

**Wells Hall CP School, Great Cornard
COG 035**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

SCCAS Report No. 2012/021

Client: Suffolk County Council

Author: Andrew Vaughan Beverton

02/2012

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Author: Andrew Vaughan Beverton

Illustrator: Crane Begg

Report Date: 02/2012

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HER Information

Report Number: 02/2012
Site Name: Wells Hall CP School
Planning Application No: Pre-planning
Date of Fieldwork: 14th and 15th February 2012
Grid Reference: TL 889 399
Client/Funding Body: Suffolk County Council
Client Reference: CORGWELL001
Curatorial Officer: Dr Jess Tipper
Project Officer: Andrew Vaughan Beverton
Oasis Reference: suffolkc1-119298
Site Code: COG 035

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: Andrew Vaughan Beverton
Date: February 2012
Approved By: *****
Position: *****
Date: *****
Signed: *****

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Summary

Two trial trenches were excavated over two days at Wells Hall CP School, Great Cornard in advance of a program of improvement to the school's playing field and playground. The site lies within a designated Area of Archaeological Interest just to the north of a series of prehistoric funerary monuments (COG 004/028, COG 005/030, COG 006 and COG 025). The evaluation trenches revealed deep stratigraphy across the site predominantly consisting of compacted fine-sandy silts but no archaeological horizon could be identified. It was considered that the depth of the stratigraphy would be sufficient to protect any archaeology that may lie within the area and therefore no further work is recommended.

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Wells Hall CP School, Great Cornard (Fig. 1) in order to assess the potential impact of future development on the school grounds. The evaluation took place over the course of the 14th and 15th of February 2012. The work was carried out according to a Brief and Specification produced by Dr Jess Tipper of SCCAS Conservation team (Appendix 1) and was funded by Suffolk County Council.

2. Geology and topography

The site is located in the parish of Great Cornard and to the south of Sudbury town (Fig. 1) and lies at approximately 27m A.O.D overlooking the Stour river valley.

The natural geology within the development area is made up of compacted natural gravels and pea shingle with bands of fine light yellowish brown sands that are located between 1m and 1.2m below the current ground-level.

3. Archaeology and historical background

The site lies in a designated Area of Archaeological Importance. The 1st and 3rd editions of the Ordnance Survey (late 19th and early 20th Century respectively) record the site as an area of open farmland. The current use of the site as a playground and playing field should have caused little significant disturbance below plough-soil depth and provides a high potential for preserved archaeological deposits to survive. The Suffolk Historic Environment Record contains a number of entries for the parish of Great Cornard which are predominantly prehistoric and post-medieval in nature. Those in close proximity to the site these can be seen in Figure 1 with further details below.

Immediately adjacent to the site a Palaeolithic axe head of pale grey chert-flint cordate was found by a pupil of the school on the edge of the playing field (COG 008).

The Historic Environment Record (HER) identifies six prehistoric entries within a 500m radius of the site. Of these, five are funerary monuments comprising ring ditches (COG 004/028, COG 005/030, COG 006 and COG 025,) and a possible pond barrow (COG 029). Other prehistoric evidence is a large scatter of lithic implements of meso and

later date (COG 026) that have been discovered by metal detectorists over a number of years. The presence of the prehistoric monuments suggests a landscape heavily shaped by funerary related activity during the Bronze Age period and the continuation of this landscape into the development area (Fig. 1) seems probable.

Evidence of Roman activity is sparse in the area. The discovery of a lead coffin with accompanying whole pots and possible cremated remains forms the only recognised Roman deposits (COG 023). This site lies more than 500m north west of the development area.

A single find-spot of three silver *sceattas* (COL 024) constitutes the extent of Saxon evidence recovered from the area.

Medieval activity is also sparingly represented by a medieval moat present to the south east of the site (COG 002) and the 14th Century church of St Andrew (COG 007) located along Bures Road to the north west.

Hodskinson's map of 1783 identifies an area to the west of the proposed development as 'Mill Tye' (COG 018). The precise location of the mill is unknown at this time yet both a post-medieval watermill (COG 024) and windmill (COG 015) are identified on the 1840 tithe map. Brickworks known to be operation between 1844 and 1846 are located at COG 021. Finally, evidence of a post-medieval field system was observed during an evaluation at COG 029.

