ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

MARSH STABLES, CHURCH STREET, EXNING, SUFFOLK

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

Authors: Peter Thompson M	Peter Thompson MA (Desk-based assessment)			
Gareth Barlow	(Fieldwork & report)			
NGR: TL 622 653	Report No: 3488			
District: Forest Heath	Site Code: EXG 088			
Approved: Claire Halpin	Project No: 3488			
Signed:	Date: June 2009			

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OASIS SUMMARY SHEET

Project details							
Project name	Marsh	Stable,	Church	Street,	Exning,	Suffolk.	An
	archaed	ological ev	aluation.				

In June 2009 Archaeological Solutions Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation of land at Marsh Stables, Church Street, Exning, Suffolk (TL 622 653). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition attached to permission for a residential development.

Exning is an area of significant Roman, Saxon and Medieval activity including a Roman Villa, a possible Saxon royal palace and a medieval moat. The site lies in the heart of the late Saxon settlement indicated by at least one large hall type building and pottery, and is close to the 14th century moat and fish ponds. There is a Listed Building nearby comprising a post-medieval dove-cote. The potential for surviving archaeology in the area is high.

In the event no archaeological features were revealed within the two trenches. The stratigraphy revealed comprised a series of made ground layers (L1000/1007, L1001, L1002, L1003, and L1005) of early modern/modern date and a buried topsoil (L1006) in the southern part of the site.

Project dates (fieldwork)	18- 19 June 2009		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	N	Future work (Y/N/?)	?
P. number	3488	Site code	EXG 088
Type of project	An archaec	ological trial trench eva	aluation
Site status			
Current land use	Grass / pac	ldocks	
Planned development	Construction	n of a house	
Main features (+dates)	None		
Significant finds (+dates)	None		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	Suffolk	Forest Heath	Exning
HER/ SMR for area	Suffolk HER (Bury St Edmunds)		
Post code (if known)	(n) -		
Area of site	c.800 sq m		
NGR	TL 622 653		
Height AOD (max/ min)	16.00m OD		
Project creators			
Brief issued by	Suffolk Cou	ınty Council Archaeol	ogy (Jess Tipper)
Project supervisor/s (PO)	Gareth Bar	low	
Funded by	Mr J Locke, Melcon Services Ltd		
Full title	Marsh Stable, Church Street, Exning, Suffolk. An archaeological evaluation.		
Authors	Peter Thompson, Gareth Barlow		
Report no.	3488		
Date (of report)	report) June 2009		

LAND AT MARSH STABLES, CHURCH STREET, EXNING, SUFFOLK

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In June 2009 Archaeological Solutions Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation of land at Marsh Stables, Church Street, Exning, Suffolk (TL 622 653). The evaluation was carried out in compliance with a planning condition attached to permission for a residential development.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In June 2009, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at Marsh Stables, Church Street, Exning, Suffolk (NGR TL 622 653; Figs. 1-2). The evaluation was commissioned by Mr J Locke of Melcon Services Ltd on behalf of Mrs S Lines of Marsh Stables in compliance with a planning condition attached to the construction of a new residential dwelling (F/2003/0893/RMA).
- 1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a brief issued by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) (dated 27 April 2009), and a specification prepared by AS (dated 30th April 2009). The project conformed to the procedures outlined in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* (revised 2001) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (revised 2001), as well as the document *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14 (Gurney 2003).
- 1.3 The principal objectives of the evaluation were to
 - Establish whether any archaeological deposits exist in the area, particularly with regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ*
 - 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
 - Evaluate the likely impact of past uses, and the possible presence of any masking colluvial / alluvial deposits
 - Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence

Planning policy context

- 1.4 The relevant planning policies which apply to the effect of quarry expanding with regard to cultural heritage are Planning Policy Guidance Note 15 'Planning and the Historic Environment' (PPG15) and Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 'Archaeology and Planning' (PPG16) (Department of the Environment).
- 1.5 PPG16 (1990) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to archaeology. It states that there should always be a presumption in favour of preserving nationally important archaeological remains in situ. However, when there is no overriding case for preservation, developers are required to fund opportunities for the recording and, where necessary, the excavation of the site. This condition is widely applied by local authorities.
- 1.6 PPG15 (1994) is the national Planning Policy Guidance Note which applies to the conservation of the historic environment by protecting the character and appearance of Conservation Areas and protecting listed buildings (of architectural or historical interest) from demolition and unsympathetic change and safeguarding their settings as far as is possible. This condition is also widely applied by local authorities.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE (Figs. 1-2)

2.1 The site is located on the south side of the village of Exning and just to the north of the A14(T) which abuts it. Exning is situated immediately north-north-west of Newmarket and 3 km north-east of the Devils Dyke, a linear earthwork and Scheduled Monument.

