

**Downs Garage, Southgate Street,
Long Melford, Suffolk**

Planning application: DC/20/04906

HER Ref: LMD 360

Archaeological Evaluation Report

(© John Newman BA MCIFA, 10 Fitzgerald Road, Bramford, Ipswich, IP8 4AA)

(July, 2022)

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Site details for HER

Name: Downs Garage, Southgate Street, Long Melford, Suffolk, CO10 9HU

Client: Willow Walk Homes

Planning authority: Babergh DC

Planning application refs: DC/20/04906

Development: Erection of 9 dwellings

Date of fieldwork: 26 May, 2022

HER ref: LMD 360

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-505154

Grid ref: TL 86104 4460

Site area: c2000m²

Recent land use: Former garage with extensive ground disturbance from removal of fuel tanks

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Summary: Long Melford, Downs Garage, Southgate Street (LMD 360, TL 8610 4460) evaluation trenching for a 9 dwelling development at a former garage site at the southern end of the major Roman period site at Long Melford and adjacent to a Roman period road line indicated recent major ground disturbance from the removal of fuel tanks and associated garage features and the two evaluation trenches confirmed this truncation of deposits and no archaeological features or finds were revealed. (John Newman Archaeological Services for Willow Walk Homes).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 Willow Walk Homes commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological evaluation works for a planned 9 dwelling development (see Fig. 1) that had gained consent under planning application DC/20/04906. The evaluation requirements were set by Mr J Rolfe of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service (SCCAS) with the aim of gaining a representative sample by trial trenching of the planned development area within the site. The Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological evaluation (see Appendix II) was subsequently prepared by JNAS in order to allow the trenching to go ahead and be reported on before any other ground works are undertaken in relation to this development though extensive ground disturbance had already been undertaken to remove fuel tanks. This development concerns the proposal as outlined above at the former Downs Garage site, Southgate Street, Long Melford.

1.2 In addition to being one of the well known 'wool' towns in the southern part of Suffolk which prospered in the later medieval period, as evidenced by the large number of listed buildings and large church, Long Melford was also a substantial local centre in the Roman period, with good evidence of an earlier later Iron Age origin, with this site being in the southern part of the historic settlement. The Downs Garage site is located at the southern part, and more substantial, part of Long Melford on the eastern side of Southgate Street which broadly runs along the line of the main Roman period road that ran through the settlement on a north-east to south-west alignment. To the east of the site a former embanked railway line runs on a north-east to south-west alignment. Recent use of the site has been as a garage and extensive remediation work has been carried out to remove fuel tanks and contaminated ground particularly in the western and central parts of the site leaving only the northern and eastern fringes of the area being potentially undisturbed.

1.3 The British Geological Survey describes the drift deposits as Head with a mixture of clay, silt and gravel at c30m OD.

1.4 Archaeological interest in this development was therefore generated by its location on the southern edge of a site described in the County Historic Environment Record (HER) as being on the southern edge of a major Roman period settlement (HER LMD 172) and adjacent to a Roman period road (HER LMD 031) with a nearby site (HER 082) having revealed Roman period features. Therefore this site had a high potential to contain deposits of Roman date, albeit in a disturbed state, and an evaluation by trial trenching was required to examine and characterise any such deposits prior to ground works starting.

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 The development area was trenched to a plan agreed with SCCAS (see Fig. 2), in the eastern and northern parts of the site where recent ground disturbance was less obvious, using a medium sized 360 machine equipped with a 1500mm flat

bucket which was under archaeological supervision at all times and any indistinct areas were hand cleaned as necessary to improve clarity with the trenches being 1.80m wide.

2.2 The sides and base of trenches and the upcast spoil were examined visually and scanned with a metal detector. Site visibility for features and finds is considered to have been good throughout the evaluation which was undertaken under dry and sunny weather conditions. At the end of the evaluation the location of the trenches were plotted from nearby mapped features and as the works progressed a full photographic record in digital format (see Appendix I) was taken.

