





## HER Information

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**Planning Application No:** 3929/07

**Date of Fieldwork:** 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> February 2009

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**Funding Body:** Landfast (Anglia) Limited

**Curatorial Officer:** William Fletcher

**Project Officer:** Duncan Stirk

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## Summary

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An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Station Road East, Stowmarket (TM 0506 5889; SKT 051)

A trial trench evaluation was carried out at the above site in advance of a proposal to redevelop the site. The redevelopment involves the construction of residential properties and associated parking. A number of features of archaeological interest were recorded during the work. The site appears to have been low lying, possibly marshy ground prior to the completion of the Stowmarket Navigation in 1793, which made the River Gipping much more navigable for the transport of goods. The completion of the Navigation led to the foundation of a number of industrial and mercantile operations at the navigation head on the development site. Foremost among these were maltings and their associated warehouses, evidence for which was recorded during the evaluation. A modest assemblage of finds dating from the medieval up to the early modern period was collected.

(Duncan Stirk, SCCAS for Suffolk CC report no: 2009/066)







# 1. Introduction

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A planning application was made for a residential development at land near Station Road East, Stowmarket, Suffolk. The site is centred on approximately NGR TM 0506 5889 and comprises approximately a total of 0.29 hectares.



Figure 1. Site location

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The site lies in close proximity to sites of known archaeological activity as recorded in the County Historic Environment Record. It is thought (see Brief and Specification, Appendix 1) that activity related to the medieval crossing point at Pickerel Bridge may be present on the development site. There is also a high potential for preserved palaeo-environmental remains such as peat, in the river side deposits. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance with the potential to destroy these deposits, were they present. As such, there was an initial requirement for an archaeological evaluation by trial trench, as outlined in a Brief and Specification produced by William Fletcher of the SCCAS Conservation Team (Appendix 1). The SCCAS Field Team was subsequently commissioned to carry out the work by the client, Suffolk CC.

## 2. Geology and topography

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The drift geology underlying the site is sub alluvial and glaciofluvial sand and gravels.

The site is located in the centre of Stowmarket beside the River Gipping. It is bounded to the west by the towpath for the river, to the north by Stowupland Street, and to the south and east by Station Road East. Prior to the evaluation, the site was covered by three properties which were occupied by a brick office, a brick light industrial building,

and a metal warehouse. These buildings had been demolished by the time of the archaeological evaluation and the site surface was hardcore derived from their demolition. The site gently sloped down from southeast to northwest. The highest point of the site was in the southern corner at 29.18m AOD while the lowest was the northwest corner at 27.74m AOD. The centre of the site was at approximately 28.22m AOD.

### 3. Archaeological and historical background

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The site is located at the edge of the historic centre of Stowmarket, and as such there have been many archaeological investigations in the vicinity. Only a few of these are potentially relevant to the current development site. The historic core of medieval Stowmarket was located on the opposing side of the River Gipping (SKT 022); while the medieval bridge crossing the river, Pickerel Bridge (SKT 023), is thought to have been adjacent to the northern site boundary. Pickerel Bridge was the route from the town centre to Stowupland and to Thorney Manor Hall (SKT 012), that was located 150m to the east of the development site. The name Thorney includes the Anglo Saxon word for island or islet, perhaps indicating that the development site was in the marsh surrounding Thorney Hall. Work on the railway line to the east of the Hall encountered severe problems with the boggy ground, and it is possible that the area between the Hall and the river was similarly boggy. Indeed, the site flooded in 1795 and 1912 after the raising of the river banks, when such inundations should have been less likely. It is suggested that there was a medieval dock or shipyard on the river in the manor of Thorney, and this may potentially lie close to the development site (Rolfe, 2007).

The area was transformed with the opening of the Navigation in 1793, after which the area at the navigation head (up to Pickerel Bridge) was a focus for mercantile activity. Foremost amongst these were maltings which are listed in historic documents to the south of the site and to the west of the river at this time. The 1880's map shows these still in existence, even though by this time the railway was proving detrimental to river traffic on the Navigation. The Ipswich and Bury Railway built the Stowmarket station in 1846, which is located just to the east of the development site.

A print by Henry Davey dated 1838 (see cover) shows in detail the Navigation and the buildings present on the development site. From north to south the three main buildings on the site are listed as J Prentice & Co's warehouse, Mr. Cowell's warehouse, and Mr. Cobbold's warehouse. Both Cobbold and Prentice are listed as malsters at Navigation wharf in the 1844 White's directory. Later, the building at the north end of the site is listed as belonging to Vincent's soft drinks. (Rolfe, 2007)

Archaeological work in the vicinity has been limited, the exception being monitoring of groundworks at the former maltings to the south of the development site (SKT 039), which revealed a truncated soil horizon and no remains earlier than the maltings. The maltings buildings themselves are listed buildings and date from the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

## 4. Methodology

Trial trenching was carried out from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> February. The trenches were excavated using a 360° 13-tonne tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide flat-bladed ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation was carried out under close archaeological supervision until the top of the first undisturbed archaeological deposit or natural subsoil was revealed. Hand cleaning of the exposed surfaces was carried out where necessary in order to clarify the nature of the deposits and identify cut features. This was complicated by heavy snow which fell during the week, and the subsequent flooding of the trenches. In consultation with William Fletcher of SCCAS Conservation team, strategically located sondages and sumps were excavated to allow the archaeologically important areas to drain and be recorded.

The site covers approximately 2989 sq metres, of which 197.24 sq metres was within the trial trenches, resulting in a sample of 6.6%.



Figure 2. Site detail and trial trench locations.

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The site was allocated the HER number SKT 051. All observed deposits were allocated unique context numbers and recorded on pro forma recording sheets. All drawn recording was carried out in a series of 1:50 or 1:20 scale plans and 1:20 or 1:10 scale section drawings, as appropriate. A photographic record of representative sections and trenches was made which, along with the written records, forms the archive, stored with SCCAS Bury St Edmunds. The illustrations of individual trenches were rendered using MapInfo mapping software.



## 5. Results

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### 5.1 Introduction

The basic trench dimensions were as follows:

	Length (m)	Area sq. m
Trench 1	20.98m	48.72
Trench 2	11.48m + 2.5m Extension	31.52
Trench 3	28.44m	65.12
Trench 4	10.21m	22.46
Trench 5	10.63m + 1.5m extension	29.42
Totals	85.74m	104.4 sq. m

Table 1. Trench dimensions

### 5.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 was positioned in the north-west corner of the site so as to be entirely within the footprint of a modern building, and therefore provide a view of the pre-modern stratigraphy, particularly the alluvial deposits associated with the River Gipping.

The deepest deposit seen in the Trench 1 was seen at the base of sondages dug at both the south-west and north-east ends of the trench. This was a consistent reddish brown peat deposit (0043) that was at least 0.32m thick. Overlying this in both sondages was a mid grey clay deposit with pebble inclusions (0042) that was 0.1m - 0.14m thick.

Deposit (0042) was overlain in the south-western sondage by a thick deposit of blue grey sandy clay mottled with black patches (0040). This deposit was 0.58m to 0.72m thick. At the other end of the trench it was overlain by deposit (0050), a mid grey to brownish grey sandy clay, that was 0.12m thick. Over deposit (0050) was a mid brown and orangy grey sandy clay (0049), and a similar mid brown and grey sandy clay deposit (0051).

The top of these deposits had a number of patches of variable colour. These were initially assigned context numbers, but it was determined that the colour changes predominantly occurred around later intrusions, and were likely to be the effects of oxidation on formerly anaerobic deposits, and as such, part of the underlying layers. These were: (0027) in hypothetical cut [0028] a mottled orangy brown & grey firm sandy clay with some gravel, (0039) mixed orangy brown and grey firm clay with gravel and sand inclusions, (0041) light brown sandy clay, and (0029) a light brown gravelly sandy clay. Three joining sherds of a post-medieval redware pot were recovered from this deposit, dating from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century, along with a burnt flint and three animal bone fragments. An undated copper alloy coin (SF 001) was recovered from deposit (0027).

A number of timbers were recorded along the length of the trench. Most appeared to have been driven into the underlying clay deposits rather than being placed into post-holes. This impression was supported by the pointed ends of the three posts that were lifted and examined. The timbers were:

Timber	Dimensions(m)	Description
0008	0.38 x 0.06 x 0.16	Driven timber. Halved round-wood roughly pointed.
0009	0.22 x 0.23 x 1.5	Driven timber. Boxed heart wood, roughly done. Pointed at end.
0010	0.17 x 0.15 x 1.27	Driven timber. Whole wood, some bark preserved. Pointed at end.
0011	0.18 x 0.12 x ?	Driven timber. Boxed halved wood.
0012	0.20 x 0.12 x ?	Driven timber. Boxed halved wood.
0013	0.44 x 0.08 x ?	Plank. Probably remnant of pad under possible column base.
0014	0.40 x 0.1 x ?	Plank. Probable remnant of pad under possible column base.
0015	0.22 x 0.07 x ?	Driven timber. Plank-like.
0016	0.75 x 0.08 x ?	Plank. Possible remnant of ground beam, or portion of (0015).
0017	0.16 x 0.06 x ?	Driven Timber. Plank-like.
0018	0.18 x 0.12 x ?	Driven timber. Boxed halved wood.
0019	0.15 x 0.05 x ?	Driven timber. Plank-like.
0020	0.23 x 0.24 x ?	Driven timber. Quartered wood.
0021	0.30 x 0.14 x ?	Driven timber. Boxed half wood.
0035	>0.64 x 0.13x?	Driven timber pile.
0036	>0.32 x 0.12x?	Driven timber pile.
0037	0.32 x 0.05 x ?	Ground beam timber beneath masonry partition wall remnant (0044).
0038	0.17 x 0.13 x ?	Round wood laid horizontally beneath masonry wall (0044).
0052	0.32 x 0.12 x >2.0	Plank. Foundation beam for brick foundation (0022).

Table 2. Trench 1 Timbers

Directly overlying timbers (0035) and (0036) at the south-western end of Trench 1 was the remnant of a brick and mortar structure (0034) that was perpendicular to the line of the trench. This was at most 2 brick courses thick (0.20m) and over 0.96m was visible within the trench. A similar brick structure (0044) overlay timbers (0009), (0010), (0037) and (0038). This was only seen in section and consisted of a single course of bricks 0.08m thick and 0.35m wide. A more substantial brick and mortar foundation was recorded at the north-eastern end of the trench (0022) overlying timbers (0020), (0021), and (0052). This, once again, was perpendicular to the line of the trench, and was over 2m long by 0.55m wide and was 0.4m deep. It was assigned a hypothetical construction cut [0105], that would likely have contained timber beam (0052) as well as foundation (0022). Along the eastern edge of foundation (0022) there was a brick structure (0046), comprising a single brick course thick (0.08m) and two courses wide (0.28m) This was only seen in section so it is unclear whether or not it extended fully across the trench. A sample brick from foundation (0022) was a Drury Type LB3 brick dating to the late 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Abutting each brick structure, and present all along the trench except to the east of foundation (0022) was an off-white crushed chalk deposit 0.08m to 0.12m thick (0033). On the top of this, but more evident along the western portion of chalk surface (0033) was a very dark brown to black compact silt deposit (0032) that was 0.03m thick. A small feature [0048], that was seen only in section, cut chalk surface just to the west of foundation (0022). It was 0.24m wide and 0.18m deep, and held a mid brown grey sandy clay & gravel fill with chalk inclusions (0047). Chalk surface (0033) was also cut by a much larger feature [0107] that had moderate to steep straight sides and a flat

base, and was 5.24m wide by over 2m long by c. 0.5m deep. This held a predominantly brick rubble and dark grey silty sand fill (0106). The relationship between cut [0107] and surrounding deposits was somewhat unclear due to flooding and collapse of the trench sides, and it may be that the feature was cut from higher in the sequence.

