

**Land Off Wishing Well Close and to the Rear of
The Red House, Gas House Drove, Suffolk**

Planning application: F/2010/0856/FUL

HER Ref: BRD 216

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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

(February 2011)

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Site details for HER

Name: Land off Wishing Well Close and to the rear of The Red House, Gas House Drove, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0FB

Client: Mr B Beard

Local planning authority: Forest Heath DC

Planning application ref: F/2010/0856/FUL

Development: Erection of two residential dwellings

Date of fieldwork: 3 February 2011

HER Ref: BRD 216

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-92850

Grid ref: TL 7874 8654

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Summary: Brandon, land off Wishing Well Close (BRD 216, TL 7874 8654) evaluation trenching did not reveal any significant features or finds on a proposed small scale residential development site, the only feature being a rabbit burrow. (John Newman Archaeological Services for Mr B Beard).

1. Introduction & background

1.1 Mr B Beard commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological evaluation works on the area where planning permission is being sought for a small scale residential development to the west of Wishing Well Close and south of The Red House, Gas House Drove, Brandon (see Fig. 1) under application F/2010/0856/FUL. The evaluation requirements were set out in a Brief and Specification (see Appendix II) set by Dr J Tipper of the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service. This development concerns the erection of two residential dwellings on an area that has in recent years formed part of a garden to the nearby properties.

1.2 Brandon is a small town on the north western edge of Suffolk which historically grew at a bridging point on the Little Ouse River which has seen extensive development in recent years. Hodskinson's map of Suffolk of 1783 depicts a relatively small cluster of buildings close to the bridging point in an area of very dispersed and sparse settlement as the area to the south of the town, which is now dominated by extensive coniferous forestry plantations, comprises the very sandy and dry tracts of Breckland where pre-modern land use has largely been sheep grazing and rabbit warrening. In such an environment water sources are rare and past settlement in both the prehistoric and historic eras has concentrated near what sources are available. The *Suffolk Landscape Character Assessment* describes this area of Breckland as being *Estate Sandlands* characterised by 'flat or very gently rolling plateaux of free-draining sandy soils...absence of watercourses...sparse settlement' (www.suffolklandscape.org.uk).

1.3 The proposed development area is located on the southern side of the Little Ouse River and Gas House Drove on flat ground at c7m OD and only some 250m from the river in an area with the light soils typical of the Breckland derived from the local deep sands of glaciofluvial origin. At the time of the evaluation the site was soft ground being part of a grassed back garden in an area 500m east of the historic centre of the town that has seen extensive recent residential development, albeit much of this development being at a relatively low density.

2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 The proposed development site to the west of Wishing Well Close was trenched to a previously agreed plan with a 7m long, north-south aligned trench 3.5m to the west of each planned house footprint and a single 6m long east-west aligned trench in the area of driveway between the house plots giving an extensive sample of the overall area (see Fig. 2). The evaluation trenches were located just outside the proposed house and garage footprint areas in order to facilitate the excavation of the foundations as areas of recently disturbed ground are likely to cause weak points of potential collapse within the planned strip footings.

2.2 In all 20m of trench at a width of 1.9m were mechanically excavated under close archaeological supervision to the top of the underlying naturally occurring glaciofluvial sand deposit using a 1200mm wide, toothless, ditching bucket giving a sample of 38m², or 5% of the overall application area. The exposed sand surface was closely examined for archaeological features and any indistinct areas were hand cleaned. The upcast spoil from the trenches was closely examined for archaeological

finds. Site visibility for features and finds is considered to have been good throughout the evaluation on a clear, sunny, day. The trenches were recorded in relation to existing mapped details. A full photographic record in digital format was taken of the trenching works (see Appendix I).

3. Results

(see Fig. 2)

3.1 Trench 1 was aligned north-south and was 3.5m to the west of the northern house plot. This trench was 7m long by 1.9m wide and the naturally occurring pale yellow sand with small flints and chalk fragments underlying the site was revealed under 300mm of a sandy topsoil. No archaeological features were revealed and the only finds in the upcast spoil were items of modern debris.

