

**LAND AT LION LODGE
LION LANE
BILLERICAY
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

SEPTEMBER 2009

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LION LANE

BILLERICAY

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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Position: Project Manager	Date:

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	ECC HEM
	Essex HER

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

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LAND AT LION LODGE

LION LANE

BILLERICAY

ESSEX

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Client: E+M Design Partnership

NGR: TQ 6731 9452

Site Code: BL18

Planning Ref: BAS/0461/08

Oasis No.: essexcou1- 63953

Date of Fieldwork: 6th to 8th July 2009

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was carried out on land at Lion Lodge, Lion Lane, Billericay, in advance of proposed residential development. One large trench, covering 48 square metres, was excavated in the garden, at the rear of the property.

No remains of Prehistoric, Roman or Saxon date were identified. Two sherds of residual medieval pottery were recovered, but no features were found to indicate that this backland area of Billericay was actively used in the medieval or early post-medieval period.

The earliest archaeological feature investigated was a large sand or gravel quarry containing pottery dating it to the 18th century and it is likely that the quarried material was used in contemporary building projects on the near-by High Street.

A Victorian rubbish pit was also excavated, along with three other pits and a gully dating to the 19th or 20th century. Two animal burials were noted in the south of the trench.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching carried out on land at Lion Lodge, Lion Lane, Billericay, Essex, in advance of the proposed construction of six flats with access and parking. The evaluation was undertaken by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) on behalf of the E+M Design Partnership.

As the site was located within an area of archaeological potential, a full archaeological condition was placed on planning consent (planning application ref: BAS/0461/08), following advice given by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM) based on Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (DoE 1990). The investigation was carried out in accordance with an archaeological design brief issued by ECC HEM (2009) and a written scheme of investigation prepared by the ECC FAU (2009).

The fieldwork was to consist initially of a trench-based evaluation, but if significant remains were found an area excavation may have been required if the identified features/deposits could not be preserved *in situ*.

Copies of this report will be supplied to the E+M Design Partnership, ECC HEM and the Essex Historic Environment Record. 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>). The site archive and copies of the report will be deposited at Chelmsford Museum.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and Geology (Fig. 1)

The site is located within the historic core of Billericay, on the north side of Lion Lane (TQ 6731 9452). The land slopes gently from north to south. The southern half of the plot was covered by an existing building (Lion Lodge), garage and associated outbuildings that were due to be demolished, while the northern half was used as garden. The garden was divided into three main areas. To the immediate north of the house was a paved patio which was terraced slightly into the slope, beyond which was a raised walled border, an upstanding pond and set of steps leading up to a large lawn at the rear of the property.

Billericay lies on a north-south ridge of London Clay capped by gravel. In the vicinity of the development area gravel of the Stanmore Formation overlies Bagshot Formation sand.

2.2 Archaeology and History (Fig. 1)

This archaeological and historical background is based on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held by Essex County Council at County Hall, Chelmsford and the Historic Towns Project Assessment Report for Billericay (Medlycott 1999).

Late Iron Age and Roman settlement is known to the north and south of the town, with the latter location exhibiting urban characteristics in the Roman period. There is no evidence of occupation in the Saxon period.

Billericay was founded in the 13th century by the monks of Stratford Langthorne Abbey. A market is recorded by 1253, while a chapel dedicated to St John was founded in 1345 and rebuilt in brick in the 15th century (EHER 5411). The Red Lion Inn at the junction of High Street and Lion Lane also dates to the 15th century (EHER 25927).

Post-medieval expansion of the town took the form of ribbon development along existing medieval streets. The proposed development site lies off Lion Lane and to the rear of the High Street and has the potential for remains of medieval and early post-medieval date to survive.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

The initial aim of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition and significance of any surviving remains within the development area. The results of the evaluation will be used by the HEM monitoring officer to determine the need for any mitigation measures (e.g. area excavation).

