

**Archaeological Evaluation
Land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road
Takeley, Essex**

**ASE Project No: 8207
Site Code: TAMH 14**

ASE Report No: 2014206



June 2014

Archaeological Evaluation

**Land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road
Takeley, Essex**

NGR: TL 57100 21200

Planning Ref: UTT/1736/09

**ASE Project No: 8207
Site Code: TAMH 14**

**ASE Report No: 2014206
OASIS id: 181111**

Adam Dyson

Illustrations by Lukasz Miciak

June 2014

**Archaeology South-East
The Old Magistrates Court
79 South Street
Braintree
Essex
CM7 3QD**

**Tel: 01376 331470
Email: fau@ucl.ac.uk**

www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeologyse

Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Morgan House, Takeley.

Three trenches were excavated within those parts of the site identified as holding some potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains. The evaluation established that modern truncation and disturbance have affected the site; earlier soils had evidently been removed and areas of modern make-up laid down during the previous development.

Over the majority of the site the modern truncation extended to the depth of the natural clay, although at the far north end of site a thin layer of remnant subsoil survived beneath the later modern deposits. This layer contained small fragments of charcoal and seemingly modern brick or tile. Modern features comprised a drainage trench in trench 1 and several irregularly shaped pits in trench 2 which contained substantial quantities of modern material such as brick rubble, concrete, glass and metal. A recent tree line was also evident along the eastern edge of trenches 2 and 3. No archaeological remains were found in the trenches.

The archaeological potential of the site is judged to be very low. It is therefore considered that the redevelopment of the site will have only a low to negligible impact upon the heritage resource of this location.

CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

Acknowledgements

Bibliography

Appendices

Appendix 1: List of recorded contexts

Appendix 2: HER summary sheet

Appendix 3: OASIS form

FIGURES

Front Cover Image: General view of site, looking north

Figure 1: Location of archaeological evaluation trenches

Figure 2: Trench 1, looking north

Figure 3: Trench 2, looking north

Figure 4: Trench 3, looking north

Figure 5: Trench 3, south end, looking east

TABLES

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

Table 2: List of recorded contexts (Appendix 1)

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 In June 2014, Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road, Takeley, in advance of proposed residential development.

1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

1.2.1 The site lies on the north side of the B1256 Dunmow Road (formally the A120) which follows the line of Stane Street, which was originally the Roman road from Braughing to Colchester. The 0.12ha development area comprises the former site and grounds of a large frontage property with associated outbuildings. (NGR TL 5710 2120). It is bounded by a small area of woodland on the edge of the Priors Green residential development to the north and by residential properties to the east and west.

1.2.2 The site lies at roughly 97m AOD, on level ground. The superficial geology of the site is mapped by the British Geological Survey as comprising glacial tills of the Lowestoft Formation above an underlying bedrock of London Clay (British Geological Survey © NERC 2014).

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 A planning application (UTT/1736/09) was submitted to Uttlesford District Council in December 2009 for the erection of four dwellings with associated garages and access. As the site lies within an area highlighted by the Historic Environment Record as having the potential for archaeological deposits to be present, ECC Place Services, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the local planning authority, recommended that an archaeological condition be attached to any grant of planning consent.

1.3.2 The archaeological recommendation was based upon guidance given in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and the condition duly attached to consent states that:

No development, or preliminary groundworks, of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work and recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the planning authority.

1.3.3 A brief was issued by the ECC Place Services Historic Environment team (ECC HE) stipulating the requirement for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at the site (dated May 2014). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was subsequently prepared by ASE (dated June 2014) and approved by ECC Place Services prior to the commencement of works.

1.3.4 Certain aspects of the development commenced prior to any archaeological works being commissioned, principally the laying of foundations in three of the four house plots. The brief and subsequent WSI therefore cover only the evaluation of the remaining undeveloped house plot and the new access road (Figure 1).

