

Archaeological monitoring (Phase 3) at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP

August 2022



by Adam Ronn and Sarah Veasey

figures by Chris Lister, Sarah Veasey and Emma Holloway

fieldwork by Adam Ronn

**commissioned by Kieran Alexander
on behalf of the RSPB**

NGR: TL 97400 12656 (centre)

Planning ref.: MAL/18/01395

CAT project ref.: 2021/07f

ECC code: TOO21

OASIS ref.: colchest3-433042



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CAT Report 1838

September 2022

Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Aims	2
5	Results	2
6	Finds	4
7	Conclusion	4
8	Acknowledgements	4
9	References	4
10	Abbreviations and glossary	5
11	Contents of archive	5
12	Archive deposition	5

Figures after p6

OASIS summary sheet

List of photographs and figures

Cover: site shot

Photograph 1	Representative section, view east.	3
Photograph 2	Site shot, view north.	3

Fig 1	Site location.
Fig 2	Monitoring results.
Fig 3	Representative section.

1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex during phase 3 groundworks for the creation of new wetland scrapes and other amendments to the reserve. Despite being located within a historic grazing marsh and close to a number of Red Hills (salt-production sites), no archaeological remains were encountered.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for archaeological monitoring carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) for Phase 3 investigations at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex on the 16th August 2022. The work was commissioned by Kieran Alexander on behalf of the RSPB and took place during the creation of new scrapes and other amendments to the reserve.

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). This follows Phases 1 and 2 archaeological monitoring carried out by CAT in 2019 and 2021 as part of the same project (CAT Reports 1475 and 1725).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the original 2019 brief (*Brief for archaeological monitoring and excavation at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury*), which was written by Maria Medlycott and detailed the required archaeological work for the whole project. The written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in 2019 in response to the brief, and was agreed with ECCPS before the first phase of work (CAT 2019).

All fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with the brief and WSI, along with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016), and *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 excavation (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 Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessible to the public via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The Old Hall Marshes are of national significance as a rare example of an intact historic grazing marsh located between Salcott Creek and Tollesbury Fleet, to the southeast of Salcott village. Coastal grazing marshes are a major heritage asset, part of the special landscape character of many parts of the English coast. Essex County Council, often working in partnership with English Heritage, has arranged detailed surveys of those reserves to enhance the approach to their management (Gascoyne & Medlycott 2014).

Reclamation of the Old Hall Marsh area (marsh 41) is thought to have been underway in a piecemeal fashion by the late 16th century, but the process accelerated over the following decades and reached its full extent by the mid 18th century. The sea walls have undergone a number of alterations. The marsh has large fleets, water-filled creeks, relict salt marsh surface and raised causeways that cross the marsh. There are nine or more mounds, perhaps the remnants of red hills, midden sites, two surviving duck decoy ponds, one of which is scheduled, and remains of barns, a decoy house and a house. The marsh is crossed by a number of counter walls, which appear as raised earthworks. The borrow dykes are crossed by causeways in places (ECC48467).

Buried land surfaces have been recorded on several grazing-marsh sites. These generally are recorded as a result of erosion of the marsh edge and as a consequence are most visible in the

inter-tidal zone, but occasionally have also been recorded during excavations. The buried land surfaces range in date from the Neolithic to the Roman period.

Approximately 426 red hills have been recorded around the Essex coast, and this number is increasing as a consequence of aerial survey and excavation. Red hills are sites where salt was extracted by evaporation from sea water, using clay pans over hearths. They are conspicuous sites, either because of their associated red earth deposits or because they form slight mounds in flat landscapes. The earliest excavated examples appear to date to the Middle Bronze Age (Germany 2004, 192-5), but the majority have their origins in the Late Iron Age and Roman periods. Some were re-used during the medieval period (for an overview, see Fawn *et al* 1990). At the Stanford Wharf Nature Reserve, Oxford Archaeology undertook a large-scale archaeological investigation in advance of the development of a new deep-sea London Gateway container port. An area of approximately 30 hectares was investigated with large areas extensively excavated (HER 47049). Although the artefactual evidence recovered was limited, two large Romano-British salt-production sites with associated buildings were uncovered (Biddulph *et al* 2012). Key evidence included channels dug to catch salt water, briquetage trays and supports, evaporation hearths and traces of red hills.

Two red hills lie very close to the proposed scrapes, one of which is actually situated between the new scrape areas (see Fig 2). Areas of earthworks, thought to be red hills are plotted to the southeast of the site (ECC 11556, ECC 16707 and ECC16192).

CAT carried out a watching brief in 2003 to the west of the current site for the excavation of a 100m ditch as part of water control system enhancements. No features or finds of archaeological significance were recorded during the works. It was noted that the ground appeared to be undisturbed except for the previous removal of the topsoil (CAT Report 249). Archaeology South East (ASE) undertook monitoring work in 2015 during enhancement work, but no archaeological remains that pre-dated marsh improvement were identified. Post-medieval and modern drainage, particularly in the form of ceramic and gravel filled under-drainage, was present across the site. It was noted, however, that the area was thought to have been subject to levelling in the 1960s (ECC16192, ASE Report 8438).

