

INDEX DATA	RPS INFORMATION
Scheme Title	Details
Corchester Northern cupproach road.	Arch. Evou. Stagle 1: Turner Rd- Boxted Rd
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Road Number	Date
Contractor Arch . Trust.	
County ESSEX,	
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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE LINE OF THE COLCHESTER NORTHERN APPROACH ROAD. STAGE 1: TURNER ROAD TO BOXTED ROAD.

COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST 1997 C.O.L.E.M. 1997/6

SUMMARY

The evaluation revealed two areas of significant archaeology of the late iron age and early Roman periods, both on the southern section of the new road line between Turner Road and Mill Road.

To the west of the Colchester General Hospital a ditch dating to the early Roman period, and probably close to a settlement area of the same date, was located just below the modern topsoil.

There is a more substantial concentration of features of late iron age to early Roman date along the whole of the section of the new road passing through the grounds of Turner Village Hospital. These consist of the partly truncated remains of several ditches together with possible other smaller features, which could provisionally be interpreted as a ditched trackway leading toward a settlement site or focus situated on the northern part of this area. The archaeological features survive at a depth of about 0.7m below present ground level at the nothern end of this area and about 1.0m on the central and southern parts. They are directly sealed by modern redeposited layers probably resulting from the insertion of two major drains just to the west of the evaluation trench line. These late iron age/early Roman features are important not only of themselves but form part of a larger archaeological landscape which includes the extensive Roman cremation cemetery (with about 100 known burials) and Roman road or trackway just to the south on Turner Rise.

There is no evidence for any significant archaeology on the section of the new road line between Mill Road and Boxted Road.

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION OF THE LINE OF THE COLCHESTER NORTHERN APPROACH ROAD. STAGE 1: TURNER ROAD TO BOXTED ROAD.

INTRODUCTION

This report is concerned with the Stage 1 archaeological evaluation of the Colchester Northern Approach Road which covers the southern and middle sections from Turner Road to Boxted Road.

The Stage 1 evaluation was undertaken in two phases which conform to separate units defined by the existing road pattern. Phase 1 covers the new road line between Turner road and Mill road in the area and grounds of Colchester General Hospital, and the grounds of Turner Village Hospital. This section was completed in February 1997. Phase 2 follows the proposed road line from Mill road to Boxted road through the grounds of Severalls Hospital and was carried out in March 1997.

There are no records or archives indicating any known archaeology within the Stage 1 area, and the evaluation was effected by machine trenching on a minimum 50% sample basis, with an even distribution of trenches along the proposed road line. The total length of the new road included in the Stage 1 area is approximately 2 tem over which the total length of evaluation trenching carried out was just under 1.2 km giving an approximate linear sample of 60%. The trenches were excavated to the natural sub-soil and any features revealed investigated. A careful watch was also maintained on spoil from the trenches for any archaeological material.

The Phase 1 and 2 evaluations comprise a total of eighty trenches, the majority of which proved negative in terms of archaeology, and so only those which produced significant results are presented in detail. The location and findings from all of the trenches are summarised on the main area plans and in the attached appendices.

The topography of the area of Phase 2 and the northern end of Phase 1 is relatively flat and open. However on the Phase 1 section from the area of the General Hospital southward the land begins to steadily fold into a small valley bisected by an artificially coursed and deeply cut stream.

ARCHAEOLOGY

1. Prehistoric: (notes on worked/smashed flint)

A very small number of worked/smashed flints were recovered from topsoil on the Phase 1 area. A total of six from T8 and T9 and one from T24. The flints from T8 and T9 are all of relatively crude working being either large fragments broken by quite heavy blows or cortex removal/trimming flakes. This small concentration coincides with the occurrence of a modern field drain in T8 which utilises broken and smashed flints as its main packing. It is clear that the crude nature of the working exhibited by these finds would make this drain a likely source, and it is probable that they are of modern creation rather than late neolithic or Bronze age in date. The single struck flint flake from T24 is also a cortex removal/trimming flake and is possibly prehistoric, but of itself and as an isolated find is not dateable.

No other potentially prehistoric material was found on Phase 1 or Phase 2, and there is no secure evidence of any prehistoric activity along these sections of the new road line.

II. Late iron age and early Roman:

Two areas of late iron age and early Roman activity were identified, both on the Phase 1 evaluation. One to the west of the General Hospital (plan 2) and a second in the grounds of Turner Village Hospital (plan 4).

Area covered by Plan 2:

In Trench 15 west of the main General Hospital a Roman ditch (F2) probably dating to the later 1st-early 2nd century AD was revealed. The range of finds from a small sample section comprised 300g of pottery, fragments of roof tiles, burnt bone and daub, together with small pieces of charcoal. Despite a lack of other clearly contemporary features in this area the quantity and range of finds recovered would indicate the presence of a near by settlement focus of early Roman date which remains unlocated.

The two other features, a shallow scoop or depression (F3) and a shallow slot or gully (F4), located in the same general area as F2 produced no finds and are essentially undated. However their clearer definition immediately below the topsoil would suggest that they are probably of more recent origin than the Roman ditch.

Area covered by plan 4:

A second more extensive concentration of activity dating from the late iron age to early Roman period was shown to exist along the course of the new road line between the Turner Village Hospital and Turner Road. It is clear that the archaeology along this whole area has been truncated by major excavation from the insertion of two large drains just to the west (see section III below).

At the northern end of this area in Trench 33 two ditches (F5 & F6) intersect at a right angle to each other, possibly defining part of a field system or enclosure. Both produced a significant quantity of pottery (in total 575g) dating to the late pre Roman iron age or early Roman period. A large lump of burnt flint some oyster shell fragments and a small piece of Roman tile were also recovered from F5. This material from a limited sample excavation would suggest proximity to an area of settlement. Two further ditches (F7 & F9) were found in trenches 35 and 40 to the south. The finds recovered from these consisted almost entirely of pottery fragments of the same date as F5 and F6 but both the relative quantities (125g from F7 and 65g from F9) and the average size of the sherds are smaller. A small piece of Roman tile was also found in the fill of F9. It is possible that these two ditches form part of a trackway running north-south.

In addition to these in Trench 36 the remains of a poorly defined ?pit (F8) contained a small quantity of fragmented pottery (10g) dating to the later iron age/early Roman period. This appeared to cut a dark gravelly feature running along the west edge of the trench which produced no finds, and of itself is undated. F8 was very poorly defined and the relationship between the two features is not secure. It is possible that the gravelly feature is of natural origin, but it could also represent the edge of deeper modern disturbance associated with the insertion of the major drains about 10m to the west.

Along the west edge of T41 at the southern end of this area were a series of irregular features (F10 F11 F12) which appear to form a consistent or regular group. A small amount of pottery fragments of probable late iron age/early Roman date were recovered from the F10, and a small piece of brick/tile which is undated. The archaeological status of these features is questionable and their dark stony fills were reminiscent of the gravelly feature in T36. It is possible they could represent late iron age/Roman activity, however it is also possible that they are modern and part of an irregular edge of deeper disturbance from the insertion of the major drains to the west.

IIL Modern Factors Affecting the Archaeological Potential of the Southern Phase 1 Area:

The valley bottom and stream course of the southern Phase 1 area are closely followed by two large drains. In the area of Project Horizon (plan 3) these were measured from service covers at 4 metres deep. The drains are shown on a service map to run from Turner Road to just beyond the north boundary of Project Horizon. However surface drain covers, and drains revealed in trenches to the south of the Nurses Home would indicate that they probably extend further north than shown.

