

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

ROCKYLLS HALL, SHELLAND (SMR ref. SLD 006)

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2008
(Application No: 2754/07)

Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Report No. 2008/165
(OASIS Ref. suffolkc1-43336)

Summary

Shelland: Rockylls Hall (TL 9984 6050; SLD 006). An archaeological monitoring was carried out at the above site in advance of the construction of a small extension to the Grade 2 listed building.

The monitoring revealed a horizontal sequence of natural chalky till, 'made ground' deposits of late medieval or post-medieval date and modern turf/topsoil.

HER information

Planning application no:	2754/07
Site code:	SLD 006
Date of fieldwork:	07 May 2008
Grid Reference:	TL 9984 6050
Funding body:	Landowner

Introduction

An archaeological monitoring was conducted at Rockylls Hall, Shelland (Fig 1) in accordance with an archaeological condition relating to planning permission for the construction of a single-storey extension at the rear of the house (Mid Suffolk District Council application number: 2754/07).

Rockylls Hall, a Grade 2 listed building, is an early/mid 17th-century farmhouse of timber-framed construction that incorporates timber elements from a house of *circa* 1550. It is within a medieval moated enclosure (SLD 001 in the County Historic Environment Record) and on the edge of Shelland's medieval green (SLD 009).

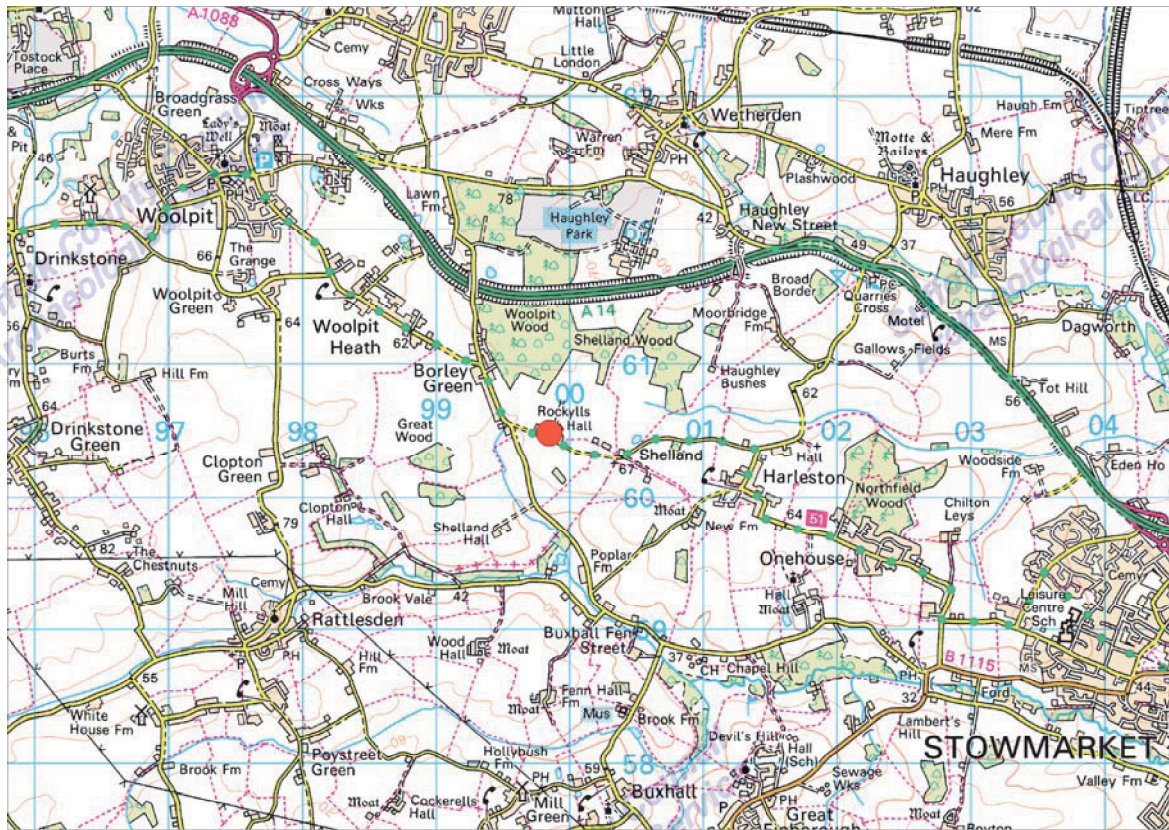


Figure 1. General location of Rockylls Hall, Shelling

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Methodology

The archaeological evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Brief and Specification written by Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service Conservation Team (see Appendix).

