

**WARNERS HALL
HIGH STREET
BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**



Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit

AUGUST 2006

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RECORDING**

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**WARNERS HALL, HIGH STREET
BURNHAM-ON-CROUCH, ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**

SUMMARY

Client: Mr And Mrs N.R.Kennedy

NGR: TQ 953956

Site Code: BCWH06

Project No: 1632

Date of Fieldwork: 17th May 2006

Oasis Accession Number: essexcou1-14902

Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit carried out an archaeological investigation comprising monitoring and recording on behalf Mr and Mrs N.R. Kennedy for construction of a pool, pool house, garage and conservatory to the rear of Warners Hall, Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex, a grade II listed building.

The development involved the part-demolition of an outbuilding and a garage to the rear of the Hall. The northern and eastern walls of the old outbuilding were not fully demolished and, once underpinned; they were incorporated into the new build.

The archaeological investigation comprised observation during excavation of the swimming pool. Principally, excavation encountered the brick-built garage foundations and modern concrete foundations that belonged to the recently demolished outbuildings. Consequently, observations were limited to those areas between these in situ foundations.

The archaeological remains comprised an isolated post-hole that could constitute part of a fence line or early building of simple construction. This was exposed towards the eastern limit of the swimming pool footprint. The post-hole cut the natural, at c.2mOD. It contained no datable finds and was filled by the overlying topsoil.

The investigation identified that groundworks to be undertaken during construction of the pool house, garage, and conservatory to the rear of Warners Hall will not disturb any

significant archaeological remains. Archaeological evidence appears to confirm that the northern side of the High Street remained undeveloped until the post-medieval period. The finds recovered from the topsoil seem to be typical of a general spread of occupation debris found within back gardens. However, the presence of 17th century pottery suggests that domestic debris was being discarded at this location from relatively early on in the town's development.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning Background

The Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out archaeological monitoring and recording on behalf Mr and Mrs N.R. Kennedy under the terms of an archaeological condition placed on planning consent in accordance with Planning Policy Guideline note 16 (PPG16).

The condition was placed on planning application FUL/MAL/05/01211 by Maldon District Council Planning Department following specialist advice from the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM) given the potential archaeological sensitivity of the area. The application is for the construction of a new pool, pool house, garage, and conservatory at Warners Hall, Burnham-on-Crouch, a grade II listed building.

The archaeological work followed a brief produced by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM 2006) and the written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by ECC FAU (2006).

1.2 Report and Archive

Copies of this report will be supplied to Mr and Mrs N.R. Kennedy, ECC HEM and the Essex County Council Historic Environment Record (ECC HER). A version will be uploaded to the Online Access Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>). The project archive, including two copies of the report, will be deposited at Colchester museum.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, Geology and Topography

Burnham-on-Crouch is an historic town sited within the Dengie peninsula on the northern bank of the River Crouch estuary, Essex. The development is situated to the rear of 70 High Street, Warners Hall (TQ 9533 9561). The site is accessed from the High Street via a private driveway adjacent to the western wall of the property. Ground surface heights are c.3mOD and geology comprises coarse sandy gravels.

2.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

The following archaeological background utilises information held in the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

Prehistory

Very little archaeological investigation has been undertaken in the immediate vicinity of the development. Consequently, the origins and development of Burnham-on-Crouch remains poorly understood. Primarily, prehistoric material has been recovered from areas to the north-west of Burnham. A small number of flint artefacts have been found including one dating to the Lower Palaeolithic (EHER 11214), an example of Clactonian Industry. Several other un-diagnostic fragments have also been recovered (EHER 11318, 11342, 11365). Further archaeological remains comprise six Bronze Age loopless plastaves (EHER 11211) as well as Iron Age burials and pottery (EHER 11235). A first century farmstead was partially excavated prior to the construction of the Springfield Industrial Estate in the 1970's (EHER 16132). The development may have destroyed archeologically significant remains that could be seen as cropmarks prior to the works. Further Roman features and deposits include several isolated finds; two coins (EHER 11302 and 11234) and a fragment of flue tile (EHER 11233). The only evidence that has been found for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the High Street was to the north, adjacent to Orchard Road, where Bronze Age pottery, human bone and Iron Age pottery were recovered from a sewer trench (EHER 11326).

