

Archaeological evaluation and excavation: land east of 'Langford Lee', Maldon Road, Langford, Essex

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on behalf of Granville Developments

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Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	2
4	Evaluation results	3
5	Finds, <i>by S Benfield</i>	8
6	Description of excavation, and site discussion	11
7	Acknowledgements	14
8	References	14
9	Glossary and abbreviations	15
10	Contents of archive	15
11	Archive deposition	15
	Figures	after p 16
	EHER summary sheet	

List of figures

Fig 1	Site location
Fig 2	Combined interpretation of evaluation and excavation
Fig 3	T1 - T8: detailed trench plan of western side of site
Fig 4	Detailed excavation plan
Fig 5	F5-6, F8-9, F11, F13, F15-20: sections
Fig 6	F21-23, F25, F27-9: sections
Fig 7	Prehistoric pottery

List of plates

Front cover:	view of evaluation and excavation site	
Plate 1:	cropmarks of enclosures and burial sites to the NE of Langford Lee	2
Plate 2:	T6: view NE of N end of T6, with ditch F12	4
Plate 3:	T7: general shot of T7, view west	5
Plate 4:	View south across excavated area. Features under excavation are F27-9	11
Plate 5:	extract from Ordnance Survey 1960, showing missing field boundary	13

1 Summary

This site, an open paddock on the northern side of Maldon Road, Langford, is 100m SW of an extensive area of prehistoric and Roman-period cropmarks, representing burial sites, enclosures, field boundaries and trackways.

Eight evaluation trenches (total length 140m) were positioned across the site in advance of residential development. A subsequent excavation was conducted in the north-eastern corner of the site.

Multi-period archaeological remains were identified in both the evaluation and excavation stages. There were two Neolithic features (a ditch and a post-hole), one Roman ditch, nine medieval features (five pits and four ditches) and one modern field ditch (thirteen features were undated).

Of particular interest was an assemblage of middle Neolithic Peterborough Ware, associated with a ditch and post-hole. This may be from a disturbed burial or other ritual deposit. However, given the quantity of residual finds on this site, it is possible that the Neolithic sherds are residual in a later (medieval?) context.

The earliest landscape feature was a Roman ditch. Four ditches indicate increased landscape activity in the medieval period. There were five medieval pits, though the small number of medieval sherds from these pits (eight) may indicate that medieval settlement took place adjacent to this site, rather than on it. The medieval (and perhaps the Roman?) pottery may have been brought in as manure scatter.

One modern ditch is very close to the line of a modern field boundary (now grubbed-out) which was shown by the Ordnance Survey as recently as 1960.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological evaluation and excavation on land east of 'Langford Lee', Maldon Road, Langford, Essex, carried out by CAT in two phases (evaluation 14th-15th April, excavation 21st-22nd April 2015). The work was commissioned by Richard Horley of John Finch partnership on behalf of Granville Developments, in advance of construction of two new dwellings and an access road.

The site, an open grass paddock, is centred at TL 8401 0895.

ECC Historic Environment Team was consulted by Maldon District Council in December 2014 (MAL/14/01069). In response to consultation, Maria Medlycott of ECCHET 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."

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological evaluation* (ECC 2015) detailing the required archaeological work, and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to brief and agreed with ECCHET (CAT 2015). In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England (EAA 14)*, and *Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England (EAA 24)*. This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*, and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA

2014a, b).

3 Archaeological background

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



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Plate 1: cropmark enclosures and burial sites to the north-east of Langford Lee (red circle). From Wallis and Waughman 1998, fig 129.

The EHER shows that the proposed development site is adjacent to a known site of archaeological interest. This comprises a multi-period cropmark complex (EHER 7870-1). Excavation on the northern part of this complex in March-April 1996 identified Late Neolithic and Middle Bronze Age funerary monuments, and Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age/Roman enclosures, field boundaries and trackways, thus confirming the survival of multi-period remains below-ground. To the immediate east of the proposed development is the Listed Building of Station Bridge Cottage and Garden House (EHER 38969) which is 17th century in origin, to the west is the medieval settlement of Langford (O'Connor 2006). The site therefore has considerable potential for significant surviving archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic period onwards

4 Evaluation results (Figs 2 - 7)

An archaeological summary of each evaluation trench with a tabulation of context and finds dating information follows below. The excavated area is described and discussed below in Section 6.

The evaluation trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator, through two layers: modern topsoil 250mm thick (L1), which sealed an accumulation of silt/clay 150mm thick (L2). L2 sealed natural boulder clay with occasional patches of gravel (L3), in whose surface the archaeological features were visible.

Twelve features were identified, ranging in date from prehistoric (Neolithic/EBA) to Roman medieval, and modern. They include a post-hole (F10) and gullies or ditches (F1- F9 and F11, F12).

Trench 1: summary

T1, located in the SE corner of the site, contained a gully F1. This was probably a drainage feature or landscape boundary. The fill contained a sherd of medieval pottery. It is noticeable that this ditch aligns with F5 in T5, and with F13 on the excavated site.

Trench 1 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F1	gully	medieval pottery	med 13-14

Trench 2: summary

T2, located in the south-western corner of the site, contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 3: summary

T3, on the western site edge, contained two ditches, F2 and F3. Both are probably field boundaries. F2 contained Roman CBM. It was also seen in T4 to the east, where it is numbered F4 (and dated to the Neolithic period). Although F3 is undated in T3

Like T2, T3 had a noticeable deposit of apparent alluvial material at its west end. This may represent a now in-filled (or levelled) valley associated with the River Blackwater to the SW.

Trench 3 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F2	ditch	Roman CBM	Roman
F3	ditch	-	undated

Trench 4: summary

T4, in the centre of the site, contained a ditch F4, which appears to be a continuation of F2 in T3. F4 contained a prehistoric rim, dated between Neolithic and EIA (given the Roman CBM in T3, this must be residual).

Trench 4 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F4	ditch	prehistoric sherd, Neo-EIA	residual prehistoric in Roman feature

Trench 5: summary

T5, central on the eastern site edge, contained three ditches: F5, aligned N-S, F6 and F7, both aligned SW-NE. F6 and F7 are immediately adjacent, and may be a double ditch, or a ditch and its recut (it was not possible to determine whether they were contemporary, or whether one cut the other).

F5 is undated in T5. However, it appears to be directly in line with F13 on the excavated site. F5 may therefore be Roman. Both F6 and F7 are dated by medieval sherds, and are probably field boundaries.

Trench 5 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F5	ditch	--	undated - medieval
F6	ditch	medieval pottery	medieval 13th-14th
F7	ditch	medieval pottery	medieval 13th-14th

Trench 6: summary

T6, in the north-eastern corner of the site, contained an isolated and undated post-hole F10, and two ditches F11 and F12.

Ditch F11 is undated, and does not align with any other (dated) feature on this site.

Ditch F12 contained a good group of Neolithic pottery (20 sherds, 284g). In evaluation, this was suspected to be part of a ring ditch (prehistoric house site?), hence the requirement that an area be excavated around it and to its north. The excavation, however, showed it was not a ring-ditch. Because of the large number of residual finds on this site, it is possible that F12 is actually medieval (like three adjacent pits F27-9) and that the Neolithic pottery is residual.



Plate 2: View of north end of T6, with ditch F12

Trench 6 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F10	post-hole	--	undated
F11	ditch	--	undated
F12	ditch	Neolithic pottery	Late Neolithic /EBA

Trench 7: summary

T7, central on the northern site edge, contained two parallel ditches, F8 and F9, both aligned N-S. Whereas F8 only contained a piece of fired clay, F9 is dated by 19th-20th century brick, and post-medieval/modern peg-tile.

Although it is conventional to interpret these ditches as recent field boundaries, it is curious that they did not cross T4, to the south.



Plate 3: General shot of T7, view W

Trench 7 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F8	ditch	fired clay	modern?
F9	ditch	brick, peg-tile	modern

Trench 8: summary

T8, in the north-western corner of the site, contained no archaeological deposits or features.

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Introduction

Small quantities pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), worked flint and 'burnt' flints were recovered from features during an evaluation and during further exploratory excavation. The more closely-dated finds are of Middle Neolithic, Roman, medieval, and post-medieval to modern date. Finds types are listed in Table 1, and all finds are listed and described by finds number for each context in Table 5. The prehistoric pottery fabrics refer to Brown (1988) and the Roman and medieval pottery fabrics refer to the Colchester Roman and post-Roman pottery type series (*CAR 10*, *CAR 7*).

Finds type	no.	wt (g)
Pottery	43	475
Ceramic building material (CBM)	6	1394
Fired clay	7	90
Flint	2	87
Heat altered (burnt) stone	3	8

Table 1. Type and quantities of bulk finds

Finds by period

Prehistoric

The prehistoric finds consist of pottery, worked flint and heat-altered (burnt) flints. A significant proportion of the pottery can be dated to the middle Neolithic. The middle Neolithic Peterborough ware pottery was kindly examined by Nigel Brown and his comments have been incorporated into the text.

Pottery which can be dated to the prehistoric period comprises 24 sherds (total weight 319 g). The great majority is flint-tempered, commonly with poorly sorted small-large flint fragments (Table 2). There is one rim sherd but a significant number of the sherds are decorated.

