

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

32 St Andrew's Street South, Bury St Edmunds BSE 322

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2008
(Planning app. no. SE/08/1205)

*Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service*

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List of Contributors

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by the owners Steve Wilkinson and Jaki Lilly and carried out at the request of John Stebbing Architect Ltd. The fieldwork was carried out by Mo Muldowney and Liz Muldowney from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The project was managed by Andrew Tester.

Finds processing was carried out by Gemma Adams and the specialist finds report produced by Richenda Goffin. Other specialist identification and advice was provided by Robert Carr.

Summary

Three stages of monitoring at 32 St Andrew's Street South revealed ditch-like features in the cellar and to the rear of the property, although it was unclear whether they were of archaeological or geological origin. The foundation for a chimney was also identified, located on the rear wall of the property, which was likely to have been contemporary with the construction of the house (late 17th/early 18th century).

HER information

Planning application no.	SE/08/1205
Date of fieldwork:	5th, 7th, 20th August and 27th October 2008
Grid Reference:	TL 8519 6396
Funding body:	Steve Wilkinson and Jaki Lilly
Oasis reference.	suffolkc1-52244

Introduction and Background

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken at the rear of 32 St Andrew's Street South (Figure 1 and 2) on the 5th, 7th and 20th August and the 27th October 2008 at the request of John Stebbing Architect Limited, during the demolition of the existing single-storey rear extension, creation of a cellar skylight, levelling of the rear courtyard and excavation of foundation trenches for a replacement extension. The work was carried out in accordance with an outline Brief and Specification prepared by Robert Carr of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to fulfil the requirements of the planning application (SE/08/1205).

The archaeological monitoring condition was placed upon the work as the property is situated immediately west of the assumed location of the town wall and ditch (BSE 139), that is, on the line of, and slightly to the east of St Andrew's Street South and also because the property (with number 31) is Listed Grade II (Images of England no. 467167). In addition, there are a number of entries in the Historic Environment Record (HER) (Table 1) in close proximity to the property which suggests there is medium potential for the discovery of archaeological remains of all periods.

HER Ref	Brief Description	Grade	Period
Unknown	31 to 32 St Andrew's Street South. Single-storey house, later 2 cottages. Timber-framed, rendered, pan-tile roof. Carriageway at south end (no.31). Cellar and attic	II	Late 17th/ early 18th C
BSE 029	Domestic waste recovered from a deep pit on site of a former maltings		11th C
BSE 076	'Lime kilns' shown on Thos. Warren's 1776 map		Post-medieval
BSE 139	NW section of the 'town defences' (SF16509) between Risbygate and Westgate		Medieval
BSE 179	Rear of 71 Guildhall Street. Monitoring recovered pottery and burnt flint		Bronze Age; prehistoric
BSE 181	An evaluation discovered part of the town ditch and the remains of bank, wall and later buildings		Medieval
BSE 181	Finds recovered from buried soil below town bank		Prehistoric; Late-Saxon; Medieval
BSE 185	Capped ventilation shaft at rear of 31(?) St Andrew's Street South		Undated
BSE 209	71 Guildhall Street. Monitoring recovered pottery and peg tile		Late medieval
BSE 251	Building depicted in the middle of St Andrew's Street on Alex Downing's 1740 map		Post-medieval

Table 1. Selected HER entries in proximity to 32 St Andrew's Street South

Despite the potential for discovering remains of prehistoric to post-medieval date, it was considered most likely that any archaeology encountered would be late medieval and/or post-medieval. There are two reasons for this: firstly, the presumed construction date of the property and secondly, its proximity to the assumed location of the town defences.

