

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Land to rear of Chips 'N' Chopstix, Long Melford LMD 173

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2007
(Planning app. no. B/07/01250/FUL)



R. Brooks
Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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Lucy Robinson, Director of Environment and Transport
Endeavour House, Russel Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX

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List of contributors

All Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service unless otherwise stated.

Rob Brooks	Excavation Supervisor
Richenda Goffin	Finds Manager
Gemma Adams	Finds and Post Excavation Assistant
Cathy Tester	Roman pottery

Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Mr and Mrs Norrington and was monitored by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team). Jo Caruth and Rob Brooks, from the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Field Team, carried out the fieldwork. Andrew Tester, who also provided advice during the production of the report written by Rob Brooks, oversaw the project.

The post-excavation work was managed by Richenda Goffin. Finds processing and the production of site plans and sections were carried out by Gemma Adams, and the specialist finds and environmental reports by Richenda Goffin and Cathy Tester.

Summary

A single, post-medieval posthole was identified in trenches dug for a house conversion. Finds indicated nearby Roman activity, but all soil layers contained post-medieval material.

HER information

Planning application no.	B/07/01250/FUL
Date of fieldwork:	15th, 16th, 19th and 21st November, 2007
Grid Reference:	TL 862454
Funding body:	Mr and Mrs Norrington
Oasis reference.	suffolkc1-35388

1. Introduction

Visits were made to the site on the 15th, 16th, 19th and 21st November, 2007 to monitor the ongoing excavation of footing, service and soak-away trenches for the conversion of the existing building behind Chips 'N' Chopstix on Hall Street, Long Melford, (Fig. 1) for residential use. The work was carried out to an outline Brief and Specification issued by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) to fulfil a planning condition on application B/07/01250/FUL. The developers, Mr and Mrs Norrington funded the work.



Figure 1. Site location.

Interest in the site was based upon its position within a large area of Iron Age and Roman settlement and to the west of the medieval and post-medieval core along Hall Street (Fig. 3). The majority of ground works observed in the area since the 1960s have produced Roman occupation deposits, including related soil layers, rubbish pits (LMD 024), later Roman burials, structural remains and high quantities of pottery (LMD 166) (Fig. 2). A substantial Roman building, Scheduled Ancient Monument SF90, which may be a bathhouse, lies to the south-east and is recorded on the Historic Environment Record as LMD 017.