3 METHODOLOGY (Desk-based assessment)

Information was sought from a variety of available sources in order to meet the objectives of the desk-based assessment.

3.1 Archaeological databases

The standard collation of all known archaeological sites and spot finds within Suffolk is contained within the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER). In order to provide a representative sample, the HER database was searched for all known entries within an approximate 750m radius of the site. The entries are listed (Appendices 2 and 3) and plotted (Fig.3). Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2. Significant HER entries from beyond the 750m radius have also been discussed where relevant.

3.2 Historical and cartographic sources

The principal source for these types of evidence was the Record Office, Bury St Edmunds. These are listed in Appendix 3 and reproduced in Figure 4

3.3 Secondary sources

The principal sources of secondary material were the Suffolk Record Office, Bury St Edmunds as well as AS's own reference library. All sources, including websites, are listed in the bibliography.

3.4 Geological/geotechnical information

A description of the superficial and solid geology of the local and surrounding area was compiled in order to assess the likely presence and potential condition of any archaeological remains on the site. This information was drawn from appropriate maps based on the work of the British Geological Survey.

4 THE EVIDENCE

4.1 Topography, geology and soils

4.1.1 The site is located at approximately 16 metres OD. The soil comprises grey rendzinas (calcareous loam) over solid geology consisting of Middle and Lower Cretaceous Chalk.

4.2 Archaeological and historical background (Fig. 3)

Prehistoric (c. 700,000 BC - AD 43)

4.2.1 Evidence of prehistoric activity in the Parish of Exning includes Neolithic arrowheads and scatters of worked flint within the evaluation area. Bronze Age metal work and two Early Bronze Age graves, one a multiple burial, were found at TL 6303 6357. The main grave contained a man aged 35+ accompanied by 5 juveniles and an infant, with an associated smaller grave containing a female adult 35+. A radiocarbon dated sample was 1570+/-80 b.c. Exning may have been of some importance during the Iron Age. It is claimed (on no secure grounds) as one location for the capital of Boudicca's Iceni, which contributed to Exning and its environs being incorporated into Suffolk from Cambridgeshire hence the kink in the county boundary. On Windmill Hill an Iron Age enclosure was identified by a trial trench cut across the ditch and rampart, but its extent and status has not been established.

Romano-British (AD 43 – 410)

4.2.2 In the 18th and 19th centuries cremations and interments, coins and metalwork were found in the parish. A Roman villa was discovered in 1904 situated 1.5 km north-west of Exning (EXG 012; TL 6121 6760). It was constructed in several phases between the 1st and early 4th centuries AD and finds included a mosaic, painted wall plaster and numerous artefacts particularly pottery, tools, a shale bracelet and metalwork (PCAS 1987). A hoard of Roman silver pewter was also found on the former bed of the Exning-Landwade stream in the area of TL 62 67. In 1948, a Roman well was discovered reaching a depth of 16 metres. It was unusual in having footholds cut in the lowest 8.5 metres and this trait is paralleled at Dunstable. The fills contained 80 small finds of pottery and metalwork including coins of Hadrian and Constantine I (Johnston 1959). An evaluation carried out at Newmarket Isolation Hospital, Fordham Road (TL 6352 6655) uncovered field boundary ditches relating to two phases of Roman occupation in the 1st century and again in the late 2nd/early 3rd with

probable abandonment in between (EXG 074). Crop marks noted in a field further to the north suggest the presence of a Roman building. An archaeological evaluation undertaken prior to the construction of Mays Garden Centre at Windmill Hill found no archaeological features but early Roman pottery and a late Roman coin c.330-45 were found, believed to be the result of the manuring of arable fields.

