

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCAS REPORT No. 2009/026

**Fornham House, Fornham St Martin,
Bury St Edmunds
FSM 019**

A. Tester
© May 2009
www.suffolkcc.gov.uk/e-and-t/archaeology

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HER Information

Planning Application No: SE/09/0099

Date of Fieldwork: April 21 2009

Grid Reference: TL 8525 6711

Funding Body: Healthcare Homes Group Ltd

Curatorial Officer: Jess Tipper

Project Officer: Andrew Tester

Oasis Reference: 1-59036

Digital report submitted to Archaeological Data Service:
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Fornham House, Fornham St Martin prior to the construction of an extension to the existing care home. Two trenches revealed evidence of a trackway that is recorded on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map. The site was heavily disturbed but a shallow irregular shaped pit may have been early post-medieval as it contained only a single sherd of pottery dated 15th-16th century, and animal bone.

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1. Introduction

Archaeological trial trenching was carried out in the grounds of Fornham House, Fornham St Martin to establish the archaeological potential of the site prior to the construction of an extension to the existing care home. The trenching was part of a condition of planning application SE/09/0099 set out in a Brief and Specification for the work by Jess Tipper of the Conservation Team at Suffolk County Council. The work was commissioned by PJP Partnership on behalf of Healthcare Homes Ltd.

2. Geology and topography

The site lies on slightly rising ground above the floodplain of the Lark valley at a height of c.43m AOD. The underlying geology is of chalk.

3. Archaeological and historical background

Interest in the site is generated by the proximity of the site to the medieval church and the possibility of contemporary settlement.