Monitoring for Phases 1 and 2 (CAT Report 1475 and 1725) on the site did not reveal any previously unknown red hills, nor did they expose any other archaeological features, although a single, very small sherd of Roman pottery and a fragment of medieval or post-medieval brick were recovered.

4 Aims

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken to excavate and record any archaeological deposits which were exposed by the groundworks.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

An area covering approximately 225m² was mechanically excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

The area was located directly adjacent to an area monitored in 2021 (see CAT Report 1725), and was reduced by c 0.4m through topsoil (L1, c 0.25-0.4m thick, solid mid-grey silty-clay) into natural (L2, hard light grey and orange-brown mottled clay).

No archaeological features or finds were present.



Photograph 1 Representative section, view east.



Photograph 2 Site shot, view north.

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

7 Conclusion

As seen during previous phases of monitoring at Old Hall Marshes, no archaeological features or finds were uncovered during Phase 3 groundworks.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Kieran Alexander of RSPB for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by A Ronn. Figures are by S Veasey 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>

- | | | |
|--|-------|--|
| ASE Report 8438 | 2015 | <i>Tollesbury Wick Nature Reserve, Wyke Lane, Tollesbury. Archaeological monitoring report</i> , by E Heppell |
| Biddulph, E, Foreman, S, Stafford, E, Stansbie, D & Nicholson, R | 2012 | <i>London Gateway: Iron Age and Roman salt making in the Thames Estuary. Excavation at Stanford Wharf Nature Reserve, Essex.</i> Oxford Archaeology Monograph 18 |
| 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) |
| Fawn, AJ, Evans, K, McMaster, I & Davies, GMR | 1990 | <i>The red hills of Essex: salt-making in antiquity.</i> Colchester Archaeological Group |
| CAT | 2019 | <i>Written scheme of investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring and excavation at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP</i> by E Holloway |
| CAT Report 249 | 2003 | <i>An archaeological watching brief during enhancements to the water control system at the RSPB nature reserve, Old Hall Marshes, Tollesbury, Essex: October 2003</i> by K Orr |
| CAT Report 1475 | 2019 | <i>Archaeological monitoring (Phase 1) at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP: September 2019</i> by E Hicks |
| CAT Report 1725 | 2021 | <i>Archaeological monitoring (Phase 2) at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP: September 2019</i> by M Seehra |
| 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> |
| Germany, M | 2004 | 'Middle Iron Age red hill at Tollesbury Creek, Tollesbury, Essex', <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> 34 , 192-195. |
| ECCPS | 2019 | <i>Brief for archaeological monitoring and excavation at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury</i> , by M Medlycott |
| Gascoyne, A & Medlycott, M | 2014 | <i>Essex historic grazing marsh project.</i> ECC |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14). |
| Historic England | 2016 | <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 and 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. |

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	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
EHER	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
Iron Age (Late)	Late Iron Age (LIA), period from c 100 – 50 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
Neolithic	period from c 4000 – 2500 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of A rchaeological I nvestigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
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
wsj	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of digital archive

CAT Report 1838
ECC Brief, CAT WSI
Digital photographs and log
Graphics files
Site data
Scans of original site section drawings
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 Archaeological Data Service.

Distribution list:

Kieran Alexander, RSPB
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

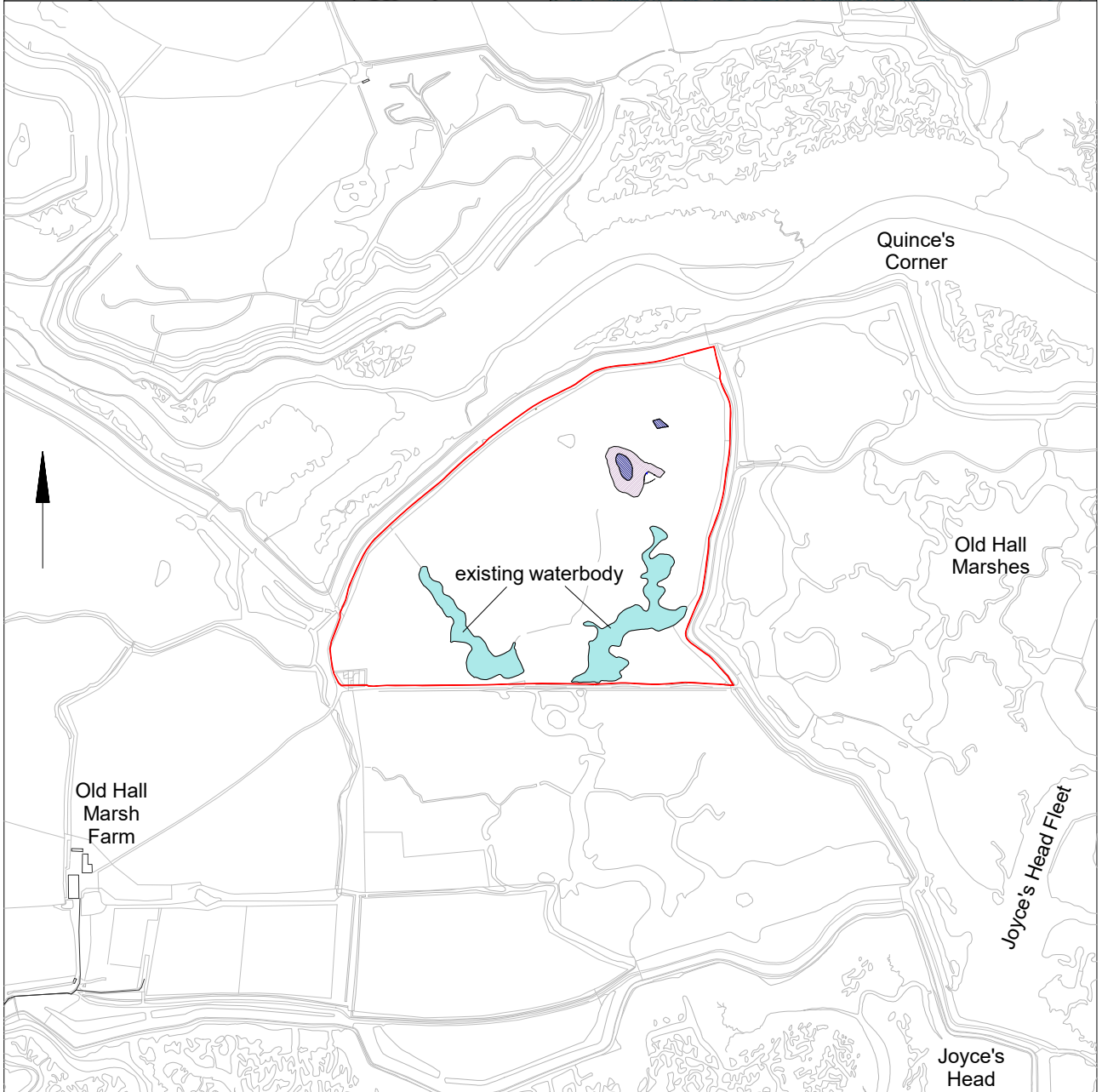
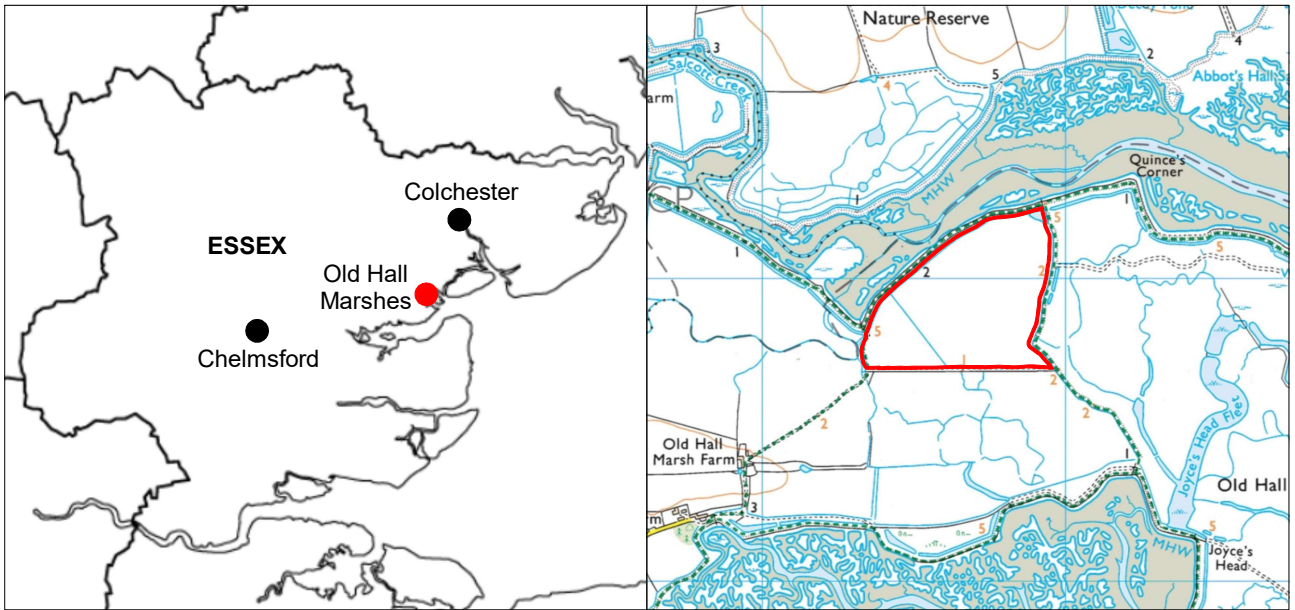


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Date: 09/09/2022



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Fig 1 Site location.



