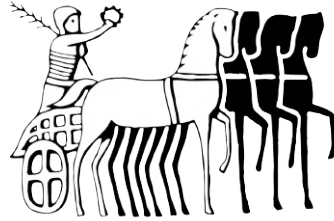


Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 2104
issued November 2024**

**Archaeological evaluation at Camp Poultry Farm,
Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex, CM22 7AA:
October-November 2024**



**CAT project ref.: 2024/07f
ECC code: EEX60631**

**Archaeological evaluation at Camp Poultry Farm,
Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex, CM22 7AA:
October 2024**

NGR: TL 51856 15625

**Planning district: Uttlesford
Planning ref.: UTT/23/1688/FUL**

**CAT project ref.: 2024/07f
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**ECC code: EEX60631
OASIS id: colchest3-527163**

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**commissioned by Chris Loon,
Springfields Planning and Development Ltd
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Issued:	14/11/2024	

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (12 trial-trenches) was carried out at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex, in advance of developments at the site. The site forms part of a former WWII prisoner of war camp, probably constructed in 1942/43. Excavations revealed a single feature, which was probably a backfilled modern pond.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex on the 30th October to 1st November 2024. The work was commissioned by Chris Loon and took place ahead of the erection of storage, parking, ancillary buildings and a new dwelling.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Planning Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor advised that, 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 2023).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Building Recording and Archaeological Trial Trenching at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Bishops Stortford, CM22 7AA*, written by Robin Mathieson (ECCPS 2024), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT (2024a).

In addition to the project brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was undertaken in accordance with:

- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015),
- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2020a-b, 2022, 2023a-b),
- East of England standards and frameworks, published by East Anglian Archaeology (Brown & Glazebrook 2000; Gurney 2003; Medlycott 2011), and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- Relevant health and safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2024b).

3 Archaeological and geological background

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the ECC Brief (ECC 2024) and Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The proposed development site is located at Camp Poultry Farm and forms part of a former WWII prisoner of war (PoW) camp (EHER 21265). The camp, officially numbered as Camp 116, was probably constructed in 1942/43 and represents a typical example of a 'standard' PoW camp. The camp comprises a combination of huts, built from a range of materials, and exists in various states of decay. The camp was rejected for listing by Historic England but is included in the local list for Uttlesford. The built heritage statement summarised that the "*proposed new buildings within the site would form the setting of the locally listed complex. While a departure from the existing built form of the site, the proposals have been designed to be contextually appropriate. This removes any further potential heritage impact arising from the proposed development*" (Copp 2023).

The EHER and a desk-based assessment (Peachey 2016) all indicate that the proposed development lies within a potentially highly sensitive area of heritage assets. Aerial photographic evidence shows an historic route-way lying to the north of the site associated with a moated site identified in the DBA (Peachey 2016). Archaeological remains on other sites to the north of Hatfield Heath show occupation from the Bronze Age through to the modern day (Peachey 2016).

Archaeological work was undertaken nearby by CAT in 2013 when a historic building recording (CAT Report 761) and trial-trenched evaluation (CAT Report 746) was carried out at the rear of Stag Inn, Hatfield Heath. The timber-framed public house had a date of the late 18th-century/early 19th-century (SMR 38108). The evaluation uncovered five archaeological features, a medieval pit and modern ditches and pits. The medieval pit provides slight evidence for medieval activity, with finds of medieval pottery.

Archaeological monitoring and evaluation by Pre-Construct Archaeology (2022) at Lea Hall moated manor (SMR 4414), 990m south-west of the proposed development, revealed a single post-medieval ditch. Approximately 340m north of the proposed site is The Mill (SMR 15105), a 19th-century brick-built building.

Holy Trinity Church (SMR 49195), built in 1856-1957, which is grade II listed, is 700m south-east of the site, and half a mile west of the church is a medieval moat (SMR 4437). Other find spots in the vicinity of the development include a Roman coin (SMR 50711), a Late Iron Age coin (SMR 50696), and a Late Iron Age to early medieval pin.

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site to be London Clay, a stiff bluish clay of early Eocene date, with superficial deposits of Head (gravel, sand, silt and clay).

