

Archaeological evaluation at Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering, Essex, CM21 9JX

December 2018



by **Dr Elliott Hicks**

figures by Chris Lister, Laura Pooley and Emma Holloway

fieldwork by Mark Baister with Jim Keeble

commissioned by Jeff Allen, Riverway Properties Ltd

NGR: TL 48924 14779 (centre)

Planning ref.: EPF/1400/16

CAT project code: 18/02f

ECC code: SHEAH18

Epping Forest Museum accession code EFDM: 2018.22

OASIS ref.: colchest3-309362



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CAT Report 1358
January 2019

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out at Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering in advance of the construction of a new business premises. Although located within the Lower Sheering Conservation Area and close to the 19th-century Station Road Maltings, no archaeological features were encountered.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering, Essex, which was carried out on 17th December 2018. The work was commissioned by Jeff Allen of Riverway Properties Ltd and undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in advance of the construction of new business premises.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Maria Medlycott advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological trial trenching*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Maria Medlycott (ECCPS 2016), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2018).

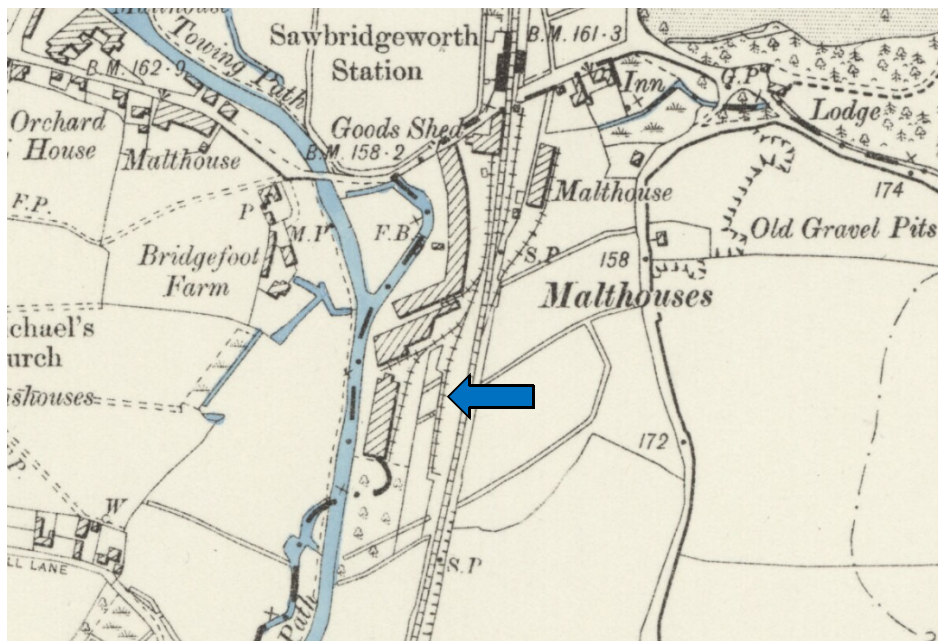
In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a), *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex.

The EHER shows that the proposed development site is located within the Lower Sheering Conservation Area and adjacent to the 19th-century Station Road Maltings (EHER 3628). In the early 20th-century, the proposed development area contained railway sidings associated with the functioning of the Maltings. There is therefore the possibility that archaeological deposits could survive on the development site relating to the function and development of the maltings and the wider conservation area.

Prior to the construction of the Maltings, the site was crossed by a tributary stream of the River Stort and palaeoenvironmental deposits associated with the landscape history of the Stort valley may have survived here.



Map 1 6-inch OS map (ESSEX XXXI.SE), surveyed 1895-6, published 1898. Development site indicated by blue arrow

4 Aim

The aim was to ascertain the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site in order that the ECCHEA might determine whether further archaeological investigations would be required.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

It was initially proposed that a cross-shaped trial-trench would be machine-excavated within the footprint of the new development. However, as a thick layer of concrete and crush (0.5m thick) covered the development site, it was agreed with the ECCHEA that two test-pits would be excavated instead, both 2m by 1.8m.

Beneath the layer of concrete and crush was a layer of modern build-up (L1, c 0.4-0.6m thick, soft dark black loamy-clay containing fragments of brick and concrete) which sealed natural clay (L2, encountered at a depth of 0.9-1.1m below current ground level).

A modern service was present in test-pit 2, but there were no significant archaeological features in either test-pit.



Photograph 1 TP1, looking east northeast

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

7 Conclusion

Despite being located in the Lower Sheering Conservation Area and close to the Station Road Maltings, no archaeological features were encountered.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Jeff Allen of Riverway Properties Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by M Baister with J Keeble. Figures are by C Lister, L Pooley and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Maria Medlycott.

9 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

Brown and Glazenbrook	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 – Research Agenda and Strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8
CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2018	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation at Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering, Essex, CM21 9JX</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i>
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
ECCPS	2017	<i>Brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at Allen</i>

English Heritage	2006	<i>House, Lower Sheering Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
Brown and Glazenbrook	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 – Research Agenda and Strategy</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBM	ceramic building material, ie brick/tile
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHF	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1358)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (layer sheets, sections)

Site digital photos and log

Inked section drawings

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1358)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Graphics

Site digital photos and log

Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Epping Forest Museum under accession code EFDM: 2018.22.

