

# Archaeological Evaluation Report

## Outdoor Activity Centre, Center Parcs, Elveden Forest Holiday Village, Elveden ELV 066

Report No. 2006/092

Planning Application No: F/2006/0270/FUL

Oasis reference: suffolkc1-17332

Grid reference: TL 8090 8015

Date of fieldwork: 17/08/2006

Funding body: Center Parcs

### Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken ahead of a proposed new Outdoor Activity Centre at Center Parcs, Elveden Forest Holiday Village. Two trial trenches were excavated and a walk-over survey of approximately 1 hectare was conducted. No evidence of any surviving archaeological deposits was identified.

### Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken ahead of the construction of a building which will form part of the new Outdoor Activity Centre at Center Parcs, Elveden Forest Holiday Village. The brief and specification for the archaeological works was prepared by Dr. J. Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) (Appendix 1).

The brief and specification required the trial trenching within the area of the proposed new building to identify any surviving buried archaeological deposits and to assess the potential of these deposits. A walk-over survey was also required across the surrounding area in order to identify any above ground archaeological survival in the form of earthworks that may be threatened by the proposed development.

The development site was located in an area of managed woodland to the south-east of the main Holiday Village (Figure 1). The area has been woodland since at least the 19th century when known as Warren Wood (1st Edition OS Map). Before this it was believed to be open heath land.

Located within the immediate vicinity of the evaluation were undated inhumation burials (ELV 030) and an Iron Age torc (ELV 049), though the exact location of the latter is unknown (Figure 1). Further findspots of prehistoric and Roman material are located 250m to the north (ELV 006) and an archaeological evaluation to the north-west (ELV 051) identified only an undated field ditch.

