

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Elmside Farm, Walsham Le Willows WLW 093

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2006
(Planning app. no. SE/05/1608/P)

A Tester
Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Hopkins Homes and was monitored by Dr Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team). Andrew Tester, Nicholas Taylor and Michael Green from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team, carried out the fieldwork. Gemma Adams processed the finds and prepared the drawing and Richenda Goffin reported on the finds. Colin Pendleton identified the flint.

Summary

A trenched evaluation carried out in advance of residential development at Elmsham Farm, Walsham Le Willows uncovered only fragmentary evidence of prehistoric and Roman settlement. A clay platform set back from the road probably indicates the site of a medieval building, which is tentatively dated to the 13th century from associated pottery.

SMR information

Planning application no. SE/05/1608/P
Date of fieldwork: 8-9th August 2006
Grid Reference: TL 0067 7119
Funding body: Hopkins Homes
Oasis reference Suffolkc1-17893

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Elmside Farm, Walsham Le Willows. The archaeological work was a condition on planning application SE/05/1608/P which is for 85 dwellings. Details are included in a Brief and Specification for the work by Jess Tipper of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team. The work was commissioned by the developer Hopkins Homes.

The site lies at TM 0067 7119, on land behind the Finningham Road, which is slightly sunken. The site rises from 48.12m OD to 49.97m OD from north to south. The site was occupied by various derelict buildings and sheds, many set in concrete and containing asbestos. For these reasons the trenches were arranged so as to fall within open ground (Figure 2). Elmside Farmhouse (a recent structure) and the surrounding plot are subject to a separate planning application and were not included in this evaluation.

Interest in the site is based on the discovery of Roman finds to the East of the site, the presence of medieval buildings and a road and the size of the development which amounts to c.2.5 hectares.

Historical Background

A survey of historical sources is not a requirement of this report but Walsham Le Willows has been the subject of extensive research, the results of which have been published (West and McLaughan 1998) and the following was taken from this report. A survey of all holdings in the manor was made for Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord of The Manor, in 1577 (although a survey of 1581 is thought to record the earlier medieval field pattern as it was based on pre-existing records). All of these show the development area as a single large plot. A survey of 1695 refers to it as Master John's Close, part of a larger tenement. The tenement was frequently mentioned in court rolls from 1328 onwards. Several later charters survive, formerly kept in the parish church concerning the granting of land to a syndicate of Walsham men including clerics. This indicates it was used for the benefit of the parish. It was transferred to the Trustees of Walsham Town Land who held it in 1577. The report suggests this plot was mostly used as pasture but may have been arable prior to 1577.

2. Methodology

Seven trenches were excavated to a total length of c.330m, using a JCB with a 1.6m flat bucket. The trenches were positioned by agreement with the curating archaeologist in an open area avoiding the standing buildings and concrete pads. Two other areas, marked A and B on Figure 2, refer respectively to an area where pigs are known to have been buried in recent times and a mature orchard. Features were excavated by hand with sections and trench profiles recorded at a scale of 1:20. Levels were taken on the sides of trenches and appear in Figure 2. Digital photographs were taken at various stages of the evaluation and are included in the site archive. Inked copies of feature section drawings have been made and bulk finds were washed, marked and quantified. Finds and written records are held at Shire hall Bury St Edmunds (SMR No. WLW 093). An OASIS form has been completed for the project (suffolkc1-17893).

