

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

Land off Ferry Lane, West Row, Mildenhall MNL 595

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

A Tester
Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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List of Contributors

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

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Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Andrew Garnett and was monitored by Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

The evaluation was carried out by Andrew Tester and Andrew Beverton from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. Andrew Beverton and inked section drawings produced digital site plans by Gemma Adams.

Summary

An archaeological evaluation in advance of a planning application for housing uncovered evidence of field ditches that were open at least until the 18th century but do not appear on the OS map of 1880. No evidence was found of earlier occupation.

SMR information

Planning application no.	Pre-Planning
Date of fieldwork:	4th December 2007
Grid Reference:	TL 6768 7500
Funding body:	Andrew Garnett
Oasis reference	Suffolkc1-36630

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of a planning application for housing at land off Ferry Lane, West Row, Mildenhall. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team – Appendix 1). The work was funded by the developer, Andrew Garnett. The proposed development lay at TL 6768 7500, at a height of 6.5m OD (Fig. 1). The natural geology of this area is chalk. The site, an area of 1340sqm, continues a line of houses that front onto Ferry Lane as the road curves towards Jude's Ferry Bridge.

Archaeological interest is centred upon the river crossing which is historically one of the lowest crossings of the River Lark. Numerous finds have been recovered from the immediate vicinity of the site and based on this evidence it is thought that this may have been an attractive area for settlement. The topography of the area is unusual with a steep drop to the east of the road. The origins of this feature are uncertain but the houses to the north of this site fall within an area extensively mined for chalk (a lime kiln and chalk pit may be seen on the OS map figure 4 below).