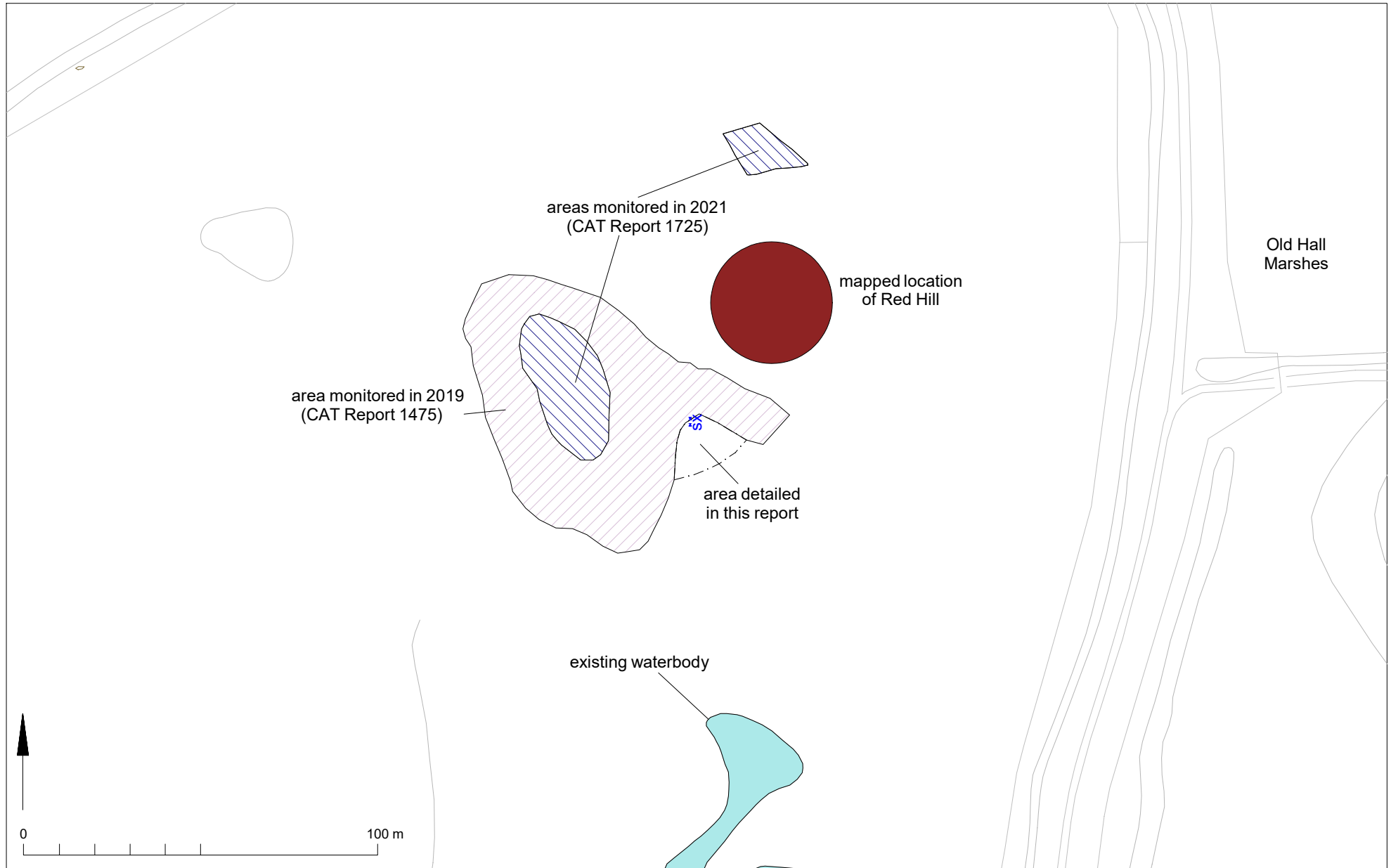


Fig 2 Monitoring results.

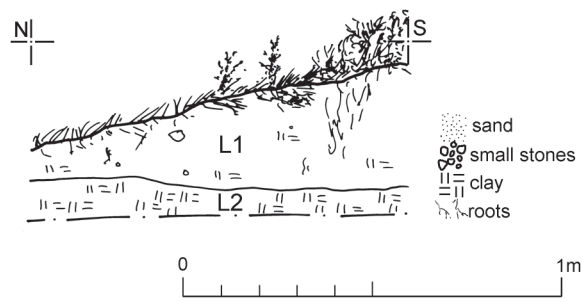


Fig 3 Representative section.

Summary for colchest3-509167

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-509167
Project Name	Watching Brief at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP
Sitename	Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP
Activity type	Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	2021/07f
Planning Id	MAL/18/01395
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	16-Aug-2022 - 16-Aug-2022
Location	Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP NGR : TL 97400 12656 LL : 51.777746762793, 0.860075393533683 12 Fig : 597400,212656
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Maldon Parish : Tollesbury
Project Methodology	Monitoring of all groundworks as per the Brief and WSI
Project Results	Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex during phase 3 groundworks for the creation of new wetland scrapes and other amendments to the reserve. Despite being located within a historic grazing marsh and close to a number of Red Hills (salt-production sites), no archaeological remains were encountered.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A, Ronn, S, Veasey
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;

Brief for archaeological monitoring and excavation at
Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury



Date:
9/1/2019





Title: Brief for archaeological monitoring and excavation at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury

Applicant: Kieren Alexander Kieren.Alexander@rspb.org.uk

Planning Reference: MAL/18/01395

Date issued: 9/1/19

Historic Environment Advisor: Maria Medlycott 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 monitoring and excavation, on Land within the Old Hall Marshes reserve. The proposed development will comprise the creation of new scrapes as well as other amendments to the reserve. The submitted planning application identifies the site of a red hill in close proximity to one of the new scrapes.

