

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

REAR OF 63, HIGH STREET, LOWESTOFT LWT 158

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2007
Planning application no. W/7173/10
OASIS ID: 46526



Looking west at the rear of 63, High Street

Linzi Everett
Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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SCCAS REPORT No. 2007/243

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List of Contributors

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Summary

Monitoring of groundworks at 63, High Street, Lowestoft, was required to investigate the archaeological potential of the site. One pit was observed in the north west corner of the site, from which two adjoining sherds of 'Tudor Green' pottery, dating from c.1380-1500, were recovered from the section. A corner of a flint and mortar wall of uncertain date was also observed, cutting the pit.

HER information

Planning application no. W/7173/10
Date of fieldwork: November 2007
Grid Reference: TM 5517 9372
Funding body: Mr. J. Head
OASIS ID No. 46526

Introduction

Planning permission for the construction of a two houses on land to the rear of 63, High Street, Lowestoft, required a programme of archaeological works as a condition of the consent. The site lies at TM 5517 9372 (Fig. 1) on a sloping terrace which falls away sharply from a height of c.16m OD at the west end of the site to c.12m OD at the east. Archaeological interest in this site is due to its location within the area of medieval settlement defined for Lowestoft in the County Historic Environment Record and adjacent to Martins Score, a medieval street.

Monitoring of the site was carried out by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Field Team, based on a 'Brief and Specification' by Keith Wade. The fieldwork took place during November 2007 and was funded by Mr. J. Head.

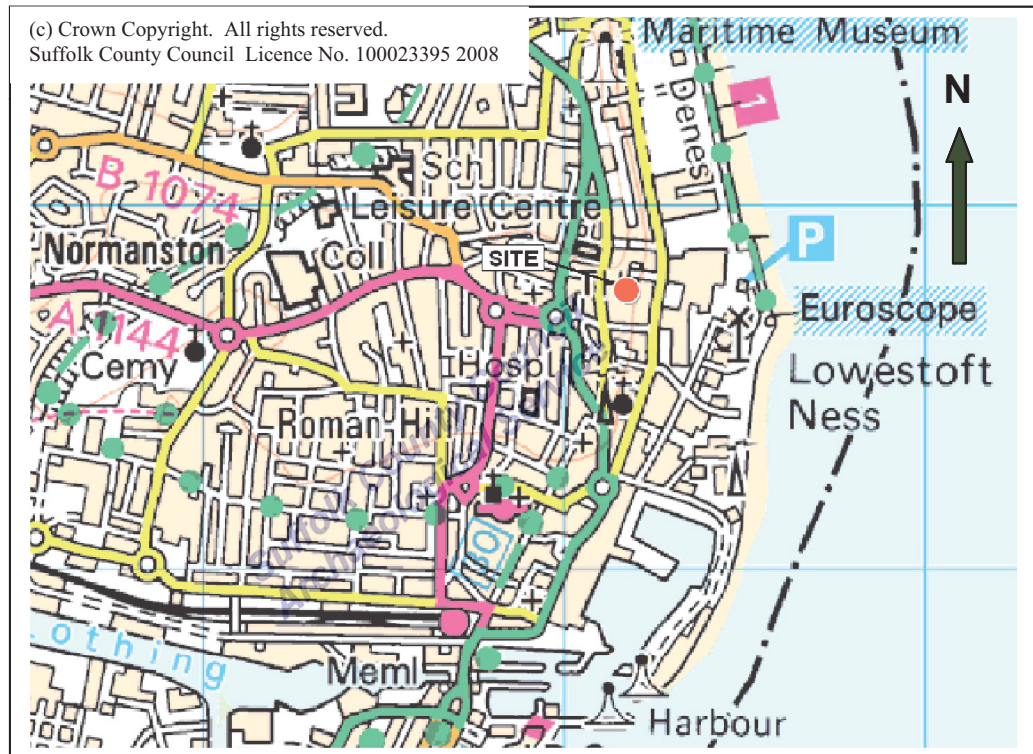


Figure 1. Site location

Methodology

Prior to excavation of the new building footprint, window sampling of the site was carried out by NAU Archaeology (report no. 1275), in order to assess the extent, depth, date and state of preservation of the archaeological sequence across the site. This showed no evidence of medieval activity within the development area, however, the test holes sampled only a very small proportion of the site, meaning that isolated features could still be present.

