

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2010/202

5, Church Walk, Mildenhall MNL 643

M. Muldowney
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HER Information

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Grid Reference: TL 0929 4599
Funding Body: Mr P Warburton
Curatorial Officer: Keith Wade
Project Officer: Mo Muldowney
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Summary

An archaeological monitoring was carried out at 5, Church Walk, Mildenhall which identified a ditch, two pits, four postholes and one postpipe. Most of the features were undated, but the light fills and lack of organic material within the postholes in particular may suggest that they are prehistoric in date. Features from which dating evidence was recovered were post-medieval.

1. Introduction

A monitoring was carried out at 5, Church Walk, Mildenhall (Fig. 1) during groundworks associated with the construction of a four-bay garage (F/2010/0558/HOU). The work was carried out on 26th and 27th October 2010 and was undertaken in accordance with a Brief and Specification produced by Keith Wade of the Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service, Conservation Team (SCCAS/CT).

Mildenhall is located in West Suffolk, approximately 16km north-east from Newmarket and No. 5, Church Walk is located at the south-west edge of the town, north-east of the cricket club. The development area itself lies at the end of a driveway that runs south off Church Walk.

2. Geology and topography

The development area is underlain by chalk and stands at approximately 7.30m OD on predominantly flat land above the River Lark (to the south). The site boundaries are a combination of walls and fences and the proposed garage is located in the north-east corner of the development area.

3. Archaeological and historical background

The County Historic Environment Record (HER) contains a small number of entries in close proximity to the development area. Of these, the majority are medieval in date, but there are also a small number of pre-medieval and post-medieval entries (Table 1 and Fig. 2).

The HER indicates that there is a high potential for the identification of medieval remains, particularly as an extant structure lies within the development area (MNL 181) and because it may lie within the extent of medieval Mildenhall (MNL 617), with a lower likelihood of identifying Roman and/or post-medieval remains.

