

**ELM COTTAGE
NEWMARKET ROAD
GREAT CHESTERFORD
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION



**Essex County Council
FIELD ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT
November 2009**

**ELM COTTAGE
NEWMARKET ROAD
GREAT CHESTERFORD
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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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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CONTENTS

	<i>Page No.</i>
SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	3
2. BACKGROUND	3
2.1 Location, Geography and Topography	
2.2 History and archaeology	
3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES	5
3.1 Project Aims	
3.2 Objectives	
4. METHOD	5
5. FIELDWORK RESULTS	6
5.1 Roman	
5.2 Post-medieval	
6. FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL	8
6.1 Finds	
6.2 Environmental material	
7. CONCLUSIONS & ASSESSMENT	10
Acknowledgements	11
Bibliography	12
APPENDICES	
Appendix 1: Fieldwork Data	13
Appendix 3: Finds and Environmental Material	14
Appendix 4: Archive Index	15
Appendix 5: EHER Summary	16
FIGURES	
Figure 1. Location plan and area of archaeological monitoring	
Figure 2. Evaluation trench plans and section	
PLATES	
Plate 1. Wall 17, looking north-east	
Plate 2. Wall 17, looking north-east	
Plate 3. Layer 5 and Walls 6 and 8, looking north-east	
Plate 4. Chalk Surface 2 and Wall 3, looking north-east	
Plate 5. Test pit, looking south-west	

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SUMMARY

Client: Mrs. P. Maurice
FAU Project No: 2125
NGR: TL 5041 4320
Planning Application No.: UTT/1045/09/FUL
Site Code: GC49
OASIS No: essexcou1-66048
Date of Fieldwork: 22/10/09 – 26/10/09

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at Elm Cottage, Newmarket Road, Great Chesterford in advance of two proposed extensions to the existing building. A trial trench measuring 3.2m x 0.6m was hand-excavated along the proposed south-eastern footing of the music room extension. A 1m x1m test pit was also hand-excavated in the area proposed for the new kitchen/bedroom extension. The site is situated to the north of the centre of Great Chesterford and is within the area of the Scheduled Ancient Monument which encompasses both the early Roman fort and later Roman town remains. The specific objective of this work was to establish the presence of the western defensive wall of the late Roman town which, on the strength of previous discoveries in the surrounding vicinity, was judged to run beneath the cottage and the site of the proposed music room extension to the south.

Substantial remains of the town wall foundation were confirmed to be present in the north-eastern end of the music room trench, comprising large flint nodules and chalk rubble within a sandy mortar matrix. Stratified Roman deposits of apparent dumped material were also identified against its south-western (interior) side. The overlying archaeological activity comprised a series of modern (Victorian) walls and surfaces, presumably belonging to an ancillary building which is shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. The test pit located to the rear of the house contained two modern services and a chalk and tile layer overlying a post-medieval buried soil which also contained one residual fragment of Roman brick.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of archaeological evaluation at Elm Cottage, Newmarket Road, Great Chesterford, Essex conducted by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU), prior to the construction of a new music room on the south-east side of the house and a new kitchen/bedroom extension on the south-west side of the house. The fieldwork was undertaken in response to a condition (UTT/1045/09/FUL) placed upon the new development by Uttlesford District Council following advice from the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management Team (ECC HEM) based on Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (DoE 1990). The site is situated within the limits of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 24871). The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with a brief issued by ECC HEM (2009) and a written scheme of investigation by ECC FAU (2009) and was monitored by ECC HEM on behalf of the local planning authority.

Bound and digital copies of this report will be supplied to Uttlesford District Council, ECC HEM and the Essex Historic Environment Record. A digital copy of the report will be uploaded on the online access to the index of archaeological investigations (www.oasis.ac.uk). The full site archive will be retained by the landowner.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Location, Geology and Topography

Elm Cottage is located on the west side of Newmarket Road, on the north-western outskirts of the village of Great Chesterford (NGR TL 5041 4320). It lies to the east of the M11 and railway line, and a number of ponds or former gravel quarries (Fig. 1).

The property is located within an area of agricultural land, occupying a roughly rectangular plot alongside the road frontage (Fig.1). It currently comprises a dwelling, of probable 18th century construction date, with a wooden shed to its rear and a coal shed and possible outdoor lavatory structure along the north-western property boundary. A gravelled driveway is located along the north-western edge of the site while the remainder of the plot is laid to garden. The garden to the south of the house is bounded on the east and south by a historic wall which incorporates both stone and brick in its build.

The geology of Great Chesterford comprises river terrace deposits of sandy gravel and bands of clay above chalk and chalky boulder clay.

2.2 History and Archaeology

The following archaeological and historical background references the Essex Historic Environment Record and previous fieldwork at Great Chesterford.

