

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Palmers Department Store, 37 Buttermarket, Bury St Edmunds BSE 303

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2008
(Planning app. no. SE/07/1732)



John Duffy
Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

© September 2008

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

Contents

List of Figures
List of Tables
List of Contributors
Acknowledgements
Summary
HER information

Introduction

Methodology

Results

The Finds

General Discussion

References

Appendix 1: Brief and specification

List of Figures

1. Site location
2. Historic maps. Warren's Map 1747 (left) and 1st Edition OS Map 1883-4 (right), site location marked in red
3. Site plan
4. Time capsule
5. Time capsule located on architects plan

List of Tables

1. Finds quantities

Front cover: A late medieval type jug used as a time capsule and found plastered into a wall.

List of Contributors

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

John Duffy	Assistant Project Officer
Richenda Goffin	Finds Manager

Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Palmers Department Store and the archaeological work specified and inspected by R. Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

The archaeological work was carried out by John Duffy from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was managed by Andrew Tester (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team).

Finds processing was carried out by Gemma Adams and the specialist finds report produced by Richenda Goffin. Post excavation assistance was provided by John Simms and Gemma Adams.

Summary

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the excavation for a new lift shaft within Palmers Department Store, Bury St Edmunds. The excavation identified the remains of five brick walls with a date range of the 15th century through to the 18th century. These walls appeared to be cellar walls, some of which were still in use, with a later 19th/20th century backfilling. Two possible wells were also identified below the walls. A time capsule buried behind a doorframe within the basement contained a local trading token dated 1795 and a folded parchment naming the building developer and a list of tradesman.

HER information

Planning application no.	SE/07/1732
Date of fieldwork:	March and September 2008
Grid Reference:	TL 8535 6421
Funding body:	Palmers Department Store
Oasis reference.	suffolkc1-40763

Introduction

A programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of a new lift shaft within Palmers Department Store, 37 Buttermarket, Bury St Edmunds. The project was commissioned by Palmers Department Store and the work was monitored by R. Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team), who also prepared the Brief and Specification (Appendix 1).

The site is located in the centre of the medieval town of Bury St Edmunds in an area of high archaeological importance (Fig. 1). It is in the rear of buildings fronting onto the Buttermarket and Abbeygate Street (formerly known as Cook Row). The building, a Grade II listed building (ID 466686), is of timber-framed construction and is described as originally two shops and houses fronting Abbeygate Street (numbers 9 and 10) and is early 19th century with an earlier fragmentary core. Its façade is mainly 20th century with most of its external and internal features hidden. The building is currently occupied by Palmers Department Store which utilises the ground floor as a sales area and the existing cellars as sales and storage areas. Although the current cellars are extensive they do not extend into the area of the proposed lift shaft.

