

# Archaeological evaluation at Hill Farm, Boxted Cross, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5RD

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**on behalf of Joe Jackson, Thomas Bates & Son Ltd**

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (18 trial-trenches) was carried out at Hill Farm, Boxted Cross, Essex during pre-application work for the construction of residential dwellings. The development site is located close to a number of prehistoric cropmarks and field systems, including the Boxted 'henge'. Evaluation revealed a possible prehistoric field boundary running NE/SW across the site, a possible medieval pit, a post-medieval (16th-17th century) ditch and brick foundation, a number of undated ditches, pits and postholes, and several modern features.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation at Hill Farm, Boxted Cross, Essex which was carried out on the 5th-12th December 2016. The work was commissioned by Joe Jackson, on behalf of Thomas Bates & Son Ltd, during pre-application work for the construction of residential dwellings, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT). Robert Masefield of RPS provided archaeological consultancy and attended site meetings on behalf of the client.

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 an Archaeological Trial-Trenched 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* (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 draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

An archaeological desk-based assessment for the development site was carried out in 2014 (CAT Report 796, by Howard Brooks). The following is a summary taken from that report:

*There are no archaeological remains or other heritage assets within the Application Site.*

*However, the modern village of Boxted Cross lies within a prehistoric landscape. The evidence for this consists of archaeological 'cropmarks' including a 'henge' (ceremonial Neolithic site 400m NE of the Application Site). Other cropmarks include field ditches and droveways. An archaeological evaluation carried out prior to the building of St Peter's School (immediately east of the Application Site) intercepted two of the cropmarks and showed that they were part of an Iron Age field system dating to approximately 700-200 BC. Prehistoric flints*

*collected during a watching brief on a pipeline west of Carters Hill are further evidence for prehistoric activity in Boxted.*

*Other nearby heritage assets include a now-demolished WWII spigot mortar, and four groups of listed buildings, the most important of which is the early medieval hall-house Songers on Cage Lane. None of the listed buildings will be affected by this development.*

*The prehistoric ditches on the St Peter's School site may continue into the Application Site.*

For full details of the archaeological remains in the area see CAT Report 796. For details of other archaeological fieldwork carried out in the vicinity see CAT Report 175 and Crossan 1992.

#### **4 Results** (Figs 2-6)

Eighteen trenches were laid out across the development site and machine excavated under archaeological supervision. Seventeen trenches measured 30m long by 1.8m wide with one (T14) measuring 20m long by 1.8m wide (totalling 530m linear or 954m<sup>2</sup>).

Trenches T1-T11 and T13 were excavated through c 100-600mm of modern tarmac/concrete and crush onto a sandy-silt subsoil (L2, c 150-600mm thick) which sealed natural sands (L3). Trenches T12 and T14-T18 were excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 110-340mm thick) onto L2 (c 110-590mm thick) which sealed natural sands (L3).

The following trenches contained no significant archaeological features or horizons: T5, T7 (modern services), T11 (tree-throw F10), T13 (modern services), T14 (modern services), T15, T16 (modern services), T18 (tree-throws F2-F3).



**Photograph 1** T3, looking W

**Trench 1 (T1):** Undated ditch terminal F12 was aligned NE/SW and measured 0.52m wide by 0.12m deep.

**Trench 2 (T2):** Modern ditch F18 was aligned E/W. It was cut by modern posthole F17, which formed a roughly N/S line with modern postholes F19-F20. Features F18 and F20 both contained modern pottery, CBM and glass with postholes F17, F19 and F20 containing the remains of modern wooden posts. Further to the north were undated, but probably modern, pit F21, posthole F22 and tree-throw F23.

**Trench 3 (T3):** Undated ditch F16 was aligned NW/SE and measured 0.78m wide by 0.14m deep. It continued to the SE as ditch F14 in T8. Undated ditch F29 was aligned roughly E/W and measured 0.67m wide by 0.14m deep. The relationship between F29 and pit F30 could not be determined. The pit contained a single sherd of abraded medieval (13th-14th century) pottery which may be contemporary or the result of later manuring. The remains of foundation F31, constructed with bricks of a 17th-18th century date, were also identified in the section edge of the trench.

**Trench 4 (T4):** Undated ditch F9 measured 1.2m wide by 0.13m deep. It appeared to curve slightly from a NE/SW alignment to more of a ENE direction. Modern ditch F13, containing a length of iron chain link, was also excavated.



**Photograph 2** T9, looking NE

**Trench 6 (T6):** Undated ditch F24 and possible later prehistoric ditch F27 were aligned NE/SW. They both terminated within the trench creating an opening 0.2m wide. Ditch F24 measured 0.84m wide by 0.22m deep, and F27 0.24m deep. Undated pits F25 and F26 were excavated between the ditch terminals, although pit F25 did contain three fragments of slag. Undated feature F28 may be a similar pit, or could possibly be a ditch terminal. If it is a ditch does it continue to the SW as post-medieval ditch F1 in T17 (see Fig 2)?

**Trench 8 (T8):** Undated ditch F14 was aligned NW/SE and measured 0.94m wide by 0.17m deep. It continued to the NW as ditch F16 in T3. The alignment is approximately perpendicular to ditch F24/F27 in T6 and it is possible that these alignments are contemporary elements of a former landscape. This landscape is on a differing alignment to that of the post-medieval and modern periods.

**Trench 9 (T9):** V-shaped ditch F15 was aligned N/S measured 0.87m wide by 0.29m deep. It contained a single sherd of abraded Roman pottery which may be contemporary or the result of later manuring.

**Trench 10 (T10):** Undated ditch F8 was aligned NE/SW and measured 0.87m wide by 0.19m deep. Further to the north were tree-throw F7 and undated posthole F11.

**Trench 12 (T12):** Modern pits F4 and F5, and medieval/post-medieval pit F6 were excavated.

**Trench 17 (T17):** Post-medieval ditch F1 was aligned NW/SE and measured 0.96m wide by 0.18m deep. It may have continue to the north as F28 in T6 but this is a very tentative interpretation.



**Photograph 3** T6, F24-F27, looking W

## 5 Finds

All of the finds are listed in Table 1 below. The pottery was identified by Stephen Benfield and the flint by Adam Wightman. Pottery fabrics referred to broadly follow *CAR 10* (Roman pottery) and *CAR 7* (post-Roman pottery). Dating evidence is sparse across the whole site, and most of the earlier (Roman and medieval) pottery is represented by small, abraded sherds that may have been deposited in later features during manuring.

