
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOLUTIONS LTD

**LAND TO THE REAR OF 16 COAST ROAD,
WEST MERSEA, COLCHESTER, ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING & RECORDING

Authors: Claire Hallybone BSc MSc	
NGR: TM 00773 12508	Report No. 2080
District: Colchester	Site Code: AS 992
Approved: Claire Halpin MIFA	Project No. P2623
Signed:	Date: Nov 2006

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CONTENTS

	OASIS SUMMARY
	SUMMARY
1	INTRODUCTION
2	SITE DESCRIPTION
3	ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND
3.1	Roman
3.2	Medieval
4	METHODOLOGY
5	RESULTS
5.1	Site visit 06/06/06
5.2	Site visit 07/06/06
6	CONFIDENCE RATING
7	DEPOSIT MODEL
8	DISCUSSION
9	DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
	BIBLIOGRAPHY
Appendix 1	Essex Heritage Conservation Record/ Essex Archaeology and History
Appendix 2	Concordance of Contexts
	PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX

Project details			
Project name	<i>Land to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording.</i>		
<p><i>During June 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording prior to the proposed construction of a new residential dwelling at the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex (NGR TM 00773 12508). The monitoring was commissioned by Spatial Design in advance of the proposed development. It was undertaken in response to a planning condition imposed by the local planning authority (based on advice from the Archaeological Officer at Colchester Borough Council (CBC)).</i></p> <p><i>The site is situated on the Essex coast, approximately 13km south of Colchester town centre. It is located to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, south of Church Road, within the grounds of Yew Tree House, a Grade II listed, 18th century building. This part of West Mersea has the potential for archaeological remains of Romano-British and/or medieval date in particular.</i></p> <p><i>The monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a new residential building. Site visits were undertaken to monitor these works on 06/06/06 and 07/06/06.</i></p>			
Project dates (fieldwork)	<i>6th and 7th June 2006</i>		
Previous work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>	Future work (Y/N/?)	<i>N</i>
P. number	<i>2623</i>	Site code	<i>AS992</i>
Type of project	<i>Watching Brief</i>		
Site status			
Current land use	<i>Residential gardens</i>		
Planned development	<i>Residential dwelling</i>		
Main features (+dates)	<i>Modern posthole</i>		
Significant finds (+dates)	<i>None</i>		
Project location			
County/ District/ Parish	<i>Essex</i>	<i>Colchester</i>	<i>West Mersea</i>
HER/ SMR for area	<i>Essex Historic Environment Record</i>		
Post code (if known)			
Area of site	<i>0.1 ha</i>		
NGR	<i>TM 00773 12508</i>		
Height AOD (max/ min)			
Project creators			
Brief issued by	<i>The Archaeological Officer at Colchester Borough Council</i>		
Project supervisor/s (PO)	<i>Paul Ilson, Josh Williams</i>		
Funded by	<i>Mr & Mrs Jarvis</i>		
Bibliography			
Full title	<i>Land to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex: Archaeological Monitoring and Recording.</i>		
Authors	<i>Claire Hallybone BSc MSc</i>		
Report no.	<i>2080</i>		
Date (of report)	<i>Nov 2006</i>		

LAND TO THE REAR OF 16 COAST ROAD, WEST MERSEA, COLCHESTER, ESSEX

Archaeological Monitoring and Recording

SUMMARY

During June 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording prior to the proposed construction of a new residential dwelling at the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex (NGR TM 00773 12508). The monitoring was commissioned by Spatial Design in advance of the proposed development. It was undertaken in response to a planning condition imposed by the local planning authority (based on advice from the Archaeological Officer at Colchester Borough Council (CBC)).

The site is situated on the Essex coast, approximately 13km south of Colchester town centre. It is located to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, south of Church Road, within the grounds of Yew Tree House, a Grade II listed, 18th century building. This part of West Mersea has the potential for archaeological remains of Romano-British and or medieval date in particular.

The monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a new residential building. Site visits were undertaken to monitor these works on 06/06/06 and 07/06/06.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 During June 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording prior to the proposed construction of a new residential dwelling at the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex (NGR TM 00773 12508). The monitoring was commissioned by Spatial Design on behalf of Mr & Mrs Jarvis in advance of the proposed development. The monitoring was undertaken in response to a planning condition imposed by the local planning authority (based on advice from the Archaeological Officer of Colchester Borough Council (CBC) (Planning Ref. F/COL/05/0991).