Extensive areas of modern disturbance in the trenches across the area of Plan 3 indicate that the excavation cuts for these drains could extend to an irregular edge between 10 and 15 metres west from their centre. This was directly tested by Trench 30 where the drain cut was demonstrated to be in excess of 10 metres on their west side. It should be noted that the trenches reproduced on plan 3 were progressively adjusted slightly towards the western edge of road line to skirt the edges of this extensive disturbance.

The evaluation trenches for the area of Turner Village (Plan 4) were placed 5 metres east of the north-south boundary fence partly to compensate for an expected cut extending out on the east side of the drains. The natural clay subsoil and surviving archaeology on this section of road line were found to be at a greater depth than on any other part of the Phase 1 or Phase 2 evaluation areas at between 0.7m and 1.0m deep. Modern fragments of brick and tile were also found in the layers directly sealing these levels and the remains of the archaeological features themselves are thought to be heavily truncated. The explanation for this extensive disturbance would seem to be the construction cut for the two major drains involving the scraping back of this whole area. Exploratory results from Trench 39 would indicate that this disturbance extends to some 4 - 5 metres to the east of the evaluation trench line.

IV. Stage 2 area:

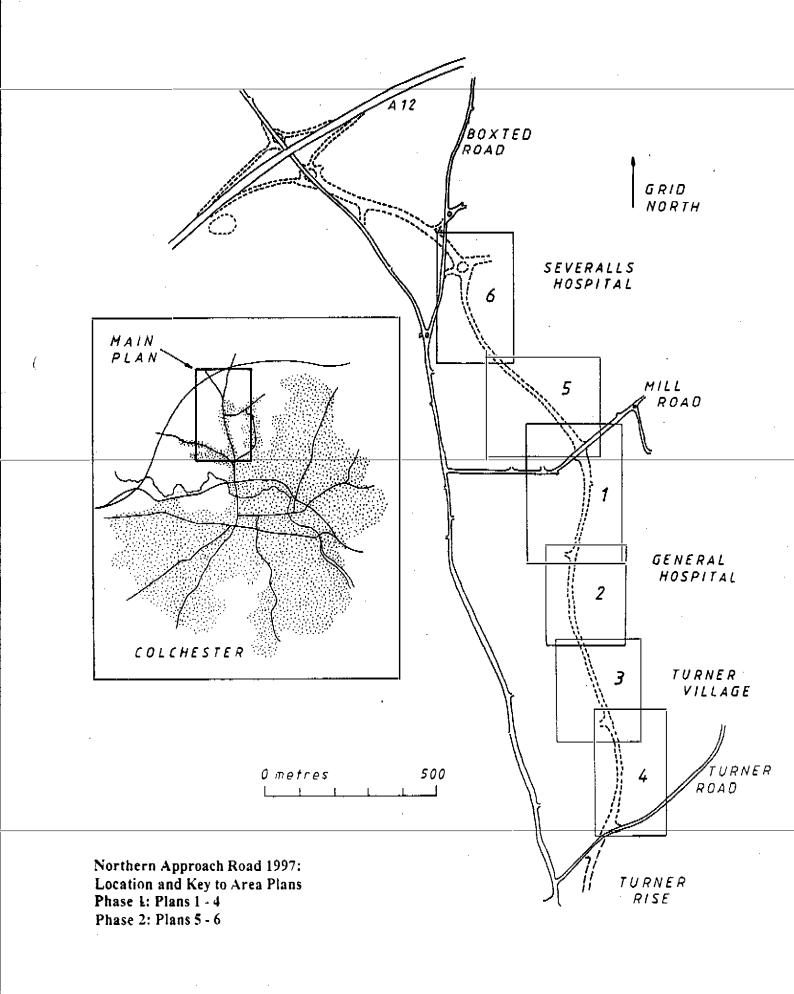
No significant archaeology was found to be present on the Stage 2 area.

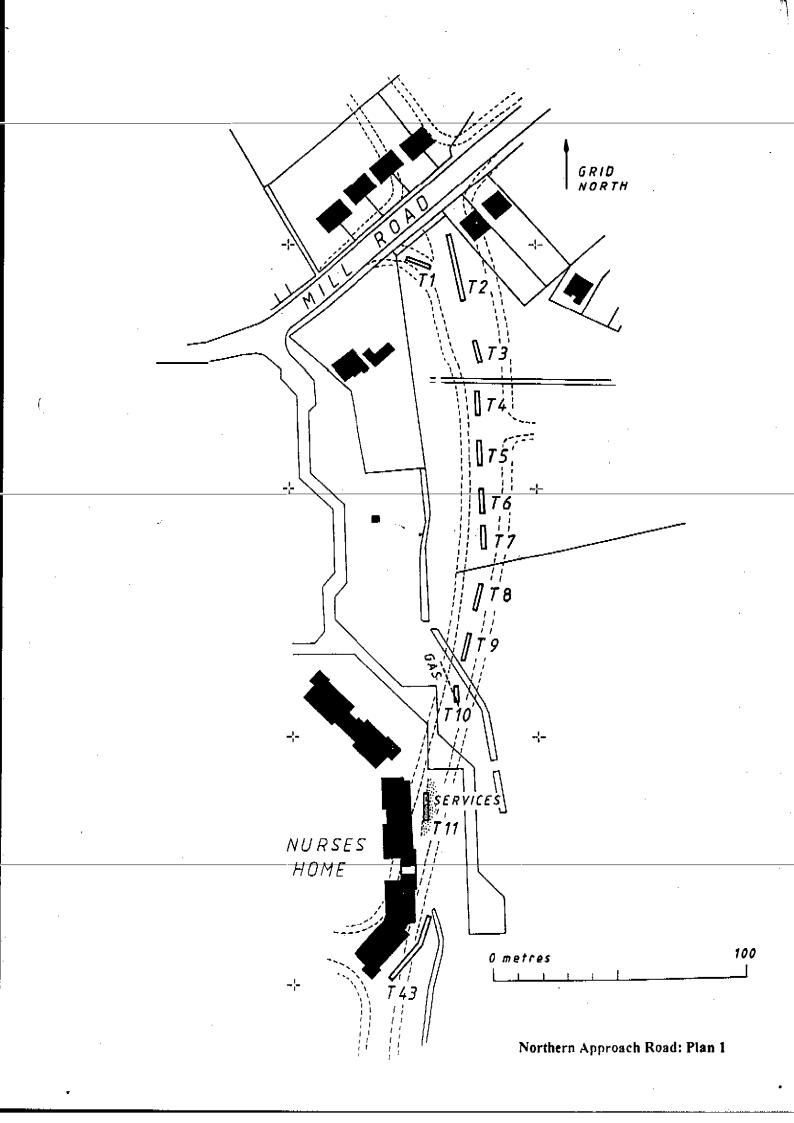
Three small-medium sized fragments of Roman tile were recovered, one each from the topsoil of T58 T59 and T61. The largest fragment was approximately 8 x 4 x 3 cm and the smallest 4 x 3 x 3 cm. There were no other finds of Roman date and no features which could be associated with this material were found.

All features encountered were clearly post Medieval in date (probably 19th-20th century) or of natural origin.

