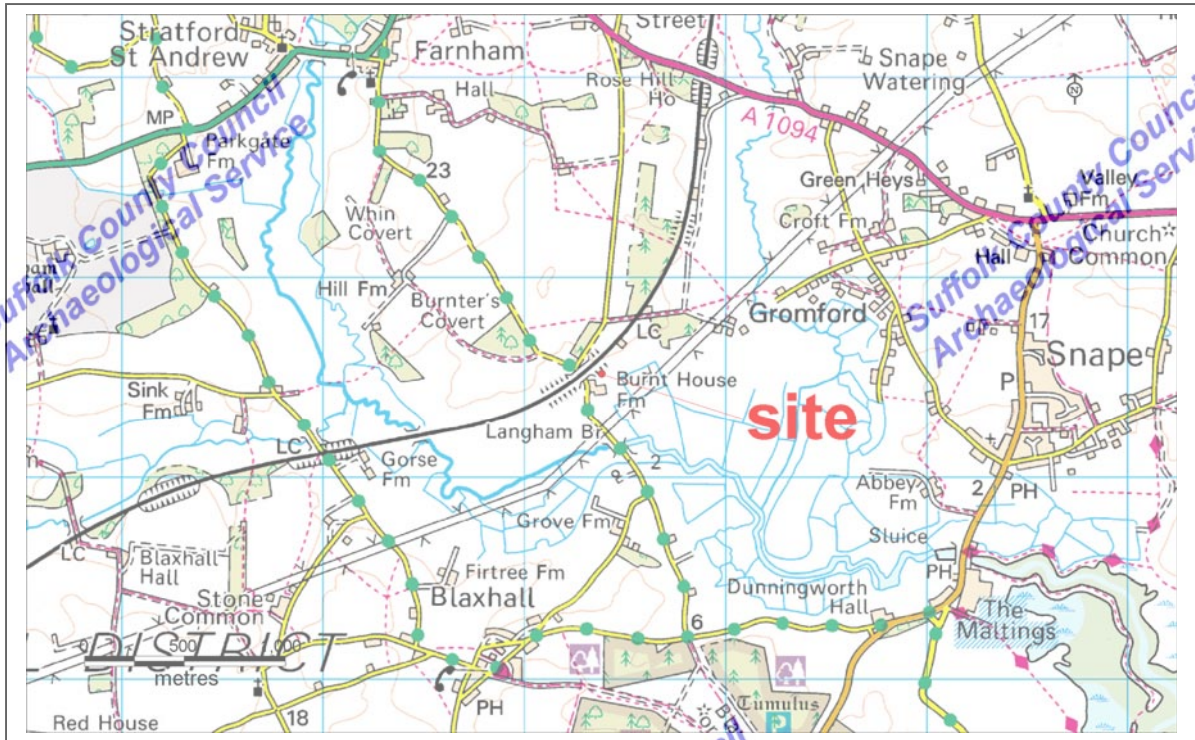


Figure 1. Site location

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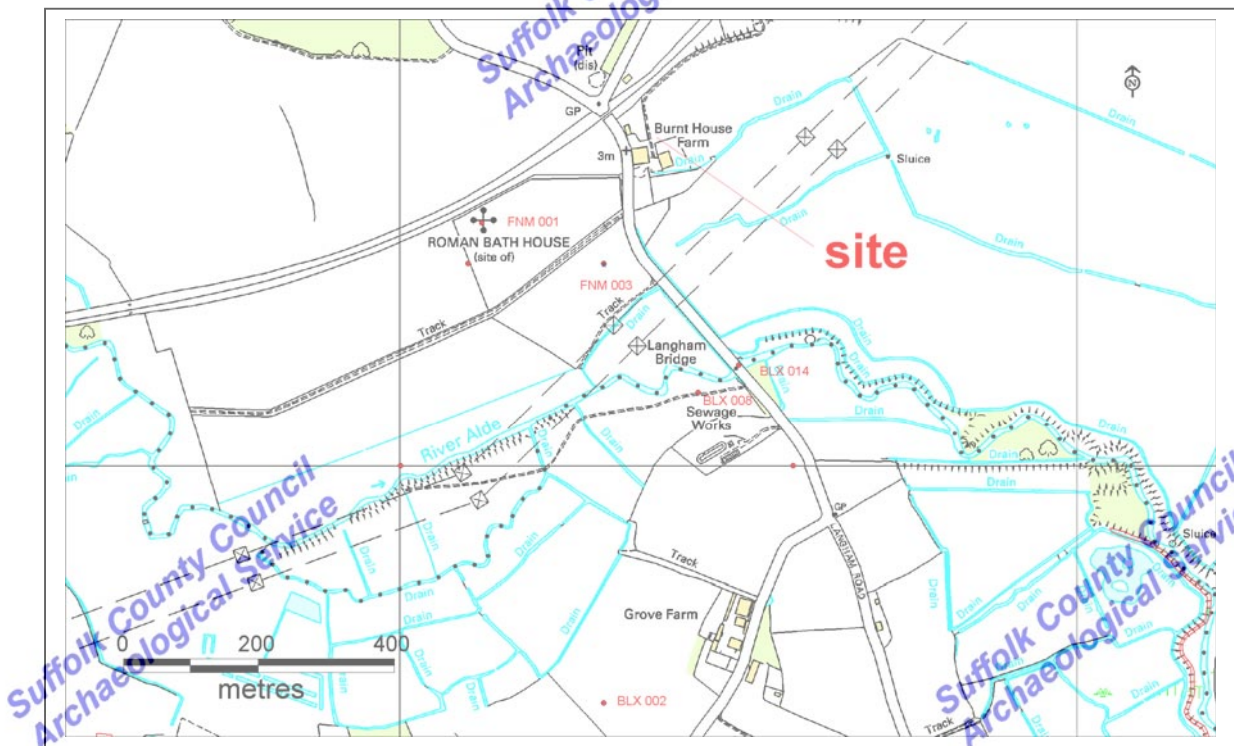


Figure 2. Site location within the context of Sites and Monuments Record

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Introduction

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Burnt House Farm, Farnham (TM 3738 5849) as a condition of planning application C/05/1770/FUL. The Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring was produced by Judith Plouviez (Plouviez, 2006) (see Appendix 1). Located on a gentle south facing slope just below the 5m OD contour of the Alde Valley, the site lies around 350m north of the Langham Bridge river crossing. A Roman Bath House, lying around 250m to the south west, was excavated in 1971 and a poorly defined area of related activity, including evidence of iron working, extends to the east towards Burnt House Farm (FNM 003). Pottery manufacture is also recorded in the area to the south of the River Alde (BLX 002) (see Figure 2). Burnt House itself appears on Hodskinson's map of 1783 and is likely to be of medieval or even earlier origin in this location (Plouviez, 2005) (see Figure 3). The present development entailed digging a four hundred metre long series of two metre deep trenches which were required for the installation of a geothermal heating facility. The site had previously been monitored in February 2006 (Everett, 2006) during the construction of the new dwelling towards the eastern area of the site (see Figure 2); however no archaeological features or finds were located. The geothermal heating trenches were examined during two visits to the site on the 28th and 30th of November 2006.

