

**An archaeological  
watching brief and recording  
at Brightlingsea Quarry,  
Moverons Lane,  
Brightlingsea, Essex  
October 2003**

**commissioned by  
Mineral Services Ltd  
on behalf of  
Alresford Sand & Ballast Co Ltd**

**report prepared by  
Howard Brooks**

Planning reference: ESS/47/94/00/TEN  
CAT project ref.: 03/10a  
Colchester Museums accession code: 2002.54  
NGR: TM 07450 18190 (centre)



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**CAT Report 252**  
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EHCR summary sheet

## 1 Summary

*An area of 0.15 hectares was stripped in the North Field at Brightlingsea Quarry. Two ditches were recorded, one of which produced prehistoric pottery. The other produced an abraded sherd of Roman pottery. Four other features were identified, of which three were undated and a third was post-medieval. This phase of work followed on from a more substantial investigation in 2002, when most of the North Field was stripped, and field ditches containing Neolithic pottery and a disturbed Beaker burial were recorded.*

*The prehistoric ditch recorded in 2003 may be the same as an undated (but presumably prehistoric) ditch recorded in 2002.*

*Work was carried out using a methodology agreed with the ECC HAMP group, and was commissioned for Alresford Sand & Ballast Co Ltd by Mr Peter Orrock of Mineral Services Ltd.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

- 1.1 This is the archive report on an archaeological monitoring and recording project at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex (National Grid Reference TM 07450 18190 centre).
- 1.2 Proposed work is the realignment of a haul road, which was preceded by a topsoil-strip over an area of 0.15 hectares in the 'North Field' (see Fig 2 for location).
- 1.3 The project was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) according to a scheme agreed with Essex County Council Heritage Advice, Management and Promotions (ECC HAMP) group. This scheme involved:
  - detailed walkover of stripped area to identify archaeological features
  - cleaning/excavation/recording of any exposed archaeological features
  - monitoring of future topsoil strips.
- 1.4 Fieldwork took place in October 2003, and post-excavation work in November and December 2003.
- 1.5 The project was monitored by ECC HAMP group.

## 3 Archaeological background

- 3.1 The site lies in something of an archaeological hot spot (Fig 1). The North Field (east of 'The Link') and the South Field (east of 'The Long Plantation') are in an area of cropmarks which includes at least two prominent sub-rectangular enclosures, a number of ring-ditches, two trackways, and numerous field boundaries (Fig 2: Essex Heritage Conservation Record or EHCR 2234). Some of the cropmarks overlie one another, showing that they are of several periods. The excavated Bronze Age ring-ditch and the burial site at Moverons Pit are [located] 500m north-west and 150m west of the site respectively (EHCR 2142: Clarke 1990; Clarke 1991).
- 3.2 Monitoring and recording in 2002 in the field to the north of that reported here revealed field-ditches containing Neolithic pottery, and a disturbed Beaker burial. Middle Bronze Age and Roman material was recovered from the ploughsoil (CAT Report 214).

## 4 Aim

The aim of the archaeological project was to identify, excavate and record any archaeological features or deposits exposed in the topsoil strip to enable their date, importance and condition to be assessed.

## 5 Methodology

The stripped area was examined by detailed walkover. Where archaeological features were visible, they were marked and then examined. This involved half-sections of the pits and sections across the ditches. All digging was by hand. Features were recorded on standard CAT pro-forma sheets, plans were drawn at scale on film, and photographs were taken with a digital camera.

The record system has been continued from the 2002 work, when eight features, two layers and thirteen finds bags were numbered. In the 2003 recording, features numbers started at Feature or F10, layers at Layer or L10, and finds bags at 20.

## 6 Results (Figs 2-4)

**6.1** The recorded features comprised ditches and pits.

### 6.2 Ditches

**6.2.1** Two ditches were recorded. A 5.7m length of F12 was recorded, aligned east to west on the north edge of the stripped area. There is a close correlation between this ditch and a cropmark (the ditch excavated in 2002: CAT Report 214, fig 3, F9). The 2002 ditch was not excavated but it is presumed to be prehistoric (CAT Report 214, 2). It is unfortunate that the edge of the stripped area coincided with the ditch position; it is likely that more of it lies hidden under the haul road to the north. The ditch was sectioned, and one sherd of pottery was recovered. This sherd was certainly prehistoric, but cannot be more closely dated (see finds report below).

