

Archaeological monitoring and trial-trenching on land west of High Warren Farm, Lee Chapel Lane, Langdon Hills, Basildon, Essex

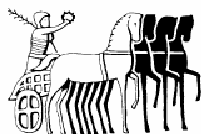
August 2014



Report prepared by Pip Parmenter
and Mark Baister

on behalf of Huggins Bromage Ferguson Ltd.

CAT project ref: 14/06h
NGR: TQ 68102 87038



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CAT Report 787
September 2014

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1. Summary

The proposed development lies on land west of High Warren Farm, along Lee Chapel Lane, Langdon Hills (Fig. 1). Four trial trenches (each 9m long) were excavated within the proposed footprints of four detached houses (Fig 2). These were located to avoid a former road and with the intention to identify a boundary associated with a post-medieval settlement at Nightingales Farm. The strip of the access road into the site was also subject to archaeological monitoring.

No significant archaeological remains were encountered. The only features present were six modern pits and a modern linear.

2. Introduction

This is the report on the monitoring and trial-trenching carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land west of High Warren Farm, Lee Chapel Lane, Langdon Hills, Basildon, Essex (Fig. 1, TQ 68102 87038), on the 13th August 2014. The work was commissioned by Huggins Bromage Ferguson Ltd. following the direction of a brief prepared by Teresa O'Connor, Historic Environment Advisor for Essex County Council (12/5/14). The archaeological brief was issued in response to a planning application for the proposed development of the site, comprising the construction of four detached houses and garages, an access road and parking (Planning Ref: 14/00411/FUL). Work proceeded in accordance with a WSI prepared by CAT (2014) in response to the above brief.

In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with local and national standards as detailed in IfA 2008a, IfA 2008b, MoRPHE, EAA 8, EAA 14, and EAA 24.

3. Archaeological Background

The Essex Historic Environment Record informs us that the proposed development sits within an area of significant archaeological potential (O'Connor 2014), which at one time was part of the Nightingales Farm settlement. This farm appears to be present on Chapman and André maps dating to 1777, and presumably predates these. It is still present on first edition Ordnance Survey maps, so must have been extant in the mid-19th century, at which time it appears to potentially have been moated.

The township of Langdon Hills appears to have been a dispersed settlement as far back as the late medieval period, and Lee Chapel Lane, on which the development site is located, was a historic routeway at this time.

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, in particular with reference to any potential archaeological deposits relatable to the information provided in Section 3 above.

5. Methodology and Results (Fig 2)

This section provides an archaeological summary of the monitoring of the road strip and the excavation of four trial trenches, including features, finds encountered, and dating information.

The four trial-trenches and road strip were excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator with a toothless ditching bucket.

Two layers were encountered across the site. L1 was the remains of a soft, dark, loamy modern topsoil which was heavily rooted. The site had been stripped prior to archaeological work to remove overgrowth and to locate services, as such very little in the way of topsoil remained. L2 was a natural post-glacial clay. Seven archaeological features were identified, all of which were modern in date.

Trench 1

Trench 1 revealed a single large modern pit (F1 – **Plate I**) containing frogged brick. Pit F1 was overlain by a modern topsoil (L1), and cut into the natural post-glacial clay (L2) underlying the site.

Trench 2

Trench 2 contained a modern linear feature (F2), the bottom of which appeared to have been disturbed by rooting. This feature contained glass, the sole of a small shoe and a jar. It was sealed by modern topsoil (L1) and cut into natural underlying clay (L2).

Trench 3

A large modern pit was located along the eastern edge of Trench 3. Frogged brick was observed in this feature, but not recovered. It was sealed by modern topsoil (L1) and cut into natural underlying clay (L2).

Trench 4

Trench 4 contained a large modern cess pit (F4 – **Plate II**) which extended past the limits of the trench. The fill of the cess pit contained fragmented brick and glass. Similarly to all the other features identified at this site, the cess pit was sealed by modern topsoil (L1) and cut into natural underlying clay (L2).

Monitoring

The monitoring of an area of road strip on the site revealed two modern pits (F5 and F6), both containing modern glass and metalwork. Also present in the road strip was F7, a irregular linear feature, or possibly series of cess pits, with plastic and modern glass observed in the fill. F7 had a very similar cessy fill to F4 in Trench 4, and could be a continuation of that feature.