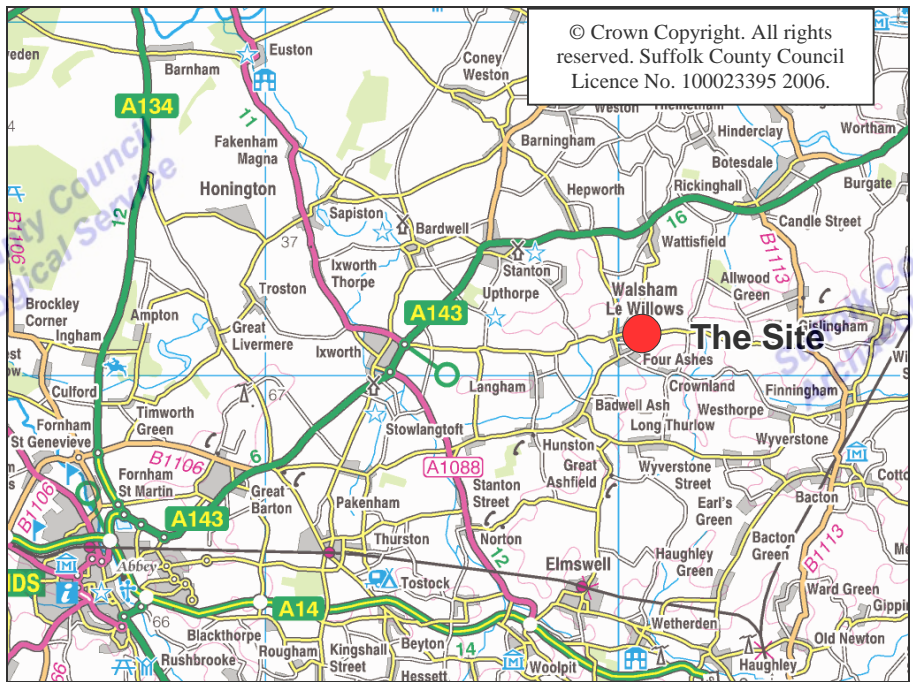


Figure 1. Site Location

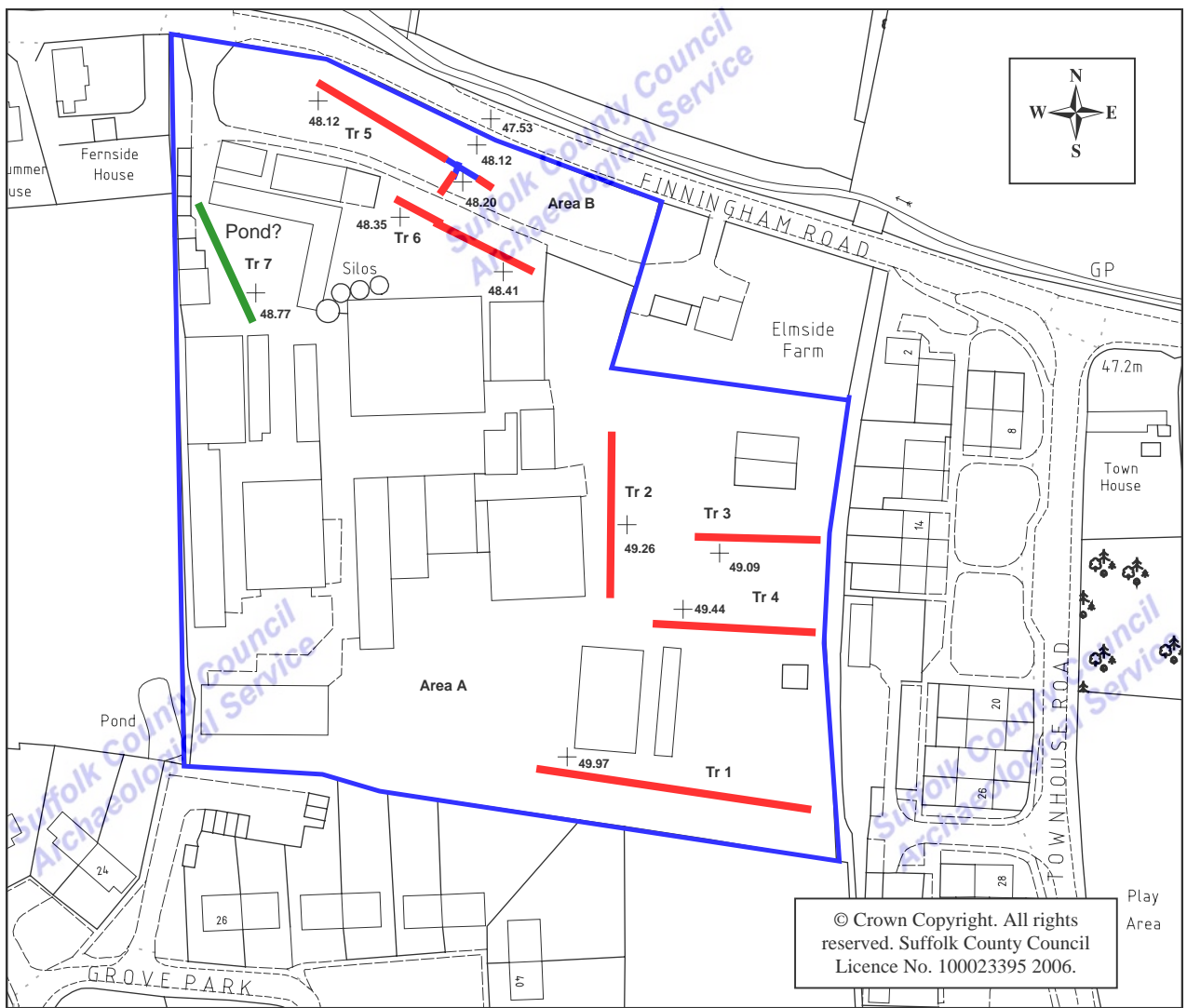


Figure 2. Trench plan

3. Results

(Figs. 2 and 3)

The general aspect of the ground was flat except where it dropped towards Finningham Road which is sunken. The majority of the trench profiles were similar with the exception of Trench 7 which contained a dark silt, and Trench 5 which contained a clay surface.

Trench 1:	67m in length aligned E-W. The profile consisted of 0.2m of dark topsoil over 0.15m of an orange/brown gravelly silty clay. Below this was grey clay with some orange silt in patches.
Trench 2:	39m in length aligned N-S. The profile consisted of 0.2m of dark topsoil over 0.15m of an orange/brown gravelly silty clay. Below this was grey clay with some orange silt in patches.
Trench 3:	29.6m in length aligned E-W. The profile consisted of 0.2m of dark topsoil over 0.15m of an orange/brown gravelly silty clay. Below this was grey clay with some orange silt in patches.
Trench 4:	39.3m in length aligned E-W. The profile consisted of 0.2m of dark topsoil over 0.15m of an orange/brown gravelly silty clay. Below this was grey clay with some orange silt in patches.