Fabric code	Fabric description	no.	Wt/g
C	Flint small-medium common, with occasional large flint	4	33
D	Flint small-large, common, poorly sorted	18	273
E	Flint and sand-temper	2	12
H	Sand-temper, moderate	1	1
<i>Total</i>		24	319

Table 2 Prehistoric pottery by fabric type

The earliest closely-dated pottery is a group of Peterborough ware sherds from ditch F12 (10). This pottery tradition dates to the middle Neolithic and is broadly current during the later 4th millennium to the mid 3rd millennium (c 3500-2500 BC) (Gibson 2002, 78). One sherd is from the rim of a bowl decorated with a herringbone pattern on the rim top (Fig 7.1). A second small rim sherd with similar decoration is probably part of the same vessel. There is also a group of sherds from a bowl with an oxidised surface which are decorated with horizontal lines formed from close set small incisions or finger-nail impressions (Fig 7.2). A few other sherds from the context have finger-tip/-nail impressions. All of the sherds have some abrasion, but this varies from clear abrasion on one or two sherds to moderate or slight on others. The group of sherds which form part of the decorated body of a bowl and which exhibit little or only moderate abrasion, suggest that some at least of the pottery did not have a long depositional history or did not have a long period of exposure before entering the ditch. This might suggest that the pottery contains some older elements, possibly representing a collection of sherds of differing ages since breakage. Two finger-tip/nail decorated sherds from other contexts, one from F29 (21) and another from F15 (12), are probably also Neolithic Peterborough ware.

The Peterborough ware from F12 can be compared with that from an assemblage recovered from the Springfield Cursus (Chelmsford) where the use of close set finger-nail impressions to produce lines on sherds is also noted (Brown 2001, 123) - although the lines on the sherds here appear to form horizontal bands.

In addition there is a flint-tempered sherd from F4 (4) which is of Neolithic or Bronze Age date and two, small, abraded sherds, one from F15 (12) and another from F27 (19) which can be broadly dated as prehistoric.

Illustrated

Fig 7.1 Rim from a Peterborough ware bowl with herringbone decoration of the rim top (Fabric D, weight 18 g).

Fig 7.2 Two joining bodysherds (lower body) from a Peterborough ware bowl with an oxidised surface and decorated with bands of horizontal lines formed from close set small incisions or finger-nail impressions (Fabric D) (note-two other moderately large, non-joining sherds from same vessel not illustrated - total weight of all sherds 138 g)

Two worked flints were recovered, both from L1. These are a snapped flint flake which has a possible small notch on one edge (15) and a core or more probably a tool of convenience made on a flint pebble with multiple flake removals along both sides of one edge (1). The flints are not closely-dated but it can be noted that relatively crude utilised pieces or tools of convenience appear to be more common in the later prehistoric period (Bronze Age-Iron Age) than earlier.

A few small pieces of heat-altered (burnt) flint are also likely to date to the prehistoric period. These were recovered from F13 (13) & F19 (27).

Roman

Small quantities of Roman pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered. While not closely-dated, overall the pottery suggests a Mid-Late Roman date rather than earlier. The pottery fabrics and quantity of each fabric type are listed in Table 3.

Fabric code	Fabric description	wt/g
BACG	Central Gaulish plain samian	1
GX	Other coarse wares, principally locally produced grey wares	29
HD	Shell-tempered ware	9
	<i>Total</i>	39

Table 3 Roman pottery fabric quantities

The Roman pottery consists of one small sherd of very abraded 2nd century samian from F27 (19), greyware sherds (including two abraded rim sherds which are probably from a large bowl) from F13 (11), F27 (19) & L1 (1) and sherds of shell-tempered ware from F27 (19). Although difficult to date closely the greyware bowl is probably of Mid-late Roman date and the shell-tempered ware is probably of Late Roman (4th century) date.

Two pieces of Roman brick or tile were recovered from F2 (3) & F21 (16).

Medieval

Finds which can be closely-dated to the medieval period consist of sherds of pottery. The pottery fabrics and quantity of each fabric type are listed in Table 4.

Fabric code	Fabric description	wt/g
13	Early medieval sandy wares	40
20	Medieval sandy greywares/coarsewares (general)	77
	<i>Total</i>	<i>117</i>

Table 4 Medieval pottery fabric quantities

There is a small quantity of early medieval sandy ware sherds which date to the 11th-12th century. These were recovered from F29 (21) & F28 (20) and include rims sherds from two cooking pots. Sherds of later dated medieval greywares/coarsewares, which can be dated to the period of the late 12th/13th-14th century, come from features F1 (2), F6 (5), F7 (6), F17 (14), F22 (17) & F27 (19). All of these sherds are body sherds.

Late medieval/post-medieval and modern

Pieces of flat, thin tile, identified as peg-tiles, were recovered from F9 (8) and L1 (1). These can be broadly dated as late medieval to post-medieval as this type of tile was not common, outside of important buildings such as churches or manorial buildings, prior to the late 13th century (Ryan & Andrews 1993, 97).

A large piece of red brick dating to the 19th-20th century was recovered from F9 (8).

Finds discussion

The more closely-dated of the finds show activity on the site in the middle Neolithic, Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern period. The largest quintiles of finds are from the middle Neolithic, Roman & medieval period.

Among the finds assemblage probably the most significant find are the sherds of Neolithic Peterborough ware from ditch F12 (10) which are current during the period c 3500-2500 BC. These include a decorated rim sherd from a bowl and decorated body sherds, some of which share decorative traits seen on Peterborough pottery from the Cursus at Springfield (Chelmsford). The sherds exhibit various states of abrasion. However, the presence of moderately large sherds, including joining body sherds from one pot with only moderate abrasion to the edges, shows clearly that the pottery represents depositional activity on the site during the middle Neolithic and that some at least does not appear to have had any significant history before entering the ditch context. The difference in abrasion within the assemblage may indicate the pottery is a collection of sherds with different depositional histories or of different ages since breakage.

The Roman and medieval sherds are mostly abraded and of moderate to small size. The Roman finds suggest an area marginal to settlement and may have arrived on the area primarily in manure scatter. While not closely-dated, the Roman pottery indicates activity here in the Mid-late Roman period and probably the Late Roman period. The quantity of medieval pottery is not large but may indicate an area close to occupation. The types of medieval pottery recovered suggest a period of continued activity from the early medieval period of the 11th-12th century through the late 12th/13th-14th century.

Later dated finds are few in number, but a few pieces of peg-tiles, probably introduced as manure scatter, indicate use of the area in the late medieval or possibly more likely in the post-medieval period. There is a single find of modern date which is a large piece of a 19th-20th century red brick.

ctxt no.	T	find no	find type	finds description	fabric code	form	no	wt/g	period/ spot date
F001	T1	2	pot	Small abraded dark greyware sherd – probably medieval coarseware	20		1	3	13-14C
F002	T3	3	CBM	Brownish-orange, abraded, 28 mm thick		RBT	1	269	Rom
F004	T4	4	pot	Flint-tempered, oxidised surfaces	C		1	15	Neo/BA-EIA
F006	T5	5	pot	Base sherd in sandy greyware, appears to be medieval coarseware, probably a cooking pot	20		1	46	13-14C
F007	T5	6	pot	Small sherd, probably medieval coarseware	20		1	5	13-14C
F008	T7	7	F clay	Soft, orange sandy clay, abraded			1	9	
F009	T7	8	CBM	Piece from a red brick 65 mm thick		BR	1	1045	19-20C
F009	T7	8	CBM	Orange tile piece 10-12 mm thick		PT	2	39	Med/p-med
F009	T7	9	stone	Piece from a naturally rounded stone (NR)			1	80	
F012	T6	10	pot	Decorated bowl rim, herringbone pattern, Peterborough ware, second (similar) small rim sherd	D		2	18	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	Four sherds, oxidised surface, same pot (2 join), decorated with horizontal lines made up of short indentations, Peterborough ware	D		4	138	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	Body sherd, oxidised surface, decorated with fine horizontal lines, Peterborough ware	D		1	6	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	sherds with oxidised surface, some flint-temper & spaced finger-tip decoration, Peterborough ware	C		3	18	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	Flint-tempered sherds, most with oxidised surface, Peterborough ware	D		10	104	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F013	ex	11	pot	Greyware rim, abraded (surface find) probably same rim as (19)	GX		1	9	Rom
F013	ex	13	B stone	Small piece of white, heat crazed flint			1	5	preh
F015	ex	12	pot	Sand with sparse flint-temper, abraded surface	E		1	6	Later prehistoric?
F015	ex	12	pot	Abraded sherd with oxidised surface, some flint-temper & spaced finger-tip decoration, probably Peterborough	E		1	6	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)

ctxt no.	T	find no	find type	finds description	fabric code	form	no	wt/g	period/ spot date
				ware					
F017	ex	14	pot	Grey surfaces sandy medieval coarseware	20		1	7	13-14C
F021	ex	16	CBM	Abraded orange piece of brick/tile, 25+ mm thick, probably Roman		RBT	1	14	Rom
F029	ex	21	pot	Neolithic decorated sherd, dark fabric with pattern of indentations, probably finger tip impressions, probably Peterborough ware	D		1	7	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F021	ex	21	pot	Early medieval cooking pot rim, dark sandy fabric	13		1	13	11-12C
F022	ex	17	pot	Small, abraded sandy greyware(?) sherds/ fragments, probably medieval	20		2	3	13-14C
F022	ex	18	F clay	Sandy fabric with some clear quartz, two wattle voids in one face, no original surface			1	53	
F027	ex	19	pot	Samian, very abraded, Central Gaul	BACG		1	1	E/M-L2C
F027	ex	19	pot	Shell-tempered, shell dissolved leaving voids, wheel made with a soft fabric, Roman rather than medieval	HD		2	9	Rom (4C?)
F027	ex	19	pot	Greyware rim, abraded (surface find) probably same rim as (11) + one other sherd	GX		2	19	Rom
F027	ex	19	pot	Medieval coarseware	20		1	13	13-14C
F027	ex	19	pot	Abraded soft, black sandy sherd, probably prehistoric, possibly IA	H		1	1	preh
F027	ex	19	B stone	Two small pieces of white, heat crazed flint			2	3	preh
F027	ex	19	F clay	Five abraded pieces, mostly sandy & orange-buff			5	28	
F028	ex	20	pot	Rim from a cooking pot in gritty greyware	13		1	8	11-12C
F028	ex	20	pot	Body sherds with oxidised surfaces	13		3	19	11-12C
L001		15	flint	Pebble core or 'tool of convenience' with multiple flake removals on both sides of one edge leaving a ridge along that side, cortex on lower half with one flake removal from base			1	84	
L001	T1	1	CBM	Orange tile piece 13-14 mm thick		PT	1	27	Med/ p-med
L001	T1	1	flint	Thin flake with earlier flaking scars, snapped with proximal end missing, some edge damage/use wear and possible small notch			1	3	Neo-BA
L001	T1	1	pot	Small sherd of wheel-turned sandy greyware probably Roman	GX		1	1	Rom

Table 5 Finds by context (NR=not retained)

6 Description of excavated area, and site discussion (Figs 2-3)



Plate 4: view south across excavated area. Features under excavation (centre) are F27-28.

