

**Nelson Farm, Ashbocking Road, Witnesham,
Suffolk**

Planning application: C/09/1895

HER Ref: WTN 021

Archaeological Monitoring Report

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

(September 2010)

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Site details for HER

Name: Nelson Farm, Ashbocking Road, Winesham, Suffolk

Client: Mr A Pratt

Local planning authority: Suffolk Coastal DC

Planning application ref: C/09/1895

Development: Erection of agricultural storage barn

Date of fieldwork: 19 & 20 July 2010

HER Ref: WTN 021

OASIS Ref: johnnewm1-79984

Grid ref: TM 1801 5356

Contents

Summary

1. Introduction & background
2. Monitoring methodology
3. Results
4. The Finds (Stephen Benfield)
5. Conclusion

Fig. 1 Site location

Fig. 2 Detail of site location and archaeological features (Sue Holden)

List of appendices

Appendix I – Images of monitoring

Appendix II - Brief & Specification

Summary: Winesham, Nelson Farm, Ashbocking Road (WTN 021, TM 1801 5356) monitoring of post pits for an agricultural storage barn within an area that has already produced metal detector finds indicating later Iron Age/earlier Roman activity recorded one feature, a probable pit, containing 1st-2nd/3rd century pottery. The surface of the adjacent field was also scanned and a moderately dense scatter of Roman period sherds was noted. (John Newman Archaeological Services for Mr A Pratt).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 Mr A Pratt commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological monitoring of ground works required under condition 7 for a programme of archaeological works of the planning decision notice for application C/09/1895. The monitoring requirements were set out in a Brief and Specification set by Ms J Plouviez of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service to satisfy this condition (Appendix II). This development concerns the erection of an agricultural barn some 90m south-east of Nelson Farm, Witnesham, (see Fig. 1).

1.2 Witnesham parish lies to the north of Ipswich in an area where the local soils are dominated by the heavier boulder clay or till deposits of central Suffolk. Nelson Farm is remote from the village as it lies on the northern parish boundary that runs along the B1078 some 200m west of the crossroads formed by this road running east-west and the north-south Ashbocking Road. The 65m OD contour line is a short distance to the south of the proposed barn site that is located in the north-western corner of an arable field (see Fig. 2a) which has a very gentle gradient on a southerly aspect.

Section 1.3 of the Brief and Specification outlines how the site is located in an area where metal detector searches on arable land in the vicinity have revealed scattered evidence for past activity (HER WTN 009, 011, 012 & 018) with a small number of later Iron Age coins and various copper alloy coins and dress items of earlier Roman date. The nearby B 1078 road also marks the line of a known Roman road (Margary 340) that runs between the small Roman towns at Baylham/Coddenham in the Gipping valley to the south-west and Hacheston to the north-east. The development therefore lies in an area of archaeological interest where deposits relating to the known later Iron Age and Roman presence might be encountered though, as the disturbance for the barn was planned to be minimal, monitoring of ground works was considered to be the appropriate mitigation strategy.

2. Monitoring methodology

2.1 Two visits were made to the site to monitor the mechanical excavation of the 10 post pits (see Fig. 2b), each of which was 1m x 1m and 900mm deep. The heavy clay topsoil across the site was not removed. Each pit was examined closely for archaeological deposits and, where required, section faces were trowelled clean in order to check for variations from the normal 300mm of topsoil over a stiff yellow clay with flints natural drift geology which was observed in most cases. In one pit, number 3 on Fig. 2b, a possible feature was identified and the respective sections were further investigated in order to facilitate recording and search for any finds that might be close to the surface. While visual examination of the upcast spoil from the post pits did not reveal any pre-modern finds a rapid scan of the bare field surface just to the south of the barn site did enable the recovery of a few pottery sherds (0001).

3. Results

3.1 As noted above post pit 3 revealed an archaeological feature (0002) which was observed as the rounded profile of a probable pit in the northern and eastern sections (see Fig. 2c & Appendix I – Images). Excavation of the post pit disturbed the south-western part of the feature which contained an upper dark grey/brown clay fill (0003) over a basal fill (0004) of mid-light grey clay with some evidence of iron staining. The feature was 600mm deep where exposed within the post pit and while

its full interpretation is impossible from such a small exposure the rounded profile seen in the two section faces and the its absence in the southern or western faces of the post pit indicates that this feature (0002) is a pit rather than any form of linear feature. Cleaning the section cut through the feature did allow the recovery of 6 sherds of pottery from its upper fill (0003).

