

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

PPG SITE, NEEDHAM ROAD WEST, STOWMARKET (SMR ref. SKT 011)

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORK
ASSOCIATED WITH AN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT
(Application No. 1413/03)

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2005/12
(OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-6781)

Summary: Archaeological monitoring of groundwork associated with the construction of industrial premises on land adjacent Needham Road West, Stowmarket (NGR TM 0601 5755), was undertaken during autumn 2004. Two ditches were noted in the base of a large hole excavated for a storm water storage tank. One ditch aligns with a cropmark thought to be associated with a nearby medieval moated enclosure but no dating evidence was recovered from its fill. The other ditch aligns with a ditch marked on late 20th century OS maps. This monitoring event is recorded on the Sites and Monuments Record under the reference SKT011. The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, with funding from the developers, 3663 First for Foodservice.

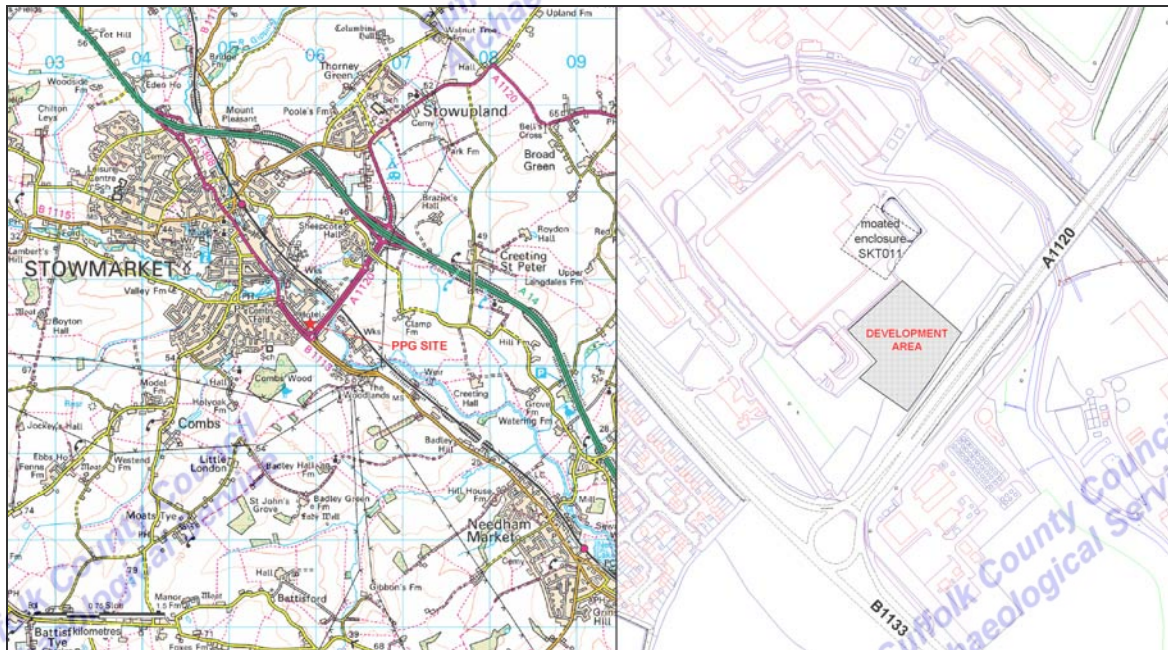


Figure 1: Location Plan

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Introduction

An application for the construction of an industrial warehouse on land to the north of Needham Road West, Stowmarket (application no. 1413/03) was approved but with an attached condition calling for a programme of archaeological works to be put in place prior to the commencement of construction work.

The archaeological interest in the site was due to its location adjacent a medieval moated enclosure recorded on the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) under the reference SKT 011. The enclosure itself has been partially excavated in 1980 and again in 1999. Linear cropmarks thought to be associated with the moated enclosure run through the proposed development. They may represent a further enclosure or be associated with medieval agriculture (Anderson 2004).

The entire area of the proposed development has been artificially raised by some 2.5 to 3.0m through the importation of spoil during the early 1990s. The proposed structure was to be built on pads with vibro compacted stone columns below which would not affect archaeological deposits. The only aspect of the development that had the potential to damage or destroy archaeological deposits was an excavation for a large storm water tank. This was to be c.8m wide and 70m in length and would be cut across the line of one of the linear cropmarks. The excavation was to be c.2.8m deep and would cut into the original ground surface to a depth of c.0.6m. As this was to be the only danger to buried archaeological deposits a Brief and Specification for just archaeological monitoring of the development was produced by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team (Appendix 1).

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 0601 5755; for a location plan see figure 1 above. This monitoring event is recorded on the Suffolk County Sites and Monuments Record under the medieval moated site's reference SKT 011. This project has also been entered onto OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the reference suffolkc1-6781. The Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Projects Team, was commissioned to carry out the work by KMG Partnership on behalf of the developers, 3663 First for Foodservices.

