

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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## **Land off Aldridge Lane, Fornham All Saints FAS 031**

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2003  
(Planning app. no. SE/00/2150/P)

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Field Team  
Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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## List of Contributors

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

Jo Caruth	Project Officer
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## Acknowledgements

This project was funded by Rev. Peter Dainty and was monitored by Edward Martin (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team).

## Summary

Evaluation in advance of new development at Aldridge Lane, Fornham All Saints revealed the presence of a probable early medieval boundary ditch, demonstrating a change in alignment of the south end of Aldridge Lane. It was hoped to find prehistoric features relating to the Fornham Cursus complex but none was identified.

## **SMR information**

Planning application no. SE/00/2150/P  
Date of fieldwork: 20<sup>th</sup> October 2003  
Grid Reference: TL 8371 6762  
Funding body: Rev P. Dainty

# 1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out in advance of new development at Aldridge Lane, Fornham All Saints (Fig. 1. Grid ref: TL 8371 6762). The work was carried out in accordance with a Brief and Specification (Appendix 1) set by Edward Martin (Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Conservation Team). The site lies close to the medieval parish church, but more importantly lies within the area of a complex series of prehistoric ritual monuments including Neolithic causewayed enclosures, a Cursus (FAS 004) and Bronze Age ring ditches. The Cursus covers a length of c.4km and can be seen clearly as cropmarks in the fields to the west and east of the village. The southern ditch line can be projected to run within a few metres of the development area.

The aim of the evaluation was to establish firstly whether or not prehistoric monuments could be identified and secondly to look at the potential for survival of medieval occupation within the development area.



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Figure 1 Location plan

# 2. Methodology

The plot was very small, c. 24m x 11m, and there were several young trees and shrubs within it. A single trench, 9.9m long, was excavated down the length of the plot roughly along the line of the western footing for the proposed building using a 7 tonne 'mini-digger' equipped with a 1.5m wide toothless bucket (Fig. 2). Manoeuvrability within the site was limited and therefore the trench was dug in two stages to allow the backfilling of the south end before the digging of the north. Sections were hand-excavated through all archaeological features and the trench was planned and sections drawn at 1:20. The trench was widened at the north end to enable the full width of a north-south ditch to be established. All finds were kept. Colour slide photographs were taken of selected sections. Context numbers 0001-0015 were issued using the new SMR site code FAS 031. Natural sand and gravel was found at between 0.6m and 0.8m below the present ground surface.

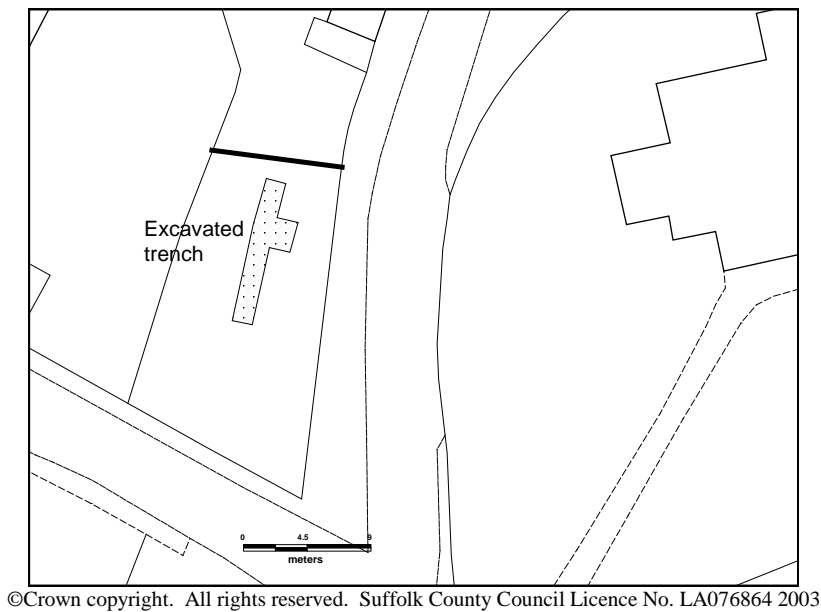


Figure 2 Trench location plan

### 3. Results

Three distinct soil layers were identified overlying the archaeological features. The first of these was loam topsoil (0002) c.0.3m deep. This overlay a mixed brown sand and loam layer (0003) containing moderately frequent chalk and brick fragments; a sherd of 18<sup>th</sup> century speckled-glazed ware was recovered from this layer. At the north end of the trench, pale yellow-brown gravelly sand subsoil overlay natural sand and gravel.