Trench 5:	50m in length aligned E-W long with a 7m extension to the S. The general profile consisted of 0.2m of dark topsoil over 0.15m of an orange/brown gravelly silty with stones. Below this was orange/grey clay with some orange silt in patches. Towards the middle of the trench was a clay layer 0007 which was 9.5m wide, c.0.12m deep directly below the topsoil (Fig 3, plan and section 0004). A projecting trench was excavated to the south of Trench 5 to establish the extent of the clay, which continued for a further 2m. A gravel layer (0008) with some clay extended a further 1m to the south of this. A line of three modern postholes (0012) cut Trench 5 with two cutting the clay. A shallow scoop or impression in the clay 0002 was sectioned but produced no finds. A possible clay pad (0012) of similar material to 0007 was recorded in the southern baulk to the east of the pad.
Trench 6:	37.5m in length aligned NW-SE. The profile consisted of 0.2m of dark topsoil over 0.15m of an orange/brown gravelly silty clay. Below this was grey clay with some orange silt in patches. A dogleg in the trench was the result of a concrete block obstructing the original course of the trench.
Trench 7:	31.5m in length aligned N-S. The profile consisted of 0.1m of concrete or tarmac over 0.2m brick and stone rubble over 0.6m of fine grey silt/clay. Below this in the base of the trench were layers of orange silt and clay.

