

**Land Adjacent 2 Linden Close,  
Parsons Heath, Colchester, Essex**

**Planning application: 163051**

**HER Ref: ECC 4278**

**Archaeological Evaluation Report**

(© John Newman BA MCIFA, 2 Pearsons Place, Henley, Ipswich, IP6 0RA)

(December 2018)

(Tel: 01473 832896 Email: [johnnewman2@btinternet.com](mailto:johnnewman2@btinternet.com) )

**Site details for HER**

Name: Land adjacent 2 Linden Close, Parsons Heath, Colchester, Essex, CO4 3LZ

Clients: MAB Building Services Ltd

Planning authority: Colchester BC

Planning application ref: 163051

Development: Erection of one dwelling

Date of fieldwork: 3 December, 2018

Event ref: ECC 4278

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-335147

Grid ref: TM 0217 2609

Site area: c120m<sup>2</sup> (footprint area)

Recent land use: Garden

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*Summary: Colchester, land adjacent 2 Linden Close, Parsons Heath (ECC 4278, TM 0217 2609) evaluation trenching for a single dwelling development close to the edge of Parsons Heath did not reveal any features except a ceramic drain of recent date and the only stray finds in the upcast spoil were occasional brick and tile fragments of 20<sup>th</sup>-century date (John Newman Archaeological Services for MAB Building Solutions Ltd).*

## 1. Introduction & background

1.1 Mr S Earl on behalf of his client MAB Building Services Ltd commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological evaluation works for a single dwelling development on land adjacent to 2 Linden Close, Parsons Heath, Colchester (see Fig. 1) that has been given planning consent under application 163051. The evaluation requirements were set by Dr J Tipper of Colchester BC (CBC) with the aim of gaining a representative sample by trial trenching of the development area concerned. The Written Scheme of Investigation for the archaeological evaluation (see Appendix II) was subsequently prepared by JNAS in order to gain a conditional discharge and allow the trenching to go ahead before any other ground works are undertaken.

1.2 This planned development is some 1800m to the east of the historic core of Colchester in an area of 20<sup>th</sup>-century residential growth which still maintains the historic name of Parsons Heath.

1.3 The site is close to the 35m OD contour in an area described by the Geological Survey of Britain as being on superficial deposits made up of sands and gravels of the Kesgrave catchment subgroup. It is c1600m east of the River Colne, 800m west of the Salary Brook and 300m east of the line of a small tributary stream to the River Colne.

1.4 Archaeological interest in this development was generated by its location close to the edge of the historic area of Parsons Heath (HER MCC9324) where evidence for past activity of medieval and earlier Post medieval might be anticipated though the heath area is now subsumed by 20<sup>th</sup>-century development.

## 2. Evaluation methodology

2.1 The development area was trenched to an agreed plan (see Fig. 2). The trenching was carried out using a medium sized 360 machine equipped with a 1500mm flat bucket which was under archaeological supervision at all times and any indistinct areas were hand cleaned as necessary to improve clarity with the trench being 1.80m wide.

2.2 The sides and base of trench and the upcast spoil were examined visually and scanned with a metal detector for any finds as the evaluation progressed. Site visibility for features and finds is considered to have been good throughout the evaluation which was undertaken under dry though overcast weather conditions. At the end of the evaluation the location of the trench was plotted from nearby mapped features and as the works progressed a full photographic record in digital format (see Appendix I) was taken.

## 3. Results

3.1 The relevant details for the evaluation trench are summarised in the table below (see also Fig. 2 & Appendix I):

| Orientation | Length (m)             | Topsoil depth (mm) | Subsoil depth (mm)  | Drift geology                      | Archaeological/natural features & finds   |
|-------------|------------------------|--------------------|---|------------------------------------|---|
| East-west   | 10                     | 300                | 200 (east end) to 400 (west end) of mid brown sandy subsoil | Silty pale orange sand with flints | The only feature revealed was a north-south ceramic drainage pipe of recent date and the few stray finds in the upcast spoil were small fragments of brick and tile of 20 <sup>th</sup> -century date |
|             | 10 (18m <sup>2</sup> ) | 300                | 200-400   |                                    | Overall trench depth was 500mm to 700mm   |

Table 1: Trench details

3.2 As outlined in table 1 above the trench depth was 500mm at its eastern end dropping to 700mm its western end with the local glaciofluvial deposit at the site being silty pale orange sand with flints below 300mm of topsoil and 200mm to 400mm of mid brown sandy subsoil. The only feature revealed was a ceramic drainage pipe of 20<sup>th</sup>-century date though it was notable that the roots of the bushes and shrubs that formerly covered the area had caused some disturbance to the upper surface of the locally occurring natural silty sand with flints.

