

An archaeological excavation and watching brief at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3LE

October 2015 - January 2016



by Laura Pooley

with contributions by Steven Benfield
illustrations by Mark Baister and Emma Holloway

on behalf of PlayFootball Ltd

Planning reference: 150562
CAT project ref.: 15/07f
NGR: TL 989 258 (centre)
Colchester Museum accession code: COLEM 2016.5
UAD ref: ECC3645
OASIS reference: colchest3-217574



Colchester Archaeological Trust
Roman Circus House,
off Circular Road North,
Colchester,
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785
email: archaeologists@catuk.org

CAT Report 905
January 2016

Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Results	2
5	Finds	5
6	Discussion	7
7	Acknowledgements	7
8	References	8
9	Abbreviations and glossary	9
10	Contents of archive	9
11	Archive deposition	9

Figures

after p10

- Appendix 1 Finds Catalogue
- Appendix 2 List of Archaeological Projects at St Helena
- Appendix 3 CAT WSI
- Appendix 4 OASIS Summary

List of tables, photographs and figures

Cover: general site shot

Table 1	Types of find	5
Table 2	Pottery fabrics	5

Photograph 1	Wall foundation F1 and gravel surface L4	3
Photograph 2	Lighting pit 5 and F2	4
Photograph 3	Lighting pit 1	4
Photograph 4	Lighting pit 18 and L7	4

Fig 1	Site location	
Fig 2	Site location in relation to nearby archaeological points of interest	
Fig 3	Portico wall plan, incorporating the original excavation of the wall in the 1930s and recent CAT investigations	
Fig 4	Detailed plans of the lighting pits	
Fig 5	Sections	

1 Summary

St Helena School lies on the eastern side of the nationally important Late Iron Age and early Roman site of Sheepen, which is the northern focus of the oppidum of Camulodunum. It is also the location of two Romano-British temples.

Groundworks associated with the construction of football pitches, a pavilion and services took place at several locations across the school site. A cable trench revealed part of the foundation of the north side of the outer precinct wall of 'Temple 2', along with an external buttress and gravel surface.

Other groundworks to the northeast of Temple 2 revealed a Roman agricultural/drainage ditch and demolition layer. It is difficult to say if they were associated with the temple complex or other industrial or domestic activity occurring nearby.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological work at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex which was carried out in October 2015-January 2016. The work was commissioned by Steve Bennett of PlayFootball Ltd in advance of the development of football pitches and associated infrastructure, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Colchester Borough Council Planning Services (CBCPS), the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor Jess Tipper 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 paragraphs 128, 129 and 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Excavation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCPS 2015), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with CBCPS (CAT 2015).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), 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 excavation* (ClfA 2014a), *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014b) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014c).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), and also on the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) created by Colchester Borough Council, and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

St Helena School is in an area of high archaeological importance. It is within the enclosed *oppidum* of *Camulodunum* - a nationally important late Iron Age and Roman fortress whose 12-square-mile extent is now occupied by modern Colchester.

Camulodunum had two principal centres. One was at Gosbecks (the farmstead and possible the home of Cunobelin) and the other was at Sheepen (the trading depot and quayside). St Helena School is located on the northern side of Sheepen, and part of the site (and school) is a Scheduled Monument (no. 1002173) (EHER 11673).

St Helena School shares a site with two Romano-Celtic temples (Colchester Temples 2 & 3, Crummy 1980) (Figs 2-3). These temples were first discovered in 1935 during excavations prior to the construction of the school and the Colchester bypass (now the 'Avenue of Remembrance'). One of the temples (Temple 2) lies underneath the northern edge of the main school buildings, while a second, much smaller temple (Temple 3) lies beneath the boundary of the north edge of the school grounds and the Avenue of Remembrance (EHER 11684 and 13126).

Apart from the major excavation in the 1930s, there have been many small-scale archaeological projects at St Helena. These projects confirm the presence of extremely important archaeological remains at St Helena. Excavations in 2014 (CAT Reports 699 & 825) prior to the construction of the science and technology block exposed the Temple 2 precinct wall, a possible shrine, and a large possible 'votive' pit containing a hoard of Roman coins.

The Roman remains are not deeply-buried, and are susceptible to damage from modern construction.

The proposed sports pitches occupy a large block of land to the east of the school. In 2014 CAT excavated four test pits in the corners of the proposed pitches (CAT Report 816). These showed the level at which archaeological remains were present and might be anticipated. Working clockwise from NW to SE, the 'archaeological level' in the four TPs was 540mm, 580mm, unclear, and 550mm respectively *below present ground level*.

In 2015 CAT undertook an evaluation (CAT Report 835) across the site of the proposed sports pavilion which revealed thirteen archaeological features, including a gravel surface. As the evaluation trench was approximately 65m outside the precinct wall of Temple 2, and 90m east of the nearest temple-related structure, the evaluated area is clearly peripheral to the temple complex. Whether the features excavated in 2015 are connected with the temple complex is difficult to say, and it may be that they are of an industrial or domestic character.

A complete list of recent projects at St Helena is given as Appendix 1 to this report.

4 Results (Figs 2-5)

Unless otherwise stated, the contractor carried out all groundworks under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

Electricity Cable Trench (Figs 2-3 and 5)

A cable trench was dug to supply electricity to the new sports pavilion. The trench was 300mm wide and 650-750mm deep. It was dug through modern topsoil (L1, c 200mm deep), an accumulation horizon (L2, c 200mm deep) and onto natural silts (L3).

The only archaeological feature identified was located towards the west end of the cable trench. Foundation F1 (c 500-600mm thick) was the remains of the north side of the outer precinct wall of Temple 2, encountered at a depth of 300-350mm below ground level. Part of the wall had been robbed out but an external buttress surrounded by a gravel surface (L4, 80-90mm thick) had also survived. The cable trench was stepped slightly at this point to avoid the surviving precinct wall and was instead dug through the robbed section.



Photograph 1 Wall foundation F1 and gravel surface L4

Water Pipe Trench (Figs 2 and 5)

A pipe trench was dug to supply water to the new sports pavilion. The trench was 300mm wide and 650-700mm deep. It was dug through modern topsoil (L1, 300mm deep), an accumulation horizon (L2, 210mm deep) and onto natural silts (L3). No archaeological features were encountered. Some residual Roman material was observed in L1 but not retained.

A small slot was dug in the corner of the caretaker's front garden to locate the existing water pipe. The water pipe was identified at a depth of 600mm. The slot was dug through modern topsoil (L1).

Strip of the Sports Pitches and Pavilion

An area (approximately 10m x 10m) across the footprint of the football pitches was reduced by approximately 100mm to level the ground surface. This 100mm was dug through modern topsoil (L1). Crush was then laid over the entire area.

Turf and modern topsoil (L1) was also removed from the area of the new sports pavilion to allow for the instillation of piling mats. No archaeology was observed in the up-cast of the piles.

Fence around the Sports Pitches

Fence posts were hand dug around the outside of the sports pitches. They were mainly dug through crush and modern topsoil (L1) to a depth of 600mm from raised ground level.

Lighting Pits (Figs 2 and 4-5)

Twenty-two lighting pits were dug across the football pitches. Excavated by a CAT archaeologist they measured 1m² by 1m deep.

LP1-LP17

All seventeen lighting pits were dug through crush (20-200mm deep), modern topsoil (L1, 200-320mm deep), an accumulation horizon (L2, 400-620mm deep) and onto natural silts (L3). No archaeological features were observed in the trenches unless otherwise stated below.

LP5 A V-shaped Roman gully (F2) aligned northeast to southwest was identified in the pit. It was probably agricultural or for drainage.

LP16 A modern drain (F3) was identified in the pit containing residual Roman material.



Photograph 2
Lighting pit 5 and F2



Photograph 3
Lighting pit 1

LP18

LP18 was dug through 400mm of L1, 500mm of L2 and onto a Roman demolition layer (L7) containing clay blocks, ceramic building material, pottery and animal bone.



Photograph 4 Lighting pit 18 and L7

LP19-LP22

Four lighting pits were dug through crush (150-350mm), L1 (100-260mm) and onto a layer of modern disturbance (L5, 200-700mm deep) containing residual Roman material and modern concrete. L5 sealed natural silt (L6). No archaeological features were observed in the trenches unless otherwise stated below.

LP22 The top of LP22 had been heavily disturbed by a modern plastic land drain.

5 Finds by Stephen Benfield

Introduction

Finds, consisting primarily of pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) of Late Iron Age (LIA) and Roman date, were recovered. Small quantities of other finds were also recovered, including Roman painted wall plaster, building stone and animal bone. Only a small number of finds are of post-medieval or modern date. All of the find types are listed and quantified in Table 1.

Finds type	No.	Wt/g.
Pottery	62	1275
CBM	42	12266
Fired clay	1	15
Painted plaster	2	78
Stone	6	6275
Nails (iron)	1	7
Animal bone	8	112

Table 1 Types of find

The pottery was recorded (quantified) by fabric and is listed in Table 2. The pottery fabrics refer to the Colchester Roman fabric series (*CAR 10*) and to the post-Roman fabric series (*CAR 7*). Pottery vessel forms refer to the Camulodunum Roman pottery type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947, Hull 1958). All of the pottery is listed by context in the finds appendix, Appendix 1.

