



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

**11 BOLTON STREET, LAVENHAM,
SUFFOLK**

NGR TL 91835 49412

On behalf of

Ms S. Lane and Mr R. Notley

MAY 2012

REPORT FOR Ms S. Lane and Mr R. Notley
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FIELDWORK 8th and 15th May 2012
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out a watching brief at 11 Bolton Street, Lavenham, Suffolk on the 8th and 15th May 2012, during the ground work for the foundations for an extension to an existing property. No archaeological deposits were identified, and the only retained finds were unstratified worked flints.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location

The groundwork took place on land (hereafter referred to as ‘the Site’) at 11 Bolton Street on the eastern edge of Lavenham, Suffolk (NGR TL 91835 49412; Figure 1). The Site consists of an existing two storey semi-detached residential property and associated narrow trapezoidal plot of land approximately 23m long and 13m wide. A flint and brick wall and a hedge form the north-eastern boundary of the Site alongside Lower Road, and also part of the south-eastern boundary fronting onto Bolton Street. Immediately to the south-east and north are further residential properties. Access to the Site was via a garden gate through the wall and hedge on Bolton Street.

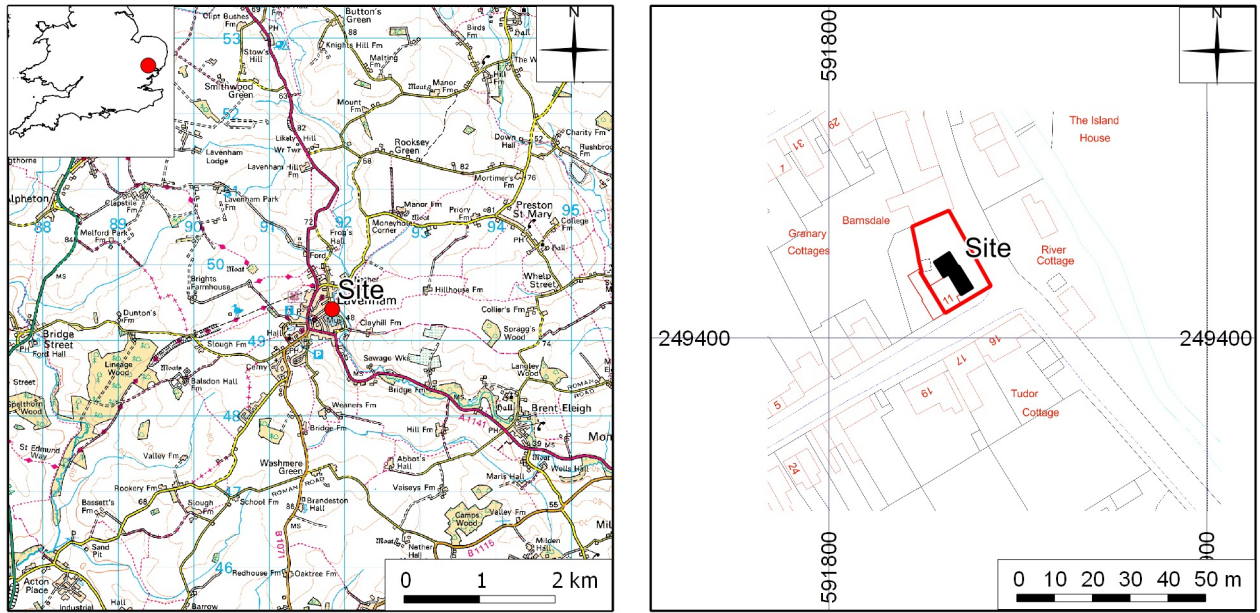
The Site is situated near the bottom of a hill at *circa*. 50 metres above Ordnance Datum (OD), on land that slopes gradually towards the east and south-east. The Site is located on fluvio-glacial gravel and silt deposits, overlying chalky till from the Anglian glaciation. The development work involved the removal of topsoil and the machine excavation of footings trenches for the new extension.