Four features were identified, a north-east to south-west aligned ditch and three shallow ill-defined features (Figs. 3 and 4).

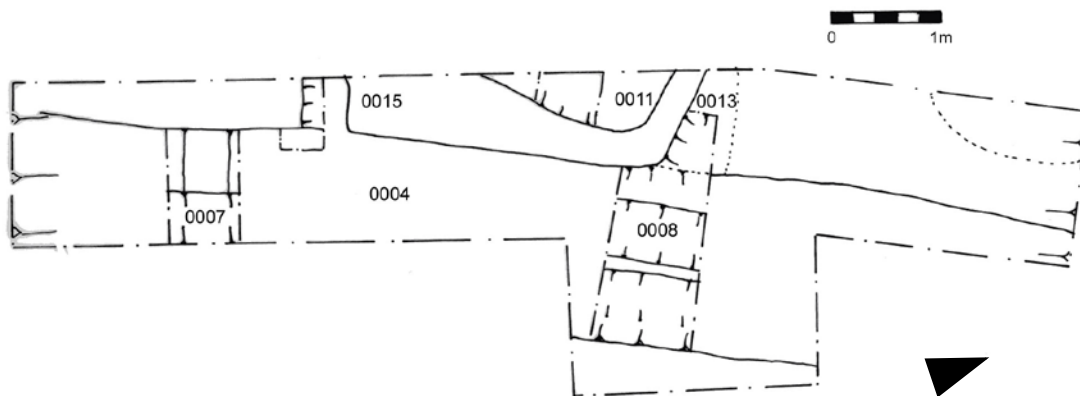


Figure 3 Trench plan

Ditch 0004 ran along the east side of the full length of the trench. Sections excavated through it (0007 and 0008) showed it to be 1.5m wide and the base to be at c1.2-1.3m below the current ground surface. It had two fills, the upper of which (0005 and 0009) was a mid yellow-brown gravelly sand and from which four pieces of animal bone were recovered. The lower fill lay within two small cuts at the base of the ditch and was a grey-green streaked compacted sand (0006 and 0010). No finds were recovered from the lower fill.

The other features (0013 and 0015) were shallow and lay on the west side of the ditch. These were both filled with the upper ditch fill and may simply represent slight irregularities at the edge of the ditch, or possibly mark the positions of structures associated with the use of the ditch e.g. fence line, secondary boundary or entrance, however there was no evidence of any change in the nature of the ditch at these points

The fourth feature was a shallow possible pit (0011) filled with material (0012) similar to layer 0003. A couple of pieces of post-medieval brick were recovered from it.