4 Aims

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken to excavate and 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 2-4)

Twelve trial-trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Numerous site constraints meant that Trench 9 could not be excavated, but Trench 13 was extended to make up the coverage. Trenches 1, 7 and 10 also had to be moved. The trenches ranged from 10m to 23m in length, and each was 2m wide.

The stratigraphy of trenches T1-T7, part of T8, T10 and T13 was loose topsoil (L4, 0.20-0.40m thick) sealing subsoil (L3, 0.06-0.24m thick) above natural clay (L2, identified at a depth of 0.18-0.50m below ground level).

The stratigraphy of part of T8 and T11 was a thick layer of mixed crush composed of gravel, bricks, and pieces of concrete (L1, c 0.34m thick) sealing L3 (0.1-0.14m thick) above L2 (at a depth of c 0.48m).

The stratigraphy of T12 was L1 (0.17-0.30m thick) sealing L2.

Only one archaeological feature (F1) was observed, located in T12. It was over 8.4m wide, and a sondage excavated to a depth of 0.97m failed to reach the base of the feature. It was backfilled with fine silty clay with occasional rotted twigs as well as small modern brick fragments, and it is thought that F1 was probably a backfilled modern pond.

A full context list can be found in Appendix 1.



Photograph 1 Trench 1, looking west.



Photograph 2 Trench 3, looking south.



Photograph 3 Trench 6, looking west.



Photograph 4 Trench 8, looking west.



Photograph 5 Trench 10, looking west.



Photograph 6 Trench 12, looking east.

6 Finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

The evaluation produced one sherd (30g) of modern Staffordshire-type white earthenwares (fabric F48D) from the topsoil L4. This has a transfer printed stamp of POUNTNEY'S//W//1941. The W is set within a diamond shaped frame. Pountney & CO LTD was a Bristol firm active from 1849 until 1969 (Godden 1991, 506-507).

7 Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex revealed a single feature, which was possibly a backfilled modern pond. A Staffordshire-type earthenware sherd obtained from L4 might be contemporary with the site's former PoW camp usage if "1941" in the stamp is a date.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Chris Loon of Springfields Planning and Development Ltd and Greenways Eggs Ltd for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by A Wightman and C Lister, with fieldwork carried out by N Rayner, X Smith, D Spenner and K Anderson. Figures were compiled by X Smith and C Hill. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Katie Lee-Smith.

9 References

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|---|
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| 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). |
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| CAT | 2024a | <i>Written scheme of investigation for historic building recording and archaeological evaluation at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Bishops Stortford, CM22 7AA,</i> by S Veasey & C Hill. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust. |
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| CIfA | 2020a | <i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020. |
| CIfA | 2020b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020. |
| CIfA | 2022 | <i>Code of Conduct.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2022. |
| CIfA | 2023a | <i>Standard for archaeological field evaluation.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. |
| CIfA | 2023b | <i>Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. |
| Cotter, J P | 2000 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85.</i> Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd. |
| ECC | 2024 | <i>Brief for Building Recording and Archaeological Trial Trenching at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Bishops Stortford, CM22 7AA,</i> by R Havis. |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14). |
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| 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 | 2023 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government |

Peachey, A	2016	<i>Land West of Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex: An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment.</i>
Pre-Construct Archaeology	2022	<i>Lea Hall, Dunmow Road, Hatfield Heath, Essex: An Archaeological Evaluation and Watching Brief by Jonathan House.</i>

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	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
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Late Iron Age	period from c 100 – 50 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
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
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: none retained

Digital:

CAT Report 2104

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Digital photographs

Site data

Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The 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 the Archaeology Data Service (digital archive).