Distribution list:

Jeff Allen, Riverway Properties Ltd
Historic Environment Advisor, Essex County Council Place Services
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



Colchester Archaeological Trust

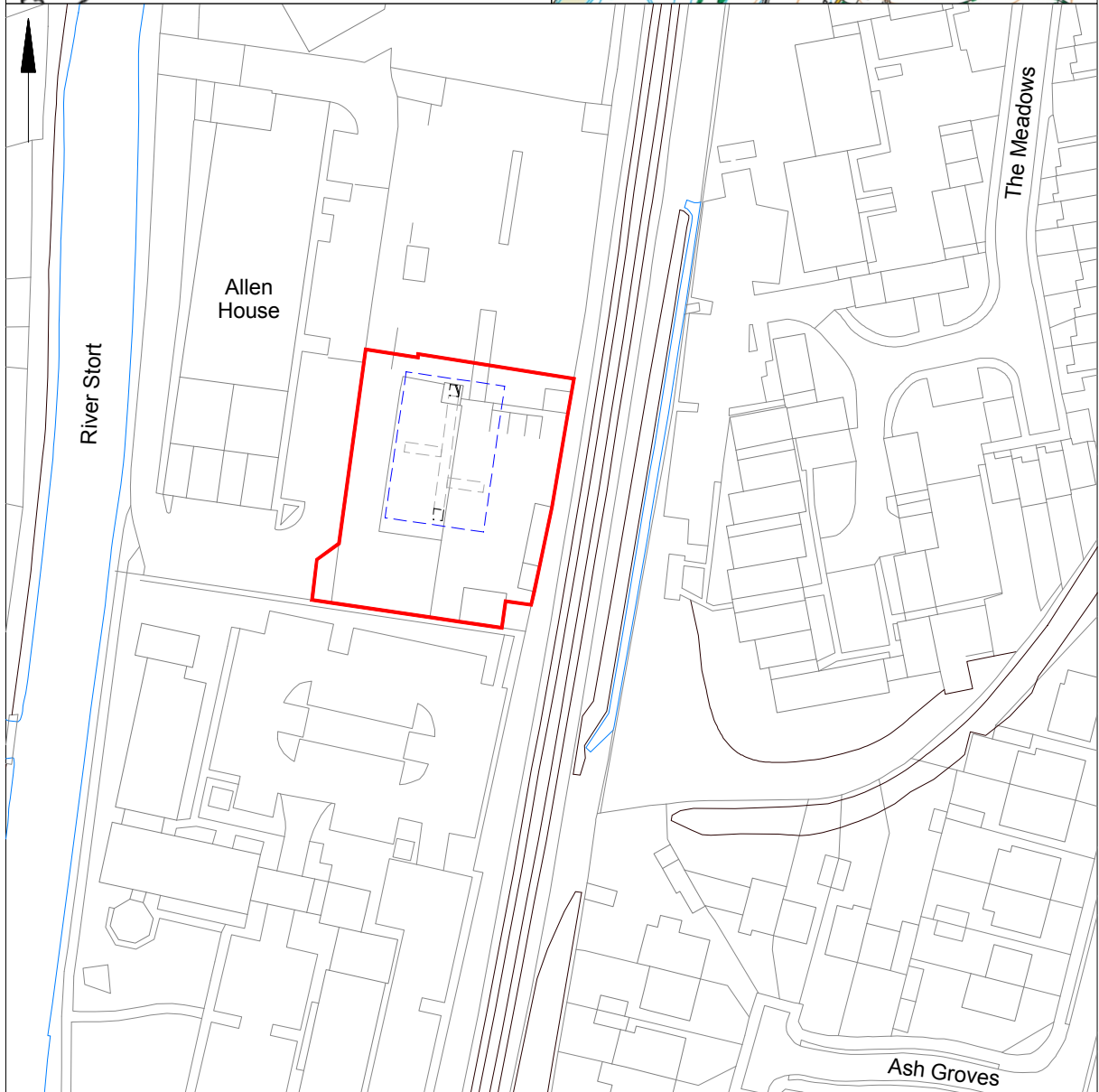
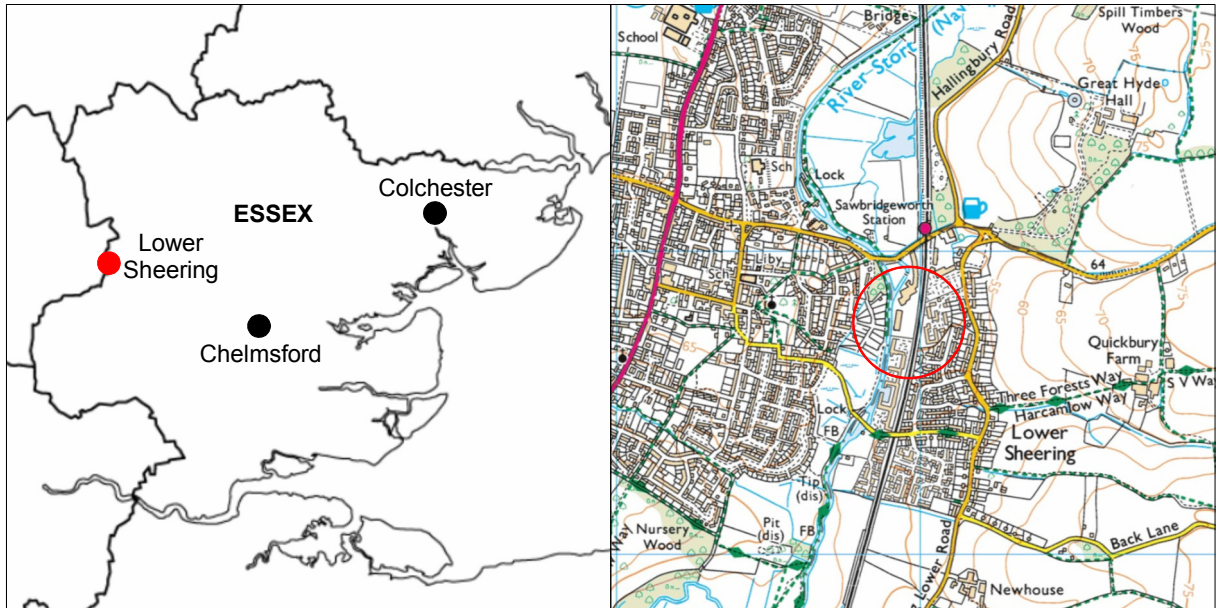
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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 3.1.2019