Elm Cottage is located just east of centre of the Roman Fort at Great Chesterford, which dates to the period following the Boudican Revolt of AD60 (EHER 4942; SAM 24871). The fort's ditch was backfilled in the second half of the first century indicating that it was a short-lived, defensive structure.

Following the abandonment of the fort, the settlement focus gradually expanded northwards and developed into a small town. By the end of the second century it covered some 12 hectares. Following contraction in the 3rd century, expansion resumed in the fourth, culminating in the construction of defensive town walls (EHER 4015). The walls no longer survive as upstanding monuments but have been traced through aerial photographs, excavations and geophysical survey (e.g. Medlycott 1998, Wardill 2003). The town wall is thought to run through or along the eastern frontage of Elm Cottage. Where encountered within service trenches along Newmarket Road, just south of Elm Cottage (EHER 13908-10), the wall remains were found c.0.5m below ground level. Comprising large flints, stone, chalk and Roman brick in a mortar bond, the foundation remains were themselves approximately 0.4m deep; the upper portion of the wall probably having been deliberately robbed in antiquity.

The Enclosure map of c.1804 and the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map show the immediate vicinity around Elm Cottage to have changed little since the 1870s. The house is present in both maps, as is the boundary wall to the south and along the frontage. Land apportionment further to the south is slightly different, with small regular fields or paddocks to the rear and side that have since been simplified.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Aims

The aims of the archaeological investigation were threefold:

- to evaluate the potential for the presence and survival of archaeological deposits within the area of the extension footprints
- to establish whether any significant deposits that are present will be destroyed or damaged by the intended construction
- to determine what further archaeological mitigation might be required prior to or during construction

3.2 Objectives

The research objectives for the project sought to address those laid out in the *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000). The regional research framework identifies the investigation of walled Roman towns as a subject for further research. Urban development and its impact on the surrounding countryside are also identified as relevant research themes (Going and Plouviez 2000, 21)

The specific objectives of the investigation were:

- to determine the presence, nature and survival of remains of the late Roman town wall
- to identify and investigate settlement remains associated with occupation within the Roman town or the preceding fort

4. METHOD

The site was investigated by the targeted excavation of a 3.15m x 0.6m trench along the south-western footing of the Music Room extension and a 1m x 1m test pit within the footprint of the proposed kitchen/bedroom extension (Fig. 1). Both the test pit and the trench were hand-excavated. The trench and test pit represent 5% of the site area. All identifiable archaeological deposits were investigated and recorded to a maximum depth of 1m. The ECC HEM monitoring officer advised during a site visit that deeper excavation was not necessary as the proposed construction method would not impact upon any deeper deposits.

The archaeological fieldwork was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (IFA 1999) and the Association of Local Government Officers' *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003). The ECC FAU uses its own recording system (ECC FAU 2006).

5. FIELDWORK RESULTS

The excavation revealed the footings of the late Roman town wall along with three Roman layers built up against its south-western edge. The next stage of archaeological activity comprised two modern walls, one of which was situated above the footings of the Roman wall. Another modern wall and a contemporary chalk surface are thought to be the remains of a structure depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey. The various features and deposits are described below. Further context details are presented in Appendix 1.

5.1 Roman

A section of the remaining Roman town wall foundation (Plates 1 and 2) was revealed in the north-eastern end of the music room trench (Fig.2). The wall is aligned north-north-west to south-south-east and is present 0.51m below modern ground level to a depth of at least 0.91m. It must be noted here that excavation was halted at 0.91m below ground level in the north-eastern end of the trench and 0.99m in the south-western trench. It is therefore likely to extend to a significantly greater depth. The surviving foundation (17) measures over 1.3m wide, extending beyond the north-eastern edge of the trench. The fabric of the wall comprises large flint nodules with the occasional small chalk block, bonded with sand mortar and matches that discovered just a little further south along Newmarket Road (Brooks and Wallis 1991).

The apparent NNE-SSW alignment is likely to be slightly misleading, as the eastern side of the wall foundation was not revealed. The wall is thought to follow more of a north-west to south-east alignment at this point in order to line up with other known and excavated sections (e.g. Brooks and Wallis 1991). It is probable that the south-western edge of the foundation was disturbed, possibly by root action (all of the deposits within the music room trench were heavily disturbed). Layer 19 (see below) varied in appearance and consistence at its point of contact with the foundation, whereupon it became considerably sandier and took on a lighter colouring, perhaps indicating that this area of the deposit was mixed with the truncated remains of the wall foundation.

Layer 19 (Fig.2, plates 1 and 2) extended beyond the south-western edge of the trench. It was the lowest layer encountered and was only partially excavated. The deposit abutted the western edge of Wall 17. It comprised dark red brown sandy silt and contained Roman pottery. Also contained within the fill were small blocks of chalk and large flint nodules.

Layer 20 was situated above layer 19. It comprised dark orange slightly silty sand and was present as a very thin layer extending from the southern edge of the wall. This layer was sterile of archaeological finds.