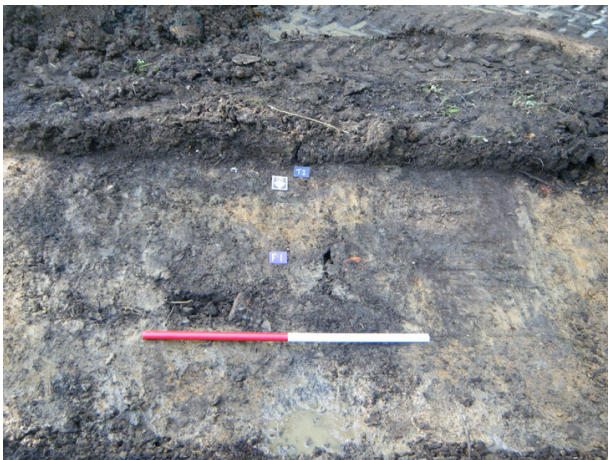


Plate I F1 in trench 1, facing south.



Plate II F4 in trench 4, facing north-west.

6. Finds

Brick and glass were recovered from across the site and were all modern and largely fragmented. Metal objects were recovered from features F6 and F7 in the road strip, and the sole of a small shoe was recovered from the modern linear feature (F2) in Trench 2. All the finds recovered date to the modern era.

7. Discussion

The proposed development site was situated in an area of significant archaeological potential, and covered an area thought to have been occupied by the post-medieval Nightingales Farm settlement. However, no significant archaeological material relating to this settlement or any other archaeological activity was revealed. The site appears to have been used as a dumping ground in recent history, with large amounts of modern glass, brick, and fragments of plastic recovered from across the site. The likely source of this modern dumping is the adjacent housing developments along Lee Chapel Lane, as well as the construction of the main road of Staneway to the north (per conversation with the developer).

This modern dumping, combined with the (in places) heavy reduction of the site to clear foliage and uncover services, has removed any archaeological evidence of Nightingales Farm or any other period in this sites history.

8. Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Huggins Bromage Ferguson Ltd. for commissioning the project. The project was managed by M Baister, and the fieldwork was carried out by M Baister, N Griggs and R Matheson. Figures by M Baister. The project was monitored for Essex County Council by Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor.

9. References

| | | |
|-------------|-------|--|
| EAA 8 | 2000 | Research and Archaeology: a frame work for the Eastern Counties 2 Research agenda and strategy, East Anglian Archaeological Occasional Papers 8, ed. by Brown, N. and Glazenbrook, J. |
| EAA 14 | 2003 | Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Paper 14, ed. by David Gurney |
| CAT | 2014 | Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological monitoring and trial-trenching on land west of High Warren Farm, Lee Chapel Lane, Langdon Hills, Basildon, Essex. June 2014 (CAT WSI By Mark Baister) |
| EAA 24 | 2011 | Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24, ed. by Maria Medlycott |
| MoRPHE | 2006 | Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (English Heritage) |
| O'Connor, T | 2014 | Brief for Archaeological monitoring and trial trenching on land west of High Warren Farm, Lee Chapel Lane, Langdon Hills, Basildon. May 2014. |
| IfA | 2008a | Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation. |
| IfA | 2008b | Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials. |

10. Abbreviations and glossary

| | |
|---------------|---|
| CAT | Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| CBM | ceramic building material (brick, tile, tessera). |
| 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 floor; can contain 'contexts' |
| fill | the soil filling up a hole such as a pit or ditch |
| HEA | Historic Environment Advisor |
| IfA | Institute for Archaeologists |
| layer | an accumulation or deposition of archaeological material |
| medieval | the period from AD 1066 to AD 1500 |
| modern | the period from AD 1800 to present day |
| natural | geological deposit undisturbed by human activity |
| NGR | National Grid Reference |
| OS | Ordnance Survey |
| post-medieval | the period from AD 1500 to AD 1800 |

11. Contents of the archive

Finds archive

No finds retained.

Paper archive

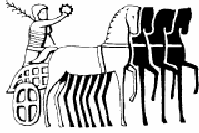
1 A4 wallet containing:
this report
original site record (context and finds sheets)
section drawings
digital photo log
attendance record
sundry papers
digital photos on disc

12. Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive are currently held by CAT at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, C02 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Southend Museum (accession code requested).