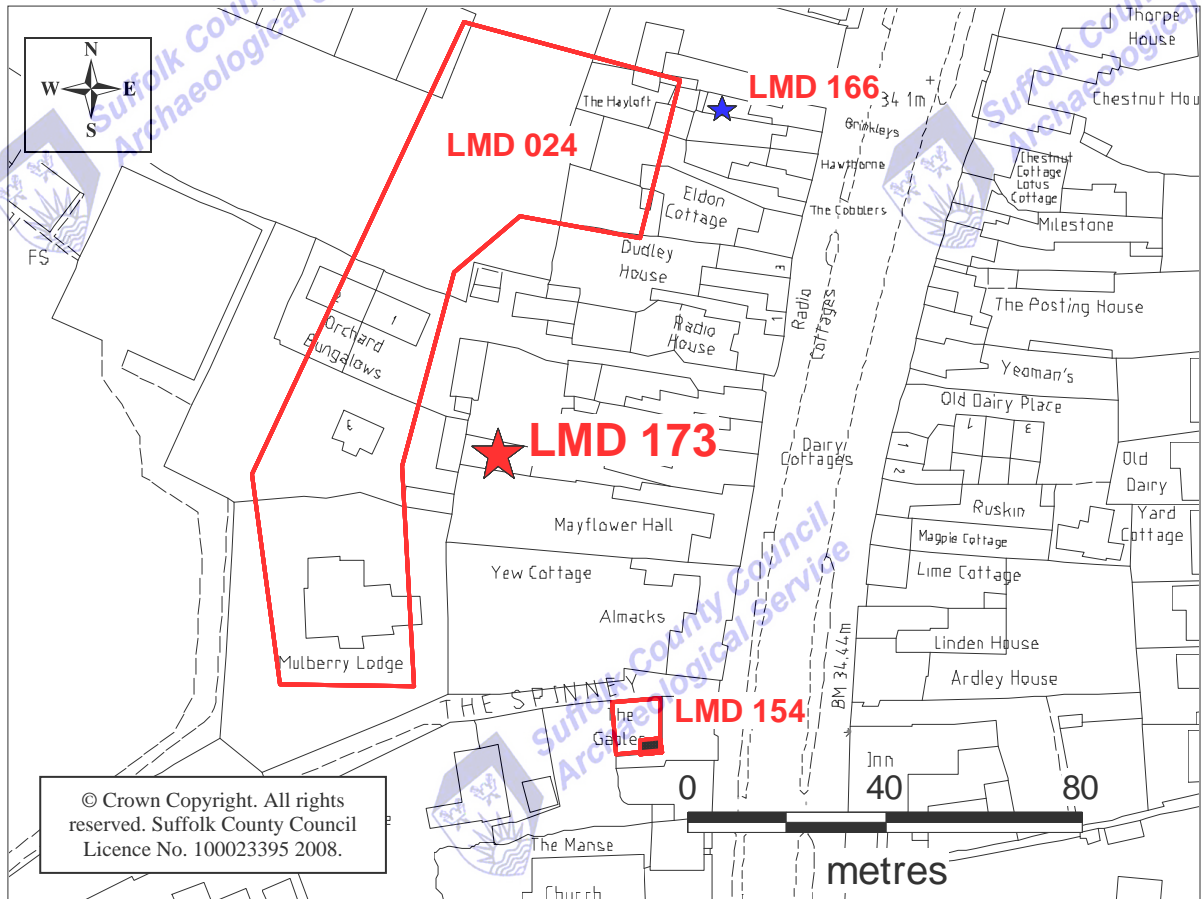


Figure 2. Archaeological listings recorded in the Historic Environment Record

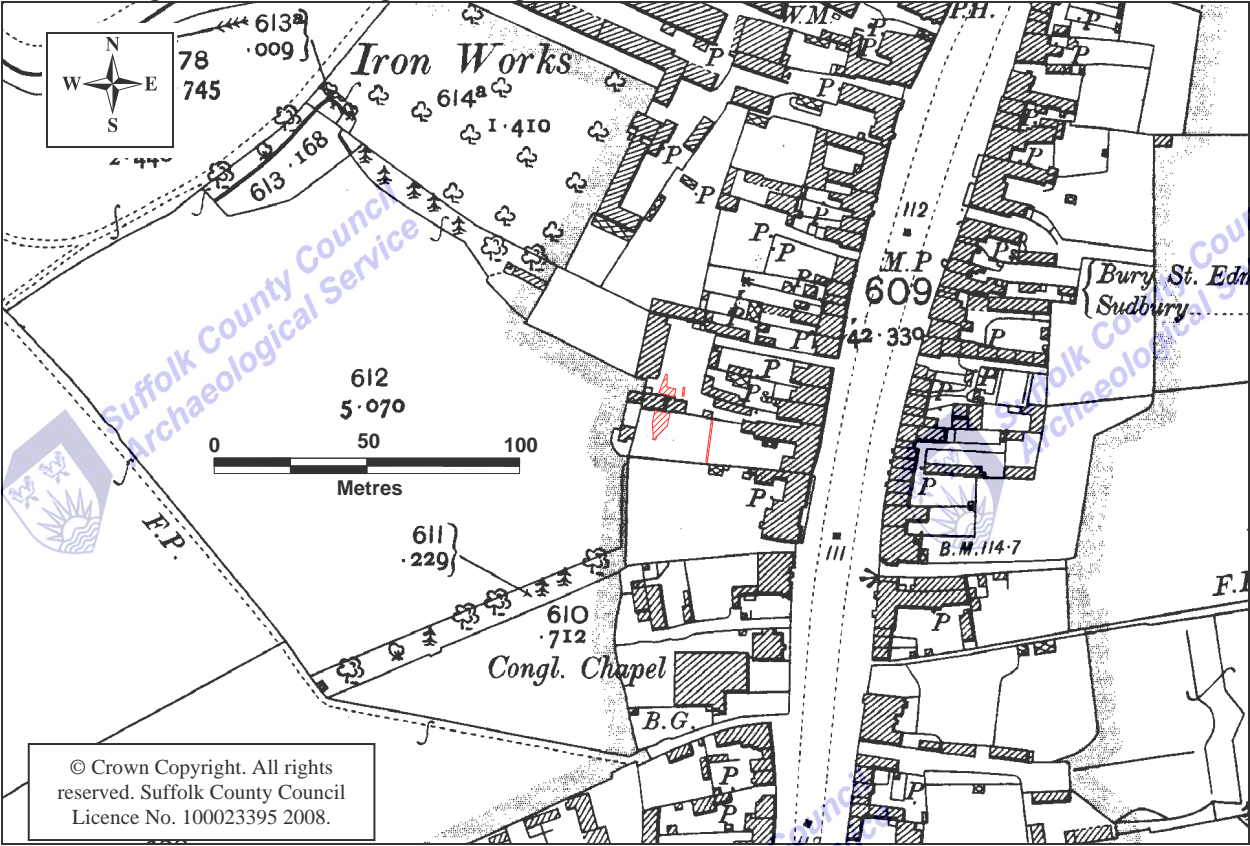


Figure 3. Position on the 1890 Ordnance Survey map

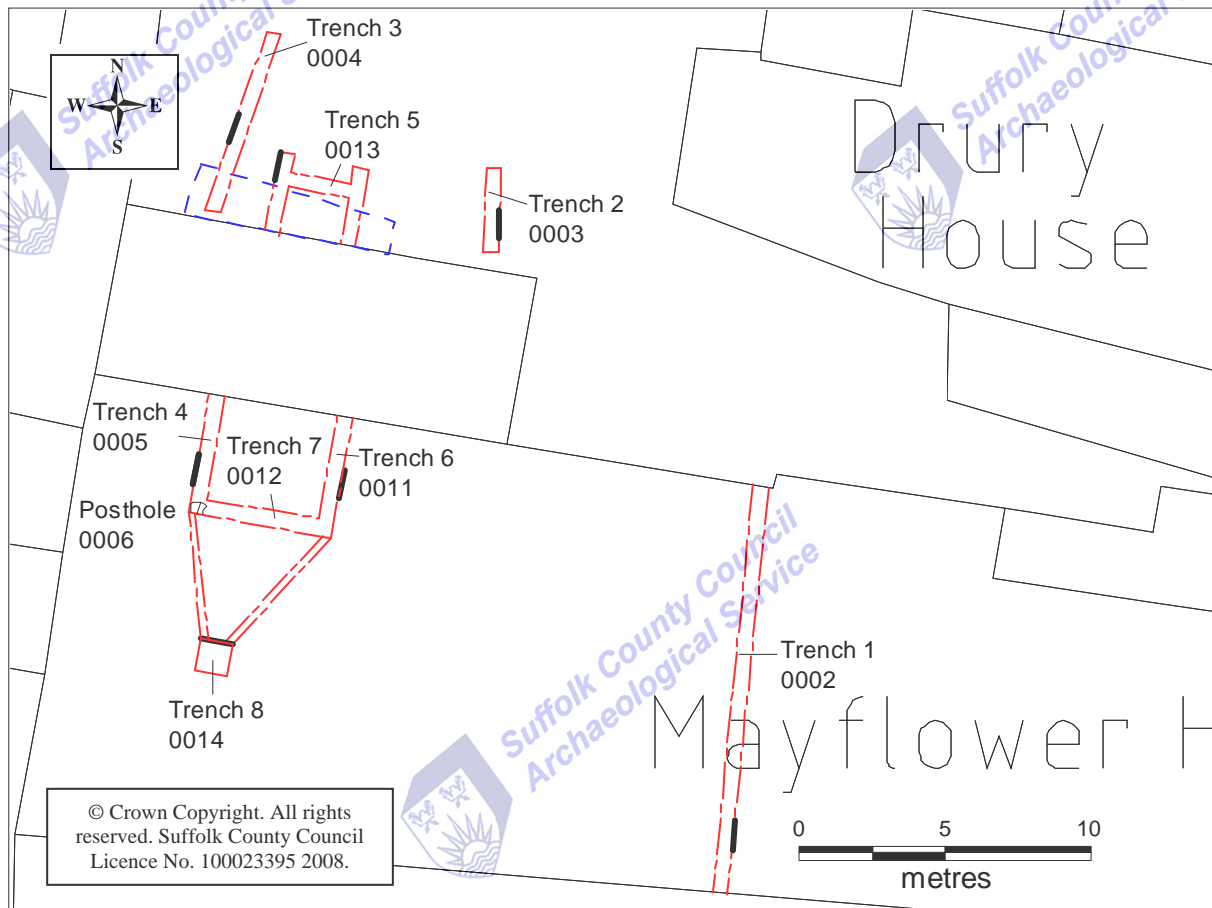


Figure 4. Trench plan

2. Methodology

Eight trenches at a width of c.0.5-0.55m (Fig. 4) were excavated using a toothed bucket. Trench profiles were then cleaned by hand as required for drawings at scales of 1:20. A plan was drawn of posthole 0006 at a scale of 1:50 with a section at 1:20, after it was excavated by hand. Two thinner trenches leading from the south of the proposed building extension to the soak-away were dug at c.0.3m wide to a depth of 0.5m and showed a similar profile to the surrounding trenches. All trenches were monitored.

