

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RAPID IDENTIFICATION SURVEY REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2011/009

Brettenham Heath bare ground plots, Brettenham, Norfolk ENF125696

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HER Information

Date of Fieldwork: 15/12/2010 & 21/12/2010

Grid Reference: TL 9258 8612

NLA Reference: CNF43186_1

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Curatorial Officer: David Robertson (Historic Environment Service,
Norfolk County Council)

Project Officer: Rob Brooks

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<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

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Disclaimer

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1. Brief and specification

Summary

An archaeological rapid identification survey was carried out over five plots on Brettenham Heath, Norfolk. This was done in order to identify any earth works which might be present prior to rotavation as part of a conservation trial.

Although they could not be identified, various linear and sub-circular mounds were recognised around plot 5, and are thought to possibly represent sand quarrying spoil heaps. Three flints of Mesolithic, Neolithic or later prehistoric date were recovered from Plots 1 and 2.

1. Introduction

An archaeological rapid identification survey (RIS) was carried out over five different plots spread on a roughly east-west alignment south of the A11 and west of High Bridgham Road, on Brettenham Heath, Norfolk. This was done in order to identify any potential earthworks, prior to the plots being rotavated as part of a moth conservation strategy. The work was carried out on 15th and 21st December, 2010 to a Brief issued by David Robertson (Historic Environment Service, Appendix 1) and to a Written Scheme of Investigation by Jo Caruth (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team).

2. Topography

The topography of the site was quite variable, ranging from 27-44m above the Ordnance Datum. Some areas of the heath were relatively flat, whilst some were rather more undulating and indicate potential natural rabbit warrens and features that formed as a result of glacial activity (Unknown author, 2010, www.naturalengland.org.uk). Areas to the south-east, such as Plot 1, were heavily sloped, running down into a dry valley.

3. Archaeological and historical background

The site is known to have been relatively undisturbed heathland in the late 18th century, whilst by the late 19th century it was being used in part for cultivation and tree planting. There are only five archaeological records associated with the heath, including a prehistoric lithic implement, post-medieval well and possible trackway/parish boundary, and various undated earthwork features (see Appendix 1). Heaths in Norfolk were often managed in a way that has allowed the survival of earthworks, such as prehistoric burial mounds or medieval warren features. The Peddars Way runs directly to the east of the heath.

