

**LAND AT HIGH STREET/WEALD ROAD
BRENTWOOD
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION SUMMARY



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

OCTOBER 2009

ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: , Land at High Street/Weald Road, Brentwood, Essex	
Parishes: Brentwood	District: Brentwood
NGR: TQ 59145 93673	Site Code: BW 19
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: T. Ennis, ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Dates of Work: 31st March 2009	Size of Area Investigated: 38 sq m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Chelmsford	Funding source: ECC
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos.:
Final Report: EAH summary	Oasis No.: essexcou1- 57424
Periods Represented: Post-medieval, modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p><i>Introduction</i></p> <p>Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken at the junction of High Street and Weald Road, Brentwood in advance of the construction of a new left hand slip road. The site was formerly occupied by four buildings, including a public house on the corner, that were demolished prior to fieldwork.</p> <p>The evaluation was undertaken in response to a recommendation made by ECC Historic Environment Management to ECC Environment, Sustainability and Highways that a programme of archaeological fieldwork be put in place to assess the likely impact of the junction improvements upon the historic environment.</p> <p>Trench location was restricted by the presence of three large basements along the High Street and Weald Road frontages, further limitations were imposed by the discovery of unknown live services in the north-west corner of the development area and the fact that most of the south-east corner of the development area had been covered in geotextile fabric and sealed beneath a compacted stone layer prior to the commencement of fieldwork. Two small trenches were initially machine-excavated and later linked together on the advice of the HEM monitoring officer. The completed trench (Fig. 1) covered an area of approximately 38 square metres.</p> <p><i>Overburden</i></p> <p>In the north of the trench the overburden was 0.5m deep and comprised dark greyish brown silty sandy clay topsoil (6) containing occasional fragments of brick. In the south of the trench the overburden was 0.54m deep and was more mixed comprising brick rubble, gravel and dark brownish grey topsoil (1). Modern artefacts, such as brick, glass pottery and slate were noted, though not retained.</p> <p><i>Fieldwork results (Fig. 2)</i></p> <p>In the south-east of the trench was a rectangular brick surface (2), aligned north-west/south-east, and over 1.12m wide by 2.8m in length. The surface comprised one layer of unfrogged bricks dating to the 18th to early 19th century and occasional reused broken 19th century floor tiles. Traces of cream-coloured mortar were noted along the south and west sides of the surface indicating the probable position of former wall lines. To the west of the surface was a mixed dark brownish grey gravel deposit (3), 0.08m thick, containing fragments of modern pottery and glass, post-medieval brick and tile and pieces of clay tobacco pipe stem.</p>	

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In the north of the trench was a rectangular pit (9), 1.88m long by 1.06m wide and filled with dark brownish grey clay silt (10). The pit had vertical sides and was excavated to a depth of 0.27m. Finds were of clearly modern date and included fragments of glass (not retained) and pottery dating to the 19th or early 20th century. The west side of the pit was truncated by a modern, north-west/south-east aligned, drain pipe. A second, similarly aligned, drain ran to the east of pit 9 towards a modern brick manhole in the centre of the trench.

Exposed along the north-west side of the site was a north-west/south-east aligned brick wall (7). The wall survived to three courses high and was composed of frogged bricks bonded with a cream coloured to brownish yellow mortar. The position of the wall exactly matched that of one of the recently demolished former property boundaries.

All of the above features were cut into the underlying natural strata which comprised yellow silty sand and gravel (5) interspersed with occasional pockets of darker, brownish yellow sand (4).

Discussion

All of the exposed features were of relatively modern (19th/20th century) date. They were orientated north-west/south-east and were thus all aligned with the positions of the previously demolished properties. Brick surface 2 probably represented the floor of a former 19th or 20th century outbuilding. Interestingly, this structure is not depicted on early editions of the Ordnance Survey (late 19th to mid-20th century) suggesting that it may date to the first half of the 19th century. Alternatively, it is possible that the building was a later structure that was not mapped, perhaps because it was only in use for a short period of time before its destruction.

Conclusion

No remains dating to the medieval or post-medieval periods were identified. Research aims regarding the origins and development of medieval and post-medieval settlement could not therefore be addressed, although the lack of medieval features and absence of medieval pottery suggests this part of the town may not have been built-up in the medieval period. A similar lack of post-medieval remains, apart from one very abraded residual pottery sherd, suggests that this area may not have been developed until as late as the 18th or early 19th century.

A finds summary and table is included as Appendix 1 and context data as Appendix 2.

A copy of this summary will be submitted to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>).

