

**CANFIELD MOAT, HIGH CROSS LANE  
LITTLE CANFIELD  
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**



**Essex County Council  
Field Archaeology Unit**

**February 2010**



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LITTLE CANFIELD  
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**CANFIELD MOAT, HIGH CROSS LANE  
LITTLE CANFIELD  
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**

**Client:** Mr A. Smith

**FAU Project No.:** 2151

**NGR:** TL 5944 2085

**Planning Application:** UTT/0704/09

**OASIS No.:** essexcou1- 72146

**Site Code:** LCCM 09

**Date of Fieldwork:** November 2009 & January 2010

**SUMMARY**

*Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on foundation trenches excavated prior to the construction of two buildings in the garden of Canfield Moat, a 19th century house that stands on an earlier medieval moated site.*

*The northern edge of the moat was found to the north-west of the house, backfilled with late 19th or early 20th century material, with the western arm of the moat continuing to the north. The second area lay to the east of the moat within undisturbed ground.*

**1.0 INTRODUCTION**

A programme of archaeological monitoring was undertaken by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) in the grounds of Canfield Moat, Little Canfield, Essex, prior to the construction of a new garage and pool house. The work was commissioned by Alan Hawkes of Aria Design on behalf of the owner, Mr Andy Smith, and carried out in accordance with a brief issued by the Historic Environment Management team of Essex County Council (ECC HEM), who also monitored the work, and the written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by ECC FAU (2009).

Copies of the report will be supplied to ECC HEM and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) at County Hall, Chelmsford. The archive will be stored at Saffron Walden Museum. An OASIS online record has been created at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/oasis/index.cfm>.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Site description**

Canfield Moat is located on a minor road leading off High Cross Lane in the parish of Little Canfield (TL 5944 2085). The house lies within the earthworks of a medieval moat and extensive garden that include a converted 19th century coach house, utility buildings and a swimming pool (fig. 1).

The outline of a backfilled sub-rectangular moat remains as a landscape feature around the house. Only the southern end still contains water, which has been remodelled as a duck pond. The topography is fairly flat and the natural geology consists of head deposits of clay overlying chalk and a chalky boulder clay between 0.2 and 0.5m below present ground level.

### **2.2 Planning background**

A planning application to build a new garage and pool house was submitted to Uttlesford District Council (UDC) in June 2009 (UTT/0704/09). Mindful of the location of the development site on a medieval moated site, ECC HEM recommended to UDC that a full archaeological condition should be attached to the planning consent, based on advice given in Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (DOE 1990).

### **2.3 Archaeological background**

The 1777 Chapman and Andre map shows an earlier building, a parsonage, located inside a rectangular moat with an entrance midway on the western side. This may have been, or contained parts of, the earlier medieval house. Later 19th century maps suggest a double moat; with the remains of a central arm mostly in-filled, perhaps when the present house was built. In particular, the c.1897 OS map suggests the northern part had been at least partly in-filled by this stage, with buildings encroaching upon its edge (fig. 2).

## **3.0 OBJECTIVES**

The purpose of the historic building survey was, as outlined in the brief (ECC HEM 2009), to record any archaeological deposits disturbed by groundworks for the new garage and pool

house, primarily the backfill deposits of the moat. As the garage lies on the line of the moat, it was possible that any excavation into it would contain good environmental remains.

#### **4.0 METHODOLOGY**

The site of the garage occupied the north-western corner of the moat, while the site of the new pool house was initially to be sited on the north-east corner, but was repositioned on the east side of the moat. Both areas were excavated under archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-bladed bucket. Exposed archaeological deposits were then examined, photographed and recorded using standard FAU methodology and any finds recovered for dating purposes.

#### **5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS**

##### **5.1 Garage**

Prior to the start of works, the area was cleared of vegetation and loose topsoil. Excavation for the foundation trenches for the garage showed 0.3m of topsoil and floor deposits for a 20th century utility structure built on top of the moat. Due to the soft nature of the backfills, the trenches were excavated onto the natural chalk.

