

Archaeological evaluation on land off Goldlay Gardens, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 OEN

June 2016



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**commissioned by ECC Place Services (Richard Havis)
on behalf of ECC / Lambert Smith-Hampton**

NGR: TL 71132 06093 (centre)

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ECC project code: CF85

Chelmsford Museum accession code: CHMRE 2016.088

OASIS ref.: colchest3-253815



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CAT Report 970

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land off Goldlay Gardens, Chelmsford, Essex. Despite being located close to a Roman fort no significant archaeological horizons were identified with only modern layers, features and finds recorded.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land off Goldlay Gardens, Chelmsford, Essex which was carried out on 15th June 2016. The work was commissioned by ECC Place Services (Richard Havis), on behalf of ECC / Lambert Smith-Hampton, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT). The evaluation was carried out in advance of and to support a planning application to Chelmsford City Council for the construction of residential housing with parking and open spaces.

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Tender for Archaeological Evaluation* detailing the required archaeological work, written by Richard Havis (ECCPS 2016), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2016).

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

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

To the east of the development area lies Roman Chelmsford or *Caesaromagus* which was probably established around a fort constructed in the aftermath of the Boudican revolt of 60-61 AD. The civilian settlement developed along the London-Colchester Road (Moulsham Street) and a side road to the south-east that led to Heybridge and Wickford. The town included a *mansio* (government posting station) and its bath-house, and a temple precinct. The *mansio* and bath-house were rebuilt on a larger scale in the mid-2nd century. In c. 160-75 substantial earthwork defences were constructed around the town's core but the southern side of the circuit at least was abandoned by the mid-3rd century, and settlement continued to extend along the road frontages to the south and the east. The site lies to the east of the established extent of the Roman town and outside the later 2nd-century town defences.

The Historic Environment record shows the presence of the Roman fort immediately to the west of the development site. There is also the potential for Roman burials as the siting of cemeteries on the outskirts of Roman towns was the norm in the Roman period.

Directly to the north-east of Goldlay Gardens excavations at Lynmouth Gardens (EHER 46252) found evidence of quantities of Roman material including a cremation along with a large pit containing waterlogged material which included worked leather and wood items. To the SE, evaluation by CAT in 2008 on land to the rear of 2-26 Goldlay Avenue (CAT Report 458) revealed a small gully, Roman pit and prehistoric pit along with twelve post-medieval/modern and ten natural features.

The site itself was open fields until the middle of the 20th century at which time a printing works was constructed on the site. This was later taken over by the library service of Essex County Council as its base. The site is now unoccupied and protected by Heras fencing.

For further details of the archaeology of Chelmsford see Medlycott (1999).

4 Results (Figs 2-3)

Three trial-trenches were excavated across the site. Each trench was 15m long by 1.8m wide (totalling 81m²) and was dug by machine under archaeological supervision. Three layers were identified. Modern tarmac and crush (L1, c 200-400mm thick) sealed modern subsoil (L2, c 280-420mm thick) which sealed natural sands and gravels (L3, identified at a depth of 600-700mm below current ground level).

Trench 1 (T1)

A modern service was recorded 500mm below ground level running across most of the length of the trench. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.

Trench 2 (T2)

No significant archaeological features were identified.

Trench 3 (T3)

A V-shaped ditch/gully (F1), aligned NW to SE, was recorded in the centre of the trench. It measured 400mm wide and 250mm deep, and contained fragments of modern brick (London Stock bricks, late 19th – early 20th century; not retained). It was located on the same alignment as a modern concrete foundation (3.8m to the south-west) and the two may have been related.



Photograph 1 T1, looking NE



Photograph 2 T2, looking SE



Photograph 3 T3, looking SW

5 Finds

No archaeological finds were identified.

6 Discussion

Despite being located within an area of high archaeological potential, no significant archaeological horizons were identified during the evaluation with only modern layers, features and finds recorded.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks ECC Place Services and ECC / Lambert Smith-Hampton for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway, N Rayner and A Wade. Figures are by M Baister and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Alison Bennett.

