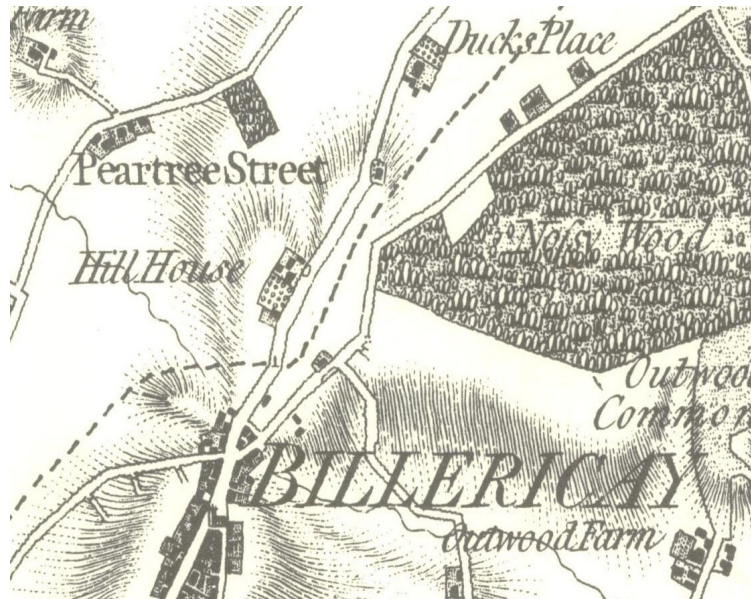


Archaeological evaluation on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex, CM11 1BB

April 2019



by **Dr Elliott Hicks**

figures by Chris Lister, Ben Holloway and Emma Holloway

fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Adam Tuffey

commissioned by **Richard Smalley, Kingfisher Homes**

NGR: TQ 38030 95323 (centre)

Planning ref.: 19/00154/FUL

CAT project code: 19/03r

ECC code: BLDR19

Colchester Museum accession code: CHMER: 2019.027

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CAT Report 1406

May 2019

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex in advance of the construction of a new dwelling. The site is located within the deerpark of Norsey Wood, an area of medieval and post-medieval woodland which was also a site of settlement during the prehistoric and Roman periods. Despite being located in an area of archaeological interest no archaeological remains were encountered.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex which was carried out on 16th April 2019. The work was commissioned by Richard Smalley of Kingfisher Homes, in advance of the construction of a new dwelling, and 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* (MHCLG 2018).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a Brief detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2019), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the Brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2019).

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 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 draws on the Brief and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessible to the public via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>.)

Medieval Billericay (HER 5410) was a 13th-century creation by the Cistercian monks of Stratford Langthorne Abbey. The name itself is not recorded until 1291, although there may well have been a market on the site since 1253 (EHER 18415). Billericay was built on wasteland, where the Mounthnessing and Great Burstead parish boundaries met, and the urban area incorporated land from several manors. In 1345 a chapel was built in Billericay (EHER 5411-2).

The proposed development lies within the former extent of Norsey Wood, a medieval deerpark of national importance (Scheduled Ancient Monument no 29428). Medieval deerparks form an important part of the Essex historic environment, with Norsey Wood an exceptionally fine example, as reflected by its Scheduled Ancient Monument status. The Scheduled Monument includes the perimeter earthworks and interior of Norsey Wood, an area of mixed and coppice woodland immediately east of Billericay. The Wood contains one of the most remarkable collections of archaeological features anywhere in the region. In addition to the medieval and post-medieval woodland, there is considerable evidence for prehistoric and Roman settlement both within and to the south of the wood (EHER nos 5304-5338). In particular, the northern and western

boundary of the garden of Minstead abuts the edge of the Scheduled area and the proposed development potentially lies on the line of 'The Deerbank' (EHER nos 5328-5329). The deerbank was a 5-6ft high bank, with an external ditch, which survived until 1895 and was designed to contain deer and cattle in the park. The place-name evidence suggests that the woodland may have been enclosed prior to 1066. The bank dates to some time between 1201 and 1323. The wood was also used for military exercises during the Second World War.

