

**An archaeological evaluation
at Lind Ltd, Colchester Road,
Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex
May 2008**

**report prepared by
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**on behalf of
Lind Ltd**

CAT project ref.: 08/5e
HEM code: SPCR08
NGR: TL 7366 0880 (c)



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CAT Report 479
June 2008

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1 Summary

The site lies on the south edge of the Roman road from Colchester to Chelmsford. The only features revealed in any of the three evaluation trenches were one post-medieval pit and a possible tree-throw pit.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report on archaeological evaluation carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on behalf of Lind Ltd at the Lind Ltd BMW and Mini showroom on Colchester Road, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex, between the 6th and 12th May 2008. Site centre is at NGR TL 7366 0880 (Fig 1).

The evaluation was undertaken prior to design and planning proposal for the construction of a new showroom.

All fieldwork was done in accordance with a brief written by Essex County Council Historic Environment Management (HEM) team and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT.

This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IFA 2001a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IFA 2001b). Other sources used are *Management of archaeological projects* (MAP 2), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

3 Archaeological background

The site lies along the line of the Roman road between Chelmsford (*Caesaromagus*) and Colchester (*Camulodunum*). There was therefore a potential for roadside settlement or activity (Medlycott 1999). Roman material has been recovered close to the site (Essex Historic Environment Record or EHER no 9923).

Cropmarks close to the site indicate past settlement in the area. To the north-east, archaeological excavation has produced evidence for later Bronze Age settlement (EHER no 9922). Features indicating medieval occupation have also been identified in the area. These include hearths which may represent evidence of timber buildings (EHER no 9928).

To the south of the development area, a trial-trenching investigation in advance of the construction of the Chelmer Industrial Site provided evidence of multi-period activity from the late Neolithic onwards (EHER nos 17780-17782), and for the continuation of dispersed late prehistoric activity on the western scarp of the Chelmer Valley.

4 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to establish and record the character, extent, date, significance and condition of any archaeological remains and deposits on the site, with particular reference to any Roman roadside activity.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

The Lind Ltd site consists of 1,000m² of hardstanding currently used as the forecourt for the BMW-Mini dealership. The access to a service car-park had to be kept free, so trenches were located in the north-eastern half of the evaluation site.

Three trenches with a total length of 30m were sited within the footprint of the proposed showroom building. The trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision using a tracked excavator. Three layers were encountered in all three trenches:

- L1: tarmac surface over a concrete base, total depth between 150 and 250mm thick.
- L2: a thin, slightly silty clay layer truncated by the construction of the hardstanding.
- L3: natural geological layer (a light orange/yellow sandy brickearth).

Trench 1: summary

T1 was located on the south-west edge of the footprint of the proposed showroom building. The hardstanding forecourt surface (L1) sealed silty clay (L2), which in turn sealed the archaeological deposits and the natural of brickearth (L3).

Three pits, all cutting natural ground L3, were located at the south end of the trench (F1, F2, F3). F1 contained a fragment of peg-tile, which indicates a post-medieval date. Neither F2 or F3 contained any datable material, although F3 had charcoal and daub flecking in its middle and upper fill. This may indicate a prehistoric date. F2 was irregularly cut, and may have been a natural tree-throw pit. However, it also had a very small amount of charcoal flecking which may indicate some human activity such as tree-stump removal in an episode of agricultural clearance.

Trench 1 – archaeological features and finds.

Feature	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F1	Pit	Peg-tile	post medieval/modern
F2	Pit	-	natural
F3	Pit	-	prehistoric

Trench 2: summary

T2 was located in the centre of the footprint of the proposed showroom building. T2 was excavated through the modern hardstanding forecourt surface (L1) through silty clay (L2) and into natural ground (L3). No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

Trench 3; summary

T3 was located on the north-eastern edge of the footprint of the proposed showroom building. T3 was excavated through the modern surface (L1), through silty clay (L2) and into natural geological brickearth and sand deposits (L3). An exploratory sondage was excavated in the central part of T3, to a depth of 1m. This showed a continuation of natural (L3) which became sandier as the depth increased. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

6 Finds

There were no significant archaeological finds; a piece of peg-tile was retrieved from F1 (above).

7 Discussion

Despite the potential for Roman or later archaeological activity along the line of the Roman road, no evidence for such activity was evident in this evaluation. It is likely that the site has been disturbed, and some archaeological levels truncated by the construction of the hardstanding and showroom which now occupy the site.

