

# Archaeological trial-trenching evaluation: The Maltings, Waterside Place, Lower Sheering Road, Sheering, Essex

April 2015



**report prepared by Ben Holloway  
on behalf of Foxley Builders**

Planning reference: EPF/0360/12  
CAT project ref.: 15/03d  
NGR: TL 4911 1488  
Epping Forest Museum accession code: pending



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**CAT Report 830**  
April 2015

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## 1 Summary

*The site is on the north edge of Sheering, close to the River Stort, and in a car park adjacent to the old maltings. A cross-shaped evaluation trench (total length, 42m) positioned in the footprint a proposed new building revealed no significant archaeological remains.*

*Modern fills were revealed, and modern disturbance probably due to the removal of a concrete silo prior to the conversion of the maltings complex for housing.*



**Plate 1:** general site shot, view north-west

## 2 Introduction and planning background (Fig 1)

This is the report on the archaeological trial-trenching evaluation carried out by CAT for Foxley Builders at The Maltings, Waterside Place, Sheering, Essex in April 2015.

At the time of the evaluation, the site was open hard-standing used as car park for the new maltings apartments.

Proposed works involve the construction of a single new dwelling, garage and associated infrastructure.

Site centre is NGR TL 49118 14887.

Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS) was consulted by Epping Forest District Council in 2012 (EPF/0360/12). In response to consultation, ECCPS made the following recommendation to the LPA in line with advice given in *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012):

*" 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."*

A brief detailing the required archaeological work (an evaluation by trial-trenching) was written by Place Services officer (Maria Medlycott: ECC 2015).

The required archaeological work was commissioned by Mr Bill Gregory of Foxley Builders and was carried out on 10th April 2015, in accordance with a CAT WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) agreed with Place Services (CAT 2015). Post-excavation work was carried out in April 2015.

In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with CAT's *Policies and procedures* (CAT 2012), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a), and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b). The guidance contained in the documents *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE), *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) and *Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24) was also followed.

### **3 Archaeological background**

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

EHER shows that the proposed development lies in an area of considerable archaeological interest - a huge complex of mid 19th-century maltings and associated structures (EHER 15044) beside the railway station at Lower Sheering. The Listed main maltings building (EHER 33893) is a four-storey building with attics. At the north end there is six-storey crosswing with wide corner pilasters and a cast iron spiral staircase rising to the fifth storey on the east side. At the south end there is a conical kiln. In addition to the potential survival of historic industrial remains, the site's location within the Stort Valley and proximity to the River Stort indicates that important palaeo-environmental remains may survive.

### **4 Aim**

The aim of the evaluation was to record and establish the character, extent, date, significance and condition of any remains and deposits likely to be disturbed by the proposed works. Particular attention was paid to the potential for historic industrial remains associated with the former maltings.

### **5 Results of the evaluation** (Figs 1-3)

This section gives an archaeological summary of the evaluation trench (T1), with context and finds dating information.

Two layers were removed by machine under archaeological supervision:

- modern car park surface (tarmac and sub-base material), 100mm thick (L1);
- a deposit of imported crush material, 400mm thick (L2 - in the eastern part of the trench, L2 sealed natural geological deposits of alluvial silts and clay (L3).

In the western arm of the trench, Layer 4 appears to have been dumped in order to level the site (ground levels drop away towards the railway and the river Stort to the west). Layer 4 consists of crush (as L2) but also contains a substantial quantity of road planings, compacted presumably to create a firm consolidated surface.

Two areas of modern disturbance in the centre of the trench contained fragments of concrete and rebar (reinforcement bars), none of which was retained.

### Trench 1: summary

No significant archaeological features or deposits were revealed by this evaluation. Modern disturbance was observed in the western arm and centre of the trench, directly sealing natural deposits. Groundwater was encountered at the base of the trench.



*Plates 2, 3: shots to illustrate general site stratification*

## 6 Finds

Fragments of modern brick, concrete and other building debris were recovered from L2 and were seen compressed into natural L3. None of this material was retained.

## 7 Discussion

No significant archaeological deposits or materials were revealed by this evaluation, despite the site being adjacent to the old maltings with its industrial heritage.

In conversation, the previous owner of the site referred to a concrete silo (associated with the maltings) which stood on this site. This was removed during the conversion of the maltings into apartments and the associated car parks thirty years ago. It is therefore likely that the disturbed areas revealed by this evaluation are associated with either the silo itself or its subsequent removal.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Bill Gregory of Foxley Builders for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by B Holloway, fieldwork carried out by BH, and E Sanford. Site plans by MB and sections prepared by E Holloway. The project was monitored for the ECC Place Services by Maria Medlycott.

