

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2010/228

Cherry Tree Public House Debenham DBN 132

M. Sommers
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Lucy Robinson, County Director of Economy, Skills and Environment
Endeavour House, Russel Road, Ipswich, IP1 2BX.

HER Information

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at the Cherry Tree Public House, Debenham, in advance of a small residential and commercial development. Five trenches, with a total length of 110m, were excavated across the proposed development site. Two ditches, a small number of indistinct features, which may have been postholes but were at too great a depth to safely examine, and two Bronze Age cremation burials, one of which was urned, were identified and recorded. (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service for Hollins Architects, on the behalf of their client).

1. Introduction

It has been proposed to construct a small number of houses and a small-scale commercial development within the grounds of the Cherry Tree Public House, and on the adjacent former bowling green, in Debenham, Suffolk. Planning permission has yet to be sought but the client has been advised that any consent will be conditional on the implementation of an agreed programme of archaeological work. The initial stage of the programme of work, as specified in the Brief and Specification produced by Keith Wade of the Suffolk County Council Conservation Team (Appendix 1), was the undertaking of a trenched evaluation in order to ascertain what levels of archaeological evidence may be present within the development area, and to inform any mitigation strategies that may be deemed necessary.

The National Grid Reference for the approximate centre of the site is TM 1749 6292. Figure 1 shows a location plan of the site.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service's Field Team who were commissioned by Hollins Architects & Surveyors on behalf of their client.

2. Geology and topography

The development site is situated on the north east facing slope of a shallow valley and comprises three terraces; the area of the existing public house and car park at c. 34.1m OD; the former bowling green at c. 35.1m OD and the rear garden area to the south west of the public house at c. 35.4m OD. The bowling green is built on an artificially created level terrace which is partially cut into the valley slope. The other two terraces are generally even but with gentle slopes down towards the east.

The valley is drained by a tributary to the River Deben which runs across the north end of the site and along the eastern edge on the other side of the adjacent roadways. The site is located on the bottom edge of the high ground as it descends into the floodplain of the Deben, which is bounded by the tributary and the main channel of the Deben some 120m to the east.

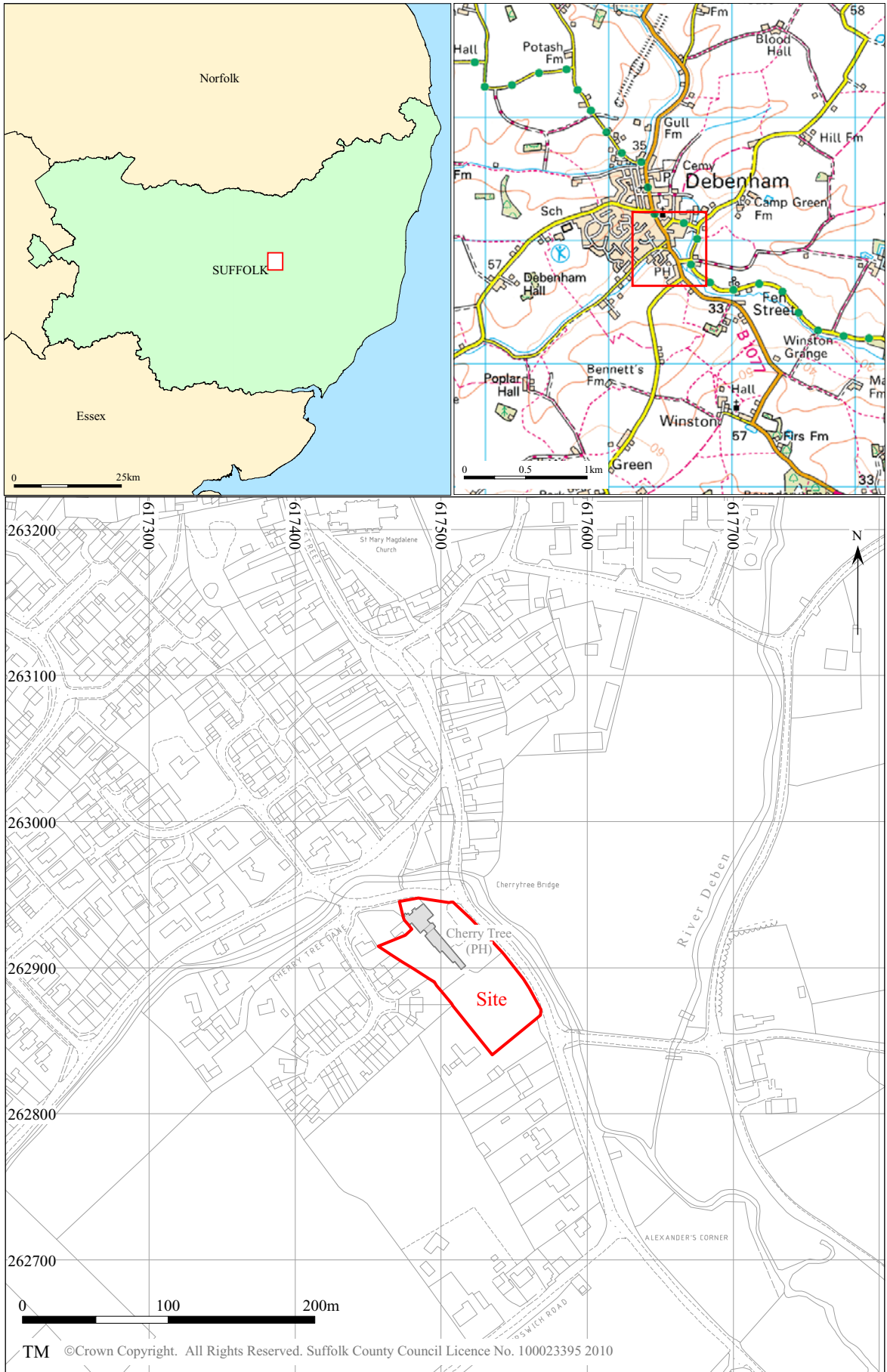


Figure 1. Site location plan

Valleys such as this have been cut through the central clay plateau by water draining off the relatively impermeable soil into the main river channels. Most of the soils in these valleys are the better drained and more workable clays of the Hanslope series although in some areas there are more mixed soils and occasional sand and gravel terraces.

3. Archaeological and historical background

There are no known sites recorded on the County Historic Environment Record (HER) within the proposed site, but it is located within the area of medieval Debenham, as defined in the County Historic Environment Record (HER), and close to the site of a human burial of unknown age discovered in 1839 in the garden of house being built in the meadow to the rear of the Cherry Tree (HER ref. DBN 085).

The site is also situated in a valley on the edge of high ground close to a source of water, a location which is topographically favourable to earlier settlement.