Fabric	Fabric description	No.	Wt/g.
<i>LIA & Roman</i>			
AJ	Amphorae, Dressel 20	4	386
AR	'Arretine' samian	1	27
BASG	South Gaulish plain samian	3	32
BSW	Black surface wares	2	13
CW	Eggshell ware (Italian)	1	1
EC	Early Colchester colour-coated ware	1	11
DJ	Coarse oxidised and related wares	8	119
GTW	Grog-tempered wares (Late Iron Age-type)	7	55
GX	Other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares	1	9
HZ	Large storage jars in heavily-tempered fabrics	3	164
HZ(G)	Grog-tempered large storage jars	11	127
RCW	Romanising coarse wares	11	55
TD	Mortaria - Verulamium region	2	78
TN	<i>Terra-nigra</i>	2	30
TZ	Mortaria, buff fabric mortaria primarily from Colchester	4	149
<i>LIA & Roman Total</i>		61	1256
<i>Post Roman</i>			
40	Post-medieval red earthenwares (general)	1	19
<i>Pottery total</i>		62	1275

Table 2 Pottery fabrics

Discussion

Most of the finds were recovered from layers (topsoil, accumulation and surfaces) and were quite broken-up. A significant number of finds are abraded. This suggests that many of them are likely to be residual in the contexts from which they were recovered.

The most closely datable of the finds recovered is the pottery. Most of this can be dated to the Late Iron Age (LIA) and Early Roman period and is closely comparable with pottery among a large assemblage from the adjacent Sheepen site (Hawkes & Hull 1947) where the main period of activity is currently dated c AD 5-60/61 (Niblett 1985, Table 1).

Pottery of LIA-type consists of grog-tempered wares (GTW) while sherds from storage jars in grog-tempered fabric (HZ(G)) also broadly represent a LIA-type. This pottery is current during the period of the late 1st century BC-mid 1st century AD and is probably rapidly superseded at Colchester by pottery of Roman technique and manufacture soon after the conquest. One feature of the Sheepen site is a large number of early imports and these are also present in the assemblage. There is one sherd from an Arretine (AR) platter (L1(14)) which is likely to be a pre-conquest import and would not be current later than the immediate conquest period. Also sherds of micaceous terra nigra (TN) from a platter (LP5 (F2)), can be broadly dated to the early-mid 1st century.

Pottery that can be closely-dated to the post-conquest period, or which is probably of post-conquest date, includes sherds from imported South Gaulish samian (BASG) (dated mid-late 1st century), Spanish oil amphorae (Dressel 20) (AJ) imported from the 1st-into the 3rd century, a sherd from a eggshell ware cup (CW) of form Cam 64 (pre-Flavian) and a jar of form Cam 218 in Fabric BSW (mid-late 1st/early 2nd century). There are examples of mortaria from Colchester (TZ) and in a sandy fabric most probably from the Verulamium region (TD); also sherds from large storage jars (HZ) and buff/oxidised sherds probably from flagons and bowls (DJ). Other coarsewares include sherds in Romanising fabrics (RCW) and one sherd of Roman greyware (GX). Most of this pottery could also be accommodated within the period of intense Early Roman occupation at Sheepen (up to c AD 60) but some could date to later in the Roman period. One sherd from a Dressel 20 amphora, from L5, is of a fabric type that might indicate a 2nd-3rd century date. However, while none of the more closely-dated pottery need date later than the 1st century some is abraded suggesting that it might be residual in later contexts.

While not closely-dated, some of the Roman building materials recovered (brick/tile & stone) suggest they might date to the 2nd century or later. One piece of tegula (L2 (LP5)) has a lower cut away that has been suggested is of a type that dates to the 2nd-3rd century (Warry 2006), although this method of dating is probably not reliable (certainly in relation to individual pieces rather than larger groups). Some of the Roman brick/tile also has been reused with mortar covering broken edges possibly indicating it was of some age at the point of reuse. It can be noted that while most of the tile is red/orange in colour, a few pieces of cream/white Roman *tegula* roof tile and brick are present among the assemblage.

The building stone consists of several rough (irregular shaped) pieces recovered from L1, although none of these have any traces of mortar on their surfaces. While all of this stone was recovered from the topsoil layer it appears most likely to be associated with Roman activity on the site rather than later. Although slightly mixed in terms of their grain size and cementation/hardness, almost all the pieces are white/pale grey limestone that contains dark green/olive sand. The stone is not positively identified or sourced, but can be compared with greensand limestone from Kent, commonly referred to as Kentish ragstone. This type of limestone building material is not thought to have been imported into Roman Colchester (certainly not in any quantity) until the early 2nd century or later.

Of note are two small pieces of Roman painted wall plaster recovered from an area of modern disturbance (L5). One has a dark olive/black line on white background painted on a thin white mortar skim over pink *opus signinum* (*op sig*) plaster. The other is painted red white, the white and red areas meeting at a straight line (the red painted over white) and also on an *op sig* plaster backing. These pieces are almost certainly to

be associated with buildings on the site and indicate some sophistication to the decoration of the Roman buildings here.

In terms of the finds associated with Roman or probable Roman contexts a single sherd of sandy red ware was recovered from below the wall F1 and this is probably of early Roman date. A gully, feature F2 (LP5), produced a small number of sherds that are mostly of LIA -type with one Roman coarseware sherd (BSW) and sherds of imported *terra-nigra* indicating a mid 1st century date for the group. A small piece of animal bone from this feature is probably from a sub-adult pig or sheep. A demolition layer, L7 (LP5) also produced a few Roman sherds that can only be broadly dated to the mid 1st-2nd century. It also contained pieces of Roman brick and tile, including a tessera (flooring) cube. Both the pottery and the tile from L7 is abraded and indicates that this material might be of some age so that a mid-late Roman date might be appropriate. A piece of animal bone that is probably from a cow tibia was also recovered from this layer. It should be noted that the few pieces of animal bone recovered are in poor condition suggesting that bone may only be poorly preserved here.

A small number of finds of post-Roman date, including peg-tile pieces (medieval-post-medieval/modern) a post-medieval brick and a single sherd of post-medieval pottery (Fabric 40) dated to the 17-19C, were recovered from the topsoil (L1) and an area of modern disturbance (L5). Almost all of these were recovered from L1.

6 Discussion

St Helena School is the location of two Romano-British temples first discovered and excavated by the Colchester Excavation Committee in 1935 (Hull 1958, 224-34). Present day groundworks for an electricity cable trench revealed two significant archaeological contexts associated with 'Temple 2'. Temple 2 was a late 1st-century Romano-Celtic temple within a sacred precinct defined by an outer precinct wall (*temenos*).

The cable trench revealed the foundation of the north side of the outer precinct wall (F1) and an associated gravel surface (L4) (Fig 3). Significantly, not only did the cable trench reveal that the precinct wall had survived at this location but that it included an external buttress. Although the line of the outer precinct wall was established in 1935 it was only excavated at frequent intervals along its length. This means that a plan of the buttresses along the wall is incomplete, and the discovery of a buttress during these groundworks is an important addition to our understanding of the wall.

Gravel surfaces are a recurring theme at St Helena, and have been seen at several locations both inside and outside the temple precinct. The location of a gravel surface outside the north side of the precinct wall was also identified during the 1935 excavations (Hull 1958, 232).

Two other archaeological contexts were identified during groundworks to the northwest of Temple 2. It is difficult to say whether the Roman agricultural/drainage ditch (F2) and demolition layer (L7) are associated to the temple complex or are of an industrial or domestic character.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Steve Bennett of PlayFootball Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by CL, B Holloway, E Sanford and E Holloway. Site plans were prepared by M Baister. The project was monitored for CBCPS by Jess Tipper.

8 References

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

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---|
| CAR 6 | 1992 | Colchester Archaeological Report 6: <i>Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilberd School, and other sites in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by P Crummy |
| CAR 7 | 2000 | Colchester Archaeological Report 7: <i>Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester 1971-85</i> , by J Cotter |
| CAR 10 | 1999 | Colchester Archaeological Report 10: <i>Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , by Robin Symonds and Sue Wade |
| CAR 11 | 1995 | Colchester Archaeological Report 11: <i>Camulodunum II</i> , by C F C Hawkes and P Crummy |
| CAT | 2015 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological excavation at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex</i> |
| CAT Report 131 | 2001 | <i>An archaeological watching brief at Colchester Institute, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: January-March 2001</i> |
| CAT Report 188 | 2002 | <i>An archaeological watching brief on the installation of tennis court floodlights at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: March 2002</i> |
| CAT Report 349 | 2005 | <i>Report on a watching brief at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: October 2005</i> |
| CAT Report 351 | 2005 | <i>An archaeological evaluation of St Helena School Drama Block, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: November 2005</i> |
| CAT Report 384 | 2006 | <i>An archaeological excavation of a foundation trench at the drama block, St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: June 2006</i> |
| CAT Report 414 | 2007 | <i>Archaeological evaluation at St Helena School: February 2007</i> |
| CAT Report 451 | 2007 | <i>An archaeological watching brief at St Helena School car-park, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: July-August 2007</i> |
| CAT Report 544 | 2010 | <i>An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at St Helena School, Colchester, Essex: March 2010</i> |
| CAT Report 669 | 2013 | <i>An archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: April 2013</i> |
| CAT Report 716 | 2013 | <i>An archaeological excavation at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester: September 2013</i> |
| CAT Report 816 | 2015 | <i>An archaeological watching brief at St Helena School: February 2015</i> |
| CAT Report 817 | 2015 | <i>Heritage Statement: St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex</i> |
| CAT Report 825 | 2015 | <i>Archaeological excavation at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester: October-November 2014</i> |
| CAT Report 835 | 2015 | <i>Archaeological evaluation on the site of a proposed pavilion at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex: May 2015</i> |
| CBCPS | 2015 | <i>Brief for Archaeological Excavation at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, CO3 3LE</i> |
| CIfA | 2014a | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological excavations</i> |
| CIfA | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs</i> |
| CIfA | 2014c | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
| Crummy, P | 1980 | 'The temples of Roman Colchester', in <i>Temples, Churches and Religion (Recent Research in Roman Britain)</i> , ed by Warwick Rodwell, BAR, British Series, 77, 242-83 |
| Crummy, P | 1997 | <i>City of Victory: the story of Colchester – Britain's' first Roman town</i> |
| DCLG | 2012 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Dept of Communities and Local Government. |
| EAA 14 | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14. Ed. D Gurney |
| EAA 24 | 2011 | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24, by Maria Medlycott |
| English Heritage
Hawkes, C F C, | 2006
1947 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment
Camulodunum, first report on the excavations at Colchester 1930-</i> |

