

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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## Three Bridges, Norton Little Green NRN 018

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007  
(Planning app. no. 2102/06/RES)  
Oasis ID No. suffolkc1-26711

Suffolk County Council  
Archaeological Service

Robert Atfield  
Field Team  
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## SMR information

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Planning application	2102/06/RES
Date of fieldwork	20-03-2007
Grid Reference:	TL 9794 6650
Funding body:	Mr. and Mrs. Adams (landowners)
SMR No.	NRN 018
Oasis reference	Suffolkc1-26711

## Acknowledgements and List of Contributors

This project was funded by Mr. and Mrs. Adams (landowners) and was monitored by R.D.Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

Robert Atfield from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team, carried out the fieldwork.

The project was directed by Robert Atfield, and managed by John Newman, 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, and the specialist finds report by Richenda Goffin.

## Summary

*A programme of archaeological evaluation was a requirement of planning consent for a proposed four dwelling development at Three Bridges, Norton Little Green, Norton. The evaluation consisted of excavating a series of three trial trenches, in order to try and determine the alignment of the boundary ditch associated with the medieval green. The SCCAS Conservation Team anticipated that the ditch would be located within the evaluation trenches continuing in a southwest to northeast direction through the central area of the development site. Preserved remnants of the ditch remain visible to the southwest of the site near to Manor Farm. The evaluation was also designed to assess and record any potential medieval dwelling, or settlement remains, which may have existed along the green frontage. Two of the evaluation trenches revealed two segments of the ditch close to the anticipated alignment, offering a good opportunity to record lost sections of the ditch in detail. Unfortunately very little finds material was evident within the ditch fill and no further occupation features were located as a result of the evaluation.*

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Figure 1. Site location

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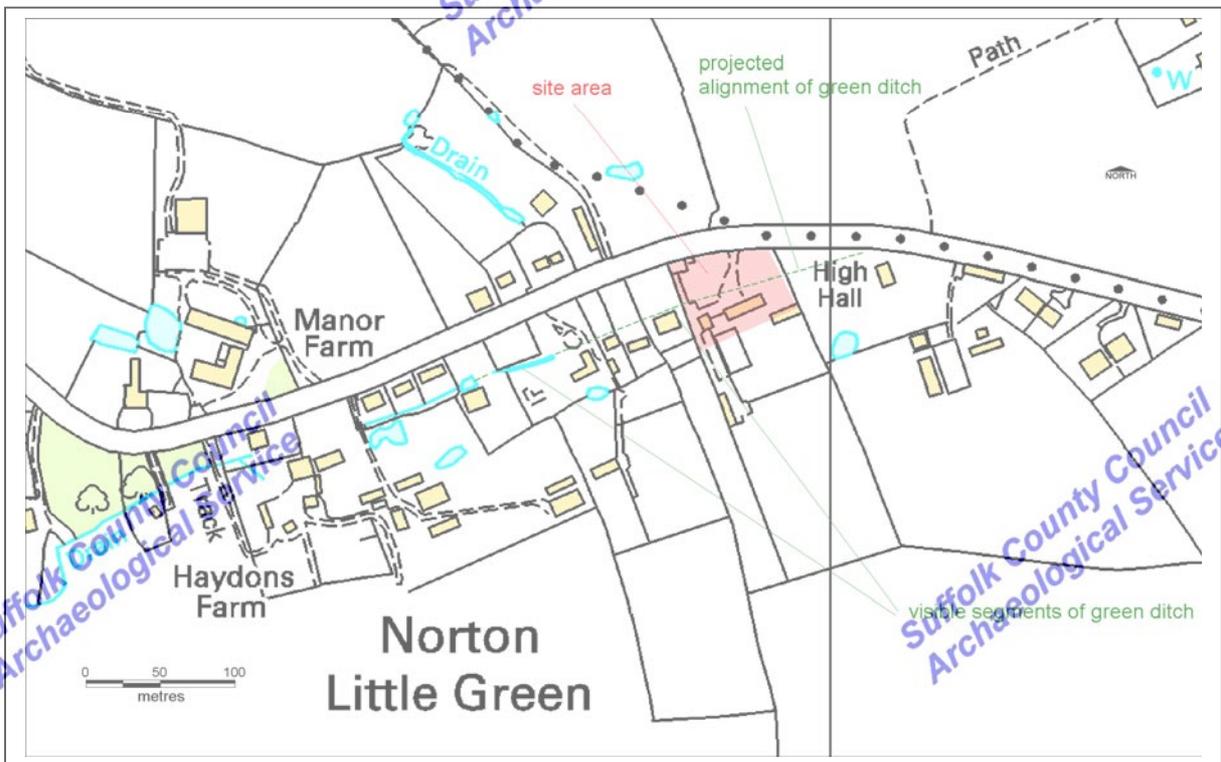