4. The Finds (Stephen Benfield)

4.1 The finds types recovered during the monitoring are set out in Table 1. These can be dated to the Roman period and the medieval/post-medieval period. The single medieval/post-medieval find (0001) is a small piece of thin tile (10 mm thick) which is almost certainly peg-tile.

Context	Pottery		CBM		comments	spot date
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0001	19	93	1	10	CBM=thin red tile, probably peg-tile	Roman + later
0003	6	21				Roman
Total	25	114	1	10		

Table 1: Bulk finds quantities

Roman pottery

In total 25 sherds of pottery, weighing a total of 114g with a total Eve (estimated vessel equivalence) of 0.12, were recovered (Table 2). These can all be dated to the Roman period. The pottery was recovered from two contexts: surface finds (0001) and a pit 0002 (0003). All of the pottery was recorded using the Suffolk (Pakenham) pottery fabric type series (unpublished). Vessel forms refer to the Camulodunum (Colchester) type series (Hull 1963) and the Suffolk Pakenham type series (unpublished). The pottery is listed by context in Table 3.

Fabric name	Code	No	%No	Wt/g	% Wt/g	Eve	% Eve
Black surface wares	BSW	10	40	46	40.4	0.08	66.7
Grey micaceous wares (black surface)	GMB	1	4	1	0.9		
Grey micaceous wares (grey surface)	GMG	7	28	19	16.6	0.04	33.3
Miscellaneous sandy grey wares	GX	5	20	18	15.8		
Storage jar fabrics	STOR	2	8	30	26.3		
Total		25	100	114	100	0.12	100

Table 2. Roman pottery fabric quantities

John Newman Archaeological Services

context	Fabric Code	No	Wt/g	Eve	notes
0001	BSW	9	40	0.08	abraded, includes rim sherd
0001	GMB	1	1		abraded
0001	GMG	3	5	0.04	abraded; includes small ?beaker rim sherd
0001	GX	4	17		abraded
0001	STOR	2	30		abraded
0003	BSW	1	6		abraded
0003	GMG	4	14		abraded, recently broken joining sherds
0003	GX	1	1		abraded
Total		25	114		

Table 3. Roman pottery by context

Discussion

The small quantity of pottery recovered consists entirely of Roman coarse wares; no fine wares are present. All of the sherds exhibit some degree of abrasion and for some of the sherds classified as Fabric BSW the surface is quite worn, revealing the reddish-brown fabric colour below. The average sherd weight for pottery from the field surface (0001) is, as might be expected, quite low at 4.9g. Based simply on the number of sherds, the average sherd weight for the pit (0003) is less, but the sherds of Fabric GMG from this feature represent a single recently broken sherd, so the true average sherd weight is slightly higher at 7g.

Of the pottery recovered from the field surface (0001), apart from two pieces of rim, all of the sherds are body sherds. Individually none of these is closely datable other than as Roman. However, one rim, which is from a small pot, possibly a beaker, is everted and of simple, pointed form suggesting a 1st-2nd century date. Also, the fabric of some of the sherds of Fabric BSW contains black, burnt organic fragments, possibly with some sparse grog-temper, suggesting an Early Roman date (1st-early 2nd century) for these. The other rim sherd recovered is probably from a jar but the vessel form is not clear and it is simply dated as Roman.

The pottery from the pit consists of two body sherds (dated as Roman) and a single sherd (recently broken into several pieces) from a narrow necked jar with a small plain cordon at the base of the neck. As only a small part of the neck and shoulder of the jar is present it is not easy to date closely. However, the angle of the body and neck suggest the shape is rounded, similar to the early types of the Colchester form Cam 280/281 (Symonds & Wade 1999, 480) - this would correspond with the Suffolk (Pakenham) form 2.1 - and probably can be dated to the later 2nd-3rd century.

The small size of the assemblage and the fact that most consists of abraded surface finds makes meaningful comment difficult. However, some of the pottery can be dated to the early-mid Roman period, and there are no clear late Roman pottery types present. The pottery from the one excavated context, the pit 0002, also shows some abrasion suggesting (if not due to soil conditions) some delay between

breakage and deposition. One sherd from this feature can probably be dated to the later 2nd-3rd century.

