

# Archaeological evaluation on the former Martello Caravan Camp site, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the Naze, Essex, CO14 8QP

March 2018



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figures by Ben Holloway and Sarah Carter

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**commissioned by Stephen Sibley**  
**on behalf of Martello Land and Properties Limited**

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**CAT Report 1246**  
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OASIS summary sheet

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out on land at the former Martello Caravan Camp site, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the Naze, Essex in advance of the construction of four terrace houses and six detached bungalows. Previous archaeological investigations on the former Martello Caravan site have revealed a long history of activity, from the Neolithic through to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, with less intensive activity in the Roman and medieval periods, probably to exploit the resources of the marshland.*

*Evaluation revealed a ditch of Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age date and three prehistoric features (two postholes and a pit) which were probably contemporary with the ditch. This activity is likely associated with similar prehistoric features identified nearby which were probably related to agricultural clearance and stock management.*

*A modern ditch and modern service were also identified.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land at the former Martello Caravan Camp site, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the Naze, Essex which was carried out on 15th March 2018. The work was commissioned by Stephen Sibley on behalf of Martello Land and Properties Limited in advance of the construction of four terrace houses and six detached bungalows and was carried out 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 *Brief for archaeological trial trenching*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2017), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2018).

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

The Walton area is significant for the established presence of prehistoric archaeological remains, particularly of the later Neolithic, the discovery of much of which is linked to the results of the Hullbridge Survey (Wilkinson and Murphy 1995). Thousands of worked flints, including polished axes, have been collected from the vicinity of the Naze and form a large component of the entries in the EHER. More recently, a Middle Bronze Age bucket urn containing cremated human bone was recovered from the foot of the cliffs at the Naze having eroded from the exposed upper strata and presumably deriving from a grave.

At the northern end of the Naze, on the foreshore in front of low-lying marshland, remains described as 'red hills' have been noted (e.g. EHER 3511). These features are typically associated with salt working and are usually of Late Iron Age or Roman date. Towards the south of the Naze, Late Iron Age and Roman pottery was recovered during development on the west side of Old Hall Lane (EHER 3563/3564). Another potential 'red hill' has been recorded on low-lying land to the north-west of the site (EHER 3529). On farmland, also to the north-west of the site, cropmarks of former field boundaries have been plotted along with the tentatively identified remains of a possible ring-ditch (EHER 17239).

In the medieval period Walton was part of the 'soke' or estate of St Pauls, along with Kirby and Thorpe. Walton Hall was first recorded as a separate entity in 1222. The Tendring Historic Environment Characterisation Project notes that no buildings pre-dating the 18th century survive within Walton and that the town's historic core developed from the early 19th century onwards. The lack of earlier buildings can be blamed on coastal erosion as the medieval settlement originally extended further east with the former medieval church being lost to the sea in 1796. Medieval features and deposits have been identified around the periphery of Hamford Water, which probably relate to marsh edge farming whilst the marshes themselves were utilised for the grazing of both sheep and cattle.

To the north of the development site is Martello Tower K, built c 1810-1812, which is one of the largest of the eleven Clacton Defence Towers. It is a grade II listed building (NHLE no. 1111504) and, along with a battery situated 80m further west (NHLE no. 1016787), is also a Scheduled Monument (SM 29434).

A full archaeological and historic background can be found in *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment: Martello Caravan Park, Walton-on-the-Naze* by John Duffy, L-P: Archaeology (2015).

There have been five recent archaeological investigations on land surrounding the proposed development site (as part of the wider redevelopment of the caravan site) which have revealed multi-period archaeological activity which could potentially extend into the development site.

1) In 2015 Archaeology South-East carried out an evaluation on land immediately to the north of the site (centred 60m N) (ASE 2015). Only three of the six trenches (T2, T4 and T5) contained significant archaeological remains of prehistoric and medieval date.

2) In March 2016 CAT excavated an area measuring 20m x 25m over ASE Trench 2 (centred 60m NW) (CAT Report 927). Excavation revealed 40 Late Bronze Age features, two Roman and four medieval.

3) In June 2016 Pre-Construct carried out an evaluation on the Aldi site, located between the proposed development site and Kirby Road (centred 120m S) (PCA 2016). Eleven Neolithic or Bronze Age features were identified. In particular, significant archaeological remains were excavated in Trench 1, 90m south of the southern edge of the proposed development site.

