

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

LAND AT CROSS GREEN, OLD NEWTON, SUFFOLK (SMR Ref. ONW 019)

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF THE AREA OF A PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL
DEVELOPMENT ON LAND LYING TO THE NORTH OF
CHURCH ROAD, CROSS GREEN, OLD NEWTON

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Land at Cross Green, Old Newton, Suffolk

SMR Ref. ONW 019

Summary: An archaeological evaluation was undertaken during December 2005 to investigate the potential for buried archaeology within an area of land north of Church Road, Cross Green, Old Newton (NGR ref. TM 0512 6264), in advance of a proposed residential development. Six linear trenches were machine excavated to the depth of the undisturbed natural subsoil. No significant archaeological deposits or features were identified although two, probably natural, depressions in the natural subsoil were noted. This evaluation is recorded on the County SMR, reference no. ONW 019. The evaluation was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service who were commissioned and funded by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of their client, Higgins Construction.

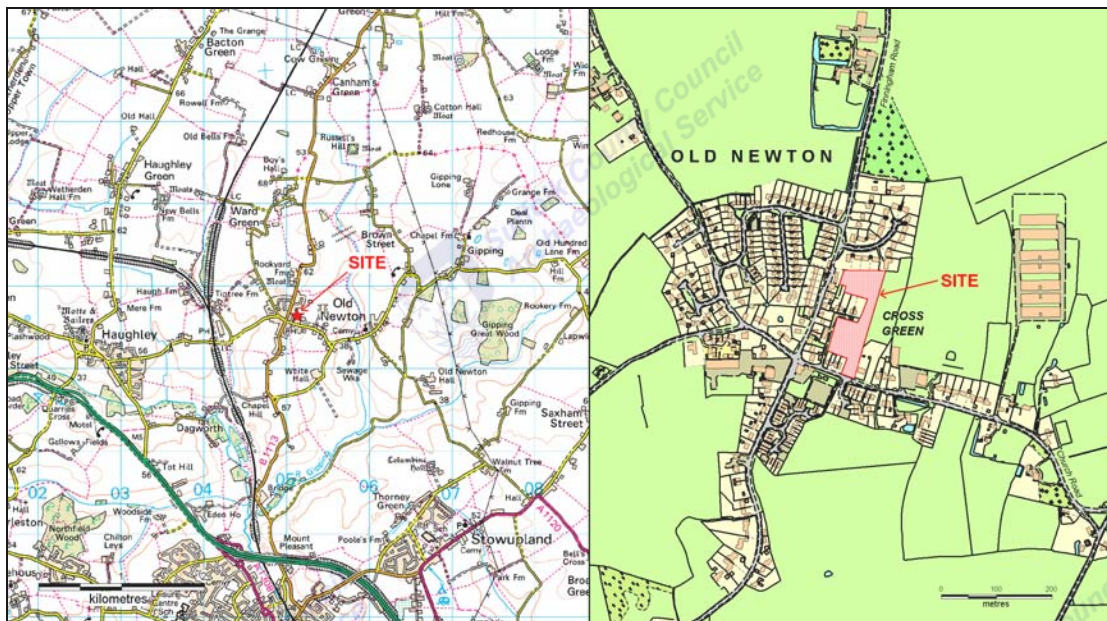


Figure 1: Location Plan

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1. Introduction

A residential development has been proposed for an area of land lying to the north of Church Road, Cross Green, Old Newton. A desk-based survey, undertaken by Richard Meager of CgMs Consulting, identified a moderate to high archaeological potential for the site to yield evidence of Neolithic activity based on the finding of three Neolithic axe heads in the locality (SMR refs. ONW 008, 017 & 018). In order to ascertain the potential for buried archaeological deposits and features within the site, and as an aid to determination of the planning application, an archaeological evaluation was commissioned by CgMs Consulting. The main aims of the evaluation were to identify actual archaeological deposits and to assess the impact of earlier development on the site.

The site is c.8900 square metres in area and is situated on level ground. Only a small part of the site actually fronts onto Church Road with the greater majority of the area lying behind properties that front onto Church Road to the south and Finningham Road to the west. The NGR for the approximate centre of the site is TM 0512 6264.