1.2 The monitoring and recording was undertaken in accordance with a brief issued by the Archaeological Officer of Colchester Borough Council (CBC, dated 11/05) and a specification prepared by AS (dated 8/11/05). It also complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (both revised 2001), as well as ALGAO's *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003).

1.3 The monitoring was undertaken during the groundworks associated with the construction of a new residential building.

1.4 The objectives of the project were:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect archaeological remains;
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme;
- To secure the full analysis and interpretation of the site archive and the publication of the project results, if appropriate;
- To secure the conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.

1.5 The specific archaeological requirements of the project are summarised below:

- Monitoring of all groundworks;
- Mitigation of the archaeological impact of the development by a programme of archaeological excavation and recording, if archaeological remains are present;
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis and publication, as appropriate to the results of the project.

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 The site is situated on the Essex coast, approximately 13km south of Colchester town centre. It is located to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, south of Church Road, within the grounds of Yew Tree House, a Grade II listed, 18th century building.

2.2 This part of West Mersea has the potential for archaeological remains of Romano-British and or medieval date in particular.

2.3 The soils of the area are mainly of the Ratsborough association. They are described as fine silty and fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging (SSEW 1983). On the site, these soils overlie the solid geology of London Clay which was laid down during the Eocene (British Geological Survey 1989).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Roman

3.1 Romano British remains are well known from the town, particularly from the area of the Church of St Peter and Paul and the site of the Hall (c.100m to the west of the site), where many structural remains of Romano-British date have been found since the 18th century (including mosaic/tessellated floors and walls) (EHER 2214 &2274). The site of a Roman mausoleum also lies to the east. Mersea may be the site of a small Romano-British town or large villa complex.

Medieval

3.2 In the medieval period, the site may have lain within the precinct of a Benedictine Monastery centred on the site of the Church of Saints Peter and Paul. Inhumation burials, presumed to be monastic in origin, have been found in the vicinity (EHER 2187).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 The archaeological monitoring comprised the observation of all groundworks, inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features, the examination of spoil heaps and the recording of soil profiles. Deposits were recorded by means of *pro forma* recording sheets, drawn to scale and photographed as appropriate. Excavated spoil was searched for archaeological finds.

4.2 The monitoring and recording focused on groundworks associated with the excavation of foundation trenches for the new development. Site visits were undertaken to monitor these works on 06/06/06 and 07/06/06.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Site visit 06/06/06

The site was visited to monitor the digging of foundation trenches in the southern area of the plot.

Sample section: Section 1 (Plate 2)	
0.00m = 11.70m AOD	
0.00 – 0.35m	L1000. Topsoil.
0.35 – 0.55m	L1001. Subsoil. Light brown silt.
0.55m+	L1002. Natural. Brown sand and gravel.

Sample section: Section 2 (Plate 3)	
0.00m = 12.01m AOD	
0.00 – 0.25m	L1000. Topsoil.
0.25 – 0.50m	L1001. Subsoil. Light brown silt.
0.50m+	L1002. Natural. Brown sand and gravel.

Sample section: Section 3 (Plate 4)	
0.00m = 12.15m AOD	
0.00 – 0.25m	L1000. Topsoil.
0.25 – 0.60m	L1001. Subsoil. Light brown silt.
0.60m+	L1002. Natural. Brown sand and gravel.

No archaeological features were present excepting a single modern posthole (F1003) which contained porcelain (Plate 5).

5.2 Site visit 07/06/06

The site was visited on this occasion in order to monitor the remaining excavations associated with the footings to the north of the site.

Sample section: Section 4 0.00m = 11.95m AOD	
0.00 – 0.40m	L1000. Topsoil. Dark brown sandy clay
0.40 – 0.55m	L1001. Subsoil. Light brown silt with frequent gravel
0.55m+	L1002. Natural. Brown sand and gravel.

Sample section: Section 5 0.00m = 11.95m AOD	
0.00 – 0.35m	L1000. Topsoil. Dark brown sandy clay
0.35 – 0.50m	L1001. Subsoil. Light brown silt with frequent gravel
0.50m+	L1002. Natural. Brown sand and gravel.

Sample section: Section 6 0.00m = 12.28m AOD	
0.00 – 0.35m	L1000. Topsoil. Dark brown sandy clay
0.35 – 0.55m	L1001. Subsoil. Light brown silt with frequent gravel
0.55m+	L1002. Natural. Orange, brown sand and gravel.

