

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

J Bradnam & Sons, Melbourne Bridge, Withersfield WTH 034

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF GROUNDWORKS ASSOCIATED WITH
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AT J BRADNAM & SONS, MELBOURNE BRIDGE, WITHERSFIELD

Planning Application No. SE/04/1014/P

NGR: T L 6579 4665

OASIS Ref. Suffolkc1-7452

Funded by: J Bradnam & Sons
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2006/46

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of site stripping at J Bradnam & Sons, Melbourne Bridge, Withersfield, did not identify any archaeological features or deposits except for one possible undated linear feature.

Introduction

A series of visits were made to the site from 22nd March to April 1st 2005 to monitor the site strip for the construction of a new building. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) to fulfil a planning condition on application SE/04/1014/P. The work was funded by the developer, J Bradnam & Sons Ltd.

Interest in the site was based upon its general location (Fig. 1) on the north side of the Stour Brook. Gravel quarrying in the 1750's uncovered Roman cremation and inhumation burials, recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record as WTH 001, a few metres to the east of the new development. Therefore there was potential for development to affect further Roman burials, although the area had seen considerable disturbance from former quarrying and the raising of the road to the nearby railway bridge.

Methodology and Results

Two visits were made to see the site during and after the topsoil strip. Across most of the site this involved the removal, with a toothed bucket, of 0.3m-0.5m of modern material or topsoil and then up to 0.3m of natural subsoil. In the southern part of the site the amount of material removed decreased, as the site sloped down to the south-east, and the 0.3m removed did not expose the subsoil. Along the north edge up to 2m of material was removed as the building footprint cut into the modern bank of the raised road.

The stripping revealed the natural subsoil, a thick, mid brown, clay/loam. No features were seen but observation conditions were difficult as the excavation had been carried out with a large toothed bucket and the subsoil surface was not cleaned. The northern site edge clearly showed, in

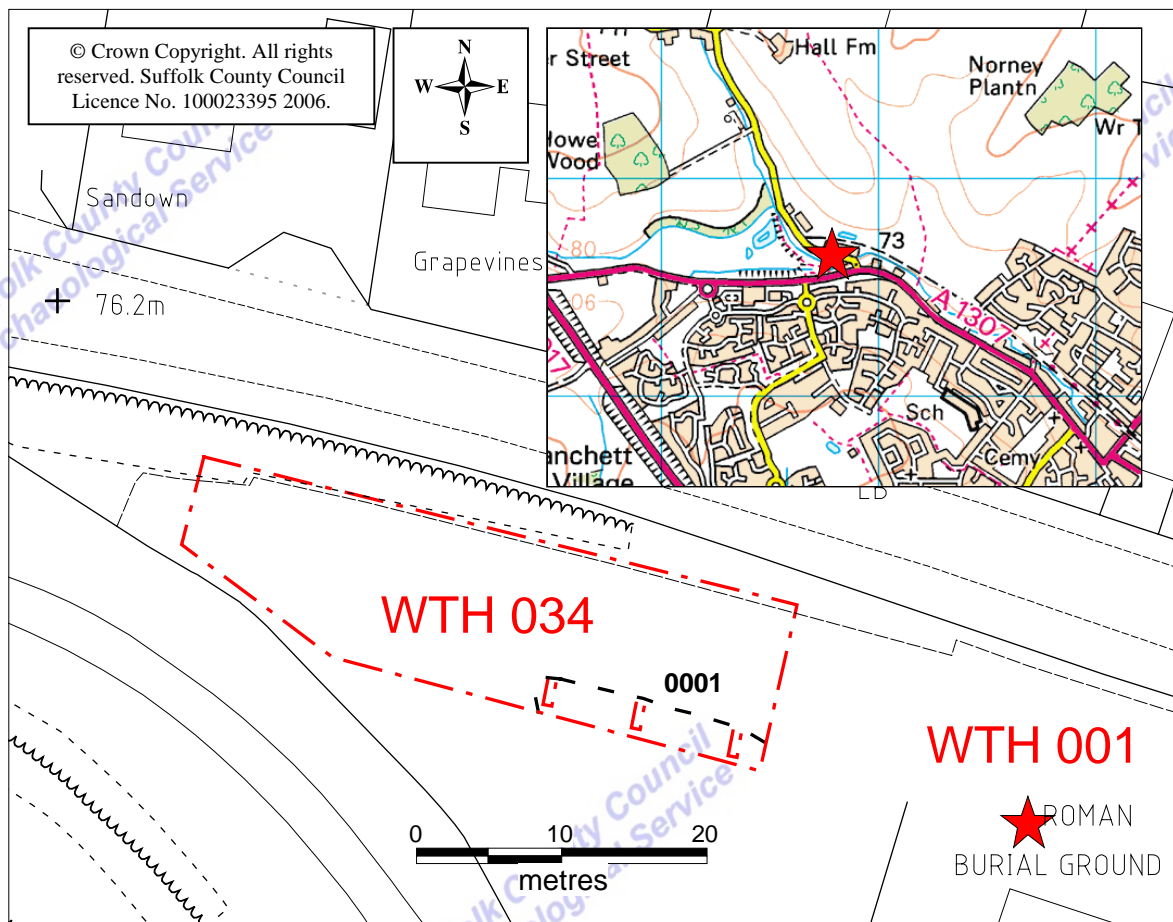


Figure 1. Site location plan

section, the modern bank lying above the former, undisturbed, groundlevels. The base of the section, which cut 0.3m into the natural subsoil, again showed a complete absence of features.

A third visit was made to look at the excavation of a series of footing pads after the site strip. The majority of these showed clean subsoil, which had already been truncated but in the southern corner, visible in three footings beneath the *in situ* modern deposits, was a possible linear feature, 0001, with a dark sand fill, capped with clay. No finds were recovered.

Discussion

No features were identified during the site strip, or seen in section in the site edge and there was no indication of any form of Roman activity. However this may have partially been due to the site strip which truncated the subsoil, possibly removing any shallow archaeological levels and possible truncation that may have been caused by modern activity.

The results of the footing pads in the southern corner of the site were inconclusive with the size, form, function and date of the possible feature being unclear.

J. A. Craven
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