

Racehorse Rehabilitation/Assessment
Centre, Palace House Stables, Newmarket
NKT 036

Archaeological Evaluation Report

SCCAS Report No. 2012/006

Client: Forest Heath District Council

Author: Simon Cass

January 2012

Racehorse Rehabilitation/Assessment Centre, Palace House Stables, Newmarket NKT 036

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Report Date: January 2012

HER Information

Report Number: 2012/006

Site Name: Racehorse Rehabilitation /Assessment Centre,
Palace House Stables, Newmarket

Planning Application No: F/10/0683/EOT

Date of Fieldwork: 17-01-2012

Grid Reference: TL 6461 6329

Client/Funding Body: Forest Heath District Council

Client Reference: -

Curatorial Officer: Jess Tipper

Project Officer: Simon Cass

Oasis Reference: suffolkc1-118099

Site Code: NKT 036

Digital report submitted to Archaeological Data Service:

<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Team alone. Ultimately the need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its Archaeological Advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting services cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to the clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.

Prepared By: Simon Cass

Date: 31/01/2012

Approved By: Jo Caruth

Position: Contracts Manager

Date: 31/01/2012

Signed:

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Summary

Planning consent was given by Forest Heath District Council for the construction of a ménage and viewing area and a new barn as part of the redevelopment of unused stables for a racehorse rehabilitation centre on land to the rear of Palace House Stables, Newmarket. A condition relating to archaeology was imposed on this development, requiring a scheme of archaeological investigation prior to the commencement of the development in order to assess the likelihood of archaeologically relevant deposits being disturbed and if so, to provide for an appropriate mitigation strategy. No artefacts or deposits of archaeological relevance were observed during this evaluation and no further works are recommended as being necessary in order to fulfil the condition placed on these parts of the redevelopment of the site. It should be noted that works not covered by this application may attract further archaeological requirements.

1. Introduction

Planning consent was given by Forest Heath District Council for the construction of a ménage and viewing area and a new barn as part of the redevelopment of unused stables for a racehorse rehabilitation centre on land to the rear of Palace House Stables, Newmarket. A condition relating to archaeology was imposed on this development, requiring a scheme of archaeological investigation prior to the commencement of the development in order to assess the likelihood of archaeologically relevant deposits being disturbed and if so, to provide for an appropriate mitigation strategy.

2. Geology and topography

The underlying geology on the site is recorded as loamy deposits over chalk. The geology noted in the trenches was a mixed silty sand with very frequent flints and stones, with occasional patches of chalk fragments and lumps. The site lies on a gentle slope up to the north-east, at a height of approximately 30m AOD, in an area currently grassed over and believed to have most recently been used as pasture.

3. Archaeology and historical background

The site subject to evaluation lies adjacent to Palace House Stables, which is sited on the remains of the 'racing stables' built by Charles II in the later 17th century, next to his Palace in Newmarket (Fig. 1). Much of the potential for this evaluation derives from its location close to this important area, and the expected range of features would include peripheral developments outlying the royal stables such as boundary ditches or postlines. Another possibility would be for structural remains to be along this route, documentary records note that some buildings were demolished due to their obscuring/impinging on Queen Anne's view of the open countryside which (because of the known layout of the Royal Palace) must have passed along this area.

