Former Fire Station, Normanston Drive, Lowestoft. LWT 181

Archaeological Evaluation Report

SCCAS Report No. 2012/69

Client: Badger Building (East Anglia) Ltd.

Author: Linzi Everett

May 2012

HER Information

Report Number:	**2012/69**
Site Name:	**Former Fire Station, Normanston Drive, Lowestoft**
Planning Application No:	**DC/11/1095/FUL**
Date of Fieldwork:	**8th-9th May 2012**
Grid Reference:	**TM 5350 9382**
Commissioned by:	**Badger Building (East Anglia) Ltd.**
Curatorial Officer:	**Jess Tipper**
Project Officer:	**Linzi Everett**
Oasis Reference:	**suffolkc1-126917**
Site Code:	**LWT 181**

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: Linzi Everett
Date: May 2012

Approved By: Dr Rhodri Gardner
Position: Acting Contracts Manager
Date:
Signed:

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Summary

An area of 1.4 hectares was evaluated by trial trenching as a condition of planning consent. This proved the site to have been subject to considerable truncation and modern disturbance, except for a few small pockets predominantly around the margins of the site. Even where the natural subsoil had not been significantly truncated, no archaeological features were present.

1. Introduction

A trial trench evaluation was carried out on the site of the former fire station, Normanston Drive, Lowestoft (Fig. 1; grid reference TM 5350 9382). The proposed development area (hereafter referred to as 'the site') consisted of an area of c.1.4 hectares and trenching was undertaken with a view to investigating a 5% sample of the site.

The evaluation was carried out as a requirement of a planning condition specified by Waveney District Council for a residential development. A Brief and Specification issued by Jess Tipper (Appendix I) outlined the manner of the fieldwork and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailed the archaeological methodology and risk assessment (Gardner 2012).

The trial trenching was conducted by the Field Team of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS), between the 8th and the 9th of May 2012.

The site has been given the Lowestoft reference LWT 181 with the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER).

2. Geology and topography

The site is relatively level and lies at a height of approximately 21m OD. It is bounded on its south side by Normanston Drive and by housing elsewhere. The underlying geology of the site comprises glaciofluvial drift (deep sand).

