

**31 MILDMAY ROAD  
CHELMSFORD  
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING AND EXCAVATION**



**Essex County Council**

**Field Archaeology Unit**

**August 2008**

**31 MILDMAY ROAD  
CHELMSFORD  
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCHING AND EXCAVATION  
ISSUE 1**

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**Client:** M & P Dunn Ltd.

**Planning application number:** CHL/00844/05

**ECC FAU project number:** 1745

**National grid reference:** TL 71020 06254

**Site code:** CF55

**Dates of fieldwork:** 17 March to 1 April 2008

**Oasis reference:** essexcou1-442571

**SUMMARY**

*An archaeological investigation in advance of a residential development at 31 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford, consisting of three trenches, has recorded a dense concentration of Roman pits dating from the mid-2nd to late 3rd/early 4th century AD. A small quantity of residual late Mesolithic/early Neolithic worked flint and Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery was also found.*

*The investigation took place in the north-eastern sector of Roman Chelmsford (formerly known as Caesaromagus), 30m south of the Roman road leading south-eastwards to Heybridge and Wickford, and outside the line of the later 2nd-century town defences.*

*The pits were backfilled with domestic rubbish, but were probably originally dug as gravel quarries, while one pit is interpreted as a well. The pits are thought to have been located at the rear of an area of settlement alongside the Roman road in the mid-2nd and 3rd century. In the late 3rd and early 4th century the well was sealed over by an extensive rubbish deposit containing very large quantities of pottery, as well as tile, metalwork and animal bone.*

*The results of the investigation complement previous archaeological work undertaken in the surrounding area (Wickenden 1992). The combined information suggests that this part of the Roman town prospered during the mid-2nd to 3rd century, but declined in the 4th century.*



## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This report describes the results of an archaeological investigation in advance of a residential development at 31 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford carried out by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) for M & P Dunn Ltd. The archaeological work was undertaken as a condition on planning consent (CHL/00844/05) following advice from the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM) in accordance with Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (DoE 1990). The investigation followed the archaeological brief issued by ECC HEM (2007) and the written scheme of investigation prepared by ECC FAU (2008). All stages of work were monitored by the ECC HEM case officer. Initially, two 8m-long trial trenches were excavated, but once significant Roman features were located it was agreed with the ECC HEM officer and M & P Dunn to open up an additional area measuring 4 x 4m and carry out further excavation and analysis of the Roman remains.

Copies of this report will be supplied to M & P Dunn Ltd (including a copy to forward to the Local Planning Authority), ECC HEM, the Essex Historic Environment Record and Chelmsford Museum. A digital version will be uploaded to the Online Access Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis>). The project archive, including two copies of the report, will be deposited at Chelmsford Museum.

## **2.0 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Site Location (Fig. 1)**

The site is located in a residential area south of Chelmsford town centre (Fig. 1), 200m south of the river Can and 80m south of Parkway, the inner ring road (TL 71020 06254). It is situated on the corner of Mildmay Road and Goldlay Road and covers an area of up to 16 x 23m (c. 350m<sup>2</sup>). Two small office buildings previously occupied the site.

### **2.2 Geology**

The site lies on the gravel terrace to the south of the confluence of the rivers Can and Chelmer. Most of the gravel terrace is covered by a layer of brickearth, but towards the rivers the brickearth cover is thin and patchy. The site is located in one of the areas where the river gravels are exposed, as no brickearth was recorded within the site area, or at the west end of the adjacent excavation at 1-12 Goldlay Road (Wickenden 1992, 47-9).

### 2.3 Archaeology (Fig. 2)

The site is located on the eastern edge of Roman Chelmsford, a posting station and small town on the Roman London-Colchester road, formerly known as *Caesaromagus* (Fig. 2). This background is based on a published report on previously excavated sites in the vicinity of the present site (Wickenden 1992) and on information contained in the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

Large amounts of Mesolithic and Neolithic worked flint and Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pottery have been found locally at the Roman temple site (Fig. 2, site K; EHER 5862-4 and Wickenden 1992, 16-17) in a disturbed layer at the top of the natural brickearth.

The Roman town was founded in c. AD 70/75 on the site of a short-lived fort built to the south of the crossing of the rivers Can and Chelmer after the Boudican revolt of AD 60/61. The civilian settlement developed along the London-Colchester road (Moulsham Street) and a side road to the south-east that led to Heybridge and Wickford. The town included a *mansio* (government posting station) and its bath-house, and a temple precinct. The *mansio* and bath-house were rebuilt on a larger scale in the mid-2nd century. In c. 160-75 substantial earthwork defences were constructed around the town's core but the southern side of the circuit at least was abandoned by the mid 3rd century, and settlement continued to extend along the road frontages to the south and the east. The site lies at the eastern edge of the established extent of the Roman town and outside the later 2nd-century town defences.

The site lies 30m to the south of the Roman road to Heybridge and Wickford, excavated at 29-30 Rochford Road (Fig. 2, site D; EHER 17121 and Wickenden 1992, 6-15). On the opposite side of this road was the Roman temple precinct (Fig. 2, site K; EHER 5862 and Wickenden 1992, 16-43). Roman roadside activity recorded at 29-30 Rochford Road (Fig. 2, site D) is dated to the late 1st to 3rd centuries and includes evidence of brickearth/gravel quarries, boundary ditches, timber buildings and ovens. By the 4th century the road surface had deteriorated and roadside activity had ceased. Roman activity a little further back from the road was recorded in a small excavation in 1972-3 by P. Drury at 1-12 Goldlay Road, immediately to the east of the site (Fig. 2, site AB; EHER 17170 and Wickenden 1992, 47-9). The Roman features included a 2nd-century well and a timber structure (Fig. 5, structure 13), and pits dated to the late 2nd/3rd-century.

After the Roman town had been abandoned, medieval Chelmsford was founded north of the river crossing in 1199. A small suburb existed along Moulsham Street in the medieval and



post-medieval periods, but the site was located within an area of orchards and market gardens until the construction of houses along Mildmay Road in the 1850s.

### **3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The general aim of the investigation was to establish the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains on the site, especially any related to the Roman town, and to preserve by record any archaeological deposits that were likely to be destroyed by the construction of the new residential building.

The research objectives for the project were in line with those laid out in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2: Research Agenda and Strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000).

These were to record:

1. The date and character of activity at the eastern edge of the Roman town and along the Roman road leading to Heybridge and Wickford; and
2. Any prehistoric material at the top of the natural strata.

### **4.0 METHOD**

The archaeological work was undertaken in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* and the Association of Local Government Officers' *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (IFA 1999; Gurney 2003). The ECC FAU is a registered archaeological organisation with the Institute of Field Archaeologists. The ECC FAU uses its own recording system to record all archaeological deposits and features (ECC FAU 2006).

The site was initially sampled by two trial trenches 8m long and 1.8m wide (Fig. 3, A and B). Following the discovery of significant archaeological remains a third trench measuring 4 x 4m was added in the north-west of the site (Fig. 3, C) and the southern end of trench A was extended. Trench A was located in the site's north-eastern corner in order to investigate any further remains of a Roman timber building (Fig. 5, structure 13), which had been previously

been recorded during the previous excavation of 1-12 Goldlay Road immediately to the east of the site. The trenches investigated 14% of the development area.

A tracked excavator with a toothless bucket was used to strip topsoil and overburden in all three trenches down to the top of the natural sand and gravel. The trenches were planned at a scale of 1:20, and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10, with levels reduced to Ordnance Datum. Black and white prints and colour digital photographs were taken of the more significant archaeological features and of work in progress. All contexts (cut features and deposits) were individually recorded on pro-forma sheets. The trenches were surveyed into the Ordnance Survey by local measurement.

## **5.0 FIELDWORK RESULTS**

The archaeological investigation revealed a dense concentration of Roman pits (Figs 3 and 4), but there was no further evidence of the Roman timber structure recorded in the previous excavation immediately to the east of the site (Fig. 5, structure 13; Wickenden 1992, 47-9). The pits cut natural sandy gravel and lay immediately below 0.45-0.65m of topsoil and overburden. They proved difficult to distinguish in plan since they had similar surface fills and were closely spaced and intercutting. Many fragments of modern brick and concrete were compacted into the surfaces of the pits as a result of recent site clearance.

The pits mainly had moderate to steep-sloping sides and uneven or rounded bases. All but one of the pits contained more than one fill, and the maximum number of fills in any one pit was four. Most of the pits contained Roman finds, especially in their upper fills, mainly pottery, but also including smaller amounts of building materials, animal bone, metalwork and glass. The finds assemblage from fill 9/33 in the top of well 30 and pit 44 in trench C was very large, representing about two-thirds of all the material recovered from site. A relatively high proportion of the finds were residual in later features, in particular a small number of pieces of Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic worked flint and Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery.