The writer visited the site on 07 May 2008 to monitor the excavation of foundation trenches for the proposed extension (Fig 2). The extension measures approximately 8.00m x 5.00m and the associated foundation trenches were 0.50m wide x 1.25m deep.

The sides and bases of all excavations were examined for archaeological features and deposits and the excavated material was examined for artefacts that might be dated archaeologically. Written descriptions and a sketched section drawing of archaeological deposits were made in a field notebook and all salient details have been reproduced in this report. A digital photographic record was made (images captured at 3008 x 2000 pixels, in .jpg format).

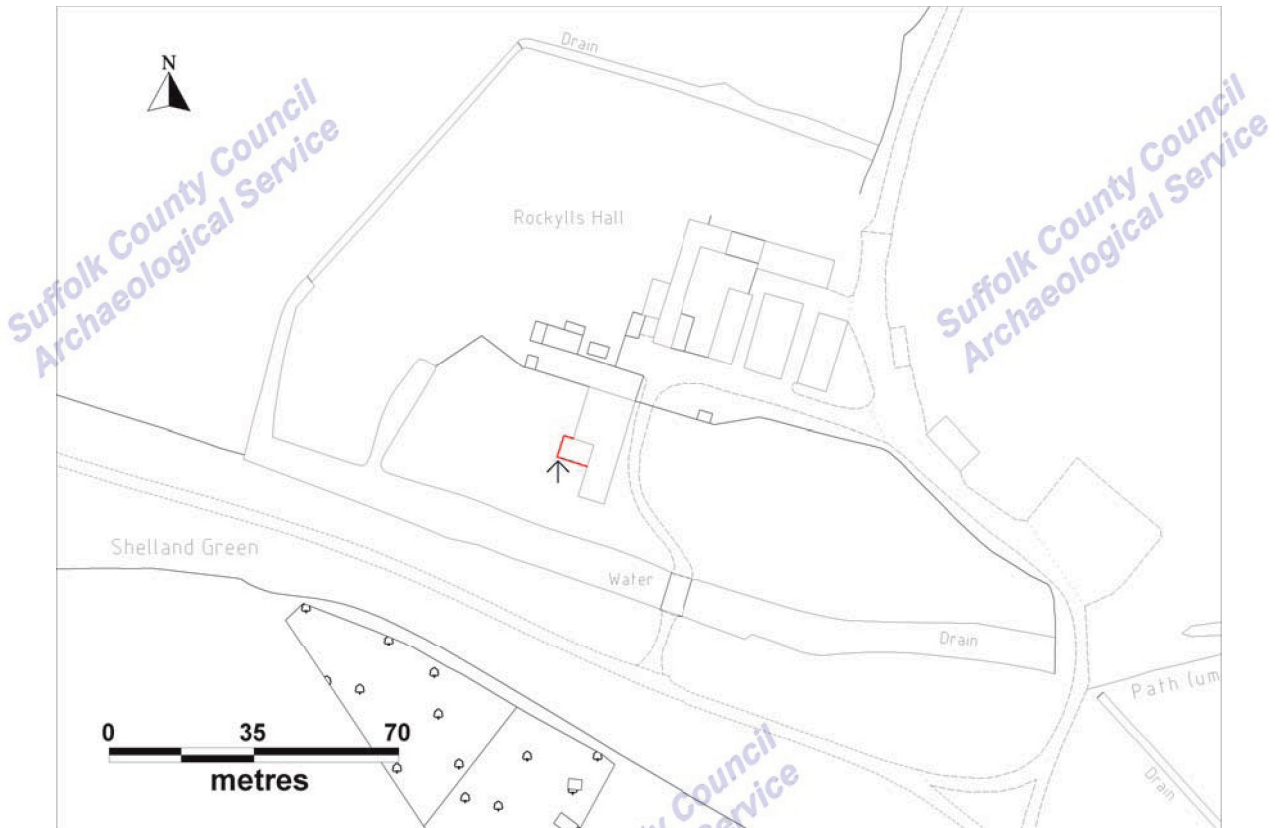


Figure 2. Plan showing the foundation trenches for the proposed extension (red) and the location of the section drawn as Figure 3 (arrowed)

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Results

The monitoring revealed a horizontal sequence of natural chalky till, 'made ground' deposits and modern turf/topsoil that extended across the area of the proposed extension. A representative section in the south west corner of the extension was drawn (located on Figure 2) and has been reproduced below as Figure 3. The deposits are described below.

