

# **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT**

**WELL COTTAGE, MALLETS  
LANE, ORFORD**

**ORF 110**

L. Everett  
Field Team  
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

© October 2004  
SCCAS REPORT No. 2004/153  
OASIS ID No. 4477

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**Well Cottage, Mallets Lane, Orford**  
**(ORF 110)**  
**Planning Application no. C/03/1046**  
**Evaluation Report no: 2004/153**  
**OASIS ID no. 4477**

## **Summary**

*Orford*, Well Cottage, Mallets Lane (TM/421498; ORF 110). An archaeological evaluation was carried out within the footprint of a proposed new dwelling to the rear of Well Cottage, Orford, in order to sample and record any surviving archaeological deposits. The area lies within the area defined for the medieval town of Orford. One trench was excavated, revealing that medieval archaeology was present, but sealed by over a metre of overburden. An assemblage of medieval pottery, oyster shell and animal bone was recovered from the spoil, suggesting occupation on or around the site, and two pits were revealed in the trench base. However, the depth of the trench prevented full investigation of these features.

(Linzi Everett for Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and R. Hipwell; report no.2004/153)

## **1. Introduction**

An application (C/03/1046) has been made to construct a single dwelling to the rear of Well Cottage, Mallets Lane, Orford (Fig.1). The site lies at TM 4212 4984, within the medieval town centre, just south of Market Hill. The evaluation area lies within a terraced garden, on land which would naturally occupy a gentle south to north slope between the 5m and 10m OD contours. The natural subsoil comprises a bright yellow sand.

The evaluation was carried out by the Field Team at Suffolk County Council on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2004, and was commissioned by O. Seaman and Son Ltd and funded by the owner, Mr. R. Hipwell.

## **2. Fieldwork Methodology**

A single trial trench (Fig. 3) was opened in a location agreed by the Conservation Team of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS). This was carried out by a mechanical excavator equipped with a 1 metre wide ditching bucket, under the supervision of Linzi Everett of the Field Team, SCCAS. Overburden was removed from 9.5 metres of trenching to the depth of the naturally occurring subsoil. Both the excavated topsoil and the exposed surfaces of trenches were examined visually for artefactual evidence, as far as was possible.

Where features were revealed, they were cleaned manually for definition and each allocated 'observed phenomena' numbers within a unique continuous numbering system under the SMR code ORF 110 (Appendix I). Features were then partially excavated in order to recover dating evidence as well as to observe their form and possibly determine any function. The trench was planned on site to form a part of the site archive. The evaluation archive will be deposited in the County SMR at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

All finds were washed and marked before being quantified, identified and dated by the finds management staff of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.

