

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Rear of 39 Kings Street, Sudbury
SUY 080

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS

Planning Application No.: B/06/01559/FUL

NGR: TL 8745 4129

Oasis Ref. Suffolke1-26493

Funded by: Peddars of Sudbury (Gents Outfitters)

SCCAS Report no. 2007/026

Summary

An infilled brick built cellar and a bonded flint wall, the remains of a previous building, were recorded during ground works for an extension to the rear of 39, High Street, Sudbury. The brick size suggested that the cellar dated to late 15th/early 16th century and was an addition to an earlier building that had fronted the High Street. The flint wall, part of the front range, included roof tile within its construction and whilst earlier than the cellar, was thought to be either late medieval or early post-medieval in date. The results of the monitoring show that although the shops occupying the site are modern they respect much earlier plot divisions.

Introduction

Two monitoring visits were made to the site during excavation of footings for an extension to the rear of 39 High Street, Sudbury. The monitoring was a condition of planning application B/06/01559/FUL. The visits were made on 9th and 13th March 2007 by members of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service and the work was funded by applicant Peddars of Sudbury.

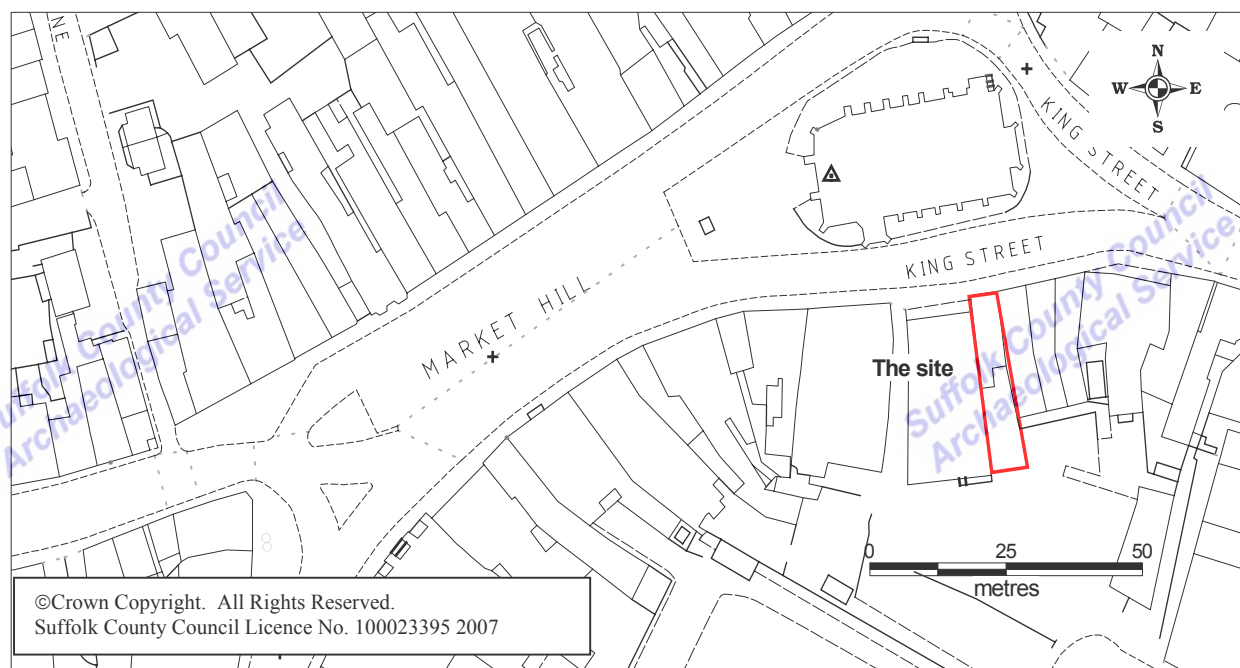


Figure 1. Site location plan

The site is within an Area of Archaeological Importance defined for Sudbury in the Babergh Local Plan. It is within the core of the medieval town and opposite the 15th century church of St Peter's; Kings Street forms the south side of the marketplace.

Results

The top of the east wall of an early post-medieval building was exposed during excavation to reduce the ground level. The wall was encountered at 620mm below the finished floor level of the proposed extension and recorded in figure 2. The wall was constructed in two phases with a brick built range added to a mortared flint wall, which continued under the existing shop. The position of the wall was on the line of the existing plot boundary but at a slight variance to the alignment. The projected opposing west wall was outside the area of the development and not seen.

The flint wall was 740mm wide and 400mm deep, the flints were bonded with a pale brown lime mortar with chalk and flint grit inclusions. Part of the current works cut through the wall exposing it in section and showed that the wall was faced on each side with horizontally laid red clay roof tiles (Fig. 3). An internal wall extended from the west face of the wall forming a right-angled corner but a drain truncated its extent. The internal face of both walls was finished with lime plaster and in the angle of the joining walls this was burnt. The burning was deep enough to turn pink the mortar bonding the flint to a depth of 80mm and charcoal was recorded in this area. The flint wall was built over a layer of dark occupation debris soil and the subsoil was encountered 300mm below the base of the wall. The occupation debris layer was undated. The brick wall was connected to the flint wall by a simple butt joint but the junction between the two had been cut away by a later disturbance. The brick wall continued on the alignment of the flint one and clearly was an extension of it. A 6m length was recorded of the brick wall, it was 350mm wide but the full extent of the range continued beyond the limit of the excavation.

