

**4A CANNONS CLOSE
BISHOP'S STORTFORD
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
BY TRIAL TRENCHING**



Essex County Council

Field Archaeology Unit

February 2006

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Document Ref.	1583rep.doc
Report Issue Date	24 February 2006
Circulation	Graham Baker, G F Baker & Son (x2)
	Hertfordshire CC Archaeological Office (x3)
	Hertford Museum

As part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content or the presentation of this report.

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SUMMARY

Client: G F Baker and Son Ltd

NGR: TL 4943 2209

Planning reference no: 3/04/1262

Site Code: None

Project No: 1583

Date of Fieldwork: 24/01/06

The Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out an evaluation by trial trenching at 4a Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire on behalf of G.F. Baker and Son Ltd. The evaluation was carried out as a result of an archaeological condition placed on planning consent for construction of a new house on land that was formerly the garden of no 4 Cannons Close. The planning condition had been overlooked during construction, and the evaluation was carried out after the house was built to determine whether any archaeological remains were present in its immediate area, and the potential impact that construction might have had.

The evaluation identified no archaeological remains in the areas investigated either to the front or the rear of the house. It is therefore extremely unlikely that the house construction had any impact on any archaeological remains.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Background

The Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out an evaluation by trial trenching at 4A Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford on behalf of Mr Graham Baker of G.F. Baker and Son, under the terms of a condition placed on planning consent. The development site lies within an area of archaeological significance (113), as designated in the local plan, and an archaeological condition was placed on the advice of the Hertfordshire County Council Archaeological Office (HCC CAO) in accordance with Planning Policy Guideline 16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning. The archaeological work followed a brief produced by Hertfordshire CAO (HCC 2005) and the written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by ECC FAU (2006).

As the Hertfordshire CAO were not contacted until after the house had been built, the brief required an archaeological evaluation to model any archaeological remains in the immediate area of the house to evaluate whether the construction work would have had an adverse impact.

1.2 Report and Archive

Copies of this report will be supplied to G F Baker and Son Ltd, to forward to the local planning authority, and the Hertfordshire CAO. A version will be uploaded to the Online Access Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>). The project archive will be deposited at Hertford Museum.

1.3 Abbreviations used in the Report

HCC (Hertfordshire County Council), CAO (County Archaeological Office), FAU (Field Archaeology Unit), IFA (Institute of Field Archaeologists), NGR (National Grid Reference), WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation).

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, Geology and Topography

The development area is located immediately to the west of the existing 4 Cannons Close and was formerly the garden of no. 4. It is a corner plot bounded by Cannons Close to both south and west, with the main frontage to the south (Fig. 1).

The development consists of construction of a single house, with a parking area and site access on the southern road frontage, in addition to an existing garage and access to the rear (Fig. 1). The ground gently slopes from north-west to south-east with an apparent artificial sharp drop off to the pavement of the southern road frontage. The surface geology comprises glacial sands, clays, and gravels.

2.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

The site lies within Area of Archaeological Significance 113, as designated in the Local Plan, which notes that there is evidence for Roman remains in the area. This may be related to evidence for Roman settlement to the south-west, in the centre of Bishop's Stortford. Extensive evidence of Iron Age remains is also known in the area to the east, at Woodside Business Park, and at Thorley to the south of the town centre.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Generally, the aim of the work was to 'determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains' (HCC 2005). The small scale of the archaeological evaluation means that it was likely to make only a minor contribution to answering regional research agendas (see Brown and Glazebrook 2000).

The project was designed and undertaken in order to:

- Evaluate any archaeological remains revealed and place them in their regional context.
- Project the quality and quantity of remains likely to be present in the development area.

4.0 METHODS

The topsoil, and modern overburden, was removed using a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision, and natural geology was exposed. The work was carried out according to regional standards in field archaeology, and all fieldwork methods and recording conformed to the codes of practice and guidance issued by the IFA and adhered to ALGAO guidelines (Gurney 2003). Standard Essex CC FAU recording and excavation methods were used. A digital photographic record was maintained throughout the project.

