

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2008/274

Former Eastgate Nursery Site, Bury St Edmunds

J.Rolfe
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HER information

Planning application no:	Pre-Planning
Grid Reference:	TL8582/6430
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Funding Body	St Edmundsbury Borough Council
Oasis reference:	Suffolkc1-52746

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List of abbreviations used in the text

DBA	Desk Based Assessment
HER	Historic Environment Record
PAS	Portable Antiquities Scheme
PDA	Proposed Development Area
PPG 16	Planning Policy Guidance 16
SAM	Scheduled Ancient Monument
SCCAS	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
SCCAS/CT	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service / Conservation Team
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest

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Summary

The results of this DBA suggest that the PDA is in an area of high archaeological potential.

The PDA adjoins and is part of the Abbey of St Edmund, a site of international significance. The site lies within the area of high archaeological importance, defined in the Replacement St Edmundsbury Borough Local Plan 2016 (Appendix B).

The topographic location of the PDA adjacent to the historic river crossing of the main eastern route into Bury St Edmunds has a high potential for medieval settlement along the road frontage.

The documentary evidence indicates that tanning and associated activities took place within the PDA. The well preserved evidence of the early post medieval tanning industry found at **BSE 292** suggests that any material found within the PDA would be equally prolific and possibly even better preserved due to a lack of later development within the PDA.

The location of the PDA close to the river within the floodplain significantly, increases the potential for waterlogged material or environmental evidence to survive.

The PDA has the archaeological potential to lead to a greater understanding of the land-use, economy and development of this area of the town.

Consultation with English Heritage and Suffolk County Council Planning Archaeologist should be at the earliest opportunity as any development on this site will affect the setting of a Scheduled Ancient monument that is statutorily protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979. The status of this internationally important site will result in the acceptability of any development being questioned.

Should development in principle be accepted the type of mitigation required will depend upon the type of development and construction methods used?

Due to the high archaeological potential indicated by this DBA, it is probable that further field evaluation would be required if consideration of the development is progressed. Any development that involves ground disturbance will need to have a program of archaeological works specified by SCCAS/CT which could involve environmental sampling and full scale excavation.

1. Introduction

Project Background

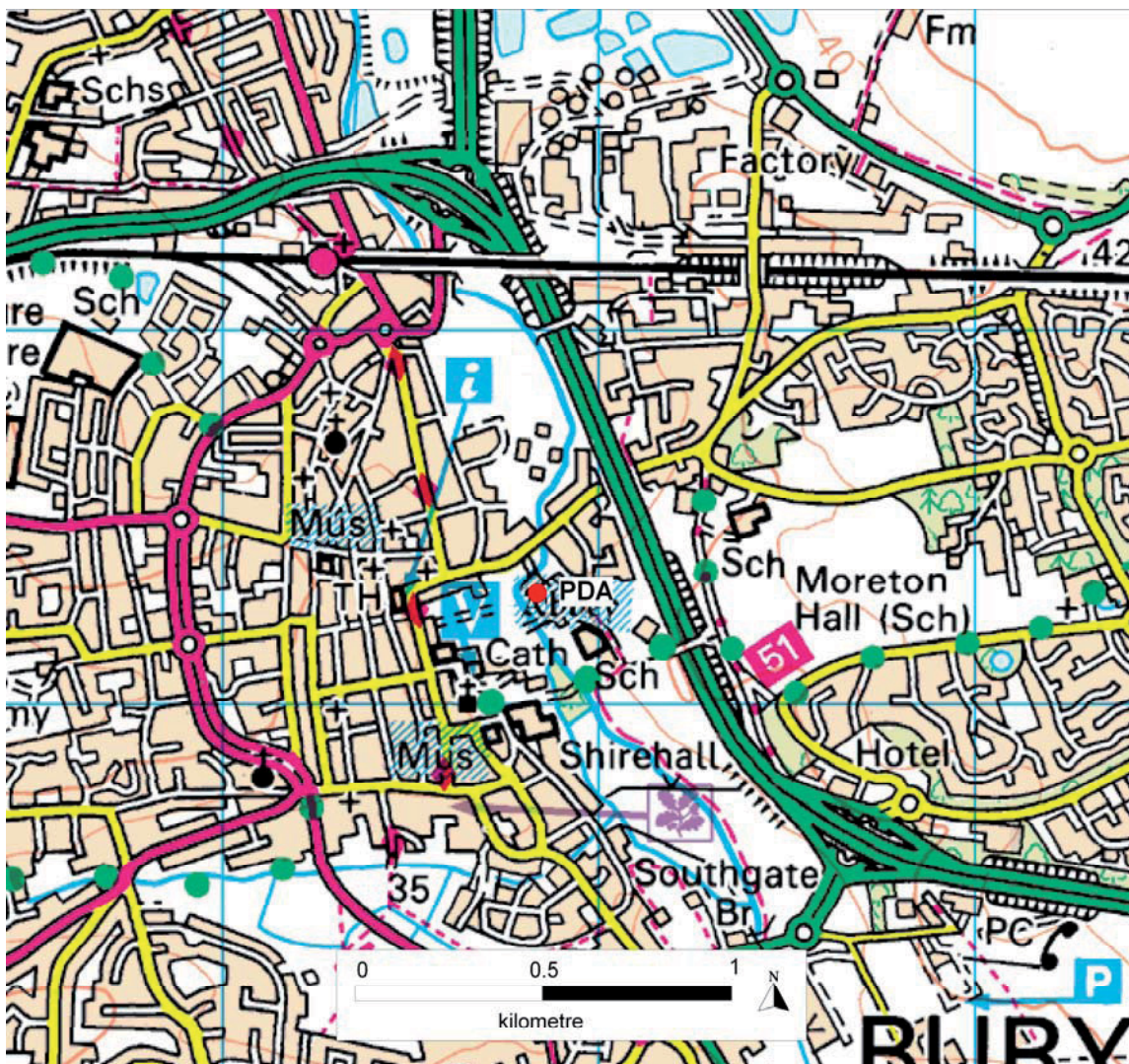
This archaeological DBA has been prepared by James Rolfe of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service for St Edmundsbury Borough Council.

This DBA is the first stage of a programme of archaeological works to access the archaeological potential of the PDA.

Site description

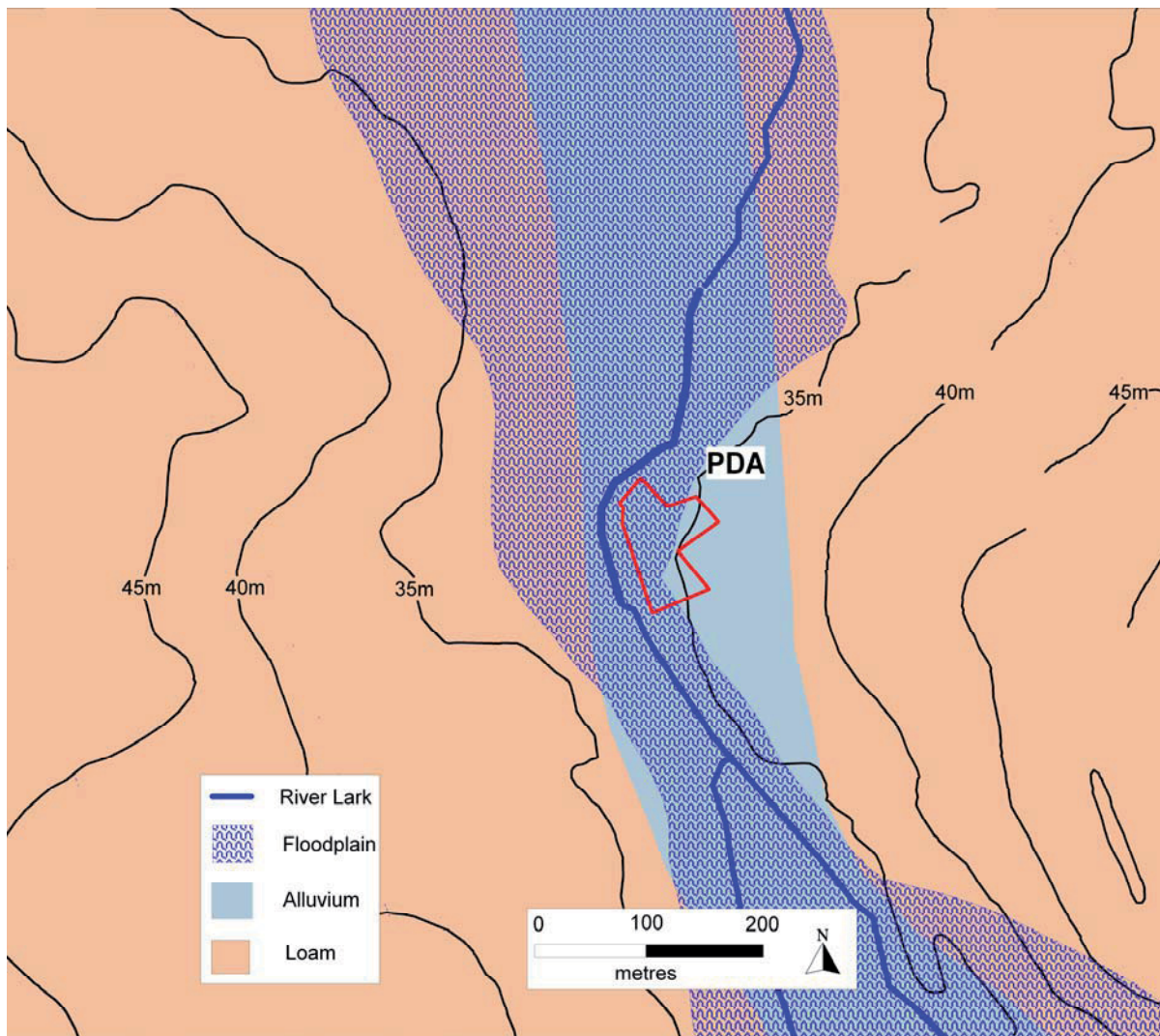
The subject of this DBA covers an area of approximately 0.55ha centred at TL8582/6430, in the parish of Bury St Edmunds (Fig. 1).

A site visit was made on 04/12/2008, to assess the present land-use. The PDA comprises a disused nursery site and a lawn. There is one single storey standing building and the remains of several glasshouses in the form of low brick walls and associated heating pipes.



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Figure 1. Location of the PDA



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Figure 2. Topography and geology of the PDA and surrounding area

Topography and geology

The PDA is located on the eastern bank of the River Lark, within the floodplain. The PDA is c 31-35m above sea level. The localised topography of the PDA is flat ground by the river rising up to the east (Fig. 2).

The PDA is on deep alluvial clay and silts over chalk, (Ordnance Survey 1983) (Fig. 2).

Historical Background

General (Andrew Tester, Dave Gill)

The first reference to the town of Bury St. Edmunds is as 'Bedericsworth', a pre-existing settlement which attracted the attention of one of the Anglian kings, Sigebert, who 'retired' there in 633, founding a small religious community. Documents of the 10th century refer to it as having the status of 'villa regia' (King's or royal house) from the mid-Saxon period. It is thought that the Saxon town was centred towards St. Mary's Square and along the edge of the floodplain of the River Lark (Fig. 3A), but this remains unproven. The impetus for the growth of the settlement appears to have been related to the importance of the shrine of St. Edmund, who was martyred by the Danes in 869AD and whose body was brought to Bury in 903AD. The town is known to have had its own mint and market before the Norman Conquest. The name of the town was changed from Bedericsworth to Bury St. Edmunds during the 10th century (Statham 1988). In the early 11th century the secular church or Minster was refounded by Cnut as a Benedictine monastery and the first stone church was built.

