

Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment
in advance of the Proposed Development at
296 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, Essex
CO3 8PB

NGR: TL 94027 24370



**Touchstone
Archaeology**

Report for *Text*

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TOUCHSTONE ARCHAEOLOGY

The Ridings, White Elm Road, Danbury, Essex CM3 4LR

Tel; 07976 275180

www.touchstonearchaeology.com

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NGR: TL 94027 24370

1 SUMMARY

Touchstone Archaeology has been commissioned to carry out an archaeological desk-based assessment in advance of the proposed development at 296 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, Essex as part of the planning application submitted by

Text

This Desk Based Assessment examines the wide variety of archaeological data held by Colchester Borough Council and other sources.

Based on this data the potential for archaeological sites either on or in the near vicinity of the proposed development can be summarised as:

- *Prehistoric: Low*
- *Iron Age: Low*
- *Romano-British: High*
- *Anglo-Saxon: Moderate*
- *Medieval: Moderate*
- *Post-medieval: Moderate*
- *Modern: Moderate*
- *Undated: Moderate*

The Desk Based Assessment concludes that:

- *The site has **Moderate** potential for any archaeological discoveries.*

The PDA is located in the east of England, in the north of Essex, in the District and Borough of Colchester and in the village and civil parish of Stanway. Stanway is located 3 miles (4.8km) west of Colchester, between Copford and Beacon End. The

PDA (NGR: TL 94027 24370) is a rectangular parcel of agricultural land of some 3.3 hectares with access gained from London Road (B1408), to the south. It is situated in the centre of the village, bounded to the north, northeast and northwest by open fields and to the southwest by a small collection of commercial and retail businesses, including a large Garden centre (32666-MCC4529). St Albrights Church (32682-MCC4545) is located to the south, facing the site access road. Southwest is a residential property and beyond the fields a collection of large industrial/agricultural buildings. The London Road is developed on both sides with residential dwellings, commercial buildings and agricultural complexes. Further north lies the A12, a major road joining London to Norfolk (Fig.1).

2 INTRODUCTION

Touchstone Archaeology has been commissioned by **Text** to carry out an Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment to supplement a planning application for the proposed development at 296 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, Essex CO3 8PB (Figure 1). The report has accessed various sources of information to identify any known heritage assets, which may be located within the vicinity of the Proposed Development Area. The PDA is centered on National Grid Reference: TL 94027 24370.

Archaeological investigations, both recent and historic have been studied and the information from these investigations has been incorporated in the assessment.

The PDA has not been subject to any archaeological investigation, however, in 1998 at Tollgate North, an evaluation of a proposed development site fronting the Roman Stane Street recorded a post-medieval ditch, a post medieval linear feature and a pit of uncertain date. Land at Stane Park, was the subject of an assessment in 2000, in advance of a proposed development, that identified a number of cropmark sites thought to be a prehistoric settlement and in 2003, five evaluation trenches opened in advance of a proposed development at the Medical centre, Tollgate West, London road, identified a shallow pit of unknown date.

This report is a desk-based appraisal from known cartographic, photographic and archaeological sources and is a research led statement on the archaeological potential of the proposed development.

It may be that intrusive investigations, such as a Geophysical Survey and/or an Archaeological Evaluation, with machine cut trial trenching, may be requested by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) as a Planning Condition.

2.1 Geology and Topography

The Geological Survey of Great Britain (1:50,000) shows that the PDA is situated upon Bedrock Geology of London Clay Formation – Clay, Silt and Sand. This sedimentary bedrock was formed approximately 34 to 56 million years ago in the Palaeogene Period when the local environment was dominated by deep seas. Superficial Deposits of Cover Sand – Clay, Silty, Sandy formed up to 3 million years ago in the Quaternary Period when the local environment was dominated by wind blown deposits.

The PDA sits at an average height of 122ft (37m) AOD.

2.2 Planning Background

The National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012)

Policy 12 is the relevant policy for the historic environment:

2.2.1 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

Local planning authorities should set out in their Local Plan a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats. In doing so, they should recognise that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner appropriate to their significance. In developing this strategy, local planning authorities should take into account:

- the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring;
- the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and
- opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.

