

Archaeological strip, map and recording on land adjacent to 20 St Clare Road, Colchester, Essex

March 2015



by **Pip Parmenter and Adam Wightman**

with a contribution by Stephen Benfield
and illustrations by Emma Holloway

commissioned by Vaughan & Blyth

CAT project ref: 15/02e
Museum Accession Code: 2015.19
NGR: TL97450 24869



Colchester Archaeological Trust

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

tel.: 07436 273 304

email: archaeologists@catuk.org

CAT Report 832
April 2015

Contents

| | | |
|----|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1 | Summary | 1 |
| 2 | Introduction | 1 |
| 3 | Archaeological background | 1 |
| 4 | Results | 1 |
| 5 | Finds, <i>by Stephen Benfield</i> | 2 |
| 6 | Conclusions | 2 |
| 7 | Acknowledgements | 3 |
| 8 | References | 3 |
| 9 | Abbreviations and glossary | 3 |
| 10 | Contents of archive | 4 |
| 11 | Archive deposition | 4 |

Figures after p4

EHER summary sheet

List of plates, figures and tables

Cover: general site shot

- Fig 1 Site location
- Fig 2 Location of excavation area
- Fig 3 Results
- Fig 4 Sections

Table 1: Finds by context

1 Summary

The site is within the Late Iron Age and early Roman 'Lexden Cemetery'. Archaeological strip, map and recording prior to redevelopment revealed a probable post-medieval boundary ditch and six post-medieval/modern pits, but no Roman burials or other features.

2 Introduction

This report presents the results of archaeological strip, map and recording on land adjacent to 20 St Clare Road, Colchester, Essex, which was carried out in March 2015 (Figs 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Vaughan & Blyth in advance of the construction of a four bedroom detached house, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Officer, Howard Brooks, advised that the proposed site lay in an area of high archaeological importance, and that, in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with paragraphs 128, 129 and 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological strip, map and recording*, detailing the required archaeological work written by Howard Brooks (CBCPD 2015), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to brief and agreed with CBCPD (CAT 2015).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England (EAA 14 and 24)*. This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a), and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The proposed development site was located within the Lexden Cemetery (EHER 11713, 11714), an extensive Iron Age and Roman cemetery situated on both sides of the Lexden Road, Colchester. It is part of the Iron Age territorial *oppidum* and Romano-British town of Camulodunum. As such, there was a high probability of encountering human remains on the site. The Lexden Dyke (Scheduled Monument 1019966) is just 40m to the west of the site boundary, and the Lexden Tumulus (Scheduled Monument 1019967) is only 140m to the south east. The Lexden Tumulus is an Iron Age barrow that was excavated in 1924. It contained a rich Belgic burial including the remains of funerary bronzes, gold and silver objects and a coin with the head of Augustus mounted as a medallion. The Tumulus is dated to just before the Roman conquest and is thought to possibly be the burial mound of Addedomarus.

4 Results (Figs 2 to 4)

The footprint of the proposed dwelling and associated service trench (an area of approximately 255m²), were excavated using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket.

In the north of the site, a layer of topsoil that had been mixed with sand and gravel from the underlying geology (L1) overlaid the original topsoil (L2) (Fig 4). It is probable that L1 was the upcast soil sand and gravel from the excavation of the foundation trenches for 20 St Clare Road and/or the swimming pool to the west of the site (Fig 2). The original topsoil (L2) was a medium grey/brown sandy-silt which contained very few inclusions other than rounded stones. L2 overlaid the natural geology, which was a compact orange/brown sand (L3). Two sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from L2, and a flint blade, which probably dates to the early Neolithic, was recovered from the interface between L2 and an area of natural sandy-silt (Fig 2).

Eight features were identified (F1-F8). F1 was a large oval-shaped feature with a light grey/brown fill. It contained no inclusions or finds (Fig 3) and was a probably a tree-throw or glacial feature.

Five pits were aligned east to west across the site (F2, F5, F6, F7, F8). They were all shallow and contained medium grey/brown sandy-silt fills. Fragments of peg-tile (not retained) were recovered from pits F5, F6 and F7 and a sherd of post-medieval pottery was also recovered from pit F7. It is possible that these features were post-medieval/modern garden features. Pit F3 was a similar in shape and size to the other five pits and contained the same type of fill, but did not follow the same alignment. Very small pieces of clear bottle glass and post-medieval/modern brick fragments were observed in the fill of F3.