Layer 12 was the uppermost Roman layer to the west of Wall 17. The layer comprised dark red brown sandy silt. Its composition and finds assemblage were very similar to Layer 19. Only a small quantity of animal bone, a small collection of pottery bodysherds, and brick and tile were present.

5.2 Post-medieval

The majority of the archaeological activity present within the music room trench can be ascribed to the post-medieval period. The earliest feature is likely to have been Cut 8 (Plate 3). This may have represented the original robber cut of the Roman wall or it may indicate modification of the earlier structure in order to create a new wall directly above (Wall 9). A thin layer (deposit 21) formed above/within the cut to a depth of 0.02m indicating that the cut was left open for a short period. Wall 9 was subsequently constructed on top and survived as a truncated remnant comprising flint nodules, chalk and ceramic tile bonded within a sandy mortar. This was overlain by the former topsoil (deposit 5) suggesting that the wall stood for only a short period, being created and demolished during the 19th century.

Wall 3 (Plates 3 and 4) was present in the south-western end of the trench, parallel to wall 9. Comprising large flint nodules bonded with limestone mortar, the wall footing (deposit 7) was present beneath a layer of large stones and disturbed bricks, which probably formed the above ground section of the wall. The construction cut (6) had vertical sides and a flat base. This may represent the south-western wall of a small structure abutting the extant garden wall, as depicted in the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. An uneven chalk surface (deposit 2) on a bedding layer of sandy mortar, brick and ceramic tile (deposit 4) was present to the north-east of Wall 3. The uneven nature of the surface may have been the result of root disturbance, as this area of the garden was recently used as a shrubbery and plant bed. It is likely that this was the part of the floor within the structure. Deposit 22 was situated in the south-western end of the trench against the exterior face of Wall 3. It contained a large

amount of chalk, brick and tile fragments, perhaps indicating that it was a dump of excess material used in the creation of the chalk surface (deposit 2) on the other side of the wall.

The excavation of the test pit in the area of the kitchen/bedroom extension, to the rear of the house and north-west of the music room trench (Plate 5) revealed two disused services which may have been associated with the possible former outside lavatory to the north-west. These lay below two modern surfacing layers (deposits 11 and 14), the lower of which was cut by the services. The services also cut through a post-medieval chalk, brick and ceramic tile layer (deposit 15), possibly a surface, which overlay a brown soil (deposit 16). Layer 16 contained modern and Roman ceramic building material. Excavation was halted at a depth of 0.46m, with the agreement of the ECC HEM officer, due to the presence of the modern services.

6.0 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL

6.1 Finds by Joyce Compton

Small groups of finds were recovered from a total of seven contexts, across one trench and a test pit. The test pit only produced finds from a single context (deposit 16). 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.

Pottery

Five contexts produced pottery, amounting to 24 sherds, weighing 188g. Pottery of Roman date forms 70% by weight of the total, but was found in just two contexts (layers 12 and 19). Layer 12 also contained a small rim sherd from a modern flowerpot. The Roman pottery from layer 12 comprises mainly coarse wares, which are not closely datable within the Roman period. Layer 19 contained two sherds of imported samian ware, one the base sherd from a form 33 cup, along with a sherd of Nene Valley colour-coated ware. The latter was popular for drinking vessels during the 3rd and 4th centuries, replacing samian which was in short supply by that time. The two samian sherds in layer 19 are therefore likely to be residual. On the whole the Roman pottery is likely to derive from deposition during the later Roman period.

Modern pottery (*i.e.* Victorian or later) was recovered from four contexts but amounts to just five sherds, weighing 56g. The types present comprise white earthenwares and stone

wares, all in common domestic use during the 19th and 20th centuries. The rim small sherd from a flowerpot is probably intrusive in layer 12.

Brick and tile

A small quantity of brick and tile, mostly of post-medieval date, was recovered from six contexts in total. The post-medieval assemblage (eight pieces, weighing 1309g) is largely composed of bricks and includes a Suffolk white flooring-type brick (found in wall 3). This type of brick is 19th century or later. Deposit 16 produced small pieces of both post-medieval and Roman brick; the post-medieval piece is extremely friable. Roman brick and tile (totalling six pieces, weight 160g) was also found in layers 12 and 19. The post-medieval fragments in layer 12 are likely to be intrusive from the post-medieval layers directly above.

Glass

Relatively recent bottle glass was recovered from two contexts, surface 2 and layer 4. Surface 2 produced four sherds of brown glass, probably all from the same ?beer bottle. The neck and rim of a wine bottle came from layer 4. The bottle had probably been free-blown and the double rim had been applied separately. The lack of mould lines and the rim-form indicate a date of manufacture of c.1790-1820.

Other finds

The remaining finds all came from layer 12 and consist of animal bone, probably all cattle, a mortar fragment, and baked clay. The mortar fragment is likely to be modern intrusion and the bone and baked clay are undatable.