3.3 The only stray finds in the upcast spoil were a few small brick and tile fragments of recent date.

## 4. Conclusion

4.1 With no archaeological features of any significance being revealed in the evaluation of a substantial sample of the planned new dwelling footprint it is concluded that this part of the area close to the edge of Parsons Heath has only been in general agricultural use in the past with a moderately deep combined top and subsoil deposit. Therefore it is recommended that no further archaeological works should be required for this development on land adjacent to 2 Linden Close, Parsons Heath, Colchester.

*Archive- to be deposited with the Suffolk CC Archaeological Service under the HER ref: ECC 4278.*

*Disclaimer- any opinions regarding the need for further archaeological work in relation to this proposed development are those of the author's alone. Formal comment regarding the need for further work must be sought from the official Archaeological Advisor to the relevant Planning Authority.*

*(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to everyone from MAB Building Solutions Ltd for their close cooperation)*

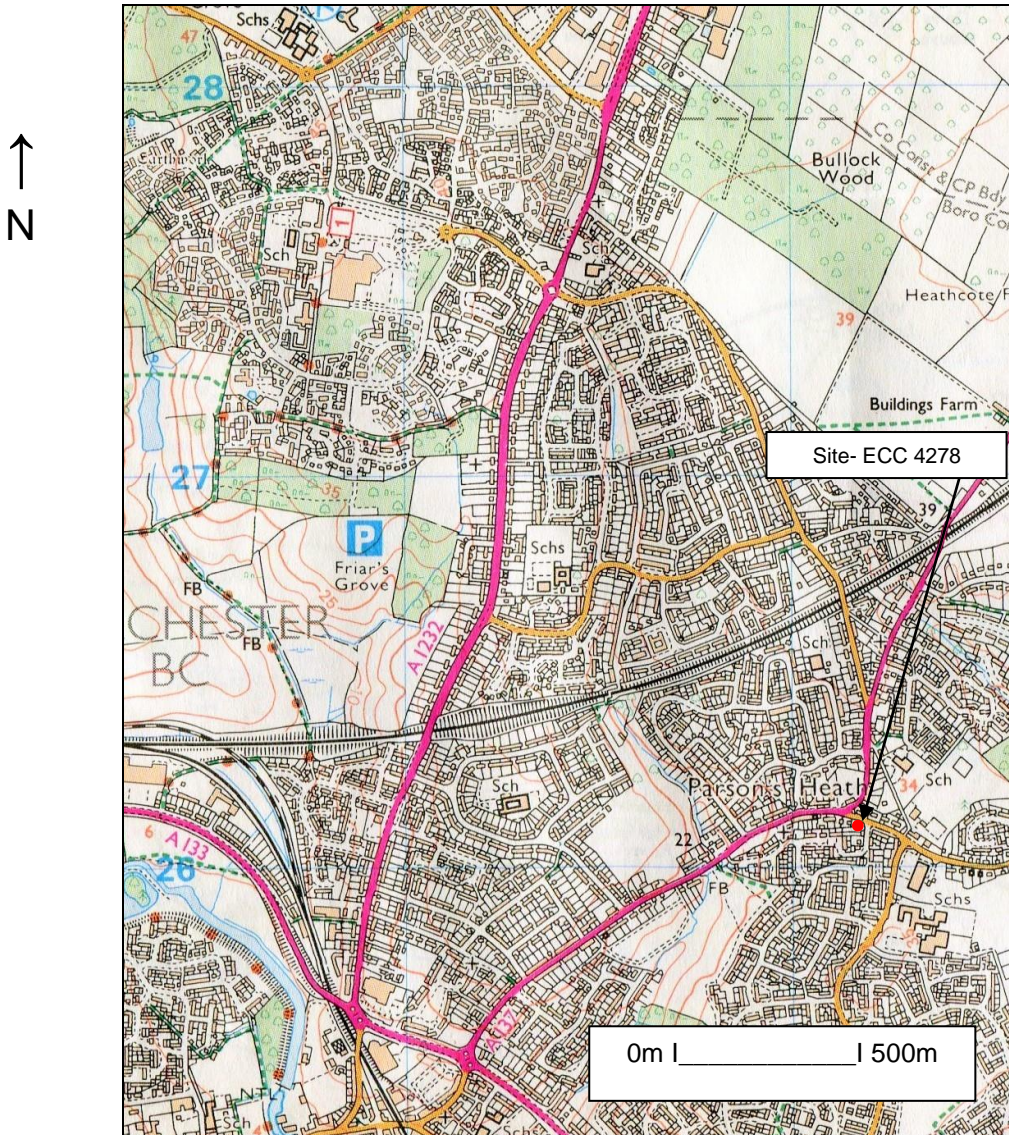
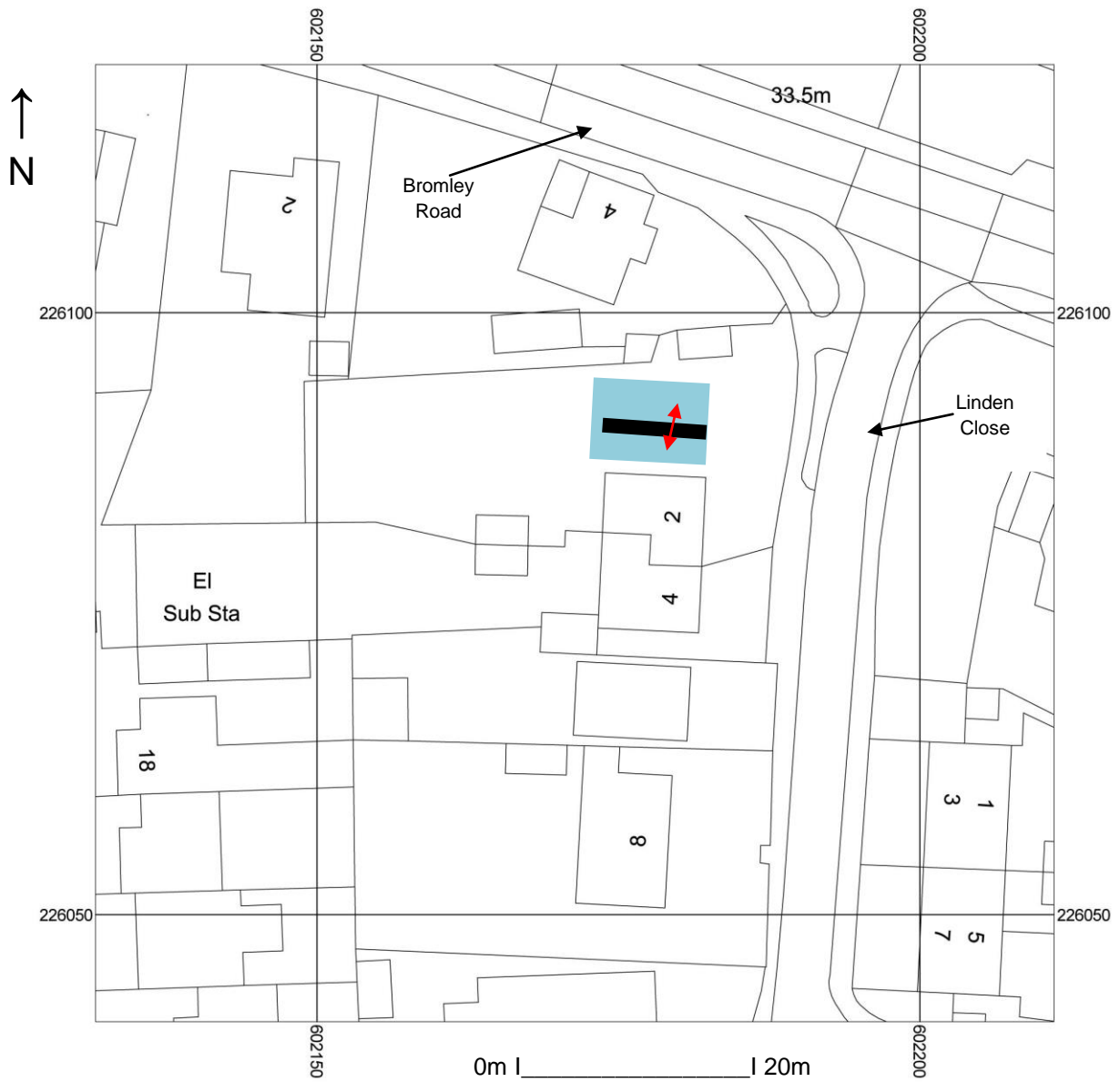