The site is therefore considered to have a very high potential for archaeological deposits to be present. The proposed development will entail significant disturbance to the existing land surface which could result in damage and/or destruction of any archaeological remains that may be present.

4. Methodology

A series of five trial trenches were machine excavated down to the level of the natural subsoil using a small tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

The machining of the trenches was closely observed throughout in order to identify archaeological features and deposits and to recover any artefacts that might be revealed. Excavation continued until the undisturbed natural subsoil was encountered, the exposed surface of which was then examined for cut features or deposits. Any features/deposits identified were sampled through hand excavation in order to determine their depth and shape and to recover datable artefacts. All features excavated were planned at a scale of 1:50 and their excavated sections drawn at a

scale of 1:20. Samples of the fills were taken from the excavated features to enable further analysis if deemed to be useful.

Following excavation the nature and depth of the overburden was recorded and the trench locations were plotted. A photographic record of the work undertaken was also compiled using a 10 megapixel digital camera.

5. Results

Five trenches with a total length of 110m were excavated across the site (Figure 2) and within these a number of archaeological features were recorded. A small number of artefacts were recovered from some of these features, for a detailed assessment of these see section 6. The results for each trench are described overleaf. See Figure 8 for an overall summary of the features identified.



Figure 2. Trench location plan

Trench 1: This trench measured 30m in length and was cut across the lowest terrace of the development area. The topsoil was c. 0.4m in thickness and overlay a probable hill-wash deposit of brown silty sand which in turn overlay the natural subsoil, which consisted of a stony sand and gravel. The natural subsoil was encountered at a depth of 0.7m at the south-east two-thirds of the trench but from a point c. 20m from the south-east end the natural subsoil sloped down gently, as it approached the water channel, reaching a depth of c. 1m at the north-west end of the trench.

Two features were noted in this trench, 0002 and 0004, both of which were interpreted as ditches (see Figure 3 for a plan and Figure 4 for the recorded sections).

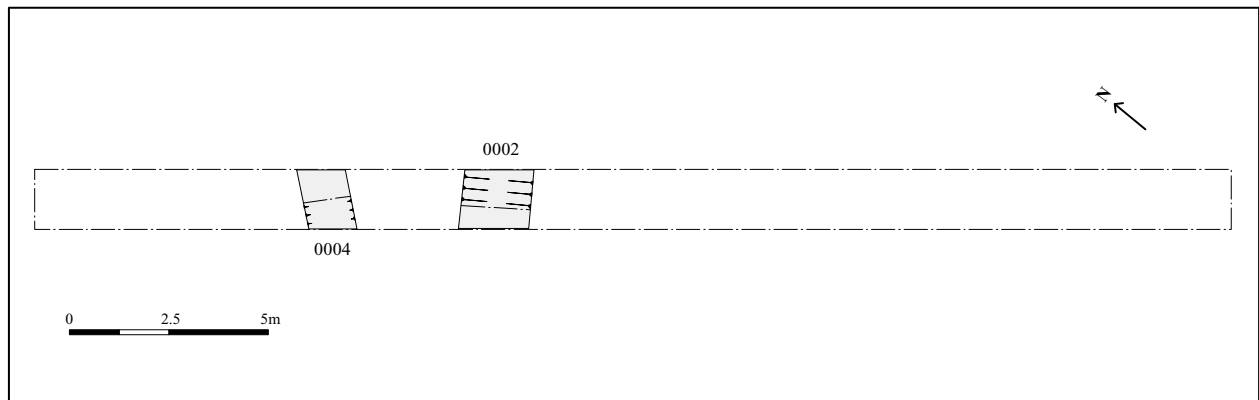


Figure 3. Plan of Trench 1

Ditch 0002: A linear feature running on a near east-west alignment. It measured 1.8m in width and cut the natural subsoil to a depth of 0.8m. It had gently sloping sides which ran down to a bowl shaped base (Plate I). The fill (0003) consisted of brown silty sand which became noticeably stony towards the base. This fill could not be distinguished from the overlying probable hill-wash layer. No finds were recovered.

Ditch 0004: A linear feature running on a south-west to north-east alignment. It measured 1.2m in width and cut the natural subsoil to a depth of 0.7m. The sides were near vertical and the base flat and level (Plate II). Three distinct layers of fill were noted. The primary deposit (0005) comprised a layer of what was initially interpreted as peat but has since been identified as compressed plant stems, probably reeds. Within this layer two fragments of worked wood were recovered, a rough stake and a section of a plank. This layer was overlain by a deposit of grey sand mottled with mid brown silt (0026) from which no finds were recovered. This was in turn overlain by a pale grey silty

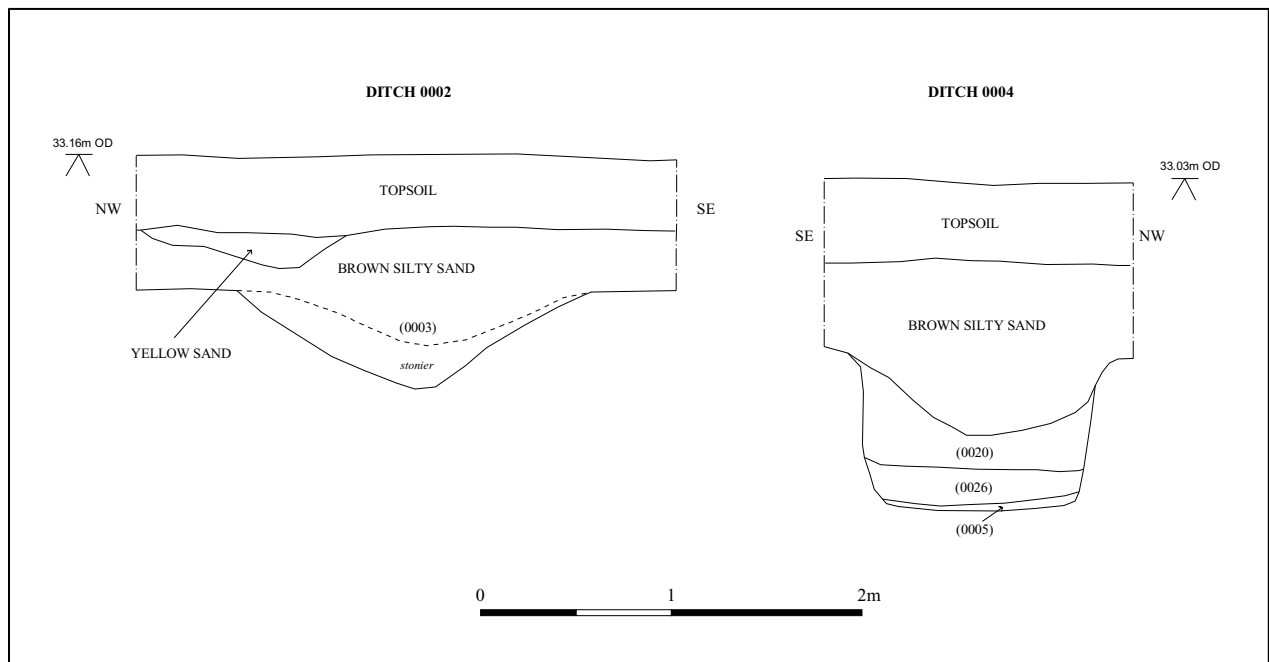


Figure 4. Trench 1 sections - ditches 0002 and 0004

sand with occasional charcoal flecks (0020) from which two small sherds of pottery were recovered, one of which has been dated to the medieval period and the other to the 16th-18th century. These fills were overlain by the probable hill-wash layer of brown silty sand.

