

# Archaeological monitoring of a cable trench on land at Woodside Green, Great Hallingbury, Essex, CM22 7UP

April 2021



**by Dr Elliott Hicks**

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**commissioned by Ramona Bergland  
on behalf of Gigaclear**

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**CAT Report 1676**

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OASIS summary sheet

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## 1 Summary

*Archaeological monitoring was carried out on land at Woodside Green, Great Hallingbury, Essex during the excavation of a fibre optic broadband cable trench. Woodside Green forms part of a historic landscape which also consists of a number of areas of ancient woodland, and is lined with numerous listed buildings, a number of which are to be recipients of the broadband cable. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, no features were uncovered, although for most of its length the cable trench did not penetrate beyond modern and post-medieval layers. Artefacts dating to the Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern periods were recovered, evidencing activity at the site across these periods.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for archaeological monitoring on land at Woodside Green, Great Hallingbury, Essex which was carried out during 15th to 26th April 2021. The work was commissioned by Ramona Bergland on behalf of Gigaclear during the excavation of a cable trench, 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* (MHCLG 2019).

In consultation with Richard Havis, a written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT (2020) and agreed with ECCPS in advance of the groundworks.

All fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015), 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 excavation* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background includes information from the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The proposed cable trench is located on the edge of an historic landscape consisting of Wall Wood (EHER 17335) and Woodside Green (EHER 17336), both of which are owned by the National Trust. Although not part of it, both of these areas possess a historical importance similar to that of Hatfield Forest, immediately to the east (EHER 17333). Hatfield Forest (another National Trust property) is unique in that it is the only royal forest where many elements of the historic landscaping and coppicing survive in their recognisably medieval form.

Wall Wood existed as a defined woodland as far back as the 13th century. It has substantial medieval earthworks delineating it from Hatfield Forest to the east and Woodside Green to the west. Woodside Green is a rare survival of an historic green, and is enclosed on its western side by a series of historic houses, constituting a form of settlement typical to Essex.

Like the adjacent Hatfield Forest, Wall Wood and Woodside both contain multiple examples of medieval earthworks and landscaping, which together form part of a rare surviving historic landscape.

To the south of Woodside Green, and in close proximity to the proposed cable trench, are Monks Wood and Wallis's Spring (EHER 49510), two further areas of ancient woodland forming another segment of the still extant historic landscape.

Along the edge of Woodside Green lie several listed buildings, many of which are to be the recipients of the fibre optic cable being laid during this project. In total twenty listed buildings are to have spurs of the cable trench excavated into their properties (Fig 2). The buildings are all Grade II listed and vary in date from the 15th to the early 19th century. They include 19th-century workers cottages (EHER 37855, NHLE no 1322659), an 18th-century timber-framed barn (EHER 37847, NHLE no 1322657), a granary (NHLE no 1308530), a 15th-century hall house (EHER 37841, NHLE no 1112012) and multiple timber-framed houses dating from the 16th-18th centuries.

To the southwest of Woodside Green lies a series of cropmarks that have been interpreted as representing field boundaries of an unknown date (EHER 19554).



**Map 1** Extract from Chapman and André's map of Essex (1777) showing Woodside Green and Wall Wood

#### 4 Aim

The aim of the archaeological monitoring was to identify, excavate and record any archaeological contexts revealed during groundworks.

## 5 Results (Figs 2-3)

Between the 15th and 26th April 2021, a CAT archaeologist observed the excavation of trenching to accommodate the new fibre optic broadband cable. The trenching was approximately 3.75 km long, 0.15m wide and 0.4-0.5m deep.

Four layers were recorded. For the most part, the trenching was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.1-0.21m thick, medium grey/brown loam with rare stones) and a modern accumulation layer (L2, c 0.16-0.38m thick, medium yellow/grey/brown sandy-clay with rare stones) and occasionally into natural (L3, medium yellow clay, encountered at a depth of 0.22-0.47m below current ground level). The northwestern section of the trenching was excavated through L1 and L2 onto a post-medieval make-up layer (L4, medium grey/brown silty-clay with frequent CBM pieces).

