

Proposed Premier Inn Site, Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex

An Archaeological Evaluation



Richard Newman

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Chelmsford, Essex**
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With a contribution by Craig Cessford

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University of Cambridge
Division of Archaeology
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Report No. 1233
Event number: CF81

Summary

A trench-based evaluation, comprising four trenches covering a combined total of 99sqm, was undertaken within a former car park situated in Chelmsford, Essex. Despite being located only 190m from the Cathedral, 500m from the core of the Medieval city and 1km from the regionally significant Roman centre of Caesaromagus, little evidence of anthropogenic activity was encountered at the site. Although the archaeological sequence was relatively well preserved, the only features to be identified were Post-Medieval in origin. These were associated with two phases of horticultural activity. The first, which probably commenced during the mid-late 18th century, consisted of a series of closely adjacent sub-rectangular planting beds; thirteen examples of this feature-type were encountered. The second was late 19th-mid 20th century in date. At this time, the area was utilised as an allotment and an extensive layer of 'garden-soil' was generated. Finally, during the 1950s this material was capped by the present car park surface.

- Introduction -

The Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) undertook a trench-based evaluation within a 2118sqm area of land located close to the centre of Chelmsford, Essex, between the 28th and the 30th of April 2014. The Proposed Development Area (PDA) is centred on TL 70709 07118. It is irregularly triangular in form and bounded to the northwest by Victoria Road, to the east by buildings fronting on to this same street (which are currently undergoing redevelopment) and to the south by Victoria House and the Rendezvous public house (Figures 1 and 2). Prior to the commencement of the evaluation, the site was in use as a car park. A total of four trenches – covering a combined area of 99sqm, or 4.7% of the PDA – were excavated. These were positioned in such a way as to sample the widest possible spectrum of the area whilst avoiding all known services and storm drains. Within Trench 2, however, immediately beneath the hardcore associated with the car park’s surface an additional concrete-covered service was encountered that could not be avoided. Consequently, further excavation in this trench was halted (thereby reducing the investigated area to 81sqm, or 3.8% of the PDA). The project followed the specification prepared by the CAU (Dickens 2014) in response to a design brief issued by Alison Bennett of Essex County Council’s Historic Environment Specialist Team (Bennett 2014). It was commissioned by Walsingham Planning, on behalf of Whitbread, in advance of redevelopment.

Methodology

All modern deposits – including the tarmac surface, concrete foundation and underlying rubble hardcore that constituted the car park itself – were removed by a 360° mechanical excavator using a 1.8m wide toothless bucket. A mini-digger with a pneumatic breaker was also employed to assist in the removal of the concrete. All archaeological deposits that were thus revealed were then recorded using the CAU-modified version of the MoLAS recording system (Spence 1994). Base plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50, whilst sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. Throughout the following text, context numbers are indicated by square brackets (*e.g.* [001]) and feature numbers are denoted by the prefix F. (*e.g.* F.01). The photographic archive consists of a series of digital images. All work was carried out with strict adherence to Health and Safety legislation and within the recommendations of FAME (Allen & Holt 2010). The combined sitecode and event number for the project is **CF81**.

Landscape and Geology

Topographically, prior to the commencement of the evaluation the ground surface of the PDA was relatively even. It varied between 29.9m and 29.2m AOD, primarily as a result of the presence of a series of gently embanked storm drains that were built-in to the car park’s surface. Geologically, the site is situated upon Pleistocene Head Brickearth. The uppermost horizon of this material, which consists of a fine mid orange sandy clay loess deposit, was encountered at 28.99m AOD.

Historical and Archaeological Background

The historical and archaeological background of the site has been covered in depth in a previous desk-based assessment (Dickens & Timberlake 2013). Consequently, only an outline summary is presented here.

