Suffolk County Council

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2009/298

Barns at Vale Farm, Sutton
SUT 216

D. Stirk

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

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HER Information

Planning Application No:	**C/04/1983**
Date of Fieldwork:	**28th July, 14th August, and 2nd September 2009**
Grid Reference:	**TM 3194 4534**
Funding Body:	**Ingleton Contracts Ltd**
Curatorial Officer:	**Edward Martin**
Project Officer:	**Duncan Stirk**
Oasis Reference:	**suffolkc1-76013**
	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 on land at Vale Farm, Sutton (TM 3194 4534); SUT 298.

Ground reduction in timber-framed farm buildings, along with groundwork for drainage, was monitored during July to September 2009. A number of archaeological features were recorded, including pits and foundations for demolished buildings. None of these can be shown to pre-date the barns. No finds were recovered during the fieldwork.

1. Introduction

Archaeological monitoring of building work was carried out at Vale Farm, Sutton, as part of an archaeological condition in relation to a planning permission for the conversion of barns and associated groundworks (Application number: C/04/1983). A programme of building recording of the complex of farm buildings was also conducted, the results of which were reported on separately by architectural historian Leigh Alston on behalf of SCCAS (Alston, 2009).

The site lies within a group of 6 buildings and a long pond shown on a map of Sutton dated 1629 by William Haiward (HER No. SUT 095). 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 requirement for archaeological monitoring of the groundworks as outlined in a Brief & Specification produced by Edward Martin of the SCCAS Conservation Team (Appendix 1). The SCCAS Field Team was subsequently commissioned to carry out the work by the client Ingleton Contracts Ltd. This took place over three visits on the 28th July, 14th August, and 2nd September 2009.

2. Geology and topography

The site is located to the north of the village of Shottisham (Figure 1). The ground prior to the building work was occupied by the farm buildings to be converted, and various farm working surfaces. The ground was relatively level at the 10m AOD contour line. The site is located on sandy Newport-series soils overlying glacial deposits and Crag sands. The site is bounded to the west, north and east by wooded areas and farmland. The access road to Vale Farm bounds the site to the south.

3. Archaeological and historical background

No previous archaeological work has been conducted in the vicinity of the site. The modern farm occupies the position of a group of 6 buildings and a long pond as shown on a map of Sutton dated 1629 by William Haiward (HER No. SUT 095). A cluster of prehistoric monuments and findspots representing a barrow cemetery is located to the south of the site (HER No. STT 006 and others).

