ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

LAND AT WHITE COTTAGE, START HILL, BIRCHANGER, ESSEX CM22 7TG

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

| Authors: John Haygreen (Fieldwork and Report) | | | | | |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| NGR: TL 52071 21417 Report No: 5751 | | | | | |
| District: Uttlesford Site Code: BIRWC19 | | | | | |
| Approved: Claire Halpin MCIfA | Project No: 7782 | | | | |
| | Date: 31 January 2019 | | | | |

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PROJECT SUMMARY SHEET

| Project details | |
|-----------------|---|
| Project name | White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex CM22 7TG |

In January 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex CM22 7TG (NGR TL 52071 21417; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two new dwellings with associated garaging on the site (Uttlesford Council Planning Approval Ref.18/0999/OP). It was required based on the advice of Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).

The evaluation comprised the excavation of three test pits in an area significantly below street level. Two of the test pits were excavated to depths of 600 and 900mm and then augured; revealing considerable evidence for truncation and deposits of made ground indicative of soil movement. The made ground contained primarily Late 18th – Mid 20th century pottery which gives a time frame for this soil movement. Elsewhere on the site the levels varied and clearly much soil movement associated with building and landscaping has taken place.

In Test Pit 2 Made Ground L1005 contained residual 14th – 16th century pottery, including the rim of a Colchester ware bowl, which may derive from focal points of activity in the local area, such as the brick kilns postulated around Tilekiln Green. Brick Floor or Surface F1006 was also recorded and may represent the remains of a former garden feature. In Test Pit 1 Ditch F1012 was recorded in section and contained 18th – mid 20th century pottery.

| Project dates (fieldwork) | January 20 | 19 | | | | |
|----------------------------|--|---|--------------------|----------|------------|--|
| Previous work (Y/N/?) | N | Future | work TBC | | | |
| P. number | P7702 | Site co | ode BIRWC | | C19 | |
| Type of project | Archaeolog | ical eva | luation | | | |
| Site status | - | | | | | |
| Current land use | Garden | | | | | |
| Planned development | Residential | | | | | |
| Main features (+dates) | Made Grou | nd, Ditc | h & Brick Surface | (post-me | edieval) | |
| Significant finds (+dates) | Pottery (res | sidual m | edieval; post-medi | eval) | | |
| Project location | · | | | | | |
| County/ District/ Parish | Essex | | Uttlesford | | Birchanger | |
| HER/ SMR for area | Essex Coul | Essex County Council Historic Environment Record (SHER) | | | | |
| Post code (if known) | CM22 7TG | CM22 7TG | | | | |
| Area of site | c.0.1ha | c.0.1ha | | | | |
| NGR | TL 52071 2 | TL 52071 21417 | | | | |
| Height AOD (min/max) | c.80m AOD | c.80m AOD | | | | |
| Project creators | · | | | | | |
| Brief issued by | Essex County Council HEA | | | | | |
| Project supervisor/s (PO) | Archaeological Solutions Ltd | | | | | |
| Funded by | Hyson Lucky Dragon Ltd | | | | | |
| Full title | Land at White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex CM22 7TG. | | | | | |
| | An Archaeological Evaluation | | | | | |
| Authors | Haygreen, J. | | | | | |
| Report no. | 5751 | | | | | |
| Date (of report) | January 2019 | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

LAND AT WHITE COTTAGE, START HILL, BIRCHANGER, ESSEX CM22 7TG

ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION

SUMMARY

In January 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex CM22 7TG (NGR TL 52071 21417; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two new dwellings with associated garaging on the site (Uttlesford Council Planning Approval Ref.18/0999/OP). It was required based on the advice of Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).

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In Test Pit 2 Made Ground L1005 contained residual 14th – 16th century pottery, including the rim of a Colchester ware bowl, which may derive from focal points of activity in the local area, such as the brick kilns postulated around Tilekiln Green. Brick Floor or Surface F1006 was also recorded and may represent the remains of a former garden feature. In Test Pit 1 Ditch F1012 was recorded in section and contained 18th – mid 20th century pottery.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In January 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex CM22 7TG (NGR TL 52071 21417; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the initial requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two new dwellings with associated garaging on the site (Uttlesford Council Planning Approval Ref.18/0999/OP). It was required based on the advice of Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA).

