

**Land At Sherwood, Mill Lane,
Thurston, Suffolk**

Planning application: 3984/14

HER Ref: THS 024

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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

(March 2015)

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Site details for HER

Name: Land at Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston, Suffolk, IP31 3QA

Clients: Grovesbrook Homes Ltd

Local planning authority: Mid Suffolk DC

Planning application ref: 3948/14

Development: Erection of two new dwellings & refurbishment of existing bungalow

Date of fieldwork: 9 March, 2015

HER ref: THS 024

Event ref: ESF 22935

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-205250

Grid ref: TL 9156 6602

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Summary: Thurston, land at Sherwood, Mill Lane (THS 024, TL 9156 6602) evaluation trenching for a small residential development of two new dwellings adjacent to Mill Lane, which runs along the line of a Roman period road that linked major settlements at Long Melford to the south and Pakenham to the north, did not reveal any archaeological features or finds with the deposit profile being very thin and sandy and historically the site was on or close to Thurston Common (John Newman Archaeological Services for Grovesbrook Homes Ltd).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 Grovesbrook Homes Ltd commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological evaluation works for a small residential development comprising two new dwellings and the refurbishment of the existing bungalow at Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston (see Fig. 1). The evaluation requirements were set out in a Brief, following the granting of planning application 3948/14, set by Mrs R Abraham of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service (SCCAS) with the aim of gaining a representative sample by trial trenching of the development area. 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 Thurston parish is some 6km east of Bury St Edmunds in central Suffolk with a formerly scattered settlement pattern now largely dominated by two areas of modern development to the north of the railway line that bisects it on an east-west alignment. The proposed development area is located towards the western side of the parish, 1500m north-west of the parish church and c750m south-east of Barton Mere and at 50m OD on generally gently sloping ground with a south-westerly aspect. Hodkinson's map of Suffolk of 1783 shows this area as being on or close to Thurston Heath, a largely open area with few dwellings depicted nearby and in all probability used mainly for grazing in the past as the light, sandy loam soils of the Swaffham Prior series 511E lie over natural chalk giving little soil moisture retention for any arable land use. The Suffolk Landscape Characterisation project describes the Thurston area as lying within the 'Plateau estate farmlands' being a 'flat landscape of light loam and sandy soil,' generally used for sheep grazing in the past and an area of late enclosure and therefore a late area also of any intensive arable cultivation.

1.3 While being remote from the historic core of the village Mill Lane, which runs along the western side of this site (see Fig. 2), runs along the line of a Roman period road that linked the major settlement at Long Melford to the south with another large settlement at Pakenham to the north-east. Evidence for this Roman period having been recorded some 50 years ago at a site to the south (HER THS 002) where the two flanking ditches characteristic of a Roman period road were recorded. However a recent evaluation at 84 Barton Road (HER THS 019) to the south of the site at Sherwood did not reveal any archaeological features suggesting that the former site was just to the east of the Roman road line.

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 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 1000mm 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 1.80m wide trenches 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 and conditions. At the end of the evaluation the location of the trenches 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 works.

3. Results

3.1 In this case the results are most easily summarised as in the table below as nothing 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	Northwest-southeast	15m	200	100 to 250 of a mid brown sandy subsoil	Orange sand with flints & pockets of degraded chalk & an area of pale brown very silty sand at the western end	No features or finds
2	Northeast-southwest	15	200	200 (as T1)	As T1 with pocket of silty pale brown sand	No features or finds, a large tree stump was left in situ leading to an irregular edge to part of the eastern side of the trench
Total		30 (54m ²)	200	100 to 250		Trench depth minimum at 300 & maximum at 450

Table 1: Trench details

3.2 As indicated in the table above no archaeological features were revealed during the evaluation with the 300mm to 450mm deep trenches revealing a deposit profile comprising a 200mm depth of topsoil over 100mm to 250mm of clean mid brown sandy subsoil. The only finds seen in the upcast spoil proved to be of recent date with the existing bungalow being a building of mid 20th century date.

4. Conclusion

4.1 No evidence was revealed for the Roman road known to run on or close to the line of Mill Lane on the western side of the site and the very sandy thin deposit of topsoil and sandy subsoil over the naturally occurring local glaciofluvial sands would suggest that this area was within Thurston Common with the well drained and poor soils leading to historic use of this area as low intensity sheep pasture in the past.