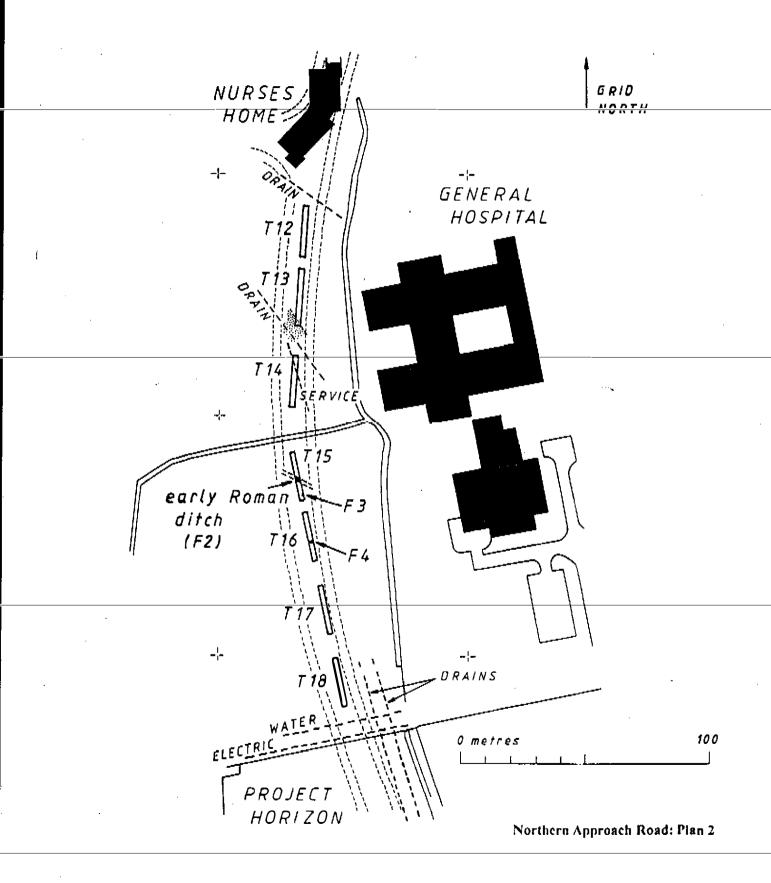
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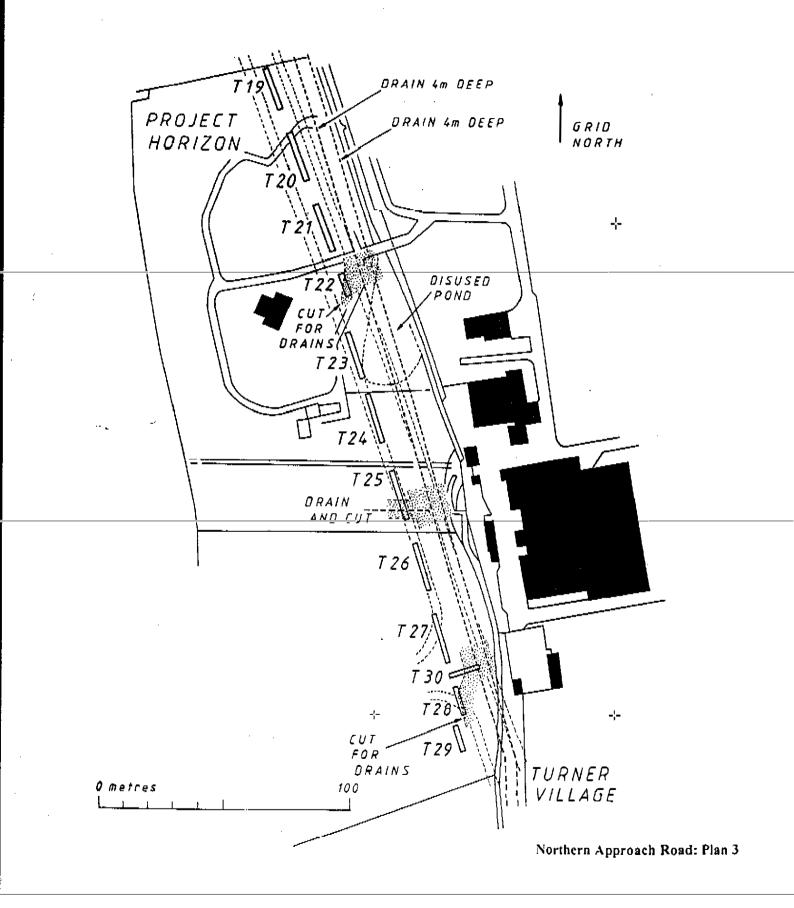
COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST
12 LEXDEN ROAD
COLCHESTER CO2 2NF
TEL/FAX (01206) 541051