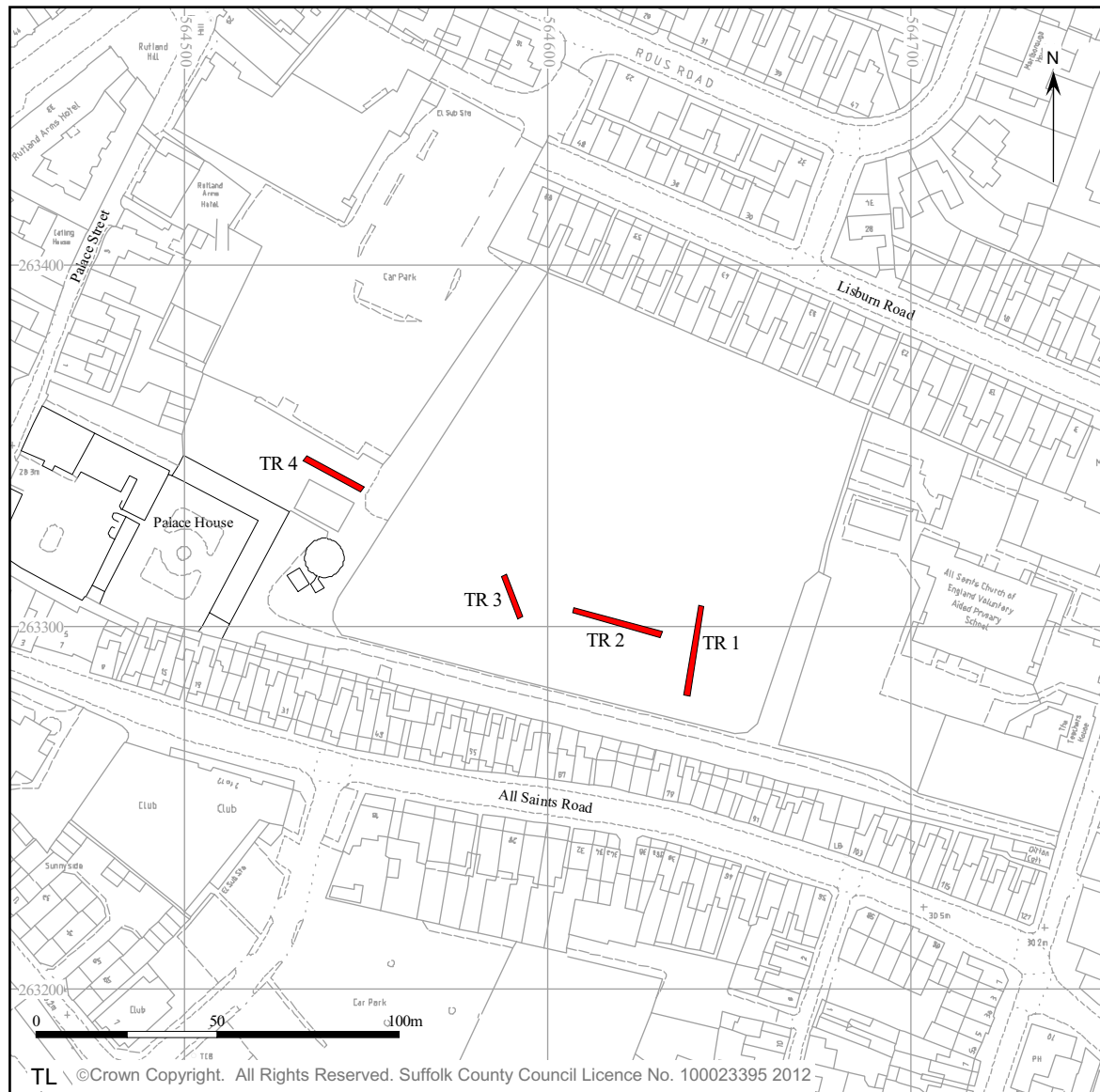
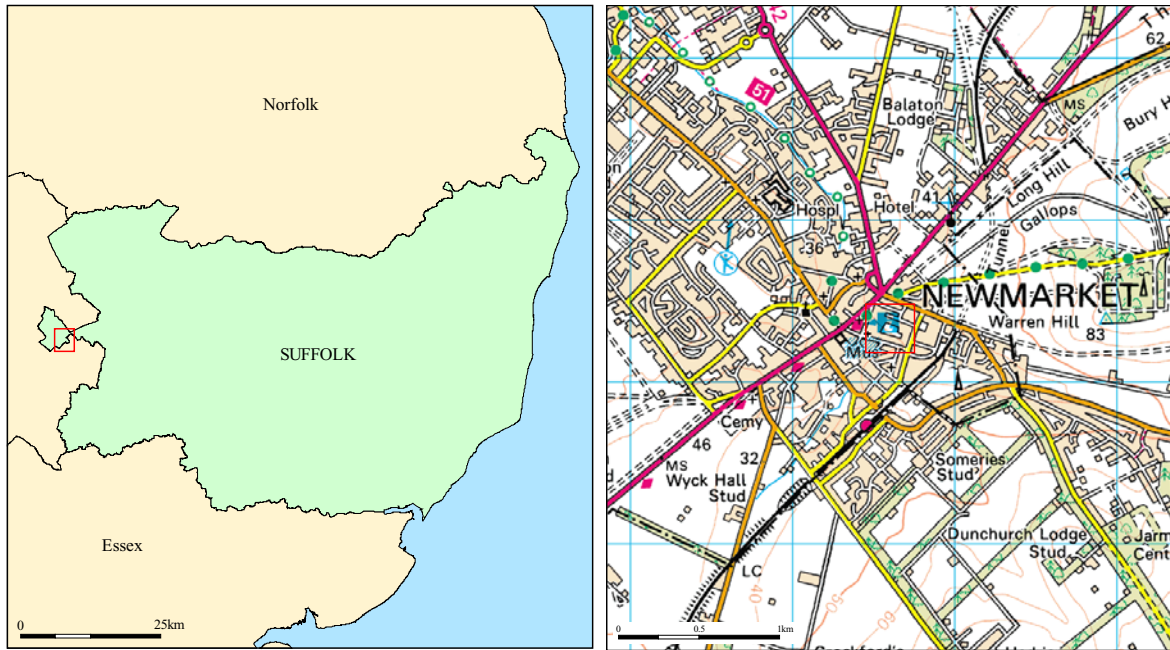


