

**39, Walnut Tree Lane, Sudbury**  
**(SUY 073)**  
**Planning Application No. B/04/02019/FUL**  
**Archaeological Monitoring Report No. 2005/112**  
**OASIS ID no. 9273**

**Summary**

Sudbury, 39, Walnut Tree Lane, Sudbury (TL/869412; SUY 073) Planning permission for a new dwelling on Walnut Tree Lane, Sudbury required archaeological monitoring of the building footprint. The building cuts into a steep slope as the land falls towards the River Stour, exposing the composition of overburden and natural subsoil in a section some 4m high. This revealed a series of large, inter-cutting pits filled by a brown gravelly loam. The relatively low density of finds suggests that the pits were quarry pits which had been quickly backfilled, rather than rubbish pits opened for the disposal of waste.

(Linzi Everett for Suffolk County Council and Waterstone Land & New Homes Ltd.; report no. 2005/112)

**1. Methodology**

Conditional planning consent for the construction of a dwelling at Walnut Tree Lane, Sudbury, (Fig. 1) required archaeological monitoring during the excavation of the building footprint. The site is centred on TL 8695 4129 within the boundaries of both Saxon and medieval Sudbury.

Excavations carried out immediately to the north east of the site in 1990 revealed remnants of Iron Age, Saxon and medieval archaeology, but deposits were heavily disturbed by post-medieval quarrying.

Visits were made to the site by Linzi Everett of the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service in order to inspect the machine excavated footprint. Any features revealed were recorded under the SMR code SUY 073 and finds were collected for identification and dating. The monitoring work took place July 2005 and was commissioned by Waterstone Land & New Homes Ltd. The monitoring archive is held in the county SMR in Bury St. Edmunds.

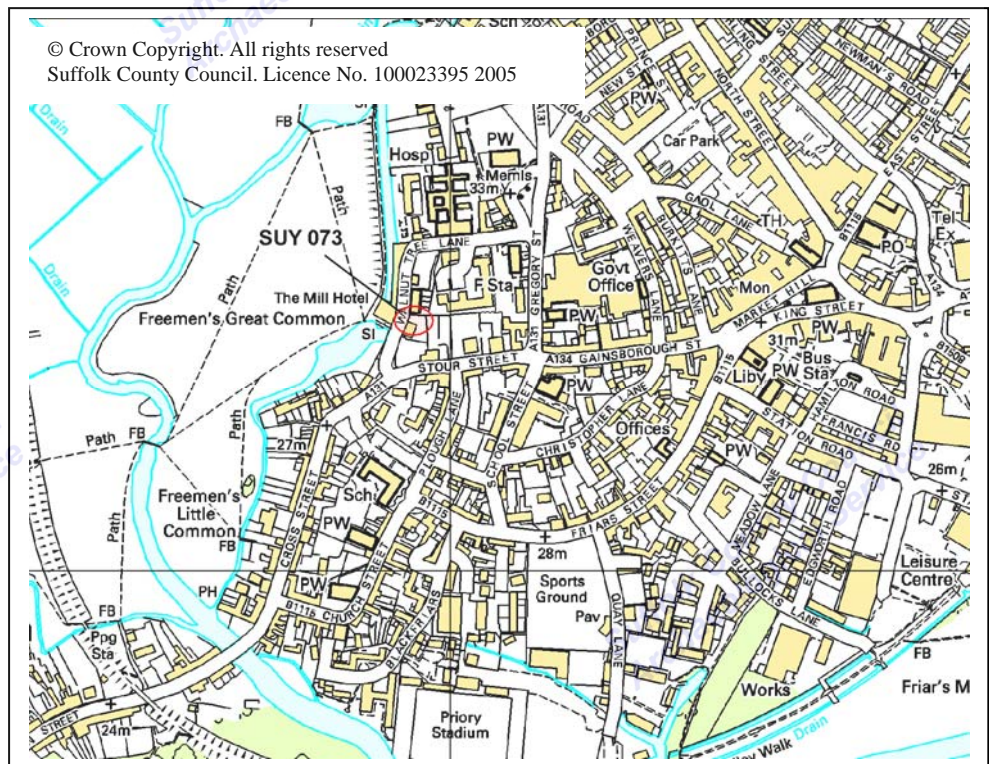


Figure 1: Site location

## 2. Results

The site occupied a steep east-west slope into which the building footprint was cut. Much of the area had been subject to disturbance prior to development, where excavation for the granary building to the south and a retaining wall to the north had taken place.

