Cedar Cycles, Tower Mills
Southwold Road, Wrentham, Suffolk
WRE 027

Archaeological Evaluation Report

SCCAS Report No. 2013/085

Client: Badger Building (E. Anglia) Ltd.

Author: M. Sommers

June 2013

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Author: M. Sommers

Illustrator: M. Sommers

Editor: Dr R. Gardner

Report Date: June 2013

HER Information

Report Number:	**2013/085**
Site Name:	**Cedar Cycles, Tower Mills, Wrentham**
Planning Application No:	**DC/12/0544/OUT**
Date of Fieldwork:	**11th June 2013**
Grid Reference:	**TM 4987 8239**
Client/Funding Body:	**Badger Building (E. Anglia) Ltd.**
Curatorial Officer:	**Abby Antrobus**
Project Officer:	**M. Sommers**
Oasis Reference:	**suffolkc1-152488**
Site Code:	**WRE 027**

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: M. Sommers
Date: 14th June 2013

Approved By: Dr. R. Gardner
Position: Contracts Manager
Date: 14th June 2013
Signed:

Contents

List of Figures

List of Plates

List of Appendices

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on a parcel of land named Tower Mills, Southwold Road, Wrentham, in advance of a residential development. A total of three trenches were excavated which revealed two undated, but probably post-medieval, ditches and part of the foundation of a 19th century tower mill (a type of windmill). The foundation consisted of a mass of chalk blocks, large flint cobbles and red brick fragments cemented with a lime mortar. It measured *c.* 1m in width and was 0.45m thick and ran in a curving strip across the trench. It rested directly on the surface of the natural subsoil, which consisted of yellow sand. No artefacts of any period were recovered. (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service for Badger Building [E. Anglia] Ltd.).

1. Introduction

A residential development has been proposed for an area of land at Tower Mills, Southwold Road, Wrentham, the former site of Cedar Cycles. Planning consent has been granted (DC/12/0544/OUT), but with an attached condition requiring an agreed programme of archaeological work is in place prior to the commencement of the development.

The first stage of the programme of work, as specified in a Brief by Abby Antrobus of the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team (Appendix 1), was the undertaking of a trenched evaluation in order to ascertain what levels of archaeological evidence may be present within the development area and to inform any mitigation strategies that may then be deemed necessary.

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 4987 8239. Figure 1 shows a location plan of the site.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Field Team who were commissioned and funded by the developer, Badger Building (E. Anglia) Ltd.

2. Geology and topography

The site consists of an irregular shaped parcel of land set back from Southwold Road and accessed by a short trackway. The site is bounded by domestic properties that front onto Southwold Road to the east and gardens to the south and north. A small, south flowing stream runs just beyond the western boundary of the site with open farmland beyond.

The topography of the site consists of a level plateau towards the eastern end, at a height of *c.* 8m OD, with a lower area in the western half of the site, at a height of *c.* 5.5m OD. The two are separated by a slope and a series of steps in the vicinity of the recently demolished Cedar Cycles warehouse which was built on a terrace cut into the west facing slope. The western, lower area slopes very gently down to the stream to the

