

# Archaeological evaluation on land south of 70 Victoria Road, Laindon, Basildon, Essex, SS15 6AR

July 2016



**by Laura Pooley**

with contributions by Stephen Benfield  
figures by Ben Holloway, Emma Holloway and Pip Parmenter

fieldwork by Ben Holloway, Robin Mathieson and Alec Wade

**on behalf of Basildon Borough Council**

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**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

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

tel.: 01206 501785

email: [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)

**CAT Report 984**  
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## 1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching was carried out on land to the south of 70 Victoria Road, Laindon in advance of the construction of four new dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and boundary walls. The development site was partially located on the northern edge of the medieval moated enclosure of Great Gubbins Farm. A single trial-trench was positioned over the projected line of the moat and, despite a lot of modern disturbance, it was identified within the centre of the trench (F1) surviving to a depth of at least 1.6m. Historic mapping shows that the moat was only partially filled with water by the late 19th century with the remaining earthwork visible until c 1940. Dating evidence from the moat confirms that the earthwork was being gradually filled during these decades with most of the backfilling occurring during the early 20th century. No evidence from the medieval period was apparent within the excavated fill of the moat.

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land to the south of 70 Victoria Road, Laindon, Essex which was carried out on 12th July 2016. The work was commissioned by Basildon Borough Council in advance of the construction of four two-bed dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and boundary walls. The work was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Trial Trenching*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2016), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2016).

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

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

The proposed development lies on land that historically lay partially upon a moated enclosure at Great Gubbins Farm (HER 5134). The site may have a long history of settlement and possibly be associated with the family of John Gubiun (1258), it is also mentioned in documents dating from 1457. Moated enclosures are typically medieval in date and were often high status settlement sites. The moat is clearly depicted from the 1st to the 4th edition OS maps, although the 1st edition OS shows that only a small part of it still contained water, so the earthwork for the moat must have remained visible until c 1940. The modern garage block has been erected upon the northern arm of the moat.



**Map 1** Six-inch OS map (Essex LXVIII.SW), revised 1895, published 1898, showing the moat partially filled with water and remaining earthwork.

#### **4 Results** (Figs 2-4)

A single trial-trench was dug by mechanical excavator under archaeological supervision, measuring 13m long by 2.4m wide. It was located within the footprint of the eastern housing block directly over the projected northern side of the Great Gubbins Farm moat.

The entire trench had been disturbed by a number of modern services. At the north and south ends, two layers were identified. Modern hard-standing (L1, c 240-400mm thick) sealed natural clay (L2, identified at a depth of 400mm below current ground level). However, although both edges had been truncated by modern services, the moat (F1) was identified in the centre of the trench. It was excavated to a safe-working depth of 1.10m bcgl and was augured for a further 700mm (making it at least 1.6m deep). The backfill was a firm, moist, dark grey clay containing early 20th-century finds with residual post-medieval pottery.



**Photograph 1** Trench shot showing the fill of moat F1, looking NE

## 5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

The only finds recovered from the evaluation came from the fill of moat F1 (finds number 1). They are listed in Table 1. The post-medieval and modern pottery fabrics refer to the Essex post-Roman fabric type series (Cunningham 1985; CAR 7).

Form/ description	Finds spot date
<p><b>Post-medieval and modern pottery:</b> (SQ) Complete pottery bottle in slightly lustrous, light-grey surfaced stoneware, English (Fabric 45), probably for ink, not marked/stamped (dated 19C); Complete jam/marmalade jar in slightly lustrous, light-grey surfaced stoneware, English (Fabric 45) broad vertical rib pattern (formed by spaced vertical grooves) on body and groove below rim, marked on underside – legend <b>W P HARTLEY LONDON &amp; LIVERPOOL</b> around edge <b>TRADE MARK REG</b> central below large lighthouse motif (dated E20C); also single body sherd from another (smaller) stoneware jar with similar broad, vertical ribbing but covered with close-set vertical grooves; Large sherd of Tin glazed earthenware (TGE) (Fabric 46) bowl with short triangular rim and small bead to rim top, internal repetitive foliate pattern on inner wall hand painted in blue and a patterned rim top also in blue, glaze has a light grey-blue hue and is crazed (dated L17-18C); single handle from a white glazed earthenware pot, glaze is crazed, probably a mug or beaker-like vessel (Fabric 48D) (dated M18-19C).</p> <p><b>Other finds:</b> (2) small piece coal/coke and a probable coal/coke cinder (dated as probably post-medieval-modern)</p>	<p><b>Modern E20C</b> (with residual L17/18-19C pottery)</p>

