

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

## ALEXANDER HOUSE, 73–81 ST MATTHEW'S STREET, IPSWICH

**IPS 594**

**A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2008**  
(Application No: IP/08/00054/FUL)

**Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2008/175**  
(OASIS Ref. suffolkc1-45174)

### Summary

**Ipswich:** Alexander House, 73–81 St Matthew's Street (TM 1578 4486; IPS 594 / IAS 7717). An archaeological monitoring was carried out at the above site in advance of the construction of a rear extension to the building.

The monitoring revealed natural sand and gravel at approximately 9.40m OD, two pits (one of which contained medieval pottery), an overlying layer of post-medieval garden soil and 19th-century brick and concrete foundations.

### HER information

Planning application no:	IP/08/00054/FUL
Site code:	IPS 594 (IAS 7717)
Date of fieldwork:	31 March – 22 April 2008
Grid Reference:	TM 1578 4486
Funding body:	Engender Developments Ltd

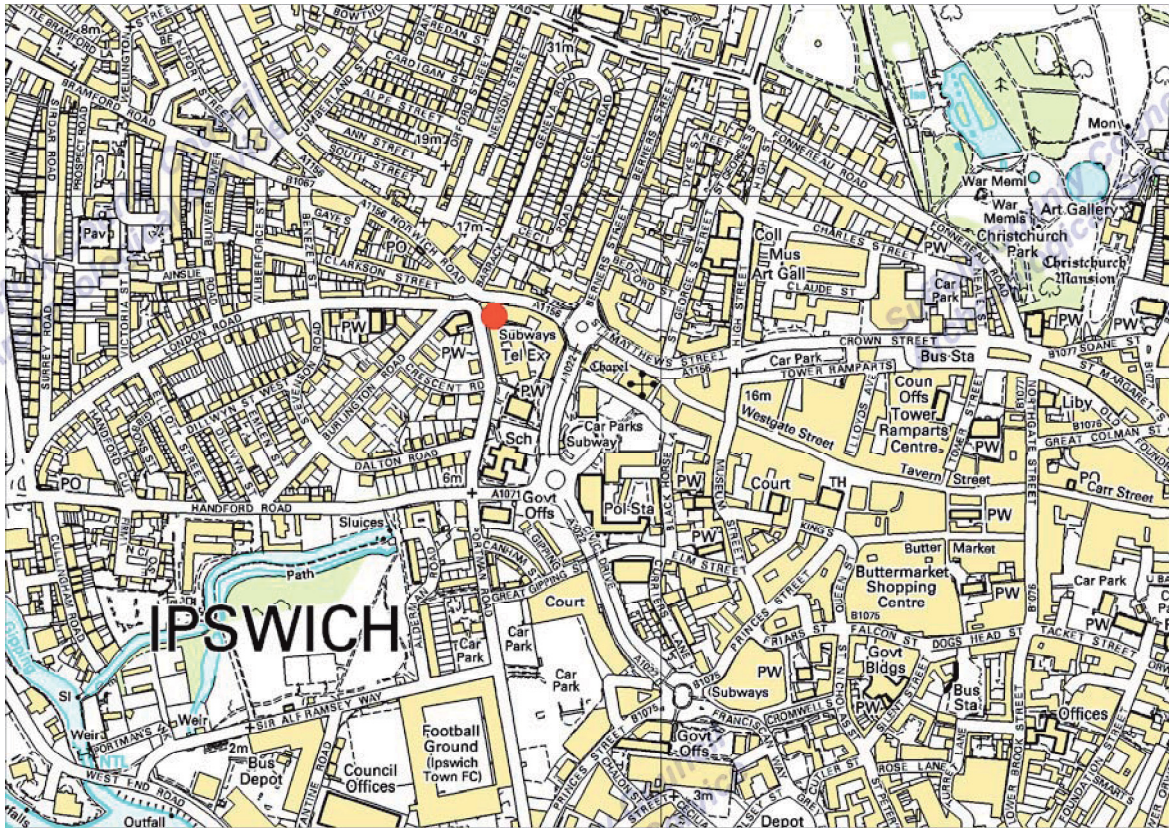