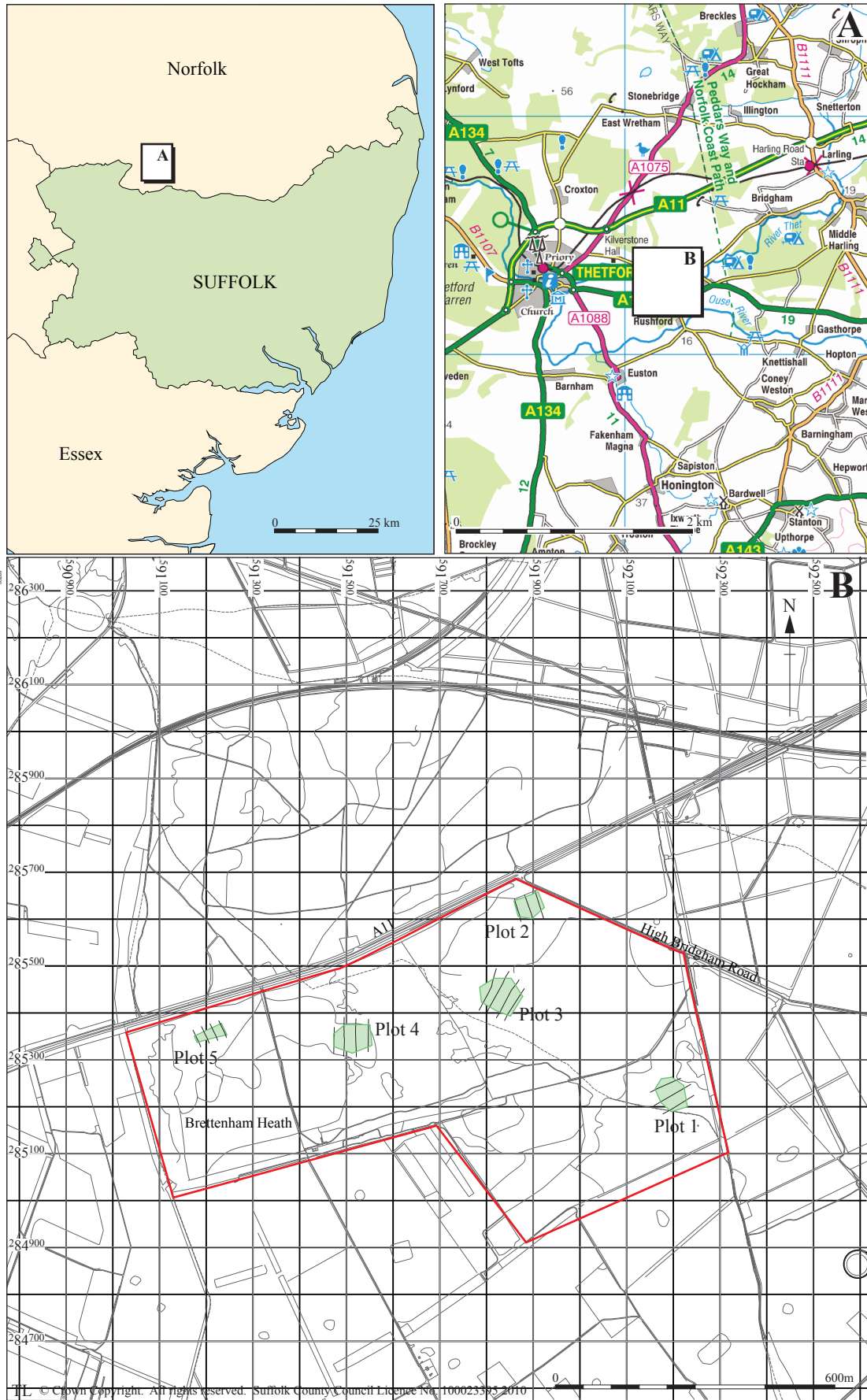


Figure 1. Site location, showing plots (green) and study area (red)

4. Methodology

The plots had been marked out with stakes. These were located and the areas mapped using a Leica GPS1200 Rover system. This was set to maximum error tolerances of 0.05m and utilises a live mobile internet connection to sign into Leica's RTK (real time kinetics) Network which calibrates the system's position in the field to within said tolerances. Processing of these results was carried out off-site using a combination of LisCAD, MapInfo and AutoCAD 2009.

The longest axis of each plot was then marked out. Transects were surveyed at 50m intervals aligned at right angles to these axes. The transects extended 20m beyond the limits of each plot in order to fully establish the limits of any potential earthworks. A visual survey was carried out along the length of each transect in order to try to recognise the presence of any distinctive earthworks. The transects were also surveyed using the GPS, with levels being taken at the start and end of each transect and at any noticeable breaks of slope along the length of the transect. Around Plot 5 a more detailed survey was carried out around the visible earthworks to plot their extent and elevations. Throughout the survey a number of digital photographs were taken of the plots and the site in general at 314 x 314dpi.

Initially the conditions for the survey were not good as there was limited visibility due to mist. However, this improved and generally the light levels were quite good. There was only low vegetation over the plots, which did not affect the appearance of the topography.

Surface finds were recovered from plots 1 and 2 and numbered as 0001 and 0002, respectively.

5. Results

	Minimum and maximum heights above OD (in metres)	Description
Plot 1	28.23m - 34.27m	No earthworks visible. Three transects were walked on a SW-NE alignment. The plot sloped heavily to the south, mirroring the general localised topography. One struck flint was recovered and recorded as 0001.
Plot 2	38.28m - 41.18m	No earthworks visible. Three transects were walked on a SE-NW alignment. The plot sloped gradually from c.40-41m along the SE edge down to c.38-39m at the NW edge. The ground was somewhat uneven, though this was thought to represent modern and natural processes. Two possibly struck flints were recovered and recorded as 0002.
Plot 3	40.12m - 43.03m	No earthworks visible. Four transects were walked on a SW-NE alignment. The ground was somewhat uneven and there was a slight mound within the plot, which was most prominent in the north-west corner. However, this was almost imperceptible within the surrounding landscape and is thought to have been a geological feature.
Plot 4	42.82m – 44.42m	No earthworks visible. Four transects were walked on a NNW-SSE alignment. The ground was somewhat uneven with very slight depressions and mounds across the area, which appeared to be naturally formed.
Plot 5	42.01m – 44.42m	Three irregular mounds and three oval depressions were recognised in this plot. Four transects were walked on a NW-SE alignment. A further survey was carried out to more accurately plot the earthworks. The three depressions were smaller than the three mounds, possibly indicating that the mounds consisted of the upcast soil from the depressions. Further similar earthworks were visible to the south and south-west of the plot.

