

Archaeological monitoring and recording at West Wood, Thundersley, Essex, SS7 3YR

August-September 2017



by **Dr Elliott Hicks**
figures by **Adam Tuffey and Sarah Carter**

fieldwork by **Adam Tuffey**

Commissioned by David Chapman, Essex County Council

NGR: TQ 80660 88091 (centred)
Planning application number: CC/CPT/42/16
CAT project ref.: 17/03f
Southend Museum accession code: SOUMS.A.2017.75
ECC code: CPWW17
OASIS reference: colchest3-278891



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CAT Report1168
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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at West Wood, Thundersley, in advance of the construction of a flood defence bund through the woodland. The development site lies in historic woodland playing host to a post-medieval lodge, and near to areas in which prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon artefacts have been recovered. No significant archaeological remains were uncovered.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at West Wood, Thundersley, which was carried out during 8th August-7th September 2017. The work was commissioned by Dave Chapman of Essex County Council, in advance of the construction of a flood defence bund through the woodland, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Essex County Historic Environment Advisor Richard Havis 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 paragraphs 128, 129 and 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for an archaeological monitoring programme in West Wood, Thundersley*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Richard Havis (ECCPS 2017), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2017).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), 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 watching briefs* (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 draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex.

West Wood extends from the high ground of Daws Heath down to the valley of Prittle Brook. For at least 200 years it belonged to the Dean of St Paul's Cathedral and was managed as a coppice woodland, and a map of 1750 shows that the boundary of the wood has barely changed. Coppicing is a traditional form of woodland management where trees are cut down, allowed to regrow, then cut down again every 10-30 years.

The desk-based assessment (DBA) submitted with the planning application identified the presence of medieval period or earlier earthworks within the woodland that, although probably not being directly affected by the bund would be affected by the keying in trench. The following summary is taken directly from the DBA (Bennett (ECCPS) 2016):

The site of the proposed flood relief bunds currently comprises historic woodland. Historic Earthworks are visible in West Wood, however, the specific placement of the bund on the existing path will avoid damage to these.

Prehistoric activity is evidenced by various finds of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age worked flint finds, including hand axes and other tools. Almost all

these finds come from the area to the east of West Wood. A clay lamp of Roman date and a couple of coins have been found within the study area.

Later activity is represented by finds of a Saxon spearhead and knife, and early medieval pottery. Woodland in the medieval period was actively managed. Of the former woodland extent, West Wood and Cottage Plantation survive, and evidence of the former management of the woodland survives in the form of earthwork banks. In the late medieval period, the deer park of Thundersley Hall may have been created. Thundersley Lodge is situated in the centre of the former park and dates from the 16th century.

4 Results (Figs 2-3)

Approximately 123m of trenching was dug under archaeological supervision. The trench measured approximately 1m in width and 0.75m in depth.

The trench was excavated through three layers. Modern topsoil (L1, c 0.28m thick, friable, moist, medium to dark brown/black silty-loam) sealed a layer of subsoil (L2, c 0.05m thick, firm, dry, medium orange/grey/brown clayey-silt). Beneath L2 was a layer of naturally-deposited soils (L3, hard, moist, medium orange/grey/brown clay).

No significant archaeological horizons were encountered.



Photograph 1 Last section of trench – looking north

5 Finds

No finds were recovered.

6 Discussion

Despite being located in an area of archaeological interest, no archaeological remains were uncovered.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Dave Chapman of Essex County Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by A Tuffey. Figures were prepared by AT and S Carter. The project was monitored for the ECCPS by Richard Havis.

8 References

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

Bennett, A (ECCPS)	2016	<i>Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for East Thundersley Flood Alleviation Scheme</i>
Brown and Glazenbrook	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 – Research Agenda and Strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology
CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2017	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring at West Wood, Thundersley, Essex, SS7 3YR</i>
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
ECCPS	2017	<i>Brief for an archaeological monitoring programme in West Wood, Thundersley</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
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)
Bennett, A (ECCPS)	2016	<i>Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for East Thundersley Flood Alleviation Scheme</i>
Brown and Glazenbrook	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 – Research Agenda and Strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology
CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>

9 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c 500 – 1066
Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
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'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
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