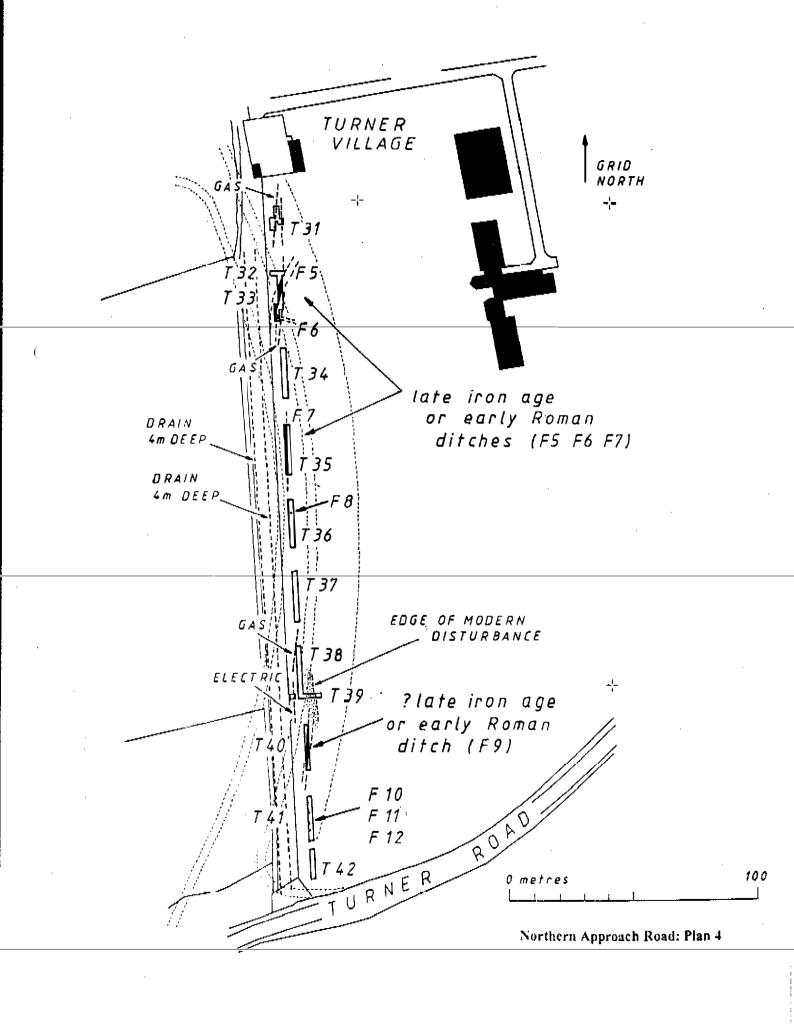


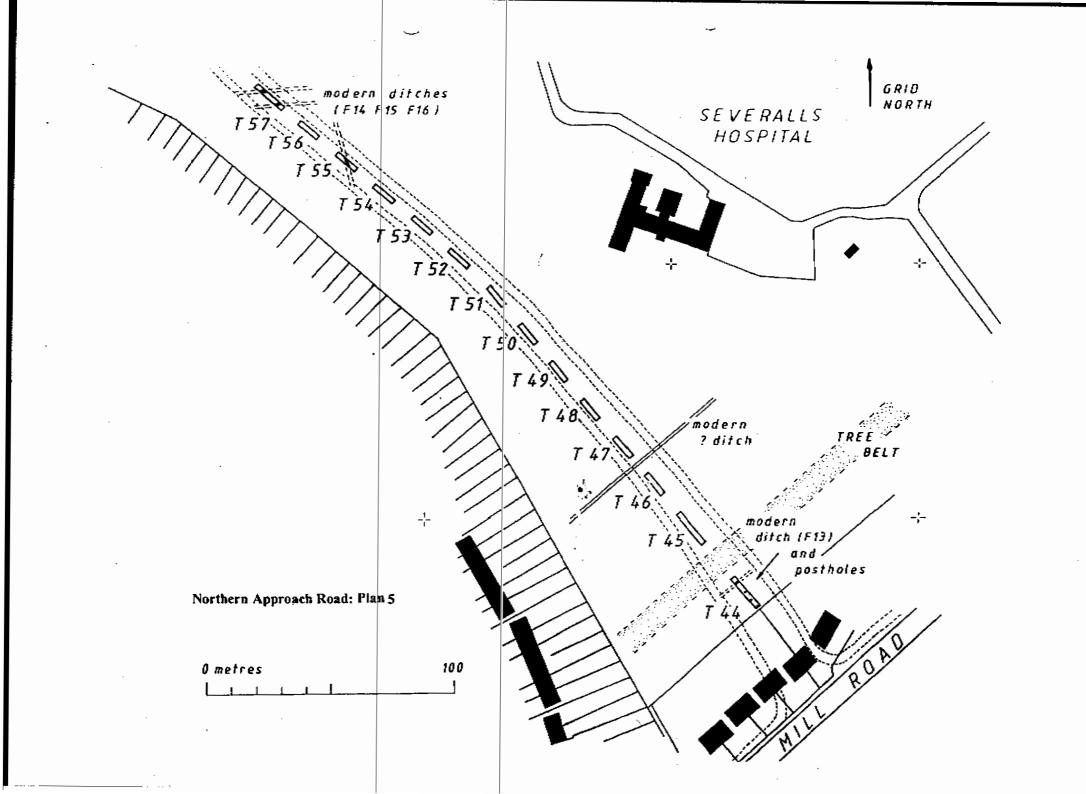


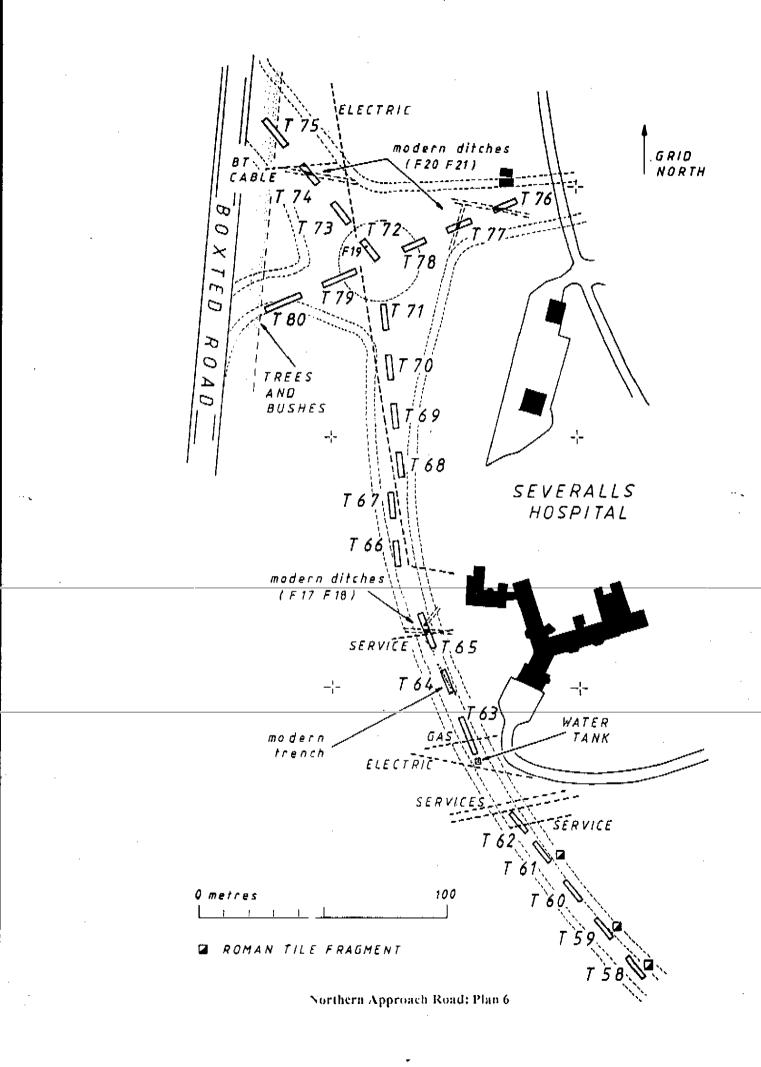
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COLCHESTER NORTHERN APPROACHES ROAD 1997 STAGE 1 APPENDIX I

NOTES, DESCRIPTION AND FIGURES FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES

PHASE 1: Plan 2

F2: Roman ditch

T15 plan and section

Feature has poor contrast with natural immediately below ploughsoil. Northern edge established approximately. Attention first brought to this area when pottery fragments noticed whilst cleaning trench base with machine bucket.

Upper fill: compacted light brownish yellow slightly silty clay with some small stone. Finds, some Roman pottery and Roman roof tile fragments (finds No.3).

Middle (lower) fill: friable medium brownish clay silt with some small to medium stone, and firm yellowish grey silty clay. Common charcoal inclusions. The majority of the finds are from this fill (finds No.4).

Base fill: clean compact medium greyish yellow clay with some charcoal and maganese fragments.

F3: undated scoop/depression (?natural)

