

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

70, The Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall MNL 589

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2007
(Planning app. no. F/2005/0583/FUL)

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

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Summary

Archaeological monitoring during extension works at 70, The Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall identified two NW-SE aligned ditches, one of which may relate to an extensive Roman field system which lies to the NW of the site. The second ditch was stratigraphically later and may relate to a post-Roman field boundary. A single sherd of possible Roman pottery, an animal bone fragment and a flint flake were recovered from the fill of the earlier ditch.

SMR information

Planning application no.	F/2005/0853/FUL
Date of fieldwork:	11th June 2007
Grid Reference:	TL 6910 7775
Funding body:	Mr KF and Mrs PBJ Olsen
Oasis reference.	Suffolkc1-28973

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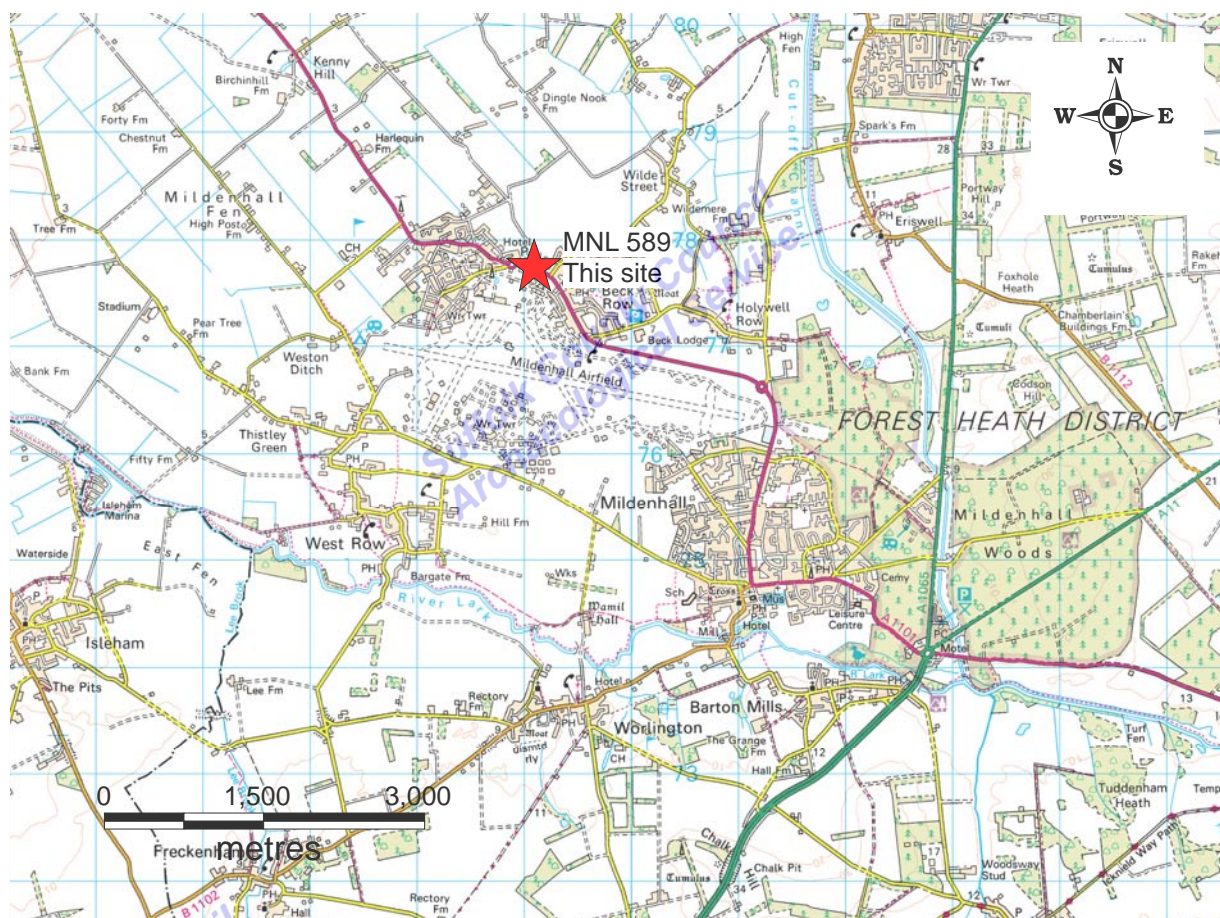
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Introduction