Comments on the assemblage

Small amounts of finds were recorded. The majority are of relatively recent date, *i.e.* 19th century and later. Roman finds, in sufficient amounts for dating purposes, came from two contexts, layers 12 and 19, and these are probably late Roman. Deposit 16 contained post-medieval and Roman material in equal amounts, but the Roman tile is probably residual in the context.

Further work is not required on any of the material. All of the finds, including the glass which is normally discarded on health and safety grounds, have been retained and will be returned to the landowner on completion of the report.

6.2 Environmental Material

No deposits with potential for the preservation of charred or waterlogged macrofossils were identified during the evaluation and no bulk soil samples were consequently collected for environmental analysis. All of the layers encountered were highly disturbed and probably mixed by rooting, it was judged that such samples would not be reliable.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS AND ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS

The evaluation established the presence of the late Roman town wall foundation and a stratified sequence of Roman layers located against its interior (south-western) side. The location of the Town Wall was previously thought to have been c.2m to the south-west of its actual position. This evaluation has therefore provided useful information regarding the exact position of the Roman town wall. Medlycott (1998) indicates that there is evidence to suggest that prior to the erection of the wall, the topsoil was removed and pits and shafts emptied then backfilled with rammed hard-core. This would explain the lack of a construction cut. The layers built-up against the wall indicate that the wall foundation was at least partially created above ground and material was later pushed up against it to support the foundation. The residual sherds of samian ware within the lowest layer perhaps indicate that the layer comprised dumped material, possibly removed from waste sites around the town, or from earlier pits or shafts beneath the wall. As noted in section 5, the fabric of the wall footing matches that found a little further south of the site by Brooks and Wallis (1991). It is documented that the top of the wall foundations were truncated by modern quarrying in order to create roads (Medlycott 1998). No archaeological remains of Roman or earlier date were identified within the test pit to the rear of the house. However, the limited depth of its excavation should be noted.

A seeming hiatus of activity ensued until the 18th and 19th centuries. It is probable that sometime following the abandonment of the Roman town, this location reverted to farmland until the construction of Elm Cottage. It is clear that the centre of medieval and later Great Chesterford shifted to the south of the Roman town. Elm Cottage was probably constructed some time in the 18th century. The Enclosure Map of c.1804 depicts the house and its land within a landscape of agricultural cultivation.

The investigation revealed that a probable post-medieval wall was located on top of the Roman wall foundations and may have represented an earlier version of the extant wall surrounding the property. The truncated wall remains and an associated chalk floor, located

in the south-western end of the trench, confirm the former existence of an ancillary building that stood against the extant property wall, as depicted in the 1st edition OS map. However, its foundations were relatively slight and did not particularly impact upon the underlying Roman period remains. To the rear of the house, the test pit established the presence of some post-medieval deposits, but also a significant degree of disturbance by modern services. However, the extent and depth of this was not established. Part of the proposed extension footprint is currently occupied by a modern extension that is likely to have adversely impacted upon any below-ground remains present in this vicinity.

The evaluation has therefore successfully investigated the presence, nature and survival of the late Roman town wall, though no settlement remains were identified relating to the occupation of the Roman town or the preceding fort. This is likely to be because the evaluation trench only extends 3.2m from the wall and it would be unlikely to find meaningful settlement activity against the Roman town wall in such a small area. Some insights into the later development and use of the site and its potential impacts upon the Roman period remains have additionally been gained.

Acknowledgements

The ECC FAU would like to thank Mrs. P. Maurice for commissioning and funding the archaeological evaluation. The assistance of Mr. D. Jones of Alun Design Consultancy is also gratefully acknowledged.

The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken by Phillippa Sparrow, Mark Germany and Andrew Letch. The finds were processed, analysed and reported upon by Joyce Compton. The project was managed by Mark Atkinson. The figures were drawn by Andrew Lewsey. The archaeological work was monitored by Richard Havis of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team on behalf of the local planning authority and by Deborah Priddy of English Heritage.