Methodology

Visits were made to the site to inspect the excavation of the storm water tank to observe for any archaeological deposits or features that the work may reveal. Any features noted were recorded and their exposed fills examined for artefacts. The depth of the excavation was recorded and the make-up of the ground was noted. Due to the lack of space within the site the tank was installed in two halves with the first half being completed, the excavation backfilled and the ground surface reinstated before excavation for the second half of the tank commenced. This resulted in multiple monitoring visits being required.

Results

The site was first visited on the 16th June 2004 to inspect the excavation of pads for the foundation of the building to confirm that archaeological deposits were not being disturbed. Unfortunately the work had been completed but assurances were given by the site manager that the excavations did not penetrate the made up ground and consequently did not reach the original ground surface and it was noted that no natural subsoil was evident on any spoil tips.

Three visits were made during work on the storm water tank which was undertaken during October 2004; see figure 2 below for its location and any details noted and Plate I for a general view of the southwest half of the excavation. The excavation was 2.7m deep and cut into the natural subsoil to a depth of 0.6m, as predicted. The sides were stepped for safety reasons. The base had been smoothed and compacted with a roller but it was still

possible to identify two linear features, interpreted as backfilled ditches, running across the base. These were allocated the context numbers 1002 and 1003 to avoid repetition of numbers allocated during excavations of the moated enclosure (marked as just '2' and '3' in figure 2).

Neither ditch feature had been bottomed by the excavation although both had been heavily truncated. The remaining portion of ditch 1002 was c.0.9m wide with a fill of dark loam. A distinctive layer of dark sandy silt and degrading vegetation ran across the top of the natural subsoil, which consisted of banded yellow and orange sands and gravels, and into the ditch. It has been interpreted as the former topsoil that was buried when the ground level was built up. Numerous tree roots and assorted sticks and twigs were present in the ditch fill suggesting it had been filled relatively recently.

