

**Report on an archaeological
evaluation on land at
1 and 2 Broadfield Villas,
Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex
April 2011**

**report prepared by
Mark Baister**

**on behalf of
Stonebond Properties Ltd**

CAT project ref.: 11/4d
NGR: TL 5699 2120
ECC project code: TABV11
Saffron Walden Museum accession code: SAFWM 2011.51



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1 Summary

An evaluation by eight trenches has revealed an absence of archaeologically significant features or remains on the site of a proposed development of seven houses and accompanying infrastructure on land at 1 and 2 Broadfield Villas, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex. The finds from the evaluation, which include glass, pottery and china, are all post-medieval or modern with the exception of one anomalous sherd of Roman pottery. There is no apparent reason why the development should be impeded by issues of an archaeological nature.

2 Introduction

2.1 This is the archive report on an archaeological trial-trenching evaluation carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on behalf of Stonebond Properties Ltd on land at 1 and 2 Broadfield Villas, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex. The site is located at NGR TL 5699 2120.

The site lies to the north of the main Roman road and to the south-west of a previously excavated area within the Priors Green development. A planning application (no UTT/1007/09/OUT) was submitted to Uttlesford District Council in August 2009 with a full application (no UTT/1976/10) in October 2010 for the construction of an access road, seven houses and associated garages, covering an area of approximately 65 x 38m.

2.2 In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with the Colchester Archaeological Trust's *Policies and procedures* (CAT 1999, updated 2008). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008b). Other sources used are *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

3 Archaeological background

The development site is set back from the road frontage of the A120 which is on the line of the Roman Stane Street (EHER no 4698), between Braughing and Colchester. This was one of the major Roman highways in the county, and evidence of roadside settlements of Roman and medieval date has been observed both immediately adjacent to and set back from this road. Evidence of prehistoric occupation of Iron Age, Bronze Age and Neolithic date has been found on a number of areas across the Priors Green development site (EHER no 46298; ECC FAU 2010). An extensive field system has been identified on the northern boundary of the evaluation site. This comprises a parallel ditch system which is likely to be of medieval date.

4 Aim

The intention of the evaluation was to identify the extent and importance of surviving archaeological deposits and assess the requirement for further archaeological excavation needed to mitigate the potentially destructive effects of the development.

5 Methodology (Figs 1-2)

Following a brief which was produced by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM team) officer Richard Havis (ECC 2011), an evaluation was commissioned by David Kwan of Stonebond Properties Ltd. A Written Scheme of Investigation was produced by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT 2011). The evaluation was carried out by CAT in April 2011. A total of 110m of trenching was undertaken (Fig 1). This equates to an 8% sample of the development area.

The site had not been cleared so the trenches were located to avoid large obstacles whilst still evaluating within the footprints of each proposed building (Fig 2). In total, eight trenches (T1-T8) were excavated. In numerical order, starting with T1, their lengths were 15m, 15m, 20m, 20m, 7m, 7m, 20m and 6m.

6 Results of evaluation (Figs 2-3)

The trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator. All eight trenches were excavated into the same stratigraphic sequence (Fig 3); a layer of loamy topsoil (L1) overlay a subsoil of mixed silty clay with frequent irregular stone inclusions and flecks of clinker (L2), which in turn overlay the natural geology of a firm medium yellow/orange clay (L3).

Eight archaeological features were recorded during the evaluation (Fig 2), all of a modern date. Three (F5, F6, F8) were sampled by 50% in order to obtain dating evidence while the other five were dated as modern from surface finds and, therefore, were not excavated.

F1 and F2 lay at the eastern end of T1, with F1 partially covered by the eastern bank of the trench. F8 was located midway along T2. F3 extended into the western bank in the centre of T3. F4 and F7 lay at the southern end of T4. There were no features in T5, but there was a drain run along its entire length, aligned east-west. There was a separate drain run through the centre of T6, aligned north-south, to the west of which were F5 and F6. There were no features in T7 and T8 (Fig 2).

F1, F2 and F3 were all modern pits which produced frequent modern finds, including glass bottles, window glass and modern china, none of which was recovered except for five sherds of pottery. These were later dated to the 19th/20th century.

F4, F5, F6 and F8 were all modern pits which produced coal and cinder fragments, with F4 also producing modern china and F7 producing roof slate. None of these finds were retained. F8 was a small modern pit/post-hole which produced only sherds of modern china, which again were not retained.

