

**LAND TO THE REAR OF NOS. 8-10
OAK COTTAGES, ELM WAY,
BOREHAM, ESSEX, CM3 3HD:**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION**

**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
CHELMSFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL**

PCA REPORT NO: 11516

SITE CODE: BOOC13

SEPTEMBER 2013



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY

**Land to the Rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham, Essex, CM3
3HD:**

An Archaeological Evaluation

Local Planning Authority: Chelmsford Borough Council

Central National Grid Reference: TL 7521 1002

Site Code: BOOC13

Planning Reference: 11/01795/FUL

Report No. R11516

Written and researched by: Tom Woolhouse

Project Manager: Mark Hinman

Commissioning Client: Oxbury and Co.

Contractor: Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd
Central Office
7 Granta Terrace
Stapleford
Cambs, CB22 5DL

Tel: 01223 845522
Fax: 01223 845522
E-mail: mhinman@pre-construct.com
Website: www.pre-construct.com

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September 2013

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ABSTRACT

This report documents the results of an archaeological evaluation of land to the rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham, Essex, carried out on 9th September 2013. One 25m long trench was machine excavated, revealing a single 19th-/20th-century rubbish pit. No features or finds of archaeological significance were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document reports the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken on land to the rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham, Essex, CM3 3HD (Figure 1; Plate 1). This work was carried out on the 9th September 2013. The work was commissioned by Oxbury and Co. in advance of proposed residential development and the construction of two bungalows.
- 1.2 The site is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 7521 1002. It lies north of the B1137 and immediately west of Elm Way and comprises the northern ends of the former back gardens of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages (0.07ha).
- 1.3 A written scheme of investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation within the development area was prepared by Adam Garwood of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (August 2013) in response to a brief issued by Alison Bennett of Essex County Council Historic Environment Unit (May 2013; Planning Application 11/01795/FUL).
- 1.4 The brief highlighted that the development was to the north of the Roman road from Chelmsford to Witham (Essex Historic Environment Record (HER) No. 5568) and adjacent to a previously-excavated site with evidence for Iron Age and medieval occupation (HER 9980). Excavations to the south of the main road have demonstrated the presence of a series of tofts and enclosures of 11th-13th-century date (Foreman 1997). It is possible that this area formed a focus for occupation in Boreham in the medieval period (Bennett 2013). This area is therefore of archaeological interest and potential.
- 1.5 The work reported upon here was designed to contribute to an understanding of the character, condition, date and extent of any archaeological remains within the development area, and to provide a comprehensive appraisal of the significance of any such remains within a local, regional and national context as appropriate.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 2.1 The underlying geology of the site is London Clay. This is overlain by superficial deposits of the Lowestoft Formation (Diamicton), an extensive sheet of chalky till with outwash sands and gravels, silts and clays, characterised by its chalk and flint content (BGS Online Viewer 2012).
