

# Archaeological evaluation at 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX

October 2016



**by Laura Pooley**

with contributions by Stephen Benfield and Lisa Gray  
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**commissioned by Homa Cherry  
on behalf of the Elysium Group**

NGR: TL 99346 25611 (centre)

Planning reference: 152797

CAT project ref.: 16/09h

Colchester Museum accession code: COLEM 2016.100

UAD ref: ECC3883

OASIS reference: colchest3-263929



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**CAT Report 1025**  
November 2016

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## 1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester in advance of the construction of a ground floor extension to the restaurant. The development site is located in a suburb of the Roman and medieval town close to the River Colne. The evaluation revealed modern soils (L1, 0-1.05m), post-medieval dump (L2, 1.05-1.31m), medieval/post-medieval river silts and gravels (L3-L5, 1.31m-2.24m, starting at 5.45m AOD), and Roman river silts (L6, starting at 2.24m deep, 4.5m AOD). Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds in the river silts were probably derived from centuries of dumping rubbish on the river edge.

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of a trenched archaeological evaluation at 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex which was carried out on the 5th October 2016. The work was commissioned by Homa Cherry, on behalf of the Elysium Group, in advance of the construction of a ground floor extension to the restaurant, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Colchester Borough Council Planning Services (CBCPS), Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor Jess Tipper advised 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 Trench Archaeological Evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCPS 2016), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with CBCPS (CAT 2016).

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 Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), and also on the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) (formally the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD)) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The development site is located in a known suburb of the Roman and medieval town of Colchester. During excavations in 1978-9 on the site of the Royal London Insurance building (now The Octagon) (directly to the south of the site), evidence of several Roman houses, some with mosaic and tessellated floors and one with a hypocaust, were observed. There was also a Roman gravel road, timber wells, and kilns of Roman and medieval date (CAR 3, 155-209).

Local archaeological evaluations and excavations have shown that there is a considerable amount of variation in the depths and dates of archaeological deposits near the river. Trial-trenches in 1978 on the site of the multi-storey car park (20m west) revealed a sandwich of post-medieval dumped soil layers and river silts (*ibid*). The highest river silt was at 1.4m below contemporary ground-level (5.3m AOD), below which was layer of post-medieval dumped soil at 1.75m below contemporary ground-

level (at 4.95m AOD), and below this were more river silts (down to 2.45 below contemporary ground-level to 4.25m AOD).

During an evaluation on a riverside development at St Peter's House in 1998 (150m east), a great depth of deposits were observed (CAT Report 25). Closer to the riverside, Roman deposits were seen at 2.3m below contemporary ground-level (at 3.9m AOD) and further back at 2.3m (at 4.0m AOD), above which was a 1.2m-thick dumped Roman gravel bank.

An evaluation (CAT Report 42) on the development site in 1999 revealed dumped soils sealing archaeological deposits at depths between 1.8m and 2.0m below contemporary ground-level (4.35-4.15m AOD). These deposits consisted of archaeological finds mixed in with riverside silts and gravels, and date between the later Roman period and the 16th century. Finds were plentiful and included medieval leather fragments, Roman pottery and tile, and two large timber pieces which may have been of Roman date. A Roman cut (F1) was also observed in trench T1 but could not be excavated as the trench was filling with water. The subsequent watching brief in 2000 yielded only negative results as the concrete footings had been poured before observations could be made (CAT Report 65).

Numbers 20 Bridge House and 21 The Moorings are listed as a 17th-century brick house (NHLE no. 1123560).

#### **4 Results** (Figs 2-3)

A single trial-trench, 4m by 4m (16m<sup>2</sup>), was machine excavated under archaeological supervision within the footprint of the new extension. This trench was excavated to a depth of 1m and before being stepped so that a 1.8m wide strip down the centre of the trench was excavated down a further 1.8m. The high water-table meant that the bottom of the trench started to rapidly fill with water.

The trench was excavated through six layers:

L1: Modern tarmac and crush, 1.31m thick, full of brick, concrete and general building waste.

L2: Post-medieval accumulation/dump, 0.27m thick, a soft, moist, very dark grey/brown silty-loamy clay with flecks of charcoal, oyster shell, brick and common stones. Finds (not retained for analysis) included small pieces of peg-tile, clay pipe, brick and mortar fragments.

L3: Post-medieval river silts, 0.69m thick, a soft, moist, medium grey sandy-silty clay with flecks of charcoal, oyster shell and common stones. Finds not retained for analysis (see below) included peg-tile and occasional whole oyster shells.

L4: Post-medieval river silts, 0.15m thick, a soft, moist medium yellow/green/brown silty-sandy clay with flecks of oyster shell and common stones.

L5: ?Medieval river silts, 0.15m thick, a soft, moist very dark grey/brown silty-clay with flecks of oyster shell, chalk and occasional oyster.

L6: Roman river silt and gravels, 0.57m+ thick, a loose, moist medium yellow/green/brown sandy-silt with abundant gravels and stones.



**Photograph 1** Evaluation trench, looking W



**Photograph 2** Evaluation trench, looking S

## 5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Small quantities of Roman pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered from four contexts (L3, L4, L5 and L6). The Roman pottery fabrics refer to *CAR 10* and the pottery forms to the *Camulodunum* (CAM) Roman pottery type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947, Hull 1958). The post-medieval pottery fabrics follow the Essex post-Roman fabric series (Cunningham 1985 & *CAR 7*). The pottery fabrics are listed in Table 1 and all of the finds are listed and described in Table 2. A significant number of the finds were recovered from processing bulk soil samples (a result of limited safe access to the excavated trench) and these are marked with <S> next to the finds number.

Fabric code	Fabric name
<i>Roman:</i>	
BACG	Central Gaulish plain samian
DJ	Coarse oxidised and related wares
GX	Other coarse wares, principally locally produced greywares
<i>Medieval:</i>	
20	Medieval sandy greywares (general)
21A	Colchester-type ware
<i>Post-medieval:</i>	
40	Post-medieval red earthenware
45C	Raeren stoneware

**Table 1** Pottery fabrics

The earliest dated find is a reused flint core, residual in L5 (7<S>). This has seen a number of flake removals and the edges have been modified, possible with retouch and certainly by usewear. The piece is broadly dated as Neolithic/Late Neolithic-Bronze Age. This is the only prehistoric find.

The higher numbered layers (L5 and L6) produced almost exclusively Roman finds; the exception being a single piece of peg-tile from L5 (7<S>). The more closely dated pottery from these layers is of mid 1st-3rd/early 4th century date and no clear Late Roman pottery was recovered from this or other layers producing finds. No anaerobically preserved organic finds were recovered from these layers.

Layers L3-L4 contained finds of medieval and post-medieval date. The pottery includes medieval sandy greywares and Colchester-type wares together with a few sherds of late medieval-early post-medieval date, that is Fabric 40 (transitional) and Raeren stoneware dated to the late 15th-16th century. As well as pieces from peg-tiles (dated medieval-post-medieval) there are a range of other finds from these layers. Among these are a few preserved organic finds consisting of pieces of wood and two small pieces of leather (L4 (3<S>)). There is also a small quantity of slag and possibly kiln/furnace lining. The only bone recovered is the end of a sheep scapula (L4 (3<S>)) stained black from the river deposits and a small, slightly abraded, phalanges bone that is almost without doubt human and from a juvenile (unfused) (L3 (2<S>)).

