

**No 25 Mercers Way, Colchester,  
Essex**

**Planning application: 192685**

**Event Ref: ECC 4608**

**Archaeological Monitoring Report**

(© John Newman BA CMIFA, 10 Fitzgerald Road, Bramford, Ipswich, IP8 4AA)

(April 2021)

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## **Site details for HER**

Name: No 25 Mercers Way, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1RY

Client: Mr & Mrs Dagge

Local planning authority: Colchester BC

Planning application ref: 192685

Development: Erection of rear and side extensions

Date of fieldwork: 10 March, 2021

Event ref: ECC 4608

OASIS: johnnewm1-392464

Grid ref: TL 99449 25910

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*Summary: Colchester, 25 Mercers Way (ECC 4608, TL 99449 25910) monitoring of ground works for rear and side extensions close to the recorded find spot of a Roman period burial to the west of the town did not reveal any evidence for past activity though the ground works were on a small scale and parts of the ground near the house were already disturbed in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century by various service trenches (John Newman Archaeological Services for Mr & Mrs Dagge).*

## 1. Introduction & background

1.1 Optimum Architecture on behalf of their clients Mr & Mrs Dagge commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological monitoring of ground works required under a condition for a programme of archaeological works of the planning decision notice for application 192685. The monitoring requirements were set out in a Brief set by Dr J Tipper then of Colchester BC to satisfy this condition and in response JNAS produced the relevant Written Scheme of Investigation (see Appendix II) in order that conditional discharge could be gained from the LPA and ground works commence on site with later liaison with Dr R Hoggett on behalf of CBC. This development concerns the erection of extensions at 25 Mercers Way, Colchester.

1.2 The major Roman period town at Colchester, '*Colonia Victricensis*' or 'City of Victory,' is located to the south/south-west of the River Colne with the river flowing below from west to east before turning to flow to the south-east. This town having been established after the conquest period inside the large area that what was probably the largest late Iron Age regional centre in Britain that comprised areas of settlement and areas for stock control inside a complex system of dykes or defensive ditches. The Roman town is well known from a series of major archaeological excavations through the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century period with 25 Mercers Way being located some 400m north of the Roman town and c260m north of the River Colne in an area of relatively recent development. The natural glaciofluvial deposits in the area are described by the British Geological Survey as being 'Head-diamicton, rock debris and/or clayey hill wash' and is just below the 10m OD contour.

1.3 Archaeological interest in this development was generated by its proximity to a recorded Roman period burial that was discovered close to this site (HER Monument no. MCC1902). Human burial in the Roman period being precluded within the centre of any major town within the Empire making the areas along associated roads in the immediate hinterlands attractive for burials from the later 1<sup>st</sup> to the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. In addition at Colchester the early Roman period saw the new administrators taking over what was already a complex late Iron Age tribal centre and numerous monuments are recorded on the western and northern sides of the town.

## 2. Monitoring methodology

2.1 The monitoring of the ground works for the rear foundation, which were excavated using a small 360 machine, was carried out over a single day under dry weather conditions and the upcast spoil was inspected closely as the work progressed. The foundation trenches were entered where safe and examined with any indistinct areas being scraped clean; then the trenches were recorded in relation to nearby mapped features and a small number of digital images were taken in order to record the monitoring (see Appendix I). The side extension area was clearly

already disturbed by service trenches therefore a decision was made to not monitor this area.

### 3. Results

3.1 Prior to ground works starting the hard patio type surface to the rear of the house was removed. In total some 11m of 600mm wide and 800mm to 900mm deep foundation trench was excavated. Below the patio level 600mm to 700mm of clean mid brown sandy subsoil was revealed.

3.2 Close inspection of the foundation trenches did not reveal any archaeological features or finds and the few stray finds in the upcast spoil were brick and tile fragments of recent date and contemporary with the house which is of mid-20<sup>th</sup> century date.

### 4. Conclusion

4.1 While this monitoring did not reveal any archaeological features or finds the scale of the works was small and the proximity of the recorded Roman period burials close to Mercers Way gives the area a high degree of archaeological potential. Therefore continued observation and investigation during future ground works in the area would be of potential archaeological value in a landscape close to a major Roman period town and an associated road in relation to the scale of future planned works.