2. Site Location and Description

The proposed development (TL9740012656) is located on the southern side of the Salcott Creek, within the historic marshland. It is currently part of the Old Hall Marshes reserve. The proposed work is to increase the areas of scrapes within the reserves as well as the creations of new islands and to restore historic crossing points across the creeks.

3. Planning Background

A planning application for the development of the site was submitted to Maldon District Council (18/01395/MAL) in November 2018. The planning application comprised the creation of 7,200 square metres of new scrapes (seasonally flooded wetland features), create 3 new islands approximately 120 square metres in size, excavate 610 metres of new foot drains, re-profile 1035 metres of existing foot drain, create 500 metres of bunds across a semi-improved grassland field, and repair and renovate 12 historical but degraded crossing points found in the ancient marshes.

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 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.

Old Hall Marshes is of national significance, as a rare example of an intact historic grazing-marsh. There is the possibility of archaeological deposits surviving within the application area, relating to the Roman salt-making industry, there is a known red hill (saltern) in close proximity to northern proposed scrape.

5. Requirement for Work

The archaeological monitoring should aim to determine, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains.

A programme of archaeological monitoring shall be undertaken on the two large scrapes proposed. The archaeologist shall monitor all of the groundworks associated with the creation of the scrapes with the ability to stop the machining at the level of surviving archaeological deposits. Once these have been appropriately recorded the groundworks can recommence.

The ClfA's *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching briefs 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.

6. General Methodology

- 6.1 A professional team of field archaeologists shall undertake the archaeological monitoring and excavation. 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. Monitoring 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 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).
- 7.5 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.
- 7.6 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.
- 7.7 The IFA's Standards and Guidance for Archaeological watching briefs 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.

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 evaluation 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 archaeological work
 - 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.

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

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
archaeological monitoring and excavation at
Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury,
Essex, CM9 8TP.**

NGR: TL 97400 12656 (centre)

Planning reference: MAL/18/01395

Commissioned by: Kieran Alexander (RSPB)

On behalf of: RSPB

Curating museum: Colchester

ECC project code: tbc

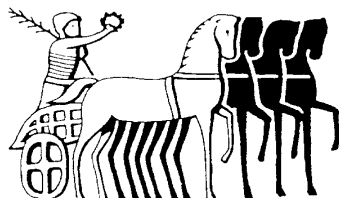
CAT project code: 2019/05b

Oasis project ID: colchest3-350684

Site manager: Chris Lister

ECC monitor: Maria Medlycott

This WSI written: 07/05/2019



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,
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Essex, CO2 7GZ

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email: eh@catuk.org

Site location and description

The proposed development site is located within the Blackwater Estuary National Nature Reserve at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP (Fig 1). Site is centred at National grid reference (NGR) TL 97400 12656.

Proposed work

The planning application proposes the creation of new scrapes and other amendments to the reserve.

Archaeological background

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

Old Hall marshes is of national significance, as a rare example of an intact historic grazing marsh located between Salcott Creek and Tollesbury Fleet, to the southeast of Salcott village. Coastal grazing marshes are a major heritage asset, contributing to the special landscape character of many parts of the English coast. Essex County Council, often working in partnership with English Heritage, has arranged detailed surveys of those reserves to enhance the approach to their management (Gascoyne & Medlycott 2014).

Gascoyne & Medlycott tell us that reclamation of the Old Hall marsh area (marsh 41) is thought to have been in an advanced state by the late 16th century, but was piecemeal until the Chapman and Andre map of 1777 at which point it had reached its full extent. The sea walls have undergone a number of alterations. The marsh has large fleets, water filled creeks, relict salt marsh surface and raised causeways that cross the marsh. There nine or more mounds, which probably represent red hills, midden sites, two surviving duck decoy ponds, one of which is scheduled and sites of buildings (barns?), decoy house and a house can be identified on the 1st edition OS map. The marsh is crossed by a number of counter walls, which appear as raised earthworks. The borrow dykes have occasional causeways across. The marsh has a number of literary connections as well as a link to Isambard Kingdom Brunel. This is a complex, well preserved and well-studied historic environment (ECC 48467).

Buried land-surfaces have been recorded on several grazing-marsh sites, these generally are recorded as a result of erosion of the marsh edge and are most visible as a consequence in the inter-tidal zone, but occasionally have also been recorded during excavations. In date the buried land surfaces range from the Neolithic to the Roman period.

The Essex HER currently has approximately 426 salt-making sites (Red Hills) recorded around the Essex coast, and this number is increasing as a consequence of aerial survey and excavation. Red Hills are sites where salt was extracted by evaporation from sea water, using clay pans over hearths. They are conspicuous sites, due to either because of their associated red earth deposits or because they form slight mounds in a very flat landscape. The earliest excavated example appear to be Mid-Bronze Age in origin (EAH 34, 192-5), but the majority can be dated to the Late Iron Age and Roman periods; some, were re-used during the medieval period. For an overview of salt-making sites see *The Red Hills of Essex* publication (CAG 1990). At the Stanford Wharf Nature Reserve Oxford Archaeology undertook a large-scale archaeological investigation in advance of the development of a new deep-sea London Gateway container port. An area of approximately 30 hectares was investigated with large areas extensively excavated (HER 47049). Although there were limited artefacts, two large Romano-British salt-production sites with associated buildings were located at each end of the excavations (OA 18). Key evidence included channels dug to catch salt water, briquetage trays and supports, evaporation hearths and traces of mounds generally known as 'Red Hills'.