- 2.2 The topsoil (2), a garden/ cultivation soil deposit, ranged in depth from 0.39-0.46m along the length of the trench. It capped a shallow subsoil (3), measuring 0.12-0.23m deep, which deepened to the east. This subsoil was a mid orangey-brown firm silty clay with occasional flints and represents the mixed interface between the topsoil and the natural geology, disturbed by past horticultural or agricultural activity. The natural light orangey-brown clay with flints (4) was recorded at depths of 0.52-0.68m below modern ground level (42.20 - 42.22m OD), with the overlying deposits deepening slightly to the east.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The brief highlighted that the development site is located to the north of the Roman road from Chelmsford to Witham (HER 5568) and adjacent to a site with evidence of Iron Age and medieval occupation (HER 9980). Excavations to the south of the main road have demonstrated the presence of a series of tofts and enclosures of 11th-13th-century date (Foreman 1997). It is possible that this area formed a focus for occupation in Boreham in the medieval period (Bennett 2013). This area is therefore of archaeological interest and potential.
- 3.2 Taken together, this previous work suggested that the current site had moderate to high potential to contain Iron Age, Roman and/ or medieval archaeological remains.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The WSI stated that one 35m long evaluation trench would be excavated. In practice, the turning space required for the mechanical excavator meant that this had to be shortened to 25m in order to fit the available space (Figure 2; Plate 3). The area of the evaluation trench (46.35m²) nevertheless constitutes a 6.6% sample of the development site. A small extension was excavated on the south side of the trench to reveal the full outline of Pit [5] (see Section 5).
- 4.2 The trenching was carried out under archaeological supervision using an 8-ton wheeled JCB backhoe loader fitted with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil deposits were removed in even spits down to the level of the undisturbed natural geology where potential archaeological features could be observed and recorded. Stripped topsoil and subsoil were stored separately for later reinstatement. All further excavation was undertaken manually using hand tools.
- 4.3 Heights above ordnance datum (m OD) and the locations of archaeological features and interventions were recorded using a Leica 1200 GPS rover unit. The trench and single archaeological feature were also manually planned at a scale of 1:50.
- 4.4 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned context numbers and recorded on individual pre-printed forms. Archaeological events recognised by the deposition of material are signified in this report by round brackets (thus), while events constituting the removal of deposits are referred to here as 'cuts' and signified by square brackets [thus]. The record numbers assigned to cuts and deposits are entirely arbitrary and in no way reflect the chronological order in which events took place. Artefacts recovered during excavation were assigned to the record number of the deposit from which they were retrieved.
- 4.5 Metal detecting was carried out during the stripping operation and archaeological features and spoil were scanned.
- 4.6 High resolution digital photographs were taken throughout the fieldwork and were used to keep a record of the evaluation. Black and white photos were also taken for the site archive.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 The evaluation found a single archaeological feature, located towards the west end of the trench (Figure 3; Plate 2). This was a small circular pit [5] with steep rounded sides and a flattish base, measuring 0.97 x 0.88m across and 0.22m deep. Its single fill (6) contained post-medieval/ modern rubbish including several hard-fired ceramic building material fragments, small lumps of coal and iron nails. The pit dates to the 19th or 20th century.
- 5.2 No other archaeological feature or finds were present in the trench.

