

**Former Thomas Wolsey Special School  
642 Old Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk  
IPS 664**

**Archaeological Excavation Report**

**SCCAS Report No. 2013/058**

**Client: Persimmon Homes Ltd. (Anglia)**

Author: M. Sommers

July 2013



Former Thomas Wolsey Special School  
642 Old Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk  
IPS 664

Archaeological Excavation Report

SCCAS Report No. 2013/058

Author: M. Sommers

Contributions By: n/a

Editor: Stuart Boulter

Report Date: July 2013



## HER Information

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**Report Number:** 2013/058

**Site Name:** former Thomas Wolsey Special School  
642 Old Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk

**Planning Application No:** IP/10/00504/OUT

**Date of Fieldwork:** 21st March and 25th April 2013

**Grid Reference:** TM 1427 4721

**Client/Funding Body:** Persimmon Homes Ltd. - Anglia

**Curatorial Officer:** Jude Plouviez

**Project Officer:** M. Sommers

**Oasis Reference:** suffolkc1-153071

**Site Code:** IPS 664

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: 2nd July 2013

Approved By: Stuart Boulter  
Position: Senior Project Officer  
Date: 2nd July 2013  
Signed:



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## **Summary**

An archaeological excavation was carried out on the site of the former Thomas Wolsey Special School at 642 Old Norwich Road, Ipswich, in advance of a residential development. An area of 560m<sup>2</sup> was opened revealing a single pit type feature containing sherds of Iron Age pottery. This is the second Iron Age feature identified on this site, which comprises an area of high ground overlooking the Gipping Valley. (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service for Persimmon Homes).