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Fig 1 Site location in relation to proposed development (dashed blue)



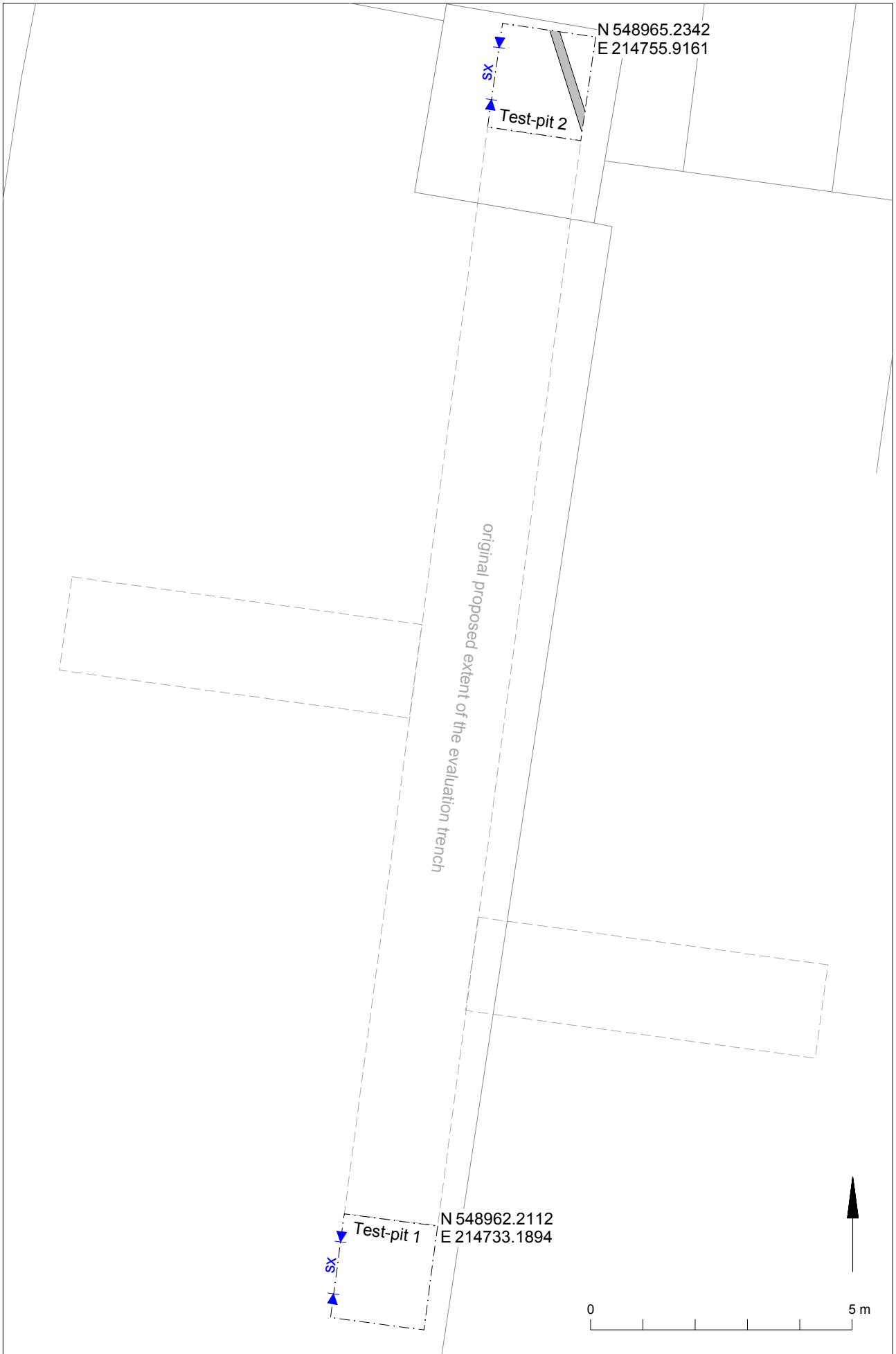


Fig 2 Results

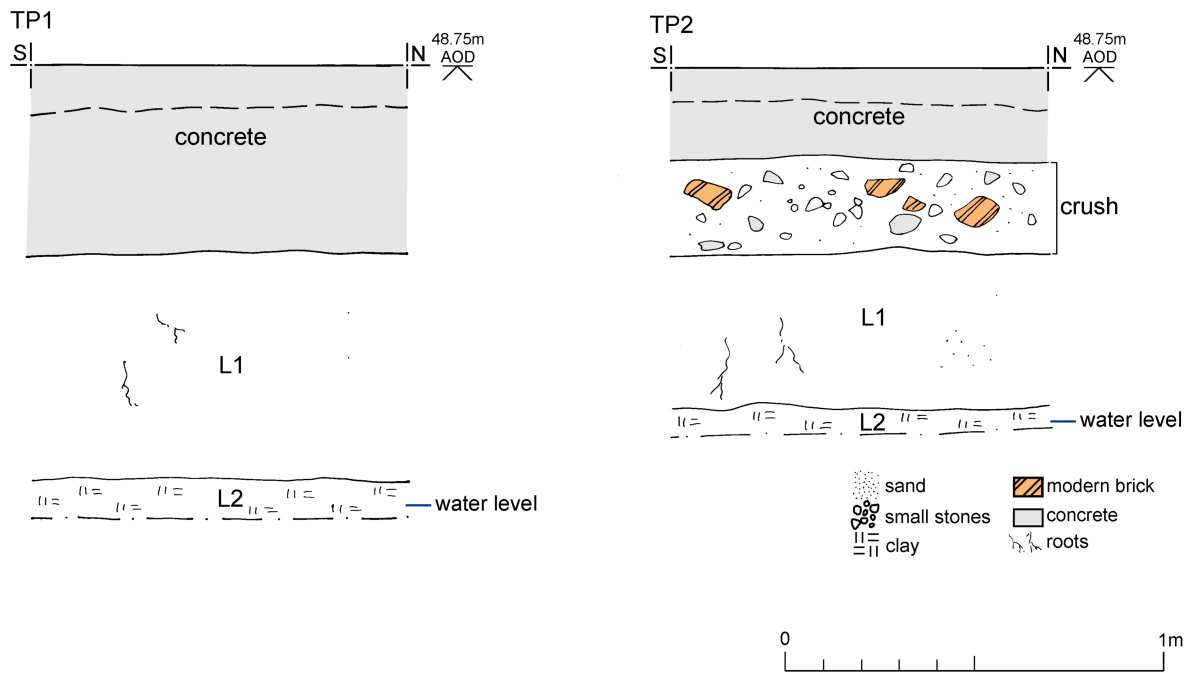


Fig 3 Representative sections.

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

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OASIS ID: colchest3-309362

Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering, Essex, CM21 9JX
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out at Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering in advance of the construction of a new business premises. Although located within the Lower Sheering Conservation Area and close to the 19th-century Station Road Maltings, no archaeological features were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 17-12-2018 End: 17-12-2018
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	18/02f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	EPF/1400/16 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	SHEAH18 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	EFDM: 2018.22 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 2 - Offices
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX EPPING FOREST SHEERING Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road
Postcode	CM21 9JX
Study area	0.18 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 48924 14779 51.811304929011 0.160564246822 51 48 40 N 000 09 38 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 47.65m Max: 47.85m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	HEM Team Officer, ECC
Project design originator	Sarah Carter
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Mark Baister
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Epping Forest Museum
Digital Archive ID	EFDM: 2018.22
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"

available
Paper Archive recipient Epping Forest Museum
Paper Archive ID EFDM: 2018.22
Paper Contents "other"
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Archaeological evaluation at Allen House, Station Road, Lower Sheering, Essex, CM21 9JX: December 2018
Author(s)/Editor(s) Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details CAT Report 1358
Date 2018
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URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html>

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Entered on 4 January 2019

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001
TP1 - looking north northeast



002
TP1 - looking east northeast



003
TP1 - looking north



004
TP1 - looking north northwest



005
TP2 - looking southwest



006
TP2 - looking southwest



007
TP2 - looking southwest (no north arrow)



008
TP1 - looking north northeast



009
TP1 - looking north northeast



