

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/205

**Unit 1C, Tomo Industrial Estate,
Stowmarket
SKT misc.**

S. Cass

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Curatorial Officer: Jess Tipper

Project Officer: Simon Cass

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Unit 1C, Tomo Industrial Estate, Stowmarket on the 3rd August 2009 in advance of the construction of a new warehouse/workshop, lorry parking and gates/fencing on the site. Four trenches were excavated, to depths of up to 2.4m. No archaeologically relevant finds or deposits were noted, and the majority of the site appeared to have been heavily disturbed in the preceding 150 years of development.

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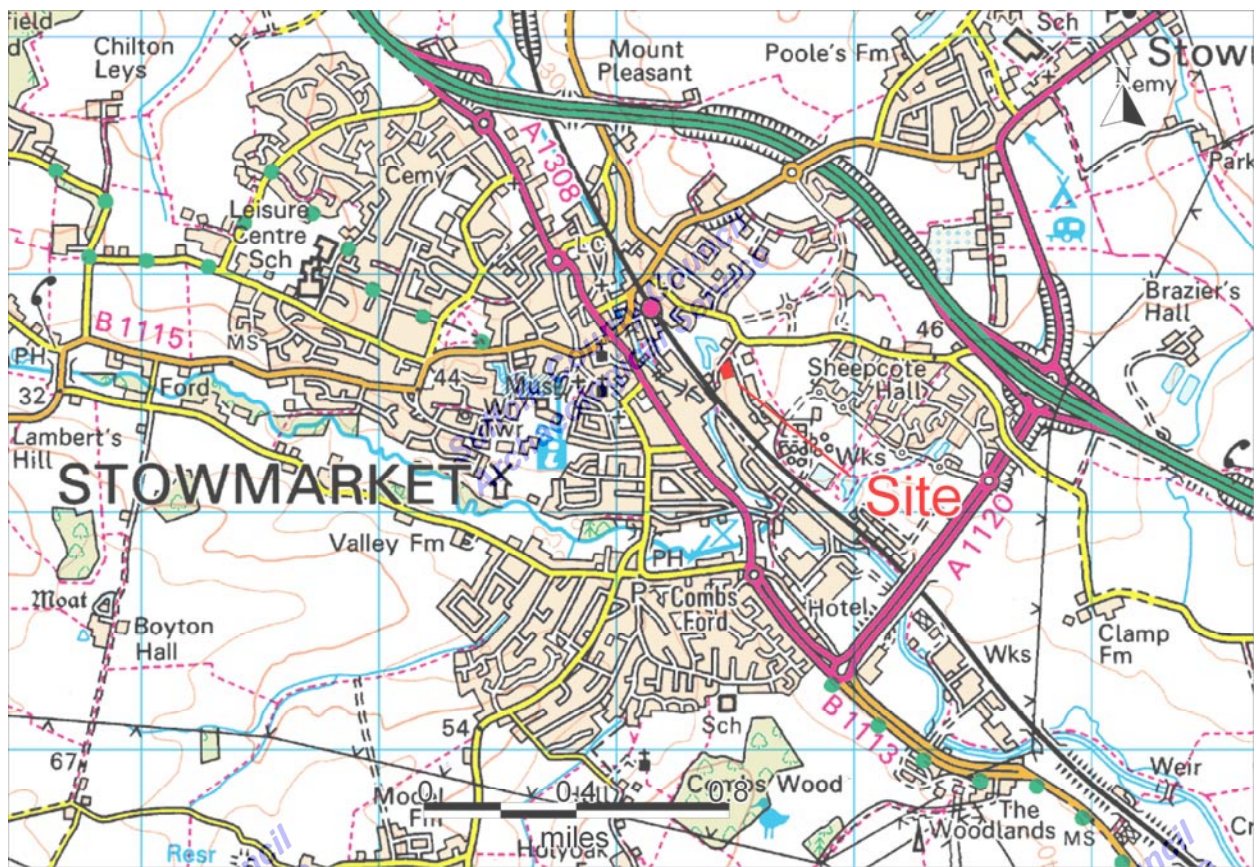
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1. Introduction

Permission (MS/2051/08) has been granted for the construction of a new warehouse/workshop building, lorry parking areas and gates/fencing at Unit 1C, Tomo Industrial Estate, Stowmarket, subject to a condition relating to archaeology requiring the applicant to obtain and undertake a programme of archaeological works agreed upon by Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service Conservation Team. In this case, the scheme was to begin with a trenched evaluation across the site, with the possibility of further works dependant on the results of the evaluation.



