

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

CAT Report 515
An archaeological watching brief
at the Royal Mail Braintree Delivery Office,
Lakes Road, Braintree, Essex

Parish: Braintree	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 7671 2287	Site code: Museum accession - (pending) ECC HEM team - BTDO 09 CAT code - 09/4e
Type of work: Watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 27th April-18th May 2009	Size of area investigated: 20 x 20m area, and 41m of linear trenching @ 1.6m wide
Location of finds/curating museum: Braintree Museum	Funding source: Owner
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER and UAD nos: EHER 6407, 6410
Periods represented: modern	
Final report: CAT Report 515 (summary sheet only)	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>Monitoring work was conducted at the site as a result of earlier evaluation work. An area measuring approximately 23 x 15m square (Area 1) and located to the west of the earlier evaluation trenches T1-T2 (CAT Report 499), was monitored during reduction and levelling works prior to the construction of a temporary car-park (Figs 1-2). The car-park surface consisting of patchy tarmac hardtop (L1); this sealed a compacted deposit of dry mix concrete and hardcore (L2) used as bedding for the parking surface. On the eastern side of the reduced area, L2 directly sealed the natural geological horizon (boulder clay L4), but, on the western side of the reduced area, a thin deposit of accumulation material was present (L3), sealing natural. Minor archaeological features in the reduced area were concentrated along its northern edge, and consisted of pits (F14-F17) datable to the 19th/20th century.</i></p> <p><i>Pits F15 and F16 had been truncated by a substantial modern pit (F18). F18 contained modern glass and plastic. The site was previously occupied by warehousing and workshops, and it is likely that F18 is associated with this previous industrial activity.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to the reduction work, monitoring was also undertaken as contractors dug a service trench to re-route an existing sewer run outside the footprint of the proposed building. The new service trench was 1.4m</i></p>	

deep by 500mm wide, and, as with the area reduction, was excavated through the car-park hardstanding (L1) and base layer (L2). There was no evidence of the accumulation horizon (L3) which was seen during the evaluation; this had probably been removed by modern terracing. Most of the trench was excavated through the natural boulder clay (L4). No significant archaeological features were observed in the trench, but there was a modern brick and concrete foundation similar to those found during the evaluation (CAT Report 499). As in the evaluation, all of the archaeological features contained material, including brick and peg-tile fragments, which indicates a post-medieval if not modern date for them.

There was no evidence of medieval activity. If it existed, it was probably removed by modern terracing. The features observed during the watching brief, as in the earlier evaluation, were post-medieval and modern (18th or 19th century) and appear to relate to Parsonage Farm, which occupied the site into the mid 20th century.

The project was commissioned by Andy Clark of The Livemore Partnership on behalf of Royal Mail. Site work was carried out by Ben Holloway and Adam Wightman, and monitored for the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team by Teresa O'Connor who prepared the site brief.

