

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Adjacent building 439, RAF LAKENHEATH ERL 200

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF IMPROVEMENTS AND REPAIRS TO A CAR PARKING AREA ADJACENT TO BUILDING 439

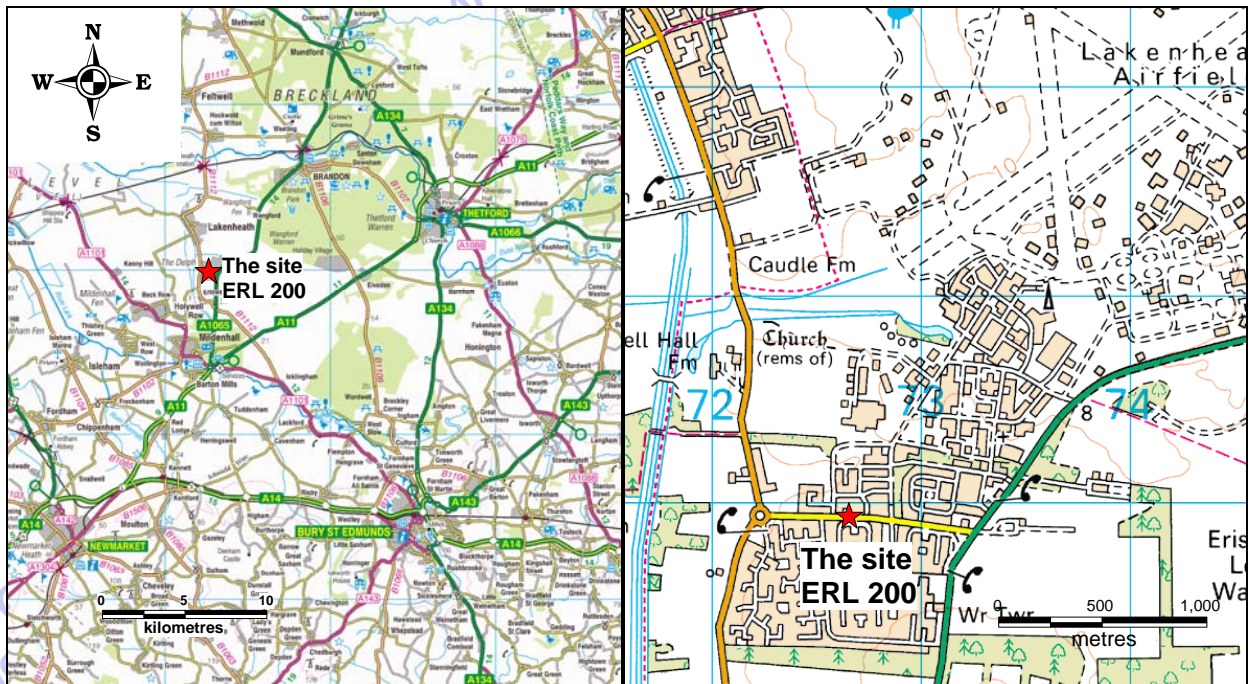
Planning Application No.: Pre RAF Lak 439
NGR: TL 7264 7994
Oasis Ref. Suffolkc1-27127

Funded by: MOD Defence Estates (USF)

SCCAS Report no. 2007/077

Summary

Archaeological monitoring carried out during repairs to a car park did not identify archaeological finds or deposits despite its location within a known area of Early Roman activity. Only very small parts of the development were excavated deep enough to penetrate modern surfaces and deposits, and where subsoil was seen it appeared to have been truncated, suggesting that the likelihood of archaeological deposits surviving in this immediate area is low.



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Figure 1. Site location

Introduction

Archaeological monitoring was carried out between February and April 2007 during repairs and improvements to a rough concrete and tarmac car park located on the north side of Lord's Walk. The work was required as a condition on planning application Pre RAF Lak 439, to a Brief and Specification (Appendix 1) issued by Jude Plouviez, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team. The site lies at grid ref. TL 7264 7994 near the top of a north facing slope at c.15m OD. This is immediately adjacent to an area where Iron Age and Early Roman features and finds including a human burial and possible droveway have been identified, ERL 089. To the west and south of the site there have been further Early Roman finds and features (ERL 112 and ERL 147), including another human burial and to the east of the site an Early Neolithic cremation (ERL 129) and scattered prehistoric features have been found.

