**Archaeology South-East** 



# Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching

# Brewers End, Takeley, Essex

ASE Project No: 5430 Site Code: TABE14

ASE Report No: 2014029



January 2014

## Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching

**Brewers End, Takeley, Essex** 

NGR: TL 55670 21190

Planning Ref: UTT/1335/12/FUL

ASE Project No: 5430 Site Code: TABE14

ASE Report No: 2014029 OASIS id: 169130

Mark Germany With illustrations by Andrew Lewsey

January 2014

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#### Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by CgMs to undertake an archaeological evaluation of a site at Brewers End, Takeley, Essex, in advance of residential development.

The evaluation of the 1.371ha area of rough grazing land comprised the excavation of thirteen trenches. No significant archaeological remains, other than an undated pit in Trench 10, were identified.

Roman strip fields previously found in the Barkers Tanks site, immediately to the west, do not appear to continue into the development area.

The southern third of the site has been subjected to significant ground disturbance in the recent past. This is suggested to have occurred during the Barkers Tanks housing development to the immediate east. The remainder of the site is undisturbed.

It is probable that few or no below-ground archaeological remains are present within the site area and its development is unlikely to have any adverse impact upon the heritage resource of this vicinity.

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 CgMs Consulting on behalf of Countryside Properties (UK) Ltd commissioned Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL), to undertake a thirteen trench archaeological evaluation of *c*. 1.371ha of rough pasture at Brewers End, Takeley in advance of proposed residential development. Richard Havis of Essex County Council Place Services requested the archaeological work.

### 1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The site sits immediately west and south of Brewers End and the B1256 respectively (Figure 1). Access to the site is via a small entranceway alongside the B1256 which runs between Braintree and Bishops Stortford.
- 1.2.2 The site consists of scrubby grazing land. It has a gradual west to south-west facing slope, falling from 99.75m AOD in the north-west corner to 96.71m AOD in the south-west corner. It overlooks the valley of the Pincey Brook and Hatfield Forest, *c*.1km west. The site has a rough and slightly uneven ground surface.
- 1.2.1 The underlying geology of the site comprises Till Boulder Clay (BGS Sheet 222 Great Dunmow 1990). The topsoil and subsoil, where not previously redeposited or truncated, are c.0.11m to 0.19m and c.0.14m to 0.18m thick respectively. The topsoil consists of brownish grey plastic/firm silt clay, and the subsoil comprises greyish brown firm silt clay. Both contain infrequent stones.

### 1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 Planning application (UTT/1335/12/FUL) was submitted to Uttlesford District Council in July 2012 for the erection of 41 no. dwellings with associated vehicular and pedestrian access, infrastructure and landscaping.
- 1.3.2 As the site lies within an area highlighted by the Historic Environment Record as having general 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. The archaeological condition that was recommended and subsequently attached to the grant of planning permission is based upon guidance contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and states that:

No development or 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 in writing by the local planning authority.

Reason: the Essex Historic Environment Record shows that the proposed development lies immediately adjacent to extensive archaeology deposits and further investigation of the site is required in accordance with Policy GEN2 of the Uttlesford Local Plan (adopted 2005).

1.3.2 The required archaeological work was subsequently undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by CgMs Consulting (2013).

### 1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The aim of the archaeological trial trenching was to determine the location, form, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, irrespective of period, liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- 1.4.2 The evaluation was also requested to clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusions and hence the degree of archaeological survival.
- 1.4.3 Within those parameters, the evaluation of the site presented an opportunity to address the following objectives:
  - 1) To establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits
  - 2) To evaluate the past land use and development of the site

#### 1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report describes the results of an archaeological evaluation of land at Brewers End, Takeley, Essex prior to use of the land for construction of residential housing. The fieldwork was managed by Andy Leonard and was carried out by Mark Germany with the assistance of Samara King between 13th-16th January 2014.

