ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

PIK Housing, Washington Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall
MNL 570

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2006
(Planning app. no. F/2006/0487/GOV)

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SCCAS Report No. 2006/187

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Mansells PLC on behalf of MoD Defence Estates and was monitored by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

The excavation was carried out by a number of archaeological staff (John Craven, Alan Smith, Nick Taylor and Jonathan Van Jennians), all from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The project was directed by John Craven, and managed by Jo Caruth, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

The post-excavation was managed by Richenda Goffin. Finds processing was carried out by Gemma Adams, the production of site plans and sections by Anna West, and the specialist finds report by Cathy Tester. Other specialist identification and advice was provided by Faye Minter, Colin Pendleton and Anna West.

Summary

An archaeological evaluation of land at Washington Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall, identified evidence of Late Iron Age and Roman occupation, principally consisting of ditch systems together with occasional pits. The dense scatter of features indicates a high level of activity, which is clearly an extension of the multi-period site MNL 502 that lies directly to the north, and it is recommended that further archaeological investigation takes place prior to development.

The evaluation also identified a natural, peat-infilled hollow, a typical feature of the natural fen-edge landscape. There was no indication of any recent waterlogging and the peat deposits were desiccated and of limited potential for environmental analysis.

SMR information

Planning application no.	F/2006/0487/GOV
Date of fieldwork:	5th-7th December 2006
Grid Reference:	TL 687 778
Funding body:	MoD Defence Estates
Oasis reference	Suffolkc1-21086

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of housing development at Washington Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team – Appendix 3) to fulfil a planning condition on application F/2006/0487/GOV. The work was funded by the developer, Mansells PLC, on behalf of MoD Defence Estates.

The proposed development of eight houses lies at TL 687 778 and occupies an area of c.9700sqm on either side of Washington Street (Fig. 1). The site consists of open lawn with scattered young and mature trees, at a height of c.5m OD. Of this area, c.4700sqm will be directly affected by the development.

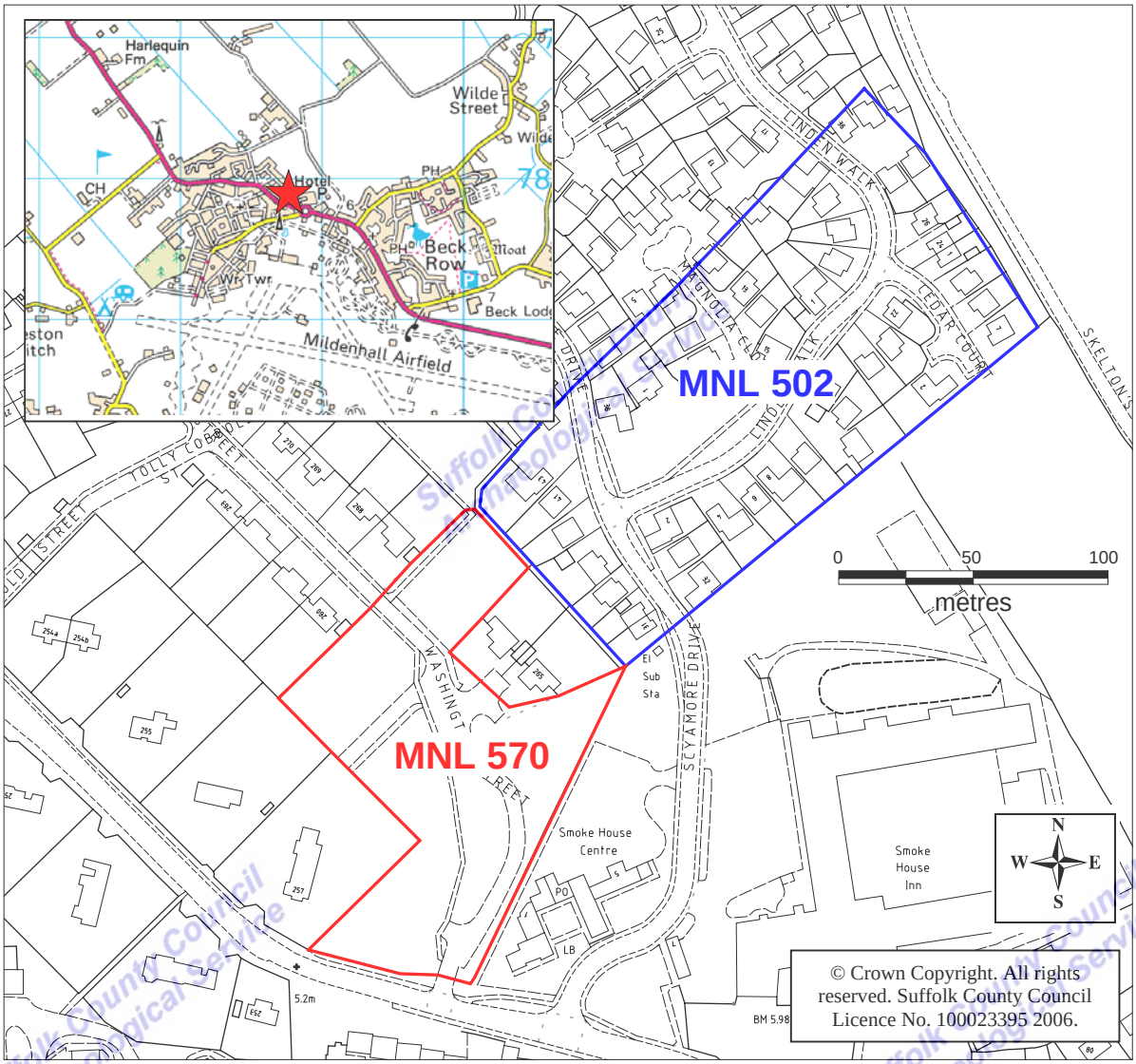

Figure 1. Site location plan

The site was of high potential interest as it lay within the dense band of prehistoric and Roman activity that lies along the edge of the fens and, in particular, lay directly adjacent and to the south of MNL 502 (Finch, 1999 and Bales, 2004). This excavation of 1.7ha, which was carried out in 1999 in advance of housing development, identified three natural peat hollows amidst evidence of activity from the Bronze Age through to the Roman period. The prehistoric material consisted of a few Early Bronze Age features and Iron Age occupation in the form of three ring ditches and associated ditch enclosures. The main phase of occupation was in the Roman period

with a series of enclosures and a mid 2nd century part-aisled timber structure, which measured 35m in length and is believed to have been used for the storage and processing of grain. Destroyed by fire it was replaced almost directly by a similar structure which appears to have been abandoned in the mid 3rd century, when activity on the site in general appears to have ceased.

The dense spread of archaeological features in the south-west corner of MNL 502 lay within 50m of the proposed development and it was thought highly likely that this multi-period occupation evidence would extend into the development area. A programme of archaeological evaluation was therefore required to assess the archaeological potential of the site, by identifying the date, form and function of any deposits and their levels of preservation, and to establish whether further peat filled hollows were present and the potential for paleo-environmental deposits. The evaluation would then assess whether any archaeological deposits would be affected by the development and if further work was required.

2. Methodology

The proposed trench layout had been for 170m of trench placed to cover, as much as possible, each house plot and associated roads, whilst avoiding the existing trees and roads. Due to further complications caused by buried services a total of twelve trenches, measuring 1.6m wide and only 118m long in total, were subsequently excavated by a mechanical excavator equipped with a ditching bucket under the supervision of an archaeologist. This amounted to c.189sqm or 4% of the 4700sqm, less than the required 5% specified in the brief but still broadly covering the areas to be affected by the development (Fig. 2).

The trenches were excavated to the top of the natural subsoil surface or archaeological levels, the subsoil being a mix of yellow and orange sands, with occasional traces of chalk. This generally involved the removal of 0.3m–0.5m of topsoil or modern deposits and a layer of mixed sands which directly overlaid the subsoil surface. Upcast spoil was examined for finds and context 0001 reserved for unstratified finds. Trenches 01-09 were detected by an experienced metal-detectorist.

The site was recorded using a single context continuous numbering system and planned with a Total Station Theodolite. The majority of the trenches were then cleaned and a sample of observed features excavated by hand. Sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20 and trench plans at a scale of 1:50. Digital colour and black and white print photographs were taken of all stages of the fieldwork, and are included in the archive.

Site data has been input onto an MS Access database and recorded using the County Sites and Monuments code MNL 570. Bulk finds were washed, marked and quantified, and the resultant data was also entered onto a database. Inked copies of section and drawings have also been made.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-21086) and a digital copy of the report 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 SMR No. MNL 570.

