ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/184

Silver Birches, Silver Hill, Hintlesham HNS 027

D. Stirk

www.suffolkcc.gov.uk/e-and-t/archaeology

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HER Information

Planning Application No:	**B/08/01650**
Date of Fieldwork:	**14th & 15th June 2009**
Grid Reference:	**TM 0925 4340**
Funding Body:	**Stour Homes Ltd.**
Curatorial Officer:	**William Fletcher**
Project Officer:	**Duncan Stirk**
Oasis Reference:	**suffolkc1-62579**

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 on land at Silver Birches, Silver Hill, Hintlesham (TM 0925 4340); HNS 027

A trial trench evaluation was carried out at the above site from 14th to 15th June 2009 in advance of a proposal to redevelop the site. The redevelopment involves the construction of residential properties and associated parking.

A number of features of archaeological interest were recorded during the work. These were four, or possibly five, ditches dating from the Middle Saxon to medieval periods. Finds dating from the prehistoric to the medieval periods were recovered.

(Duncan Stirk, SCCAS for Suffolk CC report no: 2009/184)

1. Introduction

A planning application was made for a residential development at Silver Birches, Silver Hill, Hintlesham, Suffolk. The site is centred on approximately NGR TM 0925 4340 and comprises approximately a total of 0.27 hectares.

Figure 1. Site location

The site is in an area recognised as being of high archaeological importance as recorded in the County Historic Environment Record (HER). It was felt therefore that the development work would cause ground disturbance with the potential to destroy archaeological deposits were they present. As such, there was an initial requirement for an archaeological evaluation by trial trench, as outlined in a Brief and Specification produced by William Fletcher of the SCCAS Conservation Team (Appendix 2). The SCCAS Field Team was subsequently commissioned to carry out the work by the client, Stour Homes Ltd.

2. Geology and topography

The site of the proposed development is on the east side of Hintlesham village beside the medieval road Silver Hill. (Figure 1) At the time of the evaluation the site had a bungalow and garage with attached gardens. Much of the garden was covered with trees with surrounding lawns.

The site is generally level at approximately 45m AOD, with a steep slope down towards the road along the street front southern edge of the site. The site is bounded to the southwest by a similar residential property, to the north by open agricultural fields, and to the southeast by Silver Hill road. The drift geology underlying the site is glaciofluvial sand and clay.

3. Archaeological and historical background

The site is located beside the medieval road Silver Hill, on the eastern side of Hintlesham. It is less than 500m from the church of St. Nicholas (HER No. HNS 005). There are a number of medieval and post-medieval buildings along Silver Hill including the neighbouring house, Hyntle Place, dating to the 16th century. There is also a reference to a Saxon cemetery "found opposite Hyntle Place" in the church magazine of 1920/1921. (HNS 008) The likely location for this is quarry works that are visible on the 1920 OS map less than 100 metres to the east of the site.

The site is situated with a south facing aspect over Spring Brook, a location that has a high potential for early activity. Indeed there is a ring ditch about 400m to the northeast of the site, probably representing a prehistoric round barrow (HNS 002), as well as a number of enigmatic references to a tumulus (HNS 009), and "Iceni cists" from the aforementioned church magazine, located within 450 metres to the east of the site.

The site therefore has a relatively high potential for containing archaeological features of prehistoric, Saxon, medieval or post-medieval date.

4. Methodology

Trial trenching was carried out on the 14th and 15th June 2009. The trenches were excavated using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.4m wide flat-bladed ditching bucket. All mechanical excavation was carried out under close archaeological supervision until the top of the first undisturbed archaeological deposit or natural subsoil was revealed. Hand cleaning of the exposed surfaces was carried out where necessary in order to clarify the nature of the deposits and identify cut features. In consultation with William Fletcher of SCCAS Conservation team, certain trenches were deepened to better determine the nature of exposed archaeological layers.

The site covers approximately 0.27 hectares, of which 126 square metres was trenched, resulting in a sample of 4.67%. The sample is slightly smaller than the 5% specified in the Brief and Specification (see Appendix 2), in large part because of the difficulty in placing trenches between the trees.