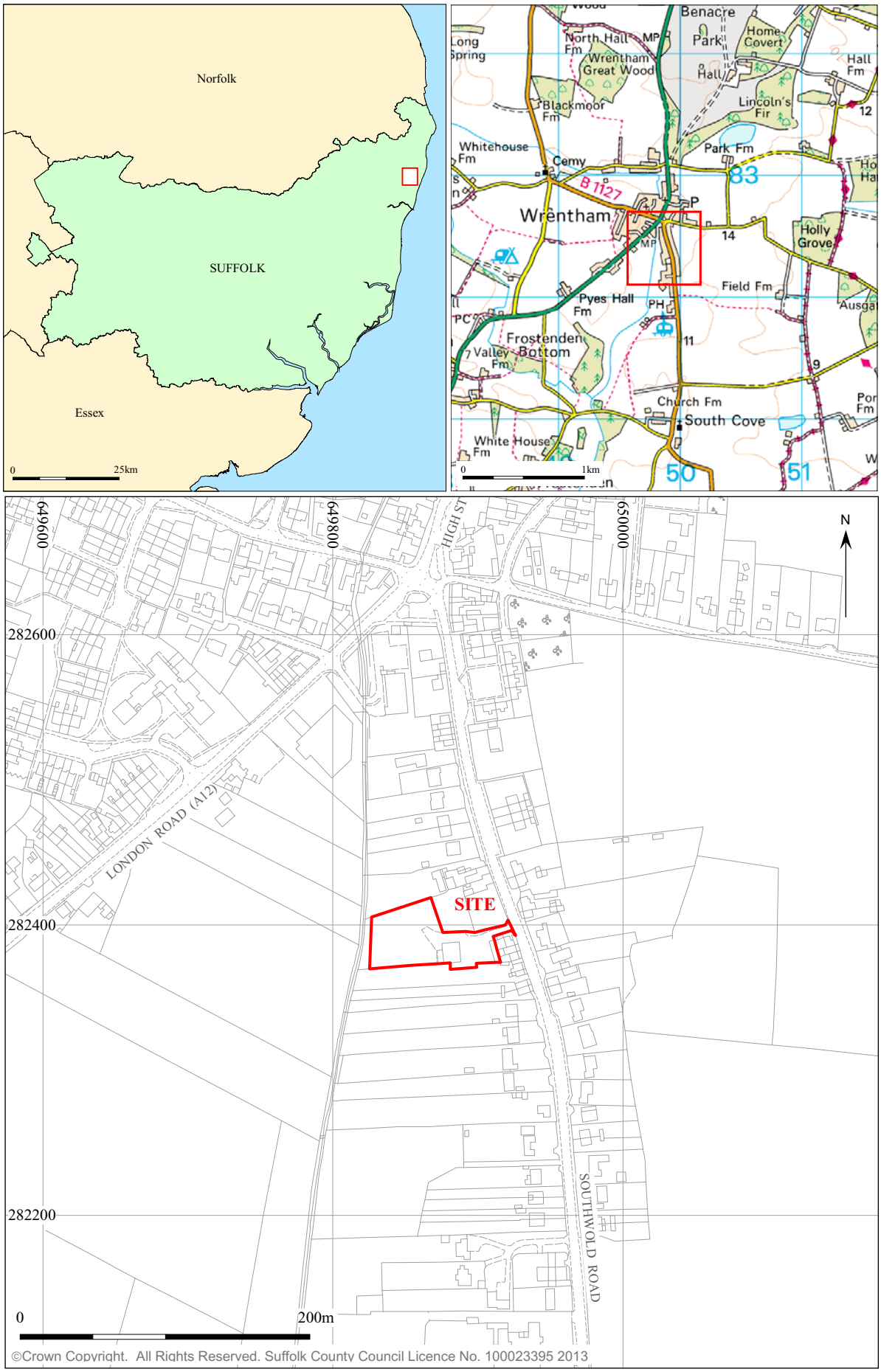

Figure 1. Location map

west. The land continues to rise to the east and south reaching a highpoint of 10m OD some 200m to the south east.

The underlying geology of the site consists of crag sand with overlying, occasional slightly silty, sand deposits.

3. Archaeology and historical background

The site is located within the area of archaeological interest and importance of the Anglo-Saxon and medieval core of Wrentham, defined in the County Historic Environment Record (HER), under the reference WRE 022.

The site is also the location of tower mill (a type of windmill) recorded on the HER under the reference WRE 027, which is presumably the source of the name 'Tower Mills'. A detailed history of the mill can be found on the Wrentham parish website (www.wrentham.org.uk, reproduced in part as Appendix 4) which records that the mill was built between 1825 and 1837. In an 1861 auction the mill was described as:

> 'a substantially built Tower Mill, having eight floors and four patent sails, driving three pairs of 4ft 6in French Stones. Also communicating with Tower Mill a Steam Mill with three floors, a 10 horse power high pressure beam engine, driving three pairs of 4ft French Stones'

The steam mill burnt down in 1863 along with two granaries and a malt house although these were rebuilt. The 65ft (*c.* 20m) tower, known locally as "Old Black Friend", was demolished in December 1964, the 100ft (*c.* 30m) chimney associated with the steam mill having been pulled down around 1929'.

The present town of Wrentham is focussed on the junction of Southwold Road and the main London to Lowestoft Road (A12) whilst the medieval parish church of St Nicholas is situated approximately 1km to the west. The parish website suggests the focus changed with the creation of the 'New Turnpike Road' in 1786 although Hodskinson's map of 1783 shows a substantial settlement along Southwold Road and the High Street in the area that corresponds with the defined Anglo-Saxon and medieval core.

4. Methodology

The trial trenches were machine excavated down to the level of the natural subsoil using the backhoe of a wheeled, JCB type, excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The location of the trenches was broadly in accordance with a plan approved by the County Conservation Team although it was necessary to slightly move two of the trenches due to the presence of large dumps of crushed concrete and brick rubble.

The machining of the trenches was closely observed throughout in order to identify any archaeological features and deposits and to recover any artefacts that might be revealed. Excavation continued until undisturbed natural deposits were encountered, the exposed surface of which was then examined for cut features. Any features or significant deposits identified were then sampled through hand excavation in order to determine their depth and shape and to recover datable artefacts. The locations of any features/deposits were then plotted in relation to the trench.

Following excavation of the trenches, the nature of the overburden was recorded photographically and with scaled drawings. The location of the trenches was plotted using basic measuring tapes, 30m in length, through triangulation and/or alignment with surrounding buildings and boundaries. A photographic record of the work undertaken was also compiled using a 14 megapixel digital camera.