Figure 1. Location map

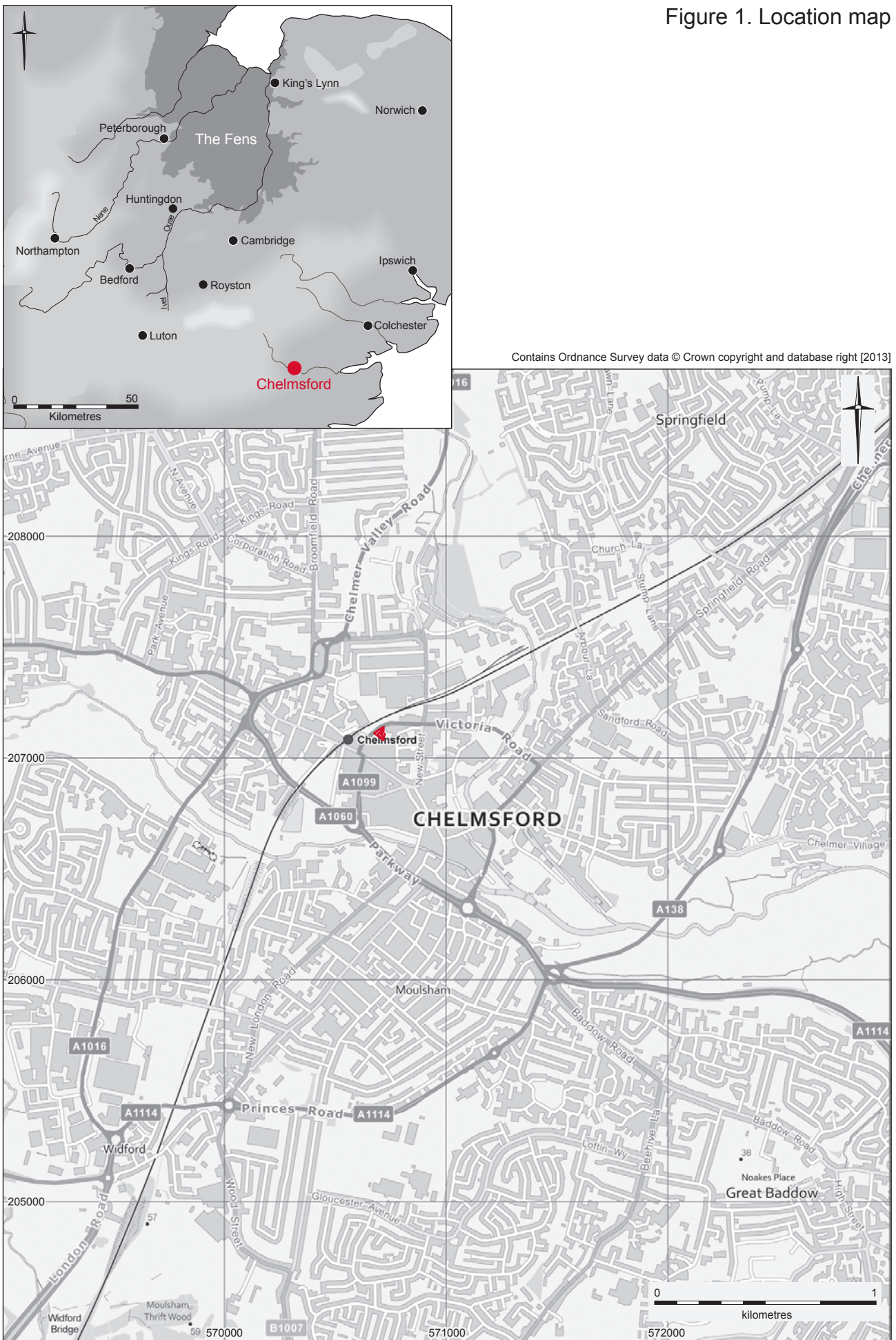
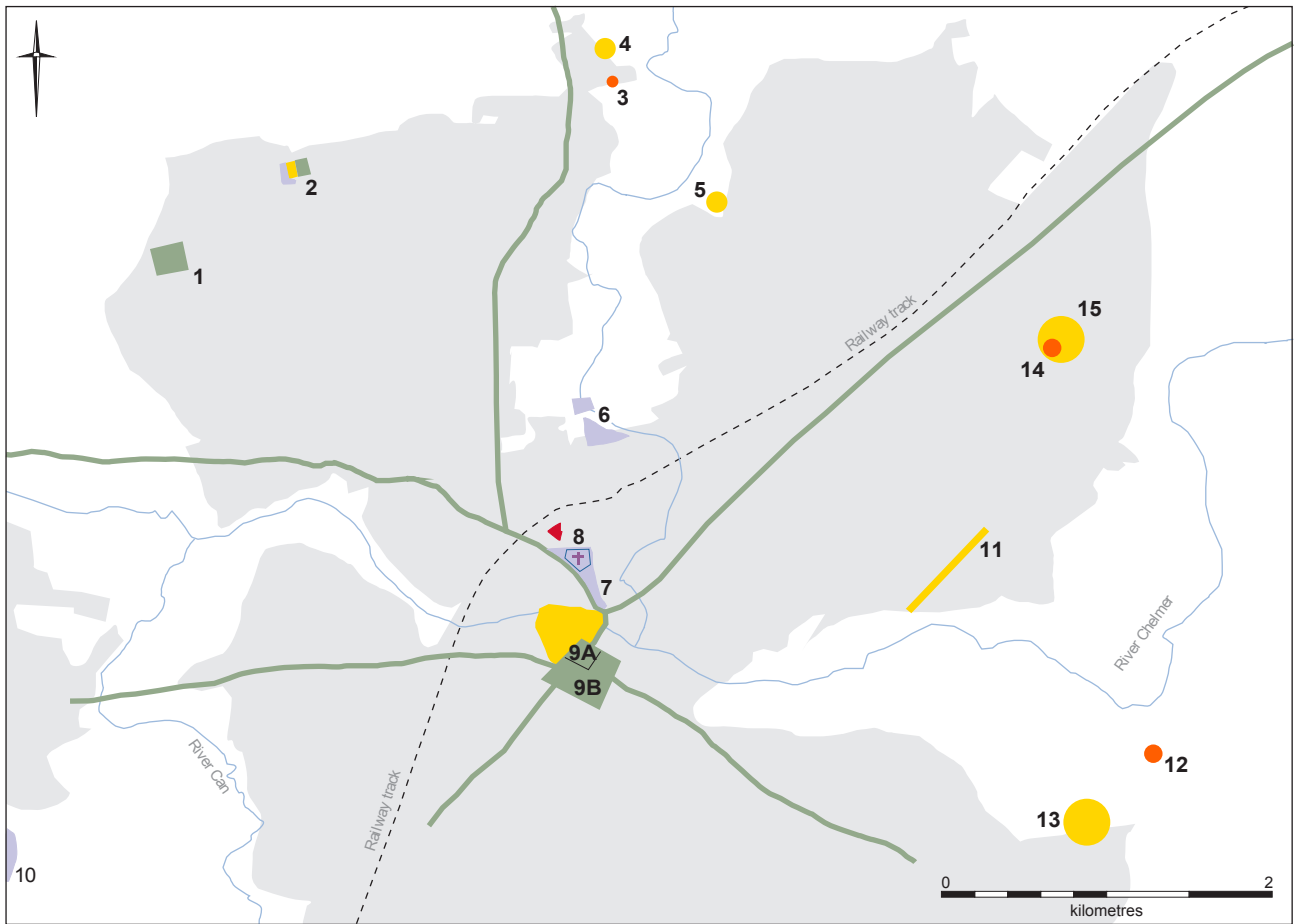




Figure 2. Trench locations



- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| Development area | 1 3rd-4th C. AD. Roman Villa | 9A 1st C. AD. Fort |
| Built up area | 2 Roman pottery and settlement | 9B 2nd C. AD. Roman town and Mansio Precinct |
| Medieval | 3 Clobb's Row Early Saxon burial | 10 Norman Manor at Writtle |
| Saxon | 4 Late Bronze Age circular enclosure | 11 Springfield cursus |
| Roman settlement and roads | 5 Early-Middle Bronze Age barrows (Springfield) | 12 Early Saxon settlement |
| Prehistoric (General area of prehistoric settlement) | 6 Bishops' Hall Manor | 13 Late Bronze Age defended site |
| | 7 Medieval market area | 14 Early Saxon cemetery |
| | 8 Dominican Friary and Cathedral | 15 Springfield Lyon Neolithic causeway camp and Late Bronze Age defended enclosure |

Figure 3. Archaeological map of Chelmsford and its hinterland

Chelmsford has long comprised an important regional centre. The disposition of its most significant elements, which pertain to the key stages in its historical development, are detailed in Figure 3. In the first instance, the area comprised an important focus of Prehistoric activity. A number of sites from this period have been identified within the city's immediate environs, which range in date from the Neolithic (such as the Springfield Cursus; Figure 3, 11) through to the Middle Iron Age (including a large settlement at Little Waltham). In the centre of Chelmsford, to the south of the River Can, residual Prehistoric material has also been recovered that indicates the presence of contemporary settlement, although few *in situ* features have been encountered (Dickens & Timberlake 2013, 4). Subsequently, around a kilometre to the south of the PDA, on the southern bank of the River Can, the Roman town of *Caesaromagus* was established (Figure 3, 9). Here, in the aftermath of the Boudiccan revolt of AD 60-61 a short-lived Roman fort had been established to the south of the river crossing. Then, following the fort's abandonment, a civilian settlement developed alongside the London-Colchester Road as a 'road station', a forerunner of the subsequent 2nd century *mansio* (government posting station). This town was extensively re-planned around AD 120-150 and the *mansio* itself rebuilt in stone. Additional earthwork defenses were also constructed around AD 160-170, but these were abandoned less than 100 years later. Indeed, although the town continued to be occupied into the early 5th century, piecemeal abandonment of building plots throughout the 3rd and 4th centuries implies a gradual decline in its population (see further Chancellor 1857; Powell 1963; Drury 1975; Medlycott 1999).