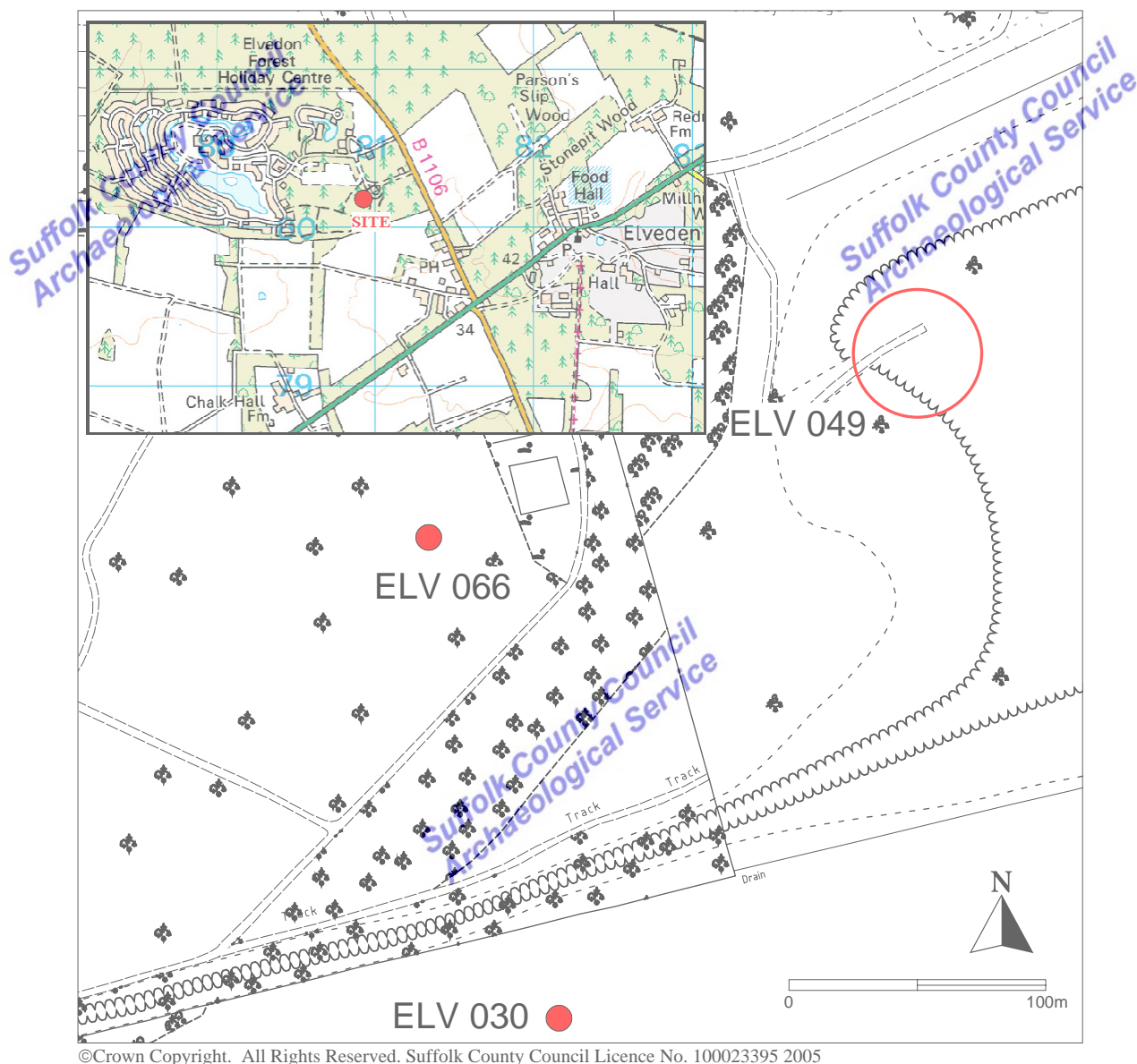


Figure 1. Site location

## Methodology

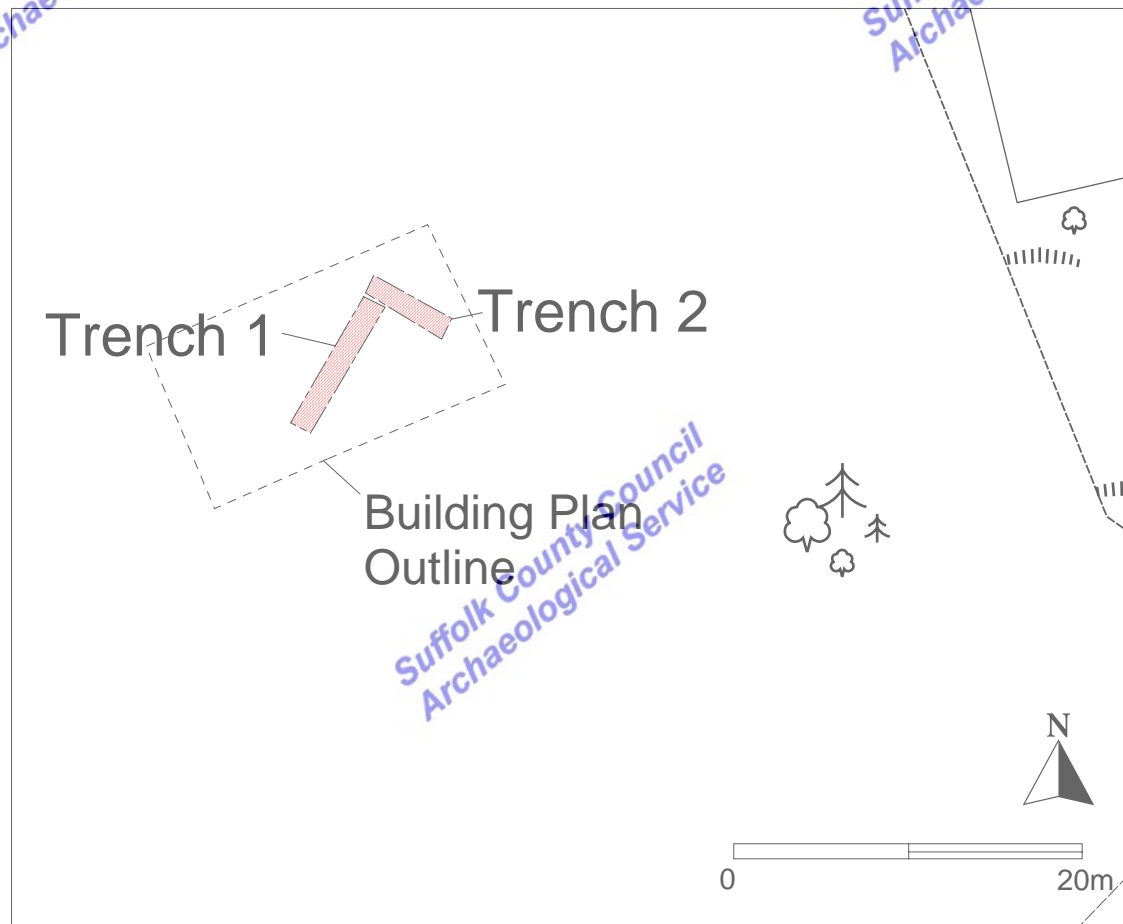
Trial trenching was conducted using a small 360 degree tracked machine fitted with a 1.2m wide toothless ditching bucket. The machine excavation of the trenches was supervised by an experienced archaeologist at all times. The trenches were excavated to the top of the natural subsoil. A profile of each trench was drawn and photographed. Archaeological remains were cleaned and excavated by hand with a full written, drawn and photographic record produced. The location of the trenches was recorded using a Total Station Theodolite (TST) and plotted onto the OS National Grid using MapInfo.

