

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Eastgate Barns, Bury St Edmunds BSE 229

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2004
(Planning app. no. SE/03/3702/P)

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Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Tony Clark Developments Ltd and was monitored by R.D. Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

The excavation was carried out by a number of archaeological project assistants, James Rolfe and Jonathan Van Jennians, from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

Summary

Evaluation trenching on the land adjacent to Eastgate Barns, site of one of the monastic granges owned by the Abbey of St Edmund, revealed a field ditch dating to the 13th/14th century, which produced three sherds of Bury-type medieval coarseware. A second, post medieval, ditch produced a base sherd of iron-glazed blackware of 17th/18th century date.

SMR information

Planning application no.	SE/03/3702/P
Date of fieldwork:	May 2004
Grid Reference:	TL 8608 6475
Funding body:	Tony Clark Developments Ltd

1. Introduction

A series of trenches was excavated as part of the archaeological evaluation of land adjacent to Eastgate Barns, Bury St. Edmunds (Fig. 1) and referred to as area B in the brief and specification (Appendix 3). The work was a condition of consent on planning application SE/03/3702/P, a proposal for a mixed residential and commercial development. The site of the Eastgate Barns is also due for development but this comes under a separate application and was not subject to this phase of work. The aims of the evaluation were to establish whether any archaeological deposits existed in the area that would be affected by the proposed development, and to provide information so that any necessary strategy for their preservation could be planned. The evaluation was carried out during May 2004 by members of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service in accordance with a brief and specification by Conservation Officer, R.D. Carr (Appendix 3) and funded by the developer, Tony Clark Development Ltd.

The development area lies at TL 8608 6475, on a west facing slope that drops down to the River Lark (although the site is now separated from the river by the embankment that formerly carried the railway and now supports the A14). The site was in the recent past a caravan park but since the park's abandonment ((?) 10-20 years ago) it has become covered with young self-seeded trees. The solid geology is chalk and at the western end of the site this is close to the surface.

The site is alongside the Eastgate Barns (County Sites & Monuments Record site BSE130), location of one of the monastic granges owned by the Abbey of St Edmund and close to Eastgate Street, the main eastern route in and out of the town from at least the 16th century. The probable site of St Stephen's hospital, which lay on the north side of Eastgate Street, is within 60m and the site is generally on the fringes of the medieval town, where workshops and semi-industrial activity may have been expected.

2. Methodology

A documentary search, a requirement of the brief and specification, is in progress and a report of the findings will be appended to this report on its completion. An examination, however, of the readily available maps, 1st-3rd editions of the OS maps and Thomas Warren's 1742 map of Bury, was made prior to the evaluation. The maps show the outline of buildings associated with the barns in Area A, but Area B is always shown as an open field.

Twenty-one trenches were excavated with a 360° tracked machine fitted with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were positioned, in accordance with the brief and specification, to sample all the available areas of the site. Limitations on the positioning of the trenches included avoiding areas close to a number of large trees protected by preservation orders, a main drain and a footpath, which was maintained to allow public access across the site. The unprotected trees had been felled prior to the evaluation and heaped up in several places across the site.

The machine removed the modern overburden and garden soil to the top of the archaeological levels or surface of the glacial subsoil, all possible archaeological features were sampled by hand excavation and were recorded in section at 1:20. The positions of the trenches and features were recorded using a Total Station Theodolite (TST) and plotted against the Ordnance Survey grid. A written description of each trench was made, recording the depth to the archaeological horizon, the nature of the subsoil and the overlying soil profile. Black and white print and colour transparency photographs were also taken. All finds were collected and retained for analysis by specialists and the finds and the site records have been archived at the County Council Archaeological Store at Shire Hall, and with the county Sites and Monuments Record, under the site code BSE 229.

3. Results

1062sq.m of trenching were opened, sampling about 6.8% of the site. A table describing each trench has been included in the appendix (Appendix 1) and the findings are summarised below.

The site slopes down to the River Lark, which flows just beyond the western side of the site. The change in level is about 5m and there is a slight step in the slope which is described by the 35m contour line. This change is a reflection of the underlying geology where the chalk of the solid geology is close to the present ground surface above the contour, but below it an increasingly deepening layer of homogenous fine clayey silt covers the chalk. The silt is either a hill-wash colluvium or glacial till, which was between 50-70cm deep in the trenches on the western edge of the site.