Table 1. Plot descriptions

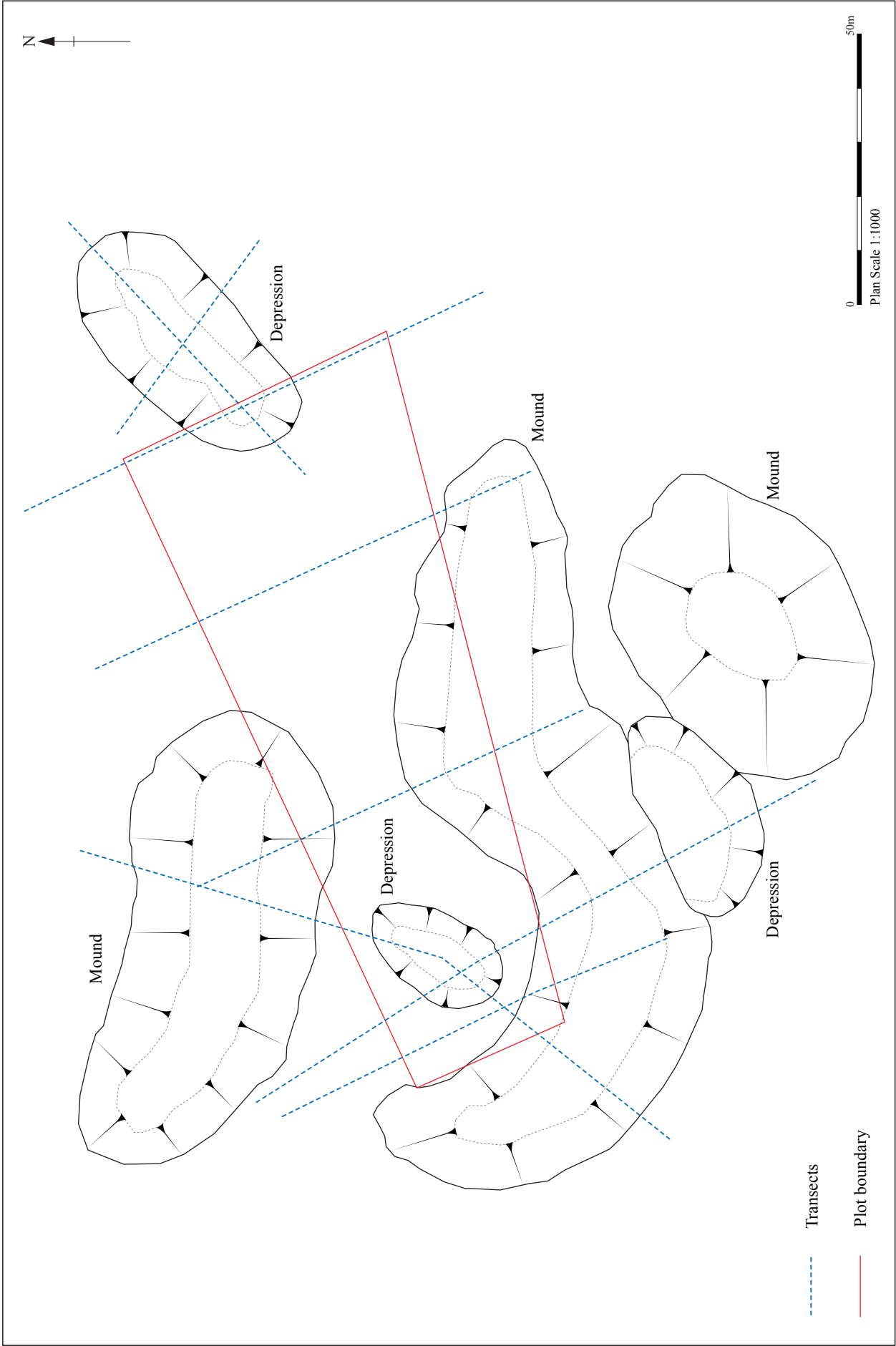


Figure 2. Plot 5

6. Finds

Andy Fawcett

Three fragments of flint were recovered from two unstratified contexts at Brettenham Heath (97g). All of the flint pieces have been identified by Colin Pendleton.

The first is a long primary flake which was noted in context 0001 (20g). It is lightly patinated with some cortex and is dated either to the Mesolithic or Neolithic periods.

Two fragments (77g) were recorded in context 0002. The first of these is a heavily patinated piece that is mainly cortical on the dorsal face; it was probably used as a simple core. A few small flake scars are visible at each end. Two of these scars are relatively long which suggests a Mesolithic or Neolithic date. The second flint in this context is a heavily patinated snapped flake which also displays some cortex. It is relatively thick, irregular and has transverse flake scars on the dorsal face. The flake is dated from the Mesolithic or later within the prehistoric period.