3. Results

3.1 The relevant details for the evaluation trenches are summarised in the table below (see also Fig. 2 & Appendix I):

Trench	Orientation	Length (m)	Topsoil depth (mm)	Subsoil depth (mm)	Drift geology	Archaeological/natural features & finds
1	East-west	15	350	1100 mid brown sand	Pale orangish brown silty sand	One small pit containing brick debris of 20 th century date was revealed at the western end of the trench, all of the stray finds in the upcast spoil were brick and tile fragments of recent date
2	Northeast-southwest	15	100	1100 mid brown sand mixed with recent brick and tile debris	As T1	No features, modern material to a depth of 1000mm+
		30m (54m ²)	100-350	1100		One small pit of 20 th century date and only recent brick and tile fragments as stray finds

Table 1: Trench details

3.2 As outlined in table 1 above the two trenches confirmed the extensive ground disturbance caused by recent use of the site as a garage with associated features and buildings with 19th to 20th century brick and tile fragments to a depth of 1000mm+. The only feature revealed was a small pit containing brick fragments of 20th century date at the western end of trench 1.

4. Conclusion

4.1 Though on the southern edge of the major Roman period settlement at Long Melford and close to a Roman period road line no evidence was revealed for activity of this date. In addition more of the site than had already been perceived had been subject to recent ground disturbance in relation to structures of later 19th to 20th century date. Therefore while the Roman period settlement may have extended into this area any evidence for this would have been removed. Also the lack of evidence for the Roman period road line suggests that this runs directly under the present Southgate Street adjacent to west.

4.2 From this lack of archaeological deposits on a heavily disturbed former garage site it is recommended that no further investigations should be required at the former Downs Garage, Southgate Street, Long Melford.

Archive- to be deposited with the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service under the HER ref: LMD 360.

Disclaimer- any opinions regarding the need for further archaeological work in relation to this proposed development are those of the authors alone. Formal comment regarding the need for further work must be sought from the official Archaeological Advisors to the relevant Planning Authority.

(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to Martin for his skilled digger operation)