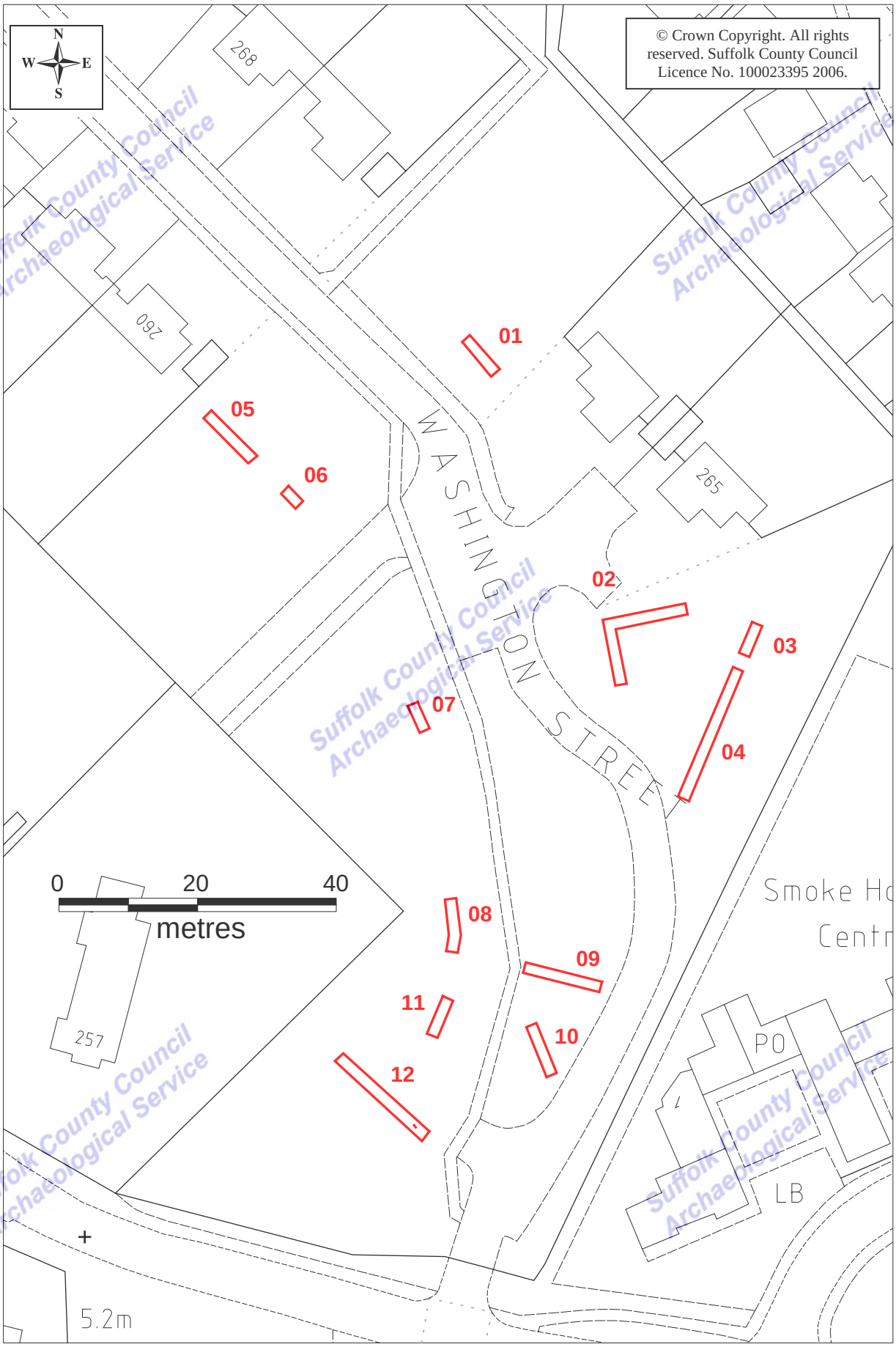

Figure 2. Trench location plan

3. Results

Of the twelve trenches only Trench 07 did not show any evidence of archaeological or environmental deposits. Evidence of a peat-filled hollow was identified in Trenches 01, 05 and 06, whilst the remaining eight trenches all contained archaeological features, predominantly interpreted as ditches. Sample cleaning and excavation of the features identified occasional stratigraphical relationships but only limited quantities of finds, which together simply indicated a broad period of late prehistoric to Roman occupation, a continuation of MNL 502 to the north. Context 0001, reserved for unstratified finds during machining was unused.

3.1. Natural topography

Trenches 01, 05 and 06 (Fig. 3) showed differing sections through what is thought to be a single peat-infilled hollow, which are a typical feature of the natural, fen-edge topography. Other peat hollows, of similar appearance, have been recorded at both MNL 502 (Bales 2004) and MNL 536, which lies 300m to the north-west (Craven in prep).

Trench 01, which was shortened due to a buried cable to the north, showed a vertical section, 0002, through a series of deposits. A modern topsoil overlaid a layer, 0003, of redeposited mid yellow/brown sand with chalk which in turn overlaid 0004, a 0.3m thick former topsoil of mid brown silt/sand and soil. At a depth of 0.8m, under 0004 was the final natural fill of the hollow, 0005, a 0.5m thick layer of light grey silt/sand. Beneath this was 0006, a 0.4m thick deposit of dark brown/red sand and peat which was dry and showed no signs of recent waterlogging. The base of the hollow, and of deposit 0006, was not reached, despite the hand excavation of a small sondage at the base of the trench which recovered two pieces of animal bone.