- 1.2 The site could not be accessed by a mechanical excavator and due to the evident different levels it appeared truncated Three test pits each 1.5m x 1.5m were excavated by hand.
- 1.3 The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by the Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA, *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation on Land at White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger,* dated 21st September 2018), and a specification prepared by AS (dated 24th September 2018) and approved by ECC HEA. It followed the procedures outlined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014). It also adhered to the relevant sections of *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).
- 1.4 The principal objectives of the monitoring were:
- to ensure the archaeological excavation and monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect buried archaeological remains;
- to secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- to secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the appropriate publication of the project results, if required; and
- to secure the analysis, long-term conservation and storage of the project archive

Planning Policy Context

- 1.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2018) states that those parts of the historic environment that have significance because of their historic, archaeological, architectural or artistic interest are heritage assets. The NPPF aims to deliver sustainable development by ensuring that policies and decisions that concern the historic environment recognise that heritage assets are a non-renewable resource, take account of the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits of heritage conservation, and recognise that intelligently managed change may sometimes be necessary if heritage assets are to be maintained for the long term. The NPPF requires applications to describe the significance of any heritage asset, including its setting that may be affected in proportion to the asset's importance and the potential impact of the proposal.
- 1.6 The NPPF aims to conserve England's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, with substantial harm to designated heritage assets (i.e. listed buildings, scheduled

monuments) only permitted in exceptional circumstances when the public benefit of a proposal outweighs the conservation of the asset. The effect of proposals on non-designated heritage assets must be balanced against the scale of loss and significance of the asset, but heritage assets of demonstrably non-designated significance may be considered subject to the same policies as those that are designated. The NPPF states that opportunities to capture evidence from the historic environment, to record and advance the understanding of heritage assets and to make this publicly available is a requirement of development management. This opportunity should be taken in a manner proportionate to the significance of a heritage asset and to impact of the proposal, particularly where a heritage asset is to be lost.

2 DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE

2.1 The site lies on the southern side of Start Hill at Birchanger. It is a landscaped garden plot adjacent to the east/south east of White Cottage, and extends to some 0.1ha. It is proposed to erect two new dwellings with associated garaging, following site clearance.

3 TOPOGRAPHY, GEOLOGY AND SOILS

- 3.1 The site is located at c.80m AOD on the north-western slope of a small valley of a minor watercourse, which passes the southern edge of the site and forms a tributary of the River Stort, whose course passes c.3km to the west. The natural topography rises slightly to the west, south-east and north-east; the latter notably to the plaeau on which London Stansted Airport id located.
- 3.2 The solid geology of the site is comprised of clay, silt and sand of the London Clay Formation, generally not overlain by any drift deposits, but towards the southern edge of the site and the watercourse, superficial Head deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel may be present. The local soils are freely draining slightly acid but base-rich.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

4.1 The Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) notes that the site lies within an area of archaeological potential. Excavations on the M11 slip road c.150m to the west revealed evidence for a broad range of prehistoric activity (EHER 46496): including tree throws containing early Neolithic flint blades and flakes; pits containing Middle and Late Neolithic flint work; Middle Bronze Age waterholes containing Deverel-Rimbury pottery, a quern stone and oak stake; Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pits containing significant pottery vessels; and late Iron Age/early Roman ditches containing pottery and animal bone. The

local Roman landscape may be viewed as relative to the major road of Stane Street, whose route has been recorded c.700m to the west (EHER 4702). The road connected the contemporary settlements of Colchester and Braughing (EHER 4697). A scatter of Roman pottery recorded at Tilekiln Green c.300m to the south-east may be related to roadside activity or occupation.