5. Conclusion

5.1 While the ground works for the proposed barn were limited in their extent the archaeological evidence recovered from the site has confirmed the presence of Roman period activity in the area as already indicated by the known scatter of metal works finds. Little more can be added save that the pottery sherds, while admittedly a small assemblage and somewhat abraded, point to early-mid Roman activity in the 1st-2nd/3rd century AD period which correlates well with the metal detector finds. All that can be added is that the probable interpretation of the recorded feature as a pit tends to indicate settlement type activity with a moderately dense pottery scatter on the field surface to the south of the site. Whether the pottery scatter, and by interpolation the Roman period settlement site, extends to the north or west of the barn site is unknown as these areas are beyond existing field boundaries.

5.2 The monitoring of the ground works for the barn in confirming the presence of Roman period deposits in the area highlights the likely requirement that any other development proposals nearby will also lead to an archaeological programme of works being needed.

(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to the contractor Mr A Pratt for his close cooperation with regard to this site monitoring, to Sue Holden for Fig. 2 and to Stephen Benfield for reporting on the finds).

References

Hull, R, 1963 *The Roman potters' kilns of Colchester*, RRC SAL 21

Symonds, R, & Wade, S 1999 *Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester 1971-86*, Colchester Archaeological Report 10

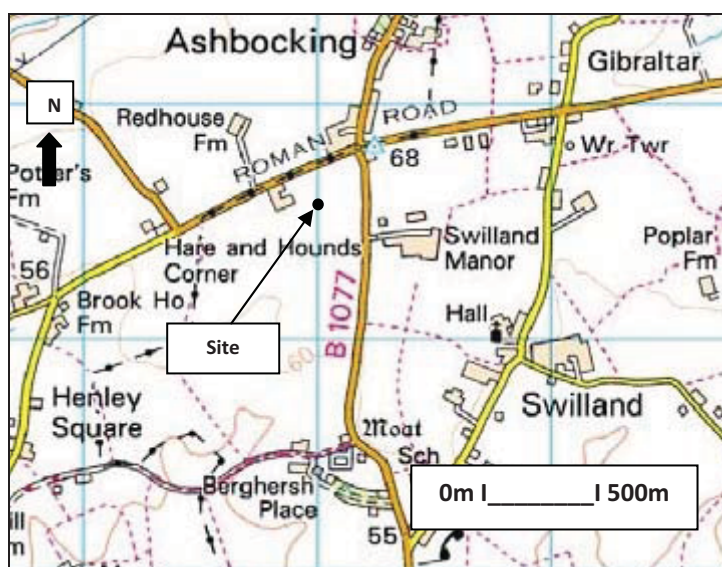
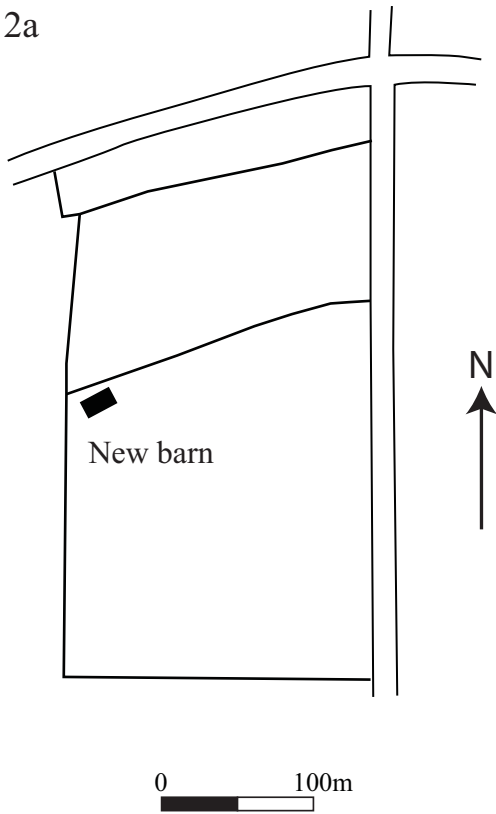
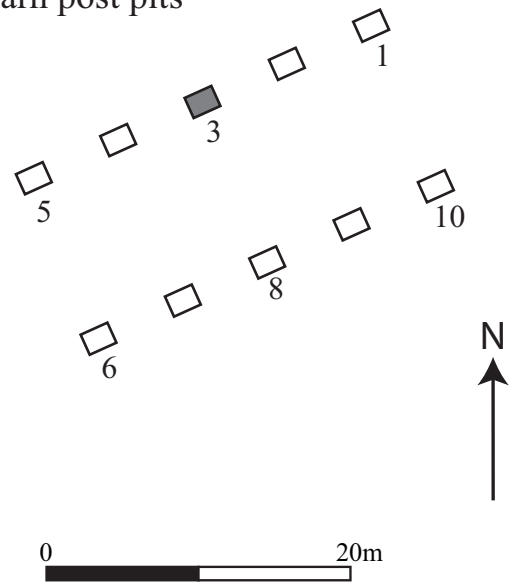


