

**PUMP HOUSE
CROMWELL HILL
MALDON
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

APRIL 2008

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CROMWELL HILL
MALDON
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

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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.

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**PUMP HOUSE
CROMWELL HILL
MALDON
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

Client: C.J. Bardwell Ltd

NGR: TL 84970 07217

Site Code: MD40

Oasis No.: essexcou1- 40268

Dates of Fieldwork: 9th January to 1st April 2008

SUMMARY

The archaeological monitoring of groundworks for the construction of three new dwellings on the site of the former Pump House, Cromwell Hill, Maldon was undertaken between January and April 2008. Although the site had been heavily disturbed by previous construction works a small number of archaeological remains were able to be identified.

At least two pits and an adjacent boundary ditch dating to the 13th-14th century were recorded in the north-western corner of the development area. It is likely that these features were located to the rear of a property that fronted onto Cromwell Hill, or its pre-cursor, in the medieval period.

One pit of probable post-medieval date was also identified, along with a curving area of truncation/terracing that predated the construction of the former Pump House. A short surviving fragment of 17th/18th century wall, that may have been a part of an earlier property boundary or structure, was recorded to the south of the development area.

The fieldwork has increased our knowledge of the development of the town of Maldon as evidence of medieval settlement has been identified in a part of the town where no medieval remains have previously been found. This settlement pre-dates, by c.150 years or more, the earliest recorded activity in this part of Maldon associated with the postulated construction of St. Helen's Chapel in the first half of the 16th century.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of archaeological monitoring and recording undertaken on the site of the former Pump House, Cromwell Hill, Maldon. The fieldwork was commissioned by C.J. Bardwell Ltd on behalf of the land owners, Mr and Mrs A. Barber, and carried out by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) in accordance with an archaeological brief for the monitoring of groundworks prepared by the ECC Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM 2007) and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ECC FAU (2007). The project was monitored by ECC HEM.

The development (planning application ref: MAL/00903/06) comprised the demolition of Pump House and the construction of three new residential properties in its place. Because the site was located in an area of perceived archaeological potential, and following PPG16 guidance, ECC HEM recommended to the Local Planning Authority (Maldon District Council) that a full archaeological condition be placed on planning permission. The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken in response to this condition.

The site archive will be deposited in Colchester Museum. A digital version of this report will be submitted, along with a project summary, to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>).

2.0 BACKGROUND (Fig. 1)

2.1 Topography and Geology

The Pump House site is situated on the north side of Cromwell Hill, off the lower part of Market Hill, on the northern periphery of Maldon and close to the Chelmer River and its road crossing at Fullbridge. The site is located on the relatively steep scarp down to the river and drops some 2.5m in height from south-west to north-east. In addition, the rear half of the property also drops by over 1m in height to the north-west. The site was located between two existing residential properties and to the rear of the extant 19th century water pump.

Pump House itself was a large post-war dwelling that had been positioned across, and terraced into, the approximate middle of the plot. To the front of the house had been tarmac hard standing and lawn with further grassed garden to the rear. The house had been demolished, and the site cleared and levelled with rubble and clay, prior to the commencement of the archaeological fieldwork.

The underlying geology comprises clay, silt and sand of the London Clay Formation.

2.2 Archaeological and Historical Background

The following background is derived from the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held and maintained at County Hall, Chelmsford and the Historic Town Assessment report for Maldon (Medlycott 1998). No previous archaeological excavations have been undertaken in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Although the burh (earthwork enclosure) to the south west of the site is suspected to be of Iron Age origin, perhaps re-fortified in the later Saxon period (Bedwin 1992; Brown 1986), discoveries of remains of prehistoric and Roman date in Maldon are sparse and incidental. None are known in the vicinity of the site and it is suspected that the Late Iron Age / Roman crossing of the Chelmer was not located at Fullbridge, but further north toward Beeleigh Abbey (Atkinson & Preston in prep).

Earlier Saxon remains have not been found in the vicinity of the site. Discoveries have been confined to the area of the burh (EHER 7766) on the hilltop to the southwest and, more recently encountered, at the Former Croxley Works site on Church Street, close to The Hythe (Ennis in prep). Although the Hythe may have been the main focus of waterfront activity at this time, it is possible that further occupation occurred alongside the Chelmer river. Early Saxon settlement has previously been found on the opposite side of the river in Heybridge (Atkinson and Preston 2001; Drury and Wickenden 1982).

