

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Land at Burgate Road, Gislegham (GSG 030)

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007
(Planning app. no. 1212/06/FUL)

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List of Contributors

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Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned and funded by DCG Construction Ltd, and was monitored by Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team (SCCASCT)).

Project Assistant Tim Browne and Project Officer Clare Good, both from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team, carried out the excavation. Metal detecting was undertaken by Alan Smith from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

Clare Good directed the project which was managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

Summary

Gislingham. Land at Burgate Road, Gislingham. (TM 0746 7185, GSG 030)

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of the construction of six new dwellings and associated car parking at Burgate Road, Gislingham, in order to characterise the nature of any surviving archaeological deposits. The site is some 80m north-west of the medieval church of St Mary's (GSG 019) and immediately to the west of the probable remains of a medieval moat (GSG 008). Five trenches were excavated over the plot and were stripped to the level of the natural subsoil. No archaeological evidence was revealed.

(C. Good, for SCCAS and DCH Construction Ltd.; 2007/112)

SMR information

Planning application no. 1212/06
Date of fieldwork: June 2007
Grid Reference: TM 0746 7185
Funding body: DCH Construction Ltd.

1. Introduction

An application has been made to construct six new dwellings with associated car parking and tree planting on land at Burgate Road, Gislingham. Planning consent was conditional on an archaeological evaluation being undertaken. The plot is centred on TM 0746 7185 (Fig. 1), and is currently overgrown meadow land.

The development covers an area of c. 2100 square metres and lies at approximately 56m OD. The plot slopes down to the north and has an underlying drift geology of heavy clay. It is surrounded by houses to the south, a road to the west and open countryside to the north and east.

Six new dwellings are to be constructed, with associated parking, access and tree planting. The plot lies within the area of historic settlement that is Gislingham village, and sits some 80m to the north west of the medieval church and churchyard (GSG 019). A medieval moated enclosure is also recorded on the county Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) just to the east (Fig. 2).

The development proposal will include significant ground disturbance so considering the location of the site within the village and in relation to St Mary's Church, it was deemed necessary to evaluate this plot in the first instance. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work (Appendix I) was produced by Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service (SCCAS) Conservation Division and the work was carried out by Clare Good of the SCCAS Field Team, commissioned and funded by DCH Construction Ltd.

2. Methodology

Five trenches were excavated to the level of the natural subsoil in June 2007 using a wheeled JCB machine fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket. They were located immediately adjacent to where footings were to be dug, in locations agreed by SCCAS Conservation Team (Fig. 2). 60m of trench were excavated representing roughly 5% of the total area, under constant supervision from the observing archaeologist.