All trenches were backfilled upon completion of the recording.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction

A total of three evaluation trenches were excavated, numbered T1 to T3 (fig. 2). All were excavated broadly in accordance to the approved trench plan although Trench 2 was moved to the south and Trench 3 to the west, to avoid large heaps of crushed rubble. Archaeological features were recorded in Trench 2 and 3, as summarised in Figure 2 (see Appendix 2 for the full context list).

The natural subsoil consisted of orange/yellow sand becoming increasingly silty down the slope. In Trench 3 the natural subsoil consisted of pale yellow to grey sand.

5.2 Trench results

The results for each trench are as below:

Trench no.	Depth of subsoil	Description
T1	0.55m	The natural subsoil of dark yellow sand and gravel lay at a depth of 0.55m below a 0.28m thick layer of pale grey/brown sand (0008), interpreted as a buried topsoil. This was overlain by a 0.18m thick layer of yellow sand and gravel (0009) that in turn was overlain by a thin spread of black sand and gravel with some silt (0010). These were interpreted as a deposit of imported material for the creation of an area of hardstanding, the top surface of which has been dirtied through use. These deposits were overlain by a further spread of yellow sand and gravel (0011) presumably resulting from the recent site clearance (Fig. 3 and plate 1). No features or artefacts were identified in this trench.
T2	0.45m	At the eastern end of the trench, where it crossed the higher plateau, the natural subsoil was identical to that recorded in Trench 1 and lay at a depth of 0.45m below a single deposit grey/brown sand (0013), interpreted as a former topsoil. As the trench progressed to the west it cut down a steep slope and across the base of the former Cedar Cycles warehouse. In this area the natural subsoil, which became a bright yellow silty sand, had clearly been heavily truncated (plate 2). *(cont.)*

