

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Land off Coulson Lane, Brandon BRD 172

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2004
(Planning app. no. F/2003/0446/FUL)

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Field Team

Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

© September 2004

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List of Contributors

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Sue Anderson	Finds Manager
Kelly Powell	Post-excavation Supervisor

Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Bennett PLC and was monitored by R.D. Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team). The fieldwork was carried out by Jo Caruth and John Craven from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The project was managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

Finds processing was carried out by Kelly Powell and the specialist finds report by Sue Anderson.

Summary

An archaeological monitoring of footing trenches and associated groundworks for the development of four houses at Coulson Lane, Brandon, located a flint lined well of possible medieval date and two miscellaneous pits dating from the 19/20th century.

SMR information

Planning application no. F/2003/0446/FUL
Date of fieldwork: 29th March – 23rd August 2004
Grid Reference: TL 7832 8664
Funding body: Bennett PLC
Oasis reference no. suffolkc1-2840

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Introduction

A series of visits were made to the site from 29th March to 23rd August 2004 to monitor the excavation of footing trenches and associated groundworks for the construction of four residential properties. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by R.D. Carr, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team (Appendix 1), to fulfil a planning condition on application F/2003/0446/FUL. The work was funded by the developer, Bennett PLC.

The development area was a plot of waste ground, situated at TL 7832 8664 (Fig. 1). A building on the eastern edge of the site had recently been demolished. On the OS map of c.1880 the site is shown as largely being open ground with scattered small buildings (Fig. 2) which have since been removed.

Interest in the site was based upon its location within the historic core of Brandon. The site lies to the rear of buildings that front onto the medieval high street and so there was potential for locating medieval backyard deposits. In addition a similar area lying 40m to the south, BRD 164 (Fig. 1), had previously been evaluated in advance of development (Tester 2001). This site showed limited evidence of prehistoric deposits and two Late Saxon ditches and one pit. These latter features were of interest as the known Middle and Late Saxon settlements lie to the west and these features were the first recorded evidence of activity in the Late Saxon period in this part of the town. Therefore there was also potential for further evidence from these periods to be located during the development.

Methodology

An initial visit was made when the entire site, except for the access road, was stripped to a depth of 0.5m by a mechanical excavator. This stripping was primarily to remove contaminated ground and the remains of a yard surface and material from demolished buildings.

Subsequent visits were made to observe the footing trenches for the four houses during excavation. The trenches were approximately 0.8m wide and from the reduced ground level they varied in depth from c.1m to 1.5m deep. A large service trench was also seen on the eastern side of the development area, this was c.1.2m wide and up to 1.5m deep.

Results

The initial removal of contaminated ground and modern deposits showed that the topsoil had been totally removed. The modern material rested directly upon the natural subsoil, a spread of mid orange gravels overlying a yellow/brown silt/clay, which may have been truncated. However the stripping left a thin layer of modern material in place, so the surface of the subsoil could not be seen.

This limited the archaeological monitoring to observation of any trenches that were excavated; these were the large service trench to the east of the development area and the four individual house plots. The access road was built upon the reduced ground level, minimising subsoil disturbance, and was not monitored.

Service trench

This trench clearly showed the natural subsoil with several areas of massive disturbance, apparently recent test pits. No archaeological features were seen.

