

Report 2758



NPS archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation at Land off Hockey Hill, Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford, Suffolk

WCB 067



Prepared for
Burgess Homes Ltd
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Wortham
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October 2012



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Plate 1. Evaluation trenches, looking south

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Location: | Hockey Hill, Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford, Suffolk |
| District: | Mid Suffolk |
| Grid Ref.: | TM 126 665 |
| HER No.: | WCB 067 |
| OASIS Ref.: | 105049 |
| Client: | Burgess Homes Ltd |
| Dates of Fieldwork: | 30 May 2011 |

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by NPS Archaeology on land off Hockey Hill, Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford, Suffolk where construction of new housing and an associated access road is proposed.

Three trenches measuring between 10m and 30m in length and each 1.8m wide were excavated within the footprint of the proposed development.

No archaeological feature or deposits were observed and no finds were collected.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

A proposal to develop land at Hockey Hill, Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford, Suffolk (Fig. 1) required a programme of archaeological works to assess the potential effects of the proposals on the archaeological resource.

This work was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition set by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Services Conservation Team (Jess Tipper, 11 May, 2011). The work was conducted in accordance with a Project Design and Method Statement prepared by NPS Archaeology (Ref. NPS/BAU2758/DW). This work was funded and commissioned by Burgess Homes Ltd.

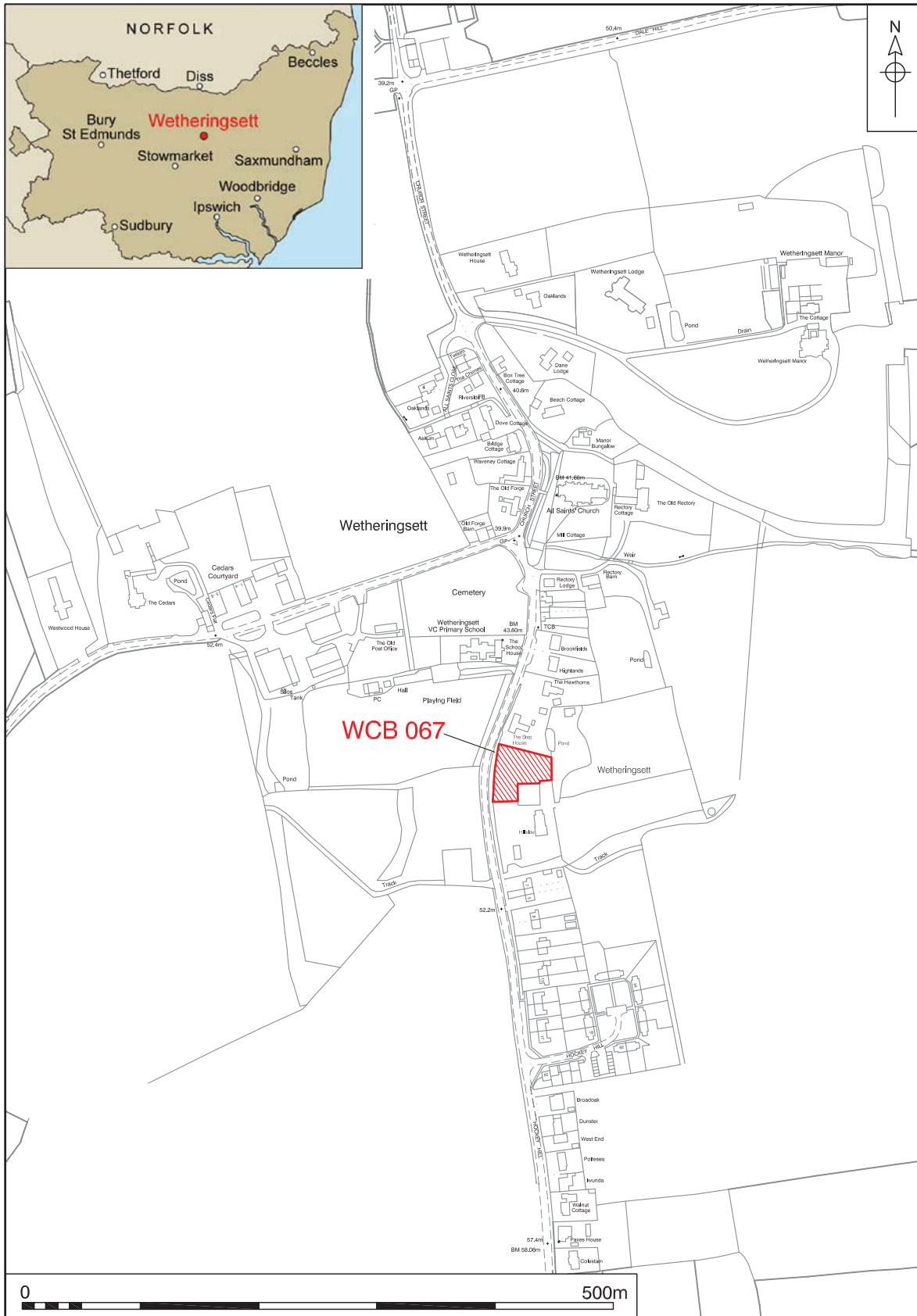
This programme of work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, following the guidelines set out in *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (Department for Communities and Local Government 2010). The results will enable decisions to be made by the Local Planning Authority about the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by NPS Archaeology and on completion of the project will be deposited with the Suffolk Historic Environmental Record.

