

## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT**

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**SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/216**

# **New Pre-School Building County Primary School, Bacton BAC 028**

**M. Sommers**  
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## HER Information

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**Planning Application No:** n/a

**Date of Fieldwork:** 19 August 2009

**Grid Reference:** TM 0530 6710

**Funding Body:** Cotton Consulting (on behalf of client)

**Curatorial Officer:** Dr Jess Tipper

**Project Officer:** M. Sommers

**Oasis Reference:** suffolkc1-63440

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



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## Summary

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An archaeological evaluation was carried out at the site of a proposed new pre-school building on land to the south of Bacton County Primary School, Bacton. A single 20m trench was excavated down to the top of the natural subsoil but no archaeological features of any period were identified although a single small abraded sherd of Roman grey ware was recovered from the topsoil. The natural subsoil consisted of an orange-yellow silt overlying grey boulder clay which occurred at a depth of c. 500mm (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service for Cotton Consulting).





# 1. Introduction

It has been proposed to construct a new pre-school building on land to the south of the County Primary School at Bacton. The Planning Authority was advised that any consent granted should be conditional upon an agreed programme of archaeological work taking place prior to the commencement of the development.

The first stage of the programme of work, as specified in the Brief and Specification produced by Dr. J. Tipper, of the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team, (Appendix 1) was the undertaking of a trenched evaluation in order to ascertain what levels of archaeological evidence may be present within the proposed site and to inform any mitigation strategies that may be deemed necessary.

The proposed site is located within the existing playing field to the south of the primary school. The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the proposed site is TM 0530 6710 (Fig. 1).

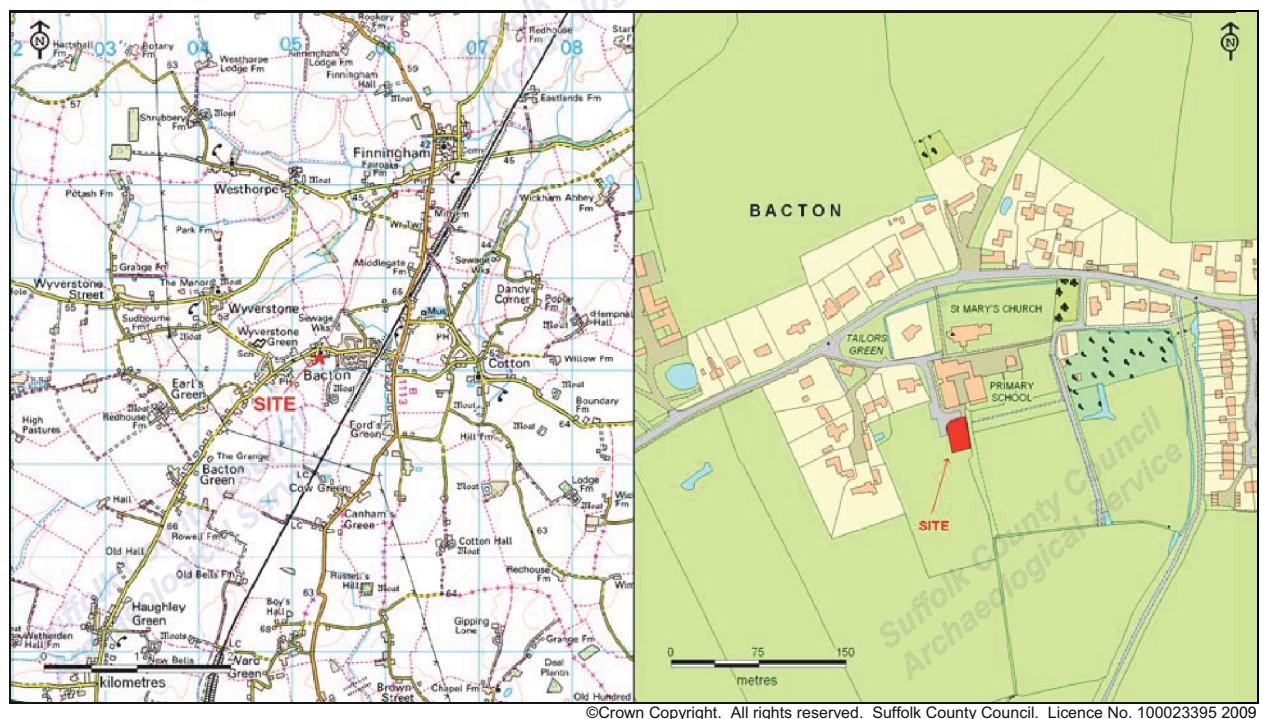


Figure 1. Location Plan

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Field Team who were commissioned by Cotton Consulting on behalf of their client who ultimately funded the project.