Figure 1. Map showing the approximate location of 73–81 St Matthew's Street  
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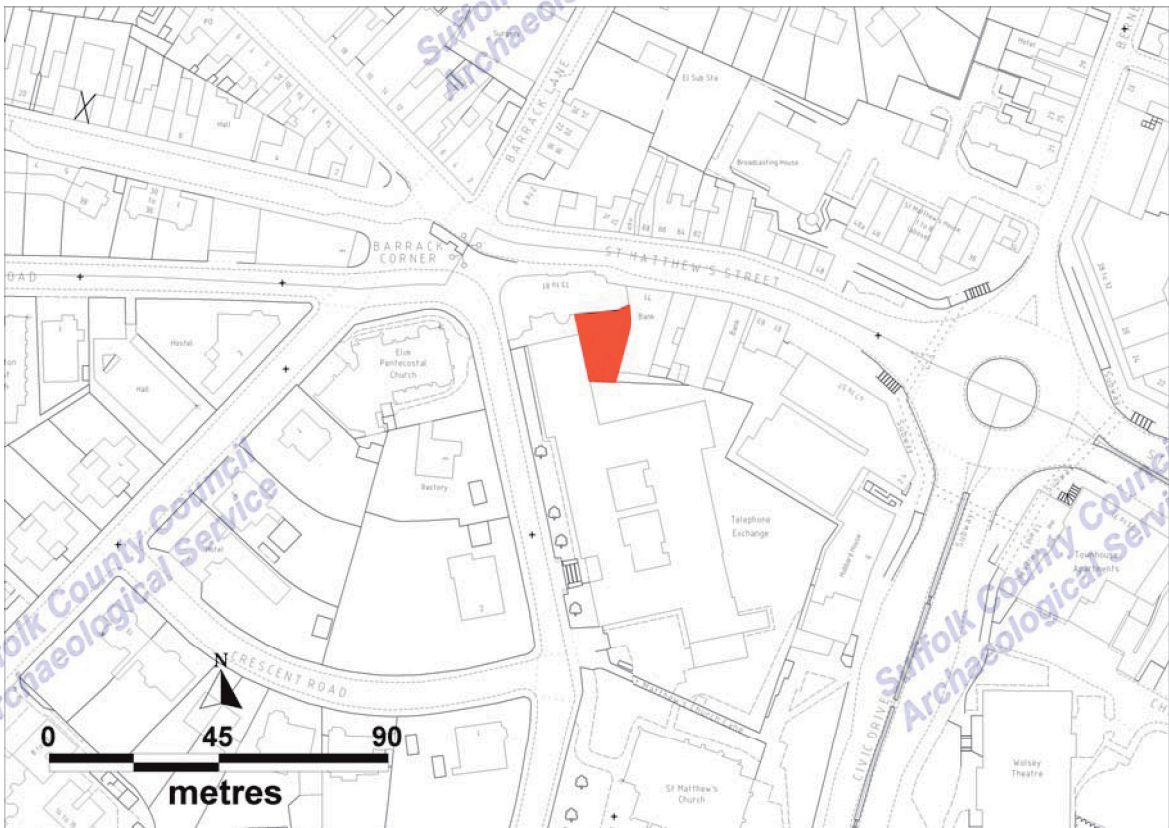


Figure 2. Map showing the site of the extension to 73–81 St Matthew's Street  
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## Introduction

An archaeological monitoring was conducted at Alexander House, 73–81 St Matthew's Street, Ipswich (Figs. 1 and 2) in accordance with an archaeological condition relating to planning permission for the construction of a three-storey extension at the rear of the building (Application number: IP/08/00054/FUL).

The proposed development lies outside the Area of Archaeological Importance defined for the Anglo-Saxon and medieval town of Ipswich in the Ipswich Local Plan but is located in an area of archaeological interest, being within the medieval suburb of St Matthew's. In addition Roman pottery and brooches were found in 1962 on the Telephone Exchange site immediately to the south of Alexander House.