Records made on site have been input into an MS Access database and recorded using the Historic Environment Record code LMD 173. Finds were washed, marked and quantified, and the resultant data was also entered onto the database. Inked copies of profile and feature sections have been made.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-35388) and a digital copy of the report submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>).

3. Results

(Figures 5 & 6)

Thick topsoil and garden soil/plough soil layers were predominant over much of the site. These contained very little archaeological evidence beyond the artefacts detailed in section 4. Most of the trenches to the north of the existing building contained differing levels of modern disturbance.

3.1 Garden wall Trench 1 (0002)

This trench revealed a built-up topsoil layer to a depth of c.0.7-0.75m. The base of the trench started to reveal a layer later recorded as 0008. The topsoil contained a range of finds, including 16th-18th century pottery, bone, 17th-18th century tobacco pipes, medieval/late medieval CBM, undated iron objects and post-medieval window glass.

3.2 Rear extension trenches (0005, 0011, 0012 and 0014)

Trenches 4 0005 and 7 0012 revealed the only definite cut feature of the site, posthole 0006. This contained a probably redeposited Roman potsherd, post-medieval roof tile, one iron nail and also oyster shell fragments. It was filled with grey-brown silty sand 0007, similar to the soil layer above/surrounding it; thus its relationship to this layer was unclear.

These two trenches also revealed topsoil to a depth of c.0.4m. However, part of Trench 7 and all of Trench 6 0011 contained a layer of sand and CBM rubble recorded as 0009, which had replaced the topsoil and was taken to relate to the construction of the existing building. Below these layers a brown silty sand, mixed topsoil layer 0008 continued until the start of yellow-orange chalky/silty/sand (10%/5%/85%). In Trench 4 the lower c.0.2m of 0008 was mixed with the natural. Context 0008 in Trench 6 was separated from the topsoil for finds and had a selection of material from as late as the 19th century, including Sunderland lustreware (as well as a Roman sherd) and post-medieval roof tile. Mixed finds from the topsoil and 0008 in Trench 4 (collected under number 0005) were also post-medieval; these included glazed red earthenware fragments and glass. Animal bone with butchery marks was also found in this context.

Two other small trenches were excavated, leading from the proposed extension to the soak-away drain. These trenches only revealed the deep topsoil and the top of layer 0008. They were not photographed or drawn. There were no finds from these trenches.

A final square excavation, Trench 8 0014, was dug for the soak-away drain. The profiles of this trench revealed similar soil layers to those seen in Trench 4 0005, but were less disturbed by the building works associated with the construction of the existing structure. Below c.0.45m of topsoil, pale brown silt appeared, similar to 0008, above a similar but mixed layer at c.0.8m deep, with a probable natural layer below this of brown-yellow silt at 1m down. At 1.25m was a layer of orange/yellow sand and gravel. There were no finds from this trench.

3.3 Front extension and service pipe trenches

Trenches 2 0003 and 3 0004 were dug at irregular depths in this area, whilst Trench 5 0013 was dug as a footing trench adjoining the existing structure. The whole area had previously been covered with a layer of concrete hard-standing to varying depths and with other layers of modern surfacing material below (Fig. 5).

Below the layers of modern material in Trench 2 a mixed, turning to pure, topsoil appeared at depths of c.0.4-0.7m deep, before merging into a layer of clean grey-brown silty-sand with occasional chalk flecks. This layer, although similar to 0008, appears to have been a natural layer, because it was free from charcoal and any finds, and was well sorted. The topsoil layer produced the only finds from this trench, which included animal bone and two pottery sherds, one of which was a base fragment of a wheel-made grog-tempered jar from the first half of the first century AD and a fragment of nineteenth century blue and white Ironstone china.

