

Archaeological monitoring and recording at 101 Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LG

November 2016



by Laura Pooley

with contributions by Stephen Benfield
figures by Ben Holloway and Emma Holloway

fieldwork by Ben Holloway

**commissioned by Andy Tyrrell, Dusek Design Associates Ltd
on behalf of Kingfisher Prestige Developments Ltd**

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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at 101 Laindon Road, Essex during the construction of two new dwellings. Evaluation on the site in August 2016 had revealed a Roman ditch, two pits and a pit/posthole, showing that the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement identified underneath the adjacent school in the 1970s did continue to the southwest into the development site. One Late Iron Age/early Roman pit and two Roman pits were recorded during monitoring.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for archaeological monitoring and recording at 101 Laindon Road, Essex which was carried out on 15th-21st November 2016. The work was commissioned by Andy Tyrrell, Dusek Design Associates Ltd, on behalf of Kingfisher Prestige Development Ltd in advance of the construction of two new dwellings. The work was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor 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 the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (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 watching brief* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

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

The EHER shows that Roman material has been recovered from an area of c. 8 hectares to the immediate east of the development area. Rescue excavations in advance of the construction of the adjacent school in the 1970s revealed Late Iron Age and Roman settlement on both sides of a Roman road that curved east-west to the south of the school. The settlement probably originated as a ditched enclosure of Late Iron Age date and grew into a village, covering an area of approximately 8 hectares, in the Roman period. Cremation burials were found throughout the area, but the main cemetery focus appears to have been around the edges of the settlement, to the north-east and south. Other features include post-holes, gullies, ditches and gravel spreads, and it is probable that some of these at least represent timber dwellings. Two, possibly three, pottery kilns and two corn-dryers have been found, providing some evidence for the local economy.

Archaeological remains identified at 81 Laindon Road are believed to be a continuation of the Roman settlement to the west. The Roman features consisted of a rubbish pit, a pebble surface probably forming part of a yard or track and an overlying layer. Finds from the pit included several large pieces of slag/clinker that indicate that metalworking was taking place in the vicinity.

An investigation to the north of 81 Laindon Road revealed further evidence that the Roman settlement previously excavated at the School continues westwards at least as far as Laindon Road.

Archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) at 101 Laindon Road in August 2016 (CAT Report 1006) revealed that the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement, identified underneath the adjacent school in the 1970s, did continue to the southwest and into the development site. Four Roman features were excavated (a ditch, two pits and a pit/posthole) and a small selection of Roman finds from a rural settlement of probable 1st to mid/late 3rd century date recorded. Ditch F2 may have been part of a boundary and the pits contained a range of relatively low status domestic refuse. The ceramic building material may even suggest the presence of unmortared structures nearby.

There is a high probability that further evidence relating to the Roman settlement may be disturbed by the proposed development.

4 Results (Figs 2-3)

The foundations for two new dwellings were excavated by the contractor under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Features F1-F4 were excavated during the August 2016 evaluation (CAT Report 1006), so the numbering of features during this monitoring begins at F5.

Foundation trenches

The foundations for building plots 1-2 measured 450-600mm wide and 1000-1100mm deep and were excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 200-550mm thick) onto a post-medieval silty-sandy subsoil (L2, c 270-370mm thick) which sealed natural yellow-orange sand (L3). Modern disturbance associated with the construction and demolition of the original property was apparent across the centre of both plots.

Plot 1: Late Iron Age/early Roman pit F7 was recorded on the northern edge of the plot.

Plot 2: Roman pits F5 and F6 were recorded to the south of the plot. The SW section of Roman ditch F2 (identified during the 2016 evaluation) was not seen during monitoring (see Fig 3). It had either been removed by the modern disturbance associated with the construction/demolition of the original property and associated buildings or terminated close to the SW edge of the evaluation trench.

Ground reduction

Ground level across the new patio area and driveway was reduced through 150-200mm of topsoil (L1).



Photograph 1 Excavation of foundation trenches, looking E



Photograph 2 Roman pit F6, looking SW



Photograph 3 Topsoil reduction, looking N

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield (pottery) and Laura Pooley (others)

A small quantity of pottery, ceramic building material and fired clay was recovered from Late Iron Age/Roman pits F5, F6, F7 and post-medieval/modern layer L2. All of the finds are listed and described by context in Table 1.