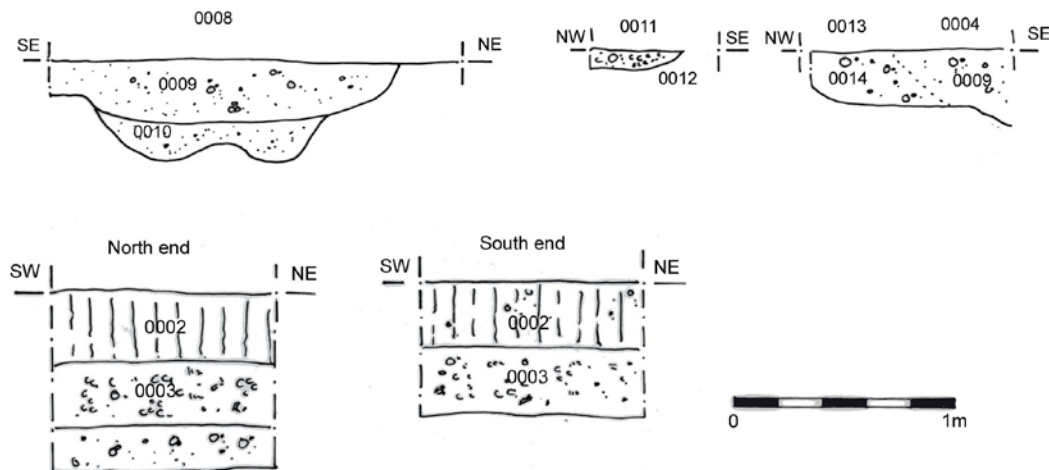


Figure 4 Feature and trench sections

Opno	Feature	Description
0001		Unstratified finds
0002		Topsoil
0003		Brown loam layer, sandier than topsoil and containing chalk and brick fragments and post-med finds.
0004	0004	NE-SW aligned ditch. 2 fills. The only finds were from the top of section 0008.
0005	0004	Upper fill of 0004 in section 0007. Gravelly mid yellow-brown sand. No finds.
0006	0004	Lower fill of 0004 in section 0007. Streaky grey-green silt. Compacted. No finds.
0007	0004	Section of ditch 0004 at south end.
0008	0004	Section of ditch 0004 at north end.
0009	0004	Upper fill of 0004 in section 0008. Same as 0005. Animal bone recovered from here.
0010	0004	Lower fill of 0004 in section 0008. Same as 0006. No finds.
0011	0011	Shallow pit filled with similar material to 0003.
0012	0011	Fill of 0011. Brown sandy loam with chalk and brick fragments. Similar to 0003.
0013	0013	Shallow possible feature on the edge of 0004. Sandy gravel fill. No finds.
0014	0013	Fill of 0013. Brown sand fill similar to 0005.
0015	0015	Very shallow cut on the edge of ditch 0004. Filled with 0005.

Table 1 Context List

## 4. Finds and environmental evidence by Sue Anderson

### Introduction

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

OP	Pottery		CBM		Bone		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0003	1	18	3	695	2	73	18th c.
0009					4	109	PMed
0012			2	14			PMed?
Total	1	18	5	709	6	182	

Table 2 Finds quantities

### Pottery

One sherd of speckle-glazed ware of 18th century date was found in 0003.

### Ceramic building material

Two fragments of red plain roof tile and a piece of brick were found in 0003, and two small fragments of ?brick were found in 0012. The brick fragment from 0003 was in a very dense red fabric, covered in white lime mortar, and measured 52mm thick. It could be a 15th-16th century brick or a post-medieval paviour.

### Animal bone

Two fragments of a large mammal long bone were found in 0003, the saw marks across one end indicating a post-medieval date. Bones from 0009 included a cow metapodial fragment and a horse tooth; the other two fragments were too small for identification, but one appeared to have been sawn.