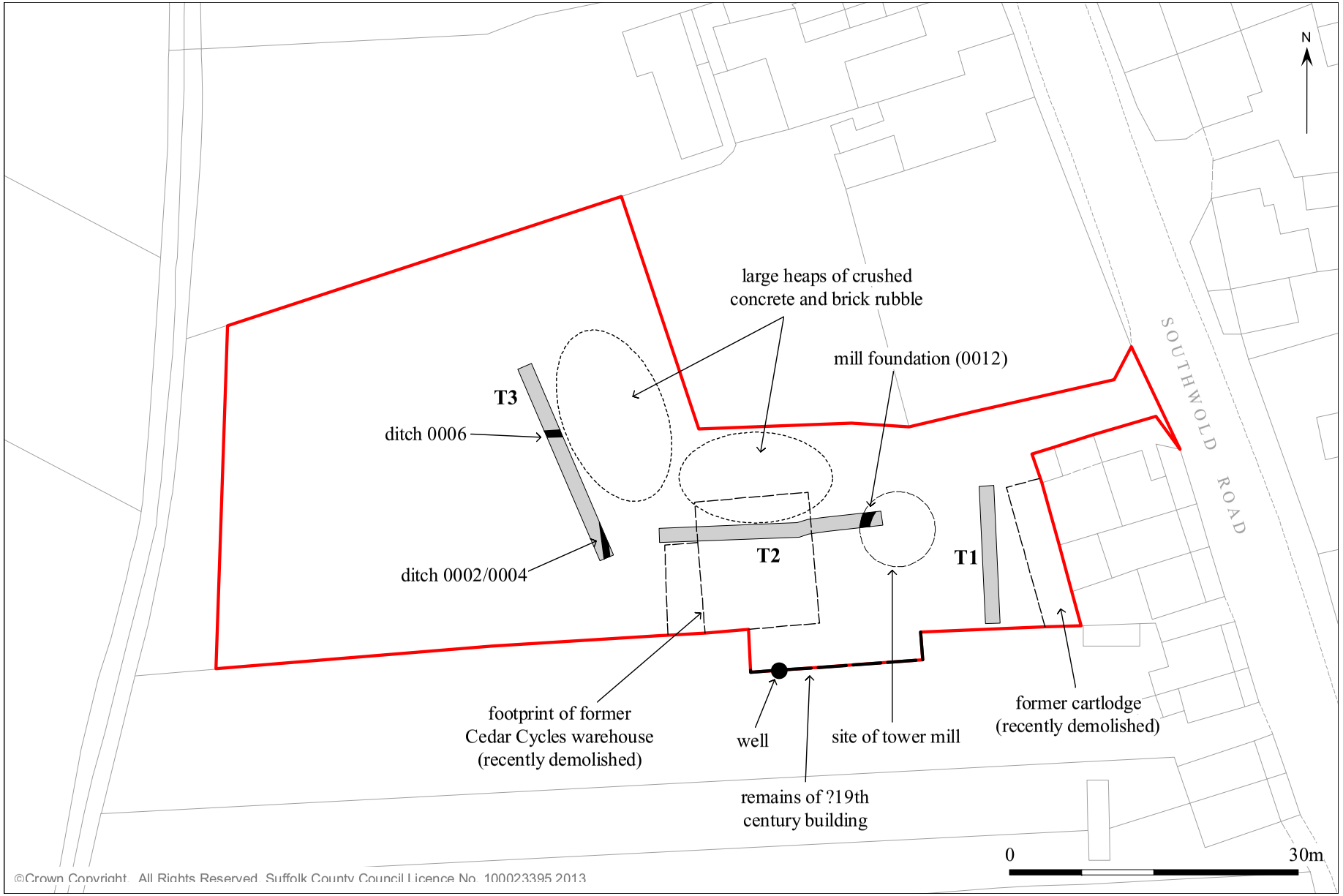

Figure 2. Trench location plan including summary of results and site observations

T2 (cont.)		At the eastern end of the trench a curving, linear feature was noted cutting into layer 0013. It measured just under 1m in width and was filled with a mass of irregular chalk blocks, large flint cobbles and fragments of red brick cemented together in a single mass using lime mortar which rested on the surface of the natural subsoil (0012). This was interpreted as part of the foundation for the tower mill. See Fig. 4 for a plan and the recorded section and plate 3.
T3	0.75m	The natural subsoil, which comprised a very pale yellow to pale grey sand, lay at a depth of 0.75m below a single deposit of brown sand (0014), becoming sandier towards the base, overlain by the present topsoil (see section 4, Fig 5; plate 4). Two separate features, both interpreted as ditches, were located within this trench. Ditch 0002 was aligned north south, measured *c.* 0.7m in width and cut the natural subsoil to a maximum depth of 0.15m. The ditch had a single fill of mid to dark grey brown silty sand (0003). This ditch cut an earlier feature (0004), also interpreted as a ditch. This had a single fill (0005) of mottled mid to pale slightly silty sand (for a plan and section see Fig. 5 and plate 5). No artefacts were recovered from either feature. Although no dating evidence was recovered the nature of the cut and fill suggested a post-medieval date. A second ditch, 0006, was also identified within this trench but due to the depth of the trench and the proximity of the large and potentially unstable heap of crushed concrete it was not able to excavate a section through its fill (see Fig. 2 for its location). It measured *c.* 0.8m in width and was aligned approximately east west (plate 6). The fill was similar in appearance to that of ditch 0002.

5.3 Site observation

During the evaluation it was noted that part of the boundary wall on the south side of the site was part of a structure (marked in Fig. 2; see plate 7), as marked on early Ordnance Survey maps (Fig. 6). It was built of soft red bricks with a lime mortar. A doorway could be clearly seen which had been blocked with bricks laid without mortar (plate 8), along with two broken off stubs of what were presumably walls or buttresses that protruded into the site. A well was also noted, situated astride the property boundary formed by the wall. The wall was carried over the well on an arch filled in with brickwork (plate 9). The top of the well was sealed with a concrete slab although this had been moved revealing the interior of the well which had been filled with rubble to within about a 1m from the top.