010
TP1 - looking north northeast



011
TP1 - looking north northwest



012
TP1 - looking west



013
TP2 - looking west southwest



014
TP2 - looking west



015
TP2 - looking east



016
TP2 - looking east southeast



017
Site shot



018
Site shot



019
Site shot



020
Site shot



021
Site shot



022
Site shot



023
Site shot



024
Site shot

The logo for 'place services' consists of a solid blue square. Inside the square, the words 'place' and 'services' are stacked vertically in a white, lowercase, sans-serif font.

Title: Brief for Archaeological Trial Trenching and Excavation at Allen House, Lower Sheering

Planning Reference: EPF/1400/16

Date issued: 21/9/2016

Historic Environment Advisor: Maria Medlycott | maria.medlycott@essex.gov.uk | 03330 136853

Museum: Epping Forest District Museum

This archaeological brief is only valid for six months. After this period the Historic Environment Advisor of Place Services, Essex County Council should be contacted to assess whether changes are required. Any written scheme of investigation resulting from this brief shall only be considered for the same period.

*The archaeological contractor is advised to visit the site before completing their **written scheme of investigation (WSI)** as there may be implications for accurately costing the project.*

1. Introduction

The Historic Environment Advisor of Place Services, Essex County Council has prepared this brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at Allen House, Lower Sheering.

2. Site Location and Description

The proposed development is located at Allen House, Lower Sheering close to the River Stort (TL4892414779). Currently the land is occupied by car-parks associated with Allen House.

3. Planning Background

A planning application for the development of the site as outlined above was submitted to Epping Forest District Council (EPF/1400/16). The proposed development comprises the Erection of B1 business use building.

The following condition was placed on the application due to the potential impact on archaeological deposits known to survive in the area. It follows the guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework:-

Recommendation: Full condition

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

Further Recommendations: A professional team of archaeologists should undertake the archaeological work. The archaeological work will consist of palaeoenvironmental sampling and trial-trenching of the development site, to be followed by full excavation if archaeological deposits survive.

4. Archaeological Background

The following archaeological background utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford. Prospective contractors are advised to obtain the EHER information prior to the completion of any written scheme of investigation.