- 1.3.5 The results of this evaluation will be used to inform decisions as to the need for, and extent of, any further archaeological work required in order to mitigate the impact of the development on any remains that are present where a design solution cannot be implemented to ensure their preservation in-situ.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of archaeological evaluation of an area of land prior to its development. It also assesses the archaeological potential of the site. The fieldwork was carried out by Adam Dyson (Archaeologist) between the 9th and 10th June 2014, and was managed by Adrian Scruby.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is located within the vicinity of a number of known archaeological sites. Evidence for prehistoric and medieval occupation was found in a number of areas across the nearby Priors Green development site (HER 46298). Prehistoric activity was represented from the Early Neolithic through to the Iron Age. Early Neolithic features point towards low level agricultural activity together with flint tool manufacturing and the processing of animal hides and carcasses. Tentative structural remains were also revealed. At least periodic use of the site continued throughout the prehistoric period with much of it taking place from the Early Bronze Age through to the Iron Age, during which time a series of waterholes were dug. Middle Iron Age activity is indicated by boundaries, probably associated with large enclosures for stock keeping (Germany et al forthcoming).
- 2.2 The development site is set close to the road frontage of the former A120, which follows the line of Roman Stane Street, running from Braughing to Colchester (HER 4698). This was a major routeway through the area in both the Roman and later periods. Only a low level of Roman activity was indicated within the Priors Green development area, although a watering hole together with field boundaries running parallel with and perpendicular to Stane Street indicate agricultural activity. A lack of Late Roman or Saxon remains perhaps implies that the site had reverted to woodland during this period, with activity resuming in the medieval period. Medieval activity is represented by post-built structures, a probable stock enclosure and several phases of strip fields. The medieval moated site of 'Jacks Green' is preserved within the housing estate and was probably the principal local medieval settlement (Germany et al forthcoming).
- 2.3 Road-side settlements of Roman and medieval date have been identified elsewhere in the Takeley/Little Canfield area, both immediately adjacent to and set-back from the road. However the nearby evaluation sites of Pallet Yard (Robertson 2006), approximately 150m to the west, and The Rest (Germany 2009 and 2010), approximately 350m to the east, did not contain any archaeological remains.

- 2.4 Regarding post-medieval settlement, analysis of historic cartographic evidence provides specific information on the development area itself. The site is shown to be devoid of structures until at least the mid 1890s (Ordnance Survey 1:2500, published 1897). By the early 1920s the current property boundaries have been established and two buildings are depicted close to the road (1920 OS 1:2500). The 1970 map depicts what appear to be the same two buildings but with a westerly extension to the eastern building bridging the gap between the two. By this point the buildings are labelled as 'garage' (1970 OS 1:2500).
- 2.5 The Morgan House site has not been investigated before although developments at the neighbouring plot of West View Cottage to the immediate east of the site have recently undergone archaeological monitoring. Despite the high potential for surviving remains due to the site's position close to the road, no deposits or features of archaeological significance were identified (Letch. forthcoming).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHOD

3.1 Project Aims and Objectives

- 3.1.1 The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains within the site and to establish their character, location, extent, date, quality and significance. Any archaeological remains uncovered by the evaluation would also be assessed against the wider background of previous fieldwork in the area.
- 3.1.2 To help achieve this aim, specifically identified objectives were:
- to identify any Roman or Medieval settlement evidence associated with the road;
 - to identify any occupation of medieval date related to the adjacent deposits in Priors Green. The origins and development of different rural settlement types and the dynamics of medieval settlement have been identified as a topic for further research (Medlycott 2011, 70).
- 3.1.3 In the event that significant discoveries were made the subsequent report was to seek to identify appropriate research objectives for any future work, with reference to those laid out in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

3.2 Fieldwork Method

- 3.2.1 The evaluation method comprised the machine excavation under archaeological supervision of two trenches measuring approximately 10m long and a third measuring approximately 15m long, all trenches measured between 1.6 and 1.8m wide. The trenches were located over the areas of proposed development; trench 1 over the proposed building plot at the north end of the site, and trenches 2 and 3 along the proposed access route along the eastern side of the site (Figure 1). The trenches were accurately located using Global Positioning System (GPS) survey equipment.

