

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

ST. JOHN'S MEADOW, METFIELD MTF 146

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
(Planning app. no. 0987/04, 0934/02)
OASIS ID: 48255

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Field Team
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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SCCAS Report No. 2008/254

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Summary

Monitoring of ground works for a housing development at St. John's Meadow, Metfield, was required to investigate the archaeological potential of the site. One large, undated pit was observed in the exposed sections of a building plot in the south west corner of the site. No other interventions were recorded, nor was any artefactual evidence recovered from upcast spoil or stripped surfaces.

HER information

Planning application no. 0987/04
Date of fieldwork: December 2005- January 2006
Grid Reference: TM 2933 8025
Funding body: Bennett Homes
OASIS ID: 48255

Introduction

Conditional planning consent for a housing development at St. John's Meadow, Metfield required a programme of archaeological monitoring. The site is centred on TM 2933 8025, at a height of approximately 45m OD. The development lies within 100m of the medieval church and churchyard, with what is likely to be a medieval road forming the western boundary of the site. There is high potential for deposits associated with the village core and roadway frontage to survive within the development area.

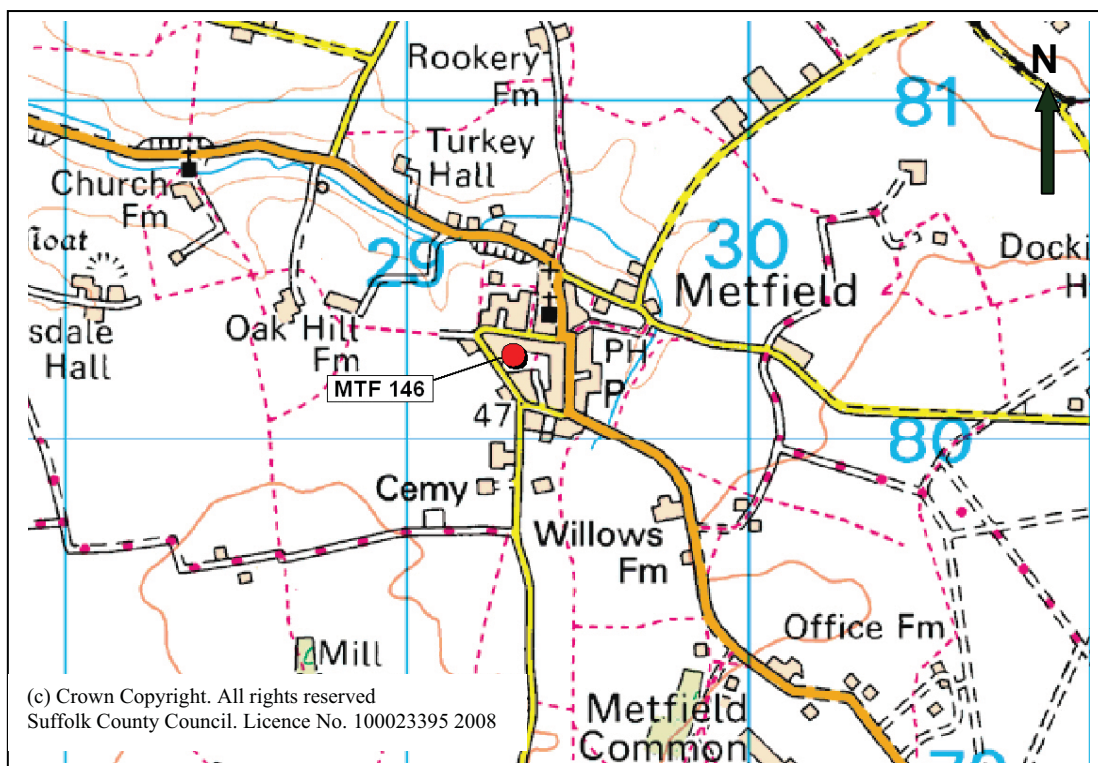


Figure 1. Site location

Methodology

Vists were made to the site by the Field Projects Team of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service (SCCAS) in order to inspect the various ground works. Where features were revealed in section, they were cleaned manually for definition and each allocated 'observed phenomena' numbers within a unique continuous numbering system under the Historic Environment Record (HER) code MTF 146 (Appendix I). Features were drawn on site at a scale of 1:20 and photographs taken as a part of the site archive. A Brief and Specification for the archaeological work was produced by Bob Carr of the SCCAS Conservation Team (Appendix II).

All finds were washed and marked before being quantified, identified and dated by the finds management staff of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service. The monitoring archive will be deposited in the County HER at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

The monitoring work took place over December 2005 and January 2006 and was funded by Bennett Homes.

Results

Much of the site was stripped of up to 300mm of dark brown clay loam topsoil which was stockpiled as an earth bund along the northern boundary of the site. Machinery had tracked over large areas of the exposed surface but what was clean comprised a pale, yellowish brown clay subsoil flecked with coal and brick fragments. No undisturbed subsoil was exposed by the soil stripping.

Footings for Plots 10-12 and 13-15 had been excavated to a depth of 1.2m, comprising 150-200mm of pale yellowish brown clay subsoil over natural boulder clay. One feature was observed in the footings, a large pit (0003) which measured *c.* 900mm deep and *c.* 10m in diameter. It was filled by 0004, a mid brown silty clay from which a single sherd of post medieval pottery was recovered 300mm below the ground surface.

Footings for Plots 1-3 in the north east corner of the site were not viewed as the contractors did not inform us of their excavation.