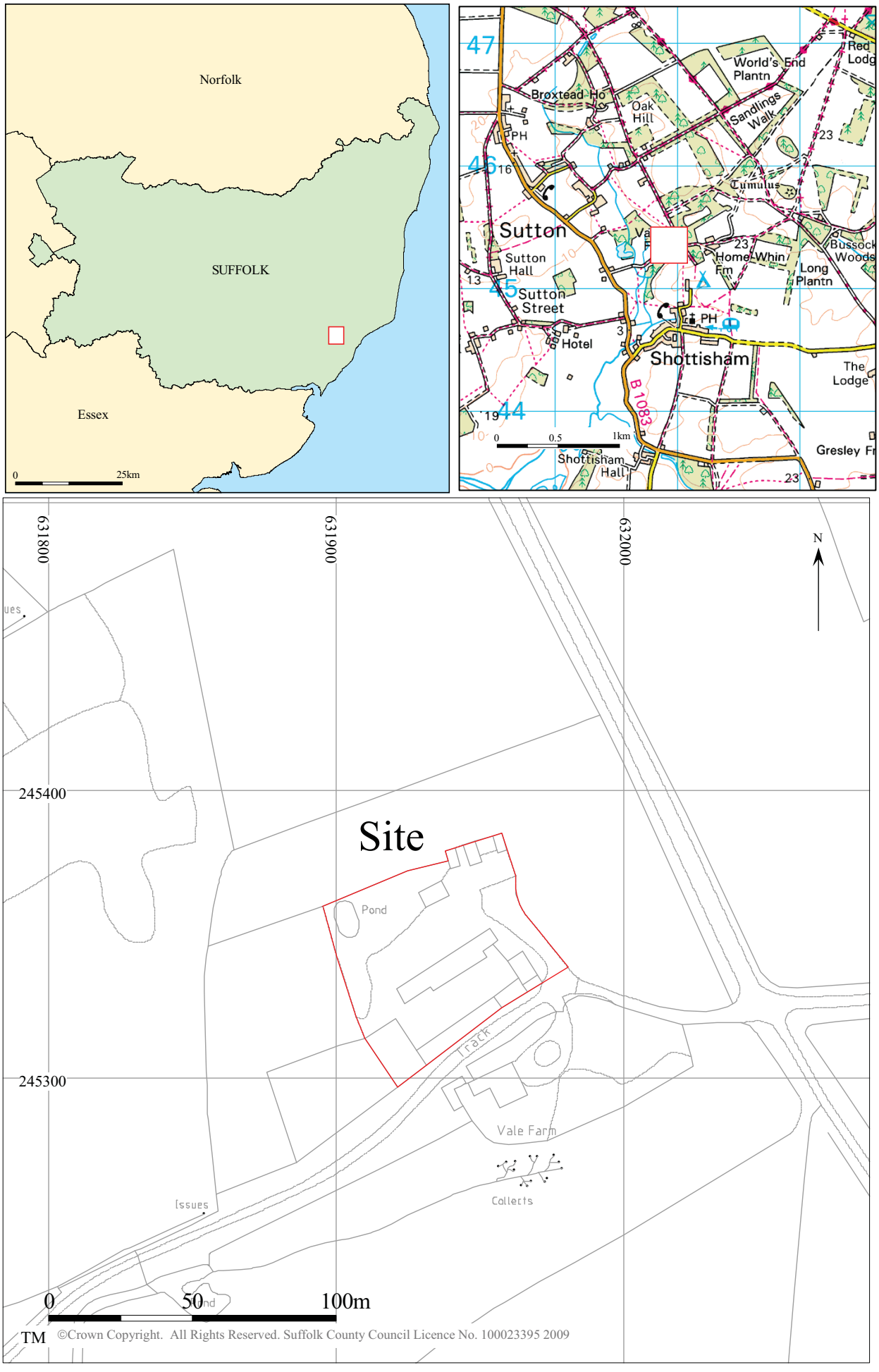

Figure 1. Site location

4. Methodology

The groundworks for the conversion of the barns were the subject of this monitoring work; which were allocated the HER number SUT 216.

The archaeological work was conducted in accordance with a Brief and Specification written by Edward Martin of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Conservation Team (See Appendix 1).

Monitoring of the reduced ground in the barns and drainage runs was carried out on the 28th July, 14th August, and 2nd of September 2009. The work involved the examination of the reduced ground level within the barns to determine the presence of archaeological features, and the recording of the foundations at select locations.

Various drainage runs around the barn were also monitored. The drains were excavated in advance of the archaeological monitoring with a 360° mechanical excavator using a 0.4m wide toothed bucket. The exposed surfaces were then cleaned by hand to better reveal changes in colour and composition that would indicate the presence of archaeological deposits and features. All observed deposits were allocated unique context numbers and recorded on *pro-forma* recording forms, following guidelines set out by SCC Archaeological Service. All archaeological deposits were draws in a series of 1:20 scale sections and 1:50 scale plans, and photographed. The graphics in this report have been produced using MapInfo mapping software.