The proposed extension is to be built on the footprint of an earlier extension (demolition completed in March 2008) using piled foundations. The ground slab for the new extension will be only slightly lower than that of its predecessor. Although it was considered that the piling would have some impact on any archaeological remains that exist on the site, the principal threat was seen to be the excavation of a new lift pit and a drainage trench below the formation level for the new slab. Consequently the piling proceeded without archaeological monitoring but all subsequent phases of groundwork were monitored by SCCAS, Field Team.

## Methodology

Consideration had been given to evaluating the site by trenching, following demolition of the existing structure, but this was precluded by the construction method. The new piles were to be drilled through the existing slab, which was then to be removed and a new ground slab constructed at a slightly lower level. As a result, it was agreed that the proposed lift pit would be excavated by hand, by the approved archaeological contractor, and that this would act as an evaluation to inform the extent of monitoring required as per the Specification written by Keith Wade of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service, Conservation Team (see Appendix).

### The lift pit

The writer visited the site on 31 March and 01 April 2008 to undertake the excavation of a lift pit, measuring 1.80m north-south x 1.70m east-west (Fig. 3). The ground slab and rubble make-up were removed by mechanical excavator (under the writer's direction) and underlying deposits were excavated by hand by the writer. Excavation continued to a maximum depth of 1.50m below ground level, which was the formation level for the lift pit.

A plan of the excavation and exposed archaeological deposits and features was drawn at a scale of 1:20 on gridded draughting film, and is reproduced in this report on Figure 4. Three vertical sections were drawn at the same scale and one of these is reproduced in this report on Figure 4. A digital photographic record was made (images captured at 3008 x 2000 pixels, in .jpg format). Written descriptions of archaeological features and deposits were made in a field notebook and have been reproduced in full in this report.

### Ground slab removal

Several monitoring visits were made during the removal of the ground slab and underlying rubble make-up. A post-medieval horizontal deposit was exposed but since this had been recorded previously (during the excavation of the lift pit) no further records were made during this phase of work.

### Drainage trench

The writer visited the site on 22 April 2008 to examine a drainage trench that had been excavated by site contractors the previous day. The trench measured approximately 9.00m long x 0.50m x 0.60m deep. The sides and base of the trench were trowelled clean and examined for archaeological features and deposits. The excavated material was examined for artefacts that might be dated archaeologically. A sketch plan, section drawing and written descriptions were made in a field notebook; the plan and notes are reproduced in this report.

All archaeological deposits and features were recorded using a unique sequence of context numbers in the range 0001–0008. A site datum level of 10.10m OD for the surface of the ground slab adjacent to the lift pit was provided by the building contractors, Marriotts Construction.

All primary records have been deposited in the SCCAS archive at St Edmund House, Rope Walk, Ipswich. The finds and finds archive are stored in the SCCAS office at County Hall, Bury St Edmunds. A copy of this report has been sent to the Historic Environment Record Officer. Details of the archaeological monitoring and a copy of this report have been entered on the OASIS on-line database.

