

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Remembrance Playing Fields, Brandon BRD 204

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007
(Planning app. no. Pre-planning)

J.A.Craven
Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

© September 2007

Lucy Robinson, County Director of Environment and Transport
Endeavour House, Russel Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Contents

List of Figures
List of Tables
List of Contributors
Acknowledgements
Summary
SMR information

1. Introduction
2. Methodology
3. Results
4. Discussion
5. Conclusion and Recommendations

List of Figures

1. Site location plan
2. Trench location plan

List of Tables

1. Trench list

List of Contributors

All Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service unless otherwise stated.

John Craven Project Officer
John Duffy Assistant Project Officer

Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields and was monitored by R.D.Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

The excavation was carried out by John Craven and Fiona Gamble from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was directed by John Craven, and managed by Andrew Tester, who also provided advice during the production of the report. The production of digital site plans was carried out by John Duffy and Fiona Gamble.

Summary

An archaeological evaluation consisting of a series of test pits at Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields, in advance of the use of the site for allotments, did not locate any archaeological deposits. The trenching showed that the natural subsoil and potential archaeological levels lay at a depth of at least 1.2m, sealed beneath substantial deposits of peat that have developed due to the sites location within the floodplain of the adjacent Little Ouse River.

SMR information

Planning application no.	Pre-planning
Date of fieldwork:	4th September 2007
Grid Reference:	TL 776866
Funding body:	Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields
Oasis reference	Suffolkc1-31141

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of the creation of allotments at Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields. The work was carried out to assess the archaeological potential of the area in advance of any planning application at the request of R.D. Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team). The work was funded by the developer, Brandon Remembrance Playing Fields.

The site, which lies immediately to the south of the Little Ouse River at a height of 3-3.5m OD, is currently an area of open scrubland forming part of the river floodplain, although it has formerly been used as a cricket pitch (Fig. 1). The site was of interest as it also lay immediately to the west of the Middle Saxon settlement excavated at BRD 018 and therefore the development of the site had the potential to disturb evidence of peripheral Saxon occupation.

