

# Archaeological evaluation at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CM12 9BQ

February 2019



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figures by Sarah Carter and Ben Holloway

fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Robin Mathieson and Bronagh Quinn

**commissioned by Heather Organ (Arcady Architects Ltd)  
on behalf of Lexden Homes Ltd**

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**CAT Report 1376**

February 2019

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, in advance of the construction of five dwellings with associated parking facilities. The site lies in the midst of a number of cropmark complexes and lies to the north of the Roman road leading to Colchester. Despite being located in an archaeologically-sensitive area, however, no significant remains were encountered.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex which was carried out on 4th February 2019. The work was commissioned by Heather Organ of Arcady Architects Ltd on behalf of Lexden Homes Ltd in advance of the construction of five dwellings with associated parking facilities, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2018).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological trial trench evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2018), 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* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

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

The EHER shows that the development site lies within an area of archaeological potential. Aerial photography has revealed several cropmarks within the surrounding landscape. Cropmarks to the north of the site suggest a possible ring-ditch and pits (EHER 2596). To the northeast of the site further cropmarks show linear features and a possible rectilinear enclosure. To the immediate east of the site, other cropmarks suggest the presence of a rectilinear enclosure (EHER 2665).

Some archaeological work has been undertaken in Elmstead Market within or close to areas of cropmarks. An evaluation carried out at Lodge Farm, to the north of the current site, by Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit in 2009 (EHER 46845) found five undatable ditches, a thin scatter of flint and a small amount of prehistoric pottery. It was speculated that some of the remains represented an Early to Middle Iron Age farmstead. Other remains probably represented post-medieval and modern field ditches. A recent evaluation by CAT on land adjacent to Market Field School, School Road in August 2018 (CAT Report 1320) found no features corresponding to the cropmarks, although a possible Roman quarry pit, a post-medieval pit, two post-medieval ditches (one of which represents the remains of a field boundary shown on 19th-century OS mapping), an undated pit and four undated ditches were detected.

The Colchester Road to the south of the site is a Roman road (EHER 2534) which leads directly from the Roman town of Colchester (*Camulodunum*) to the west of Elmstead Market.

Historic buildings survive within the village of Elmstead Market which date from the 15th century with the village expanding along Colchester Road in the 17th and 18th centuries.

To the south of the site there have been a number of finds spots. These range in date and include prehistoric axes (EHER 2353-4) and a post-medieval seal (EHER 54639).

#### 4 Aim

The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits, and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

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

Two trial-trenches, each measuring 20m long by 1.8m wide, were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

The trenching was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.17-0.23m thick, friable/firm, dry/moist medium grey/brown loamy-clay) and subsoil (L2, c 0.16-0.23m thick, firm, medium grey/brown silty-clay with 1% gravel) onto natural (L3, firm/hard, moist medium orange/brown clay, encountered at a depth of 0.39-0.43m below current ground level). A sondage was excavated in Trench 2 to ensure that the natural had been reached. A large modern fire pit was located in the area of T2.

No significant archaeological remains were encountered.



**Photograph 1** T1 trench shot – looking northwest



**Photograph 2** T2 trench shot – looking east northeast

#### 6 Finds

There were no finds.

## 7 Conclusion

Despite being located within an archaeologically-sensitive area, no significant remains were uncovered at this site.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Heather Organ of Arcady Architects Ltd and Lexden Homes Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with R Mathieson and B Quinn. Figures are by C Lister, B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

## 9 References

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

Brown and Glazenbrook	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 – Research Agenda and Strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8
CAT	2018	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 1320	2018	<i>Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Market Field School, Elmstead Market, Essex – August 2018.</i> By E Hicks
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i>
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
ECCPS	2018	<i>Archaeological trial trenching on land at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead.</i> By T O'Connor
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.
Historic England	2016	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Medlycott, M	2011a	<i>Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.
MHCLG	2018	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> ccess to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
post-medieval	from 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
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s

wsj written scheme of investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** none retained

### **Paper record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1376)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

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

Site digital photos and log

Inked sections

### **Digital record**

The report (CAT Report 1376)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Survey data

