

Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US

January 2018



by Dr Elliott Hicks

figures by Ben Holloway and Emma Holloway

fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Elliott Hicks

commissioned by Colchester County High School for Girls

NGR: TL 9800 2468 & TL 9796 2471

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CAT Report 1211

January 2018

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex in advance of the construction of a multi-functional hall and two additional car parks. The site is located within the Late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, and the Late Iron Age and Roman Lexden cemetery, and in close proximity to an early Roman fort. A triple-ditched dyke uncovered during the construction of the school in 1955 is projected to run directly through the development site. Archaeological evaluation at this site uncovered three undated pits, two post-Roman pits and two natural features. As during previous investigations at this site, no trace of the triple-ditch dyke was found, suggesting that it is not located on its projected alignment or that it no longer exists.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex which was carried out on 3rd-5th January 2018. The work was commissioned by Colchester County High School for Girls in advance of the construction of a multi-functional hall and two car parks, and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

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).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCAA 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 draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive, the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) accessed via the Heritage Gateway:

The development site is located within the grounds of Colchester County High School for Girls, a purpose-built complex of buildings opened in 1957 on land that was formerly part of the estate of Altnacealgach House (locally listed), a Victorian mansion designed by acclaimed local architect Horace Darken, built in 1888 to be the home of Arthur Thomas Osborne, heir to a successful brewing business. The school lies to the south-west of the house. The Altnacealgach estate was located within the Late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, to the west of the Roman walled town within an area of Roman cemeteries termed 'the western cemetery' by Hull (1958), more generally considered the Lexden cemetery (EHER nos 11713, 11714). This is an area of Iron Age and Roman burial grounds to either side of Lexden Road (the main Roman road leading from the walled town to London). Many Roman burials and cremations have been found and reported on in this area (see Hull and CAR 11). In particular a Roman amphora burial was found to the west of Altancealgach House (EHER 11881) and a

trial-trench evaluation on a site south of Park Road in 2009 defined Roman occupation remains, including two cremation burials (CHER event no. ECC2906, ECC Field Archaeology Unit Report).

Excavations in 1939 revealed an early Roman curving ditch, possibly the corner of a fort, to the north-west of the school (EHER 11882). The same excavations revealed two parallel ditches, thought by Hull to represent an annexe lying to the south of this fort (Hull, 273). It was later shown that these form a continuation of Heath Farm Dyke North (EHER 12660, CAR 11, 32).

In 1955, prior to the construction of the school, a 'triple-ditched dyke' was excavated by R.J. Martin beneath what was to become the main school building. The ditches were 4m wide, although their depths are unknown (CHER MCC2177, CAR 11, 127). In addition to this, on the south edge of the school, post holes and a ditch indicated the possible presence of a building with wooden posts surrounded by a diagonal ditch dated to the 2nd century and a large 4.3m deep pit, also dated to the 2nd century (EHER 12631).

In 1956 excavations undertaken by John Wachter to the east of the school revealed palisade trenches, an irregular wattle-and-daub structure, gullies and pits (EHER 12632, CAR 11, 124-126).

A watching brief undertaken by CAT in 2001 on an extension to the school revealed no trace of the ditches of the triple dyke seen in 1955 (CAT Report 155).

A further watching brief in 2005 for a new music and careers block recorded four undated pits or ditches (CAT Report 348). At least two of the ditches of the 'triple-ditched dyke' should have been visible within the footprint of the new building and one of its soakaways, but were not observed. A substantial ditch recorded in a second soakaway was not in alignment with those seen in 1955 and it was concluded that the 'triple-ditched dyke' either turns a corner or in fact does not actually exist.

An evaluation undertaken by CAT in 2014 in the area of the proposed rear or southern car park revealed a Roman ditch dating to the later 1st century AD (CAT Report 762). The ditch was aligned parallel to the ditches seen in the 1939 excavations (ie. Heath Farm Dyke North). What is unclear is whether the 2014 ditch is merely an agricultural field ditch, or whether it is part of a wider defensive scheme including the Heath Farm Dyke and the 'triple-ditched dyke' on the school site.

An evaluation undertaken by CAT in 2016 to the south of the proposed development identified a Roman ditch aligned north-east to south-west (CAT Report 975). This was recorded along with five modern and two natural features. No trace of the triple-dyke was identified even though it was projected to run through the evaluation trench.

4 Aims

Archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Colchester County High School for Girls primarily to locate the triple-ditched dyke uncovered during the construction of the school in 1955, which is projected to cross the proposed development area.

5 Results (Figs 2-4)

Three trial-trenches were excavated within the development site.

Trench 1 (T1): 17m long by 1.8m wide

T1 was excavated through modern topsoil (L5, c 0.17-0.19m thick) and post-Roman subsoil (L3, c 0.47-0.48m thick) onto naturally-deposited sands and gravels (L4, encountered at a depth of 0.65-0.67m bgl).

Undated pit F2 measured 0.5m in width and 0.07m in depth.

Pit F3 extended beyond the limit of excavation and so was not fully-excavated, but its excavated extent measured 0.79m in width and 0.11m in depth. It contained two fragments of abraded Roman CBM that were probably residual.

Medieval/post-medieval pit F4 extended beyond the limit of excavation and so was not fully-excavated, but its excavated extent measured 0.63m in width and 0.08m in depth.

Undated pit F5 measured 0.66m in width and 0.06m in depth.



Photograph 1: T1 trench shot – looking south

Trench 2 (T2): 12m long by 1.8m wide

T2 was excavated through modern tarmac and hoggin (L1, c 0.32-0.24m thick), modern topsoil layers (L2, c 0.02-0.15m thick) and L3 (c 0.62-0.51m thick) onto L4 (encountered at a depth of 0.91-0.94m bcgl).

Natural feature F1 measured 0.51m in width and 0.2m in depth.



Photograph 2: T3 trench shot – looking west north-west

Trench 3 (T3): 10m long by 1.8m wide

T3 was excavated through L1 (c 0.32-0.24m thick), L2 (c 0.02-0.15m thick) and L3 (c 0.62-0.51m thick) onto L4 (encountered at a depth of 0.91-0.94m bcgl).

Undated pit F6 measured 0.61m in width and 0.19m in depth.

Possible natural linear feature F7 was aligned NNW-SSE, and measured 0.44m in width and 0.12m in depth.

6 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Only small quantities of finds were recovered. These come from two pits in Trench 1 (F3 and F4), a soil layer in Trench 2 (L3) and unstratified (US) among spoil excavated from Trench 1. The finds range in date from the Iron Age to the modern period and are listed and described in Table 1 (below). The Roman pottery fabric codes refer to **CAR 10** with the addition of black surface ware (Fabric BSW) described in the table.

Of the two pits one (F4) produced an abraded sherd of prehistoric sand-tempered pottery (probably of Middle-Late Iron Age date), a sherd of abraded Roman pottery and a small piece of tile which is probably peg-tile of late medieval or post-medieval date. The other (F3) produced two small pieces of abraded Roman tile. A single sherd of Roman pottery and a piece from a Roman roof tile were among the finds recovered from subsoil (L3). Otherwise the finds consist of a few pieces of peg-tile and a modern stoneware bottle which was recovered from spoil from Trench 1. Overall the nature of the finds suggests that much or possibly all of the Roman material is residual in later dated or disturbed contexts that are probably of post-medieval or modern date.