Over deposit (0032), and occupying the same footprint as chalk surface (0033) was a mid orangy brown sandy gravel layer (0031) that was 0.05m to 0.22m thick. The entire trench was sealed by a 0.48m thick deposit of mixed dark brownish grey silty sand & clay deposit (0030) containing CBM & plastic, and 0.28m of dark pink crushed brick hardcore (0025).



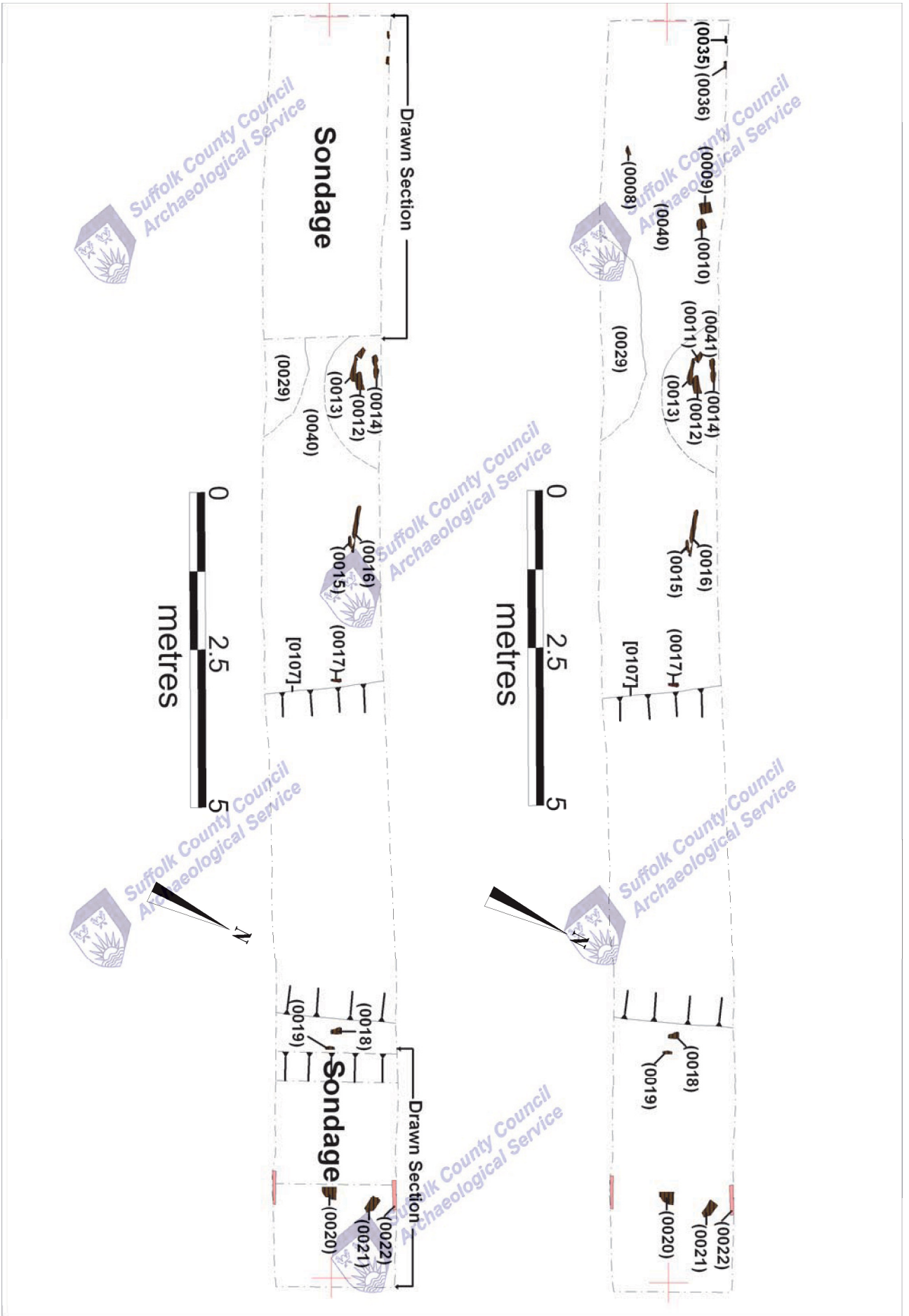


Figure 3. Trench 1 plan.

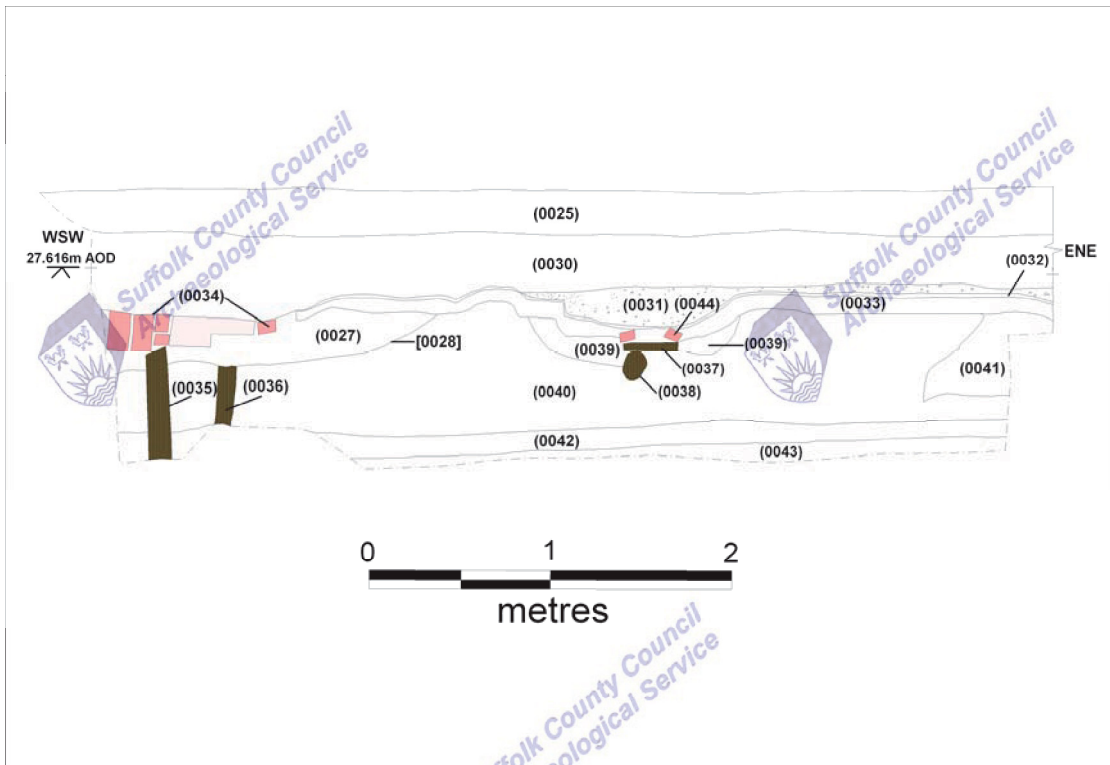


Figure 4. Trench 1 South-West sondage section

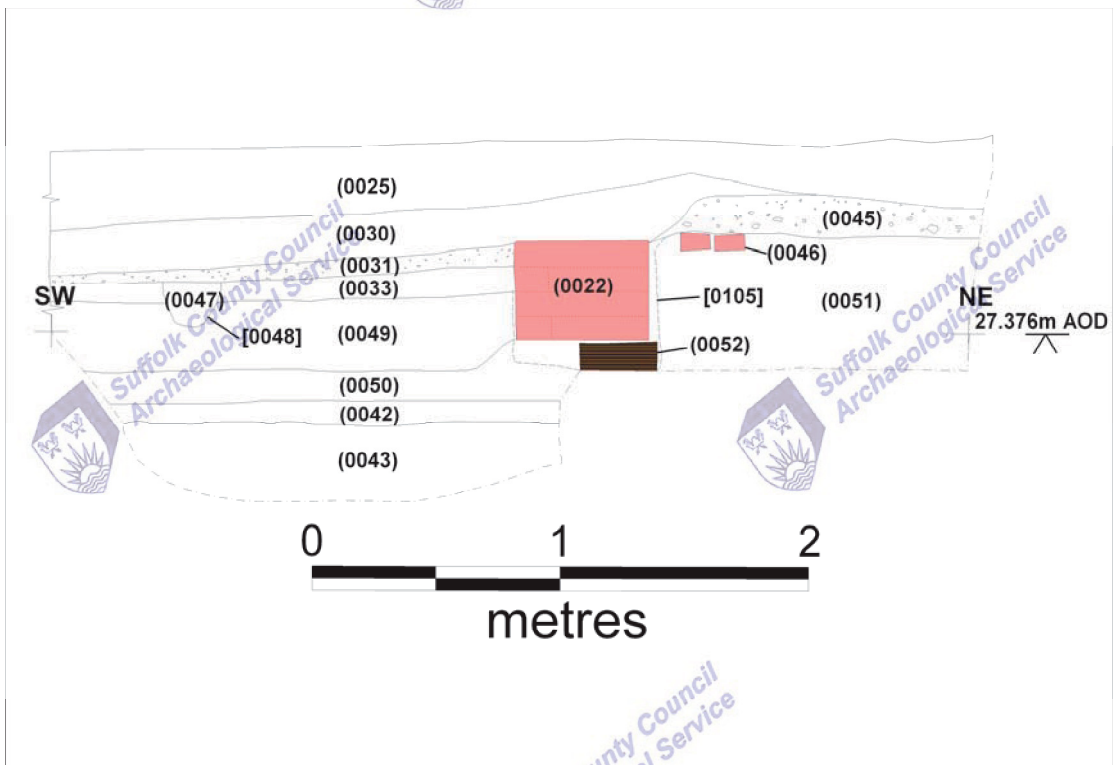


Figure 5. Trench 1 North-East sondage section



### 5.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 was positioned in the north-eastern portion of the site, as close as was practical to the Station Road East street front. This was intended to pick up any potential road side structures. The trench as originally excavated was almost entirely taken up by modern features and service trenches, which necessitated an extension of the trench to reveal undisturbed deposits.

