

# Archaeological evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1LB

December 2020



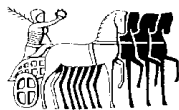
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**commissioned by Alison Fogg  
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## Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	2
4	Aim	2
5	Methodology	3
6	Results	4
7	Finds	6
	Human remains <i>by Megan Seehra</i>	6
	Ceramic finds <i>by Dr Matthew Loughton</i>	9
	Small finds <i>by Laura Pooley</i>	10
	Miscellaneous finds <i>by Laura Pooley</i>	11
8	Conclusion	12
9	Acknowledgements	13
10	References	13
11	Abbreviations and glossary	14
12	Contents of archive	14
13	Archive deposition	15
Appendix 1	Context list	16
Appendix 2	Pottery list	17
Appendix 3	CBM list	17
Appendix 4	Catalogue of small finds and iron nails	18

Figures after p18

EHER Summary Sheet

CAT WSI

OASIS summary sheet

## List of photographs, tables, maps and figures

Cover: TP1 working shot. Photograph taken facing south-west.

Photograph 1	Working shot of TP1 during excavation. Photograph taken facing south-west.	4
Photograph 2	Burial vaults F1 and F3 in TP1. Photograph taken facing west.	4
Photograph 3	TP2 after excavation. Photograph taken facing south-west.	5
Photograph 4	Detail of F4, F6 and gravestone in TP2. Photograph taken facing south.	6
Photograph 5	Base of excavation of F3. Photograph taken facing south.	7
Photograph 6	Burial F5. Photograph taken facing west.	7
Photograph 7	Burial F6. Photograph taken facing south.	8
Photograph 8	Possible pit F7, containing disarticulated bones. Photograph taken facing south-west.	8
Photograph 9	Possible pit F8, containing large amount of disarticulated bone. Photograph taken facing west.	9
Table 1	Details on the main types of ceramics and pottery	9
Table 2	Quantities of pottery and CBM from specific features and contexts	9
Table 3	Approximate dates for the individual features and layers	10
Table 4	Miscellaneous finds by context	11

Map 1 1921 25-inch OS map. St Nicholas Church shown, along with extent of churchyard to south. Areas of raised wall-garden areas surviving today outlined in red. 12

Fig 1 Site location.

Fig 2 Evaluation results, showing Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) heights in blue.

Fig 3 Detailed test-pit plans.

Fig 4 F3, F5, F6 plans.

Fig 5 Representative sections.

## 1 Summary

*An archaeological test-pit evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex in advance of the redevelopment and landscaping of the site. The site is located within the churchyard of St Nicholas Church, which was demolished in 1955. Two inhumation burials, three brick burial vaults and two probable pits containing disarticulated bone were uncovered. Finds of a 19th-20th century date were retrieved from the burial soil, although as the site has been a burial ground since the 12th century it is unclear if these find represent the date of the uncovered burials or are the result of modern disturbance.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological test-pit evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex which was carried out between the 15th and 19th December 2020. The work was commissioned by Alison Fogg on behalf of Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd, in advance of the redevelopment and landscaping of the site, and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

As the site lies within Colchester town centre and within a known burial ground, it is highlighted by the CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits. As a result, the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA) recommended an archaeological investigation be undertaken prior to the submission of a planning application for the redevelopment of the site. The recommendation was for an archaeological evaluation by test-pitting and was based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019). The results of the investigation, presented in this report, hope to inform the design and scale of the redevelopment scheme.

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Dr Richard Hoggett (CBCAA 2020), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with the CBCAA (CAT 2020).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015), 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 Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER, ECC/NCC numbers) accessed via the Colchester Heritage Explorer ([www.colchesterheritage.co.uk](http://www.colchesterheritage.co.uk)).

Colchester has been the subject of antiquarian and archaeological interest for some centuries, culminating in modern large-scale archaeological excavations within the town centre and suburbs. There is a large corpus of published information on the town's archaeological and historical background, which is only summarised here (Morant 1748, Hull 1958, CAR 1, CAR 3, CAR 6, CAR 9 and Crummy 1997).

