

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2008/250

Bourne Hill, Wherstead
WHR 069

HER Information

Planning Application No: N/A

Date of Fieldwork: 23rd – 27th April 2007

Grid Reference: TM 1606 4177

Funding Body: Anglian Water

Curatorial Officer: Jess Tipper

Project Officer: Robert Atfield

Oasis Reference: Suffolkc1-47971

Digital report submitted to Archaeological Data Service:
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

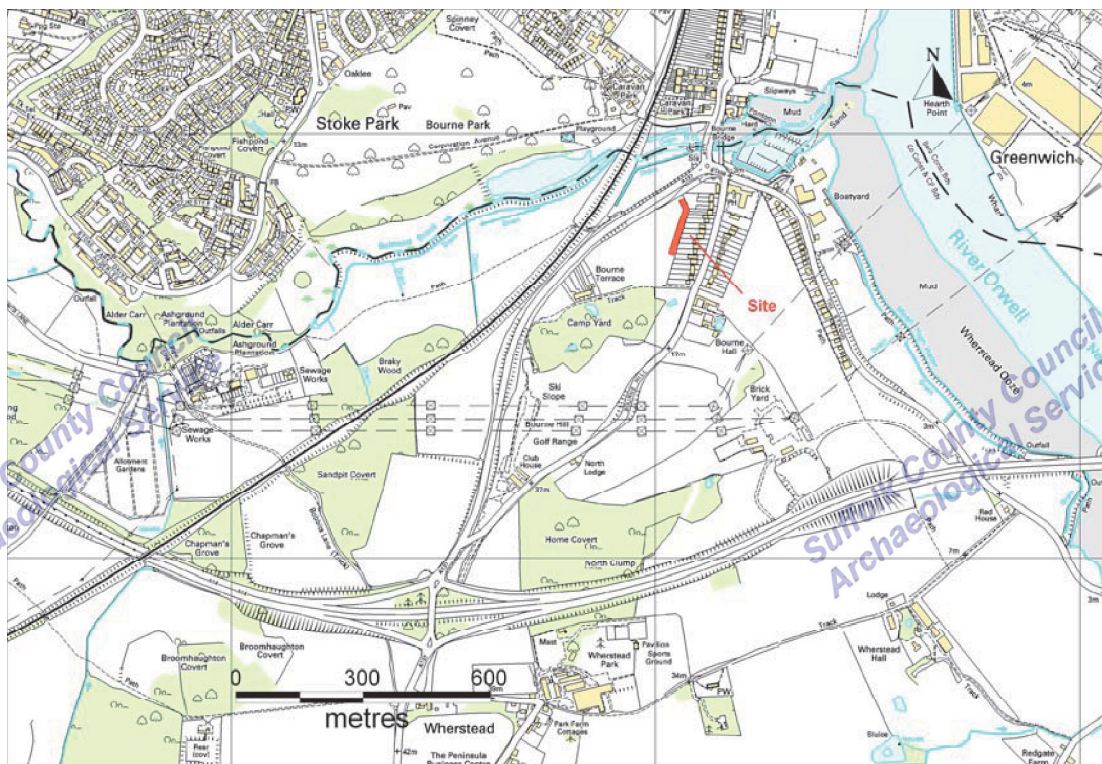
Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Summary

An archaeological monitoring was carried out on land at Bourne Hill, Wherstead, in advance of the construction of a new sewer pipeline. An undated ring ditch is recorded on the County Historic Environment Record within the area of development, and so there was high potential for prehistoric and later evidence. A 10m wide strip was excavated from the top to bottom of the hill, and a pipe trench further excavated through this. Only hill wash was visible through much of the strip with natural subsoil only revealed at the bottom of the pipe trench and the top of the hill to the south. No archaeological features were revealed, and only unstratified finds recovered.