An archaeological monitoring was carried out during groundworks for an extension to 70, The Street, Beck Row, Mildenhall. The monitoring was a condition on the consent for planning application F/2005/0853/FUL and was carried out to a Brief and Specification (Appendix 1) issued by Dr Jess Tipper, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS), Conservation Team. The archaeological work was carried out by Jo Caruth and the finds report by Richenda Goffin, both of SCCAS, Field Team. The flint identification was provided by Dr Colin Pendleton

The site lies at grid ref: TL 6910 7775 at c.5m OD on the corner of Skeltons Drove (Fig. 1). Previous excavation work in the area, MNL 502 (Bales 2004), MNL 536 (Craven in prep) and MNL 570 (Craven 2007) has identified an extensive Roman field system 300m to the north-west of the site (Fig. 2).



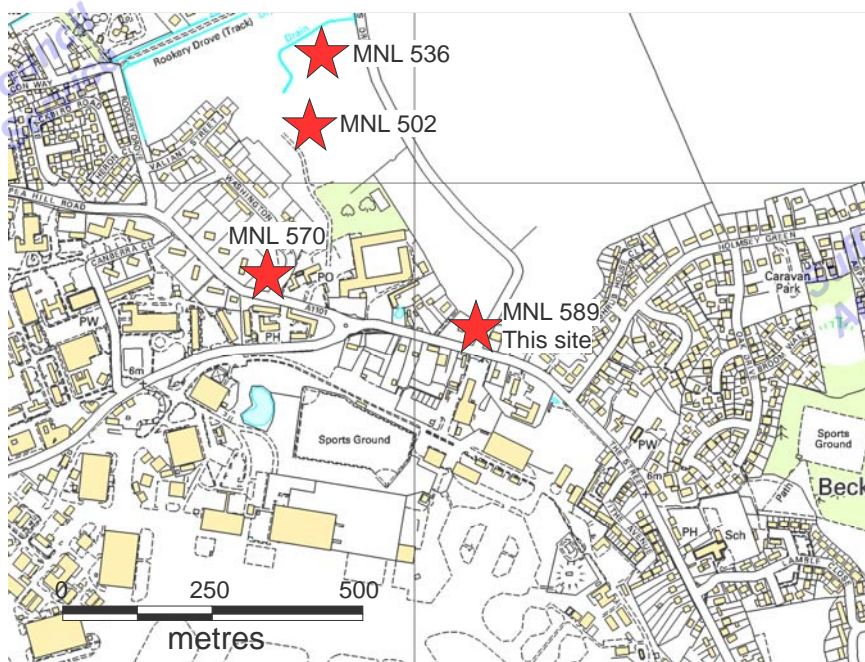
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Figure 1. Site location

Methodology

The mechanical excavation of the oversight within the building footprint and the footing trenches was monitored by a member of Suffolk County Council, Field Team, whilst it was carried out. Trench sections were cleaned by hand and recorded at 1:20. Black and white and digital photographs were taken during the work.

The site archive is held in the SCCAS archaeological stores at Bury St Edmunds and a copy of the report is lodged with the OASIS on-line database, reference Suffolkc1-28973.

