Archaeological evaluation on land west of Gubbions Hall Farm, Banters Lane, Great Leighs, Essex, CM3 1NT

July 2017

by Dr Elliott Hicks
with contributions by Stephen Benfield
figures by S Carter and B Holloway
fieldwork by B Holloway with H Furness

Commissioned by Adrian Burton, Barn Development Ltd
on behalf of Mr and Mrs Stevens

NGR: TL 7358 1781 (centre)
Planning ref.: CHL 16/01961/FUL
ECC code: GLGH17
CAT project ref.: 17/06g
Chelmsford Museum accession code: CHMRE: 2017.067
OASIS ref.: colchest3-287387
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CAT WSI
OASIS summary

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1 Summary
An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching (two trenches) was undertaken on land west of Gubbions Hall Farm, Banters Lane, Great Leighs, Essex in advance of the construction of a detached dwelling and garage. The site is located nearby to Gubbions Hall, a 17th-century Grade II listed house situated within a Medieval moated enclosure. The evaluation uncovered a modern wall.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)
This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land west of Gubbions Hall Farm, Banters Lane, Great Leighs, which was carried out on 4th July 2017. The work was commissioned by Adrian Burton of Barn Development on behalf of Mr and Mrs Stevens in advance of the construction of a detached dwelling and garage, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Alison Bennett advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a Brief for archaeological evaluation, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Alison Bennett (ECCPS 2017), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2017).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage’s Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (English Heritage 2006), and with Standards for field archaeology in the East of England (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the 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).

3 Archaeological background
The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive, the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) accessed via the Heritage Gateway.

The EHER shows that the development site is located 85m to the north of Gubbions Hall, a 17th century timber-framed house within a medieval rectangular moated enclosure. The house is Grade II listed (NHLE no. 1122127) and the moat is a scheduled monument (NHLE no. 1016802).

The Historic England listing for Gubbions Hall states that the hall is:
A C17 timber-framed and plastered house surrounded by a moat. 2 storeys and attics. 2 window range, C20 casements with lattice leaded lights. The ground storey has 2 modern bay windows and a gabled porch. there is an addition on the west side. Roof tiled, with 2 gabled dormers.

The Historic England listing for the moated enclosure states that:
The moated site includes a rectangular island measuring a maximum of 32m north-south and 45m east-west. This is contained by a water-filled moat or ditch fed by an underground spring. The moat measures up to 18m wide and at least 2m deep, and is revetted on both the inner and outer faces with faced stone,
occasionally repaired in concrete. Modern footbridges provide access to the
island.

The local antiquarian, P Morant, writing in 1768, stated that the `manor of
Gobions' was named after Sir Thomas Gobyon, who was in possession of the
manor from 1332 until 1349.

The moated site at Gubbion's Hall survives well. The island remains largely
undisturbed and will retain buried evidence for further structures, as well as
other features relating to the development and character of the site throughout
the periods of occupation. The buried silts in the base of the ditches will contain
both artefacts relating to the period of occupation and environmental evidence
for the appearance of the landscape in which the monument was set.

The monument lies in an area where moated sites are comparatively numerous,
with further examples situated 3km to the south, at Whitehouse Farm, Great
and Little Leighs, and 2km to the east at Dines Hall in Great Notley.

It is likely that evidence of medieval farming activity survives within the vicinity of the
Hall and moat.

4 Results (Figs 2-3)
Two trial-trenches were excavated within the development site.

Trench 1 (T1): 13m long by 1.8m wide
T1 was excavated through a layer of clinker (L3, 0.04-0.1m thick, friable dry dark
brown/black silty-clay) onto a layer of natural clay (L2, encountered at a depth of 0.04-
0.1m). Due to the presence of a slurry pit nearby, the trench was offset slightly.

The trench was cut by a modern wall, aligned SW-NE.

![Photograph 1](image)

Photograph 1 T1 trench shot – looking west southwest

Trench 2 (T2): 6m long by 1.8m wide
T2 was excavated through accumulated subsoil (L1, 0.04-0.08m thick, friable dry
medium to dark grey/brown sandy-silty-clay with very occasional stone and CBM
inclusions), which sealed L2 (encountered at a depth of 0.04-0.08m).