The northern edge of the moat (context 7) was recorded on the line of the earthwork seen in the garden to the east, but slightly to the south of the line plotted on the current OS map (fig. 1). The moat extends at least 5m to the south, with the opposing edge beneath the existing outbuilding (fig. 1). The moat was filled with a series of four substantial silty clay backfill deposits containing ceramics dating to the late 19th or early 20th century (contexts 2-5). The bottom fill, context 5, was especially water-logged and contained decayed vegetable matter and part of a square-toed leather boot, as well as pottery of the same date, indicating backfilling as a single event. The flat base of the feature was recorded at a depth of 2m, cut into the natural chalk (plate 1).

A 'spur' extends to the north (context 8), to the same depth beyond the limit of excavation. It may represent a short irregularity in the north-west corner that with limited excavation cannot be clearly understood, and there is no map evidence for it. This was also cut through the natural chalk (plate 1) and backfilled with the same deposits as the moat, plus a fifth deposit

(context 6), a heavy clay on the eastern edge that appeared to be a product of natural silting. Finds were limited to fragments of post-medieval tile.

## 5.2 Pool house

The location of the new pool house was repositioned from the north side to the north-east side of the swimming pool, which appears to be on the eastern arm of the moat (fig. 1). Excavations were carried out to a depth of 1.2m and found undisturbed deposits of clay subsoil beneath the topsoil/turf layer and natural chalky boulder clay 0.5m below ground level (plate 2). There was no evidence of the moat, which is likely to be a short distance to the west, on the line of the swimming pool.

## 6.0 FINDS by Joyce Compton

Finds were recovered from three contexts, all representing moat fills in the area of the new garage. No finds were collected from the area of the new pool house. All of the finds have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Full quantification details can be found at the back of this report. The finds are described briefly by category below.

### *Pottery by Helen Walker*

A total of thirteen sherds, weighing 1220g, were excavated from two contexts. The earliest piece is part of a blue-and-white transfer-printed Spode plate, showing a rural scene with a woman in the foreground and a floral border. This type of design was common in the 1820s, however most of the pottery from this context, layer 5, and layer 2, is Victorian or early 20th century. Other finds in layer 5 include a blue-and-white transfer-printed saucer fragment, this time showing a floral pattern that could easily be as late as 20th century. There are also the remains of two stoneware blacking bottles, the blacking used for blacking boots and fire-grates. Although cylindrical bottles were manufactured from the early 19th century, these examples are much more likely to be Victorian or early 20th century.

From layer 2, is the base of a white earthenware small shallow pot; such pots were used to contain toiletries, food-stuffs and even rat poison. Unfortunately, without the lid, which would have stated its contents and maker's name in a bold printed design, it is impossible to say what it contained. These pots were common from the 1870s to 1920s.

### **Brick and tile**

Two contexts contained brick and tile fragments, but most of the assemblage came from moat layer 5. Two substantial bricks from this context are probably datable to the 18th century, using the typology in Ryan (1996, 94). The third fragment from layer 6 is undiagnostic and not closely datable within the post-medieval period. Roof tiles from layer 5 are not closely datable either, but are also probably post-medieval.

### **Other finds**

The remaining finds were all recovered from layers 2 and 5 and all are likely to be contemporary with the pottery, *i.e.* late 19th to early 20th century. The finds comprise bottle and window glass, an iron door hinge or bracket, fragments of animal bone and a piece of leather from a boot, with stitch holes along one edge and lace-holes along another.

### **Comments on the assemblage**

Most of the assemblage was found in moat layer 5 and a range of late 19th and early 20th century finds was recorded. Two brick fragments are the only earlier datable finds. No further work is required on any of the material and, due to their recent nature, the finds have been discarded.