The extent of the later Saxon and Medieval settlement at Maldon is not particularly well understood, though appears to have been concentrated along the High Street, extending from the location of the former burh on high ground to the west, down to The Hythe in the east. Settlement is postulated down the east side of Market Hill to the river crossing. However, the Pump House site lies west of this, is relatively steeply-sloping and undulating, and may well have been marginal to the settlement at this time. However, as noted in the brief (ECC HEM 2007), Chapman and Andre's 1777 map shows that this vicinity was developed by this time. It is possible that this occupation has earlier, medieval, origins perhaps associated with riverside activities. The postulated site of the early 16th century St Helen's Chapel lies a short distance to the southwest of the site (Medlycott 1998, 24).

Maldon expanded beyond its medieval limits from the 18th century onwards. The thoroughfare of Cromwell Hill was certainly established by the post-medieval period and, as mentioned above, its frontages developed in part. The public pump to the front of the site, from which the property derives its name, is Grade 2 listed. It dates to the 19th century, as do the adjacent listed properties along Cromwell Hill.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 General aims

The aim of the work was to monitor all groundworks associated with the development and rapidly investigate and record any archaeological remains uncovered.

3.2 Objectives

The research objectives for the project were undertaken with reference to those laid out in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000). The town of Maldon with its royal, ecclesiastical and trading connections has the potential to contribute to many of the urban social, economic and cultural research themes (Ayers 2000, 27-32) discussed in this document.

The specific objective of the investigation was to:

- Identify and investigate any Saxon, medieval and/or post-medieval remains and relate these to our current knowledge of the origins and subsequent development of the town of Maldon.

4.0 METHOD

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken of the foundation trenches and associated deep groundworks for retaining walls, etc. Monitoring visits were co-ordinated to coincide with episodes of foundation cutting. Most of the foundation trenches were observed, apart from a small length at the southern end of Plot 3 which was disturbed by modern service trenches and some shallow sections in the west of Plot 1 which only penetrated the topsoil. All work was carried out in accordance with IFA (Institute of Field Archaeologists) by-laws and guidelines (2001) and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003). Standard ECC FAU excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout.

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS

The results of the monitored groundworks are set out below in section 5.1 and 5.2. Individual context numbers are cited in brackets and further context information is included in Appendix 1.

The new building was constructed on top of a series of concrete piles which had been inserted during the early stages of monitoring. The pile holes were not individually observed,

though casual inspection showed that they were c.6m deep and inserted into London clay. In general, there was a fairly high level of disturbance, particularly in the centre of the site, which could be attributed to the construction of the former Pump House and its subsequent underpinning with concrete. Further disturbance occurred during demolition clearance, including the removal of the concrete underpinning, and during piling works. Work was also hampered by the wet weather conditions (Plate 3).

Foundation trenches, cut between the piles, were generally about 1m wide by 1m deep in the eastern half of the development. Here, the overburden generally consisted of c.0.6m of mixed brown clay containing fragments of concrete and frogged bricks overlying c.0.4m of dark grey silt containing pieces of mortar, roof tile fragments and occasional oyster shells. The underlying natural brown clay was not exposed. More variation in foundation depth occurred, up-slope, in the western half of the development, from less than 0.5m to more than 1.5m, depending on the position of the trench in relation to the slope of the ground. Overburden often consisted of mixed modern topsoil, between 0.1m to 0.85m deep, overlying natural brown clay. In some places in the west of the site virtually all of the topsoil had been removed and frogged bricks were noted pushed into the top of the natural. Variations in building levels and pile construction meant that foundation trenches on the west side of the development hardly penetrated the ground at all. However, the retaining wall trench in the north-west of the development was more substantial at 1.4m deep (max.) by 1.5m wide. The overburden in this trench comprised 0.25m of modern garden topsoil overlying a further 0.5m of older topsoil containing brick, tile and mortar flecks. This sealed c. 0.7m of grey brown clay silt that contained occasional pieces of oyster shell and overlay the natural brown clay.