During the succeeding Saxon period, the primary evidence for activity in the area comprised a series of burials situated in the outer hinterland of the former Roman town; these included a princely 6th century burial at Clobb's Row, Broomfield (Figure 3, 3). An Early Saxon settlement has also been identified (Figure 3, 12). The Roman crossing of the Can was considered impassable in Saxon times, and the route of the London-Colchester road was therefore diverted to Writtle some 3km to the west (Figure 3, 10). It regained its former position during the Norman period *via* the establishment of a ford over the River Chelmer. By this time, however, Writtle had expanded to such an extent that at Domesday it comprised a royal manor with 194 households and a market (Rumble 1983). By way of contrast, Chelmsford itself – which was held by the Bishop of London – and nearby Moulsham – which was held by the Abbot of Westminster – were both minor settlements at this time that contained only 4 and 12 households respectively (*ibid.*). At Chelmsford, however, a new town was founded by the Bishop of London at the end of the 12th century (Page & Horace-Round 1907; Figure 3, 7). The planting of new towns in this way was a common feature of the period (see Beresford 1988). A royal charter was granted for a market in the *vill* in 1199, and its subsequent rapid expansion meant that Chelmsford effectively replaced Colchester as Essex's county town around 1250. It also quickly incorporated the previously independent settlement at Moulsham. The parish church of St. Mary, now the cathedral church of St. Mary and St. Cedd, formed the hub of the medieval town (Figure 3, 8); significantly, this lies only 190m to the south of the PDA.

During the Late Medieval and into the Post-Medieval periods the town continued to expand, first along New Street and then subsequently to the south, towards Moulsham. Economically, from the mid-16th century to the late 18th century Chelmsford was dominated by the Mildmay family. This is because, following the Dissolution, the Mildmay's had purchased the manors of Moulsham and Chelmsford

as well as the demesne of the former Dominican Friary. The town prospered, and its population steadily increased (Grieve 1988). A phase of major expansion then commenced during the 19th century, which was facilitated by the opening of the London-Colchester Railway in 1843 (Dickens & Timberlake 2013, 6). The consequent ease of access into London, allied with the availability of relatively cheap land, precipitated a period of significant industrial expansion.

Archaeologically, a number of relatively substantial excavations have previously been undertaken in Chelmsford (although the majority of these have been focused upon the settlement's Roman and Medieval core). In addition, four recent investigations have been conducted in relatively close proximity to the present site. The nearest of these occurred almost immediately to the north, at 90-96 Victoria Road (Collins 2013). Here, the only archaeological activity to be identified consisted of a 19th century plough soil with associated plough scars. Yet it was also noted that a significant proportion of the western part of the site had been heavily truncated; nevertheless, no residual finds were encountered and it appears that the site had been subject to only a very limited degree of activity. By way of contrast, at the Legg Street car park site – located 125m to the east of the PDA – residual worked flint and Roman pottery were recovered and several large brickearth quarry pits containing 13th to 14th century pottery, along with a small number of additional Medieval and Post-Medieval rubbish pits, were encountered (Barker 2005). Elsewhere, at 1-9 New Street – located 160m to the southeast of the PDA – Roman pottery was also found in the fill of a roadside ditch. In the 12th to 13th centuries a second ditch was dug and it is likely that some form of road or track existed. Moreover, 13th century timber buildings and rubbish pits were present; these structures were subsequently re-established during the 14th century (EHER 16135, 16136 & 16137). Finally, at the former Anglia Ruskin University site, located 300m to the south of the PDA, a mid-late Bronze Age/Iron Age ditch was identified (Smith 2012); however, the upper portion of the sequence at this site had been heavily truncated by 19th century cellars.

- Results -

Near-identical sequences were encountered within all three of the fully excavated trenches (Trenches 1, 3 and 4); the principal distinction between them pertained to the relative degree of archaeological survival. In Trench 1, for example, the ground level had been reduced to that of the natural geology prior to the car park's construction. Contrastingly, in Trenches 3 and 4 remnants of the preceding 'garden-soil' deposit survived. These variations in the degree of truncation are most probably attributable to terracing works conducted during the mid-20th century in order to produce a level car park surface. The earliest material to be recovered consisted of a single, residually occurring sherd of Roman greyware and a single struck flint flake. The only *in situ* features to be identified, however, were Post-Medieval in origin. They were associated with two phases of activity. The first, which probably commenced during the mid-late 18th century, consisted of a series of closely adjacent sub-rectangular pits; thirteen examples of this feature-type were encountered. The second was late 19th-mid 20th century in date. At this time, the area was utilised as an allotment and an extensive layer of 'garden-soil' was generated. Finally, during the 1950s, this material was capped by the present car park surface.