Pottery

Only a small quantity of pottery was recovered almost all of which is Roman, with one sherd dated as medieval. The Roman pottery was recorded using the Chelmsford fabric and form series, commonly used for recording pottery in Essex (Going 1987) supplemented by the *Camulodunum* (Cam) form series (Hull 198). Medieval pottery fabrics refer to the Essex fabric series (Cunningham 1985).

Previous archaeological evaluation on the site produced a small assemblage of 71 sherds, primarily of Roman date (dated broadly mid 1st-3rd century) with a few grog-tempered sherds dating to the period of the late 1st century BC-mid 1st century AD (CAT Report 1006). The small quantity of pottery from the watching brief has little to add to this, although no grog-tempered pottery is present amongst it and one sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from a soil layer (L2). In relation to the dating of the Roman occupation the pottery from the watching brief includes one sherd of Nene Valley colour-coated pottery (from a folded beaker) that probably dates to after the mid 3rd century and could date as late as the 4th century (F6). However, it remains the case that there is no closely dated pottery that need date to the 4th or late 4th century. It was also noted in the pottery from the evaluation that one samian vessel (a Central Gaulish cup of Form Dr 33) had been deliberately cut-down leaving the base. A sherd from a Dr 33 cup was also recovered during in the watching brief, but this base edge is simply broken at an angle and does not suggests that this vessel had been similarly deliberately cut-down (F5).

Ceramic building material (CBM)

Roman CBM was identified in three of the four contexts with fragments of brick from F6(10), *tegula* roof tile and brick/tile from L2(11) and fragments of brick/tile from F5(8). Of particular interest is the impression of a child's hobnail boot/shoe on the tile in L2 (Fig 4). The nailing pattern is Carol van Driel-Murray's Type 1 (1995, p6), with a single row around the edge of the sole (Nina Crummy, *pers comm*).

Fired clay

Ten fragments of undiagnostic fired clay were recorded in pits F5(8) and F7(9). Also from pit F7 were two joining fragments of fired clay from a loomweight. The fragments formed part of the corner of the weight and included the remains of a diagonal perforation, indicating that this was most likely a triangular loomweight of Late Iron Age/early Roman date. The presence of loomweights on a site suggests the use of an upright warp-weighted loom for weaving textiles, probably wool.

Feature & (finds) no.	Description	Date
F5 (8)	<p>Roman pottery: Small quantity (186g), the more closely dated of which is broadly 2nd century. Fabric SACG (1 sherd), form Dr 33 large wall sherd, worn on rim and lower wall edge (2nd century); Fabric 44 (6 sherds) sandy fabric with burnt-out organic-temper showing in external surface (mid/late 1st-2nd/3rd century); Fabric 47 (2) one sherd quite sparkly from fine quartz sand inclusions (not mica) and decorated with acute burnished lattice pattern (probably early/mid 2nd-early 3rd century).</p> <p>CBM: Three fragments (62g) of Roman brick/tile (NR).</p> <p>Fired clay: Nine fragments (68g), soft, fine sandy fabric with organic temper (vegetable matter) and very occasional small grits, brownish-red in colour, largely featureless but largest fragment includes flat surface impressed with vegetation (NR).</p> <p>Burnt stone: one piece (20g).</p>	Roman, early/mid 2nd-early 3rd century
F6 (10)	<p>Roman pottery: Fineware sherd (2g), Nene Valley colour-coated ware (Fabric 2) from a folded beaker, abraded dark colour-coat on off-white fabric. Although broadly of 3rd-4th century date, Nene Valley wares appear to arrive relatively late in this area, first appearing at Chelmsford well into the third century (Going 1987, 3) (dated mid/late 3rd-4th century).</p> <p>CBM: Fragment of Roman brick in five pieces (632g), 34mm thick, fine sandy fabric, orange-red with grey core (NR).</p>	Roman, mid/late 3rd-4th century
F7 (9)	<p>Loomweight: Two joining fragments (50g) from the corner of a loomweight which includes the remains of a diagonal perforation, suggesting this was a triangular loomweight; brittle, sandy fabric with occasional small stones, reddish-orange internally, brown on surfaces; surfaces show grass or straw marks from material that must have adhered to the surface during drying; Late Iron Age/early Roman.</p> <p>Fired clay: Flat fragment (24g), soft, fine sandy fabric with occasional small grits, reddish-orange in colour, not part of the loomweight (NR).</p>	Late Iron Age/early Roman
L2 (11)	<p>Roman pottery: Small quantity (74g) including one sherd dated to after the early-mid 2nd century. Fabric 47 (5 sherds), includes Black-Burnish ware-type dish with flaring wall and chamfered base – Going Form B1 (Cam 40) (early-mid 2nd century-3rd/4th century).</p> <p>Medieval Pottery: 1 sherd (6g) Fabric 20, small hard sandy sherd, oxidised brown interior (late 12th/13th-14th century).</p> <p>CBM: Fragment (236g) of Roman tile, 22mm thick, soft sandy fabric in brownish-orange colour, hobnail impressions from either</p>	Post-medieval/modern layer