The development site is located within the Roman walled town of *Camulodunum* (MCC9314). Specifically, it straddles *insulas* (town blocks) 29 and 30 of the Roman town, with a Roman street projected north/south through the centre of the development site (Fig 1). Evidence for archaeological remains from Culver Street East, between Queen Street and St Nicholas Street/Long Wyre Street, includes approximately six north-south foundations, an east-west one, and possibly part of a tessellated pavement (Hull 1958, 203-6), which probably belonged to buildings in Insula 30 (MCC1029). Further evidence for these was found on the south side of Culver Street East in a shaft dug in 1948 (MCC8326-7, *ibid*, 206) and in watching briefs under Sainsbury's and Caters (now Savers/ Poundland) (MCC2194 and MCC2687, Crummy 1971), and also on the north side of Culver Street East at 61-2 High Street (MCC1506, CAR 6, 995-6). The discovery of a north-south drain at 65 High Street in 1976 (MCC1597, CAR 6, 820) may indicate that Insula 30 was subdivided by a north-south street. At least one large public building may have occupied Insula 30, although the evidence for this is limited (Crummy 1971, 107). Gas replacement works in 2008 along Queen Street and Culver Street East revealed early Roman daub-block walls, burnt during the Boudican uprising of AD 60/1, and post-Boudican foundations and floors, street metalling, and a drain, as well as post-Roman pits and robber trenches (CAT Report 498).

Evidence from Culver Street East to the west of St Nicholas Street/Long Wyre Street include several Roman foundations and many fragments of marble (MCC8319, Hull 1958, 202-3). The north/south street between Insulas 29 and 30 was identified on the St Nicholas' Church site in 1955, after the church's demolition (MCC1570, Hull 1960, 315-16). The west end of Culver Street East lies immediately to the north of the extensive Lion Walk excavations of 1971-4<sup>1</sup> (CAR 3, 31-92).

The development site lies within the area of the former churchyard (MCC407) of the demolished church of St Nicholas (MCC406). The church was originally 12th century in date, but was entirely rebuilt twice, once in the 14th century and once in the late 19th century. It became redundant in 1952 and was demolished in 1955. Excavations after demolition revealed the nave and chancel of the medieval church had used Roman walls for the foundations. All that survives of the churchyard are two small raised gardens containing tombstones to the rear of St Nicholas House. It is not clear from historical accounts how many burials, if any, have been cleared from the site.

As well as the obvious potential for medieval and later burials, there was also the high potential for Roman and earlier deposits on the site, if they were not disturbed by the medieval burial ground. A series of work undertaken by CAT at 5-6 St Nicholas Street, immediately to the east of the site, revealed archaeological deposits up to 3.65m below current ground level (CAT Report 1125, CAT Report 1614). During this work the possible remains of a Roman bath house were uncovered, including walls and floors, and a large quantity of finds.

<sup>1</sup> Includes CHER no.s MCC8311, MCC482, MCC238, MCC677-8, MCC688, MCC694-5, MCC697, MCC702, MCC703, MCC733, MCC735-8, MCC757, MCC794, MCC802, MCC959.

#### **4 Aim**

The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to record the extent and depth of any archaeological remains, and particularly to ascertain the presence and location of any burials within the proposed development area. This information, particularly the depths of the remains, will then be used to inform the design of the proposed redevelopment.

Additionally, the evaluation aimed 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, condition and significance of environmental evidence.
- Include a contingency for soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floor and dark earth deposits. In addition, particular attention should be given to the collection of micro-remains preserved within and/or directly over floors.
- Establish the potential for the survival and condition of environmental evidence.
- Establish an archaeological deposit model for below-ground archaeological remains across the site.
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

#### **5 Methodology**

Two test-pits were positioned within the development site (Fig 1). TP1 was situated on the access road to the rear of St Nicholas House, and measured 5m x 1.8m in size. TP1 was positioned on one side of the access road, in order to maintain a fire escape route. TP2 was located within the easternmost of the two raised walled gardens, adjacent to the eastern boundary wall, and measured approximately 2.5m x 2.5m in size. TP2 was initially intended to be 3m x 3m but was limited in size due to a tree canopy and adjacent tombstones.

The test-pits were mechanically excavated under archaeological supervision, and excavation in this manner continued until archaeological deposits were encountered, which were then excavated and cleaned by hand (see results section below). All archaeological horizons were excavated and recorded.