Introduction to the excavation (Fig 4)

Following the evaluation trenching, ECC Place Services requested the excavation of the footprint of 'plot 2', in the north-eastern corner of the site. An area of 170m² was opened up, with the north end of T6 in the centre of the southern edge (so that it could be established whether or not the slightly curving F12 was the southern edge of a ring-ditch - it was not, as it happens).

The excavation exposed seventeen new features: 2 gullies/ditches, 3 large pits, seven pits and five post-holes, tabulated here:

Context no	context type	dated finds	notes	period
F13	gully	Roman Greyware rim, crossfit with rim (19)	same as F5 in T5 and F1 in T1. Parallel with F17	medieval with residual Roman
F14	pit	-	west of F14	undated
F15	post-hole	abraded sherds, one probably Peterborough ware		middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F16	post-hole	-	undated, but next to F16 so probably same date	
F17	gully	sandy medieval coarseware	parallel with F13. Cut by F29.	medieval 13-14C
F18	post-hole		undated, paired with F19	undated
F19	post-		undated, paired with	undated

Context no	context type	dated finds	notes	period
	hole		F18	
F20	post-hole		in cluster at north site edge with F22-25.	
F21	small pit	residual Roman brick/tile. Early medieval cooking pot rim in dark sandy fabric	in cluster at north site edge with F20, F22-25. Cuts F22	11-12C, with residual Roman
F22	pit	17: Small, abraded sandy greyware probably medieval 18: Fired clay, two wattle voids in one face, no original surface	in cluster at north site edge with F20-21, F23-25. Cut by F21	13-14C
F23	pit	-	in cluster at north site edge with F20-22, F24-25.	undated
F24	pit	-	in cluster at north site edge with F20-4, F25.	undated
F25	pit	-	in cluster at north site edge with F20-24.	undated
F26	small pit	-		undated
F27	large pit	Residual Samian and Roman greyware. Abraded sherd, probably prehistoric, possibly IA. Burnt flint (prehistoric?) Undated Fired clay Medieval coarseware (13-14C)	Cuts F29, uncertain relationship with F28	medieval with residual prehistoric and Roman
F28	large pit	medieval rim and body sherds	cuts F12. Uncertain relationship with F27	11-12C
F29	large pit	Neolithic decorated sherd, with pattern of indentations, prob Peterborough ware	cut by F27.	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)

Results of excavation, and site discussion

There are Middle Neolithic, Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds from this site, many of them residual in later contexts. This implies that later periods of activity have led to the disturbance of earlier contexts. There are nine undated features.

Prehistoric

There was undoubtedly prehistoric (Neolithic) activity here, indicated principally by the Peterborough ware, current *circa* 3500-2500 BC. However, only two features contained exclusively prehistoric finds. These were ditch F12 (intercepted by evaluation T6 and thought to be a ring-ditch - however, the excavation showed this was not the case), and post-hole F15.

Stephen Benfield thinks the large size and unabraded nature of sherds from ditch F12 implies that the pottery 'does not appear to have had any significant history before entering the ditch'. This means that the sherds were probably not in circulation on a domestic site, and may be derived from a burial or other ritual deposit. However, because of the large number of residual finds on this site, it is possible that F12 is actually medieval (like three adjacent pits F27-9) and that the Neolithic pottery is residual.

There are other prehistoric sherds from the evaluation and excavation (all residual in later contexts), evaluation T4, F4 (1 sherd, 15g), and in excavation-stage pits F27 (1,2 g) and F29 (1, 7g). These residual sherds were in much smaller quantities than the relatively large group from ditch F12 (18 sherds, 266g).

Roman

The evidence for Roman-period activity is similar to that of the prehistoric period, in that some finds are in contemporary features, and some are residual. The only (apparently) Roman-period feature is ditch F4. It is aligned WSW-ESE, which matches some elements of the cropmark landscape shown on Plate 1 above. Other Roman-period material is residual in medieval gully F13, and in medieval pits F21 and F27.

Medieval

The majority of site features are of medieval date. Two ditches, perhaps not parallel enough to be considered a trackway, are the most prominent feature- F17 (dated to 13th-14th century), and F13. Although F13 is undated in the excavated area, it aligns very well with both undated F5 (T5), and with F1 (T1) which also contains 13th-14th-century pottery. All three ditches may be part of the same field boundary.

Apart from the field ditch, there is a cluster of medieval pits (F27-29) in the south-centre of the site. These pits do not contain large quantities of medieval finds (5 sherds, 40g), so it is not certain that domestic occupation was nearby. The medieval dating is partly stratigraphical - F28 (containing medieval pottery) cut F27 (containing residual Neolithic pottery), which in turn cut gully F17 (which contained medieval pottery).

The proximity to two medieval pits (F21, F22) of four undated features on the northern site edge (F20, F23-5) means the latter may be medieval.

Post-medieval/modern

F9 containing modern brick may be the modern field boundary (now missing), shown on the 1920 Ordnance Survey (plate 5, below). Adjacent, undated ditch F8 may be contemporary.



Plate 5: extract from OS 1960, showing now-missing field boundary crossing site.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Granville Developments for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by B Holloway, fieldwork carried out by BH and N Rayner. Stephen Benfield thanks Nigel Brown for help with identifying the prehistoric pottery.

The project was monitored for the ECC Place Services by Maria Medlycott.

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Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

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9 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from <i>circa</i> 2,500 - 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to <i>circa</i> AD1500/1530
modern	period from <i>c</i> AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
Neolithic	period from <i>circa</i> 4,500 BC to 2,500 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to <i>c</i> AD1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, eg, a Roman coin in a modern pit
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds

1 museum box containing all finds

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 833)

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, Trench record sheet)

ECC Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Site digital photographic log, site photographic record on CD

Attendance register: Benchmark data: Risk assessment

11 Archive deposition

The archive (paper and finds) is currently held by CAT (Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester), but will be deposited at Colchester Museum (accession 2015.40).

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1 Summary

This site, an open paddock on the northern side of Maldon Road, Langford, is 100m SW of an extensive area of prehistoric and Roman-period cropmarks, representing burial sites, enclosures, field boundaries and trackways.

Eight evaluation trenches (total length 140m) were positioned across the site in advance of residential development. A subsequent excavation was conducted in the north-eastern corner of the site.

Multi-period archaeological remains were identified in both the evaluation and excavation stages. There were two Neolithic features (a ditch and a post-hole), one Roman ditch, nine medieval features (five pits and four ditches) and one modern field ditch (thirteen features were undated).

Of particular interest was an assemblage of middle Neolithic Peterborough Ware, associated with a ditch and post-hole. This may be from a disturbed burial or other ritual deposit. However, given the quantity of residual finds on this site, it is possible that the Neolithic sherds are residual in a later (medieval?) context.

The earliest landscape feature was a Roman ditch. Four ditches indicate increased landscape activity in the medieval period. There were five medieval pits, though the small number of medieval sherds from these pits (eight) may indicate that medieval settlement took place adjacent to this site, rather than on it. The medieval (and perhaps the Roman?) pottery may have been brought in as manure scatter.

One modern ditch is very close to the line of a modern field boundary (now grubbed-out) which was shown by the Ordnance Survey as recently as 1960.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological evaluation and excavation on land east of 'Langford Lee', Maldon Road, Langford, Essex, carried out by CAT in two phases (evaluation 14th-15th April, excavation 21st-22nd April 2015). The work was commissioned by Richard Horley of John Finch partnership on behalf of Granville Developments, in advance of construction of two new dwellings and an access road.

The site, an open grass paddock, is centred at TL 8401 0895.

ECC Historic Environment Team was consulted by Maldon District Council in December 2014 (MAL/14/01069). In response to consultation, Maria Medlycott of ECCHET 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."

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological evaluation* (ECC 2015) detailing the required archaeological work, and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to brief and agreed with ECCHET (CAT 2015). In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England (EAA 14)*, and *Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England (EAA 24)*. This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation*, and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA

2014a, b).

3 Archaeological background

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



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Plate 1: cropmark enclosures and burial sites to the north-east of Langford Lee (red circle). From Wallis and Waughman 1998, fig 129.

The EHER shows that the proposed development site is adjacent to a known site of archaeological interest. This comprises a multi-period cropmark complex (EHER 7870-1). Excavation on the northern part of this complex in March-April 1996 identified Late Neolithic and Middle Bronze Age funerary monuments, and Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age/Roman enclosures, field boundaries and trackways, thus confirming the survival of multi-period remains below-ground. To the immediate east of the proposed development is the Listed Building of Station Bridge Cottage and Garden House (EHER 38969) which is 17th century in origin, to the west is the medieval settlement of Langford (O'Connor 2006). The site therefore has considerable potential for significant surviving archaeological remains dating from the Neolithic period onwards

4 Evaluation results (Figs 2 - 7)

An archaeological summary of each evaluation trench with a tabulation of context and finds dating information follows below. The excavated area is described and discussed below in Section 6.

The evaluation trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator, through two layers: modern topsoil 250mm thick (L1), which sealed an accumulation of silt/clay 150mm thick (L2). L2 sealed natural boulder clay with occasional patches of gravel (L3), in whose surface the archaeological features were visible.

