

Archaeological evaluation and monitoring on land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham, CM3 3PG

November 2021



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Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Aims	2
5	Results	2
6	Finds	6
7	Environmental Assessment	11
8	Conclusion	11
9	Acknowledgements	11
10	References	11
11	Abbreviations and glossary	12
12	Contents of archive	12
13	Archive deposition	12

Appendix 1	Context list	14
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Figures	after p14
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OASIS summary sheet

List of photographs and figures

Cover: Site shot

Map 1	Extract of the 1:25,000 outline series of Great Britain c 1949	2
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Photograph 1	T4 trench shot – view north-west	4
Photograph 2	F7 plan – view south-east	4
Photograph 3	F11 sx – view west	5
Photograph 4	F14 and F15 – view south	5
Photograph 5	WS1 core (0-1m)	6

Fig 1	Site location
Fig 2	Results
Fig 3	Representative sections

1 Summary

Archaeological evaluation was carried out on land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Little Waltham, Essex in advance of the construction of ten new dwellings. There are several nearby archaeological sites including a Roman settlement to the south-east and a multiperiod settlement and scheduled monument to the north.

A total of 15 features were identified during this evaluation; seven pits, seven ditches and a gully. The finds recovered revealed the site is located within the vicinity of a settlement, perhaps related to the Roman settlement to the south-east. The fired-clay fragments perhaps indicating the presence of a wattle and daub structure. A small quantity of finds, including a shard of polychrome glass, possibly point to a higher status inhabitant.

Four Window sample bore-holes were also observed, two of which contained material from a potential archaeological horizon.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for archaeological evaluation and monitoring on land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham which was carried out on the 1st and 2nd November 2021. The work was commissioned by Tayla Morhall on behalf of Amherst Homes in advance of the construction of ten dwellings. The work was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Mark Baister advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological trial trenching and excavation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Mark Baister (ECCPS 2021), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2021).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the ECC brief and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

There are no recorded archaeological sites within the site boundary. However, an OS map from 1945-65 (Map 1) shows a building (possibly a post office) on the east end of site. This building does not appear on any other maps, however.

The EHER shows several important archaeological sites nearby. Approximately 200m to the south-east of the site Roman settlement remains were uncovered during excavation in the 1950s. Substantial amounts of Roman pottery was recovered, along with evidence for a timber-framed building with a gravel floor (EHER 6088). The settlement was dated to the 2nd century AD and postulated to be extensive.

Some 700m to the north is “*Settlement site at Ash Tree Corner*”, a Scheduled Monument (NHLE no 1002140). Excavations in the vicinity of the monument, during work for the Little Waltham bypass in the 1970s, uncovered an extensive multi-period landscape ranging in date from the Mesolithic to the 14th century (EHERs 6182, 6183, 6184, 6185, 6186, 6187, 6188). Remains uncovered included evidence of prehistoric and Roman buildings, the Chelmsford to Braintree Roman road, cremation burials, a 2nd/3rd-century well, and a substantial Iron Age settlement with at least three major occupation phases.



Map 1 Extract of the 1:25,000 outline series of Great Britain c 1949

An excavation c 600m to the south of the site in 1995 uncovered a Late Bronze Age sub-rectangular enclosure containing the remains of a farmstead (EHER 6142). The presence of multiple cropmark concentrations to the east and north-east of the development site (EHERs 7345, 8942, 8942) suggest that the multi-period landscape uncovered during these previous investigations extends into the surrounding fields.

Additionally, timber-framed 15th- and 17th- to 18th-century houses (EHERs 30675, 30681, 30677, 30678, 30679), a 17th-century malthouse (EHERs 15017, 48532), and a listed post-medieval red brick house (EHER 30680) have been found c 245-325m south of the site. A small worked flint flake was also found c 230m west of the site.

Given the above factors, it is considered possible that archaeological features and deposits may survive in the proposed development area.

4 Aims

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

5 Results (Figs 2-4)

5.1 Evaluation Results (Fig 2 and 4)

Four trenches were mechanically excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. They were excavated through topsoil (L1, c 0.15-0.30m thick) and subsoil (L2, c 0.14-0.27m thick) onto the natural clay (L3, c 0.36-0.47m below current ground level [bcgl]). All trenches were 30m long and 1.8m wide unless stated below. A full context list can be found in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (T1)

Two Roman pits and a Late Iron Age ditch were uncovered in T1. Pit F9 had a diameter of roughly 0.80m and was 0.15m deep. Pit F10 was 0.69m by 0.59m and 0.14m deep. A small quantity of pottery sherds was recovered from both pits.

Ditch F11 (0.90m wide and 0.31m deep) was aligned east/west and had a U-shaped profile with a flat base. Twenty-one pottery sherds were recovered from the ditch fill.

Trench 2 (T2)

Seven features were identified in T2: four ditches, a gully and two pits.

Late Iron Age ditch F5 (0.54m wide, 5.15m long and 0.07m deep) was aligned roughly east/west with a U-shaped profile. A single sherd of pottery was recovered from the fill. Late Iron Age ditch F14 was aligned north-west/south-east. It had a U-shaped profile that was 0.72m wide and 0.22m deep, and produced a good assemblage of pottery sherds and the largest assemblage of baked clay/daub. This is likely a continuation of ditch F8 in T3.

Late Iron Age/early Roman ditch F2 (1.04m wide and 0.25m deep) was aligned north-west/south-east and had an asymmetrical U-shaped profile. The second largest assemblage of pottery sherds was recovered from F2.

Late Iron Age/early Roman ?pit F150 (2.80m by 1.89m and 0.47m deep) produced the largest quantity of pottery sherds, three-times as much as the next biggest assemblage. The relationship between ditch F14 and ?pit F15 could not be ascertained.

Early Roman F6 ditch was 0.65m wide, 0.22m deep and had an exposed length of 4.80m long. It was on a north-west/south-east alignment and had a U-shaped profile. The relationship between ditch F5 and ditch F6 was not determined.

Undated gully F12 (0.62m wide, 2.03m long and 0.17m deep) and undated pit F13 (0.86m by 1.04m and 0.20m deep) were also excavated.

Trench 3 (T3)

Late Iron Age ditch F8 was on a north-west/south-east alignment and had a U-shaped profile (0.78m wide and 0.18m deep). A fair-sized assemblage of pottery was recovered from the fill. This is likely a continuation of ditch F14 in T2.

Late Iron Age/early Roman pit F3 (c 0.65m in diameter and 0.12m deep) produced a small quantity of pottery sherds, while pit F4 (0.78m by 0.43m and 0.18m deep) only produced a single a sherd.

Trench 4 (T4) 21m long by 1.8m wide

Roman pit F1 (c 0.40m in diameter and 0.08m deep) produced a small assemblage of pottery sherds, a copper-alloy coin and small quantity of cremated animal bone.

Early Roman ditch F7 was on a rough north-west/south-east alignment with a U-shaped profile. A small quantity of pottery sherds were recovered from two excavated sections along with a single shard of polychrome Roman glass. The exposed length of the ditch was 11.86m with an average width of 1.54m and a depth of 0.50m.



