

Archaeological Evaluation

Pipeline at Wyvern Farm Stanway, Essex

ASE Project No: 8491

Event Number: EVT 4252

ASE Report No: 2016463



DRAFT

December 2016

Archaeological Evaluation

Pipeline at Wyvern Farm

Stanway, Essex

NGR: TL 9432 2447

ASE Project No: 8491
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ASE Report No: 2016463

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ABSTRACT

In October 2016, 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 at Land at Wyvern Farm, Stanway, Essex, in advance of the construction of a drainage pipe for an adjacent residential development.

Three trenches were excavated within the footprint of the groundworks revealing overburden deposits of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural clay and gravels. No archaeological remains were present.

Given that the evaluation has investigated a significant proportion of the development area, the archaeological potential of the site is judged to be negligible.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

- 1.1.1 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 Wyvern Farm, Stanway, Essex.
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was carried out prior to the excavation of a drainage pipe to the west of the main site area.
- 1.1.3 The main site area was evaluated by trial trenching in 2015, with five small areas subsequently being excavated.

1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 Wyvern Farm is located within the village of Stanway, between London Road (B1408) and the A12, and just west of Essex Yeomanry Way (A1124), c.4.5k west of Colchester town centre (Figure 1).
- 1.2.2 The main site (NGR TL 9432 2447) covers an area of approximately 14.5 hectares and contains new buildings currently under construction. Arable farmland and scrubland is located to the north and west.
- 1.2.3 The site is relatively flat at between 38.6m and 41m AOD. The land slightly slopes to the west as the land drops into the small valley of the Roman River, situated 1km to the west.
- 1.2.4 According to the British Geological Survey the underlying geology of the site comprises superficial wind-blown deposits of silt and sand overlying London Clay (British Geological Survey © NERC 2016).

1.2 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 Planning permission has been granted from Colchester Borough Council (CBC) for the construction of up to 358 houses and apartments, with associated roads, parking, drainage and landscaping (Planning ref. 145494). The Council advised that consent should be conditional upon a programme of archaeological work being undertaken in advance of the development work. The proposed wording of this condition is thus:

“Prior to commencement of the development an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching shall be carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be agreed in writing by the local planning authority. This shall take the form of a 4% evaluation of the development area with 1% held in reserve should further investigation be needed. The results of this evaluation shall be set out in a report to be submitted to the local planning authority in order to inform whether there is any further need for archaeological mitigation. Until the local planning authority has confirmed the position no commencement, including any site clearance involving disturbance of the

ground, shall occur. In the event that further investigation works are found to be necessary, the methodology and scope for these further works shall be agreed in writing by the local planning authority and the works executed fully in accordance with the agreed details prior to the commencement of development. A report setting out the findings of the investigative works shall thereafter be deposited with the Council's Historic Environment Record within twelve months of completion"

REASON: The site is known to be close to the ancient road between Verulamium and Camulodunum (St Albans and Colchester) as well as the ancient Iron Age – Romano-British site at Gosbecks and therefore the Council wishes to ensure that appropriate steps are taken to identify and record heritage assets.

- 1.3.2 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in June/July 2015 in accordance with a Brief (CBC 2015) provided by Colchester Borough Council's archaeological advisor. Following the results of that work, Colchester Borough Council requested that further archaeological open area excavation took place in order to mitigate the impact of the development. Four areas were subsequently investigated, along with an additional trench near the old Roman street frontage.
- 1.3.3 This current phase of work has been necessitated by the insertion of drainage pipes associated with the same housing development.
- 1.3.4 The methodology for this current phase of archaeological work followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) produced for the previous phase of works at Wyvern farm (2015b), as agreed with the CBC archaeology advisor prior to the commencement of works. All work was undertaken in accordance with this document.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 This report details the results of a second stage of archaeological evaluation undertaken at Wyvern Farm, and assesses the archaeological potential and significance of the site.
- 1.4.2 The fieldwork was directed by Angus Forshaw and was managed by Andy Leonard. The work was carried out between 27 - 28 October 2016.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological background of the site has been described comprehensively in previous documents (CgMs 20113; ASE 2015b) and is not repeated in detail here. The following is a summary of the most pertinent information taken from those earlier reports.