Closely spaced linear marks ran across the chalk in trenches 2 and 17. These were narrow and V-shaped, and in profile look like ploughmarks. In plan however they were less regular with some merging and it was thought therefore that these are probably naturally occurring "solution" rivulets. Natural silt hollows occurred regularly over the surface of the chalk and two of these, 0019 and 0013, were sampled.

The trenching revealed little evidence of occupation activity, there appeared to be no 'background level' of finds within the soil, and few cut features, of which only one, ditch 0026, could be dated to the medieval period.

Three ditches were recorded, numbered 0003, 0026 and 0028 (Figs. 2 and 3).

0003 was a narrow ditch running north-south across the south end of Trench 1, it was 30cm deep and 95cm wide and infilled with a single layer of mid/pale brown silt. It was sampled with two sections and produced one sherd of pottery, a base sherd of iron-glazed blackware of 17th/18th century date. A narrow slot **0007** was also recorded in Trench 1, and was orientated at right-angles to 0003 but was thought to be a more recent feature.

0026 was recorded across the site and was revealed in Trenches 2, 3, 5, and 9; it was excavated in each of the trenches in the search for finds, but only the sections in Trenches 2 and 3 were drawn. The ditch was 120cm wide and 60cm deep and it was filled with a homogenous brown silty sand which appeared to be a consistent fill across the ditch's entire length. The fill was difficult to distinguish from the (?)colluvial silt but the cut of the ditch could be seen from just below the base of the topsoil. Animal bones, including cow and sheep, were found in the lengths of the ditch excavated in Trenches 9 and 2, while the section excavated in Trench 5 produced the only pottery, three sherds of Bury-type medieval coarseware which suggested a 13th/14th century date.

0028 was identified in Trenches 9, 10, 12, 15 and 18, running north-south across the site. The ditch had the appearance of a recent feature and it looked as if the infilling soil had been returned to the ditch soon after excavation. A small fragment of metalwork in the top of the fill supported the recent dating but was the only find. A sample of the ditch was excavated in Trench 12 using the machine; it had a steep sided V-shaped profile and was 2.5m wide and 1.8m deep, was backfilled with a mixture of loam and chalk and appeared to have been infilled in a single event.

Undated pits were recorded in Trenches 2 and 12. Pit **0015** was a circular and flat bottomed and filled with a loose chalk rubble; it was sectioned by hand excavation but produced no finds. Pit **0029** was at the western end of Trench 12; it was in excess of 2m deep and 3m wide and filled with an homogenous silt similar to the colluvium/glacial till which occurred at this end of the site. There were no indications in either pit to their date or possible function.

Finds and environmental evidence by Sue Anderson

Introduction

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

OP	Pottery		Bone		Shell		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0003	1	37					17/18th c.
0012			2	16			
0018			2	27			
0024	3	60	10	101			13/14th c.
0025			24	210	1	1	
Total	4	97	38	354	1	1	

Pottery

Four sherds of pottery were collected from two ditch fills. 0003 contained a base sherd of iron-glazed blackware of 17th/18th century date. Three sherds of Bury-type medieval coarseware, including a handle fragment in the finer ware associated with the second half of the medieval period (13th/14th century) were collected from 0024.

Animal bone and shell

Fragments of bone included a medium mammal pelvis (0012), a juvenile ?medium mammal long bone and large mammal rib fragment (0018), large mammal vertebrae fragments, sheep teeth and medium mammal rib and long bone fragments (0024), and a near-complete cow metatarsal, fragments of large mammal vertebrae and a ?medium mammal juvenile ulna (0025). The bone was in good condition and likely to be of medieval or later date.

One fragment of common land snail, *Helix aspersa*, was also collected from 0025.

Discussion

The pottery and animal bone from 0024 probably represent rubbish deposited in the medieval period to the rear of houses on Eastgate Street, and may indicate that this boundary ditch was relatively early. Bone from 0025 was from the northern end of the same ditch, and its presence is surprising given its distance from the street frontage. The small quantities from other features were from ditch fills in trenches which were relatively close to the street frontage, and again may simply be refuse deposited by the householders.

Summary and Conclusion

The evidence of the evaluation suggests that there has been little or no occupation activity within the development area and it has probably been a field since the medieval period. There is a concentration of features in the south-eastern corner of the site but these are either modern or undated and there is a general absence of artefactual material from this part or indeed anywhere on the site. 0026 is a field boundary ditch that dates to the 13th/14th century. The presence of pottery and food waste within its fill indicates that it has been used for rubbish disposal and the distribution of finds within the ditch reflects the proximity to the medieval properties on Eastgate Street at one end and Eastgate Barns Farm at the other. It is noteworthy that the orientation of ditch 0026 is in common with the boundaries that divided the Eastgate Street properties, but is not actually aligned with any. This suggests that the Eastgate Street property boundaries may have been altered or the plots sub-divided since the medieval period. Ditch 0003 is orientated

along the same alignment as the current eastern edge of the site and is probably an earlier expression of this boundary.