## 6 Results (Figs 2-5)



**Photograph 1** Working shot of TP1 during excavation. Photograph taken facing south-west.

### **Test-pit 1 (TP1): 5m long by 1.8m wide**

TP1 was cut through a concrete surface (L1, c 0.19-25m thick) and a sub-base of brick rubble (L2, c 0.15m thick) onto the top of the graveyard burial soil (L3). Immediately upon removal of L1 and L2 the tops of two burial vaults were exposed within the test-pit (Photograph 2). These vaults, F1 and F3, were at a depth of 0.28-34m below current ground-level (bcgl) (26.75-81m AOD). Both burial vaults were aligned east-west, were coffin-shaped and had no surviving capping. They both were partially beneath the eastern limit of excavation (LOE).

F1 was disturbed by a modern straight-sided feature on its northern side (F2), which was filled with yellow sand and brick fragments and presumably associated with the construction of St Nicholas House.



**Photograph 2** Burial vaults F1 and F3 in TP1. Photograph taken facing west.

Both vaults (F1 and F3) were constructed of unfrosted red bricks, measuring 230mm x 110mm x 65mm in size. F3 was excavated to a depth of 1.4m bcgl (25.75m AOD) but the base of the vault was not reached and no burial was encountered. At the very base of the

excavation of F3 were two handles and some staining, suggesting the presence of a coffin (Fig 4).

Also present within TP1 was the inhumation burial F5, at a depth of 0.39-42m bcgl (26.62-79m AOD). Aligned east-west like the vaults, the burial was partially beneath the western LOE (Photograph 6). The lower extent of the skeleton (from the shoulders down) was present within the test-pit, and the bones had been partially disturbed, with part of the pelvis missing and many of the more delicate skeletal remains (such as hand and foot bones) also absent. Whether this is due to general degradation of the remains or disturbance caused by the redevelopment of the site in the 1950s is uncertain.



**Photograph 3** TP2 after excavation. Photograph taken facing south-west.

#### **Test-pit 2 (TP2): 2.5m long by 2.5m wide**

TP2 was cut through a shallow modern topsoil (L4, c 0.10-14m thick), and a thicker, buried topsoil (L5, c 0.23-28m thick) into the graveyard burial soil L3 until inhumation burial F6 was encountered, at a depth of 0.70m-0.99m bcgl (26.05-26.08m AOD). Above F6 was an apparently *in situ* gravestone that had been cut off above ground (Photograph 3).

Inhumation burial F6 was entirely within the confines of the test-pit, but had been heavily truncated. Although the burial was only cleaned and exposed enough to confirm articulation, all that appeared to remain *in situ* was part of the ribcage, associated vertebrae and the skull (Photograph 7). The burial appears to have been heavily truncated to the east and south by other, deeper, graves, one of which is presumably associated with the gravestone above.

Also present in TP2 was another burial vault (F4), although this one had an intact covering and was largely outside the southern LOE (Photograph 4 and Fig 3). It was uncovered at a depth of 0.47m bcgl (26.31m AOD).

Also within TP2 (F7 and F8) were two probable pits, each containing intentionally deposited collections of disarticulated bones (Photographs 8 and 9). F7 was 0.96m bcgl (26.04m AOD), while F8 was uncovered 0.84m bcgl (26.16m AOD). Whether these disarticulated bones were collected and buried during the clearance of the site in the 1950s, or earlier, is unclear.





**Photograph 4** Detail of F4, F6 and gravestone in TP2.  
Photograph taken facing south.

## 7 Finds

### Human remains (Fig 4)

by Megan Seehra

#### Methodology

Human remains discovered during excavation were not lifted, as per the WSI; therefore, human remains were recorded in situ and osteological analysis was conducted post-excavation. Because of this, only basic analysis could be done; type of remains (articulated or disarticulated), orientation and burial type of articulated remains, age and sex estimations, as well as any obvious pathologies visible from photos. Osteological analysis was carried out as per Buikstra and Ubelaker (1994).