## **2. Geology and topography**

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The site is situated upon level ground, part of the large but slightly undulating plateau of glacial till that forms much of central Suffolk.

It is on the edge of the medieval settlement of Bacton. The nearest watercourse is a small seasonal dry stream located c. 900m to the north.

## **3. Archaeological and historical background**

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There are no known sites recorded on the County Historic Environment Record within the proposed site area but it is situated within an area of medieval settlement and lies only 70m to the south of the medieval St Mary's Church and the adjacent Tailor's Green. Consequently there is a high potential for medieval remains to be located at this site.

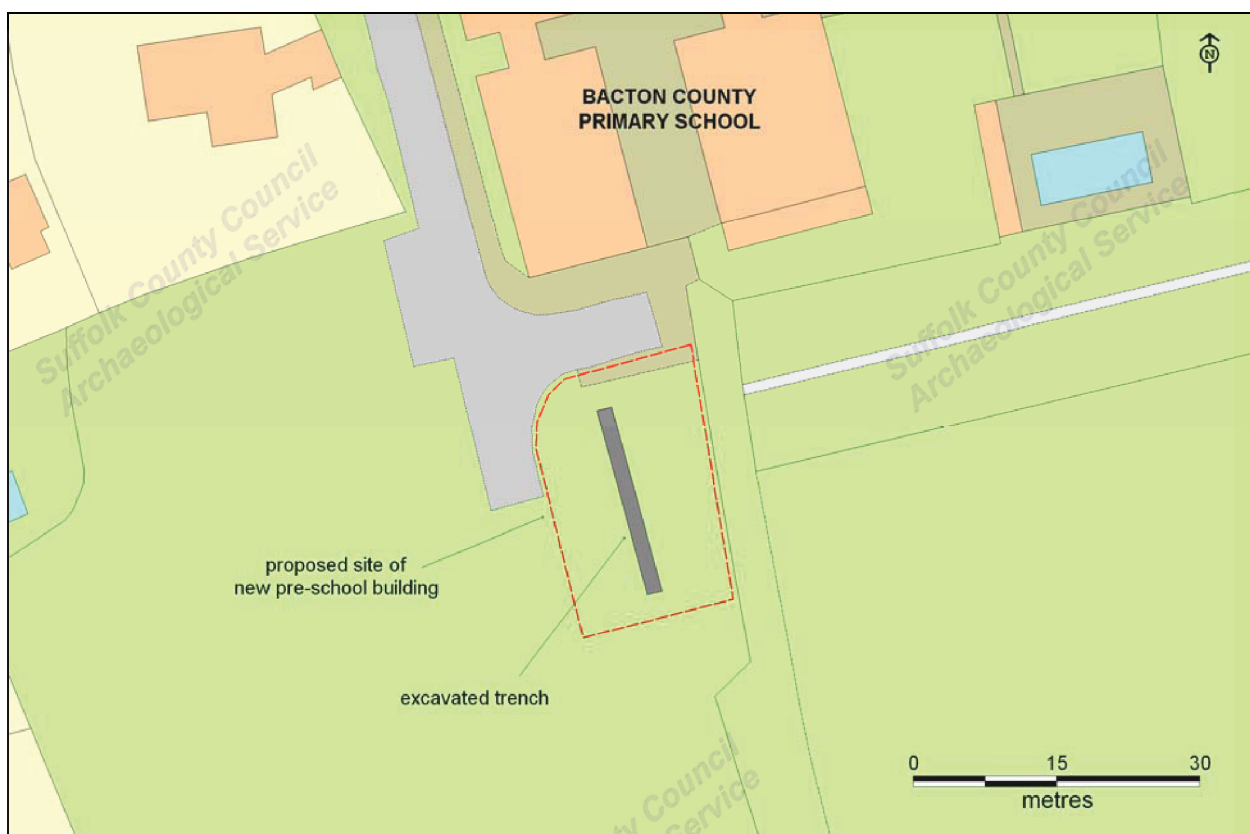
## **4. Methodology**

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A trial trench was machine excavated down to the level of the natural subsoil using the back arm of JCB type wheeled excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket. The trench was excavated in accordance with an approved plan.

The machining of the trench was closely observed throughout in order to identify archaeological features and deposits and to recover any artefacts that may be revealed. Excavation continued until the undisturbed natural subsoil was encountered, the exposed surface of which was then examined for cut features or deposits. Had any features/deposits been noted they would have been sampled through hand excavation in order to determine their depth and shape and to recover datable artefacts.

Following excavation the nature of the overburden was recorded, the trench location was plotted and the depths were noted. A brief photographic record of the work undertaken was also compiled using a 10 megapixel digital camera.