An apparently similar finds assemblage was recovered from a previous archaeological evaluations on the site (CAT Report 42) and at the adjacent former Quilters Public House site (CAT Report 65).

Context and finds no.	Form/ description	Finds spot date
L3, 2 <S>	<b>Roman pottery:</b> (6) Fabric GX (6) small sherds, including probable Cam 108 sherd (M1-E2C) (Rom) <b>Medieval pottery:</b> (1) Fabric 21A, small sandy sherd (c 13-14/15C).	late med - early p-med

Context and finds no.	Form/ description	Finds spot date
	<p><b>Medieval-post-medieval pottery:</b> (1) sandy sherd with orange surfaces and grey core (late med-early p-med).</p> <p><b>Post-Roman CBM:</b> (4) peg-tile pieces (med-p-med).</p> <p><b>Bone (human)</b> (1) small, lightly abraded, unfused juvenile phalange, almost certainly human.</p>	
L4, 3 <S>	<p><b>Medieval pottery:</b> (6) small-medium sherds Fabric 20 (4) inc cooking pot rim (L12/12-14C), Fabric 21A (1) glazed sherd (13-14C), Fabric 21A (1) late Colchester-type wear (14/15-16C).</p> <p><b>Late medieval-post-medieval pottery:</b> (2) Fabric 40 (transitional) (1) very small sherd, glazed internally (L15-16C), Fabric 45C (1) body sherd (L15-16C).</p> <p><b>Post-Roman CBM:</b> (6) pieces from peg-tiles, two with tapering round holes (med-p-med).</p> <p><b>Animal bone</b> (1) sheep scapula stained black by river deposits.</p> <p><b>Slate</b> (1) small, moderately thick piece of slate (med-p-med).</p> <p><b>Kiln or furnace lining(?)</b> (2) one edge piece of wall lining or kiln brick with vitrified green glaze on surface and edge with brick had backing of fired clay, surface undulating and probably not a deliberately glazed brick, second piece of light, vitrified/slag material with orange, iron hard, ferruginous clay backing.</p> <p><b>Slag:</b> (2) piece of heavy ferrous slag, piece of slag/clinker with patches of sand/soil incorporated into surface.</p> <p><b>Shell:</b> (1) Oyster shell.</p> <p><b>Preserved organic material: Wood</b> (3) small-medium sized, pieces of wood, almost undoubtedly preserved by anaerobic conditions rather than being later intrusions, one with 90 degree edge showing that this has been worked. <b>Leather</b> (2) preserved by anaerobic conditions, one is a small strip (45mm) piece/thong notched/narrows in the middle, the other a long triangular shape with fraying end (65 x 14mm).</p>	Post-med (L15-16C)
L5, 5	<b>Roman pottery:</b> (1) Fabric GX, sherd from the lower wall of a jar	Roman
L5, 7 <S>	<p><b>Roman pottery:</b> (5) small-medium sherds, Fabric GX, including sherd from a lattice decorated jar (2-3C).</p> <p><b>Roman CBM:</b> (3) One piece Roman brick/tile, one tile surface piece in cream fabric, one small tesserae cube.</p> <p><b>Post-Roman CBM:</b> (1) small piece of peg-tile (med-p-med).</p> <p><b>Flint:</b> (1) pieces from a core with usewear and/or possible retouch on edges (Neolithic/Late Neolithic-Bronze Age)</p>	Roman with one med/p-med find (residual prehistoric flint)
L6, 4 <S>	<p><b>Roman pottery:</b> (11) all small sherds, Fabric BACG? (1) very abraded, possibly Central Gaulish samain (2C), Fabric DJ (2) buff (circa M1-2C), Fabric GX (8) including jar and lid seated jar rim pieces, the lid seated jar has a burnt deposit in it (2C+(?)).</p> <p><b>Roman glass:</b> (1) small piece of blue-green vessel glass (Rom).</p> <p><b>Roman CBM:</b> (9) small-medium size pieces, some abraded, all orange-red fabric, includes <i>imbrex</i>, thin flat tile that is probably <i>tegula</i> and one probable piece of Roman brick.</p>	Roman 2C+
L6, 6	<p><b>Roman pottery:</b> (5) Fabric DJ (1) abraded buff coloured sherd (Rom, M1-2C), Fabric GX small sherds including shoulder sherd from a Cam 268 jar (E/M2-L3/E4C).</p> <p><b>Roman CBM:</b> (5) medium size pieces of Roman CBM, all in orange-red/brownish-red sandy fabrics. These include a piece from an <i>imbrex</i> tile and a piece from a <i>tegula</i>, the latter quite abraded and with a base thickness of c 18mm. Another piece of CBM of similar thickness is also probably <i>tegula</i>. One slightly abraded flat piece is 25mm thick and might be either brick or roof tile, while another piece at 40mm thick can identified as Roman brick.</p>	Roman E/M2-3/E4C

Table 2 All finds by context

## 6 Environmental Report

by Lisa Gray, MSc MA ACIfA Archaeobotanist

### Introduction – aims and objectives

Four samples were taken from 2.8m of Roman, medieval and post-medieval river silts (All site information *pers. comm.* Laura Pooley 2016). Sample <1> (Finds No.2, L3) and Sample <2> (Finds No.3, L4) were taken from post-medieval river silts. Sample <3> (Finds No. 7, L5) from ?medieval river silts and sample <4> (finds No. 4, L6) from Roman river silts and gravels.

### Sampling and processing methods

Samples were taken and processed by CAT. Each whole earth sample's original size was 30L. All were completely processed using a Siraf-type flotation device. Flot was collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve then dried.

Once with the author the flots were scanned under a low powered stereo-microscope with a magnification range of 10 to 40x. The whole flots were examined. The abundance, diversity and state of preservation of eco- and artefacts in each sample were recorded. A magnet was passed across each flot to record the presence or absence of magnetised material or hammer scale.

Identifications were made using modern reference material (author's own and the Northern European Seed Reference Collection at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London) and reference manuals (such as Beijerinck 1947; Cappers *et al.* 2006; Charles 1984; Fuller 2007; Hillman 1976; Jacomet 2006). Nomenclature for plants is taken from Stace (Stace 2010) and for mollusca from Kerney and Cameron (Kerney and Cameron 1979). Latin names are given once and the common names used thereafter. Low numbers of non-charcoal charred plant remains were counted. As were spheroidal hammer scale, if present. Uncharred plant remains, fauna and magnetic fragments were given estimated levels of abundance unless, in the case of seeds, numbers are very low.

### Results (Appendix 1)

#### The Plant Remains

The only charred plant remains in the samples were charcoal flecks too small to identify in samples <2> and <3> and low numbers of charred indeterminate plant tissue in sample <1>.

