Land to the east of Holt Road, Horsford, Norfolk

Project specification for archaeological evaluation

19th January 2017
(Revised 2/2/17)
Land to the east of Holt Road, Horsford, Norfolk
Proposal for an archaeological evaluation

1.0 Background

1.1 The site is an irregular parcel of land (c. 10.7 ha in size), currently consisting of three arable fields, to the east of Holt Road, Horsford, Norfolk (centred on NGR: TG 1883 1733).

1.2 Planning permission (app no. 20161770) has been sought from Broadland District Council to redevelop the site for residential housing. It is likely that any consent will be subject to a condition(s) relating to archaeology and the historic environment.

1.3 The archaeological potential of the site has been highlighted in a desk-based assessment (Wessex 2016), which concluded that there was moderate potential for prehistoric, medieval and post-medieval deposits to be present. In summary, the site lies in an archaeologically rich landscape with a number of Bronze Age barrows recorded to the north and north-east. Several cropmarks and earthworks have been recorded within the site and the immediate surrounding area, most of which are undated. Recent archaeological fieldwork immediately to the south of the present site revealed several features associated with Iron Age ironworking.

2.0 Requirement for Work

2.1 As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits on the site field evaluation is required as set out in Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2012) and the District Council policies on archaeology in order to draw up a scheme to mitigate the impacts of development on archaeology if necessary.

2.2 Dependent of the results of the evaluation, further archaeological fieldwork may be required in due course. Any further work will be covered by a separate Written Scheme of Investigation.

2.3 A brief for the field evaluation has been produced by the Norfolk County Council Archaeological Officer (Mr James Albone) (NCCHES 2017).

2.4 The evaluation is to take place according to a written scheme of investigation approved by Broadland District Council as advised by Norfolk County Council Historic Environment Service (NCCHES).

3.0 Aims and Objectives

3.1 The aims of the evaluation are to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date, state of preservation and importance of any archaeological or palaeoenvironmental deposits within the area of development.

3.2 This work will be carried out in a manner which will not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation in-situ, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation, but which sufficiently explore the archaeological sequence.

3.3 The specific research aims of this project are;

a) To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on the site.

b) To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

c) To determine the nature and date of any cropmarks or earthworks on the site.

d) To determine if archaeological deposits associated with Bronze Age funerary practices are present.

e) To determine if archaeological deposits associated with Iron Age ironworking are present.

f) To determine if archaeological deposits dating from the Roman period are present.

g) To determine if archaeological deposits dating from the medieval period are present.

h) To determine if archaeological deposits dating from the post-medieval period are present.
i) To provide sufficient information to enable an appropriate mitigation strategy to be produced if necessary.

3.4 The potential and significance of any such deposits located will be assessed according to the research priorities such as set out in *English Heritage Research Agenda* (English Heritage 2005) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011), or any more local or thematic research priorities as necessary.

**4.0 Methodology**

4.1 We propose to dig 119 trenches 25m long and 1.8-2m wide as shown on Fig. 1. This represents a c. 5% sample of the development site area. Three trenches (101, 103 and 104) have been specifically positioned to target a possible linear feature which has been identified from NMP Cropmark data.

4.1.1 The trench positions will be surveyed in using a handheld GPS unit (Trimble Geo XH).

4.1.2 The trench positions may be adjusted and subdivided once details of any services are known and to avoid other obstructions such as preserved trees, in discussion with NCCHES.

4.2 A contingency for an additional 300m of trenching is included within the proposal should this be needed to clarify the initial findings.

4.2.1 The County Council requirements for trenched archaeological evaluation (Gurney 2003) will be followed.

**4.3 Excavation Methodology**

4.3.1 Topsoil and any other overburden will be removed by a JCB or 360°-type machine using a toothless ditching bucket.

4.3.2 Where archaeological features are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas will be cleaned using appropriate hand tools.