5.1 Foundation Trenches

A sloping 40° cut (13), 1.3m wide and 0.52m deep, truncating the natural brown clay was noted in section at the north-east end of Plot 1. (Fig. 1) The steepness of the slope appeared greater than the general slope of the land and may indicate the position of an archaeological feature, such as a pit, or perhaps a more recent localised area of truncation. The fill (12) had a banded root-disturbed appearance and contained one deeply embedded piece of roof tile (not recoverable) of probable post-medieval date.

A solitary pit (2) was identified in section in Plot 3 in the east of the site (Fig. 1). The pit was 1.3m wide by 0.3m deep and filled with mid grey silty clay (2) that contained one piece of animal bone. The pit was sealed by redeposited brown clay that had resulted from recent levelling.

Also running through the centre of plot 3 was a curving area of terracing/truncation where the north-eastern slope of Cromwell Hill had been cut into (Fig. 1). No natural brown clay was observed in the groundworks within this terraced area. The terracing/truncation was over 0.4m deep and filled with dark grey clay silt containing occasional small pieces of buff mortar, oyster shell and fragments of medieval/post-medieval roof tile. This fill was sealed beneath c.0.6m of mixed brown clay containing modern finds. It was noted that there was a vertical drop in ground-level of 1.5m or more in the neighbouring property immediately beyond the site boundary.

A distorted fragment of brick wall (14) (Plate 2) was observed at the south-east side of the site between the southern car lodge foundation trench and the enclosing walls of the 19th century pump structure (Fig. 1). The wall was in excess of 0.5m long by 0.55m wide and 0.7m high and aligned perpendicular to Cromwell Hill and the pump structure. It was constructed from unfrogged bricks measuring approximately 220mm x 110mm x 55mm and bonded by a white-flecked yellowy buff mortar. Following the typology set out by Ryan (1996, 94-96) these bricks probably date to the 17th or 18th century. A small patch of brick rubble to the north of the cart lodge foundation implied that the wall originally extended at least 2m in length. It was not possible to establish the relationship between the wall and the existing pump structure, although the wall stub looked to be at a lower level and appeared to be constructed from older bricks.

5.2 Wall Trenches

One feature (5), 2m wide and over 0.6m deep, was recorded in the side of a large machine-excavated trench located to the north-west of plot 1 (Fig. 2). Two fills were identified; a chalk-flecked, mixed greyish brown silty clay lower fill (4) and a dark grey clay silt upper fill (3) (Fig. 3) (Plate 1). Finds comprised animal bone and medieval pottery dating from the later 12th to 13th century. This trench was subsequently backfilled and a new L-shaped retaining wall trench was machine excavated immediately to the north and west. Revealed in plan and step-section in the eastern arm of this trench were the remains of fills 3 and 4 which continued for over 1.5m in length. Although truncated by machining, the fills seemed to exhibit a linear, north-west/south-east, tendency suggesting that feature 5 may have been part of a ditch or elongated pit. The northern part of the feature was also truncated by an undated but clearly more recent pit (11), perhaps a garden feature, cut from directly below the topsoil.

In the western arm of the L-shaped retaining wall trench two further pits (7 and 9) were recorded in plan cutting natural brown clay (Fig. 2). These pits were not excavated as they were only exposed at the required depth limit of the trench (1.4m below the existing ground level). Pit 7 was filled by dark grey clay silt (6) that produced surface finds of oyster shell, 13th to 14th century medieval pottery and a worn fragment of millstone. Pit 9, which had a lighter mid-grey fill (8) and produced three pieces of animal bone, appeared to be stratigraphically earlier. Although not clear in plan, the irregular and slightly elongated form of pit 9 indicates that it may possibly represent more than one feature.

6.0 FINDS by Joyce Compton

6.1 Introduction

Small groups of finds were recovered from a total of four contexts. All of the finds have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Full quantification details can be found in Appendix 2. The finds are described by category below.

