

**FAMILY ANNEXE, SECRET GARDEN
DRURY LANE
RIDGEWELL
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
AND RECORDING**



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

NOVEMBER 2008

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	English Heritage x 2
	Mike Sale Chartered Surveyor
	Essex CC Historic Environment Management
	Essex Historic Environment Record
	Braintree 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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FAMILY ANNEXE, SECRET GARDEN,

DRURY LANE, RIDGEWELL,

ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING

SUMMARY

Client:: Mr and Mrs J. Thostrup

Planning application: BTE/00629/08

Scheduled Monument: SM 20767

FAU Project No: 1953

NGR: TL 7338 4079

Site Code: RISG08

OASIS ID: essexcou1-47483

Dates of Fieldwork:: 1 and 3 September 2008

Archaeological monitoring of groundworks for the construction of a family annexe to the north-west of Secret Gardens (formerly West End House) was undertaken by the Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Mr and Mrs J. Thostrup. The development lies within a medieval moated site, designated a Scheduled Monument (SM 20767). The archaeological work was carried out under Scheduled Monument consent, following advice by English Heritage and a brief issued by the Essex CC Historic Environment Management team.

The annexe, covering an area of 8.5 x 9.5m, is located in the south-east of the moated enclosure. The monitoring showed that the area of the annexe had previously been reduced by 0.40m during the construction of earlier outbuildings, down to an orangey/mid-brown chalky clay natural deposit. The ground had been built up with fine rubble and hardcore, with concrete slabs laid on top. No archaeological remains were present, not even truncated cut features (pits and ditches) or residual artefacts.

Although the new annexe is within the boundaries of the medieval moated enclosure it appears that any archaeological remains which may have been present have been truncated by the construction of 20th-century outbuildings. It is likely that a 30-40m strip along the Drury Lane frontage has been disturbed by recent buildings, but the moat survives intact in the gardens to the rear and archaeological remains may well be preserved in these areas.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of archaeological monitoring of groundworks for the construction of a family annexe immediately to the north-west of Secret Garden (formerly West End House), Drury Lane, Ridgewell, Essex, following the demolition of outbuildings. The archaeological work was undertaken by the Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on behalf of the occupants, Mr and Mrs Thostrup, under the management of their agent Mr Michael Sale, Chartered Surveyor.

The site is located within a medieval moated enclosure designated as a Scheduled Monument. The archaeological work was carried out under the terms of a Scheduled Monument consent obtained from the Department of Media, Culture and Sport (DCMS), who were advised by English Heritage's Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Essex. As a result of this consultation a full archaeological condition was attached to the planning consent granted by the local planning authority, Braintree District Council (planning application ref: BTE/00629/08), following advice given by the Essex CC Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM) under Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (DoE 1990). The archaeological monitoring was carried out in accordance with a brief prepared by the ECC HEM (2008) and a written scheme of investigation produced by the ECC FAU (2008).

Copies of the report will be sent to the agent, Michael Sale (including copies to be forwarded to Mr and Mrs J. Thostrup and Braintree District Planning Department), English Heritage, the Essex CC Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM), and the Essex Historic Environment Record. A digital version of this report will be submitted, together with a project summary, to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>). Report copies and the site archive will be deposited at Braintree Museum.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Site Description and Location

The house known as Secret Garden (formerly West End House) is located to the north of Drury Lane on the western outskirts of the historic village of Ridgewell in north Essex (NGR TL 7338 4079). Secret Garden is located in the south-eastern corner of a triangular

medieval moated enclosure, protected as a Scheduled Monument (SM 20767), measuring 110m north-south by 80m east-west, with its base along Drury Lane and its apex to the north. The northern part of the moat survives, but it has been infilled and built over along the Drury Lane frontage.

Secret Garden occupies a triangular plot 70m long and 20m wide in the south-east corner of the moated enclosure. The house is set 10m back from Drury Lane, and the family annexe will be added to the north-west of the existing house, against the western boundary of the property, after demolition of outbuildings (Fig. 1). The footprint of the annexe covers an area measuring 9.5 x 8.5m, with a small porch at its south-eastern corner.

2.2 Historical and Archaeological Background

This historical and archaeological background is based on information held in the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) at County Hall, Chelmsford.