### 2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 A more detailed account of the archaeological background for the site can be found in the Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (CgMs Consulting 2012).
- 2.2 No archaeological remains have been previously found within the development boundary.
- 2.3 Dunmow Road (the B1256) follows the course of Stane Street, a Roman road running from Colchester to Braughing.
- 2.4 Archaeological work in advance of residential development within the Barkers Tanks site immediately east of the site in 2003 revealed Middle Iron Age to Roman pits and a large complex of what was interpreted as Roman strip fields (Roberts 2007).
- 2.6 Map regression indicates the site to have remained undeveloped since at least 1777.

#### 3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHOD

3.1 The archaeological fieldwork consisted of machine stripping and archaeological investigation of thirteen trenches (Figure 1). Trenches 1 to 8,

10 to 11 and 13 measured 30m long, Trench 9 19.5m long and Trench 12 14m long. All thirteen trenches were 1.8m wide. The trenches were positioned before stripping by using a Leica GPS. The lengths and forms of the trenches avoided storm drain covers and overhead electricity cables (Figure 1). The trenches sampled 4.7% of the 1.371ha site.

- 3.2 The trenches were stripped of their topsoil and subsoil (if present) by using a tracked excavator equipped with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. The stripping of the trenches was carried out under archaeological supervision down to the top of archaeological features or else the top of the undisturbed natural deposit. The exposed surface of the Boulder Clay natural was cleaned, as required, and examined for the presence of remains. Spoil heaps were also inspected for archaeological artefacts.
- 3.3 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).
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 The site archive is currently held at the ASE site office at Braintree and will be deposited with Saffron Walden Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 1).

49
13 trench sheets, 21 context sheets
1
0
31
0
0
0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

## 4.0 RESULTS

- 4.1 Trenches 1 to 9
  - Trenches 1 to 9 revealed layers of topsoil, subsoil and natural, but no archaeological remains. The topsoil and subsoil for all nine trenches comprised brownish grey and greyish brown firm silt clay respectively. Both contained infrequent stones. The natural was slightly more variable and consisted of orange/yellowish brown silt clay in trenches 1 to 3 and 7 to 9, and grey-yellowish brown silt clay in 4 to 6. Stones and pieces of chalk occurred infrequently in all cases.

Trench				Deposit	Height
Number	Context	Туре	Description	Thickness m	m AOD
1	1/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.16 - 0.30	99.39
1	1/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.14 - 0.20	
1	1/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
2	2/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.07 - 0.18	99.17
2	2/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.13 - 0.18	
2	3/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
3	3/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.12 - 0.15	88.97
3	3/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.11 - 0.13	
3	3/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
4	4/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.07 - 0.18	99.90
4	4/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.12 - 0.14	
4	4/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
5	5/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.10 - 0.15	99.39
5	5/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.13 – 0.19	
5	5/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
6	6/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.10 - 0.14	99.49
6	6/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.17 – 0.27	
6	6/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
7	7/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.18 - 0.21	89.92
7	7/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.17 - 0.20	
7	7/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
8	8/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.10 - 0.20	98.74
8	8/002	Layer	Subsoil	0.15 - 0.20	
8	8/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	
9	9/001	Layer	Topsoil	0.16 - 0.19	99.34
9	9/002	Layer	Subsoil	015 – 0.16	
9	9/003	Layer	Natural	Not exc.	

Table 2: Trenches 1 to 9 list of recorded contexts

### 4.2 Trench 10

4.2.1 Trench 10 revealed modern deposits and wheel ruts. It also uncovered an undatable pit and two types of natural (Figures 2 and 4).

