

**Archaeological investigations in
Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex
April 2014-January 2015**

**report prepared by
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**on behalf of
Colchester Borough Council**

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1 Summary

A series of archaeological investigations took place in Upper Castle Park, Colchester from April 2014 to January 2015, in advance of and during works to improve the park amenities. These improvement works included changes to the children's play areas and the Sensory Garden, the installation of interpretation panels, and the replacement of drains. The works were designed to have a minimal impact on the surviving archaeological remains in the park, and in this they were successful as not much of archaeological significance was found. The uppermost surviving Roman deposits were uncovered in a trench immediately north of the Sensory Garden and in a trench at the Ranger Station. Extensive deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' were encountered in most of the investigations. In the 'sand play area', the 'dark earth' probably accumulated in a shallow post-Roman ditch.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

2.1 A series of archaeological investigations was carried out on behalf of Colchester Borough Council in Upper Castle Park, Colchester in 2014 and early in 2015. These took place in advance of and during works to improve the amenities in the park. They were undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) between April 2014 and January 2015. The archaeological investigations lay within the area designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument, and Scheduled Monument Consent was obtained for them.

2.2 Archaeological investigations

2.2.1 In April 2014, an archaeological watching brief took place during the installation of play equipment in a 'sand play area'. This site is situated immediately to the north-east of the Park Café. It was formerly a crazy golf course, and occupies a slight dip in the park. Before the contractor's groundworks started, CAT dug several small test pits by hand. The NGR for the sand play area is TL 9994 2548, and the modern ground level is roughly 15 m AOD.

2.2.2 In July 2014, an archaeological watching brief took place during the installation of five interpretation panels in the area around Colchester Castle. The NGR for the Castle itself is TL 9986 2532, and the modern ground level near the entrance to the Castle is approximately 26 m AOD.

2.2.3 In August 2014, CAT dug two trial pits in the Sensory Garden, to the north-east of Hollytrees Museum. They were intended to establish the presence and depth of archaeological deposits, in advance of the refurbishment of the garden. The NGR for the Sensory Garden is TL 9999 2532, and the modern ground level is approximately 23.75 m AOD.

2.2.4 In September 2014, an archaeological watching brief took place during the replacement of drains in the Ranger Station, at the northern end of Upper Castle Park. The NGR for the Ranger Station is TL 9994 2554, and the modern ground level is roughly 12 m AOD.

2.2.5 In November 2014, an archaeological watching brief took place during the relocation of the helter-skelter, also known as the spiral glide unit. It was moved from the former children's playground in Hollytrees Meadow to the new play area in the northern part of Upper Castle Park. The NGR for the repositioned helter-skelter is TL 9998 2550, and the modern ground level is approximately 15 m AOD.

2.2.6 In January 2015, an archaeological watching brief took place during the removal of play equipment and the existing bark surface from the redundant playground in Hollytrees Meadow. The NGR for the playground is TL 9998 2538, and the modern ground level is approximately 20 m AOD.

2.3 This report follows the standards set out in Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CIMS 2008a), and also those in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008a), *Standard and guidance for an archaeological evaluation* (IfA 2008b), and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008c). The guidance contained in English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE 2006), and in the documents *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 8), *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14), and *Research and archaeology revisited: a revised framework for the Eastern Counties. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 24), was also followed.

3 Archaeological background (Fig 1)

- 3.1** Much of Colchester Castle Park is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Essex SAM no 1), due primarily to the wealth of its Roman and medieval archaeology. The 2014-5 archaeological investigations took place in Insulae 7, 15, 22 and 23 of the Roman town. Numerous archaeological investigations have taken place in the Castle Park, and the more significant and relevant of these are summarised briefly below.
- 3.2** Among the remains uncovered in Insula 7 were several Roman buildings, with tessellated pavements and probable hypocausts (Hull 1958, 85-91; *CAR 6*, 371-2; CAT Report 603). At the north end of the *insula*, a watching brief was carried out by CAT in the Ranger Station in May 2009. This included monitoring the digging by contractors of a trench, 400 mm deep, for a French drain (CAT Report 516). This was in roughly the same location as the 2014 watching brief, although no significant archaeological remains were observed in 2009.
- 3.3** Further south, more Roman buildings are known in Insula 15/23, including a probable waterworks and a small ?shrine (Hull 1958, 106-145 & 191; *CAR 6*, 372). The location of a Roman street between Insula 15 and Insula 23 is uncertain.
- 3.4** Insula 22 contains the remains of the Temple of Claudius and the surrounding temple precinct. Subsequently, Colchester Castle was built on the temple foundations in the late 11th century, and the inner bailey defences were constructed over part of the former temple precinct.
- 3.5** The 'sand play area' site is situated in a dip, which extends north-south, in the surface of the Castle Park. Immediately to the west of the sand play area, and to the north of the Park Café, is a slight bank. The resulting rise and fall is traceable from the western part of the Ranger Station southwards to the north-east corner of the inner bailey defences. A section was cut across this rise and fall near the Ranger Station, when a sewer pipe was laid through the Castle Park in 1983-4 (*CAR 6*, 372). This suggested that it was a shallow post-Roman ditch, with a bank immediately to the west. It possibly formed part of the outer bailey defences of the castle (*ibid*).

4 Aims

The aims of the investigations were to record the depth and extent of any archaeological remains uncovered during the improvement works, and to assess the date and significance of these remains.

5 Methods (Figs 1-7)

5.1 Sand play area

- 5.1.1** The sand play area was designed to have a minimal impact on any surviving archaeological remains. Although the contractor's groundworks were in general fairly shallow, several items of play equipment required footings deeper than 500 mm below the existing ground level. This was the maximum construction depth stipulated in the Scheduled Ancient Monument consent. Therefore, four small test pits (T1-T4) were dug by hand by CAT staff on 15th April 2014 to examine the depth and extent of any archaeological remains in the affected locations. The test pits were all slightly different in shape and size, reflecting the outline of the proposed footings. They varied in depth from 700 to 900 mm below the existing ground level.

The creation of the sand play area involved extending the former crazy golf site by approximately 5 m northwards over a grassed area. The final dimensions of the sand play area were thus approximately 38 m north-south by 15 m east-west. T4 was situated at the southern end of the area covered by the extension. A hedge and a fence between the two areas were removed.

- 5.1.2** Following the excavation of the test pits, the contractors, Lightmain, proceeded with the groundwork. This was monitored by CAT staff during intermittent site visits. As well as extending the trenches in the locations of T1-T4, the contractors dug two short trenches adjacent to one another (T5 a & b), 600 mm deep, in the southern part of the site. These trenches were excavated using a mini-digger with a toothless trenching bucket, under the

supervision of a CAT archaeologist, on 29th April 2014. Most of the contractor's other holes were small in size and/or did not extend below the depth of the modern deposits on the site.

As well as the installation of the play equipment, other tasks undertaken by the contractors included: the construction of footpaths; the installation of new raised borders, fences, seats and bins; and the raising of the general level of the site by up to 500 mm with the addition of a layer of sand.

5.2 Interpretation panels

5.2.1 Five interpretation panels (IP1-5) were installed around Colchester Castle on 24th July 2014. They were set in post holes, which were approximately 250 mm square and 600 mm deep. These were dug by hand by the contractors. IP1 replaced an existing panel. The concrete base for the latter was removed, leaving a hole approximately 600 mm across and 500 mm deep. This hole was backfilled with spoil from the post hole for the replacement panel, which was dug immediately to the south-east. Four of the panels (IP1-3 & 5) were sited at modern ground level around the Castle, while one (IP4) was set near the top of the inner bailey bank.

5.3 Sensory Garden

5.3.1 Two test pits (TP1-2) were dug by hand by CAT staff in the area of the Sensory Garden on 28th-29th August 2014. The pits both measured 1 m square. TP1 was located in a flower bed immediately to the north of the Sensory Garden. In TP1, excavation continued down to the uppermost surviving level of archaeological significance, which was at approximately 700 mm below the modern ground level. TP2 was dug into a footpath within the Sensory Garden. No significant archaeological deposits were encountered in TP2, so excavation continued to a maximum depth of 1 m, as stipulated in the SMC. The modern ground level in the main part of the Sensory Garden, including the footpath into which TP2 was dug, was just over a metre higher than the ground level at the flower bed into which TP1 was dug.

5.4 Ranger Station

5.4.1 Several trenches were dug by hand by the contractors within the Ranger Station between 10th and 16th September 2014, during the replacement of French drains. The trenches extended along the east and south sides of a shed, and along part of the east side of the office. These trenches were approximately 600-650 mm wide and 550-700 mm deep, and were dug to house replacement drains and low retaining brick walls. A narrow connecting trench, approximately 250 mm wide and 400 mm deep, was dug between the trench on the south side of the shed and the one on the east side of the office.

5.5 Relocation of the helter-skelter

5.5.1 A trench was machine-dug by the contractors on 12th November 2014 to take the base of the helter-skelter. The trench was located within the new play area in the northern part of Upper Castle Park, and was approximately 1.6 m square and 600-650 mm deep. Three narrow arms, 900 mm long, 400 mm wide and 600 mm deep, extended off this trench (Fig 7). Two small holes for additional supports for the helter-skelter were dug 350-375 mm deep to the east of the main trench.

