Land at Burgh Road (A140 junction), Aylsham, Broadland, Norfolk, NR11 6TZ

Written Scheme of Investigation: Archaeological Evaluation

Approx. central NGR: TG 20320 26593
NHER Event no.: ENF141155
NHER ref: CNF 46763_1
Broadland app. ref.: 20160789
PCAS Site code: ABRE 16
PCAS Job No.: 1747
OASIS ref: preconst3-260415

Prepared for Lindum Group

by A. Lane

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Fig. 2: Proposed trenching plan overlain on development proposals. 1:500 @ A3
Non-Technical Summary

This document is a specification for archaeological evaluation on land at Burgh Road, Aylsham. The aim of the project is to investigate the potential for and significance of any buried archaeological remains within the site that may be impacted by the redevelopment of the site into a new service station.

The site lies on the eastern edge of the village adjacent to the A140 bypass. Archaeological works associated with the construction of the bypass identified prehistoric, Roman and medieval dated artefacts in association with an undated kiln and an unrelated burnt mound. Cropmark complexes interpreted as prehistoric / Roman in date have been identified in the vicinity.

The archaeological evaluation is constrained by the existing buildings on the site, however three 10m trenches have been positioned to investigate the survival of below ground remains. The results will be used to inform and advise any further investigation / mitigation that may be required in association with these works to ensure the preservation of the historic environment.

This methodology is subject to the approval of the Planning Archaeologist for Norfolk County Council.

Figure 1: Location plan of the site at scale 1:25,000. The position of the proposed development site is marked in red. OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.
1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS) was requested by Lindum Group to prepare a specification for an archaeological evaluation on land at the Burgh Road – A140 junction at Aylsham, Norfolk.

The site is proposed for development as a new service station, with an application having been submitted to Broadland District Council, application ref: 20160789. The Planning Archaeologist for the Norfolk Historic Environment service has recommended a program of pre-determination works to inform and advise the planning application.

This document is the specification (written scheme of investigation - WSI) for the methodology to be adopted during a scheme of trial trenching. It follows current best practice and appropriate national guidance including:

- NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
- CIIfA Code of Conduct (2014);
- CIIfA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation (2014);
- Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)
- Research and Archaeology Revisted: a revised framework for the East of England (Medlycott, 2011)

2.0 Site location and description (Fig. 1 & 2)

Aylsham is a town in the civil parish of Broadland in the North Norfolk district of the county lying c.17km north of Norwich. The A140 by-passes the southern part of the town extending north along the east side of the town.

Burgh Road extends eastwards out of the town crossing the A140 c.1km from the historic core of Aylsham. The site lies at the northwest corner of the junction between the two roads.

The site is currently occupied by a derelict showroom and carpark, with open air storage to the east. The site measures c.70m x 60m on the longest axis, with an approximate area of c. 0.3 hectares. Access to the site is currently from Burgh Road into the existing carpark.

The approximate central NGR is TG 20320 26593.

3.0 Geology and topography

The bedrock geology of Aylsham is Wroxham Crag Formation - sand and gravel, which will probably be encountered across the majority of the site. This bedrock was deposited on a coastal plain where swamps, estuaries and deltas dominated the environment. The deposit is described as a sheet of interbedded gravels, sands, silts and clays. The gravels are dominated by flint (up to c.80%) and by quartz and quartzite (up to c.60%). There is an island of chalk recorded to the north and east of the site, elements of which may also be encountered within the redline site boundary. There are no recorded overlying deposits with the redline site, however brickearth (sand, silt and gravel), alluvium and river terrace deposits of sand and gravel are all recorded in the surrounding area (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

The site lies c.0.5km from the west bank of the River Bure. The site lies at c.15m OD with ground levels rising to the west towards the town.
4.0 Planning background (Figure 2)

A planning application for the demolition of existing commercial building and erection of petrol filling station with ancillary sales kiosk and associated car parking has been submitted to and granted by Broadland District Council, application ref: 20160789.

