

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

5 The Street, Holywell Row, Mildenhall MNL 592

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007
(Planning app. no. F/2007/0282/FUL)

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Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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

John Craven Project Officer

Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Murfet Developments Ltd 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. Digital site plans were produced by Fiona Gamble and inked sections by Gemma Adams.

Summary

An archaeological evaluation in advance of housing development at 5 The Street, Holywell Row, Mildenhall did not identify any archaeological deposits, with trenching showing a typical profile of the natural fen edge topography with the subsoil sealed at depth below windblown sand deposits.

SMR information

Planning application no.	F/2007/0282/FUL
Date of fieldwork:	6th September 2007
Grid Reference:	TL 70617740
Funding body:	Murfet Developments Ltd
Oasis reference	Suffolkc1-31155

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of housing development at 5 The Street, Holywell Row, Mildenhall. 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/2007/0282/FUL. The work was funded by the developer, Murfet Developments Ltd.

The proposed development of five houses lay at TL 7061 7740, at a height of 6m OD (Fig. 1). The site, an area of 1930sqm, consisted of the existing property and its garden and was of potential interest as it was situated within the dense band of prehistoric and Roman activity that lies along the edge of the fens. Prehistoric material has been found at several sites 450-500m to the north-east, with Mesolithic and Bronze Age flints at MNL 203, Bronze Age pottery and flint at MNL 126 and prehistoric flint at MNL 357 and MNL 358. Iron Age and Roman finds scatters have been found c.250m away in the field to the west, MNL 168, and medieval material at MNL 071, 100m to the north-west. In addition the site also lies 450m to the west of the medieval moated site of Aspal Hall, MNL 083.

Recent archaeological work in advance of housing development at MNL 579, 400m to the west, has identified evidence of scattered prehistoric activity (Craven 2007), while at MNL 580, 50m to the north, a range of undated pits were observed during monitoring of building works (Craven in prep). The site was also evaluated at the same time as the adjacent site of the former Street Farm, MNL 591 (Craven 2007), which identified a substantial undated ditch aligned east to west on the north edge of the site and other undated features

The development therefore had the potential to affect multi-period archaeological deposits. A programme of archaeological evaluation was required to assess this potential and to establish any archaeological implications for the site development.

