



TOUCHSTONE ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological evaluation by Trial trenching at Long
Meadow, Mill Green Road, Fryerning, Essex CM4 0PT

February 2019

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Archaeological evaluation by Trial trenching at Long Meadow, Mill Green Road,
Fryerning, Essex CM4 0PT

NGR: TL 6426 0185 (centre)

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Touchstone Archaeology Project ref.: LMMG18

Curating Museum: Chelmsford Museum

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Summary

Touchstone Archaeology was commissioned by Smart Planning Ltd to undertake archaeological trial trenching at Long Meadow, Mill Green Road, Fryerning, Essex CM4 OPT, to discharge a planning condition relating to the demolition of the existing bungalow and the construction of a replacement two storey dwelling with basement and garage. The archaeological fieldwork was undertaken on the 25th of January 2019.

The trial trenching consisted of a single trench and produced a negative result.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

Touchstone Archaeology was commissioned by Smart Planning to undertake archaeological trial trenching in order to discharge a planning condition at Long Meadow, Mill Green Road, Fryerning, Essex CM4 OPT. The development comprised of the demolition of the existing bungalow and the construction of a replacement two storey dwelling with basement and garage (16/00322/FUL).

1.2 Geology & Location

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey the bedrock geology is recorded as Claygate Member (Clay, silt and sand) with no superficial deposits recorded (*BGS*). No boreholes are recorded within the immediate vicinity. The site is situated at an average height of 97m above Ordnance Datum.

1.2.2 The PDA is located in the county of Essex, within the Borough of Brentwood and the civil parish of Ingatestone and Fryerning and the hamlet of Mill Green. It is situated c.1km north of the village of Fryerning and 1.3km northwest of Ingatestone, mid way between the city of Chelmsford and the town of Brentwood. The PDA is a large sub rectangular plot of 1.2 hectares and is bounded to the north by fields and to the south and east by Box Wood (Fig.1-3, Plate 1).

1.3 Scope of the report

This report provides an account of the archaeological trial trenching.

1.4 Planning background

1.4.1 Planning consent was granted by Brentwood Borough Council (BBC) for the

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demolition of the existing bungalow and the construction of a replacement two storey dwelling with basement and garage (Planning Ref: 16/00322/FUL) with an archaeological condition in place (10).

1.4.2 The archaeology condition states:

No development, including preliminary ground works, shall take place until:

- 1. A scheme for the archaeological investigation of the site, including a timetable for that investigation, has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the local planning authority,*
- 2. The results of the investigation has been submitted to the local planning authority and, if necessitated by the findings of the investigation, those results shall be accompanied by a programme of excavation, recording and where necessary the protection and preservation of remains of archaeological or historical significant, and*
3. The local planning authority has approved that programme. The development shall only take place in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To enable archaeological records to be made if necessary on a site that lies within an area of known archaeological interest. This issue is fundamental to the development permitted and the application as submitted provide sufficient information to demonstrate that the proposal would not be unacceptable harmful to the archaeological interest of the site. In the absence of this condition It would have been necessary to refuse planning permission.

1.4.3 Zoe Schofield consulted with Helen Saunders, Historic Environment Advisor at Essex County Council (ECC) regarding the requirements of the archaeological work which resulted in a Brief (*Saunders H., 2018*).

1.4.4 A Written Scheme of Investigation for the trial trenching was submitted to and approved by the ECC Historic Environment Advisor in advance of the development (*Schofield, Z., 2018*).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 A search of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Record (ECC HER) centred on the site, identified a number of entries within a 500m radius. These are listed in Appendix 1 and briefly summarised below. The site does not lie within or in proximity to statutory designated areas.

2.1.1 Fryerning (EHER19219-MEX1032753) is a historic settlement found on high ground above the southwest side of the valley of Wid. The church is to the south of the village and to the north, the ground rises over the Bagshot Beds to the hamlet of Mill Green, an area of poorer soil and woodland which stretches north to Highwood and west to Blackmore.

2.1.2 The hamlet of Mill Green to the north, was originally within the parish of Ingatestone and is so named because of a mill that was sited there from the C16th. Evidence of a Roman villa (EHER 660-MEX2543) in the form of roof tile, tesserae, brick and pottery, has been found in a field c.300m east of the PDA and the ruins of this building probably provided the Roman building material for the construction of the church. In the Medieval period, it was the site of a major pottery industry (C14th) and records relating to evidence of a kiln surround the PDA (EHER765-MEX2943, 766-MEX2951, 752-MEX2893, 812-MEX3092, 842-MEX3144 & 843-MEX3148, 846-MEX3156, 866-MEX3214). By the post-medieval period it was a dispersed settlement set around a sub-triangular area of common land (EHER17500-MEX1033126) that was used as an army training ground in both world wars. In the Chapman and Andres map of 1799 the PDA is located in an area of open land to the eastern edge of the common and a brick kiln is sited just to the north.

