

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

CAT Report 578

Summary sheet

Address: Kingswode Hoe School, Sussex Road, Colchester, Essex	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9835 2528	Site codes: CAT project – 10/7d Museum accession – COLIM 2010.56
Type of work: Archaeological monitoring	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT)
Date of work: August-September 2010	Size of area investigated: 550m ²
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Related EHER numbers: 11673, 11641, 13146, 20509
Further seasons anticipated? Yes	Funding source: Developer
Final report: CAT Archive Report 578	
Periods represented: medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>The Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) undertook archaeological monitoring in August and September 2010 at Kingswode Hoe School during the installation of three relocatable classrooms at the rear of the school. Kingswode Hoe School is located to the west of Colchester town centre, north of Lexden Road and on the western side of Sussex Road. The grounds are located within an area designated as a scheduled monument under the Ancient Monuments Act of 1979 (Essex SM No.46).</p> <p>Excavations conducted in the 1930's revealed the site of a major Late Iron Age settlement to the north-east of the school defended on its western side by the Sheepen Dyke (Hawkes & Hull 1947). The Sheepen Dyke was a large earth bank and ditch thought to have been constructed in c.AD10 and levelled in AD43 following the Roman conquest. A later addition to the Sheepen Dyke, thought to have been added shortly before the Roman invasion, was projected by Hawkes and Hull (1947) to run across the south-eastern corner of Kingswode Hoe School (Fig 1). The south-eastern edge of a large Late Iron ditch, identified as the Sheepen Dyke extension, was uncovered by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) to the east of the school in 2009 (ECC FAU Report 2154). Sheepen became an industrial suburb of the Roman town and there is evidence of pottery kilns in the general area of the school including the playing fields where the relocatables are to be installed (Hull 1963, 155-7).</p> <p>The site work involved the continual monitoring of all groundworks associated with the relocation of the three classroom units from the front of the school to the rear. All excavations were undertaken using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket. Firstly, fifty-two square pits between 0.7m and 1.1m in size were excavated to a depth of between 0.6m</p>	

and 0.8m (Fig 1). These were subsequently filled with concrete and formed foundations/piers on which the relocatable classrooms were placed. This phase of the works took place in August 2010 during the school summer holidays and involved three days of archaeological supervision. The installation of the sewage pumping station and associated pipes took place in the October half-term with archaeological monitoring spread over three days. The pit for the underground pumping station was 2m² in size and roughly 2m in depth (Fig 1). The pumping station was connected to all three relocatables and the main building to the east by pipes laid in a 600mm deep trench excavated with a 400mm wide bucket (Fig 1). The overall length of the pipe trenches was 56m.

With the exception of the eastern ten metres of the pipe trench, the excavations were through a medium grey/brown sandy-silt topsoil with a thin layer of turf (L1, c.140mm deep). Modern artefacts were noted in the topsoil, and some of the unstratified (U/S) finds recovered most likely originate from this layer (see Appendix 1). A lighter, slightly orange, brown sandy-loam subsoil containing few inclusions was stratified beneath L1 (L2, c.250mm deep). Beneath L2, the yellow/orange glacial sands and gravels (L3) began at a depth of c.400mm below modern ground level (L3). However, the upper 200-300mm of L3 was often silty and brownish in colour which is interpreted as either a cover loam or the disturbed surface of the natural sand.

Five archaeological features were identified during the monitoring. Each had a distinguishably darker grey/brown sandy silt fill than L2. A post-hole (F1), a small pit (F3), two shallow linears (F2 and F4) and a large pit spanning two of the pads (F5), were recorded. Four of the features contained post-medieval/modern brick and/or peg-tile fragments (F1, F2, F4 and F5). These were not retained. The small pit F3 contained no dating evidence but appeared to be cut through the topsoil and, therefore, is assumed to be modern. Kingswode Hoe was originally a Victorian suburban house set in its own grounds (Kingswode House, built 1888). It was converted to a school in the 1950's. It is probable that the features identified are associated with landscape/garden features in the grounds of the Victorian house. All five features were identified in the square holes excavated for the foundation pads. No archaeological features or deposits were identified in the service trench despite the eastern end of the trench crossing the line of the Sheepen Dyke as projected by the ECC FAU evaluation (Fig 1). This could be attributable to the presence of tarmac and hogging over the eastern end of the trench which negated the need to excavate to a depth at which it would have been distinguishable, as well as to the difficulties associated with working in a narrow trench.

