

**Archaeological evaluation  
at the former Swallow Churchgate Hotel,  
Churchgate Street, Harlow, Essex, CM17 0JT**

**April 2016**



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figures by Emma Holloway and Chris Lister

fieldwork by Ben Holloway, Nigel Rayner and Alec Wade

**Commissioned by Staszek Stuart-Thompson,  
Wincer Kievenaar Architects  
on behalf of David Sharer**

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**CAT Report 954**  
May 2016

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## 1 Summary

*Archaeological evaluation at the former Swallow Churchgate Hotel, Churchgate Street, Harlow took place in advance of the remodelling of the late 16th/early 17th century hotel (Grade II listed, NHLE no. 1111702) and the construction of eight new dwellings along with parking, associated infrastructure and landscaping. Churchgate Street is medieval in origin and prehistoric, Roman and Saxon remains have been found in the area. The evaluation revealed three later prehistoric ditches (T2) and a cluster of late medieval/post-medieval features (T1), all located in the north-western corner of the development site. Modern disturbance was recorded across the rest of the site with modern layers sealing natural clay.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation at the former Swallow Churchgate Hotel, Churchgate Street, Harlow, Essex which was carried out on 27th-28th April 2016. The work was commissioned by Staszek Stuart-Thompson, Wincer Kievenaar Architects, on behalf David Sharer in advance of the remodelling of the listed Churchgate Hotel and the construction of eight new dwellings along with parking, associated infrastructure and landscaping. The work was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Maria Medleycott 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 trial-trenching*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Maria Medleycott (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 EHER shows that the proposed development lies within an area known to contain archaeological remains. Churchgate Street is medieval in origin (EHER 3625), however there is extensive evidence for earlier settlement (Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon) in the area. The hotel is Grade II listed and is late 16th/early 17th century in date (EHER 31634, NHLE no. 1111702). The historic cartographic evidence shows that it was originally surrounded by gardens, yards and ancillary structures. To the south-west there are cropmarks of linear features and probable Bronze Age ring-barrows (EHER 3647).

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

Eleven trial-trenches were laid out across the development site to target areas that had not been previously built on. The trenches totalled 128m linear by 1.8m wide (230m<sup>2</sup>).

All trenches were dug under archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator with toothless ditching bucket.

##### **Trench 1 (T1): 10m long**

Trench 1 was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 300-450mm thick) and two modern make-up layers that appear to have been used to level the ground at this end of the site (L2, c 300-480mm thick sealing L3, c 240-380mm thick). A modern service was located at the north end of the trench.

Three small modern pits (F1, F8 and F10) had been cut through L3. Pit F1 contained residual medieval pottery. Seven other features were sealed by L3 and cut into accumulation layers L4 and L5. None of the features were fully excavated as a safe working depth of 1.2m had already been reached. Late medieval/post-medieval pottery recorded from L5 would suggest that L4 and L5, and all of the features cutting them, are of a post-medieval or later date. The features themselves contained a range of dating evidence though. Pit F3 contained material dating to the Roman period, ditch F5 to the Medieval period, pit F4 to the late Medieval-early post-medieval period, and pit F2 and ditch F7 to the post-medieval period. No finds were recorded from pits F6 and F9. It is difficult to ascertain the date, nature and extent of these features based on this evaluation alone.



**Photograph 1** T1, looking SE

##### **Trench 2 (T2): 10m long**

Trench 2 was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 300-400mm thick) and a thick layer of subsoil (L7, c 700-800mm thick) which sealed natural clay (L10). A modern service ran north to south across the middle of the trench. Three ditches (F15-F17) were excavated and recorded, all aligned north-east to south-west. Ditch F15 was a shallow feature measuring 300mm wide and 50mm deep. Ditches F16 and F17 were U-shaped measuring 900mm wide by 230mm deep and 700mm wide by 270mm deep respectively. All three contained prehistoric flint flakes, with F16 in particular containing a large quantity of both flakes and burnt flint.

**Trench 3 (T3): 10m long**

Trench 3 was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 200-300mm thick) and a layer of subsoil (L7, c 500mm thick) which sealed natural clay (L10). A modern pit (F11) containing an animal burial was identified but not excavated. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.



**Photograph 2** T2, looking E



**Photograph 3** T3, looking S

**Trench 4 (T4): 10m long**

Trench 4 was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 350-400mm thick) and a layer of subsoil (L7, c 450mm thick) which sealed natural clay (L10). A modern service cut north to south across the middle of the trench. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.