# 1. Introduction

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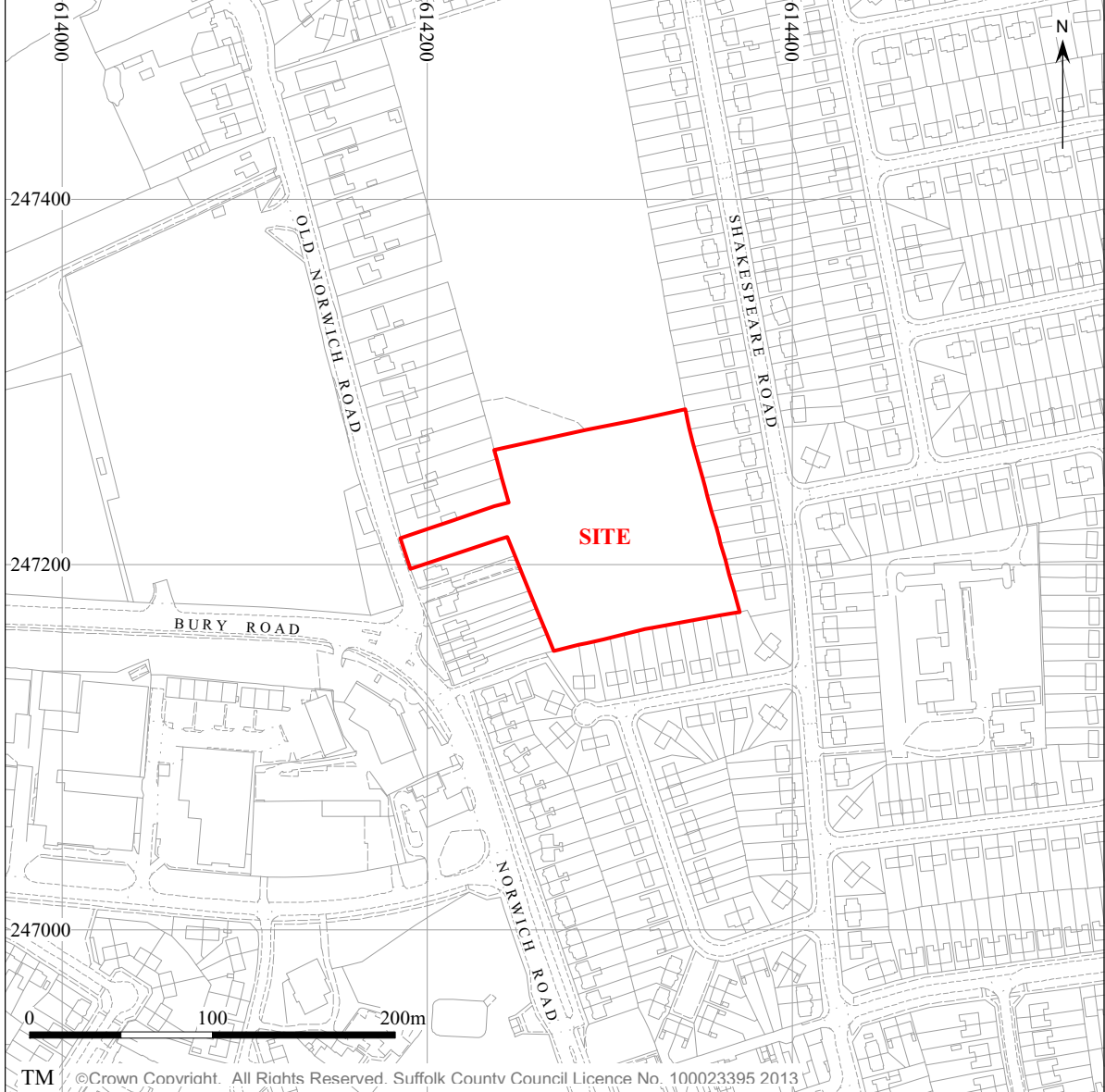
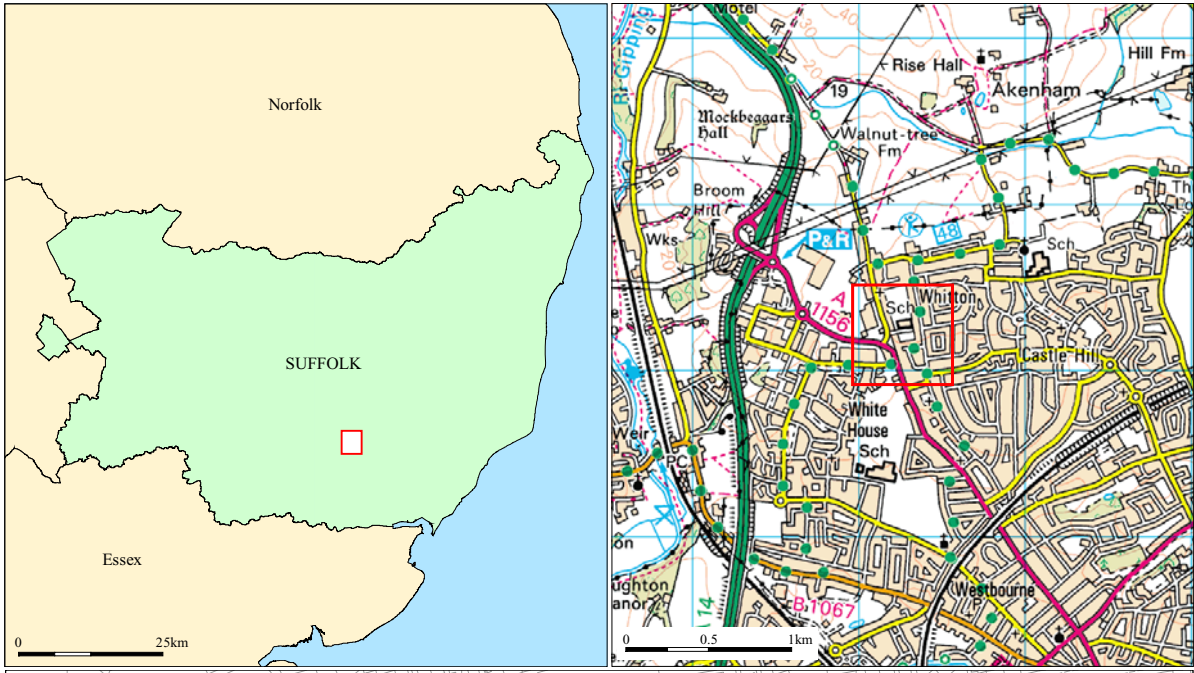
A residential development was proposed for the site of the former Thomas Wolsey Special School at 642 Old Norwich Road, Ipswich. Planning consent was granted (IP/10/00504/OUT), but with an attached condition requiring an agreed programme of archaeological work be undertaken in advance of the development.

The first stage of the programme of work 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. This was carried out in February 2012 (Sommers, 2012) and revealed a single pit dated to the Iron Age period. Although only single feature was recorded it is an indication of prehistoric activity on what is an area of high ground overlooking the Gipping Valley and indicated a potential for further features to be present within the locality.

In order to mitigate against the potential loss of any archaeological evidence that may be present on this site a Brief was issued by Jude Plouviez of the County Conservation Team calling for a further stage of in the programme of work (Appendix 1). The Brief called for an area in the vicinity of the Iron Age feature recorded during the evaluation to be stripped under archaeological supervision and for the full excavation and recording of any archaeological features that may be encountered.

The archaeological excavation was undertaken by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Field Team who were commissioned and funded by the developer, Persimmons Homes Limited - Anglia.

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the excavation area is TM 1427 4721. Figure 1 shows a location plan of the site.



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Figure 1. Location map

## 2. Geology and topography

The excavation site lies at a height of c. 40m OD on a high plateau formed of glacial deposits that overlooks the River Gipping, which lies to c. 1.7km to the east. The underlying drift geology generally consists of chalky clay tills with occasional sandy or clayey deposits.

The development site consists of an area of roughly level land situated within the Ipswich suburb of Whitton, which lies to the north west of the town centre.

It is bounded by the rear gardens of domestic properties on three sides and a recreation ground to the north. It is accessed via a short length of road off Old Norwich Road.

The excavation area lies in the south west corner of the development site, adjacent to an existing area of planting that is to be retained within the new development (Fig. 2).

