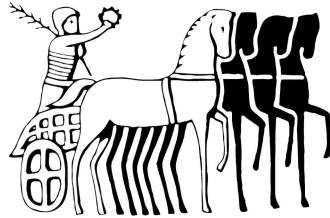


Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1962
issued July 2023**

**Archaeological evaluation at 85 Rayleigh Avenue,
Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 5DL:
July 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/07b
ECC code: RLRAE23**

**Archaeological evaluation at 85 Rayleigh Avenue,
Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 5DL:
July 2023**

NGR: TQ 82981 89822 (centre)

Planning ref.: 23/00266/FUL

**CAT project ref.: 2023/07b
CAT Report 1962**

**ECC code: RLRAE23
OASIS id: colchest3-517146**

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**fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Adam Ronn and
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commissioned by Daniel Hilton, Rushton Homes Ltd

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Issued:	25/07/2023	

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out at 85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, in advance of the construction of two bungalows. The evaluation took place within an area of archaeological significance, lying adjacent to a property where a Late Bronze Age or Iron Age ditch and a pit likely dating to the same period have been uncovered, and in the midst of the findspots of a number of prehistoric artefacts. Excavations revealed a Bronze Age pit, as well as an undatable posthole, an undatable gully and a modern wall foundation.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at 85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex on 13th July 2023. The work was commissioned by Daniel Hilton of Rushton Homes Ltd, and took place in advance of the construction of two bungalows with associated access and parking.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor 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 2021).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at 85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood* written by Mark Baister (ECCPS 2023). A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2023).

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 Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site is Claygate Member (clay, silt and sand).

The proposed development site lies within an archaeologically-sensitive area. It is situated within the area occupied by the Rayleigh deer park during the medieval period (EHER 46858). Some 800m to the north-northeast is the Rawreth Hall Wood, which can be traced back as far as the 16th century, when it formed an enclave within Rawreth Hall Manor, although its woodbank may date to the Anglo-Saxon or medieval period (EHER 13567, EHER 13568). Another historic woodland, New England Wood, which possibly has its origins in the medieval period, is situated approximately 500m to the northeast (EHER 13569). Medieval ridge-and-furrow systems have been identified in a field lying some 125m north-northeast of the site (EHER 46231) and at Edwards Hall Park, 450m to the east (EHER 9793), while a medieval or post-medieval equine ménage was found on agricultural land 655m to the southeast (EHER 47144).

¹ British Geological Survey – <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>

Two historic buildings lie in the vicinity: Gusted Hall, a Grade II-listed, timber-framed house dating to the 17th century or earlier, which is located 1.3km northeast of the site (EHER 35058), and Eastwood Lodge, a Grade II-listed, timber-framed house dating to the 16th century or earlier, situated 85m to the west-southwest (EHER 35150).

A number of prehistoric artefacts have been found within the area. A fragment of a Neolithic polished axe was discovered at Rosemary Cottage, 200m to the west-southwest (EHER 9772). Mesolithic flints were found during building work in Rayleigh Avenue, 215m southwest of the site (EHER 9771). A Mesolithic tranchet axe was also recovered from topsoil at 3 Connaught Road, 600m to the west (EHER 9676).

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken at 87 Rayleigh Avenue, directly to the north of the site, in 2010. Groundworks here revealed a ditch which yielded a sherd of Late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery, as well as a pit which, although producing no artefactual evidence, was thought to be contemporary with the ditch due to its proximity and similar fill. A post-medieval refuse pit was also uncovered; it contained a residual Mesolithic or Early Neolithic flint blade and a further sherd of Late Bronze Age or Iron Age pottery (Bazley 2010; EHER 47641). No archaeological remains or material were observed during a subsequent monitoring project at 89 Rayleigh Avenue, 60m north-northeast of the site, however (Germany 2019; EHER 49714).

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.

5 Results (Figs 2-4)

Two trial trenches were excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Both trenches were 15m long and 1.8m wide.