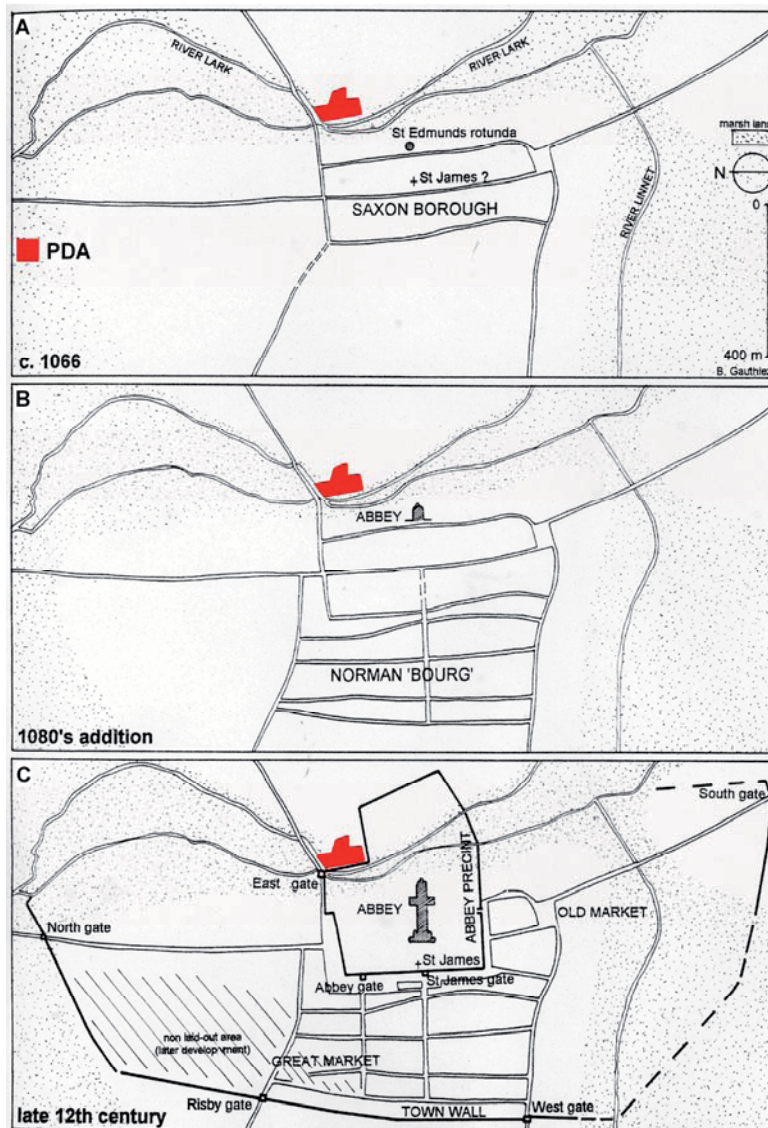


Figure 3. Hypothetical reconstructions of the historic development of Bury St Edmunds (Gauthiez, B 1998)

Following the Norman Conquest the shape of the town changed with the imposition of a plan which included a gridded pattern of streets over the rising ground in front of the Abbey Church, by Abbot Baldwin during the 1070s (Fig. 3B). The Abbey precinct was later also enlarged over the grid in front of the Abbey, which can be seen in the interrupted alignment of Northgate Street and Southgate Street (Fig. 3C). In places, the street grid pattern is thought to have displaced earlier buildings.

The present street pattern was established by the mid 13th century. During the medieval period the town remained a prominent regional economic centre and a destination for international pilgrims to the shrine of St Edmund.

Although the PDA is just outside of the east gate of the town its position is prominent as it is adjacent to the river crossing for the major eastern route into Bury St Edmunds. There is evidence of medieval dwellings further east past the PDA along Eastgate Street, indicating, medieval settlement was not restricted to within the towns walls.

The Abbey (Bob Carr)

The Abbey complex overlies the site of several phases of Saxon settlement which were the predecessor of the present town. Excavated evidence from within the Abbot's Palace (the Queen's Chamber excavation for the DoE by Tony Fleming) probably confirms a mid-Saxon date, while circumstantial evidence of a road system which seems to predate the Medieval grid and which focuses on the area later to be occupied by the Abbey, contributes to a convincing case for a high proportion of the early and mid-Saxon settlement area to be within the area of the Abbey precinct. The status of the early settlement and its ecclesiastical importance are confirmed by the translation there of the remains of the royal martyr, Edmund, in the early 10th century; the relics were housed in a 'very large church of wonderful wooden plankwork'. In the early 11th century the secular church or Minster was refounded by Cnut as a Benedictine monastery and the first stone church built. Detached fragments derived from this building were found when the Medieval crypt was emptied in the mid 20th century excavations. We have no knowledge of ancillary buildings associated with the 10th and 11th century church, or the area covered by the pre-Norman ecclesiastical complex. There is some evidence for the Late Saxon lay settlement, this seems to be orientated along the western valley side along the Northgate-Southgate axis to both north and south of the ecclesiastical complex.

Abbot Baldwin (1065-97) began the planning and construction fundamental to the Abbey and town as we receive them today. He seems to be the origin of a strategic plan which re-designed the Abbey church, orientating the claustral ranges and urban gridded street pattern upon its east-west axis. The Abbey as a whole ranked amongst the most wealthy and influential in the Medieval kingdom (with Winchester, Westminster and Crowland); the size and grandeur of the church were to be commensurate with its status. Construction of the presbytery was complete by 1095, the crossing and nave in the early 12th century, the West Front by the 1130s. Almost immediately the West Front was further elaborated upon with the addition of a west tower and then the addition of the side chapels and octagons by Abbot Samson. The West Front became the widest of any Medieval church in this country. By c.1200 the main structural work was complete, though no doubt there were many as yet unrecorded alterations. The west tower failed in the 1430s and was rebuilt by 1465. The Abbey as a whole was dissolved by Henry VIII in 1539 though there is

good evidence that the church itself survived intact until the 1580s. However, after that date it joined the rest of the claustral buildings as an effective stone pit being plundered for building stone and hardcore rubble. The Medieval structure is known to be a complex, multiphase structure.

The development of the claustral range about the Abbey church was largely achieved within the 11th and 12th centuries, certainly the major elements of cloister, refectory, dormitory and chapter house were in place by the early 12th. There was without doubt continued development, refurbishment and replacement throughout the life of the Abbey.

The pre 1100 Abbey church and complex may not have been formally enclosed. The main north to south highway (now Northgate and Southgate Streets) through the settlement seems to have formed an effective western boundary; the great West Front butts up to and aligns with it. The River Lark forms a natural eastern boundary, and the road to the crossing at Eastgate, may have formed a northern limit, nothing is known of the southern edge.

A major change took place under Abbot Anselm (1120-48): the area of the Abbey was extended and formalised with a precinct wall and gates. The Norman Tower is the sole surviving 12th century gate. The extensive lengths of surviving precinct wall and buttress have not been systematically studied and described, but casual observation shows some areas of flint and mortar walling with horizontal coursing, characteristic of the 12th century. The main gate into the 'Great Court' was destroyed in the insurrection of 1327. The flamboyant 'Abbey Gate' was built next to the site of the original (which was on the axis of the urban grid opposite the end of Abbeygate Street).

The shrine of St Edmund was the focus and origin of the community. The relics of the martyrdom and canonisation of an English king became a centre for large scale medieval pilgrimage. The Abbey had national and international connections throughout its life. It is probable that this will be reflected in the archaeological content of the site.

Following the Dissolution in 1539, the church and claustral ranges became stone-yards; fine ashlar is found in walls throughout the town. The main gates and precinct walls have survived largely intact.

Historical significance of the Abbey (Bob Carr)

The Abbey and its precinct have importance both as an ecclesiastical monument and also as a critical element in the foundation and development of a major medieval town. The Abbey is well documented and its significance as a major entity in the monastic and seigniorial life of the nation is apparent. The 11th century Royal Grant to the Abbey of the 8½ hundreds which constituted the area later to become West Suffolk gave it great status and economic power within the region, and the nation; Westminster, Winchester and Crowland were amongst the few abbeys which were rated as wealthier. The Abbey was significant as a national centre of pilgrimage, an institution which spread to France (the martyrdom is depicted in St Denis). The political importance of the Abbott was recognised when the Magna Carta was ratified at Bury by the regional magnates. Before the Reformation the

Abbey was a focus of regional economic and social life. In national terms the historical significance of the monument is exceptional.

The scale and grandeur of the Abbey church, its claustral range and precinct is recoverable in the imagination when the scope of the ruins is seen; and significant comparative architectural information on the development of the building within its national context can be gleaned from the flint and mortar which remains. It is the preservation of the startlingly large plan area, almost the entire precinct, without significant subsequent development, and yet in close juxtaposition with the medieval town it spawned, that is the unique feature of this monument. The survival of an urban monastic development of this size is rare.

Scope of this report

In order to set the PDA in its archaeological context a study area of 250m from its edge was selected for examination (Fig. 4).

In accordance with PPG16, the Government's guidance on archaeology and planning, (www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/planningpolicyguidance9) and based on a SCCAS/CT specification, this assessment examines the available archaeological sources. These include the Suffolk HER, reports of any archaeological investigations, all readily available cartographic and documentary sources, an aerial photographic survey and a site walkover.

Aims

To determine as far as reasonably practicable from the existing records, the previous land-use, the nature of the archaeological resource and the potential resource within the PDA.

Methods

The methodology involved interrogating the following sources of data to meet the aims of this DBA.

- A search of the Suffolk HER for any records within 250m from the edge of the PDA. The results are described and mapped in the main body of the report, Section 2.
- An examination of the literature with reference to archaeological excavations within the study area.
- A search for Scheduled Ancient Monuments that have a direct line of sight to the PDA was carried out. A summary is presented in the main report, Section 2.
- A search for listed buildings that have a direct line of sight to the PDA was carried out. A summary is presented in the main report, Section 2.
- An assessment of all cartographic sources relevant to the PDA to identify historic land-use, the siting of old boundaries and earlier buildings, Section 2.

- A historical documentary search was commissioned; the results have been summarised in Section 2, with the full report presented in Appendix 2.
- The aerial photographic survey was commissioned and the archives held at Suffolk County Council HER, the National Monuments Record Office at Swindon and the Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photographs were examined. The results are summarised in the main report, Section 2.
- A site walkover was conducted on the 04/12/2008, for which notes and digital photographs were taken.

Legislative frameworks

PPG 16 (November 1990) provides guidance for planning authorities, developers and others in the investigation of archaeological remains. This guidance advises developers to discuss their plans, preferably at a pre planning stage, with the County Archaeological Planning Officer for any possible archaeological constraints on their development proposal. The planning guidance sets out to protect nationally and locally important monuments and their settings. There will be a presumption in favour of preservation *in situ* of important remains. In certain circumstances field evaluation will be carried out to enable an informed decision to be made. On sites where there is no overriding case for preservation *in situ* provision will be made for their recording and excavation prior to development.

The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979 statutorily protects Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM's) and their settings as nationally important sites. There are two SAM's within 250m of the PDA. These are SF2, the remains of the Abbey and its precinct wall which is adjacent to the PDA and SF38, the remains of an early 14th century chapel in the burial grounds of the Abbey (Figs. 4 and 5).

Listed buildings are protected under the Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Act of 1990. This ensures that listed buildings are given statutory protection against unauthorised demolition, alteration and extension. Buildings are listed because they are of special architectural importance, due to their architectural design, decoration and craftsmanship; also because they are of historical interest. This includes buildings that illustrate important aspects of the nation's social, economic, cultural or military history or have a close association with nationally important persons or events. There are twelve listed buildings adjacent to or whose setting could be affected by the development of the PDA (Fig. 5).

A Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is an area that has been notified as being of special interest under the Wildlife and Countryside Act of 1981, due to its flora, fauna or geological or geomorphological features. There are no SSSI's within 250m of the PDA.

2. Results

Suffolk HER search

The HER only represents the archaeological material that has been reported (Fig. 3), this is the 'known' resource. It is not therefore, a complete reflection of the whole archaeological resource of this area because other sites may remain undiscovered. This is considered as the 'potential' resource.

Scheduled Ancient Monuments

There are two SAM's within the search area.

The first is on the western boundary of the PDA and is the eastern precinct wall of Bury St Edmunds Abbey and also the Abbot's Bridge to the north west (see Figs. 4, 5, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 22). These are part of the larger SAM of Bury St Edmunds Abbey.

The second SAM within the search area is the remains of an early 14th century chapel located within the burial grounds on the southern side of the Abbey precinct (Fig. 4) (This monument will not be affected by any development on this site).

All known archaeological sites within 250m from the edge of the PDA

The Abbey and sites related to it within the Abbey precinct.

Saxon (410-1065AD)

BSE 010, is the small monastery which was founded in circa 633AD. Later after the martyrdom of St Edmund in c.869AD, King Edmund's body was transferred to Bury in 903AD. In the 10th century the community was made up of secular priests, and c.1020 AD these were replaced by 20 Benedictine monks of King Canute. Excavations by Woods & Fleming (120m to the west of the PDA) of the complete interior of 'The Queen's House' and a small adjoining area to the west located the remains of Middle and Late Saxon buildings, Ipswich and Thetford type pottery and an iron stylus.

At BSE 052, during the excavation of a trial trench a substantial north-south aligned ditch was located as well as a pit, a beam slot and postholes. Thetford ware and St Neots style pottery (850-1150AD) was found associated with these features.

BSE 118, is a number given to decorated stone or long and short work present within the church.

BSE 120, is a number given to five fragments of pale blue glass found eroding from the face of a bank within the Abbey grounds.

Medieval (1066-1539AD)

BSE 010, is the Abbey of St Edmundsbury which was one of the four or five most

powerful and wealthy Benedictine monasteries in England. William the Conqueror increased its privileges and the number of monks at the Abbey was raised to 50 in c.1081AD; the church was rebuilt then and subsequently under Abbot Baldwin.

BSE 040, is an early 14th century chapel built of flint walls circa 8 feet high. The walls inside and out are covered with memorial tablets mostly dating to the first half of the 19th century.

BSE 062, is the Cranckles, the Abbey's large fish pond complex.

BSE 063, is the vineyard of the Abbey.

BSE 090, is a number given to piles of flint and mortar rubble wall material exposed during an excavation.

BSE 092, is the 'cemetery of the monks' marked on the Ordnance Survey 25 inch map.

BSE 110, was an excavation establishing the location of the apsidal wall of the N chapel of the West Front.

BSE 111, is a test pit that identified more than 2.8m of post-medieval deposits over a rough cobble surface, possibly the Abbey floor.

BSE 112, was an observation of a garden wall footing trench at the rear of West Front house that identified three areas of flint and mortar rubble, interpreted as the south nave arcade, south aisle external wall and a fragment between these two that does not relate to the known abbey plan and may be just demolition rubble.

