

# Land off Valley Road, Leiston LCS 174

## **Archaeological Evaluation Report**

**SCCAS Report No. 2013/143**

**Client: Badger Building Ltd**

Author: Simon Cass

November 2013

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Report Date: November 2013



## HER Information

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**Site Code:** LCS 174  
**Site Name:** Land off Valley Road, Leiston  
**Report Number** 2013/143  
**Planning Application No:** C/13/0475  
**Date of Fieldwork:** 18/11/2013  
**Grid Reference:** TM 4462 6276  
**Oasis Reference:** Suffolkc1-160634  
**Curatorial Officer:** Dr Jess Tipper  
**Project Officer:** Simon Cass  
**Client/Funding Body:** Badger Building Ltd  
**Client Reference:** -

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: Simon Cass

Date: 20/11/2013

Approved By: Rhodri Gardner

Position: Head of Contracting, SCCAS/FT

Date:

Signed:



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## **Summary**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land off Valley Road, Leiston in November 2013 in advance of the development of land for housing by Badger Building (E. Anglia) Ltd. The site is just to the east of the centre of Leiston, an historic town with a significant Premonstratensian Abbey in founded in 1182 nearby (the Abbey moved to its present site in the 14th Century). Three trenches were excavated across the site, arranged according to a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Dr Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service Conservation Team (SCCAS/CT). No archaeologically relevant finds or deposits were observed – a thickening subsoil deposit noted in Trenches 2 and 3 may be of natural origin and was devoid of any cultural material – and the depth to natural geology deepened from 0.3m at the northern end of the site to between 1.3m-2.0m in Trench 3 near the road.



## **1. Introduction**

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An application for planning permission (C/03/0475) was received by Suffolk Coastal District Council for the development of land between 55 and 81 Valley Road, Leiston, to include 12 new houses, 13 flats and associated parking and access. As a condition of this permission, the developers were required to implement a scheme of archaeological investigation in order to ascertain the presence and character and/or absence of any archaeological deposits and features within the development site sufficiently to inform any potential mitigation strategy that may be required.

## **2. Geology and topography**

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The site lies on a slope, from high ground to the north (c. 12m AOD) down to the valley floor at Valley Road on the southern boundary of the site at c. 7.2m AOD. The underlying bedrock is recorded as Crag Sands with overlying sand and gravel (Lowestoft Formation), with diamicton deposits also noted nearby to the north-west.

As observed in the trenches, the natural geology changed approximately half way along Trench 2, with pale cream/yellow sandy clays to the north and mid orangey brown sands and gravels to the south, coinciding approximately with the 10m AOD contour.

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

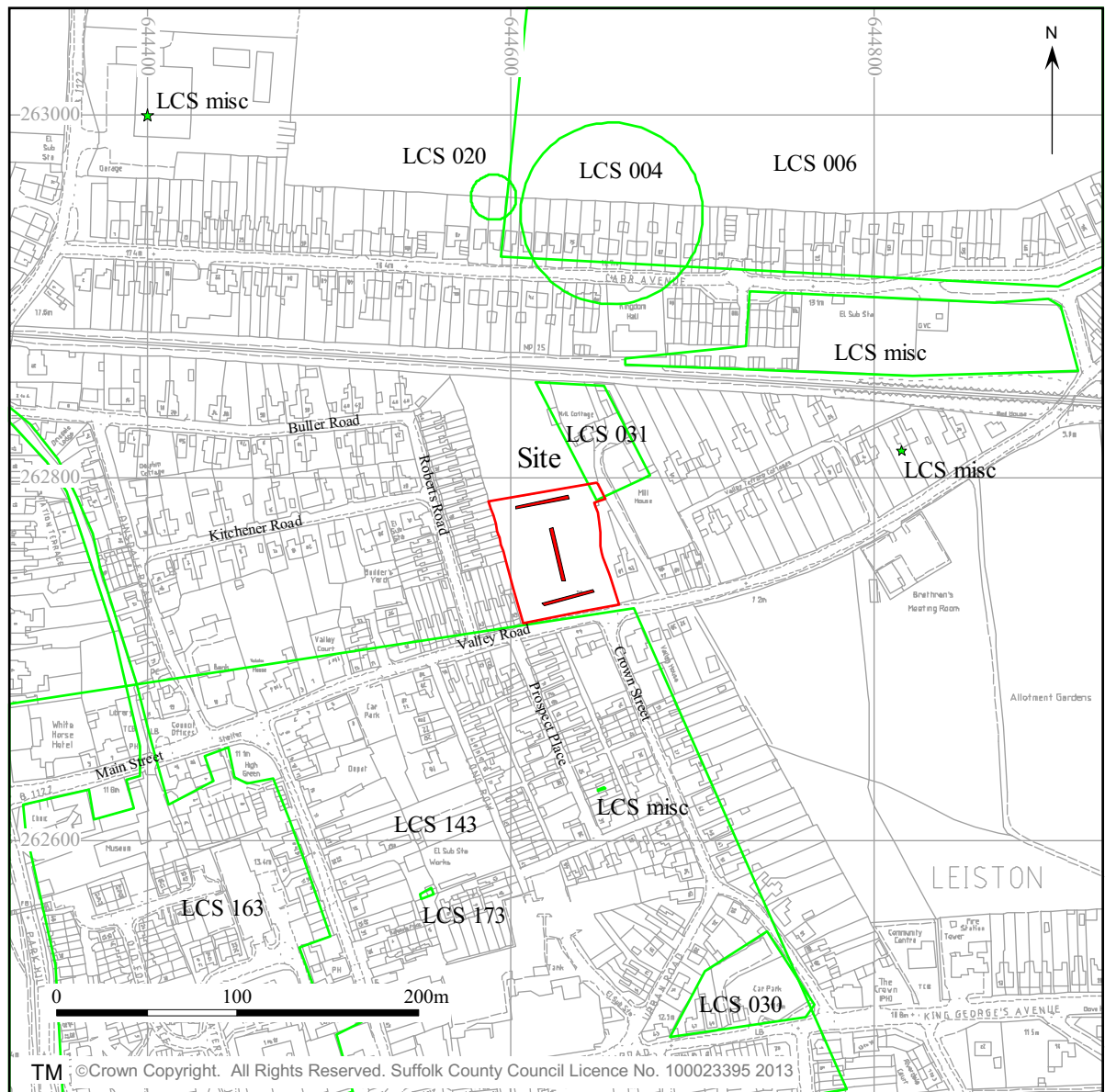
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The site lies on the edge of the area of archaeological interest for the medieval town of Leiston (LCS 143), with prehistoric and undated remains just to the north and north-east including LCS 020 (an undated cropmark ring ditch) and LCS 004 (the location of two Bronze Age cinerary urns) both approximately 200m north of the site with a complex arrangement of cropmark field systems (LCS 006) noted just to the north-east of those.