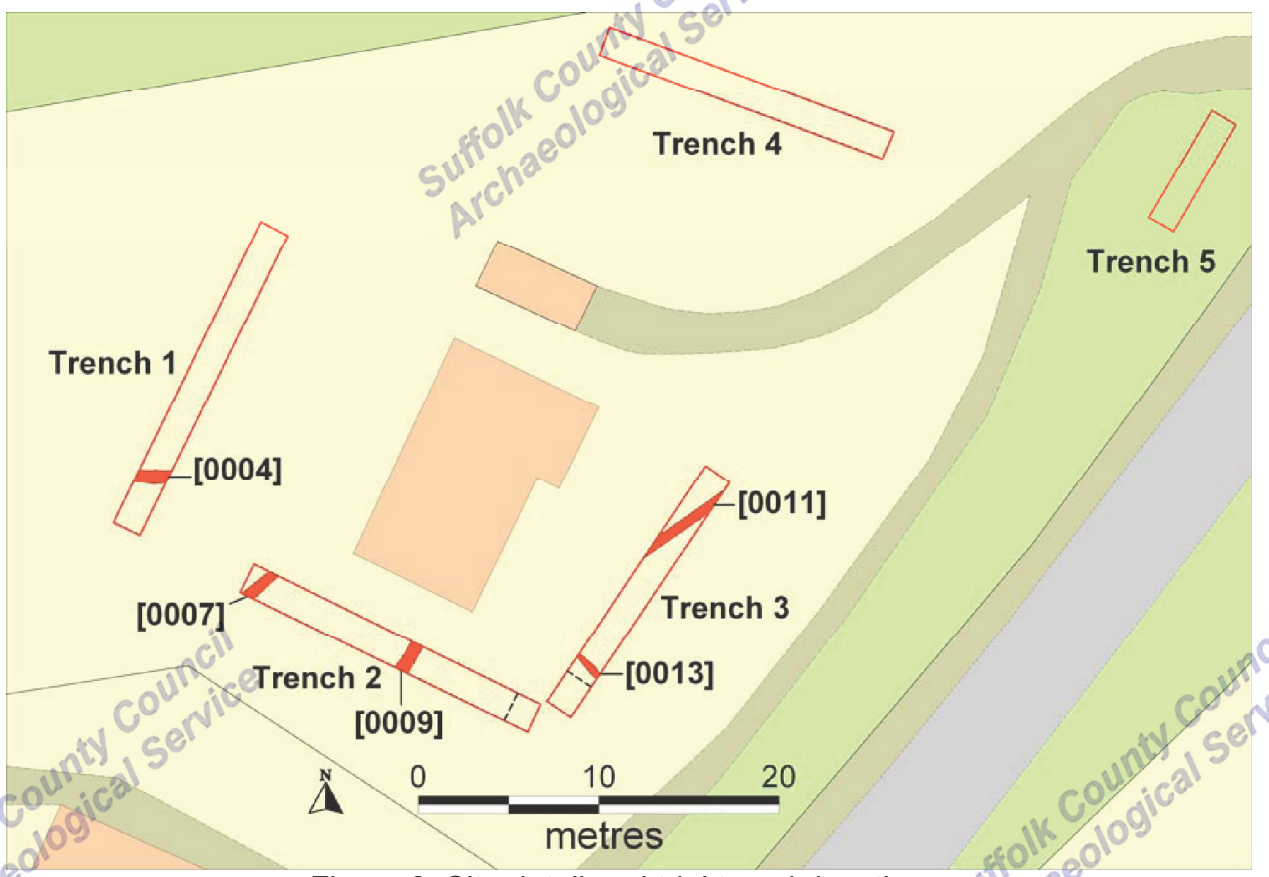

Figure 2. Site detail and trial trench locations.

The site was allocated the HER number HNS 027. All observed deposits were allocated unique context numbers and recorded on pro forma recording sheets. All drawn recording was carried out in a series of 1:50 plans and 1:20 or 1:10 scale section drawings, as appropriate. Surveying of the trenches was problematic, due to the tree cover. Trenches were measured in with reference to standing buildings. Levels for trenches 1 and 2 were taken relative to the ground level in front of the building which was on the 45metre contour line; levels for other trenches were taken relative to the road surface at an estimated height of 43m AOD. This methodology was less than ideal, and a result of no benchmarks surviving in the vicinity and poor sight lines on the site. Levels below ground level (BGL) are therefore more accurate than levels above ordnance datum (AOD), when assessing the impact of the proposed development.

