

**An archaeological evaluation of St Helena
School Drama Block, Sheepen Road,
Colchester, Essex
November 2005**

**report prepared by
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and Engineering Solutions**

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1 Summary

Three small test-pits were excavated by hand next to the drama block at St Helena School, which is within the scheduled ancient monument of Sheepen. Three cut features were recorded of early Roman, probably 1st century AD date. One ditch appears to have held a post and may have supported a wooden fence. The type of pottery and the presence of animal bone, burnt flint, a coin, slag and Roman tile suggest domestic use similar to that identified as a result of previous investigations 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.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

- 2.1 This is the archive report on an archaeological evaluation involving test-pits, carried out on the 22nd of November 2005 by the by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT), Colchester, Essex.
- 2.2 Scheduled monument consent was applied for to extend the drama block to create a media centre. An evaluation consisting of three test-pits within the footprint of the extension was a requirement of the consent.
- 2.3 The school is located between Sheepen Road and Colne Bank Avenue, south of the River Colne, 1.5km north-west of Colchester town centre. It is centred at National Grid Reference TL 9895 2580. The drama block is located to the east of the main school block, in a flat grassed area at 7m AOD.
- 2.4 All fieldwork was done in accordance with a specification submitted to the HEM Team officer and English Heritage by CAT.
- 2.5 This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines for the standards and practice of archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CM 2002) and *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums* (CM 2003), and the IFA's *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IFA 1999) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IFA 2001). Other sources are *Management of archaeological projects* (MAP 2), and *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2* (EAA 8), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

3 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to record the extent, nature and complexity of any surviving archaeological remains within the development site and also the nature of the subsoil and natural ground. The opportunity was also taken to ascertain the existing foundation details and soil conditions/type.

4 Archaeological Background (Fig 1)

- 4.1 The site lies on the eastern side of the important Late Iron Age and early Roman settlement known (Scheduled Ancient Monument no 46). Extensive excavations there in the 1930s and smaller-scale work in 1970 and later have produced evidence of workshops engaged in a range of industrial activities including metal-working, enameling, pottery-making and leather-working (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Niblett 1985).
- 4.2 A late 1st-century temple was excavated by the Colchester Excavation Committee in 1935 on the site of St Helena School (Hull 1958, 224-34). The outer 'temenos' wall of the temple precinct appears to lie underneath Sheepen Road.
- 4.3 A Roman timber-lined well was recorded in the 1930s to the north, within the grounds of Colchester Institute. A watching brief carried out at Colchester Institute in 2001 produced an assemblage of 1st-century AD Roman amphoras and mostly

1st-century AD pottery. Several pits were recorded, one of which was datable to the early Roman period. A short stretch of mortared Roman tiles, presumed to be a wall or foundation to a Roman building, was found by the contractors after the watching brief had finished (CAT Report 131).

5 Methods (Fig 2)

- 5.1** Two three 1m² test-pits were excavated by hand within the footprint of the proposed extension. A third pit of similar size was sited slightly to the south of the footprint to avoid a concrete path.
- 5.2** Individual records of layers and features were entered on CAT pro-forma record sheets. All exposed subsoil features, archaeological deposits or negative features were manually cleaned, planned using a total station, and examined in sufficient detail to allow their nature, date and importance to be assessed. Four features were excavated and drawn in section at a scale of 1:10.
- 5.3** A register was compiled of finds. Finds were washed, marked and bagged according to context.
- 5.4** Standard 'record' shots of contexts were taken with a digital camera.
- 5.5** A metal-detector was used to check all the spoil heaps.

6 Results (Figs 2-7)

6.1 Test-pit 1 (T1)

A 600mm thick layer of medium to dark brown loam topsoil (L1) was removed. This topsoil contained Roman brick and tile in its upper parts and animal bone further down. The topsoil is likely to be post-medieval in origin. It contained modern pottery near the surface. L1 sealed a dirty layer of light yellowish/buff brown sandy silt mixed with L1-type material (L2). L2 was approximately 150mm thick and likely to be re-worked cover loam, deriving from the Late Iron Age or early Roman period. Cut into L2 was a small pit (F3) with a blackish charcoal-enriched fill. Animal bone and Late Iron Age-early Roman pottery from L1 (find no 4) may have been displaced from this feature. F3 was recorded in section only. Further excavation after F3 had been removed exposed a thin layer of yellowish/buff brown sandy silt cover loam, with gravel in places (L3). Natural orange sand and gravel with pockets of sand was encountered at just over 830mm below ground level (L4). The test-pit was dug to 1.05m depth.

6.2 Test-pit 2 (T2)

750mm of L1 topsoil containing Roman pottery and animal bone sealed 150mm thick layer of re-deposited cover loam (L2) containing Late Iron Age and early Roman pottery and animal bone. A shallow ditch with a dark brown fill, containing abundant early Roman pottery, residual Late Iron Age pottery, some animal bone, Roman tile and a piece of slag was recorded on the southern side of the test-pit (F2). The width of F2 could not be established as it was outside the reach of the test-pit. F2 was cut through re-deposited cover loam (L2) and the underlying cover loam (L3). A pit or post-hole (F4) had been dug through the south-western corner of F2. F4 had a similar fill to the ditch which it cut, and contained two pieces of daub which may be the remains of packing for a post. It was only just over 300mm deep, however, which is shallow for a hole supporting a post. A post-hole would suggest that F2/F4 was a structural feature, perhaps supporting a fence. The test-pit was dug to 900mm depth, with a small sondage dug to test the depth of natural sand and gravel (L4). This was encountered below L3 at 1.23m below ground level. The test-pit also exposed the brick foundation to the drama block which were 910mm deep, with a concrete base.

6.3 Test-pit 3 (T3)

600mm of L1 topsoil was recorded. This contained Roman pottery in the first 300mm and Roman pottery and tile, clay pipe, peg-tile and post-medieval pottery further down. The removal of L1 exposed a very dark-filled cut feature on the northern side of the test-pit (F1). Once fully excavated, F1 was found to have a rounded base and to contain early Roman pottery with residual sherds of Late Iron Age pottery, plus

some daub, burnt flint and animal bone. The fill was almost black but did not contain charcoal. It was cut through a thick layer of cover loam (L3) some of which was re-deposited (L2). The feature appeared to curve round or terminate at the north-western end of the test-pit. It is not clear whether F1 was a pit or ditch. The width of the feature could not be determined because it continued below the baulk. The test-pit was dug to 1.1m depth. Natural sand and gravel was reached by digging a small sondage to a further depth of 0.1m.

7 Finds

7.1 The Late Iron Age and Roman pottery

by S Benfield

Details of the referencing for the pottery form numbers and fabrics are detailed in the appendix.

