

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

3-4 ST MARY'S COTTAGES NEWMARKET NKT 025

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS

Planning Application No. F/2007/0521/FUL

NGR: TL 4156 3423

OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-33406

Funded by: Mr J Cunnington

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Summary

The archaeological monitoring of footing excavations revealed the probable clay footing and section of chalk floor from a structure loosely dated by finds to the late 17th to early 18th century.

Introduction

The hand excavation of footings for an extension to the above property was subject to an archaeological monitoring. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Robert Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) to fulfil a planning condition on application F/2007/0521/FUL. The site is located less than twenty metres from the medieval church of St Mary and is adjacent to a cemetery (Figure 1). It is the proximity of these features and the location of the site within medieval Newmarket which has prompted archaeological interest.

Methodology and Results

The site was monitored during building work on two separate occasions. The archaeological condition was for constant monitoring but as the main excavation was carried out by hand, due to the inaccessibility of the site to machinery, potentially destructive excavation was reduced and only two visits were carried out on 28th September and 1st October. Much of the trenching was dug through disturbed ground associated with previous footings, particularly the wall footing to the East (rear) of the property and the remains of an earlier extension. Earlier deposits were exposed in the northern footing trench and these are indicated in figure 2. No finds were recovered from features but a small quantity was retrieved from the spoil alongside the recorded section.

