

**Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill,
Monks Eleigh, Suffolk**

Planning application: B/13/01004

HER Ref: MKE 035

Archaeological Evaluation Report

(© John Newman BA MIFA, 2 Pearsons Place, Henley, Ipswich, IP6 0RA)

(April 2014)

(Tel: 01473 832896 Email: johnnewman2@btinternet.com)

Site details for HER

Name: Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk

Clients: Monks Eleigh Village Hall Trust

Local planning authority: Babergh DC

Planning application ref: B/13/01004

Development: Construction of new village hall & creation of associated car parking

Date of fieldwork: 31 March, 2014

HER Ref: MKE 035

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-175644

Grid ref: TL 9652 4788

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Summary: Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill (MKE 035, TL 9652 4788) evaluation trenching for a planned new village hall with associated car parking did not reveal any archaeological features save two field drains of 19th early 20th century date with the few stray finds from the upcast spoil ranging in date from the Roman period to the early 20th century (John Newman Archaeological Services for Monks Eleigh Village Hall Trust).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 The Monks Eleigh Village Hall Trust commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological evaluation works for a new village hall with associated car parking development that has recently received consent to go ahead in the north-eastern quarter of the Playing Field on Church Hill, Monks Eleigh (see Fig. 1). The evaluation requirements were set out in a Brief, following the granting of planning application B/13/01004, set by Dr J Tipper of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service (SCCAS) with the aim of gaining a representative sample by trial trenching of the development areas concerned. The Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological evaluation (see Appendix II) was subsequently prepared by JNAS in order to gain a conditional discharge and allow the trenching to go ahead before any other ground works were undertaken.

1.2 Monks Eleigh parish lies to the east of Lavenham in an area where the local soils are dominated by the heavier boulder clay or till deposits of central Suffolk. The planned new village hall site is located c60m north-west of the parish church, where a number of listed buildings indicate the potential for medieval and earlier Post medieval period activity, in a landscape historically characterised by such small concentrations of settlement close to churches with other farms and cottages being scattered along roads and lanes and around areas of common grazing historically called greens or tyes. Topographically the new village hall site has a southerly aspect at 58m OD with the land dropping off gently towards the south and, some 250m distant, an eastward flowing tributary of the River Brett. At the time of the evaluation the new village hall site was soft ground under grass cover.

1.3 Archaeological interest in this planned development was in part generated by its proximity to the historic core of the village around St Peter's Church and in part by its location close to archaeological sites listed in the Historic Environment Record (HER) where evidence for Roman period activity has been revealed c120m to the south (HER MKE 004- see Fig. 2) and c160m to the west (HER MKE 028) where later Iron Age material was also recovered. The former record (HER MKE 004) is of particular note as it suggests the presence of a substantial Roman period building(s) as tiles and floor tesserae were noted both prior to 1930 (Northcote, 1930, 2) and in c1949 when new housing was being constructed at Church Field.

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 The c 1200m² area of the proposed new village hall site and associated car parking was trenched to a previously agreed plan (see Fig. 2) using a medium sized mini-digger 360 machine equipped with a 1500mm flat bucket which was under archaeological supervision at all times with any indistinct areas being hand cleaned for better clarity.

2.2 The sides and base of the trenches and the upcast spoil were examined visually and scanned with a metal detector for any finds as the evaluation progressed and any indistinct areas or potential features were investigated by hand. Site visibility for features and finds is considered to have been good throughout the evaluation which was undertaken under dry and sunny conditions. At the end of the evaluation the location of the trenches was 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 In this case the results are most easily summarised as in the table below as little of archaeological interest was revealed (see also Fig. 2 & Appendix I):

Trench	Orientation	Length (m)	Topsoil depth (mm)	Subsoil depth (mm)	Drift geology	Archaeological/ natural features & finds
1	North-west/ south-east	25	200	200 of mid brown clay subsoil	Stiff very pale brown clay with flints and occasional pockets of softer orange silty sand	No features except a ceramic field drain of 19 th /E20 th C date, US finds- 1 small (4g) RB greyware sherd , 4 RB tile frags (68g), 1 iron double buckle of 18 th /19 th C date (6g), also a few iron nails of uncertain date
2	North-east/ south-west	25	200	200 (as T1)	As T1	Only feature a second ceramic field drain, US finds- 1 small abraded RB greyware sherd (2g), 3 RB tile frags (50g), 1 Cu alloy cauldron leg frag (150g) of Lmed/early Pmed date, also a few nails of uncertain date
		50 (90m ²)	200	200		

