

**Archaeological evaluation on land opposite
92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge,
Essex, SS5 6JT**

March 2022



by Laura Pooley

with contributions by Dr Matthew Loughton

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and Oliver Windridge

**commissioned by Olu Olushanu, Soka Enterprises
on behalf of Morenike Investments Ltd**

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land opposite 92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge, Essex in advance of the construction of a new housing estate. Previous archaeological investigations to the south-east of the development site had revealed significant Early Iron Age settlement activity including a trackway, post-built structures, pits, post-holes and a waterhole, along with Romano-British enclosure ditches, extraction pits and two unurned cremations, and a medieval ditch. This evaluation revealed seven prehistoric pits, a Romano-British pit, two post-medieval/modern pits, five undated features (one ditch/pit and four pits) and one natural feature. All seven of the prehistoric pits produced handmade flint-tempered pottery likely dating from the Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. Other finds from the evaluation included two fragments of fired clay, possibly from loomweights.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land opposite 92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge, Essex on the 23rd to 24th March 2022. The work was commissioned by Olu Olushanu of Soka Enterprises on behalf of Morenike Investments Ltd in advance of the construction of 17 residential dwellings with associated groundworks including access, parking and amenity space.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Alison Bennet 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).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation* (ECCPS 2021), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS in advance of the work commencing (CAT 2021).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016), 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 includes extracts of the ECC brief and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

In 2006 the archaeological character of the area around Hullbridge was described as a '...flat clay plain around the headwaters of the Crouch and its tributaries, with concentrations of archaeology, often associated with historic settlement or areas of recent archaeological activity. The relatively low density of early material in the area reflects a lack of work rather than necessarily a lack of archaeology. There are pockets of development in the area and these are likely to have damaged / truncated archaeological deposits' (ECC2006, 47). Archaeological remains within the vicinity of the development site were sparse and included a possible moat (EHER 13861) and the discovery of a bronze spearhead (EHER 9901/9893).

However, from 2018-2020 archaeological investigations at Maylons Farm to the south-east of the development site revealed significant remains (OAE Reports 2179 and 2361; EHER 49519). Excavated over three areas (Area A, B and C), the earliest evidence from the site included residual Neolithic flints and Early Bronze Age pottery, and a large Late Bronze Age pit. In Area A (c 345m south-south-east of the development site) were the remains of several Romano-

British enclosure ditches and numerous extraction pits with finds including Late Iron Age and Romano-British pottery, animal bone and oyster shell. Two small unurned Romano-British cremations, each containing less than 500g of calcined bone, were also located in this area. Area B (immediately adjacent to the south-eastern corner of the development site, see Fig 3) revealed an area of unenclosed Early Iron Age settlement including a trackway, six post-built structures, scattered pits and post-holes and a large waterhole. Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age pottery, calcined bones, possible briquetage fragments and fired clay weights of Bronze Age and Iron Age date were found, along with preserved wood and environmental remains from the lower fills of the waterhole. Within Area C (355m south-east) was a north/south aligned medieval ditch producing moderate quantities of medieval pottery. Several post-medieval to modern field boundary ditches cut across the site, particularly Area B.

4 Aims

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

Specific project aims were to identify evidence of prehistoric occupation, its nature and extent, and to identify evidence of the relationship of any occupation to the remains found to the south of this site.

5 Results (Figs 2-4)

Four trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Each trench was 30m long by 1.8m wide and was stripped through topsoil (L1, c 0.2m thick) and subsoil (L2, c 0.1m thick) into natural (L3, identified at c 0.3m below current ground level). Fifteen archaeological features were sealed by L2 and cut into L3; a full context list with soil descriptions and measurements can be found in Appendix 1.

Prehistoric pottery sherds were recovered from seven pits in Trenches 2-4 (F2, F4, F5, F8, F11, F12, F14). The sherds were small and fragmentary, and no diagnostic pieces were recovered, although the predominance of handmade flint-tempered pieces suggests a date from the Bronze Age to Early Iron Age (see Section 6.1). Three of the pits (F4, F5, F11) were generally small, ranging from c 1-1.5m by 0.69-0.76m and averaged 0.2m deep. The remaining pits were not exposed in their entirety but were generally larger although of a similar depth.