Context	Find no.	Type/ description	Finds spot date
T1 F3, pit	2	Roman CBM: (2 pieces, 58g); one piece 15-18mm thick some abrasion, orange fine sand fabric with grey core; other small abraded piece.	Roman
T1 F4, pit	3	Prehistoric pottery: Single sherd (8g), thick sandy sherd, abraded, probably hand-made, probably Middle-Late Iron Age. Roman pottery: Single sherd (38g), flange with thickened edge, sandy (faintly orange) buff-brown fabric, abraded, probably from <i>mortarium</i> mixing bowl (Fabric TZ) (probably 1st-2nd century). CBM: Tile piece (22g), 10-12mm thick, most probably peg-tile (medieval (c 14th century+) to post-medieval/modern), thickness suggests this date but not certain.	Medieval/ post-medieval
T1 US (spoil)	1	Modern pottery: Complete (whole) brown stoneware bottle (ink bottle), 120mm tall (366g), marked DOULTON / LAMBETH on wall just above base, impressed stamp dated 1858+ (Godden 1991) (c late 19th/early 20th century). CBM: Peg-tile (1 piece, 18g); undated small piece of tile, edge piece with finger wipe groove, orange, fine sand fabric with grey core (1 piece, 22g).	Modern (late 19th-early 20th century)
T2 L3, subsoil	4	Roman pottery: Single sherd (14g), black surface ware (BSW), sandy red-brown fabric, dark grey surfaces (probably from a jar or deep bowl) (Roman) Roman CBM: (1 piece, 248g) 25mm thick, fine dense, orange sand/silt fabric, tile edge with part of finger wipe signature?, probably <i>tegula</i> . Post-Roman CBM: Peg-tile (30g), 10mm thick, slightly coarse sandy orange fabric (medieval (c 14th century+) to post-medieval/modern)	Post-medieval

Table 1 Finds by context (CBM=ceramic building material; US=unstratified)

7 Environmental assessment

by Lisa Gray MSc MA ACIfA Archaeobotanist

Introduction – aims and objectives

Four samples were presented for assessment. Samples <1> and <4> were taken from undated pits. Sample <2> came from a post-Roman pit and sample <3> came from a medieval/post-medieval pit.

The aims of this assessment are to determine the significance and potential of the plant macro-remains in the samples, consider their use in providing information about diet, craft, medicine, crop-husbandry, feature function and environment.

Sampling and processing methods

Forty litres of soil was sampled and processed by Colchester Archaeological Trust. It was processed using a Siraf-type flotation device. Flot was collected in a 300-micron mesh sieve then dried.

Once with the author the flot was 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 uncharred 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.

At this stage, to allow comparison between samples, numbers have also been estimated but where only a very low number of items are present they have been counted. Identifiable charred wood >4mm in diameter has been separated from charcoal flecks. Fragments this size are easier to break to reveal the cross-sections and diagnostic features necessary for identification and are less likely to be blown or unintentionally moved around the site (Asouti 2006, 31; Smart and Hoffman, 1988, 178-179). Charcoal flecks <4mm diameter have been quantified but not recommended for further analysis unless twigs or roundwood fragments larger than 2mmØ were present.

Results (Table 2)

The plant remains

Only charred plant remains were present in these samples. These consisted of one poorly preserved wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grain in sample <1> and one straight hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.) seed in sample <2>. No fragments of charcoal of identifiable size were present.

Fauna and artefactual remains

No remains were found.

Recommendations

No further work is recommended on these samples. All contents have been recorded in this report.

Sample	Finds No.	Sample description	Bulk sample volume (L)	Flot volume (ml)	Charred Grain			Grain tissue	Charcoal <4mmØ	Modern root/rhizomes
					a	b	c			
1	5	F2 undated pit	10	5	1	1	2	-	2	3
2	6	F3 post-Roman pit	10	5	1	1	3	-	1	3
3	7	F4 medieval / post-medieval pit	10	2	-	-	-	1	1	2
4	8	F6 undated pit	10	2	-	-	-	1	1	2

Table 2 Environmental results

Key: a = abundance [1 = occasional 1-10; 2 = moderate 11-100; and 3 = abundant >100]
 d = diversity [1 = low 1-4 taxa types; 2 = moderate 5-10; 3 = high]
 p = preservation [1 = poor (family level only), 2 = moderate (genus), 3 = good (species identification possible)]

8 Discussion

Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls uncovered two natural features, three undated pits and two post-Roman pits. The presence of residual prehistoric and Roman finds suggests some activity on or close to the development site in these periods.

Two of the evaluation trenches were positioned to target the triple-ditched dyke which was uncovered during the construction of the school in 1955. However, as during the watching briefs conducted by CAT in 2001 and 2005, and the evaluation undertaken in 2016, no trace of this feature was detected.

On the face of it, the failure to detect the dyke would suggest that it does not exist. Although the dyke was initially uncovered by a non-archaeologist it was subsequently observed by M.R. Hull, who compiled detailed notes on the feature, and a plan was completed (see *CAR 11*, 127). This plan has informed subsequent archaeological investigations of the dyke. It should be emphasised that this plan was drawn up in relation to the structure of the school which did not exist when the dyke was uncovered, and it may be that its location and course is somewhat different to that depicted. This could explain why no trace of the dyke was detected during this evaluation and during previous work at this site.

Another possibility is that the feature was stripped away during the building of the school, and that L3, which has been taken to be subsoil, is instead a layer of re-deposited soil which was disturbed in the process of construction. The presence of residual Roman finds in this soil layer would lend some credence to this theory.

9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Colchester County High School for Girls for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with E Hicks. Figures are by B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for Colchester Borough Council by Jess Tipper.

10 References

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

- | | | |
|---|-------|---|
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| CAT Report 348 | 2005 | <i>An archaeological watching brief at the Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: May-November 2005</i> |
| CAT Report 762 | 2014 | <i>Archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: March 2014</i> |
| CAT Report 975 | 2016 | <i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: June 2016</i> |
| CAT | 2017 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CBCAA | 2017 | <i>Brief for an Archaeological Trial-Trenched Evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, CO3 3US</i> by J Tipper |
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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> |
| DCLG | 2012 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> |
| English Heritage | 2006 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> |
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11 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CBM	ceramic building material, ie brick/tile
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
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'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
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
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
peg-tile	rectangular thin tile with peg-hole(s) used mainly for roofing, first appeared c AD1200 and continued in use to present day, but commonly post-medieval to modern
post-medieval	period from c AD 1500 to c 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
wsi	written scheme of investigation

12 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1211)

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

13 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 2018.4.

Distribution list:

Colchester County High School for Girls
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



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Checked by: Philip Crummy
Date: 15.01.2018

Appendix 1 Context list

Context Number	Find Number	Feature Type	Description	Date
F1	-	Natural feature	Firm, moist, medium orange/brown sand with very occasional CBM piece inclusions	Post-glacial
F2	5	Pit	Firm, dry, medium grey/brown silt	Undatable
F3	2, 6	Pit	Firm, moist, dark grey/brown silt	?Post-Roman
F4	3, 7	Pit	Firm, moist, dark grey/brown silt	Medieval/ post-medieval
F5	-	Pit	Firm, moist, dark grey/brown silt	Undatable
F6	8	Pit	Firm, moist medium grey/brown sandy-silt	Undatable
F7	-	Natural gully	Firm, moist, medium grey silt	Post-glacial
L1	-	Tarmac surface and hoggin	Hard, dry, medium orange sand with tarmac surface	Modern
L2	-	Buried topsoil	Firm, wet, dark brown-black silty-clay	?Modern
L3	4	Subsoil	Firm, moist, medium brown silty-clay with 1%< stone piece inclusions	?Post-Roman with residual Roman finds
L4	-	Natural	Firm, moist, medium orange/brown sand	Post-glacial
L5	-	Topsoil	Loose, dry dark brown loam	Modern