Ditch F4 had a medium brown/grey sandy-silt fill which contained small fragments of peg-tile. It is probable that F4 was a backfilled post-medieval field boundary, as it seems to match a boundary feature that is visible on the 1888 OS Map.

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

A very small quantity of finds consisting of a prehistoric worked flint (dating to the late Mesolithic or Neolithic period) and a few sherds of pottery (dating to the Roman and post-medieval period) were recovered from two contexts (L1 & F7). The finds are listed and described in Table 1. The Roman pottery fabrics refer to *CAR 10* and the post-Roman pottery fabrics to *CAR 7*

| context | finds no | finds type | fabric | quant | weight | form/description | period | spot date |
|---------|----------|------------|--------|-------|--------|--|----------|--|
| L2 | 1 | pottery | HZ | 2 | 136 | Abraded rim sherd from a large storage jar of form Cam 273, heavily-tempered body sherd from a second vessel of similar type | Roman | M1-2C |
| L2 | 3 | flint | | 1 | 8 | Blade with proximal end broken away, earlier parallel blade removal scars on dorsal face, cortex surviving along one edge, use wear/edge damage on other edge (length 60 mm) | prehist | Late Mesolithic-Neolithic (probably Neolithic) |
| F7 | 2 | pottery | 40 | 1 | 60 | Rim sherd from a large jar, unglazed in fine fabric | post-med | L17-18C |

Table 1: Finds by context

6 Discussion (Figs 3 - 4)

Excavation of land adjacent to 20 St Clare Road revealed a ditch and six pits, all thought to be of post-medieval/modern date. The ditch (F4) was probably a backfilled post-medieval boundary ditch, visible on the 1888 OS map of the site. The pits may have been slightly later than the linear feature and related to construction activities around the site. Five of the six pits (F2, F5 – F8) were aligned east to west across the site. The sixth pit (F3) was not on the same alignment but was otherwise very similar to the other pits. The only closely datable item recovered from the pits was a sherd of late 17th/18th century pottery in pit F7. Aside from this, pits F5, F6 and F7 and ditch F4 contained pegtile and pit F3 contained post-medieval/modern brick and fragments of glass. None of the features are thought to be of any particular archaeological significance.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT is grateful to Vaughan & Blyth for commissioning this project. Site work was managed by A Wightman, and undertaken by A Wightman and N Rayner. Figures are by E Holloway.

The project was monitored by Jess Tipper for Colchester Borough Council Planning Department.

8 References

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

| | | |
|------------------|-------|--|
| CAR 7 | 2000 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-1985</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 |
| CAT | 2015 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological strip, map and recording on land adjacent to 20 St Clare Road, Colchester, Essex</i> |
| CBCPD | 2015 | <i>Brief for archaeological strip, map and recording on land adjacent to 20 St Clare Road Colchester, Essex</i> |
| ClfA | 2014a | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i> |
| ClfA | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
| DCLG | 2012 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Dept of Communities and Local Government. |
| EAA 14 | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14</i> , edited by David Gurney |
| EAA 24 | 2011 | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24</i> , by Maria Medlycott |
| English Heritage | 2006 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage) |

9 Abbreviations and glossary

| | |
|---------------|---|
| CAT | Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| CBCAO | Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Officer |
| CBCPD | Colchester Borough Council Planning Department |
| ClfA | Chartered Institute for Archaeologists |
| context | specific location of finds on an archaeological site |
| EHHER | Essex Historic Environment Record |
| feature (F) | an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts' |
| layer (L) | distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil |
| medieval | period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII |
| modern | period from c AD 1800 to the present |
| natural | geological deposit undisturbed by human activity |
| NGR | National Grid Reference |
| post-medieval | from Henry VIII to c AD1800 |
| prehistoric | pre-Roman |
| residual | something out of its original context, e.g. a Roman coin in a modern pit |
| Roman | the period from AD 43 to circa AD 430 |
| section | (abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s |
| WSI | Written Scheme of Investigation |

10 Contents of archive

Finds

1 museum box containing all finds.