**Trench 5 (T5): 8m long**

**Trenches 6-9 (T6-T9): each 10m long**

Trenches 5-9 were excavated through modern tarmac and crush (L8, c 250mm thick) and a layer of modern make-up/levelling (L9, c 150mm thick) which sealed natural clay (L10). A ceramic land drain cut east to west across T5. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.

**Trench 10 (T10): 20m long**

Trench 10 was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 350 thick) and a layer of subsoil (L7, c 270mm thick) which sealed natural clay (L10). No significant archaeological horizons were identified.

**Trench 11 (T11): 20m long**

Trench 11 was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 300mm thick) and a layer of subsoil (L7, c 300mm thick) which sealed natural clay (L10). Three post-medieval/modern postholes (F12-F14) were excavated across the trench and a modern service was identified at the east end. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.



Photograph 4 T6, looking E



Photograph 5 T10, looking E

## 5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield (flint identified by Adam Wightman)

All of the finds are listed in Table 1.

Context	Find no	Form/ description	spot date
T1, L2	7	<b>Post-medieval pottery:</b> 4 sherds, 42g – sandy sherd with red fabric & grey core, internal brown (clear) glaze (Fabric 40 16/17-18C); white/cream glazed sherd Fabric 47 (L18/19-E20C); white glazed sherd with painted decoration (Fabric 48D L18-19C); hard grey stoneware-like fabric, moderately thick with pitted black glazed exterior (unidentified fabric L18/19-E20C) <b>CBM:</b> one fragment of modern brick (98g), one fragment of tile (8g) <b>Glass:</b> Three fragments of modern bottle glass, two clear, one green (36g)	Modern (L18/19-E20C)
T1, L3	5	<b>Modern pottery:</b> 1 sherd, 6g – white glazed body sherd (Fabric 47 L18/19-E20C)	Modern (L18/19-E20C)
T1, L4	4	<b>Medieval &amp; post-medieval pottery:</b> 8 sherds, 68g - grey body sherd (1) (Fabric 20, L12/13-14C); miscellaneous sandy orange/red sherds, includes rim from a large dish (4) (Fabric 21, 13-15/16C probably 14/15-16C); fine sandy fabric with grey core and slash/abraded internal glaze (Fabric 40, 16-17C); orange-red fine sand fabric with all over brown (clear) glaze (Fabric 40, 17-18/E19C) <b>Iron:</b> One fragment of very corroded iron, 55mm long by 20mm wide <b>CBM:</b> Five fragments of peg-tile, 11-13mm thick, 20g <b>Animal bone:</b> Four fragments (28g) – two fragments of antler, one long bone (cow?) and one large mammal rib	Post-medieval (17-18/E19C) (residual medieval)
T1, L5	10	<b>Medieval-post-medieval(?) pottery:</b> 6 sherds, 86g – sherd from a jug, red sandy orange fabric, white underslip with mottled green glaze (Fabric 21); sherd from a jug, grey sandy fabric with white painted decoration and pitted clear	Medieval-early post-medieval (15/16C)