Context	Description	Date
T17, F1 (1)	<b>Post-medieval pottery:</b> sherd (68g) of a German stoneware	16th-mid 17th

	jug, possibly Cologne, Fabric 45E, 16th-mid 17th century	century
T12, F4 (4)	<b>Flint:</b> retouched blade with abrupt retouch along left lateral on dorsal face (could be retouched scraper or 'backing'), two retouched notches on right lateral edge, one on dorsal face and one on lateral face, probably early Neolithic	Early Neolithic
T12, F6 (5)	<b>CBM:</b> brick fragment (1:28g), medieval-post-medieval	Medieval / post-medieval
T4, F13 (8)	<b>Iron:</b> length of three joined iron chain links (306g), 250mm long, probably modern agricultural	Modern
T9, F15 (10)	<b>Pottery:</b> very abraded sherd (58g), possibly Roman, Fabric HZ from a large jar	?Roman
T2, F18 (12)	<b>Pottery:</b> sherd (16g) of Colchester-type ware, Fabric 21A, 13th-15th century; sherd (4g) of Staffordshire-type white earthenware, Fabric 48D, 19th-20th century <b>CBM:</b> fragment of London stock brick (1: 872g), 113mm wide, 53mm deep, late 18th to first half of 20th century. <b>Post-medieval/modern glass:</b> fragment of olive green bottle glass (1: 8g)	19th-20th century
T2, F20 (13)	<b>Pottery:</b> sherd (1g) of late slipped kitchenware, Fabric 51A, 19th-early 20th century <b>CBM:</b> Peg-tile (1: 180g), 12mm thick; brick fragments(2: 22g); probably modern	19th-early 20th century
T6, F25, (14)	<b>Slag:</b> three joining fragments (216g), lightly magnetic	-
T6, F27 (15)	<b>Flint:</b> small tertiary flake with evidence of usewear/edge damage, <1g	Later prehistoric
T3, F30 (20)	<b>Pottery:</b> sherd in two pieces (6g) of abraded medieval greyware, Fabric 20, 13th-14th century	13th-14th century
T3, F31 (21)	<b>Bricks:</b> two complete bricks, 218mm by 100mm by 50mm; dark red fabric, covered in mortar on all faces; late 17th to early 18th century	Late 17th to early 18th century
L2 (3)	<b>Pottery:</b> sherd (8g) of medieval sandy oxidised ware, Fabric 21, 13th-14th/15th century	13th-14th/15th century

**Table 1** All finds by context

## 6 Environmental report

by Lisa Gray, Archaeobotanist

### Introduction – aims and objectives

These samples were taken during a trial-trenching evaluation that revealed a number of ditches, pits and posthole dating from the later prehistoric to the post-medieval period.

### Sampling and processing methods

Samples were taken and processed by Colchester Archaeological Trust. All samples 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 hammerscale.

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). Latin names are given once and the common names used thereafter. Low numbers of non-charcoal charred plant macro-remains were counted. Uncharred plant remains, fauna and magnetic fragments were given estimated levels of abundance unless, in the case of seeds, numbers are very low in which case they were counted.

### **Results (Appendix 3)**

#### ***The plant remains***

Charred wood flecks too small to identify were the most frequent plant macro-remains in these samples. Sample 4 contained fragments of identifiable size. Samples 5 and 7 contained one twig fragment each.

Samples 1, 2, 3, 4 and 7 contained no other charred plant remains. Sample 6 (?later prehistoric ditch F27) contained one possible emmer (*Triticum cf. dicocum*) grain. Sample 7 (undated ditch/pit F28) contained seven stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) seeds. Stinking mayweed is a common weed seed in charred assemblages in Eastern England, most commonly in the Roman period when the cultivation of marginal clay-rich soils has been suggested (Park 2012, 41).

Uncharred/dried waterlogged seeds of segetal and ruderal plants were present in low numbers in each sample. Seeds of duckweed (*Lemna* sp.) were in samples 5 and 6, both taken from ditches so there is a suggestion that standing water was present in these features. These were all of plants of disturbed habitats and may be intrusive as uncharred root/rhizome fragments were also frequent in this sample.

#### ***Faunal remains***

Earthworm cocoons were present in low numbers in sample <1>. Low numbers of terrestrial mollusca were found in sample <4>

#### ***Inorganic remains***

No inorganic remains were found in these samples.

### **Discussion**

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

Nothing with regards biases in recovery, residuality or contamination was highlighted for any of these samples.

On microscopic examination of was clear that bioturbation was likely due to the presence of root/rhizome fragments, terrestrial mollusca and earthworm cocoons.

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

It is likely that given the frequency of uncharred root/rhizome fragments, the uncharred/dried waterlogged plant macro-remains are intrusive.

Only samples 5, 6, and 7 contain charred plant remains other than charred wood and for each of these the amount of charred plant remains is less than half an item per litre of sampled soil. With such low numbers it is possible that these items are general background waste rather than evidence of feature function at a definite period. It is not wise to assume that the context in which the plant macro-remain was found during excavation was the context in which it was originally deposited, especially when the preservation of the plant remain is poor, numbers are very low relative to the amount of soil sampled and there is evidence of bioturbation, truncation or backfilling. At this site evidence for bioturbation was present in the form of modern root/rhizome fragments.

A recent study of intrusion and residuality in the archaeobotanical record for central and southern England (Pelling *et al.* 2015) has highlighted the problem of assigning charred plant remains such as these to the dated contexts they were taken from because it is

possible that these durable charred plant remains survived being moved between contexts by human action and bioturbation so cannot be properly interpreted unless radiocarbon dates are gained from the plant macro-remains themselves. That is the only way to secure a genuine date for the charred plant macro-remains like these (Pelling *et al.* 2015, 96).

Therefore, it is not recommended that further work is carried out on the plant remains in these samples.

## 7 Discussion

Aside from a number of modern services, ditches, pits, postholes and five undated tree-throws, evaluation at Hill Farm produced ten ditches, five pits, a pit or ditch terminal and two postholes. Unfortunately dating evidence was sparse, with most of the early pottery being small, abraded pieces which may have been deposited in later features.

### Prehistoric and cropmarks

A residual early Neolithic flint blade (from modern pit F4) and a later prehistoric flint flake from ditch F27 were the only prehistoric finds recorded on the site. If the flake is contemporary with F27 (and by association ditch F24) then a later prehistoric field boundary was aligned NE/SW across the site. It is possible that this ditch is a continuation of either of two Iron Age ditches identified immediately to the east of the site during an archaeological evaluation in 2002 before the primary school was built (CAT Report 175). One of these two ditches was probably also the northernmost plotted cropmark from the primary school site (see cropmarks on Fig 1). The southernmost cropmark (see Fig 1) was not identified in any of the five 2002 evaluation trenches and no trace of it was apparent during the current evaluation. Furthermore, ditch F16 in T3 and F18 in T8 is approximately perpendicular to ditch F24/F27 and it is possible that they form part of a contemporary field system.

Flint cores, flakes and blades were also recorded during a 1992 watching brief to the north of the development site (Crossan 1992). Dating from the Neolithic and Bronze Ages they show activity in the Parsonage Hill area which may have been connected to the Boxted Henge, 400m to the NE of the current site, which (although unexcavated) is likely to be a ceremonial site contemporary with some of the Parsonage Hill flints.

### Roman

A single, but very abraded, Roman pottery sherd was identified in ditch F15. It is not clear whether the sherd is contemporary with the ditch, however. The desk-based assessment of the development site revealed no Roman remains or finds from the search area and there are no known Roman roads or villas nearby (CAT Report 769). This would suggest that the pottery sherd is the result of manuring or general farmyard waste, and that the ditch is probably of a later date.