Distribution list:

Chris Loon, Springfields Planning and Development Ltd
Greenways Eggs Ltd
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Trench no.	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
L1	T8, T11, T12	-	Tarmac crush	Tarmac, concrete, bricks, gravel, mid- to large-size stones.	Modern
L2	All	-	Natural	Clay, containing abundant small to large angular to rounded stones.	Post-glacial
L3	T1-T8, T10-T11, T13	-	Subsoil	Mid-brown clayey silt with frequent stones.	Post-glacial
L4	T1-T8, T10, T13	1	Topsoil	Dark brown silt with occasional stones	Modern
F1	12	-	Possible backfilled pond	Fine silty clay, occasional twigs, brick fragments.	Modern

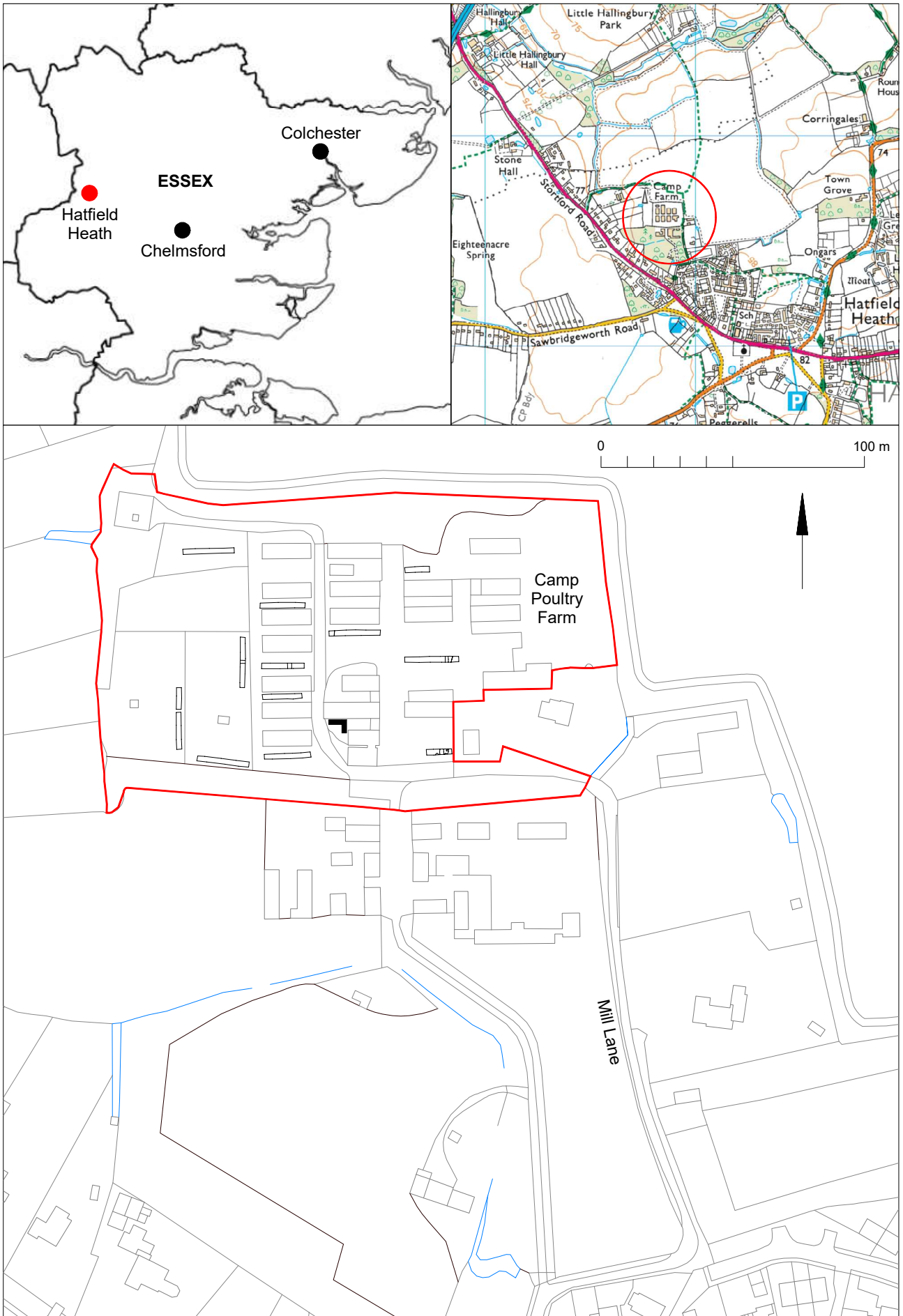


Fig 1 Site location.