5.5.2 After the helter-skelter was lifted out of the ground by machine in the redundant playground, the holes that were left were examined. The main hole was roughly circular, 1.6 m in diameter and approximately 650 mm deep. There were also several smaller holes left after the removal of the additional supports for the helter-skelter. These were approximately 600 mm wide and 500 mm deep. All the holes were backfilled with spoil from the trench in the new play area.

5.6 Redundant playground

5.6.1 The play equipment in the redundant playground in Hollytrees Meadow was removed by contractors between 19th and 21st January 2015. Two small test pits had previously been dug by hand by CAT in the playground in January 2013 (Appendix 3). Most of the concrete bases for the play equipment were removed in January 2015. However, some of those for swings along the southern edge of the playground were left *in situ*, as it proved difficult to lift them without damaging the underlying deposits.

5.6.2 A protective covering of bark chippings over the playground surface was stripped off by machine. The bark chippings were 250-400 mm thick and sealed a thin lens of fine gravel, which was also scrapped off. The gravel lay on a geotextile membrane, which was removed by hand.

- 5.7 During the watching briefs, CAT staff were given time to investigate, clean and record any archaeological deposits uncovered, and to collect up the finds unearthed. Throughout the investigations, individual records of archaeological contexts, such as layers or features, as well as finds, were entered on CAT pro-forma record sheets. Site plans were usually drawn at 1:20 and section drawings were made at 1:10. Standard record photographs of the sites and of individual trenches and contexts were taken on a digital camera. Further details of the recording methods used can be found in the CAT document *Policies and procedures* (CAT 2014).

6 Results

Listed by archaeological investigation in the order they took place.

6.1 Sand play area (Figs 1-3)

- 6.1.1 The natural subsoil was not definitely reached in the sand play area. In the bottoms of T1 and T2, a brownish-yellow, slightly clayey deposit (L5) was uncovered, 750-800 mm below the modern ground level. A potsherd and a fragment of brick/tile, both of probable Roman date, were recovered from L5 in T1, and undiagnostic brick/tile fragments were observed in L5 in T2. Only a small part of L5 was excavated, so it was unclear whether it was an *in situ* Roman deposit. It was perhaps largely redeposited material, including some subsoil.

6.1.2 Post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth'

In all of the test pits and the other trenches (T1-T5) in the sand play area, thick, dark greyish-brown deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' were encountered. These deposits were roughly 650-750 mm thick. However, in places, slight stratigraphical differences were recognised within the 'dark earth', notably in T1-T3 (L2-L4). The lower 400-500 mm of the 'dark earth' (L4) was fairly homogeneous in most of the trenches, although in T2 there were some brownish-yellow clayey mottles towards the bottom of L4. In T1 and T3, L4 was sealed by a more gravelly, dark greyish-brown layer (L3), approximately 200 mm thick. The gravel was perhaps added in order to consolidate the ground. The upper 200 mm or so of 'dark earth' in all the trenches was modern topsoil (L2).

A quantity of residual Roman potsherds and brick/tile fragments was recovered from the 'dark earth'. A clay pipe bowl fragment, of probable early 18th century date, came from just over half way down L4 in T2. Among the other post-Roman finds from L4 were some peg-tile and slate fragments, as well as a small quantity of modern material from the upper part of L4. Peg-tile and slate fragments, and some modern finds were recovered from L2, and similar material was also observed in L3.

6.1.3 Post-Roman ditch

The thickness of the deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' in the sand play area contrasts with the relatively thin deposits a short distance to the east of the site. Here, significant Roman remains were found only about 300 mm below the modern ground level (CAT Report 603, 3). The comparable Roman deposits in the sand play area were probably destroyed when a shallow post-Roman ditch (F3) was dug. This ditch was tentatively identified during previous archaeological work in this part of the Castle Park in 1983-4 (CAR 6, 372). It is also still visible as a slight dip extending north-south.

The edges of the ditch F3 were not established in the sand play area, as they lay beyond the limits of the test pits and other trenches. The exact width of F3 is unclear, but was probably roughly 10-15 m. The thick deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' in the sand play area probably accumulated as backfill in F3.

The ditch, and the probable bank to the west, clearly formed a boundary of some antiquity. It is shown for example in a survey of the castle lands for Lord Stanhope in 1622 (Drury 1983, pl 41). Ditches are notoriously difficult to date, as they were often repeatedly cleaned out. Also, the backfill of the ditch could include the fills of later pits, the edges of which were difficult to identify. The find of the clay pipe bowl fragment from L4 suggested that the ditch had probably not fully silted up by the early 18th century. It is unclear whether F3 was originally part of the medieval outer bailey defences. Documentary evidence suggests these were constructed and/or refurbished in the later 12th century or the 13th century (*ibid*, 398; VCHE 9, 244-5).

6.1.4 Modern remains

Parts of several modern footings were exposed in the sand play area, including north-south footings F1 in test pit T1 and F2 in T2. An east-west footing F4 was uncovered as the contractors extended test pit T3. The possible edge of another modern north-south footing

was observed at the western end of T5a. These footings consisted of shallow concrete foundations, up to 600 mm wide. They were reached between 250 and 400 mm below the modern ground level, and were approximately 150 mm thick. Each concrete foundation supported a line of bricks, laid end-to-end. The bricks survived 1-2 courses high. The footings were sealed by modern topsoil (L2). They were probably the remains of structures associated with the former park nursery, such as greenhouses and/or cold frames. They are shown as such on OS maps dating to the 1960's and 1970's.

A modern north-south water-pipe was uncovered at a depth of 400 mm in T3. The existing modern gravel surface and associated make-up (L1) was 80-140 mm thick. In T4, a layer of turf and topsoil (L6), approximately 150 mm thick, sealed L1.

6.2 Interpretation panels (Fig 1)

6.2.1 The natural subsoil was not reached in any of the post holes (IP1-5). Only dark greyish-brown, modern topsoil was recorded in IP1 and IP2, as well as in the hole left after the removal of the previous interpretation panel immediately to the north-west of IP1. The fill of IP3 was largely modern topsoil, although a thin, brownish-yellow clayey band was also recorded. The latter lay between 200 mm and 300 mm below the modern ground level, and a modern potsherd was recovered from it. Also, a large flint fragment and some undiagnostic brick/tile fragments were observed in the east section of the post hole.

In IP4, which was dug on the top of the inner bailey bank, there was modern topsoil to a depth of 300 mm. This sealed a yellowish-brown sandy deposit, at least 300 mm thick. Although undated, this was perhaps a post-medieval or modern make-up layer, rather than part of the Norman bank. In IP5, modern topsoil extended to a depth of 300 mm. This sealed a rubbly deposit, at least 300 mm thick, which consisted mainly of mortar fragments and gravel, with a few small pieces of brick/tile. The latter were largely undiagnostic, but included some probable Roman fragments. It seems likely that these were redeposited in a post-Roman layer.

6.2.2 Among the other finds recorded from the spoil from the post holes were fragments of clay pipe stem, modern pottery, animal bone, oyster shell, peg-tile, iron nails, Roman brick/tile and modern brick. These mainly came from the modern topsoil and were not retained, although further details are available in the site archive.

6.3 Sensory Garden (Figs 1 & 4)

6.3.1 In TP1, immediately to the north of the Sensory Garden, the uppermost surviving Roman deposit (L10) was uncovered approximately 650-700 mm below the modern ground level. This deposit was a brownish-yellow clayey layer, which contained sparse fragments of mortar, brick/tile, stone and wall-plaster. It remained unexcavated, but was perhaps derived from the demolished daub walls of a Roman building.

6.3.2 The Roman deposit (L10) in TP1 was sealed by a thick layer of dark greyish-brown post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L8). This was 650-700 mm thick and was fairly homogeneous up to the modern ground surface. The uppermost 120-150 mm of L8 was probably modern topsoil and appeared to have more inclusions than the lower part. In the western side of TP1, there was a thin clayey patch within L8, from 150 mm to 220 mm below the modern ground level.

A quantity of residual Roman finds, including several *tesserae*, were recovered from L8 in TP1. A few of the Roman pottery sherds (finds number 19) were found cleaning the last of L8 from the surface of the underlying Roman layer (L10). A range of post-Roman finds was also recovered from L8 in TP1.

6.3.3 In TP2, there was also a substantial layer of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L8), at least 650-700 mm thick. The bottom of L8 lay beyond the depth limit of the trench, which was 1 m below the modern ground level, as stipulated in the SMC. A small quantity of residual Roman material, including two *tesserae*, were recovered from L8 in TP2. There was also some post-Roman finds, including a lead trade weight of probable post-medieval date.

6.3.4 The post-Roman topsoil (L8) in TP2 was sealed by a layer of modern gravelly make-up (L9), approximately 200 mm thick. Over the western part of TP2, L9 was less gravelly and more 'soily', and contained some modern brick rubble. This layer was probably modern make-up for the existing tarmac path (L7), which was approximately 80-120 mm thick.

6.4 Ranger Station (Figs 1 & 5)

6.4.1 The uppermost surviving Roman deposit (L14) was uncovered only at the southern end of the trench along the east side of the shed. It was exposed over the southern half a metre or so of the trench and consisted of a brownish-yellow clayey layer, which lay approximately 550 mm below the modern ground level. This layer remained unexcavated, but was perhaps derived from the demolished daub walls of a Roman building. Several small fragments of Roman brick/tile were observed in the spoil from this area, although these probably came from the overlying deposit (L12).

