

Archaeological monitoring at Blue Barn Farm, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DF

September 2017 – June 2018



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**commissioned by Stephen Williams
on behalf of Hills Residential**

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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Blue Barn Farm, Elmstead Market, Essex during groundworks associated with the construction of an access road, services and the removal of contaminated soil from an old pond. Despite being located in an area of cropmarks and close to a number of medieval field boundaries identified during an earlier archaeological evaluation, monitoring revealed no significant archaeological remains.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring at Blue Barn Farm, Elmstead Market, Essex which was carried out from September 2017 to June 2018. Commissioned by Stephen Williams of Hills Residential during groundworks associated with the construction of an access road, services and the removal of contaminated soil from an old pond only, the work was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor 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 the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

A brief was not issued by ECCPS but CAT prepared a written scheme of investigation (WSI) outlining the requirement for work as stated by Teresa O'Connor of ECCPS (CAT 2017). Monitoring of the house foundations was not required by the ECCPS.

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 field evaluation* (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 utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

The EHER shows that the development site lies within an area which has substantial archaeological evidence as recorded by aerial photography and seen in cropmark features. The cropmark plot (provided by the EHER) provides evidence for a possible trackway crossing the site indicated by two parallel linear features running NW-SE, they extend across the landscape for over 800m and lead from the village at Elmstead Market which is historic in origin. The road through the village is thought to be Roman in origin and this track may be associated with this or could be later, possibly medieval, in date. In addition, there are two further parallel linear features close by, aligned NW-SE (to the south of the main trackway) and NE-SW (Fig 1) all indicating historic settlement activity. Both Roman and medieval finds have been recovered from the area through metal detecting, including pottery and glass vessels, coins and jewellery.

Former farm buildings associated with the site of Blue Barn Farm are depicted on the 1st edition OS maps and so must pre-date c 1870 and are likely to be earlier in origin. These buildings are no longer extant but lie within the area of development. Below ground remains for the buildings may survive which could provide an indication of age and origin for the site. A pond was located beside the farm buildings which may preserve waterlogged deposits or stratified archaeological deposits.



Map 1 6-inch OS map published 1898 showing Blue Barn Farm and the adjacent pond (Essex XXVIII.SE)

Phase one archaeological evaluation on the site in April 2017 (CAT Report 1094) revealed two medieval ditches, three undated (but probably medieval) ditches, three undated pits/postholes, two modern features (a pit and ditch) and two tree-throws containing residual medieval pottery. The ditches appear to be field boundaries within a medieval, c 12th/13th-14th century, field-system. One of the ditches (F2) was on a similar alignment as the trackway cropmark but, given the distances involved between the edge of the cropmark and the feature (250m) it was impossible to determine if they were related.

Phase two archaeological evaluation in December 2017 (CAT Report 1209) revealed two pits, one modern and one undated, and two modern services. There was no evidence of features relating to the cropmarks or any finds.

4 Aim

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken to excavate and record any archaeological deposits which were exposed by the groundworks.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

All groundworks were carried out by the contractors with a mechanical excavator under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

Numbers allocated during this period of monitoring follow those assigned during two previous phases of evaluation (see CAT Reports 1094 and 1209). New layer numbers start at L10.

New access road

An area approximately 110m long by c 3.5-4m was stripped of 0.25m of modern concrete and sub-base (L5). Natural ground level (L4) was observed in places along

with a lot of modern disturbance. In two areas the road was built-up to formation level, therefore no groundworks took place in these locations (see Fig 2). There were no significant archaeological features or finds.

Service trench

A service trench totalling 174m long, 0.5-0.65m wide and 0.9m deep was excavated along the new access road. The northern 94m of the trenching (everything north of the corner marked **Z** on Fig 2) was excavated through c 0.25m of modern concrete and sub-base (L5) into natural sands/gravels (L4). The remaining 85m of service trench to the south was excavated through 0.7m of modern crush (L1) into a layer of accumulated subsoil (L3), observed to a thickness of at least 0.2m before excavation ceased (natural was not encountered). There were no significant archaeological features or finds.



Photograph 1 Service trench

Pond

The old pond (present on early OS maps) was excavated by the contractors to remove contaminated backfill. It was excavated through c 0.3m of modern crush (L12), c 0.7-1.45m of contaminated clay backfill (L11) and c 0.1-0.68m of a humic clayey-silt (L10) at the base of the pond which sealed natural clay (L13). Due to modern contamination, no environmental samples were taken from the base of the pond.



