

Rede Hall Farm, Rede RDE 012

**Application No. SE/02/2876/P
TL 8055 5764**

**Oasis Reference: suffolkc1-2842
Report No. 2005/21**

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of footing and service trenches for extension and conversion of buildings at Rede Hall Farm, Rede, did not observe any archaeological evidence.

Introduction

A series of visits was made to the site from 18th April to 4th August 2004 to monitor the excavation of footing trenches for an extension to, and conversion of, an existing barn. This was to fulfil a planning condition on application SE/02/2876/P. Other development work on the site, covered by the same planning condition; the conversion of the barn to the north into two holiday cottages and the provision of car parking spaces, did not involve any groundworks of a significant depth and were not monitored.

Interest in the site was based upon its location (Fig. 1) within a moated, medieval enclosure (RDE 001). The enclosure is in two parts, the northern half is occupied by the farmhouse, the southern by ancillary farmyard buildings, a division which may have its origins in the medieval period. The groundworks on the site in the southern part of the enclosure therefore had potential for locating medieval and post-medieval evidence of yards, buildings and occupation deposits. The work was funded by the developer, Mr N.W. Oakley.

Methodology and Results

The monitored groundworks consisted of a general site strip and then a series of footing trenches (Fig. 2). The area at the western end of the barn was first of all stripped of topsoil and modern material to a depth of 0.4m. This partially exposed the natural subsoil, however observation of the ground was difficult due to heavy waterlogging, caused by heavy rainfall and poor drainage.

Trench A, forming the western end of the extension, was then excavated in this area, it was 0.5m wide and was a further 0.60m deep. The trench cut through the natural subsoil of heavy mid grey/brown clay with scattered chalk. The base of the barn wall was exposed, showing brickwork lying directly on the subsoil, no other archaeological features were observed.