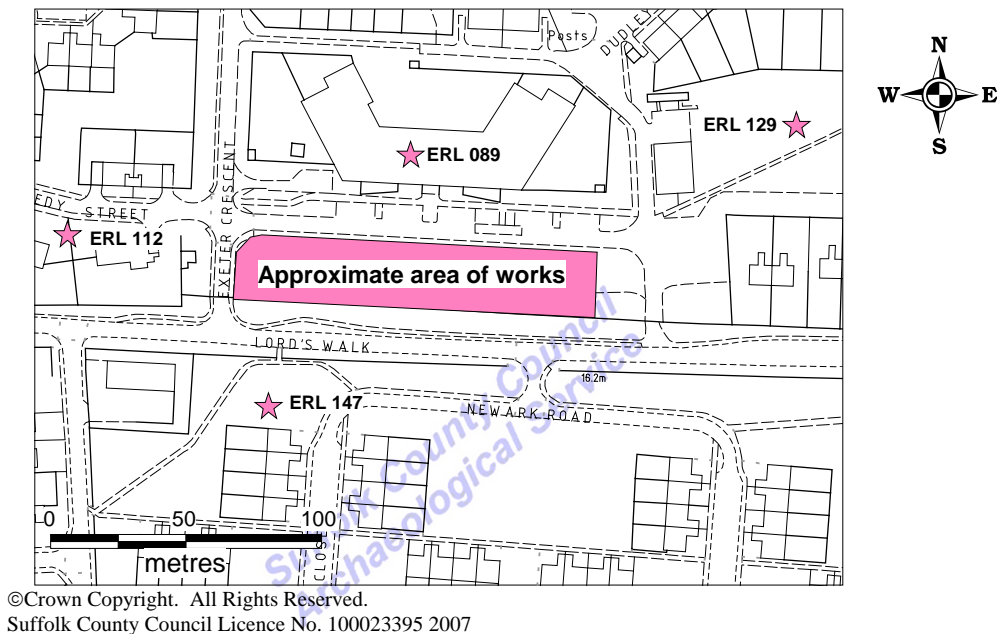


Figure 2. Approximate area of the development

Results

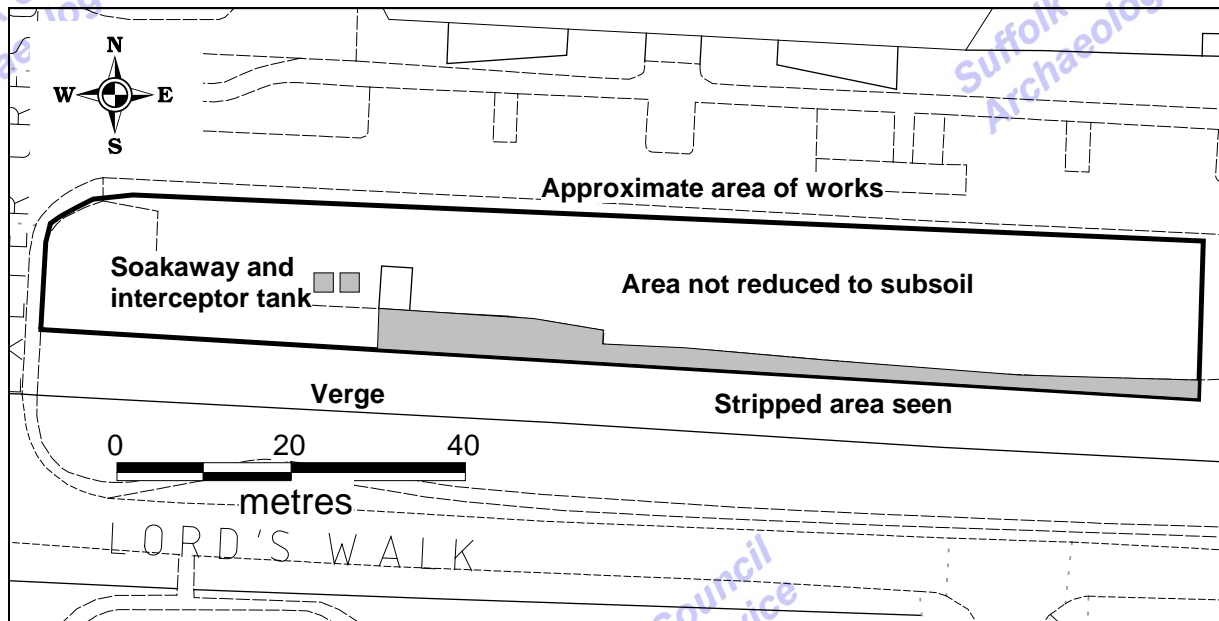
Three visits were made to this site in order to monitor excavations for the car park and associated soakaway and interceptor tank. The car park design meant that finished surface levels were significantly higher than the existing levels over much of the car park and therefore most of the existing surface or sub-base was left intact and natural subsoil was not seen. Only a c.1.5m strip at the south edge of the car park, where the new construction cut into the grass verge, revealed natural sand and the potential for archaeological deposits (Fig. 3).