Figure 2. Location of existing visible segments of green ditch and projected alignment

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# 1.0 Introduction

A programme of archaeological evaluation was a requirement of planning consent for a proposed four dwelling development at Three Bridges, Norton Little Green, Norton. The development area lies across the line of the east-west green ditch of Norton Little Green. The evaluation consisted of excavating a series of three trial trenches, to try and determine the alignment of the boundary ditch associated with the medieval green. The area has a very high concentration of medieval landscape features, including numerous moated sites, ancient woodland, trackways and extensive areas known to represent former greens. A particularly large green, called Button Hoo, Button Haugh, or Boten Haugh Green is thought to extend from Great Ashfield and Elmwell up to the present site area where it becomes known as Norton Little Green. It is therefore likely that the green ditch, which runs through the site area, formed a significant boundary to a very extensive area of common pasture. However, it is also possible that further complex regulated subdivisions existed within the area of the green, possibly related to individual parishes (Martin, 1988: 36; Birch, 2004: 284). At the Three Bridges site, it was anticipated that the green ditch would be located within the evaluation trenches continuing in a southwest to northeast direction through the central area of the development site. Preserved remnants of the ditch remain visible to the southwest of the site near to Manor Farm. The evaluation was also designed to assess and record potential medieval dwelling or settlement remains, which may have existed along the green frontage. Two of the evaluation trenches revealed two segments of the ditch close to the anticipated alignment, offering a good opportunity to record lost sections of the ditch in detail. Unfortunately very little finds material was evident within the ditch fill and no further occupation features were located as a result of the evaluation.