Saxon and medieval

The parish church of St Mary and the adjacent hall may be relicts of an earlier village nucleus, either Saxon or early medieval in origin (Medlycott 1998), some three-quarters of a mile from the current town centre. The doomsday book (1086) records a small manorial village, '*lands of Ralph Baynard*' at Burnham, or '*Burneham*' (Rumble 1983, 33.12; 90.6). A Saxon loom weight was recovered near King Edwards Avenue in the same area (EHER 11232).

The current town centre became the focus of occupation during the middle of the 12th century when a market charter was granted to the Fitzwalter family. Cartographic evidence seems to indicate a planned layout adjacent to the waterfront and quay (EHER 16024). At the centre of the settlement was the cigar-shaped market area. The layout suggests that it was planned to allow a maximum number of plots of various sizes to back onto the quay, allowing unhindered access from ship to warehouse. Unfortunately, overall, documentation of the towns development is poor, but it appears to have largely been a fishing port with

associated trades such as oyster farming, fish processing sheds, rope and sail-making, coopers and boat-builders located beyond the warehouses.

Post-medieval and modern

The original medieval street pattern remains largely unchanged and the quay continues to be the focus of industry and commerce. According to the genealogy of trade directories, between 1839 and 1908, the principal industrial was centred on oysters. It seems likely that the quay had considerable influence on the development of the town. Service industries were not established; instead, goods were imported, as it was cheaper and easier.

During the post-medieval period, a number of new streets were added to the north of the town aligned at right angles to the quay. Between the 18th and 19th century domestic dwellings were built on the southern side of the High Street, many of which survive today, including Warners Hall (EHER 25020). It is clear that during these periods considerable urban renewal took place.

In recent years, little has changed in and around the town centre. Consequently, archaeological remains comprising the development of the fishing industry and domestic development have the potential to remain relatively undisturbed.

70 High Street (Warners Hall)

The following utilises information provided by English Heritage, Listed Building Online Archives (<http://lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk>). The listed building number for Warners Hall is 116601.

It is a substantial, three storey, mid 19th century, grey gault brick house. A panel under the eaves bears the date 1848. It has three ranges of windows with double-hung sashes and glazing bars surrounded by stucco moulded architraves. The ground and first storey windows have cornices on console brackets and the centre window, on the first storey is pedimented. A recessed 20th century glazed door has a stucco door-case with pilasters, plain Ionic columns in antis and a cornice. The roof slate is hipped, with the eaves cornice supported on console brackets.

There does not seem to be any indication in written records describing the original purpose of Warners Hall. The first edition Ordnance Survey shows an outbuilding to the rear of the Hall that has disappeared by the end of the 19th century. Subsequent editions show various changes in the boundaries to the property including the addition of an access-way along the

western side of the Hall. By the beginning of the 20th century, a more substantial structure can be seen at the back of the site. In 1908, Warners Hall was a private hotel owned by a Mrs Janet Williams. Recently it has been converted back to a single dwelling from flats.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General Objectives

Generally, the aim of the work was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance, and quality of any surviving archaeological remains exposed during groundworks (ECC HEM 2006).

3.2 Research Objectives

The research objectives for the project were in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000).

The main research aim was to record archaeological evidence that would contribute to further understanding of the date, form, and function of early medieval to post-medieval settlement characteristics, development, and associated activity.

3.1.1 The specific research objectives of the investigation were to identify:

- Any remains relating to the medieval origins and development of the town.

4.0 METHODS

The investigation comprised the monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction of the swimming pool within the proposed pool house to the rear of Warners Hall. The archaeological investigation was carried out in respect to the plans provided by John James Associates (reference number: 0127/28) dated May 2005.

All mechanical excavation was carried out under archaeological supervision using a tracked 360 excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

All surfaces were sufficiently cleaned to ensure that any features present were visible and spoil heaps were examined for archaeological material. Archaeological features and deposits were excavated using hand tools and finds were collected and bagged by context.

A full photographic record was maintained throughout the investigation. Plans and sections were drawn at the appropriate scale to document the remains.

Standard ECC FAU recording and excavation methods were used. All fieldwork methods and recording conformed to the codes of practice and guidance issued by the IFA (1999) and adhered to regional guidelines (Gurney 2003). The ECC FAU is a registered organisation with the IFA.

5.0 RESULTS

The swimming pool footprint comprised an area of 30 square metres (Fig 1). Excavations lead to the exposure of the natural coarse sandy gravels at c.2mOD. No significant archaeological remains were observed. On average, a depth of c.1m of topsoil was removed and an array of post-medieval and modern finds was recovered. The topsoil comprised dark sandy silts mixed with small rounded gravels. Oyster shell was evenly distributed throughout the topsoil. No concentrations of shell were observed that could have indicated dumped deposits or features.