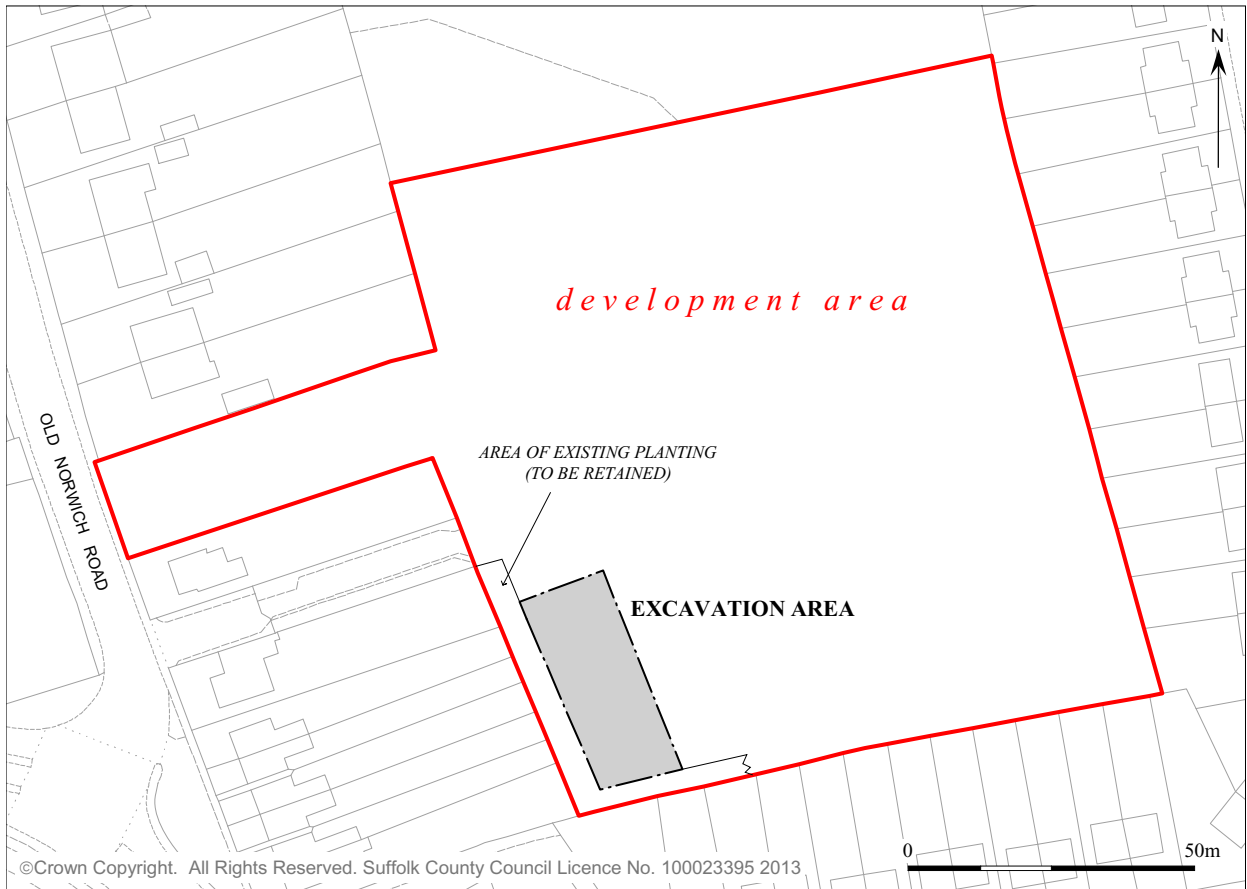


Figure 2. Location of excavation area

### **3. Archaeology and historical background**

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No archaeological sites or findspots were recorded on the County Historic Environment Record (HER) within the development area itself although it does lie within an area of archaeological interest. Isolated finds of Roman coins have been recovered in the vicinity, which suggest a possible nearby Roman settlement.

A large villa has been recorded on a site 650m to the south-east. Excavation of the villa site revealed a background of Neolithic and Iron Age finds along with limited evidence of Anglo-Saxon occupation.

Early map evidence indicates a possible medieval settlement in this area and other documentary evidence suggests that a late Anglo-Saxon or early medieval chapel may lie within the development area.

The preceding evaluation revealed a pit, containing two sherds of Late Iron Age pottery, in a trench towards the south west corner of the development site. The remains of three subterranean concrete structures, interpreted as Second World War air-raid shelters, were identified in a trench adjacent the northern boundary of the development site. These were probably associated with a school that fronted onto Norwich Road. This school was later expanded to form the Thomas Wolsey School. No other artefacts or features were located in the excavated trenches.

### **4. Methodology**

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The first stage of the excavation was the mechanical stripping of the topsoil to expose the cleanly cut surface of the natural subsoil. This was achieved using a 10 tonne, tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless bucket (plate 1). This was undertaken over an area measuring 16m by 38m, roughly centred on the pit exposed during the evaluation (context 0002). The area of existing planting contained many mature trees and shrubs to be retained within the garden area of the new development and consequently this area was not stripped.