**6.2.2** The second ditch (F13) was less well defined. It extended south from the north edge of the stripped area for 4 m, but did not appear to extend any farther. A piece of pottery of probable Roman date was recovered from this feature.

### 6.3 Pits (Fig 4)

The initial walkover identified four possible pits (F11, F14, F15, F16). On exploration, F14 proved to be a modern-looking charcoal deposit, presumably the bottom of a truncated modern pit. Investigation of F15 and F16 showed that they were surface patches with no depth, and F16 produced a piece of post-medieval peg-tile. Only F11 proved to be a genuine (though undated) feature. This was an almost circular pit, 1.4m in diameter. It had rather indistinct edges, and its fill was quite charcoally. There were no finds.

## 7 Finds

### 7.1 Finds list, with phasing comments

*by Howard Brooks, with Stephen Benfield*

Notes: context and finds records continue the series begun in 2002. Pottery fabric descriptions are after Symonds and Wade 1999.

Bag no	Context	Context type	Description	Finds date
20	F11	pit	charcoal	-
21	F12	ditch	2 small sherds (6 grammes) of prehistoric pottery, probably Bronze or Iron Age	prehistoric
22	F13	ditch?	sherd (13 grammes) of large storage jar (Fabric HZ)	Roman
23	F14	pit	charcoal	-
24	F16	pit	peg-tile (7 grammes)	post-medieval

## 8 Conclusions

During this watching brief, two ditches were recorded. Assuming that dating from single sherds is reliable, one ditch is prehistoric and the other Roman. The prehistoric ditch is so close to a ditch previously identified as a cropmark (see Fig 2) that it is probably the same feature. In this respect, it is curious that the other cropmark ditches were not seen on this site. The Roman ditch does not share the alignment of any of the cropmark ditches. The other pits on this site did not produce dated material, apart from F16 (peg-tile).

Earlier excavations and watching briefs in the Brightlingsea area have identified early Neolithic and later Bronze Age material (Clarke & Lavender in prep; Brown 1996). Neolithic pottery was recovered from the field-ditches in 2002 (CAT Report 214). The results of the present work do not add much more detail to this picture, beyond confirming the broadly prehistoric and Roman date of the field ditches.

## 9 Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Alresford Sand & Ballast Co Ltd for commissioning the work, through the good offices of Mr Peter Orrock (Mineral Services Ltd). Thanks also to Pat Connell of ECC HAMP for advice. Site work was carried out by Stephen Tyler and Howard Brooks.

## 10 Archive deposition

The finds and paper archive are currently held by CAT at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museums under accession code 2002.54 (this is the same site code as the 2002 recording (CAT Report 214).

## 11 Monitoring

The project was monitored by the ECC HAMP group.

## 12 References

- |                             |         |   |
|-----------------------------|---------|---|
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| CAT Report 214              |         | Monitoring and recording at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex, unpublished CAT archive report , by H Brooks, 2002 |
| Clarke, C P,                | 1990    | 'Brightlingsea, Moverons Pit', <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , <b>21</b> , 128   |
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| Clarke, C P, & Lavender, N, | in prep | The Brightlingsea survey report   |
| Clarke, D L,                | 1970    | <i>Beaker pottery of Great Britain and Ireland</i> , Gulbenkian Archaeol Series, <b>1-2</b>   |
| Symonds, R P, & Wade, S     | 1999    | <i>Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , Colchester Archaeological Report <b>10</b> , ed by P Bidwell and A Croom   |