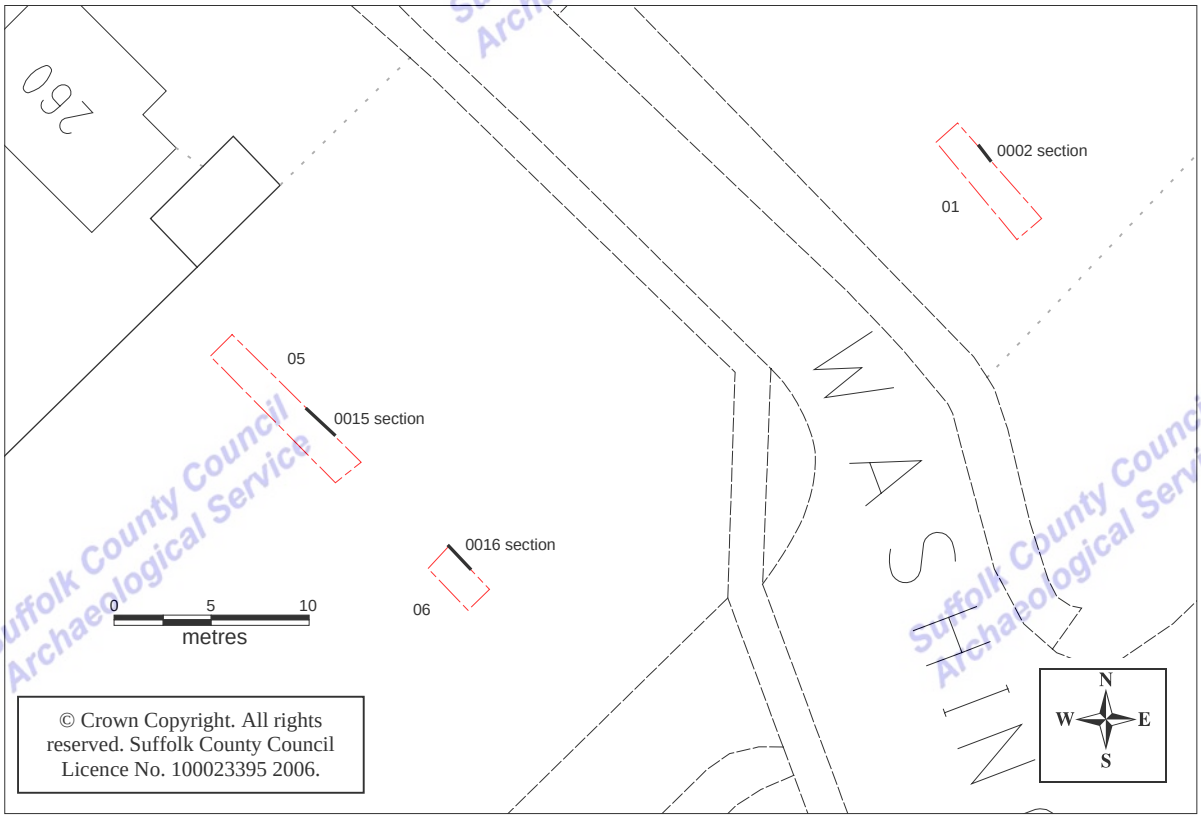

Figure 3. Trenches 01, 05 and 06

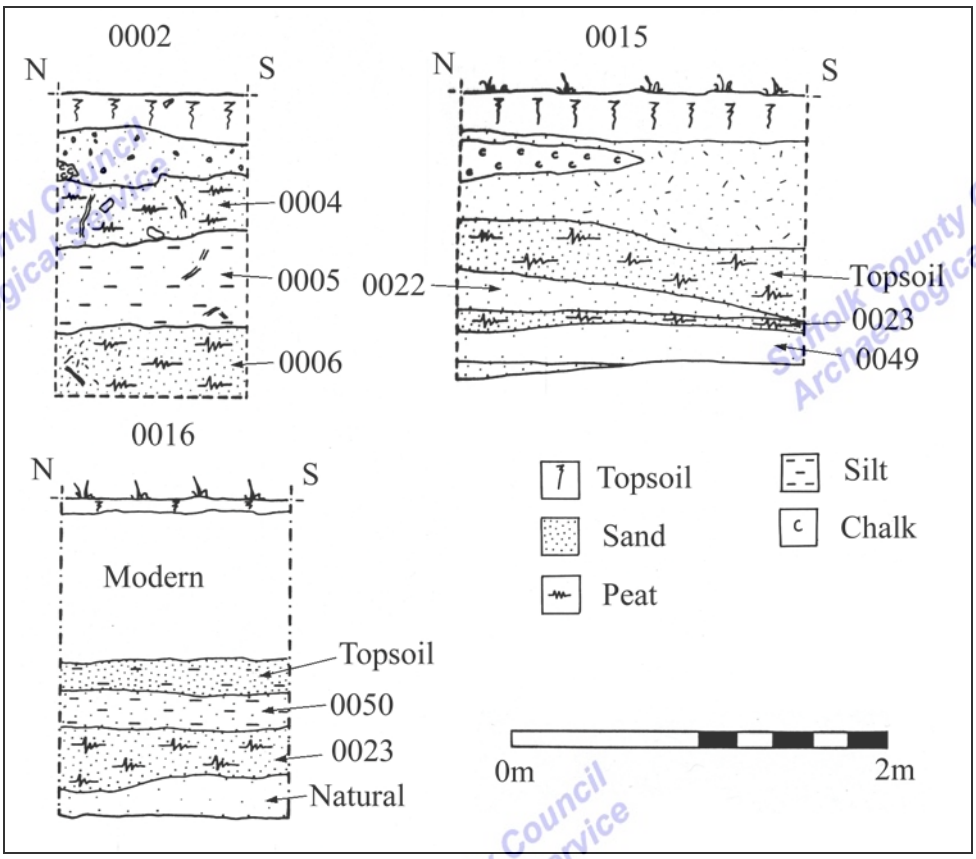

Figure 4. Sections 0002, 0015 and 0016

In Trench 05 the original topsoil also lay under thick modern deposits and was seen at the north end of the trench at a depth of 0.2m. 3m to the south the buried topsoil then began to slope down, into the hollow, as did three underlying layers, 0022, 0023 and 0049. Towards the south end of the trench Section 0015 was recorded and showed the 0.3m thick topsoil at a depth of 0.7m-0.8m. Beneath this was 0022, a layer of light yellow/mottled grey sand forming the upper fill of the hollow and which gradually thinned out. Under 0022 was 0023, a 0.15m thick layer of dark brown/red peat/sand which in turn overlaid 0049, a 0.2m thick layer of white/grey sands that lay upon the base of the hollow.

Trench 06 was then placed to the south and Section 0016 recorded, which appears to be near the centre of the hollow. The 0.2m thick former topsoil lay at a depth of 0.8m under modern redeposits and above 0050, a 0.2m thick mid brown silt/sand. Under 0050 was the peat layer 0023, which again showed no signs of waterlogging and lay upon the base of the hollow.

3.2. Phase 1: Late Iron Age/Roman

Only five of the observed features, which numbered about twenty-five in total, contained datable material, indicating a general Late Iron Age/Roman phase of activity. Other features either contained undatable material, were devoid of finds, or were simply not excavated and are therefore unphased. However it seems likely that many of these undated features are a part of the identified phase of activity. The results are detailed below by trench.

Trench 02
(Figs. 5 and 6)

This trench was 'L' shaped and measured 20m in length with a typical soil profile, 0009, of 0.4m of topsoil and modern deposits overlying a 0.2m-0.3m thick layer of pale-mid grey sands. A large proportion of the trench was occupied by various services lying above the archaeological levels.

0007 was a broad ditch, aligned north-east to south-west and was only partially visible under a modern cable. A partial section showed it to have steep sides and a flat base and it measured up to 3.5m wide and 0.54m deep. Its fill, 0008, was a pale-mid grey sand from which a piece of animal bone was recovered.

0011 was a north-south aligned ditch, seen in two places, measuring c.1m wide and 0.4m deep. Excavated in section 0010, where it clearly cut ditch 0013, it had a fill, 0012, of light grey mottled sand. A single sherd of Late Iron Age/Early Roman pottery was recovered but may actually be a part of the assemblage in 0014.

0013 was an east-west aligned ditch, measuring 0.7m wide and 0.35m wide, with steep sides and a concave base. Its fill, 0014, was a mid grey mottled sand which was cut by ditch 0011. An assemblage of Late Iron Age pottery sherds, animal bone and a struck flint was recovered.

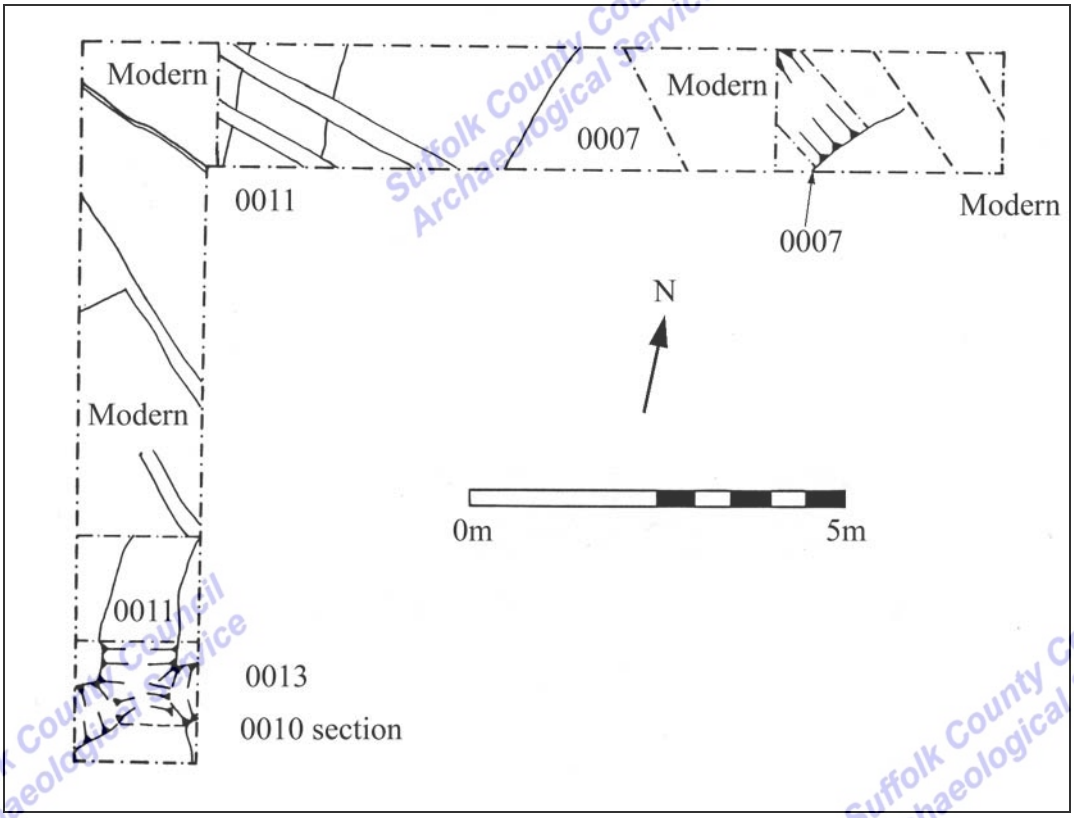

Figure 5. Trench 02 plan

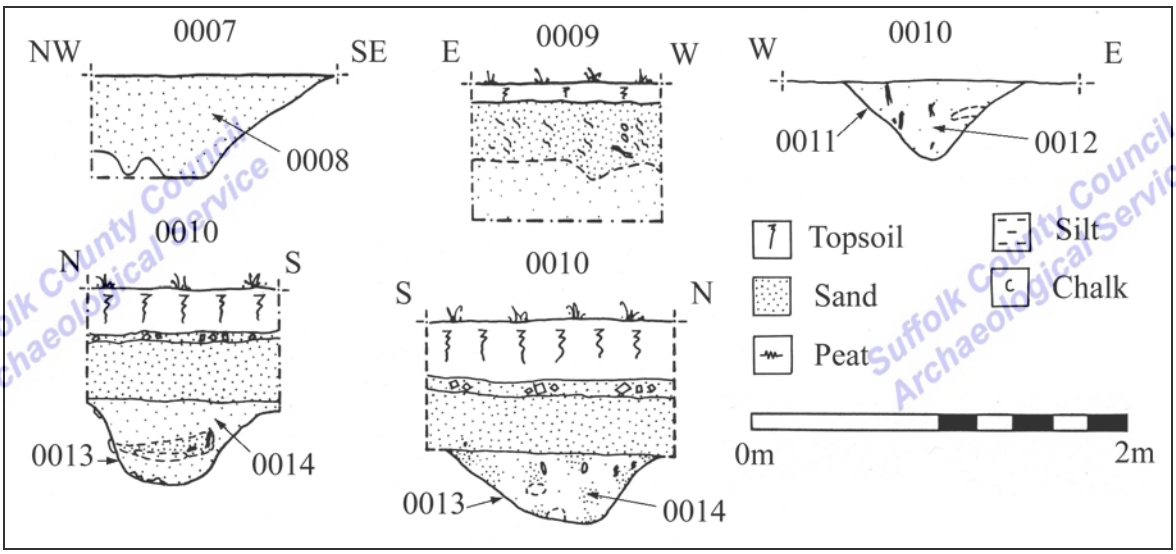

Figure 6. Trench 02 sections

Trench 03

(Fig. 7)

This short, 5m long, trench, identified two or three probable intercutting ditches with mixed fills of grey/brown sands. A trench profile, 0051, was recorded showing 0.4m of topsoil overlying a 0.1m thick layer of mixed grey sands, either sealing or being the upper part of the features. A single sherd of Roman pottery and a fragment of a stone vessel were recovered unstratified from the trench and recorded as 0029. A coin, SF 1001, was metal detected in the spoil heap.

