

**Archaeological Investigation at
The Ravens Maypole Road Langford Essex**

Grid reference: TL 8475409720
Planning Application No: FUL/MAL/13/00153
HER no: RLF 13
Oasis No.: 150874

Prepared for
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Summary

An archaeological investigation was carried out by way of monitoring/continuous archaeological recording on land adjacent to Ravens Maypole Road Langford Essex (TL 8475409720). This was in advance of the erection of a Manege, and a new extension to the existing stables. The work was carried out in response to an archaeological brief written by Maria Medlycott of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team, dated April 2013.

A 40m by 20m area was stripped of topsoil to level the surface for the base of the Manege. Monitoring of this area produced no archaeology. On the same area, three drainage channels were excavated down to 0.50m, running the length of the proposed Manege, no archaeology was noted within any of the three trenches. A further strip of topsoil was carried out on the area for the stables extension which revealed no archaeology either.

1. Introduction

A planning application was made by the client John Gilbert for the construction of a new Manege and extension to the existing stables on land adjacent to Ravens Maypole Road Langford Essex. Planning Policy S5: Archaeology and Planning, issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990, sets out the requirements for developers to provide sufficient information on the archaeological impact of development to enable a reasonable planning decision to be made. Local Plan Policy B22, while stating that there should be a presumption in favour of the preservation of nationally important archaeological features and sites, outlines the process to be followed in order that the archaeological importance of a site may be determined and mitigation strategies put in place if necessary. This is also the requirement of the Deposit Joint Replacement Structure Plan (Policy 7, June 1998). As a result of the application, and to comply with planning policy, an archaeological investigation was commissioned from Archaeoserv – DP Archaeological Services. Research was undertaken at the Essex County Council Records Office, Chelmsford and the Essex County Council Historic Environment Record office was consulted. A copy of this report will be deposited with the Essex County Council H.E.R. and an on-line report will be made available with the Archaeological Data Service/Project Oasis.

2. Site Location and Description

Grid Reference: TL 8475409720



Ordnance Survey, licence No. 100047655

Figure 1. Location of site in Langford

2.1 The local geology at the site is London Boulder Clay rising to 14.2m OD.

2.2 The site of the development is at Ravens, Maypole Road, Langford. The village of Langford is located 1km south-west of Ravens, on the Dengie peninsula close to Maldon in the county of Essex. It is part of the Wickham Bishops and Woodham ward of the Maldon district. The site at Ravens is bounded by open agricultural land except to the immediate north of its perimeter, which is a further piece of enclosed land.

2.3 The name Langford is derived from "long ford", referring to the crossing of the River Blackwater that the village grew up around. The site is located off Maypole Road and was once part of Langford Park (see fig. 2).