8 References

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

CAT	2014	<i>Health and Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation on land off Goldlay Gardens, Chelmsford, 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</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 . Ed. D Gurney
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 , by Maria Medlycott
ECCPS	2015	<i>Tender for Archaeological Evaluation, Land off Goldlay Gardens Chelmsford</i> , by Richard Havis
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage)
Medlycott, M	1999	<i>Chelmsford Historic Town Assessment Report</i> , ECC

9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 970)

ECC Evaluation Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, Architectural plans, Attendance register, Risk assessment

11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMRE: 2016.088.

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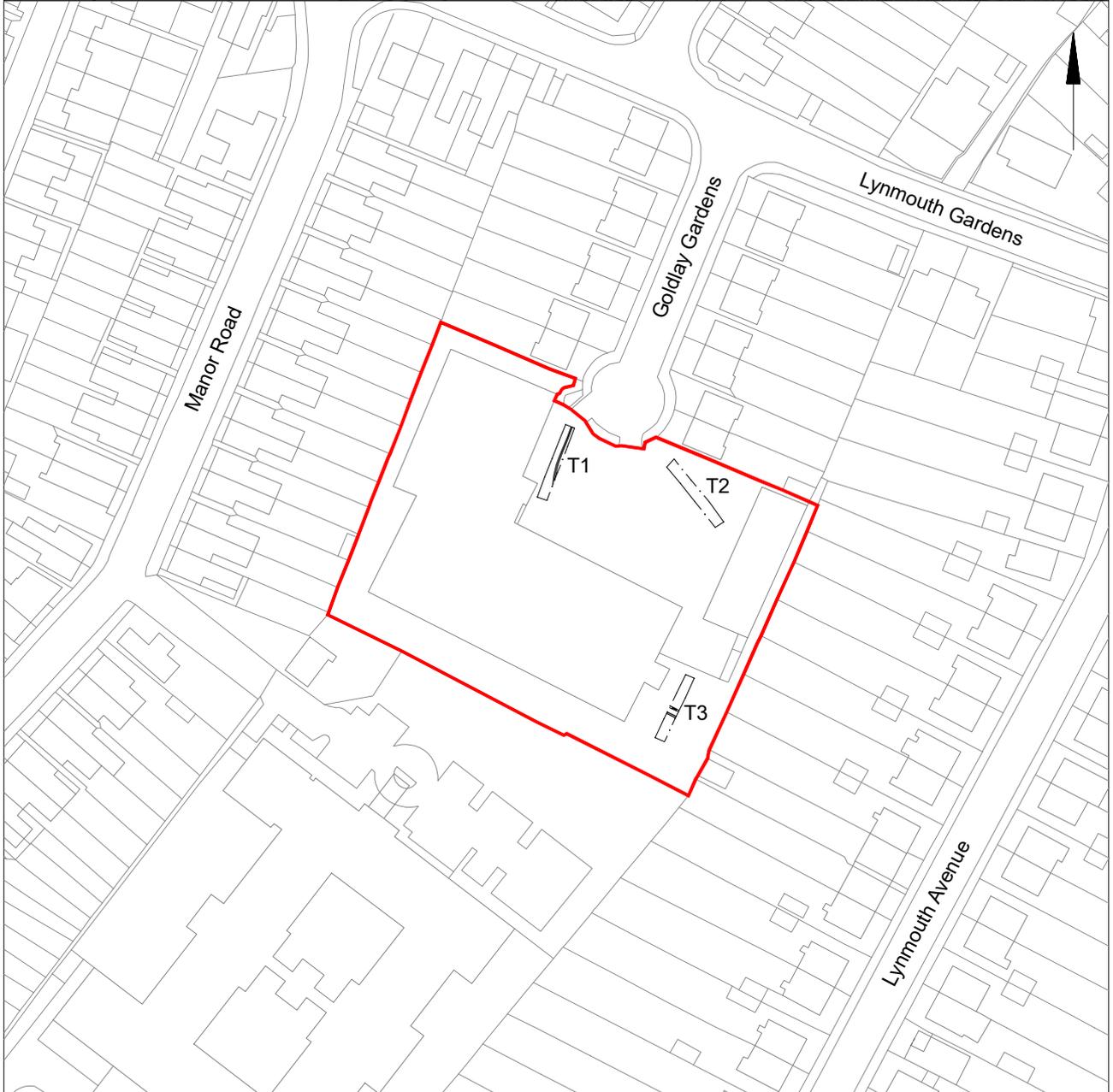
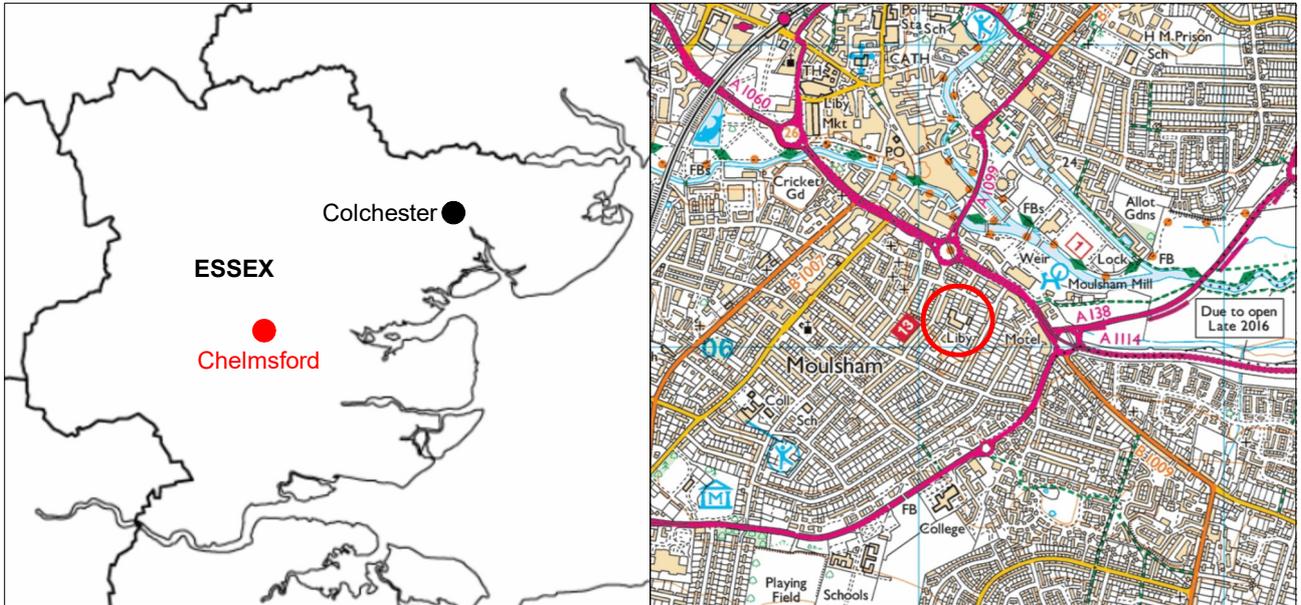
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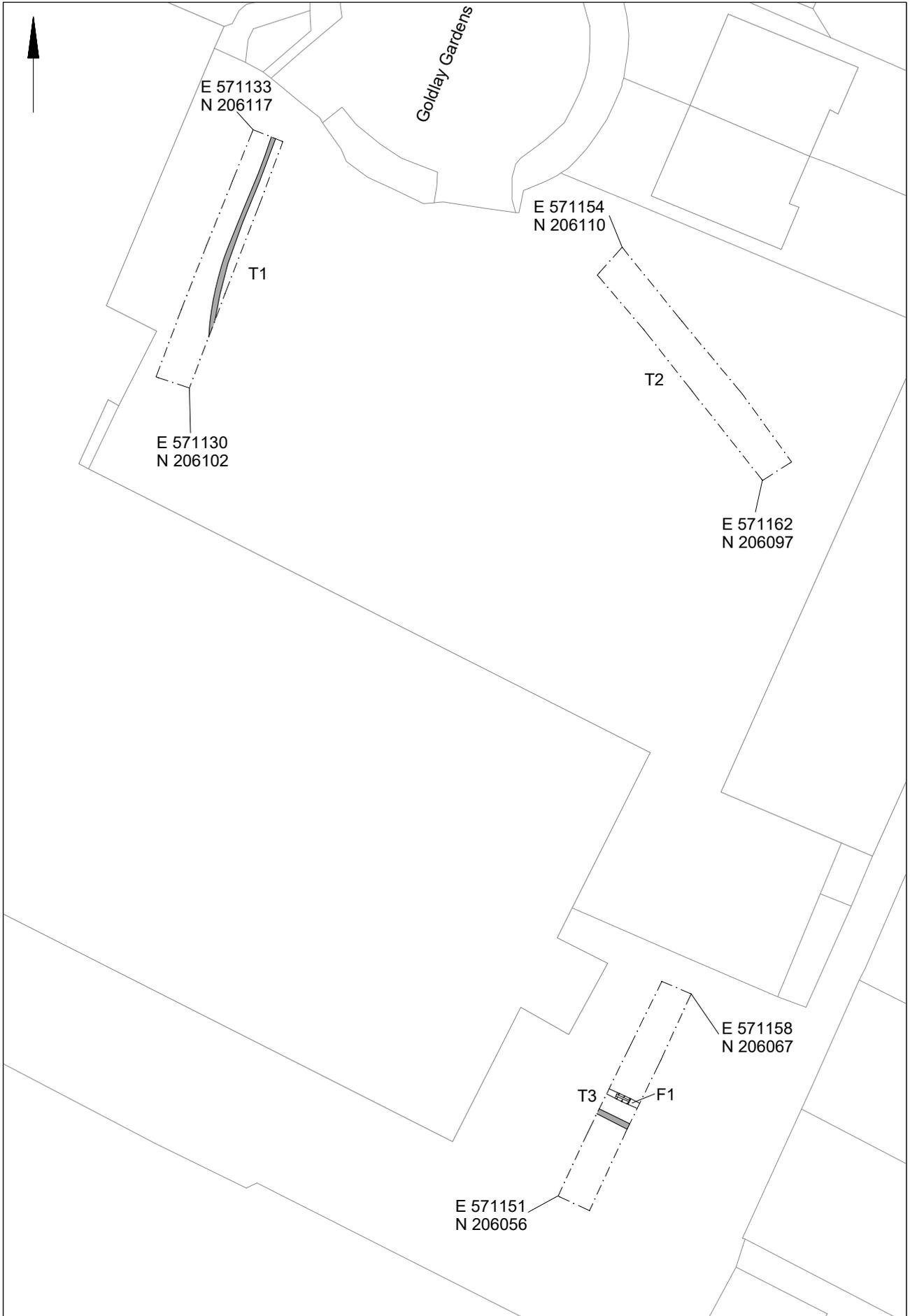
Date: 23.06.2016