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Figure 2. Trench Plan

## 5. Results

A single trench with a total length of 20m was excavated across the proposed site of the new pre-school building (Fig. 2). The trench revealed a natural subsoil of fine, orange-yellow silt overlying an undulating grey boulder clay at a depth of c. 500mm (Plates I and II). The overburden comprised a dark top soil which lay directly on the surface of the natural subsoil and the interface between the two was blurred and irregular.

No significant archaeological features or deposits were noted in the trench although a single abraded sherd of Roman grey ware was recovered from the topsoil.

## **6. Finds and environmental evidence**

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No environmental evidence was recovered although a small abraded sherd of Roman grey ware (J. Plouviez, pers. comm.) was recovered from the topsoil (not retained).

## **7. Discussion**

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No evidence for medieval activity was recovered from the excavated trench. It was cleanly cut and had any features or deposits been present it is highly likely they would have been identified. This does not entirely preclude the possibility that some small isolated features could occur outside the actual trench but given the complete absence of any medieval artefacts recovered during the evaluation this would seem unlikely.

Analysis of the modern map of Bacton suggests the church and the site of Tailor's Green was originally bounded by a continuous road to the south as well as the existing road to the north and it seems likely that the medieval settlement was focused around the outer edges of the green and church site as delineated by these roads. This would place the proposed pre-school site to the rear of any medieval properties that may have fronted on the southern road.

The single sherd of Roman grey ware is possibly related to manuring of ploughed fields which could suggest that this area was formerly part of an estate associated with a known Roman villa site situated c. 500m to the northwest (recorded on the County's Historic Environment Record as WVV 010).

## **8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work**

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It is that it is unlikely that any significant archaeological deposits or features are under threat from the proposed development and consequently no further work is recommended.

## 9. Archive deposition

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Paper archive: T:\ENV\ARC\PARISH\Bacton\pre-school building (Primary School)

Photo Archive: GDA 39 – GDA 43 in T:\ENV\ARC\MSWORKS3\Digital photos\GDA

Historic Environment Record reference under which archive is held: BAC 028

A summary has also been entered into OASIS, the online database, ref. suffolkc1-63440

## 10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

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The evaluation was carried out by M. Sommers from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The machine was provided by Holmes Plant Limited and operated by P. Clarke.

The project was directed by M. Sommers, and managed by Rhodri Gardner, who also provided advice during the production of the report. The final report was checked by John Newman.

### **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.



**Plates**

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Plate I. soil profile as revealed in western face of the trench (ref. GDA 41)



Plate II. view of the trench looking north (ref. GDA 40)

## Appendix 1 Brief and specification

### BRIEF AND SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

#### BACTON PRIMARY SCHOOL, TAILORS GREEN, BACTON

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety responsibilities.

1. **The nature of the development and archaeological requirements**
  - 1.1 A planning application has been made to Suffolk County Council for the erection of a pre-school building at Bacton Primary School, Tailors Green, Bacton IP14 4LL (TM 053 671). Please contact the developer 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 area of the proposed development (which measures c. 242m<sup>2</sup> in area) is located on the south side of Bacton Primary School. The soils are deep loam to clay of the Beccles series, derived from the underlying chalky till at c. 60 - 65.00m AOD.
  - 1.4 This school lies within an area of medieval settlement, to the south of the medieval church (HER no. BAC 014). There is high potential for occupation deposits of this period to be disturbed by development. The proposed works 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, the following work will be required:
    - A linear trenched evaluation is required of the development area.
  - 1.6 **The results of this evaluation will enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified. Decisions on the need for and scope of any mitigation measures, 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 specification.**
  - 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 (9 – 10 The Churchyard, 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 A single linear trial trench 20.00m in length, aligned N to S, is to be excavated to cover the area of the new building. The trench is to be a minimum of 1.80m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated.



- 3.2 If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' at least 1.50m 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).
- 3.6 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.
- 3.7 Archaeological contexts should, where possible, be sampled for palaeo-environmental 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 palaeo-environmental and palaeo-economic 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 Rachel Ballantyne, 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.
- 3.8 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.
- 3.9 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 3.10 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed SCCAS/CT during the course of the evaluation).
- 3.11 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.
- 3.12 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.

- 3.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies and/or high resolution digital images.
- 3.14 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.
- 3.15 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 An unbound copy of the evaluation report, clearly marked DRAFT, must be presented to SCCAS/CT for approval within six months of the completion of fieldwork unless other arrangements are negotiated with the project sponsor and SCCAS/CT.
- Following acceptance, two copies of the report should be submitted to SCCAS/CT together with a digital .pdf version.
- 5.18 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.
- 5.19 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.

5.20 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

Suffolk County Council  
Archaeological Service Conservation Team  
Environment and Transport Service Delivery  
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Date: 23 July 2009

Reference: / BactonPrimarySchool-Bacton2009

**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.**