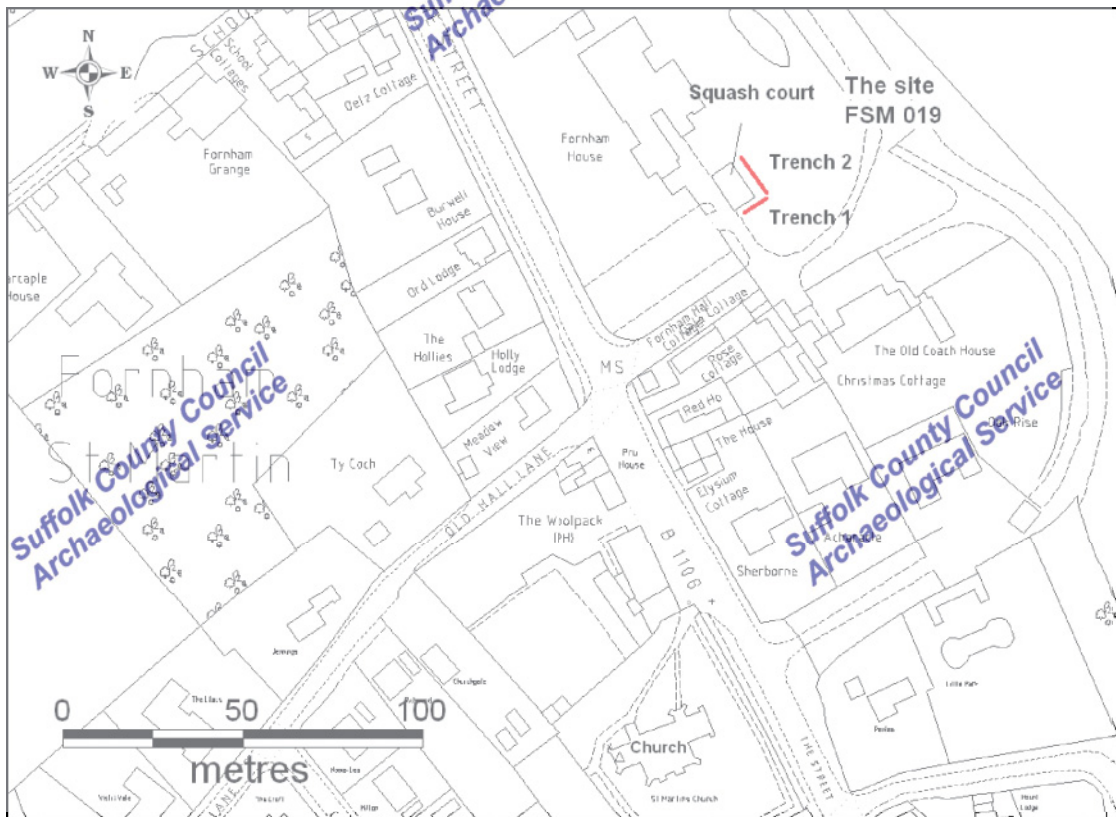
4. Methodology

Two trenches measuring 13m and 8m and 1.8m wide were excavated by a mini digger using a flat, bladed bucket within the footprint of the new building. The trenches were positioned along two sides of a squash court that is scheduled to be demolished. The trenches were planned using a combination of hand drawing and GPS. Excavations were carried out on selected features. A single sequence continuous numbering system was used for the finds recording. Digital photographs were taken and are included in the site archive.



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Figure 1. Site location plan



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Figure 2. Site in relation to Fornham Church

5. Results

Trench 1 was 7m in long, c.1.8 m wide, 0.9m deep and aligned NE-SW (Fig. 3). Most of the fill below the topsoil was disturbed and therefore not recorded in detail. The base of the trench was largely chalk with patches of sand at the SW end. Running almost directly N-S across the trench were three ditches 0006, 0010 and 0009. They were all characterised by a compacted fill of pebbles with sand. A section was dug across 0006 and 0010, the former revealing a 'V' shaped gully that was c.0.25m deep x 0.5m wide, while 0010 comprised c. 0.1m of packed flints and did not appear to continue beyond Posthole 0002. Within the packing of the gullys were fragments of crushed brick. Posthole 0002 was square in shape and 0.5m deep and 0.7m wide. The fragmentary remains of a timber post were found in the section and beneath this was a coin of George II; this would appear to have been a deliberate deposition. Ditch 0009 was almost identical in appearance to 0006 and was not therefore sectioned. On the north side of trench 0009 was an irregular feature 0004. From the uneven shape it is suggested that there may have been more than one cut although this could not be distinguished in the fill, which was of a dark loam.

Trench 2 was aligned at right angles to Trench 1. It was 12.3m long by c.1.8m wide and aligned NW-SE. This trench was approximately 0.9m deep although rising towards the NW end. The natural subsoil was of orange sand at either end of the trench with chalk towards the centre. The trench fill was heavily disturbed with several large concrete stanchions that were related to the standing building (one of these appears on the side of the trench in Figure 5). Running along the NE side of the trench and in the baulk were large amounts of flint and mortar rubble, 0011; as this post-dated the features in the base of the trench it was not recorded in detail. The three ditches recorded in Trench 1 were found to continue through Trench 2 with a similar compact gravel fill. Two modern features identified by fragments of machine made brick were not excavated.

