

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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## **School Road, Risby RBY 033**

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2005  
(Planning app. no. SE/02/2446/P)

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Field Team  
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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## List of Contributors

All Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service unless otherwise stated.

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Edward Martin	Prehistory Specialist

## Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Hopkins Homes and was monitored by R.D.Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team). The fieldwork was carried out by John Craven, James Rolfe and Jonathan Van Jennians from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The post-excavation was managed by Richenda Goffin. Finds processing and the production of feature illustrations was carried out by Gemma Adams and the specialist finds report by Richenda Goffin, with identification by Edward Martin. The project was managed by John Newman, who also provided advice during the production of the report

## Summary

An evaluation was carried out in advance of residential development on land off of School Road, Risby, to establish whether there was any evidence of medieval settlement on the site, which lay close to the parish church of St Giles. The evaluation consisted of seven trenches with a total length of 150m, equivalent to 5% of the total area of 0.48ha. The trenches did not locate any evidence of medieval settlement within the site, which was presumably farmland during the medieval period. Two possibly natural features contained two abraded sherds of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery.

## SMR information

Planning application no.	SE/02/2446/P
Date of fieldwork:	31 <sup>st</sup> May-01 <sup>st</sup> June 2005
Grid Reference:	TL 8039 6632
Funding body:	Hopkins Homes
Oasis reference	Suffolkc1-8415

# 1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land off of School Road, Risby (Fig. 1) prior to residential development. The work was carried out to a Brief and Specification, issued by R.D.Carr (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team, Appendix 1), to meet an archaeological condition on the planning application SE02/2246/P. This application is currently being resubmitted but is subject to the same Brief. The work was commissioned by the developer, Hopkins Homes.

The site lies at TL 8039 6632, on level ground, at a height of c.70.5m-71.5m OD. Immediately to the north of the site the ground level begins to descend a north-facing slope. Situated on the south side of School Road the site consists of an area of open, waste ground with a group of small buildings and hard standings in the north-west corner. The area covered by this report is of that currently owned by Hopkins Homes. The total development area includes land to the west which has not yet been bought by the developer, and this will need to be evaluated at a later date.

The site was of interest due to its location within 200m of the 11<sup>th</sup> century parish church of St Giles and its likely position within the medieval and earlier settlement core. Therefore there was a high potential for medieval occupation evidence to be affected by the development and, as the site had not previously been subject to any archaeological survey work, a program of archaeological evaluation had been specified. The aims of the evaluation were to assess the archaeological potential of the development area, and to establish any possible archaeological implications for the sites development.

# 2. Methodology

The total area under evaluation measured 4800sqm in size. Seven trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator with a 1.6m ditching bucket to the top of the archaeological levels under the supervision of an archaeologist. The trenches had a total length of 150m, equivalent to 5% of the total area, as specified in the brief and specification.

The trenches varied from 0.5m-0.8m deep and showed a layer of topsoil, 0.4m-0.5m thick, overlying a layer, varying in thickness, of mid orange/brown clay/silt which in turn lay over the natural subsoil, a dark orange clay interspersed with patches of chalk.

Features were excavated by hand with sections and trench profiles recorded at a scale of 1:20. Digital photographs were taken at various stages of the evaluation and are included in the site archive. Inked copies of feature section drawings have been made and bulk finds were washed, marked and quantified.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (suffolkc1-8415).

The site archive is kept in the small and main stores of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds under SMR No. RBY 033.