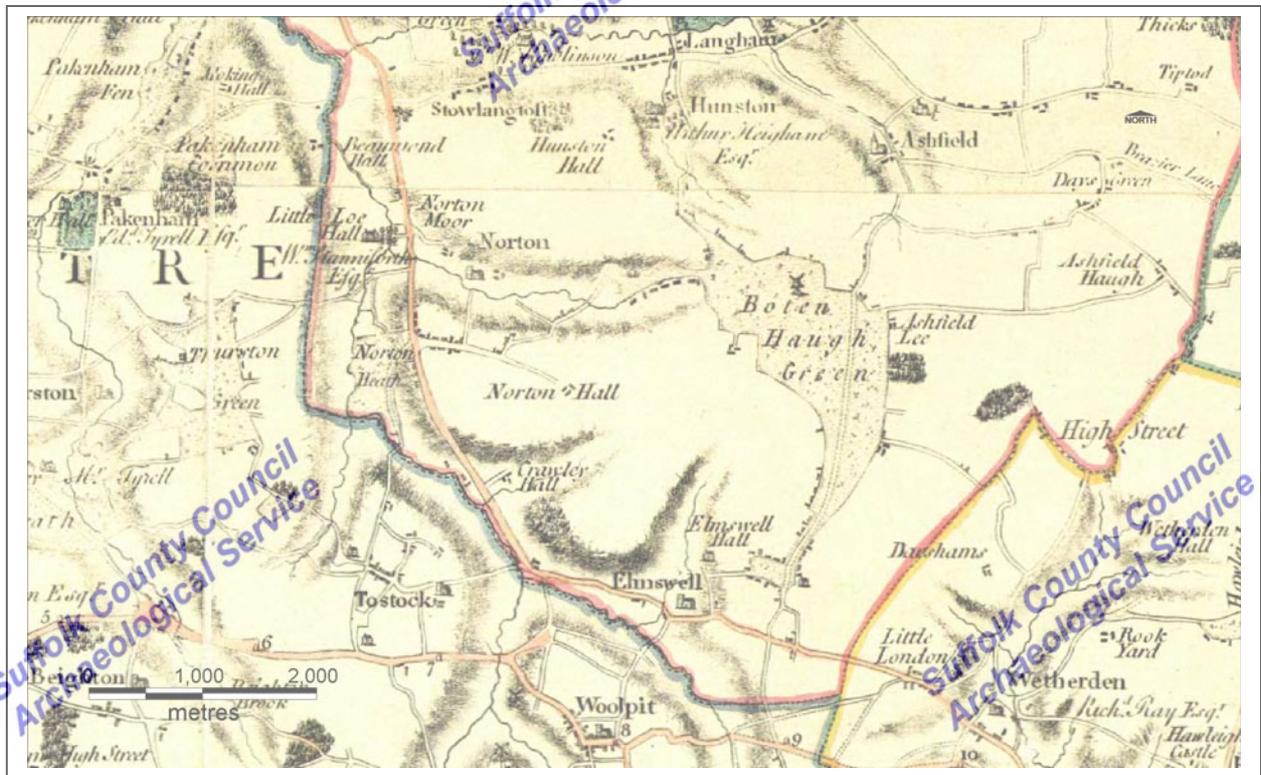


Figure 3. Hodkinson's Map of 1783

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## 2.0 Methodology

Three evaluation trenches were excavated within the site area, two ran northwest to southeast (Trenches 1 and 2) and were located in transverse positions in relation to the anticipated alignment of the green ditch. The third trench (Trench 3) ran parallel to the ditch line in the central southwest area of the site (see Figure 4). Some minor reorientation of the positions of the trenches took place in order to avoid trees, garden ponds and driveways and to minimise disruption for the residents. The trenches were excavated down to the archaeological levels using a 360° tracked mechanical mini-digger fitted with a toothless 1.50m ditching bucket. The only services encountered during the evaluation were buried garden electricity cables, which were clearly marked and did not cause much disruption to the trenching (see Figure 4.). The trenches had an average width of 1.70m and had a combined total of 67.50m in length; this represents a total of 114.75m<sup>2</sup> or just under 3% of the total site area. This figure is a reduction in the area specified (see Appendix 2.), but after a site inspection by the conservation officer during the evaluation, it was decided this was sufficient to characterise the green ditch and also to evaluate the general potential of the site archaeology.

The mechanical soil stripping was constantly monitored by an archaeologist in order to cease ground reduction at the optimum archaeological level. The spoil was also searched for any unstratified finds and also metal detected. All archaeological features were cleaned and excavated by hand, drawn in plan and section and photographed using a digital camera. Details were recorded on *pro forma* 'observable phenomena' context sheets, which run from numbers 0001 to 0010.