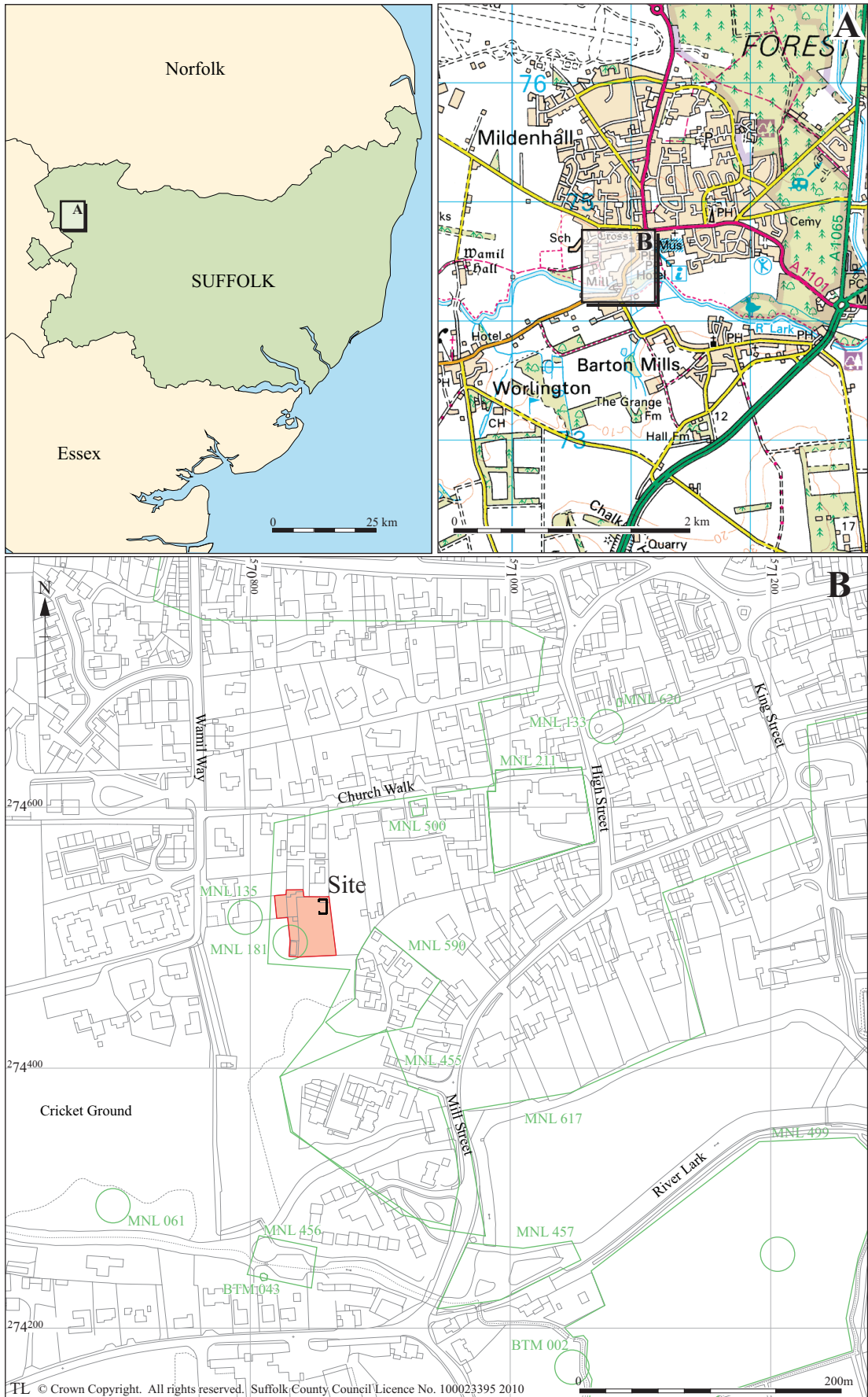


Figure 1. Site location showing development area (red), footings (black) and HER sites mentioned in the text (green)

HER Code	Description	Period
BTM 002	Stone axe	Neo
BTM 043	WWII Pillbox	Mod
MNL 061	Iron socketed spearhead	Sax
MNL 133	Market Cross (SAM and Grade II Listed Building)	Med
MNL 135	Coin 4th century	Rom
MNL 181	Remains of a dovecote	Med
MNL 211	St Mary's Church	Med
MNL 455	Lark Mill	PMed
MNL 456	Mildenhall Turf Lock	PMed
MNL 457	Former lock on Lark navigation	PMed
MNL 499	Area of metal-detected Roman finds	Rom
MNL 500	Pits found during a Watching Brief	Und
MNL 590	Parker's Mill evaluation	Med
MNL 617	Indicative extent of medieval Mildenhall	Med
MNL 620	Pit and buried soil layer found during Watching Brief	Und & PMed

Table 1. Summary of selected HER entries

Key: Und = undated; Neo = Neolithic, Rom = Roman; Sax = Anglo-Saxon, Med = Medieval, PMed = Post-medieval, Mod = modern

4. Methodology

Monitoring of the footings took place during excavation. A JCB 803 mechanical excavator fitted with a toothed bucket was used for all groundworks and spoil was removed with a 6 ton dumper. All exposed surfaces were examined and all stratified finds collected.

A drawn record of the exposed deposits was created at a scale of 1:50 (plan) and 1:20 (sections), as appropriate and all records were written on SCCAS *pro forma* sheets. Levels were taken with a dumpy level. A colour photographic record was taken using a high-resolution digital camera (314 dpi).

No metal-detecting was undertaken and no environmental samples were taken.

The site archive is stored in the SCCAS main store at Bury St Edmunds under HER no. MNL 643 and a digital copy of the report has been submitted to the Archaeological Data Service at: <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

5. Results

Monitoring identified a ditch, two pits and four postholes, one with a postpipe in the footings, and these were spread across the development area. All the