			Max.	Max.	Depth/Thickness
Context	Туре	Description	Length m	Width m	m
10/001	Deposit	Natural	15+	1.8+	Not exc.
10/002	Deposit	Natural	9.5+	1.8+	0.3+
10/003	Deposit	Subsoil	15+	1.8+	0.15
10/004	Deposit	Topsoil	21+	1.8+	0.27
10/005	Cut	Pit	0.45	0.35	0.10
10/006	Deposit	Fill of 005	0.45	0.35	0.10
10/007	Deposit	Layer	0.28+	1.8+	0.23
10/008	Cut	Ruts	1.8+	1.5	0.05 – 0.2
10/009	Deposit	Fill of 008	1.8+	1.5	0.05 – 0.2

Table 3: Trench 10 list of recorded contexts

- 4.2.2 The two types of natural comprised chalky Boulder Clay and brownish orange silt clay respectively [10/001 and 10/002]. Deposit [10/001] extended into the eastern end of the trench, and was shown by machine excavation to be in-situ and over 0.3m thick. Deposit [10/002] formed the base of the rest of the trench. It had a gradual, west-facing slope and was not investigated. The interface between [10/001 and 10/002] was situated beneath a section of topsoil, which was left in situ and not machined off [10/004].
- 4.2.3 Subsoil [10/003], layer [10/007] and most of topsoil [10/004] were removed by machine in order to establish their characteristics and to discover what was beneath them. The subsoil, the earliest of the three, extended from natural deposit [10/001] to the western end of the trench. It measured up to 0.15m thick and was present directly above pit [10/005] and natural deposit [10/002]. The topsoil covered the subsoil, was 0.27m thick and, like the topsoil, was probably in situ (*i.e.* undisturbed by modern development). Layer [10/007] was the uppermost of the three deposits and was probably a spread-out dump of unwanted spoil. It extended across natural [10/001], ruts [10/008] and most of topsoil [10/004]. It was 0.23m thick.
- 4.2.4 Pit [10/005] sat beneath subsoil [10/003] and had a 0.10m deep, concave profile. It contained a single fill of grey silt clay with infrequent flecks of charcoal [10/006]. The pit contained no finds and is therefore undated.
- 4.2.5 The parallel ruts at the eastern end of the trench were not excavated and were given a shared number [10/008]. They ran north-south, were spaced c.1.5m apart and were clearly of recent date. They cut natural deposit [002] and were very irregular in plan. Minimal investigation showed them to be 0.05m to 0.20m deep; neither was formally investigated. The fill of both [10/009] was the same as the topsoil and was therefore asumed to be modern.

### 4.3 Trench 11

4.3.1 Trench 11 revealed topsoil [11/001], natural [11/002], re-deposited natural [11/003 and 11/ 004] and a partially filled, modern gully [11/005] (Figure 3).

			Max.	Max. Width	Depth/
Context	Туре	Description	Length m	m	Thickness m
11/001	Deposit	Topsoil	50+	1.8+	0.19 – 0.24
11/002	Deposit	Natural	3.25+	1.8+	Not exc
11/003	Cut	Redeposited natural	2.5+	1.8+	0.15+
11/004	Deposit	Redeposited natural	24+	1.8+	0.55+
11/005	Cut	Gully	1.8+	1.15	0.2m
11/006	Deposit	Fill of 005	1.8+	1.15	Not exc.

Table 4: Trench 11 list of recorded contexts

- 4.3.2 Deposit [11/002] was exposed in the north end of the trench and comprised undisturbed natural Chalky Boulder Clay.
- 4.3.3 Gully [11/005] cut across [11/002] and was a *c*.0.2m deep, half-filled linear earthwork, filled by a single deposit of brownish grey silt clay [11/006]

(Figure 5). Beyond this trench, it crossed the southern half of the site and ran at a slightly shallow angle from one side of the field to the other. As it was clearly modern, this feature was not formally excavated.

- 4.3.4 Deposits [11/003 and 11/004] began immediately south of [11/002] and were probably redeposited natural. Deposit [11/004] consisted of reworked/disturbed Chalky Boulder Clay intermixed with patches of topsoil, and deposit [11/003] comprised brown firm/plastic silt clay with infrequent stones and flecks of chalk. Their machine investigation revealed them to be more than 0.15m and 0.55m thick respectively. Deposit [11/004] extended across most of the trench and was stratigraphically later than [11/003].
- 4.3.5 Topsoil [11/001] directly overlay natural and re-deposited natural deposits [11/002, 11/003 and 11/004]. It extended the length of the trench and was between 0.19m and 0.24m thick. There was no intervening subsoil.