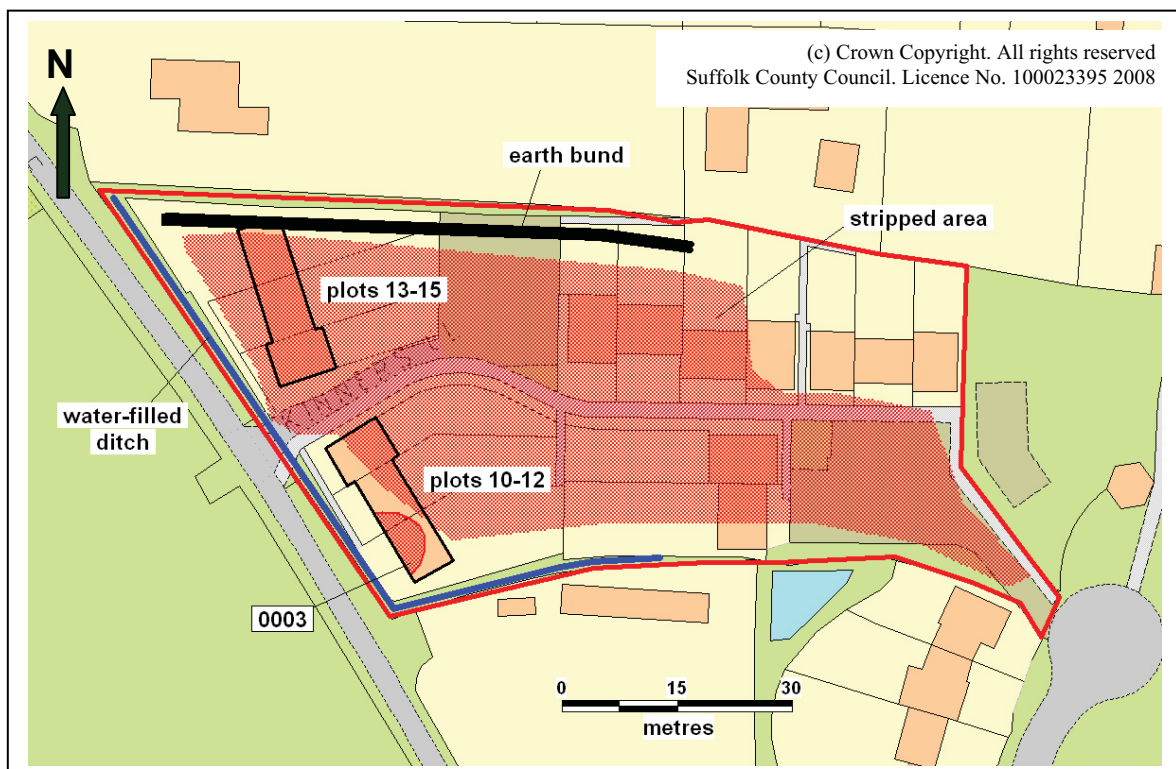


Figure 2. Location of monitored ground works

Discussion

Soil stripping did not reach the depth of the naturally occurring subsoil which is the most likely level at which to encounter archaeological deposits. A single pit was observed, the function and date of which was unclear, but the dimensions suggest a pond or extraction pit, either of which is perfectly plausible. Whilst little of archaeological interest was encountered during the monitoring, it is possible that scattered features could survive within the development area but were not revealed by the ground works.

Linzi Everett
Field Projects Team,
Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service.
September 2008.

Appendix I

OP	Context	Description	Cuts / overlies	Cut by / under
0001	0001	Topsoil- dark brown clay loam	0002	
0002	0002	Subsoil- pale yellowish brown clay	0004	0001
0003	0003	Pit cut- large, deep circular/oval pit in SW corner of Plots 10-12. Function unclear- pond? Extraction?		
0004	0003	Pit fill- mid brown silty clay		0002

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM



Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

ST JOHN'S FIELD, METFIELD

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.

1. Background

- 1.1 A planning application (934/02) has been made for the erection of 15 dwellings and parking spaces. The local planning authority have been advised that the site has high archaeological potential and that any consent should be conditional on a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition. Assessment of the available archaeological evidence indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal is within 100m of the medieval church and churchyard, and the road bounding the site to the west is probably medieval in origin. There is potential for medieval or earlier settlement associated with the village core and also of frontage development on the old roadway. The proposal involves development which will cause significant ground disturbance which will damage any archaeological deposit which 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 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.

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 and any early road frontages.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of building footing trenches. These, and the upcast soil, are to be observed **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 (see 4.3).
- 2.4 It is thought essential that both the area of the site nearest the church (e.g. plots 13-15) and also near the western road (e.g. plots 22-24) are observed. A review of results from these areas will inform the necessity for intensive observation of other plots, a policy is to be agreed with the Conservation Team following the start of monitoring.

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 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.
- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments 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 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: Robert Carr

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

Date: 11 October 2004

Reference: /Metfield-StJohns10 (rev)

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.

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

◆
Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring of Development

ST JOHN'S FIELD, METFIELD

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1. Background

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- 1.2 The proposal is within 100m of the medieval church and churchyard, and the road bounding the site to the west is probably medieval in origin. There is potential for medieval or earlier settlement associated with the village core and also of frontage development on the old roadway. The proposal involves development which will cause significant ground disturbance which will damage any archaeological deposit which exists.
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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 and any early road frontages.
- 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.

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 **after** they have been 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).

2.4 It is thought essential that both the area of the site nearest the church (e.g. plots 1-3) and also near the western road (e.g. plots 10-15) are observed. A review of results from these areas will inform the necessity for intensive observation of other plots, a policy is to be agreed with the Conservation Team following the start of monitoring.

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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.

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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 50 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.

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Specification by: Robert Carr

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

Date: 19 October 2005

Reference: /Metfield-StJohns10 (rev2)

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