

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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## LAND AT NOTCUTTS GARDEN CENTRE, IPSWICH ROAD, WOODBRIDGE

### WBG 061

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2006

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## List of Contributors

All Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS hereafter) unless otherwise stated.

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## Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Framfield House Surgery, and was monitored by Jess Tipper of the SCCAS Conservation Team. Thanks are also due to Peter Wells of the architects Barefoot and Gilles, who commissioned the work.

The project was directed by Rhodri Gardner and managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report. The evaluation was carried out by Rhodri Gardner, Phil Camps and Tim Browne; all from the SCCAS Field Team.

## Summary

**Woodbridge**, Land at Notcutts garden Centre, Ipswich Road (TM 2672 4870; WBG 061). A trial trench evaluation was carried out at the above site in advance of the construction of a new medical centre. Five trenches (total area *c.* 170m<sup>2</sup>) were excavated, covering just over 4% of the site. No archaeological finds or features were observed. A thick layer of topsoil overlay an undated peat deposit that sealed alluvial sands throughout much of the site. No further work was recommended.

(Rhodri Gardner, SCCAS, for Framfield House Surgery, report no: 2006/056)

## SMR information

Planning application no.    C/05/1380/FUL (part)  
Date of fieldwork:          4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> April 2006  
Grid Reference:              TM 2672 4870  
Funding body:                Framfield House Surgery



# 1 Introduction

An archaeological Evaluation was carried out on land at Notcutts Garden Centre, Woodbridge in advance of construction of a Medical Centre and access road. The development was covered by Planning Application C/05/1380/FUL and a condition of that application was the requirement that a programme of archaeological works be carried out. It should be noted that the application covers a larger area, and that this work relates only to the development of the Medical Centre.

The site is centred approximately on TM 2672 4870 and encompasses an area of c. 0.38 hectares. It lies on land that falls from c. 15m AOD around the perimeter of the development area to c. 12.5m in the central low-lying part of the site.

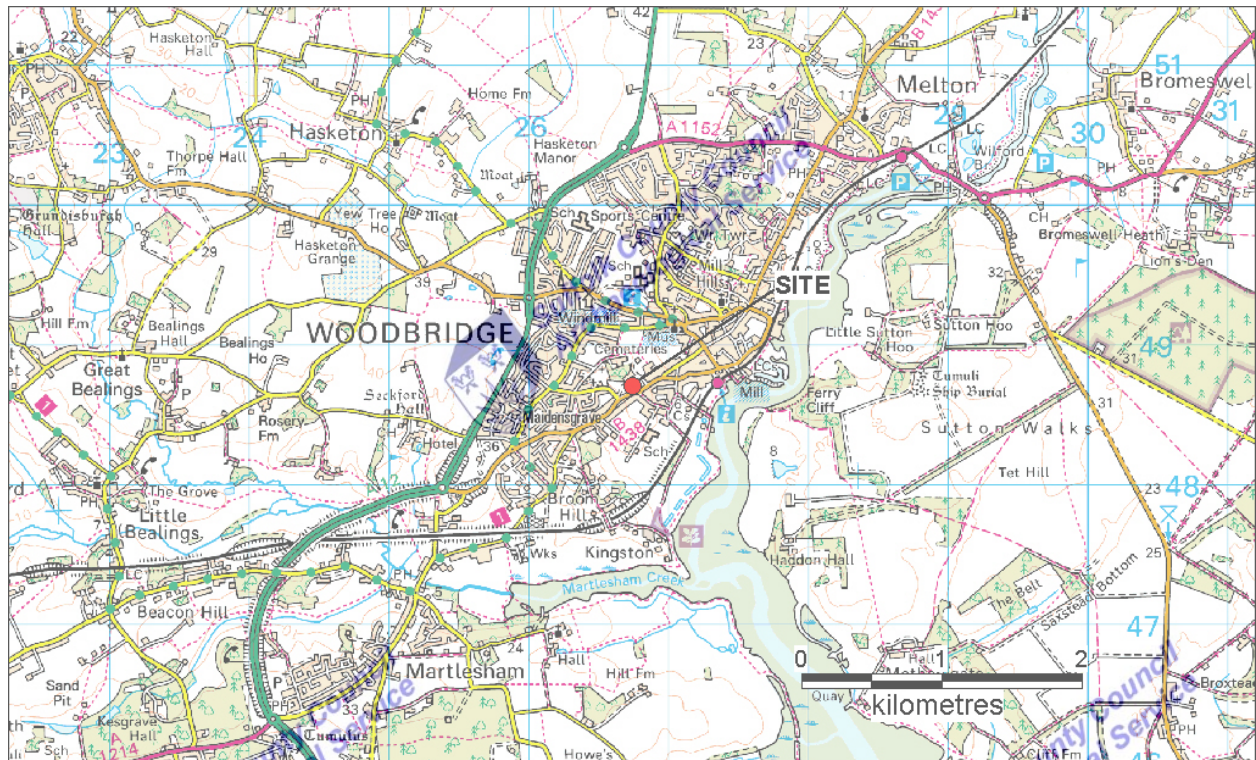


Figure 1. Site location

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The site of Notcutts Garden Centre has not seen any previous formal archaeological work. However, its favourable topographical setting along the edge of the Deben valley mean that it does have some potential for the preservation of archaeological deposits, particularly of prehistoric date. Nearby sites and other findspots are rare, with only a single Iron Age Coin (recorded as WBG 013 in the County SMR) some 100m to the north-east, within a radius of 250m.