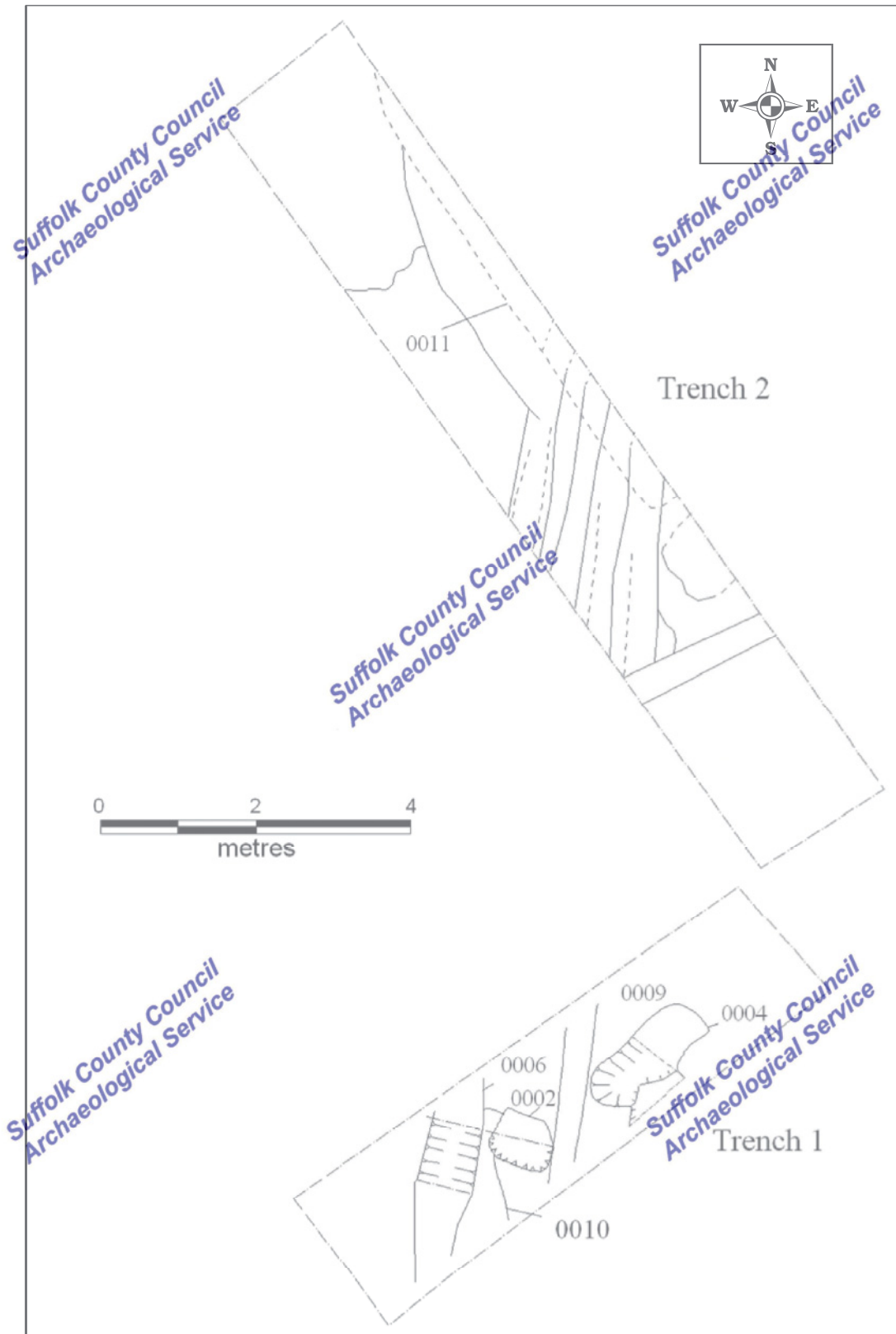


Figure 3. Trench plan

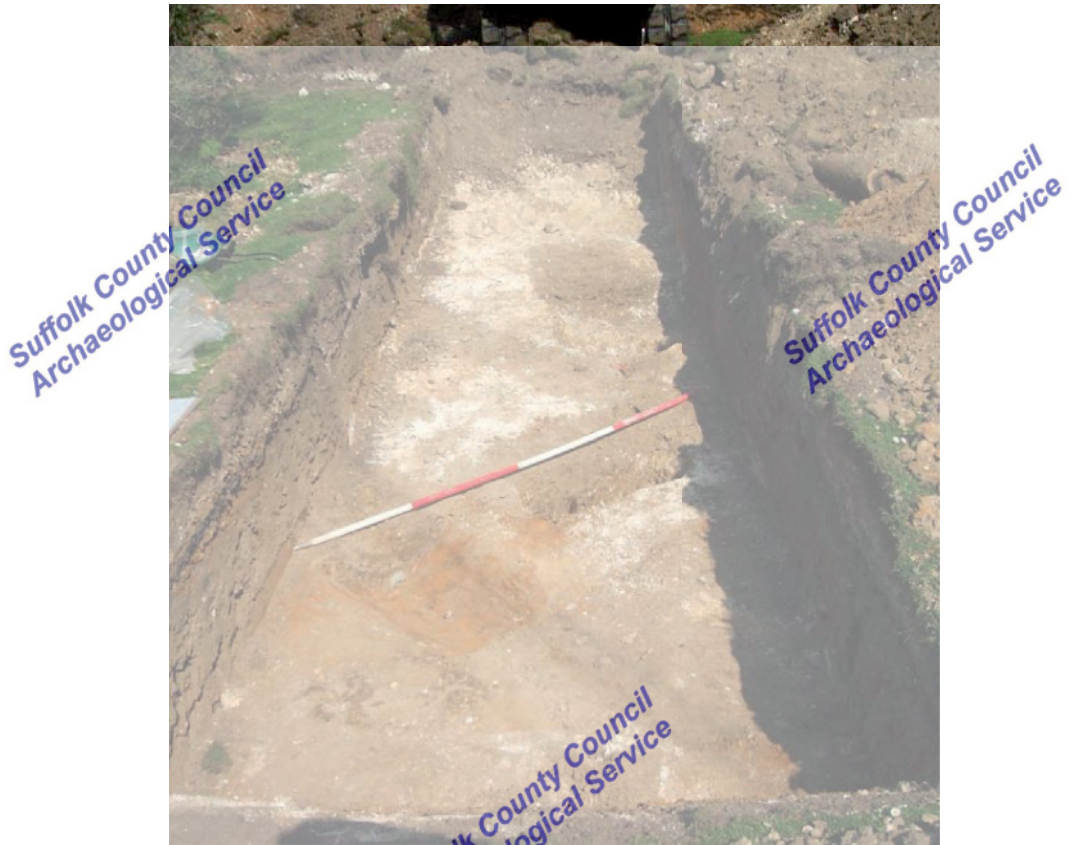