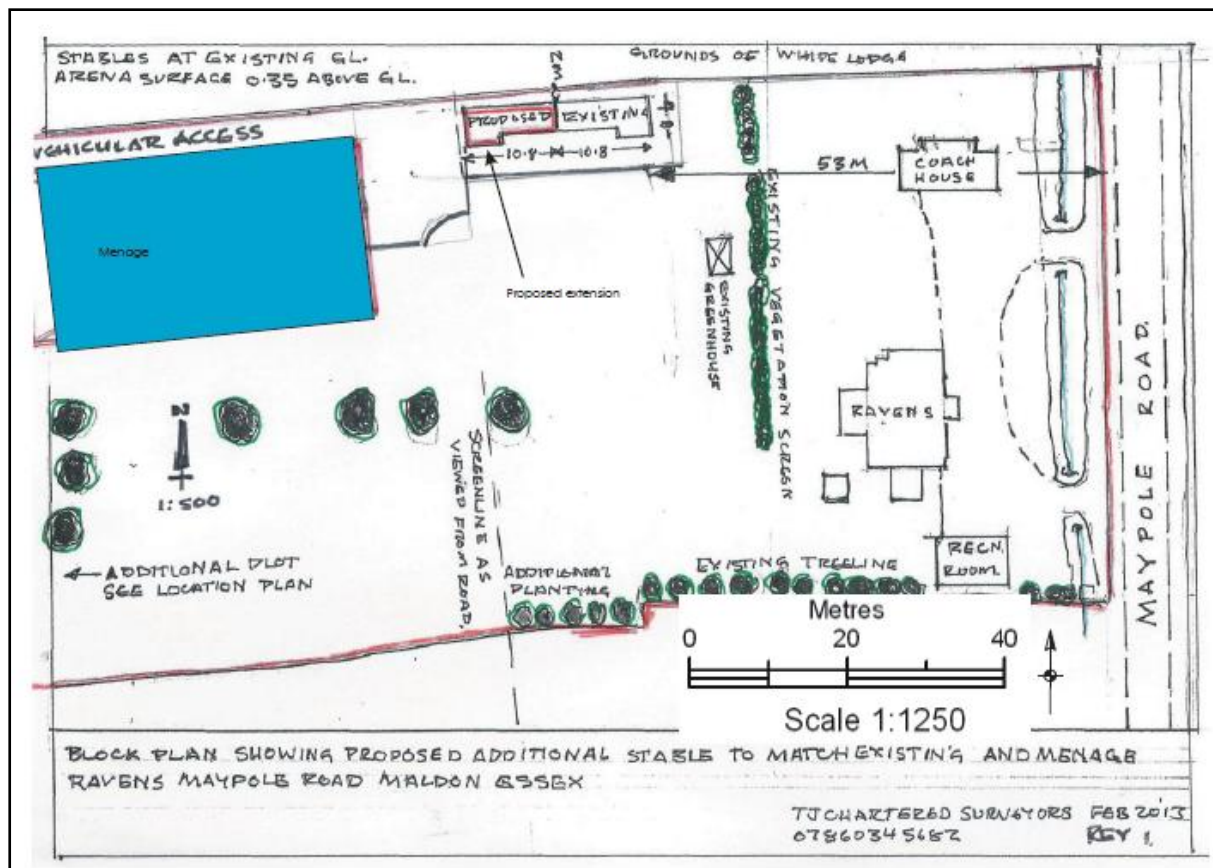


Figure 3. Block plan showing site location

3. Results

3.1 Fieldwork

Due to the absence of any archaeology a plan was drawn to a scale of 1:100; sample sections were drawn to a scale of 1:10.

A metal detector survey was carried out at all stages of the project with no finds of any significance.

A full photographic archive was produced consisting of colour slide, monochrome print and digital at 10 million pixels resolution, and will form part of the site record to be curated at the Braintree Museum archive..

Site plans and sections were digitized to archive standard, reduced versions of which are included in this report.

3.2 The Archaeological Investigation.

The areas for the Manege and stables extension were monitored during the removal of all topsoil and vegetation. Three drainage gulleys were also monitored and these revealed no archaeology in spite of the expectance of features, thought to be field boundaries, continuing up from the south on an alignment that should have intersected the Manege area. The levelling of the Manege area was considered too shallow to reveal any archaeology. The drainage trenches were excavated down to the interface of the natural sub-stratum but these also failed to reveal any evidence of the features that were expected.

The Manege was excavated deepest on its northern edge to 0.30m reducing southward to 0.05m depth. An access road was excavated for the base to 0.20m and the gulleys for drainage were at varying depths from 0.20m down to 0.50m. A soak-away was excavated to 1.50m; no finds or features were revealed during machining of the trench.