Trench T1 was cut through a modern hardcore or demolition layer (L1, c 0.21-0.25m thick), and a layer of buried soil (L2, c 0.17-0.2m thick) onto natural (L4, encountered at a depth of 0.4-0.42m below current ground level [bcgl]). Trench T2 was cut through modern topsoil (L3, c 0.09-0.18m thick) and L2 (c 0.09-0.15m thick) onto L4 (c 0.25-0.31m bcgl).

Trench 1

Pit F6 was uncovered at the centre of the trench. The feature extended beyond the limit of excavation and so its full dimensions could not be determined. However, the part that was exposed proved to have a steep-sided U-shaped profile and was 0.8m wide, 1.89m long and 0.31m deep. In addition, a single sherd of Bronze Age pottery was recovered from this feature.



Photograph 1 T1 trench shot – looking southeast.

Trench 2

Undatable post-hole F1 was located at the western end of the trench. It had a steep-sided, U-shaped profile and was 0.41m wide, 0.42m long and 0.27m deep.

Undatable gully F2 extended through the centre of the trench. It was aligned NNW-SSE, was 0.85m wide and 0.14m deep, and had a shallow, slightly-irregular profile.

Modern digger bucket cut or area of construction disturbance F5 was located to the west of F2.

Modern foundation F4 passed through the eastern end of the trench on a NNE-SSW alignment. It was constructed of frogged brick laid on a concrete foundation.

Natural feature F3 was also excavated.



Photograph 2 T2 trench shot – looking northwest.

6 Finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

The evaluation produced one sherd (38g) of Bronze Age handmade flint-tempered pottery from pit F6 and one modern complete shallow frogged brick (2,253g) with dimensions of 230 mm x 100 x 65 mm from wall foundation F4. The brick was not retained.

7 Conclusion

Excavations at this site revealed a Bronze Age pit. It is likely that this feature represents an extension of activity uncovered at the adjacent 87 Rayleigh Avenue, where a Late Bronze Age or Iron Age ditch, as well as a pit which was likely contemporary with the ditch, were recorded. A gully and a posthole were also excavated, but a paucity of artefactual evidence means that it is not possible to determine their relationship with these other features. A modern wall foundation which represented the remains of the property which previously stood at the site was also uncovered.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Daniel Hilton of Rushton Homes Ltd for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by C Lister, A Wightman and L Pooley, with fieldwork carried out by B Holloway with A Ronn and A Smith. Figures were compiled by B Holloway and S Veasey. 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>

Bazley, M	2010	<i>87 Rayleigh Avenue, Rayleigh, Essex SS9 5DL - An Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . Brockley: Pre-Construct Archaeology Reports
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	2023	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2023	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation and excavation at 85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 5DL</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 2022
ECCPS	2023	<i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at 85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood</i> , by M Baister
Germany, M	2019	<i>Archaeological Watching Brief, 89 Rayleigh Avenue, Leigh-on-Sea</i> (SMR 49714) Archaeology South East
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	2021	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c 500 – 1066
Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
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
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
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'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
Mesolithic	period from c 10,000 – 4000BC
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	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of digital archive

Finds: One pottery sherd

Digital data:

CAT Report 1962

ECCPS Brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Digital photographs

Survey data

Site 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 project ref. RLRAE23 (pottery sherd) and with the Archaeological Data Service.

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Distribution list:

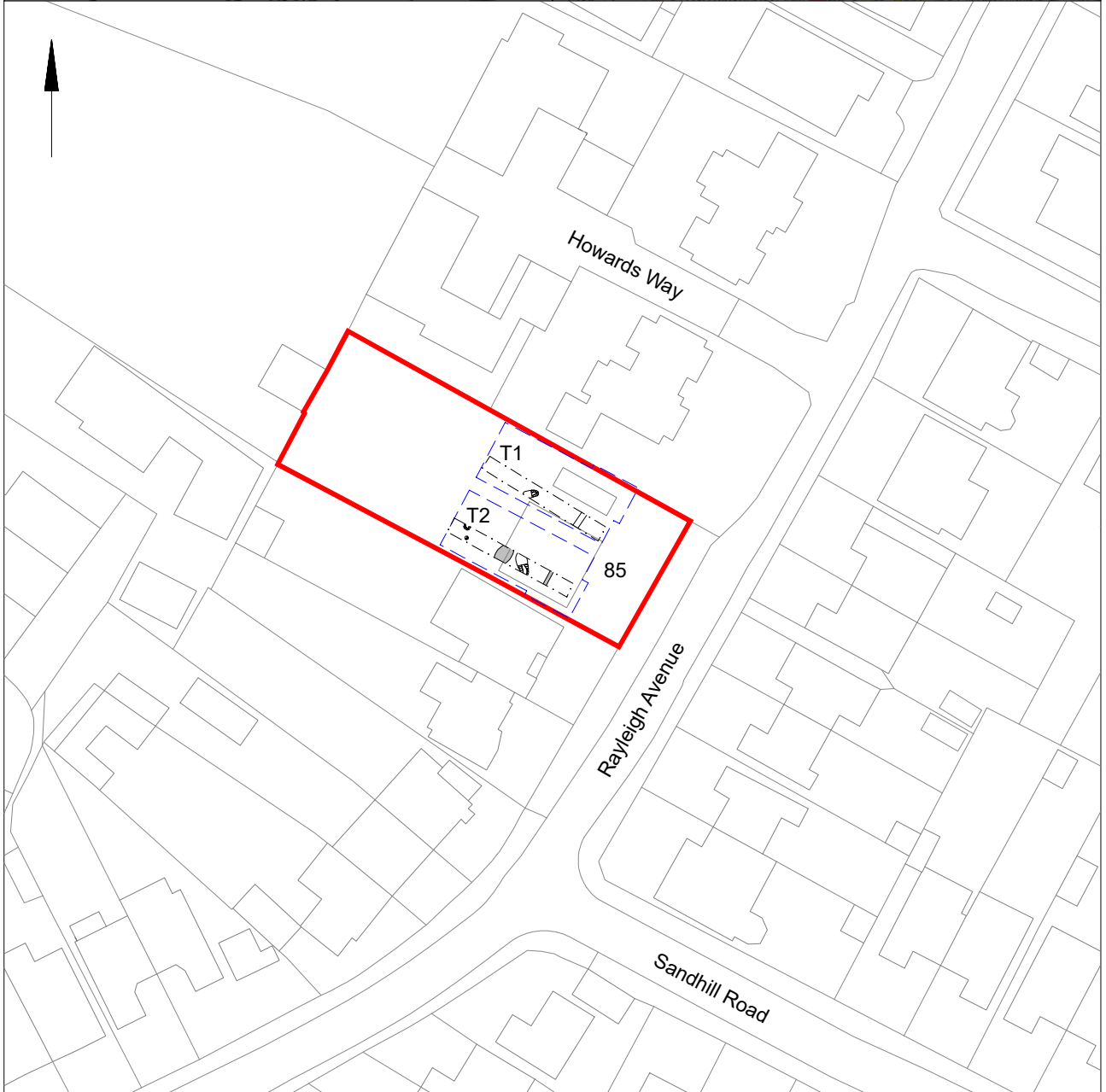
