

# Archaeological excavation on land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex, CM0 7DZ

November 2021



**by Harvey Furniss**

with contributions by Dr Matthew Loughton  
figures by Chris Lister, Harvey Furniss and Emma Holloway  
fieldwork by Harvey Furniss with Oliver Windridge

**commissioned by the homeowner**

NGR: TL 97143 01272 (centre)

Planning ref.: MAL/20/01003

CAT project ref.: 2021/10i

ECC code: AMTR21

OASIS ref.: colchest3-432827



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**CAT Report 1736**

November 2021

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (two trenches) was carried out on land to the east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex in advance of the construction of a single detached dwelling with associated access and groundworks. The development site is located within an area of significant archaeological remains including the Asheldham Camp (the Scheduled Monument univallate Iron Age hillfort), as well as prehistoric and Roman remains suggested by a series of findspots in the area. A modern pit and a post-medieval ditch were uncovered.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land to the east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex which was carried out on the 16th of November 2021. The work was commissioned by the landowner in advance of the construction of a detached dwelling and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

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* (MHCLG 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for trial-trenching and excavation at Land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham* detailing the required archaeological work, written by Maria Medlycott (ECCPS 2021), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2021).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016), 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* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the brief and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessible to the public via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The proposed development site is located within the village of Asheldham in the Dengie Peninsular. The area is characterised by small isolated farms scattered throughout flat, open fields laid out over land reclaimed from the Dengie and Tillingham marshes during the 19th century.

Significant archaeological remains lie within the area. The Scheduled Monument of Asheldham Camp, a univallate Iron Age hillfort, is located to the immediate east of the development site (EHER 12051-12060; Scheduled Monument reference 1014142). Excavations conducted in 1985 established that the hillfort was built during the Early Iron Age, but also uncovered evidence of a phase of activity at the site prior to its construction, during which the area was apparently utilised for cereal cultivation or as pasture (EAH 22, 1991, 13-34). Cropmarks of ring-ditches, linear features and pits lie to the northeast (EHER 12185). An excavation carried out on land further to the east uncovered a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age ring-ditch and a Romano-British rectilinear system of agricultural enclosures (EHER 12183). To the west of the site are cropmarks of a penannular ring-ditch and various linear features (EHER 16003).

An evaluation on land adjacent to Endway Farm in 2020 revealed two pits and a ditch dating to the Late Bronze Age, a pit dating to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, and a ditch dating to the Early Iron Age at the latest. Previous excavations of Asheldham Camp indicated that the site had witnessed a phase of activity prior to the construction of the hillfort. The present investigation provides further evidence of an earlier phase of activity here (CAT Report 1581).

Prehistoric to Roman occupation in the area is also suggested by a number of lithic blades, arrowheads and some Roman pottery recorded in the vicinity of the former Brook Farm (EHER12128-12130) and to the northeast of Asheldham Camp some sherds of unabraded Neolithic pottery was found during a watching brief prior to gravel extraction (EHER 12186).

#### **4 Aims**

The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits, and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

#### **5 Results (Figs 2-3)**

Two trial-trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Trench 1 and Trench 2 were laid out in a T-shape with T1 measuring 11m in length and T2 10m. Both trenches were 1.8m wide. A full context list can be found in Appendix 1.

Both trenches were excavated to natural (L2) which was identified as a compact mid-brownish clay and a gravelly-sand sloping downhill southwards.

##### **Trench 1 (T1)**

Trench 1 was excavated through a layer of modern topsoil (L1) which varied in thickness from 0.31m at the western end to 0.68m to the east.

Finds from ditch F2 were dated to the 19th and 20th centuries with earlier material suggesting that the feature was an older field boundary (see Section 6). The feature had gently sloping sides and a concave base which measured 1.93m wide and 1.34m deep.

##### **Trench 2 (T2)**

Trench 2 was excavated through a layer of debris (L3) left behind after the recent demolition stables and pole barn. This layer was only observed at the northern end of trench 2. It was 0.5m thick. The southern half of trench 2 was excavated through the same modern topsoil as seen in trench 1.

Pit F1 produced a small assemblage of modern finds (not retained). The pit was most likely dated to the same period as the recently demolished stables and pole barn. The feature was sub-circular in shape with sharp sides and a flat base which was not fully exposed because it extended beyond the limit of the trench. The excavated part of the pit was 1.02m by c 1.3m. It was 0.32m deep.





**Photograph 1** Trenches 1 and 2 – view SW



**Photograph 2** Ditch F2 – view SW





**Photograph 3** Pit F1 – view E

## 6 Finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

The evaluation at Asheldham uncovered a small collection of pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) – 33 sherds with a weight of nearly 1.7kg and 0.27 vessels according to the rim EVE (Table 1). The mean sherd weight is relatively high at 51g.

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	Rim EVE
Pottery	23	367	16	0.27
CBM	10	1,327	133	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1,694</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>0.27</b>

**Table 1** Summary of finds

All of the material was recovered from ditch F2. The pottery included a sherd of BB2: black-burnished ware, category 2 (fabric GB) dating to AD 110/125-300; a thumbled base from a jug in Hedingham ware (fabric F22) (c 1140-1325/1350); and a Border ware base (fabric F42) dating to the 16th-17th century. There was also a small assemblage of post-medieval red earthenwares (fabric F40) (18 sherds, 264g, EVE 0.27) consisting of medium-sized bowls (EVE: 0.23) and a large bowl or pancheon (EVE: 0.04) with a simple heavy flanged rim, dating to c AD 1650-1750 (Cotter 2000, 200). Finally there was a sherd from a globular jug in Cologne stoneware (fabric F45E) dating from the 16th-17th century and a sherd of late slipped kitchenware (fabric F51A) dating to the 19th-20th century. The CBM consisted of sherds of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile and unidentifiable post-Roman brick fragments. Feature F2 dates to the 19th/20th century. None of this material was retained.