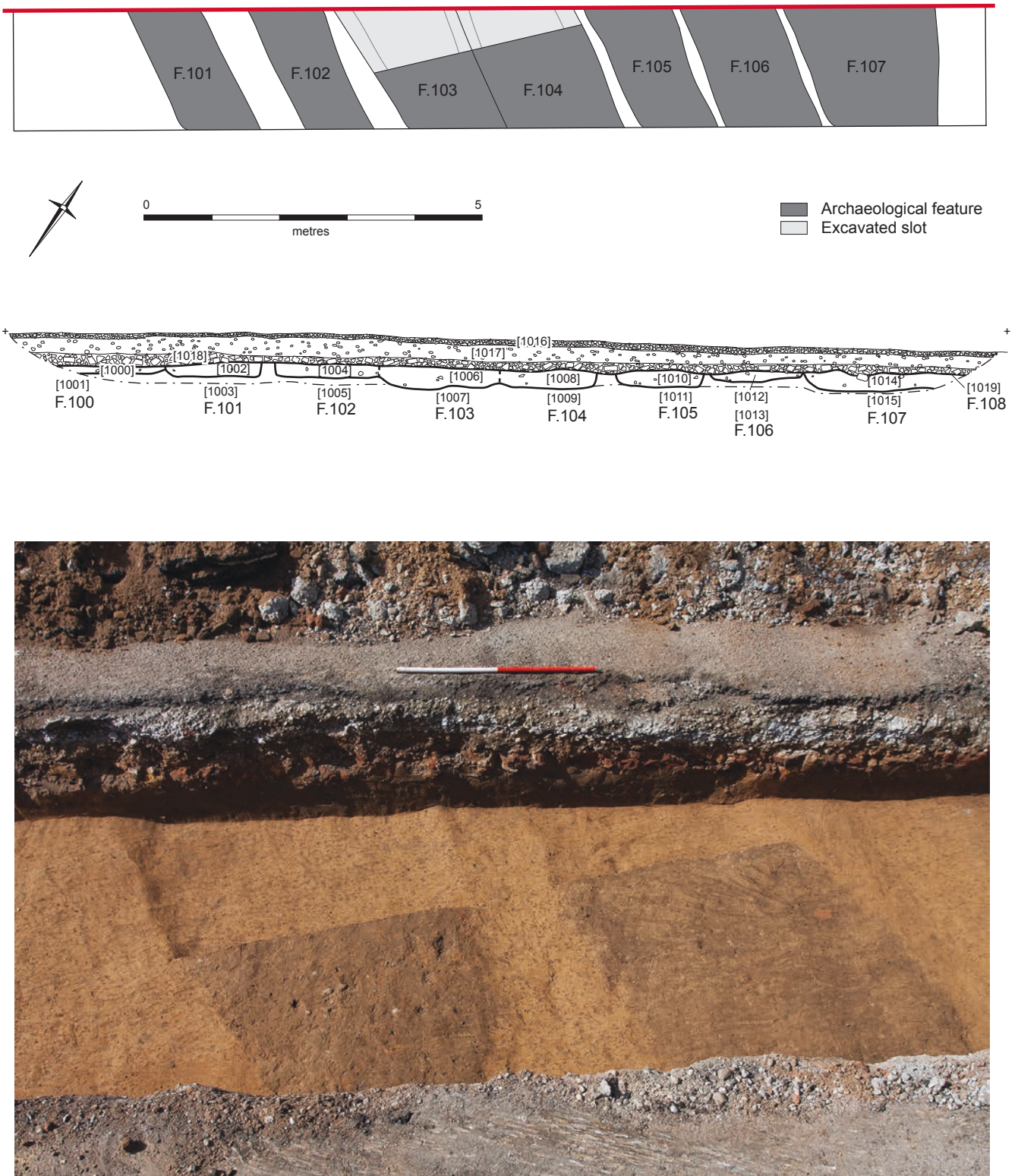
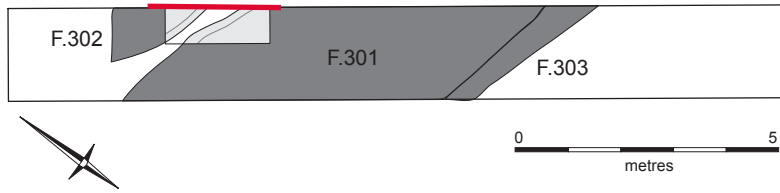


Figure 4. Trench 1 plan and section, and photograph of planting beds F.103 and F.104, facing northwest



■ Archaeological feature
 □ Excavated slot

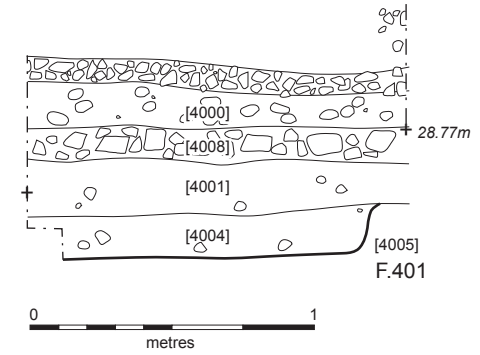
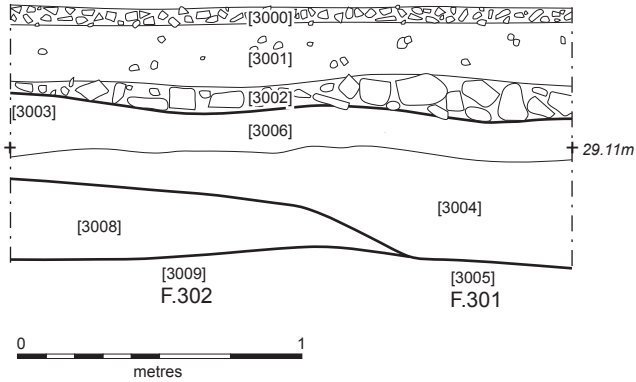
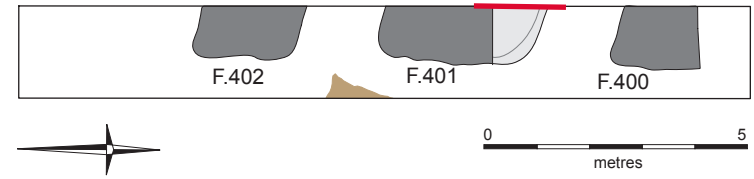


Figure 5. Trench 3 plan and representative section (left), and Trench 4 plan and representative section (right)

Phase I

All thirteen of the pits that comprised this phase were near-identical in terms of both their morphology and their fill. Each was sub-rectangular in form, with vertical sides and a relatively flat base. Moreover, each shared a common west-northwest to east-southeast alignment (Figures 2, 4 and 5). Although no complete examples were uncovered – due to a combination of their extent and their differing orientation relative to that of the trenches – they appear to have measured on average 3.0m in length by 1.6m in width. Their depths varied between 0.18m and 0.38m, whilst their uppermost surviving horizon lay at 29.05m AOD. In addition, each example contained a homogenous deposit of well-worked mid to pale orangey brown subsoil-like material. These factors, allied with their regular disposition and close physical proximity (see especially Figure 4), indicate that they were created as part of a single, consistent phase of activity. Four of these pits were investigated archaeologically, including examples located within all three excavated trenches (**F.103**, **F.104**, **F.302** and **F.401**). Their excavation produced a relatively small quantity of material culture, including fragments of pottery and clay tobacco pipe, which indicates that they were most probably mid-late 18th century in origin (see further the specialist reports, below).

Examples of this feature-type included **F.100-F.107**, **F.302**, **F.303** and **F.400-F.402**. All thirteen were sub-rectangular in form, with vertical sides and a relatively flat base. Moreover, in each instance their single homogenous fill consisted of mid to pale brown sandy clay with rare gravel and charcoal fleck inclusions.

Phase II

In Trenches 3 and 4, where the stratigraphic sequence was relatively well-preserved, each of the Phase I pits was overlain by a layer of darker, more humic ‘garden-soil’ (Figure 5). This latter deposit, which was 19th to mid-20th century in date, was almost certainly generated *via* repeated and sustained horticultural activity. In addition, a deeper, albeit localised, area of this same material was also encountered in Trench 3. Contained within a discrete west-northwest to east-southeast aligned cut – **F.301**, which measured 4.2m in width (Figure 5) – this material most probably represents part of an individual plot contained within a larger allotment. This particular plot appears to have been dug-over to a greater depth than any of its neighbours. The uppermost surviving portion of the garden-soil lay at 29.30m AOD.