The artefacts recovered during the excavations were mostly retrieved from the spoil heap or from the bucket of the mechanical excavator. Finds dating to the ?prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods were recovered (see Appendix 1). However, the number of artefacts was low suggesting little archaeological activity in the immediate vicinity. No evidence of any prehistoric pitting or of Sheepen Dyke was observed during the works.

ECC FAU Report 2154. 2010 Kingswode Hoe School, Sussex Road, Colchester, Essex: Archaeological Evaluation, by P Sparrow.

Hawkes, C.F.C. & Hull, M.R. 1947 Camulodunum. First Report on the Excavations at Colchester 1930-1939, Society of Antiquaries of London Report Vol. XIV. Oxford University Press.

Hull, M.R. 1963 The Roman Potters' Kilns of Colchester, Society of Antiquaries of London Report No. XXI. Oxford University Press.

Previous summaries/reports: ECC FAU Project No:2154

Keywords: Sheepen Dyke, Victorian landscape/garden features

Significance: neg

Author of summary: Adam Wightman

Date of summary: December 2010

Appendix 1: the finds

by Stephen Benfield

The finds recovered during the watching brief were all unstratified and are listed below (Table 1). The post-Roman pottery fabrics refer to the Colchester fabric series listed in *CAR 7*.

finds no	finds	spot date
1	Pottery: Fabric 21D handle fragment (abundant white flint & quartz in orange-brown fabric) (Walker 1991, 109).	medieval, c ?13thC
	Fabric 40, glazed, rim (6 g).	post-med, 17th-18thC
	Fabric 40 fragment from a chimneypot (20 g), red fabric with black sooted interior (<i>CAR 7</i> , 191).	modern, 19thC
	Fabric 51B (21 g) flower pot sherd, abraded.	modern, 18th-19thC
	CBM: Brick piece (189 g), not frogged, dull brownish-red fabric slightly vesicular, sparse unmodified flint up to 4 mm, abundant fine clear (glassy) quartz visible under magnification, thickness 70 mm.	post-medieval/modern
	Roman flat tile pieces 2 @ 43 g, red to orange-red fabric, abraded; Roman <i>imbrex</i> tile piece, 2@ 87 g, red fabric, thickness 13 mm.	Roman
	Peg-tile, pieces and fragments 10 @ 422 g, red to orange-red fabric, two pieces with peg hole, thickness 10-13 mm, dated med/post-med/mod.	medieval/post-medieval/modern
	Miscellaneous abraded brick fragments, 10 @ 88 g, various fabrics, mostly light slightly vesicular and slightly soft.	post-medieval/modern
	Brick corner piece, 1 @ 408 g, red to orange-red fabric.	post-medieval/modern
	Small find: Coin (SF1), one penny, reverse crowned portcullis, dated modern, 1971 or later. Much of surface covered in iron mineral sand preserving some organic fragments, regular machine struck bronze, plain edge (not milled) numbers 9 & 8 visible on obverse, weight 3.7 g (including adhering mineral deposit).	modern
Other finds: Fe nail (5 g) slightly bent, square section, 42 mm long.		
Struck flint flake, 1@ 5 g snapped?, cortex on dorsal face with earlier small flake scar.	prehistoric?	
Clay pipe: stem fragments 3 @ 17 g, between 35-40 mm long, central bores vary between 2-3 mm.	post-medieval-modern.	

Table 1 Finds (Key: US = unstratified; CBM = Ceramic building material)

Discussion

All of the finds are unstratified. There is a single flint flake of probable prehistoric date and a small quantity of Roman tile which includes two pieces of *imbrex*. The remainder of the closely dated finds are of medieval, post-medieval or modern date. Most of this consists of pieces of ceramic building material (CBM), especially pieces from peg-tiles. There is also a sherd of post-medieval pottery of 17th-18th century date and pieces of clay pipe stems. Of note is a single medieval pottery handle sherd. This may be a product of potteries in the Harlow area (Fabric 21D) and is dated as probably 13th century (Walker 1991, 109). A single coin recovered (SF1) is a modern penny which can be dated to after 1971.