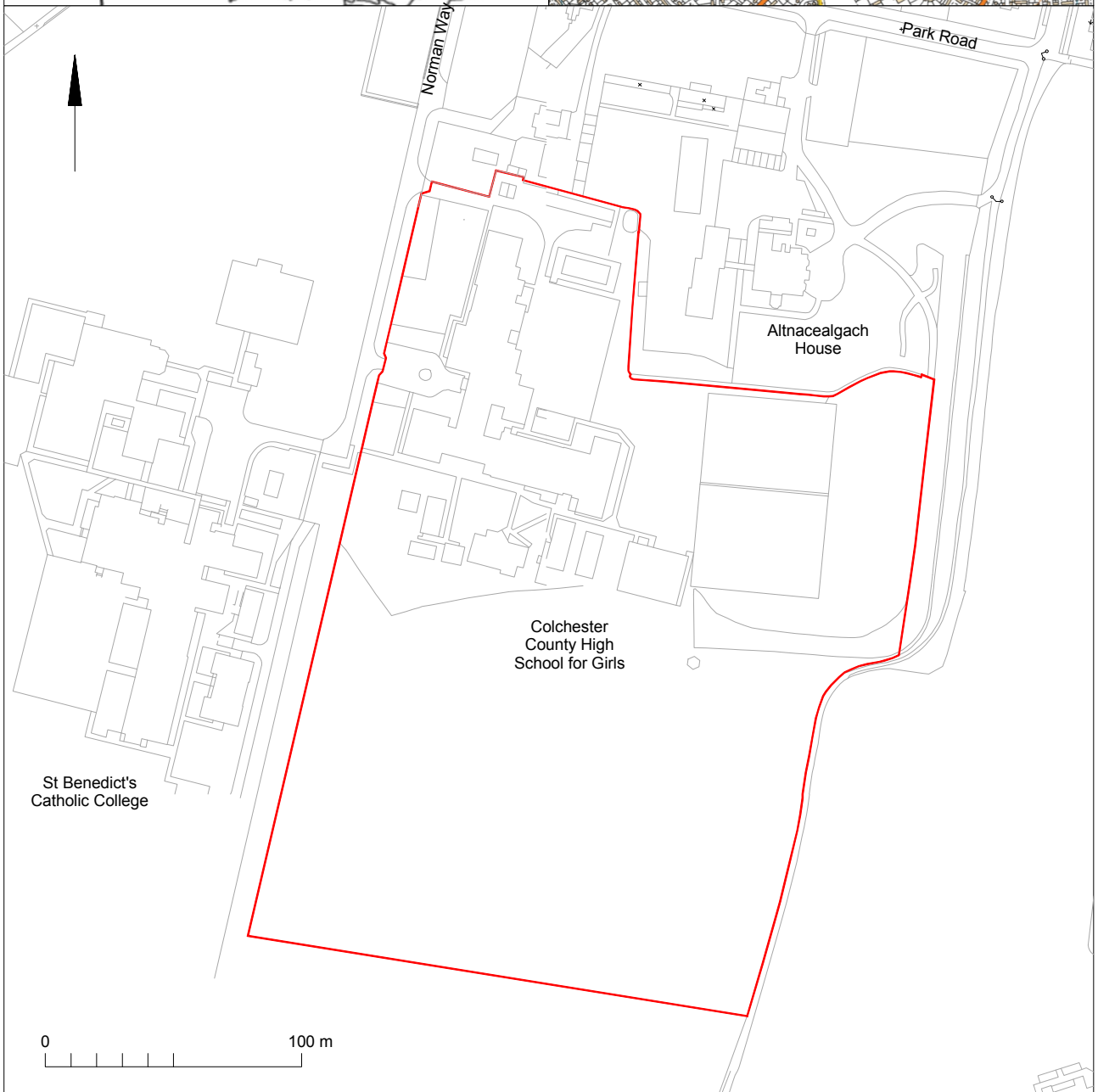
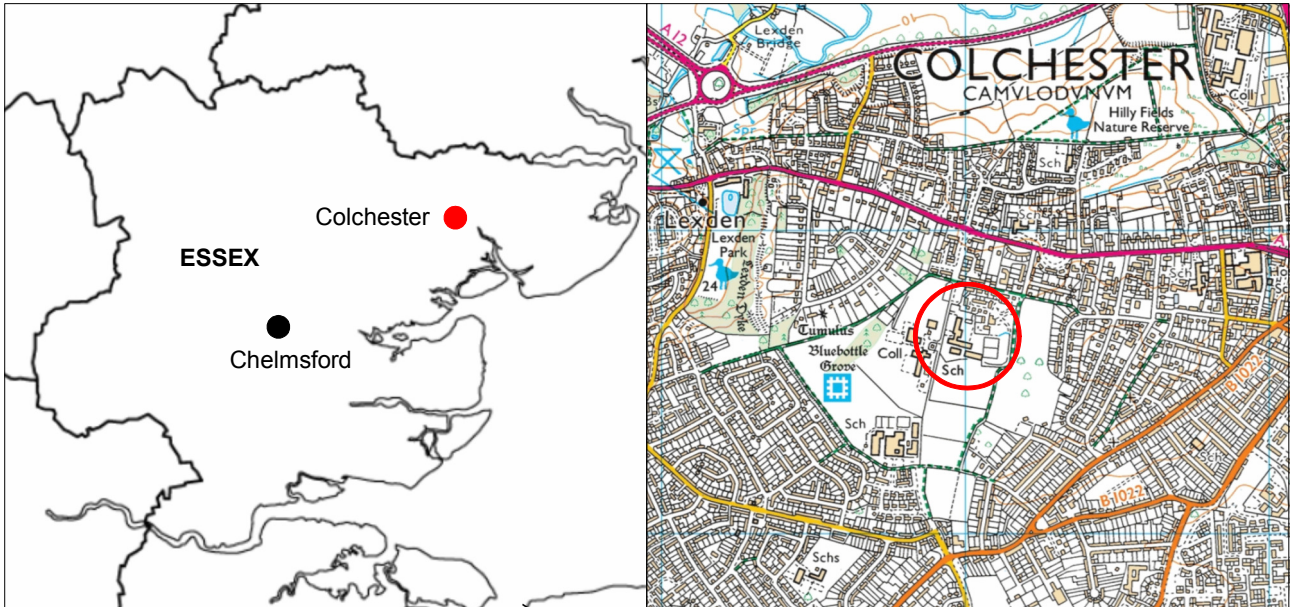


Fig 1 Site location.