Photograph 1 T4 trench shot – view north-west



Photograph 2 F7 plan – view south-east



Photograph 3 F11 sx – view west



Photograph 4 F14 and F15 – view south

5.2 Monitoring Results (Fig 3)

Four window sample (WS) boreholes (diameter 0.10m) were observed by a CAT archaeologist. All four samples were excavated through L1 (c 0.20-0.30m thick), L2 (c 0.15-0.25m thick) and into the natural (L3, c 0.45-0.60m bcgl). WS1 and WS3 were excavated to a depth of 3m and WS2 and WS2a were only 2m deep. Potential archaeological horizons were identified in WS1 and WS3 in the form of charcoal flecked fill. WS2 and WS2a had no evidence of archaeological remains.

Two more samples were taken without a CAT archaeologist present as they were located within areas covered by the evaluation trenches.



Photograph 5 WS1 core (0-1m)

6 Finds

6.1 Ceramic and Pottery finds *by Dr Matthew Loughton*

The evaluation uncovered a modest assemblage of pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) with 199 sherds with a weight of 2,488 g and EVE of 1.05 (Table 1). The mean sherd weight is 13g. This material was recovered from 13 features (Table 2). The largest assemblage with 79 sherds with a weight of 968g came from ?pit F15, followed by ditch F2 with 26 sherds weighing 290g (Table 2).

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
Pottery	183	2,382	13	1.05
CBM	16	106	7	-
Total	199	2,488	13	1.05

Table 1 Details on the main types of ceramics and pottery.

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
F1	PIT	5	21	4
F2	DITCH	26	290	11
F3	PIT	6	34	6
F4	Pit	1	10	10
F5	DITCH	1	12	12
F6	PIT	13	58	4
F7	DITCH	8	225	28
F8	DITCH	11	136	12
F9	PIT	2	192	96
F10	PIT	4	88	22
F11	DITCH	21	212	10
F13	PIT	2	4	2
F14	DITCH	21	258	12
F15	?PIT	79	958	12
Total		199	2,488	13

Table 2 Quantities of pottery and CBM by features.

Late Iron Age and Roman pottery

The Roman pottery was classified according to the fabric groups outlined in *CAR 10* (Symonds & Wade 1999) while the late Iron Age/early Roman pottery was classified using the fabrics from the Stanway (Benfield 2007) and Colchester 'Institute' (Loughton in prep.) publications (Table 3). The Late [capital L here] Iron Age and Roman vessel types were classified via the Colchester (*Camulodunum*), henceforth Cam, type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Hull 1958; *CAR 10*, Bidwell & Croom 1999, 468-487; Thompson 1982). The pottery was recorded by sherd count, the number of rims, handles, and bases, and weight, for each fabric group. The number of vessels was determined by rim EVE (estimated vessel equivalent).

Fabric code	Fabric description	Fabric date range guide
BAET	Baetican Dressel 20 amphorae	Late Iron Age-Roman
CSOW	Coarse sandy oxidized ware	Late Iron Age-Early Roman
FSOW	Fine sandy oxidized ware	Late Iron Age-Early Roman
GBW	Grossly burnished Late Iron Age 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware	Late Iron Age
GR	Fine grey wares imitating samian and <i>terra nigra</i> forms	Roman
GTW	Late Iron Age 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware	Late Iron Age
GTW (BG)	Late Iron Age 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware with black grog	Late Iron Age
GTW GREY (BG)	Grey 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware with black grog	Late Iron Age
GTW OX	Oxidised 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware	Late Iron Age
GX	Other coarse, principally locally-produced grey wares	Roman
HZ	Large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered grey wares	Late Iron Age-Roman
HZ OX	Large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered oxidised wares	Late Iron Age-Roman
RCW	Romanizing Coarse ware	Late Iron Age-Early Roman
SW	Sandy ware	Late Iron Age-Early Roman

Table 3 Late Iron Age to early Roman pottery fabrics recorded.

Fabric Group	Fabric description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
BAET	Baetican Dressel 20 amphorae	1	182	182	0.00

CSOW	Coarse sandy oxidized ware	14	219	16	0.00
FSOW	Fine sandy oxidized ware	2	12	6	0.00
GBW	Grossly burnished Late Iron Age 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware	1	3	3	0.00
GR	Fine grey wares imitating samian and <i>terra nigra</i> forms	1	10	10	0.08
GTW	Late Iron Age 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware	99	1,121	11	0.52
GTW (BG)	Late Iron Age 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware with black grog	9	123	14	0.10
GTW GREY (BG)	Grey 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware with black grog	1	27	27	0.08
GTW OX	Oxidised 'Belgic' grog-tempered ware	18	134	7	0.00
GX	Other coarse, principally locally-produced grey wares	8	64	8	0.08
HZ	Large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered grey wares	6	212	35	0.00
HZ OX	Large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered oxidised wares	3	156	52	0.08
RCW	Romanizing Coarse ware	16	59	4	0.05
SW	Sandy ware	4	60	15	0.06
Total		183	2,382	13	1.05

Table 4 Details on the Late Iron Age-Roman pottery.

Fabric group	Form	EVE
GR	Total	0.08
	Cam 69B/320	0.08
GTW	Total	0.52
	?	0.15
	Cam 229	0.07
	Cam 253	0.10
	Cam 256	0.07
	Cam 258	0.13
GTW (BG)	Total	0.10
	Cam 229	0.10
GTW GREY (BG)	Total	0.10
	Cam 253	0.10
GX	Total	0.08
	Cam 268	0.08
HZ OX	Total	0.08
	Cam 273	0.08
RCW	Total	0.05
	?	0.05
SW	Total	?
	?	0.06
Total		1.05

Table 5 Late Iron Age-Roman pottery quantification via vessel form

The evaluation produced a modest-sized assemblage of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery at 183 sherds weighing 2.3kg with an EVE of 1.05 (Tables 4-5). This material was recovered from 12 features although a significant proportion of the assemblage came from ?pit F15 while other more modestly-sized assemblages came from ditch F2 and ditch F11 (Table 6). The majority of this material dates to the Late Iron Age and grog-tempered wares (fabrics GBW, GTW, GTW BG, GTW GREY BG, GTW OX) account for a significant proportion of the assemblage and 70% of the assemblage by sherd count, 59% by weight and 67% by EVE (Table 4). Identifiable

vessel forms include bowls (Cam 229), jars (Cam 256, Cam 258) and large tall bead rim lids for the Cam 253 bowl (Hawkes & Hull 1947, 267 plate LXXXI) (Table 5). There was also a sherd from a grog-tempered sieve which came from ?pit F15. Finally, there was a small pedestal base in fabric CSOW (coarse sandy oxidized ware) which came from ?pit F15. This has been pierced through the centre with a small post-firing hole with a diameter of c 10mm.

Roman pottery is rare and mostly limited to sherds of fabric GX (other coarse, principally locally-produced grey wares) (Table 4) which came from pits F1, F6 and F10. The only vessel form was a possible Cam 268 (?), dating to AD 125/150-280/320, which came from pit F1. Pit F9 contained a Baetican Dressel 20 amphora sherd and a Cam 69B/320 bowl in fabric GR (fine grey wares imitating samian and *terra nigra* forms) which is based upon the Samian Dr. 30 and dates to c AD 69-180. This vessel has two small linear cut marks engraved on the top of the interior of the rim. Finally, from ditch F7 there is a Cam 273 storage jar (fabric HZ OX) which dates from AD 43 to the 2nd/3rd century.