Within Trench 2, irregularly-shaped and shallow pit F15 produced prehistoric pottery, a sherd of Romano-British grey ware and a fragment of possible triangular loomweight. Pit F17 in the same trench also produced prehistoric pottery but included a sherd of 19th- to 20th-century flower pot. Also of post-medieval/modern date was pit F7 in Trench 1.

The remaining five features could not be dated. The pits (F1, F3, F6 and F13) were generally of a similar size and shape to the prehistoric pits. Undated feature F9 could be part of a ditch, but further excavation may prove it to be an elongated pit. Pit F13 produced a very small piece of undated baked-clay; the other four features did not contain any archaeological material.

Feature F10 in Trench 4 was of natural origin.



Photograph 1 Pit F5, looking south-west



Photograph 2 Ditch/pit F9, looking north-east



Photograph 3 Pit F14, looking south



Photograph 4 Trench 2, looking east



Photograph 5 Trench 3, looking west



Photograph 6 Trench 4, looking south

6 Finds

6.1 Pottery and ceramic building material

by Dr Matthew Loughton

The evaluation uncovered a small assemblage of pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) totalling 38 sherds at 233g from 11 pits (Tables 1-2). The mean sherd weight is only 6g and the material, especially the pottery, is heavily fragmented.

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
Pottery	34	127	4	0.00
CBM	4	106	27	-
All	38	233	6	0.00

Table 1 Summary of the pottery and CBM

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
F2	Pit	3	5	2
F4	Pit	3	14	5
F5	Pit	1	1	1
F7	Pit	2	102	51
F8	Pit	1	4	4
F11	Pit	4	5	1
F12	Pit	7	12	2
F13	Pit	1	3	3
F14	Pit	3	10	3
F15	Pit	7	16	2
F17	Pit	6	61	10
Total		38	233	6

Table 2 Quantities of pottery and CBM from specific features

Prehistoric pottery

The prehistoric pottery was classified according to the type of inclusions (flint, sand, grog, organic), their size, frequency and sorting, and is based upon the system developed by Brown (1988) to record prehistoric pottery from Essex. There was a small assemblage of prehistoric handmade pottery and Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery at 32 weighing 114g. (Table 3). The mean sherd weight is very low at 4g and this material is heavily fragmented, meaning that there were no diagnostic or decorated sherds, or identifiable vessel forms. This material was recovered from nine pits (Table 4). Handmade flint-tempered pottery account for the majority of this material alongside occasional sherds tempered with sand, grog and organic temper (Table 3). Given the bias towards flint-tempered sherds, this material in all likelihood dates to the Bronze Age to Early Iron Age, and the lack of diagnostic sherds and vessel forms precludes any more precise dating of this material. There was, however, one sherd of Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery (fabric GTW) from pit F17.

Fabric Group	Fabric description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
GTW	Grog-tempered ware	1	36	36	0.00
HMF	Handmade flint-tempered	19	53	3	0.00
HMFS	Handmade flint and sand tempered	2	7	4	0.00
HMGS	Handmade grog and sand-tempered	1	1	1	0.00
HMGO	Handmade grog and organic-tempered	1	2	2	0.00
HMSO	Handmade sand and organic temper	1	4	4	0.00
HMS	Handmade sand-tempered	6	10	2	0.00

HMT	Handmade temperless	1	1	1	0.00
Total		32	114	4	0.00

Table 3 Summary of the prehistoric pottery

Context	Feature type	No.	Weight(g)	MSW (g)
F2	Pit	3	5	2
F4	Pit	3	14	5
F5	Pit	1	1	1
F8	Pit	1	4	4
F11	Pit	4	5	1
F12	Pit	7	12	2
F14	Pit	3	10	3
F15	Pit	6	15	3
F17	Pit	4	48	12
Total		32	114	4

Table 4 Quantities of prehistoric pottery from specific features

Romano-British pottery

One small sherd of coarse, locally-produced grey ware pottery (fabric GX) was recovered from pit F15.

Modern pottery

One sherd (12g) from a 19th-20th century flower pot (fabric 51B) came from pit F17.

Ceramic building material (CBM)

The small collection of CBM consists of a piece of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile (95g) and a small fragment of post-medieval/modern brick (7g) both of which came from pit F7. Finally, there were two small sherds of baked-clay which from pits F13 and F17.

