

Report on negative watching brief

Site address: formerly Parvins' Builders Yard, 72 High Street, Kelvedon, Essex
Date of fieldwork: 11th May-29th June 2006
NGR: TL 8611 1872
CBC brief?: No. Brief from Vanessa Clarke (ECC HEM team officer)
Sketch attached?: yes (Figs 1-2)
Museum accession: KL23
CAT report no: 379

Archaeological background:

The development site lies within the historic town of Kelvedon (Fig 1; Medlycott 1998) and within the mid 1st-century Roman fort to the south-west of the enclosed Roman town (Essex Historic Environment Record or EHER no 18762) and within the extent of the later post-medieval settlement strung along the length of the High Street (EHER no 18770).

Archaeological deposits of Late Iron Age, Roman and post-medieval date were likely to be encountered within the area of the watching brief. In the 1980s, an area 300m² was excavated in the immediate vicinity of the site, to the north of Abbey Field House. The intersections of three ditch systems identified in previous excavations were revealed; their dates were confirmed by ceramic typology as Late Iron Age/early Roman. The remains of two rectangular beam and post buildings were excavated, both producing Late Iron Age pottery from beam slots. A Late Iron Age pit was excavated to the south-west of the site of the Late Iron Age building, which was itself overlaid by an early Roman four-post structure (EHER no 8286). An early Roman oven and a 2nd-century pit were also identified (EHER no 8287). Further trenching in the vicinity of the site, at Blandford House, revealed two Late Iron Age field ditches on different alignments (EHER no 8259). Earlier Palaeolithic and Mesolithic finds have also been recorded in the general vicinity of the development site (EHER nos 8288-8290).

Results:

Between 11th May and 29th June 2006, the following groundworks were monitored: the stripping of the footprint of the new building, the excavation of foundation trenches, and the excavation of two drainage runs.

The footprint of the building was stripped under archaeological supervision using a 360-degree mini-digger to a formation depth of 300mm below the existing ground-level. Four modern layers of overburden were revealed: L1, the tarmac car-park surface; L2, Type 1 hogging material used as a base over which the tarmac had been laid; L3, a very thin redeposited subsoil; and finally L4, a thick layer of hardcore and mixed builder's rubble. These four overburden layers sealed L5, the remains of a post-medieval topsoil. This compacted material contained post-medieval and modern building material and was encountered across the entire site.

The foundation trenches were excavated to a depth of 600mm below the formation level (Fig 2). During the excavation of the trenches, two more horizons were observed, ie a subsoil layer L6 (a fine grey brown silt which contained very occasional charcoal and oyster flecks), and L7, a layer of natural glacial material (consisting of geological sands and gravels with occasional patches of boulder clay), which was sealed by L6.

The trenches for the drainage runs were dug to a maximum depth of 300mm below formation level within the post-medieval topsoil L5.

No archaeological features were observed during the excavation of the foundation trenches or the trenches for the drainage runs. The only material observed during the course of the work was post-medieval and modern brick and tile associated with the make-up material (L1-L4) deposited prior to the construction of the car-park surface L1.

Finds:

Post-medieval/modern brick and tile; none retained.

References:

Medlycott, M, 1998 *Kelvedon historic towns project assessment report*, Essex County Council Archaeology Section

Report author: B Holloway

Report date: August 2006

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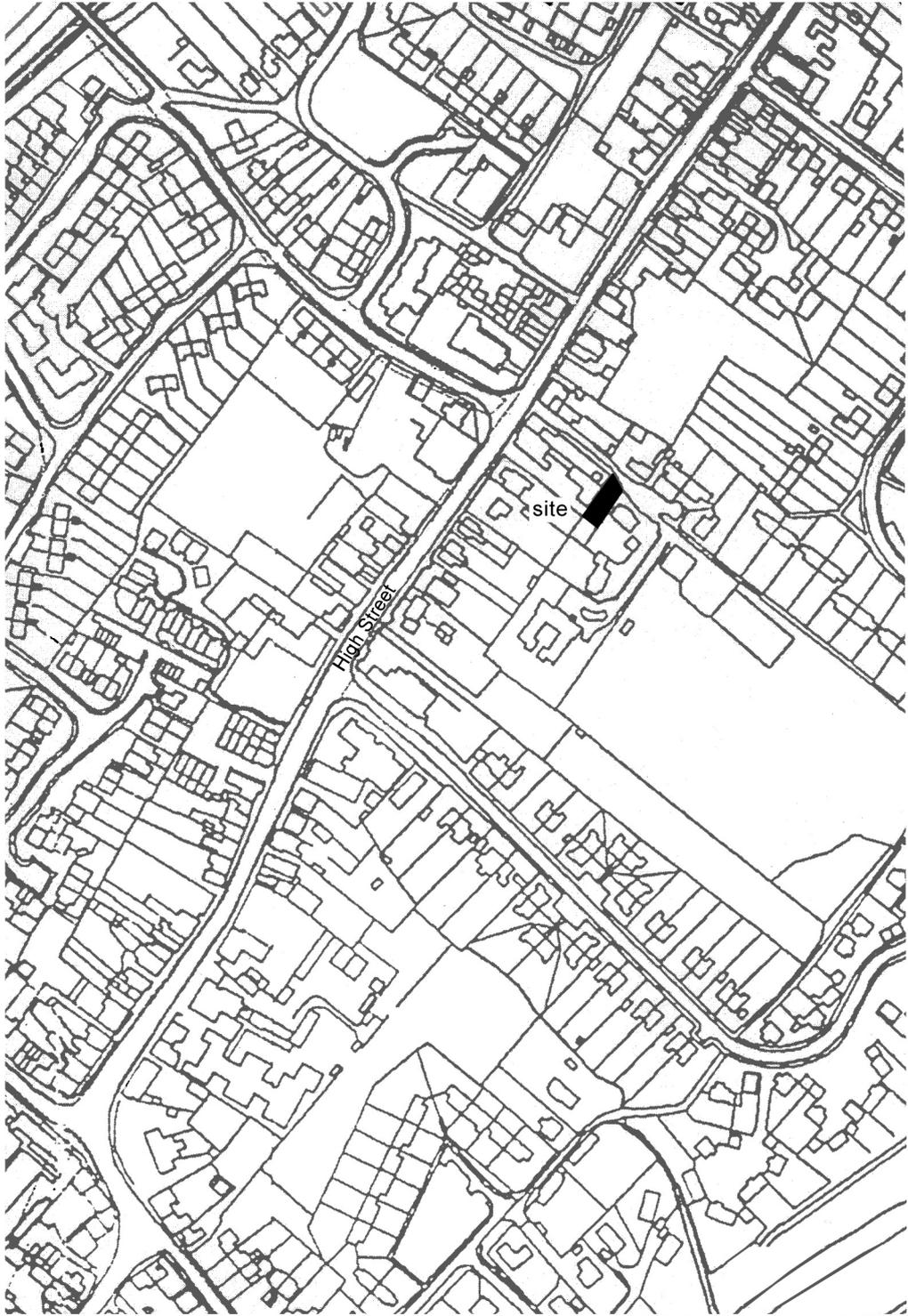
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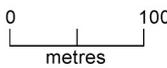
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Fig 1 Site location.