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
F1	PIT	5	21	4	0.13
F2	DITCH	24	271	11	0.07
F3	PIT	5	32	6	0.03
F4	Pit	1	10	10	0.08
F5	DITCH	1	12	12	0.00
F6	PIT	12	57	5	0.11
F7	DITCH	7	223	32	0.08
F8	DITCH	11	136	12	0.18
F4	Pit	1	10	10	0.08
F10	PIT	4	88	22	0.00
F11	DITCH	21	212	10	0.10
F14	DITCH	13	193	15	0.00
F15	?PIT	78	945	12	0.27
Total		183	2,382	13	1.05

Table 6 Quantities of late Iron Age and Roman pottery by features.

Ceramic building material (CBM)

CBM consisted of 16 sherds of baked clay and daub with a weight of 106g which was recovered from seven features (Table 7). The largest assemblage is eight sherds weighing 65g which came from ditch F14 (Table 7). A piece of burnt daub with a wattle hole (15 mm diameter) came from ditch F2.

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
F2	DITCH	2	19	10
F3	PIT	1	2	2
F6	PIT	1	1	1
F7	DITCH	1	2	2
F13	PIT	2	4	2
F14	DITCH	8	65	8
F15	?PIT	1	13	13
Total		16	106	7

Table 7 Quantities of CBM from specific features

Conclusion

Table 8 summarizes the dating evidence for the features which produced dateable ceramic finds. Most of the features date to the Late Iron Age and/or Late Iron Age to early Roman period, while there is also evidence for later Roman occupation from the Flavian period and possibly into the 2nd or 3rd century AD.

Context	Feature type	LIA-Roman	Overall date Approx.
F1	PIT	GX (Cam 268?), RCW	AD 125/150-280/320?
F2	DITCH	CSOW, FSOW, GTW (CAM 229), GTW OX	LIA OR LIA-EARLY ROMAN
F3	PIT	GTW, RCW, SW	LIA OR LIA-EARLY ROMAN
F4	PIT	GR (CAM 69B/320)	AD 69-180
F5	DITCH	GTW	LIA
F6	PIT	GTW (CAM 258), GTW OX, GX, SW	EARLY ROMAN
F7	DITCH	HZ, HZ OX (CAM 273), RCW	EARLY ROMAN
F8	DITCH	GTW (CAM 253), GTW BG, GTW GREY BG (CAM 253), GTW OX	LIA
F9	PIT	BAET (DR20)	ROMAN
F10	PIT	HZ, GTW, GX	ROMAN
F11	DITCH	CSOW, GTW, GTW BG (CAM 229), HZ OX	LIA
F14	DITCH	GTW, HZ OX	LIA
F15	?PIT	CSOW (PEDESTAL BASE), FSOW, ,GBW, GTW (CAM 256, CAM 258, SIEVE), GTW OX, RCW, SW	LIA OR LIA-EARLY ROMAN

Table 8 Approximate dates for the individual features.

6.2 Small finds and glass

by Laura Pooley

A Roman copper-alloy coin from pit F1 (SF1) is in very poor condition and completely illegible. Based on the current size and weight of the coin, it is possibly an early *nummus* (c AD 295-310), but very few later-dated Roman finds were found during the evaluation. If it is an earlier *dupondius* or *as*, the coin has been heavily worn and damaged.

A roughly-rectangular fragment of iron (SF2) came from ditch F7. If further archaeological work is carried out on the development site, it is recommended that this object be sent for x-ray and the results included in any subsequent report.

A small fragment (2.4g) of polychrome glass also came from ditch F7 sx1 (finds no. 8). The fragment is opaque red with opaque yellow and translucent green floral motifs. It is from the base of a vessel and includes part of the base ring. Polychrome vessels date from the 1st to early 2nd century.

SF1, F1 (finds no. 1). Roman copper-alloy coin. In poor condition with damage to the edges, illegible with little of the original surface surviving, c 22mm diameter, 4.8g.

SF2, F7 (finds no. 12). Rectangular fragment of iron, broken at across one short edge, covered in dirt and corrosion. Probably rectangular in cross-section but difficult to determine. 64.6mm long, 24.7mm wide, 14.4mm thick, 48.5g.

6.3 Animal bone

by Laura Pooley

Sample 1 produced 27 very small fragments of burnt bone (3.9g). The bone was shown to osteologist Megan Seehra and animal bone specialist Alec Wade. It was agreed that the bone was most likely animal, but was too small to identify further.

7 Environmental Assessment

by Laura Pooley

A 40L sample was taken from pit F1 due to the presence of very small fragments of burnt bone within the fill. The sample was floated but, aside from the bone, only five small fragments of charcoal (1.9g) were recovered.

8 Conclusion

Fifteen features (seven pits, seven ditches and a gully) were uncovered during evaluation trenching on land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Little Waltham. Thirteen features produced dating evidence, mainly pottery sherds, placing the main phase of activity in the Late Iron Age into the Roman period.

The density and date of the of features indicate occupation in the Late Iron Age and Roman periods in the immediate vicinity of the site. The types of finds recovered (storage jar, bowl, sieve, wattle-and-daub fragments) suggest that this had been in the form of farmstead which originated in the Late Iron Age and continued into the Roman period. It was likely connected in some way with the Roman settlement (EHER 6088) uncovered in the 1950's to the south-east of the development site. Some of the finds recovered, such as the polychrome glass, amphora sherd and small pedestal fragment, possibly indicate a farmstead of a higher status.

9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Tayla Morhall and Amherst Homes for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with M Perou, A Smith, S Veasey and O Windridge. Figures are by B Holloway and S Veasey. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Mark Baister.

10 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

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| CAT | 2021 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
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| CAR 10 | 1999 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 10: Roman Pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> |
| CifA | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i> |
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Loughton, M	Forth-coming	<i>Colchester Institute Pottery</i>
Thompson, I	1982	<i>Grog-tempered 'Belgic' Pottery of south-eastern England</i>

11 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
Bronze Age (Late)	Late Bronze Age, period from c 1000 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBM	ceramic building material, ie brick/tile
Cifa	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
evaluation	a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork, which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area. This may take the form of an intrusive investigation of a percentage of the site, geophysical or topographical survey. The results of this investigation will establish the requirements for any further work.
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
Iron Age (Early)	Early Iron Age, period from c 600 – 400BC
Iron Age (Late)	Late Iron Age (LIA), period from c 100 – 50 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A cces S to the I ndex of A rchaeological I nvestigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
ws	written scheme of investigation

12 Contents of archive

Finds: Part of one box

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1746)

ECCPS brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (feature and layer sheets, finds record)

Site digital photos and log

Inked sections

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1746)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Site data

Survey data

13 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMER:2022.005.