A photographic record of representative sections and trenches was made which, along with the written records, forms the archive, stored with SCCAS Bury St Edmunds. The illustrations of individual trenches were rendered using MapInfo mapping software.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction

The basic trench dimensions were as follows:

	Length (m)	Area sq. m
Trench 1	19.5	32.18
Trench 2	17.58	29.01
Trench 3	15.65	25.82
Trench 4	16.72	27.59
Trench 5	6.83	11.27
Total		125.87

Table 1. Trench dimensions

5.2 Trench 1

The geological natural across the trench was orangy brown sandy clay with frequent flint pebbles (0016). This was present at a depth of 0.65m below ground level (BGL). Towards the south-western end of the trench the geological natural was cut by a linear feature [0004] aligned east-west. This feature had moderate straight sides and a concave base, and was 0.7m wide by over 1.7m long by 0.25m deep. It held a mid greyish brown sandy clay fill (0005) with frequent flecks of charcoal, occasional flints and rare fired clay/daub inclusions. Nineteen sherds of an Ipswich Ware bowl were recovered from this fill. A further 6 sherds from the same vessel were assigned to the

machining layer. Also recovered from the fill was an iron whittle-tang knife (SF 1001), fragments of burnt animal bone, and fragments of fired clay.

Fill (0005) was sealed by 0.4m of mid orangy brown sandy clay subsoil and 0.25m of dark grey brown loamy clay topsoil and turf (0002).

5.3 Trench 2

The geological natural (0016) was similar to that seen in Trench 1. It was seen at a depth of 0.6m BGL at the northwest end of the trench and 1.0m BGL at the southeast end of the trench; a slope that was added to by the gentle slope of the ground surface. At the northwest end of the trench the natural geology was cut by a SW-NE aligned linear feature [0007]. This had moderate convex sides and a concave base, and a V-shaped profile, that was 0.63m wide by over 1.75m long, and 0.18m deep. It contained a pale yellowy brown sandy clay fill (0008), from which a sherd of Late Saxon Thetford ware was recovered, and a residual struck flint.

In the middle of the trench a linear feature [0009], with moderate convex sides and a concave base, 0.9m wide by over 1.6m long, and 0.23m deep cut the natural. It held a mid greyish brown sandy clay fill (0010) with occasional angular flint inclusions. Four sherds of 12th-13th century medieval jug were recovered from this fill, and two residual struck flints.

Sealing the geological natural, and seemingly limited to the south-eastern end of the trench, was a deposit of mid brown sandy clay (0015) that was 0.4m deep lensing out 6.1m from the southeast end of the trench. The entire trench was then sealed by 0.4m to 0.48m of mid reddish and yellowish brown sandy clay (0003), and 0.2m of dark grey brown loamy clay topsoil and turf (0002). A fragment of lava quern was recovered from deposit (0003).

5.4 Trench 3

The geological natural (0016) was seen at a depth of 1.0m BGL. It was sealed by 0.4m of mid brown sandy clay with charcoal inclusions (0019). Deposit (0019) was cut by a NW-SE aligned linear feature [0013] that had moderate concave and convex sides and a concave base. It measured 0.64m wide by over 1.6m long by 0.06m deep. The

recorded depth is misleading however, because only the portion cutting the natural was excavated. It held a mid greyish brown sandy clay fill (0014) from which a single struck flint was recovered.

Deposit (0019) was also cut by a SW-NE aligned linear feature [0011], that had moderate concave sides and a concave base. It measured over 4.5m long by 0.55m wide, and was 0.08m deep. Once again, the depth is misleading as only the portion cutting the natural geology was excavated. This feature contained a mid greyish brown sandy clay fill (0012) with moderate stones and occasional charcoal flecks. Two sherds of Late Saxon Thetford ware came from this fill, as well as a single residual struck flint.

These features were sealed by 0.4m of mid reddish and yellowish brown sandy clay with frequent angular flints (0018) and 0.2m of dark grey brown loamy clay topsoil and turf (0002). A sherd of possible Middle Saxon Ipswich ware and 3 fragments of fired clay were collected during the machining of the trench as un-stratified finds.

5.5 Trench 4

The geological natural in trench 4 was 0.45m BGL, and was orangy brown gravelly sand (0016). It was sealed by 0.3m of pale orangy brown sandy clay (0020) and 0.15m of mid brown sandy loam (0002).

5.6 Trench 5

The geological natural was recorded at a depth of 1.0m to 1.1m and was orangy brown gravelly sand (0016). It was sealed by 0.6 to 0.7m of pale to mid brown gravelly silty sand (0021), followed by 0.4m of mid brown loamy sand topsoil.