4.2 Medieval activity in the local area may have included a tile kiln at Start Hill, close to the south of the site (EHER 4661). Here yellowglazed medieval pottery was also recorded. Brick kilns are first recorded in the area in 1553 c.400m to the south around Tilekiln Green (EHER 15631), potentially representing a continued exploitation of the local natural clay resource. Field walking of the south-western extent of Stansted Airport, to the north-west of the site also recorded a large scatter of post-medieval material, but this may have been redistributed through manuring and soil re-deposition (EHER 14329). One of the only remnants of post-medieval settlement in the locality is Lewismead (or Lewis'), a 17th century timber-frame building c.400m to the southeast (EHER 4640). The local landscape has been substantially changed by the establishment of infrastructure including railway bridges in the late 19th century (EHER 40375-6); components of the Second World War airfield that preceded the development of London Stansted Airport (EHER 16654); and the M11 motorway.

5 METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 ECC required a programme of archaeological trial trenching but the site was not accessible by a mechanical excavator at the current time. The drop in ground level from the street frontage to the site suggested that the site might be significantly truncated. It was agreed that three test pits each 1.5m2 were to be excavated in the first instance (Fig. 3).
- 5.2 The archaeological evaluation comprised the inspection of the made ground, subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Encountered features and deposits were cleaned by hand and recorded using *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate.
- 5.3 Open test pits and excavated spoil were manually / visually searched and scanned by metal detector to enhance the recovery of archaeological finds.

6 DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS Figs. 3 - 5

6.1 The site stratigraphy was recorded in sample sections presented below:

| Sample section 1 0.00 = 79.36m A0 | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|---|
| 0.00 – 79.30m AC | L1009 | Made Ground. Friable, light grey silty sand. It contained Late 18 th – Mid 20 th C. pottery (1; 1g); and CBM (48g). |
| 0.23 – 0.28m | L1000 | Buried Topsoil. Friable, dark brown silty loam |
| 0.28 – 0.64m | L1011 | Made Ground. Firm, light orange brown clayey silt with CBM (796g) |
| 0.64 – 1.00m+ | L1014 | Made Ground. Firm, mid orange brown clayey silt with occasional irregular flint. Augered to a depth of a further 0.50m |

| Sample section 2 | | |
|------------------|-------|---|
| 0.00 = 79.50m A0 | OD | |
| 0.00 - 0.05m | L1007 | Gravel Path |
| 0.05 - 0.12m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above. |
| 0.12 – 0.40m | L1004 | Made Ground. Firm, Light grey brown silty clay with irregular flint and CBM. It contained Late 18 th – Mid 20 th C. pottery (7; 58g); and CBM (4898g). |
| 0.40 – 0.63m+ | L1005 | Made Ground. Firm, light grey brown silty clay with moderate CBM. Augered to a depth of a further 0.30m. It contained 14 th – 16 th C. pottery (3; 41g); and CBM (2716g). |
| c.0.60m | M1006 | Brick ?Floor or surface |

| Sample section 3 0.00 = 78.82m A | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| 0.00 – 0.14m | L1000 | Topsoil. As above. | |
| 0.14 – 0.23m | .14 – 0.23m L1001 Subsoil. Friable, light grey brown silty clay. It contained CBM (778g) | | |
| 0.23m+ | L1002 | Natural deposits. As above. | |

Description: The depth of the natural was established in each test pit. Made ground deposits, a brick floor or surface and a ditch were present. The dating evidence was predominantly Late 18^{th} – Mid 20^{th} century.

M1006 was a brick floor or surface observed in section.. A CBM sample (1644g) was extracted.

Ditch F1012 was linear (1.50+ \times ? \times 0.65m), orientated E/W. It had steep to moderately sloping sides and a flattish base. It cut Made Ground L1011. Its fill (L1013) was a friable, mid grey brown silty clay and it contained 18th – Mid 20th century pottery (1; 29g) and CBM (244g).