	a partial adult hobnail boot or a very small child's boot; fragment of Roman <i>tegula</i> (142g), 16mm thick, soft sandy fabric, orange colour with grey core (<i>tegula</i> NR).	
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Table 1 All finds by context

6 Discussion

The features and finds identified during both the evaluation and monitoring correspond to the Roman activity identified underneath the adjacent school in the 1970s, showing that the Roman settlement continued to the southwest of the school and into the development site, albeit on a much smaller scale. Unfortunately, evaluation ditch F2 (CAT Report 1006) was not recorded in the monitoring foundations and it was not possible to determine if this was a boundary ditch. It may have terminated close to where it was excavated in August 2016, or been removed by modern activity as the construction and subsequent demolition of the original property had caused significant disturbance. Pit F7 appears to be of Late Iron Age or Early Roman origin, and the presence of two residual Late Iron Age pottery sherds in the evaluation may indicate a Late Iron Age origin for the settlement. The presence of a loomweight fragment in this pit also suggests that the inhabitants of the settlement were weaving somewhere nearby. In contrast, pits F5 and F6 are of later Roman date (early/mid 2nd – mid/late 3rd century) and reveal that occupation continued through until at least the late 3rd century. All of the finds from the monitoring and evaluation consisted of relatively low status domestic refuse.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Andy Tyrrell (Dusek Design Associates Ltd) and Kingfisher Prestige Development Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway. Figures are by BH and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

8 References

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

CAT	2014	<i>Health and Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2016	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring and recording at 101 Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LG</i>
CAT Report 1006	2016	<i>Archaeological evaluation at 101 Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LG</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological watching briefs</i>
CIfA	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> . Dept of Communities and Local Government.
Driel-Murray, Carol van	1995	<i>Nailing Roman Shoes</i> . Archaeological Leather Group Newsletter 1
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 . ed. D Gurney
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Hull, R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> , RRCSAL 20
Medlycott, M	1999	<i>Billericay: Historic Towns in Essex</i> , ECC
Tomber, R and Dore, J	1998	<i>The National Roman fabric reference collection, a handbook</i> , MoLAS Monograph 2
Wild, F	2016	'Samian ware' in Luke, M, <i>Close to the Loop, landscape and settlement evolution beside the Biddenham Loop, west of Bedford</i> , EAA 156 - specialist report on CD

9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Late Iron Age (LIA)	period from c 100-50 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	placed deposit/spread of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
NR	not retained
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of A rchaeological I nvestigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	period from c AD 1500 to c 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 sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	written scheme of investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: small bag (pottery, loomweight and impressed brick/tile only)

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1057)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (feature and layer sheets, finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, architectural plans, attendance register, risk assessment

11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMRE: 2016.107

Distribution list:

Andy Tyrrell, Dusek Design Associates Ltd
Kingfisher Prestige Development Ltd
Historic Environment Advisor, Essex County Council Place Services
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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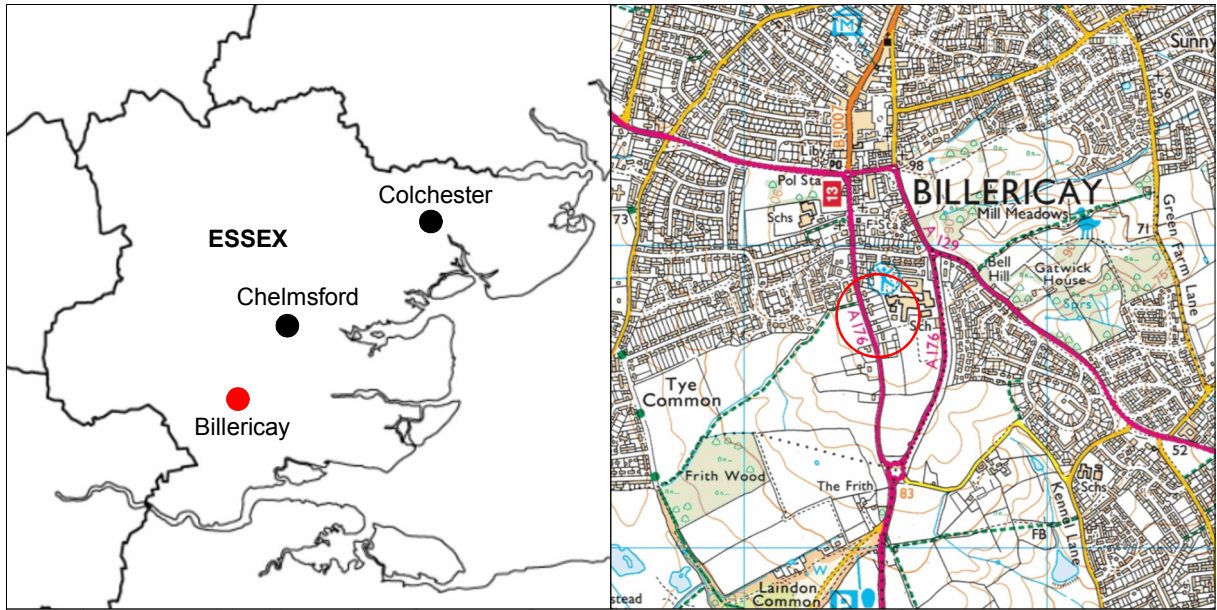
Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 19.1.2017

Appendix 1 Context list

Note: feature and finds numbers followed on from those given during the August 2016 evaluation (CAT Report 1006)

Context	Finds Numbers	Type	Description	Date
F5	8	Pit	Firm, moist, dark grey/brown sandy-silt with charcoal flecks	Roman
F6	10	Pit	Firm, moist, dark grey/brown sandy-silt with charcoal flecks	Roman
F7	9	Pit	Firm, moist, dark grey/brown sandy-silt with charcoal flecks	Late Iron Age/Roman
L1	-	Topsoil	Soft, dry, light-medium brown/black sandy-silty loam, containing modern building debris	Modern
L2	11	Subsoil	Soft, dry, light brown silty-sand containing fragments of brick, peg-tile, slate	Post-medieval/modern
L3	-	Natural	Yellow-orange sands	-



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Fig 1 Site location and areas of monitoring