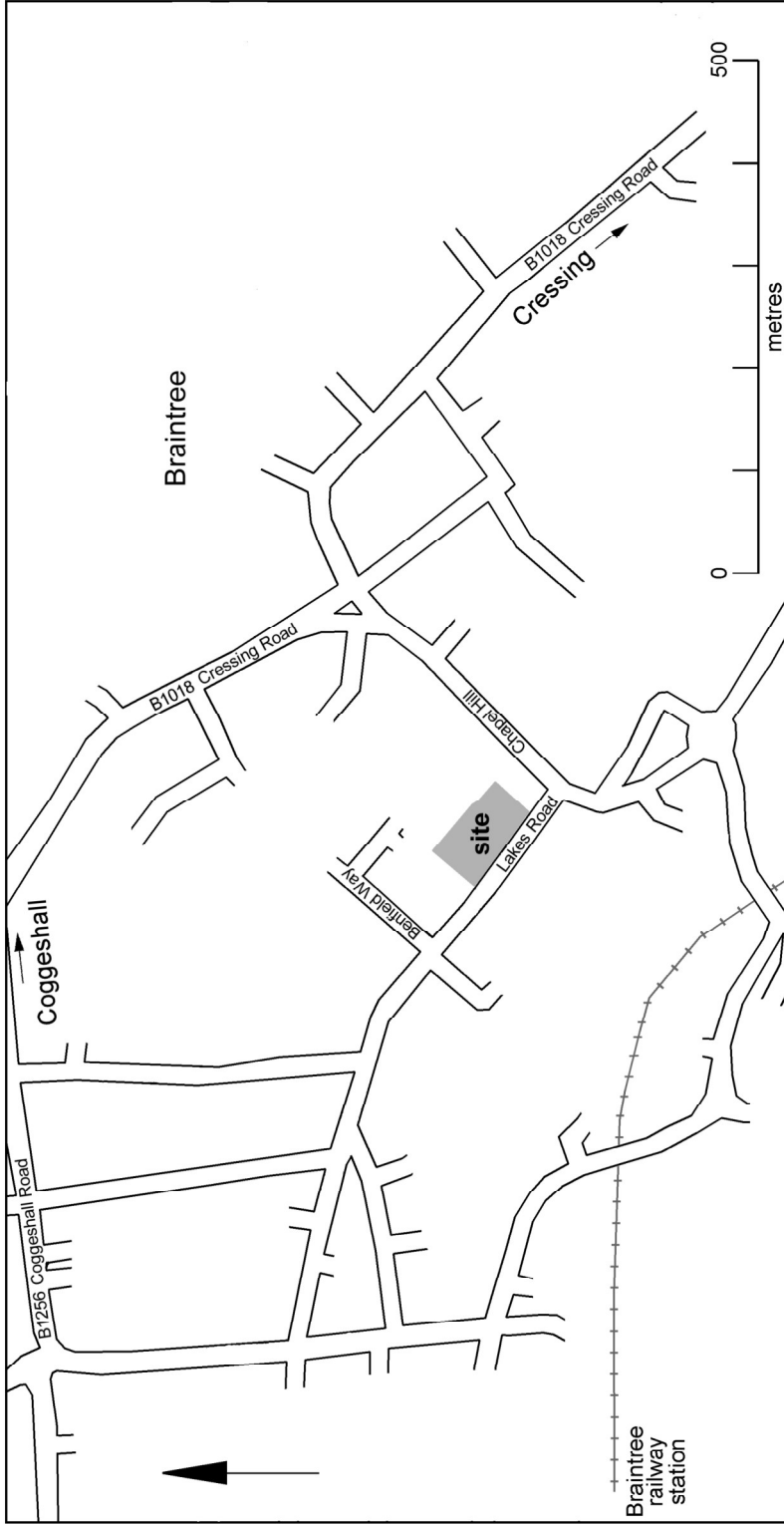
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Report 499

Keywords: -

Significance: neg

Author of summary: Ben Holloway

Date of summary: June 2009



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Fig 1 Site location plan.