1. Introduction and methodology

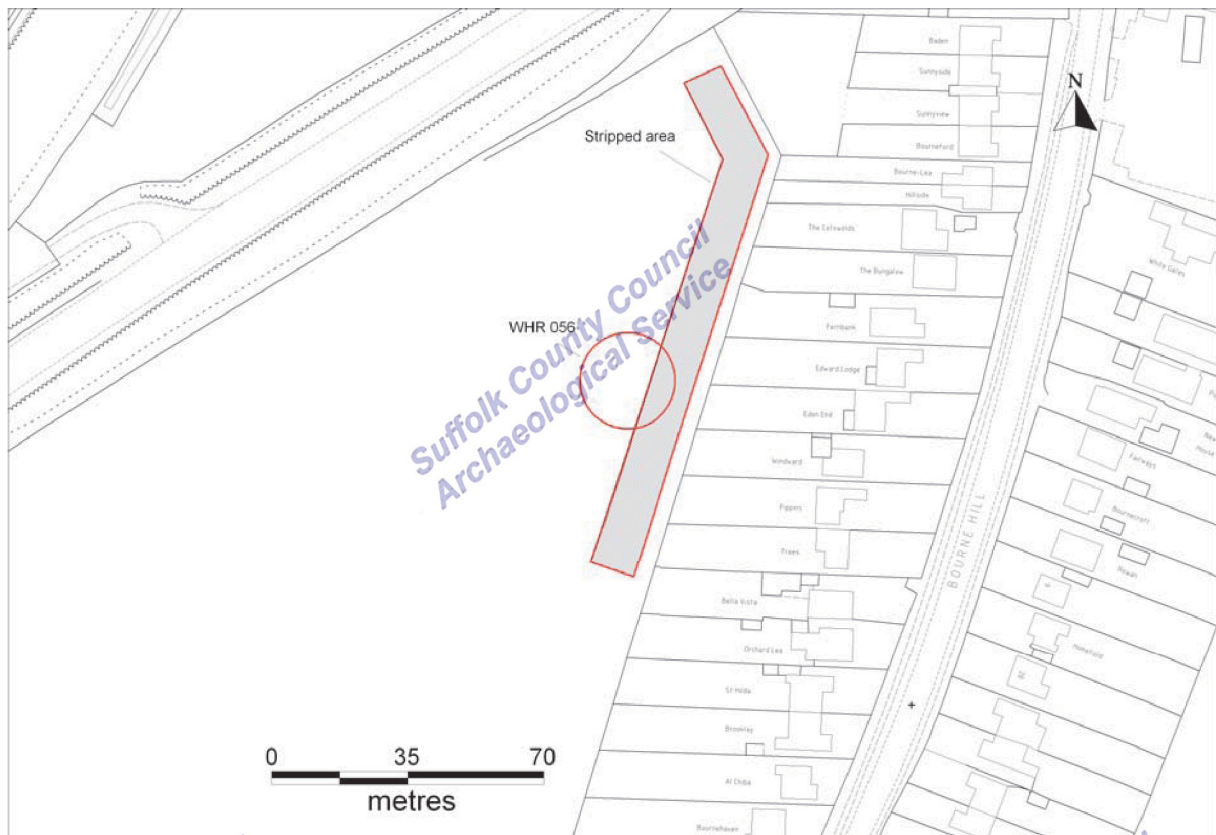
An archaeological monitoring was carried out on land to the west of Bourne Hill in advance of the laying of new sewerage pipes in April 2007. The site lies on a northwards facing hillside, between 4m -10m AOD, situated between Ipswich and the A14, with the River Orwell passing some 360m to the east.



© Crown Copyright, all rights reserved, Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2009

Figure 1. Site location

Five visits were made to the site by Robert Atfield and Clare Good of the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to inspect the ground works. This work included stripping an area 10m wide by 0.6m deep from the bottom to the top of Bourne Hill, then excavating a pipe trench through this stripped area, 0.7m wide by 1.8m deep (Fig. 2). The initial strip was almost continuously monitored, with the pipe trench excavation visited during and after the works. The site was recorded under the County Historic Environment Record (HER) code WHR 069.



© Crown Copyright, all rights reserved, Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2009

Figure 2. Stripped area and believed ring ditch location

2. Results

The pipeline area was stripped to roughly 0.6m from the top to bottom of the hill. It was excavated through topsoil 0001 and subsoils 0002 and 0004.

Topsoil 0001 comprised a rich mid-dark red brown loam with regular small/medium sized stones and occasional large flints. Large glass and ceramic building material

(CBM) fragments, especially tile, were found throughout this topsoil. Its depth ranged from between 0.32 and 0.46, but this was inconsistent and not steadily incremental down the hill as may be expected.

Subsoil 0002 comprised a mixed mid orange red brown slightly silty sand with occasional stones, charcoal flecks and assorted unstratified finds. The finds were noticeably fewer on the hill, with the majority recovered from the bottom of the hill to the north. It ranged from 0.3m deep towards the top of the hill in the south, to 1.3m deep at the bottom of the hill in the north. Towards the bottom of the hill, the topsoil and subsoil become indistinguishable within a very deep accumulation of both, suggesting they are hill wash.

Natural subsoil 0003 comprised a mixed coarse orange sand interspersed with gravel. This was only visible towards the peak of the hill in the south (c.15m from the southern end of the strip), where no hill wash was present.