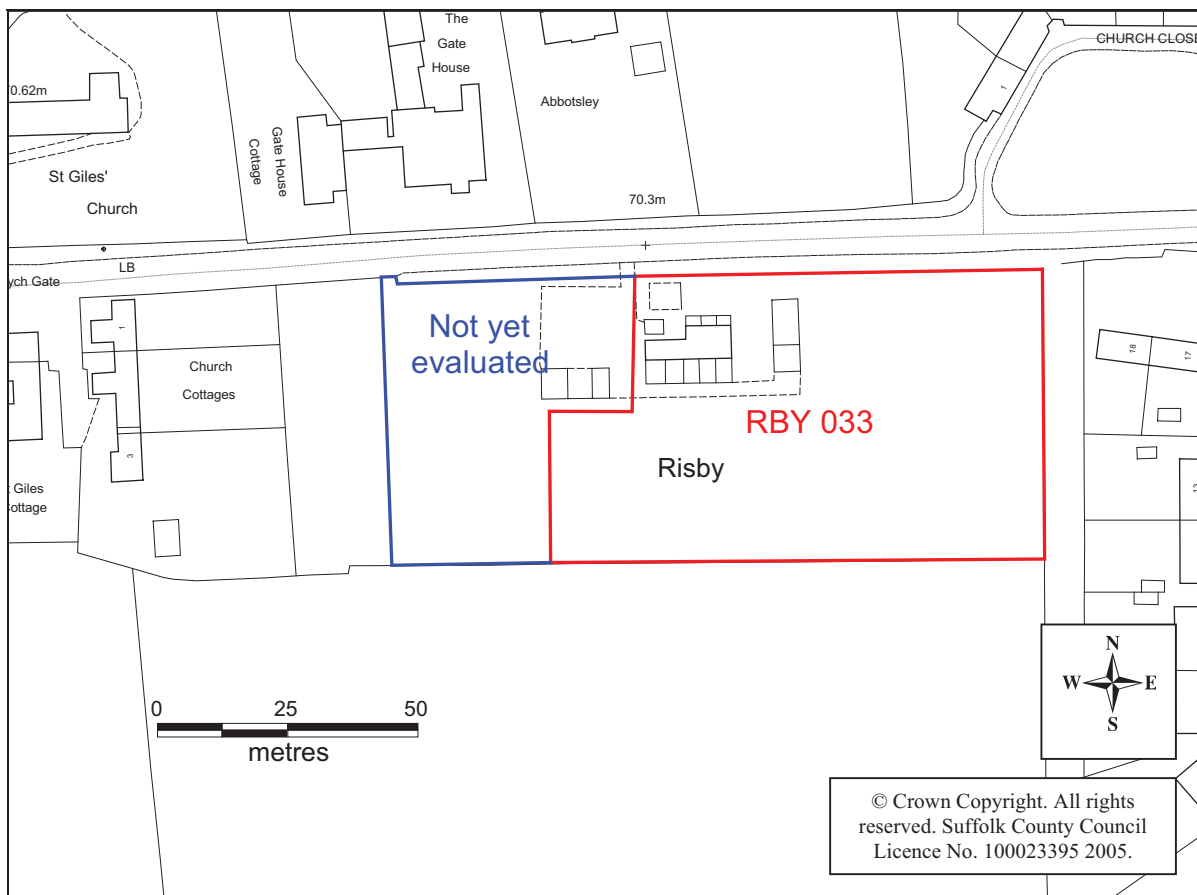
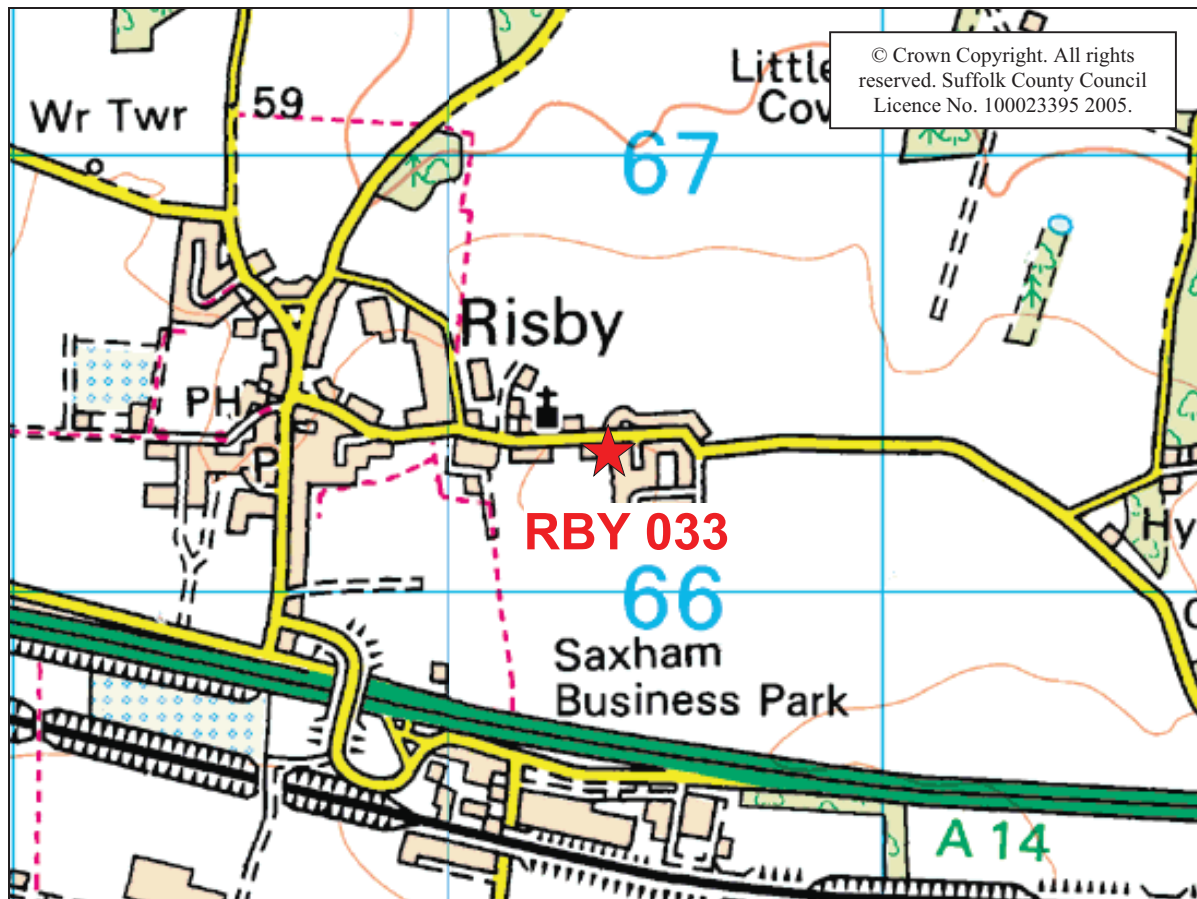