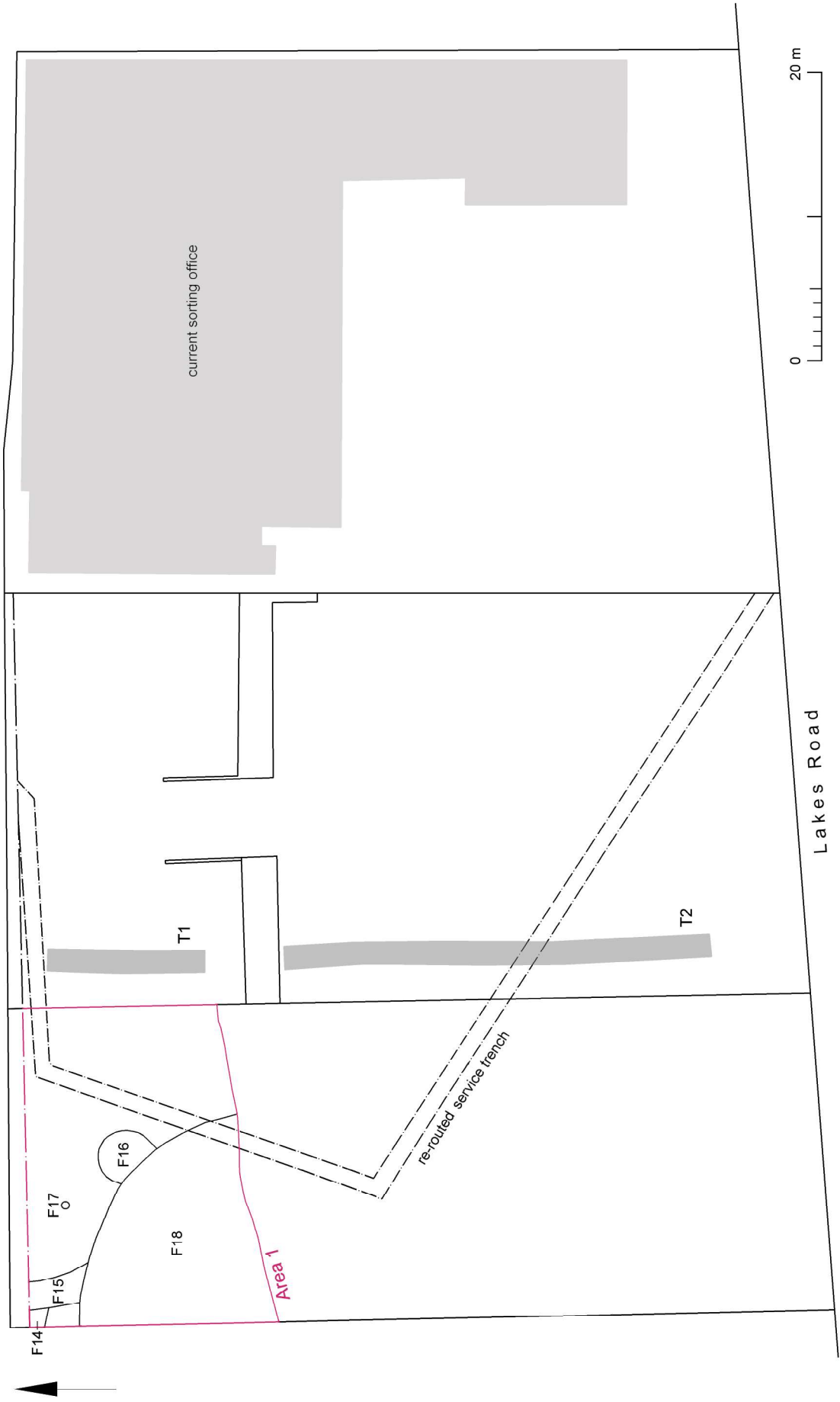


Fig 2 Site plan, showing area of ground reduction (Area 1), the location of the re-routed service trench, and the 2009 evaluation trenches T1-T2.

Site name: Braintree GPO		Site code: BTDO 09	
Interpretation: Post med / modern occupation / make-up.			Layer No. L5
Period: Modern / post-med			
Location / grid ref: over most of strip (varying depth)			
Soil Description (circle or delete as necessary, and add other details)			
Consistence:	very loose	soft	friable firm hard dry moist wet
Colour:	very light medium	dark	yellow orange green grey brown black
Munsell (if used):	2.5YR	7.5YR	10YR
Soil type:	sand	silty	clay loam clay silt sand
Inclusions: flecks	charcoal	oyster	daub brick tile
Inclusions: pieces	gravel	% stone	% tile/brick % pot %
Recording: photocopied (no labels)			
Plan nos.			
sx/profile nos.			
Photos taken	pre-ex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ex post-ex
Finds: Modern pots (none retained so far)			
Bag nos.			
Small find nos.			
Sample nos.			
Notes: (can be continued overleaf) Varies greatly in depth between east and west of site. V. shallow in the east + quite deep in west.			
Matrix		Location and detail sketch	
Completed by: GAW	Date: 30/04/09	tick here if continued overleaf <input type="checkbox"/>	

