

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

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## Monitoring of the new stables at The Old Rectory, Stock Hill, Langham LGH 010

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2007  
(Planning app. no. 0659/07)

Suffolk County Council  
Archaeological Service

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## List of Contributors

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## Summary

Evidence of medieval occupation was found during the monitoring of the groundworks for a new stable block at the Old Rectory, Langham. A hearth, posthole and a narrow slot were recorded and the pottery date suggests that the site was occupied between the 12th and 14th century.

## SMR information

Planning application no.	0659/07
Date of fieldwork:	August 2007
Grid Reference:	TL 9790 6969
Funding body:	Mr. J. Botham, landowner
Oasis reference.	Suffolkc1-29529

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# 1. Introduction

The excavations for the floor slab of a new stable block at the Old Rectory, Langham were continuously monitored (Fig. 1). The monitoring was a condition on the consent of a planning application 0659/07 and was completed in accordance with a Brief and Specification issued by Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (Appendix 1). The work was completed during August 2007, funded by the landowner, Mr. J. Botham.

The site lies at TL 9790 6969 in the corner of a narrow field which is currently down to grass. The presence of large trees within the field suggests that it has been pasture land for at least 100 years and not subject to modern ploughing. The field slopes from the 55m contour at the north end to 50m at the south.

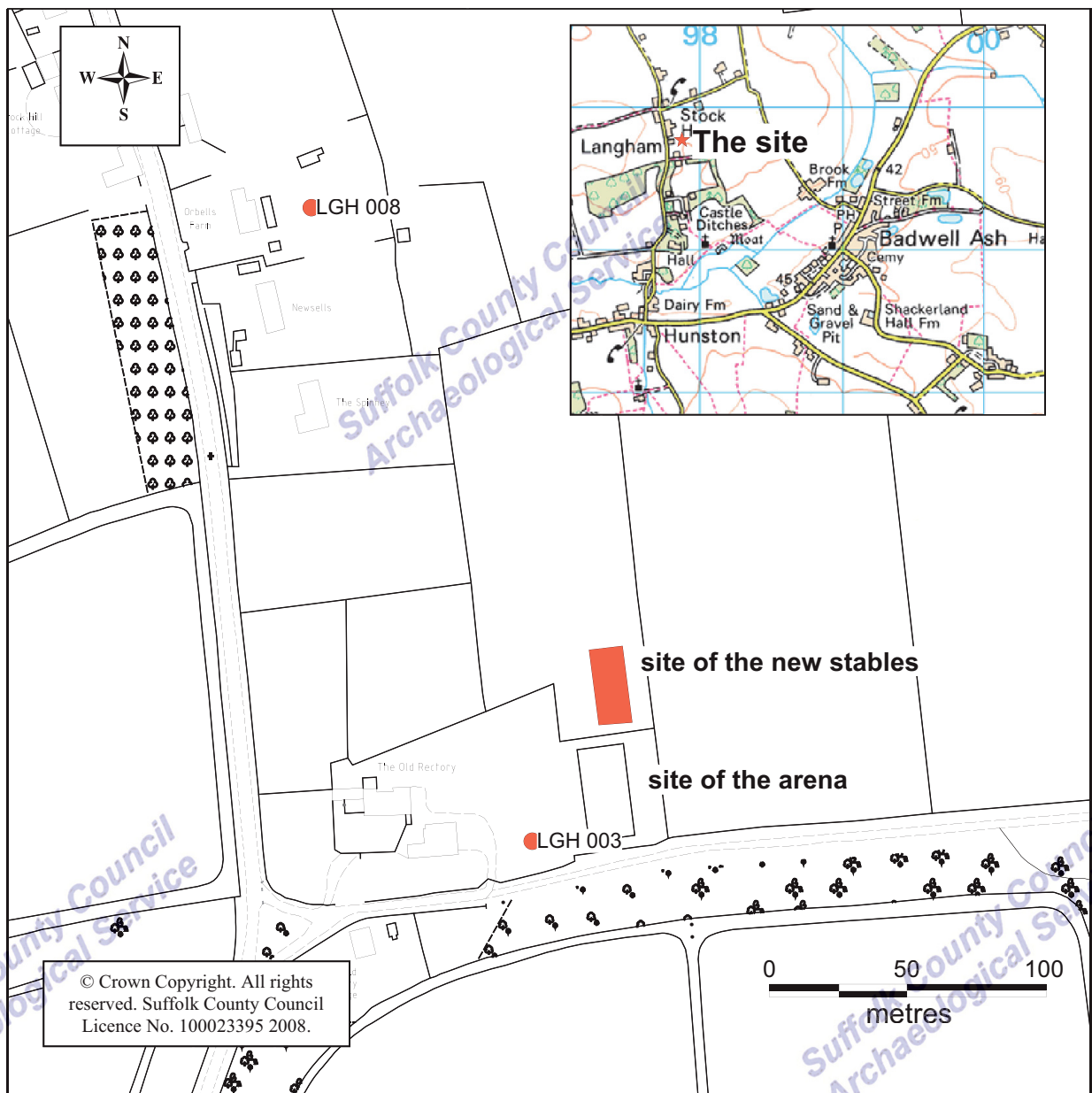


Figure 1. Site location plan

The archaeological potential for the site lies in its proximity (within 60m) to the find spot of "some Roman coins" (LGH 003). Workmen found the coins in antiquity and the event was described in The Victorian County History (1911). The site of a possible moat (LGH 008) lies 200m to the north and there is a possibility that the development would disturb Roman and medieval occupation deposits.

## 2. Methodology

The development involved stripping the entire footprint of the stable, an area of 185sqm. The depth of excavation was determined by the need for the stable floor to be level with an arena that had been created next to the site on a former tennis court. As the site sloped this meant that the excavation became progressively deeper as it extended north, with almost no soil