#### Results

Human remains were excavated from five features (F3, F5, F6, F7, F8). Three of these were articulated burials (F3, F5, F6), the other two were disarticulated remains (F7, F8). All articulated remains were orientated E-W and buried supine; one was hexagonal-shaped and brick-lined (F3), and another seems to be associated with a stone gravestone directly on top of it (F6). Due to proximity to the current ground level, brick-lining, and evidence of coffin handles (F3), it is likely all remains are post-medieval; the graves without brick-lining may be medieval. Preservation of remains seems poor, and most have been truncated or disturbed. Two other brick-lined graves were also discovered (F1, F4) but were not investigated. L3 in TP1 contained one femur (visible in section; Fig 5) in between F3 and F5, but this is likely disturbed from an articulated grave beyond the LOE.

#### F3

F3 is a hexagonal-shaped brick burial vault. Although the base of the vault was not reached, a small number of partially disarticulated bones were observed at the base of the excavation. Whether these bones belonged to the occupant of the grave is uncertain, but three of them were identifiable; the right clavicle, right humerus and at least one rib. These bones are from an individual of likely adult age (18 years+), but sex could not be estimated. No pathologies were seen.



**Photograph 5** Base of excavation of F3. Photograph taken facing south.

#### F5

F5 is a simple burial containing the remains of at least two individuals; one is articulated. The orientation of the burial was east-west, with the head at the west end. The first individual was buried supine, and the remains of the second individual were disarticulated as a third humerus and third femur were found at the west end of the grave. The skull of the first individual is beyond the LOE, all long bones can be seen *in situ*, a partial left os coxae, clavicle and calcaneus remain, but no hands, feet, ribs or vertebrae have survived. Both individuals are of adult age, but sex could not be determined for either. No pathologies could be seen.



**Photograph 6** Burial F5. Photograph taken facing west.

#### F6

F6 is also a simple burial containing the remains of one individual, and may be linked with a gravestone found directly above the head. This individual was also buried in an east-west orientation, supine, with the head at the west end, laying on its left side (looking north). Only a partial cranium, mandible, clavicles, several left ribs and at least 9 vertebrae remain of this individual; everything past the mid-torso has been truncated. The individual was likely of adult age, but sex could not be determined. The clavicle appears to be abnormally curved superiorly (upwards), which may be evidence of previous

clavicular trauma, a birth defect, or a deficiency occurring in this individual's childhood. No other pathologies were seen.



**Photograph 7** Burial F6. Photograph taken facing south.

#### F7

F7 is an oval pit continuing beyond the LOE, and contains disarticulated remains of at least one individual with two identifiable long bones, probably from the leg. There are likely more bones buried in this feature, however there is too much detritus to be certain. Age or sex cannot be reasonably estimated, and no pathologies could be seen.



**Photograph 8** Possible pit F7, containing disarticulated bones. Photograph taken facing south-west.

#### F8

F8 contains a much higher concentration of disarticulated remains than F7. There are three femora, two tibiae, a fragmented but near-complete cranium, and at least four other shafts of long bones. Therefore, the MNI for these remains is two, but there are likely more individuals than this. It was noted during excavation that these bones seem to have been placed in a deliberate way into the feature. There is at least one adult, and possibly a second adult or late adolescent. Sex couldn't be estimated, and no pathologies were seen.





**Photograph 9** Possible pit F8, containing large amount of disarticulated bone. Photograph taken facing west.

### Ceramic finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

The evaluation uncovered 35 sherds of pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) with a weight of just over 10 kg (Table 1). CBM accounts for the majority of this material (Table 1).

Ceramic material	nr	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	Rim EVE
Pottery	8	251	31	0.00
CBM	27	9,777	362	-
<b>All</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>10,028</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Table 1** Details on the main types of ceramics and pottery

Pottery and ceramic finds were recovered from two features and one layer although most of the material came from the graveyard burial soil L3 (Table 2).

Cxt	Description	nr	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
F3	brick burial vault	9	7,902	878
F5	burial	1	83	83
L3	graveyard burial soil	25	2,043	82
<b>Total</b>		<b>35</b>	<b>10,028</b>	<b>287</b>

**Table 2** Quantities of pottery and CBM from specific features and contexts

Two unfrosted bricks were recovered from the brick burial vault F3 with dimensions of 220-230 mm x 110-117 mm x 65 mm which date to the 19th century. There were also sherds from three decorated ridge-tiles (300 mm long) in a post-medieval red earthenwares type fabric (fabric F40) of possible Victorian date. Similar ridge-tiles have been recovered from the Colchester Essex County Hospital site (CAT Report forthcoming).