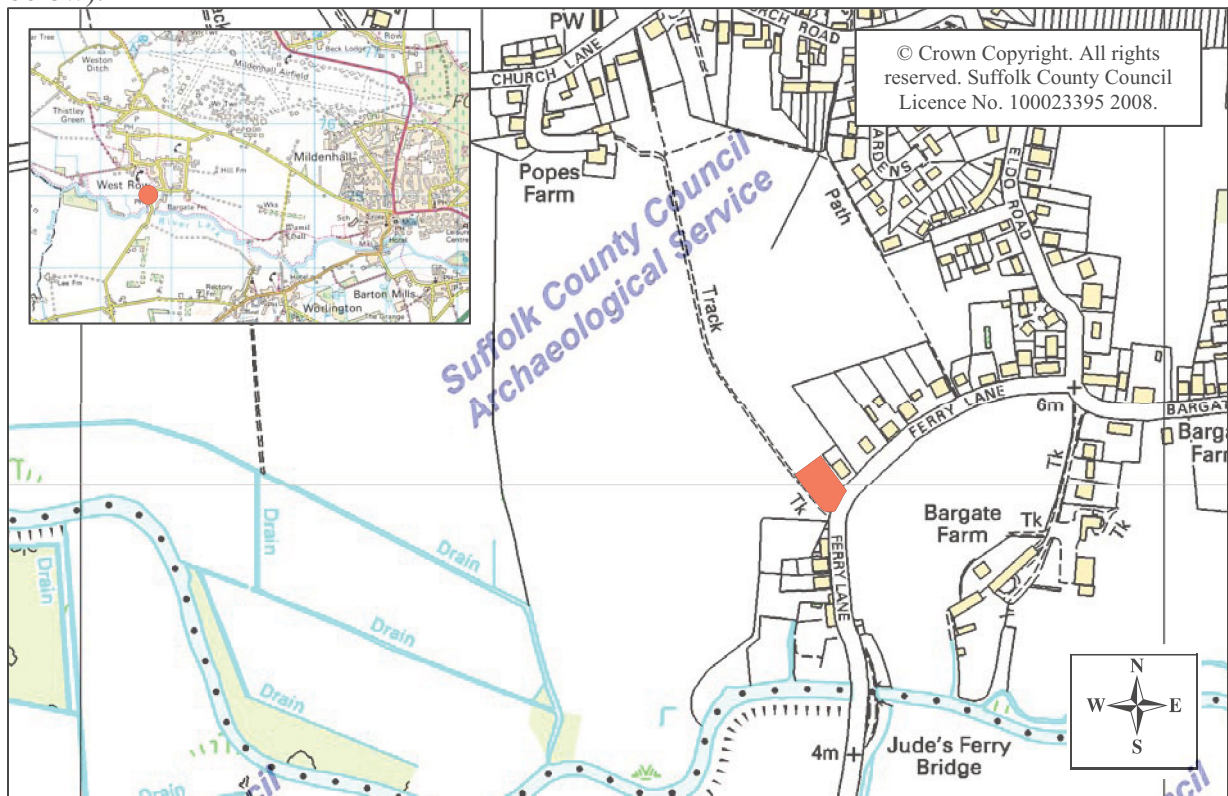


Figure 1. Site location plan

2. Methodology

Within the development area of 1,340 sqm it was proposed to dig three trenches in order to give sufficient coverage to evaluate the site. However, following the initial trenching it was agreed with the curator to excavate a further trench in order to better understand the site. In total 112sqm of trench was examined, which is approximately 8.3% of the site. 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. suffolkc1-36630) 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 595.