## 7 Conclusion

Two features were uncovered during the evaluation at Asheldham. Pit F1 was modern while ditch F2 was dated to the post-medieval period. Both features were likely associated with local isolated farms such as are typical of the surrounding area. The finds from F2 were an array of glazed and unglazed pottery along with a variety of CBM fragments all of which presumably derived from a post-medieval farmstead.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks the homeowner for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister with the fieldwork carried out by H Furniss with O Windridge. The figures were by C Lister, H Furniss 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, N & Glazebrook, J | 2000  | <i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper <b>8</b> (EAA <b>8</b> )                            |
| CAR 7                    | 2000  | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-1985.</i> Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd, by JP Cotter                               |
| CAT                      | 2021  | <i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>  |
| CAT                      | 2021  | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological trial-trenched evaluation and excavation on land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex, CM0 7DZ,</i> by Emma Holloway |
| CAT Report 1581          | 2020  | <i>Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Endway Farm, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Southminster, Essex,</i> by Dr. E Hicks  |
| ClfA                     | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>   |
| ClfA                     | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>  |
| EAH <b>22</b>            | 1991  | <i>Asheldham Camp – an Iron Age hill fort: the 1985 excavations, Essex Archaeology and History <b>22</b>,</i> by O Bedwin  |
| ECCPS                    | 2021  | <i>Brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at Land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham,</i> by M Medlycott  |
| Gurney, D                | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>14</b> (EAA <b>14</b> )   |
| Historic England         | 2016  | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>  |
| Medlycott, M             | 2011  | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> (EAA <b>24</b> )  |
| MHCLG                    | 2019  | <i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government   |

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
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, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	written scheme of investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** None retained

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1736)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (feature and layer sheets, finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log

### **Digital record**

The report (CAT Report 1736)

CBC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Site data

Survey data

## 12 Archive deposition

The 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 the Archaeological Data Service.

**Distribution list:**

Homeowner  
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk,  
Colchester,  
Essex, CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

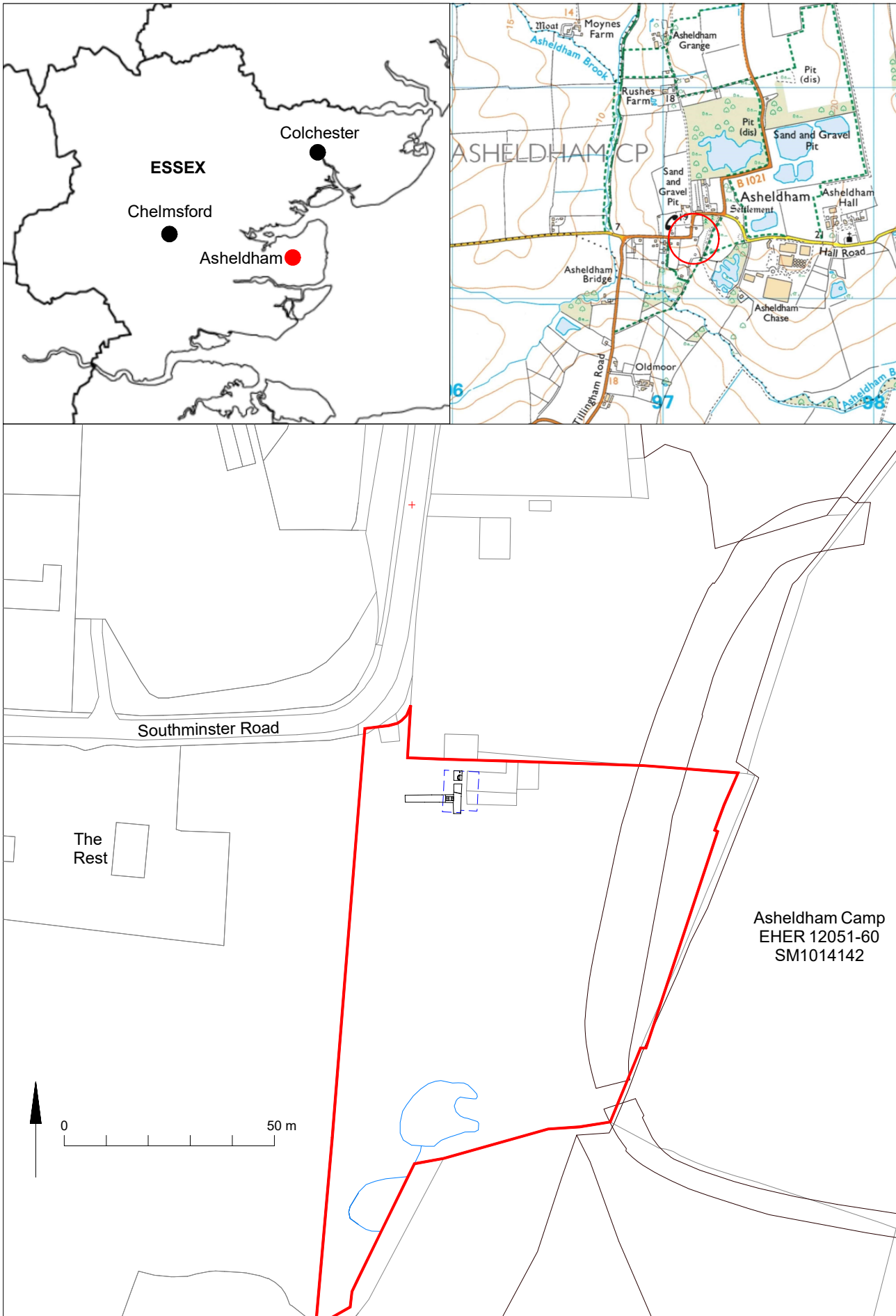
email: [hf@catuk.org](mailto:hf@catuk.org)