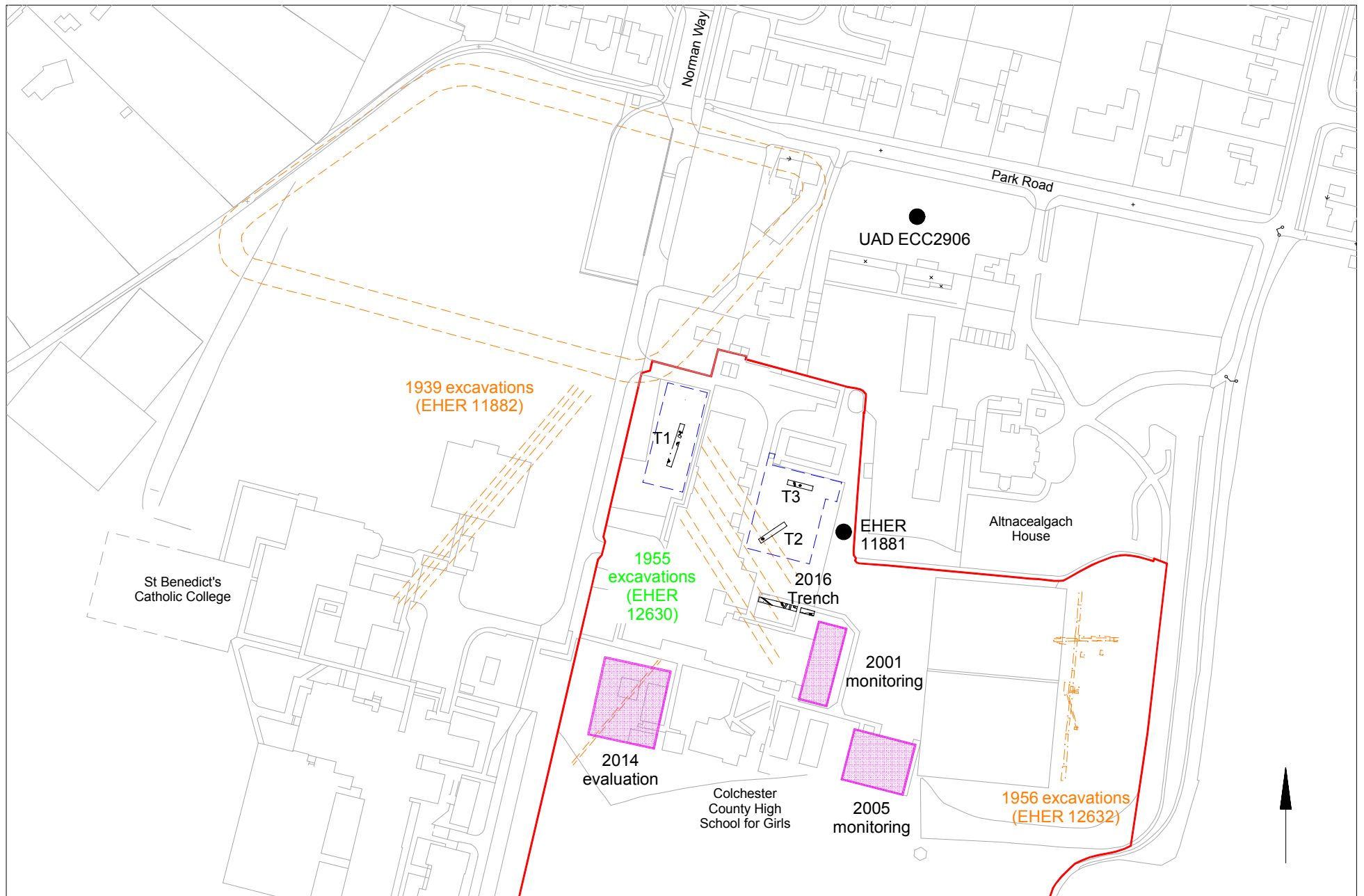
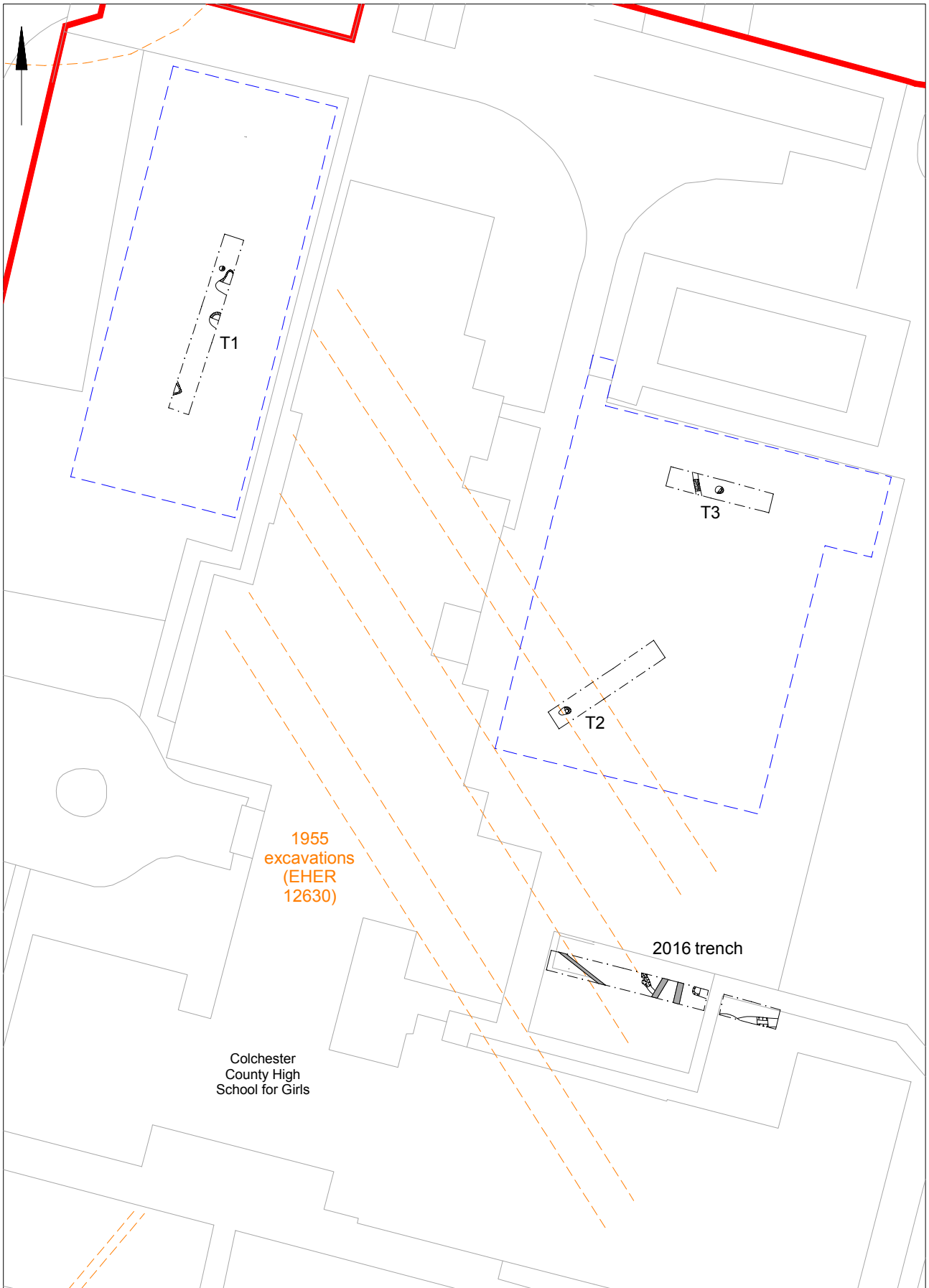


Fig 2 Site location (dashed blue lines) in relation to previous archaeological work.



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Fig 3 Trench plan.