### Medieval

Similarly, a single, abraded medieval pottery sherd (13th-14th century) was identified in pit F30. Whether this is a medieval pit or a residual pottery sherd is unclear. The pit had certainly been disturbed by later, modern activity. The only other medieval remains identified nearby were medieval pottery sherds picked up along Carters Hill during the 1992 watching brief (Crossan 1992) and two residual sherds identified during the evaluation.

### Post-medieval

Post-medieval (16-17th century) ditch F1 may have been associated with a building located on the site on Chapman and André's map of 1777 (Map 1, lower blue arrow). Brick foundation F31 in T3, dating from the late 17th to the early 18th century, is likely to be related to buildings on the northern edge of the development site (Map 1, upper blue arrow).



**Map 1** Chapman and André's map of 1777

### Modern

Early OS maps of Boxted Cross show a pond with drainage ditch to the west of Hill House Farm. This pond was located around evaluation trench T2, and F18 in T2 and possibly F13 in T4 are the likely remains of this drainage ditch (although no trace of a ditch was identified in T5).



**Map 2** 1896 OS map showing Hill House Farm, the pond and drainage ditch, and the empty field which covers most of the development site

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Joe Jackson and Thomas Bates & Sons commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by B Holloway with M Baister, S Carter, J Roberts, N Rayner and A Wade. Figures were prepared by BH and A Wade. The project was monitored for the CBCPS by Jess Tipper and by Robert Masfield of RPS for Thomas Bates & Sons.

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

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| CIfA  | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i>  |
| CIfA  | 2014c | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>   |
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## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CBM	ceramic building material, ie brick/tile
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record (previously UAD, <b>Urban Archaeological Database</b> )
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'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
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
Neolithic	period from c 4000 – 2500 BC
Neolithic (Early-Middle)	Early-Middle Neolithic, period from c 4000 – 2900 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> ccess to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to c AD 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
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 sx or SX) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** none retained

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1049)

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 2016.115.

**Distribution list**

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**Appendix 1 Context list**

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Feature No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
T17	F1	Ditch	Soft, moist, light grey/brown sandy-silt with 2% stone	16th-mid 17th century
T18	F2	Tree-throw	Firm, dry, medium grey/brown silt with occasional stone	undated
T18	F3	Tree-throw	Firm, dry, medium grey/brown silt with occasional stone	undated
T12	F4	Pit	Firm, moist, mottled orange/grey sandy-silt with occasional charcoal, 3% stone and 2% tile/brick; containing modern brick, roofing felt and concrete (not retained)	Modern
T12	F5	Posthole	Firm, dry, light-medium grey/brown silt with <2% stone	Modern
T12	F6	Pit	Soft, dry, dark brown silt with <2% stone	Medieval / post-medieval
T10	F7	Tree-throw	Very soft, moist, light grey/brown sandy-silt with 5% stone	undated
T10	F8	Ditch	Soft, moist, medium orange/brown sandy-silt with <1% stone	undated
T4	F9	Ditch	Soft, moist, light grey/brown sandy-silt with 7% stone	undated
T11	F10	Tree-throw	Firm, moist, dark brown silt with charcoal flecks and occasional stone sealing friable, hard, moist, light orange/grey sandy-clay	undated
T10	F11	Posthole?	Firm, light grey/brown silt	undated
T1	F12	Ditch	Firm, moist, light grey/brown sandy-silt	undated
T4	F13	Ditch	Soft, moist, light grey/brown sandy-silt with charcoal and brick flecks, 2% stone	Modern
T8	F14	Ditch	Firm, moist, medium grey/brown sandy-silt	undated
T9	F15	Ditch	Soft, light, orange/grey/brown sandy-silt with <3% stone	?Roman
T3	F16	Ditch	Soft, moist, light grey/brown sandy-silt with charcoal and daub flecks, 1% stone	undated
T2	F17	Posthole	Soft, moist, medium grey/brown silt with flecks with brick/tile and occasional stone/gravel	Modern
T2	F18	Ditch	Soft, moist, dark brown silt with flecks of brick/tile and charcoal, common stones	Modern
T2	F19	Posthole	Soft, moist, dark grey/brown silt with flecks of brick/tile and occasional stone	Modern
T2	F20	Posthole	Soft, moist, dark brown/black silt flecks of brick/tile and charcoal, common stone	Modern
T2	F21	Posthole	Soft, moist, light-medium, mottled grey/brown silt with occasional stone	undated
T2	F22	Pit	Soft, friable, dark brown sandy-silt with common stone/gravel	undated
T2	F23	Tree-throw	Loose, soft, moist, light grey/brown sandy-silt with occasional stone	undated
T6	F24	Ditch	Soft, medium grey/brown sandy-silt with <3% stone	undated
T6	F25	Pit	Soft, light-medium, mottled orange/grey/brown	undated

			sandy-silt with rare charcoal flecks and <3% stone	
T6	F26	Pit?	Light-medium grey/brown with mottled pale orange sandy-silt, <1% stone	undated
T6	F27	Ditch	Soft, grey/brown with mottled orange sandy-silt, <2% stone	?Later prehistoric
T6	F28	Pit or Ditch terminal	Soft, medium-dark grey/brown with lower fill of mottled orange sandy-silt, <2% stone	undated
T3	F29	Ditch	Soft, moist, dark yellow/grey/brown sandy-silt	undated
T3	F30	Pit	Soft, moist, medium yellow/grey/brown sandy-silt with 5% stone	?13th-14th century
T3	F31	Brick foundation		Post-medieval
	-	Surfaces	Modern tarmac and concrete surfaces/roads sealing modern crush = T1-T11 & T13	Modern
	L1	Topsoil	Loose, dry, medium grey/brown silt with occasional stone = T12 & T14-T18	Modern
	L2	Subsoil	Firm, moist, medium orange/brown sandy-silt with charcoal flecks and occasional stone	-
	L3	Natural	Natural sands	-