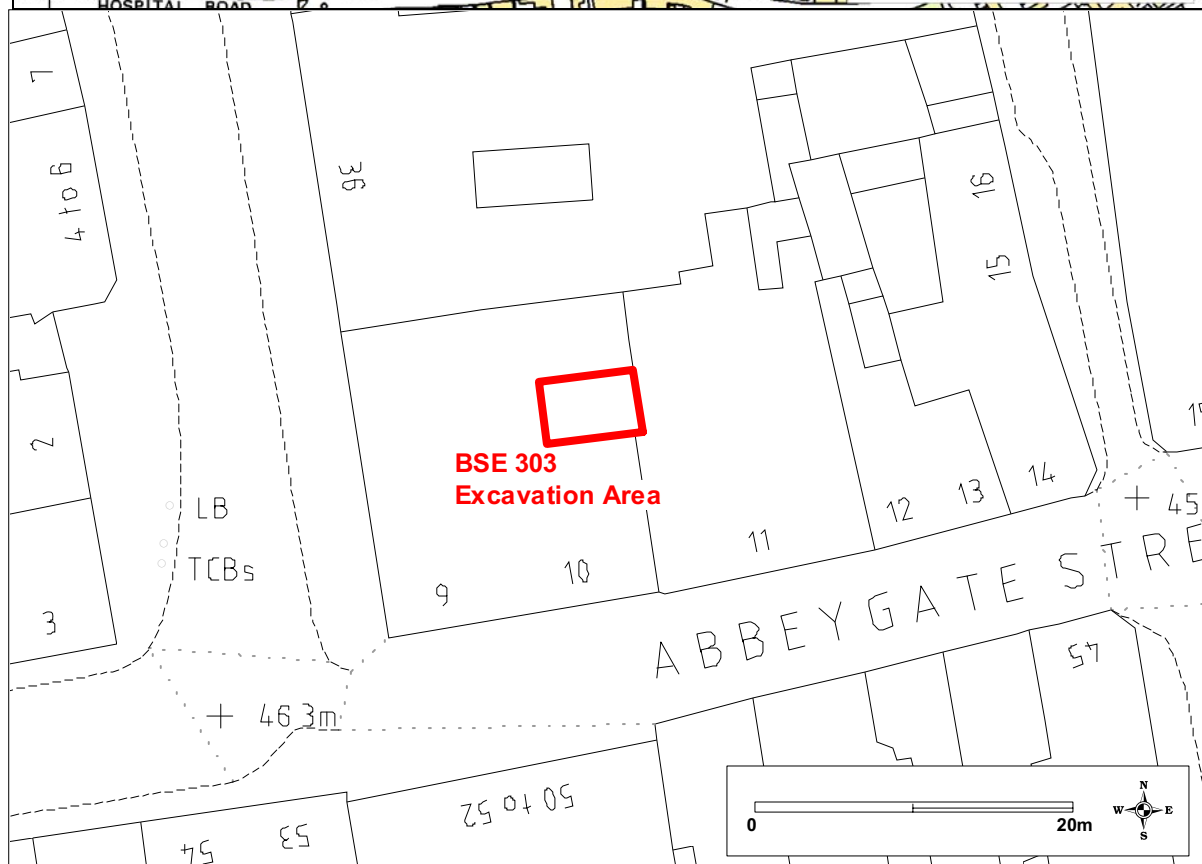
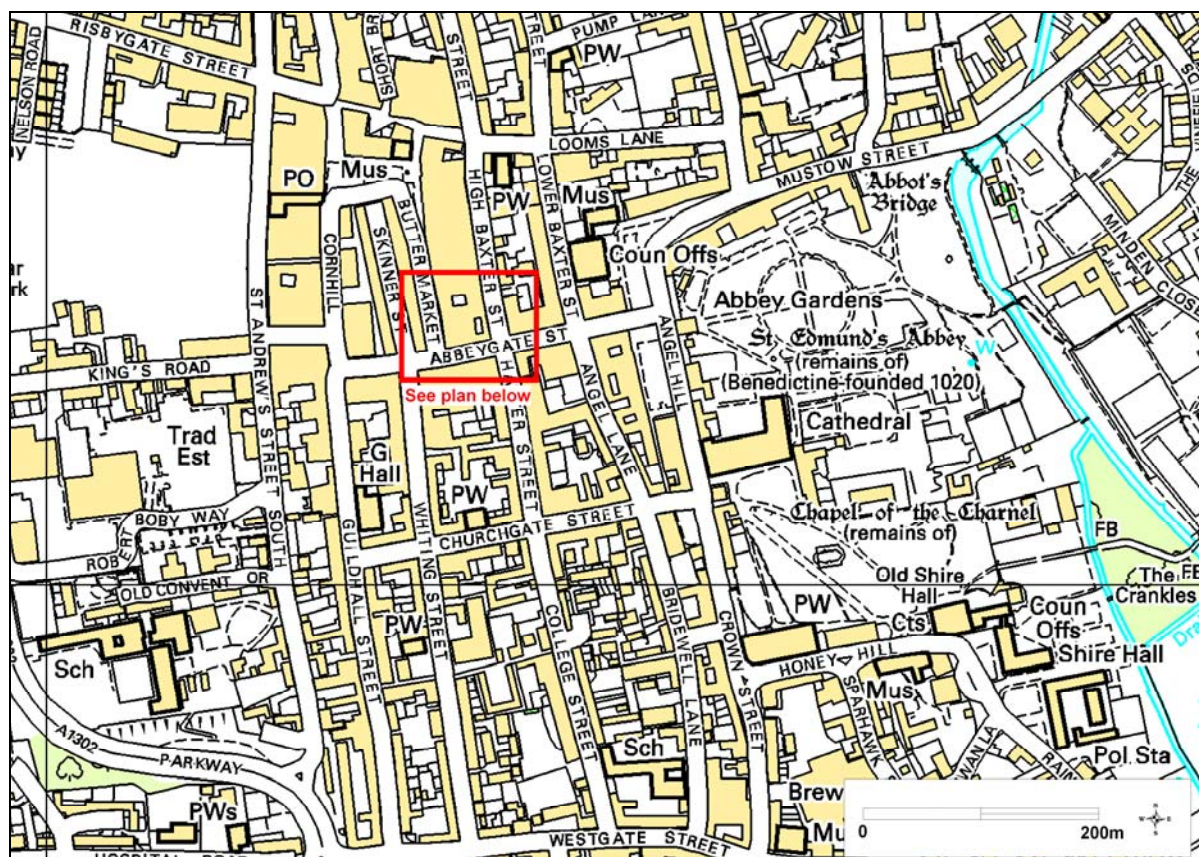
Historic maps of the site, both Warren's Map and the 1st Edition OS Map, show the development area to be an open area in the centre of the surrounding buildings (Fig. 2). This area is likely to be a small courtyard though it is unknown if it predates the 18th century. Little archaeological work has been conducted in this area as many of the original timber-framed buildings survive with little modern development. The small scale excavation of the lift shaft gives the opportunity to examine an area within the properties of the medieval and post-medieval town.