0 20 m

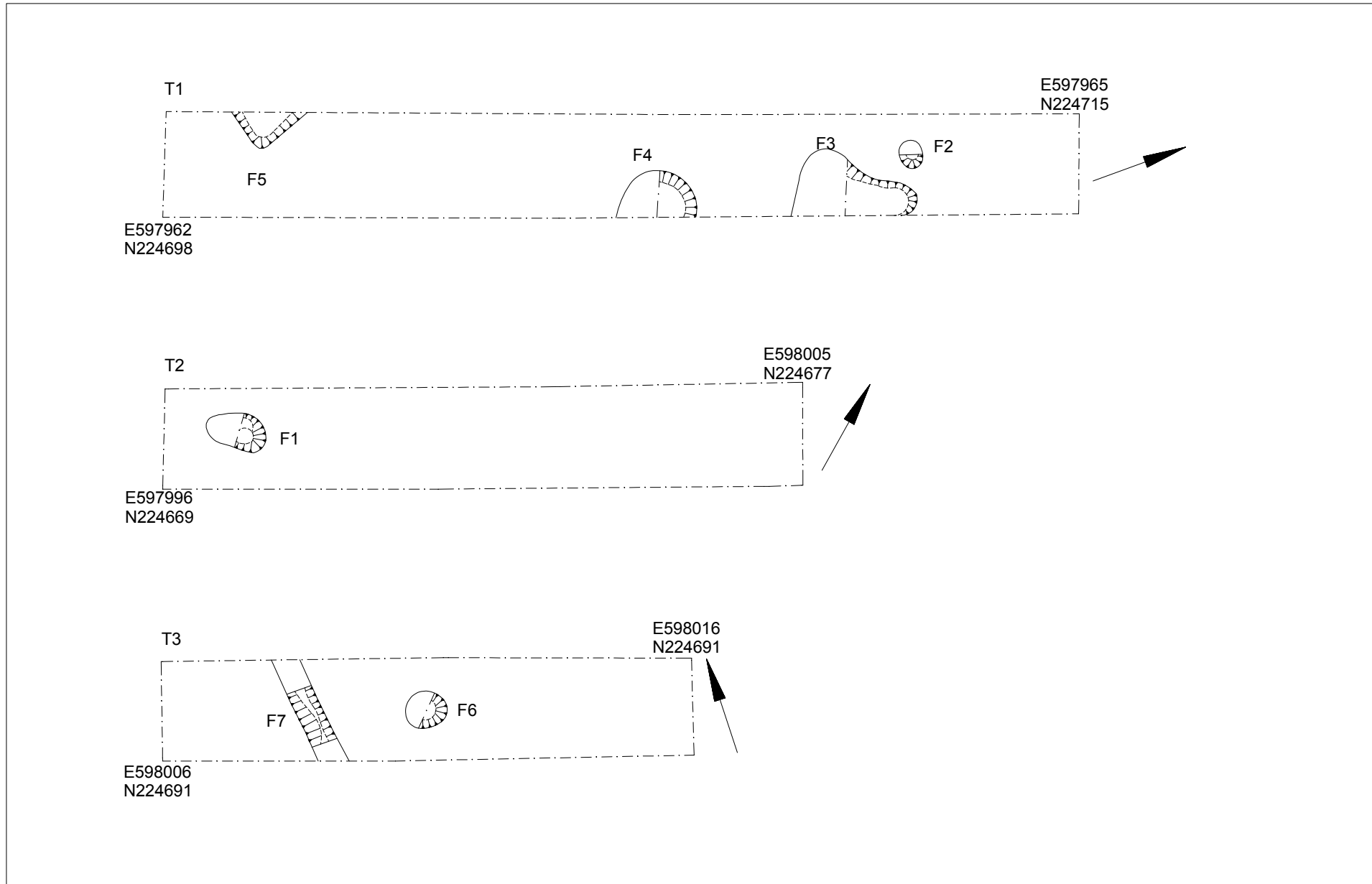


Fig 4 Trench results.



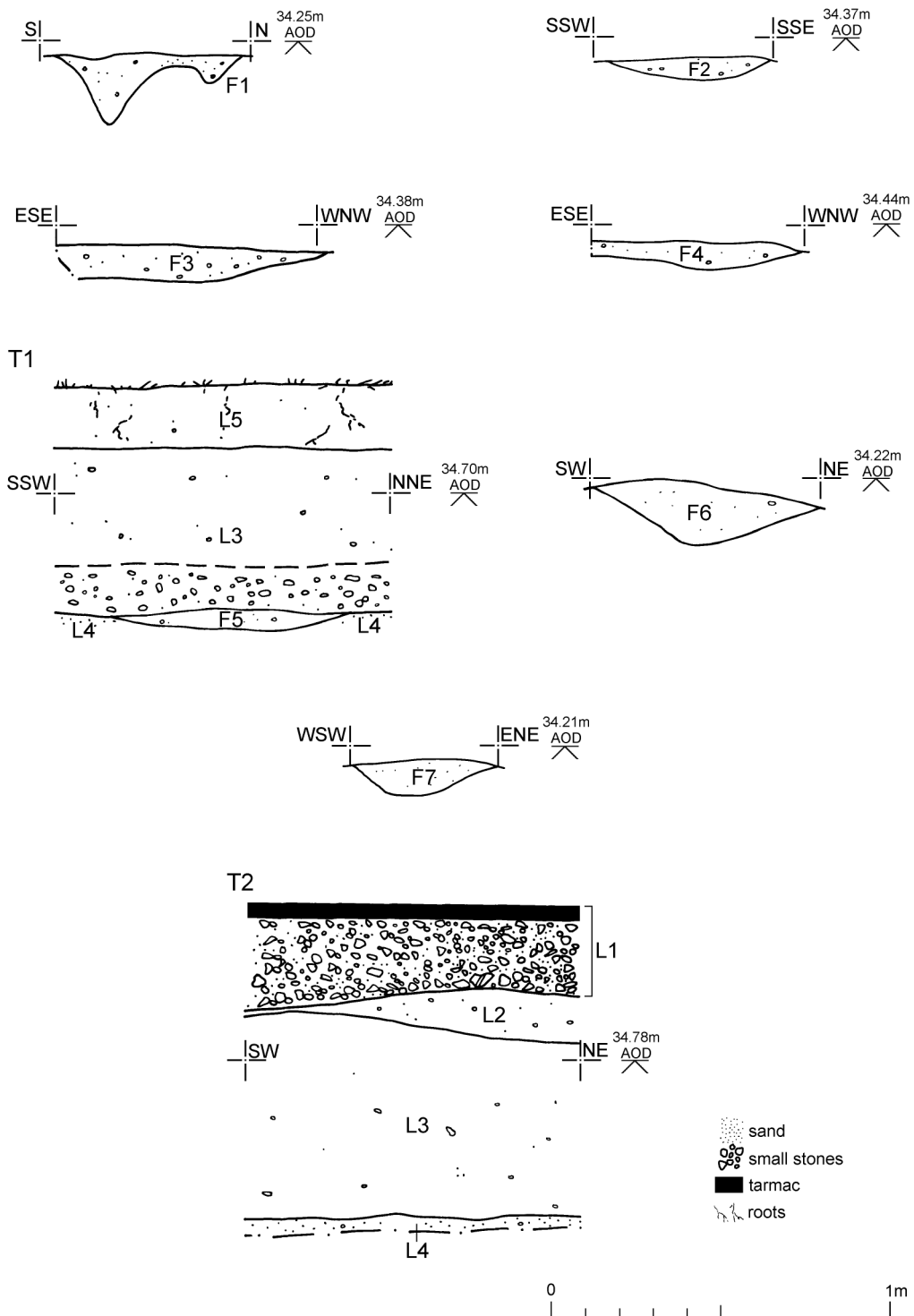


Fig 5 Feature and representative sections.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9800 2468 & TL 9796 2471	Site code: CAT project ref.: 17/12g CHER ref: ECC4124 OASIS ref: colchest3-304152
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 3rd-5th January 2018	Size of area investigated: 5.59 ha
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM 2018.4	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? Not known	Related CHER/SMR number: ECC 2906; EHER 11713, 11714, 11881, 11882, 12631, 12632, 12660; MCC 2177
Final report: CAT Report 1211	
Periods represented:	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: <i>An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex in advance of the construction of a multi-functional hall and two additional car parks. The site is located within the Late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, and the Late Iron Age and Roman Lexden cemetery, and in close proximity to an early Roman fort. A triple-ditched dyke uncovered during the construction of the school in 1955 is projected to run directly through the development site. Archaeological evaluation at this site uncovered three undated pits, two post-Roman pits and two natural features. As during previous investigations at this site, no trace of the triple-ditch dyke was found, suggesting that it is not located on its projected alignment or that it no longer exists.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: -	Significance: none
Author of summary: Dr Elliott Hicks	Date of summary: January 2018

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)
for an archaeological trial-trenched evaluation at
Colchester County High School for Girls,
Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US

NGR: TL 9800 2468 & TL 9796 2471

Planning reference: 172464

Client: Colchester County High School for Girls

Curating Museum: Colchester

Museum accession code: TBC

CHER ref.: TBC

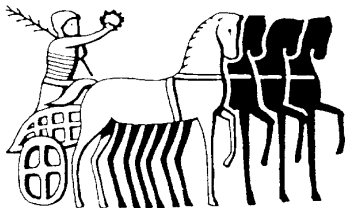
CAT Project code: 17/12g

OASIS Project id: colchest3-304152

Site Manager: Ben Holloway

CBC Monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 15.12.2017



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,
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email: cl@catuk.org

Site location and description

The proposed development site lies approximately 1.7km east of Colchester town centre (Fig 1). It lies within the grounds of the Colchester County High School for Girls and consists of a grassed area parallel to Norman Way and a former playground currently in use as a car park. The site is centred on NGR TL 9800 2468 (multi-function hall) and TL 9796 2471 (front car park).