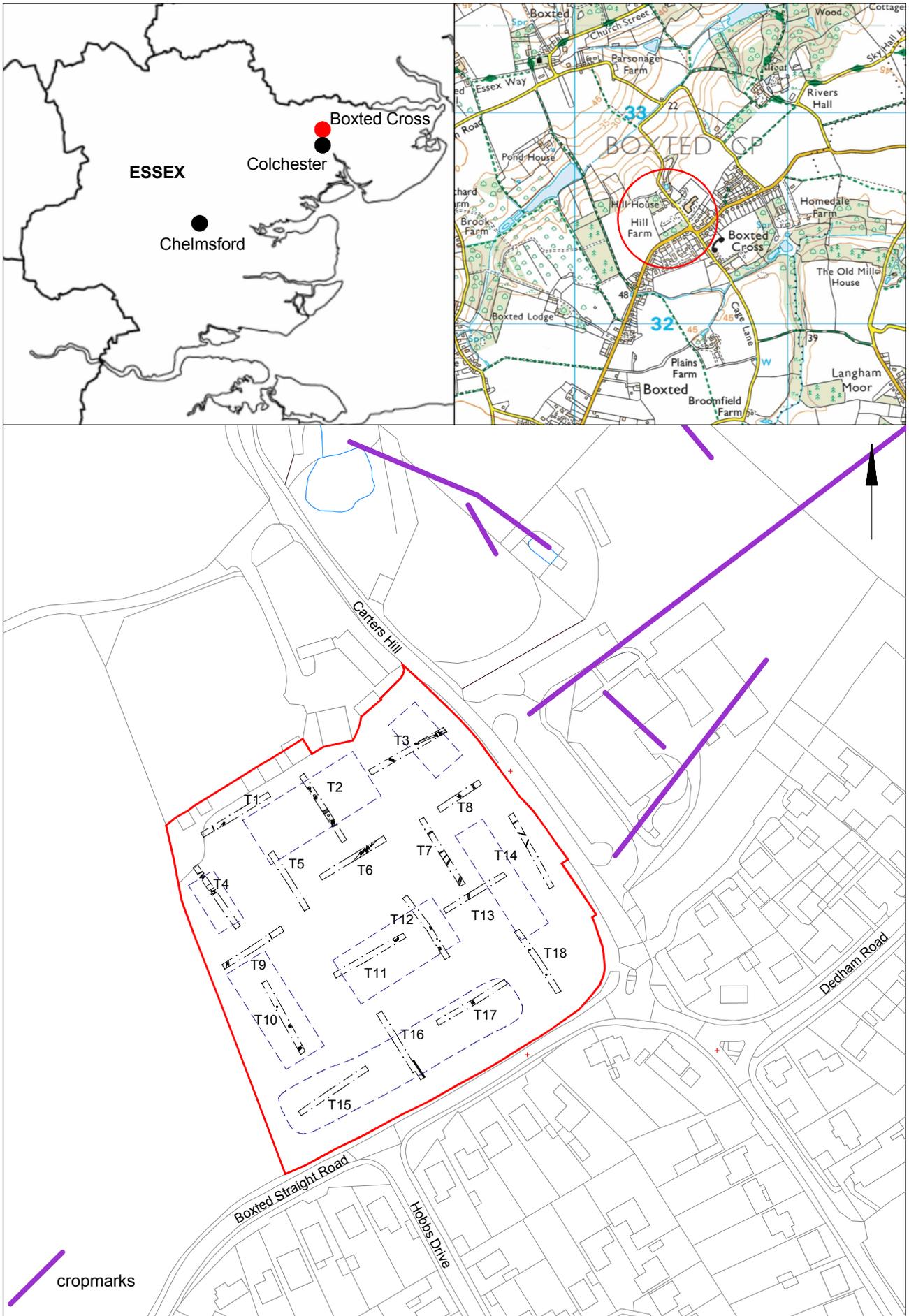
## **Appendix 2 Depth of layers by trench**

<b>Trench</b>	<b>Description</b>
T1	450mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 200mm thick, seals L3
T2	250-400mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 150-200mm thick, seals L3
T3	100-300mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 300-330mm thick, seals L3
T4	400-600mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 210-240mm thick, seals L3
T5	430-450mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 350-470mm thick, seals L3
T6	460-500mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 240mm thick, seals L3
T7	420-460mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 300-480mm thick, seals L3
T8	400mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 250mm thick, seals L3
T9	260-300mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 240-380mm thick, seals L3
T10	300-330mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 320-330mm thick, seals L3
T11	310-410mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 270-290mm thick, seals L3
T12	L1 – 300-340mm thick, seals L2 – 110-280mm thick, seals L3
T13	200-540mm of concrete/tarmac and crush seals L2 – 290-600mm thick, seals L3
T14	L1 – 200-300mm thick, seals L2 – 250-300mm thick, seals L3
T15	L1 – 110-130mm thick, seals L2 – 450-460mm thick, seals L3
T16	L1 – 200-230mm thick, seals L2 – 500-590mm thick, seals L3
T17	L1 – 140-190mm thick, seals L2 – 380mm thick, seals L3
T18	L1 – 110-160mm thick, seals L2 – 400-430mm thick, seals L3

### Appendix 3 Sample contents

Key: + = 1-10, ++ = 11-50, +++ = 51-150, ++++ = 151-250, +++++ = >250

Sample	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Feature number	F1	F8	F14	F15	F24	F27	F28
Finds number	2	6	9	11	18	17	19
Description	ditch	ditch	ditch	ditch	ditch	ditch	pit or ditch terminal
Period	Post-med, 16th – mid 17th century	undated	undated	?Roman	undated	?later prehistoric	undated
Initial volume	20L	20L	20L	20L	20L	20L	20L
Flot volume	25ml	10ml	5ml	15nl	2ml	10ml	5ml
Counted items per litre of sampled soil	0	0	0	0	<0.5	<0.5	<0.5
<b>Charred plant remains</b>							
stinking chamomile ( <i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.) fruit	-	-	-	-	7	-	-
emmer ( <i>Triticum</i> cf. <i>dicoccum</i> L.) grain	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
twig fragment	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
>4mmØ charred wood	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
<4mmØ charred wood	++	++	++	++++	+	++	++
<b>Uncharred plant remains</b>							
elderberry ( <i>Sambucus nigra</i> L.) fruit endocarp	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
fool's parsley ( <i>Aethusa cynapium</i> L.) fruit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
common fumitory ( <i>Fumaria officinalis</i> L.) fruit	-	+	-	++	++	+	+
bramble ( <i>Rubus fruticosus</i> L.agg.) fruit fragment	+	-	+	+	-	-	-
bedstraw ( <i>Galium verum/mollugo</i> )fruit	+	+	-	-	+	-	-
stinging nettle ( <i>Urtica dioica</i> L.) fruit	++	-	-	-	-	-	-
duckweed ( <i>Lemna</i> sp.)fruit	-	-	-	-	+	+	-
fat hen ( <i>Chenopodium album</i> L.) fruit	++	++	++	++	++	+	++
Root/rhizome fragments	+++++	+++++	+++++	+	+	++++	+
<b>Faunal remains</b>							
Worm cocoons	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
Terrestrial mollusca	-	-	-	+	-	-	-



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Fig 1 Site location and trenches shown in relation to proposed development (dashed blue) and cropmarks (purple)





Fig 2 Phased results and ditch projections (proposed development dashed blue)