& Hull, M R		39, Report 14 of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> , Report 20 of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London
Niblett, R	1985	<i>Sheepen: an early Roman industrial site at Camulodunum</i> , CBA Research Report 57
Warry, P	2006	<i>Tegulae, Manufacture, typology and use in Roman Britain</i> , BAR British Series 417

9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CBM	brick/tile (ceramic building material)
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to c AD 1800
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
Section	(abbreviation sc or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: one box

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 905)

CBCPS Evaluation Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, Architectural plans, Attendance register, Risk assessment

11 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 Colchester Museum under accession code: 2016.5

Distribution list

Steve Bennett of PlayFootball Ltd
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: archaeologists@catuk.org

Checked by: Howard Brooks

Date: 18/01/2016

Appendix 1

Finds Catalogue

RBT=Roman brick and tile (general), RB=Roman brick, RT=Roman tegula, RI=Roman imbrex, PT=peg-tile, BR=brick, LSJ=large storage jar

Lighting pit (LP)/ cable trench	ctxt no.	Find no	Type	Period	Description	Fabric	Form	No	Wt/g	Ab	Spot date
Below Rom precinct wall	F001	8	pot	Rom	red, sandy fabric, form a large jar or bowl, girth grooves on body	DJ		1	27		M-L1/2C
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom		AJ		1	10	(*)	M1-2C
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom	grits worn out	TZ		1	60		M1-2/E3C
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom	flanged bowl, sandy, buff fabric, abraded brownish-red slip	EC		1	11	*	M1C (pre-Flavian)
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom	pink and white sherds, inc base of prob flagon	DJ		4	59	*	M1-2C
Cable trench	L001	6	A bone		small piece, part of medium-large mammal ?scapula			1	9		
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	p-med	base edge, internal yellowish-green glaze	40		1	19		17-19C
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom	one sherd quite abraded	BASG	plate/dish	3	32	(*)	M-L1C
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	LIA/R	grog-temp fabric, combed surface	HZ(G)	LSJ	1	9		E-M1C
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom		HZ	LSJ	1	46		M1-E2/2C
Cable trench	L001	6	nail	Rom?	complete, corroded, lgth 55 mm, flat sub-circular head	iron		1	7		
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom	small base edge sherd from a cup, thin, grey with red core	CW	Cam 64	1	1		pre-Flavian
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom	misc sherds (black surface)	RCW		9	56		M-L1C
Cable trench	L001	6	pot	Rom	beaded rim sherd from a moderately thick-walled pot, buff surface, pale grey core, slight rilling (external) below rim, possibly an early mortarium	TZ?		1	38		pre-Flavian?

Lighting pit (LP)/ cable trench	ctxt no.	Find no	Type	Period	Description	Fabric	Form	No	Wt/g	Ab	Spot date
Cable trench	L001	6	CBM	Rom	RBT (4) note: one poorly made piece moderately thin and possibly post-Rom peg-tile (PT)	RS		4	200	(*)	Rom/post-Rom
Cable trench	L001	6	CBM	p-Rom	PT (1) probably peg-tile (medieval-post-medieval)	RS		1	50	*	medieval-post-medieval
Cable trench	L001	14	CBM	Rom	RB (1)	RS		1	481		Rom
Cable trench	L001	14	CBM	p-med	end of a brick (not frogged) thickness 50 mm, width 10 mm base sanded, possibly a flooring/paving brick, no traces of mortar			1	992		p-med (19-20C?)
Cable trench	L001	14	CBM	Rom?	very abraded piece of CBM, fine sand fabric, possibly Roman cream tile	C		1	424	*	Rom?
Cable trench	L002	7	pot	Rom	poss some scorching	AJ		2	106		M1-2/3C
Cable trench	L002	7	pot	Rom		HZ		1	10		M1-2C
Cable trench	L002	7	pot	LIA	poss from a tall domed/bell-like lid	GTW		1	8		E-M1C
Electric trench	L001	14	stone	Rom	sandy, not well cemented pale limestone, moderately small piece with some natural rounded edges, superficially similar in appearance to a piece of septaria with some similarities to limestone tufa - presumed Roman	limestone		1	259		Rom
Electric trench	L001	14	pot	LIA/R	sherd from an Arretine platter	AR		1	27		E-M1C
Electric trench	L001	14	CBM	Rom	RBT (1)	RS		1	393		Rom
Electric trench	L001	14	CBM	Rom	RBT (1) prob Roman brick (RB), abraded, faintly greenish cream fine sand fabric	C		1	319	*	Rom
Electric trench	L001	14	stone	Rom	irregular piece of dense, sandy limestone, contains olive coloured sand, possibly ragstone- presumed Roman	limestone		1	1081		Rom
Electric	L001	14	stone	Rom	irregular piece of coarse sandy limestone,	limestone		1	930		Rom

Lighting pit (LP)/ cable trench	ctxt no.	Find no	Type	Period	Description	Fabric	Form	No	Wt/g	Ab	Spot date
trench					not particularly well cemented, some similarities to limestone tufa but contains olive coloured sand, possibly ragstone-presumed Roman						
Electric trench	L001	14	stone	Rom	irregular pieces (lumps) of coarse-textured limestone, contain dark olive sand specks - possibly ragstone - presumed Roman	limestone		2	3204		Rom
Electric trench	L001	14	stone	Rom	irregular piece of quartz-like limestone with small voids - possibly a limestone tufa-like stone - presumed Roman			1	801		Rom
Electric trench	L001	14	stone	nat	small, abraded piece of soft (can be scratched by a fingernail) stone, worn laminated structure produces black & orange effect - possibly scorched shale/coal-like material			1	4		
LP001	L002	1	pot	LIA/R	very abraded rim sherd from a LSJ	HZ(G)	LSJ	1	27		E-M1C
LP001	L002	1	pot	Rom	Roman greyware	GX		1	9		Rom
LP002	L002	4	pot	LIA	platter base	GTW		1	12		E-M1C
LP002	L002	4	CBM	Rom	RBT (1) - probably teg (RT)	RS		1	252	(*)	Rom
LP002	L002	4	Pot	LIA	grog-tempered, moderately hard sandy fabric, moderately thin, possibly a Romanising fabric - more than one pot - inc a rim sherd from an open bowl	GTW		4	27		E-M/M 1C
LP005	F002	3	pot	LIA/R	storage jar fabric, grog-tempered, several sherds, part breaking into crumbs and fragments	HZ(G)	LSJ	9	91		E-M1C
LP005	F002	3	pot	LIA		GTW		1	8		L1C BC/E-M1C AD
LP005	F002	3	pot	LIA/R	micaceous <i>terra nigra</i> sherds from a platter	TN		2	30		L1C BC-M1C AD
LP005	F002	3	pot	LIA/R	body & base sherd	RCW		2	9		M1-L1C
LP005	F002	3	pot	Rom	small sherd	BSW		1	1		Rom (M1-2C?)
LP005	F002	3	A bone		1 piece and 3 small fragments - medium size mammal - distal end of a femur, not fully fused, sub-adult, probably sheep or			4	14		

Lighting pit (LP)/ cable trench	ctxt no.	Find no	Type	Period	Description	Fabric	Form	No	Wt/g	Ab	Spot date
					plg						
LP005	F002	3	F clay	LIA/R	abraded, brownish-red coarse sandy fabric - presumed LIA or Rom			1	15	*	LIA/Rom
LP005	L002	5	CBM	Rom	RBT (3) probably RB <u>probably reused</u> , RT (1) with lower cut-away Warry Type C5 (Warry proposed dating mid 2nd-mid 3rd century) base 20 mm thick	RS		4	955		Rom (M2C+?)
LP007	L002	2	CBM	Rom	RT (1) base thickness 16-18 mm, RI (1) later concretion on underside	RS		2	254	(*)	Rom
LP007	L002	2	pot	Rom	red, slightly coarse sandy fabric, later concretion adhering to on side	DJ		1	26		Rom (M1-E2/C?)
LP016	F003	11	pot	Rom	abraded broken rim, part of spout, very sandy prob Verulamium, broad flange, poss some grit on flange	TD	Cam 195 - type	2	78	*	M/L1-E/M2C
LP016	F003	11	pot	Rom	body sherd	TZ		1	18		L1-2/3C
LP016	F003	11	pot	Rom		BSW	Cam 218	1	12		M1-L1/E2C
LP016	F003	11	pot	Rom	coarse sandy	DJ		1	4		Rom (M1-L1/2C?)
LP016	F003	11	CBM	Rom	RBT (1), RT (2 joining) base 15 mm thick	RS		3	395		
LP018	L007	12	pot	Rom	badly abraded mortarium flange	TZ	Fl Mort	1	33	**	L1-2/3C
LP018	L007	12	pot	Rom	appears to be pottery	DJ		1	3	*	Rom (M1-2/3C)
LP018	L007	12	CBM	Rom	Tess	RS		1	23	*	
LP018	L007	12	CBM	Rom	RB (2) RBT (1) RT (1) inc part cut-away, RI (2) some abraded	RS		6	1516	(*)	
LP018	L007	12	A bone	Rom?	long bone large mammal - tibia, probably cow			2	78		
LP019	L005	9	CBM	Rom	RT (1) broken into 2 pieces, base thickness 20 mm	C		1	416		Rom
LP021	L005	10	Painted Plaster	Rom	small piece, thin (4-5 mm) dark olive/black line on white background, thin white mortar skim over pink op sig mortar/plaster			1	36		Rom
LP021	L005	10	Painted Plaster	Rom	small piece, white and red, straight join (red painted over white) thin white mortar skim over pink op sig mortar/plaster			1	42		Rom
LP021	L005	13	pot	Rom	red fabric white slip, possibly late fabric	AJ	D20	1	270		M1/2-3C