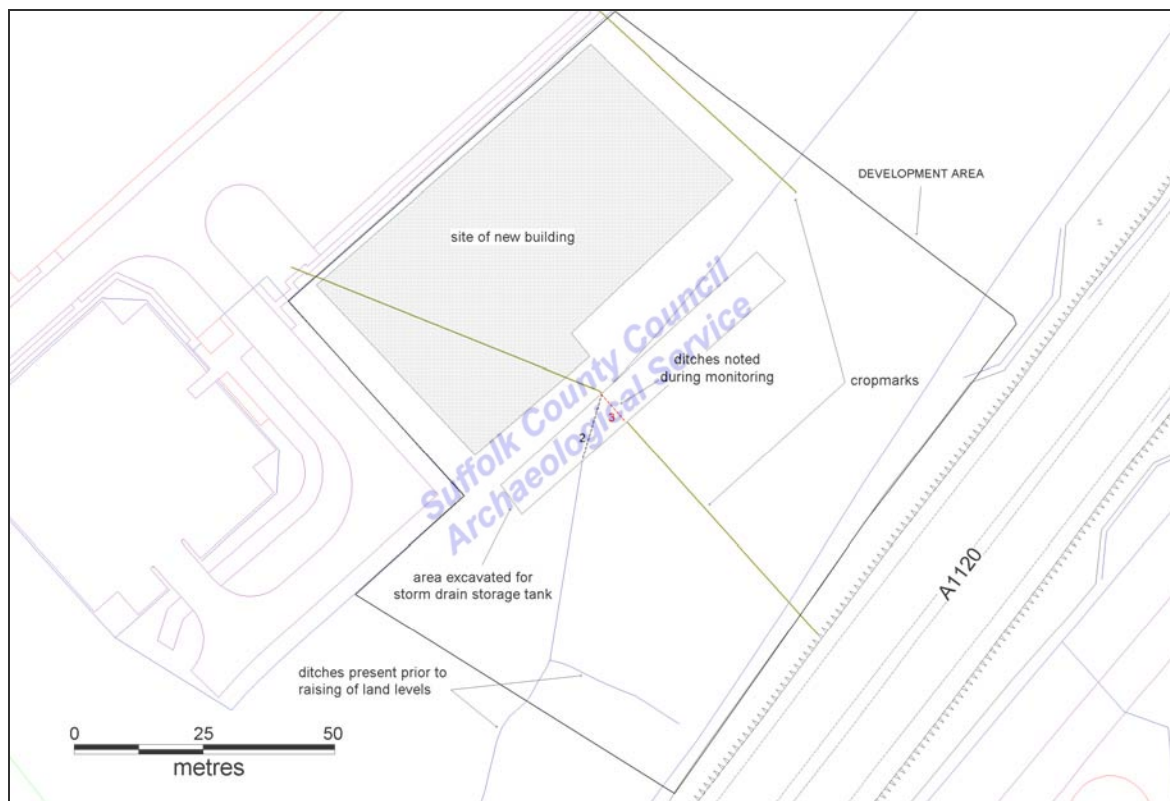


Figure 2: Monitoring Results

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Ditch 1003 was c.0.7m wide with a fill of brown sand with occasional flints. The truncated surface of the ditch fill was thoroughly examined but no artefacts were recovered. The section through ditch 1002 gave a distorted view of its profile as the feature, which had been running north-south, turned to the east and ran along a similar alignment to the storm water tank excavation (See Plate II). The section did indicate that ditch 1002 was a later feature that had been cut through ditch 1003 after it had been backfilled. The section through ditch 1003 formed by the southeast edge of the excavation indicated that it was c.1.5m wide at the original ground level and that it had been backfilled in antiquity as the buried topsoil clearly ran across the top of the ditch fill.

Conclusion

Other than the two ditches, no other significant archaeological deposits were identified during any of the monitoring visits made to the site. The inspected excavations were cleanly cut although the natural surface was not seen until it had been truncated by c.0.6m.

Ditch 1002 aligns with a ditch marked on late 20th century maps surveyed before the land levels were raised. This feature was clearly filled by the same material that had been used to raise the land levels in this area.

Ditch 1003 aligns with the cropmark seen in 1960s aerial photographs (Anderson 2004) and is undoubtedly the feature that has caused the cropmark to appear. Its alignment respects the medieval moated enclosure which suggests it is associated but unfortunately no datable artefacts that could prove it was contemporary with the enclosure's use were recovered from its fill.

Mark Sommers
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Field Projects Team

24th February 2005

Bibliography

Anderson, S. (2004) *A Medieval Moated Site At Cedars Field, Stowmarket, Suffolk* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper No. 15 (Suffolk Archaeological Service, Ipswich)



Plate I: general view of storm water tank excavation looking northeast (7th Oct 2004)



Plate II: view of northwest edge of excavation illustrating section through ditch 1002 (7th Oct 2004)

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

PPG site, Needham Rd. West, Stowmarket

Although this document is fundamental to the work of the specialist archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that certain of its requirements are likely to impinge upon the working practices of a general building contractor and may have financial implications, for example see paragraphs 2.3 & 4.3.

1. **Background**

- 1.1 A planning application (1413/03) has been made to construct a new industrial building on this site. The local planning authority have been advised that the site has high archaeological potential and that any consent should be conditional on a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition. Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The site lies adjacent to a medieval moated enclosure which is included in the County Sites & Monuments Register (SKT011) and was partially excavated in 1980 and 1999. There are linear cropmarks associated with the enclosure, one of which runs across the line of the proposed development; it appears to represent a further enclosure, or associated medieval agriculture; it is significant because of its association.

The entire area of the development has been artificially raised by the deposition of soil in the 1990s; the original ground surface lies some 2.5 to 3.0m below the present surface. The proposed development will be founded on pads with vibro compacted stone columns below; the evidence is that these will either be in the made ground or will not affect archaeologically sensitive deposits. The only intrusion to known archaeological levels will be the excavation for storm water storage tanks. These will cut across the plotted line of the cropmark for a distance of c.7.0m. penetrating to a depth c.0.6m below the original ground surface.

- 1.3 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 Project Design or Written Scheme of Investigation (PD/WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/WSI will *provide the basis for*

measurable standards and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.

- 1.4 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in “Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England” Occasional Papers 14, East Anglian Archaeology, 2003.

2. **Brief for Archaeological Monitoring**

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for earlier occupation of the site, with particular reference to the context of the medieval moated enclosure.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activities in this proposal are the excavation of the storm water storage tanks. These are to be observed whilst they are excavated by the building contractor. Adequate time is to be allowed for the recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following excavation (see 4.3).

3. **Arrangements for Monitoring**

- 3.1 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the archaeological contractor) who must be approved by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council’s Archaeological Service (SCCAS) - see 1.3 above.
- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of SCCAS 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. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to previously agreed locations and techniques upon which this brief is based.
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover archaeological costs incurred in monitoring the development works by the contract archaeologist. The size of the contingency should be estimated by the approved archaeological contractor, based upon the outline works in paragraph 2.3 of the Brief and Specification and the building contractor’s programme of works and time-table.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered the Conservation Team of SCCAS must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4. **Specification**

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Council Conservation Team archaeologist and the contracted ‘observing archaeologist’ to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.

- 4.2 Opportunity must be given to the 'observing archaeologist' to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary.
- 4.3 Unimpeded access for at least two hours to the completed excavation for the storage tanks must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development and relating to the area of the moat.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*, particularly Appendix 3. This must be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*. The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County SMR if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.3 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence, and must relate the results to those of the earlier excavation on the site of the medieval moated enclosure. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.4 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, must be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.

- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: R.D.Carr

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service Conservation Team
Environment and Transport Department
Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Date: May 10th 2004
Stowmarket1413_03

Reference:

This brief and specification remains valid for 12 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.