

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2013/018	Parish: West Stow
<b>West Stow Lodge</b>  <b>WSW 085</b>	Planning Application No: SE/12/0584
	HER Event No: WSW 085
	OASIS No: Suffolkc1-135391
Address: West Stow Lodge, Ingham Road, West Stow, IP28 6ET	Grid Reference: TL 8191 7061
	Number of Site visits: 1
	Date of visits: 07/02/2013

### Introduction

A program of archaeological evaluation was required by a condition on planning application SE/12/0584 for the construction of a dwelling and garage, replacing the existing West Stow Lodge.

The archaeological condition had been placed as the site lies within an area of high archaeological potential, within the historic settlement core of West Stow and to the north of the medieval church of St Mary's (County Historic Environment Record No. WSW 039). The site also lies on a spur of high ground in the Lark Valley, a topographic position of typically high potential, and known find spots of Iron Age date (WSW 007 and 0033) lie 200m to the north while Anglo Saxon and early medieval material has been recorded 100m to the south-east (WSW 038).

There is also potential for early remains relating to the church as the northern boundary of the churchyard appears to be of some antiquity and there are unsubstantiated claims of bones being discovered during the construction of West Stow Lodge in the mid/late 20th century.

The proposed development therefore was thought to have potential to disturb unknown archaeological deposits. Trial trench evaluation was subsequently required to establish the date, approximate form and function of any archaeological deposits within the application area, together with information as to their extent, depth and quality of preservation, so that an assessment of the developments impact upon heritage assets could be made and a suitable mitigation strategy prepared.

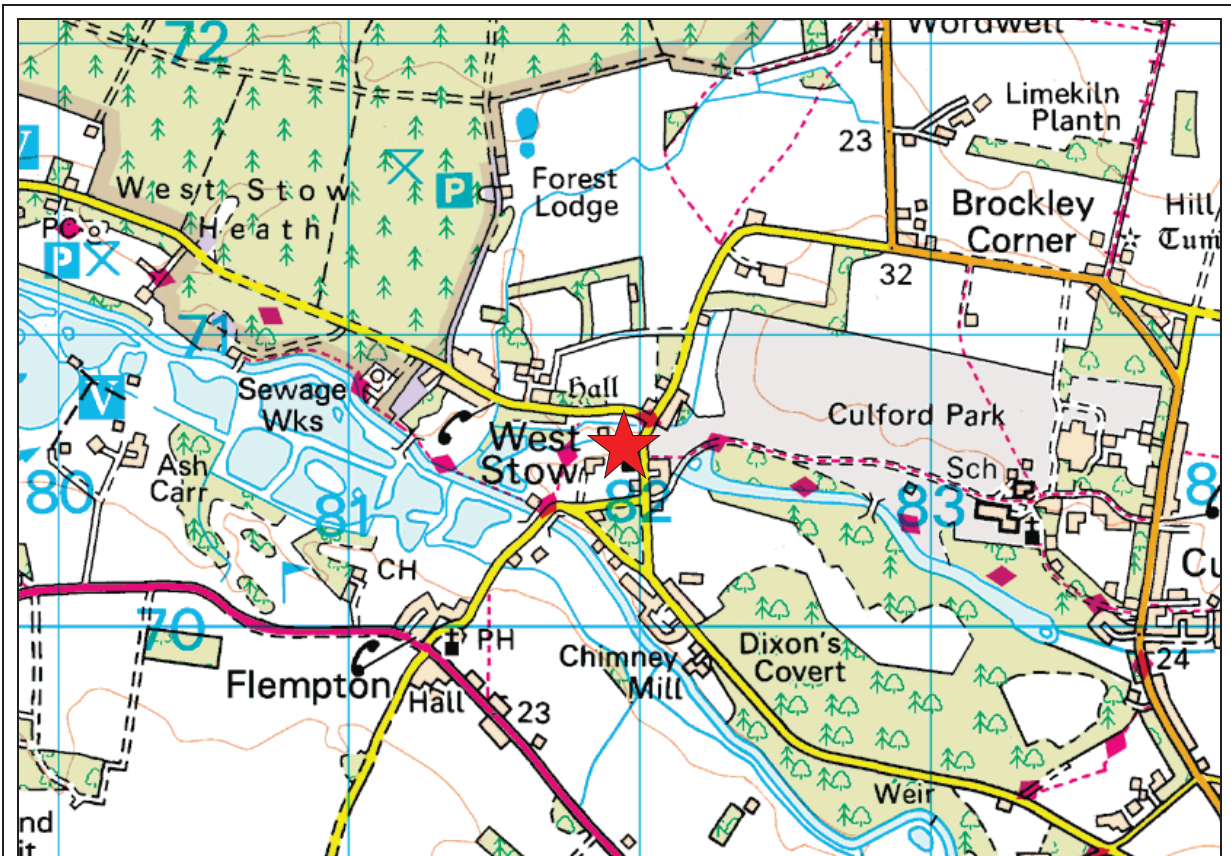
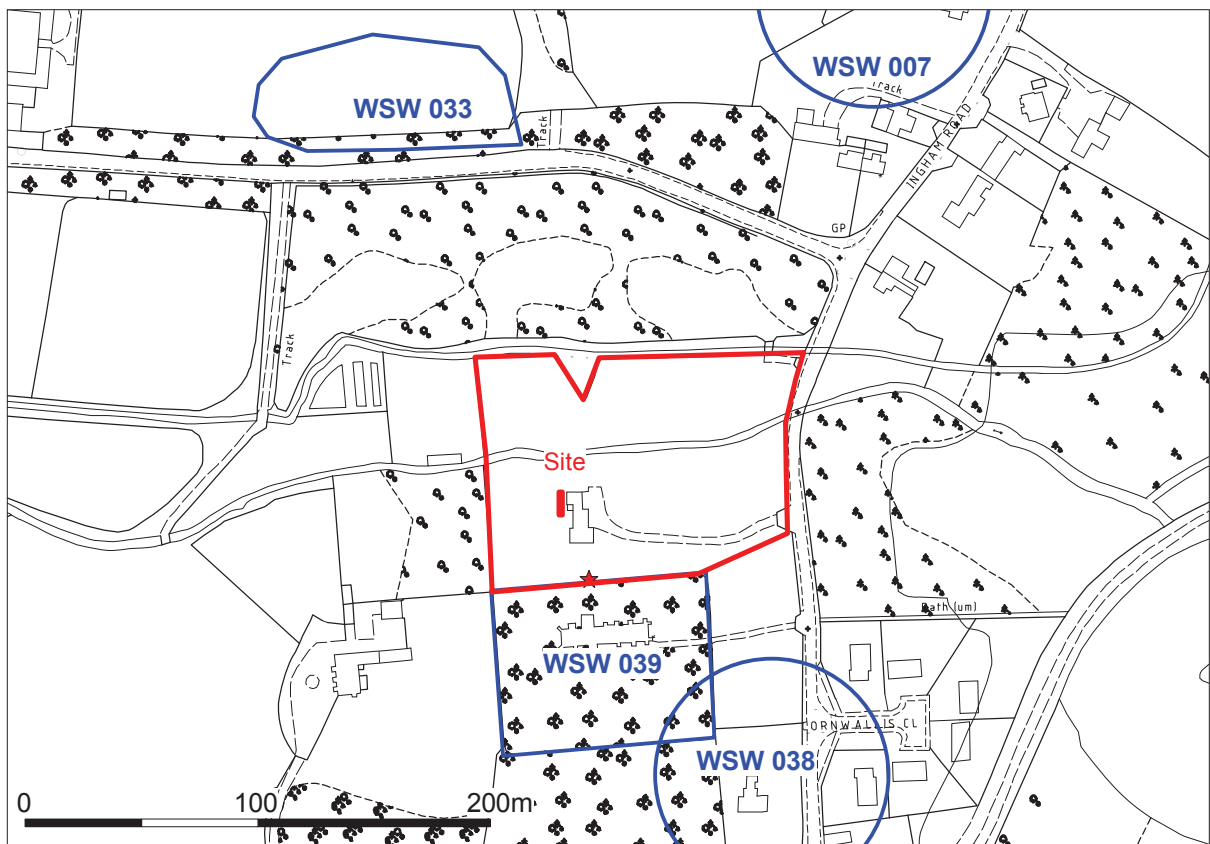


