

Archaeological monitoring and recording on Colne Bank Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3LE

September-November 2015



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on behalf of **Essex County Council (Adrian Gascoyne)**

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Colchester Museum accession code: COLEM 2015.105

ECC project code: CCCBA16

OASIS reference: colchest3-226165



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Contents

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

Figures after p5

Appendix 1 CAT WSI
Appendix 2 OASIS Summary

List of photographs, figures and tables

Cover: general site shot

Photographs 1-2	Toucan crossing service trench, looking W and N	2
Photographs 3-4	Boreholes BH1-3	3

Fig 1 Site location
Fig 2 Representative section of service trench

1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out along Colne Bank Avenue, Colchester, Essex during groundworks for a new toucan crossing including boreholes and a service trench. Despite being located within the Scheduled Monument of Sheepen (SM EX 46) groundworks did not penetrate below modern topsoil/made ground so no significant archaeological horizons were identified.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at Colne Bank Avenue, Colchester, Essex which was carried out between September-November 2015. The work was commissioned by Adrian Gascoyne on behalf of Essex County Council in advance of trial holes, a toucan crossing and signage on Colne Bank Avenue, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

As the work was to be carried out within the Scheduled Monument of Sheepen (the site of pre-Roman settlement, SM EX 46, HA 1002173), Scheduled Monument Consent was submitted to Historic England on 21 July 2015. Given the location of the proposed works, on granting consent the Secretary of State imposed the following condition:

(b) No ground works/building works shall take place until the applicant has confirmed in writing the commissioning of a programme of archaeological work before and/or during the development in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved by the Secretary of state advised by Historic England.

The Written Scheme of Investigation, as required by Historic England, was written by Adrian Gascoyne (Essex County Council Archaeological Advisor) (ECC 2015).

In addition to the 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 field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

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).

The development site is located along Colne Bank Avenue/Avenue of Remembrance to the north of St Helena School and south of Cymbeline Meadows, northwest of Colchester Town centre. Immediately to the south of Colne Bank Avenue is Sheepen Hill, or 'Hilly Fields' (Scheduled Monument, SM EX 46, HA 1002173). Sheepen was one of two principal centres of *Camulodunum* (a nationally important late Iron Age and Roman fortress). Extensive excavations at Sheepen in the 1930s and smaller-scale work in the 1970s produced evidence of settlement, roads and workshops engaged in a range of industrial activities including metal-working, enameling, pottery-making and leather-working (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Niblett 1985; *CAR 11*, 130-136). The settlement was destroyed during the Boudican revolt. Following the revolt, Sheepen became a centre for religious activity, with a total of four Romano-Celtic temples identified in the area (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Hull 1958; Crummy 1980, 248-52; Crummy 1997; *CAR 11*).

4 Results (Figs 1-2)

Geotechnical Investigations

Two geotechnical test pits were excavated within the highway corridor, measuring 0.5m by 5.6m and 0.5m by 3.5m (see Fig 1, boreholes 5-6 for approximate location). Both were dug to a maximum depth of 1m within previously disturbed ground/modern made ground and were not supervised by a CAT archaeologist.

Construction of a Toucan Crossing and installation of associated signage

Groundworks comprised surface treatments, including excavation of existing verges, revision of existing levels and installation of new paving. Excavations were to a maximum depth of 0.3m within previously disturbed ground/modern made ground and were not supervised by a CAT archaeologist.

A service trench for new lighting was excavated to the west of the toucan crossing and observed by a CAT archaeologist. The trench measured 300mm wide by 600mm deep and was dug through two layers. Modern topsoil (L1, 130-150mm) sealed modern made ground (L2, at least 450mm thick) (Fig 2). No significant archaeological horizons were identified.



Photographs 1-2 Toucan crossing service trench, looking W and N

Other works

A number of other boreholes were excavated. The first three (Fig 1, boreholes 1-3) were located on Westway. The top parts of the boreholes was hand-dug through modern made ground under CAT supervision. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.

Other boreholes (Fig 1, boreholes 4) were located immediately to the southwest of the Colne Bank Avenue/Westway roundabout. They were not supervised by a CAT archaeologist but contractors found and retained a modern brick for identification, it was recorded 3m down in alluvium.



Photographs 3-4 Boreholes BH1-3

5 Finds

No significant archaeological finds were identified.

6 Discussion

Despite being located within an area of archaeological significance and within the Scheduled Monument of Sheepen, all groundworks took place within modern topsoil and made ground and no significant archaeological horizons were identified.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Adrian Gascoyne on behalf of Essex County Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by H Brooks, B Holloway and E Sanford. Figures were prepared by M Baister and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Adrian Gascoyne.

