

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2010/201

**Aldringham Court, Aldeburgh Road, Aldringham Cum
Thorpe
ARG 060**

HER Information

Planning Application:	C/09/1956
Date of Fieldwork:	28th October 2010
Grid Reference:	TM 4452 6060
Funding Body:	SEH French Ltd.
Curatorial Officer:	Sarah Poppy
Project Officer:	Linzi Everett
OASIS Reference:	Suffolkc1 - 89570

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Aldringham Court, Aldeburgh Road, Aldringham (TM 4452 6060; ARG 060) in advance of a proposal to build a new extension. No archaeological features were observed and no artefactual evidence was recovered.

1. Introduction

A planning application was made for an extension to Aldringham Court, Aldeburgh Road, Aldringham Cum Thorpe. The site is centred on TM 4452 6060 and the extension footprint comprises a total of approximately 400 square metres.

The site lies within an area of archaeological activity, recorded in the County Historic Environment Record (HER). 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 an initial requirement for an archaeological evaluation by trial trench, as outlined in a Brief and Specification produced by Sarah Poppy of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) Conservation Team (Appendix I). The SCCAS Field Team was subsequently commissioned to carry out the work which was funded by SEH French Ltd.

2. Geology and topography

The site lies on the west side of Aldeburgh Road at c.6m OD, directly south of the Hundred River valley. The underlying geology of the site comprises glaciofluvial drift (deep sand).

3. Archaeological and historical background

The high archaeological potential for the site was based predominantly on its location south west of three nationally important Bronze Age round barrows (Scheduled Monument 21277; HER no. ARG 001, ARG 012, ARG 013). There is high potential for encountering early occupation deposits at this location and the proposed development will cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.