4) In August/September 2016 CAT carried out an evaluation on land NW of the Martello Tower in advance of the construction of a housing estate (centred 200m N) (CAT Report 1015). Four Bronze Age or Iron Age features were identified, together with three of LIA/Roman date, three medieval and four post-medieval.

5) In September 2017 and January 2018, CAT carried out an evaluation followed by excavation on the site of the new Marks and Spencer food hall located to the southwest (centred 50m SW) (CAT Report 1226). Post-excavation work is ongoing but three ditches, three pits, a pit/tree-throw and cremation burial dated from the Neolithic to the

Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age. An erosion hollow, probably used as either a watering-hole or stock enclosure, and two associated drainage ditches are of a Roman or later date. Few finds were recovered suggesting that the development site is peripheral to any settlement but probably the focus for marsh edge farming.

#### **4 Aims**

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains, to determine if any of the archaeological remains recently identified on adjacent sites continue into the development site.

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

Three trial-trenches were machine excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Each trench measured 15m long by 1.8m wide.

##### **Trench 1 (T1)**

Four layers were recorded. Modern made-ground (L1, c 0.58-0.68m thick, firm, moist medium grey-brown silty clay) sealed a thin layer of turf (L5, c 0.01-0.02m thick, soft, moist dark grey-brown silty-clay). Beneath this undated subsoil (L4, c 0.04-0.12m thick, soft, moist medium yellow/orange/brown silty-clay) sealed natural clay (L2, encountered at a depth of c 0.72-0.8m below current ground level (bcgl)).

A modern ditch (F2) was aligned NE-SW along the length of the trench. This ditch is likely to be a continuation to the SW of a modern ditch identified in three evaluation trenches by ASE in 2015 (T4-T6) (Ennis 2015).

##### **Trench 2 (T2)**

Three layers were recorded. Modern crush (L3, c 0.14-0.18m thick) and undated subsoil (L4, c 0.08-0.10m thick) sealed natural clay (L2, encountered at a depth of c 0.3-0.32m bcgl).

Two prehistoric postholes (F1 and F3) were excavated, measuring 0.18-0.21m diameter by 0.09-0.24m deep.

The trench was cut by a live electric cable to the southwest.

##### **Trench 3 (T3)**

Three layers were recorded. Modern crush (L3, c 0.2-0.24m thick) and undated subsoil (L4, c 0.08m thick) sealed natural clay (L2, encountered at a depth of c 0.24-0.29m bcgl).

At the western end of the trench, a prehistoric ditch (F4) of Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age date was aligned NNW-SSE. It measured 0.5m across and 0.12m deep, and was probably identified further to the north in trench 5 of the ASE evaluation (5/003-5/004) where sherds of Late Bronze Age pottery were recovered (Ennis 2015). Although, this ditch was considerably wider at 1.2m.

A prehistoric pit (F5), measuring 0.67m by 0.41m and 0.06m deep, was also excavated.



**Photograph 1** Trench T3, looking NE

## 6 Finds

*by Stephen Benfield*

### Introduction

The archaeological work produced a few small, abraded sherds of prehistoric pottery and a small flint flake. Most of these came from a ditch (F4), with single sherds from a pit (F5) and two postholes (F1 and F3). The nature of the finds suggests that they can probably all be encompassed within the period of the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age. All of the finds are listed and described by context in Table 2. The pottery fabrics referred to are listed and described in Table 1 and broadly follow Brown (1988).

Fabric code	Fabric description
A	Small crushed flint (common-abundant)
B	Mix of small-medium crushed flint (common)
C	Mix of small-medium crushed flint (common-abundant) with occasional larger pieces (>2 mm)
F	Sand-tempered with occasional medium-large flint inclusion
M	Grog, often with some sand and flint

**Table 1** Pottery fabrics

Context	Finds no.	Type/ description	Finds spot date
T2, F1 posthole	1	<b>Prehistoric pottery:</b> Fabric F, single very small abraded sherd (1g), oxidised, probably pottery	prehistoric
T2, F3 posthole	2	<b>Prehistoric pottery:</b> Fabric B, single small sherd (2g), abraded	prehistoric
T3, F4 ditch	3	<b>Prehistoric pottery:</b> (10 sherds, 48g) all small abraded sherds; Fabric A (1 sherd, 2g); Fabric B (2 sherds, 14g), includes base edge sherd with indications of denser gritting on base underside; Fabric C (5 sherds, 26g); and Fabric F (2 sherd, 6g), includes base edge sherd. <b>Flint:</b> small thick flake, large striking platform, hinge fracture along one edge, plunge fracture at distal end, not closely-dated, probably later prehistoric.	Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age
T3, F5 pit	5	<b>Prehistoric pottery:</b> Fabric M, single small sherd (2g), abraded, contains dark inclusions of grog and/or organic material	prehistoric