No archaeological features were encountered.



**Photograph 1** Cable trenching – looking northeast

## 6 Finds

### 6.1 Ceramic and pottery

*by Dr Matthew Loughton*

The watching brief uncovered a small collection of pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) with 12 sherds at a weight of 428g and 0.6 vessels according to the rim EVE (Table 1). The mean sherd weight is 36g.

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	Rim EVE
Pottery	5	75	15	0.06
CBM	7	353	50	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>0.06</b>

**Table 1** Details on the main types of ceramics and pottery

This material was recovered from two layers while a small quantity of material was unstratified (find nos. 3 and 6) (Table 2).

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
L2	Accumulation layer	9	262	29
L4	Make-up layer	1	76	76
US	-	2	90	45
<b>Total</b>		<b>12</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>36</b>

**Table 2** Quantities of pottery and CBM by features and layers

Accumulation layer L2 contained a mixture of later medieval, post-medieval and modern pottery with a handle (29g) from a Mill Green jug (fabric 35) dating to c 1250/1270-1350/1400, a sherd (4g) of post-medieval red earthenware (fabric 40) to c 1500-19th/20th century, and a 19th-20th century Staffordshire-type white earthenware (fabric 48D) bowl? (EVE: 0.06).

Four post-medieval brick fragments with a weight of 220g were recovered from L2 and L4, while a fragment (43g) of Roman CBM (RBT) came from L2. A fragment (19g) of pan-tile dating from the 17th century onwards was unstratified (find no. 6) while there was also an unidentified fragment (71g) of modern CBM which was also unstratified (find no. 3).

## 6.1 Miscellaneous finds by Laura Pooley

A fragment of clay pipe stem, pieces of 19th- to 20th-century bottle glass, a fragment of slag and a piece of iron sheet came from L2, ?L2 and were collected as unstratified finds. All of this material has been recorded in Table 3 below and discarded.

Context	Finds no.	Description	Date
L2	1	<b>Glass:</b> Fragment of clear bottle glass, 6g	19th-20th century
	7	<b>Clay pipe:</b> Fragment of clay pipe stem, 3.3g	Post-medieval
?L2	5	<b>Glass:</b> 1) Fragment of olive green bottle glass, 16g. 2) fragment from the base of a square bottle, with one flat side and one indented side (other two sides missing), blue/green glass, 20g.	19th-20th century
	9	<b>Metalworking debris:</b> Fragment of slag, 62.2g.	Undated
U/S	3	<b>Glass:</b> Fragment of olive green bottle glass, 7g. <b>Iron:</b> Fragment of iron sheet, 84.5mm long, 32.7mm wide, U-shaped in cross-section, tapering from 3.8mm thick along one long edge to 1.4mm thick at the other, broken at one end. Probably of agricultural origin.	19th-20th century

**Table 3** Miscellaneous finds listed by context

## 7 Conclusion

Despite being located in an archaeologically-sensitive area, no significant archaeological remains were encountered, although the narrowness of the cable trench meant conditions were not ideal for observation, and for the most part the trenching did not penetrate beyond modern and post-medieval layers. Finds dating to the Roman, late medieval, post-medieval and modern periods were recovered during the groundworks, however, attesting to activity within the area during these periods.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Ramona Berglund and Gigaclear for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by M Seehra. Figures are by C Lister, L Pooley and E Holloway. 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>

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper <b>8</b> (EAA <b>8</b> )
CAT	2020	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2020	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring of a cable trench on land at Woodside Green, Great Hallingbury, Essex, CM22 7UP</i>
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological monitoring.</i> Updated Oct 2020
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Updated Oct 2020
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>14</b> (EAA <b>14</b> )
Historic England (HE)	2015	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> (EAA <b>24</b> )
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBM	ceramic building material, ie brick/tile
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	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, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
ws	written scheme of investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** none (all finds discarded)

### **Paper record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1676)  
Original site records (finds sheets, sections)  
Photographic thumbnails and log  
Inked sections and illustrations