Post-medieval and modern remains nearby include the location of LCS 031 immediately to the north-east of the present site ("Lamberts Mill" smock mill built in 1837 and demolished 1917) and LCS 030 to the south (the location of a medieval monastic mill built pre 1608 and demolished in 1870). The site of the Richard Garrett and Sons Ltd Iron Foundry works, founded in 1778 and closed in 1920, is recorded as LCS 163.

While a great number of sites, crop marks and find spots are recorded for the parish of

Leiston, little work has been undertaken in the town itself, this being the first evaluation to be undertaken pre-development.



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Figure 1. Location map, showing site (red) and local HER entries (green)



Figure 2. Trench plan showing geological extents and sondage locations in Trench 3

## 4. Methodology

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Three trenches, measuring 90m in total length and 1.6m wide, were excavated in a standard pattern across the site by an 8-tonne mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket, under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. The trenches were excavated to the top of the undisturbed natural subsoil or archaeological levels (Fig. 2). Trenches were surveyed after excavation using a Leica 1200 GPS.

Where necessary the trench was hand-cleaned and any potential features investigated by hand. Trenches and spoil heaps were not metal-detected due to the presence of modern ironwork fragments and lumps in the topsoil and no pre-modern artefacts were located in this instance on spoil heaps. Finds were retrieved from features cut into subsoil in Trench 3 and a short commentary by a SCCAS/FT in-house Finds Specialist is included in this report.

Hand drawn plans at a scale of 1:50, and sections at 1:20, were recorded on A3 *pro forma* pre-gridded permatrace sheets where necessary and high resolution digital colour photographs were taken of all stages of the fieldwork, and are included in the digital archive.

An OASIS form has been completed for this stage of the project (reference no. suffolkc1-160634) and a digital copy of this report has been submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>).

The site archive is kept in the main store of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds under Suffolk HER No. LCS 174.

## 5. Results

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### 5.1 Trench results

#### Trench 1

This trench was 30m long, 1.6m wide and up to 0.45m deep, orientated east-west across the northern end of the site. The exposed stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of mid brown sandy organic-rich silt topsoil over silty sandy clay natural geology. Some modern disturbances were noted, dated by the modern LBC-stamped brick and brick fragments as well as assorted ironwork recovered (door hinges, short iron rods, etc). No finds or features of archaeological relevance were observed within this trench.



Plate 1. Trench 1, facing east



## Trench 2

This trench was 30m long, 1.6m wide and up to 0.45m deep, orientated north-south along the centre of the site. The exposed stratigraphy consisted of 0.35m of mid brown sandy organic-rich silt topsoil over silty sandy clay natural geology in the northern half of the trench, with a change in the geology to more typical mid orangey brown sandy Crag deposits approximately half way along and a thickening subsoil deposit of mid/dark orangey brown silty sands (up to 0.4m thick at the southern end of the trench). Some modern disturbances were noted, mostly north-south orientated plough scarring but including a single modern posthole (dated by brown bottle glass – not retained). No finds or features of archaeological relevance were observed within this trench.



