

**Archaeological evaluation at
Lordships Stud, Back Road, Writtle,
Essex, CM1 3PD**

August 2017



by Laura Pooley

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on behalf of Stonebond Properties Ltd

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CAT Report 1162
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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching (five trial-trenches) was carried out at Lordships Stud, Writtle, Essex in advance of the construction of 17 dwellings with associated landscaping, car parking and access. The development site is located in an area of prehistoric cropmarks, Roman settlement remains and close to the King John's Hunting Lodge. Evaluation revealed a medieval pit and ditch, a late 17th-18th century brick floor, and three brick wall foundations and a yard surface of 19th-20th century date.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Lordships Stud, Writtle, Essex which was carried out 3rd-4th August 2017. The work was commissioned by Stonebond Properties Ltd in advance of the construction of 17 dwellings with associated landscaping, car parking and access, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Alison Bennett 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 *Brief for archaeological evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Alison Bennett (ECCPS 2017), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2017).

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 field 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 utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

The proposed development is located to the northwest of the historic settlement area of Writtle, which has its origins in the Late Saxon period. Test-pitting to the east and west of the site in 2012 recovered evidence for medieval and post-medieval occupation in the immediate vicinity (EHER 48838, 48839). Historic OS maps show that a variety of farm buildings have existed on the site. Two of the buildings proposed to be demolished as part of the current redevelopment are a farmhouse with a mid-19th century exterior (but which contains an older timber-framed core) and an adjacent barn which, although much altered, is of 18th century origin (for locations see Fig 1). Historic Building Recording was carried out on both these buildings (CAT Report pending).

A Heritage Statement for the Daws Farm site was produced in September 2015 (CAT Report 866 by Howard Brooks). The following summary is taken from that assessment:

This is a heritage statement on the proposed development site (PDS) at Daws Farm (part of Writtle College), Back Lane, Writtle, Essex.

There are no listed Heritage Assets (archaeological or historical sites) or finds within the PDS itself.

There are five archaeological or historical sites within a 500m Search Area around the PDS. These include the find-spots of prehistoric flints, Roman pottery, and the unpublished excavation of a suspected medieval mill mound. None of these sites will be affected by this proposed development. In fact, with the exception of the western side of the King John's Hunting Lodge, all these sites have now disappeared below modern housing estates.

However, extending the Search Area to 1km gives a much better idea of the archaeological potential of this area.

Evidence for prehistoric activity includes features on the Hunting Lodge site, the cropmark ring-ditch which may be a prehistoric burial site, and loose finds of prehistoric flints (casual losses?).

However, the evidence for the Roman period is more complex, and may point to there being several distinct sites in and around Writtle. There is Roman brick in the fabric of All Saints Church, and two Roman cremation burials from nearby (at the Vicarage), so there must be a Roman settlement around All Saints. Prior to 1963, Major Jack Brinson saw a bank of gravel alongside Cow Watering Lane, which he (correctly) interpreted as a Roman road. Another Roman road was recently spotted during the construction of a reservoir. Loose finds of Roman material around the village indicate that there is more Roman material awaiting discovery here, and recent excavations by Heritage Writtle have uncovered a rich Roman site at Sturgeons Farm, which must be a separate settlement from that around All Saints (which is 1km away).

Despite Writtle being one of the biggest Essex manors at Domesday, there is little information on the Anglo-Saxon period. However, the manor was probably next to All Saints Church.

In the medieval period, the dominant sites are King John's Hunting Lodge and All Saints Church. Dispersed moated farms and separate Greens at Oxney and Greensbury Green may be elements of the very large late Anglo-Saxon and Domesday-period manor.

In summary, it can be said that whereas there are no known archaeological sites within the PDS, it is in an area where there is the potential for archaeological remains, particularly of Roman date.

4 Results (Figs 2-5)

Required archaeological work as laid out in the ECC brief stated that a 4% sample of all areas to be disturbed should be investigated. This should have totalled 165m linear trenching (by 1.8m wide) divided into seven trenches. However, once on site it became apparent that trenches T1 and T6 could not be excavated due to the presence of modern services and issues of access (ie keeping access points open to the paddocks and stables). The ECC monitor was informed and the remaining five trenches were machine excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

Trench 2 (T2): 26m long by 1.8m wide

Modern concrete and crush (L7, up to c 0.25m thick) sealed natural sandy-clay (L8, checked with a sondage). Two modern manholes and a service were present but there were no significant archaeological remains.