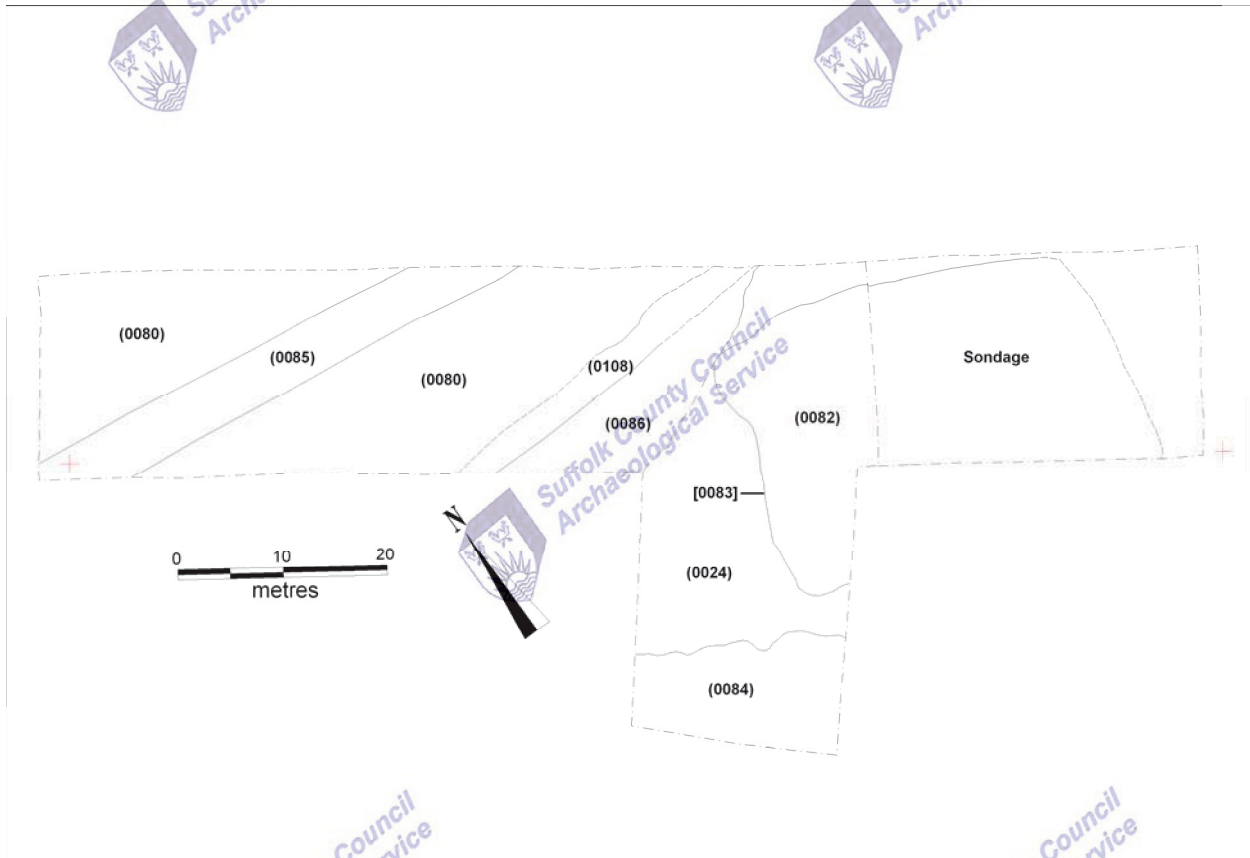


Figure 6. Trench 2 plan

The deepest deposit was seen in the south-eastern portion of the trench where a sondage was excavated to allow the groundwater to drain from the rest of the trench. At the base of the trench, at a depth of 1.38m BGL up to 0.66m BGL, there was a dark brown sandy peat deposit (0081). This deposit was probably overlain by a dark grey to black organic sandy silt (0024), although the relationship had been removed by a later feature. Two sherds of pot were recovered from this deposit, a variant of late Medieval and Transitional ware, and a late Colchester type ware, both dating to the 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century. In the western extension of Trench 3 deposit (0024) was overlain by a mid grey gritty sand deposit (0084), while in the northern portion of the trench it was overlain by a mixed dark grey gravelly sandy silt deposit (0080).

Deposit (0080) was overlain by a number of deposits that were not investigated because they were clearly modern and possibly held live services. These almost certainly were the fills of cut features, but this was not determined, so cut numbers were not assigned. Deposit/fill (0085) was over 4.4m long and 0.56m wide, and was composed of crumbly light grey concrete. This was aligned north-west to south-east. Parallel to (0085), to the south-west, were two deposits: (0086), a mid brown gravelly mortar deposit, and (0108), an orangy brown sandy gravel deposit.

The final feature of note in the trench was a very large and vertical sided feature [0083] measuring 3.7m by 2.6m by over 1.4m deep. This held a mixed dark grey organic silt sand with grey sandy gravel and pink brick dust (0082). The trench was sealed by a 0.2 to 0.35m thick deposit of dark pink crushed brick (0025). The presence of crushed brick in the fill of feature [0083] probably indicates that it was dug through deposit (0025), with the crushed brick surface being re-instated once the feature was infilled.

#### 5.4 Trench 3

This trench was perpendicular with the river Gipping, and was primarily placed to provide a transect of alluvial and peat deposits related to the river. The historic maps indicate that buildings were present from at least the late 19<sup>th</sup> century along the waterfront, and this trench was placed to investigate one of these buildings. Detailed recording of the south-western end of the trench was undertaken in the deep sondage. Elsewhere in the trench the stratigraphic sequence was much simpler and a sample section was recorded only.

The deepest deposit seen in the trench at a depth of 26.60m AOD was (0074), a light to mid grey organic sand. This was overlain by a series of natural alluvial deposits: a laminated dark brown to black peat with reddish brown wooden inclusions (0073), a mixed deposit of orangy brown clay and mid grey sandy silt (0072), a mixed deposit of orangy brown gravelly sand & mid grey silt sand (0007), a deposit of dark grey to black organic silty sand (0070), and lastly a deposit of mid to dark grey sandy clay (0065) that was present along the whole trench. A single fragment of Post-Medieval roof-tile was recovered from deposit (0007).

Deposit (0065) was cut by a wide feature with a shallow to moderately steep side, and a flat base. This was over 4.1m wide, by circa 0.50m deep and appeared to be aligned south-west to north-east, perpendicular to the trench. This feature held a series of fills that were very similar to the alluvial deposits that it cut through.

These were: a light brown sand fill (0071), a mottled orange brown and light grey clay fill (0068), an orangy brown gravelly sand and clay fill (0109), a dark brown organic silt fill (0110), and lastly a mottled orange brown and mid brown clay fill (0061).

Deposit (0061) was overlain by a thin band of mixed orange brown and light grey clayey sand with CBM mortar and charcoal inclusions (0006), that appeared to be the churned up upper surface of deposit (0061). A very similar deposit occupied the same horizon over deposit (0065), which was described as mixed orangy brown clay and grey silty sand (0064). A single fragment of Post-Medieval roof-tile was recovered from deposit (0006).

The churned deposit (0006) was cut by a northwest to south-east aligned foundation cut [0076] that was 1.3m wide, extended fully across the trench and was over 0.8m deep. It had vertical straight sides and the base was unseen. The foundation cut held a brick and mortar footing (0077), and light orange brown clay sand packing fill (0075).

To the south-west of foundation (0077) there was another structural feature cutting churned layer (0006). This was a sub-rectangular feature [0079] 1.2m wide by 1.28m long. It held a square brick and mortar foundation topped by a pyramidal ashlar stone column base (0023), and a mixed mid brown sand with chalk and CBM packing fill (0078). This foundation was not fully excavated but it was seen to be at least two brick courses deep, below the contemporary ground surface, while the stone column base

extended approximately 0.5m above the ground surface. A sample brick from the foundation dates from the late 18<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Overlying churned deposit (0064) to the north-east of foundation (0077), was a thin band of light to mid grey sandy silt and clay (0063), that was cut by a feature only seen in section. This cut [0067], had steep concave sides and a concave base and was 0.48m wide and 0.40m deep. It contained a mid brown silt sand fill (0066). Sealing this feature was a thin band of dark reddish brown gritty sand (0062).

This was overlain by an off-white crushed chalk deposit (0060) that was present along the length of the trench. A couple of bricks were present in this deposit where it would have abutted foundation (0077) but not enough was present to indicate what kind of structure it belonged to. On the surface of (0060) there was a thin band of dark brown to black sandy silt (0059) that was at most 0.05m thick. At the eastern end of Trench 3 a light brown sandy gravel deposit (0088), 0.08m thick, occupied a similar position over chalk layer (0060).

Deposit (0059) was cut by a linear feature [0058], that abutted foundation (0077), and was 1.4m wide and 0.62m deep. This had steep straight sides and a sloping base and held a mixed mid grey sandy silt fill and a ceramic drain (0057). On the other (western) side of foundation (0077) a mixed mid grey brown silt sand deposit 0.30m thick was over (0059).

In the north-western corner of Trench 3 deposit (0056) was cut by a linear feature [0055] measuring over 1.95m long by over 0.26m wide by over 0.55m deep. This was clearly of modern date so was not fully excavated. To the east of this, and also cutting deposit (0056) was a linear feature [0053] that matched the alignment of foundation [0077]. This was 0.78m wide and 1.02m deep, and had vertical sides and a stepped base. It held a mid grey sandy silt fill (0026).

The eastern portion of the trench had a mixed dark grey sand silt deposit 0.24m thick overlying (0088). The stratigraphic sequence was completed with a dark pink crushed brick deposit (0025), varying in thickness from 0.2m to 0.35m.