6.4.2 The Roman layer L14 was sealed by dark greyish-brown post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L12), which at the south-east corner of the shed was approximately 400-450 mm thick. The 'dark earth' (L12) was observed in most of the trenches in the Ranger Station, although it was often truncated as a result of later activity.

Much of the 'dark earth' (L12) probably accumulated in a shallow post-Roman ditch, which extended from south to north under the western part of the Ranger Station. This ditch was located immediately to the south of the Ranger Station in 1983-4 (CAR 6, 372). Further south, in the sand play area, the thick deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' that were uncovered in 2014 probably also accumulated as backfill in the ditch (F3; see above).

The 'dark earth' (L12) excavated on the east side of the shed at the Ranger Station probably lay near the eastern edge of the ditch. Further west, the bottom of L12 was not reached, but in this area L12 was presumably slightly thicker, where it lay nearer the middle of the ditch.

6.4.3 Two fragments of human bone were found at the south end of the trench along the east side of the office. They lay at a depth of approximately 400 mm below the modern ground level. The fragments consisted of the distal end of an adult femur (168 g) and the head of a femur (31.5 g). After being identified and photographed, the bone fragments were reburied in the south-west corner of the trench.

The bone fragments appeared to lie in post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L12), although they were not observed *in situ* and there was modern disturbance in the area they came from. No grave cut and no further fragments of human bone were visible in the sides of the trench. It could not be confirmed therefore whether or not the bone fragments were part of an articulated skeleton.

There does not appear to be any previous record of human remains found in this part of the Castle Park. Burials have been discovered to the south of the Castle (Drury 1983, 405-7; CAT Report 521, 10). These were probably of prisoners housed in the keep, perhaps in the late 16th or 17th century.

6.4.4 Over most of the trenches at the Ranger Station, the 'dark earth' (L12) was sealed by a layer of modern topsoil (L11), up to 150 mm thick. This had more inclusions, such as small fragments of mortar and brick/tile, than L12. In places, the modern topsoil L11 was sealed by the existing yard surface (L13). This consisted of tarmac, approximately 50 mm thick, resting on make-up layers of chippings, gravel and concrete, 70-100 mm thick.

Several modern services and service trenches were encountered in the trenches. Among these were redundant French drains, including that observed by CAT in 2009 (CAT Report 516). Near the south end of the trench along the east side of the office, a cable appeared to have been laid in a shallow east-west brick-lined gully.

A small quantity of finds was noted in the spoil from the trenches. These probably came mainly from L11 and L12, and included modern potsherds, and fragments of modern brick and peg-tile. They were not retained, although further details are available in the site archive.

6.5 Relocation of the helter-skelter (Figs 1 & 7)

6.5.1 Roman deposits were not reached in the trenches dug by the contractors in the new play area to take the base of the helter-skelter. A thick layer of dark greyish-brown, post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L16) was exposed in the lower part of the trench. The 'dark earth' (L16) was reached at a depth of approximately 350 mm below the modern ground level, and continued below the bottom of the trench at 600-650 mm below the modern ground level.

6.5.2 A large modern concrete base was removed from the central part of the main trench during machining, and some modern disturbance was observed in the area around the concrete. It was perhaps associated with a former nursery building on the site.

The post-Roman topsoil (L16) was sealed by a layer of light yellowish-brown modern make-up (L15), approximately 300 mm thick. This was probably added to raise the ground

level during the creation of the new play area in 2011. A thin layer of modern plastic matting was laid on the top of L15, and turf had grown on this.

A small quantity of finds was noted in the spoil from the trench. These probably came mainly from the post-Roman topsoil (L16), and included modern potsherds, a small Roman grey ware sherd, a fragment of clay pipe stem, a piece of modern window glass, and some undiagnostic fragments of brick/tile. These were not retained, although further details are available in the site archive.

- 6.5.3** Nothing archaeologically significant was observed in the hole left after the removal of the helter-skelter from the redundant playground in Hollytrees Meadow. A thick layer of dark greyish-brown post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L16) was reached at approximately 350 mm below the modern ground level. It continued below the bottom of the trench, which was at roughly 650 mm below the modern ground level. A CAT test pit in 2013 indicated that Roman deposits lay just over 700 mm below the modern ground level in this part of the playground (Appendix 3).

The post-Roman topsoil (L16) was sealed by a layer of bark chippings (L17), approximately 350 mm thick, which formed a protective covering over the redundant playground.

6.6 Redundant playground (Figs 1, 6 & 7)

- 6.6.1** Thick deposits of dark greyish-brown post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L16) were exposed during the removal of the play equipment from the former children's playground in 2015, but no *in situ* Roman deposits or structural remains were observed.
- 6.6.2** The layer of bark chippings (L17), 250-400 mm thick, over the playground surface was stripped off. The geotextile membrane below it was also removed. This exposed the surface of the post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (L16). A small number of Roman brick and tile fragments, and a *tessera* were recovered from the surface of L16.
- 6.6.3** In the more northerly of the test pits dug in 2013 (Test pit 1; Appendix 3), the uppermost surviving Roman deposit lay just over 700 mm below the modern ground level (i.e. just under 500 mm below the top of the 'dark earth' L16). Over the southern part of the playground, the uppermost surviving Roman deposit was shallower. In Test pit 2, it lay approximately 300 mm below the modern ground level (i.e. roughly 100 mm below the top of L16).

7 Finds

7.1 Introduction

A quantity of finds was retained during the archaeological investigations. Where appropriate the finds were washed, marked and bagged according to context, in line with the recommendations in *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008b). The small finds are described in section 7.2. An explanation of the pottery fabric and form codes used is given in section 7.3. The finds are listed by context in Table 2 in Appendix 2. Further details are available in the site archive.

7.2 Small finds

by Stephen Benfield

SF 1. (11) L8, TP2. Plate 1. Post-Roman topsoil. Circular lead trade weight, 8 oz. Raised edge collar around upper surface, small amount of white corrosion on one side. At least four circular stamp marks are visible in the upper surface: one large central stamp and three smaller stamps on the periphery. The large central stamp (diam. 15 mm) has traces of beading around the edge, and probably also contains an image and/or letters, but these are not at present identifiable/legible. One of the smaller stamps (diam. 10.5 mm) probably contains three letters in a row, of which only the first (F) is clear **F**(.); also there is possibly an **8** on its side above the letters, and another possible letter/figure below the letters. The other two small stamps (both diam. 6 mm) may also contain images and/or letters, but these are not identifiable. Weight 224 g (7.9 oz). Diameter 52 mm. Thickness 11-12 mm. Post-medieval (probably 16th-17th century).

SF 2. (15) L8, TP1. Post-Roman topsoil. Small green glass bead, slightly chipped, almost certainly modern. Weight 0.5 g. Diameter 8 mm. Length 6 mm.



Plate 1 Trade weight SF1, upper and lower surfaces
(SF1 is 52 mm in diameter)

7.3 Pottery fabric and form codes

(Identifications by Stephen Benfield)

The Roman pottery was recorded using the Colchester Roman fabric type series (*CAR 10*). Roman pottery vessel forms refer to the Camulodunum Roman pottery type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947; Hull 1958). The post-Roman pottery fabrics refer to Colchester post-Roman fabric type series (*CAR 7*).

Table 1: List of pottery fabrics

Fabric codes	Fabric name
<i>Roman:</i>	
AA	All amphorae (excluding Dressel 20 & Brockley Hill/Verulamium region amphorae)
BACG	Central Gaulish plain samian
DJ	Coarse oxidised wares
CZ	Colchester and other red colour-coated wares
GB	BB2: black-burnished ware, category 2
GX	Other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares
<i>Post-Roman:</i>	
20	Medieval sandy greywares (general)
21A	Colchester-type ware
40	Post-medieval (glazed) red earthenwares
45	Stoneware (general)
45M	Modern English stonewares
46	Tin-glazed earthenwares
48D	Staffordshire-type white earthenwares
51B	Flowerpot

8 Conclusions

- 8.1** A programme of works took place in 2014-5 to improve the amenities in Upper Castle Park. These works were planned to have a minimal impact on the surviving archaeological deposits in the park. However, where there was the possibility of damage to the buried deposits, archaeological investigations were carried out by CAT on behalf of CBC. These investigations consisted mainly of watching briefs, with CAT staff monitoring the improvement works in progress. In addition, a number of small test pits were dug in advance of impending works, notably in the sand play area and the Sensory Garden.
- 8.2** Roman deposits were only uncovered in a couple of places during the archaeological investigations in 2014-5. The uppermost surviving Roman deposit was located in a test pit (TP1), immediately to the north of the Sensory Garden, at a depth of 650-700 mm below the modern ground level. Also, the uppermost Roman deposit was revealed in part of a contractor's trench at the Ranger Station, at a depth of approximately 550 mm below the modern ground level. In both cases, the Roman deposits were brownish-yellow clayey layers, which probably derived from the demolished daub walls of Roman buildings on or near the sites. The Roman deposits were left unexcavated and undamaged.
- 8.3** Extensive deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' were uncovered during most of the archaeological investigations. They were similar to deposits excavated elsewhere in Colchester (CAR 3, 92). The thick deposits of 'dark earth' that were uncovered in the sand play area probably accumulated as backfill in a shallow post-Roman ditch (F3). This ditch was tentatively identified during previous archaeological work in the Castle Park in 1983-4 (CAR 6, 372). It is also still visible as a slight dip extending north-south in the surface of the park, with the remains of a bank immediately to the west. The 2014 evidence suggests that the backfill of the ditch was probably still accumulating well into the post-medieval period. The ditch possibly dates back to the medieval period; perhaps to the 12th or 13th century.
- 8.4** A quantity of finds was recovered during the archaeological investigations. Much of the material found during the watching briefs was poorly stratified and of relatively recent date. The finds from the test pits at the sand play area and the Sensory Garden were better stratified and included small quantities of residual Roman finds. Also, a range of post-Roman finds were recovered from the test pits, including a lead trade weight of post-medieval date from the Sensory Garden. Two fragments of human bone were found in a trench at the Ranger Station, and were reburied on site.
- 8.5** In conclusion, the archaeological investigations in the Castle Park in 2014-5 were small-scale in extent and not much of archaeological significance was uncovered. Clearly the measures taken to minimise the damage to the archaeological remains in the park were successful.

