

# Archaeological building assessment and monitoring at land to the rear of 11 Market Place, Great Dunmow, Essex

April 2015



Report prepared by Mark Baister  
on behalf of Mr Donaldson

CAT project ref: 15/03q  
NGR: TL 62661 22070  
HEA code: GD39



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**CAT Report 844**  
June 2015

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EHER Summary Sheet

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## 1 Summary

*A watching brief and associated historic building assessment was carried out during construction of a dwelling on land to the rear of 11 Market Place, Great Dunmow, Essex. During the groundworks, no archaeological features were uncovered, and the foundation trenches only impacted modern layers – mostly redeposited natural.*

*The building assessment proved that the building demolished prior to the watching brief was not the historic barn shown on the first edition OS map, but a much more recent structure that was erected around 1955.*

*Nothing of archaeological interest was discovered.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report describes an archaeological watching brief and building assessment carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in April 2015 on a site to the rear of 11 Market Place, Great Dunmow. The site (which is centred at NGR TL 62661 22070; Fig 1) was the location of a building which was demolished prior to the commencement of this project due to safety concerns. As a result the building assessment component of this report will deal with the cartographic evidence only.

The construction project is a two-storey dwelling with undercroft parking and strip foundations. The southernmost foundation trench had already been excavated before the beginning of this project in order to construct a retaining wall (again due to safety concerns). The remaining foundation trenches were monitored by a professional archaeologist from CAT.

Mr. Donaldson commissioned CAT to carry out the specified archaeological work. The monitoring was carried out on 20th April 2015 in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by CAT (CAT 2015) and approved by Historic Environment Officer Richard Havis. Post-excavation and building assessment work was carried out from May-June 2015. In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was carried out in accordance with standard policies and procedures as outlined in CAT 2012, IfA 2008a, IfA 2008b, MoRPHE, EAA 14, and EAA 24.

## 3 Archaeological background

The Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) shows that the proposed development lies within the medieval town of Great Dunmow, which was granted a charter in 1227 (EHER 9051). The area to the south of the current settlement of Great Dunmow was occupied by a small Roman town.

No. 11 Market Place is 17th century in date, and is listed grade II. The adjoining buildings to the south are 15th century in date, whilst those to the north are 17 or 18th century in origin.

The market-place appears to have moved to this location in the 17th century from its original site on the High Street. However, the area appears to have been occupied since the later medieval period.

A building is visible on the site on the 1st edition OS map (1875).

## 4 Aim

The archaeological monitoring was intended to preserve by record the character, extent, date and significance of any archaeological remains and deposits that may be impacted by the construction of the dwelling and associated groundworks.

The aim of the building assessment was to provide a full documentary and cartographic record of the building, as much as possible given its recent demolition.

## 5 Monitoring Results

The foundation trenches were stripped using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket under archaeological supervision.

During the strip, five layers were encountered:

Context	Description	Finds	Date
L1	dark black/brown sandy silt topsoil, 300-400mm thick across whole site. large amount of brick and peg tile present from demolition.	modern/post-medieval CBM (not retained)	modern
L2	dark green/black silty clay, contaminated and heavily stained with diesel. almost certainly redeposited. sealed by L1 and L3.	-	modern
L3	light orange/brown sandy clay, very clean. lies directly below L1. thickness varies from 230mm to 500mm. redeposited.	-	post-medieval/ modern?
L4	hard light yellow/brown sand. possibly original natural?	-	post-glacial
L5	very clean and soft orange sand, likely redeposited. has very clear edge with L4.	-	post-medieval/ modern?



**Plate I** Representative section of foundation trench. Shows redeposited natural L3 sealing contaminated L2. Shot taken facing north.

No archaeological features were observed.

These layers all suggest that the site has been heavily landscaped. The difference in ground level between this site and the adjacent plot is 1.9m, so at least one terracing event has occurred in the recent past.

## 6 Building assessment results

The first edition OS map (1875 – Plate II) shows a building occupying this site. However, later cartographic evidence seems to suggest that this was not the building demolished prior to this investigation.

The second edition OS map (1898 – Plate III) shows no building present on the site and a restructuring of plot boundaries. It would appear that between the 1st and 2nd edition OS maps the historic barn noted in the brief (Havis, R, 2015) had been demolished.