Site name: Braintree GPO		Site code: BTDO 09							
Interpretation possible linear		Feature No. F14							
Period Post Medieval									
Location / grid ref NW corner of strip.									
Soil Description (circle or delete as necessary, and add other details)									
Consistence:	very loose	soft	friable	firm	hard	dry	moist	wet	
Colour:	very light	medium	dark	yellow	orange	green	grey	brown	black
Munsell (if used):	2.5YR	7.5YR	10YR						
Soil type:	sand	silt	clay	loam	clay	silt	sand		
Inclusions: flecks	charcoal	oyster	daub	brick	tile				
Inclusions: pieces	gravel	%	stone 3 %	tile/brick 6 %	pot 1 %			%	
Recording				photographed + measured in.					
Plan nos.									
sx/profile nos.									
Photos taken	pre-ex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ex	<input type="checkbox"/>	post-ex	<input type="checkbox"/>			
Finds				Pot, tile (leg)					
Bag nos.									
Small find nos.									
Sample nos.									
Notes: (can be continued overleaf)				Only survives in corner of site so could be edge of a large pit, however, edge observable is quite straight so more likely linear. Cut by F15					
Matrix				Location and detail sketch					
Completed by:	Date: 30/04/09			tick here if continued overleaf <input type="checkbox"/>					

Site name: <i>Braintree GPO</i>	Site code: <i>BT00 09</i>
Interpretation: <i>large post med pit.</i>	Feature No. <i>F15</i>
Period: <i>Post medieval (pre victorian)</i>	
Location / grid ref: <i>NW corner of strip.</i>	

Soil Description (circle or delete as necessary, and add other details)

Consistence:	very loose soft friable firm hard dry moist wet
Colour:	very light <u>medium dark</u> yellow orange green <u>grey</u> brown black
Munsell (if used):	2.5YR 7.5YR 10YR
Soil type:	sand <u>silt</u> <u>clay</u> loam clay silt sand
Inclusions: flecks	<u>charcoal</u> oyster daub <u>brick</u> <u>tile</u>
Inclusions: pieces	gravel % <u>stone 10 %</u> <u>tile/brick 3 %</u> pot % %

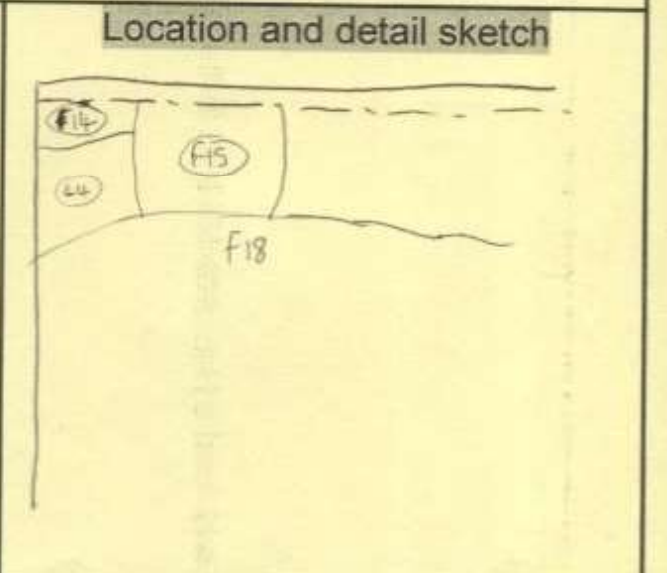
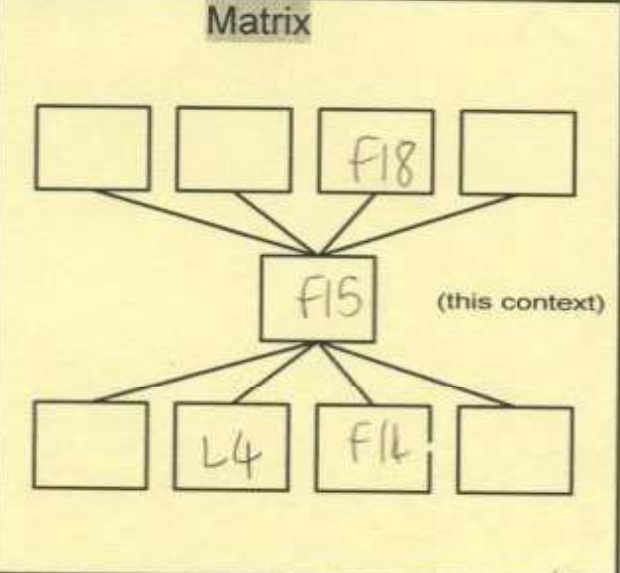
Recording *photographed + measured in*

