

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Archers Farm, Little Waldingfield

WFL 021

Planning App. No B/04/00689/FUL

Oasis ID No. suffolkc1-34700

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2007



Robert Atfield
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service
© November 2007

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Suffolk County Council
Archaeological Service

Lucy Robinson, County Director of Environment and Transport
Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX

SCCAS Report No. 2006/225

SMR information

Planning application B/04/00689/FUL

County Historic Environment Record WFL 021

Date of fieldwork: 14-11-2006, 17-11-2006 and 02-03-2007

Grid Reference: TL 9298 4456

Commissioning body: Wincer Kievenaar

Oasis reference Suffolkc1-34700

Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out Archers Farm, Little Waldingfield as a condition of planning consent. The development includes the conversion of former agricultural buildings, a new dwelling, on the site of the former farmhouse and extensive landscape work. The site contains a range of former farm buildings associated with Archers Farmhouse. The farmhouse was virtually destroyed by fire a few years ago, but was a Grade II listed building of eighteenth century date or earlier with later additions (LBS No. 278126). Archaeologically significant concentrations of pottery fragments and metal objects have been located within a half kilometre radius of the site; the items cover a wide range of dates from prehistoric to the medieval period. The site was visited on three occasions, in order to examine all phases of ground disturbance. This included footings for the restoration of a timber-framed farm building, an extensive area of ground reduction on the site of the former farmhouse, pond excavation, access road provision and the excavation of garage footings. However, the site only produced evidence of post-medieval activity, mainly from the eighteenth to twentieth centuries, probably associated with the more recent working life of the farm.

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Methodology
- 3.0 Results
- 4.0 Conclusions
- 5.0 Acknowledgements
- 6.0 Bibliography
- 7.0 Appendices
 - Appendix 1 Brief and Specification

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location
- Fig. 2 Site in the context of The County Sites and Monuments Record
- Fig. 3 First Edition of The Ordnance Survey Map (c. 1880s)
- Fig. 4 Plan of areas of ground disturbance

1. 0 Introduction

The Archers Farm development includes the conversion of former agricultural buildings, construction of a new dwelling on the site of the former farmhouse and extensive landscape work. The farmhouse, a Grade II listed building of eighteenth century date or earlier (LBS No. 278126), was virtually destroyed by fire a few years ago. It was a timber-framed and plastered house with a nineteenth century wing at the rear. The earlier, main part of the building was thatched, while the later wing had a slate roof. The last standing remains of the structure had been demolished and cleared by the time of the first monitoring visit. The development is centred on NGR TL 930 446 on the crest of a hill at a height of around 70m OD. The site overlooks the village of Little Waldingfield, which is situated in the valley, less than a kilometre to the Northwest (see Figure 1.). Surrounded by arable farmland, the site lies within an area of heavy clay geology, but has an established and enriched loamy topsoil. Although now a sparsely populated location, archaeologically significant concentrations of pottery fragments and metal objects have been located within a radius of half a kilometre of the site. Most of these finds were located as a result of metal detecting and represent a wide range of dates from the prehistoric to the medieval period. Multi-period finds scatters are recorded in the County Historic Environment Record (formerly the Sites and Monuments Record) at WFL 015 to the south of the site and WFL 008 to the Northwest (see Figure 2.)

