

Archaeological evaluation at 'Willowdene', Chelmsford Road, Felsted, Essex

August 2013



report prepared by
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on behalf of
Mr Anthony McGurren

Planning reference: UTT/13/0235
CAT project ref.: 13/07g
HET Project ref: FLWD 13
NGR: TL 6811 1941

Saffron Walden Museum accession code: 2013.awaited



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CAT Report 720
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EHER summary sheet

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1 Summary

Located to the south of Felsted's historic core, the site consists of a broadly rectangular area of overgrown grass and shrubs which was formerly part of the garden of 'Willowdene'. Ten evaluation trenches (total length 200m) positioned within the footprints of five proposed new buildings revealed only a modern pit. There was no archaeological evidence relating to the ?medieval cropmarks in the vicinity.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report on the archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at 'Willowdene', Chelmsford Road, Felsted, Essex (site centre: NGR TL 6811 1941).

The site, currently an area of open ground with grass and shrubs, was part of the garden associated with 'Willowdene'. Proposed work is the construction of five new dwellings and associated driveway and infrastructure.

The Historic Environment Team (HET) of Essex County Council (ECC) were consulted by Uttlesford District Council for a planning application (UTT/13/0235). In response to consultation, HET made the following recommendation to the LPA in line with advice given in National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012):

" L2 Implementation of Archaeological Fieldwork Programme

No development including any site clearance or groundworks of any kind shall take place within the site until the applicant or their agents, the site owner or successors in title has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work from an accredited archaeological contractor in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. The development shall be carried out in a manner that accommodates the approved programme of archaeological work."

A brief detailing the required archaeological work (trial-trenching evaluation) was written by HET officer Richard Havis (HET 2013). The required work, commissioned by Mr Anthony McGurren, was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on August 14th 2013 in accordance with a WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) written by CAT in response to the HET brief and agreed with HET (CAT 2013). Post-excavation work was done in August 2013.

In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was in accordance with standards outlined in CAT 2012, IfA 2008a, and IfA 2008b, and followed the guidance contained in Gurney 2003, and Medlycott 2011 (see references for more detail).

3 Archaeological background

This section is based on records held by Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held by ECC at County Hall, Chelmsford. The site lies on the south of the Felsted historic settlement, adjacent to an extensive complex of cropmarks (EHER 1085). Aerial photographs suggest the remains of a series of features including a series of enclosures (medieval residential plots?) and a probable 'green' or historic lane leading into the western part of the site. The proposed development site therefore had considerable potential for surviving archaeological deposits dating from the medieval and earlier periods.

4 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to record and establish the character, extent, date, significance and condition of any remains and deposits likely to be disturbed by the proposed works. With specific attention paid to the periods mentioned above.

5 Results of the evaluation (Figs 4-10)

This section gives an archaeological summary of the evaluation trenches (T1-T10), with context and finds dating information.

Each trench was excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator. It appears that the topsoil has been scraped up from this site and stockpiled during recent site clearance. The top layer of each trench was therefore an accumulation horizon 200-250mm thick (L1). This was removed by machine to reveal natural boulder clay with occasional patches of gravel (L2).

Only one archaeological feature was revealed – a modern pit F1 in T8

Trenches 1, 4, 7: summary

T1, T4, T7 contained no archaeological features.

Trench 2: summary

T2, located on the south edge of the site, contained no archaeological features, but the eastern end of the trench cut directly into natural L2 because the overlying deposits had been removed by a pond (found partially backfilled here).

Trench 3: summary

T3, located on the east edge of the site, contained no archaeological features. As in T2, the southern end of the trench cut directly into natural L2 because the overlying deposits had been removed by a pond (found partially backfilled here).

Trench 5: summary

T5, located in the centre of the site, contained no significant archaeological features, although there was a modern concrete fence post at its western end.

Trench 6: summary

T6, located in the centre of the site, contained no archaeological features, although there was a modern soakaway in the centre of the trench.

Trench 8: summary

T8, located at the northern end of the site, contained no significant archaeological features, but there was a modern pit (F1) whose excavated upper fill contained brick and coal fragments (not kept).