Trench 2: This trench measured 20m in length and was cut across the north-east edge of the former bowling green. The topsoil was thicker, at 0.5m, and overlay a 0.6m deposit of pale brown silty sand containing occasional brick rubble and chalk fragments. This overlay a 0.2m thick deposit of grey-brown silty sand which in turn overlay the natural subsoil, which in this trench consisted of a fine mottled pale yellow/orange sandy silt, at a depth of c. 1.3m (Plate III). These last two deposits were interpreted as a layer of imported material, used to create a level terrace for the bowling green, and a buried topsoil layer.

Cut in the surface of the natural subsoil a possible ditch (0008) and three possible postholes were visible (0010, 0012 and 0014). Unfortunately due to the depth it was not possible to safely enter the trench to excavate these features so recording was restricted to surface planning and photography. The fills of these possible features consisted of a pale yellowish-brown sandy silt. No finds were identified from any of these features.

A fourth possible feature was noted (0016) but on closer inspection this was interpreted as a natural variation in the subsoil. A modern pit (0006) was also seen towards the north-west edge of the trench. See Figure 5 for plan of the base of this trench.

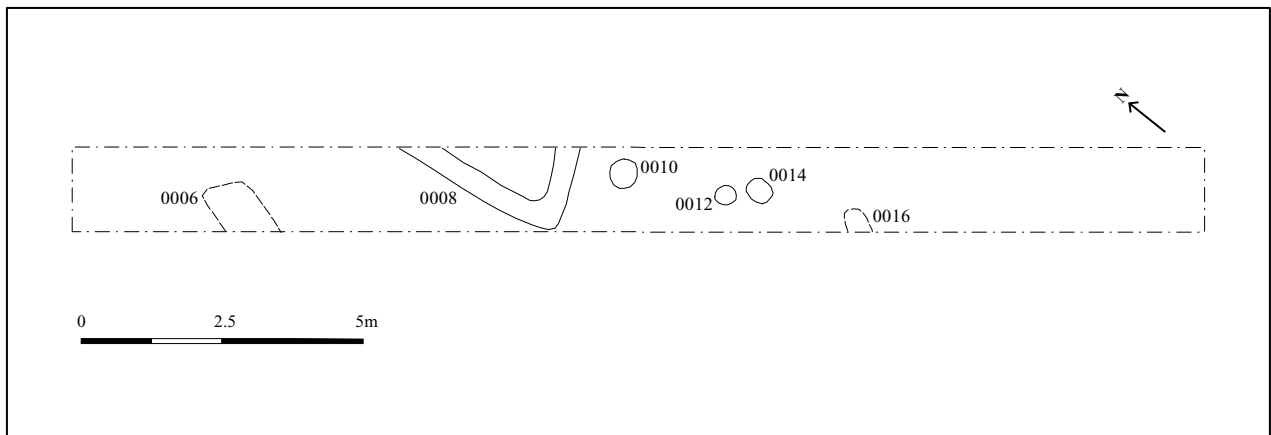


Figure 5. Plan of Trench 2

Trench 3: This trench measured 20m in length and was cut across the centre of the former bowling green. It was aligned south-west to north-east and is parallel with the former slope of the valley side. At the south-west end of the trench the natural subsoil was located immediately beneath the topsoil at a depth of 0.3m. At the north-east end of the trench the level of the natural subsoil had fallen to a depth of 1.1m and was overlain by a 0.25m thick layer of brown sandy silt which in turn was overlain by the imported deposit of pale brown silty sand containing occasional brick rubble and chalk fragments, as seen in Trench 2. No features were recorded although a substantial amount of pottery and associated burnt bone was recovered from the machine bucket and the adjacent spoil tip (allocated the context number 0017). Although discovered in the machine bucket and the spoil tip there is little doubt that they originated from an *in-situ* cremation burial located on or just above the natural subsoil (at a depth of c. 1 m) at a point some 3.2m from the north-east end of the trench (Plate IV).

A fragment of Anglo-Saxon pottery was also recovered from the spoil in the vicinity of the cremation burial.

Trench 4: A 20m trench cut across the south-east edge of the bowling green. The natural subsoil of pale yellow gravel and sand lay immediately beneath the topsoil at a depth 0.2m to 0.25m (Plate V). No features or artefacts were identified.

Trench 5: This trench measured 20m in length and ran across the former garden area behind the Cherry Tree Public House. The revealed stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of dark rich topsoil over a 0.25m thick layer of grey silt with chalk flecks beneath which a natural subsoil of mottled yellow and orange clayey silt was recorded (Plate VI).

Three features of note were recorded in the base of this trench, two ditches (0022 and 0024) and a further cremation burial (0018). See Figure 6 for a plan of this trench and Figure 7 for the recorded sections.

