

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/165

Former D&P Meats, Old Norwich Road, Barham BRH 049

S. Cass
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HER Information

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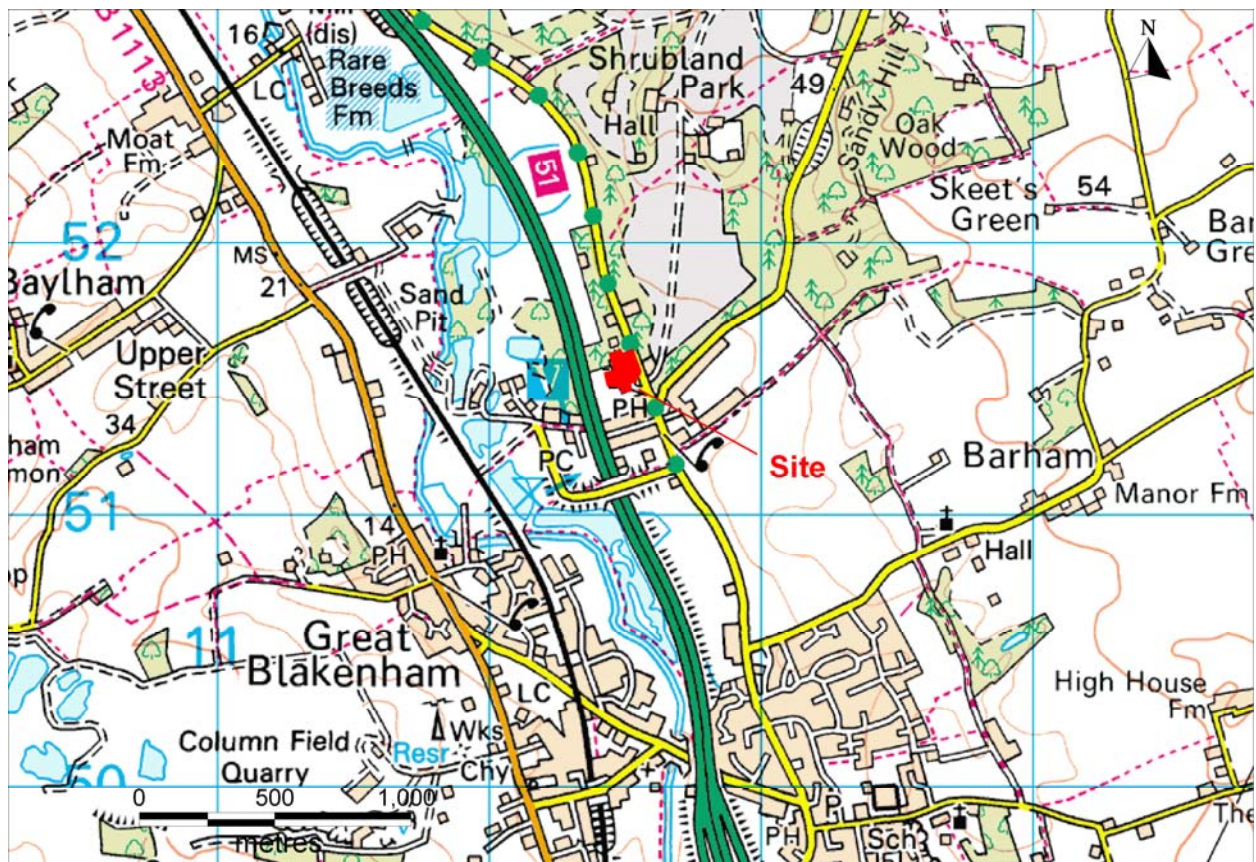
Summary

An archaeological evaluation and minor building recording was carried out on land at the former D&P Meats factory site, Old Norwich Road, Barham, Ipswich. Five trenches were excavated on two visits, on the 13th January and the 22nd May 2009. No archaeologically relevant finds or features were noted in any of the trenches.

Assessment of the buildings on the southern side of the development revealed a single section of wall dating to the 19th century, although the rest of the building had already been rebuilt/replaced with more modern materials. The current development is unlikely to have a significant impact on the survival of this structural remnant.