Fig. 1: Site location

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**Fig. 2: Location of evaluation trench**  
 (light blue- planned footprint area, red arrow- 20<sup>th</sup>-century drain)  
 (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2018 All rights reserved Licence No 100049722)

## Appendix I- Images



General view from west



Trench from east





Trench deposit profile

**No 2 Linden Close,  
Colchester, Essex**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for  
Archaeological Evaluation**

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## **Site details**

Name: No 2 Linden Close, Colchester, Essex, CO4 3LZ

Client: Mr PSelf

Local planning authority: Colchester BC

Planning application refs: 163051

Proposed development: Erection of one dwelling

Proposed date for evaluation: tbc

Brief ref: 2018-10-15\_163051\_CBC Archaeological Evaluation Brief

Grid ref: TM 0217 2609

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2. Location, Topography & Geology
3. Archaeological & Historical Background
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Proposed location of trial trench

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Mr S Earl on behalf of his client Mr P Self has commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological site evaluation for a proposed development that has received consent to go ahead. This written scheme of investigation (WSI) details the background to the archaeological requirements for planning application 163051 and how JNAS will implement the requirements of the Brief for Archaeological Evaluation set by Dr J Tipper of Colchester BC (CBC). The WSI will also set out how potential risks will be mitigated. This proposed development concerns the construction of a single dwelling on land at 2 Linden Close, Colchester (see Fig. 1).

1.2 The evaluation will be carried out to the standards set regionally in the *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (EAA Occ. Papers 14, 2003)* and nationally in *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 1994, revised 2001)*.

## 2. Location, Topography & Geology

2.1 The proposed development site (PDS) is some 1800m to the historic core of Colchester in an area of 20<sup>th</sup> century residential growth which still maintains the historic name of Parsons Heath.

2.2 The PDS is close to the 35m OD contour in an area described by the Geological of Britain as being on superficial deposits made up of sands and gravels of the Kesgrave catchment subgroup. It is c1600m east of the River Colne, 800m west of the Salary Brook and 300m east of the line of a small tributary stream to the River Colne.

## 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 To quote from the relevant Brief 'This proposal is located in an area of archaeological interest, defined in the Colchester Historic Environment Record (HER), on the edge of Parsons Heath, a medieval (or early post medieval heath (HER no. MCC9324). There is high potential for encountering early occupation remains at this location, along the edge of the heath. No previous systematic archaeological investigation has taken place within the proposed development site.'

A site evaluation by trial trenching is therefore required

- Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.

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- Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence.
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

## 4. Aims of the Site Evaluation

4.1 As outlined in section 3 above the archaeological potential of the planned development relates to its location on the edge of a historic heath area where evidence for activity of medieval and early Post medieval date might be anticipated. The aim of the evaluation is therefore to examine the specified sample of the proposed development area with an evaluation trench under controlled conditions so, if archaeological deposits are revealed they can be sampled and characterised. With this information a strategy can then be formulated for their possible preservation in situ or, failing that, the systematic recording of these deposits and the associated working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