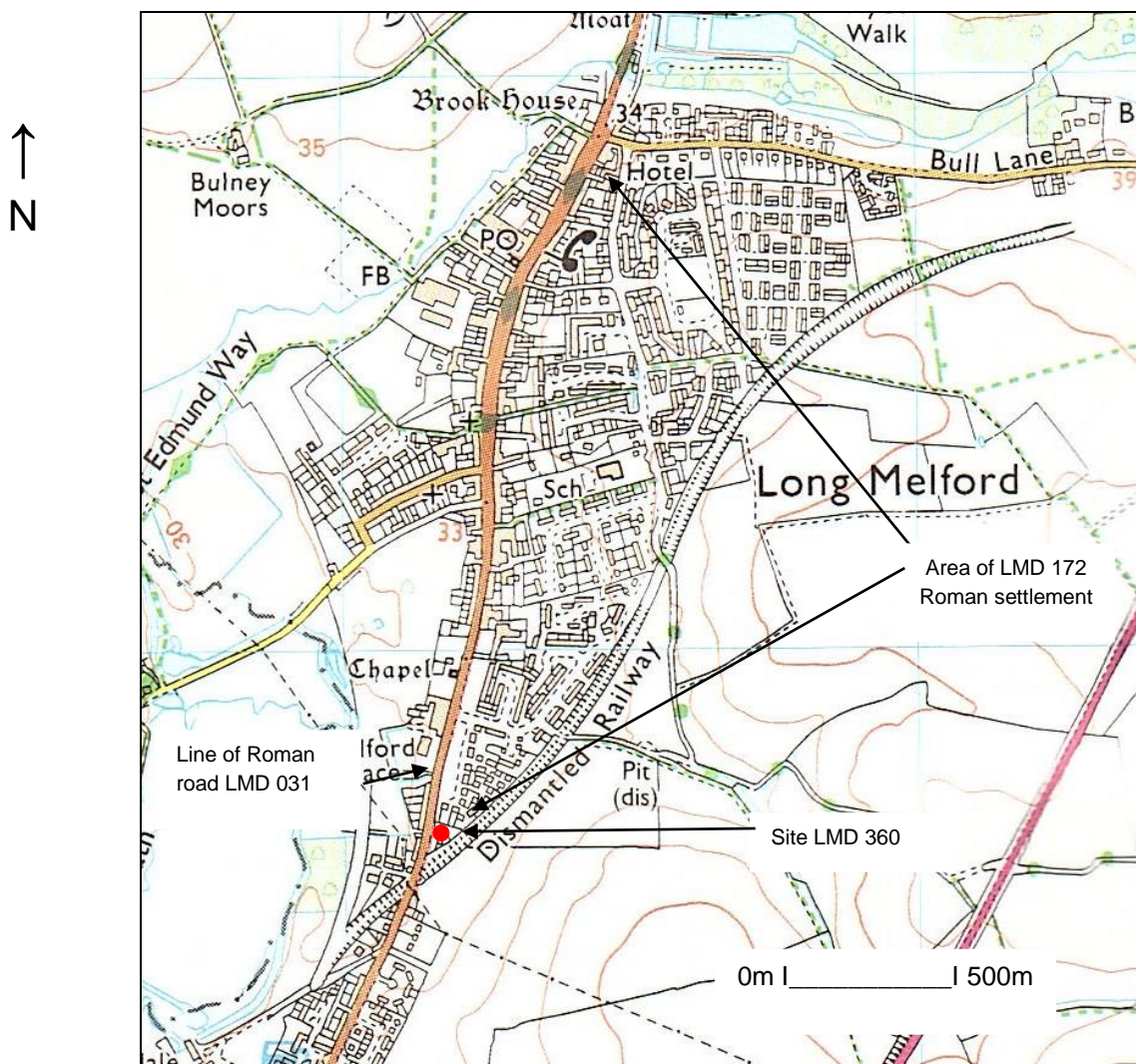


Fig. 1: Site location

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Fig. 2: Location of evaluation trenches
 (Southern and central areas heavily disturbed by removal of fuel tanks, light blue planned new footprint areas)

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Appendix I- Images



General view from south



Trench 1 from east



Trench 1 deposit profile with 20th century pit



Trench 2 from north



Trench 2 deposit profile

**Downs Garage, Southgate Street,
Long Melford, Suffolk**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for
Archaeological Evaluation**

Site details

Name: Downs Garage, Southgate Street, Long Melford, Suffolk, CO10 9HU

Client: Willow Walk Homes

Local planning authority: Babergh DC

Planning application refs: DC/20/04906

Proposed development: Erection of 9 dwellings

Proposed date for evaluation: tbc

Brief ref: SCCAS Brief DC_20_04906 Downs Garage Southgate Street Long Melford

Grid ref: TL 861 446

HER ref: tbc (? Early-mid April)

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-505154

Area: c2000m²

Current site use: Former garage

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3. Archaeological & Historical Background
4. Aims of the Site Evaluation
5. Methodology
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Proposed location of trial trenches

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1. Introduction

1.1 Willow Walk Homes have commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological site evaluation for a 9 dwelling development that has received consent to go ahead under outline application DC/20/04906 following extensive remediation works to remove fuel tanks and contaminated ground. This written scheme of investigation (WSI) details the background to the archaeological requirements for planning application DC/20/04906 and how JNAS will implement the requirements of the Brief for Archaeological Evaluation set by Mr J Rolfe of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service (SCCAS). The WSI will also set out how potential risks will be mitigated and how evaluation trenches can be located in potentially undisturbed areas of the site. This overall proposed development site (PDS) concerns the construction of 9 dwellings at the former Downs Garage, Southgate Street, Long Melford.