Figure 1. Site location plan

### 3. Results

(Figs. 2 and 3)

The majority of the trenches were uniformly empty, showing no archaeological features. The natural subsoil was well preserved beneath a deep build up of topsoil and a natural layer of clay/silt. One large pit, infilled with modern rubble, disturbed the northern end of trench 7.

- Trench 1:** 21.9m long, NE-SW aligned, 0.6m-0.7m deep. 0.4m-0.5m thick layer of topsoil over mid orange/brown silt/clay, over natural subsoil.
- Trench 2:** 18.8m long, N-S aligned, 0.6m-0.7m deep. 0.3m thick layer of topsoil over mid orange/brown silt/clay, over natural subsoil. Two possible features, 0002 and 0004.
- Trench 3:** 34.8m long, NE-SW aligned, 0.6m deep. 0.35m thick layer of topsoil over mid orange/brown silt/clay, over natural subsoil.
- Trench 4:** 30.3m long, E-W aligned, 0.6m deep. 0.35m thick layer of topsoil over mid orange/brown silt/clay, over natural subsoil.
- Trench 5:** 21.7m long, NE-SW aligned, 0.5m-0.6m deep. 0.4m thick layer of topsoil over mid orange/brown silt/clay, over natural subsoil.
- Trench 6:** 7m long, N-S aligned, 0.6m deep. 0.4m thick layer of topsoil over mid orange/brown silt/clay, over natural subsoil.
- Trench 7:** 15.5m long, N-S aligned, 0.7m-0.8m deep. 0.4m thick layer of topsoil over mid orange/brown silt/clay, over natural subsoil. Modern disturbance towards northern end.