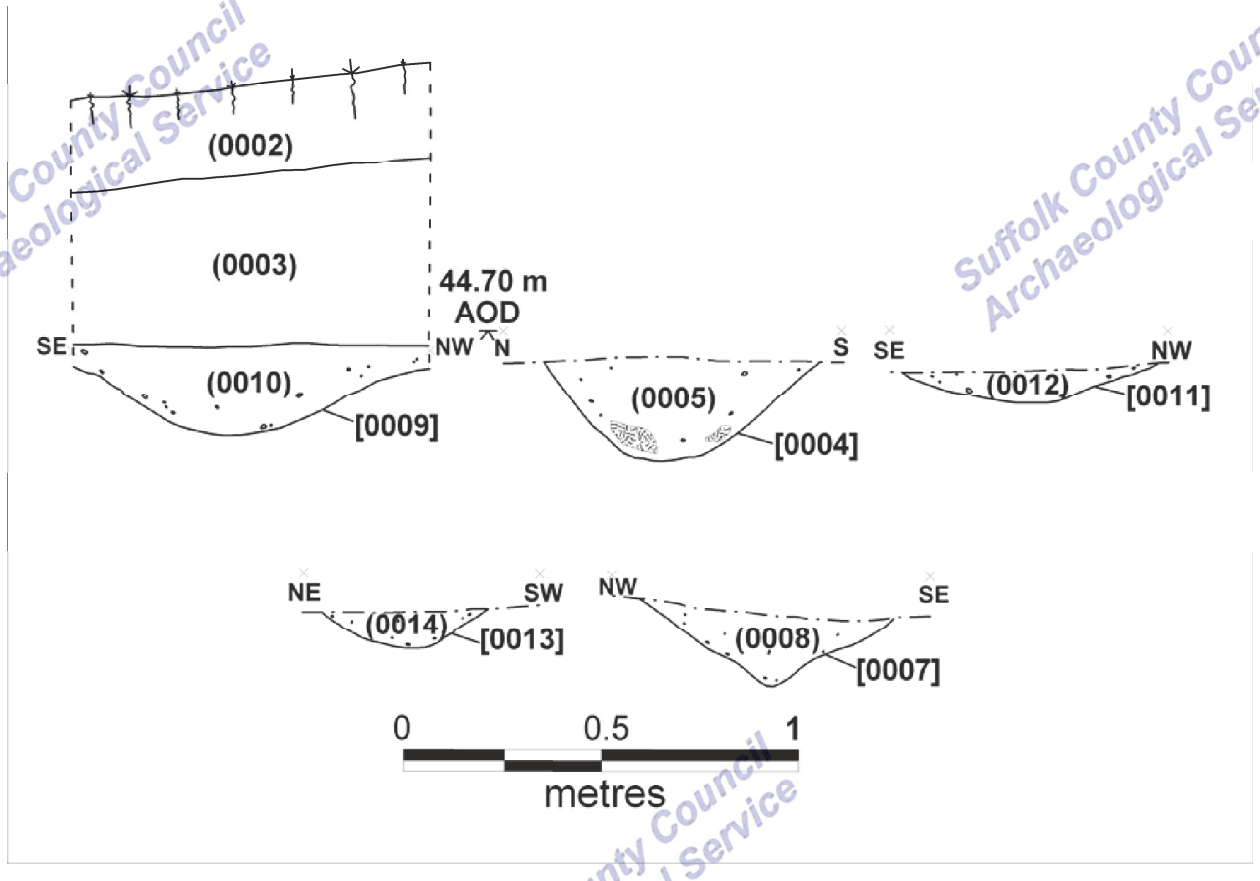

Figure 3. Sections.

6. Finds and environmental evidence (Cathy Tester)

6.1 Introduction

Finds were collected from eight contexts in three evaluation trenches as shown in the table below.

Tr No	Ctxt	Pottery		Flint		Animal bone.		Fired clay		Miscellaneous	Spotdate
		No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g		
1	0001	6	82	2	27						M Saxon
2	0003									Lava stone 2-24g	Undated
1	0005	19	104			41	14	7	5	burnt flint 1-5g, Iron 1-<1g	Mid Saxon
3	0006	1	7					3	7		Mid Saxon
2	0008	1	5	1	11						L Saxon
2	0010	4	207	2	5						12th-13th C
3	0012	2	6	1	5						L Saxon?
3	0014			1	3						
Total		33	411	7	51	41	14	10	12		

Table 2. Finds quantities

6.2 Pottery (Sue Anderson.)

Thirty-three sherds of pottery weighing 411g were collected from six contexts. Table 3 shows the quantification by context.