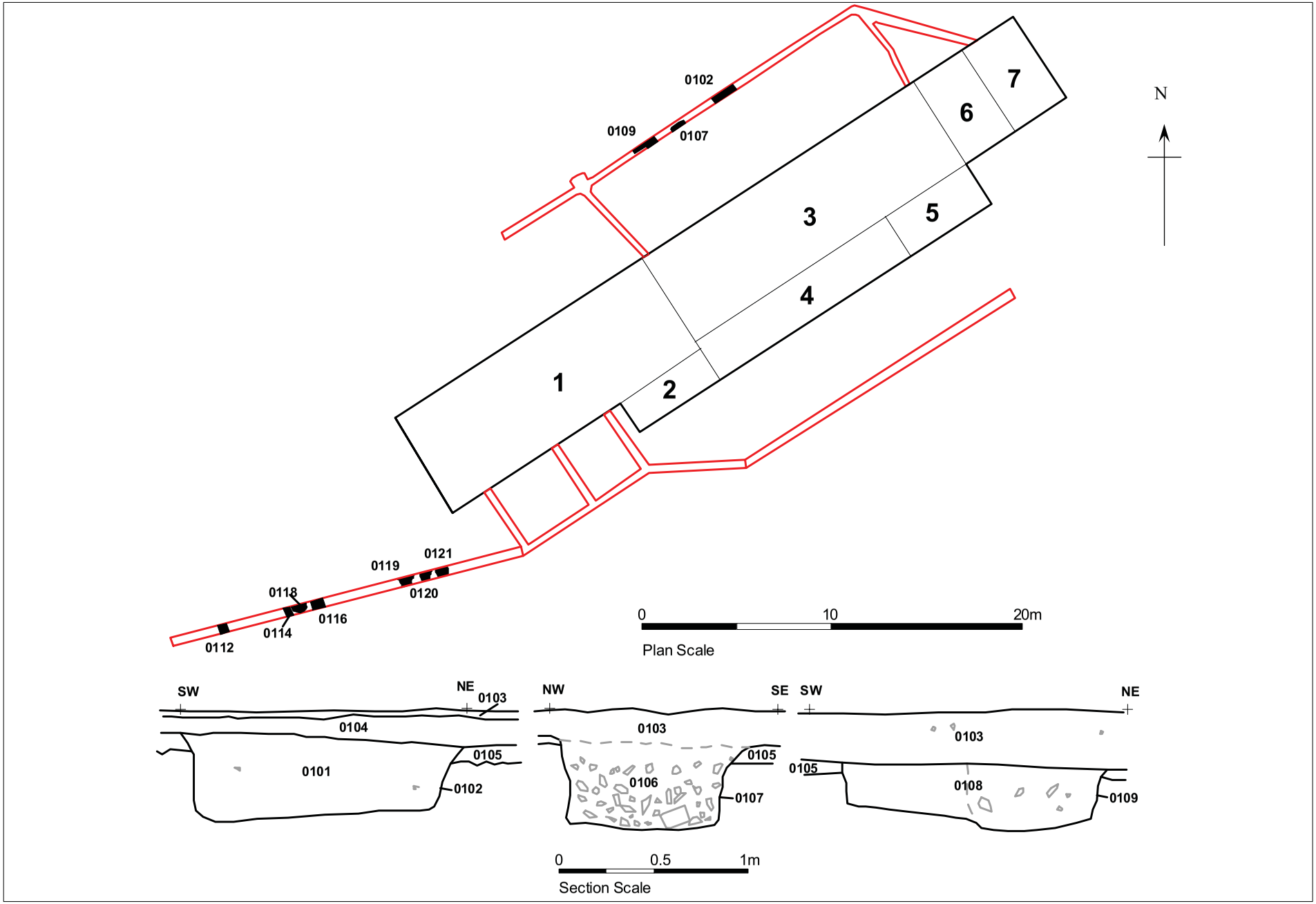

Figure 2. Site plan and sections

5. Results

5.1 Ground reduction in the barns

Room 1: The ground level in this room had been reduced by c. 0.4m prior to the archaeological monitoring. The ground reduction had revealed the orange brown shelly sand which was geological natural deposit 0122; however, without widespread hand cleaning of this surface archaeological cut features would not have been visible.

Plate 1. Room 1 looking NE

Plate 2. Room 1 foundation

Room 2: The ground level in this room had been reduced by 0.4m to 0.5m below the floor level. This revealed the light orange brown shelly sand geological natural 0122. The condition of the revealed surface prevented identification of potential features cutting the natural.

Plate 3. Room 2 looking SE

Plate 4. Room 2 foundation

Room 3: The ground level in this large room was 0.43m to 0.45m below the former floor level. Remnants of the tarmac floor to this room were evident in places. The ground reduction had revealed the light yellow brown and orange brown shelly sand natural 0122, and in places a 0.1m thick deposit of mid brown shelly sand & CBM rubble make-up, 0123. The brick foundations of the barn were revealed in two places; along the NE end of the room where they were 0.55m deep below the floor level, and along the NW side where they were 0.6m deep below the floor level.

Plate 5. Room 3

Plate 6. Room 3 foundation

Room 4: The ground level had been reduced by c. 0.4m, revealing a 0.1m thick deposit of mid brown shelly sand and CBM rubble, 0123, over the geological natural 0122. No features were seen cutting the make-up layer 0123.

Plate 7. Room 4 foundation

Rooms 6 & 7: A light tan brown mortar floor 0124, was still present in these rooms.