Two red-hills are plotted as being very close to the proposed scrapes, one between the new scrape areas (see Fig 2). Areas of earthworks, though to be red-hills area plotted to the southeast of the site (ECC 11556, ECC 16707 and ECC16192)

CAT carried out a watching brief in 2003 to the west of the current site for the excavation of a 100m ditch as part of water control system enhancements. No features or finds of archaeological significance were recorded during the works. It was noted that the ground appeared to be undisturbed except for the previous removal of the topsoil (CAT Report 249). Archaeology South East undertook monitoring work in 2015 during enhancement work. They also saw no archaeological remains that pre-dated marsh improvement were identified. Post-medieval and modern drainage, particularly in the form of ceramic and gravel filled underdrainage, was present across the site. However, it was noted that the area was thought to have been subject to levelling in the 1960s (ECC 16192, ASE Report 8438).

Planning background

An outline planning application (MAL/18/01395) was submitted to Maldon District Council in November 2018 with a proposal to improve and restore the habitat condition of the marshes for a wide range of internationally important wintering wildfowl and locally important breeding waders and other species. RSPB will create 7,200 square metres of new scrapes (seasonally flooded wetland features), create 3 new islands approximately 120 square metres in size, excavate 610 metres of new foot drains, re-profile 1035 metres of existing foot drain, create 500 metres of bunds across a semi-improved grassland field, and repair and renovate 12 historical but degraded crossing points found in the ancient marshes.

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) and states:

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.

Requirement for work (Fig 1-2)

The required archaeological work will consist of archaeological monitoring of the two new large scrapes. Details are given in a Project Brief written by ECCPS (*Brief for archaeological monitoring and excavation at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury, Essex, CM9 8TP – ECC 2019*).

Specifically, the monitoring and recording is being undertaken to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site. The archaeologist shall monitor all of the groundworks with the ability to stop the machining at the level of surviving deposits. Once these have been appropriately recorded the groundworks can recommence.

Aims are to identify:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving deposits.

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)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2018)
- the Project Brief issued by ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECCPS 2019)

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 officer for the duration of the groundworks.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway

Monitoring methodology

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' ground works to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket.

If any features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand, planned and recorded. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc).

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

A metal detector will be used to examine spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on proformarecord 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.

Site surveying

The site and any features will be surveyed by Total Station where possible, 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 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 monitoring, 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 HE guidance (HE 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.

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.

Matthew Loughton (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: Norwich Museum / Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation)

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

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black / Ian Betts (MOLA)
Roman glass: Hilary Cool
Prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Nigel Brown
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.

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* (HE 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).
- 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 copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within 1 month of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to ECCHEA.

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>

ASE Report 8438	2015	<i>Tollesbury Wick Nature Reserve, Wyke Lane, Tollesbury. Archaeological Monitoring Report.</i> By E Heppell
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)
CAG	1990	<i>The Red Hills of Essex: salt-making in antiquity.</i> Colchester Archaeological Group. By AJ Fawn, K Evans, I McMaster & GMR Davies
CAT	2019	<i>Health & Safety Policy</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>
EAH 34	2004	Middle Iron Age red hill at Tollesbury Creek, Tollesbury, Essex. <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 34, 192-195. By M Germany
ECCPS	2019	<i>Brief for archaeological monitoring and excavation at Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane, Tollesbury.</i> By M Medlycott
Gascoyne, A & Medlycott, M	2014	<i>Essex Historic Grazing Marsh Project.</i> ECC