The pits appear to have been backfilled with domestic rubbish, but were most likely originally dug as gravel quarries or, in one case, as a well, which penetrated the water table 1.8m below existing street level. Further information about the pits and their fills can be found in Appendix 1.

### **5.1 Trench A** (Figs 3 and 4)

Trench A revealed five pits (11, 16, 19, 24 and 27). The southern end of the trench was extended to record pit 27 over a wider area. In the south-eastern corner of the trench pit 27 was cut by a small modern disturbance (42). The pits were generally oval in plan with rounded profiles, and were 0.5-0.8m deep, although pit 27 was much larger and up to 1.0m deep (Fig. 4, sections 1 and 2). The near-vertical northern edge of pit 27 initially suggested it was a regular feature, but further investigation (40) showed it was irregular and of uneven depth.

The earliest datable features were pits 24 and 27 in the south of the trench, containing around 60 and 40 sherds of pottery respectively, indicating that they were filled during the mid-2nd to early/mid-3rd century. Pit 11 in the north of the trench contained over 250 sherds of late 2nd/3rd-century pottery and was probably filled slightly later. Pits 16 and 19, which were cut by pit 11, are not well-dated but were presumably Roman; pit 19 contained a single sherd of Roman pottery, but no finds at all were recovered from the fills of pit 16.

Several of the pits in trench A contained quite large amounts of pottery and other domestic rubbish, but all could originally have been dug to quarry gravel. The large, irregular pit 27 was almost certainly a gravel quarry.

### **5.2 Trench B** (Figs 3 and 4)

Two pits (1 and 4) were present in trench B. Both were irregular in plan and profile, and were 0.50-0.70m deep (Fig. 4, section 3).

Pit 4 contained over 30 sherds of pottery and was filled during the mid-2nd to mid-3rd century. Pit 1 contained a few sherds of late 4th-century pottery in its latest fill and was the latest of all the pits recorded on site.

### **5.3 Trench C** (Figs 3 and 4)

Three pits (34, 37 and 44) and a well (30) were recorded in trench C. One pit (37) was identified only in section, while a small area of a fifth, unexcavated, pit is discernible in the north-west of the trench. Both of the top fills of well 30 and pit 37 were inadvertently cross-contaminated during their excavation (finds context 9). The pits were generally oval in plan with rounded profiles, and were up to 0.70m deep (Fig 4, sections 4 and 5), although well 30 was much deeper and had a more regular steep-sided profile and a flat bottom.

Pits 34 and 44 were the earliest features in trench C. Pit 44 contained 17 sherds of pottery dated to the late 2nd to mid-3rd century, while pit 34 may have been slightly later, containing a few sherds of exclusively 3rd-century pottery.

Well 30 cut both these pits. It was circular, and had regular near-vertical sides, except for a ledge in the top of the south side, and a flat base (Fig. 4, section 4). It was 1.20m deep and contained ground water at the bottom, confirming that it could have been used as a well. The well shaft did not contain a timber lining, although it is uncertain whether the well was originally unlined or whether a lining had subsequently decayed or been removed. The lower fill (32) of well 30 contained 47 sherds of 3rd-century pottery.

Pit 44 must still have been partly open when well 30 was dug and in use, since they both had the same top fill (33). Fill 33 and finds context 9, with which it is broadly equivalent, together contained a very large quantity of pottery (1453 sherds weighing over 25kg), as well as smaller amounts of tile, metalwork and animal bone. This represents an extensive layer of rubbish dumped in the top of pit 44 and well 30 to infill them. A shallow pit (37, fill 38) was recorded in section as cutting well 30 (Fig. 4, section 4). The pottery dating indicates that the final infilling and sealing over of pit 44 and well 30 occurred in the late 3rd-early 4th century.

## **6.0 FINDS**

Finds were recovered from a total of twenty-two contexts, from three trenches (A, B and C). All of the finds have been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Full quantification details can be found in Appendix 2. The main assemblage component comprises pottery of Roman date, amounting to a total of more than 36kg. The finds are described by category below.

### **6.1 Late Iron Age/Roman pottery**

#### *Introduction and Methodology*

Twenty-one contexts produced Late Iron Age and Roman pottery, amounting to 2089 sherds, weighing 36.7kg. The pottery from each context was recorded by sherd count and weight, in grams, by fabric and form, onto paper proformas which form part of the archive. The pottery fabrics were identified using the Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit fabric series, and the vessel forms by using the type series devised for Chelmsford (Going 1987, 13-54). Sherds of intrinsic interest were also recorded, for instance, pierced sherds or those with notches,

stamps or graffiti. The pottery is in good condition with an average sherd weight of 17.6g. Burnt sherds were noted in context 9, representing finds recovery over the upper fills of well 30 and pit 37. Full details by context can be found in the archive.

#### *Dating Evidence*

The pottery was recorded, in the first instance, to provide dating evidence for site features and layers, although several contexts contained only a handful of sherds each. Only seven contexts contained forty sherds, or more, of pottery but, despite this, most could be provided with a relatively close date. There are four large and six medium-sized groups, thus enabling firm dating evidence to be supplied for half of the contexts with pottery. The largest group came from fill 9, representing finds recovery over the upper fills of well 30 and pit 37 (trench C). This context contained more than half of the total pottery by weight and is dated late 3rd to early 4th century, although exclusively 4th century vessel types are absent.

Residual material is present, especially in the top fills 9 and 33 of well 30 and pit 44 (both trench C). Late Iron Age grog-tempered pottery was recorded in three contexts and early shell-tempered ware, including a 1st-century AD jar rim sherd, was found in fill 9. Second-century pottery was more common and that found in the fills of pit 27 (trench A) may not all be residual. This feature, and pit 24 which it cuts, is likely to be among the earliest features excavated and both can probably be provided with a mid-2nd to early 3rd century date. In the main, however, the identified vessel forms span the 3rd century and include B5 dishes and folded beakers. Pottery of exclusively late 4th century date is almost totally absent and it is notable that no Rettendon-type ware was recorded. This flint-tempered fabric had its *floruit* during the first half of the 4th century and kilns manufacturing this type of pottery in Chelmsford were uncovered at nearby Moulsham Street (Going 1987, 73-8).

#### *Assemblage Composition and Pottery Supply*

Twenty fabrics and fabric groups were recorded, the range and proportions of which can be found in the archive. The assemblage is dominated by locally-made coarse wares. Collectively, these wares form more than 80% by weight of the total pottery recovered, with sandy grey wares accounting for a third. Small quantities of white-slipped red wares, including most of a tazza, and buff wares, including part of a Colchester mortarium, are also present. The main regional industries are represented, albeit by small amounts of pottery. Sherds of North Kent grey ware, Nene Valley and Colchester colour-coated wares and Hadham oxidised and black-surfaced wares indicate trading links throughout the Roman period. The Dorset black-burnished ware industry is represented by two sherds from a B1 plain-rimmed dish with external wavy line decoration. A self-coloured mortarium from the

Nene Valley was also noted. The latest pottery comprises a single small sherd of Oxfordshire red colour-coated ware (OXRC) which usually appears in late 4th century contexts. Pottery imported from the Continent comprises Dressel 20 (or perhaps the later Dressel 23) olive oil amphora (possibly all the same vessel) and samian, recorded in eight contexts. Three-quarters of the samian by weight came from fill 9 (finds recovery over pits 30 and 37) and the identified vessel forms could have been current up to the mid-3rd century. On balance, however, most of the samian is likely to be residual in later 3rd century contexts. No modified sherds are present and no graffiti or other marks were recorded.

The majority of identifiable vessels are jars, all paralleled in Going (1987, figs 7-11). The most common are lid-seated G5.5, narrow-necked G35 and everted-rimmed G24 types. Also present are storage jars, some very large. A range of dishes, bowl-jars and beakers in a variety of fabrics, was noted. Of interest is a near-complete tazza in cream-slipped red ware, almost certainly a Colchester product. A range of tazze are illustrated in Symonds and Wade (1999, figs 6.24 and 6.25) and the Chelmsford vessel can be compared to several 3rd-century examples, especially fig.6.24, nos 704 and 723. Also present in fill 9 is a near-complete B3 dish (Going 1987, fig.1) and a 3rd-century North Kent beaker (Monaghan 1987, type 2C2). Flagons and platters are scarce; however an entire J3.2 flagon rim/neck with handle scar (Going 1987, fig.16) was recovered from fill 28 of pit 27. A small number of mortaria was recorded, although the proportion, at 1.2% by weight, is on the low side for a Chelmsford assemblage. Sources include Colchester and the Nene Valley, and a body sherd from an imported samian mortarium was recorded in fill 9. Lids were noted in several contexts; fills 9 and 26 contained complete lid grips.

