

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

MODULAR UNIT AT SIDEGATE LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL, IPSWICH (SMR ref. IPS 589)

A report on the archaeological monitoring of groundwork associated with the construction of a modular unit at Sidegate Lane Primary School, Ipswich
Planning application number: IP/07/00410

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report Number: 2007/193
Oasis ID. No. - suffolkc1-32966

Summary

The construction of a modular unit at Sidegate Lane Primary School, Ipswich (TM 1809 4560, IPS 589), required a programme of archaeological monitoring to be undertaken. The site is located on high ground to the north-east of Ipswich. Although only stray prehistoric items have been recorded in the vicinity, other similar areas of north Ipswich have well preserved Roman and Saxon activity. The new school buildings required a topsoil strip and subsequent pad footings, which were inspected during and after excavation. No archaeological features were revealed during the monitoring and a small sherd of late prehistoric pottery was the only find recovered.

Introduction

Planning consent for the construction of a modular unit for school and pre-school use at Sidegate Lane Primary School in Ipswich, required a programme of archaeological monitoring to be undertaken. The development required an area to be stripped in advance of excavation for pad footings. The site is located on high ground to the north-east of Ipswich and has a slightly southerly aspect. Only stray prehistoric items have been recorded in the vicinity, however other similar areas of north Ipswich have well preserved Roman and mid to late Saxon activity. WPP Architects commissioned the project.

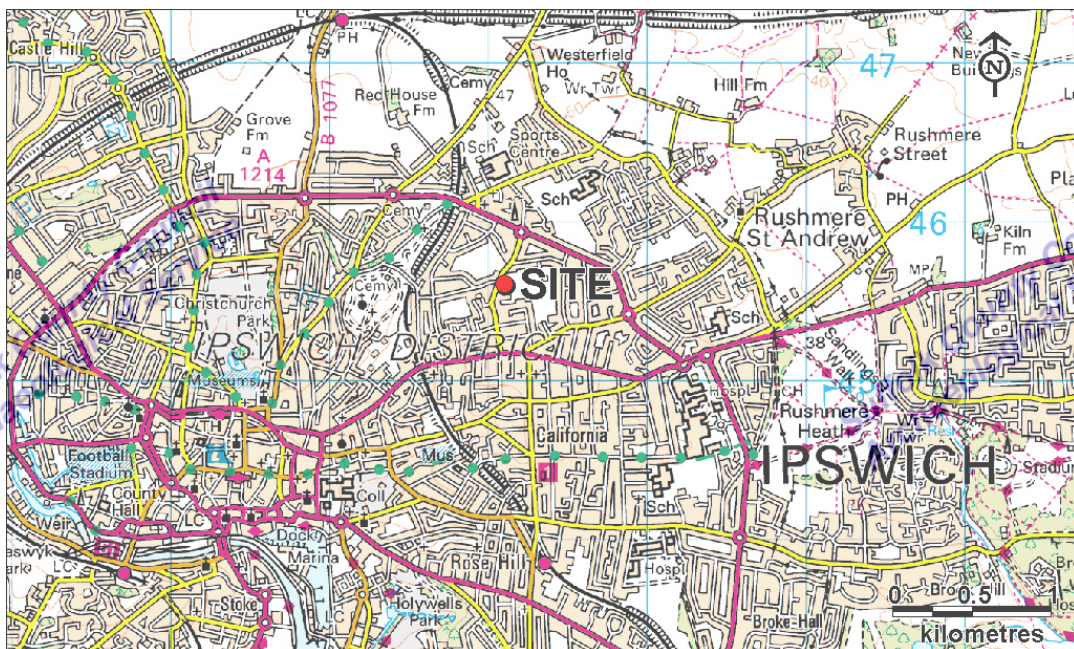
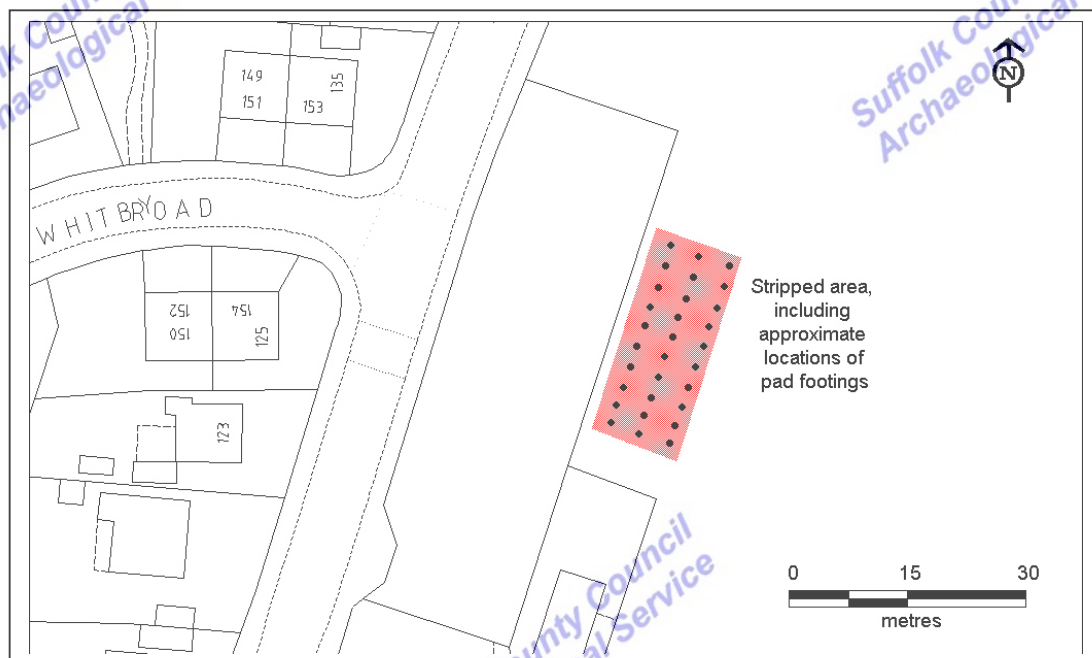


Figure 1: Site location

A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work (Appendix 1) was produced by Jude Plouviez of the Conservation Team, Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service (SCCAS), who requested monitoring visits during and after the excavation of the stripped area and the footings. This was to observe the site and the upcast soil to determine the presence, if any, of archaeological evidence in this area.



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Figure 2: Approximate location of stripped area and holes for pad footings

Results

The area was stripped to roughly 0.4m deep by a machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The exposed surface was a mid orange clay sand, just above the level of the naturally occurring subsoil. Three visits were made during the excavation of this area, on 16-10-2007 and two on 17-10-2007.

A further visit was made on 19-10-2007 after the excavation of the pad holes. These were dug into the natural subsoil, a yellow brown solid sandy clay, 0.3m deeper than the stripped level. Each pad hole was approximately 0.8m by 0.5m.

During all the visits visibility was generally poor due to wet ground conditions, despite initial clean excavation. A small, fragile sherd of late prehistoric pottery (not retained) was recovered from the stripped surface during the first visit but no further finds were made. Similarly, no archaeological features were seen throughout the monitoring.

Again a prehistoric presence is confirmed in this area with the single sherd of pottery, although this was small enough to be intrusive or residual. No further archaeological evidence was revealed during the monitoring.

Clare Good

Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service, 19th October 2007