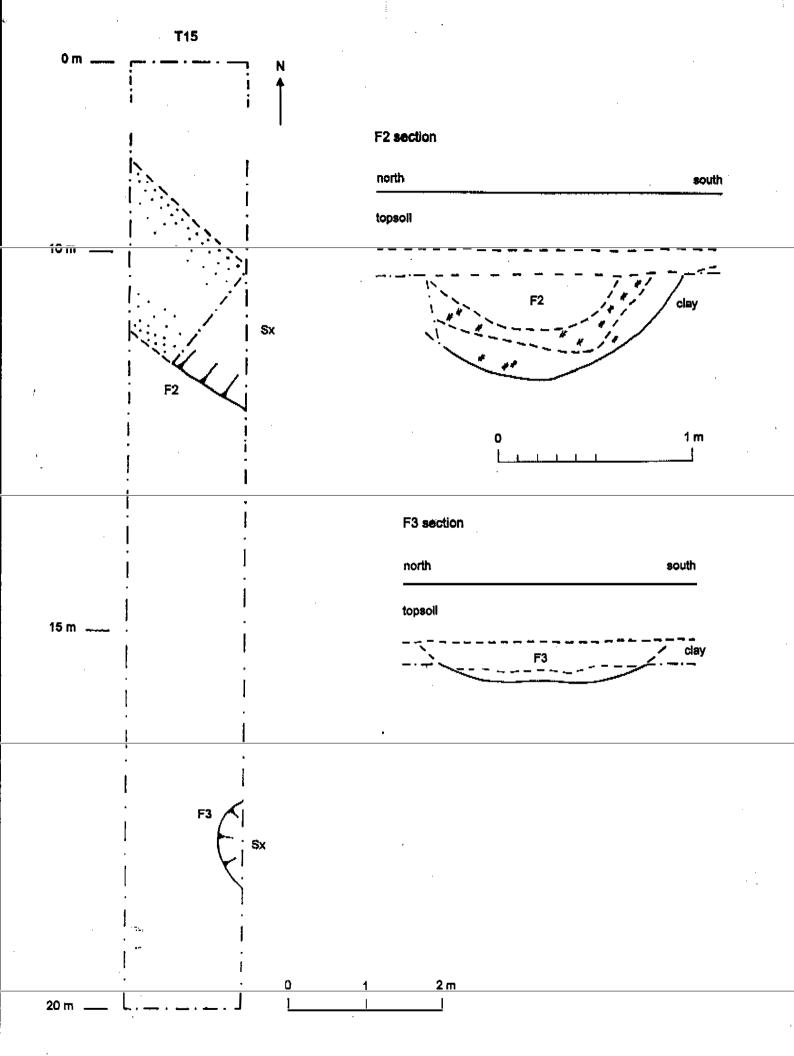
T15 plan and section

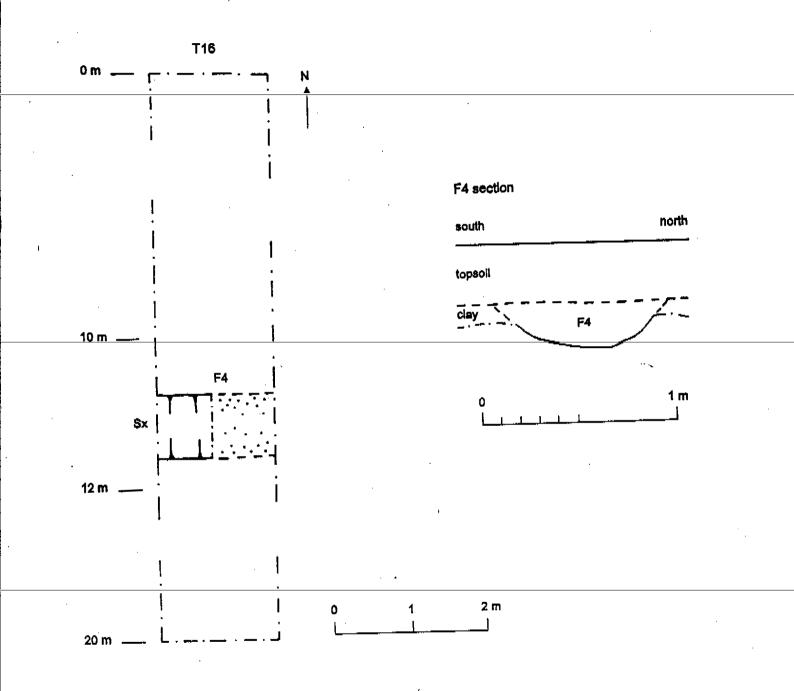
Upper fill: friable medium brown clay silt with some small stone and maganese inclusions.

Lower fill: firm light yellowish mottled clay. Possible overcut into natural clay.

F4: undated slot/gully T16 plan and section

Fill: friable light brownish grey sandy silt with some small stone and ?iron pan fragments.





PHASE 1: plan 4

F5: Late iron age/early Roman (L(A/Rom) ditch

T33 plan and section

Poor/fair general definition with surrounding natural clay. Truncated by recent disturbance.

Upper fill: light yellowish grey clay silt with charcoal flecks/fragments and some?manganese fragments.

Lower fill: firm light yellowish brown mottled clay silt with charcoal flecks and ?manganese fragments. ?possible slight overcut.

F6: LIA/Rom ditch

T33 plan and section

Fairly clear definition. Truncated by recent disturbance.

Upper fill: light whitish brown clay silt with some charcoal and degraded pottery fragments.

Lower fill: mottled orange yellow silty clay with grey silt patches.

F7; LIA/Rom ditch

T35 plan and section

LIA/ROM ditch

Poor/fair general definition with surrounding natural clay. Truncated by recent disturbance.

Fill: compact light greyish brown clay silt with rare flecks of maganese.

F8: ?LIA/Rom ?pit

T36 plan and section

Poor general definition and very badly truncated. Edges never established with certainty. Possibly cuts patchy (grey brown silty clay and orange brown sandy clay) gravelly feature to west but no definite relationship established.

Fill. Patchy light brown sandy clay

F9: LIA/Kom dirch

T40 plan and section

Poor/fair general definition with surrounding natural clay. Truncated by recent disturbance.

Fill: Yellowish brown slightly dirty silty clay with some small to medium stone and occasional charcoal flecks. Some iron pan or manganese fragments.

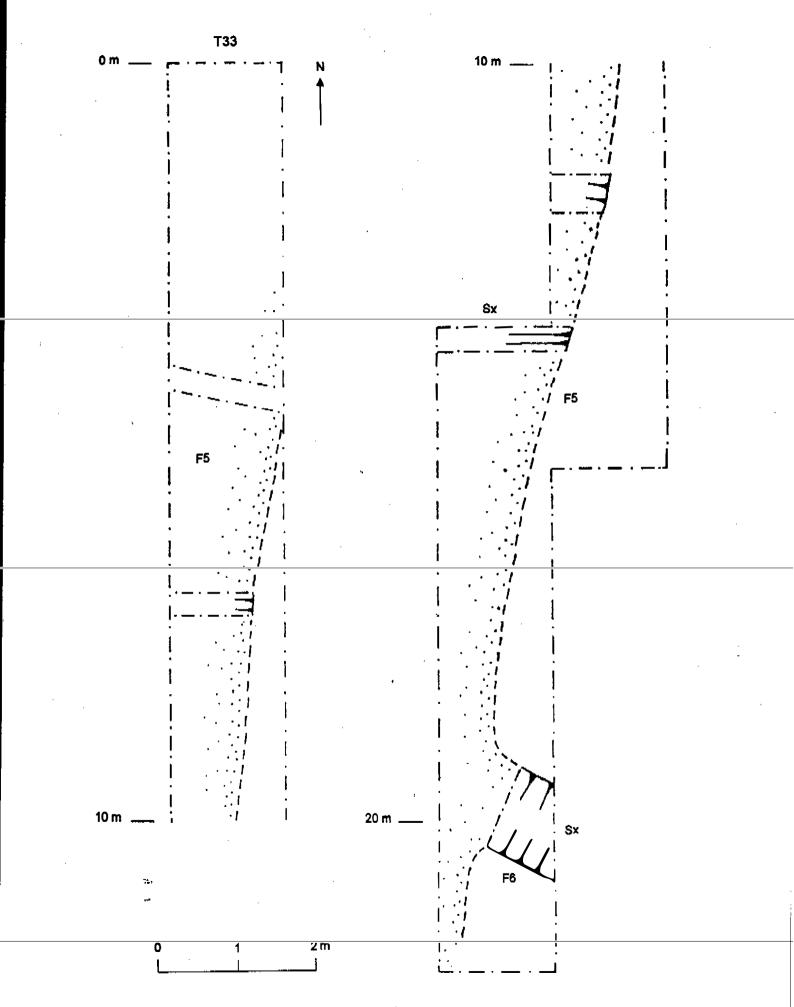
F10: ?LIA/Rom or modern disturbance

Fill: Stony mottled grey brown and yellow brown clay. Finds of LIA/Rom pottery and fragment of undated brick/tile.

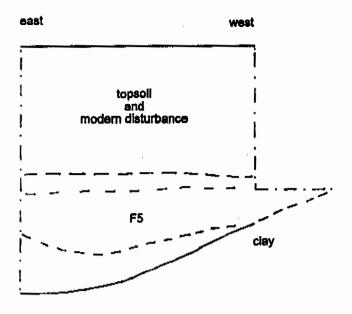
F11: As above. No finds.

