

**MANÈGE AT COLEMAN'S FARM
LITTLE BRAXTED ROAD
RIVENHALL**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

June 2011

Manège at Coleman's Farm, Little Braxted Road, Rivenhall

HER Summary Report

Prepared for Mr and Mrs Brice

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during groundworks associated with the construction of a manège at Coleman's Farm, Little Braxted. This document presents the results of that monitoring, undertaken in May 2011.

The work was carried out for Mr and Mrs Brice of Coleman's Farm in line with a brief of works prepared by Essex County Council Historic Environment Management (Teresa O'Connor).

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Manège at Coleman's Farm, Little Braxted Road, Rivenhall

HER Summary Report

Site Name/Address: Coleman's Farm, Little Braxted Lane, Rivenhall	
Parish: Rivenhall	District: Thurrock
NGR: TQ80265 82533	Site Code: RHCF11
Type of Work: Archaeological Monitoring	Site Director/Team: Ellen Heppell (ECC FAU)
Dates of Work: May 2011	Size of Area Investigated: 800m ²
Curating Museum: Braintree Museum	Funding Source: Landowner
Further Work Anticipated? No	Related HER Nos. EHER 8297
Final Report: Summary in EAH	OASIS Ref: essexcou1-104411
Periods Represented: None	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: <p>Archaeological monitoring took place during the groundworks associated with the construction of a new manège (Fig. 1). The site was located c. 100m to the northeast of Coleman's Farmhouse, within an area used for equine grazing and training.</p> <p>Situated in the floodplain of the River Blackwater at c.15mOD the underlying geology of the site is mapped by the British Geological Survey as 'River Terrace Deposits,2', made up of sands and gravels. A significant volume of prehistoric artefacts have been found in the general area including '...vast quantities of flint...' from fieldwalking in the field to the north (EHER 8850, 8851). The site itself lay within a cropmark complex, EHER 8297, comprising a ring-ditch and a trackway, the latter plotted as crossing the site of the manège.</p> <p>A planning application was submitted to Braintree DC in February 2011 and, given the archaeological potential of the area, an archaeological condition was placed on the planning consent in line with the guidance set out in Planning Policy Statement 5 – Planning for the Historic Environment. This condition stated that :</p> <p><i>"No development, or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work and recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the planning authority.</i></p>	

A manège is constructed by first levelling the area of the arena, using cut and fill techniques to minimise the need to remove spoil from the site. Drainage channels are then cut across the site at 5m intervals, filled with free draining material. The area is enclosed by kickboards then covered with specialist textile and the riding surface (e.g. sand and rubber chippings). A post and pale fence is then constructed.

At Coleman's Farm the levelling of the arena and excavation of drainage channels was subject to archaeological monitoring. The levelling was carried out using a mini-digger. Initially a toothless bucket was used, as per standard archaeological practice, to excavate a c.1m wide strip to the required level along the southern edge of the site, 0.2m to 0.4m below the present surface level. The excavation was to a depth of 0.4m in the northeast corner, 0.2m in the south, and raised in the northwest (Fig. 2) and as such was unlikely to penetrate below the subsoil over much of the area. As such the remainder of the strip was carried out using a toothed bucket, with the agreement of ECC HEM. Drainage channels were excavated to a depth of c.0.2m below the levelled arena with a 0.2m wide toothed bucket.

No archaeological remains were identified during the monitoring of the levelling of the arena. This reflects the fact that the reduction in level required for the manège was minimal and as such the archaeological horizon was not exposed over much of the site. The excavation of the drainage trenches, did expose what may be archaeological features, although the narrow nature of these trenches and the generally poor visibility in the dry and dusty conditions means that characterising these features is problematical.

Feature 1, located in the southwest drain run comprised an area of sand and gravel in a brownish gray silty sand, 3.1m wide (Fig. 2). This material was far less stoney than that of the surrounding subsoil and may perhaps be the fill of some type of cut feature. The absence of the feature in the second drain run would perhaps suggest it was not a linear feature. No artefacts were recovered which would provide a date for this feature.