**Table 2** All finds by context

The pottery sherds are of medium or small size and abraded suggesting they are of some age or degree of residuality in relation to the features. In total there are 13 sherds together weighing 53g, giving an average sherd weight of just 4g. Diagnostic pieces are limited to two sherds from the base edge of pots from ditch F4. Both are from flat base vessels and one has indications that the underside may originally have been heavily gritted. This gritting is a common feature of pottery assemblages dating to the Late Bronze Age into the Early Iron Age. Two sherds from the same feature with both sand and flint-temper (Fabric F) could also suggest a similar date. The single struck flint, also from F4, is not closely dated, but is more typical of late prehistoric flint working and would fit with a Bronze Age date.

## 7 Environmental assessment

by Lisa Gray MSc MA ACIfA Archaeobotanist

### Introduction

A sample (sample no. 1, finds no. 4) was taken from a prehistoric ditch.

### Sampling and processing methods

A forty litre samples was taken and processed by Colchester Archaeological Trust using a Siraf-type flotation device. Flot was collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve then dried. A 2ml flot was produced.

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

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

## Results

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

The sample contained only abundant uncharred root/rhizome fragments, low quantities of charcoal flecks, low numbers of dried waterlogged fat hen (*Chenopodium album* L.) and low numbers of fragments of dicotyledonous leaves.

### ***Faunal and other remains***

No faunal remains were present. No significant inorganic remains were observed.

## Discussion

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

Nothing with regards biases in recovery, residuality or contamination was highlighted for this sample. Uncharred root/rhizome fragments and earthworm cocoon can indicate that bioturbation is possible.

### ***Quality and type of preservation***

Preservation was by charring. Charring occurs when plant material is heated under reducing conditions where oxygen is largely excluded leaving a carbon skeleton resistant to decay (Boardman and Jones 1990, 2; English Heritage 2011, 17). These conditions can occur in a charcoal clamp, the centre of a bonfire or pit or in an oven or when a building burns down with the roof excluding the oxygen from the fire (Reynolds, 1979, 57). Preservation by waterlogging occurs when plant remains are in anoxic conditions such as sealed pits or layers or a high water-tables (English Heritage 2011, 13).

No plant remains were preserved by mineralisation (Green 1979, 281) or silicification (Robinson and Straker 1990), which means that there is no archaeobotanical evidence for the cess disposal or slow-burning aerated fires.

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

The only charred plant remains were charcoal flecks too small to be identifiable. The dried waterlogged plant remains consisted of low numbers of testas of fat hen seeds. These were present in too low a number to be significant.

No further work is recommended on this sample.

## 8 Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation revealed a ditch dated to the Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age, and a pit and two postholes of prehistoric date that are probably contemporary with the ditch. This shows that, despite considerable modern disturbance immediately to the north (Ennis 2015), prehistoric features have survived within the development site.

Previous archaeological investigations at the former Martello Caravan site revealed 40 Late Bronze Age features 40m to the NE (CAT Report 927). Similar prehistoric features ranging from the Neolithic to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age have also been recorded 45-110m to the SSW (CAT Report 1226 and Jackson 2016). These were identified as evidence of agricultural clearance and stock management. The prehistoric features identified on the current development site are likely to be associated with these activities.

This current archaeological work confirms the findings of previous investigations which indicated a long history of activity on the former Martello Caravan site, from the Neolithic through to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, probably exploiting the resources of the marshland.



## 9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Stephen Sibley and Martello Land and Properties Limited for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by N Rayner with S Carter, R Mathieson and A Wade. Figures are by B Holloway and S Carter. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

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

- |   |       |   |
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## 11 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find
Early Iron Age	Early Iron Age, period from c 600 – 400BC
ECC	Essex County Council
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'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
Late Bronze Age	Late Bronze Age, period from c 1000 – 700 BC
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
Neolithic	period from c 4000 – 2500 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> ccess to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsi	written scheme of investigation

## 12 Contents of archive

**Finds:** Part of one box

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1246)

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:  
2017.139.