8 References

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

Brown, D	2007	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
CAR 11	1995	Camulodunum 2, Colchester Archaeological Report 11, by Hawkes, C. F.C., and Crummy, P
CAT	2014	<i>Health and Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2016	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for continuous archaeological recording (a watching brief) at 98 Oaklands Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9EU</i>
CBCPS	2016	<i>Brief for Continuous Archaeological Recording at 98 Oaklands Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9EU</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief</i>
CIfA	2014b	<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> (Colchester & Ipswich

		Museums)
CM	2008	<i>Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums</i> (Colchester & Ipswich Museums)
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	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage)
Hawkes, C.F.C., and Hull, M.R.	1947	<i>Camulodunum, the first report on the excavations at Colchester 1930-39</i> , Report of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London, Volume 14
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

9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ECCAA	Essex County Council Archaeological Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
CBM	brick/tile (ceramic building material)
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CM	Colchester Museum
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
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 924)

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: COLEM 2015.105.

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Distribution list

Adrian Gascoyne, Essex County Council Place Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



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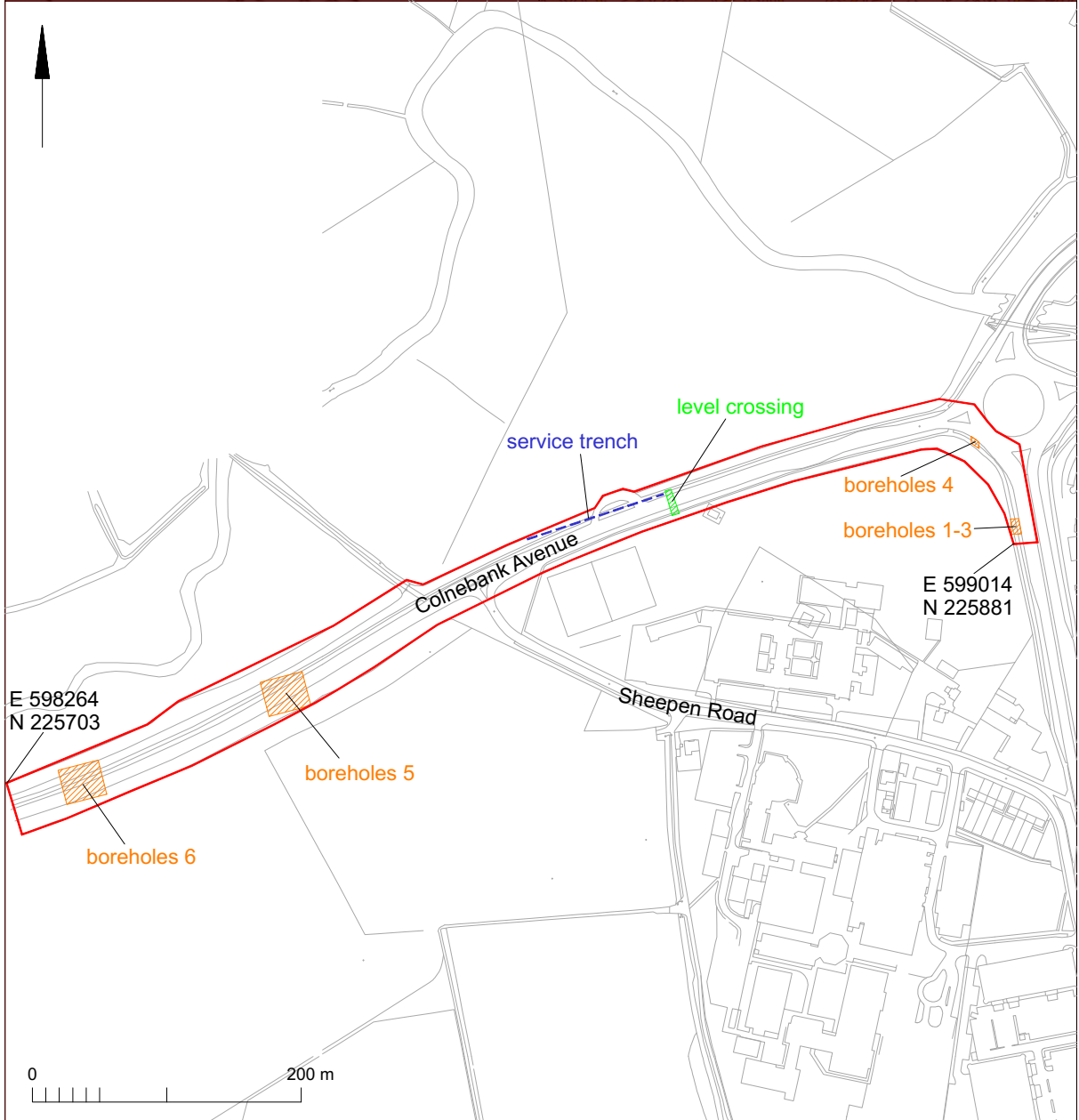
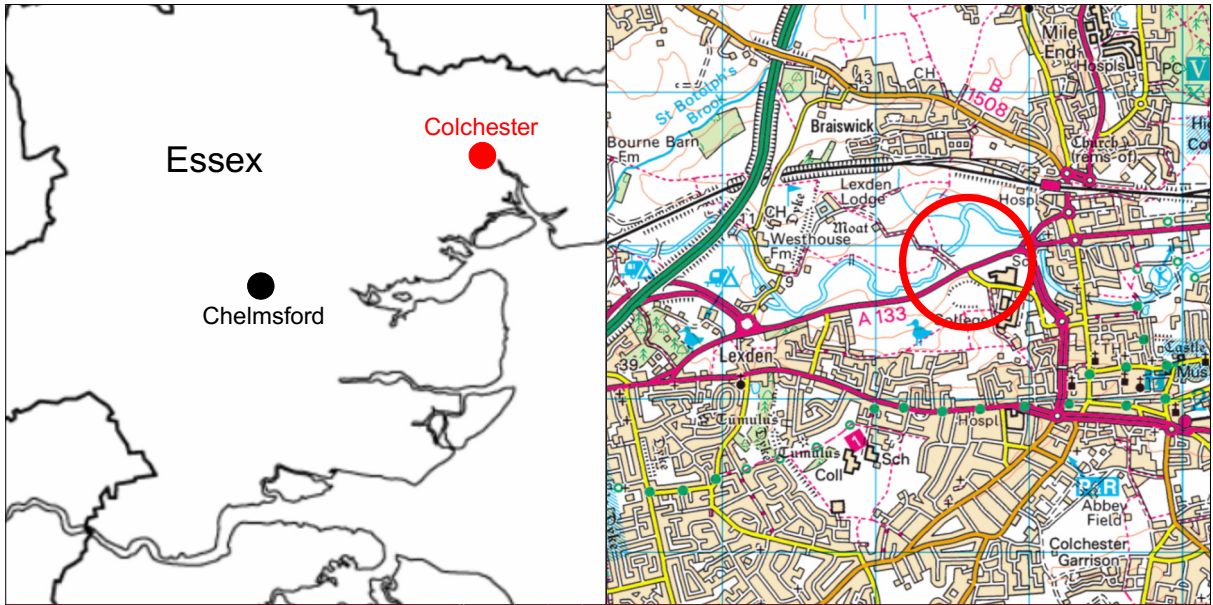