## 9 References

- |                                    |       |  |
|------------------------------------|-------|--|
| Colchester<br>Archaeological Trust | 2012  | <i>Policies and procedures</i>   |
| Colchester<br>Archaeological Trust | 2015  | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation on land at the Maltings, Waterside Place, Lower Sheering Road, Colchester, Essex, by Adam Wightman</i> |
| English Heritage                   | 2006  | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>  |
| EAA 14                             | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional papers 14, edited by David Gurney.                                       |
| ClfA                               | 2014a | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>   |
| ClfA                               | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>  |
| EAA 24                             | 2011  | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24, by Maria Medlycott                 |
| DCLG                               | 2012  | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>  |
| ECCPS                              | 2015  | <i>Archaeological Trial Trenching at Land at the 'Maltings', Waterside Place, Lower Sheering Road, Sheering.</i> Essex County Council Brief Medlycott, M                   |

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Datum
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by Essex County Council
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
fill	the soil filling up a hole such as a pit or ditch
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
Roman	the period from AD 43 to around AD 430

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds archive:** none

**Paper and digital archive:**

One A4 document wallet containing:

This report

Original site records and notes

ECC Brief and CAT WSI

Sundry papers

Photo index, and photos on CD

## 12 Archive deposition

The paper and 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 Epping Forest Museum under accession code : *pending* (requested 13/4/15).

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**Distribution list:**

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Maria Medlycott, Essex County Council Place Services

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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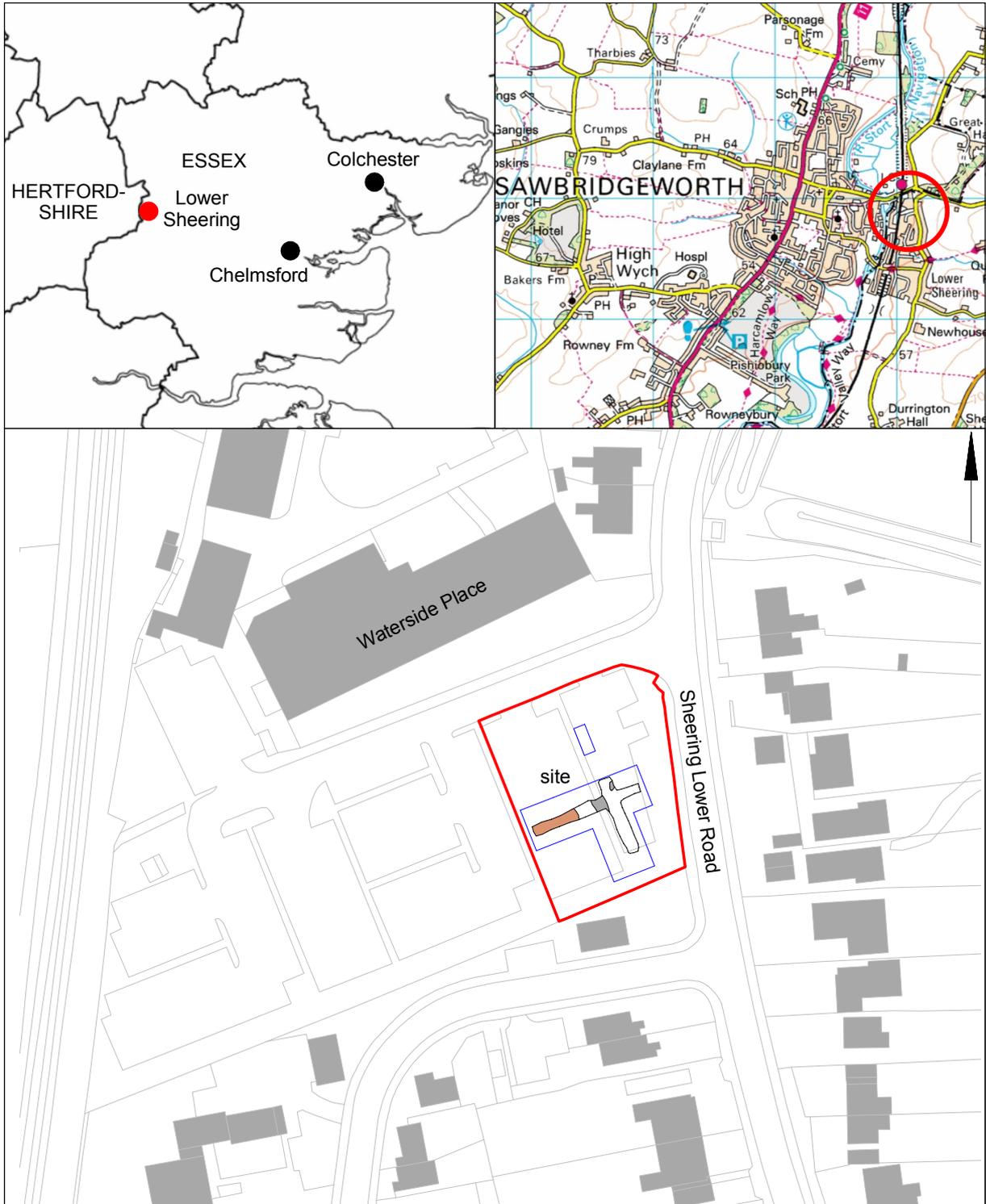
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Fig 1 Site location.