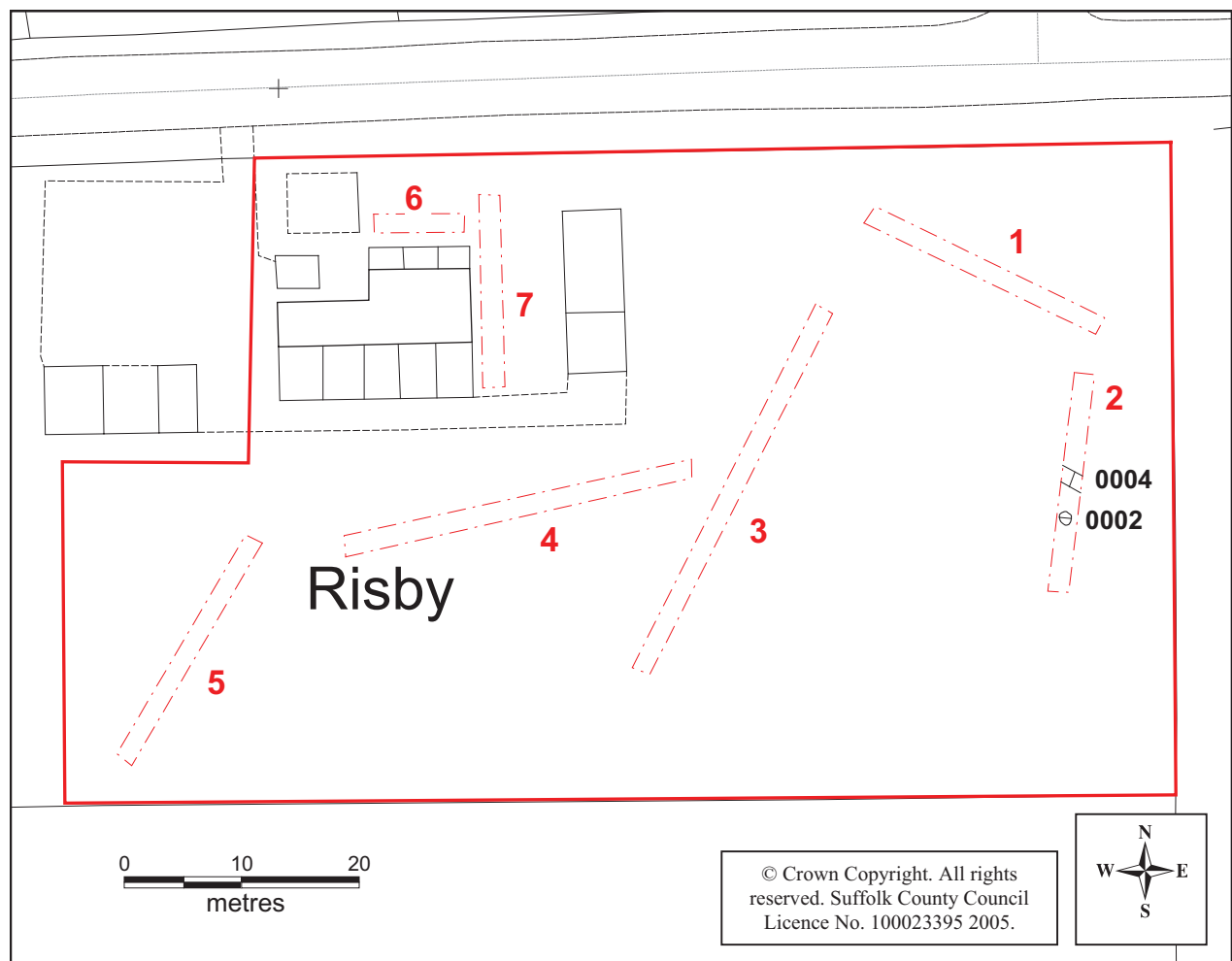


Figure 2. Trench plan

Two possible features were identified in trench 2, 0002 and 0004.

0002 was a possible pit but is more likely to be an area of natural disturbance such as a tree hole. Approximately 1m in diameter and 0.3m deep, it was 50% excavated and had steep sides with a concave base. Its fill, 0003, was at the surface a mixed brown sand/silt, changing to a mixed sand/clay at the base. A single sherd of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age pottery was recovered.

0004 was a possible irregular ditch, very hard to distinguish from the surrounding natural. It measured c.1.3m wide and 0.2m deep and had a fill of mid brown sand/silt, 0005, from which a single sherd of unidentifiable pottery was recovered. Two sections of the feature were recorded, the first was placed in the centre of the trench across the feature at 90° and the second oblique section was placed against the trench baulk after the feature was fully excavated.