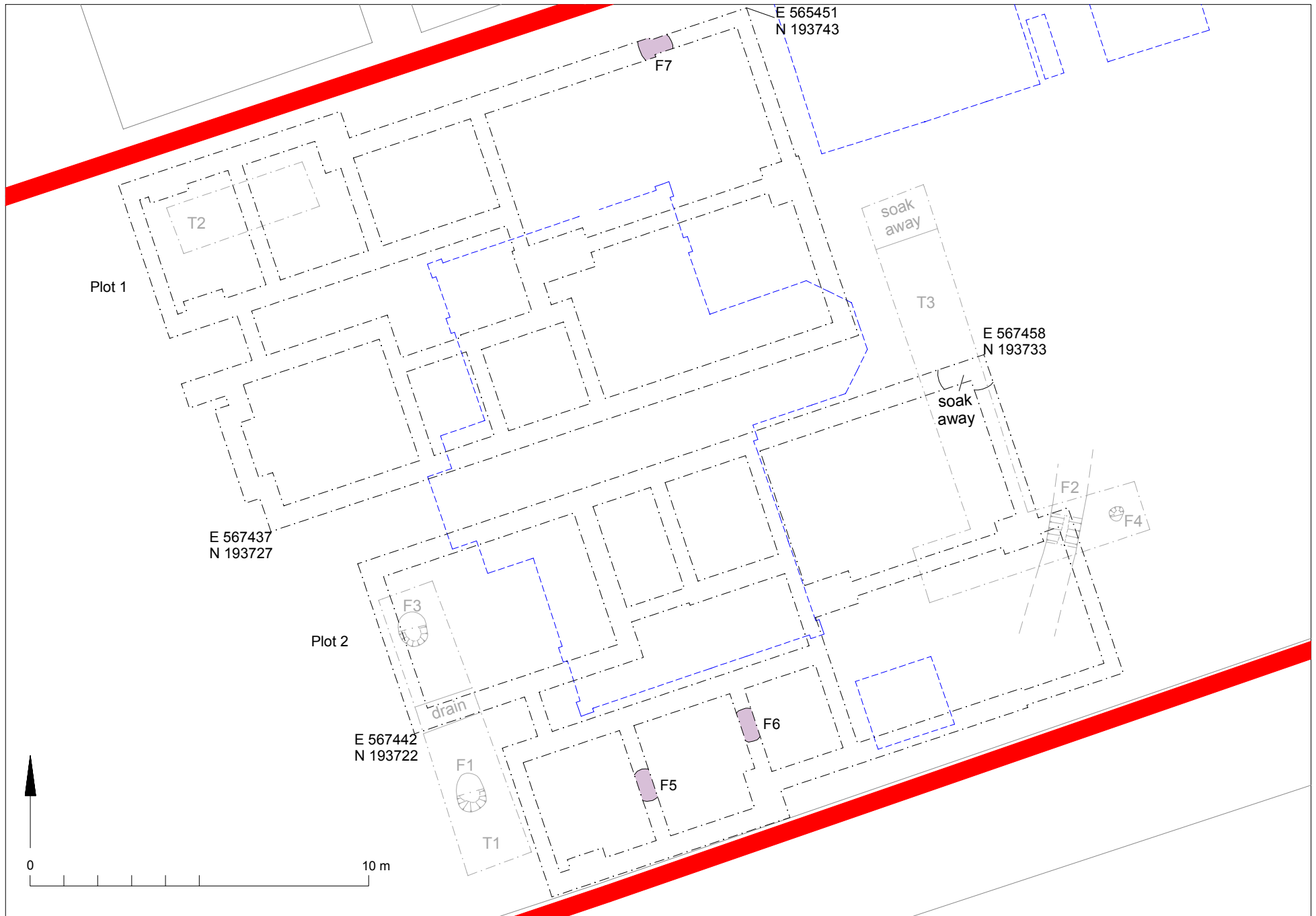


Fig 2 Results, evaluation trenches in grey, areas of disturbance from construction/demolition of original property dashed blue