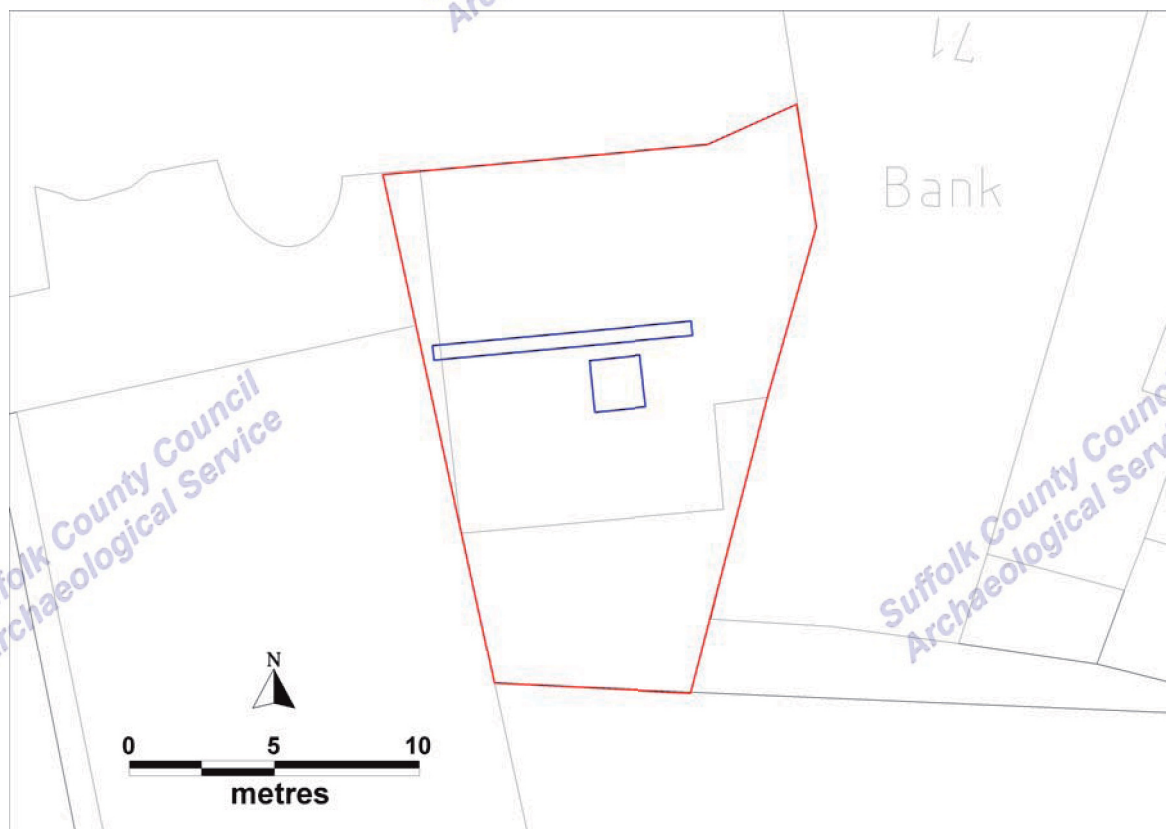


Figure 3. Plan locating the lift pit and drainage trench (blue)

## Results

### Natural stratum

The natural stratum 0006 was recorded in the lift pit and adjacent drainage trench at an average height of 9.40m OD (Fig. 4). It consists of compact, light yellowish brown silty sand and fine-medium rounded flint pebbles (80:20). The surface of the deposit displays frequent root staining.

### Pits 0005 and 0008

Pit 0005 was identified in the lift pit, cutting the natural stratum 0006. It measures >1.30m NS x >1.00m EW x 0.80m deep (Figs. 4 and 5). It has steep, slightly concave sides breaking sharply into a flat base. Deposit 0004, the fill of the pit, is loose, mid greyish brown sandy silt containing moderate pebbles and occasional small fragments of pottery, small–large fragments of bone, small fragments of charcoal and oyster shells.

Pit 0008 was identified in the drainage trench, cutting natural stratum 0006. It measures 1.80m EW x >0.50m NS x >0.60m deep (Fig. 4). It has steep, slightly concave sides but its base was not observed, being below the level of the bottom of the drainage trench. Deposit 0007, the fill of the pit, is loose, mid greyish brown sandy silt containing moderate pebbles. No cultural material was found, either in section or in the excavated soil.

### Horizontal deposit 0003

Pits 0005 and 0008 and natural stratum 0006 are sealed by a horizontal deposit of soil 0003. This is loose, mid brownish grey sandy silt containing occasional pebbles, small fragments of pottery, clay tobacco pipe, coal, chalk, mortar and charcoal, occasional small–medium fragments of animal bone (not kept) and occasional small–large fragments of ceramic roof tile and brick (not kept). The deposit is up to 0.50m thick and extends throughout the lift pit and drainage trench. Observations made during the mechanical removal of the ground slab suggest that deposit 0003 extends across most of the site.

### Brick and concrete foundation 0001

A stepped brick footing on a concrete foundation 0001 was recorded on the west side of the lift pit (Figs. 4 and 5). It is oriented approximately NS and is >1.80m long x >0.45m wide and survives to a depth of approximately 0.70m.

The footing has three surviving courses of red and yellow bricks laid in alternate courses of headers and stretchers, with a combined height of 0.24m. Individual bricks measure 236 x 106 x 67mm and are unfrogged. Its construction trench 0002 cuts through horizontal deposit 0003 and the foundation rests on top of natural stratum 0006.