Specific research aims were to identify any:

- Evidence of medieval or post-medieval occupation, its nature and extent;
- Evidence for the relationship of any medieval/ post-medieval occupation with the development of the historic town;
- Evidence for any activity pre-dating the foundation of the town.

3.2 Objectives

A major research priority in the regional research agenda is to establish the origins, date character, and development of medieval towns. A further research priority is to establish the date and character of any settlement or landscape elements pre-dating the town.

In the event of significant discoveries the report would seek to identify appropriate research objectives for any future work, 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).

4.0 METHOD

A single evaluation trench, covering 48 square metres, was excavated under archaeological supervision using a 360° tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed bucket. Trench location was limited to the very rear of the property due to the presence of a 5m wide terraced patio area, with underlying services, adjacent to the north side of the building. Further limitations were imposed by the presence of a large pond to the north of the patio, several tall trees, shrubs and a potentially live electricity cable in the east of the property.

The trench was cleaned and potential features were hand-excavated. Standard ECC FAU excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout. ECC FAU is a Registered Archaeological Organisation with the Institute of Field of Archaeologists (IFA) and all work was carried out in accordance with IFA by-laws and guidelines (IFA 1997; 2001) and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003).

5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS

Archaeological features of both post-medieval and modern date were present in the evaluation trench. Detailed context information is presented in Appendix 2.

The trench varied in depth from 0.50m to 0.68m, being deepest at the north-east and north-west extremities. The overburden consisted of 0.20m of dark grey topsoil above varying amounts of mid to dark grey subsoil containing a variety of inclusions, including fragments of roof tile, coal and modern glass. The subsoil also contained pebbles which became more common in the eastern part of the trench where the subsoil overlay undisturbed natural deposits of orange sandy gravel.

During machining, a pathway (4) constructed from small to medium sized-pebbles, was noted running north-west/south-east along the southern edge of the trench and crossing the trench in the west to continue in a north-easterly direction. The path was located directly below the topsoil and appeared to consist of two courses of pebbles intermixed with mid to dark grey clay silt. The upper pebbles were in part bounded by a number of modern red edging bricks.

5.1 Excavated features (Fig. 2)

Much of the western half of the trench was occupied by a large cut feature (2) over 14m in length but comparatively shallow at 0.4m deep where excavated. It was filled with mixed sandy clay silt that varied in colour from orange to yellow to greyish brown and appeared to contain a fairly high percentage of re-deposited natural material. The fill was investigated in two places. It was fully excavated, revealing a flat bottom, as context 1 and partly excavated to a depth of 0.35m as context 3. Pottery recovered from the fill suggests a late 18th century date for the backfilling of this feature. A number of shallow, irregular, greyish brown silty patches were noted in the top of fill, one of which (14) produced a further sherd of 18th century pottery. Three later features (7, 9 and 12) (Plate 1) were excavated in the eastern part of the trench. Pit 7 was 0.37m deep and filled with dark greyish brown silty clay (8) that contained a comparatively large amount of Victorian pottery and six pieces of clay pipe, one of which had a stamped bowl. Gully 9 was over 3.6m long, 0.26m deep and contained two fills (10 and 11), whilst near-by pit 12 was 1.8m long, 0.26m deep and contained a single dark greyish brown silty clay fill (13). Both contained pottery suggesting a Victorian or early 20th century date for their backfilling.

A number of features and localised deposits were recorded in the south-west arm of the trench between a demolished garden wall of probable 18th/19th century date and a modern wall dividing the border area from the patio. Overburden in this area was 0.58m thick and comprised recent dark grey topsoil overlying mixed brown clay silt with further buried dark grey topsoil, containing fragments of modern glass, beneath. A cat burial was noted below the upper topsoil during machining.