Lighting pit (LP)/ cable trench	ctxt no.	Find no	Type	Period	Description	Fabric	Form	No	Wt/g	Ab	Spot date
					BAT AM 2 (Tomber & Dore 1998)						
LP021	L005	13	A bone	Rom?	animal rib bone - medium-large mammal			1	11		
LP021	L005	13	CBM	Rom	RB (2) RBT (4) RT (1), <u>several pieces reused</u> , dog paw prints in surface of one tile	RS			1990		
LP021	L005	13	CBM	Rom	RT (1)	C		1	106		
LP021	L005	13	pot	Rom	grey sherd from large storage jar	HZ	LSJ	1	108	(*)	M1-2/3C
LP021	L005	13	CBM	Rom	RB (5) some reused, thickness up to 48 mm; RT (1) reused, base thickness 20 mm	RS		6	3429		Rom
LP021	L005	13	CBM	modern	tile piece, probably roofing/peg-tile, upper surface with sunken lettering]OUGH	RS		1	71		L19-20C

Appendix 2

List of archaeological projects at St Helena (taken from CAT Report 817)

From the 1930s to the 1980s

This section is based on major published works on the archaeology of Colchester by CFC Hawkes and Rex Hull (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Hull 1958), and by Philip Crummy (Crummy 1980, 248-52; Crummy 1997; *CAR 11* with C F C Hawkes), supported by other records on the *Essex Historic Environment Record* (EHER) and the *Urban Archaeological Database* (CBC).

The site is located within the nationally-important late Iron Age and Roman defended fortress of *Camulodunum*. Within the 12 square miles of *Camulodunum* are two principal centres. These are at Gosbecks (the farmstead and possible the home of Cunobelin) and Sheepen (the trading depot and quayside). St Helena School is situated on the northern side of Sheepen, and part of the site (and school) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument: Essex SAM no 46.

Sheepen first came to light when the construction of the new Colchester bypass in the 1930s (Avenue of Remembrance) was preceded by extensive excavations directed by Colchester Museum Curator Rex (MR) Hull and Oxford academic Christopher (CFC) Hawkes. These excavations revealed a range of industrial activities including metal-working, enameling, pottery and tile-making, and leather-working, all enclosed within fenced compounds (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Niblett 1985). It was evident from the wide range of imported goods (particularly pottery) that Sheepen was a major commercial centre, and that trading vessels must have laid up at a quayside of sorts somewhere nearby. Large quantities of 1st-century imported Roman amphoras have been found at the nearby Colchester Institute (*CAR 11*, 73-77; CAT Report 131).

The school site coincides with the location of two Romano-British temples (Hull 1958). These were first discovered and excavated by the Colchester Excavation Committee in 1935 on the site then about to be developed as St Helena School (Hull 1958, 224-34). The temple site consists of a late 1st-century Romano-Celtic temple (Temple 2 in the series of Colchester Temples) within a sacred precinct defined by an outer precinct (*temenos*) wall. A much smaller Romano-Celtic temple (Temple 3) lies on the boundary between the extreme north edge of the school grounds and the Avenue of Remembrance.

Immediately north of the north wall of the *temenos* is Building 159. This was discovered in 1976 (*CAR 6*, 345-6), and although absolute proof is lacking, it is a reasonable hypothesis that it was connected with the temple site (perhaps as lodging for a priest or for visitors, or as a shop).

Since 1976, and in response to small-scale development in and around the school, there have been a large number of archaeological projects, listed fully and summarised briefly below. These have generally all revealed Roman deposits here, some of them substantial.

Recent work at St Helena School

The 1930s work has been discussed above. Here follows a list of the recent archaeological projects at St Helena. As far as can be seen from consulting *Heritage Gateway* and *Essex Historic Environment Record*, all the projects were carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust.

2002 watching brief on cables around tennis courts

Fieldwork date: March 2002

CAT project ref.: 02/3d

CIMS accession: COLEM 2002.90

NGR: TL 987 259

Report: CAT Report 188, April 2002

Summary: Observations were made during an archaeological watching brief on the digging of cable trenches around the tennis courts at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester. The trenches were being dug for new floodlights and their power cables. Two features were observed in the trenches, only one of which was certainly archaeological. There was a large number of loose finds, principally Roman tile and late Iron Age/Roman pottery of a type which has been found in adjacent Sheepen excavations.

2005 cable trench along southern school edge

Fieldwork date: 17th-26th October 2005

CAT project ref.: -

CIMS accession: COLEM 2005.127

NGR: TL 9890 2583

Report: CAT Report 349, November 2005

Summary: Scheduled Monument Consent was given for a trench to be dug along part of the southern school boundary to install a new electricity mains supply cable. The trench revealed 600-700mm of topsoil (L1) sealing a dry light brown silt subsoil (L2) which contained tile flecks. Roman pottery, tile, and post-medieval peg-tile and animal bone came from L1 and the top of L2. Contractors retrieved a 3rd-century Roman coin from the western end of the trench. No features were observed. The presence of a small amount of Roman material is to be expected, though the trench was not deep enough to expose Roman or Iron Age features. The only features of note were reinforced concrete foundations, said by the caretaker to be the remains of air-raid shelters that once stood to the east and west of the main school entrance.

2005 test pits around Drama Block

Fieldwork date: November 2005

CAT project ref.: 05/9d

CIMS accession: COLEM 2005.132

NGR: TL 9895 2580 (c)

Report: CAT Report 351, December 2005

Summary: Three small test-pits were hand-excavated next to the drama block at St Helena School, which is within the scheduled ancient monument of Sheepen. Three early Roman (1st century AD) features included a ditch, possibly supporting a wooden fence. The presence of pottery and animal bone, burnt flint, a coin, slag and Roman tile suggests domestic use similar to that previously identified elsewhere at Sheepen. The finds include a sherd of Arretine samian bearing a potter's stamp not recognised in Colchester before. This reinforces the importance of Camulodunum as a centre for trade in the Late Iron Age.

2006 excavation of footings for new Drama Block

Fieldwork date: June 2006

CAT project ref.: 06/6b

CIMS accession: COLEM 2006.79

NGR: TL 9895 2580 (c)

Report: CAT Report 384, October 2006

Summary: The archaeological excavation of the foundation trench for an extension to the drama block carried out in June 2006 revealed pits, ditches and a gully, all dating to the 'Sheepen period' (ie, c AD 5-60), sealed by between 600mm and 750mm of topsoil. The type of pottery and the presence of animal bone, slag, daub and Roman tile suggests domestic and industrial use similar to that identified as a result of the previous investigations at Sheepen.

2007 evaluation in car park

Fieldwork: February 2007

CAT project ref.: 07/2a

CIMS accession: COLEM 2007.24

NGR: TL 9898 2578

Report: CAT Report 414, March 2007

Summary: Six evaluation trenches in the school car-park revealed 18 archaeological features: 10 Roman (seven pits, one wall foundation, one ditch and one metalled surface); one mid/late Bronze Age pit; one post-medieval ditch; six undated features (four pits and two ditches); and one natural feature. Significantly, the Roman wall foundation was part of the precinct wall for the late 1st century Roman temple (Temple 2). A large quantity of Roman finds were also recorded including two coins which belong to the post-conquest pre-Boudican occupation of Sheepen, a brooch fragment and briquetage which may also date to before AD 60/1, and a number of pottery sherds dating primarily from the 1st to the early 2nd century.

2007 watching brief on cable laying in car park.

Fieldwork: July-August 2007

CAT project ref.: 07/7b

CIMS accession: COLEM 2007.77

NGR: TL 98987 25786

Report: CAT Report 451, April 2010

Summary: Following the evaluation (CAT Report 414), a watching brief was carried out on groundworks to reconstruct the car park on the eastern side of the school grounds. This involved removing the old tarmac surface, creating a new path and cycle storage compound, and digging trenches for lighting cables. The groundworks largely only affected modern and post-medieval layers and therefore did not expose any archaeological features. In one lighting-cable trench, the Roman ground-surface was exposed but no archaeological features were observed.

2010 evaluation south of caretakers house

Fieldwork: March 2010

CAT project ref.: 10/2d

CIMS accession: COLEM 2010.11

NGR: TL 98970 25770

Report: CAT Report 544, April 2010

Summary: An evaluation by a single trial trench on the site of a proposed new building has revealed a gravelled surface and a Roman pit. The gravel surface may have been associated with the adjacent Roman Temple 2, whose eastern *temenos* wall lies 35m to the west, or (less likely) it may have been the surface of a minor gravel road running along the eastern side of the temple *temenos*. Finds from this evaluation are of early Roman date, which is in keeping with other finds from Sheepen and the St Helena School site.

2013 evaluation on western school extension

Fieldwork: April 2013

CAT project ref.: 13/04a

CIMS accession: COLEM 2013.16

NGR: TL 98842 25847

Report: CAT Report 699, May 2013

Summary: An evaluation by four trial-trenches revealed three Roman pits, a compacted gravel layer (surface), and a dump of ceramic building material. One of the pits contained a group of five, low denomination Roman coins dated to c AD 43-64. These are from a hoard or purse group possibly deposited at the time of the Boudican revolt, pre-dating the construction of the temple in the late 1st or early 2nd century.