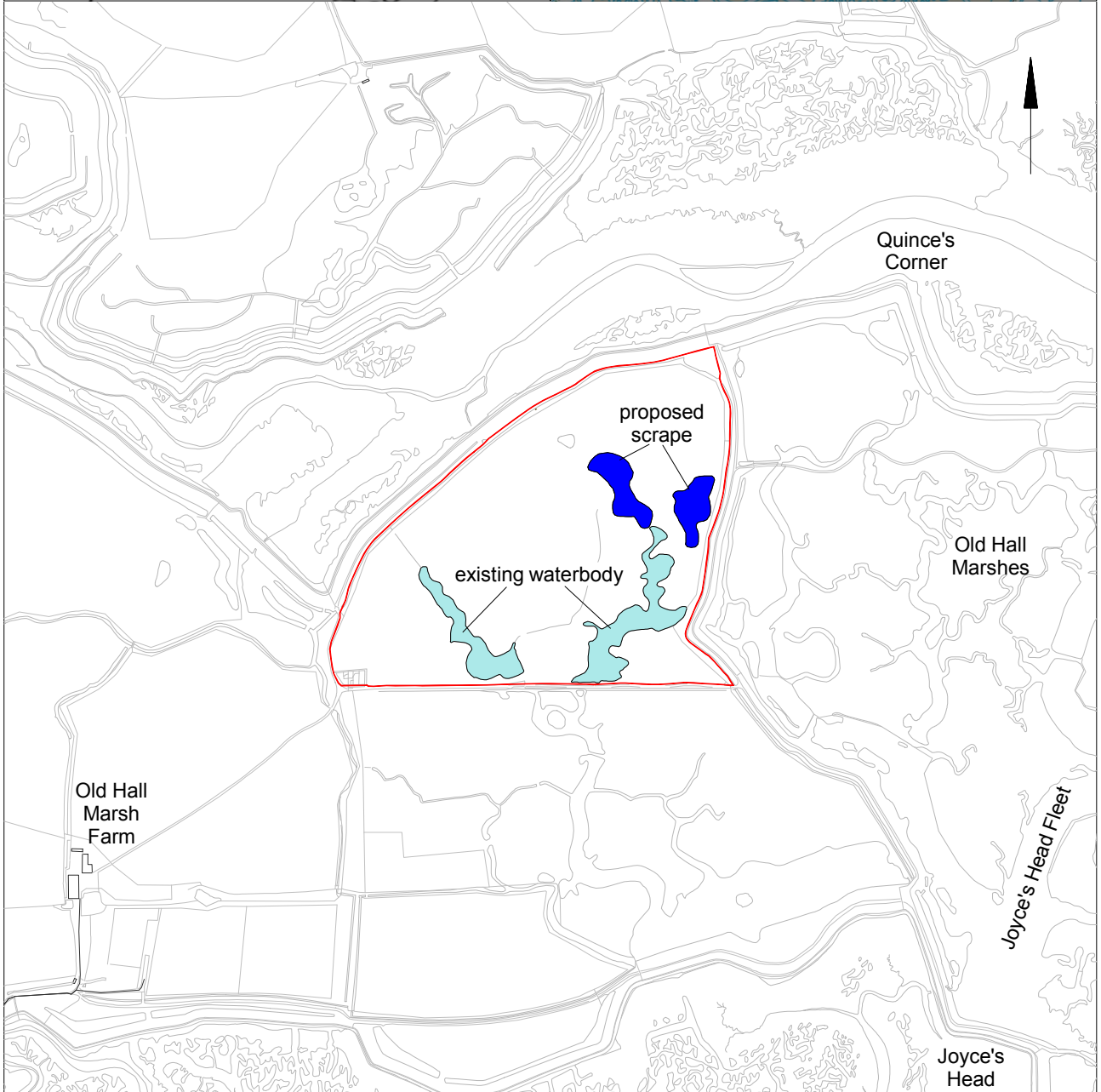
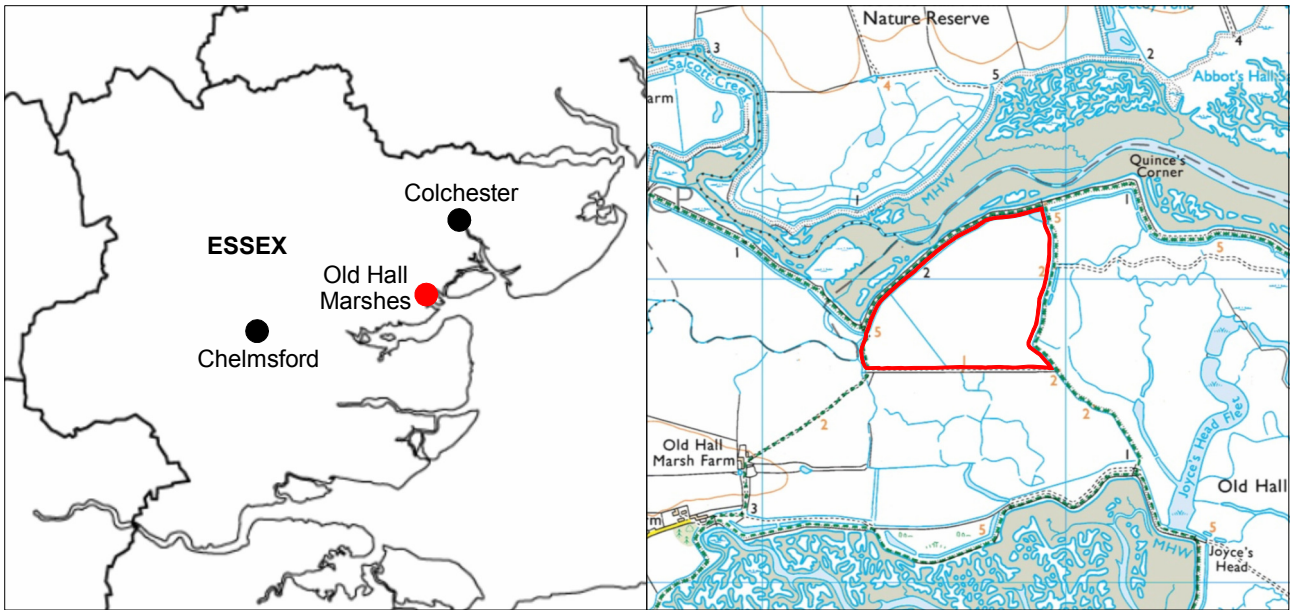
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England (HE)	2015	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Historic England (HE)	2018	<i>The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project</i> . By S Mays, M Brickley and 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.
OA 18	2012	<i>London Gateway: Iron Age and Roman salt making in the Thames Estuary. Excavation at Stanford Wharf Nature Reserve, Essex</i> . Oxford Archaeology Monograph 18 . By E Biddulph, S Foreman, Stafford, Stansbie and Nicholson

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Fig 1 Site location.