Two features were present in the base of the trench, one a small oval pit (6) (not illustrated) containing a residual sherd of 18th century pottery, and the other the grave of a small pig (Plate 2). Finds associated with the pig skeleton indicated a 19th or 20th century date for its deposition.. Both features cut a deposit of mid greyish brown sandy clay silt (15) that was also of 19th or 20th century date and which overlay natural gravel.

6.0 FINDS by Joyce Compton

Finds were recovered from nine 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.

6.1 Pottery by Helen Walker

A total of sixty-three sherds of pottery, weighing 957g, was excavated from nine contexts. Almost all is post-1750. The earliest pottery comprises a very abraded sherd in a fine sandy orange fabric; it shows the remains of an external glaze and is likely to be medieval or late medieval. There is also a sherd of unglazed Mill Green-type ware, showing a reduced surface and white slip-painting. This is likely to have been manufactured at nearby Mill Green, or at the village of Stock (8km and 4km to the north of Billericay respectively), and is datable to the 15th to 16th centuries. Both these sherds are residual in later contexts.

The latest pottery from pit/quarry 2 comprises sherds of creamware and Staffordshire-type white salt-glazed stoneware providing a late 18th-century date for this feature. A further sherd of Staffordshire-type white salt-glazed stoneware was found in layer 14. Layer 14 also produced what appears to be a sherd of Surrey-Hampshire white ware, with an all over green glaze. This ware spans the later 16th to 17th centuries and is therefore residual in this context. Further sherds of creamware and Staffordshire-type white salt-glazed stoneware are residual in later contexts and sherds of intrinsic interest comprise a plate rim of Queen's shape, dating from c.1765-75, and a hollow ware sherd exhibiting lathe-turned banding with the slightly later date of c.1780-1800, both in creamware.

The largest collection of pottery came from pit 7 and is most likely to be Victorian. Most of the pottery comprises modern white earthenware, often showing blue transfer-printed decoration. One base sherd is stamped 'Copeland' and shows a diamond registration mark indicating that the design was patented in 1855 (Fisher 1970, 68). There is a mixture of kitchen and table wares in this pit, indicating the pottery is from both living and service areas. A fair amount of post-medieval red earthenware is present; this need not be residual as production continued into the 19th century, but was mainly confined to utilitarian vessels such as the storage jar fragments found here. Other features/contexts that are likely to be Victorian or early 20th century are gully 9, pit 12 and layer 15. Of interest from gully 9 is a sherd of residual Metropolitan slipware, this is mainly a 17th-century type, manufactured at Harlow and elsewhere in Essex, but it would seem it carried on for local consumption well into the 18th century (Walker 2002, 289). Most of the occupation would appear to span the

later 18th to 19th centuries, but there is slight evidence for activity in the late medieval and post-medieval periods.

6.2 Brick and tile

Seven contexts produced brick and tile fragments, amounting to forty-two pieces, weighing 3.4kg. The assemblage is fragmentary, with few distinguishing characteristics, and is likely to be post-medieval or modern in date.

6.3 Clay tobacco pipes

Clay tobacco pipes, all stems apart from one complete bowl, were recovered from five contexts. The complete bowl, with spur, came from the fill of pit 7. There is a blurred stamp on the front of the bowl, above the stem, but only part (ROMFORD) can be deciphered. The style of both the pipe and the lettering indicates a relatively recent date, perhaps 19th century.

6.4 Glass

Two contexts produced glass. A small weathered green bottle body sherd of post-medieval date came from fill 3 of pit/quarry 2. Animal burial 16 contained a small sherd of colourless window glass and the base and joining body sherds from a cylindrical wine bottle of 19th or 20th century date.

6.5 Animal bone and shell

Animal burial 16 was recorded *in situ* and no bone was collected. The animal has been identified as pig from photographic evidence. The only other animal bone came from the fill of pit 12 and comprises a vertebra spine from a medium-sized mammal. Shell, all of which is oyster, was found in three contexts and amounts to just four pieces, weighing 26g.