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 832)

CBCPD Evaluation Brief

CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, Trench record sheet)

Site digital photographic log: Site photographic record on CD

Attendance register. Benchmark data. Risk assessment

11 Archive deposition

The paper archive and finds are currently held by CAT at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museum under accession code 2015.19.

© Colchester Archaeological Trust 2015

Distribution list:

Vaughan & Blyth

Jess Tipper (Colchester Borough Council Planning Department)

EHER



Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House,

Circular Road North,

Colchester,

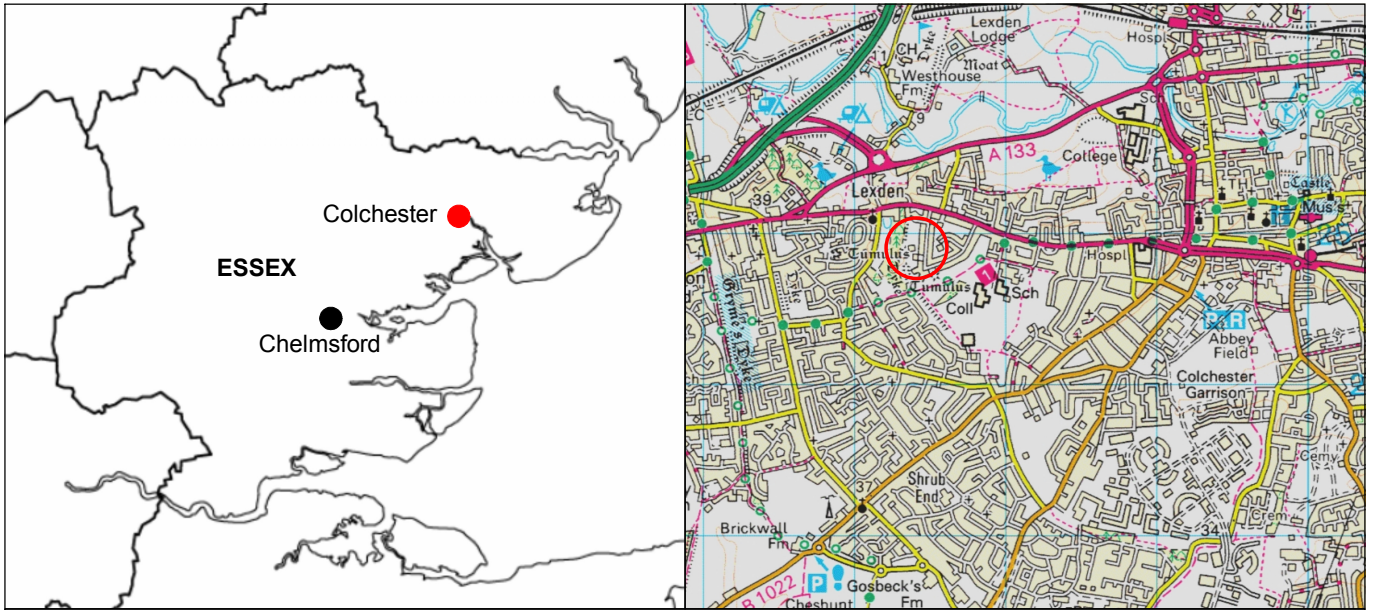
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: archaeologists@catuk.org

checked by: Howard Brooks

date: 28/04/15



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100039294.

Fig 1 Site location.