Trench 8: context and dating

Context	Description	Date
F1	pit	modern

Trench 9: Summary

T9, located in the north-eastern corner of the site, contained no archaeological features. As the trench was positioned close to the site boundary there was some evidence of tree-root activity and perhaps stump removal.

Trench 10: Summary

T10, located on the northern edge of the site and close to the site boundary, contained no archaeological features.

6 Finds

There were no finds. Modern brick, coal and concrete fragments were observed but not retained. This material may be associated with late 20th century dumping on the northern site edge.



Plate 1: T8 view E



Plate 2: T10 view W

7 Discussion

Nothing significant was revealed by this evaluation, the only feature being a modern pit. There was no evidence relating to the cropmark complex (EHER 1085), or of the potential medieval enclosures and probable 'green' or historic lane identified in aerial photography.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Mr Anthony McGurren for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by B Holloway, fieldwork carried out by BH and M Baister. The project was monitored for the ECC HET team by Richard Havis.

9 References

- | | | |
|-------------|-------|---|
| CAT | 2012 | <i>Policies and procedures</i> |
| CAT | 2013 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological trial-trenching and excavation at Willowdene, Chelmsford Road, Felsted, Essex. July 2013.</i> |
| DCLG | 2012 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Dept of Communities and Local Government. |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> East Anglian Archaeological, occasional papers 14 (EAA 14) |
| HET | 2013 | <i>Archaeological Trial Trenching at 'Willowdene' Cambridge Road Felsted.</i> Essex County Council Brief. By Richard Havis |
| 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> |
| Medycott, M | 2011 | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England,</i> East Anglian Archaeological Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24) |

10 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Datum
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by Essex County Council
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain, can contain 'contexts'
fill	the soil filling up a hole such as a pit or ditch
HET	Historic Environment Team (ECC)
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
medieval	period from Norman Invasion of 1066 to around 1530
modern	19th and 20th centuries
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference

11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by CAT at Roman Circus House, Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Saffron Walden Museum under accession code SAFWM 2013.awaited.

12 Contents of Archive

Finds archive

No finds

Paper archive

1 A4 wallet containing:

- this report
- original site record (context and finds sheets)
- section drawings
- trench sheets
- digital photo log
- attendance record
- sundry papers
- digital photos on disc

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Distribution list:

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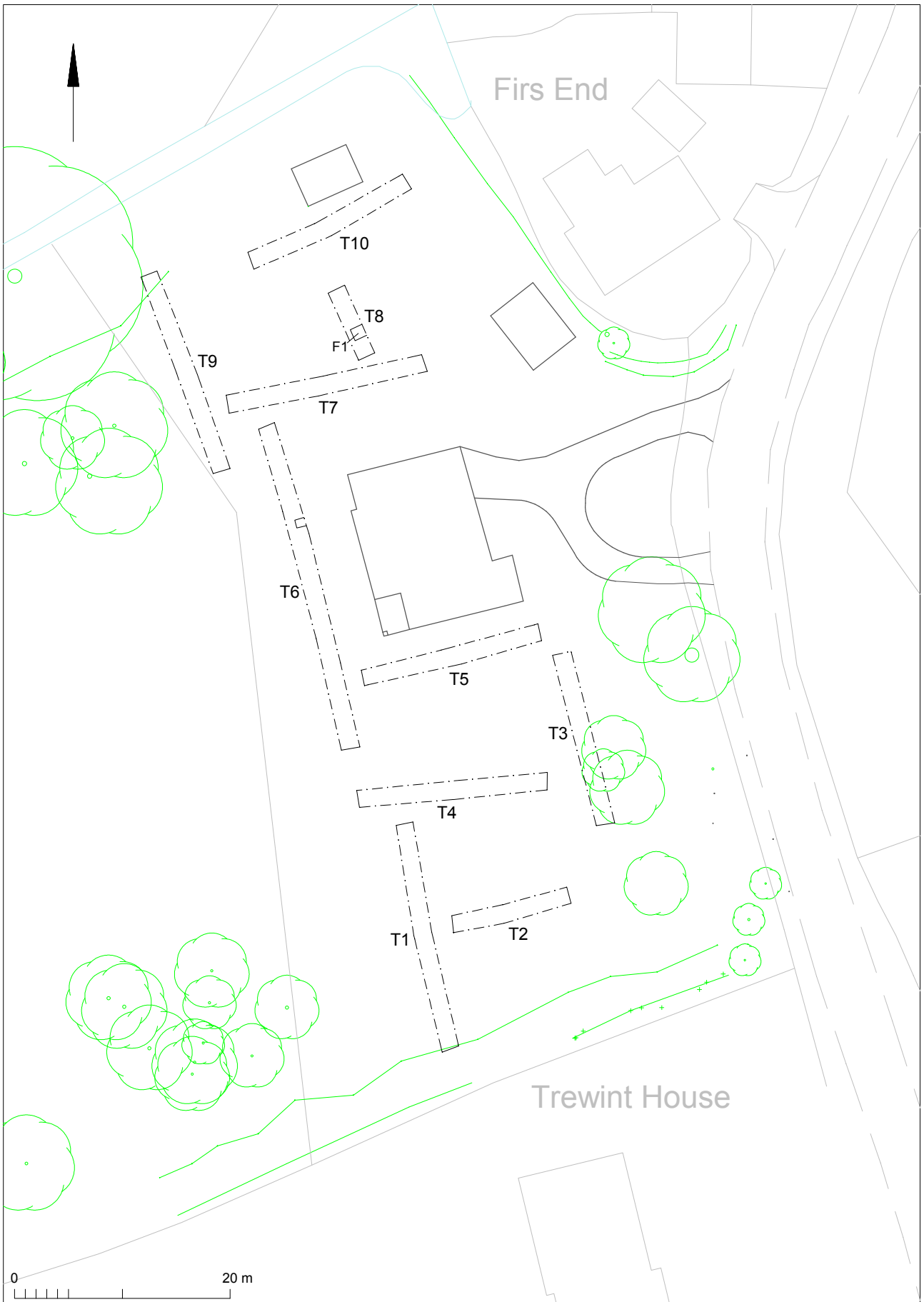
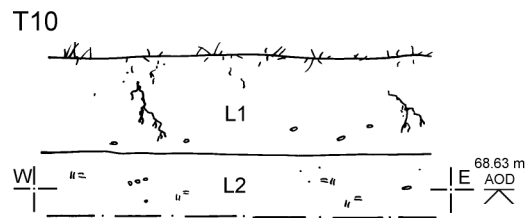
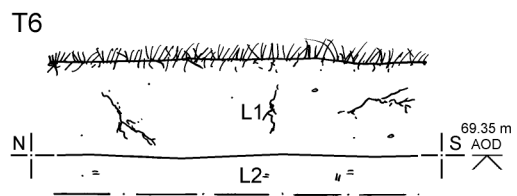
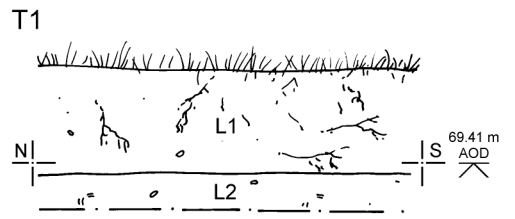


Fig 1 Evaluation results.



sand
 small stones
 clay
 roots



Fig 2 T1, T6 and T10: Representative sections

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: 'Willowdene', Chelmsford Road, Felsted, Essex	
Parish: Felsted	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 6811 1941	Site code: CAT project code: 13/07g HET Project code: FLWD 13
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 14th August 2013	Size of area investigated: 200m
Location of curating museum: Saffron Walden Museum accession code : 2013.awaited	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER number: EHER 1085
Final report: CAT Report 720	
Periods represented: modern	
Summary of fieldwork results: <i>Located to the south of Felsted's historic core, the site consists of a broadly rectangular area of overgrown grass and shrubs which was formerly part of the garden of 'Willowdene'. Ten evaluation trenches (total length 200m) positioned within the footprints of five proposed new buildings revealed only a modern pit. There was no archaeological evidence relating to the ?medieval cropmarks in the vicinity.</i>	
Previous summaries/reports: --	
HET officer: Richard Havis	
Keywords: --	Significance: neg
Author of summary: Ben Holloway	Date of summary: August 2013