#### 4.4 Trench 12

4.4.1 The contents of Trench 12 consisted of ruts [12/003], topsoil [12/002] and natural [12/001] (Figures 3 and 6).

			Max.	Max.	Depth/Thickness
Context	Туре	Description	Length m	Width m	m
12/001	Deposit	Natural	14+	1.8+	Not exc.
12/002	Deposit	Topsoil	14+	1.8+	0.06 – 0.15
12/003	Cut	Ruts	8+	1.40	0.02 - 0.12
12/004	Deposit	Fill of 003	8+	1.4+	0.02 – 0.12

Table 5: Trench 12 list of recorded contexts

- 4.4.2 Two linear ruts [12/003] cut Chalky Boulder Clay [12/001]. They ran northsouth parallel with each other and crossed the length of the trench at a shallow angle. They sat c.1.5m apart and were very irregular in plan. They were not formerly investigated, but were established by minimal excavation to be between 0.02m and 0.12m deep. The single fill [12/004] of the ruts was probably compacted, re-deposited topsoil.
- 4.4.3 Topsoil [12/002] was brownish grey in colour and between 0.06m and 0.15m thick. It covered the ruts [12/003] and extended the length and width of the trench.

#### 4.5 Trench 13

4.5.1 Trench 13 exposed natural [13/001], topsoil [13/002] and ruts [13/003] (Figures 2 and 7).

			Max.	Max.	Depth/Thickness
Context	Туре	Description	Length m	Width m	m
13/001	Deposit	Natural	50+	1.8+	Not exc.
13/002	Deposit	Topsoil	50+	1.8+	0.08 – 0.12
13/003	Cut	Ruts	25+	1.5	0.02 - 0.08
13/004	Deposit	fill of 003	25+	1.5	0.02 - 0.08
Table 6	Trench 13	list of recorder	1 contexts		

 Table 6.
 Trench 13 list of recorded contexts

- 4.5.2 Natural deposit [13/001] comprised Chalky Boulder Clay. The overlying topsoil [13/002] was very thin and is therefore likely to have been heavily truncated or re-deposited. No subsoil was present either.
- 4.5.3 Ruts [13/003] ran as a pair and crossed the length of the trench at a shallow angle. They sat *c*.1.5m apart and were very irregular in plan. The ruts were between 0.02m and 0.08m deep, but were not formerly excavated. The fill [13/004] of them consisted of compacted topsoil.

#### 5.0 FINDS

5.1 No archaeological artefacts were collected from any of the features or deposits exposed and investigated within the evaluation trenches.

#### 6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL

6.1 No environmental soil samples were taken as no datable, pre-modern archaeological deposits were found.

### 7.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 7.1 Discussion

- 7.1.1 From the results of the trenching it seems very likely that the site contains no significant archaeological remains. A low incidence of discrete, smaller features, such as undatable pit [10/005] in Trench 10, may be present across it, although no other evidence has been found to support this.
- 7.1.2 The Roman strip fields, which were found in the Barkers Tanks site immediately west of the site in 2003 (Roberts 2007), are unlikely to continue into the proposed development site. Discrete and distinct blocks of strip fields within wider areas of less intensively sub-divided land, like those of Barkers Tanks, are common to Stansted and Takeley, but of late Saxon to medieval date (Cooke *et al.* 2008, fig. 9.15; Germany *et al.* in prep.).
- 7.1.3 The southern third of the site, that area immediately south of extant drainage gully [11/005], has been subjected to significant ground disturbance in the recent past. The presence of re-deposited natural material [11/003 and 11/004] in Trench 11, the buried topsoil layer [10/004] in Trench 10, and the absence subsoil Trenches 12 and thinness of topsoil in 13 all suggest that it has been previously stripped and re-deposited upon. The ruts in Trenches 10, 12 and 13, probably caused by dumpers running on soft ground, were very likely created during this. The date of this disturbance and earthmoving is not known, but is suggested to have been during the Barkers Tanks housing development to the immediate east.