removed from the site at its southern end. The excavation was undertaken by machine fitted with a toothless bucket; where deep enough to impact on the archaeological levels the stripping was under the supervision of the monitoring archaeologist and a metal detector was used to scan the machined surface and the spoil. All features exposed by the machine were sampled by hand excavation, a plan of the site was drawn at 1:50, and sections at 1:20. All finds were retained for analysis and the site data has been input onto an MS Access database.

The finds and site records have been archived in the small and main stores of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds and with the County Sites and Monuments Record under the parish code LGH 010. An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-29529) and a digital copy of the report submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>).

## 3. Results

A 600mm depth of soil covered the archaeological levels, this was made up of 300mm of topsoil over a similar depth of fine clay silt. The silt was flecked throughout with charcoal and contained tiny fragments of burnt clay and pottery. Because of the depth of soil, archaeological features were exposed only at the north end of the site where the excavations cut into the slope of the ground.

The remains of a hearth 0004 were recorded alongside the north edge of the site. The hearth consisted of an elongated patch of burnt clay surrounded by a dispersed spread of charcoal. The clay included some burnt flint within its make up but otherwise no structure remained. To the east of the hearth and aligned with it was a shallow slot 0005. The slot was 300mm and less than 100mm deep, it was filled with a fine silt similar to the silt layer that overlay and masked the features. The north end terminated in a butt end but with the southern extent was lost within a silt filled hollow 0002. The slot was excavated with a narrow section but failed to produce any finds. Two shallow postholes, 0006 and 0003, were also excavated. These were again filled with a pale silt similar to the slot and neither produced any finds. The position of the postholes coincided with the end of the slot and lay equidistant from it. This and the alignment between the slot and hearth suggested an association between all of the features.

A small assemblage of pottery was collected from a shallow silt filled hollow, 0002. The pottery was in small abraded fragments and dated to 12th-14th century.

Metal detecting of the site produced no finds beyond relatively modern material, which was discarded.