## 12 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Chelmsford Museum under accession code COLEM: 2018.107

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### **Distribution list:**

Heather Organ, Arcady Architects Ltd

Lexden Homes Ltd

ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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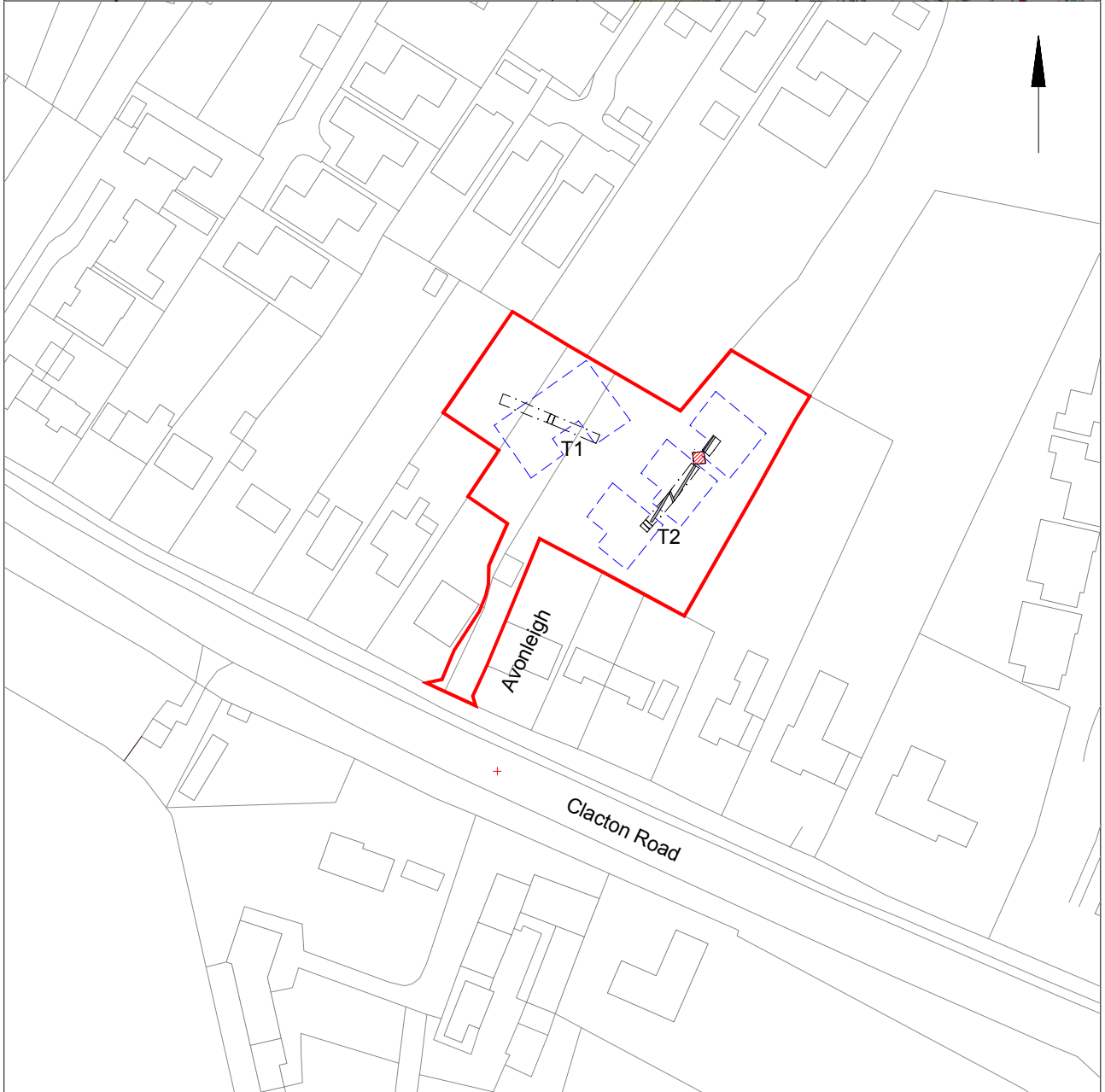
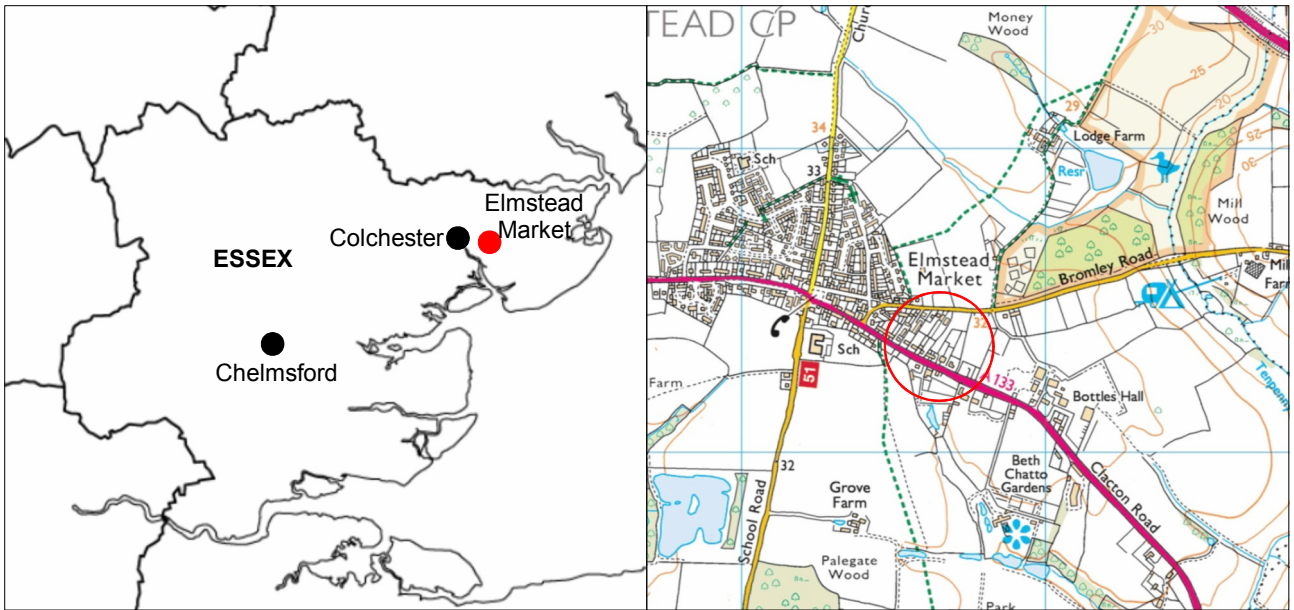
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Date: 25.02.2019



