

**REAR OF 22 HIGH STREET
BILLERICAY
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**



Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit

May 2008

**REAR OF 22 HIGH STREET
BILLERICAY, ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**

Prepared By: Matthew Pocock	Signature:
Position: Project Officer	Date:
Checked by: Patrick Allen	Signature:
Position: Project Manager	Date:

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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.

Please contact the Archaeological Fieldwork Manager, at the

Field Archaeology Unit,
Fairfield Court, Fairfield Road, Braintree, Essex CM7 3YQ
Tel: 01376 331470
Fax: 01376 331428

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Essex CM1 1QH

SITE NAME/ADDRESS:	Rear of 22 High Street, Billericay, Essex		
CONTRACTING UNIT PROJECT NUMBER	1796		
OASIS ACCESSION NUMBER	essexcou1-40024		
PARISH: Billericay	DISTRICT:	Basildon	
NGR: TL 5486 2118	SITE CODE:	BL16	
TYPE OF WORK: Evaluation (Trial Trenching) and Monitoring	SITE DIRECTOR/GROUP:	M.Pocock of ECC FAU	
DATE OF WORK: Feb - May 2008	SIZE OF AREA INVESTIGATED:	600sqm	
FINDS/CURATING MUSEUM: Chelmsford	FUNDING SOURCE:	Developer	
FURTHER WORK ANTICIPATED. No	RELATED HER Nos.	None	
FINAL REPORT:	Yes		
PERIODS REPRESENTED:	Modern		
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:			
<p>Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit in an area of perceived archaeological potential on land to the rear of 22 High Street, Billericay, in advance of residential development. The site lies within the core of the medieval and post-medieval town and no.22 is listed (LBS Number: 112331), dating to the 18th century. However, the development area is at the rear of the plot so there is relatively low potential for medieval and post-medieval remains. The site was originally a car park comprising brick paving immediately to the rear of the building and a loose gravel surface across the remainder of the site. Artificial earth banks edged the car park, rising to the higher ground to the east and south, between 50 and 52m OD. The planned development consists of an L-shaped block of flats along the eastern and southern boundary of the plot (fig. 1). The development will be terraced into the hillside, with ground reduction to a construction level of c.48m OD.</p> <p>The investigation demonstrated that much of the site had been reduced into the natural sands during construction of both the nearby buildings and the current car park to a level of between 49.01m OD nearer the road frontage and 49.41m OD at the rear of the site (fig. 1). From this reduced level, the site was then built-up with a series of compacted layers that comprised building rubble, possibly from the demolished modern outbuilding to the north of the development (fig. 1), and other dumps of modern debris including concrete, engineer's bricks, and segments of metal roofing. The remains of the modern outbuilding consisted of a foundation trench, spreads of demolition debris, concrete surfaces and a few short internal wall alignments that were constructed of frogged bricks.</p> <p>Fortunately, the original undisturbed soil sequence was preserved in section at the eastern and southern edges of the development behind the earth banks. Natural clean sand survived at 50.48m OD in the south-east corner, which sloped to 49.47m OD towards the north-west and the north. This sat below c.0.30m of pale brown subsoil that was overlain by c.0.25m of thick rich dark-brown topsoil.</p> <p>Ground reduction has resulted in the truncation of any archaeological remains that may have once been present within the areas monitored, specifically of remains associated with the medieval or post-medieval High Street frontage but also regarding any earlier prehistoric or Roman activity. The lack even of residual artefacts may suggest no such remains had been present at this location.</p> <p>There was also no sign of any archaeological remains extending to the east or the south into adjacent</p>			