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 was dug to the rear (north) of the house (Fig 1), was aligned east-west, and measured 11m long by 1.6m wide. An area of concrete 0.12-0.36m thick, associated with previous development of the area, was uncovered and left *in situ* at the eastern end of the trench. Topsoil was removed from the remaining length of the trench, which was excavated to expose natural geology 0.66m below current ground surface (Fig 2), and between 1.12m (west) and 1.28m (east) below the damp course level of the house. No archaeological features or deposits were present within the trench, and no artefacts were recovered from examination of the spoil heaps and trench sections.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 consisted of an area of ground reduction to the front (south) of the property (Fig 1) for the construction of a surfaced parking area, measuring 5.2m by 4.6m. Topsoil was stripped by machine and the natural geology was exposed between 0.60-0.74m below the current ground surface, between 1.23-1.37m below the damp course level of the house. Modern landscaping accounts for the sharp drop in ground surface levels between the front garden and roadway, and the levels on the natural geology match the pavement running alongside the property frontage. No archaeological features or deposits survived, and no artefacts were recovered from examination of the spoil heaps and trench sections.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation identified no archaeological remains within the areas of investigation both to the front and rear of the new house. Examination of spoil heaps and trench sections revealed no residual material indicative of archaeological activity. It is therefore extremely unlikely that any archaeological remains were present beneath the house, and the house's construction is considered not to have had any adverse impact on archaeological remains.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit thanks Mr Graham Baker of G.F Baker and Son for commissioning and funding the archaeological evaluation, and for his help and assistance throughout. Mr Jonathan Smith of Hertfordshire County Council Archaeology Office wrote the archaeological brief, and after his departure Mr Andy Instone took over the monitoring of the project. Matthew Pocock carried out the fieldwork and Andrew Lewsey produced the digital illustrations. The project was managed by Patrick Allen.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|------|--|
| Brown N and
Glazebrook J | 2000 | Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy, EAA Occasional paper 8. |
| ECC FAU | 2006 | Written Scheme of investigation for archaeological trial trenching and monitoring. |
| Gurney D | 2003 | Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England, EAA Occasional paper 14. |
| Herts CC | 2005 | Design Brief for Archaeological Evaluation: 4 Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford. |

APPENDIX 1. ARCHIVE INDEX

One A4 folder containing:

2 copies of the client report

1 copy of the design brief

1 copy of the written scheme of investigation

1 proposed development plan

Trench description sheets

Plan and section drawings

Monochrome prints and negatives

Colour transparencies

Disc with digital copies of report, drawings and photographs

APPENDIX 2: HERTFORDSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

Site Name & Address: 4A Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford (planning ref: 3/04/1262)	
Parish: Bishop's Stortford	District: East Hertfordshire
NGR: TL 49736 22094	Site Code: n/a
Type of Work: Trial-trenching	Site Director/Group: Matthew Pocock, Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 24/01/06	Size of Area Investigated: 42 sq m overall
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Hertford Museum	Client/Applicant: G F Baker & Son Ltd
Further Work Anticipated? No	Related HER Nos: None
Final Report: Hertfordshire Archaeology (Summary)	
Periods Represented: Modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>The Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out an evaluation by trial trenching at 4a Cannons Close, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire on behalf of G.F. Baker and Son Ltd. The evaluation was carried out as a result of an archaeological condition placed on planning consent for construction of a new house on land that was formerly the garden of no 4 Cannons Close. The planning condition had been overlooked during construction, and the evaluation was carried out after the house was built to determine whether any archaeological remains were present in its immediate area, and the potential impact that construction might have had.</p> <p>The evaluation identified no archaeological remains in the areas investigated either to the front or the rear of the house. It is therefore extremely unlikely that the house construction had any impact on any archaeological remains.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: M. Pocock	Date of Summary: 24 February 2006