The Essex Historic Environment Record shows that the proposed development is sited within the Lower Sheering Conservation Area and adjacent to the Listed Maltings. In the early 20th century the proposed development area contained railway sidings, associated with the functioning of the Maltings. Prior to the construction of these, the site was crossed by a tributary stream of the River Stort. There is therefore the potential for archaeological deposits relating to the function and development of the Listed Buildings and the Conservation area. In addition, there is high potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits associated with the landscape history of the Stort valley.

5. Requirement for Work

The archaeological work will comprise a cross-shaped trench spanning the width and breadth of the proposed development. In addition once the trenches have been opened an assessment will be made of the palaeoenvironmental potential of the site, with at least two locations within the trenches being targeted for palaeoenvironmental sampling (either by auger or test-pitting). **(Note: This will depend on whether natural sub soil is identified within the trenches).** The IfA's Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations, and excavations should be used for additional guidance in the production of the content of the WSI and report, and the general execution of the project.

A suitable sampling strategy for potential waterlogged and/or palaeoenvironmental deposits should be discussed and agreed with the Historic Environment Advisor in advance.

NB: The work described here forms the first part of the archaeological fieldwork to be undertaken on this site. Further fieldwork comprising open-area excavation may be required dependent on the results of this phase of investigation.

6. General Methodology

- 6.1 A professional team of field archaeologists shall undertake the trial-trenching. The number of staff involved and the structure of the team shall be stated in the written scheme of investigation. Notification of the project manager's name for the project shall be provided to the Historic Environment Advisor one week in advance of commencement of work.
- 6.2 A provisional timetable for the work shall be given in the written scheme of investigation.
- 6.3 The archaeological contractor is expected to follow the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.
- 6.4 The contractor shall ensure detailed study of all mains' service locations and avoid damage to these.
- 6.5 All Health and Safety guidelines must be followed on site.

- 6.6 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms

7. Trenching Methodology

- 7.1 Machine stripping shall be undertaken to an agreed standard, using a 1.8m toothless ditching bucket, and under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. The exposed sub-soil or archaeological horizon will be cleaned by hand immediately after machine stripping, if required and any archaeological deposits or negative features excavated and recorded.
- 7.2 Details of the site planning and recording policies shall be given in the written scheme of investigation. The normal preferred policy for the scale of archaeological site plans is 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.
- 7.3 The contractor shall provide details of the site surveying, excavation and finds recovery policy in the written scheme of investigation. The site grid shall be tied into the National Grid.
- 7.4 If walls or other masonry remains are uncovered these should be cleaned up, recorded and sampled, but left in situ where possible.
- 7.5 The contractor shall provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses). Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from the Historic England Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).
- 7.6 Details of the site photographic policy shall be given in the written scheme of investigation. The photographic record shall include both general and feature specific photographs, a photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. The photographic record shall be accompanied by a photographic register detailing as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot.
- 7.7 Should human remains be discovered the coroner will be informed and a licence from the Home Office sought immediately; both the client and the monitoring officer will also be informed. These should be left in situ wherever possible.
- 7.8 The IFA's Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations and excavations and the EAA Standards for Field Archaeology in the Eastern Region document should be used for additional guidance in the production of the written scheme of investigation, the content of the report, and the general execution of the project.
- 7.9 A meeting will be held on site once the trial trenching has been completed to define the level of further investigation. A summary of the results and a plan of the findings with a completed spot-dating report of all finds will be available at the meeting.**

8. Palaeoenvironmental methodology

- 8.1 The palaeoenvironmental assessment will take place once the trial-trenches have been opened and the underlying geology can be established. If the site does contain

potential palaeoenvironmental deposits relating either to former channels of the Stort or its tributary a minimum of two areas will be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains.

- 8.2 The contractor shall provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses) and dating of the deposits. Information will be provided on the sampling methodology to be used (test-pit/drilling-rig/hand-auger/etc). Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought by the contractor from the Historic England Science Advisor (East of England).

9. Post-excavation Assessment

- 9.1 An updated post excavation assessment shall be submitted within 2 months or at an alternatively agreed time to the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 9.2 Where archaeological results do not warrant a post excavation assessment then agreement will be sought from the Historic Environment Advisor to proceed straight to grey literature /publication.

10. Finds

- 10.1 All finds, where appropriate, shall be washed.
- 10.2 All pottery and other finds where appropriate, shall be marked with the site code and context number.
- 10.3 The written scheme of investigation shall include an agreed list of specialist consultants, who might be required to conserve and/or report on finds, and advise or report on other aspects of the investigation.
- 10.4 The requirements for conservation and storage shall be agreed with the appropriate museum (Epping Forest) prior to the start of work, and confirmed in writing to the Historic Environment Advisor.

11. Results

- 11.1 The report shall be submitted within a length of time (but not exceeding 6 months) from the end of the excavation phase, to be agreed between the developer and archaeological contractor, with a digital copy as a single PDF supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 11.2 This report must contain:
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the assessment
 - Location plan of excavated areas and/or other fieldwork in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of the site shall be given 10 figure grid references.
 - A section/s drawing showing depth of deposits including present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
 - Methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion. Where appropriate the discussion should be completed in consultation with the Eastern Counties Research Agenda and Strategy (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011).

- All specialist reports
 - A concise non-technical summary of the project results.
- 11.3 An EHER summary sheet shall also be completed within four weeks (copy attached with brief) and supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor. This will be completed in digital form (copy can be emailed).
- 11.4 Publication of the results at least to a summary level (i.e. round up of archaeology in Essex in Essex Archaeology and History) shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance shall be made within the costs for full publication in an appropriate journal.