Twelve features were identified, ranging in date from prehistoric (Neolithic/EBA) to Roman medieval, and modern. They include a post-hole (F10) and gullies or ditches (F1- F9 and F11, F12).

Trench 1: summary

T1, located in the SE corner of the site, contained a gully F1. This was probably a drainage feature or landscape boundary. The fill contained a sherd of medieval pottery. It is noticeable that this ditch aligns with F5 in T5, and with F13 on the excavated site.

Trench 1 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F1	gully	medieval pottery	med 13-14

Trench 2: summary

T2, located in the south-western corner of the site, contained no archaeological features or finds.

Trench 3: summary

T3, on the western site edge, contained two ditches, F2 and F3. Both are probably field boundaries. F2 contained Roman CBM. It was also seen in T4 to the east, where it is numbered F4 (and dated to the Neolithic period). Although F3 is undated in T3

Like T2, T3 had a noticeable deposit of apparent alluvial material at its west end. This may represent a now in-filled (or levelled) valley associated with the River Blackwater to the SW.

Trench 3 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F2	ditch	Roman CBM	Roman
F3	ditch	-	undated

Trench 4: summary

T4, in the centre of the site, contained a ditch F4, which appears to be a continuation of F2 in T3. F4 contained a prehistoric rim, dated between Neolithic and EIA (given the Roman CBM in T3, this must be residual).

Trench 4 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F4	ditch	prehistoric sherd, Neo-EIA	residual prehistoric in Roman feature

Trench 5: summary

T5, central on the eastern site edge, contained three ditches: F5, aligned N-S, F6 and F7, both aligned SW-NE. F6 and F7 are immediately adjacent, and may be a double ditch, or a ditch and its recut (it was not possible to determine whether they were contemporary, or whether one cut the other).

F5 is undated in T5. However, it appears to be directly in line with F13 on the excavated site. F5 may therefore be Roman. Both F6 and F7 are dated by medieval sherds, and are probably field boundaries.

Trench 5 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F5	ditch	--	undated - medieval
F6	ditch	medieval pottery	medieval 13th-14th
F7	ditch	medieval pottery	medieval 13th-14th

Trench 6: summary

T6, in the north-eastern corner of the site, contained an isolated and undated post-hole F10, and two ditches F11 and F12.

Ditch F11 is undated, and does not align with any other (dated) feature on this site.

Ditch F12 contained a good group of Neolithic pottery (20 sherds, 284g). In evaluation, this was suspected to be part of a ring ditch (prehistoric house site?), hence the requirement that an area be excavated around it and to its north. The excavation, however, showed it was not a ring-ditch. Because of the large number of residual finds on this site, it is possible that F12 is actually medieval (like three adjacent pits F27-9) and that the Neolithic pottery is residual.



Plate 2: View of north end of T6, with ditch F12

Trench 6 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F10	post-hole	--	undated
F11	ditch	--	undated
F12	ditch	Neolithic pottery	Late Neolithic /EBA

Trench 7: summary

T7, central on the northern site edge, contained two parallel ditches, F8 and F9, both aligned N-S. Whereas F8 only contained a piece of fired clay, F9 is dated by 19th-20th century brick, and post-medieval/modern peg-tile.

Although it is conventional to interpret these ditches as recent field boundaries, it is curious that they did not cross T4, to the south.



Plate 3: General shot of T7, view W

Trench 7 – contexts and dating

Feature no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F8	ditch	fired clay	modern?
F9	ditch	brick, peg-tile	modern

Trench 8: summary

T8, in the north-western corner of the site, contained no archaeological deposits or features.

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Introduction

Small quantities pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), worked flint and 'burnt' flints were recovered from features during an evaluation and during further exploratory excavation. The more closely-dated finds are of Middle Neolithic, Roman, medieval, and post-medieval to modern date. Finds types are listed in Table 1, and all finds are listed and described by finds number for each context in Table 5. The prehistoric pottery fabrics refer to Brown (1988) and the Roman and medieval pottery fabrics refer to the Colchester Roman and post-Roman pottery type series (*CAR 10*, *CAR 7*).

Finds type	no.	wt (g)
Pottery	43	475
Ceramic building material (CBM)	6	1394
Fired clay	7	90
Flint	2	87
Heat altered (burnt) stone	3	8

Table 1. Type and quantities of bulk finds

Finds by period

Prehistoric

The prehistoric finds consist of pottery, worked flint and heat-altered (burnt) flints. A significant proportion of the pottery can be dated to the middle Neolithic. The middle Neolithic Peterborough ware pottery was kindly examined by Nigel Brown and his comments have been incorporated into the text.

Pottery which can be dated to the prehistoric period comprises 24 sherds (total weight 319 g). The great majority is flint-tempered, commonly with poorly sorted small-large flint fragments (Table 2). There is one rim sherd but a significant number of the sherds are decorated.

Fabric code	Fabric description	no.	Wt/g
C	Flint small-medium common, with occasional large flint	4	33
D	Flint small-large, common, poorly sorted	18	273
E	Flint and sand-temper	2	12
H	Sand-temper, moderate	1	1
<i>Total</i>		24	319

Table 2 Prehistoric pottery by fabric type

The earliest closely-dated pottery is a group of Peterborough ware sherds from ditch F12 (10). This pottery tradition dates to the middle Neolithic and is broadly current during the later 4th millennium to the mid 3rd millennium (c 3500-2500 BC) (Gibson 2002, 78). One sherd is from the rim of a bowl decorated with a herringbone pattern on the rim top (Fig 7.1). A second small rim sherd with similar decoration is probably part of the same vessel. There is also a group of sherds from a bowl with an oxidised surface which are decorated with horizontal lines formed from close set small incisions or finger-nail impressions (Fig 7.2). A few other sherds from the context have finger-tip/-nail impressions. All of the sherds have some abrasion, but this varies from clear abrasion on one or two sherds to moderate or slight on others. The group of sherds which form part of the decorated body of a bowl and which exhibit little or only moderate abrasion, suggest that some at least of the pottery did not have a long depositional history or did not have a long period of exposure before entering the ditch. This might suggest that the pottery contains some older elements, possibly representing a collection of sherds of differing ages since breakage. Two finger-tip/nail decorated sherds from other contexts, one from F29 (21) and another from F15 (12), are probably also Neolithic Peterborough ware.

The Peterborough ware from F12 can be compared with that from an assemblage recovered from the Springfield Cursus (Chelmsford) where the use of close set finger-nail impressions to produce lines on sherds is also noted (Brown 2001, 123) - although the lines on the sherds here appear to form horizontal bands.

In addition there is a flint-tempered sherd from F4 (4) which is of Neolithic or Bronze Age date and two, small, abraded sherds, one from F15 (12) and another from F27 (19) which can be broadly dated as prehistoric.

Illustrated

Fig 7.1 Rim from a Peterborough ware bowl with herringbone decoration of the rim top (Fabric D, weight 18 g).

Fig 7.2 Two joining bodysherds (lower body) from a Peterborough ware bowl with an oxidised surface and decorated with bands of horizontal lines formed from close set small incisions or finger-nail impressions (Fabric D) (note-two other moderately large, non-joining sherds from same vessel not illustrated - total weight of all sherds 138 g)

Two worked flints were recovered, both from L1. These are a snapped flint flake which has a possible small notch on one edge (15) and a core or more probably a tool of convenience made on a flint pebble with multiple flake removals along both sides of one edge (1). The flints are not closely-dated but it can be noted that relatively crude utilised pieces or tools of convenience appear to be more common in the later prehistoric period (Bronze Age-Iron Age) than earlier.

A few small pieces of heat-altered (burnt) flint are also likely to date to the prehistoric period. These were recovered from F13 (13) & F19 (27).

Roman

Small quantities of Roman pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered. While not closely-dated, overall the pottery suggests a Mid-Late Roman date rather than earlier. The pottery fabrics and quantity of each fabric type are listed in Table 3.

Fabric code	Fabric description	wt/g
BACG	Central Gaulish plain samian	1
GX	Other coarse wares, principally locally produced grey wares	29
HD	Shell-tempered ware	9
	Total	39

Table 3 Roman pottery fabric quantities

The Roman pottery consists of one small sherd of very abraded 2nd century samian from F27 (19), greyware sherds (including two abraded rim sherds which are probably from a large bowl) from F13 (11), F27 (19) & L1 (1) and sherds of shell-tempered ware from F27 (19). Although difficult to date closely the greyware bowl is probably of Mid-late Roman date and the shell-tempered ware is probably of Late Roman (4th century) date.

Two pieces of Roman brick or tile were recovered from F2 (3) & F21 (16).

Medieval

Finds which can be closely-dated to the medieval period consist of sherds of pottery. The pottery fabrics and quantity of each fabric type are listed in Table 4.

Fabric code	Fabric description	wt/g
13	Early medieval sandy wares	40
20	Medieval sandy greywares/coarsewares (general)	77
	<i>Total</i>	<i>117</i>

Table 4 Medieval pottery fabric quantities

There is a small quantity of early medieval sandy ware sherds which date to the 11th-12th century. These were recovered from F29 (21) & F28 (20) and include rims sherds from two cooking pots. Sherds of later dated medieval greywares/coarsewares, which can be dated to the period of the late 12th/13th-14th century, come from features F1 (2), F6 (5), F7 (6), F17 (14), F22 (17) & F27 (19). All of these sherds are body sherds.

Late medieval/post-medieval and modern

Pieces of flat, thin tile, identified as peg-tiles, were recovered from F9 (8) and L1 (1). These can be broadly dated as late medieval to post-medieval as this type of tile was not common, outside of important buildings such as churches or manorial buildings, prior to the late 13th century (Ryan & Andrews 1993, 97).

A large piece of red brick dating to the 19th-20th century was recovered from F9 (8).

Finds discussion

The more closely-dated of the finds show activity on the site in the middle Neolithic, Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern period. The largest quintiles of finds are from the middle Neolithic, Roman & medieval period.

