

**Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane,
Laxfield, Suffolk**

Planning application: 0926/09

HER Ref: LXD 073

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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

(July 2014)

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Site details for HER

Name: Land to rear of Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane, Laxfield, Suffolk IP13 8DX

Clients: Mr & Mrs R Fuller

Local planning authority: Mid Suffolk DC

Planning application ref: 0926/09

Development: Erection of a detached dwelling

Date of fieldwork: 2 July, 2014

HER Ref: LXD 073

LBS Ref: 103284 (Willow Cottage- grade II)

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-183216

Grid ref: TM 2944 7247

Contents

Summary

1. Introduction & background
2. Evaluation methodology
3. Results
4. Conclusion

Fig. 1 Site location

Fig. 2 Location of evaluation trench

List of appendices

Appendix I- Selected images

Appendix II- Written scheme for evaluation

Appendix III- OASIS data collection form

Summary: Laxfield, land to the rear of Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane (LXD 073, TM 2944 7247) evaluation trenching for a new detached dwelling 20m north-west of a listed cottage of earlier Post-medieval date did not reveal any archaeological features and the few stray finds were of recent date (John Newman Archaeological Services for Mr & Mrs R Fuller).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 The Ashton Design Company, on behalf of their clients Mr & Mrs R Fuller, commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological evaluation works for a single new dwelling development on land to the rear of Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane, Laxfield (see Fig. 1). The evaluation requirements were set out in a Brief, following the granting of planning application 0926/09, 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 footprint area 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 Laxfield is a large village some 7 miles north of Framlingham and 8 miles south-west of Halesworth in central Suffolk in a landscape historically characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern partly focused within parishes on the respective churches but also scattered round the numerous greens and along roads and lanes. Historically Laxfield was a local centre of some importance with a market from at least 1226. The proposed development site to the rear of Willow Cottage lies on flat ground at c50m OD on the northern edge of the present village on Chattens Lane some 70m from the High Street frontage to the south and c140m west of the parish church. The site for the planned new dwelling is also located 20m north-west of Willow Cottage which is a listed building with grade II status described as being of 'mid 17th century date (and) is a timber framed cottage.'

1.3 Archaeological interest in this planned development was therefore generated by both its location in the historic core of the village (HER LXD 032) and its proximity to a listed building where evidence for activity of later Saxon to earlier Post-medieval date might be anticipated.

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 While the area of the proposed residential development was trenched to a previously agreed plan (see Fig. 2) using a medium sized 360 machine equipped with a 1200mm flat bucket this evaluation was carried out after the removal of a shed that previously stood on the site and the mechanical stripping of 300mm of mixed rubble base and subsoil from the western 70% of the footprint area. These initial site ground works were not observed but the mechanical scraping of a shallow trench afterwards was under archaeological supervision with any indistinct areas being hand cleaned for better clarity.

2.2 The shallow trench base in addition to the area that had been stripped of subsoil and the upcast spoil were examined visually and scanned with a metal detector for any finds 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 sunny conditions. At the end of the evaluation the location of the trench was plotted from nearby mapped features and as the evaluation progressed a full photographic record in digital format (see Appendix I) was taken of the trenching and other ground works.

3. Results

3.1 The initial mechanical stripping of the mid brown clay subsoil from the western part of the planned footprint area went to a depth of 300mm exposing areas of the underlying glaciofluvial stiff pale brown clay with flints Till deposit in places. As outlined above a shallow 14m long and 1.80m wide trench (see Fig. 2 & Appendix I) was scraped to a further depth of 100mm in order to gain a clean Till -surface and this only revealed one feature which was a modern pipe trench.

3.2 The only finds seen in the upcast spoil were occasional pottery sherds of 20th century date and a moderate quantity of building debris of the same date which formerly formed the base to a shed that stood on the site plus a few iron fragments of indeterminate date and function.

4. Conclusion

4.1 With such negative results regarding any significant evidence for past activity from a substantial sample of the proposed development footprint it can only be concluded it has been in low intensity use, in all likelihood as a garden to Willow Cottage, in the past before a shed was constructed in the 20th century.

4.2 Based on these evaluation results it is recommended that no further archaeological investigations need to be carried out on the proposed site of the new dwelling on land to the rear of Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane, Laxfield.

Archive- to be deposited with the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service under the HER ref. LXD 073.