6 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PCA would like to thank Oxbury and Co. for commissioning the archaeological investigation.
Thanks to Jennifer Simonson of the PCA CAD Department for preparing the figures.

7 REFERENCES

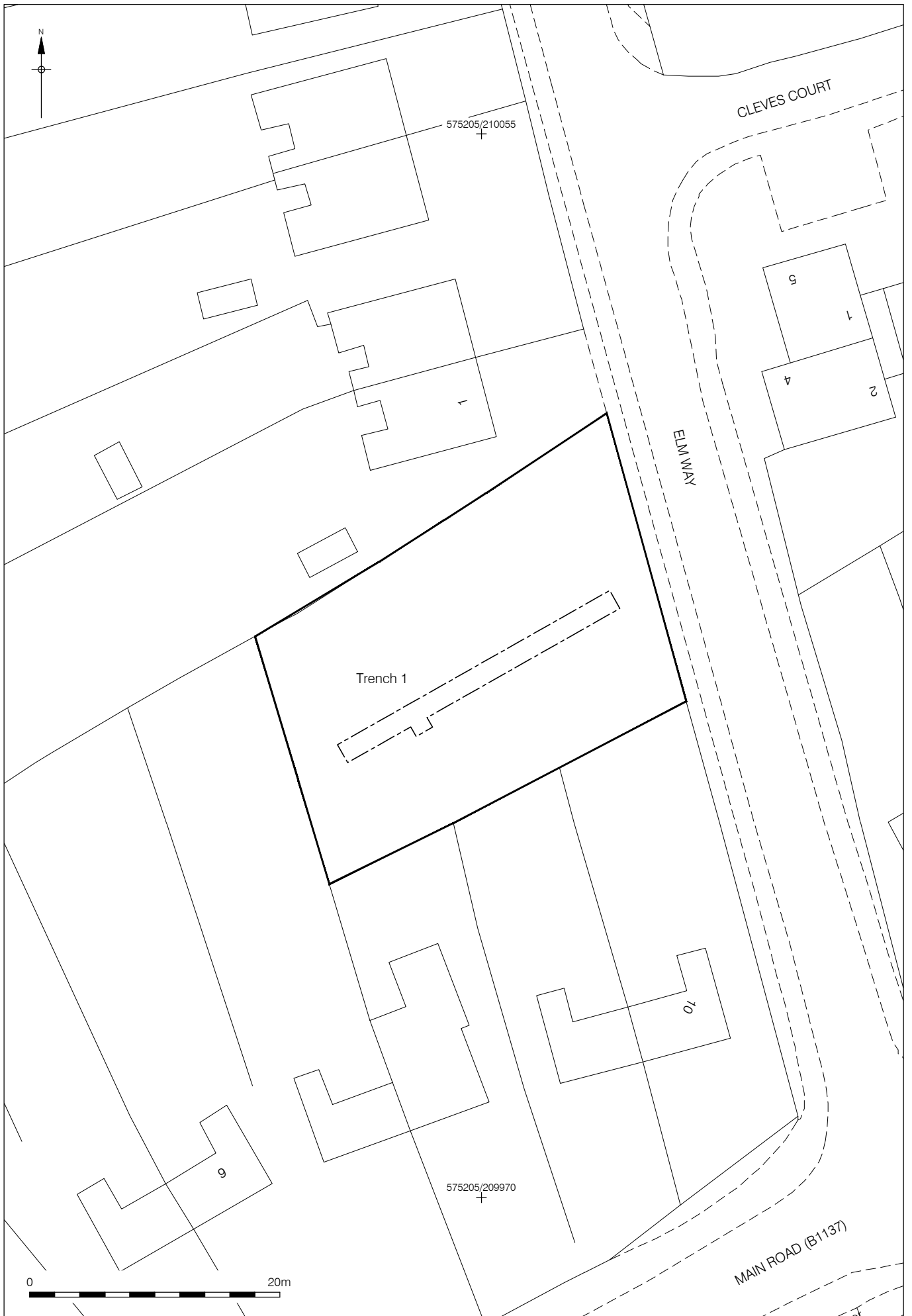
Bennett, A. 2013 *Archaeological Trial Trenching and Excavation at Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Lane, Boreham*. Essex County Council Historic Environment Unit

Foreman, S. 1997 'Medieval Boreham: Excavations at the former Buxted Chicken Factory, Boreham, 1992-93', *Essex Archaeology and History* Vol. 28

Garwood, A. 2013 *Written Scheme of Investigation, for an Archaeological Evaluation of Land to the Rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Lane, Boreham, Essex*.



Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:25,000 at A4





575206/210018
+

natural clay [4]

fill [6]



pit [5]

575206/210006
+



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16/09/13 JS

Figure 3
Trench 1 Plan
1:100 at A4

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Cut	Trench	Category	Description	Date
1	N/A	1	Trench	W-E aligned 25m long, 1.8m wide trench.	N/A
2	N/A	1	Topsoil	Fairly firm dark brown/ black clayey silt organic garden soil.	Modern
3	N/A	1	Subsoil	Firm mid orangey-brown silty clay with occasional flints.	Modern
4	N/A	1	Natural Geology	Light orangey-brown clay with occasional angular flints (<70mm).	N/A
5	5	1	Pit	Circular pit with steep rounded sides and flattish base (0.97 x 0.88 x 0.22m)	19 th /20 th C
6	5	1	Pit Fill	Compact mixed mid to dark grey silty clay and light yellow sandy clay lenses.	19 th /20 th C