Photograph 2 Excavation of the contaminated backfill from the pond.

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

7 Conclusion

Despite being located in an area of cropmarks and close to a number of medieval field boundaries identified during an earlier archaeological evaluation, no significant archaeological remains were encountered during groundworks.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Stephen Williams and Hills Residential for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by A Tuffey and B Holloway. Figures are by B Holloway, E Holloway and L Pooley. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor

9 References

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

CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2017	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological monitoring and recording at Blue Barn Farm, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DF</i>
CAT Report 1094	2017	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Blue Barn Farm, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DF: April 2017</i>
CAT Report 1209	2018	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Blue Barn Farm (Phase 2, Plots 6 and 7), Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DF: December 2017</i>

ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
English Heritage	2011	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods for Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation</i> . Swindon: English Heritage Publications.
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)

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	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
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
ws	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:
The report (CAT Report 1319)
ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation
Original site record (layer sheets, sections)
Site digital photographic thumbnails and log

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1319)
ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation
Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log
Graphics files
Survey data

12 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 Colchester Museum under accession code COLEM: 2017.48.

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Distribution list:

Stephen Williams, Hills Residential
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
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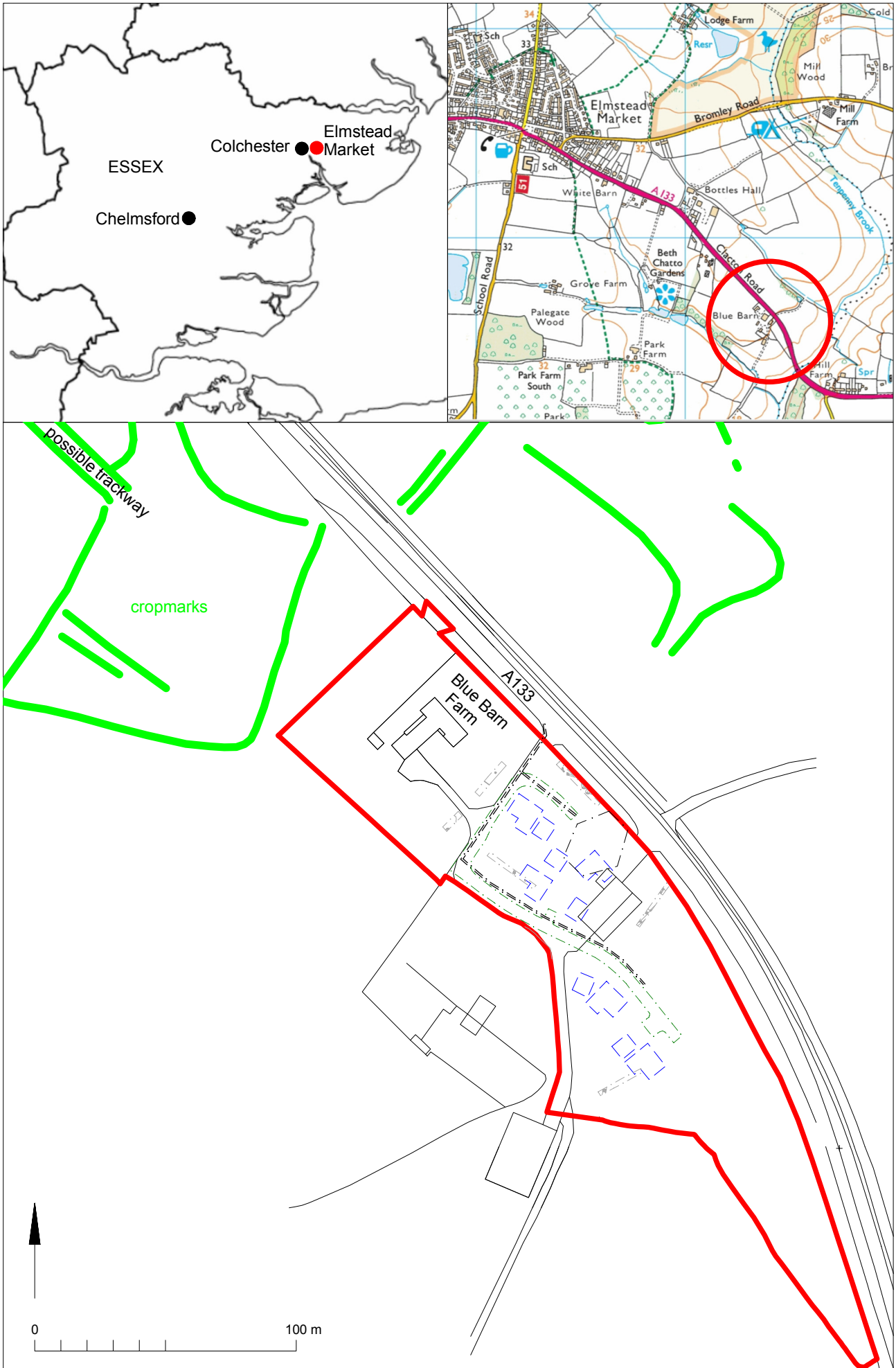
Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 4.10.2018