111 sherds (weighing 2343 g) of Late Iron Age and Roman pottery were recovered from the evaluation. The pottery is interesting both in terms of its overall composition and for the inclusion of sherds of Arretine samian from a large platter with a potter's stamp.

Overall the pottery spans the Late Iron Age and early Roman period. The earliest pottery is represented by grog-tempered sherds of Late Iron Age date which are current in the period c 75-50 BC-50 AD. No vessel form could be identified among the Late Iron Age sherds. Almost all the Roman pottery vessel forms and fabrics which could be identified are types which are current in the 1st-early 2nd century. The only exception is a single rim sherd from a bowl of form Cam 37B in Fabric GB (Test-pit 3, L1, find 8). Other than this, forms which could be identified are: a South Gaulish decorated samian bowl of form Dr. 29 (dated Tiberian-c AD 85) (Test-pit 3, F1, find 6); a South Gaulish samian cup of form Dr. 24/25 (dated pre-Flavian) (Test-pit 3, L2, find 5); probably at least 2 examples of the bowl form Cam 218 (dated 1st-early 2nd century) (Test-pit 2, L1, find 10 & F2, find 8 and Test-pit 3, L1, find 2); a bowl of form Cam 241/242 (dated Claudian-late 1st/early 2nd century) (Test-pit 3, F1, find 6); a platter of form Cam 21 (dated c AD 5 -Claudio-Neronian) (Test-pit 2, find 10, L1) and a large storage jar of form Cam 270 B (dated 1st-2nd century/3rd century) (Test-pit 1, Layer 1, finds 3 & 4). Other vessel types which could be identified but were not given a specific form number include sherds probably from two Butt Beakers (Test-pit 2, F2, find 8) one, and probably both, of which can be dated to the pre-Flavian period. While there are many sherds which cannot be identified as from a particular pottery form and dated in that way, they can be dated to the early Roman period based on their fabric, and this includes all of the sherds of fine ware (samian). The samian is all of 1st-century date with both Arretine and South Gaulish fabrics. Also the coarse ware fabrics are predominantly tempered with fine dark material (which appears to be organic in origin) and can be associated with pottery production in the early Roman period. The organic-tempered sherds are often, though not invariably, of a moderately soft fabric which is prone to laminate. This fabric (GX(RCW)) can be associated with early Roman period pottery techniques, with potters adapting to Roman potting methods. The use of grog temper in the large storage jars (Fabric HZ (GT)) also suggests an early Roman date for vessels in that fabric.

The site is situated close to or within the area of the important Late Iron Age occupation site and early Roman industrial centre at Sheepen where occupation is dated c AD 5-60/61 (Niblett 1985, 3). This is strongly reflected in the pottery from the evaluation, and while all of the pottery cannot of itself be dated so closely, virtually all of the pottery can be accommodated within a date range of c AD 5-60/61.

There were two cut features on the site which produced Roman pottery, F1 (Test-pit 3) and F2 (Test-pit 2). Of the two features, the larger quantity of pottery was recovered from F1 with 34 sherds (weighing 843 g), while 13 sherds (weighing 218 g) were recovered from F2. The pottery from both features can be dated to the early Roman period of the 1st century AD, and there is no reason to date either of them necessarily later than the end of the main period of activity at the Sheepen site c AD 60/61. While it is not possible to confidently give a relative date between the pottery from the two features, both contain residual sherds of Late Iron Age pottery, and the

quantity of pottery in each case is small. However, the pottery from the feature F2 could be seen, overall, as possibly earlier than that of F1. This appearance of an earlier date is given both by the fabrics present and the pottery forms. F2 contains no well fired sandy grey ware (Fabric GX), and the fabrics and pottery forms are predominantly those current in the Late Iron Age. This is reflected in the sherds of Fabric GTW and sherds from butt beakers, together with a large sherd of Arretine samian from a platter. However the feature is of early Roman date as it contains sherds of Fabric GX(RCW) which is considered to be entirely post-conquest.

The Arretine samian from the site is of intrinsic interest. It was manufactured in several sites in Italy of which Arretium (modern Arrezzo) was the main centre during the 1st century BC and earlier 1st century AD (Oswald & Pryce 1920, 4). Small quantities were imported into Britain in the Late Iron Age and are generally associated with important centres of power and trade, Camulodunum (Colchester) being the most important of these. Quantities of Arretine samian have been recovered previously from excavations at Sheepen (Hawkes & Hull 1947, 168-95). All the Arretine sherds were recovered from Test-pit 2. The identification of the pottery as Arretine samian is undoubted. It is made certain by the potter's name stamp on a single large sherd (find 8) from the feature F2, and the correspondence of the fabric of that sherd with three further sherds (find 10) recovered from L1. All of these sherds are most probably parts of the same a large platter, although two vessels could be represented. There is a possible join between the sherd from F2 and one (that with the base ring scar) from L1, but this is not secure. Also the underside of the sherd from F2 is not covered by the slip coating, while all of the sherds from L1 are coated on both upper and lower surfaces. However, the sherd from F2 comes from that part of the vessel inside the area enclosed by the footring. Those from L1 are from areas outside of the footring, so that it is possible that only the area within the footring on the underside of the platter was not slip coated. The Arretine sherds are described below.

Arretine platter base sherd with stamp (Test-pit 2, F2, find no 8)

Single large sherd from the base of a platter. The fabric is pale, only moderately hard and slightly powdery, with an even brownish slip coating. The edge of the sherd is 65 mm from the centre of the platter (as measured from the centre of the stamp). On the interior (upper) surface of the vessel, as well as the central stamp, there is also a short length surviving of two concentric grooves (55 mm from the centre of the stamp). There is no trace of a footring on the underside of the platter, so that the sherd comes from the area within the footring, and the footring itself must be greater than 65 mm from the centre of the platter. The surface slip coat survives well on the interior surface, although is chipped away around areas of the central stamp. Unusually the slip does not cover the underside of the sherd, the platter's base. The slip here has not been worn away as there are several smudges of slip on the underside of the platter, two of which are finger-print marks. These show positively that the base was never covered by the slip. There is a hole 3 mm across bored into the centre of the stamp. The hole does not penetrate the platter and its purpose is unknown. It could very tentatively be suggested that the unusual damage to the stamp has a ritual association since the sherds came from an area close to a Roman-Celtic temple.