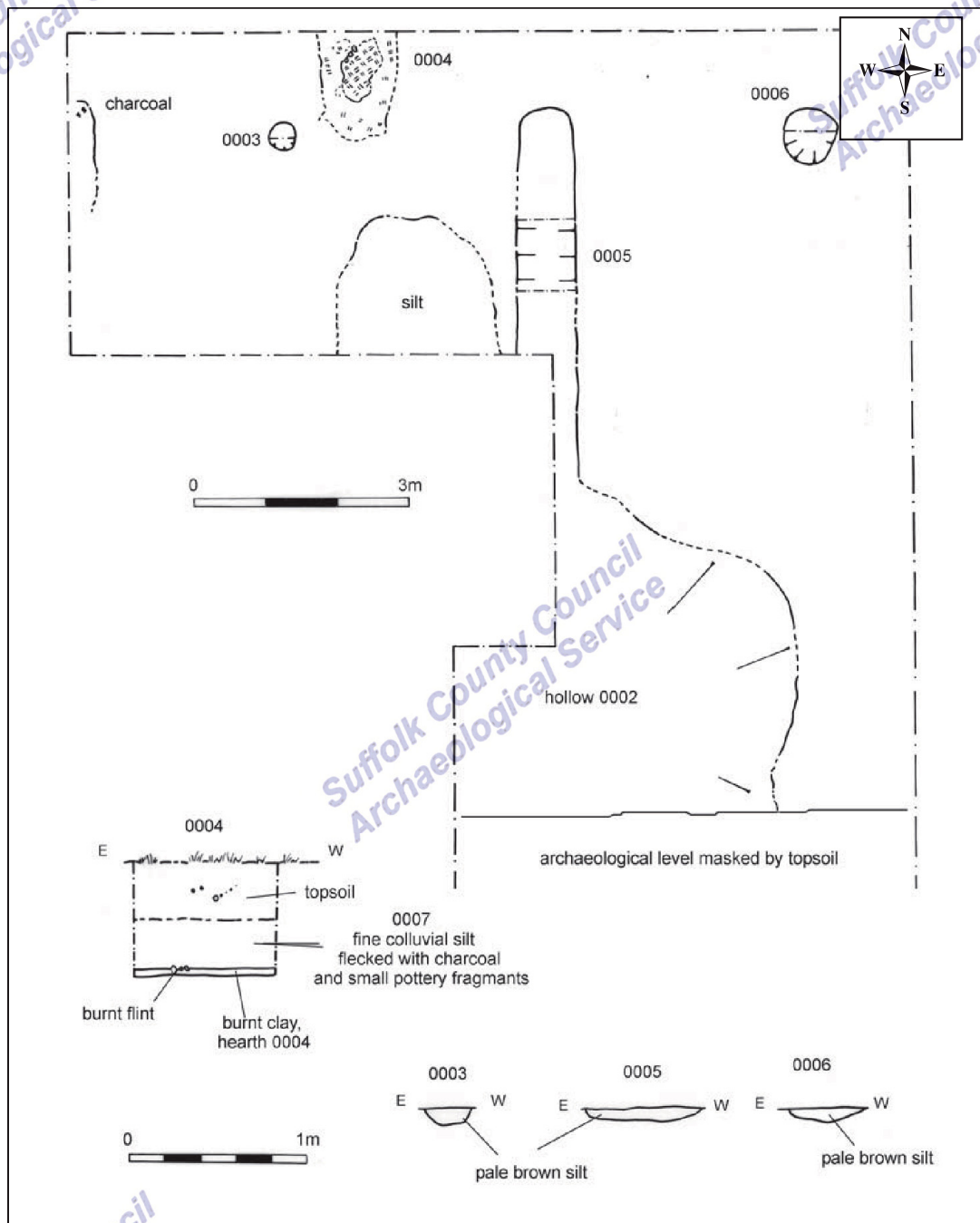


Figure 2. Site plan and sections of excavated features

## The Finds by Richenda Goffin

### Introduction

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

OP	Pottery		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	
0002	6	9	L12th-14th C
Total	6	9	