Anglo-Saxon (AD 411 – 1065)

- 4.2.3 Exning was an important site in the Saxon period. Approximately 3 km north-west of Exning is located the Devil's Dyke a substantial linear earthwork, running 13 km from the Fen Edge to Wood Ditton, which reaches up to 10m high and 35m across. It crosses three Roman roads including the Icknield Way and is one of five such earthworks in the area. Some of these are prehistoric earthworks re-commissioned in the late/post-Roman period, indicated by radiocarbon dates and the distribution of military metalwork believed to belong to late Roman tribal militias (Laycock 2006). The dykes appear to have been reinforced again in the late 6th/early 7th centuries at the start of wars of the Heptarchy (c.600-800). Exning itself was the site of the royal Saxon palace of King Anna who was nephew to Raedwald commonly believed to be the East Anglian king buried at Sutton Hoo. Anna had several pious daughters, one is associated with St. Wendreda's Well in the grounds of Hamilton Stud (TL 621 645), legend claims she used the spring water to heal people and animals. A second daughter St Ethelreda founded and then became Abbess of the convent of Ely, dying according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in 679. A third daughter, St Sexburgher became Abbess of the convent in Minster-in-Sheppey.
- 4.2.4 A Saxon cemetery mentioned in Cyril Fox's Archaeology of Cambridgeshire is located at Windmill Hill. It contained some rich burials of mainly 6th century date including a burial with silver rings (Page 1911). Metalwork includes 'horned' brooches paralleled at Lakenheath and four examples of Anglo-Saxon cruciform brooches in florid style of late 6th-mid 7th centuries date (Leeds and Pocock). Two archaeological excavations have been carried out in proximity to the evaluation site. In 1973, an excavation (EXG 052) at TL 6224 6530, immediately south-east of the site found slots and post-holes representing the sides of a hall type building 12.5m long by 6.5m wide. A separate slot related to a second building, whilst some of the slots contained pottery of either middle or late Saxon date along with a residual early Saxon grass tempered sherd. The second area immediately south of the evaluation site was found during the excavations of the Moat Island and yielded pottery and other evidence of occupation (TL 6221 6525; EXG 0101).

Medieval (AD 1066 – 1539)

4.2.5 Approximately 3.2 km north-west of Exning is located Burwell Castle (TL 587 660) which was built, but never fully completed, during 'The Anarchy' when King Stephen constructed a chain of castles to hem in the rebel Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex who had seized Ramsey Abbey as a base to raid the surrounding countryside. The strategy worked as Geoffrey was killed with an arrow whilst besieging Burwall in 1144. In the 13th century merchants from Exning abandoned their old market, it is claimed due to an outbreak of plague, and set up a new market on the Cambridge to Bury St Edmunds road which led to the foundation of Newmarket.

4.2.6 Exning is mentioned in Domesday Book as Essellinge, and again in 1158 as Exningis meaning 'settlement of the friends or family of man called Gyxen' (Mills 1991). Domesday also records that it comprised 1.5 hides and there was land for 3 ploughs; 2 in lordship and one owned by 4 villagers. There were 8 slaves, a mill, meadow for 2 ploughs, and pasture for the village livestock. In addition there was a fishery with 1,200 eels and this may relate to, or be a precursor of, the medieval fishponds located approximately 150 metres west of the assessment site (EXG 040). The land was valued then at 50 shillings and at 60 shillings in the reign of Edward the Confessor indicating it was richer and more populous in the Late Saxon period. The Church of St Martin (EXG 031) includes surviving 14th and 15th century architecture and decorative features. An evaluation carried out at Exeter Stud located 200 metres north-east of the development area found an undated gully whilst metal detector finds comprised two medieval coins (13th-15th centuries), a bronze buckle and a lead weight. Other stray medieval finds have been discovered in the area including a possibly early medieval strap end fitting. The excavations carried out in (EXG 010) immediately south of the assessment site, now under the A14(T), found a rectangular island surrounded by a moat but lacking structures in the interior. The pottery recovered indicated a 14th century date.