1. Introduction

Planning permission (OL/0125/04 and 3300/07) was granted by Mid Suffolk District Council for the redevelopment of a redundant commercial site for new housing, conditional upon an appropriate programme of archaeological works being carried out at the former site of D&P Meats factory, Old Norwich Road, Barham, Ipswich. An archaeological evaluation and minor building recording action was undertaken during demolition and preliminary ground works on the site.



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Figure 1. Site location

2. Geology and topography

The site lies on the edge of a slope immediately to the east of the A14, at a height between 15 and 19m AOD. The surrounding area consists of light woodland to the north and east, with the Sorrel Horse Inn to the south and the A14 to the west. The geology in the area is varied, with outcrops of River terrace and marine gravels, Glaciofluvial drift, pre-Quaternary deposits and glacial sands and gravels all appearing within a short distance from the site (BGS 1991). Solid chalk was encountered from depths between

0.2m down to 5m below surface level in the archaeological trenches and some of the building works being carried out at the time of evaluation.

3. Archaeological and historical background

There are no known archaeological sites within the bounds of the development area, however several findspots have been recorded on the County Historic Environment Record nearby. A small assemblage of Roman pottery sherds were found c.130m to the southeast, together with fragments of human bone – possibly indicative of a burial ground (HER ref. BRH 008). In addition, a number of Saxon and medieval artefacts have been found by metal detectorists in a small field c. 390m southeast of the development area (BRH 026) and an 8th century coin (BRH 022) was found in Broomfield pit, approximately 320m to the west.

The site is adjacent to the Sorrel Horse Inn, a listed building with parts dating from the late 15th century, and it is possible that some of the buildings on the southern edge of the site may be related, or be the same as those shown on the 1880 OS map.

4. Methodology

Due to the necessities of working around the demolition and ground works schedules, as well as various ecological conditions also imposed upon the site, it was necessary to conduct the archaeological evaluation of the site on two occasions. The first dealt with the area towards the centre of the site, Trenches 1, 2 and 3 and the building recording survey along the southern edge of the site, while the second was for trenches 4-7. The evaluation was to be carried out under standard specifications; that all trenching would be carried out with a 360-degree mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under constant archaeological supervision; that trenches would be excavated down to the top of the first archaeological horizon or to the top of natural, undisturbed, geology and that any features or deposits would be hand-cleaned and excavated, with a full photographic and written/drawn archive, and located with suitably accurate survey instrumentation (TST or GPS systems) in order to characterise the site and assess the potential for further archaeological remains to be present on site.

Unfortunately, due to the presence of a live overhead cable passing through the middle of the site and some building/demolition and vegetation detritus stored in the western side of the site, it was not possible to excavate Trenches 6 and 7 at this time as the only free space remaining on the western portion of the site had been excavated to form a pond at some time in the 19th century, destroying any possible archaeology, and had subsequently been backfilled. Due to the negative nature of the remaining trenches, the decision was made (in consultation with the curatorial officer) not to attempt to excavate those trenches.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction

Five trenches were excavated, spread throughout the site as much as possible, in order to examine as much of the land as possible. Due to on-site constraints, it was not possible to excavate in the south-western portion of the site and there was little room to move trenches elsewhere. Due to the scarcity of surviving 19th century remains along the southern edge of the site, the building recording survey mainly comprised a simple photographic record of the exposed façade.

5.2 Building recording survey (by Mark Sommers)

The building recording consisted of a small number of photographs of the exterior of the brick built structure in the southeast corner of the site. The building comprises the northern section of what was presumably stabling associated with the nearby Sorrel Horse Inn. Only the northern wing of the structure was threaten by this development as the remainder of the building is separately owned and is currently occupied. The photographs were taken using a digital camera with a 10 megapixel resolution and are held in the SCCAS Photographic Archive under the references GBM 47 to GBM 54.



Plate 1. Northwest view of former stabling adjacent Sorrel Horse Inn. The northern wing, visible in to the right-hand side of the picture, was potentially threatened by the proposed development (photo ref GBM 53).

5.3 Trench 1

This trench was 48.4m long, 2.2m wide and up to 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy encountered in the southern end of the trench consisted of 0.25m of disturbed topsoil (mid-grey/blackish brown sandy silt with frequent demolition rubble fragments) above 0.3m of mid orangey brown sandy silt subsoil with moderate stones and flints of various sizes. The natural geology here was a pale yellowish brown sandy silty clay with frequent gravels. At the northern end of the trench, there was a similar layer of disturbed topsoil, also 0.25m deep, but only c. 0.15m of subsoil above undisturbed natural.