2013 Excavation of foundation pads on 'link' building

Fieldwork: September 2013

CAT project ref.: 13/08f

CIMS accession: COLEM 2013.36

NGR: TL 9886 2584

Report: CAT Report 716, September 2013

Summary: The construction of a canopy between two existing school buildings involved the archaeological excavation of twelve foundation pads, each 0.80m square and 0.80m deep. The position of the new canopy straddles the predicted line of the northern wall of the enclosure (*temenos*) of Temple II. From the plotted position of the *temenos* wall, it seems

that none of the pad holes actually intercepted it. However, patches of compacted gravel were revealed in two of the pad-holes. A very small quantity of Roman tile and a mid-1st century sherd were recovered from the gravel. Layers of gravel have been seen at St Helena in 1935, 2007, and now twice in 2013. The gravel is too widespread to have been a road, so it is more likely to have been a Roman courtyard surface. However, it may slightly predate the temple, which was founded in the late 1st or early 2nd century.

2014 Excavation of western school extension

Fieldwork date: October - November 2014

CAT project code: 14/10k

CIMS accession code: COLEM 2014.108

NGR: TL 98842 25847

Report: CAT Report 825, June 2015

Summary: Archaeological excavation was carried out at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester. The school is situated within the Roman enclosed oppidum of Camulodunum (specifically the area of the trading depot at Sheepen), and is within a scheduled monument (List entry 1002173). The school grounds contain the remains of two Romano-British temples, and the site was within the precinct or temenos of a large post-Boudiccan temple dedicated to Jupiter (Colchester's Temple 2). The excavation revealed Roman activity comprising nine pits, one of which (F1) contained twenty-six low denomination 1st century AD coins. Also revealed were patches of the gravelled surface of the temple precinct and the cobble and mortar wall foundations of a small internal altar or similar structure.

2014 Excavation of test-pits on proposed sports pitches.

Client report only

Four test pits were hand dug at approximately the corners of the proposed sports pitch. No archaeological features were identified, but residual Roman brick and tile may be associated with the temple complex or with extensive activity on the 1st century industrial complex at Sheepen.

2015 borehole watching brief

Fieldwork date: 16-17th February 2015

CAT project code:

CIMS accession code - awaited

NGR: TL 8836 5850 (centre)

Report: CAT Report 816

A watching brief was carried out in February 2015 during excavations of seven geo-technical boreholes as part of a survey ahead of new sports facilities. The boreholes cut through modern topsoil (L1) and an accumulation horizon (of hillwash/colluvium?) (L2), onto natural deposits of glacial gravels (final depth: between 5-6m).

No archaeological features or horizons were seen, but Roman mortar tile and building stone was found mixed in with modern coal, peg-tile and concrete. The relative absence of material here reflects the site's position away from the main centre of activity.

2015 Evaluation of the site of the proposed sports pavilion

Fieldwork date: May 2015

CAT Project Code: 15/04h

Report: CAT Report 835

NGR: TL 989 258 (centre)

CIMS accession code: COLEM 2015.42

Summary: Archaeological evaluation on the site of the proposed sports pavilion at St Helena School revealed thirteen archaeological features. Two pits/post-holes and a gravel surface were dated to either the Late Iron Age or Roman period, two ditches were modern (one aligned on pre-school field boundaries), and there were eight undated pits/post-holes. All features were sealed by 0.65m of overburden (modern topsoil and subsoil).

One of the common features of excavations and evaluations at St Helena is the discovery of gravel surfaces, both inside and outside the precinct of Colchester Temple 2. The gravel surface found here shows that they are more extensive than had been thought. As the evaluation trench was approximately 65m outside the precinct wall of Temple 2, and 90m east of the nearest temple-related structure, the evaluated area is clearly peripheral to the temple complex. Whether the features excavated in 2015 are actually connected with the temple complex is difficult to say, and it may be that they are of an industrial or domestic character.

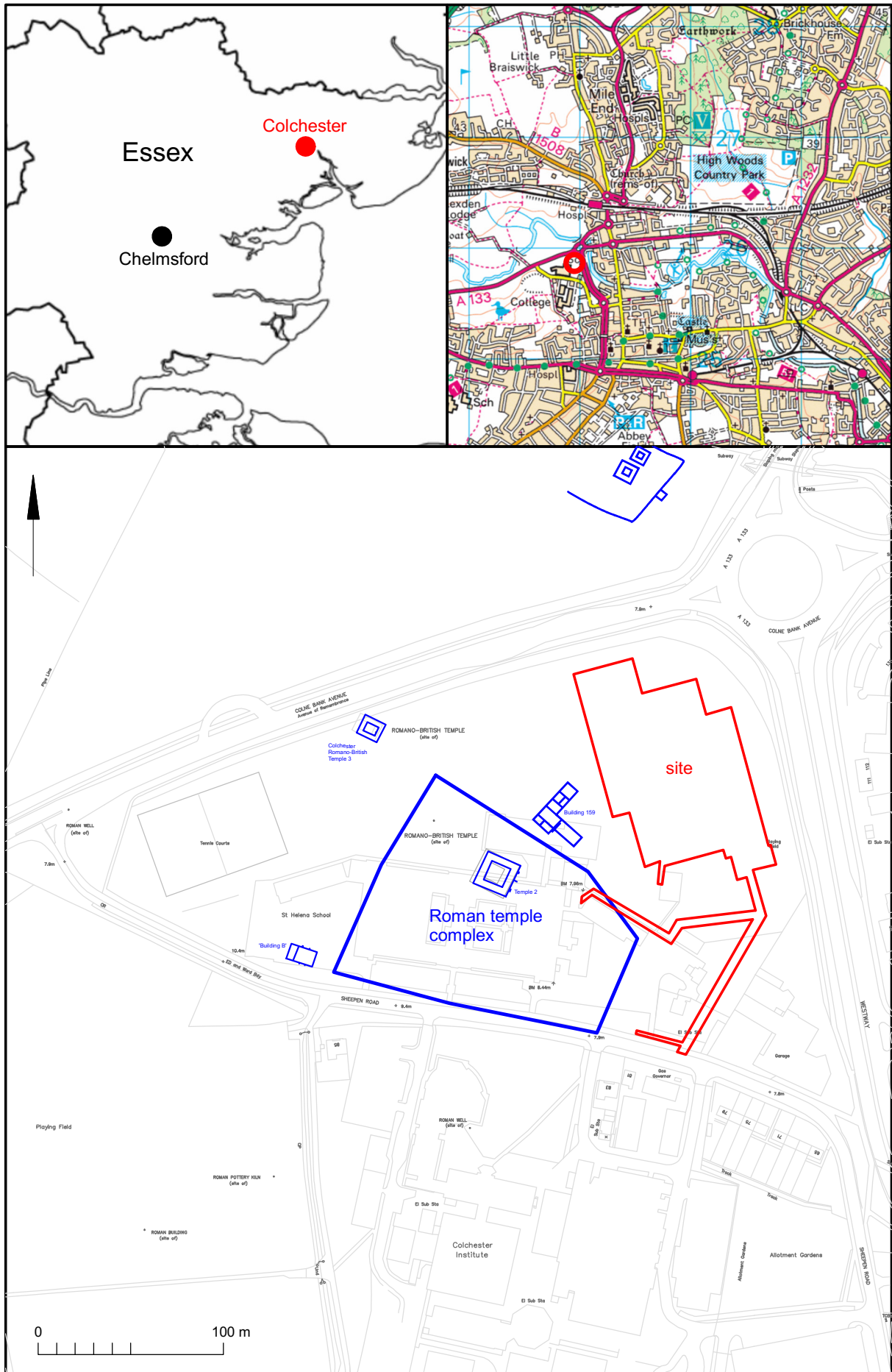


Fig 1 Site location.