### *Discussion*

The whole assemblage is characteristic of rubbish derived from domestic occupation, and, indeed, a range of artefacts and ecofacts, including personal items and quantities of animal bone, was also recovered. The pottery is a relatively plain, utilitarian assemblage, similar to that recovered from previous excavations in the vicinity (Going 1992). An apparent ceramic poverty has been noted at Chelmsford, compared with London, Verulamium and Colchester (Going 1992, 115). The elements in the assemblage from the current work concur with this view. Comparison with the pottery from the adjacent excavations (Fig 2, site AB; Wickenden 1992, 47-9) is difficult, since the pottery report (1992, 92-115) incorporates the pottery from site AB with the entire assemblage from various excavations in the north-eastern sector of Roman Chelmsford. However, the excavation report postulates activity in the 2nd and 3rd centuries which compares well with the dates for the material from the current work.

## 6.2 Metalwork

### *Copper alloy*

Two coins were recovered, one (SF1) from the fill of pit 1 (trench B) and the second (SF8) from fill 9 (finds recovery over well 30 and pit 37, trench C). Both are encrusted, and SF8 is very worn, so close dating cannot be provided until the coins are cleaned. The condition and the diameters, however, indicate that they are both of Roman date.

A number of objects were recovered, mainly from fill 9 and mostly of Roman date. Small finds 4 (fill 9) and 10 (fill 32 of well 30) both comprise concentrations of small unidentifiable fragments, and SF9 (fill 9) is a triangular offcut. More identifiable objects are represented by SFs 2 and 7, both fill 9 (trench C), SF5, fill 13 of pit 11 (trench A), and SF12, fill 33 of pit 30 (Trench C).

Small find 2 is part of a set of tweezers, with one arm bent out of shape and part-missing. Finishing marks, or perhaps linear decoration, are visible along the length of the remaining arm. Small find 5 is a hairpin with the tip broken off. Under the corrosion products, this appears to be a Crummy (1983) Type 2 hairpin, of 2nd and 3rd century date. Small find 7 is part of a chape, in poor condition but closely paralleled in Bishop and Coulston (1993, fig.80, nos 16 and 17). This style was common throughout the Antonine period. Small find 12 is in two pieces and is probably the remains of a plain armlet. The section appears to be D-shaped and can be paralleled by several examples from Colchester (Crummy 1983, fig. 42), where copper-alloy armlets were mainly found in 3rd and 4th century contexts.

Two relatively recent copper alloy objects were also recorded. A small post-medieval button, with decoration in the form of a thistle embossed on its flat surface, was intrusive in fill 33 in the top of well 30 and pit 44. A curious crescent-shaped object was recovered from fill 9 (finds recovery over well 30 and pit 37). The object is approximately 115mm long and 14mm deep. At the mid-point, its width is 30mm. A roughly-made loop, with a 10mm D-shaped aperture, is attached (off-centre) to the upper surface. The lower surface is obscured by iron corrosion products, but the length of the upper surface bears irregularly-spaced grooves, set radially, at an average 6mm apart. A large piece of iron, now detached, may be part of the object. The iron is heavily corroded but the crescent-shaped object, although cracked in two places, is not corroded in any way. The object is heavy and may contain a high proportion of zinc, which helps to prevent corrosion. The appearance of the object, however, is modern but its function remains obscure.

Copper alloy items were recorded from the adjacent excavations (Fig. 2, site AB; Wickenden 1992, 47-9); a coin of Constantius I (AD 294-305) was found in the subsoil (Wickenden 1992, 65), a pair of tweezers came from the 2nd-century fill of well 4 (Wickenden 1992, 77) and two pin shafts came from the mid/late 2nd-century fill of pit 3 (Wickenden 1992, 79).

### *Iron*

Iron nails were recorded in six contexts, including two attached by corrosion products to pot sherds. Iron objects and fragments were found in three contexts; the majority (approximately thirteen separate objects) in fill 9. None is identifiable under corrosion products, although X-radiographs will help clarify the function for some. All are thought to be Roman, but the presence of modern intrusion in some contexts points to the possibility of some being more recent, especially those from fill 9.

### *Lead*

An incomplete lead washer, approximately 60mm in diameter, was recovered from the top fill of pit 24 (Trench A). There is a 12mm-wide channel around part of the circumference which probably represents the 'ghost' of the parent object or pipe to which the washer was fixed.

## **6.3 Brick and tile**

Brick and tile fragments, amounting to 145 pieces, weighing 13kg, were recovered from eleven contexts. Almost all of the assemblage is Roman, but at least two pieces (surface finds, trench C and fill of pit 11, trench A) are post-medieval. Many of the Roman fragments are too small for either identification to type or further comment, but *tegula*, *imbrex* and box-flue tiles were all recovered from fill 9 (finds recovery over well 30 and pit 37, trench C). This context produced 70% by weight of the total tile assemblage. Some tile fragments are overfired and one piece from pit 11 has the remains of a prefiring hole. Since most of the tile came from within pit fills, it is not possible to determine whether they are derived from buildings in the vicinity.

## **6.4 Glass**

Sherds of glass were found in three contexts; window glass (4 sherds, weight 12g) was recorded in all three, but vessel glass was only recovered from fill 9 (finds recovery over pits 30 and 37). All of the glass is Roman apart from a single small sherd of decayed post-medieval window glass (surface finds 10, trench C). The Roman window glass sherds are blue-green; all are of the matt/glossy type and include one with a fire-rounded edge. The vessel glass comprises three blue-green sherds (4g), possibly from the same object. A



tubular footring probably derives from a cup or bowl of 2nd to 3rd century date (Price and Cottam 1998, 100), although the sherds are perhaps too small for firm identification.

## **6.5 Worked bone**

Three items of worked bone of probable Roman date were recovered from fill 9 (finds recovery over pits 30 and 37). Two pin shafts (SF3) are likely to be the remains of hairpins and SF6 comprises a complete needle of Crummy (1983) Type 2. Crummy (1983, 65) notes that most Type 2 needles came from 3rd and 4th century contexts at Colchester.

## **6.6 Worked flint, by Tony Blowers**

Six contexts produced seven worked flints, along with twelve burnt pieces (Appendix 2). The blades from 9 and 10, and well 30 and pit 44 (all trench C), are of late Mesolithic/early Neolithic date as is a worked-out core from fill 9. Their presence within Roman contexts suggests they are residual but it is not unreasonable to suppose that they were utilised in the Roman period. A naturally-fractured piece in pit 30 shows evidence of being used as a piercer or borer. This is not uncommon practice in the later prehistoric period. It is highly likely that the flints are contemporary with a large assemblage of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint artefacts recovered from excavations at the Roman temple site 50m to the north (Fig. 2, site K; Wickenden 1992, 16).

## **6.7 Animal bone**

A small quantity of animal bone, amounting to 291 pieces, weighing 3049g, was recovered from fourteen contexts. The animal bone was scanned for condition and completeness, and identifications of the animal types present were carried out using Schmid (1972). Most of the bone is in good condition with little abrasion, probably a result of disposal along with other rubbish which has prevented close contact with the surrounding soil. A range of domestic animal types was recorded, the majority of which were sheep/goat and cattle, both present in equal amounts. Pig, hare and bird, probably domestic fowl, were also noted and fill 9 produced deer bones, including a large section of antler beam. This had been sawn at the beam end in such a way as to indicate removal of a section of antler for use perhaps as a knife handle or similar. The presence of deer in Roman animal bone assemblages normally indicates a later Roman date, in keeping with the date of the other finds types. Very little indications of butchery were noted, but most of the animals present are likely to represent food waste, deposited in rubbish pits along with other domestic refuse.

## **6.8 Other finds**

The remaining finds comprise fragments of baked clay, burnt and unworked stone and burnt flints. Two contexts contained featureless baked clay; two pieces, weighing 16g, were found in fill 9, and 4 pieces, weighing 84g, came from fill 33 of pit 30 (both Trench C). *Septaria* fragments, weighing a total of 946g, were recovered from three contexts (fill 9, fill 33 of pit 30 and the fill of pit 44, all Trench C). *Septaria* was used as a crude building stone during the Roman period, but it is difficult to determine whether these fragments had been so utilised. A small number of burnt flints (Appendix 2) were recovered from five contexts within Trenches A and C. Their presence is unlikely to have any significance. A single small, burnt, cuboid piece of stone was recorded in Trench C (surface finds 10).

## **6.9 Comments on the Assemblage**

A range and variety of finds was recorded, as would be expected from an area of pitting in this part of Roman Chelmsford. Activity appears to have commenced in the mid-2nd century and to have ceased by the late 3rd or early 4th. This is consistent with the findings of previous investigations in the vicinity (Wickenden 1992). It should be pointed out that a large part of the finds assemblage was recovered from a single context, fill 9, which represents initial finds recovery over pits 30 and 37.