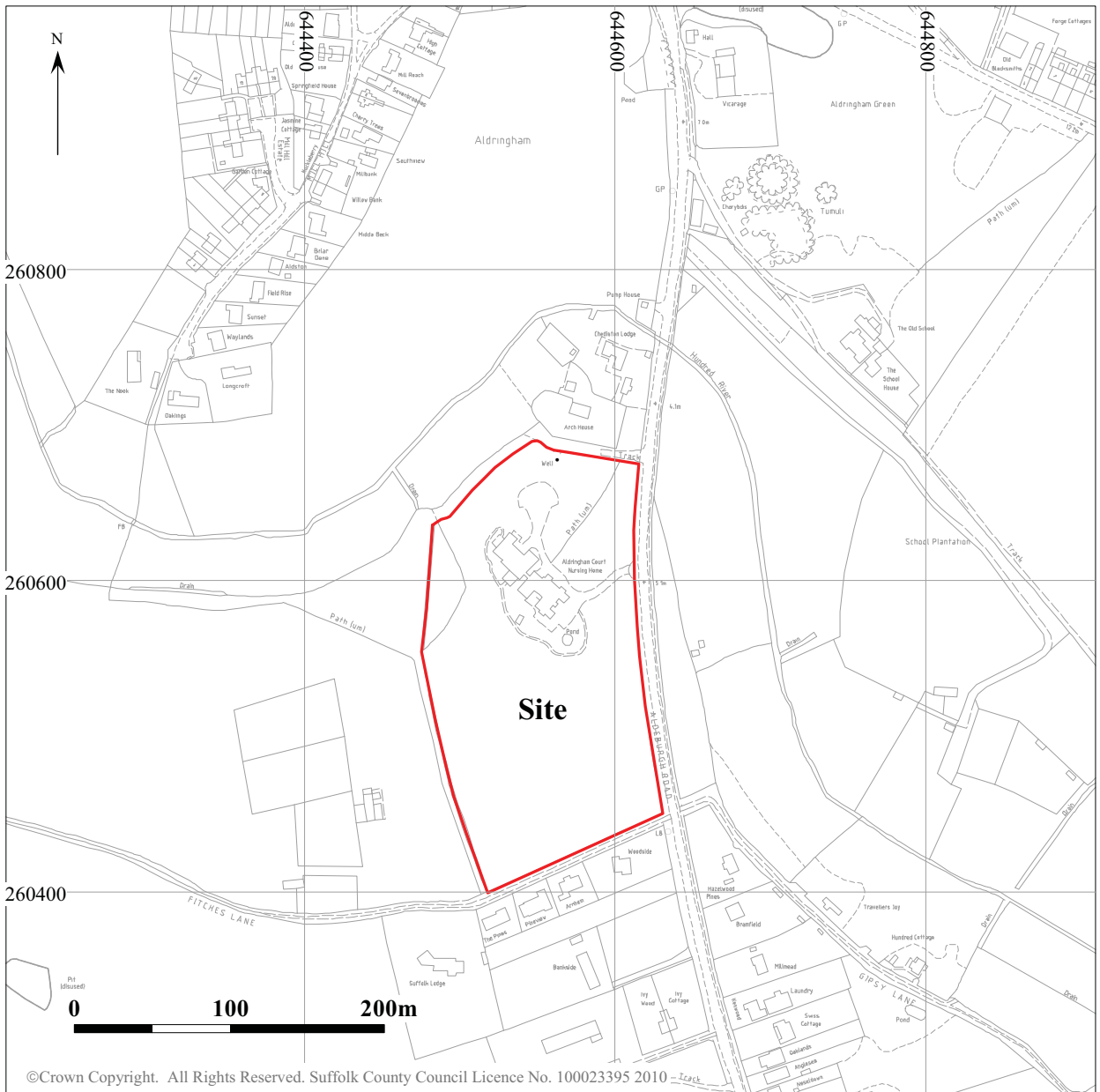
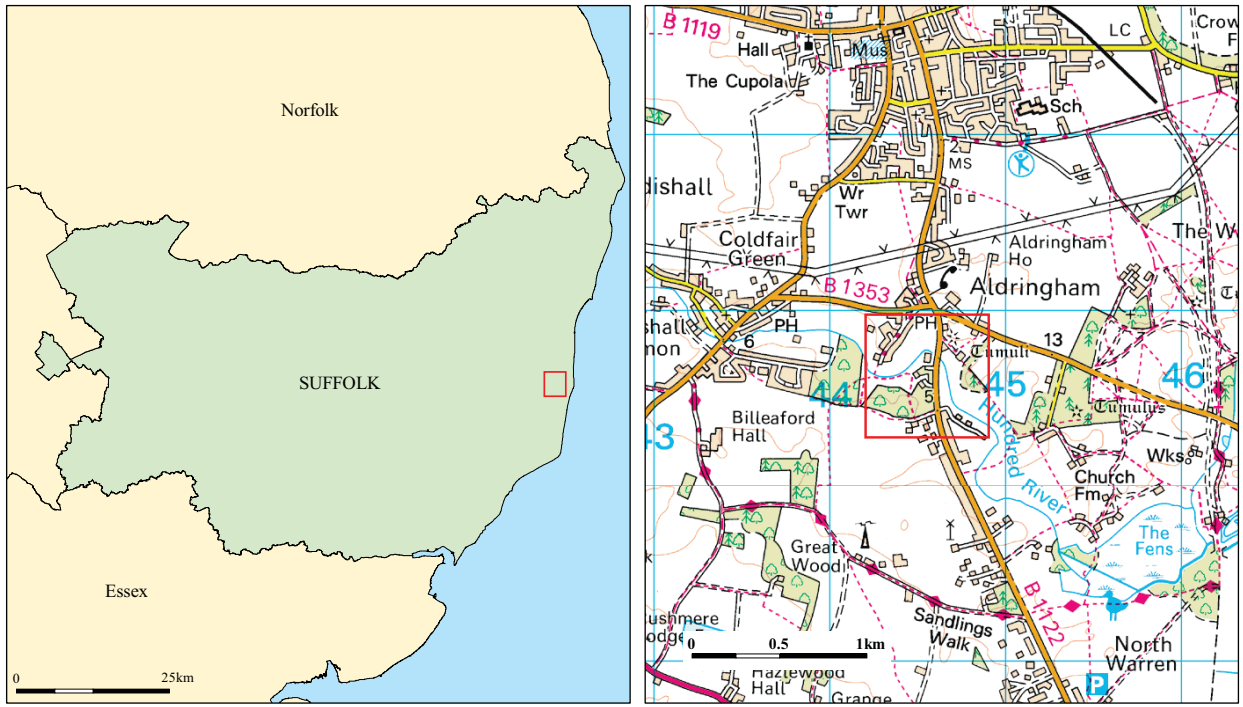


Figure 1. Site location

4. Methodology

Trial trenching was carried out on 28th October 2010. The trench was excavated under the supervision of an archaeologist, using a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a 1m wide toothless ditching bucket, removing overburden until the top of the first undisturbed archaeological deposit or natural subsoil was revealed. The trench was excavated to twice the width of the machine bucket in order to achieve the area of evaluation required by the Brief and Specification. Hand cleaning of the exposed surfaces was carried out where necessary in order to clarify the nature of the deposits and identify cut features. Both the exposed trench surfaces and upcast spoil were examined visually for artefactual evidence, and both were subject to a metal detector survey.