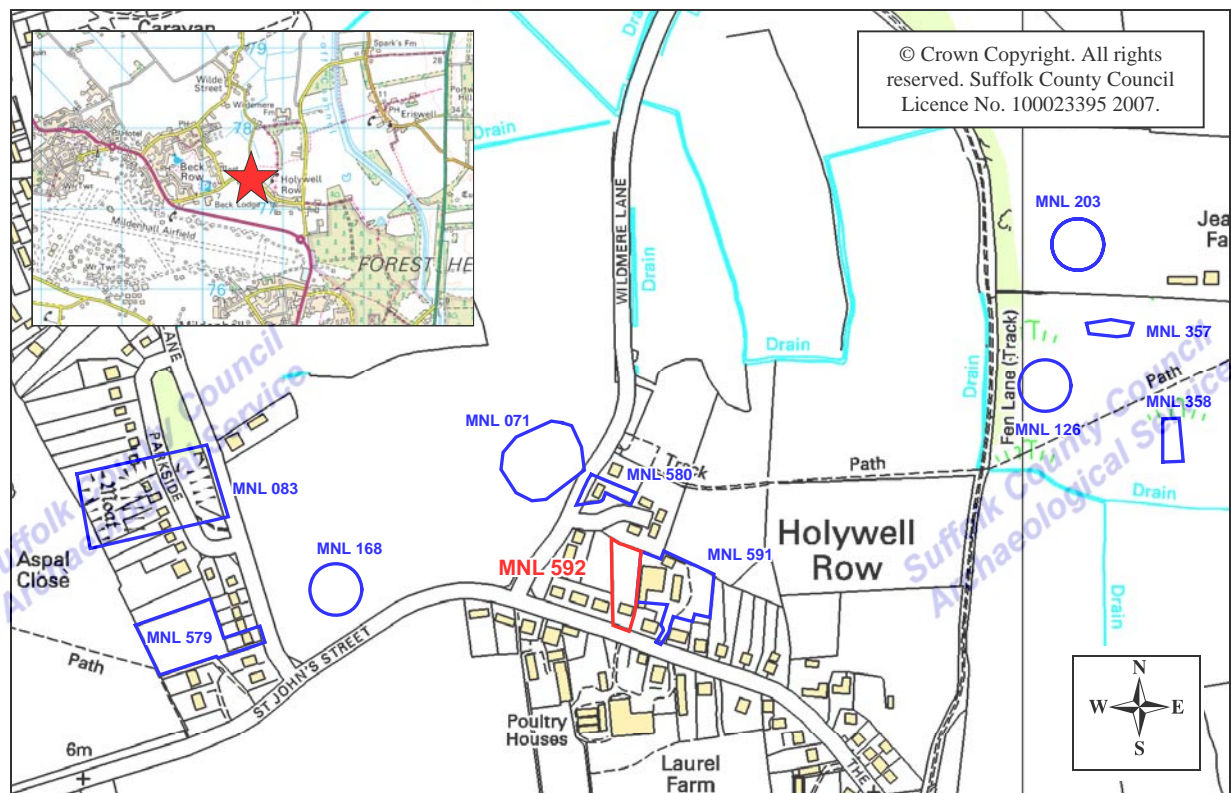


Figure 1. Site location plan

2. Methodology

The total development area of 1930sqm was not fully available for evaluation due to the presence of the existing house and garage. Two trenches, totalling 39.5m in length, were placed within the rear garden, an area of c.1150 sqm. Excavated by a mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.6m ditching bucket under the supervision of an archaeologist, this amounted to 63 sqm or 5.5 % of the available area.

Both trenches were excavated to the top of the natural subsoil surface, a mix of yellow and orange sands. Upcast spoil was examined for finds and context 0001 reserved for unstratified finds.

The site was planned with an RTK GPS with trench profiles being drawn by hand at a scale of 1:20. Digital colour photographs were taken of all stages of the fieldwork, and are included in the archive. Inked copies of section drawings have been made.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-31155) 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. MNL 592.