Car park

A 95m long section and 1.5m wide strip were seen against the south edge of the development. The excavated level just reached natural orange sand at the west end of the strip, but this was at approximately the same level as the existing car park surface, indicating a high likelihood that the majority of any archaeological deposits under the car park would have been already truncated. At the east end the strip penetrated c. 0.2m into natural but no features were visible and no finds were recovered. The section showed that the grass verge, which formed a bank up from the car park to the perimeter fence alongside Lord's Walk, was entirely made up of modern deposits, 0.7m deep at the edge of the development. This seemed to indicate that original topsoil had probably been truncated during previous earth moving in this area, but it is not possible to be sure that this is true for the whole length or width of this verge.

Soakaway and interceptor tank

These and c.5m length of drainage trench into them were seen after excavation. All showed truncated natural sand under c.0.4m of modern rough concrete and tarmac surfaces and sub-base. No archaeological features were seen. No finds were recovered.



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Figure 3. Areas archaeologically monitored

Conclusion

Finished levels for this development were such that only minimal excavation was undertaken and therefore only very small areas of natural subsoil were seen, and that appeared to be truncated. The existing car park levels were only slightly higher than natural sand indicating that the majority of any archaeological deposits that had existed in this area are likely to have been destroyed during earlier development. However as the previous car park surface was largely left intact there is the possibility that the base of deeper features and burials could still survive under the car park.

Jo Caruth
May 2007

Appendix 1

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

PARKING AREA REPAIRS, ADJACENT BUILDING 439, RAF LAKENHEATH

1. **Background**

- 1.1 Works are planned to repair a parking area at RAF Lakenheath (ref: MSET 05-2047); the Archaeological Service has been consulted by Defence Estates about the impact on archaeological deposits and the appropriate mitigation.
- 1.2 The planned works are centred at TL 7263 7994, on the north side of Lords Walk. The dominant subsoil in this area is chalky. Archaeological deposits (mainly prehistoric and Roman settlement and agricultural features) have been identified immediately to the north (ERL 089) and in recent work to the south of Lords Walk. There is thus good potential for early activity in this area, but there is also a likelihood of moderate to severe truncation judging by the preservation in adjacent areas.
- 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" Occasional Papers 14, East Anglian Archaeology, 2003.

2. **Brief for Archaeological Monitoring**

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are damaged or removed by the current planned works (MSET 05-2047).
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for earlier occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activities in this proposal are likely to be the site preparation works involving topsoil stripping.

The stripping process and the upcast soil are to be observed whilst they are excavated by the building contractor.

Adequate time is to be allowed for the recording of archaeological deposits during excavation (see 4.3).

3. **Arrangements for Monitoring**

- 3.1 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the archaeological contractor) who must be approved by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS).
- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of SCCAS 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. The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to previously agreed locations and techniques upon which this brief is based.
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover archaeological costs incurred in monitoring the development works by the contract archaeologist. The size of the contingency should be estimated by the approved archaeological contractor, based upon the outline works in paragraph 2.3 of the Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and time-table.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered the Conservation Team of SCCAS must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4. **Specification**

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Council Conservation Team archaeologist and the contracted 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity must be given to the 'contract archaeologist' to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary.
- 4.3 In the case of topsoil stripping for site preparation, unimpeded access to the stripped area must be allowed for archaeological recording at the interface between topsoil and clean sub-soil surface before the area is further deepened, traversed by machinery or sub-base deposited. The recording process may include archaeological excavation to normal SCCAS standards, if significant features are exposed.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 4.6 Developers should be aware of the possibility of human burials being found. If this eventuality occurs they must comply with the provisions of Section 25 of

the Burial Act 1857; and the archaeologist should be informed by 'Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England' (English Heritage & the Church of England 2005) which includes sensible baseline standards which are likely to apply whatever the location, age or denomination of a burial.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*, particularly Appendix 3. This must be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 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.
- 5.3 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 5.4 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, must be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.6 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.

- 5.7 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

Date: 7 April 2006

Reference: /2006_Pre RAF Lak 439

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.