### 7.2 Conclusions

7.2.1 Significant disturbance, truncation and re-deposition has taken place across the rear (south) of this site in the recent past. The impact of this is evidently variable, but it is likely to have at least damaged any archaeological features

if and where present. The remainder of the site was undisturbed.

- 7.2.2 No archaeological features or unstratified artefacts of significance have been identified within any of the trenches. It is probable that few or no below-ground archaeological remains are present within the site area.
- 7.2.3 The development of this site is unlikely to have any adverse impact upon the heritage resource of this vicinity.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeology South-East thanks CgMs for its commissioning and assisting of the work, and Richard Havis of Essex County Council Place Services for his guidance and monitoring. Mark Germany and Samara King undertook the fieldwork, Chris Russell the surveying, and Andy Lewsey the production of figures 1 to 3. The project was managed by Andy Leonard.

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CgMs	2013	Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation. Land at Brewers End, Takeley, Essex
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Germany, M., Scruby, A. and Masefield, R.	In prep.	'Excavation of prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains at Priors Green, Takeley, 2006 to 2010'. <i>Essex Arch. Hist.</i>
Roberts, B.	2007	'Evidence of Roman agricultural drainage: excavation south of the former A120, Takeley, 2003'. <i>Essex Arch. Hist</i> . 38, 53 – 65

### Appendix 1: HER Summary Form

Site name/Address: Brewers End, Take	eley
Parish: Takeley	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 55670 21190	Site Code: TABE14
Type of Work: Archaeological	Site Director/Group: Mark Germany,
evaluation by trial-trenching	Archaeology South-East
Date of Work: 13/1/14 to 23/1/14	Size of Area Investigated:
	13 trenches (654.3m <sup>2</sup> )
Location of Finds/Curating Museum:	Client: CgMs on behalf of Countryside
Saffron Walden Museum	Properties
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos:
Final Report: EAH roundup	OASIS Ref: 169130
Periods represented: Modern, undated	

#### SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:

An archaeological evaluation consisting of thirteen trenches was carried out in advance of proposed residential development within a 1.371ha block of rough grazing land at Brewers End, Takeley.

The trenching revealed modern ground disturbance, but no archaeological remains. The ground disturbance was restricted to the southern third of the site and appeared to consist of subsoil and topsoil stripping/stockpiling and ruting by heavy plant.

The results of the trenching suggested that the modern disturbance had not been particularly detrimental to the archaeological resource and that the site had never been intensively occupied.

Previous Summaries/Reports:- None	
Author of Summary: Mark Germany	Date of Summary: January 2014