3.2 Trench 2 was aligned north-south and was 3.5m to the west of the southern house plot. This trench was 7m long by 1.9m wide and the naturally occurring pale yellow sand with small flints and chalk fragments underlying the site was revealed under 300mm of a sandy topsoil and 200mm of a mid brown sandy subsoil. The naturally occurring sand did show a moderate degree of root disturbance so these areas were cleaned by hand but no archaeological features were revealed and the only finds in the upcast spoil were items of modern debris.

3.3 Trench 3 was aligned east-west and was located in the centre of the planned driveway between the proposed house plots. This trench was 6m long by 1.9m wide and the naturally occurring pale yellow sand with small flints and chalk fragments underlying the site was revealed under 300mm of a sandy topsoil and 200mm of a mid brown sandy subsoil. The only feature revealed in this trench was the base of a rabbit burrow with the characteristic entry runs being visible on its western and southern sides as they ran up from the base of the burrow into the subsoil above (see Appendix I- Images 4 & 5). This burrow, which contained a pale brown sandy fill with occasional yellow sand bands, was investigated by hand to confirm the interpretation based on the entry runs seen running into the subsoil and it proved to be 450mm deep at its base with the characteristic profile of a burrow with entry runs. The only pre-modern find from the upcast spoil was a small white, heat cracked flint (weight 10g) which while essentially not dateable could be of prehistoric origin.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The lack of any significant features or finds from what represents a substantial sample of the proposed overall development area indicates that this site, though relatively close to the nearby river, has seen no activity, save general agricultural use, in the past. While the evaluation trenches did not sample the proposed house footprint areas their close proximity is likely to be a good indicator as to the archaeological potential of these areas which will see significant ground disturbance for the planned ground works. The single, small, burnt flint by itself is not a find of great significance.

4.3 Based on the evaluation results it is recommended that no further archaeological investigations be carried out on the proposed site to the west of Wishing Well Close, Brandon.

John Newman Archaeological Services

Archive- to be deposited with the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service under the HER ref. BRD 216.

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 Barry Beard and his contractor for their close cooperation).