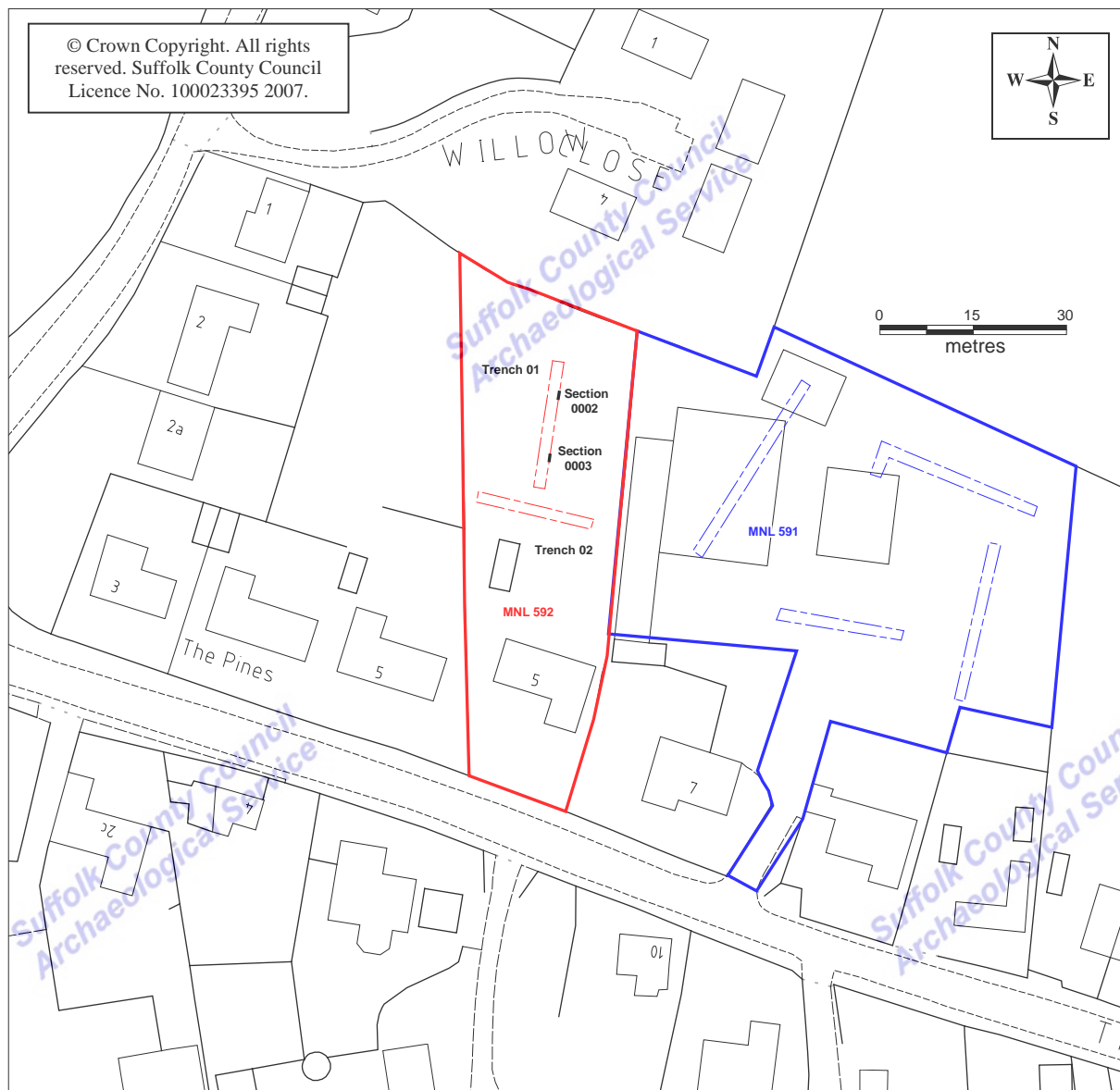


Figure 2. Site plan

3. Results

Trench 01 was 20.5m long and aligned north to south. A 0.5m thick topsoil was seen to overlie a series of layers of sand, which in turn overlaid the natural subsoil of pale yellow sands which was seen at a depth of 1m-1.25m, rising gradually towards the south. No archaeological features were seen within the trench. Two baulk sections 0002 and 0003 were recorded.

Trench 02 was 19m long and aligned east to west. The 0.4m thick topsoil overlaid a layer of mixed yellow/brown sands varying in thickness from 0.3m to the east and 0.1m to the west. The natural subsoil of mid orange/yellow sands, heavily affected by modern disturbance in the eastern half of the trench, was seen at a depth of 0.5-0.7m. No archaeological features were seen within the trench.