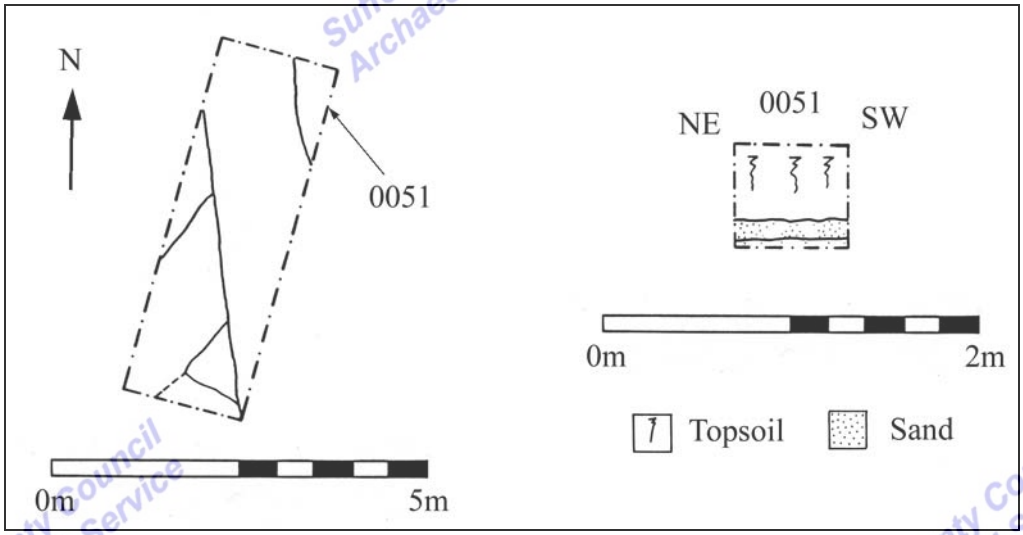

Figure 7. Trench 03 plan and profile

Trench 04

(Figs. 8 and 9)

This trench, 20m in length, was separated from Trench 03 by a modern service trench and had a typical soil profile, 0052, of 0.35m of topsoil and dark brown sands overlying a 0.2m thick layer of mixed pale grey/brown sands.

0017 and 0019 appeared on the surface as a single broad ditch, north-east to south-west aligned. Section 0021 showed this feature to have two cuts, 0017 being a narrow gully, 0.3m wide and

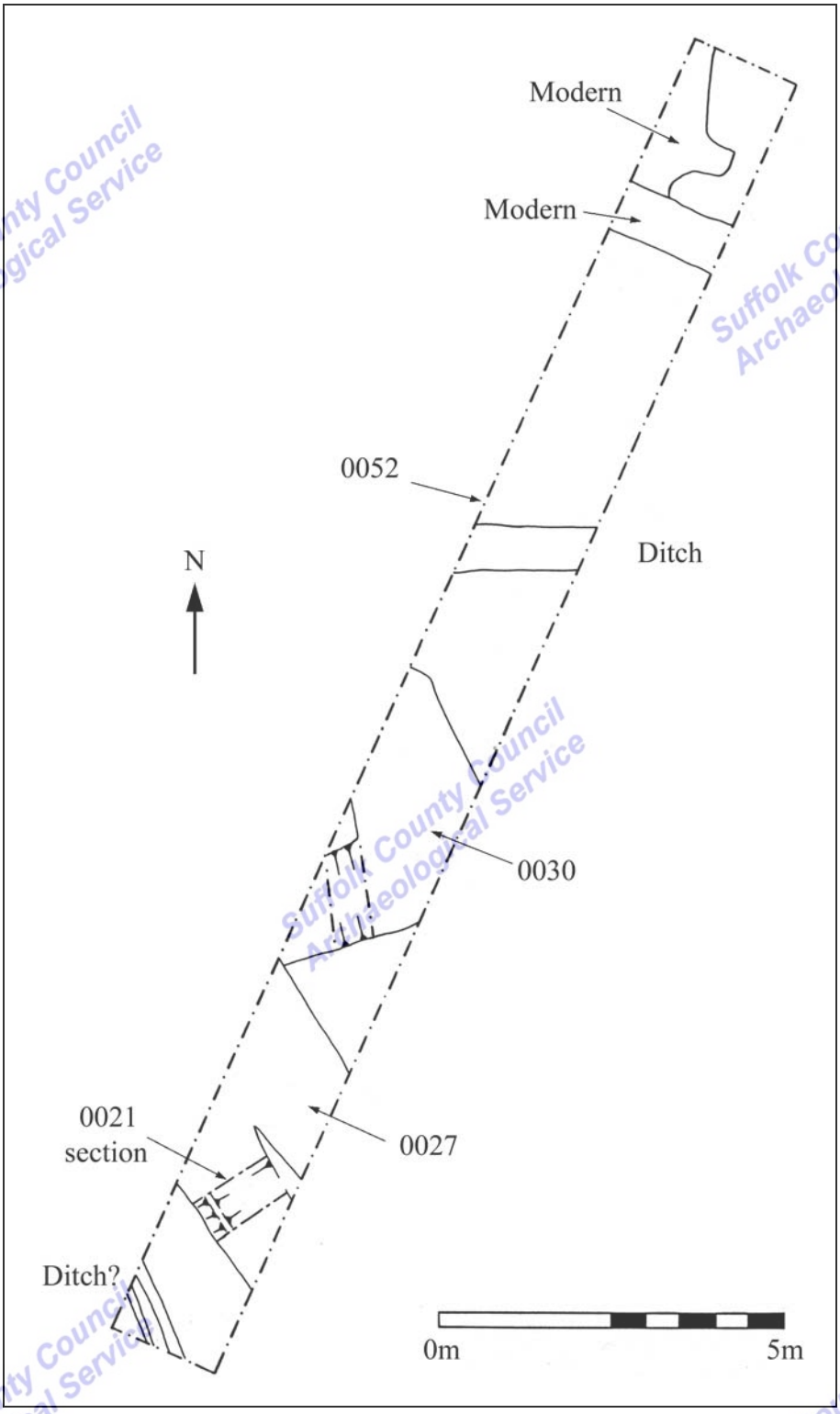

Figure 8. Trench 04 plan

0.14m deep, with a fill, 0018, of mid-dark grey sand from which an iron buckle was recovered by metal detector. 0019 lay to the north of, and adjacent to, 0017, and was 1m wide and 0.2m deep with a fill, 0020, of mid grey sand with iron panning from which three pieces of animal bone were recovered.

Immediately to the north of 0019 and merging with it was a similar broad ditch, 0027. Measuring 1.5m wide it was not excavated but four pieces of animal bone were collected from its fill, 0028, of dark brown mottled sands. On the western edge of the trench it appeared that 0027 cut 0030.

0030 was a 1.3m wide ditch, apparently turning 90° within the trench. Up to 0.3m of the feature was probably removed during machining. In section it had moderate sloping sides with a concave base and was a further 0.35m deep. Its fill, 0031, was a light/mid mottled grey sand.

A further ditch, aligned east-west and measuring 0.8m wide with a fill of mottled dark grey/orange sands was observed to the north of 0030 but not investigated. The base of another possible ditch or double ditch was also seen in the very southern end of the trench.

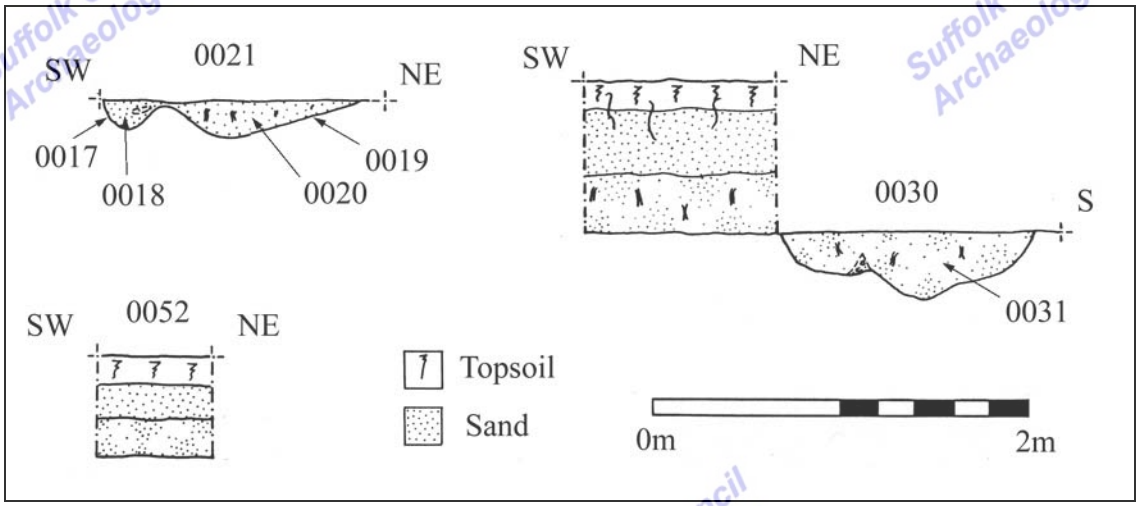

Figure 9. Trench 04 sections

Trench 07

(Figs. 2 and 12)

This 4m long trench did not contain any archaeological or environmental deposits. A baulk profile, 0053, was recorded and showed 1m of root disturbed topsoil overlying a 0.15m thick layer of windblown mid/dark grey sands and then the natural subsoil.

Trench 08

(Figs. 10 and 12)

This trench, 8m in length, contained a single ditch, 0024, running down the eastern side and partially under the baulk. The ditch lay under 0.7m of root disturbed topsoil and was excavated in Section 0026. It measured 1m+ wide and 0.5m deep and had moderate sloping sides and a concave base. Its fill, 0025, was a mottled mid grey sand with bands of dark grey sand.

Trench 09

(Figs. 10 and 12)

This trench was 11.5m long and was disturbed by a large modern trench in the eastern half.

0033 was a north-south aligned ditch, partially cut by a modern feature, which measured 0.8m wide and 0.12m deep. Its fill, 0034, was a mottled light grey sand with root and animal disturbance from which two pieces of animal bone were recovered.