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 William Ayres and Alan Flatman for their close cooperation during the evaluation)

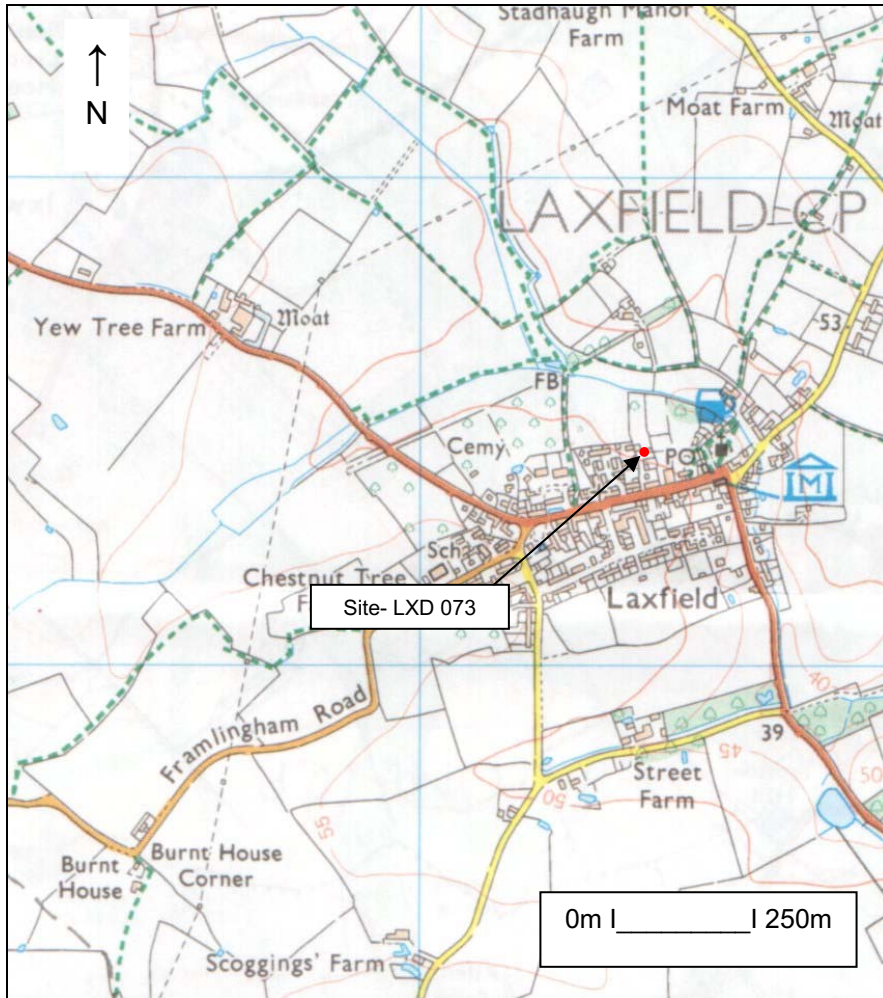


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2006
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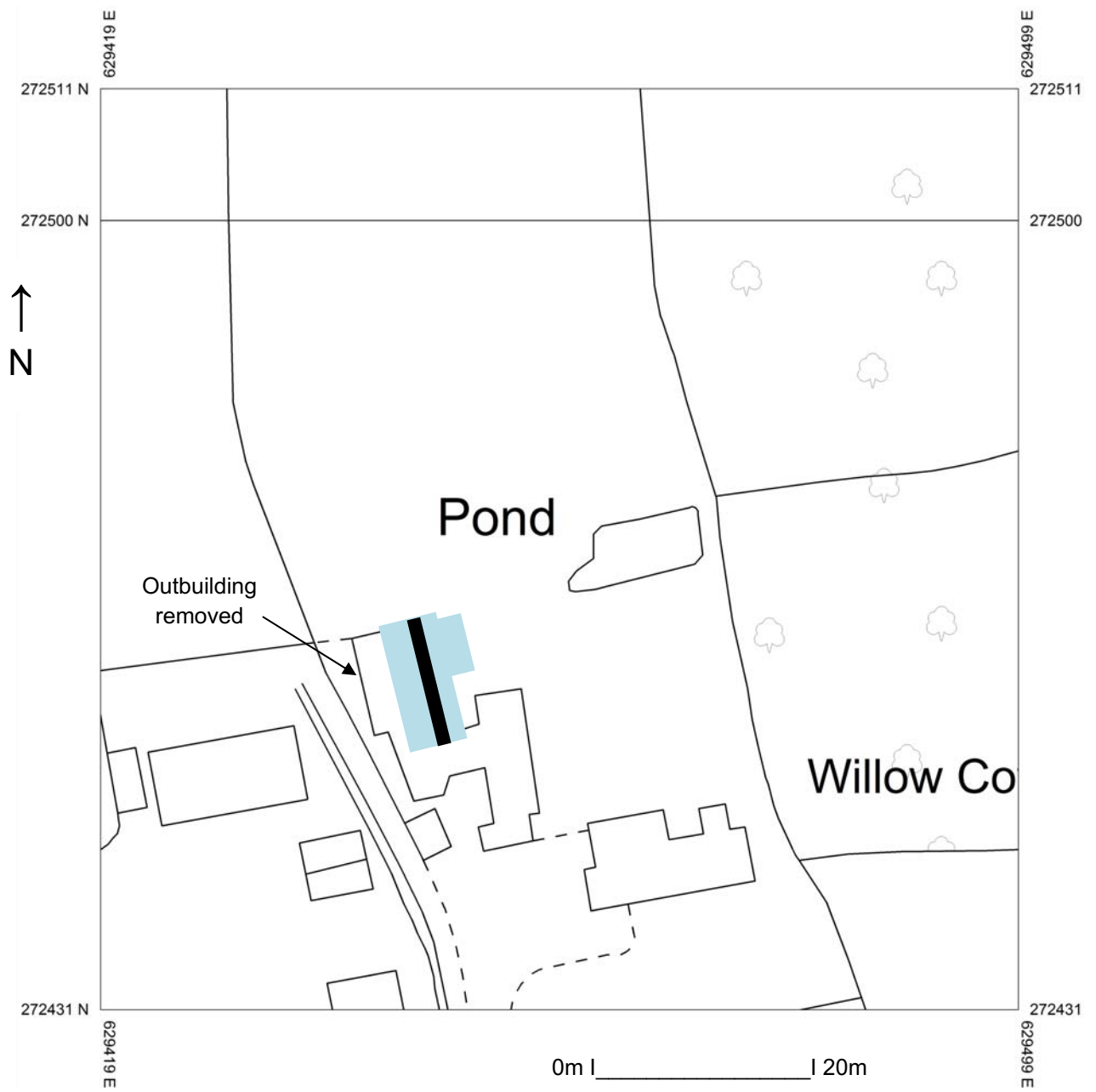