No archaeological features or finds were present.

6 CONFIDENCE RATING

6.1 It is not felt that any factors inhibited the recognition of archaeological features or finds during the monitoring and recording.

7 DEPOSIT MODEL

7.1 The stratigraphy comprised topsoil, L1000, overlying a light brown silt subsoil (L1001), which in turn overlay sand and gravel natural (L1002) (Plate 6).

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 No archaeological finds or features were present at the site other than a single modern posthole (F1003) containing porcelain. The stratigraphy comprised topsoil, overlying subsoil, overlying the natural with no occupational layers or anthropogenic deposits. No residual finds of pre-modern date were identified within any of the layers encountered on the site.

9 DEPOSITION OF THE ARCHIVE

9.1 The archive will be deposited with Colchester Museum. The archive will be adequately catalogued, labelled and packaged for transfer and storage in accordance with the guidelines set out in the United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's *Conservation Guideline No. 2* and other relevant reference documents. Archive records, with an inventory, as well as any donated finds from the site, are to be deposited at Colchester Museum in

accordance with their requirements. The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed, cross-referenced and checked for internal consistency. In addition to the overall site summary, it will be necessary to produce a summary of the artefactual and ecofactual data.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Solutions would like to thank Mr & Mrs Jarvis for funding the works and their agents, Spatial Design, for their assistance (in particular Mr Brendon Robins).

AS would also like to acknowledge the assistance of the main contractor, Horizon Construction Management (East Anglia) Ltd (in particular Messrs Phil Holding and Kevin McKenna).

AS is also grateful for the input of the Archaeological Officer at Colchester Borough Council (CBC), Mr Martin Winter.

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Appendix 1 Essex Heritage Conservation Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Site name/Address: <i>Land to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex</i>	
<i>Parish: Colchester</i>	<i>District: Colchester</i>
<i>NGR: TM 00773 12508</i>	<i>Site Code: AS 992</i>
<i>Type of Work: Archaeological Monitoring and recording</i>	<i>Site Director/Team: P Ison, Josh Williams / Archaeological Solutions Ltd</i>
<i>Date of Work: 6th and 7th June 2006</i>	<i>Size of Area Investigated: 1 ha</i>
<i>Location of finds/Curating Museum: Colchester Museum</i>	<i>Funding Source: Mr & Mrs Jarvis</i>
<i>Further seasons anticipated: No</i>	<i>Related HER Nos: - EHER 2114, 2274 and 2187</i>
Final Report: <i>Land to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex: Archaeological Monitoring & Recording</i>	
<i>Periods Represented: One modern posthole was present and no archaeological finds were recovered.</i>	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</p> <p><i>During June 2006, Archaeological Solutions Ltd (AS) carried out a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording prior to the proposed construction of a new residential dwelling at the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex (NGR TM 00773 12508). The programme of archaeological works was commissioned by Spatial Design in advance of the proposed development. The monitoring was undertaken in response to a planning condition imposed by the local planning authority (on advice from the Archaeological Officer at Colchester Borough Council (CBC)).</i></p> <p><i>The site is situated on the Essex coast, approximately 13km south of Colchester town centre. Located to the rear of 16 Coast Road, West Mersea, south of Church Road, all set within the grounds of Yew Tree House, a Grade II listed, 18th century building. This part of West Mersea has the potential for archaeological remains of Romano-British and or medieval date in particular.</i></p> <p><i>The monitoring was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a new residential building. Site visits were undertaken to monitor these works on 06/06/06 and 07/06/06.</i></p>	
<i>Previous Summaries/Reports:</i> N/A	
<i>Author of Summary: Claire Hallybone BSc MSc</i>	<i>Date of Summary: 14th July 2006</i>

Appendix 2 Concordance of Contexts

Layer	Description
L1000	Topsoil. Dark brown sandy clay
L1001	Subsoil. Light brown silt.
L1002	Natural. Brown sand and gravel.

PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX



DP 1

General shot of site



DP 2

Section 1



DP 3

Section 2



DP 4

Section 3



DP 5

Modern posthole F1003



DP 6

Example of site stratigraphy;
topsoil L1000, subsoil L1001,
natural L1002



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Fig. 1 Site location plan
 Scale 1:25,000



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Fig. 3 Plan showing monitored areas
 Scale 1:400 @ A3