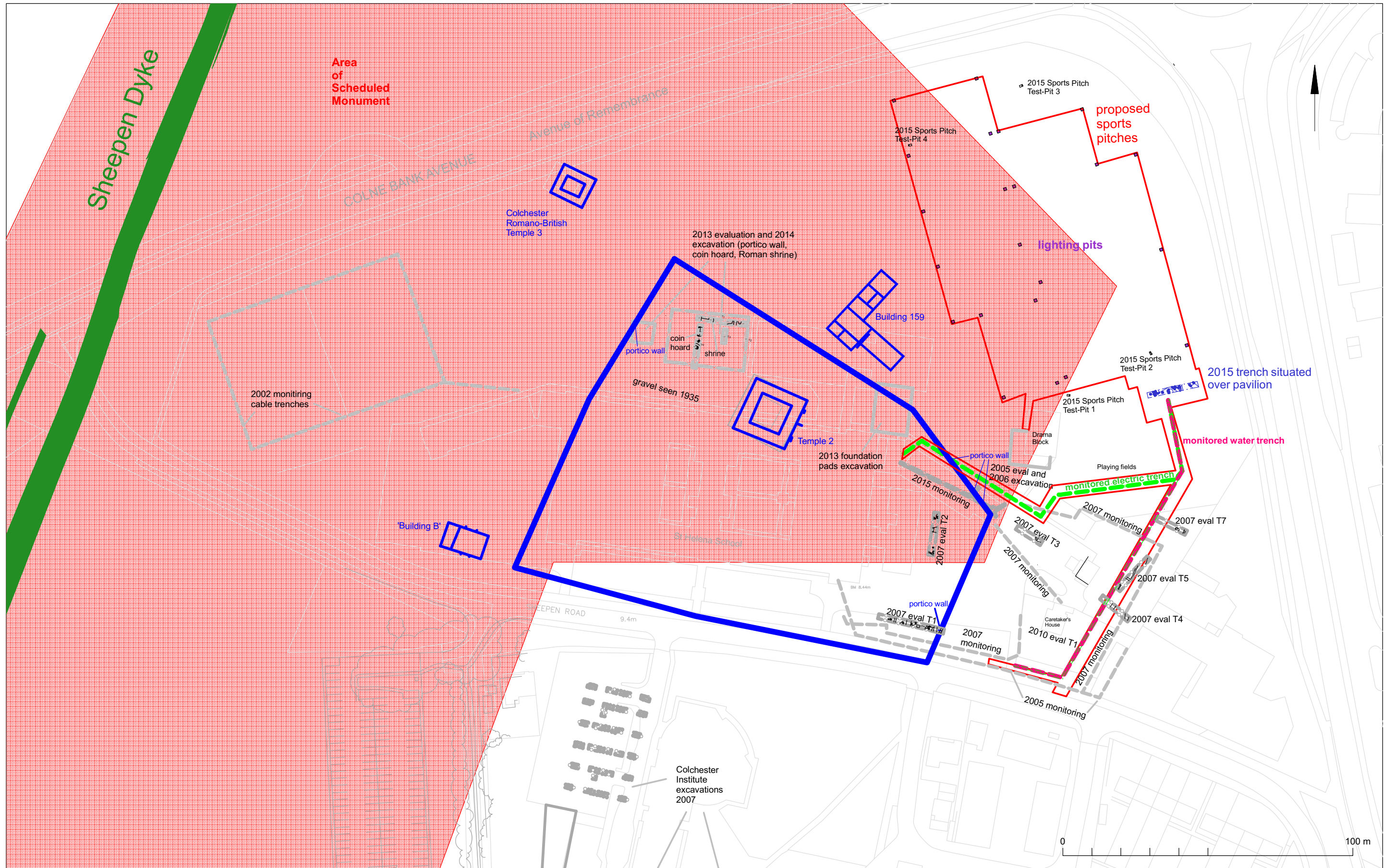


Fig 2 Site location in relation to nearby archaeological points of interest.

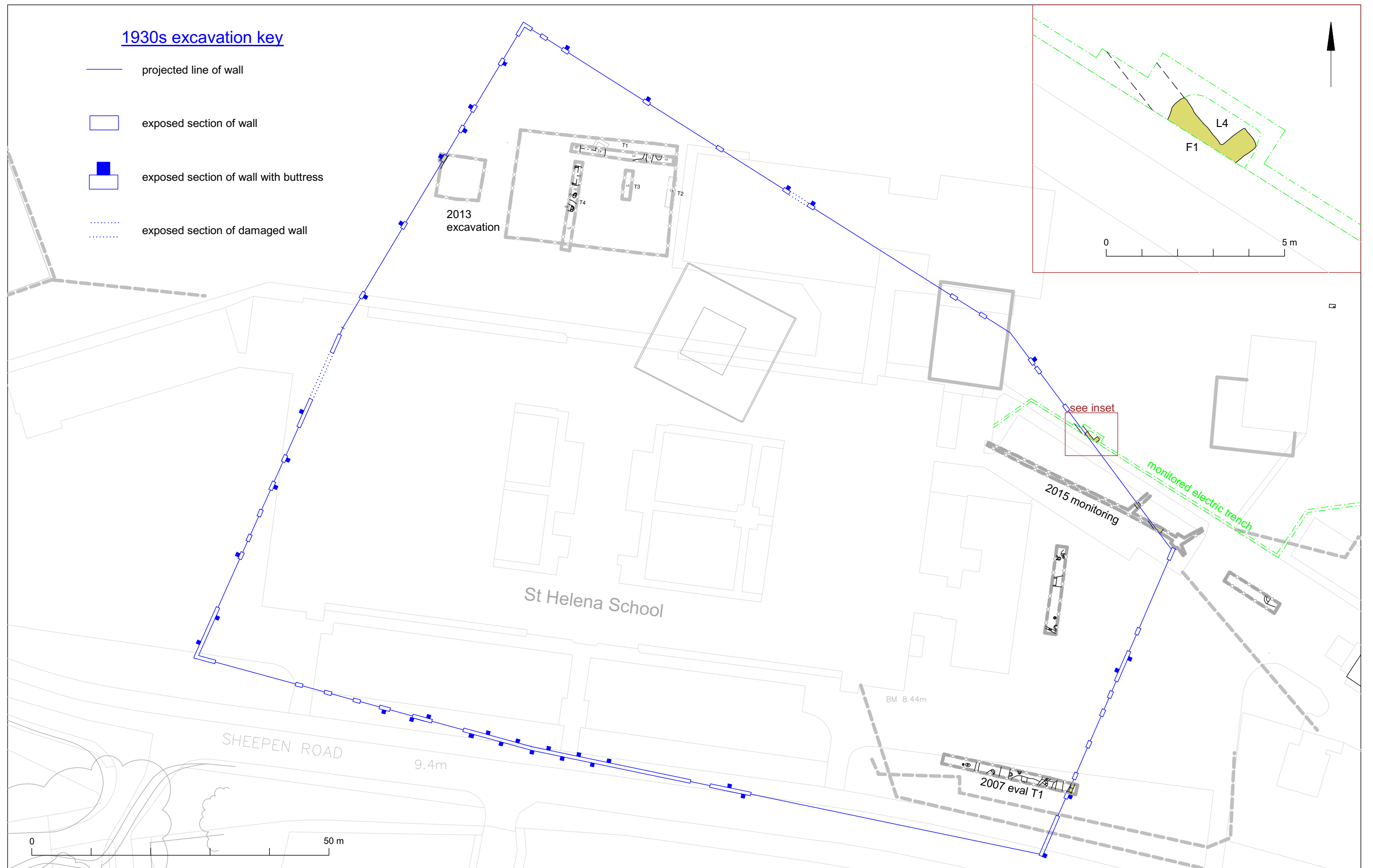


Fig 3 Portico wall plan, incorporating the original excavation of the wall in the 1930s and recent CAT investigations.

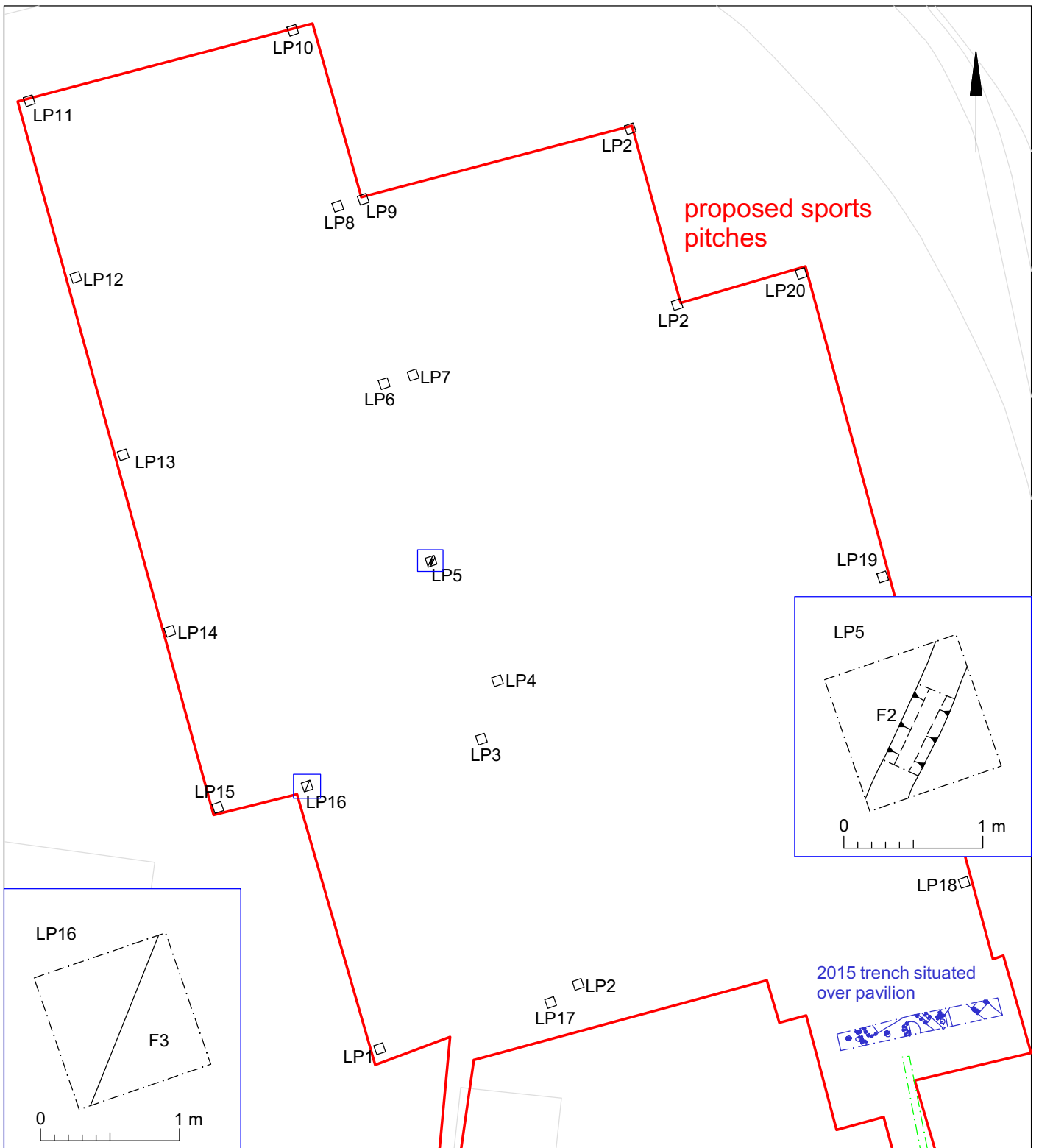
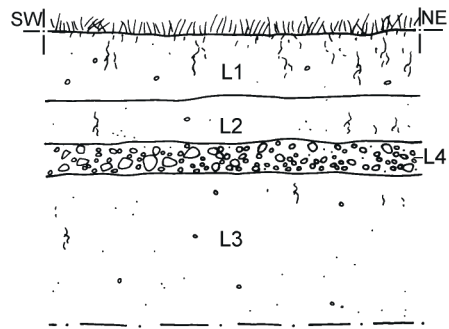
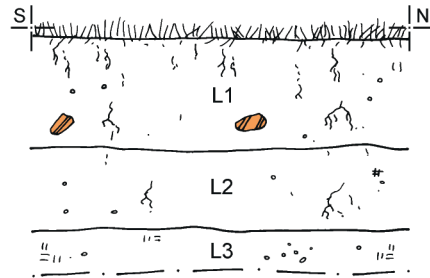


Fig 4 Detailed plan of lighting pits.

