

**Archaeological Evaluation at
7 Cambridge Road
Colchester, Essex**

NGR: 59852 22457

**ASE Project No: 8545
Event No. / Site Code: ECC3754**

ASE Report No: 2016216



May 2016

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7 Cambridge Road
Colchester, Essex**


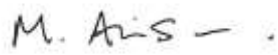
NGR: 59852 22457

**Planning Ref: 150531
ASE Project No: 8545
Event No / Site Code: ECC 3754**

**ASE Report No: 2016216
OASIS id: archaeo16-252682**

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East (ASE) was commissioned by Kingwood Homes East Anglia Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation at 7 Cambridge Road, Colchester, Essex. At the time of the evaluation the site had been levelled by machine in preparation for construction works.

The potential for archaeological remains was considered high due to the proximity of a Roman extra-mural cemetery. Previous investigation within adjacent properties had revealed Roman pitting, but no burials.

A single trench was excavated by machine down to the natural deposits. No archaeological features or artefacts were found.

The report concludes that the absence of archaeology within the trench indicates a low potential for archaeological survival across the site. Since the trench was targeted on the footprint of the planned works, it is unlikely that the development will greatly impact on any surviving archaeological remains.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) was commissioned by Kingwood Homes East Anglia Ltd to carry out an archaeological evaluation at 7 Cambridge Road, Colchester, Essex.

1.1.2 The site is centred at NGR: 59852 22457, to the south-west of Colchester town and to the west of the B1022 Maldon Road (figure 1). It forms the southern part of the plot of 7 Cambridge Road and a house is to be built to the south of the existing dwelling, which is separated from the construction site by a wooden fence. It is bordered by 9 Cambridge Road to the south and properties fronting Victoria Road to the west. At the time of the archaeological work the site had been generally prepared for construction by levelling the ground and clearing rubble into a heap in the SE corner.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 According to the British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>, accessed 23/05/2016) the superficial geology of the site comprises deposits of Cover Sands. The underlying bedrock geology is silty clay of the Thames Group.

1.2.2 The site is almost flat and lies between 33.80m AOD and 33.90m AOD. Cambridge Road at this point is also fairly level. Approximately 300m to the north, Lexden Road follows the line of a former Roman Road along a ridge overlooking the Colne Valley.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 Planning permission has been granted by Colchester Borough Council (Planning Ref: 150531) for the erection of a new dwelling. The permission was subject to a number of conditions, amongst which was Condition 5 which reads:

No works shall take place until the implementation of a programme of archaeological works has been secured, in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation that has been submitted to and approved, in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The Scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions; and:

- a. The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording*
- b. The programme for post investigation assessment*
- c. Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording*
- d. Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- e. Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation*
- f. Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works.*

The site investigation shall thereafter be completed prior to development, or in such other phased arrangement, as agreed in writing, by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall not be occupied or brought into use until the site investigation and post investigation assessment has been completed in accordance with the programme set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation approved and the provision made for analysis, publication and dissemination of results and archive deposition has been secured.

- 1.3.2 A brief for a trenched archaeological evaluation was issued by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor in November 2015 (CBC 2015). Following this, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by ASE in May 2016 (ASE 2016a) and was approved prior to the commencement of fieldwork.
- 1.3.3 The archaeological evaluation described in this report satisfies the requirements of Condition 5.

1.4 Scope of Report

- 1.4.1 The report presents the results of a single archaeological evaluation trench excavated on the site on 23rd May 2016 (Figure 2). The work followed the methodology laid out in the WSI (ASE 2016a) and the Risk Assessment Method Statement (ASE 2016b).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The site is located to the south-west of the walled Roman town of Colchester, and is just outside the predicted southern limit of the west cemetery of the Roman town. This cemetery appears to be long lived and featured both cremations and inhumations either side of the road to London. It is only one of a number of cemeteries surrounding the town. Many of the discoveries associated with it took place during 19th-century development and were not made under modern controlled conditions (EHER MEX34466). The cemetery remains ill-defined and it is possible that there was no formal boundary for burials during the Roman period.
- 2.1.2 An excavation at Handford Place in 2003, approximately 200m north of the site between West Lodge Road and Beverley Road, revealed two pyre sites, 57 cremations and 9 inhumations mostly dating to the 1st or 2nd centuries AD (Gascoyne and Radford 2013, 154). Burials have also been found at the Royal Grammar School in a walled cemetery area c. 350m to the north-east of the site (ibid. 155), as well as in Maldon Road and Butt Road to the south-east (ibid. 156). More recently, in 2007, two Roman cremation burials were found c. 400m west of the site at Park Road (ECC Field Archaeology Unit 2007), perhaps indicating that burials continue further west than anticipated.
- 2.1.3 High status tombs lined the approach road to the town. These included a temple-tomb found at the Royal Grammar School which survived at foundation level only (Gascoyne and Radford 2013, 152 and fig 7.21).
- 2.1.4 To the south-west of the site a Roman temple was identified from cropmarks and excavated by staff and pupils of the Royal Grammar School in the 1950s (EHER 13128). It was rectangular, but positioned within a polygonal enclosure which may suggest the presence of an earlier shrine (Gascoyne and Radford 2013, 147).
- 2.1.5 Little or no formal archaeological recording took place during the construction of the suburbs to the south-west of the walled town during the 20th century and knowledge of the archaeology of the immediate vicinity of the site is restricted to limited modern interventions. A watching brief at 7A Victoria Road in 2005 (National Monument Record 1929480) recorded a pit containing fragments of Roman brick. A similar exercise at 5 Cambridge Road (immediately adjacent to the site, to the north) also recorded a pit containing Roman artefacts.
- 2.1.6 These limited opportunities to investigate the archaeology of the locality of the site have revealed Roman activity, albeit not intensive, but have not conclusively identified the southern limits of the cemetery, if indeed there was an established boundary.
- 2.1.7 In the late 19th century the location of the site comprised fields and Cambridge Road was not established until between 1881 and 1897, when Ordnance Survey maps show it terminating immediately to the north of the site. By 1923 the road had been extended southwards and plots laid out.