### Discussion

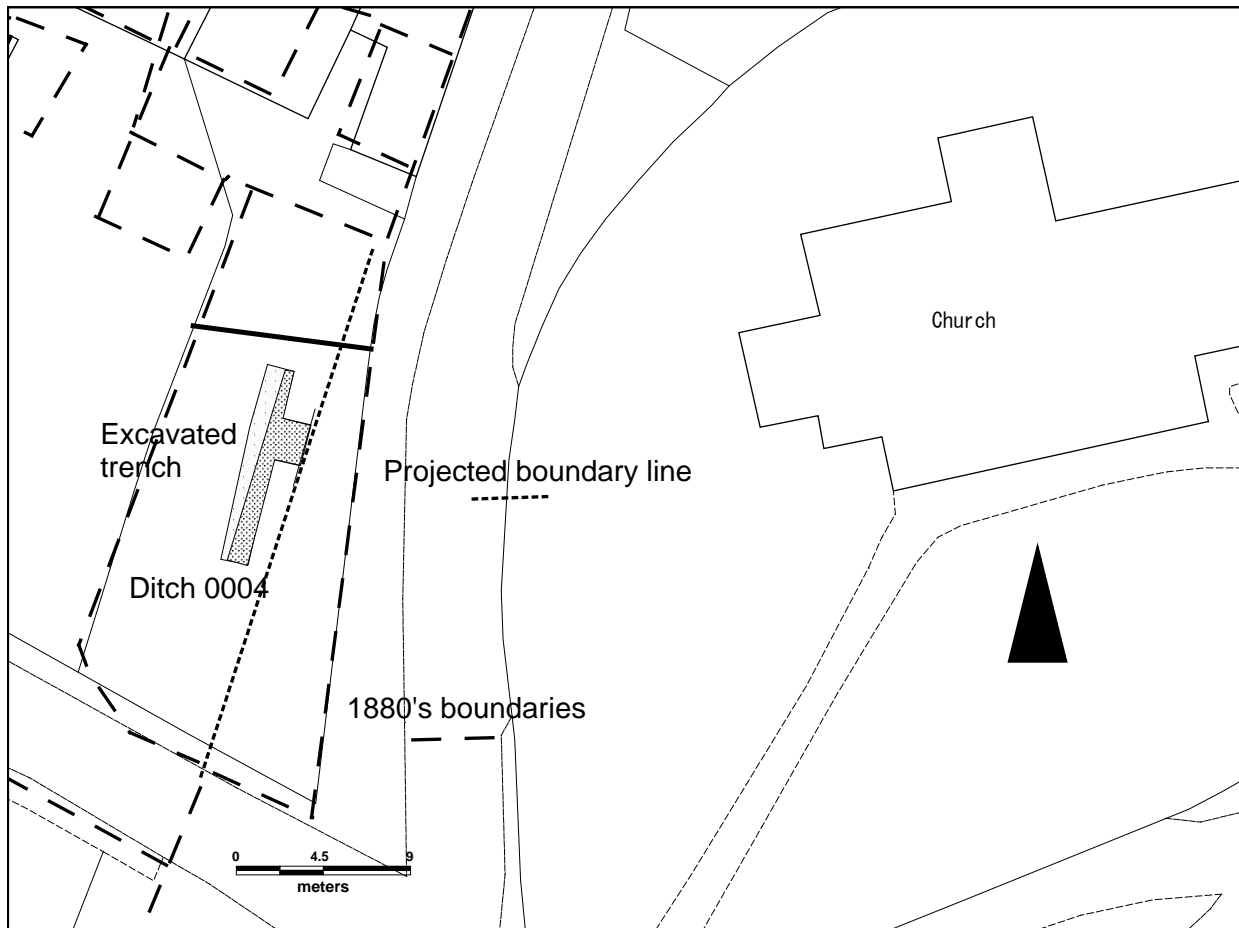
All finds from the site were probably post-medieval in date and included discarded building materials and butchery waste.

## 5. Discussion and Conclusions

The most significant feature on the site was ditch 0004. This could not be securely dated but the absence of post-medieval finds and the clean appearance of the fill suggests that it went out of use in antiquity. It is possible that this is a prehistoric feature, but the survival of some pieces of animal bone in relatively good condition in soil that is usually known for poor preservation of bone suggests that it may be more modern. It was noticeable that this ditch aligned with medieval buildings along Aldridge Lane and to the south and it is possible, even likely, that this ditch marks the line of an earlier course of Aldridge Lane. The projected line of the ditch runs under no. 12 Aldridge Lane, which may suggest that this represents an early medieval boundary, pre-dating the standing medieval buildings.

The presence of chalk and brick fragments in soil layer 0003 seem to indicate a demolition layer for a building which stood nearby but probably not actually within this plot. The material all suggests that this may have been a post-medieval building demolished sometime between the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the 1880's Ordnance Survey map on which it does not appear.





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Figure 5 Evaluation results with information from 1880's Ordnance Survey Map

## 6. Recommendations

The work done during this evaluation has identified and plotted a probable medieval or earlier ditch. No datable finds were found within it despite the excavation of c50% of the available fill. It is considered unlikely that further work would be any more successful. Given the small size of the development and the relatively large proportion of the area evaluated no further funded archaeological work is recommended.

Jo Caruth  
October 2003

## Disclaimer

Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. The need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its archaeological advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting service cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.