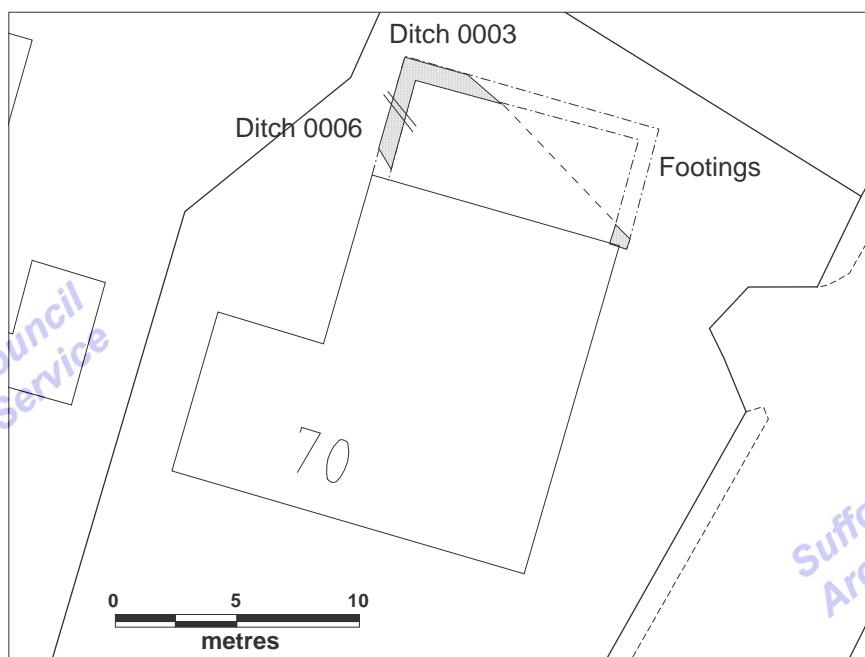


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Figure 2. Site in relation to known Roman field system

Results

This monitoring identified two NW-SE aligned ditches (Fig. 3). The earlier of these, 0002, was cut by the later, 0006, and filled with water-sorted sands under fine, possibly wind-blown deposits. A small rounded cut was visible at the base of the feature, but broad, gently sloped sides were visible beyond this suggesting a wide feature, possibly with other, not discernible, cuts (Fig. 4). 0006 was deeper than 0002 and despite a hand-dug trench through the base the bottom was not found. It had a main fill of even, coarse mid brown sand, suggesting that it may have been deliberately back-filled and it cut through all the layers associated with ditch 0003 (Fig. 4), indicating that it was probably significantly later in date.



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Figure 3. Location of ditches