Checked by: Philip Crummy  
Date: 24/11/2021

### **Appendix 1 Context List**

<b>Context number</b>	<b>Trench number</b>	<b>Find number</b>	<b>Feature type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
L1	All trenches	-	Topsoil	Firm moist dark grey/brown silty clay	Modern
L2	All trenches	-	Natural	Firm moist medium grey/brown silt with charcoal flecks	Post-glacial
L3	Trench 2	-	Backfill	Demolition material consisting of disused service pipes and concrete rubble	Modern
F1	T2	-	Pit	Sub-circular in plan, sharp sides, flat base Hard, mid greyish yellow clay with occasional stone inclusions	Modern
F2	T2	1, 2	Ditch	Linear in plan, gradual to sloping sides and concave base Upper fill: Firm grey sandy silt with charcoal and stone inclusions and CBM flecks Lower fill: Hard, mid brownish grey sandy silt with regular rounded stone inclusions	Medieval/ post-medieval





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Fig 1 Site location

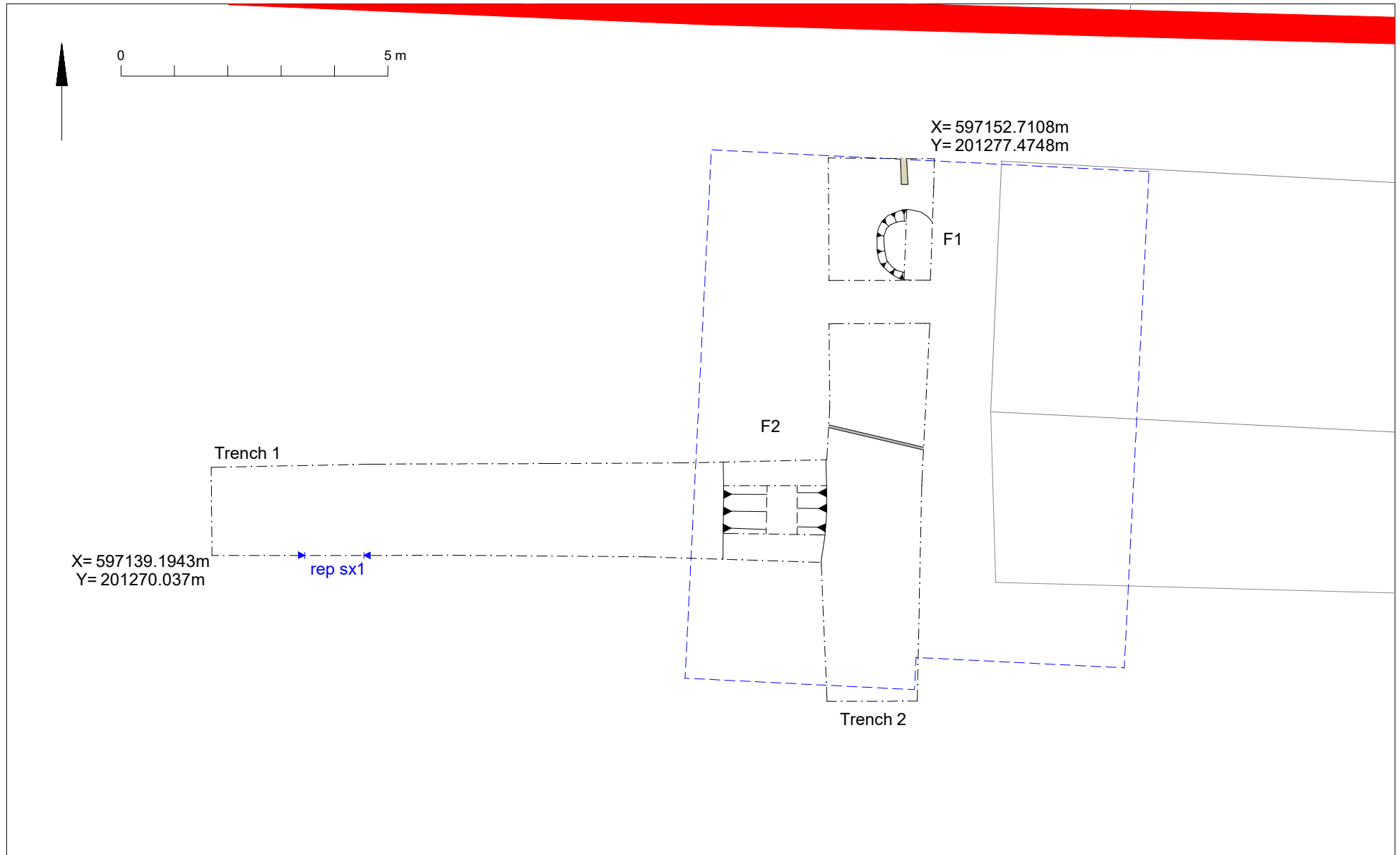


Fig 2 Results (modern feature in grey)