2.2.2. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation (NPPF 2012).

Colchester's Archaeology and Development Strategy (Adopted 2015) recognises that Heritage is a key priority in Colchester Borough's Strategic Plan 2015-2018.

Colchester's Heritage Strategy defines the following themes relating to archaeology:

- *Promote best practice in terms of conservation and stewardship of Colchester's heritage assets, supported by key stakeholders and national and local government policy and guidance.*

- *Promote positive initiatives that secure the conservation, beneficial management and enhancement of Colchester's assets and maximise the contribution of heritage to sustainable development.*
- *Promote high quality design in new development that respects and enhances heritage assessments, local distinctiveness and the character of Colchester Borough's townscape and rural landscape*
- *Promote Colchester Borough's rich heritage at local regional and international levels showing the borough as a good place to visit, live, work and invest in.*
- *Identify opportunities to support the council's ambitious regeneration agenda through positive intervention initiatives within the historic environment.*
- *Identify opportunities presented by new development to promote greater understanding and local heritage within local communities.*
- *Identify opportunities for residents and visitors to participate in heritage initiatives, maximising its contribution to health, well-being and learning.*
- *Identify opportunities to display new heritage discoveries in a range of appropriate community settings.*
- *Maintain, enhance and promote the historic environment record, which is a key resource and the evidence base for all heritage assets, for the whole Borough.*
- *Promote the long-term curation of important archaeological archives and collections and make them available for display and study.*

- *Promote an integrated approach between different services, organisations and sectors to increase the impact and audience of Colchester's Heritage assets.*

Regional Policies

The South-East Research Framework (SERF) is on-going with groups of researchers producing a Resource Assessment, which will identify research questions and topics in order to form a Research Agenda for the future.

This Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment has been prepared in accordance with the guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework and the Good Practise Advice notes 1, 2 and 3, which now supersede the PPS 5 Practise Guide, which has been withdrawn by the Government. The Good Practise Advice notes emphasises the need for assessments of the significance of any heritage assets, which are likely to be changed, so the assessment can inform the decision process. Significance is defined in the NPPF Guidance in the Glossary as “the value of the heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historical. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also it’s setting”. The setting of the heritage asset is also clarified in the Glossary as “the surroundings in which a heritage asset is experienced. Its extent is not fixed and may change as the asset and its surroundings evolve”.

This Desk-Based Assessment therefore forms the initial stage of the archaeological investigation and is intended to inform and assist in decisions regarding archaeological mitigation for the proposed development and associated planning applications.

2.3 The Proposed Development

The proposed development will comprise of a planning application for residential development, associated access roads and landscaping.

2.4 Project Constraints

No project constraints were encountered during the data collection for this assessment.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The Desk-Based Assessment was commissioned by **Text** in order to supplement a planning application for the proposed residential development at 296 London Road, Stanway, Colchester, Essex CO3 8PB (TL 94027 24370), to establish the potential for archaeological features and deposits.

3.2 Desktop Study – Institute for Archaeologists (revised 2011)

This desktop study has been produced in line with archaeological standards, as defined by the Institute for Archaeologists (2014). A desktop, or desk-based assessment, is defined as being:

“a programme of study of the historic environment within a specified area or site on land, the inter-tidal zone or underwater that addresses agreed research and/or conservation objectives. It consists of an analysis of existing written, graphic, photographic and electronic information in order to identify the likely heritage assets, their interests and significance and the character of the study area, including appropriate consideration of the settings of heritage assets and, in England, the nature, extent and quality of the known or potential archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interest. Significance is to be judged in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate”. (CiFA 2014)

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Desk-Based Assessment

4.1.1 Archaeological Databases

The local Historic Environment Record (HER) held at Colchester Borough Council provides an accurate insight into catalogued sites and finds within both the proposed development area (PDA) and the surrounding environs of Stanway.

The Archaeology Data Service Online Catalogue (ADS) was also used. The search was carried out within a 500m radius of the proposed development site.

Relevant HER data is included in the report. The Portable Antiquities Scheme Database (PAS) was also searched as an additional source as the information contained within is not always transferred to the local HER.

4.1.2 Historical Documents

Historical documents, such as charters, registers, wills and deeds etc., were considered not relevant to this specific study.