Principally the investigation identified brick and concrete foundations of the previous outbuildings on the site. These foundations exceeded the depth of the natural gravels and removing them would have potentially caused excessive damage to surrounding archaeological remains of interest. Consequently, they were left in situ and excavation was carried out between them.

An isolated circular post-hole 4, 0.14m in depth, was exposed towards the eastern end of the investigation area. It contained no datable finds and was filled by the overlying topsoil. This may represent the edge of an outhouse or fence line to the rear of the property that has been removed prior to the construction of the outbuildings that recently stood on the site. At the western end of the swimming pool footprint, two irregular hollows were sampled but both were less than 0.10m in depth and contained no significant archaeological finds or deposits.

The concrete foundations were situated to the east of the swimming pool footprint and were laid in trenches that were c.0.80m in width. The brick-built foundations survived towards the western end of the area and were constructed in trenches over 0.80m wide (Fig 1).

6.0 FINDS (by Joyce Compton)

A range of finds was recovered from the topsoil; all have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, details of which can be found in Appendix 2. Finds are described by category below. The largest component is pottery; the remaining finds are few in number.

Pottery (by Helen Walker)

Nineteen sherds of post-medieval and modern pottery weighing 922g were collected. Much of the pottery is datable to the 17th century, comprising the base of a large Frechen stoneware jug, part of a post-medieval red earthenware chafing dish, and a sherd of Surrey-Hampshire white ware. In addition, sherds from a post-medieval red earthenware storage jar (?) may be of this date or later. The most interesting find is the chafing dish. These are pedestal-based, bowl-shaped vessels used either as portable stoves, or to keep food warm at the table. The vessel to be heated was placed on evenly spaced spurs rising from the rim of the chafing dish. Excavations at Chelmsford and Colchester show chafing dishes are commonest during the second half of the 16th to the later 17th centuries (Cotter 2000, 212; Cunningham 1985, 71).

Modern pottery dating to the 19th and 20th centuries includes fragments from two cylindrical stoneware bottles, one impressed with the makers name, 'Denby' of Derbyshire. A variety of products were sold in these bottles, such as blacking, ginger-beer and ink. There are also three fragments of transfer-printed china. One shows a figure, either a camel or a donkey. Views of oriental scenes with such mounted figures in the foreground were common during the 1810s to 1830s (cf. Copeland 1982, 21, top left and right). The latest datable piece shows a purple transfer-printed design, providing a date of 1830s or later, when colours other than blue were first used.

Glass

A plain, blue-green glass stopper was recorded, of a type used with modern utilitarian storage bottles.

Clay pipes

A single clay pipe stem fragment is undatable within the post-medieval period. Clay tobacco pipes were manufactured from the 1580s (following the introduction of tobacco-smoking) into the 20th century.

Brick and tile

Single small fragments of brick and roofing tile are not closely datable within the post-medieval period, and could be relatively modern.

Animal bone

The animal bone comprises two sections of rib and part of an unfused long bone, probably a femur fragment from a sheep/goat.

Shell

A single small oyster shell was recorded. This has not been retained.

The assemblage is consistent with urban rubbish deposits dating to the post-medieval period, in the days before municipal collections were commonplace. None of the material requires further work, and the finds could be discarded at the archiving stage.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

The investigation established that groundworks to be undertaken during construction of the pool house, garage, and conservatory to the rear of Warners Hall will not disturb any significant archaeological remains. The absence of earlier archaeological remains within the development means little can be discerned about occupation or domestic activity in the immediate vicinity prior to the post-medieval period. Furthermore, there is insufficient information to enable greater understanding of the growth of commerce and industry along the waterfront.

Archaeological evidence appears to confirm that the northern side of the High Street remained undeveloped until the post-medieval period. The finds recovered from the topsoil seem to be typical of a general spread of occupation debris found within back gardens. However, the survival of 17th century pottery suggests that waste material was being discarded at this location from early on in the town's development.

Generally, the historic and archaeological records for the area are poor but there is some cartographic evidence to demonstrate that an outbuilding of unknown function has stood on the site since the late 19th century. Unfortunately, any remains of earlier structures or other deposits have been removed by the construction of the modern outbuildings.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The archaeological monitoring was limited to a small area of the High Street 'back lands' and as such it is possible that evidence of the medieval town development, or earlier remains, survive in the wider vicinity.