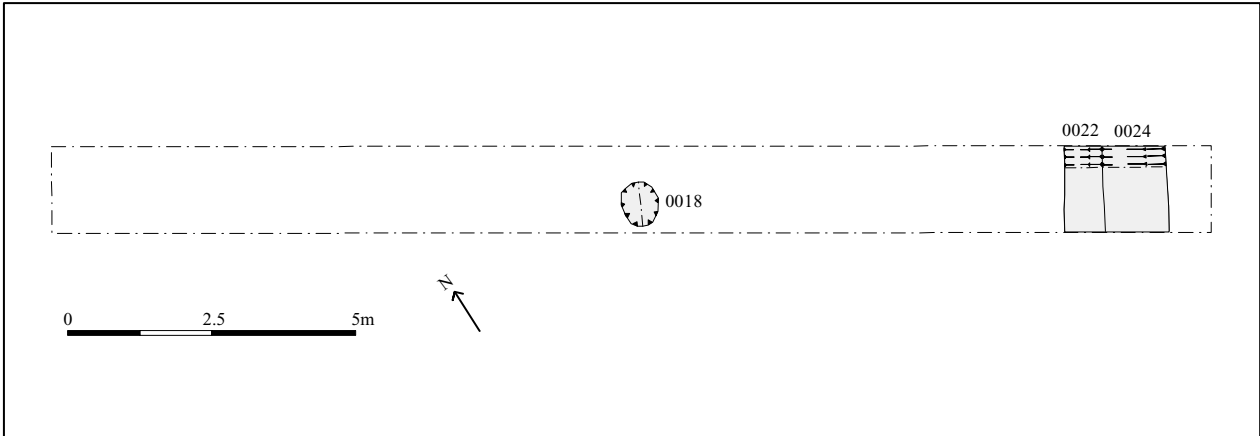


Figure 6. Plan of Trench 5

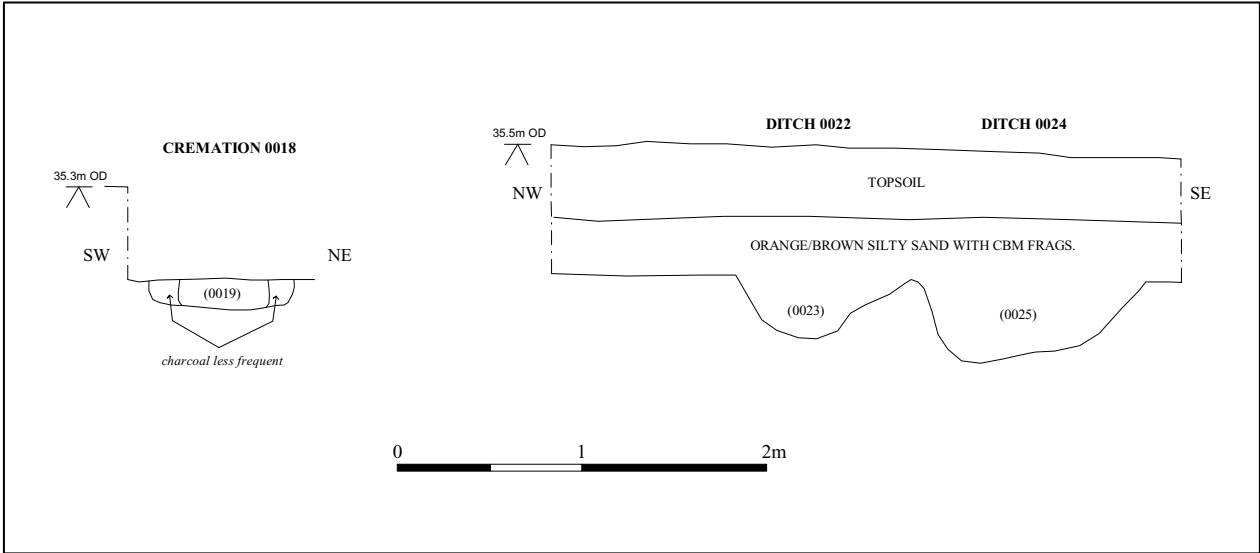


Figure 7. Trench 5 sections - cremation 0018 and ditches 0022 & 0024

Pit 0018 consisted of a shallow, flat bottomed pit with a charcoal rich fill with frequent burnt bone fragments (0019). The charcoal and burnt bone was noticeably denser in a central area (Plate VII). No finds were recovered from the fill and there was no evidence for a ceramic urn. The pit was cut into the grey silt layer and could be seen from immediately beneath the topsoil, at a depth of 0.3m. A 100% sample of the fill was retained for analysis, the results of which indicate this feature is also a cremation burial (see section 6. 'Finds and environmental evidence', below).

The two ditches, 0022 and 0024 were overlain by a deposit of orange brown silty sand with numerous tiny fragments of red brick or tile (Plate VIII). Each ditch was parallel and immediately adjacent but it was not possible to determine any relationship between the two. The fills of each ditch were of similar colour and nature to the overlying deposit although there were no CBM fragments noted in the fill of ditch 0022 (fill 0023). No artefacts were recovered from the fill of either ditch.

6. Finds and environmental evidence Stephen Benfield

Introduction

The total quantities of each of the finds types recovered are listed showing number and weight by context in Table 1.

| Ctxt | Pot No | Pot Wt(g) | Fired Clay No | Fired Clay Wt(g) | Burnt flint No | Burnt flint Wt(g) | Miscellaneous | Spot Date |
|-------|--------|-----------|---------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|---|-----------|
| 0001 | 1 | 3 | | | | | | Sax? |
| 0017 | 67 | 455 | 1 | 28 | 9 | 18 | One sherd Saxon; cremated bone- numerous frags @ 105g | MBA |
| 0019 | | | | | 9 | 13 | Cremated bone - numerous frags @ 351g | MBA |
| 0020 | 2 | 6 | | | | | | P-Med |
| Total | 70 | 464 | 1 | 28 | 18 | 31 | | |

Table 1. Finds quantities

Pottery

Prehistoric pottery

The prehistoric pottery consists of sherds from a Deverel–Rimbury urn of Middle Bronze Age date (context 0017).

There are sixty-six sherds from the body and base of a large vessel which can be identified as a Middle Bronze Age urn of Deverel–Rimbury type. This was recovered during machining in Trench 3 (context 0017). All the sherds share the same fabric and at least some can be joined together so that the sherds recovered represent one pot. There is one sherd from the edge of the base with the remainder from the body of the vessel. No rim sherds are present and none of the sherds are decorated. The sherds are between 10-15mm thick and the curvature of the body sherds indicates a diameter of about 300mm. The fabric contains dark grey grog-temper with some lighter coloured pieces. The grog-temper is common to abundant throughout the fabric with the pieces ranging in size up to about 5mm. The surface colour of the urn varies from grey-brown, though yellow-brown to red. Grog, either used exclusively or mixed with calcified flint is a common tempering material in urns of Middle Bronze Age date (Brown 1999, 79).

A quantity of cremated bone was recovered with the urn so that it presumably represents a Middle Bronze Age cremation. As a sherd from the base was recovered, while no sherds from the rim are present, this suggests that the pot may originally have been placed in the ground upright.

Hand-made Saxon pottery

Two hand-made sand-tempered sherds were also recovered which have been provisionally dated as Saxon. It should be noted that hand-made Saxon pottery has been recovered from a site at Alexander Corner (HER ref. WNT 017) located approximately 300m to the south.

One sherd was recovered with the sherds of the Middle Bronze Age urn (context 0017) in Trench 3. This is a base sherd. There are sparse white (unmodified) flint fragments in the fabric and voids from sparse vegetable fragments in the surface. The edge of the base is clearly slightly rounded and the underside of the base itself is slightly undulating. The shape of the base suggests a Saxon rather than Middle Iron Age date.

The other is a small sherd. This is slightly abraded and has a vesicular surface. The sherd is an unstratified find from Trench 2 (context 0001).

Medieval and post-medieval pottery

A small grey sherd of medieval coarse ware (Fabric MCW) and a sherd of post-medieval Iron Glazed Black ware (Fabric IGBW) dated to the 16th-18th century were recovered from the ditch 0004 (fill 0020) in Trench 1.