4.2 Based on the evaluation results it is recommended that no further archaeological investigations need to be carried out at this planned small residential development site at Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston.

Archive- to be deposited with the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service under the HER ref. THS 024.

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 everyone on site for their close cooperation with regard to this evaluation)

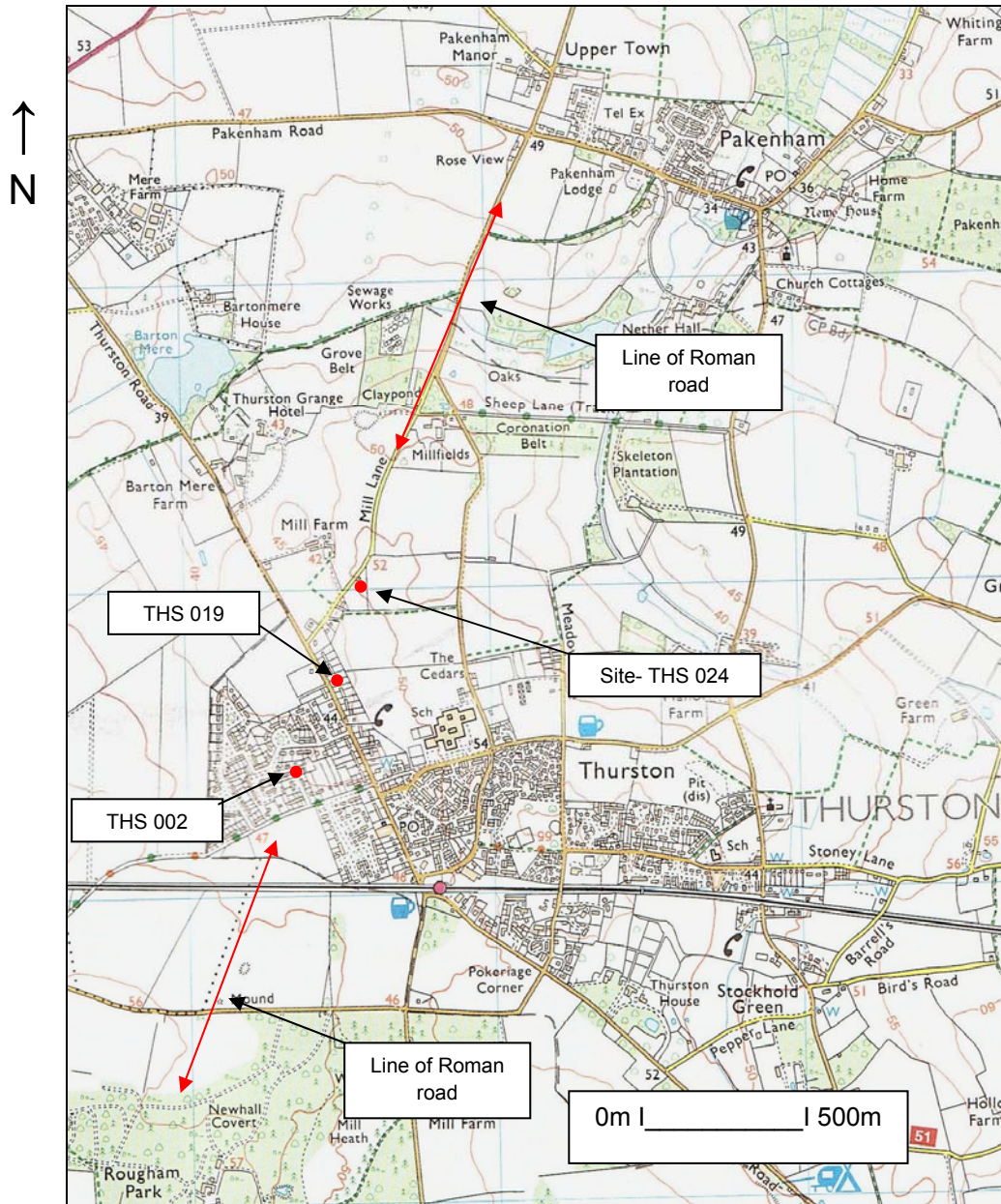


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2006