Trench 3 had a similar stratigraphy, although the modern layers ran to a greater depth (c.0.8m deep). Below this a thin lens of black, sandy and compacted material ran, which was originally thought to be a surviving archaeological layer, but turned out to contain a sufficient quantity of modern glass for its age to be uncertain. Below this was a topsoil-like layer similar to 0008,

though it was again mixed with modern material. From 0.9m deep to 1.5m deep was a mix of orange clayey sand containing a high quantity of gravel. This layer appears to have been of natural build-up due to its compaction and colouration. The modern service pipe cut the south end of this trench. No finds came from this trench.

Trench 5 0013 was made up of two SSW-NNE aligned trenches and one WNW-ESE aligned trench. The majority of the length had been cut away by the sewer service pipe and associated trench that ran close along the north side of the existing building (as marked on Fig. 4 by the blue dashed line). In the remaining undisturbed areas, more modern layers appeared, this time to a depth c.0.3m, above a possible rubble demolition layer 0010 that has been dated to the 18th-19th century from the CBM fragments found within it, as well as containing an older, but undated piece. Below this was a thin, possibly associated mortar layer with another dark soil layer, which appeared to be similar to that found in Trench 3. Under this, 0.4m of a pale-mid brown silt was uncovered, also resembling that found at the base of Trench 3.