- 3.2.2 The trenches were mechanically excavated using a toothless ditching bucket. Excavation was undertaken to the surface of natural geology. On completion of the work, backfilling and compaction were left to the discretion of the client but subsequent to the agreement of the ECC Place Services monitoring officer.
- 3.2.3 Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout, with all work carried out in accordance with the IfA (Institute for Archaeologists) Code of Conduct, by-laws and guidelines (IfA 2008, 2010) and in compliance with *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).
- 3.2.4 All stratigraphy was recorded using the ASE context recording system, with all exposed archaeological features and deposits recorded and excavated, except obviously modern features and disturbances.
- 3.2.5 Where required, a 50% sample of all contained features was excavated. Post-medieval and modern features were excavated as necessary in order to establish their date and significance. Features were excavated using hand tools and planned using digital survey equipment. A digital photographic record was created.

3.3 Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Saffron Walden museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	6
No. of files/paper record	1
No. of plan and sections sheets	0
Photographs	9 (colour digital)
Bulk finds	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Summary

- 4.1.1 The dimensions of the trenches varied. Trench 1 (Figure 2) measured 10m long by 1.7m wide and reached a maximum depth of 0.8m; trench 2 (Figure 3) measured 14.2m long by 1.6m wide and reached a maximum depth of 0.56m; and trench 3 (Figure 4) measured 11.5m long by 1.6m wide and reached a maximum depth of 0.54m.
- 4.1.2 Archaeological remains were not encountered in any of the trenches. The data regarding all recorded contexts can be found in appendix 1.
- 4.1.3 The only identified features were of modern date, and consisted of an east to west field drain in trench 1 and a scattering of small and irregular modern pits in trench 2. These pits were all cut from within the modern made ground and all had dark loose fills which contained modern refuse such as plastic, metal pottery and glass.

4.1.4 The remains of a recent tree line was also evident along the eastern edge of trenches 2 and 3.

4.1.5 No finds or environmental samples judged to have significant potential for analysis were identified; consequently none were recovered during the evaluation.

4.2 Description of recorded contexts

4.2.1 The existing ground surface was a layer of modern made ground of mixed composition including mid to dark grey silty clay and demolition rubble including concrete, glass, ceramic building material (CBM), plastic and metal. The made ground was present in all four trenches and was approximately 0.2-0.56m thick, it was recorded as [1/001], [2/001], [2/002], and [3/001]. The upper most 0.2-0.3m in trench 2, included more compact deposits of flint cobbles and chalky clay which may be the remnants of a modern yard surface [2/001]. On the east side of the site, and especially towards the south end, recent demolition activity had reduced the ground level by approximately 0.2-0.4m prior to the archaeological investigation (Figure 5).

4.2.2 Beneath the modern made ground but only present in trench 1 was a cleaner layer, [1/002] measuring 0.2-0.3m thick. It was a mid grey brown, compact silty clay with moderate CBM and charcoal flecks. It appears to be modern and may represent a cultivation layer predating the development of the site in the early 20th century.

4.2.3 The natural geology was present at the base of all three trenches and comprised light orange yellow, compact chalky clay. It was recorded as [1/003], [2/003] and [3/002].

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

5.1.1 The evaluation has demonstrated that modern disturbance and truncation has occurred in the northern and eastern areas of the site. Although not investigated we can posit that this truncation was more widespread and is likely to have similarly affected much of the remainder of the site. The south end is likely to have been highly disturbed by the former frontage building. In trenches 2 and 3 along the eastern side of the site, deposits relating to this truncation are all that survives above the level of natural geology. In trench 1 a relatively thin cultivation layer survives above the natural geology. This is seemingly modern in date but nevertheless reveals the north end of site to be less disturbed.

5.2 Consideration of research aims

5.2.1 The evaluation has achieved its aim by determining the absence of archaeological remains within the site. Consequently the more specific objectives of identifying Roman or medieval settlement evidence associated with the road or the Priors Green deposits could not be achieved.

5.2.2 The presence of modern truncation across the site means that archaeological remains may once have been present but have since been lost. However the relatively shallow depth of the truncation, combined with the lack of even trace remains of deeper archaeological features or residual artefacts suggests that the evaluation results reliably reflect the former archaeological content of the site as a whole.

5.2.3 The results from this evaluation appear to conform to a general trend for this vicinity. Despite their perceived potential, sites located along the northern frontage of Roman Stane Street in the east Takeley/Little Canfield area (2.3) are shown to be generally devoid of archaeological remains.