Fired clay

A single piece of fired clay weighing 28g was recovered with the Middle Bronze Age cremation 0017 in Trench 3. The fragment is similar in appearance to sherds from the urn from this context, but the fabric is different so that the piece is certainly not part of that vessel. The fabric colour is reddish brown with a yellow-brown surface and the fabric contains abundant fine-medium size sand.

The fabric of the piece clearly shows that it is not part of the urn, although one small area retains part of a dark smooth surface which is similar in appearance to the interior of the urn. In the absence of any clear indication that it is part of a pottery vessel it has been classified as fired clay and the sandy fabric makes this identification most likely. The dark surface may indicate an internal void suggesting that it is part of a clay object, or may be a wattle hole.

Burnt flint

A few small pieces and fragments of burnt (heat-affected) flint were recovered. Nine pieces weighing a total of 18g come from the Middle Bronze Age cremation 0017 in Trench 3. A further nine pieces weighing a total of 13g come from the undated cremation 0018 (fill 0019) in Trench 5.

Cremated bone

Sue Anderson

Introduction

This report examines the cremated bone collected from two cremation burials of unknown prehistoric date. Bone was recovered under two context numbers, 0017 (Trench 3) and 0019 (Trench 5).

Methodology

Bone was collected as bulk samples and sieved, the entire residue being retained as a single group for each context. A high proportion of 0019 comprised charcoal fragments, which were separated from the bone during examination. The bone from was sorted into

six categories: skull, axial, upper limb, lower limb, unidentified long bone, and unidentified. All fragment groups were weighed to the nearest tenth of a gram. Measurements of maximum skull and long bone fragment sizes were also recorded. Observations were made, where possible, concerning bone colour, age, sex, dental remains and pathology. Identifiable fragments were noted. Methods used follow the Workshop of European Anthropologists (WEA 1980) and McKinley (1994 and 2004).

Quantification, identification, collection and survival

Table 2 shows the bone weights and percentages of identified bone from the burial, and the proportions of bone identified from the four areas of the skeleton (skull, axial, upper limb, lower limb). Expected proportions are provided based on McKinley (1994, 6).

| Context | Total wt/g | % identified | % Skull | % Axial | % Upper limb | % Lower limb |
|------------------|------------|--------------|---------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| <i>Expected*</i> | | | 18.2 | 20.6 | 23.1 | 38.1 |
| 0017 | 100.9 | 86.0 | 16.2 | 17.1 | 5.4 | 57.1 |
| 0019 | 292.3 | 37.8 | 8.1 | 0.4 | 5.1 | 57.8 |

Table 2. Percentages of identified fragments out of total identified by area of skeleton.

This shows that in both burials, leg fragments were considerably over-represented amongst the identifiable material, and that other areas of the skeleton were under-represented. It has been suggested that 'it should be possible to recognise any bias in the collection of certain areas of the body after cremation' (McKinley 1994, 6). However there is also some bias inherent in the identification of elements, in this case particularly as the lower limb bones were much better preserved than the other fragments. It is likely that many of the small fragments recorded as 'unidentified limb bone' were pieces of the upper limbs. In addition, burial 0017 was not recovered in situ, having been discovered when it was disturbed by the machine, and some bone is likely to have been lost as a result. These figures therefore provide only a rough guide to what was originally collected.

The total weights of both burials are very low. Mays (1998, Table 11.2) notes that the combusted weight of an adult skeleton has a mean of around 1500g for females and 2300g for males. The quantity of bone in this assemblage therefore represents only a small proportion of the combusted weight of an average adult skeleton.

The cremation burials

The burials are summarised in Table 3.

| Burial | Age | Sex | Notes |
|--------|--------|-----|---|
| 0017 | mature | M | Good condition but little surviving; some degenerative changes may indicate older age group; sexing based on size of acetabulum. |
| 0019 | mature | M | Fair condition but heavily fragmented and incomplete; age based on epiphyseal fusion and overall size; sex based on large occipital crests; possible osteophytes on one finger phalanx. |

Table 3. Summary of cremation burials.

Identifiable pieces in this group included cranial vault, part of the left zygoma, two tooth root fragments, pieces of vertebral facet, distal humerus, distal radius, finger phalanges, a large piece of the right acetabulum (hip joint), proximal tibia, pieces of shaft of the femur, tibia and fibula, and both distal hallucial phalanges (big toes). The two pieces of tooth root were not identifiable.

The fragments were certainly adult as joint fragments showed that epiphyses were fully fused. There was some evidence of new bone formation at muscle attachments in 0017 and on one finger phalange in 0019, possibly suggesting that the individuals were both mature or older adults. The acetabulum of 0017 appeared to be large – the diameter was c.50mm and, allowing for shrinkage, this suggests that the femoral head was probably within the male range. There were fragments of cranial vault in 0019 which appeared to be pieces of the occipital crest, and again this was robust.

There was no evidence to suggest that the bone from these burials represented more than one individual each, although a few pieces appeared to show signs of abrasion.

The degree of fragmentation in 0019 was very high, and the identification rate of 37.8% is low as a result, although it is comparable with other unurned cremation burials. The largest fragment of skull was 30mm long and the largest piece of long bone 68mm long, both from 0017, which had a higher identification rate due to better preservation of the surviving pieces. Much of the unidentified fraction in both burials was less than 10mm in length.

The majority of bone in this group was fully oxidised and cream to white in colour, although a few inner fragments of thicker long bones, particularly the femur, were grey-blue in colour. The presence of a high proportion of white bone indicates firing temperatures in excess of c. 600°C (McKinley 2004, 11). Mays (1999, 159) noted that

the uniformity of colour in the surviving bone at Ardleigh in Essex may be due to poor survival of less well cremated bone.

Summary and discussion

The burials contained the fragmented remains of two individuals, both mature adult males. The total weight of bone indicates that both were very incomplete. For 0019 this may be due to poor collection following the cremation ritual, poor preservation of incompletely cremated material following burial, the token collection of remains for burial, or severe truncation. However in the case of 0017 it is most likely due to disturbance by the machine during the evaluation.

A small quantity of unurned bone, if not truncated, is typical of later prehistoric cremation deposits in Suffolk, suggesting that 0019 may be of later Bronze Age or Iron Age date. A sample has been selected for radiocarbon dating if required.

Wood samples

Two pieces of worked wood were recovered from the peat layer at the base of ditch 0004 (0005).

The longest of these is a stake 366mm in length, now broken into two pieces. It is irregular in section and tapers to a wedge shape. The second fragment is 267mm in length and 66mm in width, being approximately rectangular in section.