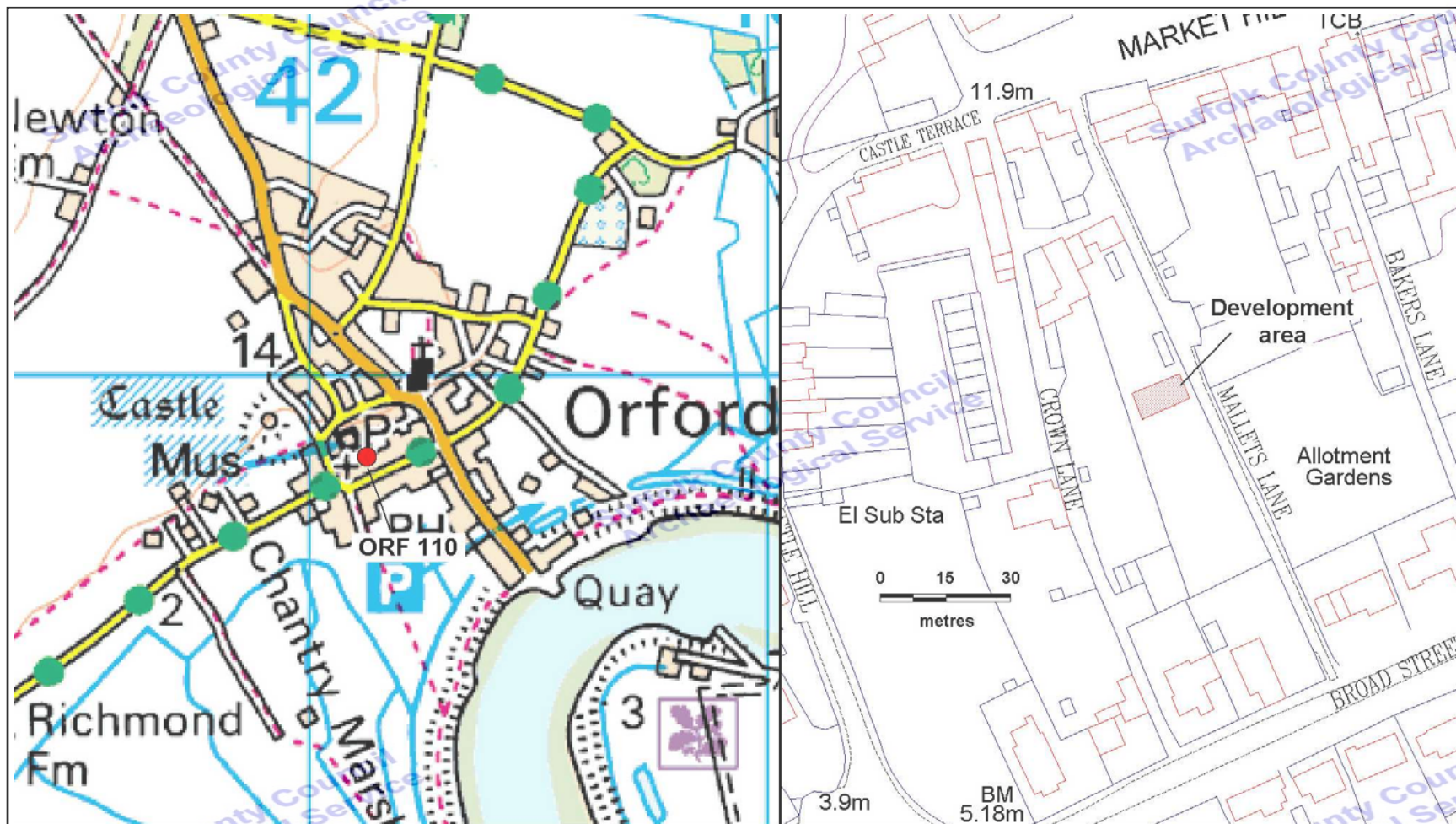
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**FIGURE 1: SITE LOCATION PLAN**

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### 3. Fieldwork Results

The trench was excavated from west to east and measured 9.5m in length, with natural subsoil occurring at a depth of 1.8m at its deepest point. The topsoil, 0001, was a dark brown loamy sand and was between 340-400mm thick throughout. It contained a small amount of modern building material and included a 50mm thick layer of clean, yellow sand at its base. This sealed 0002, a layer of dark brown loamy sand subsoil, containing chalky lumps and a moderate quantity of post medieval or modern building material, clay pipe stems and glazed porcelain. It was c.800mm thick and quite heavily disturbed. Beneath this was 0003, a layer of mid brown sand subsoil containing very occasional stones. Pottery, bone and shell were recovered from this layer but individual features were not identified within it. 0005 was pale, yellowish brown sand subsoil, with the appearance of 'dirty' natural. It was 150mm thick and virtually stoneless.

Two features were noted in the trench sections. 0006 was a small, steep sided pit, probably circular but not fully exposed. Its fill, 0007, was a mid brown sand from which pot, bone and a fragment of limestone with probable toolmarks were recovered. It appeared to cut 0005 but its relationship with 0003 was unclear. This feature was not fully excavated due to the depth of the trench. 0008 was a small feature partially exposed in the northern side of the trench. Its location was recorded but the depth of the trench at this point prevented access for further investigation.

Various finds, mostly comprising medieval pottery and oyster shell, were collected from the upcast spoil and allocated the OP number 0004. They are believed to be from layer 0003 but contamination by 0001 and 0002 is possible.