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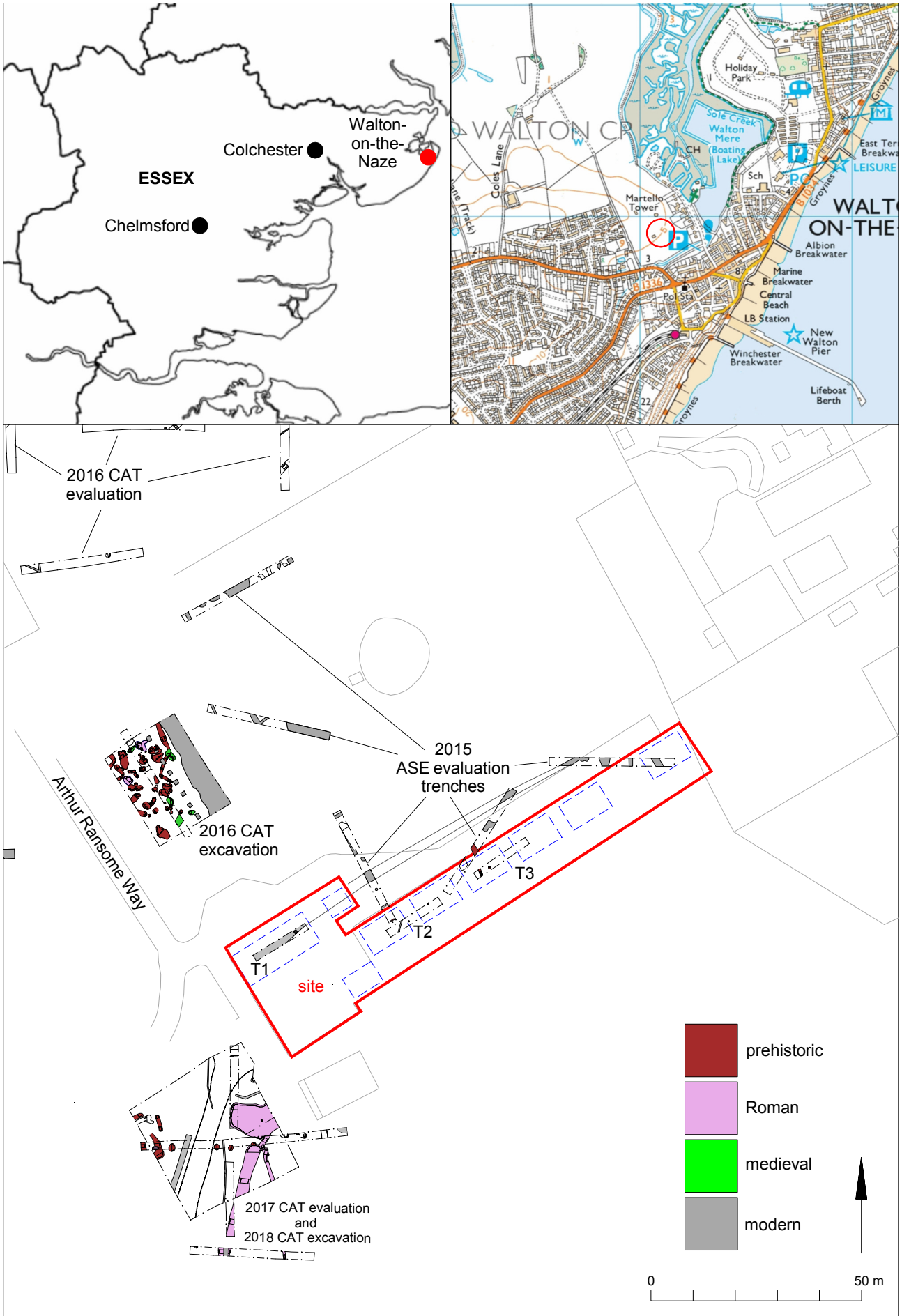
Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 10.4.2018

**Appendix 1 Context list**

Context no.	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
F1	1	Posthole	Soft, moist, medium grey/brown silty clay	Prehistoric
F2	-	Ditch	Firm, moist, medium/dark brown silty clay with rare charcoal and brick fleck inclusions and <1% stone piece inclusions	Modern
F3	2	Posthole	Soft, moist, medium grey/brown silty clay with rare charcoal fleck inclusions	Prehistoric
F4	3 4<1>	Ditch	Soft, moist/wet medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal and daub fleck inclusions and >2% stone piece inclusions	Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age
F5	5	Pit	Soft, moist, medium mottled orange/grey/brown silty-clay with charcoal and manganese fleck inclusions	Prehistoric
L1	-	Made ground	Firm, moist, medium grey/brown silty-clay with brick, glass and concrete piece inclusions	Modern
L2	-	Natural	Medium yellow/brown clay	Post-glacial
L3	-	Crush	Modern crush	Modern
L4	-	Subsoil	Soft, moist medium yellow/orange/brown silty-clay	undated
L5	-	Buried turf	Soft, moist, dark grey/brown silty-clay with <1% stone piece inclusions	Modern