1.2 The evaluation will be carried out to the standards set regionally in the *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (EAA Occ. Papers 14, 2003)*, locally in *Requirements for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation 2021 (Suffolk CC)* and nationally in *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014 & 2020)*.

1.3 The evaluation as detailed in this document is the first phase of a programme of archaeological investigation secured by negative condition on planning consent DC/20/04906. Where the results of the evaluation indicate the presence of heritage assets further archaeological works will be required to mitigate the impact of the development on the historic environment. The SCCAS officer will identify the type and extent of works in a new brief necessary to adequately mitigate the impact of the proposed development. All further archaeological works, as recommended by SCCAS, must be undertaken in accordance with an additional WSI, submitted and approved by SCCAS and the LPA. All further archaeological investigations must be undertaken prior to commencement of development, unless specifically referenced as monitoring of groundworks in the approved WSI.

2. Location, Topography & Geology

2.1 In addition to being one of the well-known 'wool' towns in the southern part of Suffolk which prospered in the later medieval period, as evidenced by the large number of listed buildings and large church, Long Melford was also a substantial local centre in the Roman period, with good evidence of an earlier late Iron Age origin, in the southern part of the settlement. The Downs Garage site is located at the southern part, and more substantial, part of Long Melford on the eastern side of Southgate Street which broadly runs along the line of the main Roman road that ran through the settlement on a northeast-southwest alignment. To the east of the proposed development site (PDS) a former embanked railway line runs on a north-eastern to south-western alignment. Recent use of the site has been as a garage and extensive remediation work has already been carried out to remove fuel tanks

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and contaminated ground particularly in the western and central parts of the PDS leaving only the northern and eastern fringes of the area being potentially undisturbed.

2.2 The British Geological Survey describes the drift deposits as Head with a mixture of clay, silt and gravel at c30m OD.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The relevant archaeological brief from SCCAS notes the location of the PDS within the area defined in the Historic Environment Record (HER) as the major Roman period settlement (HER LMD 172) as being adjacent or on the line of a Roman (HER LMD 031) that broadly runs along the line of Southgate Street and near a site (HER LMD 082) where Roman features have been recorded. Therefore 'as a result, there is high potential for the discovery of below-ground heritage assets of archaeological importance within this area, and groundworks associated with the development have the potential to damage or destroy any archaeological remains which exist.' However the PDS as outlined is extensively disturbed to a depth of c4-6m.

A site evaluation by trial trenching prior to any further, except movement of spoil over the eastern part of the PDS, works starting is therefore required to:

- Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation within two areas which appear to be intact.
- Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence.
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

4. Aims of the Site Evaluation

4.1 As outlined in section 3 above the archaeological potential of this PDS relates to its location on the southern edge of a major Roman settlement and adjacent or over the line of a Roman road line.

5. Methodology

5.1 The proposed development is for the construction of 9 dwellings. To inform the results of the evaluation if archaeological deposits are revealed a search will be commissioned from the County HER for the area within 250m of the PDS and the relevant invoice number will be included in the report. Ten days notice of the

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evaluation starting will be given to SCCAS so a monitoring visit can be agreed and ecological work will be carried out in advance to translocate any protected species. Contact will also be maintained with SCCAS as the evaluation progresses and through the post-excavation study and work with regard to the results from the site, the finds and any samples and the main report preparation.