Ctxt	Fabric	No.	Wt/g	Description	Spotdate
0001	SIPS	6	82	Fragments of rim & base of a small bowl,sooted, also in 0005, rim diam 140mm (31%), type B?	MSaxon
0005	SIPS	19	104	Fragments of base & body of the vessel in 0001	MSaxon
0006	SIPS?	1	7	Greyware sherd, surfaces lost	MSaxon?
0008	THET	1	5	Black surface, red core, shallow girth grooving	LSaxon
0010	MCWG	4	207	Fragments of jug in coarse sandy fabric, oxidised externally, short strap handle with thumbing and upright thickened rim, diameter c.110 (20%)	12th-13th c.
0012	THET?	2	6	Small (AA) jar rim type 4, diam 90mm (14%)	LSaxon?

Table 3. Pottery catalogue.

Key: SIPS – Sandy Ipswich Ware; THET – Thetford-type ware; MCWG – medieval coarseware gritty.

Twenty-five fragments of a small Ipswich Ware bowl were collected from unstratified context 0001 and ditch 0004 (0005) in Trench 1. The full profile of the vessel can be reconstructed from three joining sherds, showing that it is a shallow vessel with a thick rounded base, slight girth grooving on the lower half, and an unusually fine, narrow rim which is slightly everted with an internal bevel (Type B; West 1963, fig. 41). A similar vessel was recovered at Cox Lane in Pit 16 (West 1963, fig. 50 P16 L5 no. 4), although that example had been knife-trimmed at the base. One other possible sherd of Ipswich Ware was unstratified in Trench 3 (0006). A girth-grooved body sherd of Thetford-type ware was found in ditch 0007 (0008) in Trench 2. Two rim sherds from a small jar in ditch 0011 (0012) in Trench 3 have also been identified as this ware, although there is a possibility that they may be from a Roman greyware vessel. On balance, however, the hardness of the fabric suggests a Late Saxon date.

Fragments of a medieval jug with a short, thumbed strap handle and bright orange external surface were found in ditch 0009 (0010) in Trench 2. The coarse fabric is typical of 12th-13th-century south Suffolk and northern Essex wares.

This small assemblage may indicate continuity of occupation on the site from the Middle Saxon to medieval periods, or it could simply represent three isolated and short episodes of activity. Further work on the site may help to elucidate this.

6.3 Fired clay

Fired clay was recovered from two contexts. Seven small fragments (4g) in an orange medium sandy fabric with ferrous inclusions were recovered from the environmental sample from ditch 0004 (0005) in Trench 1. Three fragments in a fine sandy micaceous fabric found unstratified in Trench 3 (0006) with possible Ipswich ware were undiagnostic although finer fired clay of this type was generally used to make objects such as loomweights, rather than for daub or hearth-related functions.

6.4 Metalwork

An iron whittle-tang knife with a rising back that angles down to the tip was found in ditch 0004 (0005) SF 1001. Although it is heavily corroded, the knife appears to be complete or nearly complete, measuring *c*. 80mm in length and *c*. 20mm at its widest point. The tang appears to be shorter in length than the blade. The knife if likely to be Saxon in date and is similar to whittle-tang knives found at Thetford (Goodhall 1984, figs.122-123, 50-62). A radiograph will be required for a more exact description and measurements of the knife.

6.5 Flint (identified by Colin Pendleton)

Seven pieces of struck flint were recovered from five contexts. All but one of the pieces is unpatinated. The material was classified by type and other descriptive comments about appearance, condition and technology were noted and a date suggested. Descriptions by context are shown in the table below.

Ctxt	Type	No	Notes	Date
0001	blade/flake	1	Snapped flake or blade w parallel blade scars on dorsal face. Soft hammer struck. Unpatinated	NEO
	blade/flake	1	Snapped longflake/blade, the snap is unpat. Notched retouch on one edge (pat) Small area of unpat retouch, parallel blade scars on dorsal face. Probably MESO re-uitilised in Later Preh	MESO/LPreh
0008	blade	1	Blade w parallel blade scars on dorsal face. Small retouched notch on one edge. Unpatinated	NEO
0010	flake	1	Squat flake w pronounced ripples. unpatinated	Later Preh
	flake	1	Small irregular flake, parallel flake scars on dorsal face. Hard hammer struck. Unpatinated	Later Preh
0012	flake	1	Relatively thick flake w hinge fracture and limited edge retouch. Unpatinated	Later Preh
0014	flake	1	Snapped flake w hinge fracture. Unpatinated	Later Preh