BSE 118, is St James' Church built chiefly c.1510-1530AD and completed under Edward VI. Excavations revealed the remains of an earlier chancel c1390-1402AD. The church was originally built by the monastery as a parish church.

BSE 123, was a pipe trench dug by workmen working on the northern half of the West Front that uncovered wall fragments. Three areas of bonded material were identified, two representing columns/pillars in the north wall and north arcade. The third area was identified as a large loose fragment of rubble.

BSE 143, was the monitoring of a stump removal pit within the area of the cloister that revealed a 1m deep demolition deposit.

BSE 158, was a bridge that lead from the Abbey to the Abbey vineyard and was probably medieval in date.

BSE 174, is the Norman Tower (Scheduled Ancient Monument), the entrance leading to the West Front of the Abbey Church of Bury St Edmunds and churchyard, built c.1121-46AD.

BSE 196, was the recording of an area of collapsed section of the Abbey precinct wall.

Undated

BSE 087, is a number given to undated human bones from a well.

HER entries not relating to the Abbey

Later Prehistoric (4000BC-42AD)

BSE 010, is a number given to unspecified Iron Age finds from an excavation by Fleming and Woods.

BSE 052, is a number given to two sherds of residual Iron Age pottery found in a trial trench.

BSE 054, is a probable Neolithic unpatinated flint chisel found in a garden.

Medieval (1066-1539AD)

BSE 027, is a 13th century gold ring with a garnet insert found in a medieval drain.

BSE 041, represents finds of 14th century pottery, two tokens and a silver ring brooch with garnets.

BSE 068, is the site of the east gate of Bury St Edmunds.

BSE 146, is the site of St Mary's Chapel.

BSE 147, is the site of Eastgate Bridge just to the north-east of the present Eastgate Bridge.

BSE 172, was a section excavated through ditches running east west along the south edge of Mustow Street.

BSE 193, is the site of late medieval sand and gravel pits.

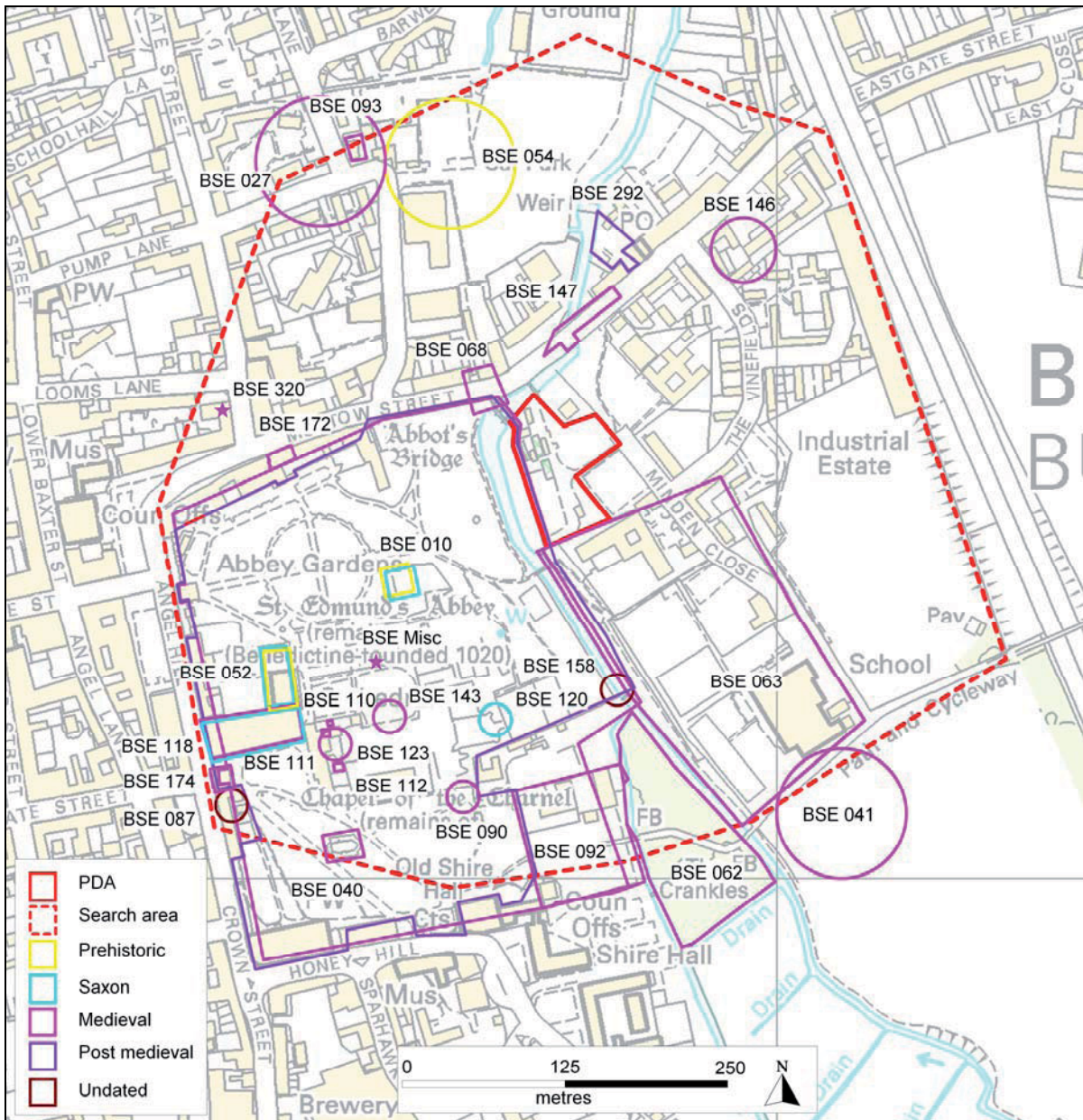
BSE 320, is the site of a medieval chantry.

BSE misc, is a reference in the *Gesta Sacristarium* to a lead aqueduct built by Walter of Banham to bring water from two sources to the Abbey.

Post medieval

BSE 292, was the excavation prior to a housing development on the northern side of Eastgate Street opposite the PDA. On this site there was substantial evidence of early post medieval tanning activity including three wells, five clay-lined troughs and a large collection of animal horn cores, waste products of the tanning process was found.

BSE 010, is the area inside of the Abbey precinct where a privately owned botanic gardens was created in 1831. By the early 20th century the gardens had become open to the public.



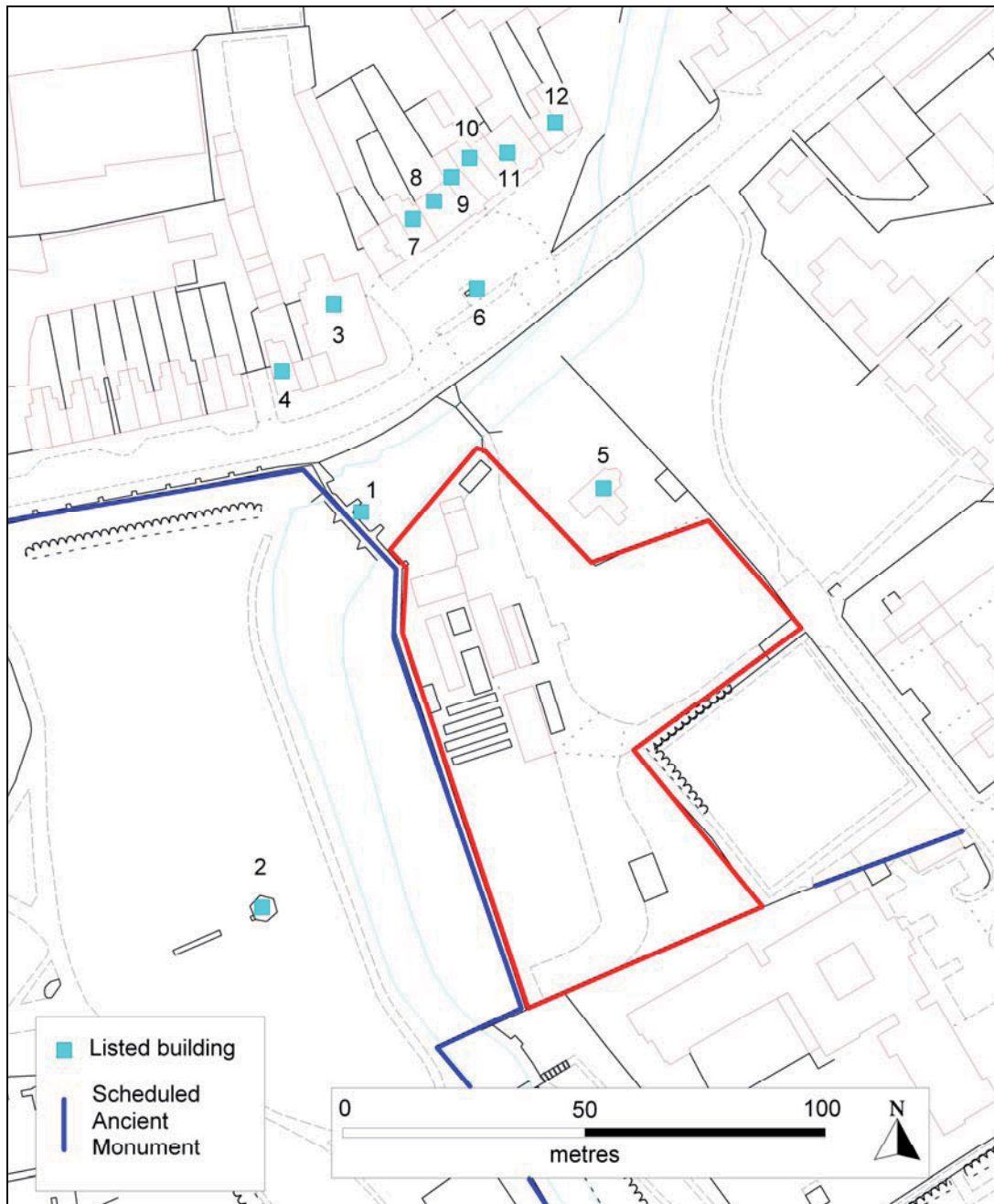
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Figure 4. HER entries within 250m of the PDA
 (numbers referred to in the text)

Listed buildings

There are 12 listed buildings with a direct line of sight to the PDA whose setting could be affected (Fig. 5).

1. Abbot's Bridge (Grade I), is across the River Lark at the north-west corner of the Abbey Precinct, late 12th century with 14th century additions.
2. Ruins of the Abbey dovecote and wall (Grade I) 12th century.
3. The Fox Inn (Grade II*), public house, formerly a merchant's house dated to the 15th century, timber-framed and rendered with plaintiled roofs.
4. House (Grade II), built following the demolition of a row of timber-framed buildings in Mustow Street in 1926. The timber-frame was built entirely of re-used timbers; and has a plaintiled roof.
5. Eastgate Cottage (Grade II) built in 1862. The walls are a mixture of knapped flint and small stone blocks; stone dressings and bands of dark knapped flint in the gable ends with fishscale tiles.
6. Drinking trough (Grade II) presented to the Borough of St Edmundsbury by Lady Bunbury in November 1875. Inscribed on the front is 'BE MERCIFUL TO MAN AND BEAST'.
7. House (Grade II), the surviving part of a larger building. Early 17th century timber-framed.
8. House (Grade II), early 16th century timber-framed and rendered with an old plaintile roof.
9. House (Grade II), 16th and 17th century timber-framed; faced in red brick, with an old plaintile roof.
10. House (Grade II), early 16th century with 17th century extension, timber-framed and red brick with an old plaintile roof.
11. House (Grade II), 17th century timber framed with 19th century red brick and a plaintile roof.
12. A pair of semi-detached houses (Grade II), early to mid 19th century, white brick fronts; red brick rear extensions; the east gable of No.11 is in a mixture of red and white brick with a section of old flint and brick rubble at the base with slate roofs.



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Figure 5. Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Listed Buildings with a direct line of sight to the PDA (numbers referred to in the text)

Aerial photographic survey summary

An aerial photographic study was commissioned, but after initial work it was stopped as the historic land-use would mean positive results from this study would be extremely unlikely.

Documentary Study summary and Historic map search

Documentary sources relating to the PDA make reference to tanners or 'barkers', (named after the use of oak bark in the tanning process). Thomas Tillott who occupied a house to the west of the present Eastgate Cottage (immediately to the east of the PDA) was the owner of a tannery. Robert Hubbard's tannery to the east of the cottage was pulled down between 1709 and 1731 together with two houses. There are a number of lost medieval dwellings along the street frontage and within the PDA, though the lack of probate material for many of the former dwellings does not suggest that these houses had a particularly high status. Apart from the obvious associated trade of cordwainer (a shoe maker), George Skulthorpe's inventory (1680) shows that he was a drum maker who used parchment for the skin and possibly leather for the bodies of his drums. A second trade that appears to feature in the records is weaving. There are two references to 'tainters', these were the wooden frames used for the drying of cloth after it had been removed from the loom and had been through a fulling mill.