6.2 Pottery by Helen Walker

A small amount of pottery, 5 sherds, weighing 136g, came from two contexts (Appendix 3). Diagnostic pottery from the upper fill (3) of ditch 5 comprises the base of a medieval coarse ware storage jar or curfew fragment, decorated with thumbled applied strips and perhaps dating to the later 12th to 13th centuries. From the same fill are body sherds of shell-tempered ware and medieval coarse ware. Fill 6 of pit 7 produced a lower handle attachment from a partially-glazed sandy orange ware jug, dating to the 13th to 14th centuries.

6.3 Millstone fragment

The fill of pit 7 produced a small flat fragment of stone (100g), probably from a millstone. The piece is worn and abraded and could easily be contemporary with the pottery from the same context.

6.4 Animal bone

Three contexts contained animal bone, amounting to five pieces weighing 148g. Nothing can be assigned to species, although the recognisable fragments derive from large mammals. The femur in the fill of pit 9 has been chopped along two planes, probably indicating the preparation of joints of meat for domestic consumption.

6.5 Shell

The fill of pit 7 produced two oyster shells, weighing 30g.

6.6 Comments on the Assemblage

The groups of finds are too small for further comment. All of the material should be retained.

7.0 DISCUSSION

No archaeological remains of prehistoric, Roman or Saxon date were identified.

7.1 Medieval

At least two medieval pits (7 and 9) and a possible ditch (5) were identified dating broadly to the 13th-14th century. These were located in the north-west corner of the development area and perhaps represent back-yard rubbish disposal adjacent to a property boundary. These features may have been part of a medieval property that appears to pre-date the existing boundaries, but is still likely to have fronted onto Cromwell Hill or a medieval pre-cursor. No other medieval features were observed but more may have been mainly located along the western side of the development area which was subject to minimal disturbance from the current construction. Any potential medieval remains in the east side of the site were unlikely to have survived due to later truncation/disturbance.

7.2 Post-medieval / modern

The remaining features observed within the development area probably all date to the post-medieval or modern periods. Pit 2 may be of post-medieval date as it was located beneath the position of the former Pump House and is therefore likely to pre-date its construction. Also clearly of post-medieval date is the stub of 17th/18th century brick wall (14). This wall could possibly be a fragment from an earlier building or part of a north-west/south-east orientated property boundary wall. The latter interpretation is perhaps more likely as the wall aligns quite well with the possible medieval property boundary ditch (5) identified at the north-west end of the site. Although speculative due to the lack of supporting cartographic evidence, it is possible that the present plot was created by amalgamating the side gardens of the two adjacent houses, wall 14 representing the remains of the demolished wall between them. This would also account for the curious positioning of the water pump structure – originally straddling the boundary between the houses.

The curving area of terracing/truncation running through Plot 3 did not align with the position of the former Pump House and may have been associated with structures or groundworks

that pre-dated the construction of this 20th century building. Oyster shells noted within the fill also suggest a post-medieval or medieval date for this activity. If the identification of wall 14 as the original property boundary prior to the creation of the Pump House plot is correct, this terracing/truncation could have been associated with the construction of No. 5 Cromwell Hill, to the north-east of the site, in the 19th century.

Pits 11 and 13 were both located to the rear of the property and could be accounted for as modern back-garden disturbance. The centre of the development area was heavily disturbed by the concrete underpinning (Plate 3) of the former Pump House and surface deposits of re-deposited clay and rubble were all the result of modern levelling.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The specific objectives of the fieldwork were to identify and investigate any Saxon, medieval and/or post-medieval remains and relate these to our current knowledge of the origins and subsequent development of the town of Maldon. This has been successfully achieved as the identification of a small group of medieval features indicates that there was probable medieval occupation on Cromwell Hill in the 13th-14th century. This occupation predates the postulated construction of St Helen's Chapel to the southwest of the development area in the early 16th century and the previously earliest known occupation on Cromwell Hill depicted on the Chapman and Andre map of 1777, and suggests that medieval occupation indeed extends down the hillside in this vicinity of the town. Further medieval remains can be expected to be present on Cromwell Hill where not affected by later terracing and construction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks go to John James Associates, C.J. Bardwell Ltd and the owners, Mr and Mrs A. Barber. The co-operation and assistance of Robbie Nihill and Bill Chapell of C.J. Bardwell Ltd is gratefully acknowledged. The archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken by Trevor Ennis of the ECC Field Archaeology Unit. Finds were processed by Phil McMichael and analysed by Joyce Compton and Helen Walker. The project was managed by Mark Atkinson of ECC FAU and monitored on behalf of the local planning authority by Pat Connell of ECC HEM.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

All dimensions given in metres.

