

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE

Woodbridge School, Woodbridge (WBG 073); Record of an Archaeological Evaluation

SCCAS Report No. 2008/143; Oasis No. suffolkc1-41772



Trench 1; taken from the East

Stuart Boulter
Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

© May 2008

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Suffolk County Council



Environment and Transport



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Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to Chris Wilkie (Rees Pryer Architects LLP), Steve Crane (Assistant Bursar of Woodbridge School) and Jess Tipper (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team).

Staff from Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (Roy Damant under the direction of Stuart Boulter) undertook the trenching evaluation with a mechanical excavator driver and banksman provided by the building Contractor (R. G. Carter Ipswich Ltd.)

Funding was provided by Woodbridge School.

Summary

Woodbridge, Woodbridge School (TM 2686 4940; WBG 073) A trial-trenching evaluation of the area of a new VI form centre and classroom block on the site of an earlier building at Woodbridge School failed to identify archaeological deposits. The evidence suggested that the site had previously been truncated and had been further damaged during the demolition of the earlier building.

(Stuart Boulter for Suffolk County Council & Woodbridge School)

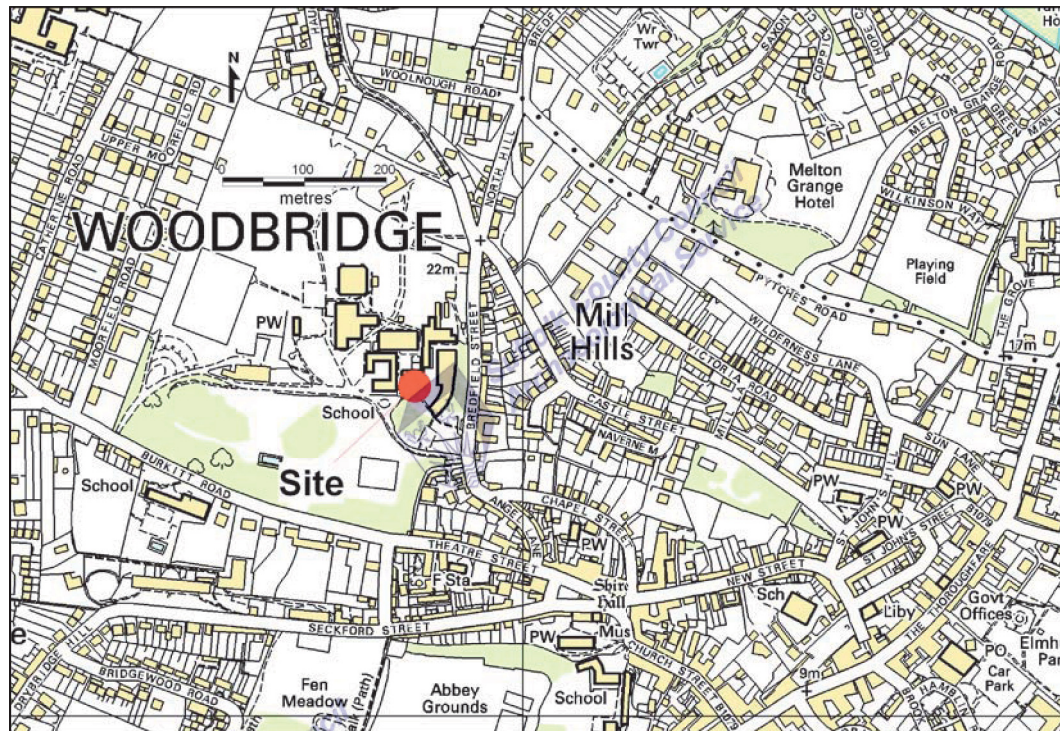
HER information

Planning application no:	C/07/2344
Site HER code:	WBG 073
Date of fieldwork:	Evaluation 30/04/2008
Grid Reference:	TM 2686 4940
Commissioning body:	Woodbridge School
SCCAS Rpt. No.	2008/143
Oasis No.	suffolkc1-41772

1. Introduction

1.1 Planning Background

The consent for Planning Application C/07/2344 covering the construction of a new VI form centre at Woodbridge School, Woodbridge, (Fig. 1) (TM 2686 4940) was conditional on the applicant providing for a programme of archaeological works which, in the first instance, would involve mechanically excavated trial-trenches on the site.