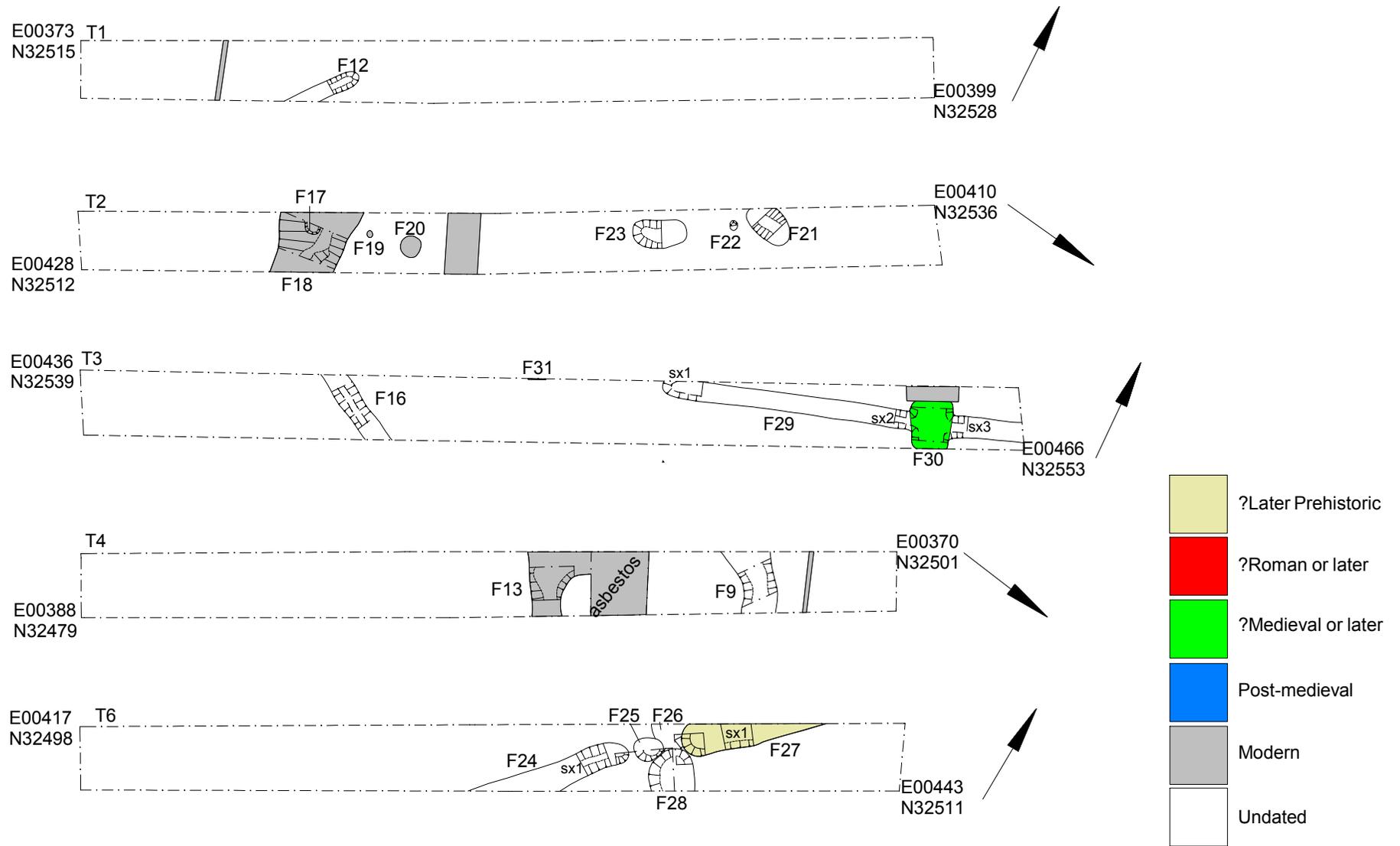


Fig 3 Detailed trench plans: T1, T2, T3, T4 and T6

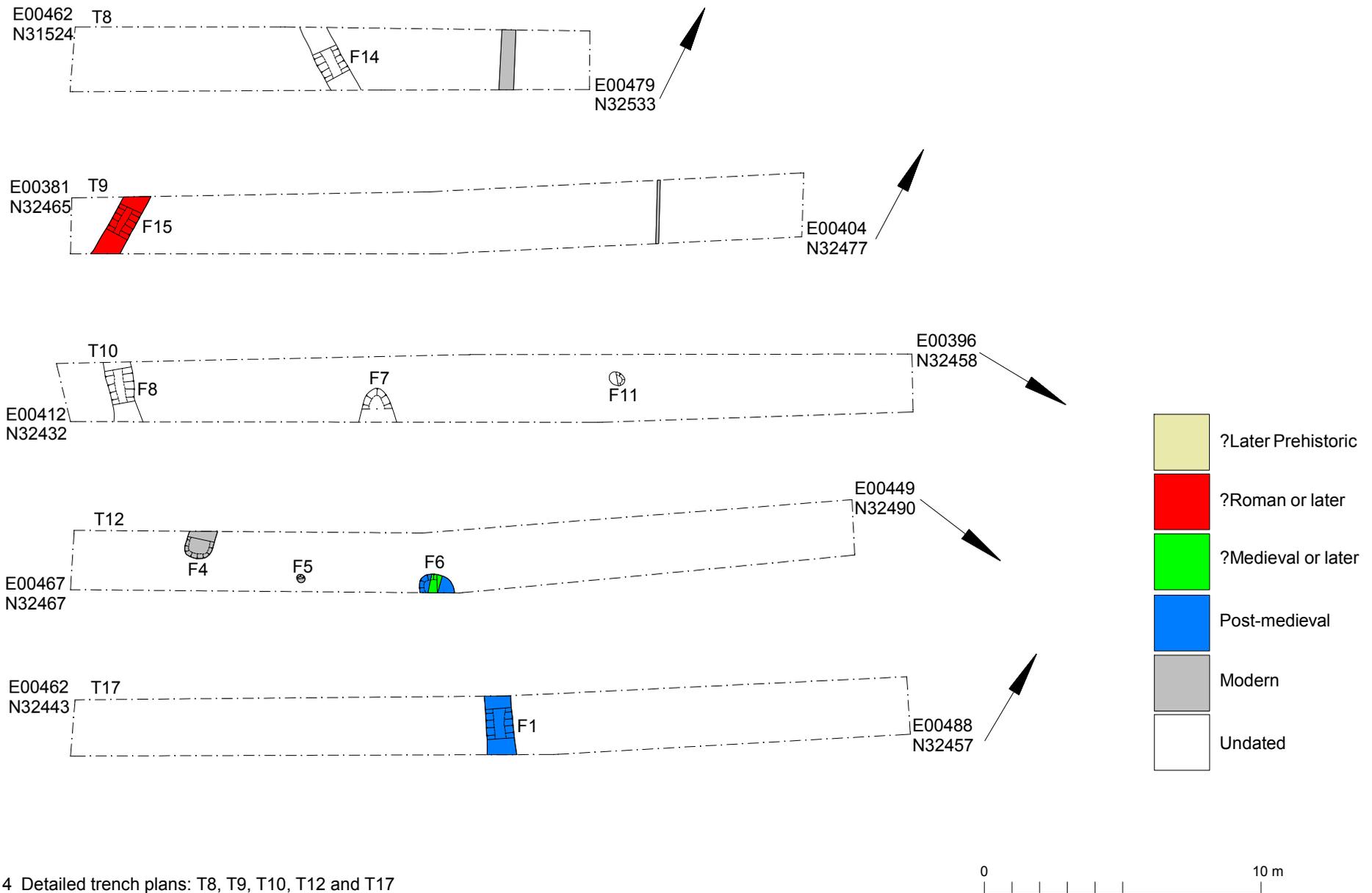


Fig 4 Detailed trench plans: T8, T9, T10, T12 and T17

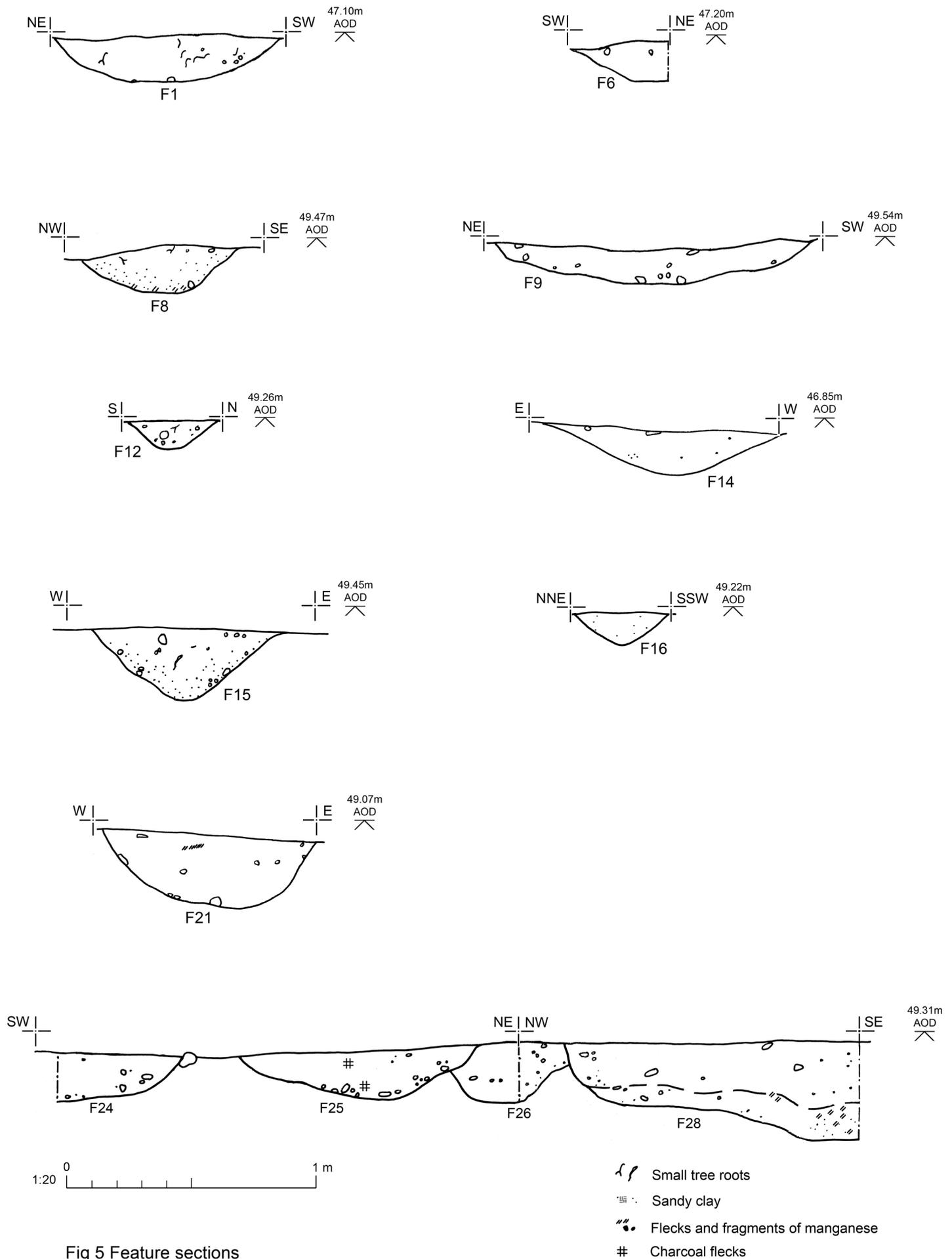
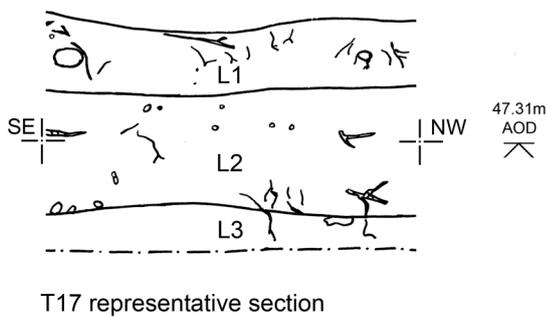