Context	Type	Description	Period
1	Fill of 2	Mid grey silty clay	?Post-med
2	Pit	1.3m wide x 0.3m deep	?Post-med
3	Fill of 5	Dark grey clay silt (upper fill), 0.5m thick	Medieval
4	Fill of 5	Mixed mid greyish brown silty clay (lower fill), 0.3m thick	Medieval
5	Ditch?	1.5m+ long x 2m wide x 0.6m deep	Medieval
6	Fill of 7	Dark grey clay silt	Medieval
7	Pit	1.1m+ long x 0.8m+ wide (not exc)	Medieval
8	Fill of 9	Mid grey clay silt	Medieval
9	Pit	2.4m+ long x 1.8m wide (not exc)	Medieval
10	Fill of 11	Mid grey-brown clay silt	?Modern
11	Pit	0.94m+ long x 0.8m wide x 0.5m deep	?Modern
12	Fill of 13	Banded greyish brown silty clay	?Modern
13	Pit?	1.3m wide x 0.52m deep	?Modern
14	Brick wall	0.5m+ long x 0.55m wide x 0.7m high	Post-med

APPENDIX 2: FINDS DATA

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
1	2	1	6	Animal bone; rib fragment, large mammal	-
3	5	1 4	2 78	Animal bone; fragment Pottery; body sherds, one with applied cordon	- Medieval
6	7	2 1 1	30 100 58	Shell, oyster, two valves Millstone fragment, heavily worn Pottery; jug handle fragment	- - Medieval
8	9	3	140	Animal bone; femur condyle, distal end, chopped and unfused, and rib fragment, large mammal	-

APPENDIX 3: MEDIEVAL POTTERY

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
3	5	1	7	Shell-tempered ware	10th to 13th C
		3	71	Medieval coarse ware; body sherds and sagging base from large vessel with vertical thumbed applied strip starting at basal angle, probably from a storage jar but could be from a curfew	later 12th to 13th C
6	7	1	58	Sandy orange ware; lower handle attachment from jug, ribbed handle showing simple finger/thumb nail decoration and traces of plain lead glaze, could be Colchester ware	13th to 14th C

APPENDIX 4: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE

SITE NAME: Pump House, Maldon

SITE CODE: MD40

Index to Archive:

1. Introduction

1.1 ECC HEM Brief

1.2 ECC FAU WSI

2. Research Archive

2.1 Client Report

2.2 Finds Reports

3. Site Archive

3.1 Context Record Register

3.2 Context Records (1 to 14)

3.3 Plan Register

3.4 Section Register

3.5 3 x A4 plan/section sheets

3.6 Location plan

3.7 Photographic Register

3.8 Site Photographic Record (1 Set of digital images on disk)

3.9 Miscellaneous notes/plans

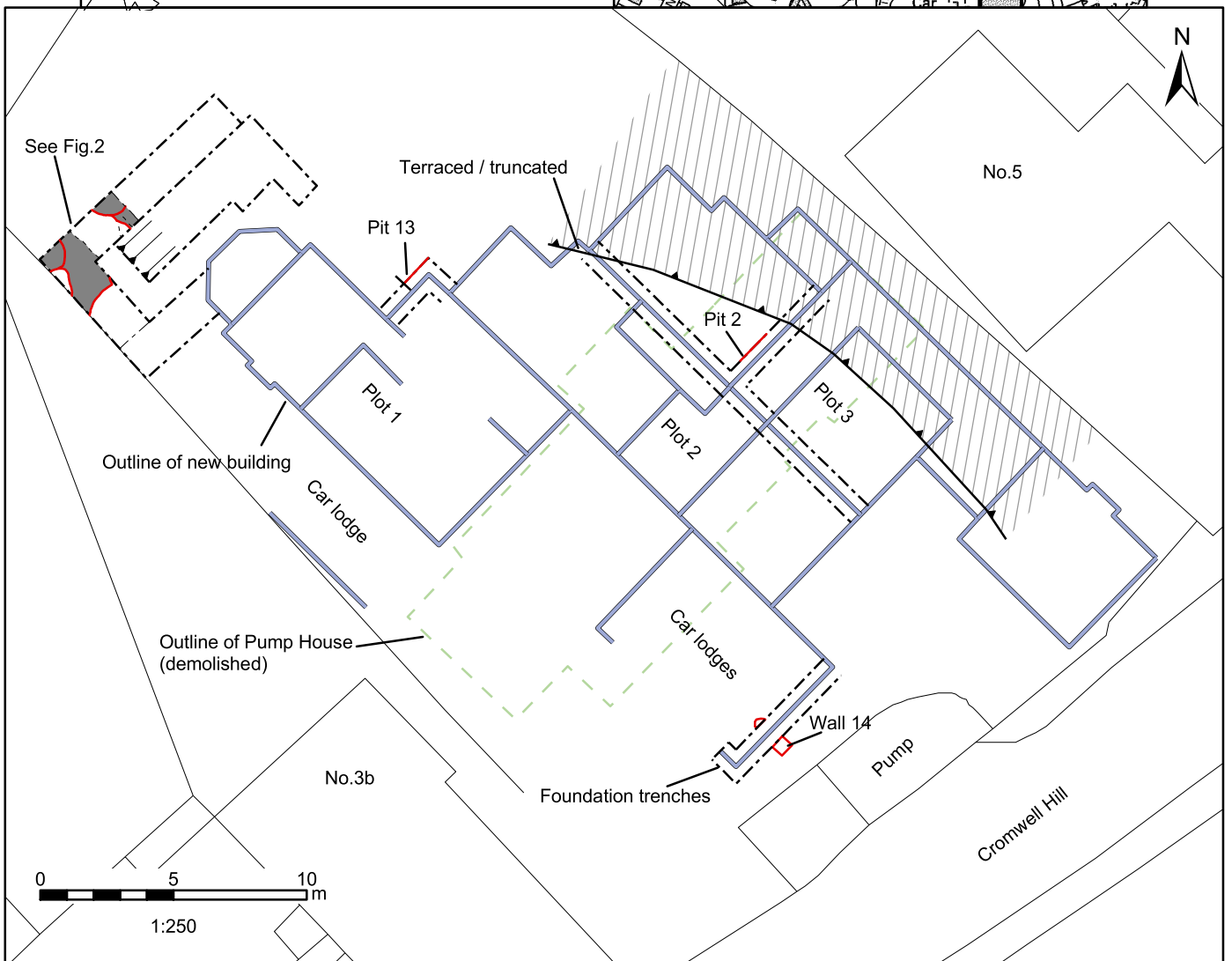
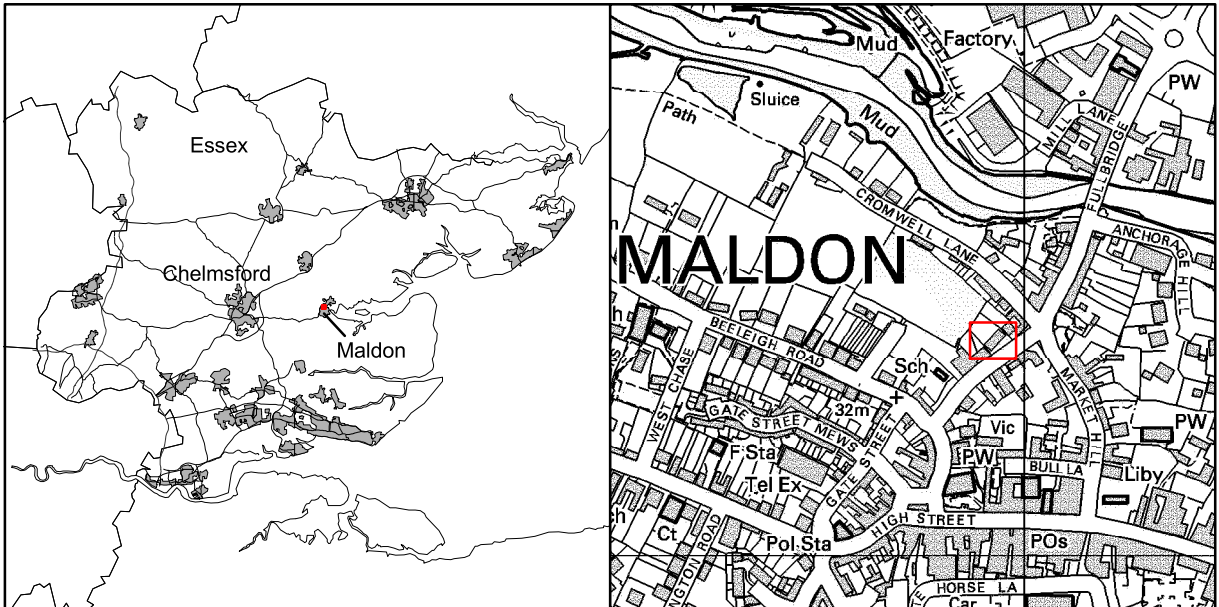
Finds