A second ditch, aligned south-west to north-east, was identified to the east of 0033, and was 0.6m wide with a mottled mid grey sand fill. Two possible gullies, heavily truncated by the modern trench, were also seen on a north-west to south-east alignment.

Trench 10

(Figs. 10 and 12)

This trench, which was 8m long, could not be extended further north due to the presence of a service cable. A recorded baulk profile, 0037, showed 0.3m of topsoil overlying 0.3m of mixed grey sands. A single ditch, 0035, was identified which was aligned east-west and c.1.3m wide. A single sherd of Roman pottery, together with a small quantity of animal bone, was recovered from the surface of its mid grey/brown sand fill, 0036. The eastern edge of 0035 also appeared to cut, at the very edge of the trench a small deposit of charcoal and burnt bone, c.0.2m in diameter, which was left *in situ.*

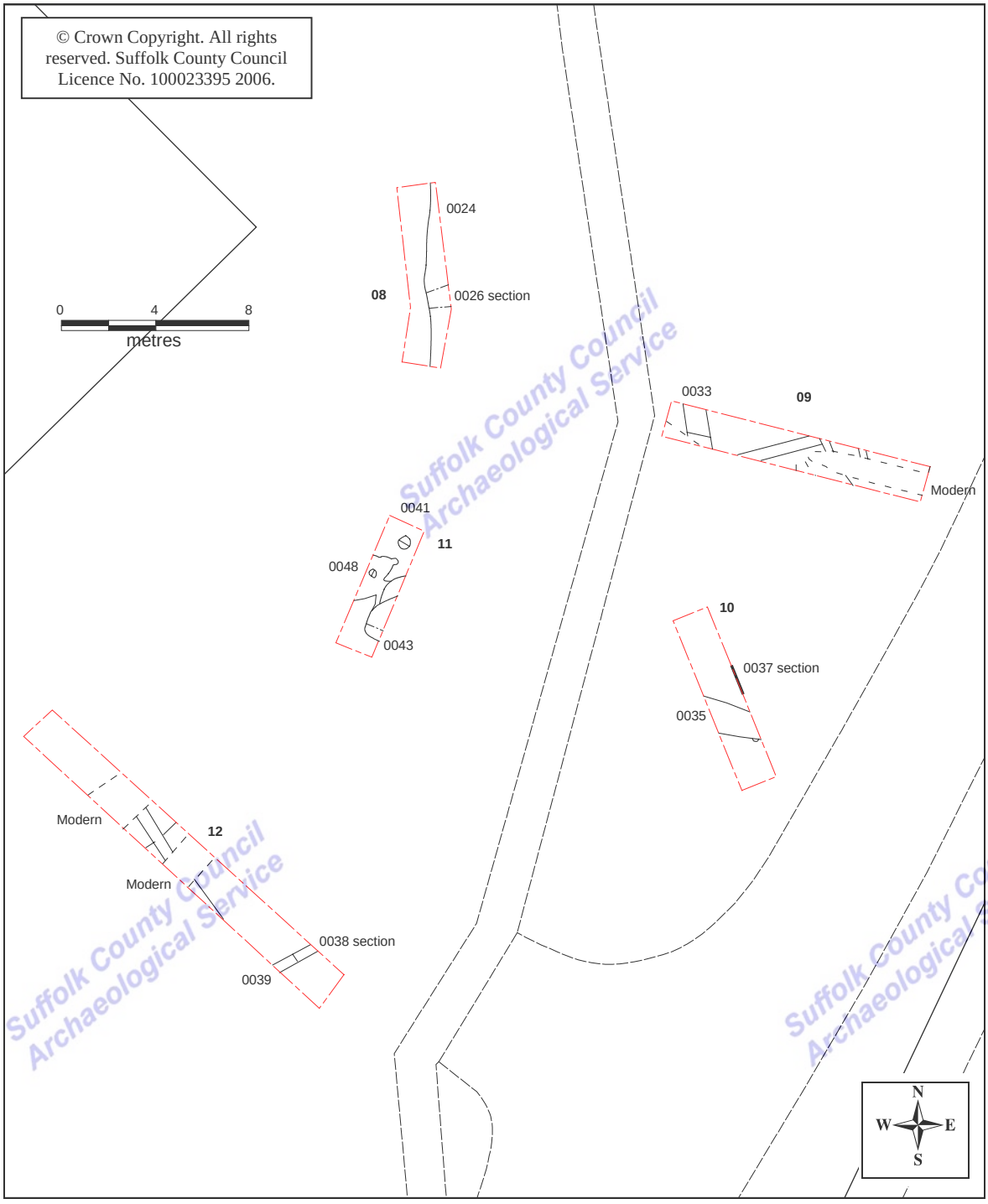

Figure 10. Trenches 08-12 plan

Trench 11

(Figs 10, 11 and 12)

This trench was six metres long and had 0.2m of topsoil overlying an earlier 0.3m thick topsoil of mid brown sand. Then, across most of the trench, there was a mixed layer of dirty yellow/grey sand and chalk up to 0.2m thick. This layer still appeared on the base of the trench and was possibly cut by two features.

0041 was an irregular circular pit, with steep sides, a concave base and measured 0.6m wide and 0.15m deep. Its fill, 0042, was a mid grey/brown sand.

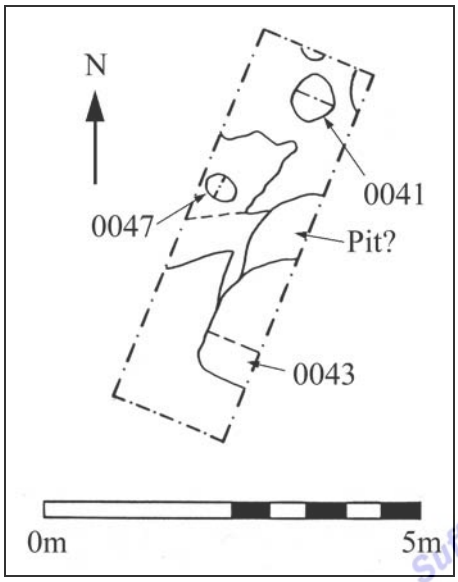

Figure 11. Trench 11 plan

0043 was a probable large pit, apparently cutting another pit to the north, lying only partially within the trench. The upper part of the feature appeared to have been truncated during machining by c.0.2m. An excavated section showed it to be 0.8m+ wide and 0.4m+ deep, with steep sides and a concave base. The upper fill, 0044, was an even mid/dark grey sand, from which three pieces of animal bone were recovered. This lay above 0045, a band of dark grey/black sand and the basal fill, 0046, which was a mix of grey and white sands.

To the west of the two pits was an irregular spread of dirty yellow/grey sand and chalk, possibly the remnants of the above layer. A straight edge of the southern edge of the spread may be indicative of a ditch cut by the pits. Cut into this spread was a small possible pit, 0047, measuring 0.4m in diameter and 0.2m deep. Its fill, 0048, was a grey sand with soil and charcoal with heavy root disturbance. A single sherd of Early Roman pottery, together with animal bone and a small quantity of fired clay, was recovered.

Trench 12

(Figs 10 and 12)

This trench, which was 17m in length, could not be extended further west due to the presence of a water main. The trench profile, recorded in section 0038, showed 0.1m of topsoil overlying 0.15m of mid brown silt/sand. This layer gradually merged into a 0.15m thick layer of dark grey sand, which sealed ditch 0039 and the subsoil.

Two large areas of modern disturbance cut through a north-west to south-east aligned ditch, which was 0.6m wide with a mottled dark grey sand fill. This ditch and the southern modern disturbance both appeared to cut a second possible feature or spread of mid grey sand. At the southern end of the trench a ditch, 0039, aligned south-west to north-east, was identified and excavated in Section 0038. Measuring 0.5m wide and 0.2m deep it had moderate sloping sides and a concave base, with a fill, 0040, of mid grey sand. A single sherd of Late Iron Age pottery was recovered.