Palaeolithic	period c 800,000 BC to c 10,000BC
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c AD 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
Section	(abbreviation sc or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsi	written scheme of investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1168)

ECCPS evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (feature and layer sheets, finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, architectural plans, attendance register, risk assessment

11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital 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 accession code: SOUMS.A.2017.75

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Distribution list

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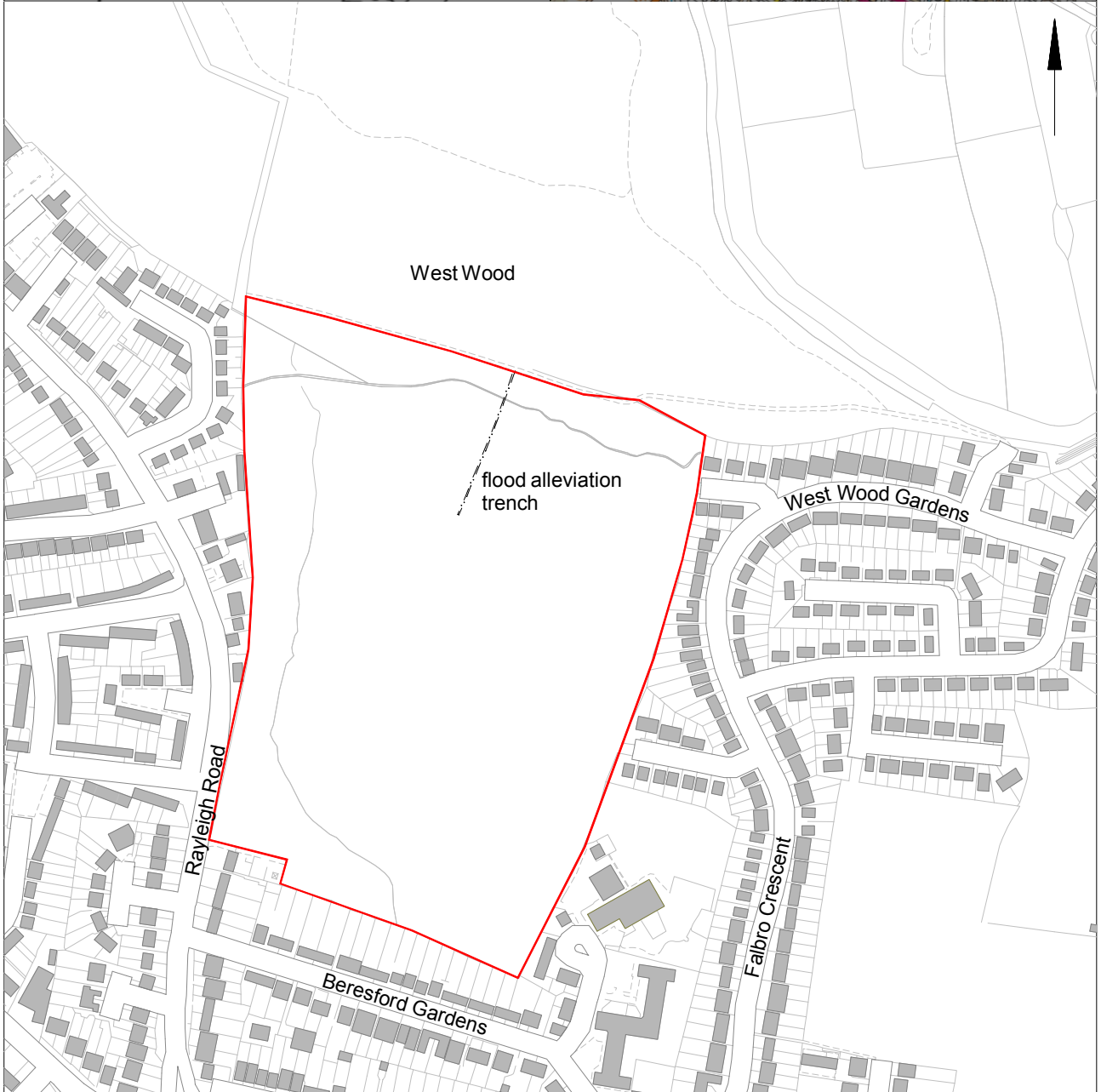
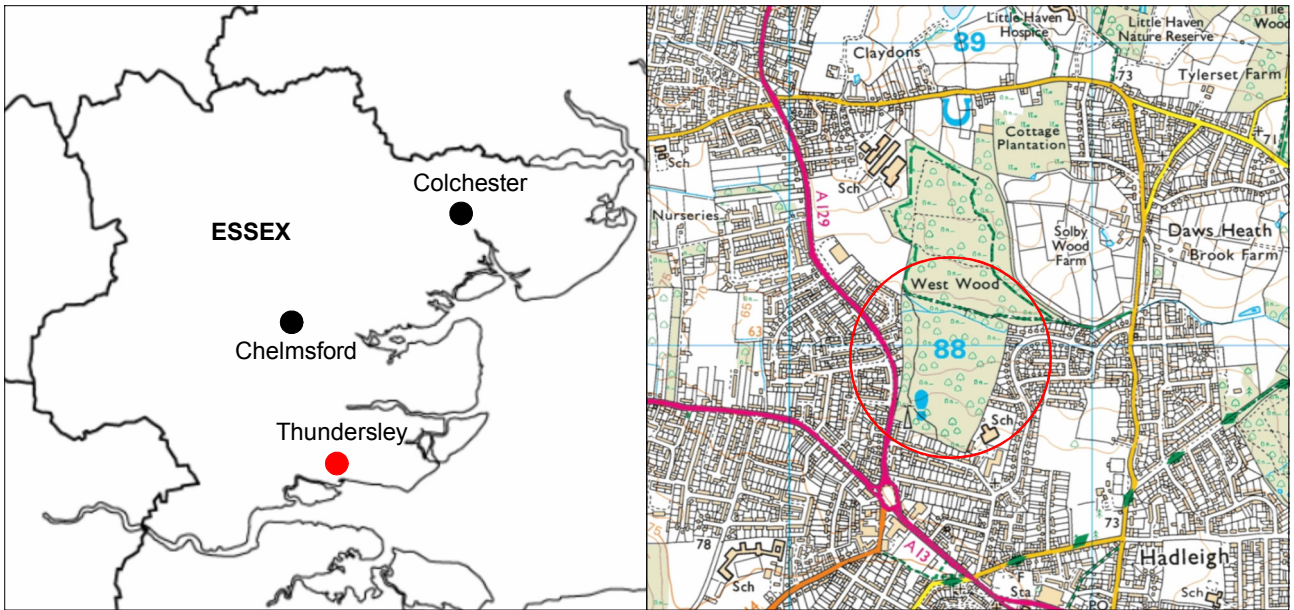
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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 03.10.2017