## 5. Methodology

5.1 The proposed development is for one new dwelling on land at 2 Linden Close, Colchester.

5.2 The Brief requires a single 10m long trench and this will be 1.80m wide, the work will be undertaken using a 900/1.20m wide toothless ditching bucket on a suitably sized machine operated by an experienced driver with a trench plan as set out below. The machine will be closely supervised by an experienced archaeologist as the overburden is removed in shallow spits to the top of any archaeological deposits that are present, where hand investigation will start, or to expose the underlying drift geology which will be further hand cleaned and examined. The spoil will be stored close to the excavated trenches. The trenches will not be backfilled until the relevant Archaeological Officer at CBC has been consulted and should any modification to the trench layout be required due to any unforeseen circumstances, such as local services, then CBC will be contacted immediately. A metal detector search will be carried out by an experienced operator at all stages of the evaluation. The upcast spoil will also be closely examined for unstratified artefacts as evidence for past activity in past rural areas in particular is often as evident via artefact scatters as by undisturbed archaeological deposits.

5.3 Site records will be made under a continuous and unique numbering system of contexts under an overall site event number obtained from the Archaeological Officer at CBC beforehand. All contexts will be numbered and finds recorded by context. Conventions compatible with the CBC HER will be used throughout the evaluation. Site plans will be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and sections at 1:10 or 1:20

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(all on plastic drawing film) and related to OS map cover. Sections will be levelled to a datum OD. A photographic record in high resolution digital images will be made of the site and exposed features.

5.4 As necessary and to define archaeological deposits exposed surfaces will be trowelled clean before appropriate hand investigation and recording. Exposed archaeological features will be sampled at standard levels with care being taken to cause minimum disturbance to the site consistent with evaluation to a level adequate to properly form a subsequent mitigation strategy. Significant features such as solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post holes (where fills are sampled) will have their integrity maintained (and during backfilling). Otherwise for discrete, contained, features, sampling will be at 50%- possibly rising to 100% if requested, and 1m wide sampling slots across linear features. If human burial evidence is revealed the CBC Officer will be informed and the clear presumption must be to preserve such remains in situ with minimum disturbance during this evaluation stage. If this is not possible then a Ministry of Justice licence will be obtained prior to full on site recording (total 100% sampling if a cremation deposit) and removal of the remains followed by examination by the relevant specialist and possibly scientific dating. If human remains do have to be recorded, removed from site and reported on then these works will add an additional cost to the evaluation works which may involve radiocarbon dating (in this case the likelihood of revealing human burial is assessed as being low).

5.5 All finds will be collected and processed unless any variation is agreed with the relevant CBC Officer. Finds will be assessed by recognised period specialists and their interpretation will form an integral part of the overall report. Finds will be stored according to ICON guidelines with specialist advice/treatment sought for fragile ones. Every effort will be made to gain the deposit of the site finds with the site archive with the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service under the accession number gained from their Documentation Officer. If this is not possible then the CBC Archaeological Officer will be consulted over any requirements for additional recording (which may have an additional cost implication). Any discard policy will be discussed and agreed with the relevant CBC Officer.

5.6 Where appropriate palaeoenvironmental samples will be taken for processing and assessment by a specialist conversant with regional archaeological standards and research agendas. The sampling, processing and assessment will follow as detailed in *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post Excavation* (English Heritage, 2011, second edition). In accordance with standard practice bulk samples of 40 litres (or 100% of the deposit where less) will be taken from a representative cross section of archaeological deposits of all periods (respecting defined fills within features), in consultation with the relevant CBC Officer (and RSA if the deposits merit more targeted advice) including deposits that cannot be immediately dated by their artefact content, so the state of preservation and full archaeological and

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palaeoenvironmental potential of the deposits can be assessed and any further sampling, should further field work take place, be systematically planned and fully costed. Archaeological deposits of all types may reveal valuable data through the processing and assessment of samples with high priority features including the primary fills of pits, wells and cesspits, layers of middens, occupation surfaces and structural features as well as other discrete activity areas, contents of hearths, ovens, and other craft related or industrial structures. In addition more generalised settlement and land use features such as ditches may also yield valuable and informative data when sampling is undertaken systematically as the sum of all the assessment results can add considerably to the interpretation of a site and its landscape. Through an integrated study of all the data recovered from the evaluation the results from the assessment of the samples will be reviewed in terms of:

- What is the quality and state of preservation of charred plant remains, mineralised plant and animal related remains, small vertebrates and industrial residues such as evidence for iron working (contributing to the fullest interpretation of the evaluation results and to aid the planning of any further field work- if any RC dates are required on features containing suitable material but no easily dateable finds then this will incur an additional cost though this is a rare occurrence on small scale evaluations).
- What is the concentration of macro-remains (to inform sampling strategy in any further field work), in particular how might bulk sampling inform the interpretation of burial deposits.
- Can any patterning or similarities/differences be ascertained between deposits from different periods represented on site, similarly can any useful comparisons be made with undated and unphased deposits (to aid interpretation of the evaluation results and help in the study of undated deposits which may otherwise be overlooked and which may via sampling yield material for RC dating)
- Do waterlogged deposits exist on site, if so is there potential for palaeoenvironmental data from preserved insects or pollen and do such deposits contain organic material suitable for RC dating from samples taken as advised by the relevant soil specialist (who would also coordinate the assessment for pollen and insect remains), the RSA will also be consulted in such cases in conjunction with the relevant CBC Officer. Incremental column samples will be taken should waterlogged deposits be revealed in close consultation with the evaluation soils specialist with 10-20 litre sample sizes which will be sub-sampled for preserved pollen, insects, diatoms, preserved parasite eggs etc. If waterlogged wood is encountered it will ideal to leave in situ, if it has to be lifted it will be packed while wet in black polythene and stored at 5C until it can be transferred to a specialist for species identification, assessment and potential for RC dating is undertaken (should RC dating be

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required in the evaluation on such deposits this will be covered within the resources agreed for the first date but will take time to obtain, examination of the topographic location of the site indicates that the presence of waterlogged deposits is unlikely unless particularly deep features are present).

- Deep blanket type deposits resulting from both natural and human derived actions and events can yield valuable land use and palaeoenvironmental information. In particular such deposits can form at the base of a slope, if located in the evaluation the relevant CBC Officer and RSA will be consulted over monolith sampling and assessment by the relevant evaluation specialist (the composition of such deposits may give information on past land use in the area through a study of the soil matrix notwithstanding additional data if it is waterlogged)

5.7 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared consistent with the principles in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*. This archive will be deposited with the Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service within 6 months of working finishing on site under the relevant accession number and following the Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums (2008). As necessary the site digital archive will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) within the agreed allowance for the monitoring and reporting works.

5.8 The evaluation report will be consistent with the principles of *MoRPHE* and this report will summarise the methodology employed and relate the archaeological record directly to the aims of this WSI and section 4 above in particular. The report will give an objective account of the deposits and stratigraphy recorded and finds recovered with an inventory of the latter. The report will include an assessment of palaeoenvironmental remains recovered from palaeosols and cut features in relation to both dated and undated features and in terms of patterning across the site. The report will also be prepared taking into account information from the HER at CBC and assessment of historic cartographic sources.

5.9 Any interpretation of the evaluation will be clearly separated from the objective account of the evaluation and its results and the results will be discussed with the relevant CBC Officer at an early stage in the reporting process following reporting on the day of the immediately apparent conclusions. The report will give a clear statement regarding the results of the site evaluation in relation to both the more detailed aims in section 4 above and their archaeological value and significance in the context of local HER records and of the Regional Research Framework (EAA Occ. Papers 3, 8 & 24, 1997, 2000 & 2011). There will be no further work on site until the evaluation results have been discussed with the Archaeological Officer at CBC. The report may give an opinion regarding the necessity for further evaluation work as appropriate. A copy of the report marked draft, with this WSI attached, will be presented to CBC within 3 months of the completion of the site works. Once



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accepted a pdf copy, with the relevant HER summary form, will be provided for CBC with a digital version on disc. As required the site evaluation will be registered on the OASIS online archaeological record before site works commence followed by submission of the final draft in .pdf format and the HER will be provided with a vector plan of the trench locations in .dxf format.

## 6. Risk Assessment

6.1 Protective clothing will be worn on site (hard hat, high visibility vest/coat, steel-toe cap boots, and ear muffs if required). A safe working method will be agreed with the machine operator for excavation of the trenches and examination of the up cast spoil while at the same time allowing efficient use of plant. Suitable clothing will be available to mitigate against extremes of weather.

