

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Mellis Primary School, Yaxley Road, Mellis MLS 020

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS ASSOCIATED WITH EXTENSIONS TO MELLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Planning Application No. SCC-Mellis 2007

NGR: TM 1064 7444

OASIS Ref. Suffolk1-40671

Funded by: Education Dept, Suffolk County Council

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2008/107

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of the site strip and footing trenches for an extension to Mellis Primary School located a single ditch of medieval date, possibly marking separate plots on the edge of Mellis Green.

Introduction

A series of visits was made to the site from 10th to 14th September 2007 to monitor groundworks for a new extension to Mellis Primary School. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) to fulfil a condition on the planning application. The work was funded by the developer, Education Dept, Suffolk County Council.

Interest in the site was based upon its general location, on the edge of the village's medieval green, MLS 011 (Fig. 1). The development therefore had the potential to disturb medieval occupation deposits which would require archaeological recording.

Methodology

The initial site visit was made after the footprint of the building had been roughly stripped of 0.4m of modern deposits, to a level broadly corresponding with the natural subsoil horizon, a mid grey/brown boulder clay with chalk, although in areas modern deposits still remained *in situ*. Subsequent visits were made to observe the footing trenches, which measured c.0.6m wide and c.1m deep, whilst fully open, prior to the pouring of concrete.

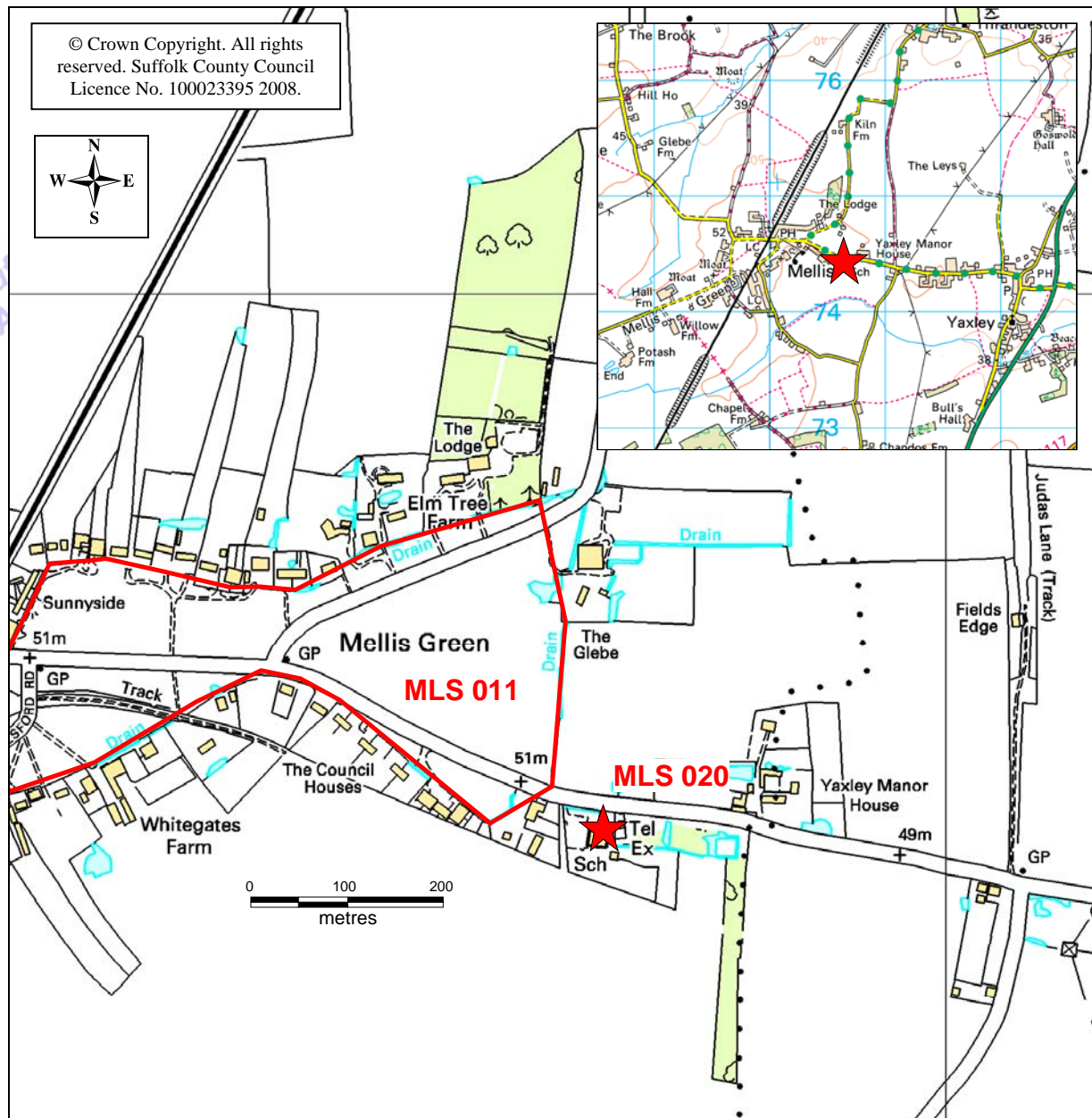


Figure 1. Site location plan

Results

The site strip, which removed an existing playground surface and underlying hardcore, identified the natural clay subsoil lying immediately beneath the modern deposits. One archaeological feature was seen in plan, a possible linear ditch, 0001, which was aligned broadly north to south and measured 0.8m wide. A single sherd of 11th-12th century pottery was recovered from the surface of its dark brown clay fill, 0002.

