

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/246

**6 Market Place, Mildenhall
MNL 620**

J. A. Craven

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HER Information

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Funding Body: Mr A Minns

Curatorial Officer: Keith Wade

Project Officer: J. A. Craven

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

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Summary

An archaeological monitoring was carried out during the construction of an extension to the rear of 6 Market Place, Mildenhall, a Grade II listed building dating to the late 16th century. A large pit of unknown date and a buried soil layer were identified immediately to the rear of the property, the latter containing a sizeable pottery assemblage consisting of late 16th century Rhenish stonewares. These are possibly derived from single act of deposition such as a tavern clearance and, being contemporary with the property, therefore suggest a possible original function for the building or one of its immediate neighbours.

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1. Introduction

An archaeological monitoring was carried out at 6 Market Place, Mildenhall, during the groundworks for a new extension at the property in September and October 2009. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification issued by Keith Wade (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team) to fulfil a planning condition on application F/2009/0218/FUL. The work was funded by the developer, Mr A Minns.

The planning condition had been placed as the site had high potential for archaeological deposits to be disturbed or destroyed by the development (see below) and so archaeological monitoring was required to record any affected deposits.

2. Geology and topography

Mildenhall is situated on the eastern edge of the fens and the site was located in the centre of the town, to the rear of a property fronting the Market Place, at a height of c.10m AOD (Fig. 1). The site lies on well drained, calcareous, coarse and fine loamy soils overlying chalk and chalky drift (Ordnance Survey 1983).

3. Archaeological and historical background

The site was of interest as it lay in the heart of the medieval settlement of Mildenhall, which is defined in the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (HER) as an archaeological site of regional importance. The HER also records the medieval Market Cross (MNL 133), a Scheduled Monument and Listed Building, which lies 20m to the south-west and St Mary's Church (MNL 211) which lies some 70m to the south-west.

The site lies to the rear of a range of listed buildings which front onto the Market Place. A summary of the information available at <http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk> is given below for each property.