**Digital record**

The report (CAT Report 1676)  
Photographs, photographic thumbnails and log  
Graphics files

## 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 Saffron Walden Museum under accession code SAFWM: 2021.28

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**Distribution list:**

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Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



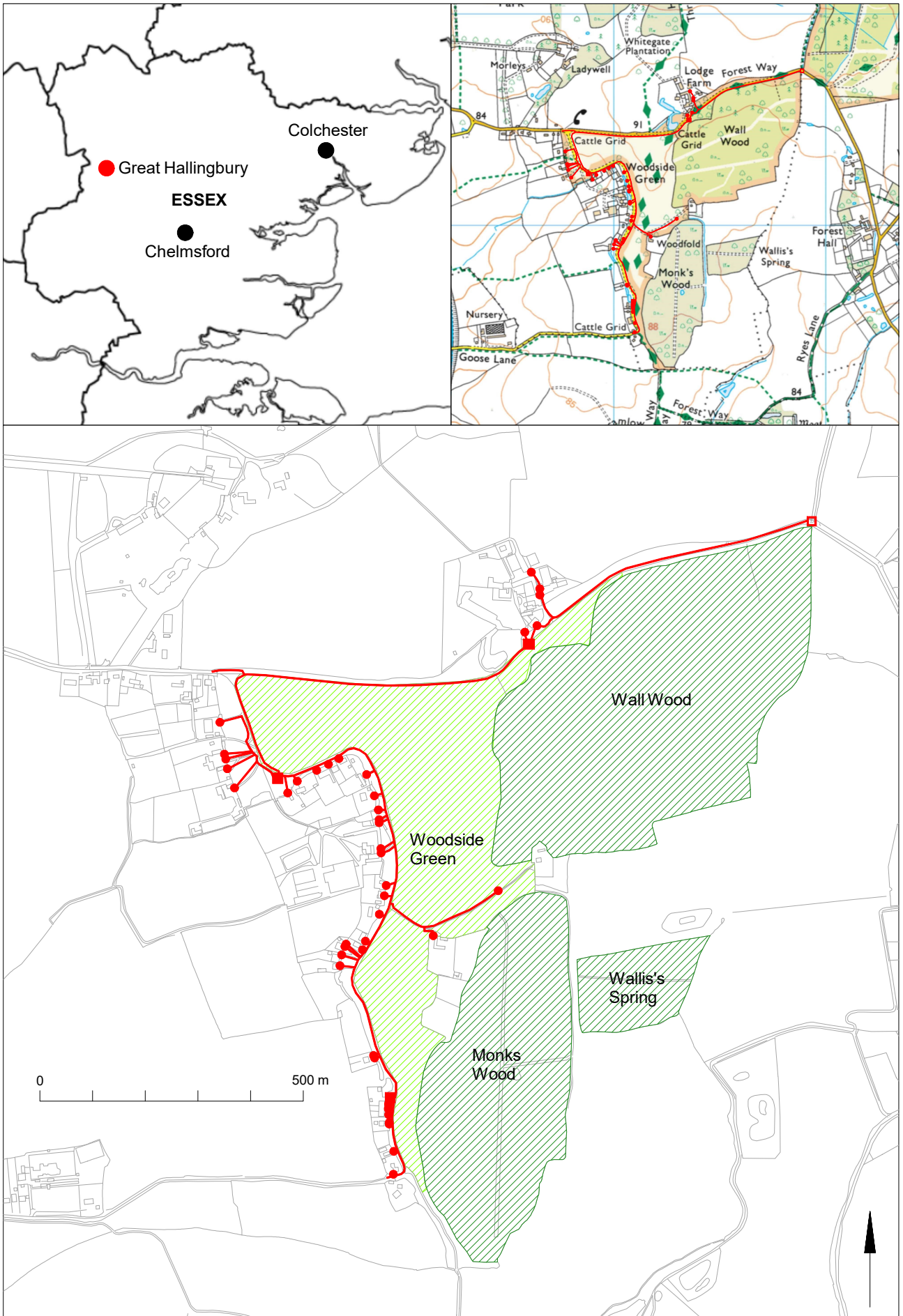
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Checked by: Philip Crummy  
Date: 23.6.2021