Plan nos.	
sx/profile nos.	
Photos taken	pre-ex <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ex post-ex

Finds *Pot, tile (peg)*

Bag nos.	
Small find nos.	
Sample nos.	

Notes: (can be continued overleaf)
*large feature (probably pit). Quite a bit of
 rights. Cuts F14 but is probably cut itself, by extremely large modern
 feature*



Completed by: *MW* Date: *30/4/09* tick here if continued overleaf

Site name: <i>Braintree GPO</i>		Site code: <i>BT Do 09</i>	
Interpretation <i>large post med pit (well?)</i>			Feature No. <i>F16</i>
Period <i>Post medieval (pos victorian)</i>			
Location / grid ref <i>Northern area of strip</i>			
Soil Description <small>(circle or delete as necessary, and add other details)</small>			
Consistence:	very loose soft friable firm hard dry moist wet		
Colour:	very light <u>medium</u> <u>dark</u> yellow orange green <u>grey</u> brown black		
Munsell (if used):	2.5YR 7.5YR 10YR		
Soil type:	sand <u>silty</u> <u>clay</u> loam clay silt sand		
Inclusions: flecks	<u>charcoal</u> oyster daub <u>brick</u> <u>tile</u>		
Inclusions: pieces	gravel % <u>stone 15%</u> <u>tile/brick 10%</u> <u>pot 3%</u> %		
Recording <i>photographed + measured in</i>			
Plan nos.			
sx/profile nos.			
Photos taken	pre-ex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ex post-ex
Finds <i>Pot, tile</i>			
Bag nos.			
Small find nos.			
Sample nos.			
Notes: (can be continued overleaf) <i>large pit cut by large modern disturbance. Size + shape could be a well(?)</i>			
Matrix		Location and detail sketch	
<p>A diagram showing feature F16 in a central box, with lines connecting it to four surrounding boxes. The top row contains boxes for F18 and L4. The bottom row contains boxes for L4 and F18. The text "(this context)" is written next to the F16 box.</p>		<p>A hand-drawn sketch of a site plan. It shows several features labeled F12, F15, F17, F16, and F18. F16 is a large feature with a curved boundary. F18 is a smaller feature below F16. F12, F15, and F17 are smaller features to the left and right. The letters "AN" are written in the bottom right corner.</p>	
Completed by: <i>AMW</i>	Date: <i>30/04/09</i>	tick here if continued overleaf <input type="checkbox"/>	