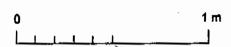
F12: As Above

Partly excavated. No finds, Large piece of Roman tile found imbedded in clay subsoil just to east ?disturbed by machine.

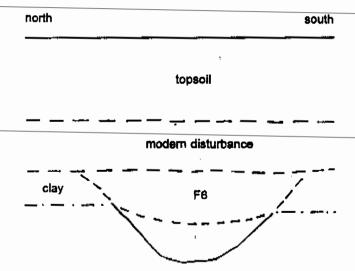


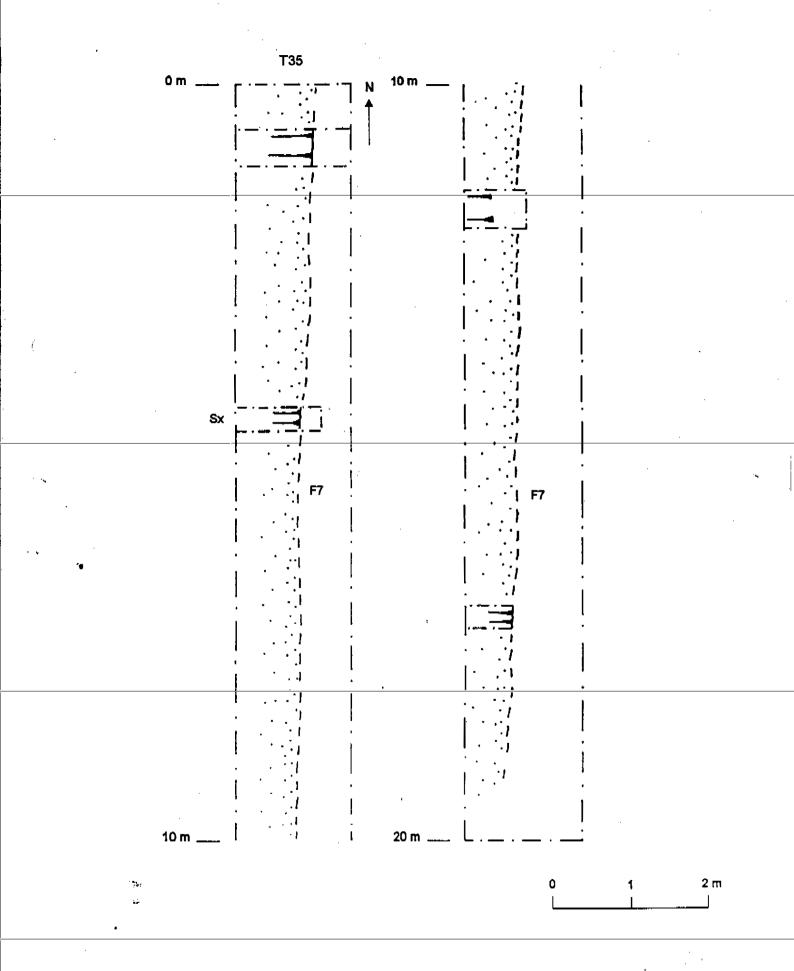




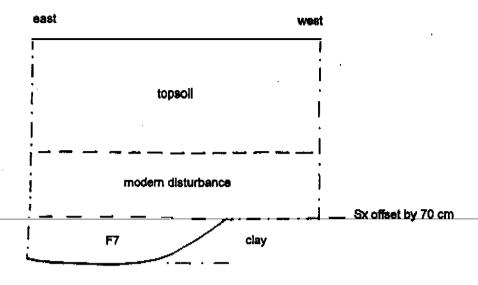


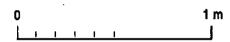
F6 section



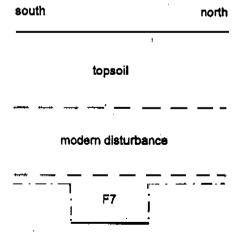


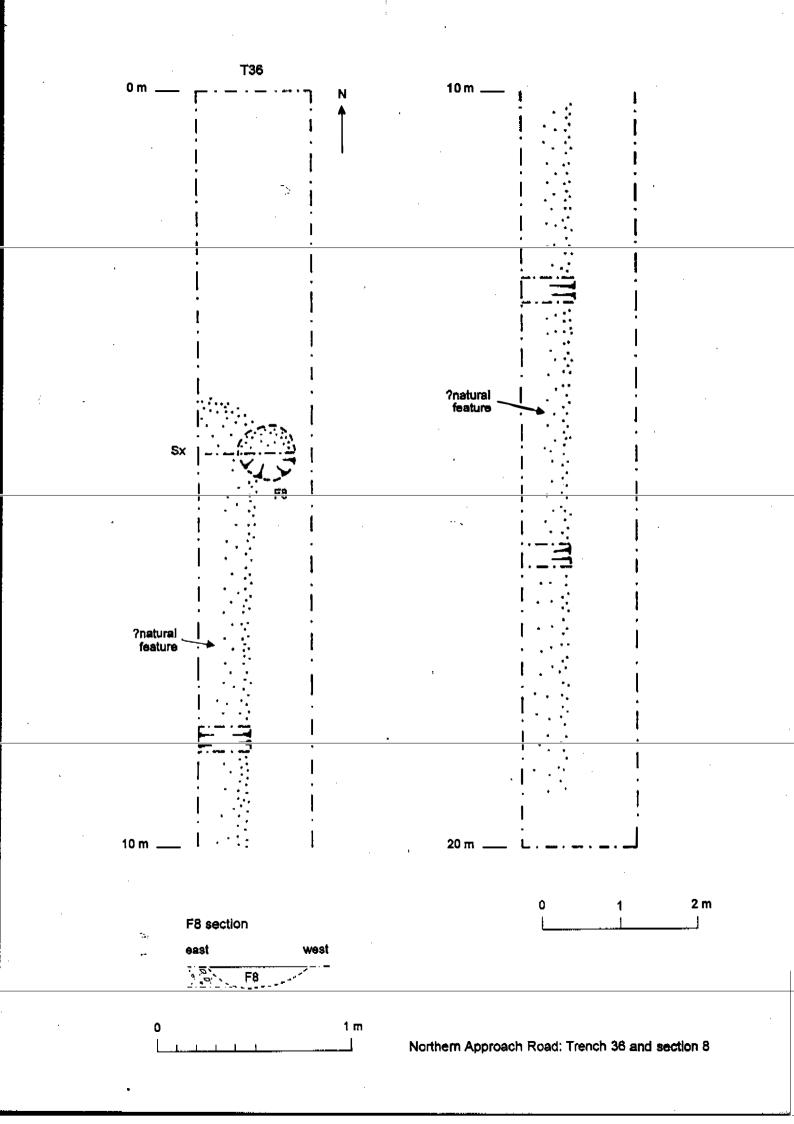


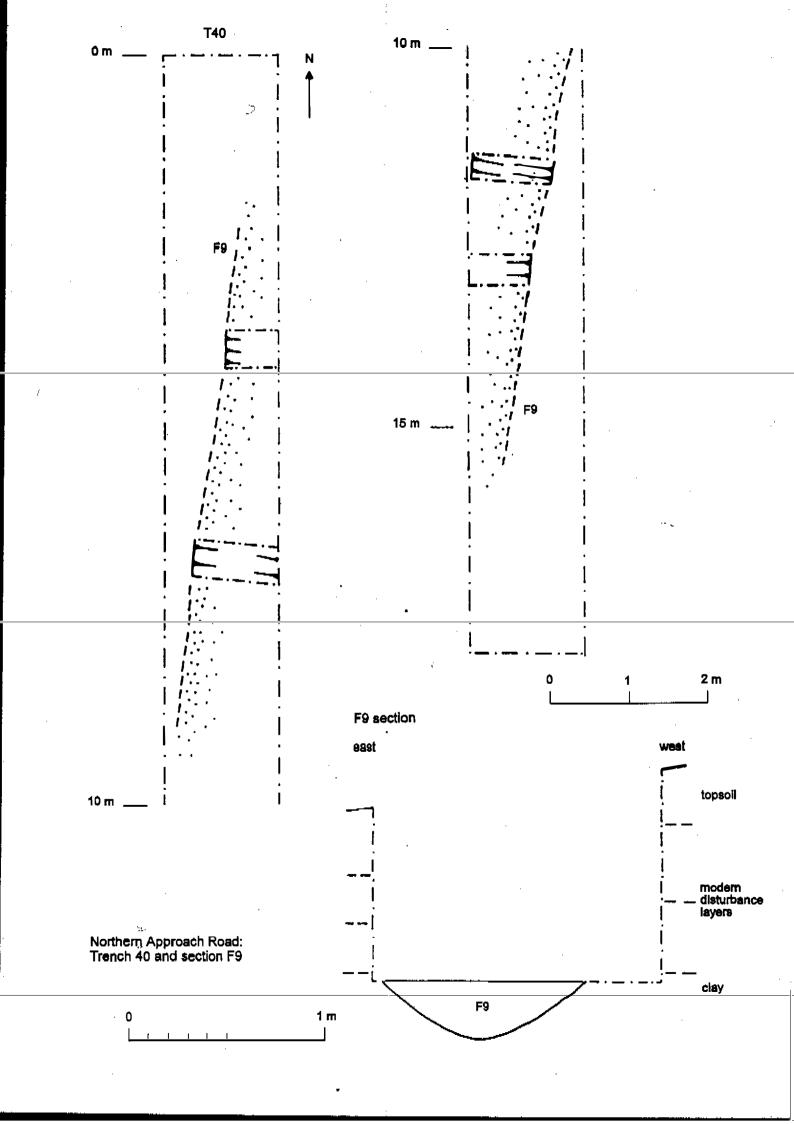


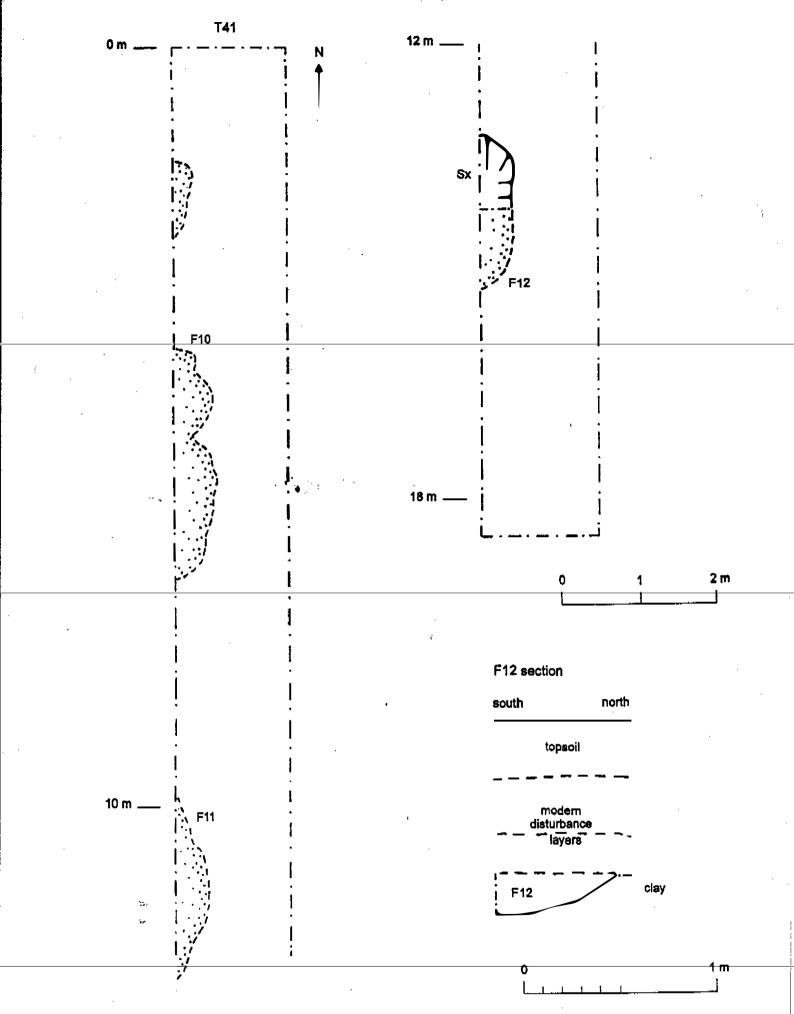


F7 section









Northern Approach Road: Trench 41 and section F12

NORTHERN APPROACHES ROAD, PHASE 1. 1997 APPENDIX II

FINDS RETAINED

COLEM accession code 1997/6

T No.	Context	Find No.	Find Type	No./WL	Date	Comments
8	topsoil	1	worked flint	3	?modern/prehistoric	possibly associated with modern field drain construction
9	topsoil	2	worked flint	3	?modern/prehistoric	possibly associated with modern field drain construction
15	, F2	3 & 4	potlery tile bone daub ?slag	300g 3 3 .1 1	Early Roman Floman	prob. 1st-2nd century roof tile burnt fired/burnt fragment/lump
24	topsoil	5	worked flint	1	?prehistoric	undated
33	F5	6,7&8	pottery bumt flint oyster shell tile	450g 1 1	Ll∤√Roman Roman	poss, late Iron age large lump fragment fragment
	F6	9	pottery	125g	LU//Roman	poss, late Iron age
35	F7	10, 11 & 12	pottery ?slag	65g 5	prehistoric	prob. late Iron age fragments
36	F8	13	pottery	10g	prehistoric	prob. late Iron age