However, the concrete foundations for the modern house are more extensive than any available records indicate and consequently much of the site has previously been truncated. With the addition of services and drainage runs, it is unlikely that any significant archaeological remains survive in any other parts of the proposed development. Currently, further development of the property does not encompass the driveway that runs alongside the western edge of Warners Hall. The driveway runs from the road frontage to beyond the new outbuildings and future investigation of this area may offer an opportunity to observe and record undisturbed features and deposits that relate to both the development along the northern side of the High Street frontage and earlier archaeological remains.

9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The ECC Field Archaeology Unit thanks Mr and Mrs Kennedy for commissioning and funding the project. Mark Atkinson managed the project, Matthew Pocock carried out the fieldwork. Andrew Lewsey produced the digital illustrations and all finds were processed by Phil McMichael and pottery accessed by Helen Walker. The finds report was written by Joyce Compton. Pat Connell of the ECC HEM monitored the investigation on behalf of the local planning authority.

10.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX 1: FIELDWORK DATA

Context	Type	Description	Depth/ Thickness (m)
1	Layer	Topsoil – dark grey/brown silty sand. Contained small rounded gravels and oyster shell	0.90-1.02
3	Layer	Natural – coarse, well mixed sandy gravels	n/a
4	Cut	Isolated circular post-hole, filled by topsoil (1).	0.14

APPENDIX 2: FINDS DATA

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
1	Topsoil	3	22	Animal bone; rib, proximal end and fragment; unfused long bone, ?femur, medium-sized mammal	-
		1	10	Shell; oyster, one valve (Discarded)	-
		1	12	Glass stopper, blue-green	Modern
		1	6	Clay pipe stem	Post med.
		1	48	Roof tile fragment	Post med.
		1	32	Brick fragment	Post med.
		19	922	Pottery; rim, handle, base and body sherds; at least twelve vessels represented	Post med/ modern

APPENDIX 3: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE

SITE NAME; Warners Hall, High Street, Burnham-on-Crouch

Index to the Archive

File containing:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Brief for the archaeological investigation
- 1.2 Written scheme of investigation

2. Research Archive

- 2.1 Client Report
- 2.2 Analytical Reports
 - 2.2.1 Finds Report
- 2.3 Catalogues
 - 2.3.1 Context Finds Record
 - 2.3.2 Finds Catalogue

3. Site Archive

- 3.1 Context Index
- 3.2 Context Record Sheets
- 3.3 Photographic Register
- 3.4 CD (Digital photos and archive data)
- 3.5 Miscellaneous maps, plans and sketch sections

The finds occupy less than one box

APPENDIX 5: EHER SUMMARY

SITE NAME/ADDRESS:	Warners Hall, 70 High Street, Burnham-on-Crouch, Essex		
CONTRACTING UNIT NUMBER	1632		
OASIS ACCESSION NUMBER	essexcou1-14902		
PARISH: Maldon	DISTRICT:	Maldon	
NGR: TQ 953956	SITE CODE:	BCWH06	
TYPE OF WORK: Monitoring and Recording	SITE DIRECTOR/GROUP:	M.Pocock of ECC FAU	
DATE OF WORK: 17th July 2006	SIZE OF AREA INVESTIGATED:	30 square metres	
FINDS/CURATING MUSEUM: Colchester	FUNDING SOURCE:	Developer	
FURTHER WORK ANTICIPATED. Unknown	RELATED HER No.	n/a	
FINAL REPORT:	EAH Summary		
PERIODS REPRESENTED:	Post-medieval and modern		
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:			
<p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at a development to the rear of Warners Hall, Burnham-on-crouch, Essex. Principally, the investigation comprised monitoring and recording during excavation of a new swimming pool.</p> <p>It was established that groundworks for the pool, pool house, garage, and conservatory to the rear of Warners Hall would not disturb any significant archaeological remains of interest. Principally, excavation identified the brick-built garage and modern concrete foundations of the outbuilding that was demolished prior to archaeological observations. Consequently, observations were limited to those areas between these in situ foundations.</p> <p>The archaeological remains comprised an isolated post-hole cut into the natural sandy gravels (c.2m OD) that could constitute the edge of a fence line or early outbuilding of simple construction. This was exposed towards the eastern limit of the swimming pool footprint. It contained no datable finds and was filled by the overlying topsoil. The topsoil comprised post-medieval and modern finds including a broad range of pottery dating from the 17th to the 20th century.</p> <p>Little can be discerned about occupation or domestic activity in the immediate vicinity or about the growth of commerce and industry along the waterfront. Archaeological evidence appears to confirm that the northern side of the road remained undeveloped until the post-medieval period. The finds recovered from the topsoil seem to be typical of general spread of occupation debris within back gardens. However, the survival of 17th century pottery suggests that domestic waste was being discarded at this location from early on in the town's development.</p>			
PREVIOUS SUMMARIES/REPORTS:	None		
AUTHOR OF SUMMARY:	Matthew Pocock (ECCFAU)	DATE OF SUMMARY:	July 2006