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Fig 1 Site location.



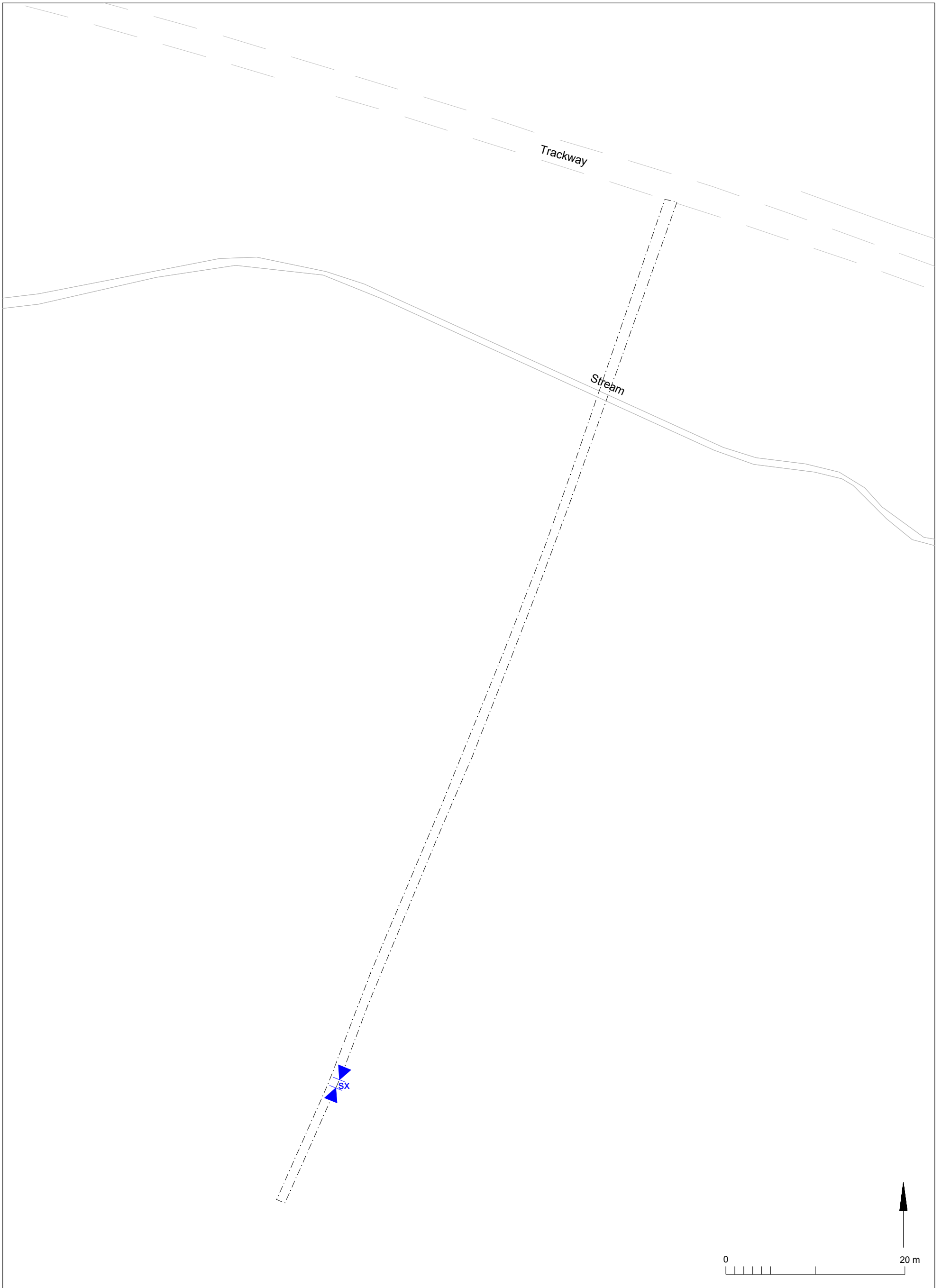
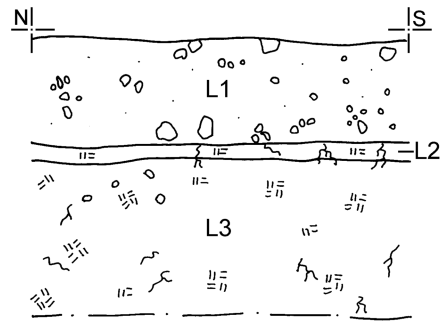


Fig 2 Results







-  small stones
-  large stones
-  roots
-  clay



Fig 3 Representative section

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring at West Wood, Thundersley, Essex, SS7 3YR

NGR: TQ 80660 88091 (centred)

Planning application number: CC/CPT/42/16

Commissioned by: Dave Chapman, ECC

Client: Essex County Council

Curating museum: Southend Museum

Museum accession code: [requested](#)

ECC project code: CPWW17

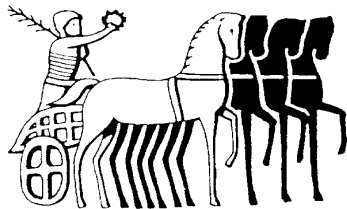
CAT project code: 17/03f

OASIS project ID: colchest3-278891

Site manager: Chris Lister

ECC monitor: Richard Havis/Maria Medlycott

This WSI written: 13.3.2017



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Site location and description

The development site is located at West Wood, Thundersley, Essex (Fig 1). Site centre is NGR TQ 80660 88091.

Proposed work

The development comprises the construction of a flood defence bund through the woodland. To tie in the bund it is proposed to excavate a trench to create a clay key for the bund itself. The trench is likely to be up to a metre deep.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex.