4 Aims

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

Trench 1 was excavated through modern hardstanding (L4, c 0.44-0.5m thick) and L2 (0.01-0.07m thick) onto L3 (encountered at a depth of 0.5-0.52m bcgl). A sondage was excavated Trench 2 to ensure that the natural had been reached.

Trench 2 was excavated through topsoil (L1, c 0.38-0.45m thick, soft/friable, dry medium/dark brown silty-clay with <3% stones) and subsoil (L2, c 0.22-0.26m thick, soft/friable, dry light/medium yellow/orange/brown silty-clay with >2% stones) onto natural (L3, soft, dry light/medium grey/brown silty-clay, encountered at a depth of 0.62-0.67m below current ground level [bcgl]).

No archaeological remains were encountered.



Photograph 1 T1 trench shot – looking south-east



Photograph 2 T2 trench shot – looking north-west

6 Finds

There were no finds.

7 Conclusion

No evidence of the deerpark boundary – either the ditch or the bank – was observed during this investigation. Nor were any other archaeological remains encountered, despite the location of the site being in an archaeologically-sensitive area.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT is grateful to Richard Smalley and Kingfisher Homes for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with A Tuffey. Figures are by C Lister, B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored by Teresa O'Connor for Essex County Council Archaeological Services.

9 References

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

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8)
CAT	2018	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2019	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological trial-trenching on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex, CM11 1BB</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
ECCPS	2019	<i>Brief for archaeological trial-trenching evaluation on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay.</i> By T O'Connor
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England	2015	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
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)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
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 AD 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of A rchaeological I nvestigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1406)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

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

Site digital photos and log

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1406)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The paper archive and finds are currently held by CAT at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMER: 2019.027.