Similar brick and concrete foundations were observed elsewhere on the site but not recorded.

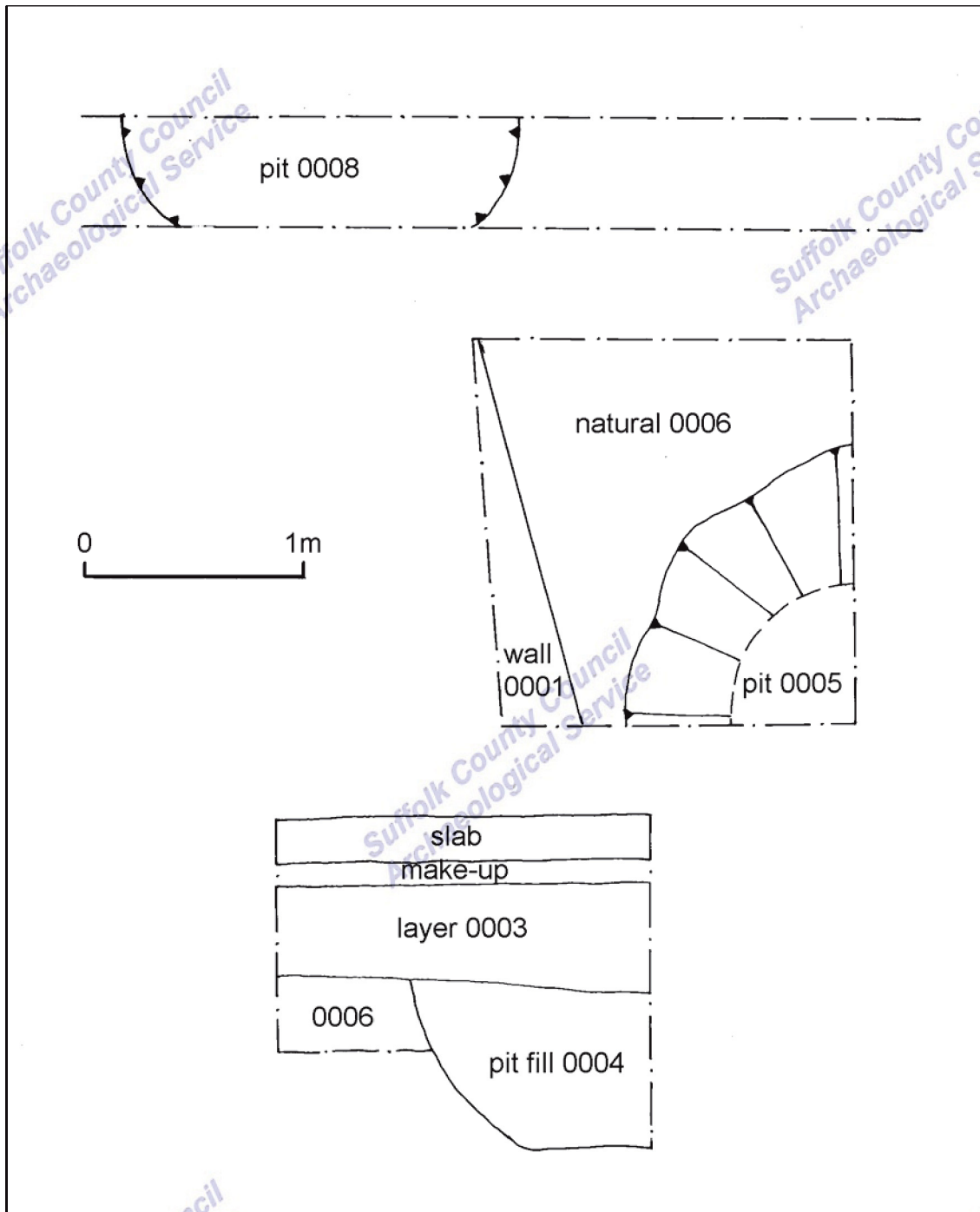


Figure 4. Plan of deposits and features in the lift pit and drainage trench, and west-facing section in the lift pit