Methodology

Hand excavation of the lift shaft was undertaken by the developer with intermittent monitoring undertaken by an experienced archaeologist as outlined in the Brief and Specification (Appendix 1). Initial excavation was through the current concrete floor surface and its underlying hardcore layer. Due to the limited size and nature of the excavation any standing walls within the lift area had to be removed when encountered.

All identified archaeological deposits were given a unique context number and a written description. All deposits were photographed using a colour digital camera and recorded in plan at 1:50.

The site archive and finds are kept at the County Council Archaeological Store, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk under code BSE 303.



©Crown Copyright. All Rights Reserved. Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2008.

Figure 1. Site location

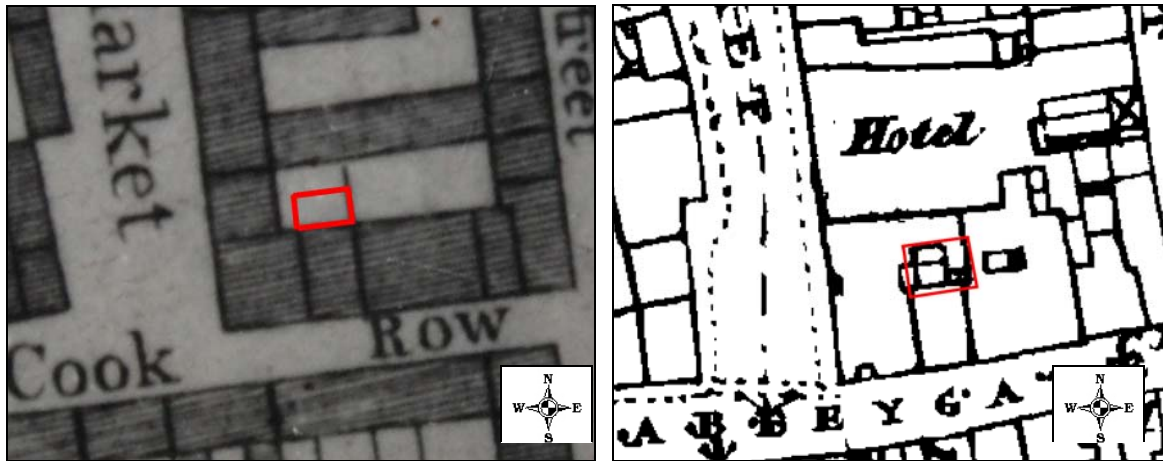


Figure 2. Historic Maps. Warren's Map 1747 (left) and 1st Edition OS Map 1883-4 (right) (site location marked in red)