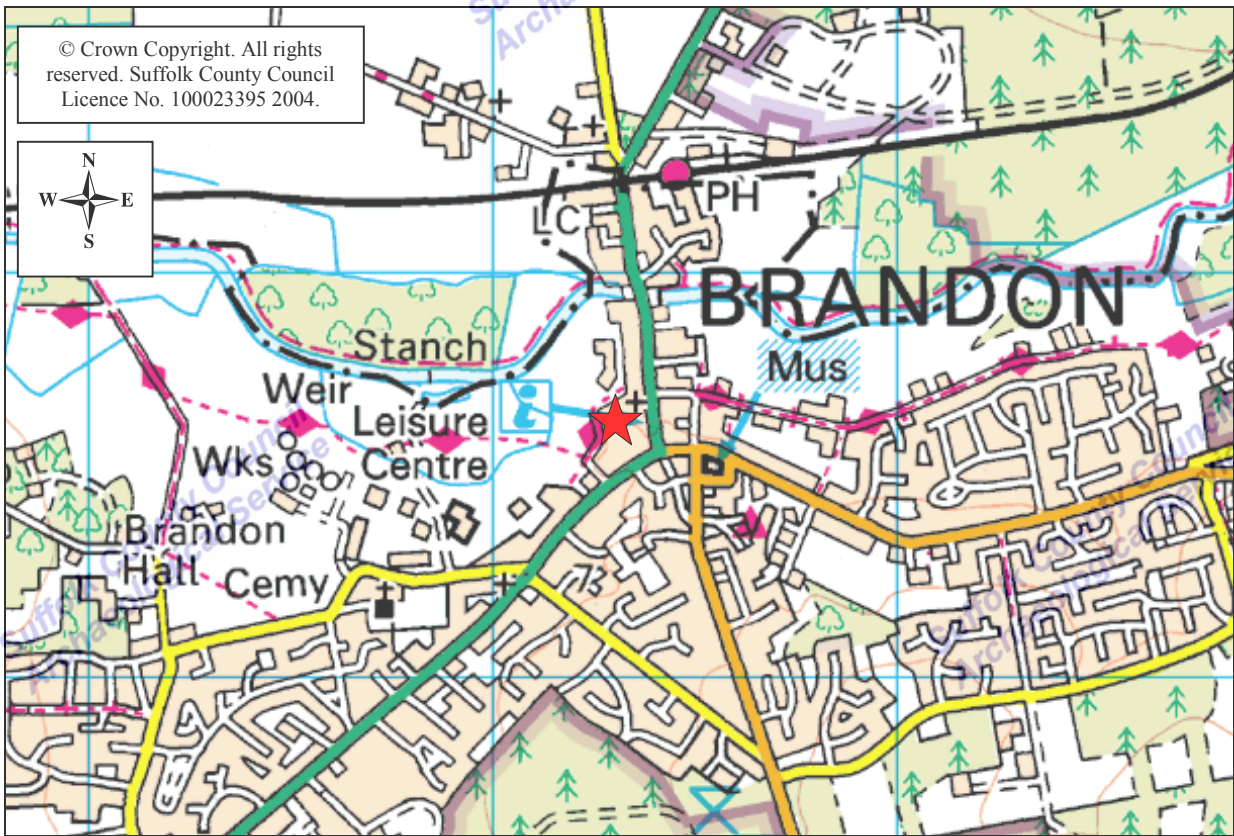