Dried waterlogged plant remains dominated the assemblages for each sample. Plants of disturbed ground, damp ground and aquatic plants were represented. Possible food plants were present as one grape (*Vitis vinifera* L) seed in sample <4>, one fragment of marrow/cucumber (*Cucurbita/Cucumis* sp.) seed in sample <2> and possible caraway (?*Carum carvi* L.) seeds in samples <1> and <2>. These seeds were compared with reference collection seeds of fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare* L.), dill (*Anethum graveolens* L.) and water dropwort (*Oenanthe* sp.) but caraway seeds were the closest match. Small fragments of dried waterlogged wood/stem were found in samples <3> and <4>.

#### Faunal Remains

Low to moderate quantities of freshwater mollusca were found in each sample, most in sample <3>. Terrestrial mollusca were found in low numbers in samples <2> and <4>. Fragments of oyster (*Ostrea edulis* L.) were found in low numbers in samples <1> and <2>.

Other faunal remains consisted of low numbers of earthworm cocoons in samples <3> and <4>. Low numbers of beetle fragments were found in samples <3> and <4>.

### **Inorganic Remains**

One fragment of spheroidal hammerscale was found in sample <1>. Spheroidal hammerscale is formed when droplets of liquid slag solidifies when it is expelled from the iron during hot working (Starley 1995).

### **Discussion**

#### **Biases in recovery, residuality, contamination**

Nothing was highlighted with regards biases in recovery and contamination. However, as these items were found in contexts described as river silts their origin is uncertain as they could have floated in from upriver. The aquatic plant remains and freshwater mollusca reflect the riverine environment.

#### **Significance and potential of the samples and recommendations for further work**

Rubbish seems to have been dumped onto the riverbanks over the centuries (*pers.comm.* Laura Pooley 2016) but evidence for the dumping of plant food waste is scant. The grape seed in <1>, marrow/cucumber seed in sample <2> and ?caraway seeds in samples <1> and <3> could be evidence of food waste but they could also have floated in the river from unknown origins.

The plant remains in these samples were low enough in number to be wholly recorded at this stage. Unless it is necessary to establish concrete identifications for the marrow-cucumber seed and ?caraway seeds it is unlikely that further work on these samples would be beneficial.

#### **Concluding summary and key points**

Four samples were taken from river silts. Two samples were dated as post-medieval, one as ?medieval and one as Roman. Each sample produced plant remains from ruderal, aquatic and damp ground plants. A grape seed was found in the sample from Roman river silts and gravels <4>, a marrow/cucumber seed was found in the samples from post-medieval river silts <2> and possible caraway seeds were found in post-medieval river silts <1> and the sample from ?medieval river silt <3>. No further work is recommended on these samples.

## **7 Discussion**

This evaluation trench was located close to two other trenches excavated in 1999 – approximately 7m to the west of Trench 2 (1999 T2) and 9m to the south of Trench 1 (1999 T1) (CAT Report 42). A comparison of these three trenches shows definite similarities across the site (see Fig 3; the sections are laid out on the page according to ground level heights to allow for ease of comparison).

*Comparison with 1999 T1:* Layer L1 is associated with the building works that took place on the site subsequent to the 1999 evaluation. These works raised ground level and removed modern topsoil (1999 T1 context A). Layer L2 corresponds to context B, L3-L5 to contexts C-E (although we appear to have had later dating evidence from them), and Roman L6 with context F. In fact the height of 1999 T1 context F and L6 match to within 120mm.

*Comparison with 1999 T2:* Layer L1 is associated with the building works that took place on the site subsequent to the 1999 evaluation. These works raised ground level and removed modern topsoil and some of the post-medieval dump (1999 T1 contexts A-B). Layers L2-L4 broadly correspond to contexts B-D and L5 to context E, however the deeper the trenches the more apparent the differences, to the extent that Roman layer context F was identified 600mm deeper than layer L6.

The post-medieval dump layer is possibly associated with improvements of the river bank at North Bridge (recorded on a plaque on the bridge) (CAT Report 42). Material contained within the subsequent post-medieval and medieval river silts suggests that

domestic rubbish was being tipped on the river bank during these centuries. Medieval houses were identified during excavation on the west side of Middleborough (CAR 3, 109-209), and post-medieval buildings are shown all around Middleborough and North Bridge on both John Speed's 1610 map and Keymer's version of the 1648 plan of the Siege of Colchester (CAT Report 42).

Underneath these layers, horizon L6 (at 4.5m AOD) is the first definite Roman layer. As with later periods, it seems apparent that dumping rubbish on the river edge was a common occurrence, and much of this material probably derived from Roman buildings on the site of The Octagon (CAR 3). No evidence of the wooden piles and possible Roman wharf identified in 1999 T2 was exposed.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Homa Cherry and the Elysium Group for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by R Mathieson and N Rayner. Figures were prepared by CL, L Pooley and A Wade. The project was monitored for the CBCPS by Jess Tipper.

## 9 References

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

- |                     |       |   |
|---------------------|-------|---|
| Brown, D            | 2007  | <i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>  |
| CAR 3               | 1995  | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 3: Excavations at Lion Walk, Balterne Lane and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex</i> , by Philip Crummy                                      |
| CAR 7               | 2000  | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by John Cotter  |
| CAR 10              | 1999  | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 10: Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , by R Symonds and S Wade   |
| CAT                 | 2014  | <i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>   |
| CAT                 | 2016  | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a trenched archaeological evaluation at 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX</i>  |
| CAT Report 25       | 1998  | <i>An archaeological evaluation at St Peter's House, St Peter's Street, Colchester, in 1998</i>   |
| CAT Report 42       | 1999  | <i>An archaeological evaluation at the rear of Middleborough House (21 Middleborough), Colchester, in 1999</i>  |
| CAT Report 65       | 2000  | <i>Watching brief report: Quilters Public House, Middleborough, Colchester, Essex: March 2000</i>   |
| CBCAA               | 2016  | <i>Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation at 20 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX</i> by J Tipper   |
| ClfA                | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>   |
| ClfA                | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>   |
| Cunningham, C       | 1985  | 'A typology for post-Roman pottery in Essex' in Cunningham, C., & Drury, P., <i>Post-medieval sites and their pottery: Moulsham Street, Chelmsford</i> , CBA Research Report 54 |
| DCLG                | 2012  | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>   |
| English Heritage    | 2006  | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>   |
| Gurney, D           | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).   |
| Hawkes, C & Hull, M | 1947  | <i>Camulodunum, first report on the excavations at Colchester 1930-39</i> , RRCSAL 14   |
| Hull, M             | 1958  | <i>Roman Colchester</i> , RRCSAL 20   |
| Medlycott, M        | 2011  | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)                                 |

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CBM	brick/tile (ceramic building material)
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
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 AD 1800
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
Section	(abbreviation sc or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** ½ box

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1025)