Figure 1. Location Map



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2013

Figure 2. Trench plan

## **Results**

An attempt was made to open up an evaluation trench to the rear of the current property, at the north-western corner. A live service pipe was identified running down its length which meant that the trench could not be fully opened. Physical constraints precluded moving the trench to a different location so a small sondage was excavated at the north end.

The original trench was to have been 10m long and 1.5m wide. In the event, a small sondage some 1m in length and 1.2m in width was excavated to a depth of 1.5m before being abandoned having failed to encounter natural geological deposits.

The encountered stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of paving (0.1m of block paving and bedding sand over a thin screen of cement which lay above a second, slab-paved, surface). This overlay approximately 0.5m of garden soil. This was a mid brown humic-rich sandy silt with very frequent roots from the adjacent trees.

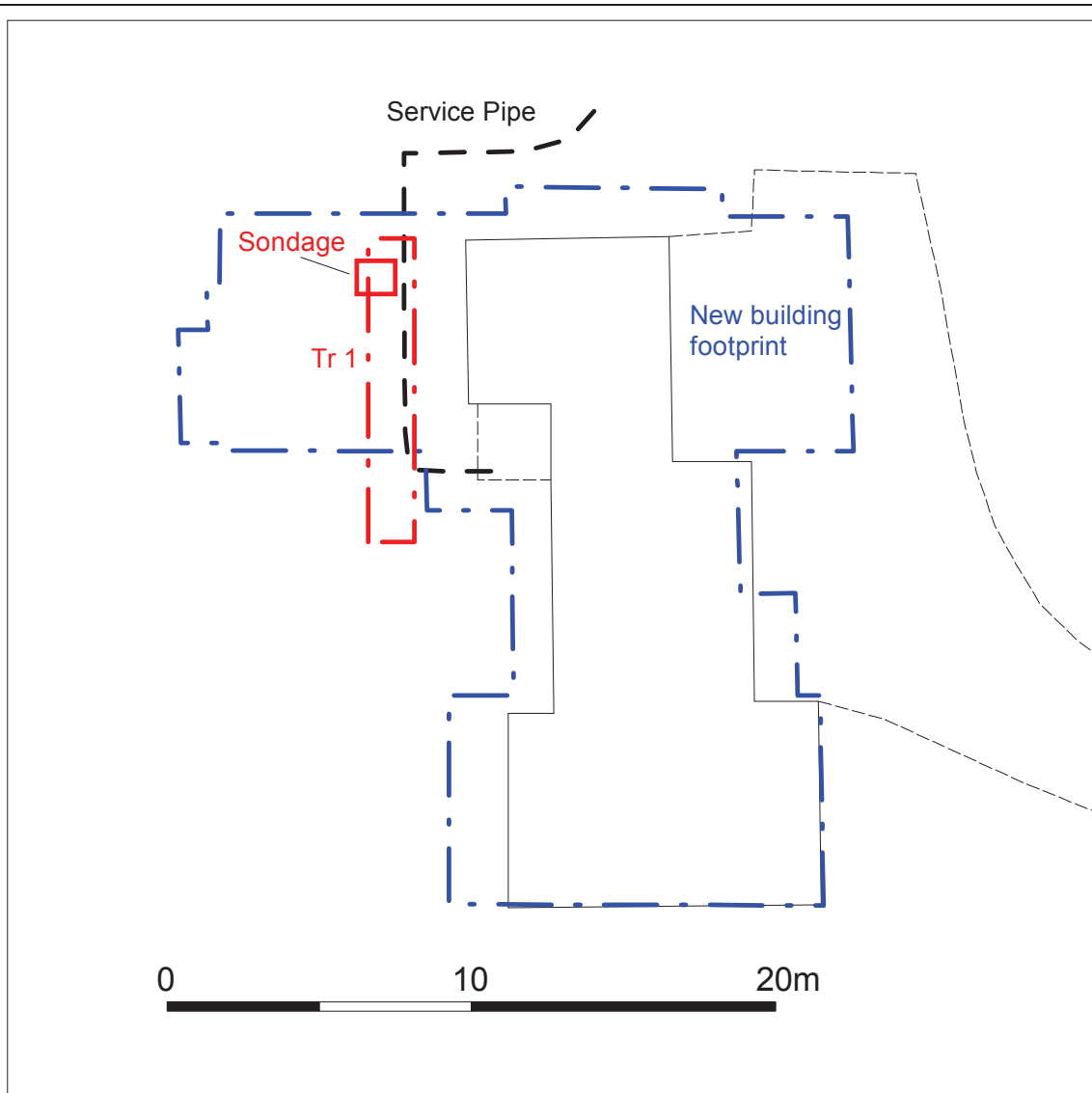
The topsoil/garden soil sealed a deposit, recorded as 0001, of mid grey-brown friable sandy silt with red/brown silty sand mottling, interpreted as a water-lain deposit. This deposit, the base of which was not seen, extended for at least 0.7m to a total depth in excess of 1.5m below surface level. A small finds assemblage was collected.

## **Finds**

Three sherds of pottery and three fragments of bone were collected from deposit 0001.

A single body sherd of a Hedingham fineware vessel (HFW1) was present dating to the mid 12th-mid 13th century (4g). In addition two joining thickwalled body sherds with a dark grey sandy fabric with a slightly reddish brown external surface (GX) were considered to date to the Late Iron Age/early Roman period (37g).

Two joining fragments of the proximal end of a human ulna were recovered (28g), together with the shaft of a cattle sized animal limb bone which has a cut mark (148g).



© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2013

Figure 3. Trench plan

### Discussion

Due to the current physical limitations of the development site it has not been possible to open an evaluation trench in full. The evaluation has demonstrated however that a c.0.75m deep layer of modern deposits and garden topsoil is present and indicates landscaping of the slight natural slope from south to north.

This overlies a thick subsoil, 0001, which is thought to be an alluvial deposit relating to the Lark floodplain and its tributary stream immediately to the north. The archaeological material was all recovered at depth from this deposit and, being mixed in date, has probably been redeposited from other unknown contexts. Any underlying stratified archaeological deposits may be at a depth of at least 1.5m

below current ground levels.



Plate 1. View of sondage section facing west

The human bone is likely to have originated from the adjacent churchyard, and appears to confirm previous reports of bones being found at the property. However it is also possible that it may indicate the presence of an earlier cemetery in the vicinity.

Depending upon the nature of groundworks for the proposed development the evaluation has indicated that any stratified deposits may be preserved intact at depth below new foundations, although this cannot be confirmed. With the proposed development replacing the existing property it also seems likely that a considerable part of the site will have already seen heavy disturbance. However any groundworks may impact upon layer 0001 which has been shown to contain disarticulated human skeletal remains.

Fieldwork: Simon Cass  
Graphics: Crane Begg

Report: Simon Cass and John Craven  
Finds Identification: Richenda Goffin