Results

The excavation of the lift shaft was initially through a modern concrete floor over a hardcore rubble base with a total depth of over 0.5m. Immediately below this was a backfill deposit between several brick walls of various dates. The backfilled deposit was removed by the developer along with any wall remains in the middle of the lift shaft excavation area. The lift shaft excavation extended into the underlying chalk natural.

The main backfill layer (0002) was a mixed dark brown silty sand and chalk fragments with large quantities of building rubble. This layer appeared to be a later deposit over and in between the identified brick walls. Recovered finds included six fragments of animal bone, a post-medieval glass ointment bottle (not retained) and two mid 20th century milk bottles (not retained). None of the building rubble was retained and all was fragmentary and of mixed post-medieval and modern dates.

Below layer 0002 several brick walls were identified though only one, 0008, crossed the middle of the excavated area (Fig. 3). Walls 0004 and 0008 were constructed using similar red bricks and extended to the same depth. Wall 0004 was identified running east to west and turning north to south in the north-west corner of the excavation area. At its southern limit a possible corner was also identified but was heavily disturbed by a later wall, 0006 (Fig. 3). Wall 0008 appeared to cross the excavation area running north to south then turning to run west to east. However, the wall was not seen in plan as demolition by the developer had taken place prior to a site visit by the archaeologist. A brick recovered from wall 0004 was dated probably to the 15th -16th centuries but unfortunately it was not possible to recover a brick from wall 0008.

Wall 0006 was identified running north to south along the western edge of the excavation area with a possible corner at its northern end turning east where it cuts wall 0004. Wall 0006 was approximately 0.75m shallower than wall 0004 and was constructed using white bricks dated to the 18th – 19th century. The wall contained a low arch at its southern end which extended across a possible well, 0011 (Fig. 3).