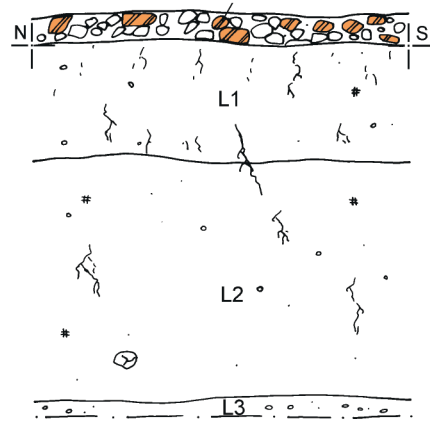
electric cable trench



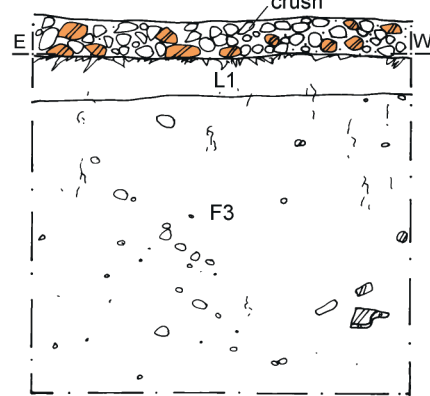
water pipe trench



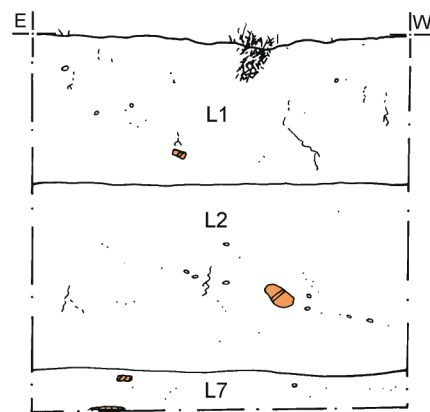
LP1



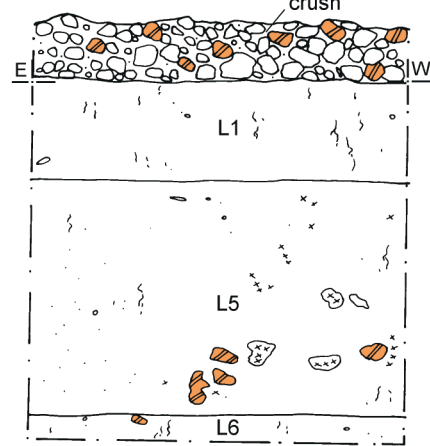
LP16



LP18



LP19



- sand
- small stones
- ||| clay
- ## charcoal
- ▨ post-Roman brick and tile
- ▩ Roman brick and tile
- xx mortar
- √ roots

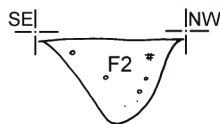


Fig 5 Sections.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3LE	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 989 258	Site code: CAT project ref.: 16/07f UAD ref: ECC3645 OASIS ref: colchest3-217574
Type of work: Excavation (strip and map) and watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: October 2015-January 2016	Size of area investigated: Approximately 8580m ²
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2016.5	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? no	Related UAD/SMR number: EHER 11673, EHER 11684, EHER 13126
Final report: CAT Report 905	
Periods represented: Late Iron Age/Early Roman	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: <i>St Helena School lies on the eastern side of the nationally important Late Iron Age and early Roman site of Sheepen, which is the northern focus of the oppidum of Camulodunum. It is also the location of two Romano-British temples.</i></p> <p><i>Groundworks associated with the construction of football pitches, a pavilion and services took place at several locations across the school site. A cable trench revealed part of the foundation of the north side of the outer precinct wall of 'Temple 2', along with an external buttress and gravel surface.</i></p> <p><i>Other groundworks to the northeast of Temple 2 revealed a Roman agricultural/ drainage ditch and demolition layer. It is difficult to say if they were associated with the temple complex or other industrial or domestic activity occurring nearby.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: Hawkes and Hull 1947, Hull 1958, Crummy 1997, CAR 11, CAT Reports 699, 816, 825, 835	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: Sheepen, Temple 2	Significance: -
Author of summary: Laura Pooley	Date of summary: January 2016

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

[List of Projects](#) | [Manage Projects](#) | [Search Projects](#) | [New project](#) | [Change your details](#) | [HER coverage](#) | [Change country](#) | [Log out](#)

Printable version

OASIS ID: colchest3-217574

Project details

Project name	St. Helena School PlayFootball Exc 15
Short description of the project	St Helena School lies on the eastern side of the nationally important Late Iron Age and early Roman site of Sheepen, which is the northern focus of the oppidum of Camulodunum. It is also the location of two Romano-British temples. Groundworks associated with the construction of football pitches, a pavilion and services took place at several locations across the school site. A cable trench revealed part of the foundation of the north side of the outer precinct wall of 'Temple 2', along with an external buttress and gravel surface. Other groundworks to the northeast of Temple 2 revealed a Roman agricultural/ drainage ditch and demolition layer. It is difficult to say if they were associated with the temple complex or other industrial or domestic activity occurring nearby.
Project dates	Start: 07-10-2015 End: 25-01-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	15/07f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	150562 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC3645 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM:2016.5 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	TEMPLE Late Iron Age
Monument type	TEMPLE Roman

Monument type	WALL FOUNDATION WITH BUTTRESS Late Iron Age
Monument type	WALL FOUNDATION WITH BUTTRESS Roman
Monument type	GRAVEL SURFACE Late Iron Age
Monument type	GRAVEL SURFACE Roman
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Monument type	DEMOLITION LAYER Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Roman
Significant Finds	BUILDING STONE Roman
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Roman
Significant Finds	PAINTED WALL PLASTER Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	PEG-TILE Post Medieval
Investigation type	""Part Excavation"", ""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER St. Helena School, Sheepen Road
Postcode	CO3 3LE
Study area	0.84 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 989 258 51.89467676801 0.891080333255 51 53 40 N 000 53 27 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Ben Holloway
Name of sponsor/funding body	PlayFootball Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Physical Archive ID	COLEM:2016.5
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM:2016.5
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM:2016.5
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An archaeological excavation and watching brief at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3LE: October - November 2015
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Pooley, L.
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 905
Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A4 ringbound loose leaf
URL	http://www.cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html
Entered by	Laura Pooley (lp@catuk.org)
Entered on	28 January 2016

OASIS:

Please e-mail Historic England for OASIS help and advice

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation at St. Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex

NGR: TL 989 258 (centre)

Planning reference: 150562

Client: Steve Bennett, PlayFootball Ltd

Agent:

Curating Museum: Colchester

Museum accession code: TBC

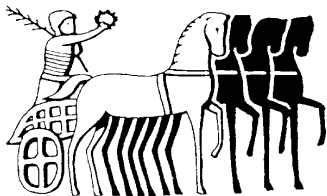
ECC Project code: n/a

CAT Project code: 15/04h

Site Manager: Ben Holloway

CBC Monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 28.04.2015



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,
Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk
Colchester,
Essex, C02 7GZ
tel: 07436 273 304
email: archaeologists@catuk.org

Site Location and Description

The proposed site is located north-west of Colchester town centre on the north side of Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3LE. St. Helena School is located within the nationally significant pre-Roman settlement at Sheepen (Scheduled Monument 1002173) and consists of school buildings, the earliest dating from 1938, set within extensive grounds of some 17 acres mainly laid to grass for playing fields, hard surface parking areas and an all weather sports pitch. The site is currently undeveloped grass playing field.

Proposed work

Development of land for football pitches and the construction of a sports pavilion.

Archaeological Background

The following archaeological background draws on CAT Report 817:

St Helena School is in an area of high archaeological importance. It is within *Camulodunum* - the nationally important late Iron Age and Roman fortress whose 12-square-mile extent is now occupied by modern Colchester.

Camulodunum had two principal centres. One was at Gosbecks (the farmstead and possible the home of Cunobelin) and the other was at Sheepen (the trading depot and quayside). St Helena School is on the northern side of Sheepen, and part of the site (and school) is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The school site coincides with the location of two Romano-Celtic temples (Colchester Temples 2, 3) and associated buildings (first discovered and excavated in 1935 when the school was first built, and prior to the construction of the new Colchester bypass - now the 'Avenue of Remembrance').

Temple 2 lies under the northern edge of the main school building, and the precinct wall encloses a block of land now occupied by the core school buildings. A much smaller Romano-Celtic temple (Temple 3) lies on the boundary between the extreme north edge of the school grounds and the Avenue of Remembrance.

Apart from the major excavation in the 1930s, there have been many small-scale archaeological projects at St Helena. These projects confirm the presence of extremely important archaeological remains at St Helena. Excavations in 2014 (CAT Reports 699 & 825) prior to the construction of the science and technology block exposed the Temple 2 precinct wall, a possible shrine, and a large possibly 'votive' pit containing a hoard of Roman coins.