6.6 Other finds

A piece of mortar was found in fill 1 of pit/quarry 2 and a piece of slate came from fill 10 of gully 9. Layer 15 produced a single iron nail.

6.7 Comments on the assemblage

A range of relatively recent finds was recovered. Several earlier sherds of pottery are residual in later features, but there is nothing else in the assemblage which certainly dates to the 18th century or earlier. Most of the undatable material, along with the glass and brick and tile, has been discarded following recording. The remaining finds should be retained, at least in the short term, but further discard could take place at the archiving stage.

7.0 DISCUSSION

Several archaeological features were identified. The oldest and largest, feature 2, dated to the 18th century. The size of the feature, and the fact that it was cut into natural sandy gravel suggested that it was most likely originally dug as a sand or gravel quarry. The re-deposited nature of much of the fill might indicate that waste material from the quarrying exercise was incorporated into the backfill. The remainder of the archaeological features in the trench appear to be later and date to the 19th or 20th century when the rear of the property was subsequently in use as a garden. On the 1st edition (1867-95) 25 inch Ordnance Survey the area is shown as a rectangular garden bounded to the west by the (still *in situ*) “wavy” wall and to the south by the (demolished) 18th/19th century garden wall. Within the garden, a pathway in a similar position to that of pathway 4 is also depicted.

8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

No features dating to the Roman, Saxon or medieval periods were identified. Two sherds of locally made medieval pottery were recovered from later contexts but do little more than suggest activity in the vicinity at this time.

The lack of early remains mean few of the research aims and objectives of the project could be met. The evaluation trench was located approximately 50m from the High Street and was perhaps situated slightly beyond any focus of medieval or early post-medieval backland activity. As much of the trench was occupied by the 18th century quarry it is also feasible that this may have removed or obscured any earlier remains that may have originally been present.

It should perhaps be noted that previous archaeological investigations of backland areas within Billericay have generally proven disappointing (Medlycott 1999, 13). Disturbance from post-medieval gravel quarrying was found at the Fold site to the east of the High Street (HER 16071) and is not uncommon in other parts of the town (Medlycott 1999, 13). Georgian Billericay was relatively prosperous and there are far more 18th century listed buildings in Billericay than from any other period. It is likely that sand or gravel from the Lion Lodge site was used in a near-by construction project, perhaps at 107 High Street where the house was built in the 18th century or at the Red Lion Inn which was considerably altered at this time.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Essex CC FAU thanks the E + M Design Partnership for commissioning the work, especially John Cressey for his help throughout the project. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Trevor Ennis and Andrew Lewesy of the ECC Field Archaeology Unit. Finds were processed by Phil McMichael and analysed by Joyce Compton and Helen Walker. The report was prepared by Trevor Ennis with illustrations by Andrew Lewsey. The project was managed by Adrian Scruby and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Richard Havis of ECC HEM.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

All dimensions given in metres

Context	Type	Description	Period
1	Fill of 2	Orange brown to greyish brown sandy clay silt	Late 18th century
2	Pit/quarry	14m+ x 3m+ x 0.4m deep	Late 18th century
3	Fill of 2	Mid greyish brown, yellow and orange sandy clay silt	Late 18th century
4	Path	14m+ x 1.1m x 0.3m deep, pebbles bordered by smooth red edging bricks (195 mm x 45 mm x 100 mm+)	19th/20th century
5	Fill of 6	Dark grey ashy silt	19th/20th century
6	Pit	Oval, 0.5m x 0.3m x 0.08m deep	19th/20th century
7	Pit	Oval, 0.95m x 0.8m+ x 0.37m deep	19th century
8	Fill of 7	Dark greyish brown silty clay	19th century
9	Gully	3.6m+ x 0.8m+ x 0.26m deep	19th/20th century
10	Fill of 9	Dark tan sandy silt, 0.2m thick	19th/20th century
11	Fill of 9	Dark greyish brown silty clay, 0.09m thick	19th/20th century
12	Pit	Oval, 1.8m x 0.43m+ x 0.26m deep	19th/20th century
13	Fill of 12	Dark greyish brown silty clay, 0.26m deep	19th/20th century
14	Layer	Mid greyish brown sandy clay silt (unexcavated)	Late 18th century
15	Layer	Mid greyish brown sandy clay silt	19th/20th century
16	Finds	associated with pig burial	19th/20th century