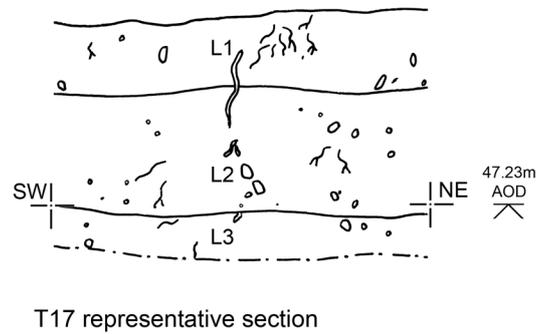
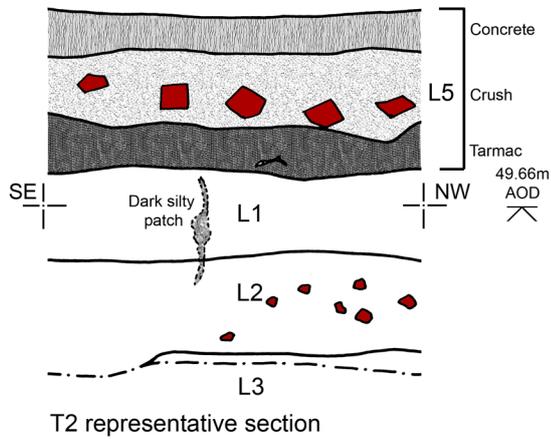
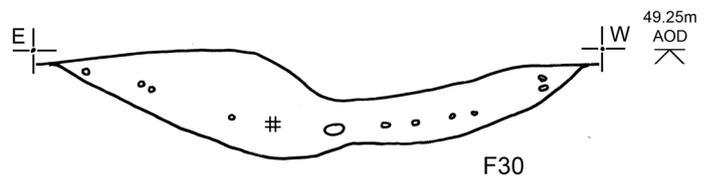
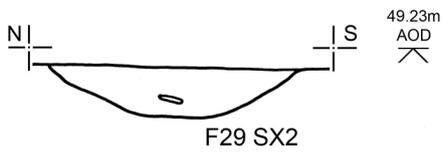
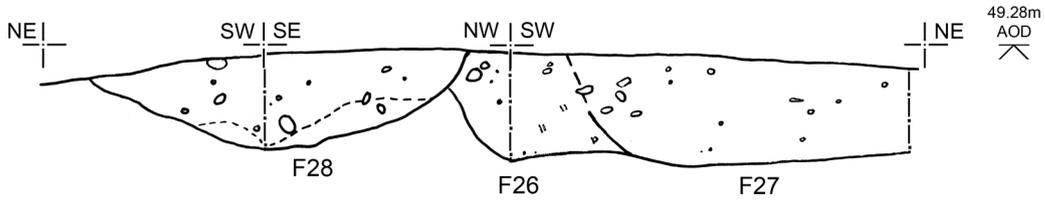
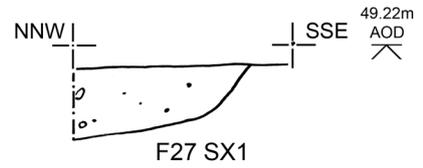
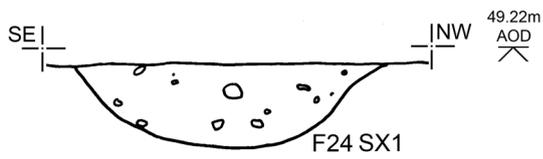


