

An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land between 3 and 5 Hamilton Road, Little Canfield, Essex October 2013



**report by
Adam Wightman**

**commissioned by E+M Design Partnership
on behalf of
P.G Bones Developments Ltd**

CAT project ref.: 13/10c
Saffron Walden Museum accession code: 2013.28
NGR: TL 5763 2135 (c)



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CAT Report 732
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This is the summary report on the archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land between 3 and 5 Hamilton Road, Little Canfield, Essex (NGR TL 5763 2135 (c); Fig 1). The proposed development comprises the construction of five properties in two blocks and a separate garage block (planning application no UTT/13/1953) (Fig 2).

The development site lies close to the old A120 which is on the line of the Roman Road from Braughing to Colchester (Stane Street, EHER 4697). Evidence of both Roman and medieval settlement has been found elsewhere along this road. To the north of evaluation area, evidence of prehistoric occupation and an extensive medieval field system has been identified during archaeological investigations at the Priors Green development site (EHER no 46298; ECC FAU 2010).

CAT undertook the archaeological evaluation on the 21st October 2013 in accordance with a written scheme of investigation produced by CAT (CAT 2013) which followed a brief produced by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor Richard Havis (ECC HE 2013). Three trenches (T1-T3) totalling 32m in length were excavated within the footprints of the three proposed development blocks (Fig 2). The trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator equipped with a 2.1m wide toothless ditching bucket.

The development site was covered in a dark grey clayey-silt topsoil (L1) between 260mm and 300mm thick (Fig 4). All the finds observed in L1 were modern in date. The topsoil overlaid a medium grey/brown silty-clay subsoil (L2). This subsoil layer was also identified during the evaluation at 4 Hamilton Road 70m to the south-east (CAT Report 685) (Fig 3). L2 overlaid a pale brown/orange boulder clay with some flint gravel (L3). Small sondages were hand-excavated into L3 to confirm that it was the natural clay and not a masking deposit (Fig 2). An undated linear feature (F1) was identified in T2 (Fig 2). F1 had a medium grey clayey-silt fill and cut the subsoil (L2) and the natural clay (L3) (Fig 4). No finds were recovered from the hand-excavated section of F1.

A total of nine worked flints were recovered from L2 during the machine excavation of the trenches: two from T1 (45g), two from T2 (11g) and five from T3 (52g). The worked flint assemblage consisted of three waste flakes (one primary, two secondary), three retouched secondary flakes (one ?denticulate and two retouched notches), two flakes with areas of rough retouch or usewear (one secondary and one tertiary) and one blade with an area of usewear or retouch. The flints are generally thick and squat, appear to have been detached using a hard hammer and the retouch identified is rough and patchy. The characteristics of the flake assemblage described above are suggestive of the declining ability of flintknappers in the Bronze Age when an intensification in farming activities and the emergence of a wider range of metal tools led to an increasing decline in the quality of flintworking techniques.

Two small sherds of hand-made flint-tempered (HMF) pottery (2@9g) were also recovered from L2 in T3. Both are plain body sherds from different vessels. Although they cannot be dated with much confidence, both have oxidised surfaces which suggests they probably date to the Late Bronze Age (Stephen Benfield *pers comm.*). This date is supported by the flint assemblage which is also Late Bronze Age in character.

No evidence for road-side settlements of Roman or medieval date were identified during the evaluation. The worked flints and pottery sherds recovered are probably associated with the prehistoric occupation identified across the Priors Green development to the north of the site.

References

Note: all CAT fieldwork reports are available online in .pdf format at
<http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

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|----------------|------|--|
| CAT | 2013 | Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological trial-trenching and excavation on land at 3-5 Hamilton Road, Little Canfield, Great Dunmow, Essex, by M Baister |
| CAT Report 685 | 2013 | <i>An Archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 4 Hamilton Road, Little Canfield, Essex.</i> Client report prepared by Adam Wightman |
| ECC FAU | 2010 | Priors Green, Takeley, Phase 3 mitigation for Area C/E, by M Germany |
| ECC HE | 2013 | Brief for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation on land at 3-5 Hamilton Road, Little Canfield, Great Dunmow by R Havis of the Historic Environment team |