In the documentary study carried out for **BSE 292**, (on the northern side of Eastgate Street Fig.4) in the earliest records investigated, the rental returns gathered for the Sacrist to the Abbey in 1433, the dominant industrial activity of this area was tanning with at least three 'barkers' mentioned in 1433. There are also references to other trades including a cordwainer and fellmongers, the buyer of hides and other animal skins, whose role would be to sort the material suitable for the tanners from the skins sold to other trades. There were a range of crafts which used animal skins and it is quite possible that some trades such as curriers and parchment makers would have worked in other areas of the town. Butchers, who are recorded in the area, would also have been responsible for most of the slaughtering before the 20th century.

The first available map of the PDA is Downing's map of 1740 (Fig 6). The main item of note on this map; is the apparent eastward continuation of the north boundary wall of the Vine Fields from 'Cobbles Barn' ('T' on the map) to Eastgate Street. This continuation of the wall also appears to be depicted on Buck's 1741 print (Fig. 8), running behind the building in the foreground, 'Cobble's Barn' to the left side of the print, Eastgate Street. This possibly suggests that the plot of land containing the PDA and defined by this wall, Eastgate Street and the Abbey precinct wall next to the River Lark was also part of an outer Abbey precinct like the Vine Fields. This wall is not however illustrated on any later maps though the property boundary remains.

Strutt's print of 1821 (Fig. 13) names the buildings formerly on the site of Abbey Cottage as the 'The Gardener's Cottage'. It is tempting to suggest that as the Marquis of Bristol who owned the cottage and adjoining gardens, as well as the Abbey Gardens, used the buildings as accommodation for gardeners employed in the Abbey Gardens. The Abbey Gardens, through his sponsorship become the town's formal Botanic Gardens in 1831. The various fruit bushes shown in the print (Fig. 13) and in the undated illustration of Walnut Tree Close (Fig. 12) may have been those listed on a separate piece of paper folded into an agreement to the sale in 1791. The new owner in 1791 was Mrs Mary Davers (also named on Warren's map of 1791, Fig 11) , who also owned the grounds of the Abbey Gardens and this connection might suggest that these were the gardeners' cottages for those employed in the Abbey Grounds.

The sale agreement of 1791 specifically mentions building stone and in the undated illustration of Walnut Tree Close (Fig. 12) there appears to be a fragment of a wall standing to the left of the cottage. This may have been part of the then demolished tenement of Thomas Tillott pulled down before 1725 or another as yet unidentified structure. This same fragment of a wall is not apparent in Strutt's print (Fig. 13).

The two further prints which illustrate part of the PDA are a pre 1760 print of a view looking west along Eastgate Street towards the Abbot's Bridge (Fig. 10) and a view of the Abbot's Bridge by Grose c.1740 from the south east (Fig. 9). Grose's print (Fig. 9) shows a gateway in the precinct wall, although no trace of this is visible in the wall now. The visible part of the PDA appears to be open ground. The pre 1760 print (Fig. 10) only shows a small portion of the north east corner of the PDA, and the footbridge leading to it from Eastgate Street, with some of the PDA obscured by a building, possibly the one illustrated on Warren's map of 1747 (Fig. 7) to the east of 'Gardner's Cottage'.

PDA has been named on maps as 'Walnut Tree Close' since the 1869 publication of Alfred Morant's paper on the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds. Although there are earlier references made to 'Walnut Tree Close' in Richard Payne's 1833 particulars and an undated illustration of the house that formerly stood on this site is labelled as 'Walnut Tree Close' (Fig. 12). In the various deeds for the site (dated 1709-28, 1725-43 and 1781) the property is described as 'Sparrow Hill' and on Warren's 1791 survey part of the site is labelled 'Malting Close'.

Two parcels of land called Walnut Tree Close or Yard are mentioned in post-dissolution documents, one close to the Shire Hall (the present council offices), the other consisting of three acres elsewhere. The reference to this second piece in the text of the letters patent of 1560 suggests that it should be close to the former abbey's vineyard. The letters patent were published in 1805. The juxtapositions of the two properties, Walnut Tree Yard and the Vineyard may have suggested to both Payne and Morant that 'Walnut Tree Yard' should be in the area of this site. No documentary evidence has been found to sustain this suggestion, but it still remains a possibility due to its location near the 'Vine fields'.

The 1880's Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 15) shows that the 'Gardner's Cottage' is no longer present and a new building 'Abbey Cottage' (now named Eastgate Cottage) has replaced it, but built c.20m further south. The PDA is also shown as being covered with trees, possibly fruit trees or bushes. The 1900's Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 16) is basically the same as the 1880's, except no trees are shown. The 1920's Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 17) is the same as the 1900's except two greenhouses are now shown.

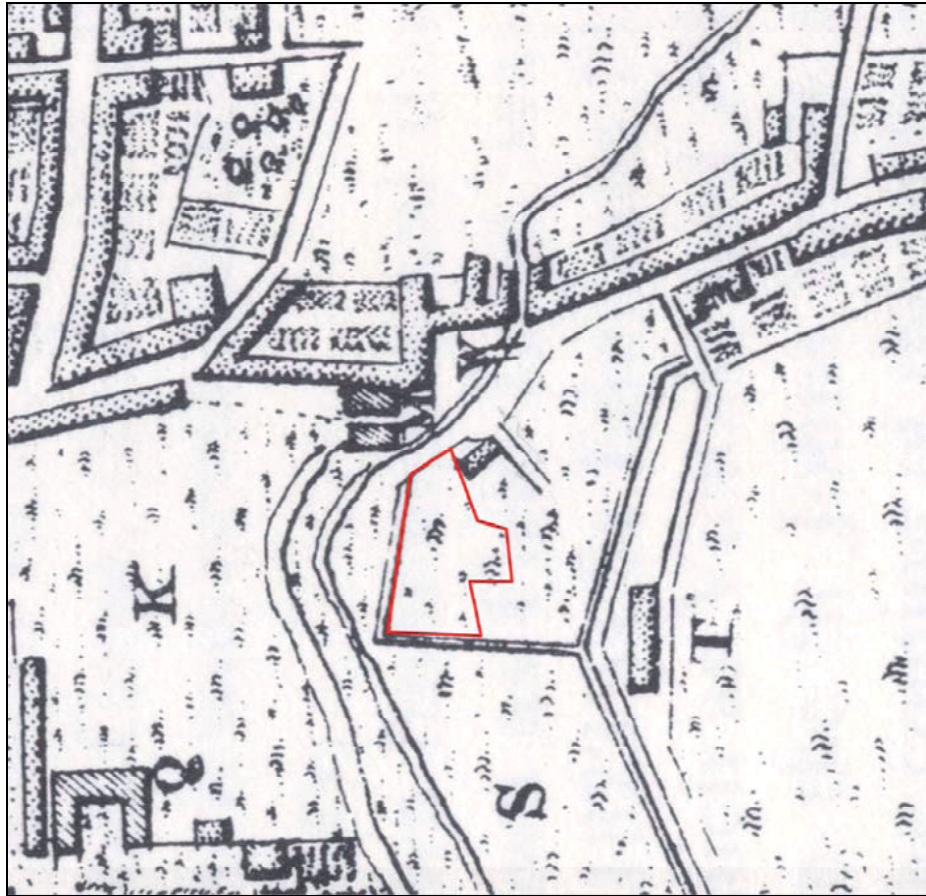


Figure 6. Downing's map of 1740 (no scale)



Figure 7. Warren's map of 1747 (no scale)



Figure 8. Buck's 1741 print looking west towards Bury St Edmunds

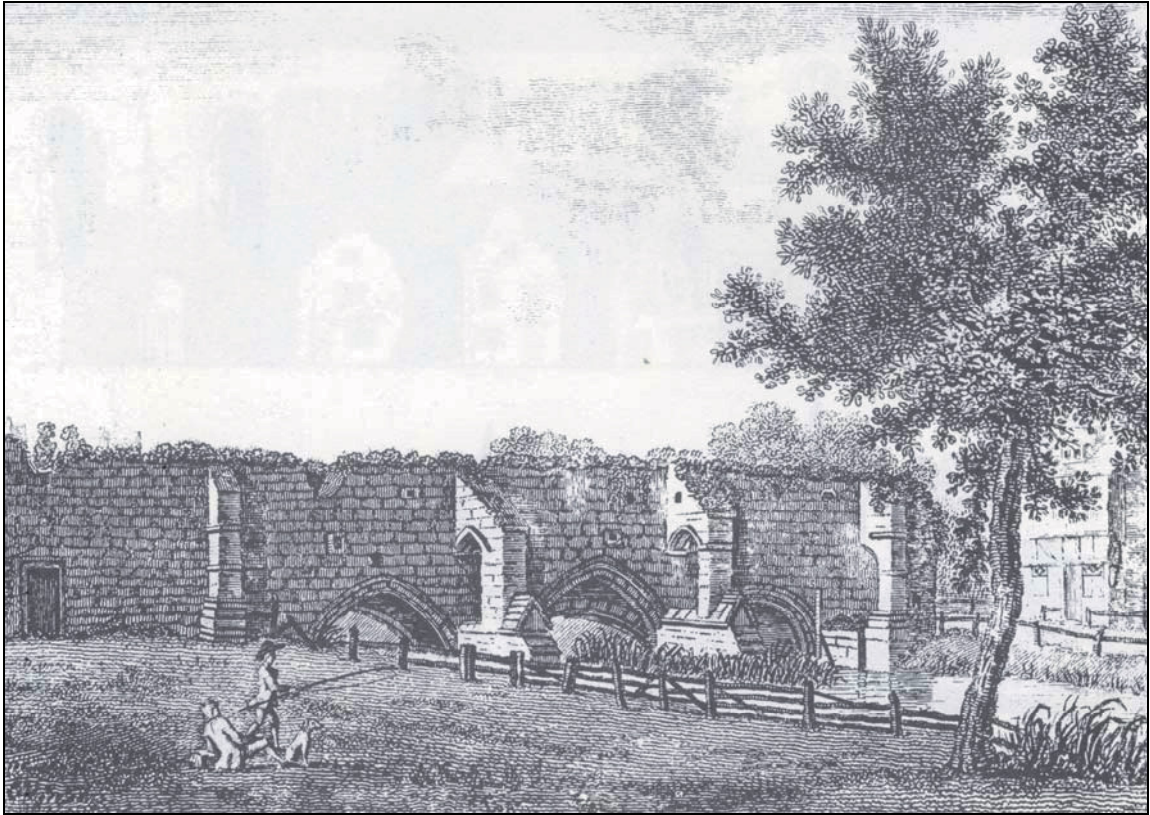


Figure 9. Grose's view of the Abbot's Bridge, looking north west from the PDA c.1740



Figure 12. Walnut Tree close, undated illustration



Figure 13. Strutt's print of Gardner's cottage 1821

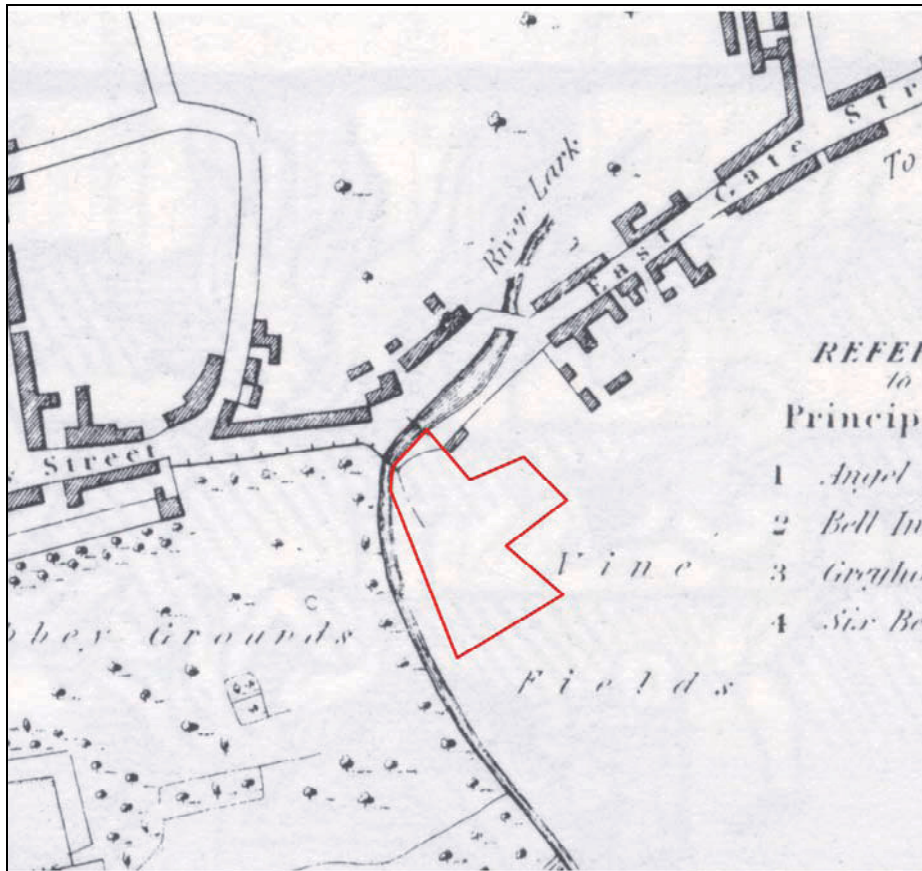


Figure 14. Lenny's map of 1823 (no scale)