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client, Higgins Construction., who funded the work. The evaluation was undertaken by the Field Projects Team of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and was carried out during December 2005. The evaluation archive is lodged with the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at its Bury St. Edmunds office under the Sites and Monuments Record reference, ONW 019. A summary of this project has also been entered onto OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the reference suffolkc1-12158.

2. Methodology

Trial trenches were machine excavated down to the level of the natural subsoil (or the top of any significant archaeological deposits if encountered) using the rear arm of a 'JCB' type wheeled excavator. It had been hoped to use a toothless ditching bucket but unfortunately in many areas of the site the ground was extremely hard and dry which necessitated the use of a toothed bucket *c.*1m wide. By carefully crouching the bucket it was possible to neatly cut surface on the trench base without leaving excessive tooth marks. The trenches were to be positioned in accordance with an approved plan. Unfortunately it was not possible to place the trenches exactly as hoped as it was not possible to gain access to two areas of the site due to the size and number of young trees and undergrowth. A formalised garden associated with a property on Church Road had encroached across the site, this area was also avoided as advised by CgMs.

The machining of the trenches was closely observed throughout in order to recover artefacts that may be revealed. Upon removal of the initial topsoil the resultant trench base was examined for archaeological deposits or features. Following this, any underlying subsoils or hillwash, which may have masked archaeological deposits and features, were removed until the underlying unweathered natural subsoil was revealed. This too was examined for archaeological deposits and features. The surface of the resultant spoil tips and the bases of the trenches were subject to a metal detector survey. A small number of digital photographs using 3.2megapixel camera were taken.

In the event of features being revealed, a 1:50 scale surface plan would have been constructed and context numbers issued to each feature starting from 0002, 0001 being reserved for unstratified finds from the site, and sample sections excavated.

The trench locations were plotted and their depths were noted. A dumpy level was used to measure the relative heights of the trenches and any features noted. A bench mark was located on the nearby 'Shoulder of Mutton' public house, its height is recorded on Ordnance Survey maps as 61.45m.

Upon completion of the fieldwork the trenches were backfilled.



Figure 2: Trench Location Plan

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3. Results

Six trenches totalling over 200m in length were excavated across the development area; see figure 2 for a plan of their locations. The results for each trench were consistent across the site with c.0.3m of dark topsoil overlying c.0.3m to 0.4m of pale orange subsoil before the natural subsoil, which comprised stiff boulder clay, was encountered.

In **Trench 1** a late 20th century footing was revealed and this was seen again in **Trench 2** as well as a number of redundant drains.

In two separate areas within **Trench 3** the natural subsoil was located at a depths of *c.*2.1m and 2.4m (see figure 3). Each appeared to be filled with the pale orange subsoil although this was progressively much darker towards the base of each but with no obvious layering. It was not possible to safely enter the trench but no artefacts appeared to be present within the trench sides and none were recovered from the spoil. The edges of these deeper portions sloped at approximately 40 degrees and each appeared to have a relatively flat base.

No features or deposits were recorded in **Trench 4**, **Trench 5** or **Trench 6** although a modern water pipe was encountered at a depth of *c.*0.5m within Trench 6.