Due to a lack of space on site the excavation was carried out two separate halves. The southern half of the site was stripped first and then backfilled. The northern half of the excavation area was stripped on a separate occasion. The second phase of stripping partially overlapped with the first to ensure the entire area had been examined.

The freshly cut surface of the natural subsoil was left clean and smooth which allowed for the easy identification of the archaeological features. A single feature was identified which was sampled through the hand excavation of a half section through its fill to reveal the profile and depth of the feature cut, to obtain dating evidence in the form of artefacts, and to investigate the makeup of the fill.

Context numbers were allocated to the feature cut and fill, continuing in sequence from those allocated during the trenched evaluation (see Appendix 2 for the complete list). The revealed section was recorded at a scale of 1:20 on plastic drafting film. A photographic record was made using a digital camera and a surface plan of the site was drawn. These drawings have been digitised and the data used to create the plans and sections presented in this report.

Following recording, the remainder of the fill was removed to recover all artefacts present within the feature.

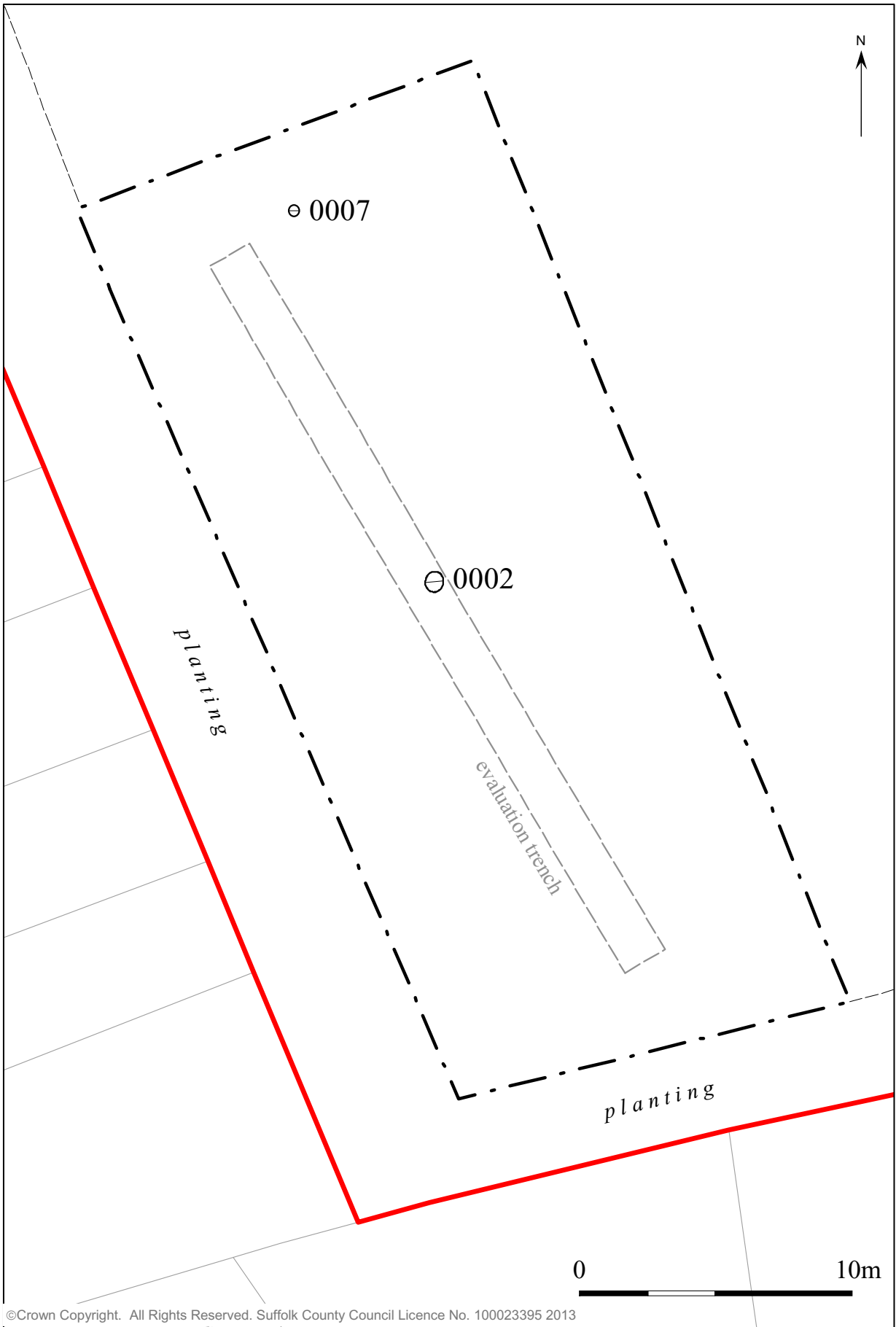


Figure 3. Plan of excavation area



## 5. Results

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A total area of 560m<sup>2</sup> surrounding the site of the previously recorded Iron Age feature (0002; plate 2) was stripped and examined over two separate days (21st March and 25th April 2013). Within this area, an additional single small circular feature was identified and excavated (plates 3 and 4). Figure 3 comprises a plan of the excavated area; Figure 4 consists of larger scale plans of both the features recorded within the excavation area, and their recorded sections.