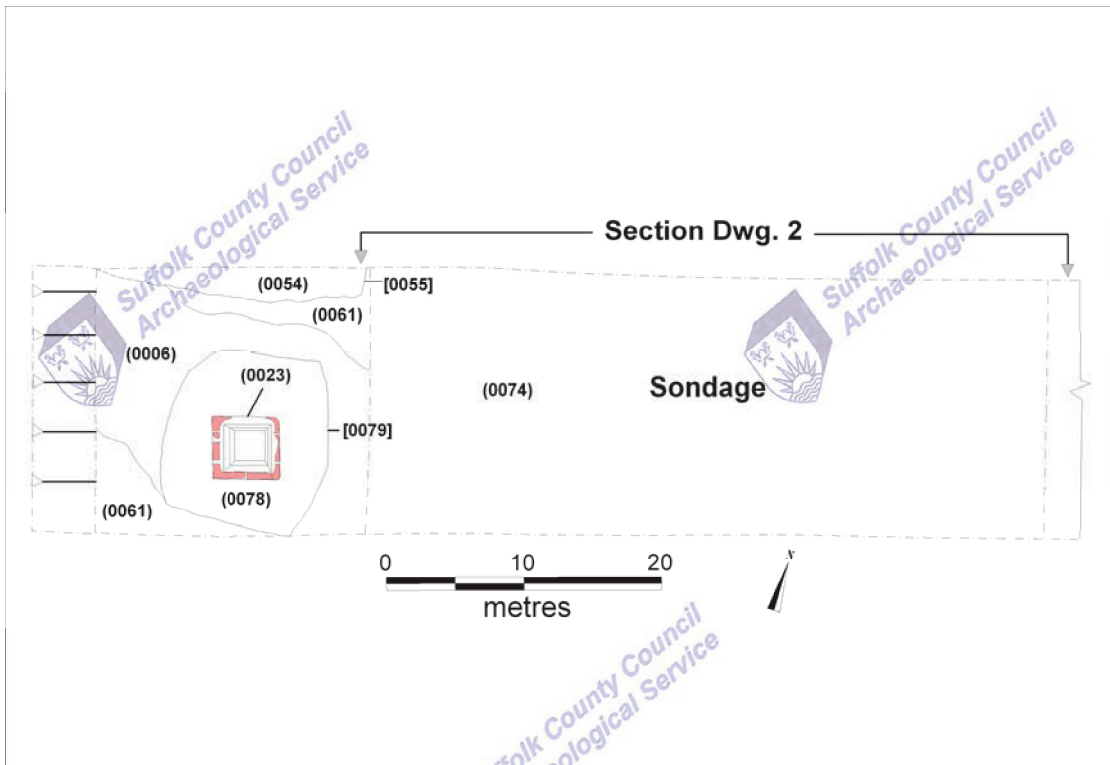


Figure 7. Trench 3. Plan of south-western end

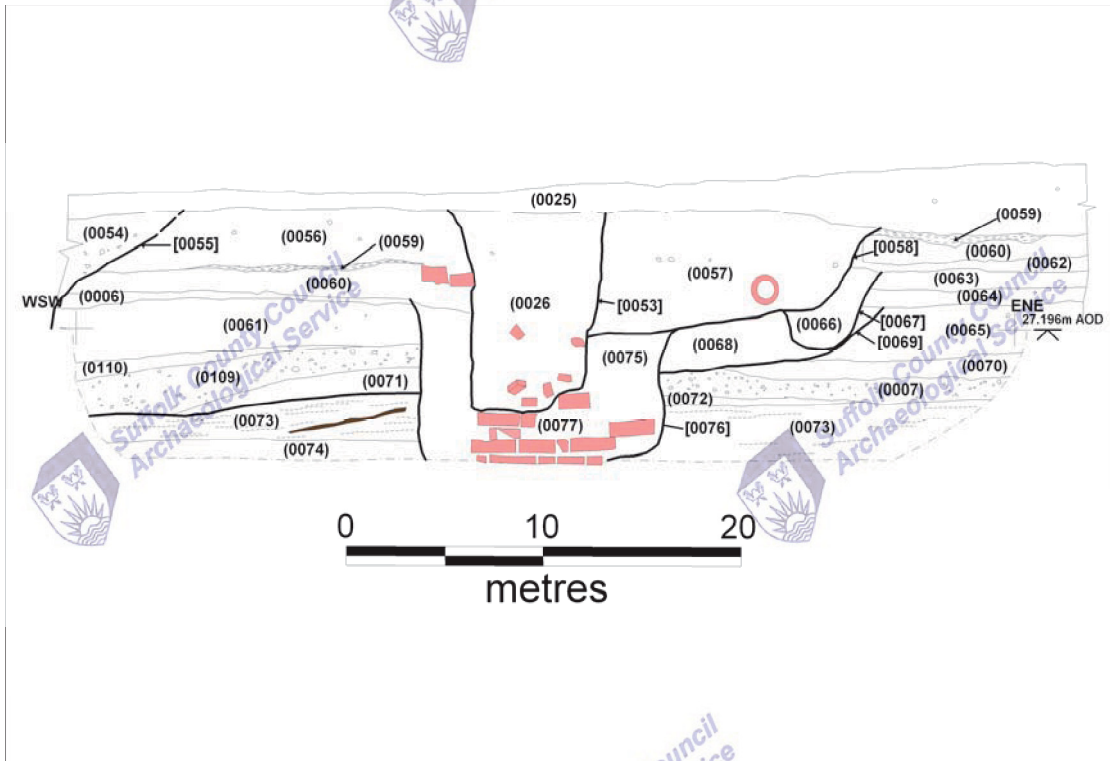


Figure 8. Trench 3 section

## 5.5 Trench 4

This was placed in what appeared to be a courtyard area in order to avoid 19<sup>th</sup> century and modern foundations. Once excavated, access to this trench was limited due to flooding and the presence of hydrocarbon contamination. Recording was therefore limited to the trench edge resulting in a less detailed record of the stratigraphy than in other trenches.

The following sequence was recorded in the centre of the trench:

Context	Depth	Description
0025	0 – 0.08m	Dark pink crushed brick. Modern hardcore.
0089	0.08m – 0.34m	Mixed dark grey sandy silt. Make up layer.
0090	0.34m – 0.50m	Off white crushed chalk floor.
0094	0.48m – 1.04m+	Mixed dark grey and dark brown organics and sandy silt

Table 3. Trench 4 deposit sequence

This sequence extended throughout the trench except in two areas. Along the north-eastern edge of the trench a large modern feature [0093], measuring approximately 5.5m by over 1m was seen. It held a dark grey brown organic and sand silt fill with CBM inclusions (0092). Also, two elements of a brick foundation (0091) were seen along the south-eastern and south-western sides. Together they probably formed the footings for a south-east to north-west aligned wall, and its north-east to south-west return.

## 5.6 Trench 5

This trench was placed to determine the type of activity in the southern portion of the site. It was perpendicular to the course of the river Gipping, and was placed to minimize the number of 19<sup>th</sup> century foundations hit. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century the map evidence suggests this was a lane between buildings, which was built over by the later part of the century.

The following sequence was recorded in the centre of the trench, and was present pretty uniformly along the trench:

Context	Depth	Description
0095	0 – 0.42m	Mixed orange brown sand and dark grey sand silt with brick rubble inclusions. Make-up layer.
0096	0.42m – 0.92m	Lt brown mottled with lt grey clay. Make up layer.
0097	0.92m – 1.06m	Dark grey sandy silt and brick and tile rubble. Demolition layer.
0098	1.06m – 1.12m	Off white chalk surface. Chalk surface, probably exterior.
0099	1.12m – 1.48m	Mid brown sandy clay and gravelly sand with CBM inclusions. Possible make up layer.
0100	1.48m – 1.52m	Orange brown sandy clay. Possible natural alluvial deposit.
0101	1.52m +	Dark grey clay. Trench wide alluvial natural deposit.

Table 4. Trench 5 deposit sequence

At the south-western end of trench 5 there were the remains of a modern brick lined feature (0102). This masonry was over 3.5m wide by circa 4m long and 1.7m deep. The masonry had been partly removed by a large cut [0103], that was of similar dimensions. This was then infilled with brick rubble in a dark grey sandy silt matrix (0104), that was 3.5m long by over 3.1m wide by 1.7m deep.

## 6. Finds and environmental evidence (Richenda Goffin)

### 6.1 Introduction

Finds were collected from 7 contexts, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		CBM		Burnt flint		Animal bone		Small Finds	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0006			1	103						Post-med
0007			1	57						Post-med
0022			1	1949						L17th-18th C
0023			2	3114						18th-19th C
0024	2	52								15th-16th C
0027									SF 1001 1 copper alloy @ 9g	
0029	3	28			1	5	3	29		16th-18th C
Total	5	80	5	5223	1	5	3	29		

Table 5. Bulk finds

### 6.2 Pottery

A total of 5 fragments of pottery were recovered from the evaluation (0.080kg). The ceramics were fully catalogued and the data was input into the site database (Appendix 3).

Three joining fragments of the same vessel were present in deposit 0029 (Trench 1). The sherds appear to be worn, discoloured and possibly burnt, and their outer surfaces have been adversely affected, probably by depositional changes. They are made in a medium sandy redware fabric with quartz and flint inclusions. Precise identification is difficult given the condition of the pottery, but it can be given the collective fabric name of Post-medieval Redware (16th-18th C).

Two fragments of early post-medieval wares were found in deposit 0024 (Trench 2). The first sherd has a sagging, knife-trimmed base which has an internal olive green glaze. It is made in a medium sandy fabric with moderate quartz, iron oxide and clay pellet inclusions, and has a light grey core with oxidised external margin. It is a variant of a Late medieval and transitional ware. A second small and abraded sherd of Post-medieval redware, made in a dense hard brick red fabric, which originally may have been slipped and glazed is probably a Late Colchester type ware. Both sherds are of a similar date range, 15th-16th century.

### 6.3 Ceramic building material

Small quantities of ceramic building material were collected from two of the trenches (5 fragments @ 5.223kg). The material has been fully quantified with a catalogue on the database.

The remains of a large brick encased in off-white mortar was sampled from the brick foundation 0022 of the possible malting building in Trench 1. The brick is light purple in colour and has white clay bands and sparse flint inclusions. Two complete dimensions are measurable, the width (115mm) and the height (65mm). These measurements and the type of brick indicate that it dates from the Late 17th-18th century (Drury Type LB3).

A second, almost complete brick was recovered from 0023, part of a brick and mortar base which may have provided support for a raised floor in another possible malting structure in Trench 3. The brick is made in a fine hard orange fabric with black ?ferrous inclusions, and is covered in cream mortar. The full dimensions of this brick were recorded, length 230mm, width 110mm and height 60mm. Similar bricks measured for the Suffolk brick survey on existing buildings in Bury St Edmunds date to the late 18th - 19th century.

Two fragments of post-medieval roof tile were recovered from Trench 3. One fragment found in deposit 0006 has a large circular peghole (diameter 15mm). It is unusual in appearance and may be an example of a tile which was attached only with a single peghole rather than having two, which is more standard. A second roof tile was collected from waterlain deposit 0007.

#### **6.4 Metalwork**

The only small find recovered from the evaluation is a heavily encrusted copper alloy disc, probably a coin, which was found in the fill 0027 of a possible foundation cut in Trench 1 (SF1001, diameter 27mm). No details can be seen without radiography.

#### **6.5 Miscellaneous**

A single fragment of burnt flint was collected from deposit 0029 in Trench 1.

#### **6.6 Animal bone**

Three fragments of animal bone recovered from deposit 0029 (Trench 1) include a fragment of sheep scapula and a single bovine phalange.

#### **6.7 Environmental samples (Val Fryer)**

##### **6.7.1 Introduction and method statement**

A single organic deposit 0024 of possible early post medieval date was sampled for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblage.

The sample was processed by manual water flotation/washover and the flot was collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. As the flot was seen to contain a number of waterlogged/de-watered macrofossils, it was stored in water prior to sorting, but subsequently air-dried for ease of storage. The wet retents were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Appendix \*. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). Both charred and de-watered macrofossils were recorded.

The non-floating residue was collected in a 1mm mesh sieve and will be sorted when dry. Any artefacts/ecofacts have been retained for further specialist analysis.

##### **6.7.2 Results**

The assemblage was largely composed of fragments of de-watered wood and root/stem and pellets of densely compacted organic mud. However, charcoal/charred wood fragments were also moderately common along with a small number of poorly

preserved seeds and shells of both terrestrial and freshwater obligate molluscs. The seeds were largely of grassland, ruderal and tree/shrub species including bugle (*Ajuga* sp.), deadnettle (*Lamium* sp.), buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.), bramble (*Rubus* sp.) and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*). A single very poorly preserved charred cereal grain was also noted.

### 6.7.3 Conclusions

In summary, although the sample was taken from a deposit which is currently waterlogged, the poor condition of many of the macrofossils would appear to indicate that the remains have been subjected to intermittent periods of drying and re-wetting caused by fluctuations in the local water table. As this may have resulted in the destruction of many less robust macrofossils, accurate interpretation of the assemblage is not possible. However, it would appear most likely that during the earlier post-medieval period, this area of Stowmarket comprised a poorly maintained area of damp grassland, which was possibly subject to intermittent flooding.

### 6.7.4 Recommendations for further work

Although somewhat sparse, this assemblage clearly illustrates that plant macrofossils are preserved within the archaeological horizon at Stowmarket. Therefore, if further interventions are planned, it is recommended that additional plant macrofossil samples of approximately 20 – 40 litres in volume are taken from all well sealed and dated contexts. Special attention should be given to any waterlogged organic deposits, as these may provide valuable data about the surrounding environment. It should be noted that waterlogged deposits may also preserve arthropod remains and specific specialist input may be required for this material.