## **7.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS**

The moat at Canfield Moat is 2m deep and over 5m wide at the north-west corner and appears to have been backfilled in one episode in the late 19th or early 20th century, judging from historic map evidence and dating of finds found throughout the backfills from top to bottom. The southern part of the moat lies beneath existing outbuildings. A spur leads off to the north that perhaps linked to an early trackway ditch that now leads to farm buildings to the west. It appears to be a contemporary feature that was backfilled at the same time. Natural deposits are unusually high on the edge of the moat where overlying material has been removed in the backfilling process, suggesting the ground level has been reduced here.

The undisturbed area of the new pool house contains clearly-stratified undisturbed subsoil and chalky boulder clay deposits outside of the moat. No finds were identified or collected.

The site of Canfield Moat has evolved from the medieval period onwards. No medieval remains associated with the moat were found during the monitoring works, though it is possible that medieval remains lie within the enclosure around the existing house.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to Alan Hawkes of Aria Design commissioning the works on behalf of the owner, and to Michael Spink of Right Build (Essex) for supplying drawings used in the survey. Thanks also to Doug and Ray of Right Move for their assistance during the survey. Fieldwork, recording and photography were undertaken by the author. Illustrations were prepared by the author and produced by Andrew Lewsey of ECC FAU. The project was managed by Patrick Allen and monitored by Richard Havis of ECC HEM, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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| ECC FAU  | 2009 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Monitoring at Canfield Moat, High Cross Lane, Little Canfield</i> (unpub.) |
| ECC HEM  | 2009 | <i>Brief for Archaeological Monitoring at Canfield Moat, High Cross Lane, Little Canfield</i> (unpub.)                           |
| Ryan, P. | 1996 | <i>Brick in Essex from the Roman Conquest to the Reformation</i> , P. Ryan, Chelmsford   |