9 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Survey datum point based on mean sea level at Newlyn, Cornwall
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council's Archaeological Advisor
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (formerly IfA, the Institute for Archaeologists)
CIMS	Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service
context	specific location on an archaeological site, especially one where finds are made; usually a layer or a feature
dark earth	post-Roman topsoil; probably the result of long-term cultivation, refuse disposal and pit-digging.
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford
feature	an identifiable context, such as a pit, a wall or a posthole
<i>imbrex</i>	curved Roman roof tile
<i>insula</i>	an area or block within the grid pattern of a Roman town (plural <i>insulae</i>)
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c AD 1500
modern	period from c 1850 onwards to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
Norman	relating to the period from AD 1066 to c AD 1154
OASIS	Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigationS
OS	Ordnance Survey
pan-tile	an S-shaped, post-medieval or later roofing tile, which overlaps with its neighbour
peg-tile	rectangular roof tile of medieval or later date; intact examples usually have two peg-holes
post-medieval	period from c 1500 to c 1850
residual	finds that were deposited earlier than the context in which they were found
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
RRCSAL	Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London
SAM	scheduled ancient monument
SMC	scheduled monument consent
<i>tegula</i>	flanged Roman roof tile
<i>tessera</i>	small ceramic cube used to make Roman tessellated and mosaic floors (plural <i>tesserae</i>)
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database, maintained by Colchester Museums
U/S	unstratified, ie without a well-defined context

10 References

Note: all CAT reports (except DBAs) are available online in .pdf format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/>

CAR 3	1984	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 3: Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex</i> , by P Crummy
CAR 5	1988	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 5: The post-Roman small finds from excavations in Colchester 1971-85</i> , by N Crummy
CAR 6	1992	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 6: Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilbert School, and other sites in Colchester 1971-85</i> , by P Crummy
CAR 7	2000	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by J Cotter
CAR 10	1999	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 10: Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , by R P Symonds and S Wade, ed by P Bidwell and A Croom
CAT	2014	<i>Policies and procedures</i> , Colchester Archaeological Trust
CAT Report 516	2009	An archaeological watching brief at the nursery and ranger station, Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex: May 2009, CAT archive report, by Ben Holloway
CAT Report 521	2011	Archaeological investigations in Museum Street, Colchester, Essex: June-July 1986 and January-April 2010, CAT archive report, by Donald Shimmin
CAT Report 603	2011	Report on an archaeological watching brief at the new play area and the park service yard, Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex: April-June 2011, CAT archive report, by Adam Wightman

CIMS	2008a	<i>Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester (CBC)</i>
CIMS	2008b	<i>Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums (CBC)</i>
Drury, P	1983	'Aspects of the origins and development of Colchester Castle', in <i>Archaeol J</i> , 139 (1982), 302-419
EAA 3	1997	<i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 3 , ed by J Glazebrook
EAA 8	2000	<i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 8 , ed by N Brown & J Glazebrook
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 , ed by D Gurney, ALGAO East
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: a revised framework for the Eastern Counties. Research agenda and strategy</i> , ed by M Medlycott, ALGAO East
Hawkes, C F C & Hull, M R	1947	<i>Camulodunum, first report on the excavations at Colchester 1930-39</i> , RRCSAL, 14
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> , RRCSAL, 20
IfA	2007	<i>Archaeological archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
IfA	2008a	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
IfA	2008b	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>
IfA	2008c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
MoRPHE	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> , English Heritage
VCHE 9	1994	<i>A history of the County of Essex, 9: the Borough of Colchester</i> , ed by J Cooper, The Victoria History of the Counties of England

11 Acknowledgements

CAT is grateful to Colchester Borough Council for commissioning and funding the archaeological investigations; and in particular to Ian Baalham, CBC Parks and Recreation Officer. Philip Wise, CIMS Collections and Curatorial Manager, arranged the interpretation panels watching brief. CAT would also like to thank the various contractors for their help on site, including: Lightmain Ltd (sand play area); CBC service team (interpretation panels); Bob Clark (Sensory Garden); MPS Construction, and Gothard & Taylor (Ranger Station); Greyhound Leisure Ltd (helter-skelter); and Veolia (redundant playground).

The 2014-5 fieldwork was carried out by Donald Shimmin, Ben Holloway, Stephen Benfield, Patrick Spencer, Stefania Usai and Sarah Carter. The excavation of the 2013 test pits in the redundant playground in Hollytrees Meadow was undertaken by Adam Wightman. The work was monitored by Debbie Priddy, Ancient Monuments Inspector, English Heritage, and by successive CBC Archaeological Advisors.

12 Archive deposition

The archive from the watching brief will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museums under accession code COLEM 2014.26, in accordance with *Guidelines on the preparations and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums (CIMS 2008b)* and *Archaeological archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation (IfA 2007)*.

13 Appendices

Appendix 1: contents of archive

Three A4 document wallets containing:

1 Project management archive

- 1.1 Copies of plans and other figures provided by CBC, on paper and CD
- 1.2 Copies of the scheduled monument consents, on paper and CD

- 1.3 Copies of the CBC method statement for the removal of the redundant playground, on paper and CD
- 1.4 Copies of the risk assessment, on paper and CD
- 1.5 Copies of correspondence/emails, on paper and CD
- 1.6 Copies of reports and figures relating to previous discoveries, on paper and CD

2 Site archive

- 2.1 Attendance register sheets
- 2.2 Context sheets
- 2.3 Photographic record sheets
- 2.4 Site plans/sections on 3 sheets of A3 drafting film
- 2.5 Site plans/sections on 7 sheets of A4 paper
- 2.6 Site diary/notes on 5 sheets of A4 paper
- 2.7 Site photographs on CD
- 2.8 Sundry papers

3 Research archive

- 3.1 Lists of finds, on paper and CD
- 3.2 Copies of final report (CAT Report 814), on paper and CD

Not in wallet:

4 Finds archive

- 4.1 One small plastic box containing the small finds
- 4.2 Several plastic bags containing the remaining finds; taking up roughly one museum box

Appendix 2: list of finds by context

All weights are in grammes. For the pottery fabric and form codes, see section 7.3; identifications and descriptions are by Stephen Benfield. The clay tobacco pipe types follow those used in *CAR 5*. The glass is clear, unless stated otherwise. The fabrics of the ceramic building materials are reddish in colour, unless stated otherwise.

T1-4 = test pits 1-4 in sand play area.

TP1-2 = test pits 1-2 in Sensory Garden.

Table 2: list of finds by context

Context	Trench no	Finds no	Qty	Description	Wt (g)	Comments
L1	T2	5	2	modern pottery sherds	47	Fabric 51B: joining rim sherds in plain red earthenware (not glazed), from a large flowerpot/planting pot, 19th-20th century
			1	oyster shell	76	
			1	modern cartridge case	10	
L2	T2	6	1	<i>tegula</i> fragment	111	Fabric 51B: rim and body sherds from flowerpots in plain red earthenware, incl. 2 joining sherds inscribed with 1 [or L] \diamond SA (SANKEYS?); also 1 sherd inscribed with NU , 19th-20th century
			2	peg-tile fragments	41	
			8	modern pottery sherds	64	
			1	animal bone fragment	2	
			1	slate fragment	24	
			1	post-Roman glass fragment	2	
L4	T1	2	1	Roman pottery sherd	2	Fabric GX: small sherd of Roman grey ware, traces of internal water scale