CBCPS 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

## 12 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 Colchester Museum under accession code: COLEM 2016.100.

**Distribution list**

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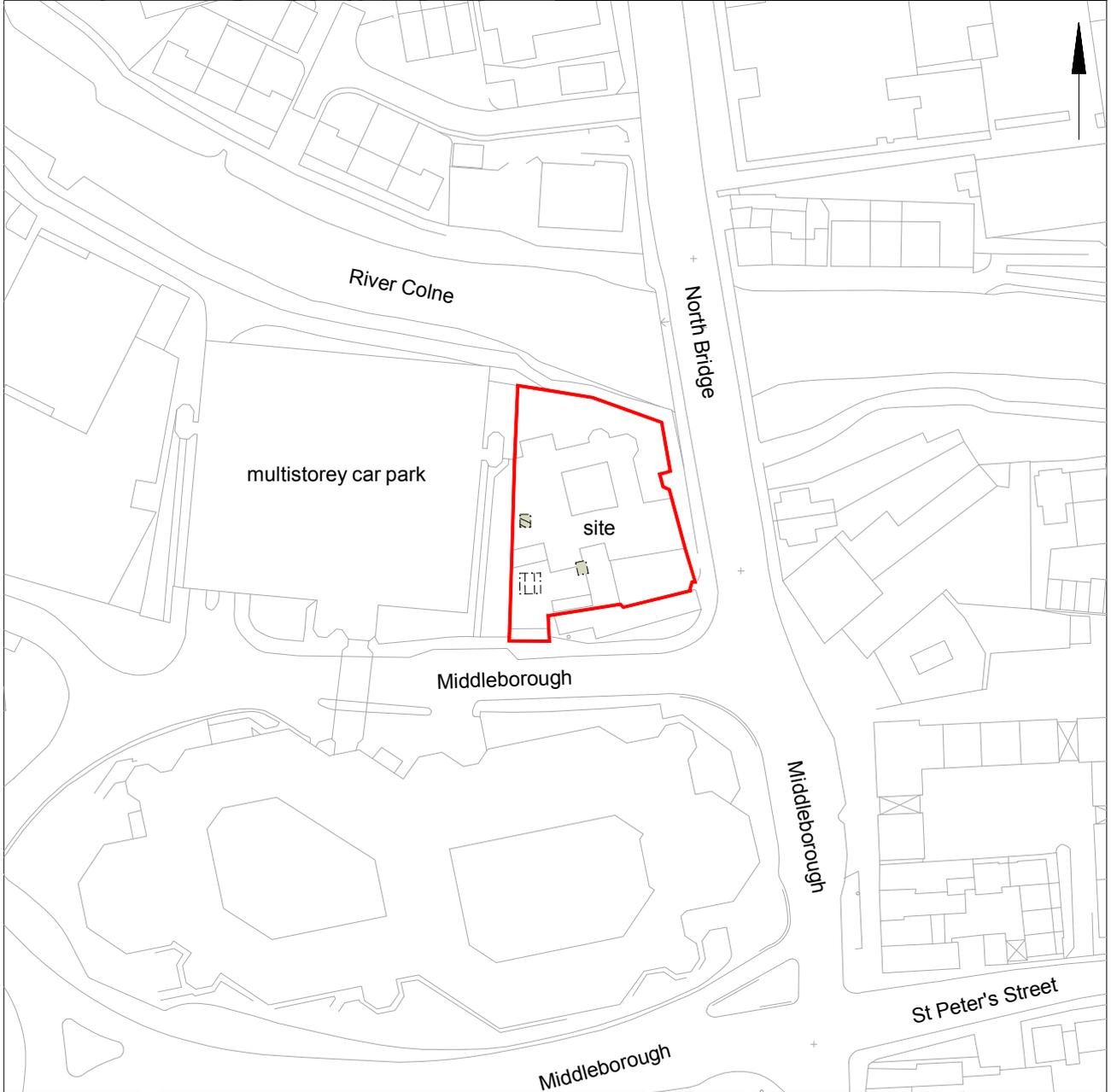
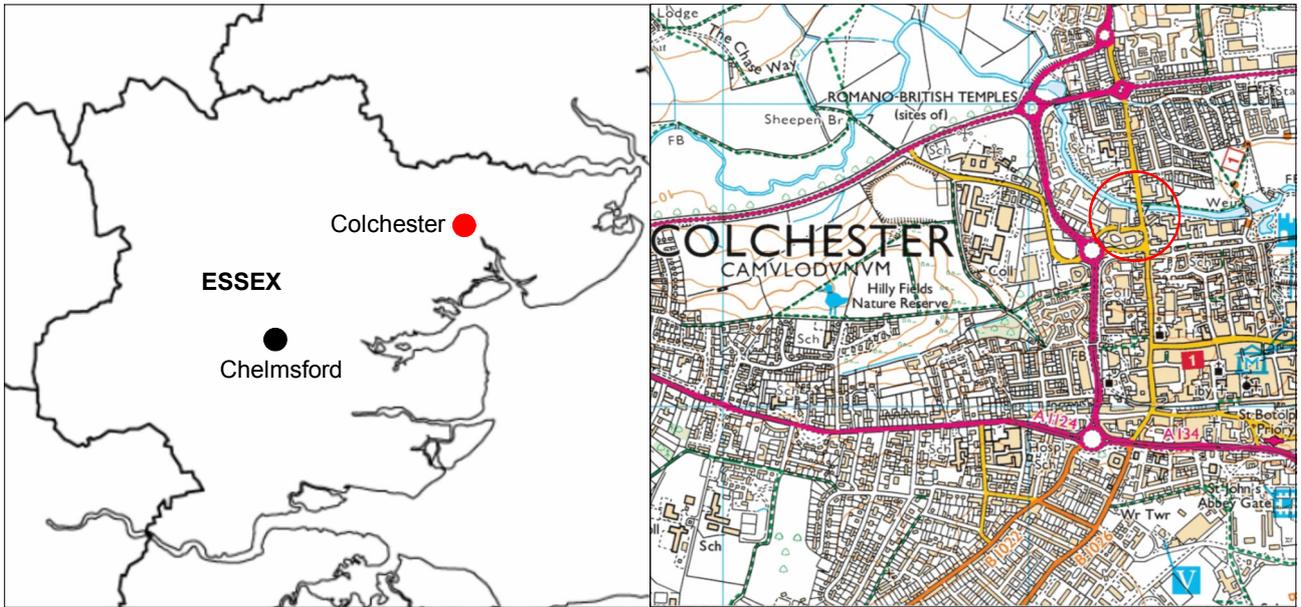
*Checked by:* Philip Crummy