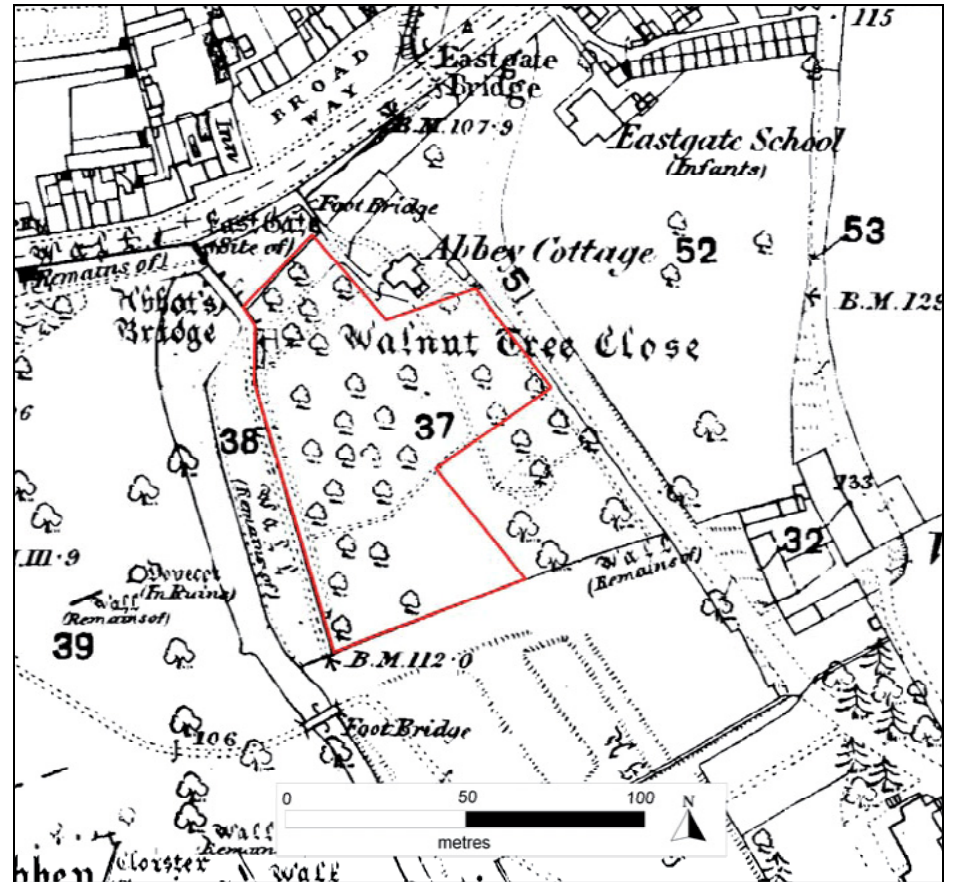


Figure 15. 1880's Ordnance Survey map

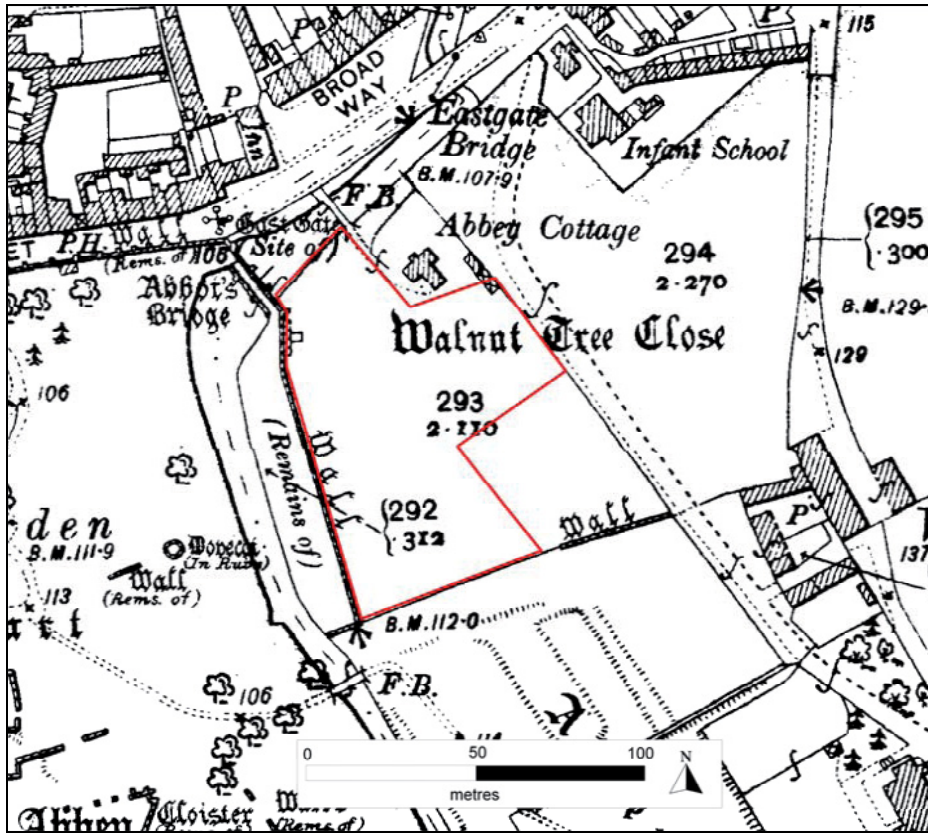


Figure 16. 1900's Ordnance Survey map

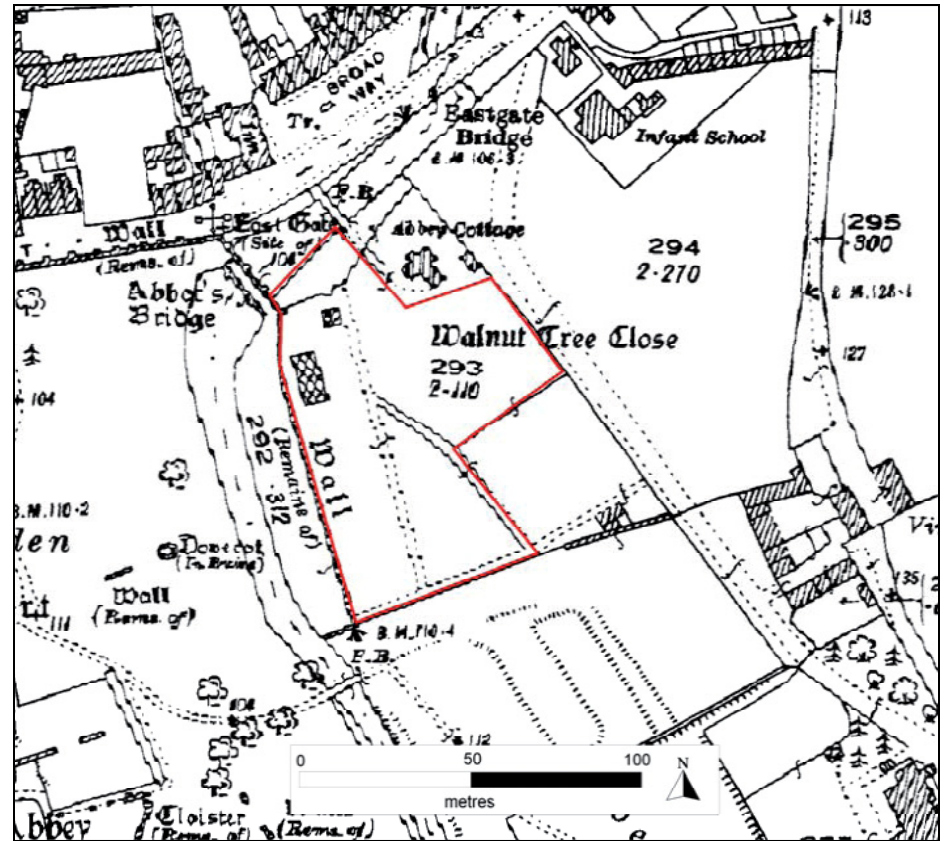


Figure 17. 1920's Ordnance Survey map

3. Assessment of impacts and effects

The archaeological potential of the PDA

Various factors indicate that there is a high archaeological potential for the PDA, these are;

- The location of the PDA being adjacent to the Abbey and possibly within an outer precinct of the Abbey.
- The topographic location of the PDA adjacent to the historic river crossing of the main eastern route into Bury St Edmunds has a high potential for medieval settlement along the road frontage.
- The archaeological evidence for early post medieval tanning and associated industries on the opposite side of the road at **BSE 292** and the documentary evidence indicating the same activities within the PDA.
- There is evidence for some buildings on the site, known from the historic record, such as the demolished tenement of Thomas Tillott, pulled down before 1725.
- The location of the PDA close to the river increases the potential for waterlogged material or environmental evidence to survive.

Potential of preserved archaeological remains within the PDA

Any archaeological material present within the PDA has a high potential for survival as the site has not been developed in the last 300 years and has been used for horticultural purposes for the last 100 years.

There is a high potential for the survival of waterlogged and environmental evidence due to the location of the PDA close to the river within its floodplain.

Assessment of the impact of the development on the archaeological resource

Due to this document not having a specific development proposal to consider only broad comments can be made about the impact of any development activity within the PDA on the archaeological resource.

An issue that will be of major concern to both English Heritage and the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Conservation Officers is the effect that any development will have on the setting of part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Bury St Edmunds Abbey, specifically the eastern precinct wall that forms the western boundary of the PDA and the Abbot's Bridge immediately to the north west. Any building development within the PDA will obscure the view of the precinct wall from the north or east and affect the setting of the Abbot's Bridge (Figs 18 & 19). Even when the wall is viewed from the west within the Abbey precinct (Figs. 20, 21

and 22), any development of a single storey building or higher will be visible directly behind the wall as demonstrated by the roof of the existing single storey building on the PDA (Figs. 21 and 22). When the Abbot's Bridge is viewed from the north or east its setting will be affected.

Any development that involves ground disturbance (foundations, piling, services, landscaping / earth moving) will have a negative effect on any below ground archaeological material and with there being a high potential for settlement, industrial, waterlogged and environmental evidence within the PDA the impact would be considerable.



Figure 18. PDA and Abbey precinct wall viewed from the south east



Figure 19. Abbot's Bridge and PDA viewed from the north



Figure 20. Abbey precinct wall viewed from the south west



Figure 21. Abbey precinct wall and dovecote viewed from the west



Figure 22. Abbey precinct wall viewed from the north west

4. Mitigation measures

Consultation with English Heritage and Suffolk County Council Planning Archaeologists should be at the earliest opportunity as any development on this site will affect the setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument that is statutorily protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act of 1979 (also see English Heritage 2008)

The type of archaeological mitigation required will depend upon the type of development and construction methods used.

Due to the high archaeological potential of the PDA, any development that involves ground disturbance will need to have a program of archaeological works specified by SCCAS/CT which could involve environmental sampling and full scale excavation.

Consultation with the County Council Planning Archaeologist should be at the earliest possible opportunity, as archaeological investigations can have considerable time and cost implications. This consultation will determine the program of archaeological works that will need to be carried out.

Archaeological evaluation

Applicants for planning consent are reminded that national guidance recommends that potential archaeological sites are evaluated (field-walking and/or geophysical survey and/or trenching) prior to the determination of any application and that refusal of consent is an option to ensure that nationally important sites are preserved *in situ* (PPG16 paragraphs 8, 27 and 28).

Purchasers of land should be aware that, until an evaluation is undertaken, it is usually impossible to define the extent of archaeological work that may be required on a site and equally difficult to calculate the likely cost and time implications. Bearing this in mind developers are strongly advised to undertake archaeological evaluations at the earliest opportunity to clarify the likely archaeological work required and its cost.

5. Conclusions / Recommendations

Any development within the PDA will affect the setting of a Scheduled Ancient Monument and as such consultation will be required with English Heritage and the County Council planning officer as this site is statutorily protected.

The results of this DBA suggest that the PDA is in an area of high archaeological potential. The PDA has the archaeological potential to lead to a greater understanding of the land-use, economy and development of this area of the town.

Consultation with the County Council Planning Archaeologist (SCCAS/CT) should be at the earliest possible opportunity, as archaeological investigations can have considerable time and cost implications. This consultation will determine the actual program of archaeological works that would need to be carried out, which could include full-scale excavation.

6. List of contributors and Acknowledgements

This project was funded and commissioned by St Edmundsbury Borough Council. The desk based assessment was carried out by James Rolfe, of Service SCCAS, the documentary study by Anthony M. Breen, a freelance local history researcher, the historical background was written by Andrew Tester and Dave Gill of SCCAS and Bob Carr of SCCAS/CT, the aerial photographic survey by Roger Palmer of Air Photo Services.

The project was managed by Joanne Caruth, of SCCAS. Advice was given by Jess Tipper and Bob Carr SCCAS/CT

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Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Team alone. Ultimately the need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its Archaeological Advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting services cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to the clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.