No further features were identified within the subsequent footing trenches and feature 0002 was not visible in section.

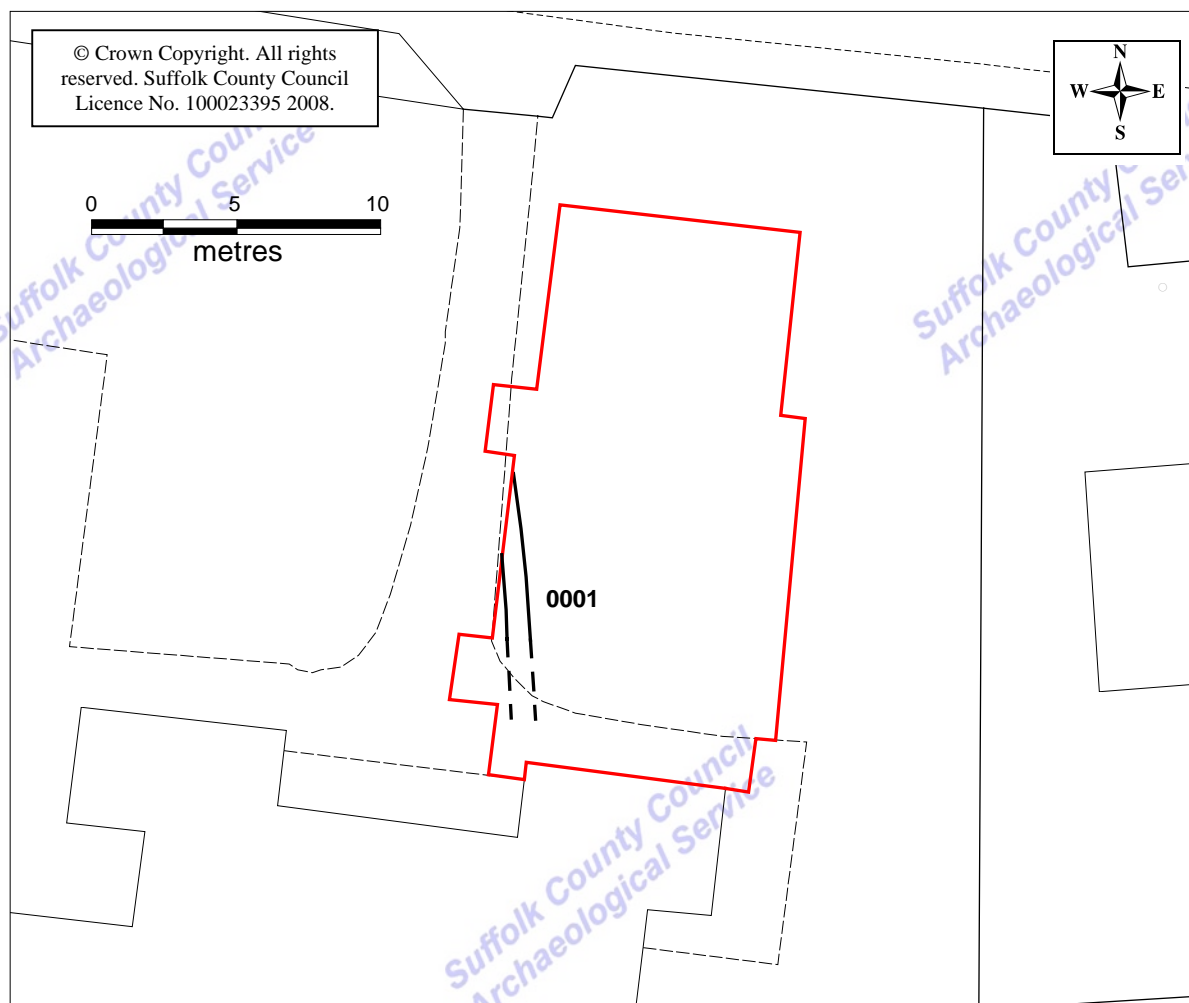


Figure 2. Site plan

The Finds

Richenda Goffin

Introduction

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

OP	Pottery		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	
0002	1	16	11th-12th C
Total	1	16	

Table 1. Finds quantities

Pottery

A single rim of an Early medieval ware jar was recovered from the surface of a probable ditchfill 0002. It is finely potted and made in a sandy fabric with oxidised margins, and is slightly abraded. It has a simple everted rim dating to the 11th-12th century.

Discussion

The depth and position of the subsoil surface, immediately under modern deposits, indicates that it has probably been truncated to an unknown extent during the 20th century. The site strip was only done roughly and left areas of modern material overlying the subsoil meaning that observation at this stage was difficult. The possible linear ditch, 0001, that was identified can be tentatively dated to the early medieval period, although the single sherd of pottery may have come from elsewhere. This indicates some medieval activity in the vicinity, likely to be occupation on the edge of the green, with the ditch possibly separating individual plots.

J. A. Craven

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