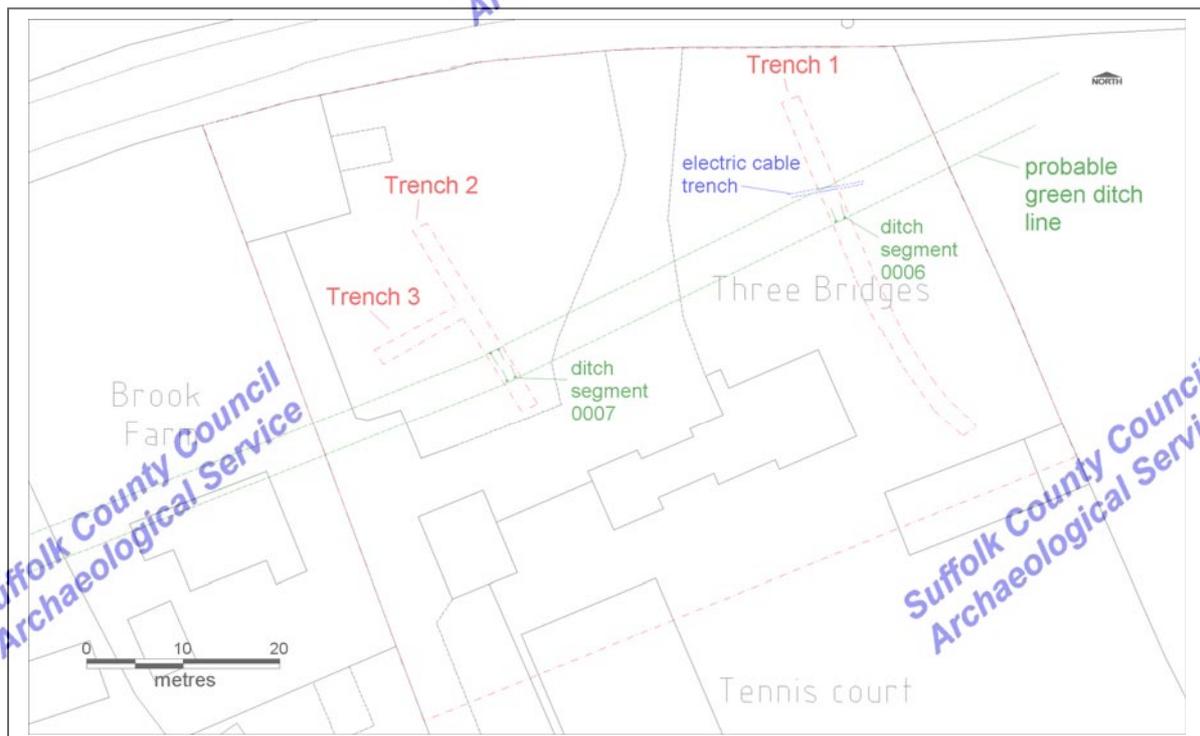


Figure 4. Location of evaluation trenches and features

### 3.0 Results

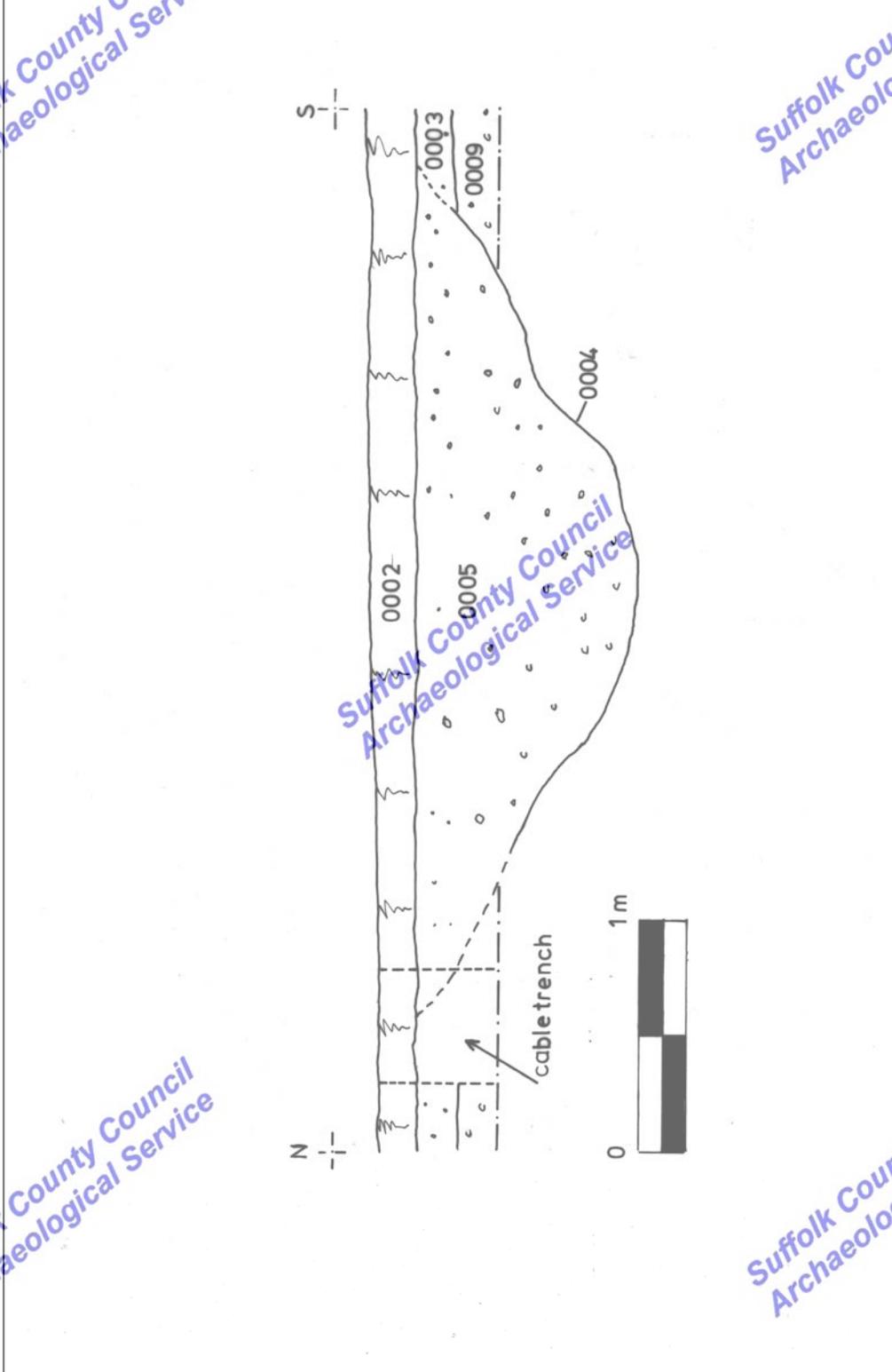
O.P. No.	Trench No.	Feature	Component	Identifier	Description
0001	All trenches			Unstratified finds	
0002	All trenches			topsoil	mid-dark brown loamy clay
0003	All trenches			subsoil	Pale brown silty clay
0004	1 and 2	0004	0004	Ditch cut	Cut of green ditch running SW-NE
0005	1	0004	0004	Fill of ditch 0004 at segment 0006	Pale grey-brown clay
0006	1	0004	0004	Segment of ditch 0004 (Trench 1)	
0007	2	0004	0004	Segment of ditch 0004 (Trench 2)	
0008	2	0004	0004	Fill of ditch 0004 at segment 0007	Pale grey-brown clay
0009	All trenches			Natural deposit	Pale orange-brown clay with occasional chalk lumps
0010	1 and 2			Natural deposit (seen below 0009)	Pale grey chalky clay

