

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

22, Nethergate Street, Clare CLA 054

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2007
(Planning app. no. SE/07/0380)

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Mr Geoffrey Bray and the archaeological work specified by Keith Wade (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Manager). The fieldwork was carried out by Jo Caruth and Andrew Tester from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

Finds processing was carried out by Gemma Adams and the specialist finds report produced by Richenda Goffin. Finds were collected by the builders during excavation and their diligence in this has led to the recovery of a small but significant assemblage of medieval pottery.

Summary

Archaeological monitoring during the excavations for a small extension at 22, Nethergate Street, Clare, identified two pits and a small assemblage of 11th-13th century pottery recovered by the builders during their work, which although not necessarily all from the pit fills, was recovered from the general area of the pits. Nethergate Street is one of the Medieval routes into Clare and the results of this monitoring indicate occupation on this site that pre-dates any of the existing buildings along this Street.

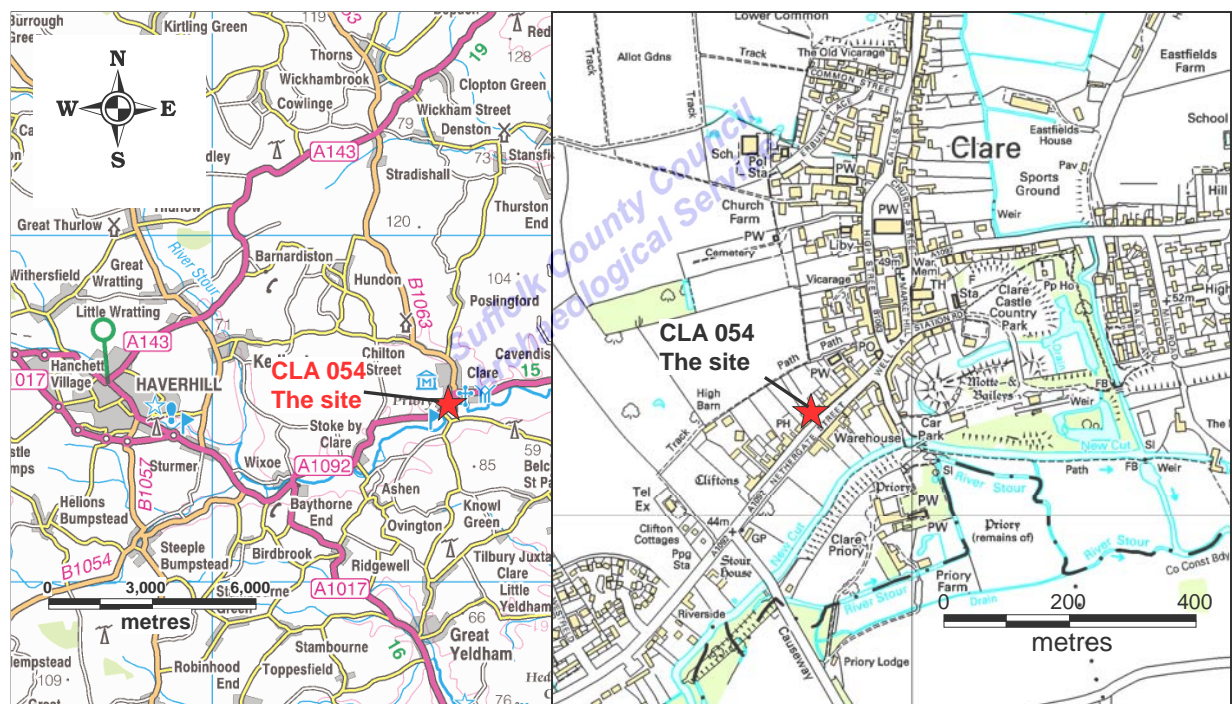
SMR information

Planning application no. SE/07/0380, (previous application no. SE/06/2141)
Date of fieldwork: March 2007
Grid Reference: TL 76842 45166
Funding body: Mr Geoffrey Bray
Oasis reference. Suffolkc1-27231