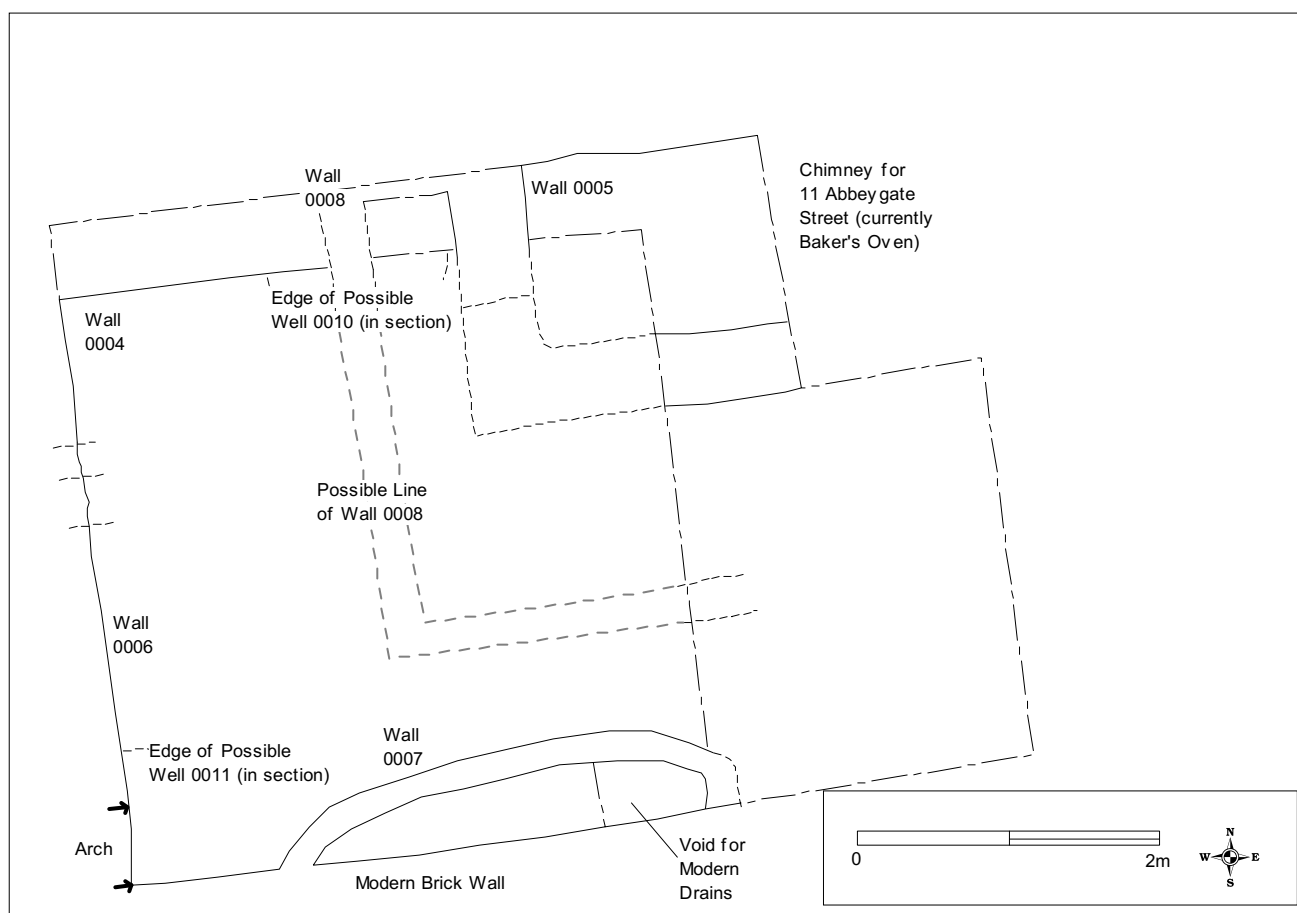


Figure 3. Site plan

At the southern limit of the excavated area a curvilinear wall was identified, 0007. The wall was constructed using mainly red bricks, dated to the 15th – 16th centuries, with some flint. This wall extended further to the south but was cut off along the southern edge of the site by an inserted modern wall.

Located in the north-east corner of the excavation was a red brick structure, 0005. It was approximately 1.6m by 1.2m although the eastern end was roughly built compared to the rest of the structure and may not have been the original east limit. Its full depth was not identified as it extended at least 3m deep and continued deeper than the development formation level. The structure was constructed using red brick bonded with a light grey mortar with the possible remains of a brick vaulted ceiling, which was largely removed by the modern concrete floor. It was filled by a dark brown silty sand, 0003, which was only partially excavated and only two fragments of early 19th century bottle glass were recovered from it.

Feature 0010 was a possible well located below walls 0004 and 0008. It was vertical-sided but was only visible in section and the full depth was not identified. It was filled by a mixture of dark brown silty sand and chalk, 0013, with an upper fill of black silty sand, 0009, from which a fragment of re-used 16th to 18th century brick was recovered. A simple arch was built into the base of wall 0004 where it spanned this feature.

A second possible well, 0011, was identified in the south-west corner of the site below wall 0006. The well was only visible in section and had vertical sides though there had been heavy collapse of the northern edge. The base was not identified. It was filled by 0012, a mixed mid and dark brown silty sand, crushed chalk and mid orangey brown silty sand. As with feature 0010 an arch was built into wall 0006 above, where it spanned the feature.

Time capsule

Following the ground works for the lift shaft a ceramic jug was disturbed by the builders from where it had been mortared about 5 feet above the ground behind a doorframe to one of the cellar rooms (Figs. 4-5). The jug contained a folded piece of parchment and a bronze token dated 1795. On one side of the paper is a list of workman and their trades (see below), presumably those who were a party to the burial (writing on the reverse was in a different hand and truncated which indicates that the paper had been trimmed presumable so that it would fit comfortably into the jug). Given the location of the site behind what would have been a very busy medieval street we can be certain that there would have been pits laden with pottery waste behind the houses. Although speculative it is quite reasonable to suggest that this pot was disturbed from a pit when parts of the basement were excavated and selected, due to its good condition and fine green glaze, for reburial.