Features 2 and 3 comprised similar areas of sands and gravels in an orangish brown/gray silty sand, 2m and 3m wide respectively (Fig.2). This material may be the fill of the two trackway ditches which were identified on the cropmark plots (Fig. 3) although it is noted that the projected alignment of the features noted in the field differs from that of the cropmarks, although this is not surprising given the limited visibility. No dateable artefacts were recovered.

The archive for the monitoring comprises this report and photographs (appended to the report).

This will be deposited in the Essex Historic Environment Record, the OASIS online repository and with Braintree Museum.

Previous Summaries/Reports: None

Author of Summary: E.Heppell

Date of Summary: 30 June 2011

Selected Photographs



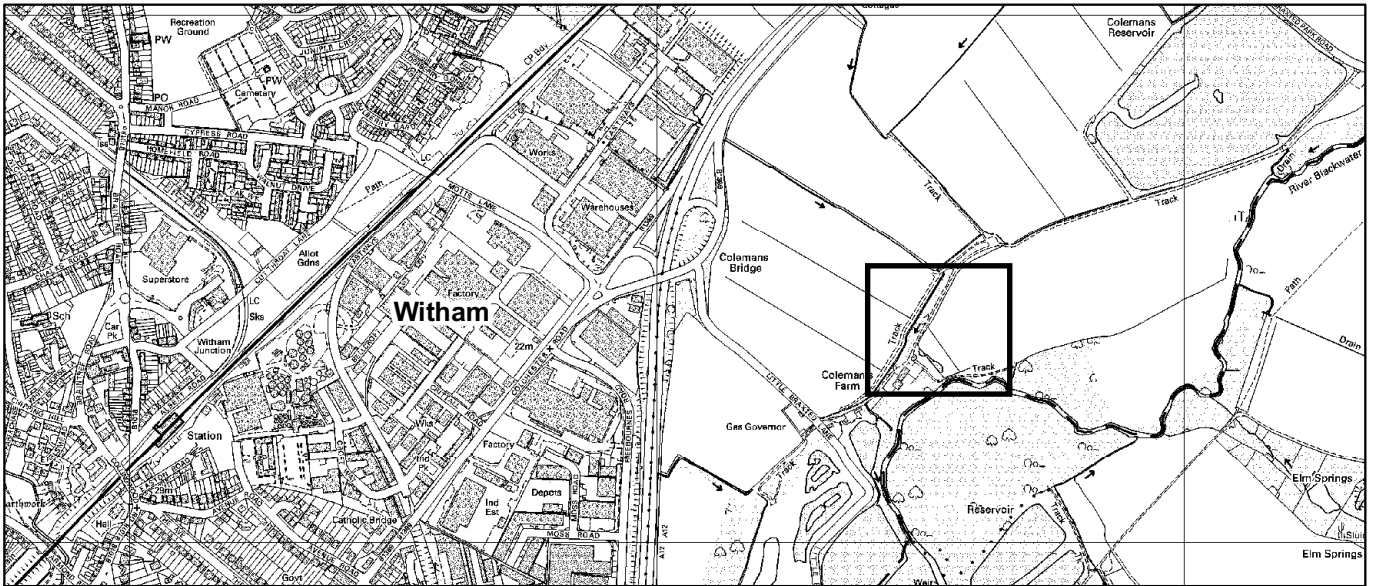
Plate 1: Arena following levelling and excavation of drain runs



Plate 2: Drain runs (looking north)