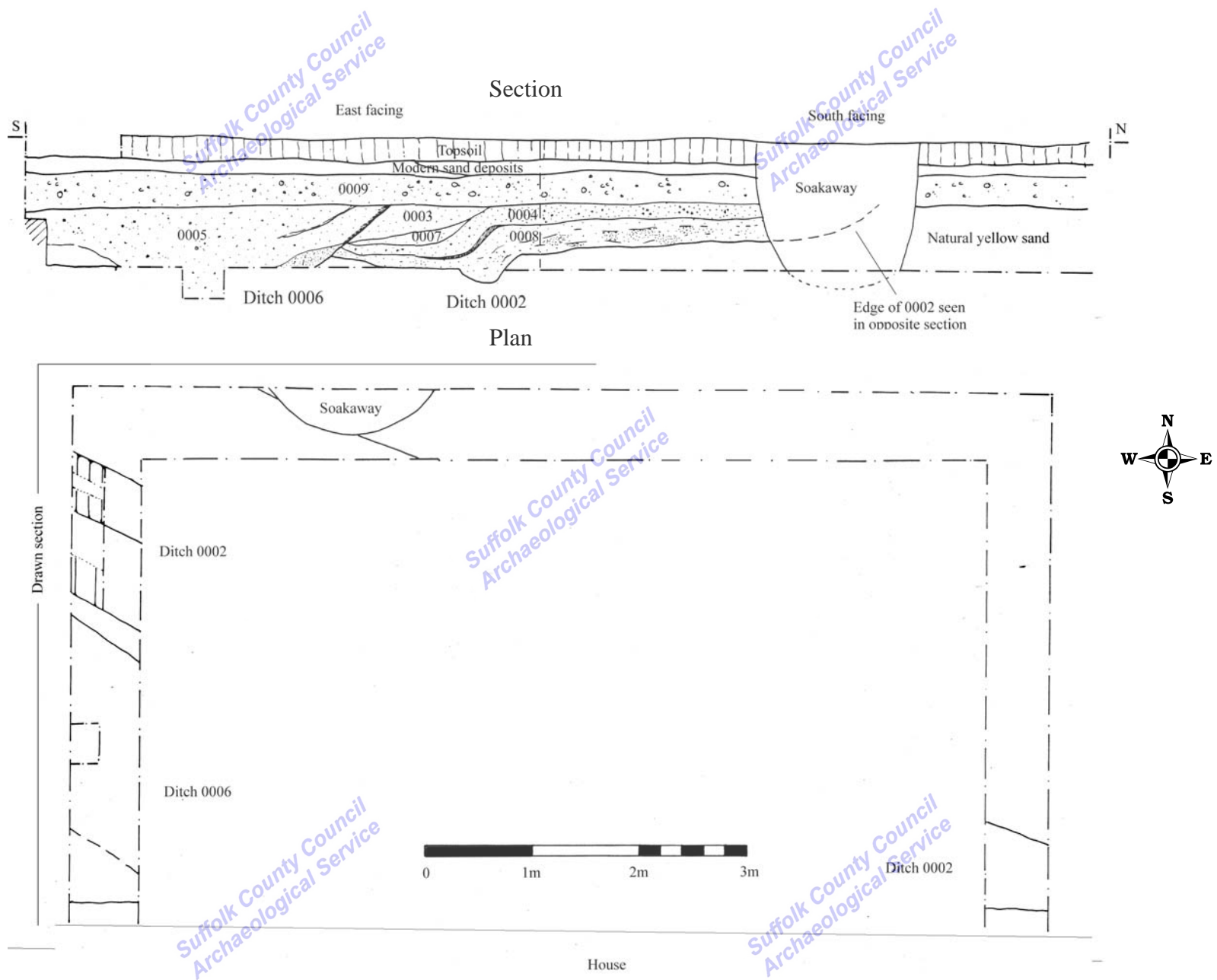


Figure 4. Plan and section

Context no	Feature no.	Identifier	Description
0001		US finds	Unstratified finds from the whole site (no finds actually recovered).
0002	0002	Ditch cut	Cut of NW-SE aligned ditch with rounded base. There is a defined basal cut with gently sloped extended sides. It was not possible to fully define this within the narrow trenches.
0003	0002?	Ditch fill/layer	Fine grey-brown sand overlying 0007. Possibly also wind deposited? A small fragment of pottery, animal bone and a flint flake were recovered from this.
0004	0002	Ditch fill	Red, iron panned sand overlying 0002, although separated from 0002 in one area by a thin band of dense dark brown sand.
0005	0006	Ditch fill	Even coarse brown sand fill of ditch 0006. This had some slightly yellower sand patches to the north side but was generally an even thick deposit. A sample hole through it failed to locate the base.
0006	0006	Ditch cut	Broad NW-SE aligned ditch, filled with 0005 and 0010. This cut all the fills and layers overlying 0003.
0007	0002?	Ditch fill/layer	Fine pale sand overlying 0004? Possible slump/overlying layer rather than primary or secondary fill. ?Possible windblow?
0008	0002	Ditch fill	Mottled water sorted pale brown and dark grey sand. Broad layer that extends beyond defined basal cut of 0003.
0009	0009	Layer	Layer of brown silty loam with chalk and stone inclusions. Present throughout the footing trenches and with a clear, sharp interface with the lower layers suggesting truncation. Some modern sand patches within this but it was overlain by modern layers and may be a ploughsoil pre-dating the current 1970s-80s house construction.
0010	0006	Ditch fill	Dense dark brown sand-loam underlying 0005. Bands of a similar deposit were seen at the edge of the feature and within 0005.
0011	0011	Layer	Mixed sand and gravel – modern.
0012	0012	Layer	Pale sand – modern.