Figure 3. Trench 1, section

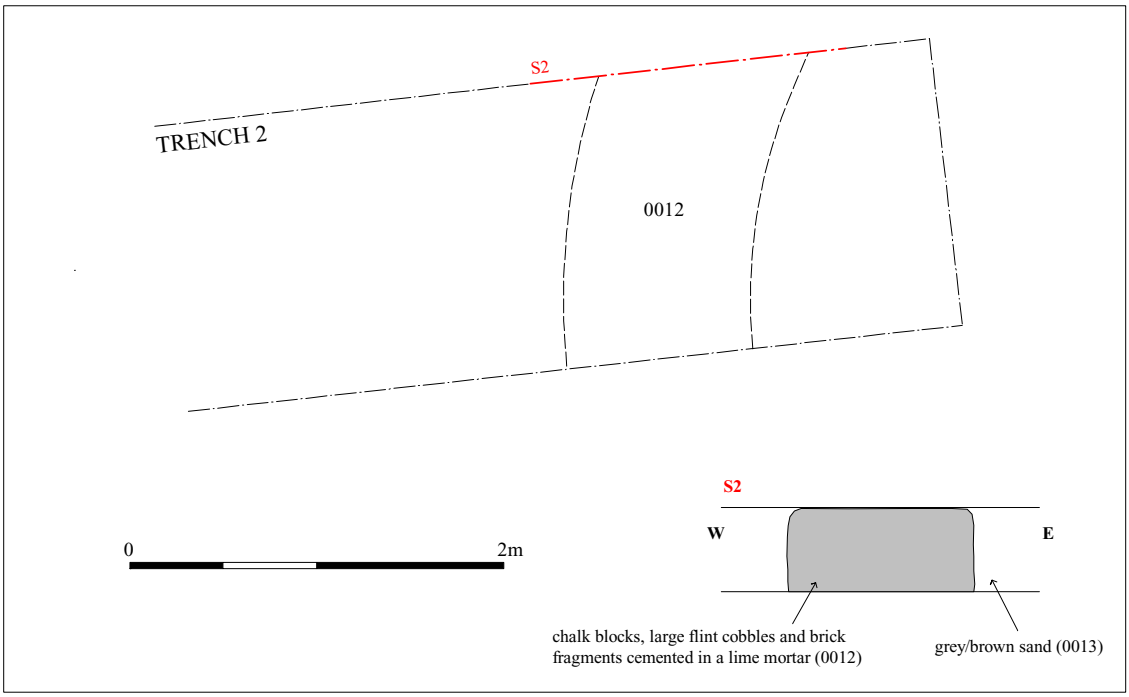

Figure 4. Trench 2, plan and sections

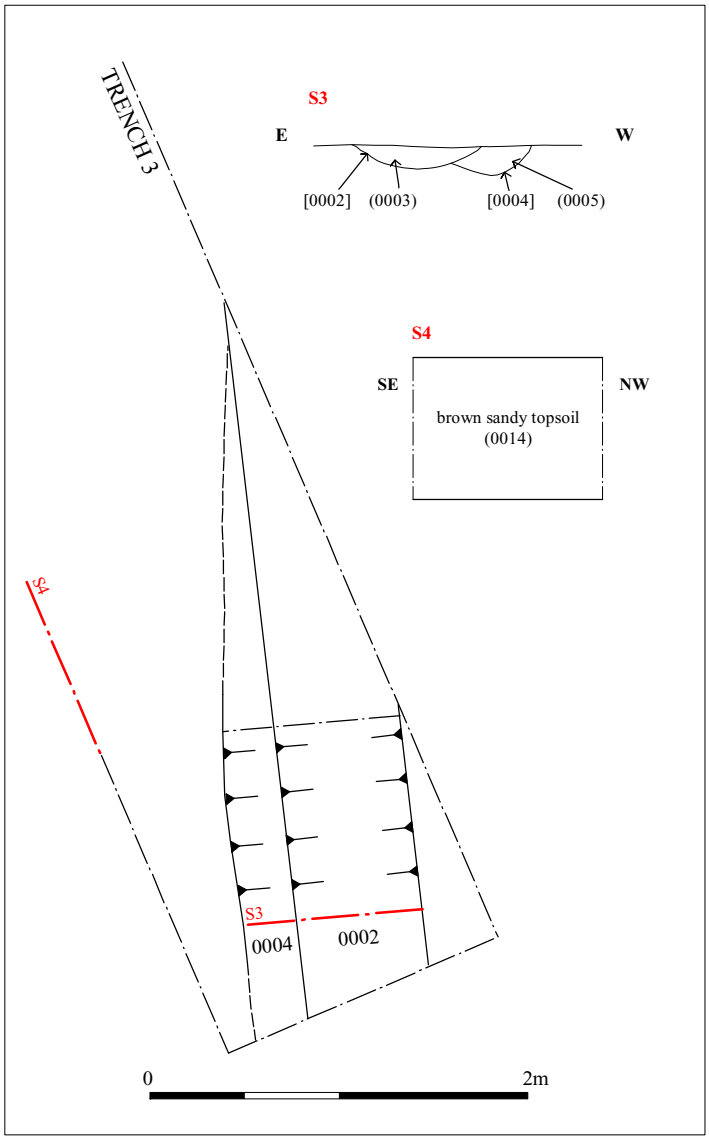

Figure 5. Trench 3, plan and sections

6. Finds and environmental evidence

No artefacts of any period were recovered during the evaluation.

7. Discussion

The surface formed by sand and gravel deposits (0009 and 0010) are likely to be modern in origin and probably relate to the construction and use of the site by Cedar Cycles. They overlie what is probably a buried topsoil. No evidence for a yard surface associated with the mills was identified suggesting it had been removed during the construction of the cycle warehouse.

The mass of chalk blocks, flint cobbles and brick fragments (0012) is undoubtedly part of the foundation of the tower mill known to have stood on this site. The mill is marked on early Ordnance Survey maps and the recorded location of 0012 is coincidental with the indicated site (Fig. 6). It would appear that to create the tower's foundation a circular trench was dug to the depth of the natural subsoil which was then filled with the large flint cobbles, chalk blocks and brick fragments and set in lime mortar that rested directly on the surface of the natural subsoil. No surviving brickwork associated with the tower mill was identified.