5.4 Trench 2

This trench was 12m long, 2.2m wide and 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.4m of modern buildup (layers of hardcore and reinforced concrete for the previous floor surface) above 0.35m of mid orangey brown sandy silty clay with

moderate flints and gravels. A band of chalk was visible towards the eastern end of the trench.



Plate 2. Trench 2, facing west

5.5 Trench 3

This trench was 41.4m long, 2.2m wide and 0.5m deep. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.25m of mixed topsoil (mid/dark brown clayey silts with moderate flints and chalk fragments) above 0.25m of degraded chalk. This sealed solid chalk at the base of the trench.

5.6 Trench 4

This trench was 20m long, 2.2m wide and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.2m of disturbed mid-grey/blackish brown sandy silt topsoil, with frequent demolition rubble fragments, old tarmac surfacing and modern rubbish (the trench, being very near to the road and footpath, had a number of items thrown into the general vicinity). Below this layer was a deposit 0.2m thick of mid orangey brown sandy silt with frequent stones and flints of various sizes. Natural geology (silty sandy clay and stones

pockets within solid chinks) was encountered at a depth of 0.4m. There were no archaeological finds or deposits visible in this trench.



Plate 3. Trench 4, facing west

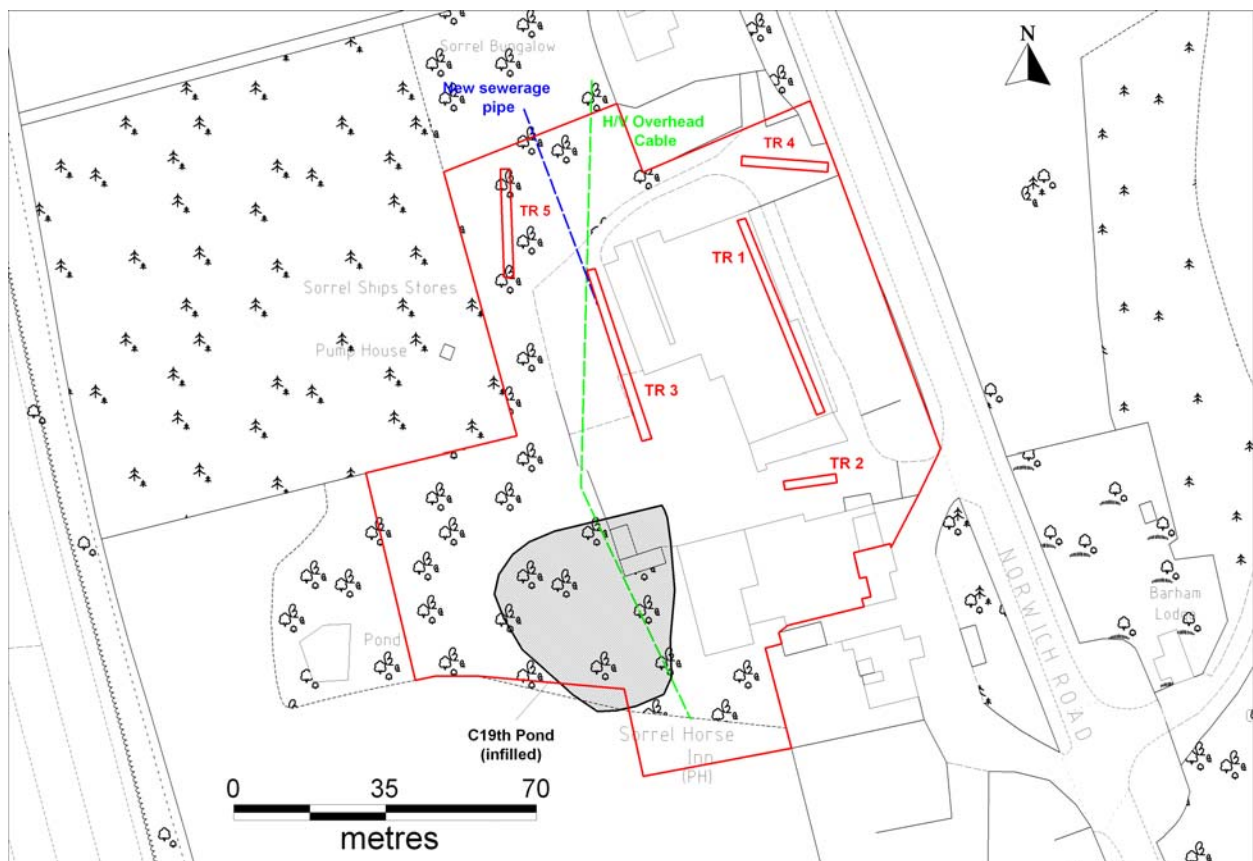
5.7 Trench 5

This trench was 25m long, 2.2m wide and up to 1.7m deep. The stratigraphy encountered here varied from the northern to the southern end of the trench. At the northern end, the trench stratigraphy consisted of 0.7m of dark grey/blackish brown sandy silt with moderate amounts of CBM and demolition detritus inclusions, a disturbed/mixed topsoil. This sealed 1.0m of a mid brown sandy silt subsoil with moderate flints and gravels of various sizes, and very occasional CBM fragments. Below this was a layer of mid-pale brown silty sand with frequent small – large stones and flints with chalky patches appearing on the eastern side of the trench. At approximately 17m along the trench (from the northern end) the natural changed to solid chalk geology and began to rise, levelling out at a depth of 0.7m by 21m along the trench. At the southern end of the trench, the stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.3m of disturbed topsoil, above 0.4m of sandy silt subsoil, sitting directly on solid chalk.

5.8 Observed trenches (non-archaeological)

It was possible to observe some other excavations on the site during the second phase of evaluation trenching. These included a geotechnical test-pit and a deep hole forming part of the services for the new buildings. Both excavations were within the area of the former buildings (roughly between trenches 1,2 and 3) but it was not possible to survey them precisely. The geotechnical pit was approximately 1.5m deep, with 0.4m of disturbed soils and remains of concrete foundations sitting directly above solid chalk deposits. Some pockets of mid-pale brown silty sandy clay and stones were also visible in the sections, though not extending below 1m from the surface level.