*Date:* 3/11/2016

## Appendix 1 Environmental data

Sample		1	2	3	4
Finds No.		2	3	7	4
Layer		L3	L4	L5	L6
Feature type		Post-medieval river silts	Post-medieval river silts	?medieval river silts	Roman river silts and gravels
<b>Dried Waterlogged Plant Remains</b>					
<b>Ruderals</b>					
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i> L. (seed)	henbane	+	-	-	-
<i>Lamium</i> sp. (fruit)	deadnettle-type	-	+	-	+
<i>Carduus/Cirsium</i> sp. (fruit, pappus removed)	thistles	-	-	+	-
<i>Sambucus nigra</i> L. (fruit endocarp)	elderberry	+	+	+	+
<i>Aethusa cynapium</i> L. (fruit)	fool's parsley	+	-	+	-
<i>Fumaria officinalis</i> L. (fruit)	fumitory	-	+	-	-
<i>Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus</i> (fruit)	buttercups	-	+	+	-
<i>Cretaeus monogyna</i> Jacq. (seed)	hawthorn	-	-	-	+
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> (fruit)	bramble	-	+	+	+
<i>Prunus spinosa</i> L. (seed)	sloe	-	-	-	+
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L. (fruit)	stinging nettle	+	-	-	+
<i>Mercurialis perennis</i> L.	dog's mercury	-	-	-	+
<i>Lepidum coronopus</i> (L.)	swine-cress	+	-	-	-
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L. (fruit)	knotgrass	-	+	+	+
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.) A.Love (fruit)	black-bindweed	-	-	+	-
<i>Rumex acetosa/crispus/obtusifolius</i>	common/curled/broad-leaved dock	-	-	+	-
<i>Atriplex prostrata/patula</i> (fruit)	spear-leaved/common orache	-	-	-	-
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L. (fruit)	fat hen	-	-	+	+
<b>Aquatics/Damp Ground</b>					
<i>Potamogeton/Groenlandia</i> sp. (fruit endocarp)	pondweed	-	+	+	-
<i>Juncus</i> sp. (seed)	rush	+	-	-	-
<i>Carex</i> sp. (lenticular fruit)	sedge	-	+	-	-
<i>Carex</i> sp. (trigynous fruit)	sedge	-	-	+	-
<i>Schoenoplectus</i> sp. (fruit)	club-rush	+	+	+	-
<i>Ranunculus</i> subgen. <i>Batrachium</i> (DC)A (fruit)	crowfoot type	-	+	-	-
<i>Ranunculus sceleratus</i> L. (fruit)	celery-leaved crowfoot	+	-	-	+
<i>Lycopus europaeus</i> L. (fruit)	gypsywort	+	-	-	-
<i>Alnus glutinosa</i> (L.) Gaertn (fruit)	alder	+	-	-	-
<i>Lemna</i> sp. (fruit)	duckweed	+	-	-	-
<i>Persicaria lapathifolia</i> (L.) Delarbre (fruit)	pale persicaria	-	-	-	+
<b>Possible food plants</b>					
? <i>Carum carvi</i> L. (fruit)	?caraway	+	-	++	-
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L. (seed)	grape	-	-	-	+
<i>Cucurbita/Cucumis</i> sp. (seed)	marrow/cucumber	-	+	-	-
<b>Other plant macrofossils</b>					
Charcoal <4mmØ		-	+	+	-
Charred Plant Tissue		+	-	-	-
Uncharred root/rhizome fragments		-	++	+	-
Uncharred Bryophyta		+	-	-	-
Uncharred wood fragments		-	-	+	+++
Bud		-	-	-	+
<b>Fauna</b>					
Fresh water mollusca		+	++	+++	++
Terrestrial mollusca		-	++	-	++
<i>Ostrea edulis</i> (fragments)		+	+	-	-
Earthworm cocoon		+	-	+	+
Beetle fragments		-	-	+	++
<b>Inorganic</b>					
Spheroidal hammer scale		1	-	-	-
Sample Volume (litres)		30	30	30	30
Volume processed (litres)		30	30	30	30
Volume of flot (litres)		0.015	0.05	0.075	0.

Key - + =1-10, ++=11-50, +++=51-150, ++++=151-250, +++++=&gt;250



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Fig 1 Site location.



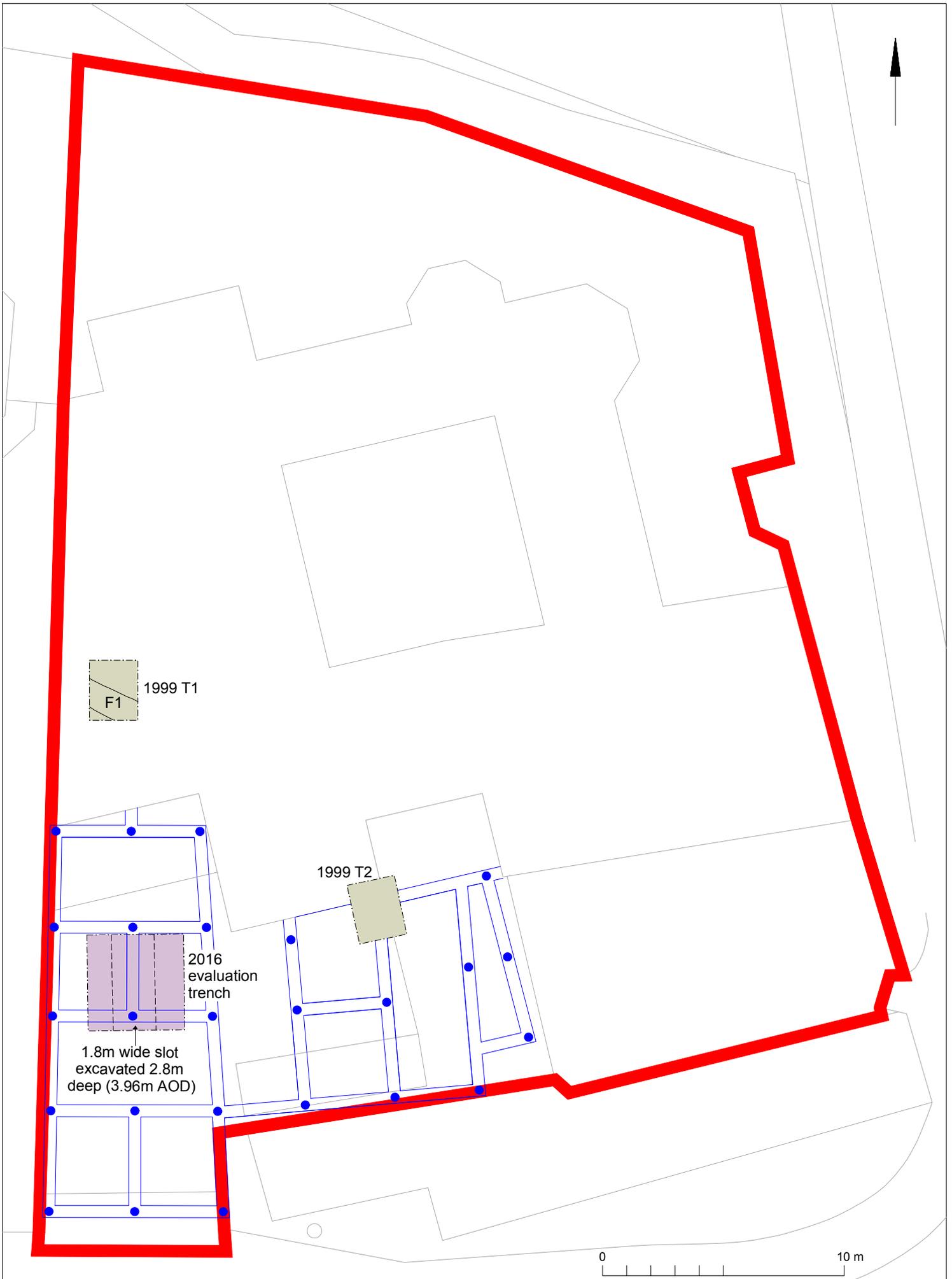


Fig 2 Results showing location of 1999 evaluation trenches and proposed development (in blue) including piling plan