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ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



Colchester Archaeological Trust

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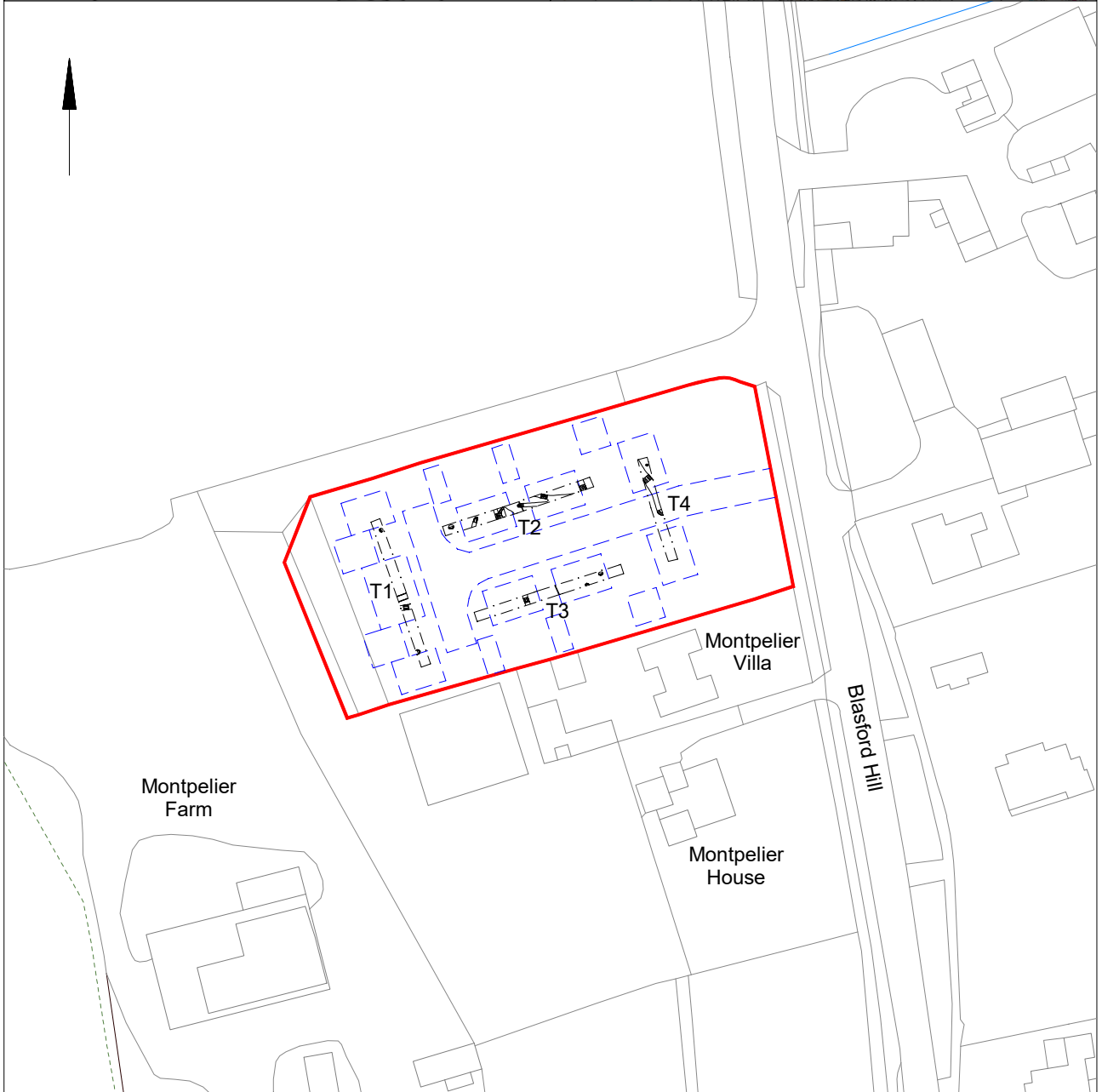
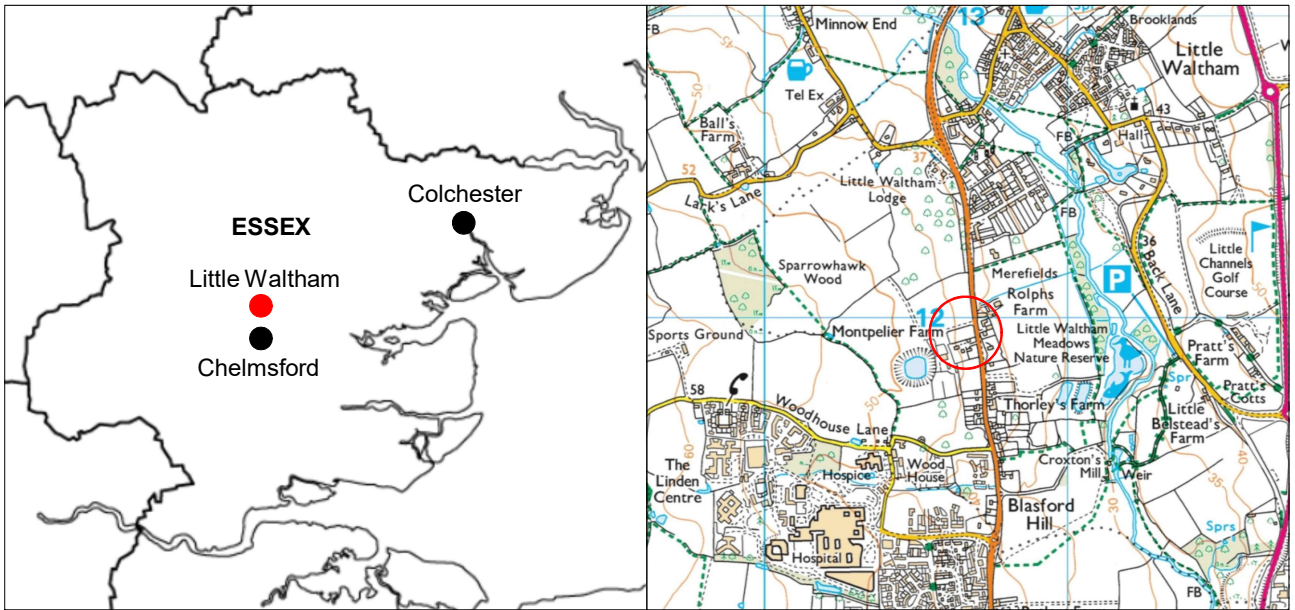
email: sv@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 25/11/2021