Among the finds assemblage probably the most significant find are the sherds of Neolithic Peterborough ware from ditch F12 (10) which are current during the period c 3500-2500 BC. These include a decorated rim sherd from a bowl and decorated body sherds, some of which share decorative traits seen on Peterborough pottery from the Cursus at Springfield (Chelmsford). The sherds exhibit various states of abrasion. However, the presence of moderately large sherds, including joining body sherds from one pot with only moderate abrasion to the edges, shows clearly that the pottery represents depositional activity on the site during the middle Neolithic and that some at least does not appear to have had any significant history before entering the ditch context. The difference in abrasion within the assemblage may indicate the pottery is a collection of sherds with different depositional histories or of different ages since breakage.

The Roman and medieval sherds are mostly abraded and of moderate to small size. The Roman finds suggest an area marginal to settlement and may have arrived on the area primarily in manure scatter. While not closely-dated, the Roman pottery indicates activity here in the Mid-late Roman period and probably the Late Roman period. The quantity of medieval pottery is not large but may indicate an area close to occupation. The types of medieval pottery recovered suggest a period of continued activity from the early medieval period of the 11th-12th century through the late 12th/13th-14th century.

Later dated finds are few in number, but a few pieces of peg-tiles, probably introduced as manure scatter, indicate use of the area in the late medieval or possibly more likely in the post-medieval period. There is a single find of modern date which is a large piece of a 19th-20th century red brick.

ctxt no.	T	find no	find type	finds description	fabric code	form	no	wt/g	period/ spot date
F001	T1	2	pot	Small abraded dark greyware sherd – probably medieval coarseware	20		1	3	13-14C
F002	T3	3	CBM	Brownish-orange, abraded, 28 mm thick		RBT	1	269	Rom
F004	T4	4	pot	Flint-tempered, oxidised surfaces	C		1	15	Neo/BA-EIA
F006	T5	5	pot	Base sherd in sandy greyware, appears to be medieval coarseware, probably a cooking pot	20		1	46	13-14C
F007	T5	6	pot	Small sherd, probably medieval coarseware	20		1	5	13-14C
F008	T7	7	F clay	Soft, orange sandy clay, abraded			1	9	
F009	T7	8	CBM	Piece from a red brick 65 mm thick		BR	1	1045	19-20C
F009	T7	8	CBM	Orange tile piece 10-12 mm thick		PT	2	39	Med/p-med
F009	T7	9	stone	Piece from a naturally rounded stone (NR)			1	80	
F012	T6	10	pot	Decorated bowl rim, herringbone pattern, Peterborough ware, second (similar) small rim sherd	D		2	18	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	Four sherds, oxidised surface, same pot (2 join), decorated with horizontal lines made up of short indentations, Peterborough ware	D		4	138	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	Body sherd, oxidised surface, decorated with fine horizontal lines, Peterborough ware	D		1	6	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	sherds with oxidised surface, some flint-temper & spaced finger-tip decoration, Peterborough ware	C		3	18	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F012	T6	10	pot	Flint-tempered sherds, most with oxidised surface, Peterborough ware	D		10	104	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F013	ex	11	pot	Greyware rim, abraded (surface find) probably same rim as (19)	GX		1	9	Rom
F013	ex	13	B stone	Small piece of white, heat crazed flint			1	5	preh
F015	ex	12	pot	Sand with sparse flint-temper, abraded surface	E		1	6	Later prehistoric?
F015	ex	12	pot	Abraded sherd with oxidised surface, some flint-temper & spaced finger-tip decoration, probably Peterborough	E		1	6	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)

ctxt no.	T	find no	find type	finds description	fabric code	form	no	wt/g	period/ spot date
				ware					
F017	ex	14	pot	Grey surfaces sandy medieval coarseware	20		1	7	13-14C
F021	ex	16	CBM	Abraded orange piece of brick/tile, 25+ mm thick, probably Roman		RBT	1	14	Rom
F029	ex	21	pot	Neolithic decorated sherd, dark fabric with pattern of indentations, probably finger tip impressions, probably Peterborough ware	D		1	7	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F021	ex	21	pot	Early medieval cooking pot rim, dark sandy fabric	13		1	13	11-12C
F022	ex	17	pot	Small, abraded sandy greyware(?) sherds/ fragments, probably medieval	20		2	3	13-14C
F022	ex	18	F clay	Sandy fabric with some clear quartz, two wattle voids in one face, no original surface			1	53	
F027	ex	19	pot	Samian, very abraded, Central Gaul	BACG		1	1	E/M-L2C
F027	ex	19	pot	Shell-tempered, shell dissolved leaving voids, wheel made with a soft fabric, Roman rather than medieval	HD		2	9	Rom (4C?)
F027	ex	19	pot	Greyware rim, abraded (surface find) probably same rim as (11) + one other sherd	GX		2	19	Rom
F027	ex	19	pot	Medieval coarseware	20		1	13	13-14C
F027	ex	19	pot	Abraded soft, black sandy sherd, probably prehistoric, possibly IA	H		1	1	preh
F027	ex	19	B stone	Two small pieces of white, heat crazed flint			2	3	preh
F027	ex	19	F clay	Five abraded pieces, mostly sandy & orange-buff			5	28	
F028	ex	20	pot	Rim from a cooking pot in gritty greyware	13		1	8	11-12C
F028	ex	20	pot	Body sherds with oxidised surfaces	13		3	19	11-12C
L001		15	flint	Pebble core or 'tool of convenience' with multiple flake removals on both sides of one edge leaving a ridge along that side, cortex on lower half with one flake removal from base			1	84	
L001	T1	1	CBM	Orange tile piece 13-14 mm thick		PT	1	27	Med/ p-med
L001	T1	1	flint	Thin flake with earlier flaking scars, snapped with proximal end missing, some edge damage/use wear and possible small notch			1	3	Neo-BA
L001	T1	1	pot	Small sherd of wheel-turned sandy greyware probably Roman	GX		1	1	Rom

Table 5 Finds by context (NR=not retained)

6 Description of excavated area, and site discussion (Figs 2-3)



Plate 4: view south across excavated area. Features under excavation (centre) are F27-28.

Introduction to the excavation (Fig 4)

Following the evaluation trenching, ECC Place Services requested the excavation of the footprint of 'plot 2', in the north-eastern corner of the site. An area of 170m² was opened up, with the north end of T6 in the centre of the southern edge (so that it could be established whether or not the slightly curving F12 was the southern edge of a ring-ditch - it was not, as it happens).

The excavation exposed seventeen new features: 2 gullies/ditches, 3 large pits, seven pits and five post-holes, tabulated here:

Context no	context type	dated finds	notes	period
F13	gully	Roman Greyware rim, crossfit with rim (19)	same as F5 in T5 and F1 in T1. Parallel with F17	medieval with residual Roman
F14	pit	-	west of F14	undated
F15	post-hole	abraded sherds, one probably Peterborough ware		middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)
F16	post-hole	-	undated, but next to F16 so probably same date	
F17	gully	sandy medieval coarseware	parallel with F13. Cut by F29.	medieval 13-14C
F18	post-hole		undated, paired with F19	undated
F19	post-		undated, paired with	undated

Context no	context type	dated finds	notes	period
	hole		F18	
F20	post-hole		in cluster at north site edge with F22-25.	
F21	small pit	residual Roman brick/tile. Early medieval cooking pot rim in dark sandy fabric	in cluster at north site edge with F20, F22-25. Cuts F22	11-12C, with residual Roman
F22	pit	17: Small, abraded sandy greyware probably medieval 18: Fired clay, two wattle voids in one face, no original surface	in cluster at north site edge with F20-21, F23-25. Cut by F21	13-14C
F23	pit	-	in cluster at north site edge with F20-22, F24-25.	undated
F24	pit	-	in cluster at north site edge with F20-4, F25.	undated
F25	pit	-	in cluster at north site edge with F20-24.	undated
F26	small pit	-		undated
F27	large pit	Residual Samian and Roman greyware. Abraded sherd, probably prehistoric, possibly IA. Burnt flint (prehistoric?) Undated Fired clay Medieval coarseware (13-14C)	Cuts F29, uncertain relationship with F28	medieval with residual prehistoric and Roman
F28	large pit	medieval rim and body sherds	cuts F12. Uncertain relationship with F27	11-12C
F29	large pit	Neolithic decorated sherd, with pattern of indentations, prob Peterborough ware	cut by F27.	middle Neolithic (c 3500-2500 BC)

Results of excavation, and site discussion

There are Middle Neolithic, Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds from this site, many of them residual in later contexts. This implies that later periods of activity have led to the disturbance of earlier contexts. There are nine undated features.

Prehistoric

There was undoubtedly prehistoric (Neolithic) activity here, indicated principally by the Peterborough ware, current *circa* 3500-2500 BC. However, only two features contained exclusively prehistoric finds. These were ditch F12 (intercepted by evaluation T6 and thought to be a ring-ditch - however, the excavation showed this was not the case), and post-hole F15.

Stephen Benfield thinks the large size and unabraded nature of sherds from ditch F12 implies that the pottery 'does not appear to have had any significant history before entering the ditch'. This means that the sherds were probably not in circulation on a domestic site, and may be derived from a burial or other ritual deposit. However, because of the large number of residual finds on this site, it is possible that F12 is actually medieval (like three adjacent pits F27-9) and that the Neolithic pottery is residual.

There are other prehistoric sherds from the evaluation and excavation (all residual in later contexts), evaluation T4, F4 (1 sherd, 15g), and in excavation-stage pits F27 (1,2 g) and F29 (1, 7g). These residual sherds were in much smaller quantities than the relatively large group from ditch F12 (18 sherds, 266g).

Roman

The evidence for Roman-period activity is similar to that of the prehistoric period, in that some finds are in contemporary features, and some are residual. The only (apparently) Roman-period feature is ditch F4. It is aligned WSW-ESE, which matches some elements of the cropmark landscape shown on Plate 1 above. Other Roman-period material is residual in medieval gully F13, and in medieval pits F21 and F27.