Table 1. Trench Descriptions

Context	Trench	Description
0001		Unstratified finds
0002	Trench 5	Cut of small pit or depression in surface of clay layer 0007.
0003	Trench 5	Fill of pit 0002. Dark silty clay.
0004	Trench 5	Section across trial machine dug scoop through layer 0007.
0005	Trench 1	Finds recovered from base of topsoil.
0006	Trench 4	Finds recovered from base of topsoil
0007	Trench 5	Layer, Clay spread c. 9.5m x at least 2.5m. c. 0.2m deep. Yellow boulder clay. Noticeable chalk flecks. Straight edges E-W fragments of finds on surface
0008	Trench 5	Layer, layer within extension on edge of 0007. Gravelly/grey mid brown clay.
0009	Trench 6	Soil profile, sample section showing mixed clay with gravel beneath topsoil.
0010	Trench 7	Soil profile. Shows concrete and tarmac over mixed clay with silt/sand (interpreted as pond silting 0014).

0011	Trench 5	Clay post pad. Recorded in plan only E end of clay floor plan. c.0.1m thick.
0012	Trench 5	Collective No. for three postholes. All contained dark fill and two were lined with asbestos and therefore demonstrably modern.
0013	Trench 5	Trial dig through clay 0007. Revealed 0007 resting on subsoil gravel/clay and silt layer.
0014	Trench 7	Layer of mixed clay with silt/sand grey blue colour (interpreted as pond silting).

Table 2. Context List

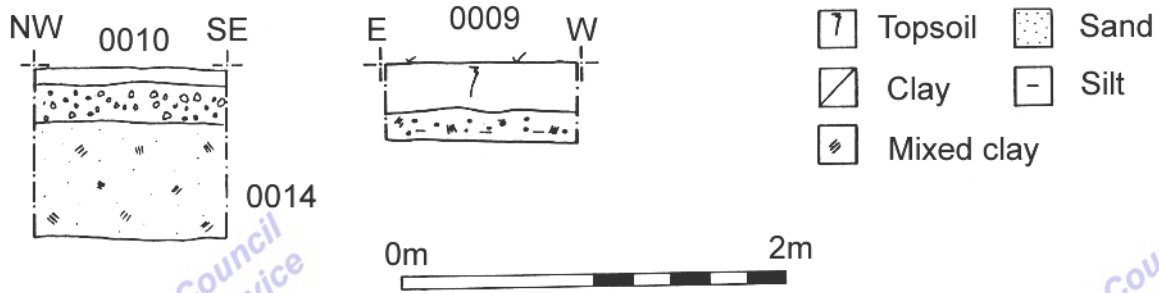
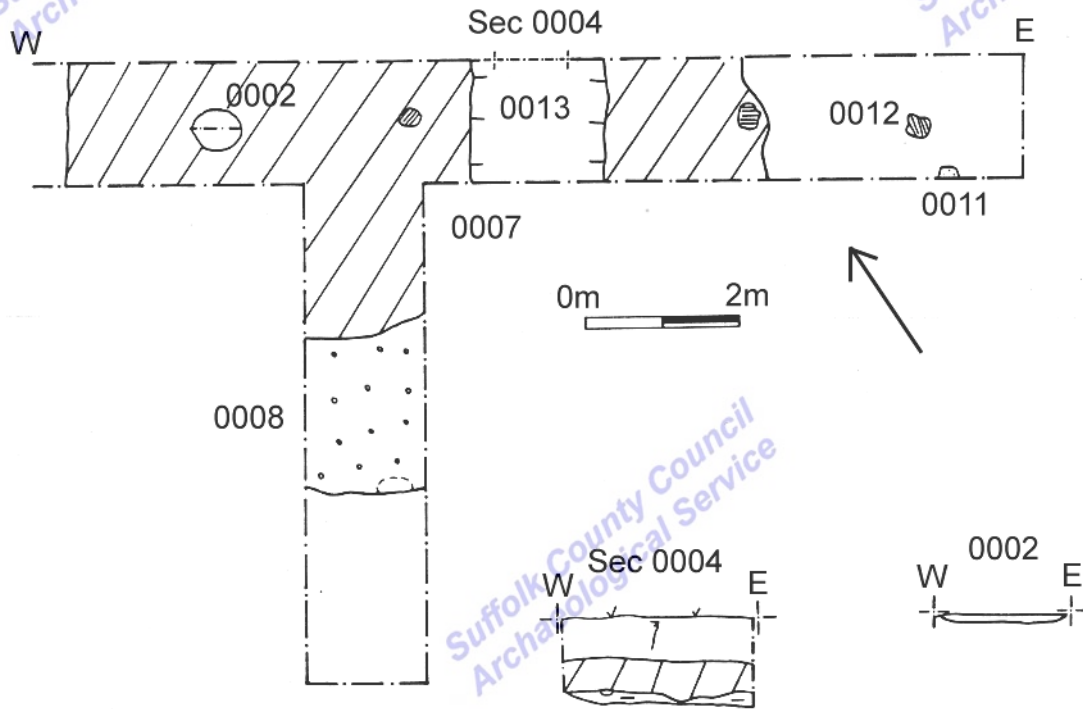