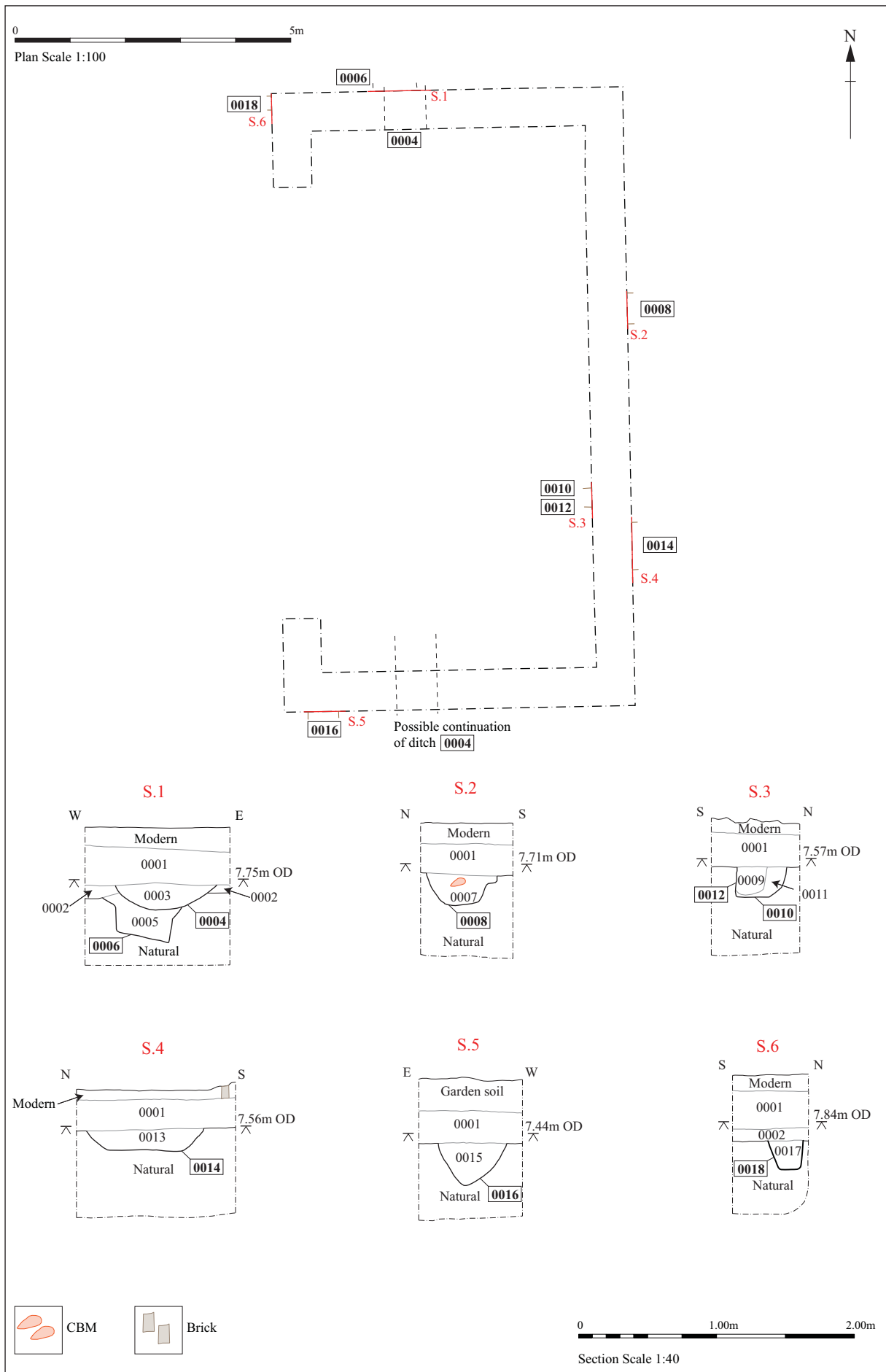


Figure 2. Detail of footings and sections

features were observed in section only, as the full depth of the footings (c. 1m) exceeded the depths of the features by approximately 0.40m. The majority of the features were undated, although a very small quantity of post-medieval finds was recovered from three of the deposits.

Features are described by type with finds information where applicable. Full context descriptions are presented in Appendix 2.

The natural geology (0019) was chalk and was observed at a height of 7.70m OD, a minimum of approximately 0.35m below the ground surface.

Ditch

Ditch 0004 was oriented north to south and had a shallow u shaped profile. It was 0.74m wide by 0.20m deep and contained single fill (0003). It truncated layer 0002 and also posthole 0006. No finds were recovered.

Pits

Pit 0014 was located 2.20m north from the south-east corner of the footings. It had a v-shaped, flat-based profile and was 0.84m wide by 0.18m deep. Post-medieval pottery and a fragment of CBM were recovered from the fill (0013).

Pit 0016 was in the south-west corner of the footings and was 0.50m wide by 0.32m deep. It had a tapering profile and was filled by 0015. No finds were recovered.