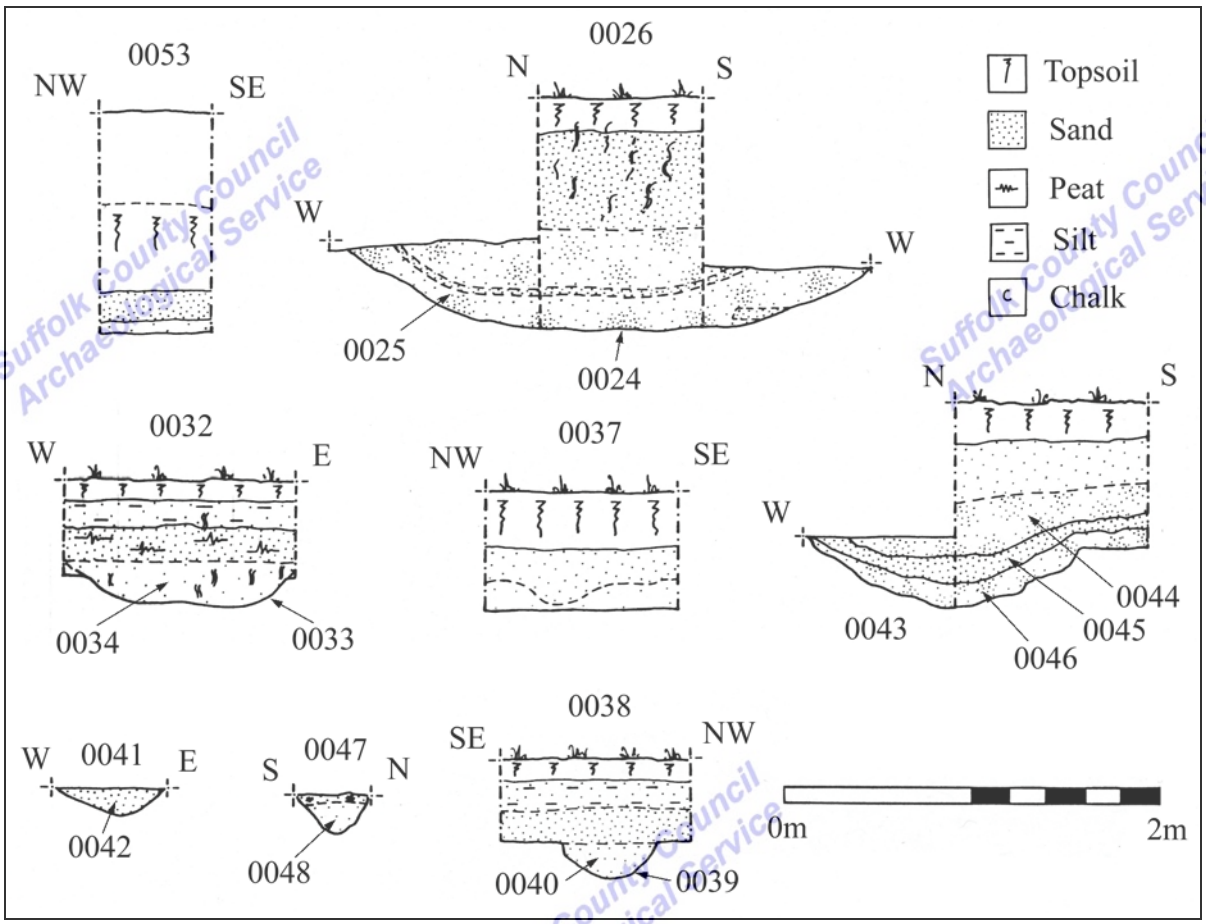

Figure 12. Trenches 07-12 sections

4. The Finds

Cathy Tester

4.1. Introduction

Finds were collected from thirteen contexts in eight of the evaluation trenches and the quantities by context and trench are shown in the table below.

Tr No	OP	Pottery		Animal bone		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
		No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
1	0006			2	529		
2	0008			1	52		
	0012	1	10				LIA-ERom
	0014	11	171	7	71	Flint (1-6g)	LIA
4	0018					SF 1000 copper alloy buckle-(1-7g)	
	0020			3	26		
	0028			4	134		
3	0029	1	7			SF 1001, Stone(1-6g)	Rom
9	0034			2	4		
10	0036	1	5	6	65	Fired clay (1-1g)	Rom
12	0040	1	19	1	12		Later IA
11	0044			3	139		
	0048	1	12	2	52	Fired clay (14-325g)	ERom
Total		16	224	31	1084		

Table 1. Finds quantities.

4.2. Pottery

The evaluation produced sixteen sherds of pottery weighing 224g belonging to the Iron Age and Roman periods. This material, which includes hand-made and wheel-made wares, was found in five of the evaluation trenches (Nos 02-04, 10 and 11).

Most notable is a substantial proportion of a single sand-tempered vessel collected from ditch 0013 in Trench 2 (0014). This high-shouldered jar with a straight neck and everted bead rim appears to be hand-made but wheel-finished, and probably represents the transition between hand-made and wheel-made technology in the Late Iron Age.

One other hand-made bodysherd was found in ditch 0039 (0040) in Trench 12. This piece is also sand-tempered, hard fired, has possible scored or scratched decoration and probably belongs to the later Iron Age.

The rest of the pottery is wheel-made. These ceramics include a grog-tempered storage jar sherd (GROG) which is Late Iron Age or Early Roman from ditch 0011 (0012) in Trench 2, and grey micaceous wares in the black (GMB) and grey-surfaced (GMG) variants. These three sherds occurred singly and are non-diagnostic bodysherds which are not closely datable.

4.3. Fired clay

Fifteen fragments of fired clay weighing 326g were recovered from the evaluation. Nearly all this material was found in the fill of pit 0047, which contained a single sherd of pottery of Early Roman date, and animal bone.

4.4. Metalwork (identified by Faye Minter and Anna West)

4.4.1. Coin

A copper alloy coin (SF 1001), a copy of a *nummus* dating to c330-402 AD was an unstratified find in Trench 3 (0029).

4.4.2. Buckle

A D-shaped copper alloy buckle (SF 1000) with frame and pin was found in ditch 0017 (fill 0018) in Trench 4. The shape of the buckle is similar others which are medieval in date (for example, Egan and Pritchard No. 397 (1991)).

4.5. Miscellaneous small finds

A fragment from the rim of a possible stone vessel was an unstratified find in Trench 3 (0029). It has an upright tapered rim with two deep grooves and shallower incised lines, and appears to be made from a degraded limestone. It is not closely datable.

4.6. Flint (identified by Colin Pendleton)

A single struck flake was collected from ditch 0013 (0014) in Trench 2. The piece is squat and hinge-fractured with an incipient cone of percussion and limited edge retouch. It is probably Late Bronze Age or Iron Age.

4.7. Animal bone

Thirty-one fragments of animal bone weighing 1084g were collected from ten contexts in seven evaluation trenches. The bone is in good condition and was found in association with Late Iron Age and Roman-dated pottery in four of the trenches.

Most bone identified belongs to cattle and includes long bones, pelvis, vertebrae, mandible and tooth fragments. A sheep skull and and articulated sheep femur and tibia with an unfused epiphyseal join denoting an immature individual was found in ditch 0013 (0014) in Trench 02.

4.8. Discussion

The majority of the finds were recovered from the fills of ditches and pits from nine out of the twelve evaluation trenches. This material is likely to represent the disposal of domestic waste resulting from occupation in the immediate vicinity. The animal bone was generally in good condition, and was associated with LIA and Roman pottery in four of the trenches.

The most datable artefacts are the ceramics, which consist of hand-made and wheelmade wares. Sand tempered wares are a trend of the later Iron Age and the wheel-finished jar from ditchfill 0014 probably represents the transition between hand-made and wheel-thrown technology in the Late Iron Age.

Tr	OP	No	Wt/g	Fabric	Sherd	*Notes*	Spotdate
2	0012	1	10	GROG	b	Storage jar, combed ext interior surf flaked off	LIA-ERom
	0014	11	171	HMS	rb+	jar SV High-shouldered jar substantial proportion of single vessel with everted bead rim (150mm,45%)	LIA
3	0029	1	7	GMB	b	Abraded bodysherd	Rom
10	0036	1	5	GMG	b	Jar neck and shoulder	Rom
12	0040	1	19	HMS	b	Hard-fired sand-tempered b/s possibly scored dec	Later IA
11	0048	1	12	GMB	b	very abundant mica	ERom
	Total	16	224				

Table 2. Pottery by context

5. Discussion

5.1. Peat hollow

Trenches 01, 05 and 06 demonstrate the presence of an infilled natural hollow. The hollow, estimated as being at least 1.5m deep, has a basal deposit of peat and was subsequently naturally infilled with a series of deposits of sand. There was no indication of any recent waterlogging and the peat deposits were desiccated. Although the northern sloping edge is broadly apparent in Trench 05 the full extent of the hollow was not defined and layers of sand or peat (0022, 0023 0049) appeared to be extending northwards. No datable material was recovered from any of these deposits.

A small pond is marked on the First Edition OS of c.1880 (Fig. 13) in the vicinity of Trench 01, indicating that at least part of the hollow still remained open in the late 19th century. An aerial photo from 1945 (Fig.14), prior to the construction of the existing housing estate, shows the site as an open field. Trenches 01, 05 and 06 lie within a circular dark feature, possibly a crop mark or indication of a still existing natural depression, which corresponds closely to the probable position of the hollow. During construction of the estate the hollow was apparently still visible but was infilled with redeposited material during landscaping. Even so, the level of Washington Street, where it passes between the three trenches, still noticeably dips by 0.3m-0.4m.