Medieval

The majority of site features are of medieval date. Two ditches, perhaps not parallel enough to be considered a trackway, are the most prominent feature- F17 (dated to 13th-14th century), and F13. Although F13 is undated in the excavated area, it aligns very well with both undated F5 (T5), and with F1 (T1) which also contains 13th-14th-century pottery. All three ditches may be part of the same field boundary.

Apart from the field ditch, there is a cluster of medieval pits (F27-29) in the south-centre of the site. These pits do not contain large quantities of medieval finds (5 sherds, 40g), so it is not certain that domestic occupation was nearby. The medieval dating is partly stratigraphical - F28 (containing medieval pottery) cut F27 (containing residual Neolithic pottery), which in turn cut gully F17 (which contained medieval pottery).

The proximity to two medieval pits (F21, F22) of four undated features on the northern site edge (F20, F23-5) means the latter may be medieval.

Post-medieval/modern

F9 containing modern brick may be the modern field boundary (now missing), shown on the 1920 Ordnance Survey (plate 5, below). Adjacent, undated ditch F8 may be contemporary.



Plate 5: extract from OS 1960, showing now-missing field boundary crossing site.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Granville Developments for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by B Holloway, fieldwork carried out by BH and N Rayner. Stephen Benfield thanks Nigel Brown for help with identifying the prehistoric pottery.

The project was monitored for the ECC Place Services by Maria Medlycott.

8 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

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9 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from <i>circa</i> 2,500 - 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to <i>circa</i> AD1500/1530
modern	period from <i>c</i> AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
Neolithic	period from <i>circa</i> 4,500 BC to 2,500 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to <i>c</i> AD1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, eg, a Roman coin in a modern pit
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds

1 museum box containing all finds

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 833)

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, Trench record sheet)

ECC Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Site digital photographic log, site photographic record on CD

Attendance register: Benchmark data: Risk assessment

11 Archive deposition

The archive (paper and finds) is currently held by CAT (Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester), but will be deposited at Colchester Museum (accession 2015.40).

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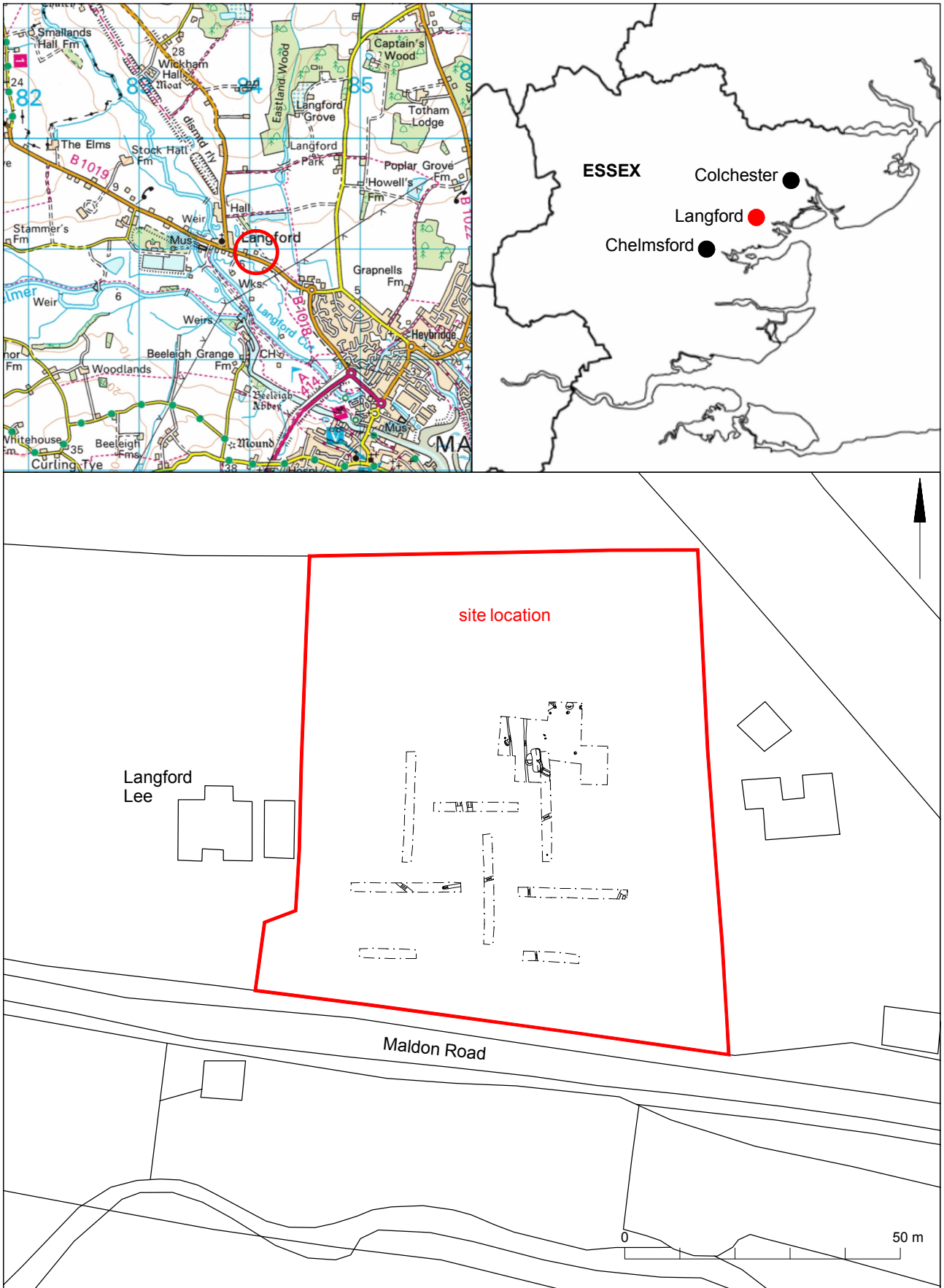
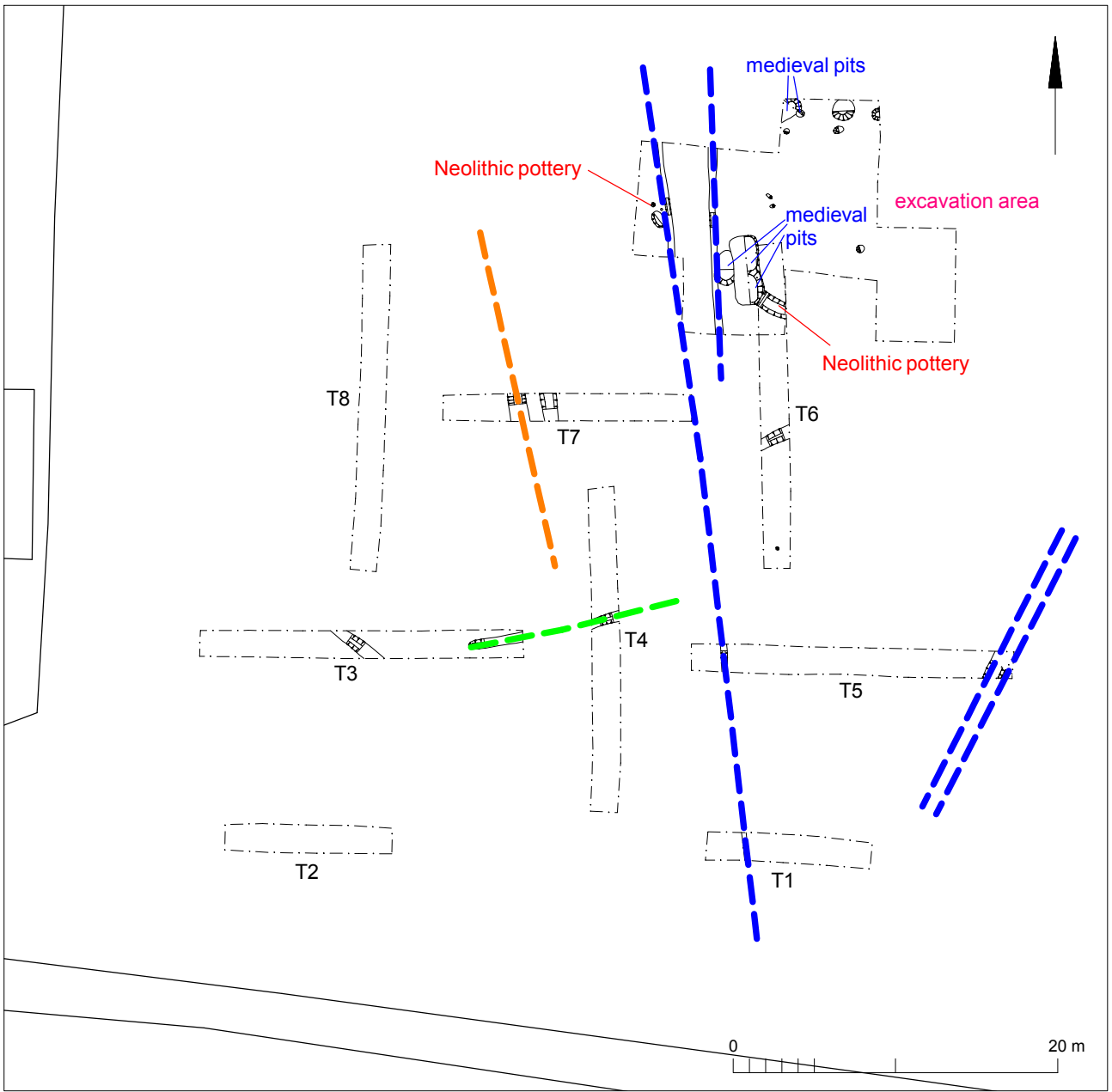


Fig 1 Site location.