Figure 1. Location map

4. Methodology

The Brief and Specification (Appendix 1) required that 5% of the development area (c. 125sq m) should be subject to trial trenching. This equated to four trenches, each 1.8m wide with a total length of 78m. The trenches were located to cover the areas most affected by the proposed development on the site. In total, 80.5m of trench was excavated (c.128.6sq m).

The trenches were excavated by a 7-tonne 360⁰ tracked mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket. All machining was constantly supervised by an experienced archaeologist. Overburden was removed until the first archaeological horizon or top of the natural substrate was encountered.

Deposits were recorded using SCCAS *pro forma* sheets and plans and sections were hand-drawn at 1:50 and 1:20 where necessary. A photographic record was made using a high resolution digital SLR camera (6.2 megapixels).

The location of each trench was established prior to excavation using GPS surveying equipment to an accuracy of within 0.05m. Trench 3 was repositioned to investigate a feature visible on the surface close by its original position.

A digital copy of the report will be submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>) upon completion of the project.

The site archives are kept in the store of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service in Bury St Edmunds under HER No. NKT 036.

5. Results

Trench 1

This trench was 25m long, 1.6m wide and up to 0.58m deep (though more usually c.0.4m), orientated approximately north-south towards the eastern side of the proposed ménage site (Pl. 1). The stratigraphy encountered consisted of c.0.28m of mid brown sandy silt topsoil over up to 0.3m of mid orangey brown silty sand with moderate chalk

flecks, and small flints and gravel inclusions (interpreted as natural geology). No archaeologically relevant finds or deposits were noted in this trench.



Plate 1. Trench 1, facing south (2m and 1m scales)

Trench 2

This trench was 25m long, 1.6m wide and up to 0.44m deep, orientated approximately east-west, across the centre of the proposed ménage site (Pl. 2). The stratigraphy encountered consisted of c.0.28m of mid brown sandy silt topsoil over 0.16m of mid orangey brown silty sand with moderate chalk flecks, very frequent small-medium flints and gravel inclusions (interpreted as natural geology) and an outcrop of significantly more chalky gravels. No archaeologically relevant finds or deposits were noted in this trench.



Plate 2. Trench 2, facing west (2m and 1m scales)

Trench 3

This trench was 12.5m long, 1.6m wide and up to 0.5m deep (though normally c. 0.35m), orientated approximately northwest-southeast, and was originally intended to pass along the location of the proposed viewing platform for the ménage (Pl. 3). It was moved slightly to investigate a shallow depression in the field surface nearby which was believed to be a sand-bath of uncertain date. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of c.0.35m of mid brown sandy silt topsoil over mid orangy brown silty sand with moderate chalk flecks, and small flints and gravel inclusions (interpreted as natural geology). The depression was confirmed to be a sand bath, which had been excavated through the topsoil but terminated at the interface with the natural stony sands and was filled with clean soft yellow sand. It is believed that this feature is modern, due to the cleanness and grading of the sand. Two postholes were noted in the southern end of the trench, both were positively dated as being of modern origin and not further investigated. No archaeologically relevant finds or deposits were noted in this trench.