4.1.3 Cartographic and Pictorial Documents

A cartographic and pictorial document search was undertaken during this assessment. Research was carried out using resources offered by Colchester Borough Council, the Internet and Ordnance Survey Historical mapping (Figs. 3-11).

Map Regression 1867 - 1994

In the Map of Essex by Robert Morden the village of Stanway is a small village denoted by a church motif and Stanway Hall, on the south of the roman road from Colchester to Coggleshall and on the east bank of a tributary of the river Coln.

In the 1876 OS Map the PDA is a made up of one large western field (54), one slightly smaller field (53) adjacent and to the east, a small slither of land (52) adjacent and to the east, a longer slither of land (44) adjacent and to the east containing two rectangular buildings forms an access route that continues along the east boundary and along the north boundary. A stream or ditch begins at the northeast corner and

runs west along the north boundary. To the top northeast corner is a small square orchard (44a) and a large pond (46) with a raised earthworks to its west bank. The north boundary is trees and hedges and a 5ft fence. The PDA wraps around the property of Catch Bells and The Cedars both located in the southeast corner. The Roman Road is on the south boundary and St Ethelbert's Church, graveyard and Rectory and the local school is on the other side of the road. A footpath leads from the Cedars across the road in to the field adjacent to the school. A gravel pit is just east and Stanway Cottage, White Hart Farm and the Post Office are west. It appears that the land forms part of the White Hart Farm. It is a very rural area and the few properties have kitchen gardens and glasshouses. The Benchmark of the road is 127.5.

In the 1897 OS Map the fields have been redesignated; the large field is 99 (4.193) and the smaller field is 100 (2.738) and the smaller parts seem to form part of this. One of the rectangular buildings has disappeared and a new pond is in the northwest corner of field 100. A small field has been sectioned off in the south of field 100. Cedars have extended their glasshouses and added a pond. Catchbells has removed some of their larger external buildings. Stanway cottage has also removed one of its buildings. The school has added a new building and St Ethelbert's Church has been extended to the south, a pathway leads to the new Rectory, a substantial building with an access road from the Roman Road.

In the OS Map of 1923 field 99 has been divided in two, 99 (2.585) and 99a (1.608). A small rectangular building has been installed on the east boundary between the two fields. Field 100 has a new building to the southeast corner and has reduced in size (2.7140 due to the pond being designated as 102b (0.182). The field to the south has been divided in two, the east field having two buildings. The orchard has been extended and to accommodate this the rectangular building has been reduced. Catchbells has undergone some layout changes but the Cedars has been vastly extended, the glasshouses removed and renamed 'Stanway Grange'. A small dwelling is in place to the east and across the road to the north. St Ethelbert's Church has a Benchmark of 125.6 and the Rectory gardens have been developed.

The school has been further developed and is now known as the Sunday school. Stanway cottage has been reconfigured and is named Rosemary. White Hart farm has some additional buildings and the Post Office has disappeared.

In the OS Map of 1962-65 the PDA has been redesignated again; the large field as 0046 (2.61/1.79) and the smaller field 0060 (0.16/6.11). A large glasshouse is in the southeast corner of field 0060. A large rectangular building has been built on each side of the trackway and the waterway/ditch has been extended south and is marked as 'Issues'. The pond is 0663 (0.16). A Benchmark has been installed at Catchbells (123.90) and at St Ethelbert's Church (123.86). The Rectory has become Collier House and is one of Dr Barnado's Homes. The entire village has undergone development. White Hart Farm is now Braiswick Rose Gardens, Rosemary Cottage is Rosemary Alms-houses with tennis courts and glasshouses behind and the school is a Hall and a Church Bungalow. Along the A12 (Roman Road) dwellings have sprung up to both sides and a large development of tanks and buildings is just to the east.

In the OS Map of 1972 the PDA is designated as 0046 (1.056/2.61), 0049 (2.544/6.29) and 0060 (0.065/0.16) and the pond 0663 (0.065/0.16). St Ethelbert's Church has become St Albright's Church. Braiswick Rose Gardens is now Stanway Plant Centre and the tennis courts behind the Alms-houses have been removed.