Context	Find no	Form/ description	spot date
		slip (Fabric 21); rim sherd from a cooking pot, flat rim, necked pot, sandy grey fabric brownish-orange surface (Fabric 13, L12-E13C); base sherd, brownish-red, slightly silty fabric with common sand inclusions (sooted) (Fabric 21 medieval); red coarse sandy fabric with thin grey core, speckled brown (clear) glaze on internal surface (2) (Fabric 21/40 15/16C)	
T1, F1	1	<b>Medieval pottery:</b> 1 sherd, 12g – brownish-red sandy fabric with dark-grey surfaces (slightly abraded) (Fabric 20/21, 13-15/16C) <b>Iron nail:</b> One iron nail, shaft only 39mm long, square-section (1g) <b>Animal bone:</b> One fragment (6g) of sheep metatarsal	Medieval (13-15/16C)
T1, F2	2	<b>CBM:</b> One fragment of peg-tile (13mm thick, 6g); one fragment of brick/tile 31mm thick, 26g), ?post-medieval	
T1, F3	3	<b>Roman pottery:</b> 1 sherd, 20g - grey, sandy fabric with red margin and abraded white/cream slip (Fabric 15)	Roman
T1, F4	9	<b>Roman pottery:</b> 1 sherd, 8g – sandy orange fabric with grey core and white/cream slip over external surface (Fabric 15) <b>Medieval-post-medieval pottery:</b> 4 sherds, 56g – rim from a bowl or pancheon, internal bead, traces of white slip and patchy greenish glaze (Fabric 21/40 transitional(?), c 15-16/17C); red coarse sandy fabric with thin grey core, speckled brown (clear) glaze on internal surface (3) (Fabric 21, 15-16C) <b>CBM:</b> One fragment of tile, 16mm thick, 28g <b>Iron:</b> Iron nail, 29mm long, 2g; iron lump, very corroded, 6g <b>Flint:</b> Two flints (22g) – one ?retouched secondary flake and one tertiary flake	Late medieval/post-medieval (c 15-16/17C) (residual Roman)
T1, F5	8	<b>Medieval pottery:</b> 1 sherd, 4g – sherd from a jug, grey fine sand fabric with mottled green glazed exterior and white internal slip (Fabric 21 13-14/15C)	Medieval (13-14/15C)
T1, F7	11	<b>Medieval &amp; post-medieval pottery:</b> 4 sherds, 28g - oxidised sandy coarseware with pale grey core (2) (Fabric 13 L11-12C); sandy orange fabric with brown(clear) internal glaze (Fabric 21/40 M16-17C); orange-red fine sand fabric with a complete internal brown (clear) glaze (Fabric 40 16/17-18C) <b>CBM:</b> Three fragments of brick/tile (2g)	Post-medieval (16/17-18C) (residual medieval)
T1, F7	12	<b>CBM:</b> One fragment of tile, ?post-medieval (12g)	
T2, F15	15	<b>Flint:</b> Two flints (50g) – two secondary hard hammer flakes, one with usewear/edge damage and one patinated and rolled with evidence of possible retouch. One burnt flint (12g)	
T2, F16	16	<b>Flint:</b> Eight flints (42g) – three tertiary flakes, one retouched tertiary flake, one secondary hard hammer flake, one patinated flake/blade, and two possible flakes. Ten burnt flints (606g)	
T2, F17	17	<b>Flint:</b> Probable secondary flint flake (14g)	
T3, F11	13	<b>Post-medieval pottery:</b> 1 sherd, 22g – fine sand orange/red fabric greenish-brown internal glaze (Fabric 40, 16/17-18C) <b>CBM:</b> Five fragments of peg-tile, 10-12mm thick, one peg-hole 11mm diameter, 140g; five fragments of brick/tile, 106g; one fragment of brick, 64g; probably all post-medieval. <b>Iron nail:</b> Shank only, 35mm long, 12g (concreted onto a piece of flint) <b>Animal bone:</b> One fragment (8g) of sheep long bone	Post-medieval (16/17-18C)
T4, L7	14	<b>Medieval-post-medieval(?) pottery:</b> 1 sherd, 6g – orange sandy fabric with grey core and brownish splash glaze on	Late medieval/

Context	Find no	Form/ description	spot date
		internal surface (Fabric 21/40 – late medieval/early post-medieval c 15-16C)	post-medieval (c 15-16C)

**Table 1** All finds by context

The Roman pottery fabrics refer to Going (1987). The post-Roman fabrics refer to the Essex post-Roman fabric series (Cunningham 1982 & CAR 7). The fabrics are listed in Table 2.

Fabric code	Fabric name
<i>Roman fabrics:</i>	
15	Miscellaneous white- or cream-slipped sandy red wares
<i>Post-Roman fabrics:</i>	
13	Early medieval sandywares (general)
20	Medieval sandy greywares (general)
21	Sandy orangewares (general)
40	Post-medieval (glazed) red earthenware
47	Staffordshire-type salt glazed stoneware
48D	Staffordshire-type white earthenware

**Table 2** Pottery fabrics

Most of the pottery is quite broken-up, consisting of small-medium size sherds indicating that most probably had some history of deposition before they entered the contexts from which they were recovered. None of the pottery has been sourced to a particular kiln group or manufactory, although it can be noted that there is production of pottery in the Harlow area in the medieval period (Walker 2000) and the sherds of post-medieval glazed red earthenware (Fabric 40) are unlikely to be other than products of the Harlow pottery industry.