7. Discussion

Plots 1-4 are thought to be clear of earthworks. Whilst showing a degree of variability in general topography, heights above the Ordnance Datum and localised irregularities, these are thought to be the result of geological and other natural processes. The earthworks around Plot 5 however, appear to show human activity within the plot and to the south and south-east. Whilst it is unclear without further investigation, this is probably the result of undated quarrying activity, judging by the irregularity of the mounds and depressions, as opposed to the more ordered forms expected from other earthworks such as tumuli. To the north and east of Plot 5 this activity seems to stop.

The presence of unstratified flints indicates the presence of Mesolithic, Neolithic or later prehistoric activity on the heath, although no further evidence was identified.

8. Archive deposition

The paper and photographic archive will be deposited with the Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service. A further digital archive and paper copy of the report will be kept at SCCAS Bury St Edmunds, T:\Arc\Archive field proj\Brettenham\ENF125696
Brettenham Heath

9. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The monitoring was carried out by a number of archaeological staff, (Rob Brooks, David Gill and Jo Caruth) all from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team.

The project was directed by Rob Brooks and managed by Jo Caruth, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

The post-excavation was managed by Richenda Goffin. Finds processing was carried out by Jonathan Van Jennians, the production of report graphics by Gemma Adams and the specialist finds report by Andy Fawcett. The report was checked by Jo Caruth and Richenda Goffin.

Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the archaeological results 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.

Appendix 1. Brief



BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL RAPID IDENTIFICATION SURVEY

Site or Project Name: Brettenham Heath bare ground plots
Parish: Brettenham
Grid reference: Centred on TL92588612
Norfolk HER No.: To be arranged
HES Reference CNF43186_1 Associated Y
Planning Authority: Natural England (National Nature Reserve)
Application or Reference No.: N/A
Issued by: David Robertson
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Date: 19 November 2010
Notes:



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PROJECT BACKGROUND

Bare ground plots for butterflies are to be created on Brettenham Heath. The work will include rotavation of five areas, each up to 0.5ha in area.

A Programme of Archaeological Works (PoAW) is required to determine the extent, date and significance of any surviving archaeological earthworks and features within the five rotavation areas and to inform the rotavation works. The PoAW may involve a number of phases of work; the number and nature of these will be informed by the results of each phase and the nature of rotavation works.

This brief has been prepared following Natural England's 2008 *Brettenham Heath National Nature Reserve Management Plan* and Natural England's 2008 guidance document *Impact of heathland restoration and recreation techniques on soil characteristics and the historical environment* (Natural England Research Report NERR010). It covers the first phase of the PoAW: a rapid identification survey to be carried out before rotavation begins. The results of this survey will inform the rotavation works and the possible need for further phases of archaeological work.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Faden's map of 1797 and Bryant's map of 1826 show Brettenham Heath as heath. By the time the Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6-inch map was published in the 1880s, two areas had been taken into cultivation and trees had been planted in two areas. One edge of the eastern arable area was marked by the Brettenham/Bridgham parish boundary.

Five archaeological features have been recorded within the heath (all of which are outside the areas of rotavation). These are a prehistoric flint artefact, an undated earthwork (probably a natural feature), an undated banked enclosure, a post medieval well and earthworks of a possible trackway or parish boundary. The Peddars Way marks the eastern boundary of the heath.

Many heaths in Norfolk have surviving archaeological earthworks and features, mainly due to the nature of heathland management and the lack of ploughing. These include Bronze Age burial mounds, parish boundary features and medieval and/or post medieval rabbit warren features, such as pillow mounds and warren banks. As a result, there is high potential for unrecorded archaeological earthworks and features to survive within the rotavation areas. This potential is confirmed by the previously recorded earthworks and the presence of an upstanding parish boundary bank to the north on Bridgham Heath (HER 37075).

REQUIREMENT FOR WORK

A rapid identification survey is required to determine the extent, date and significance of archaeological earthworks and features. The survey should be involve transects through the five rotavation areas, at c.50m intervals

wherever possible. All archaeological features and earthworks should be located, described, analysed and sketch plotted at a scale of 1:10,000.

The Archaeological Contractor will prepare a Method Statement or Specification for this phase of the PoAW and submit this to the Historic Environment Service of Norfolk County Council (HES) for approval *before* costs are prepared for the commissioning client. The PoAW will include, as appropriate, background research, fieldwork, assessment, analysis, preparation of report, publication and deposition of the project archive.