Figure 4. Time capsule

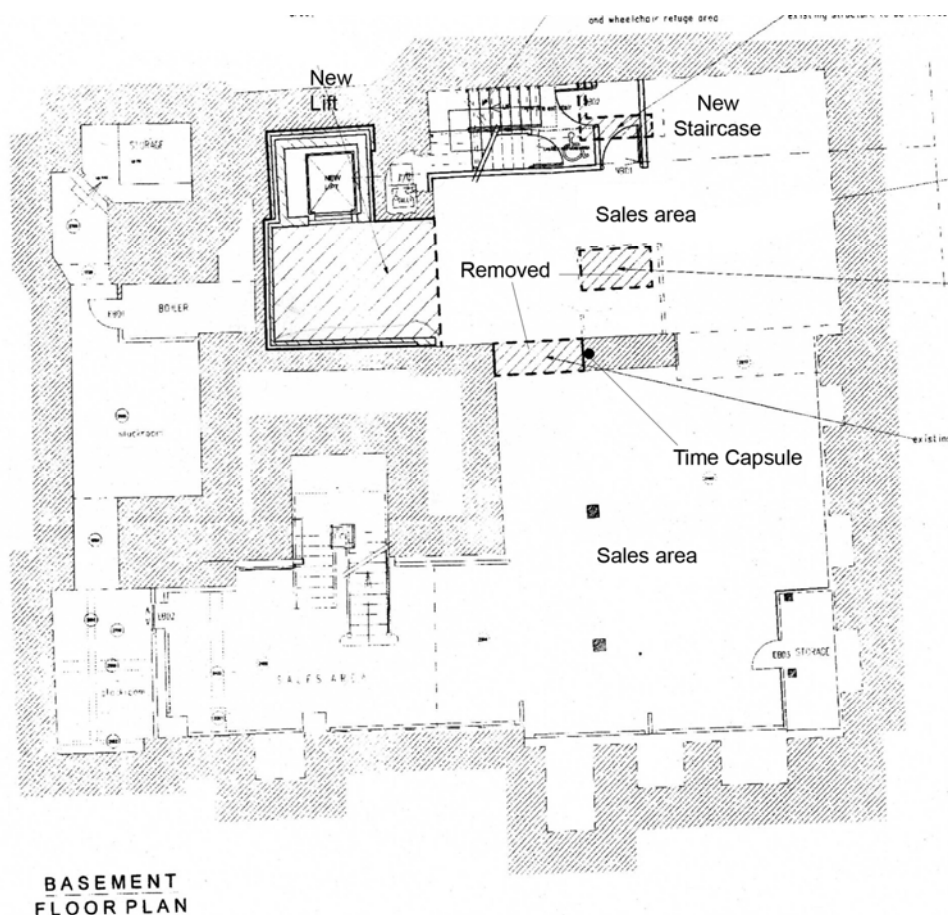


Figure 5. Time capsule located on architects plan

The Finds by Richenda Goffin

Introduction

Finds were collected from 7 contexts, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		CBM		P-med glass		Animal bone		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0001	1	292							1 copper alloy trade token, 1 parchment	Post- 1800
0002							6	187		Undated
0003					2	222				Early 19th C
0004			1	2634						15th-16th C?
0006			1	2698						18th-19th C
0007			1	3085						15th-16th C?
0009			1	853						16th-18th C
Total	1	292	4	9270	2	222	6	187		

Table1 Bulk finds

Ceramic building material

Four brick samples were taken from the monitoring, all of which were post-medieval. The first was a complete brick removed from 0004, the outer face of the brick cellar. This measured 248mm (L) x 115mm (W) x 49mm (H). The brick is made in a hard, sandy red-firing clay covered with a clinker mortar. It is slightly longer than the most common types of post-medieval bricks classified by Drury, with its dimensions suggesting that it is likely to be early post-medieval in date.