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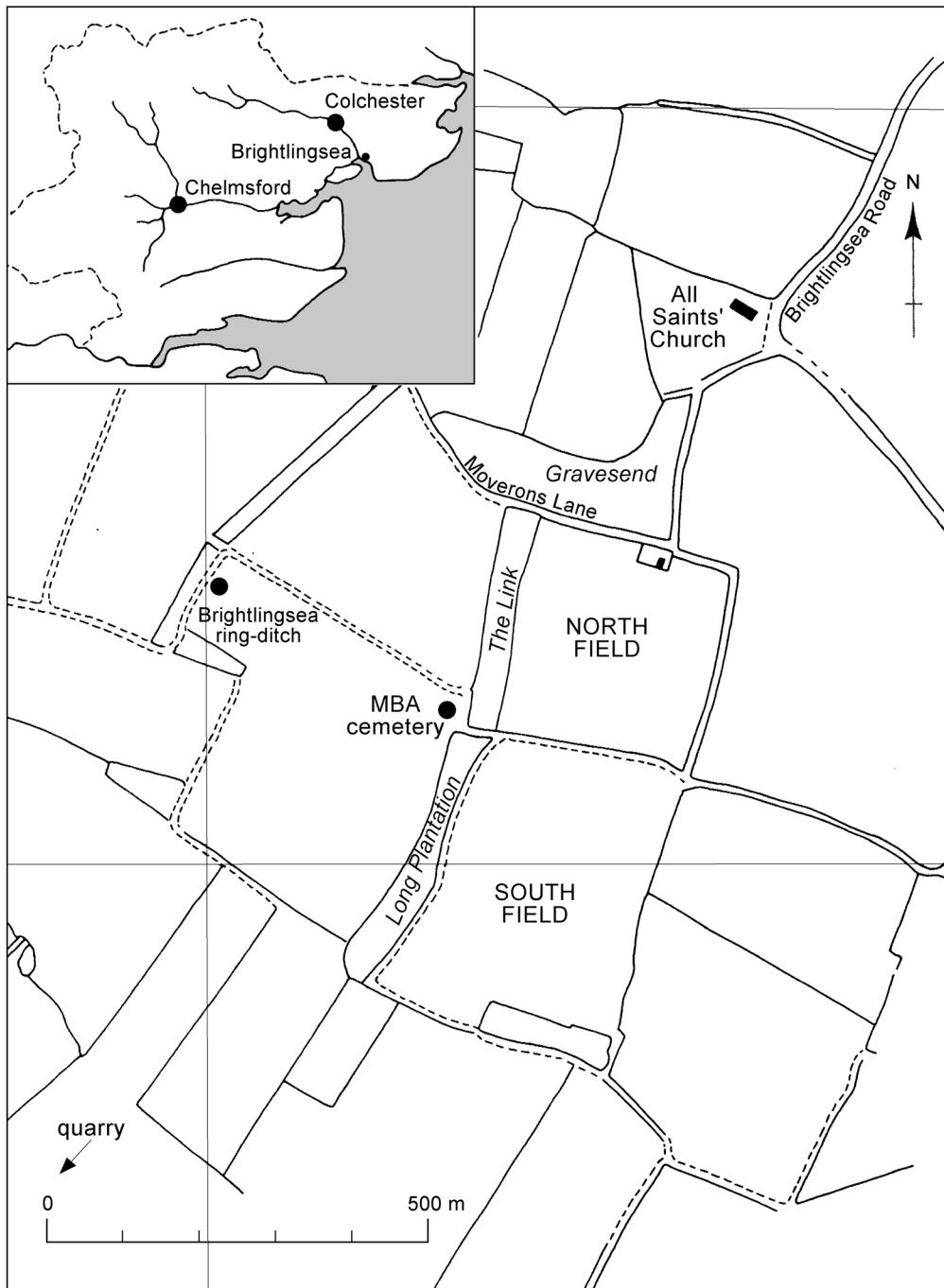
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**Fig 1 Location of North Field and South Field (areas of woodland in italic).**



**Fig 2 Cropmarks in North and South fields**  
(courtesy Essex County Council Field  
Archaeology Group).  
The 2003 watching brief area is toned.