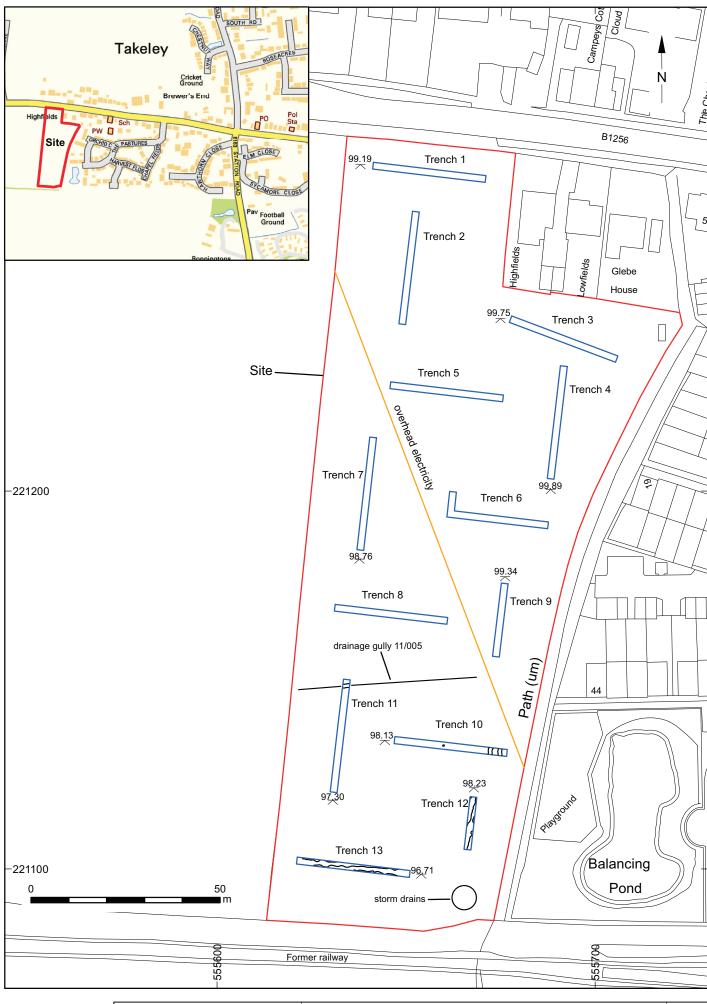
### Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS ID: arch	aeol6-169130
Project details	
Project name	Brewers End, Takeley
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation consisting of thirteen trenches was carried out in January 2014 in advance of proposed residential development within a 1.371ha block of rough grazing land at Brewers End, Takeley, Essex. The trenching revealed modern ground disturbance, but no archaeological remains. The ground disturbance was restricted to the southern third of the site and was probably due to previous, unrecorded subsoil and topsoil stripping and stockpiling.
Project dates	Start: 13-01-2014 End: 16-01-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	TABE14 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	5430 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 5 - Character undetermined
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD TAKELEY Brewers End
Study area	1.37 Hectares
	1

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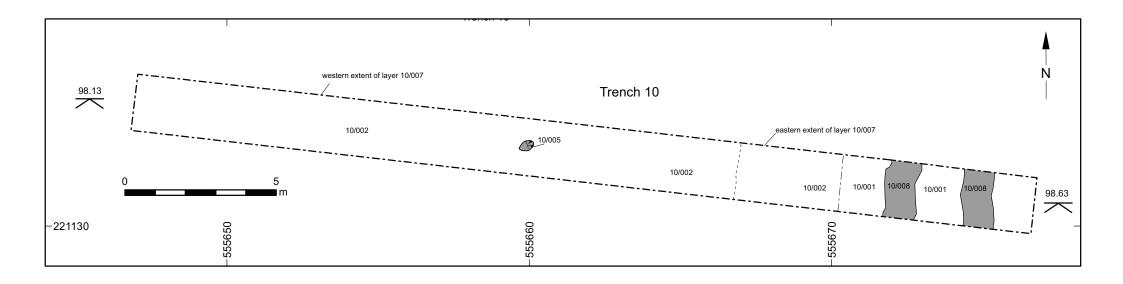
## Archaeology South-East Brewers End, Takeley, Essex ASE Report No. 2014029

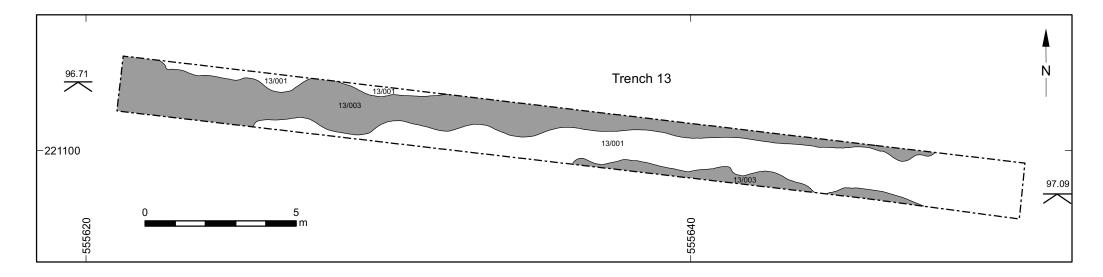
Site coordinates	TL 55670 21190 51.8670643394 0.261239053635 51 52 01 N 000 15 40 E Point
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	Essex County Council Place Services
Project design originator	CgMs Consulting
Project director/manager	Andrew Leonard
Project supervisor	Mark Germany
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	n/a
Digital Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report"
Entered by	Mark Germany (m.germany@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	21 January 2014