5.3 Conclusions

5.3.1 The evaluation revealed an absence of archaeological remains. It is therefore judged that the ongoing redevelopment of the site will have a low to negligible impact upon the heritage resource of this location.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Camb rils Ltd for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Richard Havis (ECC Place Services) for his guidance and monitoring. The evaluation was directed by Adam Dyson. Luk asz Miciak produced the figures for t his report; Adrian Scruby project managed the excavations and Mark Atkinson project managed the post-excavation process.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASE. 2014. *Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation on land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex*

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J. (eds) 2000. *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy*, E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper. 8

DCLG. 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework*. HMSO

ECC Place Services 2013. *Brief for Archaeological Trial Trenching and Excavation on land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road, Takeley*

Germany, M. Scruby, A. and Masefield, R. forthcoming. 'Excavation of Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval Remains at Priors Green, Takeley, Essex, 2006-2010' *Essex Archaeology and History*

Germany, M. 2010. *Land Adjacent to The Rest, Dunmow Road, Little Canfield, Essex. Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching, phase 2*. ECC FAU report 2110

Germany, M. 2009. *The Rest, Dunmow Road, Little Canfield, Essex. Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching*. ECC FAU report 2084

Gurney, D. 2003. *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper 14

IfA. 2008. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (revised)*. Institute for Archaeologists

IfA. 2010. *Code of Conduct (revised)*. Institute for Archaeologists

Letch, A. 2014. *West View Cottage, Dunmow Road, Takeley. Archaeological Monitoring*. ASE report 2014191

Medlycott, M. (ed) 2011. *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England*, E. Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper 24

Robertson, A. 2006. *Pallet Yard, Priors Green, Takeley, Essex, Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching*. ECC FAU report 1701

Appendix 1

Trench Number	Context	Type	Description	Deposit Thickness (m)	Height (m AOD)
1	[1/001]	Layer	Modern made ground	0.4 – 0.5	96.94 (N end) 96.79 (S end)
1	[1/002]	Layer	Subsoil	0.2 – 0.3	-
1	[1/003]	-	Natural	-	96.13 (N end) 96.20 (S end)
2	[2/001]	Layer	Modern made ground (compact)	0.2 – 0.3	96.62 (N end) 96.85 (S end)
2	[2/002]	Layer	Modern made ground	0.26 – 0.36	-
2	[2/003]	-	Natural	-	96.06 (N end) 96.25 (S end)
3	[3/001]	Layer	Modern made ground	0.46 – 0.54	96.88 (N end) 97.15 (S end)
3	[3/002]	-	Natural	-	96.40 (N end) 96.64 (S end)