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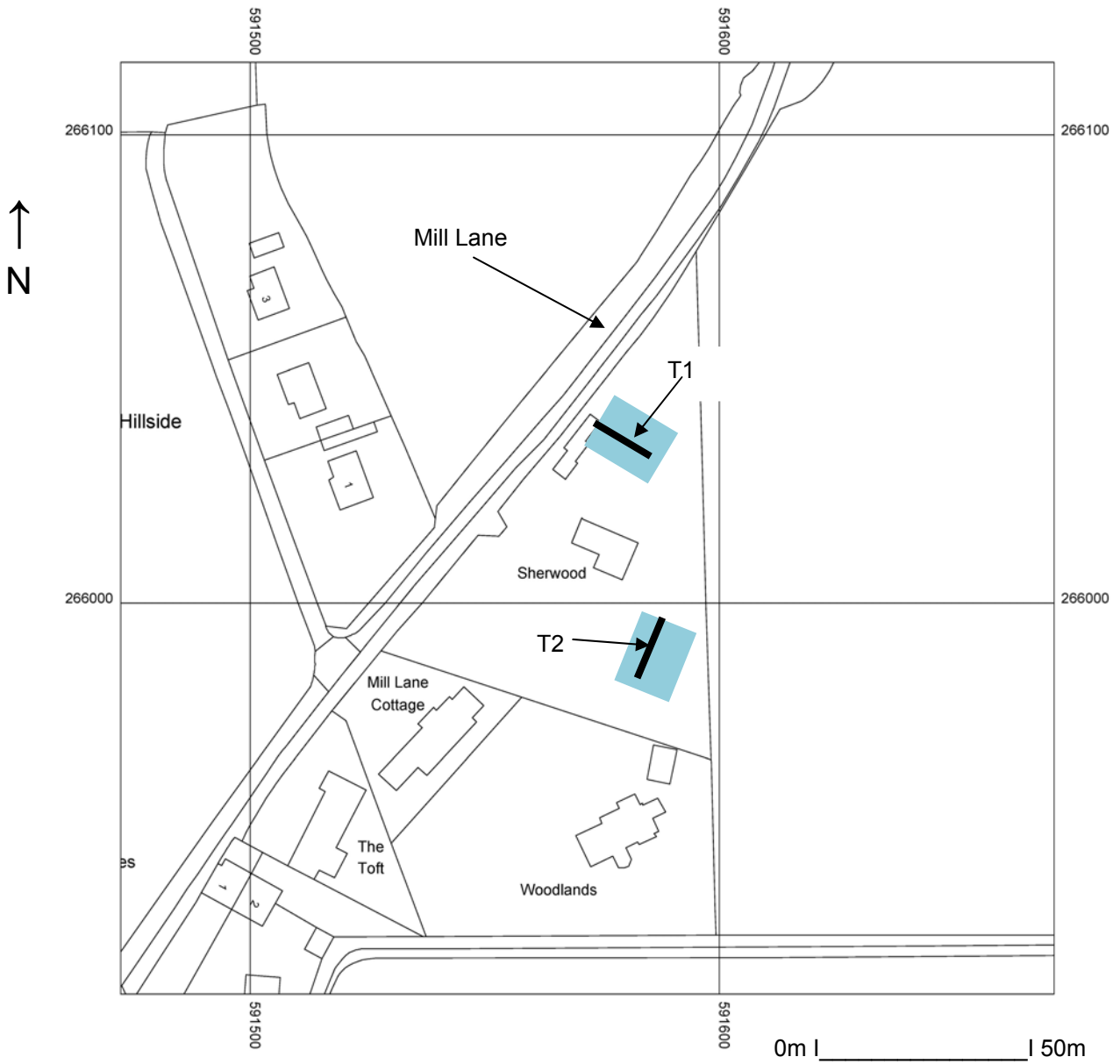


Fig. 2: Location of evaluation trenches (light blue- new house footprints)
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Appendix I- Images



General view from north



General view from southeast



Trench 1 from southeast



Trench 1 deposit profile



Trench 2 from northeast



Trench 2 deposit profile

**Land At Sherwood, Mill Lane,
Thurston, Suffolk**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for
Archaeological Evaluation**

Site details

Name: Land at Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston, Suffolk, IP31 3QA

