
SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

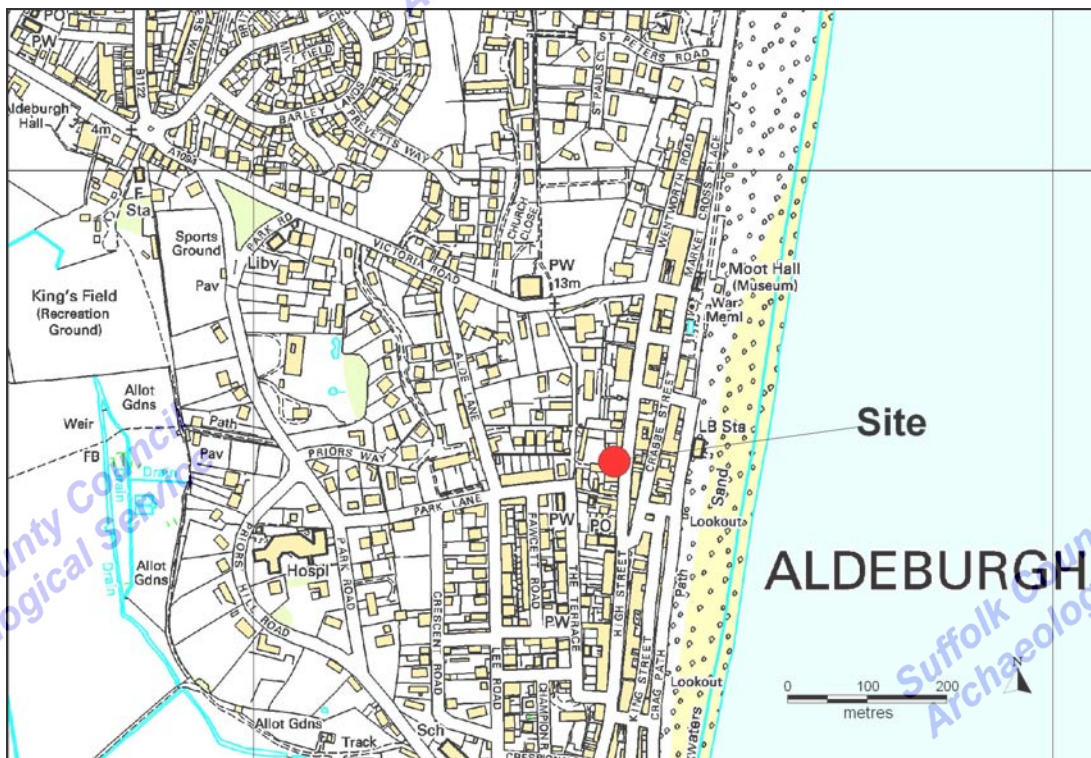
85 High Street (formerly Ward's Garage), Aldeburgh (ADB 169)
Planning application no. C/06/2319/FUL
Archaeological Monitoring Report no. 2008/146
OASIS ID No. suffolkc1-42192

Summary

Aldeburgh, 85 High Street (TM 4645 5663) Conditional planning consent for the erection of housing and shops on the former Ward's Garage site at 85 High Street, Aldeburgh, required a programme of archaeological works involving the monitoring of groundworks associated with the development.

A number of site visits were made during the extensive grubbing out operations undertaken to remove the below ground structures (tanks, contaminated soils, inspection pits etc.) associated with the former garage on the site. The disturbance caused by the tanks extended down to a depth of c.2.5 metres below the existing ground level. Given that naturally occurring sand/gravel subsoil was seen in the sides of the excavation at a depth of 1.3 metres it must be assumed that any archaeological deposits that had been on the site had been truncated during the insertion of the tanks.

(Stuart Boulter for S.C.C.A.S. & The Aldeburgh Development and Investment Co. Ltd.; SCCAS report no. 2008/146)



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Fig. 1 1:10,000 scale OS map extract showing the location of the site

1. Introduction

Planning consent for the erection of housing units and shops on the former site of Ward's Garage at 85 High Street, Aldeburgh (TM 4645 5663; Figs. 1 & 2) was conditional on the completion of a programme of archaeological works. In the first instance, the requirement involved the monitoring of groundworks, principally the removal of the below ground structures associated with the redundant garage.