Site name: <i>Braintree GPO</i>		Site code: <i>BTDO 09</i>	
Interpretation <i>Post hole</i>			Feature No. <i>F17</i>
Period <i>Post med / modern</i>			
Location / grid ref <i>Northern area of shp</i>			
Soil Description (circle or delete as necessary, and add other details)			
Consistence:	very loose	soft	friable firm hard dry moist wet
Colour:	very light	<u>medium</u>	dark yellow orange green <u>grey</u> brown black
Munsell (if used):	2.5YR	7.5YR	10YR
Soil type:	sand	<u>silt</u>	<u>clay</u> loam clay silt sand
Inclusions: flecks	charcoal	oyster	daub brick tile
Inclusions: pieces	gravel	% stone	% tile/brick % pot %
Recording <i>photographed + measured in</i>			
Plan nos.			
sx/profile nos.			
Photos taken	pre-ex	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ex post-ex
Finds			
Bag nos.			
Small find nos.			
Sample nos.			
Notes: (can be continued overleaf) <i>quite a large post hole (i) (need a post hole) that is fairly round in shape + quite deep (still easily observable despite much of it being machined away).</i>			
Matrix		Location and detail sketch	
		SEE F16	
Completed by:	Date:	tick here if continued overleaf <input type="checkbox"/>	

Site name: Braintree GPO		Site code: BTDO 09	
Interpretation: Huge modern feature (old hydrocarbon tank?)			Feature No. F18
Period: Modern			
Location / grid ref: Centre / south of strip			
Soil Description (circle or delete as necessary, and add other details)			
Consistence:	very loose	soft	friable firm hard dry moist wet
Colour:	very light medium	dark	yellow orange green grey brown black
Munsell (if used):	2.5YR	7.5YR	10YR
Soil type:	sand	silt	clay loam clay silt sand
Inclusions: flecks	charcoal	oyster	daub brick tile
Inclusions: pieces	gravel	%, stone	%, tile/brick %, pot %, %
Recording			
Plan nos.			
sx/profile nos.			
Photos taken	pre-ex	ex	post-ex
Finds	Modern - rubber shoe sole etc... not kept.		
Bag nos.			
Small find nos.			
Sample nos.			
Notes: (can be continued overleaf) Huge + very deep feature. Cuts post med archaeology. Smells quite organic and contains rotting vegetation. Has a monitoring well in the middle suggesting a pollutant once existed here.			
Matrix		Location and detail sketch	
<pre> graph TD A1[] --- F18[F18] A2[] --- F18 A3[] --- F18 A4[] --- F18 F18 --- B1[] F18 --- B2[F15] F18 --- B3[F16] F18 --- B4[L4] </pre>			
Completed by: GMM	Date: 30/06/09	tick here if continued overleaf <input type="checkbox"/>	

Site name: Proville GPO Site code: BDD 04

Context	F 2	L	u/s	Find no.
Notes:	upper fill <u>middle fill</u> lower fill ? stratification <u>good</u> /poor?			1
Pottery	whole, frags	prehistoric Roman Saxon Med	Post-med Mod ?	
CBM	R Brick, R Tile, box tile, tessera	<u>P-R brick unfroged / froged</u> , <u>Peg tile</u>		
organics	<u>Animal bone</u> , Human bone,	shell,	leather, wood	
other	fe	R Glass, P-R glass, painted plaster, mortar, slate, clay pipe,		
Small find Δ	SF No.	SF type:		
Sample ◇	Sample No.	Sample type:		

Context	F 14	L	u/s	Find no.
Notes:	<u>upper fill</u> middle fill lower fill ? stratification <u>good</u> /poor?			2
Pottery	whole, frags	prehistoric Roman Saxon Med	<u>Post-med</u> Mod ?	
CBM	R Brick, R Tile, box tile, tessera	<u>P-R brick unfroged / froged</u> , <u>Peg tile</u>		
organics	<u>Animal bone</u> , Human bone,	shell,	leather, wood	
other	fe	R Glass, P-R glass, painted plaster, mortar, slate, clay pipe,		
Small find Δ	SF No.	SF type:		
Sample ◇	Sample No.	Sample type:		