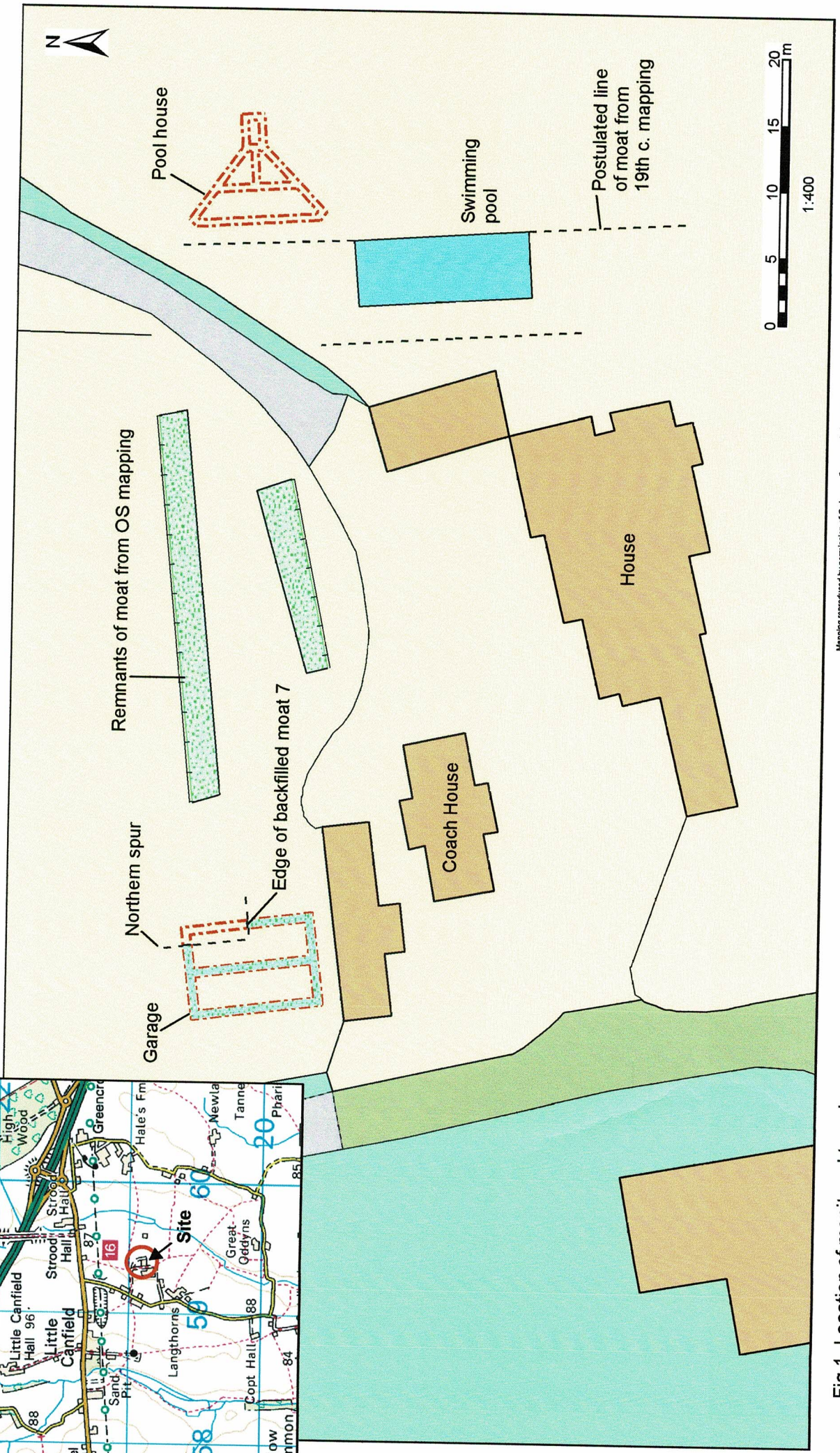
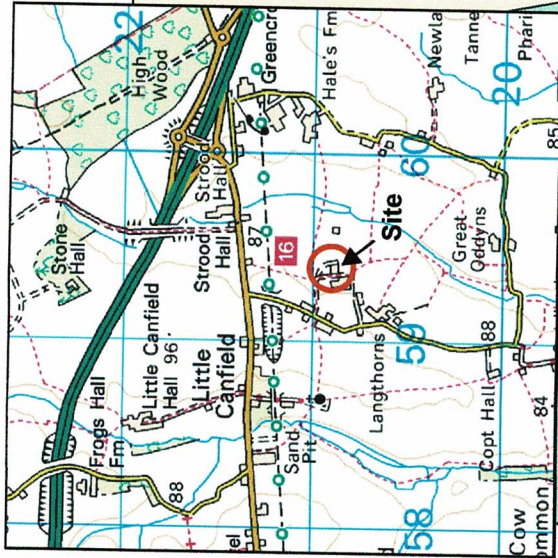