Plate 3: Detail showing location of Ditch 2 in drain run



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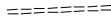
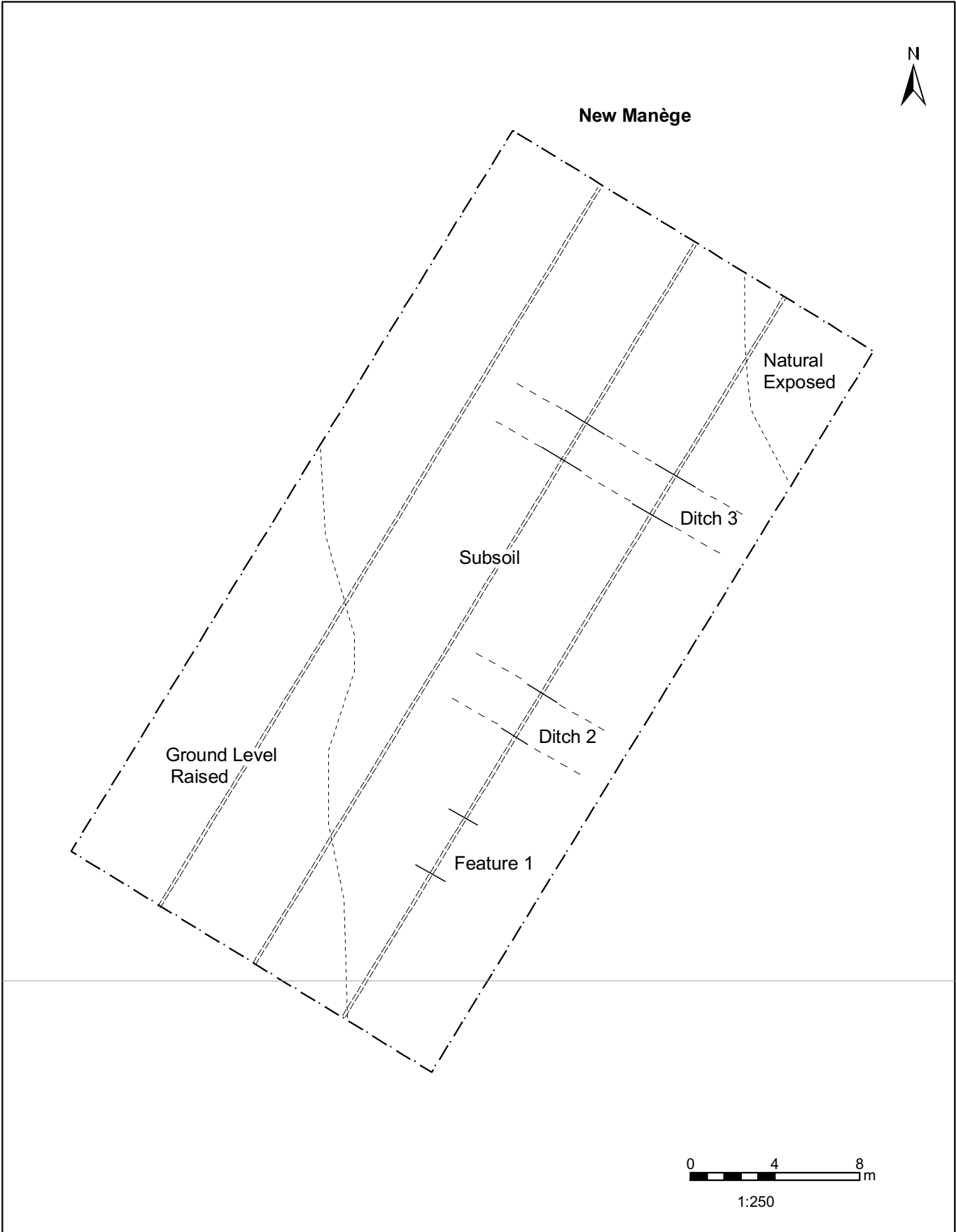
 Striped Area
 Drain run