8 Archive deposition

No finds were retained. The paper and digital archive is currently held by CAT at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford and Essex Museum, under accession code to be issued.

9 Acknowledgements

The Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Lind Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was monitored by Theresa Connell, Essex County Council County Historic Environment Team officer. Site work was carried out by Ben Holloway assisted by N Rayner and B Hurrell. Digital survey was by Chris Lister.

10 References

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| EAA 14 | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 , ed by D Gurney |
| IFA | 2001a | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i> |
| IFA | 2001b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
| MAP 2 | 1991 | <i>Management of archaeological projects</i> , second edition (English Heritage) |
| Medlycott, M | 1999 | <i>Chelmsford historic town assessment report</i> , Essex County Council |

11 Glossary

EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a floor
IFA	Institute of Field Archaeologists
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c AD 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	after c AD 1500 to c AD 1800
prehistoric	in the years BC
sondage	an exploratory hole

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Distribution list:

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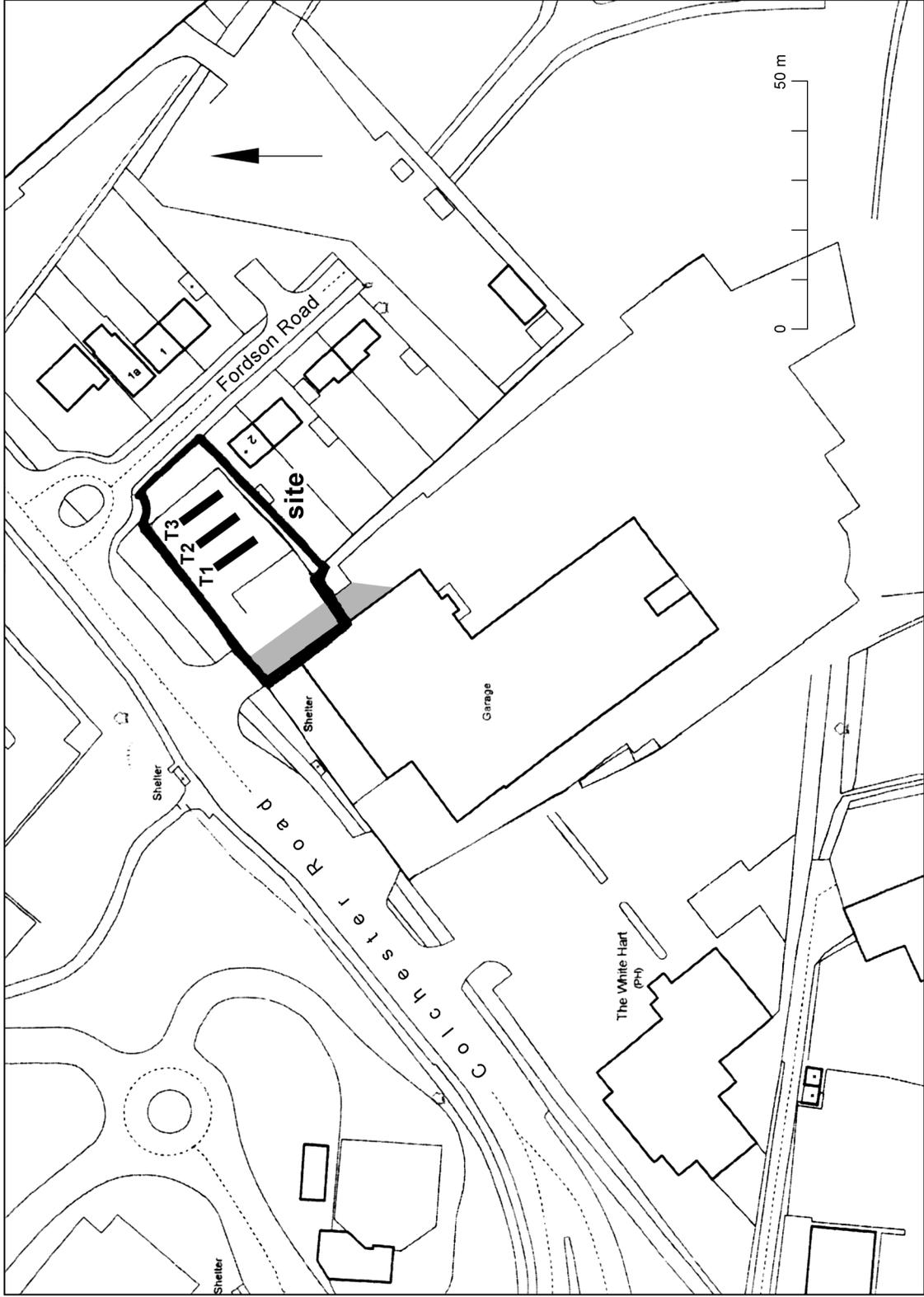


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access to service car-park

Fig 1 Site location.