APPENDIX 2: FINDS DATA

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
1	2	6	200	Mortar/plaster (Discarded)	-
		1	4	Clay pipe stem	Post med.
		4	550	Brick fragments (3/178g discarded)	Post med.
		17	1205	Roof tile fragments, four with peg holes (All discarded)	Post med.
		2	16	Pottery; rim and body sherds	Post med.
3	2	1	2	Glass; green bottle body sherd, weathered	Post med.
		3	414	Brick fragments, depth 60mm (2/112g discarded)	Post med.
		1	60	Roof tile fragment (Discarded)	Post med.
		9	18	Pottery; body sherds, mostly creamware	Post med.
5	6	6	30	Brick fragments, inc two in buff clay (Discarded)	Post med.
		1	4	Pottery; base sherd	Post med.
8	7	1	12	Shell; oyster, one valve (Discarded)	-
		1	48	Slate (Discarded)	-
		6	16	Clay pipes; complete bowl, with spur, stamped P**** ROMFORD on front above stem, and stems	Post med.
		4	444	Roof tile fragments, two with peg holes (Discarded)	Post med.
		36	855	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds	Modern
10	9	2	4	Shell; oyster fragments (Discarded)	-
		4	8	Clay pipe stems	Post med.
		2	472	Roof tile fragment (Discarded)	Post med.
		3	16	Pottery; rim and body sherds	Modern
13	12	1	4	Animal bone; vertebra spine, medium-sized mammal	-
		1	10	Shell; oyster, one valve (Discarded)	-
		2	6	Clay pipe stems	Post med.
		1	42	Roof tile fragment (Discarded)	Post med.
		6	34	Pottery; rim and body sherds	Modern
14	Layer	1	2	Clay pipe stem	Post med.
		2	12	Pottery; body sherds	Post med.
15	Layer	1	40	Iron nail (Discarded)	-
		1	70	Brick fragment (Discarded)	Post med.
		3	100	Roof tile fragments (Discarded)	Post med.
		4	8	Pottery; base and body sherds	Modern
16	Finds	1	2	Glass; colourless window sherd (Discarded)	Modern
		3	72	Glass; green bottle base and body sherds (Discarded)	Modern
		1	1	Pottery; body sherd	Modern