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Fig 2 Combined interpretation of evaluation and excavation.

- - - Roman ditch
 - - - medieval ditch
 - - - post-medieval ditch

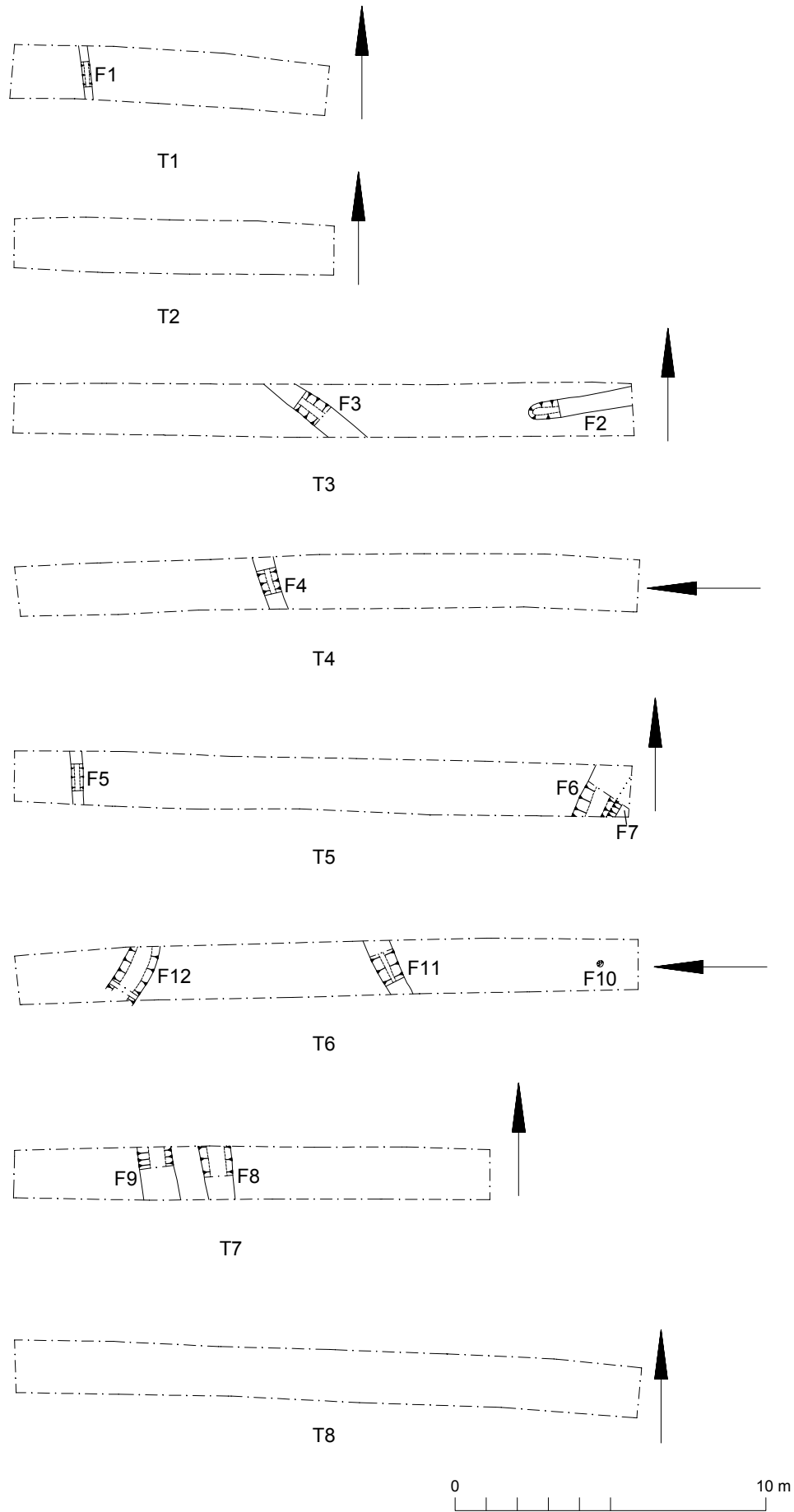
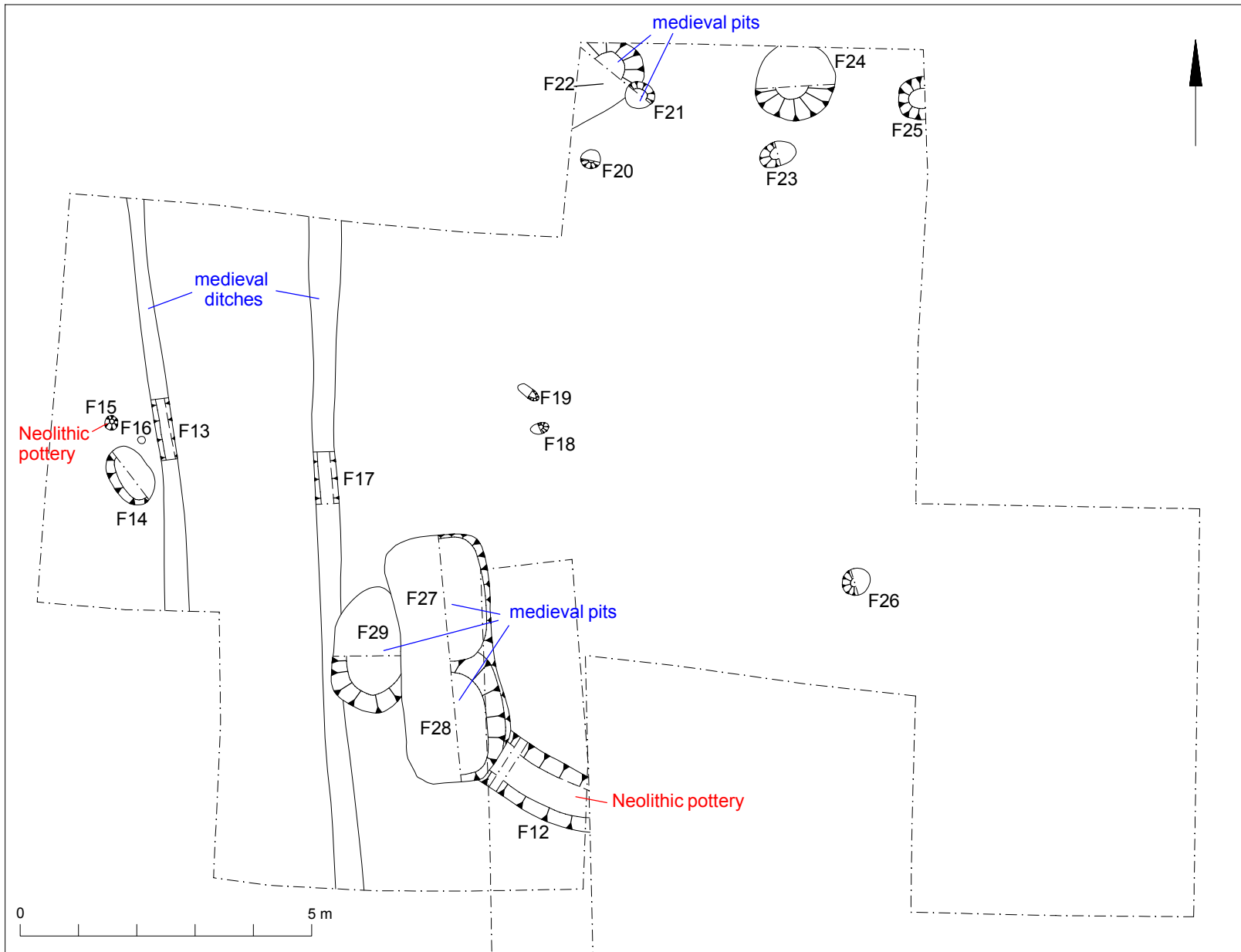


Fig 3 Detailed trench plans.



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Fig 4 Detailed excavation plan.