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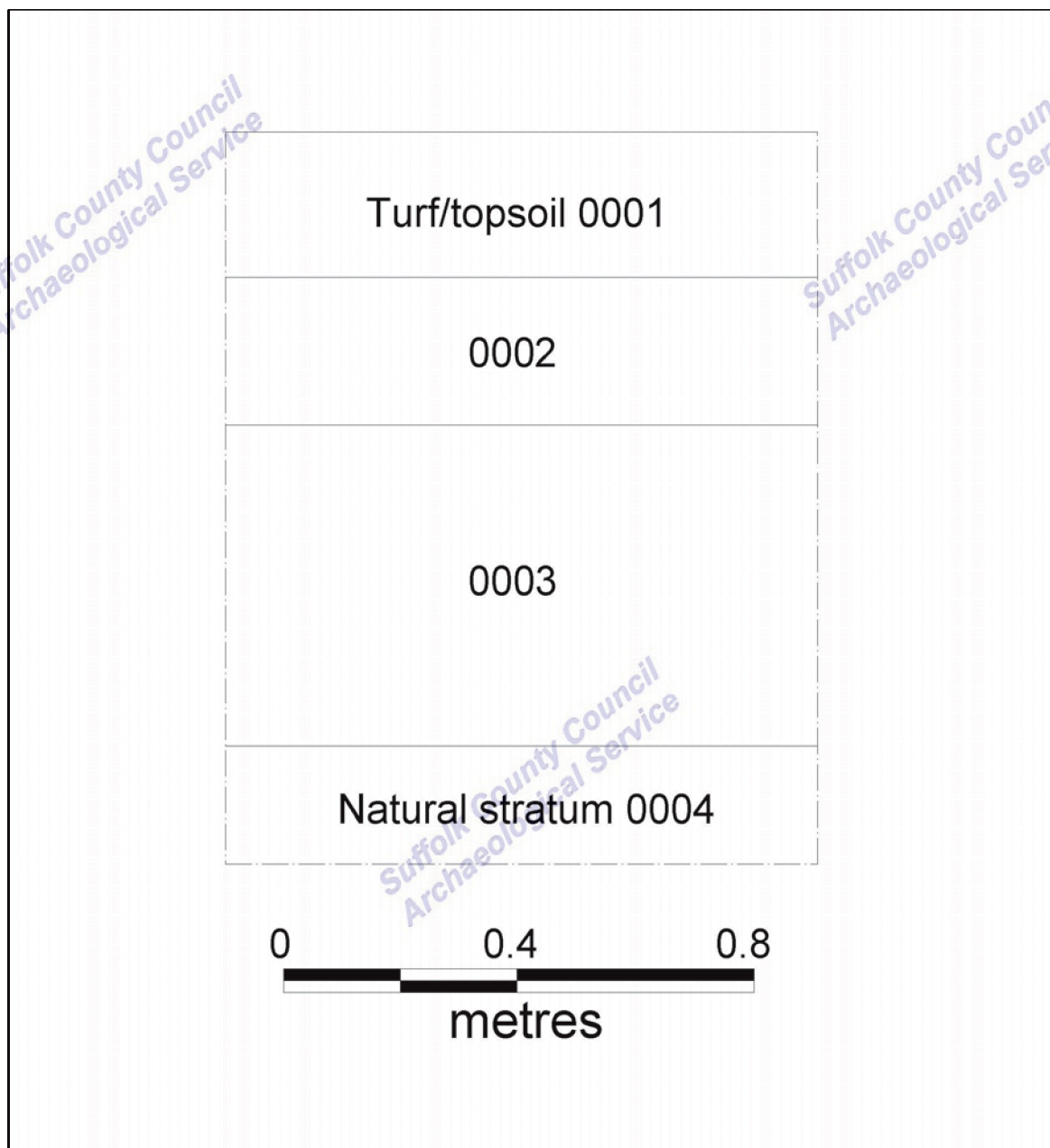


Figure 3. North-facing section showing the general sequence of deposits

Natural stratum 0004

The natural stratum is a typical chalky till (glacial boulder clay) comprising firm, light yellowish brown clay/silt with frequent flecks and small fragments of chalk.

Thickness: unknown.

Deposit 0003

A layer of soft, mid brownish grey, slightly clayey silt containing occasional pebbles, small fragments of brick, flecks-small fragments of chalk and charcoal and a small fragment of pottery. The pottery is in a red earthenware fabric and is probably of 15/16th-century date (Richenda Goffin, *pers comm*).

Thickness: 0.55m.

Deposit 0002

A layer of firm, mottled light yellowish brown and light grey, slightly clayey silt containing occasional pebbles, small fragments of brick and oyster shell and moderate flecks-small fragments of chalk.