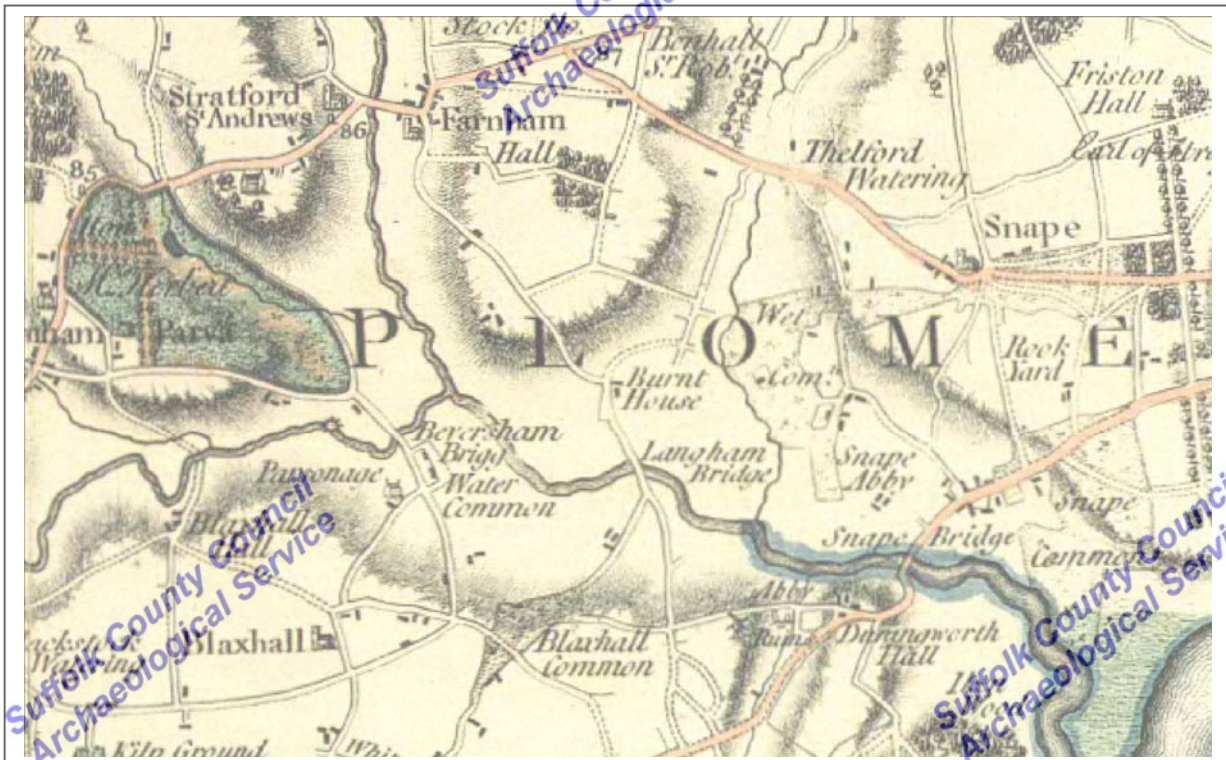


Figure 3. Hodskinson's map 1783

Methodology

The trench configuration was cumulatively recorded using measured sketch plans as work progressed. The close trench layout required that after the heating pipes were laid, backfilling was required before it was possible to gain access to the next trench location (see Figure 6.) Good co-operation with the landowners and contractors allowed the visiting archaeologist to examine virtually all of the open trench segments. The trenches were excavated using a tracked 360° mechanical digger, fitted with a range of toothless buckets. The trenches measured 2m deep and 2m wide at the surface, but were battered to produce a tapering profile with a trench base width of 0.50m (see Figure 5.). Conditions were generally dry and bright, allowing good visibility when examining the deposits. A small amount of hand cleaning was carried out in order to clarify areas of the trench faces. All of the upcast spoil was available for examination in order to retrieve any available archaeological finds. Soil profiles and unstratified finds were recorded using standard context sheets which begin at 0001 and all records were entered under the site SMR code of FNM 016. The monitoring archive is held in the County Sites and Monuments Record at Bury St Edmunds and entered within the Oasis Archaeological Resource under suffolkc1-26147.