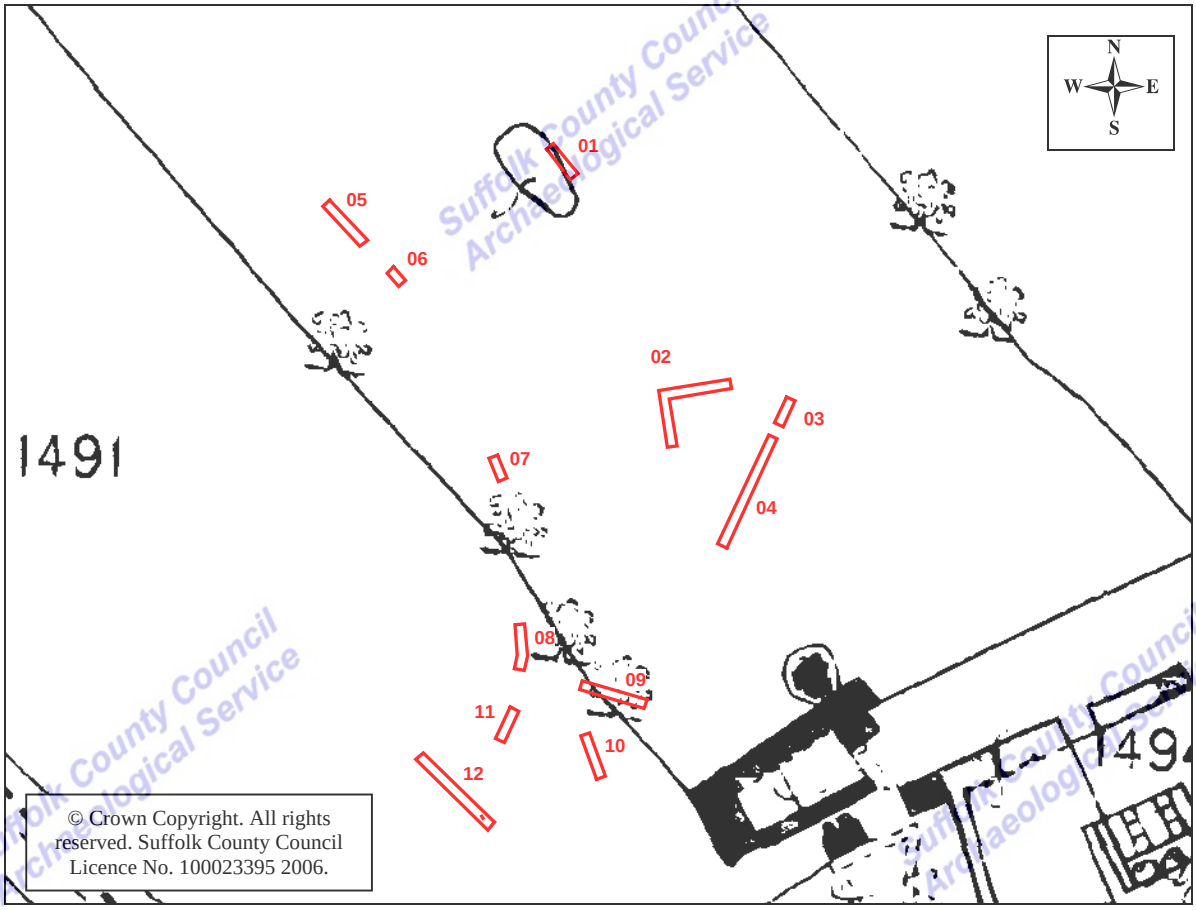

Figure 13. Site on the First Edition OS

This hollow is a typical feature of the natural fen-edge landscape and three similar features were identified at MNL 502, where palynological analysis indicated that they were infilled from the Bronze Age to Roman periods with peat deposits and windblown sands (Bales 2004). At MNL 536 (Craven in prep), 300m to the north-west, two large, waterlogged, peat hollows, were

identified and sampled. One of these hollows was set within a wider shallow basin, infilled with windblown sands containing prehistoric material. The layers 0022, 0023 etc, which are extending north beyond the main sloping edge of this new hollow may be a similar wider spread of windblown sands and there is potential for prehistoric deposits to occur in the vicinity.

The position of the hollow may also explain why, in the southern part of MNL 502, the archaeological features were concentrated on the eastern side. The main band of activity, which lay to the east in MNL 502, now appears to extend southwards, skirting around the eastern side of the hollow.

Figure 14. The site on a c.1945 aerial photo

5.2. Archaeological features

Trenches 02-04 and 08-12 all identified archaeological features, of which the majority probably relate to a Late Iron Age/Roman phase of occupation. It is, however, quite possible that some of these features may relate to a wider phase of activity throughout the Bronze or Iron Age periods, as was seen at MNL 502.

Excavation of the trenches was often hampered by modern services but, as these generally lay above the archaeological or subsoil levels, there was a good state of preservation. Modern

landscaping appears to have built up ground levels and so the post-medieval topsoil is mostly intact, often 0.1m-0.2m below the surface. Beneath this topsoil there is often a layer of mixed grey or brown sands which seals the archaeological deposits or subsoil surface.

Features principally consisted of a range of ditches, which varied considerably in size and alignment, with possible pits in Trench 11 and a possible cremation in Trench 10. This corresponds to the pattern of features seen in the southern part of MNL 502, which primarily consisted of a series of ditch systems or enclosures, shifting in alignment over time. Together with the finds evidence this demonstrates that the prehistoric and Roman occupation seen at MNL 502 extends southwards into the eastern side of the proposed development area. There was no sign of any structural features, such as the Iron Age ring ditches of MNL 502, but the trenching was limited in extent.

The post-medieval field boundary, shown on the First Edition OS (Fig. 13) and probably consisting of a ditch, was not identified and so probably ran just between Trenches 08-10.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

The archaeological evaluation has demonstrated that evidence of the prehistoric topography and of the Late Iron Age/Roman periods of occupation seen at MNL 502 extended southwards across the majority of the development area. The preserved subsoil or archaeological levels are generally at a depth of 0.3m-0.6m and so are vulnerable to any groundworks associated with the development of the site (Fig. 15).

The three houses in the vicinity of Trenches 01, 05 and 06 all appear to be situated within the probable location of a peat hollow and will have little effect on any archaeological evidence. As the peat layers were dry, with no indication of current waterlogging, environmental analysis may not be overly productive. Also, as sampling has been carried out extensively on other hollows in the vicinity, the benefit of further work with this hollow may be limited. Monitoring of groundworks for these three plots could record any archaeological features that may exist and, if necessary, include further environmental sampling.

Trench 7, did not identify any archaeological deposits, and demonstrated that the subsoil horizon was at a considerable depth. The formation level for the new access road in this area is therefore not likely to affect any archaeological deposits and no further work in this area is thought necessary.

The remaining trenches identified an intense spread of preserved archaeological features, generally lying at a depth of 0.4m-0.6m. These are highly likely to be disturbed by groundworks for five house plots and associated new roads. The formation level of Washington Street probably lies at or just above the archaeological levels and so the removal of parts of it is also likely to cause damage to deposits.

A full archaeological excavation of the areas to be affected will be required to record the evidence of this multi-period occupation. This is likely to be an irregular area of c.1900sqm (Fig. 15), which avoids the trees that are to remain in place but covers the footprints of the house, road and removed area of Washington Street.

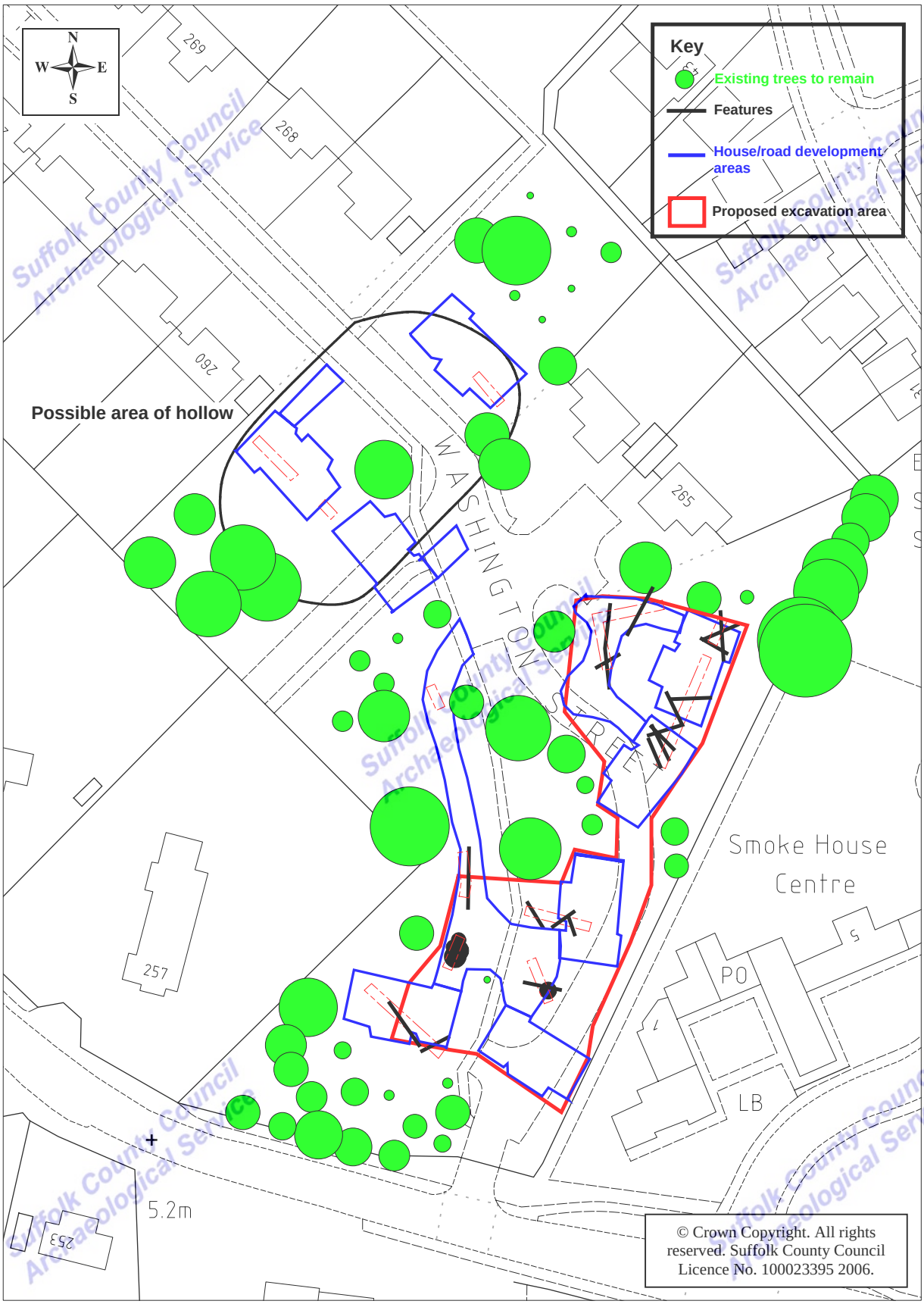

Figure 15. Proposed area for archaeological excavation

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Field Team, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
December 2006