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Fig. 1 1:10,000 scale OS map extract showing the location of the site

Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service Conservation Team (hereafter SCCASCT), in his role as Archaeological Advisor to the Local Planning Authority, wrote a Brief and Specification document detailing the scope of the required archaeological works (Appendix I). Subsequently, Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service Field Team were commissioned by Rees and Pryer (the project architect's) on behalf of their client (Woodbridge School) to undertake the evaluation, the fieldwork for which was carried out on 30/04/2008.

1.2 Historical & Archaeological Background

Lying within an area of high archaeological importance as defined in the County Historic Environment Record, the site had, until recently, been occupied by an earlier school building which was demolished shortly before the archaeological evaluation was undertaken.

Previously known archaeology in the vicinity includes an Anglo Saxon burial seen in 1873 during the construction of Queens House 230.00 metres to the

north and a Roman clay floor and finds (WBG 029) some 175.00 metres to the north-west recorded in a watching brief in 2000.

1.3 Topographical Setting & Drift Geology

Essentially, the site lies on a west facing spur between two shallow tributary valleys, both now dry, that would have discharged into the River Deben approximately 1 kilometre to the west.

The site lies at approximately 25.00 metres OD, although landscaping associated with Woodbridge School has locally remodelled the landscape profile.

The underlying drift geology comprises glaciofluvial sands and gravels.

2. Methodologies

2.1 Fieldwork

A Historic Environment Record (HER) code WBG 073 was allocated to the site.

The Brief and Specification required that 5% of the development area would be covered by the trial-trenches which equates to a total length of c.50 metres with a 1.5 metre wide machine bucket. Location of the trial-trenches was agreed with Jess Tipper (SCCASCT) (Fig. 2).

The trenches were opened using a 360° mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.5 metre wide toothless ditching bucket for a good clean cut.

Site levels were related to Ordnance Datum from a benchmark (at 27.50 metres OD) transferred from one of the standing school buildings.

A metal detector survey was undertaken over the exposed surface in the base of the trenches.

A full photographic record, both monochrome prints and digital shots, was made.