An Assessment of the plant macrofossils

Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and Methods

The flots from three bulk samples from features excavated by Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service were submitted to the Environmental Department at Oxford Archaeology East for an initial assessment in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

The flots had been obtained by the manual flotation of bulk samples carried out by a member of the Suffolk Archaeology team using a 0.3mm mesh sieve. The dried flots

were scanned using a binocular microscope at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted on Table 4.

Results

The results are recorded on Table 4

| Ctxt No. | Cut No. | Feature Type | Flot Contents | Flot volume (%assessed) |
|----------|---------|------------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 0005 | 0004 | layer in base of ditch | Compressed stems, single insect fragment | 400ml (25%) |
| 0017 | | Cremation | Charcoal, fragments of fired clay | <1ml (100%) |
| 0019 | 0018 | Charcoal-rich feature | Charcoal, grass stem, wheat grain | 200ml (100%) |

Table 4. Results (plant macrofossils)

Preservation of plant remains from context 0005 is by waterlogging (survival due to anoxic conditions). The plant remains in the other two contexts are preserved by carbonisation.

The sample from context 0017 produced a flot volume of less than 1ml and contains sparse charcoal only. The sample from context 0019 in, contrast, is comprised solely of charcoal with a single charred grain that is most probably one of the prehistoric wheats; emmer or spelt (*Triticum dicoccum/spelta*).

Discussion

The sample from context 0005, layer in base of ditch 0004, was not comprised of peat as originally thought during excavation. It consisted of a layer of compressed stems without any features or accompanying seeds that might have assisted identification. The plant material is most likely to be the stems of reeds that were growing in the ditch which could have been seasonally wet. There is a remote possibility that the stems could be those of flax suggesting that retting (the process in which fibres are released from the stems for use in linen) was taken place.

The sample from context 0019 produced a significant quantity of charcoal. The cremation 0017 was recovered out of context but it may be possible that the charcoal recovered from 0019 could be the remains of the cremation pyre.

Significance of the finds and requirements for further work

Although recovered during machining, the remains of a Middle Bronze Age urn associated with cremated bone must represent an urned cremation of that period in

Trench 3. Burials of this date and type commonly occur in groups or clusters so that other cremations of this period might be expected within this area. A second cremation burial recovered from Trench 5 was not associated with any other finds and is undated; although it can be noted that in Middle Bronze Age burial areas where pots were in common use as cremation vessels, unurned cremations have also been recorded (Brown 1999, 173). The cremated bone offers a good opportunity to obtain radiocarbon dates for both of these burials.

There is some indication of Early Anglo-Saxon activity on or close to the site. This is represented by two sherds of hand-made sand-tempered pottery. Although a Saxon date is considered most likely for these sherds and hand-made Saxon pottery has been recovered from a site about 300m to the south, a possible Middle Iron Age date is not entirely excluded.

The pottery, burnt flint and fired clay recovered in the evaluation have been quantified and it is not considered that any further work is required for these finds. The remains of the Middle Bronze Age urn are not sufficient to warrant illustration.

Although the bulk environmental samples from the evaluated area at Cherry Tree Inn have not produced a quantifiable assemblage there is potential for further archaeobotanical study. It is recommended that the plant stems from context 0005 be submitted to an archaeobotanical specialist for full identification.

It may be feasible to submit charcoal or bone from context 0019 and bone from 0017 for radiocarbon dating to establish whether these deposits are contemporary. If context 0019 is considered to be associated with the cremation 0017, it would be possible to perform charcoal identification with the view to investigation of pyre technology.

If further excavations are planned for this area, it is recommended that a schedule for targeted environmental sampling should be appended to the updated project design.

7. Discussion

The evaluation has revealed a small number of features on this site. See Figure 8 for an overall summary of the recorded features.

The ditches noted in Trench 1 and the south-east end of Trench 5 are possibly late medieval in date although a post-medieval date for their infilling is suggested by the small amount of pottery and timber fragments recovered from Ditch 0004 and the small brick and tile fragments from Ditch 0024. Ditches 0022 and 0024 are likely to be associated, one being a re-cut of the other, but it was not possible to determine the actual sequence. It is possible that Ditch 0004 in Trench 1 is a part of one of these ditches as it is on a similar alignment. Ditch 0002 could also be related although the alignment is slightly different it is possible that the ditch could have turned to run the slightly shorter distance to the water channel by the road. These ditches are likely to relate to property or field divisions on the outskirts of Debenham as well as draining water from the higher ground to the south-west.