2.2 Prehistoric

2.2.1 Palaeolithic and Mesolithic flint implements have been recorded from Oldhouse Farm c.750m to the south-east of the site (EHER 11619 and EHER 11767). Neolithic implements have also been discovered near the same farm c.1km to the south of the site (EHER 11602).

2.2.2 Aerial photographic cropmark interpretation has revealed the presence of a ring-ditch of c.25m diameter located less than 50m to the east of the site. The cropmark might represent the ploughed-out remains of a Bronze Age burial mound (EHER 11939). Such a feature is unlikely to be in isolation and there may be additional prehistoric remains within the immediate landscape. The nearest known Bronze Age cemetery is at Chitts Hill (Crummy 1977) over 1km to the north-east of the Site.

2.3 Iron Age to Roman

2.3.1 The excavation of cropmarks 750m to the south of the site at Church Lane revealed evidence of a Middle Iron Age trackway and residual flint finds. The trackway was found to comprise parallel ditches with internal metaling. Cropmark analysis provided by the Essex HER appears to show the trackway aligned south-west to north-east and passing some 300m to the east of the site (EHER 45996 and EHER 11937; Partridge 1993).

2.3.2 During the Late Iron Age a system of defensive dykes (EHER 11642) were laid out to the west of what is now Colchester, the closest being Grymes Dyke located 1.5km to the east of the site (not illustrated). This extensive system enclosed the Late Iron Age *oppidum* of *Camulodunum*. Excavations have shown the dyke system not only continued in use after the Roman conquest but was added to and modified.

2.3.3 The site at Wyvern Farm lies outside this system of dykes, however its location need not preclude occupation in the Late Iron Age to Roman period; cropmarks and excavation have demonstrated that Late Iron Age and Roman settlement occurred outside the defended *oppidum* as well as within it. One example of such a settlement is the cropmark site excavated at Abbotstone Field, Stanway (EHER 11919). This site, located 1.7km south-south-west of Wyvern Farm (not illustrated), spans the period from the Middle Iron Age, through to the Late Iron Age, and into the Roman period. Over time, small irregular enclosures were gradually replaced by a larger and more formal complex of square 'Romanised' enclosures. Despite this growth, the site

remained a low status rural settlement, involved in small-scale domestic/self-sufficient activities (CAT 2005).

- 2.3.4 The southern boundary of the site is formed by London Road which is on the route of Stane Street Roman road (also known as Stone Way) (EHER 11705). Stane Street was the major Roman trunk road from Colchester to Braughing via Braintree. The Roman road is thought to follow an earlier route way which was straightened and metalled in the Roman period (EHER 1226). The close proximity of the Roman road to the site provides opportunity for features associated with the road to be present. The presence of the road would have influenced the layout of the wider landscape and roadside activity such as temporary camps, burials and features associated with the construction of the road could conceivably be present, along with field systems respecting the road's alignment.
- 2.3.5 The Church of St Albrights 500m to the west of the site contains Roman brick in its dressing and contains quoins of Roman brick in the wall of the west nave (EHER 11833).
- 2.3.6 Despite the presence of the Roman road and the re-used Roman material within the church fabric, the immediate area has not produced much evidence for Roman occupation. Archaeological investigations in the vicinity have produced little in the way of Roman finds (see Section 2.7).

2.4 **Anglo-Saxon and medieval**

- 2.4.1 The place name 'Stanway' comes from (*æt*) *Stanwægun* which appears from c.1000AD and means 'at the Stone Ways', referring to its location by the Roman road also known as 'Stane Street' (Reaney 1969, 398).
- 2.4.2 Documentary sources indicate that in the 10th century Stanway was part of a large estate held by the ealdormen of Essex. In c.AD1002 Aelfflaed, widow of Ealdorman Byrhtnoth, directed that Stanway and nineteen other estates should pass to King Ethelred after her death (Cooper 2001, 263-266). St. Albrights church is dedicated to St. Ethelbert of East Anglia (died AD794) and the original chapel is believed to date to the Saxon period (HER 11834).
- 2.4.3 Actual archaeological evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity within the site area, especially from the early Anglo-Saxon period, is as undetectable as that from the Roman period.
- 2.4.4 Medieval settlement was scattered and does not appear to have been nucleated around St Albrights Church. Medieval moated sites are not uncommon, the closest being Moat Farm (EHER 11703) which is over a kilometre to the west of the Site. The farm still has a medieval earthwork which originally surrounded an earlier house.
- 2.4.5 An archaeological evaluation carried out at the adjacent site to east recorded a low level of medieval activity alongside London Road (ASE 2015a). The activity could have related to occupation within a roadside plot or to quarrying (see Section 2.7).