<>= environmental sample number



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Fig 1 Site location in relation to proposed development (dashed blue) and previous archaeological investigations

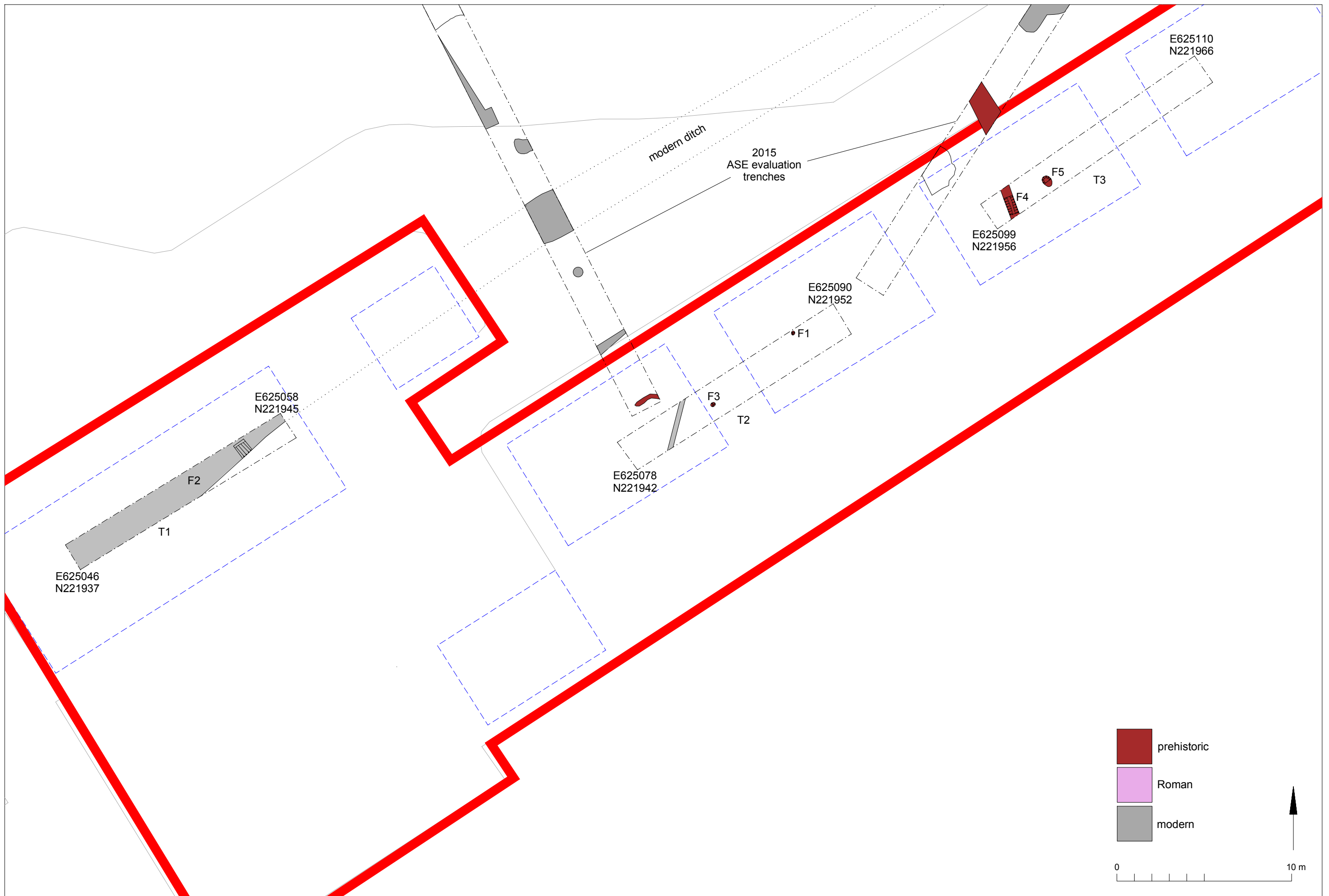
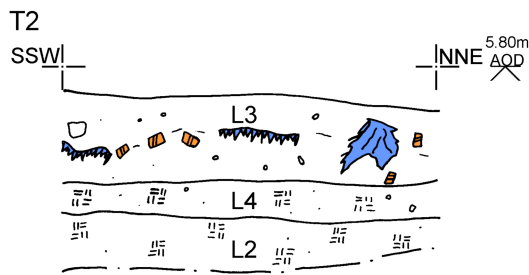
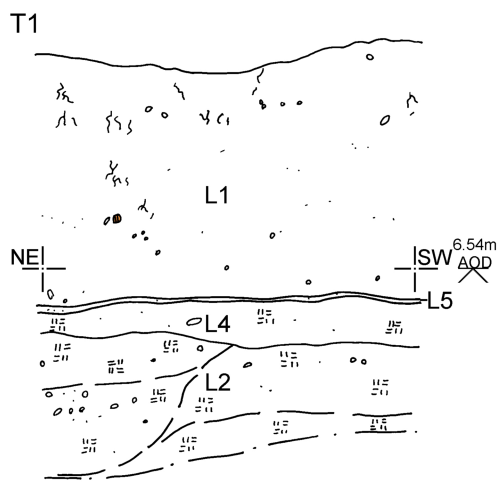
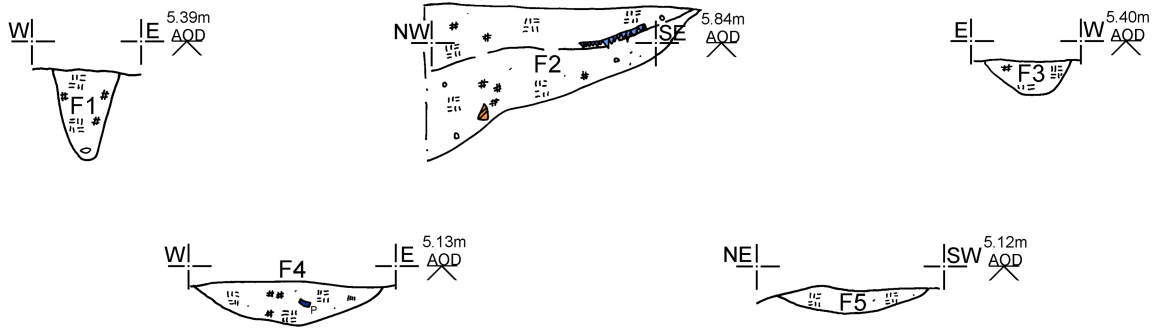