Between 1983 and 1994 there was little change to the PDA with the exception of the removal of the glasshouse and little change to the village.

4.1.4 Aerial Photographs

The study of the collection of aerial photographs held by Google Earth was undertaken. The images begin in 2000 when the area was largely rural with development centred on the main village road (A12/Roman Road). The PDA is open fields with trees and hedges to its boundaries. The church is still opposite and the development is largely agricultural and commercial (Plates 1-2)

4.1.5 Geotechnical Information

To date, no known geotechnical investigations have been carried out at the site.

4.1.6 Secondary and statutory resources

Secondary and statutory sources, such as regional and periodic archaeological studies, landscape studies; dissertations, research frameworks and websites are considered appropriate to this type of study and have been included within this assessment where necessary.

5 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

Prehistoric	Palaeolithic	c. 500,000 BC – c.10,000 BC
	Mesolithic	c.10,000 BC – c. 4,300 BC
	Neolithic	c. 4,300 BC – c. 2,300 BC
	Bronze Age	c. 2,300 BC – c. 600 BC
	Iron Age	c. 600 BC – c. AD 43
Romano-British		AD 43 – c. AD 410
Anglo-Saxon		AD 410 – AD 1066
Medieval		AD 1066 – AD 1485
Post-medieval		AD 1485 – AD 1900
Modern		AD 1901 – present day

Table 1 Classification of Archaeological Periods

The Archaeological record within the assessment area is diverse and should comprise possible activity dating from one of the earliest human period in Britain (the Neolithic) through to the post-medieval period.

This section of the assessment will focus on the archaeological and historical development of this area, placing it within a local context. Each period classification

will provide a brief introduction to the wider landscape, followed by a full record of archaeological sites, monuments and records within the site's immediate vicinity. Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed on the previous page in **Table 1**.

5.2 History of the site

'Stanway' derives from the phrase 'at the stone tracks', and probably relates to the Maldon Road, 2 miles (3.2km) south of the PDA. The village and parish of Stanway is mentioned in the Domesday book, with Stanway Manor having a recorded population of 40.

Scattered Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, and Neolithic tools have been found in the parish and the earliest evidence for settlement is provided by cropmarks associated with a Bronze-Age cemetery at Chitts Hill, 2 miles (3.2km) northeast of the PDA, and at Gosbecks, 2.8 miles (4.5km) southeast of the PDA. Gosbecks was within the Iron Age 'Camulodonun', which is suggested to be a royal centre of settlement. The fine bronze statue of Mercury, god of commerce, discovered there, indicates the importance of its market. A grave, believed to be that of an Iron Age Celtic druid, dated c.40-60 AD, later known as the 'Druid of Colchester' was discovered in the village. It is among a number of graves of eminent people, believed to have been buried around the time of the Roman invasion of Britain in 43 AD. The area was associated with the Catuvellauni community, the tribe thought to have been in charge of the resistance against the Roman conquest. The grave contained cremated human remains, a cloak with brooches, a board game, a jet bead, a cup, a medical kit, a tea strainer and astrology related metal poles.

In the mid 1st century a small Roman fort was built in a corner of the Gosbecks site and later, a temple, theatre and bathhouse were added, forming a large tribal sanctuary. Just west of Gosbecks, was the burial place of the native aristocracy of Camulodonun, which continued in use after the Roman conquest. The four main cremation burials had been made in wooden mortuary chambers within large enclosures, a practice otherwise known only at St. Albans. Grave goods from the few

secondary graves within the enclosures included a spear, an inkpot, and a set of surgical instruments, suggesting their occupants may have been officials of those buried in the chambers. Another cemetery at Gosbecks was in use in the 4th century.

Three hoards of late 3rd century coins were found at Oliver's Orchard, south of Gosbecks suggesting the presence of a settlement in the area at that time. Several reports appear to relate to a villa at Stanway Green, 1 mile (1.6km) southeast of the PDA, possibly part of the undated cropmarks, or at least suggest the existence of Roman buildings within the vicinity. Scattered Roman finds have been made throughout the village, including the Roman Colonia Coin, which was found c.300m north of the PDA (56182-MCC6708). The roman road also runs through the Parish and along the southern border of the PDA (11705-MCC7518, 1226-MCC8754, 11823-MCC7619). A minor roman road is also believed to have existed joining Gosbecks to Colchester, perhaps also continuing further westwards.