Plate 3. Trench 3, facing southeast (2m and 1m scales)

Trench 4

This trench was 18.5m long, 1.6m wide and up to 0.44m deep, orientated approximately east-west, across the location of a proposed new barn to the north of the Stables. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of c.0.32m of mid brown sandy silt topsoil over 0.12m of mid orangey brown silty sand with moderate chalk flecks, and small flints and gravel inclusions (interpreted as natural geology). Significant quantities of roots were noted, likely from the mature trees just to the east of this trench. No archaeologically relevant finds or deposits were noted in this trench.

6. Finds and environmental evidence

No finds of archaeological relevance were observed during this evaluation.

7. Discussion

The absence of any archaeological activity in the trenches, coupled with the shallow depth of natural geology suggests that this area has probably only ever been used as grassland/grazing land. The lack of anything other than very intermittent modern detritus in the topsoil suggests that there was little activity in this direction from the Royal Stables – possibly it was only ever a route out of the more developed areas of Newmarket to other stables and studs nearby.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

The results of this evaluation indicate that there is little potential for the ground works involved in the creation of the ménage, viewing platform and new barn in this field to disturb archaeological deposits of significance. It should be noted that any work involved in renovations nearer the upstanding stables may require further monitoring, although this would require separate planning/listed building consent as well and could likely be assessed at that time.

9. Archive deposition

Paper archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds

Digital archive: SCCAS R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\Archaeology\Archive\
Newmarket\NMK 036 Evaluation

Digital photographic archive: SCCAS R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\
Archaeology\Catalogues\Photos\HOA-HOZ\HOV 58-61

Finds and environmental archive: None.

10. Acknowledgements

The project was directed and managed by Dave Gill. The evaluation was carried out by Simon Cass and John Simms from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

Post-excavation graphics were produced by Simon Cass and the report was edited by Richenda Goffin.

Appendix 1. Brief and Specification**Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation**

AT

**PALACE HOUSE STABLES,
ROTHSCHILD YARD,
NEWMARKET,
SUFFOLK**

PLANNING AUTHORITY:	Forest Heath District Council
PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:	B/10/0683/EOT
HER NO. FOR THIS PROJECT:	To be arranged
GRID REFERENCE:	TL 644 633
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:	Change of use to racehorse rehabilitation/assessment centre
AREA:	Small
CURRENT LAND USE:	Racehorse training establishment
THIS BRIEF ISSUED BY:	Jess Tipper Archaeological Officer Conservation Team Tel. : 01284 741225 E-mail: jess.tipper@suffolk.gov.uk
Date:	18 October 2011

Summary

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted with the following condition (Condition 9) relating to archaeological investigation:

‘No development shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted by the applicant for the prior, written approval of the Local Planning Authority.’

- 1.2 The archaeological contractor must submit a copy of their Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) or Method Statement, based upon this brief of minimum requirements (and in conjunction with our standard Requirements for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation 2011), to the Conservation Team of Suffolk County

Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS/CT) for scrutiny; SCCAS/CT is the advisory body to the Local Planning Authority (LPA) on archaeological issues.

- 1.3 The WSI should be approved before costs are agreed with the commissioning client, in line with Institute for Archaeologists' guidance. Failure to do so could result in additional and unanticipated costs.
- 1.4 Following acceptance, SCCAS/CT will advise the LPA that an appropriate scheme of work is in place. The WSI, however, is not 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 (including the need for any further work following this evaluation), will enable SCCAS/CT to advise the LPA that the condition has been adequately fulfilled and can be discharged.
- 1.5 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. If the approved WSI is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected.