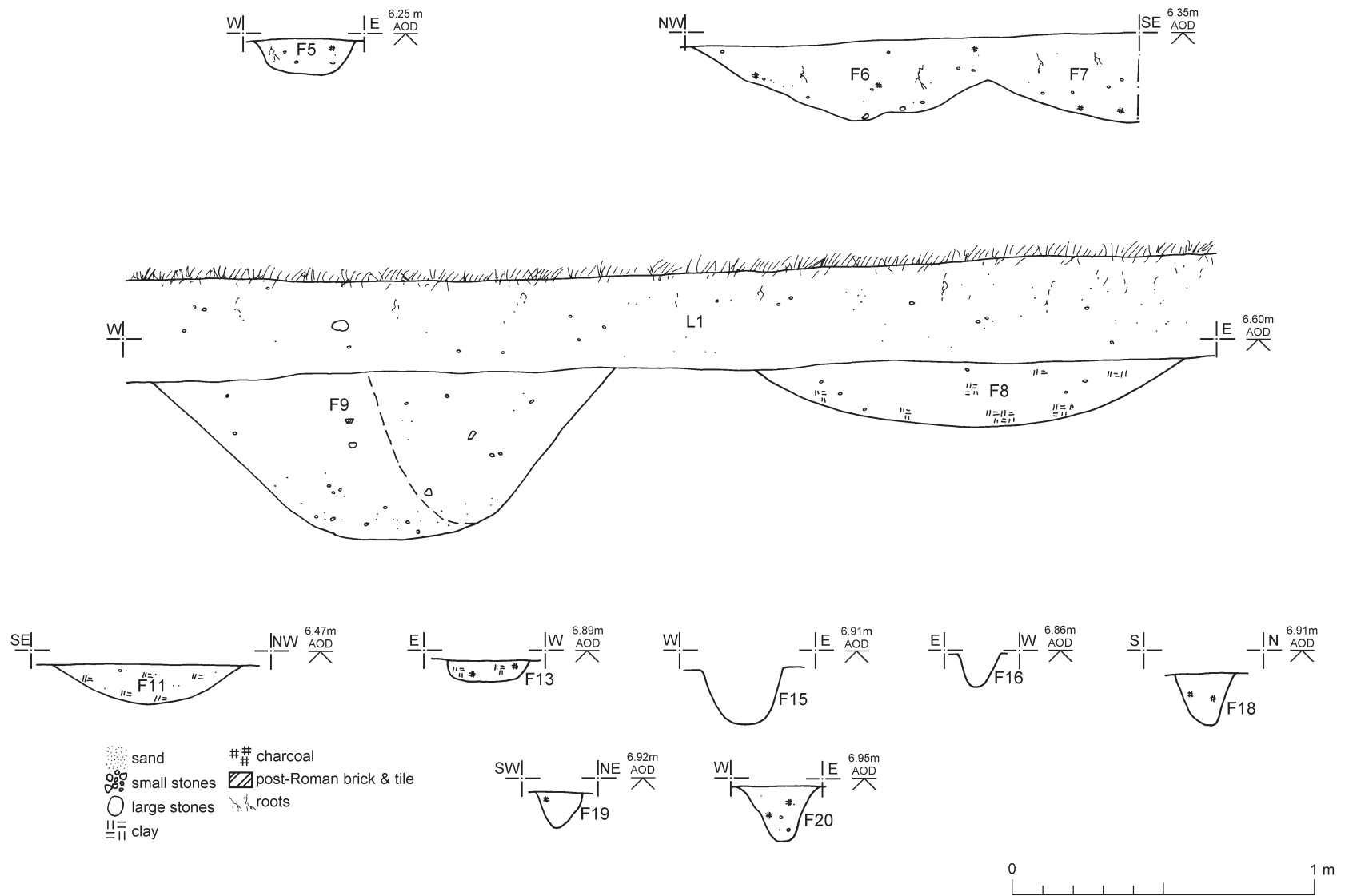


Fig 5 Sections.

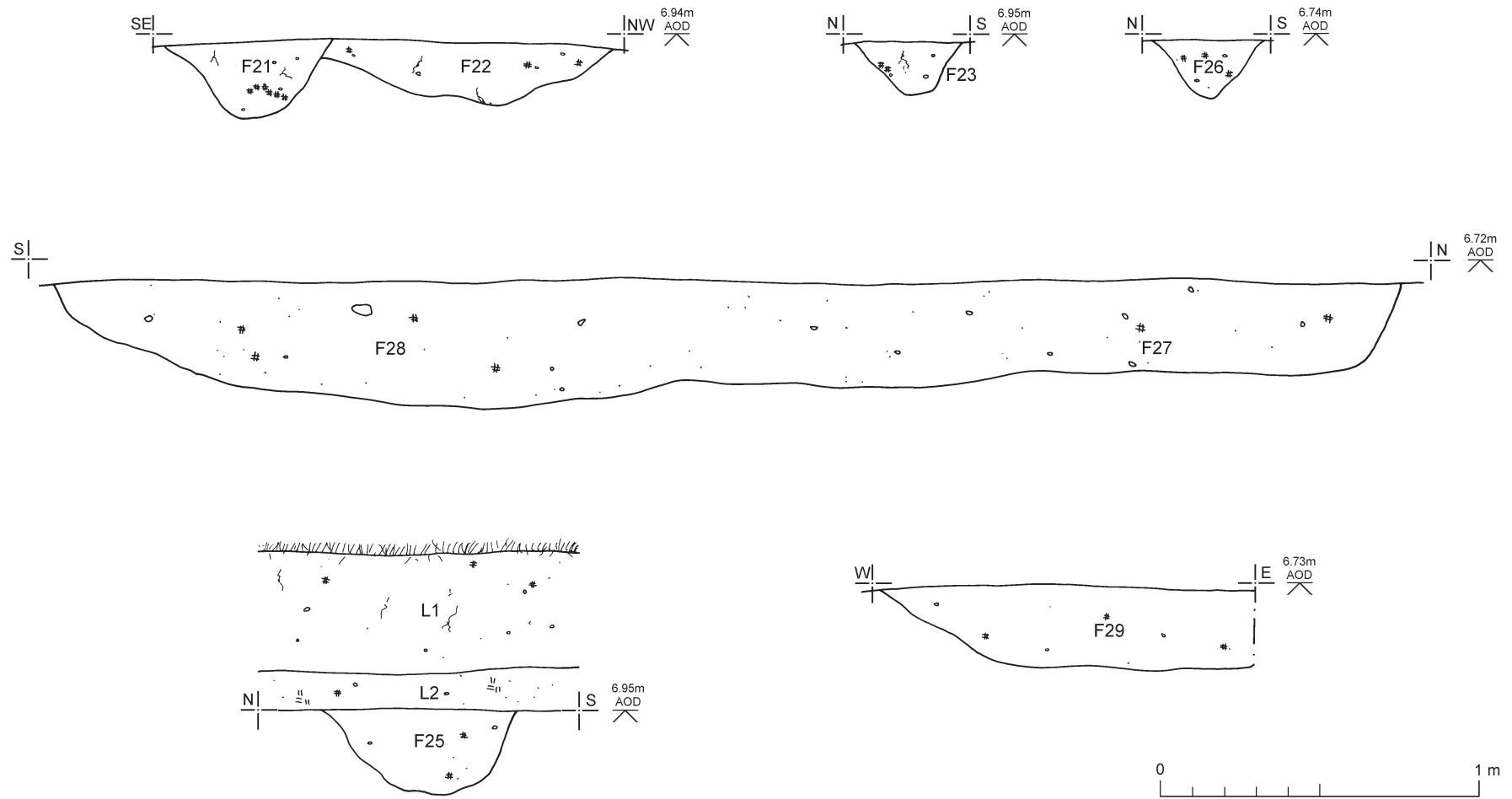


Fig 6 Sections.

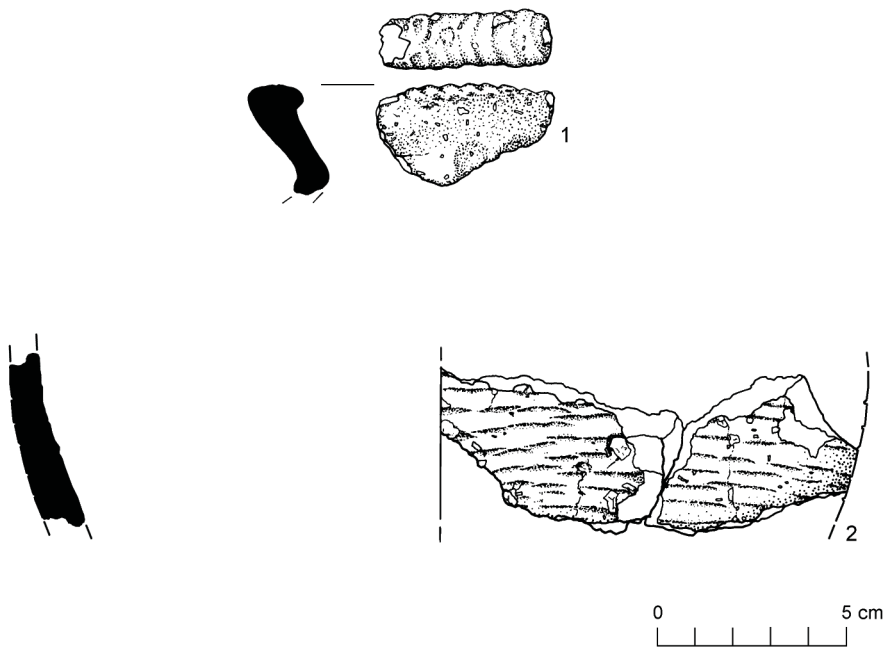


Fig 7 Prehistoric pottery.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Land East of 'Langford Lee', Maldon Road, Langford, Essex	
Parish: Langford	District: Maldon
NGR: TL 8401 0895	Site code: CAT project code – 15/3n HET Code – LFLL15
Type of work: Evaluation and excavation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 14-15 April 2015 (eval) 21-22 April (ex)	Size of area investigated: Eval:140m (linear) Exc: 170 m ²
Location of curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museum accession code : 2015.40	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER number: 7870-1, 38969
Final report: CAT Report 833	
Periods represented: Prehistoric, Roman, medieval, post-medieval	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>This site, an open paddock on the northern side of Maldon Road, Langford, is 100m SW of an extensive area of prehistoric and Roman-period cropmarks, representing burial sites, enclosures, field boundaries and trackways.</p> <p>Eight evaluation trenches (total length 140m) were positioned across the site in advance of residential development. A subsequent excavation was conducted in the north-eastern corner of the site.</p> <p>Multi-period archaeological remains were identified in both the evaluation and excavation stages. There were two Neolithic features (a ditch and a post-hole), one Roman ditch, nine medieval features (five pits and four ditches) and one modern field ditch (thirteen features were undated).</p> <p>Of particular interest was an assemblage of middle Neolithic Peterborough Ware, associated with a ditch and post-hole. This may be from a disturbed burial or other ritual deposit. However, given the quantity of residual finds on this site, it is possible that the Neolithic sherds are residual in a later (medieval?) context.</p> <p>The earliest landscape feature was a Roman ditch. Four ditches indicate increased landscape activity in the medieval period. There were five medieval pits, though the small number of medieval sherds from these pits (eight) may indicate that medieval settlement took place adjacent to this site, rather than on it. The medieval (and perhaps the Roman?) pottery may have been brought in as manure scatter.</p> <p>One modern ditch is very close to the line of a modern field boundary (now grubbed-out) which was shown by the Ordnance Survey as recently as 1960.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: -	
ECC monitor: Maria Medlycott	
Keywords: Prehistoric ditch, Roman ditch, medieval ditch, Peterborough Ware	Significance: */**
Author of summary: Ben Holloway / Howard Brooks	Date of summary: June 2015