			4	Roman brick/tile fragments	539	
			1	peg-tile fragment	13	
L4	T3	3	1	peg-tile/pan-tile fragment	41	
			1	window glass fragment	2	probably modern
L4	T4	4	1	Roman brick/tile fragment	94	
			3	modern pottery sherds	88	Fabric 48D: 2 white earthenware sherds, incl 1 base sherd, late 18th/19th-20th century; Fabric 51B: 1 flowerpot rim sherd, 19th-20th century
L4	T2	7	2	Roman pottery sherds	15	Fabric DJ: 1 abraded sherd from the base of a 'cheese press', Cam 199, mid 1st-late 2nd/early 3rd century; Fabric GX: grey ware (?) sherd, probably from the base of a large pot
			2	modern pottery sherds	23	Fabric 51B: base and body sherds from flowerpots in plain red earthenware; body sherd inscribed with TT , possibly part of decorative band, 19th-20th century
			1	peg-tile fragment	20	
			1	peg-tile/pan-tile fragment	19	
			1	slate fragment	119	
L4	T2	8	1	<i>tegula</i> fragment	74	buff fabric
			1	<i>imbrex</i> fragment	52	
			1	?peg-tile fragment	16	
			3	brick/tile fragments	65	probably Roman
			1	clay pipe bowl fragment	12	rim missing; IA [or V] in relief on sides of foot; probably Type 9, c 1700-1740
			2	animal bone fragments	3	
L4	T2	9	2	brick/tile fragments	202	1 probable post-Roman brick fragment, approx 55 mm thick; 1 possible Roman fragment
L5	T1	1	1	Roman pottery sherd	3	Fabric GX, grey ware body sherd
			1	?Roman brick/tile fragment	11	
L8	TP1	12	2	modern pottery sherds	19	Fabric 45: 1 body sherd, 15th/16th-19th/20th century; Fabric 48D: 1 rim sherd, late 18th/19th-20th century
			1	post-medieval tile fragment	18	Fabric 46: abraded piece from a tile in tin-glazed earthenware, 9mm thick
			1	Roman pottery sherd	9	Fabric GX: grey ware body sherd
			2	<i>tesserae</i>	33	
			1	<i>tegula</i> fragment	74	
			1	peg-tile fragment	28	
L8	TP2	13	2	Roman pottery sherds	14	Fabric CZ: 1 base sherd from a colour-coated beaker, early/mid 2nd-mid/late 3rd century; Fabric GX: 1 body sherd
			2	post-medieval pottery sherds	32	Fabric 40: rim & body sherd, both with internal glaze, on rim sherd reaching to rim top, 17th-19th century
			1	<i>tegula</i> fragment	320	
			4	peg-tile fragments	95	
			2	clay pipe stem fragments	6	
			1	animal bone fragment	16	
L8	TP1	14	11	Roman pottery sherds	130	Fabric AA: 3 body sherds, all same vessel, fine buff fabric, with knife trimmed surface, mid 1st-3rd century; Fabric DJ: 1 body sherd, prob. mid 1st-2nd/3rd century; Fabric GB: 4 sherds, incl. 2 rim sherds from Cam 37 bowls, mid 2nd-3rd century – prob. late 2nd-3rd century; Fabric GX: 3 grey ware body sherds

			4	post-medieval/modern pottery sherds	141	Fabric 40: 1 rim sherd from a dish or pancheon, glazed upper surface, late 16th/17th-early 18th century; Fabric 45M: 1 rim sherd from a bottle, 19th-20th century; Fabric 48D: 1 rim sherd from a glazed white bowl, mottled with fine veins of green glaze on external surface, 19th-20th century; Fabric 51B: 1 rim sherd from a flowerpot, 19th-20th century
			3	post-Roman glass shards	55	1 dark green; 2 clear
			1	<i>tessera</i>	15	
			2	peg-tile fragments	49	
			3	clay pipe stem fragments	11	
			2	animal bone fragments	51	
			1	iron nail	17	65mm long, square shaft
			1	Roman painted wall-plaster fragment	9	?grey
L8	TP1	16	1	stone 'marble'	3	small, round stone of white/milky quartz, slightly uneven, smooth surface, no indication of working, probably natural in origin, diameter 14mm
L8	TP2	17	1	Roman pottery sherd	7	Fabric GX: grey ware body sherd
			1	post-medieval pottery sherd	15	Fabric 40: fine fabric, internal brownish glaze, prob. 16th-17th century
			2	<i>tesserae</i>	54	
			5	peg-tile fragments	169	incl. 1 in grey fabric
			2	animal bone fragments	16	
			1	oyster shell	7	
L8	TP2	18	1	Roman pottery sherd	5	Fabric GX: grey ware body sherd
			3	medieval/post-medieval pottery sherds	27	Fabric 21A: 2 sherds, 1 rim sherd from a cooking pot or cauldron (see CAR 7, fig 89 no. 109), 13th-14th/15th century, 1 body sherd with brown and cream glaze on red fabric, 13th-14th/15th century; Fabric 40: 1 body sherd, dark (unglazed) surface with red fabric, prob. 16th-early 17th century
			1	?Roman brick/tile fragment	100	
			3	peg-tile fragments	142	
L8	TP1	19	6	Roman pottery sherds	36	Fabric BACG: 1 rim sherd from a cup or small bowl/dish, 2nd century; Fabric DJ: 3 body sherds, mid 1st-2nd/3rd century; Fabric GB: rim sherd from a Cam 37B bowl, late 2nd-late 3rd century; Fabric GX: 1 grey ware body sherd
L9	TP2	10	1	modern pottery sherd	2	Fabric 48D: rim sherd, 19th-20th century
			3	medieval pottery sherds	17	Fabric 20?: 1 greyware body sherd, late 12th/13th-14th century; Fabric 21A: 2 sherds, 1 glazed body sherd, 1 sandy body sherd, from a flagon or jar neck?, both dated 13th-14th/15th century
			3	Roman pottery sherds	25	Fabric DJ: body sherd, prob. mid 1st-2nd/3rd century; Fabric GX: 2 grey ware rim sherds, 1 from a jar/bowl and 1 from a bowl
			4	peg-tile fragments	123	
			1	animal bone fragment	3	
L16	--	20	2	<i>tegula</i> fragments	1,048	

		1	<i>tessera</i>	27	
		1	Roman brick/tile fragment	158	
		1	?peg-tile fragment	52	

Appendix 3: 2013 test pits in redundant playground

by Adam Wightman

CAT project code: 12/12b

The results from the two test pits excavated in the 'old play area' at Castle Park on 10th January 2013 (Figs 6-7) were as follows:

In both test pits a layer of bark and gravel overlay a terram sheet (L1), which in turn overlay a layer of demonstrably modern, compacted clayey-silt soil (L2; Fig 7).

In Test pit 1 (next to the helter-skelter) the modern layers L1 and L2 overlaid a thick deposit of topsoil (L3), which contained modern/post-medieval finds in the upper part of the layer (glass and modern pottery sherds) and Roman finds throughout (pottery sherds, *tesserae*, and brick and tile fragments). What appeared to be demolition material from a Roman building (L4) was uncovered at a depth of c 750 mm below modern ground level beneath the topsoil in Test pit 1.

In Test pit 2 (next to the swings near the southern edge of the playground) the modern layers L1 and L2 overlaid a grey/pale yellow deposit (L5), which contained numerous charcoal inclusions as well as Roman finds (brick, tile and pottery sherds). It is possible that L5 may have been the fill of a pit or a Roman occupation layer. The excavation of a small exploratory hole into L5 indicated that the material was not redeposited and did not appear to contain any finds that suggest the layer is not Roman in date.

It is probable that a 'cut-and-fill' technique was used to create the flat plateau on which the old play area is situated. This would explain why a deep deposit of topsoil was identified down-slope in the northern test pit and no topsoil at all was identified in the southern-most test pit, which is further up-slope.

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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 30.06.15