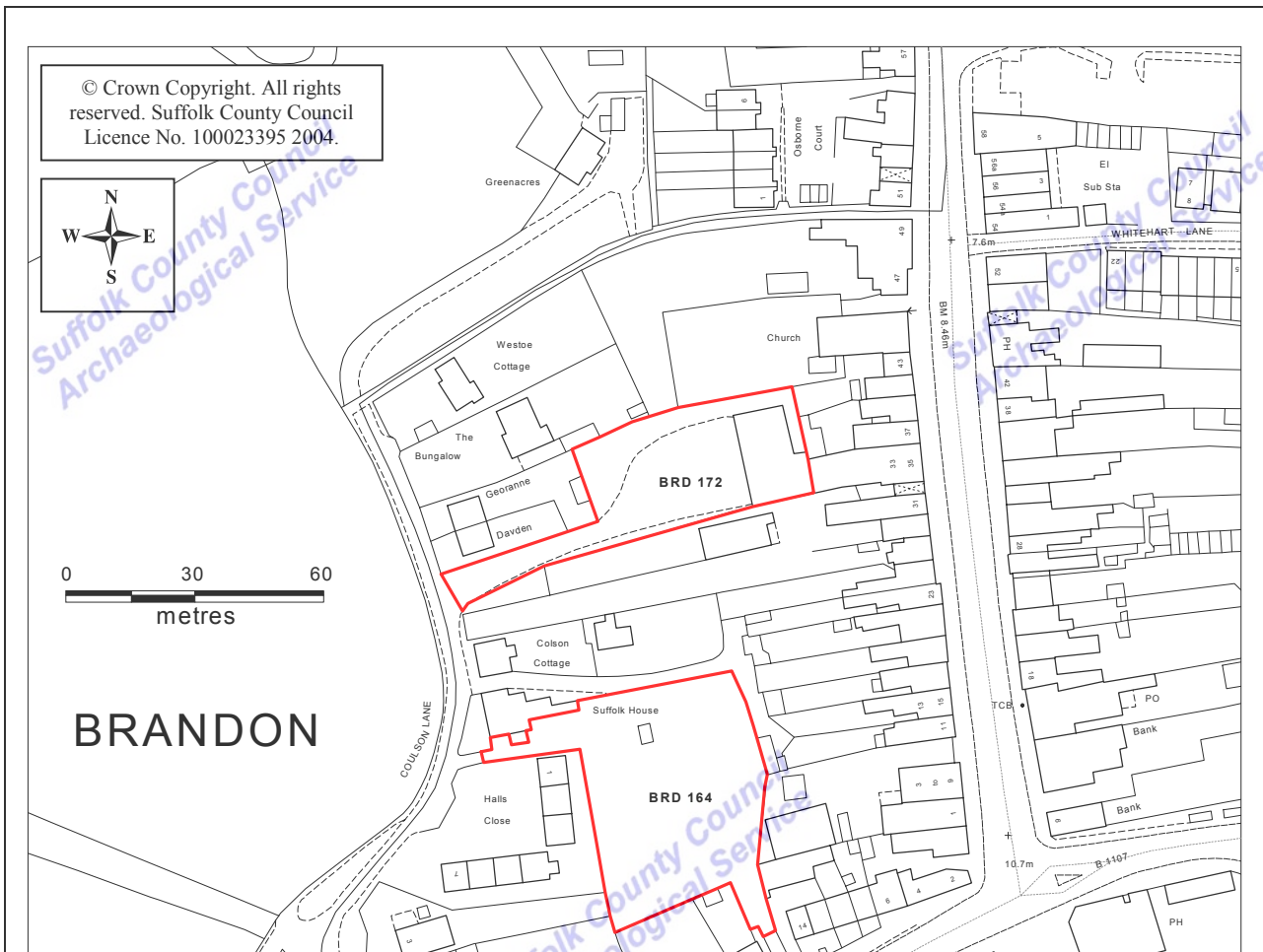