2.0 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The solid geology consists of undifferentiated gravels, sands, silts and clays overlain by boulder clay.

The village is located 16 miles north of Ipswich, 11 miles north-east of Stowmarket and 5 miles north-west of Debenham. The parish contains the village of Wetheringsett together with several hamlets i.e. Blacksmith's Green, Broad Green, Brockford Street, Brockford Green, Knaves Green, Page's Green, Park Green, Pitman's Corner, Wetherup Street and White Horse Corner.



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Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:5000

The proposed development site lies at an elevation of 48m OD to the south sloping downwards to 45.50m OD to the north.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site is situated in a rich archaeological landscape. A number of archaeological investigations have taken place in recent years, revealing extensive evidence of past activity in the area.

The Suffolk Historical and Environmental Records (SHER) has been consulted and the most relevant entries are discussed in broad chronological order below (where finds of other periods are present from the same site they are shown in the period category of the main find).

Iron Age

WCB 010 located to the north-east of the site produced an Iceni 'Boar-Horse B' silver coin with a star under the horse. Also recovered from the same site were two Roman Colchester derivative brooches, a Middle Saxon bronze disc brooch, a Roman or Saxon glass bead and a Late Saxon long cross penny of Harold (1035-1040) minted in Ipswich by moneyer 'LIFINC'.

Roman

WCB 062 located to the north of the site produced a scatter of metal detecting finds which included a bow brooch, Colchester derivative brooches, a finger ring and coins. Also recovered was a Late Saxon coin of Cnut and a medieval bird-shaped silver mount with traces of gilding on the front.

Saxon

WCB 060 located to the north of the site produced a silver gilt fragment of a square-headed brooch dating to the Early Saxon period.

Medieval

The church of All Saints (DSF 5170) was built in the 13th century and restored in the 1850s. It consists of an aisled nave, chancel, west tower, south porch, north vestry (formerly a chapel). The earliest phase of the church has the 13th-century four-bay aisles and much-renewed three-light perpendicular-style windows. The aisles retain 13th-century doorways. The south aisle has a 14th-century west window with reticulated tracery. There is a 15th-century square tower, an aisled roof of probable 15th-century origin but significantly restored and poppy-head benches (some still with original 15th-century ends). The octagonal font was made c.1660 and has carved panels with mainly shields however the base of the font may date to the 13th century. Several 17th- to 18th-century ledger slabs, in particular honouring members of the Sheppard family are present. Other furnishings date to the mid-late 19th century.

Post medieval

To the north of the site a witch bottle was found beneath a hearth during the removal of a fire-place in Bridge Cottage.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence or absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

The Brief required that the evaluation should examine a 5% sample of the development area (2,500m²).

Machine excavation was carried out with a wheeled JCB excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket and operated under constant archaeological supervision.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal-detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds, other than those which were obviously modern, were retained for inspection.

No environmental samples were taken as no suitable deposits were encountered.