There are two Roman sherds (F3 (3) & F4 (9)), both with a white/cream slip (Fabric 15). Neither is closely dated within the Roman period. Medieval pottery is represented by three glazed sherds from jugs (Fabric 21) and by coarsewares which are mostly oxidised (Fabric 21), with one sherd of greyware (Fabric 20). The sherds from the glazed jugs can be broadly dated to the period of the 13th -14th century. One sherd from a jug (L5 (10)) has a sandy orange fabric with a white slip under the glaze and is similar to products of the Colchester potteries; however, none appear to be typical of products of the Heddingham potteries. There is one large rim sherd from a cooking pot (L5 (10)) in an oxidised sandy fabric (Fabric 13) that suggests a late 12th-13th century date, although a slightly later date might also be possible. Two sherds are from large bowls. One (L4 (4)) is of late medieval or possibly early post-medieval date and almost certainly dates to after the mid 15th century. The other (F4 (9)) is broadly of similar late medieval-early post-medieval date, but has traces of an internal glaze and is probably likely to date to the late 15th-16th century. A number of sandy oxidised sherds with internal splashed/speckled clear glaze, showing brown over the red fabric (L5 (10), L7 (14), F4 (9)) are also probably of late medieval or early post-medieval date, c late 15-16 century (CAR 7 146). Among the pottery from F7 (11) is a sherd of Fabric 40 with a complete internal glaze, which is certainly of post-medieval date (c 17th-18/early 19th century) and there are sherds of modern factory wares dating from the late 18th/19th or early 20th century from L2 (7) & L3 (5).

It can be noted that, together with finds of Roman and modern date, medieval pottery dated to the period of the 13th-15th century (including sherds with patchy clear glaze) has been previously reported from an archaeological evaluation at 1 Churchgate Street (CA 2011).



Small fragments of probable post-medieval peg-tile and brick/tile were identified in six contexts with modern brick and glass from L2. Other finds include a small quantity of iron nails/corroded lumps and animal bone.

The large quantity of flint flakes and burnt flint from ditches F15-F17 is significant, with F16 containing the majority of this material. The flakes probably date to the later prehistoric period (Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age). Quantities of burnt flint/stone is most commonly associated with prehistoric occupation, most having probably been used to indirectly heat water and often referred to as 'pot boilers'.

## 6 Discussion

Archaeological evaluation at the Swallow Churchgate Hotel revealed a significant amount of modern disturbance across most of the site with modern layers sealing natural clay. The only trace of surviving archaeological horizons was located in the far north-western corner of the site, around T1-T2, at a depth of 750-900mm below current ground level. Three possible later prehistoric ditches containing a quantity of flint flakes and burnt flint were identified in T2. Ten features (pits and ditches) of a probable later medieval/post-medieval date were identified in T1 along with a small quantity of residual Roman and earlier medieval pottery.

## 7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Staszek Stuart-Thompson of Wincer Kievenaar Architects for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway, N Rayner and A Wade. Figures are by C Lister and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Maria Medlycott.

## 8 References

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

CA	2011	<i>Land adjoining no.1 Churchgate Street, Harlow, Essex, archaeological evaluation, Cotswold Archaeology unpublished archive report (CA Report 11019)</i>
CAR 7	2000	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85, by J Cotter</i>
CAT	2014	<i>Health and Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation on land east of Knowles Farm, Wycke Hill, Maldon, Essex, CM9 6SH</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
CIfA	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 <b>54</b>
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, <b>14</b> . 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 <b>24</b> , by Maria Medlycott
ECCPS	2015	<i>Brief for archaeological trial-trenching on land east of Knowles Farm, Wycke Hill, Maldon</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage)
Going, C	1987	<i>The Mansio and other sites in the south-eastern sector of Caesaromagus: the Roman pottery</i> , CBA Research Report <b>62</b>

Walker, H            2000            'The medieval and post-medieval pottery' in Medleycott, M.,  
Prehistoric, Roman and post-medieval material from Harlow:  
investigations at Church Langley 1989-1994. *EAH* Volume **31**, 77-  
78

## 9 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period circa 2500- 700 BCE
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'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
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
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to c AD 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
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 sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
U/S	unstratified, ie without a well-defined context
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 10 Contents of archive

**Finds:** half a box (pottery and flint only retained)

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 954)

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 Harlow Museum under accession code HAWMS: 2016.200.