7 Pottery report

by Howard Brooks

Introduction

This is the report on the pottery. The archive will be deposited with Saffron Walden Museum (accession code SAFWM 2011.51).

The material

The pottery came from two bags representing two site contexts. The Roman pottery was classified according to *CAR 10*, and the post-Roman pottery according to *CAR 7*. Material from each bag was listed, weighed and identified (Table 1, below).

Table 1: list of pottery by context.

| Context | Finds no | Qt | Wt (in g) | Comment |
|---------|----------|----|-----------|---|
| L2 | 1 | 1 | 22 | Roman grey ware sherd (CAR 10, Fabric GX). |
| F3 | 2 | 1 | 232 | Large rim sherd of large storage jar in late slipped kitchen ware with arched lug handle (Fabric 51a). 19th or early 20th century. There is a very close parallel to this in CAR 7 (255, fig 171.1). |
| F3 | 2 | 4 | 1,071 | Rim and body sherds from large storage jar in Fabric 40 (post-medieval red earthenware). Lid-seated rim, brown glaze with smaller pale brown speckles up to 1.5mm across over whole pot except for lid seating area. Arched lug handle, similar in style to the Fabric 51a pot (above). The fabric contains pale brown inclusions, as in the later type of Fabric 40 quoted by Cotter as dating to 1675-1850. There is an arched lug storage jar in Cotter's Stratified Group 22, which he dates to c 1730-1740 (CAR 7, 351). His example has thumbled decoration around the rim, which this example lacks, and this one has a more pronounced lid seating than his example. Also, this example has a glossy and rather modern feel. Probably 19th century. |

Pottery discussion

It is difficult to draw conclusions from the single Roman potsherd, but it points to some level of Roman-period activity here. The lack of medieval material precludes any comments on medieval activity. Nevertheless, there is an interesting point to be made about the later pottery. There are five sherds from modern pit F3, which derive from two 19th-/20th-century vessels in Fabrics 40 and 51a, identified as large kitchen storage pots. Both pots had arched lug handles of very similar construction. This suggests that they were products of the same pottery manufacturer. Where this was located is problematic. The colour of the glaze is probably too dull for the Wethersfield/ Gestingthorpe/Hedingham potteries, and it may be that these products are from a source in West Essex, although they are probably too late to have been made in Harlow (Davey & Walker 2009, 172).

8 Discussion

The lack of any pre-modern features and the relatively shallow depth (430mm at most) of the undisturbed natural geology is a strong indicator that there is little or nothing of archaeological significance on the site.

There is no obstacle to successful completion of the proposed development. Nothing was found which relates to the previously discovered prehistoric occupation or the medieval field boundary on nearby sites, and the single sherd of Roman pottery was unstratified.

9 Archive deposition

The paper archive and finds are currently held by CAT at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, but will be permanently deposited with Saffron Walden Museum under accession code SAFWM 2011.51.

10 Acknowledgements

This project was commissioned and funded by Stonebond Properties Ltd, to whom CAT is grateful. Site work was undertaken by Adam Wightman. Report written by Mark Baister. Illustrations by Chris Lister. The project was monitored by Richard Havis for Essex County Council.

11 References

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

| | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--|
| CAR 7 | 2000 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-1985</i> , by J Cotter |
| CAR 10 | 1999 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 10: Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , by R P Symonds and S Wade, ed by P Bidwell and A Croom |
| CAT | 1999, revised 2008 | <i>Policies and procedures</i> |
| CAT | 2011 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation on land at 1 and 2 Broadfield Villas, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex</i> , by A Wightman |
| Davey, W, & Walker, H | 2009 | <i>The Harlow pottery industries</i> , Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper, 3 |
| EAA 14 | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 , by D Gurney |
| ECC | 2011 | <i>Archaeological trial-trenching and excavation on land at 1 and 2 Broadfield Villas, Takeley</i> , by R Havis |
| ECC FAU | 2010 | <i>Priors Green, Takeley, Phase 3 mitigation for Area C/E</i> , by M Germany |
| IfA | 2008a | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i> |
| IfA | 2008b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
| MoRPHE | 2006 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage) |