Post-medieval (AD 1540 – 1900)

- 4.2.7 Gaps cut into the Devils's Dyke mainly relate to the horse racing on Newmarket Heath that developed from the 17th century. During WW II No. 3 Group Bomber Command had its Headquarters at Exning House, and New Market Heath was used as an airfield during which another cut was made through the Devil's Dyke for heavily laden aircraft to taxi through. The only extant remains comprise a hangar by the A14 Trunk Road 2.3 km south-east of the evaluation area.
- 4.2.8 There are five Listed Buildings within 750 metres of the site, the Church of St Martins is a Grade 1 and the remainder Grade II (Appendix 3). The closest to the site is the 17th-18th century dovecote located immediately to the north-east (EXG 041). Monitoring of footing trenches and a soakaway for an extension added to Exeter House, Church Street (EXG 084) found a post-medieval garden wall, possible drain and soil containing 17th-19th century pottery but no medieval remains (Brook 2008). A Watching Brief carried out at 17 Church Street (TL 6211 6570) uncovered only modern disturbance (Carruth 2002).

4.3 The site

4.3.1 The Enclosure Map of 1812 (Fig. 4) shows the site located between the Newmarket Road to the east and the medieval fishponds to the west with several buildings immediately to the north. The landowner/occupier's name is difficult to decipher but may have been a *Vincente Cottondirst* with the land simply described as 'Enclosed'.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The groundworks associated with the development had already been completed, principally the foundations and ground floor slab (Fig.2) and the laying of the services. This work was undertaken in error, and nonetheless the trial trench evaluation was undertaken. The trenches were located adjacent to the new dwelling, and in the area giving access to the site (Fig.2)

- 5.2 Two trial trenches were excavated in locations approved by SCC AS (Fig. 2), totalling 27m. Trench 1 was 12m x 1.80m and Trench 2 was 15m x 1.80m. The trenching represents a 5% sample of the site.
- 5.3 The trenches were mechanically excavated using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under close archaeological supervision. Undifferentiated overburden was mechanically excavated; thereafter all further investigation was undertaken by hand. Exposed surfaces were cleaned by hand and examined for archaeological features and finds. Archaeological features and deposits were recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as necessary. Excavated spoil was checked for finds and the trenches were scanned by metal detector. The trench positions were plotted using a Total Station.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS

Individual trench descriptions are presented below:

6.1 Trench 1 Fig. 5 DPs 3 & 4

Sample Section 1: North end, west facing 0.00 = 15.92m AOD			
0.00 – 0.16m L1000 Made ground. Very pale, firm, chalky silt with frequent small sub-angular chalk pieces.			
0.16 – 0.23m	L1002	Made ground. Mid grey brown, firm, sandy silt with frequent small/medium sub-angular chalk pieces.	
0.23m+	L1004	Natural deposits. White, compact, chalk, and small areas of yellowy white chalky silt with small/medium sub-angular chalk pieces.	

Sample Section 1: South end, west facing				
0.00 = 15.90m A	OD			
0.00 - 0.22m	L1000	Made ground. As above.		
0.22 - 0.32m	L1001	Made ground. White, compact, chalk.		
0.32 - 0.36m	L1002	Made ground. As above.		
0.36 - 0.62m	L1003	Made ground. Pale/mid brownish grey, firm, chalky sandy silt		
with moderate small and medium-large sub-angular chalk, and				
occasional medium-large rounded flints.				
0.62m+	L1004	Natural deposits. As above.		

Description: Four layers of early modern/modern made ground (L1000, L1001, L1002, and L1003) were present in Trench 1. No other archaeological features or finds present.

6.2 Trench 2 Fig. 5 DPs 5 & 6

Sample Section 2 : West end, south facing				
0.00 = 15.60m A0	0.00 = 15.60m AOD			
0.00 - 0.17m	0.00 – 0.17m L1007 Made ground. Very pale, firm, chalky silt with very frequent			
	small sub-angular chalk pieces.			
0.17 - 0.52m	L1006	Buried topsoil. Mid grey brown, firm sandy silt with occasional		
small sub angular chalk and occasional small angular flints.				
0.52m+	L1004	Natural deposits. As above.		

Sample Section 2	Sample Section 2: East end, south facing			
0.00 = 15.64m A	0.00 = 15.64m AOD			
0.00 - 0.43m	L1007	Made ground. As above.		
0.43 - 0.48m	L1006	Buried topsoil. As above.		
0.48 - 0.62m				
with moderate small and medium-large sub-angular chalk.				
0.62m+	L1004	Natural deposits. As above.		