Distribution list:

Huggins, Bromage Ferguson Ltd.
Teresa O'Connor, Essex County Council Historic Environment Officer
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

| | |
|--|---|
| Address: Lee Chapel Lane, Langdon Hills, Basildon, Essex | |
| Parish: Basildon | District: Southend |
| NGR: TQ 68102 87038 | Site code: CAT project code – 14/06h HET Code – BALC14 |
| Type of work: Evaluation | Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| Date of work: 13th of August 2014 | Size of area investigated: 36m of trenching plus a road strip |
| Location of curating museum: Southend Museum: accession code requested | Funding source: Developer |
| Further seasons anticipated? No | Related EHER numbers: - |
| Final report: CAT Report 787 | |
| Periods represented: modern | |
| <p>Summary of fieldwork results: <i>In advance of the erection of four detached houses, four 9m long trenches were excavated and a road strip monitored.</i></p> <p><i>No significant archaeological remains were encountered. The site was heavily disturbed and the only features present were six modern pits and a modern linear.</i></p> | |
| Previous summaries/reports: None | |
| ECC Monitor: Teresa O'Connor | |
| Keywords: -- | Significance: neg |
| Author of summary: Mark Baister | Date of summary: September 2014 |

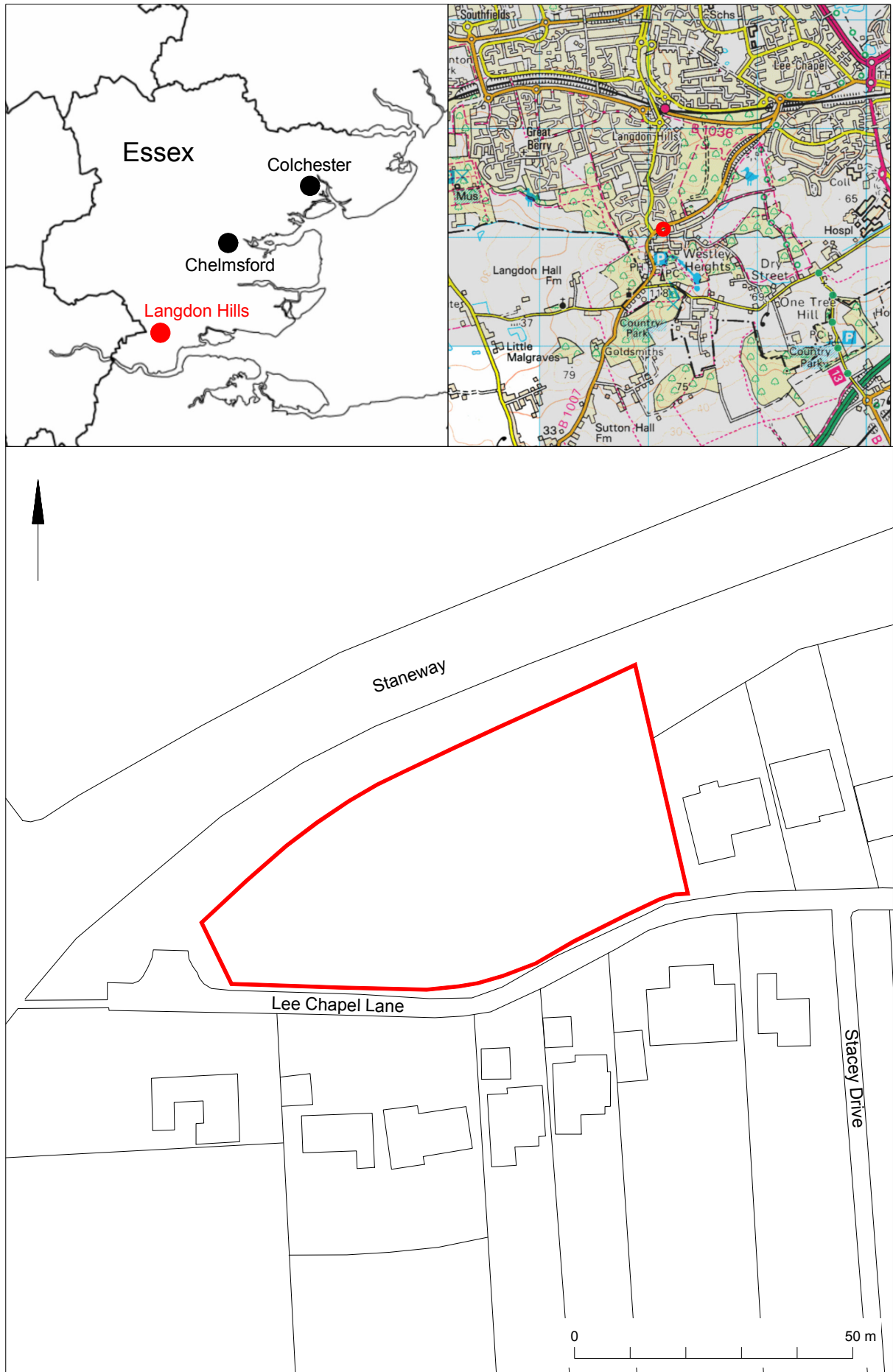
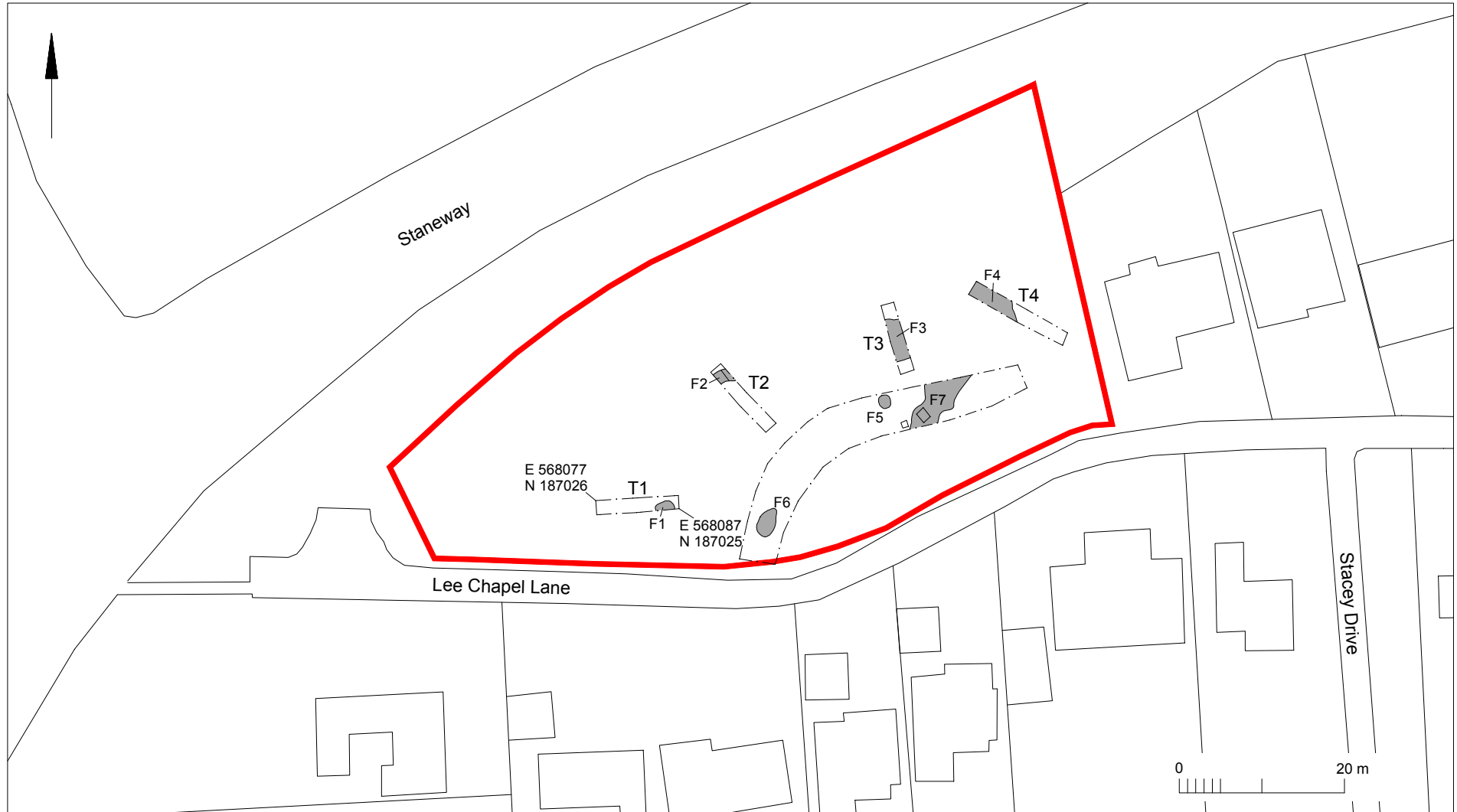


Fig 1 Site location.



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Fig 2 Evaluation results.