The Planning Archaeologist for the Norfolk Historic Environment Service was consulted and advised that a program of archaeological works are required to investigate the archaeological potential of the site, and inform and design any archaeological mitigation that may be required in association with the redevelopment. This ensures the suitable investigation of the site and the requirements of NPPF:

128. In determining applications.... Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Planning permission was granted in August 2016, and included the following condition:

10 With the exception of demolition and site clearance works, no development shall take place until an archaeological written scheme of investigation has been submitted to and approved by the local planning authority in writing. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and 1) The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording, 2) The programme for post investigation assessment, 3) Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording, 4) Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation, 5) Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation and 6) Nomination of a competent person of persons / organisation to undertake the works set out within the written scheme of investigation.

No development shall take place other than in accordance with the approved written scheme of investigation.

The development shall not be occupied until the site investigation and post-excavation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the approved archaeological written scheme of investigation and the provision to be made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive has been secured.

The Planning Archaeologist has advised that for this project the suitable programme of archaeological mitigatory work will initially involve the excavation of a scheme of trial trenches to determine the scope and extent of any further mitigatory work that may be required (e.g. an archaeological excavation or monitoring of groundworks during construction). This document details the methodology of an archaeological evaluation of the site and the post-excavation reporting and archiving procedures and timetable.

5.0 Archaeological and historical background

Aylsham lies in a landscape of varied archaeological monuments, including records directly adjacent to the redline site boundary.

Fieldwalking ahead of the construction of the A140 Aylsham bypass recovered a small quantity of prehistoric flints from the area immediately east of the site (NHER ref: 15075). Slightly to the north additional fieldwalking and archaeological monitoring during the construction of the road recovered Bronze Age pottery from a discrete pit, an undated pottery kiln and unstratified Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery. A number of large
fragments of iron slag were also recorded during these works thought to be indicative of an undated metalworking site in the vicinity (NHER ref: 15074).

These sparse finds of prehistoric date may be related to a recorded burnt mound that was also encountered during the works for the bypass (NHER ref: 19708). The burnt mound lies around 200m south of the site with further flints and later period artefacts just beyond. Immediately east of these aerial photography has identified a ring ditch and linear features with discrete features of probably pits scattered throughout the complex (NHER ref: 36460).

Evidence of Roman occupation is similarly represented in the archaeological record as a series of unstratified artefacts around the site but there are few recorded confirmed Roman dated features in the area. The recovery of Roman pottery from the line of the A140 bypass suggests the presence of Roman dated features in the close vicinity. A large Iron Age and Roman site has been identified at Brompton, c.3km to the southeast of the site, with a smaller slightly closer at Bolwick Hall (List entry ID 1003698, 1003952).

The place name derives from the Old English meaning “homestead of a man called Aegel”, and the village is recorded in the Domesday Book. The recorded Domesday manor is very large, including 15 villagers, 81 smallholders, 3 slaves and 47 freemen, with woodland to support 320 pigs and 4 mills (http://opendomesday.org/place/TG1927/aylsham/).

The historic core of the settlement of Aylsham lies c.1km to the east of the site where the main north-south road (pre-bypass) and several smaller roads from the local villages. The site lies on the periphery of the medieval settlement and was probably utilised for agricultural purposes throughout this period. Bure Valley farmhouse c.200m southeast of the site is a Listed Building dating from the 18th century (List entry ID 1373005); without the bypass the site was immediately adjacent to the road and close to the farm.

6.0 Archaeological requirement (Fig. 2)

The Planning Archaeologist has advised that a scheme of trenching is required to investigate the potential for and significance of any buried archaeological remains that would be impacted by the development proposals, and to inform the design of any archaeological mitigation measures to be employed in association with the development that may be required in light of the results of the trenching.

To investigate this potential, three evaluation trenches each measuring 10m x 2m, will be excavated across the site.

The aims of the evaluation are to record the presence / absence, location, extent, date, character, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains within the site. The results of the trenching will be submitted with the forthcoming application to advise if any archaeological mitigation is required in connection with the proposals, and to inform any such mitigation strategy.

An online record of the project data has been initiated with the Archaeological Data Service (OASIS database), ID preconst3-260415. This online record shall be updated and completed as the project progresses, and will include an uploaded digital copy of the final report of the results of the trenching.