The potter's stamp is framed in a rectangle of the cut die. Two letters survive to either side of the hole. These are **CN** on the left and **EI** on the right. The letter **N** is set within the open side of the letter **C**. Also there is a line, presumed to be the top part of a letter **T**, surviving over the top of the hole. The stamp can be restored as **CN.(A)TEI**. Stamps on Arretine ware with these letters are known from the Colchester Sheepen site (Hawkes & Hull 1947, 191-4) and are stamps of the potter Cn. Ateius. However there are no parallels for this particular stamp die among the published examples from Camulodunum (Hawkes & Hull 1947 pl XLI).

Arretine platter sherds (Test-pit 2, L1, find no 10)

Three sherds from an Arretine platter are probably part of the same platter as above (F2, find 8) and are in identical fabric and slip. The correspondence between the sherds from the two contexts (F2 and L1) allows a positive identification as Arretine samian. One sherd is from just over the area of the footring which is broken away leaving a scar. The area above the footring is rouletted, and there is a length a double concentric groove surviving just beyond the rouletting towards the outer edge

of the platter. The other two sherds, which join together, are parts of the outer area of the platter base. They do not join with the other sherd but are undoubtedly part of the same pot. All of the sherds (unlike the sherd from F2 from inside the area enclosed by the footring) are slipped over all of their surfaces.

7.2 Medieval and later pottery and glass

by Howard Brooks

The material came from four bags representing three site contexts, and consisted principally of pottery, with a single piece of glass. The pottery was classified according to CAR 7. Material from each bag was listed, weighed and identified (Tables 1 and 2).

The pottery is all of post-medieval date, and fairly typical of small assemblages containing post-medieval red earthenware (PMRE fabric 40), flowerpot (fabric 51b), and German stoneware (fabric 45d). Fabric 48d ironstone is absent.

A single sherd of green glass was recovered. It is thin glass (1.5mm thick) and ribbed with an external curve. The sherd is probably from a glass flask or bowl.

The interesting point about this material is where it may have come from. St Helena School was built on open fields to the west of a commercial nursery site (OS 1881) and opened in 1938 (VCH 1994, 363). Thus the pottery must relate to pre-school activity. The nearest habitation was the now long-demolished Sheepen Farm, 650m to the west (the Avenue of Remembrance passes over its site). The pottery may have derived from Sheepen Farm via manure scattering on the fields or possibly from the adjacent nursery.

Table 1: pottery: quantity and weight of finds per bag and context

Find no.	Test-pit	Context	Qt	Wt	Comments / date
2	3	L1	1	76g	Post-medieval Red Earthenware (PMRE) glazed fabric 40 (17th-18th century) bowl or pancheon rim. Probably a Cotter type B2, late 16th or early 17th century (CAR 7, 196-7).
1	3	L1	1	1g	Tiny sherd of flowerpot, fabric 51b (19th-20th century).
1	3	L1	1	2g	Sherd of glazed post-medieval red earthenware (PMRE), fabric 40 (17th-18th century).
1	3	L1	1	10g	Stoneware sherd, probably Frechen ware, fabric 45d. Late 16th-17th century.
7	2	F2 surface	1	24g	PMRE glazed fabric 40 base sherd from bulbous jug (17th century).
totals			5	113g	

Table 2: glass: quantity and weight of finds per bag and context

Find no.	Test-pit	Context	Qt	Wt	Comments / date
1	3	L1	1	2g	Strongly coloured green glass from ?ribbed flask. Modern (19th-20th century)

7.3 The Roman coin

by Nina Crummy

L1, T1, find 3 -Illegible radiate *antoninianus*, AD 250-280. Diameter 16.5 mm.

7.4 The lamp fragment

L1, T2, find no 10 – a small fragment of the wall of a Roman lamp was found at least 500mm below ground level within the topsoil. The fabric is cream with a brown slip. It was not possible to ascertain whether this was from a factory lamp or a picture lamp.

7.5 Other finds

Table 3: list of other finds

Find no	Context	Description	Date	Weight
<i>Ceramic Building Material</i>				
1	L1 – upper 300mm, T3	Roman tile	Roman	119g
2	L1 –300mm+ below ground level, T3	Peg-tile Brick/tile fragments	Medieval to modern ?	195g 296g
3	L1 – upper 300mm, T1	Peg-tile brick/tile fragments Roman roof tile	Medieval to modern ? Roman	151g 210g 844g
5	L2, T3	Roman tile Peg-tile, intrusive in layer?	Roman Medieval to modern	28g 76g
7	Surface of F2, T2	Roman tile	Roman	606g
10	L1 – 500mm+ below ground level, T2	Peg-tile Roman tile	Medieval to modern Roman	48g 368g
2	L1-300mm+ down, T3	Daub	?	22g
5	L2, T3	Daub	Roman?	97g
6	F1, T3	Daub	Roman	246g
12	F4, T2	Daub	Roman	68g
<i>Stone</i>				
2	L1, 300mm+, T3	Unidentified stone	?	36g
5	L2, T3	Burnt flint	Roman?	98g
6	F1, T3	Burnt flint	Roman	154g
<i>Fe</i>				
1	L1 – upper 300mm , T3	Fe nail	?	2g
2	L1, 300mm+, T3	Fe nail Fe object	? ?	5g 35g
6	F1, T3	Fe Nail	Roman	6g
9	L1 – upper 500mm, T2	Fe object	?	33g
8	F2 – lower fill, T2	Slag	Roman	8g
11	L2, T2	Slag	Roman?	55g
<i>Animal bone</i>				
2	L1, 300mm+ below ground level, T3	Animal bone	?	1.3g
4	L1, 300mm+ below ground level, T1	Animal bone	?	28g
5	L2, T3	Animal bone	Roman?	5g
6	F1, T3	Animal bone	Roman	28g
8	F2 – lower fill, T2	Animal bone	Roman	183g
9	L1 –300mm+ below ground level, T2	Animal bone	?	23g
10	L1 - 500mm+ below ground level, T2	Animal bone	?	59g
11	L2, T2	Animal bone	Roman?	79g
<i>Miscellaneous</i>				
10	L1, T2	Charcoal	Modern	7g
1	L1, T3	Coal/tar	Modern	16g
2	L1 – 300mm+ below ground level, T3	Glass	Modern	7g
2	L1 – 300mm+ below ground level, T3	Clay pipe	Post-medieval or modern	7g
3	L1 – upper 300mm, T1	Mortar	?	923g

8 Discussion

The test-pits exposed three cut features of early Roman, probably 1st century AD, date with residual Late Iron Age pottery. One ditch (F2) featured a post-hole (F4) and may be a slot for a wooden palisade/fence, but it is impossible to be certain given such a small excavated area. The features revealed are not unusual for this area. The Sheepen excavation of 1970 on the playing fields to the south west of the school recorded pre-conquest and early Roman postholes, shallow scoops, rubbish pits, palisade slots, a Roman road, Roman ditches and gravel pits. Some of the Sheepen postholes and slots defined compounds and were interpreted as supports for a substantial fence (Niblett 1985, 29-43). Only one feature from the test-pits (F3) was cut into natural gravel, and so a quarry pits is an unlikely interpretation. The type of pottery and the presence of animal bone, burnt flint, a coin, slag and Roman tile suggest domestic use similar to that identified as a result of the previous investigations at Sheepen. Sherds of Arretine samian pottery from a platter bear a potter's stamp not recognised in Colchester before. These and other imported wares reinforce the importance of Camulodunum as centre for trade in the Late Iron Age.