Appendix 1

Brief and Specification

Brief and Specification for Desk-Based Assessment

LAND ADJACENT TO EASTGATE STREET AND MINDEN CLOSE, BURY ST EDMUNDS, SUFFOLK

1. Background

- 1.1 A planning enquiry has been made for development of Land Adjacent to Eastgate Street and Minden Close, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk (TL 858 643) (see accompanying plan).
- 1.2 The proposed application area measures c. 0.54 ha., on the eastern side of the River Lark (see accompanying plan); the western half of the site is located within the floodplain of the river. It is situated on river alluvium (calcareous clay soil) at c. 30 - 35.00m AOD.
- 1.3 This enquiry affects an area of archaeological importance recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, within the medieval urban core and adjacent to the Abbey of St Edmunds (Scheduled Ancient Monument SF 2). There is high potential for encountering archaeological occupation deposits from the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, and possibly earlier occupation, at this location. There is also high potential for encountering palaeo-environmental deposits within the area of the floodplain. However, the area of this major development has not been subject to systematic archaeological survey. Any development with significant ground disturbance has the potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.4 A desk-based assessment of the known and potential archaeology for the application area is required as the first part of a programme of archaeological work. Further information concerning the location, extent, survival and significance of the known archaeological remains on the site, which includes standing buildings, as well as the potential for further archaeological remains to survive, is required. This brief sets out the requirement for an initial stage of work comprising an archaeological desk-based assessment and walk-over survey.
- 1.5 This initial stage of assessment will lead to a further programme of works, likely to consist of a general programme of archaeological evaluation (geophysical survey, trial-trenching and palaeo-environmental assessment) prior to determination of any planning application that may be submitted. **A further archaeological brief will be required for any subsequent stage of work from the desk-top assessment.**

2. Objectives

- 2.1 To collate and assess the existing information regarding archaeological and historical remains within and adjacent to the site shown in the accompanying plan. It is important that a sufficiently large area around the target area is studied in order to give adequate context; in this instance an area with boundaries 250m beyond the parcel boundaries will be the minimum appropriate.
- 2.2 To identify any known archaeological sites, including existing buildings, which are of sufficient potential importance to require an outright constraint on development (i.e. those that will need preservation *in situ*).
- 2.3 To assess the potential for unrecorded archaeological sites within the application area.
- 2.4 To assess the likely impact of past land uses and the potential quality of preservation of below ground deposits, and where possible to model those deposits.

- 2.5 To assess the potential for the use of particular investigative techniques in order to aid the formulation of any mitigation strategy.
- 2.6 The results will inform the location and method of subsequent stages of evaluation.
- 2.7 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below. In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/WSI will provide the basis for measurable standards.

3. Specification

- 3.1 The assessment shall be undertaken by a professional team of field archaeologists. The archaeological contractor is expected to follow the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 3.2 Collation and assessment of the County Historic Environment Record to identify known sites and to assess the potential of the application area.
- 3.3 Collation and assessment of all cartographic sources, both printed and manuscript, relevant to the site to identify historic landuse, the siting of old boundaries and any earlier buildings. Where possible, (high quality) copies should be included in the report. All materials used should be cited to the original records.
- 3.4 Collation and assessment of historic documentation relevant to the site that would contribute to the archaeological investigation of the site. All materials used should be cited to the original records.
- 3.5 Assess the historical significance of existing industrial buildings on the site.
- 3.6 Re-assessment of aerial photographic evidence and, where relevant, a replotting of archaeological and topographic information by a suitably qualified specialist with relevant experience at a scale of 1:2500. It should be possible to obtain residual errors of less than $\pm 2m$. Rectification of extant mapped features such as field boundaries and buildings shall be undertaken in order to give additional indication of accuracy of the transcription.
- 3.7 Examination of available geotechnical information to assess the condition and status of buried deposits and to identify local geological conditions. Relevant geotechnical data should be included as appendices to the report.
- 3.8 Ascertain whether there are other constraints on the site (e.g. SSSI, County Wildlife Site, AONB, etc).
- 3.9 A site visit to determine any constraints to archaeological survival.

4. Report Requirements

- 4.1 The report shall be submitted within a length of time (but not exceeding 1 month) from the end of fieldwork, to be agreed between the developer and archaeological contractor, with a copy supplied to the County Historic Environment Record. A full digital copy of the report will be supplied to Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (SCCAS/CT).
- 4.2 Assemble, summarise and order the available evidence.
- 4.3 Synthesise the evidence and place it in its local and/or regional context.

- 4.4 The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence within the regional context. The conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological potential of the site, highlighting any research priorities, and the significance of that potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 4.5 Comment on the reliability of the evidence and give an opinion on the necessity and scope for further assessment including field evaluation.
- 4.6 A comprehensive list of all sources consulted (with specific references) should be included.
- 4.7 A copy of the report should be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record within six months.
- 4.8 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 4.9 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the County Historic Environment Record. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).
- 4.10 A digital copy of the air photographic evidence should be supplied with the report for inclusion in the County Historic Environment Record; AutoCAD files should be exported and saved into a format that can be imported into MapInfo (for example, as a Drawing Interchange File or .dxf) or already transferred to .TAB files and ArcView.
- 4.11 The IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessments* (1999) should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.
- 4.12 Publication of the results, at least to a summary level (i.e. round up of archaeology in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology*), shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance shall be made within the costs for full publication in an appropriate journal.
- 4.13 The involvement of SCCAS/CT shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1 SCCAS/CT will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project. This will include the fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.
- 5.2 Notification of the start of work shall be given to SCCAS/CT one week in advance of its commencement.
- 5.3 Any variations to the written scheme of investigation shall be agreed with SCCAS/CT prior to them being carried out.

References

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|---------------------------------|------|--|
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Date: 10 November 2008

Reference: / EastgateStreet-BuryStEdmunds2008

This brief and specification remains valid for six 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.

Appendix 2

Former Nursery site and land off Eastgate Street, Bury St Edmunds:

Documentary Report By Tony Breen

Introduction

The research for this report has been carried out at the Suffolk Record Office in Bury St Edmunds. This site is on the south side of Eastgate Street and to the east of the abbey precinct wall and to the north of the wall of the former abbey's vineyard. On the first edition of the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map of the area, the site is marked in gothic print as 'Walnut Tree Close'. The name appears on a 'Plan of the Monastery' published with Alfred Morant's 1869 paper 'On the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds' 'read at the meeting of the British Archaeological Institute' held at Bury St Edmunds on 20 July 1869. The name also appears in the first grant of the site of the former abbey from the crown to John Eyer in February 1560 (Yates 1805). In return for a payment of £412 19s 4d John Eyer was granted 'all that site, circuit and precinct of the late dissolved monastery of Bury' together with various parcel of lands and buildings within the grounds. Other parts of the abbey are described in the letters patent before 'And all those four gardens within the site aforesaid, lying between Bradfield-hall and the Walnut-tree close within the said site'. The description continues 'And all that land, ground and soil whatsoever and all that piece of land called the Vine, in Bury aforesaid, containing six acres. And all that pasture and land called The Walnut-tree Yard containing three acres'.

The names Walnut-tree close and Walnut-tree Yard appear to be interchangeable. The site of Walnut-tree close mentioned in 1560 was outside of the abbey's grounds though within a precinct connected with the office of the former Sacrists or Sacristans. It is again mentioned in a deed of 1663 as 'Walnut Tree Yard ... neare unto the Shire House' (Carr and Gill, April 2007). It has been established through documentary research that the site adjoins the site of the present Suffolk Archaeological Unit's offices in Bury. The 'Walnut-tree Yard containing three acres' is the present site. It is interesting to note that unlike all the other parcels of land described in 1560 and defined as within the former abbey's precinct walls, this site is uniquely outside and not defined in the same manner as within a boundary wall.

There is an earlier reference to this site in the 'First Ministers' Account' prepared by the officers of the Court of Augmentation who administrated under the crown the estates of the former abbeys and other ecclesiastical institutions. In 1540 the property 'The site of the late Monastery with the demesne, and other lands' were in the hands of Anthony Wingfield. The account declared that there were 'No profits from the said site of the late monastery with the church, belfry, precinct, cemetery, house and buildings, gardens, orchards, ponds, waters, fisheries, lands and soil within the site of the Monastery, nor from meadows called Nommanes Meadow, Sykelesmeremedowe and Walnotttree Yerde late in the hands of the said Abbot and Convent for the use of their hospice, since the said site ... remains in the hands of Anthony Wingfield to the use of the King and is to be accounted for elsewhere' (Redstone 1909). The same account mentions 'a meadow, called Wallenottetreyard, late in the hands of the Sacristan, now in the occupation of Anthony Wyngefild, knt' under the possessions of the former Sacristan.

If this site was part of the abbey grounds it will not be mentioned in separate deeds but included in the property deeds and descriptions relating to the site of the former abbey.

There are two other elements relating to this site that are considered in this report. The first relates to the buildings formerly on the site of the present 'Abbey Cottage'. These are shown on an undated pen and wash drawing of 'Walnut Tree Close' (ref. K511/484). In this illustration a fragment of a large stonewall is shown to the left of the buildings the purpose of this wall is unclear. This wall is not shown in Jacob George Strutt's print of the same building published in 1821. He labelled the print as the 'Gardeners' Cottage, East Gate Street'. In both illustrations the area adjoining the river and immediate east of the abbey's precinct wall appears as a nursery with a row of closely planted young trees or bushes. This may suggest that the site has always been linked with the 'Abbey Gardens'.

'In an extract from the 1836 "Guide to Bury St Edmunds" there is a description of the Botanic Gardens "The Botanic Garden was established in the year 1820, by a gentleman devoted to Botany, and under the patronage of the nobility and gentry of the town and county. It was at that period situated on the east side of the churchyard, and immediately on the bank of the river Lark: but the present beautiful site was suggested by the noble proprietor the Marquis of Bristol, who being satisfied with the zeal and ability of the old garden, was pleased to grant him a lease of the great court of the abbey for the purpose, and also to allow the entrance through the magnificent gateway: a house was also built for the conductor, and grounds were laid out and planted by him in the year 1831"' (Carr and Gill, April 2007).

If there is a link with the abbey gardens it predates the establishment of the gardens as Bury's 'Botanic Gardens' in 1831.

The third element to this site is the medieval street frontage. The houses along Eastgate Street appear to have been a distinct medieval suburb of the town. In its medieval context a suburb was an area outside the walls of a town. The medieval residents of the houses along the northern side of the street between the river and the site of the present Magna House have been described in another report (Tester May 2008). From at least the early fourteenth century onwards there was a strong concentration of tanners and allied trades occupying these houses. The same sources are examined here for the houses along the southern side of the street up to an including 'Le Venfeldgate'. The position of 'Venfeldgate' is shown on the plan of the town centre in 1433 (Statham 1987). The site was a recognisable geographic location in the eighteenth century as shown in a deed of 1729 describing the Ram Inn as 'over against the Vine Field Gate'. The site was the street entrance to the Market Path shown on Warren's 1791 plan of Bury and is now the entrance to the close 'Vinefields'. A path or trackway leading to the southwest to the site of the former 'Vinefields Farm' forms a boundary of the present study area.

The maps relating to this area of this study were reproduced in the earlier report (Tester May 2008). It should be noted that on Warren's 1791 Survey of Bury (ref. M555/38), the main area of this site is shown as divided into two plots. To the south the plot then in the ownership of Mrs Mary Davers was measured at 1 acre and 25 perches. The area to the north measured at 3 acres 3 roods and 24 perches was the property of Sir Charles Davers and described as 'Malting Close'. On Richard Payne's 1833 map (ref. 586/2), the plot boundaries are the same. These are

described in the separate 'Particulars of the Lands in Bury St Edmunds 1833' and are listed under the properties of the then marquis of Bristol. John Stead lived at the 'house and yard' numbered 277 and also held the garden 276. A farmer John Boldero held the fields numbered 271-275 mainly described as 'Vine-Yards' or 'Vine Field' and also 282 'Polly's Orchard'. His total landholding was just 29 acres 21 perches. The Revd James Blomfield held 278 described as 'Walnut Tree Close and Stable' and measured just 2 acres 2 roods 4 perches.

In addition to the illustrations of 'Gardeners Cottage' a view of 'East Gate at St Edmundsbury in Suffolk, From an Old Print' (Morant 1869) has been included in this study. The town's former 'Five gates were pulled down by order of the Corporation between 1761 and 1765'. This shows that the original print was made before the 1760's. A building is shown adjoining the middle span of East Gate Bridge, this may have been the site of 'Our Ladyes Chapell at the Eastgate Bregge' mentioned in the will of the tanner Thomas Chestyn in 1513 (Tester May 2008). This building is not shown on later illustrations such as 'A View of the Old Eastgate Bridge' (ref. K511/135). To the left of the illustration of East Gate and within the area of this site a building is shown close to the riverside.

Walnut Tree Close and the Abbey Grounds

The deeds relating to the subsequent owners of the former abbey have been transcribed in part (Yates 1805) and the relationship between 'The Walnut-tree Yard containing three acres' and the present site discussed in the introduction to this report.

In September 1720 the abbey was sold to Major Richardson Pack for the sum of £2,800 and in the 'abstract of title' the relevant part of the property description was changed to 'All that ground called The Vine with the wall of the site and precinct of the said Monastery' and all reference to 'Walnut-tree Close' omitted. In the same year the abbey grounds were assigned to Sir Jermyn Davers and at the date of Yates' book, 'Mrs Davers and Sir Charles Davers' are named as 'the present possessors'. Their names appear on Warren's 1791 plan of Bury.