The evaluation has adequately recorded what archaeology occurs on this part of the site and it is felt that there is no requirement for further work.

David Gill

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.

**SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM**

Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation

Eastgate Barns, Bury St Edmunds

1. Background

- 1.1 Outline planning consent has been granted for industrial development [SE/01/2813] The planning consent contains a condition (no.28) requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work before development begins (Planning Policy Guidance 16, paragraph 30 condition). A further application has been made for mixed development [SE/03/3702/P], 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).
- 1.2 **An archaeological evaluation of the application area will be required as the first part of such a programme of archaeological work; decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work will be based upon the evaluation.**
- 1.3 The development area contains the site of Eastgate barns (County Sites & Monuments Register site BSE130), which are shown on the 18th century map of the area; they are referred to as being on the site of 'Holderness Barn'. The available evidence is that this is the site of the monastic grange owned by the Abbey of St Edmund; it is known to have existed from the 14th century, but is likely to be 11th century in origin. The remains of a domestic building which included some (?late medieval) timber framing exist within the probable site of the grange complex. There has been an archaeological evaluation in 1999 of an area immediately north of the development area which provided good circumstantial evidence for Medieval occupation spreading well beyond the area of the house. The remainder of the development area is close to the main eastern route in and out of the town (Eastgate Street), which is known to have been settled from at least the 16th century; and is within 60m of the probable site of St Stephen's hospital which lay on the N side of Eastgate Street. This is a general location on the fringes of the Medieval town where semi-industrial functions may be reasonably expected. There is demonstrated specific and general archaeological potential.
There is a high probability that development of the form proposed will affect archaeological deposits.
- 1.4 The developer has asked that the costing be divided between two areas of the site : 'A' and 'B' on figure 1.
- 1.5 The access route in the area of 40 Eastgate St is not available for evaluation at the moment. It is probable that a programme of work will be necessary before development as it has frontage onto the medieval street.

- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 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

2. **Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation**

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ* [at the discretion of the developer].
- 2.2 Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- 2.4 Establish whether waterlogged organic deposits are likely to be present in the proposal area.
- 2.5 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.
- 2.6 It is expected that the evaluation will proceed sequentially: the desk-based evaluation will precede the field evaluation (there is a possibility that some aspect of the site’s history may indicate limits to the extent of field evaluation required).

- 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 A: Desk-Based Assessment**

- 3.1 Consult the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), both the computerised record and any backup files.
- 3.2 Examine all the readily available cartographic sources (e.g. those available in the County Record Office). Record any evidence for archaeological sites (e.g. buildings, settlements, field names) and history of previous land uses. Where possible, photocopies or tracings should be included in the report.
- 3.3 Assess the potential for documentary research that would contribute to the archaeological investigation of the site. Prepare a brief report on the early history, likely extent and potential importance of the medieval site.
- 3.4 Ascertain whether there are other constraints on the site (e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest, County Wildlife Site, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Tree Preservation Order, etc).

4 **Specification B: Field Evaluation**

- 4.1 Examine the area for earthworks, e.g. banks, ponds, ditches. If present these are to be recorded in plan at 1:2500, with appropriate sections. A record should be made of the topographic setting of the site (e.g. slope, plateau, etc). The Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service must be consulted if earthworks are present and before proceeding to the excavation of any trial trenches.

- 4.2 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' at least 1.2m wide must be used. The trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 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.
- 4.7 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 P Murphy, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy and Wiltshire 1994) is available.
- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector.
- 4.10 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).
- 4.11 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.

- 4.12 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.
- 4.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 4.14 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.

5. **General Management**

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 The composition of the project staff must be detailed and agreed (this is to include any subcontractors).
- 5.3 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.
- 5.4 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 5.5 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.

6. **Report Requirements**

- 6.1 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).
- 6.2 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 6.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 6.4 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.
- 6.5 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.
- 6.6 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).
- 6.7 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.

- 6.8 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.
- 6.9 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.
- 6.10 County SMR sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 6.11 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.
- 6.12 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: R.D.Carr

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

Tel: 01284 352443

Date: April 23 2004

Reference:Easgatebarns.doc.

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.