**Table 1** All finds

Key: SQ=small quantity (5-10 pieces/items, usually sherds, and including any part or whole items that are individually described but counted as 1)

## 6 Discussion

Despite significant modern disturbance, the Great Gubbins Farm moat was still visible within the evaluation trench. It was identified approximately 200mm below current ground level and excavated to a depth of 800mm, although auguring showed that it survived for a depth of at least 1.6m. The excavated fill of the moat contained early 20th-century pottery with residual late 17th/18th- to 19th-century pottery. OS mapping shows that the moat was only partially filled with water from the late 19th century and the remaining earthwork was visible until c 1940. With the finds evidence, this suggests that the earthwork was being gradually filled during these decades with most of the backfilling occurring in the early 20th century, presumably in advance of the building of the housing estate. Unfortunately the bottom of the moat could not be excavated within the safe-working depth of the trench so we do not know if finds or waterlogged deposits from the medieval period had survived.

## 7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Basildon Borough Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway, R Mathieson and A Wade. Figures are by BH, Pip Parmenter and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

## 8 References

CAR 7	2000	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by J Cotter
CAT	2014	<i>Health and Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2016	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological trial trenching on land south of 70 Victoria Road, Laindon, Basildon</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Cunningham, C	1985	'A typology for post-Roman pottery in Essex' in Cunningham, C., & Drury, P., <i>Post-medieval sites and their pottery: Moulsham Street, Chelmsford</i> , CBA Research Report 54
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
ECCPS	2015	<i>Brief for Archaeological trial trenching on land south of 70 Victoria Road, Laindon</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage)

## 9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
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
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to c AD 1800
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 984)

ECC 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 Southend Central Museum under accession code SOUMS: A.2016.2

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### **Distribution list:**

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Teresa O'Connor, Essex County Council Place Services

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



### **Colchester Archaeological Trust**

Roman Circus House

Roman Circus Walk,

Colchester,

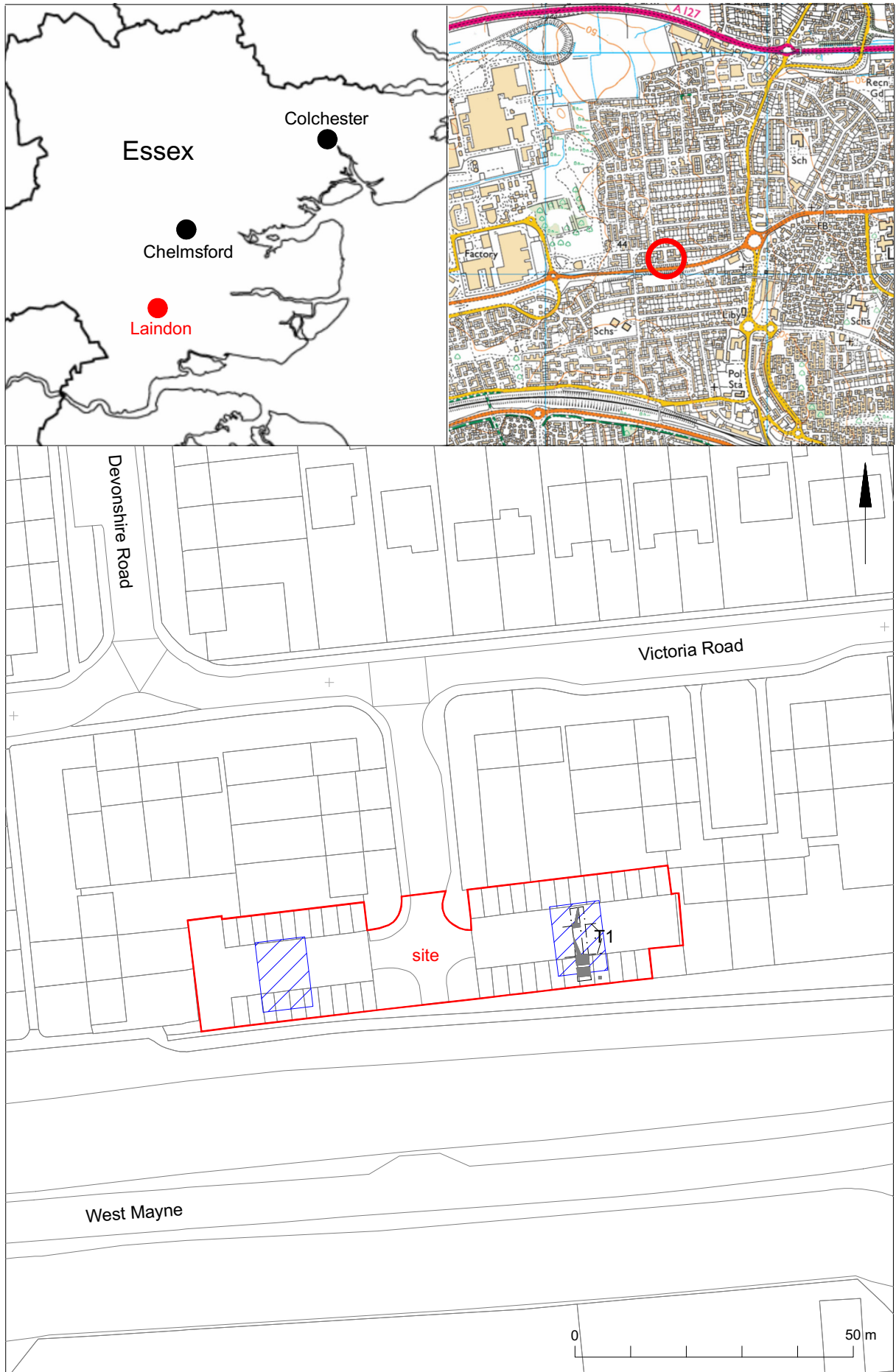
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)

Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 03.08.2016



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Fig 1 Site location and suggested trench locations.  
Proposed development shown in blue.



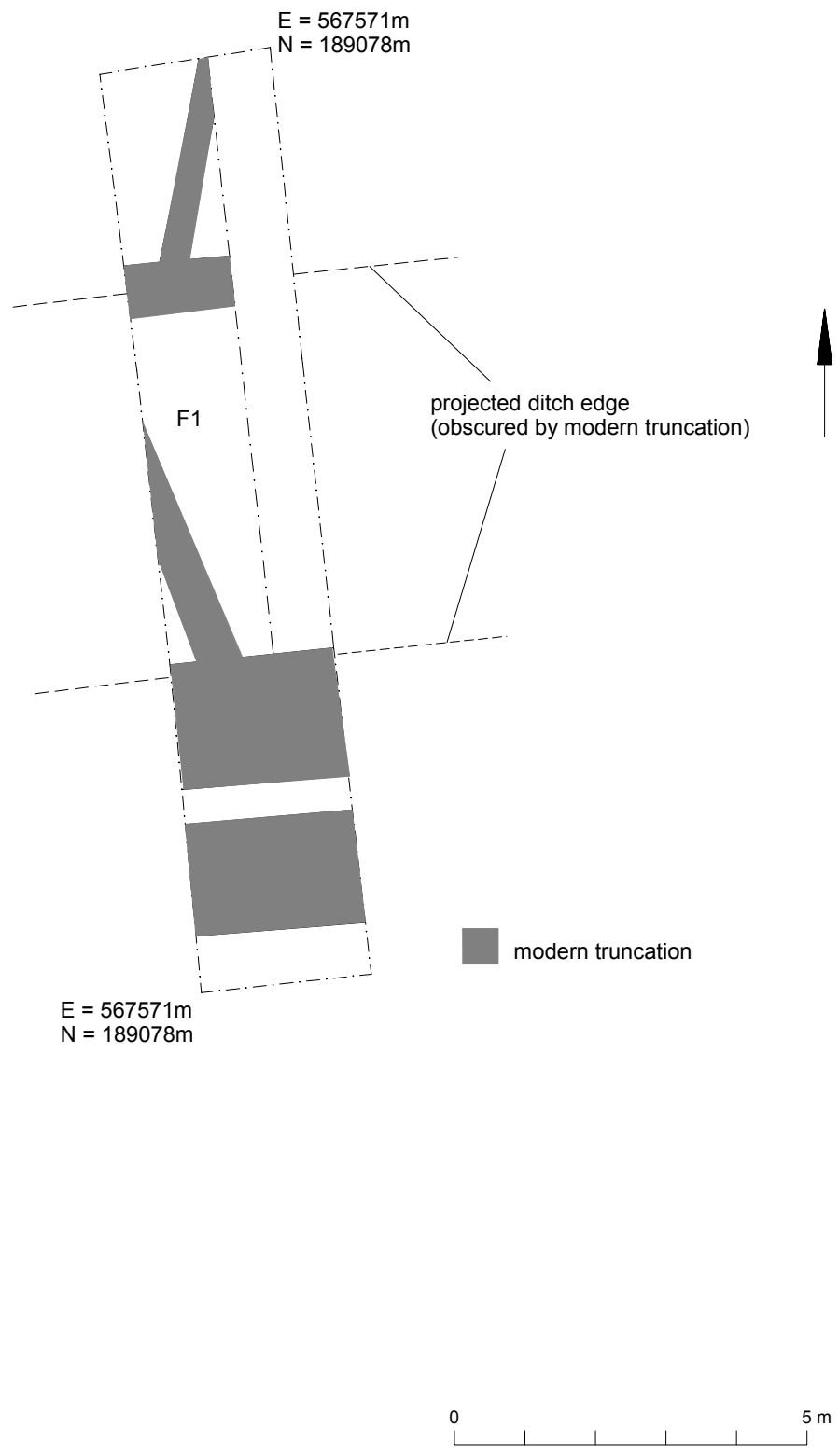


Fig 2 Trench Detail.