The grave F5 contained a sherd (83 gr) of Modern English stoneware (fabric F45M) dating to the 19th-20th century.



The graveyard soil horizon produced a small quantity of residual Roman pottery with a sherd (22 gr) of 2nd century AD decorated central Gaulish samian (fabric BXCG) and a sherd from a southern Spanish Cadiz Dressel 7-11 amphora (39 gr). There was also three sherds (92 gr) of Medieval (c.1200-1550) Colchester-type ware (fabric F21A). There were two sherds of Post Medieval pottery: a sherd (6 gr) of Westerwald stoneware? (fabric F45M) dating to the 17th-18th century and a sherd (9 gr) from a 19th-20th century flower pot (Fabric 51B). There was also a quantity of Roman and Post-Roman CBM (peg-tile).

Table 3 summarizes the dating evidence for the features and layers which produced dateable ceramic finds.

Cxt	Description	Roman	Post Roman	CBM	Overall date Approx.
F3	brick burial vault	-	-	BR UNFROGGED RIDGE TILE	19th-20th century
F5	burial	-	F45M		19th-20th century
L3	graveyard burial soil	BXCG CADIZ (DR7-11)	F21A F45F F51B	RI RT RB PT BR UNFROGGED	19th-20th century

**Table 3** Approximate dates for the individual features and layers

### Small finds

by Laura Pooley

All of the small finds are of post-medieval/modern date and most came from L3 (graveyard soil) with two fragments of worked stone from F3. See Appendix 4 for a full catalogue.

Of the non-ferrous objects there were two worn and illegible copper-alloy halfpennies (SF1-SF2), a barrel tap key (SF3), a plain lead disc (SF4) and a piece of brass wire (SF5). All of the ferrous objects are pieces of coffin furniture. Burial in a coffin became common from the late 17th century onwards with coffin decoration becoming increasingly more elaborate by the early 18th century (Webb & Norton 2009, 173). Metal coffin fittings could include handles (also known as grips), grip plates, upholstery studs, breastplates, headplates and footplates. From L3 were three rounded coffin handles, an angular coffin handle, a fragment of a fifth handle and fragments of grip plate (most corroded onto the handles) (SF6 and SF7). Similar rounded and angular handles were recorded at Rivenhall Church to the south-west of Colchester (Rodwell & Rodwell 1993, Fig 23.6) and recently at St Mary's Church, Wivenhoe (CAT Report 1551). Handles were commonly fixed to the coffin using decorative grip plates and would have been placed at intervals around the outside of the coffin, normally three to each side and one at each end for an adult-sized coffin or two per side for a child-sized coffin (Reeve & Adams 1993, 83). Given the size of the handles and the weight of the coffin with occupant, most handles were likely to be purely decorative (Reeve & Adams 1993, 83) although, made from iron, the handles and grip plates from St Nicholas Square were in the cheapest metal available (Webb & Norton 2009, 159). Seven iron nails from L3 (finds nos. 5-6) and three iron nails from grave F5 (finds no. 7) are probably coffin nails.

A fragment of stone block (SF8) and two fragments of stone slab/panel (SF9) from brick burial vault F3 are likely to come from the structure of the monument. Brick shaft graves of the 18th and 19th centuries were intended for multiple family burials, and examples excavated at St Peter-le-Bailey in Oxford were lined with a single or double layer of bricks and mortar with the coffins stacked vertically one above the other (Webb & Norton 2009, 155). The top of the grave was then covered by 'horizontal ledgers, often roughly dressed sandstone or limestone slabs, which could be removed for subsequent interments' (Webb & Norton 2009, 155). As the burial within F3 was not fully excavated, it

is not known if this is a shaft grave with multiple burials beneath, but the fragments of stone from the top of the grave (SF9) might suggest that it was originally covered in slabs.

### Miscellaneous finds

by Laura Pooley

Miscellaneous finds included nine fragments of clay tobacco pipe. There were two Type 7 bowls and one probable Type 9 bowl with a maker's mark on either side of the foot. The bowl types are dated to c 1670-1700 and c 1700-1740 respectively (CAR 5, 49-52).