The rear of the site was excavated to a total depth of 4m into the slope, comprising c.1.1m of a dark brown sandy loam containing moderate pebble and post-medieval tile and ceramic inclusions.

Below this layer, several cuts and layers were visible, as shown by figure 3 and described in table 2. The natural subsoil was a yellow sandy gravel into which a series of pits had been cut.

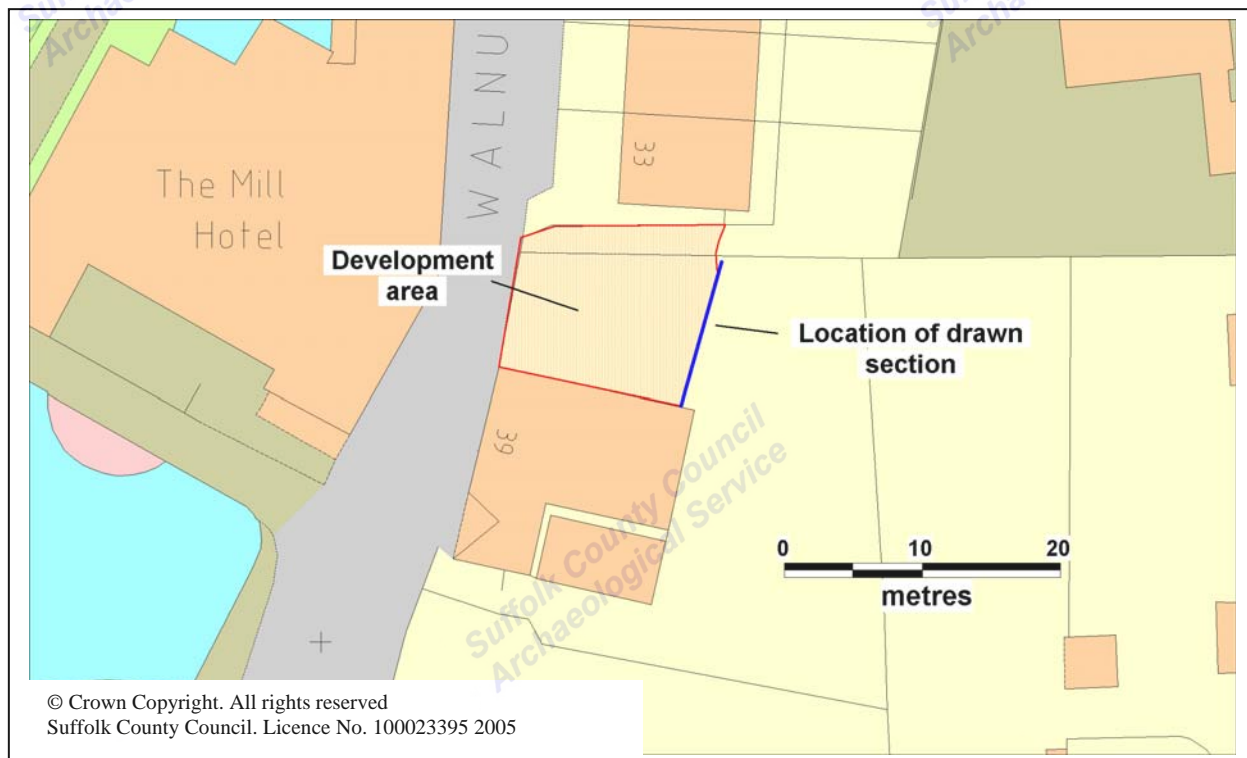


Figure 2: Location of monitored area and exposed section

## 3. Walnut Tree Lane (SUY 073): the finds

By Richenda Goffin, October 2005

### Introduction

Finds were collected from 3 contexts, as shown in the table below.

Context	Pottery		CBM		Iron		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0001	3	36	1	30	2	21	3 frags bone ?writing implement	Unstratified
0003			2	60			Copper alloy pin 1@ 1g	Post-med
0007	4	18	4	217	1	1	Flint 1@ 1g, copper alloy pin 1@ 1g	Med pot but post-med cbm
Total	7	54	7	307	3	22		

Table 1: Finds quantification

## **Pottery**

Seven fragments of pottery were recovered from the monitoring, weighing 0.054kg. Three unstratified wares include a medieval coarseware jar with flat-topped rim (Rim type F2), and another medieval coarseware body sherd dating from the late 12th to 14th century. In addition a small fragment of a Raeren stoneware drinking vessel dates from the late 15th to early 16th century.