Proposed work

The development comprises the erection of a new multi-functional hall, with changing rooms, group rooms and classroom. The new hall will adjoin an existing externally covered swimming pool and offer new changing facilities. There is also provision for two additional car parks.

Archaeological background (Fig 2)

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

The development site is located within the grounds of Colchester County High School for Girls, a purpose-built complex of buildings opened in 1957 on land that was formerly part of the estate of Altnacealgach House (locally listed), a Victorian mansion designed by acclaimed local architect Horace Darken, built in 1888 to be the home of Arthur Thomas Osborne, heir to a successful brewing business. The school lies to the south-west of the house. The Altnacealgach estate was located within the Late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, to the west of the Roman walled town within an area of Roman cemeteries termed 'the western cemetery' by Hull (1958), more generally considered the Lexden cemetery (EHER nos 11713, 11714). This is an area of Iron Age and Roman burial grounds to either side of Lexden Road (the main Roman road leading from the walled town to London). Many Roman burials and cremations have been found and reported on in this area (see Hull and CAR 11). In particular a Roman amphora burial was found to the west of Altnacealgach House (EHER 11881) and a trial-trench evaluation on a site south of Park Road in 2009 defined Roman occupation remains, including two cremation burials (CHER event no. ECC2906, ECC Field Archaeology Unit Report).

Excavations in 1939 revealed an early Roman curving ditch, possibly the corner of a fort, to the north-west of the school (EHER 11882). The same excavations revealed two parallel ditches, thought by Hull to represent an annexe lying to the south of this fort (Hull, 273). It was later shown that these form a continuation of the Heath Farm Dyke North (EHER 12660, CAR 11, 32).

In 1955, prior to the construction of the school, a 'triple-ditched dyke' was excavated by R J Martin beneath what was to become the main school building. The ditches were 4m wide, although their depths are unknown (CHER MCC2177, CAR 11, 127). In addition to this, on the south edge of the school, post holes and a ditch indicated the possible presence of a building with wooden posts surrounded by a diagonal ditch dated to the 2nd century and a large 4.3m deep pit, also dated to the 2nd century (EHER 12631).

In 1956 excavations undertaken by John Wachter to the east of the school revealed palisade trenches, an irregular wattle-and-daub structure, gullies and pits (EHER 12632, CAR 11, 124-126).

A watching brief undertaken by CAT in 2001 on an extension to the school revealed no trace of the ditches of the triple dyke seen in 1955 (CAT Report 155).

A further watching brief in 2005 for a new music and careers block recorded four un-dated pits or ditches (CAT Report 348). At least two of the ditches of the 'triple-ditched dyke' should have been visible within the footprint of the new building and one of its soakaways, but were not observed. A substantial ditch recorded in a second soakaway was not in alignment with

those seen in 1955 and it was concluded that the 'triple-ditched dyke' either turns a corner or in fact does not actually exist.

An evaluation undertaken by CAT in 2014 in the area of the proposed rear or southern car park revealed a Roman ditch dating to the later 1st century AD (CAT Report 762). The ditch was aligned parallel to the ditches seen in the 1939 excavations (ie, Heath Farm Dyke North). What is unclear is whether the 2014 ditch is merely an agricultural field ditch, or whether it is part of a wider defensive scheme including the Heath Farm Dyke and the 'triple-ditched dyke' on the school site.

An evaluation undertaken by CAT in 2016 to the south of the proposed development identified a Roman ditch aligned north-east to south-west (CAT Report 975). This was recorded along with five modern and two natural features. No trace of the triple-dyke was identified even though it was projected to run through the evaluation trench.

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in September 2017 (application No.172464) proposing the construction of a new sports hall (multi-function hall) with changing rooms, group rooms and classroom. The new sports hall will adjoin an existing externally covered swimming pool and offer new changing facilities. There is also provision for two additional car parks.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the CHER / EHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, a pre-determination 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 (Fig 3)

The required archaeological work is for archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2017).

Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover 5% by area of each plot. Specifically, this will comprise the excavation of a single trial-trench (T1) 17m long by 1.8m wide, located across the footprint of the proposed northern car park. This has been positioned to avoid known services and root protection zones and targeted to intercept the projected line of the central ditch of the triple dyke. A second trench (T2) 12m long by 1.8m wide will be excavated through the existing car park across the projected line of the northern ditch of the triple dyke. A third trench (T3) 10m long by 1.8m wide will be excavated across the northern part of the proposed multi-function hall (Fig 3). The purpose of the trenches is to assess the archaeological potential of the site and to determine if further archaeological investigation is required. Decisions on the need for any further archaeological investigation before any groundworks commence and/or monitoring during groundworks will be made by the CBCAA on the basis of the results of the evaluation.

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.

General methodology

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

- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a-c)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- Relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2017)
- The Project Brief issued by CBCAA (CBC 2017)

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 two archaeologists for two days.

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

Evaluation methodology

Where appropriate, modern overburden and any topsoil stripping/levelling will be performed using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. If no archaeologically significant deposits are exposed, machine excavation will continue until natural subsoil is reached.

Where necessary, areas will be cleaned by hand to ensure the visibility of archaeological deposits.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered time will be allowed for these to be excavated, planned and recorded.

All features or deposits will be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) in 1m wide sections, and 100% of complex structures/features. Complex archaeological structures such as walls, kilns, ovens or burials will be carefully cleaned, planned and fully recorded, but where possible left *in situ*. Only if it can be demonstrated that the complex structure/feature is likely to be destroyed by groundworks will it be removed.

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

A sondage will be excavated in each trench to test the stratigraphy of the site. This will occur in every trench unless it can be demonstrated that a feature excavated within a particular trench has clearly penetrated into natural.

A representative section will be drawn of each trench, to include ground level, the depth of machining within the trench and the depth of any sondages.

A metal detector will be used to examine trenches, contexts and 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 topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket under the supervision of an archaeologist.

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. Any significant features, ie burials, will be planned by hand.

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. Trained CAT staff will do all processing with flots passed to Val Fryer / Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

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

Human remains

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

Photographic record

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

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

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

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

animal bones (small groups): Adam Wightman/Alec Wade

flints: Adam Wightman

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

or to outside specialists:

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.

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 trenches in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each trench 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 and supplied to CBCAA.

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

Archive deposition

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

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

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

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

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

Monitoring

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

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

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with CBCAA prior to them being carried out.