However, the site was not occupied by a building until some point between surveys of 1939 and 1952.

2.2 Research Aims and Objectives

2.2.1 The aims and objectives of the evaluation were set out in the WSI (ASE 2016a) as follows:

The aim of the archaeological evaluation is to determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains and to establish their character, location, extent, date, quality and significance. Any archaeological remains uncovered by the evaluation will be assessed against the wider background of previous fieldwork in the area.

2.2.3 More specific research aims include:

- Investigation of the nature, intensity and extent of Roman activity to the south-west of Colchester
- Further refinement of knowledge of the southern extent of the Roman cemetery outside Balkerne Gate

2.2.4 In the event that significant discoveries were made the resulting report was to seek to identify further appropriate research objectives for any future work, 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) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The work comprised the excavation of a single trench 12m long and 1.80m wide (figure 2, figure 3). The trench was positioned within the footprint of the proposed building.
- 3.1.2 The trench was excavated using a 3-tonne rubber-tracked 360⁰ excavator with a toothless bucket. The topsoil and subsoil were stripped under archaeological supervision down to the top of geological deposits and cleaned using hand tools.
- 3.1.3 The trench was recorded using standard ASE trench sheets. It was planned and levelled from the site survey provided by the client and its location was measured from the standing building and the site boundary wall.
- 3.1.4 A full photographic record comprising colour digital images was made. The trench was photographed from each end. In addition, a number of representative photographs of the general work on site were taken (working shots). The photographic register includes the shot number, location of shot, direction of shot and a brief description of the subject photographed.
- 3.1.4 No artefacts were recovered from the trench.

3.2 Archive

- 3.2.1 Guidelines contained in UKIC's Guidelines for the Presentation of excavation Archives for Long Term Storage and the MGC's Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections will be followed for the preparation of the archive for museum deposition. Finds from the archaeological fieldwork will be kept with the archival material.
- 3.2.2 Subject to agreement with the legal landowner ASE will arrange with Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service for the deposition of the archive.

Number of Contexts	5
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	0
Bulk Samples	0
Photographs	9
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length m	Max. Width m	Deposit Thickness m	Height m AOD
1/001	Topsoil	Mixed fairly loose dark grey topsoil, brick rubble, gravel, and occ concrete frags. Highly rooted.	12.00	1.80	0.35 – 0.60	33.85
1/002	Subsoil	Compact mid grey/brown silty gravel, occ charcoal and cbm frags and flecks	12.00	1.80	0.50 – 0.70	33.45
1/003	Natural	Pale fairly loose mid orange/brown sand and gravel. Softer at SE end.	12.00	1.80	n/a	32.90 (NW) 32.55 (SE)
1/004	Fill	Very similar to topsoil [1/001]	1.20	0.95	Not exc.	32.85
1/005	Cut	Irregularly shaped modern cut into natural, beyond SW limit of trench, not excavated	1.20	0.95	Not exc.	32.85