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APPENDIX 1: FIELDWORK DATA

Context	Category	Details	Period
1	Topsoil	Loose dark brown sandy silt. Present across the trench. Heavily rooted with modern nails and CBM not retained.	Modern
2	Chalk Surface	Compact chalk and occasional CBM present across the majority of the trench. Abutting wall 3. Contained post-med glass. 2.41m x 0.60m+ x 0.18m (max)	Post-medieval (Victorian)
3	Wall	Limestone mortar, flint yellow brick tile and Bricks. Aligned NW-SE. 0.60m+ x 0.26m x 0.41m	Post-medieval
4	Bedding layer	Under chalk surface 2. light orange yellow silty sand with mortar and a large amount of CBM. , 2.41m x 0.60m x 0.03m	Post-medieval (early 19 th century)
5	Former topsoil	Dark brown sandy silt. Post-med. Cut by Wall 3. Located across the trench. 2.95m+ x 0.6m+ x 0.11m	Post-medieval
6	Foundation cut	Foundation cut for wall 3. Vertical sides and flat base. 0.60m+ x 0.26m x 0.41m	Post-medieval
7	Foundations	Wall 3 foundation. Pale brownish white lime-based mortar with chalk and flint. 0.60m+ x 0.26m x 0.41m	Post-medieval
8	Construction cut of wall 9	NE end of trench. Aligned NW – SE. Cut through former topsoil 5. 0.69m+ x 0.60m+ x 0.11m	Post-medieval
9	Wall	Post-med wall within construction cut 8. Made of flint and sandy mortar. 0.69m+ x 0.60m+ x 0.11m	Post-medieval
10	Fill	Mid brown and chalky clayey sand fill of modern service. In test pit. 1m+ x 1m+ x not fully excavated	Modern
11	Layer	Modern gravel surface of driveway. In test pit. 1m+ x 1m+ x 0.14m	Modern
12	Layer	Roman layer. Next to wall 17. Uppermost Roman layer. Dark reddish brown sandy silt, firm. 1.96m+ x 0.6m+ x 0.4m	Roman
13	Cut	Modern service cut. 1.20m+ x 0.58m+ x 0.45m	Modern
14	Layer	Compacted mid orange clayey sandy gravel deposit in test pit. Cut by modern services. 0.48m+ x 1m+ x 0.11m	Post-medieval
15	Layer	Chalk and CBM layer in test pit. No finds. Not similar to Chalk Surface 2. 1m+ x 1m+ x 0.15m+	Post-medieval
16	Layer	Possible former topsoil in test pit, as very similar to layer 5. 1m+ x 1m+ x 0.10m+	Post-medieval
17	Wall Foundation	Comprised flint and sandy mortar. Present to a height of 0.48m. Located in, and extended beyond, north-eastern edge of trench. 1.3m+ x 0.6m+ x 0.4m+	Roman
18		Void	
19	Layer	Dark reddish brown sandy silt layer against wall 17. Contained Roman pot. 1.9m+ x 0.6m+ x 0.10m+	Roman
20	Layer	Dark orange silty sandy patch in eastern edge of trench and against wall 17. No finds. 0.54m x 0.02m+ x 0.06m	Roman
21	Layer	Dark brown sandy silt layer within cut 8. 0.69m+ x 0.60m+ x 0.02m	Post-medieval
22	Layer	Dark grey brown sandy silt in SW end of trench to south of Wall 3. Poss. Made ground around lean-to? 0.46m+ x 0.60m+ x 0.15m	Post-medieval

APPENDIX 2: FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL

Finds data

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
2	Surface	4	88	Glass; brown bottle body sherds	Modern
		1	54	Brick fragment, mortar attached	Post- med.
		1	26	Pottery; body sherd, grey Victorian stoneware beer/mineral water bottle	Modern
3	Wall	1	1055	Brick; Suffolk white flooring brick, width 110mm, depth 35-40mm	Modern
		2	26	Pottery; body sherds, white earthenware and Kitchen ware	Modern
4	Layer	2	78	Glass; joining neck/rim sherds, green cylindrical wine bottle, hand-applied lip	1790-1820
5	Layer	1	72	Pantile fragment, buff clay	Modern
		1	2	Pottery; plate/saucer rim sherd, white earthenware, blue transfer-printed	Modern
12	Layer	9	84	Animal bone; cattle phalanx; long bone fragments, large mammal	-
		1	6	Mortar	-
		5	112	Baked clay	-
		3	82	Roof tile fragments	Post- med.
		2	126	Tile fragments	Roman
		1	2	Pottery; flowerpot rim sherd	Modern
		16	108	Pottery; rim and body sherds, various fabrics, mainly coarse wares	Roman
16	Deposit	2	46	Brick; friable fragments	Post -med.
		1	22	Brick corner	Roman
19	Layer	4	34	Brick fragments, undiagnostic but probably Roman	Roman
		3	24	Pottery; base and body sherds samian, inc f33 cup base; body sherd Nene Valley colour-coated ware	Roman

APPENDIX 3: ARCHIVE INDEX

ELM COTTAGE, NEWMARKET ROAD, GREAT CHESTERFORD, ESSEX (GC49)

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 Evaluation Report
- 2.2 Analytical Reports
 - 2.2.1 Roman and Later Pottery Report
- 2.3 Catalogues
 - 2.3.1 Context Finds Record
 - 2.3.2 Roman and Later Pottery Catalogue
 - 2.3.3 Miscellaneous Finds Catalogue

3. Site Archive

- 3.1 Context Index
- 3.2 Context Record Register
- 3.3 Original Context Records 1 to 22 (excluding 18)
- 3.4 Plans Register
- 3.5 Sections Register
- 3.6 Levels Register
- 3.7 Photographic Register
- 3.8 Photograph Contact Sheet (+ digital photos on CD)
- 3.9 Miscellaneous maps and plans