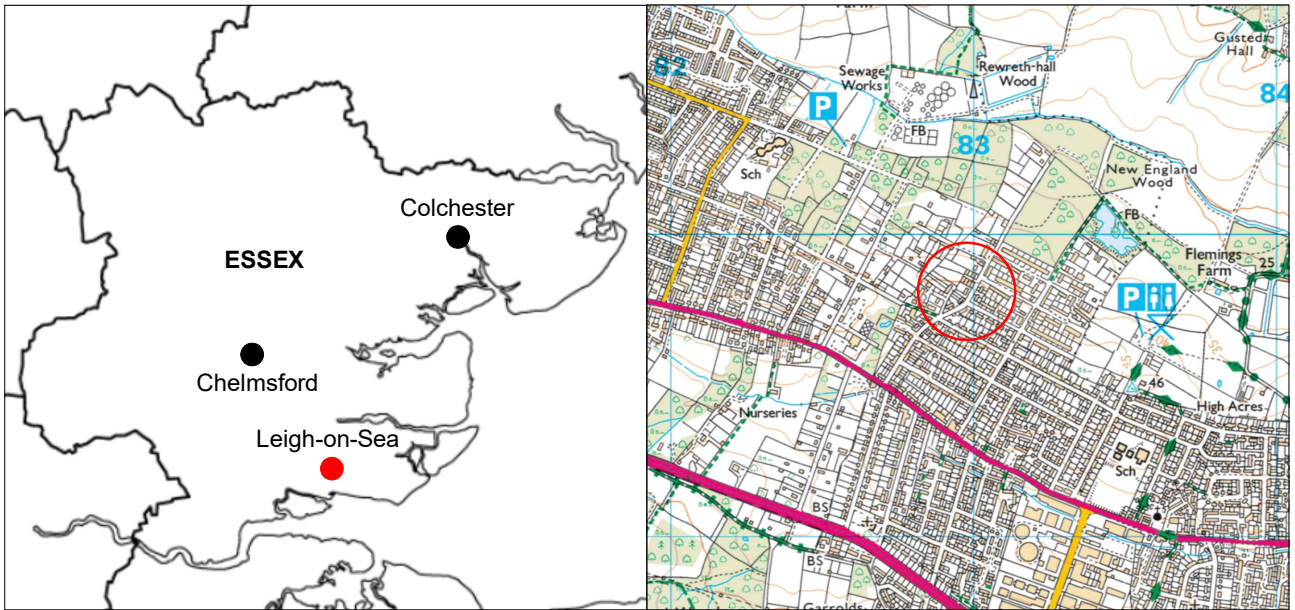
Daniel Hilton, Rushton Homes Ltd

ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Trench no.	Finds no.	Interpretation	Soil description	Period
L1	T1	-	Hardcore/demolition layer	Soft, dry light grey/brown sandy-silt with abundant CBM and concrete and 1% stones	Modern
L2	All	-	Buried soil layer	Firm, moist medium grey/brown sandy-silt	Undatable
L3	T2	-	Topsoil	Firm moist dark grey/brown sandy-silt	Modern
L4	All	-	Natural	Firm moist medium orange sand	Post-glacial
F1	T2	-	Post-hole	Firm, dry medium grey/brown silty-sand with CBM flecks and 1% stones	Undatable
F2	T2	-	Gully	Soft/friable, dry light/medium brown sandy-silt with CBM flecks	Undatable
F3	T2	-	Natural feature	Soft, dry medium grey sandy-silt	Post-glacial
F4	T2	1	Foundation	Constructed out of frogged brick on a concrete foundation	Modern
F5	T2	-	Digger bucket cut/ construction disturbance	Friable, moist dark brown/black sandy-silt	Modern
F6	T1	2	Pit	Friable dry medium grey/brown silty sand and inclusions of: stone 1%	Bronze Age



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

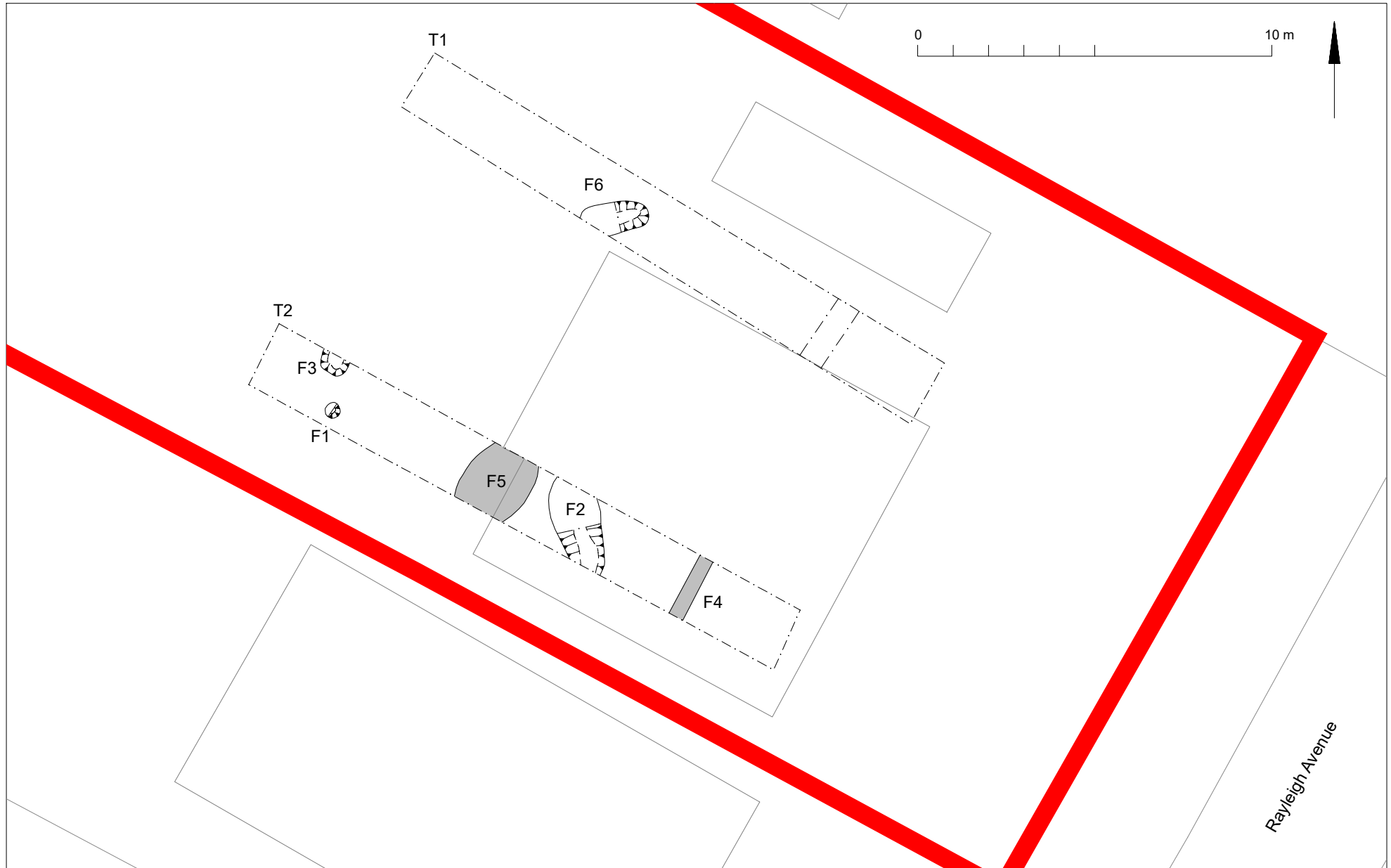


Fig 2 Evaluation results.