Context	F	L 4	u/s	Find no.
Notes:	upper fill <u>middle fill</u> lower fill ? stratification good/poor?			3
Pottery	whole, <u>frags</u>	prehistoric Roman Saxon Med	<u>Post-med</u> / <u>Mod</u> ?	
CBM	R Brick, R Tile, box tile, tessera	<u>P-R brick unfroged / froged</u> , <u>Peg tile</u>		
organics	<u>Animal bone</u> , Human bone,	shell,	leather, wood	
other	fe	R Glass, P-R glass, painted plaster, mortar, slate, clay pipe,		
Small find Δ	SF No.	SF type:		
Sample ◇	Sample No.	Sample type:		

Context	F 16	L	u/s	Find no.
Notes:	<u>upper fill</u> middle fill lower fill ? stratification good/poor?			4
Pottery	whole, <u>frags</u>	prehistoric Roman Saxon Med	<u>Post-med</u> / <u>Mod</u> ?	
CBM	R Brick, R Tile, box tile, tessera	<u>P-R brick unfroged / froged</u> , <u>Peg tile</u>		
organics	<u>Animal bone</u> , Human bone,	shell,	leather, wood	
other	fe	R Glass, P-R glass, painted plaster, mortar, slate, clay pipe,		
Small find Δ	SF No.	SF type:		
Sample ◇	Sample No.	Sample type:		

Context	F 18	L	u/s	Find no.
Notes:	<u>upper fill</u> middle fill lower fill ? stratification good/poor?			5
Pottery	whole, <u>frags</u>	prehistoric Roman Saxon Med	Post-med <u>Mod</u> ?	
CBM	R Brick, R Tile, box tile, tessera	<u>P-R brick unfroged</u> , <u>froged</u> , <u>Peg tile</u>		
organics	<u>Animal bone</u> , Human bone,	shell,	leather, <u>weed</u>	
other	fe	R Glass, P-R glass, painted plaster, mortar, slate, clay pipe,		
Small find Δ	SF No.	SF type:		
Sample ◇	Sample No.	Sample type:		



01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08



09



10



11



12



13



14



15



16



17



18



19



20



21



22



23



24



25



26



27



28



29



30



Photographic log for Braintree GPO WB

Filename	Description
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_01.jpg	Site shot pre excavation view N
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_02.jpg	Site shot pre excavation view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_03.jpg	Site shot pre excavation view S
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_04.jpg	F14/ F15 record shot view N
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_05.jpg	F14/ F15 record shot view N
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_06.jpg	F14/ F15 record shot view N
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_07.jpg	F16 mid strip view N
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_08.jpg	F17 view N
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_09.jpg	General site working shot view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_10.jpg	General site working shot view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_11.jpg	General site shot view S
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_12.jpg	Modern tile deposit view NW
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_13.jpg	North end of reduction area view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_14.jpg	North end of reduction area view SW
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_15.jpg	North end of reduction area view SW
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_16.jpg	Reduced area day 1 view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_17.jpg	Rep sx east edge of site view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_18.jpg	Rep sx west edge of site (modern accumulation) view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_19.jpg	Modern accumulation/ infill view S
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_20.jpg	Modern disturbance F16 view NE
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_21.jpg	Drainage works general shot view E
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_22.jpg	Drainage works general shot view NE
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_23.jpg	Drainage trench sx (natural) view NE
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_24.jpg	Drainage trench shows (drymix infill) view NE
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_25.jpg	Drainage hub view N
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_26.jpg	Excavated and infilled drainage trench view E
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_27.jpg	General site shot temp carpark view SW
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_28.jpg	Rep sx natural horizon L4 view E
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_29.jpg	Pipe laid in base of trench view W
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_30.jpg	Trench sx view NW
BTDO09_PhotoGraph_31.jpg	Trench under excavation view NW