2.4.6 The site appears to have been situated well away from the identified local centres of activity in both the Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods, and the majority of the site probably consisted of agricultural land at this time.

2.5 **Post-medieval**

2.5.1 The Chapman and Andre Map of Essex (1777) shows the site situated within open land to the west of Beacon Farm. More detail is provided by the later mapping of the Manor of Stanway (1787) and the Map of Stanway (1808), both of which show the site as farmland situated around and to the north of what later becomes Wiseman's Farm.

2.5.2 The 1839 Stanway Tithe Map shows no change within the site but the apportionment does provide the additional information that the fields were used for arable purposes at this time.

2.5.3 The Ordnance Survey of 1876 shows Wiseman's to the south of the site and a Gravel Pit just to the west, inside of the site boundary. The remainder of the site is shown as open land at this time occupying parts of seven different fields. No change is shown to the area of the site on mapping from 1896 to 1921.

2.5.4 Post-war development in the wider area saw residential development expand east from Stanway along the main road to Colchester. By 1958 residential development was located both to the east and west of Wiseman's, along the London Road frontage. A modern farm building was constructed in the south-west of the site along with a number of outbuildings to the north of the main dwelling. The majority of the site remained undeveloped at this time.

2.5.5 The expansion of what now is called Wyvern Farm is evident from mapping of 1963-66. The original buildings in the south-west of the site appear to have been replaced by what appear to be farm buildings on a north-south axis. To the north and east around eighteen outbuildings now make up the farm complex. The remainder of the site has been homogenised into two main fields both of which are shown as open land at this time.

2.5.6 Mapping from the present day shows a number of outbuildings and a swimming pool have been added in the south-west of the site. The wider site area remains undeveloped.

2.6 **Cropmark information**

2.6.1 Information provided by the Essex HER shows that the site contains, and is adjacent to, a number of crop marks. Cropmarks identified within the north of the site appear to be representative of field boundaries, as shown on mapping from 1787 up the 1950s or 60s, with possible traces of an earlier or alternative field system on a separate alignment (EHER 11923).

2.6.2 As previously discussed, a circular cropmark 25m in diameter is situated 50m from the eastern boundary of the site (EHER 11939). The cropmark is

believed to be Bronze Age in origin (see below) and may represent a ploughed out funerary mound/ barrow.

2.7 Archaeological interventions

- 2.7.1 A number of archaeological investigations have been undertaken in close proximity to the study site. In May 2015 ASE carried out an evaluation in the field immediately to the east of the site (Stane Park Phase 1a and 1b). A seemingly incomplete ring-ditch of probable Bronze Age date (cropmark EHER 11939) was located, as well as a prehistoric pit. The presence of both features suggests an area of possible funerary activity during the late prehistoric period. Medieval remains consisted of a scatter of features at the south end of the site. These comprised a large possible quarry pit, a smaller pit, a ditch and a posthole, and collectively are indicative of some form of activity alongside London Road during the medieval period. The fairly broad date range provided by the pottery from these features spans the 12th – 14th century and the 14th to 16th century. While they may be settlement related, possibly associated with a plot fronting on to London Road, the features may also include roadside quarry pits in which domestic rubbish has been dumped (ASE 2015a).
- 2.7.2 An archaeological evaluation at Tollgate North (CAT 1996), 75m to the east of the site comprised twenty two trenches which recorded no significant features but did encounter finds of residual prehistoric flints and a sherd of Roman pottery (HER 45995). A later archaeological evaluation undertaken at the near-by Medical Centre at Tollgate West proved similarly uninformative with five evaluation trenches only revealing a single shallow pit of unknown date (HER 25997).
- 2.7.3 A fifty-eight trench archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Wyvern Farm by ASE in June and July of 2015 (ASE 2015a), with thirteen trenches yielding a limited number of archaeological features mainly parts of six post-medieval field boundary ditches, along with a number of undated features and discrete features of Medieval and modern date (Figure 2).
- 2.7.4 Following this four excavation areas were opened in November 2015 focusing on the areas of archaeological activity identified during trial trenching (ASE 2016a; Figure 2). The work identified Iron Age pits along with several undated pits which may have been contemporary. The field boundary ditches were further investigated, with finds from later 18th/early 19th century, broadly mirroring the dates on historic mapping records that depict the boundaries.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Project Aims and Objectives

3.1.1 The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were as follows:

- To determine and preserve by record, as far as reasonably practicable, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.
- To enable Colchester Borough's archaeologist to make an informed decision as to the requirement for any further work.