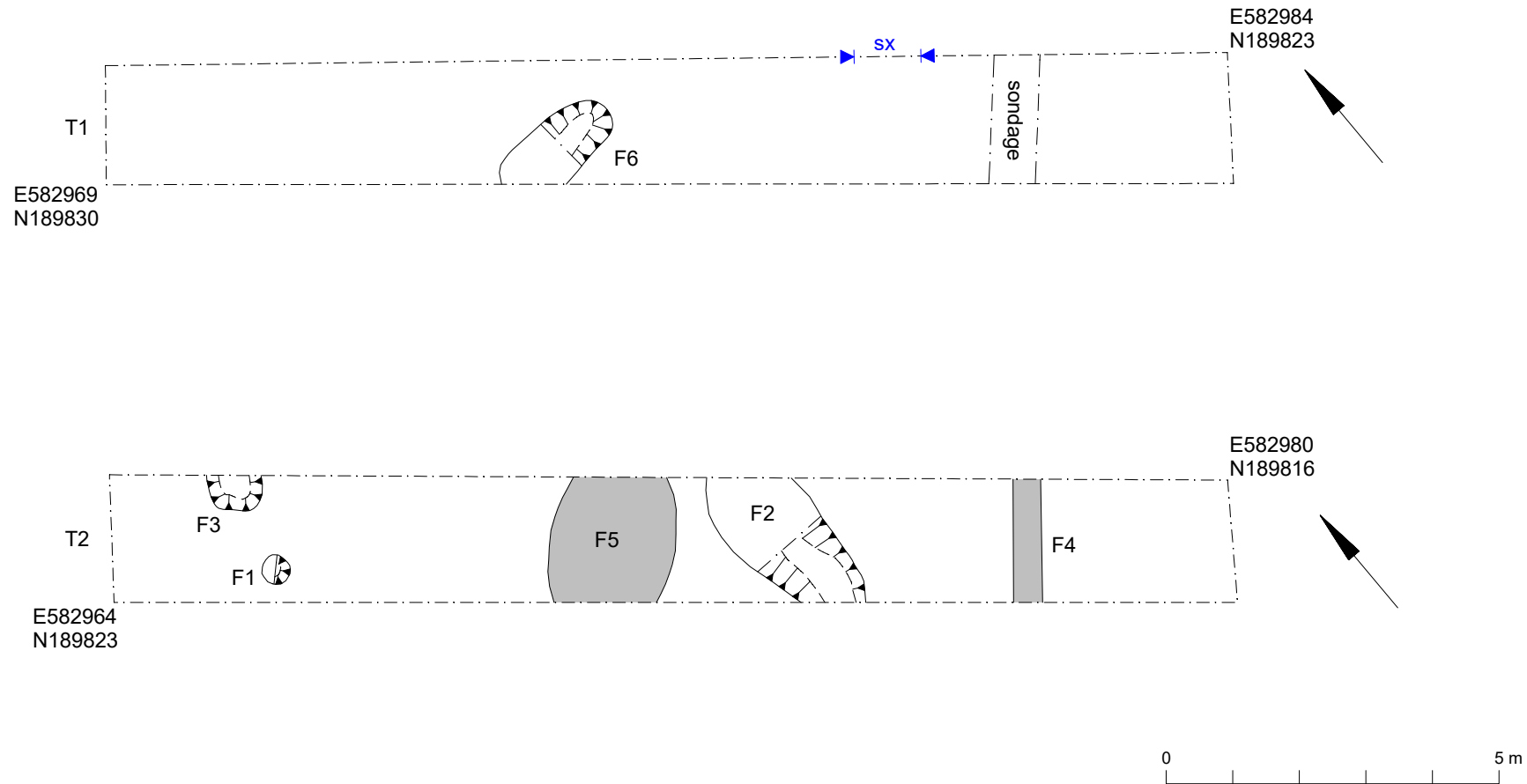


Fig 3 Detailed trench plans

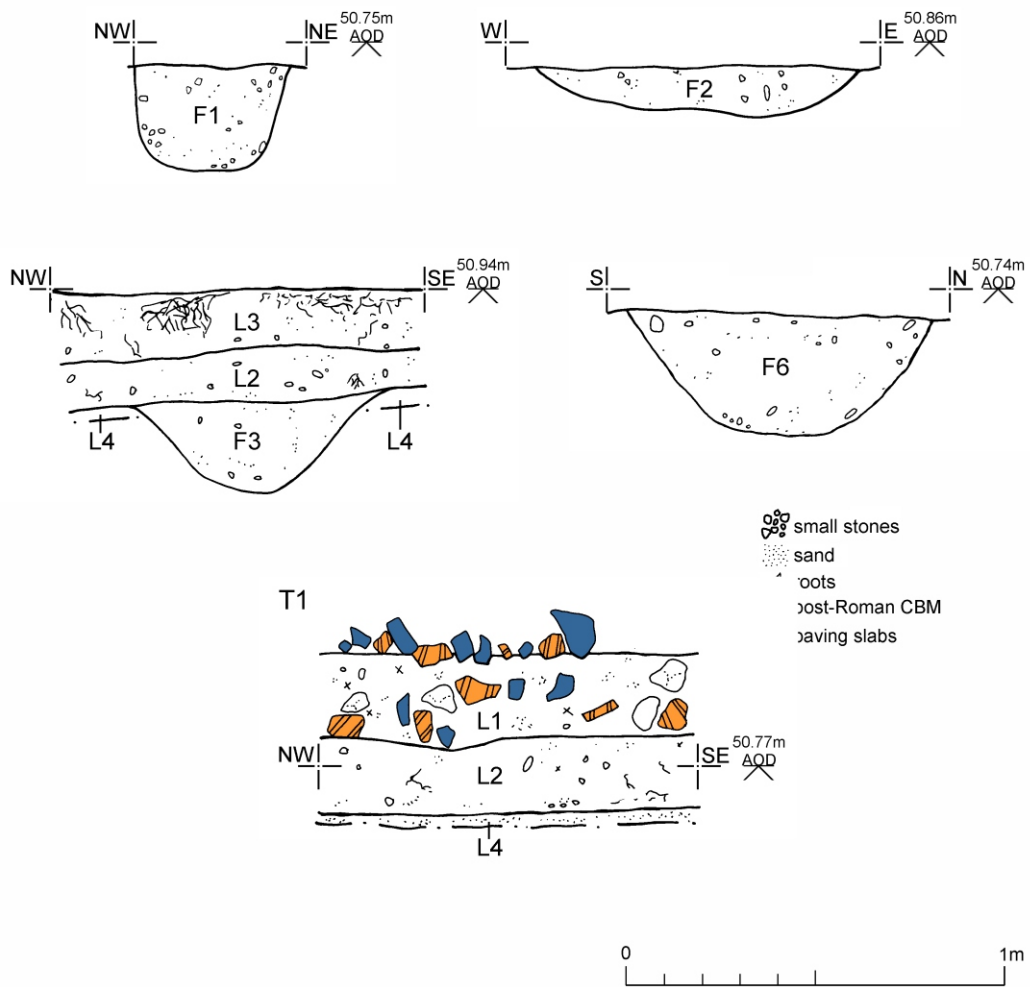


Fig 4 Feature and representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-517146

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-517146
Project Name	Evaluation, Excavation at 85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 5DL
Sitename	85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 5DL
Sitecode	2023/07b
Project Identifier(s)	2023/07b
Activity type	Excavation, Evaluation
Planning Id	23/00266/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Between application and determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	13-Jul-2023 - 13-Jul-2023
Location	85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, SS9 5DL NGR : TQ 82981 89822 LL : 51.577557266957655, 0.63935358043312 12 Fig : 582981,189822
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Rochford Parish : Rayleigh
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation was carried out as per the brief and the WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out at 85 Rayleigh Avenue, Eastwood, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, in advance of the construction of two bungalows. The evaluation took place within an area of archaeological significance, lying adjacent to a property where a Late Bronze Age or Iron Age ditch and a pit likely dating to the same period have been uncovered, and in the midst of the findspots of a number of prehistoric artefacts. Excavations revealed a Bronze Age pit, as well as an undatable posthole, an undatable gully and a modern wall foundation.
Keywords	Post Hole - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Gully - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Natural Feature - None - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Pit - BRONZE AGE - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Sherd - BRONZE AGE - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Brick - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	Private or public corporation Rushton Homes Ltd
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	C Lister
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - RLRAE23
Archives	