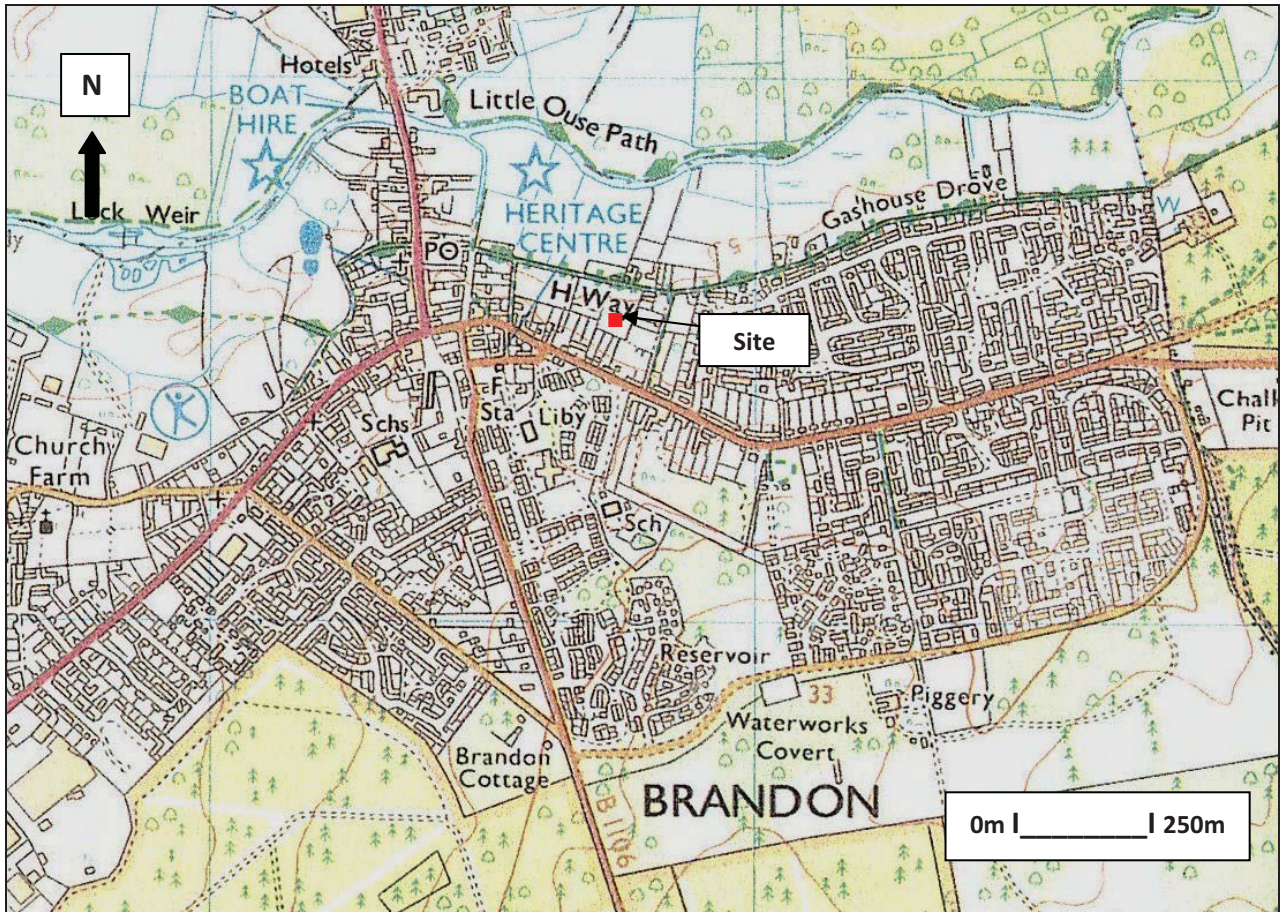


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2006
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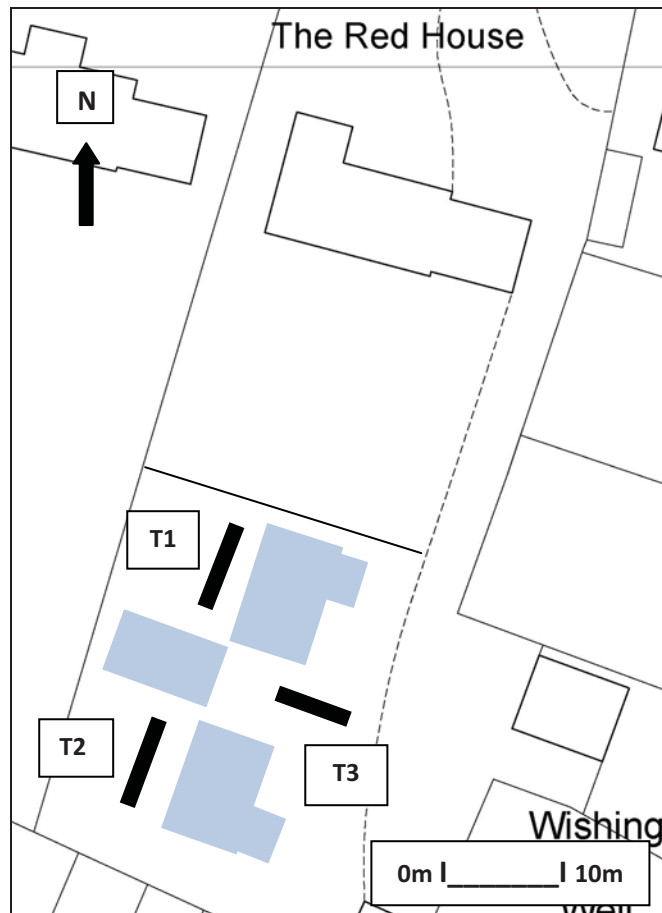


Fig. 2: Proposed footprints with location of trial trenches (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2011 All rights reserved Licence No: 100049722)

Appendix I- Images



Image 1: general view from north east



Image 2: Trench 1 from the north



Image 3: Trench 2 from the north



Image 4: Trench 3 from the west (rabbit burrow in mid-distance as revealed)



Image 5: Rabbit burrow in T3 from the west showing entry run in foreground from the west and part of entry run from the south to the left of the section with the base of the burrow below the section

9-10 The Churchyard, Shire Hall
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IP33 2AR

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Evaluation

LAND OFF WISHING WELL CLOSE (REAR OF THE RED HOUSE GAS HOUSE DROVE), BRANDON, SUFFOLK (F/2010/0856/FUL)

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities.