Early Anglo-Saxon pottery has been found in Gol Grove, 1.8 miles (2.9 km) south, in the Roman river valley near Stanway Hall. In the 10th century when Stanway was part of a large estate held by the eldermen of Essex, the later parish was divided into two estates, Berton and Stanway. Berton is derived from the word 'Burh' meaning fort and the whole name means 'settlement of the fort'. Although there is no evidence of a fort in the area, a fort at Berton would have commended the western approach roads to Colchester. Berton later became known as Little Stanway until the Great and Little Stanway divide stopped in the 16th century. The large estates of Berton and Stanway included the land between the London and Halsted Roads. Local field names suggest that it may have extended along both sides of the London Road and as far west as Church Lane, directly opposite the PDA. If this were true, St Albright's Church (32682-MCC4545), 20km from the PDA, might have been its church.

Settlement was scattered across Stanway until the 19th century; in 1790 there was no recorded village or hamlet in the parish but by 1787 there were several houses by Stanway bridge, most of which survive to this day. These buildings include the Swan Inn, which retains its 18th century core and 366, 368 and 370 London Road; all four

are located 0.4miles (640m) west of the PDA. Other early houses in the area stand along London Road, which borders the south of the PDA. They include the 'Cants Garden Centre' (32666-MCC4529) and 'Catchbells' (32669-MCC4532) both within a c.300m radius.

The built up area of Colchester quickly expanded into Stanway. By 1966 the A12 road from the London to Colchester became so busy that it was described as dividing the village into two 'like a berlin wall'. By 1967 the parish became known as a 'district receptacle for social problems' due to its two hostels for the 'mentally subnormal'; one for maladjusted boys and the other a halfway house for former mental patients. The addition of an old person's hospital and a hostel for homeless families continued the new unwelcome identity of the village. Construction of housing, industrial and retail estates replaced the old institutions during the 1980s and 90s and by 1995 most of the east of the ancient parish became medium density housing estates.

5.3 This section of the assessment will focus on the archaeological and historical development of this area, placing it within a local context. Each period classification will provide a brief introduction to the wider landscape (500m radius centered on each site of the PDA), followed by a full record of archaeological sites, monuments and records within the site's immediate vicinity. Time scales for archaeological periods represented in the report are listed on page 25 in **Table 1**.

A preliminary review of the cultural heritage data shows that the site has **moderate** archaeological potential.

5.4 Scheduled Monuments; Listed Buildings; Historic Parks & Gardens and Conservation Areas

No events, monument, buildings or events are recorded within the confines of the proposed development area (PDA). Fourteen monuments, three find spots and seven listed buildings are within a 500m vicinity of the PDA. Two Listed buildings share intervisibility with the PDA; St Albrights Church (32682-MCC4545) and

'Catchbells' (32669-MCC4532).

There are three find spots within a 500m vicinity of the PDA, with the first two providing potential evidence of Roman activity within the area. Much Roman brick has been found in St Albright's Church dressings, c.20m from the PDA, and there are quoins of Roman brick located in the west wall of the nave (11833-MCC7629). A late Roman Colonia coin was also found c. 300m North of the PDA, dating from 293 to 296 AD (56182-MCC6708). A Post Medieval finger ring dating from 1800 to 1850 AD, was found c.300m south of the PDA (54861-MCC6498).

Of the fourteen monuments listed on the Colchester HER, eight are described as undated cropmarks (14279-MCC8622, 11938-MCC7728, 11942-MCC7071, 11948-MCC7076, 11923-MCC7716, 11939-MCC7068, 14285-MCC8628, 11937-MCC7727).

Three of the monument records refer to 'Stane Street', a Roman Road connecting Colchester to Coggeshall, which borders the PDA to the south (11705-MCC7518, 1226-MCC8754, 11823-MCC7619). The road followed the present course of the road into Dunmow from across the old Dunmow Ford, close to where Roman pottery was found in 1935. The road also ran south of the present road from Lexden to where it meets the main Roman Road to the Balcerne Gate. Victoria County History regards Stane Street as a British track straightened and metalled by Roman engineers.