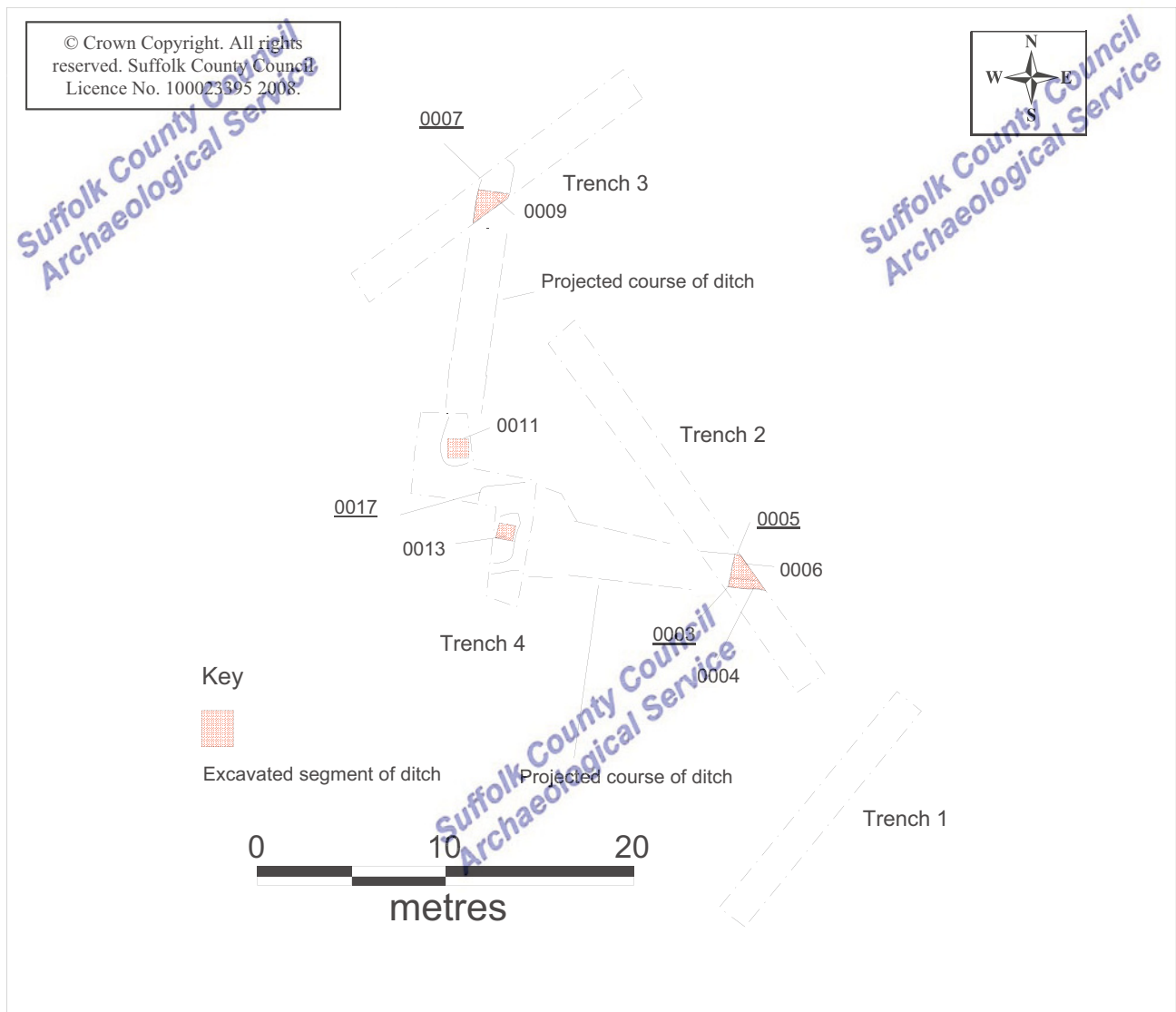


Figure 2. Site plan

3. Results

Trench 1 was 15m long and aligned SW-NE. The soil profile was 0.6m thick and comprised an upper ploughsoil, 0014, that was 0.3m deep over sub-soil of orange/dark brown silt, 0015 which was 0.3m thick and came down onto solid chalk. No features were observed.

Trench 2 was 23m long and aligned NW-SE. It increased in depth from south to north from c. 0.6m to 0.7m and had a similar soil profile to Trench 1 with layers 0014 increasing to up to 0.4m thick. The trench was cut by at least two linear ditches, 0003 and 0004 running approximately E-W across the trench. (Fig 3-4). 0003 was 0.15m deep below the natural chalk and filled with mid/dark grey brown chalky silt, context 0004. Cut 0005 was wider and deeper measuring 2m x 0.4m respectively. The fill (0006) was similar to 0004 although with slightly orange hue. The relationship of these ditches was uncertain although it is likely that they were re-cuts of the same ditch.

Trench 3 was 18m long and aligned SW-NE. The natural was found at c. 0.8m. The trench profile had a similar fill to Trenches 1 and 2 (the second layer of orange/dark brown silt was

slightly thicker). The trench was excavated to a greater depth at the SW end where the natural chalk dipped below a layer of natural blue grey clay-silt. The trench was crossed by a ditch, 0007, that was aligned N-S and was 1.5m wide and 0.2m deep. The fill, 0009, consisted of a mid, dark-grey, brown silt.

Trench 4 was excavated in an attempt to interpret the ditches found in Trenches 2 and 3. As a consequence it occupies a dog-leg 15m long. The trench was approximately 0.7m deep and the section comprised fill types 0014 and 0015 that were divided respectively into 0.3m and 0.4m. The continuation of Ditch 0007 was located and recorded as Ditch 0011. It was excavated with a shovel and found to be only c. 0.1m deep although it was quite wide coming to the top of the chalk at the edge of the trench.

At the south end of Trench 4 there appeared to be a wide butt end with a deeper central area 0017. A sondage was excavated into the fill, 0013 that comprised a mid grey brown clay/silt with chalk inclusions. Finds were recovered and there was sufficient evidence to characterise the feature without full excavation.

3. The Finds

Introduction

Finds were collected from three contexts, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery		CBM		Animal bone		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
0006	1	5	1	24	4	23		16th-18th C
0009	1	19			3	43	9 snails @ 27g	15th-16th C
0013			2	536	2	34		16th-19th C
Total	2	24	3	560	9	100		

Pottery

Two fragments of pottery were recovered from the evaluation (0.024). A small sherd of Glazed red earthenware (GRE) was present in ditch fill 0006 (16th-18th C). A larger but more abraded fragment of a post-medieval redware made in an Essex-type fabric (LMTE) of fifteenth-sixteenth century date was identified in ditchfill 0009.