7 CONFIDENCE RATING

7.1 It is not felt that any factors restricted the identification of archaeological features or finds.

8 DISCUSSION

- 8.1 Given the drop in level from the street level to the site it was judged that the site might be significantly truncated but two of the test pits were surprisingly deep before the natural was encountered. Test Pit 1 was 1m deep and augered to a further depth of 0.50m before the natural was present. Test Pit 2 was 0.63m deep and augered to a further depth of 0.30m before the natural was present. These two test pits contained deposits of made ground indicative of soil movement, and the made ground contained primarily Late 18th Mid 20th century pottery which gives a time frame for this soil movement. Elsewhere on the site the levels varied and clearly much soil movement associated with building and landscaping has taken place. Test Pit 3 appeared the least disturbed but was a relatively short distance from Test Pit 2.
- 8.2 Made Ground L1005 (Test Pit 2) contained residual 14th 16th century pottery, including the rim of a Colchester ware bowl. The pottery may derive from focal points of activity in the local area such as the brick kilns postulated around Tilekiln Green.
- 8.3 Brick Floor or Surface F1006 may represent the remains of a former garden feature. Ditch F1012 (Test Pit 1) was recorded in section. It contained 18th mid 20th century pottery, and truncated Made Ground L1011.

DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

Archive records, with an inventory, will be deposited with any donated finds from the site at Saffron Waldon Museum. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Ms Holly Drake of Hyson Lucky Dragon Ltd for funding the works and for assistance.

AS would also like to acknowledge the input and advice of Mr Richard Havis of Essex County Council Place Services.

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Gurney, D. 2003 Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper no. 14

SSEW 1983 Soil Survey of England and Wales: Soils of South East England (sheet 4). Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

SSEW 1983 Soil Survey of England and Wales: Legend for the 1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales Harpenden, Rothamsted Experimental Station/Lawes Agricultural Trust

Appendix 1 - Concordance of Finds

BIRWC19 - P7782, Land at White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger

| Feature | Context | Trench | Description | Spot Date (Pot Only) | Pot Qty | Pot tery (g) | CBM (g) | A.Bo ne (g) | Other Materia I | Other Qty | Other (g) |
|---------|---------|--------|---------------|-------------------------|---------|--------------------|------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------|--------------|
| | 1001 | TP 3 | Subsoil | | | | 778 | | | | |
| | 1004 | TP 2 | Made Ground | Late 18th-mid 20th | 7 | 57 | 4898 | | | | |
| | 1005 | TP 2 | Made Ground | 14th-mid 16th C | 3 | 28 | 2716 | | | | |
| | 1006 | TP 2 | Brick Floor | | | | 1644 | | | | |
| | 1009 | TP 1 | Made Ground | Late 18th-mid 20th | 1 | 1 | 48 | | | | |
| | 1011 | TP 1 | Made Ground | | | | 796 | | | | |
| 1012 | 1013 | TP 1 | Fill of Ditch | Late 18th-19th C | 1 | 14 | 244 | | | | |

APPENDIX 2 SPECIALIST REPORTS

The Pottery

Peter Thompson

The archaeological evaluation recovered 12 sherds weighing 100g from four contexts. Layer L1005 contained three lightly to moderately abraded medieval sherds. One is a medieval sandy coarseware and the other two sherds were late medieval orange sandy ware or Colchester type ware including a bowl rim, while both had a small amount of glaze. The pottery was found in association with modern CBM. L1004 also contained a residual sherd of medieval sandy coarseware. The remaining pottery was early modern to modern in date.

Methodology

The sherds were examined and recorded according to the Medieval Pottery Research Group Guidelines (Slowikowski et al 2001). Fabric codes below (in brackets) are those used for the Essex County Council pottery type series (Cotter 2000).