Table 1. Summary of contexts

The three trenches were excavated to depths that provided the optimum levels for defining archaeological features within the natural deposits. The average depth from the existing ground levels down to the underlying natural clay was 0.44m. The character and depth of the topsoil and subsoil deposits remained fairly consistent in all three trenches; the only notable variation was a slight increase in topsoil depths towards the southwest area of the site. The underlying natural clay was equally consistent and was pale orange-brown in colour with occasional chalk lumps and flints. The trenches had an average width of 1.70m and were excavated to an average depth of 0.60m. The only archaeological features which were located were the two segments of the green ditch 0004 located in Trenches 1 and 2; these areas were machined to a deeper level,

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Figure 5. Section of Ditch 0004 (Segment 0006)

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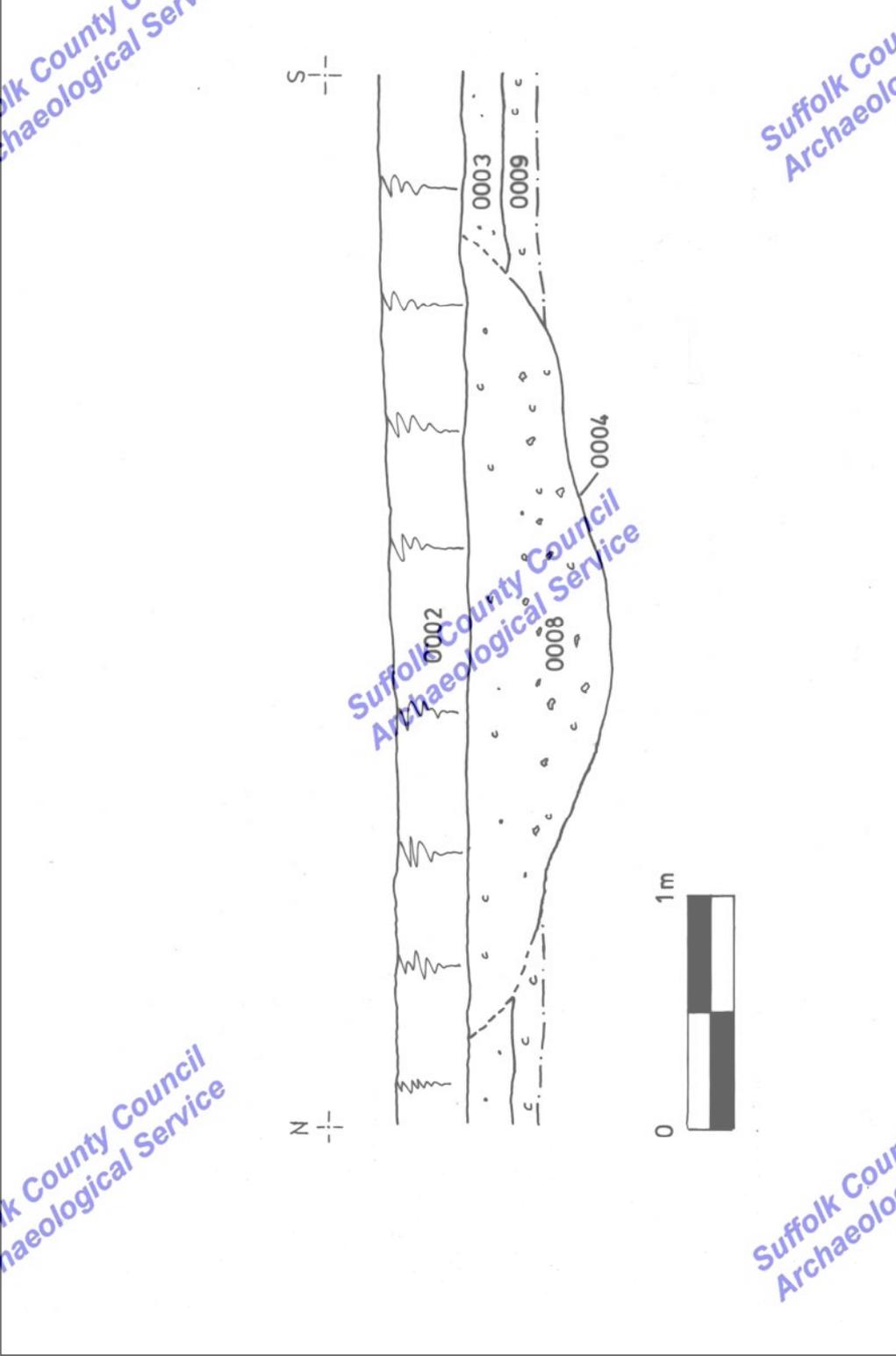


Figure 6. Section of Ditch 0004 (Segment 0007)

to around 1.10m, in order to reveal the full depth of the features in section. In these deeper areas of excavation an additional pale chalky grey natural clay deposit was briefly revealed in the base of the trenches. The topsoil was of mid-dark brown loamy clay (garden soil), containing regular small stones and occasional modern domestic ceramics, ranging from 0.16 to 0.35m deep. The subsoil was pale brown silty clay containing very occasional chalk lumps, but very few stones; the depth was between 0.17-0.19m.

**Trench 1.** This trench was excavated from northwest to southeast for a length of 36m. The green ditch 0004 was revealed at a point 10m along the trench (ditch segment 0006), but was truncated along the northwest edge by a recent electricity cable trench at a depth of around 0.60m. The cable formerly supplied security equipment in the grounds of Three Bridges. A reasonably complete section of the ditch was recorded in spite of the modern ground disturbance (see Figure 5). The ditch was around 4.00m wide, with a maximum depth of 1.20m. In profile, the ditch has shouldered, moderately steep sides and a gently dished base. The ditch had a single homogeneous fill (0005) of pale grey-brown clay with occasional chalk lumps and large flints. The deposit was notably clean, lacking any charcoal, pottery and containing very little ceramic building material other than very occasional small flecks; the fragmentary remains of a medium sized scapula were also present.

**Trench 2.** This trench was shortened from that which was recommended by the Brief and Specification, in order to avoid cutting off access along the drive to the house. It measured a total of 22m and was excavated from the southeast to the northwest. Segment 0007 of the green ditch was revealed at a point 3.40m along the trench, almost exactly on the anticipated alignment to that which was proposed prior to excavation. This segment of the ditch was shallower, with a depth of 0.80m and also slightly narrower at 3.50m. However, the character of the ditch profile was very similar. The fill (0008), also closely resembled the fill recorded in segment 0006, although was slightly stonier. Similarly, the fill in this segment was almost devoid of finds except for a bovine mandible found in the base of the feature.