The other visible hole was approximately 5m deep. Due to the depth the sides had been shuttered so there was minimal opportunity to view the exposed sections, however conversation with the machine drivers suggested that the chalk was present at depths of less than 1m, and continued to the base of the hole, where it was visible before concrete pouring began.



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Figure 2. Site detail

7. Finds and environmental evidence

No finds or deposits of archaeological significance were noted during the course of this evaluation. All of the finds that were encountered consisted of relatively modern materials, usually either brick or concrete fragments, likely related to either the most recent demolition works on site or the building works carried out on the site in the last century. No finds were retained.

7. Discussion

The archaeological evaluation has shown that much of this site has been damaged in some way in the recent past, even in areas that appear to be outside the footprint of the most recent buildings. The shallow nature of the natural geological horizon may be related to terracing for the road that passed the site to the east, although equally it may be a result of hillwash and erosion processes. In either case, it appears that there is almost nothing in the way of protective subsoil layers so even shallow raft-type construction would impact on the archaeological horizon. This would presumably apply to any other developments along this stretch of Old Norwich Road.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

There appears to be no archaeological activity across this site. Whether any activity was present prior to the factory complex or not is uncertain, although no remains have been located to suggest that there was. The generally shallow nature of subsoil deposits across the site is suggestive that there may have been extensive landscaping and/or terracing in the past, possibly relating to infilling of the large post-medieval pond in the southern part of the site. No further work is recommended for this site.

9. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Ipswich T:\ENV\ARC\PARISH\Barham
Finds and environmental archive: None.

10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by a number of archaeological staff, (Simon Cass, Tony Fisher, Mark Sommers and Sabra Henessey) all from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was directed by John Newman and carried out by Mark Sommers and Simon Cass.

The production of site plans was carried out by Simon Cass and the report was checked by Richenda Goffin.

11. Bibliography

BGS, 1991 East Anglia, Sheet 52N 00 Quaternary, Scale 1:250000,
Southampton

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.