## 6.8 Discussion of the material evidence

Only small quantities of finds were recovered from the evaluation. It is clear that extensive ground disturbance has affected many of the underlying deposits. In addition the intermittently waterlogged nature of some of the deposits has affected the condition of the artefacts.

No finds of medieval date were identified which could be related to activity associated with the old bridge crossing point. If much of the immediate area was marshland during this period, it is unlikely that many finds would be present anyway. A small quantity of early post-medieval sherds was identified in the two most northerly trenches, which may represent dumped material over the marshy ground.

The ceramic building material provided some information on the dating of the foundations of two of the probable maltings buildings in Trenches 1 and 3, but the approximate date of the construction of these buildings is already known through documentary evidence.





## 7. Discussion

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### 7.1 Trench 1

The sequence in Trench 1 is relatively straightforward, and can be assigned to two general phases. Deposit (0043), at the base of the trench, up to the top of deposits (0040), (0049), and (0051), is clearly an alluvial sequence related to the wetland margins of the River Gipping. The top of this sequence warrants some discussion. On initial examination it appeared that the top of the alluvium was cut by a number of features, excavation of which produced a small finds assemblage. Further excavation of deposits (0029) and (0041) demonstrated this hypothesis to be untrue. A more likely explanation is that over time rubbish was dumped on a probably marshy area and incorporated within the alluvium. The colour changes of parts of the alluvium, which had the appearance of cut features, can also be explained. Almost without exception the lighter coloured parts of the alluvium coincided with later intrusive features, which suggests that exposure of formerly anaerobic deposits to air has created the appearance of features where none exist. Although recorded initially as possible cut features and distinct deposits, (0027), [0036], (0039), (0029), and (0041) may all be explained this way.

Immediately overlying the alluvial deposits were the structural elements of a building, suggesting that a portion of the ground surface was removed prior to the construction of the building. This was the case during archaeological monitoring of work at the maltings complex (SKT 039) to the south of the site, where pre-maltings ground levels had been truncated (Rolfe, 2007).

The first stage of the construction was the driving of timber piles into the alluvium. All but one of the timbers recorded in the trench can be demonstrated to be part of this structure, as they underlay brick foundations, and were at regularly spaced intervals. The exception was timber (0008) which was retained. Where the preservation of the foundations was good, such as under (0022) the full construction technique was evident. The piles were driven into the alluvium and a timber plank or beam was laid over the pilings. The brick foundation was then built on the plank. This technique was probably designed to cope with the unstable nature of the underlying alluvial deposits and has been recorded by the author in similar deposits beside the River Thames in London.

According to modern OS maps Trench 1 was placed entirely within the footprint of the most recent building. Certainly foundations (0034) and (0044) look like internal partitions, however (0022) looks to be part of an external wall. This impression is reinforced by the associated floor surfaces that are different on either side of (0022). Deposit (0033) is a rammed chalk floor of a type that is common on the site. A black silty occupation layer (0032) was present over this floor. At some stage the floor was replaced by a sandy gravel floor (0031). This was distinct from the sandy gravel surface (0045) to the east of wall (0022) which was a thicker and dirtier deposit and likely to have been an external surface. Wall (0022) may therefore have been the original end of a building that was subsequently extended. This extension was evident on the photographs of the building prior to demolition.

The wide linear feature [0107] may also have been part of this building. The condition of the trenches prevented a full understanding of this feature. It certainly cut the chalk

floor, and lacked any kind of masonry lining. It was backfilled with demolition rubble, and is probably best interpreted as the remnant of a grubbed out structural element.

It appears that the building was the first and only building on this footprint, as the foundations are immediately overlain by modern make-up layers containing plastic and other modern rubbish.

## 7.2 Trench 2

In retrospect it is clear that many of the features present in Trench 2 were related to the original site boundary which was further southwest than the present one. Deposit (0085) for example is probably the concrete surround to the water mains, while (0108) and (0086) are probably related to the former kerb and pavement, or other services. Taking up much of the rest of the trench was a very large pit [0083]. A thin band of crushed brick in the fill gave this feature away as being very modern, and almost certainly cut through the crushed brick hardcore surface of the site.

In the small portion of the trench not taken up by modern features a similar sequence to Trench 1 was evident. Peaty deposit (0081) and deposits (0024) and (0084) were clearly water-lain, and pottery was recovered from (0024) suggesting that dumping of rubbish was occurring in the early Post-Medieval period, as in Trench 1. There was no evidence for building activity in the small visible area of pre-modern deposits. The environmental sample from deposit (0024) probably indicates why. A collection of seeds and mollusc shells from the sample indicates that the area was poorly maintained grassland that was subject to intermittent flooding, and therefore unsuited to building at this date.

## 7.3 Trench 3

The stratigraphic sequence in Trench 3 was very similar to that in Trench 1, which is probably not surprising considering its similar placement relative to the river. Deposits (0074) at the base of the trench up to deposit (0065) are clearly water-lain. The environmental evidence produced by the basal peat deposit (0074) was unfortunately poorly preserved and not suitable for dating. It did however suggest that it was formed in a "fen carr" environment dominated by the alder tree species. Significantly, no evidence for human presence or activity was present in the sample, suggesting that it is very old. This contrasts with the overlying deposit (0007), which produced a fragment of Post-Medieval roof tile.

This alluvial sequence was cut by a shallowly sloping channel [0069] that held very similar alluvial fills. The cut may be the edge of the River Gipping, that prior to the Navigation opening in 1793 is thought to have been much wider and shallower than at present. The Post-Medieval roof-tile recovered from deposit (0007), a deposit which pre-dates this channel, suggests that between the 16<sup>th</sup> century and the late 18<sup>th</sup> century opening of the Navigation, the river was meandering and quickly silting up. An almost identical fragment of Post-Medieval roof tile was recovered from the very top of this alluvial sequence from deposit (0006). If the sondage in Trench 3 had been extended it is likely that deposits (0007), (00070), and (0065) would be revealed as fills of an earlier version of the river channel. Environmental samples taken from the alluvial sequence proved to be poorly preserved, but they did support the environmental evidence from Trench 2. In the Post-Medieval period the site was occupied by a meandering poorly defined river channel bounded by periodically flooded rough disturbed ground and

poorly maintained grassland with nearby hedgerows. In short, a fairly typical water meadow.

As in Trench 1 the alluvial deposits were immediately overlain by a structure, suggesting that the ground had been truncated. The top of the alluvium was churned up and had bits of CBM incorporated in it, as recorded as deposits (0006) and (0064). This probably represents the working horizon on which the building was constructed, which was churned by the passage of workmen.

The structural features in Trench 3, namely brick foundation (0077) and column base (0023), are probably contemporaneous, and part of a building seen on OS maps dated 1880, 1890, and 1920. Interestingly, the photographs of the modern building on the plot suggest that it was built on the old foundations that we see in the trench. Foundation (0077) is probably the eastern wall of this early building, while robber trench [0055] marks the line of the north wall. Column base (0023) is an important clue as to the original function of the building. This is a feature typical of granaries in the south of England, but also is found in drying floors for malt. (Wood, E, 1997) The column supports a floor on which the grain, hops, or malt is dried and is shaped to keep out mice and rats. A secondary benefit would have been protection from flooding which was common in the area. Like in Trench 1, the building here also had a rammed chalk floor (0060). This overlay the brick foundation to the column base, but not the chamfered stones. The floor level was therefore about 0.4m below the top of the column base. A number of maltings were known to occupy the site at the time and this warehouse was probably for the storage of hops or malt.

Feature [0067] may have been a post-hole or structural slot associated with the building phase. It was undated but stratigraphically post-dates the working horizon and pre-dates the laying of the chalk floor. The rammed chalk floors associated with this building are present on either side of wall footing (0077). No building appears on any of the historic maps to the east, so it may be assumed that this portion of the chalk floor was a yard surface. Deposit (0056), while not particularly interesting in itself, indicates that at some stage during the life of the drying barn the cavity below the suspended floor was infilled. This presumably occurred when the barn no longer served as a storage warehouse.

There was no evidence in the trench of the railway line that would have passed across the trench according to the historic maps.

#### **7.4 Trench 4**

Trench 4 was problematic in that it flooded very quickly and was contaminated with hydrocarbons. The deposit sequence appeared to match the other trenches however. A rammed chalk floor (0090) immediately overlay organic alluvial deposits (0094). The chalk floor is probably the yard surface that was also seen in Trench 3. Two arms of a brick foundation (0091) were seen in the south-western corner of the trench, that don't unfortunately match any of the buildings on the historic maps. The bricks types appeared to be relatively modern, so probably belong to the car sales garage known to have existed on the site. This would also account for the hydrocarbon contamination.

## 7.5 Trench 5

Trench 5 revealed stratigraphy mostly consistent with the other trenches. The difference in this trench was that a chalk surface (0098) overlay deposits that may not have been alluvial. This may indicate that the ground was built up rather than reduced as was evident in other parts of the site. On the 1880 map this part of the site was a different property designated as a malthouse. The owners of this site may have felt the need for more protection from flooding and raised the ground prior to building. The trench was positioned within a building on the 1880 and 1890 maps which was demolished at some point before the 1920 map was surveyed; evidence for which is the demolition rubble layer over the chalk floor (0097).

The malthouse building was sealed by thick make-up layers laid down before a modern building was constructed. Evidence for this was a brick surround to a deep pit [0103]. This may be a vehicle inspection pit for the car sales garage that occupied this part of the site.

## 8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

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The archaeological work at Station Road East, Stowmarket has answered a number of questions about the site. Alluvial deposits were recorded across the site, and it now seems clear that the area was very wet in the past. Samples taken from the peat and the top of the alluvial sequence should give us some idea when these deposits were laid down. The finds evidence indicates that water-lain deposits were still being laid down during the Post-Medieval period. A portion of what may be the pre-navigation river channel was seen during the work, cutting other alluvial deposits that were laid down in the Post-Medieval period. It appears therefore, that the river channel shifted and silted up relatively quickly until formalized by the digging of the Navigation channel in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The environmental evidence indicates that the ground beside the river was periodically flooded scrub grassland as late as the early Post-Medieval period. The modest finds assemblage recovered from these deposits is probably a result of rubbish being dumped on scrub land. From this evidence it seems likely that the boggy ground deterred development on the site until relatively recently. It appears that the site was part of the marsh that partially or wholly surrounded Thorney Hall in the medieval period.

The upper portions of a typical soil horizon were seldom present, and it seems likely that the site was stripped of topsoil and levelled prior to the construction of warehouses in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century. The warehouses were related to the opening of the Navigation in 1793, and it seems that the site was what we would consider a "greenfield site". (A similarly dated maltings on the west side of the river, Cobbold's Maltings, was also documented as having been built on "a close of meadow or pasture land") Presumably the excavation of a deeper channel for the Navigation, with raised towpath banks, was seen as a safeguard against the flooding that had so far deterred building on the site. Unfortunately the documented floods of 1795 and 1912 show this to have been too optimistic.

A late 18<sup>th</sup> century date for the building seen in Trench 3 is consistent with the brick type recovered from the pillar base, so the warehouse was likely to have been built

specifically for Navigation trade. A slightly earlier date (late 17<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> century) may be implied for the construction of the building seen in Trench 1. This may indicate that a pre-existing building along Stowupland Street was incorporated in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century into the mercantile activity alongside the Navigation, and need not contradict the evidence that the site was largely undeveloped.