0 50 100 metres



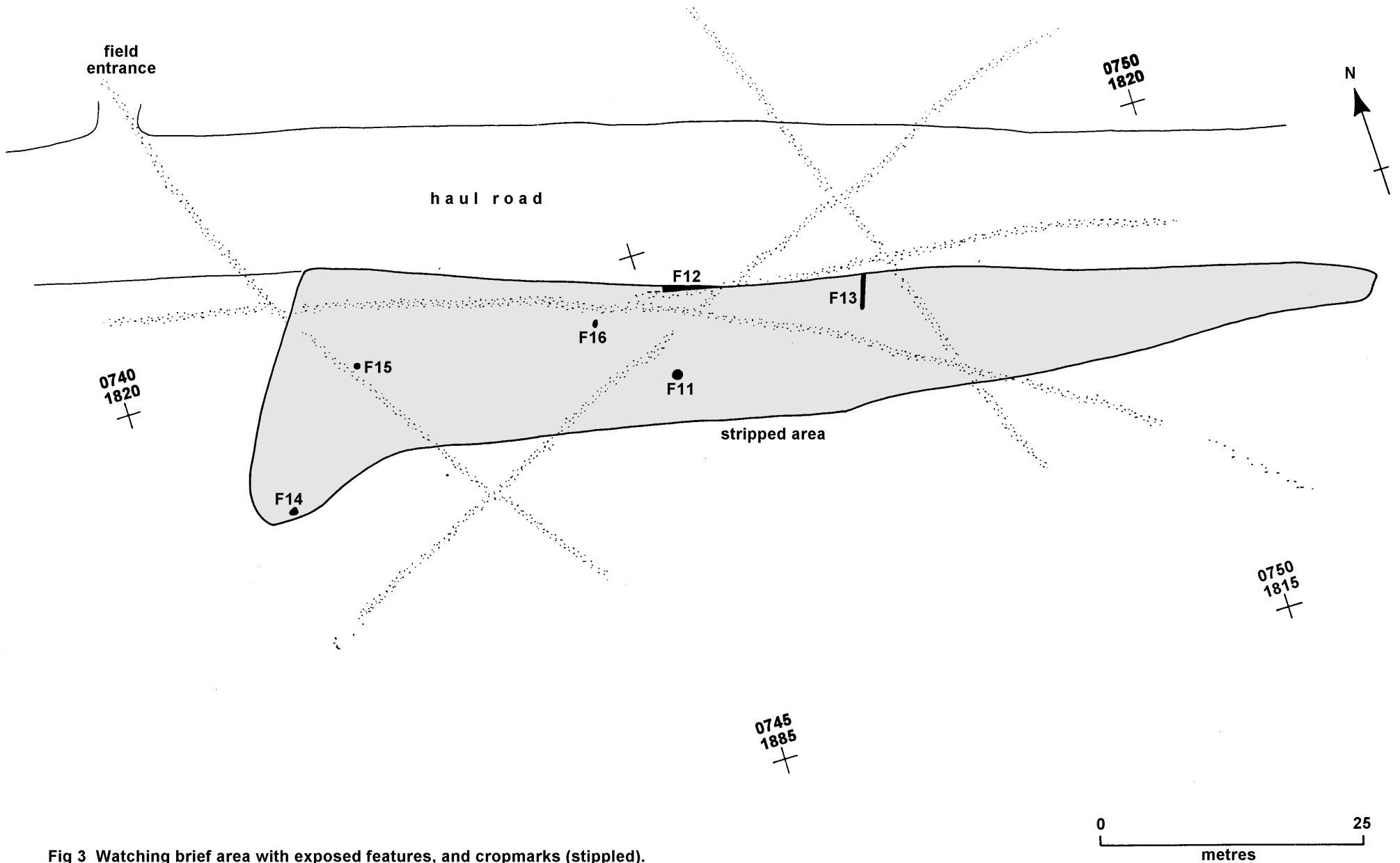


Fig 3 Watching brief area with exposed features, and cropmarks (stippled).