Three of the fourteen monument records relate to the GII listed building of St Albright's Church (32682-MCC4545), which is located on the opposite side of the aforementioned Roman road, c.20m from the PDA. The chapel is believed to date back to the Saxon period and the present nave is of Saxon or Saxo-Norman date (11834 - MCC7630). The chancel was built in 1826 and rebuilt in 1880, at the same time as the south aisle and chapel were added (11836-MCC7632). The church has many interesting features, notably the arcade, several windows and doorways dating from the 12th century. Later windows and doorways date from the 14th to 16th

century (11835-MCC7631). It was established from assessment that little of the original building survives and that it has been substantially restored.

Both St Albright's Church and 'Catchbells', a Grade II listed medieval timber-framed house, share intervisibility with the PDA (32669-MCC4532). Three further Grade II listed houses are located within c.500m of the PDA; 'Rosemary', which was constructed 1700 to 1799 AD, c.100m west (32668-MCC4531), 'Wisemans', which was constructed 1500 to 1599 AD, c. 200m east (32671-MCC4535) and 'Cants Garden Centre', which was constructed 1300 to 1399 AD, c.300m west (32666-MCC4529). Two post medieval Grade II listed barns built from 1667 to 1699 AD survive, the first (32667-MCC4530), c.350m west and the second (32676-MCC4539), c.450m west.

Listed Buildings

The report has accessed various sources of information to identify any known heritage assets, which may be located within the vicinity of the Proposed Development Area. Archaeological investigations, both recent and historic have been studied and the information from these investigations has been incorporated in the assessment.

6. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

6.1 Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age

The Palaeolithic represents the earliest phases of human activity in the British Isles, up to the end of the last Ice Age. The rivers Stour and Colne and their tributaries are favourable locations for early occupation and evidence suggest that these have been densely settled from the Neolithic period onwards. Palaeolithic presence within the assessment area has not been found.

The Mesolithic period reflects a society of hunter-gatherers active after the last Ice Age. The Essex HER has no record of archaeological evidence from this period within the assessment area.

The Neolithic period, the beginning of a sedentary lifestyle based on agriculture and animal husbandry is not represented within the assessment area.

The Bronze Age was a period of large migrations from the continent and more complex social developments on a domestic, industrial and ceremonial level. This period is also not represented within the vicinity of the PDA.

There are no records that reflect prehistoric activity within the search area. The potential for finding remains that date prior to the Iron Age within the confines of the proposed development is therefore considered **low**.

6.2 Iron Age

The Iron Age is, by definition a period of established rural farming communities with extensive field systems and large 'urban' centres. During the late Iron Age Colchester emerged as one of the major settlements in Southern England and at Stanway excavations uncovered a group of high status burials and evidence of a Late Iron Age settlement and farmstead. The Colchester HER, however, contains no records representing this era within the assessment area, therefore the potential for finding remains that date to this period within the confines of the development site is considered **low**.

6.3 Romano-British

The Romano-British period is the term given to the Romanised culture of Britain under the rule of the Roman Empire, following the Claudian invasion in AD 43, Britain then formed part of the Roman Empire for nearly 400 years.

The predominant feature of the Roman infrastructure within Essex is arguably the extensive network of Roman roads connecting administrative centres: the towns to military posts and rural settlements (villas, farmsteads and temples) increasing the flow of trade, goods, communications and troops. Colchester or *Camulodonun* was a major Roman settlement or '*coloniae*', as was the nearby Kelvedon or '*Canonium*'. An investigation undertaken at Birch Pit, Stanway defined the remains of an

extensive Roman (possibly earlier) enclosed landscape with settlement, track ways and enclosed fields and at Abbotstone field a farmstead.

The assessment area includes five records from this period. Three of the records refer to the Roman Road, known as 'Stane Street', which runs along the southern border of the PDA (11705-MCC7518, 118230MCC7619, 1226-MCC8754). Roman bricks are present in the dressings of the nearby parish church of St Albright's (11833-MCC7629) and a late Roman Colonia Coin was found c.300m north of the PDA (56182-MCC6708). Due to the known settlement of the area within this period, the locality of the Roman Road and the archaeological finds and features uncovered within the PDA's vicinity the potential is considered as **high**.