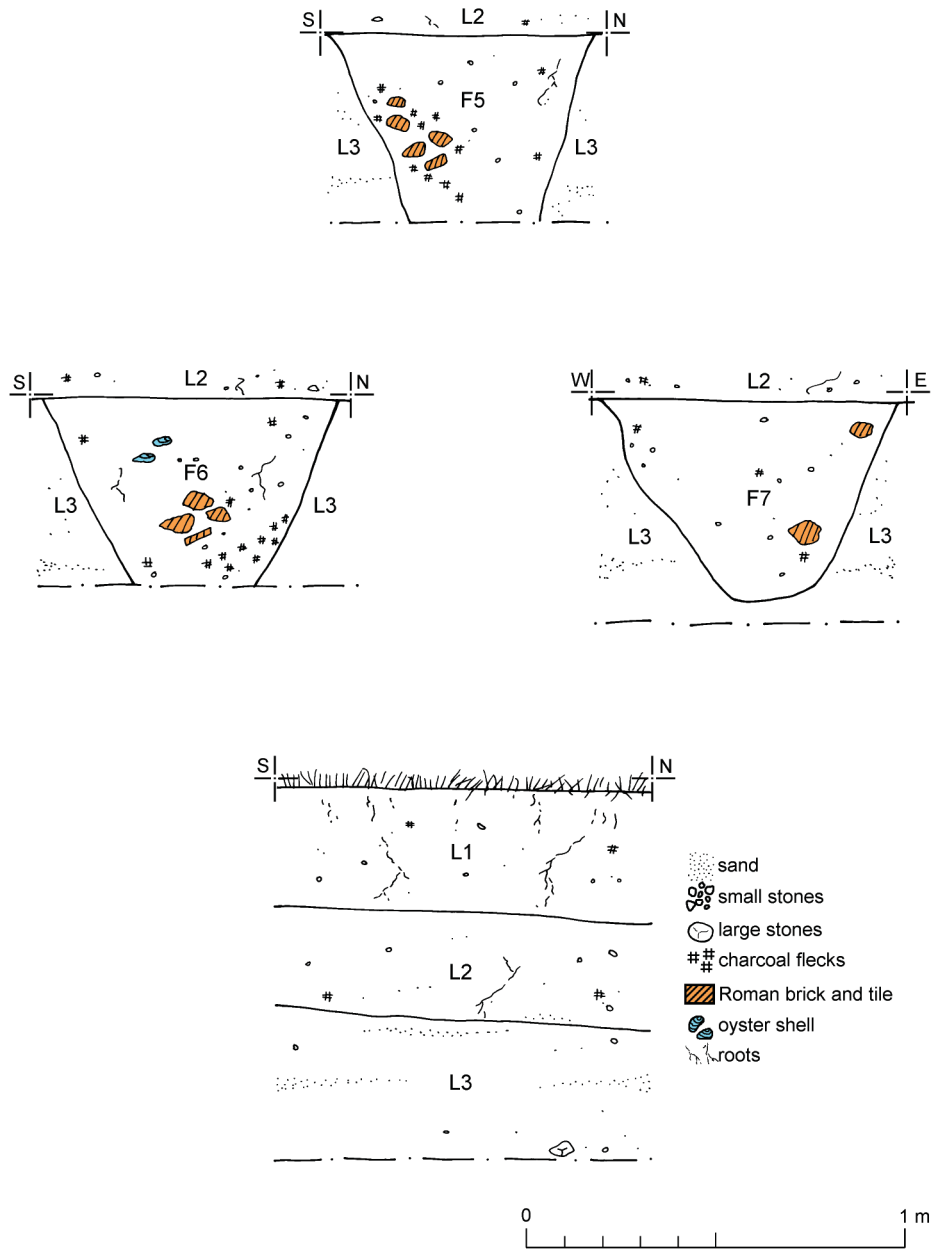


Fig 3 Feature sections and representative foundation trench section.



Fig 4 Impressed brick/tile.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-267923

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at 101 Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LG
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at 101 Laindon Road, Essex during the construction of two new dwellings. Evaluation on the site in August 2016 had revealed a Roman ditch, two pits and a pit/posthole, showing that the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement identified underneath the adjacent school in the 1970s did continue to the southwest into the development site. One Late Iron Age/early Roman pit and two Roman pits were recorded during monitoring.
Project dates	Start: 15-11-2016 End: 21-11-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	16/00416/FUL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	16/11c - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	BLLR16 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	CHMRE: 2016.107 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	PIT Late Iron Age
Monument type	PITS Roman
Significant Finds	LOOMWEIGHT Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Roman
Significant Finds	FIRE CLAY Roman
Significant Finds	IMPRESSED BRICK/TILE Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX BASILDON BILLERICAY 101 Laindon Road
Postcode	CM12 9LG
Study area	0.16 Hectares
Site coordinates	TQ 67448 93729 51.616932216263 0.418946264998 51 37 00 N 000 25 08 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	none
Project design originator	Laura Pooley
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Ben Holloway
Type of sponsor/funding body	Owner

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Chelmsford Museum
Physical Archive ID	CHMRE: 2016.107
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Chelmsford Museum
Digital Archive ID	CHMRE: 2016.107
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
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Project bibliography 1

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