**Trench 3.** Trench 3 was excavated as a right-angled extension to Trench 2 midway along the southwest side (see Figure 4.). The trench was 9.50m in length and reached a depth of 0.60m, however, no archaeological features or finds were located. The soil profile was very similar to Trench 2, but with a slight decrease in topsoil depth to 0.25-0.30m.

## 4.0 The finds

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Archaeological Service

Richenda Goffin, May 2007.

## Introduction

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

OP	CBM		Animal bone		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0005	4	197	1	7	Post-med
0008			1	317	Undated
Total	4	197	2	324	

Table 2. Finds quantification

## Ceramic building material

A total of four fragments of ceramic building material was collected from the evaluation (0.197kg). A single piece of post-medieval roof tile was present, made from a red-firing medium sandy fabric with occasional flint. The tile has mortar still adhering to the upper surface and may have been re-used. In addition three small fragments of possible floortile were identified, made from a medium sandy fabric with occasional pale clay lenses and grog inclusions. The height of these fragments is c28mm, and one of the outer surfaces shows evidence of a ?burnt surface showing signs of vitrification, or possibly the remains of a plain glaze. All these fragments were recovered from fill 0005 of the ditch on the edge of the green.

## Animal bone

Two pieces of animal bone were recovered (0.314kg). The fragmentary remains of a medium sized scapula was present in ditchfill 0005 and a bovine mandible was found in ditchfill 0008.

## Discussion

Only a small quantity of finds were recovered from the evaluation, and no pottery or other closely datable artefacts were collected. The ceramic building material recovered from one of the ditchfills is clearly post-medieval, but the fragmentary remains of a possible floortile may be earlier in date.

## 5.0 Conclusion

The evaluation was effective in proving the alignment of the green ditch, but unfortunately did not produce diagnostic finds material with which to clarify the date of the ditch. However, the excavated ditch segments provided a valuable record of the

character of the green ditch in terms of profile, dimensions and fill. The evaluation did not produce any evidence of earlier occupation along the green frontage, such as dwelling sites or associated deposits, but it is not possible to discount this possibility at this location, given the limitations of the sample area.

## 6.0 Recommendations

The evaluation was sufficient in terms of identifying the location and alignment of the green ditch. Although unsuccessful, a considerable effort was made to locate datable finds material from the fill of the ditch. Clearly defined ditch profiles and dimensions were recorded with which to further characterise the feature. The conservation officer (Robert Carr) made a close inspection of the site near to the completion of the evaluation and it was decided that preservation *in situ* was not necessary and that no further archaeological excavation was required.

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## 7.0 References

Birch, M. 2004 *Suffolk's Ancient Sites and Historic Places*, Castell, Mendlesham, Suffolk.

Martin, E. 1988 'Greens, Commons and Tyes' in: Dymond, D. and Martin, E.(eds.) *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk*, SCC Planning Dept./ SIAH, (48-9).

## 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.

## 6.0 Appendix Brief and Specification

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*Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation*

**THREE BRIDGES, NORTON LITTLE GREEN**

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

**1. Background**

*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.*

- 1.1 Planning consent [2102/06/RES] has been given for development consisting of four new dwellings and new access route within the plot.
- 1.2 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.**
- 1.3 The development area lies across the line of the east-west green ditch of Norton Little Green. The green ditch can be seen running in front of the adjacent property to the west (Brook Farm), and is believed to continue across the Three Bridges plot. There is high potential for medieval occupation on the green frontage including dwelling sites with associated deposits.
- 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 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 of the **entire site** 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. A suggested trench design is attached at Figure 1. The final 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 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 show what provision has been made for environmental assessment of the site and must 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.
- 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. *"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 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that adequate resources are available to fulfil the brief.
- 4.4 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.
- 4.5 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 4.6 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. Account must be taken of any requirements the County SMR may have regarding the conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage of excavated material.
- 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: Robert Carr

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

Tel: 01284 352441

Date: 12 March 2007

Reference: /Three Bridges, Norton

**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.**