Conclusion

Table 5 summarizes the dating evidence for the features which contained dateable pottery and ceramics. Most of the pits date to the prehistoric period. One is possibly Romano-British and two are post-medieval/modern.

Context	Prehistoric-LIA pottery	Roman pottery	Modern pottery	CBM	Date Approx.
F2	HMF	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F4	HMF	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F5	HMF	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F7	-	-	-	PT, BR	Post-medieval/modern
F8	HMSO	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F11	HMGs, HMF	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F12	HMF, HMS, HMGO	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F14	HMF, HMS	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F15	HMF, HMSF, HMT	GX	-	-	Romano-British?
F17	HMF, HMFS, GTW	-	F51B	-	Modern

Table 5 Approximate dates for the features

6.2 Fired clay objects

by Laura Pooley

Two small fragments of fired clay object came from pits F14 and F15 in Trench 2. Both were made of silty clay fired to an orange-brown with a black core. The fragment from F14 had no diagnostic features but is similar in appearance to that from F15. The fragment from F15 came

from the corner of an object, and could possibly be part of a triangular loomweight. Fragments of Iron Age triangular weight were found during previous excavations to the south-east of the development site (OEA Report 2361).

SF1, F14, finds no. 12. Fragment of silty clay fired to an orange-brown with a black core, no diagnostic features. 47.4mm long, 33.3mm wide, 20.8mm thick (max.), 22.9g.

SF2, F15, finds no. 10. Fragment of silty clay fired to an orange-brown with a black core, from the corner of an object. 39.9mm long, 32.7mm (side 1) and 23.0mm (side 2) wide, 25.0g.

7 Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation on land opposite 92-96 Windermere Avenue revealed 15 features. Seven prehistoric pits were concentrated in Trenches 2-4 and produced sherds of probable Bronze Age to Early Iron Age pottery. Given the proximity of the development site to Area B of excavations at Maylons Farm (OAE Report 2361), it is likely that these pits, and the pottery from them, date to the Early Iron Age and represent a continuation of activity identified there which included a trackway, post-built structures, scattered pits and post-holes, and a large waterhole. Early Iron Age activity in Area B was sparse towards the western/northwestern edge of the site, but the discovery of seven pits during this evaluation indicates that activity does increase into the development site (see Fig 3).

Late Iron Age to early Roman activity at Maylons Farm was concentrated in Area A further to the south, but a small number of sherds of Late Iron Age and early Roman pottery were recovered from features in Area B, and the fragment of grey ware pottery from pit F15 may similarly relate to this activity. Other finds from the evaluation include two fragments of fired clay, both possibly loomweights, and fragments of both Bronze Age and Iron Age weights were recovered from excavations at Maylons Farm.

The results of the evaluation would suggest that further excavation on the development has a high potential of revealing more archaeological features and finds relating to both Early Iron Age and Late Iron Age/early Roman occupation previously found at Maylons Farm. Particular aims would be to trace F9 (see p2) to determine if it is a ditch or a pit, and if a ditch to recover datable material, and to determine if any structural remains continue from Area B into the development site. However, post-medieval/modern pits F7 and F17 are likely to be associated with agricultural activity and may indicate some truncation of earlier remains.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Olu Olushanu of Soka Enterprises and Morenike Investments Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman, with fieldwork carried out by B Holloway with W Bateson, C Hill, S Veasey and O Windridge. Figures were compiled by C Lister, B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Alison Bennett.

9 References

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| Brown, N | 1988 | 'A Late Bronze Age enclosure at Lofts Farm, Essex', <i>Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society</i> 54 , 249-302. |
| 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 8 (EAA 8) |
| CAT | 2022 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CAT | 2022 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation on land opposite 92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge, Essex, SS5 6JT, by E Holloway</i> |
| CIfA | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation.</i> Revised October 2020 |

CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> . Revised October 2020
CIfA	2014c	<i>Code of Conduct</i> . Revised October 2021
Cotter, J P	2000	<i>CAR Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> . Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.
ECC	2006	<i>Rochford District Historic Environment Characterisation Project</i> . Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch
ECCPS	2021	<i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at Land opp 92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge</i> , by A Bennett
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England	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 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
OAE Report 2179	2018	<i>Malyons Farm, Hullbridge, Essex, Archaeological Evaluation Report</i> , by N Cox & P Lambert, Oxford Archaeology East.
OAE Report 2361	2020	<i>Malyons Farm, Hullbridge, Essex, Post-excavation assessment and updated project design</i> , by N Cox, Oxford Archaeology East