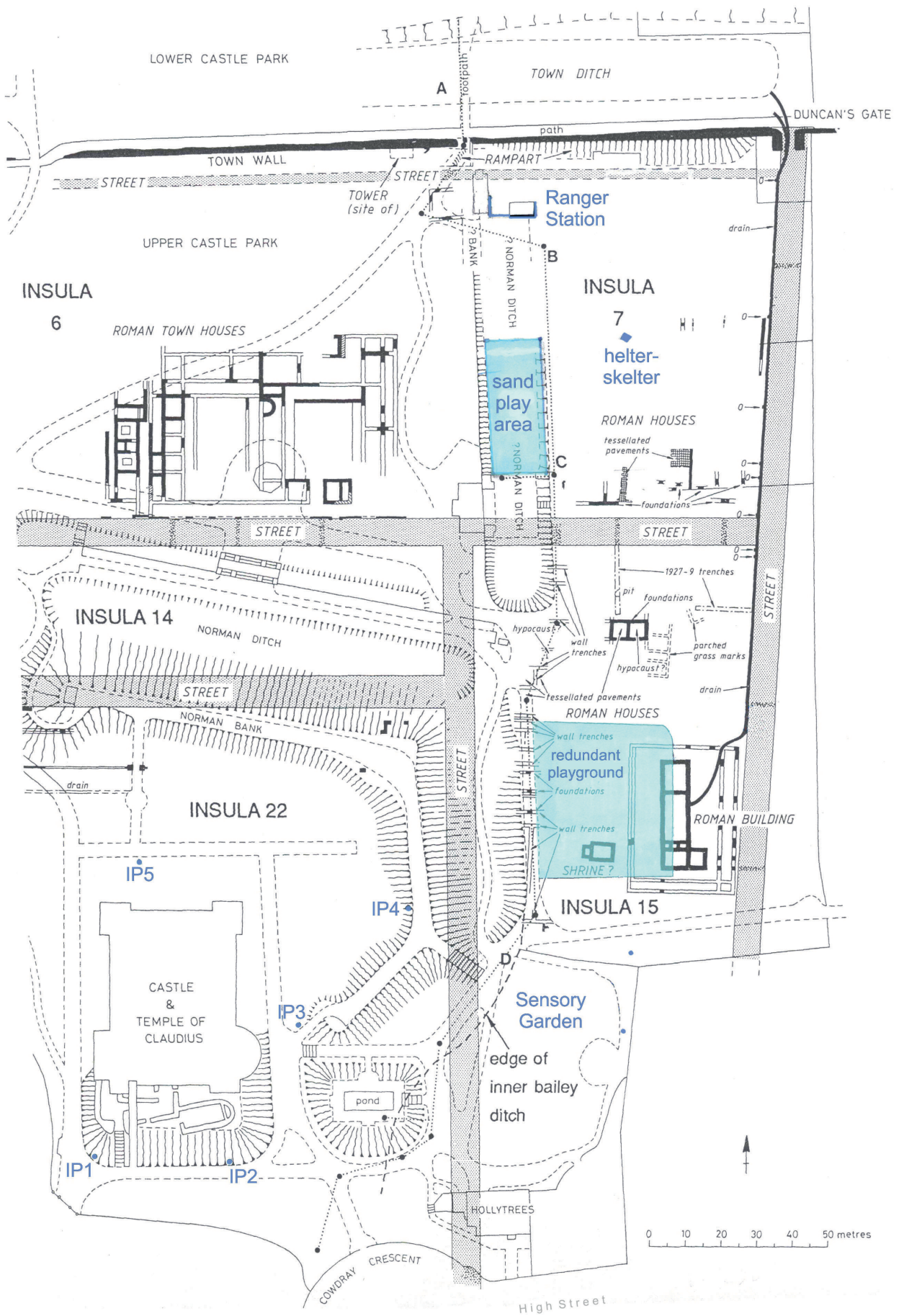


Fig 1 Location plan of the 2014-15 archaeological investigations (in blue), including the interpretation panels IP1-IP5. (Adapted from CAR 6, fig 13.225.)

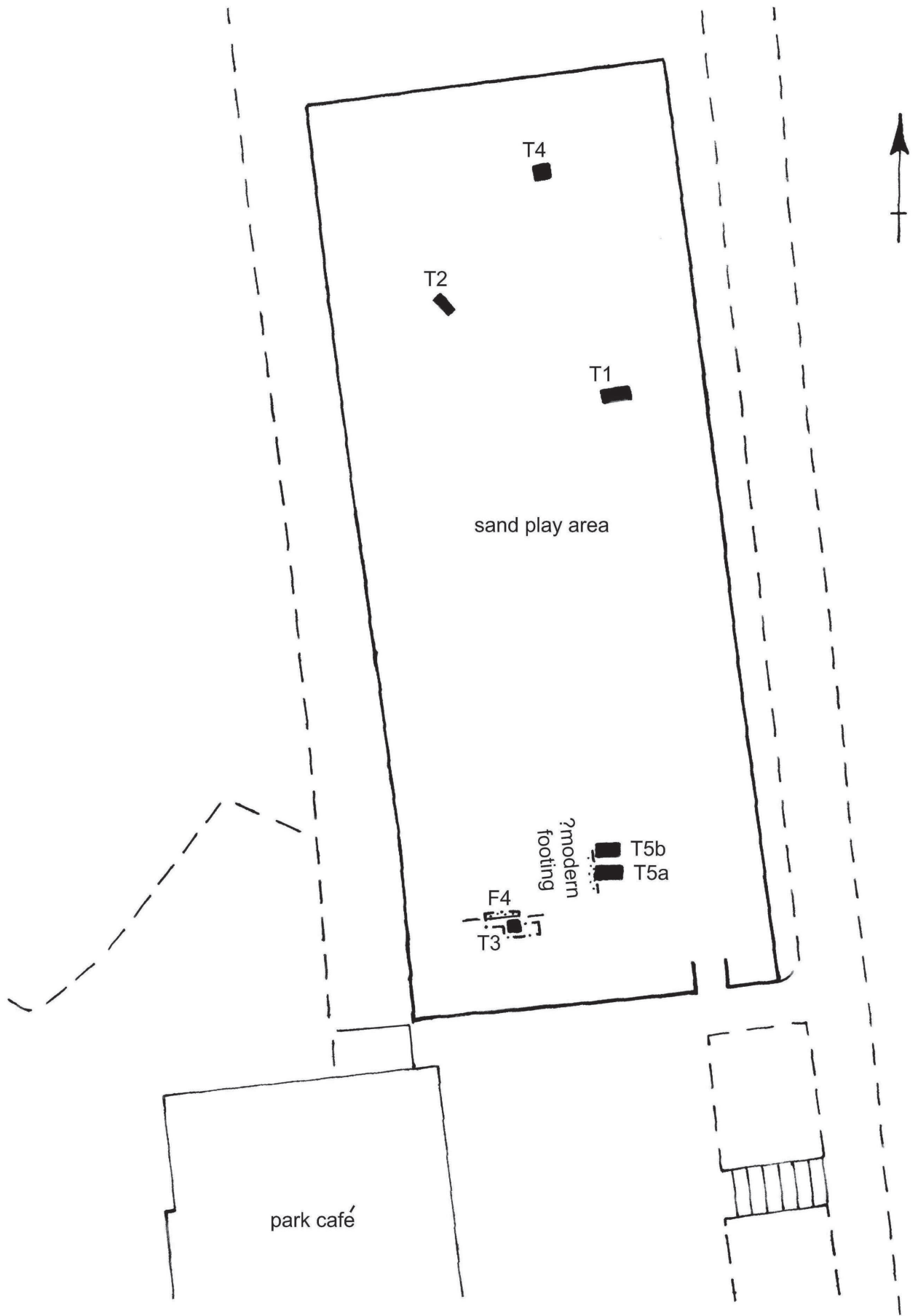


Fig 2 Sand play area: site plan.



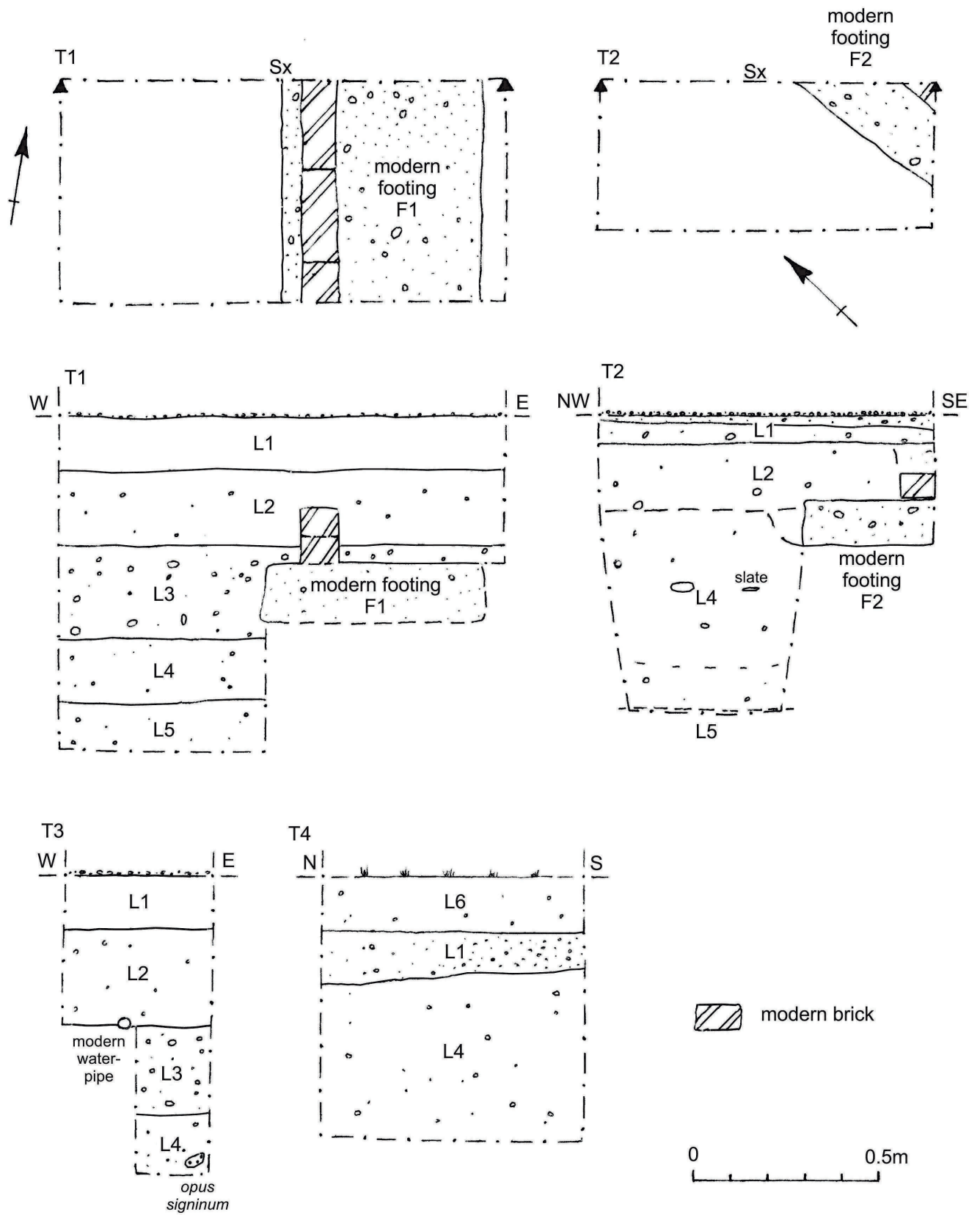


Fig 3 Sand play area: trench plans T1-T2 and sections T1-T4.