The archaeological trenching will be completed in accordance with the methodology detailed below.
7.0 Methodology: Fieldwork and Recording

All archaeological excavation and recording will be undertaken by suitably qualified/experienced professional archaeologists; where necessary the site team will be supervised by a PCAS Project/Field Officer.

Where possible the trenches will be positioned according to the proposed trenching plan, however they may be adjusted due to the presence of unforeseen obstacles such as services etc or health and safety considerations. Final trench positions will be tied to the OS National Grid using full RTK GPS co-ordinates which is accurate down to 0.03m.

Unless ground conditions dictate otherwise, the evaluation trenches will be opened under archaeological supervision, using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless blade which is a minimum of 1.50m wide. It is anticipated that the upper layers on the site will be concrete of modern hardcore that may require the use of a breaker or a toothed bucket. This equipment will be used under archaeological supervision, with care taken to ensure minimal impacts on underlying horizons, and the machine will revert to using the toothless bucket at the earliest opportunity.

Mechanical excavation will remove all modern overburden, topsoil and any subsoils, to the first archaeologically significant horizon, the natural substrate or the maximum safe working depth, whichever is encountered first. If considered necessary, a sondage will be excavated in each trench to further investigate the natural horizons encountered.

Subject to Health & Safety regulations, trenches will be cleaned manually and inspected for archaeological remains. Where identified, archaeological features will be examined sufficiently to determine their date, character and survival condition. This will usually involve a 1m wide slot excavated through all linear features, and 50% excavation of all discrete features such as pits.

In certain cases, the use of mechanical excavation equipment may also be appropriate for removing deep intrusions (e.g. modern brick and concrete floors or footings), or for putting sections through major features after partial excavation (e.g. ditches, cellars, etc.), or through deposits to check that they are of natural origin.

A full written drawn and photographic record of each significant stratigraphic horizon and archaeological feature will be made, including any colluvial or other natural deposits identified on the site. A description of each horizon will be made on standard PCAS context recording forms. All sections will be drawn at scales 1:10 or 1:20 where appropriate, archaeological features will be plotted on plans of each trench normally drawn at scale 1:100, although more detailed plans may be made if necessary.

These will be supplemented by a narrative account in the form of a site diary. The archaeologist will pay due attention to the landscape aspect of any exposed remains – both the cultural and the natural landscape – which may necessitate a rudimentary assessment to be made of neighbouring conditions (e.g. visible earthworks in adjacent areas, surface observation, standing buildings, vegetation cover etc).

A photographic record in digital format, supplemented where appropriate with colour slide and black and white photography, will be maintained during the course of the archaeological intervention. Where appropriate these will include an identification board, scale and north arrow. The photographic record will include:

- general site shots;
- specific stages of fieldwork;
- individual features and, where appropriate, their sections;
- groups of features, where relationships are important.

**Artefacts**

Prehistoric flints, prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery and iron working slag have been recovered during fieldwalking in the immediate vicinity of the site; any or all of these artefacts may be encountered during the works.

All finds visible during the excavation will be recovered and returned to PCAS offices for processing and initial identification. All finds will be bagged and labelled according to the individual deposit from which they were recovered, ready for later cleaning, marking and analysis. All artefacts will be treated in accordance with UKIC guidelines, First Aid for Finds (Watkinson & Neale 1998). A specialist assessment will be made of the artefacts recovered with a view to their potential for further study. Allowance will be made for preliminary conservation and stabilisation of all objects and an assessment of long-term conservation and storage needs. Should any specific conservation requirements be encountered in the field, advice from the Planning Archaeologist for the Norfolk Historic Environment Service will be sought immediately.

All finds that qualify as ‘treasure’ under the 1996 Treasure Act (Treasure Act Code of Practice – 2002 revision) will be treated in accordance with the Act; HM Coroner will be informed and the finds will be safely stored. The Norfolk Finds Liaison Officer may be contacted for advice in the first instance.

**Human Remains**

The legislation concerning the exhumation of human remains was updated in 2014 (Church of England (Miscellaneous Provisions) Measure 2014, No. 1 Section 2).