CBCAA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

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

References

CAR Report 11	1995	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 11: Camulodunum II</i> , by Hawkes and Crummy
CAT Report 155	2001	<i>An archaeological watching brief at the County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: September 2001</i> by Kate Orr
CAT Report 348	2005	<i>An archaeological watching brief at the Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: May-November 2005</i> by Kate Orr
CAT Report 762	2014	<i>Archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex - March 2014</i> by B Holloway
CAT Report 975	2016	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: June 2016</i> by L Pooley
CAT	2017	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CBCAA	2017	<i>Brief for an Archaeological Trial-Trenched Evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, CO3 3US</i> by J Tipper
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i>
ClfA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>

DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).</i>
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester, Society of Antiquaries Research Committee Report, XX</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>

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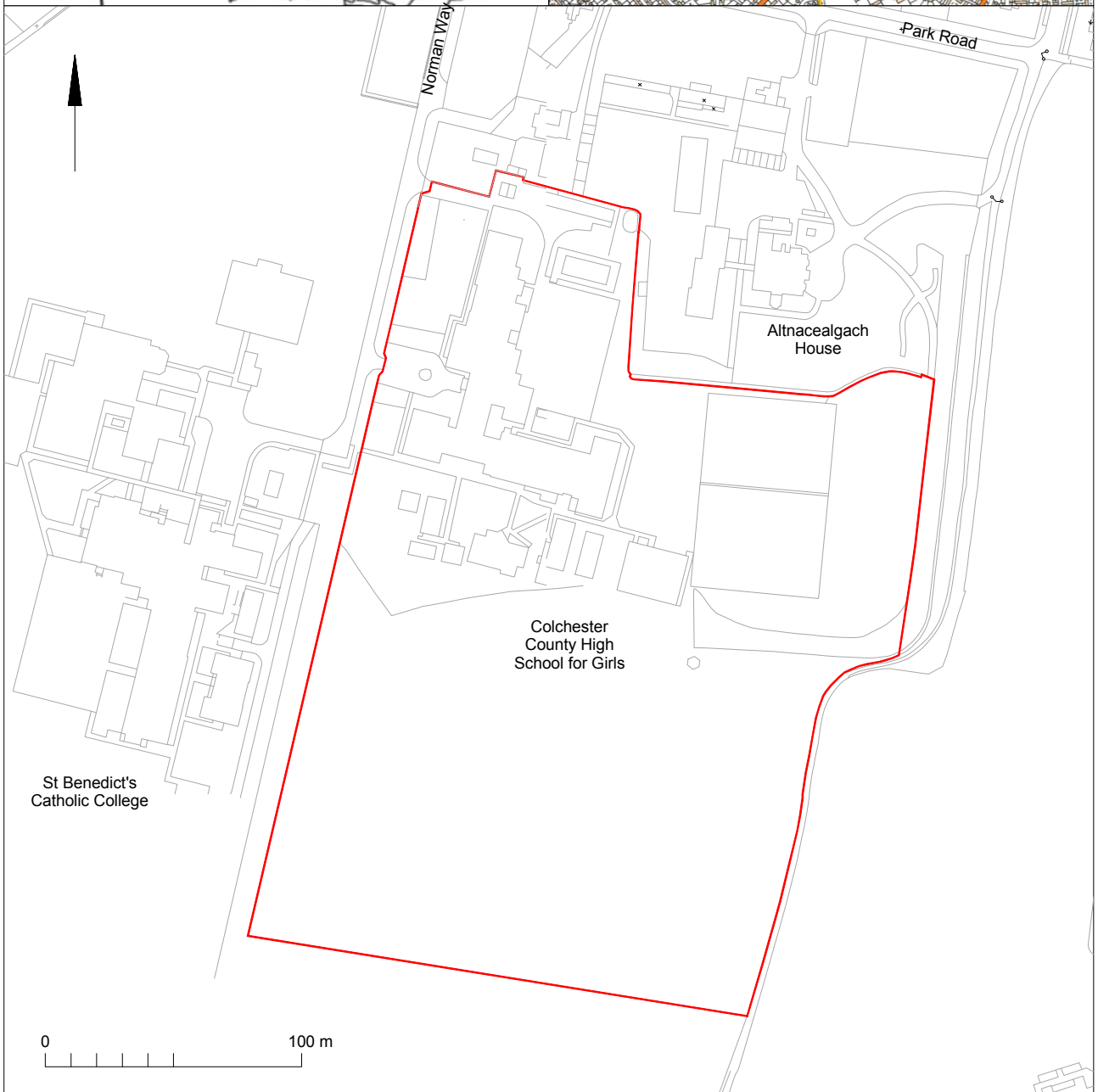
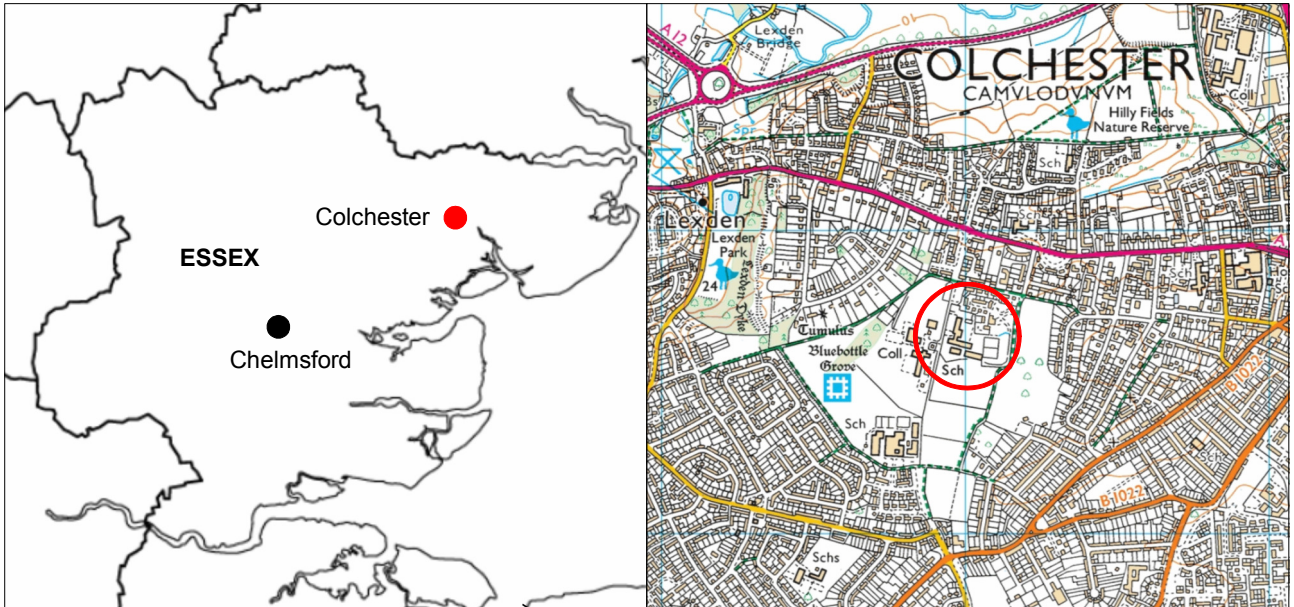


Fig 1 Site location.