*(Acknowledgements: JNAS is grateful to everyone on site for their close cooperation during the monitoring)*

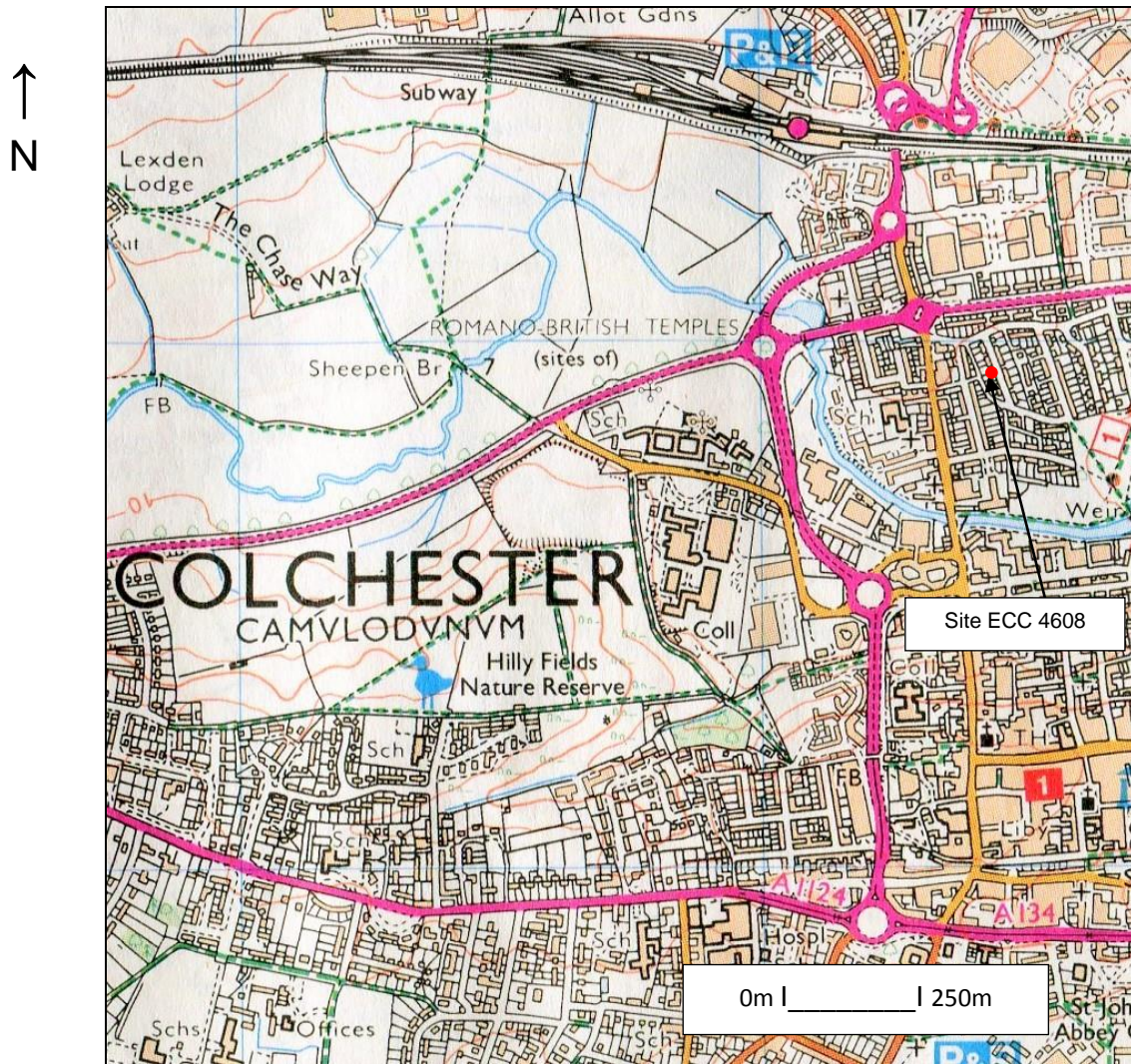


Fig. 1: Site location (Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2008  
All rights reserved Licence No 100049722)





Fig. 2: Monitored extension area

(Ordnance Survey © Crown copyright 2021 All rights reserved Licence NO 100049722)