Fig.1. Location of the area of archaeological monitoring

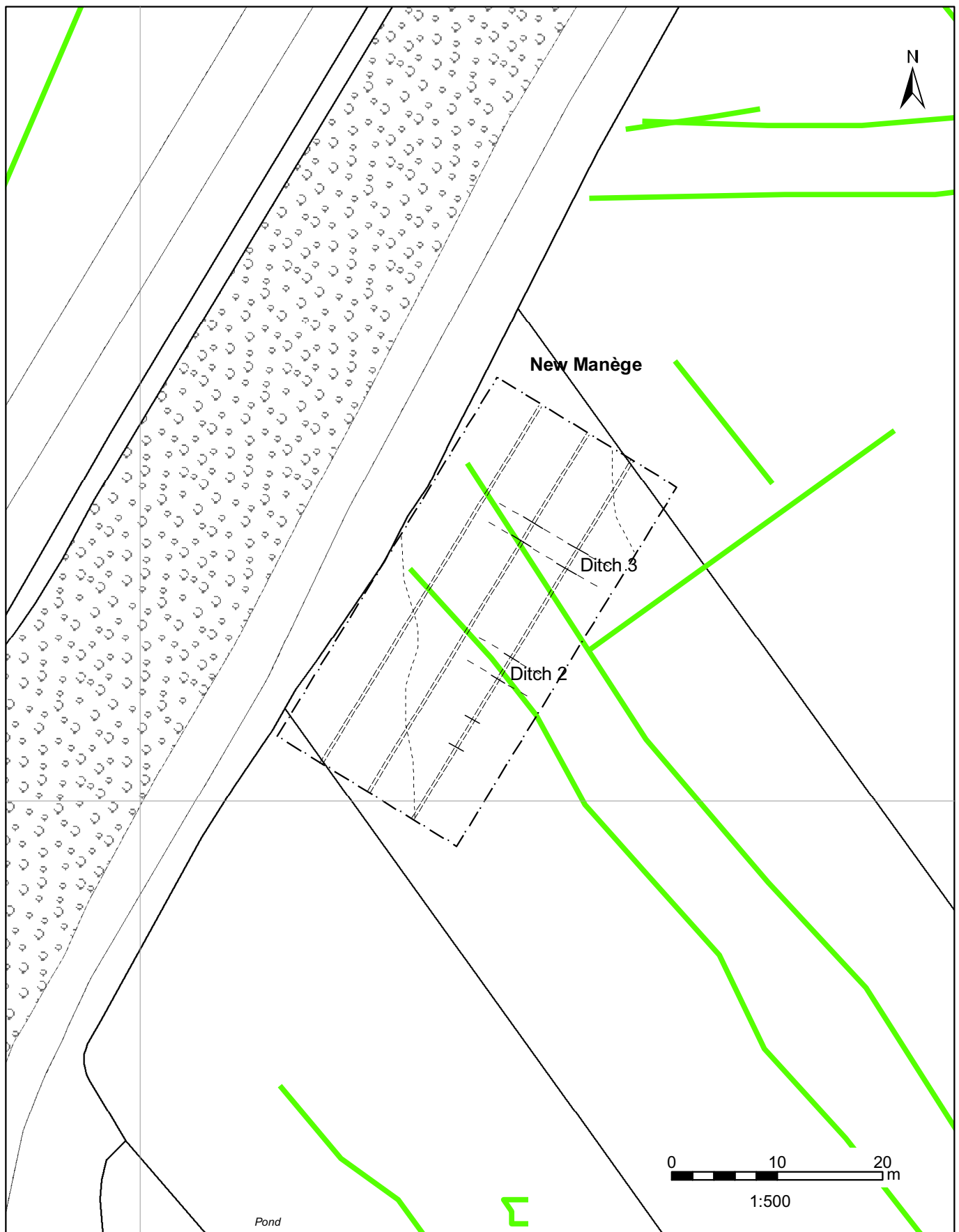


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Stripped Area
 Drain run




Fig.2 Results of monitoring



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Fig.3 Results of monitoring showing cropmarks (derived from NMP plots)

-  Stripped Area
-  Drain run
-  Cropmarks