0 50 m

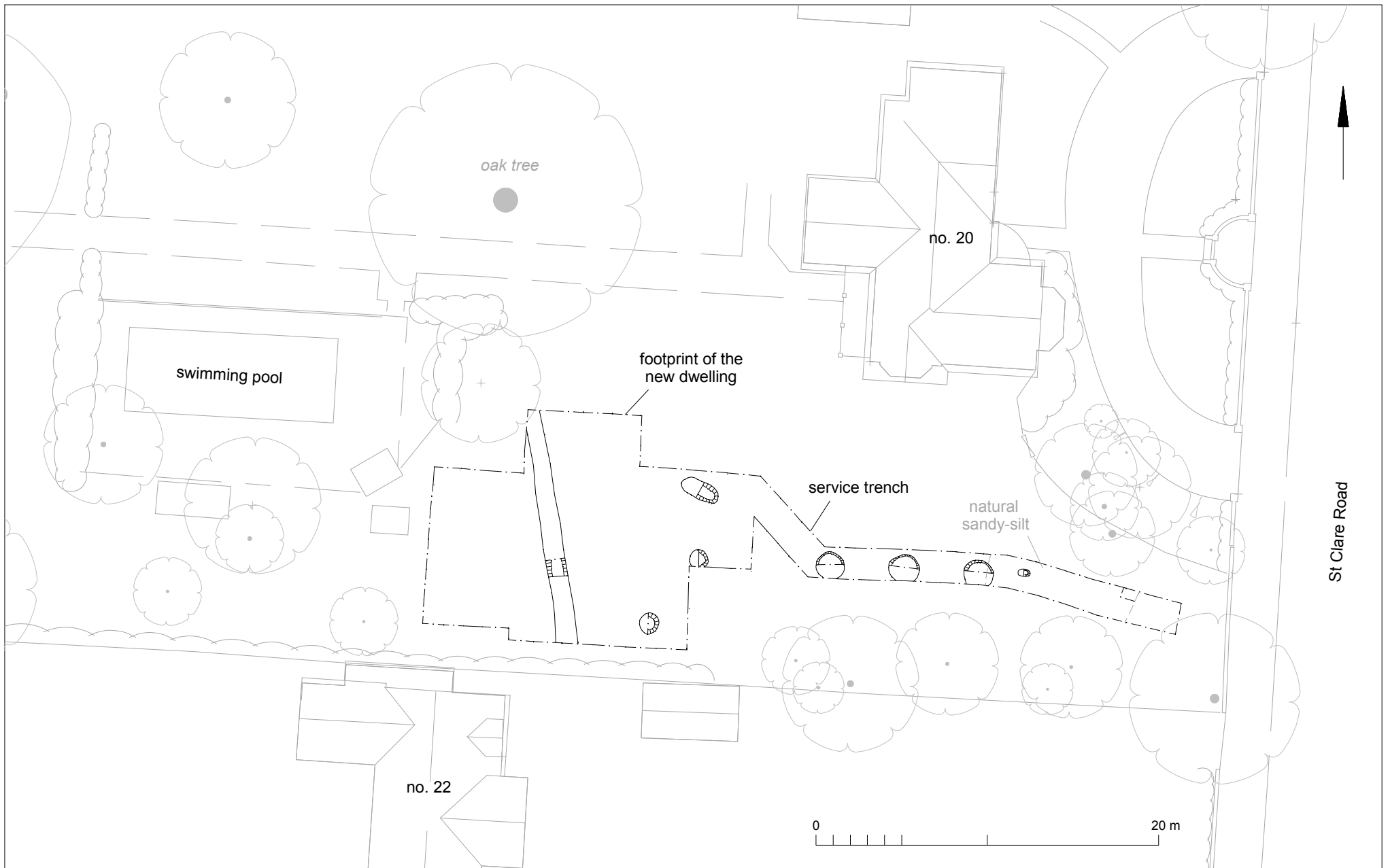


Fig 2 Location of excavation area.