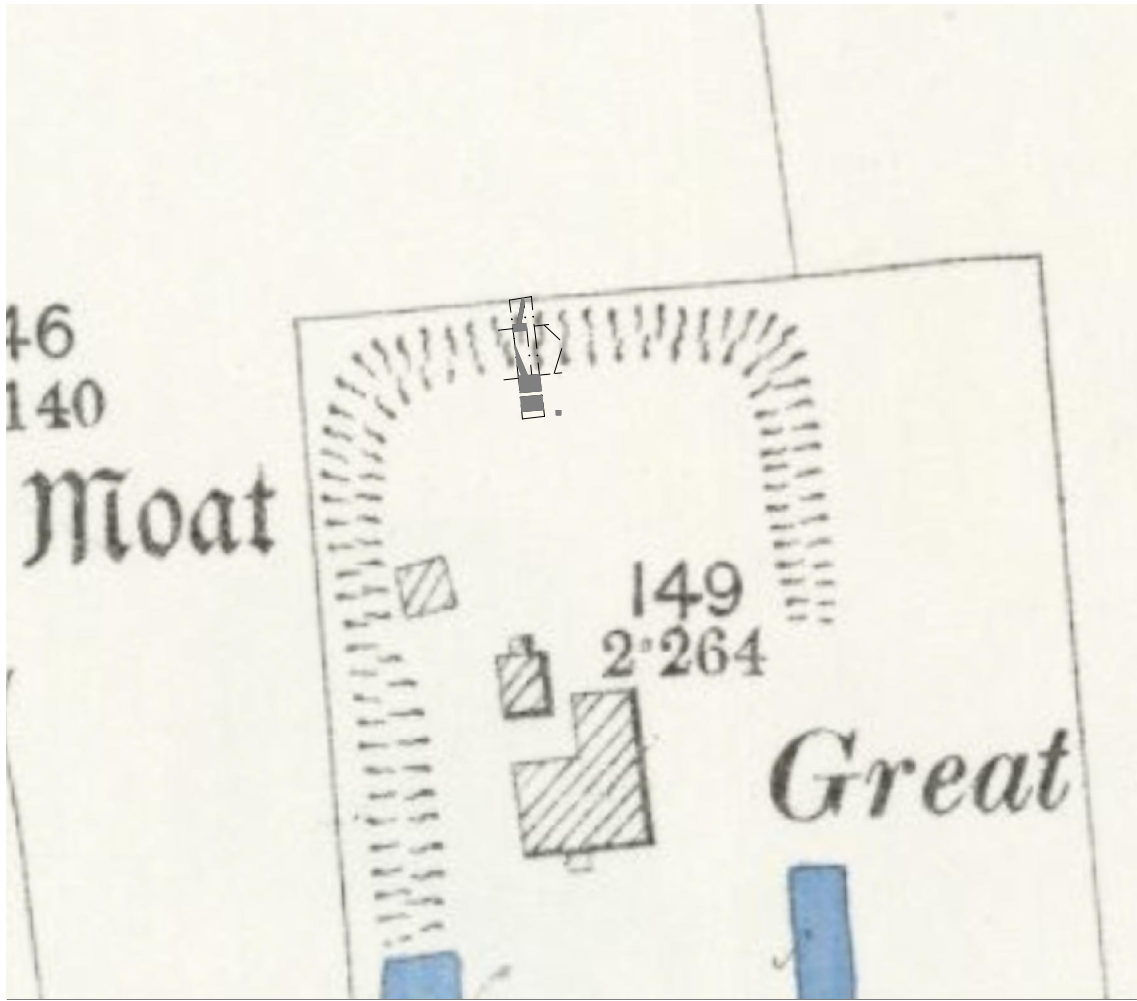
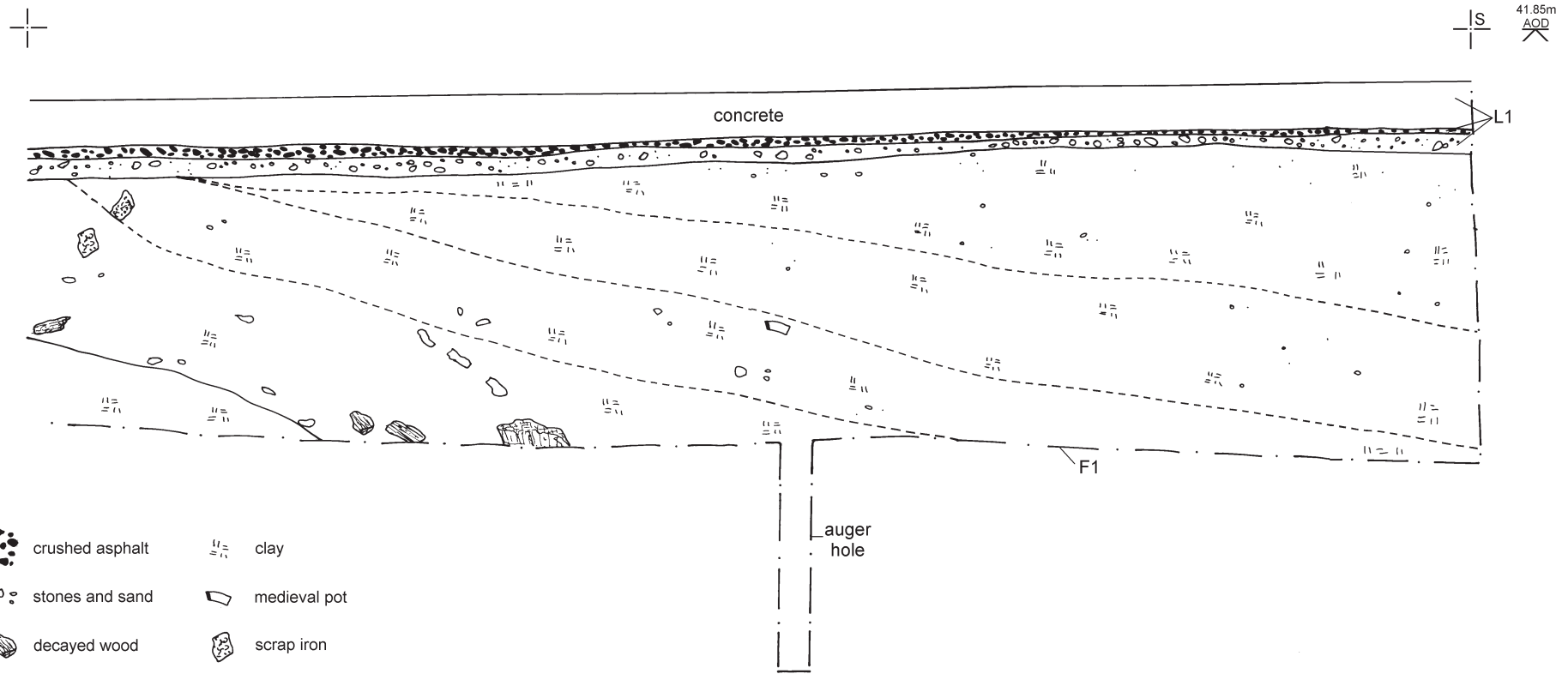