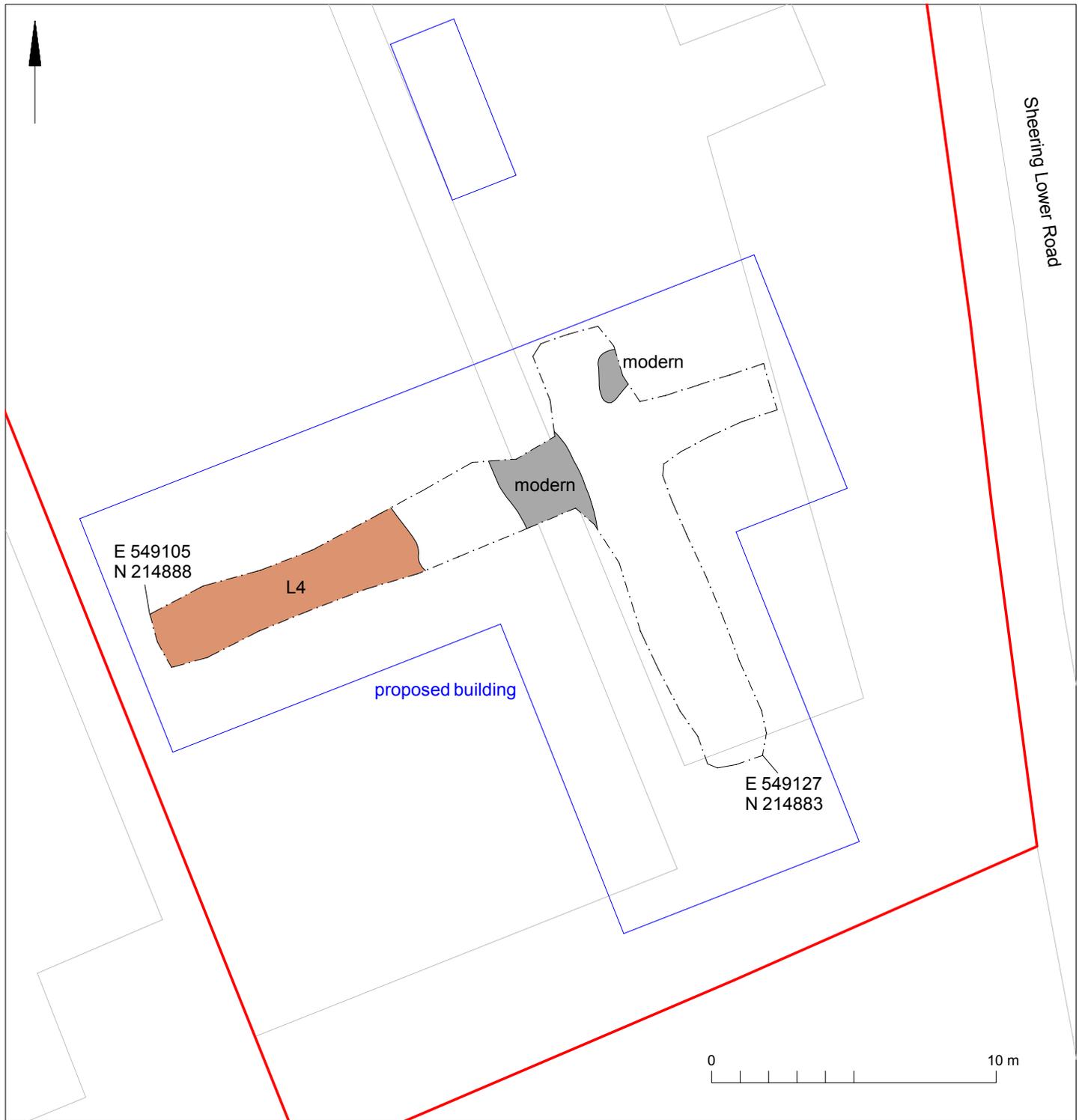


Fig 2 Evaluation results.