Appendix 1 Context list

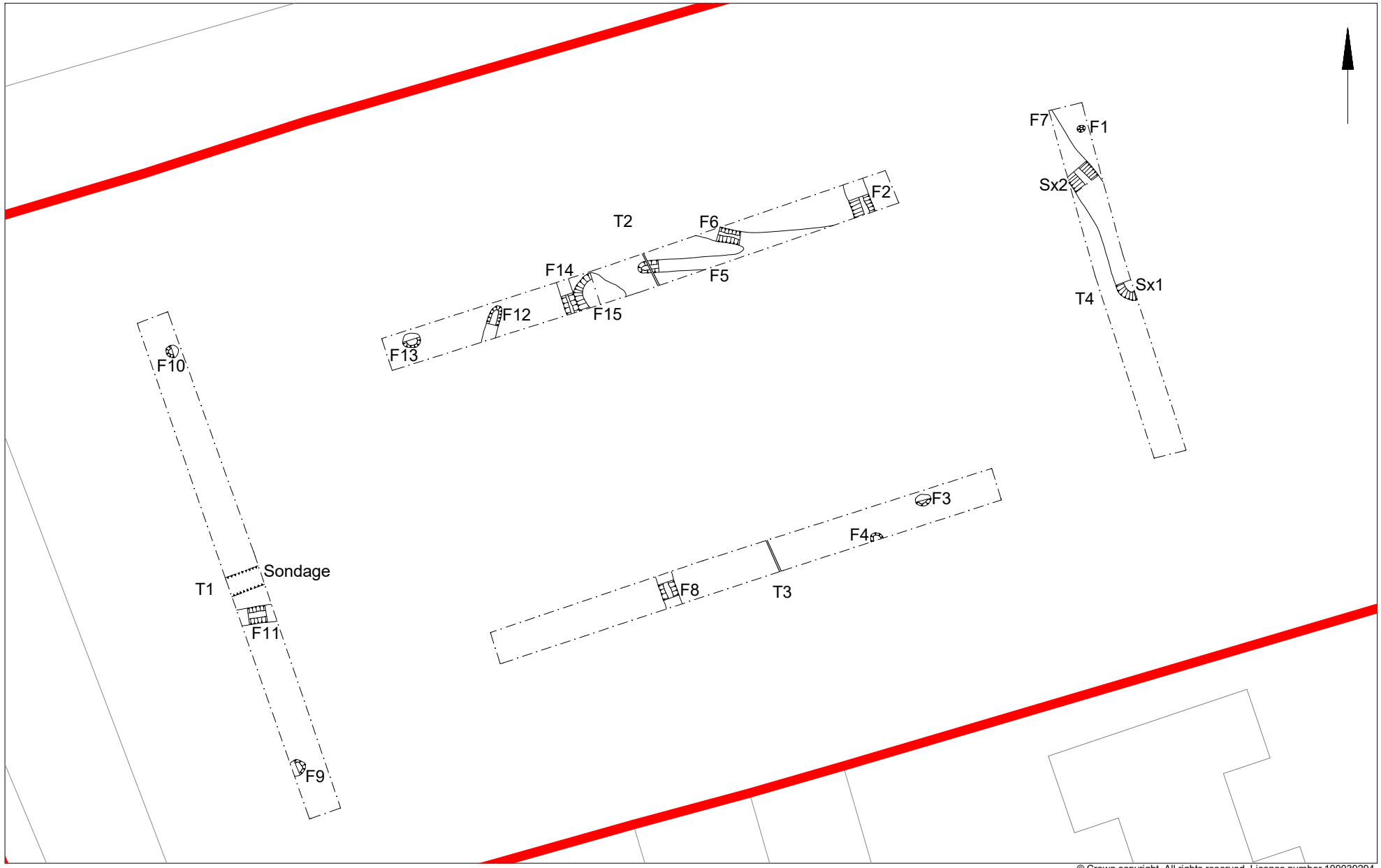
Trench no.	Context	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
All	L1	-	Topsoil	firm moist dark grey/brown clayey silt	Undated
All	L2	-	Subsoil	firm moist medium grey/brown clayey silt with charcoal flecks	Post-glacial
All	L3	-	Natural	firm moist medium orange/brown clay	Post-glacial
T4	F1	1, 2	Pit	Friable moist dark brown sandy silt clay with charcoal flecks	AD 125/150-280/320?
T2	F2	3	Ditch	Firm moist medium grey/brown sandy silt clay with charcoal flecks, daub flecks	Late Iron Age/early Roman
T3	F3	4	Pit	Friable dry medium grey/brown sandy silt clay	Late Iron Age/early Roman
T3	F4	5	Pit	Soft moist medium grey/brown sandy silt clay	AD 69-180
T2	F5	6	Ditch	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 6%	Late Iron Age
T2	F6	7	Ditch	Firm moist medium grey/brown silt clay with charcoal flecks	Early Roman
T4	F7	8, 9	Ditch	Firm moist medium grey/brown sandy silt clay with charcoal flecks	Early Roman
T3	F8	10	Ditch	Firm moist medium grey/brown silt with charcoal flecks	Late Iron Age
T1	F9	11	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silt clay	Roman
T1	F10	12	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silt clay	Roman
T1	F11	13, 14	Ditch	Firm moist medium grey/brown silt clay	Late Iron Age
T2	F12	-	Gully	Firm moist medium brown silt clay and inclusions of: gravel 5% stone 15%	Undated
T2	F13	15	Pit	Firm moist medium brown silt clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 10%	Undated
T2	F14	16	Ditch	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 5%	Late Iron Age
T2	F15	17	?Pit	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 7%	Late Iron Age/early Roman



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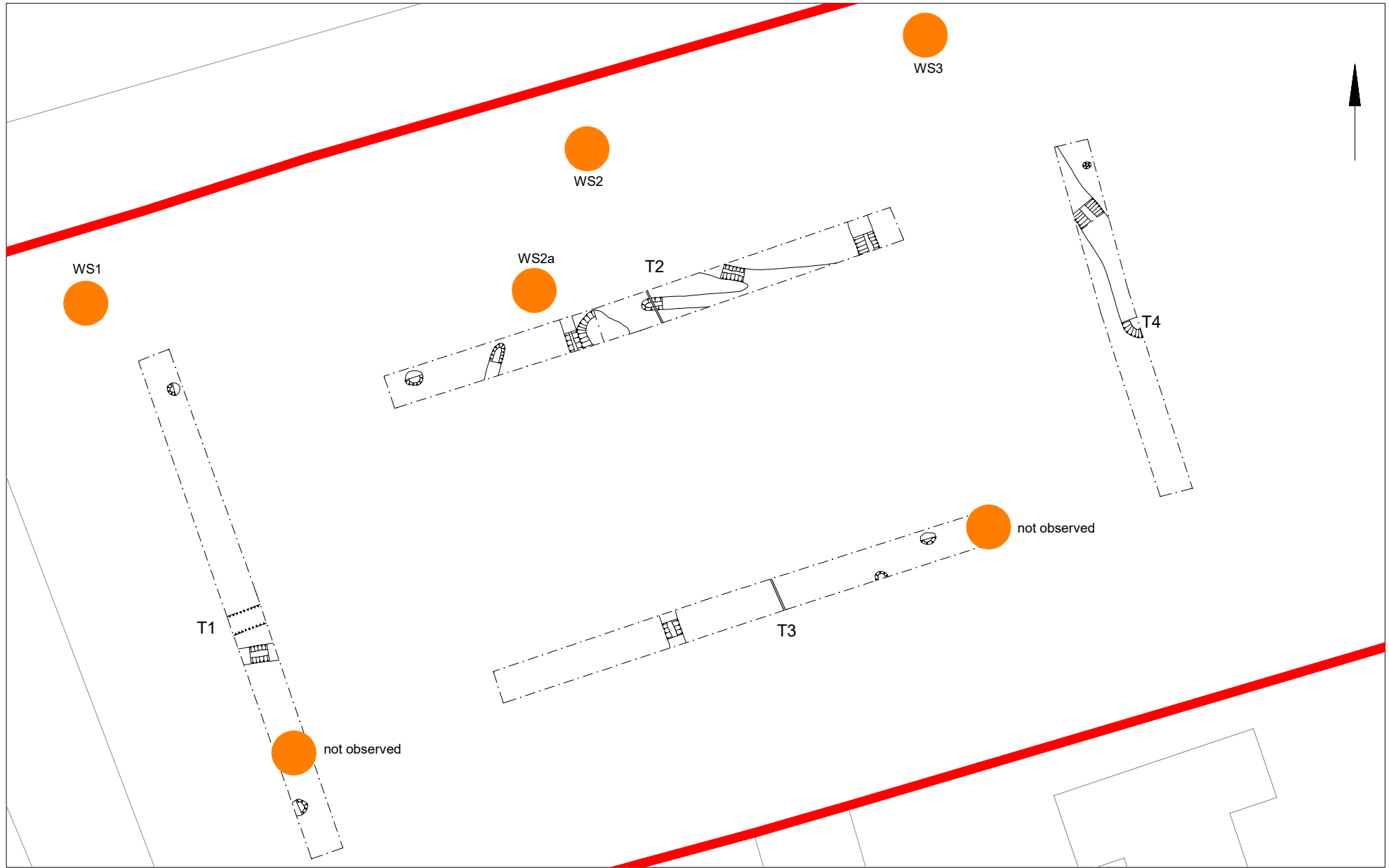
Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).