KEY:

(20) MSG: Medieval Sandy grey coarseware mid 12th-14th

(21) COL: Colchester type ware early 13th-mid 16th

(48) TPW: Transfer Printed Ware: late 18th+

(48) RWE: Refined white earthenware late 18th+

(48) MOCH: Mocha ware late 18th+

| Feature | Context | Quantity | Date | Comment |
|------------|----------|-----------|---|-----------|
| Layer | 1004 TP2 | 1x22g MSG | late 18 th - | |
| | | 2x17g TPW | 19 th /mid 20 th | |
| | | 1x6g MOCH | | |
| | | 3x12g RWE | | |
| Layer | 1005 TP2 | 1x1g MSG | 14 th -mid 16 th | COL: bowl |
| | | 2x27g COL | | rim |
| | 1009 | 1x1g TPW | late 18 th -mid | |
| | | | 20 th | |
| Ditch 1012 | 1013 TP1 | 1x14g TPW | late 18 th -19 th | |

Table 1: Quantification of pottery by context

Bibliography

Cotter, J. 2000 Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85 Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd and English Heritage

Slowikowski, A., Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001 *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics*, Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 2

The Ceramic Building Materials

Andrew Peachey

The evaluation recovered a total of 70 fragments (11124g) of modern CBM (Table 2), in a highly fragmented, poorly preserved condition that is best-regarded as small rubble. The CBM includes soft red brick with a broad angular frog, pantile and glazed earthen ware tile from a kitchen or bathroom; which collectively may have origins in the late Victorian period but are most likely entirely of 20th century date. The bulk of the CBM was recovered from re-deposited layers (L1004, L1005, L1009 & L1011) with sparse fragments also recovered from Floor Layer L1006 and Ditch F1012.

| CBM type | Fragment count | Weight (g) |
|-----------------------|----------------|------------|
| Soft red brick | 53 | 9197 |
| Pantile | 16 | 1917 |
| Kitchen/bathroom tile | 1 | 10 |
| Total | 70 | 11124 |

Table 2: Quantification of CBM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: archaeol7-341594

Project details

Project name White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex CM22 7TG (TT)

Short description of the project

In January 2019 Archaeological Solutions (AS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex CM22 7TG (NGR TL 52071 21417; Figs. 1 - 2). The evaluation was undertaken in compliance with the requirements of a planning condition attached to planning approval for the proposed construction of two new dwellings with associated garaging on the site (Uttlesford Council Planning Approval Ref.18/0999/OP). It was required based on the advice of Historic Environment Advisor of Essex County Council (ECC HEA). The evaluation comprised the excavation of three test pits in an area significantly below street level. Two of the test pits were excavated to depths of 600 and 900mm and then augured; revealing considerable evidence for truncation and deposits of made ground indicative of soil movement. The made ground contained primarily Late 18th - Mid 20th century pottery which gives a time frame for this soil movement. Elsewhere on the site the levels varied and clearly much soil movement associated with building and landscaping has taken place. In Test Pit 2 Made Ground L1005 contained residual 14th - 16th century pottery, including the rim of a Colchester ware bowl, which may derive from focal points of activity in the local area, such as the brick kilns postulated around Tilekiln Green. Brick Floor or Surface F1006 was also recorded and may represent the remains of a former garden feature. In Test Pit 1 Ditch F1012 was recorded in section and contained 18th - mid 20th century pottery.

Start: 01-01-2019 End: 30-01-2019 Project dates

Previous/future

work

Not known / Not known

Any associated project reference

codes

Any associated

P7782 - Contracting Unit No.

project reference

codes

Field evaluation

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

BIRWC19 - Sitecode

Current Land

Type of project

use

Other 15 - Other

Monument type MADE GROUND, DITCH AND BRICK SURFACE Post Medieval

Significant Finds **POTTERY Post Medieval**

Methods & techniques "Test Pits"

Development Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

type

Prompt Planning condition

1 of 3 01/02/2019, 11:35 Position in the planning process Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country