Client: Grovesbrook Homes Ltd

Local planning authority: Mid Suffolk DC

Planning application ref: 3948/14

Proposed development: Erection of two dwellings

Proposed date for evaluation: tbc

Brief ref: SCCAS(RA)_Trenched Archaeological Evaluation Brief_Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston_3948

Grid ref: TL 9156 6602

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2. Location, Topography & Geology
3. Archaeological & Historical Background
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5. Methodology
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Proposed location of trial trenches

1. Introduction

1.1 Grovesbrook Homes Ltd have commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological site evaluation for a proposed 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 3948/14, and how JNAS will implement the requirements of the Brief for Archaeological Evaluation set by Mrs R Abraham 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 two detached dwellings in the garden of Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston with one to the north of the existing house and one to the south-east.

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 Thurston parish is some 6km east of Bury St Edmunds in central Suffolk with a formerly scattered settlement pattern now largely dominated by two areas of modern development to the north of the railway line that bisects it on an east-west alignment. The proposed development area (PDA) is located towards the western side of the parish, 1500m north-west of the parish church and c750m south-east of Barton Mere and at 50m OD on generally flat ground with a slight south-westerly aspect. Hodkinson's map of Suffolk of 1783 shows this area as being on or close to Thurston Heath, a largely open area with few dwellings depicted nearby and in all probability used mainly for grazing in the past as the light, sandy loam soils of the Swaffham Prior series 511E lie over natural chalk giving little soil moisture retention for any arable land use. The Suffolk Landscape Characterisation project describes the Thurston area as lying within the 'Plateau estate farmlands' being a 'flat landscape of light loam and sandy soil,' generally used for sheep grazing in the past and an area of late enclosure and therefore a late area also of any intensive arable cultivation.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 To quote from the relevant Brief 'This application affects an area on or close to a Roman road (recorded in the County Historic Environment Record as THS 007). The earthwork and flanking ditches of the road were identified on a site further to the south (THS 002).' A site evaluation by trial trenching 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.
- 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 relates to the PDA's location on or very close to the line of a Roman road that can be traced in elements of the modern landscape, such as parts of Mill Lane, on its north-east/south-west alignment from the known small Roman town at Ixworth/Pakenham towards another small Roman town at Long Melford. The aim of the evaluation is therefore to examine the specified sample of the proposed development area with evaluation trenching 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 two detached dwellings on soft ground in the garden of Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston.

5.2 The Brief requires 30m of 1.8m wide trench and this will be undertaken using a 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 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 of 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 evidence is assessed as being low).

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 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 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 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).

- 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 be 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 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. As appropriate 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 Prior to evaluation work starting on site the client will be consulted with regard to any potential contamination at the site. 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.