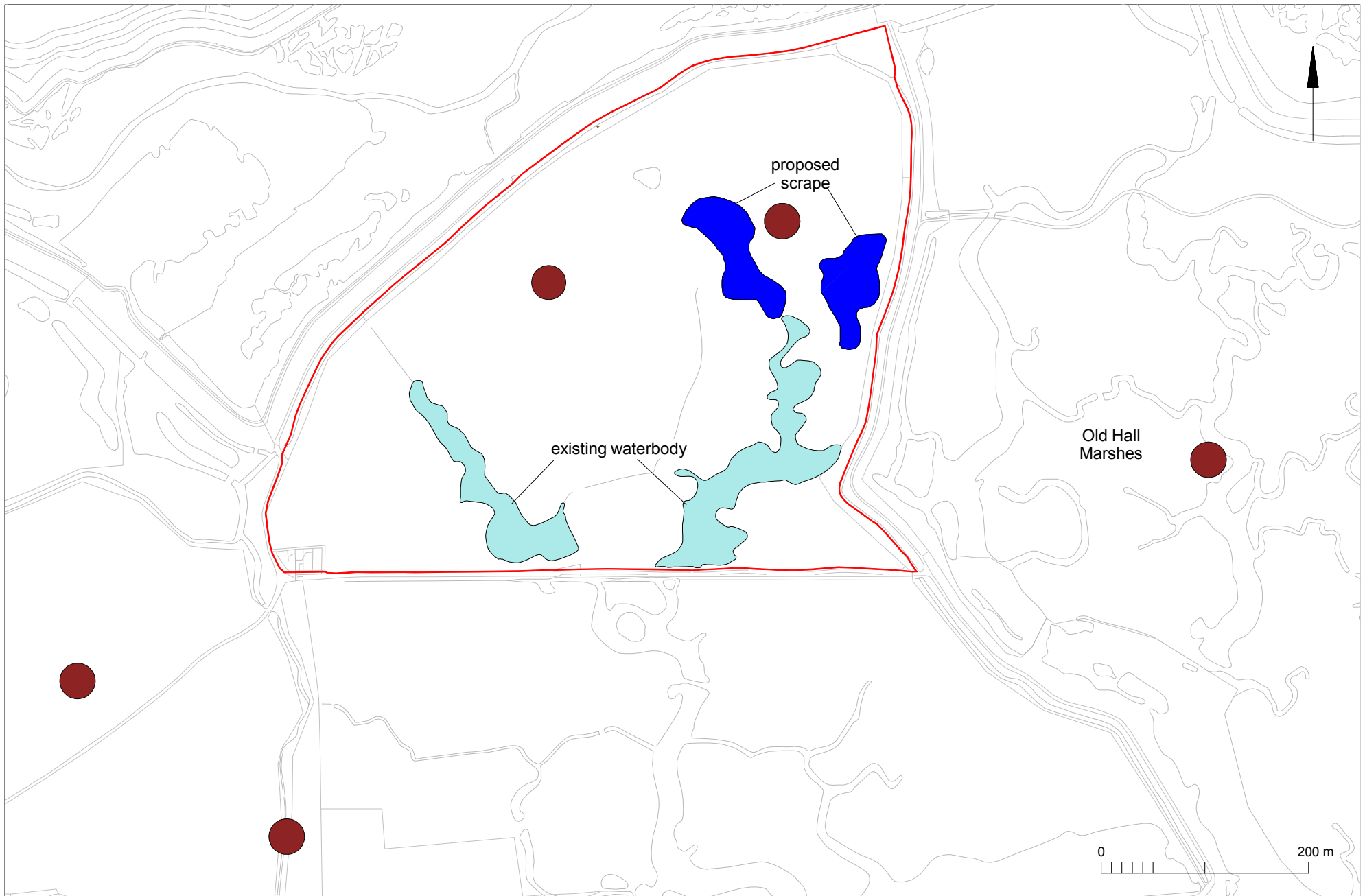


Fig 2 Site location in relation to known archaeology.

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● Red hill



001



002



003



004



005



006



007



008



009



010



011



012



013



014



Filename	Description
T00H21_PhotoGraph_001.jpg	Stripping SSW facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_002.jpg	Stripping SW facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_003.jpg	Rep sx SEE facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_004.jpg	Rep sx S facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_005.jpg	Rep sx SEE facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_006.jpg	Rep sx s facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_007.jpg	Site shot S facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_008.jpg	Site shot S facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_009.jpg	Site shot E facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_010.jpg	Site shot N facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_011.jpg	Site shot N facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_012.jpg	Site shot N facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_013.jpg	Site shot NE facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_014.jpg	Site shot N facing
T00H21_PhotoGraph_015.jpg	Site shot NEW facing

Old Hall Marshes, Old Hall Lane Tollesbury Phase 3

TOOK 2



- L1 - Topsoil, mid-grey, silty clay
- L2 - Natural, hard, light grey/orange

SCALE 1:10
AR

OLD HALL MARSHES TOLLESBURY PHASE 3 WB