5.2 External Test Pit

A test pit was excavated just outside the barn, in the middle of the southeast side. This revealed a deposit sequence that was typical for the area. At a depth of 0.53m below the ground level (BGL) the natural orange brown shelly sand natural 0110 was seen. This was overlain by 0.09 to 0.17m of mid brown silty sand subsoil, 0105. Over the subsoil was a 0.25m thick deposit of re-deposited natural and CBM rubble, 0104. The sequence was sealed by a 0.1m thick deposit of grey brown sandy silt topsoil, 0103.

Plate 8. Test pit section

5.3 Drainage runs to NW of Barn

A straight drain run measuring 22m long by 0.3m wide was monitored. This was parallel to the NW side of the barn, and had three side branches leading to individual rooms. The drain was excavated to a maximum depth of c. 0.7m BGL at the SW end of the drain run. The natural was a light orange brown shelly sand deposit 0110, that was overlain by a 0.08m thick subsoil deposit of mid brown silty sand with 20% shell, 0105. Three features cut this deposit along the length of the drain run. The first, and eastern-most was 0102, that had steep to vertical sides and a flat base. It was 1.48m wide by over 0.35m by 0.46m deep. Feature 0102 held a mid brown sandy silt with frequent shelly crag fill, 0101.

A couple of metres to the SW there was a similar feature 0107. Feature 0107 had steep to vertical sides and a flat base, and was 0.95m wide by 0.46m deep. It held a dark brown shelly sand and mortar fill, containing occasional bricks, 0106. Feature 0107 was only visible in one side of the drainage run, indicating that only the edge of the feature was hit by its excavation.

The third and final feature visible in the drain run was seen 1m to the SW of 0107. It had steep to vertical straight sides and a stepped base, measuring 1.4m wide by 0.34m deep. The feature extended across the drain run, but was only 0.65m wide on the SE side. The feature held a dark brown shelly sand and mortar fill with occasional bricks, 0108.

Plate 9. Drain run to NW

Plate 10. Feature 0107

5.4 Drainage runs to SE of Barn

Along the SE side of the barn a second drain run was monitored. This one was approximately 50m long and 0.45m wide, and had various side branches leading to the barn. The majority of the drain was shallow and not affecting the archaeological horizon.

Plate 11. Drain run to SW

Plate 12. Foundation 0113/0114

Features were seen in the SW extent of the drain run where it was deeper. The deepest part of the trench was the SW end, at 0.4m deep. Here, there was a shallow NW-SE aligned linear feature 0112, that had moderate concave sides and a flat base, 0.45m wide and 0.1m deep. It held a mottled mid brown and grey clay sand fill 0111.

Further to the NE a NW-SE aligned flint and mortar foundation was recorded. This was held in a vertical sided foundation cut that was 0.4m wide and over 0.3m deep, 0114. The foundation, 0113, was made of flint cobbles and light pink mortar, and was capped with a course of bricks.

Abutting foundation 0113, to the NE was feature 0118, filled with greenish brown sand 0117. This feature was not excavated. Further NE was a shallow feature 0116, with a greenish brown sand and decayed straw fill 0115. This measured 0.7m long by 0.45m wide, and was not fully excavated. Three similar features were located in a cluster to the NE: a pit containing a mixed black and greenish grey sand fill, and two pits with mid brown silty sand fills 0120 and 0121. None of these features was excavated.

6. Discussion

The ground reduction that was conducted within the barns had the potential to reveal archaeological features pre-dating the 19th century barns. In the event, the ground condition was such that no such features were visible. The foundations for each room were examined, and it was clear that the foundations were contemporary with the existing buildings. No older foundations had been re-used when the barns were built.

A test pit excavated outside the barns revealed a buried soil horizon 0104 that was overlain by a rubble filled horizon. This indicates that the ground was prepared and levelled prior to the construction of the barn. Evidence for ground preparation was evident within the barns also, where the demolition rubble layer directly overlay the natural geology. It is not clear whether this demolition rubble was imported to the site or whether the rubble is the remains of older buildings that were demolished when the barn was built.

A number of possible foundations were recorded in the drainage runs outside the farm buildings. The most complete of these, flint foundation 0113, matches the line of a SW range of farm buildings shown on the late 19th century historic maps, which once extended further NW than the current range. Others features to the NW of the barn, 0107 and 0109, may be the remains of robbed-out foundations. They were similarly

aligned to the standing buildings, and contained similar bricks. No buildings are shown on the late 19th century historic maps in this position, so it is possible that the features represent an earlier phase of farm building. Alternatively, the features may be the remains of robbed-out drains.