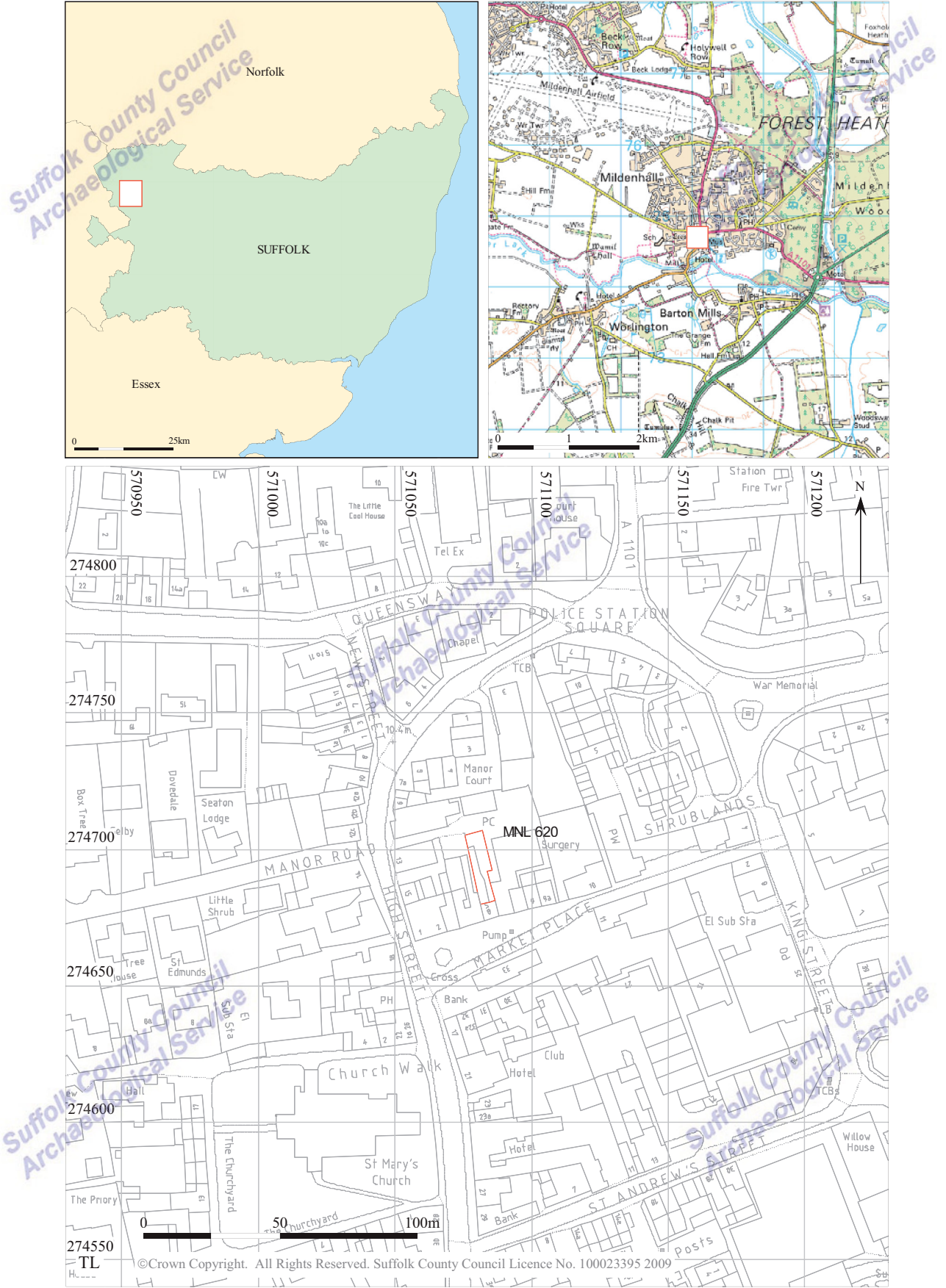


Figure 1. Site location plan

- **1 and 2, The Market Place** (LBS No. 275865) is a timber-framed building with elements of its structure dating to the late 16th century.
- **3, The Market Place** (LBS No. 275909) is a medieval timber and brick building with 17th and 19th century alterations.
- **4, The Market Place** (LBS No. 275866) is constructed of gault brick and dates to the late 17th or early 18th century.
- **Nos. 5 (The Old Gift Shop), 6 (Oak House), and 7 (part of Doctors' Surgery), The Market Place** (LBS No. 275867) is a timber framed, jettied building of late 16th century date with 19th century alterations.
- **Nos. 7 (part of Doctor's Surgery), 8, 9 and The Market Café** (LBS No. 275868) is also a timber framed, jettied building of late 16th century date with 19th and 20th century alterations.

Mildenhall also lies within a dense band of prehistoric and Roman activity that lies along the edge of the fens and so the development had additional potential to disturb multi-period archaeological deposits.

4. Methodology

Following demolition of an existing outbuilding ground levels were lowered across the site by 0.2m but did not fully remove the modern deposits of disturbed ground and rubble. Footing trenches for the extension were then excavated by a machine with a toothed bucket, and were observed by an archaeologist either during or after excavation. The trenches (Fig. 2) measured c.0.6m wide and up to c.1.5m deep.

Excavated spoil was examined for finds. The site was planned at a scale of 1:50, overlying the supplied architectural drawings for the development. Digital colour photographs were taken at all stages of the fieldwork.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-67717) and a digital copy of the report submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>).

The site archive is kept in the main store of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds under HER No. MNL 620.

5. Results

The majority of the trenching, particularly to the south, showed a 0.5m thick build-up of modern deposits directly overlying the natural chalk subsoil, indicating that potential archaeological levels may have seen a high level of truncation.

In the southern part of the site however, against the rear northern wall of the property, several archaeological deposits were identified, starting with a small quantity of unstratified and undated finds material, 0003, which was recovered from the spoilheap. In the western trench against the building a sizeable assemblage of 16th century pottery was recovered from a 0.2m thick layer of mixed rubble and mid brown sand/loam, 0001, which lay at a depth of 0.6m+ under modern deposits.

A large pit, 0004, was seen in section in the eastern trench, lying immediately below the modern deposits. Measuring c.1.5m wide and at least 1.5m deep it was steep sided and cut the natural chalk. Its fill was a mixed dark grey/brown loam with frequent chalk inclusions. The depth and unstable sides of the trench meant that it was not possible to record the feature. Unstratified material, 0002, was recovered from this part of the trench and so probably derived from the feature.



Figure 2. Site plan

6. Finds and Environmental Evidence

6.1. Introduction

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

Context	Pottery		CBM		Animal bone		Fired clay		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0001	105	4280	1	79	6	22			Unstrat, 2nd half of 16th C
0002	1	247							
0003					1	222	2	55	Undated
Total	106	4527	1	79	7	244	2	55	

Table 1. finds quantities

6.2. Pottery

A total of 106 sherds of pottery was recovered from the monitoring weighing 4.527kg. The assemblage was fully quantified and recorded (Appendix 1).