Description: Two layers of early modern/modern made ground (L1005 and L1007) and a buried topsoil (L1006) were present in Trench 2. No other archaeological features or finds were present.

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds.

8 DEPOSIT MODEL

- 8.1 A layer of made ground (L1000=L1007) was present across the whole of the area investigated. It varied in thickness from 0.16m at the north end of Trench 1 to 0.43m at the east end of Trench 2. It consisted of a very pale, firm, chalky silt with very frequent small subangular chalk pieces. In the western part of the site, Trench 1, this overlay, at the north end, a 0.07m thick layer of made ground (L1002), consisting of a mid grey brown, firm, sandy silt with frequent small/medium sub-angular chalk pieces. At the southern end of Trench 1 layer L1000 overlay a 0.10m thick layer of compacted chalk (L1001), which in turn overlay layer L1002 here reduced in thickness to 0.04m. Beneath this, infilling a depression in the natural deposits, was layer L1003, a 0.26m thick pale/mid brownish grey, firm, chalky sandy silt with moderate small and medium-large sub-angular chalk, and occasional medium-large rounded flints.
- 8.2 In the southern part of the site, Trench 2, layer L1007 (=L1000) overlay a possible buried topsoil (L1006), a mid grey brown, firm sandy silt with occasional small sub angular chalk and occasional small angular flints. This varied in thickness from 0.35m at the western end to only 0.05m at the eastern end. Beneath this, at the eastern end only, infilling a depression in the natural deposits, was layer L1005, a pale/mid brownish grey, firm, chalky sandy silt with moderate small and medium-large sub-angular chalk.

8.3 The natural deposit (L1004) was located at a depth of 0.23m at the northwest of the site but at increasing depth of between 0.52m and 0.62m at the southern end. It consisted of white, compact, chalk, and small areas of yellowy white chalky silt with small/medium subangular chalk pieces.

9 DICUSSION

9.1 Summary of the archaeology

9.1.1 No archaeological features were revealed by the two trenches. The stratigraphy revealed showed a series of made ground layers (L1000/1007, L1001, L1002, L1003, and L1005) of early modern/modern date and a buried topsoil (L1006) in the southern part of the site.

9.2 Interpretation of the site: archaeology and history

- 9.2.1 The brief notes that the site lies in an area of archaeological importance in the immediate vicinity of an Anglo-Saxon settlement excavated to the south-west (HER EXG 052), however, no remains of this date were present. In the event no archaeological features of any date were present, only a succession of early modern/modern made ground layers. With the exception of the western end of Trench 2, these directly overlay the natural chalk deposits suggesting that the ground had previously been reduced perhaps to consolidate a soft wet area. The site lies some 200m northeast of the river in an area known as The Marsh, lending weight to this hypothesis.
- 9.2.2 Approximately 25m to the northwest of the site stands a post-medieval dovecote, now forming part of the Marsh Stables complex. The earliest period of levelling/consolidation may correspond with farm yard activity from this period. The land owner reports that the farm yard once extended as far as the site and that parch marks of old outbuildings can still sometimes be seen in the adjacent paddocks.
- 9.2.3 In view of the early modern/modern ground reduction on to, or even in to the natural deposits over most of the site it is unlikely that further excavation would reveal anything over and above the current findings. If the ground was as wet in the past as the area's name might suggest then the potential for archaeological remains may be limited by this.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with Suffolk County Council Museum Store. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Archaeological Solutions Limited would like to thank Colin Pendleton of SHER

AS gratefully acknowledge the input and advice of Dr Jess Tipper of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service

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Medieval Britain in 1973 (Webster and Cherry)

APPENDIX 1 HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD DATA

The following sites are those that lie within a *c*. 750m radius of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER). The locations of the sites are shown in Fig. 3. Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2.