Trench 3 (T3): 11m long by 1.8m wide

Modern topsoil (L5, c 0.29m thick) sealed a sandy-silty subsoil (L6, c 0.31m thick), beneath which was natural sandy-clay (L8). There were no significant archaeological remains.

Trench 4 (T4): L-shaped trench (incomplete due to the presence of a concrete path), totalling 10m long by 1.8m wide

Modern turf and topsoil (L1, c 0.4-0.43m thick) sealed a sandy-silty subsoil (L2, c 0.28m thick), beneath which was natural sandy-clay (L8, checked with a sondage). Present in the trench were 19th-20th century wall foundations F1 and F5, with earlier brick pathway F3 of late 17th to 18th-century date. A modern drain was also recorded.

Trench 5 (T5): 14m long by 1.8m wide

Modern hardstanding (L3, c 0.41m thick) sealed a metalled yard surface (L4, c 0.08m thick) probably of 19th-20th century date, beneath which was natural sandy-clay (L8). Contemporary with L4 was brick wall foundation F2. A patch of modern concrete was also present in the trench.

Trench 7 (T7): T-shaped trench totalling 14m long by 1.8m wide

Modern topsoil (L5, c 0.1-0.14m thick) sealed a sandy-silty subsoil (L6, c 0.30m thick), beneath which was natural sandy-clay (L8). Two medieval features were present in the trench. Ditch F6 was aligned NE-SW and measured 1.6m wide by 0.34m deep. To the north was pit F7, a wide, shallow feature measuring 2.15m in diameter by 0.11m deep. Undated pit F4 was also recorded.



Photograph 1 F5 in T4, looking E



Photograph 2 T5, looking N



Photograph 3 F6 in T7 (with F4 and F7 in background), looking N

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Moderate-small quantities of finds, primarily of post-medieval and modern date, but with a few sherds of medieval pottery, probable medieval brick and a small piece of Roman brick, were recovered from four features (F2-F7) and one soil layer (L2). The medieval pottery sherds, dated to the period of late 12th/13th-14th century come from pit F7 (4) and were the only finds associated with this feature. The small piece of Roman brick was residual among finds of post-medieval and modern date recovered from L2. Of interest is a large piece from a hand-made brick with a distinctive straw marked surface which comes from ditch F6. This is probably of late medieval date and is the only datable find from this feature. All of the finds are listed and described by context in Table 1. The pottery fabrics (listed in Table 1) refer to the Colchester (Essex) post-Roman pottery fabric series (CAR 7).

Context	Type/ description	Spot date
F2, 1 wall foundation	CBM: Near complete frogged red brick (225 x 110 x 65mm), rectangular frog, some mortar on all surfaces except one end.	Modern, late 19-early 20th century
F3, 2 brick floor	CBM: Mid section from an unfrogged red brick (110 x 55mm), relatively sharp edges, some creasing in sides; plus a second small piece from a red brick (55mm thick).	Post-medieval/modern, late 17th-18th century
F6, 3 ditch	CBM: Piece from a brick, grass/straw marked surfaces, poorly wedged, sandy orange-brown fabric with some patches of dark brown (c 50mm or >5 mm thick), early irregular hand-made brick, medieval-?early post-medieval, possibly a small Flemish-type (Ryan 1996, 94), c early 14th century, or possibly slightly later Fired clay: Small/medium size piece, orange sandy fabric with some irregular pale clay mix, surface piece preserving rounded edge. Animal bone: single horse tooth (damaged at base)	Medieval, (c 14th century?)
F7, 4 pit	Medieval pottery: Three sherds (18g) of medieval coarseware, sandy fabric, one with abraded (grey) surface, two others with grey surfaces (Fabric 20)	Medieval, c late 12th/13th to 14th century
L2, 5 subsoil	Post-medieval & modern pottery: small group of small quite broken-up sherds; Fabric 40 (L16th-18th C); Fabric 48D (L18th-19th/E20th C) includes sherd from a hand-painted (blue) bowl/tea bowl rim (c 18th century); Fabric 51A (19th-E20th C). Glass (vessel): sherd from the base of a bottle, green glass with corroded oxidised surface (c 18th-19th C) CBM Three pieces, small piece from a Roman tile/brick edge, small piece of peg-tile (med/post-medieval), large piece from a pantile (16th/17th-E20th C). Clay pipe: small stem piece (post-medieval). Slag: medium slag, nondescript small, vesicular piece. Coal: small piece (probably post-medieval/modern). Iron: Small corroded object (70mm long), pointed at one end, other flattening and widening – broken. Animal Bone: small piece, humerus sheep/goat or pig (probably sheep/goat)	Modern, c 19th-early 20th century