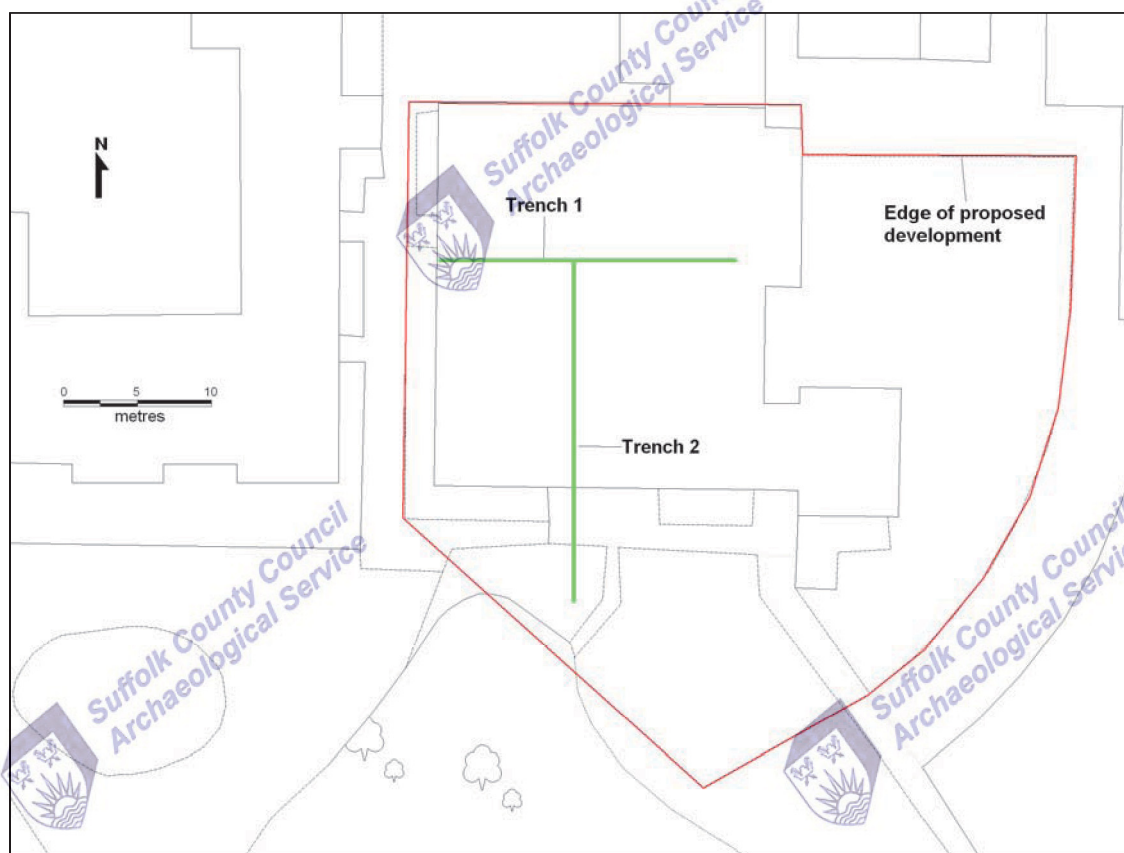
2.2 Post-Excavation

A site archive (including photographs & other site records) was prepared and deposited in the County Historic Environment Record (HER) in Bury St. Edmunds. The information recorded during the project was compiled into a single coherent report (this document).

The report has also been submitted to OASIS, the online archaeological database, under the code suffolkc1-41772.

3. Results

The evaluation was undertaken after the demolition of the previous building. The site had effectively been levelled, although it had been left with a slight slope from north-west to south-east before it fell away steeply down the natural slope to the south-east. The existing paved area around the northern and north-west side of the site was approximately 1.00 metre above the surface of the site itself. Cleaning of the exposed north edge of the site revealed naturally occurring sand subsoil at 0.4 metres above the surface of the levelled site indicating that at least at that juncture the earlier building had been terraced into the natural slope. The situation became less clear along the western edge of the site, but there did appear to have been at least some previous truncation to at least a point level with the western end of Trench 1 (Fig. 2).



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Fig. 2 1:500 scale OS map extract showing the location of the trial-trenches

Given that the northern end of the site had definitely been truncated and that the eastern edge of the site was steeply sloping, possibly landscaped, a total trench length of 43.00 metres (Trench 1; 20.00 metres & Trench 2; 23.00 metres) was considered adequate as it represented in excess of 5% of the available area of the site.

Trench 1 (1.50 metres x 20.00 metres): Trench 1 was orientated from east to west across the site towards its northern end (Fig. 2 & Plate 1).



Plate 1 Trench 1 from West

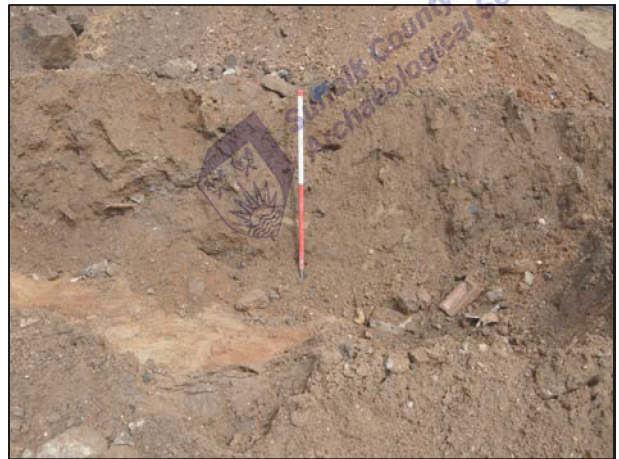


Plate 2 Overburden at East end of Trench 1

Levels taken on the existing surface of the site show that it reduced from 25.61 metres OD at the western end, to 25.25 metres OD at its junction with Trench 2 and then down to 24.80 metres at its eastern end. However, the naturally occurring subsoil only reflected this slope for the western 12.00 metres of the trench; encountered at 25.35 metres OD at the western end, 24.99 metres OD at the junction with Trench 2 and then dipping steeply down to 24.00 metres OD at its eastern end.

A c.0.25 metre thick layer of dirty sand with some building rubble was encountered throughout the entire length of the trench. For the westernmost 12.00 metres this lay directly on clean naturally occurring sand subsoil with a sharp interface and no weathered top to the underlying layer, the latter suggesting that it had suffered some previous truncation. At the eastern end



Plate 3 Trench 2 from the South

of the trench, where the level of the natural subsoil fell away to the east, an intervening layer of building rubble and rubbish was encountered which had been introduced to maintain the approximately level surface of the site (Plate 2).