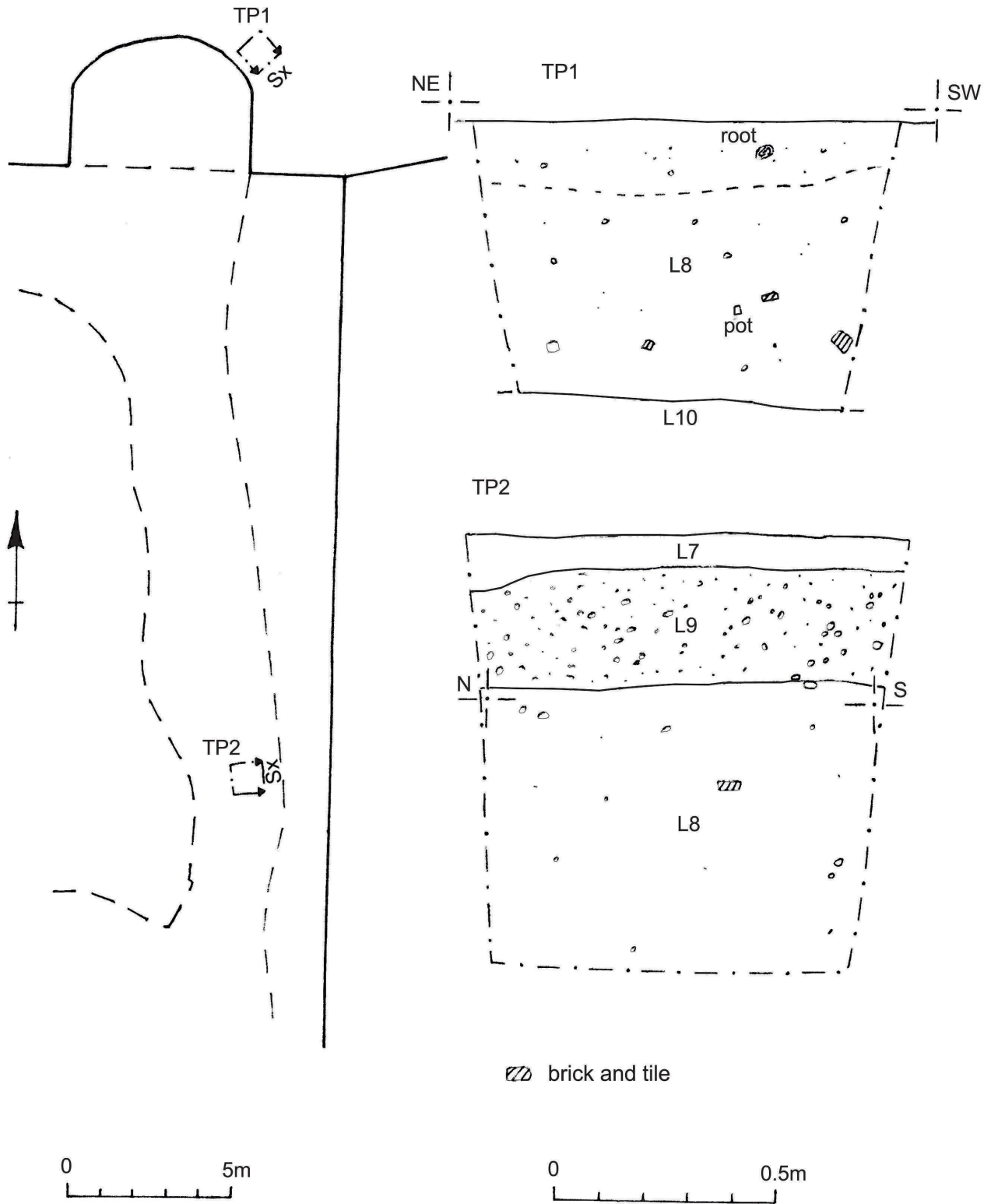


Fig 4 Sensory Garden: site plan and sections (TP1-TP2).

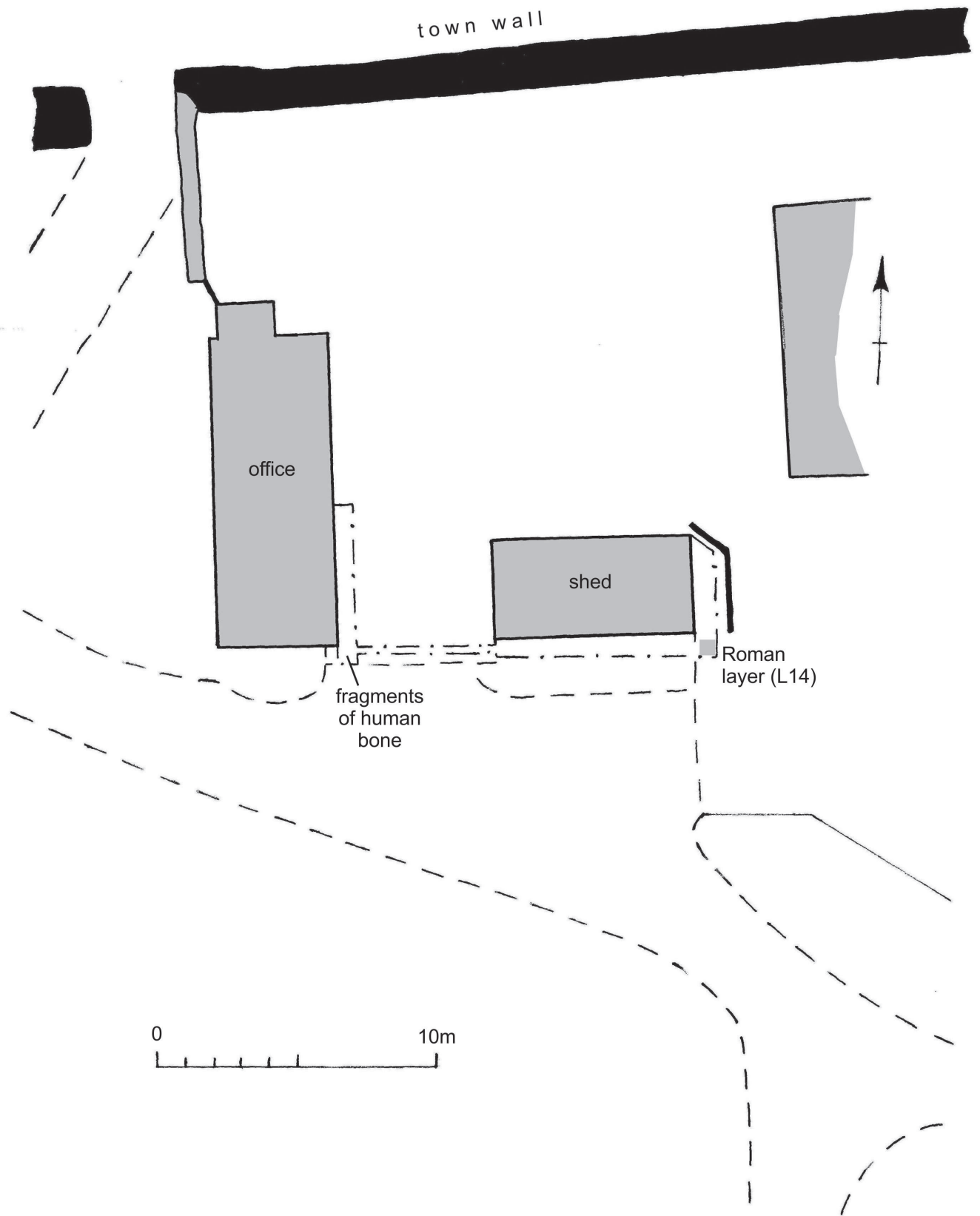
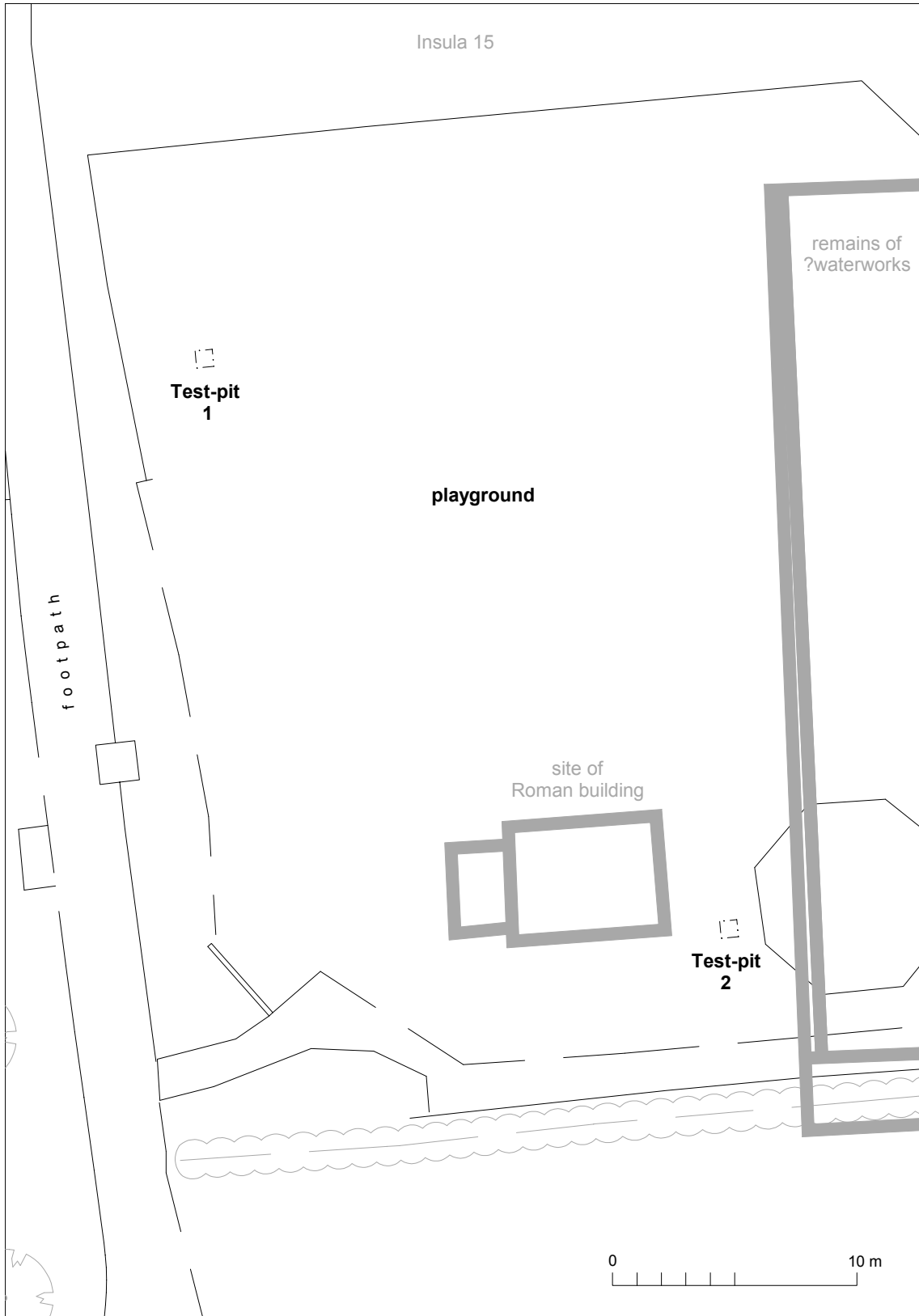