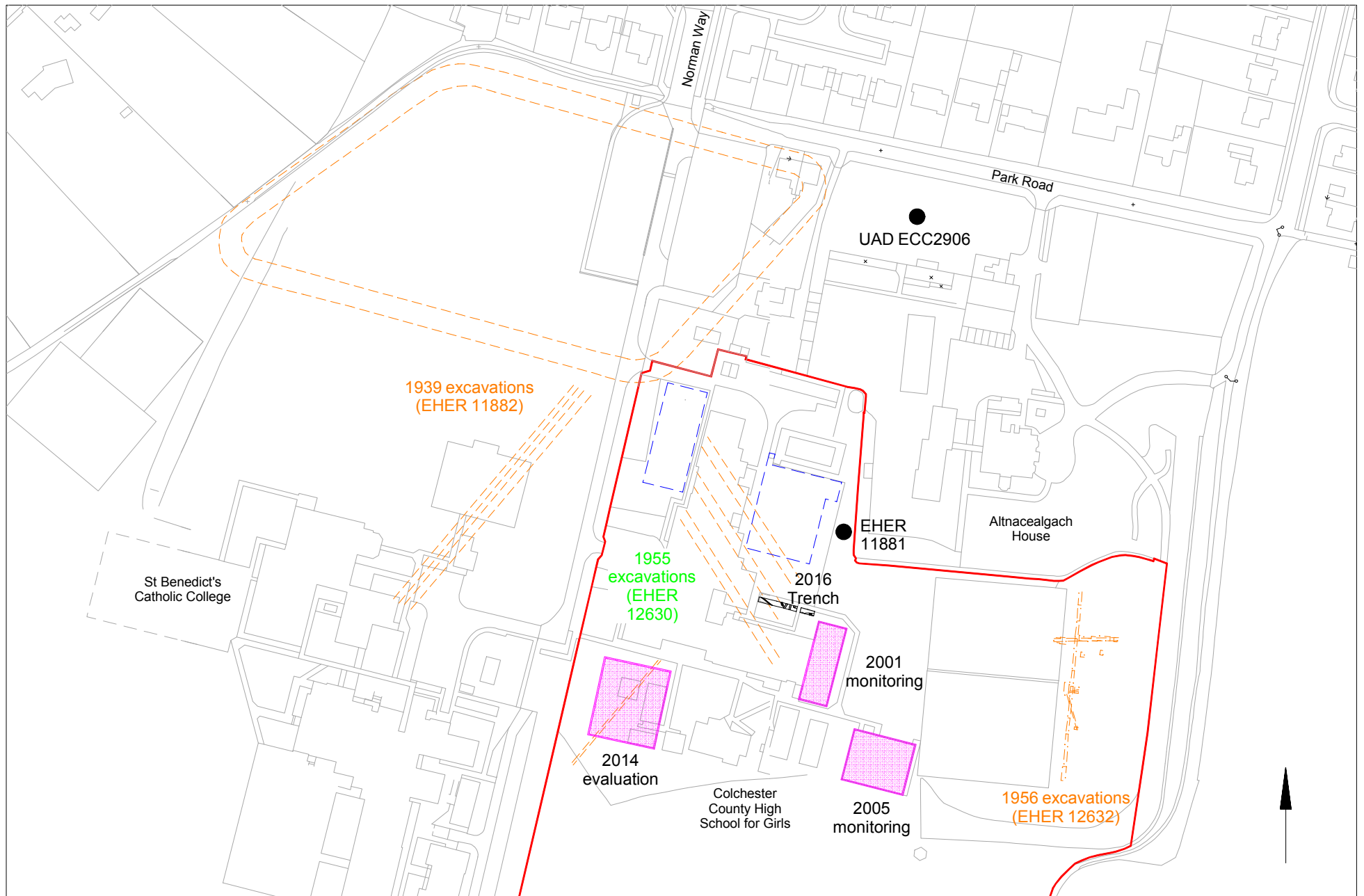
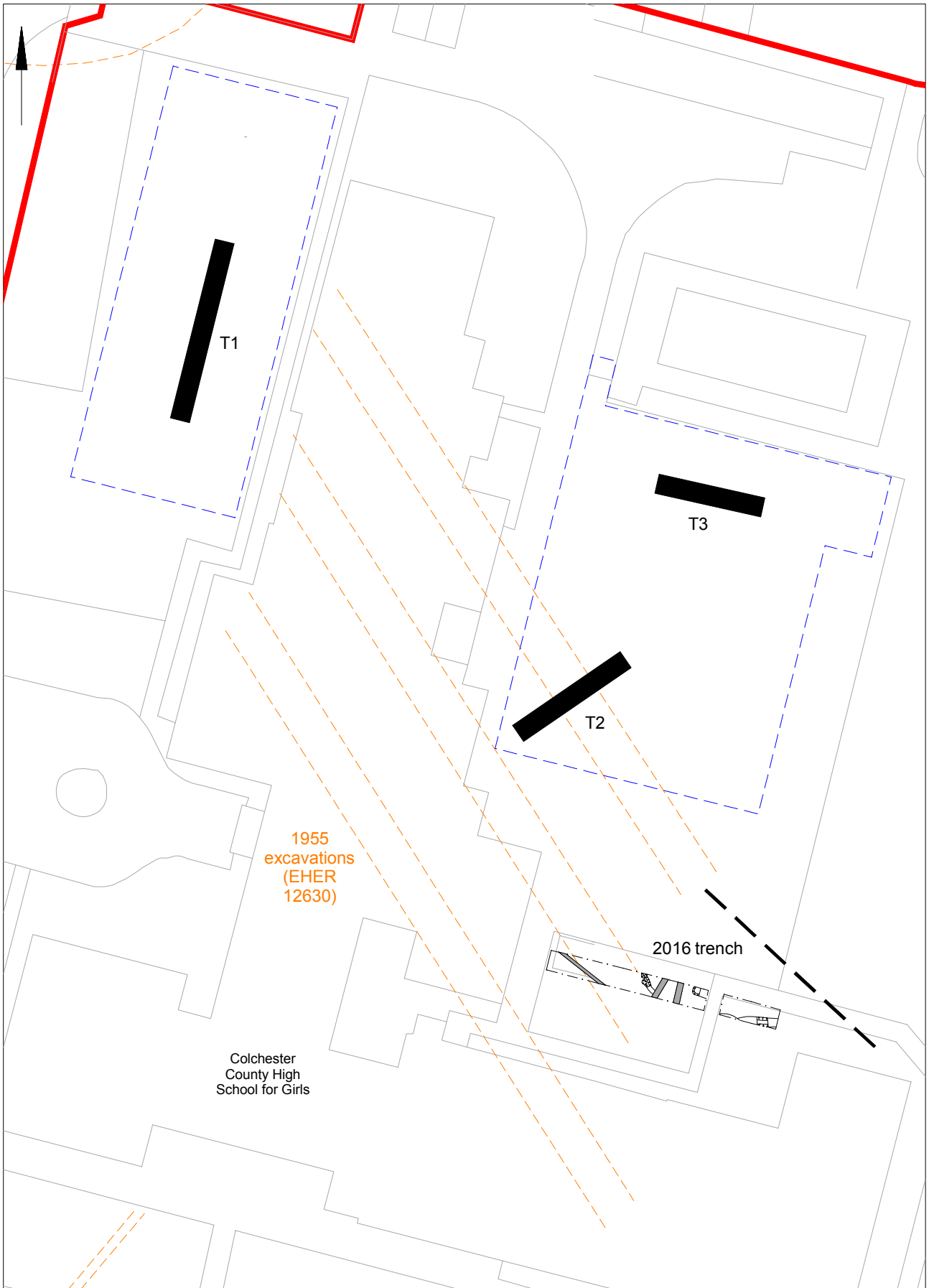


Fig 2 Site location (dashed blue lines) in relation to previous archaeological work.



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Fig 3 Trench proposal.



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OASIS ID: colchest3-304152

Project details

Project name	Archaeological trial-trenched evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex in advance of the construction of a multi-functional hall and two additional car parks. The site is located within the Late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, and the Late Iron Age and Roman Lexden cemetery, and in close proximity to an early Roman fort. A triple-ditched dyke uncovered during the construction of the school in 1955 is projected to run directly through the development site. Archaeological evaluation at this site uncovered three undated pits, two post-Roman pits and two natural features. As during previous investigations at this site, no trace of the triple-ditch dyke was found, suggesting that it is not located on its projected alignment or that it no longer exists.
Project dates	Start: 03-01-2018 End: 05-01-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	17/12g - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	172464 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4124 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM 2018.4 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Current Land use	Transport and Utilities 1 - Highways and road transport
Monument type	PIT Uncertain
Monument type	PIT Early Medieval
Monument type	PIT Medieval

Monument type	FEATURE None
Monument type	LINEAR None
Significant Finds	CBM Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Significant Finds	CBM Modern
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Colchester County High School for Girls
Postcode	CO3 3US
Study area	5.59 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 9801 2468 51.884937035875 0.877518546345 51 53 05 N 000 52 39 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 34.25m Max: 34.31m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Chris Lister
Project director/manager	Ben Holloway
Project supervisor	Chris Lister
Type of sponsor/funding body	Owner
Name of sponsor/funding body	Colchester County High School for Girls

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM 2018.4

Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM 2018.4
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: January 2018
Author(s)/Editor (s)	Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1211
Date	2018
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Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A4 loose-leaf ringbound
URL	http://cat.essex.ac.uk/
Entered by	Elliott Hicks (lp@catuk.org)
Entered on	16 January 2018

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