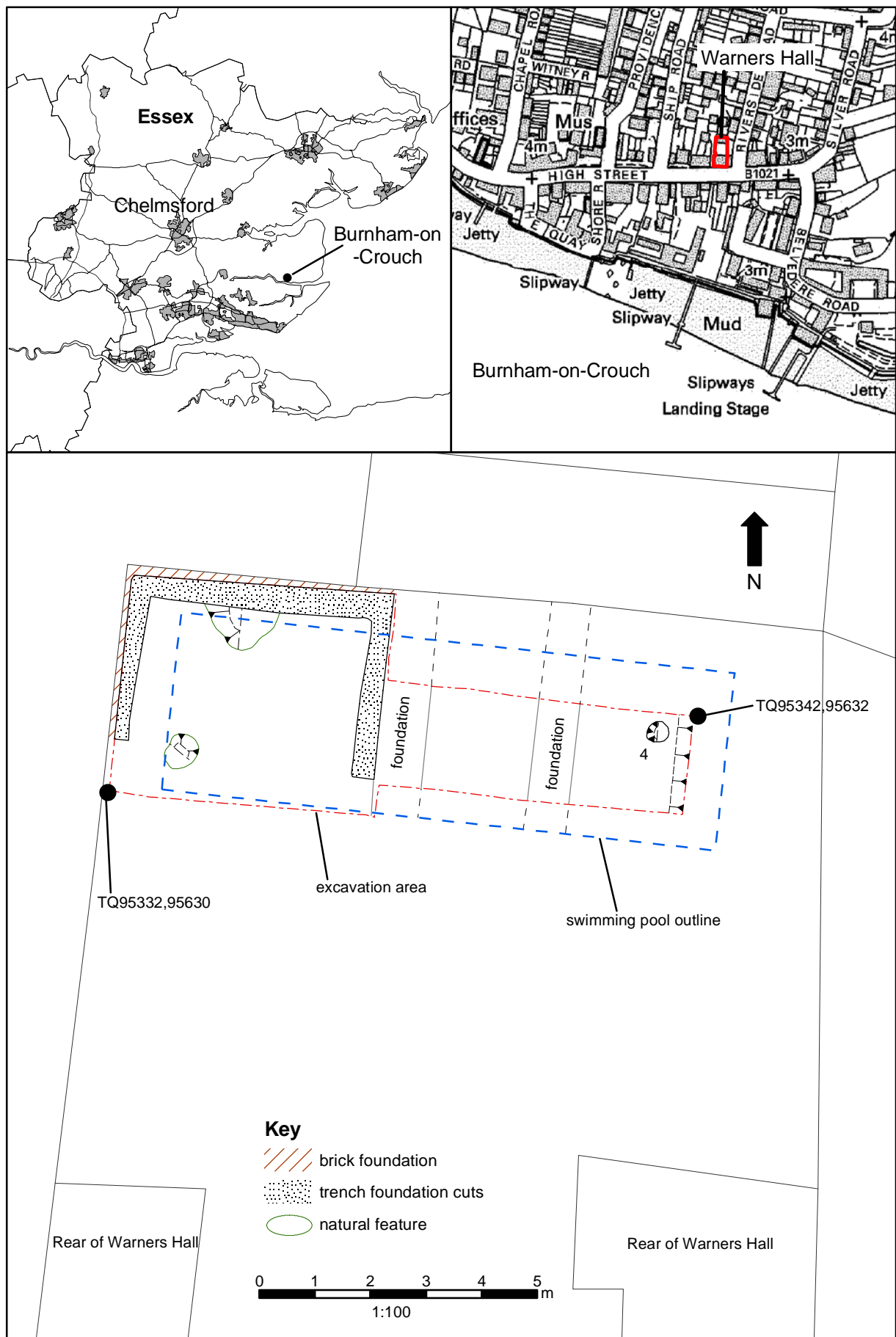


Fig. 1. Location plan

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