Figure 5. General view of the lift pit, looking south, showing foundation 0001 and pit 0005 (0.5m scale)

## Finds report

Richenda Goffin

### Introduction

Finds were collected from two contexts, as shown in the table below:

Context	Pottery		CBM		Clay pipe		Glass		Misc	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0003	13	121			3	33	1	40	1 silver penny	1650-1700
0004	5	38	1	44	1	4			2 fragments of animal bone @ 120g	11th-12th C
Total	18	159	1	44	2	33	1	40		

### Pottery

A total of 18 fragments of pottery was recovered (0.159kg). Eight sherds are post-medieval, but the remainder of the assemblage dates to the Late Saxon and medieval periods.

Pottery of mixed date was present in 0003, a deposit which is likely to represent garden soil. The earliest fragment is a sherd of Thetford ware dating to the Late Saxon period. In addition two fragments of medieval coarseware, a sherd of Stamford fineware and the handle of a Scarborough Glazed jug span the period of the 11th to mid 14th century. The remainder of the pottery from 0003 is post-medieval. In addition to Glazed Red Earthenwares (16th-18th C), two fragments of Westerwald stoneware were identified, including a decorated sherd with a

cobalt blue background and an applied roundel, dating to the 17th century. A sherd of Staffordshire Combed slipware and a small sherd of Tin-glazed earthenware with blue and white decoration are also likely to be 17th century, probably dating to the second half.

Five sherds of pottery from pit fill 0004 are earlier in date, although they were found with a fragment of post-medieval brick and a piece of clay pipe stem that are intrusive and likely to have come from the overlying deposit. A single fragment of Thetford ware was identified, with a large but slightly abraded fragment of St Neots ware (c850-1150). Three fragments of Yarmouth type wares were also present, dating to the 11th-12th century. These hand-made wares are characterised by their sandy fabric which also contains sparse calcareous inclusions. To date the origin of this fabric type is unknown, although it is increasingly considered that the pottery was produced somewhere along the east coast of Norfolk or Suffolk. When examined in thin-section, sample sherds have been found to include rounded, oval fragments, mostly of non-ferroan calcite, between c.0.2mm and 1.5mm long. Some grains show brown staining around the edges and might be derived from an iron-cemented shell sand whilst others have a blackened halo, indicating that they are derived from recent shell which still retained its organic content (Alan Vince, pers. comm.). The fabric is commonly found in many parts of the region from Norwich eastwards, and it is perhaps likely that such pottery was produced locally and distributed through one of the medieval ports such as Yarmouth.

#### *Ceramic building material*

A small fragment of post-medieval brick made in a red-fired, sandy fabric from pit fill 0004 is likely to be intrusive.

#### *Clay tobacco pipe*

Three fragments of clay tobacco pipe were present in deposit 0003 (two bowls and a stem). A bulbous bowl with rouletted rim dates to mid to late 17th century, and a longer bowl with rouletted rim and curved sides is slightly later in date, c1680-1710 (Oswald 37). A single stem fragment present in 0004 is likely to be intrusive.

#### *Post-medieval bottle glass*

A single fragment of green glass from a post-medieval globular wine bottle was recovered from deposit 0003.

#### *Animal bone*

Two fragments of animal bone recovered from pit fill 0004 consist of a bovine molar and a fragment of bovine pelvis.

#### *Metalwork*

A single worn long-cross penny made of debased silver alloy was found in deposit 0003. It dates to the reign of the Scottish King Alexander III (reigned 1249-1285/6) and as it belongs to the 2nd coinage of 1280 onwards, it must date to 1280-86 (Andrew Brown, pers. comm).



### Finds discussion

The small quantities of pottery recovered from the evaluation reflect the Late Saxon and early medieval suburban settlement of this part of Ipswich. The finds from the overlying deposit 0003 also include pottery of this date, but also medieval wares and 17th century ceramics and clay pipe.

### Discussion and Conclusion

Pit 0005 is of 11/12th-century date and pit 0008, although undated, is likely to be broadly contemporary given its stratigraphic position. There is insufficient evidence to indicate functions for the pits, but it is assumed that they were dug to the rear of properties on St Matthew's Street. Both pits were identified at the level at which they cut the natural stratum but are likely to have been deeper originally; there is no evidence for contemporary ground surfaces and it is assumed that these have been removed by subsequent horizontal truncation.