Table 1: Trench details

3.2 As indicated in the table above the only features revealed in the two relatively shallow trenches were a pair of ceramic field drains of 19th or earlier 20th century date and, as anticipated, the locally occurring glaciofluvial deposit below 200mm of top soil and 200mm of subsoil proved to be stiff pale brown clay with flints with occasional pockets of orange silty sand. The number of stray finds recovered visually was also low with one small and abraded Roman period pottery sherd from each trench (combined weight 6g) and, in total, 7 abraded Roman tile fragments (weight 118g) from the evaluation as a whole. The metal detector search also recovered a low number of finds with the only ones of any note being an iron double buckle of 18th/19th century date from trench 1 and a copper alloy cauldron leg fragment of late medieval/early Post medieval date from trench 2.

4. Conclusion

4.1 While the site for the new village hall is close to what appears to be a Roman period settlement of some size and potential importance in addition to being near the parish church these evaluation results indicate that this area in the north-eastern quarter of the playing field is peripheral to the main foci of past activity. The two small Roman period pottery sherds and small number of Roman tile fragments can, in all probability, be interpreted as deriving from the scattering of domestic debris during the manuring of arable land as can the other stray finds that were recovered.

4.2 Based on the evaluation results it is recommended that no further archaeological investigations need to be carried out on the proposed site of the new village hall with associated car parking at the Playing Field, Church Hill, Monks Eleigh.

Ref.

Northcote, A F 1930 Notes on the history of Monks Eleigh

Archive- to be deposited with the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service under the HER ref. MKE 035.

Disclaimer- any opinions regarding the need for further archaeological work in relation to this proposed development are those of the author's 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 Richard Bines and to the machine operator, Dan, for their close cooperation, and to Laure Bonner and James Armes for their assistance during the evaluation)