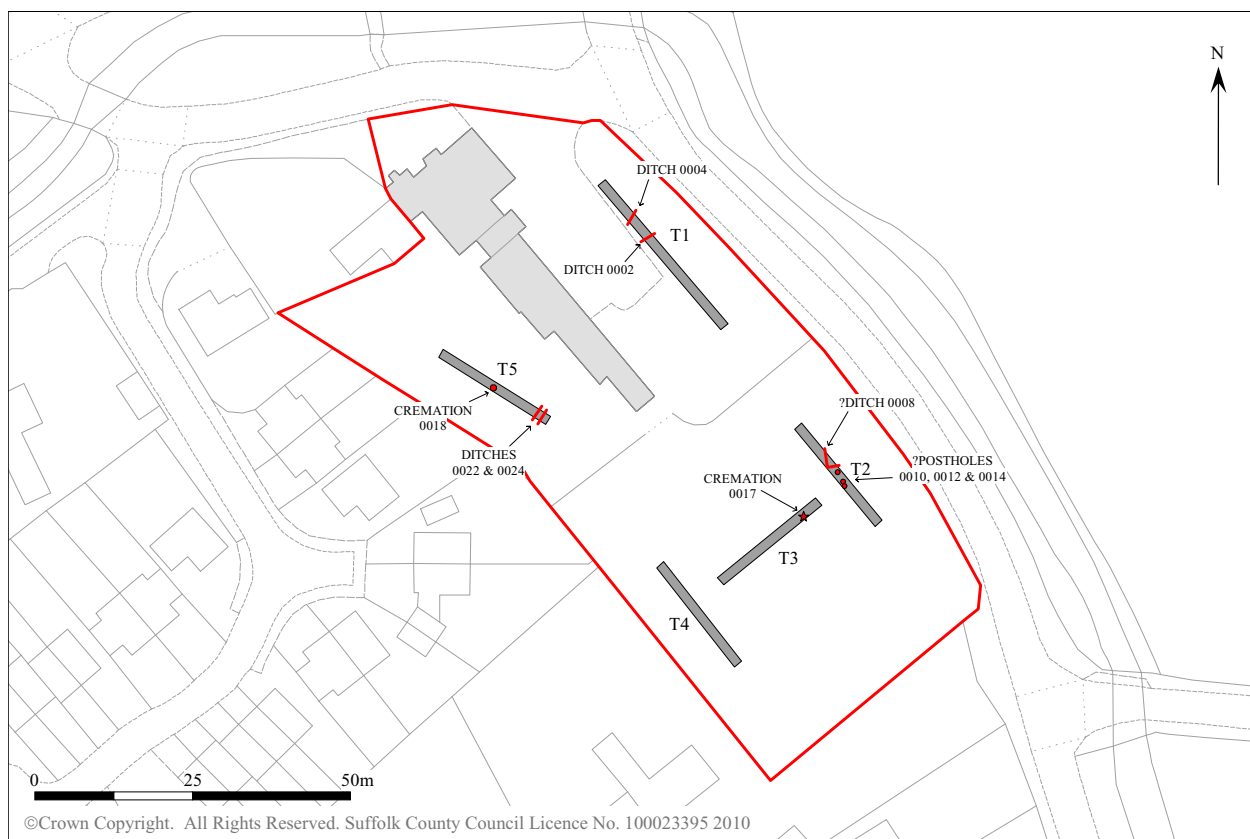


Figure 8. Summary of results

The bowling green area (Trenches 2, 3 and 4) had clearly been landscaped to create a level terrace. The natural subsoil lay immediately beneath the topsoil at the south-west

edge of the bowling green and a steep slope separated it from the land further to the south-west indicating that the terrace had been cut into the slope which had resulted in a truncation of the natural surface. Further down slope there was evidence for a substantial amount of material having been imported and spread to extend the terrace towards the north-east and that this had been placed directly on the existing topsoil.

The possible features noted in Trench 2 (Ditch 0008 and the possible postholes 0010, 0012 and 0014) may relate to a possible roadside house plot but this was not conclusive. Attempts were made to recover datable material through scraping with the machine bucket and investigation with a long-handled hoe but no artefacts were identified. Had this been a medieval house plot artefactual is likely to have been present and its complete absence suggests these may possibly be prehistoric features.

The two features of greatest significance are the cremation burials, 0017 and 0018. One of these was urned and is clearly of a Bronze Age date, the other is un-urned but is assumed to be of the same period. These have been sited on the valley slope overlooking the river and its flood plain and it is highly likely that other burials will have been buried nearby. Although the urned cremation (0017) was recovered from a depth of c. 1m this is primarily due to the area having been built-up to create the bowling green and it is likely that the burial would have originally been in a relatively shallow cut, such as the un-urned cremation, 0018, although there has also been some degree of truncation, either natural erosion or earlier farming practices, as only a small portion of the lower part of the urn appeared to have survived. The low percentage of expected bone from 0018 also indicates a degree of truncation.

8. Conclusions and recommendations for further work

The evaluation has found evidence for Bronze Age cremation burials on the site and as such it is highly likely that further burials will be present, particularly in the area of the bowling green and the garden behind the public house (unlikely in the car-park as it is too low-lying).

Consequently there will be a need for further work although what form this will take is dependant on the construction methods used. It is believed that all new building will be

on strip foundations. These would be cut through the overburden and into the underlying natural subsoil and would destroy any archaeological features they encountered. In order to mitigate against the potential loss of archaeological evidence the excavation of these foundations would need to be undertaken under constant archaeological supervision with provision for the hand excavation of any remains that may be revealed.

As the main areas of new build are towards the rear, south-west, edge of the site where the natural subsoil is relatively close to the existing ground surface, it may be prudent to undertake a controlled strip of the building footprints down to the level of the natural subsoil and excavate any archaeological features that may be exposed, rather than undertake a simple watching brief. The soil strips for any proposed roadways whose formation level comes close to the predicted levels of the natural subsoil should also be undertaken under constant archaeological supervision.

The precise nature of any further work will be the decision of the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service Conservation Team

9. Archive deposition

Paper archive: T:\ENV\ARC\MSWORKS3\PARISH\Debenham\DBN132 Cherrytree Inn
Historic Environment Record reference under which archive is held: DBN 132
A summary has also been entered into OASIS, the online database, ref. suffolkc1-90233

10. List of contributors and acknowledgements

The evaluation was carried out by Linzi Everett and Mark Sommers from Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team. The machine and operator was provided by Holmes Plant Limited.

The project was directed by Mark Sommers, and managed by Rhodri Gardner, who also provided advice during the production of the report.

11. References

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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.

Plates (Scales = 1m length divided onto 0.5m sections)



Plate I. Trench 1, ditch 0002, camera facing NE



Plate II. Trench 1, ditch 0004, camera facing SW



Plate III. Trench 2, stratigraphy, camera facing NE



Plate IV. Trench 3, stratigraphy in area of cremation 0017, camera facing NW



Plate V. Trench 4, showing natural subsoil surface with thin overburden, camera facing SW



Plate VI. Trench 5, stratigraphy



Plate VII. Trench 5, cremation 0018, camera facing NW



Plate VIII. Trench 5, ditches 0022 and 0024, camera facing E

SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation(Heritage Statement)

Evaluation by Trial Trench

Cherry Tree Public House, Debenham

The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety and other responsibilities, see paragraphs 1.8 & 1.9.

1. Background

- 1.1 Planning consent is to be sought for extensions to existing and new housing at the Cherry Tree Public House and adjacent bowling green.
- 1.2 The development area lies within the area of medieval Debenham as defined in the County Historic Environment Record and a human burial of unknown date was found on the meadow behind the Inn when a house was built in 1839. There is, therefore, a high probability that development will damage or destroy archaeological deposits.
- 1.3 Mid Suffolk District Council, as Local Planning Authority, expects all planning applications affecting known areas of archaeological interest to be accompanied by a Heritage Statement which describes the archaeological assets present on the site and details the applicant's proposals for mitigating any damage to those assets
- 1.4 As this site has considerable potential to contain important archaeological assets (including human remains which have special protection in law) the Heritage Statement should be based on the results of an archaeological evaluation by trenching which will establish the presence/absence of such remains in relation to the development proposals.
- 1.5 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.
- 1.6 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.
- 1.7 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 validation requirements of the planning authority will be adequately met.
- 1.8 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.

- 1.9 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*.
- 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 Evaluation is to proceed sequentially: the desk-based evaluation will normally precede the field evaluation unless agreed otherwise. The results of the desk-based work is to be used to inform the trenching design. This sequence will only be varied if benefit to the evaluation can be demonstrated.
- 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 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.
- 2.9 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 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

3. **Specification A: Desk-Based Assessment**

- 3.1 Consult the County Historic Environment Record (HER), both the computerised record and any backup files and assess the implication to the application site of known finds.
- 3.2 Examine all the readily available cartographic sources (e.g. those available in the County Record Office). Record any evidence for historic or archaeological sites (e.g. buildings, settlements, field

names) and the history of previous land uses. Where permitted by the Record Office make either digital photographs, photocopies or traced copies of the document for inclusion in the report.

- 3.3 Assess the potential for documentary research that would contribute to the archaeological investigation of the site.