5.2 The Brief required 4 x 15m trenches with locations outlined, however only the northern and eastern trenches are across potentially undisturbed areas as indicated below, these will be 1.8m wide. This will be undertaken using a wide toothless ditching bucket on a suitably sized machine operated by an experienced driver. The machine will be closely supervised by an experienced archaeologist as the overburden is removed in shallow spits to the top of any archaeological deposits that are present, where hand investigation will start, or to expose the underlying drift geology which will be further hand cleaned and examined as required. The spoil will be stored adjacent to the excavated trench with top and sub soil kept separate to allow for subsequent sequential backfilling. No trenches will be backfilled until the relevant officer at SCCAS has been consulted and should any modification to the trench layout be required due to any unforeseen circumstances, such as local services, then SCCAS will be contacted immediately. A metal detector search will be carried out by an experienced operator at all stages of the evaluation including before the trenches are opened (see specialists section below) for both ferrous and non-ferrous finds and between the trenches though recent debris may make this search problematic. The up cast spoil will also be closely examined for unstratified artefacts as evidence for past activity in past rural areas in particular is often as evident via artefact scatters as by undisturbed archaeological deposits. Allowance has been made for one member staff on site for one day with additional detector survey for half a day plus a machine and operator for one to two days to cover the opening of the trenches plus back-filling once full approval for the latter has been gained from SCCAS following a site monitoring visit. If required further investigation of the trenches will be carried out in particular following a SCCAS monitoring visit and examination of the exposed deposits. Any requirement to vary the related brief requirements and this WSI will only be carried out following communication with SCCAS.

5.3 Site records will be made under a continuous and unique numbering system of contexts under an overall HER number obtained from the Suffolk CC HER beforehand. All contexts will be numbered and finds recorded by context. Conventions compatible with the county HER will be used throughout the monitoring. Site plans will be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and sections at 1:10 or 1:20 (all on plastic drawing film) and related to OS map cover. Sections will be levelled to a datum OD. A photographic record in high resolution digital images will be made of the site and exposed features (using a Lumix DMC-FZ5 camera with allowance for .jpeg and higher definition .tif images depending on what is revealed).

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5.4 As necessary and to define archaeological deposits exposed surfaces will be trowelled clean before appropriate hand investigation and recording. Exposed archaeological features will be sampled at standard levels with care being taken to cause minimum disturbance to the site consistent with evaluation to a level adequate to properly form a subsequent mitigation strategy. Significant features such as solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post holes (where fills are sampled) will have their integrity maintained, including any road surface in the evaluation stage (and during backfilling) as will any evidence of pottery production which will be sampled by hand so it can be characterised while left in situ when revealed. Otherwise for discrete, contained, features, sampling will be at 50%- possibly rising to 100% if requested, and 1m wide sampling slots across linear features. These features will be hand investigated unless agreed with SCCAS that larger/more recent features can be partially machine/hand investigated. If human burial evidence is revealed the SCCAS Officer will be informed and the clear presumption is to preserve such remains in situ with minimum disturbance during this evaluation stage depending on SCCAS advice if lifting remains appears to be sensible at this stage. If this is not possible then a Ministry of Justice licence will be obtained prior to full on site recording (total 100% sampling if a cremation deposit) and removal of the remains followed by examination by the relevant specialist and possibly scientific dating. If human remains do have to be recorded, removed from site and reported on then these works will add an additional cost to the evaluation works which may involve radiocarbon dating (in this case the likelihood of revealing human burial evidence is assessed as being low given the recent land use).

5.5 All finds will be collected and processed unless any variation is agreed with the relevant SCCAS Officer. Finds will be assessed by recognised period specialists and their interpretation will form an integral part of the overall report. Finds will be stored according to ICON guidelines with specialist advice/treatment sought for fragile ones. Every effort will be made to gain the deposit of the site finds to the SCCAS Store under their relevant HER code and site numbering for future reference. If this is not possible then the SCCAS Officer will be consulted over any requirements for additional recording (which may have an additional cost implication). Any discard policy will be discussed and agreed with the relevant SCCAS Officer and any finds that qualify under the Treasure Act will be reported to the local Finds Liaison Officer within 14 days.