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

*Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation*

**12 ALDRIDGE LANE, FORNHAM ALL SAINTS**

**Evaluation by trial trench**

**1. Background**

- 1.1 Planning consent (SE/00/2150/P) has been given for the construction of a house at 12 Aldridge Lane, Fornham All Saints.
- 1.2 The Planning Authority has attached a condition to the consent stipulating that an agreed programme of archaeological work must be implemented before development begins (Planning Policy Guidance 16, paragraph 30 condition). An archaeological evaluation of the consent area will be required as the first part of such a programme of archaeological work; decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work will be based upon the evaluation.
- 1.3 The development area lies close to the projected line on an important Neolithic ritual monument known as a cursus (Suffolk Sites and Monuments Record no. FAS 004). The development site also lies close to the medieval parish church.
- 1.4 All arrangements for the field evaluation of the site, the timing of the work, access to the site, the definition of the precise area of landholding and area for proposed development are to be defined and negotiated with the commissioning body.
- 1.5 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 is required in order to *provide the basis for measurable standards* and 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 evaluation project must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the Project Design as satisfactory.

**2. Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation**

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological sites exist 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 sites within the application area.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- 2.4 Evaluate whether waterlogged organic deposits are likely to be present in the proposal area.

- 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 It is expected that the evaluation will proceed sequentially: the desk-based evaluation will precede the field evaluation (there is a possibility that some aspect of the site's history may indicate that further evaluation is not necessary) and any field-walking evaluation will precede trenching; the results of the desk-based work and any field-walking are to be used to inform the trenching design.
- 2.7 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (address as above) five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored
- 2.8 If the approved evaluation design is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected. Alternatively the presence of an archaeological deposit may be presumed, and untested areas included on this basis when defining the final mitigation strategy.
- 2.9 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

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

- 3.1 Consult the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), both the computerised record and any backup files.
- 3.2 Examine all the readily available cartographic sources (e.g. those available in the County Record Office). Record any evidence for archaeological sites (e.g. buildings, settlements, field names) and history of previous land uses. Where possible, photocopies or tracings should be included in the report.
- 3.3 Provide a transcription of archaeological features from all available air photographs held by Suffolk County Council Environment and Transport Department and its SMR, at a scale of 1:2500.
- 3.4 Ascertain whether there are other constraints on the site (e.g. Site of Special Scientific Interest, County Wildlife Site, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Tree Preservation Order, etc).

### 4 **Specification B: Field Evaluation**

- 4.1 Examine the area for earthworks e.g. banks, ponds, ditches. If present these are to be recorded in plan at 1:2500, with appropriate sections. A record should be made of the topographic setting of the site (e.g. slope, plateau etc). The Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service must be consulted if earthworks are present and before proceeding to the excavation of any trial trenches.
- 4.2 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover the footprint of the house and the major services. If significant archaeology is encountered, the trenching will need to be extended to cover a minimum 2% of the site area and be positioned to sample all areas of the site.

**Linear trenches** are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. Trenches should be a minimum of 1.5m wide; the length of trench to fulfil the percentage requirement should be computed on the nominal basis of 1m wide trenches. In practice trench width will be determined by machine bucket size; a toothless ‘ditching bucket’ of at least **1.80m** width is expected unless special circumstances can be demonstrated. The trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins.

- 4.3 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine fitted with toothless bucket and other equipment. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 4.4 The top of the first archaeological deposit may be cleared by machine, but must then be cleaned off by hand. There is a presumption that excavation of all archaeological deposits will be done by hand unless it can be shown there will not be a loss of evidence by using a machine. The decision as to the proper method of further excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- 4.5 In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation; that significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled.
- 4.6 There must be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of an archaeological deposit. The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 4.7 The contractor shall provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from P.Murphy, English Heritage Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy and Wiltshire 1994) is available.**
- 4.8 Any natural subsoil surface revealed should be hand cleaned and examined for archaeological deposits and artefacts. Sample excavation of any archaeological features revealed may be necessary in order to gauge their date and character.
- 4.9 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced detector user.**
- 4.10 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service during the course of the evaluation).
- 4.11 Human remains must be left *in situ* except in those cases where damage or desecration are to be expected, or in the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory evaluation of the site. However, the excavator should be aware of, and comply with, the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.

- 4.12 Plans of the 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.
- 4.13 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 4.14 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 principle of *Management of Archaeological Projects*, English Heritage 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 Sites and Monuments 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 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 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).

- 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 SMR if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 6.8 The site archive is to be deposited with the County SMR within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 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 SMR sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.

Specification by: Edward Martin

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

Tel: 01284 352442

Date: 8 October 2003

Reference: Fornham,Aldridge.doc

**This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.**

**If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.**