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during extension works at 22, Nethergate Street, Clare. The site lies along one of the medieval routes into Clare from the south-west at grid reference TL 76842 45166, on a south facing slope between c. 50m and 46m OD. Both Clare Castle and Clare Priory lie within 200m south and east of the site and the 'New Cut' of the River Stour c.110m to the south (Fig. 1). The entry into Clare from the south-west in the medieval period was by a wooden bridge over the River Stour and then right into the Nethergate. It is probable that the new cut for the river was to supply the mill and that it dates to the 14th century or earlier (http://www.clare-uk.com/about/short_history/page4.html). Nethergate Street boasts a wealth of timber framed houses from the 15th-19th centuries with almost every building listed. The site of Clare Rural Council Offices, c.85m north-east of this development, occupies the previous location of a building known as Stonehall, which dated to 1309 but is now completely gone.

The aim of the monitoring was to record any evidence for medieval occupation that was under threat from the new development.



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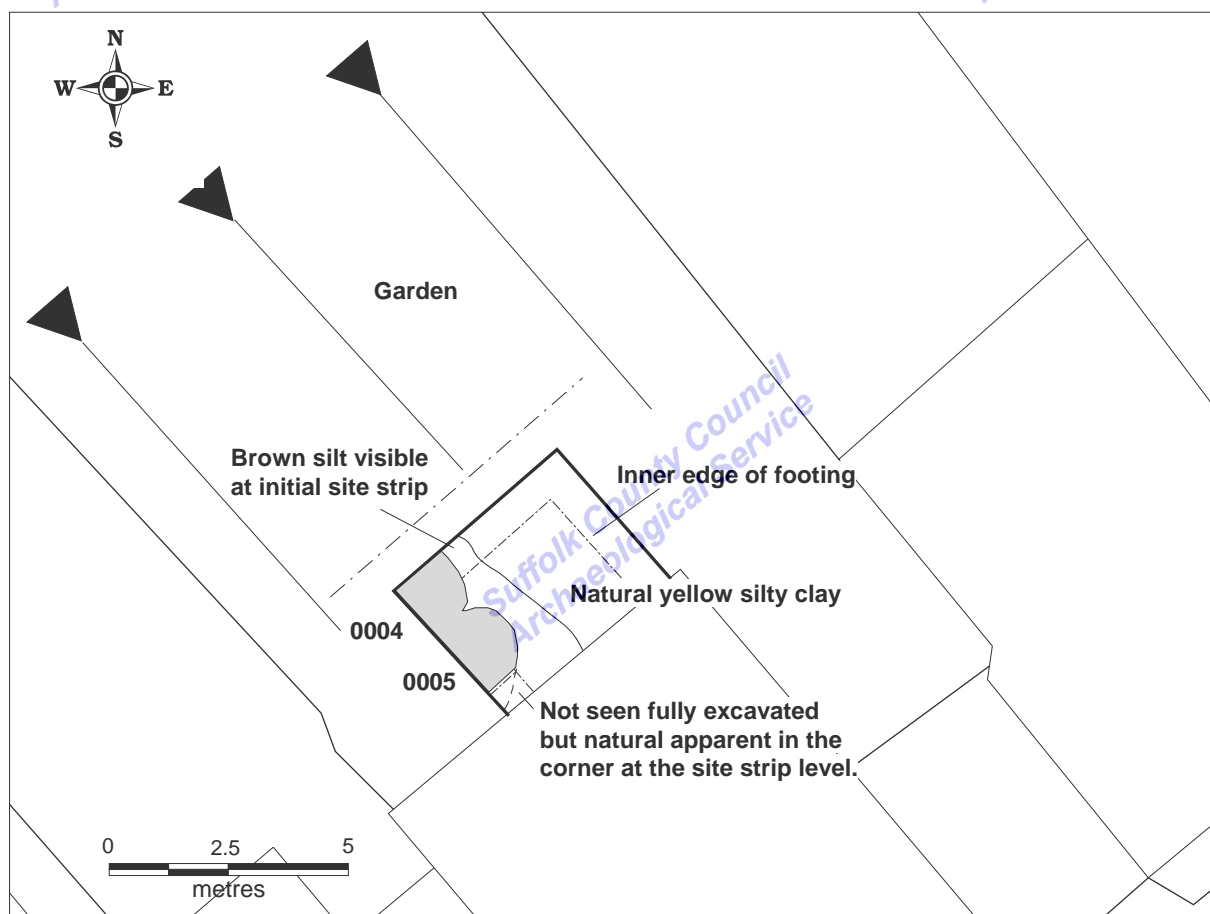
Figure 1. Site location