A single, unstratified sherd of pottery, 0001, of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age date, was recovered during machining from near feature 0004 and may have been in either its fill or the overlying layer of orange/brown clay/silt.

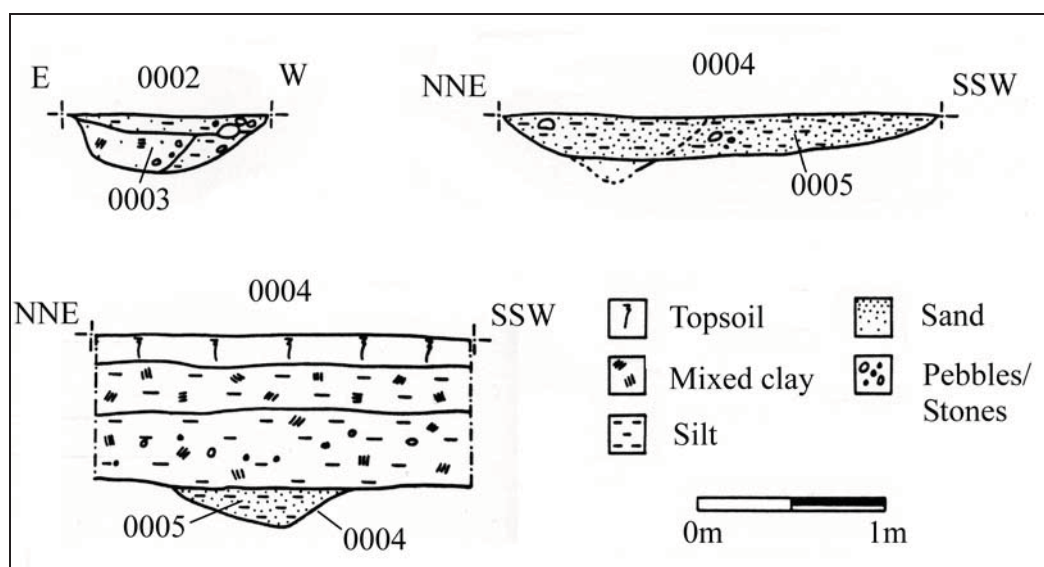


Figure 3. Sections

## 4. The Finds

Richenda Goffin, June 2005

### 4.1. Introduction

Finds were collected from three contexts, as shown in table 1 below.

Contexts	Pottery		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	
0001	1	0.009	Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age
0003	1	0.002	Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age
0005	1	<0.001	?
Total	3	0.012	

Table 1. Finds Quantities

## **4.2. Pottery**

(Identification by Edward Martin)

Three fragments of pottery were the only finds recovered from the evaluation. A single abraded sherd of hand-made sandy ware with moderate coarse flint inclusions up to 4mm in length was recovered as an unstratified find (0001), from machining close to the possible ditch. It may have the remains of a nail impressed decoration on the outer surface. The pottery is Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age in date.

A smaller sherd was present in 0003, the fill of a possible pit, or perhaps more likely, a natural feature such as a tree hole. The pottery is made in a finer fabric, with smaller but frequent flint inclusions up to 2mm in length. The fragment is less abraded than the unstratified sherd, and has a smooth outer surface, although there is no sign of burnishing. This pottery also dates to the Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age.

A single, very tiny fragment of possible pottery weighing considerably less than a gramme was identified from 0005, the fill of a possible ditch or natural gully. It may represent a portion which has laminated away from the main part of the sherd, or it could perhaps be a fragment of fired clay. It is sandy and contains a single inclusion which may be flint. Although likely to be of a similar date, it is too insubstantial to date with certainty.

## **4.3. Discussion**

The paucity of the finds and the insubstantial nature of the features identified during the evaluation suggests that there is little evidence of much archaeological activity in the immediate area under investigation. The very small quantity of prehistoric sherds are wide ranging in date and insubstantial. There are no artefacts of 11th century or medieval date which could provide evidence that the area was being occupied or used at this period, in spite of its proximity to the church.