Garden-soil layer **[3006]** = **[4001]** consisted of mid greyish brown silty clay, with rare gravel, charcoal fleck and CBM inclusions. An identical deposit, **[3004]**, was also present within **F.301**.

The car park

Partially truncating the Phase II garden soil in Trenches 3 and 4 – and entirely removing it within Trench 1 – was a truncation horizon associated with the establishment of the extant car park. This lay between 28.78m and 29.30m AOD. Robustly constructed, the tarmac surface was underlain by a concrete foundation with a dense rubble screed.

The car park consisted of deposits **[1016]** = **[1017]** = **[1018]** = **[3000]** = **[3001]** = **[3002]** = **[4000]**, which were contained within cut **[1019]** = **[3003]** = **[4008]**. It was banded in form, and included an upper layer of tarmac (0.08m thick), a foundation of dense concrete (0.27m thick) and a basal deposit of densely compacted CBM (0.20m thick). Its surface height varied between 29.9m and 29.2m AOD.

- Material Culture -

A small finds assemblage was recovered during the course of the evaluation. This material – which included metalwork, pottery, clay tobacco pipe, glass, flint and ceramic building materials – is broken down and discussed by material-type below.

Metalwork

A single metal item was recovered from **F.301**. This consisted of a copper alloy pin with a spherical head that measures 25mm in length and weighs <1g. It is most probably 19th century in date.

Pottery (with Craig Cessford)

A small pottery assemblage, consisting of seven sherds weighing 52g, was recovered during this investigation (Table 1). The earliest material to be recovered comprised a residual sherd of indeterminate Roman greyware, which weighed 3g. The bulk of the assemblage, however, was 18th century in date. This included single sherds plain coarseware, Chinese Export porcelain, tin-glazed earthenware and creamware. In addition, two sherds of later, 19th century material – consisting of coarseware plant pot and refined white earthenware – were also identified. Whilst providing useful dating evidence, the sparsity of the material precludes detailed assessment. It is consistent with the occasional incorporation of refuse in an otherwise relatively sterile, horticultural environment.

Period	Fabric	Count	Weight (g)	MSW	Date
<i>Roman</i>	Coarse grey	1	3	3	2 nd -4 th century
<i>Modern</i>	Plain coarseware	1	31	31	17 th -18 th century
	Chinese Export porcelain	1	5	5	18 th century
	Tin-glazed Earthenware	1	4	4	18 th century
	Creamware	1	1	1	Late 18 th century-early 19 th century
	Coarseware plant pot	1	7	7	18 th -19 th century
	Refined White Earthenware	1	1	1	19 th century
	Total	7	52	7.4	

Table 1: Ceramic assemblage by fabric (MSW = mean sherd weight)

Clay Tobacco Pipe (with Craig Cessford)

A total of four clay tobacco pipe fragments were recovered, with two pieces each being derived from **F.104** and **F.301** respectively. These fragments consisted of three stem pieces and one heel/spur. In general, the presence of clay tobacco pipe fragments in a context indicates a date between late 16th to early 20th centuries (c. 1580-1910), although bowls can often be more closely dated *via* comparison to Oswald's simplified general typology (Oswald 1975). In this particular instance, however, insufficient of the bowl remained in order to allow its form to be determined. Its only notable feature comprised a poorly moulded initial *W* located to one side of the heel; a second initial may also have been present on the obverse, although this could no longer be determined with certainty. The letters most probably represent the maker's initials.

Glass

A single shard of green glass, weighing 1g, was recovered from **F.401**. This fragment was derived from the body of a wine or utility bottle; it is 18th or early 19th century in date.

Flint

A single flint flake was recovered from **F.401**. It represents a secondary reduction flake, and had the remnants of cortex still adhering to its outer surface. Its relative crudity indicates that it is most probably later Prehistoric (Bronze Age/Iron Age) in date.

Ceramic Building Materials

In total, 22 pieces of ceramic building materials were recovered (from **F.103**, **F.104**, **F.301**, **F.302** and **F.401**). This group included 15 peg tile fragments and 17 indeterminate brick/tile fragments, all of which appear to have been Post-Medieval or later in origin. Each of the pieces was small in size and many were moderately to heavily abraded. They thus appear to have become incorporated into the general horticultural soil, where they were frequently disturbed/redeposited. None of this material has been retained.

- Discussion -

In contrast to the results of previous investigations conducted in the near vicinity (*e.g.* Collins 2013), the level of modern truncation within the PDA appears to have been relatively minimal. Consequently, the most significant result obtained by this evaluation comprises the dearth of Prehistoric, Roman, Saxon and Medieval activity that was encountered. Despite being situated only 500m from the historic core of Medieval Chelmsford, and only 1km from the regionally significant Roman town of *Caesaromagus*, the site appears to have lain in a peripheral location within a broader agricultural hinterland during both periods. This interpretation is supported by the residual presence of a single sherd of Roman greyware and a single struck flint flake; such a low level of material is consistent with that which might be expected from a plough-soil located at some remove from the primary *locus* of occupation. Similarly, the earliest cartographic sources for the area – which date from 1591 (Figure 6), 1777 (Figure 7) and 1841 (Figure 8) respectively – all indicate that during these periods the site remained at some distance from contemporary *foci* of activity. Further corroborating this pattern, the earliest archaeological evidence of anthropogenic activity was mid-late 18th century in date. At this time a large number of shallow, sub-rectangular pits were created. Arrayed in tightly-packed rows, and following a dominant west-northwest to east-southeast alignment, these features appear to have extended across the majority of the site. Yet their purpose is somewhat unclear.

On the one hand their regular, linear disposition – allied with their close physical proximity (which was such that in many instances only narrow ‘spines’ of natural remained between them) – is consistent with the morphological pattern that characterizes intensive, strip-type quarrying activity. Moreover, although not a true brickearth deposit the underlying natural strata is nonetheless known to have been extensively worked to both the north and west of Chelmsford in order to supply the requirements of the local brick industry (Dickens & Timberlake 2013, 3). Yet two factors argue against such an interpretation in the present instance. The first comprises the features’ depths. As these averaged around 0.25m, only a very small percentage of the total brickearth deposit would have been extracted; an amount that is not commensurate with the effort required for their excavation (in order to be effective, quarry pits typically measure at least a metre in depth). The second factor comprises their fills. These consisted of well-worked sub-soil deposits that remained uniformly consistent across the site. This is again atypical of extraction-related activity, where banded deposits composed of redeposited upcast material, often interspersed with dumps of domestic refuse, are frequently encountered. Taken together, therefore, this evidence implies that the features are most likely to represent a grid-like arrangement of planting beds. Such an interpretation accords with both their depth and fill-type, as well as their row-like physical arrangement.