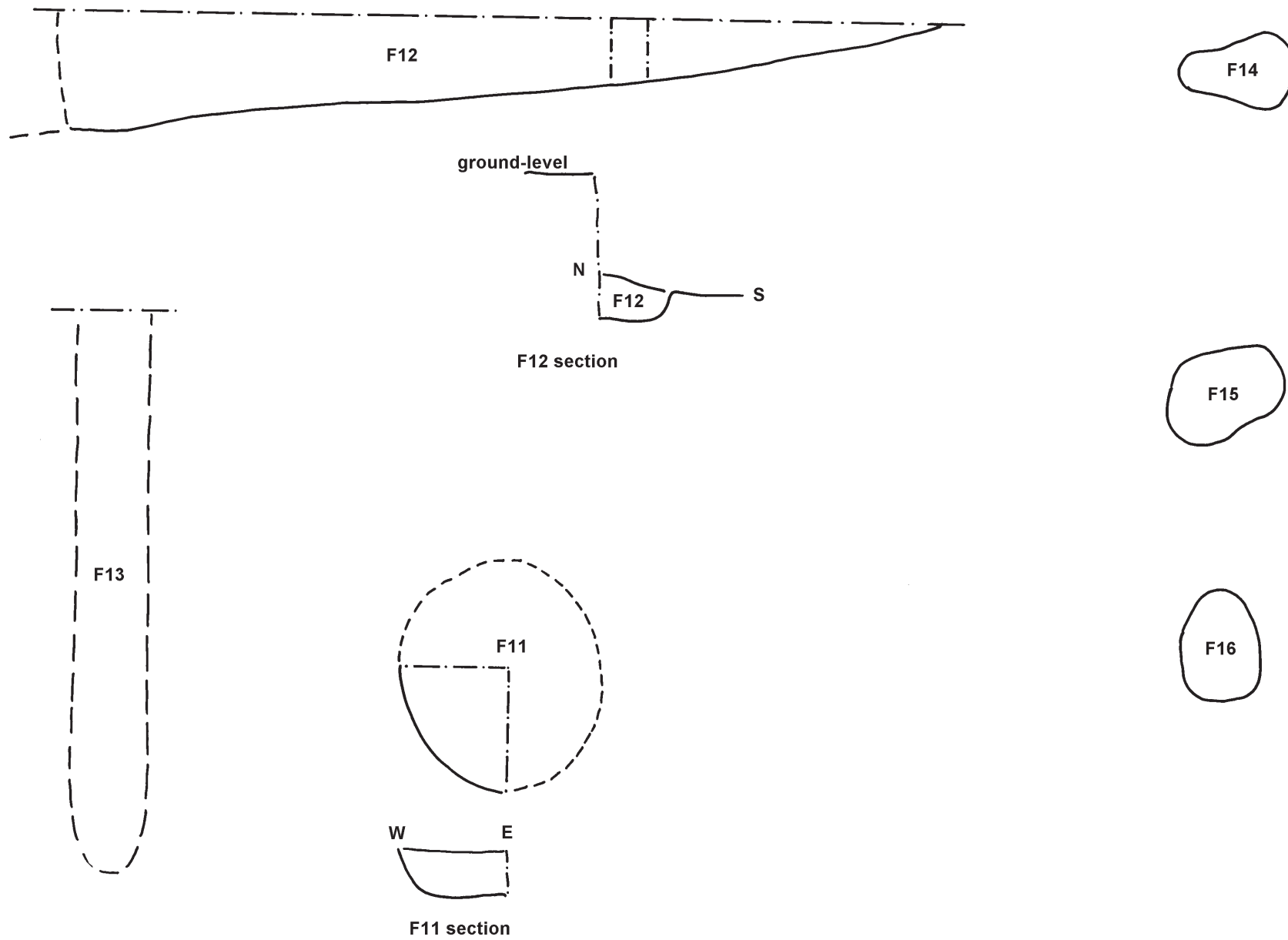


Fig 4 Features: plans and sections.

# Essex Heritage Conservation Record/ *Essex Archaeology and History*

## Summary sheet

<b>Site address:</b> Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Brightlingsea	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> NGR TM 07450 18190 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> Museum accession code 2002.54
<b>Type of work:</b> Watching brief and recording	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> October 2003	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 0.15 hectares
<b>Location of finds/curating museum:</b> Colchester Museums	<b>Funding source:</b> Developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Uncertain	<b>Related EHCR nos:</b> 2142, 2234
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 252 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
<b>Periods represented:</b> prehistoric, Roman	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>  <i>An area of 0.15 hectares was stripped in the North Field at Brightlingsea Quarry. Two ditches were recorded, one of which produced prehistoric pottery. The other produced an abraded sherd of Roman pottery. Four other features were identified, of which three were undated and a third was post-medieval. This phase of work followed on from a more substantial investigation in 2002, when most of the North Field was stripped, and field ditches containing Neolithic pottery and a disturbed Beaker burial were recorded.</i></p> <p><i>The prehistoric ditch recorded in 2003 may be the same as an undated (but presumably prehistoric) ditch recorded in 2002.</i></p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> <i>EAH 34</i>	
<b>Author of summary:</b> Howard Brooks	<b>Date of summary:</b> 8th December 2003