

**STOCK CHASE  
HEYBRIDGE  
MALDON  
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION**



**Essex County Council  
Field Archaeology Unit**

**JULY 2010**

## ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

<b>Site Name/Address:</b> STOCK CHASE, HEYBRIDGE, MALDON, ESSEX	
<b>Parishes:</b> Heybridge	<b>District:</b> Maldon
<b>NGR:</b> TL 8580 0824	<b>Site Code:</b> HEYSC10
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological Investigation	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> T. Ennis, ECC Field Archaeology Unit
<b>Dates of Work:</b> 29th June 2010	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> 19.2 sq m
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Colchester and Ipswich Museum	<b>Funding source:</b> Developer
<b>Further Seasons Anticipated?:</b> No	<b>Related HER Nos.:</b> -
<b>Final Report:</b> EAH summary	<b>Oasis No.:</b> essexcou1-79444
<b>Periods Represented:</b> Saxon, Modern	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<u>Introduction</u>	
<p>An archaeological investigation was carried out on land at Stock Chase, Heybridge before the construction of two new houses (Fig. 1), as a condition placed on planning consent by Maldon District Council (MAL/05/00686) following advice from the Essex CC Historic Environment Management team. Heybridge is an area of high archaeological potential, and the site lies to the east of a large Late Iron Age, Roman and Early Saxon settlement (Atkinson and Preston 1998; Wickenden 1986), with its cemetery area located in the centre of modern Heybridge (Wickenden 1986, 53-7 and fig. 2, gazetteer sites 1 and 4a/4b).</p>	
<u>Description</u> (Fig. 1; Plates 1-4)	
<p>Two evaluation trenches (1 and 2), 8m long by 1.2m wide, were excavated. The trenches were located as near as possible in the house footprints but were restricted to the north of the site by the presence of an overhead power cable along the southern frontage. Further restrictions on trench locations were imposed by two lines of metal posts and the discovery, after the removal of a buddleia thicket, of a man-hole cover in the centre of the westernmost footprint. Machining was undertaken under the supervision of an archaeologist using a mini-excavator fitted with a flat-bladed bucket, although much of the modern overburden had to be loosened with a toothed bucket.</p>	
<p>Trench 1 was 0.9m deep and trench 2 was 1.1m deep. The overburden in both trenches was broadly similar with rooty shingle overlying layers of grey stone chippings, concrete and brown gravel. Near the base of the sequence in both trenches was a compacted deposit of crushed brick rubble up to 0.2m thick. Under the brick rubble in trench 1 was a 0.1m thick deposit of iron slag which overlay mid to light greyish brown sandy clay silt subsoil. No slag was present in</p>	

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trench 2 and the subsoil directly underlay brick rubble. The exposed subsoil was highly compact but about c. 0.15m of this deposit was removed until a slightly browner interface was reached.

At the east end of trench 1 a robber trench perpendicular to Stock Chase was backfilled with modern bricks, iron and wire. In section the trench cut through the brick rubble layer. To the west of this was an irregular void in the brown sandy silt, at least 0.25m deep. During the clean-over of the base of the trench two sherds of abraded Early Saxon pottery dating to the 5th-7th centuries AD, were recovered from the west end, and also present were small fragments of coal and slate (not retained). Prior to backfilling a 3m long by 0.6m wide by 0.3m deep sondage was cut through the brown sandy silt in the area where the finds were recovered to check for the presence of archaeological features. None was identified and the sandy silt appeared to become gravellier and more orange in colour with depth.

A live sewer pipe extended down the entire length of trench 2. The eastern two-thirds of the trench were machined to a depth of c.1.1m, whereas the western third was left higher from where the sewer pipe reached the centre of the trench. Also present in this western third was a modern pit cut from high in the sequence.

Conclusions and Assessment

The only archaeological remains present in the evaluation trenches were two sherds of residual Early Saxon pottery. All the overburden above the natural subsoil was modern and it appears that the site had already been reduced down to subsoil level before being levelled in stages with 19th- and 20th-century construction materials. Significantly, late 19th and early 20th century Ordnance Survey maps show the site as located within the yard of a factory. It is possible that the site was once within an Early Saxon settlement or cemetery area, but any possible evidence for this has been destroyed by previous phases of modern development.

**References:**

Atkinson, M. and Preston, S.J., 1998: The Late Iron Age and Roman settlement at Elms Farm, Heybridge, Essex, excavations 1993-5: an interim report, *Britannia* XXIX, 85-110

Drury, P.J. and Wickenden, N.P., 1982: An Early Saxon Settlement within the Romano-British small town at Heybridge, Essex, *Medieval Archaeol.* 26, 1-41

Wickenden, N.P., 1986: Prehistoric Settlement and the Romano-British 'Small Town' at Heybridge, Essex, *Essex Archaeol. Hist.* 17, 7-68