Figure 6. Walker map. 1591 Mildmay Estates (Essex Record Office)



Figure 7. Chapman and Andre map of Chelmsford (Moulsham 1777)

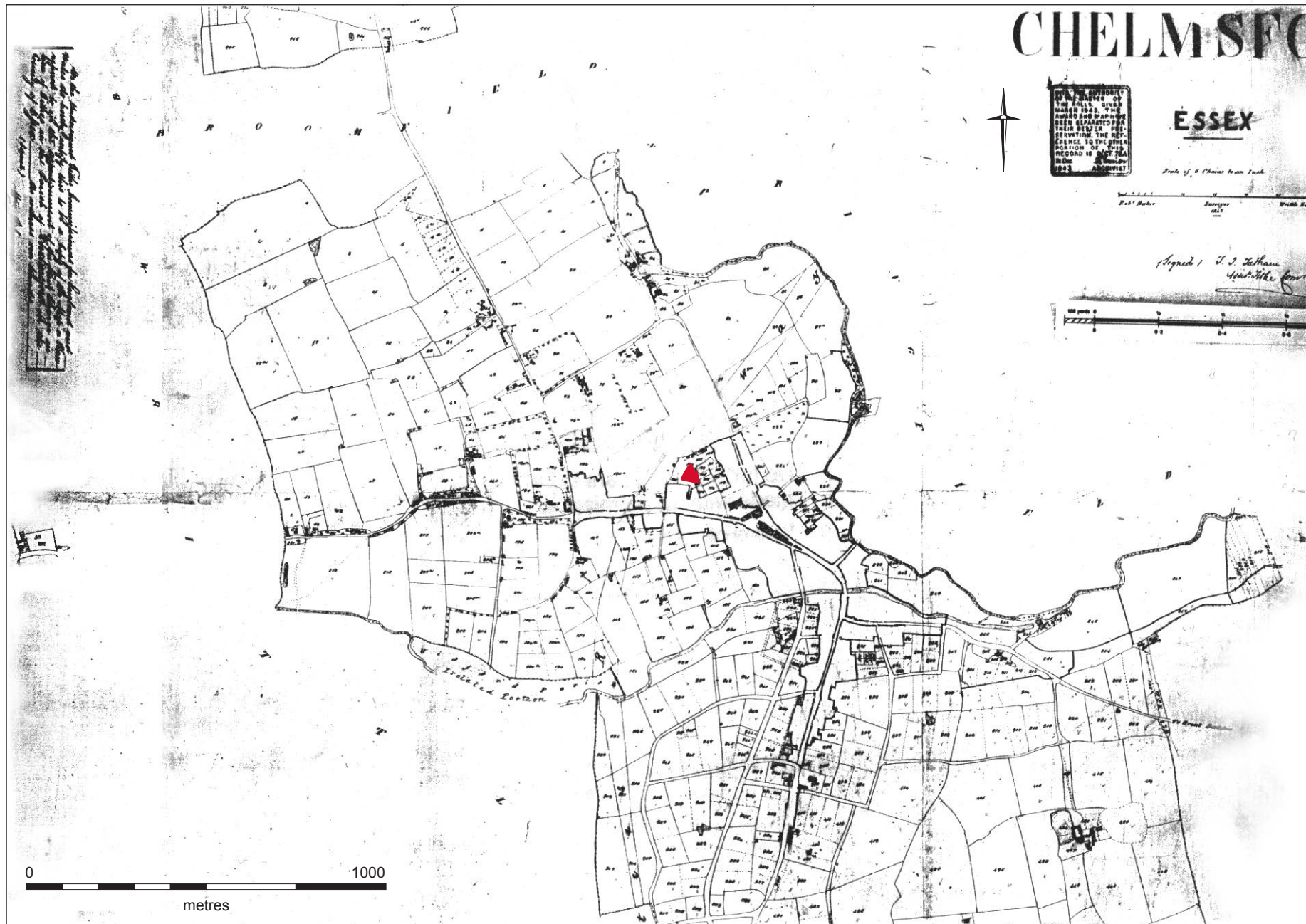


Figure 8. 1839 (1841) Chelmsford Title Award map