12. Archive Deposition

- 12.1 The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the appropriate museum (Epping), and confirmed to the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 12.2 The full archive shall be deposited with the appropriate museum within 1 month of the completion of the report and confirmed with the Historic Environment Advisor.
- 12.3 A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor at the time of deposition to the museum.

13. Monitoring

- 13.1 The Historic Environment Advisor will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project. This will include the fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.
- 13.2 Notification of the start of work shall be given to the Historic Environment Advisor one week in advance of its commencement.
- 13.3 Any variations of the written scheme of investigation shall be agreed with the Historic Environment Advisor prior to them being carried out.

14. Contractors Written Scheme of Investigation

- 14.1 In accordance with Standards and Guidance produced by the IFA this design brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A WSI is required therefore in order to provide *the basis for a measurable standard* and for submission by the developer to the Local Planning Authority for approval.
- 14.2 Archaeological contractors shall forward a written scheme of investigation to the Historic Environment Advisor for validation **before** any work is undertaken on site. This validation is undertaken on behalf of the Planning Authority.
- 14.3 The involvement of the Historic Environment Advisor shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J.	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy</i> East Anglian. Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 8
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Gurney, D.	2003	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian. Archaeol. Occ. Pap. 14
Medlycott, M.	2011	<i>Research and Archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeol. Occ. Paper 24

For further information regarding the content of this brief and as part of our desire to provide a quality service, we would welcome any comments you may have on the content and presentation of this archaeological brief. Please address them to the author at the address below.

Maria Medlycott
Historic Environment Advisor
Place Services
County Hall
Chelmsford
CM1 1QH

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation at Allen House, The Maltings, Station Road, Lower Sheering, Essex, CM21 9JX

NGR: TL 48924 14779

Planning application number: EPF/1400/16

Client: Jeff Allen, Riverway Properties Ltd

Curating museum: Epping Forest District Museum

Museum accession code: [tbc](#)

ECC project code: [tbc](#)

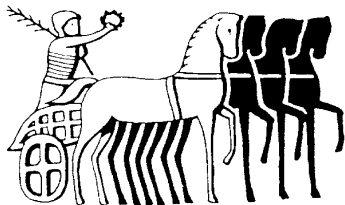
CAT project code: 18/02f

OASIS project ID: colchest3-309362

Site manager: Chris Lister

ECC monitor: Maria Medlycott

This WSI written: 15.2.2018



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,
Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex, CO2 7GZ

tel: 01206 501785

email: lp@catuk.org

Site location and description

The development site is located at Allen House, Lower Sheering, Essex between the River Stort and the railway (Fig 1). The site is currently a car park for Allen House. Site centre is NGR TL 48959 14751.

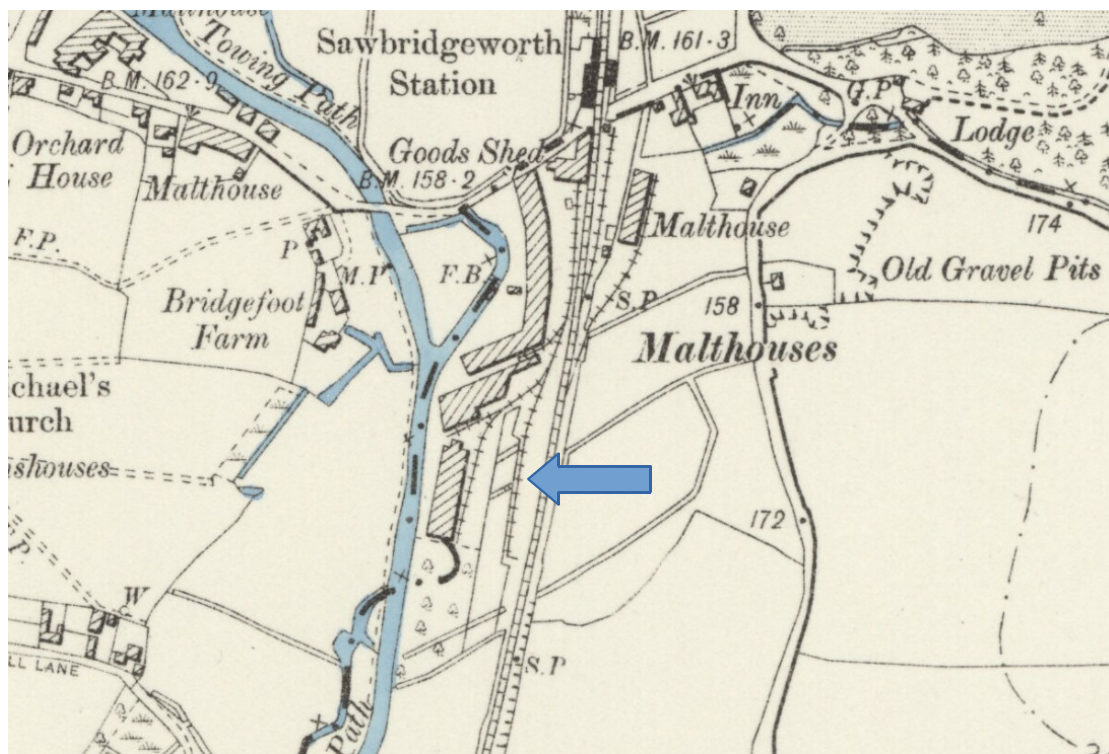
Proposed work

The development comprises of the construction of a B1 business use building.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex.