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

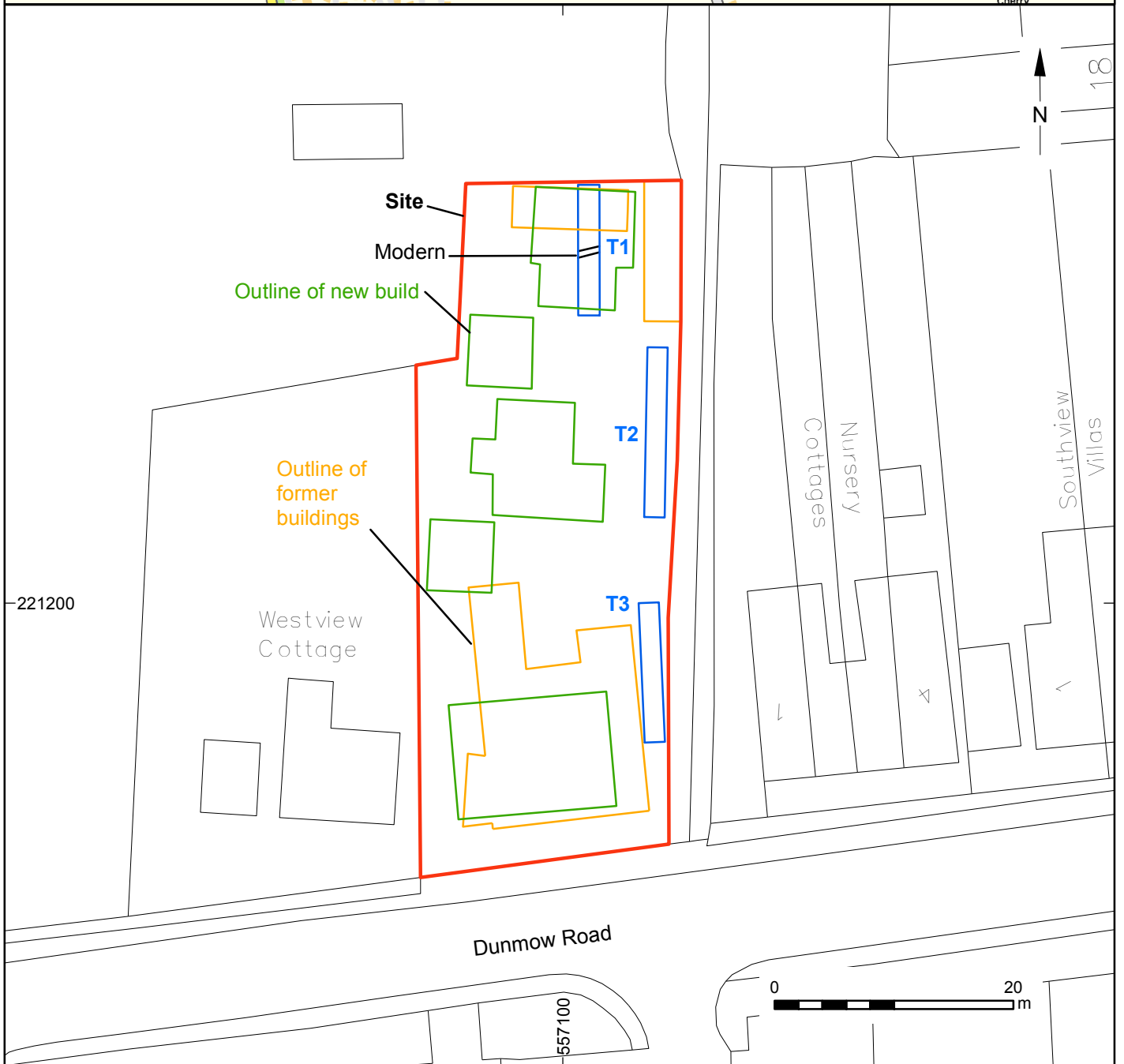
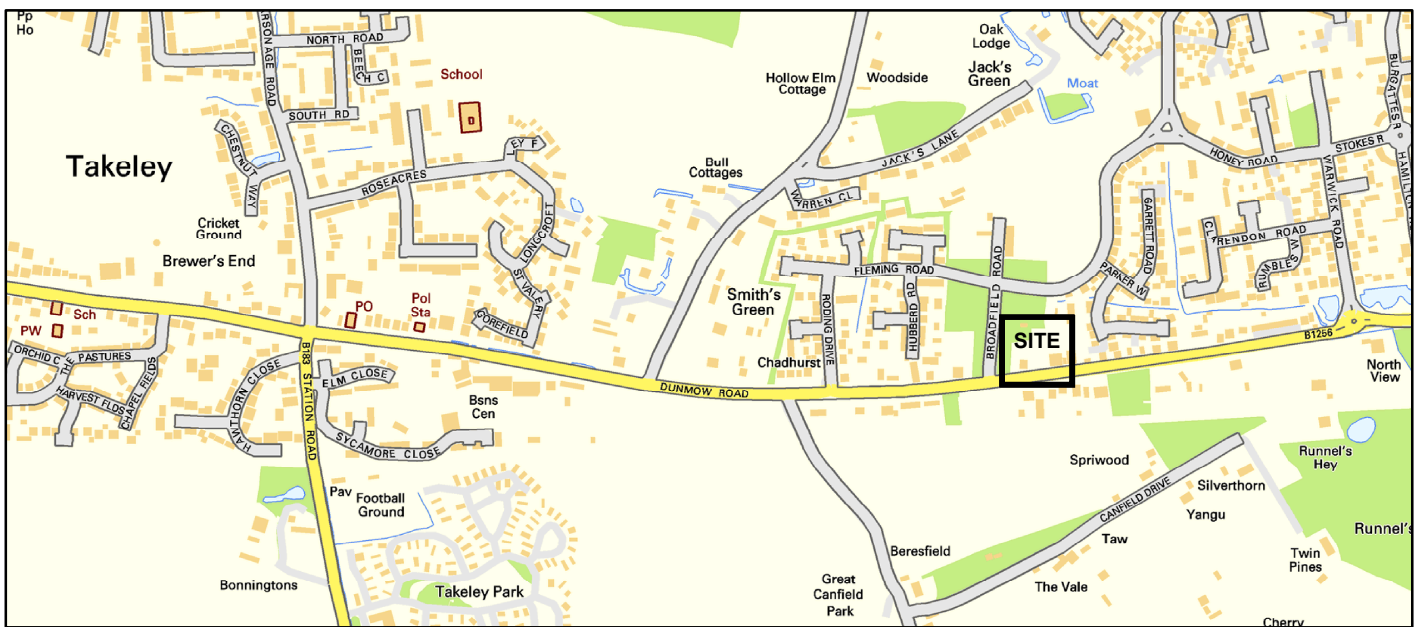
Appendix 2: HER Summary Form