Table 1 Finds by context

6 Discussion

Archaeological evaluation at Lordships Stud revealed a medieval ditch and pit, dated from c late 12th/13th to the 14th century. Test-pitting to the east and west of the site in 2012 recovered medieval (and post-medieval) pottery sherds further suggesting medieval occupation in the immediate vicinity, possibly associated with a 12th-14th

century mill mound 250m to the southeast (HER 857) and King John's Hunting Lodge 620m NE (HER 659).

Post-medieval and modern wall foundations, brick floors and yard surfaces in T4 and T5 are probably all associated with old farm buildings shown on historic mapping. The 6-inch OS map of 1895 in particular shows two further farm buildings to the east and south of the surviving farmhouse and barn (see Fig 6).

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Stonebond Properties Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with Z Eksen, H Furniss, G Morgan, N Rayner and A Tuffey. Figures are by S Carter, BH and L Pooley. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Alison Bennett.

8 References

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

CAR 7	2000	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by J Cotter
CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2017	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation at The Lordships Stud, Back Road, Writtle, Essex, CM1 3PD</i>
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>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
ECCPS	2017	<i>Brief for archaeological evaluation at The Lordship Stud, Back Road, Writtle</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).
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)
Ryan, P	1996	<i>Brick in Essex from the Roman conquest to the reformation</i>

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
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) 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
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsj	written scheme of investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1162)

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: 2017.095.

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Distribution list:

Andrew Moore, Stonebond Properties Ltd

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Colchester Archaeological Trust