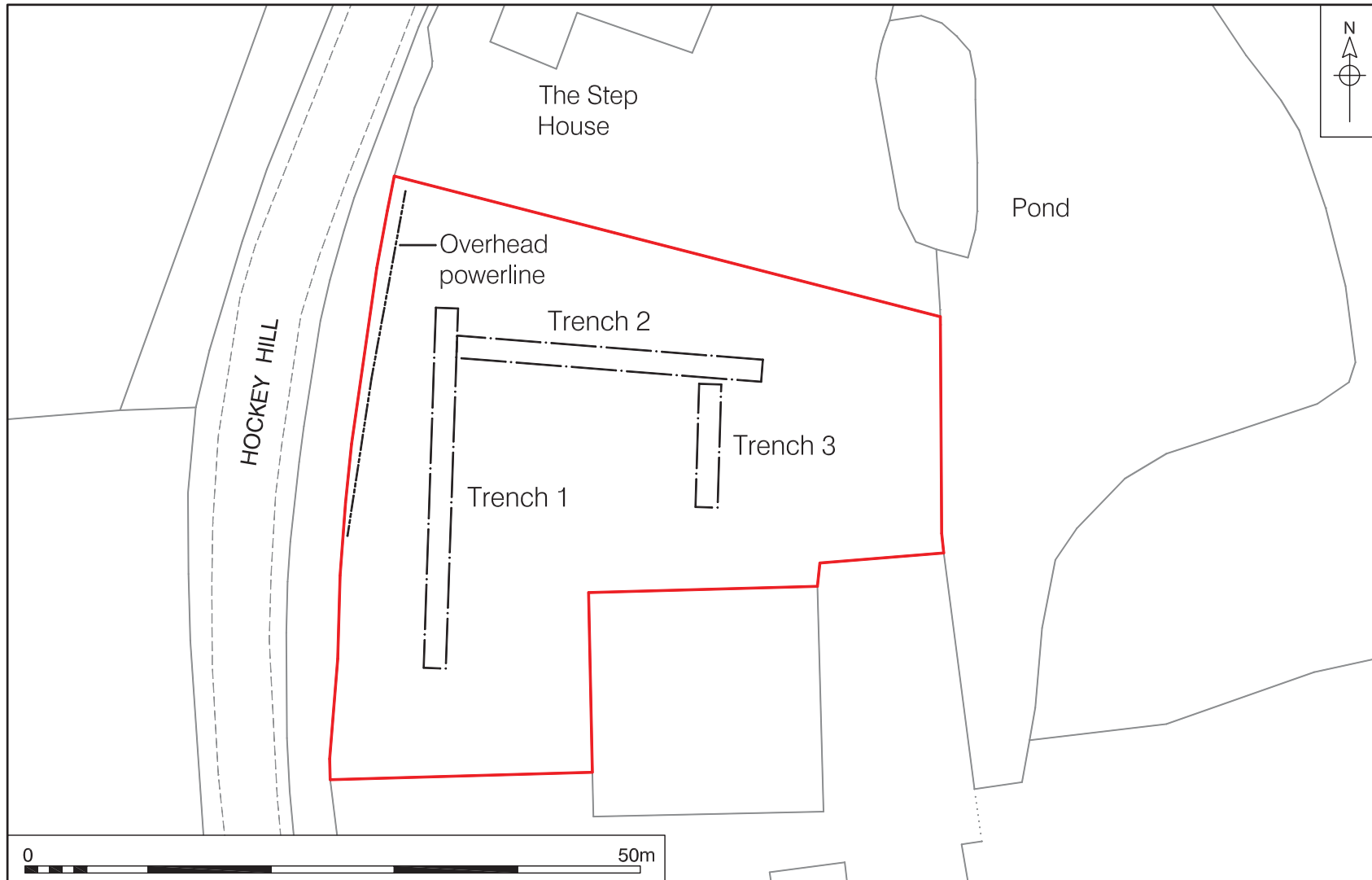
All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using NPS Archaeology pro forma. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales. Colour and monochrome were taken of all relevant features and deposits where appropriate.

All trenches were located using a Leica GPS9000. Temporary benchmarks were positioned at the ends of each trench and were established by the use of Leica GPS9000.

Site conditions were good, with the work taking place in fine weather.



Plate1. Evaluation trenches, looking south



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Figure 2. Trench location. Scale 1:500

5.0 RESULTS

(Fig. 2)

Trench 1

Trench 1 was orientated north-south and measured 29.30m long by 1.8m wide. It was excavated to a depth ranging between 0.20m (north end) to 0.40m (south end). The height of the ground surface at the southern end of the trench was 48.31m OD and 45.86m OD at the northern end.