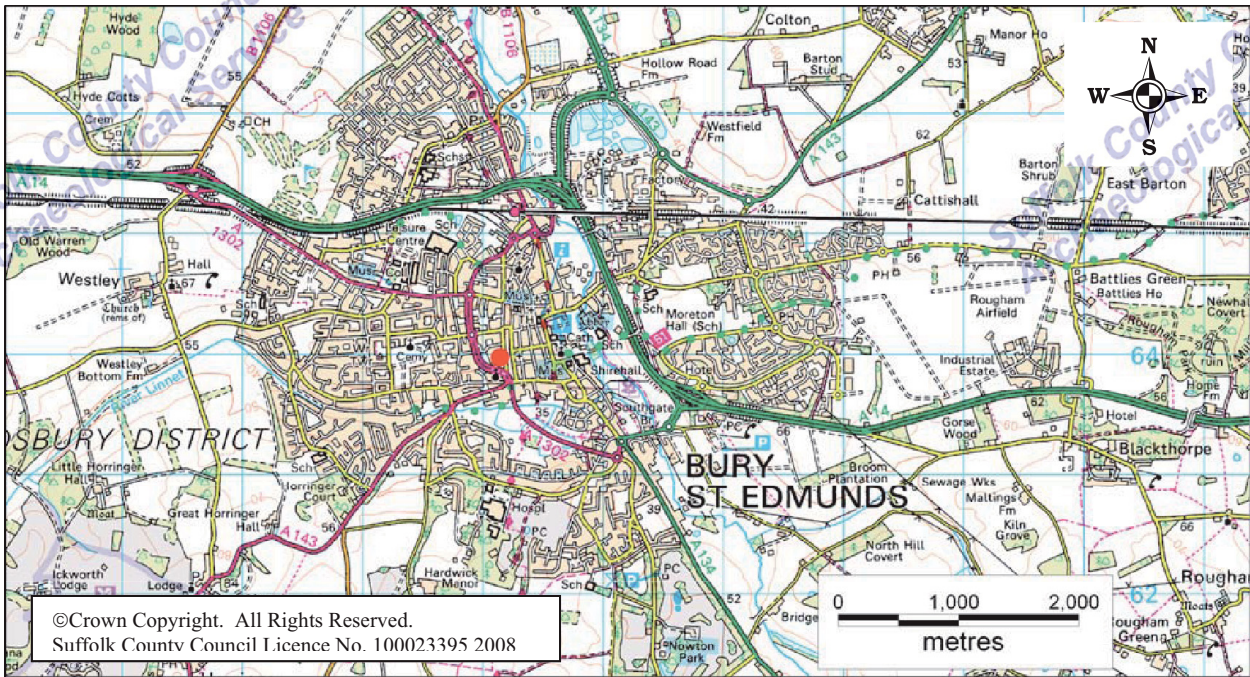


Figure 1. Site location (red)