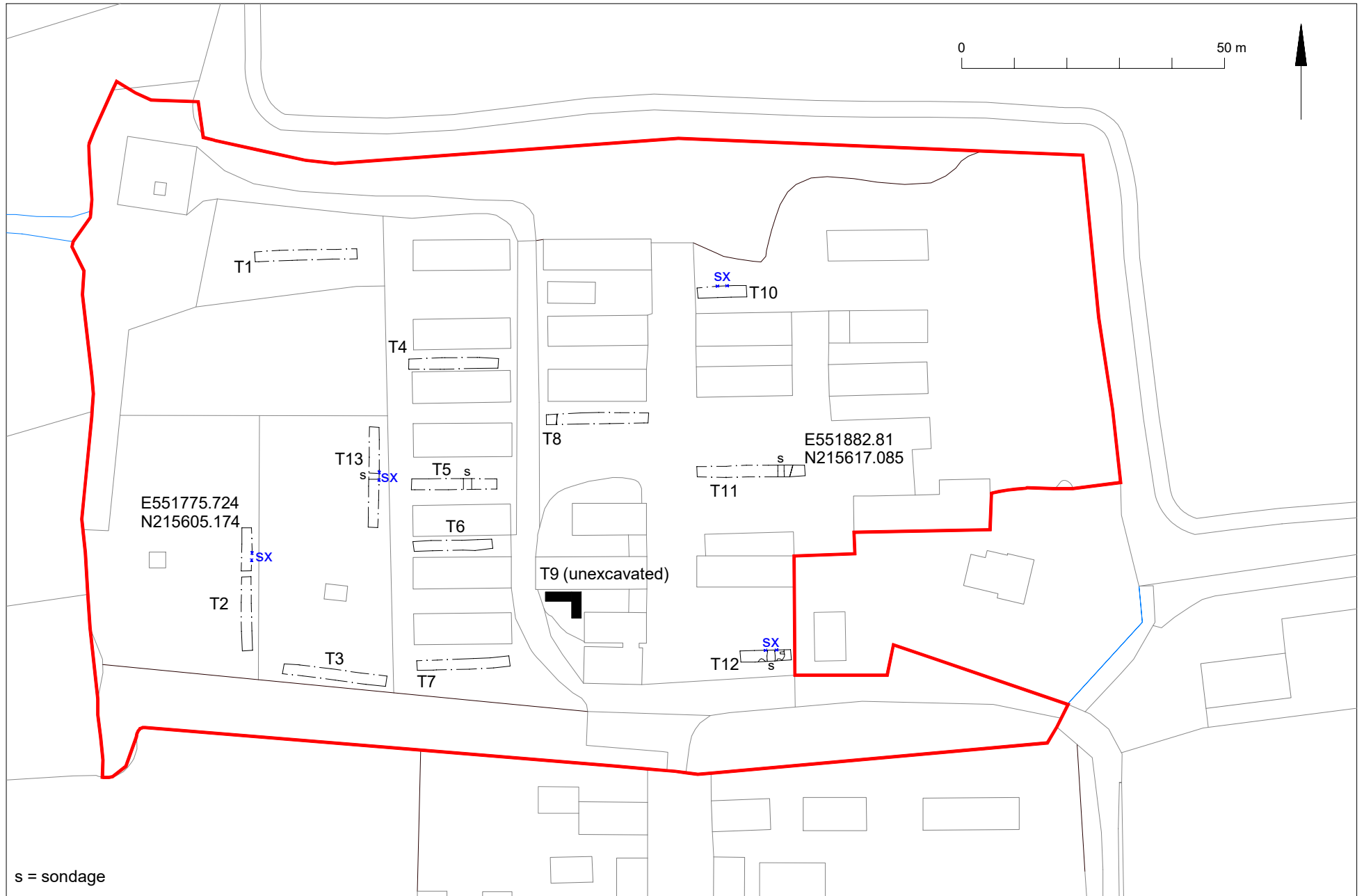


Fig 2 Results (modern services in grey).