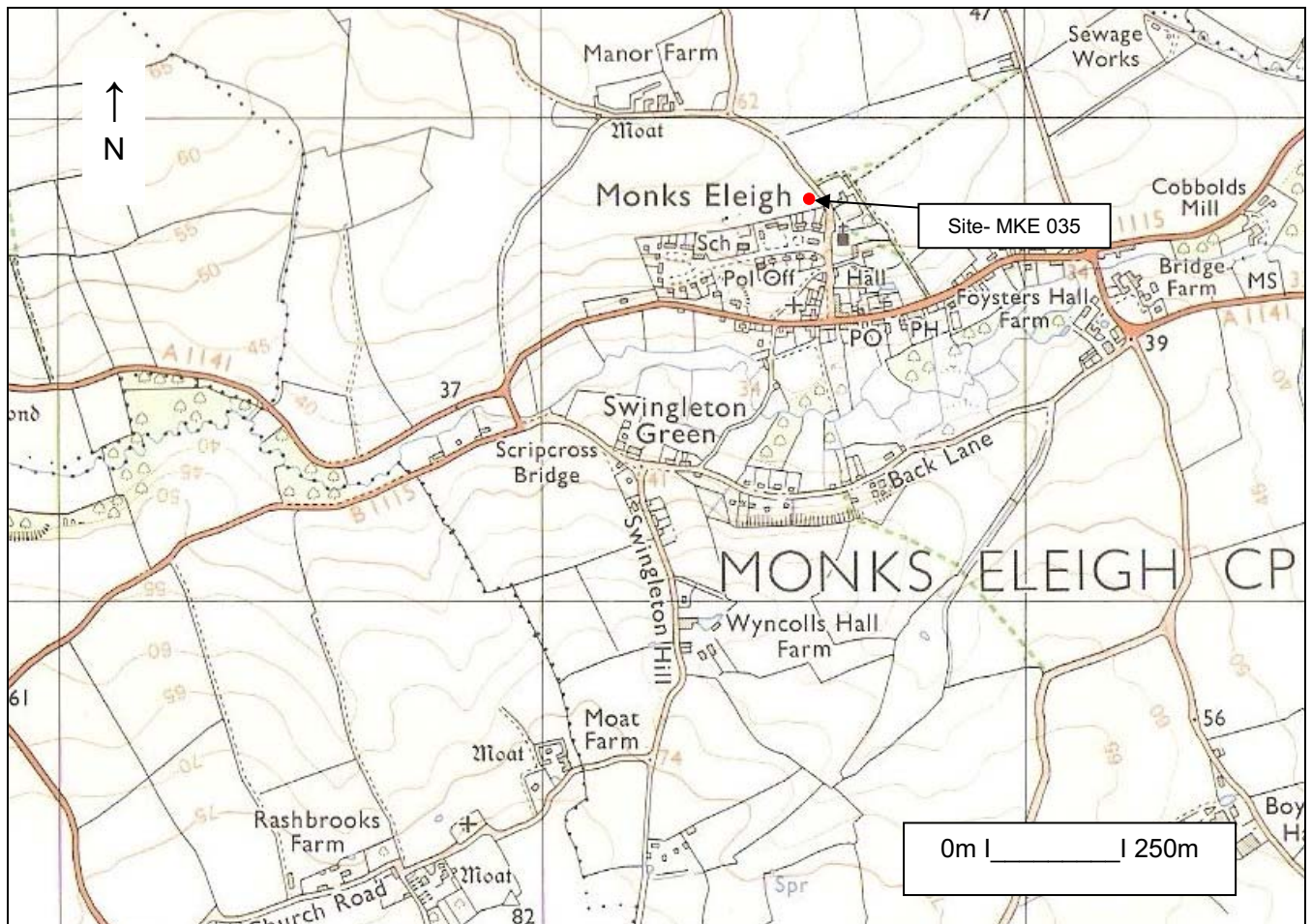


Fig. 1: Site location

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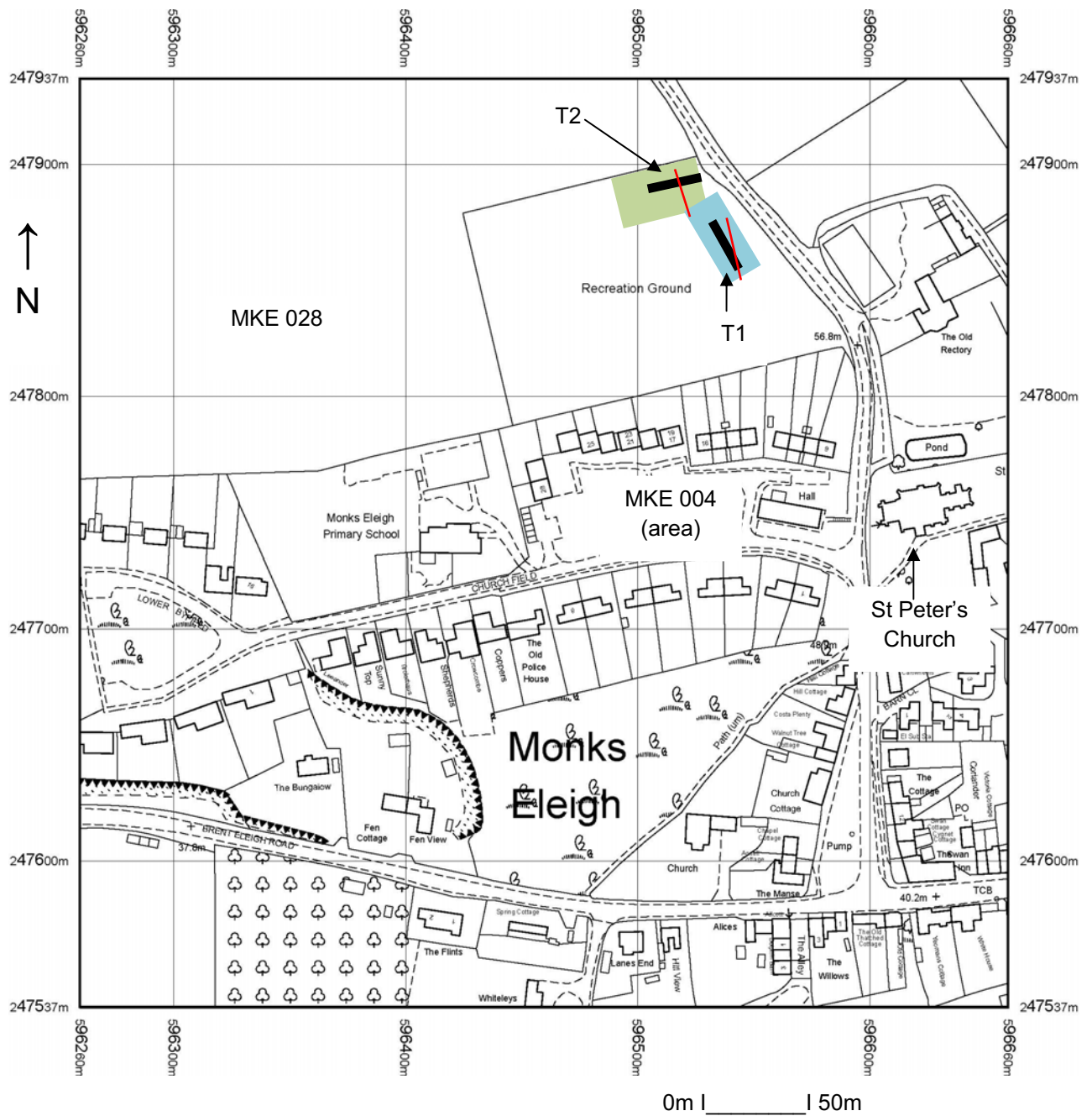