9 Acknowledgements

The Trust would like to thank Atkins Design and Engineering Solutions for commissioning the work. The project was monitored by Pat Connell - the HEM Team officer. The site work was carried out by Laurence Driver, Brian Hurrell and Kate Orr.

10 References

- | | | |
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Oswald F, and Pryce T, D	1920	<i>An introduction to the study of Terra Sigillata. Longmans, Green and Co.</i>
OS	1881	1st edition Ordnance Survey sheet XXVII (scale of six inches to one mile, surveyed 1875-76, published 1881)
VCH 9	1994	<i>The Victoria History of the Counties of England: a history of the County of Essex. Volume 9: the Borough of Colchester</i> , ed by Janet Cooper

11 Glossary

AOD context	Above Ordnance Datum, i.e. height above sea level specific location on an archaeological site, usually a feature or layer
cover loam	a wind blown deposit of sandy silt, deposited in tundra conditions in prehistory
EHER feature	Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	The period preceding the Roman conquest in Britain, c 700 BC to AD 43
modern natural	period from the mid 19th century to the present geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	period from c 1500 to the mid 19th century
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410

12 Archive deposition

The finds and the digital and paper archive are held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but both will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museums under accession code 2005.132.

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Appendix 1: the Late Iron Age and Roman pottery

by S Benfield

Introduction

In this report on the late Iron Age and Roman pottery, vessel form numbers follow those of the Camulodunum (Cam) Roman pottery type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Hull 1958). Samian forms refer to Dragendorff (Dr.) form numbers. Late Iron Age and Roman pottery fabrics used in this report (Table 1) follow those devised for CAR 10 with the addition of the fabric for Late Iron Age grog-tempered ware which has been given the letter code GTW. Also production areas for samian are indicated by additional lettered codes to both plain (BA) and decorated (BX) fabric codes, as are Romanising coarse ware Fabric GX(RCW) and grog-tempered large storage jars HZ(GT).

Table 4: Roman pottery fabric codes and the corresponding fabric name used in this report.

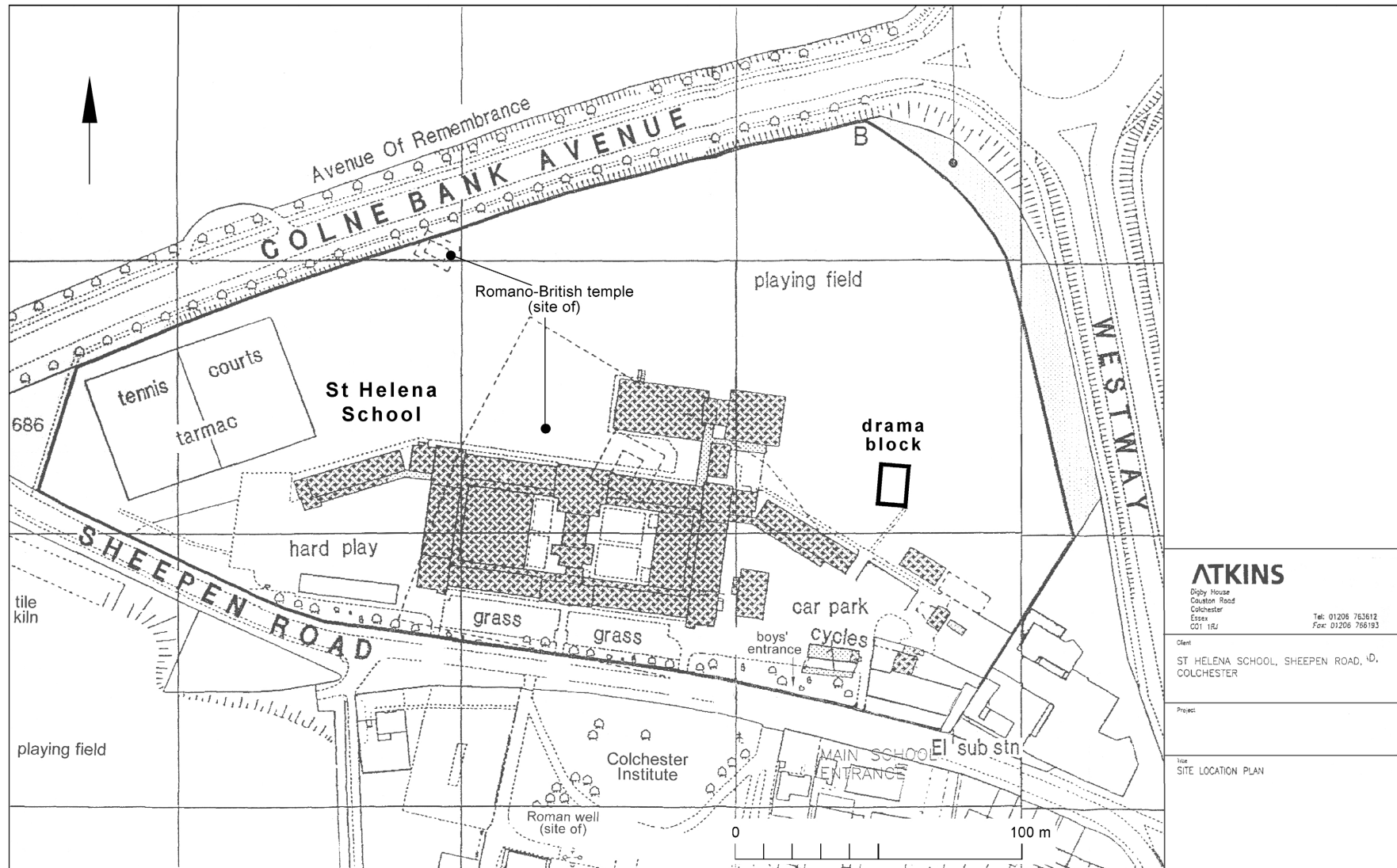
Fabric code	Fabric name
AJ	amphora, Dressel 20
BA	plain samian forms
BA(A)	Arretine samian
BA (SG)	South Gaulish plain samian
BX	decorated samian
BX(SG)	South Gaulish decorated samian
DJ	coarse oxidised and related wares
DZ	fine oxidised wares
GB	BB2: black-burnished ware, category 2
GFW	Gaulish flagon ware
GTW	Grog tempered ware
GX	Other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares
GX(RCW)	Romanising coarse ware
HZ	Large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered grey wares
HX(GT)	Large storage jars and other vessels with grog temper in heavily-tempered grey wares
TZ	mortaria, Colchester and mortaria imported from the Continent