4 **Specification B: Field Evaluation**

- 4.1 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover a minimum 5% by area of the development area and shall be positioned to sample all parts of the site. 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.
- 4.2 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.
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation. Significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled.
- 4.5 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.
- 4.6 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 the English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy and Wiltshire 1994) is available.
- 4.7 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.
- 4.8 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.
- 4.9 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).
- 4.10.1 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.
"Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England" English Heritage and the Church of England 2005 provides advice and defines a level of practice which should be followed whatever the likely belief of the buried individuals.
- 4.11 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.

- 4.12 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome and colour photographs.
- 4.13 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.

5. **General Management**

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 The composition of the project staff must be detailed and agreed (this is to include any subcontractors).
- 5.3 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.
- 5.4 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 5.5 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.

6. **Report Requirements**

- 6.1 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).
- 6.2 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Historic Environment Record.
- 6.3 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
- 6.5 6.5 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.
- 6.6 The Report must include:
 - a) 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).
 - b) an assessment of the ground disturbance which would result from the development proposals and a strategy to mitigate damage and/or destruction of the archaeological assets which may include preservation *in situ* and/or preservation by recording prior to and/or during development
- 6.7 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 HER if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not

possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.

- 6.8 The site archive is to be deposited with the County HER within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 6.9 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.
- 6.10 County HER sheets must be completed, as per the county HER manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 6.11 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.
- 6.12 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the HER. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Keith Wade

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

Tel: 01284 352440

Date: 5th July 2010

Reference: Cherry Tree

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.

DBN 132 - Context list

| Context | Feature Identifier | Tr. | Description | cuts | cut by | over | under |
|---------|--------------------|------|--|------|--------|------|-------|
| 0001 | 0001 U/S Finds | T1-5 | Unstratified finds (consists of a single sherd from Trench 2) | | | | |
| 0002 | 0002 Ditch Cut | T1 | Linear feature cut interpreted as a ditch. Runs perpendicular across Trench 1. Gently sloping sides and a 'V' shaped profile | | | | |
| 0003 | 0002 Ditch Fill | T1 | Fill of cut 0003 consisting of brown sandy loam (similar to subsoil layer 0021). Slightly greyer and siltier towards base | | | | |
| 0004 | 0004 Ditch cut | T1 | Linear feature cut interpreted as a ditch. Runs at an angle across Trench 1 with near sheer sides and flatish base | | | | |
| 0005 | 0004 Ditch Fill | T1 | Primary fill of cut 0004. Consists of a pale brown peat within which sticks and twigs are present. Two fragments of worked wood were recovered (part of ?plank and a large 'tent' peg) | | | | 0026 |
| 0006 | 0006 Pit Cut | T2 | Straight sided possible pit cut seen in base of Trench 2, surface cleaned but feature not excavated due to extreme depth of trench | | | | |
| 0007 | 0006 Pit Fill | T2 | Fill of cut 0006. Consists of compact pale yellowish-brown sandy silt with pale mid greyish-brown sandy silt | | | | |
| 0008 | 0008 Ditch Cut | T2 | Linear feature cut interpreted as a ditch. Seen in the base of Trench 2. Photographed and planned but not excavated due to depth of trench. Appears to form a right-angled corner or is possible a 'T'-junction of two ditches | | | | |
| 0009 | 0008 Ditch Fill | T2 | Fill of cut 0008. Consists of very compact pale yellowish-brown silty sand with infrequent small charcoal flecks and occasional tiny CBM fragments (very similar to fill of 0010) | | | | |
| 0010 | 0010 Pit Cut | T2 | Circular feature cut interpreted as a pit. Located at the base of trench 2. Photographed and planned but not excavated due to depth of trench. | | | | |
| 0011 | 0010 Pit Fill | T2 | Fill of cut 0010 consisting of very compact yellowish-brown silty sand with infrequent charcoal flecks and tiny CBM fragments (very similar to fill of 0008) | | | | |
| 0012 | 0012 Posthole Cut | T2 | Small circular feature. Based on its size it was interpreted as a possible posthole. Photographed and planned but not excavated due to depth of trench. | | | | |
| 0013 | 0012 Posthole Fill | T2 | Fill of cut 0012. Consists of compact mid greyish brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks | | | | |
| 0014 | 0014 Posthole Cut | T2 | Small circular feature. Based on its size it was interpreted as a possible posthole. Photographed and planned but not excavated due to depth of trench. | | | | |
| 0015 | 0014 Posthole Fill | T2 | Fill of cut 0014. Consists of compact greyish brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks | | | | |
| 0016 | 0016 Posthole Cut | T2 | Indistinct but possible feature noted on edge of Trench 2. Interpreted as a possible posthole based on its size alone. Fill consists of compact greyish brown sandy silt. Photographed and planned but not excavated due to depth of trench. | | | | |
| 0017 | 0017 Cremation | T3 | Remains of an urned cremation burial recovered from the machine bucket/spoil. Comprises a number of pottery sherds and an amount of burnt bone fragments, some large. Undoubtedly from an in-situ | | | | |

| Context | Feature Identifier | Tr. | Description | cuts | cut by | over | under |
|---------|--------------------|----------------|---|---|--------|------|-------|
| | | | cremation located just above the natural subsoil, c. 3m from the north-east end of the trench | | | | |
| 0018 | 0018 | Cremation Cut | T5 | Oval shaped feature cut, with near sheer sides and a flat base | | | |
| 0019 | 0018 | Cremation Fill | T5 | Fill of cut 0018 consisting of charcoal rich dense clay sandy silt with frequent burnt bone fragments | | | |
| 0020 | 0004 | Ditch Fill | T1 | Fill within cut 0004 comprising pale grey silty sand mottled with orange sand and occasional charcoal flecks | | 0026 | |
| 0021 | 0021 | Layer | | Subsoil layer, probably hillwash, located immediately beneath topsoil in trenches 1, 3, 4 and 5. Consists of a brown slightly sand clay/silt. Overlies the natural subsoil. | | | |
| 0022 | 0022 | Ditch cut | T5 | Linear feature cut interpreted as a ditch. Runs roughly perpendicular across Trench 5. Sloping sides with a rounded base | | | |
| 0023 | 0022 | Ditch Fill | T5 | Fill of cut 0022. Consists dark grey-brown sandy silt with few stones and occasional fragments of Pmed CBM (not retained) | | | |
| 0024 | 0024 | Ditch Cut | T5 | Linear feature cut interpreted as a ditch. Runs roughly perpendicular across Trench 5. Sloping sides with an uneven 'double-dipped' base (a possible re-cut) | | | |
| 0025 | 0024 | Ditch Fill | T5 | Fill of cut 0024. Consists of brown sandy silt - no finds | | | |
| 0026 | 0004 | Ditch Fill | T1 | Fill of cut 0004 consisting of grey sand mottled with mid brown silt | | 0005 | 0020 |