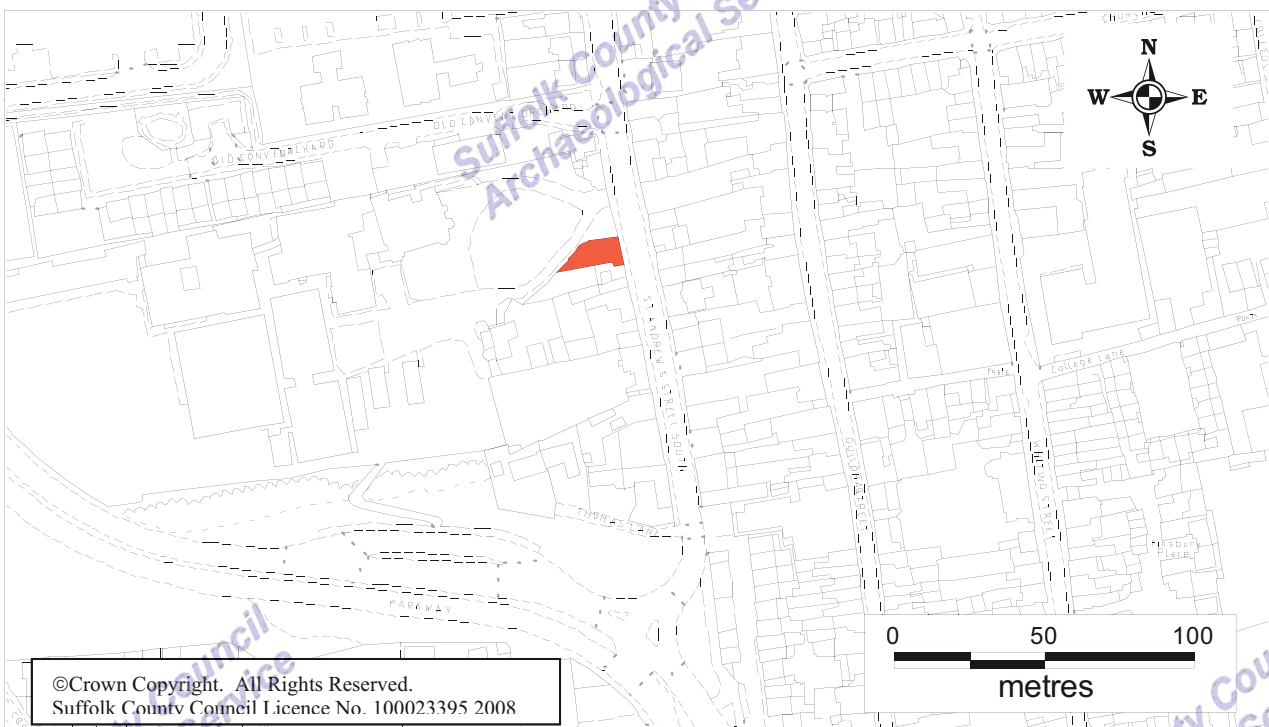


Figure 2. 32 St Andrew's Street South (red)

Methodology

Three areas within the rear courtyard were excavated using a rubber-tracked JCB 360 degree excavator (1.5 tonnes) with a foot-wide toothed ditching bucket. The first area (Stage 1) to be excavated lay in the north-west corner of the yard, against the back wall of the property and the

south-facing elevation of the single-storey extension. At the time of monitoring, this trench was approximately 2.5m long by 0.6m wide and no more than 0.5m deep. Stage 2 involved machine-stripping the cobbled surface of the courtyard. Additional work to the cellar was undertaken by the contractors in the days preceding 20th August, whereby the cellar walls were knocked back and in some instances, the underlying chalk natural was exposed. Stage 3 involved the demolition of the modern, brick construction single-storey rear extension and excavation of footings ahead of the proposed construction. All stages of work were monitored by an experienced archaeologist.

Any remains of historic, architectural or archaeological interest were recorded by hand planning and digital photography, and any artefacts were collected and stored at SCCAS Bury St Edmunds office. A colour photographic record was compiled using a high-resolution digital camera and drawn record was created at scale 1:50 (or as appropriate). Written descriptions of structures and deposits were recorded on SCCAS *pro forma* sheets. A site plan showing the location of the three stages of monitoring is kept in the archive.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-52244) and a digital copy of the report submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>).

The site archive is kept in the main store of SCCAS at Bury St Edmunds under HER No. BSE 322.

Results

Stage 1

Excavation of the cellar window trench revealed part of a chimney foundation, constructed with brick and flint set in mortar. Only one course was evident, at the top of the surviving level, comprising six bricks set in stretcher bond (Plate 1). Under this course, the foundation cut was almost wholly visible to a depth of 0.5m and backfilled with a mix of mortar, chalk, broken bricks and flint nodules. The cut itself was approximately 1.2m long and survived to 0.46m wide and had steep, near vertical sides, breaking gradually to the base (not clearly seen). It truncated dark yellowish brown subsoil and cut into the underlying natural chalk, which was a mixed deposit of chalk and mid brownish yellow silty clay, with rare flint nodules.

Further evidence for a former fireplace can be seen on the rear wall of the property, above the current window where a narrow section of rough render is visible. Internally, on the floor immediately behind the chimney foundation, a rectangular section of screed marks the approximate position of the hearth. Hardcore for the hearth could be seen from the cellar and was constructed using a mix of well-crushed bricks, flint and mortar and was supported underneath by a crude timber-frame arrangement, affixed to the existing floor beams.

Observations took place after additional work on the cellar had been carried out by the contractor during which artefacts had been recovered. These objects were: a large worked stone fragment, a post-medieval pottery sherd – both retained for analysis (see Finds evidence, below), a (crushed) lower jaw bone of an unidentified animal (not kept) and three fragments of dressed stone, probably flagstones (not kept). On examination of the exposed cellar walls, two probable ditches were observed. Ditch 0005 was located towards the rear of the property and observed fully in the north-facing cellar wall and partially in the east-facing wall. It had a possible south-east to north-west alignment and was over 1m wide and 1m deep and contained three fills. The lower (0004)

and upper fill (0002) were indistinguishable mid orange brown silty clay, and the mid fill (0003) was a slump deposit of yellowish white chalk from the east side of the pit (Plate 2). Ditch 0007 was located at the entrance to the cellar, towards the front of the house and had a possible south-west to north-east alignment. It was smaller than ditch 0005, approximately 0.7m wide by 0.5m deep, and contained a deposit of mid yellowish brown silty clay (fill 0006). No finds were observed in the exposed sections of either ditch.