Ceramic building material

Three fragments of ceramic building material were collected from Trench 2. A small piece of sandy red-fired post-medieval brick was found in fill 0006. A fragment of post-medieval roof tile in layer 0013 in Trench 4 was found with a large and very abraded brick. It is made in a fine poorly mixed pink and buff fabric with sparse calcareous inclusions, and due to its fragmentary condition, cannot be closely dated.

Miscellaneous

A small number of land snails (*helix aspera*) were recovered by hand from ditchfill 0009 in Trench 3 and similar snails were noted in ditchfill 0013 but not recovered.

Animal bone

Nine fragments of animal bone were collected (0.100kg). Most of this is poorly preserved and very fragmentary, but the distal end of a sheep's humerus was present in 0013.

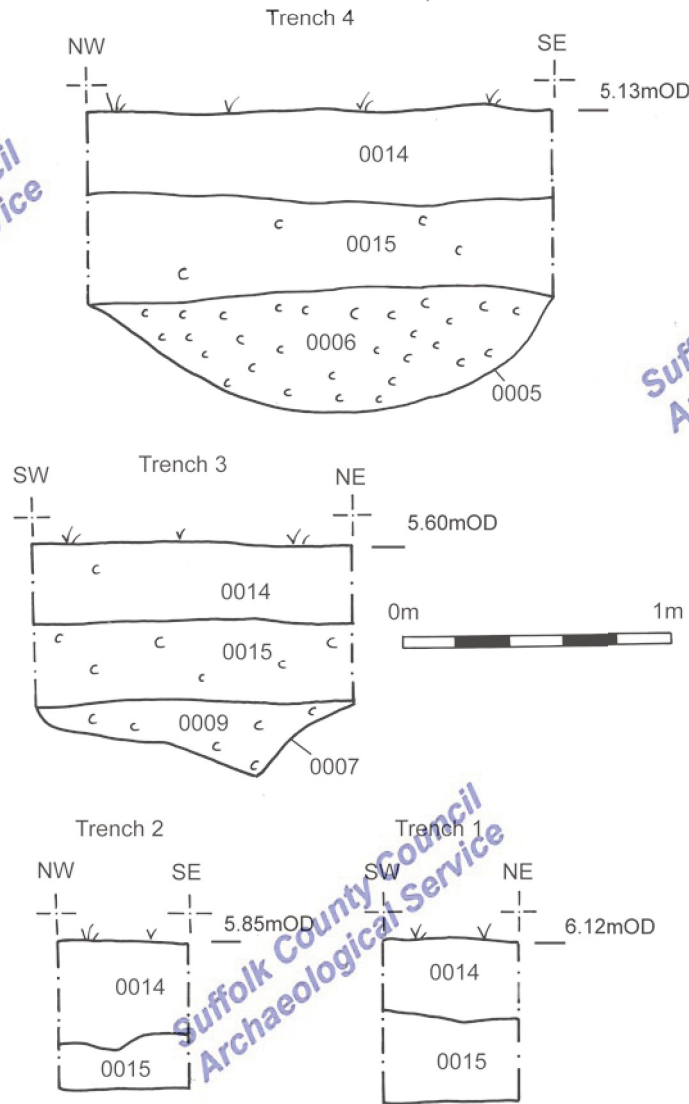


Figure 3. Trench profiles

Discussion

In spite of the possibility of earlier activity in the area around river crossing, the small quantity of finds recovered from the evaluation are mainly post-medieval in date. The artefacts are for the most part both fragmentary and abraded, indicative of a considerable amount of movement and redeposition.

4. Discussion

All four trenches contained layers 0014 and 0015 and the latter overlay the tops of all the ditch fills indicating the accumulated depth of plough penetration. There were no scars on the chalk (which would indicate deep ploughing). Exposed features comprised ditches (with re-cuts) that were aligned at right angles, 0003 and 0007. Within Trench 4 these features converge. The relationship between them could not be determined but given the similarity of fill and the alignment it is reasonable to suggest that they were contemporary and part of a single ditch system. The ditches are not set at right angles to the curve of Ferry Lane (which is the case with the recent property boundaries to the north). They are, instead, closer to the alignment of field boundaries that were more at right angles to the River Lark, as it appears on the OS maps since 1890 (Fig. 4). The trackway to the south of the development, which begins where the run of older properties end, and is marked as a footpath, is also on a different alignment to the established pattern closer to the bridge and may indicate that it was later than the ditches located