Fig 5 Ranger Station: site plan.



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Fig 6 Redundant playground: site plan, showing the location of 2013 Test-pits 1-2.

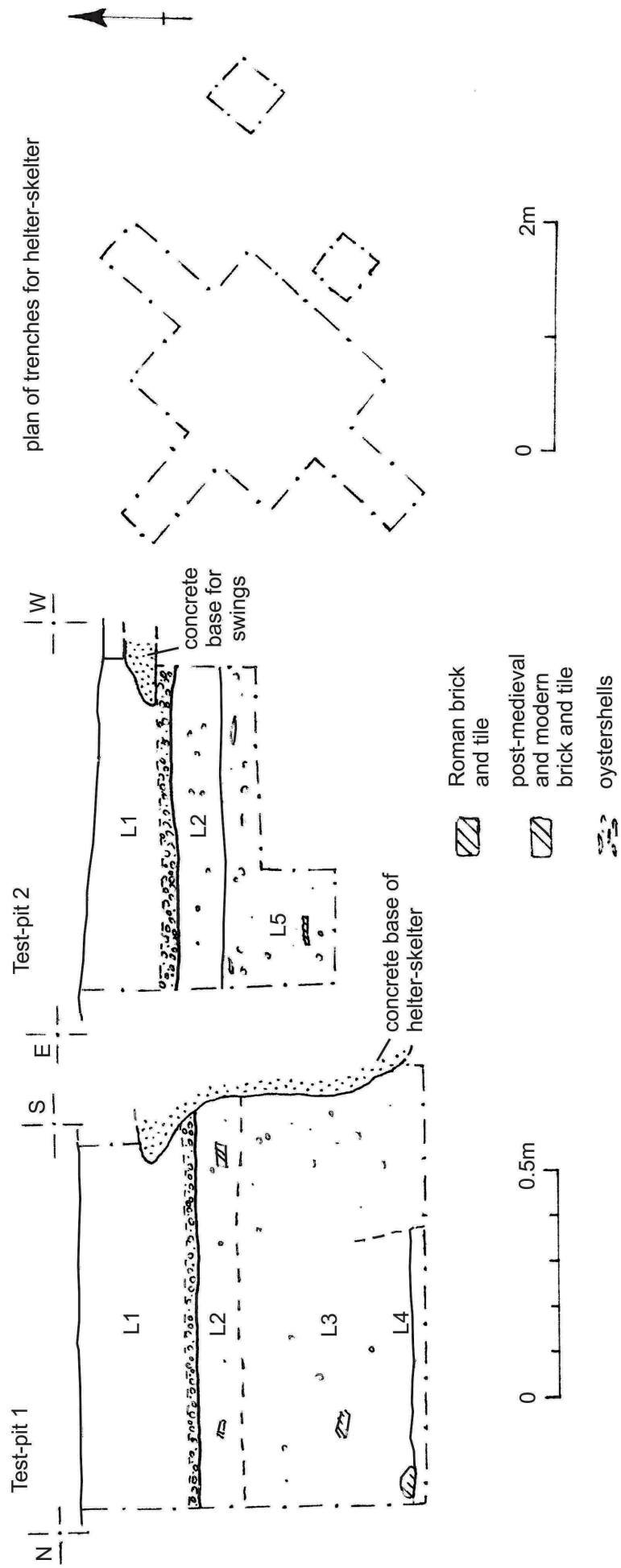


Fig 7 Sections of 2013 Test-pits 1-2 in the redundant playground, and plan of trenches for the helter-skelter in the new play area.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-179952

Project details

Project name	Upper Castle Park investigations, Colchester 2014-5
Short description of the project	A series of archaeological investigations took place in Upper Castle Park, Colchester from April 2014 to January 2015, in advance of and during works to improve the park amenities. These improvement works included changes to the children's play areas and the Sensory Garden, the installation of interpretation panels, and the replacement of drains. The works were designed to have a minimal impact on the surviving archaeological remains in the park, and in this they were successful as not much of archaeological significance was found. The uppermost surviving Roman deposits were uncovered in a trench immediately north of the Sensory Garden and in a trench at the Ranger Station. Extensive deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' were encountered in most of the investigations. In the 'sand play area', the 'dark earth' probably accumulated in a shallow post-Roman ditch.
Project dates	Start: 15-04-2014 End: 21-01-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	14/04a - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	2014.26 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	14/07g - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	14/08b - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	DITCH Medieval

Monument type	DEMOLITION DEBRIS Roman
Significant Finds	LEAD TRADE WEIGHT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	HUMAN REMAINS Uncertain
Investigation type	"Part Excavation","Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Upper Castle Park
Postcode	CO1 1UN
Study area	2170.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 9995 2545 51.8911561905 0.906118388439 51 53 28 N 000 54 22 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project director/manager	Philip Crummy
Project supervisor	D Shimmin
Type of sponsor/funding body	Borough Council

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Physical Archive ID	COLEM 2014.26
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Metal","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM 2014.26
Digital Contents	"Ceramics","Glass","Metal","other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM 2014.26
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","other"

Paper Media available "Aerial Photograph", "Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Diary", "Map", "Miscellaneous Material", "Notebook - Excavation", "Research", "General Notes", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Archaeological investigations in Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex: April 2014-January 2015

Author(s)/Editor(s) Shimmin, D

Other bibliographic details CAT Report 814

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Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: Upper Castle Park, Colchester	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester Borough
NGR: TL 9994 2548 (centre of area)	Site codes: Museum accession code: COLEM 2014.26 CAT project codes: 14/04a, 14/07g, 14/08b
Type of work: Watching briefs and evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: April 2014-January 2015	Size of area investigated: approximately 2,170 sq m
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Colchester Borough Council
Further seasons anticipated? Yes	Related EHER and UAD nos: --
Final report: CAT Report 814 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: A series of archaeological investigations took place in Upper Castle Park, Colchester from April 2014 to January 2015, in advance of and during works to improve the park amenities. These improvement works included changes to the children's play areas and the Sensory Garden, the installation of interpretation panels, and the replacement of drains. The works were designed to have a minimal impact on the surviving archaeological remains in the park, and in this they were successful as not much of archaeological significance was found. The uppermost surviving Roman deposits were uncovered in a trench immediately north of the Sensory Garden and in a trench at the Ranger Station. Extensive deposits of post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' were encountered in most of the investigations. In the 'sand play area', the 'dark earth' probably accumulated in a shallow post-Roman ditch.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Report 603; <i>CAR 6</i> , 368-73	
Keywords: Roman demolition debris, dark earth, post-Roman ditch, pottery, human bone, lead trade weight	Significance: *
Author of summary: Donald Shimmin	Date of summary: July 2015