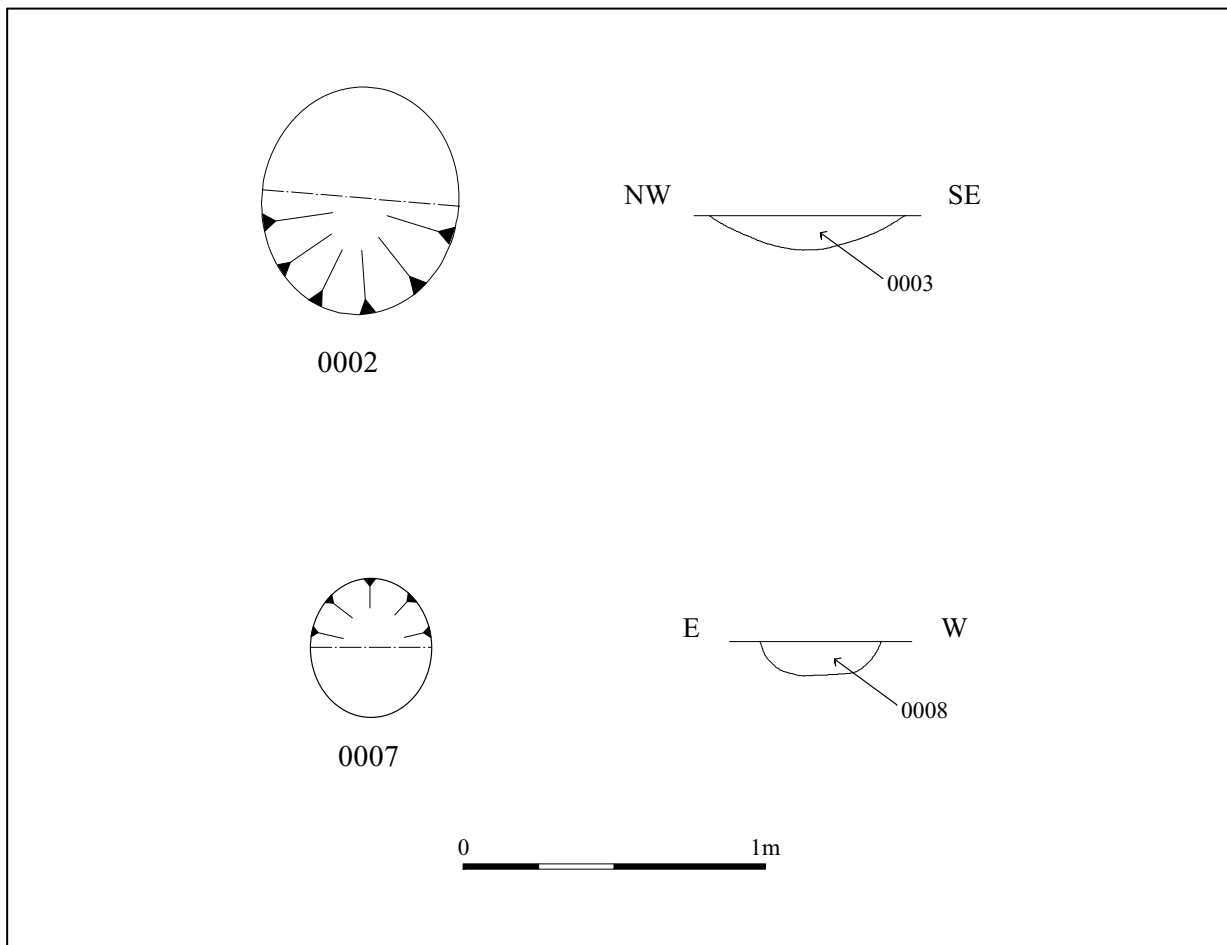


Figure 4. Plans and sections

The additional feature comprised a shallow cut with a bowl shaped profile and was allocated the context number 0007. It measured 0.41m in diameter and cut the natural subsoil to a depth of 0.11m. The fill (0008) consisted of dark brown silty clay with infrequent, moderately large flint. A number of pottery sherds were recovered from the fill which have been dated to the Iron Age period (see Section 6).

The site of the pit identified during the evaluation, context 0002, was clearly visible. It consisted of a small oval shaped cut with a fill (0003) of pale to mid brown silty clay from which two small sherds of Late Iron Age pottery were recovered. The feature measured 0.65m by 0.75m and cut the natural subsoil to a depth of 0.12m.

The natural subsoil consisted of a yellow silty clay and lay at a depth of c. 0.5m, below an overburden of imported hardcore over a dark topsoil that faded to pale brown with depth.