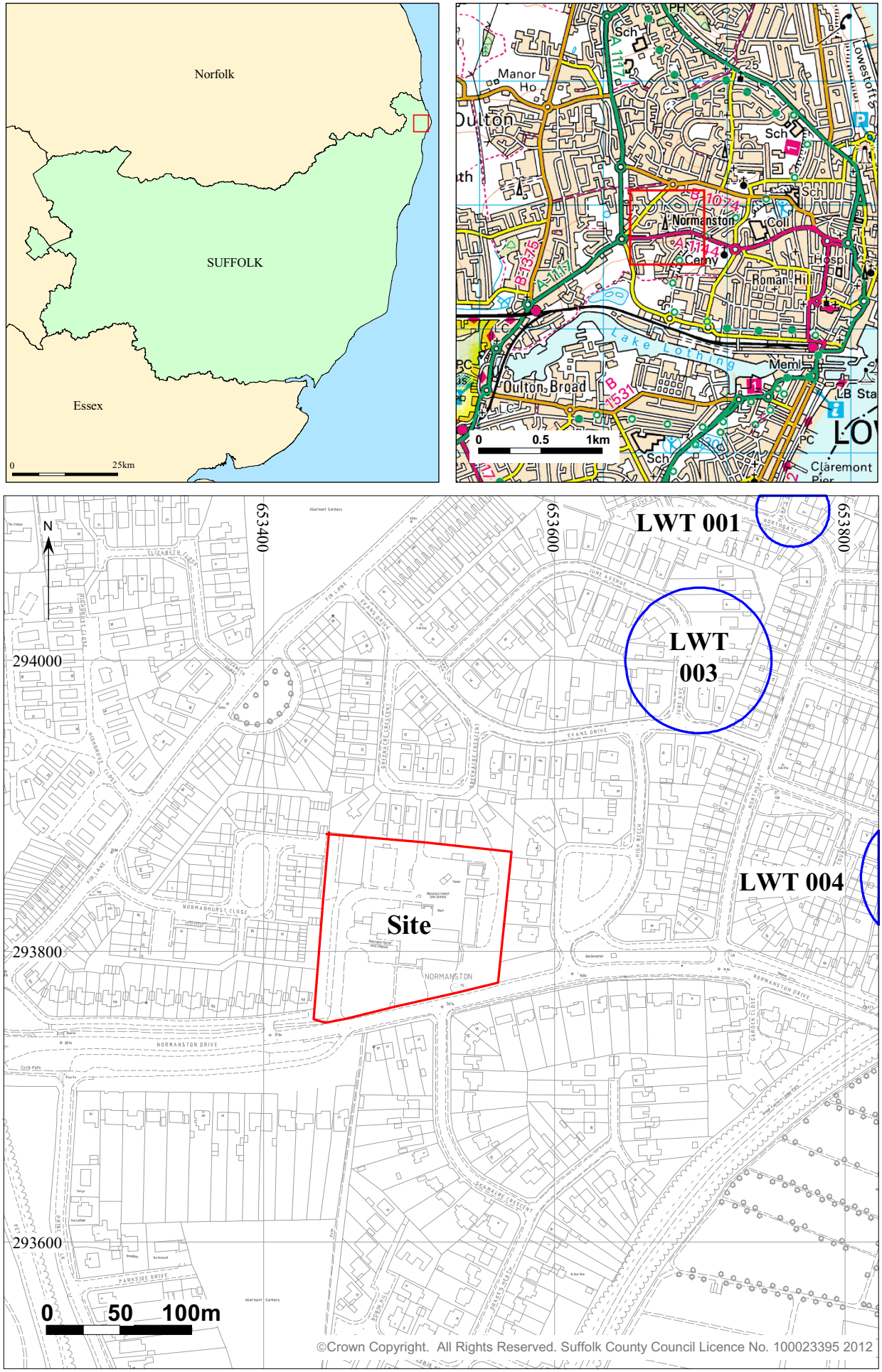

Figure 1. Site location, showing Historic Environment Record entries

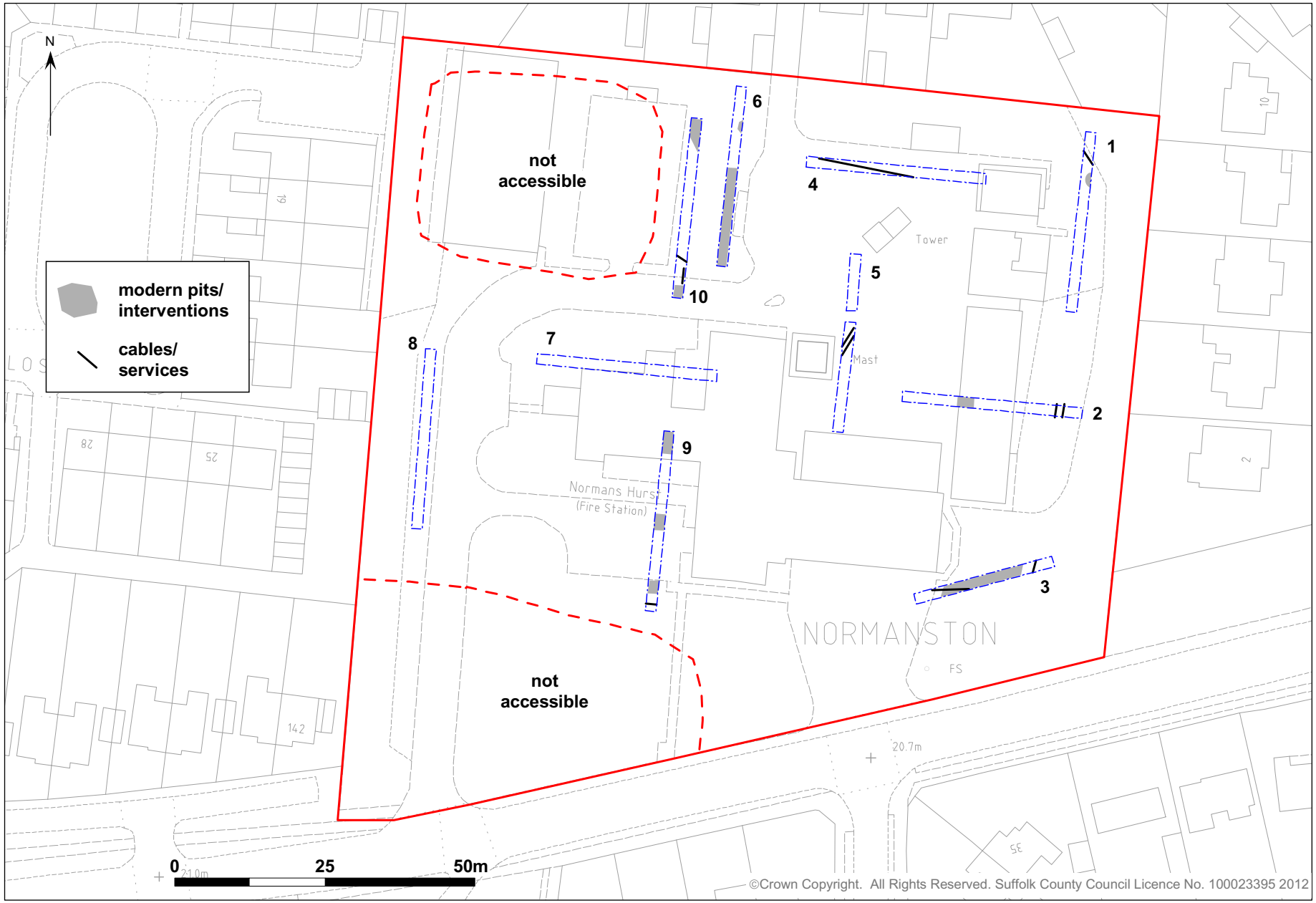

Figure 2. Location of trenches and

3. Archaeology and historical background

The site is located close to various Neolithic find spots (LWT 001, LWT 003 and LWT 004) which could indicate the presence of further occupation deposits in the vicinity. There was believed to be high potential for archaeological remains given the presence of known remains and the large size of the proposed development area.

4. Methodology

Trenching was conducted using a wheeled mechanical digger equipped with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket. Originally 12 trenches were proposed but as some areas of the site were not available for trenching due to the presence of trees and a large spoil heap, one trench was dropped from the original plan.

All machining was observed by an archaeologist standing adjacent to or within the trench. Topsoil was removed by machine to reveal undisturbed natural subsoil and/or archaeological deposits.

The base of each trench was examined for features or finds of archaeological interest. The upcast soil was examined visually for any archaeological finds. Records were made of the position and length of trenches and the depths of deposit encountered. A digital photographic record was made of each trench and, consisting of high-resolution .jpg images.

The site has been given the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER) code LWT 181. All elements of the site archive are identified with this code. An OASIS record (for the Archaeological Data Service) has been initiated and the reference code suffolkc1-126917 has been used for this project.

5. Results

Eleven trenches were excavated across the site (Fig. 2). All but one of these showed moderate to severe disturbance and/or truncation throughout. The exception to this was Trench 8 towards the western limit of the site where a thin layer of hardcore was stripped off to reveal the natural subsoil, a coarse orangey yellow sand mottled with blackish brown mineralised sand, characteristic of heathland soils (Plate 1). This was present at a height of 21.03m OD and whilst this mineralised natural did appear in small parts of trenches 1, 3, 9 and 10, it occurred at a much deeper level and had clearly been truncated. As such, Trench 8 gives the best indication of true ground levels prior to modern development of the site.

Trench 3 contained a tarmac surface sealed by *c.*0.5m of overburden (Plate 3) This appears to relate to a road shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (Figure 3). No pre-modern interventions were noted.