Methodology

Three visits were made during both the initial site strip to level the ground between the sloped garden and the house, and the excavation of the footing trenches (Fig. 2). The new construction covered an area of c.11m² with all the excavation being carried out by hand and the builders retrieved most of the finds as they worked. Where archaeological deposits were seen, sections and plans were recorded at 1:50 and 1:20. Digital photographs were taken during the work and all finds were kept. The site was recorded under the new sites and monuments record number CLA 054 and context numbers from 0001-0006 (Table 1) were issued during the archaeological work. The site archive is stored in the archaeological store at the Suffolk County Council Offices in Bury and a copy of this report lodged with the OASIS on-line database under the reference suffolkc1-27231.

| Context no | Identifier | Description |
|------------|------------|---|
| 0001 | Finds | Unstratified finds from the whole area |
| 0002 | Finds | Finds collected mostly by the builders during the initial site strip |
| 0003 | Finds | Finds collected mostly by the builders during the deeper site strip and footing trenches. All finds from the western half of the site where the pit fills could be seen. |
| 0004 | Pit | Pit seen in western footing trench. North of 0005. Filled with dark brown silt 0006 |
| 0005 | Pit | Pit seen in western footing trench. South of 0004. Filled with dark brown silt 0006 |
| 0006 | Pit fill | Dark brown even silt fill of pits 0004 and 0005. 0003 finds probably mostly from here? |

Table 1. List of contexts



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Figure 2. Site plan

Results

The excavation work was undertaken during some heavy downpours and the stripped surface was partially underwater during the first two visits. However it was possible to determine the presence of natural clay on the north side of the area at c. 0.25m below ground adjacent to the house and deeper, up to 0.65m, where the ground sloped up from the front to the back of the garden. All the garden soil removed was a uniform worked soil suggesting either that the natural slope had been truncated by deep cultivation, or that it originally started further west of the house than it does now, and that the soil build-up near the house is a result of soil movement down the slope. During these first two visits it was also possible to identify an ill-defined area of darker silty clay on the east side of the site, which was defined at the third visit during the footing excavations in this area, as two adjacent dark brown silt filled pits, 0004 and 0005 (Fig. 2). Neither pit was sufficiently excavated to confirm their size but minimum dimensions of 1.2 wide

and greater than 0.7m deep for pit 0004 and 1.4m wide and probably only slightly greater than 0.7m deep for pit 0005 (Fig. 3). The footing was not seen fully excavated to the house but the impression from the site strip was that natural was just apparent in this corner. Finds were recovered by the builders during the excavations, context 0002 was recovered from the initial site strip from the whole area and 0003 more specifically from the dark silt fill, 0006, of the pits during the second spit of the site strip and the footings.

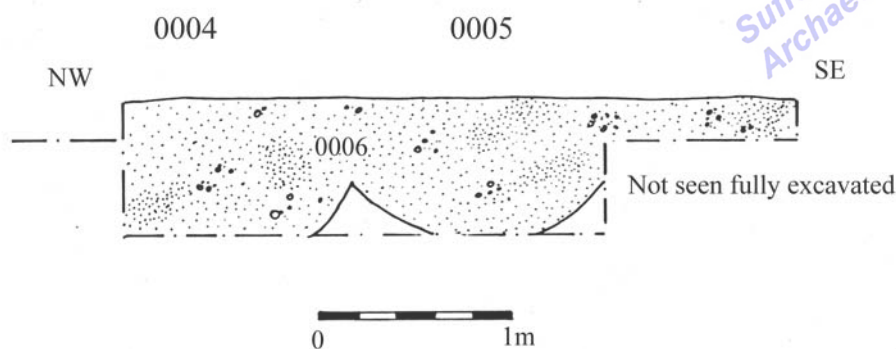


Figure 3. Section

Finds and environmental evidence by Richenda Goffin

Introduction

Finds were collected from three contexts, as shown in Table 2 below.