When the construction groundworks commenced, various visits were made to the site by the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to inspect the machine excavated building footprint. Where features were revealed by machining, they were cleaned manually for definition and each allocated 'observed phenomena' numbers within a unique continuous numbering system under the HER (Historic Environment Record) code LWT 158 (Appendix I). A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work was produced by Keith Wade of the SCCAS Conservation Team (Appendix II).

The monitoring archive is held in the county HER in Bury St. Edmunds.

Results

The area of the proposed dwellings was stripped of up to a metre of overburden in order to create a level footprint within the sloping site. The composition of the soil in the sections around this area are summarised below.

Section A-B (Fig. 2; Plate 1)

This was excavated to a depth of c.2.3m along the eastern boundary of the terrace at the rear of 63 High Street. The exposed section comprised 250mm of concrete which sealed c.1m of sandy loam topsoil of relatively modern origin. Below this was a layer of pale yellowish brown sand natural subsoil c.750mm thick sealing a mid greyish blue clay natural subsoil.

In the north west corner of the site, a single large pit, 0002, (Plate 2) was recorded, from which two joining sherds of 'Tudor Green' glazed pottery was recovered from the lower fill (0004). It had been cut by a remnant of a flint and mortar wall, 0011, (Plate 3) which had in turn been cut by an 18th/19th century red brick east to west wall (0013). 0011 comprised a c.1.65m stretch of flint and mortar wall or wall footing, 300-500mm high and c.500mm thick aligned north to south. At the south end it turned 90° to the west to form a corner extending back towards the western boundary of the site.

Section B-C (Fig. 2; Plate 4)

This section was visible following the removal of the garden wall of the adjacent property prior to its replacement. It showed the adjacent garden to be c.1m higher than the study area but this appears to be the result of imported material to make the natural slope more level, rather than suggesting that the development area had been truncated.

Section A-D (Fig. 2)

Approximately 400mm of relatively recent sandy loam topsoil sealed pale yellowish brown sand natural subsoil to a total depth of c.600mm. No interventions were observed nor were any pre-modern artefacts recovered from the topsoil.