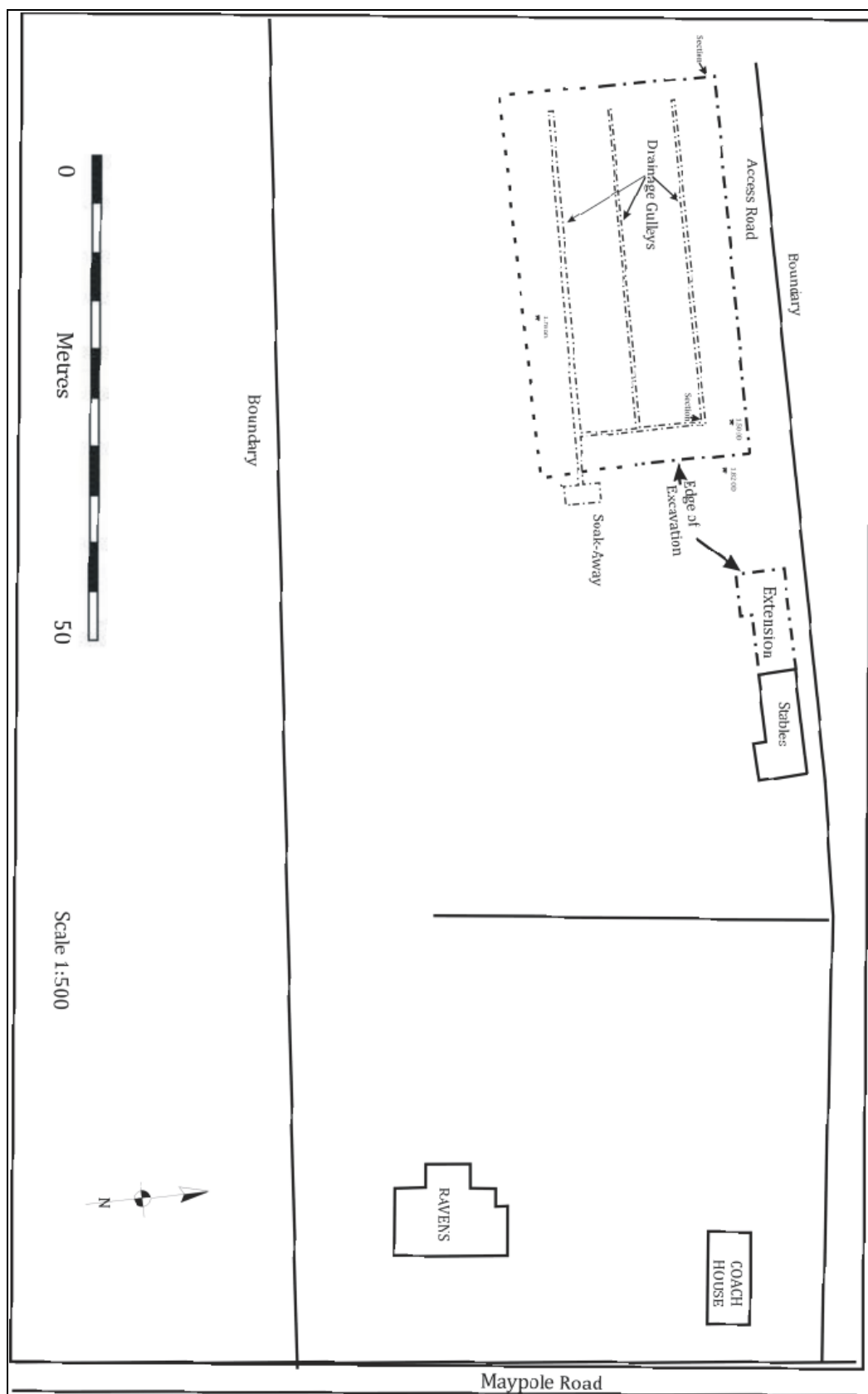


Figure 4. Plan of Excavations

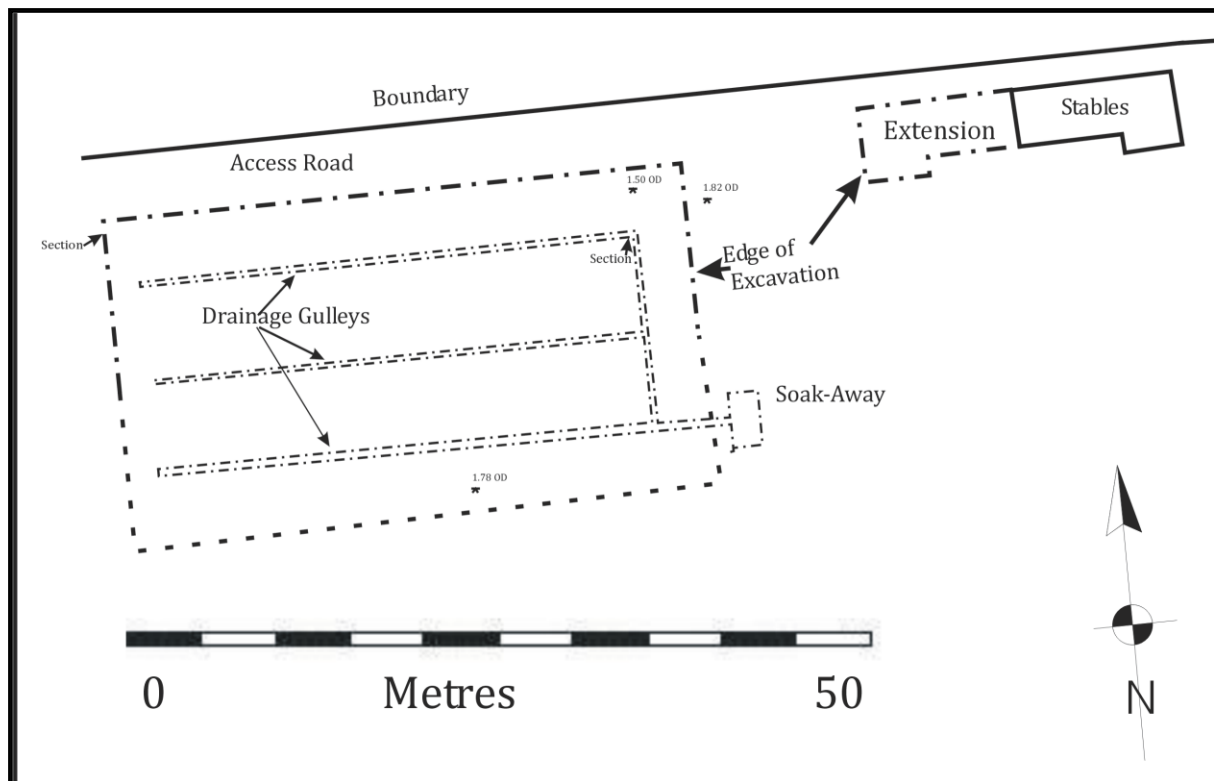


Figure 5. Plan of Excavations

4. Interpretation

As mentioned, the features that were expected to be seen, at least within the drainage trenches across the Manege area, did not appear. It is entirely possible that the features seen to the south of the site (fig.6) may terminate at some point below Ravens or that they change direction, missing the area inspected. It is, however, more likely that the site may have been under the plough before it was converted into parkland and due to the shallow nature of the topsoil (0.10m), ploughing action over time has erased all trace of any continuation of the features recorded to the south of Ravens.