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Fig 2 Trenching results.





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Fig 3 Window sample locations (orange) in relation to the evaluation results.

0 20 m

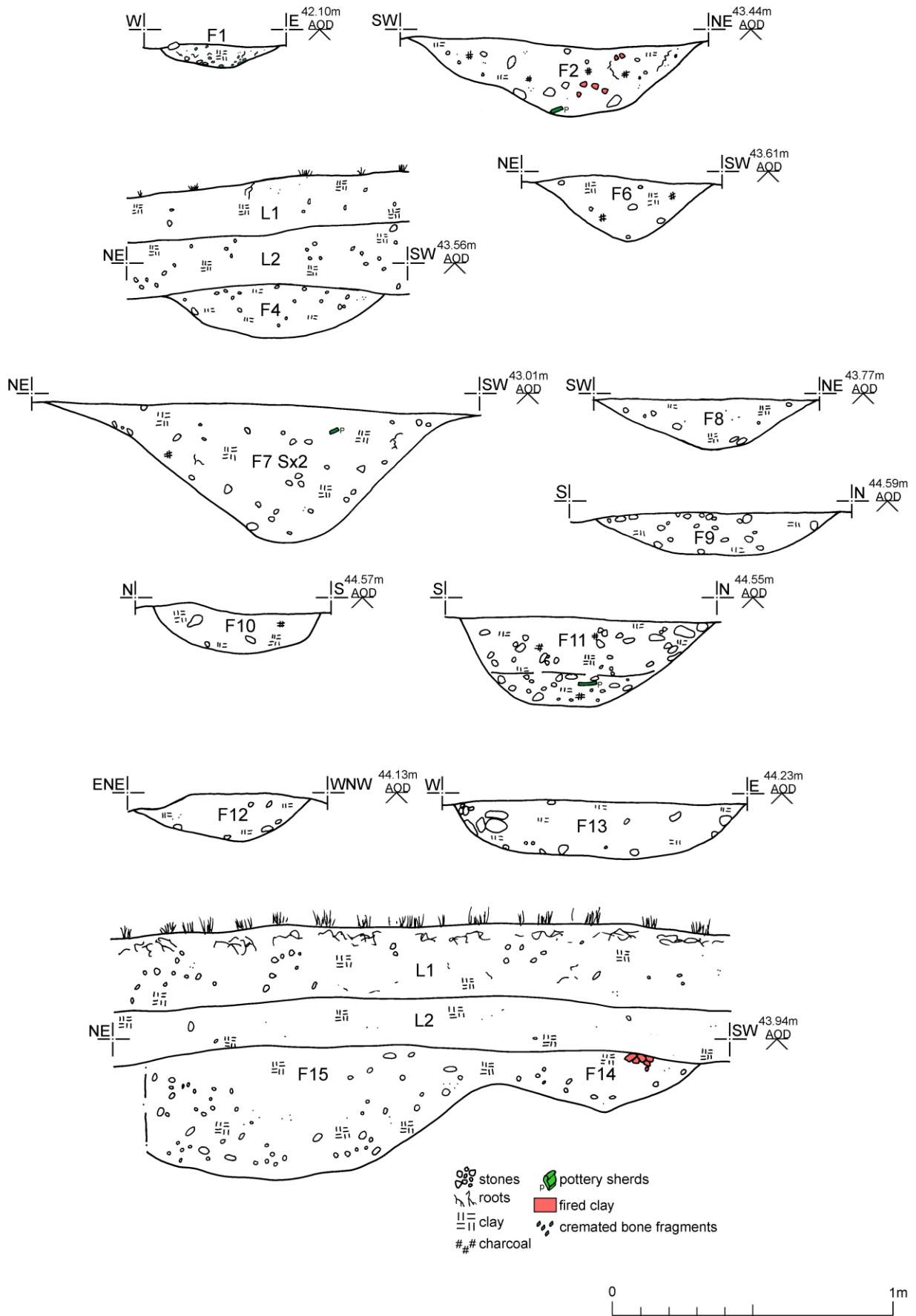


Fig 4 Feature and representative sections.

Summary for colchest3-431709

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-431709
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation on land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham, CM3 3PG
Activity type	Evaluation, Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	2021/09k
Planning Id	CHL/20/01907/OUT
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	01-Nov-2021 - 02-Nov-2021
Location	Land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Little Waltham, CM3 3PG NGR : TL 70650 11940 LL : 51.7801048577113, 0.472380019015403 12 Fig : 570650,211940
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Chelmsford Parish : Little Waltham
Project Methodology	Four trenches were mechanically excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. T1, T2, and T3 were 30m long and 1.8m wide and T4 was 21m long and 1.8m wide. Excavation of 4 window sample borehole were observed by a CAT archaeologist.

Project Results	<p>Archaeological evaluation was carried out on land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Little Waltham, Essex in advance of the construction of ten new dwellings. There are several nearby archaeological sites including a Roman settlement to the south-east and a multiperiod settlement and scheduled monument to the north.</p> <p>A total of 15 features were identified during this evaluation; seven pits, seven ditches and a gully. The finds recovered revealed the site is located within the vicinity of a settlement, perhaps related to the Roman settlement to the south-east. The fired-clay fragments perhaps indicating the presence of a wattle and daub structure. A small quantity of finds, including a shard of polychrome glass, possibly point to a higher status inhabitant.</p> <p>Four Window sample bore-holes were also observed, two of which contained material from a potential archaeological horizon.</p>
Keywords	<p>Ditch - ROMAN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ditch - LATE IRON AGE - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Amphora - ROMAN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Daub - LATE IRON AGE - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Ceramic - LATE IRON AGE - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Ceramic - ROMAN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Coin - ROMAN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus</p>
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
HER Identifiers	LWMV21
Archives	Physical Archive, Documentary Archive, Digital Archive - to be deposited with Chelmsford Museum

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation on land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham, CM3 3PG

NGR: TL 7065 1194 (centre)

District: Chelmsford

Parish: Little Waltham

Planning reference: CHL/20/01907/OUT

Commissioned by: Tayla Morhall of Amherst Homes Ltd

Curating museum: Chelmsford

Museum accession code: tbc

ECC project code: LWMV21

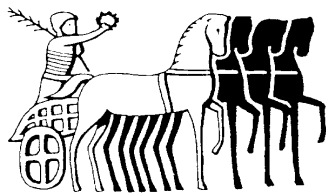
CAT project code: 2021/09k

Oasis project ID: colchest3-431709

Site managers: Chris Lister and Adam Wightman

ECC monitor: Mark Baister

This WSI written: 30/09/2021



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Site location and description

The proposed development site is currently an area of open land south of Little Waltham, land north-west of Montpelier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham, Essex (Fig 1). Site is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 7065 1194.