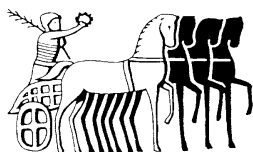
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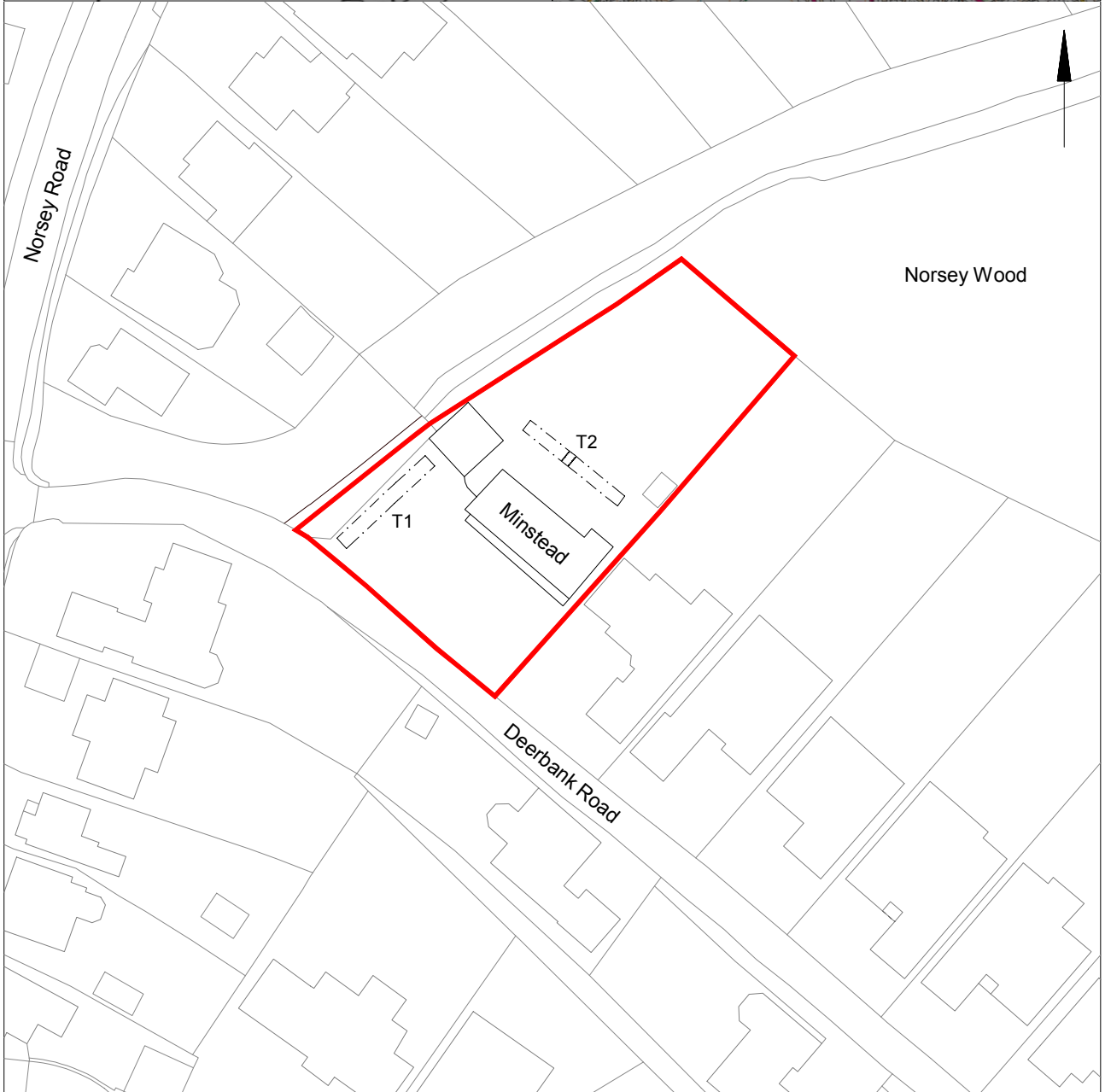
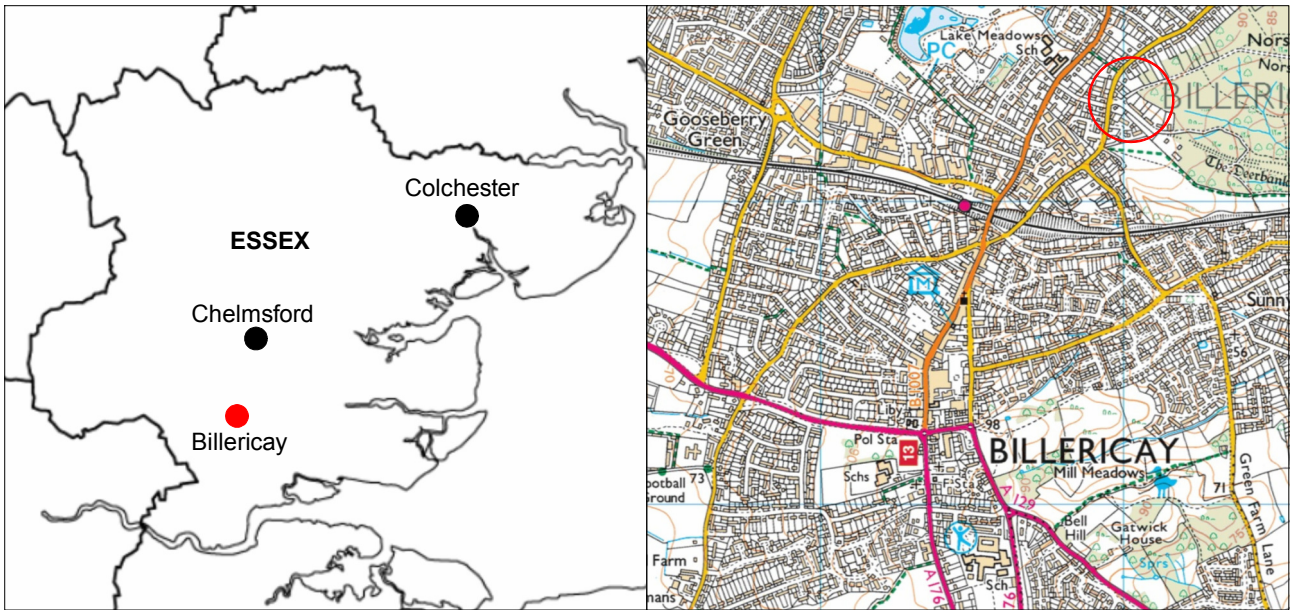
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date: 30.04.2019