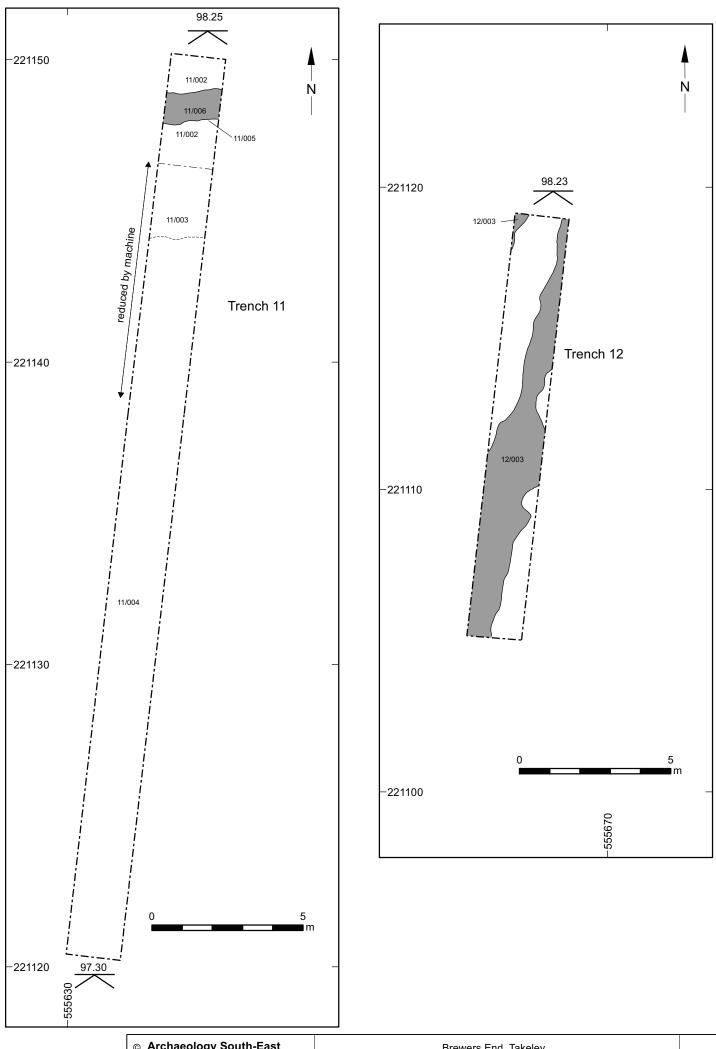
© Archaeology South-East		Brewers End, Takeley	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 5430	Jan 2014	Location of archaeological evaluation trenches	
Report Ref: 2014029	Drawn by: APL		

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© Archaeology South-East		Brewers End, Takeley	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5430	Jan 2014	Evaluation trenches 10 & 13	1 ig. 2
Report Ref: 2014029	Drawn by: APL		



© Archaeology South-East		Brewers End, Takeley	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 5430	Jan 2014	Evaluation trenches 11 & 12	rig. o
Report Ref: 2014029	Drawn by: APL		



Figure 4: Trench 10, looking west (1m scales)



Figure 5: North end of Trench 11, looking north-east (1m scale)



Figure 6: Trench 12, looking south (1m scales)



Figure 7: Trench 13, looking west (1m scale)

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