**Distribution list:**

Staszek Stuart-Thompson, Wincer Kievenaar Architects  
Maria Medleycott, Essex County Council Place Services  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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*Date:* 24.05.2016

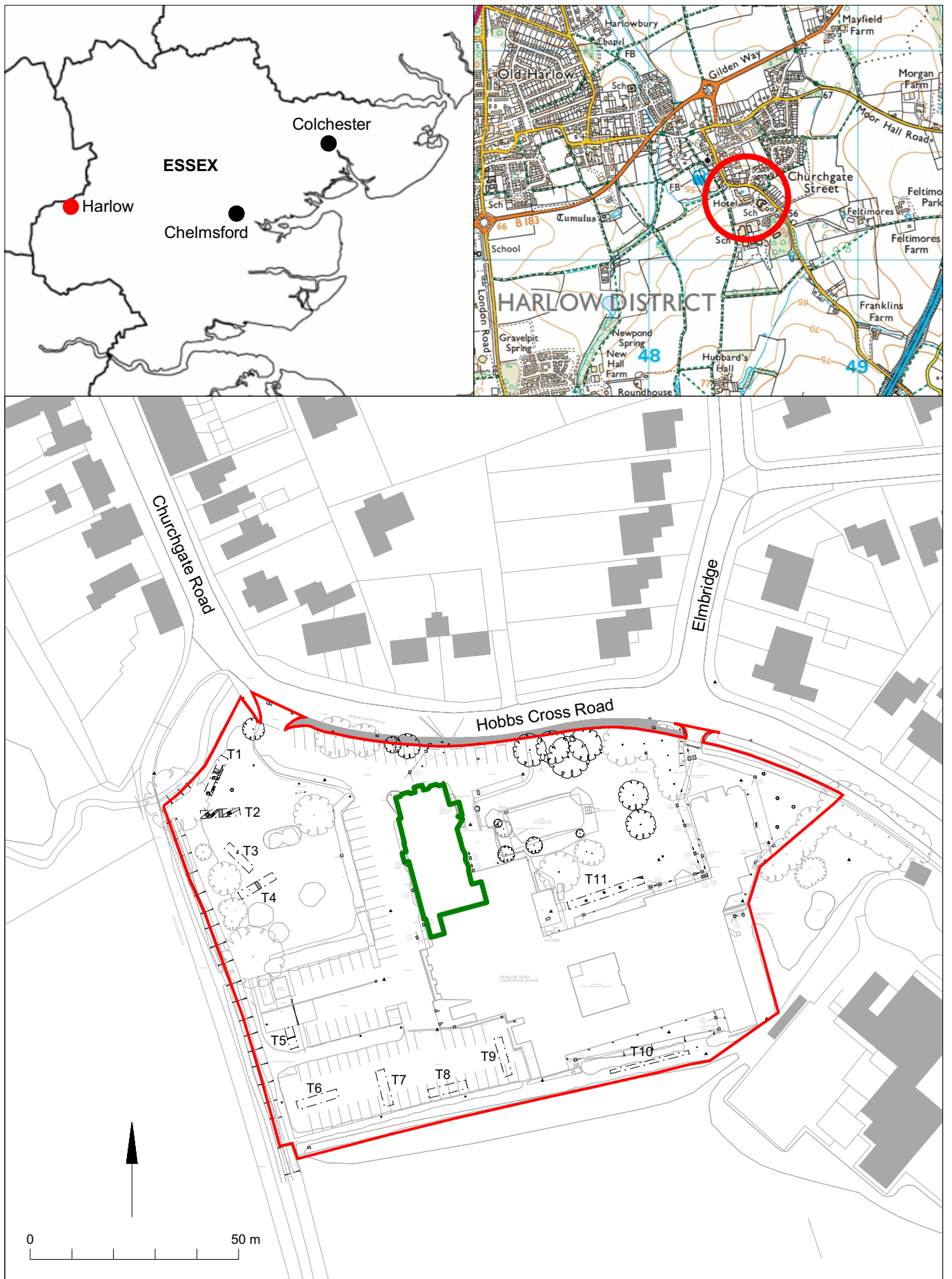


Fig 1 Site location.