Plate 2. Trench 2 section, facing west (0.3m and 2.0m scales)

### Trench 3

This trench was 30m long, 1.6m wide and up to 2.0m deep, orientated east-west across the southern end of the site near to Valley Road. The exposed stratigraphy consisted of 0.6m of mid brown sandy organic-rich silt topsoil over a thin band 0.12m thick of mixed silt and pale clays with frequent modern inclusions (glass/modern brick/CBM). This overlay a very thin layer (some 0.03m thick) apparently of iron panning/natural concretions. Below this was the mid orangey brown subsoil deposit seen in Trench 2, but at a greater thickness (0.55m thick) with natural geology (pale leached mottled silty sands) occurring at a depth of 1.35m at the eastern end of the trench.

Due to the depth of the observed natural, only intermittent sondages were possible to reach this layer, with a sondage in the centre of the trench reaching natural mid orange sands and gravels at approximately 1.8m deep and one at the western end of the trench reaching 2.0m before encountering underlying geology. Due to the depths it was not possible to obtain a clearer view of the sections and precise stratigraphy involved but it is believed to be broadly similar to that noted in the eastern end of the trench, with a deepening layer of subsoil leading to the added depth.



Plate 3. Trench 3 east end section, facing south (2.0m scale)

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

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Cathy Tester

Half of a brick (1448g) with an indentation or 'frog' in one bed was collected from the topsoil deposit in Trench 3. The brick is made in a medium sandy fabric with ferrous inclusions (msfe) and fired to an orange colour.

Its date is relatively recent, probably no earlier than mid 19th century (dave gill pers comment) and it has not been retained.

## **7. Discussion**

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The results of this evaluation are largely negative, in that no archaeological features or artefacts were observed, but does indicate the possibility for preserved waterlain deposits near the road. The northern half of the site, upslope and away from the road, appears to have little in the way of overburden to protect any archaeological deposits from damage with a shallow layer of topsoil and frequent plough scarring evident in the natural layers. Local residents recall various small-scale agricultural structures across the site within living memory (chicken runs, sheds and possibly a small barn-like structure) generally across the north and western parts of the site and the remains of these structures might be expected to have left intermittent traces on such a shallow site. In addition, mention was also made of frequently seeing tractors getting bogged down near the top of the site, and this may be the cause of some of this disturbance noted in Trench 1.

## **8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work**

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It would appear that this site has little likelihood of containing further significant archaeological remains, with no deposits or artefacts visible in either the trenches or the spoil. It may be that the slope of the site meant that it was not considered favourable for occupation during earlier periods, when more suitable land was available for use just to the north or south, with the cropmark evidence on the high ground to the north and the medieval town centre to the south.

Unless the construction design threatens to disturb the deep deposits near to Valley Road in a way that afforded safe access no further investigation is suggested. The requirement for further works remains the decision of SCCAS/CT.

## **9. Archive deposition**

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Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds

Digital archive: SCCAS R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\Archaeology\Archive\Leiston\LCS 174 Evaluation

Digital photographic archive: SCCAS R:\Environmental Protection\Conservation\Archaeology\Catalogues\Photos\HVA-HVZ\HVO 70-82

Finds and environmental archive: None

Store Location: None

## **10. Acknowledgements**

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The fieldwork was carried out by Simon Cass and managed and directed by Rhodri Gardner who also provided advice during the production of the report.

Post-excavation management was provided by Simon Cass. Finds processing and analysis was undertaken by Jonathan Van Jennians and Cathy Tester respectively. The specialist finds report was produced by Cathy Tester.

The report illustrations were created by Simon Cass and the report was edited by Rhodri Gardner.

## **11. Bibliography**

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Ordnance Survey 1983 *Soils of England and Wales*: Soil survey of England and Wales, sheet 4 Eastern England 1:250,000. Harpenden

**Appendix 1. Brief for  
archaeological evaluation**

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

**Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation**

AT

**Land between 55 and 81 Valley Road, Leiston**

<b>PLANNING AUTHORITY:</b>	Suffolk Coastal District Council
<b>PLANNING APPLICATION NUMBER:</b>	C/13/0475
<b>HER NO. FOR THIS PROJECT:</b>	To be arranged
<b>GRID REFERENCE:</b>	TM 446 227
<b>DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL:</b>	12 dwellings, 13 flats and associated parking and access
<b>AREA:</b>	c.0.37 ha.
<b>THIS BRIEF ISSUED BY:</b>	Jess Tipper County Archaeologist Conservation Team Tel. : 01284 741225 E-mail: jess.tipper@suffolk.gov.uk
<b>Date:</b>	23 September 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 submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.
- 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 a Trenched Evaluation 2011 Ver. 1.3), to the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS/CT) for scrutiny, before seeking approval from the LPA.
- 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 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 This application lies in an area of high archaeological potential, recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, on the edge of the medieval urban area (HER no. LCS 143) and to the south of a cropmark complex (LCS 006). There is high potential for encountering further occupation deposits at this location. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.

### **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.185.00m<sup>2</sup>. 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.103.00m 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 before fieldwork commences. 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. A plan of known sites and monuments, in relation to the current site, should be presented in the report. Where necessary, the project manager should discuss size of the HER search area with the archaeological officer.
- 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 hard copy of the report as well as a digital copy of the approved report should be marked for the attention of the archaeological officer, who will deposit it with the HER.
- 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](http://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.





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