APPENDIX 2: PLATES



Plate 1: The site, view south-west



Plate 2: Pit [5], south-facing section



Plate 3: Trench 1, view east

APPENDIX 3: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-159696

Project details

Project name	Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham: Evaluation
Short description of the project	A 25m long evaluation trench was excavated to assess the archaeological implications of residential development of the site. A single 19th-/early-20th-century rubbish pit was present.
Project dates	Start: 09-09-2013 End: 09-09-2013
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	BOOC13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	11/01795/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CBM Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX CHELMSFORD BOREHAM Land to the rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham, Essex, CM3 3HD
Postcode	CM3 3HD
Study area	0.07 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 7521 1002 51 0 51 45 39 N 000 32 20 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 42.20m Max: 42.22m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd

Project brief originator Essex County Council

Project design originator Mark Hinman

Project director/manager Mark Hinman

Project supervisor Tom Woolhouse

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Name of sponsor/funding body Oxbury & Co.

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Chelmsford Museum

Digital Archive ID BOOC13

Digital Contents "Stratigraphic"

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Text"

Digital Archive notes Digital photographs and copy of report

Paper Archive recipient Chelmsford Museum

Paper Archive ID BOOC13

Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Unpublished Text"

Paper Archive notes Trench record sheet x 1, registers x 4, context sheets x 2, B+W film photos x 3 + contact prints, permatrace plan x 1

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Land to the rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham, Essex, CM3 3HD: An Archaeological Evaluation

Author(s)/Editor(s) Woolhouse, T.

Other bibliographic PCA Report No. R11516

details

Date	2013
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd.
Place of issue or publication	Stapleford
Description	22 page bound A4 text report with three colour plates, three figures, contents page and appendices
<hr/>	
Entered by	Tom Woolhouse (twoolhouse@pre-construct.com)
Entered on	20 September 2013
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APPENDIX 4: ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD/ ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Land to the rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham, Essex, CM3 3HD	
Parish: Boreham	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TL 7521 1002	Site Code: BOOC13
Type of Work: Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation	Site Director/Team: Tom Woolhouse, Pre-Construct Archaeology
Date of Work: 9 th September 2013	Size of Area Investigated: 46.35m ² (6.6% sample of 0.07ha site)
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Chelmsford Museum	Funding source: Developer (Oxbury & Co.)
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related EHER Nos: N/A
Final Report: Woolhouse, T. 2013 <i>Land to the rear of Nos. 8-10 Oak Cottages, Elm Way, Boreham, Essex, CM3 3HD: An Archaeological Evaluation</i> . Pre-Construct Archaeology Report No. R11516	
Periods Represented: Post-Medieval/ Modern (19 th /20 th century)	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</p> <p>A 25m long trench was excavated to investigate the site's archaeological potential in advance of housing development. A single post-medieval/ modern rubbish pit was identified.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: N/A	
Author of Summary: Tom Woolhouse	Date of Summary: 19 th September 2013

PCA

PCA SOUTH

UNIT 54
BROCKLEY CROSS BUSINESS CENTRE
96 ENDWELL ROAD
BROCKLEY
LONDON SE4 2PD
TEL: 020 7732 3925 / 020 7639 9091
FAX: 020 7639 9588
EMAIL: info@pre-construct.com

PCA NORTH

UNIT 19A
TURSDALE BUSINESS PARK
DURHAM DH6 5PG
TEL: 0191 377 1111
FAX: 0191 377 0101
EMAIL: info.north@pre-construct.com

PCA CENTRAL

7 GRANTA TERRACE
STAPLEFORD
CAMBRIDGESHIRE CB22 5DL
TEL: 01223 845 522
FAX: 01223 845 522
EMAIL: info.central@pre-construct.com

PCA WEST

BLOCK 4
CHILCOMB HOUSE
CHILCOMB LANE
WINCHESTER
HAMPSHIRE SO23 8RB
TEL: 01962 849 549
EMAIL: info.west@pre-construct.com

PCA MIDLANDS

17-19 KETTERING RD
LITTLE BOWDEN
MARKET HARBOROUGH
LEICESTERSHIRE LE16 8AN
TEL: 01858 468 333
EMAIL: info.midlands@pre-construct.com