The finds occupy less than one box.

APPENDIX 5: EHER SUMMARY SHEET

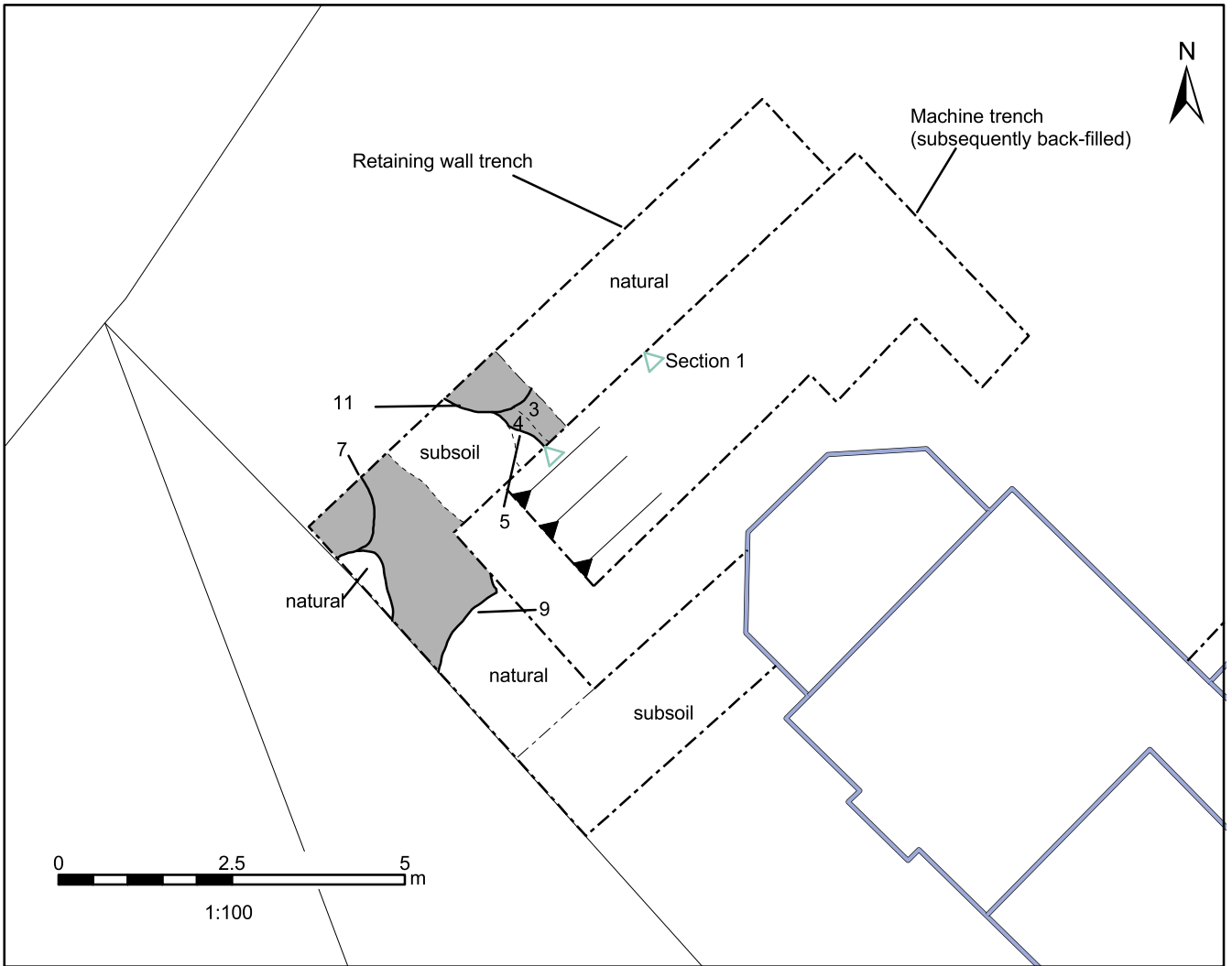
EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: Pump House, Cromwell Hill, Maldon, Essex	
Parishes: Maldon	District: Maldon
NGR: TL 84970 07217	Site Code: MD40
Type of Work: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording	Site Director/Group: T. Ennis, ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: 9th January to 1st April 2008	Size of Area Investigated: 900 sq m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Colchester	Funding source: C.J. Bardwell Ltd
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos.:
Final Report: EAH round-up	Oasis No.: essexcou1 - 40268
Periods Represented: Medieval, post-medieval	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>The archaeological monitoring of groundworks for the construction of three new dwellings on the site of the former Pump House, Cromwell Hill, Maldon was undertaken between January and April 2008. Although the site had been heavily disturbed by previous construction works a small number of archaeological remains were able to be identified.</p> <p>At least two pits and an adjacent boundary ditch dating to the 13th-14th century were recorded in the north-western corner of the development area. It is likely that these features were located to the rear of a property that fronted onto Cromwell Hill, or its pre-cursor, in the medieval period.</p> <p>One pit of probable post-medieval date was also identified, along with a curving area of truncation/terracing that predated the construction of the former Pump House. A short surviving fragment of 17th/18th century wall, that may have been a part of an earlier property boundary or structure, was recorded to the south of the development area.</p> <p>The fieldwork has increased our knowledge of the development of the town of Maldon as evidence of medieval settlement has been identified in a part of the town where no medieval remains have previously been found. This settlement pre-dates, by c.150 years or more, the earliest recorded activity in this part of Maldon associated with the postulated construction of St. Helen's Chapel in the first half of the 16th century.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: T. Ennis	Date of Summary: April 2008