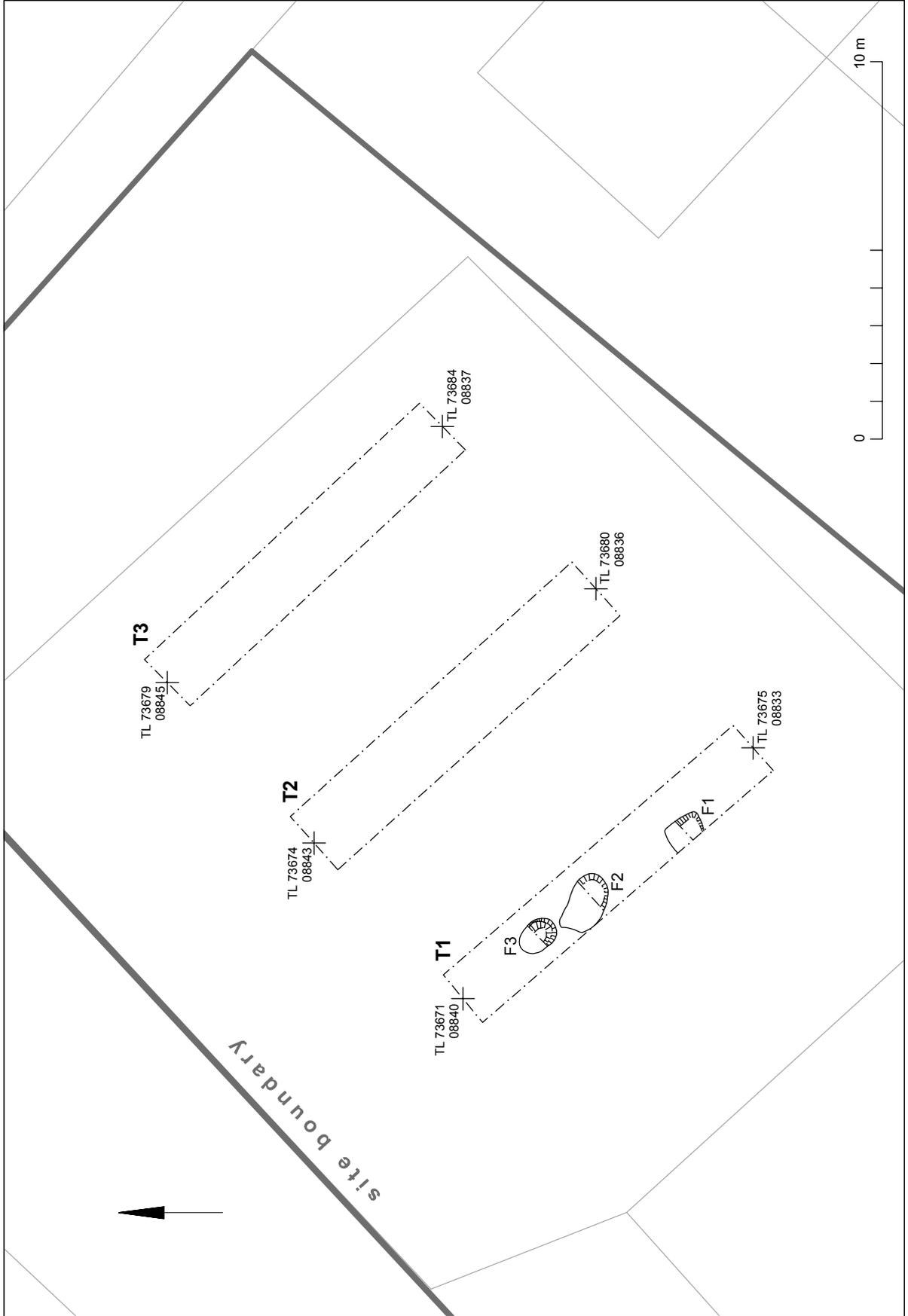
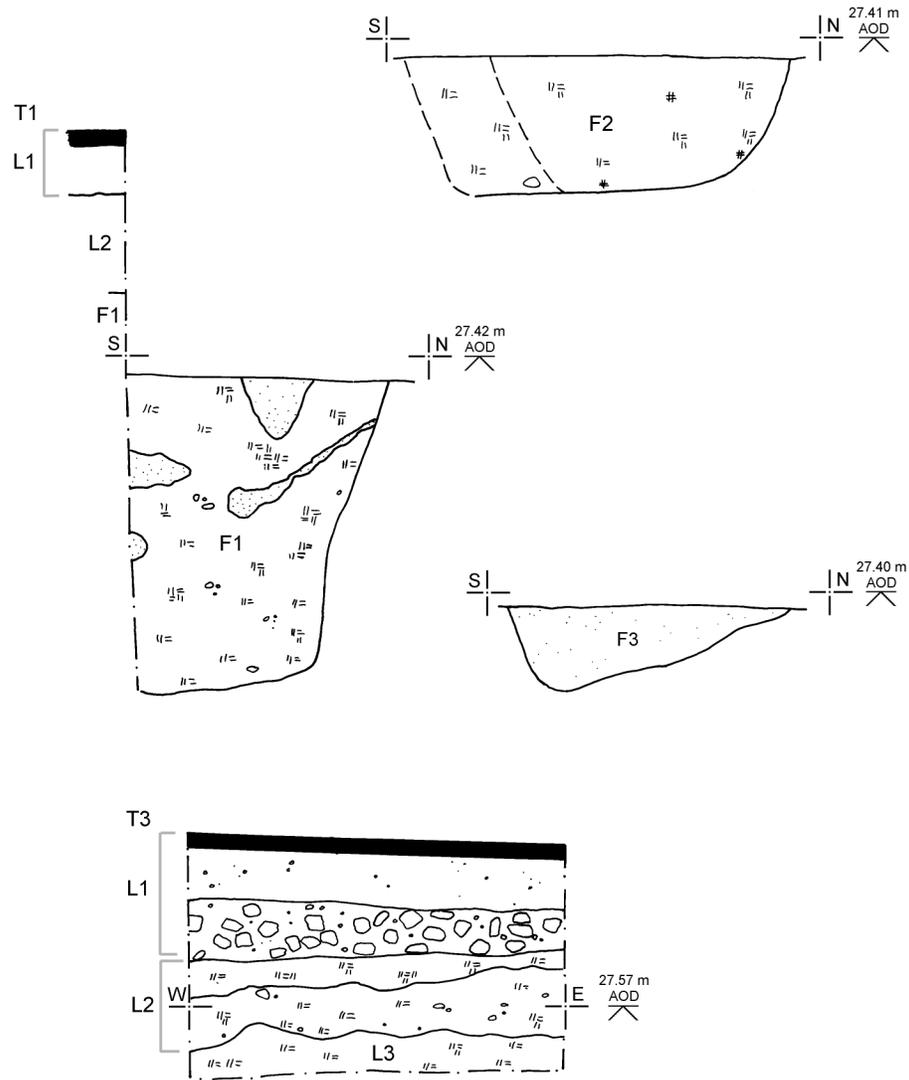


Fig 2 Plan of trenches.



-  sand
-  small stones
-  clay
-  charcoal flecks
-  tarmac

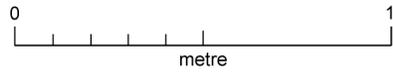


Fig 3 T1: F1, F2, F3 and T3 - sections.

**Essex Historic Environment Record/
Essex Archaeology and History**

Summary sheet

Site address: Lind Ltd, Colchester Road, Springfield, Chelmsford, Essex	
Parish: Springfield	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TL 7366 0880 (c)	Site code: CAT project code 08/5e HEM code SPCR08 Museum accession code to be issued
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: May 2008	Size of area investigated: 30m length of trenches 1.8m wide in a 1,000m ² site
Location of finds/curating museum: Chelmsford and Essex Museum	Funding source: Contractor
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER nos: 9922, 9923, 9928, 17780-17782
Final report: CAT Report 479	
Periods represented: post-medieval	
Summary of fieldwork results: <i>The site lies on the south edge of the Roman road from Colchester to Chelmsford. The only features revealed in any of the three evaluation trenches were one post-medieval pit and a possible tree-throw pit.</i>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
Keywords: -	Significance: neg
Author of summary: Ben Holloway and Howard Brooks	Date of summary: June 2008