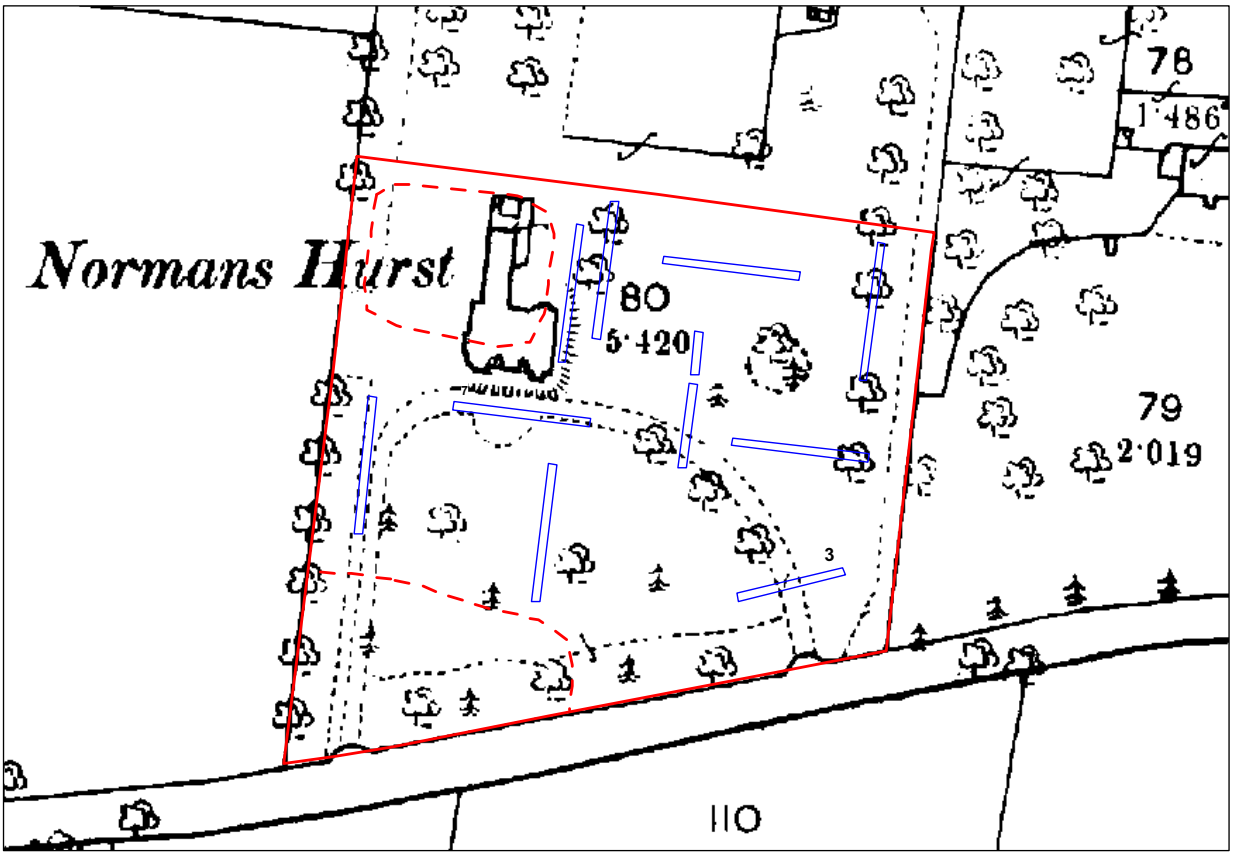

Figure 3. Extract from 3rd edition Ordnance Survey Map *c.*1924, showing the trench locations.

Plate 1. Trench 8, looking south

Plate 2. Trench 9, looking south

Plate 3. Trench 3 soil profile showing tarmac road surface

6. Discussion

All but one of the trenches showed significant disturbance by previous development and associated landscaping of the site and no archaeological interventions or artefacts were observed during the trial trenching. The levels of truncation encountered would have impacted on all but the deepest of pits or ditches, had any been present. The natural subsoil observed suggests that prior to the expansion of Lowestoft and associated development of this location, the area was formerly heathland and may not have been heavily occupied in antiquity.

7. Archive deposition

The archive is lodged with the SCCAS at its Ipswich office under the HER reference LWT 181. A summary of this project has also been entered onto OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the reference suffolkc1-126917.

Digital archive: R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\Archaeology\Archive\ Lowestoft\LWT 181 Former Fire Station, Normanston Drive.

Finds archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds, 8-10 The Churchyard, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 2AR.

Suffolk County Council

The Archaeological Service

Economy, Skills and Environment
9–10 The Churchyard, Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 1RX

Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation

AT

FORMER FIRE STATION, NORMANSTON DRIVE, LOWESTOFT

PLANNING AUTHORITY:	Waveney District Council
PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:	DC/11/1095/FUL
HER NO. FOR THIS PROJECT:	To be arranged
GRID REFERENCE:	TM 5350 9382
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:	26 dwellings, 6 flats and new access
AREA:	*c.*1.35 ha.
THIS BRIEF ISSUED BY:	Jess Tipper Archaeological Officer Conservation Team Tel. : 01284 741225 E-mail: jess.tipper@suffolk.gov.uk
Date:	20 April 2012

Summary

1.1 The Local Planning Authority (LPA) has been advised that any planning consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of archaeological investigation work taking place before development takes place in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

1.3 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 1.3), 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.

1.4 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.

1.5 The WSI will *provide the basis for measurable standards* and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the brief 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 site lies in an area of archaeological interest, recorded in the Suffolk Historic Environment Record, to the west and south west of Neolithic find spots indicative of further occupation deposits, are recorded from this area (HER no. LWT 001, LWT 003 and LWT 004). There is high potential for archaeological remains to be defined at this location, given the presence of known remains and also the large size of the proposed area.

Fieldwork Requirements for Archaeological Investigation

3.1 A linear trenched evaluation is required of the development area to enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified.

3.2 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.

3.3 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.

3.4 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover 5% by area, which is *c.*675.00m^2, either prior to demolition of the existing buildings or after demolition of the existing buildings down to ground level (but before the removal of any foundations). These shall be positioned to sample all parts of the site. Linear trenches are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method, in a systematic grid array. Trenches are to be a minimum of 1.80m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated; this will result in *c.*375.00m of trenching at 1.80m in width.

3.5 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

4.1 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.

4.2 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.

4.3 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

5.1 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.

5.2 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.

5.3 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.

5.4 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.

5.5 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.

5.6 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.

5.7 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.

5.8 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.

5.9 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*.

5.10 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 1.3.

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.