No archaeological deposits were recognised and no finds recovered from Trench 1. The only intrusive features were irregular in shape and clearly modern, filled with building debris and related to the earlier building and its subsequent demolition.

Trench 2 (1.50 metres x 23.00 metres): Trench 2 was orientated from north to south across the site and intersecting with Trench 1 at its northern end (Fig. 2 & Plate 3).

Levels taken on the existing surface of the site show that it reduced from 25.28 metres OD at its northern end, to 24.96 metres OD approximately halfway along its length and then down to 24.78 metres at its southern end. The naturally occurring subsoil was encountered at 24.82 metres OD at its northern end, 24.35 metres OD at its middle and 24.41 metres OD at its southern end.

The overburden above the naturally occurring subsoil was similar in character to that observed in Trench 1, it comprising dirty orange sand with inclusions of building debris. Its interface with the clean sand subsoil was very sharp, again suggesting previous truncation.

Also similar to Trench 1, no archaeological deposits were recognised and no finds recovered from Trench 2. Again, the only intrusive features were irregular in shape and clearly modern, filled with building debris and related to the earlier building and its subsequent demolition.

4. Discussion

The attractive aspect of the site and the previously identified archaeology in the vicinity suggested that there was a high potential for archaeological deposits to occur within the development area. However, the evaluation proved beyond doubt that the site had previously been truncated by the earlier building, particularly at its northern end, and further disrupted by the subsequent demolition of that structure. It is clear that any archaeological deposits, particularly shallow lain features, would have been very badly damaged by the recent activities on the site and the lack of even residual material suggests that very little, if any, archaeology had been present within the proposed development area.

5. Recommendations for Further Archaeological Works

Given the negative results of the evaluation it seems unlikely that the Local Planning Authority's Archaeological Advisors will ask for further archaeological works associated with the development.

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

WOODBIDGE SCHOOL, BURKITT ROAD, WOODBRIDGE, 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 Planning permission for the erection of a new VI form centre and classroom block, following demolition of existing building, at Woodbridge School, Burkitt Road, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP12 4JH (TM 2687 4940), has been granted by Suffolk Coastal District Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application C/07/2344).
- 1.2 The proposed new building has a total area of 1,950m², on the western side of the valley of the River Deben, and located at c. 25.00m AOD. The underlying glaciofluvial drift geology of the site comprises cretaceous sand or crag.
- 1.3 The development lies within an area of high archaeological importance, defined in the County Historic Environment Record. An Anglo-Saxon burial was found under traces of a mound in 1873 during construction of Queen's House to the north of the proposal (WBG 022) and a Roman clay floor and finds were made during a watching brief to the west of the proposal in 2000 (WBG 029). There is high potential for Roman and Anglo-Saxon occupation deposits to be disturbed by this development. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.4 A linear trenched evaluation is required of the development area, before any groundworks take place. The results of this evaluation will enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified, informing both development methodologies and mitigation measures. 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.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 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.

- 1.8 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.
- 1.9 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.
- 1.10 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 98m² of the development plot. 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 54m 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. For guidance:
- For linear features, 1.00m wide slots (min.) should be excavated across their width;
- For discrete features, such as pits, 50% of their fills should be sampled (in some instances 100% may be requested).
- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 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.
- 3.10 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.

- 3.11 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed SCCAS/CT during the course of the evaluation).
- 3.12 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.
- 3.13 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.
- 3.14 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies and/or high resolution digital images.
- 3.15 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 3.16 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 WSI.
- 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 HER 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*.
- 5.11 The project manager should consult the SCC Archive Guidelines 2008 and also 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 Every effort must be made to get the agreement of the landowner/developer to the deposition of the finds with the County HER or a museum in Suffolk which satisfies Museum and Galleries Commission requirements, as an indissoluble part of the full site archive. If this is not achievable for all or parts of the finds archive then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate. If the County HER is the repository for finds there will be a charge made for storage, and it is presumed that this will also be true for storage of the archive in a museum.
- 5.13 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.
- 5.14 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.
- 5.15 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the County HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.16 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.

- 5.17 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.
- 5.18 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: 1 April 2008

Reference: / WoodbridgeSchool-Woodbridge2008

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.