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Figure 1. Site location

2. Geology and topography

The site lies at a height of approximately 30m AOD with the majority of the site approximately 1m+ higher than the access road around it, and the underlying geology is listed as deep clay/chalky till, although the presence of the River Gipping nearby and the sites location adjacent to a historically boggy area could lead to peaty or water-lain alluvial silts and gravels being present on the site.

3. Archaeological and historical background

The site lies outside the historic medieval core of Stowmarket, on the far side of the River Gipping, some 4-500m from the believed medieval bridge or fording point underneath Norwich road. The area immediately to the north and northwest of the site appears to have been marshy until the 20th century, although some drainage may have occurred prior to this. Thorney Hall, a medieval Hall site, is recorded on the county Historic Environment Record as being situated some 330m north of the site, and Roman and Iron Age finds and features (including a Roman pottery kiln) have been discovered between 300-450m to the north, northeast and east, most recently in the Cedars Park residential development scheme.

4. Methodology

Prior to arrival on site, the existing concrete slab was broken up by the client across the areas required for trenching using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator with a concrete breaker attachment. Due to space constraints, Trenches 2 and 3 had to be moved from their original locations but the trenching still achieved a good spread across the site. After the concrete slab was broken up, the evaluation trenches were excavated under constant archaeological supervision with a flat-bladed (ditching) bucket. Modern/recent layers were removed in spits down to the top of undisturbed natural geology or any preserved archaeological horizon. Due to the depth of the trenches, hand cleaning of sections or deposits was not always possible. All trenches were photographed and a written record made of their location, depth and the stratigraphy encountered.

5. Results

5.1 Introduction

Four trenches were excavated, in the locations indicated in figure 2. They were not specifically targeting any known archaeological features or structural remains. They varied in length from 10-18m long, and were all 2.5m wide, with depths of up to 2.4m, but more usually between 1.2m-1.5m.

5.2 Trench 1

This trench was 18m long, 2.5m wide and up to 2.4m deep, orientated approximately north-east/south-west. The trench was excavated through a stepped concrete slab, with the highest slab to the north-east. This corresponded with a significantly sized area of dumping/infill, together causing the lower appearance of undisturbed natural deposits. The large dump feature was not bottomed, and its extent is unknown, although there were indications that it was tapering off to the north-western side of the trench.

The stratigraphy encountered at the north-eastern end of the trench consisted of 0.2m of concrete slab over 2m+ of modern dumping deposit/contaminated ground (variously black, dark brown, dark red silts and clays with concrete/cement detritus, ashy lenses, Fe fragments, CBM pieces, whole bricks, etc). Natural mid brown chalky till was observed at a depth of 2.2m at the end of the trench, although the large truncation removed this deposit further along the trench.



Plate 1. Trench 1, facing south-east, showing modern truncation at north eastern end.

The stratigraphy encountered towards the south-western end consisted of 0.2m of concrete slab over 0.8m of modern made/disturbed as in the north-eastern end. Below this was 0.6m of disturbed mid brown sandy clay with flints and gravels, with frequent modern inclusions, although these may have been from the frequent truncations in this

area. Below this, at a depth of 1.6m+ was undisturbed mid brown sandy clay with flints and gravels – believed to be a water-lain deposit, probably relating to hillwash/water run-off down to the River Gipping a short distance to the west.