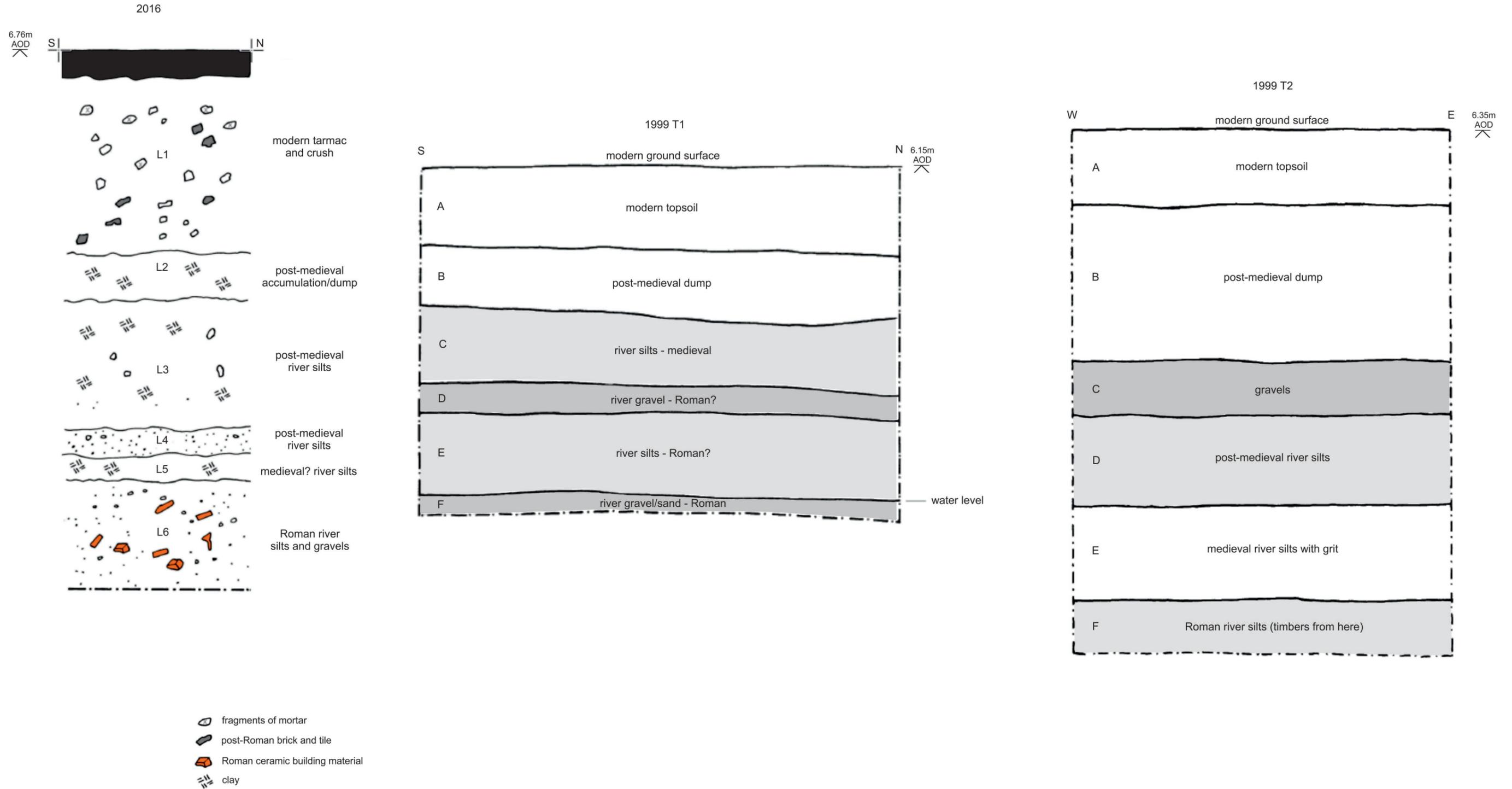


Fig 3 Representative section of 2016 trench in comparison to the 1999 evaluation trenches.

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 99346 25611 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project ref.: 16/09h UAD ref: ECC3883 OASIS ref: colchest3-263929
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 5th October 2016	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> one trench 4mx4m (16m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2016.100	<b>Funding source:</b> Owner
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Not known	<b>Related UAD/SMR number:</b>
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 1025	
<b>Periods represented:</b> modern, post-medieval, medieval and Roman	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester in advance of the construction of a ground floor extension to the restaurant. The development site is located in a suburb of the Roman and medieval town close to the River Colne. The evaluation revealed modern soils (L1, 0-1.05m), post-medieval dump (L2, 1.05-1.31m), medieval/post-medieval river silts and gravels (L3-L5, 1.31m-2.24m, starting at 5.45m AOD), and Roman river silts (L6, starting at 2.24m deep, 4.5m AOD). Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds in the river silts were probably derived from centuries of dumping rubbish on the river edge.</p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> CAT Report 42	
<b>CBC monitor:</b> Jess Tipper	
<b>Keywords:</b> –	<b>Significance:</b> *
<b>Author of summary:</b> Laura Pooley	<b>Date of summary:</b> November 2016

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)  
for a trenched archaeological evaluation at  
20-22 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX

**NGR:** TL 99346 25611 (centre)

**Planning reference:** 152797

**Commissioned by:** Homa Cherry

**Client:** Elysium Group

**Curating Museum:** Colchester

**Museum accession code:** TBC

**CHER number:** TBC

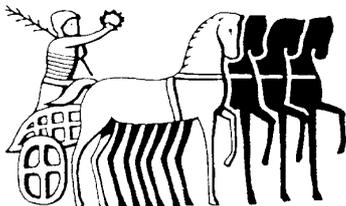
**CAT Project code:** 16/09h

**OASIS Project ID:** colchest3-263929

**Site Manager:** Ben Holloway

**CBC Monitor:** Jess Tipper

**This WSI written:** 27.09.2016



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Roman Circus House,  
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tel: 01206 501785  
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## Site location and description

The proposed development site lies immediately to the north of Colchester town centre (Fig 1) at The Riverlodge restaurant, located on land between North Station Road, the River Colne and the Middleborough multi-storey car park. The site is centred on NGR TL 99346 25611.

## Proposed work

The development comprises an extension to the ground floor restaurant adjacent to and adjoining the listed building.

## Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive, the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) and the Essex Historic Environment Record accessed via the Heritage Gateway:

The development site is located in a known suburb of the Roman and medieval town of Colchester. During excavations in 1978-9 on the site of the Royal London Insurance building (now The Octagon) (directly to the south of the site), evidence of several Roman houses, some with mosaic and tessellated floors and one with a hypocaust, were observed. There was also a Roman gravel road, timber wells, and kilns of Roman and medieval date (CAR 3, 155-209).