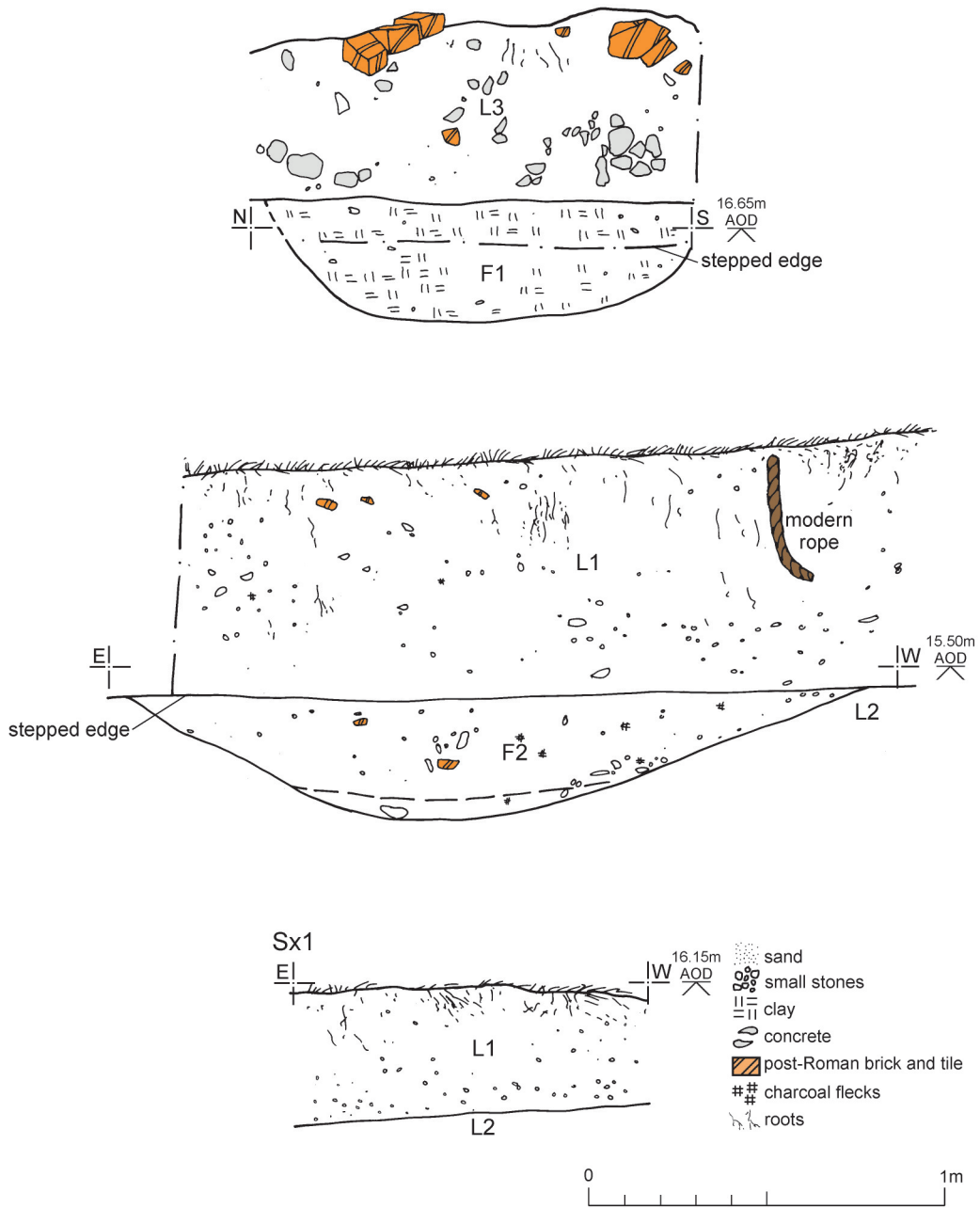


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

## Summary for colchest3-432827

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-432827
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation on land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex, CM0 7DZ
Activity type	TRIAL TRENCH
Project Identifier(s)	2021/10i
Planning Id	MAL/20/01003
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	16-Nov-2021 - 16-Nov-2021
Location	land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex NGR : TL 97142 01272 LL : 51.675609, 0.849895 12 Fig : 597142,201272
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Maldon Parish : Asheldham
Project Methodology	Evaluation by trial-trenching
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (two trenches) was carried out on land to the east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex in advance of the construction of a single detached dwelling with associated access and groundworks. The development site is located within an area of significant archaeological remains including the Asheldham Camp (the Scheduled Monument univallate Iron Age hillfort), as well as prehistoric and Roman remains suggested by a series of findspots in the area. A modern pit and a post-medieval ditch were uncovered.
Keywords	
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
HER Identifiers	HER Monument No - AMTR21
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive

Brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation  
on Land east of The Rest, Southminster Road,  
Asheldham



Date:  
9/3/2021





**Title:** Brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at Land east of The Rest,  
Southminster Road, Asheldham

**Contractor:** Anne Collins [annegurnett@aol.com](mailto:annegurnett@aol.com)

**Planning Reference:** MAL/20/01003

**Date issued:** 9/3/2021

**Historic Environment Advisor:** Maria Medlycott [maria.medlycott@essex.gov.uk](mailto:maria.medlycott@essex.gov.uk)

**Museum:** Colchester 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 on Land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham.

## **2. Site Location and Description**

The proposed residential development site is sited on the southern side of the Southminster Road, to the west of the Scheduled Iron Age Hill-Fort (TL9714301272). Details of the planning application can be found on the Maldon Planning web site under the application number.

## **3. Planning Background**

A planning application for the development of the site was submitted to Maldon District Council (MAL/20/01003) in 2020. The planning application comprised: *Demolition of existing stables and pole barn and erection of single dwelling - amended proposal following approval FUL/MAL/17/01251*

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

### **L1 Archaeological Assessment**

*No development including any site clearance or groundworks of any kind shall take place within the site until the applicant or their agents; the owner of the site or successors in title has submitted an archaeological assessment by an accredited archaeological consultant to establish the archaeological significance of the site. Such archaeological assessment shall be approved by the local planning authority and will inform the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. The development shall be carried out in a manner that accommodates such approved programme of archaeological work.*

### **L2 Implementation of Archaeological Fieldwork Programme**

*No development including any site clearance or groundworks of any kind shall take place within the site until the applicant or their agents; the owner of the site or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work from an accredited archaeological contractor in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in a manner that accommodates the approved programme of archaeological work.*

#### **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 proposed development site is sited in the midst of a number of known sites of archaeological interest, including the Scheduled Monument of Asheldham Camp. Asheldham Camp (EHER 12051-60, SM1014142). To the east of the proposed development is Asheldham Camp, a univallate hill-fort of Iron Age date, there is also evidence for multi-period activity on the site in the form of cropmarks and finds. These include a possible Neolithic settlement, and Bronze Age, Roman and Saxon finds. To the north of the proposed development are cropmarks of a probably penannular ring ditch and various linear features (EHER 16003). To the west and south, prehistoric and Roman finds have been recovered from the riding-stables and Oaklands Farm (EHER 12127, 12128-30). It is evident therefore that the proposed development lies within a complex, multi-period site.

#### **5. Requirement for Work**

The trial trenching should aim to determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains. Two trial-trenches (either cross-shaped or T-shaped) should be excavated across the length and width of the proposed building, with the excavation area to be expanded to encompass the entirety of the areas of groundworks if significant archaeological remains are identified.