1.2 Planning Background

Babergh District Council granted planning permission for side and rear extensions to 11 Bolton Street, Lavenham conditional upon a programme of archaeological work being undertaken (B/12/00156/FHA). Due to the location of the Site within the area of archaeological interest defined for the medieval town of Lavenham and the potential presence of below-ground archaeological remains, a condition for an archaeological watching brief was attached to the permission by the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team Archaeological Service, who prepared a *Brief* for the archaeological work. The *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2630/01) was prepared in response to the Brief, and outlined the methodology by which the archaeological watching brief would be carried out.

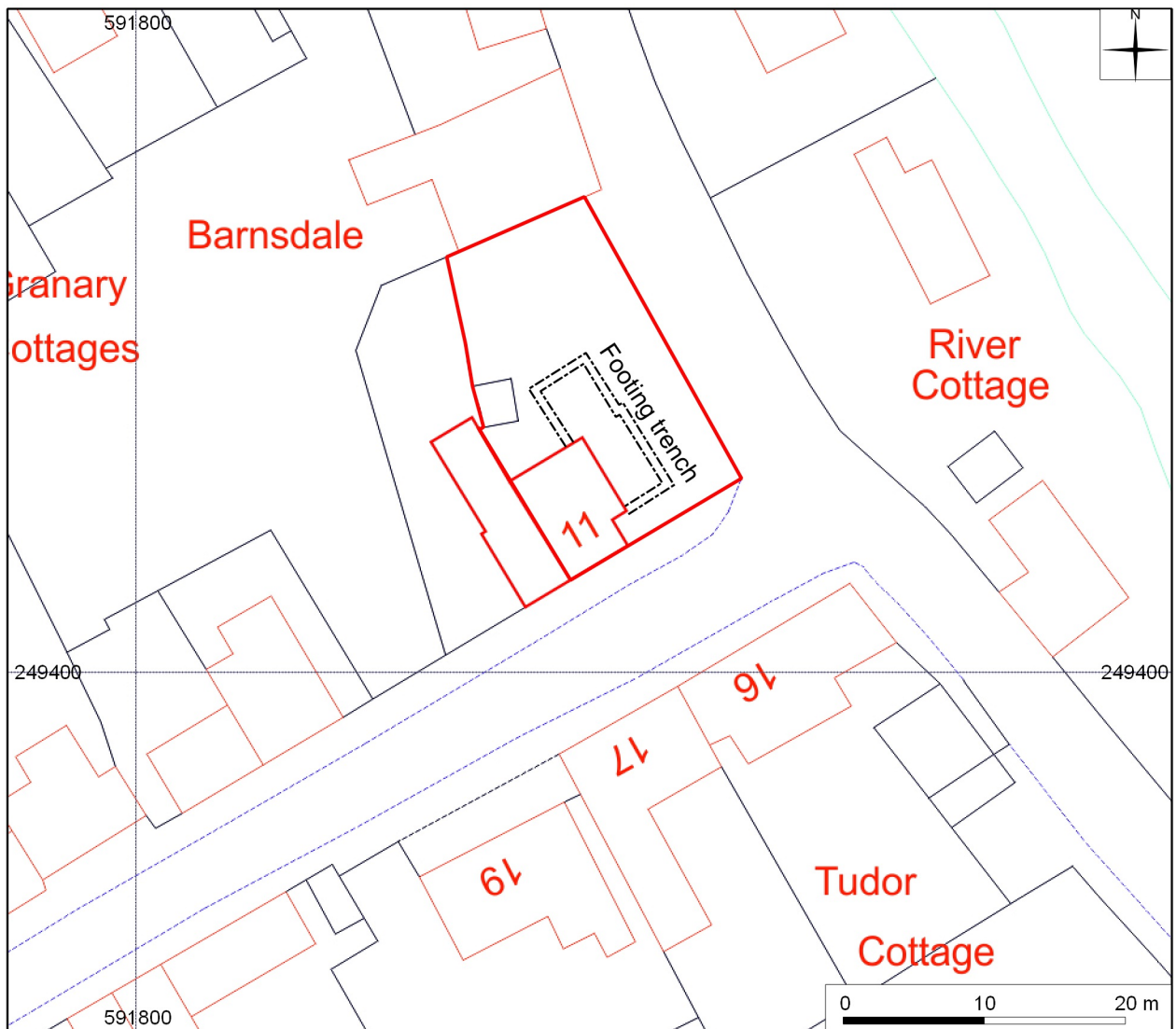
1.3 Archaeological Background

The Site is situated within the area of archaeological interest defined for the medieval town of Lavenham in the County Historic Environment Record. The 1st Edition 1: 2500 Ordnance Survey map of 1885 does not show any building at the Site’s location, however, and a well is marked on the plot on the 1904 1: 2500 OS map. An evaluation in 2010 *c.* 220m south-west of the Site identified a ditch pre-dating the main medieval boundaries and street alignments of the town, but this feature only contained two prehistoric struck flints with no further dating evidence (Stirk 2010).



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Figure 1. Site location

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation indicated in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains;

And in particular:

- to record any evidence associated with the history of Lavenham, particularly in the medieval and early post-medieval periods.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

An archaeologist would be present on Site during the course of any groundwork that had the potential to reveal or disturb archaeological remains, including any reduction in ground level, excavations for services and any additional intrusive works.

Any archaeological deposits, features or other archaeological remains such as a concentration of artefacts would be cleaned by hand and would have written, drawn and photographic records made of them. Where archaeological features were exposed during any reduction in ground level but were otherwise unaffected, these would only be recorded through written descriptions and plans, whilst any surface finds would be retained. Where archaeological features or remains would be impacted by any groundwork, then sufficient excavation work would be done to date, characterise and record the remains. Any variations to this would be agreed with the Suffolk County Archaeological Service, on behalf of the local planning authority

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work would be carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008).

3.2 Methodology