HER Number	Grid Reference	Description
Prehistoric		
EXG 046	TL 6238 6535	Concentration of worked flints found in an area 40x6m during topsoil stripping for a pipeline
Roman		
EXG 010	TL 6221 6525	Pottery
EXG 055	TL 6210 6523	Metal detected finds
Saxon		
EXG 010	TL 6221 6525	Pottery and occupation evidence from Moat Island excavation
EXG 052	TL 6224 6530	Excavation in 1973 recovered slots and post-holes relating to two buildings, one a large hall, dated by pottery to Middle to Late Saxon
Medieval		
EXG 010	TL 6221 6525	The Moat Island: 14 th century pottery found during excavations
EXG 031	TL 6213 6550	St Martins Church. Listed Building
EXG 040	TL6209 6529	Linear Fishponds
EXG 056	TL 6228 6551	Undated narrow gully and medieval coins and metalwork found during an archaeological evaluation at Exeter Stables in 1995
Post-medieval	•	
EXG 040	TL 6220 6539	Dovecote Grade II Listed Building
Undated		
EXG 047	TL 6225 6514	Long, low earthen bank, possibly a track, running parallel to wooded slope to the east

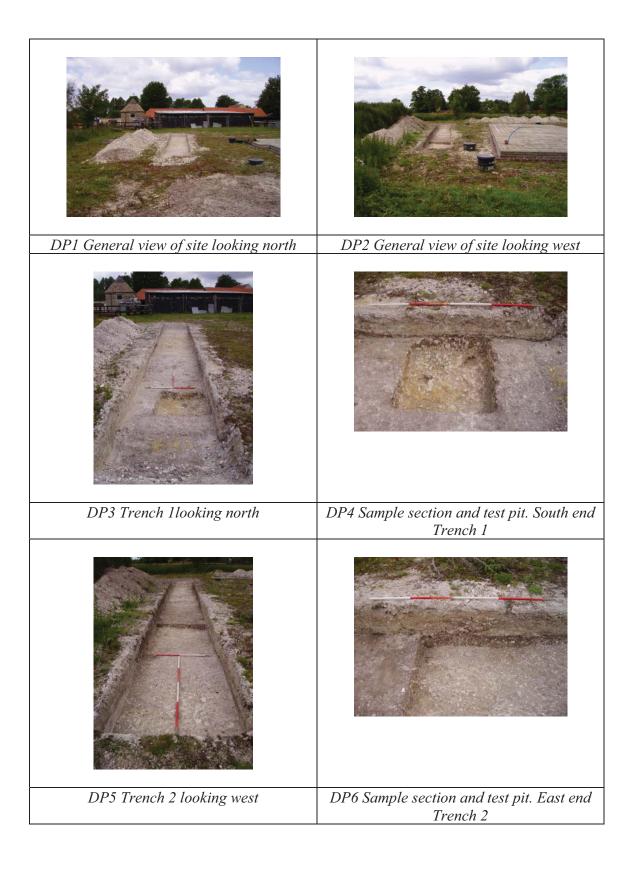
APPENDIX 2 LISTED BUILDINGS

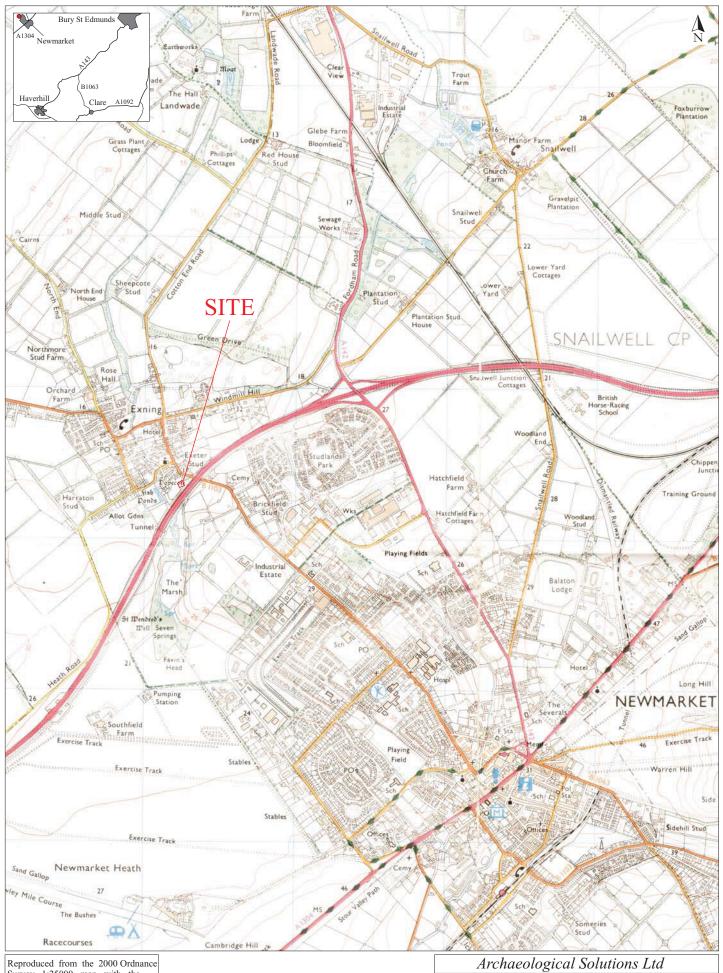
The following listed buildings are those that lie within c. 750m of the assessment site. The table has been compiled from data held by the Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER). Their significance, where relevant, is discussed in Section 4.2.