A second brick from the cellar wall 0006 in the south-west corner of the site is a made from white-firing clay which is hard fired with burnt out clinker inclusions, and mortared on the base. This dates to the 18th-19th century (dimensions 220mm (L), 107mm (W), 52mm (H)).

A complete red-firing brick from 0007, a wall along the south edge of the site was encased with a soft beige chalky mortar. It measured 245mm (L) x 115mm (W) x 51mm (H). It is similar to the brick from 0004 in terms of dimensions and fabric, and is likely to be of the same date, c. 15th-16th century.

The remains of an incomplete brick from silty deposit 0009 below wall 0004, was made from a fine orange fabric with silty cream bands and clay pellets with mortar on the top. It is abraded, and the only intact dimension is the width (115mm). It is likely to have been re-used but dates to the 16th-18th century.

Pottery

An almost complete ceramic vessel was recovered as part of a 'time capsule'. It is the remains of a Late Medieval and Transitional ware small bottle. This would have originally have had a strap handle, but only the attachment scar is now visible. The vessel has a narrowed neck but none of its rim is surviving, and a flat base. It has a grey fabric with oxidised inner margin, and the upper part is covered with a lead glaze. The bottle dates to the early post-medieval period, 15th-16th centuries, but has clearly been embedded subsequently in mortar as this still adheres to the exterior.

Post-medieval bottle glass

Two fragments of dark brown bottle glass were present in 0003. One of these was the base of a cylindrical bottle with deep basal kick, dating to the early 19th century (Noel Hume 68).

Animal bone

Six fragments of animal bone from general backfill deposit 0002 include a fragment of a bovine humerus and the proximal end of a bovine ulna, a bird humerus and rib fragments.

Small finds

A complete trade token was placed with the ceramic bottle making up the time capsule. It shows an auctioneer's hand and gavel on one side, with the slogan 'GOING A GOING 1795'. The other side shows an angel blowing through a trumpet and holding a palm. Around the top of this face the legend reads 'PAYABLE AT CHARLES GUEST'S AUCTIONEER BURY'. The token has diagonal milling around the edge.

Presumably this token was wrapped in the parchment as this is considerably stained green. This has affected the legibility of one of the sides making it hard to make out the larger hand-writing. The smaller writing on the other side of the parchment is easier to read. The parchment side with the larger writing reads... 'This building was erected by... Mr John G?olden Draper of this town who laid the first stone the sixth day of ?January 18..... ?Henry Pixey....Robert Pirt..... back part of the foundation... appropriate in the ?Times. Geo. Herriot – Bricklayer James Miller – Carpenter ?Gibson – PlumberCocksedge – Glazier (not sure of the first name, it could be William).

Discussion

Only a small quantity of datable finds was recovered from the monitoring, all of which are post-medieval. The objects placed in the ceramic bottle clearly post-date it quite substantially, which future generations may have found confusing.

General Discussion

The excavation for the new lift shaft provided evidence of several walls down to the depth of the existing basement levels elsewhere in Palmer's Department Store. Walls 0004 and 0008 appear to be of the same build and date though early removal of wall 0008 during the excavation meant a detailed comparison was not possible. Both walls appeared to relate to the cellars to the north of the excavated area. Wall 0006 was a later cellar wall than 0004 and was related to the cellar to the west of the excavated area. It is possible that wall 0006 was a southerly extension of the cellar originally defined by wall 0004.

Wall 0007 was originally the northern wall of the cellar to the south but it appeared to have been hidden behind a modern wall with the small space between used for a drain pipe to run down. The full extent and function of structure 0005 is not clear though it was likely to be a narrow cellar possibly extending out from a larger chamber. The area between the walls and backfilled by 0002 was heavily disturbed probably during the construction of the surrounding cellars. There was also evidence of continued activity and backfilling with finds recovered dating to the 20th century. Below the cellar walls two possible wells were also identified, 0010 and 0011. These appeared to be deliberately backfilled before the construction of walls 0004 and 0006, which overlay them. The wells are probably of an early post-medieval date or possibly medieval but no clear dating evidence was recovered. The wells were probably associated more with the rear of the earlier properties with the later cellars built over the top with the low arches in walls 0004 and 0006 used to bridge the unstable backfill.