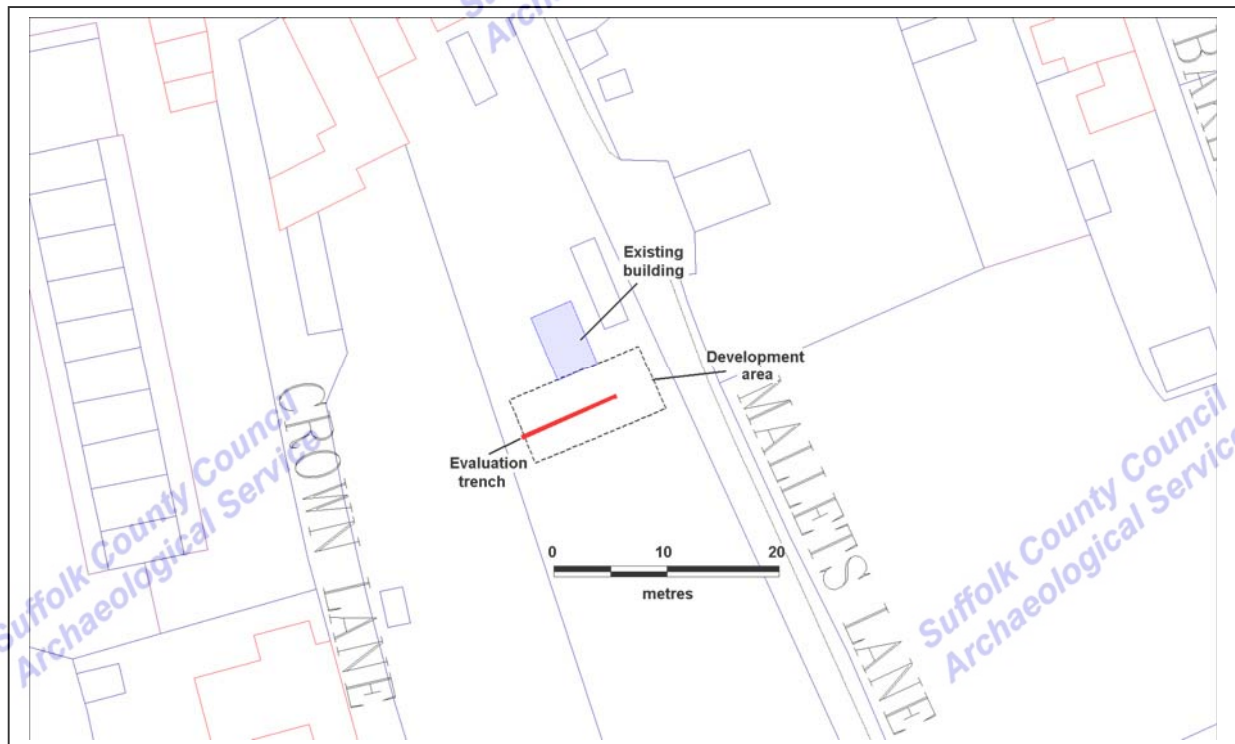


Figure 2: Trench location

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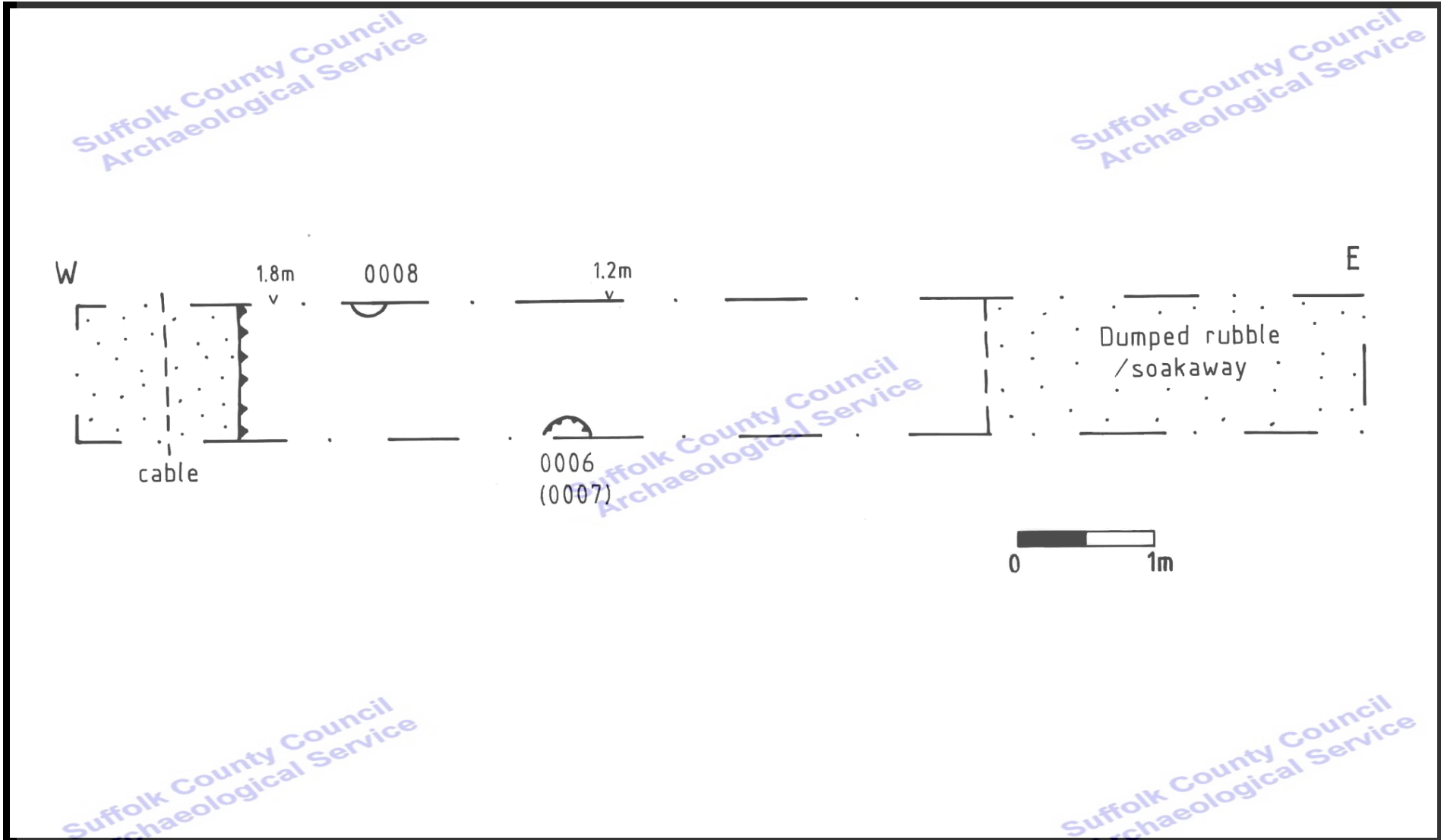


Figure 3: Trench plan

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#### 4. Well Cottage, Mallets Lane, Orford: the evaluation finds

The majority of the finds assemblage comprised medieval coarseware pottery but includes occasional sherds of glazed imported and stonewares. Oyster shells and animal bone were also represented. Fragments of possible burnt tile were recovered from 0007.

#### 5. Discussion

The site has been subject to a degree of terracing in recent times but in the trenched area this seems to have raised the garden so has had no impact on archaeological features. The quantity of pottery recovered from the upcast spoil clearly indicates quite significant medieval activity on or around the site but a combination of the depth of overburden and shadow cast into a narrow trench meant that any features were impossible to identify as stripping took place.

#### 6. Recommendations

A significant depth of overburden is to be removed within the footprint of the proposed building and strip foundations subsequently excavated. Monitoring of these ground works is recommended in order that the nature of the archaeology on the site is better understood.