Also seen in the drainage trench to the SW of the barn were a number of pits. These were clearly of relatively recent date, as indicated by the presence of rotted straw in their fills.

7. Conclusions and significance of the fieldwork

The monitoring of groundwork at Vale Farm revealed little that adds to our understanding of the 19th century farm. Working conditions were not ideal for identification of archaeological features that pre-dated the standing barns, however what was revealed appeared to be part of the 19th century farm. Nothing definitively earlier than the 19th century farm was revealed, although a demolition rubble layer and two undated rubble filled features may be evidence for an older phase of buildings.

8. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds.

9. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The monitoring was carried out by Duncan Stirk from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was managed by Dave Gill, who also provided advice during the production of the report. Production of site plans and sections was carried out by Duncan Stirk, and the report was checked by Richenda Goffin.

10. Bibliography

Alston, L., 2009 Barns at Vale Farm, Sutton, Suffolk. SUT 216. Historic Building Recording. SCCAS

Suffolk County Council

The Archaeological Service

Environment and Transport Service Delivery
Shire Hall
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk
IP33 2AR

Appendix 1: Brief & Specification

Brief and Specification for Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Monitoring

BARNS AT VALE FARM, SUTTON

Although this document is fundamental to the work of the specialist archaeological contractor the developer should be aware that certain of its requirements are likely to impinge upon the working practices of a general building contractor and may have financial implications.

1. **Background**

1.1 Planning permission for the conversion of barns at Vale Farm has been granted by Suffolk Coastal District Council, conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out (application C/04/1983).
The barns will need to be recorded before conversion and areas of ground disturbance will need archaeological monitoring.

1.2 This application concerns the conversion of traditional timber-framed barns and associated works. A recent policy statement on historic farm buildings by English Heritage and the Countryside Agency, endorsed by English Nature and the Rural Development Service (*Living buildings in a living landscape: finding a future for traditional farm buildings*, 2006 – available at www.helm.org.uk) advises that recording of such structures before conversion works is desirable. The buildings will retain important archaeological information concerning the construction, character, date, context and use.
In addition, the development area is on the site of a group of six buildings on the north side of a long pond that are recorded on a 1629 map of Sutton by William Haiward (Suffolk Historic Environment Record site no. SUT 095). Ground works for this development may disturb archaeological deposits associated with this site and will need to be monitored.

1.3 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. Detailed standards, information and guidance to supplement this brief are to be found in *Understanding Historic Buildings; A guide to good recording practice* (English Heritage 2006; this defines the different levels of recording recommended by English Heritage, see: www.helm.org.uk/server/show/category.19612) and *Standard and Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 2001). Technical standards, applicable to detailed survey, are covered by *Metric Survey Specification for English Heritage* (English Heritage 2000).
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 establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.

1.4 Before commencing work the project manager must carry out a risk assessment and liase with the site owner, client and the Conservation Team of SCCAS (SCCAS/CT) in ensuring that all potential risks are minimised.

1.5 It is the archaeological contractor's responsibility to ensure that adequate resources are available to fulfill the Brief.

2. Brief for Archaeological Recording

2.1 Historic building and archaeological recording, as specified in Sections 3 and 4, is to be carried out prior to conversion and during development.

2.2 The objective will be to compile a descriptive record at English Heritage Level 2 of the barns before their conversion takes place.

2.3 Any works that might disturb below-ground archaeological remains, including under-pinning, excavation of service trenches and any other ground reduction, are to be observed during stripping and after they have been excavated. Adequate time is to be allowed for archaeological recording of archaeological deposits during excavation, and of soil sections following excavation.

2.4 The academic objective will be to provide a detailed understanding of the nature of each building, and to provide the historical context, development and significance of the building group.

3. Specification for Archaeological Recording

The survey methodology will form part of the WSI and is to be agreed in detail before the project commences; defined minimum criteria in this outline are to be met or exceeded. Any variation from these standards can only be made by agreement with SCCAS/CT, and must be confirmed in writing.

3.1 English Heritage Level 2 recording will cover both the interior and exterior of the barn. Both the exterior and interior will be viewed, described and photographed.

3.2 A block plan should be produced of the site, to locate the buildings within the group. The main components of the complex shall be numbered for reference in the report.

3.3 A historical document search (documentary, cartographic and pictorial) should be undertaken to situate the history of the building complex within the immediate local context.