Context	Finds no.	Description	Qt.	Wt. g
F5, TP1	7	<b>Clay tobacco pipe stem:</b> Fragment of plain stem, post-medieval (discarded).	1	3.1
L3, TP2	5	<b>Clay tobacco pipe stems:</b> Four fragments of plain stem, post-medieval (discarded).	4	19.4
		<b>Clay tobacco pipe bowls:</b> 1) Incomplete clay pipe bowl (front and rim missing) with small oval foot and part of stem present, probably a Crummy Type 9 (CAR 5, 51-52), there is a moulded maker's mark in the form of a ?cross in relief on either side of the foot. A similar mark is recorded in CAR 5 as either a cross of a four-petalled flower (CAR 5, ref. 2959). An unused waster. Date: c 1700-40.	1	8.1
		2) Incomplete clay pipe bowl (part of rim missing) with all of stem missing too, rim bottered and 20% rouletted, oval foot scored with a single straight line, Crummy Type 7 (CAR 5, 49). An unused waster. Date: c 1670-1700.	1	15.8
		3) Incomplete clay pipe bowl (part of rim missing) with most of stem missing too, rim bottered, oval foot, Crummy Type 7 (CAR 5, 49). An unused waster. Date: c 1670-1700.	2	547.6
	<b>Unworked stone:</b> Two fragments of septaria (discarded).			
	6	<b>Clay tobacco pipe stem:</b> Fragment of plain stem, post-medieval (discarded).	1	10.2

**Table 4** Miscellaneous finds by context

Also recovered from the backfill of F3, but not retained, were several modern finds, including tinfoil and the remains of a battery. These finds would seem to suggest that the burial vault was opened and backfilled during the demolition work carried out on the site in 1955.

## 8 Conclusion

The results from this evaluation clearly show that the graveyard associated with the church of St Nicholas was not comprehensively cleared of burials when the church was demolished in 1955. The multiple burial vaults, disarticulated remains and *in situ* skeletons within the test-pits all suggest that a high number of burials survive in the vicinity.

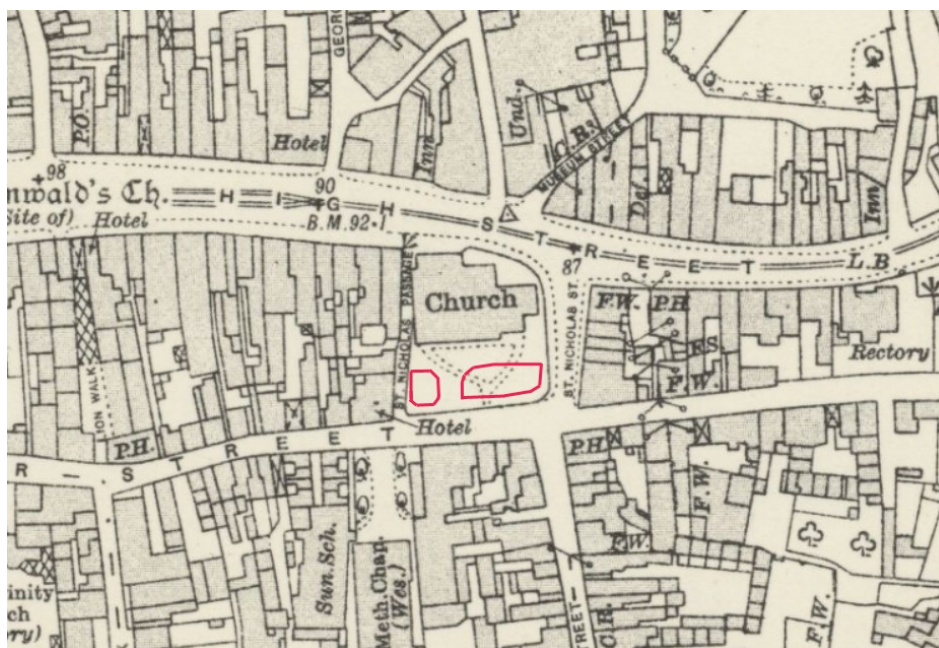
The majority of the finds recovered during the evaluation dated to the 19th-20th century. Whether this represents the date of the burials uncovered during this investigation or is simply the result of modern disturbance is unclear. Presumably the churchyard was in use as a burial ground until the church became redundant in 1952, so burials of an early 20th century date could reasonably be expected to be present on the site.