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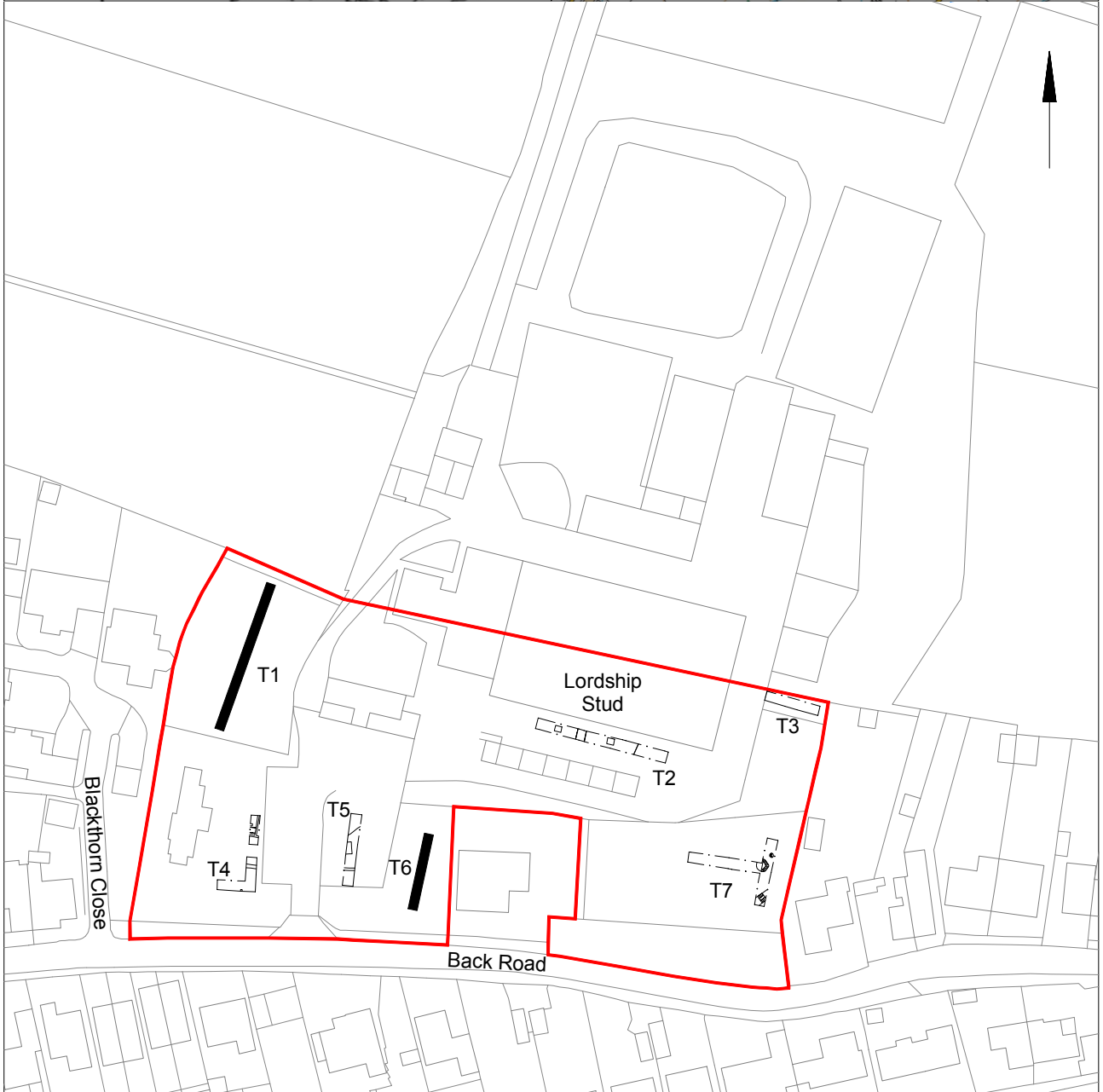
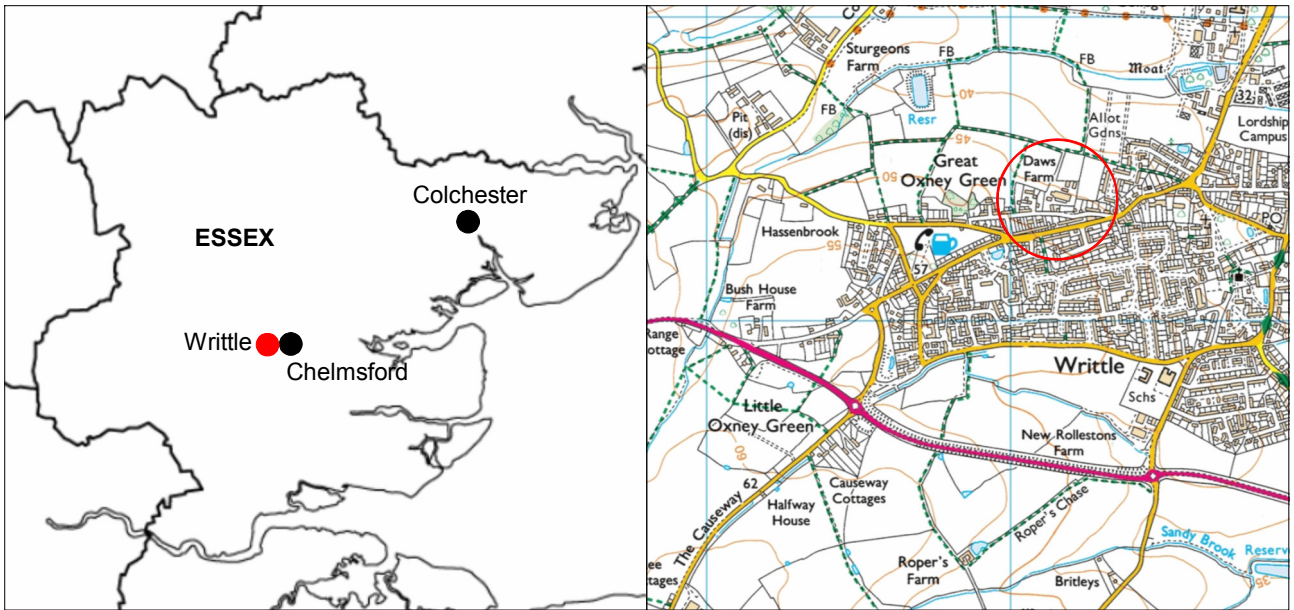
email: lp@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 01.09.2017