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
Bronze Age (Early)	Early Bronze Age, period from c 2500 – 1500 BC
Bronze Age (Middle)	Middle Bronze Age, period from c 1500 – 1000 BC
Bronze Age (Late)	Late Bronze Age, period from c 1000 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
evaluation	a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork, which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area. This may take the form of an intrusive investigation of a percentage of the site, geophysical or topographical survey. The results of this investigation will establish the requirements for any further work.
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
Iron Age (Early)	Early Iron Age, period from c 600 – 400BC
Iron Age (Late)	Late Iron Age (LIA), period from c 100 – 50 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
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
Neolithic	period from c 4000 – 2500 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the Index of Archaeological Investigation S , http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
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: Small bag

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1785)

ECCPS brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site records

Site digital photographic thumbnails and log

Inked sections

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1785)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Site data

Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The 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 Southend Museum under reference no. HUWA22 and with the Archaeological Data Service.

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Distribution list:

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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 8.4.2022

Appendix 1 Context list

Trench no.	Context	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
All	L1	-	Topsoil	Firm moist dark grey/brown silty clay, 0.2m thick.	Modern
All	L2	-	Subsoil	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay, 0.1m thick.	Undated
All	L3	-	Natural	Firm moist medium yellow clay	Post-glacial
T4	F1	-	Pit	Firm moist light grey/brown clay with blue hues. 1.3m by 1.2m and 0.27m deep.	Undated
T3	F2	1	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay. 2.16m by at least 0.85m and 0.31m deep.	Prehistoric
T3	F3	-	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay. At least 1.02m long by 0.72m wide and 0.17m deep.	Undated
T3	F4	2	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay. 0.98m by at least 0.64m and 0.26m deep.	Prehistoric
T3	F5	3	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay. 1.02m by 0.62m and 0.12m deep.	Prehistoric
T3	F6	-	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay and inclusions of: stone 15%. 1.06m by at least 0.96m and 0.18m deep.	Undated
T1	F7	4	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay. 10.9m long by 0.7m deep.	Post-medieval/modern
T4	F8	6	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 5%. At least 2.82m by 1.17m and 0.15m deep	Prehistoric
T4	F9	-	Ditch or pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 7%. 1.07m wide and 0.13m deep.	Undated
T4	F10	0	Natural feature	Light grey/brown silty clay. At least 1.8m by 1.50m and 0.15m deep.	Post-glacial
T2	F11	5	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay. 1.49m by 0.75m and 0.21m deep.	Prehistoric
T2	F12	8	Pit	Firm dry medium brown clayey and inclusions of: stone 12%. At least 3.14m by at least 1.15m and 0.28m deep.	Prehistoric
T2	F13	7	Pit	Firm dry medium brown clayey and inclusions of: stone 10%. 2.64m by at least 1.33m and 0.37m deep.	Undated
T2	F14	12	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay. 2.12m by at least 1.28m and 0.19m deep.	Prehistoric
T2	F15	9, 10	Pit	Firm moist medium orange/grey/brown silty clay and inclusions of: stone 5%. 4.36m by at least 1.8m and 0.07-0.23m deep.	Romano-British?
-	F16	-	VOID	-	-
T2	F17	11	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 6%. 2.49 by at least 1.03m and 0.2m deep.	Modern