Fig. 2: Location of evaluation trench (new dwelling footprint- light blue)

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Appendix I- Images



General view from north (Willow Cottage to left)



Trench from north



Deposit profile on eastern side

**Land Adjacent to Willow Cottage, High Street,
Laxfield, Suffolk**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for
Archaeological Evaluation**

Site details

Name: Land adjacent to Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane (off High Street), Laxfield, Suffolk, IP13 8DX

Clients: Mr & Mrs R Fuller

Local planning authority: Mid Suffolk DC

Planning application ref: 0926/09

Proposed development: Erection of detached dwelling

Proposed date for evaluation: tbc

Brief ref: 2012_10_15_SCCAS_Trenched Archaeological Evaluation_Brief_Willow Cottage, Laxfield

Grid ref: TM 2946 7248

LBS 103284, grade II (Willow Cottage)

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 trench

1. Introduction

1.1 Ashton Design Company Ltd on behalf of their clients, Mr & Mrs R Fuller, have commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological site evaluation for a proposed small scale residential 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 0926/09, 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 development concerns the construction of a detached dwelling on land adjacent to Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane (off High Street), Laxfield.

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 Laxfield is a large village some 7 miles north of Framlingham and 8 miles south-west of Halesworth in central Suffolk in a landscape historically characterised by a dispersed settlement pattern partly focused within parishes on the respective church but also scattered round the numerous greens and along roads and lanes. Historically Laxfield was a local centre of some importance with a market from at least 1226. The proposed development site (PDS), adjacent to Willow Cottage, lies on the northern edge of the present village on Chattens Lane some 70m from the High Street frontage to the south and c140m west of the parish church. Willow Cottage is a listed building with grade II status described as being of 'mid 17th century date....timber framed cottage.'

2.2 Central Suffolk is generally dominated by the heavier boulder clay soils derived from the underlying till deposits with the PDS being at c50m OD.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 To quote from the relevant Brief 'This application lies in an area of archaeological importance recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, within the historic settlement core and to the west of the medieval church (HER No. LXD 032). There is high potential for medieval occupation deposits to be located in this area.' A site evaluation by trial trenching will therefore be required to:

- 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. The further recording of any archaeological deposits may involve excavation prior to ground works commencing or monitoring of the relevant ground works

4. Aims of the Site Evaluation

4.1 As outlined in section 3 above the main archaeological potential relates to the site's location close to where evidence for medieval and earlier Post medieval activity may be present. The aim of the evaluation is therefore to examine the specified sample of the proposed development area with an evaluation trench 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 detached dwelling on land adjacent to Willow Cottage. The evaluation trenching will be in an area that is currently largely soft ground.

5.2 The Brief requires a single 10m long and 1.8m wide trench across the area of the planned dwelling footprint. This will be undertaken using a 1.20m or 1.50m 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 examined for unstratified artefacts as evidence

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

5.3 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 in monochrome film and high resolution digital images will be made of the site and exposed features.

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 (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 at this location).

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.

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 *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for*

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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 should 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

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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 (examination of the topographic location of the site indicates that the presence of waterlogged deposits is unlikely).