Table 5: St Helena School, Roman pottery from all contexts

Test-pit	find no	F	L	fill loc.	fabric CAR 10	add. fabric detail	form	pot type	sherd quant	weight. g	eve	comments	date
T1	13			U/S	GX	RCW			1	13	0.00	base in soft fabric with dark organic inclusions	1st century
T1	3		1	upper	GB		Cam 37B	bowl	1	17	0.05	abraded, burnished surface worn away	late 2nd-mid/late 3rd
T1	3		1	upper	GTW				1	7	0.00	abraded sherd with dark grog temper	Late Iron Age after AD 5
T1	3		1	upper	HZ	GTW	Cam 270B	jar (large storage jar)	2	88	0.05	abraded, rim damaged	1st-?2nd century/3rd century
T1	3		1	upper	GX				2	5	0.00	2 sherds abraded,	Roman
T1	3		1	upper	GX	(RCW)			2	37	0.00	2 sherds in well fired organic tempered fabric with dark inclusions including a base sherd representing part of a base with 2 post-firing holes)	1st-?2nd century
T1	4		1	lower	HZ	GT	Cam 270B	jar (large storage jar)	1	158	0.10	probably grog tempered, though possibly with dark organic temper	1st-?2nd century/3rd century
T1	4		1	upper	GX	(RCW)			4	37	0.00	4 sherds in well fired organic-tempered fabric with dark inclusions, almost certainly part of pot T1 find 3	1st-?2nd century
T1	4		1	upper	GX	(RCW)			2	10	0.00	2 sherds from 2 pots in soft fabric with dark organic inclusions, one sherd with a fragment of decoration of incised lines in a V shape	1st-?early 2nd
T1	4		1	upper	GTW				1	7	0.00	dark grog temper	Late Iron Age after AD 5
T2	8	2		lower	GTW				2	47	0.00	base sherd moderately soft fabric with worn base ring and dark grog, second sherd hard fired and sandy with very coarse grog and black coating on exterior surface	Late Iron Age-?early Roman
T2	8	2		lower	DZ			butt beaker ?	1	3.7	0.00	red sandy fabric with a dull brownish red surface or coat	Late Iron Age? after AD 5 - pre-Flavian
T2	8	2		lower	GX	RCW		butt beaker ?	2	16	0.00	2 sherds from the shoulder of a closed vessel, with fine vertical line decoration in two bands, probably part of a butt beaker	pre-Flavian
T2	8	2		lower	GX	RCW	Cam 218	bowl	6	89	0.15	sherds from 3- 4 pots	?pre-Flavian
T2	8	2		lower	TZ			mortaria	1	19	0.00	thick cream sherd with hard very sandy fabric possibly part of an imported mortaria	?pre-Flavian
T2	8	2		lower	BA	A		platter	1	43	0.00	large base sherd from a platter with central rectangular stamp CN..EI possibly of Cn. Ateius (c AD 1- 20), no direct parallel in Camulodunum	Late Iron Age c AD ?5-20

Test-pit	find no	F	L	fill loc.	fabric CAR 10	add. fabric detail	form	pot type	sherd quant	weight. g	eve	comments	date
												(Hawkes & Hull 1947), hole of unknown purpose bored into stamp in its centre but does not pass through the pot, good slip on one side (interior) other side (exterior) slip almost entirely absent with smudges which look like finger marks, ?was slip only on one side?	
T2	9		1	upper	GX				15	164	0.00	sherds from 2 pots in well-fired fabric with small sparse back ?organic inclusions	? 1st-2nd century
T2	9		1	upper	HZ	GT		jar (large storage jar)	1	7	0.00	well fired with black ?organic inclusions and grog temper	1st-?2nd century/ 3rd century
T2	10		1	lower	BA	A		platter	3	44	0.00	Arretine samian sherds all from same rouletted large platter, most probably the same vessel as T2 find 8	Late Iron Age, c AD ?5-20
T2	10		1	lower	GFW				1	8	0.00	sandy pale cream sherd, possibly Gaulish flagon ware	Late Iron Age?- pre-Flavian
T2	10		1	lower	DJ				1	29	0.00	sherd probably from a large flagon	Roman 1st - 2nd century
T2	10		1	lower	GTW				3	47	0.00	sherd with moderately soft fabric and dark grog, second sherd hard fired with coarse dark grog, third sherd abraded, soft sandy fabric with some grog	Late Iron Age - ?early Roman
T2	10		1	lower	GX		Cam 21	platter	1	23	0.10	dark sandy fabric with traces of a dark ?slip and/or burnishing	Late Iron Age?-early Roman
T2	10		1	lower	GX	RCW	Cam 218	bowl	3	29	0.00		1st century
T2	22		2		HZ	GT	Cam 270B	jar (large storage jar)	1	190	0.10	rim sherd, well fired grog tempered	1st-?2nd century/3rd century
T2	22		2		GX	RCW			3	29	0.00		probably 1st
T3	2		1		AJ				1	64	0.00		1st-early 3rd century
T3	2		1		GX	RCW	Cam 218	bowl	1	8	0.00		probably 1st
T3	2		1		GX				2	12	0.00	sandy grey ware	Roman
T3	5		2		BA	SG	Dr. 24/25	cup	1	5	0.05	abraded with slip coat worn	pre-Flavian
T3	5		2		GTW				1	4	0.00	sherds with body cordons	late-Iron Age - ?early Roman
T3	5		2		GX				6	161	0.20	eves on two lids, sherds from 2-3 other pots	Roman ?1st-2nd century
T3	5		2		HZ				2	70	0.00	from 2 different pots	1st-2nd century/3rd century
T3	6	1			AJ				4	258	0.00		1st-early 3rd century
T3	6	1			DJ				2	119	0.00		1st-2nd century/3rd century
T3	6	1			HZ				2	144	0.00	sherds from 2 pots, one has some grog temper	1st-2nd century/3rd century
T3	6	1			GTW				1	27	0.00	thick sandy sherd with dark grog	Late Iron Age
T3	6	1			GX	RCW	Cam 241/		8	108	0.15	sherds from 2-3	1st century

Test-pit	find no	F	L	fill loc.	fabric CAR 10	add. fabric detail	form	pot type	sherd quant	weight. g	eve	comments	date
							242					pots, one with small pedestal base	
T3	6	1			GX				14	178	0.10	eve on lid sherds, all from same lid but different to T3 find 5	Roman
T3	6	1			BA	SG			1	3	0.00	base, possibly part of Dr. 24/25 T3 find 5	1st century probably pre-Flavian
T3	6	1			BX	SG	Dr. 29		2	6	0.05	joining rim sherds	early-mid 1st-mid-late 1st century
T3	14			U/S	DJ				1	9	0.00	probably part of T3 find 6	1st-2nd century/3rd century
									111	2342.7	1.1		



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Client
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Project

Site
 SITE LOCATION PLAN

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Fig 1 Site location.