5.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 was 18m long, 2.5m wide and up to 1.6m deep (at the northern end). The stratigraphy encountered at the southern end consisted of 0.2m of concrete slab over 0.5m of demolition rubble/hardcore. This lay over c. 0.5m of disturbed/contaminated soils, usually a mid greyish sandy clayey silt, sealing undisturbed natural deposits of mid yellowish brown silty clay and gravels. Some of the natural deposits had been stained grey, likely to be a result of chemical leaching from higher deposits. The stratigraphy at the northern end of the trench consisted of 0.2m of concrete slab over c. 0.4m of demolition rubble/hardcore. Below this was a layer c. 0.6m thick of a mid grey brown sandy clay with occasional CBM fragments (though these may have been intrusive) and infrequent small stones/ gravels. Below this was 0.4m+ of natural mid yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small/medium stones and gravels, again, with some leaching/staining from above.

5.4 Trench 3

Trench 3 was 10m long, 2.5m wide and up to 0.5m deep, orientated north-east/south-west. It was necessary to move this trench from its original location some 3m south due to the presence of laden shipping containers in the area. Unfortunately the repositioned trench encountered several buried services of uncertain nature but likely to include live BT cables. One pipe encountered appeared to be leaking diesel fuel, though this was believed residual fuel from a redundant pipe. The trench was abandoned due to the number of unrecorded services in the area. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of c. 0.15m of weak concrete slab over 0.35m of mixed dark brownish red, dark grey and mid yellowish brown clayey silt.



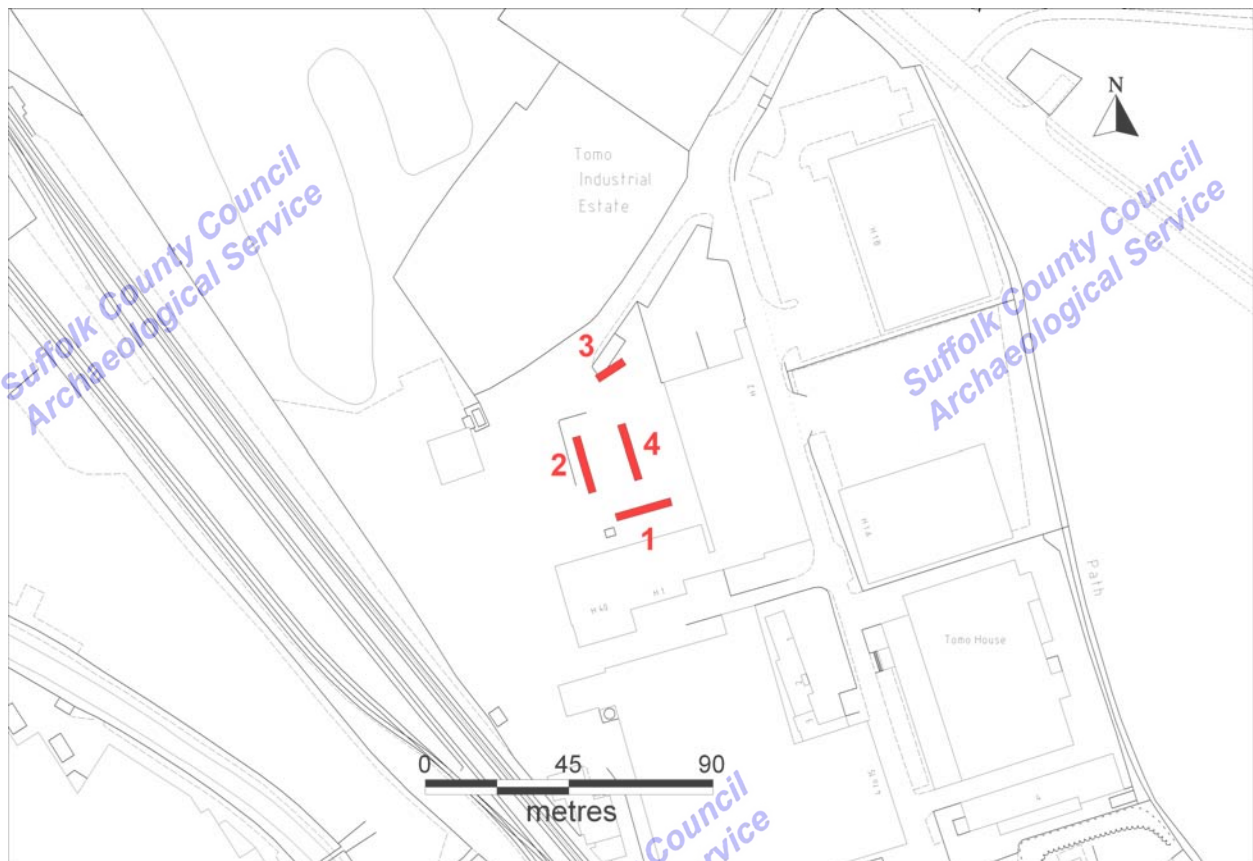
Plate 3. Trench 3, facing north, showing unidentified pipes in centre and northern end of trench.