Fig 2 Results



- small stones
- large stones
- roots
- charcoal
- clay
- iron pan
- post-Roman brick
- membrane
- pottery sherds



Fig 3 Feature and representative sections

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## Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation on the former Martello Caravan camp site, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, CO14 8QP
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out on land at the former Martello Caravan Camp site, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex in advance of the construction of four terrace houses and six detached bungalows. Previous archaeological investigations on the former Martello Caravan site have revealed a long history of activity, from the Neolithic through to the Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age, with less intensive activity in the Roman and medieval periods, probably to exploit the resources of the marshland. Evaluation revealed a ditch of Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age date and three prehistoric features (two postholes and a pit) which were probably contemporary with the ditch. This activity is likely associated with similar prehistoric features identified nearby which were probably related to agricultural clearance and stock management. A modern ditch and modern service were also identified.
Project dates	Start: 15-03-2018 End: 15-03-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	18/03d - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	17/02118/OUT - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	FWKR17 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2017.139 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	DITCH Late Bronze Age
Monument type	DITCH Early Iron Age
Monument type	PIT Late Prehistoric
Monument type	POSTHOLES Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Bronze Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Early Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Prehistoric
Significant Finds	FLINT FLAKE Late Prehistoric
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 TENDRING FRINTON AND WALTON land off Arthur Ransome Way
Postcode	CO18 8QP
Site coordinates	TM 25094 21953 51.850126582929 1.268681574539 51 51 00 N 001 16 07 E Point

## 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	Nigel Rayner
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer



## Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Physical Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.139
Physical Contents	"Ceramics","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.139
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey","other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.139
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

## Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological evaluation on the former Martello Caravan camp site, Kirby Road, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, CO14 8QP: March 2018
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Pooley, L.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1246
Date	2016
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Description	A4 ringbound loose leaf
URL	<a href="http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html">http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html</a>
Entered by	Laura Pooley (lp@catuk.org)
Entered on	11 April 2018

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