3.1.2 Other site specific aims of the fieldwork were to:

- The East of England falls within two landscape regions — the Central Midlands province and the Eastern province of Roberts and Wrathmell (2000), or alternatively the 'planned' and 'ancient' countryside of Rackham (1986) — and there has been some progress in our understanding of the development of these landscapes. There is a vast level of complexity in the field systems of Eastern England, with common fields of varying degrees of formality prevailing in the north and west of the region, and ancient 'block holdings' (or land in severalty) dominating in the south. Can the excavation enhance our understanding of the division between these landscape types in this area?
- The Historic Landscape Characterisation project provides an interpretation of field types within the region, focussing on the 1st edition OS map (1870s and 80s) and the modern day. Allied to this, the Historic Field Systems of East Anglia project has explored the evolution, forms and management of historical field systems, basing the analysis on twelve detailed case studies across the region (Martin and Satchell 2008). Can the post-medieval material observed in the evaluation be further explored in the excavation phase and facilitate these research agendas?

3.1.3 In the event that significant discoveries were made these were to be considered with reference to pertinent research themes and questions identified 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 archaeological evaluation method was conducted broadly in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2015b) and Method Statement (ASE 2016b).

3.2.2 Three evaluation trenches were excavated under direct archaeological supervision using a JCB mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless

ditching bucket. The trenches each measured 30m long and 2m wide. Mechanical excavation was undertaken to the depth of the natural stratum and/or the top of any archaeological deposits present. All spoil heaps were scanned visually for artefacts during machining of the trenches.

- 3.2.3 The trenches were arranged within the footprint for the drainage pipe, with the locations limited to areas not yet excavated and not accessible due to dense scrubland.
- 3.2.4 Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout, with all work carried out in accordance with the ClfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) Code of Conduct (ClfA 2014a), *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014b) and in compliance with *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).
- 3.2.5 All stratigraphy was recorded using the ASE context recording system, with all exposed archaeological features and deposits recorded and sample excavated, except obviously modern features and disturbances.
- 3.2.6 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 by hand and using digital survey equipment.

3.3 Archive

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

Description	Number	Type
Trench sheets	3	A4 paper
Site photographic register	1	A4 paper
Digital images	25	Hi-res JPGS

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 There were no archaeological remains encountered within any of the evaluation trenches excavated.
- 4.1.2 The results from the trenches are briefly described below and detail of their deposit sequences are presented in Appendix 1. Their locations are shown in Figure 2.

4.2 General Soil descriptions

- 4.2.1 An overlying topsoil was present across all of the trenched areas but had been removed within the pipeline easement prior to their excavation. The topsoil was formed of moderately friable mid grey brown silty clay recorded in all of the trenches and was generally formed of moderately friable light grey brown silty sand of approximately 0.18m thick. Subsoil deposits were encountered within all of the trenches and consisted of moderately compact light grey brown silt clay of between 0.09m to 0.18m thickness. These were removed by machine under archaeological supervision.
- 4.2.2 The underlying natural strata was generally compact yellow brown silt clay with common patches of gravel.
- 4.2.3 No archaeological deposits or features were found below the topsoil and subsoil deposits. No artefacts were retrieved from the topsoil. There was no evidence of truncation or significant ground disturbance in the surface of the natural deposit.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 5.1.1 The results of the evaluation suggest that very little previous disturbance has occurred on the site, leaving the natural undisturbed beneath a c.0.30-0.35m thickness of overburden deposits comprising topsoil and subsoil.
- 5.1.2 No archaeological features or deposits were encountered below either topsoil or subsoil deposits.