1. The nature of the development and archaeological requirements

- 1.1 Planning permission has been sought from Forest Heath District Council (F/2010/0856/FUL) for the erection of two new dwellings and access on Land off Wishing Well Close (rear of the Red House Gas House Drove), Brandon (TL 787 865). **Please contact the applicant for an accurate plan of the site.**
- 1.2 The Planning Authority has been advised that any consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of work taking place before development begins in accordance with PPS 5 *Planning for the Historic Environment* (Policy HE 12.3) to record and advance understanding of the significance of the heritage asset before it is damaged or destroyed.
- 1.3 The site is located on the south side of the valley of the Little Ouse at c.7.00m OD (on the south side of Gas House Drove). The soil is deep sand derived from the underlying glaciofluvial drift deposits.
- 1.4 This application is situated within an area of archaeological interest that is recorded in the County Historic Environment Record. There is high potential for early occupation deposits to be disturbed by development at this location given the landscape setting, within the Little Ouse valley. The proposed works will cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.5 In order to inform the archaeological mitigation strategy, the following work will be required:
 - A linear trenched evaluation is required of the development area.
- 1.6 The results of this evaluation will enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified. Decisions on the need for and scope of any mitigation measures, should there be any archaeological finds of significance, will be based upon the results of the evaluation and will be the subject of an additional specification.
- 1.7 All arrangements for the field evaluation 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 with the commissioning body.
- 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 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute for 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. The WSI will provide the basis for measurable standards and will be used to satisfy the requirements of the planning condition.

- 1.10 Neither this specification nor the WSI, however, is a sufficient basis for the discharge of the planning condition relating to archaeological investigation. Only the full implementation of the scheme, both completion of fieldwork and reporting based on the approved WSI, will enable SCCAS/CT to advise Forest Heath District Council that the condition has been adequately fulfilled and can be discharged (assuming planning permission is forthcoming).
- 1.11 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of SCC (SCCAS/CT) before execution.
- 1.12 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.
- 1.13 Any changes to the specifications that the project archaeologist may wish to make after approval by this office should be communicated directly to SCCAS/CT and the client for approval.

2. Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ*.
- 2.2 Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- 2.4 Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence.
- 2.5 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.
- 2.6 This project will be carried through in a manner broadly consistent with English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (MAP2), all stages will follow a process of assessment and justification before proceeding to the next phase of the project. Field evaluation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential. Any further excavation required as mitigation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential, analysis and final report preparation may follow. Each stage will be the subject of a further brief and updated project design; this document covers only the evaluation stage.

- 2.7 The developer or his archaeologist will give SCCAS/CT (address as above) 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.
- 2.8 If the approved evaluation design is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected. Alternatively the presence of an archaeological deposit may be presumed, and untested areas included on this basis when defining the final mitigation strategy.
- 2.9 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

3. Specification: Trenched Evaluation

- 3.1 A single trial trench 20.00m long x 1.80m wide is to be excavated to cover the area of the new development. It has been agreed that the trench can be located immediately adjacent to the proposed new dwellings.
- 3.2 If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' 1.50m wide must be used. A scale plan showing the proposed locations of the trial trenches should be included in the WSI and the detailed trench design must be approved by SCCAS/CT before field work begins.
- 3.3 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine with a back-acting arm and fitted with a toothless bucket, down to the interface layer between topsoil and subsoil or other visible archaeological surface. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 3.4 The top of the first archaeological deposit may be cleared by machine, but must then be cleaned off by hand. There is a presumption that excavation of all archaeological deposits will be done by hand unless it can be shown there will not be a loss of evidence by using a machine. The decision as to the proper method of excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- 3.5 In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation; that significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled. For guidance:
- For linear features, 1.00m wide slots (min.) should be excavated across their width;
- For discrete features, such as pits, 50% of their fills should be sampled (in some instances 100% may be requested).
- 3.6 There must be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 3.7 Archaeological contexts should, where possible, be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. The contractor shall show what provision has been made for environmental assessment of the site and must provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from Helen Chappell, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling

archaeological deposits (Murphy, P.L. and Wiltshire, P.E.J., 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.