## Appendix I- Images



General view from southeast



Rear extension trench



Rear extension trench



**No 25 Mercers Way,  
Colchester, Essex**

**Planning application: 192685**

**Written Scheme of Investigation for  
Archaeological Monitoring**

## **Site details**

Name: No 25 Mercers Way, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1RY

Client: Mr & Mrs Dagge

Local planning authority: Colchester BC

Planning application ref: 192685

Proposed development: Erection of side and rear extensions

Proposed date for ground works: tbc

Grid ref: TL 99449 25910

OASIS ref: johnnewm1-392464

Current land use: Garden

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Selection strategy

## 1. Introduction

1.1 Optimum Architecture on behalf of their clients Mr & Mrs Dagge have commissioned John Newman Archaeological Services (JNAS) to undertake the archaeological monitoring (watching brief) of ground works required under a condition for a programme of archaeological investigative works of the planning decision notice for application 192685. This written scheme of investigation (WSI) details the background to the archaeological condition and how JNAS will implement the requirements of the Brief set by Dr J Tipper, archaeological officer at Colchester BC, to satisfy this condition. The WSI will also set out how potential risks will be mitigated. This development concerns the erection of a side extension at 25 Mercers Way, Colchester.

## 2. Location, Topography & Geology

2.1 The major Roman period town at Colchester, '*Colonia Victricensis*' or 'City of Victory,' is located to the south/south-west of the River Colne with the river flowing below from west to east before turning to flow to the south-east. This town having been established after the conquest period inside the large area that what was probably the largest late Iron Age regional centre in Britain that comprised areas of settlement and areas for stock control inside a complex system of dykes or defensive ditches. The Roman town is well known from a series of major archaeological excavations through the 20<sup>th</sup> and early 21<sup>st</sup> century period with 25 Mercers Way being located some 400m north of the Roman town and c260m north of the River Colne in an area of relatively recent development. The natural glaciofluvial deposits in the area are described by the British Geological Survey as being 'Head-diamicton, rock debris and/or clayey hill wash' and is just below the 10m OD contour.

## 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 To quote from the Brief 'The proposed development is located within an area of archaeological interest recorded in the Colchester Historic Environment Record. A Roman burial has been discovered close to this site (HER Monument no. MCC1902). There is high potential for locating further burials and other archaeological remains at this location. Groundworks relating to the application would cause ground disturbance that has potential to damage any archaeological deposits that exist.'

3.2 While the core area of Roman Colchester is more clearly defined by existing and recorded defensive wall lines recorded archaeological evidence clearly demonstrates that past prehistoric and Roman settlement related and burial activity extends for a considerable distance beyond the core of the historic core.

3.2 The Brief then confirms that while this development may reveal deposits of archaeological significance this potential disturbance to local heritage assets can be

mitigated by their investigation and recording as invasive ground works progress through a programme of continuous monitoring.

## 4. Aims of the Site Monitoring

4.1 As outlined in section 3 above 25 Mercers Way is located close to recorded burial evidence of Roman date to the north of the River Colne and the core of the Roman period town. This monitoring will aim to record all possible details of the exposed overburden, any archaeological features and depth of local deposits as revealed within ground works in particular in relation to any evidence for further burials.

## 5. Methodology

5.1 The ground works, which are anticipated as trench-fill foundations, will be monitored as they progress and if any archaeological features are revealed these will be cleaned, investigated by hand and recorded in plan, section and by photography by the monitoring archaeologist. The upcast spoil will also be examined both visually and with a metal detector for archaeological finds as works progress to this point. Any unexpected or exceptional findings at the site will be reported back to the relevant Colchester BC Archaeological Officer as will notice of when the site works are scheduled to start. In addition if the monitoring records positive archaeological results a request will be made to Colchester BC for a search of the immediate area around 18 Shelley Road on the relevant urban archaeological database.

5.2 Site records will be made under a continuous and unique numbering system of contexts under an overall site event number gained from the Colchester BC Archaeological Officer before site works commence. All contexts will be numbered and finds recorded by context. Conventions compatible with the county HER will be used throughout the monitoring. Site plans will be drawn at 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50 as appropriate and related to the proposed development, and sections at 1:10 or 1:20 (all on plastic drawing film) and related to OS map cover. A photographic record of high resolution digital images will be made of the site and any exposed features (using a Lumix DMC-FZ5).