Appendix 1 Context list

Only those contexts encountered during current monitoring are listed here – see CAT Reports 1094 and 1209.

Context Number	Context	Description	Date
L1	Crush	Crush layer of brick and mortar	Modern
L3	Subsoil	Loose, dry, medium-dark brown sandy-silt with common stones, finds include peg-tile and slate	Post-medieval/ modern
L4	Natural	Natural sands, gravels and clay	Post-glacial
L5	Concrete	Concrete	Modern
L10	Base of pond	Friable, wet, dark brown/black clayey-silt, very humic	Pond dates to before c 1870.
L11	Backfill of pond	Friable, wet, medium grey/black/blue clay, <5% stone. Contaminated.	Modern, c mid 20th century
L12	Imported crush	Crush layer of brick and mortar	Modern
L13	Natural	Natural clay at base of pond	Post-glacial



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Fig 1 Site location in relation to cropmarks (green), the proposed development (dashed blue) and the evaluation trenches (in grey)

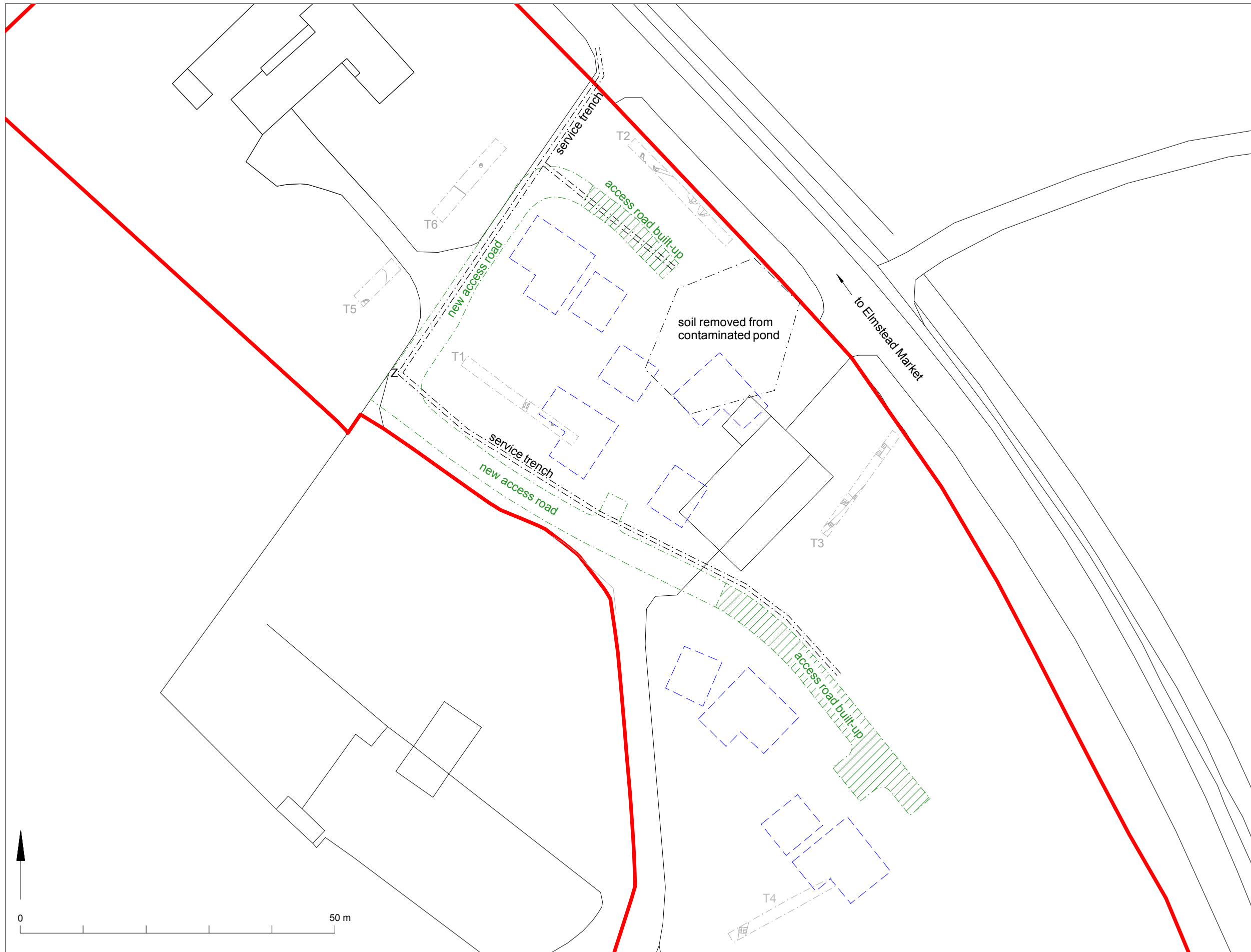


Fig 2 Results, in relation to proposed development (dashed blue) and the evaluation trenches (in grey)

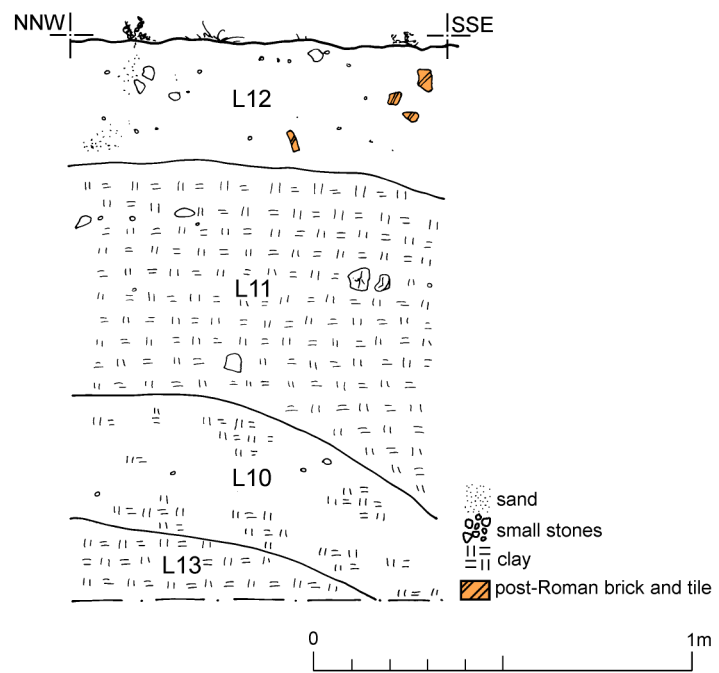


Fig 3 Representative section through the pond.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-290319

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Blue Barn Farm, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DF
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Blue Barn Farm, Elmstead Market, Essex during groundworks associated with the construction of an access road, services and the removal of contaminated soil from an old pond. Despite being located in an area of cropmarks and close to a number of medieval field boundaries identified during an earlier archaeological evaluation, monitoring revealed no significant archaeological remains.
Project dates	Start: 01-09-2017 End: 30-06-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ESBB17 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	17/07e - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	16/00724 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2017.48 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX TENDRING ELMSTEAD Blue Barn Farm, Clacton Road
Postcode	CO7 7DF
Study area	1.73 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 07385 23618 51.900300748635 -0.439041997691 51 54 01 N 000 26 20 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	none
Project design originator	Laura Pooley
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Ben Holloway
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.48
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey", "other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum

Paper Archive ID COLEM: 2017.48
Paper Contents "other"
Paper Media available "Section","Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report"

**Project
bibliography 1**

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