- 3.8 Any natural subsoil surface revealed should be hand cleaned and examined for archaeological deposits and artefacts. Sample excavation of any archaeological features revealed may be necessary in order to gauge their date and character.
- 3.9 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 3.10 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed SCCAS/CT during the course of the evaluation).
- 3.11 Human remains must be left *in situ* except in those cases where damage or desecration are to be expected, or in the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory evaluation of the site. However, the excavator should be aware of, and comply with, the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.
- 3.12 Plans of any archaeological features on the site are to be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50, 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. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum. Any variations from this must be agreed with SCCAS/CT.
- 3.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies and/or high resolution digital images.
- 3.14 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 3.15 Trenches should not be backfilled without the approval of SCCAS/CT. Suitable arrangements should be made with the client to ensure trenches are appropriately backfilled, compacted and consolidated in order to prevent subsequent subsidence.

4. General Management

- 4.1 A timetable for all stages of the project must be agreed before the first stage of work commences, including monitoring by SCCAS/CT. The archaeological contractor will give not less than five days written notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.
- 4.2 The composition of the archaeology contractor staff must be detailed and agreed by this office, including any subcontractors/specialists. For the site director and other staff likely to have a major responsibility for the post-excavation processing of this evaluation there must also be a statement of their responsibilities or a CV for post-excavation work on other archaeological sites and publication record. Ceramic specialists, in particular, must have relevant experience from this region, including knowledge of local ceramic sequences.
- 4.3 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that adequate resources are available to fulfill the Brief.
- 4.4 A detailed risk assessment must be provided for this particular site.
- 4.5 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.

- 4.6 The Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised 2001) should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds must be prepared consistent with the principles of English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (particularly Appendix 3.1 and Appendix 4.1).
- 5.2 The report should reflect the aims of the WSI.
- 5.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 5.4 An opinion as to the necessity for further evaluation and its scope may be given. No further site work should be embarked upon until the primary fieldwork results are assessed and the need for further work is established.
- 5.5 Reports on specific areas of specialist study must include sufficient detail to permit assessment of potential for analysis, including tabulation of data by context, and must include non-technical summaries.
- 5.6 The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence, including an assessment of palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological potential of the site, and the significance of that potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.7 The results of the surveys should be related to the relevant known archaeological information held in the County Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 5.8 A copy of the Specification should be included as an appendix to the report.
- 5.9 The project manager must consult the County HER Officer (Dr Colin Pendleton) to obtain a HER 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.
- 5.10 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*.
- 5.11 Every effort must be made to get the agreement of the landowner/developer to the deposition of the full site archive, and transfer of title, with the intended archive depository before the fieldwork commences. If this is not achievable for all or parts of the finds archive then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, scientific analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.12 If the County Store is not the intended depository, the project manager should ensure that a duplicate copy of the written archive is deposited with the County HER.
- 5.13 The project manager should consult the intended archive depository before the archive is prepared regarding the specific requirements for the archive deposition and curation, and regarding any specific cost implications of deposition. The intended depository should be stated in the WSI, for approval. The intended depository must be prepared to accept the entire archive resulting from the project (both finds and written archive) in order to create a complete record of the project.

- 5.14 If the County Store is the intended location of the archive, the project manager should consult the SCCAS Archive Guidelines 2010 and also the County Historic Environment Record Officer regarding the requirements for the deposition of the archive (conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage) of excavated material and the archive. A clear statement of the form, intended content, and standards of the archive is to be submitted for approval as an essential requirement of the WSI.
- 5.15 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 the proper deposition (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>) with ADS or another appropriate archive depository.
- 5.16 Where positive conclusions are drawn from a project (whether it be evaluation or excavation) a summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology*, must be prepared. It should be included in the project report, or submitted to SCCAS/CT, by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.
- 5.17 An unbound hardcopy of the evaluation report, clearly marked DRAFT, must be presented to SCCAS/CT for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated with the project sponsor and SCCAS/CT.
- Following acceptance, two hard copies of the report should be submitted to SCCAS/CT together with a digital .pdf version.
- 5.18 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 HER. 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.
- 5.19 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.
- 5.20 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the County HER, and a copy should be included with the draft report for approval. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Dr Jess Tipper

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Date: 13 January 2011

Reference: /WishingWellClose_Brandon2010

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.