The walk-over survey was conducted across an area of approximately 1 hectare around the trenched site. The position of any earthworks was recorded using a handheld GPS and a written description produced.

The project archive is kept at the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Store, Shire Hall, Bury St. Edmunds under code ELV 066.

## Results

The positioning and length of the trenches were restricted due to a footpath occupying the western part of the proposed building footings and the fairly dense tree coverage across the rest of the area. A total length of 13.3m of trenching, in two trenches, covering over 5% of the area of the proposed building was excavated (Figure 2).



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Figure 2. Trench plan

### *Trench 1*

Trench 1 was excavated in a north-east to south-west direction and measured a total length of 8.3m (Figure 2). The trench was excavated through a 0.18m deep topsoil and a 0.2m deep dark orange sand subsoil down onto a mid to dark orange sand natural with moderate flint (Figure 3). No archaeological features were identified.

### *Trench 2*

Trench 2 was excavated in a north-west to south-east direction and measured a total length of 5m (Figure 2). The trench was excavated through a 0.23m deep topsoil and a 0.13m deep mid orange sand subsoil down onto a mid to dark orange sand natural with moderate flint (Figure 3). No archaeological features were identified.

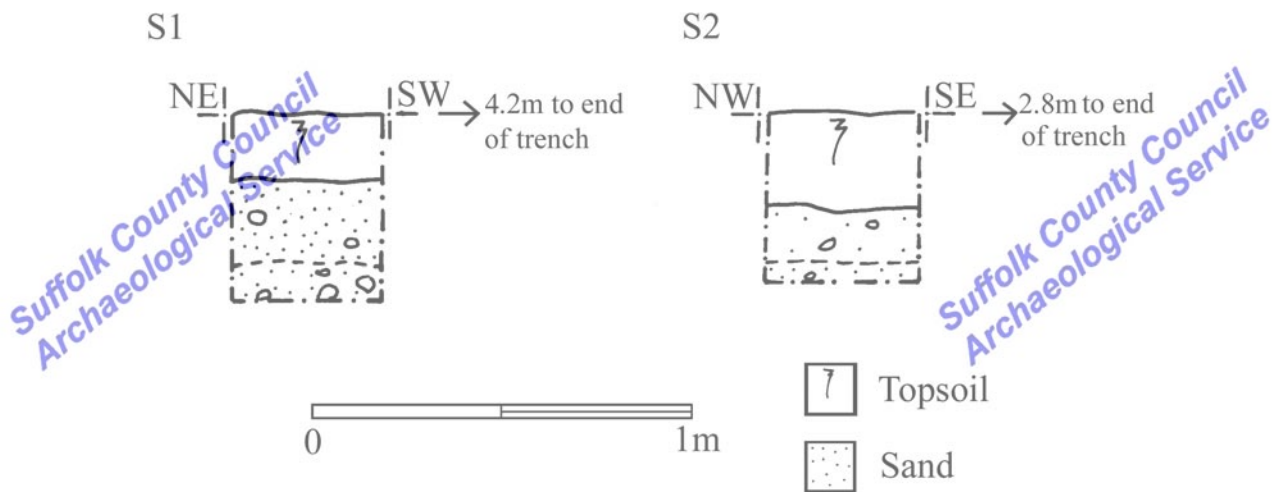


Figure 3. Trench profiles

### *Walkover Survey*

The walk-over survey covered an area of approximately 1 hectare in the woodland surrounding the site of the proposed building. No archaeological features were identified during the survey though dense undergrowth made identification difficult across much of the area.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

No evidence for archaeological activity was identified during the evaluation work suggesting the site was heathland and then woodland with little or no activity or occupation. However, the trenching was limited to a very small area and could have missed any dispersed prehistoric archaeological remains and any large scale ground disturbance outside of the area of the building may disturb these features.

As there is a lack of any identifiable archaeological deposits within the area of the building it is recommended that no further archaeological work needs to be carried out on this part of the site. However, any disturbance of the ground below the depth of the topsoil in the surrounding area may require archaeological monitoring as possible dispersed prehistoric activity may be identified.

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August 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.