If human remains are encountered, they will be left in situ where possible, and only disturbed if their continued presence will severely hinder the development processes, or if there are sound academic/scientific justifications for removal. The City of Lincoln Archaeologist will be notified and if appropriate an Exhumation License will be requested from the Secretary of State/Ministry of Justice and the local Environmental Health Officer advised.

Excavators should be aware of current legislation regarding human remains, and pay due attention to requirements of Health and Safety. All work involving human remains will be carried out according to the standards and guidelines recommended by the British Association of Biological Anthropologists and Osteologists in conjunction with the CIfA guidelines.

All reasonable requests of interested parties concerning the methods of removal, re-interral or disposal of the remains and associated items will be complied with, and attempts will be made at all times not to cause offence to interested parties.

All work involving human remains will be carried out according to the standards and guidelines recommended by the British Association of Biological Anthropologists and Osteologists in conjunction with the CIfA guidelines.

**Environmental Sampling**

Any securely stratified dated or undated archaeological deposits considered suitable will be sampled for the retrieval and assessment of the preservation conditions and potential for analysis of biological and environmental remains. Industrial residues and waste from craft and manufacturing processes are also routinely sampled. Where possible, deposits will be sampled in 40l quantities, less if necessary, and returned to PCAS offices prior to dispatch to the appointed specialist for processing and assessment. Sampling techniques and methods
will be undertaken in accordance with the current Historic England guidance as set out in *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation* (Campbell *et al*, 2011, 2nd edition).

### 8.0 Methodology: Post-Fieldwork

Following completion of site works, all archaeological records, environmental samples and finds will be taken to the offices of PCAS for initial processing. The Archaeology Department will be contacted at this stage to advise of the start of the post-exvavation process, and to request a unique accession number which will be assigned by the Archaeology Department.

Stable finds (e.g. pottery, bone) will be washed, marked and packaged at offices of PCAS prior to dispatch. Unstable finds will be dispatched for remedial conservation as a prelude to assessment, and bulk samples will be dispatched for processing.

PCAS have used the services of a variety of specialists in the past and may use any/all of the following depending on suitability/availability etc:

**Archaeological Contractors:**

- Durham University Archaeological Services (DUAS) staff – provides environmental archaeology services.
- Archaeological Project Services (APS) staff – provides a comprehensive service in most areas of post excavation analysis.
- University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) staff – provides a comprehensive service in all areas of post excavation analysis.

**Other Freelance Specialists:**

- I Rowlandson – specialising in the identification / assessment of Iron Age & Roman pottery.
- Dr Phil Mills & Dr J Evans – specialising in the identification / assessment of Roman pottery, and Roman & Medieval ceramic building materials
- Sarah Percival – specialising in the identification of Pre-Historic pottery /ceramics
- M Taylor / M Bamford – specialising in the identification / assessment of waterlogged wood
- Dr D Underhill / T Lane / J. Rylett – specialising in the identification / assessment of lithic materials and tools.
- Dr Rachel Tyson – specialising in the identification / assessment of glass.
- Dr Rod Mackenzie – specialising in the identification / assessment of waste metal working residues.
- Dr K Leahy – specialising in the identification / assessment of post Roman & early Medieval artefacts inc metal work.
- Q Mould – specialising in the identification / assessment of leather artefacts
N.B. For work outside of the East Midlands, we take advice from the relevant County Archaeologist / Museum Services as to the appropriate specialist to use.

Subject to the receipt of any specialist accounts/archive reports, within six weeks of the completion of fieldwork, a fully illustrated and appended report on the results will be prepared in accordance with current guidelines and sent to the Planning Archaeologist for Norfolk for approval. All electronic submissions will be in single .PDF format. The final report will include the following minimum information:

- A non-technical summary
- Museum accession number, site code and project number
- Planning reference number
- Grid reference, site location, topography and geology
- Archaeological and historical background
- A description and analysis of the fieldwork undertaken, describing any associated finds and/or environmental data recovered
- A geo-referenced location plan at a minimum scale of 1:10,000
- A scaled overall site plan showing the accurately surveyed location of the development site in relation to known and speculated archaeological features (if appropriate)
- Scaled section and plan drawings of archaeological features encountered within the excavated area.
- Discussion and conclusions, including the importance of the findings in local, regional and national basis and a critical review of the effectiveness of methodology
- Tables summarising features and artefacts with full descriptions and brief interpretation
- Specialist artefact and environmental reports included as appendices, as necessary, with reference made to appropriate published type-series and a consideration of their potential for further study or their suitability for discard.
- Colour photographs, including general views and appropriate detail
- Acknowledgements
- Bibliography of sources used
- Archive deposition location and agreed deposition date
- A summary of the report’s presence and location on the OASIS online database

The site should not be treated in isolation, and reference should be made to relevant historical sources and previous archaeological work in the area when interpreting the results.