An initial stage of work involving trial trench excavation was recommended by Jess Tipper of the SCCAS Conservation Team in a Brief and Specification dated 27/02/06. The SCCAS Field Team were subsequently commissioned to carry out the work by the architects Barefoot and Gilles on behalf of their client, Framfield House Surgery.

## 2 Methodology

The field evaluation was carried out between 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of April 2006. All evaluation trenches were excavated using a small 360° tracked mechanical excavator (minidigger) fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless

ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation was carried out under close archaeological supervision until the top of the first appropriate undisturbed archaeological deposit or natural subsoil was encountered. Trench locations were recorded by triangulation from existing boundaries and landscape features.

The trenches shown in Figure 2 covered 170m<sup>2</sup>, c. 4% of the total area. The trench locations varied slightly from that originally agreed with Jess Tipper of the SCCAS Conservation Team, due to the presence of standing water and extremely soft ground in the lowest lying central part of the site, which was causing the small minidigger to become bogged down.

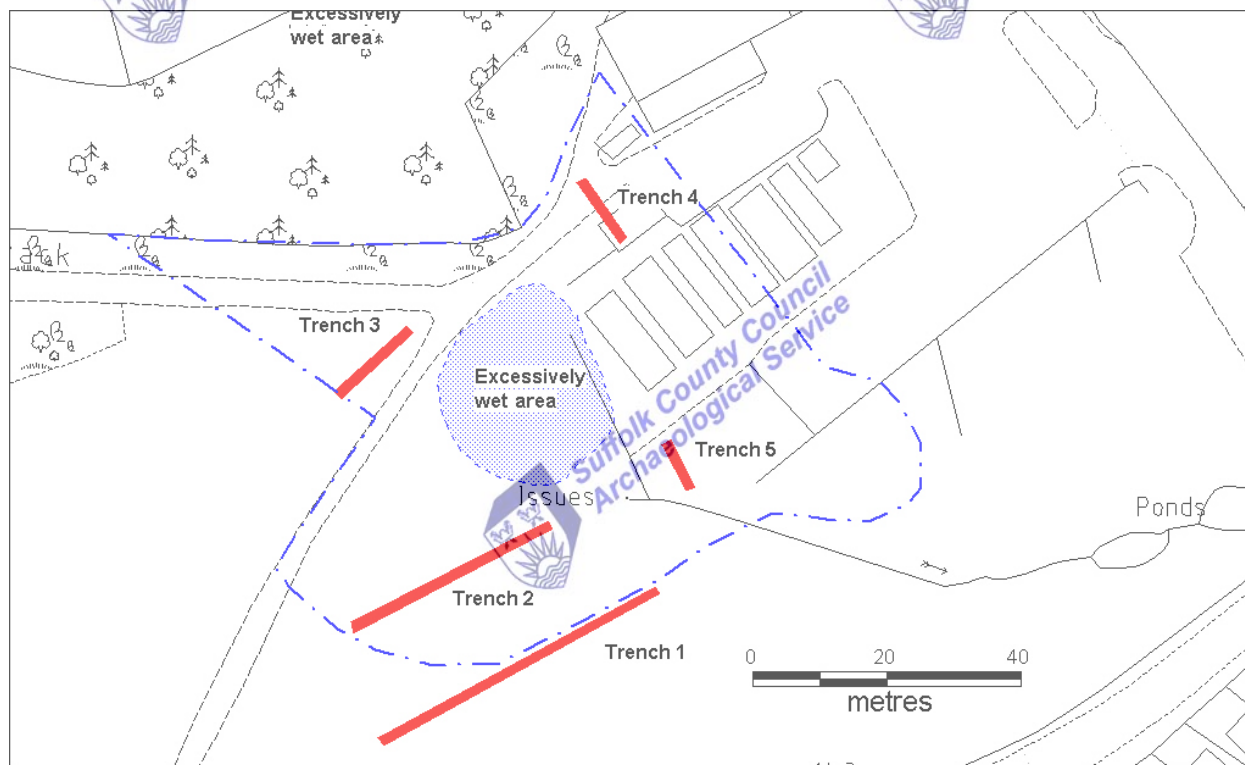


Figure 2. Trench locations

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The County SMR number WBG 061 was allocated to the site and all stratigraphic elements of the deposits were allocated context numbers within a continuous numbering system. All features were excavated and recorded in a series of 1:50 scale plans and 1:20 scale section drawings. Context records were entered onto an Access97 database, and inked copies of the drawings were prepared on archive quality drafting film. A photographic record (35mm colour slide, 35mm black and white and digital photographs) was maintained throughout where necessary.