3.4 The record will present conclusions regarding the location, form, date, development and use of each building.

4. Specification for Monitoring of Groundworks

4.1 The developer shall afford access at all reasonable times to both SCCAS/CT and the contracted archaeologist to allow archaeological observation of building and engineering operations which disturb the ground.

4.2 Opportunity must be given to the contracted archaeologist to hand excavate any discrete archaeological features which appear during earth moving operations, retrieve

finds and make measured records as necessary. Where it is necessary to see archaeological detail one of the soil faces is to be trowelled clean.

4.3 In the case of footing and main service trenches unimpeded access 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. In the case of the topsoil stripping and levelling, or other ground reduction (including replacement of internal floors) unimpeded access of trench must be allowed for archaeological recording before concreting or building begin.

4.4 If unexpected remains are encountered SCCAS/CT must be informed immediately. Amendments to this specification may be made to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

4.5 All archaeological features exposed must be planned at a minimum scale of 1:50 on a plan showing the proposed layout of the development.

4.6 All contexts must be numbered and finds recorded by context. All levels should relate to Ordnance Datum.

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

4.9 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County HER.

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 HER within six months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible.

5.2 The project manager must consult the County HER Officer (Dr Colin Pendleton) to obtain a 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.

5.3 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 Officer 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.

5.4 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.

5.5 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 proper deposition (http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html).

5.6 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, including palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features. 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).

5.7 A copy of the 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 approval, two hard copies, as well as a digital copy, of the report must be presented to SCCAS/CT and a single copy to the Suffolk Coastal District Council Conservation Officer.

5.8 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*, must be prepared and included in the project report.

5.9 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the County HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.

5.10 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.

5.11 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.

5.12 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: Edward Martin

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Date: 23 April 2009 Reference: SpecHBRValeFmSutton09

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.

Appendix 2: Context List

Context	Type	Description
0101	Fill	Mid brown sandy silt with frequent shelly crag. Fil of possible pit 0102 1.48m wide x >0.35m x 0.46m thick.
0102	Cut	Steep to vertical sides & flat base. Cut of possible pit. 1.48m wide x >0.35m x 0.46m deep.
0103	Dep	Dark grey sandy silt. Topsoil & turf.
0104	Dep	Mixed orange brown crag & sand & dark grey sandy silt. Make-up layer.
0105	Dep	Mid brown silty sand & crag. Subsoil.
0106	Fill	Dark brown craggy sand & mortar. Occasional bricks. Fill of possible robbed foundation 0107.
0107	Cut	Steep to vertical sides & flat base. Cut of possible foundation.0.95m wide by 0.46m deep.
0108	Fill	Dark brown craggy sand & mortar. Occasional bricks. Fill of possible robbed foundation 0109.
0109	Cut	Steep to vertical straight sides & stepped base. Cut of possible robbed foundation.
0110	Dep	Light orangy brown crag & sand. Natural.
0111	Fill	Mid brown & grey clay sand. Fill of linear feature 0112.
0112	Cut	Moderate concave sides & flat base. NW-SE aligned. Cut of linear feature. 0.45m wide.
0113	Mas	Flint cobbles and light pink mortar foundation capped with a course of bricks. 0.4m wide by >0.3 thick.
0114	Cut	Vertical sides and unseen base. 0.4m wide by >0.3m deep.
0115	Fill	Greenish brown sand and decayed straw. Fill of feature 0116. 0.7m wide by >0.45m. Not fully excavated.
0116	Cut	Cut of pit 0.7m wide by >0.45m. Not fully excavated.
0117	Fill	Greenish brown sand. Fill of pit 0118. 0.9m by >0.45m. Not excavated.
0118	Cut	Cut of pit 0.9m by >0.45m. Not excavated.
0119	Fill	Mixed black & greenish grey sand. Modern fill or deposit. Unexcavated. 0.85m x >0.45m.
0120	Fill	Mid brown silty sand. Modern fill or deposit. Unexcavated. 0.8m x >0.45m.
0121	Fill	Mid brown silty sand. Modern fill or deposit. Unexcavated. 0.75m x >0.45m.
0122	Dep	Lt yellow brown & orange brown shelly sand. Natural.
0123	Dep	Mid brown shelly sand & CBM rubble. Make-up layer 0.1m thick.
0124	Dep	Lt. tan brown mortar floor. Floor in rooms 6 & 7.