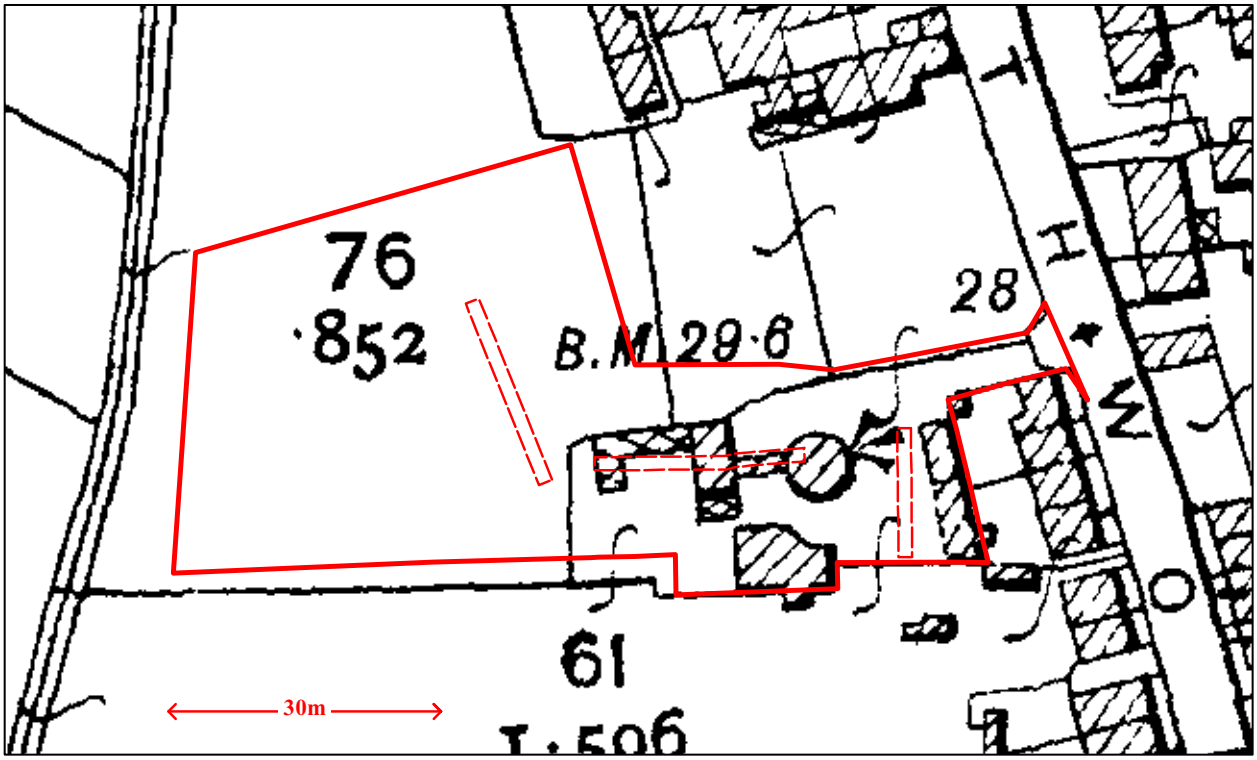

Figure 6. 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map, pub. 1904 (rescaled extract) with site outline and trenches overlain in red

The two ditches recorded in Trench 3 are perpendicular to each other and appear to respect the southern site boundary. No dating evidence was recovered from the fill of the example sampled but the nature of the fill and the clearness of the cut would suggest they not of any great antiquity. They are likely to mark the boundaries of the plot within which the mills stood although neither appear on the early Ordnance Survey maps.

It is clear that the former Cedar Cycles' warehouse had been built on a terrace cut into the west facing slope resulting in a significant truncation of the natural subsoil over the

entire footprint of the building. There was no evidence of such truncation in any of the other areas sampled.

The brick wall noted on the southern boundary of the site is part of the structure visible to the south of the mill on the early Ordnance Survey map. The well seen during the evaluation lies to the west but it is not marked on the early map.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

No evidence for any Anglo-Saxon or medieval activity on the site was identified during the evaluation although the site is set back from the road frontage, where evidence for medieval structures would be more likely. It is possible that discrete features from these, or earlier periods, could exist within the site as, other than in the area of the cycle warehouse, there is no evidence for truncation of the surface of the natural subsoil.

The existence of the tower mill, the steam mill and associated structures are of some local history interest. If any significant remains of these buildings are encountered during groundworks they should be recorded.

The wall and well noted on the southern boundary comprise the only visible remains of the mill complex and may be worthy of further recording.

9. Archive deposition

Historic Environment Record reference under which the archive is held: WRE 027.
The digital archive will be stored on the SCC secure servers at the location:

> *R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\Archaeology\Current Recording Projects \Wrentham\WRE 027 Evaluation (Tower Mills)*

Digital photographs are held under the references: HTN83 to HTN91

A summary of this project has been entered into OASIS, the online database, under the reference: suffolkc1-152488 (see Appendix 3).

10. Acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by Jezz Meredith and Mark Sommers from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was directed by Mark Sommers and managed by Dr R. Gardner, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

11. Plates

(featured scales are 1m or 2m in length with 0.5m divisions)

Plate 1. Overburden as revealed in Trench 1 (Section 1)

Plate 2. Trench 2 showing the area of the former warehouse, note the variation in levels

Plate 3. Trench 2, section across the tower mill foundation (0012) (Section 2)

Plate 4. Overburden as revealed in Trench 3 (Section 4)

Plate 5. Trench 3, Ditches 0002 and 0004 (Section 3)

Plate 6. Trench 3, Ditch 0006

(note the large crushed concrete heap close to the edge of the trench)

Plate 7. Former building remains visible on southern boundary of the site

Plate 8. Trench 3, blocked doorway

Plate 9. View of the arch carrying the wall over the well

Appendix 1. Brief and specification

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

CEDAR CYCLES, TOWER MILLS, SOUTHWOLD ROAD, WRENTHAM, SUFFOLK

PLANNING AUTHORITY:	Waveney District Council
PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:	DC/12/0544/OUT
HER NO. FOR THIS PROJECT:	To be arranged
GRID REFERENCE:	TM 498 823
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:	Erection of four detached houses, and associated garages and turning areas
AREA:	0.28 ha
CURRENT LAND USE:	Brownfield
THIS BRIEF ISSUED BY:	Abby Antrobus Archaeological Officer Conservation Team Tel. : 01284 741231 E-mail: jess.tipper@suffolk.gov.uk
Date:	16 April 2013

Summary

1.1 Planning permission has been granted with the following condition (Condition **) relating to archaeological investigation:

'No development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work has been secured, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.'

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 1.1), 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 site lies within the area of archaeological interest and importance of the saxon and medieval core of Wrentham, defined in the County Historic Environment Record (WRE 022). There is potential for archaeological remains relating to early occupation and life to be present, on this plot between a main road and the watercourse. Groundworks associated with the development have the potential to cause significant damage or destruction to any archaeological deposits that exist.

Planning Background

3.1 There is high 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 was advised that any consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of work taking place before development begins in accordance with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework 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 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover 5% by area of the site to be affected by development (c0.2ha). 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*. 55m of trenching at 1.80m in width.

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 1.1.

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.	Trench	Description
0001		Unstratified finds (none recovered)
0002	3	Linear feature cut. Interpreted as a ditch. Shallow with rounded profile
0003	3	Fill of cut 0002. Consists of mid to dark grey brown silty sand with very occasional medium round flints (mainly along base). Cuts 0004
0004	3	Linear feature, interpreted as a ditch. Cut by 0002
0005	3	Fill of 0004. Consists of mottled mid-pale, slightly silty sand
0006	3	East-west linear feature. Not excavated due to proximity of large heap of crushed concrete
0007	3	Topsoil
0008	1	Pale grey-brown sand. Interpreted as a probable former topsoil
0009	1	Layer of yellow sand and gravel. Interpreted as a base for a modern yard surface
0010	1	Layer of black sand, gravel and silt. Possible surface, probably modern
0011	1	Layer of yellow sand and gravel. Present, post-demolition surface
0012	2	Large mass of chalk blocks, large flint cobbles and brick fragments cemented with lime mortar. Interpreted as the foundation of the tower mill
0013	2	Pale grey-brown sand. Interpreted as a probable former topsoil
0014	3	Brown sand

Appendix 3. OASIS data collection form

OASIS ID: suffolkc1-152488

Project details

Project name	Cedar Cycles, Tower Mills, Wrentham
Short description of the project	trenched evaluation revealed two undated ditches (prob. post-med) and part of the foundation of a tower mill.
Project dates	Start: 11-06-2013 End: 17-06-2013
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	WRE 027 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	DC/12/0544 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	TOWER MILL Post Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK WAVENEY WRENTHAM Cedar Cycles, Tower Mills
Study area	2900.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 4987 8239 52 1 52 22 54 N 001 40 19 E Point

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	Rhodri Gardner
Project supervisor	Mark Sommers
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Suffolk County SMR
Digital Archive ID	WRE 027
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Suffolk County SMR
Paper Archive ID	WRE 027
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Correspondence","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Plan","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation Report: Cedar Cycles, Tower Mills, Southwold Road, Wrentham, Suffolk
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Sommers, M.
Other bibliographic details	SCCAS Report No. 2013/085
Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	SCCAS
Place of issue or publication	Ipswich
Description	printed sheets of A4 paper in card covers

Entered by	MS (mark.sommers@suffolk.gov.uk)
Entered on	17 June 2013

Appendix 4. History of Tower Mill

From the Wrentham Parish website, (http://www.wrentham.org.uk), accessed on the 13th June 2013

TOWER MILL was built sometime between 1825 and 1837 probably by J. J. Goff who operated it until his death in 1849. In the 1851 census returns, Mary Goff, his widow, is listed as being at the Wind and Steam Mills and Malt Office and employing eight men. In 1861 J.J. Goffs estate was auctioned and included was "Lot 1, Wrentham Mills comprising a substantially built Tower Mill, having eight floors and four patent sails, driving three pairs of 4ft 6in French Stones. Also communicating with Tower Mill a Steam Milt with three floors, a 10 horse power high pressure beam engine, driving three pairs of 4ft French Stones".