Table 4. Flint catalogue

The flint assemblage represents at least three different periods of prehistoric activity. The earliest piece is a Mesolithic long flake or blade which was probably re-used in a later prehistoric period. Another long flake or blade and a blade are Neolithic and four flakes are later prehistoric, probably Bronze Age or even later

6.6 Lava stone

Two fragments of lavastone were collected from subsoil/possible colluvial layer 0003 in Trench 2. The pieces are too small to have any distinguishing features but the material is presumed to come from a hand-operated rotary quern which could be Roman or later. The stone is grey vesicular lava which is almost certainly of Rhenish origin although its exact source cannot be confirmed.

6.7 Burnt flint

A small fragment (5g) of burnt flint was found in the non-floating residue from the environmental sample 1 in ditch 0004 (0005).

6.8 Animal bone

Forty-one tiny fragments of animal bone weighing 14g were found in the non-floating residue from environmental sample 1 in ditch 0004 (0005). Approximately two thirds of the fragments are burnt and the remaining third are unburnt but in very poor condition, probably representing the crumbled remains of a single fragment.

6.9 Plant macrofossils and other remains (Val Fryer)

6.91 Introduction and method statement

A sample for the evaluation of the content and preservation of the plant macrofossil assemblage was taken from a fill within pit 0004.

The sample was bulk floated by SCCAS staff and the flot was collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flot was scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table 5. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). All plant remains were charred.

Sample No.	**1**
Context No.	**0005**
Feature No.	**0004**
Herbs	
Chenopodium album L.	x
Small Fabaceae indet.	x
Galium sp.	x
G. aparine L.	x
Rumex sp.	x
R. acetosella L.	x
Urtica dioica L.	xcf
Vicia/Lathyrus sp.	xx
Tree/shrub macrofossils	
Prunus sp.	xcf
Rubus sp.	xx
R. idaeus L.	xcf
R. sect. *Glandulosus* Wimmer & Grab	x
Other plant macrofossils	
Charcoal <2mm	xxxx
Charcoal >2mm	xxx
Charcoal >5mm	x
Charred root/stem	xx
Indet.seeds	x
Other remains	
Black tarry material	x
Bone	x
Fish bone	xcf
Small coal frags.	x
Small mammal/amphibian bone	x
Sample volume (litres)	**20**
Volume of flot (litres)	**0.3**
% flot sorted	**50%**

Table 5. Plant macrofossils and other remains from Ditch 0004 (0005)

Key: x = 1-10 specimens, xx = 11-50 specimens, xxx = 51-100 specimens, xxxx = 100+ specimens. cf = compare

6.92 Results

Although the flot was largely composed of charcoal/charred wood fragments, seeds of grassland and hedgerow herbs (including goosegrass (*Galium aparine*) and vetch/vetchling (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.)) were also present along with an assemblage of tree/shrub macrofossils including a moderate density of immature bramble (*Rubus* sp.) type 'pips'.

6.93 Conclusions

Given the number of small, immature bramble seeds it is, perhaps, most likely that the assemblage is at least partly composed of burnt hedge trimmings. Hedges would almost certainly have been cleared and maintained on a regular basis, with any rubbish removed being burnt nearby on small bonfires. As the assemblage contains a number of large charcoal fragments, which are unlikely to be indicative of wind-blown detritus, it is assumed that the current material is derived from rubbish, which was deliberately deposited within the ditch fill after burning.

6.94 Recommendations for further work

The current assemblage is almost certainly the product of a single episode of burning and may not, therefore, be typical of the material present within other features in the immediate area. However, if further excavations are undertaken, it is recommended that additional samples of approximately 20-40 litres in volume are taken from any dated and well- sealed features which are recorded.

6.10 Discussion of Material Evidence

Finds were collected from eight contexts in three evaluation trenches. The assemblage is of modest size and the range of types present is also limited but indicates activity on this site or in the vicinity during the prehistoric, Saxon and medieval periods.

The earliest finds are within the struck flint assemblage in which three different periods of prehistoric activity are represented. The earliest phase is Mesolithic represented by a patinated long flake/blade which was unstratified in Trench 1. A blade and an unstratified long flake/blade, both unpatinated, are Neolithic. The rest of the flint consists of unpatinated flakes which are later prehistoric, probably Bronze Age or Iron Age. All of the flint is redeposited in later-dated contexts and is typical of what is often a 'background scatter' of dispersed prehistoric activity on sites.