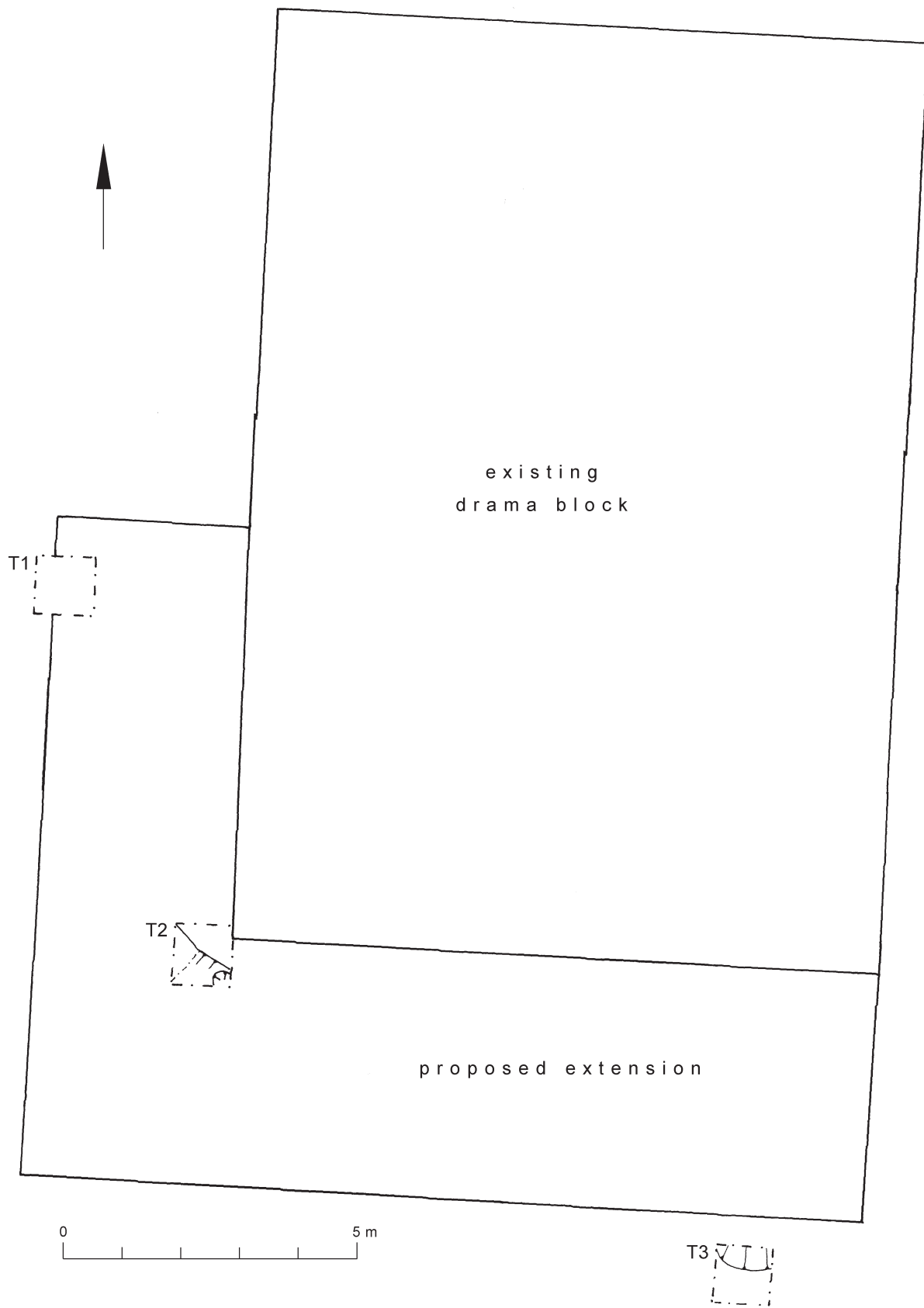


Fig 2 Location of test-pits.