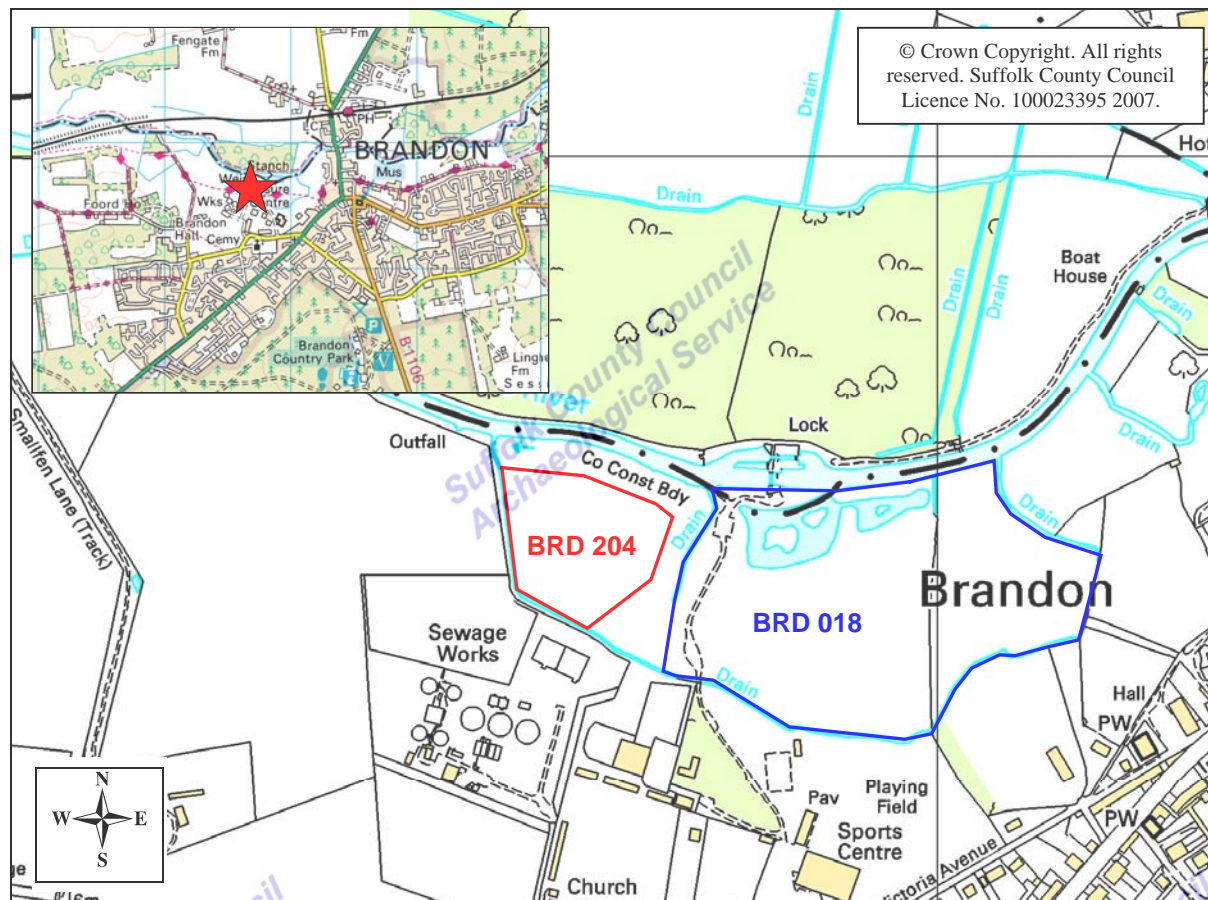


Figure 1. Site location plan

2. Methodology

Using a mechanical excavator equipped with a ditching bucket under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist, the initial plan was to excavate a series of linear trenches across the site. This methodology was abandoned after the subsoil levels in Trench 01 were seen to quickly descend below the water table and any likely depth of disturbance that would be caused by the sites proposed change of use to allotments. Instead a further twelve test pits were then excavated across the site in an attempt to establish the depth of the natural subsoil with a view to placing further linear trenching if subsoil levels were seen to rise.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-31141) and a digital copy of the report submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>).

The site archive is kept in the main store of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds under SMR No. BRD 204.

3. Results

Trench 01, which measured 15.5m long, was aligned south-west to north-east at a height of 3.6m OD along a slight natural slope where groundlevels began to slightly rise from the floodplain to the north.

At the south-west end a 0.4m thick layer of topsoil/peat overlaid a 0.3m thick deposit of dark grey silt/sands. This in turn overlaid a natural subsoil of waterlogged mid grey/orange mottled sands. These sand deposits, and the associated watertable were seen to slope downwards to the north-east. At the centre of the trench the dark grey sand layer lay at a depth of 0.8m sealed under an increasingly thick layer of peat. Although the water table, which corresponded to the underlying mid grey/orange mottled sand natural subsoil, was no longer apparent the trench was still infilling with water from its higher position to the south-west and so the trench was not excavated any deeper. By the north-east end of the trench the sand layer was still not visible when the trench was abandoned at a depth of 0.9m.

Subsequent trenches consisted of test pits, listed in Table 1 below, which were generally abandoned when it became clear that the peat deposits were over 1.2m thick.

Trench No	Description	Depth of trench	Depth of water table	Ground-level OD
02	0.4m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.4m	1.2m	3.55m
03	0.4m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.2m	1.1m	3.5m
04	0.5m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.7m	1.2m	3.45m
05	0.5m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.4m	1.1m	3.3m
06	0.7m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.3m	1.2m	3.3m
07	0.3m modern deposits overlying 0.6m of topsoil/peat, in turn overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.4m	1.3m	3.48m
08	0.2m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.2m	1m	3.25m
09	0.3m modern deposits overlying 1.7m of peat. Dark grey/black silt/sand subsoil seen at base of trench.	2m	1.2m	3.35m
10	0.4m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.2m	1m	3.1m
11	0.4m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.4m	1m	3.1m
12	0.4m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.2m	0.6m	3.12m
13	0.4m modern topsoil/peat overlying peat. Subsoil not seen.	1.6m	0.8m	2.95m