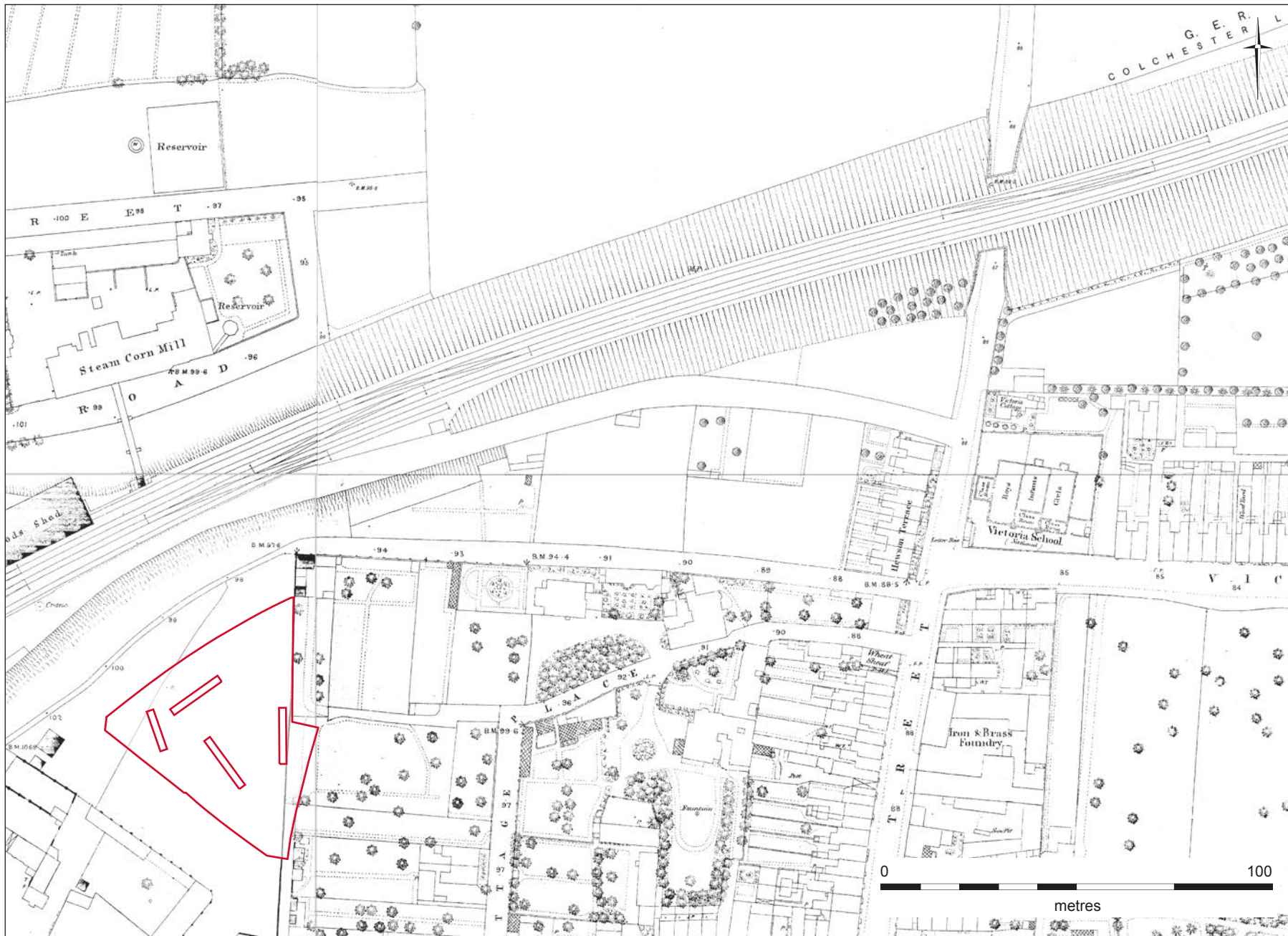


Figure 9. Ordnance Survey map 1875 1:528 scale (2nd Edition)

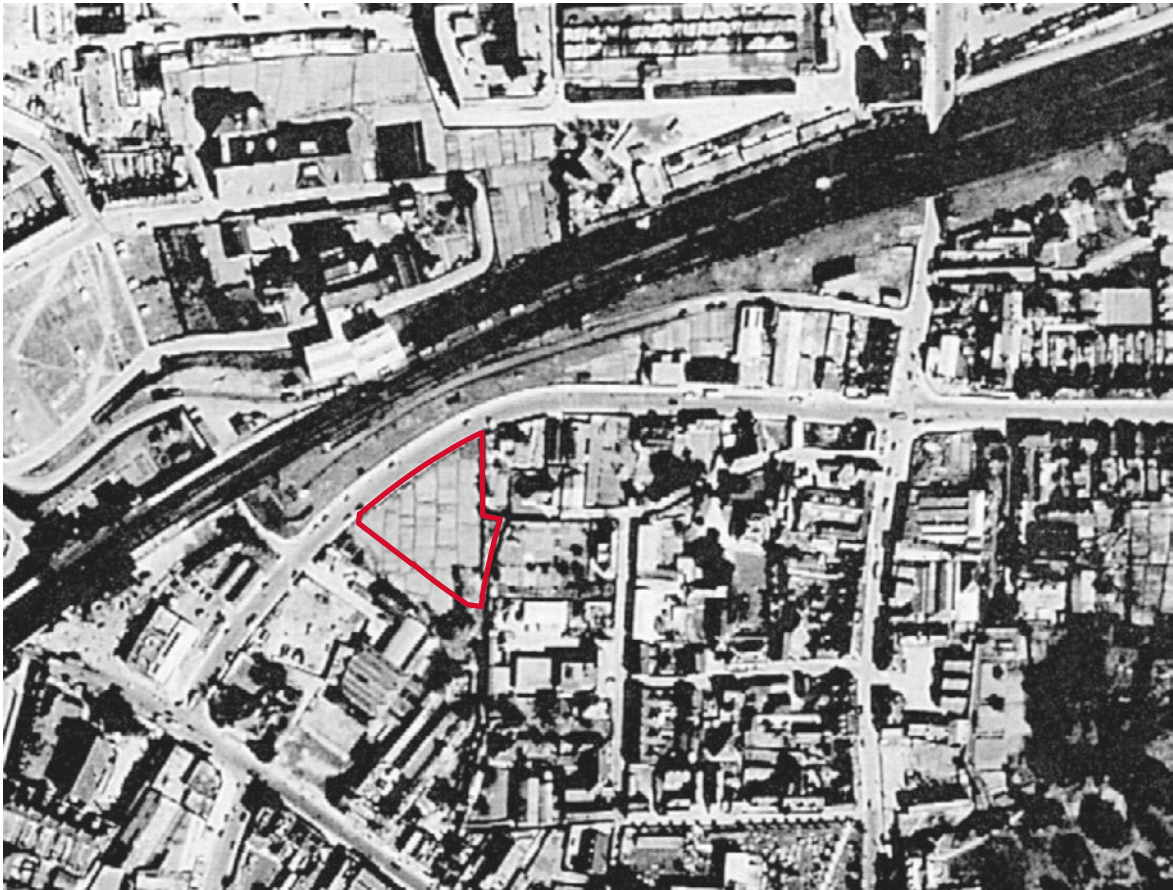


Figure 10. Aerial photograph taken 26 April 1946 (RAF-CPE-2029-F6049)