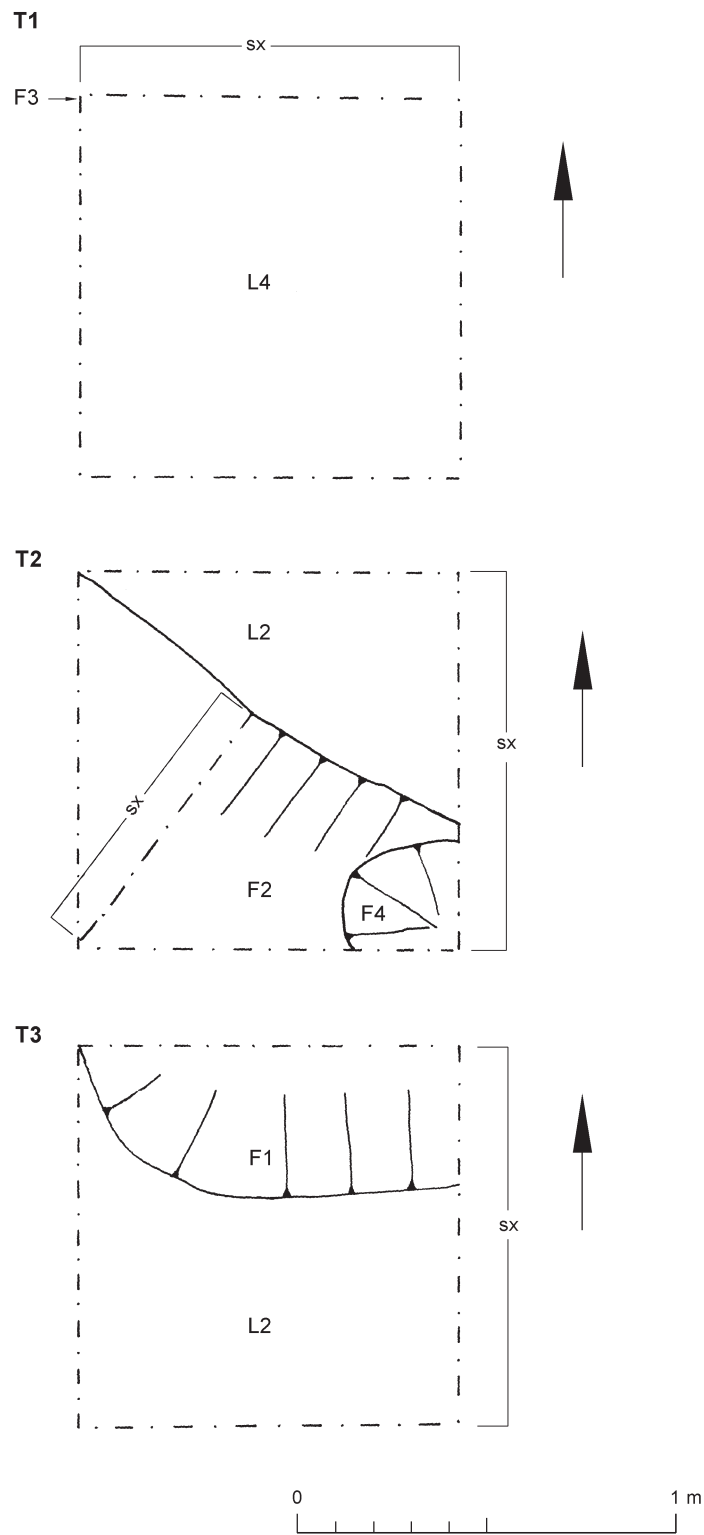


Fig 3 Plans of test-pits.

T1, F3, south-facing section

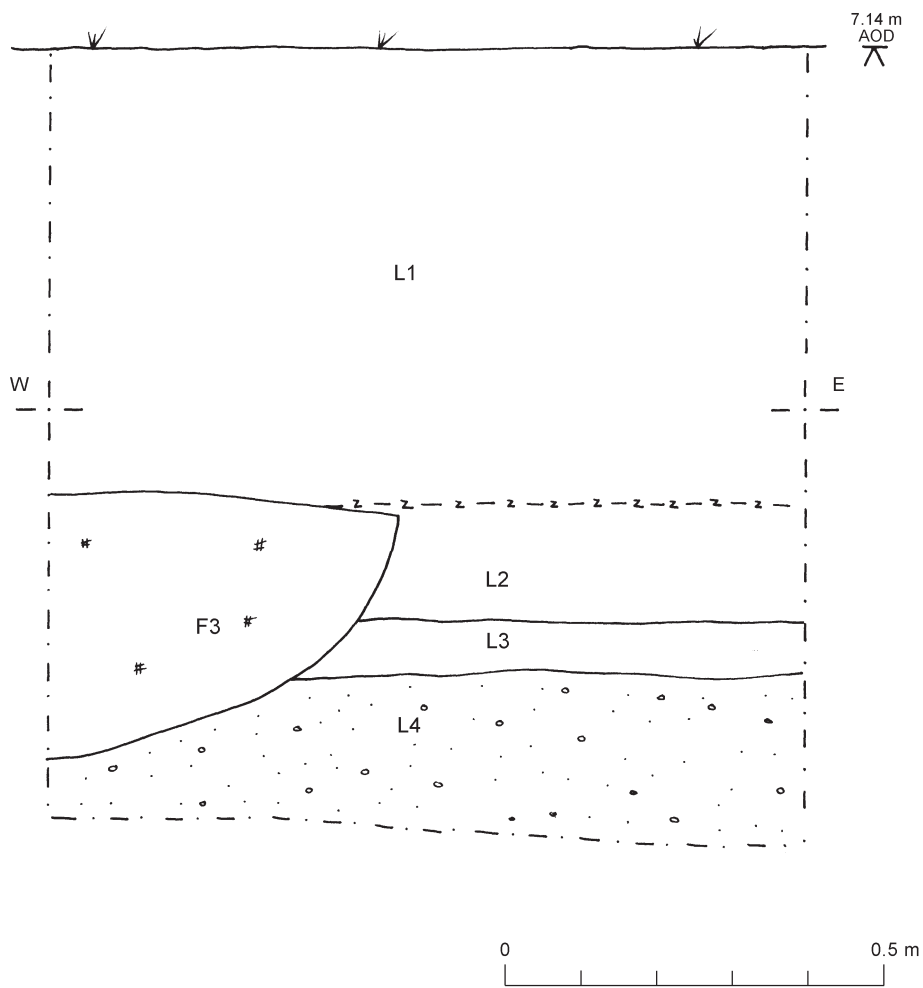


Fig 4 T1 section drawing.