Postholes

Posthole 0006 was truncated by ditch 0004 and was 0.58m wide by 0.36m deep. It had a regular, u-shaped profile with a slightly flared top and a flat base. The fill (0005) contained no finds.

Posthole 0008 was located 3.70m from the north end of the east side of the footings. It was 0.52m wide by 0.24m deep and had a u-shaped profile. A fragment of post-medieval CBM was recovered from the fill (0007).

Posthole 0010 was located in the east-facing baulk of the east side of the footings, almost opposite pit 0014. It was 0.36m wide by 0.22m deep and had a u-shaped profile

and a single fill (0010). Postpipe 0012 was located on the south edge of the posthole (0010) cut and was 0.22m wide by 0.20m deep. It also had a u-shaped profile and a single fill (0009). Neither fill contained finds.

Posthole 0018 was located in the north-west corner of the footings and was 0.12m wide by 0.20m deep. It had a regular profile and a flat base and contained a single fill (0017). No finds were recovered.

Layer 0002 was observed across the footings, but survived only intermittently, thinning towards the south end. At the north end of the footings it was a maximum of 0.10m thick but was less than 0.03m thick at the south end. A fragment of post-medieval CBM was recovered. Small sherds of modern glass were also recovered but not retained.

Topsoil 0001 was approximately 0.24m deep on average, reaching a maximum of 0.36m deep in places. It was present across the footings, but was overlain by either modern rubble and concrete or a clean garden soil. Finds such as Transfer Printed Pottery and modern glass were observed but not retained.

6. Finds evidence

6.1 Introduction

A total of four finds with a weight of 221g was recovered during the archaeological investigation at Church Walk. Only two finds categories were noted, pottery and CBM.

6.2 Pottery

A single sherd of abraded Ironstone pottery (IRST) was noted in pit fill 0013 (3g), which is dated from the early 19th century onwards.

6.3 CBM

Single late brick fragments (212g), dated to the post-medieval period, were recorded in layer 0002 and post-hole 0007. Both are in a medium sandy fabric with calcite (msc); due to their highly abraded and fragmentary state no dimensional measurements were possible. A further abraded piece (6g) of post-medieval CBM was noted in pit fill 0013. Due to its scrappy condition it is not possible to say if this is roof tile or late brick.

6.3 Conclusion

This is a small finds assemblage that is highly abraded and fragmented, all of which is dated to the post-medieval period.

7. Discussion and conclusion

The monitoring identified a series of eight features with a broad distribution across the area of the footings. Extrapolating this result across the larger area suggests that there is widespread and moderately dense activity in this location, which broadly reflects the results anticipated by the HER search. This only extends to the presence of features however, as the HER search indicated that there was a high potential for medieval remains and the work recovered only post-medieval finds and undated features. Whilst it is possible that the undated features (0005, 0010 and 0012, 0016 and 0018) are medieval, the pale colour and high chalk content of their fills is more typical of prehistoric features, which are often pale and lack the higher quantity of organic material that is normally present in post-prehistoric fills. Precedents for prehistoric features in this area are few (see Table 1), so if these are indeed of that date, they are of some interest regarding the early occupation of Mildenhall, where the prehistoric occupation is predominantly further to the west on the Fen margins.

Whilst postholes 0006, 0008 and 0010 do not together form a structure, their presence is a strong indication that there were structures, whether a fenceline or building, in this area. All these postholes had pale fills, and if reasoning is correct and these were prehistoric features, they are probably likely to date to the later prehistoric periods, such as Bronze Age or Iron Age. If so, this would provide the first evidence for prehistoric settlement in this location.

Ditch 0004 clearly truncated probable subsoil layer 0002 and had a darker fill, matching that of pit 0014, from which post-medieval finds were recovered and was itself almost certainly also post-medieval. Of note is the ditch's depth, which was no more than 0.20m at the north end of the footings, reducing (if still even present) to less than 0.03m at the south end. The extreme shallowness of the ditch at the south end made a positive identification difficult.

The 1880's Ordnance Survey historic map of the area shows the development area and the land surrounding it as orchard, and there are also a small number of paths or boundaries with the same alignment as ditch 0004, but it is not clear if any of these correspond. The next map (1890's) shows the development area as 'allotment gardens' with no indications of ditches or boundaries. There is no (digital) map available for the early 20th century. It is most likely therefore that the ditch either pre-dates the Ordnance Survey mapping or was not marked.