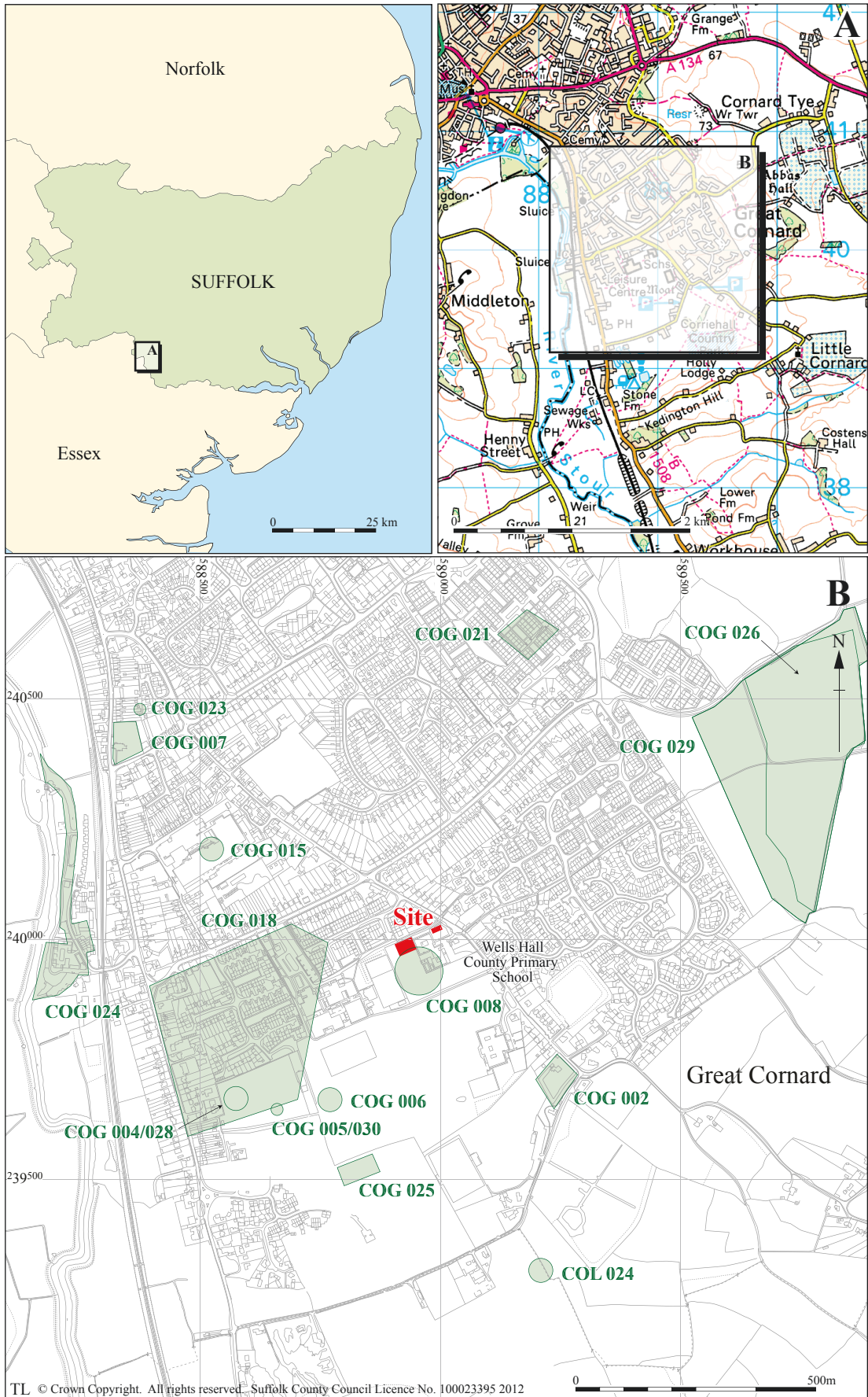


Figure 1. Location map, showing development areas (red) and selected HER entries (green) mentioned in the text