The dockside buildings and their owners are clearly shown on the Davey print dated 1838. The evidence from the evaluation strongly indicates that the northern building originally belonging to J. Prentice and Co. continued in use with minor additions until demolished just prior to the evaluation. The middle building, belonging to Mr Cowell, appears to have had its upper portion rebuilt, but was essentially the same building. The southern building, part of Mr. Cobbold's malthouse, was demolished sometime prior to the 1920's, although the print indicates that the building was similar to the remnants of Thomas Prentice's malthouse to the south.

The evaluation has provided the opportunity to collect environmental evidence for the riverine margins to the River Gipping. Occupation on the site seems to have occurred somewhat late in the history of Stowmarket, probably because it was very wet land. This late 18<sup>th</sup> century mercantile activity at the head of the Navigation is well attested by the historic documents and the evaluation has not added much to this body of knowledge. In retrospect, the surviving warehouses on the site may have provided more information if recorded in some fashion prior to or during their demolition. Whether this was worth doing when there are better preserved examples still standing to the south of the site is doubtful.

Further monitoring of development on the site is likely to provide more evidence for late Post-Medieval and early modern building activity, a period better investigated through the archival evidence. For this reason further work is not recommended.

## **9. Archive deposition**

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Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds  
Finds and environmental archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds.

## **10. List of contributors and acknowledgements**

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The evaluation was carried out by a number of archaeological staff, (Andy Beverton, Steve Manthorpe, Simon Pickard, John Simms, Duncan Stirk) all from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was managed by Joanna Caruth and carried out by Duncan Stirk. The post-excavation was managed by Richenda Goffin. The production of site plans and sections was carried out by Duncan Stirk, and the specialist finds report by Richenda Goffin. Other specialist identification and advice was provided by Val Fryer. The report was checked by Joanna Caruth.

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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.



## 12. Plates

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Plate 1. Trench 1 building prior to demolition; once owned by J. Prentice and Co?



Plate 2. Trench 3 building rebuilt on original foundations, prior to demolition; once owned by M. Cowell?



Plate 3. Trench 1 looking north-east



Plate 4. Timbers (0009) & (0010) recovered from Trench 1





Plate 5. Column base (0023) Trench 3



Plate 6. Trench 3 looking north-east

# Appendix I. Brief & Specification

## Brief and Specification for Archaeological Evaluation

### LAND EAST OF STATION ROAD, STOWMARKET, SUFFOLK

*The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities.*

#### 1. The nature of the development and archaeological requirements

- 1.1 An outline planning application was been approved by Mid Suffolk District Council (0810/06/OUT) for residential development at Station Road East, Stowmarket (TM 0506 5889). Full planning consent has now also been granted (3929/07) with a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition. This condition requires an acceptable programme of archaeological work to be undertaken. An archaeological Desk Based Assessment has already been completed (Rolfe 2007<sup>1</sup>), and further mitigation in terms of field evaluation and palaeoenvironmental assessment is required to meet this condition.
- 1.2 The proposed application area measures c. 0.29 ha. in extent and has not been the subject of previous archaeological investigation. The site is located on the eastern side of, and over-looking, the River Gipping. It is situated within the flood plain on the divide between river alluvium over peat (to the west) and calcareous clay (to the east), at c. 29m OD.
- 1.3 The site lies within close proximity of known archaeological activity recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record, in the valley of the River Gipping and close to a crossing point of the river. There is high potential for medieval, and earlier, archaeological deposits to be disturbed by this development. There is also high potential for preserved palaeo-environmental remains, such as peat deposits, within the application area. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.4 Aspects of the proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.5 In order to inform the archaeological mitigation strategy, and as part of a staged scheme of archaeological evaluation work, a linear trenched evaluation is required of the area, before any groundwork takes place. This will need to take into account the potential wet nature and provide a preservation assessment of any deposits encountered. A further brief for palaeoenvironmental assessment will be provided
- 1.6 The results of this evaluation will enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified, informing both development methodologies and mitigation measures. Decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work should there be any archaeological finds of significance will be based upon the results of the evaluation and will be the subject of an additional brief.
- 1.7 All arrangements for the field evaluation of the site, the timing of the work, access to the site, the definition of the precise area of landholding and area for proposed development are to be defined and negotiated with the commissioning body.

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<sup>1</sup> Rolfe, J., 2007, Archaeological Desk Based Assessment of Land East of Station Road, Stowmarket, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2007/074

- 1.8 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, 2003.
- 1.9 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 WSI as satisfactory. The WSI will provide the basis for measurable standards and will be used to satisfy the requirements of the planning condition.
- 1.10 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of SCC (SCCAS/CT) before execution.
- 1.11 The responsibility for identifying any constraints on field-work, e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c., ecological considerations rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such constraints or imply that the target area is freely available.
- 1.12 Any changes to the specifications that the project archaeologist may wish to make after approval by this office should be communicated directly to SCCAS/CT and the client for approval.

## **2. Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation**

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ* [at the discretion of the developer].
- 2.2 Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- 2.4 Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence.
- 2.5 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

- 2.6 This project will be carried through in a manner broadly consistent with English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (MAP2), all stages will follow a process of assessment and justification before proceeding to the next phase of the project. Field evaluation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential. Any further excavation required as mitigation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive and an assessment of potential, analysis and final report preparation may follow. Each stage will be the subject of a further brief and updated project design; this document covers only the evaluation stage.
- 2.7 The developer or his archaeologist will give SCCAS/CT (address as above) five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored.
- 2.8 If the approved evaluation design is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected. Alternatively the presence of an archaeological deposit may be presumed, and untested areas included on this basis when defining the final mitigation strategy.
- 2.9 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

### **3. Specification: Trenched Evaluation**

- 3.1 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover 5% by area, which is approximately 142 m<sup>2</sup>. These shall be positioned to sample all parts of the site. Linear trenches are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. Trenches are to be a minimum of 1.80m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated; this will result in a minimum of 80 m of trenching at 1.80m in width.
- 3.2 If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' at least 1.20m wide must be used. A scale plan showing the proposed locations of the trial trenches should be included in the WSI and the detailed trench design must be approved by SCCAS/CT before field work begins.
- 3.4 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine with a back-acting arm and fitted with a toothless bucket, down to the interface layer between topsoil and subsoil or other visible archaeological surface. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 3.5 The top of the first archaeological deposit may be cleared by machine, but must then be cleaned off by hand. There is a presumption that excavation of all archaeological deposits will be done by hand unless it can be shown there will not be a loss of evidence by using a machine. The decision as to the proper method of excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- 3.6 In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation; that significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled. For guidance:
- For linear features, 1.00m wide slots (min.) should be excavated across their width;

- For discrete features, such as pits, 50% of their fills should be sampled (in some instances 100% may be requested).
- 3.7 There must be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 3.8 Palaeoenvironmental deposits are expected to be present on this site. Archaeological and palaeoenvironmental contexts should therefore be sampled for in the most appropriate manner. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. The contractor shall show what provision has been made for environmental assessment of the site and must provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from J. Heathcote, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy, P.L. and Wiltshire, P.E.J., 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.
- 3.9 Any natural subsoil surface revealed should be hand cleaned and examined for archaeological deposits and artefacts. Sample excavation of any archaeological features revealed may be necessary in order to gauge their date and character.
- 3.10 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 3.11 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed SCCAS/CT during the course of the evaluation).
- 3.12 Human remains must be left *in situ* except in those cases where damage or desecration are to be expected, or in the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory evaluation of the site. However, the excavator should be aware of, and comply with, the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.
- 3.13 Plans of any archaeological features on the site are to be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50, depending on the complexity of the data to be recorded. Sections should be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 again depending on the complexity to be recorded. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum. Any variations from this must be agreed with SCCAS/CT.
- 3.14 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies and/or high resolution digital images.
- 3.15 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 3.16 Trenches should not be backfilled without the approval of SCCAS/CT.

#### 4. General Management

- 4.1 A timetable for all stages of the project must be agreed before the first stage of work commences, including monitoring by SCCAS/CT. The archaeological contractor will give not less than five days written notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.
- 4.2 The composition of the archaeology contractor staff must be detailed and agreed by this office, including any subcontractors/specialists. For the site director and other staff likely to have a major responsibility for the post-excavation processing of this evaluation there must also be a statement of their responsibilities or a CV for post-excavation work on other archaeological sites and publication record. Ceramic specialists, in particular, must have relevant experience from this region, including knowledge of local ceramic sequences.
- 4.3 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that adequate resources are available to fulfil the Brief.
- 4.4 A detailed risk assessment must be provided for this particular site.
- 4.5 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 4.6 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised 2001) should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

## 5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds must be prepared consistent with the principles of English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (particularly Appendix 3.1 and Appendix 4.1).
- 5.2 The report should reflect the aims of the WSI.
- 5.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 5.4 An opinion as to the necessity for further evaluation and its scope may be given. No further site work should be embarked upon until the primary fieldwork results are assessed and the need for further work is established.
- 5.5 Reports on specific areas of specialist study must include sufficient detail to permit assessment of potential for analysis, including tabulation of data by context, and must include non-technical summaries.
- 5.6 The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence, including an assessment of palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological potential of the site, and the significance of that potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.7 The results of the surveys should be related to the relevant known archaeological information held in the County Historic Environment Record (HER).

- 5.8 A copy of the Specification should be included as an appendix to the report.
- 5.9 The project manager must consult the County HER Officer (Dr Colin Pendleton) to obtain an HER number for the work. This number will be unique for each project or site and must be clearly marked on any documentation relating to the work.
- 5.10 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*.
- 5.11 The project manager should consult the SCC Archive Guidelines 2008 and also the County HER Officer regarding the requirements for the deposition of the archive (conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage) of excavated material and the archive.
- 5.12 The WSI should state proposals for the deposition of the digital archive relating to this project with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), and allowance should be made for costs incurred to ensure the proper deposition (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>).
- 5.13 Every effort must be made to get the agreement of the landowner/developer to the deposition of the finds with the County HER or a museum in Suffolk which satisfies Museum and Galleries Commission requirements, as an indissoluble part of the full site archive. If this is not achievable for all or parts of the finds archive then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate. If the County HER is the repository for finds there will be a charge made for storage, and it is presumed that this will also be true for storage of the archive in a museum.
- 5.14 The site archive is to be deposited with the County HER within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.15 Where positive conclusions are drawn from a project (whether it be evaluation or excavation) a summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology*, must be prepared. It should be included in the project report, or submitted to SCCAS/CT, by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.
- 5.16 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the County HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.17 Where appropriate, a digital vector trench plan should be included with the report, which must be compatible with MapInfo GIS software, for integration in the County HER. AutoCAD files should be also 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.
- 5.18 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.
- 5.19 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the County HER. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: William Fletcher

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Date: 26th Novemebr 2008

Reference:/StationRoad\_Stowmarket2008(Eval)

