

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

VICTORIA STREET / FIELD STILE ROAD

SOUTHWOLD

SMR Ref. SWD 046; OASIS ref. suffolkc1-34296

SCCAS Report No. 2007/205

Summary: An archaeological evaluation was undertaken during Autumn 2007 to investigate the potential for buried archaeology within an area of land between Victoria Street and Field Stile Road, Southwold (NGR ref. TM 5063 7638), in advance of a housing development. A series of nine linear trenches were machine excavated to the depth of the undisturbed natural subsoil across the site but no significant archaeological features of any period were revealed. The natural subsoil, which comprised a mottled yellow and brown sand, lay at a depth of $c.$ 0.5m except for in the northwest corner which had been raised by $c.$ 0.8m through the deposition of imported material. This evaluation is recorded on the County SMR under the reference SWD 046. The evaluation was undertaken by the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service who were commissioned and funded by the developers, Hopkins Homes.



Figure 1: Location Plan

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1. Introduction

A residential development is proposed for a plot of land situated between Victoria Street and Field Stile Road, Southwold (application no. W/3682/14). The site lies within the area of medieval Southwold, defined in the County Sites and Monuments Record as an archaeological site of regional importance, and is a mere 60m west of the medieval parish church of St Edmund. It is $c.$ 300m to the northwest of the modern centre of Southwold and lies just to the northeast of the only access road in

and out of the town. The National Grid Reference for its approximate centre of the site is TM 5063 7638.

The proposed works pose a significant threat to any buried deposits that may be present and consequently a condition was placed upon the application requiring an agreed programme of archaeological works be put in place prior to commencement of any groundwork. To detail the work required a Brief and Specification was produced by Keith Wade of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team (See Appendix).

The first stage of the programme of works was to undertake a Desk-Based Assessment of the site (Specification A in the Brief and Specification). This was carried out by J. Rolfe of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS Report No. 2007/016) who concluded that the site was in a favourable topographic location, being high ground overlooking marshes and the sea, with the potential for archaeological activity from the prehistoric period onwards. The nearby location of the parish church was thought to indicate that this area of the town was likely to have been a focus for activity during the medieval period and that it was remains of this period that were most likely to be encountered within the proposed development area.

Based on its results and as recommended in the Desk-Based Assessment the next phase of the programme of works was field evaluation. This was to comprise a series of mechanically excavated test trenches at intervals across the site (Specification B in the Brief and Specification) in order to establish the full archaeological implications of the proposed development with the results being used to assess the need for any further work.

The archaeological field evaluation was commissioned and funded by the developer, Hopkins Homes Limited, and was undertaken by the Field Projects Team of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service. The archive is lodged with the SCCAS at its Bury St. Edmunds office under the Sites and Monuments Record reference, SWD 046. A summary of this project has also been entered onto OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the reference suffolkc1-34296.

2. Methodology

A series of trial trenches were machine excavated down to the level of the natural subsoil (or the top of any significant archaeological deposits had they been encountered) using 360° tracked excavator fitted with a 2.2m wide toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were excavated in accordance with an approved plan as published in the Desk-Based Assessment (SCCAS Report 2007/016).

The machining of the trenches was closely observed throughout in order to identify archaeological features and deposits and to recover any artefacts that may be revealed. Excavation continued until the undisturbed natural subsoil was encountered, the exposed surface of which was then examined for cut features or deposits. Any features/deposits noted would then be sampled through hand excavation in order to

determine their depth and shape and to recover datable artefacts but in the event this was not required.

Following excavation the revealed stratigraphy was recorded, the trench locations were plotted and their depths were noted. Upon completion of the fieldwork the trenches were backfilled. A photographic record of the work undertaken was also compiled.