12 Glossary

| | |
|---------------|---|
| AOD | above Ordnance Datum |
| Bronze Age | prehistoric period defined by the introduction and use of metal (bronze) in Britain, c 2,000-700 BC |
| feature | an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain, a floor; can contain 'contexts' |
| IfA | Institute for Archaeologists |
| Iron Age | prehistoric period defined in Britain by the introduction and use of iron, c 700 BC-AD 43 |
| layer | distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil |
| medieval | period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII |
| modern | period from c AD 1800 to the present |
| natural | geological deposit undisturbed by human activity |
| Neolithic | period which saw the introduction of farming practices into Britain, c 4,000-2,000 BC |
| NGR | National Grid Reference |
| post-medieval | after Henry VIII to around the late 18th century |
| Roman | period of assimilation of Britain as part of the Roman Empire, c AD 43-410 |

13 Appendix 1: contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Copy of the evaluation brief issued by the ECC HEM team
- 1.2 Copy of the WSI produced by CAT
- 1.3 Risk assessment
- 1.4 2 x A4 site plans provided by the developer

2 Site archive

- 2.1 Digital photo. record
- 2.2 Context sheets (L1-L3, F1-F8, 8 x trench sketch sheets)
- 2.3 Attendance register
- 2.4 Finds register
- 2.5 Site photographic record on CD
- 2.6 2 x A4 sheets with three representative section drawings

3 Research archive

- 3.1 Monitoring (client) report
- 3.2 Pottery report

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Distribution list:

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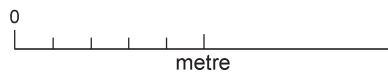
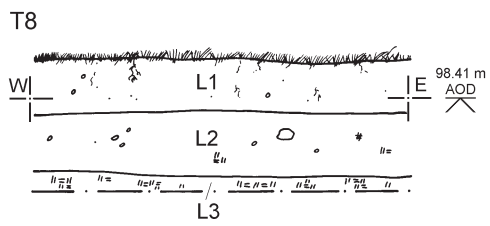
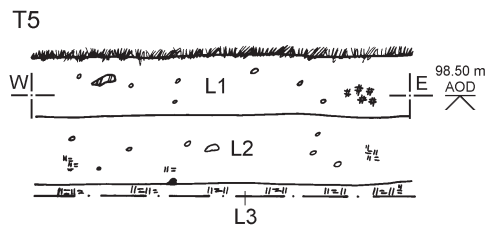
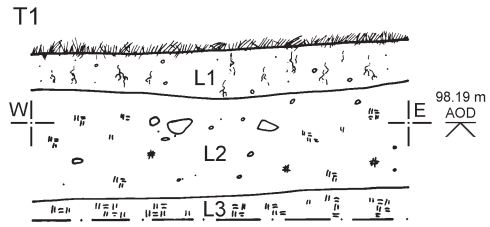


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Fig 1 Site location, showing the evaluation trenches, existing buildings (black) and proposed buildings (grey).



Fig 2 Evaluation results in relation to the existing buildings (black) and proposed buildings (grey).



- sand
- stones
- clay
- charcoal
- post-Roman brick and tile
- coal
- roots

Fig 3 Representative sections.

**Essex Historic Environment Record/
Essex Archaeology and History**

Summary sheet

| | |
|--|---|
| Address: land at 1 and 2 Broadfield Villas, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex | |
| Parish: Takeley | District: Uttlesford |
| NGR: TL 5699 2120 | Site codes: CAT project – 11/4d ECC – TABV11 Museum accession – SAFWM 2011.51 |
| Type of work: Evaluation | Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| Date of work: 26th April 2011 | Size of area investigated: 198m ² |
| Location of curating museum: Saffron Walden Museum | Funding source: Stonebond Properties Ltd |
| Further seasons anticipated? No | Related EHER numbers: 4698, 46298 |
| Final report: | CAT Report 597 |
| Periods represented: | modern |
| Summary: <i>An evaluation by eight trenches has revealed an absence of archaeologically significant features or remains on the site of a proposed development of seven houses and accompanying infrastructure on land at 1 and 2 Broadfield Villas, Dunmow Road, Takeley, Essex. The finds from the evaluation, which include glass, pottery and china, are all post-medieval or modern with the exception of one anomalous sherd of Roman pottery. There is no apparent reason why the development should be impeded by issues of an archaeological nature.</i> | |
| Previous summaries/reports: None | |
| Keywords: modern | Significance: neg |
| Author of summary: Mark Baister (pottery analysis by Howard Brooks) | Date of summary: June 2011 |