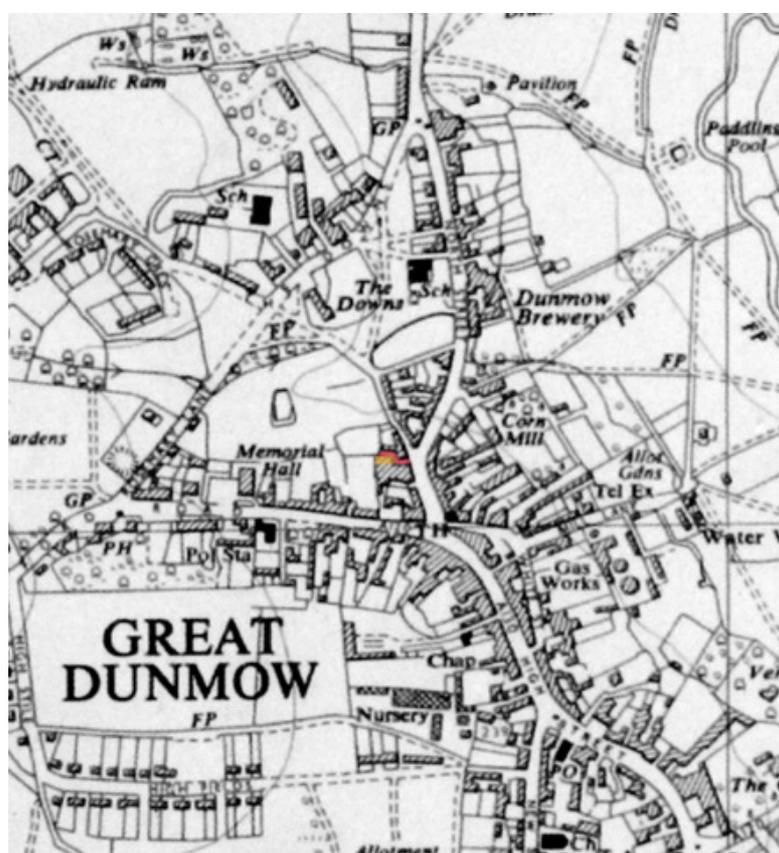
A building does not appear again on the site until the 1955 OS map (Plate IV) – it is likely this is the (much more recent) building that was the subject of demolition prior to the investigation. This is corroborated both by the stratigraphy encountered during the monitoring and by a conversation with the client (suggesting the demolished building had been constructed within the lifetime of the previous landowner).



**Plate II** 1st edition OS map (1875). Site shown in red, building shown in blue.



**Plate III** 2nd edition OS map (1898). Site shown in red, no building present. Change in plot boundaries visible.



**Plate IV** 1955 OS map. Site shown in red, new building shown in yellow.

## 7 Discussion

The identification of redeposited natural and the layer contaminated with diesel (L2) both suggest that the site has been heavily landscaped in its recent history.

A possible natural horizon was encountered (L4) and no finds were recovered from any context. Peg tile and brick were observed in the demolition debris, but were not retained. All evidence seems to suggest that the ground level has been lowered substantially and then built up with redeposited natural. This would have occurred sometime prior to the construction of the most recent building on this site (ie around 1955).

Overall, nothing of archaeological interest was discovered.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Mr Donaldson for commissioning the work. The project was managed by C Lister and fieldwork carried out by M Baister. The project was monitored by ECC Historical Environment Advisor Richard Havis.

## 9 References

CAT	2012	<i>Policies and procedures</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological building recording and monitoring on land to the rear of 11 Market Place, Great Dunmow, Essex CM6 1AX</i> by Chris Lister
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Department of Communities and Local Government
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, by David Gurney (editor)
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the east of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeological Occasional Papers 24, by Maria Medlycott
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (MoRPHE)
Havis, R	2015	<i>Brief for Archaeological building recording and monitoring at Land to the rear of 11 Market Place, Great Dunmow</i> Essex County Council Brief
IfA	2008a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
IfA	2008b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBM	ceramic building material (brick, tile, tessera).
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 floor; can contain 'contexts'
fill	the soil filling up a hole such as a pit or ditch
HET	Historic Environment Team
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
layer	an accumulation or deposition of archaeological material
medieval	the period from AD 1066 to AD 1500
modern	the period from AD 1800 to present day

natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OS	Ordnance Survey
post-medieval	the period from AD 1500 to AD 1800

## 11 Contents of archive

### Finds archive

No finds recovered.

### Paper archive

1 A4 wallet containing:

- this report
- original site record (context and finds sheets)
- section drawings
- digital photo log
- attendance record
- sundry papers
- digital photos on disc

## 12 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Saffron Walden Museum (an accession code has been requested).

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### Distribution list:

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Richard Havis, Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor  
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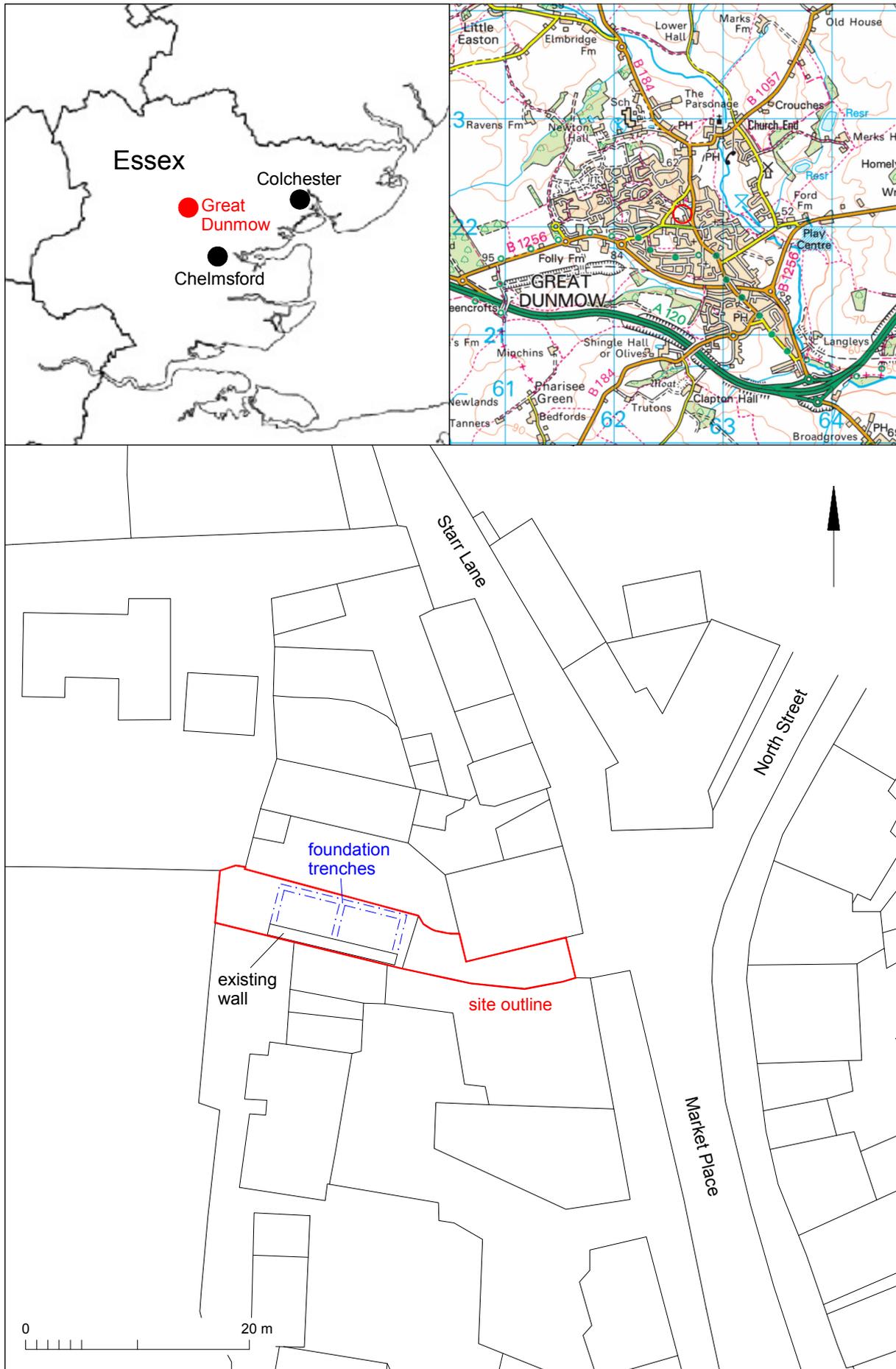


Fig 1 Site location.

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> land to the rear of 11 Market Place, Great Dunmow, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Great Dunmow	<b>District:</b> Uttlesford
<b>NGR:</b> TL 62661 22070	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project code – 15/03q HEA Code – GD39
<b>Type of work:</b> watching brief and building assessment	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> April - June 2015	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 21m of trenching
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Saffron Walden Museum: accession code requested	<b>Funding source:</b> developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Yes	<b>Related EHER numbers:</b> -
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 844	
<b>Periods represented:</b> modern, post-medieval	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b></p> <p><i>A watching brief and associated historic building assessment was carried out during construction of a dwelling on land to the rear of 11 Market Place, Great Dunmow, Essex. During the groundworks, no archaeological features were uncovered, and the foundation trenches only impacted modern layers – mostly redeposited natural.</i></p> <p><i>The building assessment proved that the building demolished prior to the watching brief was not the historic barn shown on the first edition OS map, but a much more recent structure that was erected around 1955.</i></p> <p><i>Nothing of archaeological interest was discovered.</i></p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> None	
<b>ECC Monitor:</b> Richard Havis	
<b>Keywords:</b>	<b>Significance:</b> neg
<b>Author of summary:</b> Mark Baister	<b>Date of summary:</b> June 2015