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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. MNL 570 context list

context	feature	trench	section	identifier	description	find	cuts	cutby	over	under	small finds	spotdate
0001				Unstratified finds	Unstratified finds recovered during machining.							
0002		01	0002	Section	Baulk section in Trench 0001showing profile of peat hollow.							
0003		01	0002	Layer	Layer of redeposited mid yellow/brown sand with chalk under the modern topsoil. Probably dumped during modern landscaping of estate.				0004			
0004		01	0002	Layer	Layer of mid brown silt/sand and soil. Former topsoil prior to landscaping?				0005	0003		
0005		01	0002	Layer	Layer of light grey silt/sand. Upper fill of hollow.				0006	0004		
0006		01	0002	Layer	Layer of dark brown/red sand and peat. Dry - no sign of current waterlogging. Base of layer or hollow not seen despite excavation of small sondage.	yes				0005		
0007	0007	02		Ditch cut	Ditch, aligned NE-SW, only partially visible under a modern cable but probably upto 3.5m wide. Partial section showed steep sides and a flat base at a depth of 0.54m.							
0008	0007	02		Ditch fill	Pale-mid grey sand.	yes						
0009		02	0009	Section	Profile of trench 02.							
0010	0011 0013	02	0010	Section	Section at junction of ditches 0011 and 0013. Three separate faces drawn although none showing relationship. This however was very clear during excavation.							
0011	0011	02	0010	Ditch cut	Ditch, broadly north-south aligned and slightly curving, also seen again further to north?. 1m wide and 0.4m deep.		0014					
0012	0011	02	0010	Ditch fill	Light grey mottled sand. Pot sherd may actually be from 0014.	Y						LIA-Erom
0013	0013	02	0010	Ditch cut	Ditch, east-west aligned, steep sided, concave base, 0.7m wide and 0.35m deep.							
0014	0013	02	0010	Ditch fill	Mid grey mottled sand, occasional charcoal in area of pottery sherds.	Y		0011				LIA
0015		05	0015	Section	Profile of trench 05 showing peat hollow.							
0016		06	0016	Section	Profile of trench 06 showing peat hollow.							

context	feature	trench	section	identifier	description	find	cuts	cutby	over	under	small finds	spotdate
0017	0017	04	0021	Ditch cut	Ditch, NW-SE aligned, steep sided with a concave base, 0.3m wide and 0.14m deep. Adjacent and parallel with 0019, part of a double ditch?							
0018	0017	04	0021	Ditch fill	Mid-dark grey sand.						1000	
0019	0019	04	0021	Ditch cut	Ditch, NW-SE aligned, steep sided with a concave base, 1m wide and 0.2m deep. Adjacent and parallel with 0017.							
0020	0019	04	0021	Ditch fill	Mid grey sand with iron panning.	yes						
0021	0017 0019	04	0021	Section	Section across double ditch 0017/0019.							
0022		05	0015	Layer	Layer of light yellow/mottled grey sand. Upper fill of peat hollow, under former topsoil.				0023			
0023		05 06	0015 0016	Layer	Layer of dark brown peat/sand in base of hollow. Dry, no sign of waterlogging.				0049	0022 0050		
0024	0024	08	0026	Ditch cut	Ditch, N-S aligned, running down east side of trench and not fully visible. Excavated in section 0026, 1m+ wide and 0.5m deep with moderate sloping sides and a concave base.							
0025	0024	08	0026	Ditch fill	Mottled mid grey sand with bands of dark grey sand.							
0026	0024	08	0026	Section	Section across ditch 0024.							
0027	0027	04		Ditch cut	Ditch adjacent to/merging with 0019. Not excavated.							
0028	0027	04		Ditch fill	Dark brown mottled sand, finds recovered from surface.	yes						
0029		03		Unstratified finds	Unstratified finds in Trench 03.	yes					1001	Rom
0030	0030	04		Ditch cut	Broad ditch, probably overmachined by 0.3m. Section showed a possible double cut, 1.3m wide and a further 0.35m deep. Appears to corner 90 degrees within trench.							
0031	0030	04		Ditch fill	Light/mid mottled grey sand.							
0032	0033	09	0032	Section	Section of ditch 0033.							
0033	0033	09	0032	Ditch cut	Shallow ditch, aligned NW-SE, 0.8m wide and 0.12m deep.							
0034	0033	09	0032	Ditch fill	Mottled light grey sand, root and animal disturbance.	Y						
0035	0035	10		Ditch cut	Ditch, aligned E-W, cutting small possible cremation? Not excavated.							
0036	0035	10		Ditch fill	Mid grey/brown sand, finds collected from surface.	yes						Rom

context	feature	trench	section	identifier	description	find	cuts	cutby	over	under	small finds	spotdate
0037		10	0037	Section	Profile of trench 10.							
0038	0039	12	0038	Section	Section of ditch 0039.							
0039	0039	12	0038	Ditch cut	Small ditch, SW-NE aligned, moderate sides and concave base. 0.5m wide, 0.2m deep.							
0040	0039	12	0038	Ditch fill	Mid grey sand.	yes						Later IA
0041	0041	11		Pit cut	Irregular circular pit, steep sided, concave base. 0.6m wide and 0.15m deep.							
0042	0041	11		Pit fill	Mid grey/brown sand.							
0043	0043	11		Pit cut	Large pit? Partially within trench and possibly cutting another pit to the north. Overmachined, 0.8m+ wide and 0.4m deep steep sided, concave base.	yes						
0044	0043	11		Pit fill	Upper fill of pit. Even mid/dark grey sand.							
0045	0043	11		Pit fill	Dark grey/blac ksand.							
0046	0043	11		Pit fill	Basal fill of pit, mixed grey/white sands.							
0047	0047	11		Pit cut	Possible small circular pit cut into surrounding mixed spread of sand and chalk. Heavy root disturbance. 0.4m wide and 0.2m deep.							
0048	0047	11		Pit fill	Disturbed grey sand with soil and charcoal.	Y						Erom
0049		05	0015	Layer	Layer of white/grey sand at base of hollow.					0023		
0050		06	0016	Layer	Layer of mid brown silt/sand in peat hollow, under former topsoil.				0023			
0051		03	0051	Section	Profile of trench 03.							
0052		04	0052	Section	Profile of trench 04.							
0053		07	0053	Section	Profile of trench 07.							

Appendix 2

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation

NEW FAMILY HOUSING, ADJACENT WASHINGTON STREET, BECK ROW, RAF MILDENHALL

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety and other responsibilities, see paragraphs 1.7 & 1.8.

This is the brief for the first part of a programme of archaeological work. There is likely to be a requirement for additional work, this will be the subject of another brief.

1. Background

1.1 An application [F/2006/0487/GOV] has been made to build eight houses on land adjacent to Washington Street, Beck Row. The application also involves improvements, particularly garages construction, to ten properties to the west on both sides of Shippea Hill Road.

1.2 In order to establish the full archaeological implications of this application the planning authority has been advised that an archaeological evaluation of the application area should be required of the applicant.

The Planning Authority 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 results of the evaluation and will be the subject of additional briefs.**

This brief is principally concerned with the area in which eight new houses are to be built. The area of improvement to ten houses is also within the Fen edge area of high potential and groundworks for new garages and new service trenches should be archaeologically monitored.

1.3 The proposed construction site is at TL 687 778 on the 5m contour facing north-west. This is on the edge of the Fens, an area characterised by sands on chalk with natural peat-filled hollows, and densely occupied throughout prehistory up to the end of the Roman period. Excavation immediately north east of Washington Street (MNL 502) revealed complex Iron Age and Roman settlement activity and enclosure systems that must extend into the development area. There were also peat hollows with variable potential for environmental information and a low density of early Bronze Age features. Monitoring of new extensions and services on Washington Street (MNL 540) also exposed one undated feature in Washington Street to the north of the current development proposal. There is, therefore, a high probability that the construction of eight houses will impact on archaeological deposits, particularly of Iron Age and Roman date.

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.

1.5 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.

1.6 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.

1.7 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. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with this office before execution.

1.8 The responsibility for identifying any restraints on field-work (e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c.) rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such restraints or imply that the target area is freely available.

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 natural soil processes. Define the potential for existing damage to archaeological deposits. Define the potential for colluvial/alluvial deposits, their impact and potential to mask any archaeological deposit. Define the potential for artificial soil deposits and their impact on any archaeological deposit.

2.4 Establish the potential for waterlogged organic deposits in the proposal area. Define the location and level of such deposits and their vulnerability to damage by development where this is defined.

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 Evaluation is to proceed sequentially: the desk-based evaluation will precede the field evaluation. If field-walking is proposed it will precede trenching. The results of the desk-based work and any field-walking are to be used to inform the trenching design. This sequence will only be varied if benefit to the evaluation can be demonstrated.

2.7 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.

2.8 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.

2.9 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.

2.10 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 of the development area and shall be positioned to sample all parts of the site. Linear trenches are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. Trenches are to be a minimum of 1.8m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated. If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' must be used. The 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 fitted with toothless bucket and other equipment. 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 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 Heathcote, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy and Wiltshire 1994) is available.

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.

4.9 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.
"Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England" English Heritage and the Church of England 2005 provides advice and defines a level of practice which should be followed whatever the likely belief of the buried individuals.

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. 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. 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: Judith Plouviez

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service Conservation Team
Environment and Transport Department
Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Tel: 01284 352448

Date: 21 August 2006

Reference: /Adj Washington Street

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.