Plate 1: Trench 1, view west



Plate 2: Trench 2, view south



Plate 3: Trench 3, view south



Plate 4: Trench 3 stratigraphy, view west

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Essex Historic Environment Record



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Appendix 1: contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Copy of the evaluation brief issued by the ECC HE team
- 1.2 Copy of the WSI produced by CAT
- 1.3 Risk assessment

2 Site archive

- 2.1 Site digital photographic record
- 2.2 Attendance register
- 2.3 Context sheets (F1, L1-L3)
- 2.4 A4 section sheet
- 2.5 Finds register
- 2.4 Site photographic record on CD

3 Research archive

- 3.1 Monitoring (client) report

Not in wallet

The finds (1 small bag)

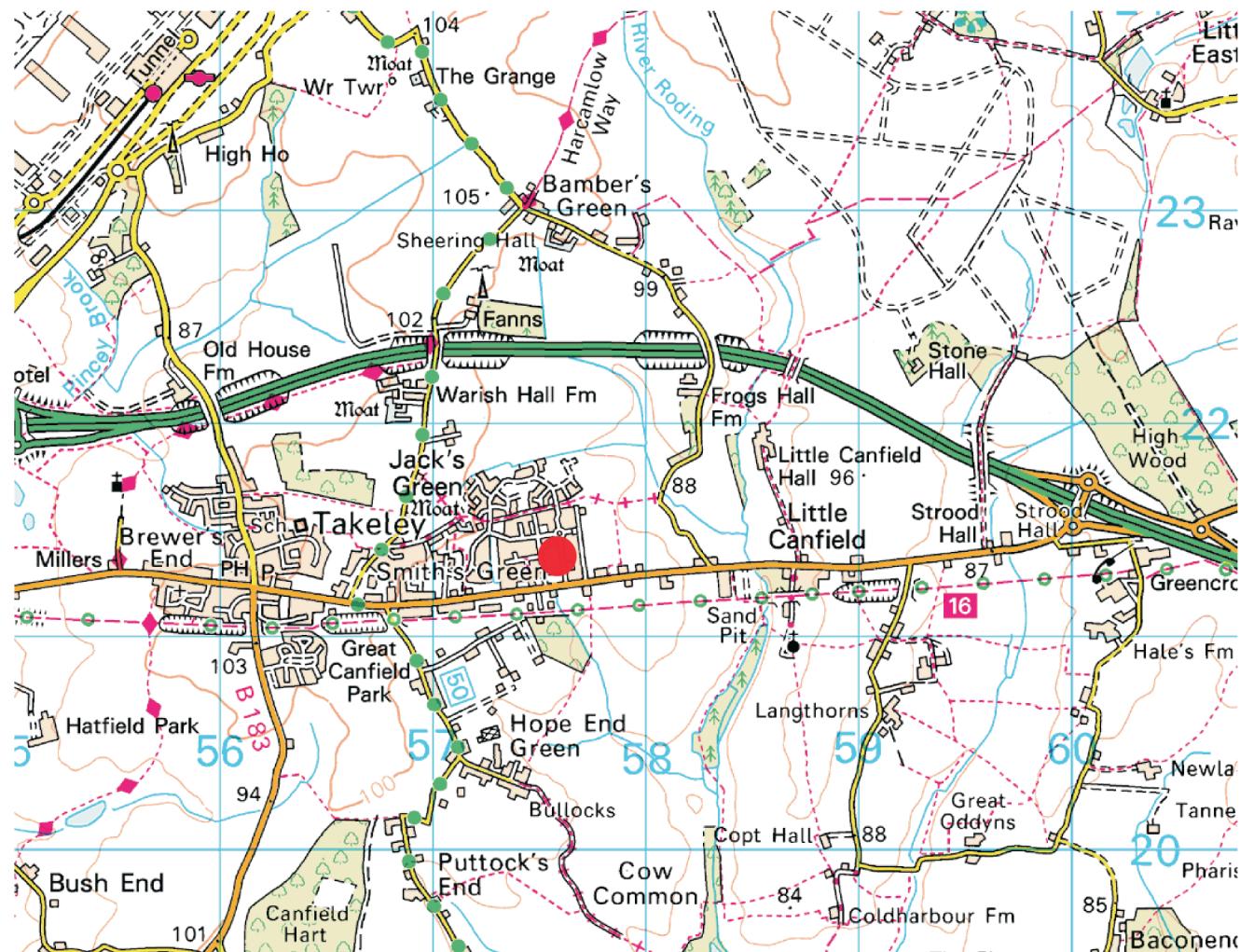


Fig 1 Site location, marked by a red dot.