## **6. Finds and environmental evidence**

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### **Pit 0002 (Andy Fawcett)**

Two grog tempered sherds (GROG) dated to this period were from the fill of Pit 0002 (0003). The first of these is an abraded oxidised sherd which is possibly hand-made (11g). It contains abundant ill sorted pale grog and has a soapy feel. The second sherd displays only slight abrasion and is reduced (6g). The fabric is composed of pale and dark ill sorted grog and has a soapy feel. Although the sherd is small, its thickness indicates that it was from a large jar, perhaps of the storage variety.

Grog tempered fabrics can straddle the conquest period and in particular fabrics associated with the larger storage jars. The presence of a potentially hand-made sherd may suggest that these pieces are dated to the pre-conquest period. Nevertheless due to the small number of sherds within pit fill 0003, the feature cannot be considered well dated.

### **Pit 0007 (Cathy Tester)**

Nine sherds of prehistoric pottery weighing 84g were recovered from the fill of Pit 0007 (0008). All of the sherds are undecorated, made in a flint tempered fabric (HMF) and are of probable Iron Age date. Six of the sherds join and come from the lower wall and base of a jar and the other three sherds are singular and less diagnostic.

## **7. Discussion**

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The two pits identified within the excavation area have both been dated to broadly within the Iron Age period from the pottery recovered from their fills. Although both are probably of Iron Age date, the pottery from each feature is noticeably different suggesting that they are not contemporary, but this is based on only a small assemblage from each cut.

They indicate some form of Iron Age activity on this area of high ground although the precise nature could not be determined. A small settlement is possible with these pits representing just the surviving lower portions of deep features and that all other evidence has been lost through erosion but this is purely speculative.

## **8. Conclusions**

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The results of the evaluation and subsequent excavation confirm Iron Age activity in this area although its precise nature is undetermined.

## **9. Archive deposition**

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Historic Environment Record reference under which the archive is held: IPS 664.

The digital archive will be stored on the SCC secure servers at the location:

*R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\Archaeology\Archive\Ipswich\  
IPS 664 Excavation (Thomas Wolsey School site)*

Digital photographs are held under the references: HLM30 to HLM79 (evaluation) and HTO60 to HTO62 (excavation).

A summary of this project has been entered into OASIS, the online database, under the reference: suffolkc1-153071 (see Appendix 3).

## 10. Acknowledgements

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The excavation was carried out by 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.

The finds report was produced by Cathy Tester and Andy Fawcett.

## 11. Bibliography

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Sommers, M., 2012, Archaeological Evaluation Report: Thomas Wolsey Special School, 642 Old Norwich Road, Ipswich, Suffolk. SCCAS *Report 2012/035*

## 12. Plates

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*(featured scale is 1m or 2m in length with 0.5m divisions)*



Plate 1. topsoil stripping of the excavation area (ref. HTO 60)



Plate 2. Pit 0002 as seen during the evaluation (ref. HLM 37)



Plate 3. Pit 0007 (ref. HTO 61)



Plate 4. Pit 0007 (ref. HTO 62)

## Appendix 1. Brief for archaeological excavation

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### Brief for Archaeological Excavation

Former Thomas Wolsey School, Old Norwich Road, Ipswich

**PLANNING AUTHORITY:** Ipswich Borough Council  
**PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:** IP/10/00504/OUT  
**HER NO. FOR THIS PROJECT:**  
**GRID REFERENCE:** TM 142 441  
**DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:** Residential  
**AREA:** 125 x 60m  
**THIS BRIEF ISSUED BY:** Judith Plouviez  
Archaeological Officer  
Conservation Team  
Tel. : 01284 741235  
E-mail: jude.plouviez@suffolk.gov.uk  
**Date:** 11 February 2013

#### 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 approved in writing by the LPA. This is in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 141).
  
- 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 Archaeological Excavation 2012 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.

- 1.4 Following acceptance by SCCAS/CT, it is the commissioning body's responsibility to submit it to the LPA for formal approval. No fieldwork should be undertaken on site without the written approval of the LPA.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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 (unless a variation is agreed by SCCAS/CT), SCCAS/CT will be unable to advise discharge of the condition.

### **Archaeological Background**

- 2.1 A trenched archaeological evaluation carried out by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Field Team identified a prehistoric (Iron Age) pit in the south-west part of the development area (Suffolk HER no. IPS 642). This seems to be one of a number of areas of later prehistoric activity on the high ground to the north of Ipswich.

### **Fieldwork Requirements for Archaeological Investigation**

- 3.1 Archaeological investigation is to be carried out prior to development:  
Controlled strip, map and excavation of the south-west part of the site – an area 40m N-S x 20m E-W (incorporating evaluation Trench 4). (see attached figure).

### **Arrangements for Archaeological Investigation**

- 4.1 The project code should be confirmed with the HER officer before work commences. This number must be clearly marked on all documentation relating to the work.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 A timetable for fieldwork and assessment stages of the project must be presented in the WSI and agreed with SCCAS/CT before the fieldwork commences.