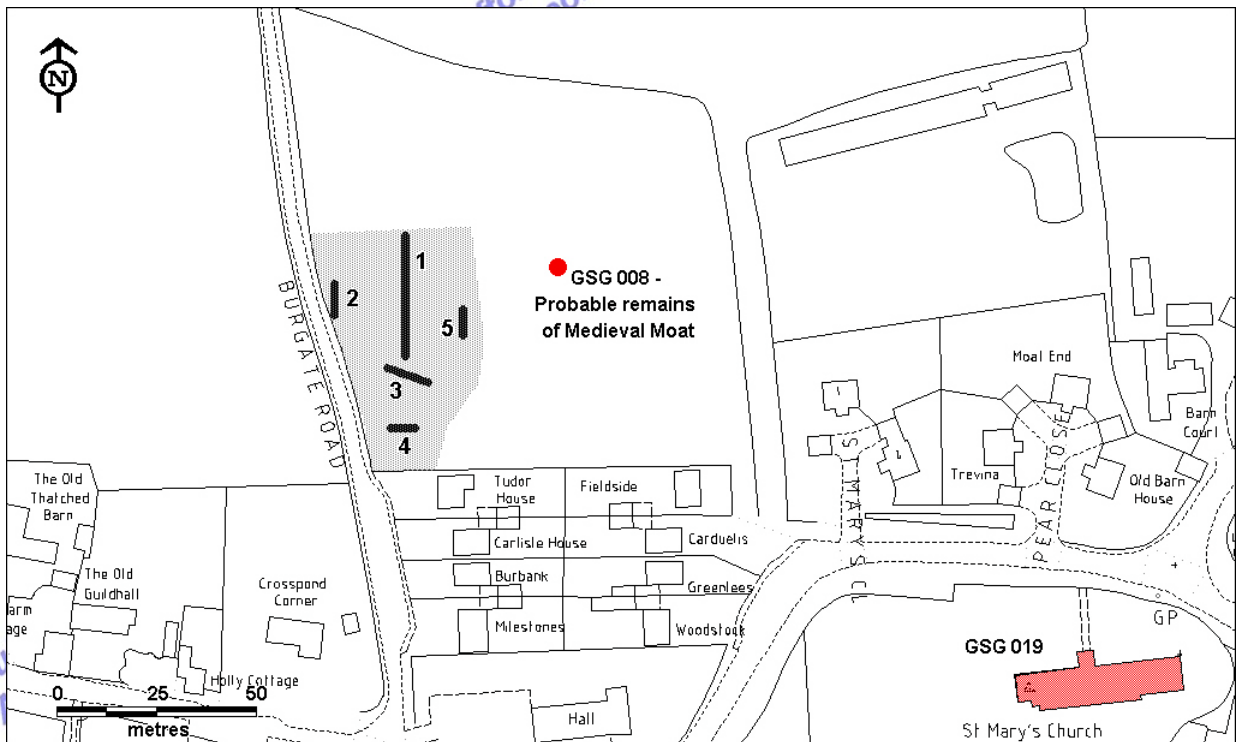
Both the excavated topsoil and the exposed surface of the trenches were examined visually for finds and features. Where features were revealed, they were cleaned manually for definition and each allocated 'observed phenomena' (OP) numbers within a unique continuous numbering system under the SMR code GSG 030, then partially excavated in order to recover dating evidence as well as to observe their form and possibly determine any function. Features were drawn on site at a scale of 1:20, and recorded photographically using a digital and black and white camera. The trenches and the upcast spoil were metal detected by a competent operative. They were planned at a scale of 1:50 and their locations within the development area determined manually using measuring tapes. The site archive will be deposited in the County SMR at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

The site and subsequent results are recorded on OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the code Suffolkc1-27865.



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Figure 1: Site Location



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Figure 2: Location of the trenches in relation to St Mary's Church (GSG 019) to the south-east and the possible remains of a medieval moat to the east (GSG 008)

3. Results

The trenches were located immediately adjacent to where footings were to be dug in order to sample the area as well as possible, but retain stable ground for the future footings.

Topsoil 0001 was similar over the whole site and comprised a mid grey/brown clay silty sand. It was between 0.35m and 0.45m deep.

Visibility in all the trenches was reasonably good.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was aligned roughly N-S and was 30m long. It ran through the centre of the plot, just to the rear of the future dwellings. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.4m, through topsoil 0001, onto natural mid brown yellow clay with chalk lumps and flecks.

No finds or features were seen in this trench.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned roughly N-S and was 8m long. It was immediately adjacent to the road, in front of the future dwellings. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.4m, through topsoil 0001, onto natural mid brown yellow clay with chalk lumps and flecks.

No finds or features were seen in this trench.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned roughly WNW-ESE and was 10m long. It ran between the two blocks of future dwellings. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.4m, through topsoil 0001, onto natural mid brown yellow clay with chalk lumps and flecks.

No finds or features were seen in this trench.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned roughly E-W and was 5.5m long. It ran through the line of a future road, between the dwellings and some car ports. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.35m, through topsoil 0001, onto natural mid brown yellow clay with chalk lumps and flecks.

No finds or features were seen in this trench.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was aligned roughly N-S and was 6.5m long. It ran to the rear of the plot, through the future location of an access road. It was excavated to a depth of c.0.45m, through topsoil 0001, onto natural mid brown yellow clay with chalk lumps and flecks.

No finds or features were seen in this trench.

5. Conclusion

Despite the location of this site within the historic settlement of Gislingham, some 80m from the medieval church and immediately adjacent to the remains of a probable medieval moat, no archaeology was revealed during the evaluation. The area was adequately sampled, both adjacent to and some distance from the road, but nothing was seen.

No further archaeological work is recommended at this site.

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. The need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its archaeological advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting service cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.