England

Site location

ESSEX UTTLESFORD BIRCHANGER White Cottage, Start Hill, Birchanger, Essex

CM22 7TG

Postcode

CM227TG

Study area

0.1 Hectares

Site coordinates

TL 52071 21417 51.870099564224 0.209102900171 51 52 12 N 000 12 32 E Point

Height OD /

Depth

Min: 80m Max: 80m

Project creators

Name of

Archaeological Solutions Ltd

Organisation Project brief

originator

ESCC

Project design

Jon Murray

originator Project

Jon Murray

director/manager

Project

Archaeological Solutions Ltd

supervisor

Type of

Hyson Lucky Dragon Ltd

sponsor/funding

body

Name of sponsor/funding

body

Hyson Lucky Dragon Ltd

Project archives

recipient

Physical Archive Saffron Walden Museum

Physical

Contents

"Ceramics"

Digital Archive

Saffron Walden Museum

recipient

Digital Media available

"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"

Paper Archive recipient

Saffron Walden Museum

Paper Contents

"Ceramics"

Paper Media available

"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey"

Entered by Hollie Wesson (admin@ascontract.co.uk)

Entered on 1 February 2019

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PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX (P7782)



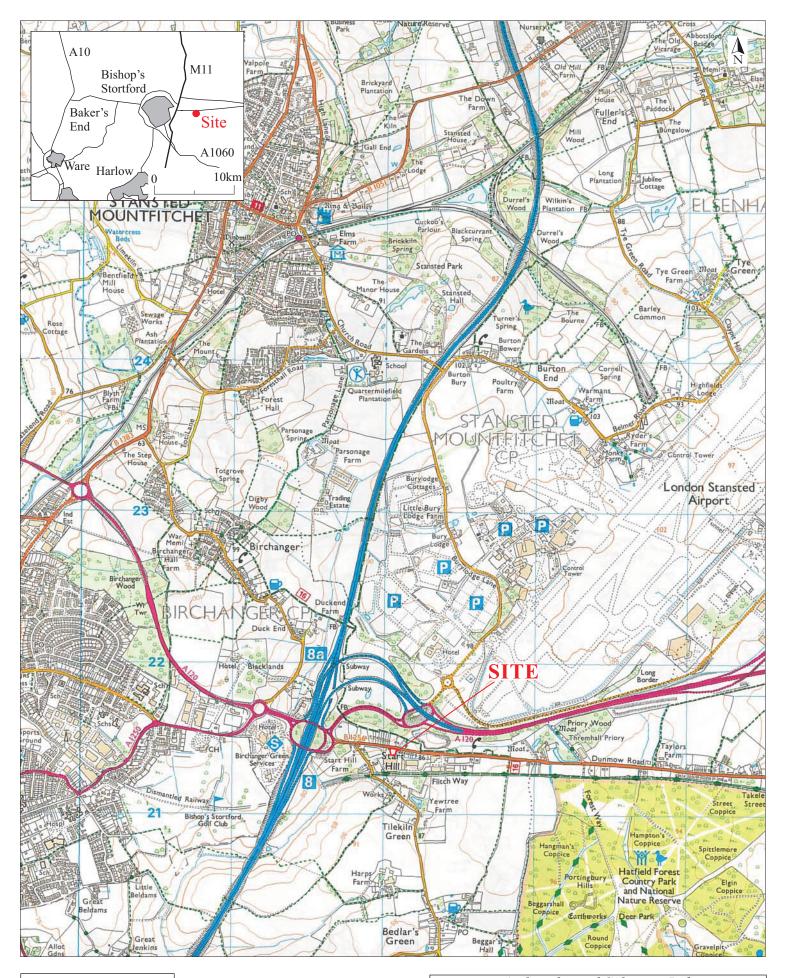
Test Pit 1 looking south



Test Pit 2 showing Bricks M1006 looking east



3 Test Pit 3 looking east

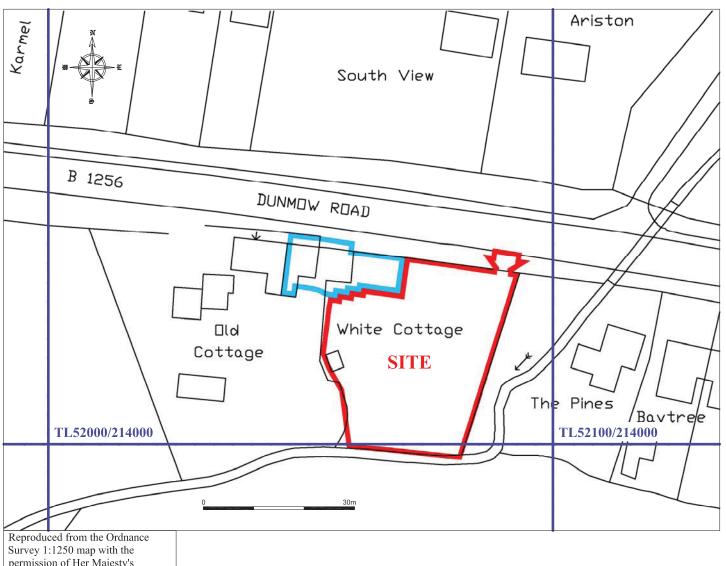


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Fig. 1 Site location plan

Scale 1:25,000 at A4

White Cottage, Start Hill, Dunmow Road, Essex (P7782)