Despite the high potential for the survival and identification of medieval remains, the monitoring has found evidence for post-medieval activity in the form of a ditch and a pit and a further pit and postholes (all undated), which are of possible prehistoric date. The presence of these features shows that there is good survival of remains in this area of the town and that they may range in date from the prehistoric to modern period. It is perhaps somewhat surprising that no remains securely dated to the medieval period were identified, given that a medieval dovecote (MNL 181) stands very close nearby.

8. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds
T:\Arc\ALL_site\MILDENHALL\MNL 643 5 Church Walk

Finds archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds. Store Location: Parish box H / 81 / 1

9. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The monitoring was carried out by Mo Muldowney from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team and the project was managed by Jo Caruth.

Finds processing was carried out by Jonathan Van Jennians. Andy Fawcett identified the finds and Richenda Goffin edited the report.

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 view different from that expressed in the report.

Plates



Plate 1. Ditch 0004 cutting layer 0002, and posthole 0006, facing north



Plate 2. Posthole 0010 and postpipe 0012, facing west

Appendix 1. Brief and Specification

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring

5 CHURCH WALK, MILDENHALL

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to erect a 4 bay garage at 5 Church Walk, Mildenhall has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (F/2010/0558/HOU). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence and the proposed foundation methods indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal lies within the area of archaeological importance defined for medieval Mildenhall in the County Historic Environment Record (MNL617) and close to other known archaeological sites (including MNL590, Saxo-Norman and medieval occupation).
- 1.3 As strip foundations are proposed there will only be limited damage to any archaeological deposits, which can be recorded by a trained archaeologist during excavation of the trenches by the building contractor.

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which would be 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 the medieval occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of building footing trenches. These, and the up-cast soil, are to be observed during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor.

3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 The developer or his archaeologist will give the County Archaeologist (Keith Wade, Archaeological Service, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR. Telephone: 01284 352440; Fax: 01284 352443) 48 hours notice of the commencement of site works.
- 3.2 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the observing archaeologist) who must be approved by the Planning Authority's archaeological adviser (the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).
- 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 timetable.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered, the County Archaeologist should be immediately informed so that any amendments deemed necessary to this specification to ensure adequate provision for recording, can be made without delay. This could include the need for archaeological excavation of parts of the site which would otherwise be damaged or destroyed.

4. **Specification**

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Archaeologist and the 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity should 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 In the case of footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of one and half hours per 10 metres of trench 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 should be fully excavated and planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts should be numbered and finds recorded by context as far as possible.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Historic Environment Record.
- 4.7 Developers should be aware of the possibility of human burials being found. If this eventuality occurs they must comply with the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857; and the archaeologist should be informed by '*Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England*' (English Heritage & the Church of England 2005) which includes sensible baseline standards which are likely to apply whatever the location, age or denomination of a burial.

5. **Reporting Requirements**

- 5.1 **Reporting should be commensurate with results.
If significant archaeological features or finds are found:**
- 5.2 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 Historic Environment Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible. This should include a plan showing the proposed development with all areas observed during the monitoring clearly marked.
- 5.3 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 HER 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.
- 5.4 A report, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must also 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. 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).
- 5.5 A summary report should be provided, in the established format for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology* (which can be included in the project report)
- 5.6 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 HER. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

5.8 Where appropriate, a digital vector plan showing all the areas observed should be included with the report. This must be compatible with MapInfo GIS software, for integration into 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.

When no significant features or finds are found

5.9 A short report should be provided including the following information:

- Grid Ref
- Parish
- Address
- Planning Application number
- Date(s) of visit(s)
- Methodology
- Plan showing areas observed in relation to ground disturbance/proposed development (a digital vector plan as in 5.8 above when possible)
- Depth of ground disturbance in each area
- Depth of topsoil and its profile over natural at each location of observation
- Observations as to land use history (truncation etc)
- Recorder and Organisation
- Date of report

Specification by: Keith Wade

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service Conservation Team
Economy, Skills and Environment Department
9-10 The Churchyard
Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Date: 11th October 2010

Reference: 5 Church Walk

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.