Middle Saxon Ipswich ware pottery was found in two contexts in Trench 1 and another possible sherd was unstratified in Trench 3. Late Saxon Thetford-type ware was found in ditches 0007 and 0011 in Trenches 2 and 3. A single medieval vessel was found in ditch 0009 in Trench 2. It has been suggested that although the pottery assemblage may indicate continuity of occupation on the site from the Middle Saxon to medieval periods, it could also represent three short and isolated episodes of activity. Further work on the site may clarify this.

Although the macrofossil assemblage is the product of a single burning episode and may not be typical of materials present in other features in the area, it demonstrates the potential for well-preserved material within the archaeological horizon.

7. Discussion

The evaluation has produced evidence of activity from the Middle Saxon period through to the medieval period. This activity was limited to boundary ditches that were on a variety of alignments. Ditch [0004], probably dating to the Middle Saxon period, is on a notably different angle to the line of the modern road, which is presumed to be medieval in origin. Linear feature [0007] in retrospect, is quite likely to be part of the same ditch as [0011]. The two features had very similar profiles and Late Saxon Thetford ware was recovered from both. The slight difference in alignment between the two features can easily be explained by a small error in surveying the trenches. This ditch also has a different alignment from the modern road, and so may pre-date it.

Ditch [0009] was of probable medieval date, and significantly, was parallel to the modern road. Ditch [0013] was perpendicular to both the road and ditch [0009] and produced no finds, but was probably contemporaneous. These ditches may form the side and rear boundaries to a small plot of land adjacent to the road. This plot may have contained a medieval building, but there was no evidence for this within the evaluation trenches. The 12th-13th century date for this enclosure probably indicates that the line of the modern road was established by this date.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

The archaeological evaluation at Silver Birches, Hintlesham, although modest in scale, has produced some important information about the development of the village. The prehistoric struck flints cover a range of time periods and are all residual finds in later features. They are typical of the 'background scatter' of dispersed prehistoric sites that may be expected in the region. It is not clear whether the ditches, which date to the middle Saxon, late Saxon, and medieval periods, represent continuous occupation or three separate phases. It does appear however that at some time between the late Saxon period and the 12th-13th century, the site was reorganized; probably relative to a newly established thoroughfare, along which enclosures or house plots were laid out. Prior to this the ditches may have been for field boundaries, although the presence of domestic objects like the complete bowl and knife within ditch [0004] suggests that a Middle Saxon settlement was nearby. This is supported by the environmental evidence which is indicative of a bonfire of hedge trimmings mixed with domestic rubbish.

Development of the plot is likely to impact upon similar archaeological deposits to those recorded in the evaluation phase of work. These archaeological features were limited to the southern trenches, which may be representative of overall activity on the site. It should be noted however that placement of trenches was based partly on logistical requirements and so the southern part of site was trenched more thoroughly than the northern portion. The ditches seen in the middle of the site are probably field boundary ditches, although the presence of domestic rubbish in their fills suggests that a settlement is nearby, portions of which may be on the site. Also, the southern part of site within the small plot bounded by ditches [0009] and [0013] has the potential to contain building remains of probable medieval date.

The findings of this evaluation are that deposits of archaeological importance do survive on the development site, which are likely to be disturbed by the development. These remains are present mainly in the central and southern portion of the site. It is therefore recommended that a suitable programme of archaeological mitigation be developed (the level of which to be determined by the SCCAS Conservation Officer), to ensure the preservation *In-Situ* or preservation by record of these archaeological deposits.

9. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds.
Finds and environmental archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds. Parish box: H / 80 / 4

10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by a number of archaeological staff, (Linzi Everett, Duncan Stirk, Anna West) all from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The project was managed by Rhodri Gardner. The post-excavation finds work was managed by Cathy Tester. Finds processing was done by Rebekah Pressler. The production of site plans and sections was carried out by Duncan Stirk, and the specialist finds report by Sue Anderson. Other specialist identification and advice was provided by Richenda Goffin and Colin Pendleton.