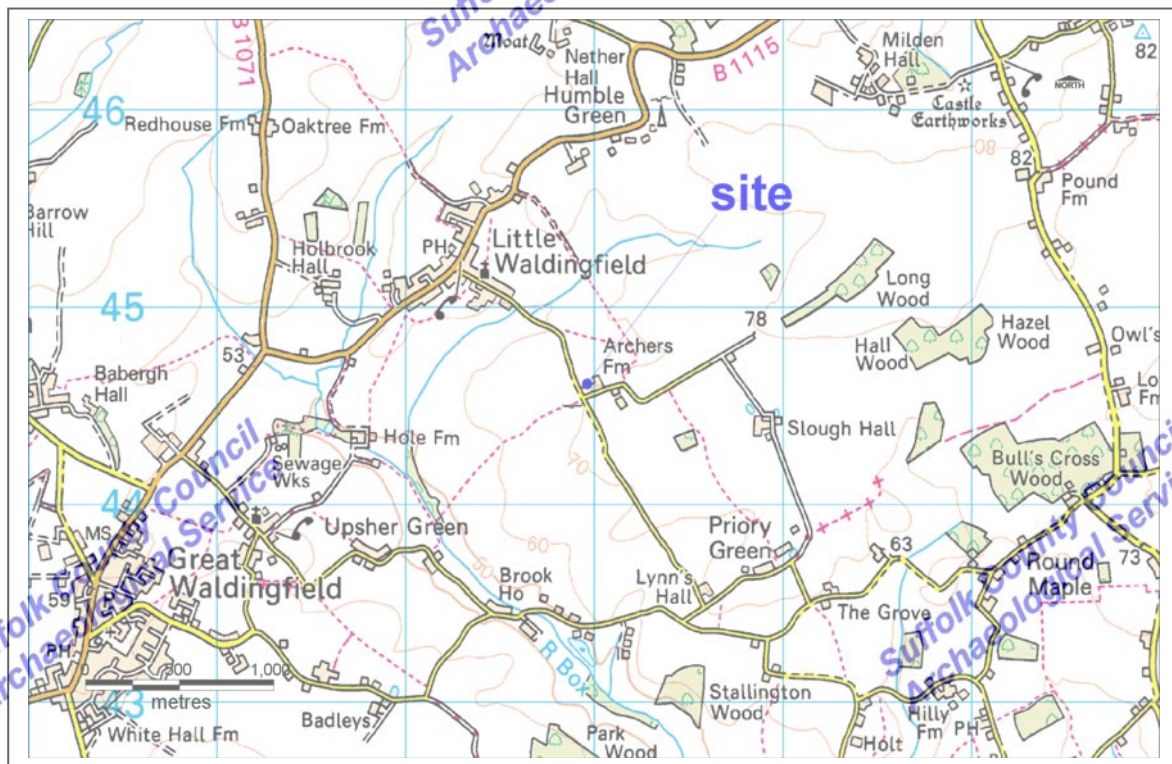


Figure 1. Site location

(© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2007)