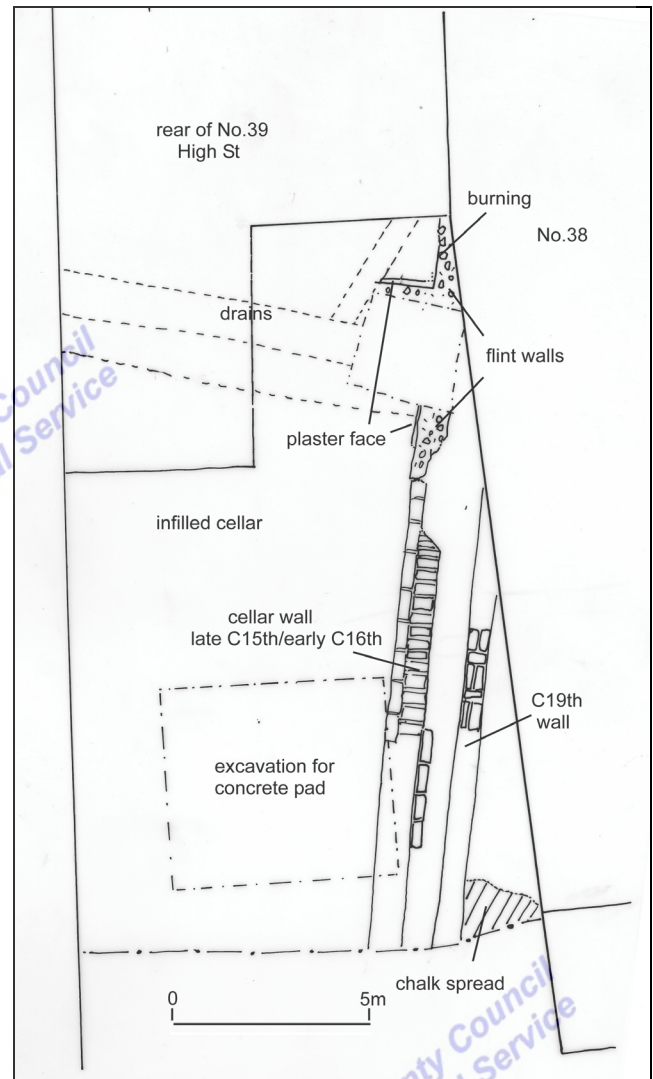


Figure 2. Site plan

The bricks were laid in a variation of English bond creating a wall $1\frac{1}{2}$ bricks wide, but which in elevation appeared as an alternating stretcher and headers. The bricks were plain handmade bricks; bonded with a coarse pale lime mortar and the inner face of the wall had been painted with a pink limewash. The bricks were made of a well mixed fine sandy textured red-brown firing clay with small grog inclusions and were evenly fired. The bricks measured $9\frac{1}{4}'' \times 4\frac{1}{4}'' \times 1\frac{3}{4}''$ and dated to the late 15th/ early 16th century.



Figure 3. Cross section of flint wall



Figure 4. Cellar wall

Deep excavation for a concrete pad demonstrated that the brick range was cellared and exposed part of the inner face of the cellar wall (Fig 4). The concrete for the pad had already been poured by the time of the monitoring visit, so the depth of the cellar or whether it had a floor could not be determined but the excavation showed it to be in excess of 1.60m deep. The cellar had been infilled with building demolition rubble, the bricks within the rubble were not the same as those in the cellar wall but later ones stamped ALLEN BALLINGDON within the frog. These were supplied by the local manufacturer who was producing these bricks in the 19th century.

A second wall, constructed of 19th century bricks and part of an adjacent building was recorded alongside the cellar.

Conclusion

The recorded remains are of a large/long multi-celled building built in at least two phases and completed no later than the first half of the 16th century. The flint wall represents the rear of the earliest identifiable building fronting the street and is likely to have been a dwarf wall that would have underpinned a timber framed building. The presence of courses of tile within the fabric of wall is interesting but it is unknown whether this was representative of the whole wall or a particular feature as only a small sample was seen. The presence of burning in association with the tiles could suggest that this is a hearth and the tiles a fire back.

The walls are well constructed suggesting that these are the remains of a high status building befitting its prominent location in the commercial centre of the town. The front range is probably late medieval or early post medieval; close to the date of the re-building of the church on the opposite side of the road implying an extensive regeneration of this area at this time.

The edge of the building is close to the existing plot boundary and suggests that these have been fixed since at least the 16th century. The adjacent buildings (Nos. 36-39), although modern have long narrow plots typical of the medieval urban planning.

A building with a longer footprint than the present shop is shown on this site on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1883 and it is likely that the demolition of this building produced the material infilling the cellar.

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