5.5 Trench 4

Trench 4 was 18m long, 2.5m wide and between 1.2-1.3m deep. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of 0.4m of concrete slab (comprised of two layers each c. 0.2m thick) above 0.7m of modern disturbance similar to that in Trench 2, with generally mixed silty clays and clayey silts and frequent modern detritus. Natural yellow/brown silty clay and chalky till was encountered between 1.2 and 1.3m below surface level, and similarly to Trenches 1 and 2 there was apparent staining/leaching into the natural geology resulting in grey silty patches amongst the yellow clays.

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Figure 2. Trench location

6. Finds and environmental evidence

No finds of archaeological relevance were recovered from the evaluation trenches, and no uncontaminated deposits of environmental interest were located.

7. Discussion

It would appear from the results of the evaluation that although the archaeological horizon lies at significant depth across most of the site, there has been noticeable truncation into and through it since the sites use as a chemical works. While the extant natural geology occurs at 1.2m deep or lower, the apparent lack of any surviving undisturbed subsoil layer means this is not certainly the true horizon, which may have been truncated away. The presence of large amounts of apparent contamination of subsoils suggests that any preserved organic remains nearby may well have suffered through contamination, making them of less use for further analysis. This is of particular relevance given the historically marshy area to the north and northwest, closer to the site of Thorney Hall.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In conclusion, it appears that there is little archaeological potential remaining within the area under development here. Significant late post-medieval and modern truncations and contamination have likely destroyed any features that may have been present, and there is only conjectural evidence to suggest that such features ever existed. The low potential for archaeology, coupled with the likely contamination levels mean that no further work is recommended for this site.

9. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Ipswich T:\ENV\ARC\PARISH\Stowmarket
Finds and environmental archive: None.

10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by Simon Cass and Alan Smith from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was managed by Stuart Boulter, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

The production of site plans was carried out by Simon Cass and the report was checked by Stuart Boulter.

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.

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Brief and Specification for Trenched Evaluation

SITE 1C, TOMO INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, CREETING ROAD, STOWMARKET, SUFFOLK (2051/08)

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 warehouse building and lorry parking area at Site 1C, Tomo Industrial Estate, Creeting Road, Stowmarket (TM 054 585) has been granted by Mid Suffolk District Council conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work (2051/08) (**see accompanying 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, which measures 0.30ha. in size, is located on the western side of Creeting Road and on the eastern side of the valley of the River Gipping and on the edge of the flood plain, on deep clay over chalky till at c. 30.00m AOD.
 - 1.4 This site lies in an area of archaeological importance recorded in the County Historic Environment Record, to the south and west of areas of late prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlement. This proposal will cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists. There is also high potential for encountering palaeo-environmental deposits in this location.
 - 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 to cover 5% by area of the proposed development site, which is c. 150m². 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 83.00m 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.

3.3 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 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 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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Tel: 01284 352197

Date: 10 March 2009

Reference: / Site1CTomolIndustrialEstate_Stowmarket2009

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.