Figure 4. Trench 1 looking north-east



Figure 5. Trench 2 looking north

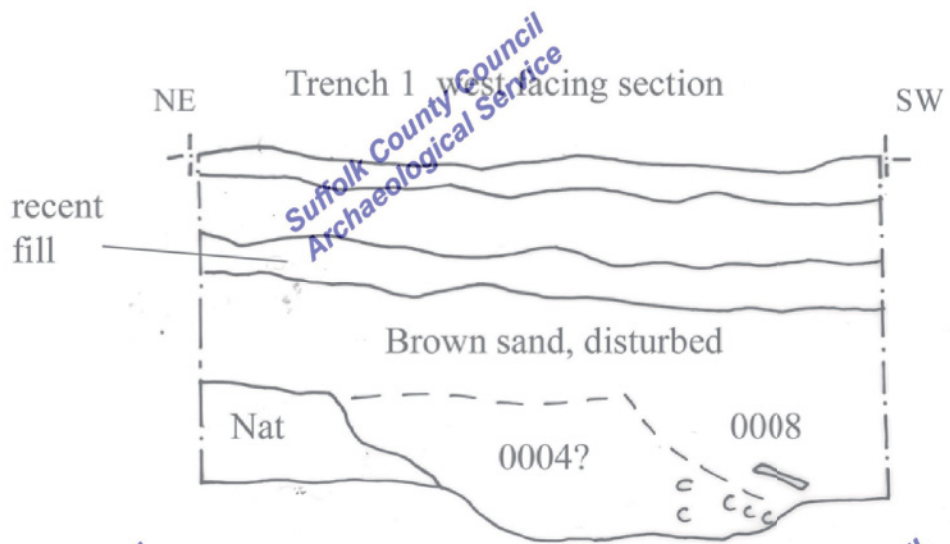
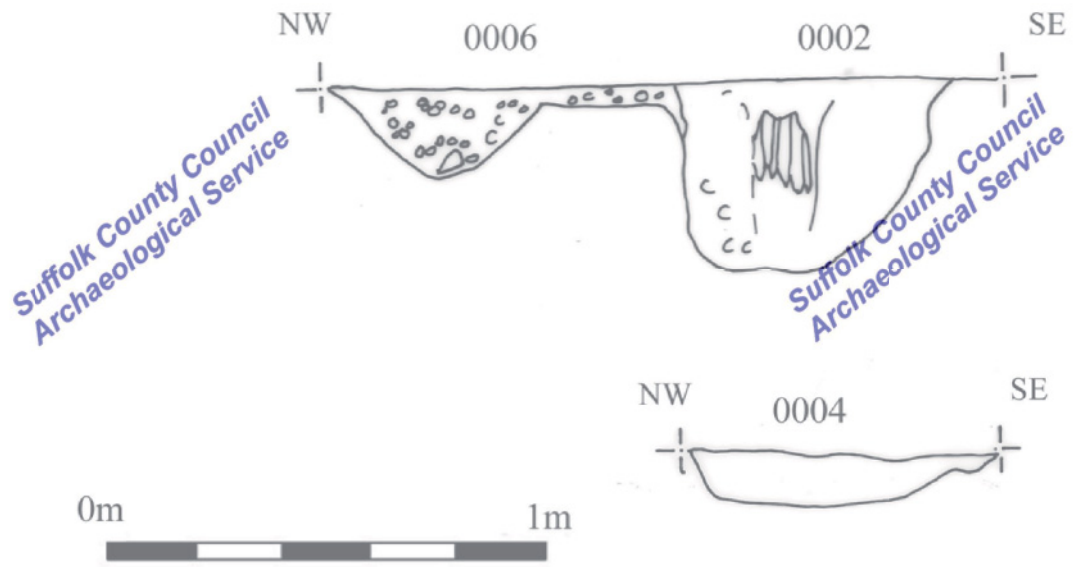