Appendix 1 Context list

Feature Number	Finds Number	Feature Type	Description	Date
F1	-	Brick wall foundation	Soft red bricks set in an off-white mortar	Probably 19th-20th century
F2	1	Brick wall foundation	Frogged red bricks set in a weak mortar	Modern, late 19-early 20th century
F3	2	Brick floor	Part-bricks set in an off-white mortar	Post-medieval/modern, late 17th-18th century
F4	-	Pit	Soft, moist, medium grey/brown silty-clay, rare stones	-
F5	-	Brick wall foundation	Red bricks set in an off-white mortar	Probably 19th-20th century
F6	3	Ditch	Soft, moist, medium grey/brown sandy-silty clay	Medieval, (c 14th century?)
F7	4	Pit	Soft, moist, medium grey/brown sandy-silty clay	Medieval, c late 12th/13th to 14th century
L1	-	Turf and topsoil	Soft, moist, dark yellow/grey/brown sandy-loam with flecks of CBM, chalk and charcoal, common stone. Peg-tile, brick, mortar and coal fragments not retained.	Modern
L2	5	Subsoil	Firm to hard, dry, medium yellow/brown sandy-silt (slightly clayey), flecks of CBM and charcoal, common stone.	Modern, c 19th-early 20th century
L3	-	Hardstanding	Modern hardstanding	Modern
L4	-	Yard surface	Metalled surface of very compacted small/medium stones	Seals F2, so modern.
L5	-	Topsoil	Soft, moist, dark grey/brown sandy-loam, occasional stone and gravel	Modern
L6	-	Subsoil	Soft, moist, medium yellow/brown sandy-silt (slightly loamy), common stones	-
L7	-	Hardstanding	Concrete and crush	Modern
L8	-	Natural	Natural sandy-clay matrix with occasional gravel patches.	-



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Fig 1 Site location





Fig 2 Phased evaluation results (trenches in black were not excavated)