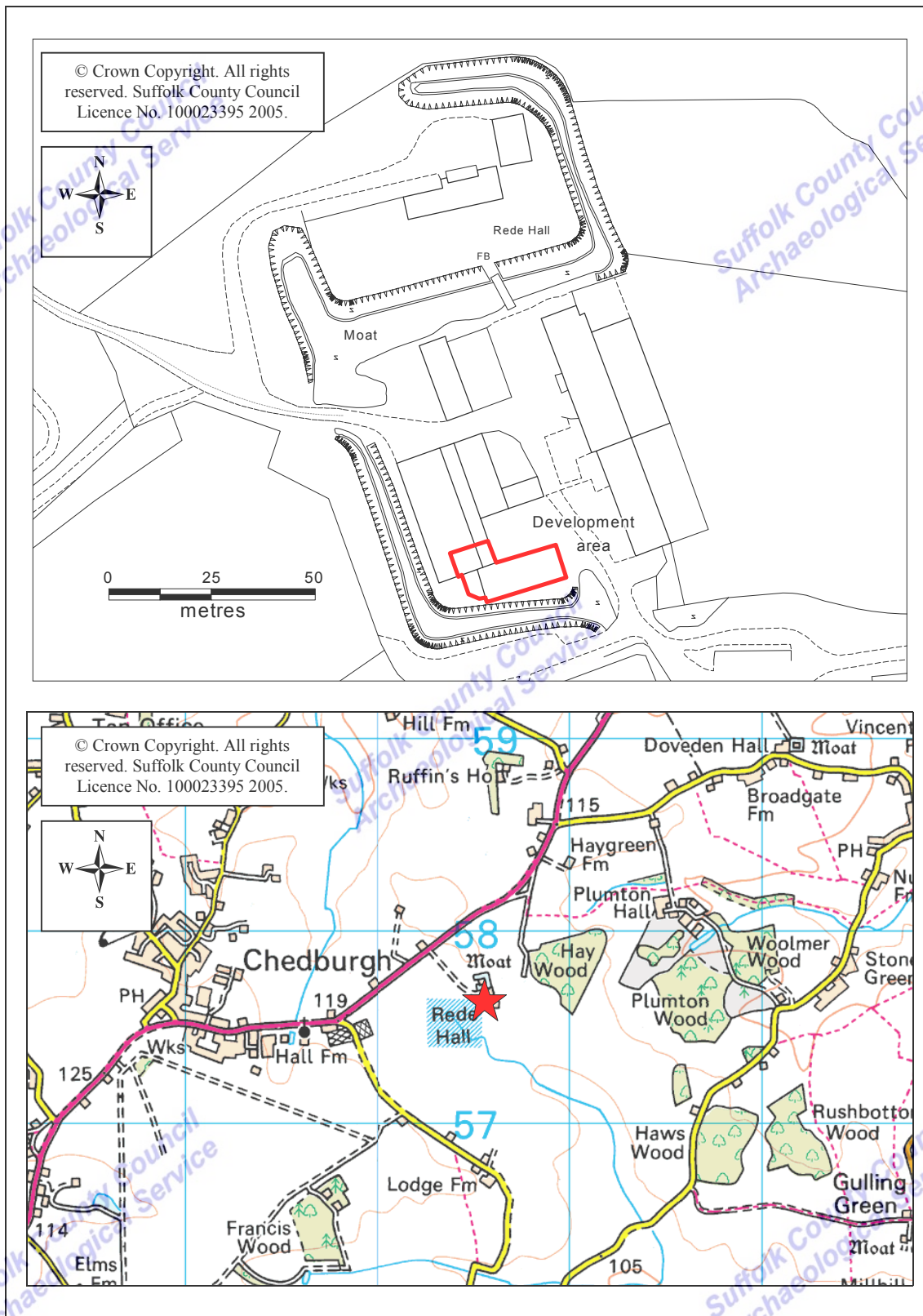
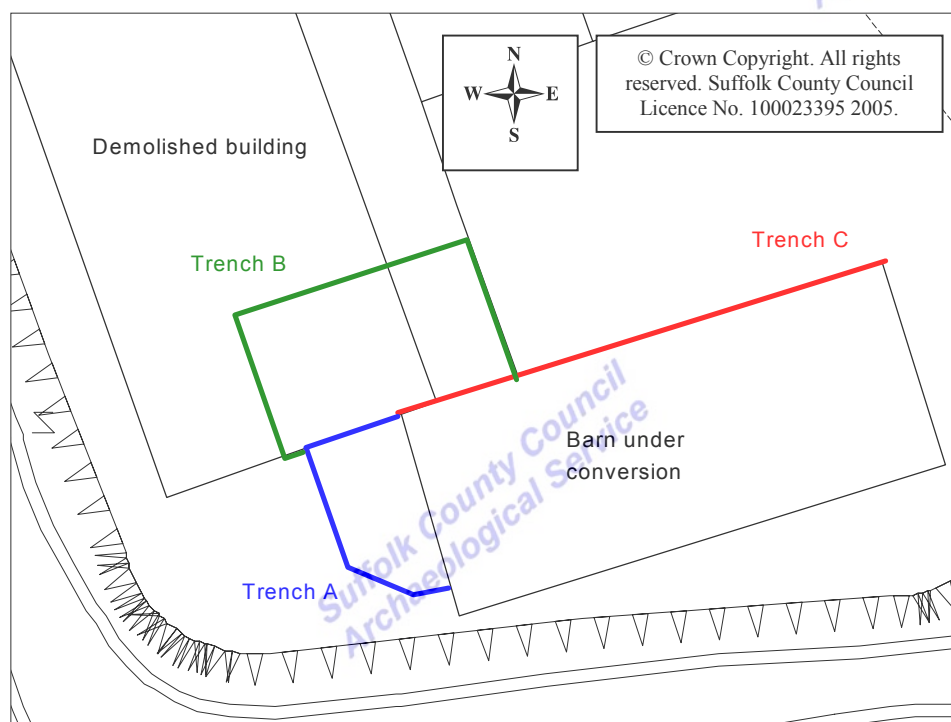


Figure 1. Site location plan

The extension to the north-west part of the barn was over the area of a building demolished during the development. The removal of the buildings floor had reduced the ground level by 0.4-0.5m to the natural subsoil. This was also waterlogged and observation of the subsoil surface was not possible. Trench B, excavated in this area,

was of the same dimensions as trench A and showed the same clay subsoil and a similar absence of archaeological evidence.

Trench C was excavated along the line of the northern edge of the barn. This side of the barn was open, consisting of a series of posts supporting the roof. The posts were removed by the trench, which was 1m deep and 0.5m wide and showed the modern barn floor to be lying on a 0.15m thick foundation of modern rubble which directly rested upon the natural clay subsoil. The posts did not rest upon any substantial foundation pads and extended no deeper than the base of the floor.



Discussion

The three trenches did not show any evidence of medieval or post-medieval activity upon the site. However this absence of any archaeological evidence, given the sites location, may be due more to modern truncation of the ground than of a real absence of medieval or post-medieval activity.

Trench C showed the modern floor of the barn resting immediately upon the natural clay subsoil, implying that any previous floor surfaces had been totally removed. The stripping of the area around trenches A and B also largely involved the removal of modern material associated with the demolished building of relatively recent date.

These modern deposits again directly overlaid the natural clay, indicating the complete removal of any earlier deposits.

John Craven, January 2005