West Wood extends from the high ground of Daws Heath down to the valley of Prittle Brook. For at least 200 years it belonged to the Dean of St Paul's Cathedral and was managed as a coppice woodland, and a map of 1750 shows that the boundary of the wood has barely changed. Coppicing is a traditional form of woodland management when trees are cut down, allowed to regrow, then cut down again every 10-30 years.

The desk-based assessment (DBA) submitted with the planning application identified the presence of medieval period or earlier earthworks within the woodland that, although probably not being directly affected by the bund would be affected by the keying in trench. The following summary is taken directly from the DBA (Bennett (ECCPS) 2016):

The site of the proposed flood relief bunds currently comprises historic woodland. Historic Earthworks are visible in West Wood, however, the specific placement of the bund on the existing path will avoid damage to these.

Prehistoric activity is evidenced by various finds of Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age worked flint finds, including hand axes and other tools. Almost all these finds come from the area to the east of West Wood. A clay lamp of Roman date and a couple of coins have been found within the study area.

Later activity is represented by finds of a Saxon spearhead and knife, and early medieval pottery. Woodland in the medieval period was actively managed. Of the former woodland extent, West Wood and Cottage Plantation survive, and evidence of the former management of the woodland survives in the form of earthwork banks. In the late medieval period, the deer park of Thundersley Hall may have been created. Thundersley Lodge is situated in the centre of the former park and dates from the 16th century.

Planning background

A planning application (CC/CPT/42/16) was submitted to Essex County Council, Minerals and Waste planning in 2016 for the construction of a flood defence bund through West Wood. As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECCHEA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and states:

"No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work and recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the planning authority."

Requirement for work

The required archaeological work is monitoring and recording, to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits that will be exposed during groundworks. Details are given in a Project Brief written by ECC Place Services (Brief for an archaeological monitoring programme in West Wood, Thundersley – ECC 2017).

Specifically:

The archaeological work will comprise of archaeological monitoring and recording of the tie-in trench for a distance of 20m either side of Prittle Brook which runs through the woodland.

General methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a, b)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- the Project Brief issued by ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECC 2017)

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to ECCHEA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from the ECCHEA and/or the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT officer for the duration of the groundworks.

Watching brief methodology

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' ground works to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be planned and recorded.

If any features or deposits uncovered are to be destroyed by the proposed development, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc). If walls or other masonry

remains are uncovered these should be cleaned up, recorded and sampled, but left *in situ* where possible.

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used to examine the site and spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

Site surveying

Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas and trenches will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphological and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough)

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer / Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Trained CAT staff will do any processing and the flots passed to Val Fryer / Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF/LG will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF/LG and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

Human remains

During evaluation work CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove the remains from the site during the evaluation phase, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not

ancient, then the coroner, the client, and HEI will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Pip Parmenter

animal bones (small groups): Pip Parmenter

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey

Other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to ECCHEA.

Results

Notification will be given to ECCHEA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The report will be submitted within 2 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- Aims and methods adopted in the course of the archaeological work.
- Location plan of fieldwork in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of the development site will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Appropriate discussion and result sections assessing the site in relation to the Regional Research Frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000 and Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments.
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An OASIS summary sheet shall be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the ECCHEA. This will be completed in digital form with a paper copy included with the archive.

A copy (with trench plan) will also be emailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects (paul.gilman@me.com).

Publication of the results at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological fieldwork. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series.

Archive deposition

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full paper copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within one month of the completion of the final publication report and confirmed in writing to the ECCHEA.

A summary of the contents of the archive shall be supplied to the ECCHEA at the time of deposition to the museum.

Monitoring

ECCHEA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to the ECCHEA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with ECCHEA prior to them being carried out.