Figure 3. Detail of trench 5, and sections

4. The Finds

Richenda Goffin, August 2006.

4.1 Introduction

Finds were collected from four contexts, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		Flint		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0005	5	27			L12th-14th C
0006	1	22			15th-16th C
0007	3	8			M12th-M13th C
0008	14	108	2	8	13th C
Total	23	165	2	8	

4.2 Pottery

A total of 23 fragments of pottery were recovered from three of the evaluation trenches, weighing 165g.

A single abraded rim of a Roman greyware jar was identified in the base of the topsoil deposit 0005 in Trench 1, with fragments of abraded medieval coarseware. Another greyware sherd in this context may also be Roman rather than medieval, but it is also very abraded.

The remainder of the pottery is medieval and late medieval in date. Three very abraded coarseware sherds dating to the L12th-14th century, one of which is similar to Hollesley ware, were present in the lower part of the topsoil deposit 0005. Two further sherds of medieval coarsewares were identified from the clay surface 0007 in Trench 5, together with a fragment of a highly decorated jug. This Hedingham ware vessel is made in a micaceous orange fabric and has a polychrome decoration of probable 'Rouen-type' with an applied strip and red painted zone, a decorative type which dates to c the first half of the thirteenth century (Cotter 91). Further fragments of medieval pottery were found in the gravelly clay deposit 0008 in Trench 5. Three fragments of gritty type medieval coarseware and a single sherd from another vessel were recovered, as well as sherds from three different glazed jugs. One of these was a Mill Green ware jug, consisting of four body sherds of a fine redware with a reduced core, decorated with a white slip over which a green lead glaze had been applied. The jug is further embellished with shallow applied strips and small applied blobs. Two other Hedingham fineware vessels were also present. One of these is the remains of a sub-collared rounded jug, also with shallow applied strips and blobs, which may originally have been a stamped strip jug. Three smaller and more abraded sherds of a second Hedingham jug were also recovered, decorated with the faint remains of a vertical applied strip. Both are made in an orange-pink fabric with a deep mottled green glaze, consistent with the fabric variant described by Cotter (Cotter 76).

A single large fragment of a glazed red earthenware dating to the 15th-16th century was collected from 0006, the base of the topsoil deposit in Trench 4.

4.3 Flint (Identifications by Colin Pendleton)

Two flints were recovered from the clay deposit 0008. Both are snapped flakes with simple retouched edges, one of which has a natural striking platform. Both are later prehistoric in date.

4.4 Discussion

The small group of finds recovered from the evaluation indicates the proximity of the medieval settlement. Many of the sherds from the beneath the topsoil deposits are medieval, and the presence of abraded Roman sherds here also may reflect an intensity of land-usage during this time, which did not continue into the post-medieval period.