2.1.4 The Essex HER records are largely found to the north of the PDA in and around Stonemore Wood (Appendix I).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and Objectives

3.1.1 The general objective of the archaeological work was to record, interpret and report on any archaeological remains revealed by the groundworks in accordance with current archaeological standards and to assess past impacts on the site. The information collated was to enable the ECC Historic Environment Advisor to make an informed decision as to the requirement for any further archaeological work.

3.1.2 Specific research aims were to identify any evidence of settlement activity associated with the Roman villa (EHER 660-MEX2543), the medieval settlement of Mill Green and Fryerning, the identification of the pottery kiln or associated features thought to be within the area and post medieval or earlier deposits.

3.2 Methodology

3.2.1 All archaeological works were carried out in accordance with the Brief issued by Place Services (*Saunders, H., 2018*), the WSI prepared by Touchstone Archaeology (*Schofield, Z., 2018*) and the Standards and Guidance of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (*CIfA 2014*).

3.2.2 The current dwelling remained in situ throughout the archaeological evaluation.

3.2.4 The fieldwork took place over one day, 25th of January 2019. David Britchfield MCIfA acted as the senior archaeologist on site. Plant and welfare were supplied by Touchstone archaeology.

3.2.5 A single trench was mechanically excavated with a bladed bucket under archaeological supervision, 27m x 1.0m (NW-SE)

3.2.6 The trench and archaeological features were accurately located and planned and tied in to the position of the existing building (Fig.4).

3.2.7 All deposits were recorded in a site diary and using Touchstone Archaeology standard recording sheets.

3.2.8 Section drawings of the excavated profiles were drawn where necessary on plastic drafting film at a scale of 1:10 and later digitised (Fig. 4).

3.2.9 A full photographic record was made recording all features and contexts.

3.2.10 The fieldwork was monitored by Helen Saunders of ECC Place Service, however, due to the results a site visit was deemed unnecessary.

3.3 Site archive

The site archive is currently held at the offices of Touchstone Archaeology and will be delivered to the Chelmsford Museum in due course. The contents of the archive include:

Type	No.
WSI	1
Site Diary/Day book	1
Context Register	1
Photographic Register	1
Photographs	20
Drawings	2
Summary sheet	1
Final Report	1

Table 1. Site Archive

4.0 RESULTS

The post-excavation assessment and the preparation of this report have been carried out in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Management of Research projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE, 2015).

4.1 Context description

4.1.1 (1

Trench 1 (NW-SE) was located to the northeast of the existing building and measured 27m x 1.0m. The trench was excavated to a depth of approximately c.0.5m and exposed a stratigraphic sequence which comprised of a top soil of mid dark grey sandy silt with frequent rooting and occasional small rounded stones (001), a sub soil of mid brown sandy silt with moderate rounded stones and occasional rooting (002) and a natural geology of compact light orange brown sandy silt with frequent gravel (003). No significant archaeological finds or features were present (Fig.4, Plate 2).

4.2 Natural geology

The lowest deposit identified was a compact light orange brown sandy silt with frequent gravel (003) at 0.25m below ground level.

4.3 Context record

No archaeological features or artefacts were encountered during the trial trenching but a total of three contexts were recorded.

Context No.	Type	Interpretive Category	Depth
001	Layer	Top soil - mid dark grey sandy silt with frequent rooting and occasional small rounded stones (001)	0.0m -0.20m
002	Layer	Sub soil - mid brown sandy silt with moderate rounded stones and occasional rooting (002)	0.10m – 0.30m
003	Layer	Natural - compact light orange brown sand silt with frequent gravel (003)	0.25m +

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

5.0 FINDS

No finds were recovered during the evaluation.

6.0 DISCUSSION

The evaluation comprised of a single trench that encountered top soil and sub soil overlaying the natural geology at a depth of 0.25m. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded.

The aims and objectives of the evaluation were fulfilled.

7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Touchstone Archaeology would like to thank Smart Planning Ltd for commissioning the work and Helen Saunders (ECC HEA) for her guidance throughout the project. David Britchfield (MCIfA) carried out the fieldwork, the drawing were digitised by Digitise This and Zoe Schofield authored the report.

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