Identified contexts were allocated numbers within a unique continuous numbering system under the HER code ARG 060 (Appendix I). Context information was recorded on SCCAS 'pro-forma' recording sheets.

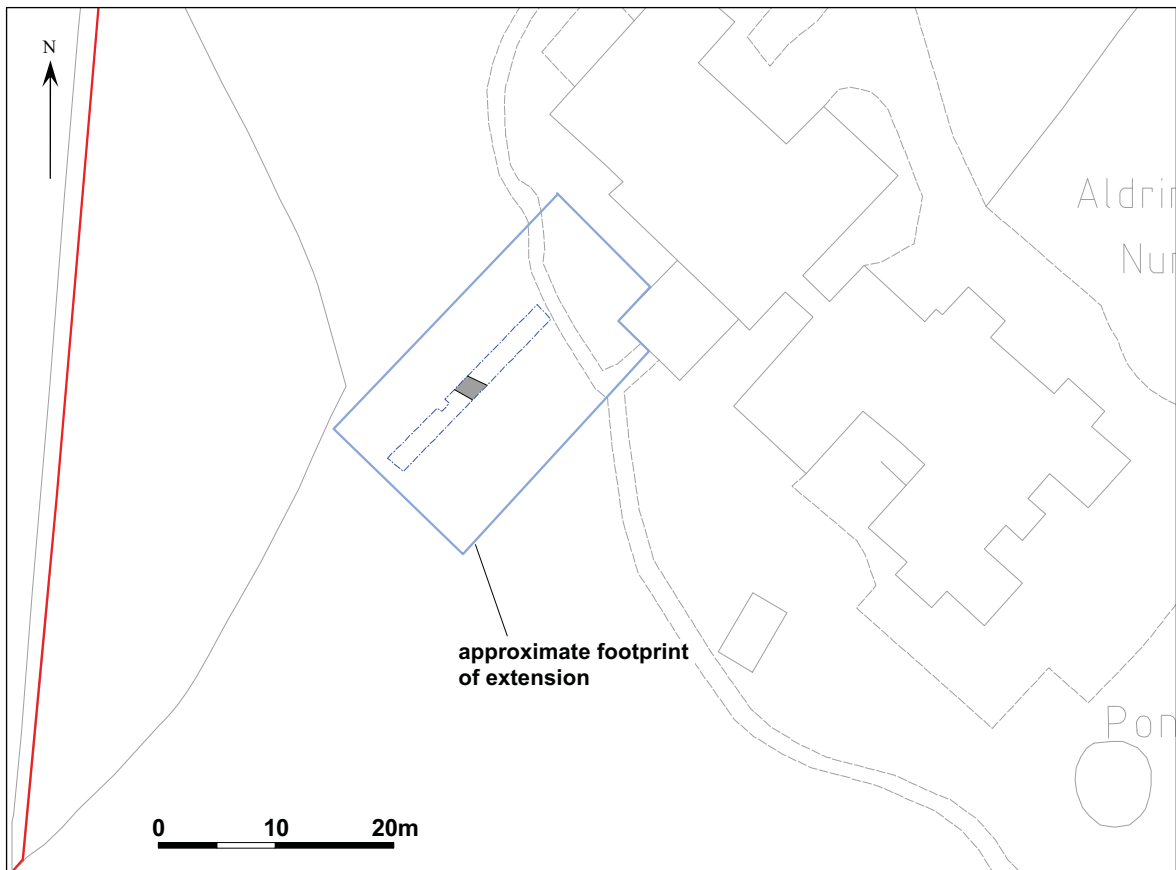
A photographic record comprising digital shots, was made throughout. The evaluation archive will be deposited in the County HER at Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds.

5. Results

A single trench was opened within the development area, measuring 18.5m long and 2m wide. Its location within the proposed extension footprint is shown in Figure 2.

The topsoil consisted of a thin layer of mid brown humic sand with dense roots over c.0.4m of grey leached sand. This sealed a dark blackish brown sand mottled with orange sand which appeared to be a natural subsoil with the inclusion of fine organic matter and mineral staining. 0.2m of this layer was removed onto a more compact, course orange natural sand mottled with regular patches of black mineral staining. All of these layers are characteristic of heathland soils.