| OP | Pottery | | Animal bone | | CBM | | Clay Pipe | | Miscellaneous | Spotdate |
|-------|---------|------|-------------|------|-----|------|-----------|------|-------------------------------|----------|
| | No. | Wt/g | No. | Wt/g | No. | Wt/g | No. | Wt/g | | |
| 0001 | 8 | 142 | 36 | 637 | | | 2 | 12 | Glass 3 @ 368g, Fe 3 @ 79g | Med/Pmed |
| 0002 | 8 | 74 | 4 | 329 | | | | | Fe 3 @ 672g, 1 shell @ 18g | Med/Pmed |
| 0003 | 17 | 211 | 2 | 32 | 1 | 24 | | | 1 shell @ 1g | Med/Pmed |
| Total | 33 | 427 | 42 | 998 | 1 | 24 | 2 | 12 | | |

Table 2. Finds quantification

Pottery

A total of thirty-three fragments of pottery was recovered from contexts 0001, a number allocated for unstratified finds, and 0002 and 0003, numbers that were allocated to finds below the surface which were not fully stratified. Five sherds dating to the post-medieval period were identified, whilst the remaining twenty-eight fragments are medieval. Two joining fragments of a Staffordshire slipware dish with thumb-impressed rim were present in 0001, with a single sherd of a Staffordshire Manganese tankard dating to the late 17th-mid 18th century. A fragment of an English stoneware bottle was present in 0003 dating to the 19th century or later, together with a small sherd of abraded Glazed red earthenware of 16th-18th century.

The remainder of the ceramic assemblage is made up almost entirely of medieval coarsewares which date from the 11th-13th centuries.

Three fragments of hand-made sandy wares are early medieval (11th-12th century). The rim of a sooted bowl with slightly thickened flat-topped rim, pronounced girth-grooves and decorated with incised wavy line decoration may be a product of the Middleborough kilnsites, which have been found to the north of the town of Colchester (Cotter 57). A second abraded sherd from

0003 is more thick-walled and has superficial shell inclusions. It has also been catalogued as Early medieval sandy ware, and is probably the equivalent of Colchester Fabric 13S, which dates to the 11th-12th century (Cotter 41).

Several sherds of medieval coarseware cooking vessels or jars from both contexts had thickened flat-topped rims, dating to the twelfth to thirteenth century. Three fragments from the knife-trimmed base of a cooking vessel or jar made in a red-brown medium coarse fabric with quartz inclusions may be a product of the Mile End or Great Horksley kilnsites in Essex, which were located to the north of Colchester (Drury and Petchey 1975). The remainder of the coarsewares are body sherds, some of which show evidence of usage through sooting. One fragment has a vertical applied thumbed strip. A small fragment of a glazed redware with iron oxide stripe is a Hedingham fineware dating from the Mid 12th to Mid 13th century.

Ceramic building material

A single fragment of an oxidised roof tile fragment was collected from 0003. The fabric contains red clay pellets (mscp) and dates to the late or post-medieval period.

Clay pipe

Two fragments of clay tobacco pipe were recovered from 0001. In addition to a piece of stem, part of the bowl of a nineteenth century pipe with abraded initials on the spur was recorded.

Post-medieval bottle glass

Three fragments of post-medieval bottle glass were collected from 0001. The best preserved piece is a heavy base of a winebottle with a shallow basal kick which dates to the seventeenth or eighteenth century.

Iron

Six fragments of iron were recovered. In all case the objects appear to be late post-medieval in date, and they were not allocated individual numbers. A nail was present in 0002, together with a large wide iron strap with minerally replaced wood preserved on the inside surface, which may be part of a barrel hoop.