- 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 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 monitoring and reporting works.

5.8 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.

5.9 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 at the start of the works 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. 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.

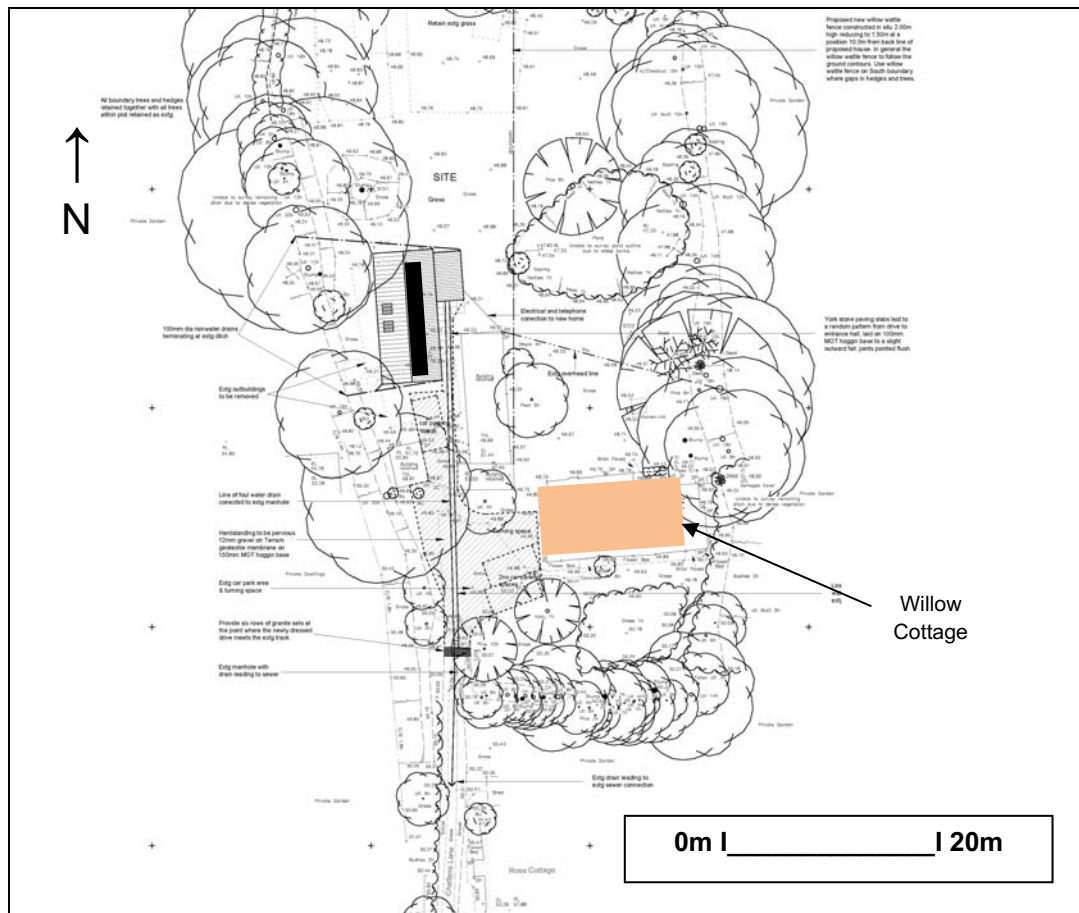
6.6 JNAS holds full insurance cover for archaeological site works from the specialist provider Towergate Risk Solutions covering Public & Products Liability, details can be supplied on request.

7. Specialists

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

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Soils specialist	R Macphail (UCL)
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:	S Benfield (CAT)
Medieval coins:	M Allen (Fitzwilliam Museum)
Post Roman small finds:	JNAS



Proposed location of trial trench

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: johnnewm1-183216

Project details

Project name	Part Garden Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane, Laxfield, Suffolk-Archaeological Evaluation Report
Short description of the project	Laxfield, land to the rear of Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane (LXD 073, TM 2944 7247) evaluation trenching for a new detached dwelling 20m north-west of a listed cottage of earlier Post-medieval date did not reveal any archaeological features and the few stray finds were of recent date.
Project dates	Start: 02-07-2014 End: 02-07-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	LXD 073 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	0926/09 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	103284 - LBS No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK MID SUFFOLK LAXFIELD WILLOW COTTAGE, CHATTENS LANE

Postcode	IP13 9DX
Study area	140.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 2944 7247 52.3017927699 1.36564376939 52 18 06 N 001 21 56 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 49.00m Max: 50.00m

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	Landowner

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Suffolk CC Archaeological Service
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Suffolk CC Archaeological Service
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Willow Cottage, Chattens Lane, Laxfield, 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)