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings produced where appropriate.

4 RESULTS

On the first watching brief visit to the Site on the 8th May 2012, the ground work on the Site had to be halted after only the turf and topsoil had been removed, as written notification of such ground work had to be provided five days in advance. When ground work resumed on the 15th May, a JMHS archaeologist monitored the machine

excavation of the footings trench, which was carried out using a small tracked 1.5 tonne 360-degree mini-digger equipped with a 0.80m wide toothless ditching bucket.



Figure 2. Machining the footings trench on Site on the 15th May 2012, looking south-west towards the existing building and Bolton Street.

The footings trench was 0.80m wide and 1.00m deep, and was excavated at right angles to and parallel with the existing walls of the property (Fig. 1). The topsoil was up to 0.20m thick prior to reduction, and consisted of very dark grey-brown clayey or silty loam. This was above a subsoil layer up to 0.30m thick comprising mottled dark orange-brown silty sand, which in turn was situated above the natural undisturbed subsoil of orange brown clayey sand and gravel.



Figure 3. Representative section of the footings trench.

The area of the extension was heavily disturbed by roots, earlier service trenches and two brick-lined soakaways. The topsoil contained modern brick and tile fragments, modern metal objects such as corroded nails and door hinges, in addition to late 19th and 20th century ceramics and glass bottle fragments, none of which were retained. Some worked flints were identified, however, although only as unstratified finds within the topsoil. No archaeological features or deposits were identified.

5 FINDS

5.1 Flint by David Gilbertson

Two struck flints and one thermally fractured piece were recovered from the topsoil (Table 1). Although these may represent a portion of a wider a sparse scatter they were not associated with any subsoil features.

All pieces were of dark brown-grey flint, the thermally fractured piece shows signs of a pale grey patina forming. It is difficult to give a date to such a small assemblage, although the flake technology may suggest a later prehistoric date. This assemblage is not worthy of retention for museum archive.

Table 1. Worked Flint

Artefact	L (mm)	W (mm)	B (mm)	Notes
Uncorticated Flake	25	20	5	
Uncorticated Flake	13	12	1	fragment
Thermal fractured	22	12	10	fragment

6 DISCUSSION

No archaeological features or deposits were recorded during the watching brief. Most artefacts identified were late 19th or 20th century pottery sherds, mainly glazed porcelain, in addition to modern brick and tile fragments, all as unstratified topsoil finds. No buildings are shown on the Site on the 1885 1st Edition Ordnance Survey map. Two worked flints were also identified, but these too were unstratified, although they do hint at prehistoric activity in the vicinity.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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