



**Waldringfield  
Tidal Defence Repair and Wildlife Pond**

**Archaeological Monitoring**

**ESF 22926**

**Heather Wallis  
February 2016**

**HW Report No. 173**



<b>Project name</b>	<b>Waldringfield Tidal Defence Repair</b>
<b>Parishes</b>	<b>Waldringfield</b>
<b>Event No.</b>	<b>ESF 22926</b>
<b>Grid Ref.</b>	<b>TM 28511 44773 to TM 28313 45475</b>
<b>Date of Work</b>	<b>March to August 2015</b>

## Introduction

The East Suffolk Internal Drainage Board has undertaken works at Waldringfield to repair the tidal defences and create freshwater wetland habitat adjacent to the River Deben (Fig. 1).

Works include the excavation of a new dyke and extended scrape behind the present flood bank. Material excavated from the new dyke was used to backfill an existing small dyke and raise and strengthen the flood bank.

A Brief for Archaeological monitoring of the groundwork associated with this project was issued by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (dated 17/2/2015). The archaeological monitoring was carried out according to Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Heather Wallis (February 2015) and complied with the requirements of the Brief.



Fig 1. Site location showing new dyke (blue) and strengthened section of flood bank (orange).

## **Location, Topography and Geology**

Waldringfield is located on the right bank of the River Deben some 6km to the south of Woodbridge. The river rises further north near to Debenham entering the North Sea to the north of Felixstowe. From Woodbridge to the North Sea the river forms a tidal estuary.

The underlying bedrock along the valley is Thames Group clay, silty sedimentary bedrock while the higher landscape beyond this is made up of Crag Formation sand and sedimentary bedrock. On this higher ground the superficial geology is Kesgrave Catchment sand and gravels while the riverine superficial geology is made up mainly of Tidal Flat Deposits of clay and silt with some areas of river terrace sand and gravel.

(<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

## **Archaeological Background**

No known archaeological sites lay on the line of the excavations although the flood bank itself is probably post-medieval in date. To the east of the flood bank are the wet mudflats of the River Deben within which a number of wooden posts and hulks have been recorded. To the west of the works, on the 'high' ground above river valley a number of finds mainly of medieval and post-medieval date have been recovered. These lay c.300m from the proposed works.

Slightly further afield to the north of the village aerial photographs have revealed a complex of field boundaries and enclosures. These are thought to be Iron Age and/or Roman in date and a number of finds of this date have been found in this area. Further areas of field boundaries, also possibly of late prehistoric or Roman date have been identified to the south of the present village.

Given the location of the works there was the possibility that previously unrecorded evidence could be revealed such as salterns or waterlogged wood structures.

## **The works**

The scheme was designed to achieve two goals; the repair and restoration of the tidal flood bank with its footpath and the establishment of a freshwater nature reserve. The works consisted of the excavation of a new dyke and wide shallow pond with the material from these excavations used to raise and strengthen the floodbank.

## Monitoring and Recording methods

Monitoring was undertaken at regular intervals during the machine excavation of the dykes and pond. The sides of the excavations were inspected for any revealed archaeological features and the spoil monitored in order to retrieve any disturbed finds. Prior to works commencing the excavation team were briefed on the possibility of revealing archaeological deposits, including preserved wood and burnt material, and were encouraged to report findings immediately. Archaeological records of the watching brief comprise written, drawn and photographic data.

All works were carried out in full accordance with national and regional guidelines for the treatment of archaeological remains, and in particular the guidance set out in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003) and the *Institute of Field Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2001).

## Archaeological Monitoring

Five monitoring visits were made during the period of works. A photographic record (Figs 2 and 3) was made on each visit along with descriptions of the revealed soils.



Fig. 2. Excavation of dyke, looking north.

The revealed deposits were consistent along the length of the dyke and within the pond. The lowest deposit was orange/grey silty sand, observed at an

approximate depth of 0.5m. Above this was c.0.3m of orange/grey silty clay over which sat c.0.2m of dark brown clayey loam topsoil.



Fig. 3. Excavation of pond, looking north-east.

No archaeological features or deposits were seen during the excavation works and no artefacts were recovered.

## Conclusions

Despite being in an area close to known activity, particularly that of the medieval and post-medieval date, no features or finds were disturbed or revealed by the works.



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### Project details

Project name	Waldringfield Tidal Defence
Short description of the project	Watching brief carried out on excavation of new dyke and wildlife pond at Waldringfield. Excavated material used to strengthen floodbank. No features revealed, no finds recovered.
Project dates	Start: 02-03-2015 End: 31-08-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	ENS22926 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK SUFFOLK COASTAL WALDRINGFIELD Waldringfield Tidal Defence
Study area	0.65 Kilometres
Site coordinates	TM 28511 44773 52.053573966984 1.33338325937 52 03 12 N 001 20 00 E Line
Site coordinates	TM 28313 45474 52.059948473201 1.330968728617 52 03 35 N 001 19 51 E Line

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### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Heather Wallis
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Heather Wallis
Project director/manager	Heather Wallis
Project supervisor	None
Type of sponsor/funding body	IDB

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### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","other"
Paper Media available	"Miscellaneous Material","Report"

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### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Waldringfield Tidal Flood Defences and Wildlife Pond. Archaeological monitoring.
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