The ClfA'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.

**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 maybe 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 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. Post Excavation Assessment**

- 8.1 An updated post excavation assessment shall be submitted within 2 months or at an alternatively agreed time to the Historic Environment Advisor following the completion of the excavation phase.
- 8.2 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.

## **9. Finds**

- 9.1 All finds, where appropriate, shall be washed.
- 9.2 All pottery and other finds where appropriate, shall be marked with the site code and context number.
- 9.3 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.
- 9.4 The requirements for conservation and storage shall be agreed with the appropriate museum (Colchester) prior to the start of work, and confirmed in writing to the Historic Environment Advisor.

## **10. Results**

- 10.1 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.

10.2 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.
- Deposit model across the site with labelled individual site stratigraphic sections
- 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.

10.3 An OASIS sheet shall be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor. This will be completed in digital form. A copy should also be e-mailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects in the Journal [paul.gilman@me.com](mailto:paul.gilman@me.com)

10.4 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.

## **11. Archive Deposition**

11.1 The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the appropriate museum (Colchester), and confirmed to the Historic Environment Advisor.

11.2 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.

11.3 A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor at the time of deposition to the museum.

## **12. Monitoring**

12.1 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.

12.2 Notification of the start of work shall be given to the Historic Environment Advisor one week in advance of its commencement.

12.3 Any variations of the written scheme of investigation shall be agreed with the Historic Environment Advisor prior to them being carried out.

### 13. Contractors Written Scheme of Investigation

- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 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.
- 13.3 The involvement of the Historic Environment Advisor shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

### 14. 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
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 an archaeological trial-trenched evaluation and excavation on land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex, CM0 7DZ**

**NGR:** TL 97143 01272 (centre)

**District:** Maldon

**Parish:** Asheldham

**Planning reference:** MAL/20/01003

**Commissioned by and on behalf of:** the homeowner

**Curating museum:** Colchester

**ECC project code:** tbc

**CAT project code:** 2021/10i

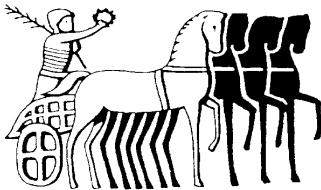
**Oasis project ID:** colchest3-432827

**Fieldwork Manager:** Adam Wightman

**Contracts Manager:** Chris Lister

**ECC monitor:** Maria Medlycott

**This WSI written:** 15/10/2021



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## Site location and description

The proposed development site is located at the centre of the village of Asheldham on land to the east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Essex (Fig 1). Site is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 97143 01272.

## Proposed work

The planning application proposes the demolition of existing stables and pole barn to be replaced with a new detached dwelling and associated access and groundworks.

## Archaeological background

The following archaeological includes extracts of the ECC brief and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The proposed development site is located within the village of Asheldham in the Dengie Peninsular. The area is characterised by small isolated farms scattered throughout flat, open fields laid out over land reclaimed from the Dengie and Tillingham marshes during the 19th century.

Significant archaeological remains lie within the area. The Scheduled Monument of Asheldham Camp, a univallate Iron Age hillfort, is located to the immediate east of the development site (EHER 12051-12060; Scheduled Monument reference 1014142). Excavations conducted in 1985 established that the hillfort was built during the Early Iron Age, but also uncovered evidence of a phase of activity at the site prior to its construction, during which the area was apparently utilised for cereal cultivation or as pasture (EAH 22, 1991, 13-34). Cropmarks of ring-ditches, linear features and pits lie to the northeast (EHER 12185). An excavation carried out on land further to the east uncovered a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age ring-ditch and a Romano-British rectilinear system of agricultural enclosures (EHER 12183). To the west of the site are cropmarks of a penannular ring-ditch and various linear features (EHER 16003).

An evaluation on land adjacent to Endway Farm in 2020 revealed two pits and a ditch dating to the Late Bronze Age, a pit dating to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, and a ditch dating to the Early Iron Age at the latest. Previous excavations of Asheldham Camp indicated that the site had witnessed a phase of activity prior to the construction of the hillfort. The present investigation provides further evidence of an earlier phase of activity here (CAT Report 1581).

Prehistoric to Roman occupation in the area is also suggested by a number of lithic blades, arrowheads and some Roman pottery recorded in the vicinity of the former Brook Farm (EHER12128-12130) and to the northeast of Asheldham Camp some sherds of unabraded Neolithic pottery was found during a watching brief prior to gravel extraction (EHER 12186).

## Planning background

A planning application (MAL/20/01003) was submitted to Maldon District Council in October 2020 proposing the *demolition of existing stables and pole barn and erection of single dwelling - amended proposal following approval FUL/MAL/17/01251*.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological remains a phased full archaeological condition was recommended. This follows the guidelines given in National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2019).

## **Requirement for work (Fig 1)**

The required archaeological work will consist of an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and excavation. Details are given in a Project Brief written by ECCPS (*Brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at Land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham – ECC 2021*).

It is proposed that one trench be evaluated in an 'T' shape within the foundations of the new building. The trench will be 22m in length and 1.8m wide covering an area of 39.6m<sup>2</sup>.

Further area excavation may be required should significant archaeological deposits/features be identified that cannot be preserved *in situ*. This will be decided by the ECCHEA on completion of the trial-trenching and report.

## **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* (CIfA 2014a, b)
- East of England Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2021)
- the Project Brief issued by ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECCPS 2021)

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 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 CAT project officer and one archaeologist for one day.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway/Harvey Furniss

## **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 proforma 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. 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 trench and any features will be surveyed by Total Station or GPS, 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 micromorphical 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 process the samples and the flots will be sent to Val Fryer or Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF or 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.

