Archaeological evaluation at Manor House Farm, Brentwood Road, Bulphan, Upminster, Essex, RM14 3TJ

January 2018

by Dr Elliott Hicks
figures by Ben Holloway and Sarah Carter
fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Sarah Carter and Adam Tuffey
commissioned by Michael Norcross on behalf of Smart Planning Ltd

NGR: TQ 64515 86120 (centre)
Planning ref.: 15/00183/FUL
CAT project ref.: 16/02g
ECC code: THMF16
Thurrock Museum accession code: tbc
OASIS ref.: colchest3-242917

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

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

CAT Report 1225
February 2018
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1 **Summary**

An archaeological evaluation (six trial-trenches) was carried out at Manor House Farm, Brentwood Road, Bulphan, Upminster, Essex in advance of the construction of storage units, a stable yard and six residential dwellings. The evaluation uncovered the remains of a collection of nineteenth-century cow sheds which formerly stood at this site.

2 **Introduction** (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Manor House Farm, Brentwood Road, Bulphan, Upminster, Essex which was carried out on 25th-26th January 2018. The work was commissioned by Michael Norcross of Smart Planning Ltd in advance of the construction of storage units, a stable yard and six residential dwellings and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Richard Havis 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 historic building-recording, archaeological trial trenching and excavation detailing the required archaeological work, written by Richard Havis (ECCPS 2015), 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 Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex.

![Map 1](image)
Cartographic evidence shows that the proposed development will impact on historic farm buildings dating to the post-medieval period associated with Wick House, a house formerly standing at this site which was extant from at least the early nineteenth century (see Map 1 above). There is also the potential of encountering remains of a much earlier farm complex on the site. During the nineteenth century, a complex of cow sheds was erected on the site (see Map 2 below). According to the present owner of the property, these cow sheds burnt down during the 1950s, and a new barn was built in their stead.

The EHER shows that a World War II road barrier existed to the north of the site on Doesgate Lane (EHER 21503) associated with a bombing decoy airfield further to the east (EHER 16682).

4  **Aim**  
The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to ascertain the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site.

5  **Results**  (Figs 2-3, photographs 1-2)  
Six trial-trenches totalling 177m in length were machine excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

**Trench 1 (T1): 27m long by 1.8m wide**

T1 was excavated through a layer of modern concrete and crush (L5, c 0.19-0.25m thick) and subsoil (L2, c 0.18-0.21m thick) onto natural (L3, encountered at a depth of c 0.39-0.44m bgl). T1 was excavated within the barn which now stands at this site.

Post-medieval/modern building foundations F1 were uncovered at the eastern end of the trench. They comprised of a brick structure with concrete flooring and a ceramic drain pipe. Another modern building foundation, F2, also composed of a brick structure and concrete flooring, was uncovered at the western end of the trench.

**Trench 2 (T2): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

T2 was excavated through L5 (c 0.17-0.21m thick) and a modern chalk yard surface (L6, c 0.15-0.22m thick) onto L3. The trench was truncated by modern services and disturbance in several places. T2 was excavated within the barn which now stands at this site.
Modern wall F3 was found towards the northern end of the trench. It was composed of frogged bricks, indicating that it was constructed around or after the mid nineteenth century. Modern concrete surface F4, similar to that of F1, was uncovered midway along the trench. Possibly underlying F4 was F5, a post-medieval/modern gravel surface consolidated with peg-tiles.

**Trench 3 (T3): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

T3 was excavated through L5 (c 0.3-0.32m thick) and L2 (c 0.08-0.14m thick) onto L3.

Post-medieval/modern gravel surface F6, equivalent to F5, was uncovered at the eastern end of the trench.

**Trench 4 (T4): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

T4 was excavated through modern surface/crush (L1, c 0.16-0.23m thick, friable/firm, dry/moist sandy-silt and fragmented rubber overlying tarpaulin and crush) through L2 (c 0.35-0.43m thick) onto L3 (encountered at a depth of 0.58-0.6m bcgl).

No significant archaeological remains were encountered.

**Trench 5 (T5): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

T5 was excavated through L1 (c 0.04-0.09m thick) and buried topsoil (L4, c 0.33-0.44m thick) onto L3 (encountered at a depth of 0.42-0.48m bcgl).

No significant archaeological remains were encountered.

**Trench 6 (T6): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

T6 was excavated through L1 and L2 onto L3.

No significant archaeological remains were encountered.
6  **Finds**
No archaeological finds were recovered.

7  **Discussion**
Archaeological excavations at Manor House Farm uncovered some remains of the cow sheds attached to the former Wick House indicated in OS mapping of the area compiled during the 1890s (see Map 2 above). No other remains of archaeological significance were found.

8  **Acknowledgements**
CAT thanks Michael Norcross of Smart Planning for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with S Carter and A Tuffey. Figures are by B Holloway and S Carter. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Richard Havis.

9  **References**
Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at [http://cat.essex.ac.uk](http://cat.essex.ac.uk).