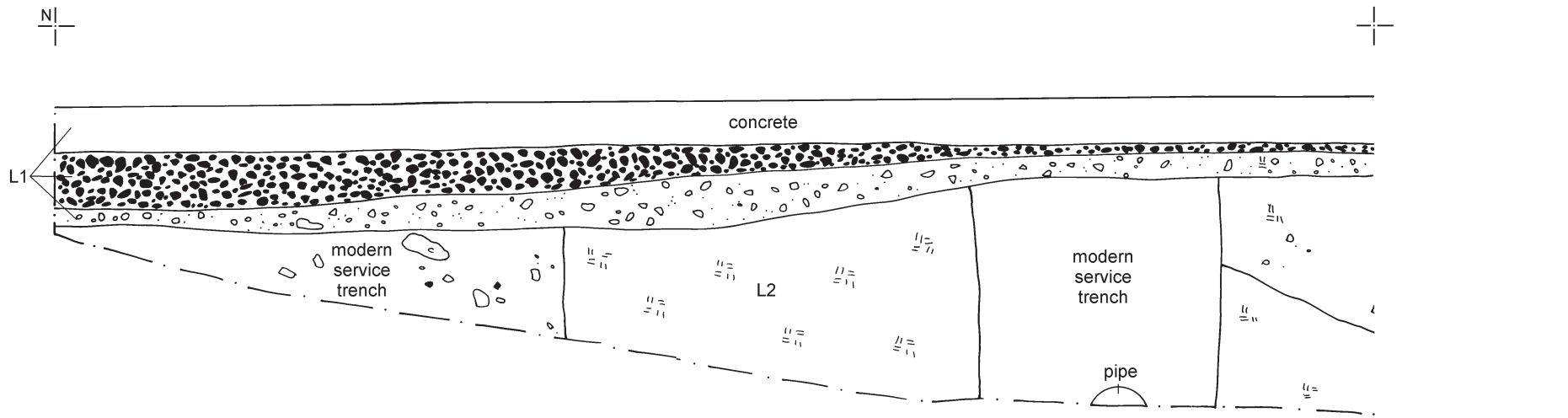