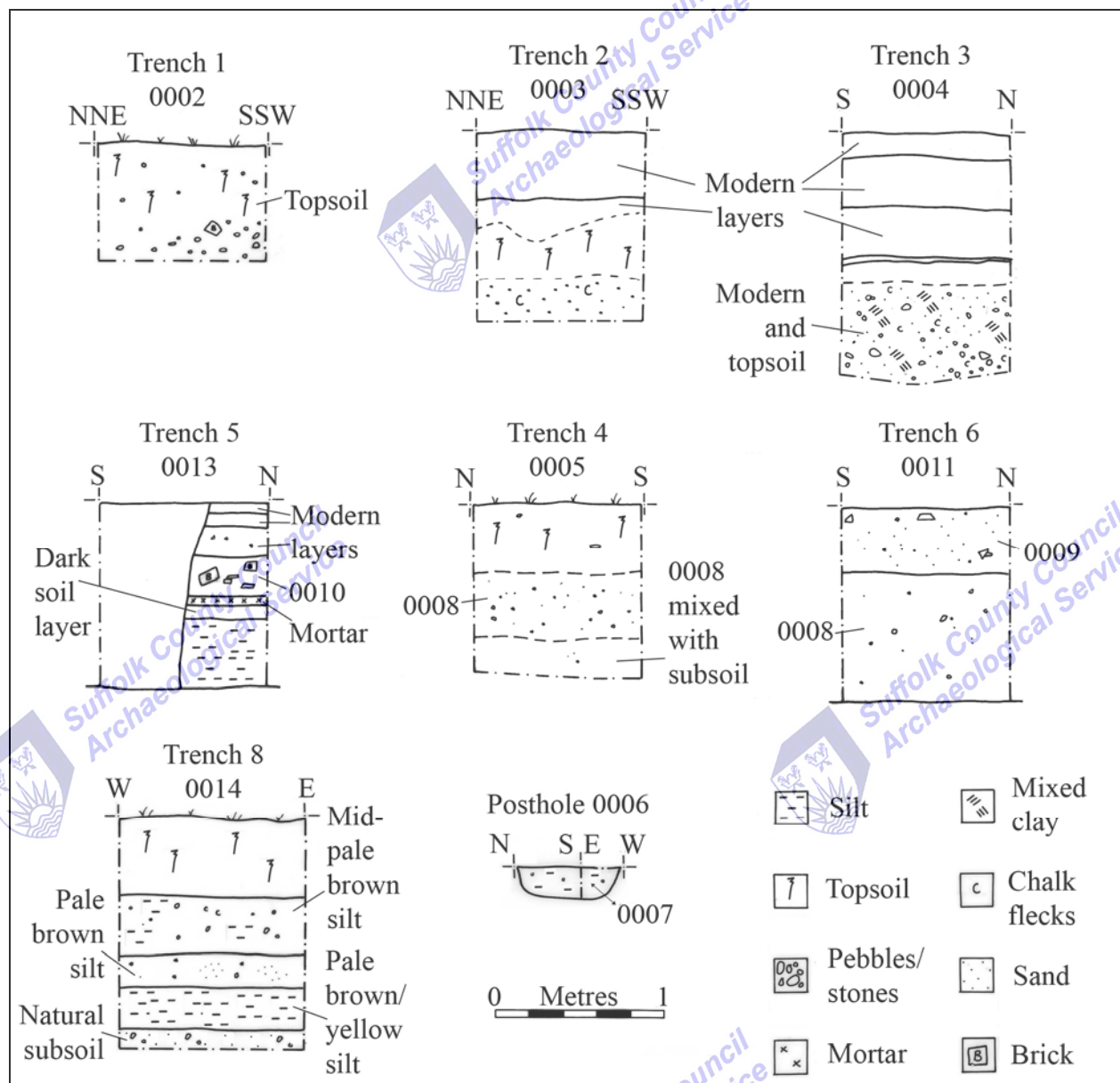


Figure 5. Trench and feature sections

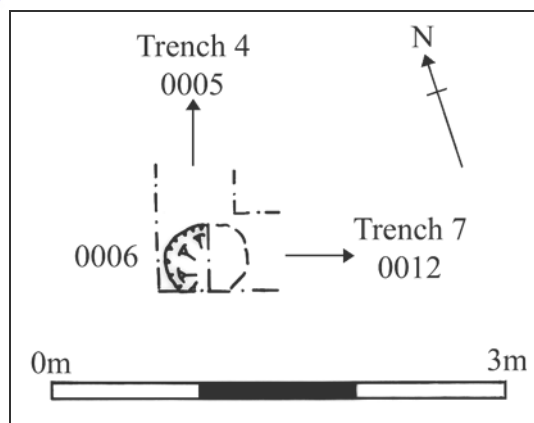


Figure 6. Feature plan

3. Finds by Richenda Goffin

Introduction

Finds were collected from six contexts, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		CBM		Animal bone		Clay pipe		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0002	7	83	1	90	2	16	2	19	2 frags P-med window glass @ 1g, 2 Fe @ 9g	18th C +
0003	2	49			4	100				19th C
0005	6	77	1	64	14	263			1 frag P-med window glass @ 1g	18th-19th C
0007	1	4	1	6					1 shell @ 3g, 1 Fe @ 11g	Post-med
0008	3	8	1	36						19th C
0010			4	3473						18th-19th C
Total	19	221	8	3669	20	379	2	19		

Table 1. Finds quantities

Pottery (Roman pottery identifications by Cathy Tester)

A total of 19 fragments of pottery was recovered from the evaluation (0.221kg). Most of the assemblage is post-medieval, but a number of Roman sherds were also identified as residual elements in the assemblage.

Two sherds of creamware, and a single piece of Staffordshire white salt-glazed stoneware were among the ceramics dating to the 18th century which were found in topsoil deposit 0002. Two fragments of Frechen stoneware were also present, dating to the sixteenth to eighteenth century. A sherd of Ironstone china with blue and white transfer printed decoration was identified from 0003 in Trench 2 (19th C). A large fragment of a post-medieval red earthenware flowerpot was recovered from 0005 in Trench 4, with a sherd of Glazed red earthenware, and two sherds of Sunderland lustreware dating to the nineteenth century were found in the loam 0008, a deposit which was observed in several trenches.

Small quantities of Roman pottery were redeposited into several of the features containing post-medieval ceramics. A large fragment of the base of a wheel-made grog-tempered jar present in 0003 dates to the first half of the first century AD. The handle of a buff-coloured carinated flagon, which may have come from the West Stow kilnsite was present in 0005, together with the base of a greyware dish. Both of these date to the 2nd century AD or later. Two other sherds

of Roman pottery were also present in this feature. Undiagnostic fragments of Roman pottery were identified in posthole fill 0007 and loam deposit 0008.

Ceramic building material

Eight fragments of ceramic building material were collected from the monitoring, mostly from rubble layer 0010 in Trench 5. Most of the material was made up of fragments of post-medieval roof tile (contexts 0005, 0007 and 0008), but a tile with an earlier fabric dating to the medieval/late medieval period was present in 0002. A large fragment of an East Anglian white-firing brick present in rubble layer 0010 in Trench 5 may have been a floor brick. It was accompanied by two other post-medieval fragments, one of which is a large piece of a coping brick. A fourth fragment made in a softer, fabric with more voids is earlier in date, but is unlikely to be Roman.

Clay tobacco pipe

Two pieces of clay tobacco pipe were recovered from deposit 0002. In addition to a stem fragment, the remains of an undecorated bowl dating to the late 17th-18th century was identified.