It was bought by Samuel Kett for £1200 who paid £200 down and had a mortgage for the rest. It seems that the business ran into trouble and in November 1863 a fire broke out which gutted all the buildings except the Tower Mill and counting house which, unlike the steam mill, two granaries and the malt house, were made of brick. The circumstances of the fire seemed somewhat suspicious as it started in two places about 30 yards apart and it came just five days after Mr. Kett had insured the buildings for £1600! At his subsequent trial for arson he was found guilty and was sentenced to twenty years penal servitude. The newspapers report of the case stated that "all the driving gear and a greater proportion of the machinery of the steam engine was destroyed or irreparably damaged and so intense was the heat of the fire that the millstones in the steam mill crumbled away like sand".

Sometime after this disastrous fire the complex must have been rebuilt with the Steam Mill being constructed of bricks and being made only two stories high.

Thomas Hurwood is listed as the miller in 1868-9, 1874 and 1879 and the 1871 census records him as a "Master Miller employing three men". He died in 1880 aged 63 and the 1881 census lists his widow, Charlotte, as "Miller and Baker". At some stage James Gunn took over the mill from Charlotte Hurwood and it is recorded that he was operating it when he went bankrupt in 1895.

The Tower Mill complex was then bought by Sir Alfred Gooch, Bart., of Benacre Hall, for £700 and it was then leased or sold to Benjamin Carter and Son. Unfortunately for them a "cyclone" struck Wrentham in 1897 and blew off the cap and sails from Tower Mill. The latter were blown across the road and killed a horse stabled in a field close by.

From that time on, Tower Mill was operated via a belt from the driving source of the Steam Mill.

After his father's death in 1900, Samuel Carter continued to operate the Tower Mill complex until 1916 when it was leased to Charles J. Rowling. In the June 1938 Wrentham Parish Magazine there is an advertisement as follows:- "C. J. Rowling - Wrentham, Roller Flour and Grist Mills and Steam Bakery wholesale and retail. Prompt daily deliveries." According to Ernest Fox, now living in Chelmsford, the actual Tower Mill was still operating during 1927/28 as he says that he saw Dewey Hupton stone dressing there. This was when he was working with his Uncle George for W. G. Lilley, the local builder, repairing the lead roof of the Tower.

Jean Chipperfield, who still lives in Wrentham, said that on the death of Mr. Rowling in 1938, R. J. Read purchased the Tower Mill complex from Mrs. Rowling and in November 1938 sold Tower Mill House to her father, Alfred. He renamed it The Firs and made it into a private house as part of it which fronted onto Southwold Road had been used as a shop selling flour, cakes, bread and the like. This business was transferred to another building near to the Tower and a Mrs. Clayton looked after it whilst her husband ran the Mill. In 1942 R.J. Read, whilst retaining the flour rights, sold the complex to C. D. Clarke Ltd. James Smedley, a partner in the firm, said the actual Tower Mill was then just a seven storey shell and the Steam Mill was driven by a Ruston & Hornsby oil engine situated in its own shed. In 1948 the complex was acquired by Tower Mills Ltd. owned by Mr. and Mrs. Smedley who, in 1953, replaced the Oil Engine with electric motors and also removed the three sets of stones and installed a hammer mill in their place. Two of the sets of stones were sold to a Doctor in Wangford and for many years they could be seen propped up outside his house. The other set of millstones was left on site and one of these stones can still be seen as part of the garden path not far from where the Tower Mill stood.

In 1962 Tower Mills Ltd. sold out to R & W Paul Ltd. of Ipswich, who operated the complex until about the end of 1964 when the 65ft. Tower, known locally as "Old Black Friend" was demolished in December 1964. (The 100ft. chimney associated with the beam engine had been pulled down around 1929). R & W Paul then sold off the cottages which were part of the Tower Mill complex and in 1977 Mike Bull bought from them the area on which the Tower had stood and established his Cedar Cycles business. The Bakers Shop building and adjoining Cartshed are still in existence and are now used as offices and storerooms and part of the base of the Tower can be seen in the yard of Cedar Cycles.

Tower Mill prior to 1897

View up Southwold Road from the London Road junction with Tower Mill and the steam mill chimney visible in the distance (May 1900)

Tower Mill in 1939, with the steam mill to the right

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