40	F9	14 & 15	pottery tile	3g 1	prehistoric Roman	prob. late fron age fragment

			tile	1	?modelii	raginalit muusive
41	F10	-16	pottery brick/tile	15g 1	prehistoric	prob. late Iron age undated fragment
	subsoil	17	tile	- 1	Roman	large fragment/piece possibly associated with F12

\$ 45

frogmont Sintrucius

COLCHESTER NORTHERN APPROACHES ROAD, PHASE 1. 1997 APPENDIX III

EVALUATION TRENCHES: SUMMARY

STAGE 1: MILL ROAD TO TURNER ROAD. FEBRUARY 1997

PLAN 1: MILL ROAD TO NURSES HOME

T No.	LENGTH m's	DEPTH m's	SUBSOIL TYPE	AT DEPTH m's	ROAD BASE m's	NOTES
1	10	0.6	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0.5 - 1	excavated deeper at N. end to confirm natural
2	27	0.6	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0.5 - 1	excavated deeper at N. end to confirm natural F1 (natural feature)
3	10	0.6	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0.5 - 1	
4	10	0.6	c la y	0.4 - 0.5	0.5 - 1	
5	10	0.6	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0.5 - 1	
6	10	0.6	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0.5 - 1	feature (natural)
7	10	0.5	ctay	0.4 - 0.5	.0	•
8	10	0.6	clay	0.5 - 0.6	0	modem land drains and pit. 3 worked/smashed flints in topsoil prob. modern from smashed flint fill of land drain
9	10	0.6	clay	0.5 - 0.6	0	modem land drains and natural feature. 3 worked flints in topsoil poss, prehistoric
10	6	0.7	clay	0.2	0	modern disturbance at N. end. abandoned as gas pipe on same alignment