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<th>Reference</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<td>CAT</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Health &amp; Safety Policy</td>
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<td>CAT</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation at Manor House Farm, Brentwood Road, Bulphan, Upminster, Essex, RM14 3TJ</td>
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<td>CIfA</td>
<td>2014a</td>
<td>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIfA</td>
<td>2014b</td>
<td>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</td>
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<td>DCLG</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
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<td>Brief for historic building recording, archaeological trial trenching and excavation at Manor House, Doesgate Lane, Bulphan, Richard Havis, March 2015</td>
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<td>English Heritage</td>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</td>
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10  **Abbreviations and glossary**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tr>
<td>CAT</td>
<td>Colchester Archaeological Trust</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIfA</td>
<td>Chartered Institute for Archaeologists</td>
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<tr>
<td>context</td>
<td>specific location of finds on an archaeological site</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECC</td>
<td>Essex County Council</td>
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<td>ECCHEA</td>
<td>Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor</td>
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<td>ECCP</td>
<td>Essex County Council Place Services</td>
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<td>EHER</td>
<td>Essex Historic Environment Record</td>
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<tr>
<td>feature (F)</td>
<td>an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain ‘contexts’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>layer (L)</td>
<td>distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modern</td>
<td>period from AD 1800 to the present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natural</td>
<td>geological deposit undisturbed by human activity</td>
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<td>NGR</td>
<td>National Grid Reference</td>
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<td>OASIS</td>
<td>Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>post-medieval</td>
<td>from AD 1500 to AD 1800</td>
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11 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper and digital record
One A4 document wallet containing:
The report (CAT Report 1225)
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

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 Thurrock Museum under accession code, tbc.

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Distribution list:
Michael Norcross, Smart Planning Ltd
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

Colchester Archaeological Trust
Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex, CO2 7GZ
tel.: 01206 501785
e-mail: lp@catuk.org
## Appendix 1 Context list

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context number</th>
<th>Context type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>F1</td>
<td>Building foundations</td>
<td>Brick structure with concrete flooring</td>
<td>Post-medieval / modern</td>
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<td>F2</td>
<td>Building foundations</td>
<td>Brick structure with concrete flooring and wooden posts</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F3</td>
<td>Wall</td>
<td>Constructed from frogged bricks</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F4</td>
<td>Concrete surface</td>
<td>Concrete floor surface</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F5</td>
<td>Gravel surface</td>
<td>Gravel floor surface</td>
<td>Post-medieval / modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F6</td>
<td>Gravel surface</td>
<td>Gravel floor surface</td>
<td>Post-medieval / modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>Modern surface / crush</td>
<td>Friable/firm, dry/moist sandy-silt and fragmented rubber overlying tarpaulin and crush</td>
<td>Modern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Subsoil</td>
<td>Firm, medium yellow/grey/brown silty-clay with &gt;1% tile fleck inclusions and occasional stone piece inclusions</td>
<td>Undatable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L3</td>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Friable/firm, dry/moist medium yellow/grey clay</td>
<td>Post-glacial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4</td>
<td>Buried topsoil</td>
<td>Friable dark brown silty-loam with .2% brick and &gt;2% tile fleck inclusions</td>
<td>Undatable</td>
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<tr>
<td>L5</td>
<td>Concrete / crush</td>
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<td>L6</td>
<td>Yard surface</td>
<td>Chalk surface</td>
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Fig 1 Site location.
Fig 2. Trench results.
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

Printable version

OASIS ID: colchest3-242917

Project details

Project name: Archaeological evaluation at Manor House Farm, Brentwood Road, Bulphan, Upminster, Essex, RM14 3TJ

Short description of the project: An archaeological evaluation (six trial/trenches) was carried out at Manor House Farm, Brentwood Road, Bulphan, Upminster. Essex in advance of the construction of storage units, a stable yard and six residential dwellings. The evaluation uncovered the remains of a collection of nineteenth-century cow sheds which formerly stood at this site.

Project dates: Start: 25-01-2018 End: 26-01-2018

Previous/future work: No / Not known

Any associated project reference codes: 16/02g - Contracting Unit No,

Any associated project reference codes: 15/00183/FUL - Planning Application No,

Any associated project reference codes: THMF16 - HER event no.

Type of project: Field evaluation

Site status: None

Current Land use: Other 15 - Other

Monument type: FOUNDATIONS Post Medieval

Monument type: FOUNDATIONS Modern

Monument type: WALL Modern

Monument type: CONCRETE SURFACE Modern

Monument type: GRAVEL SURFACE Post Medieval

Monument type: GRAVEL SURFACE Modern

Methods & techniques: **Sample Trenches**

Development type: Housing estate

Development type: Farm infrastructure (e.g. barns, grain stores, equipment stores, etc.)

Prompt: Planning condition

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

Project location

Country: England

Site location: ESSEX THURROCK BULPHAN Manor House Farm, Brentwood Road

Postcode: RM14 3TJ

Study area: 6650 Square metres

Site coordinates: TQ 64515 86120 51.549436065118 0.373050007507 51 32 57 N 000 22 22 E Point

Height OD / Depth: Min: 9.6m Max: 10.65m

Project creators

Name of Organisation: Colchester Archaeological Trust

Project brief originator: HEM Team Officer, ECC

Project design originator: Laura Pooley

Project director/manager: Chris Lister

Project supervisor: Ben Hollway

Type of sponsorship body: Developer

Name of sponsorship body: Michael Norcross / Smart Planning Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?: No
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