APPENDIX 3: POTTERY

All weights in grams

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
1	2	1	5	Mill Green-type ware sherd, reduced 'skin' and slip-painted	15th to 16th C
		1	11	Post-medieval red earthenware thickened rim from bowl or dish with internal glaze	late 16th to 19th C
3	2	8	17	Creamware sherds	mid 18th to early 19th C
		1	1	Staffordshire-type white salt glazed stoneware, later type	late 18th C
5	6	1	4	Staffordshire-type white salt glazed stoneware footing base from plate or saucer	residual pot 1720s to 1770s
8	7	7	401	Post-medieval red earthenware including sherds from storage jars and the rim of a small bead rim bowl, all glazed	17th to 19th C
		1	10	Black-glazed ware sherd	17th to 19th C
		1	5	Creamware plate rim, Queen's shape	from 1765-75
		2	38	Modern stoneware	19th to early 20th C
		1	10	Slipped kitchen earthenware	19th to early 20th C
		4	107	Yellow ware including plain bowl rim and flanged rim	late 18th to early 20th C
		20	277	Modern white earthenware including part of large undecorated hemispherical bowl with footing base, and a hand-painted sherd body sherd. Most show blue-transfer prints, either in willow pattern, other Chinoiserie styles or floral patterns, vessel forms include a flanged rim perhaps from a chamber pot, part of a cup and rims from dishes and plates. One base sherd has a back stamp in brown 'Copeland' and a diamond registration mark, which indicates the pattern was registered in 1855 (Fisher 1970, 68)	1855 or later
10	9	1	3	Metropolitan slipware body sherd from hollow ware with decoration on the outside	c.1725 to 18th C
		1	14	Creamware, flanged dish or plate rim, plain	later 18th to early 19th C
		1	1	Porcelain hollow ware sherd with polychrome painting	19th to 20th C
13	12	1	6	Post-medieval red earthenware, body sherd with internal glaze	late 16th to 19th C
		4	25	Creamware including sherds from plates/dishes and a hollow ware sherd showing lathe-turned banding	c.1780-1800
		1	2	Modern stoneware rim from drinking vessel with iron wash around rim, lead glazed	19th to early 20th C
14	Layer	1	8	Surrey-Hampshire white ware, hollow ware sherd with all over green glaze	late 16th to 17th C or later
		1	3	Staffordshire-type salt-glazed stoneware sherd from a hollow ware	1720s to 1770s
15	Layer	1	3	Body sherd with fine sandy orange fabric, very abraded but showing remnants of external glaze, most likely medieval or late medieval	13th to 16th C
		1	4	English salt-glazed stoneware base sherd	late 17th to 19th C
		1	1	Modern white earthenware sherd showing blue transfer print	19th to 20th C
16	Finds	1	1	Modern white earthenware sherd showing blue transfer print	19th to 20th C
		63	957		

APPENDIX 4: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE

Site Name: Land at Lion Lodge, Lion Lane, Billericay

Site Code: BL18

Index to Archive:

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Brief
- 1.2 Written Scheme of Investigation

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 16)
- 3.3 1 Trench Record sheets
- 3.4 Plan Register
- 3.5 Section Register
- 3.6 1 x A4 Section sheet
- 3.7 Levels Register
- 3.8 Trench location plan
- 3.9 Photographic Register
- 3.10 Site Photographic Record (1 set of colour prints & 1 set of digital images on disk)
- 3.11 Miscellaneous notes/plans