Table 1. List of contexts

Three finds were recovered from upper ditch fill/layer 0003, a fragment of animal bone, a flint flake and a small sherd of pottery, probably Roman. It is likely that 0002 represents a Roman ditch and a continuation of the Roman field system identified to the north-west of this site. The water sorting of the lower ditch fills suggests that the area had periods of being wet whilst the ditch was open, and it may be that another of the frequent, large, now peat-filled, hollows seen on the adjacent sites, MNL 502, MNL 536 and MNL 570, lies close to this spot. The later ditch, 0006, although undated, was stratigraphically later than all the fills of 0002. Although it is not possible to be sure of the exact alignment of 0006 within such a narrow trench, it appears to be on the same line as a boundary shown on the west side of Lock's Lane (Fig. 5) and therefore may be a former field boundary, possibly with early origins, but being maintained into the medieval or post-medieval periods. It appears, however, to have already been lost by the time of 1886, 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (Fig. 5).

Finds and environmental evidence by Richenda Goffin

Introduction

Finds were collected from a single context, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		Flint		Animal bone		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0003	1	1	1	3	1	2	?Roman
Total	1	1	1	3	1	2	

Table 2. Finds quantities

Pottery

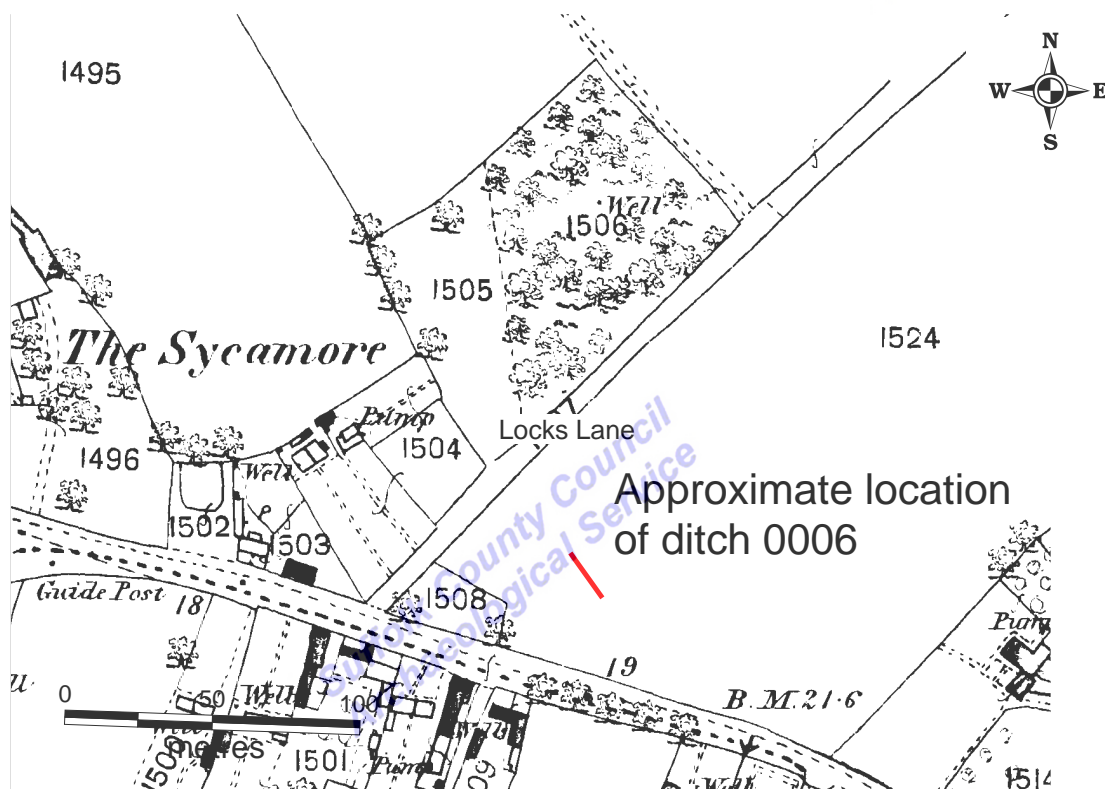
A single small body sherd was recovered from ditchfill 0003. It is made from a sandy fabric, and is thin-walled and slightly abraded. The pottery is most likely to be Roman.