5.2 Consideration of research aims

- 5.2.1 The evaluation has achieved its primary aim by determining the absence of archaeological remains within the footprint of the drainage pipe trench. As the fieldwork results are negative, the project objectives to evaluate historic landscapes could not be achieved.
- 5.2.2 Given the restricted extent of the pipeline construction work and the low quantity/significance of archaeological remains found in the 2015 trenches to the immediate east, it is judged that the evaluation results reliably reflect the low archaeological content and potential of this site area.

5.3 Conclusions

- 5.3.1 The evaluation has revealed an absence of archaeological remains within the three trenches excavated. It is likely that the remainder of the proposed pipeline route has no, or negligible, archaeological content.
- 5.3.2 It is judged that the pipeline construction works will have a negligible impact on the heritage resource of this vicinity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank CgMs Consulting for commissioning the work and for their assistance throughout the project and the Colchester Borough Council archaeological advisor for providing guidance and monitoring. Andy Leonard project managed the fieldwork and Mark Atkinson managed the post-excavation process. The report figures were prepared by Andrew Lewsey.

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Appendix 1: Summary of archaeologically blank trenches

Trench	Context	Description	Depth/thickness	Height (m AOD)
1	1/001	Topsoil	unk	
	1/002	Subsoil	0.09 – 0.14	36.50 (W) 36.63 (E)
	1/003	Natural	-	
2	2/001	Topsoil	unk	
	2/002	Subsoil	0.13 – 0.14	36.88 (W) 37.17 (E)
	2/003	Natural	-	
3	3/001	Topsoil	unk	
	3/001	Subsoil	0.15 – 0.17	37.21 (W) 37.18 (E)
	3/003	Natural	-	