The remains of four medieval glazed jugs provides sufficient evidence to indicate that deposits 0007 and 0008 date to the thirteenth century. The presence of a Mill Green ware jug, which was produced near Ingatestone in Essex from the first half of the thirteenth century, and Hedingham 'Rouen-style' jug sherds of a similar date, suggests that a deposition date of the earlier half of the thirteenth century could be more likely.

5. General Discussion

The evaluation recovered fragmentary finds evidence of earlier settlement from the interface between the topsoil and subsoil. Two worked flint provide rare evidence of prehistoric activity on the clayland and there was both Roman and medieval pottery. Only within Trench 5 was there a sufficient quantity to identify the site of occupation and this was associated with a clay layer, 0007. This has the characteristics of a floor, being 9.5m wide from E-W with straight edges. The position of the frontage is unknown but a further 2m was identified in a southern extension and it is unlikely to extend more than a couple of metres more to the north. The pottery evidence suggests the building was medieval with a concentration of occupation during the 13th century. Written evidence from the post medieval period suggests that the site was mostly contained within a single large field and has been under pasture since the 16th century. This is consistent with the results of the trenching where the definition between the topsoil and subsoil was pronounced.

The dark silt/clay with few stones in Trench 7 is typical of the remains of a silted pond. This feature is unrecorded on the tithe maps but ponds were a feature of pasture fields providing water for livestock. It was quite large being at least 31.5m long and it extended beyond the trench. There were no finds and no evidence from which to date this feature. The topsoil had been removed and replaced with rubble, concrete and tarmac but the ground was firm confirming that the pond had some antiquity.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of the evaluation are qualified by the limited area available for trenching due to the standing buildings and concrete. Given these limitations the trenches to the rear of the site produced little evidence to suggest settlement of any period. The clay floor and large pond located towards the front are consistent with medieval settlement as suggested by the historical search.

1) Although the evaluation proved negative over much of the site it may be desirable to excavate further trenches to give a more complete coverage after demolition is complete. It may also be desirable to excavate a trench through the orchard along Finningham Road, if this area is to be developed, as there may have been more evidence of medieval settlement such as that recorded in Trench 5.

2) The clay floor in Trench 5 is a significant feature preserved immediately below the topsoil. If the area is to be developed it should be exposed and recorded by excavation. This should include a limited area around the building and the removal of a proportion of the clay.

3) Following the removal of the concrete it may be of interest to establish whether the silt in Trench 7 is from a pond, how large it was, its antiquity and, depending on the outcome, whether it contains information on contemporary land use. This would best be achieved through a programme of environmental sampling combined with machine and limited hand excavation after demolition in the area is complete.

A Tester
August 2006

7. References

- Cotter, J., 2000, Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85, 76
- West, S., McLaughlan, A., 1998 . East Anglian Archaeology 85: Towards a Landscape History of Walsham Le Willows, Suffolk

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

ELMSIDE FARM, FINNINGHAM ROAD, WALSHAM LE WILLOWS

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

1. Background

- 1.1 An application is to be made (application SE/05/1608/P) to Mid Suffolk District Council for the erection of 85 dwellings on land at Elmside Farm, Walsham le Willows (TM 0067 7119).
- 1.2 The applicant (Hopkins Homes) 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 development plot lies on a medieval, and possibly earlier, routeway. The site of a medieval guildhall is recorded immediately to the north (WLW 086). In addition, there is a Roman finds scatter immediately to the east of the site (WLW 010). These strongly indicate the high potential for archaeological deposits to be archaeological deposits to be disturbed by this development.
- 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.

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 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover a minimum 5% by area, which is c. 1185m² of the total application site that measures 2.37ha (Figure 1). Trenches are to be a minimum of 1.8m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated; this will result in a minimum of c. 658m of trenching at 1.8m in width. 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 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.

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, 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

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service Conservation Team
Environment and Transport Department
Shire Hall

Date: 12 June 2006

Reference: / ElmsideFarm-WalshamleWillows2006

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.

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