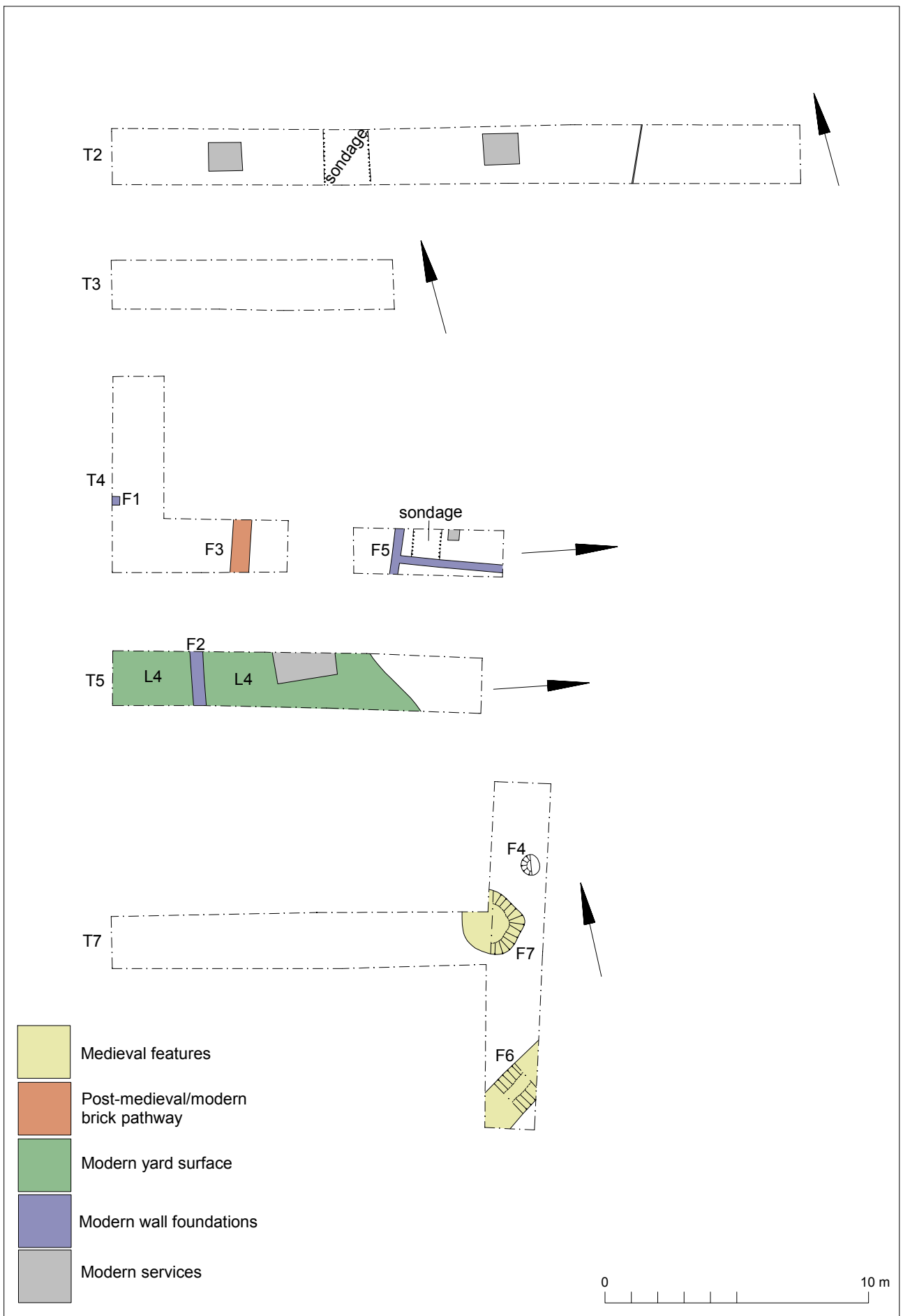


Fig 3 Trench plans

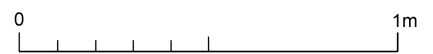
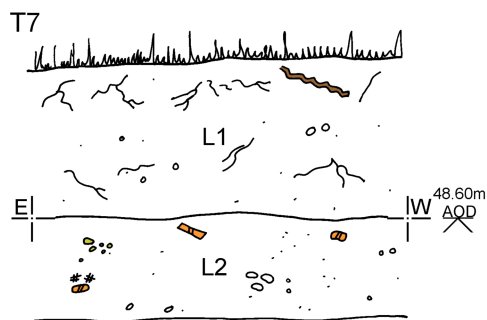
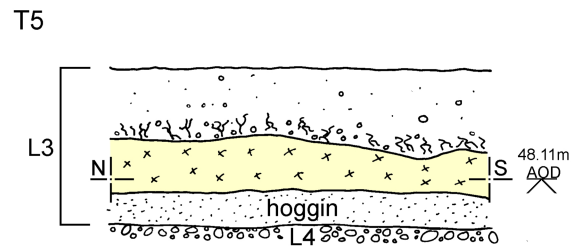
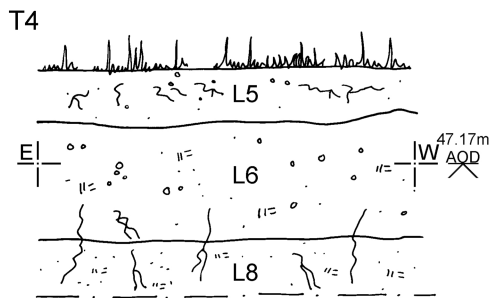
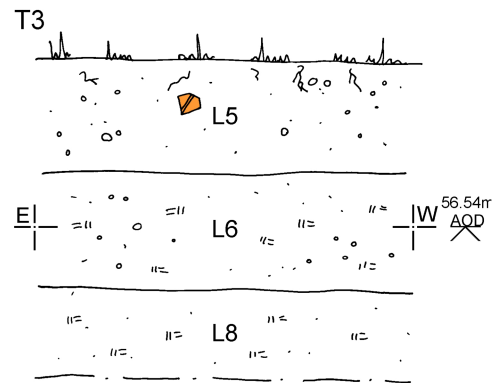
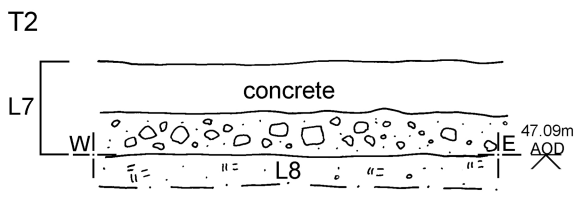