5.3 As necessary and to define archaeological deposits exposed surfaces will be trowelled clean before recording. Archaeological deposits will be fully hand investigated and recorded within the constraints of the trench foundations with sections at appropriate points. Contained features such as pits and post holes will be at least 50% excavated and linear features at least 10% excavated again within the trench foundations. Full excavation and recording will be carried out for structural features such as hearths, furnaces or kilns and bonded features, such as walls, will be cleaned and investigated in relation to any other features including sectioning within the trench foundations. If no archaeological deposits are revealed every effort will be made to gain a record of the natural occurring deposits and overburden and any evidence of truncation that could help in an understanding of the history of the



## John Newman Archaeological Services

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land use at the site. Where appropriate 40 litre palaeoenvironmental samples will be taken for processing and assessment by a specialist conversant with regional archaeological standards and research agendas if suitable deposits are revealed. If human burial evidence is revealed the relevant Colchester BC Archaeological Officer will be informed and a Ministry of Justice licence obtained before excavation, recording and removal of the remains which may entail enlarging the trench. Any such work will incur an additional cost. The possibility of modifying the ground work design to leave any such remains in situ will also be examined (in this case the possibility of finding burials given past records for this area is assessed as being medium to high).

5.4 Dependant on the results from the monitoring CBC have also advised that provision for radio-carbon or archaeomagnetic dating of deposits that are revealed may be required for which costs would have to be submitted to the client once the nature of the archaeology recorded has been examined and characterised.

5.5 All finds will be collected and processed unless any variation is agreed with the relevant Colchester BC Archaeological Officer and an accession number will be requested from the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Documentation Officer beforehand. 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 to the Colchester and Ipswich museum service under their site event and accession numbers for future reference in accordance with the *Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums (2008)*. If this is not possible then the relevant Colchester BC Archaeological Officer will be consulted over any requirements for additional recording. Any discard policy will be discussed and agreed with the relevant Archaeological Officer at Colchester BC and a selection is included below.

5.6 An archive of all records and finds will be prepared consistent with the principles and guidelines in *MoRPHE* and this will be deposited with the Colchester and Ipswich museum service within 6 months of working finishing on site under the relevant event number. As necessary the site digital archive will deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) within the agreed allowance for the monitoring and reporting works.

5.7 The monitoring report will be consistent with the principles and guidelines in *MoRPHE* and the requirements outlined in section 5.6 of the Brief, the report will also include this WSI as an appendix. The report will summarise the methodology employed and relate the archaeological record directly to the level of visibility given the nature of the underlying natural deposits and the width of the trenches. The report will also give an objective account of the deposits and stratigraphy recorded and finds recovered with an inventory of the latter and the findings will be discussed

in relation to a search of the Colchester urban data base for the area around this site. Any interpretation of the monitoring results will be clearly separated from the objective account of the monitoring and its results. The report will give a clear statement regarding the results of the site monitoring in relation to both the more detailed aims in section 2 above and their significance in the context of the Regional Research Framework (EAA Occ. Papers 3, 8 & 24, 1997, 2000 & 2011). A draft copy of the report will be presented to the Archaeological Officer at Colchester BC within 3 months of the completion of the site works. Once accepted a final pdf version will be sent to the Colchester HER in addition to a pdf version for the client for submission to the relevant LPA. The site monitoring will be registered on the OASIS online archaeological record before field work starts followed by submission of the final draft in .pdf format. An HER summary sheet will be completed and a summary prepared of any positive results for inclusion in the annual county journal. The reporting will be commensurate with the findings from the monitoring and at its most basic level will detail the planning details, event/accession/OASIS references, date(s) of fieldwork, recorder/organisation carrying out the monitoring, location, area(s) examined in relation to the ground disturbance, circumstances and characteristics of the deposits exposed (depth and profile of deposits) and any finds that are revealed. If required a vector plan will be provided and positive results may require a CBC HER search request for the area of this site.

### 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 contractors on site in order to maximise access to disturbed ground and up cast spoil. 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 Before work on site starts any special requirements regarding potential site contamination will be discussed with the client's agent and ground test reports examined. Gloves and hand wash/wipes be available and any information on possible ground contamination will be passed to finds and environmental specialists. The potential for services in the area will be discussed with the client and their contractor.