Proposed work

The planning application proposes the construction of ten residential dwellings with associated parking and any associated groundworks.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the ECC brief and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

There are no recorded archaeological sites within the site boundary, however an OS map from 1945-65 shows a building (possibly a post office) on the east end of site (<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/explore/#zoom=17&lat=51.78059&lon=0.47291&layers=219&b=1&marker=51.780213,0.472557>). This building does not appear on any other maps, however.

The EHER shows several important archaeological sites nearby. Approximately 200m to the south-east of the site Roman settlement remains were uncovered during excavation in the 1950s. Substantial amounts of Roman pottery was recovered, along with evidence for a timber-framed building with a gravel floor (EHER 6088). The settlement was dated to the 2nd century AD and postulated to be extensive.

Some 700m to the north is “*Settlement site at Ash Tree Corner*”, a Scheduled Monument (NHLE no 1002140). Excavations in the vicinity of the monument, during work for the Little Waltham bypass in the 1970s, uncovered an extensive multi-period landscape ranging in date from the Mesolithic to the 14th century (EHERs 6182, 6183, 6184, 6185, 6186, 6187, 6188). Remains uncovered included evidence of Prehistoric and Roman buildings, the Chelmsford-Braintree Roman road, cremation burials, a 2nd/3rd-century well, and a substantial Iron Age settlement with at least three major occupation phases.

An excavation to c 600m to the south of the site in 1995 uncovered a sub-rectangular enclosure of a Late Bronze Age date, containing the remains of a farmstead (EHER 6142). The presence of multiple cropmark concentrations to the east and north-east of the development site (EHERs 7345, 8942, 8942) suggests that the multi-period landscape uncovered during these previous investigations extends into the surrounding fields.

Additionally, timber-framed 15th and 17th-18th century houses (EHERs 30675, 30681, 30677, 30678, 30679), a 17th century malthouse (EHERs 15017, 48532), and a listed post-medieval red brick house (EHER 30680) have been found c 245-325m south of the site. A small worked flint flake was also found c 230m west of the site.

Given the above factors it is considered possible that archaeological features and deposits may survive in the proposed development area.

Planning background

The original planning application (CHL/20/01907/OUT) was submitted to Chelmsford City Council in December 2020 proposing the *construction of 10 dwellings with associated access*.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological remains a phased full archaeological condition was recommended. This follows the guidelines given in National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2019).

Requirement for work (Fig 1)

The required archaeological work will consist of an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and excavation. Details are given in a Project Brief written by ECCPS (*Brief for Programme of Archaeological evaluation and excavation at Land North-West of Montpelier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham* – ECC 2021).

It is proposed that four trenches be evaluated. All four are to be placed within the foundation trenches of the new dwellings. T1-T3 are to be 30m long, and T4 is to be 21m long; all four will be 1.8m wide. This equates to 111m of linear trenching covering 5% of the development area.

The archaeological work will aim to record the location, extent, date and character of any surviving archaeological remains within the area of the proposed development, and to assess the potential for further archaeological remains being present.

Specific areas of interest are:

- Evidence pertaining to previous land use(s).
- Evidence of any activity relating to the multi-period landscape to the north
- Evidence associated with the nearby Roman settlement site to the south-east

Further area excavation may be required should significant archaeological deposits/features be identified that cannot be preserved *in situ*. This will be decided by the ECCHEA on completion of the trial-trenching and report.

A meeting will be held on site once the trial trenching has been completed to define requirements for further work. A summary of the results and a plan of the findings with a completed spot-dating report of all finds will be available at the meeting.

General methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a, b)
- East of England Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2021)
- the Project Brief issued by ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECCPS 2021)

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to ECCHEA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from ECCHEA and/or the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT project officer and three archaeologists for two days.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway/Nigel Rayner/Harvey Furniss

Evaluation methodology

Where appropriate, modern overburden and any topsoil stripping/levelling will be performed using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. If no archaeologically significant deposits are exposed, machine excavation will continue until natural subsoil is reached.

Where necessary, areas will be cleaned by hand to ensure the visibility of archaeological deposits.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be excavated, planned and recorded.

There will be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. For linear features 1m wide sections will be excavated across their width to a total of 10% of the overall length. Discrete features, such as pits, will have 50% of their fills excavated, although certain features may be fully excavated. Complex archaeological structures such as walls, kilns, ovens or burials will be carefully cleaned, planned and fully recorded, but where possible left *in situ*. Only if it can be demonstrated that the complex structure/feature is likely to be destroyed by groundworks, and only then after discussion with the ECCHEA, will it be removed.

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits will be established. Therefore, a sondage will be excavated in each trench to test the stratigraphy of the site. This will occur in every trench unless it can be demonstrated that a feature excavated within a particular trench has clearly penetrated into natural.

A representative section will be drawn of each trench, to include ground level, the depth of machining within the trench and the depth of any sondages.

Trained CAT staff will use a metal detector to scan all trenches both before and during excavation. All spoil heaps will also be scanned and finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on proformarecord sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

The photographic record will consist of general site shots, and shots of all archaeological features and deposits. A photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. A photographic register will accompany the photographic record. This will detail as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot.

Trenches will not be backfilled until they have been signed off by the ECCHEA.

Site surveying

The evaluation trenches and any features will be surveyed by Total Station or GPS, unless the particulars of the features indicate that manual planning techniques should be employed. Normal scale for manual archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphical and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough).

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer / Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Trained CAT staff will process the samples and the flots will be sent to Val Fryer or Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF or LG will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF/LG and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

Human remains

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure or unless advised to do so by the project osteologist or ECCHEA. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the evaluation, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them and seek advice from the project osteologist. Following Historic England guidance (2018) if the human remains are not to be lifted, the project osteologist should be available to record the human remain *in situ* (i.e. a site visit). Conditions laid down by the DoJ license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and the ECCHEA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number. CAT may use local volunteers to assist with this task.

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT Staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Howard Brooks (Deputy Director). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton

animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman, small groups only)

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley

flints: Adam Wightman

environmental processing: Bronagh Quinn

project osteologist (human remains): Megan Seehra

or to outside specialists:

animal and human bone: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

radiocarbon dating: SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, Glasgow

conservation/x-ray: Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation) / Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

flint: Hazel Martingell

prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey

Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Gwladys Monteil

Roman brick/tile: Ian Betts (MOLA)

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

small finds: Nina Crummy

other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to ECCHEA.

A contingency will be made in the budget for scientific assessment/analysis if suitable deposits are identified. This can include soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floors and dark earth deposits and/or absolute dating (such as archaeomagnetic and radiocarbon). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice.

Post-excavation assessment

An updated post-excavation assessment will be submitted within 2 months or at an alternatively agreed time with the ECCHEA.

Where archaeological results do not warrant a post-excavation assessment then agreement will be sought from the ECCHEA to proceed straight to grey literature / publication.

Results

Notification will be given to ECCHEA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (Historic England 2016).

The report will be submitted within 2 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each excavated area will be given a 10 figure grid reference.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion. Appropriate discussion and results section assessing the site in relation to the Regional Research Frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An OASIS summary sheet shall be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the ECCHEA. This will be completed in digital form with a paper copy included with the archive. A copy (with trench plan) will also be emailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects (paul.gilman@me.com).

Publication of the results at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological fieldwork. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series.

A PDF copy of the full report will be uploaded by CAT to the OASIS website and the Colchester Archaeological Trust's Online Report Library (<http://cat.essex.ac.uk/>), both of which are publicly accessible.