5.6 Where appropriate palaeoenvironmental samples will be taken for processing and assessment by a specialist conversant with regional archaeological standards and research agendas. The sampling, processing and assessment will follow the guidelines as detailed in *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation* (English Heritage, 2011). In accordance with standard practice bulk samples of 40 litres (or 100% of the deposit where less) will be taken from a representative cross section of archaeological deposits of all periods (respecting defined fills within features), in

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consultation with the relevant SCCAS Officer (and the Historic England Regional Scientific Advisor (RSA) if the deposits merit more targeted advice) including deposits that cannot be immediately dated by their artefact content, so the state of preservation and full archaeological and palaeoenvironmental potential of the deposits can be assessed and any further sampling, should further field work take place, be systematically planned and fully costed. Archaeological deposits of all types may reveal valuable data through the processing and assessment of samples with high priority features including the primary fills of pits, wells and cesspits, layers of middens, occupation surfaces and structural features as well as other discrete activity areas, contents of hearths, ovens, and other craft related or industrial structures. In addition more generalised settlement and land use features such as ditches may also yield valuable and informative data when sampling is undertaken systematically as the sum of all the assessment results can add considerably to the interpretation of a site and its landscape. Through an integrated study of all the data recovered from the evaluation the results from the assessment of the samples will be reviewed in terms of:

- What is the quality and state of preservation of charred plant remains, mineralised plant and animal related remains, small vertebrates and industrial residues such as evidence for iron working (contributing to the fullest interpretation of the evaluation results and to aid the planning of any further field work- if any RC dates are required for features containing suitable material but no easily dateable finds then this will incur an additional cost).
- What is the concentration of macro-remains (to inform sampling strategy in any further field work), in particular how might bulk sampling inform the interpretation of burial deposits.
- Can any patterning or similarities/differences be ascertained between deposits from different periods represented on site, similarly can any useful comparisons be made with undated and unphased deposits (to aid interpretation of the evaluation results and help in the study of undated deposits which may otherwise be overlooked and which may via sampling yield material for RC dating)
- Do waterlogged deposits exist on site, if so is there potential for palaeoenvironmental data from preserved insects or pollen and do such deposits contain organic material suitable for RC dating from samples taken as advised by the relevant soil specialist (who would also coordinate the assessment for pollen and insect remains), the RSA will also be consulted in such cases in conjunction with the relevant SCCAS Officer. Incremental column samples will be taken should waterlogged deposits be revealed in close consultation with the evaluation soils specialist with 10-20 litre sample sizes which will be sub-sampled for preserved pollen, insects, diatoms, preserved parasite eggs etc. If waterlogged wood is encountered it will ideal

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to leave in situ, if it has to be lifted it will be packed while wet in black polythene and stored at 5C until it can be transferred to a specialist for species identification, assessment and potential for RC dating is undertaken (should RC dating be required in the evaluation on such deposits this will incur an additional cost and will take time to obtain, examination of the topographic location of the site indicates that the presence of waterlogged deposits is unlikely unless deep deposits are revealed).

- Deep blanket type deposits resulting from both natural and human derived actions and events can yield valuable land use and palaeoenvironmental information. In particular such deposits can form at the base of a slope, if located in the evaluation the relevant SCCAS Officer and RSA will be consulted over monolith sampling and assessment by the relevant evaluation specialist (the composition of such deposits may give information on past land use in the area through a study of the soil matrix notwithstanding additional data if it is waterlogged)

5.7 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared consistent with the principles of *MoRPHE* (and the guidelines in the Archaeological Archives Forum: a guide to best practice 2007). This archive, including the digital content, will be deposited with the Suffolk CC HER within 3 months of working finishing on site under the relevant HER number and following the guidelines outlined in '*Archaeological Archives in Suffolk- Guidelines for preparation and deposition*' (SCCAS Conservation Team revised version 2019). As necessary the site digital archive will deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) within the agreed allowance for the monitoring and reporting works.

5.8 The evaluation report will be consistent with the principles of *MoRPHE* and this report will summarise the methodology employed and relate the archaeological record directly to the aims of this WSI and section 4 above in particular. The report will give an objective account of the deposits and stratigraphy recorded and finds recovered with an inventory of the latter. The report will include an assessment of palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features in relation to both dated and undated features and in terms of patterning across the site. Any developments during the site and reporting works will be communicated to SCCAS.