Metalwork

Iron nails were recovered from topsoil deposits 0002 and the fill of posthole 0006.

Miscellaneous

Small fragments of plain post-medieval window glass were present in topsoil deposit 0002 and deposit 0005 in Trench 5.

Animal bone

Small quantities of animal bone recovered from the evaluation include the mandible of a sheep, and a bovine molar. Cut marks and evidence of butchery was noted on some of the fragments from 0005.

5. Discussion

Modern disturbance in the trenches on the northern side of the existing structure made interpretation of this area problematic. However, in general the finds recovered from the monitoring are post-medieval in date, with the majority of the pottery dating to the eighteenth and nineteenth century. There is also the possibility of some medieval activity from the finds in context 0002. A significant amount of redeposited Roman pottery was recovered with the later material, suggesting occupation from this date in the vicinity too. All the finds appear likely to be the result of domestic activity.

The depth and mixed nature of topsoil indicates that this layer probably built up as the result of garden related activities, and the site's close proximity to the road further confirms this, as opposed to suggesting ploughing. Below this the layer recorded as 0008 appears to resemble a developed soil, perhaps generated by the area at some point being wooded. These two layers both had finds assemblages indicative of post-medieval activity.

Feature 0006 was post-medieval and is indicative of a structure, the nature of which is unknown, though it may relate to the existing structures on site.

6. Conclusion

There was little direct indication of the past use of the site beyond the mixed finds from the Roman, post-medieval and possibly medieval periods. It is probable that the area was used as a garden/orchard in the post-medieval phase and possibly before, judging by the stratigraphy. A single posthole is post-medieval, but could be a result of any number of structures and uses.

With projects of this nature it is difficult to make strong conclusions on the nature of past activity because of the limited visibility in construction trenches. This problem was compounded here by the modern disturbance to the north of the existing building.

Rob Brooks
Excavation Supervisor
Field Team, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
September 2008

Appendix 1 - LMD 173 database

Context	Feature	Trench	Identifier	Type	Description	Photographs
0001				Unstratified	Finds that would normally have been kept under this number were generally associated with their trench context numbers instead. This was done in order to establish changes in finds densities relative to boundaries or buildings.	
0002		0002		Trench 1	NNE-SSW aligned trench dug for footings of garden wall. Filled with topsoil. Moderate rounded and angular pebbles throughout fill and occasional chalk flecks. The finds in particular, but also the larger stones (80x60mm max) were concentrated towards the base of the fill. Towards the base of the trench the fill seemed to become slightly lighter in colour (I.e. mid-dark brown) with heavier compaction, and a slightly higher fine sand/clay content, particularly towards the north of the trench. Presumably this marked the start of layer (0008). Finds, which were generally post-medieval, were found throughout the fill, including tile, occasional other CBM (brick) lumps, pipes, pottery, glass, bone and nails. All finds were kept, except for tile, pipe, nails and CBM material, of which samples were kept of about 25% of the material. A digital photograph was taken of the section and a section was drawn. With measured WNW-ESE.	Y
0003		0003		Trench 2	NNE-SSW aligned trench dug by machine at north-east corner of proposed development to find service pipe. It contained various layers of modern material (hard-standing and construction rubble) to depths of 0.4-0.7m. At this point it hit topsoil of a similar nature to that in trench 1 0002. Eventually this came down to a light grey/brown silty/sand (20%/80%), with very occasional chalk flecks and no finds. All finds under this context were from the topsoil layer and included bone (1 piece), 1 post-medieval pottery sherd and one Roman sherd from the topsoil-silt/sand interface. Interpretation - topsoil is a build up of material from a garden and general post-medieval activity. The sand layer is probably a slightly mixed, though largely pure, layer of natural. Width measured WNW-ESE, length SSW-NNE.	
0004		0004		Trench 3	NNE-SSW aligned trench dug by machine at north-west corner of proposed development to find service pipe. As with trench 2 0003, it contained thick top layers of modern, made up of sand, CBM rubble, tarmac, concrete, etc. Excavated to 0.4m at the south end for 2m in which the service pipe cut through, 1.5m deep for 2.7m and then at a depth of 1m for the northern 1.6m. It came through a dark orange, slightly brown clayey/sand natural (25%/75%) with lots of gravel inclusions. No archaeological layers were visible in this trench and what was thought to be one surviving lens between the modern and the natural, actually had very modern glass contained within it. Width measured WNW-ESE, length SSW-NNE. No finds.	