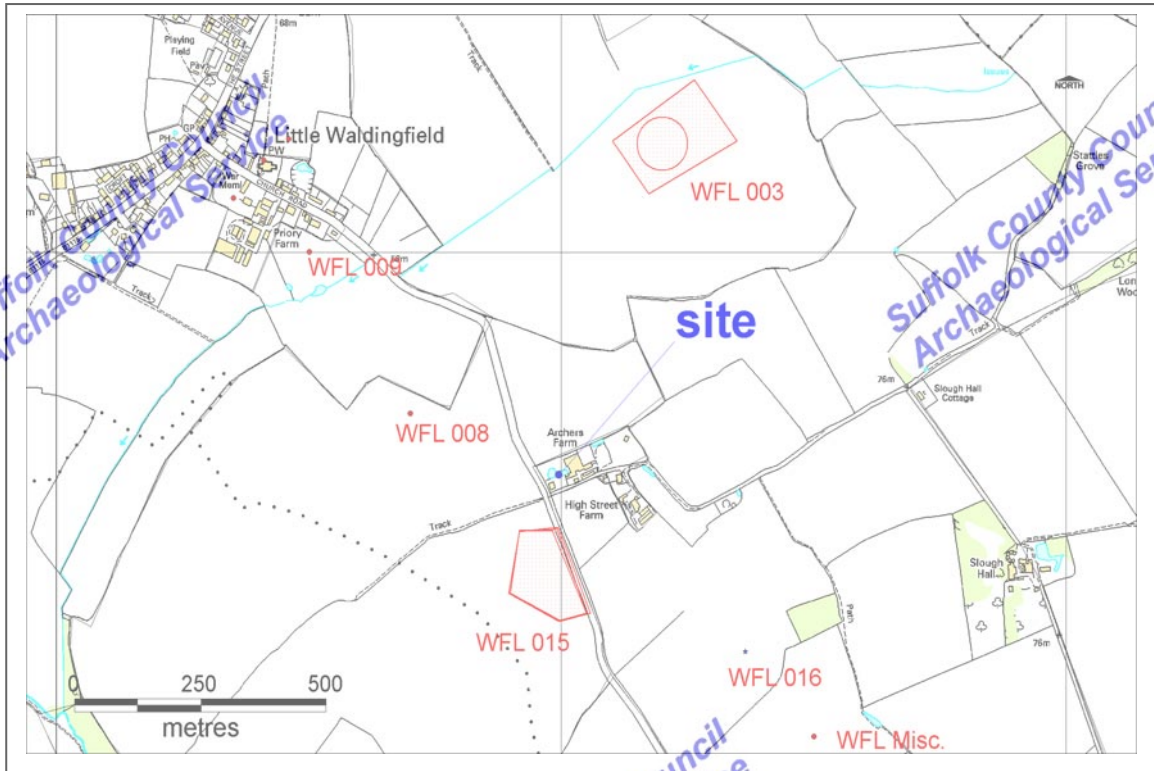


Figure 2. Site within the context of the County Historic Environment Record
 (© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2007)