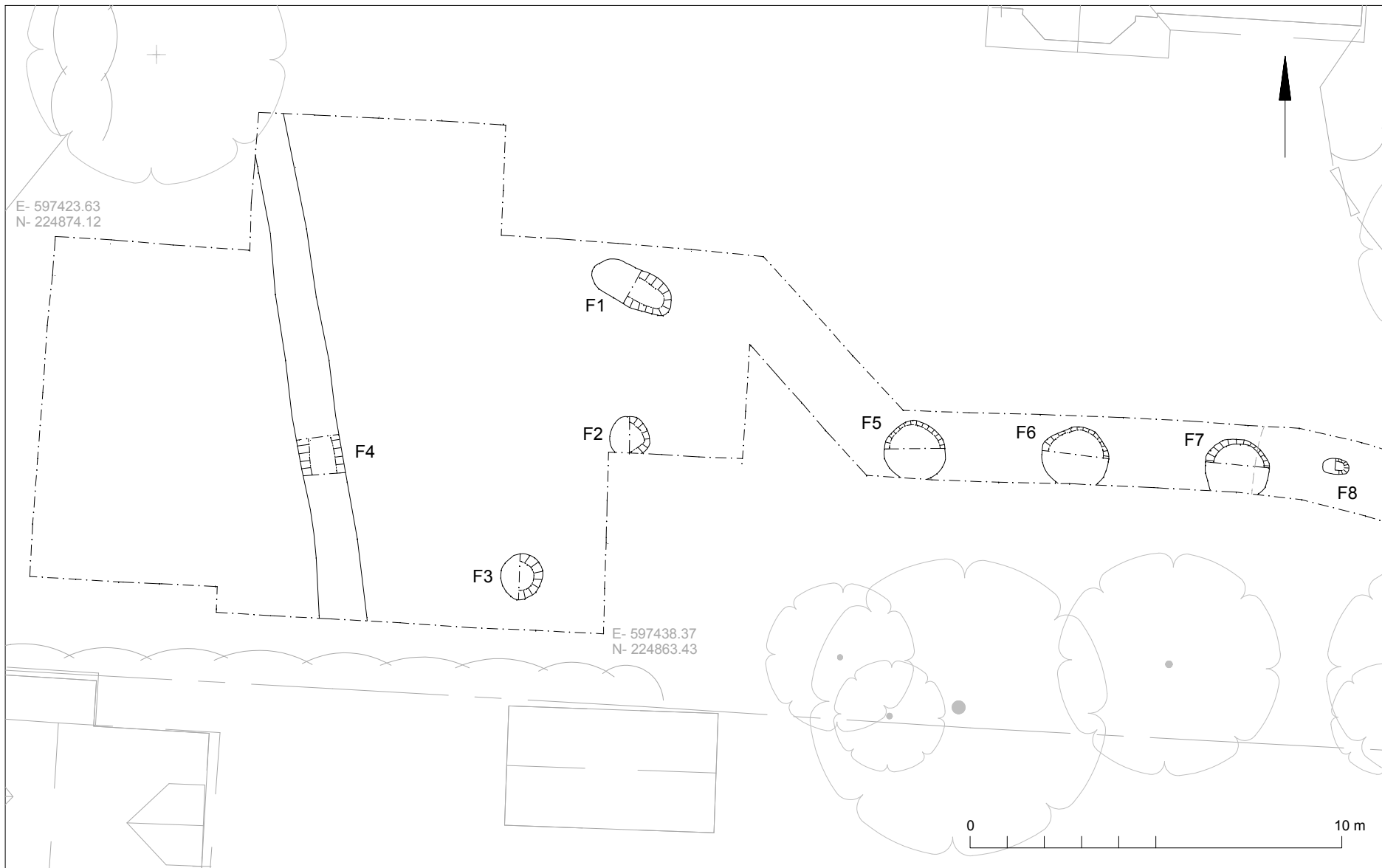


Fig 3 Results.