Fig. 1. Location of monitored trenches

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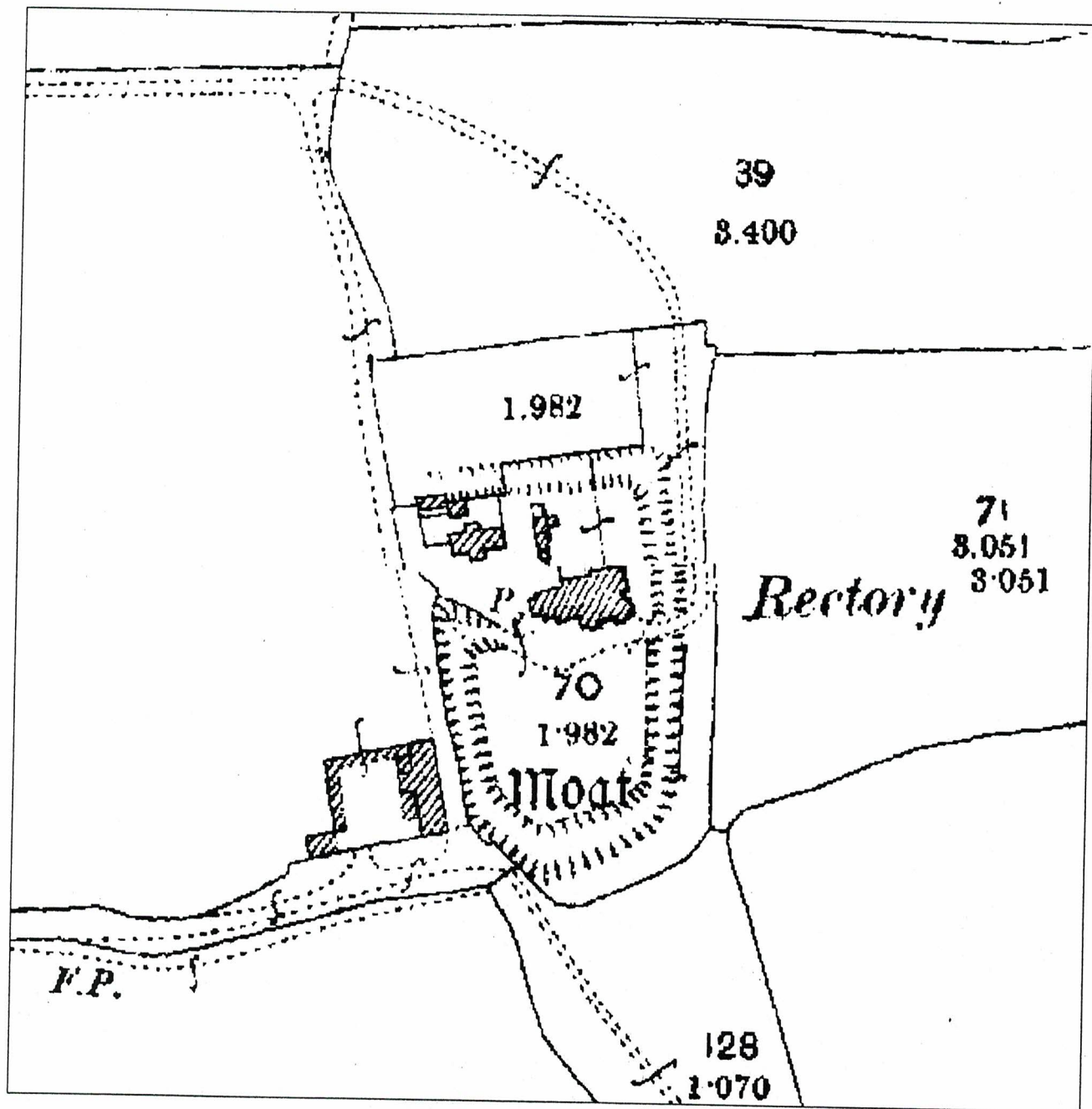


Fig. 2 Ordnance Survey map from c.1897





Plate 1 View to north-east of backfilled moat deposits in new garage area with the moat and northern spur cutting natural chalk on the right side of the photograph



Plate 2 Excavation for pool house on undisturbed ground to the east of the moat



## Appendix 1: Context data

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Period</i>
1	topsoil	Clay silt	Modern
2	deposit	Upper moat fill, with brick & coal frags	Modern
3	deposit	Moat fill	Modern
4	deposit	Moat fill	Modern
5	deposit	Primary moat fill	Modern
6	deposit	Primary fill of spur, below context 5	Post-med
7	cut	North arm of moat, contains fills 2-5	medieval
8	cut	North spur, contains fills 2-6	medieval
9	deposit	Undisturbed clay subsoil to N of pool	-
10	deposit	Natural deposits: chalk & chalky boulder clay	-