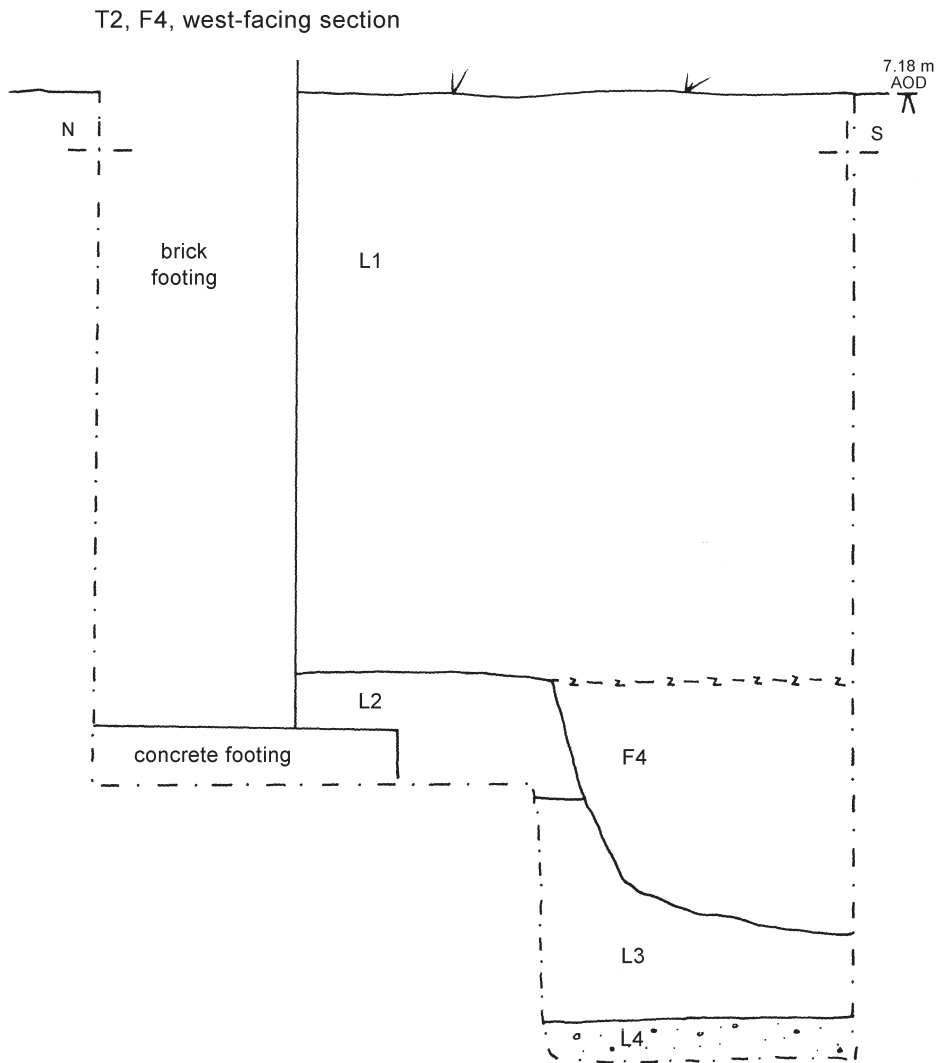
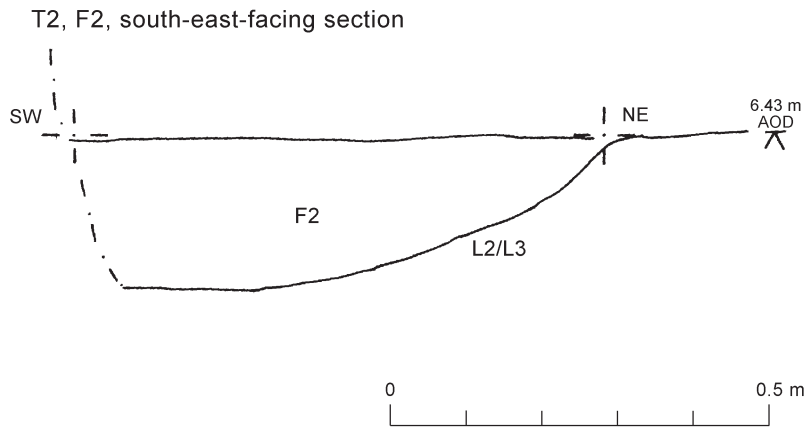


Fig 5 T2, section drawings.

T3, F1, west-facing section

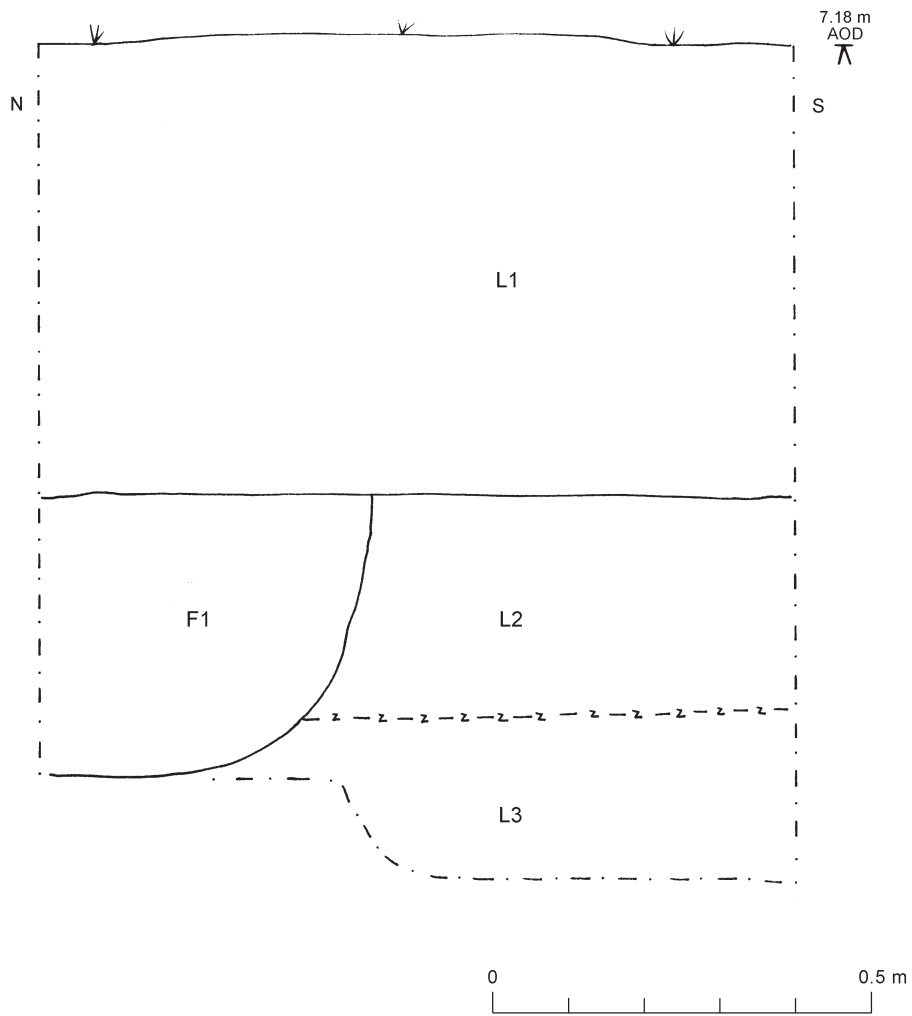


Fig 6 T3 section drawing.



Fig 7 Potters's stamp from an Arretine samian platter base CN(A)TEI.
Find no 8, F2, T2.

Essex Heritage Conservation Record/ *Essex Archaeology and History*

Summary sheet

Site name/address: St Helena School Drama Block, Sheepen Road, Colchester, Essex	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester Borough
NGR: TL 9895 2580	Site code: 2005.132
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: November 2005	Size of area investigated: 3 test-pits
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester Museums	Funding source: Atkins Design and Engineering Solutions
Further work anticipated?: Yes	Related EHCR nos:
Final report: CAT Report 351	
Periods represented: Late Iron Age to early Roman	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: Three small test-pits were excavated by hand next to the drama block at St Helena School, which is within the scheduled ancient monument of Sheepen. Three cut features were recorded of early Roman, probably 1st century AD date. One ditch appears to have held a post and may have supported a wooden fence. The type of pottery and the presence of animal bone, burnt flint, a coin, slag and Roman tile suggest domestic use similar to that identified as a result of previous investigations 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.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports:	
Author of summary: Kate Orr	Date of summary: December 2005