A single sherd of another medieval coarseware jar was identified in pit fill 0007. The fragment, which is made from a fine micaceous fabric and has oxidised margins, is a Hedingham fineware variant of Mid 12th to Mid 13th century date. Three other body sherds of medieval coarsewares were also present in this context.

## **Ceramic building material**

Seven fragments of ceramic roof tile were recovered, weighing 0.307kg. Four fragments were recorded from pit fill 0007. One abraded sandy fully oxidised tile is post-medieval in date, and a second less sandy tile containing ferrous inclusions is likely to be of a similar date. Two other burnt fragments are more difficult to identify, but they have moderately coarse sandy fabrics and are likely to be post-medieval. Only one fragment shows any signs of mortar.

Two similar fragments were identified in pit fill 0003. One of these has laminated, but the remains of mortar can be seen on the reverse. It is fully oxidised and made from a fine fabric. The second small fragment is slightly sandier. Both fragments are post-medieval.

A single unstratified fragment of ceramic roof tile is likely to date to the post-medieval period. It has a fine to medium sandy fabric with occasional flint and ferrous inclusions, and the remains of mortar along one broken edge suggesting re-use.

## **Metalwork**

Two copper alloy dress pins were recovered from pit fills 0003 and 0007 (SFs 1001 and 1002). The pin from 0003 has a wound-wire spherical head. Such pins have been found in medieval deposits from London but can also be later in date (Egan and Pritchard 299). The pin from 0007 appears to have a thickened hammered head and is likely to be post-medieval. A single small iron nail was found in 0007 and two larger nails with square sections were collected as unstratified finds.

## **Miscellaneous**

A small flint fragment in 0007 is not considered to be of any archaeological significance.

## **Animal bone**

Three fragments of unstratified bone were recovered, two of which are joining (SF1003). Two bones have been cut obliquely at the end to form a sharp point. The bones are straight and hollow and ovoid in section, and are likely to be goose radii. These pointed implements may have been used as rudimentary pens, although exactly how they were used is open to question. More complete examples of these have been found dating to the medieval and early post-medieval periods from excavations in Norwich (Margeson 69). They have also been found on other sites from elsewhere in the country (McGregor 125).

## **Discussion**

The finds recovered from the pits at 39 Walnut Tree Lane are mainly post-medieval in date, although a number of sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from pit fill 0007 and amongst the unstratified material. The presence of three fragments of sharpened bird bones which may have been used for writing implements is of interest.

Quantification AW, finds analysis RG 10/05

#### **4. Discussion**

The site showed significant disturbance, both recently and in antiquity. Clearly the natural subsoil had been quarried for its gravel and/or sand content during the post-medieval period and probably earlier. The fact that medieval and post-medieval finds were found within in the same contexts implies that either no differentiation between layers of different dates was possible on site or the later activity disturbed and re-deposited material from older, medieval contexts which existed on the site. The majority of medieval sherds were recovered from fill 007, the earliest fill of pit 0012 which itself appears to be stratigraphically the earliest feature recorded on the site. It is difficult to make any meaningful interpretations from such a small finds assemblage, however, the low density of finds suggests that the pits were quickly backfilled, as would be expected if they were extraction pits, rather than opened for the disposal of domestic rubbish.

Linzi Everett  
Field Team  
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service  
October 2005