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Fig.1. Site location



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Fig.2. Detail of north-west area

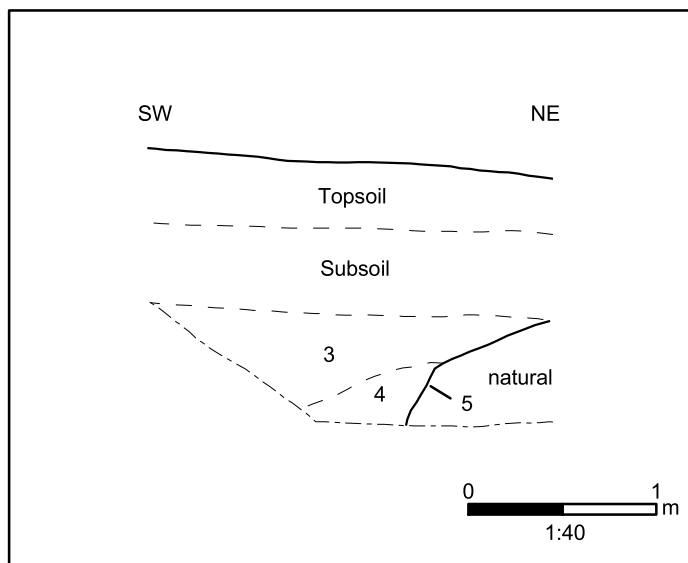


Fig.3. Section 1

Plate 1 Ditch 5 looking north-west



Plate 2 Wall fragment 14 looking south-east

Plate 3 Removal of old concrete underpinning