6.2 Vehicles will be safely parked away from work areas and lines of access.

6.3 Discussion with the client's agent has already confirmed that there is no known, or likely, ground contamination and the discovery of underground services is unlikely. No overhead services impinge on the trench locations. Gloves and hand wash/wipes be available and any information on possible ground contamination revealed during the evaluation will be passed to finds and environmental specialists.

6.4 A fully charged mobile phone will be carried and a first aid kit will be taken to site.

6.5 It is unlikely that any trench plus excavated feature depth will go below c1/1.3m from the present ground level. If any excavations need to go deeper measures such as stepping in the sides will be employed.

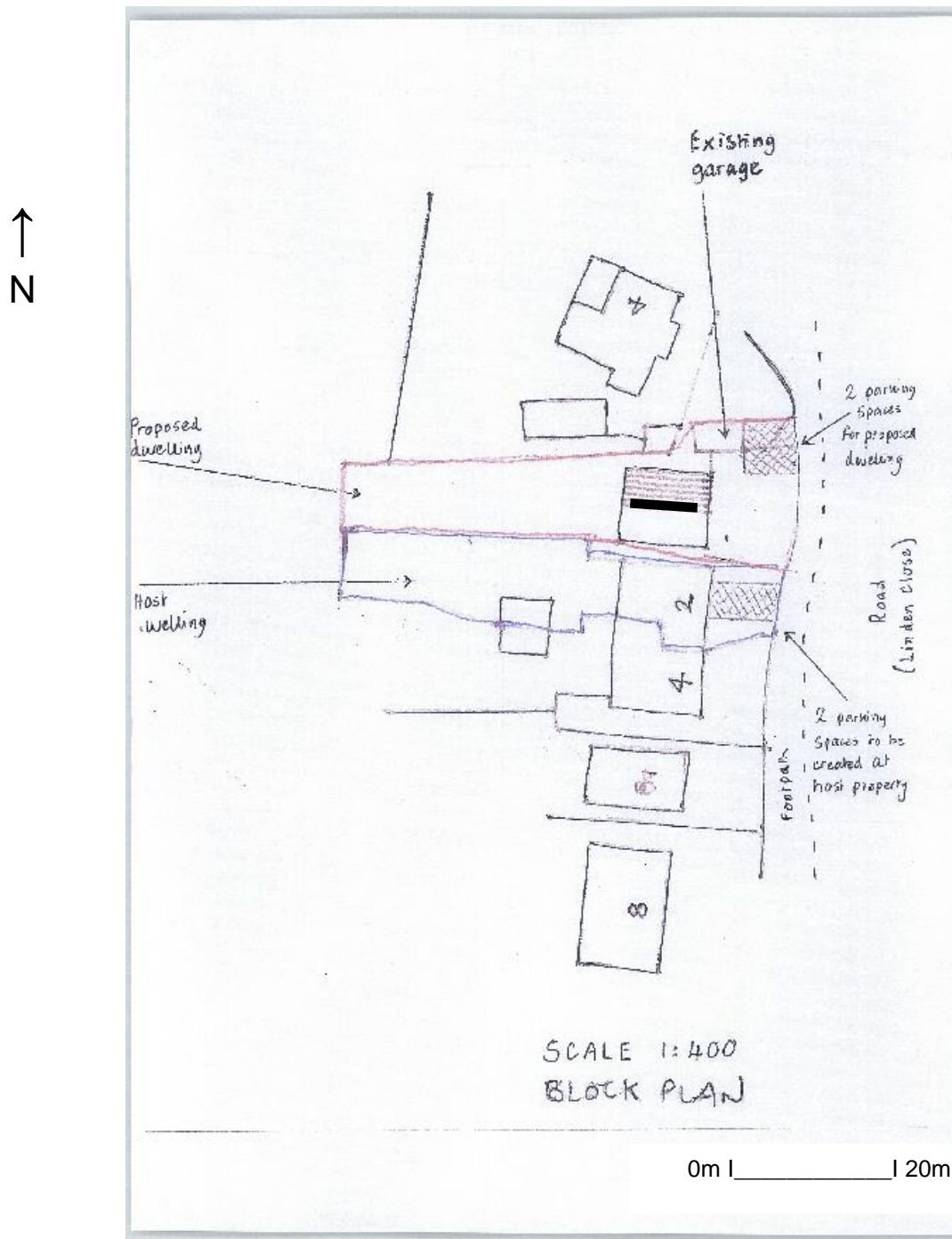
6.6 JNAS holds full insurance cover for archaeological site works from the specialist provider Tovergate Risk Solutions covering Public & Products Liability, details can be supplied on request.