Context	Feature	Trench	Identifier	Type	Description	Photographs
0005		0005	Trench 4		SSW-NNE aligned trench dug by machine for extension on south side of existing structure. Western-most of the three trenches dug for the extension. At its junction with trench 7 0012 it contained posthole [0006]. A topsoil layer existed to a depth of c.0.43m before hitting a mixed topsoil or possible ploughsoil layer which ran to a depth of 0.83m, where a yellow-orangey, compacted clayey/sand (20%/80%) natural. The middle layer was a friable, mid-dark grey-brown sandy topsoil type, but slightly lighter in colour to the topsoil found elsewhere on the site. This layer also contained some small stones and chalk flecks and is probably the same as layer (0008) recorded in trench 6 0011. Finds from this trench were mixed from the topsoil and middle layer as it was difficult to see the interface during machining of the trench. The top two layers would appear to be medieval or post-medieval judging by the finds in both as well as what appears to be a relatively recently buried animal jaw bone (as well as fragments of skull- not kept) found in the middle layer. Also contained tile (of which a sample was kept) and modern glass, sheet iron and other iron items (such as nails). One older piece of glass was also kept. Width measured WNW-ESE, length SSW-NNE.	Y
0006	0006	0005 0012	Posthole	Cut	Roughly circular posthole cut located where trench 4 0005 and trench 7 0012 meet. In section it had steep sides, curving abruptly to a fairly flat base. It was not visible in the trench section. The west side of the feature was excavated as it was the clearest in plan, though the section did run into the trench section. The visible width was measured N-S, and length E-W.	Y
0007	0006	0005 0012	Posthole	Fill	Fill of posthole [0006]. Grey-brown silty sand. Occasional sub-angular stones (10-30mm diameter). Finds - pottery, oyster shell and one nail. Fill was quite similar to the the orange/grey/brown mixed layer above.	
0008		0002	Layer	Deposit	Brown silt loam originally recorded in trench 6 0011, but also found in trench 1 0002, trench 4 0005, trench 7 0012 and trench 8 0014, though in these trenches it was recorded as a purer top layer with a mixed lower layer. Dense and quite clean with occasional stone and some chalk flecks. In trench 6 0011 it contained occasional peg tile fragments (1 kept), pottery and 'other' finds. It also contained finds in trench 4 0005, which were kept under number 0005 as they were mixed with those from the topsoil in this trench.	
0009		0011 0012	Layer	Deposit	Upper 0.4m in trench 6 0011 and most of trench 7 0012. Fine crushed rubble with coarse sand. Quite a lot of post medieval peg tile - presumably all related to adjacent building construction. No finds were collected as they were all 19th and 20th century.	
0010		0013	Layer		Rubble layer in trench 5 0013. Cut by modern drain. Made up of crushed CBM, occasional mortar. 1 CBM (brick) fragment retained for dating. Interpretation - possibly 17th century.	
0011		0011	Trench 6		SSW-NNE aligned trench dug by machine for extension on south side of the existing structure. Eastern-most of the three trenches dug for this extension. Contained layers (0008) and (0009) before hitting natural.	

Context	Feature	Trench Identifier	Type	Description	Photographs
0012	0012	Trench 7		WNW-ESE aligned trench dug by machine for extension on south side of the existing structure. Links trenches 4 0005 and 6 0011. At its eastern end it contained posthole [0006], as well as containing a layer of topsoil, c.0.42m deep before hitting two very similar layers, which were essentially the same as (0008). For most of the length of this trench though layers (0008) and (0009) ran through as in trench 6 0011, with (0009) fading out towards trench 4 0005.	
0013	0013	Trench 5		Three-part trench dug by machine for the building extension on the north side of the existing structure. Most of the trench was disturbed by the modern service drain (see fig. 3 in report). However, in the trench areas dug for the front door columns rubble layer (0010) was visible.	
0014	0014	Trench 8		Square trench dug for soak-away drain on south side of existing building. This contained topsoil to a depth of c.0.48m, mid-pale brown silt to c.0.8m deep, a similar but less sorted layer down to c.1m, pale brown/yellow silt to c.1.25m before hitting natural sand and gravel. Essentially this was a similar profile to that seen in trench 4 0005, just interpreted slightly differently. See section drawing for further detail.	