Animal bone

Seventeen fragments of animal bone from 0001 include a small horn core, two molars and a rib. Apart from one bovine tibia, the remainder of the bones are mainly limb bones from medium sized mammals. One fragment shows cut marks. The shafts of two slender limb bones without their terminals, probably from sheep were recovered from 0003.

Shell

Two fragments of oyster shell from 0002 and 0003 were discarded.

Discussion

Although all the finds recovered from the evaluation are mostly either unstratified or poorly stratified, (most being collected by the builders), the group includes a small but significant group of medieval pottery spanning the eleventh through to the thirteenth century. This material includes some fabrics which are likely to be made locally in the area to the North of Colchester. The presence of twenty relatively unabraded but unstratified medieval sherds suggests the proximity of medieval features.

Summary and Conclusion

This monitoring identified two pits and a small assemblage of finds was recovered. All the finds groups were collected by the builders with only occasional surface finds contributed to the finds contexts during the monitoring. Whilst this means that the finds cannot be attributed to secure contexts and probably accounts for the slightly mixed dates apparent, it is probable that most of the finds originate from the pit fills as this reflects the approximate location from which the builders reported that the finds came. The pottery assemblage was largely 11th-13th century, predating any of the standing buildings on Nethergate Street and certainly indicating occupation on this site well before the current house. Nethergate Street was, however one of the Medieval routes into Clare and it is known that there was a stone building on Nethergate Street from 1309. The presence of the 11th century Castle and 13th century Priory within 200m of this site demonstrate that it lies close to the Medieval centre of activity and this monitoring has provided evidence for occupation on this site during the 11th-13th centuries, a time

Jo Caruth
May 2007

References

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Appendix 1

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring

22 NETHERGATE STREET, CLARE

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to extend 22 Nethergate Street, Clare, has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (SE/06/2141). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence and the proposed foundation methods indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal lies within the Area of Archaeological Importance defined for medieval Clare in the County Sites and Monuments Record, and will involve significant ground disturbance. In addition, Roman occupation was found on the opposite side of the road (Nethergate Street Garage) in 2004.
- 1.3 As strip foundations are proposed there will only be limited damage to any archaeological deposits, which can be recorded by a trained archaeologist during excavation of the trenches by the building contractor.
- 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. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with this office before execution.

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which would be damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for the Roman and/or medieval occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of building footing trenches. These, and the upcast soil, are to be observed during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor.

3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 The developer or his archaeologist will give the County Archaeologist (Keith Wade, Archaeological Service, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR. Telephone: 01284 352440; Fax: 01284 352443) 48 hours notice of the commencement of site works.
- 3.2 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the observing archaeologist) who must be approved by the Planning Authority's archaeological adviser (the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).
- 3.3 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, based upon the outline works in paragraph 2.3 of the Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and timetable.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered, the County Archaeologist should be immediately informed so that any amendments deemed necessary to this specification to ensure adequate provision for recording, can be made without delay. This could include the need for archaeological excavation of parts of the site which would otherwise be damaged or destroyed.

4. Specification

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Archaeologist and the 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity should 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.
- 4.3 In the case of footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of one and half hours per 10 metres of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed should be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts should be numbered and finds recorded by context as far as possible.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

4.7 Archaeological contexts should, where possible, be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from J Heathcote, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy, P L and Wiltshire, P E J, 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.

4.8 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; and the archaeologist should be informed by ‘*Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England*’ (English Heritage & the Church of England 2005) which includes sensible baseline standards which are likely to apply whatever the location, age or denomination of a burial.

5. Report Requirements

5.1 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 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.

5.2 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.

5.3 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).

5.4 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual ‘Archaeology in Suffolk’ section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, should be prepared and included in the project report.

- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets should be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 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: Keith Wade

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service Conservation Team
Environment and Transport Department
Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Date: 5 December 2006

Reference: /22 Nethergate Street

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.