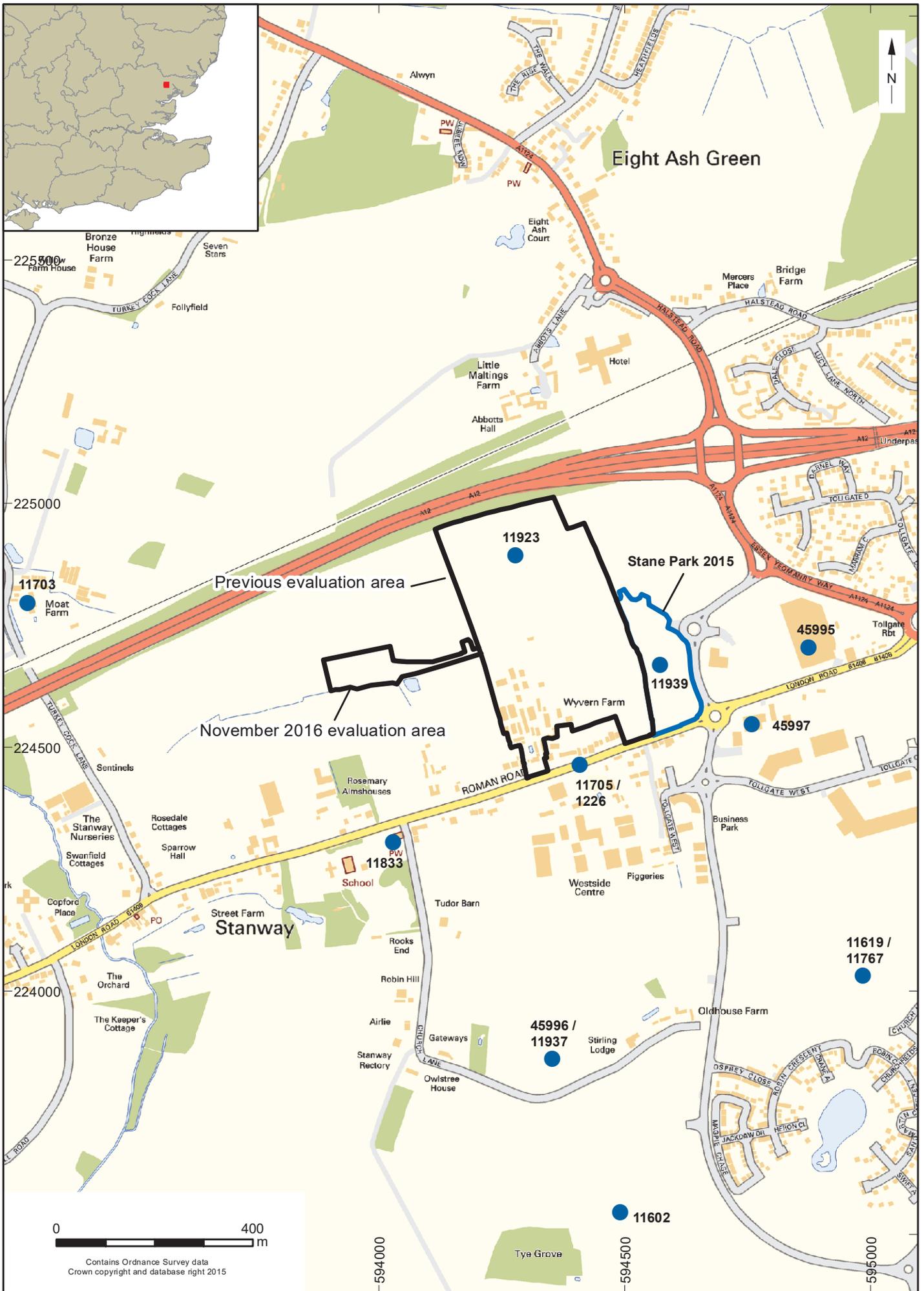
Appendix 2: HER Summary Form

Site name/Address: Land at Wyvern Farm, Stanway, Colchester, Essex	
Parish: Stanway	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9432 2447	Site Code: EVT 4252
Type of Work: Archaeological Excavation	Site Director/Group: A. Forshaw, Archaeology South-East
Date of Work: 27th – 28th October 2016	Size of Area Investigated: 180 sq m
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Colchester Museum	Funding source: Client
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos: -
Final Report: EAH roundup	OASIS No: 269511
Periods Represented: none	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p><i>Archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of the construction of a pipeline serving an adjacent residential development site, itself previously investigated in 2015 and 2016.</i></p> <p><i>Three trenches were excavated along the route of the pipe trench, revealing overburden deposits of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural clay and gravels. No archaeological remains were present.</i></p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
<p>ASE 2015, <i>Archaeological Evaluation Report, Land at Wyvern Farm, London Road, Stanway, Essex.</i> ASE Rep. No. 2015247</p> <p>ASE 2016, <i>Archaeological Excavation: Wyvern Farm, Stanway, Colchester, Essex.</i> ASE Rep. No. 2016181</p>	
Author of Summary: A. Forshaw	Date of Summary: November 2016

Appendix 3: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-269511	
Project details	
Project name	Wyvern Farm Pipeline
Short description of the project	Archaeological evaluation was undertaken in advance of the construction of a pipeline serving an adjacent residential development site, itself previously investigated in 2015 and 2016. Three trenches were excavated along the route of the pipe trench, revealing overburden deposits of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural clay and gravels. No archaeological remains were present.
Project dates	Start: 27-10-2016 End: 28-10-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Associated project reference codes	8491 - Contracting Unit No. EVT 4252 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 2 - Operations to a depth less than 0.25m
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Pipelines/cables (e.g. gas, electric, telephone, TV cable, water, sewage, drainage etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER STANWAY Wyvern Farm
Postcode	CO3 8AS
Study area	500 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 9417 2467 51.886204046988 0.821783044077 51 53 10 N 000 49 18 E Point
Lat/Long Datum	WGS 84 Datum
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager	Andrew Leonard
Project supervisor	Angus Forshaw
Type of sponsor/funding body	Consultant
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet"
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation. Pipeline at Wyvern Farm, Stanway, Essex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Forshaw, A.
Other bibliographic details	ASE rep. 2016463
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Witham
Description	A4 and A3, approx. 17 pages text, tables and figures
Entered by	Mark Atkinson (mark.atkinson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	1 December 2016



Contains Ordnance Survey data
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© Archaeology South-East		Wyvern Farm, Stanway	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 8491	Nov 2016	Site location and selected EHER references	
Report No: 2016463	Drawn by: APL		



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© Archaeology South-East		Land at Wyvern Farm, Stanway		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 8491	Nov 2016	Location of evaluation area with previous excavation areas and evaluation trenches		
Report Ref: 2016463	Drawn by: APL			

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