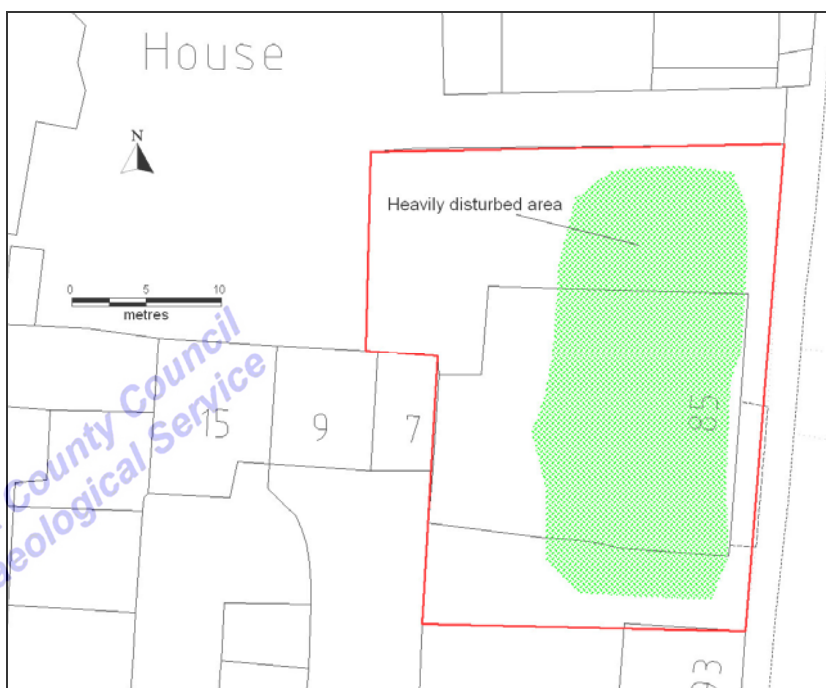
The site lies on the 5 metre contour line immediately to the east of the steep east facing slope which effectively represents the line of what was at one time the coastal cliffs. The development site actually lies at the base of this cliff and the underlying naturally occurring subsoil comprises sand and gravel that would once have been the beach.

The perceived archaeological potential of the site lies in its location within what is defined as an area of archaeological importance in the county Historic Environment Record (HER) relating to the late medieval town of Aldeburgh. Extensive ground disturbance associated with the proposed development had the potential to damage or destroy any surviving archaeological deposits and, as a consequence, it was deemed necessary to record the archaeology during the project.

To that end, a Brief and Specification document (appended to this report) outlining the required archaeological work was written by Keith Wade of SCCASCT. Subsequently, Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Field Team (hereafter SCCASFPT) was commissioned by David Gaunt Consulting Ltd to undertake the archaeological work on behalf of their client (The Aldeburgh Development and Investment Co. Ltd).

2. Methodology

A series of six site visits were made variously by Stuart Boulter, Linzi Everett and John Newman of SCCASFPT during October and November 2007 while extensive excavation and earth moving was in progress. Observations were recorded in field notebooks and on site plans. The Historic Environment Record (HER) code ADB 169 was allocated to the site.



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Fig. 2 1:500 scale OS map extract showing the main area of truncation

3. Results

It soon became clear that the disturbance associated with the insertion of the below ground structures relating to the garage was very extensive (Fig. 2) with tanks covering a large area of the site frontage and a further inspection pit to the south.

The site visit during which the most useful information was gleaned was made on 24th of October 2007. At this time the fuel tank at the northern end of the site

was being removed along with its surrounding brick structure and contaminated soil. While access to the open excavation was not possible due to health and safety considerations, the soil profile was clearly visible in the side of the trench. The hole had been excavated to a depth of 2.5 metres with running beach gravel seen at a depth of 1.3 metres in the side of the trench. This material was considered to represent the naturally occurring beach gravels known to underlie this part of Aldeburgh. A 0.8 metre thick, relatively homogenous brown sandy loam layer above the running gravel was thought to represent a topsoil dating to before the construction of the garage. The remaining overburden was a mix of loam, building rubble and other modern debris. Various brick structures, including a floor of yellow bricks, were visible, the majority associated directly with confining the fuel tanks. No features of archaeological interest were seen and no finds recovered from the upcast spoil.

During subsequent visits the extent of the damage to the site was confirmed. The only natural subsoil was visible around the edge of the site with no associated archaeological features.

4. Conclusion

While the location of the site within the bounds of the late medieval town indicated a potential for surviving archaeology of that date, the relatively recent disturbance associated with the insertion of fuel tanks and other structures relating to Ward's Garage had clearly truncated the natural subsoil by in excess of 1.0 metre. Any archaeology that had been present on the site would have been severely compromised by these earlier excavations.

Stuart Boulter
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May 2008

**SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM**

Appendix I Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation

85 HIGH STREET, ALDEBURGH

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety and other responsibilities, see paragraphs 1.7 & 1.8.

This is the brief for the first part of a programme of archaeological work. There is likely to be a requirement for additional work, this will be the subject of another brief.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning consent for the erection of houses, flats and shops on the former Ward's garage site at 85 High Street, Aldeburgh, has been granted conditional upon a programme of archaeological work being agreed and taking place prior to development (C/06/2319/FUL).
- 1.2 An archaeological evaluation of the application area will be required as the first part of such a programme of archaeological work; decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work will be based upon the results of the evaluation and will be the subject of additional briefs.
- 1.3 The proposal lies within the area of archaeological importance defined for the late medieval town of Aldeburgh in the County Sites and Monuments Record and will involve extensive ground disturbance.
- 1.4 All arrangements for the field evaluation of the site, the timing of the work, access to the site, the definition of the precise area of landholding and area for proposed development are to be defined and negotiated with the commissioning body.
- 1.5 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, 2003.
- 1.6 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Project Design or Written Scheme of Investigation (PD/WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/WSI will *provide the basis for measurable standards* and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.
- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 The responsibility for identifying any restraints on field-work (e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c.) rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such restraints or imply that the target area is freely available.

2. Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ* [at the discretion of the developer].

- 2.2 Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses and natural soil processes. Define the potential for existing damage to archaeological deposits. Define the potential for colluvial/alluvial deposits, their impact and potential to mask any archaeological deposit. Define the potential for artificial soil deposits and their impact on any archaeological deposit.
- 2.4 Establish the potential for waterlogged organic deposits in the proposal area. Define the location and level of such deposits and their vulnerability to damage by development where this is defined.
- 2.5 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.
- 2.6 Evaluation is to proceed sequentially: the desk-based evaluation will precede the field evaluation. The results of the desk-based work are to be used to inform the trenching design. This sequence will only be varied if benefit to the evaluation can be demonstrated.
- 2.7 This project will be carried through in a manner broadly consistent with English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (MAP2), all stages will follow a process of assessment and justification before proceeding to the next phase of the project. Field evaluation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential. Any further excavation required as mitigation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential, analysis and final report preparation may follow. Each stage will be the subject of a further brief and updated project design, this document covers only the evaluation stage.
- 2.8 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (address as above) 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.
- 2.9 If the approved evaluation design is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected. Alternatively the presence of an archaeological deposit may be presumed, and untested areas included on this basis when defining the final mitigation strategy.
- 2.10 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

3. **Specification A: Desk-Based Assessment**

- 3.1 Consult the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), both the computerised record and any backup files.
- 3.2 Examine all the readily available cartographic sources (e.g. those available in the County Record Office). Record any evidence for historic or archaeological sites (e.g. buildings, settlements, field names) and history of previous land uses. Where permitted by the Record Office make either digital photographs, photocopies or traced copies of the document for inclusion in the report.
- 3.3 Assess the potential for documentary research that would contribute to the archaeological investigation of the site.

4 **Specification B: Field Evaluation**

- 4.1 Examine the area for earthworks, e.g. banks, ponds, ditches. If present these are to be recorded in plan at 1:2500, with appropriate sections. A record should be made of the topographic setting of the site (e.g. slope, plateau, etc). The Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service must be consulted if earthworks are present and before proceeding to the excavation of any trial trenches.
- 4.2 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover a minimum 5% by area of the entire site and shall be positioned to sample all parts of the site. Linear trenches are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. Trenches are to be a minimum of 1.8m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated. If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' must be used. The trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins.

- 4.3 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine fitted with toothless bucket and other equipment. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 4.4 The top of the first archaeological deposit may be cleared by machine, but must then be cleaned off by hand. There is a presumption that excavation of all archaeological deposits will be done by hand unless it can be shown there will not be a loss of evidence by using a machine. The decision as to the proper method of further excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- 4.5 In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation; that significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled.
- 4.6 There must be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 4.7 The contractor shall provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. 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 and Wiltshire 1994) is available.
- 4.8 Any natural subsoil surface revealed should be hand cleaned and examined for archaeological deposits and artefacts. Sample excavation of any archaeological features revealed may be necessary in order to gauge their date and character.
- 4.9 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 4.10 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service during the course of the evaluation).
- 4.11 Human remains must be left *in situ* except in those cases where damage or desecration are to be expected, or in the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory evaluation of the site. However, the excavator should be aware of, and comply with, the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.
“Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England” English Heritage and the Church of England 2005 provides advice and defines a level of practice which should be followed whatever the likely belief of the buried individuals.
- 4.12 Plans of any archaeological features on the site are to be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50, depending on the complexity of the data to be recorded. Sections should be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 again depending on the complexity to be recorded. Any variations from this must be agreed with the Conservation Team.
- 4.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 4.14 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.

5. General Management

- 5.1 A timetable for all stages of the project must be agreed before the first stage of work commences, including monitoring by the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service.
- 5.2 The composition of the project staff must be detailed and agreed (this is to include any subcontractors).
- 5.3 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.

- 5.4 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 5.5 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* and for *Field Evaluations* should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

6. Report Requirements

- 6.1 An archive of all records and finds must be prepared consistent with the principles of English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (particularly Appendix 3.1 and Appendix 4.1).
- 6.2 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 6.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 6.4 An opinion as to the necessity for further evaluation and its scope may be given. No further site work should be embarked upon until the primary fieldwork results are assessed and the need for further work is established
- 6.5 Reports on specific areas of specialist study must include sufficient detail to permit assessment of potential for analysis, including tabulation of data by context, and must include non-technical summaries.
- 6.6 The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological potential of the site, and the significance of that potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 6.7 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.
- 6.8 The site archive is to be deposited with the County SMR within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 6.9 Where positive conclusions are drawn from a project (whether it be evaluation or excavation) a summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology*, must be prepared. It should be included in the project report, or submitted to the Conservation Team, by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.
- 6.10 County SMR sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 6.11 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.
- 6.12 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: Keith Wade

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Environment and Transport Department
Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Tel: 01284 352440

Date: 6 July 2007

Reference: /85 High Street

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.