Table 2: Trench 1 list of recorded contexts

- 4.1.1 Trench 1 was located c. 5m to the south of the present 7 Cambridge Road, within the footprint of the proposed building (figures 2 and 3). It was orientated NW to SE. It measured 12m long and 1.80m wide.
- 4.1.2 Topsoil [1/001] and subsoil [1/002] were stripped down to natural deposits [1/003] by machine to a depth of 0.95m at the NW end and 1.30m at the SW end. There was some difficulty machining cleanly onto the surface of the natural sands and gravel [1/003] due to its loose consistency, but no archaeological features were observed.
- 4.1.3 The only recorded feature was cut [1/005], located near the NW end of the trench, which measured 1.20m x 0.95m and was irregular in shape. The fill, [1/004], was loose and very similar to the topsoil, with modern brick and concrete inclusions. It was cut through the subsoil [1/002] and was interpreted as a machined cut for the removal of a tree, as informed by the client prior to excavation of the trench. The cut was not excavated.
- 4.1.4 No artefacts were recovered from the trench.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 5.1.1 Natural superficial geology consisting of Cover sands (sand and gravel) was observed at between 32.55 – 32.90m AOD. Above it was a layer of subsoil up to 0.70m thick which contained brick and tile fragments and charcoal flecks. It was of post-medieval origin but no precise dating material was retrieved. The topsoil, up to 0.60m thick, had been disturbed in very modern times.
- 5.1.2 No archaeological features were observed within the trench nor any significant artefacts retrieved from overburden deposits. The only feature was a machine-dug pit for the removal of a tree root.

5.2 Deposit survival and impacts

- 5.2.1 No archaeological discoveries were made. The impact of the proposed development on archaeological survival is therefore likely to be low.

5.3 Consideration of research aims

- 5.3.1 Insofar as the aims of the project were to establish the presence, date and quality of any surviving remains, the evaluation has shown that there is no survival within the trench. The stated aim of seeking evidence for Roman activity and any remains associated with the extra-mural cemetery (ASE 2016a, section 4.2) has not been achieved due to lack of evidence from the period, other than to demonstrate that no Roman burials are present at this location.

5.4 Conclusions

- 5.4.1 The impact on archaeology of the proposed development is expected to be minimal. While the footprint of the proposed new house extends beyond the confines of Trench 1, the potential for significant archaeological remains to be present is considered to be low to negligible.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank the client, Kingwood Homes East Anglia Ltd, and in particular Tony Britton, for commissioning and facilitating the archaeological work. Thanks are also due to the CBC Archaeological Advisor, Jess Tipper, for providing the brief and for monitoring the archaeological work. The author would also like to thank John the machine driver.

For ASE the fieldwork was supervised by the author. The Project Manager was Niall Oakey and the post-excavation work was managed by Mark Atkinson. The illustrations for the report were produced by Andrew Lewsey.

APPENDIX 1: HER Summary Form

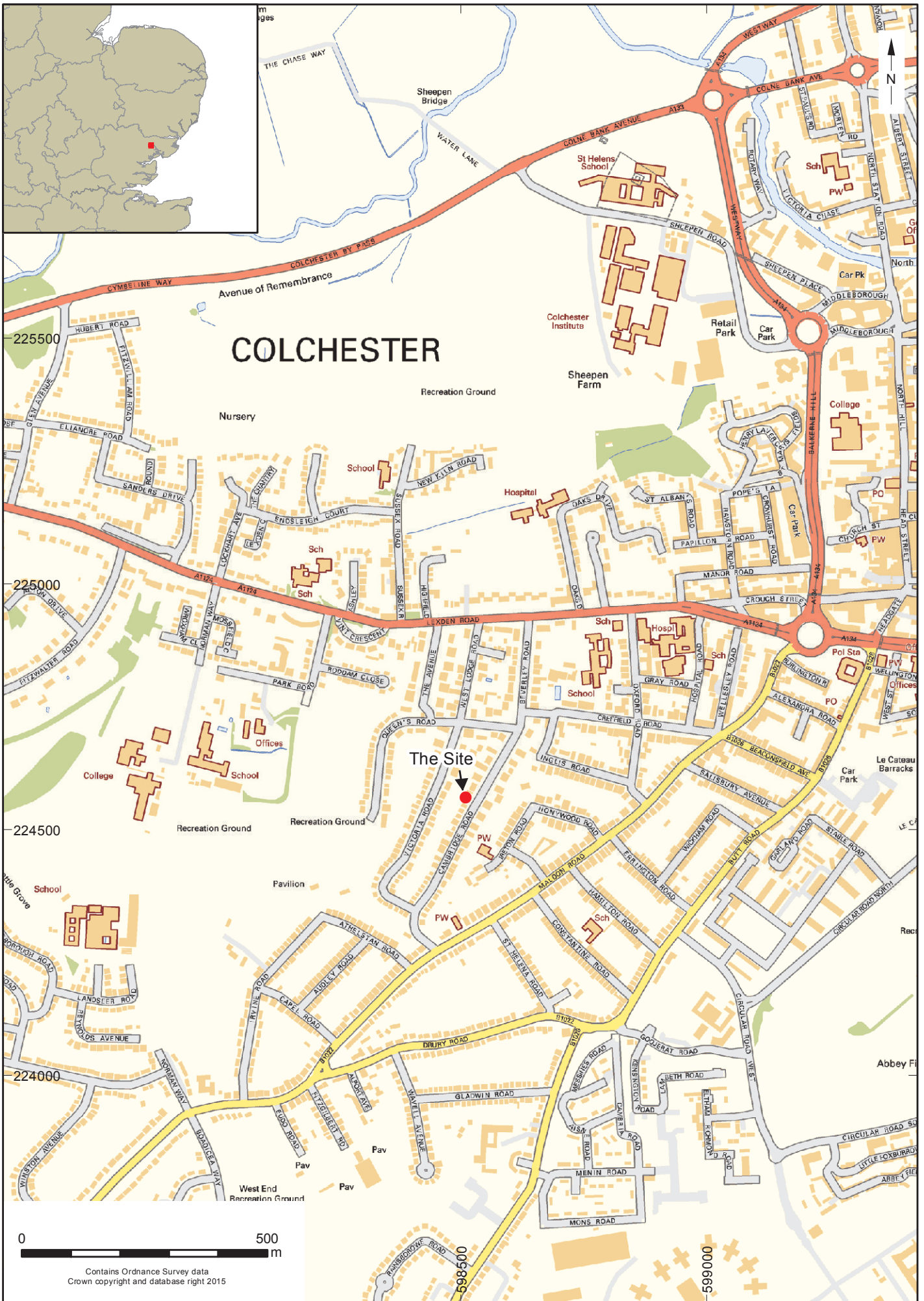
Site name/Address: 7 Cambridge Road, Colchester, Essex CM9 5QJ	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9852 2457	Site Code: ECC36754
Type of Work: Archaeological Evaluation	Site Director/Group: Robin Wroe-Brown, Archaeology South-East
Date of Work: 23rd May 2016	Size of Area Investigated: 350m ²
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service	Funding source: Developer
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos: N/A
Final Report: EAH roundup	OASIS No: archaeol6-252682
Periods Represented: Modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p>Archaeology South-East (ASE) undertook an archaeological evaluation at 7 Cambridge Road, Colchester, Essex. At the time of the evaluation the site had been levelled by machine in preparation for construction works. The potential for archaeological remains was considered high as fieldwork on the adjacent properties had revealed Roman pitting.</p> <p>A single trench was excavated by machine down to the natural deposits. No archaeological features or artefacts were found. The report concludes that absence of archaeology within the trench indicates a low potential for archaeological survival across the site. Since the trenches were targeted on the footprint of the planned works, it is unlikely that the development will greatly impact further on surviving archaeology.</p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: None	
Author of Summary: Robin Wroe-Brown	Date of Summary: May 2016