Flint

A small flint flake which is patinated on one side was found in the fill 0003. It has vertical blade scars on the dorsal face and has been struck with a soft hammer. It is Mesolithic or Neolithic in date.

Animal bone

A small limb bone, probably from a bird, was also present in ditchfill 0003.



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Figure 5. 1886, 1st edition Ordnance Survey Map

Summary and Conclusion

The results of this monitoring provide further evidence of the large scale agricultural use of this part of north-west Suffolk during the Roman period. An extensive network of Roman ditches has been seen at sites MNL 502 (Bales 2004) and MNL 570 (Craven 2007) c. 300m to the north-west of this site and whilst the evidence from this small monitoring is limited there is good potential for the continuation of the field system into the fields between these sites.

Jo Caruth
July 2007

References

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Bales, N., 2004 | <i>A Roman Maltings at Beck Row, Mildenhall, Suffolk.</i> East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional paper no. 20. |
| Craven, J., in prep, | MNL 536, Archaeological Excavation Report, unpublished SCCAS report |
| Craven, J., 2007 | MNL 570, PIK housing, Interim Summary of Excavation results. |

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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.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to construct a single storey side extension at 70, The Street, Beck Row, IP28 8DH (TL 6910 7775), has been granted by Forest Heath District Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application F/2005/0853/FUL). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by development can be adequately recorded by continuous archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal lies within an area of high archaeological importance. It is adjacent to the site of Roman inhumation burials, which is recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record (MNL 243). In addition, excavations to the north of Smoke House Hotel defined extensive later prehistoric and Roman occupation deposits (MNL 502). The results of this work have been published as an East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper (Number 20) in 2004. The proposed works will cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 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 Before commencing work the project manager must carry out a risk assessment and liaise with the site owner, client and the Conservation Team of SCCAS (SCCAS/CT) in ensuring that all potential risks are minimised.

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 Roman burial remains on the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of the footing trenches for the extension, which measures 9.65 x 5.14m in area, and also any associated service trenches. These, and the upcast soil, are to be closely monitored during and after they have been 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 SCCAS/CT - see 1.3 above.

- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give SCCAS/CT 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 SCCAS/CT 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 archaeologist to allow archaeological monitoring of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity must be given to the contracted archaeologist to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.3 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.4 A photographic record of the work is to be made of any archaeological features, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies/high resolution digital images.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.6 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. 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, P.L. and Wiltshire, P.E.J., 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.
- 4.7 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with SCCAS/CT during the course of the monitoring).
- 4.8 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 three months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 The project manager must consult the SMR Officer to obtain an event number for the work. This number will be unique for each project or site and must be clearly marked on any documentation relating to the work.
- 5.3 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 and the archive.

- 5.4 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, including palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. 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).
- 5.5 An unbound copy of the report, clearly marked DRAFT, must be presented to SCCAS/CT for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated with the project sponsor and SCCAS/CT.
- 5.6 Following acceptance, two copies of the report should be submitted to SCCAS/CT. A single hard copy should be presented to the county SMR as well as a digital copy of the approved report.
- 5.7 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.
- 5.8 Where appropriate, a digital vector trench plan should be included with the report, which must be compatible with MapInfo GIS software, for integration in the County Sites and Monuments Record. AutoCAD files should be also exported and saved into a format that can be imported into MapInfo (for example, as a Drawing Interchange File or .dxf) or already transferred to .TAB files.
- 5.9 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.
- 5.10 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: Dr Jess Tipper

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Date: 4 May 2007

Reference: /70TheStreet-BeckRow2007

This brief and specification remains valid for six 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.