Fig 5 Feature sections



- # Charcoal flecks
- Small tree roots
- Post-Roman ceramic building material
- Flcks and fragments of manganese

Fig 6 Features and representative sections



# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Hill Farm, Boxted Cross, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5RD	
<b>Parish:</b> Boxted	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TM 0044 3248 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project ref.: 16/11f CHER ref: ECC3898 OASIS ref: colchest3-269054
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 5th-12th December 2016	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 1.9ha; eighteen trial-trenches totalling 530m linear or 954m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2016.115	<b>Funding source:</b> owner
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Not known	<b>Related EHER/SMR number:</b>
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 1049	
<b>Periods represented:</b> prehistoric, medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> An archaeological evaluation (18 trial-trenches) was carried out at Hill Farm, Boxted Cross, Essex during pre-application work for the construction of residential dwellings. The development site is located close to a number of prehistoric cropmarks and field systems, including the Boxted 'henge'. Evaluation revealed a possible prehistoric field boundary running NE/SW across the site, a possible medieval pit, a post-medieval (16th-17th century) ditch and brick foundation, a number of undated ditches, pits and postholes, and several modern features.	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> –	
<b>CBC monitor:</b> Jess Tipper	
<b>Keywords:</b> –	<b>Significance:</b> *
<b>Author of summary:</b> Laura Pooley	<b>Date of summary:</b> January 2017

# Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a trenched archaeological evaluation at Hill Farm, Boxted Cross, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5RD

**NGR:** TM 0044 3248 (centre)

**Planning reference:** pre-application

**Commissioned by:** Joe Jackson, Thomas Bates & Son Ltd

**Client:** Thomas Bates & Son Ltd

**Curating Museum:** Colchester

**Museum accession code:** [tbc](#)

**CHER Event number:** ECC3898

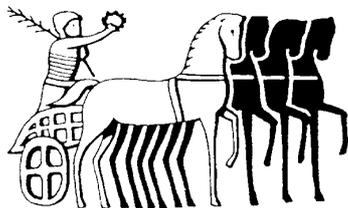
**CAT Project code:** 16/11f

**OASIS Project id:** colchest3-269054

**Site Manager:** Ben Holloway

**CBC Monitor:** Jess Tipper

**This WSI written:** 17.11.2016



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## Site location and description

The proposed development site (1.9ha) lies approximately 7km north of Colchester on land at Hill Farm, Carters Hill, Boxted Cross, Essex (Fig 1). The site is centred on NGR TM 0044 3248.

## Proposed work

A new residential development.

## Archaeological background (Fig 2)

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

An archaeological desk-based assessment for the development site was carried out in 2014 (CAT Report 796, by Howard Brooks). The following is a summary taken from that report:

*There are no archaeological remains or other heritage assets within the Application Site.*

*However, the modern village of Boxted Cross lies within a prehistoric landscape. The evidence for this consists of archaeological 'cropmarks' including a 'henge' (ceremonial Neolithic site 400m NE of the Application Site). Other cropmarks include field ditches and droveways. An archaeological evaluation carried out prior to the building of St Peter's School (immediately east of the Application Site) intercepted two of the cropmarks and showed that they were part of an Iron Age field system dating to approximately 700-200 BC. Prehistoric flints collected during a watching brief on a pipeline west of Carters Hill are further evidence for prehistoric activity in Boxted.*

*Other nearby heritage assets include a now-demolished WWII spigot mortar, and four groups of listed buildings, the most important of which is the early medieval hall-house Songers on Cage Lane. None of the listed buildings will be affected by this development.*

*The prehistoric ditches on the St Peter's School site may continue into the Application Site.*

For full details of the archaeological remains in the area see CAT Report 796. For details of other archaeological fieldwork carried out in the vicinity see CAT Report 175 and Crossan 1992.

## Planning background

This development is currently in the pre-application stage. The development site was recently identified in Boxted's Neighbourhood Plan as an appropriate location for development and the developer/architect is currently working on a scheme that conforms to the various conditions contained therein.

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 to enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately plotted. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2016).

Specifically, eighteen trial-trenches will be laid out across the development site totalling totalling 530m linear (seventeen 30m by 1.8m and one 20m by 1.8m) or 954m<sup>2</sup> (5% of the development area) (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.

If unusual, significant or unexpected remains are encountered the CBCAA will be informed immediately and further evaluation may be required, which 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* (CIfA 2014a-c)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- 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 three archaeologists for four days.

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/Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. CAT staff will process samples (unless of a complex nature) and the flots will be sent to VF/LG for reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF/LG 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 / Lisa Gray