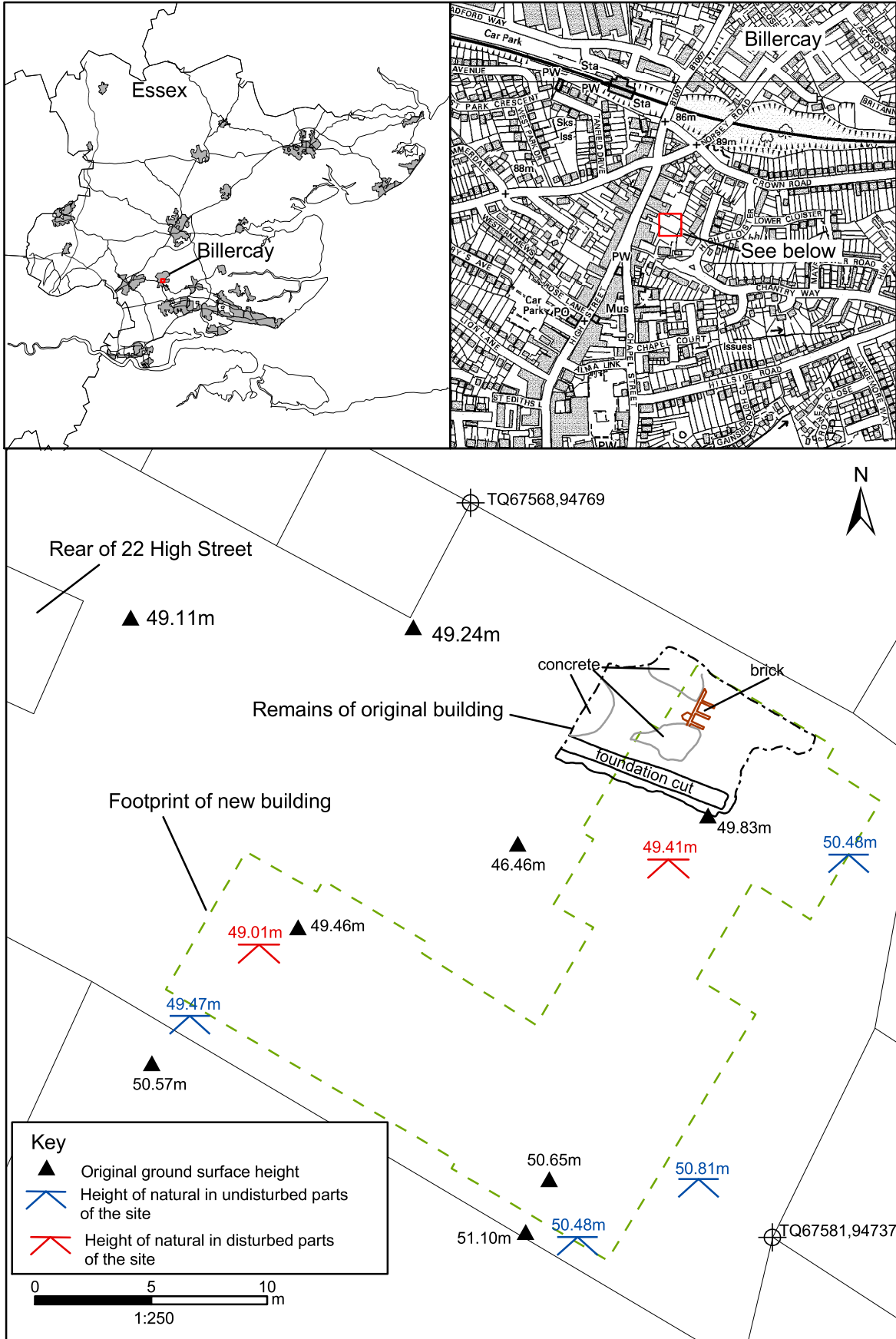
plots of land where the degree of preservation seemed good, with little or no evidence for truncation or re-working of the underlying natural geology.

The monitoring established that no archaeological remains survived the high level of truncation/disturbance (possibly up to 1.5m) across the site and concludes that the development will have no impact upon the archaeological record.

PREVIOUS SUMMARIES/REPORTS: None

AUTHOR OF SUMMARY: Matthew Pocock (ECCFAU)

DATE OF SUMMARY: May 2008



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Fig.1. Site location