Not in File

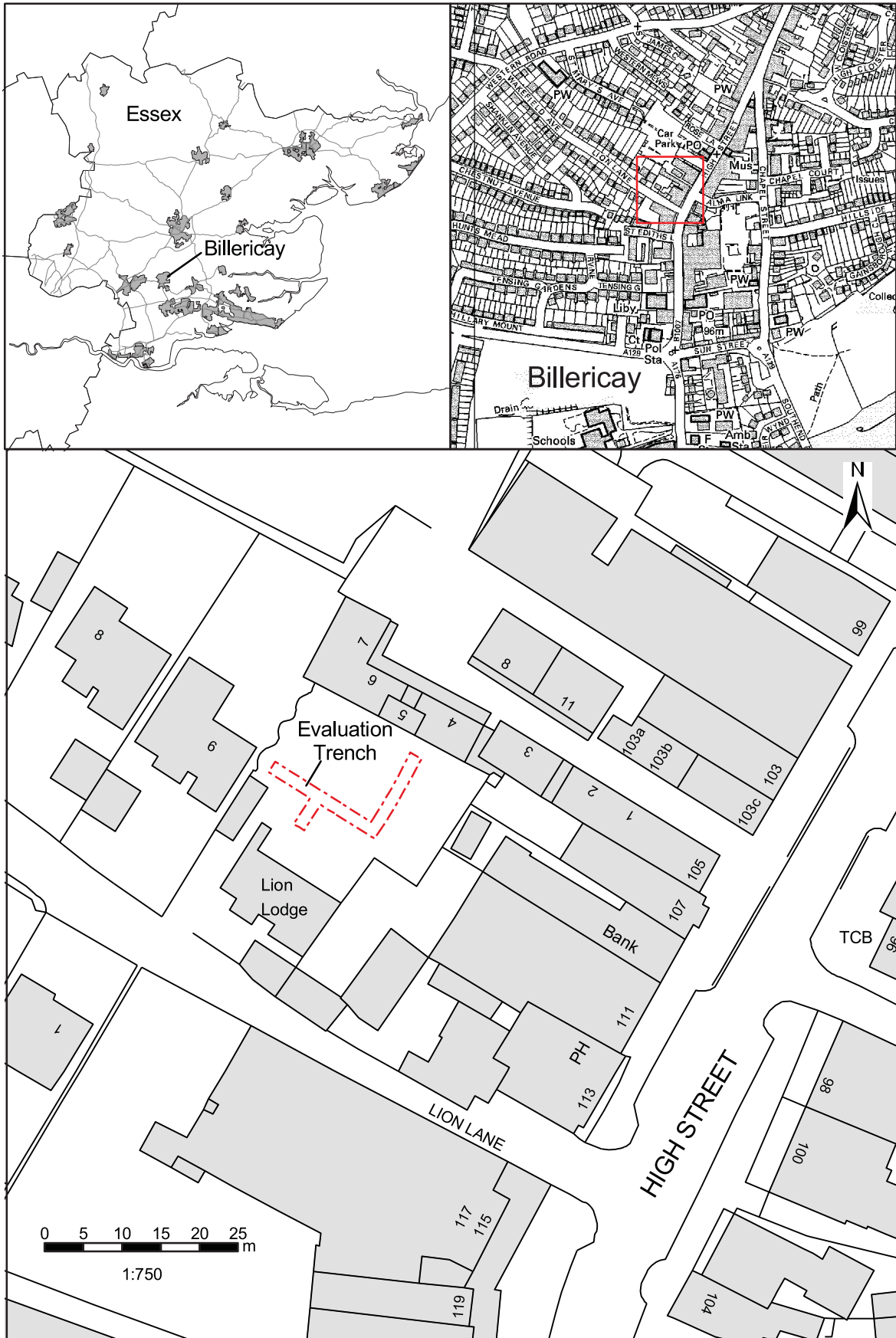
2 large plans

Finds

The retained finds occupy less than one box.