Previous Summaries/Reports: None

Author of Summary: T. Ennis

Date of Summary: October 2009

Finds data

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
2	Structure	1		Sample brick; 230 x 110 x 65mm, regular-sided, no frog, traces of mortar on upper and lower surfaces (Discarded)	18th-early 19th C
		1	780	Part-brick; 105 x 45mm, mortared underside, worn upper surface; flooring-brick (Discarded)	19th C
10	9	1	30	Animal bone; ?pelvis fragment, large mammal (Discarded)	-
		2	94	Roof tile fragments, both with peg holes, one square (Discarded)	Post med.
		6	52	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds (Discarded)	Post med/ modern

APPENDIX 2

Context data

All dimensions given in metres

Context	Type	Description	Period
1	Overburden	Dark brownish grey silt clay sand with abundant gravel and numerous modern artefacts (pottery, glass, slate etc), 0.54m thick	Modern
2	Structure	Brick and tile surface, 2.8m+ x 1.12m + x 0.15m thick	Modern
3	Layer	Dark brownish grey silt clay sand, 0.08m thick	Modern
4	Natural	Dark brownish yellow sand	-
5	Natural	Yellow silty sand and gravel	-
6	Overburden	Dark greyish brown silt sand clay with abundant gravel and occasional brick fragments, 0.50m thick	Modern
7	Wall	Brick wall, 3.5m+ x 0.43m x c. 0.18m+, cream & brownish yellow mortar	Modern
8	Natural	Brownish yellow sand and gravel	-
9	Pit	Rectangular, vertically sided, 1.88m x 1.06m x 0.27m+ deep	Modern
10	Fill of 9	Dark brownish grey clay silt	Modern