The site lies within a triangular medieval moated enclosure (Fig. 1), designated a Scheduled Monument (SM 20767; EHER 6974). The moat is fed by a spring to its north; the area immediately to the north-east of the site is known as Colne Springs and is the source of the river Colne. The earthworks of the moat survive over the northernmost two-thirds of its circuit. Towards the south-west the moat divides into two channels, one of which may have been a leet feeding a watermill in the vicinity of the Mill House.

Secret Garden/West End House originally dates to the 18th century and is the only remaining building of a farm that occupied the interior of the moated enclosure in the 18th and 19th centuries. However, moated enclosures are typically medieval and there was a high probability of below-ground medieval remains surviving within the site area.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the investigation was to record the location, extent, date and character of any surviving archaeological remains within the area of the new annexe.

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 date, character and development of medieval and rural

settlements are an important regional research topic. The specific objective of the investigation was to investigate any evidence for earlier phases of occupation within the moated site.

4. METHOD

The Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) is a registered archaeological organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) and adheres to IFA standards and by-laws, and the Association of Local Government Officers' (ALGAO) Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003).

The ECC HEM brief required monitoring of groundworks for construction of the annexe, with excavation and recording of any archaeological remains that were exposed. This was carried out according to guidelines for monitoring work produced by the IFA (1999). A plan showing the location of the annexe in relation to existing and new buildings is attached (Fig. 1).

Machine-excavation was carried out under the supervision of an experienced archaeologist. The removal of modern overburden was undertaken using a flat bladed bucket, as were subsoil layers. The spoil heaps generated were visually scanned and checked with a metal detector. The groundworks were inspected for archaeological features, deposits and artefacts. An overall site plan was drawn at 1:50 and tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A full photographic record comprising digital images was made.

5. FIELDWORK RESULTS

Ground reduction over the area of the annexe exposed only modern building rubble, and the monitoring was carried out on machine-dug foundation trenches totalling 43m in length and 0.7m wide. A maximum depth of 1.70m was reached in the north-west corner of the development area.

The uppermost natural deposit, orange-brown chalky clay, was encountered at a depth of 0.40m. The land surface above this had been removed during the construction of outbuildings and replaced with fine rubble and hardcore to support concrete raft foundations.

The clay deposit remained consistent to the average trench depth of 0.90m, with larger chalk nodules appearing in the deeper, north-western corner.

No archaeological remains were exposed during the groundworks for the new extension, not even truncated pits or ditches, or residual artefacts, despite the site's location within the scheduled monument.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Moated farmsteads are a common element of the medieval landscape of Essex. Although the new annexe is within the boundaries of the moated enclosure any archaeological remains which may have been present within its footprint have already been truncated by the foundations of 19th- and 20th-century outbuildings. It should not be assumed, however, that the truncation recorded on the present site is typical of the Scheduled Monument as a whole. It is likely that a 30-40m strip along the Drury Lane frontage has been disturbed by recent buildings, but the moat survives intact in the gardens to the rear and buried archaeological remains within the moated enclosure may well be preserved in these areas.

Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned and funded by Mr and Mrs J. Thostrup through their agent, Mike Sale Chartered Surveyor, and special thanks are due for their assistance throughout the project. The monitoring work was carried out by the author and the illustrations were produced by the author and Andrew Lewsey. The project was managed by Patrick Allen for Essex CC FAU and was monitored by Teresa O'Connor of Essex CC Historical Environment Management team on behalf of the local planning authority and English Heritage. Debbie Priddy, English Heritage's Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Essex, was consulted throughout.

Bibliography

- | | | |
|-------------------------|------|---|
| Brown N & Glazebrook, J | 2000 | <i>Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy</i> , East Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper 8 |
| DoE | 1990 | <i>Planning Policy Guidance 16: Archaeology and Planning</i> . HMSO |
| ECC FAU | 2008 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Investigation. Family Annexe, Secret Garden, Drury Lane, Ridgewell, Essex.</i> ECC FAU project design |
| ECC HEM | 2008 | <i>Brief for Archaeological Monitoring of Groundworks for a Family Annexe at Secret Garden, Drury Lane, Ridgewell, Essex.</i> ECC HEM design brief |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper 14 |
| IFA | 1999 | <i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs</i> (revised) |

APPENDIX 1: ARCHIVE INDEX

SITE NAME: Family Annexe, Secret Garden, Drury Lane, Ridgewell, Essex

Index to the Archive

File containing:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Brief for Evaluation
- 1.2 Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation

2. Research Archive

- 2.1 Client Report

3. Site Archive

- 3.1 1 Levels Register

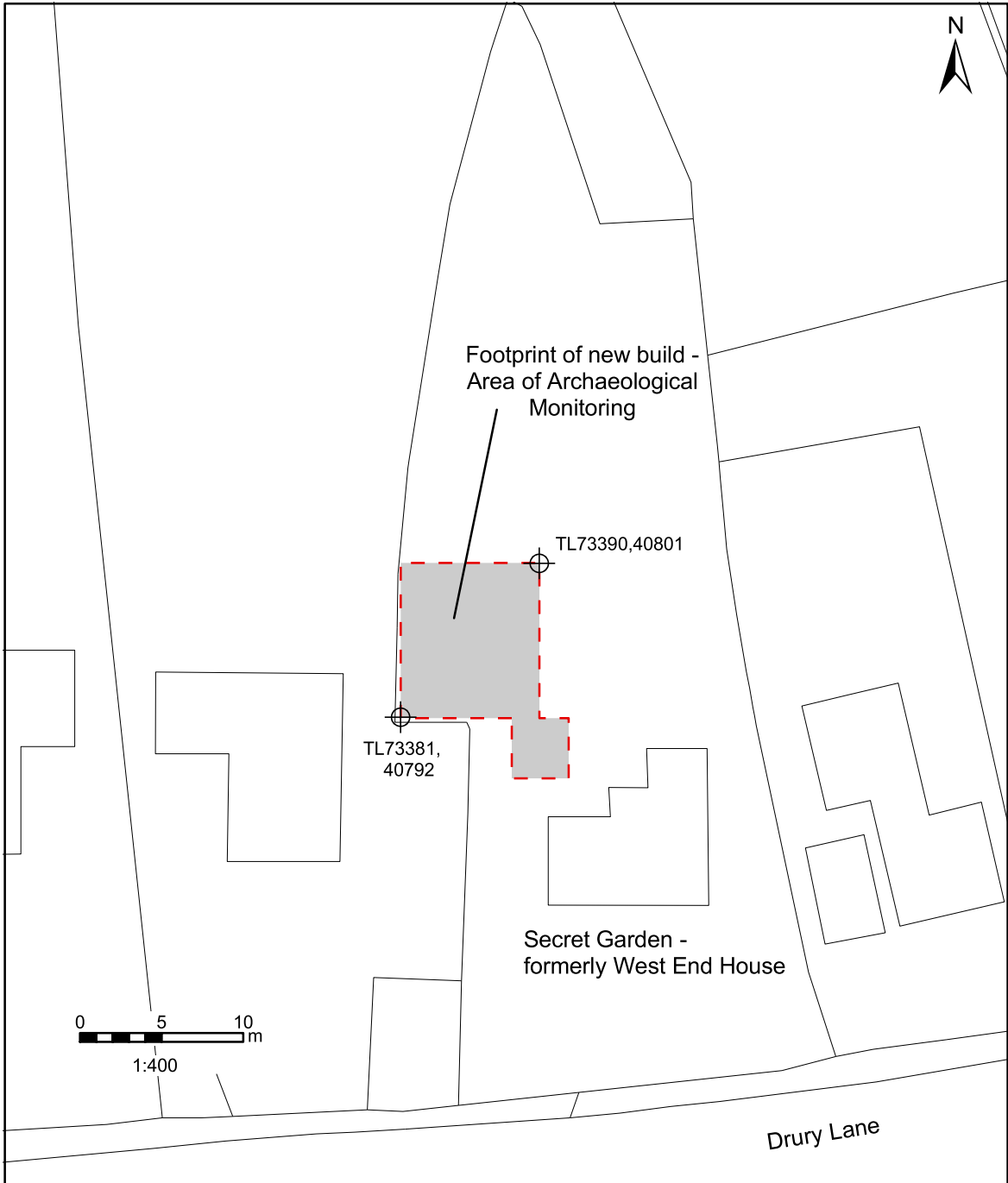
APPENDIX 2: ESSEX HISTORICAL ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY

Site Name/Address: Family Annexe, Secret Garden, Drury Lane, Ridgewell, Essex	
Parish: Ridgewell	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 7338 4079	Site Code: RISG08
Type of Work: Watching Brief	Site Director/Group: Tony Blowers ECC FAU
Date of Work: 1st to the 3rd September 2008	Size of Area Investigated: 80.75sqm
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Braintree Museum	Funding Source: Mr and Mrs J. Thostrup
Further Work Anticipated? No	Related EHER Nos: EHER 6974 SM 20767
Final Report: EAH Summary	OASIS ID: essexcou1-47483
Periods Represented: Modern	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS: <i>Archaeological monitoring of groundworks for the construction of a family annexe to the existing house was undertaken by the Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit on behalf of Mr and Mrs J. Thostrup. The development lies within a medieval moated site, designated as a Scheduled Monument (SM 20767). The annexe, covering an area of 8.5 x 9.5m, is located in the south-east of the moated enclosure. The monitoring showed that the area of the annexe had previously been reduced by 0.40m during the construction of earlier outbuildings, down to an orangey/mid-brown chalky clay natural deposit. The ground had been built up with fine rubble and hardcore, with concrete slabs laid on top. No archaeological remains were present, not even truncated cut features (pits and ditches) or residual artefacts.</i></p> <p><i>Although the new annexe is within the boundaries of the medieval moated enclosure it appears that any archaeological remains which may have been present have been truncated by the construction of 20th-century outbuildings. It is likely that a 30-40m strip along the Drury Lane frontage has been disturbed by recent buildings, but the moat survives intact in the gardens to the rear and buried archaeological remains may well be preserved in these areas.</i></p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: Tony Blowers	Date of Summary: September 2008



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Fig.1. Site location



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Fig.2. Area of archaeological monitoring



Plate 1 : General view of site after demolition of outbuildings, looking north.



Plate 2 : General view of site after cutting foundation trenches, looking north-west.



Plate 3 : North-facing section of the southernmost foundation trench, showing natural clay truncated by 19th-20th century groundworks.

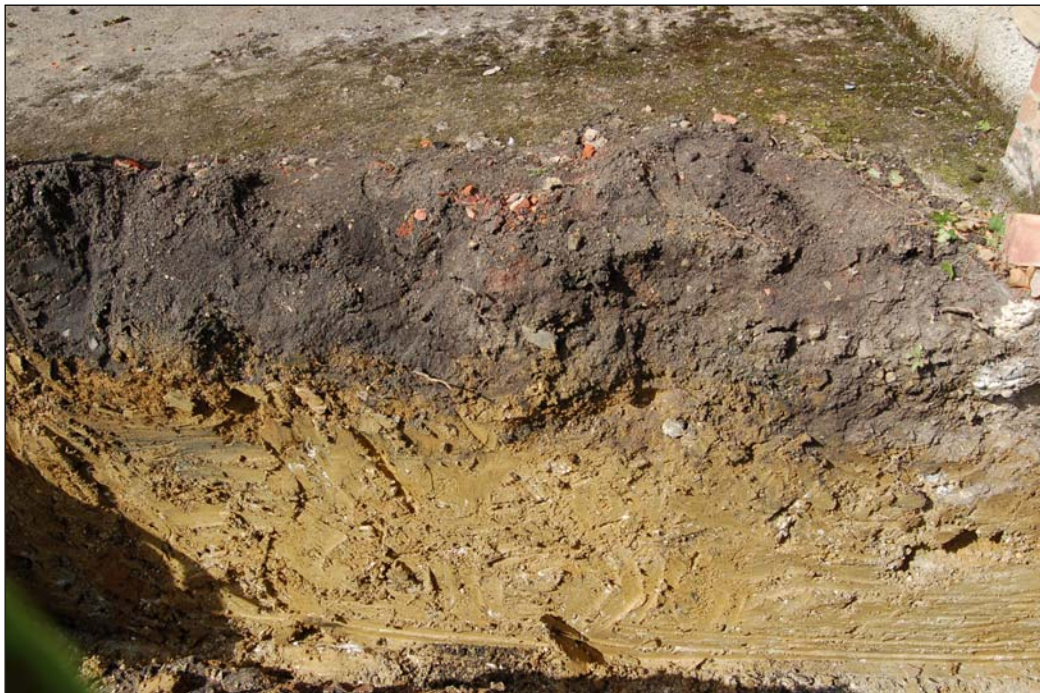


Plate 4 : East facing section of the westernmost foundation trench, showing natural clay truncated by 19th-20th century groundworks.