

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Walcot House, Hall Street, Long Melford LMD 170

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS ASSOCIATED WITH
A CONSERVATORY EXTENSION AT WALCOT HOUSE , LONG MELFORD

Planning Application No. B/07/00020

NGR: TL 8637 4579

OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-26652

Funded by: Mr & Mrs G Barber

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2007/72

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of footing trenches for a conservatory extension at Walcot House, Hall Street, Long Melford, identified a sealed well of probable post-medieval date.

Introduction

A single visit was made to the site on 1st May 2007 to monitor the excavation of footing trenches for a conservatory extension to the rear of Walcot House, Hall Street, Long Melford. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team, Appendix 1) to fulfil a planning condition on application B/07/00020. The work was funded by the developer, Mr & Mrs G Barber.

Interest in the site was based upon its general location (Fig. 1) within the historic settlement core of Long Melford, an area of archaeological importance recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record. Walcot House is a listed building (LBS No. 278267), dating to the 18th century, and forms part of the post-medieval street frontage which in turn originated in the medieval period. The development therefore had the potential to disturb medieval occupation deposits and, as the site lies only 200m-300m to the north of a known area of substantial Roman settlement, there was also potential for earlier deposits.

Methodology and Results

The site visit observed the single footing trench once it was fully excavated. Measuring c.0.5m wide and c.0.3m deep it was aligned north-east to south-west, parallel to the rear of Walcot House and running between two building wings extending from the main house.

The depth of the trench was limited and only showed a layer of modern paving overlying topsoil. Potential archaeological levels were not reached or disturbed. At the northern end of the trench however a small hole was knocked through the top of a sealed well allowing limited observation

of the interior. Circular, measuring c.0.8-1m in diameter, the well shaft was of brick construction and, at an uncertain depth but probably c.2m+, was seen to still contain water.