The Roman copper alloy items have been submitted to Colchester museum service for conservation and the iron objects have been submitted for x-ray. Cleaning of the coins may help to provide a closer date, although SF8 is heavily worn through use and surface detail may remain unclear. Further work on any of the finds is not required. The pottery has been recorded to the required archive standard (SGRP 1994) and does not warrant publication. The remaining finds categories are too small to merit publication. All of the finds should be retained, although the few post-medieval items could be discarded at the archiving stage. Some smaller pieces of tile, and the *septaria* fragments, have already been discarded following recording.

## **7.0 CONCLUSIONS**

The investigation has revealed a dense concentration of Roman pits, mainly dating to the mid-2nd to late 3rd/early 4th century, and small quantities of late Mesolithic/early Neolithic worked flint and Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery as residual finds in later contexts.

## 7.1 Prehistoric

The worked flint recovered as residual finds from the site complements the worked flint assemblage found during the excavation of the Roman temple site 50m to the north (Fig. 2, site K; Wickenden 1992, 16-17), and is a further indication that small groups of semi-itinerant hunter gatherers and early farmers were moving and living along the banks of the rivers Can and Chelmer during the 5th and 4th millenniums BC. River valleys were attractive places to inhabit during prehistory because they were rich in natural resources. Much of the flint is likely to have been sourced locally from the river gravels.

## 7.2 Roman

The Roman pits were mainly dug and filled between the mid-2nd and the late 3rd/early 4th century. Several pits belong to the earlier part of this date range, dating to the mid-2nd to early or mid-3rd century - pits 24 and 27 in trench A, pit 4 in trench B, and probably also the poorly-dated or undated early pits 16 and 19 in trench A. Almost all of the other pits are dated a little later, to the late 2nd-3rd century or entirely within the 3rd century - pit 11 in trench A, and well 30 and pits 34, 37 and 44 in trench C. The partially filled pit 44 and well 30 in trench C were capped by an extensive rubbish layer dated to the late 3rd/early 4th century. There is no evidence for early or late Roman activity on the site, with the exception of pit 1 in trench B, which was filled in the late 4th century.

The pits contained varying quantities of domestic rubbish, pottery, tile, metalwork and animal bone, but were most likely originally dug to quarry the river gravels. Many of the pits (e.g. 11, 16, 19 and 24 in trench A) were discrete oval scoops, possibly deliberately dug in a row, while other pits (e.g. 27 in trench A) and the trench B pits were larger and more irregular. Well 30 in trench C was significantly deeper than the pits and penetrated the water table. In the immediate area of site the river gravels were near the surface and this would have been favourable both for quarrying and sinking wells.

The results of the present investigation complement those of a previous excavation at 1-12 Goldlay Road immediately to the east (Figs 2 and 5, site AB; Wickenden 1992, 47-49). This earlier excavation revealed a 2nd-century well and a small timber structure (structure 13), and several late 2nd/3rd-century pits including a large quarry pit. The well was very similar in form to well 30 in trench C, and was also dug in an area where the river gravels are close to the surface.

The combined evidence from the present investigation and the earlier excavation at site AB suggests the digging of pits and wells at the rear of an area of settlement activity along the

south side of the Roman road leading south-eastwards from the town. A previous excavation at site D, 40m to the east, suggests the road and related activity initially date to c. AD 120, with a decline by the 4th century (Wickenden 1992, 6-15).

Three phases of activity are suggested for the present site and the adjacent site AB (Fig. 5):

1. The well and timber structure (structure 13) recorded at site AB appear to be dated exclusively to the 2nd century, a little earlier than the majority of features on the present site. No further evidence of structure 13 was recorded in trench A of the present site. The evidence for this structure is ephemeral, consisting of shallow beam slots, and it may have been disturbed in trench A by later Roman pitting or by modern truncation. Either way, the structure was small, presumably representing an outbuilding towards the rear of a plot. Some of the earlier pits in trench A may have been contemporary with structure 13.

2. The majority of the pits at both sites, and the well in trench C, are dated to the later 2nd-3rd century, with most of these features dated exclusively within the 3rd century. The pits in this phase were densely concentrated and appear to represent an intensification of pit digging and quarrying. Comparison with site D, where roadside activity continued through the 3rd century (Wickenden 1992, 13), suggests that the pits and well would have been part of this roadside development, although with the construction of the town defences in the later 2nd century the site would have been extra-mural.

3. By the 4th century activity to the south of the road had ceased. This was marked in trench C by the dumping of large amounts of domestic rubbish in the top of well 30 and pit 44 in the late 3rd/early 4th century, and in general by the dearth of features dating to the 4th century. By this stage the site may have become an extra-mural rubbish dump. The decline in activity on the site in the 4th century is consistent with the evidence of other sites nearby, notably site D to the east, where the road had narrowed and its surface had deteriorated by the 4th century (Wickenden 1992, 13-15).

## **8.0 ASSESSMENT OF RESULTS**

Roman pits were present in all areas of the site that were investigated, and were relatively well preserved, cutting to depths of between 0.5m and 0.8m below the modern overburden. The well in trench C penetrated the water table at a depth of 1.2m (1.8m below street level). Most of the pits were intercut and closely spaced and were difficult to identify individually in

plan view. There was little disturbance from modern building foundations, although there appears to have been a degree of truncation of the top of the Roman features through one or more previous phases of site clearance. This resulted in modern building materials and artefacts being compacted into the upper fills of many of the Roman features. No Roman ground surfaces survived, most likely as a result of truncation.

The pits and well were related to an area of activity at the eastern edge of the Roman town that developed in the mid-2nd and 3rd centuries along the south side of the Chelmsford to Heybridge/Wickford road, and to the south of the temple precinct. The construction of the road was probably related to the major re-organisation of the town in c. AD 120, which chiefly involved the replacement and enlargement of the *mansio* (government posting station). The density of pitting and the date-range of the finds recovered suggest that activity alongside the road was sustained through the 3rd century, although by that time the site area lay outside the town defences. This peak in development in the 2nd and 3rd centuries is typical of Roman Chelmsford as a whole. By the late 3rd/early 4th century, however, the site was used for a time as a rubbish dump. By the 4th century settlement in this eastern suburb of the Roman town had ceased, in common with other peripheral areas of the town (Wallis 1988; Robertson forthcoming), with only the temple precinct continuing in use.

### **Acknowledgements**

The Essex CC Field Archaeology Unit thanks M & P Dunn Ltd for commissioning and funding the archaeological investigation, especially Paul Dunn and David Payne for their help both before and during the fieldwork, and for providing a mechanical excavator.

The fieldwork was carried out by Tony Blowers, Rachael Brazil, John Hewitt, Dave Smith and Marcus Wood under the supervision of Mark Germany. The finds were processed by Phil McMichael and were analysed by Joyce Compton and Tony Blowers. The illustrations were prepared by Andrew Lewsey. The project was managed by Patrick Allen and was monitored by Teresa O'Connor of the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management team on behalf of the local planning authority.

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## APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DATA

All dimensions (length x width x depth) in metres. Depths measured from top of natural

No.	Part of	Tr.	Category	Description	Date
1		B	Pit	Steep-sided. Broad, slightly concave base. 3.6m x 1.6m+ x 0.7. Filled by 2, 7 and 8	Late 4th C +
2	1	B	Fill	Top fill of pit 1. Dark grey brown friable silt clay sand with infrequent gravel. Above 7	Late 4th C +
3		B	Artefacts	Unstratified finds from spoil heap of trench B	
4		B	Pit	Steep sided. Undulating base. 1.7+ x 1.4 x 0.42. Filled by 5 and 6	Mid 2nd to mid 3rd C
5	4	B	Fill	Top fill of pit 4. Brownish grey compacted sand silt with frequent gravel. Above 6	Mid 2nd to mid 3rd C
6	4	B	Fill	Primary fill of pit 4. Dark brownish compacted grey sand silt with frequent gravel. Below 5	Mid 2nd to mid 3rd C
7	1	B	Fill	Secondary fill of pit 1. Dark grey brown compacted silt clay sand with frequent gravel. Below 2. Above 8	Late 4th C +
8	1	B	Fill	Primary fill of pit 1. Grey brown/yellow soft silt sand with frequent gravel. Below 7	Late 4th C +
9	30 37	C	Artefacts	Finds from fills 33 and 38 in pits 30 and 37 respectively	Late 3rd / Early 4th C
10		C	Artefacts	Surface finds	Unstratified
11		A	Pit	Moderately-sloping sides, concave base. 2.6 x 2+ x 0.8. Filled by 12, 13, 14 and 15. Cuts 18 and 22	Late 2nd / 3rd C
12	11	A	Fill	Primary fill of pit 11. Dark brownish grey loose silt sand with occasional gravel. Below 13	Late 2nd / 3rd C
13	11	A	Fill	Secondary fill of pit 11. Yellowish brown friable silt sand clay with occasional gravel. Above 12. Below 14	Late 2nd / 3rd C
14	11	A	Fill	Third fill of pit 11. Greyish brown friable silt sand clay with occasional gravel. Above 13. Below 15	Late 2nd / 3rd C
15	11	A	Fill	Top fill of pit 11. Dark greyish brown friable silt sand clay with occasional gravel. Above 14	Late 2nd / 3rd C
16		A	Pit	Moderately-sloping sides, concave base. 1.4 x 0.6+ x 0.65. Filled by 17 and 18	Undated
17	16	A	Fill	Primary fill of pit 16. Dark greyish brown compacted silt sand with occasional gravel. Below 18	Undated
18	16	A	Fill	Top fill of pit 16. Yellowish brown friable silt sand clay with infrequent gravel. Above 17. Cut by 11	Undated
19		A	Pit	Moderately-sloping sides, concave base. 2 x 1.7 x 0.7. Filled by 20, 21 and 22	Early to mid Roman
20	19	A	Fill	Primary fill of pit 19. Dark grey compacted silt sand with occasional gravel. Below 21	Early to mid Roman