The only feature observed within the trench was a north west - south east aligned pit or linear which was cut from the ground surface to a depth of 1.24m. This was filled by loose topsoil and the remains of various tree stumps.



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Figure 2. Trial trench location with modern pit feature shaded grey



Plate 1. View of trench, looking north east.



Plate 2. Modern pit section, looking south east, also showing the soil profile through the trench.

6. Discussion and recommendations for further work

No pre-modern features or artefacts were observed within the trench. Whilst this does not preclude the possibility of features being present beyond the limits of the evaluation trench, it does suggest that features are unlikely to be present in any density, nor that disturbance of archaeological deposits, represented by artefacts distributed through the topsoil and subsoil, has taken place. The development area consists of heathland, colonised by trees, and it seems likely that it has always been slightly marginal land which would have been utilised, but not occupied. As such, it seems unlikely that any further work will be recommended by SCCAS Conservation team.

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.



The Archaeological Service

Environment and Transport Service Delivery
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Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation

ALDRINGHAM COURT NURSING HOME, ALDRINGHAM ROAD, ALDRINGHAM CUM THORPE, SUFFOLK

This is the brief for the first part of a programme of archaeological work. There is likely to be a requirement for additional work, this will be the subject of another brief.

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

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Suffolk Coastal District Council (C/09/1958) for the construction of a single storey extension at Aldringham Court Nursing Home, Aldringham Cum Thorpe, IP16 4QF (TM 445 606). **Please contact the applicant for an accurate plan of the site.**
- 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 site is located on the west side of Aldeburgh Road at c. 6.00m AOD. The soil is deep loam to clay derived from the underlying chalky till. The underlying geology of the site comprises glaciofluvial drift (deep sand).
- 1.4 This application lies within an area of archaeological importance, recorded on the County Historic Environment Record. It is located in close proximity to two nationally important Bronze Age round barrows (Scheduled Monument 21277). There is high potential for encountering early occupation deposits at this location and the proposed development will cause significant ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposit that exists.
- 1.5 The following archaeological evaluation work is required across the area:
 - A linear trenched evaluation 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 suitability of the area for development, and also 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 Paper 14, 2003.

- 1.9 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the WSI as satisfactory. The WSI will provide the basis for measurable standards and will be used to satisfy the requirements of the planning condition.
- 1.10 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of SCC (SCCAS/CT) before execution.
- 1.11 The responsibility for identifying any constraints on field-work, e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c., ecological considerations rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such constraints or imply that the target area is freely available.
- 1.12 Any changes to the specifications that the project archaeologist may wish to make after approval by this office should be communicated directly to SCCAS/CT and the client for approval.

2. Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ*.
- 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 Evaluation is to proceed sequentially: the field-walking, metal-detecting and geophysical surveying will precede the trenched evaluation. The results are to be used to inform the trenching design
- 2.7 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.
- 2.8 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.
- 2.9 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.

- 2.10 Outline specifications for the two elements of the evaluation, which define certain minimum criteria, are set out below.

3. Specification: Trenched Evaluation

- 3.1 A single trial trench 20.00m in length is to be excavated to cover the area of ground disturbance associated with the current planning application (across the area of the proposed building). A linear trench is thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. 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 palaeoenvironmental remains. Best practice should allow for sampling of interpretable and datable archaeological deposits and provision should be made for this. The contractor shall show what provision has been made for environmental assessment of the site and must provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from Dr Helen Chappell, 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 Every effort must be made to get the agreement of the landowner/developer to the deposition of the full site archive, and transfer of title, with the intended archive repository before the fieldwork commences. 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, scientific analysis) as appropriate.
- 5.12 The project manager should consult the intended archive repository before the archive is prepared regarding the specific requirements for the archive deposition and curation, and regarding any specific cost implications of deposition.
- 5.13 If the County Store is the intended location of the archive, the project manager should consult the SCCAS Archive Guidelines 2010 and also the County Historic Environment Record Officer regarding the requirements for the deposition of the archive (conservation, ordering, organisation, labelling, marking and storage) of excavated material and the archive. A clear statement of the form, intended content, and standards of the archive is to be submitted for approval as an essential requirement of the WSI.
- 5.14 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>).
- 5.15 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.
- 5.17 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the County HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 5.18 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.

- 5.19 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.
- 5.20 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.
- 5.21 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).

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Date: 18 March 2010

Reference: ArchSpecEval_Aldringham Court2010

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.