Subsoil 0004 was visible south of the peak of the hill only, and so was unlikely to have been hill wash. It comprised a red brown sand/gravel (mixed), becoming finer and more silty towards the south. A modern gravel or sand pit containing modern ceramics, glass and metal was visible in the west half of the stripped area, just south of the peak of the hill (c.15m from southern end of the strip).

No archaeological features were noted in this strip, despite the relatively clean nature of the excavation. Natural subsoil was only reached towards the southern end, past the area where the ring ditch was likely to be located.

The pipe trench was excavated through this stripped area, 1.8m deep by 0.7m wide. This was excavated through subsoil 0002, and natural subsoil 0003. This was not excavated as cleanly as the stripped area, but it would still have been possible to determine the presence of any archaeological finds or features. However, none were noted.

Finds (by Richenda Goffin)

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

OP	Pottery		CBM		Clay tobacco pipe		Flint		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0002	6	37	3	80	6	21	31	334	Multi-period Later prehistoric
0004							3	44	
Total	6	37	3	80	6	21	34	378	

Table 1. Bulk finds quantities

Pottery

Six sherds of pottery were collected from the monitoring (0.037kg). Two abraded fragments of low fired pottery with oxidised surfaces and grey cores contain moderate medium to large (up to 4mm in length) flint inclusions. These cannot be closely dated within the prehistoric period. A hard-fired grey sherd which is less abraded and contains red ?grog inclusions is likely to be Iron Age. Two further joining sherds of Bury Sandy ware date to the Early Roman period (Cathy Tester, pers. comm). A fragment of a Late slipped redware pancheon or bowl dating to the 18th-19th century was also found in the topsoil deposit 0002.

Ceramic building material

Three fragments of red-fired late to post-medieval roof tile were recovered from 0002.

Clay tobacco pipe

Six fragments of post-medieval ceramic tobacco pipe stem were found in 0002.

Flint (identified by Colin Pendleton)

A total of 31 fragments of worked flint was collected, weighing 0.334kg in total. The fragments have been individually catalogued in Appendix 1.

Nearly all the flint was collected from topsoil deposit 0002. This assemblage consists mainly of flints which date from the Mid Bronze Age through to the Iron Age. The group exhibits a similar range of characteristics, as none show well controlled flaking,

and they are all relatively crude. Two possible Palaeolithic flints were also recovered from the topsoil.

Three flints were collected from subsoil 0004. The largest fragment is a long flake or blade which is probably Neolithic. Two snapped flakes from 0004 are probably Bronze Age or Iron Age, and it may be that the large flake could have been re-used during this period.

The assemblage is mainly homogenous, but the presence of three earlier flints is of interest and may suggest possible re-use during the Bronze Age to Iron Age.

Metalwork

A total of six fragments of metalwork was collected through metal detecting.

Small Find No	Period	Material	Name of object	No of frags
0001	L-med/EP-med	Copper alloy	Trade weight	1
0002	P-med	Copper alloy	Nuremburg jetton	1
0003	P-med	Copper alloy	Trade token	1
0004	P-med	Copper alloy	Coin	1
0005	Med	Copper alloy	Buckle	1
0006	P-med?	Copper alloy	Ring	1

Table 2. Small finds

SF 0001 Trade weight, equivalent of a quarter of an ounce. Late med/early post-med. (Andrew Brown, pers. comm).

SF 0002 Worn and folded Nuremburg jetton, 16th-17th C.

SF 0003 Very worn trade token, post-medieval.

SF 0004 Post-medieval coin, very worn, diameter 21mm. (Andrew Brown, pers. comm).

SF 0005 Sub-square buckle frame with grooved pinrest (Margeson 1993, No 142). Medieval.

SF 0006 Ring with overlapping terminals, and rounded section. Early Post-medieval?

Discussion of the finds

The finds recovered from the monitoring are all unstratified, and none were recovered from features. The presence of relatively large quantities of worked flint in the topsoil and subsoil deposits, showing similar general characteristics and dating, together with the presence of flint-tempered wares and a possible sherd of Iron Age pottery is significant, given the proximity of the site to the undated ring ditch. Small quantities of medieval and later finds were also recovered from the topsoil.

Discussion

The stripped area was fairly extensive and afforded good visibility of the subsoil but despite this, and the site's high archaeological potential for prehistoric activity, no archaeological deposits of that date were observed. The extensive hill wash covering much of the area potentially masked any archaeology that was present.

The narrow pipe trench through this also did not reveal any archaeology, but this was just to the east of where the ring ditch may be located. If the ring ditch is present, it is likely to be further west than the stripped area, or beneath subsoil layer 0002.

S. Cass and C Good

May 2009

References

Margeson, S., 1993, *Norwich Households*. EAA 58, Norwich Survey.