# Appendix 1

## SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

### *Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation*

#### CENTER PARCS, ELVEDEN FOREST HOLIDAY VILLAGE, ELVEDEN

*The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities, see paragraph 1.7.*

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 Planning consent (application F/2006/0270/FUL) has been granted for the erection of an outdoor pursuits building on land at Center Parcs Elveden Forest Holiday Village, Elveden, Brandon IP27 0YZ (TL 8090 8015), with a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition requiring an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out.
- 1.2 The Planning Authority (Forest Heath District Council) has been advised that any consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of work taking place before development begins (PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition). An archaeological evaluation of the application area will be required as the first part of such a programme of archaeological work; decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work will be based upon the evaluation.
- 1.3 This proposal lies in an area of archaeological importance, recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record. The proposal area is to the north of the location of two (undated) inhumation burials (ELV 030) and to the west of the (reputed) find spot of an Iron Age torc (ELV 049). The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.4 All arrangements for the field evaluation of the site, the timing of the work, access to the site, the definition of the precise area of landholding and area for proposed development are to be defined and negotiated with the commissioning body.
- 1.3 Detailed 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.
- 1.4 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Project Design or Written Scheme of Investigation (PD/WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/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.
- 1.5 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination.

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## 2. Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ* [at the discretion of the developer].
- 2.2 Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- 2.4 Establish whether waterlogged organic deposits are likely to be present in the proposal area.
- 2.5 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.
- 2.6 This project will be carried through in a manner broadly consistent with English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (MAP2), all stages will follow a process of assessment and justification before proceeding to the next phase of the project. Field evaluation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential. Any further excavation required as mitigation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential, analysis and final report preparation may follow. Each stage will be the subject of a further brief and updated project design; this document covers only the evaluation stage.
- 2.7 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (address as above) five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored.
- 2.8 If the approved evaluation design is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected. Alternatively the presence of an archaeological deposit may be presumed, and untested areas included on this basis when defining the final mitigation strategy.
- 2.9 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

## 3. Specification: Field Evaluation

- 3.1 A single trial trench is to be excavated across the site, and aligned on the long axis, of the proposed activity centre building, measuring 20m in length. The trench is to be a minimum of 1.8m wide. If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' at least 1.2m wide must be used. Linear trenches are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. The detailed trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins.
- 3.2 In addition to the trenched evaluation, the area of the proposed children's quad course is to be the subject of a walk-over to establish the presence of any surviving earthwork features, which might be affected by the development.

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- 3.2 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine with a back-acting arm and fitted with a toothless bucket. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 3.3 The top of the first archaeological deposit may be cleared by machine, but must then be cleaned off by hand. There is a presumption that excavation of all archaeological deposits will be done by hand unless it can be shown there will not be a loss of evidence by using a machine. The decision as to the proper method of further excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- 3.4 In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation; that significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled.
- 3.5 There must be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 3.6 Archaeological contexts should, where possible, be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. The contractor shall provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from J. Sidell, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy, P.L. and Wiltshire, P.E.J., 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.
- 3.7 Any natural subsoil surface revealed should be hand cleaned and examined for archaeological deposits and artefacts. Sample excavation of any archaeological features revealed may be necessary in order to gauge their date and character.
- 3.8 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 3.9 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service during the course of the evaluation).
- 3.10 Human remains must be left *in situ* except in those cases where damage or desecration are to be expected, or in the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory evaluation of the site. However, the excavator should be aware of, and comply with, the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.
- 3.11 Plans of any archaeological features on the site are to be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50, depending on the complexity of the data to be recorded. Sections should be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 again depending on the complexity to be recorded. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum. Any variations from this must be agreed with the Conservation Team.
- 3.12 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 3.13 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.



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## 4. General Management

- 4.1 A timetable for all stages of the project must be agreed before the first stage of work commences, including monitoring by the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service.
- 4.2 The composition of the project staff must be detailed and agreed (this is to include any subcontractors).
- 4.3 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.
- 4.4 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 4.5 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* and for *Field Evaluations* should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

## 5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds must be prepared consistent with the principles of English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (particularly Appendix 3.1 and Appendix 4.1).
- 5.2 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 5.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 5.4 An opinion as to the necessity for further evaluation and its scope may be given. No further site work should be embarked upon until the primary fieldwork results are assessed and the need for further work is established.
- 5.5 Reports on specific areas of specialist study must include sufficient detail to permit assessment of potential for analysis, including tabulation of data by context, and must include non-technical summaries.
- 5.6 The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence, including palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological potential of the site, and the significance of that potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.7 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*. The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County SMR if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.8 The site archive is to be deposited with the County SMR within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.9 Where positive conclusions are drawn from a project (whether it be evaluation or excavation) a summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology*, must be prepared. It should be included in the project report, or submitted to the Conservation Team,

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by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.

- 5.10 County SMR sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.11 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.
- 5.12 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Dr Jess Tipper

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Tel: 01284 352197

Date: 9 August 2006

Reference:/ CenterParcsHolidayVillageElveden2006

**This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.**

**If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.**