#### **References**

- Margeson, S., 1993, Norwich Households: The Medieval and Post-medieval Finds from Norwich Survey Excavations 1971-1978
- MacGregor, A., 1985, Bone, antler, ivory and horn, The Technology of Skeletal Materials since the Roman Period
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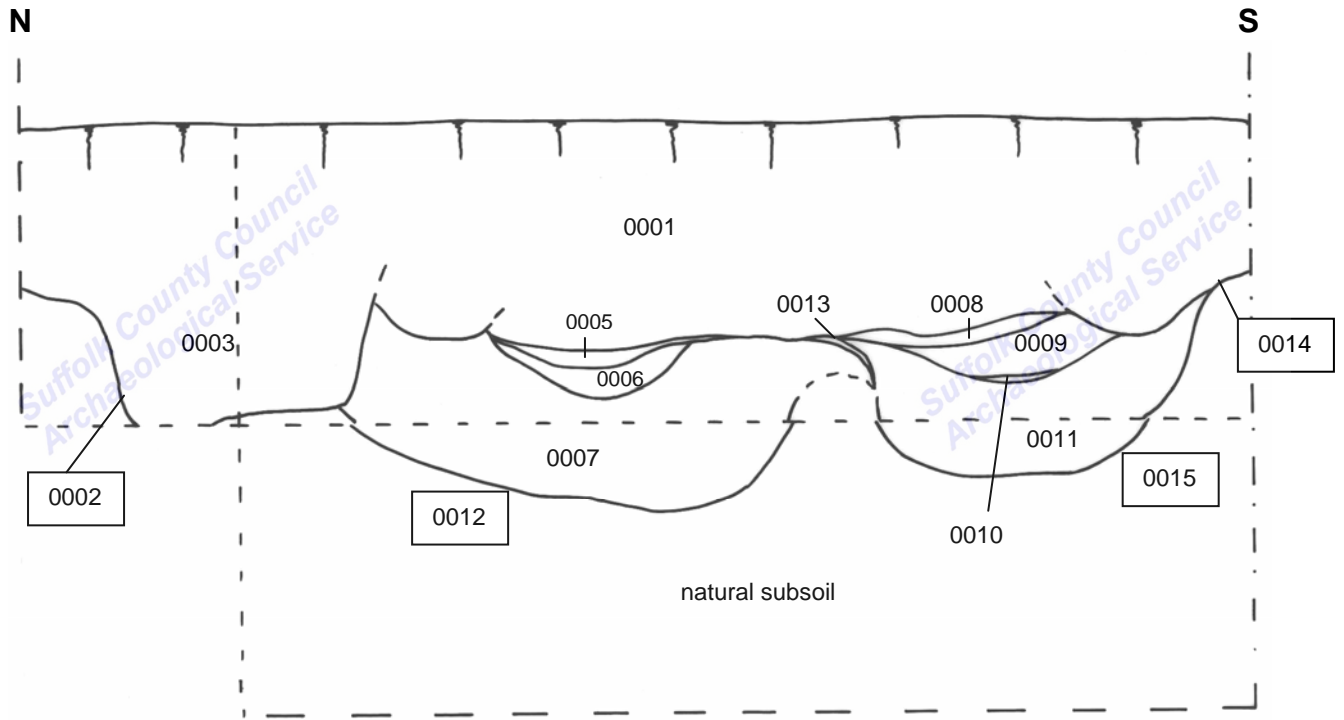


Figure 3: Exposed section, scale 1:50



Plate 1: Photo of exposed section

OP	Feature	Identifier	Description	Cuts/ over	Cut by /under
0001		Topsoil/ unstratified	Dark brown loam, moderately stony, includes post medieval tile and glazed pot	0003, 0005, 0008, 0013	
0002	0002	Pit cut	Large Pit, flat base and steep sides. 2m deep (from present ground surface), c. 1.8m wide	0012	
0003	0002	Pit fill	Mid-dark brown loamy sand, gravelly, includes post medieval material at base		0001
0004	0004	Cut	Small pit cut, c. 0.75m wide	0012	0002
0005	0012	Pit fill	Lens of dirty brownish yellow sand	0006	0001
0006	0012	Pit fill	Dark greyish brown sandy layer, rich in charcoal	0007	0005
0007	0012	Pit fill	Mid brown gravelly sand, occasional brick and tile fragments, pot sherds recovered		0006, 0013
0008	0015	Pit fill	Lens of dirty brownish yellow sand	0009	0001
0009	0015	Pit fill	Mid greyish brown ashy sand	0010	0008
0010	0015	Pit fill	Lens of dirty brownish yellow sand	0011	0009
0011	0015	Pit fill	Mid brown gravelly sand, occasional brick and tile fragments		0010
0012	0012	Pit cut	Large pit, c.3m wide and 2.6m deep (from present ground surface)		0015, 0004, 0002
0013	0015	Pit fill	Lens of grey ashy material	0007	0011, 0001
0014	0014	Pit cut	Small pit cut, c. 1.1m wide	0015	
0015	0015	Pit cut	Large pit, c. 2.1m wide and 2.1m deep (from present ground surface)	0012	0014

Table 2: Context list