- 4.4 All arrangements for the excavation, the timing of the work and access to the site, are to be defined and negotiated by the archaeological contractor with the commissioning body.
- 4.5 If the archaeological excavation is scheduled to be undertaken immediately before construction, the commissioning body should be aware that there may be a time delay for excavation and recording if unexpected and complex archaeological remains are defined. Adequate time is to be allowed for full archaeological recording of archaeological deposits before any construction work can commence on site (unless otherwise agreed by the LPA on the advice of SCCAS/CT).
- 4.6 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, and land contamination, rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor.
- 4.7 The WSI must state the security measures to protect the site from vandalism and theft, and to secure any deep holes.
- 4.8 The archaeological contractor will give SCCAS/CT ten working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to agreed locations and techniques in the WSI.

### **Post-Excavation Assessment and Archival Requirements**

- 5.1 Within four weeks of the end of fieldwork a written timetable for post-excavation assessment, updated project design and/or reporting must be produced, which must be approved by SCCAS/CT. Following this, a written statement of progress on post-excavation work – whether assessment, analysis, report writing and publication or archiving – will be required at six monthly intervals.
- 5.2 A post-excavation assessment (PXA) report on the fieldwork should be prepared in accordance with the principles of *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006). The PXA will act as a critically assessed audit of the archaeological evidence from the site; see East Anglian

*Archaeology Draft Post Excavation Assessments: Notes on a New Guidance Document* (2012).

- 5.3 In certain instances a full PXA might be unnecessary. The need for a full PXA or otherwise should be discussed and formally agreed with SCCAS/CT within four weeks of the end of fieldwork.
- 5.4 The PXA must present a clear and concise assessment of the archaeological value and significance of the results, and identifies the research potential, in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3, 8 and 24, 1997, 2000 and 2011). It must present an Updated Project Design, with a timetable, for analysis, dissemination and archive deposition. The PXA will *provide the basis for measurable standards* for SCCAS/CT to monitor this work.
- 5.5 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared, consistent with the principles of *MoRPHE*. It must be adequate to perform the function of a final archive for deposition in the Archaeological Store of SCCAS/CT or in a suitable museum in Suffolk (see *Archaeological Archives Forum: a guide to best practice 2007*).
- 5.6 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with guidelines from *The Institute of Conservation* (ICON).
- 5.7 The project manager should consult the intended archive depository before the archive is prepared regarding the specific requirements for the archive deposition and curation, and regarding any specific cost implications of deposition. The intended depository must be prepared to accept the entire archive resulting from the project (both finds and written archive) in order to create a complete record of the project. A clear statement of the form, intended content, and standards of the archive is to be submitted for approval as an essential requirement of the WSI.
- 5.8 The PXA should offer a statement of significance for retention, based on specialist advice, and - where it is justified – the UPD should propose a discard strategy. This should be agreed with the intended archive depository.
- 5.9 For deposition in the SCCAS/CT's Archaeological Store, the archive should comply with SCCAS Archive Guidelines 2010. If this is not the intended depository, the project manager should ensure that a duplicate copy of the written archive is deposited with the Suffolk HER.

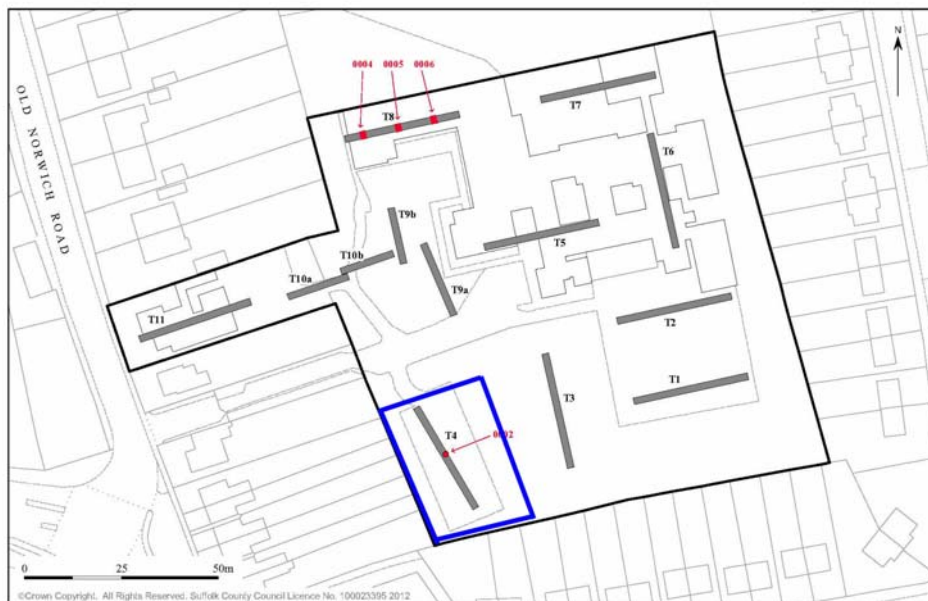
- 5.10 The UPD should state proposals for the deposition of the digital archive relating to this project with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), or similar digital archive repository, and allowance should be made for costs incurred to ensure proper deposition (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>).
- 5.11 An unbound hardcopy of the PXA and UPD (or grey literature report if otherwise agreed), clearly marked DRAFT, must be presented to SCCAS/CT for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated. Following acceptance, a single hard copy of the report should be presented to the Suffolk HER as well as a digital copy of the approved report.
- 5.12 On approval of an adequate PXA and UPD, SCCAS/CT will advise the LPA that the scheme of investigation for post-excavation analysis, dissemination and archive deposition has been agreed.
- 5.13 Where appropriate, a copy of the approved PXA should be sent to the local archaeological museum, whether or not it is the intended archive depository. A list of local museum can be obtained from SCCAS/CT.
- 5.14 SCCAS/CT supports the OASIS project, to provide an online index to archaeological reports. At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. When the project is completed, all parts of the OASIS online form must be completed and a copy must be included in the final report and also with the site archive. A .pdf version of the entire report should be uploaded to the OASIS website.
- 5.15 Where positive results are drawn from a project, a summary report must be prepared, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History*. It should be included in the project report, or submitted to SCCAS/CT, by the end of the calendar year in which the work takes place, whichever is the sooner.