The Archaeological Contractor will contact the HER Officer of HES in advance of work starting to obtain a HER number for the site or, if a number is already given on the Brief, to ensure that it is still applicable.

The archaeological research aims and objectives of the project will be clearly stated, and the Method Statement or Specification will demonstrate how these will be met. Appropriate reference will be made to the following documents:-

Glazebrook, J. (ed) 1997, *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 1. Resource assessment* (E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 3).

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J. (eds), 2000, *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. Research agenda and strategy* (E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 8).

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.

When the project is completed, all parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the Norfolk Historic Environment Record. This will include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report.

Hard copies of the report must also be provided, as specified below.

STANDARDS

Method Statements or Specifications prepared by Archaeological Consultants or Contractors should state that all works will be carried out in full accordance with the appropriate sections of Gurney, D., 2003, '*Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*', as adopted by the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers for the East of England Region and published as *East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14*. This is available as a PDF file on the web at www.eaareports.org.uk

Archaeological Contractors should note that the *Standards* document stipulates basic *methodological* standards. It is considered axiomatic that all contractors will strive to achieve the highest possible *qualitative* standards, with the application of the most advanced and appropriate techniques

possible within a context of continuous improvement aimed at maximising the recovery of archaeological data and contributing to the development of a greater understanding of Norfolk's historic environment. Monitoring officers will seek and expect clear evidence of commitment to the historic resource of Norfolk, with specifications being drawn up within a context of added value.

OTHER MATTERS

If archaeological earthworks and features are discovered during the survey, HES will provide advice regarding the management during and after the rotavation works.

Archaeological Contractors are reminded that they should submit a copy of their Method Statement or Specification to HES for approval, *before* costs are prepared for commissioning clients, in line with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' guidance.

The Method Statement or Specification should indicate the number of person days allocated to the project.

HES will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project. The archaeological contractor will give HES not less than two week's written notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.

Any subsequent variation to a Detailed Project Specification or Method Statement must be agreed with HES prior to its implementation.

This brief is valid for a period of one year from the date of issue. After that time, it may need to be revised to take account of new discoveries, changes in policy or the introduction of new working practices or techniques.

Three hard copies and PDF copy on CD of the Survey Report should be supplied to HES for the attention of the Senior Archaeologist (Planning) within the stipulated time-scale on the understanding that this will become a public document after an appropriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months). Three hard copies and a PDF copy of the draft publication report will be supplied to HES for comments within stipulated or agreed time-scale for the completion of fieldwork. Contractors may wish to submit drafts for comments prior to sending the rest of the copies.

NOTES

HES is responsible for safeguarding the County's archaeological heritage. HES is consulted by Local Planning Authorities and provides specialist information and advice on the archaeological implications of development proposals.

An Archaeological Project will usually consist of one or more of the following:-

Desk-based assessment: a report drawing together existing information about a site from a wide range of sources.

Survey: usually fieldwalking and metal-detecting, sometimes non-intrusive earthworks or geophysical surveys (e.g. magnetometer survey)

Evaluation: survey and/or trial-trenching or test-pitting.

Excavation: larger-scale excavation

Watching brief or monitoring: the presence of an archaeologist during the development to record any features exposed

Post-excavation: analysis, and the preparation of a report and archive of records and finds at the end of any archaeological project

A phased approach to fieldwork is frequently adopted, with one stage leading on to another (if necessary) after each phase is reported upon and reviewed.

WHAT YOU NEED TO DO

You should then ask one or more Archaeological Contractors to prepare a Method Statement or Specification which will detail how the project is to be undertaken, and how the brief will be fulfilled. This will be sent to HES for approval on behalf of the Planning Authority, after which the Contractor will give you details of costs.

HES does not see Contractors' costings, nor do we give advice on costs. You may wish to obtain a number of quotations or to employ the services of an archaeological consultant.

Details of archaeological contractors based in Norfolk and beyond may be found in the Institute of Field Archaeologists Yearbook & Directory, available from the I.F.A., University of Reading, 2 Earley Gate, PO Box 239, Reading RG6 6AU. Tel: 0118 931 6446. Fax: 0118 931 6448. Email: admin@archaeologists.net. Website: www.archaeologists.net.

FOR FURTHER HELP, INFORMATION AND ADVICE CONTACT

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The Historic Environment Service of Norfolk County Council is responsible for safeguarding the County's archaeological heritage. HES is consulted by Planning Authorities and provides advice on archaeological work that may be required as a result of development proposals.