APPENDIX 2: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-252682	
Project details	
Project name	7 Cambridge Road, Colchester, Essex
Short description of the project	At the time of the evaluation the site had been levelled by machine in preparation for construction works. The potential for archaeological remains was considered high due to the proximity of the Roman extra-mural cemetery. Fieldwork on the adjacent properties had revealed Roman pitting.. One trench was excavated by machine down to the natural deposits. No archaeological features or artefacts were found.. The report concludes that absence of archaeology within the trench indicates a low potential for archaeological survival across the site. Since the trenches were targeted on the footprint of the planned works, it is unlikely that the development will greatly impact further on surviving archaeology.
Project dates	Start: 23-05-2016 End: 23-05-2016
Previous/future work	No / No
Associated project reference codes	2016216 - Contracting Unit No. ECC3754 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER 7, Cambridge Road, Colchester
Postcode	CO3 3NS
Study area	350 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 98520 24570 51.883766974756 0.884856549209 51 53 01 N 000 53 05 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 32.55m Max: 32.9m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Colchester Borough Council

Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Niall Oakey
Project supervisor	Robin Wroe-Brown
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Kingwood Homes East Anglia Ltd
Project archives	
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	n/a
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Report"
Project bibliography	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Evaluation at 7 Cambridge Road, Colchester, Essex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Wroe-Brown, R.
Other bibliographic details	ASE report no. 2016216
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	ASE
Place of issue or publication	Witham
Description	A4 report
Entered by	Robin Wroe-Brown (r.wroe-brown@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	24 May 2016

APPENDIX 3: Written Scheme of Investigation



© Archaeology South-East		7 Cambridge Road, Colchester		Fig. 1
Project Ref: 8545	May 2016	Site location		
Report No: 2016216	Drawn by: APL			



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© Archaeology South-East		7 Cambridge Road, Colchester	Fig. 2
Project Ref: 8545	May 2016	Trench location plan	
Report Ref: 2016216	Drawn by: APL		



The site from Cambridge Road, looking north-west



The trench within the site, looking north



Trench 1 looking south-east, 1m scale



Trench 1 looking north-west, 1m scale

© Archaeology South-East		7 Cambridge Road, Colchester	Fig. 3
Project Ref: 8545	May 2016	Selected photographs	
Report Ref: 2016216	Drawn by: APL		

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