Figure 1. Site location plan.

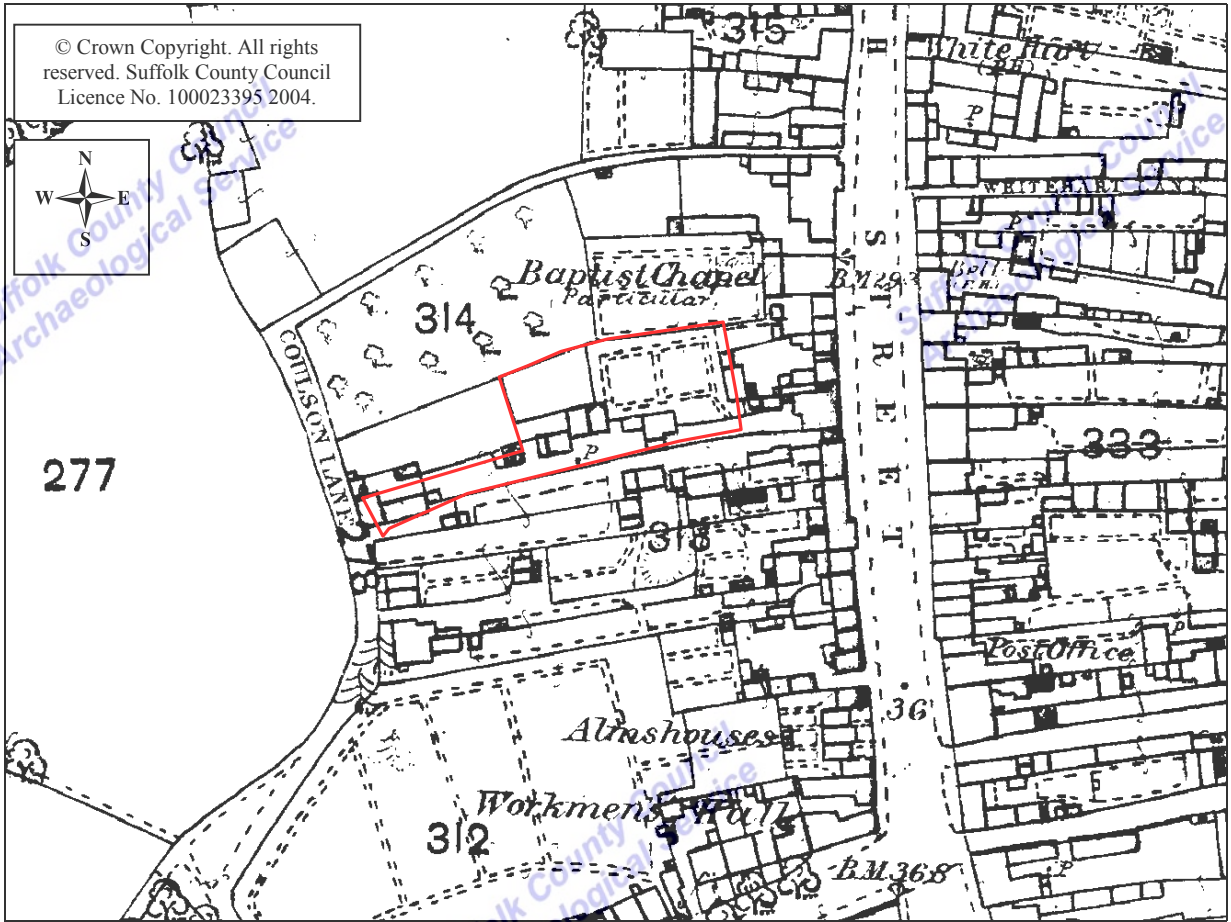


Figure 2. Site on the OS map of c.1880.