## 7. Specialists

|                              |                                 |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Conservation:                | Conservation Services           |
| Faunal remains:              | J Curl (Sylvanus Archaeology)   |
| Human remains:               | S Anderson (Freelance)          |
| Metal detecting:             | J Armes (experienced freelance) |
| Palaeoenvironmental samples: | V Fryer (Freelance)             |
| Soils specialist             | R Macphail (UCL)                |
| Pre-historic flint:          | S Bates (Freelance)             |
| Pre-historic pottery:        | S Percival (Freelance)          |
| Post Roman ceramics & CBM:   | S Anderson (Freelance)          |

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|                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Roman period small finds: | N Crummy (Freelance)            |
| Roman period ceramics:    | Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| Medieval coins:           | M Allen (Fitzwilliam Museum)    |
| Post Roman small finds:   | JNAS                            |



Proposed location of trial trench

# OASIS ID: johnnewm1-335147

## Project details

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Project name                           | Land Adjacent to 2 Linden Close, Colchester, Essex-<br>Archaeological Evaluation Report  |
| Short description of the project       | Colchester, land adjacent 2 Linden Close, Parsons Heath (ECC 4278, TM 0217 2609) evaluation trenching for a single dwelling development close to the edge of Parsons Heath did not reveal any features except a ceramic drain of recent date and the only stray finds in the upcast spoil were occasional brick and tile fragments of 20th-century date. |
| Project dates                          | Start: 03-12-2018 End: 03-12-2018  |
| Previous/future work                   | No / No  |
| Any associated project reference codes | 163051 - Planning Application No.  |
| Any associated project reference codes | ECC 4278 - Related HER No.   |
| Type of project                        | Field evaluation   |
| Site status                            | None   |
| Current Land use                       | Other 5 - Garden   |
| Monument type                          | PIPE Modern  |
| Significant Finds                      | NONE None  |
| Methods & techniques                   | "Sample Trenches"  |
| Development type                       | Small-scale (e.g. single house, etc.)  |
| Prompt                                 | Planning condition   |
| Position in the planning process       | After full determination (eg. As a condition)  |
| Project location                       |  |
| Country                                | England  |
| Site location                          | ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER LAND AT 2<br>LINDEN CLOSE  |
| Postcode                               | CO4 3LZ  |
| Study area                             | 200 Square metres  |
| Site coordinates                       | TM 0217 2609 51.896098759865 0.938714046611 51 53 45<br>N 000 56 19 E Point  |
| Height OD / Depth                      | Min: 33m Max: 34m  |
| Project creators                       |  |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Name of Organisation          | John Newman Archaeological Services   |
| Project brief originator      | Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body                               |
| Project design originator     | John Newman   |
| Project director/manager      | John Newman   |
| Type of sponsor/funding body  | Developer   |
| Project archives              |   |
| Physical Archive Exists?      | No  |
| Digital Archive recipient     | Suffolk CC Archaeological Service   |
| Digital Contents              | "none"  |
| Digital Media available       | "Images raster / digital photography","Text"  |
| Paper Archive recipient       | Suffolk CC Archaeological Service   |
| Paper Contents                | "none"  |
| Paper Media available         | "Report"  |
| Project bibliography          |   |
| 1                             |   |
| Publication type              | Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)   |
| Title                         | Land Adjacent to 2 Linden Close, Parsons Heath, Colchester, Essex- Archaeological Evaluation Report |
| Author(s)/Editor(s)           | Newman, J   |
| Date                          | 2018  |
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| Place of issue or publication | Henley, Suffolk   |
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