### 3 Results

No incised archaeological features were encountered in any of the trenches and no significant or dateable unstratified finds were recovered.

Identical deposits were encountered in all trenches.

The topsoil (0002) was a soft dark greyish brown loam with occasional small to medium sub-rounded flint pebbles and fragments of modern pottery (flower pot/terracotta).

In all trenches this overlay deposit 0003, a soft dark grey/black silty peat with frequent root disturbance and very rare small flint pebbles. This was up to 0.4m thick. No dateable finds could be recovered from it in any of the trenches.

In the lower-lying waterlogged parts of the site this peat deposit overlay natural drift in the form of alluvial sands (0004). This deposit is described as a soft light grey slightly silty sand with very rare small to medium sub-angular flint pebbles.

On the margins of the site where dryer conditions were observed (trench 4, and the far south-western end of trench 1) the natural drift was of slightly different character (0007): very soft light orange-brown medium sand with very rare small sub-rounded to sub-angular flint pebbles.

The only feature of note to be recorded was the buried stream channel (0005) that continued to the east-south-east (see Figures 2 and 3). It's fill (0006) was indistinguishable from the more general peat deposit (0003) described above. The stream had been culverted in this part of the site and the eastern side of the channel held a large diameter plastic pipe laid in a trench filled with flint gravel/cobbles.

In the area of the proposed building natural drift deposits were at least 0.7m below the existing ground level.

## **4 Discussion and Conclusions**

No archaeological finds or features were observed.

A thick deposit of topsoil overlay an undisturbed peat deposit that could not be dated. The topsoil had been continually dumped in the area in small amounts as a result of other activities around the garden centre.

The nature of the peat deposit and underlying alluvial sands suggests that the area of the proposed development has long been low-lying and extremely marginal and as such is not likely to have seen any significant archaeological occupation.

It is highly unlikely that the construction of the access road and medical centre (particularly as piling is to be used) will affect any archaeological remains.

## **5 Recommendations for Further Work**

No further work is recommended.

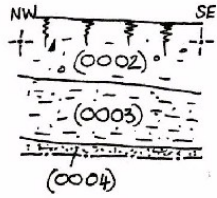
Report No. **2006/056**  
Rhodri Gardner, for SCCAS, April 2006.

### **Disclaimer**

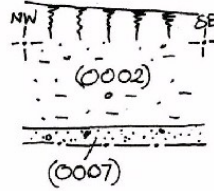
Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. The need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its archaeological advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's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



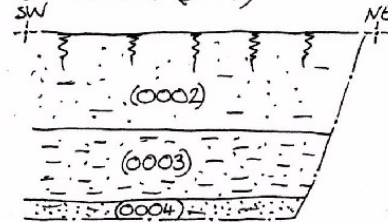
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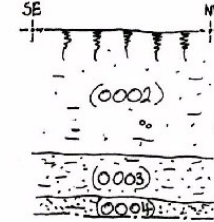
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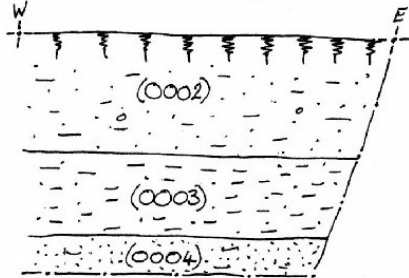
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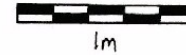
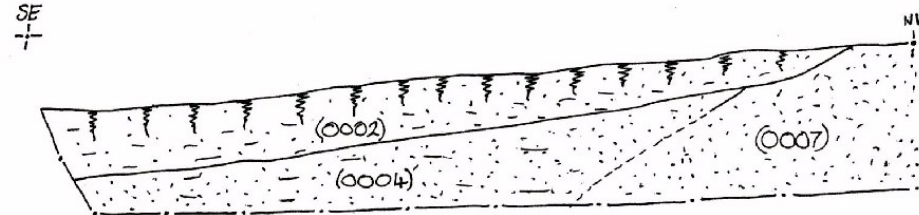
S.6. TRENCH 5



S.4. TRENCH 3 (E. END)



S.5. TRENCH 4



TRENCH 2 PLAN

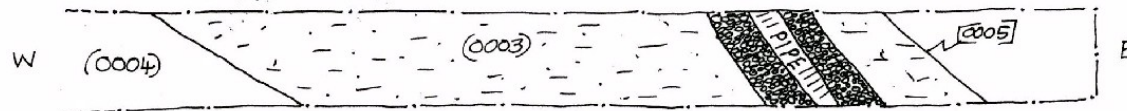


Figure 3 Trench plans and sections