ECCHEA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of ECCHEA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-------|---|
| Bennett, A (ECCPS) | 2016 | <i>Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for East Thundersley Flood Alleviation Scheme</i> |
| Brown and Glazenbrook | 2000 | <i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 – Research Agenda and Strategy</i> . East Anglian Archaeology |
| CAT | 2014 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CIfA | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs</i> |
| CIfA | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
| DCLG | 2012 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> |
| ECCPS | 2017 | <i>Brief for an archaeological monitoring programme in West Wood, Thundersley</i> |
| English Heritage | 2006 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14). |
| 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) |

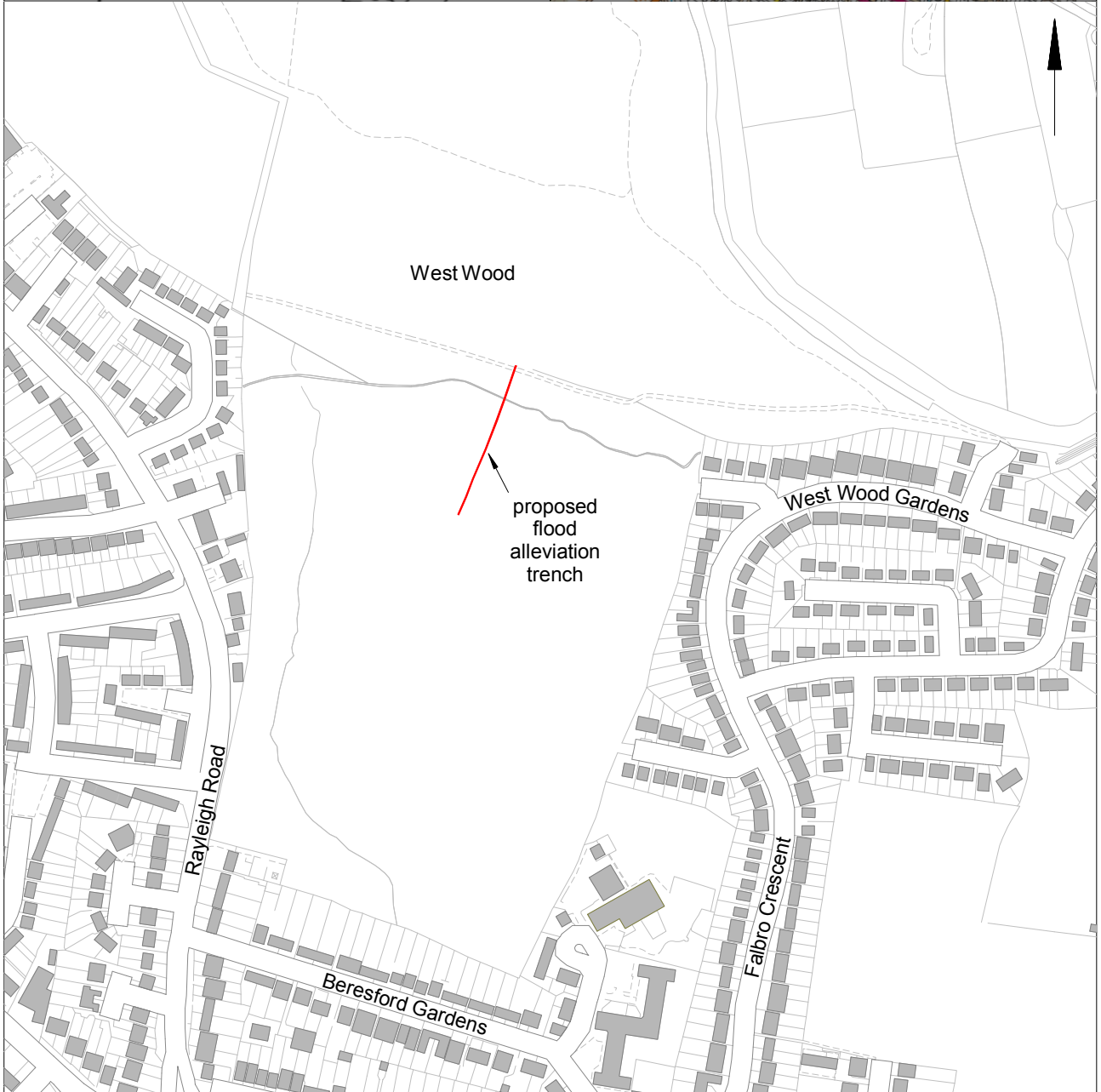
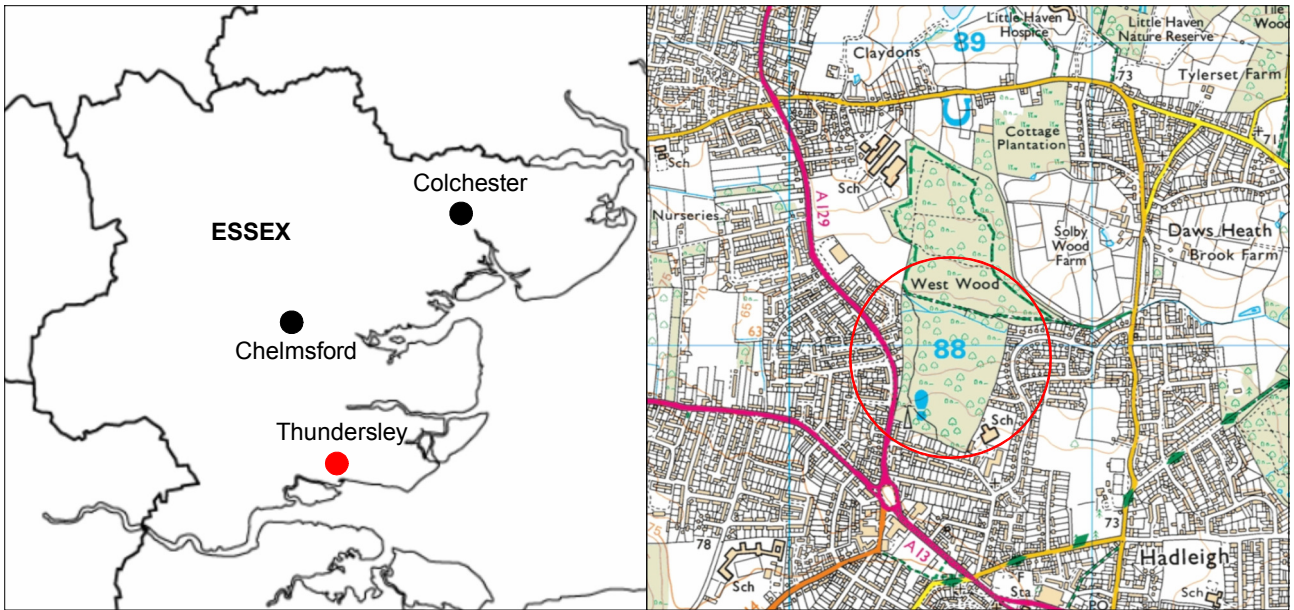
L Pooley