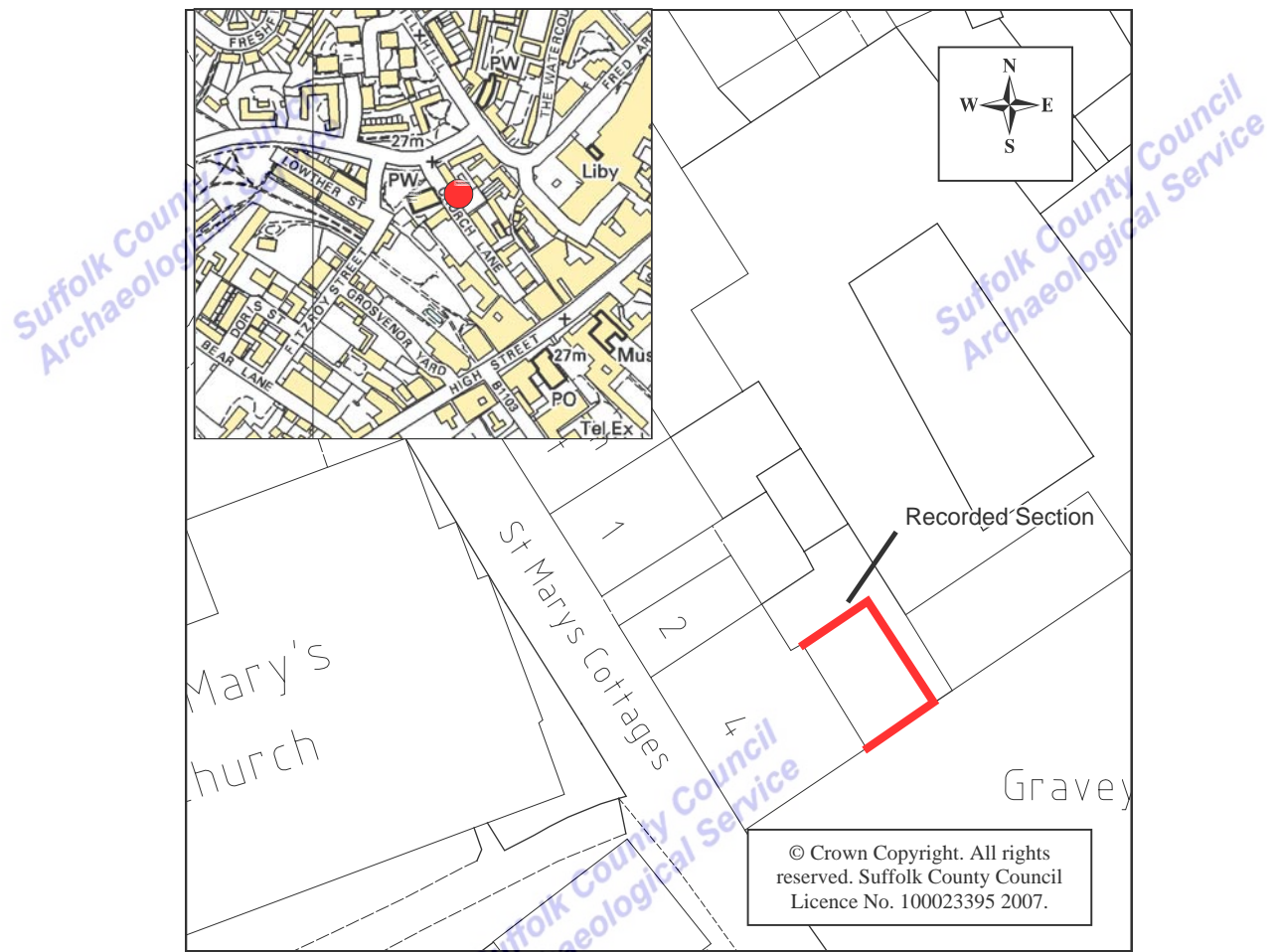


Figure 1. Site location plan

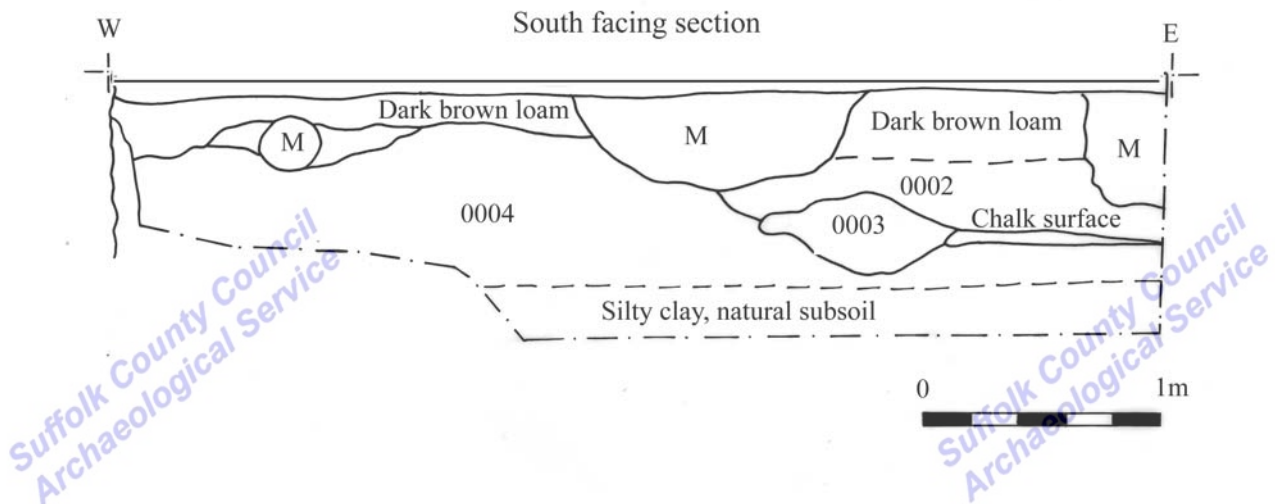


Figure 2. Section of footing trench

The section was cut through a layer of concrete. Features marked with M denote modern material including a pipe trench at the western end. At the eastern end of the trench a brown loam with fragments of tile and charcoal, 0002, was exposed overlying a surface of crushed

chalk c. 0.6m from the surface. The chalk abutted against a clay layer that was 0.8m wide and up to 0.38m deep. The western end of the clay marked the boundary between layer 0002 and brown loam 0004. Layer 0004 was c.0.65m deep and became lighter towards the base, which suggests it was an accumulated layer rather than a single deposit. This layer continued beneath clay 0003 and the chalk surface. The natural subsoil that ran the length of the trench was made up of orange silty clay.

The clay and chalk were not present in the opposing section and the drawn section revealed the edge of archaeological deposits which were absent from the remainder of the trenching including the opposing section.

Finds

Introduction

Finds were collected from a single context, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		P-med bottle glass		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0001	2	321	1	138	Unstratified, 18th C
Total	2	321	1	138	

Pottery

A large fragment of a Glazed red earthenware storage jar was collected from the spoil, with a sherd of a post-medieval red earthenware jar or bowl, made in a fine Central Essex type fabric. The pottery dates to the late seventeenth to eighteenth century.

Post-medieval bottle glass

A single unstratified fragment of the base of a post-medieval winebottle was also recovered, dating to the eighteenth century (Noel Hume 1980, 64-66).

Discussion

Although the recovered finds were not stratified, they are likely to have come from above the chalk surface, which may have formed the internal floor of a post-medieval structure layer 0002.

Discussion

There is very limited evidence from which to interpret this site but the clay and chalk would be consistent with foundations for an insubstantial shed or workshop. The clay is likely to be the seating for a timber (?) sill beam. Chalk floors were probably quite commonplace particularly for insubstantial workshops. The finds were recovered during the excavation of this area of the trench and although it could not be established with certainty that they originated from layer 0002 this would seem most likely. The lack of finds and the sterility of soil 0004 suggest settlement activity in the area was limited. There would appear to have been a build up of soil 0004 against the clay footing, or the footing inserted a little below ground. The former interpretation would seem the most likely but there was insufficient evidence to be certain. From the pottery we can suggest this building went out of use sometime during the 18th century.

References

Noel-Hume, I., A guide to artifacts of colonial America, New York

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