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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).

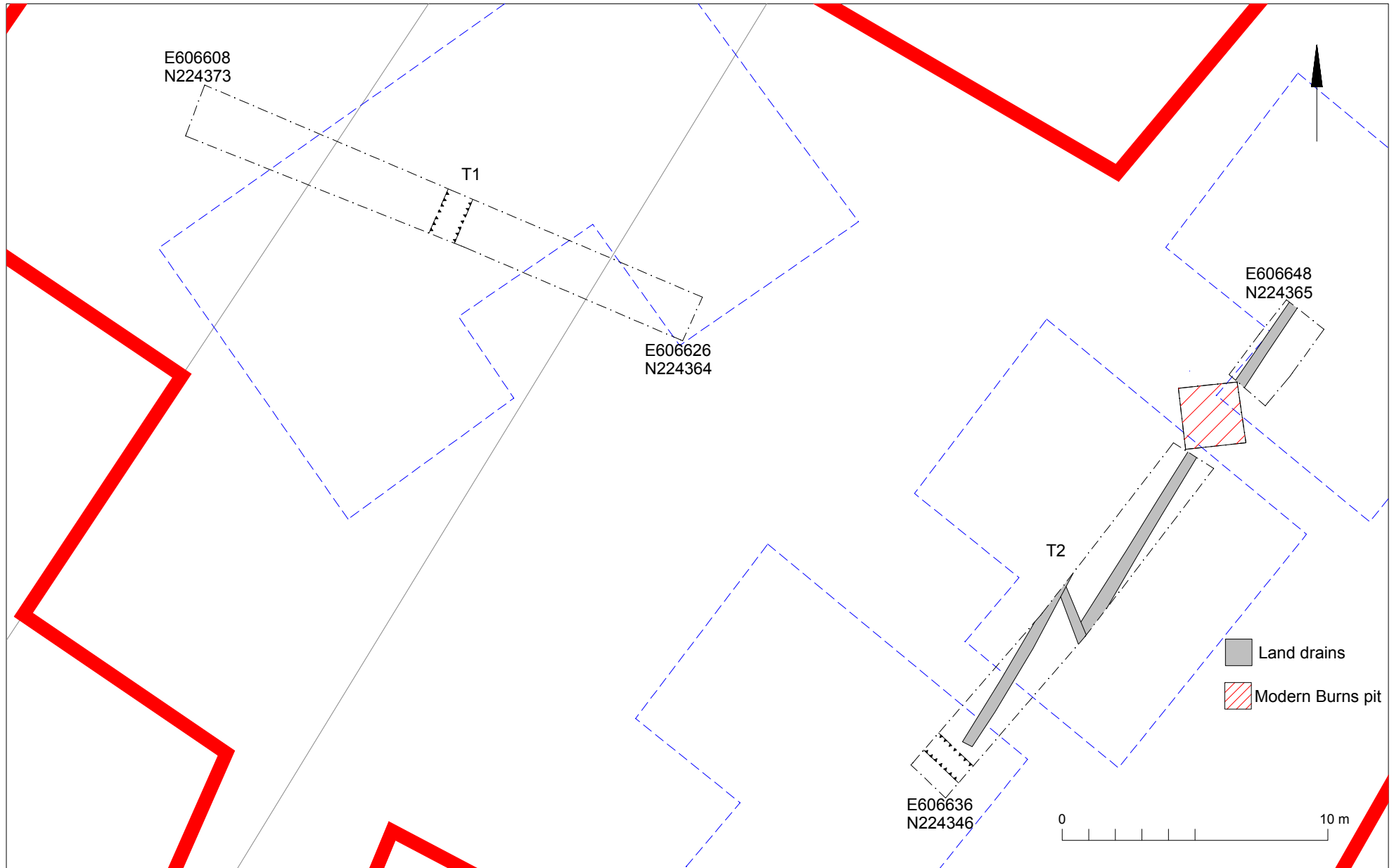


Fig 2 Evaluation results.



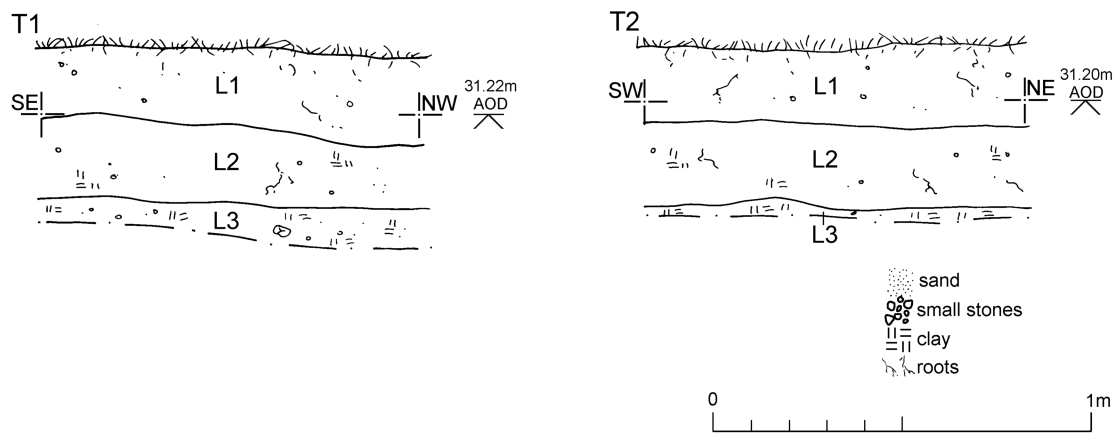


Fig 3 Representative sections.

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**OASIS ID: colchest3-331541**

### Project details

Project name	Trial- trenching on land at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DA
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, in advance of the construction of five dwellings with associated parking facilities. The site lies in the midst of a number of cropmark complexes and lies to the north of the Roman road leading to Colchester. Despite being located in an archaeologically-sensitive area, however, no significant remains were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 04-02-2019 End: 04-02-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2018/10j - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	17/00027/OUT - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	18/10j - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2018.107 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX TENDRING ELMSTEAD land at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market
Postcode	CO7 7DA
Study area	2441 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 06622 24359 51.878914436129 1.002296053786 51 52 44 N 001 00 08 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 31.06m Max: 31.12m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	HEM Team Officer, ECC
Project design originator	Emma Holloway
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Ben Holloway

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2018.107
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2018.107
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Photograph", "Report"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological evaluation at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CM12 9BQ: February 2019
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Entered on 26 February 2019

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