

22 Mill Street, Mildenhall MNL 557

Application No. F/2004/1074

TL 7096 7450

Oasis No. suffolkc1-8484

Report No. 2005/88

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of groundworks for the construction of an indoor swimming pool at 22 Mill Street, Mildenhall, located a single rubbish pit, with material of 18th/19th century date, cutting a buried former topsoil.

Introduction

A series of visits was made to the site from 1st to 8th June 2005 to monitor the excavation of the footprint for an indoor swimming pool, an enlargement of a pre-existing outdoor pool, within the garden of the property. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Keith Wade (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) to fulfil a planning condition on application F/2004/1074. The work was funded by the developer, Mr R. Palmer.

Interest in the site was based upon its general location (Fig.1) within the area of medieval Mildenhall. In particular the site is in close proximity to the Church of St Mary's, MNL 211, which lies 100m to the north-east and to the post-medieval mill, MNL 455, 150m to the south, the latter of which may relate to a mill mentioned in the Domesday survey. Therefore there was potential for the development to affect medieval and later archaeological deposits and a programme of archaeological monitoring had been specified to record the groundworks.

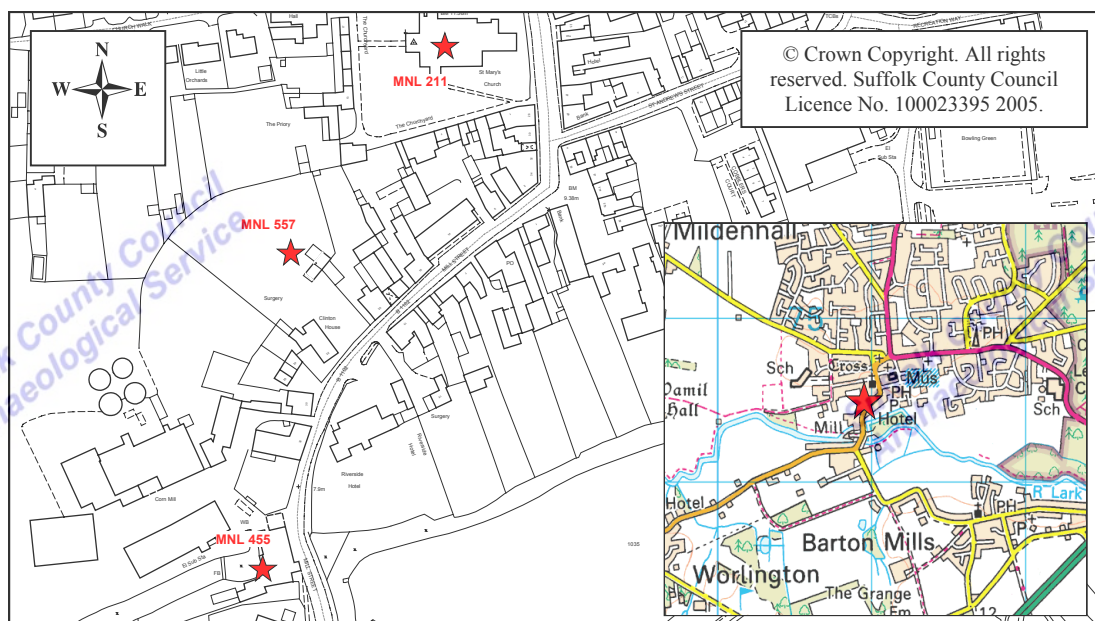


Figure 1. Site location plan

Methodology and Results

The existing outdoor swimming pool and its original construction trench were removed by machine. The construction of the pool, and of a pre-existing air raid shelter that had formerly stood on the site (R. Palmer *pers comm*), had totally removed the topsoil layers and cut deep into the natural chalk subsoil. Removal of the south-east corner of the pool did uncover a small part of an older concrete wall, with impressions from a sheet of corrugated iron, at a depth of c.1.2m, and is believed to have been part of the air raid shelter.