The EHER shows that the proposed development area is sited within the Lower Sheering Conservation Area and adjacent to the Listed Maltings (EHER 3628). In the early 20th century the proposed development area contained railway sidings, associated with the functioning of the Maltings. Prior to the construction of these, the site was crossed by a tributary stream of the River Stort. There is therefore the potential for archaeological deposits relating to the function and development of the Listed Buildings and the Conservation area. In addition, there is high potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits associated with the landscape history of the Stort valley.



Map 1 6-inch OS map (ESSEX XXXI.SE), surveyed 1895-6, published 1898. Development site indicated by blue arrow.

Planning background

A planning application (EPF/1400/161) was submitted to Epping Forest District Council in June 2016 for the erection of a B1 business use building.

As the development lies in an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, the ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECCHEA) made the following recommendation with guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and states:

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

Requirement for work

The required archaeological work is for archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching. Details are given in a Project Brief written by ECC (*Archaeological brief for trial-trenching and excavation at Allen House, Lower Sheering – ECC 2016*).

Specifically one cross-shaped trench spanning the width and breadth of the proposed development area will be excavated.

Once the trenches have been opened an assessment of palaeoenvironmental potential will be made, with at least two locations within the trenches being targeted for sampling (either by auger or test-pitting). This will depend on whether natural subsoil is identified within the trenches. If strata needing to be sampled is found below 1.2m then samples will be retrieved by the digger bucket and collected from there.

General methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a, b)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- the Project Brief issued by ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECC 2016)

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to ECCHEA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from the ECCHEA and/or the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: one supervisor plus two archaeologists for one day.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Nigel Rayner/Ben Holloway

Evaluation methodology

Where appropriate, modern overburden and any topsoil stripping/levelling will be performed using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. If no archaeologically significant deposits are exposed, machine excavation will continue until natural subsoil is reached.

Where necessary, areas will be cleaned by hand to ensure the visibility of archaeological deposits.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be excavated, planned and recorded.

There will be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. For linear features 1m wide sections will be excavated across their width to a total of 10% of the overall length. Discrete features, such as pits, will have 50% of their fills excavated, although certain features may be fully excavated. Complex archaeological structures such as walls, kilns, ovens or burials will be carefully cleaned, planned and fully recorded, but where possible left *in situ*. Only if it can be demonstrated that the complex structure/feature is likely to be destroyed by groundworks, and only then after discussion with the ECCHEA, will it be removed.

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits will be established. Therefore, a sondage will be excavated in each trench to test the stratigraphy of the site. This will occur in every trench unless it can be demonstrated that a feature excavated within a particular trench has clearly penetrated into natural.

A representative section will be drawn of each trench, to include ground level, the depth of machining within the trench and the depth of any sondages.

Trained CAT staff will use a metal detector to scan all trenches both before and during excavation. All spoil heaps will also be scanned and finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

The photographic record will consist of general site shots, and shots of all archaeological features and deposits. A photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. Standard "record" shots of contexts will be taken on a digital camera. A photographic register will accompany the photographic record. This will detail as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot.

Trenches will not be backfilled until they have been signed off by the ECCHEA.

Site surveying

The evaluation trenches and any features will be surveyed by Total Station, unless the particulars of the features indicate that manual planning techniques should be employed. Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphological and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough)

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer / Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Trained CAT staff will do any processing and the flots passed to Val Fryer / Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF/LG will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF/LG and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

Specifically, the palaeoenvironmental assessment for this site will take place once the trial-trench has been opened and the underlying geology established. If the site does contain potential for palaeoenvironmental deposits relating either to former channels of the Stort or its tributary, a minimum of two areas will be sampled for palaeoenvironmental remains.

Human remains

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove the remains from the site during the evaluation phase, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and HEI will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

animal bones (small groups): Alec Wade / Adam Wightman
flints: Adam Wightman
or to outside specialists:
animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)
environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray
conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum / Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation)
Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:
Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black
Roman glass: Hilary Cool
Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey
Other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to ECCHEA.

Results

Notification will be given to ECCHEA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- Aims and methods adopted in the course of the archaeological work.
- Location plan of fieldwork in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of the development site will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Appropriate discussion and result sections assessing the site in relation to the Regional Research Frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000 and Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments.
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An OASIS summary sheet shall be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the ECCHEA. This will be completed in digital form with a paper copy included with the archive. A copy (with trench plan) will also be emailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects (paul.gilman@me.com).

Publication of the results at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological fieldwork. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series.

Archive deposition

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full paper copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within one month of the completion of the final publication report and confirmed in writing to the ECCHEA.

A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to the ECCHEA at the time of deposition to the museum.

Monitoring

ECCHEA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to the ECCHEA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with ECCHEA prior to them being carried out.

ECCHEA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of ECCHEA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