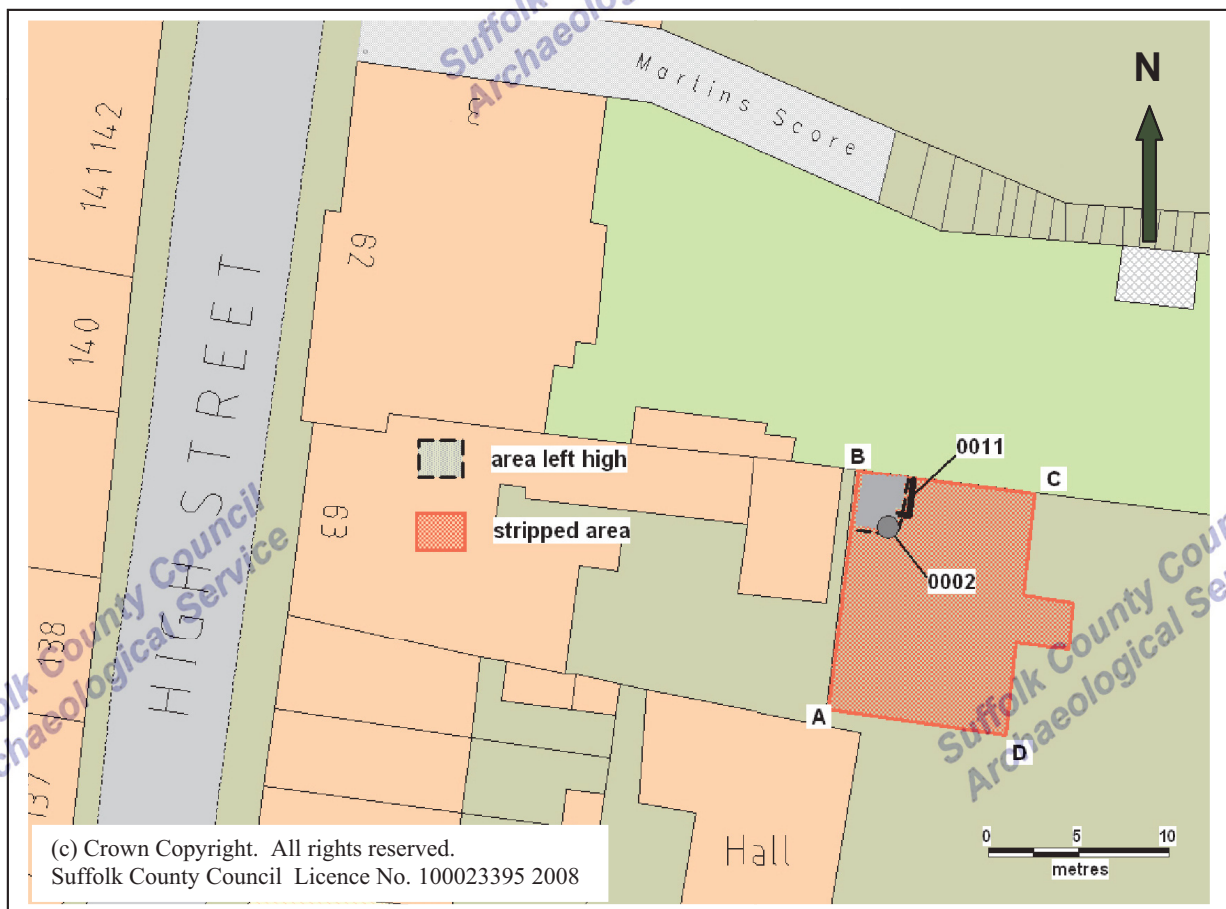


Figure 2. Location of monitored area

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Plate 1. View of western section (A-B)

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Plate 2. North east corner of the stripped area showing pit 0002 and walls 0011 and 0013



Plate 3. S-N face of wall 0011, showing cut by later red brick wall (0013) in centre of picture



Plate 4. View of northern section (B-C)



Plate 5. West to east section through pit 0002

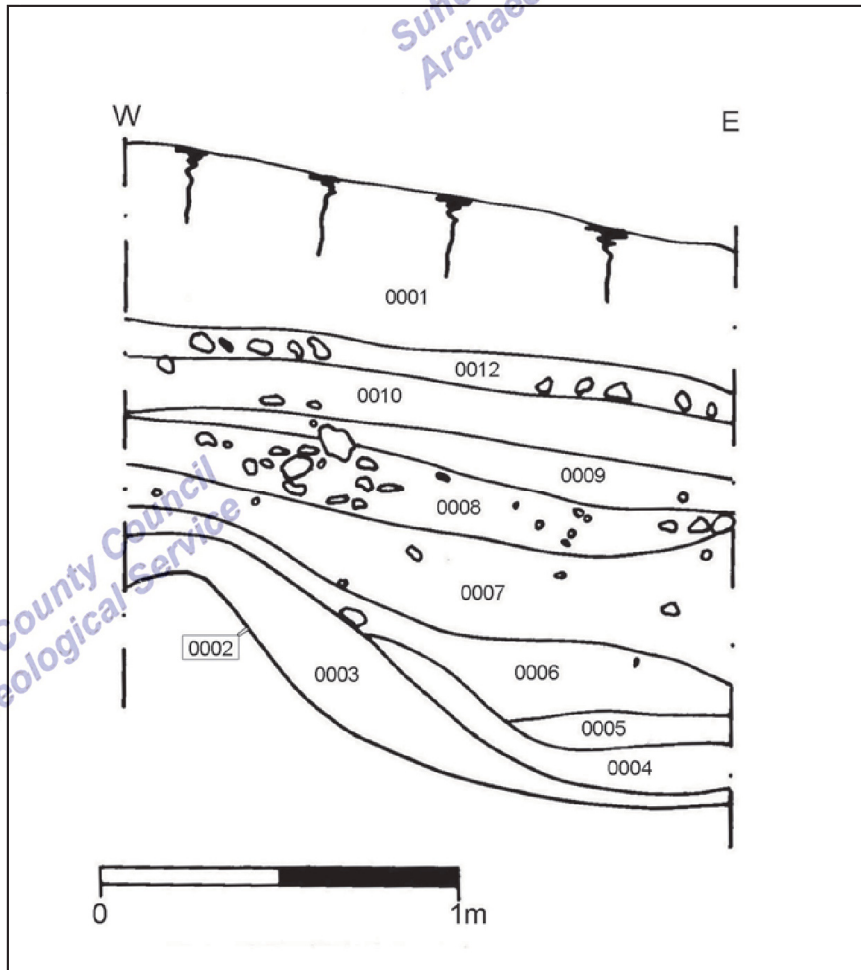


Figure 3. West to east section through pit 0002

63, High Street, Lowestoft (LWT158): the finds

Richenda Goffin, February 2008

Introduction

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

OP	Pottery	
	No.	Wt/g
0004	2	4
Total	2	4

Pottery

Two joining sherds were recovered from a pitfill in the garden at the rear of the property. The pottery is fine tempered, thin-walled, and made in white-firing clay with small splashes of green glaze on the outer surface. The sherds are from a small globular vessel, made in a 'Tudor Green' fabric type, which dates to c1380-1500.