No.	Part of	Tr.	Category	Description	Date
21	19	A	Fill	Secondary fill of pit 19. Yellowish brown friable silt sand clay with occasional gravel. Above 20. Below 22	Early to mid Roman
22	19	A	Fill	Top fill of pit 19. Dark greyish brown friable silt sand clay with occasional gravel. Above 21. Cut by 11	Early to mid Roman
23		ABC	Natural	Natural layer. Pale brownish loose yellow sand with frequent gravel	
24		A	Pit	Gradual-sloping sides, concave base. 2.4 x 0.7+ x 0.6. Filled by 25 and 26	Mid 2nd / Early 3rd C
25	24	A	Fill	Primary fill of pit 24. Greyish brown friable clay silt. Below 26	Mid 2nd / Early 3rd C
26	24	A	Fill	Top fill of pit 24. Dark greyish brown friable clay silt with frequent gravel. Above 25. Cut by 27	Mid 2nd / Early 3rd C
27		A	Quarry	Steep-sided. Concave base. 1+ x 1+ x 0.98. Filled by 28 and 29. Cuts 26. Same as 40	Mid 2nd / Early 3rd C
28	27	A	Fill	Primary fill of quarry 27. Mixed brown/grey friable clay silt. Below 29	Mid 2nd / Early 3rd C
29	27	A	Fill	Top fill of quarry 27. Greyish brown compacted clay silt. Above 28	Mid 2nd / Early 3rd C
30		C	Pit	Steep-sided, below gradual-sided weathering/erosion cone. 2.4 x 1.12+ x 1.15+. Filled by 31, 32 and 33. Cuts 36	Late 3rd / Early 4th C
31	30	C	Fill	Primary fill of pit 30. Pale yellowish brown friable silt sand with frequent gravel. Below 32	Late 3rd / Early 4th C
32	30	C	Fill	Secondary fill of pit 30. Greyish brown compacted silt sand with occasional gravel. Above 31. Below 33	Late 3rd / Early 4th C
33	30	C	Fill	Top fill of pit 30. Dark greyish brown soft silt clay sand with infrequent gravel. Cut by 37	Late 3rd / Early 4th C
34		C	Pit	Moderately-sloping sides, concave base. 0.7+ x 0.34 + x 0.75. Filled by 35 and 36	Late 2nd / 3rd C
35	34	C	Fill	Primary fill of pit 34. Greyish brown friable silt clay sand with infrequent gravel. Below 36	Late 2nd / 3rd C
36	34	C	Fill	Top fill of pit 34. Pale friable yellowish brown silt clay with occasional gravel. Above 35. Cut by 30	Late 2nd / 3rd C
37		C	Pit	Moderately-sloping sides, concave base. Identified in section. 0.85+ x ? x 0.32. Filled by 38. Cuts 33	Late 3rd / 4th C
38	37	C	Fill	Single fill of pit 37. Greyish brown friable silt clay sand with infrequent gravel	Late 3rd / 4th C
39		ABC	Topsoil	0.45 to 0.65 thick. Dark greyish brown friable clay silt with occasional gravel. Contains modern artefacts (not retained)	Modern
40		A	Quarry	4+ x 2.8+ x 0.42. Filled by 41. Sampled by box-section dug by machine. Same as 27	Undated
41	40	A	Fill	Single fill of quarry 40. Dark greyish brown soft sand clay silt with infrequent gravel. Cut by 42	Undated



No.	Part of	Tr.	Category	Description	Date
42		A	Modern	Modern disturbance. 2.05+ 0.7+ x ?. Filled by 43. Not excavated	Modern
43	42	A	Fill	Single fill of modern feature 42. Pale yellowish brown loose silt sand with occasional gravel. Contains modern brick, slate, mortar and iron pipe. Not excavated	Modern
44		C	Pit	Large circular pit with moderately-sloping sides. Base not exposed. 1.55+ x 0.6+ x 0.65+. Filled by 45 and 46	Late 2nd / 3rd C
45	44	C	Fill	Primary fill of pit 44. Brown loose sand silt with frequent gravel. Below 46	Late 2nd / 3rd C
46	44	C	Fill	Top fill of pit 44. Yellowish brown soft silt clay with occasional gravel. Above 45. Cut by 30	Late 2nd / 3rd C

## APPENDIX 2: FINDS DATA

### Finds data

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
2	1	1	10	SF1, Copper alloy coin	Roman
		1	10	Animal bone; cattle molar fragment	-
		2	420	Tile fragments	Roman
		18	224	Pottery; rim and body sherds, various fabrics inc Oxford red colour-coated ware	Late 4th C+
3	Unstrat. Trench B	17	350	Pottery; rim and body sherds, various fabrics inc North Kent grey ware	2nd C+
5	4	13	98	Animal bone; cattle metatarsus, proximal end; cattle molar; fragments, poor condition	-
		2	434	Tile fragments	Roman
		30	434	Pottery; rim and body sherds, various fabrics inc samian	Mid 2nd to mid 3rd C
6	4	1	2	Pottery; body sherd, samian	Roman
7	2	4	16	Pottery; rim and body sherds, sandy grey ware	Roman
9	30/37	2	645	Copper alloy crescent-shaped object with corroded iron lump attached	Modern
		13	29	SF2, Copper alloy tweezers; SF4, SF9, Copper alloy fragments and offcut; SF7 Copper alloy chape; SF8 Copper alloy coin	Roman
		17	1210	Iron objects, not identifiable	-
		31	464	Iron nails and fragments, one attached to potsherd	-
		194	2120	Animal bone; antler, sawn at beam end, sawn-off tine; deer metatarsus, proximal end x 4, and phalanges; mandible hinge, molars, metacarpus, proximal end, and hoof, cattle; sacrum, vertebra, pelvis and rib fragments, large mammal; sheep/goat glenoid cavity; pig canine and incisor; tibia, proximal end, hare; bird bones, inc radius, proximal end, and metatarsus with spur; green-stained rib joins with 32; fragments, inc burnt	-
		2	10	Flint flakes	-
		7	132	Burnt flints	-
		-	2	Charcoal	-
		5	240	Septaria fragments (Discarded)	-

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
9	30/37	2	16	Baked clay	-
		3	4	SF3, Worked bone pin shafts; SF6 Worked bone needle	Roman
		3	4	Glass; vessel, blue-green rim sherd, body sherd and tubular footring sherd	Roman
		2	8	Glass; window sherds, blue-green, matt-glossy, one with one fire-rounded edge	Roman
		89	9085	Tile fragments, inc brick, tegula, imbrices and box-flue tile, some fragments are overfired; 47/1720g small fragments and spall Discarded	Roman
		1 1203	22 21521	Pottery; base sherd, internal amber glaze Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics inc samian, amphora, Nene Valley and HAX wares and Rhenish ware, near-complete tazza and B3 dish	Post med. Late 3rd to early 4th C
10	Unstrat. Trench C	4	10	Animal bone; sheep/goat molar; fragments	-
		1	8	Flint flake	-
		1	10	Burnt flint	-
		1	26	Burnt stone, cuboid	-
		1	2	Window glass sherd, decayed	Post med.
		8	250	Tile fragments, at least one is post-medieval	Roman
		128	1525	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various coarse wares	3rd C
11	11	1	6	Iron nail	-
		15	104	Animal bone; sheep/goat molar; humerus, distal end, ?pig; mandible, vertebra and astragalus fragments, large mammal; fragments	-
		1	8	Burnt flint	-
		2	2	Charcoal	-
		9	630	Tile fragments, at least one is post-medieval, one Roman fragment has the remains of a pre-firing hole	Roman
		121	1370	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics, inc amphora, samian and Nene Valley ware	3rd C
12	11	6	126	Pottery; body sherds, various coarse wares	Roman
13	11	1	2	SF5, Copper alloy pin	Roman
		5	80	Animal bone; metatarsus, distal end, cattle; fragments	-
		5	310	Tile fragments	Roman
		34	1110	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics inc Nene Valley ware	Late 2nd C+
14	11	2	26	Iron nails, one attached to potsherd	-
		8	120	Animal bone; sheep/goat mandible in three pieces, plus molars, and metatarsus shaft and proximal end; cattle hoof and foot bone; fragments	-
		4	520	Tile fragments (tegulae)	Roman
		61	803	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics inc samian, Nene Valley and Hadham wares, Rhenish ware	3rd C
15	11	9	68	Animal bone; cattle phalanx, long bone, rib and molar fragments, large mammal	Roman 3rd C
		6	336	Tile fragments	
		38	618	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics inc Hadham ware	
21	19	1	4	Animal bone fragment	-
		1	28	Burnt flint	-
22	19	1	10	Pottery; body sherd, sandy grey ware	Roman