The excavated overburden consisted of homogeneous dark blackish brown clayey sand (01) which contained frequent lumps of charcoal, occasional fragments of brick rubble and modern rusted iron objects (not retained). No subsoil was seen in section and the natural ground consisted of very firm mixed orangey clay and chalky till with frequent large flint nodules.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was orientated east-west and measured 25m long by 1.8m wide. It was excavated to a depth ranging between 0.30m (west end) to 0.40m (east end). The height of the ground surface at the western end of the trench was 46.03m OD and 47.20m OD at the eastern end.

Deposits in Trench 2 were very similar to those observed in Trench 1; the overburden consisted of homogeneous dark blackish brown clayey sand (01) which contained frequent lumps of charcoal, occasional fragments of brick rubble and rusted iron objects of modern date (discarded on site). No subsoil was seen in section and the natural ground consisted of very firm mixed orangey clay and chalky till with frequent large flint nodules.

Trench 3

As the combined length of 35m that was planned for Trenches 1 and 2 could not be achieved, Trench 3 was excavated to make up the difference and to achieve the desired evaluation sample size.

Trench 3 was orientated north-south and measured 10m long by 1.8m wide. It was excavated to a depth ranging between 0.40m (north end) and 0.20m (south end). The height of the ground surface at the northern end of the trench was 47.08m OD and 47.76m OD at its southern end.

The excavated overburden consisted of homogeneous dark blackish brown clayey sand (01) which contained frequent lumps of charcoal, occasional fragments of brick rubble and modern rusted iron objects (not retained). No subsoil was seen in section and the natural ground consisted of very firm mixed orangey clay and chalky till with frequent large flint nodules.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The mixed deposit (01) that overlay the natural strongly suggested that truncation of the ground surface may have taken place in this area the past which may explain the lack of subsoil and archaeological features within the development area.

Recommendations for future work will be based upon the results of this report by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team.

Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Simon Burgess of Burgess Homes Ltd for funding and commissioning the project and also for supplying the machine and welfare facilities. Thanks are extended to Jess Tipper (SCCAS) for his consideration and help during this project.

The author and Lilly Hodges undertook the fieldwork. Sandrine Whitmore undertook the surveying of the trenches. The report was produced by David Dobson and edited by Jayne Bown.

Bibliography

Department for Communities and Local Government 2010 *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* TSO, London

Appendix 1: Context Summary

| Context | Category | Type | Description | Period |
|----------------|-----------------|-------------|--|---------------|
| 01 | Deposit | Topsoil | Mixed deposit of black charcoal rich clayey sand which contained fragments brick rubble and iron | Modern |

Appendix 2: Archaeological Specification

9-10 The Churchyard, Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
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Brief and Specification for Archaeological Evaluation

LAND AT HOCKEY HILL, WETHERINGSETT-CUM-BROCKFORD (0922/11)

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 Mid Suffolk District Council (0922/11) for the erection of four dwellings on Land at Hockey Hill, Wetheringsett-cum-Brockford (TM 126 665). **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 area of the residential development measures c.0.25ha. on the east side of Hockey Hill at c.45–50.00m OD. The soil is deep loam to clay derived from the underlying chalky till of the Beccles Series.
- 1.4 This application lies in an area of high archaeological interest recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, within the historic settlement core. It is situated to the south of the medieval church (HER: WCB 041). Moreover, the application is located to the west of Iron Age, Roman and Anglo-Saxon find spots (WCB 010) that indicate earlier occupation within the immediate vicinity. There is a strong possibility that medieval and earlier deposits will be encountered at this location, given the proximity to known remains. Any groundworks causing significant ground disturbance have potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.5 In order to inform the archaeological strategy, the following work will be required:
 - A linear trenched evaluation is required of the development area. This work must be undertaken before any groundworks relating to the demolition of the current bungalow are undertaken (although the superstructure of the bungalow may be removed, i.e. to ground level).
- 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 further investigation, 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). 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 Mid Suffolk 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 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover 5% by area of the development site (c.125.00m² in total area). Linear trenches are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. Trenches are to be a minimum of 1.80m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated; this will result in a minimum of 70.00m of trenching at 1.80m in width.
- 3.2 If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' 1.80m 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: 11 May 2011

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.