Fig 4 Representative Sections

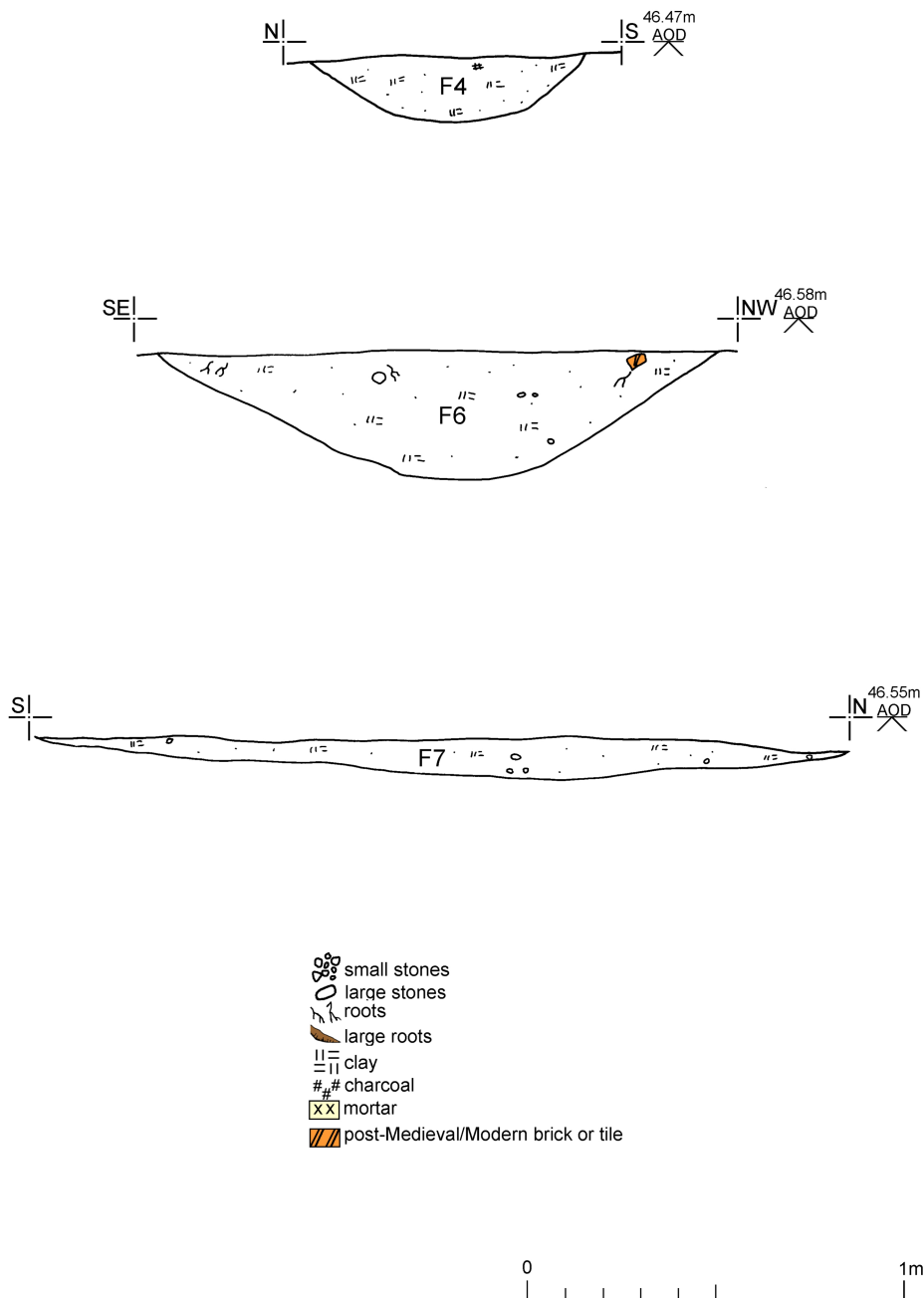
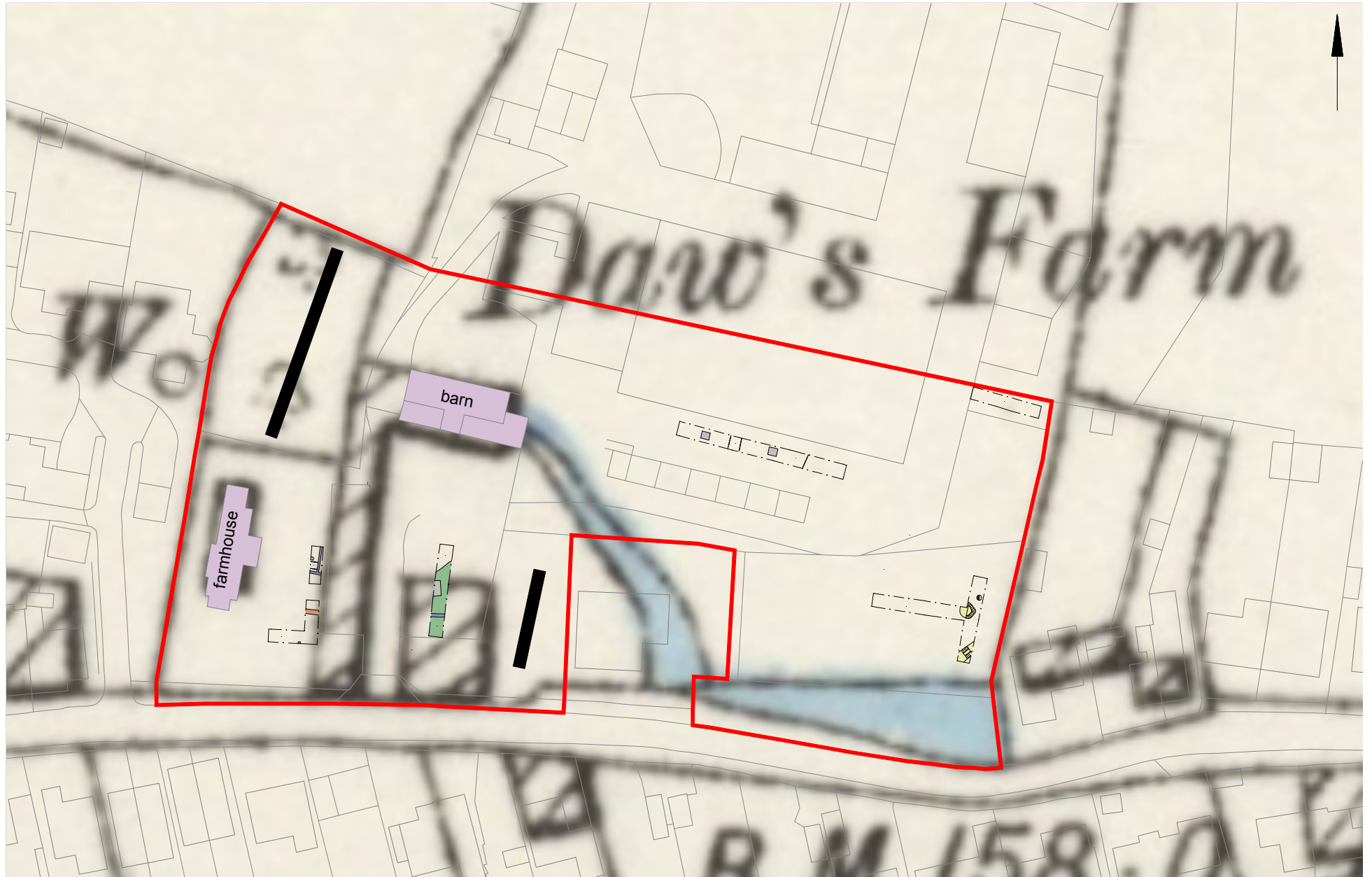