Figure 6. Sections

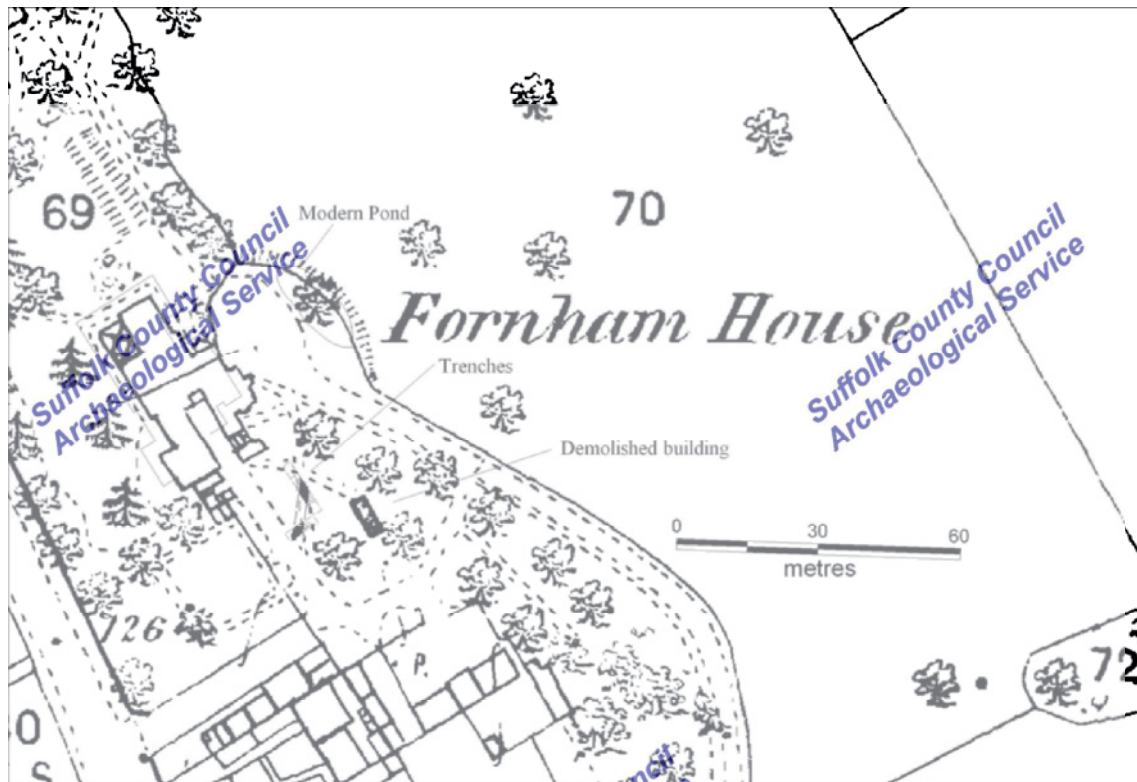


Figure 7. Evaluation superimposed on the map of 1884

6. Finds

Introduction

Finds were collected from 3 contexts, as shown in the table below.

Context	Pottery		CBM		Animal bone		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0003			1	31			18th Century
0005	1	5			8	161	15th-16th C
0008	1	329					16th-18th C
Total	2	334	1	31	8	161	

Table 1 Finds quantities

Pottery

Two fragments of pottery were collected from the evaluation (0.334kg). An unglazed fragment of Late Medieval and Transitional ware was recovered from pitfill 0005 dating to the 15th-16th century. A very large sherd of a Glazed red earthenware storage vessel, with a worn base, was present in fill 0008 dating to the 16th-18th century.

Ceramic building material

A single fragment of post-medieval roof tile was found in 0003. It is made in a medium sandy fabric with occasional flint inclusions (msf), and was found with an eighteenth century coin.

Animal bone

Eight fragments of animal bone were collected from pitfill 0005. In addition to small rib bone fragments and undiagnostic pieces, the remains of a metapodial bone of a sheep was identified and a cranial vertebra, probably from a cow.

Small Finds

A worn copper alloy coin dating to the reign of George II (1727-60) had been placed in the posthole 0003 in Trench 1, together with a fragment of post-medieval roof tile.

Discussion

In spite of the location of the site within the historic core of the village and not far from the church of St Martin, the earliest find recovered from the evaluation is a single sherd of pottery dating to the 15th-16th century from pitfill 0005, which was found with animal bone. The remaining finds date to the post-medieval period.

7. Discussion

From the alignment of the three 'ditches', that ran across both trenches, and particularly their compacted fill of stones with sand and crushed brick, these are interpreted as wheel ruts indicating a trackway. This is almost certainly a route that appears on the 1884 Ordnance survey map (Fig. 7) and was contemporary with Fornham Hall, although it had been infilled by 1904. The trackway was quite marked suggesting heavy usage at some stage; a possible explanation lies in the scars in the chalk indicated on the 1884 map, which has become a pond (Figure 2). Perhaps the trackway was used by carts carrying chalk for lime mortar from an opencast pit? The flint and mortar rubble that appeared in the N section of Trench 2 was probably part of a demolition fill used to reinstate the hollow way created by the trackway. The source may have been a rectangular building that is shown on the 1884 map close to the trackway, which had been demolished by 1904. A coin of George II that was almost certainly deliberately placed beneath the timber post within posthole 0002 was undoubtedly what would be

described as a 'special deposit' if it had occurred on a prehistoric site. This find may serve as a reminder of the need to mark an event in everyday life, such as the setting out of a building or even a posthole that may not have a deep spiritual meaning. The only feature that predates these ditches was shallow pit 0004, which is tentatively dated by a single piece of pottery to the 15TH-16TH centuries. The upper fills of both trenches were disturbed with relatively modern materials including a series of concrete blocks (Fig. 6) that probably supported a glass lean-to that once stood against the squash court.