**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.**

**If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.**





## Appendix 2 Context list

Context	Type	Description
0001	Finds	Unstratified finds from machining of Trench 1
0002	Finds	Unstratified finds from machining of Trench 2
0003	Finds	Unstratified finds from machining of Trench 3
0004	Finds	Unstratified finds from machining of Trench 4
0005	Finds	Unstratified finds from machining of Trench 5
0006	Deposit	Mixed orange brown and light grey clayey sand with CBM mortar and charcoal inclusions. >3.74m x >2.0m x 0.08m thick. Trampled surface of underlying deposit (0061)
0007	Deposit	Mixed orangy brown gravelly sand & mid grey silt sand. Water-lain deposit. >1.8m x >2.0m x 0.10 to 0.14m thick
0008	Timber	Driven timber. Halved round-wood roughly pointed. Retained.
0009	Timber	Driven timber. Boxed heart wood, roughly done. Pointed at end. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0010	Timber	Driven timber. Whole wood, some bark preserved. Pointed at end. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0011	Timber	Driven timber. Boxed halved wood. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0012	Timber	Driven timber. Boxed halved wood. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0013	Timber	Plank. Probably remnant of pad under possible column base. Not lifted
0014	Timber	Plank. Probable remnant of pad under possible column base. Not lifted.
0015	Timber	Driven timber. Plank-like. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0016	Timber	Plank. Possible remnant of ground beam, or portion of (0015). Not lifted.
0017	Timber	Driven Timber. Plank-like. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0018	Timber	Driven timber. Boxed halved wood. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0019	Timber	Driven timber. Plank-like. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings structure.
0020	Timber	Driven timber. Quartered wood. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings foundation (0022).
0021	Timber	Driven timber. Boxed half wood. Not lifted. Probable pile for maltings foundation (0022).
0022	Masonry	Brick foundation forming eastern gable end of probable maltings building. 0.55m wide x >2.0m long x 0.40m deep. Supported on a ground beam (0052) and timber piles (0020)(0021).
0023	Masonry	Brick and mortar base for Ashlar stone pillar base. 2 blocks forming a truncated pyramid, with wooden post position visible on top. This was probably to support a raised floor for the drying of hops. Base measures 0.5m x 0.46m & >2 courses deep.
0024	Deposit	Dark grey to black organic sandy silt shell, CBM and bone inclusions.
0025	Deposit	Dark pink crushed brick. Modern hardcore across most of the site. 0.26m deep Tr1, 0.32m deep Tr2, 0.2- 0.35m deep Tr3, 0.08m deep Tr 4.
0026	Fill	Mid grey sandy silt. Fill of grubbing out trench [0053], for the removal of foundation (0077). 0.78m wide by over 2.0m long by 1.02m thick.
0027	Fill	Mottled orangy brown & grey firm sandy clay with some gravel. Fill of possible foundation cut [0028] or oxidized portion of deposit (0040). >1.84m long by ? By 0.24m thick.
0028	Cut	Shallow concave sides and concave base of hypothetical cut containing (0027). This may be a cut for foundation (0034) or simply an interface between oxidized/ non-oxidized parts of (0040).
0029	Deposit	Light brown gravelly sandy clay. Slightly different material mixed into the top of deposit (0040). C. 3.3m long by >0.68m by c. 0.30m thick.
0030	Deposit	Mixed dark brownish grey silty sand & clay with CBM & plastic inclusions. Modern make-up layer. Trench wide 0.48m thick.



## Context list

Context	Type	Description
0031	Deposit	Mid orangy brown sandy gravel. Probable floor surface replacing chalk floor (0033). C. 18.1m long by over 2m wide by 0.05-0.22m thick.
0032	Deposit	Very dark brown to black compact silt. >4.15m by >2.0m 0.03m thick. Occupation layer over chalk floor (0033).
0033	Deposit	Off white crushed chalk floor. C. 18.1m long by over 2.0m by 0.08-0.12m thick. Floor in maltings building.
0034	Masonry	Shallow brick structure. Possible partition wall in maltings building. > 0.96m long x ? By 0.20m thick.
0035	Timber	Driven timber pile. Probable pile for masonry (0034). Not lifted.
0036	Timber	Driven timber pile. Probable pile for masonry (0034). Not lifted.
0037	Timber	Ground beam timber beneath masonry partition wall remnant (0044). Not lifted, and seen only in section.
0038	Timber	Round wood beneath masonry partition wall remnant (0044). Not lifted and seen only in section.
0039	Deposit	Mixed orangy brown and grey firm clay with gravel and sand inclusions. Possible portion of partition foundation or oxidized portion of underlying deposit (0040). 1.18m long by ? By 0.17m thick.
0040	Deposit	Blue grey sandy clay mottled with black patches. Stone inclusions. Mixed alluvial natural with possible dumped material mixed in. Over 5.0m long by over 2.0m wide by 0.58-0.72m thick
0041	Deposit	Light brown sandy clay. Lense of lighter material over deposit (0040) or oxidized portion of that underlying deposit. 2.4m long by over 0.9m wide by 0.46m thick.
0042	Deposit	Mid grey clay with pebble inclusions. Trench wide by 0.10-0.14m thick. Alluvial deposit.
0043	Deposit	Reddish brown peat. Trench wide by over 0.32m thick.
0044	Masonry	Brick remnant of possible partition wall. 0.34m wide by 0.08m thick.
0045	Deposit	Grey to mid brown sandy gravel with CBM inclusions. Over 1.3m wide by 0.16m thick. Yard surface.
0046	Masonry	Brick surface. 0.28m wide by 0.08m thick. Possible threshold to maltings building.
0047	Fill	Mid brown grey sandy clay & gravel with chalk inclusions. 0.24m wide by 0.18m thick. Fill of possible post-hole [0048]
0048	Cut	Steep concave sides, concave base. 0.24m wide by 0.18m deep. Cut of possible post-hole, only seen in section.
0049	Deposit	Mid brown and orangy grey sandy clay with stone inclusions. Over 1.88m by over 2.0m by 0.30m thick. Mixed alluvial natural with possible dumped material mixed in.
0050	Deposit	Mid grey to brownish grey sandy clay. Over 2.0m long by over 2.0m wide by 0.12m thick. Alluvial deposit.
0051	Deposit	Mid brown and grey sandy clay with stone inclusions. Over 1.3m long by over 2.0m wide by 0.56m thick. Mixed alluvial natural with possible dumped material mixed in.
0052	Timber	Plank. Foundation beam for brick foundation (0022). 0.30m wide by over 2.0m long by 0.11m thick. Part of foundation for maltings building east wall.
0053	Cut	Near vertical sides and stepped base. 0.78m wide by over 1.95m long by 1.02m deep. Robber trench formed when foundation (0077) was grubbed out.
0054	Fill	Mixed brown grey sandy clay. Stone, Brick and chalk inclusions. Over 1.95m long by over 0.26m by over 0.55m thick. Backfill of grubbed out foundation [0055].
0055	Cut	Steep convex sides, unseen base. Over 1.95m long by over 0.26m wide by over 0.55m deep. Robber trench formed when a Maltings building foundation was grubbed out.
0056	Deposit	Mixed mid grey brown silt sand. Over 1.9m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.30m thick. Make-up layer.



## Context list

Context	Type	Description
0057	Fill	Mixed mid grey sandy silt an ceramic drain. Over 1.4m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.62m thick. Fill of service trench for drain [0058].
0058	Cut	Steep straight sides and sloping flat base. Over 1.4m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.62m deep. Cut for drain beside wall (0077).
0059	Deposit	Dark brown to black sandy silt. Over 4.8m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.05m . Occupation layer on chalk floor (0060).
0060	Deposit	Off white crushed chalk. Over 5.3m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.20m thick. Crushed chalk floor.
0061	Deposit	Mottled orange brown and mid brown clay. Over 1.86m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.28m thick. Alluvial deposit with possible make-up component.
0062	Deposit	Dark reddish brown gritty sand. Over 1.2m long by 0.08m thick. Possible surface.
0063	Deposit	Light to mid grey sandy silt and clay. Over 1.2m long by 0.08m thick. Made ground deposit?
0064	Deposit	Mixed orangy brown clay and grey silty sand. Over 1.1m long by 0.09m thick. Mixed alluvial deposit, possible working horizon.
0065	Deposit	Mid to dark grey sandy clay. Over 1.5m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.26m thick. Probable alluvial deposit.
0066	Fill	Mid brown silt sand. 0.48m wide by 0.40m thick. Fill of possible post-hole seen only in section.
0067	Cut	Steep convex sides and concave base. 0.48m wide by 0.40m deep. Cut of possible post-hole seen only in section.
0068	Fill/deposit	Mottled orange brown and light grey clay. 1.12m long by 0.26m thick. Fill of possible feature [0069] seen in section or oxidized portion of (0065) exposed to air when foundation and drain went in.
0069	Cut?	Moderate straight sides and sloping base. Over 4.1m long by 0.50m deep. Cut of possible river channel.
0070	Deposit	Dark grey to black organic silty sand. Over 1.55m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.12m thick. Organic alluvial deposit.
0071	Deposit	Light brown sand. Over 1.34m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.14m thick. Alluvial sand deposit.
0072	Deposit	Mixed orangy brown clay and mid grey sandy silt. 1.06m long by 0.07m thick. Alluvial deposit.
0073	Deposit	Laminated Dark brown to black with mottles of reddish brown peat with wooden inclusions. Over 4.6m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.14m to over 0.26m thick.
0074	Deposit	Mixed mid grey sandy silt and ceramic drain. Over 1.4m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.62m thick. Fill of service trench for drain [0058].
0075	Fill	Steep straight sides and sloping flat base. Over 1.4m long by over 1.95m wide by 0.62m deep. Cut for drain beside wall (0077).
0076	Cut	Vertical straight sides and unseen base. 1.3m wide by over 1.95m long by over 0.8m deep. Construction cut for foundation (0077).
0077	Masonry	Brick and mortar. 0.94m wide by over 1.95m long by over 0.36m thick. Foundation for maltings building wall.
0078	Fill	Mixed mid brown sand with chalk and CBM. 1.2m wide by 1.28m long. Packing fill around pillar base (0023)
0079	Cut	Unexcavated rectangular cut for pillar base (0023) 1.2m wide by 1.28m long.
0080	Deposit	Mixed dark grey gravelly sand silt. Trench-wide deposit of unknown depth. Possible make-up deposit.
0081	Deposit	Dark brown sandy peat. 0.36m thick.
0082	Fill	Mixed dark grey organic silt sand and grey sandy gravel. C. 3.7m long by 2.6m wide by over 1.4m deep.
0083	Cut	Rectangular in plan. Vertical sides and unseen base. C. 3.7m long by 2.6m wide by over 1.4m deep. Cut of large modern pit.
0084	Deposit	Mid grey gritty sand with pebble and CBM inclusions. Alluvial deposit.
0085	Masonry	Concrete surround for water line. Over 4.4m long by 0.56m wide.
0086	Deposit	Mid brown gravelly mortar. Over 3.1m long by 1.1m wide. Surround for possible service or bedding for kerb.
0087	Deposit	Mixed dark grey sand silt Trench-wide by 0.24m thick. Make up layer.
0088	Deposit	Light brown sandy gravel. 0.08m thick Yard surface.