It may be the case, however, that any 'clearing' of the graveyard during the 1950s work was limited to more recent burials, whose gravestones and other grave markers were still extant. If this is true then it would suggest that the burials remaining on the site are earlier in date.

The ground-level of the two raised walled-garden areas seems to broadly represent the original, or close to the original, ground-level of the churchyard prior to the church's demolition. The layer of buried topsoil (L5) in TP2 (sealing the graveyard soil L3) is presumably the original churchyard topsoil, with the thin layer of modern topsoil above (L4) having built-up in the 66 years since the sites redevelopment in the 1950s. The presence of a gravestone in TP2 that had been broken off above-ground seems to confirm this.

Meanwhile, the areas of the churchyard (Fig 1 and Map 1) in-between or outside the walled-garden areas appear to have been much more heavily landscaped during the work in the 1950s. The much shallower burial F5 and the presence of burial vaults F1 and F3 almost immediately below the concrete surface in TP1 are clear indicators of this.

It is hoped that the heights (both bcgl and AOD) recorded during this evaluation will allow the proposed redevelopment to be designed such that it can proceed while impacting the minimum number of surviving burials (Fig 2).



**Map 1** 1921 25-inch OS map. St Nicholas Church shown, along with extent of churchyard to south. Areas of raised wall-garden areas surviving today outlined in red.

## 9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by M Baister with A Wade and R Mathieson. Figures are by M Baister and S Carter. The project was monitored for Colchester Borough Council by Dr Richard Hoggett.

## 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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| CAR 3                                | 1984        | <i>Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex: Colchester Archaeological Report 3</i> , by P Crummy  |
| CAR 5                                | 1988        | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 5: The post-Roman small finds from excavations in Colchester 1971-85</i> , by N Crummy  |
| CAR 6                                | 1992        | <i>Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilbert School, and other sites in Colchester 1971-85</i> , Colchester Archaeological Report 6. by P Crummy                                |
| CAR 7                                | 2000        | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by J Cotter   |
| CAR 9                                | 1993        | <i>Excavations of Roman and later cemeteries, churches and monastic sites in Colchester, 1971-88</i> . Colchester Archaeological Report 9. by N Crummy, P Crummy, and C Crossan |
| CAT                                  | 2020        | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex CO1 1LB</i>  |
| CAT                                  | 2020        | <i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>   |
| CAT Report 1125                      | 2017        | <i>Archaeological evaluation and monitoring at 5-6 St Nicholas Street and 60 Culver Street East, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1DW: April 2017</i> By L Pooley                         |
| CAT Report 1551                      | 2020        | <i>Archaeological monitoring and test-pit evaluation at St Mary's Church, High Street, Wivenhoe, Essex, CO7 9BD: April 2018-May 2020</i> by Dr E Hicks                          |
| CAT Report 1614                      | forthcoming | <i>Archaeological excavation at 5-6 St Nicholas Street and 60 Culver Street East, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1DW: June-July 2019</i> By L Pooley                                    |
| CAT Report 498                       | 2008        | <i>An archaeological watching brief on trenches for gas mains in Queen Street and Culver Street East, Colchester, Essex - April-November 2008</i> by D Shimmin                  |
| CBCAA                                | 2020        | <i>Brief for an archaeological evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester</i> , by Dr R Hoggett   |
| CIfA                                 | 2014a       | <i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>   |
| CIfA                                 | 2014b       | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>   |
| Crummy, P                            | 1971        | <i>'Insula 30', Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society 3, 3rd series, part 1, 107-111</i>   |
| Crummy, P                            | 1997        | <i>City of Victory. The Story of Colchester – Britain's first Roman town</i>  |
| Gurney, D                            | 2003        | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14)  |
| Historic England                     | 2015        | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>   |
| Hull, M R                            | 1958        | <i>Roman Colchester</i>   |
| Hull, M R                            | 1960        | <i>St Nicholas Church site, Colchester', Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society 25 (1955), 301-328</i>  |