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

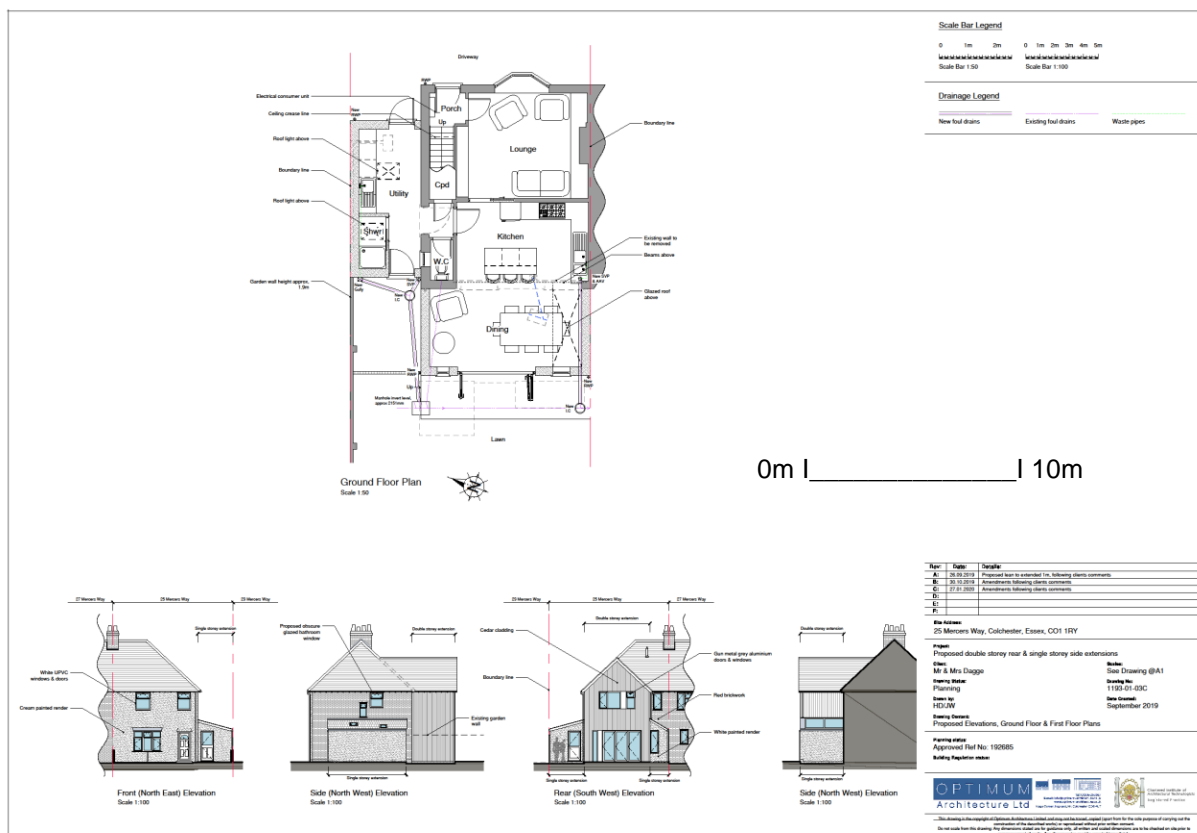
6.5 Close liaison will be maintained with the contractor on site with regard to the depth and stability of the footing trenches and any potential health and safety considerations.

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

## 7. Specialists

(All of the specialists are conversant with current works within their areas of study in East Anglia and work regularly in the region).

Conservation:	Conservation Services
Faunal remains:	J Curl (Sylvanus Archaeology)
Human remains:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Palaeoenvironmental samples:	V Fryer (Freelance)
Pre-historic flint:	S Bates (Freelance)
Pre-historic pottery:	S Percival (Freelance)
Post Roman ceramics & CBM:	S Anderson (Freelance)
Roman small finds:	N Crummy (Freelance)
Roman pottery & CBM	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Post Roman small finds:	JNAS
Scientific dating of deposits	tbc (dependant on character of deposits)



Planned extension works

# Monitoring at 25 Mercers Way, Colchester

## 20/04/2020 v1

### Selection Strategy

## Project Information

### Project Management

<b>Project Manager</b>	John Newman
<b>Archaeological Archive Manager</b>	John Newman
<b>Organisation</b>	John Newman Archaeological Services

### Stakeholders

Stakeholders	Date Contacted
<b>Collecting Institution(s)</b>	Colchester and Ipswich Museums tbc
<b>Project Lead / Project Assurance</b>	John Newman
<b>Landowner / Developer</b>	Mr & Mrs Dagge
<b>Other</b>	

### Resources

#### Resources required

Describe the resources required to implement this Selection Strategy, particularly if unusual resources are required.

The aim of the monitoring is to investigate as necessary ground works for new extensions close to the recorded find spot of a burial Roman date on the northern side of Colchester as outlined in the WSI. Material of modern date will be discarded, it is intended that any other material will be deposited with the paper and digital archive at the Colchester and Ipswich Museums under their guidelines in the context of the relevant Brief and WSI.