Fig 1 Site location.

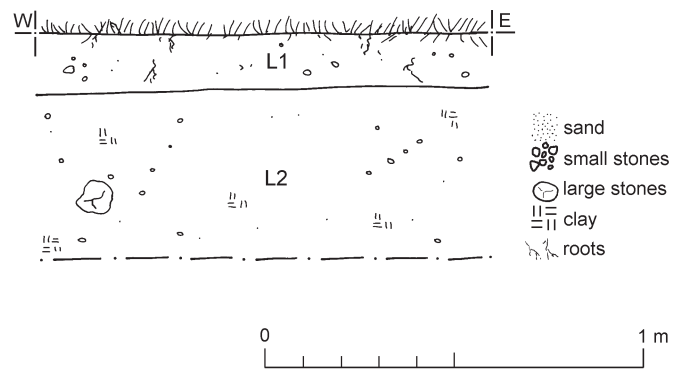


Fig 2 Representative section of service trench.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Colne Bank Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3LE	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9856 2546	Site code: CAT project ref.: 15/09i ECC project code.: CCCBA16 OASIS ref: colchest3-226165
Type of work: Watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: September-November 2015	Size of area investigated:
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2015.105	Funding source: Essex County Council
Further seasons anticipated? no	Related UAD/SMR number:
Final report: CAT Report 924	
Periods represented: -	
Summary of fieldwork results: Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out along Colne Bank Avenue, Colchester, Essex during groundworks for a new toucan crossing including boreholes and a service trench. Despite being located within the Scheduled Monument of Sheepen (SM EX 46) groundworks did not penetrate below modern topsoil/made ground so no significant archaeological horizons were identified.	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: -	Significance: -
Author of summary: Laura Pooley	Date of summary: March 2016