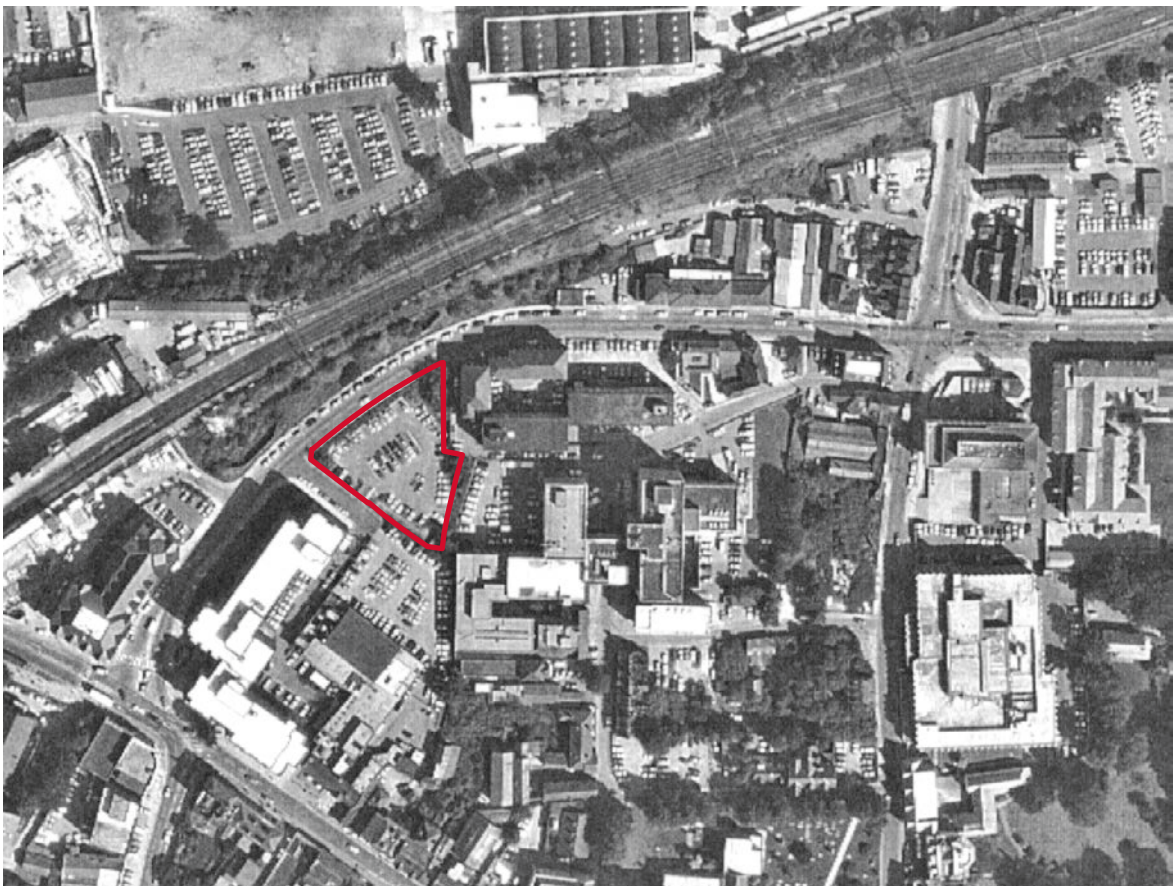


Figure 11. Aerial photograph taken 20 August 1987 (OS-87117-F102)

It is possible that such an extensive array of planting beds, of such uniform size and depth, was created as part of a commercial enterprise (in order to grow a particular, specialized crop, for example). Alternatively, these features may represent the inception of a more communal, allotment-type horticultural practice. Nevertheless, regardless of their initial function, it appears that by the late 19th century just such an allotment had indeed been established (although it is notable that it was not recorded as such upon the detailed 1:528 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map; Figure 9). By this date the earlier planting beds had become sealed beneath an extensive layer of much darker ‘garden-soil’. Horticultural activity then seems to have continued in a similar fashion until the construction of the car park in the mid-20th century. An aerial photograph of the site taken in 1946, for example (Figure 10), reveals the presence of a series of regular allotment strips (although it is possible that, in this form, such activity was associated with a specific wartime initiative). The garden-soil was finally subsumed beneath tarmac prior to 1963, with relatively little associated truncation, and the car park itself remained largely unaltered right up until the present-day (Figure 11).

Acknowledgments

This evaluation was commissioned by Walsingham Planning, on behalf of Whitbread, and was monitored by Alison Bennett of Essex County Council’s Historic Environment Specialist Team. It was managed for the CAU by Alison Dickens and the fieldwork was directed by Richard Newman with the assistance of Timothy Lewis and Robert Barratt. The graphics for this report were produced by Bryan Crossan, while the finds were processed by Justin Wiles.

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Oasis Form

OASIS ID: cambridg3-178907	
Project Details	
Project name	Proposed Premier Inn, Chelmsford
Short description of the project	A trench-based evaluation, comprising four trenches covering a combined total of 99sqm, was undertaken within a former car park situated in Chelmsford, Essex. Despite being located only 190m from the Cathedral, 500m from the core of the Medieval city and 1km from the regionally significant Roman centre of <i>Caesaromagus</i> , little evidence of anthropogenic activity was encountered at the site. Although the archaeological sequence was relatively well-preserved, the only features to be identified were Post-Medieval in origin. These were associated with two phases of horticultural activity. The first, which probably commenced during the mid-late 18th century, consisted of a series of closely adjacent sub-rectangular planting beds; thirteen examples of this feature-type were encountered. The second was late 19th-mid 20th century in date. At this time, the area was utilised as an allotment and an extensive layer of 'garden-soil' was generated. Finally, during the 1950s this material was capped by the present car park surface.
Project dates	Start: 28-04-2014 End: 30-04-2014
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	CF81 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	CF81 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	PLANTING BEDS Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPS
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Project Location	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX CHELMSFORD CHELMSFORD Proposed Premier Inn, Chelmsford
Postcode	CM1 1JW
Study area	2118.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 70709 07118 51.7362339187 0.472553599631 51 44 10 N 000 28 21 E Point

Height OD / Depth	Min: 28.86m Max: 28.99m
Project Creators	
Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Alison Dickens
Project director/manager	Alison Dickens
Project supervisor	Richard Newman
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Whitbread
Project Archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID	CM81
Physical Contents	"Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics"
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Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "Survey"
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Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"
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ESSEX HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD/ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

SUMMARY SHEET

Site name/Address: <i>Proposed Premier Inn Site, Victoria Road, Chelmsford</i>	
Parish: <i>Chelmsford</i>	District: <i>Chelmsford</i>
NGR: <i>TL70709 07118</i>	Site Code: <i>CM81</i>
Type of Work: <i>Evaluation</i>	Site Director/Group: <i>Cambridge Archaeological Unit</i>
Date of Work: <i>28-30th April 2014</i>	Size of Area Investigated: <i>2118 sq m</i>
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: <i>Cambridge Archaeological Unit</i>	Funding source: <i>Developer</i>
Further Seasons Anticipated?: <i>No</i>	Related EHER No.s:
Final Report: <i>Newman, R. 2014 Proposed Premier Inn Site, Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex: An Archaeological Evaluation Cambridge Archaeological Unit Report 1233</i>	OASIS No.: <i>cambridg3-178907</i>
Periods Represented: <i>Roman (1 sherd), Post-medieval</i>	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p><i>A trench-based evaluation, comprising four trenches covering a combined total of 99sqm, was undertaken within a former car park situated in Chelmsford, Essex. Despite being located only 190m from the Cathedral, 500m from the core of the Medieval city and 1km from the regionally significant Roman centre of Caesaromagus, little evidence of anthropogenic activity was encountered at the site. Although the archaeological sequence was relatively well preserved, the only features to be identified were Post-Medieval in origin. These were associated with two phases of horticultural activity. The first, which probably commenced during the mid-late 18th century, consisted of a series of closely adjacent sub-rectangular planting beds; thirteen examples of this feature-type were encountered. The second was late 19th-mid 20th century in date. At this time, the area was utilised as an allotment and an extensive layer of 'garden-soil' was generated. Finally, during the 1950s, this material was capped by the present car park surface</i></p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: <i>Dickens, A. and S. Timberlake 2013 Proposed Premier Inn Site, Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex: An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment Cambridge Archaeological Unit Report 1184</i>	
Author of Summary: <i>Alison Dickens</i>	Date of Summary: <i>21/05/2014</i>