The Roman remains are not deeply-buried, and are susceptible to damage from modern construction.

The proposed sports pitches occupy a large block of land to the east of the school. Assessing the potential damage caused by the construction of the pitches is genuinely difficult, as the only information we have is that provided by the four test pits (CAT Report 804) dug in the corners of the proposed pitches. These showed the level at which archaeological remains are present and might be anticipated. Working clockwise from NW to SE, the 'archaeological level' in the four TPs was 540mm, 580mm, unclear, and 550mm respectively *below present ground level*. Allowing a 'buffer zone' of 150mm to protect the archaeological levels, it follows that approximately 400mm *in total* could be removed from this site without unduly impacting the archaeological level. If it is proposed to remove more than a total of 400mm, then it may be anticipated that the construction will have a detrimental impact on the buried archaeological remains.

Planning Background

A planning application was submitted to Colchester Borough Council for the proposed work (above: Planning reference 150562). As the site lies within an area highlighted by the UAD & EHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, a full archaeological condition

was recommended by Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and states:

"No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work and recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the planning authority."

Requirement for Work

The required archaeological work involves undertaking an evaluation of linear trial trenching. The proposed trench layout includes one trench 18.5m x 1.8m along the central axis of the pavilion and central line of piles (see Fig 1). The mechanical stripping of the trench will involve using a flat-edged ditching bucket whilst under constant archaeological supervision. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAO (Brief for a trenched Archaeological Evaluation at St. Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex - CBC 2015). Once the strip is complete a meeting will be held on site with CBCAA, the developer and CAT to discuss what further work is needed.

It is anticipated that this work will comprise the complete excavation and recovery of any burials on discovered on the site and standard sample excavation of all other features.

Specific research aims are:

- Follow requirements as stated in section 3.2 of the Brief
- To identify the nature of Iron Age and Roman activity on the site and how this links to the rest of the Sheepen area.

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-c)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- required standards of fieldwork in Colchester Borough (CM 2008a, b)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- the Project Brief issued by CBCAA (CBC 2015)

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 CBCAA 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.

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

Written Scheme of Investigation

Prior to start of work, a Written Scheme of Investigation will be submitted to CBCAA. The WSI will describe in appropriate detail how the *Brief* from CBCAA will be implemented in fieldwork, post-excavation, reporting and publication stages.

The WSI shall be submitted to CBCAA, and fieldwork will not commence prior to approval of WSI from CBCAA.

The WSI will include a location plan of the development site showing area of proposed excavation or trench layout.

OASIS Record

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 CBCAA and EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows – one archaeologist to continually monitor the strip with an additional archaeologist for archaeological contexts that require excavation.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway

Evaluation methodology

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' ground reduction, footings work, service trench digging, and all related works to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction, which will be done with a toothless bucket.

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

If any features or deposits uncovered are to be destroyed by the proposed development, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc).

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

A metal detector will be used to examine the site, spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on proforma record 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.

Site surveying

Normal scale for 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 and trenches 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 (Loddon) whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Val Fryer will do any processing and reporting.

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

Human remains

Policy depends on the age of the burial. 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 license to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed.

If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and CBCAA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Allowance will be made in the budget and timetable to allow a human bone specialist to visit site to advise on recording and lifting human remains (inhumations), and for an experienced conservator to visit site and advise on recording and lifting of fragile grave goods.

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.

Post-excavation assessment

If a post-excavation assessment is required by CBCAA, it will be normally be submitted within 2 months of the end of fieldwork, or as quickly as is reasonably practicable and at a time agreed with CBCAA.

Where archaeological results do not warrant a post-excavation assessment, preparation of the normal site report will begin. This is usually a PDF report available as hard copy, and also published on the CAT website and on the OASiS website.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

animal bones (small groups): Adam Wightman

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Nina Crummy.

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer (Loddon)

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum

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

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey

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 CBCAA.

End of Fieldwork, and Report

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

An appropriate report will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The draft report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork for approval by CBCAA.

Final report will normally be submitted to CBCAA as PDF, but printed copy can be provided on request.

The report will contain:

- The aims and methodology adopted in the course of the archaeological project
- Location plan of site and excavated area in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each trench / excavated area will be given 10 figure grid references.
- A section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Detailed archaeologists results including list of sites resulting from an EHER/UAD search, and historic maps to show changes and development of site, with a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.
- As Appendices, the OASIS entry and the WSI.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and attached as Appendix to the site report, which will be emailed as PDF to CBCAA.

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

Archive Deposition

A site archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards given in CM 2008, ClfA 2014b, and MoRPHE (EH 2006).

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

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAA.

A Drawing Interchange File (.dxf) will be supplied to for integration in the UAD/HER. AutoCAD files will also exported and saved into a format that can be can be imported into MapInfo.

Monitoring

CBCAA 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 to CBCAA one week in advance of its commencement.

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

CBCAA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

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

References

CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 699	213	<i>An archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex.</i> Unpublished grey literature by B Holloway and H Brooks April 2013
CAT Report 804	2014	<i>Archaeological test pits at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex.</i> Unpublished grey literature report by B Holloway
CAT Report 817	2015	<i>Heritage Statement: St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex.</i> Unpublished grey literature report by H Brooks
CAT Report 825		<i>An archaeological excavation at St Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex.</i> Unpublished grey literature by P Parmenter and B Holloway forthcoming
CBCAA	2015	Brief for a trenched Archaeological Evaluation at St. Helena School, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex, by J Tipper
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological excavation</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i>
CifA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
CM	2008	<i>Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester</i>
CM	2008	<i>Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums</i>
Crummy, P	1997	<i>City of Victory</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
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)

Emma Holloway



Colchester Archaeological Trust,
Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex, C02 2GZ

tel: 07436 273 304:
email: eh@catuk.org

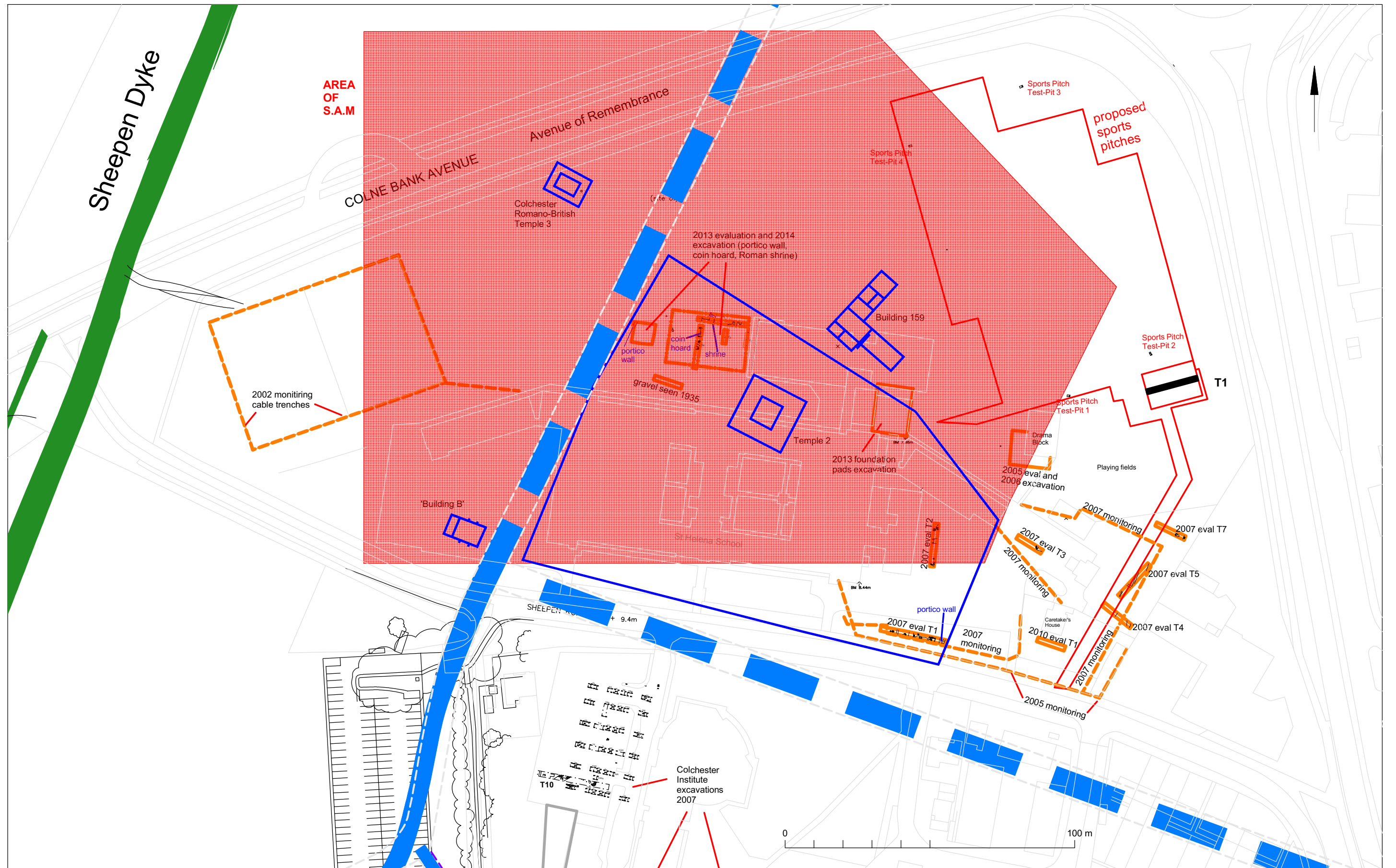


Figure 1 Proposed trenching scheme on site of PlayFootball pavilion.