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Fig 1 Site location.



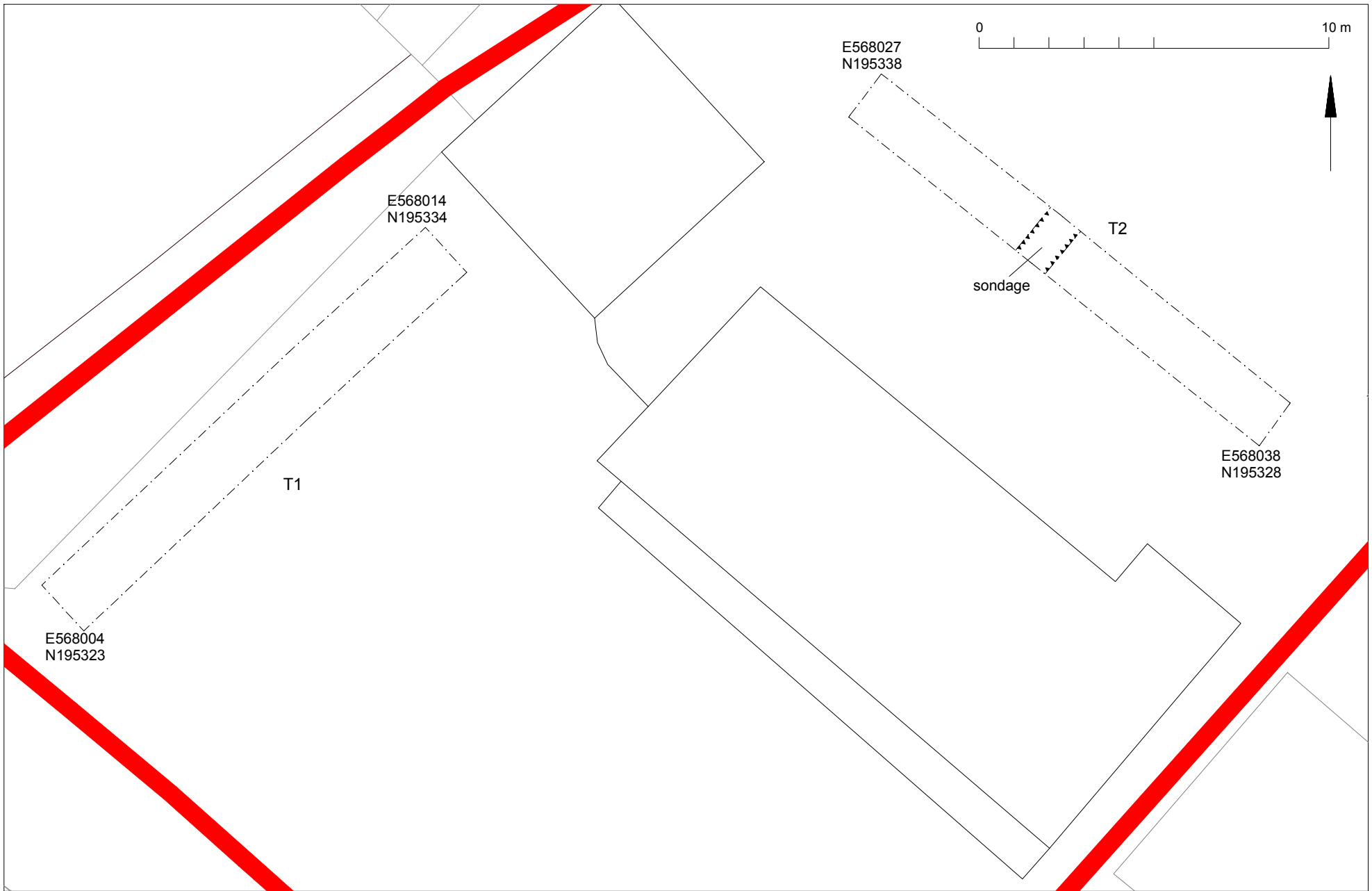


Fig 2 Evaluation results.

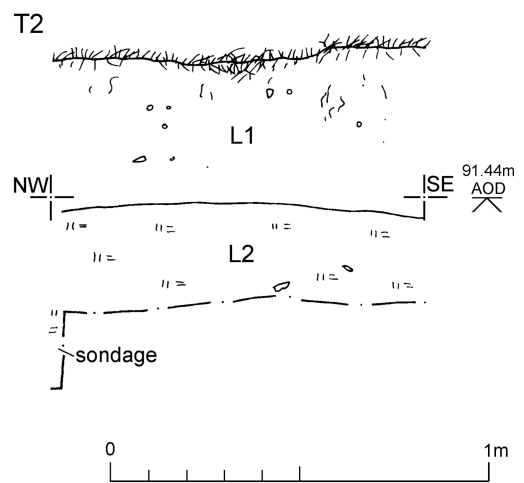
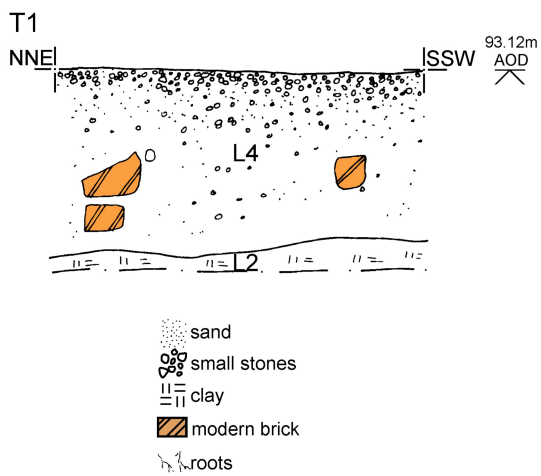


Fig 3 Representative sections.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-347493

Project details

Project name	Archaeological trial-trenching on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex in advance of the construction of a new dwelling. The site is located within the deerpark of Norsey Wood, an area of medieval and post-medieval woodland which was also a site of settlement during the prehistoric and Roman periods. Despite being located in an area of archaeological interest no archaeological remains were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 16-04-2019 End: 16-04-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	19/00154/FUL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2019/03h - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	""Targeted Trenches""
Development type	Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX BASILDON BILLERICAY Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex
Postcode	CM11 1BB
Study area	50 Square metres
Site coordinates	TQ 38030 95323 51.63926392112 -0.005089849744 51 38 21 N 000 00 18 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 91.16m Max: 92.6m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	HEM Team Officer, ECC
Project design originator	Emma Holloway
Project director/manager	Ben Holloway
Project supervisor	Chris Lister
Type of sponsor/funding	Owner

body

Name of sponsor/funding body
Kingfisher Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No

Digital Archive recipient Chelmsford Museum

Digital Archive ID CHMER 2019.027

Digital Contents "Survey"

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"

Paper Archive recipient Chelmsford Museum

Paper Archive ID CHMER 2019.027

Paper Contents "none"

Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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