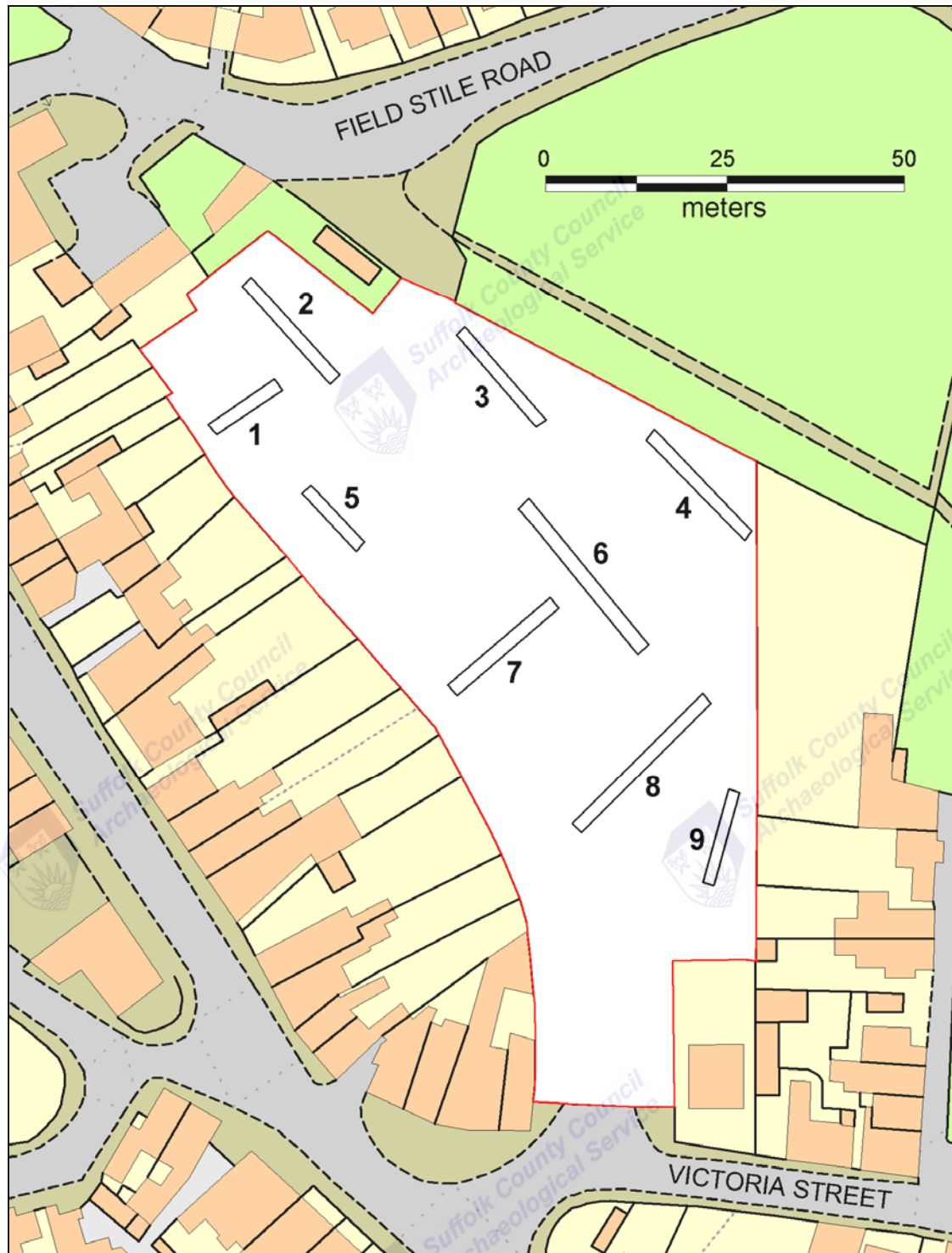


Figure 2: Trench Locations

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3. Results

Nine trenches totalling c. 165m in length were excavated across the area of the proposed development; see figure 2 for a plan of their locations. The trenching was undertaken during two separate visits; trenches 1 to 4 were excavated on the 16th August 2007, prior to the demolition of the redundant warehouse building that occupied the site. The remaining trenches were excavated on the 11th November 2007, after demolition of the warehouse building and the removal of all concrete hardstanding.

The results from all trenches were broadly similar with a stratigraphy comprising the former hardstanding and sub-base which was laid either directly on to a buried topsoil, which in turn overlay the natural subsoil, or onto a deposit of made ground which overlay the buried topsoil. The natural subsoil comprised dark orange sand and gravel with occasional dark brown mottling. See table below for individual trench details:

<u>Trench No(s).</u>	<u>Depth to natural subsoil</u>	<u>Description of stratigraphy</u>
1 and 2	1.4m	Concrete hardstanding directly on to a 0.8m thick layer of made ground comprising crushed concrete and brick rubble containing much mid to late 20 th century debris. This in turn overlay a 0.6m thick deposit of rich dark brown soil which lay directly on the natural subsoil.
3 and 4	0.95m	Concrete hardstanding and sub-base of hardcore to a depth of 0.35m over a 0.6m thick deposit of rich dark brown soil which lay directly on the natural subsoil.
5	0.85m	Crushed remains of concrete hardstanding directly on to a 0.3m thick layer of made ground comprising crushed concrete and brick rubble containing much mid to late 20 th century debris which in turn overlay a 0.55m thick deposit of rich dark brown soil which lay directly on the natural subsoil.
6, 7, 8 and 9	0.5m	Crushed remains of concrete hardstanding and sub-base of hardcore to a depth of 0.2m over a 0.3m thick deposit of brown sandy soil which lay directly on the natural subsoil.