Almost the entire assemblage is made up of a collection of unstratified early post-medieval wares recovered by the developer from a mixed layer of rubble and sand/loam at some depth down. A minimum of fourteen different rims were recorded, although the overall number of individual vessels may actually be many more.

The group consists of many individual Rhenish stoneware drinking jugs and jugs. These are all of one type, although they are in two different sizes, being small and medium globular cordoned jugs, with a double cordon above the flat base. Such plain globular jugs date to the second to third quarters of the sixteenth century (Hurst, fig 106, 332). The majority of these are undecorated, although a single very badly damaged applied face mask was present. Some of the vessels have a plain glaze more like Cologne wares, whilst others have a later, mottled brown glaze more like full Frechen stoneware. Many, although not all, have concentric wire marks on the base, which is a characteristic feature of Frechen stoneware. The rim diameters vary in size between 50mm and 70mm, with the smaller vessels being drinking jugs and the larger ones likely to have been used as pitchers. As very similar products were being made at both Cologne and Frechen in this period it is probably best to describe the stoneware as 'Cologne/Frechen'.

The condition of the stonewares is curious and worthy of further comment. Presumably the group has been burnt and severely damaged post-depositionally. Many of the sherds appear to have been affected by heat, discoloured and even some slightly distorted. On one large body sherd the surface of the vessel has disappeared completely. Overall the appearance of the assemblage resembles a kiln group, but as this pottery was produced on the continent this is not really possible. However, there is documentary evidence to show that there were some attempts to actually produce stonewares in England itself, although not until the seventeenth century (Gaimster 1997 309). In the sixteenth century there is mention of a petition by William Simpson to Queen Elizabeth for an import monopoly on stone pots produced in Cologne with his vague comment that it might 'drawe the making of such like pottes into some decayed town within this realm' (Gaimster 309), but there is no evidence that Simpson did anything further to develop this suggestion. It seems much more likely that the collection of Rhenish jugs and drinking vessels was deposited on one occasion, and that in view of the number of vessels, it may represent a tavern clearance. Further documentary research on this part of the town centre may shed some light on this.

The lower part of a sixteenth century redware chafing dish was identified in 0002, an unstratified find from the south-eastern part of the trenching.

6.3. Ceramic building material

A single fragment of ceramic building material was collected (0.079kg). It is part of a roofing tile dating to the post-medieval period. It is made of yellow clay with red clay pellet inclusions and is slightly overfired.

6.4. Fired clay

Two fragments of fired clay were collected from 0003. They are made in a hard fine fabric which has clear sparse organic impressions in the fabric matrix but also larger concave impressions resembling straw or other vegetable matter on one side. The fragments are not dissimilar to kiln furniture found on clay pipe kilnsites.

6.5. Animal bone

Part of an equine shoulder blade was recovered from 0003.

6.6. Discussion of material evidence

The ceramic assemblage suggests that there was occupation in the vicinity in the sixteenth century, with a large group of Rhenish stonewares which could possibly be remnants of a tavern clearance. Further documentary research would be useful to determine whether there were any hostelrys in the immediate vicinity during this period.

7. Discussion

The monitoring of the initial site strip and excavation of footing trenches showed that, across the majority of the site, modern deposits most likely deriving from activity during the 19th and 20th centuries had truncated the natural chalk subsoil and removed potential shallow archaeological deposits.

Although the deep and narrow nature of the trenching limited the monitoring work that could be carried out, some evidence of early post-medieval activity was identified. This principally consisted of deposit 0001 which was located against the rear wall of the property and appeared to be broadly contemporary with its construction and early history.

The finds assemblage recovered from the deposit, which has likely derived from a single act of deposition, may be an indication that either the property or one of its neighbours was originally a tavern or hostelry. However the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1880 shows two inns on the west side of the High Street, 50m to the west and two hotels on the east side of the High Street, 100m to the south, any of which could also have had post-medieval origins. It is quite possible therefore that the finds assemblage could have come from another establishment in the vicinity.

To the east of this deposit was the single cut feature (0004) identified in the trenching which, being of substantial size, had survived later truncation and was easily identifiable in section. Although undated it is thought likely to be contemporary with the early post-medieval deposits and building.

8. Conclusions and significance of the fieldwork

The monitoring has identified evidence of 16th century occupation activity, contemporary with the adjacent buildings fronting onto the town market place. This demonstrates that, despite later post-medieval and modern activity, early post-medieval or medieval archaeological deposits may survive across the town centre.

9. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds

Digital archive: T:\arc\archive field proj\MILDENHALL\MNL 620 6 Market Place

Finds and environmental archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds.

10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The project was carried out by the following Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team staff. The monitoring fieldwork was carried out by John Craven. The post-excavation work was managed by Richenda Goffin who also wrote the specialist finds report. Finds processing was carried out by Rebekah Pressler.

11. Bibliography

Gaimster, D., 1997, *German stoneware 1200-1900*, British Museum Press

Hurst, J., David S Neal, HJE van Beuningen, 1986, *Pottery produced and traded in north-west Europe 1350-1650*, Rotterdam Papers VI

Ordnance Survey, 1983, 'Soils of England and Wales' *Soil survey of England and Wales, sheet 4 Eastern England 1:250,000*. Harpenden.

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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Appendix 1
Brief and Specification

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SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring

6 MARKET PLACE, MILDENHALL

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission for a single storey rear extension to 6 Market Place, Mildenhall has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (F/2009/0218/FUL). Assessment of the available archaeological evidence and the proposed foundation methods indicates that the area affected by new building can be adequately recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The proposal lies within the area of the medieval settlement of Mildenhall, defined in the County Historic Environment record as an archaeological site of regional importance
- 1.3 As strip foundations are proposed there will only be limited damage to any archaeological deposits, which can be recorded by a trained archaeologist during excavation of the trenches by the building contractor.
- 1.4 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 this office before execution.

2. Brief for Archaeological Monitoring

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which would be damaged or removed by any development [including services and landscaping] permitted by the current planning consent.
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this development to produce evidence for the medieval occupation of the site.
- 2.3 The significant archaeologically damaging activity in this proposal is the excavation of building footing and drainage trenches. These, and the up-cast soil, are to be observed during and after they have been excavated by the building contractor.

3. Arrangements for Monitoring

- 3.1 The developer or his archaeologist will give the County Archaeologist (Keith Wade, Archaeological Service, Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR. Telephone: 01284 352440; Fax: 01284 352443) 48 hours notice of the commencement of site works.
- 3.2 To carry out the monitoring work the developer will appoint an archaeologist (the observing archaeologist) who must be approved by the Planning Authority's archaeological adviser (the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service).
- 3.3 Allowance must be made to cover archaeological costs incurred in monitoring the development works by the contract archaeologist. The size of the contingency should be estimated by the approved archaeological contractor, based upon the outline works in paragraph 2.3 of the Brief and Specification and the building contractor's programme of works and timetable.
- 3.4 If unexpected remains are encountered, the County Archaeologist should be immediately informed so that any amendments deemed necessary to this specification to ensure adequate provision for recording, can be made without delay. This could include the need for archaeological excavation of parts of the site which would otherwise be damaged or destroyed.

4. Specification

- 4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both the County Archaeologist and the 'observing archaeologist' to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.
- 4.2 Opportunity should be given to the 'observing archaeologist' to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve finds and make measured records as necessary.
- 4.3 In the case of footing trenches unimpeded access at the rate of one and half hours per 10 metres of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.
- 4.4 All archaeological features exposed should be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.
- 4.5 All contexts should be numbered and finds recorded by context as far as possible.

- 4.6 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Historic Environment Record.
- 4.7 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. 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.
- 4.8 Developers should be aware of the possibility of human burials being found. If this eventuality occurs they must comply with the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857; and the archaeologist should be informed by 'Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England' (English Heritage & the Church of England 2005) which includes sensible baseline standards which are likely to apply whatever the location, age or denomination of a burial.

5. Report Requirements

- 5.1 An archive of all records and finds is to be prepared consistent with the principles of *Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2)*, particularly Appendix 3. This must be deposited with the County Historic Environment Record within 3 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 5.2 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*. The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County HER if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.3 A report on the fieldwork and archive, consistent with the principles of *MAP2*, particularly Appendix 4, must be provided. The report must summarise the methodology employed, the stratigraphic sequence, and give a period by period description of the contexts recorded, and an inventory of finds. The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its interpretation. The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological value of the results, and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).

- 5.4 A summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology*, should be prepared and included in the project report.
- 5.5 County Historic Environment Record sheets should be completed, as per the county manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.6 If archaeological features or finds are found an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 5.7 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the HER. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Keith Wade

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

Date: 9th July 2009

Reference:6 Market Place

This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.

If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.