Local archaeological evaluations and excavations have shown that there is a considerable amount of variation in the depths and dates of archaeological deposits near the river. Trial-trenches in 1978 on the site of the multi-storey car park (20m west) revealed a sandwich of post-medieval dumped soil layers and river silts (*ibid*). The highest river silt was at 1.4m below contemporary ground-level (5.3m AOD), below which was layer of post-medieval dumped soil at 1.75m below contemporary ground-level (at 4.95m AOD), and below this were more river silts (down to 2.45 below contemporary ground-level to 4.25m AOD).

During an evaluation on a riverside development at St Peter's House in 1998 (150m east), a great depth of deposits were observed (CAT Report 25). Closer to the riverside, Roman deposits were seen at 2.3m below contemporary ground-level (at 3.9m AOD) and further back at 2.3m (at 4.0m AOD), above which was a 1.2m-thick dumped Roman gravel bank.

An evaluation (CAT Report 42) on the development site in 1999 revealed dumped soils sealing archaeological deposits at depths between 1.8m and 2.0m below contemporary ground-level (4.35-4.15m AOD). These deposits consisted of archaeological finds mixed in with riverside silts and gravels, and date between the later Roman period and the 16th century. Finds were plentiful and included medieval leather fragments, Roman pottery and tile, and two large timber pieces which may have been of Roman date. The subsequent watching brief in 2000 yielded only negative results as the concrete footings had been poured before observations could be made (CAT Report 65).

Numbers 20 Bridge House and 21 The Moorings are listed as a 17th-century brick house (NHLE no. 1123560).

## Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in December 2015 (application no. 152797) proposing an extension to the ground floor restaurant adjacent to and adjoining the listed building, with non-structural internal alterations to the listed building and repairs of its external features.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER / CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). This recommendation was for an

archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and was based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

### **Requirement for work**

The required archaeological work is for archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2016).

Specifically, a single trial-trench, 4m by 4m will be excavated to cover the area of the proposed extension (Fig 1).

The trial-trenching is required to:

- Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

The CBCAA may decide that further evaluation is required if unusual deposits or other archaeological finds of significance are recovered. This would be the subject of an additional brief.

### **General methodology**

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a-c)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- Required standards of fieldwork in Colchester Borough (CM 2008a, b)
- Relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- The Project Brief issued by CBCAA (CBC 2016)

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to CBCAA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

A project or site code will be sought from the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the finds bags and boxes, and the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

### **Staffing**

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: one supervisor and one archaeologist for one day.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway.

### **Evaluation methodology**

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket under the supervision of an archaeologist.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, these will be excavated by hand, planned and recorded. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) in 1m sections where this is possible.

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used to examine the site, spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

Samples will be taken based on the strategy requested by CBCAA (see 'Environmental Sampling Policy' below)

### **Site surveying**

The evaluation trench and any features will be surveyed by Total Station, unless the particulars of the features indicate that manual planning techniques should be employed. Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas will be located by NGR coordinates.

### **Environmental sampling policy**

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphological and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough)

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer (Loddon) whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Val Fryer will do any processing and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

### **Human remains**

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure. As the requirement for work is for full excavation any human remains encountered on the site will be subject to the following criteria: if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Ministry of Justice for a licence to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and CBCAA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

## **Photographic record**

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

## **Finds**

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

animal bones (small groups): Pip Parmenter

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Pip Parmenter

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer (Loddon)

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey

Other: Historic England Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to CBCAA.

## **Post-excavation assessment**

Once fieldwork has finished the need for a post-excavation assessment will be discussed and agreed with CBCAA.

If a post-excavation assessment is required by CBCAA, it will be normally be submitted within 2 months of the end of fieldwork, or as quickly as is reasonably practicable and at a time agreed with CBCAA. It will be a clear and concise assessment of the archaeological value and significance of the results, and will identify the research potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework. It will include an Updated Project Design, with a timetable, for analysis, dissemination and archive deposition.

Where archaeological results do not warrant a post-excavation assessment, preparation of the normal site report will begin.

## Results

Notification will be given to CBCAA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAA as a PDF.

The report will contain:

- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the archaeological project.
- Location plan of the excavation area in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of the area will be given 10 figure grid references.
- A section drawing showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale (if this can be safely done)
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and supplied to CBCAA.

Results will be published, to at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series

## Archive deposition

It is a policy of Colchester Borough Council that the integrity of the site archive be maintained (i.e. all finds and records should be properly curated by a single organisation), with the archive available for public consultation. To achieve this desired aim it is assumed that the full archive will be deposited in Colchester Museums *unless otherwise agreed in advance*. (A full copy of the archive shall in any case be deposited).

**By accepting this WSI, the client agrees to deposit the archive, including all artefacts, at Colchester & Ipswich Museum.**

The requirements for archive storage will be agreed with the curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAA.

## Monitoring

CBCAA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to CBCAA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with CBCAA prior to them being carried out. CBCAA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of CBCAA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