Fig 3 Trench overlay on 1st Edition OS Map









-  crushed asphalt
-  stones and sand
-  decayed wood
-  clay
-  medieval pot
-  scrap iron



Fig 4 Section.

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Land to the south of 70 Victoria Road, Laindon, Essex, SS15 6AR	
<b>Parish:</b> Basildon	<b>District:</b> Laindon
<b>NGR:</b> TQ 67553 89070 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project code: 16/04d ECC project code: BLVR16 OASIS project ID: colchest3-247799
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 12th July 2016	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> One trench – 13m long by 2.4m wide (31.2m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Southend Central Museum accession code SOUMS: A.2016.2	<b>Funding source:</b> Basildon Borough Council
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Not known	<b>Related EHER number:</b> EHER 5134
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 984	
<b>Periods represented:</b> post-medieval, modern	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b></p> <p>An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching was carried out on land to the south of 70 Victoria Road, Laindon in advance of the construction of four new dwellings with associated parking, landscaping and boundary walls. The development site was partially located on the northern edge of the medieval moated enclosure of Great Gubbins Farm. A single trial-trench was positioned over the projected line of the moat and, despite a lot of modern disturbance, it was identified within the centre of the trench (F1) surviving to a depth of at least 1.6m. Historic mapping shows that the moat was only partially filled with water by the late 19th century with the remaining earthwork visible until c 1940. Dating evidence from the moat confirms that the earthwork was being gradually filled during these decades with most of the backfilling occurring during the early 20th century. No evidence from the medieval period was apparent within the excavated fill of the moat.</p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> –	
<b>Keywords:</b> –	<b>Significance:</b> *
<b>Author of summary:</b> Laura Pooley	<b>Date of summary:</b> August 2016