Linzi Everett  
Field Team,  
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

#### Appendix I: Context list

OP	Context	Description	Cuts / overlies	Cut by / under
0001	0001	Topsoil- dark brown loamy sand, 340-400mm thick. Contains modern rubble.	0002	
0002		Subsoil- dark brown loamy sand, 800mm thick, containing chalky lumps and post-med/modern building rubble, clay pipe, glazed china etc.	0001	0003
0003		Subsoil- mid brown sand, c.200mm thick. Contains v. occasional stones, pottery and shell	0002	0005
0004		Finds- unstratified finds recovered from spoil heap, believed to come from interface of 0003 and 0005. May be slight contamination from 0001/0002		
0005		Subsoil- pale yellow brown sand, c.150mm thick, appearance of dirty natural. Noticeably stoneless.	0003	natural
0006		Pit cut- small, steep sided pit in S edge of trench, only partially excavated. Relationship with 0005 unclear.	natural	
0007	0006	Pit fill- mid brown sand, gradually paler towards base. Pottery, bone and worked stone recovered.	natural	
0008		Pit- small pit exposed at base of northern trench section. Trench depth prevented access to excavate. Possibly cuts 0005 but relationship unclear.	natural	
0009		Pit- large, deep pit /soakaway filled with modern building waste	0002, 0003, 0005,	

			natural	
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