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2008.
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2a



2b Barn post pits



2c Post pit 3

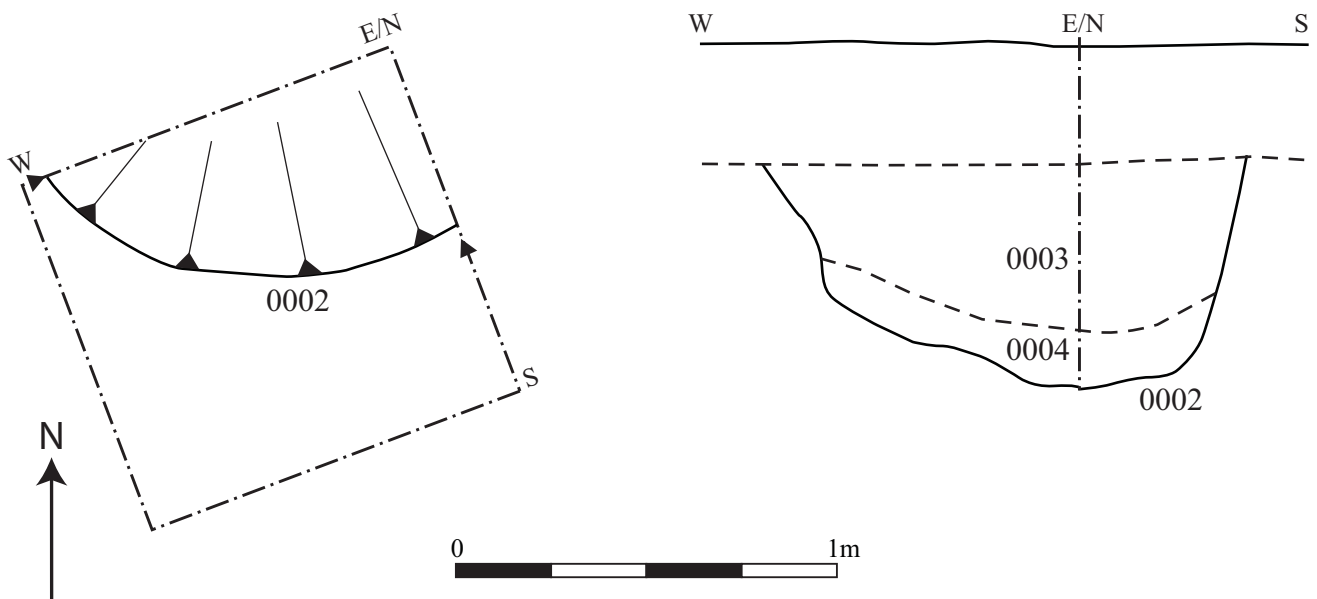


Fig 2: Detail of site location and archaeological features.