These deeds are now in the Hervey Family and Estate Collection held at the record office in Bury (ref. HA 507/2/221/2) and include the original letters patent with a separate English translation. In 1581 the property was sold to Henry Blagge and the property is described in the Latin text as in 1560. The property description is the same in the English text of another deed dated 20 January 1592 between Sir Robert Jermyn and Henry Blagge. In another deed of 29 May 1623 part of the property is described as 'all that ground comonlie called or knowen by the name of the Vine within the wall of the scite or precinct of the said monasterie with the dovehouse upon the same ground' and the reference to Walnut Tree Close is omitted. The same deed omits the references to Walnut Tree Yard and it is certain that that site was a separate property from at least 1663. It is possible that this site was included within a catchall phrase 'And all the soyle within the walls circuit and precinct of the scite of the late monastery', though again this poses the question was there a distinct boundary wall surrounding this site.

The property passed to the earl of Bristol in August 1806 (ref. HA 507/2/221/1). In the deed of conveyance only the abbey grounds are described and in a simpler manner as 'All those lands or grounds commonly called or known by the name of

the Abby Ground' and the 'grounds were late in the tenure or occupation of the said Mary Davers deceased and were formerly the estate and inheritance of Sir Jermyn Davers Baronet deceased father of the said Sir Charles Davers'.

Other Deeds

The property deeds for the abbey grounds do not show a clear link between 'The Walnut-tree Yard containing three acres' as described in the letters patent of 1560 and the site of Walnut Tree Close as marked on the Ordnance Survey maps.

Both the abbey grounds and part of this site are shown to be the property of Mrs Mary Davers on Thomas Warren's 1791 survey of Bury. She also owned the 'abbey vineyard' and the Vine Field.

Amongst the deeds in the Hervey collection, there is a separate bundle described in the catalogue as 'Deeds of piece of land near the East Gate, Bury St Edmunds purchased 1 November 1728 by John Turnor, esq of Bury St Edmunds from William Cow of Mildenhall, gent 1690-1728' (ref. HA 507/2/383). The deeds are listed under a general heading 'West Suffolk: deeds of portions of the Davers estate purchased in 1808'.

In a deed dated 6 March 1710 between 'Frances Youngman of Wymondham in the county of Norfolk widow who was lately the wife of Thomas Youngman late of the same town and county worsted weaver deceased and who was before that the wife of Thomas Tillott of Bury Saint Edmunds in the county of Suffolk tanner also deceased and Thomas Tillott of the city of Norwich ... cordwayner eldest son and heir at law of the said Thomas Tillott ... and John Gilly of Bury St Edmunds ... yeoman'. The property is described as 'All those two messuages or tenements scituate and being in Bury Saint Edmunds ... in or near a certain street there called East Gate Street with all and singular the outhouses edifices and buildings ... to the same belonging ... as the same do abut upon the street towards the north and the pasture ground herein after menconed and intended to be hereby granted towards the south and are standing between a certain wall called Abby Wall towards the west and a messuage or tenement of the Widow Warren now in severall tenures occupacons of Henry Wallis and Mary Pelgrave widow towards the east And also all that close or piece of pasture ground containing by estimacon one acre and an halfe more or less lying in Bury St Edmunds aforesaid abutting upon the Abby Wall aforesaid towards the west and the orchard or ground of Robert Hubbard tanner in part and a certaine lane leading into the said orchard or ground of the said Robert Hubbard and the said close or piece of pasture ground in part towards the east and upon all the messuages or tenements before menconed towards the north and the said orchard or ground of the said Robert Hubbard in part and a close called the High Vine in part towards the south ... all which said premises were late the inheritance of the said Thomas Tillott deceased and are now in the severall tenures or occupacons of Jeremy Hunt and John Kendall'.

This property description appears to describe the plot of land measured at 1 acre and 25 perches as shown on Warren's 1791 survey. Mrs Mary Davers purchased this property in 1791.

The earliest deed in this bundle dated 24 January 1690 is a mortgage for a property described as 'all that messuage or tenement with buildings yards tan fatts gardens

and orchards thereunto belonging lying neere the Eastgate Bridge ... and late in the tenure or occupacon of the said Thomas Tillott deceased and of one piece of pasture the greatest parte thereof was lately converted into tillage lying neere to the said messuage and of one close or peece of ground heretofore called Taynter Close lying on the east parte of the said peece of ground without any division and lately also converted into tillage as the same lye together in Bury St Edmond's aforesaid without Eastgate and on the west side of the river'. The location suggests that this was a separate property and not part of this site.

There is a reference to Thomas Tillott's property in the records of the manor of Eastgate Barns, the estate of the former cellarers of the abbey. In the earliest court book (ref. E7/21/1) there is a list of the manorial tenants with a brief description of their lands written in Latin with the dates of their entries into their respective properties. In this list 'Jonas Bond held one meadow near the Eastgate late Thomas Bond his father 1648, 1653 & 2 Car 13'. In the records of the manorial court held on 17 October 1653, the property is described as 'Three acres of meadow lying next the meadow late of Edmund Barber gent on the north part and the meadow late in the occupation of Thomas Tillott on the south part the east head thereof abutteth upon the river there and the west head abutteth upon the meadow late in the occupation of Charles Darby gent which said three acres of meadow with their appurtenances (amongst other things) the said William Revell late had & tooke up to him & his heirs by & after the decease of William Revell gent his father deceased as only sonne of the said William Revell at a court here holden for the manor ... upon Thursday the 12th day of September in the fifteen year of the reign of our late sovereign Charles I' (1640).

Thomas Tillott's property on the south side of the street adjoined that of Robert Hubbard. In the description of another piece of manorial land 'Susan Wiffen, widow holds one piece of pasture 1 rood and a half near the Eastgate Street late John Johnson her father 1648 1658'. At the court held on 15 April 1658 this property is described as 'one piece of pasture ground conteyning by estimacon a rood and a half ... adioyning to a tenement called the oven lying & being in the street called the Eastgatestreete in Bury St Edmunds aforesaid & of late in the occupacon of Edmund Talbot bricklayer ... the one side abuts upon the lands of Edmund Barber of the north & upon the lands of Sir Ralph Cantwell in the part of the south part which piece of ground the said John in his life tyme late had & tooke up to him ... from the surrender of Thomas Hubbard at a court 27 March 24 Chas 1' (1649).

The other properties in Eastgate Street included 'John Dickinson holds one messuage in the Eastgate Street late Roger Dickinson his father 1649 & 1652'. At the court held on 21 September 1652 John Dickenson admitted as only son and heir of Roger Dickenson 'one messuage or tenement ... in a streete or neere the streete called the Eastgate Streete ... to wit betweene the tenement somtymes past Lawrence Reysings afterwards Francis Eldred & late of John Dickenson gent on the east part and the gate called the Falgate of the west & abuts upon Le Vinefield towards the south & upon the streete called the Eastgate Streete towards the north'. Roger had entered the property together with his father John Dickenson at a court held on 27 October 1633.

A further property in Eastgate Street was 'messuage' held by Barnard Herbert late the property 'of Martin Folkes 1653, 1654 2 Car 22'. This property is mentioned in a separate bundle of deeds (ref. HA 507/2/398/1-4). These relate to the conveyance

of the property from the executors of Thomas Symonds, of Bury to Mary Davers, spinster on 13 February 1793.

In his will dated 13 October 1790, Thomas Symonds left instructions for the sale of 'two cottages and orchard on the Eastgate Street' to pay for his funeral expenses. A small part of the property was copyhold of the manor of Eastgate Barns 'formerly the estate of John Boovor ... at a court hold for the said manor on sixteenth of April' (1724). Thomas Symonds purchased this property in September 1769. In 1790 the property including the copyhold was described as 'All that messuage or tenement with the scite soil or ground whereon another messuage or tenement long since wasted did formerly stand as the same was formerly in the occupation of Edward Lever and John Lee afterwards John Carter late John Poutney ... situate lying and being in Eastgate Street ... abutting upon the said street towards the north and the road leading to Stowmarket east and upon the lane called Shakers Lane south and southeast which premises the said Thomas Symonds had and purchased ... from Henry Steward of Bury St Edmunds ... upholster as by certain indentures ... bearing the date' (24/25 April 1775). 'And also all that cottage or tenement with a close thereto adjoining lately used as a garden ground, containing by estimation one acre more or less with a barn thereupon built the same are situate ... and are contiguous to and adjoining the aforesaid messuage or tenement abutting thereon towards the east the north head thereof abuts upon the said street called Eastgate Street upon the Vinefield now in the occupation of George Anderson towards the south and the piece of ground next herein after described into which ground the said close of ground is now laid towards the west as the said cottage and close of land last described were formerly in the occupation of Catherine Garwood widow together with the ancient and accustomed liberty of a gateway or free passage with carriages ... out of and from the said close ...through at the end of the Vinefield ... into the King's Highway there which said last mention cottage or tenement and close ... were conveyed ... to ... Thomas Symonds ... by ... Catherine Garwood' (24/25 April 1775). And also all that small piece or parcel ground formerly used as a garden ground ... near thereto whereon a messuage or tenement formerly did stand but long since wasted formerly the estate ... of John Boover of London hosier then in the occupation of Nathaniel Bennett and Spilman and lately in the occupation of James Plummer and called Plummer's Garden or Plummer's Ground ... now or formerly were copyhold ... and were seized into the hands of the lord of the said manor ... the same did adjoin to the last mentioned cottage and close and abuts thereon towards the east'.

There are copies of court records relating to this property in a separate bundle (ref. HA507/2/398/2) for the period 1697-1723. At the court held on 8 November 1697 the entry mentions that Mathew Marsh grocer lately held 'One copyhold or customary tenement with a garden to the same adjoining situate in Eastgate Street'. He was admitted to the property as the 'son of John Marsh late of Bury grocer deceased and nephew of the said Mathew Marsh'. Mathew Marsh was admitted on 1 May 1679 on the surrender of Bernard Herbard'. This is possibly a further reference to the Hubbard family. Elizabeth Marsh John's widow was admitted on 7 February 1709, to hold the property on behalf of her son John a minor. John Marsh, the son was admitted in October 1723 and then the property was released to Mr John Boover on 16 April 1724.

Returning to the land adjoining the precinct wall. The deed of conveyance of this property from Dr William Norford to Mrs Mary Davers is dated 11 October 1791.

William Norford had been granted the property in 1787. The property is described in the 1791 deed as 'All that messuage tenement or cottage wherein George Sculthorpe formerly dwelt and John Turner now dwells with the barn or hayhouse edifices buildings stables yards garden and ground thereto adjoining and belonging situate and being in Bury St Edmunds aforesaid without the place where the East Gate formerly stood between the close of meadow or pasture ground hereinafter mentioned and intended to be hereby granted and released on the parts of the South and West and the lane called Sparrow Hill Lane on the part of the East fronting and abutting upon Sparrow Hill on the part of the North And also that piece of pasture ground with the barn or stable and other erections thereon standing situate lying and being in Bury Saint Edmunds aforesaid and bounded by the said tenement or cottage and yard in part and the said lane called Sparrow Hill Lane and the lands formerly of the said Lady Castleton and now of Sir Charles Davers Baronet in part towards the East and a certain wall called the Abbey Wall towards the West abutting on the said lands late of the said Lady Castleton and now of the said Sir Charles Davers in part on the wall belonging to a certain field called the Abbey Vineyard in part towards the south and on the East Gate Street and Common River there towards the North' (ref. HA 507/2/397).

In the same bundle there is an earlier agreement relating to this sale. This agreement describes the property as 'being in the East Gate Street ... near the river'. The agreement specifically mentions 'the fruit trees bushes and other plants now standing and growing on the same' and 'all other materials, building stone'. Enclosed with the agreement a separate piece of paper lists '1 Nectarin 7s 6d, 3 dozen of Goosber 4s 0d, 4 Anson Apricot 11s 0d, 5 St Apples &c 10s 6d, 3 ditto 6s 0d'. The total was £1 19s 0d and this may have been a valuation of the plants then growing on the site.

In the earliest documents in this bundle, attested copies of the sale of the property in July 1754, the cottage 'wherein George Sculthorpe formerly dwelt' and the piece of pasture 'formerly Lady Castleton' are linked with another property on Angel Hill 'late in the occupation of Thomas Evans esquire'. The vendors of these properties were 'Right Honourable Lady Viscountess Galway & John Turnor' and the property was sold to George Dashwood. There is a fuller description of the Angel Hill Property in a further attested copy of a deed dated 6 April 1773 and this shows that it was on the western side of Angel Hill and back onto 'Nether Baxter Street'. The descriptions of the other parts the property are only slightly amended. The cottages where 'George Sculthorpe formerly dwelt' was then where 'John Derwent labourer dwells' and the lands of Lady Castleton were then 'now of Sir Charles Davers'.

There is a third bundle of deeds relating to property on this site covering the years 1725-1743 (ref. HA 507/2/386). These begin with a deed dated 29 September 1725. The vendors of the property appear to be the descendants of 'John Sharpe of Bury St Edmunds, mercer and Rebecca his wife who was one of the daughters of Stephen Cook late of the same towne, mercer'. Amongst the numerous descendants there is Elizabeth Halls who was the 'only daughter & heire of the body of Rebecca the late wife of Matthias Warren the younger' possibly the 'Widow Warren' mentioned in the earlier deeds. The will of a Stephen Cook, gentleman of Bury St Edmunds was proved at the archdeaconry of Sudbury Court in 1695. In 1725 the property was sold to 'John Burrough of Bury St Edmunds ...dyer' and described as 'All that messuage or tenement wherein George Sculthorpe formerly dwelt ...without East Gate there between the pasture ground now of Lady Castleton

now in the occupacon Mr Simon Webster formerly a garden ground whereon a tenement stood belonging to Thomas Tillett on the south and west parts and the Lane called Sparrow Hill Lane on the east part and Sparrow Hill on the north ... now in the several tenures ... of Thomas Huggins, George Scott and John Sterry By the name or names of four messuages one acre and one acre of pasture’.