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Fig 1 Site location.



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OASIS ID: colchest3-278891

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at West Wood, Thundersley, Essex, SS7 3YR
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at West Wood, Thundersley, in advance of the construction of a flood defence bund through the woodland. The development site lies in historic woodland playing host to a post-medieval lodge, and near to areas in which prehistoric, Roman and Anglo-Saxon artefacts have been recovered. No significant archaeological remains were uncovered.
Project dates	Start: 08-08-2017 End: 07-09-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	CC/CPT/14/16 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	16/0721/ECC - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	17/03f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	SOUMS.A.2017.75 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	CPWW17 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Woodland 6 - Parkland
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX CASTLE POINT THUNDERSLEY West Wood
Postcode	SS7 3YR
Study area	13.87 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 80660 88091 51.562186216857 0.606699065388 51 33 43 N 000 36 24 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	HEM Team Officer, ECC
Project design originator	Laura Pooley
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Adam Tuffey
Type of sponsor/funding body	County Council

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Southend Museum
Digital Archive ID	SOUMS.A.2017.75
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Southend Museum

Paper Archive ID SOUMS.A.2017.75
Paper Contents "Stratigraphic","Survey"
Paper Media available "Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Archaeological monitoring and recording at West Wood, Thundersley, Essex, SS7 3YR: August-September 2017
Author(s)/Editor(s) Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details CAT Report 1168
Date 2017
Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication Colchester
Description A4 loose-leaf ringbound
URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html>

Entered by Laura Pooley (lp@catuk.org)
Entered on 4 October 2017

OASIS: Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice
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Cite only: <http://www.oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm?id=297398> for this page