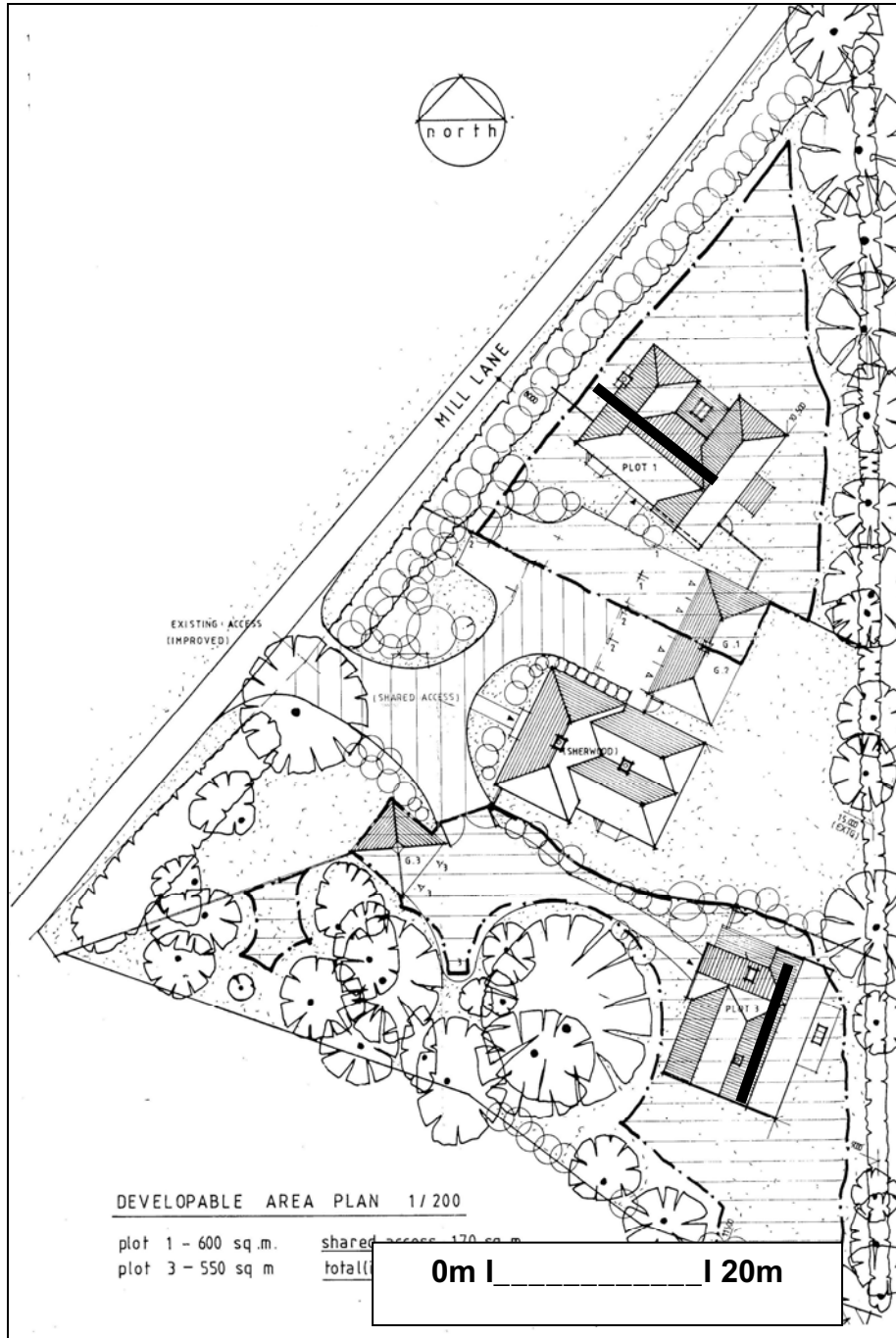
6.6 JNAS holds full insurance cover for archaeological site works from the specialist provider Tovergate Risk Solutions covering Public & Products Liability, details can be supplied on request.

7. Specialists

Conservation:	Conservation Services
Faunal remains:	J Curl (Sylvanus Archaeology)
Human remains:	S Anderson (CFA Archaeology)

John Newman Archaeological Services

Metal detecting:	J Armes (experienced freelance)
Palaeoenvironmental samples:	V Fryer (Freelance)
Soils specialist	R Macphail (UCL)
Pre-historic flint:	S Bates (Freelance)
Pre-historic pottery:	S Percival (Freelance)
Post Roman ceramics & CBM:	S Anderson (CFA Archaeology)
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 (total length 30m)

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: johnnewm1-205250

Project details

Project name	Land At Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston, Suffolk- Archaeological Evaluation Report
Short description of the project	Thurston, land at Sherwood, Mill Lane (THS 024, TL 9156 6602) evaluation trenching for a small residential development of two new dwellings adjacent to Mill Lane, which runs along the line of a Roman period road that linked major settlements at Long Melford to the south and Pakenham to the north, did not reveal any archaeological features or finds with the deposit profile being very thin and sandy and historically the site was on or close to Thurston Common.
Project dates	Start: 09-03-2015 End: 09-03-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	ESF 22935 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	THS 024 - Related HER No.
Any associated project reference codes	3948/14 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
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 THURSTON SHERWOOD MILL LANE
Postcode	IP31 3QA
Study area	1100.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 9156 6602 52.25846904 0.80711363713 52 15 30 N 000 48 25 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	Developer

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	Land at Sherwood, Mill Lane, Thurston, Suffolk- Archaeological Evaluation Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Newman, J
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	John Newman Archaeological Services
Place of issue or publication	Henley, Suffolk
Description	Loose bound client report and pdf

Entered by John Newman (johnnewman2@btinternet.com)
Entered on 13 March 2015

OASIS:

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