A brick was retrieved from L1.
5  Finds  
by Stephen Benfield

One modern unfrogged brick piece (brick end) was retrieved from L1 in T1. It is composed of buff fabric with hard brownish-red ferrous inclusions, and measures 110 mm by 50 mm. There is a pale grey concrete based mortar adhering to the brick surface. Part of the maker’s stamp, reading ‘RBRIDGE’ can be discerned on the surface. The brick can be dated to late 19th-early 20th century.

6  Discussion

Evaluation trenching on land to the west of Gubbions Hall Farm uncovered the remains of a modern brick wall.

7  Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Adrian Burton of Barn Development Ltd and Mr and Mrs Stevens for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with H Furniss. Figures are by S Carter and B Holloway. The project was monitored for Essex County Council by Alison Bennett.

8  References

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

CAT 2014 Health & Safety Policy  
CIfA 2014a Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation  
CIfA 2014b Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials  
DCLG 2012 National Planning Policy Framework  
ECCPS 2017 Brief for archaeological evaluation and excavation at land west of Gubbions Hall Farm, Banters Lane, Great Leighs  
English Heritage 2006 Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)  
9 Abbreviations and glossary
CAT Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC Essex County Council
ECCPS Essex County Council Place Services
EHER Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F) an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain ‘contexts’
layer (L) distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR National Grid Reference
OASIS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval from c AD 1500 to c 1800
section (abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsi written scheme of investigation

10 Contents of archive
Find: none retained
Paper and digital record
One A4 document wallet containing:
The report (CAT Report 1130)
ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation
Original site record (feature and layer sheets, finds record, plans)
Site digital photos and log, architectural plans, attendance register, risk assessment

11 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 Chelmsford Museum under accession code: CHMRE: 2017.067

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Distribution list:
Adrian Burton, Barn Development Ltd
Mr and Mrs Stevens
Alison Bennett, Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record

Colchester Archaeological Trust
Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex, CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785
email: lp@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy
Date: 14.7.2017
Fig 1  Site location in relation to proposed development (dashed blue)
Fig 2  Results

modern brick wall foundation
Fig 3 Representative sections
OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects | Manage Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out

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OASIS ID: colchester3-287387

Project details

Project name: Archaeological evaluation on land west of Gubbions Hall Farm, Banters Lane, Great Leights, Essex, CM3 1NT

Short description of the project: An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching (two trenches) was undertaken on land west of Gubbions Hall Farm, Banters Lane, Great Leights, Essex in advance of the construction of a detached dwelling and garage. The site is located nearby to Gubbions Hall, a 17th-century Grade II listed house situated a within a Medieval moated enclosure. The evaluation uncovered a modern wall.


Previous/future work: No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes: 1706g - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes: CHL 16/01961/FUL - Planning Application No.

Any associated project reference codes: GLGH17 - HER event no.

Any associated project reference codes: CHMRE: 2017,067 - Museum accession ID

Type of project: Field evaluation

Site status: None

Current Land use: Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed

Monument type: WALL Modern

Significant finds: BRICK Modern

Methods & techniques: ***Sample Trenches***

Development type: Rural/Residential

Prompt: Planning condition

Position in the planning process: After full determination (eg, As a condition)

Project location

Country: England

Site location: ESSEX CHELMSFORD GREAT AND LITTLE LEIGHTS land west of Gubbions Hall Farm, Banters Lane

Postcode: CM3 1NT

Study area: 0.09 Hectares

Site coordinates: TL 7358 1781 51.8313989223607 0.5194425232023 51 49 53 N 000 31 09 E Point

Height OD / Depth: Min: 71.71m Max: 71.86m

Project creators

Name of Organisation: Colchester Archaeological Trust

Project brief originator: HEM Team Officer, ECC

Project design originator: Laura Pooley

Project director/manager: Chris Later

Project supervisor: Ben Holloway

Type of sponsor/funding body: Owner

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?: No

Digital Archive recipient: Chelmsford Museum

Digital Archive ID: CHMRE 2017,067

Digital Contents: "Stratigraphic","Survey"

Digital Media available: "Images raster / digital photography","Survey"
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Entered by: Laura Pooley (lp@catuk.org)
Entered on: 18 July 2017