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
26	24	1	216	Iron plate fragment	-
		1	8	Iron nail fragment	-
		1	174	Lead washer	-
26	24	7	170	Animal bone; long bone fragments and radius, proximal end, large mammal; ?fibula shaft; fragments	-
		3	120	Tile fragments	Roman
		59	1107	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various coarse wares	Mid 2nd to mid 3rd C
28	27	1	24	Animal bone; sheep/goat mandible with molars	-
		2	292	Tile fragments	Roman
		10	510	Pottery; rim and body sherds, various fabrics, inc samian and North Kent grey ware	2nd C+
29	27	31	752	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics inc samian and North Kent grey ware	Mid 2nd to early 3rd C
32	30	12	6	SF10, Copper alloy fragments	-
		1	6	Iron nail	-
		1	1	Animal bone; rib fragment, ?bird, stained green, joins with fragment in 9	-
		47	1479	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics inc amphora	2nd C+
33	30	1	1	SF11, Copper alloy button	Post-medieval
		2	2	SF12, Copper alloy wire, probable bracelet	Roman
		1	58	Iron object	-
		8	94	Iron nails and fragments	-
		30	238	Animal bone; sheep/goat mandible with molars, and loose molar; rib fragments, mostly large mammal; metatarsus, distal end, cattle; bird metacarpus; fragments	-
		3	20	Flints, inc knife with serrated edge	-
		2	12	Burnt flints	-
		4	422	Septaria fragments (Discarded)	-
		4	84	Baked clay	-
		15	630	Tile fragments, inc imbrex	Roman
		1	2	Window glass sherd	Roman
		252	4210	Pottery; rim, base and body sherds, various fabrics inc amphora, samian and Nene Valley ware	3rd C
		35	34	4	142
38	37	2	2	Animal bone; fragments	-
		6	68	Pottery; body sherds, various coarse wares	Roman
46	44	1	4	Flint flake	-
		2	284	Septaria fragments (Discarded)	-
		17	354	Pottery; rim and body sherds, various coarse wares	Late 2nd-mid 3rd C

## Worked Flint

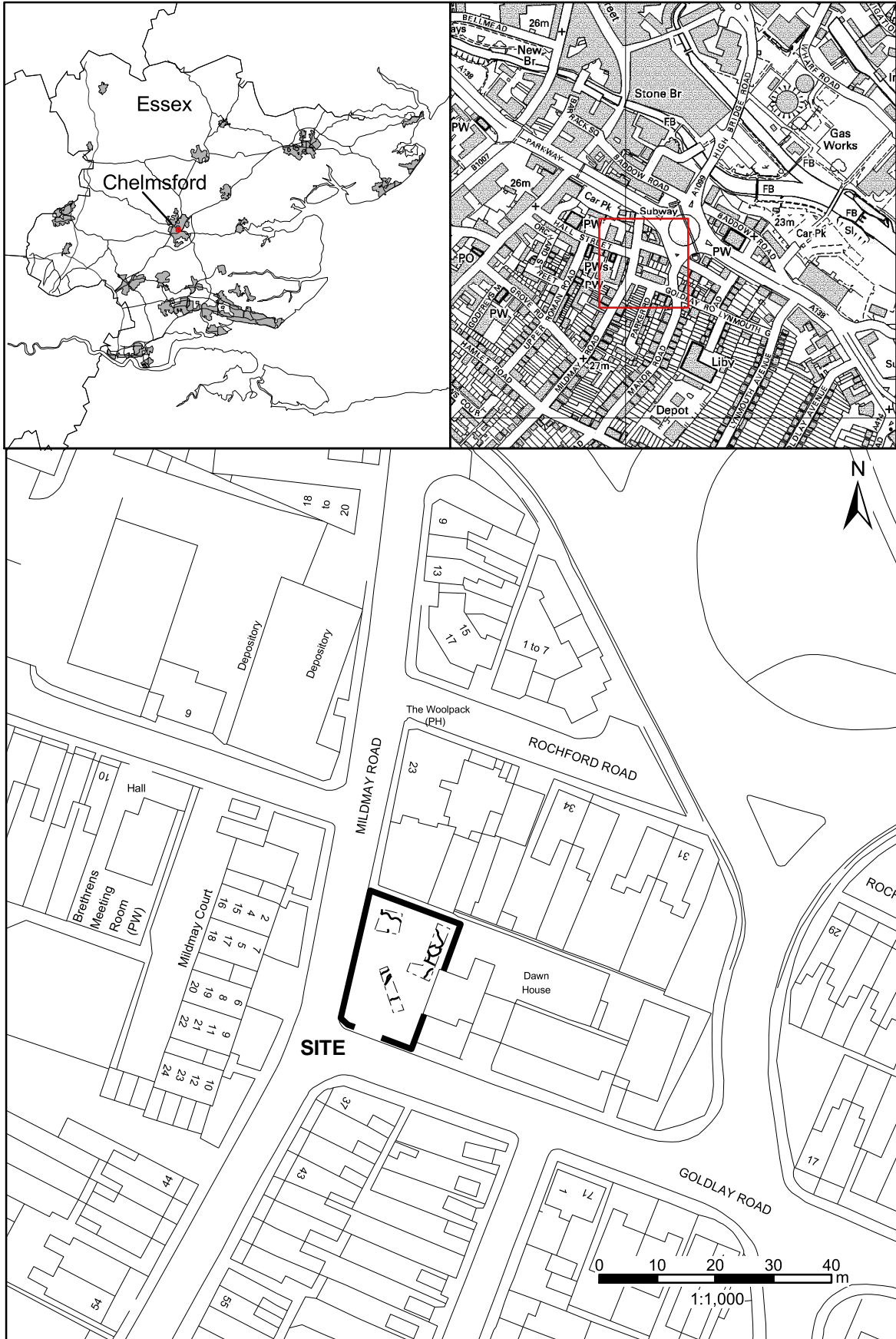
Context	Feature	Description	Date
9	Finds	Blade, tertiary, patinated, grey with abraded edges Core, worked-out fragment Seven burnt pieces	
10	Finds	Blade, tertiary, patinated, damage to ventral side of bulb Burnt piece	
11	11	Burnt piece	
21	19	Burnt piece	
33	30	Point, utilised natural piece Flake, secondary Blade, secondary, from bi-polar core, small notch, residue present on dorsal face Two burnt pieces	Later Prehist.  Mesolithic/ Early Neolithic
46	44	Blade, tertiary, dull grey, very fine retouch on side of bulb	

## APPENDIX 3: CONTENTS OF ARCHIVE

- 1 Copy of this report
- 1 Copy of the archaeological brief
- 1 Copy of the written scheme of investigation
- 1 Finds report
- 1 Finds list
- 1 Flint report
- 1 Small finds table
- 1 Pottery report
- 1 Pottery table
- 2 Context register sheets
- 46 Context sheets
- 1 Plan register sheet
- 2 Section register sheets
- 2 Levels register sheets
- 1 Small finds register sheets
- 25 Black and white photographs and negatives
- 23 Digital colour photographs
- 7 Boxes of finds
- 5 Large sheets of section drawings and trench plans