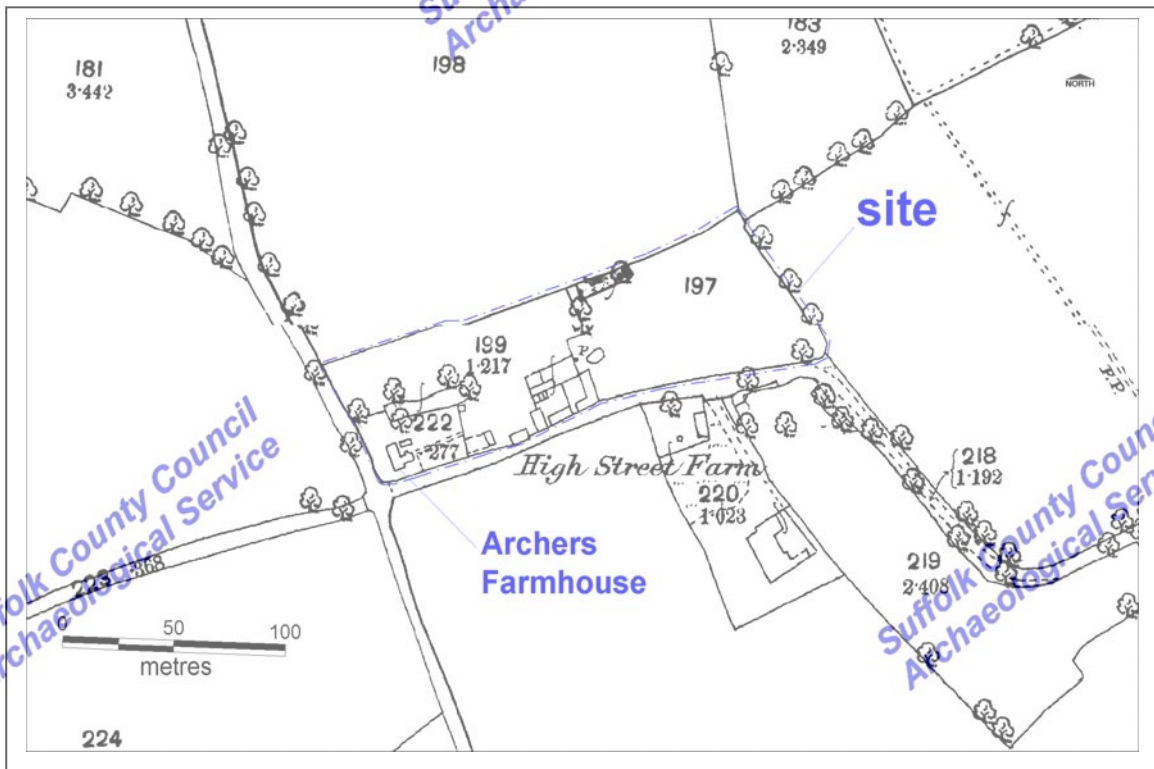


Figure 3. The site on the c.1880 OS
 (© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2007)