**Author of Summary:** T. Ennis

**Date of Summary:** July 2010

## **Finds report** by Sue Tyler and Helen Walker

### Pottery data

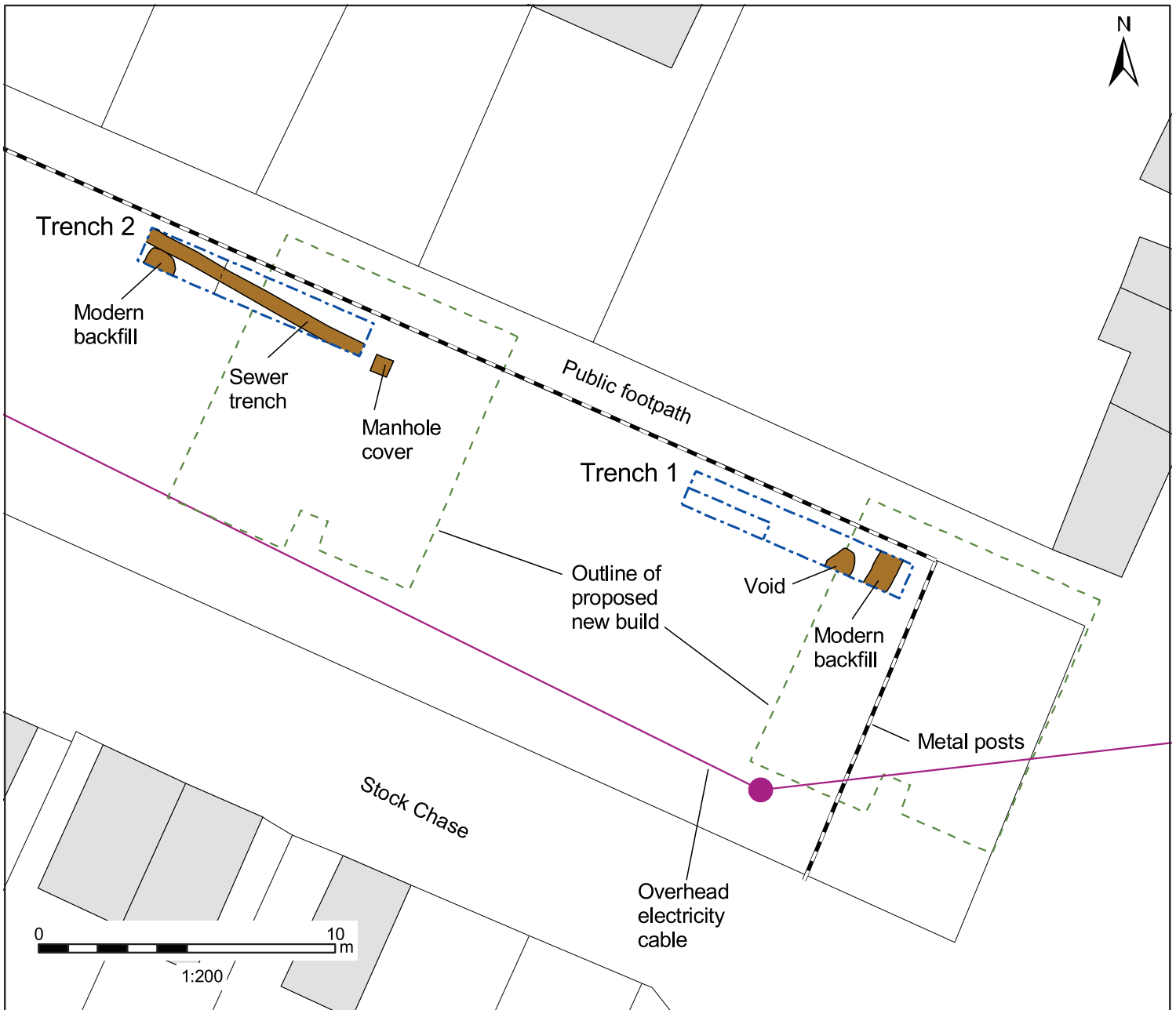
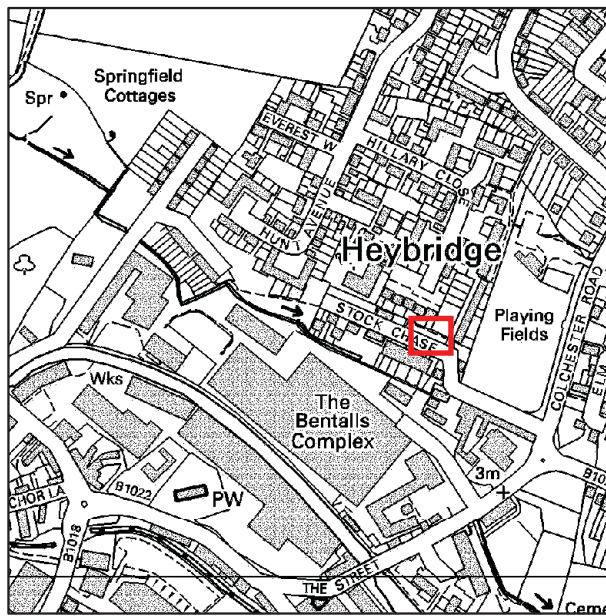
<b>Context</b>	<b>Feature</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Weight (g)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
US	-	2	20	Saxon pottery: everted rim and body sherd	5th to 7th century

### Summary

Two sherds of Saxon pottery, identified by Sue Tyler, were found unstratified, comprising a body sherd and an everted rim both datable to the 5th to 7th centuries.

### **Trench co-ordinates** (end, centre)

Trench 1 NE - 585818.33, 208237.46	Trench 2 NE - 585792.62, 208248.86
SW - 585810.98, 208240.63	SW - 585800.10, 208245.62



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Fig.1. Evaluation trench plan



Plate 1. Trench 1 (1m scale)



Plate 2. Trench 1 SW facing section (1m scale)



Plate 3. Trench 2 (1m scale)



Plate 4. Trench 2 SW facing section (1m scale)