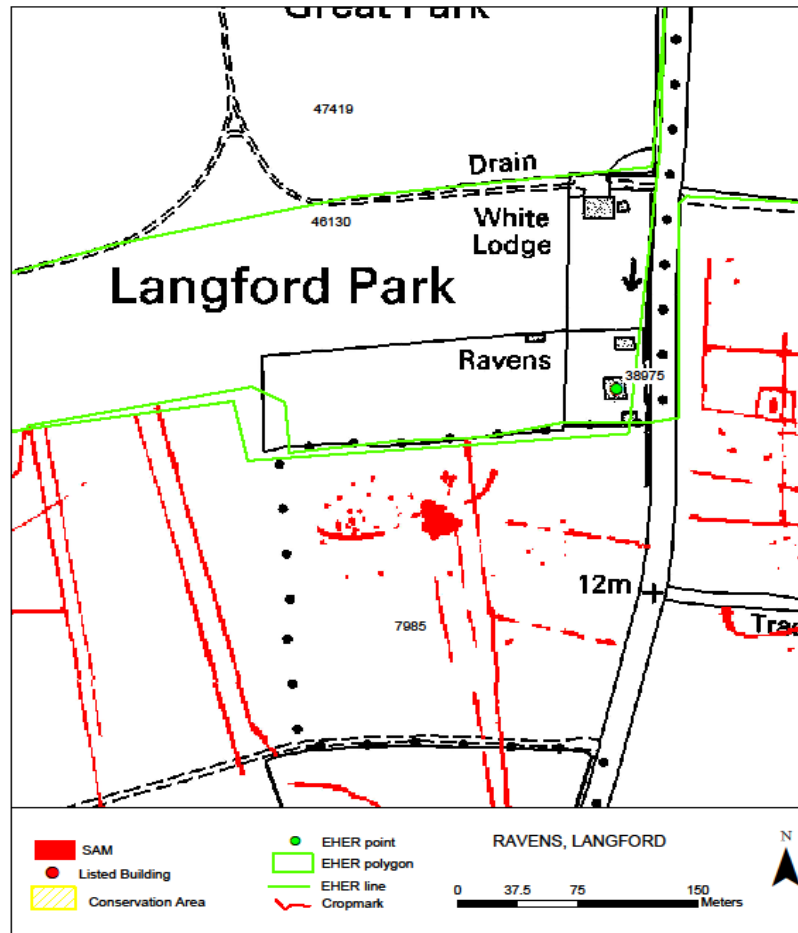


Figure 6. HER map showing cropmarks to the south of Ravens
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Table of Context Descriptions

Context	Type	Description/Dimensions	Interpretation	Find Types /comments
(001)	Layer	Dark brown top soil; depth, 0.10m (max)		
(002)	Layer	Light brown silty subsoil with stone inclusions; depth, 0.30m (max)	Sub soil	
(003)	Layer	Natural Glacio-fluvial gravels		

5. Conclusion

The results of this investigation have successfully shown that no archaeology will be compromised by this development. No further archaeological work is thought necessary.

6. Archive deposition

The paper and photographic archive will be held at the Essex County Council Historic Environment Records Office (EHER)

A digital record and copies of the report can be viewed at the Essex County Council Historic Environment Records Office (EHER). The digital report may also be viewed at the following site: <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/policy.html>.

The physical finds archive will be deposited at the County Store, Colchester Museum Essex

7. Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Mr John Gilbert who commissioned this work.

This report for archaeological evaluation was written by Dennis Payne BA (Hons) (DPAS), who also managed the project and carried out the field-work.

Bibliography

British .Geological. Survey. 1990 (sheet 241)

Medlycott, M. (ed.) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology. Occ. Pap. 24

Online References

PastScapes <http://www.pastscape.org/homepage/index.htm>

APPENDIX I: Digital Images



Plate 1. Pre-excavation, view from the north-east



Plate 2. Stables Extension after clearing, from the south-west



Plate 3. New trackway after topsoil removal, from the east



Plate 4. North-east corner of Manege, showing soil removal depth



Plate 5. Manege area from the north-east



Plate 6. Section showing depth of Manege area from the east



Plate 7. The completed Manege area from the west



Plate 8. The Drainage Gulleys across the Manege area from the east



Plate 7. Section of Manege from the north-west



Plate 8. Soak-Away trench