## Appendix 2: Finds data

<i>Context</i>	<i>Feature</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Weight</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
2	Layer	2	38	Animal bone; bird tibia; vertebra spine, large mammal	-
		1	172	Glass; greenish 'Kilner' jar-type base, underside is embossed "K B Ltd 276" (Discarded)	Modern
		2	186	Pottery; modern white earthenware; undecorated dish with everted rim and base of small shallow pot.	1850s to early 20th C
5	Layer	1	440	Iron ?door hinge/bracket, length 300mm, width 33mm, depth 8mm	Modern
		2	44	Animal bone; rib fragment; tibia, distal end, deer	-
		1	2	Glass; colourless window sherd (Discarded)	Modern
		1	40	Glass; dark green wine bottle base sherd (part of kick-up) (Discarded)	Modern
		1	34	Leather fragment, part of boot uppers, stitch holes along one edge; four lace holes along opposing edge (Kept damp)	Modern
		2	3330	Brick fragments, one with mortar attached, 105 x 58mm and 105 x 55mm	Post med.
		4	614	Roof tile fragments, inc section of width 160mm	Post med.
		11	1040	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds; fragments of at least four stoneware blacking bottles; white earthenware plate (printed back-stamp 'SPODE' with the letter B) and saucer rim sherds with blue transfer-printing; flowerpot body sherds	Victorian to early 20th C
6	Layer	1	362	Brick fragment, abraded, depth 55mm	Post med.

### Appendix 3: EHER Summary Sheet

<b>Site Name/Address:</b> Canfield Moat, High Cross Lane, Little Canfield, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Little Canfield	<b>District:</b> Uttlesford
<b>NGR:</b> TL 5944 2085	<b>Site Code.:</b> LCCM 09
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological Monitoring	<b>Site Director/Team:</b> Andrew Letch ECC FAU
<b>Date of Work:</b> 10th & 11th November 2009 & 18th January 2010	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> 77m (garage) & c.40m (pool house)
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Saffron Walden	<b>Funding Source:</b> Mr. Andy Smith
<b>Further Work Anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related HER Nos.</b> HER 4578 (moat) & 4579 (house)
<b>Final Report:</b> Summary in EAH	
<b>Periods Represented:</b> Late 19th- to early 20th century	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<p>Archaeological monitoring was undertaken on foundation trenches excavated prior to the construction of two buildings in the garden of Canfield Moat: a garage on the north-western corner of the moat and new pool house on the east side of the moat.</p> <p>Canfield Moat is a large house built in the 19th century as a rectory that stands on an earlier, medieval moated site. The outline of a sub-rectangular moat remains as a landscape feature, though the southern end, which has been remodelled as a duck pond, still retains water. The 1777 Chapman and Andre map shows an earlier building located inside a rectangular moat with an entrance to the west. More detailed late 19th century maps appears to show part of a central arm, suggesting a double-moat.</p> <p>Monitoring works on the garage established the northern edge in line with the earthwork seen in the garden to the east. The moat extends atleast 5m to the south, cut through natural chalk under only 0.2m of topsoil. The opposing edge lies beneath an existing outbuilding. A spur continues north of the moat, perhaps linking to former ditches along the original entrance track, which now leads to farm buildings. The moat was filled with a series of silty clay backfill deposits containing ceramics dating to the late 19th or early 20th century.</p> <p>The eastern arm of the moat is on the line of the swimming pool. The new pool house is located to the north-east of the pool and excavation found undisturbed deposits of clay subsoil and natural chalky boulder clay below topsoil.</p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports:</b> None	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> Andrew Letch	<b>Date of Summary:</b> 10th February 2010

## **Appendix 4: Contents of archive**

**Canfield Moat, High Cross Lane, Little Canfield, Essex**

**Archaeological Monitoring**

**Site code: LCCM 09**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 ECC FAU WSI

1.2 ECC HEM brief

**2. Research Archive**

2.1 Copy of report

2.2 Copy of report pdf-formatted on CD

**3. Site Archive**

3.1 Site photographic record (digital images) on CD

3.2 Field notes & drawings

3.3 Architect's drawings (reduced)