Appendix I – Images



Barn site from east- excavated post pits visible to right



Post pit 3- north face showing pit 0002

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Brief and Specification for Continuous Archaeological Recording

Nelson Farm, Ashbocking Road, Witnesham

Although this document is fundamental to the work of the specialist archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that certain of its requirements are likely to impinge upon the working practices of a general building contractor and may have financial implications

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission for the construction of an agricultural storage barn on land adjoining Nelson Farm, Witnesham, Suffolk (TM 180535), has been granted by Suffolk Coastal District Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (C/09/1895).
- 1.2 Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by development can be adequately recorded by continuous archaeological recording during all groundworks. Our current understanding is that ground disturbance will not take place on the access road and that topsoil will not be stripped from the footprint – **please contact SCCAS if the amount of ground disturbance is increased. (Please contact the developer for an accurate plan of the development).**
- 1.3 This application is within a site recorded on the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER ref WTN 010) and close to other sites (WTN 009, 011, 012, 018). Overall the evidence indicates a substantial area of later Iron Age and Roman activity, including Iron Age and early Roman coinage, brooches and other objects. The location is immediately south of a Roman road line (the current B1078) which runs north-east from the 1st century fort at Coddensham. It is on high ground (just above 65m OD) with a south-facing aspect. It is on the border between clay soil types Beccles 1 and Hanslope over chalky till. Aspects of the proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.4 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (9-10 The Churchyard, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the WSI as satisfactory, and until confirmation has been sought by the applicant from the Local Planning Authority. The WSI will *provide the basis for measurable standards* and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.

- 1.5 Before commencing work the project manager must carry out a risk assessment and liaise with the site owner, client and the Conservation Team of SCCAS in ensuring that all potential risks are minimised.
- 1.6 All arrangements for the excavation of the site, the timing of the work, access to the site, the definition of the precise area of landholding and area for proposed development are to be defined and negotiated by the archaeological contractor with the commissioning body.
- 1.7 The responsibility for identifying any constraints on field-work (e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c., ecological considerations rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such constraints or imply that the target area is freely available.
- 1.8 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, 2003.
- 1.9 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (revised 2001) should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.
- 2.2 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the ground works associated with the construction of the storage building, principally stanchion foundation pits and any associated ground reduction. Any ground works, and also the upcast soil, are to be closely monitored during and after removal by the building contractor. Adequate time is to be allowed for archaeological recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following excavation.

3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the archaeological contractor) who must be approved by SCCAS/CT.
- 3.2 The developer or his contracted archaeologist will give SCCAS/CT five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to previously agreed locations and techniques upon which this brief is based.
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover archaeological costs incurred in monitoring the development works by the contract archaeologist. The size of the contingency should be estimated by the approved archaeological contractor, based upon the outline works in this Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and time-table.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered SCCAS/CT must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4. Specification

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to SCCAS/CT and the contracted archaeologist to allow archaeological monitoring of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity must be given to the contracted archaeologist to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.3 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development, depending on the complexity of the data to be recorded. Sections should be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 again depending on the complexity to be recorded.
- 4.4 A photographic record of the work is to be made of any archaeological features, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies/high resolution digital images.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.6 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with SCCAS/CT during the course of the monitoring).
- 4.7 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Historic Environment Record.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*, particularly Appendix 3. This must be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record within three months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 The project manager must consult the County Historic Environment Record Officer to obtain an event number for the work. This number will be unique for each project or site and must be clearly marked on any documentation relating to the work.
- 5.3 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*.
- 5.4 The project manager should consult the SCC Archive Guidelines 2008 and also the County HER Officer regarding the requirements for the deposition of the archive (conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage) of excavated material and the archive.
- 5.5 The WSI should state proposals for the deposition of the digital archive relating to this project with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), and allowance should be made for costs incurred to ensure proper deposition (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>).
- 5.6 The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.7 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the

archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence, including palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).

- 5.8 An unbound copy of the assessment report, clearly marked DRAFT, must be presented to both SCCAS/CT for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated with the project sponsor and SCCAS/CT.
- 5.9 Following acceptance, two copies of the assessment report should be submitted to SCCAS/CT. A single hard copy should be presented to the County Historic Environment Record as well as a digital copy of the approved report.
- 5.10 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, must be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.11 Where appropriate, a digital vector trench plan should be included with the report, which must be compatible with MapInfo GIS software, for integration in the County Historic Environment Record. AutoCAD files should be also exported and saved into a format that can be imported into MapInfo (for example, as a Drawing Interchange File or .dxf) or already transferred to .TAB files.
- 5.12 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 5.13 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to County Historic Environment Record. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Judith Plouviez

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Date: 23 March 2010

Reference: /SCCAS_ArcSpecMon_JP_23Mar2010.doc

This brief and specification remains valid for six months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.

If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.