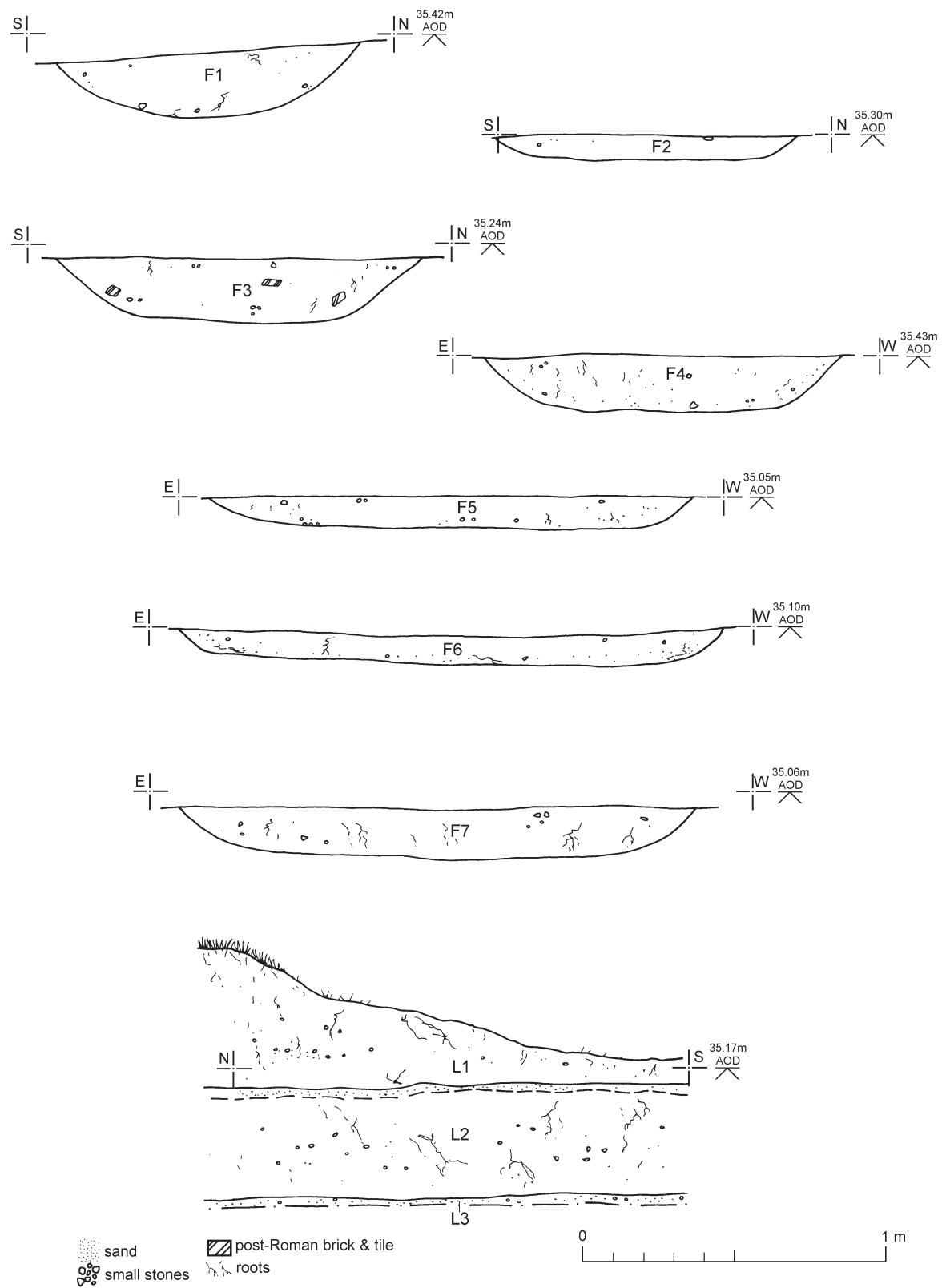


Fig 4 F1-7: sections and a representative section.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

| | |
|---|---|
| Address: land adjacent to 20 St Clare Road, Colchester, Essex | |
| Parish: Colchester | District/Borough: Colchester |
| NGR: TL 8193 1316 | Site code: CAT project code – 15/02e |
| Type of work: strip, map, record | Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust |
| Date of work: 23rd-24th March 2015 | Size of area investigated: c 255 m2 |
| Location of curating museum: Colchester & Ipswich Museum: 2015.19 | Funding source: Developer |
| Further seasons anticipated? no | Related EHER/SAM numbers: EHER 11713-4. SAM 1019966-7 |
| Final report: CAT Report 832 | |
| Periods represented: post-medieval and modern | |
| Summary of fieldwork results: <i>The site is within the Late Iron Age and early Roman 'Lexden Cemetery'. Archaeological strip, map and recording prior to redevelopment revealed a probable post-medieval boundary ditch and six post-medieval/modern pits, but no Roman burials or other features.</i> | |
| Previous summaries/reports: None | |
| CBC monitor: Howard Brooks (WSI), Jess Tipper (fieldwork and px) | |
| Keywords: post-medieval / modern ditch, pits | Significance: neg |
| Author of summary: Howard Brooks | Date of summary: April 2015 |