Archaeological monitoring was only possible to the north and east of the old pool, during the excavation of the new pool's footprint. This new area, measuring c.30 sqm, was excavated to a depth of 0.8m-1m, which roughly coincided with the level of the natural chalk subsoil. The chalk was cleanly exposed and no features were visible. In section the modern topsoil, c.0.4m thick, overlaid a layer, 0004, of mid brown loam/soil with scattered chalk, c.0.5m thick. One feature, 0002, was seen in the section, it consisted of an indistinct cut, c.0.5m wide, through layer 0004. Its loose soil fill, 0003, contained a dump of broken pottery and glass, which lay just above the natural chalk. A few finds were collected as a representative sample.

With no features apparent within the pool footprint, and the substantial depth of the natural subsoil below ground level, monitoring for the footing trenches of the pool building was deemed unnecessary.

The Finds

Richenda Goffin

Introduction

Finds were collected from a single context from the monitoring, as shown in the table below.

Context	Pottery		Glass		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0003	2	52	1	92	19th C

Pottery

Two fragments of post-medieval pottery were recovered from pit fill 0003. A single fragment of an ironstone china vessel, possibly a mug, decorated with blue and white swirled pattern dates to the 19th century. In addition, a large fragment of a Yellow ware bowl is of late 18th to 19th century date. A complete wide mouthed green glass pharmaceutical bottle initialled with 'C & B' can be dated more closely to the early 19th century (Noel Hume, Fig 17, No 18).

Discussion

The monitoring has shown a thick layer of modern topsoil apparently overlying the original post-medieval topsoil, 0004, which predates the 18th/19th century rubbish pit 0002. There was no indication of any medieval or post-medieval activity within the monitored area and the chalk subsoil was undisturbed.

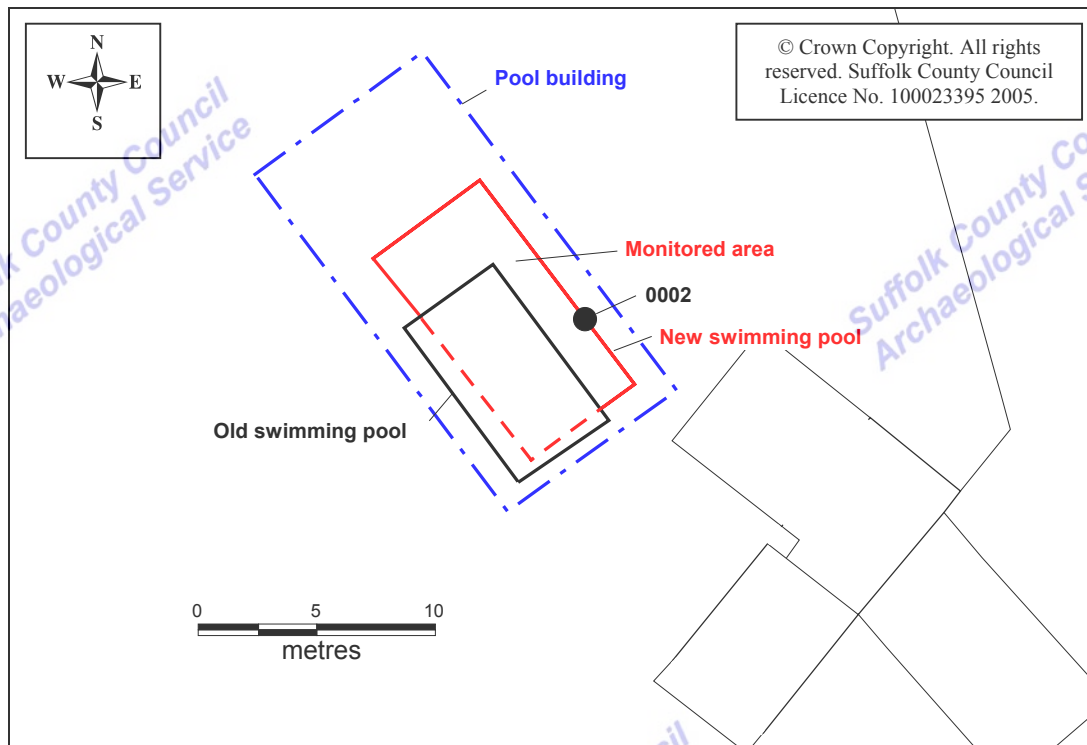


Figure 2. Site plan

References

Noel Hume, I., 1980, Artefacts of colonial America

J.A. Craven, June 2005