Not in Files:

Site Drawings (1 x A1 sheet and 2 X A3)
Collected artefacts (pottery, brick/tile, baked clay, animal bone, glass)

APPENDIX 4: EHER SUMMARY SHEET

Site Name/Address: Elm Cottage, Newmarket Road, Great Chesterford, Essex	
Parish: Great Chesterford	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 5041 4320	Site Code: GC49
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: Phillippa Sparrow, ECC Field Archaeology Unit.
Date of Work: 22/10/09 – 26/10/09	Size of Area Investigated: 1 trench 3.2m x 0.6m and 1 test pit 1m x 1m (5%)
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Landowner	Funding Source: Landowner
Further Work Anticipated? Yes	Related EHCR Nos: EHER 13908-13910
Final Report: EAH annual round-up	OASIS Ref: essexcou1-66048
Periods Represented: Roman and post-medieval	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Elm Cottage in advance of two proposed extensions to the existing building. A trial trench measuring 3.2m x 0.6m was hand-excavated along the proposed south-eastern footing of the extension to the south of the house. A 1m sq test pit was also hand-excavated in the extension footprint to the west of the house.</p> <p>The site is situated in the Scheduled area, within the early Roman fort and later Roman town. The late Roman town wall is projected to run through the front of the property.</p> <p>Excavation within the southern trial trench was limited to a depth of 1m. The late Roman town wall foundation was located at the north-east end of the trench, at a depth of 0.51m. Aligned NNW-SSE, the foundation was over 1.3m wide and more than 0.4m in depth and extended beyond the trench limit. Its apparent construction method included the removal of the topsoil, followed by the erection of the foundation, which comprised large flint nodules and chalk blocks within a sandy mortar matrix. A stratified sequence of apparent dump layers lay against the south-west (interior) side of the wall foundation, which contained late Roman pottery sherds. Some evidence for the post-medieval robbing of the wall was recorded.</p> <p>Overlying remains comprised thin buried post-medieval topsoil and a series of Victorian period walls and a chalk surface, mostly relating to an ancillary building constructed against the extant garden wall and shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map.</p> <p>Excavation of the test pit was impeded by the presence of modern services and halted at a depth of 0.46m. A buried topsoil over a post-medieval chalk and tile layer, possibly a surface, were located below modern layers associated with the existing gravel driveway. Residual Roman tile fragments and post-medieval pottery were recovered from the buried soil.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: Brooks, H. and Wallis, D. 1991 'Watching briefs on Newmarket Road' in <i>Recent Arch. Work in Gt. Chesterford</i> , Essex Arch. and Hist. vol. 22, 44	
Author of Summary: Phillippa Sparrow	Date of Summary: 04/11/09