Thickness: 0.25m.

Topsoil 0001

Friable, mid brownish grey sandy silt (loam) containing moderate pebbles and flint fragments and frequent roots. It contains occasional small fragments of post-medieval pottery (including transfer-printed pottery of 19th-century date), brick and tile, coal, mortar, chalk and animal bone. The topsoil supports turf that forms the current land surface at approximately 65m OD.

Thickness: 0.25m.



Figure 4. A view of part of the foundation trench for the proposed extension, showing the vertical section recorded in Figure 3 (looking south)

Discussion and Conclusion

The natural stratum of chalky till is overlaid by up to 0.80m of 'made ground' deposits containing cultural material. A fragment of pottery recovered from deposit 0003 is dated provisionally to the 15/16th century and demonstrates that these strata must be of late medieval or post-medieval date.

It can be postulated that these 'made ground' deposits represent dumping to raise the ground level within the area of the moated enclosure, and might even incorporate up-cast from the original excavation or subsequent scouring of the moat. It was noted that the enclosed area is approximately 1.5m higher than the ground beyond the moat to the south of the enclosure.

It was noted also that the brick foundation at the rear of the house (where exposed by the trench for the proposed extension) is only about 0.40m deep and that deposit 0003 extends underneath the foundation. Clearly, deposit 0003 pre-dates the construction of Rockylls Hall in the first half of the 17th century.

In conclusion, the archaeological monitoring has demonstrated that there was a significant amount of dumping within the moated enclosure prior to the construction of Rockylls Hall. Although of some historical interest this is of limited archaeological significance and further monitoring is not considered necessary. However, it should be noted that any decision regarding additional archaeological work on the site remains with the Archaeological Planning Officer.

Kieron Heard, project Officer, SCCAS Field Projects Team

26 June 2008

APPENDIX: Brief and Specification

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

ROCKYLLS HALL, SHELLAND, STOWMARKET, SUFFOLK, IP14 3JF

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.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission to erect a new extension at Rockylls Hall, Shelland, Suffolk, IP14 3JF (TL 9984 6050), has been granted by Mid Suffolk District Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application 2754/07). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by development can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 This proposal lies in an area of archaeological interest, recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, within the internal area of a medieval moated enclosure (SLD 001). In addition, it is located on the edge of the medieval green (SLD 009). There is a strong possibility that medieval occupation deposits will be encountered in this location. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 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 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 establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.
- 1.4 Before commencing work the project manager must carry out a risk assessment and liaise with the site owner, client and the Conservation Team of SCCAS (SCCAS/CT) in ensuring that all potential risks are minimised.
- 1.5 All arrangements for the excavation 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 by the archaeological contractor with the commissioning body.
- 1.6 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.

1.7 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.

1.8 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (revised 2001) should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

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 significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the ground works associated with the new building, which measures 45.6m² in area. These, and also the upcast soil, are to be closely monitored during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor. Adequate time is to be allowed for archaeological recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following excavation.

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 SCCAS/CT.

3.2 The developer or his contracted archaeologist will give SCCAS/CT 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 this Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and time-table.

3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered SCCAS/CT 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 SCCAS/CT and the contracted archaeologist to allow archaeological monitoring of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.

4.2 Opportunity must be given to the contracted archaeologist to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.

4.3 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development, 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.

- 4.4 A photographic record of the work is to be made of any archaeological features, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies/high resolution digital images.
- 4.5 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum.
- 4.6 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. 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.
- 4.7 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with SCCAS/CT during the course of the monitoring).
- 4.8 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Historic Environment Record.

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 Historic Environment Record within three months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 The project manager must consult the County Historic Environment Record Officer 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.
- 5.3 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*.
- 5.4 The project manager should consult the County Historic Environment Record officer regarding the requirements for the deposition of the archive (conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage) of excavated material and the archive.
- 5.5 The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record 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. Account must be taken of any requirements the County Historic Environment Record may have regarding the conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage of excavated material and the archive.
- 5.6 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, including palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. 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).

- 5.7 An unbound copy of the assessment report, clearly marked DRAFT, must be presented to SCCAS/CT for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated with the project sponsor and SCCAS/CT.
- 5.8 Following acceptance, two copies of the assessment report should be submitted to SCCAS/CT. A single hard copy should be presented to the County Historic Environment Record as well as a digital copy of the approved report.
- 5.9 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.
- 5.10 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 Historic Environment Record. 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.
- 5.11 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.
- 5.12 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to County Historic Environment Record. 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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Date: 4 March 2008

Reference: /RockyllsHall-Shelland2008

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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