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Appendix 2 Context list

Context	Type	Description
0001	Finds number	Unstratified finds Trench 1
0002	Topsoil	Dark grey brown loamy clay. Site wide x 0.2 to 0.25m thick.
0003	Subsoil	Mid reddish and yellowish brown sandy clay. Possible colluvium. Trench wide x 0.48m thick. Trench 2
0004	Ditch Cut	Moderate straight sides & concave base. 0.7m wide x >1.7m long x 0.25m deep.
0005	Ditch Fill	Mid greyish brown sandy clay with frequent flecks charcoal, occasional flints & rare fired clay/daub. 0.7m wide x >1.7m long x 0.25m deep.
0006	Finds number	Unstratified find Trench 3
0007	Ditch Cut	Moderate convex sides & concave base. V-profile. 0.63m wide x 1.75m x 0.18m deep
0008	Ditch Fill	Pale yellowy brown sandy clay. 0.63m wide x 1.75m x 0.18m deep
0009	Ditch Cut	Moderate convex sides and concave base. 0.9m wide x 1.6m x 0.23m deep
0010	Ditch Fill	Mid greyish brown sandy clay with occasional angular flint. 0.9m wide x 1.6m x 0.23m deep
0011	Ditch Cut	Moderate concave sides & concave base. >4.5m long x 0.55m wide x >0.08m deep
0012	Ditch Fill	Mid greyish brown sandy clay with moderate stones and occasional charcoal flecks. >4.5m long x 0.55m wide x >0.08m deep
0013	Ditch Cut	Moderate concave & convex sides & concave base. 0.64m wide x >1.6m long x >0.06m deep
0014	Ditch Fill	Mid greyish brown sandy clay. 0.64m wide x >1.6m long x >0.06m deep
0015	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay. Buried soil. >6.1m long x >1.6m wide x 0.4m deep. Trench 2
0016	Natural	Orangy brown sandy clay with frequent flint pebbles or orangy brown gravelly sand.
0017	Subsoil	Mid orangy brown sandy clay. Trench wide x 0.4m thick. Trench 1
0018	Subsoil	Mid reddish and yellowish brown sandy clay with frequent angular flints. Trench wide x 0.4m thick. Trench 3
0019	Subsoil	Mid brown sandy clay. Buried soil. Trench wide x 0.4m thick. Trench 3
0020	Subsoil	Pale orangy brown sandy clay. Trench wide x 0.3m thick.. Trench 4
0021	Subsoil	Pale to mid brown gravelly silty sand. Trench wide x 0.6m thick. Trench 5

Suffolk County Council

The Archaeological Service

Environment and Transport Service Delivery
Shire Hall
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IP33 2AR

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Evaluation

SILVER BIRCHES, SILVER HILL, HINTLESHAM, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK, IP8 3NJ

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 has been granted (B/08/01650) by Babergh District Council for the re-development of a site known as Silver Birches, in Hintlesham, Suffolk (TM 092 434). Permission has been granted conditional upon an acceptable program of archaeological works being carried out under a PPG 16, paragraph 30 condition. This brief is for archaeological evaluation of the site, and is the first stage of the program of archaeological work. Any additional work required will be subject to further Brief and Specification documents.

1.2 The site measures 0.3 ha in size and is situated on the northern side Silver Hill to the east of Hintlesham Park and Church at 45.00 m AOD. The soils are a deep loam of the Ludford series over glaciofluvial drift geology.

1.3 The site is recognised as being in an area of high archaeological importance as recorded in the County's Historic Environment Record. This is attested by the known archaeological sites in the area which include the location of a Saxon cemetery 50 m to the east in a former gravel pit. Silver Hill is also an old medieval road, with a number of medieval and late medieval buildings located along its length. Including the neighbouring house Hyntle Place, dated to the 16th Century. The site also sits on the northern bank of the Spring Brook on a south facing aspect, an area of high archaeological potential.

1.4 There is therefore a high potential for encountering Saxon and medieval deposits at this site. Aspects of the proposed works, specifically works relating to the re-development of the site and the erection of two new properties would cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.

1.5 In order to inform the archaeological mitigation strategy, a staged scheme of archaeological evaluation work is required. This includes a linear trenched evaluation of the site, prior to any development and demolition work.

1.6 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*.

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: Trenched Evaluation

3.1 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover 5% by area, which is approximately 150 m^2. 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 1.80m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated; this will result in a minimum of 84 m of trenching at 1.80m in width.

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.

3.4 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.

3.5 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.

3.6 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. 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 fulfil 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 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 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 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: William Fletcher

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Reference: /SilverBirches_Hintlesham_Eval2009

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.