## **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 or unless advised to do so by the project osteologist or ECCHEA. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the evaluation, 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 and seek advice from the project osteologist. Following Historic England guidance (2018) if the human remains are not to be lifted, the project osteologist should be available to record the human remain *in situ* (i.e. a site visit). Conditions laid down by the DoJ license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and the ECCHEA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

In the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory investigation of the site. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during excavation, 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 SCCAS will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed. Following Historic England guidance (2018) all archaeological human remains excavated during the course of the project will either be analysed and reported by CAT project osteologist Megan Seehra or will be sent to external specialist Julie Curl.

## **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. CAT may use local volunteers to assist the CAT Finds Officer with this task.

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT Staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Laura Pooley (Post-excavation Manager). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton

animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman, small groups only)

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc.: Laura Pooley

non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley

flints: Adam Wightman

environmental processing: Bronagh Quinn

project osteologist (human remains): Meghan Seehra

or to outside specialists:

animal and human bone: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

archaeometallurgy: David Dungworth

radiocarbon dating: SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, Glasgow

conservation/x-ray: Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation) / Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

flint: Hazel Martingell

prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey

Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Gwladys Monteil

Roman brick/tile: Ian Betts (MOLA)

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

small finds: Nina Crummy

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.

A contingency will be made in the budget for scientific assessment/analysis if suitable deposits are identified. This can include soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floors and dark earth deposits and/or absolute dating (such as archaeomagnetic and radiocarbon). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice.

## **Post-excavation assessment**

An updated post-excavation assessment will be submitted within 2 months or at an alternatively agreed time with the ECCHEA.

Where archaeological results do not warrant a post-excavation assessment then agreement will be sought from the ECCHEA to proceed straight to grey literature / publication.

## **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* (Historic England 2015).



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:

- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each excavated area will be given a 10 figure grid reference.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion.
- Appropriate discussion and results section assessing the site in relation to the Regional Research Frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011. <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>).
- 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](mailto: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.

A PDF copy of the full report will be uploaded by CAT to the OASIS website and the Colchester Archaeological Trust's Online Report Library (<http://cat.essex.ac.uk/>), both of which are publicly accessible.

## **Archive deposition**

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

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

The digital archive resulting from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service ([www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk](http://www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk)) to safeguard the long-term curation of the digital records. The ECCHEA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre [DCC 2013]) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive. A summary of the contents of the archives shall be supplied to the ECCHEA at the time of their deposition.

## **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 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

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

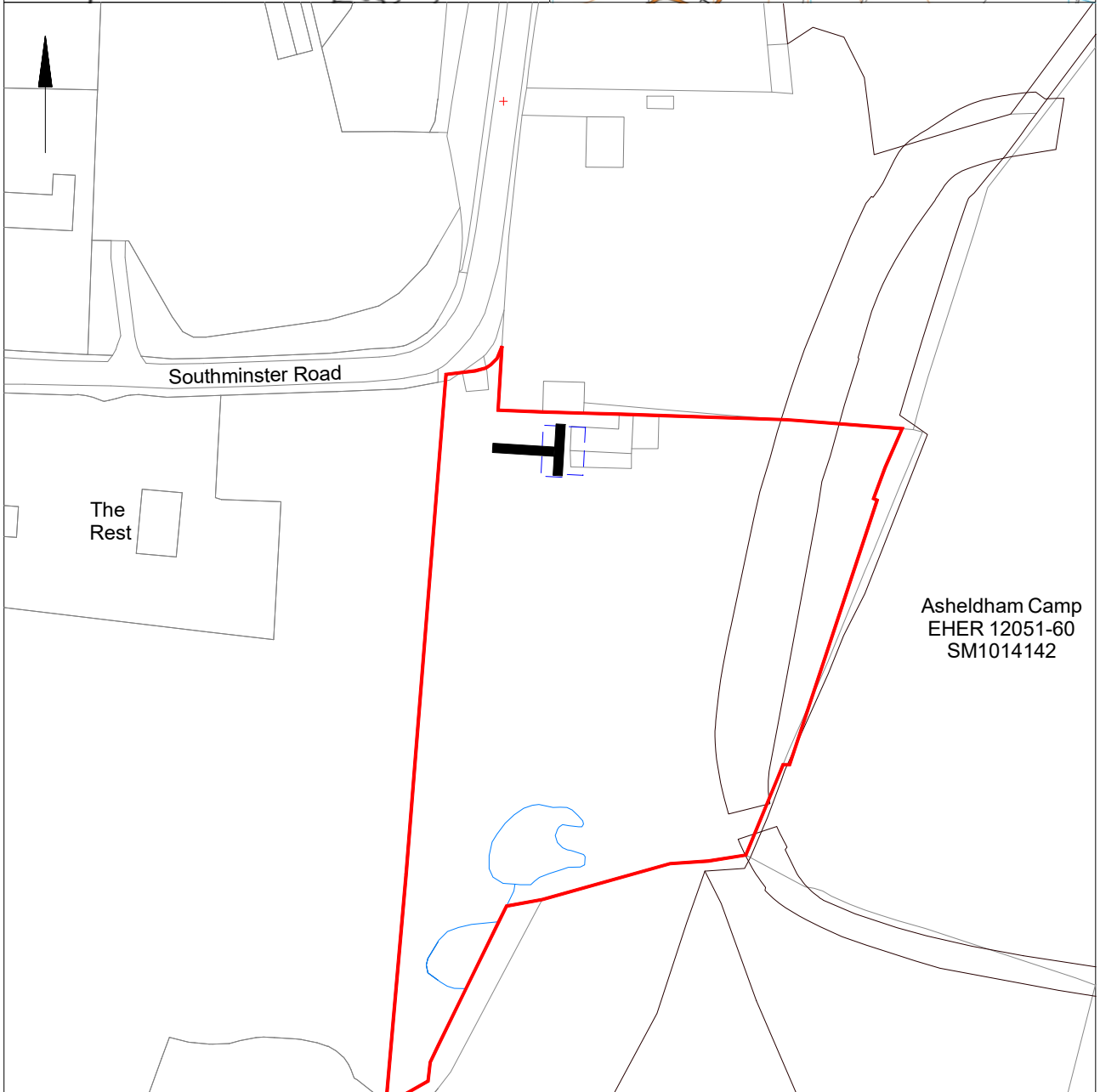
- |                               |       |  |
|-------------------------------|-------|--|
| Brown, N & Glazebrook, J      | 2000  | <i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8) |
| CAT                           | 2021  | <i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>  |
| CAT report 1581               | 2020  | <i>Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Endway Farm, Southminster Road, Asheldham, Southminster, Essex – July 2020</i> , by E Hicks               |
| 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>                                      |
| Digital Curation Centre (DCC) | 2013  | <i>Checklist for Data Management Plan v. 4.0</i>   |
| EAH 22                        | 1991  | <i>Asheldham Cap - an Iron Age hill fort: the 1985 excavations</i> , Essex Archaeology and History 22, by O Bedwin   |
| ECCPS                         | 2021  | <i>Brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at Land east of The Rest, Southminster Road, Asheldham</i> , by M Medlycott                     |
| Gurney, D                     | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).                                     |
| Historic England              | 2015  | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>  |
| Historic England              | 2018  | <i>The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project.</i> By S Mays, M Brickley & J Sidell  |
| 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)             |
| MHCLG                         | 2019  | <i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.  |