## **Standards and Guidance**

- 6.1 Detailed requirements are to be found in our Requirements for Archaeological Excavation 2012 Ver 1.1 and in SCCAS Archive Guidelines 2010

- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 The Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological excavation* (revised 2008) should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

**This brief remains valid for 6 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.**



Area for excavation outlined in blue

Jude Plouviez 11 Feb 2013

## Appendix 2. Context List

Context No.	project	Description
0001	Evaluation/ excavation	Unstratified finds from both the evaluation and excavation phases of work.
0002	Evaluation	A small oval shaped feature cut interpreted as a pit. Dimensions: 0.65m by 0.75m, cuts the natural subsoil to a depth of 0.12m.
0003	Evaluation	Fill of cut 0002. Consists of a homogenous, pale to mid brown silty clay from which two small sherds of Late Iron Age pottery were recovered.
0004	Evaluation	Remains of a concrete structure running perpendicular to the trench. The western most of a group of three. Consists of a series of adjacent upright concrete panels forming two walls set 1.55m apart (plate 12). Each panel measured 31.5cm wide and 0.35 cm thick with edges raised by 5.5cm . Occasional holes were present within the raised edges. The walls were vertical but at a point c. 0.7m below the top of the former school floor slab they started to curve in towards each other and would have presumably met to form an arched roof. The bottom of this structure was below the level of the natural subsoil and was not exposed. The space between the two walls was filled with concrete.
0005	Evaluation	Probable site of a structure similar to 0004. Only a construction cut seen, the actual structure having been destroyed. Not excavated.
0006	Evaluation	The eastern most structure of the group of three. Formed of identical concrete panels to 0004 but had been broken up and the smashed remains then used to backfill the hole. A concrete floor was located at a depth of 1.45m below the former school floor slab. Some of the concrete fragments recovered from the backfill consisted of concrete slabs poured against timber shuttering which were probably related to a passageway at the entrance.

0007	Excavation	Small roughly circular cut, 0.4m diameter. Cuts the natural subsoil to a depth of 0.11m.
0008	Excavation	Fill of cut 0007. Consists of dark brown silty clay with infrequent, moderately large flint. A number of pottery sherds were recovered from the fill which have been dated to the Iron Age period

## Appendix 3. OASIS data collection form

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**OASIS ID: suffolkc1-153071**

### Project details

Project name	IPS 664 - Thomas Wolsey School, Ipswich
Short description of the project	Open area excavation revealed a single pit containing Iron Age pottery. This is the second pit feature containing Iron Age pottery excavated within this site, the previous example having been identified during an earlier evaluation.
Project dates	Start: 21-03-2013 End: 21-06-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	IPS 664 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	IP/10/00504/OUT - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	PIT Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Iron Age
Investigation type	"Full excavation"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	SUFFOLK IPSWICH IPSWICH IPS664 - Thomas Wolsey School, Old Norwich Road
Study area	600.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 1427 4717 52 1 52 04 50 N 001 07 38 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	Stuart Boulter
Project supervisor	Mark Sommers
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Suffolk County SMR
Physical Archive ID	IPS664
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Suffolk County SMR
Digital Archive ID	IPS664
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Suffolk County SMR
Paper Archive ID	IPS664
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Correspondence","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Plan","Report"

### Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
------------------	---

Entered by	MS (mark.sommers@suffolk.gov.uk)
Entered on	18 June 2013





# Archaeological services Field Projects Team

**Delivering a full range of archaeological services**

- Desk-based assessments and advice
- Site investigation
- Outreach and educational resources
- Historic Building Recording
- Environmental processing
- Finds analysis and photography
- Graphics design and illustration

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**[www.suffolk.gov.uk/Environment/Archaeology/](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/Environment/Archaeology/)**