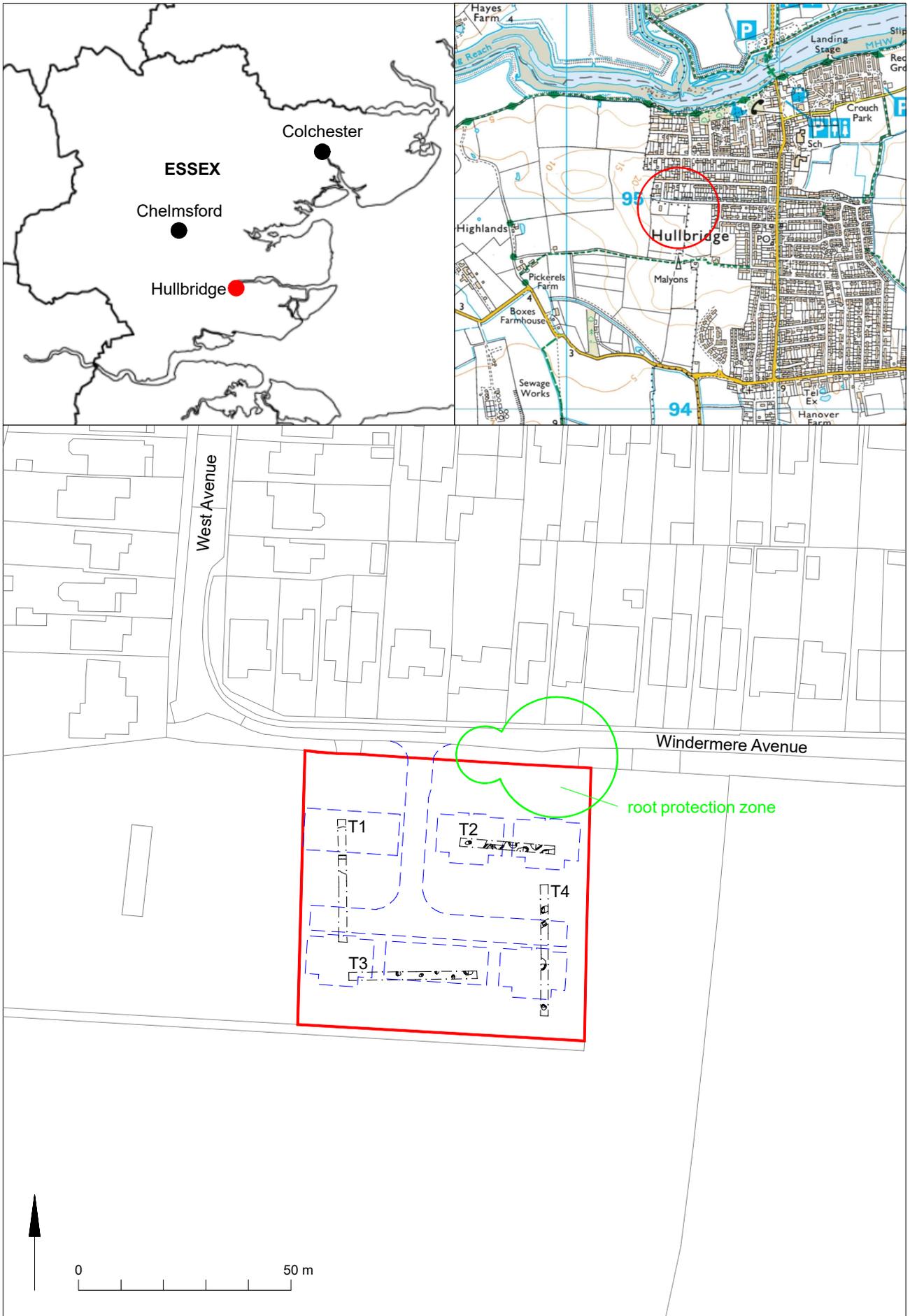


Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to the proposed development (dashed blue).