Emma Holloway



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



Site: Asheldham land E of the Rest EVAL

Site Code: AMTR21

Feature No.

Interpretation Pit

Period Post-medieval

Location Northern end of trench

1

**SOIL DESCRIPTION**

Consistence very loose soft friable firm hard dry moist wet

Colour very light medium dark yellow orange green grey brown black

Soil sand silt clay loam clay silt sand

Type

charcoal oyster daub brick tile

Inclusions: flecks

gravel % stone % tile/brick % pot %

Inclusions: pieces

**RECORDING** Photo and 1:10 sx drawing

Plan nos

Section nos

pre-exc ex post-ex

Photos taken

**FINDS** Ceramic building material (not retained)

Find Nos

**NOTES** Sub-circular in plan, sharp sides, flat base

Hard, mid greyish yellow clay with occasional stone inclusions.

cut by L F

F 1

cutting L F

By Date

Site: Asheldham land E of the Rest EVAL

Site Code: AMTR21

Feature No.

**Interpretation**

Period Medieval

Location Eastern end of trench

**2**

**SOIL DESCRIPTION**

Consistence very loose soft friable firm hard dry moist wet

Colour very light medium dark yellow orange green grey brown black

Soil sand silt clay loam clay silt sand

**Type**

charcoal oyster daub brick tile

**Inclusions: flecks**

gravel % stone % tile/brick % pot %

**Inclusions: pieces**

**RECORDING** Photo and 1:10 sx drawing

Plan nos

Section nos

pre-exc ex post-ex

Photos taken

**FINDS** Pottery, peg tile, ceramic building material

Find Nos

1

2

**NOTES** Linear in plan, gradual to sloping sides.

Upper fill: Firm grey sandy silt with charcoal and stone inclusions and ceramic building material flecks.

Lower fill: Hard, mid brownish grey sandy silt with regular rounded stone inclusions.

cut by L F



**F 2**

cutting L F

By Date 16/11/21

Site: Asheldham land E of the Rest EVAL

Site code: AMTR21

Feature No. Layer No.

u/s

Find No.

CONTEXT

2

1

upper fill  
✓

middle fill

lower fill

?

good  
✓

poor

?

Notes

Pottery

whole frags prehis Roman Saxon Med Post-med Mod ?  
✓ ✓ ✓ ✓

CBM

R Brick R Tile box tile tessera unfrogged frogged Peg tile  
P-R Brick ✓ ✓ ✓

Organics

Animal bone Human bone shell leather wood

other

flint fe nail R glass P-R glass painted plaster mortar slate clay pipe burnt stone

Small Find?

Small Find No.

Small Find type

Sample?

Sample No.

Sample type

Site: Asheldham land E of the Rest EVAL

Site code: AMTR21

Feature No. Layer No. u/s

Find No.

CONTEXT

2

2

upper fill

middle fill

lower fill  
✓

?

good  
✓

poor

?

Notes

Pottery

whole frags prehis Roman Saxon Med Post-med Mod ?  
✓ ✓

CBM

R Brick R Tile box tile tessera unfrogged frogged Peg tile  
P-R Brick

Organics

Animal bone Human bone shell leather wood

other

flint fe nail R glass P-R glass painted plaster mortar slate clay pipe burnt stone

Small Find?

Small Find No.