Identification	Name	Description
number		
DSF 3345	The Yews	Grade II early 19 th century
DSF 3346	The White Horse	Grade II late 18 th century
	Public House	
DSF3 539 (EXG 031)	St Martins Church	Grade I
DSF 3538	Barn at Exeter stud	Grade II 17 th century barn
		40m east of Exeter house
DSF 3327	House	Grade II, 18 th century

APPENDIX 3 CARTOGRAPHIC SOURCES

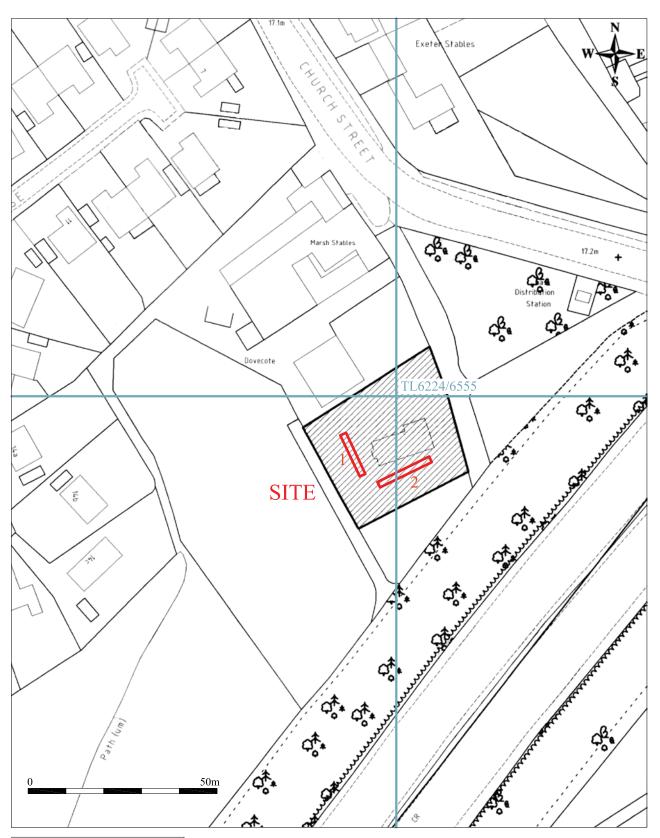
Figure	Date	Мар	Scale	Description
1	Modern	OS Explorer	1:25000	Site location
2	Modern		1:1000	Trench location
3	Modern	OS Explorer	1:25000	HER sites within c. 750m of
				assessment site
4	1812	Enclosure	23 cm =	Enclosure Award (Q/RI 24)
		Мар	1 mile	





