

Report on negative evaluation

Site address: proposed nursing home, on land at the junction of Celeborn Street and The Withywindle, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex
Date of fieldwork: 18th October 2007
NGR: TQ 80063 96855 (centre)
CBC brief?: brief from Teresa O'Connor, ECC HEM team officer
Plan attached?: yes (Figs 1-2)
Site code: SWFCS07
CAT report no: CAT Report 442

Archaeological background

Significant archaeological finds have been made on buried land surfaces on the eastern bank of Fenn Creek where this site is located. These include burnt flints of probable Bronze Age date, two salt-production sites, fired clay and pottery dating to the Iron Age and a Late Bronze Age brushwood platform (EHER nos 13668-13669, 13528, 13712, 13675, 13677). Also water-logged deposits have preserved rare and important finds, in addition to containing preserved environmental evidence. Less than 1km to the south and east, at Ormesby Chine (EHER nos 19592-19594), archaeological evaluation and excavation have revealed evidence for human activity in the area from at least the Bronze Age to the medieval period.

Brief report

The site (0.4ha) was the subject of a 5% evaluation in advance of the construction of a proposed new 70-bed nursing home (Fig 1). A total of 112m of trenching was excavated under archaeological supervision using a 360 degree mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Eleven 1.8m-wide trenches were excavated, ten of which were 10m long and one 12m long (Fig 2). The trenches were excavated through three horizons: a topsoil remnant (L1), subsoil (L2), and natural boulder clay (L3). The clayey silt topsoil contained modern building material and domestic waste throughout and only exceeded 100mm in depth in trenches T10 and T11, which were sited in an area where a larger volume of building material had been deposited. The silty clay subsoil layer was of a greater depth in the north-east of the site, ranging from 170mm to 250mm in T1-T5. The subsoil in T6-T11 in the south-west of the site ranged from between 120mm and 200mm in depth. Due to its high clay content, the subsoil was machined away as large clumps, resulting in an uneven interface between the subsoil and natural clay. In places, there were clusters of rocks in the subsoil (see Fig 2). The trenches were excavated to an overall depth of between 500mm and 700mm, at which point the clumps of clayey subsoil ceased and the solid natural clay began. No archaeological material or features were observed during the course of the evaluation, nor were any finds recovered. The thin layer of topsoil and small amount of subsoil overlying natural geological material may indicate that the area had been subjected to some degree of reduction or levelling, probably when the surrounding housing estate was originally constructed. This would account for the absence of archaeological material identified in the evaluation.

Finds:

None.

References:

O'Connor, T, 2007 *Archaeological investigation. Proposed nursing home, land at junction of Celeborn Street and The Withywindle, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex County Council brief*

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Report date: October 2007

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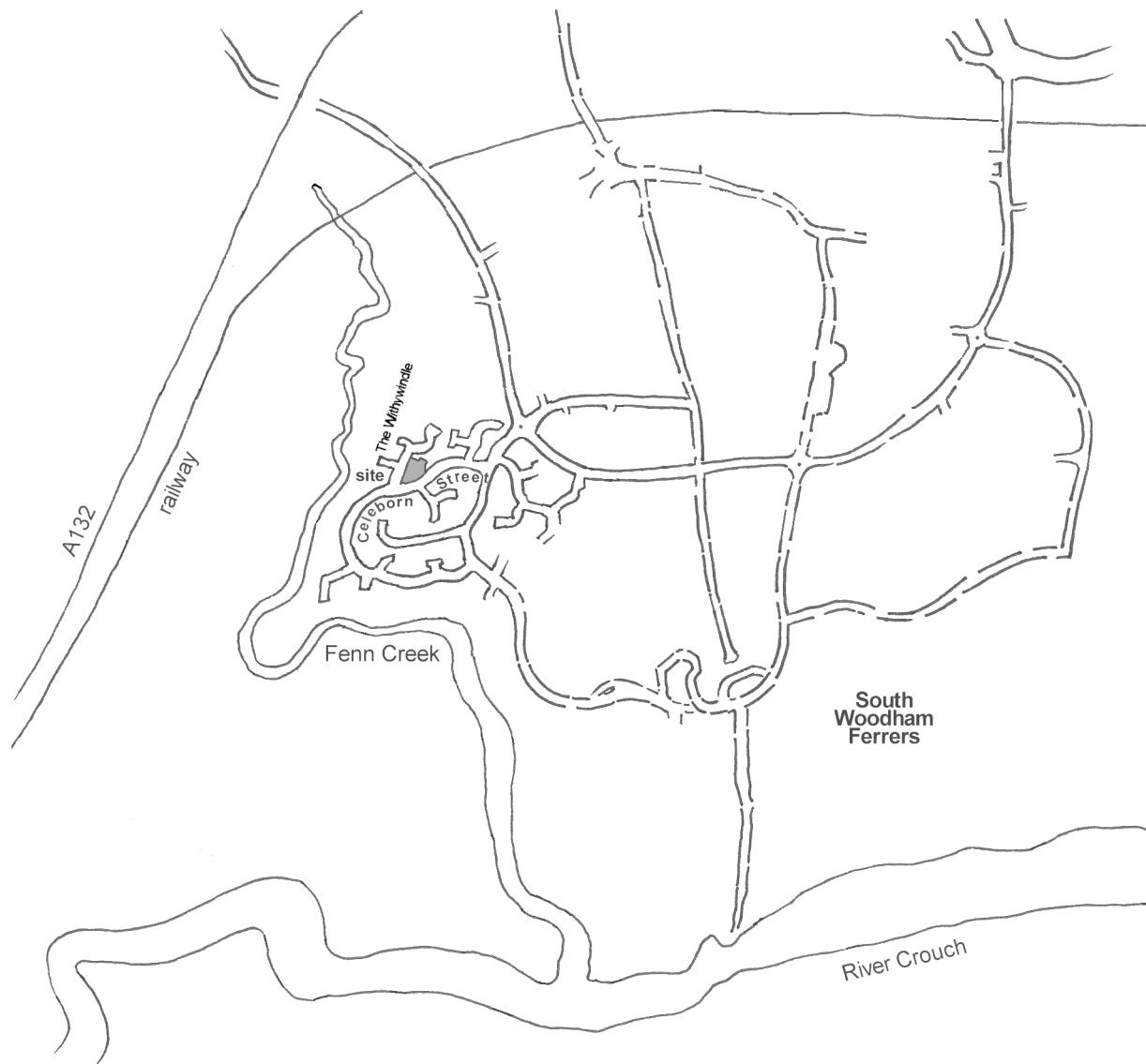


