

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

10, CROSS GREEN, DEBENHAM (SMR ref. DBN 122)

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORK ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN EXTENSION

(Application No. 1163/03)

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2004/162

(OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-4888)

Summary: Archaeological monitoring of groundwork associated with the construction of a small extension to the rear of 10, Cross Green, Debenham, (NGR TM 1753 6316), was undertaken in November 2004. No archaeological features, other than a post-medieval well, were revealed and no artefacts were recovered. The well lining was of brick, flint and small septaria blocks and was of an unknown date. A pump is marked at the same location as the well on early Ordnance Survey maps. Steel girders that appeared to be set into the top of the brickwork were present. These may have been to support the pump and a cover for the well although it is more likely they had been put in place to support the concrete cap that had been used to cover the well. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference DBN 122. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, with funding from the owner, L. Robbins.

Introduction

An application for the construction of a small extension to the rear of 10, Cross Green, Debenham (application no. 1163/03) was approved but with an attached condition calling for a programme of archaeological works to be put in place prior to the commencement of construction work.

The archaeological interest in the site was due to its location close to the Church of St Mary Magdalene, within the area of medieval Debenham. The site also fronted onto a former medieval green. The proposed extension was to be built on strip foundations and it was the excavation of these that had the greatest potential to reveal and damage buried archaeological deposits. A Brief and Specification calling for archaeological monitoring of the groundwork was produced by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team (Appendix).

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 1753 6316; for a location plan see figure 1 below. This monitoring event is recorded on the Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record under the reference DBN 122. The work was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, with funding from the owner, L. Robbins.

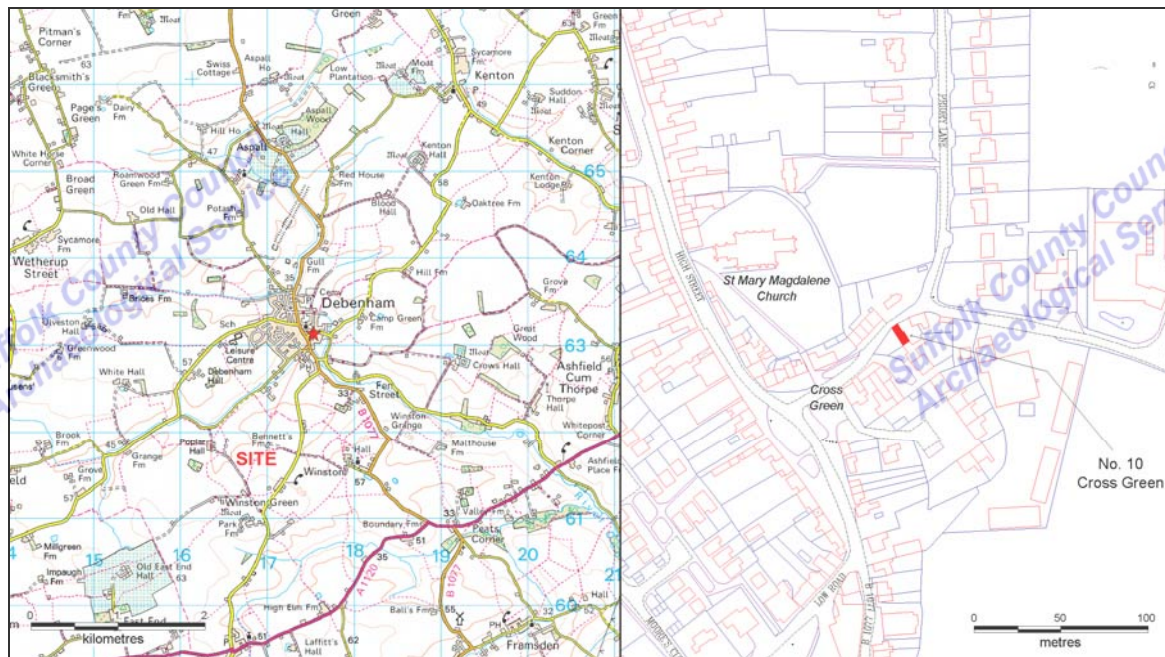


Figure 1: Location Plan

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Methodology

A visit was made to the site to inspect the footing trench after it had been hand excavated. This was done through a visual examination of the footing trench, and the resultant spoil, for buried archaeological deposits, features or artefacts. The depth of the footing trenches was recorded and the make-up of the ground as revealed by the footing trench was noted. Any features revealed were recorded with a measured sketched plan. Digital photographs were also taken.