Archive deposition

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

The paper archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within two months of the completion of the final publication report and confirmed in writing to the ECCHEA.

The digital archive resulting from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk) to safeguard the long-term curation of the digital records. The ECCHEA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre 2013) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive. A summary of the contents of the archives shall be supplied to the ECCHEA at the time of their deposition.

Monitoring

ECCHEA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given ECCHEA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with ECCHEA prior to them being carried out.

ECCHEA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of ECCHEA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

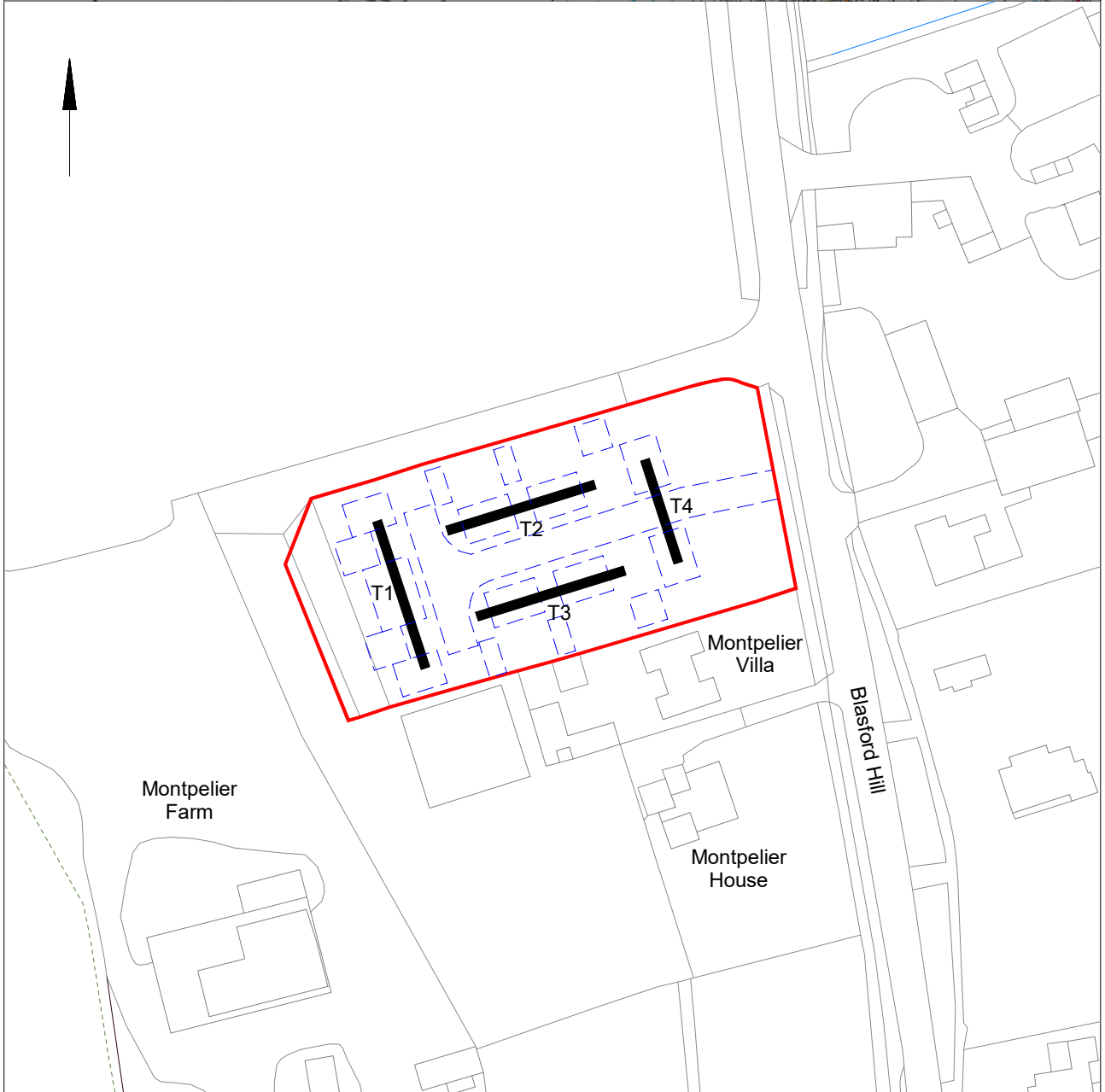
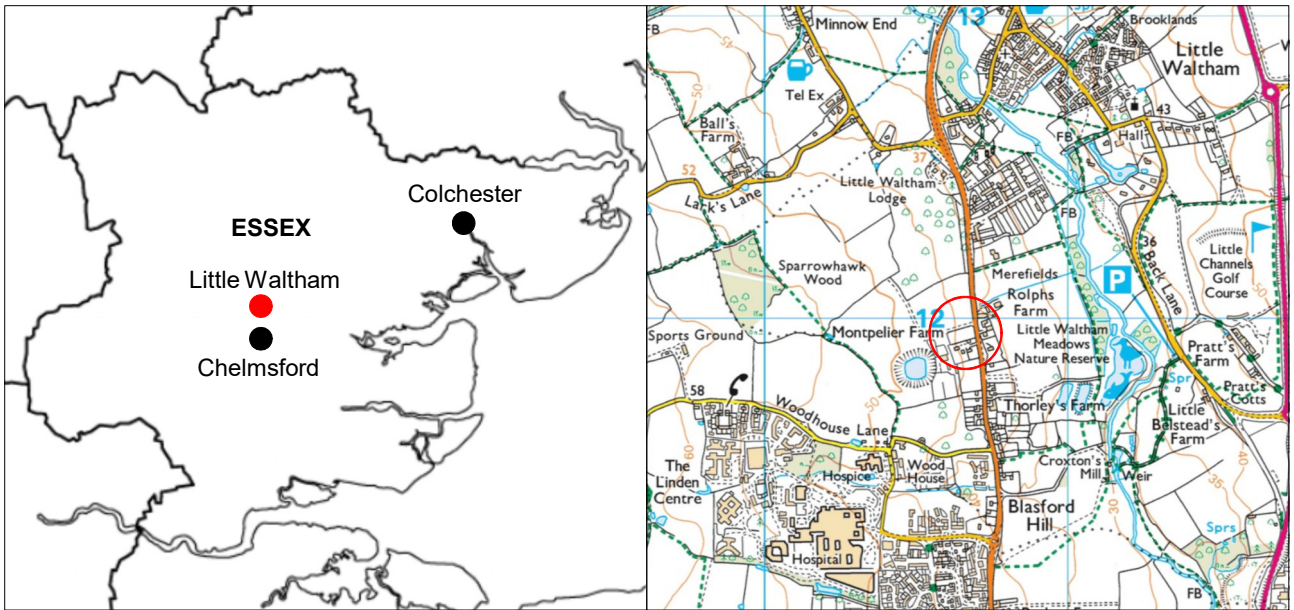
Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8)
CAT	2021	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Digital Curation Centre	2013	<i>Checklist for Data Management Plan v. 4.0</i>
ECCPS	2021	<i>Brief for Programme of Archaeological evaluation and excavation at Land North-West of Montpelier Villa, Blasford Hill, Little Waltham</i> By M Baister
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England	2016	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Historic England	2018	<i>The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project.</i> By S Mays, M Brickley & J Sidell
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

M Seehra



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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).