4.3.3 Sufficient of the archaeological features and deposits exposed will be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief, without compromising the objective set out in 3.2. Any strategy will be in agreement with the county archaeological office. All discrete features will be investigated by hand and at least 50% of the volume of each pit or posthole will be dug. Each linear feature will also be dug (a minimum of a 1m wide slot per feature), or 10%.

4.3.4 In general, all finds and artefacts will be retained. At the post-excavation stage (see 4.5 below) the collection policy of the recipient museum will be followed which may involve the discarding of some classes of building material, such as brick and tile or flint nodules after recording with only a representative sample being retained, in discussion with NCCHES.

4.3.5 Conservation on site will follow guidelines in First Aid For Finds with any other specialist conservation work subcontracted to our conservation advisor (see below).

4.3.6 NCCHES will be notified immediately if human remains are discovered during the evaluation, and an appropriate strategy agreed with the Norfolk Archaeological Officer. An appropriate Ministry of Justice licence will be obtained as soon as human remains are identified.

4.3.7 A programme of environmental sampling will take place should sufficient well stratified subsoil deposits be located. Typically this involves samples of up to 40L depending on the size of the feature examined. A programme of environmental sampling will take place if any significant deposits from features dated or undated are encountered, which are not demonstrably modern. These will be sampled in consultation with our environmental consultants and the County Archaeological Officer (NCCHES). Sampling will take place according to English Heritage guidance (English Heritage 2011). Sampling should aim to determine the potential of the site for biological remains and small sized artefacts. The number and range of samples collected will represent the range of feature types encountered. Cores and column samples may be required as necessary.
4.3.8 Metal detectors will be used to enhance the recovery of metal finds. The area of the trenches will be detected prior to the removal of the topsoil and then the removal of any subsequent subsoil layers. All exposed features will be metal detected along with any spoil arising from their excavation. There will be no removal without reference to contextual information. No title will be assumed by the finder of any gold, silver or prehistoric base metal objects and the provisions of the Treasure Act (1996) and its subsequent amendments, will be implemented where appropriate.

4.3.9 Spoilheaps will be searched for finds.

4.3.10 Following completion of all excavation and recording, the trench will be efficiently backfilled but not resurfaced, returfed or reseeded.

5.0 Recording Methodology

5.1 A single context recording system will be used in accordance with the TVAS Field Recording Manual (7th edition 2011). Descriptions of individual deposits and features will be recorded on pro-forma context recording sheets.

5.2 All archaeological deposits exposed will be planned at a scale of 1:20 and sections drawn at a scale of 1:10. All site drawings will be by pencil on drafting film.

5.3 Heights above OD will be taken and recorded on plans and sections.

5.4 The locations of the trenches, and of all plans and sections, will be tied into the National Grid with a handheld GPS unit (Trimble Geo XH).

5.5 A photographic record will be made of the project, consisting of High Resolution digital images and black and white images (contact sheet). It will record the principal features and finds discovered, both in detail and in their general context.

5.6 A Norfolk HER event number will be obtained prior to the commencement of fieldwork.

6.0 Post-fieldwork

6.1 Finds processing and analysis will commence immediately following the completion of the fieldwork in accordance with guidelines in MAP2 and TVAS post-excavation procedures (6th edition 2013).

6.2 Artefacts/ecofacts will be cleaned, conserved and prepared for long term museum storage.

6.3 Specialist reports will be prepared on the artefacts recovered. Particular attention will be paid to correlating the pottery recovered with local or regional fabric type sequences.