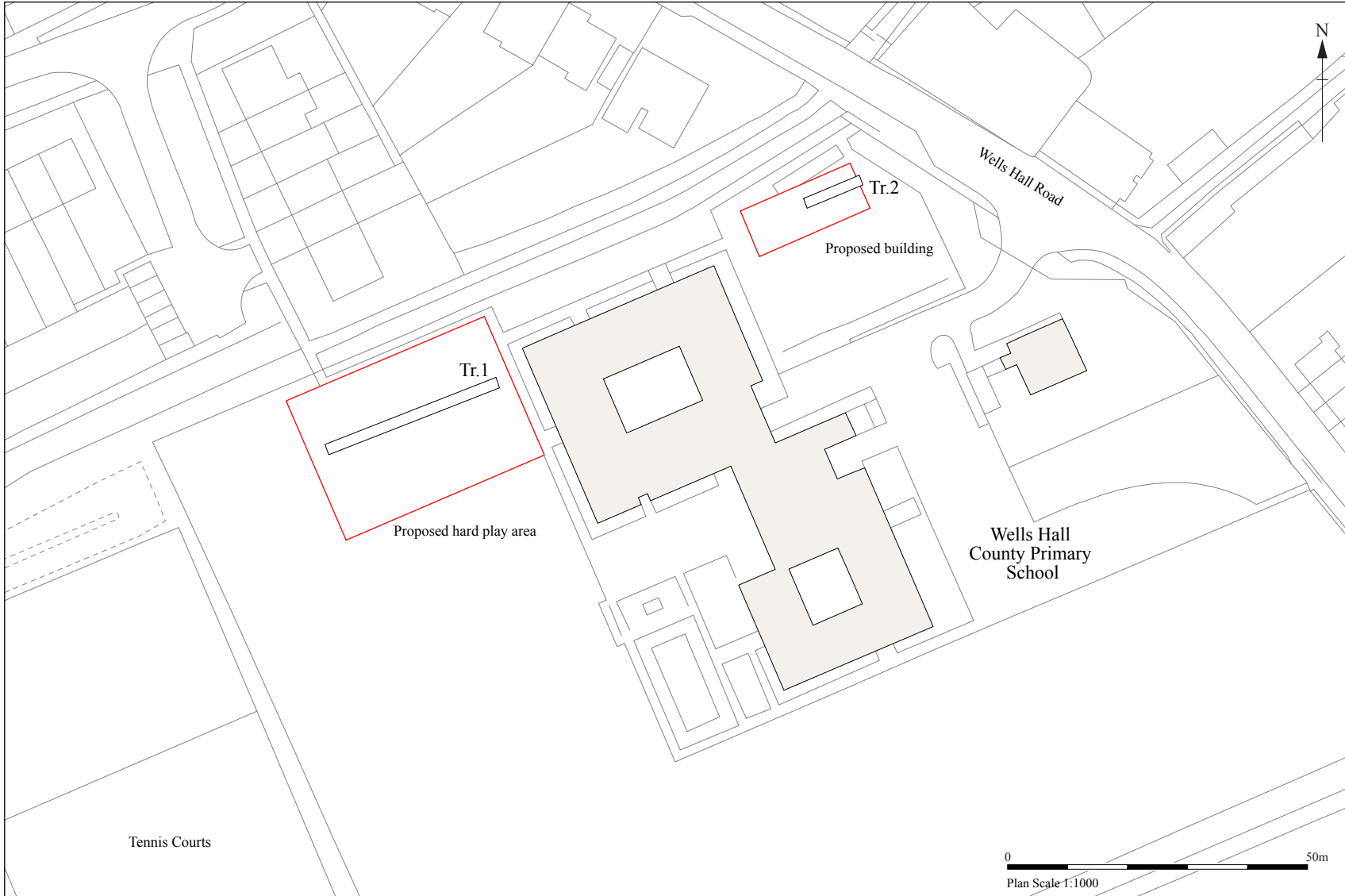


Figure 2. Trench locations

4. Methodology

A single evaluation trench was excavated through the middle of each of the areas shown in Figure 2. The trenches were excavated using a back-acting JCB fitted with a 1.8m wide ditching bucket. The trench through the existing playground (Trench 2) required the breaking and removal of 0.12m of tarmac and approximately 0.25m of concrete prior to excavation of the subsoil.