5.9 Any interpretation of the evaluation will be clearly separated from the objective account of the evaluation and its results and the results will be discussed with the relevant SCCAS Officer at an early stage in the reporting process following reporting on the day of the immediately apparent conclusions. The report will give a clear statement regarding the results of the site evaluation in relation to both the more detailed aims in section 4 above and their significance in the context of local HER records and of the Regional Research Framework (EAA Occ. Papers 3, 8 & 24, 1997, 2000 & 2011). There will be no further work on site until the evaluation results have been assessed and the SCCAS Officer has considered whether further

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archaeological works are required if this application receives consent. The report may give an opinion regarding the necessity for further evaluation work as appropriate. A draft copy of the report will be presented to SCCAS following completion of the site works. Once accepted a bound hard copy will be provided for the County HER with a digital version on disc. As required the site evaluation will be registered on the OASIS online archaeological record followed by submission of the final draft in .pdf format. An HER summary sheet will be completed and a summary prepared of any positive results for inclusion in the annual PSIAH round-up.

6. Risk Assessment

6.1 Protective clothing will be worn on site (hard hat, high visibility vest/coat, steel-toe cap boots, and ear muffs if required). A safe working method will be agreed with the machine operator for excavation of the trenches and examination of the up cast spoil while at the same time allowing efficient use of plant. Suitable clothing will be available to mitigate against extremes of weather. COVID guideline requirements will be adhered to with social distancing, no sharing of equipment and separate rest areas.

6.2 Vehicles will be safely parked away from work areas and lines of access.

6.3 Prior to evaluation work starting on site the client has been consulted with regard to any potential contamination remaining at the site. No overhead services impinge on the trench locations and the client will be consulted regarding any possible underground services. Gloves and hand wash/wipes be available and any information on possible ground contamination revealed during the evaluation will be passed to finds and environmental specialists.

6.4 A fully charged mobile phone will be carried and a first aid kit will be taken to site.

6.5 It is unlikely that any trench plus excavated feature depth will go below c1/1.3m from the present ground level. If any excavations need to go deeper measures such as stepping in the sides will be employed.