Results

The site was visited on the 15th November 2004. All the footings for the new extension had been excavated by hand and were ready for concreting. The trench had been cut to a depth of c.1m revealing a 0.25m thick topsoil which immediately overlay a natural subsoil of stiff pale brown/yellow clay. The footing was thoroughly examined but no significant archaeological features or deposits were identified.

Within the area of the new extension the ground surface had been reduced by c.0.2m revealing a circular shaft interpreted as a well. Its internal diameter was 1.2m but it was not possible to ascertain its depth as it was filled with rubble to within c.1m of the top. The rubble appeared to comprise of 20th century bricks, mortar and concrete. The property owner reported that the area of the well had been covered in a thick layer of concrete.

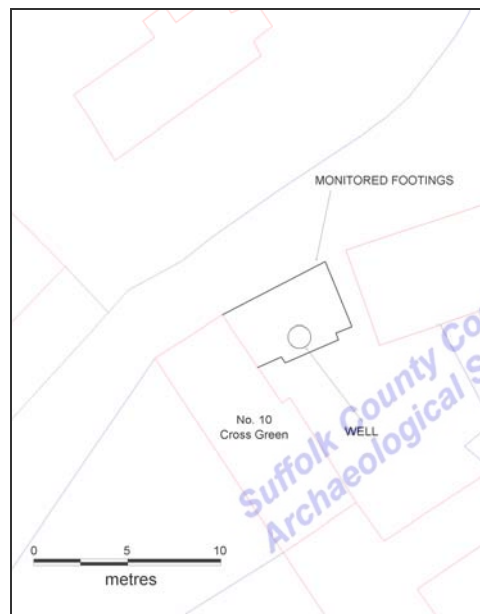


Figure 2: Monitoring Results

The well was lined with brickwork which also contained occasional small septaria blocks and flints. The bricks had dimensions of 55-60mm thick and 125-130mm wide (see Plate III). It was not possible to measure the length as only the ends were visible in the face of the well and it appeared that only half bricks had been used.

Across the top of the well a series of three sets of girders had been placed (see Plates I and II). Each set comprised two 'U' shaped channels that were held together by square plates riveted across them. One end of the girders was exposed (the other ends were still buried in the topsoil) and these also had plates riveted across them although these were of differing shapes and contained circular holes.

The spoil was still on site although it was to be later removed. This was quickly examined but no artefacts were recovered.

Conclusion

No significant medieval archaeological deposits were identified. The footings were very cleanly cut and had any archaeological remains existed they would have been easily identified.

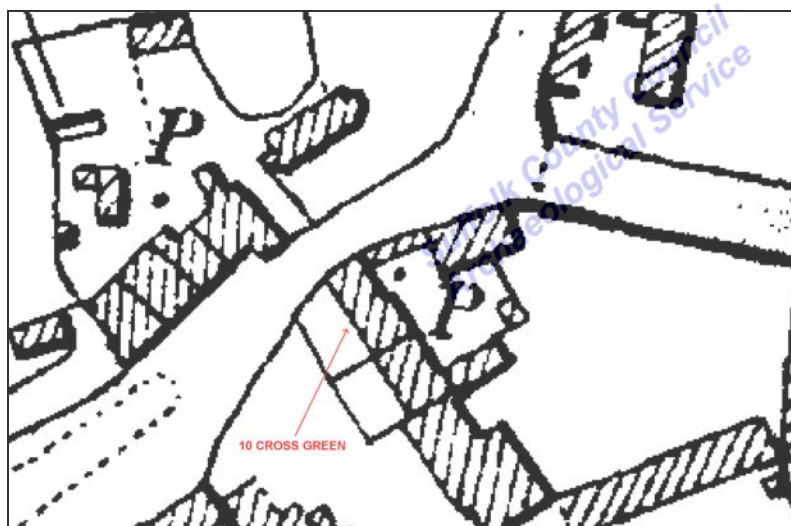


Figure 3: 2nd Edition OS, c. 1900 (extract)

No dating evidence was recovered from the well although a pump is marked on the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance Survey maps of c.1885 and 1900 respectively (see figure 3). It is likely that this is a hand pump that would have been situated over the well for the purpose of extracting water. The well itself would have been hidden under the yard surface.

It was initially thought the girders may have been part of a supporting structure for the pump and well cover but after further thought it is more likely that these had been used to support the thick layer of concrete that had been cast *in-situ* across the top of the well. The girders themselves had probably been reused and originally came from a steel framed structure, possibly a pylon, as the angles on the end plates of one girder suggest it had once been a diagonal brace.



Plate I: The well



Plate II: girders across the well top



Plate III: brickwork within well



Plate IV: general view of site



Plate V: The revealed soil profile