## Pottery

Six fragments of pottery were recovered from the monitoring (0.009kg). All were small body sherds, two of which were extremely abraded. Three fragments are made from reduced, sandy fabrics, one of which contains sparse calcareous inclusions. These are hard to date as they are so small and featureless, but are likely to be Early medieval (11th-12th century). Two slightly larger fragments are made from a softer, pale orange medium sandy fabric, containing inclusions such as sparse clay pellets, occasional shell and flint. These can be included under the broad classification of Medieval Coarsewares, although their precise origin cannot be established. Similar wares were produced at kilnsites at Great Horkesley and Mile End near Colchester (Drury and Petchey 1975) and Sible Hedingham, also in Essex, but it is also possible that the pottery was made in Suffolk. Such coarsewares date to the Late 12th-14th century, but the presence of pottery dating to the earlier part of this date range may suggest a 12th century date for the deposition of the ceramics.

## 5. Discussion

The limited size of the excavation means that it is difficult to draw many conclusions about the previous activity that is represented here. The hearth and postholes are something beyond a transient occupation and indicate a former timber structure, possibly a building, on the site. The pottery date suggests that this occurred at some time between the 12th and 14th century and possibly part of a medieval landscape that may have been centred on the putative moated site LGH 008 which lies 200m to the north of the excavation. The features align with the current field edges suggesting that these boundaries (and the footpath that fields front onto) are of some antiquity.

Although the site does not appear to have been ploughed in the recent past the silt layer that underlies the topsoil and masked the features is the result of former cultivation. The greater depth of soil over the site is the result of soil movement exacerbated by regular ploughing with the slope. The plough has also truncated the archaeological levels so that only the deeper features remain, the presence of charcoal, burnt clay and fragmentary pottery within the overlying silt is indicative that upper part of the archaeological deposit has been lost.

There was no indication of Roman occupation on the site, Roman pottery has been found in the adjacent field c. 1.2km from the site; this suggests that the coins found prior to 1904 were probably part of an isolated hoard. It is interesting to note that the coins are also on the line of the footpath.

David Gill  
Field Team, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service  
January 2008

## References

Drury, P. J., and Petchey, M. R., 1975, Medieval potteries at Mile End and Great Horkesley, near Colchester in *Essex Archaeol. Hist.* 7, 33-60.



## SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

***Brief and Specification for Metal-detecting Survey and Archaeological Monitoring of Development*****THE OLD RECTORY, STOCK HILL, LANGHAM**

***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 erect a stable block and arena on land at The Old Rectory, Stock Hill, Langham (TL 9790 6969), has been granted by Mid Suffolk District Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application 0659/07). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by development can be adequately recorded by metal-detector survey, prior to development, and continuous archaeological monitoring during development.

1.2 This application lies in an area of archaeological importance recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record, situated close to the known find spot of Roman coins (LGH 003). There is high potential for Roman occupation archaeological deposits to be disturbed by any development. The proposed works would 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 of Roman occupation of the site.

2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is topsoil stripping for the stable block and access road centre and menage, believed to be c. 100mm in depth (max.); the building will be erected with footings 300mm wide (min.) x 450mm deep (min.). The stable block measures c. 41 x 6m in area. These, and the upcast soil, are to be closely monitored during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor. The arena, located to the south of the building and measuring 36 x 25m, is on the site of an earlier tennis court and will be constructed without further ground surface. 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 A non-ferrous metal-detecting survey is to be undertaken prior to development. This should allow for total coverage of the impact area.

**If positive results are produced by this survey in areas where groundworks (drainage and other services trenches) will impact on sensitive archaeological deposits, further archaeological mitigation may be required prior to development.**

4.2 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Council Conservation Team archaeologist and the contracted archaeologist to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.

4.3 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. 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 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.
- 4.6 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with SCCAS/CT during the course of the monitoring).
- 4.9 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 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.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 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.
- 5.8 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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Tel. : 01284 352197

Date: 15 May 2007

Reference: /OldRectory-Langham2007

**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.**