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Fig 1 Site location with route of cable trench in red

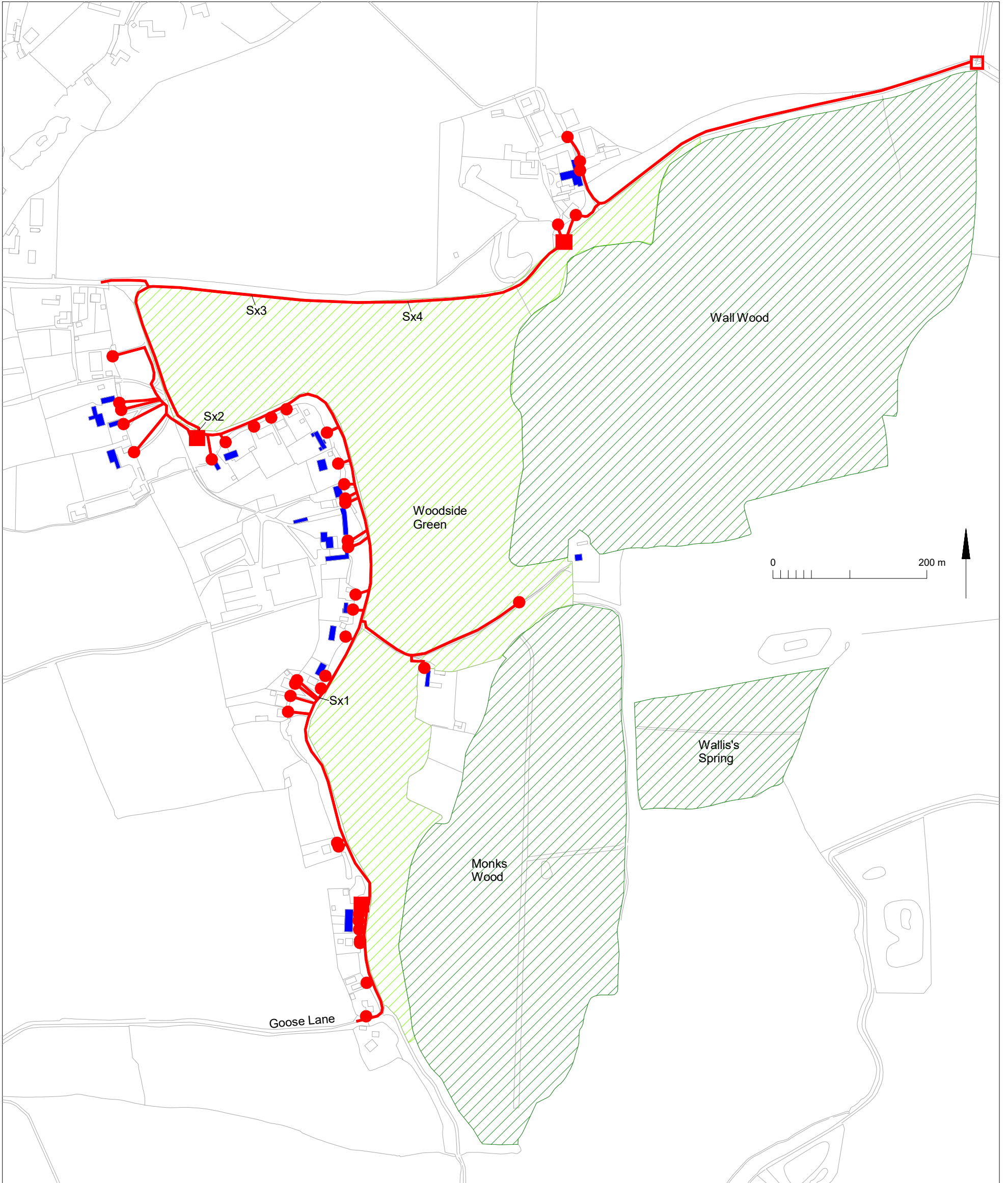


Fig 2 Detailed plan showing cable trench (in red) alongside listed buildings (in blue)