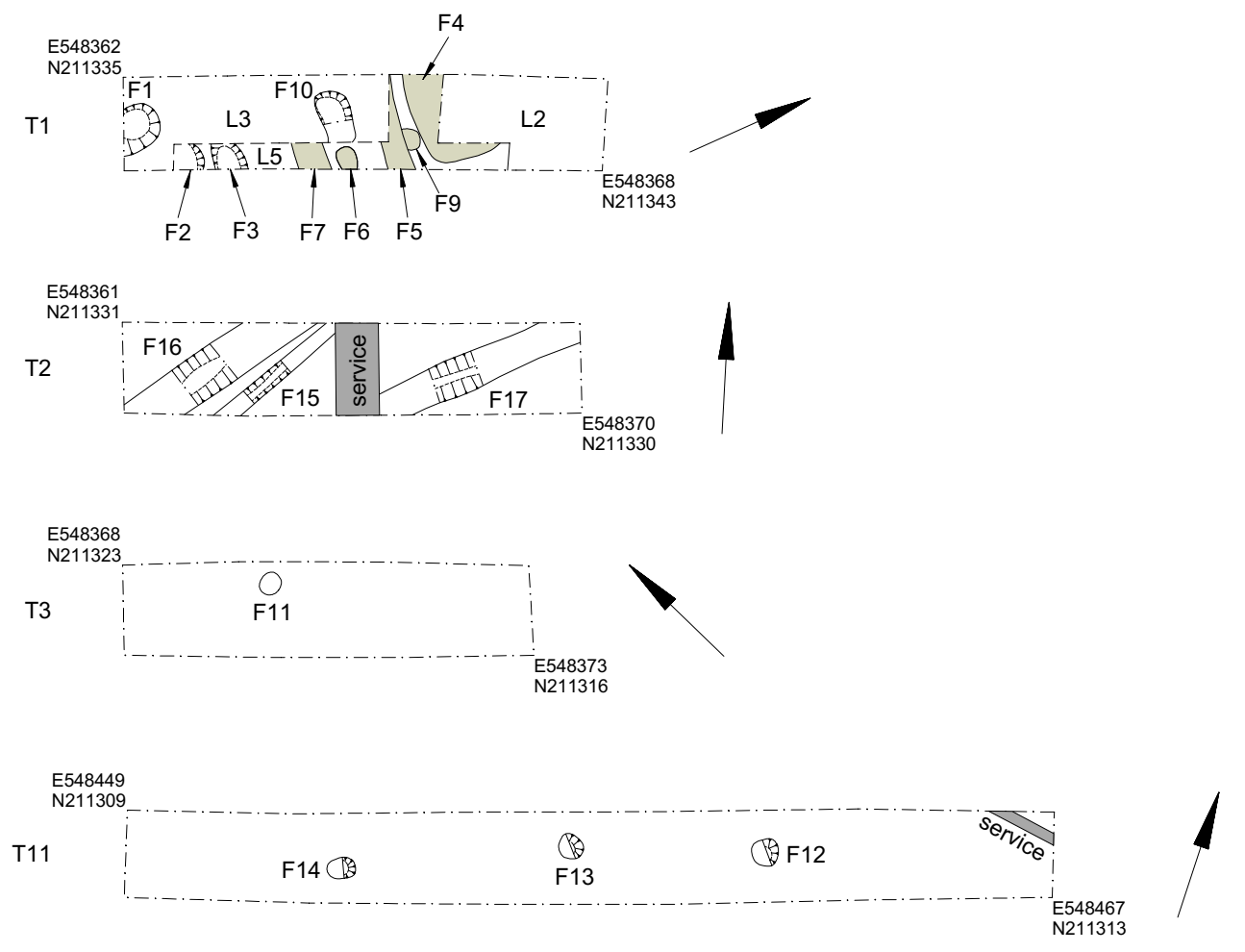



Fig 2 Evaluation Results



 not excavated due to unsafe depth

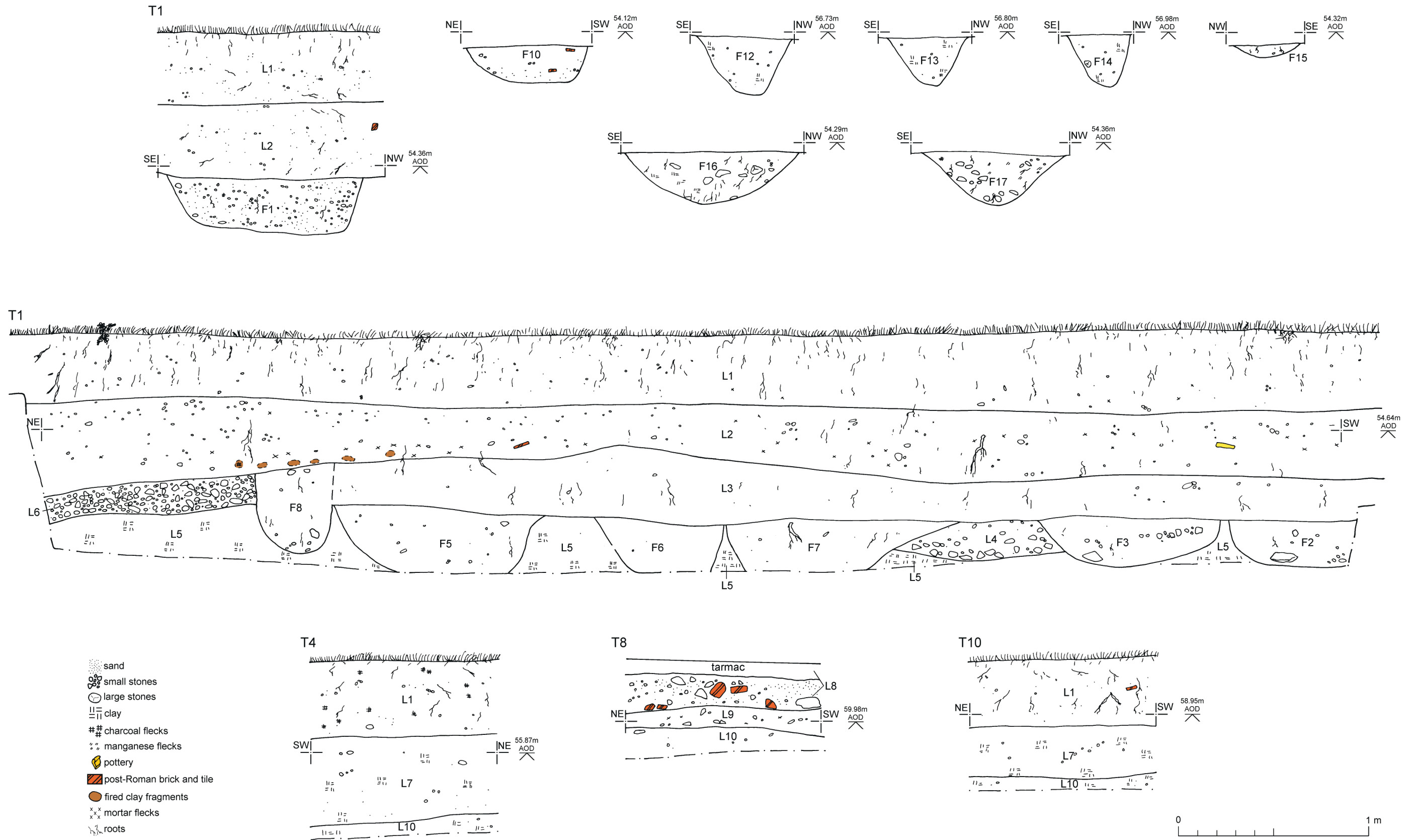


Fig 3 Feature sections (F1-F3, F5-F8, F10 and F12-17) and representative trench sections (T1, T4, T8 and T10).

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Swallow Churchgate Hotel, Churchgate Street, Harlow, Essex, CM17 0JT	
<b>Parish:</b> Harlow	<b>District:</b> Harlow
<b>NGR:</b> TL 48446 11300 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project code: 16/04e ECC project code: HACH 16 OASIS project ID: colchest3-248148
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 27th-28th April 2016	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> Eleven trial-trenches totalling 128m linear by 1.8m wide (230m <sup>2</sup> ).
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Harlow Museum accession code HAWMS: 2016.200	<b>Funding source:</b> Developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Not known	<b>Related EHER number:</b> EHER 3625, 3647, 31634
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 954	
<b>Periods represented:</b> later prehistoric, late medieval/post-medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> Archaeological evaluation at the former Swallow Churchgate Hotel, Churchgate Street, Harlow took place in advance of the remodelling of the late 16th/early 17th century hotel (Grade II listed, NHLE no. 1111702) and the construction of eight new dwellings along with parking, associated infrastructure and landscaping. Churchgate Street is medieval in origin and prehistoric, Roman and Saxon remains have been found in the area. The evaluation revealed three later prehistoric ditches (T2) and a cluster of late medieval/post-medieval features (T1), all located in the north-western corner of the development site. Modern disturbance was recorded across the rest of the site with modern layers sealing natural clay.</p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> -	
<b>Keywords:</b> -	<b>Significance:</b> *
<b>Author of summary:</b> Laura Pooley	<b>Date of summary:</b> May 2016