Site name/Address: Land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex	
Parish: Takeley	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 57100 21200	Site Code: TAMH 14
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: A. Dyson, Archaeology South-East
Date of Work: 9-10 June 2014	Size of Area Investigated: 0.12ha
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Saffron Walden Museum	Funding source: Landowner/developer
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos: n/a
Final Report: EAH roundup	OASIS No: 181111
Periods Represented: Modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Morgan House, Takeley.</p> <p>Three trenches were excavated within those parts of the site identified as holding some potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains. The evaluation established that modern truncation and disturbance have affected the site; earlier soils had evidently been removed and areas of modern make-up laid down during the previous development.</p> <p>Over the majority of the site the modern truncation extended to the depth of the natural clay, although at the far north end of site a thin layer of remnant subsoil survived beneath the later modern deposits. This layer contained small fragments of charcoal and seemingly modern brick or tile. Modern features comprised a drainage trench in trench 1 and several irregularly shaped pits in trench 2 which contained substantial quantities of modern material such as brick rubble, concrete, glass and metal. A recent tree line was also evident along the eastern edge of trenches 2 and 3. No archaeological remains were found in the trenches.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: A. Dyson	Date of Summary: June 2014

Appendix 3: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-181111	
Project details	
Project name	Land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road Takeley
Short description of the project	Three trenches were excavated within those parts of the site identified as holding some potential for the presence of buried archaeological remains. The evaluation established that modern truncation and disturbance have affected the site; earlier soils had evidently been removed and areas of modern make-up laid down during the previous development. Over the majority of the site these extended to the depth of the natural clay, whereas at the far north end of site a thin layer of remnant subsoil survived beneath the later modern deposits. This layer contained small fragments of charcoal and seemingly modern brick or tile. No archaeological remains were found in the trenches.
Project dates	Start: 09-06-2014 End: 10-06-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	E8207 - Contracting Unit No. TAMH 14 – Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD TAKELEY Land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road
Postcode	CM226SN
Study area	0.12 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 5710 2120 51.8667521222 0.28199787839 51 52 00 N 000 16 55 E Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Essex County Council Place Services
Project design originator	ASE

Project director/manager	Adrian Scruby
Project supervisor	Adam Dyson
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Report"
Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation, Land at Morgan House, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Dyson, A.
Other bibliographic details	report number: 2014206
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Braintree
Description	PDF document comprising approximately 14 pages of text and 5 figures (site plan and 4 photographs)
URL	www.oasis.ac.uk
Entered by	A Dyson (adam.dyson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	16 June 2014



© Archaeology South-East		Morgan house, Dunmow road, Takeley	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 8207	Jun 2014	Location of archaeological evaluation trenches	
Report Ref: 2014206	Drawn by: APL		



Figure 2. Trench 1, looking north (1m scales)



Figure 3. Trench 2, looking north (1m scales)



Figure 4. Trench 3, looking north (1m scales)



Figure 5. Trench 3, south end looking east (1m scales)

Sussex Office

Units 1 & 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
tel: +44(0)1273 426830
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeologyse

Essex Office

The Old Magistrates Court
79 South Street
Braintree
Essex CM7 3QD
tel: +44(0)1376 331470
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeologyse

London Office

Centre for Applied Archaeology
UCL Institute of Archaeology
31-34 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY
tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