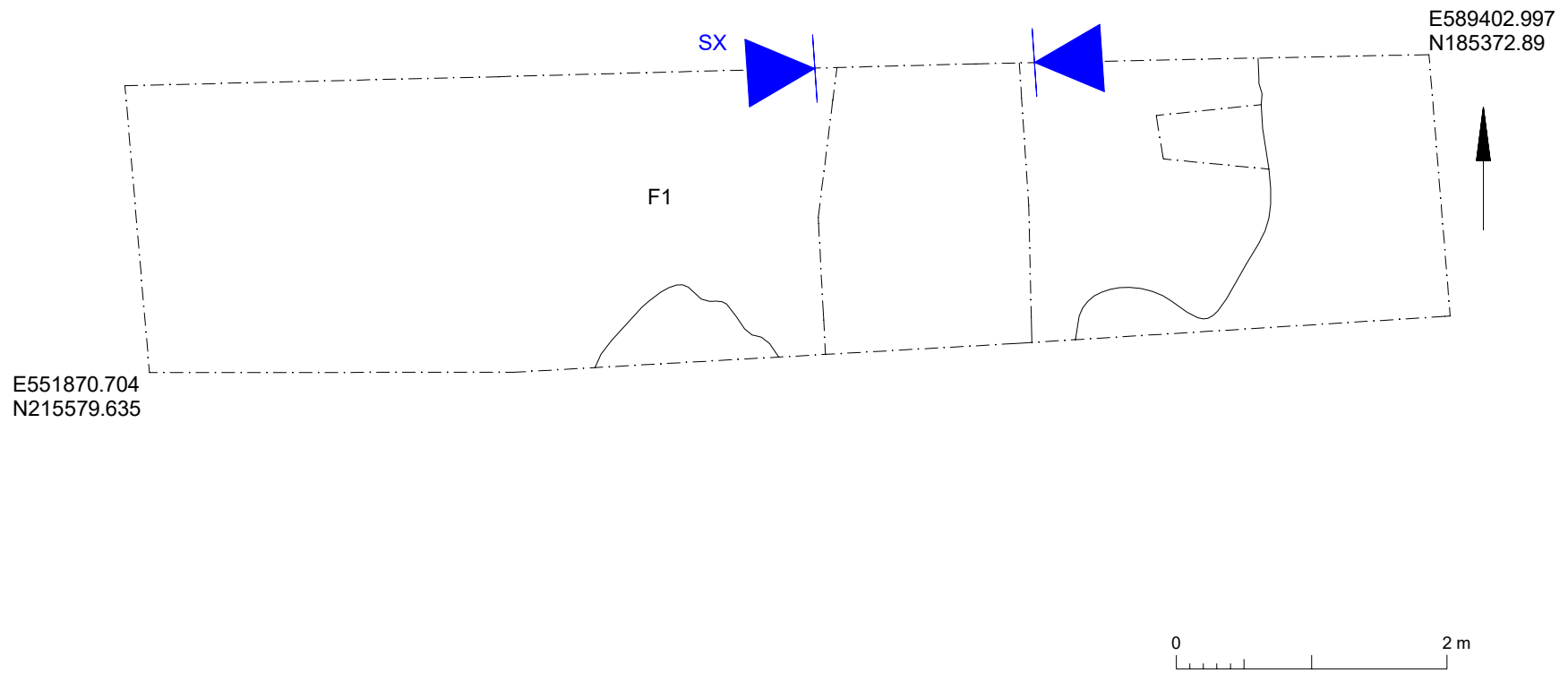


Fig 3 Close-up plan of Trench 12.