11	10	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.5	0	most of trench occupied by modern service cuts and disturbance
43	28	0.7	clay	0.5	0.5 - 1	
PLAN	2: NURSE	S HOME T	O PROJECT	HORIZON		
T No.	LENGTH m's	DEPTH m's	SUBSOIL TYPE	AT DEPTH	ROAD BASE m's	NOTES
12	20	1.0 - 0.5	clay	0.5 - 0.7	0 - 0.5	excavated deeper at N. end land drain
13	21	0.7	sandy clay	0.5	0 - 0.5	cut for ?drain at S. end land drain several natural channel/depression features
14	20	0.4	sandy clay	0.4	0 - 0.5	cut for modem services at N. end several land drains
15	25	0.4	clay	0.4	0 - C.5	F2 Roman ditch, quantity of material recovered indicates prob. close to settlement area. F3 undated pit
16	20	0.4	clay	0.3	0 - 0.5	F4 undated shallow liner feature
17	20	0.5	clay	0.3	0 - 0.5	
18 -	20	0.5	clay	0.3	0 - 0.5	
PLAN	3: PROJEC	CT HORIZO	ON			
T No.	LENGTH m's	DEPTH m's	SUBSOIL TYPE	AT Depth	ROAD BASE	NOTES

				m's	m's	
19 1 g	19	8.0	clay	0.5 - 0.6	0	modern trench (?service) and pit. land drain
20	10	0.6	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0	land drains
21	20	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.25	0	two irregular features with dark fill ?tree/root disturbance
22	10	0.6	clay	0.4	0	heavy modem disturbance, cut for drains
23	15	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0	small modern disturbance/root/tree hole
24	20	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	worked flint in topsoil, prob. prehistoric two small modern liner features and land drains
25	20	0.4	clay	0.3	0.5 - 1	very large cut for modern drain
26	20	0.3	clay	0.2	0	
27	20	0.4	clay	0.2	. 0	land drain
28	13	0.7 - 0.8	clay	0.4	0	helavy modern disturbance, cut for drains
29	10	0.7 - 0.8	clay	0.4	0	small modern liner feature
30	13	0.9 - 0.5	clay	0.4	0	extravated to locate cut for main drains modern disturbance/pit prob. bucket teeth marks and cut for drains
PLAN	4: TURNE	R VILLAGE	.			
T No.	LENGTH m's	DEPTH m's	SUBSOIL TYPE	AT Depth	ROAD BASE m's	NOTES
31	14	0.6 - 0.7	clay	0.6 - 0.7	0	two gas pipes. trench abandoned

32	6	1 - 0,5	clay	0.6 - 0.7	0	excavated to explore services line, gas pipe at E. end
¥ -33	22	0.9	clay	0.7	0 - 0.5	F5 late iron age/early Roman ditch, significant quantity of material recovered, prob. close to settlement area F6 LIA/Roman ditch, significant quantity of material in fill modern gas pipe on east side of trench
34	20	1	clay	0.9	0.5 - 1	several modern features with gravel and cinder fills
35	20	0.8 - 0.9	clay	0.8 - 0.9	0.5 - 1	F7 LIA/early Roman ditch land drains with cinder fills
36	20	0.6 - 0.8	clay	0.5 - 0.7	0.5 - 1	F8 poss. LIA/early Roman pit/disturbance with poor definition above cuts ?liner feature with poor definition poss. ?natural or ?modern disturbance
37	20	0.6	clay	0.4+	0.5 - 1	
38	19	8.0	clay	0.7	0	modern brick built drains cut modern ?redeposited clay
39	11	0.7	clay	0.8	0	excavated to explore ?redeposited material electricity service at W. end
40	20	1	clay	8.0	0	F9 L!A/early Roman ditch
41	20	0.8 - 0.9	clay	0.7 - 0.8	0	F10 - F12 ?disturbance features, some finds indicate poss, LIA/Rom, could be modern
42	12	1	clay	0.7 - 0.8	0	excavated deeper at S. end to confirm natural

STAGE 1: Total length of trenching 691 metres

STAGE 2: SEVERALLS HOSPITAL GROUNDS. APRIL 1997

PLAN 5: SEVERALLS HOSPITAL SOUTH

T No.	LENGTH m's	DEPTH m's	SUBSOIL TYPE	AT DEPTH m's	ROAD BASE m's	NOTES
44	15	0.5	clay	0.3	0.5 - 1	F13 modern ditch and three modern post holes Coal frags. in post holes
45	16	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.4	0.5 - 1	
46	10	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	prob. modem ditch still visible as liner depression between T46 & T47
47	10	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	
48	10 -	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	
49	10	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	several natural feature
50	10	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	natural sand filled channels and silt filled hollows
51	10	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	natural sand channel
52	10	0.6	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	
53	10	0.6	clay	0.4 - 0.5	0.5 - 1	two natural silt filled hollows
54	10	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.4	0.5 - 1	natural feature poss root/tree disturbance
55	10	0.4	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	F14 ditch late 19th-20th century
56	10	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.4	0.5 - 1	F15 F16 ?lane/trackway ditches modern Modern potlery in F15 Modern Fe. Object in F16

57 15 0.4 clay 0.3 0.5-1

FLAN 6: SEVERALLS HOSPITAL NORTH

T No. LENGTH DEPTH SUBSOIL AT ROAD

T No.	LENGTH m's	DEPTH m's	SUBSOIL	AT DEPTH m's	ROAD BASE m's	NOTES
58	10	0.5	clay	0.35	0.5 - 1	natural silt filled feature Roman tile frag. in topsoil
59	10	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	⊓atural silt filled feature Roman tile frag. in topsoil
60	10	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.3 - 0.4	0.5 - 1	irregular feture poss. root/tree disturbance
61	10	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	natural silt filled feature Roman tile frag. in topsoil
62	10	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	modern service trench
63	10	0.5 - 0.6	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	two prob. root/tree disturbance features modern gas service
64	10	0.4 - 0.5	ciay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	modern intermittent ?machine dug feature Recent burnt wood and modern Fe. object in filt
65	15	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	continuation of above feature F17 F18 modern ditches, modern pit, pipe trench and field drains F17 modern Fe, object in fill F18 modern brick and Fe. Obj. in fill
66	10	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	

67	10	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	·
68	10	0.5	cay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	natural silt filled feature
69	10	0.4	clay	0.3	0.5 - 1	·
70	10	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	field drain remnants
71	10	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	
72	10	0.4	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	feature with light ?natural silt fill and fragments of ?mineralised wood (two other similar feature's encountered in other trenches, prob. natura
73	10	0.5	clay	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	
74	10	0.4	day	0.3 - 0.35	0.5 - 1	F20 modern ditch BT cable at N. end of trench Frags. of modern land drain in F20
75	14	0.4	clay	<u>0</u> .3	0.5 - 1	two shallow post-Med. slots prob. plough marks. silt filled natural liner feature and disturbance from tree/bush roots
76	10	0.5	day	0.4	0.5 - 1	modern ditch prob. same as F20
77	10	0.5	clay	0.4	0.5 - 1	modern ditch F21 cuts prob. plough groove if slots Modern brick frags, in fill of F21
78	10	0.5	clay	0.3	0.5 - 1	
79	15	0.5	day	0.3	0.5 - 1	tile land drain
80	15	0.4 - 0.5	clay	0.3	0.5 - 1	ti l e land drain

STAGE 2: Total length of trenching 405 metres