No significant features of any period were noted in any of the excavated trenches. The machining was closely observed throughout in order to maximise the recovery finds but no artefacts were identified.

5. Discussion

Despite lying within the limits of the medieval town of Southwold and in close proximity to the church no archaeological remains or artefacts of any period were identified. There was no evidence of large-scale disturbance or truncation of the natural subsoil which could have removed any earlier remains and the results must

therefore be taken as a true reflection of archaeological activity on this site. It therefore seems likely that this area was formerly a green space kept open, undeveloped and clear of debris from the earliest inception of the town.

The thick deposits of made ground noted in trenches 1, 2 and 5 are related to the now demolished warehouse and had been used to extend the area of level ground for the use by lorries accessing the warehouse and dates from the mid to late 20th century. The rich dark topsoil noted in the trenches is likely to be a result of the area's former use as allotments as indicated on the 2nd and 3rd Edition 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey maps.

6. Recommendations for Future Work

Based on the results of the evaluation it would seem unlikely that any significant archaeological deposits are under threat from the proposed development in the area trenched. The area immediately adjacent Victoria Street was not fully investigated and consequently it may be prudent to monitor any groundwork in this area, services permitting.

M. Sommers
Suffolk County Council, Field Projects Team

19th November 2007

PLATES



Plate I: Trench 2 showing thick deposit of made ground over buried topsoil



Plate II: Trench 2



Plate III: Trench 4



Plate IV: Trench 9

APPENDIX

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation

VICTORIA STREET/FIELD STILE ROAD, SOUTHWOLD

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

1. Background

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

- 1.1 Planning consent for a new store, café, public square and 34 dwellings on the former Adnams Distribution Centre, Victoria Street/Field Stile Road, Southwold, has been granted, conditional upon the implementation of an agreed programme of archaeological works taking place prior to development (W/3682/14).
- 1.2 **An archaeological evaluation of the application area is 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 proposal lies within the area of medieval Southwold, defined in the County Sites and Monuments Record as an archaeological site of regional importance, and will involve extensive ground disturbance.
- 1.4 Southwold was a small hamlet in 1086 (9 households recorded and no church), rendering 25,000 herring to the Abbot of St Edmunds. The first chapel was built in the reign of King John (1199-1216) and the right to hold a market was granted to the Abbot of St Edmunds in 1222. During the 13th century the town grew rapidly and Richard de Clare obtained a licence to convert his house into a castle in 1260.

In 1659 a Great Fire destroyed the entire town (including 238 houses).
- 1.5 The 'Adnams' site forms a substantial urban block (5,000 square metres) to the immediate west of St Edmunds Church, with at least one medieval street frontage (the northern boundary onto Tibby's Green).
- 1.6 There is, therefore, a high potential for medieval settlement evidence throughout the site. There has been so little opportunity for archaeological observation work in the town, that no prior knowledge of the likely nature or depth of deposits is currently available.
- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 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.

- 1.9 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.
- 1.10 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.
- 1.11 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 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.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.
- 2.5 Evaluation is to proceed sequentially: the desk-based evaluation will precede the field evaluation. If field-walking is proposed it will precede trenching. The results of the desk-based work and any field-walking are to be used to inform the trenching design. This sequence will only be varied if benefit to the evaluation can be demonstrated.
- 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 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 historic or archaeological sites (e.g. buildings, settlements, field names) and history of previous land uses. Where permitted by the Record Office make either digital photographs, photocopies or traced copies of the document for inclusion in the report.

3.3 Assess the potential for documentary research that would contribute to the archaeological investigation of the site.

4 **Specification B: Field Evaluation**

4.1 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' must be used. The trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins. (A suggested layout of trenches is attached.)

4.2 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.

4.3 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.

4.4 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.

4.5 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.

4.6 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.

- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 4.9 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).
- 4.10 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.
- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 4.13 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: Keith Wade

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Tel: 01284 352440

Date: 13 December 2006

Reference: /Adnams, Victoria St_Field Stile Rd

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.