Appendix 2. Context descriptions

Context	Fill of	Filled by	Category	Type	Description			Width (m)	Depth (m)	Interpretation
0001			Layer	Deposit	Dark greyish brown	Clay silt	Friable	Chalk: occasional, small, sub-angular Flint: rare, small, sub-angular	0.24	Topsoil - post-med most likely judging by inclusions etc
0002			Layer	Deposit	Dark greyish brown	Clay silt	Friable	Chalk: abundant, small sub-angular Charcoal: rare, flecks	0.10	Possible subsoil. Got post-med finds in. 1x CBM fragment kept. Layer thins towards south of footings. Intermittent presence across area too. Thickest at north end
0003	0004		Fill	Ditch	Mid whiteish brown	Clay silt	Friable	Chalk: occasional, very small, sub-angular Charcoal: rare flecks Peagrit: rare concave	0.20	Single fill of shallow ditch 0004
0004		0003	Cut	Ditch	Linear	N-S	Shallow u shape. Sharp BOS from surface, gradual sides	0.74	0.20	Shallow ditch truncating layer 0002. Indicates post-med
0005	0006		Fill	Posthole	Light whiteish brown	Silty chalk	Loose	Flint: very rare, small, angular	0.24	Single fill of slightly irregular posthole. Lighter coloured fill indicates an early feature but undated
0006		0005	Cut	Posthole	Not seen		Straight-sided. Sharp break from upper surfaces, with straight moderately sloping sides, breaking to vertical sides. Sharp break to base	0.58	0.36	Irregular posthole
0007	0008		Fill	Posthole	Mid whiteish brown	Clay silt	Friable	Chalk: common, small, sub-rounded Charcoal: very rare, flecks Flint: very	0.22	Single fill of posthole. P-med looking. Less square cut than 0006, for instance

Context	Fill of	Filled by	Category	Type	Description		Width (m)	Depth (m)	Interpretation	
0008		0007	Cut	Posthole	Not seen	U-shaped. Sharp BOS from surface with kink on south side at top. Straight sides with sharp break to base	rare, small sub-rounded Flat	0.52	0.24	Again, slightly uneven looking posthole, but this is probably to do with the crumbly nature of the chalk
0009	0012		Fill	Postpipe	Light whiteish brown	Clay silt Loose	Chalk: abundant, small, sub-rounded and occasional medium sub-angular		0.20	Single fill of a postpipe in posthole 0010. No finds
0010		0011	Cut	Posthole	Not seen	U-shaped. Sharp BOS from surface with straight vertical sides and sharp break to base. More gradual on north side	Flat	0.36	0.22	Cut for posthole with visible postpipe 0012
0011	0010		Fill	Posthole	Light brownish white	Chalk Loose	Chalk: small to medium rubbly-like, sub-angular fragments and chalky 'peagrit'		0.22	Light fill of posthole. Upcast not moved very far. Indicating early date? Undated
0012		0009	Cut	Postpipe	not seen	Vertical sided u-shape with sharp break of slope from surface and gradual break to base	Concave	0.22	0.20	Postpipe with posthole 0010. Situated on south side of the cut
0013	0014		Fill	Pit	Mid whiteish grey	Clay silt Friable	Chalk: occasional small sub-rounded Flint and charcoal: rare flecks		0.18	Single fill of shallow pit, likely post-med
0014		0013	Cut	Pit	Not seen	Gradual BOS from surface with moderately steep sides and gradual break to base	Flat	0.84	0.18	Shallow, flat based pit. Likely post-med date. Quite dark fill
0015	0016		Fill	Pit	Light whiteish	Clay silt Loose	Chalk: occasional small to medium		0.32	Small, pointy based pit, single fill

Context	Fill of	Filled by	Category	Type	Description			Width (m)	Depth (m)	Interpretation	
0016		0015	Cut	Pit	brown Not seen		V-shaped. Sharp BOS from surface with curved but steep sides with barely a break to base	sub-rounded tapered	0.50	0.32	Small pit. Pointy base. No finds. Lighter fill suggesting early date - pre-R-B?
0017	0018		Fill	Posthole	Light whiteish brown	Clay silt	Friable	Chalk: common, peagrit to small angular		0.20	Single fill of small posthole type thing
0018		0017	Cut	Posthole	Not seen		Sharp BOS from surface with steep, near vertical sides. Sharp break to base	Flat	0.12	0.20	Small posthole, quite regular shape. No postpipe