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Fig 1 Site location.





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Fig 2 Evaluation results.



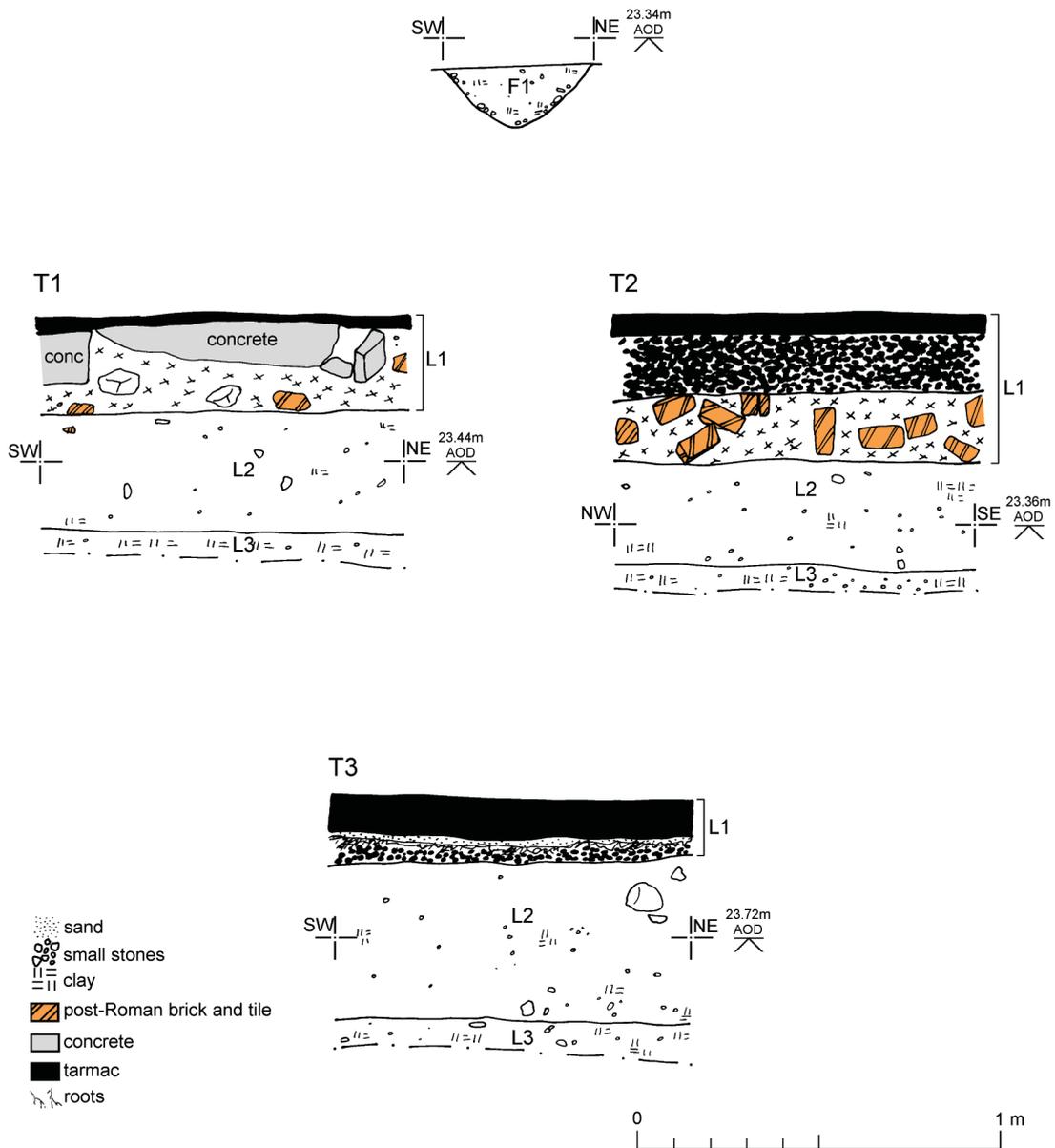


Fig 3 Feature (F1) and representative trench sections (T1-3).

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Land off Goldlay Gardens, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 OEN	
Parish: Chelmsford	District: Chelmsford
NGR: TL 71132 06093 (centre)	Site code: CAT project code: 16/06a ECC project code: CF85 OASIS project ID: colchest3-253815
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 15th June 2016	Size of area investigated: Three trenches each measuring 15m long by 1.8m wide (81m ²)
Location of curating museum: Chelmsford Museum accession code CHMRE: 2016.088	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER number: EHER 46252
Final report: CAT Report 970	
Periods represented: modern	
Summary of fieldwork results: An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land off Goldlay Gardens, Chelmsford, Essex. Despite being located close to a Roman fort no significant archaeological horizons were identified with only modern layers, features and finds recorded.	
Previous summaries/reports: -	
Keywords: -	Significance: -
Author of summary: Laura Pooley	Date of summary: June 2016