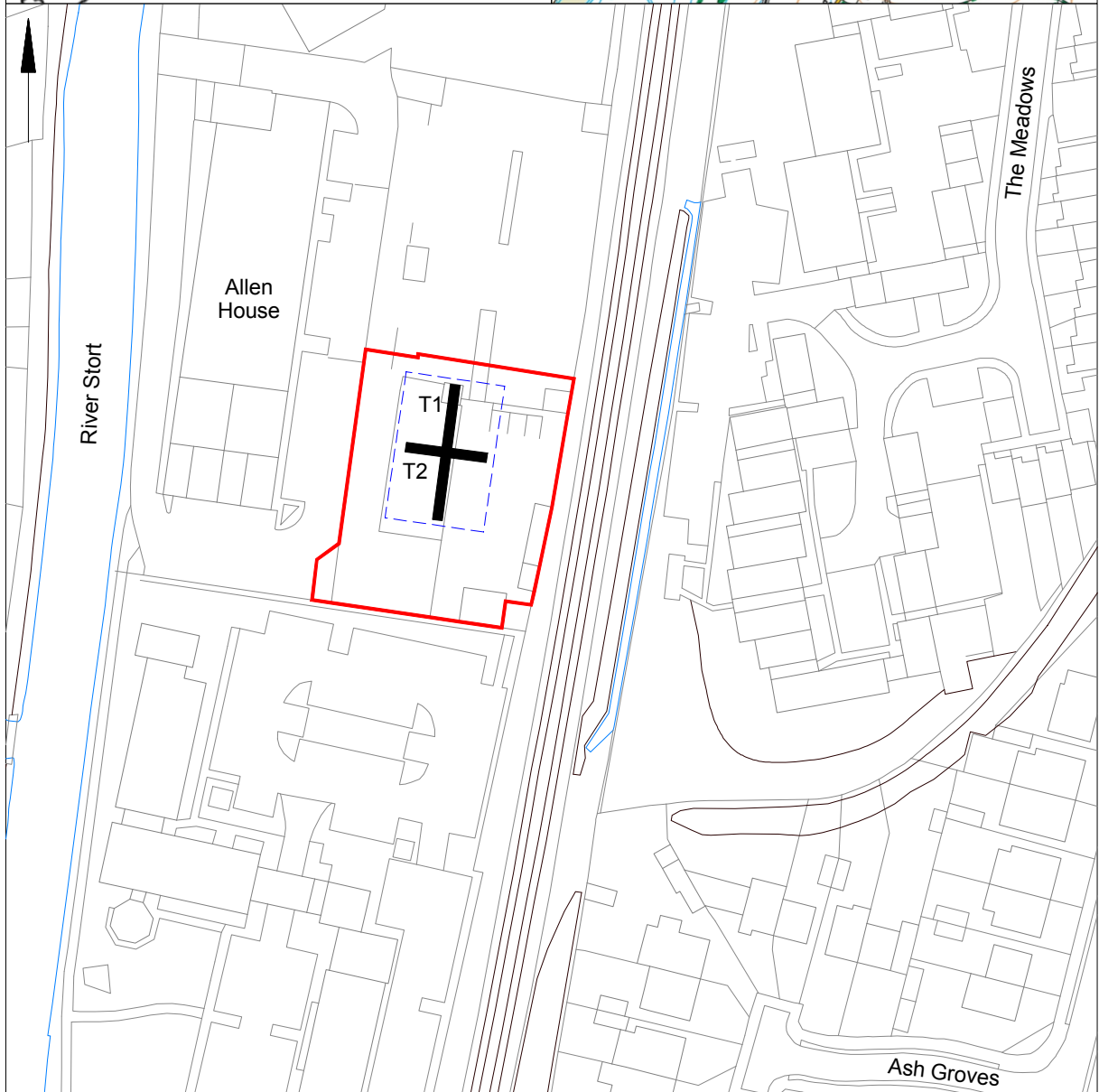
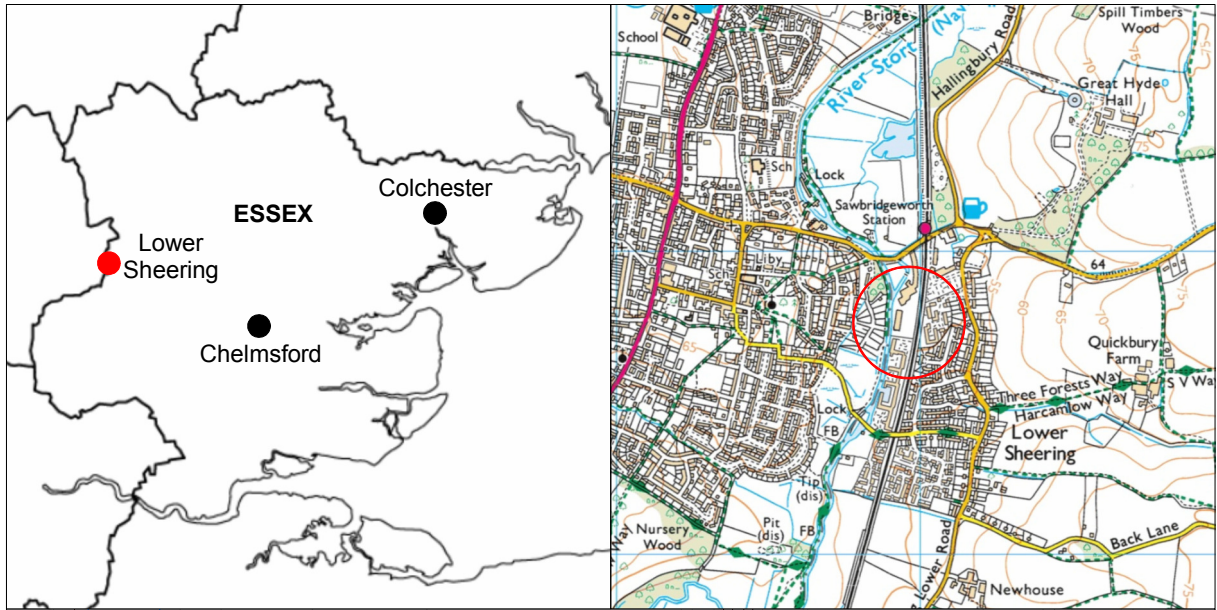
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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (sashed blue lines).