Trench profiles were recorded as sketch sections with written dimensions and were photographed digitally. Trench locations were recorded using an RTK Leica GPS with a maximum error tolerance of 0.05m.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction

Two trenches were excavated in order to evaluate the archaeology within the development area.

5.2 Trench results

Trench 1: Proposed hard play area

This trench was excavated through the playing field to the rear of the school in the proposed hard play area (Fig. 2). The trench measured 35.5m in length and ran north-east to south-west. The trench had a width of 1.8m and reached the natural geology at a depth of 0.95m at its south-west end and 1.2m towards its north-east end.

No archaeology was observed in this trench. The soil profile at the south-west end of this trench consisted of an imported topsoil (0001) lying over a mid greyish brown clayey-sandy-silt subsoil (0002). A pale-orangey brown sandy-silt (0003) between 0.45m and 0.5m in depth lay underneath 0002; the context was heavily compacted and sealed a thin (0.1m) mixed orangey-brown interface layer (0004) between it and the natural. Neither layer contained archaeological finds.

The heavy compaction of the stratigraphy is likely to have been caused by early groundworks preparing the playing field surface. A degree of truncation appears to have

occurred to 0003 at the north-eastern end of this trench where 0005, mid brownish-grey sandy-clay-silt (20:30:50), lies between 0003 and 0002. Modern brick and tarmac were observed within this truncating layer (0005).



Plate 1. Trench 1 profile at north east end facing north-west (1m scale).

Trench 2: Proposed building

This trench was excavated through the playground towards the front of the school (Fig. 2). Excavation of the trench required breaking through the tarmac and underlying concrete forming the playground surface before removal of the subsoil could begin.

The trench measured 1.8m wide and 10m long. The length was amended by Dr Jess Tipper, SCCAS Curatorial Team, from that specified in the Brief and Specification (App.

1) in light of the depth of the trench (1.18m) and the lack of archaeology hitherto identified.

The profile of the trench was recorded as a sketch section and consisted of a surface of tarmac and concrete sealing a heavily compacted mid/slightly pale orangey- brown sandy-silt (0006) which, in turn, lay over a compacted mid orangey creamy-brown silty sand. No archaeological finds were present in the subsoil layers.

6. Discussion

The evaluation did not identify any archaeology within either of the development areas. Trench 1 showed a degree of disturbance to the subsoil layer in the playing field area but this disturbance had not reached the natural geology where if present an archaeological horizon could be assumed to have been.

The silty subsoil layers across both areas were heavily compacted. It is more likely that this compaction is a result of the landscaping of the playing field and playground rather than a natural occurrence of the settling of a fine sandy-silt matrix.

7. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

The evaluation has concluded that no archaeology was present within the excavated trial trenches. However, this cannot be assumed to be the case across the whole of the development area.

The archaeology of Great Cornard is predominantly a prehistoric funerary landscape that overlooks the Stour valley (Fig. 1) and it is possible that this landscape extends through the development area. Excavation of the Bronze Age ring ditches to the south west (COG 028 and 030) identified the funerary monuments but observed very few discrete features (Antrobus, forthcoming). It is possible therefore that archaeology existing within the development area could include part of a burial monument such as a ring ditch or barrow that may lie outside the targeted trenches. However, the depth of stratigraphy shown in the evaluation trenches is likely to be sufficient protection against any potential disturbance caused by the groundworks associated with this project.

8. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds

Digital archive: R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\Archaeology\Archive\Cornard Great\COG 030

9. Acknowledgements

The archaeological evaluation was carried out by Andy Beverton and Rob Brookes of SCCAS field team.

The project was directed Andy Beverton and managed by John Craven.

Graphics were provided by Crane Begg.