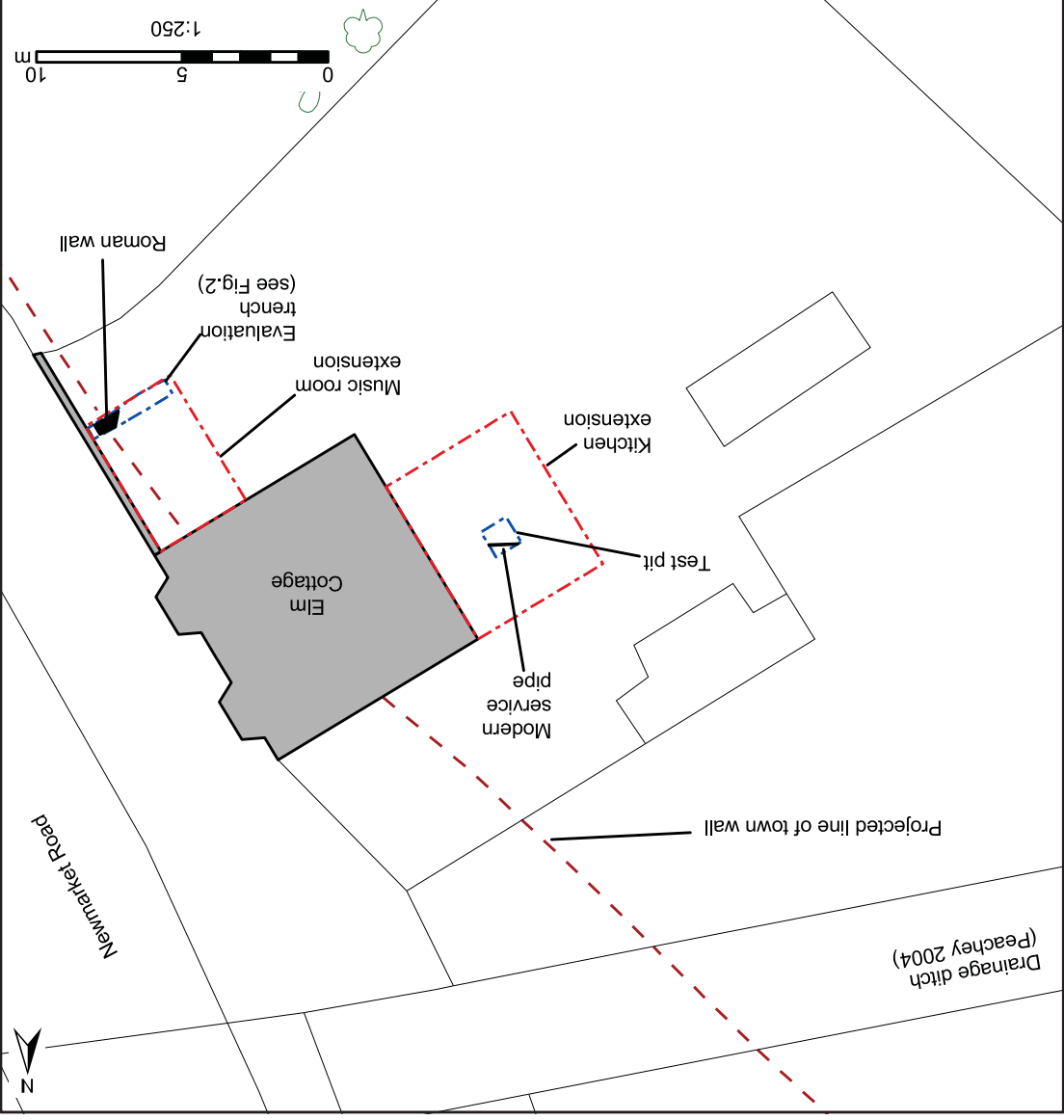
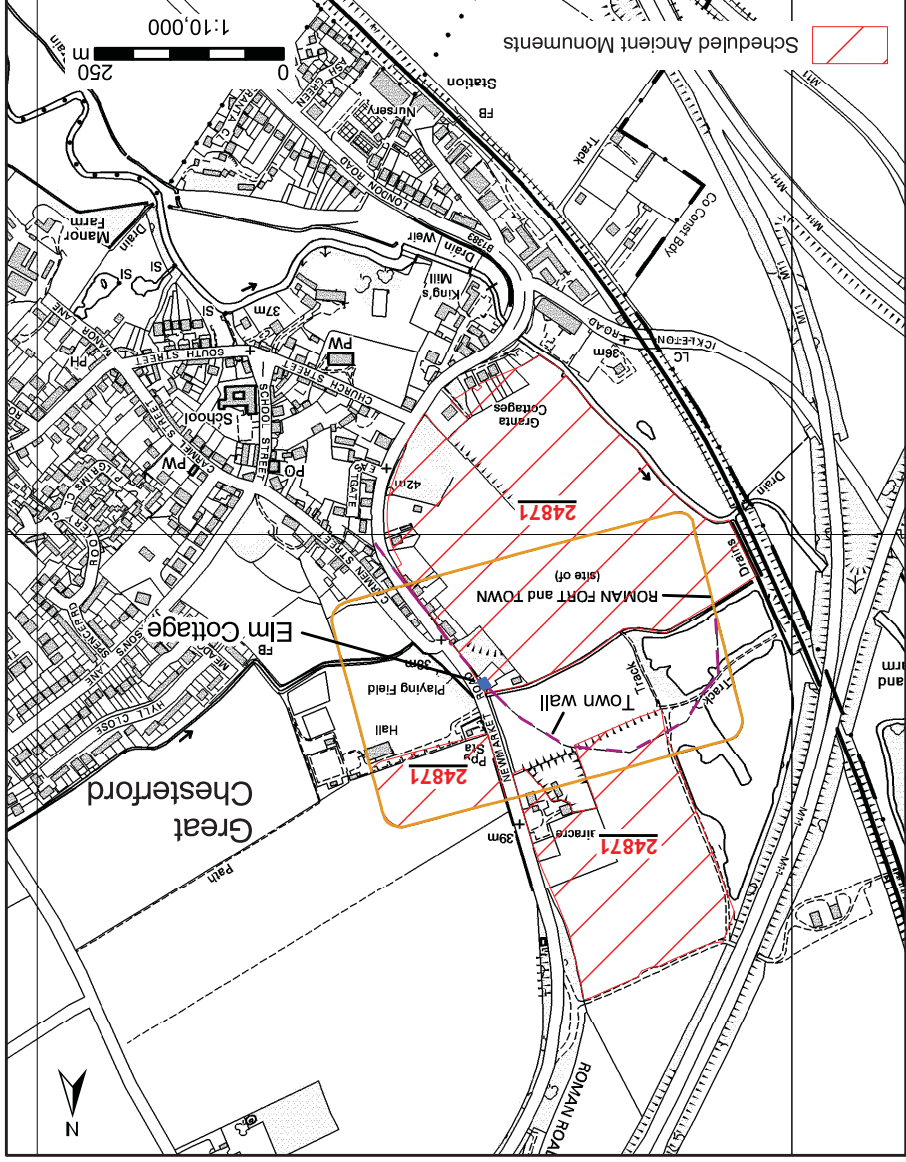