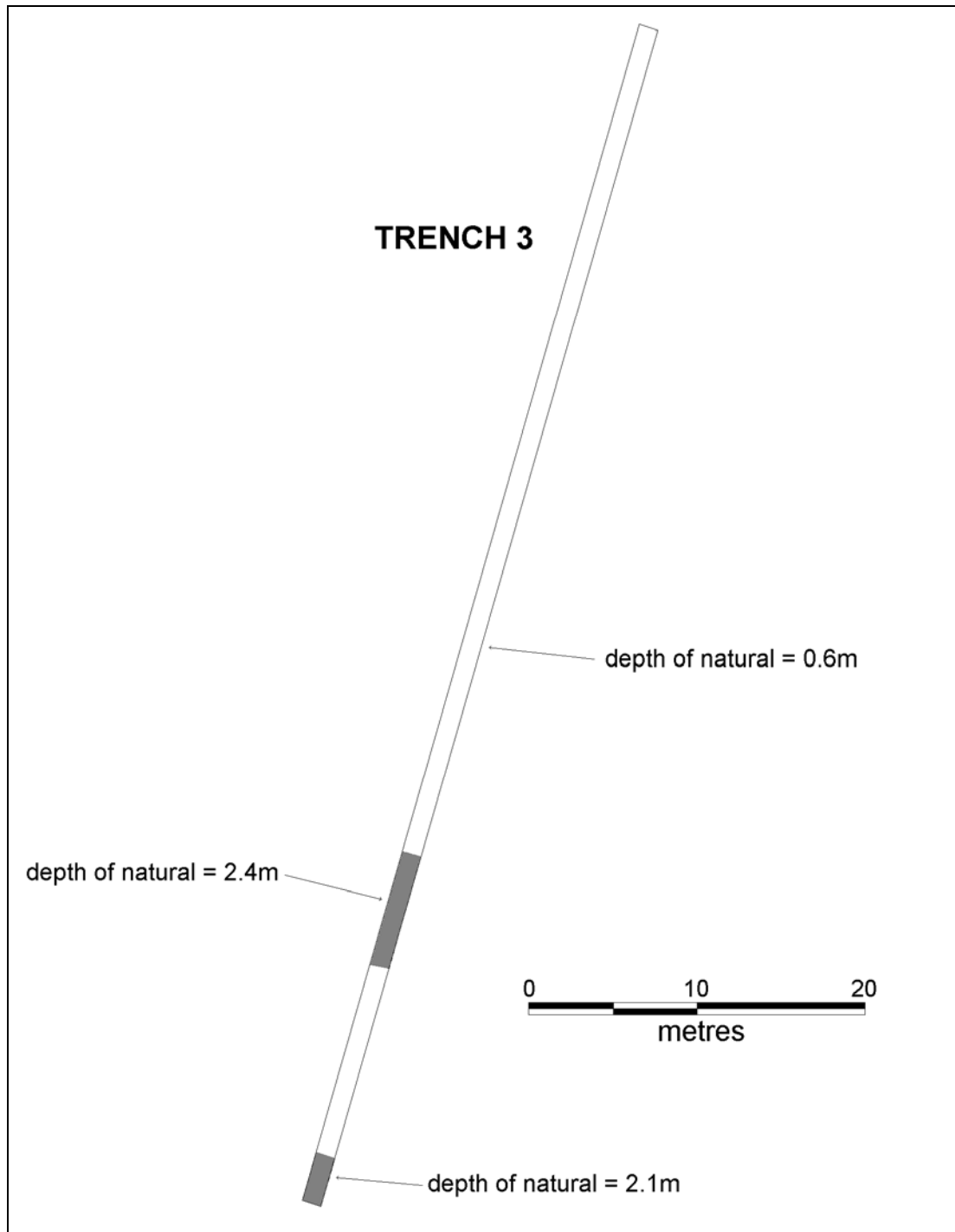


Figure 3: Plan of Trench 3

A number of levels were taken across the site and related the benchmark on the nearby public house. These indicated surface heights of 60.69m at the Church Road frontage, 60.48m adjacent the southern end of Trench 3 and 60.12m at the northern end of Trench 5 with the natural subsoil being at heights of c.60m at the southern end of the site and dropping very slightly to c.59.5m to the north.

4. The Finds

No finds were recovered from any of the trenches or the resultant spoil tips.

5. Discussion

No archaeological deposits or features relating to any period earlier than the 20th century were noted in the trenches excavated. The two deep depressions noted in Trench 3 were initially thought to be ponds but the complete lack of any artefacts from the fill and the nature of the fill itself suggests that these are natural phenomena.

It must be noted that it was not possible to trench in all areas of the proposed development but nothing was recorded in the excavated trenches to suggest early occupation in the immediate vicinity.

6. Recommendations for Future Work

Based on the results of the evaluation it is unlikely that any significant archaeological deposits are under threat from the proposed development. Consequently no further work is recommended.

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