Archaeological Background

- 2.1 This application is located immediately to the east of the site of the world's first horse racing stable, constructed by King Charles II. The original stables were replaced with the trainer's house, the western yard and stables between 1857-1860, followed by the eastern yard and stable between 1896-1903, built for Leopold de Rothschild. The eastern yard and stables are located within the current application area. The stable complex, and individual buildings, are important heritage assets and protected as Grade II Listed Buildings. In addition, the site is located on the edge of the medieval settlement core (which has not been closely defined in this area). There is high potential for encountering heritage assets of archaeological interest at this location.

Planning Background

- 3.1 There is high potential for archaeological deposits to be disturbed by this development. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 3.2 The Planning Authority was 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 any heritage assets (that might be present at this location) before they are damaged or destroyed.

Fieldwork Requirements for Archaeological Investigation

- 4.1 A linear trenched evaluation is required of the development area to enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified.
- 4.2 Trial Trenching is 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.
- 4.3 Further evaluation could be required if unusual deposits or other archaeological finds of significance are recovered; if so, this would be the subject of an additional brief.
- 4.4 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover the area of the proposed ménage (two trenches, each 25.00m long), viewing gallery (single trench 10.00m long) and new barn (single trench 18.00m long). 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.
- 4.5 A scale plan showing the proposed location of the trial trenches should be included in the WSI and the detailed trench design must be approved by SCCAS/CT before fieldwork begins.

Arrangements for Archaeological Investigation

- 5.1 The composition of the archaeological contractor's staff must be detailed and agreed by SCCAS/CT, including any subcontractors/specialists. Ceramic specialists, in particular, must have relevant experience from this region, including knowledge of local ceramic sequences.
- 5.2 All arrangements for the evaluation of the site, the timing of the work and access to the site, are to be defined and negotiated by the archaeological contractor with the commissioning body.
- 5.3 The project manager must also carry out a risk assessment and ensure that all potential risks are minimised, before commencing the fieldwork. The responsibility for identifying any constraints on fieldwork (e.g. designated status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites and other ecological considerations rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor.

Reporting and Archival Requirements

- 6.1 The project manager must consult the Suffolk HER 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 all documentation relating to the work.
- 6.2 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared and must be adequate to perform the function of a final archive for deposition in the Archaeological Service's Store or in a suitable museum in Suffolk.
- 6.3 It is expected that the landowner will deposit the full site archive, and transfer title to, the Archaeological Service or the designated Suffolk museum, and this should be agreed before the fieldwork commences. The intended depository should be stated in the WSI, for approval.

- 6.4 The project manager should consult the intended archive depository before the archive is prepared regarding the specific requirements for the archive deposition and curation (including the digital archive), and regarding any specific cost implications of deposition.
- 6.5 A report on the fieldwork and archive must be provided. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance. The results should be related to the relevant known archaeological information held in the Suffolk HER.
- 6.6 An opinion as to the necessity for further evaluation and its scope may be given, although the final decision lies with SCCAS/CT. No further site work should be embarked upon until the evaluation results are assessed and the need for further work is established.
- 6.7 Following approval of the report by SCCAS/CT, a single copy of the report should be presented to the Suffolk HER as well as a digital copy of the approved report.
- 6.8 All parts of the OASIS online form <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be completed and a copy must be included in the final report and also with the site archive. A digital copy of the report should be uploaded to the OASIS website.
- 6.9 Where positive results are drawn from a project, a summary report must be prepared for the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*.
- 6.10 This brief remains valid for 12 months. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the brief may need to be revised and re-issued to take account of new discoveries, changes in policy and techniques.

Standards and Guidance

Further detailed requirements are to be found in our Requirements for Trenched Archaeological Evaluation 2011.

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.

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.

Notes

The Institute for Archaeologists maintains a list of registered archaeological contractors (www.archaeologists.net or 0118 378 6446). There are a number of archaeological contractors that regularly undertake work in the County and SCCAS will provide advice on request. SCCAS/CT does not give advice on the costs of archaeological projects.

Archaeological services Field Projects Team

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- Site investigation
- Outreach and educational resources
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- Environmental processing
- Finds analysis and photography
- Graphics design and illustration

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www.suffolk.gov.uk/Environment/Archaeology/