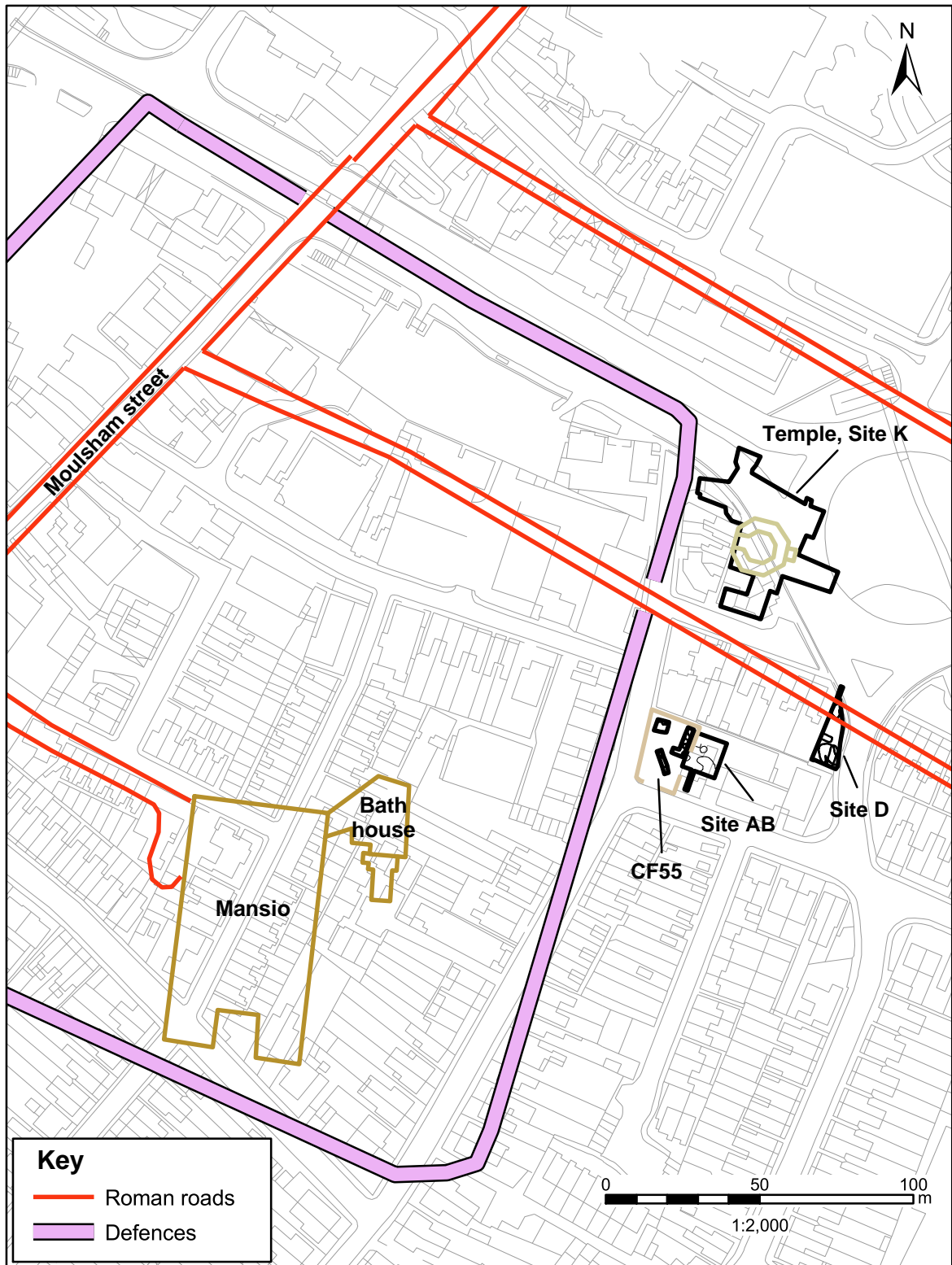
#### APPENDIX 4: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY

<b>Site name/Address:</b> 31 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford	
<b>Parish:</b> Chelmsford	<b>District:</b> Chelmsford
<b>NGR:</b> TL 71020 06254	<b>Site Code:</b> CF 55
<b>Type of Work:</b> Trial-trenching and excavation	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> Mark Germany, Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit
<b>Date of Work:</b> 17/3/08 to 20/3/08 and 31/3/08 to 1/4/08	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> Trenching: 3 trenches, totalling 49.4m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Chelmsford Museum	<b>Client:</b> M & P Dunn Ltd
<b>Further Seasons Anticipated?:</b> No	<b>Related EHR Nos.:</b>
<b>Final Report:</b> Essex Archaeology and History (Summary)	
<b>Periods represented:</b> Prehistoric Roman	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<p>An archaeological investigation in advance of a residential development at 31 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford, consisting of three trenches, has recorded a dense concentration of Roman pits dating from the mid-2nd to late 3rd/early 4th century AD. A small quantity of residual late Mesolithic/early Neolithic worked flint and Late Iron Age/early Roman pottery was also found.</p> <p>The investigation took place in the north-eastern sector of Roman Chelmsford (formerly known as Caesaromagus), 30m south of the Roman road leading south-eastwards to Heybridge and Wickford, and outside the line of the later 2nd-century town defences.</p> <p>The pits were backfilled with domestic rubbish, but were probably originally dug as gravel quarries, while one pit is interpreted as a well. The pits are thought to have been located at the rear of an area of settlement alongside the Roman road in the mid-2nd and 3rd century. In the late 3rd and early 4th century the well was sealed over by an extensive rubbish deposit containing very large quantities of pottery, as well as tile, metalwork and animal bone.</p> <p>The results of the investigation complement previous archaeological work undertaken in the surrounding area (Wickenden 1992). The combined information suggests that this part of the Roman town prospered during the mid-2nd to 3rd century, but declined in the 4th century.</p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports:-</b>	
Wickenden , N. P. 1992: <i>The temple and other sites in the north-eastern sector of Caesaromagus</i> . Chelmsford Archaeological Trust Report 9, Council British Archaeology Report 75	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> Mark Germany	<b>Date of Summary:</b> August 2008



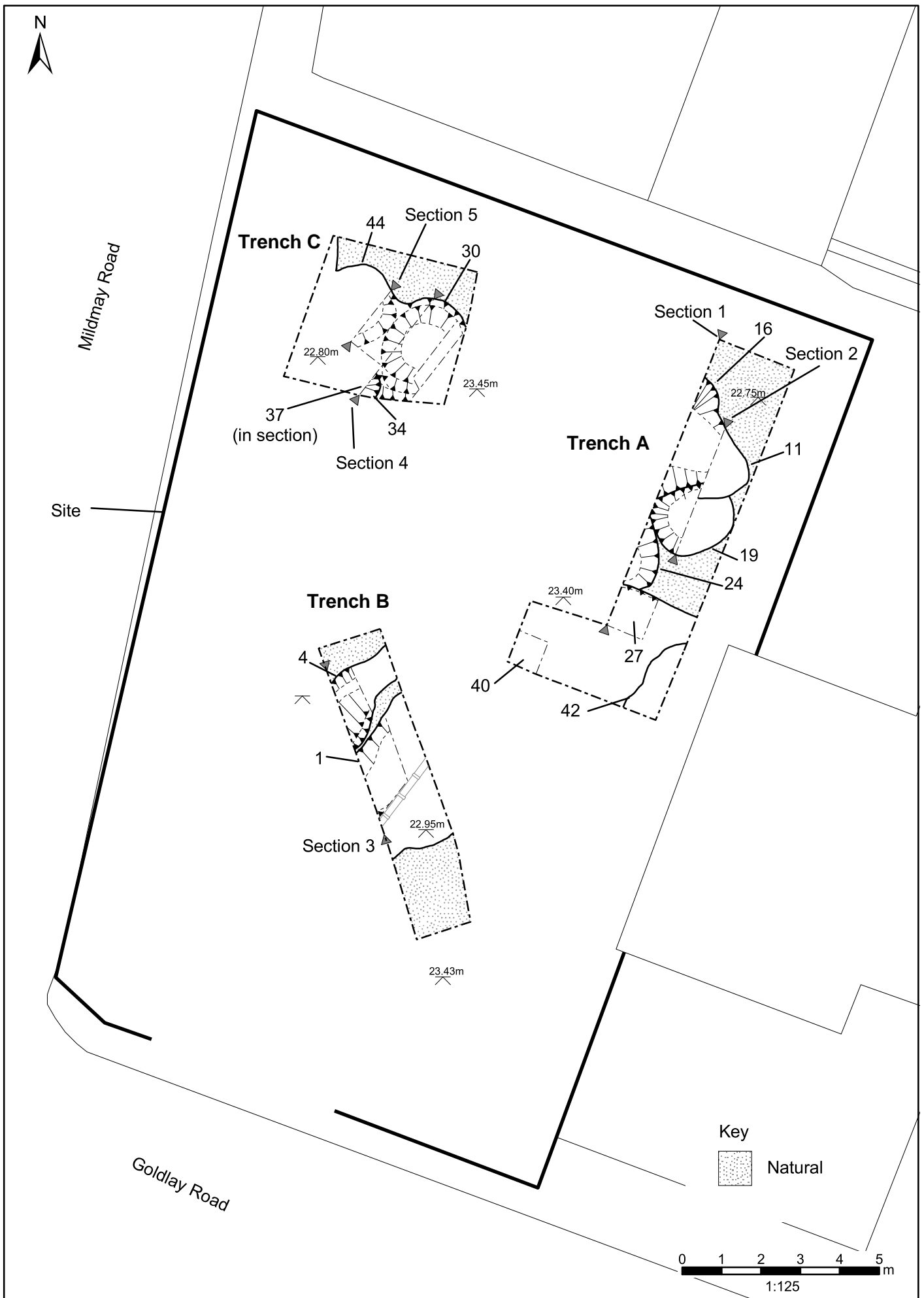
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Fig.1. Site location