Economy, Skills and Environment
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Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 1RX

Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation

AT

Wells Hall County Primary School, Great Cornard, Suffolk

PLANNING AUTHORITY:	Suffolk County Council
PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER :	To be arranged
HER NO. FOR THIS PROJECT:	To be arranged
GRID REFERENCE:	TL 889 399
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:	New annexe (20.00 x 8.00m), temporary classroom, hard play area (36.00 x 25.00m), eco bund, reorganisation of existing play area into car park
AREA:	Small
CURRENT LAND USE:	School grounds
THIS BRIEF ISSUED BY:	Jess Tipper Archaeological Officer Conservation Team Tel. : 01284 741225 E-mail: jess.tipper@suffolk.gov.uk
Date:	3 January 2012

Summary

- 1.1 The prospective developer (Suffolk County Council Corporate Property) has been advised that any planning consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of archaeological investigation work taking place before development.
- 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 Ver 1.2), 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 The school lies in an area of archaeological importance, recorded in the Suffolk Historic Environment Record, within a valley location and overlooking a watercourse that is topographically favourable for early occupation and is the findspot of a Palaeolithic axe (HER no. COG 008) and to the north of a cropmark of a Bronze Age burial mound (HER: COG 006). However, the school has not been the subject of systematic archaeological investigation. The location has good potential for the discovery of important hitherto unknown archaeological sites and features in view of its topographic location.

Planning Background

- 3.1 There is 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 will be 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 Two linear trial trenches are to be excavated to cover the area of the proposed classroom annexe and new hard play area, 20.00 x 1.80m and 36.00 x 1.80m respectively.
 - 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 Ver 1.2.

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.

Appendix 2 - Context List

Context No	Feature No	Feature Type	Description/Interpretation	Finds	Overall Date	Env. Sample	Trench
0001		Layer	A dark greyish brown sandy-silt that is friable and slightly loose. Topsoil imported	No		No	1
0002		Layer	A mid grey clayey-sandy silt containing occasional charcoal and CBM flecks. Subsoil layer containing modern CBM	No		No	1
0003		Layer	This context is a pale orangey brown sandy-silt containing occasional flecks of charcoal. This context is very heavily compacted, perhaps resultant from landscaping. Lower subsoil layer with heavy compaction.	No		No	1
0004		Layer	An interface layer between 0003 and the natural. Mixed orangey brown silty sand with moderate inclusions of flint pebbles and shingle. Interface layer.	No		No	1
0006		Layer	A heavily compacted slightly pale orangey-creamy brown sandy-silt. Very similar to 0003. Subsoil layer.	No		No	2
0007		Layer	This layer is a mid-orangey creamy brown colour with a silty-sand matrix. It contained moderate quantities of flint gravel even spaced through the context. The context is very similar to 0006 but slightly darker. Subsoil layer.	No		No	2
NAT.			A mid brown orange sandy-silt containing gravels, shingle and flint pebbles in a frequent quantity. The natural, undisturbed geology.	No		No	1, 2

Appendix 3. Oasis form

OASIS ID: suffolkc1-118770

Project details

Project name	COG 035 Wells Hall CP School, Great Cornard
Short description of the project	Two trial trenches were excavated over two days at Wells Hall CP School, Great Cornard in advance of enhancement to the schools playing field and playground. The site lies within a designated area of Archaeological Interest just to the north of a series of Prehistoric funerary monuments (COG 004/028, COG 005/030, COG 006 and COG 025). The evaluation trenches observed deep stratigraphy across the site predominantly consisting of compacted fine-sandy silts but no archaeological horizon could be indentified. The ring ditch monuments indicate that the development area lies within, or in close proximity to, a Prehistoric funerary landscape and it is suggested that further groundworks be monitored in order to assess the continuation of this funerary landscape.
Project dates	Start: 14-02-2012 End: 15-02-2012
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	COG 035 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG15
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK BABERGH GREAT CORNARD COG 035 Wells Hall CP School, Great Cornard
Postcode	CO10 0NH
Study area	1067.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 889 399 52.0248090347 0.753666347666 52 01 29 N 000 45 13 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 27.00m Max: 27.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team
Project director/manager	John Craven
Project supervisor	A Beverton
Name of sponsor/funding body	SCC

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Digital Contents	'none'
Digital Media available	'Database','Images raster / digital photography','Survey','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
Paper Contents	'none'
Paper Media available	'Unpublished Text'
Entered by	Andy Beverton (Andy.Beverton@suffolk.gov.uk)

Archaeological services Field Projects Team

Delivering a full range of archaeological services

- Desk-based assessments and advice
- Site investigation
- Outreach and educational resources
- Historic Building Recording
- Environmental processing
- Finds analysis and photography
- Graphics design and illustration

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