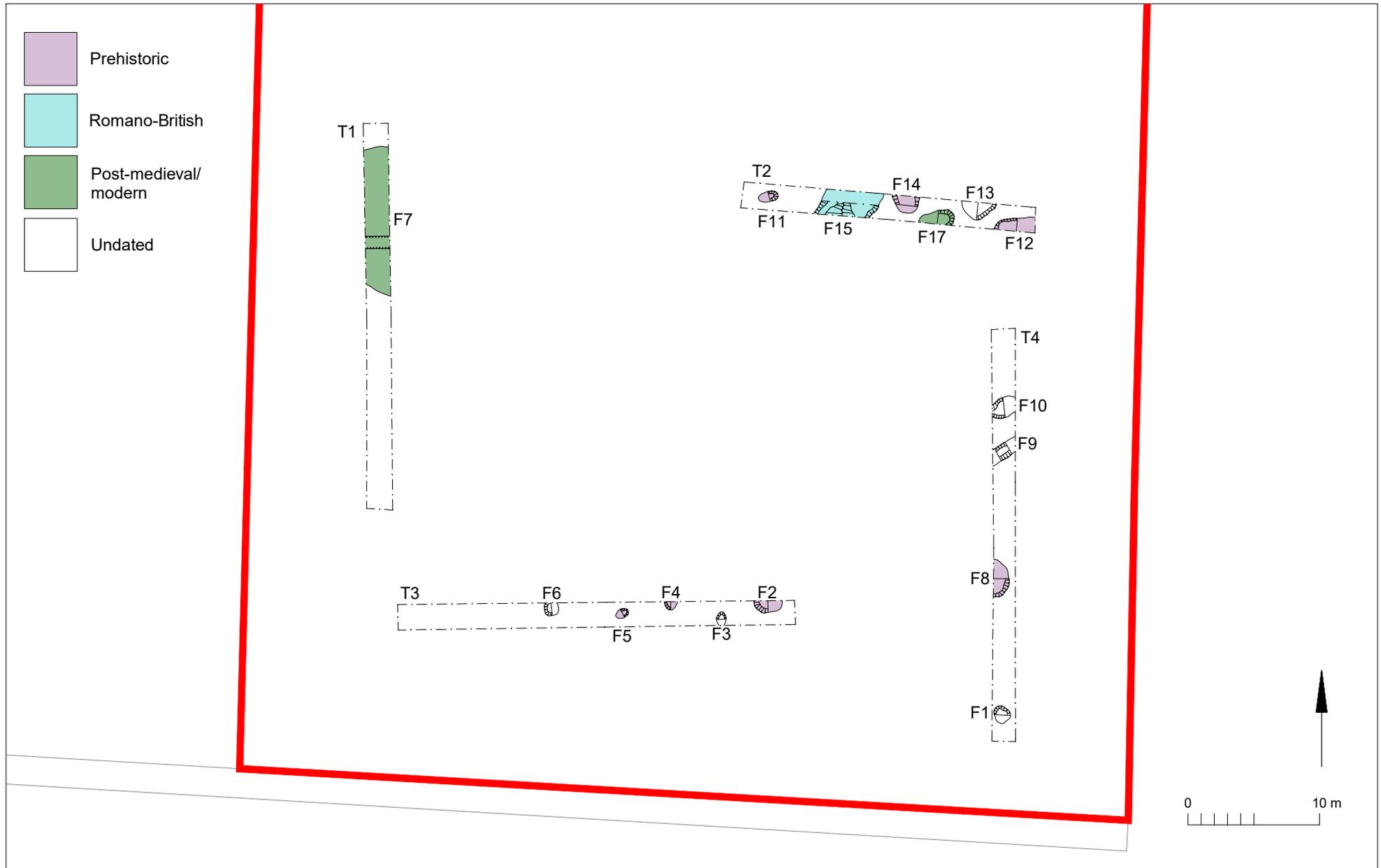


Fig 2 Results.



Fig 3 Evaluation results in relation to excavations at Malyons Farm by Oxford Archaeology East.