Fig 1 Site location.



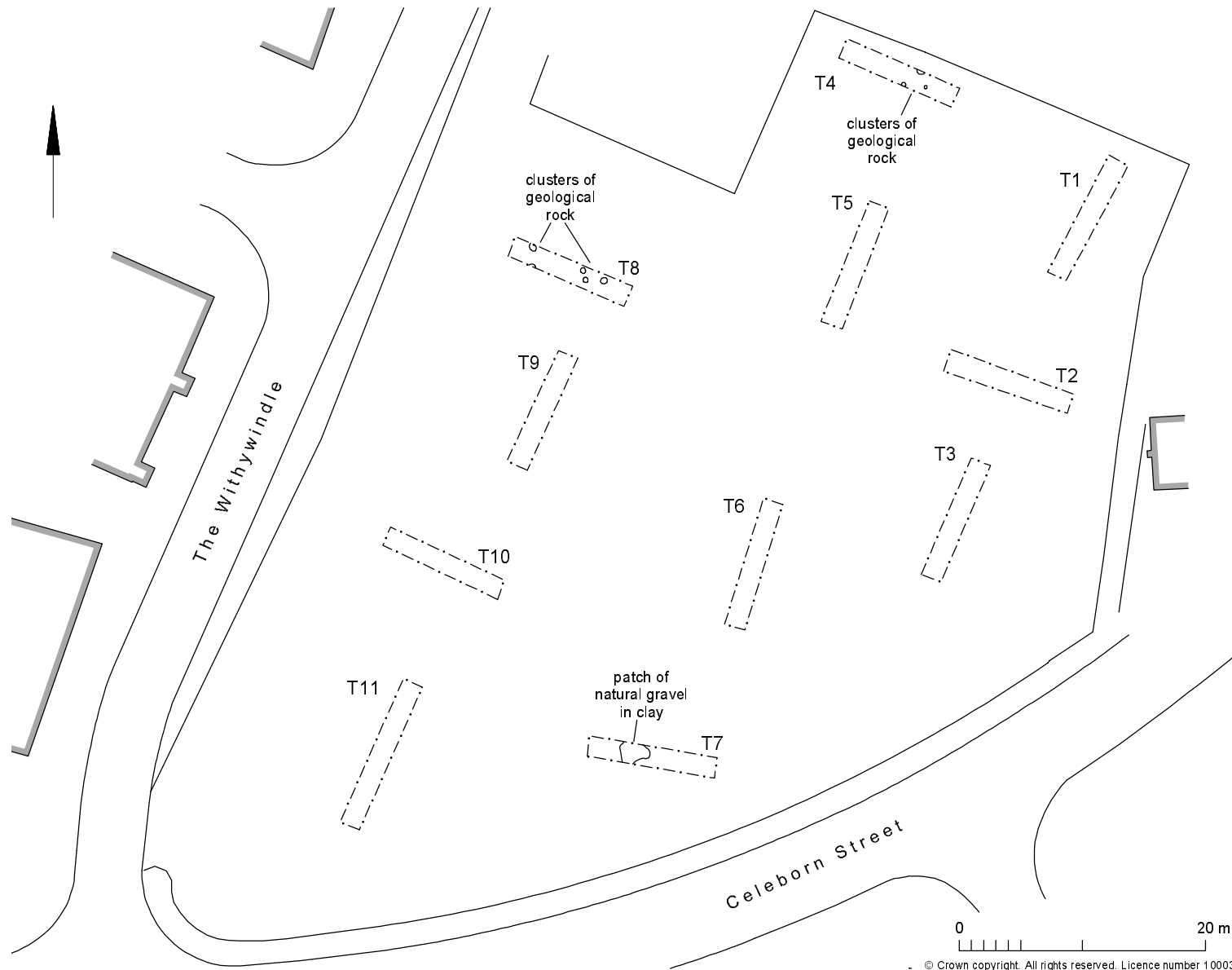


Fig 2 Proposed trench locations.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ *Essex Archaeology and History*

Summary sheet

Site address: on land at the junction of Celeborn Street and The Withywindle, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex	
Parish: Holy Trinity	District: Chelmsford Borough
NGR: TQ 80063 96855 (c)	Site code: SWFCS07
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: October 2007	Size of area investigated: 112m of trenching (5% of 0.4ha site)
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester Museums??	Funding source: Developer: Lasertons Ltd
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER nos:
Final report: CAT Report 442	
Periods represented: none	
Summary of fieldwork results: <i>The site is located on land at the junction of Celeborn Street and The Withywindle, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex. No archaeological material or features were observed, and no finds were recovered.</i>	
Previous summaries/reports: No	
Author of summary: Adam Wightman	Date of summary: October 2007