6.4 Specialist analysis and reporting will be carried out by the following specialist staff or consultants as appropriate:-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Specialist</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pottery Specialists</td>
<td>Dr Jane Timby, Mr. Paul Blinkhorn or Dr. Malcolm Lyne</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(consultants) , Dr. Richard Tabor (TVAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Later Prehistoric Struck flint</td>
<td>Dr. Steve Ford (TVAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stone Specialist</td>
<td>Dr. David Williams (Southampton University)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Metalwork Specialist</td>
<td>Mr Steve Crabb (TVAS) or Dr. Robin Taylor (consultant)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Charred Plant Remains</td>
<td>Professor Mark Robinson (Oxford University)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ms Rossy McKenna (consultant) or Ms Joanna Pine (TVAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faunal Remains</td>
<td>Ms Sheila Hamilton-Dyer, Dr Matilda Holmes (consultants) or</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dr Ceri Falys , Ms Danielle Milbank, or Ms Genni Elliott (TVAS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Remains</td>
<td>Dr Ceri Falys (TVAS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pollen/environment</td>
<td>Mr Dan Young (Reading University- Quest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservation</td>
<td>Wiltshire Conservation Centre</td>
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7.0 Report and Dissemination

7.1 A report on the results of the fieldwork should be available within four weeks following completion of the fieldwork.

7.2 The report will follow our established format, comprising a descriptive text, illustrations and catalogues in appendices as appropriate.

7.3 The text will address the aims and objectives of the project, the methodology employed, describe the basic nature of the archaeological deposits discovered, and report on the artefacts recovered. It will then attempt to place the significance of the findings in their local, regional and national setting if appropriate.

7.4 The report will include a frontsheet providing the following information:

* Site name
* Grid reference
* Planning reference
* Site activity (evaluation trenching, geophysical survey, fieldwalking, watching brief, excavation, etc.)
* Date and duration of project
* HER parish code
* HER event number
* TVAS site code
* OASIS reference
* Area of site
* Summary of results
* Monuments identified (referenced to the RCHME Thesaurus of Monument Types)
* Location and reference of archive

7.5 The illustrations will include:
   a site location plan
   a plan of the distribution of archaeological finds by material, type and date generated from the fieldwalking
   a plan of archaeological deposits
   profiles/sections of excavated features
   photographs of significant/representative features
   photographs of all trenches

7.6 A summary of any positive findings will be produced for Norfolk Archaeology.

7.7 Copies of the results will be supplied to the Norfolk Historic Environment Record in digital (pdf) and paper format as required. Non-published report(s) will be made available for inspection or download on the TVAS website.

7.8 An OASIS online record for the project will be initiated prior to the commencement of fieldwork. A digital version of the report will be provided to the OASIS project and the completed OASIS submission form appended to the report.

7.9 Copies of digital images will be supplied to the Norfolk HER (if requested).

8.0 Archive Deposition

8.1 The finds and site archive will be prepared in accordance with guidelines in Management of Archaeological Projects 2 and after consultation with the recipient museum.

8.2 The site archive will be deposited with an approved local museum in due course.

8.3 With the agreement of the landowner, the finds will be deposited with an approved local museum.

8.4 The records will be copied onto microfiche for the National Archaeological Record.
9.0 General Items

9.1 The project will be managed on a regular basis by a Member of the Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists with an appropriate area of competence (S. Ford, J. Pine or S. Wallis).

9.2 The project will be carried out in accordance with the CIFA Code of Conduct and Code of Practice and Standards and Guidance and. The quality control mechanisms set out in the TVAS fieldwork and post-fieldwork manuals. The fieldwork will be carried out as defined by the CIFA standards and guidance on watching briefs. In addition the guidance provided by Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003) will be followed.

9.3 Safe working practices will be adopted as set out in the TVAS health and safety manual and current health and safety standards will be adhered to.

9.4 A risk assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of the project.

9.4 Our insurance cover comprises £10 million for public liability, £10 million for employee liability, cover for any hired-in plant, and professional indemnity cover of £5m.

9.5 The archaeological advisor to the District Council will be contacted both prior to work commencing on site, and during the evaluation itself, to arrange a site monitoring visit. Any changes in the agreed project design will be discussed and agreed with the project consultant and the archaeological advisor to the District Council before implementation.

10.0 References


Land to the east of Holt Road, Horsford, Norfolk, 2017 Archaeological Evaluation

Figure 1. Detailed location of site showing proposed evaluation trenches and NMP Cropmarks (green).