## **5. Discussion**

The evaluation did not locate any evidence of medieval settlement within the site and the near total lack of activity in any period indicates that the site has never been an area of occupation and was presumably farmland during the medieval period. In particular trenches 1, 6 and 7, located near the road frontage, the most likely site of medieval occupation, were totally blank.

The two possible features in trench 2 are thought most likely to be natural features, 0002 possibly being a treehole and 0004 a natural gully or depression in the clay subsoil. Both have probably been infilled via natural processes, which have also laid down the thick layer of orange clay/silt seen covering the subsoil across the site. The presence of two abraded sherds of Late Bronze Age to Early Iron Age pottery are not indicative of any real phase of prehistoric activity in the area as they are probably just residual finds within these natural deposits.

However it was apparent that the subsoil level in trenches 6 and 7, although at a depth of 0.6m was, at a height of c.70.6m OD, still a full 0.3m above the level of the modern road. This probably demonstrates that the original road was cut into the side of the slope that begins to descend northwards from the site.

## 6. Conclusion and Recommendations

Evaluation of the site has not located any evidence of medieval settlement and only insubstantial evidence of prehistoric activity. Therefore no further work within the evaluated area is thought necessary prior to development. It is worth noting however that the condition on the planning application still requires evaluation trenching to be carried out on the remaining land within the development area, which lies immediately to the west of the area covered in this report.

J. A. Craven  
June 2005

### **Disclaimer**

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. 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 service cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.

## **Appendix 1:**

### **SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM**

#### ***Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation***

#### **SCHOOL ROAD, RISBY**

***The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety and other responsibilities, see paragraphs 1.7 & 1.8.***

#### **1. Background**

- 1.1 An application [SE/02/2246/P] has been made to build 19 dwellings on this site. A revised application is being prepared for the construction of 9 dwellings.
- 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). An archaeological evaluation of the application area will be required as the first part of such a programme of archaeological work; decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work will be based upon the evaluation.
- 1.3 The proposal area has not been the subject of any archaeological survey and as a consequence there is no known archaeology. However, the site is on the opposite side of the road from the 11<sup>th</sup> century parish church of St Giles and is believed to lie within the medieval and earlier settlement core with high potential for extensive archaeological deposits from housing and association occupation.
- 1.4 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.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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 Project Design or Written Scheme of Investigation (PD/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 PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/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.

- 1.7 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.
- 1.8 The responsibility for identifying any restraints on field-work (e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c.) rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such restraints or imply that the target area is freely available.

## 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 natural soil processes. Define the potential for existing damage to archaeological deposits. Define the potential for colluvial/alluvial deposits, their impact and potential to mask any archaeological deposit. Define the potential for artificial soil deposits and their impact on any archaeological deposit.
- 2.4 Establish the potential for waterlogged organic deposits in the proposal area. Define the location and level of such deposits and their vulnerability to damage by development where this is defined.
- 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 the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (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 Examine the area for earthworks, e.g. banks, ponds, ditches. If present these are to be recorded in plan at 1:2500, with appropriate sections. A record should be made of the topographic setting of the site (e.g. slope, plateau, etc). The Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service must be consulted if earthworks are present and before proceeding to the excavation of any trial trenches.
- 3.2 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover a minimum 5% by area of the entire site and 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 1.8m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated. If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' must be used. The trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins.
- 3.3 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine fitted with toothless bucket and other equipment. 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 further 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.

- 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 The contractor shall 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 P Murphy, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy and Wiltshire 1994) is available.
- 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 with the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service 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. Any variations from this must be agreed with the Conservation Team.
- 3.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 3.14 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.

#### 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 the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service.
- 4.2 The composition of the project staff must be detailed and agreed (this is to include any subcontractors).

- 4.3 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.
- 4.4 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 4.5 The Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* and for *Field Evaluations* 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 data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 5.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 6.4 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. 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 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 SMR 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.
- 5.8 The site archive is to be deposited with the County SMR within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.

- 5.9 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 the Conservation Team, by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.
- 5.10 County SMR sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 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 SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: R D Carr

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

Tel: 01284 352441

Date: 4 April 2005

Reference: /Risby-SchoolRoad04

**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.**