The monitoring of the ground works for the new lift shaft provided good evidence for the post-medieval brick cellars for the Buttermarket and Abbeygate Street fronting properties. In order to fully understand the layout the results could be combined with a detailed record of the basement level of Palmers Department Store. Combined with a documentary search the development and the different functions over time of these cellars may be understood.

The time capsule which fell out of the wall provides a very human link with the past. The writing style is typical of the period although literacy was by no means universal at that time. It records a Mr John Draper as the developer and among the list of workman is a glazier called Cocksedge which is quite a prominent local name; it is beyond the scope of this report to investigate whether there is a connection between this builder from the early 19th century and contemporary local builders of the same name. This idiosyncratic find, built into the brickwork, would appear to represent a humble ceremony of foundation perhaps mimicking something grander elsewhere in the town. The burial of a rather fine jug that may have lain in the ground for 200 years or more, was probably not a deliberate attempt to confuse antiquarians but evidence of what the workman disturbed when the cellars were built.

References

Meeres, F., 2002, *The History of Bury St Edmunds*

Noel-Hume, I., 1980, *A guide to artifacts of colonial America.*

Statham, M., 1988, *The Book of Bury St Edmunds*

Appendix 1

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM



Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

PALMERS DEPARTMENT STORE, 37 BUTTERMARKE, BURY ST EDMUNDS

Although this document is fundamental to the work of the specialist archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that certain of its requirements are likely to impinge upon the working practices of a general building contractor and may have financial implications, for example see paragraphs 2.3 & 4.3. The commissioning body should also be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities, see paragraph 1.5.

1. Background

- 1.11 A planning application (SE/07/1732) has been made to introduce a lift into the store. The developer has been advised that this is likely to have an impact on archaeological levels and that mitigation for damage to archaeology should be provided.

- 1.2 The development area lies within 10m of the market frontage in an area likely to have been occupied by early medieval structures.

The lift base is relatively small in size but will involve disturbance of ground surviving immediately below the present ground floor.

- 1.3 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in "Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England" Occasional Papers 14, East Anglian Archaeology, 2003.

- 1.4 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. . The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with this office before execution.

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.

- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for earlier occupation of the site.

The significant archaeologically damaging activities in this proposal are likely to be the site preparation works involving removal of soil levels immediately below the existing ground floor for a depth of at least 2m.

Ground disturbance is to be observed whilst it takes place by the building contractor. Adequate time is to be allowed for the recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following excavation.

3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the archaeological contractor) who must be approved by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) - see 1.3 above.
- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of SCCAS five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to previously agreed locations and techniques upon which this brief is based.
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover archaeological costs incurred in monitoring the development works by the contract archaeologist. The size of the contingency should be estimated by the approved archaeological contractor, based upon the outline works in paragraph 2.3 of the Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and time-table.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered the Conservation Team of SCCAS must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4. Specification

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Council Conservation Team archaeologist and the contracted 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity must be given to the 'observing archaeologist' to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary.
- 4.3 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.4 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

- 4.5 Archaeological contexts should, where possible, be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from J Heathcote, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy, P L and Wiltshire, P E J, 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.
- 4.6 Developers should be aware of the possibility of human burials being found. If this eventuality occurs they must comply with the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857; and the archaeologist should be informed by 'Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England' (English Heritage & the Church of England 2005) which includes sensible baseline standards which are likely to apply whatever the location, age or denomination of a burial.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*, particularly Appendix 3. This must be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*. The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County SMR if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.3 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence, including palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.4 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, must be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.6 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.

- 5.7 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Robert Carr

Date: 18 December 2007

Reference: /Palmers Department Store

This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.

If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

Shire Hall Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR 01284 352443