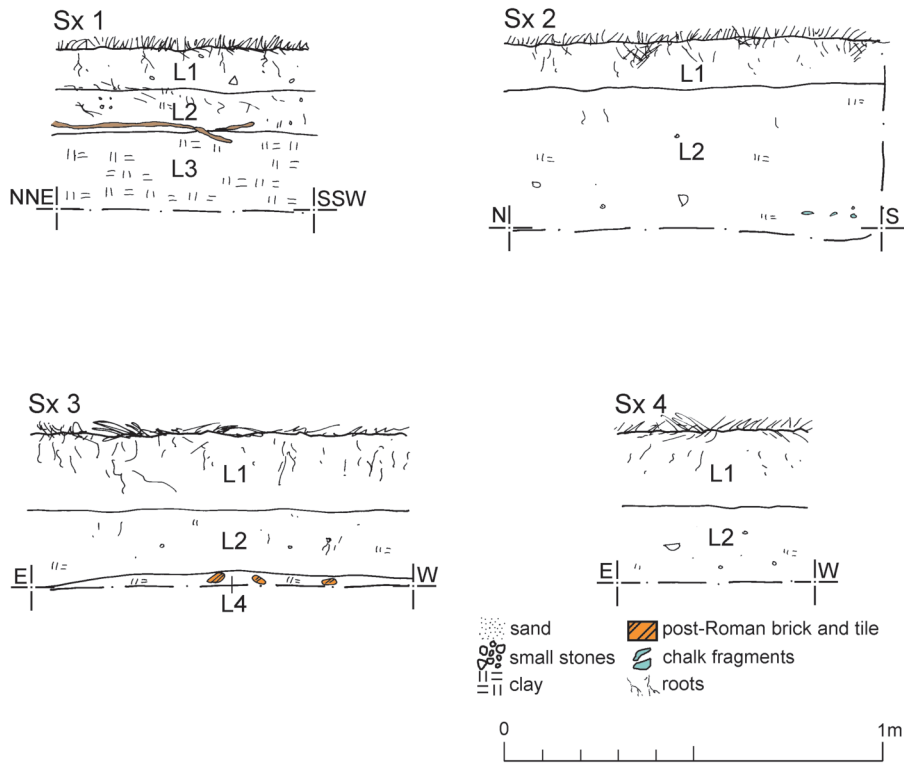


Fig 3 Representative sections.

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## Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring on land at Woodside Green, Great Hallingbury, Essex, CM22 7UP
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring was carried out on land at Woodside Green, Great Hallingbury, Essex during the excavation of a fibre optic broadband cable trench. Woodside Green forms part of a historic landscape which also consists of a number of areas of ancient woodland, and is lined with numerous listed buildings, a number of which are to be recipients of the broadband cable. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, no features were uncovered, although for most of its length the cable trench did not penetrate beyond modern and post-medieval layers. Artefacts dating to the Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern periods were recovered, evidencing activity at the site across these periods.
Project dates	Start: 15-04-2021 End: 26-04-2021
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2020/11h - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	GHWG21 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	SAFWM: 2021.28 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	National Trust land
Current Land use	Woodland 1 - Deciduous native
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

## Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD GREAT HALLINGBURY land at Woodside Green
Postcode	CM22 7UP
Study area	3.75 Kilometres
Site coordinates	TL 52093 18144 51.840684834553 0.20798167968 51 50 26 N 000 12 28 E Point

## Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	none
Project design originator	Mark Baister
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Megan Seehra
Type of sponsor/funding body	Telecommunications company

## Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Digital Archive ID	SAFWM:2021.28
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Paper Archive ID	SAFWM:2021.28

Paper Contents "other"  
Paper Media available "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report", "Section"

### Project bibliography 1

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