Fig. 2: Location of evaluation trenches
 (light blue- new village hall site, light green- new car park area, red- field drains)
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Appendix I- Images



General view from south



Trench 1 from south



Trench 2 from west



Trench 1 deposit profile



Trench 2 deposit profile

**Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill,
Monks Eleigh, Suffolk**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for
Archaeological Evaluation**

Site details

Name: Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk

Client: Monks Eleigh Village Hall Trust

Local planning authority: Babergh DC

Planning application ref: B/13/01004

Proposed development: Construction of new village hall & creation of associated car parking

Proposed date for evaluation: tbc

Brief ref: Archaeological Evaluation_Brief_Monks Eleigh Playing Field

Grid ref: TL 9656 4782

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Location, Topography & Geology
3. Archaeological & Historical Background
4. Aims of the Site Evaluation
5. Methodology
6. Risk Assessment
7. Specialists

Proposed location of trial trenches

1. Introduction

1.1 The Monks Eleigh Village Hall Trust has commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological site evaluation for the new village hall with associated car parking development that has recently received consent to go ahead. This written scheme of investigation (WSI) details the background to the archaeological requirements for planning application B/13/01004 and how JNAS will implement the requirements of the Brief for Archaeological Evaluation set by Dr J Tipper of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service (SCCAS). The WSI will also set out how potential risks will be mitigated. This proposed new village hall development site is at the Monks Eleigh Playing Field on Church Hill.

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 2011 Ver. 1.1 (Suffolk CC)* and nationally in *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Institute for Archaeologists 1994, revised 2001)*.

2. Location, Topography & Geology

2.1 Monks Eleigh parish lies to the east of Lavenham in an area where the local soils are dominated by the heavier boulder clay or till deposits of central Suffolk. The proposed development site (PDS) is located c60m north-west of the parish church, where early OS maps and a number of listed buildings indicate the potential for medieval activity, in a landscape characterised by small concentrations of settlement close to churches and general dispersed settlement along the roads and lanes and around areas of common grazing. Topographically the site has a southerly aspect at 58m OD. In general the land drops off towards the south and, some 250m distant, an eastward flowing tributary of the River Brett. At present the PDS is soft ground on the north-eastern side of the village playing field

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 To quote from the relevant Brief 'The proposed development site lies in an area of archaeological potential. The medieval parish church lies to the south of the site (recorded in the county Historic Environment Record as site MKE 007). An archaeological evaluation to the west of the playing field revealed Iron Age and Roman ditches (recorded as MKE 028). As such, there is high potential for encountering further archaeological deposits at this location, which may be damaged by any groundworks associated with the present application.' In addition the PDS is located to the west of another area (HER MKE 004) where antiquarian sources record evidence for Roman period activity. A site evaluation by trial trenching is therefore required to:

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- Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 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 main archaeological potential relates to the site's location where evidence for Roman and medieval period settlement and related activities may exist close to the historic core of the village around the parish church. The aim of the evaluation is therefore to examine the specified sample of the proposed development area with two evaluation trenches across the proposed new village hall and car parking areas under controlled conditions so, if archaeological deposits are revealed they can be sampled and characterised. With this information a strategy can then be formulated for their possible preservation in situ or, failing that, the systematic recording of these deposits and the associated working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

5. Methodology

5.1 The proposed development is for a new village hall with associated car parking on what is currently soft ground.

5.2 The Brief requires two 25m long by 1.80m wide trenches and a proposed trenching plan is included below. The trenching will be undertaken using a 1.2/1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket on a suitably sized machine operated by an experienced driver with a trench plan as set out below. 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. 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. The up cast spoil will also be closely

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examined for unstratified artefacts as evidence for past activity in rural areas in particular is often as evident via artefact scatters as by undisturbed archaeological deposits.

5.4 Site records will be made under a continuous and unique numbering system of contexts under an overall site 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 of high resolution digital images will be made of the site and exposed features.

5.5 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 (and during backfilling). Otherwise for discrete, contained, features, sampling will be at 50%- possibly rising to 100% if requested, and 1m wide sampling slots across linear features. If human burial evidence is revealed the SCCAS Officer will be informed and the clear presumption must be to preserve such remains in situ with minimum disturbance during this evaluation 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 is assessed as being low.

5.6 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.

5.7 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

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guidelines as detailed in *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis* (Murphy P L & Wiltshire P E J, 1994). 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 consultation with the relevant SCCAS Officer (and 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 on features containing suitable material but no easily dateable finds then this will incur an additional cost though this is a rare occurrence on small scale evaluations).
- 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

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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 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 be covered within the resources agreed for the first date but will take time to obtain, examination of the topographic location of the site indicates that the presence of waterlogged deposits is unlikely unless particularly deep features are present).

- 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)

5.8 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared consistent with the principles in *Management of Archaeological projects* (MAP2, and particularly Appendix 3). This archive 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 '*Deposition of Archaeological Archives in Suffolk*' (SCCAS Conservation Team 2008). As necessary the site digital archive will deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) within the agreed allowance for the evaluation and reporting works.

5.9 The evaluation report will be consistent with the principles of MAP2 (particularly Appendix 3.1 & Appendix 4.1) 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.

5.10 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

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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 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. A vector plan of the trench locations will be provided in .dxf format for inclusion in the County HER.

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.

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

6.3 Discussion with the client's agent has already confirmed that there is no known, or likely, ground contamination and the discovery of underground services is unlikely. No overhead services impinge on the trench locations. 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:

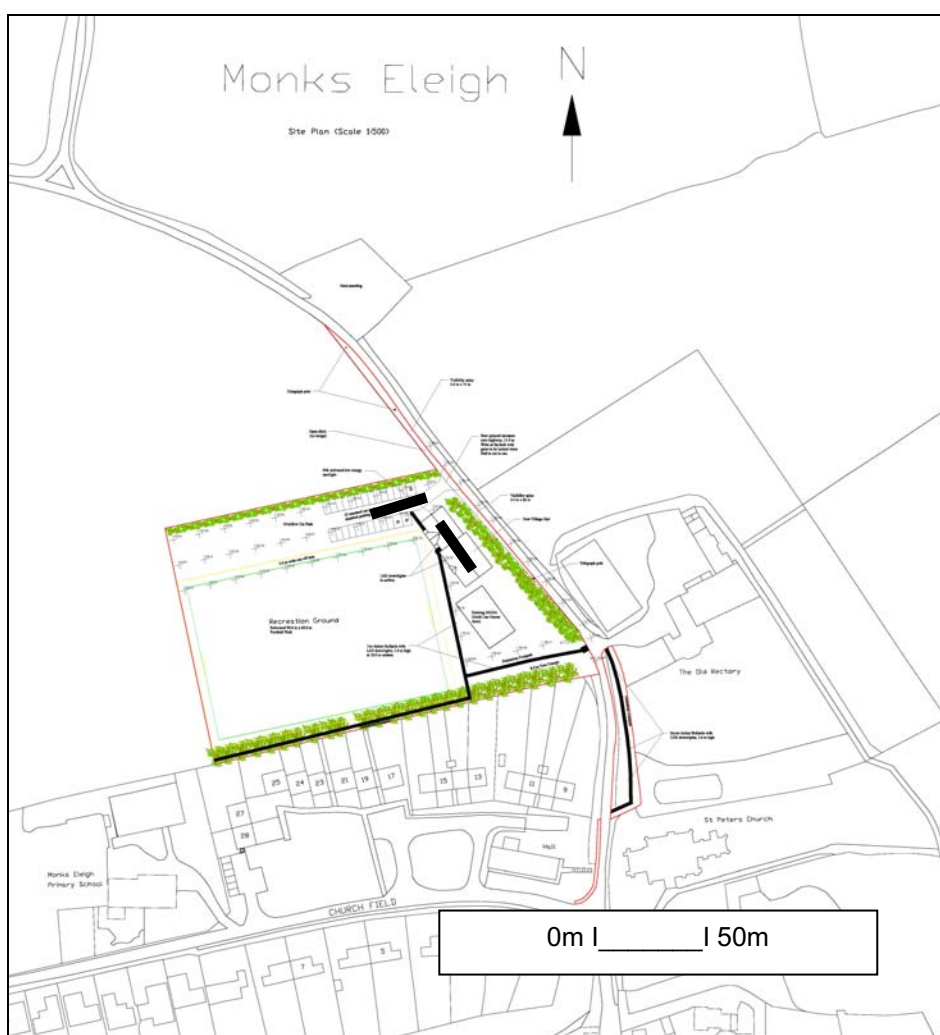
Conservation Services

Faunal remains:

J Curl (Sylvanus Archaeology)

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Human remains:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Metal detecting:	J Armes (experienced freelance)
Palaeoenvironmental samples:	V Fryer (Freelance)
Soils specialist	R Macphail (UCL)
Pre-historic flint:	C Pendleton (Freelance)
Pre-historic pottery:	S Percival (Freelance)
Post Roman ceramics & CBM:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Roman period small finds:	N Crummy (Freelance)
Roman period ceramics:	S Benfield (CAT)
Medieval coins:	M Allen (Fitzwilliam Museum)
Post Roman small finds:	JNAS



Proposed location of trial trenches (2 x 25m each)

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: johnnewm1-175644

Project details

Project name	Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk-Archaeological Evaluation Report
Short description of the project	Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill (MKE 035, TL 9652 4788) evaluation trenching for a planned new village hall with associated car parking did not reveal any archaeological features save two field drains of 19th early 20th century date with the few stray finds from the upcast spoil ranging in date from the Roman period to the early 20th century.
Project dates	Start: 31-03-2014 End: 31-03-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	MKE 035 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	B/13/01004 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	TILE Roman
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Amenity area (e.g. public open space)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK BABERGH MONKS ELEIGH NEW VILLAGE HALL, CHURCH HILL

Study area 1200.00 Square metres
 Site coordinates TL 9652 4788 52.0938130651 0.869190300315 52 05 37 N 000 52 09 E
 Point
 Height OD / Depth Min: 59.00m Max: 60.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation John Newman Archaeological Services
 Project brief originator Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
 Project design originator John Newman
 Project director/manager John Newman
 Project supervisor John Newman
 Type of sponsor/funding body Other Charitable Trust

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Discarded
 Physical Contents "Ceramics","Metal"
 Digital Archive recipient Suffolk CC Archaeological Service
 Digital Contents "Ceramics","Metal"
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Text"
 Paper Archive recipient Suffolk CC Archaeological Service
 Paper Contents "Ceramics","Metal"
 Paper Media available "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
 Title Monks Eleigh Playing Field, Church Hill, Monks Eleigh, Suffolk-Archaeological Evaluation Report
 Author(s)/Editor(s) Newman, J
 Date 2014
 Issuer or publisher John Newman Archaeological Services
 Place of issue or publication Henley, Suffolk
 Description Loose bound client report
 Entered by John Newman (johnnewman2@btinternet.com)