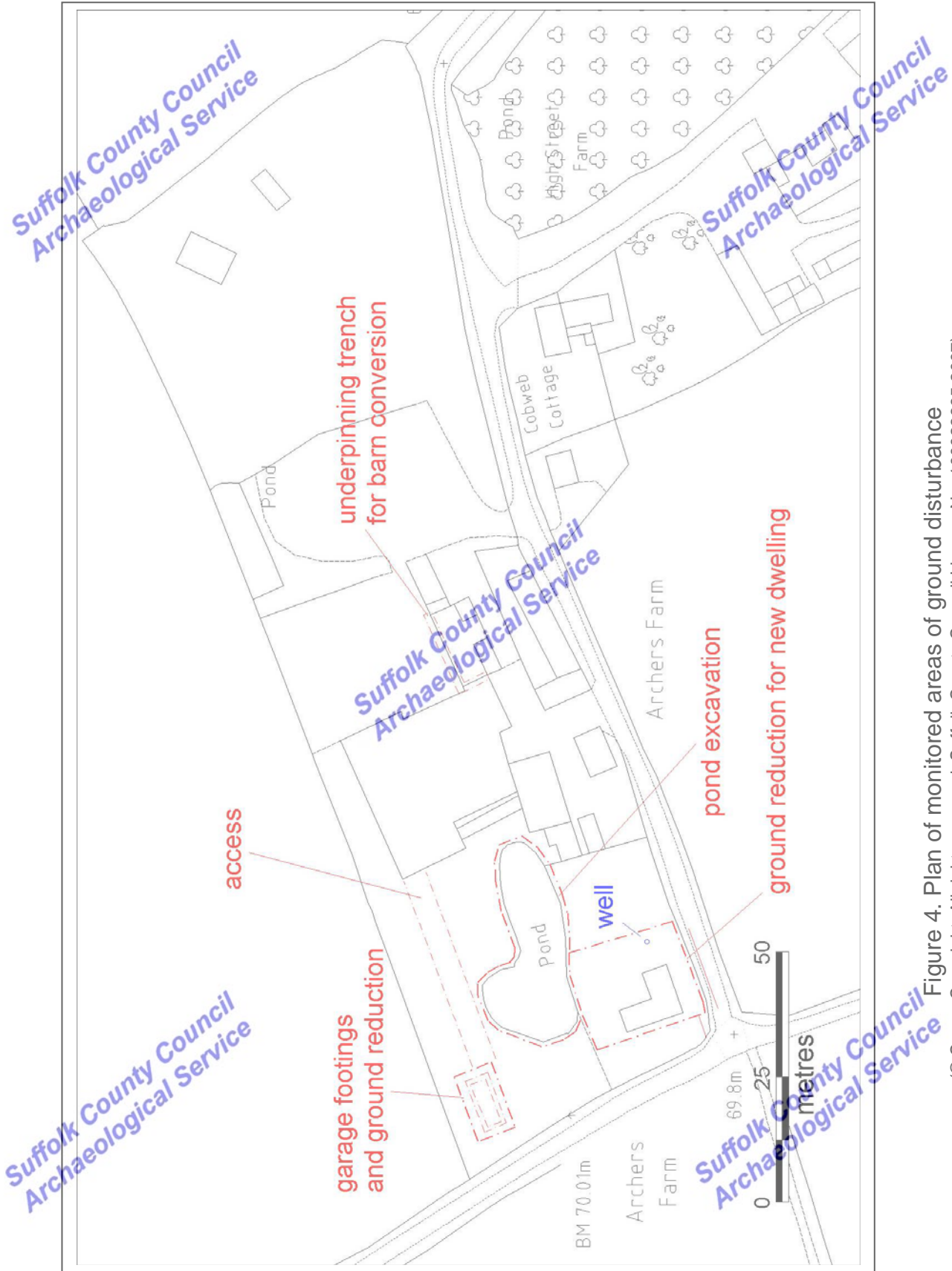


Figure 4. Plan of monitored areas of ground disturbance
 (© Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Suffolk County Council Licence No. 100023395 2007)

2.0 Methodology

Judith Plouviez of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team produced the brief and specification for the archaeological monitoring (see Appendix 1.). The site was visited on three occasions, in order to examine all phases of ground disturbance. This included footings dug during the restoration of a timber-framed farm building; an extensive area of ground reduction on the site of the former farmhouse, pond excavation, access road provision and the excavation of garage footings.

Some areas of the site had ground levels reduced by a mechanical digger, equipped with a ditching bucket (see Figure 4.). Reduction depths varied from between 0.20m to 0.35m, these depths were frequently suitable for determining the existence of archaeological features. The details of all ground works were recorded onto measured sketch plans, which were prepared on site. The extent of the area of ground reduction, features, approximate levels and soil profiles were plotted and described. Digital photographs were also taken of all aspects of the site including the faces of any exposed sections. A thorough search was also made of the upcast and disturbed soil with the aim of retrieving datable archaeological artefactual material. Conditions were generally good in terms of visibility, but some areas of the site had become waterlogged by the time of the final visit.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (suffolkc1-34700).

3.0 Results

Timber-framed barn footing trench

The timber-framed barn is located at the Northeast end of the site (see Figure 4.). The structural restoration required a footing trench to be dug along the line of the existing walls in order to construct a low brick wall for supporting a replacement sill beam. The trench was 1.00m wide and around 1.00m deep and revealed the profile of a relatively modern floor surface of tarmac with a sand and gravel base layer. Below this floor was a layer of heavy brown chalky clay of around 0.25m deep. Below the clay were the remains of an earlier floor level, possibly the original, although it appeared all that survived were the levelling or bedding materials. The layer was made up of broken flint, chalk and small brick and tile fragments up to a depth of 0.20m. The final layer probably represents natural subsoil and consisted of soft brown clay, almost stone free, with rare fragments of chalk. No earlier structures, archaeological features, or finds were located.

Former Archers Farmhouse area

The area located in the Southwest corner of the site once contained the farmhouse and was reduced by between 0.20 to 0.35m. The area measured 21.50m (NW-SE) by 17.00m (SW –NE) and was visually searched and metal detected once the undergrowth and the debris from the old house had been removed. Ground reduction revealed a notably clean surface of mid-pale brown clay, below mid-brown loamy clay topsoil. The former farmhouse clearly had no foundations and was probably constructed on sill beams. The only feature within this area was a substantial well, probably of nineteenth century date (based on the brickwork evidence), located centrally to the rear of the later wing of the farmhouse (see Figure 4.). The well remained open and was filled with water from a depth of around three metres from the surface. It had an external diameter of 1.30m and was lined with lime mortar bonded curved soft red bricks 65mm. (2½ ins.) thick. No other features or finds were located within this area.

Garage area and access drive

The site for the new detached garage was located in the Northwest corner of the site and was linked by an access drive running parallel to the northern boundary. The access drive had been levelled, but ground disturbance did not exceed the depth of the topsoil. However, the opportunity was taken to further search for archaeological finds. The actual garage area had been reduced to similar levels to the house plot and footings had been dug. Mid-pale brown clay, similar to that seen as subsoil across much of the site was exposed by the footings and ground reduction, but no archaeological features or finds were located.