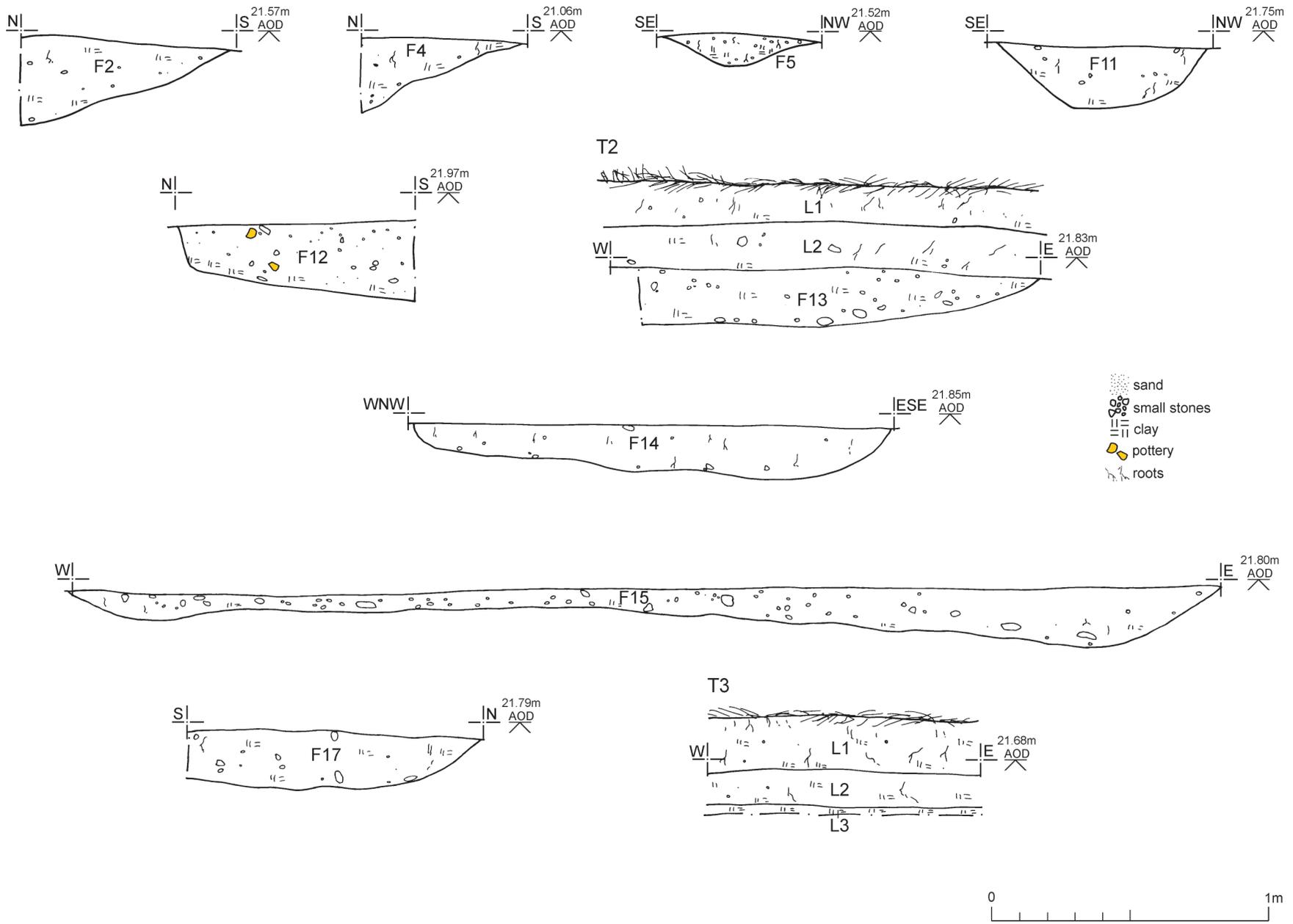


Fig 4 Feature and representative sections.

Summary for colchest3-505074

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-505074
Project Name	Evaluation at land opposite 92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge, Essex, SS5 6JT
Sitename	
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	2022/02r
Planning Id	20/00332/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	23-Mar-2022 - 24-Mar-2022
Location	land opposite 92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge, Essex, SS5 6JT NGR : TQ 80630 94950 LL : 51.624374597942, 0.608101098064582 12 Fig : 580630,194950
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Rochford Parish : Hullbridge
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation of four trial-trenches
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land opposite 92-96 Windermere Avenue, Hullbridge, Essex in advance of the construction of a new housing estate. Previous archaeological investigations to the south-east of the development site had revealed significant Early Iron Age settlement activity including a trackway, post-built structures, pits, post-holes and a waterhole, along with Romano-British enclosure ditches, extraction pits and two unurned cremations, and a medieval ditch. This evaluation revealed seven prehistoric pits, a Romano-British pit, two post-medieval/modern pits, five undated features (one ditch/pit and four pits) and one natural feature. All seven of the prehistoric pits produced handmade flint-tempered pottery likely dating from the Bronze Age to Early Iron Age. Other finds from the evaluation included two fragments of fired clay, possibly from loomweights.
Keywords	Rubbish Pit - LATER PREHISTORIC - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Rubbish Pit - ROMAN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Vessel - LATER PREHISTORIC - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	L, Pooley
HER Identifiers	

Archives	Physical Archive - to be deposited with Southend-on-Sea Museums Service Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Southend-on-Sea Museums Service Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive
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