## References

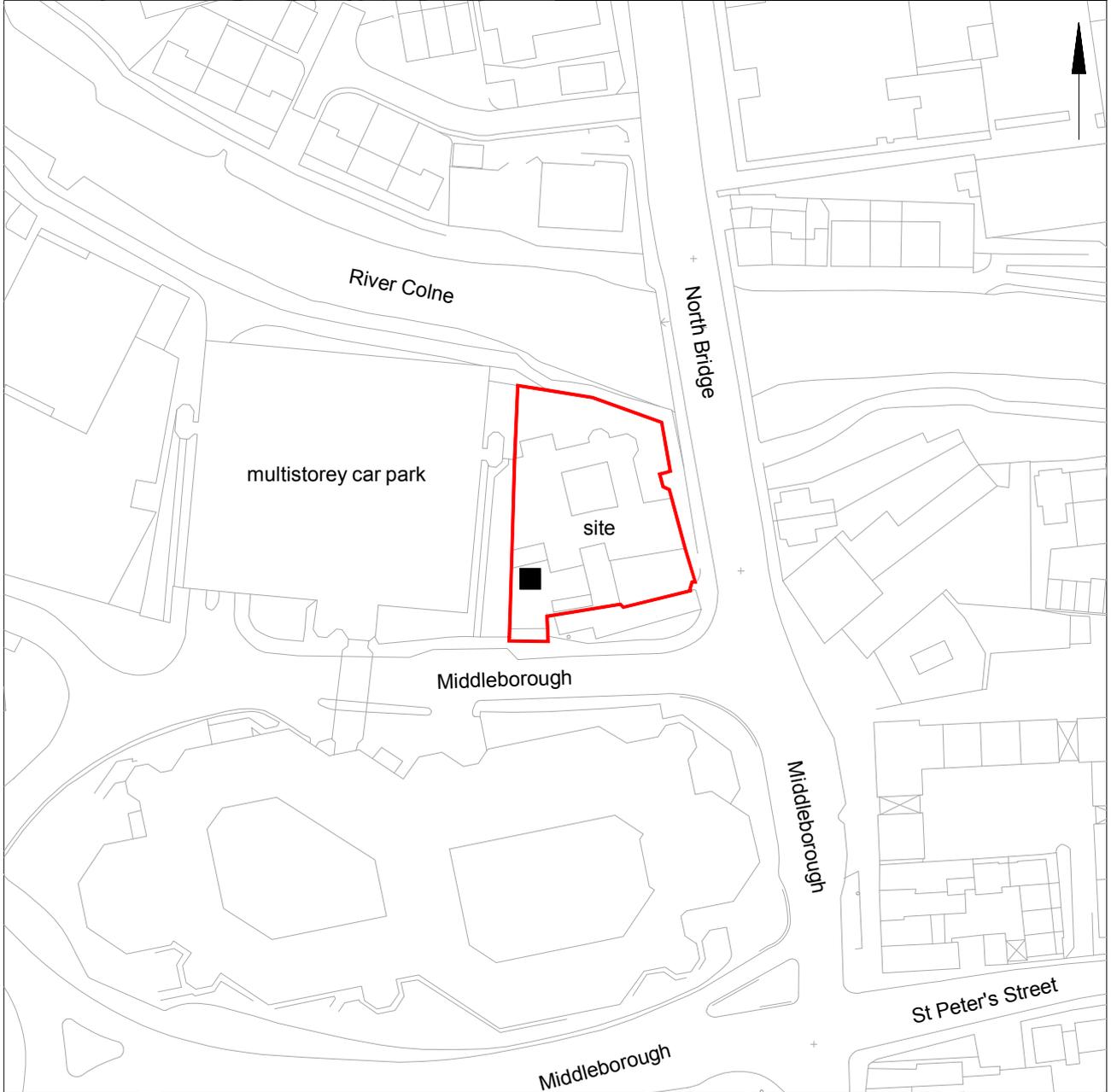
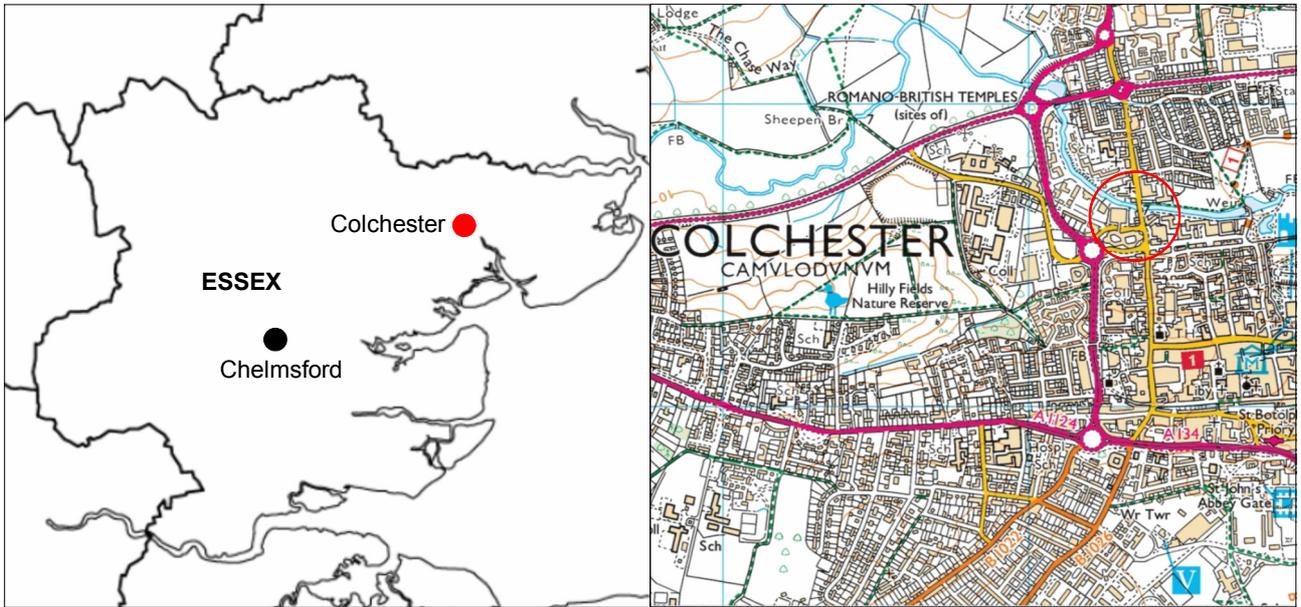
CAR 3	1995	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 3: Excavations at Lion Walk, Balcerne Lane and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, by Philip Crummy</i>
CAT Report 25	1998	<i>An archaeological evaluation at St Peter's House, St Peter's Street, Colchester, in 1998</i>
CAT Report 42	1999	<i>An archaeological evaluation at the rear of Middleborough House (21 Middleborough), Colchester, in 1999</i>
CAT Report 65	2000	<i>Watching brief report: Quilters Public House, Middleborough, Colchester, Essex: March 2000</i>
CBCAA	2016	<i>Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation at 20 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX by J Tipper</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i>
ClfA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)</i>

L Pooley



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Fig 1 Site location.



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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: colchest3-263929**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at 20-22 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation was carried out at 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester in advance of the construction of a ground floor extension to the restaurant. The development site is located in a suburb of the Roman and medieval town close to the River Colne. The evaluation revealed modern soils (L1, 0-1.05m), post-medieval dump (L2, 1.05-1.31m), medieval/post-medieval river silts and gravels (L3-L5, 1.31m-2.24m, starting at 5.45m AOD), and Roman river silts (L6, starting at 2.24m deep, 4.5m AOD). Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds in the river silts were probably derived from centuries of dumping rubbish on the river edge.
Project dates	Start: 05-10-2016 End: 05-10-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	16/09h - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	152797 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2016.100 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	ECC3883 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Roman
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	GLASS Roman
Significant Finds	LEATHER Post Medieval
Significant Finds	WOOD Post Medieval
Significant Finds	HUMAN REMAINS Uncertain

Methods & techniques "Sample Trenches"

Development type Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process Not known / Not recorded

### Project location

Country England

Site location ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER 20-22 Middleborough

Postcode CO1 1QX

Study area 16 Square metres

Site coordinates TL 99346 25611 51.892819388886 0.897444906337 51 53 34 N 000 53 50 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation Colchester Archaeological Trust

Project brief originator CBC Archaeological Officer

Project design originator Laura Pooley

Project director/manager Chris Lister

Project supervisor Nigel Rayner

Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Colchester Museum

Physical Archive ID COLEM: 2016.100

Physical Contents "Ceramics","Human Bones","Leather","Worked stone/lithics"

Digital Archive recipient Colchester Museum

Digital Archive ID COLEM: 2016.100

Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey"

Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum

Paper Archive ID COLEM: 2016.100

Paper Media available "Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title Archaeological evaluation at 20-21 Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1QX: October 2016

Author(s)/Editor(s) Pooley, L.  
Other bibliographic details CAT Report 1025  
Date 2016  
Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust  
Place of issue or publication Colchester  
Description A4 ringbound loose leaf  
URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html>

Entered by Laura Pooley (lp@catuk.org)  
Entered on 24 October 2016

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