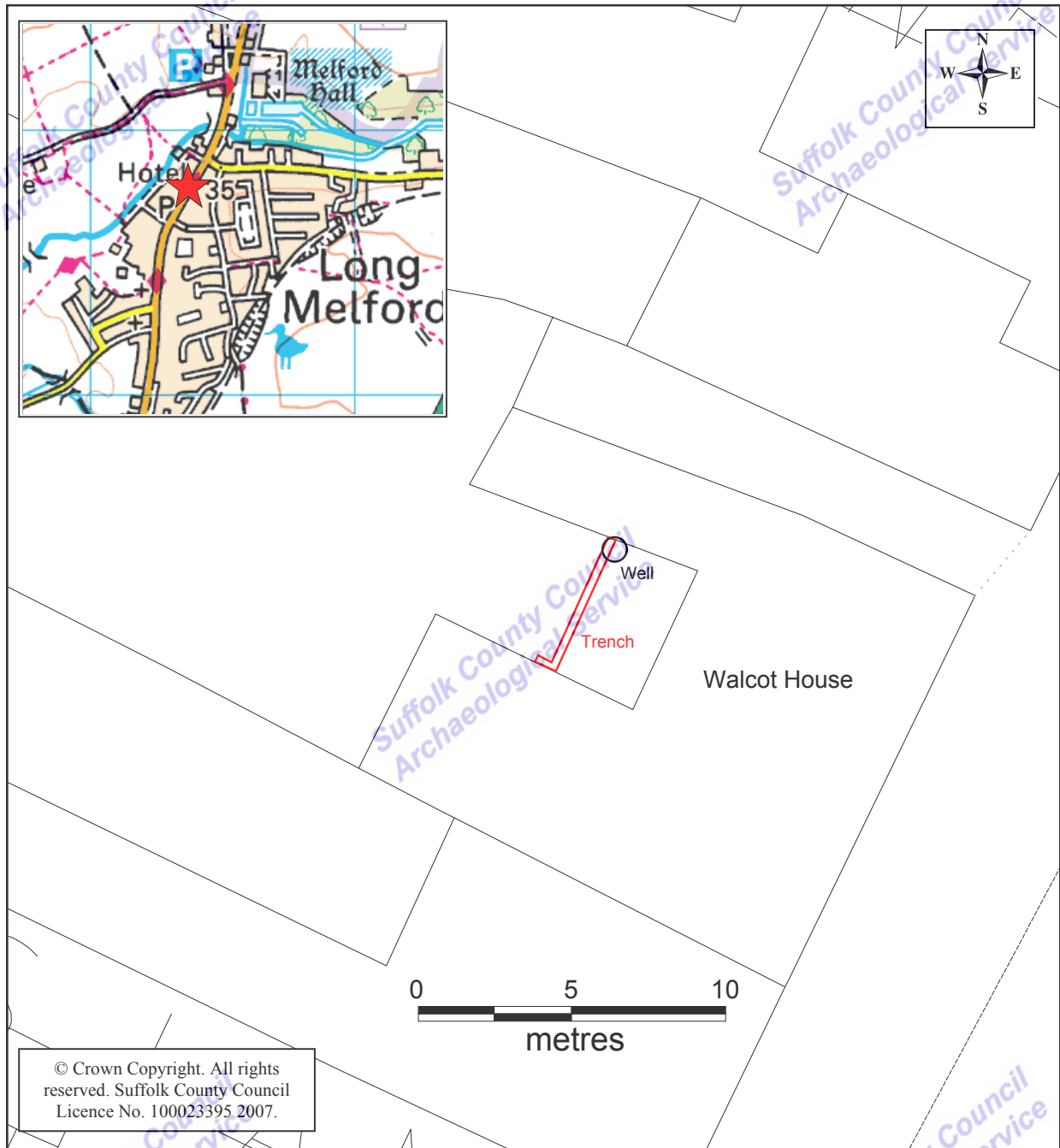


Figure 1. Site location plan

Discussion

The depth of the trenching for the development was limited and did not reach archaeological levels. The well is most likely to be of a post-medieval date, pre-dating the building immediately to the north which appears to be a later extension to the main building fronting the road.

J. A. Craven

Project Officer, Field Team, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

May 2007

Appendix 1.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

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Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

WALCOT HOUSE, HALL STREET, LONG MELFORD

Although this document covers the work of the archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that its requirements may affect the work of a building contractor and may have financial implications (e.g. see paragraph 2.3); there may also be Health & Safety responsibilities (e.g. paragraph 1.4).

1. Background

1.1 Planning permission to erect a conservatory on the rear of Walcot House, Hall Street, Long Melford (TL 8637 4579) has been granted by Babergh District Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application B/07/00020). The available evidence indicates archaeological monitoring of development, with provision for a record of any archaeology as it occurs, will be an adequate programme of work.

1.2 This application lies in an area of archaeological importance, within a historic settlement core recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record. There is high potential for encountering medieval, and possibly earlier, occupation deposits at this location. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.

It is intended that, subject to archaeological conditions, this monitoring should not be an extended or complex exercise. Provided building excavations are properly timetabled, and accurate notice given, it should be possible to complete monitoring in one visit with the whole process of monitoring and report writing being achieved in one working day.

1.3 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in "Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England" Occasional Papers 14, East Anglian Archaeology, 2003.

1.4 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination.

1.5 Developers should be aware of the possibility of human burials being found. If this eventuality occurs they must comply with the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.

2.2 The main objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for medieval, and possibly earlier, occupation of the site.

2.3 Opportunity must be given to the contracted archaeologist to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary.

The significant archaeologically damaging activities in this proposal are the groundworks associated with the foundation trenches for the conservatory.

Trenches and the upcast soil are to be observed by an archaeologist after they have been excavated by the building contractor. Unimpeded access of trenches must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin.

- 2.4 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist who must be approved by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS/CT).
- 2.5 The developer or his archaeologist will give SCCAS/CT five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site.
- 2.6 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.
- 2.7 If unexpected remains are encountered the SCCAS/CT must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.
- 2.8 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the SCCAS/CT archaeologist and the contracted 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 2.9 Opportunity must 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.
- 2.10 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 2.11 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 three months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 2.12 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.
- 2.13 The project manager must consult the SMR Officer to obtain an event number for the work. This number will be unique for each project or site and must be clearly marked on any documentation relating to the work.
- 2.14 The results of the surveys should be related to the relevant known archaeological information held in the county SMR.
- 2.15 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.
- 2.16 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: Dr Jess Tipper

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Reference: /WalcotHouse-LongMelford2007

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.