Fig 5 Feature sections



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Fig 6 6-inch OS map of 1895 (ESSEX LII.NW) overlaid with modern mapping and the results of the evaluation. Shows the position of surviving farmhouse and barn in relation to other demolished structures.

0 50 m

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OASIS ID: colchest3-290362

Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at Lordships Stud, Back Road, Writtle, Essex, CM1 3PD
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching (five trial-trenches) was carried out at Lordships Stud, Writtle, Essex in advance of the construction of 17 dwellings with associated landscaping, car parking and access. The development site is located in an area of prehistoric cropmarks, Roman settlement remains and close to the King John's Hunting Lodge. Evaluation revealed a medieval pit and ditch, a late 17th-18th century brick floor, and three brick wall foundations and a yard surface of 19th-20th century date.
Project dates	Start: 03-08-2017 End: 04-08-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	17/07f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	CHL 15/01885/FUL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	WRLS17 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	CHMRE: 2017.095 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	YARD SURFACE Modern
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	PIT Medieval
Monument type	WALL FOUNDATION Post Medieval
Monument type	WALL FOUNDATIONS Modern
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Roman
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Modern
Significant Finds	CLAY PIPE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	GLASS Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX CHELMSFORD WRITTLE Lordships Stud, Back Road
Postcode	CM1 3PD
Study area	0.73 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 6712 0637 51.730599185999 0.4202617418 51 43 50 N 000 25 12 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 45.95m Max: 48.54m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	HEM Team Officer, ECC
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 Chelmsford Museum
Digital Archive ID CHMRE: 2017.095
Digital Contents "Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey"
Paper Archive recipient Chelmsford Museum
Paper Archive ID CHMRE: 2017.095
Paper Contents "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available "Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

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