Table 1. Trench list

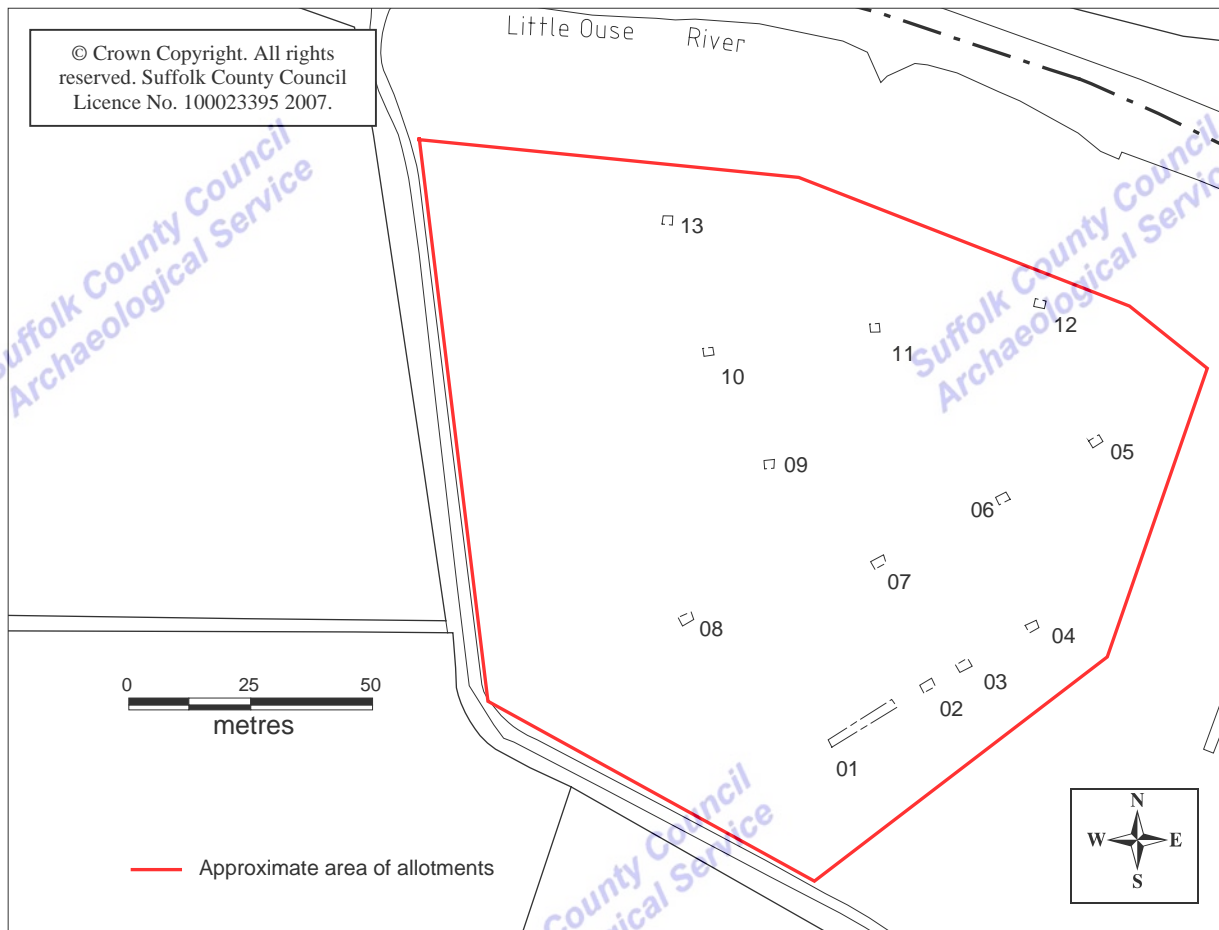


Figure 2. Trench location plan

4. Discussion

The trenching has shown that the natural subsoil and any potential archaeological levels generally lay at a depth of at least 1.2m, sealed beneath substantial deposits of peat. This peat, which contained material such as reed and sedge, indicates that the site has in the past normally been an area of frequently waterlogged marshy land immediately adjacent to the river.

Trench 01, in the south-western part of the site furthest from the river, lay at a point where ground levels, and therefore subsoil levels, could be seen to rise slightly from the rivers floodplain. No archaeological deposits were apparent within the small area of subsoil observed and it is thought unlikely that deposits will exist elsewhere as the subsoil is well below the watertable. It is worth noting however that recent weather conditions throughout the summer of 2007 meant that the river level was high and that the watertable may also have been higher than usual.

Any peripheral occupation related to the Middle Saxon settlement may instead lie on the slightly higher ground to the south of the current site

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The proposed usage of the site for allotments is unlikely to cause deep disturbance and will not have any affect upon potential archaeological deposits, which will be at least 1.2m below groundlevel across the majority of the site. Therefore no further archaeological work is thought necessary.

J.A.Craven
Project Officer
Field Team, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
September 2007

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.