References

CAR 7 2000, John Cotter, Post-Roman pottery from excavation in Colchester, 1971-85

Walker, H., 1991 'The medieval and later pottery' in Andrews, D., An archaeological sequence at the edge of Old Harlow marketplace, *Essex Archaeology and History*, Volume 22, 101-114

Appendix 2: contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing;

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Copy of the excavation brief issued by ECC HEM.
- 1.2 Copy of the WSI produced by CAT
- 1.3 Copy of the ECC FAU evaluation report
- 1.4 4 A3 site plans provided by developer
- 1.5 quotes, schedule of works, and email correspondence with the clients

2 Site Archive

- 2.1 Digital photo record
- 2.2 Attendance register
- 2.3 Context sheets (F1-F5, L1-L3)
- 2.4 Finds register
- 2.5 Site photographic record on cd
- 2.6 2 A4 section sheets

3 Research Archive

- 3.1 Monitoring (client) report
- 3.2 Finds report

Finds

The finds occupy less than one box

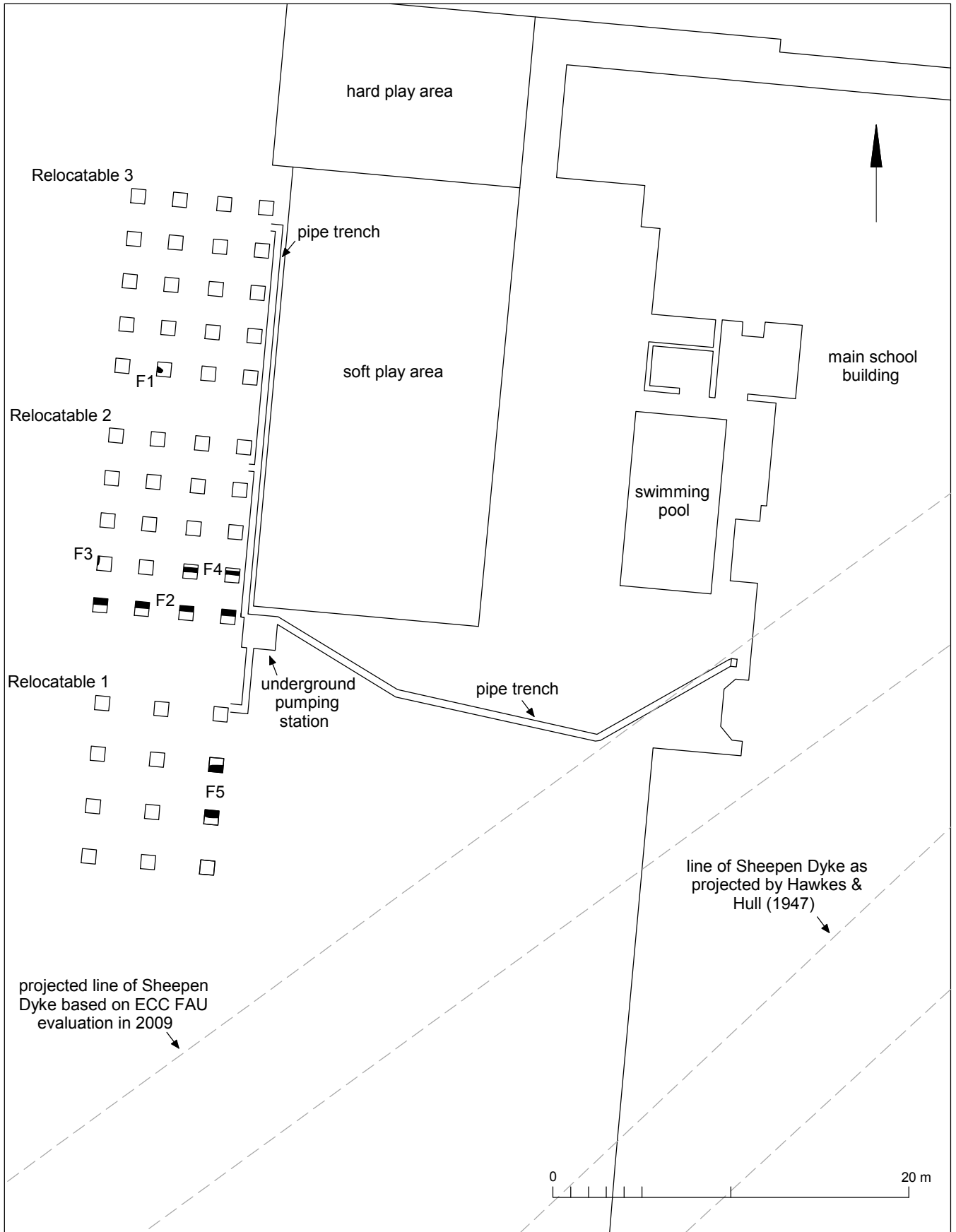


Fig 1 Plan showing the contractors excavations.