Figure 4. Example of typical trench profile

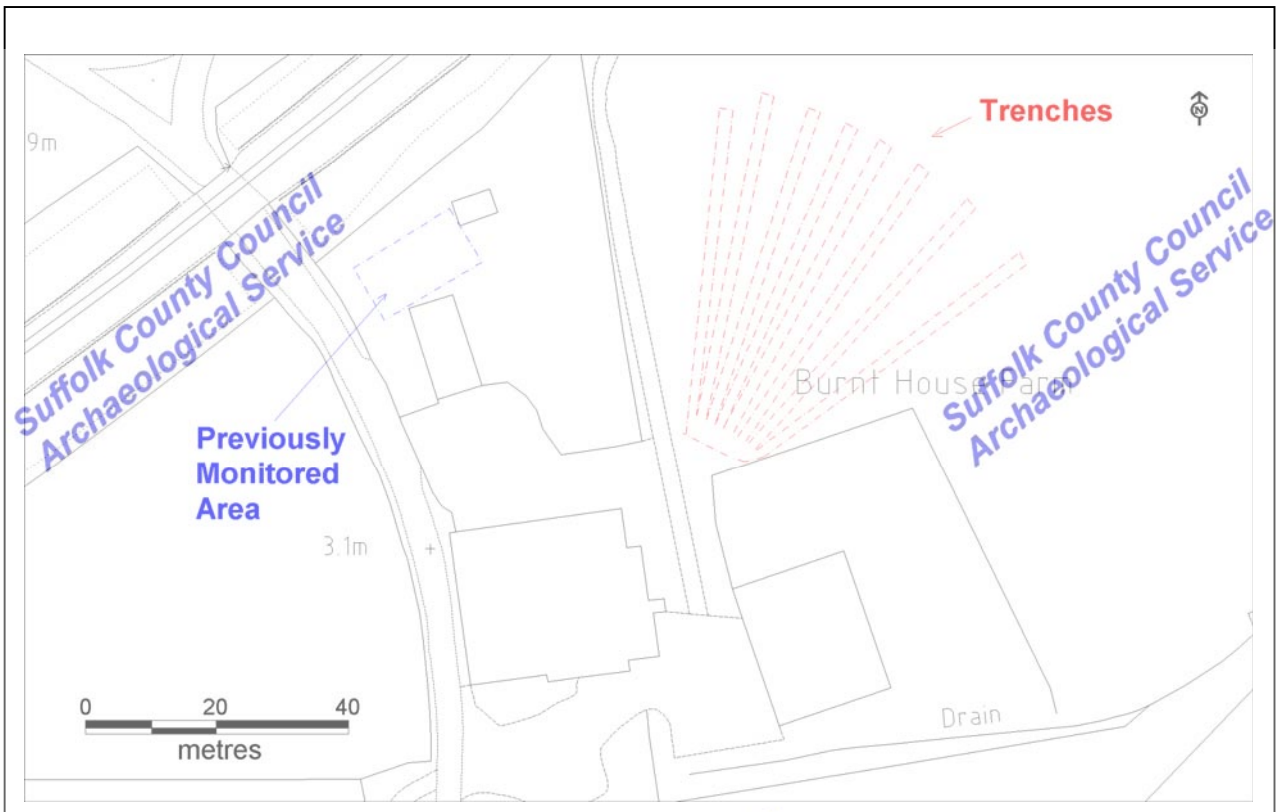


Figure 5. Trench Configuration

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Results

A length of approximately 400m of trenching was examined within an area of former grassland or pasture. The trench sections reached a depth of around 2m and revealed a virtually undisturbed soil profile below around 0.40m from the present surface level. The topsoil was between 0.35-0.40m in depth and consisted of light orange-brown silty sand, contained few large stones and showed light compaction. Below this was a subsoil of around 1.35m in depth consisting of orange-yellow sand with occasional gravel bands; this appeared to be a largely undisturbed natural deposit. Some possible plough marks were evident at the interface of the topsoil and the subsoil. Below the subsoil were dark orange-brown banded natural sands which contained occasional possible iron deposits but very few stones above a size of 5mm. This deposit was very firmly compacted and was recorded to a depth of up to 0.30m, the full depth was not seen in any of the trenched areas. No archaeological features were seen within any of the trenches and the only finds were located from within the upcast spoil.

The Finds

Richenda Goffin

Introduction

A small quantity of unstratified finds was recovered from the trenches. These are shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		CBM		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0001	3	51	1	65	Roman/P Med
Total	3	51	1	65	

Table 1: Finds quantities

Pottery

Three fragments of pottery were collected in total. A single fragment of a micaceous wheelthrown greyware of overall Roman date was identified. In addition two sherds of a Glazed red earthenware vessel dating from the 16th-18th century were recovered.

Ceramic building material

One fragment of very abraded ceramic building material was collected. The fabric is fine, dense, and pale orange, with pale cream clay lenses and pellets (fscp). As none of its original surfaces have survived, it is not possible to identify the form. It is likely to be Roman, although similar fabrics were used in the early post-medieval period.

Discussion

The small number of Roman finds are likely to be scattered finds associated with the Roman settlement located to the south-east of the site.

Summary and Conclusion

The total lack of archaeological features in this area of ground suggests that this particular location has long fulfilled an agricultural function. Although previous evidence has suggested that Roman industrial activity took place to the east of the Roman bath house site, it does not appear to have extended beyond Burnt House Farm. The site deposits were notably lacking in charcoal, fragments of building material and although a few ceramic finds were retrieved, the total was very low in relation to the extent of the deposits that were searched. It appears that the focus of settlement and associated activity lies to the south east and perhaps nearer to the river crossing to the south.

References

Everett, L. 2006 'Archaeological Monitoring Report: Burnt House Farm, Langham Road, Farnham' SCCAS Report No. 2006/16, Ipswich.

Plouviez, J. 2005 'Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development: Burnt House Farm, Langham Road, Farnham' SCCAS- Conservation Team, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.