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Fig 2 The results of the trial-trenching evaluation (the footprints of the proposed development blocks are shown as dashed lines).



Fig 3 Trial-trenching evaluations undertaken in the vicinity by the Colchester Archaeological Trust.

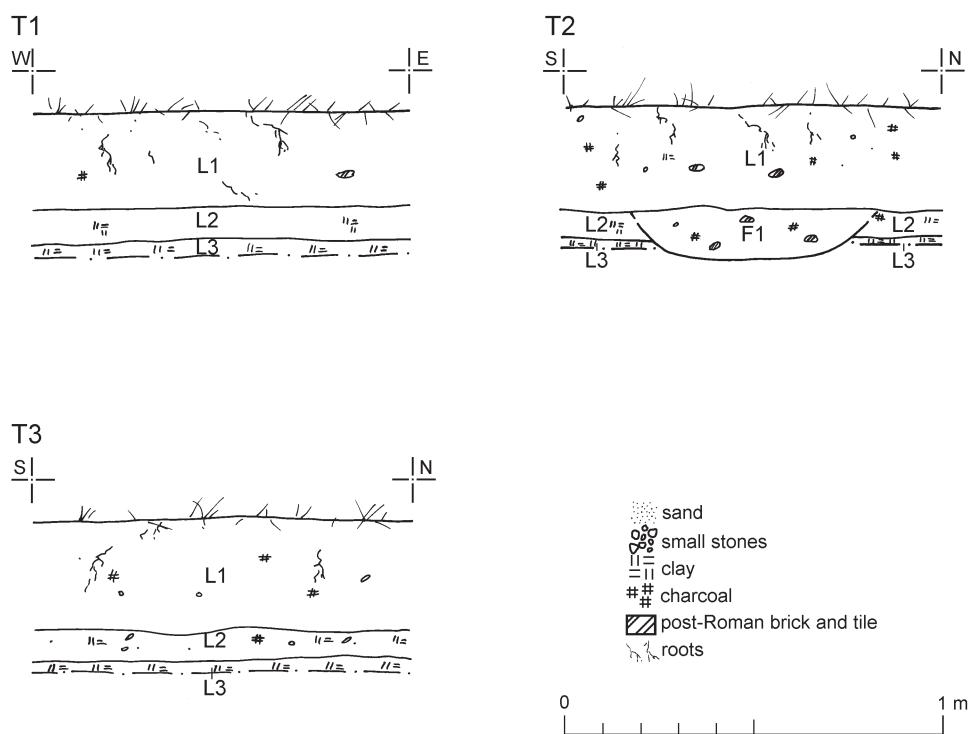


Fig 4 T1-3: Representative trench sections.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Land between 3 and 5 Hamilton Road, Little Canfield, Essex	
Parish: Little Canfield	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 5763 2135(c)	Site codes: CAT project - 13/10c Historic Environment - LCHR13 Museum accession - 2013.28
Type of work: Evaluation by trial-trenching	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 21st October 2013	Size of area investigated: c 0.5 ha
Location of curating museum: Saffron Walden	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EH&R numbers: 4697, 46298
Final report:	CAT Report 732
Periods represented:	-
Summary:	
<p>Three trial-trenches were excavated by the Colchester Archaeological Trust prior to the construction of five properties and a garage (in three blocks) on land between 3 and 5 Hamilton Road.</p> <p>One undated linear feature was identified during the evaluation and nine worked flints and two sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the subsoil. It is probable that these finds are associated with the prehistoric occupation (most likely Late Bronze Age) identified across the Priors Green development to the north of the site.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: none	
Keywords: ?Late Bronze Age pottery and worked flints	Significance: neg
Author of summary: Adam Wightman	Date of summary: October 2013