Pond area

A large pond occupied a central area of the site immediately to the north of the farmhouse. It forms an irregular shape in plan and an equally irregular shape in profile. The gentle slopes of some segments of the pond bank suggest that access to the water was deliberately improved or livestock perhaps eroded the banks. The pond had been emptied of sediments and the banks stripped in some areas. It was possible to record soil profiles in some areas and examine the cleared banks for features such as ditches or alterations to the outline. Areas of pale brown heavy natural chalky clay were exposed to depths of over 0.40m, covered by around 0.40m of loamy clay topsoil with regular fine chalk lumps. No archaeological features or finds were located.

4.0 Conclusions

A substantial area of the site was available for inspection during the course of the monitoring visits. The lack of archaeological features or artefactual material suggest that this particular location may not have been densely occupied in antiquity. Archaeological monitoring located exclusively eighteenth to twentieth century features and finds material. This is somewhat surprising, as much of the background character of the area and close proximity of a number of notable finds locations strongly suggest earlier prolonged periods of activity or occupation. However, the potential of the area in general should not be seen as diminished as a consequence of a negative, but very localised archaeological investigation.

5.0 Acknowledgements and List of Contributors

This project was commissioned by Wincer Kievenaar and was monitored by Judith Plouviez (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

The fieldwork was carried out by Robert Atfield from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

6.0 Bibliography

English Heritage, 1978 ' Grade II listing: Archers Farmhouse, Little Waldingfield LBS Number 278126' <http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk/BUildingDetails>

7.0 Appendices

Appendix 1. Brief and Specification

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

ARCHERS FARM, LITTLE WALDINGFIELD

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, for example see paragraphs 2.3 & 4.3. The commissioning body should also be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities, see paragraph 1.5.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to develop on this site has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application B/04/00689/FUL). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by development can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The development is at TL 930 446 at 70m OD on the crest of a west facing spur overlooking the River Box. Substantial scatters of prehistoric and later surface finds (particularly Late Iron Age and Roman objects) have been recorded in fields to the west and south of the farm (WFL 015 etc). The existing farm (Listed Grade 2, as 18th century or earlier) has the potential for a medieval origin. Overall there is good archaeological potential for surviving deposits of a range of dates throughout the development area.
- 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 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in "Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England" Occasional Papers 14, East Anglian Archaeology, 2003.

- 1.5 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.

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 earlier occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activities in this proposal are likely to be the site preparation works involving topsoil stripping (e.g. the construction of access roads, hard standing construction, and landscaping) and the excavation of building footing or ground-beam trenches and the provision of underground services.

If site preparation works involve topsoil stripping the stripping process and the upcast soil are to be observed whilst they are excavated by the building contractor.

In the case of footing trenches the excavation and the upcast soil, are to be observed whilst they are excavated by the building contractor. Adequate time is to be allowed for the 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 the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) - see 1.3 above.
- 3.2 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of SCCAS 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 the Conservation Team of SCCAS 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 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 In the case of topsoil stripping for site preparation, access roads, hard standings and landscaping unimpeded access to the stripped area at the rate of one hour per 100 square metres must be allowed for archaeological recording at the interface between topsoil and clean sub-soil surface before the area is further deepened, traversed by machinery or sub-base deposited.

In the case of footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of one and a half hours per 10 metres of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. 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 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 4.6 Developers should be aware of the possibility of human burials being found. If this eventuality occurs they must comply with the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857; and the archaeologist should be informed by '*Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England*' (English Heritage & the Church of England 2005) which includes sensible baseline standards which are likely to apply whatever the location, age or denomination of a burial.

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 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 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.

- 5.3 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. 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).
- 5.4 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.
- 5.5 County Sites and Monuments Record sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.6 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.
- 5.7 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: Judith Plouviez

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

Date: 21 February 2006

Reference: /WaldingfieldLt02-Archers-00689

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.