8. Conclusions and recommendations

The evaluation has recorded a number of features including a trackway that probably date from the 19th century and later. A single shallow pit was found that may have been medieval in date. While these finds are of interest they are of insufficient importance to merit further archaeological work on the site.

9. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds T:arc\

Finds and environmental archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds. Store Location: Row, H, Parish boxes.

10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by Andrew Tester and the site was surveyed by Andrew Beverton. Gemma Adams processed the finds and produced the section drawing; Richenda Goffin prepared the finds report.

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Team alone. Ultimately 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 services cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to the clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.

Appendix 1

Brief and Specification for Trenched Evaluation

FORNHAM HOUSE, THE STREET, FORNHAM ST MARTIN, SUFFOLK (SE/09/0099)

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 extension at Fornham House, Fornham St Martin (TL 852 671) has been granted by St Edmundsbury Borough Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work (SE/09/0099) (see applicant for an accurate location plan)
 - 1.2 The Planning Authority has been advised that any consent should be conditional upon an agreed programme of work taking place before development begins (PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition).
 - 1.3 The proposed development area is located on the north side of Bury Road and on the northern side of the valley of the River Lark, on glaciofluvial drift deposits (deep sand) at c. 40.00m AOD.
 - 1.4 This site lies in an area of archaeological importance recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, within the historic settlement core and to the north of the medieval church (HER No. FSM 005). There is high potential for medieval occupation deposits to be located in this area. The proposed works would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
 - 1.5 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.
 - 1.7 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, amounting to 20.00m in length x 1.80m in width across the site of, or immediately adjacent to, the new extension.

3.2 If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' at least 1.20m wide must be used. A scale plan showing the proposed locations of the trial trenches should be included in the WSI 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).

3.8 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.

3.9 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.

3.10 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.

3.11 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.

3.12 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed SCCAS/CT during the course of the evaluation).

- 3.13 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.
- 3.14 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.
- 3.15 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies and/or high resolution digital images.
- 3.16 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 3.17 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. Ceramic specialists, in particular, must have relevant experience from this region, including knowledge of local ceramic sequences.
- 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 Historic Environment Record (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 Pennington) 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 The WSI should state proposals for the deposition of the digital archive relating to this project with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), and allowance should be made for costs incurred to ensure the proper deposition (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>).
- 5.13 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.
- 5.14 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.
- 5.15 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.
- 5.16 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the County HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.17 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.
- 5.18 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.
- 5.19 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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Archaeological Service
Tel: 01284 352197

Date: 9 March 2009

Reference: / FornhamHouse-FornhamStMartin2009

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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Appendix 2. Context List

0001	Unstratified finds	
0002	Posthole cut	Square cut posthole, 0.5m deep and 0.7m wide.
0003	Posthole fill	Loam fill including wood remains and coin placed below posthole. Suggest this was deliberate. Cuts pebble spread 0010.
0004	Pit cut	Shallow cut in top of chalk, irregular shape suggests more than one cut. (See section).
0005	Pit fill	Dark loam fill, occasional chalk with animal bones
0006	Ditch cut	'V' shaped feature, possibly ditch but suggested to be wheel rut because of infill, see below.
0007	Ditch fill	Fill of fine silt and stones with occasional fragments of brick. All compacted, very hard to break up.
0008	Fill	Possible later cut and fill into pit 0004 and seen in section. Similar dark loam fill.
0009	Ditch fill	Third of ditches(wheel ruts) not sectioned but similar upper fill of compacted stones with sand and odd brick.
0010	Ditch cut	Insubstantial rut between 0006 and 0009. Cut by posthole 0002. Appears more as a layer than as a cut
0011	Compacted rubble	Compacted rubble, mostly flint and mortar with some post-medieval brick.

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