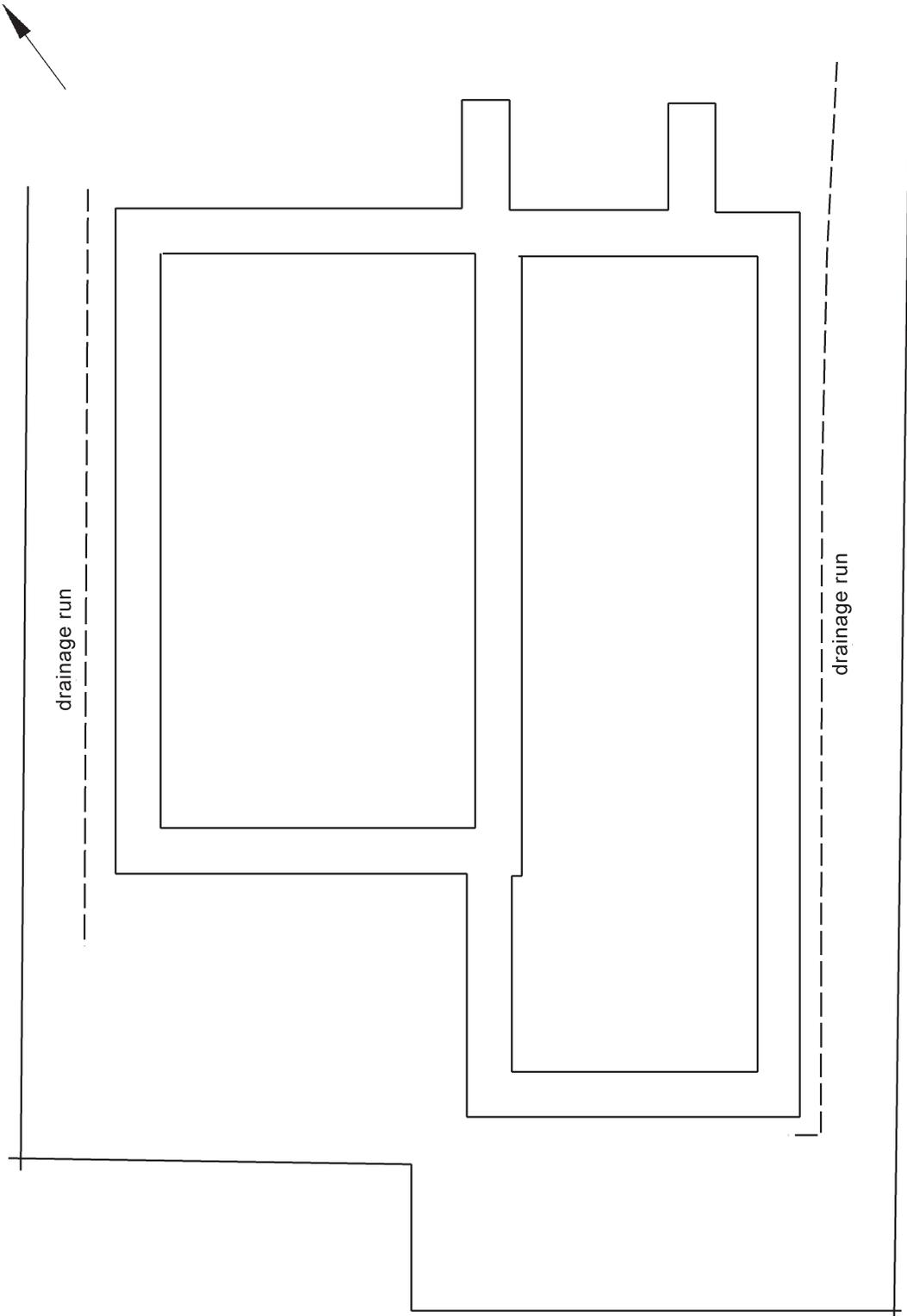


Fig 2 Footing plan.