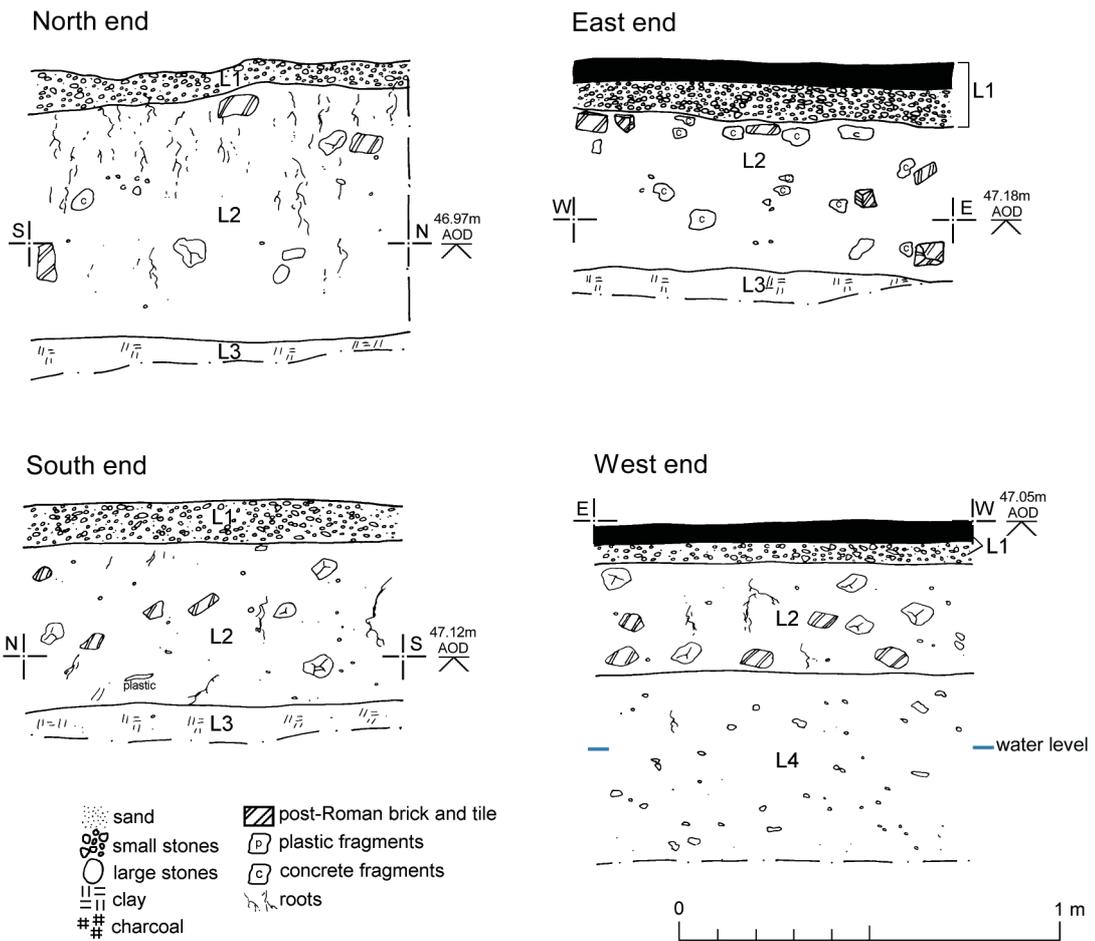


Fig 3 Representative trench sections.

## Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

### Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Land at 'The Maltings' Waterside Place, Lower Sheering Road, Sheering, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Sheering/Sawbridgeworth	<b>District:</b> Epping Forest
<b>NGR:</b> TL 49118 14887	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project code – 15/03d
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 9th April 2015	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 42m (linear)
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Epping Forest Museum accession code : pending	<b>Funding source:</b> Developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> no	<b>Related EHER number:</b> EHER 15044, 33893
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 830	
<b>Periods represented:</b> Modern	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>  <i>The site is on the north edge of Sheering, close to the River Stort, and in a car park adjacent to the old maltings. A cross-shaped evaluation trench (total length, 42m) positioned in the footprint a proposed new building revealed no significant archaeological remains.</i></p> <p><i>Modern fills were revealed, and modern disturbance probably due to the removal of a concrete silo prior to the conversion of the maltings complex for housing.</i></p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> None	
<b>ECC Monitor:</b> Maria Medlycott	
<b>Keywords:</b> Modern	<b>Significance:</b> neg
<b>Author of summary:</b> Ben Holloway	<b>Date of summary:</b> April 2015