6.4 Anglo-Saxon

The Anglo-Saxon period is represented by St Albright's Church chapel and nave, dating from 410 to 1065 AD (11834-MCC7630). It is therefore reasonable to conclude that the potential for finding remains dating to the Anglo-Saxon period in the PDA would be **moderate**.

6.5 Medieval

Colchester re-emerged as one of the major regional medieval towns with the growth of the cloth industry and excavations at Abbotstone field have revealed a medieval field system. The medieval period is moderately represented within the assessment area with six HER records. Three of these records relate to the parish church of St Albright's, c.100m west of the PDA, which was constructed 1100 to 1199 AD and is now a Grade II listed building (32682-MCC4545, 11834-MCC7630, 11835-MCC7631). Three medieval Grade II listed houses survive within the vicinity of the PDA, 'Catchbells', located c.70m east (32669-MCC4532), 'Wisemans' located c.200m east and 'Cants Garden Centre' located c.300m west (32666-MCC4529). Therefore the potential for finding remains dating to the medieval period is considered as **moderate**.

6.6 Post Medieval to Modern

The Post Medieval period is represented moderately within the assessment area by six Colchester HER records. A Portable Antiquities Scheme findspot of a finger ring, dating from 1800 to 1850 AD is c.300m south of the PDA (54861-MCC6498). The chancel at St Albright's Church, c.100m west, was built in 1826 and rebuilt in 1880 when the whole church underwent extensive alterations (118360MCC7632).

'Rosemary', a Grade II listed house located c.100m west was constructed during the post medieval period (32668-MCC4531) and 'Wisemans', another Grade II listed house within the vicinity of the PDA, also has features from this era (32671-MCC4535). Two barns located within a 450m radius were also constructed during this period (32667-MCC4530, 32676-MCC4539).

The modern period is not represented on the HER. The potential for finding remains dating to the post-medieval to modern period is therefore considered as **Moderate**.

6.7 Undated

Cropmarks are prevalent in the fields that surround the PDA. A ring ditch is found east of Wyvern Farm (11939-MCC7068) and linear features and parts of rectangular/rectilinear enclosures (11923 - MCC7716) are found north of Wyvern Farm. An east-west trackway, linear features, a rectangular enclosure and one ring ditch (11948 - MCC7076) are to the south of Albright's church. Former field boundaries of linear features and a ring ditch of low validity (14279 - MCC8622) are to the east of Rosedale Cottages and linear features or a possible trackway (11937 - MCC7727) are west of Oldhouse Farm. More Linear features and a possible trackway (11938 - MCC7728) are west of Fairmead Farm and old field boundaries with double ditched track ways and a pennanular ring ditch (11942-MCC7071) are near Stanway.

Therefore, the potential for encountering archaeological features and deposits that are as yet undated is **moderate**.

6.8 Summary of Potential

The desk-based assessment has considered the archaeological potential of the site but this potential can only be tested by fieldwork. Research has shown that the PDA may contain archaeological sites and these can be summarised as:

- Prehistoric: **Low**
- Iron Age: **Low**
- Roman: **High**
- Anglo-Saxon: **Moderate**
- Medieval: **Moderate**
- Post-Medieval and Modern: **Moderate**
- Undated: **Moderate**

7. IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Introduction

Cartographic Regression, Topographical Analysis, and Historic Research have provided evidence for the historic use of the site. By collating this information we have assessed the impact on previous archaeological remains through the following method of categorisation:

- **Total Impact** - Where the area has undergone a destructive process to a depth that would in all probability have destroyed any archaeological remains e.g. construction, mining, quarrying, archaeological evaluations etc.
- **High Impact** – Where the ground level has been reduced to below natural geographical levels that would leave archaeological remains partly in situ either in plan or section e.g. the construction of roads, railways, buildings, strip foundations etc.

- **Medium Impact** – Where there has been low level or random disturbance of the ground that would result in the survival of archaeological remains in areas undisturbed e.g. the installation of services, pad-stone or piled foundations, temporary structures etc.
- **Low Impact** – Where the ground has been penetrated to a very low level e.g. farming, landscaping, slab foundation etc.