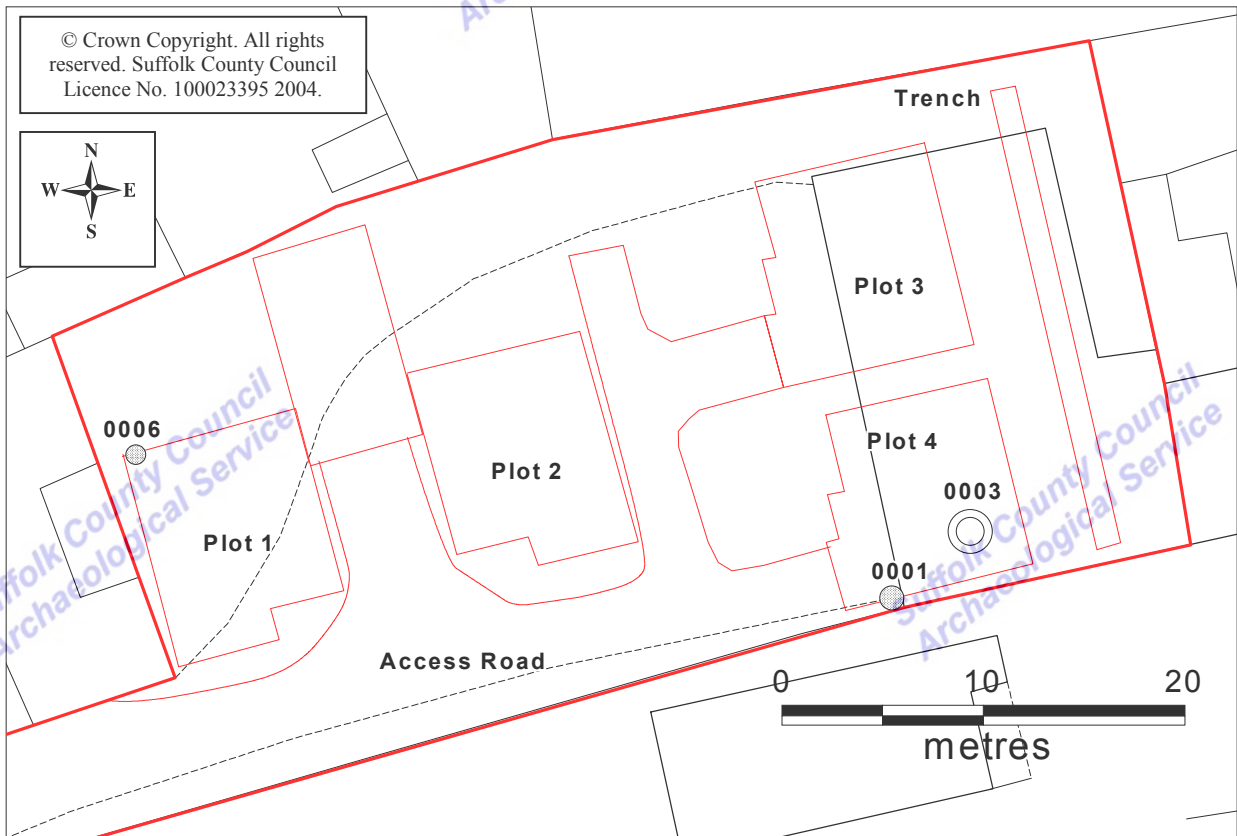


Figure 3. Site plan.

Plot 1

One feature was observed in this plot, 0006, a circular pit 1m in diameter and 1.1m deep. The fill, 0007, was a mix of loam and modern building debris.

Plot 2

The footing trenches for this plot and the adjacent garage were not monitored as the Archaeological Service was not informed of their excavation before they were backfilled.

Plot 3

No features were observed on this plot, the natural subsoil was clearly exposed in the majority of the trenches apart from along the northern edge, which ran alongside a modern sewer trench.

Plot 4

Two features were observed in this plot, the remainder of the trenches showed the natural subsoil with only limited disturbance.

0001 was a large pit, approximately 1.2m in diameter and 1m deep. Its fill, 0002, was a soft mid brown loam from which a single flint flake was recovered.

0003 was a circular, flint walled well, approximately 2.2m in diameter. It consisted of a 0.4-5m thick flint and mortar wall (0004), leaving a central shaft about 1.2m wide. The inner face of the wall was roughly faced with mortar. The well was at least 2.2m deep from the reduced ground level and the base was not seen. The central fill of the shaft, 0005, was a fairly clean dark brown soil, with only rare traces of mortar, rubble or other debris.

Finds and environmental evidence

Sue Anderson

Finds were collected from two contexts. Pit fill 0002 produced one worked flint flake with some retouch, but it may be of either later prehistoric or post-medieval date (C. Pendleton, pers. comm.). Possible well fill 0005 contained one fragment of estuarine clay peg tile of 14th-15th century date and two fragments of medium/large mammal bone, one of which showed signs of gnawing by a canid.

Summary and Conclusion

The site has clearly seen a considerable level of activity in the past century, resulting in the removal of any topsoil levels and the probable truncation of the natural subsoil which lies immediately below the modern deposits. It is unclear how deep this truncation extended but it seems reasonable to assume that any shallow archaeological features may have been lost.

Those features that were observed were all substantial in size and depth, aiding their identification. Two of these however, 0001 and 0006, are probably associated with 19/20th century activity, with the flint flake being a residual find or waste from the gunflint industry.

The remaining feature, well 0003, is possibly of medieval date and was probably situated in the back yard or garden of a property fronting onto the medieval high street.

References

Tester, A., 2002, *Land off Coulson Lane, Brandon BRD 164*, SCCAS Report No. 2002/24.

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Appendix 1

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM



Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

COULSON LANE (2), BRANDON

Although this document is fundamental to the work of the specialist archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that certain of its requirements are likely to impinge upon the working practices of a general building contractor and may have financial implications, for example see paragraphs 2.3 & 4.3.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to develop on this site has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application F/2003/0446/FUL). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by development can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal area lies behind the medieval main street at Brandon, there is moderate potential for medieval backyard occupation deposits. An area *c.*20m to the south was evaluated and monitored in 2001, there was evidence of a low level of background prehistoric deposit and a Late Saxon ditch running parallel and close to Coulson Lane.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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 any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.
- 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 will be the excavation of service trenches down the access road and the excavation of building footing trenches. These, and the upcast soil, are to be observed whilst they are being excavated by the building contractor. Adequate time is to be allowed for archaeological recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following 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) - see 1.3 above.
- 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 ‘observing 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 the main service trenches in the access roadway and the footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of one and a half hours per 10 metres of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.

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.

Specification by: R D Carr

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

Date: 1 December 2003

Reference: /BrandonCoulsonLane12

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.