The medieval pits are sealed by a homogenous layer of soil 0003 containing 17th-century and perhaps later material. In the late 17th century the site formed part of the gardens to the rear of properties on St Matthew's Street (Fig. 6). Deposit 0003 is assumed therefore to be a garden soil, and the cultivation of this soil has truncated the underlying medieval pits.



Figure 6. Extract from Ogilby's map of 1674 showing the approximate location of the site of the extension to 73–81 St Matthew's Street (red)

The brick and concrete foundation 0001 and others that were not recorded are assumed to have belonged to 19th-century outbuildings to the rear of Alexander House. They were truncated when the rear extension to the building was constructed in the early 20th century.

The medieval pits are of particular interest and it is likely that contemporary features will exist elsewhere on the site. The post-medieval garden soil is of lesser archaeological significance.

It is understood that the formation level of the new ground slab will be at approximately 9.70m OD, as indicated on a drawing supplied by Marriotts Construction and retained in the site file. Given that the medieval features survive at levels of 9.40m OD or lower, it is unlikely that the construction of the slab will impact on significant archaeological deposits. Apart from the lift pit and drainage trench no excavations are planned below the formation level of the ground slab. Consequently, no further archaeological monitoring of the site is required.

## **Acknowledgements**

Endymion Architects commissioned the archaeological investigation on behalf of Engender Developments Ltd., who funded the work.

Keith Wade (SCCAS, Conservation Team) provided the Brief and Specification and monitored the project.

The project was managed by John Newman and conducted by Kieron Heard. (SCCAS, Field Team).

Richenda Goffin prepared the finds report (SCCAS, Post-Excavation Team).

The writer would like to thank Andy Johnson and the staff of Marriott Construction for their assistance on site.

## **References**

Oswald, A, 1975, Clay pipes for the archaeologist, British Archaeological Reports 14

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Kieron Heard, SCCAS, Field Team

24 July 2008

## **APPENDIX: Brief and Specification**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Planning permission to erect a rear extension to 73-81 St Matthew's Street, Ipswich, has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (IP/08/00054/FUL). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence and the proposed foundation methods indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal lies outside of the Area of Archaeological Importance defined for the Anglo-Saxon and medieval town of Ipswich in the Ipswich Local Plan but it does lie in an area of archaeological interest being within the medieval suburb of St Matthew's.

In addition, Roman (1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> century) pottery and brooches were found in 1962 on the telephone exchange site immediately to the south.

- 1.3 As pile and reinforced slab construction is proposed there will only be limited damage to any archaeological deposits, which can be recorded by a trained archaeologist during excavation of the trenches by the building contractor.
- 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 would be 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 the Roman and/or medieval occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of drainage trenches and a lift shaft. These, and the upcast soil, are to be observed during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor.

### 3. **Arrangements for Monitoring**

- 3.1 The developer or his archaeologist will give the County Archaeologist (Keith Wade, Archaeological Service, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR. Telephone: 01284 352440; Fax: 01284 352443) 48 hours notice of the commencement of site works.
- 3.2 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the observing archaeologist) who must be approved by the Planning Authority's archaeological adviser (the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).
- 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 timetable.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered, the County Archaeologist should be immediately informed so that any amendments deemed necessary to this specification to ensure adequate provision for recording, can be made without delay. This could include the need for archaeological excavation of parts of the site which would otherwise be damaged or destroyed.

### 4. **Specification**

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Archaeologist and the 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity should 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 In the case of footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of one and half hours per 10 metres of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed should be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts should be numbered and finds recorded by context as far as possible.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

4.7 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.

4.8 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. 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*, should be prepared and included in the project report.

5.5 County Historic Environment Record sheets should be completed, as per the county manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.

- 5.6 If archaeological features or finds are found 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: Keith Wade

Suffolk County Council  
Archaeological Service Conservation Team  
Environment and Transport Department  
Shire Hall  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Date: 3 April 2008

Reference: /73-81 St Matthew's 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.**