John Burrough sold this property to John Turnor in May 1743. The later deed omits all references to Thomas Tillott’s former tenement.

The deeds for the property of Sir Charles Davers shown on the 1791 map are in yet another bundle (ref. HA 507/2/381). In a deed dated 26 April 1731 Robert Hubbard of Bury, ‘gentleman who was formerly Robert Hubbard the younger’ sold his property to Sir Jermyn Davers. The property is described as ‘all that messuage or tenement then in the occupation of the said Robert Hubbard the elder with the appurtenances scituate & being in Bury aforesaid in or near the street called Eastgate Street and the Tan House and Tanning Office to the said messuage then belonging or therewith used since demolished by the said Robert Hubbard the elder and Robert Hubbard party hereto or one of them And also all that piece or parcel thereof as the same are on the east side of a lane called Sparrow Hill Lane and abutting Eastgate Street towards the north And also all that piece of ground whereon two other messuages or tenement which were lately demolished and pulled down stood the one of the said two messuages or tenements was formerly in the occupation of Cornelius Arnold and afterwards of James Dorling and the other of the said two messuages or tenements was formerly in the occupation of Abel Smith and afterwards of Stephen Ashfield And also all that orchard lately adjoining to the said last menconed tenements but laid and made parcel of the close therein and herein after next menconed And also all that close formerly adjoining to the said orchard called the Tainter Close alias Mayes Close containing by estimacon three acres more or less as the same lyes next to the Vinefield towards the northeast and next the High Vine towards the south east and did formerly abut on the said orchard towards the north west and in part upon the ground late of Thomas Tillott towards the west And also all those three acres of land One acre thereof lyes in Bury Fields inclosed with lands formerly and then in the occupacon of Martin Cocksedge and the other two acres thereof lye in Barton Fields in the said County of Suffolk between the lands called Catshill Lands on the South part and the lands belonging to the dissolved Monastery of Bury St Edmunds then in the occupacon of the said Martin Cocksedge towards the North and the lands of in the several tenures or occupacons of the said Robert Hubbard the elder and Richard Stugale’.

The other documents in this bundle relate to mortgages raised on the property. In the property description in the mortgage deed of 27 October 1709, the tannery and messuages were still standing. One of the tenements was on the east side of the tanning office and ‘near the Vinefield Gate’.

There is an inventory of the goods of George Sculthorpe of Bury dated 1680 (ref. IC500/3/20(146)) is written in an extremely illiterate fashion even for the standards of the time. The house was divided into a hall, buttery, little and great parlours. A separate barn was also mentioned. The only unusual items mentioned are ‘4 great drums and 3 small drummes’ these together with drum rims and a quantity of parchment suggest that he was a drum maker.

Medieval Rentals: Sacrist's Rentals 1433 and 1526

The rental of 1433 (ref. Acc 1055), unlike later rental of 1526, offers a full geographic description for each property. In 1433 amongst 19 properties listed under Eastgate Street; the hospital of St Nicholas held two tenements a further 9 properties are listed on the south side of the street and 8 on the north side. In 1526 only 18 tenements are listed and are described without a full geographic description. The same tenements are listed in other post dissolution rentals for the years 1542-1547 (Breen 2000). A number of the occupants and former occupants left wills that were proved at the Sacrist's Peculiar Court of Bury and these records are now in the Archdeaconsry of Sudbury collection. The numbers of such references to wills appears to be modest compared with other parts of the town. The references to these wills have been drawn from the published indexes (Serjeant 1984).

The properties on the south side begin in 1433 with

Item William atte Watyr labourer for a tenement late John Moryel formerly Agnes Parcyons & Roger Cobatte, taylor lying between the tenement of Walter Asche cordwainer on the part of the east and the tenement of Walter Chapman on the part of the west the south head abuts on the tenement of Walter Asche and the north head on the king's highway aforesaid rent 2d

Above this entry inserted in a later hand there is the name now Margaret Toly widow (will 1476) of John Toly (will 1467)

In 1526 the same tenement is described as

Of William Brown, smyth, (will 1530) for a tenement late William Soper between the tenement of Andrew Larke (will 1550) on the west part and the tenement of John Frost on the east part rent 2d

In the later rentals 1542-1547 the tenant is named as 'William Butts for a tenement there formerly William Brown and before William Soper'.

In 1433

Item Walter Asche cordwainer for a tenement late John Moryel and formerly Agnes Parcyons & Roger Cobatte lying between the tenement William Watyr on the part of the west and the tenement of Richard Toly barker on the part of the east and abuts north on the king's highway aforesaid rent 6d

Above this entry is the name now William Rougham

In 1526 the same tenement is described as

Of John Frost for a tenement late John Rougham (will 1516) between the tenement of William Brown, smyth, on the part of the west and the tenement of Robert Payn on the part of the east rent 6d

In 1542-47 the entry is 'John Frost for a tenement there formerly John Rougham'.

In 1433

Item of Richard Toly for a tenement late Walter Asche and formerly William Warde, chaplain, Edward Taylor and Robert Sowter lying between the tenement of Walter Asche on the part of the west and a gate called Le Venyfeldgate on the part of the east and abuts towards the north on the king's highway rent 2d

In 1526 the same tenement is described as

Of Robert Payn for a tenement late Thomas Launder between the tenement of John Frost on the west part and the convent ground on the east part rent 2d

In 1542-47 the entry is 'Robert Bishop for a tenement late Thomas Lawder'

Though to the east of the Vine Field Gate the next property listed in 1433 is worth noting for the reference to 'a tenement of the convent of St Edmunds' and for the further references to Tillott and Palgrave or 'Pelgrave' in the later deeds.

Item of Robert Steege labourer for a tenement late Robert Copping, glover and formerly Nicholas Foster (will 1361) and Nicholas Palgrave lying between a tenement of the convent of St Edmunds on the part of the west and the tenement of Richard Lynseye carpenter on the part of the east and abuts on the king's highway towards the north rent 6 ½ d

Above this entry now Henry Godfrey now Thomas Hall

In 1526 the same tenement is described as

Of Reginald Tillot of Rougham (will 1557) for a tenement late Symon Marham (weaver will 1520) between the tenement of the convent on the part of the west and the tenement of Robert Lacy on the part of the east 6 ½ d

In 1542-47 the entry is 'William Hall for a tenement there formerly Lawrence Digon'.

In 1433

Item Richard Lyndeseye carpenter for a tenement Thomas Spycer and formerly Nicholas Foster & Nicholas Palgrave lying between the tenement of Robert Stenge on the part of the west and the tenement of the convent of St Edmund on the part of the east and abuts on the king's highway to the north rent 7d

Above this entry is the name William Symond of Barton. In the text Robert Stenge's name appears as Robert Steege in the previous entry.

In 1526 the same tenement is described as

Of Robert Lacy for a tenement late William Atkyn between the tenement of Reginald Tillot on the part of the west and the tenement of the convent on the part of the east 7d

In 1542-47 the same property was described as 'Of Robert Lacey for a meesuage formerly William Atkin'.

In 1433 the next tenement is described as

Item Adam Babyngton wolleman, (will 1456) for a tenement late Alice Wyther and formerly William Miller and Nicholas Palgrave lying between the tenement of the same Adam towards the west and the tenement of John Clerk barker on the part of the east and abuts towards the north on the king's highway rent 12d

Above this entry is the name of Margery Ildryzerd (will 1484) late wife of John Smyth

This tenement has not been identified in the later rentals.

Returning to the references to the two tenements held by the hospital of St Nicholas as described in the 1433 sacrist's rental, the first of these is described as 'a tenement late John Cordwiner (will John Cordewaner 1406) lying at Sparwehyll between the tenement of William Stamford Glover on the part of the west and a certain lane there on the part of the east and abuts to the north on the common river' and the second as 'the same for another tenement there late Robert Scherwynd (will Robert Scherewynd cordwainer 1446)'. In 1526 the same properties are described as:

'Of the Master of the Chapell of Saint Nicholas for a tenement late Robert Peche upon a certain lane on the west part and a tenement of the said Hospital on the east part

Of the said Chapell for a tenement late Robert Sherwyn between the tenement of the said Chapell on the east part & the tenement of William May on the west'

The late medieval form 'Sparwehyll' is found in the 1791 property deeds as 'Sparrow Hill'.

Conclusion

Since the publication of Alfred Morant's 1869 paper on the abbey of Bury St Edmunds this site has been named on maps as 'Walnut Tree Close'. The land was described as 'Walnut Tree Close' in Richard Payne's 1833 particulars and an undated illustration of the house that formerly stood on this site is labelled 'Walnut Tree Close'. In the various deeds for the site the property is described as 'Sparrow Hill' and on Warren's 1791 survey part of the site is labelled 'Malting Close'.

Two parcels of land called Walnut Tree Close or Yard are mentioned in post-dissolution documents, one close to the Shire Hall, the present council offices, the other consisting of three acres elsewhere. The reference to this second piece in the text of the letters patent of 1560 suggests that it should be close to the former abbey's vineyard. The letters patent were published in 1805. The juxtapositions of the two properties, Walnut Tree Yard and the Vineyard may have suggested to both Payne and Morant that 'Walnut Tree Yard' should be in the area of this site. No documentary evidence has been found to sustain this suggestion.

Various properties along the southern side of Eastgate Street are mentioned in the record of the manor of Eastgate Barns the former estate of the abbey's cellarers and in the two sacrist's rentals of 1433 and 1526 none of the property description mention Walnut Tree Yard or Close.

Strutt's print of 1821 names the buildings formerly on the site of Abbey Cottage as the 'The Gardeners' Cottage' and it is tempting to suggest that as the marquis of Bristol who was the then owner of the cottage and adjoining gardens, as well as the owner of the Abbey Gardens used the buildings as accommodation for gardeners employed in the Abbey Gardens. The Abbey Gardens, through his sponsorship did not become the town's formal Botanic Gardens until 1831. The various fruit bushes shown in the print and undated illustration may have been those listed on a separate piece of paper folded into an agreement to the sale in 1791. Again the new owner in 1791 was Mrs Mary Davers and she also owned the grounds of the Abbey Gardens and this connection again might suggest that these were the gardeners' cottages for those employed in the Abbey Grounds. Unfortunately this property had previously been linked to another property on Angel Hill. The fuller description of the Angel Hill property given in 1773 suggests that it may have had limited garden space and the plants growing on this site provided produce for the Angel Hill house.

The sale agreement of 1791 specifically mentions building stone and in the undated illustration there appears to be a fragment of a wall standing to the west of the cottage. This may have been part of the then demolished tenement of Thomas Tillott pulled down before 1725 or another as yet unidentified structure. This same fragment of a wall is not apparent in Strutt's print.

As with the northern side of Eastgate Street, in the area of this site there are some earlier references to tanners or 'barkers'. Thomas Tillott who occupied a house to the west of the present Abbey Cottage was the owner of a tannery. Robert Hubbard's tannery to the east of the cottage was pulled down between 1709 and 1731 together with two houses. There are a number of lost medieval dwellings along the street frontage and within the area of this site, though the lack of probate material for many of the former residence does not suggest that these houses had a particularly high status. Apart from the obvious associated trade of cordwainer, a show maker, George Skulthorpe's inventory shows that he was a drum maker who used parchment for the skin and possibly leather for the bodies of his drums. A second trade that appears to feature in the records is weaving. There are two references to 'tainters', these were the wooden frames used for the drying of cloth after it had been removed from the loom and had been through a fulling mill. The archaeological examination of these areas would assist in the understanding of the development of the medieval suburb of Eastgate.

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December 2008

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Illustrations

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K511/484 Walnut Tree Close' n.d

Maps

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HA 507/2/221/2 Deeds of the Abbey Site, Bury St Edmunds, purchased 16 June 1727 by Sir Jermyn Davers of Rushbrooke, baronet from Francis Bancroft of London 1560-1735

HA 507/2/381 Deeds of messuage and tan-house on East-gate Street and Sparrow Hill Lane two messuages near the Vinefield, 1 acre in Bury and 2 acres in Great Barton purchased 2 July 1726 by Sir Jermyn Davers from Rev Edward Leeds of Ipswich 1709-1728

HA 507/2/383 Deeds of piece of land near the East gate, Bury St Edmunds purchased 1 November 1728 by John Turnor, esq of Bury St Edmunds from William Cow of Mildenhall, gent 1690-1728'

HA 507/2/386 Deeds of messuage adjoining Eastgate Street and Sparrow Hill Lane ... purchased 24 May 1743 by John Turnor ... 1725-1743

HA 507/2/397 Conveyance of Property on Eastgate Street purchased 11 October 1791 by Mary Davers from William Norford 1754 – 1791

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Sacrist Rental

Acc 1055 Photostat copy Sacrist Rental 1433

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