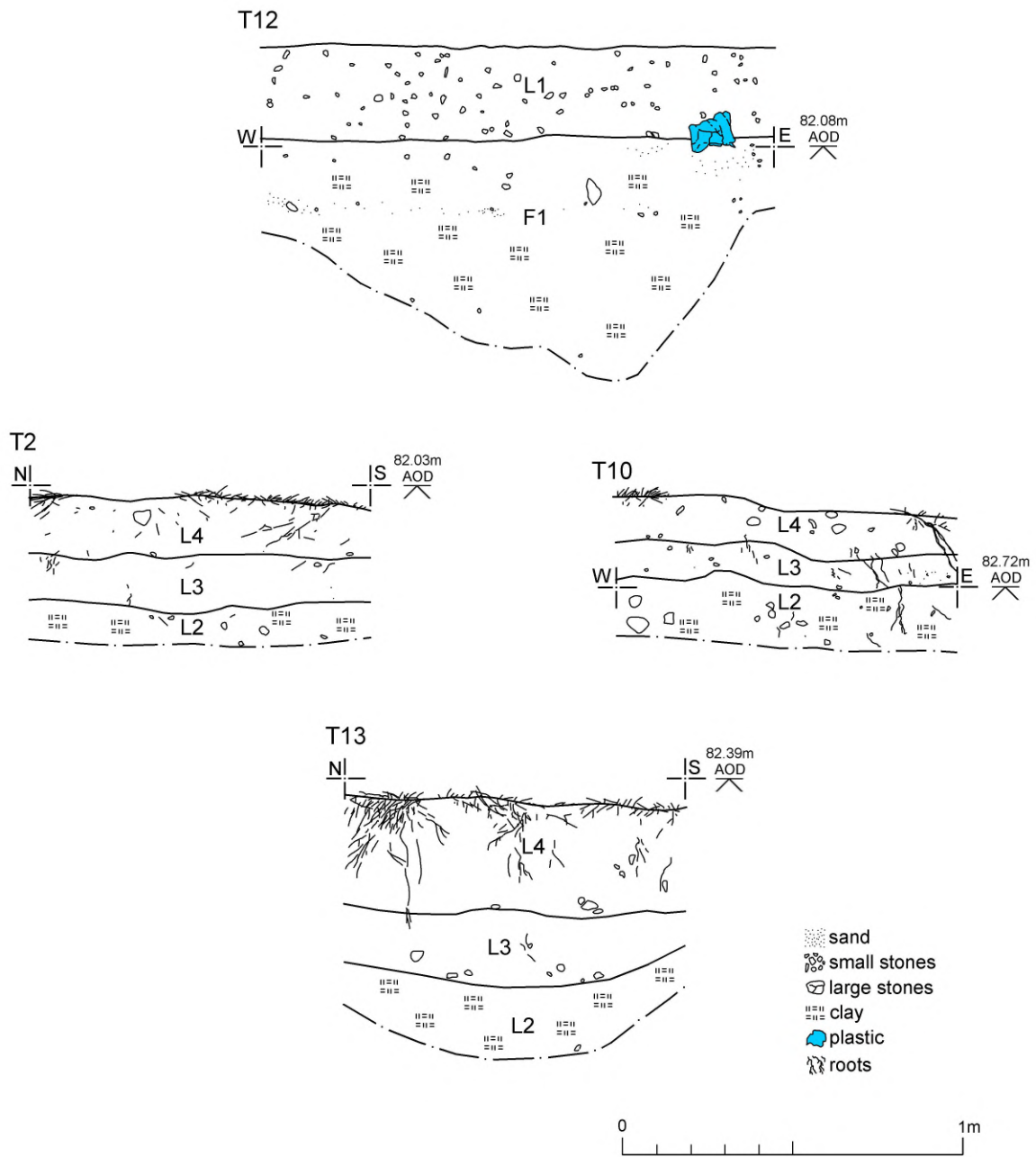


Fig 4 Feature and representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-527163

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-527163
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex, CM22 7AA: October 2024
Sitename	Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Uttlesford, Essex, CM22 7AA
Sitecode	EEX60631
Project Identifier(s)	2024/07f
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	UTT/23/1688/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	30-Oct-2024 - 01-Nov-2024
Location	Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Uttlesford, Essex, CM22 7AA NGR : TL 51858 15590 LL : 51.818311, 0.201788 12 Fig : 551858,215590
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Uttlesford Parish : Hatfield Heath
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation (12 trial-trenches) carried out as specified in the project brief and wsi.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (12 trial-trenches) was carried out at Camp Poultry Farm, Mill Lane, Hatfield Heath, Essex, in advance of developments at the site. The site forms part of a former WWII prisoner of war camp, probably constructed in 1942/43. Excavations revealed a single feature, which was probably a backfilled modern pond
Keywords	
Funder	Private or public corporation owner
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Adam Wightman, Chris Lister
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - EEX60631
Archives	