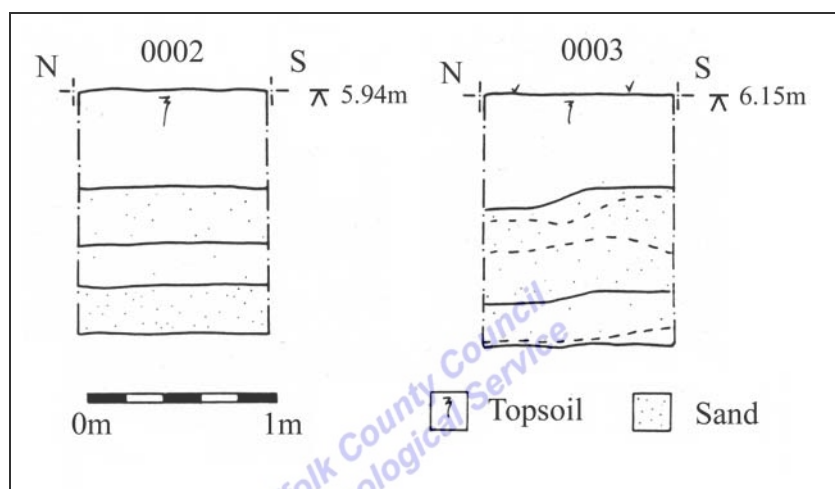


Figure 3. Trench profiles

4. Discussion

The trenches showed that the natural subsoil was well preserved, lying at depth below a series of layers of sand which have built up via natural processes such as windblow. This is a typical profile of the natural fen edge topography which consists of dunes and layers of windblown sand interspersed with natural peat hollows.

No unstratified material was recovered during excavation of the trenches and there was no indication of any archaeological deposits. Trenching however was limited towards the rear of the plot and the area around the house and fronting onto the road was not investigated.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The site was devoid of any archaeological deposits, although the subsoil surface was well preserved. In the northern part of the plot development is unlikely to have a significant impact upon the deep lying subsoil. In the southern, uninvestigated, part of the site, subsoil levels were rising and potential archaeological deposits may be more vulnerable to development. However the existing house will have already caused substantial disturbance.

When combined with the limited results from the adjacent evaluation, MNL 591, the site is clearly of minimal or no interest and no further archaeological work is thought necessary.

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

References

- Craven, J.A., 2007, *Land adjacent 1 Aspal Lane, Beck Row, Mildenhall, MNL 579*. SCCAS Report No. 2007/30
- Craven, J.A., in prep, *5 Wildmere Lane, Holywell Row, Mildenhall, MNL 580*. SCCAS.
- Craven, J.A., 2007, *Street Farm, The Street, Holywell Row, Mildenhall, MNL 591*. SCCAS Report No. 2007/128.

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.

Appendix 1

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation

5 THE STREET, HOLYWELL ROW

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety and other responsibilities, see paragraphs 1.7 & 1.8.

This is the brief for the first part of a programme of archaeological work. There is likely to be a requirement for additional work, this will be the subject of another brief.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning consent [F/2007/0282/FUL] has been given for seven dwellings with access at 5 The Street, Holywell Row.
- 1.2 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). **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 results of the evaluation and will be the subject of additional briefs.**
- 1.3 The application area lies in the settlement core close to known medieval deposits and within an area classed as Fen Edge, with potential for Roman and prehistoric occupation.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, 2003.
- 1.6 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.

- 1.7 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with this office before execution.

- 1.8 The responsibility for identifying any restraints on field-work (e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c.) rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such restraints or imply that the target area is freely available.

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 natural soil processes. Define the potential for existing damage to archaeological deposits. Define the potential for colluvial/alluvial deposits, their impact and potential to mask any archaeological deposit. Define the potential for artificial soil deposits and their impact on any archaeological deposit.

- 2.4 Establish the potential for waterlogged organic deposits in the proposal area. Define the location and level of such deposits and their vulnerability to damage by development where this is defined.

- 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 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.

2.7 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.

2.8 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.

2.9 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

3. **Specification: Field Evaluation**

3.1 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover a minimum 5% by area of the development area 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' must be used. The trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins.

3.2 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.

3.3 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.

3.4 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.

3.5 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.

- 3.6 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 J Heathcote, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy and Wiltshire 1994) is available.
- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 3.9 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).
- 3.10 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.
“Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England” English Heritage and the Church of England 2005 provides advice and defines a level of practice which should be followed whatever the likely belief of the buried individuals.
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 3.13 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.

4. General Management

- 4.1 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.

- 4.2 The composition of the project staff must be detailed and agreed (this is to include any subcontractors).
- 4.3 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.
- 4.4 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 4.5 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.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 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).
- 5.2 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 5.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 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.
- 5.6 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).
- 5.7 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.

- 5.8 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.
- 5.9 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.
- 5.10 County SMR sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.11 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:

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

Tel: 01284 352441

Date: 13 August 2007

Reference: /5 The Street, Holywell Row

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.