in the evaluation although this is speculation. The latest of the two post-medieval sherds of pottery recovered from the ditches was c.18th century providing a *terminus post quem* for their infilling. These few sherds and the sheep bones were probably manuring waste from the adjoining field. The snail shells were a sample only and many more were found particularly in the wide terminus at the end of ditch 0013. These common garden snails prefer damp ground and may be an indication that the ditches were hedged.

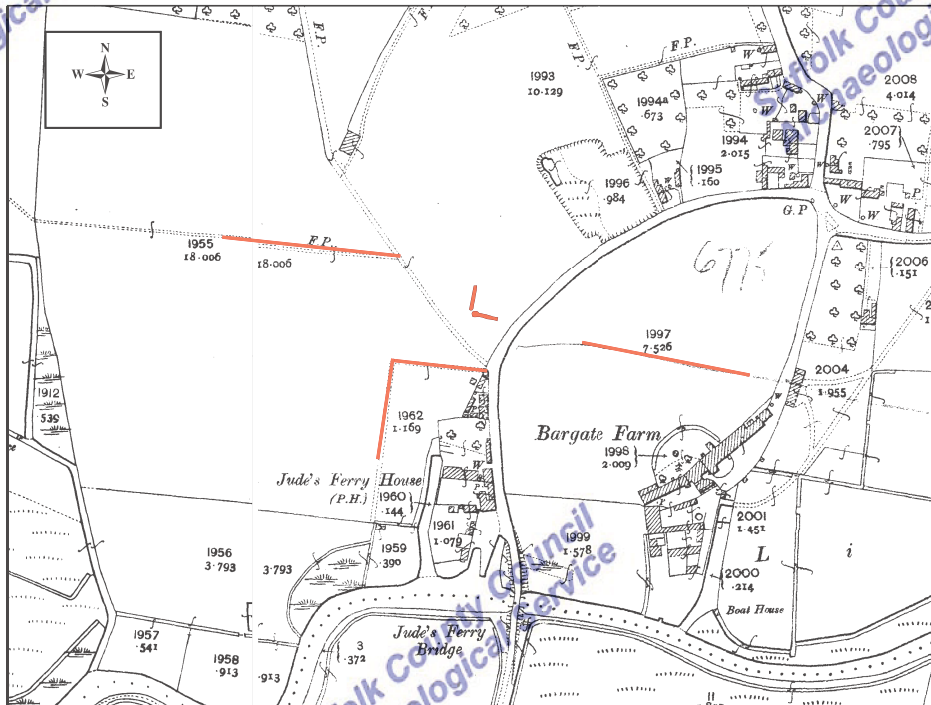


Figure 4. Projected ditches on map of 1890

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The evaluation located elements of a post-medieval ditch system that was well established in the area and seemingly unrelated to the course of Ferry Lane. The small collection of finds recovered from the ditches suggest these elements were infilled during the 19th century and that there was probably no habitation on the site. In the circumstances I would suggest that the evaluation has demonstrated a lack of potential within the area of development and that no further archaeological work is required.

A Tester
 Senior Project Officer
 Field Team, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service
 January 2008

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.

**SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM**

Brief and Specification for a Archaeological Trenched Evaluation

LAND TO NORTH OF FERRY LANE, WEST ROW, SUFFOLK

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities.