It is not clear whether these features would have truncated any subsoil deposit as none survived beneath the house.

Stage 2

The courtyard was stripped of the flint-cobbled and concrete surface to a depth of no more than 0.2m, and a small raised, brick-edged flower bed was also removed. Machining revealed dark brown silty clay topsoil only. No archaeological deposits were encountered during levelling of the courtyard.

Stage 3

The footprint of the new extension was reduced in depth by approximately 0.3m, this revealed a mixture of garden soil and make-up deposits from the previous extension. No archaeological deposits were encountered. The foundation trench for the south wall of the new extension was excavated to a depth of 0.5m and formed the continuation of the footings observed in Stage 1 for the cellar skylight. The north side of the trench was partially within the previous foundation trench and as such revealed only recent backfill. The section of the south side was photographed and recorded. Here a modern drainage trench (excavated as part of the current works) was revealed cutting a steep-sided feature filled with degraded chalk and silt. A 'V' shaped feature with a similar fill was also recorded in section. It was unclear whether their origins were archaeological or geological.

Finds evidence

Introduction

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

Context	Pottery		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g		
0001	1	51	1 moulded stone	18th-20th C
Total	1	51		

Pottery

The remains of a dish or shallow bowl was recovered as an unstratified find by the contractor. The vessel is made in a hard-fired unglazed earthenware which has a buff, slightly pink exterior. The fabric is fine but contains mixed bands of cream clay and grog. The dish has been catalogued as Late Post-medieval earthenware (18th-20th C).

Architectural Stone (Robert Carr)

A fragment of architectural moulded stone was collected by the builders. It is made from a medium fine-grained limestone with shelly inclusions. It is worn, particularly on one side, and has clearly been redeposited. The stone is most likely to have formed part of the upper element of a large arched window, decorated with a wide roll of possible ogee moulding. The fragment may have come from a mullion from which the decorative moulding sprang, or, perhaps more

likely, it formed part of the side of the window itself. There are two jointing faces at the top of the stone. Although the precise type of limestone from which it was made has not been established, it is not Barnack stone as it is too fine. The combination of stone type and the decorative elements suggest that it belongs to the decorated or perpendicular architectural style, and that it dates to around the middle of the 14th century. Many such fragments were removed from the Abbey buildings of Bury St Edmunds following the dissolution and were re-used in properties throughout the town.

Summary and Conclusion

Three stages of monitoring took place in the rear courtyard and cellar of 32 St Andrew's Street South which identified a fireplace foundation on the rear of the property - probably contemporary with its construction (late 17th/early 18th century) - and four 'cut' features of uncertain origin. Neither ditch 0005 and 0007, as observed in the cellar walls (Stage 1), were seen to contain any organic or anthropologically derived material which suggests they were either prehistoric field boundaries or geological features within the chalk natural. This is also the case regarding the two 'cut' features identified during Stage 3.

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Appendix 1 – Context Summary

Context No	Cut No	Description	Depth	Cuts
0001	-	Unstratified finds	-	-
0002	0005	Mid orange brown silty clay. Upper fill	0.5	-
0003	0005	Slump deposit of yellowish white chalk from the east side of the pit. Mid fill	0.2	-
0004	0005	Mid orange brown silty clay. Lower fill	0.5	-
0005	0005	V-shaped possible ditch of unknown function and date	1	Natural
0006	0007	Mid yellowish brown silty clay. Single fill.	0.5	-
0007	0007	U-shaped possible ditch of unknown function and date	0.5	Natural

Table 2. Context summary

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Plates



Plate 1. External view of the fireplace foundation at the rear of 32 St Andrew's Street South



Plate 2. Feature 0005, visible in the north-facing cellar wall