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Fig.2. Roman Chelmsford with surrounding sites



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Fig.3. Trench locations



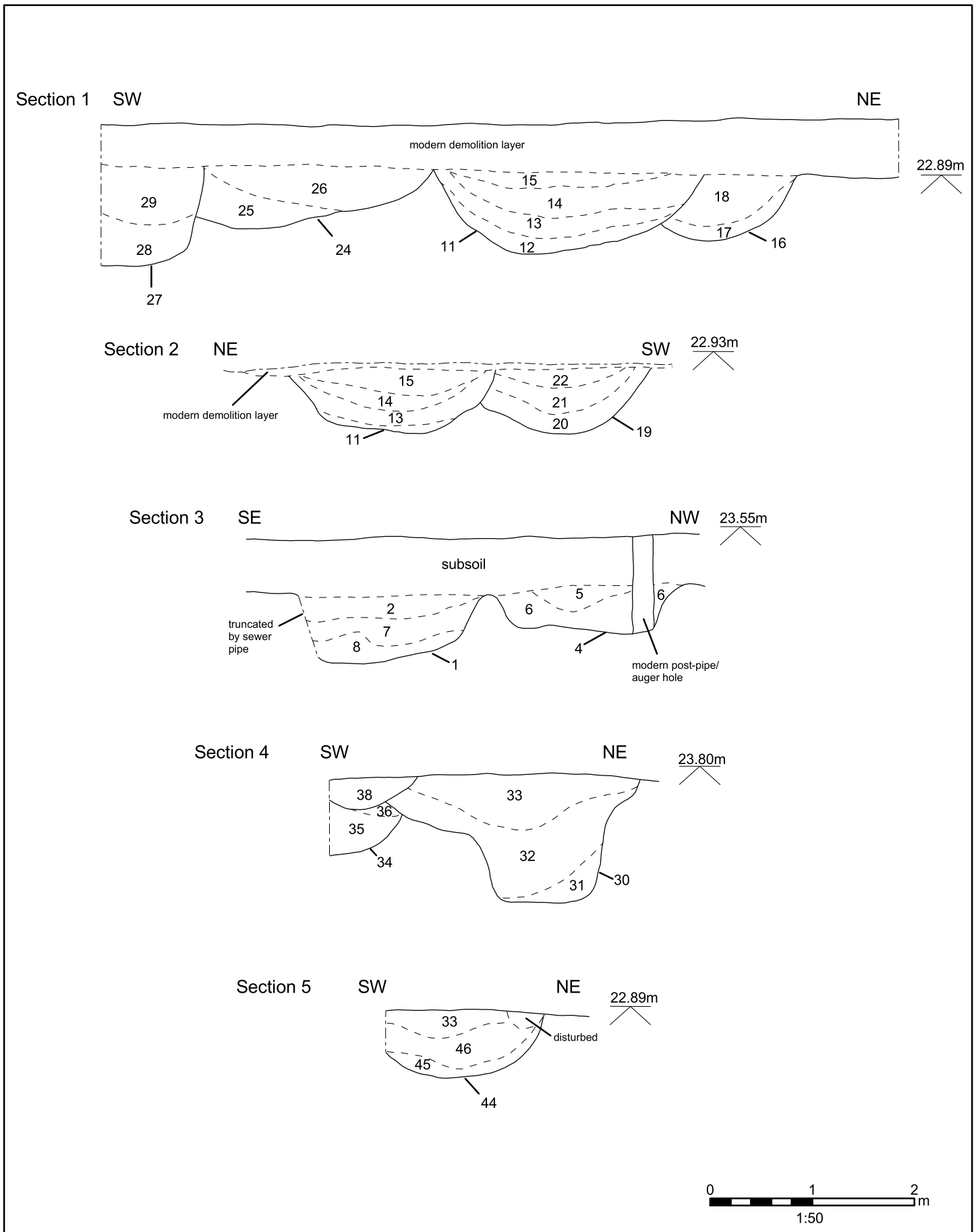
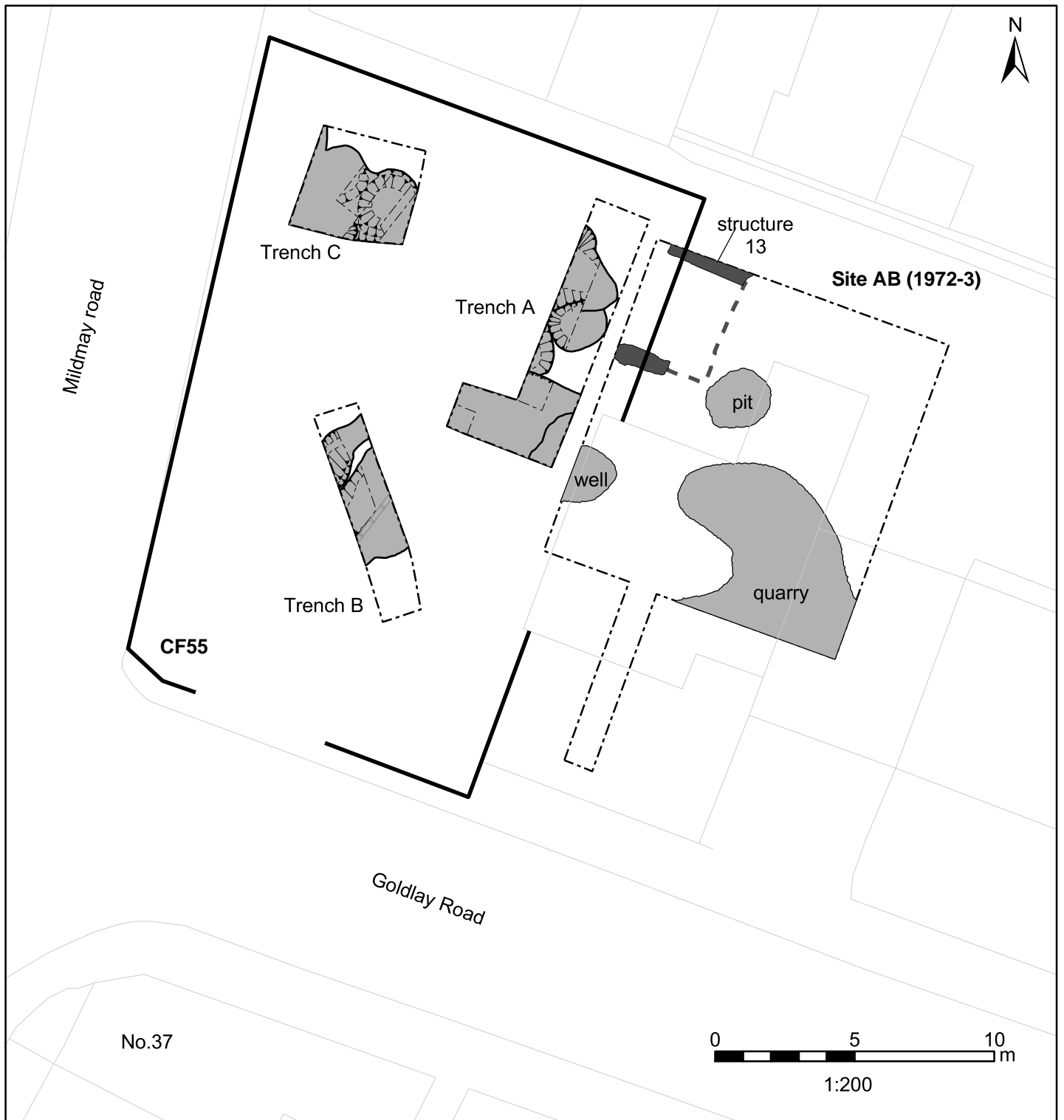


Fig.4. Sections



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Fig.5. CF55 and Site AB



Plate 1: Pits 11 and 19, trench A, looking north-east



Plate 2: Well 30 and pit 44, trench C, looking south-west