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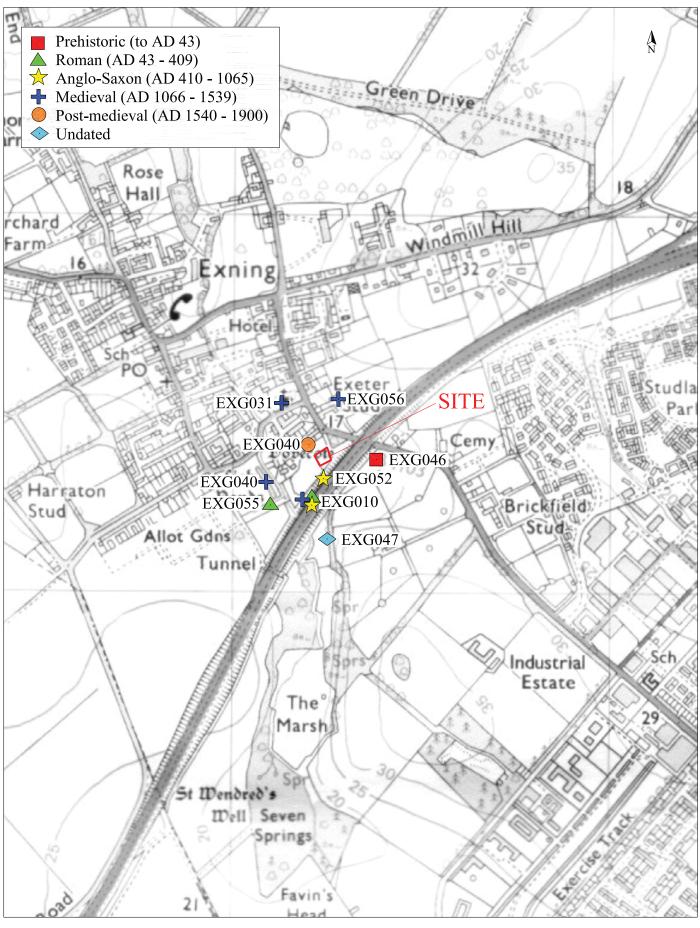
Fig. 1 Site location plan Scale 1:25,000 at A4



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Fig. 2 Trench location plan
Scale 1:1000 at A4



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Fig. 3 HER data
Scale 1:10,000 at A4

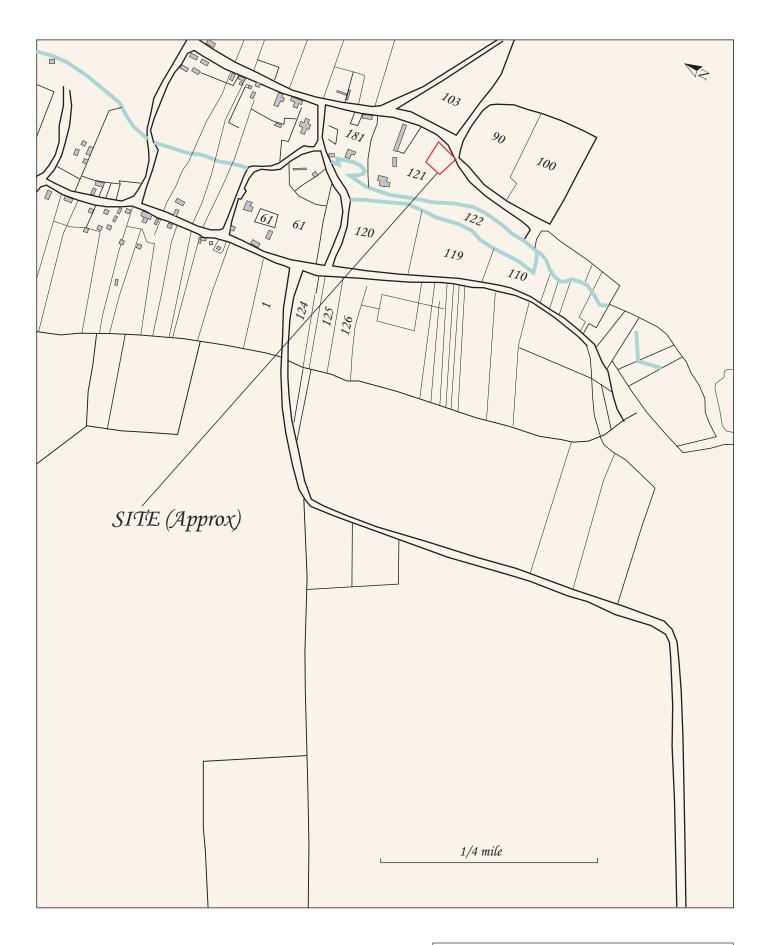


Fig. 4 Enclosure map, 1812
Scale as shown