APPENDIX 5: ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

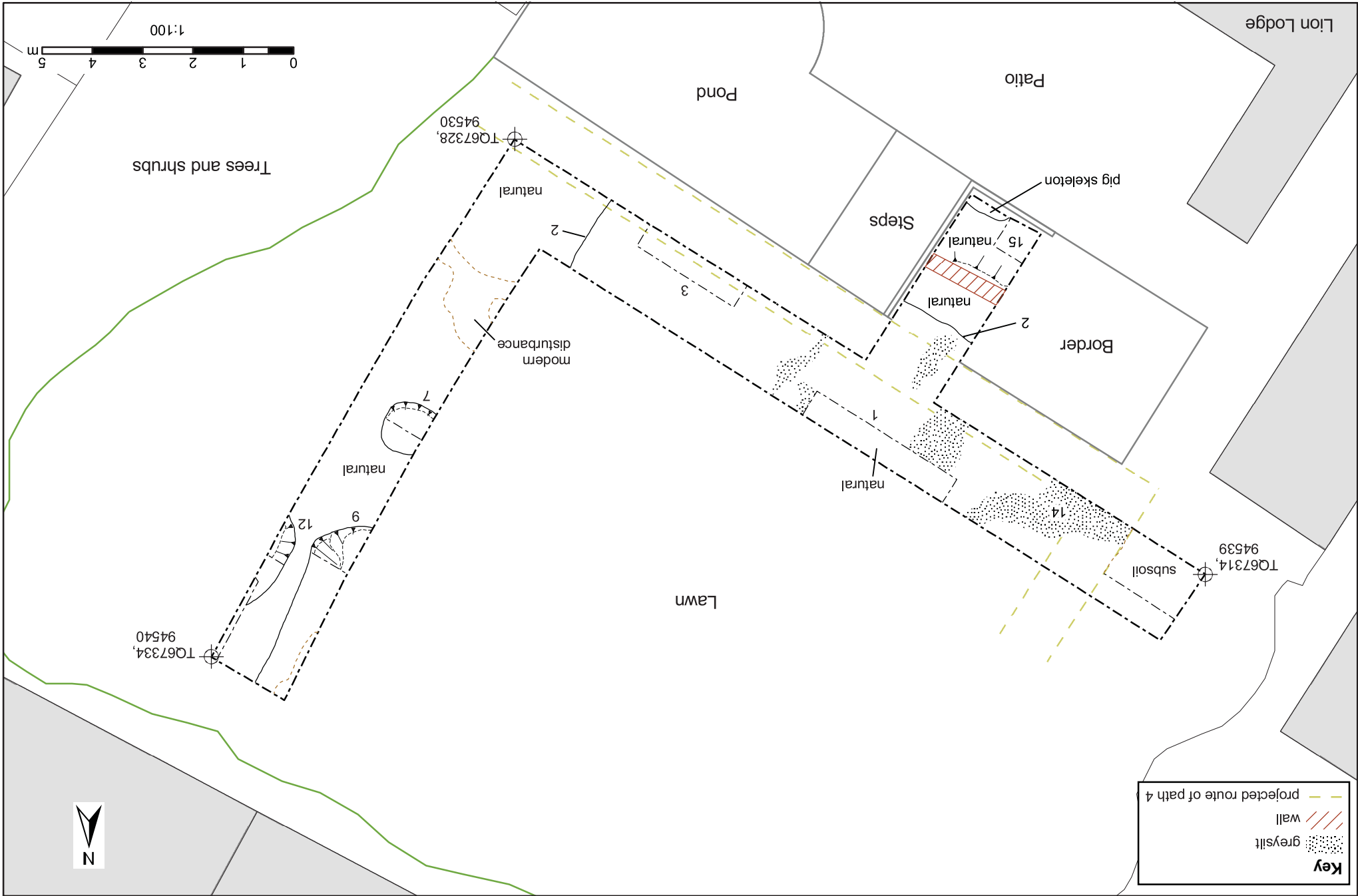
Site name/Address: Land at Lion Lodge, Lion Lane, Billericay, Essex	
Parishes: Billericay	District: Basildon
NGR: TQ 6731 9452	Site Code: BL18
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: T. Ennis, ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Dates of Work: 6th to 8th July 2009	Size of Area Investigated: c.775 sq m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Chelmsford	Funding source: Client
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos.: -
Final Report: EAH summary	Oasis No.: essexcou1- 63953
Periods Represented: Post-medieval, modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was carried out on land at Lion Lodge, Lion Lane, Billericay, in advance of proposed residential development. One large trench, covering 48 square metres, was excavated in the garden at the rear of the property.</p> <p>No remains of Prehistoric, Roman or Saxon date were identified. Two sherds of residual medieval pottery were recovered, but no features were found to indicate that this backland area of Billericay was actively used in the medieval or early post-medieval period.</p> <p>The earliest archaeological feature investigated was a large sand or gravel quarry containing pottery dating it to the 18th century and it is likely that the quarried material was used in contemporary building projects on the near-by High Street.</p> <p>A Victorian rubbish pit was also excavated, along with three other pits and a gully dating to the 19th or 20th century. Two animal burials were noted in the south of the trench.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: none	
Author of Summary: T. Ennis	Date of Summary: September 2009



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Fig.1. Site location

Fig.2. Evaluation trench plan



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Plate 1. Features 7, 9 and 12 (1m scale)



Plate 2. Pig skeleton (0.5m scale)