### Context

Name: No 25 Mercers Way, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1RY  
 Client: Mr & Mrs Dagge  
 Local planning authority: Colchester BC  
 Planning application refs: 192685  
 Proposed development: Erection of a side and rear extensions  
 Proposed date for evaluation: tbc  
 Brief ref: 2020-02-17\_192685\_CBC Archaeology brief



Grid ref: TL 99449 25910

*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 2014)*.

*Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post Excavation* (English Heritage, 2011, second edition)

*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE*

*Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums* (2008)

*Regional Research Framework (EAA Occ. Papers 3, 8 & 24, 1997, 2000 & 2011)*.

## 1 – Digital Data

### Stakeholders

John Newman

### Selection

#### Location of Data Management Plan (DMP)

Digital data will be selected in line with local museum guidelines and ADS guidelines to include data generated by JNAS both on site and during reporting, data from any specialists involved and a vector plan in dxf format.

### De-Selected Digital Data

De-selected data will be chosen in consultation with the Archaeological Officer at CBC and will be kept on an external hard drive by JNAS.

### Amendments

Detail any amendments to the above selection strategy here.

Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders

## 2 – Documents

### Stakeholders

John Newman and Dr J Tipper of CBC

### Selection

Describe your Selection Strategy for the Documents elements of the archaeological archive. To do this you must:

As outlined above following local museum and ADS guidelines in consultation with Dr J Tipper of CBC.

### De-Selected Documents

Describe the procedure for dealing with De-selected material and what specialist advice has informed this procedure.

In consultation with Dr J Tipper with regard to the date, context and significance of any material considered for de-selection.

### Amendments

Detail any amendments to the above selection strategy here.

Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders

## 3 – Materials

**Note:** This step should be completed for each material component of the archaeological archive. Copy this table for the various materials as required, providing the 'Material Type' and a section identifier (eg. '3.1') for each.

**Material type**

**Section 3.**

### Stakeholders

Name the individual(s) responsible for the Materials Selection decisions (i.e. Archaeological Archive Manager, Project Manager, Repository Representative).

### Selection

Describe your Selection Strategy for each material type and or object type. To do this you must:

- 3.1 State the Selection Strategy you are applying to each category of material, how this will be done, and why.
- 3.2 Identify the selection review points during the project (e.g. project planning, data gathering, analysis and reporting and archive compilation).
- 3.3 Reference all relevant standards, policies or guidelines (e.g. thematic, period, and regional, Research Frameworks, repository deposition policies) and specialist advice sought.
- 3.4 Identify any selection decisions that differ from standard guidelines and explain why.

The Materials Selection Template may be useful in structuring this section.

### Uncollected Material

If you are practising selection in the field, describe the process that will be applied. To do this you must:

- Detail how you will characterise, quantify and record all uncollected material on site.
- Explain how you will dispose of, or re-distribute, uncollected material.

### De-Selected Material

Describe what you will do with the de-selected material. All processed material should have been adequately recorded before de-selection.



## Amendments

Detail any amendments to the above selection strategy here.

Date	Amendment	Rationale	Stakeholders

## Materials Selection Template

This table may be inserted into Section 3 of the main [Selection Strategy Template](#) to help present differing selection strategies for different material types

Find Type	Selection Strategy	Stakeholders	Review Points

# OASIS ID: johnnewm1-392464

## Project details

Project name	No 25 Mercers Way, Colchester, Essex- Archaeological Monitoring Report
Short description of the project	Colchester, 25 Mercers Way (ECC 4608, TL 99449 25910) monitoring of ground works for rear and side extensions close to the recorded find spot of a Roman period burial to the west of the town did not reveal any evidence for past activity though the ground works were on a small scale and parts of the ground near the house were already disturbed in the mid-20th century by various service trenches.
Project dates	Start: 10-03-2021 End: 10-03-2021
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	ECC 4608 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	192685 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER No 25 MERCERS WAY
Postcode	CO1 1RY
Study area	20 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 99449 25910 51.895467476266 0.899112859629 51 53 43 N 000 53 56 E Point
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
Project supervisor	John Newman
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester and Ipswich Museums
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester and Ipswich Museums
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Report"
Project bibliography	
1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	No 25 Mercers Way, Colchester, Essex- Archaeological Monitoring Report
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Newman, J
Date	2021
Issuer or publisher	John Newman Archaeological Services
Place of issue or publication	Bramford, Suffolk
Description	Report in pdf format
Entered by	John Newman (johnnewman2@btinternet.com)
Entered on	7 April 2021