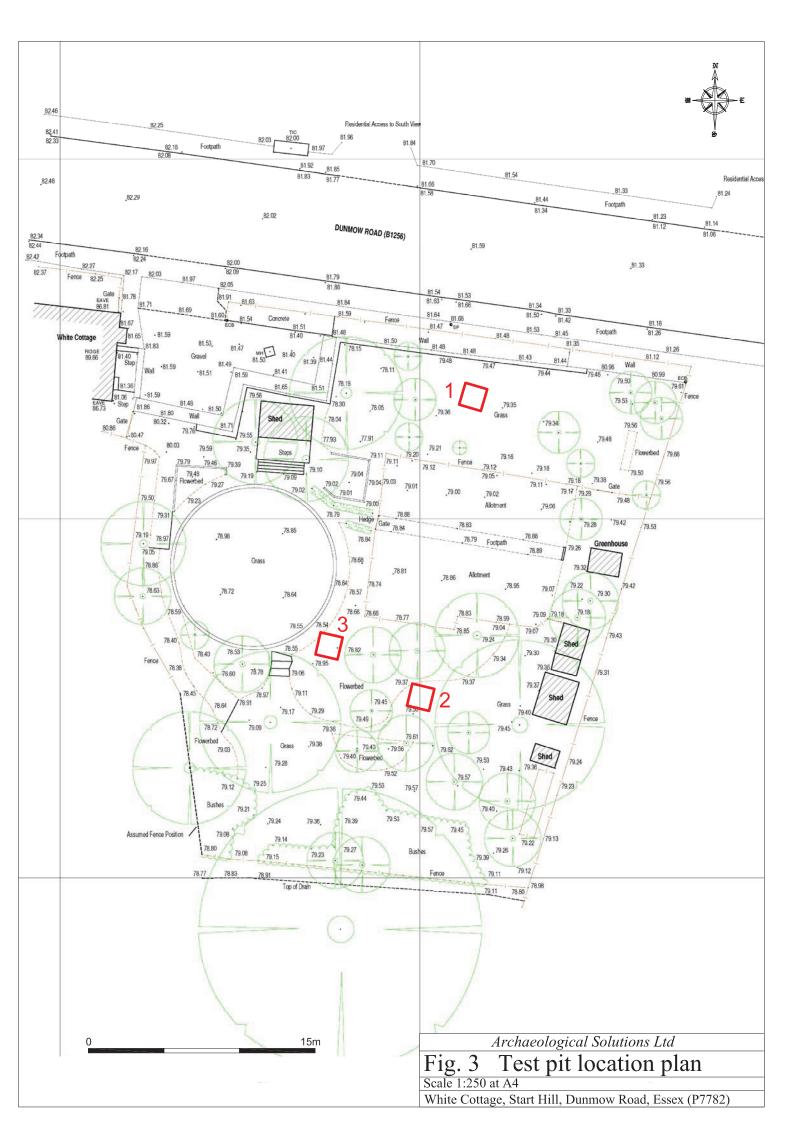


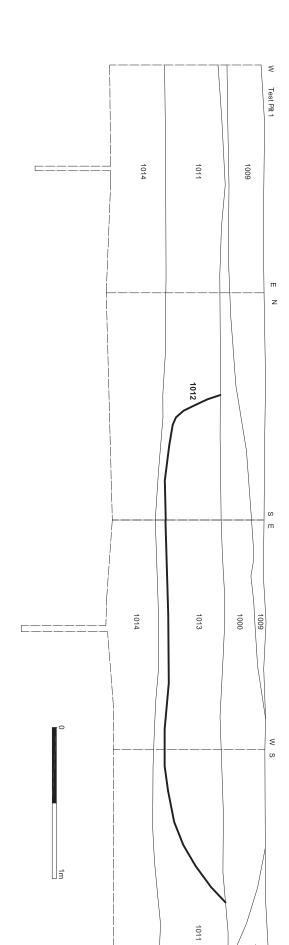
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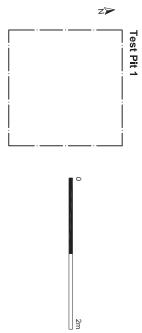
Fig. 2 De Scale 1:750 at A4 Detailed site location plan

White Cottage, Start Hill, Dunmow Road, Essex (P7782)



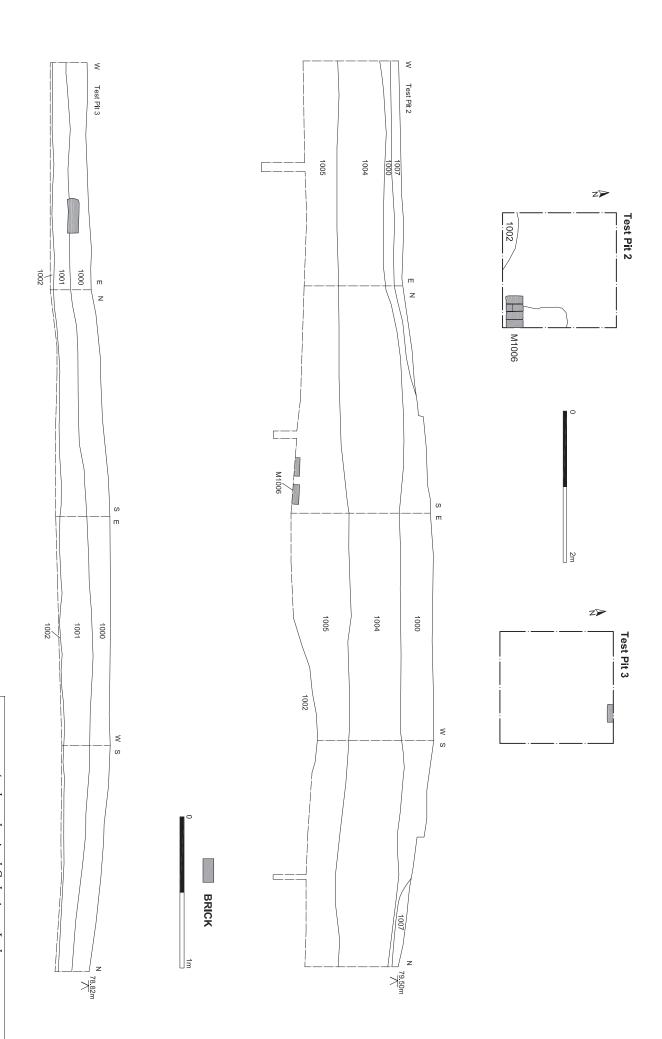


1009



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Fig. 4 Test Pit 1
Scale 1:50 and 1:25 at A4
White Cottage, Start Hill, Dunmow Road, Essex (P7782)



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Fig. 5 Test Pits 2 and 3

Scale 1:50 and 1:25 at A4

White Cottage, Start Hill, Dunmow Road, Essex (P7782)