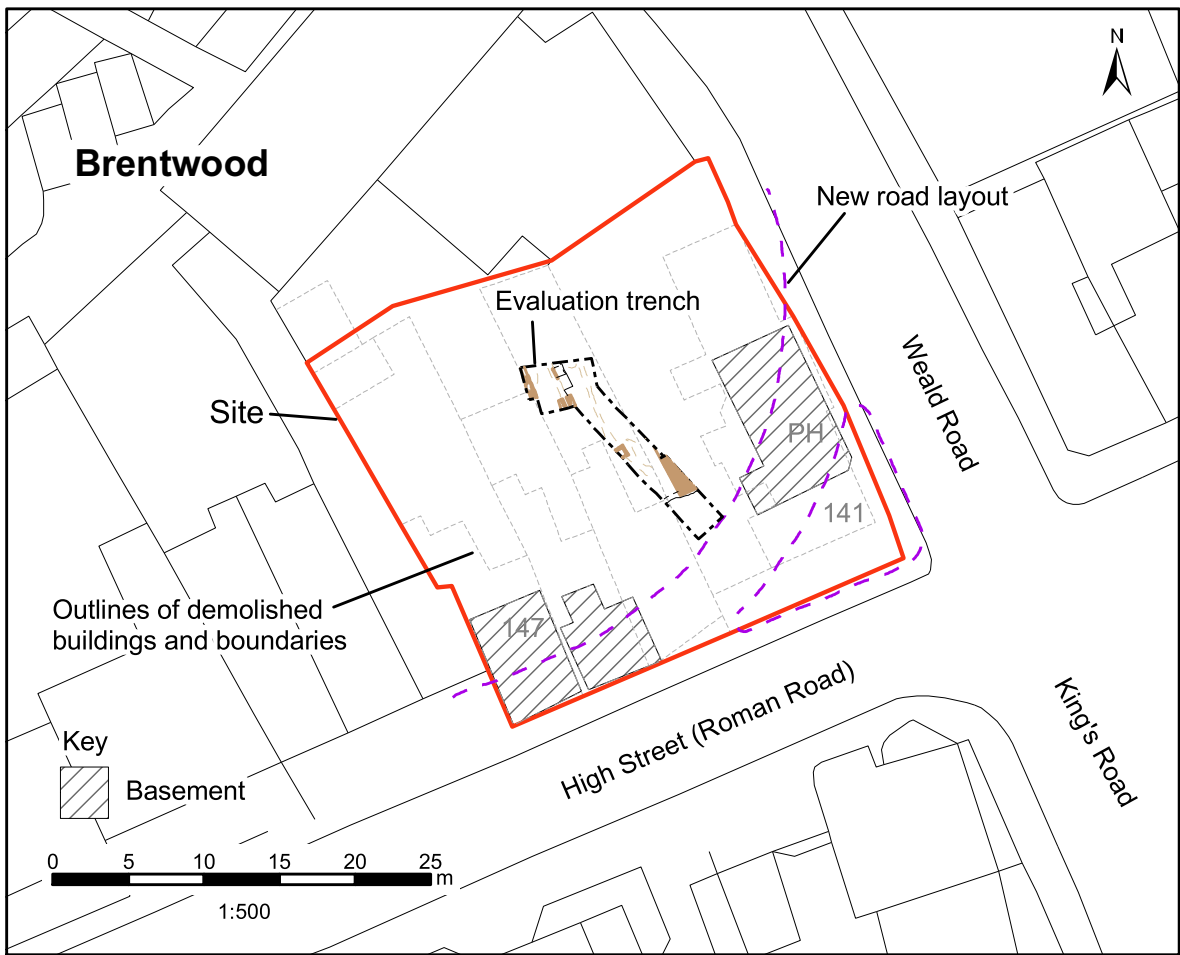


Fig.1. Site location

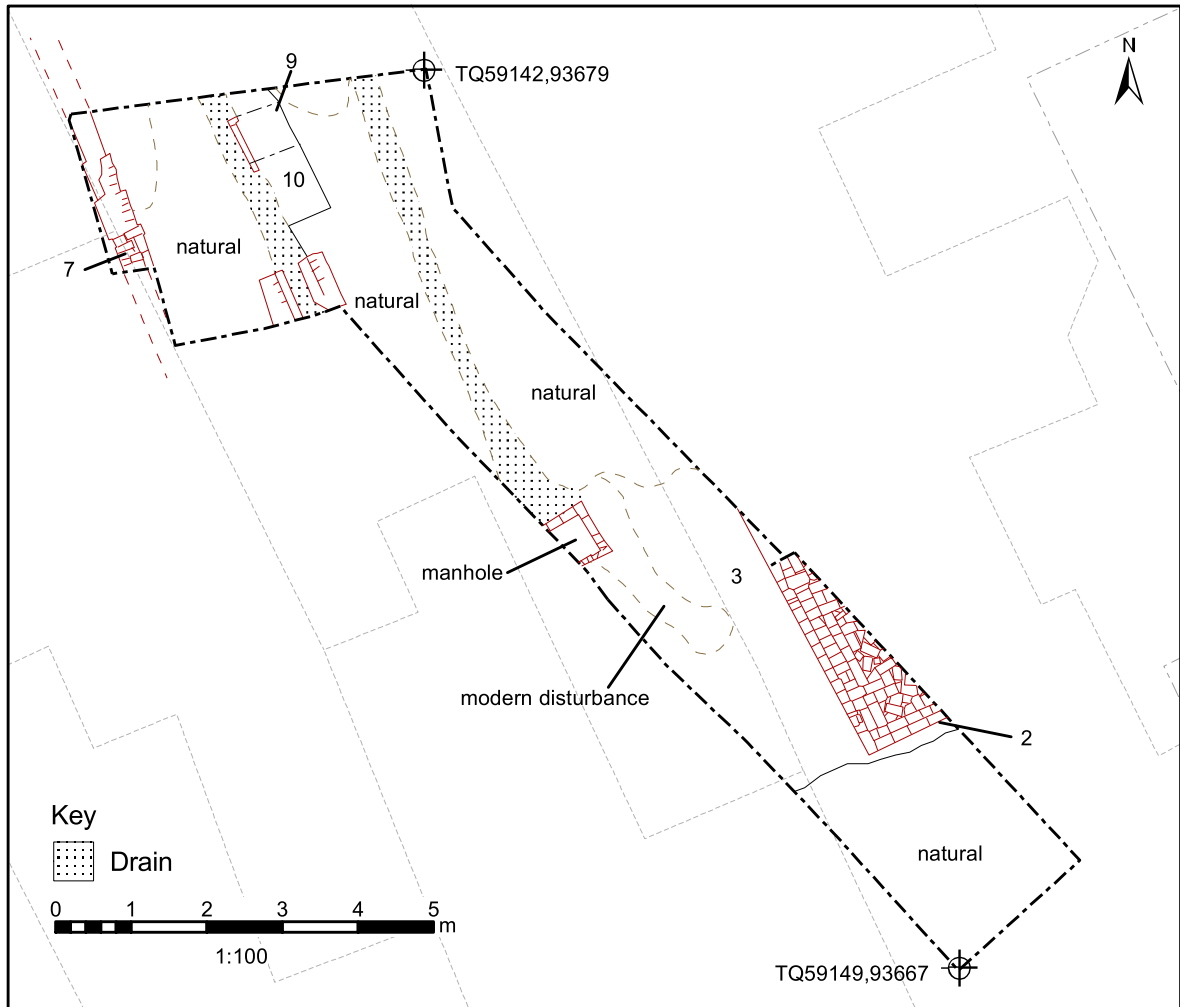


Fig.2. Trench detail

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