Three hard copies of the approved report and a pdf. copy on CD will be sent to the Norfolk HER, usually within 12 months of the completion of the fieldwork; two copies of which will be forwarded to the HER. A fourth hard copy of the report will be sent to the Regional Advisor for Archaeological Science at English Heritage.

The data from the project, along with a digital copy of the approved report, will be uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service OASIS (Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological
investigationS) database for public consultation, usually within 6 months of the completion of the fieldwork.

Deposition of the report with the HER, where it will be incorporated into their database for public consultation, and uploading the project data to OASIS will be considered as placing the results of the project in the public domain. However, wider publication of the results will be considered, although the content and place of publication will be dependent on what is found, and be subject to discussion with the archaeological advisor to the planning authority. For example, where a significant discovery is made, consideration will be given to the preparation of a short note for inclusion in a local journal.

Working under the terms of the Copyright, Design and Patents Act 1988, the archaeological contractor shall retain full copyright with regard to written, digital and graphic material. However, following project completion, both the commissioning body, Norfolk HER and the Archaeology Data Service may, in the interest of informing and advancing the profession, make responsible use of the data, provided that any material copied or cited in reports is duly acknowledged and all copyright conditions observed.

Following acceptance of the report into the HER, a project archive (documentary and material) will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines contained in Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage (UKIC 1990) and Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections (Museums and Galleries Commission 1992). The receiving archive for Norfolk is the Norwich Castle Museum, however at this time it is understood the archive is not accepting new archives, therefore the prepared archive will be retained by PCAS until a suitable repository is found.

9.0 Timetable and Personnel

The evaluation trenching is expected to commence in late summer 2016, according to instruction to proceed.

The site team will include an experienced Project Officer as a minimum. Details of the site team and CVs will be provided if required.

A full report on the results of the project will be submitted within 6 months of the completion of the onsite groundworks. For evaluations this time scale is usually reduced to 6-8 weeks, dependant of the receipt of any specialist reports.

10.0 Health and Safety

All work will be carried out in compliance with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and its related regulations and codes of practice. Employees and sub-contractors of Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd will perform their duties in accordance with company safety policy (revised 2011). Where PCAS employees are temporarily engaged at other workplaces, they are to respect relevant local regulations, both statutory and as imposed by other employers within the Health and Safety at Work Act (1974).

A site specific risk assessment will be prepared prior to any site works taking place.

11.0 Monitoring arrangements

Internal monitoring will be the responsibility of PCAS Director Will Munford. The Planning Archaeologist for Norfolk will be informed of the start of the archaeological intervention; he
will be kept informed of any unexpected discoveries and regularly updated on the project’s progress, and will be free to visit the site by prior arrangement with the site director.

All phases of fieldwork and post-excisionation reporting / archiving shall be carried out in accordance with the approved WSI, with any variations to the specification being agreed in writing with the Planning Archaeologist.

12.0 Other factors

Any potential financial outlay which may be activated over and above rudimentary costs (i.e. fieldwork, basic reporting and archive arrangements) will be been calculated as provisional sums/contingencies.

13.0 Contacts

James Albone, Planning Archaeologist (Norfolk) 01362 869 279
Will Munford, Director, PCAS 01522 703 800

14.0 Insurance

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd has the following insurance cover:

Employers’ Liability: £10,000,000
Public Liability: £5,000,000
Professional Indemnity: £1,000,000

15.0 References


http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html
http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/

Figure 2: Proposed trenching plan overlain on development proposals. Plan supplied by Lindum Group. 1:500 @ A3.