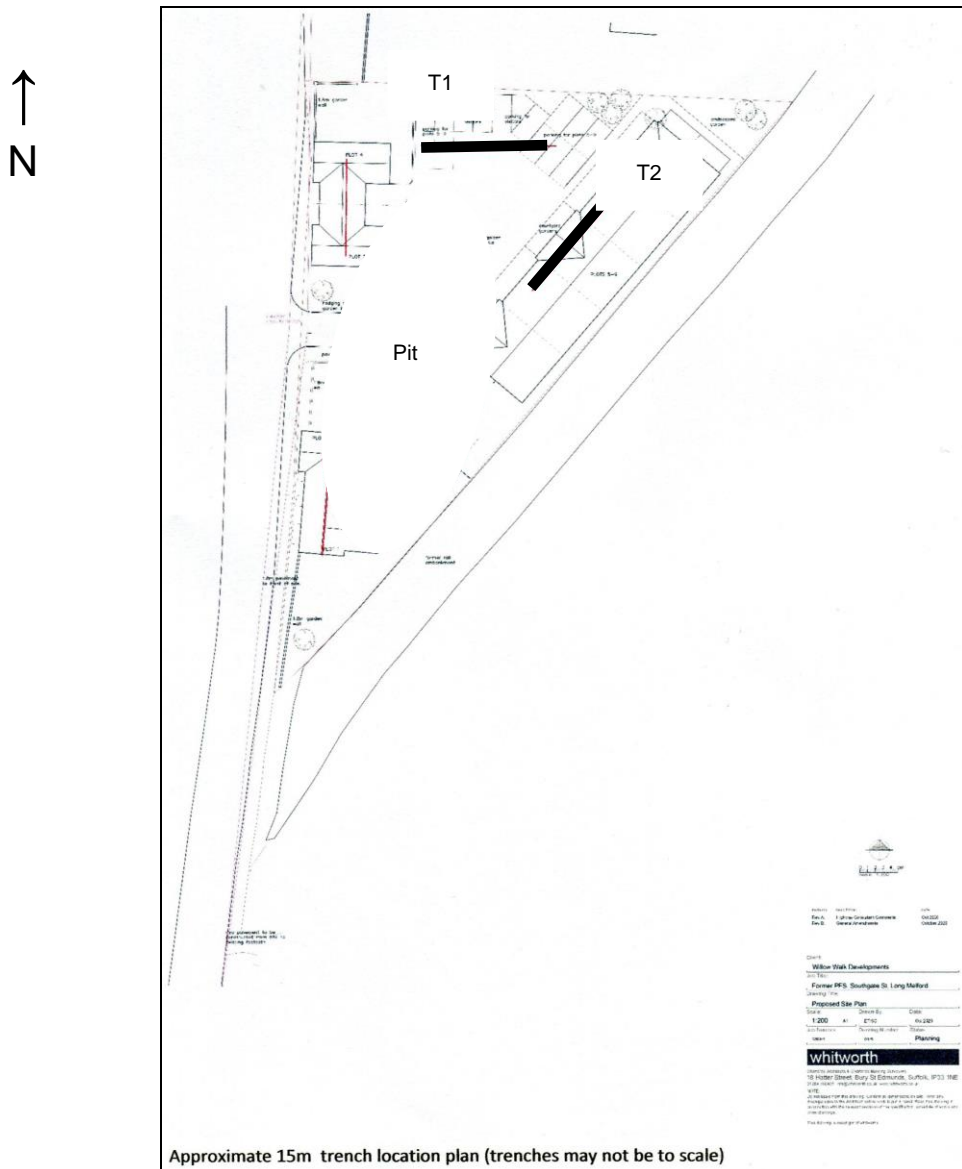
6.6 JNAS holds full insurance cover for archaeological site works from the specialist provider Towergate Risk Solutions covering Public & Products Liability, details can be supplied on request.

7. Specialists

Conservation:	Conservation Services
Faunal remains:	J Curl (Sylvanus Archaeology)
Human remains:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Metal detecting:	J Armes (experienced freelance)
Palaeoenvironmental samples:	V Fryer (Freelance)

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Soils specialist	tbc
Pre-historic flint:	S Bates (Freelance)
Pre-historic pottery:	S Percival (Freelance)
Post Roman ceramics & CBM:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Roman period small finds:	N Crummy (Freelance)
Roman period ceramics:	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Medieval coins:	M Allen (Fitzwilliam Museum)
Post Roman small finds:	JNAS



Proposed location of trial trench (2 x 15m)

Summary for johnnewm1-505154

OASIS ID (UID)	johnnewm1-505154
Project Name	Evaluation at Downs Garage Southgate Street Long Melford
Sitename	Downs Garage Southgate Street Long Melford
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	John Newman Archaeological Services
Project Dates	26-May-2022 - 26-May-2022
Location	Downs Garage Southgate Street Long Melford NGR : TL 86100 44600 LL : 52.0684974215768, 0.713730488735364 12 Fig : 586100,244600
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Suffolk District : Babergh Parish : Long Melford
Project Methodology	Evaluation trenching
Project Results	Long Melford, Downs Garage, Southgate Street (LMD 360, TL 8610 4460) evaluation trenching for a 9 dwelling development at a former garage site at the southern end of the major Roman period site at Long Melford and adjacent to a Roman period road line indicated recent major ground disturbance from the removal of fuel tanks and associated garage features and the two evaluation trenches confirmed this truncation of deposits and no archaeological features or finds were revealed.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	Suffolk HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	
HER Identifiers	HER Monument No - LMD 360
Archives	