Fig. 1. Location plan and area of archaeological monitoring

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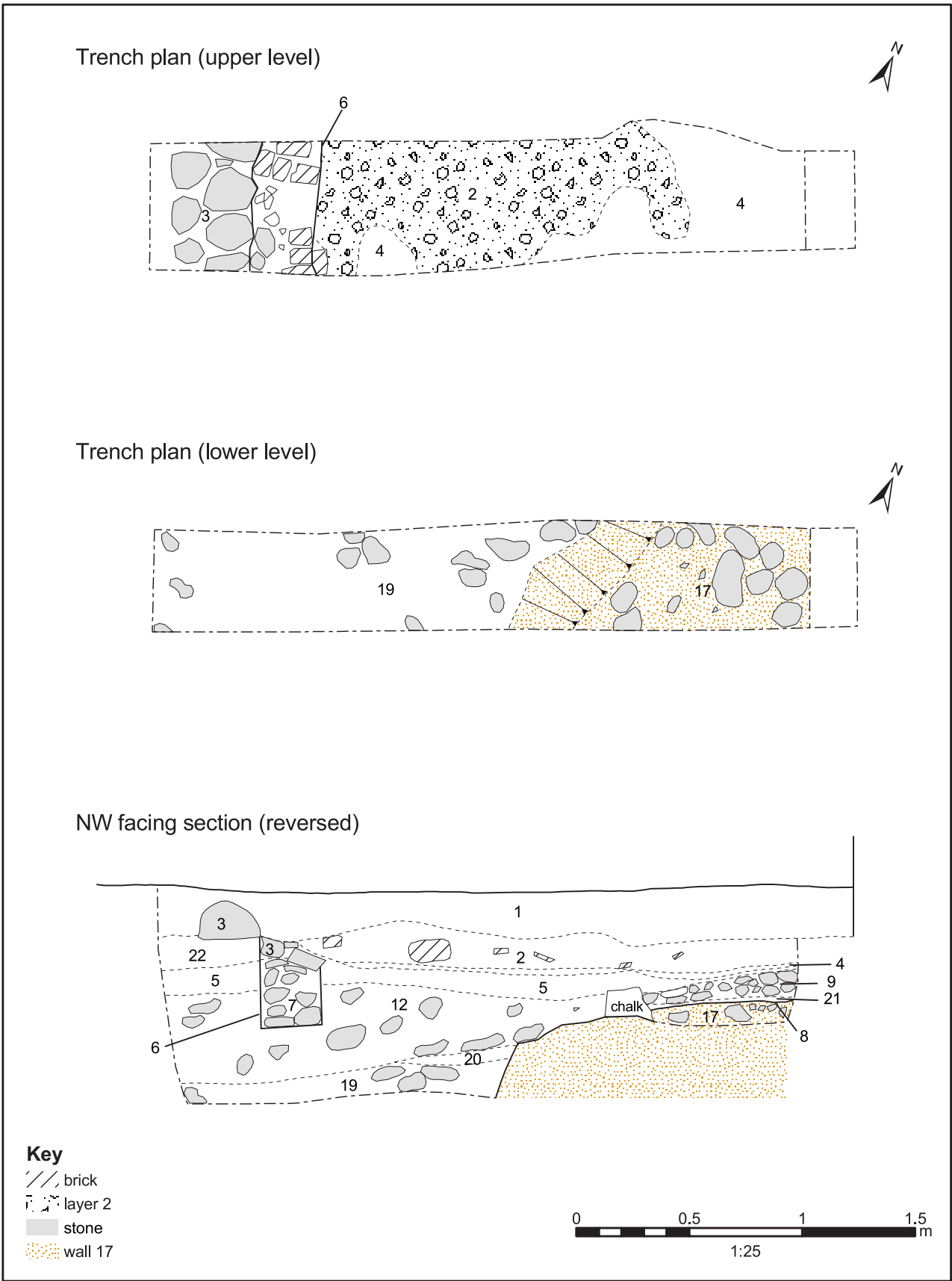


Fig.2. Evaluation trench plans and section



Plate 2. Wall 17, looking north-east (0.5m scale)



Plate 1. Wall 17, looking north-east (1m scale)



Plate 4. Chalk surface 2 and wall 3, looking north-east (1m scale)



Plate 3. Layer 5 and walls 6 & 8, looking north-east (1m scale)



Plate 5. Test pit, looking south-west (1m scale)