## Context list

Context	Type	Description
0089	Deposit	Mixed dark grey sandy silt. Trench-wide by 0.28m thick. Make up layer.
0090	Deposit	Off white crushed chalk floor. Trench wide by 0.15m thick.
0091	Masonry	Brick foundations. Maltings building. C. 3.6m long by over 0.5m wide. Foundation and return at right angles.
0092	Fill	Dark grey brown organics and sand silt with CBM inclusions. C. 5.5m long by over 1m wide. Fill of modern pit [0093]
0093	Cut	Steep sides and unseen base. C. 5.5m long by over 1m wide. Cut of modern pit.
0094	Deposit	Mixed dark grey and dark brown organics and sandy silt. Trench wide and over 0.54m thick.
0095	Deposit	Mixed orange brown sand and dark grey sand silt with brick rubble inclusions. Trench wide by 0.42m thick. Make-up layer.
0096	Deposit	Lt brown mottled with lt grey clay. Trench wide by 0.50m thick. Make up layer.
0097	Deposit	Dark grey sandy silt and brick and tile rubble. Trench wide by 0.2m thick. Demolition layer.
0098	Deposit	Off white chalk surface. Trench wide by 0.1m thick. Chalk surface, probably exterior.
0099	Deposit	Mid brown sandy clay and gravelly sand with CBM inclusions. Trench wide by 0.34m thick. Possible make up layer.
0100	Deposit	Orange brown sandy clay. Trench wide by 0.05m thick. Possible natural alluvial deposit.
0101	Deposit	Dark grey clay. Trench wide alluvial natural deposit.
0102	Masonry	Brick surround for modern feature possibly an inspection pit. C. 4m by over 3.5m by 1.7m deep.
0103	Cut	Unseen cut for grubbing out of inspection pit masonry (0102). C. 4m by over 3.5m by 1.7m deep.
0104	Fill	Brick rubble and dark grey sandy silt. Demolition rubble fill of possible inspection pit [0103]. 3.5m by over 3.1m by 1.7m deep.
0105	Cut	Vertical straight sides and flat base. 0.60m wide by over 1.9m by 0.52m deep. Construction cut for foundation (0022).
0106	Fill	Brick rubble and dark grey silty sand. 5.24m wide by over 2.0m wide by c. 0.50m thick.
0107	Cut	Moderate to steep straight sides and flat base. 5.24m wide by over 2m long by c. 0.5m deep. Large modern feature.
0108	Fill	Orangy brown sandy gravel. Fill of possible service trench.
0109	Fill	Orangy brown gravelly sand and clay. >1.78m by over 2.0m by 0.12m to 0.24m thick. Alluvial deposit.
0110	Fill	Dark brown organic silt. Over 1.5m by over 2.0m by 0-0.10m thick. Peaty deposit.





## Appendix III: Finds

### CBM catalogue

Context	Period	Fabric	Form	No	Weight	Height	Length	Width	Mortar	Notes	Date
6	PM	msf	RT	1	103					Circular peghole 15mm diam	Post-med
7	PM	ms	RT	1	57					Very hard fabric, late	Post-med
22	PM	mscp	LB	1	1949	650		115	Encased in white mortar	Sim to Drury LB3	L 17 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> C
23	PM	fsfe	LB	2	3114	60	230	112	Cream mortar	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> in Suffolk Survey eggs	18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C

### Small Finds catalogue

Small find number	Context	Period	Material	Object name	No of fragments	Weight	Diameter	Comments
1001	0027	Unk	Cu alloy	Disc	1	9	27	Awaiting Radiography

### Pottery catalogue

Context No.	Ceramic Period	Fabric	Form	Sherd No.	Weight (g)	State	Comments	Fabric date range	Context date
0024	PM	LMT/GR E	Base	1	41		Sagging base, reduced core, olive	15 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> C	
0024	PM	Coll?	Body	1	11		Possible glaze & slip	15 <sup>th</sup> -16 <sup>th</sup> C	Prob 16 <sup>th</sup> C
0029	PM	PMRW	Body	3	28	AB	3 joining, discoloured & abraded	16 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> C	16 <sup>th</sup> - 18 <sup>th</sup> C

**BIRMINGHAM  
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ENVIRONMENTAL**



**BAE**



**Palaeoenvironmental assessment of deposits  
from the River Gipping floodplain, Station  
Road, Stowmarket, Suffolk**

*By*

**Dr B. Gearey MIFA, E.-J.Hopla,  
Dr D. Smith and Dr P. Grinter**

**SCC-1901-09**

## Summary

### Palaeoenvironmental assessment of deposits from the River Gipping floodplain, Station Road, Stowmarket, Suffolk

May 2009

#### *Non-technical summary*

*This report describes the assessment of sediment samples recovered during an archaeological excavation at Station Rd, Stowmarket. The samples were taken from deposits which had formed due to waterlogging adjacent to the River Gipping. The samples were assessed for the presence of sub-fossil pollen, plant remains and beetles but the preservation and concentration of these was found to be poor. The material that was preserved sheds little light on the nature of past environments at the site and no further work is thus recommended.*

**KEYWORDS:** River Gipping, Palaeoenvironments, Floodplain, Holocene Landscape Change, Human Activity

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## Palaeoenvironmental assessment of deposits from the River Gipping floodplain, Stowmarket Relief Road, Suffolk

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Birmingham Archaeo-Environmental (BA-E) was subcontracted by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service to undertake recording and palaeoenvironmental assessment of deposits identified during an archaeological evaluation of land at Station Road, Stowmarket. Samples were recovered from the Trenches and cores were also extracted using a windowless sampler. This report describes the results the assessments of sub-samples collected from the site.

### 2. METHODS

#### 2.1 Stratigraphic recording, sampling and core recovery

Five trenches had been excavated across the site. Trench 3 contained the most promising organic deposits although the stratigraphy suggested a significant amount of disturbance to the natural deposits with a modern brick filled cut apparent. The undisturbed sequence of deposits was recorded as follows:

- 0-0.50m: Made ground
- 0.50-0.90m: Grey orange mottled clay silt (alluvium)
- 0.90-1.20m: Orange/yellow coarse gravel rich sand
- 1.20-1.50m: Brown highly humified peaty silt
- 1.50m: Gravels

Two bulk samples (Sample 1: 1.20-1.35 and Sample 2: 1.35-1.50m) were

taken from the basal unit of brown highly humified peaty silt. A single bulk sample of the alluvium (Sample 3: 0.50-0.90m) was also collected. In addition, a core was taken from adjacent to Trench 3 using the windowless sampler. The stratigraphy of the core was similar to that recorded from the Trench section.

#### 2.1 Pollen Assessment

A total of seven subsamples from the alluvium and silty peat in the core were assessed for pollen. Pollen preparation followed standard techniques including potassium hydroxide (KOH) digestion, hydrofluoric acid (HF) treatment and acetylation (Moore *et al.*, 1991). For assessment, at least 125 total land pollen grains (TLP) excluding aquatics and spores were counted for each sample. However, pollen concentrations were very low in most of the samples and full counts were not possible in these cases.

#### 2.2 Plant Macrofossil Assessment

The three samples were processed and assessed for waterlogged plant macrofossils. The samples were processed using standard methods for waterlogged remains as described by Kenward *et al.* (1980). Plant remains were extracted by means of a 'washover' to concentrate the lighter, organic fraction. The components of the fraction were recorded whilst wet. The washover and the residue were stored wet.

The processed samples were sorted, and material identified, under a low

power binocular microscope at magnifications of x10 and x40.

Macrofossil identification was aided by the use of a modern comparative collection and by using various seed identification manuals (Anderberg, 1994; Beijerinck, 1947 and Berggren, 1969 & 1981 and Cappers *et al.*, 2006). The nomenclature and habitat information for this report follows Stace (1997).

### 2.3 Beetle Assessment

The three samples described above were also assessed for Coleoptera (beetle) remains. The insect remains were sorted from the paraffin flots as described above and the sclerites identified under a low power binocular microscope at x10 magnification. The system for “scanning” faunas as outlined by Kenward *et al.* (1985) was followed in this assessment. The taxonomy follows Lucht (1987). This assessment was carried out to answer four main questions:

1. Are any insect remains of interpretative value preserved?
2. Do any of the insects present suggest the nature of the environment in the area around the palaeochannel at the time of deposit formation?
3. What were the flow regimes and water conditions within the palaeochannel?
4. Do any of the insects indicate the nature of human activity at and around the site?

## 3. RESULTS

### 3.1 Pollen Results

Pollen concentration and preservation was very poor for all seven samples. Only one sample (1.05m) yielded sufficient pollen for an assessment level count. This sample was dominated by *Alnus glutinosa* (alder), with a few other tree species including *Quercus* (oak), *Corylus* (hazel) and *Pinus sylvestris* (Scots Pine) recorded.

### 3.2 Plant Macrofossil Results

All three sub-samples contained organic remains including twigs, wood and other detritus but only Sample 3 contained any identifiable material. These remains included: *Rubus fruticosus* agg. (bramble), *Sambus nigra* (elder), *Rumex* sp. (dock), *Prunus domestica* (wild plum) and *Carex* sp.(sedges).

### 3.3 Beetle Results

The insect taxa recovered from the flots are listed in Table 1. The taxonomy used for the Coleoptera (beetles) follows that of Lucht (1987). Unfortunately the insect remains from these samples were eroded and the faunas recovered contain very few individuals. As such they have little to contribute to the interpretation of either these features or the site in general.

## 4. DISCUSSION

The plant macrofossil sub-sample from the alluvial deposit (Sample 3) reflects a disturbed ground or hedgerow environment. However, as the plant remains were present in such low quantities and because there was a

fairly narrow range of species present, little useful further comment may be made. The absence of beetles further inhibits interpretation of the deposits in Trench 3. The single pollen sample which produced any data indicates that the peat unit was probably accumulating within an alder dominated fen carr environment. There is no evidence in this sample for any human presence or activity.

The relatively shallow depth of deposits and low palaeoenvironmental potential at this site can be contrasted with recent work on deposits also associated with the River Gipping floodplain some 200m to the south-east of the Station Rd. At this location, a sequence of peats some 4.5m deep were recovered (Hill 2008). Pollen preservation was also poor in these sediments but plant macrofossil and beetles were well preserved.

This illustrates both the significant variation in sediment depth that can be anticipated on floodplain contexts and also demonstrates that sites must always be assessed on their own merits; the quality of preservation of environmental remains at one location may not necessarily be a reliable indication of preservation conditions at an adjacent site. The poor preservation at Station Road may result from conditions at the time of sediment deposition, post-depositional factors or a combination of the two.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear that the general sequence of deposits in Trench 3 represents a 'typical' floodplain accumulation with peat deposition within a fen carr environment followed by channel migration and the burial of this unit

beneath alluvium. Subsequent human activity on the site seems to have truncated and disturbed these sediments. This assessment has indicated that the deposits at Station Road can be regarded as of low palaeoenvironmental potential and no further work is recommended at this time.

## 6. ARCHIVE

The borehole samples, subsamples and all electronic and paper records pertaining to the work at this site are held at B A-E. These samples will be retained until further notice.

## 7. REFERENCES

- Anderberg, A L (1994) *Atlas of seeds, Part 4 Resedaceae-mbelliferae*. Sweden: Risbergs Tryckeri AB.
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Sample No.	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3
<b>COLEOPTERA</b>			
<b>Hydrophilidae</b>			
<i>Megasternum boletophagum</i> (Marsh.)	-	-	1
<b>Staphylinidae</b>			
<i>Olophorum</i> spp.	-	1	-
<b>Cryptophagidae</b>			
<i>Atomaria</i> spp.	-	1	-
<b>Cuculionidae</b>			
<i>Sitona</i> spp.			1
<i>Thyrogenes</i> spp.	1	-	-

**Table 1:** Results of the beetle assessment