Small Find type

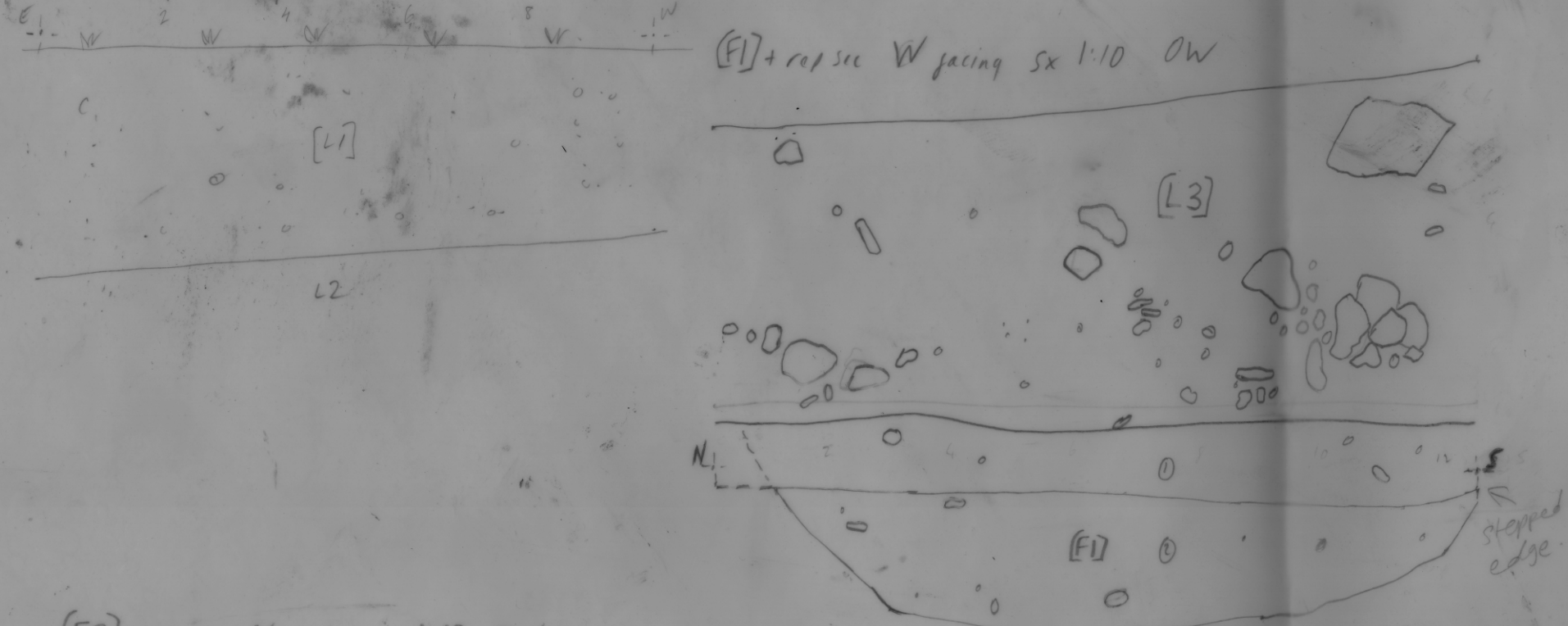
Sample?

Sample No.

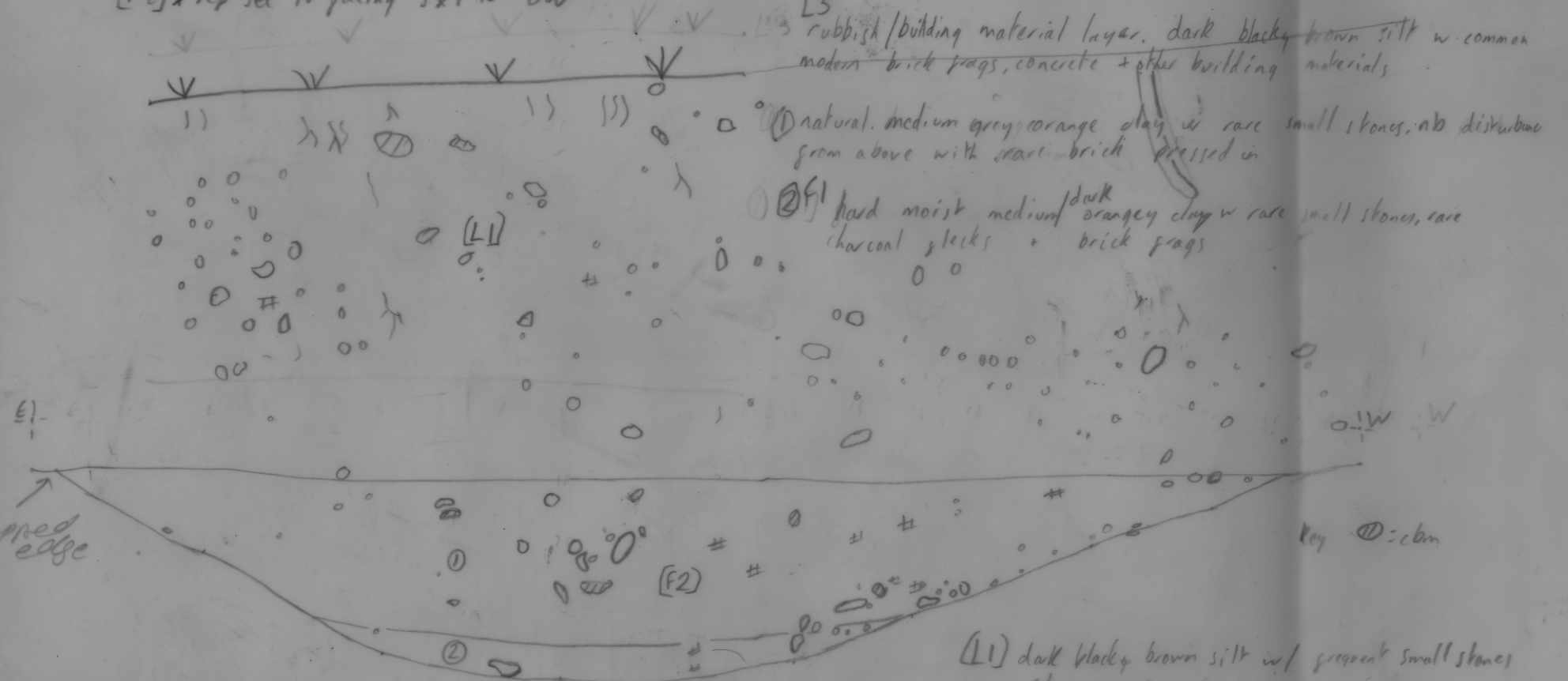
Sample type

NA + 10.16.11.21

(F1) + rep sec W facing SX 1:10 OW



(F2) x rep sec N facing SX 1:10 OW



L3 rubbish/building material layer, dark blacky brown silt w. common modern brick frags, concrete + other building materials

(1) natural, medium grey/orange clay w. rare small stones, no disturbance from above with cracked brick pressed in

(2) hard moist medium/dark orangey clay w. rare small stones, rare charcoal streaks + brick frags

key (1) = cbm

(L1) dark blacky brown silt w/ frequent small stones + cbm frags

(F2) (1) hard dry dark orangey brownish grey w/ rare small stones, charcoal streaks + cbm streaks

(2) hard dry medium/dark orangey grey w/ rare small stones

ASHELDHAM, LAND EAST OF THE REST, SOUTHMINSTER RD EVAL

Asheldham