7.2 Existing Impacts

7.2.1 Cartographic regression (4.1.3), Topographic analysis (4.1.4) and Historical research (5.2) indicate that the site has been the subject of agriculture, with some development to the southeast field. Therefore, previous impacts to archaeological remains from construction are considered low to most of the site but **high** to the southeast corner.

7.2.2 Agriculture became gradually more intense over time and by the modern era it was mechanised. Although the farming process rarely penetrates below the upper layers of the ground, plough truncation can have a significant impact on preserved shallow deposits. The site is within an enclosure that was once subject to agricultural use, therefore the impact of agriculture is considered to be **medium**.

7.3 Proposed Impacts

7.3.1 The general development of the site

At the time of preparing this archaeological assessment, the extent of the proposed development was for the construction of a residential development, associated access roads and landscaping.

7.3.2 The very nature of construction can have a negative impact on below ground deposits through the movement of plant, general ground disturbance and

contamination and excavation. Therefore, extensive impact can be expected within the development area once construction begins.

7.3.3 With due consideration to the impacts sited above the following is an assessment of the specific impacts and their relation to this development:

- Ground contamination from the storage and use of materials may have an adverse effect on soil sampling and recording of shallow deposits – **Medium impact**
- Ground vibration, weight displacement and surface disturbance from the movement and use of plant and machinery may cause disruption of shallow features and deposits – **Medium impact**
- Ground penetration from the erection of access equipment, barriers etc. could result in isolated damage to shallow features and deposits – **Medium impact**
- Landscaping may result in the displacement of shallow features and deposits – **Medium impact**
- Ground stripping and levelling could remove shallow deposits and features and leave the archaeological horizon open to damage or destruction from the foot, plant or vehicle traffic – **High impact**
- Trenching for the installation of services may involve the removal of shallow deposits or features and further damage the archaeological horizon sited immediately below or neighbouring archaeology – **High impact**
- The excavation of the foundations may result in the entire removal of the archaeological feature or deposit from a localised area, subsequently intruding on related neighbouring archaeology – **High impact**
- The long-term effect of the development will be in the new use of the site and changes resulting therein. In this case the possibility of higher foot and vehicular traffic to the site – **Low impact**

7.4 Proposed mitigation for the impact of the construction process

The suggested mitigation strategies for the proposed development area are the consideration of item 7.3 of this document, from which a proposed plan of action could be developed for the Borough Council's approval and the general adherence to the requirements by the HSE department to increase safety, reduce risk and therefore, lessen the impact of the construction process on archaeological features and deposits.

8. MITIGATION

The purpose of this archaeological desk-based assessment was to provide an assessment of the contextual archaeological record, in order to determine the potential survival of archaeological deposits that may be impacted upon during any proposed construction works.

The assessment has generally shown that the area to be developed is within an area of **moderate** archaeological potential.

9. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Setting of Listed Buildings

One of the tasks of the site visit was aimed to identify any designated heritage assets within the wider context of the PDA in accordance with *The Setting of Heritage Assets – English Heritage Guidance* (English Heritage 2011). This guidance states that “*setting embraces all of the surroundings (land, sea, structures, features and skyline) from which the heritage asset can be experienced or that can be experienced from or with the asset*” (The Setting of Heritage Assets, English Heritage 2011).

There are two Listed Buildings that share intervisibility with the PDA; St Albrights Church (32682-MCC4545), a Grade II Listed building that dates in part to the 12th

century with 19th century alterations and 'Catchbells' (32669-MCC4532), a Grade II Listed, early 15th century timber framed house (Plates 3-6).

9.1 Archive

Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, two copies of this desk-based assessment will be submitted to Colchester Borough Council (Heritage) within 6 months of completion.

9.2 Reliability/Limitations of Sources

The sources that were used in this assessment were, in general, of high quality. The majority of the information provided herewith has been gained from either published texts or archaeological 'grey' literature held at Essex County Council, and therefore considered as being reliable.

9.3 Copyright

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Zoe Schofield

5th June 2016

10 REFERENCES & BIBLIOGRAPHY

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