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

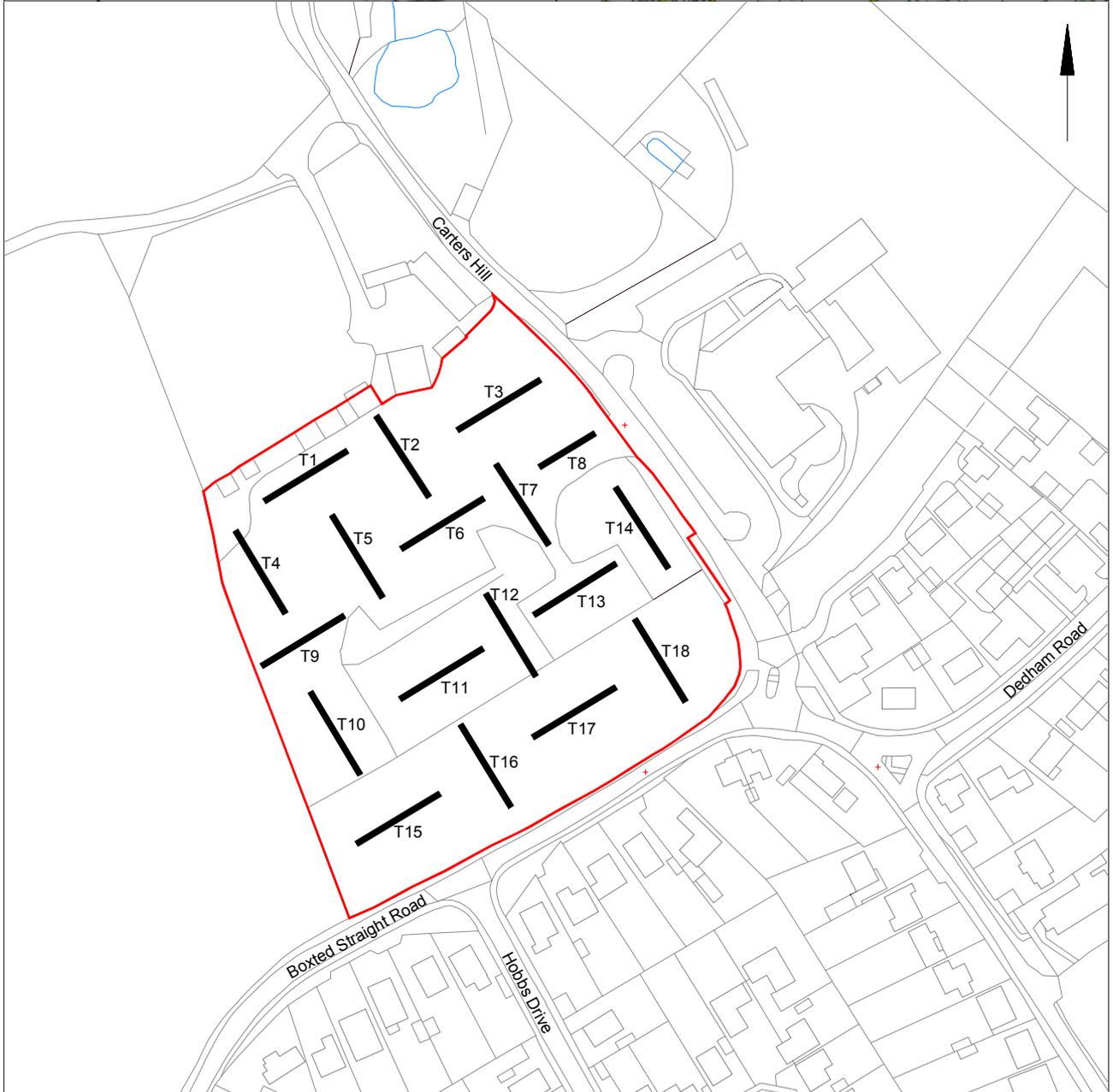
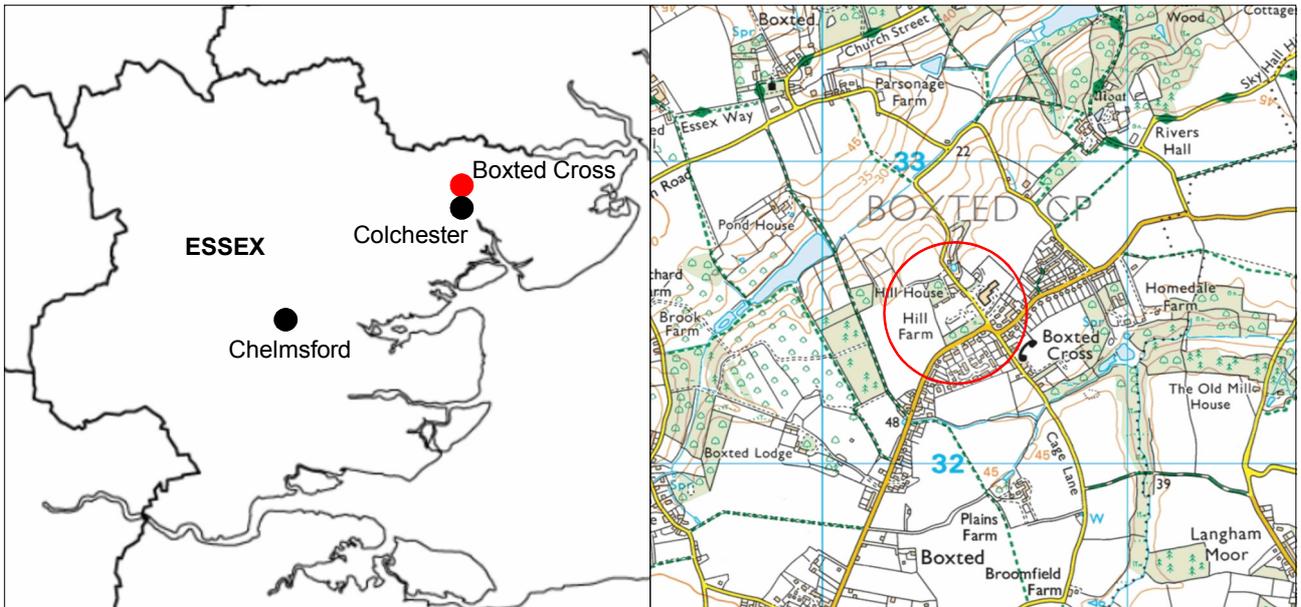
CAT Report 175	2002	<i>An evaluation at Carter's Hill, Boxted Cross, near Colchester, Essex.</i>
CAT Report 796	2014	<i>A desk-based assessment of the archaeological remains around a site at Boxted Cross, Essex</i>
CBCAA	2016	<i>Brief for an Archaeological Trial-Trenched Evaluation at Land at Hall Road, Boxted Cross, Boxted, CO4 5RD</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i>
CIfA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Crossan, C	1992	<i>Watching Brief, water mains renewal at Boxted, Essex. Colchester Archaeological Trust Field Report, 19 November 1992</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 and trench proposal.

0 100 m

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: colchest3-269054**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at Hill Farm, Carters Hill, Boxted Cross, Essex, CO4 5RD
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (18 trial-trenches) was carried out at Hill Farm, Boxted Cross, Essex during pre-application work for the construction of residential dwellings. The development site is located close to a number of prehistoric cropmarks and field systems, including the Boxted 'henge'. Evaluation revealed a possible prehistoric field boundary running NE/SW across the site, a possible medieval pit, a post-medieval (16th-17th century) ditch and brick foundation, a number of undated ditches, pits and postholes, and several modern features.
Project dates	Start: 05-12-2016 End: 12-12-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	16/11f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2016.115 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	ECC3898 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 1 - Vacant land previously developed
Monument type	PIT Medieval
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	PITS Modern
Monument type	BRICK WALL FOUNDATIONS Post Medieval
Monument type	POSTHOLES Modern
Monument type	DITCH Late Prehistoric
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Modern
Significant Finds	FLINT Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Significant Finds	FLINT Early Neolithic

Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Modern
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER BOXTED Hill Farm, Boxted Cross
Postcode	CO4 5RD
Study area	1.9 Hectares
Site coordinates	TM 0044 3248 51.954109652837 0.917323312148 51 57 14 N 000 55 02 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 46.92m Max: 49.58m

### 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	Ben Holloway
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2016.115
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2016.115
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Plan", "Report", "Section", "Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

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## OASIS:

Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice

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