1. The nature of the development and archaeological requirements

- 1.1 A planning application is to be made to develop land for housing on to the north of Ferry Lane, West Row, Mildenhall, Suffolk (TL 6768 7499).
- 1.2 The proposed application area measures c. 0.136 ha., on the northern side of Ferry Lane. The site is located at c. 5 - 6.00m AOD. The underlying geology of the site comprises chalk drift and chalk, with well-drained calcareous loamy soil over chalk rubble.
- 1.3 The Planning Authority (Forest Heath District Council) will be advised that any consent should be conditional upon securing the implementation of a programme of archaeological works before development begins (PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition). An archaeological evaluation of the application area is required as the first part of a programme of archaeological mitigation; decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work should there be any archaeological finds of significance will be based upon the results of the evaluation and will be the subject of an additional brief.
- 1.4 The application lies in an area of archaeological importance, defined in the County Historic Environment Record (HER). There is considerable evidence on both sides of the River Lark for extensive multi-period settlements. This point at Jude's Ferry is significant as it is recognised as the first inland crossing point of the river from the fens. It is likely that this has made it a focus for human activity for all periods. There is high potential for occupation deposits to be disturbed by development at this location given the landscape setting, close to the historic crossing point of the river. The proposed works will cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.5 There is high potential for important archaeological features to be located in this area. Aspects of the proposed works will cause significant ground disturbance with the potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.6 A trenched evaluation is required as the first part of the archaeological mitigation strategy for this development.
- 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 Written Scheme of Investigation (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 WSI as satisfactory. The WSI will provide the basis for measurable standards and will be used to satisfy the requirements of the planning condition.

- 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 the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of SCC (SCCAS/CT) before execution.
- 1.11 The responsibility for identifying any constraints on field-work (e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c., ecological considerations) rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such constraints or imply that the target area is freely available.
- 1.12 Any changes to the specifications that the project archaeologist may wish to make after approval by this office should be communicated directly to SCCAS/CT and the client for approval.

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 the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- 2.4 Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence.
- 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 SCCAS/CT (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 5% by area, which is 68m² of the total area of disturbance (c. 0.136 ha.). These 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; this will result in a minimum of c. 38m of trenching at 1.8m in width.

- 3.2 If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' at least 1.2m wide must be used. A scale plan showing the proposed locations of the trial trenches should be included in the Written Scheme of Investigation and the detailed trench design must be approved by SCCAS/CT before field work begins.
- 3.3 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine with a back-acting arm and fitted with a toothless bucket, down to the interface layer between topsoil and subsoil or other visible archaeological surface. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 3.4 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 excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- 3.5 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.
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 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. The contractor shall show what provision has been made for environmental assessment of the site and must 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, P.L. and Wiltshire, P.E.J., 1994, *A guide to sampling archaeological deposits for environmental analysis*) is available for viewing from SCCAS.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 3.10 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed SCCAS/CT during the course of the evaluation).
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 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. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum. Any variations from this must be agreed with SCCAS/CT.
- 3.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies and/or high resolution digital images.

- 3.14 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 3.15 Trenches should not be backfilled without the approval of SCCAS/CT.

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 SCCAS/CT. The archaeological contractor will give not less than five days written notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.
- 4.2 The composition of the archaeology contractor staff must be detailed and agreed by this office, including any subcontractors/specialists. For the site director and other staff likely to have a major responsibility for the post-excavation processing of this evaluation there must also be a statement of their responsibilities or a CV for post-excavation work on other archaeological sites and publication record.
- 4.3 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that adequate resources are available to fulfill the Brief.
- 4.4 A detailed risk assessment must be provided for this particular site.
- 4.5 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 4.6 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (revised 2001) 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 report should reflect the aims of the Written Scheme of Investigation.
- 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, including an assessment of palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. 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 The results of the surveys should be related to the relevant known archaeological information held in the County HER.
- 5.8 A copy of the Specification should be included as an appendix to the report.

- 5.9 The project manager must consult the County HER Officer (Dr Colin Pendleton) 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.
- 5.10 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 HER 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.
- 5.11 The project manager should consult the County HER Officer regarding the requirements for the deposition of the archive (conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage) of excavated material and the archive.
- 5.12 The site archive is to be deposited with the County HER within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.13 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 SCCAS/CT, by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.
- 5.14 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the County HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.15 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 HER. 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.
- 5.16 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.
- 5.17 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the County HER. 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: 19 October 2007

Reference: / FerryLane_WestRow2007

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.

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