Reference

Pearce, J., and Vince, A., 1988, A dated type-series of London Medieval Pottery Part 4: Surrey Whitewares, LAMAS

Discussion

The sites location to the rear of an area of medieval settlement suggested potential for the presence of domestic activity. Two archaeological features were observed within the excavated building footprint, a large pit and a section of flint and mortar wall, both of which survived in the north west corner of the site. Only a single, broken sherd of pottery was recovered from the pit as dating evidence which cannot be used to date the feature closely; it is from a vessel and fabric type with a fairly wide date range and as the only find recovered, the possibility that it is a residual find cannot be discounted. However, the pit can be said to be earlier than the section of flint and mortar wall which cuts it, and although it was not possible to date this wall fragment, it had itself been cut by a later 18th or 19th century red brick wall.

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Field Projects Team,
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
July 2008

Appendix I: Context List

OPNO	CONTEXT	IDENTIFIER	DESCRIPTION	CUTS	OVER	CUTBY	UNDER	FINDS Y/N
0001	0001	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay loam mixed with gravel and building rubble-modern		0012			
0002	0002	Pit cut	Cut of large pit visible in NW corner of site. Revealed during site level reduction and left high for recording. Deep, open 'U' shaped profile					
0003	0002	Pit fill	Primary fill. Clean, pale-mid yellowish brown sandy clay, occasional chalk flecks and small stones/gravel. Firm compaction. Re-deposited/slumped natural?				0004	N
0004	0002	Pit fill	Dark brown humic layer, loosely compacted, homogenous, very occasional small stones		0003		0005, 0006	Y
0005	0002	Pit fill	Pale-mid orangey yellow silty sand mottled with grey/brown silt. Loose compaction		0004		0006	N
0006	0002	Pit fill	Mid-pale greyish brown silty sandy clay with moderate chalk flecks, fairly firm compaction		0004, 0005		0007	N
0007	0002	Pit fill	Mid greyish brown silty clay, firm compaction, moderate small-medium stones, occasional chalk flecks		0006		0008	N
0008	0002	Pit fill	Mid-pale grey/brown clay silt with frequent small stones and large pebbles. Occasional CBM fragments. Moderate compaction		0007		0009	N
0009	0002	Pit fill	Mid-pale yellowish brown silty clay with moderate chalk flecks and occasional small stones. Firm compaction		0008		0010	N
0010	0002	Pit fill	Mid grey/brown clay sandy silt with moderate charcoal flecks and small stones. Occasional CBM flecks and oyster fragments		0009		0012	N
0011	0011	Wall	Remnant of flint and mortar wall or footing, aligned N-S turning 90° E-W to form a corner. Date uncertain but cuts medieval pit and cut by post medieval wall. c. 500mm high, 1.65m long N-S	0002		0013		
0012	0002	Pit fill	Mid-dark greyish brown clay sandy silt with frequent large stones and occasional chalk and CBM flecks. Loose compaction		0010		0001	N
0013	0013	Wall	Base of E-W red brick wall, 18 th /19 th century, cutting through earlier flint and mortar wall. Parallel with boundaries of property. Probably associated with a former outbuilding.	0011			0001	

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring

63 HIGH STREET, LOWESTOFT

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to construct two houses to the rear of 63 High Street, Lowestoft, has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (W/7173/10). 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 fronts Martins Score, a medieval street, and lies within the area of Lowestoft defined in the County Historic Environment Record as an archaeological site of regional importance.
- 1.3 The NAU Archaeology evaluation of the site (*An Archaeological Window Sampling Evaluation at 63 High Street, Lowestoft*, Report No 1275) indicates a low potential for the presence of medieval remains but in view of the destructive nature of proposed groundworks, these should be monitored in case the evaluation results are misleading.

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 medieval occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the lowering of ground levels and excavation of building footing trenches. 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 Sites and Monuments Record sheets should be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.

Specification by: Keith Wade
Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service Conservation Team
Environment and Transport Department
Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Date: 14 November 2007

Reference: /63 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.