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)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Morant, P	1748	<i>History and antiquities of the Borough of Colchester</i>
Reeve, J & Adams, M	1993	<i>The Spitalfields Project. Volume 1 – The Archaeology. Across the Styx</i> . CBA Research Report 85
Rodwell, W J & Rodwell, K A	1993	<i>Rivenhall: investigations of a Roman villa, church and village, 1950-1977. Volume 2: Specialist studies and Index to Volumes 1 and 2</i> . CBA Research Report 80/Chelmsford Archaeological Trust Report 4.2.
Webb, H & Norton, A	2009	'The medieval and post-medieval graveyard of St Peter-le-Bailey at Bonn Square, Oxford', in <i>Oxoniensia</i> , Oxfordshire Architectural and Historical Society

## 11 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	<b>A</b> bove <b>O</b> rdnance <b>D</b> atum
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
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
EHHER	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
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> ccess to the Index of Archaeological Investigation <b>S</b> , <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
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	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	<b>W</b> ritten <b>S</b> cheme of Investigation

## 12 Contents of archive

**Finds:** one box (pottery, CBM, small finds)

### **Paper record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1625)

CBC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (layer sheets, finds sheet, sections)

Site digital photos and log

### **Digital record**

The report (CAT Report 1625)

CBC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Survey data

### 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 ECC4586.

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#### Distribution list:

Alison Fogg, Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd  
Dr Richard Hoggett, Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor  
Essex Historic Environment Record



#### Colchester Archaeological Trust

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Colchester,  
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tel.: 01206 501785

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## Appendix 1 Context list

Context Number	Test Pit number	Finds Numbers	Feature / layer type	Description	Date
L1	1	-	Concrete surface	-	Modern
L2	1	-	Brick rubble sub-base	friable/firm moist dark grey silty clay with very common brick and tile inclusions	Modern
L3	1 & 2	5, 6, 8, 9	Burial soil / grave fill	soft/friable moist dark grey/black sandy silt with oyster flecks, brick flecks and rare stone inclusions	Post-medieval
L4	2	-	Topsoil	loose/soft dry medium/dark brown sandy silt	Modern
L5	2	-	Buried topsoil	soft dry dark brown/black sandy silt	Post-medieval/modern
F1	1	-	Brick burial vault	constructed from unfrogged red bricks. Unexcavated.	19th-20th century
F2	1	-	Modern straight-sided feature	soft moist light/medium sand with brick flecks and common CBM inclusions	Modern
F3	1	1, 2, 3, 4	Brick burial vault	constructed from unfrogged red bricks. soft/friable moist medium/dark grey/brown sandy silt with brick flecks, tile flecks and occasional CBM inclusions	19th-20th century
F4	2	-	Brick burial vault	constructed from unfrogged red bricks. Unexcavated.	19th-20th century
F5	1	7	Inhumation burial	soft/friable moist dark grey/black sandy silt with oyster flecks, brick flecks and rare stone inclusions	19th-20th century
F6	2	-	Inhumation burial	soft/friable moist dark grey/black sandy silt with oyster flecks, brick flecks and rare stone inclusions	Undated
F7	2	-	?pit	soft/friable moist dark grey/black sandy silt with oyster flecks, brick flecks and rare stone inclusions	Undated
F8	2	-	?pit	soft/friable moist dark grey/black sandy silt with oyster flecks, brick flecks and rare stone inclusions	Undated

### Appendix 2 Pottery list

Cxt	Feature type	Find no.	TR	NR	GR.	MSW	Discard	Rim	Handle	Base	Stamp	Graf Pre-F	Graf Post-F	Wind	Soot	Pitting	Burn	Overfired	Residue	Gritted	Abraded	Modif.	Mark	Repair hole	Hole	Disc	Polishing	Fabric Grp	Typology	Vessel function	EVE	Diam.	Vessel H.	Comments	Date
F005	GRAVE	7	1	1	83	83		0	0	1																F45M								19TH-20TH CENTURY	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	6	6																				F45F								17TH-18TH CENTURY	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	53	53		0	0	1																F21A							TRACES OF GLAZE	c.1200-1550	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	39	39																				CADIZ	DR7-11						ROMAN		
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	6	1	1	9	9																				F51B								19TH-20TH CENTURY	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	6	1	1	22	22																				BXCG							HERCULES WITH A CLUB	AD 100-200	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	6	1	2	39	20																				F21A							ORANGE GLAZE	c.1200-1550	

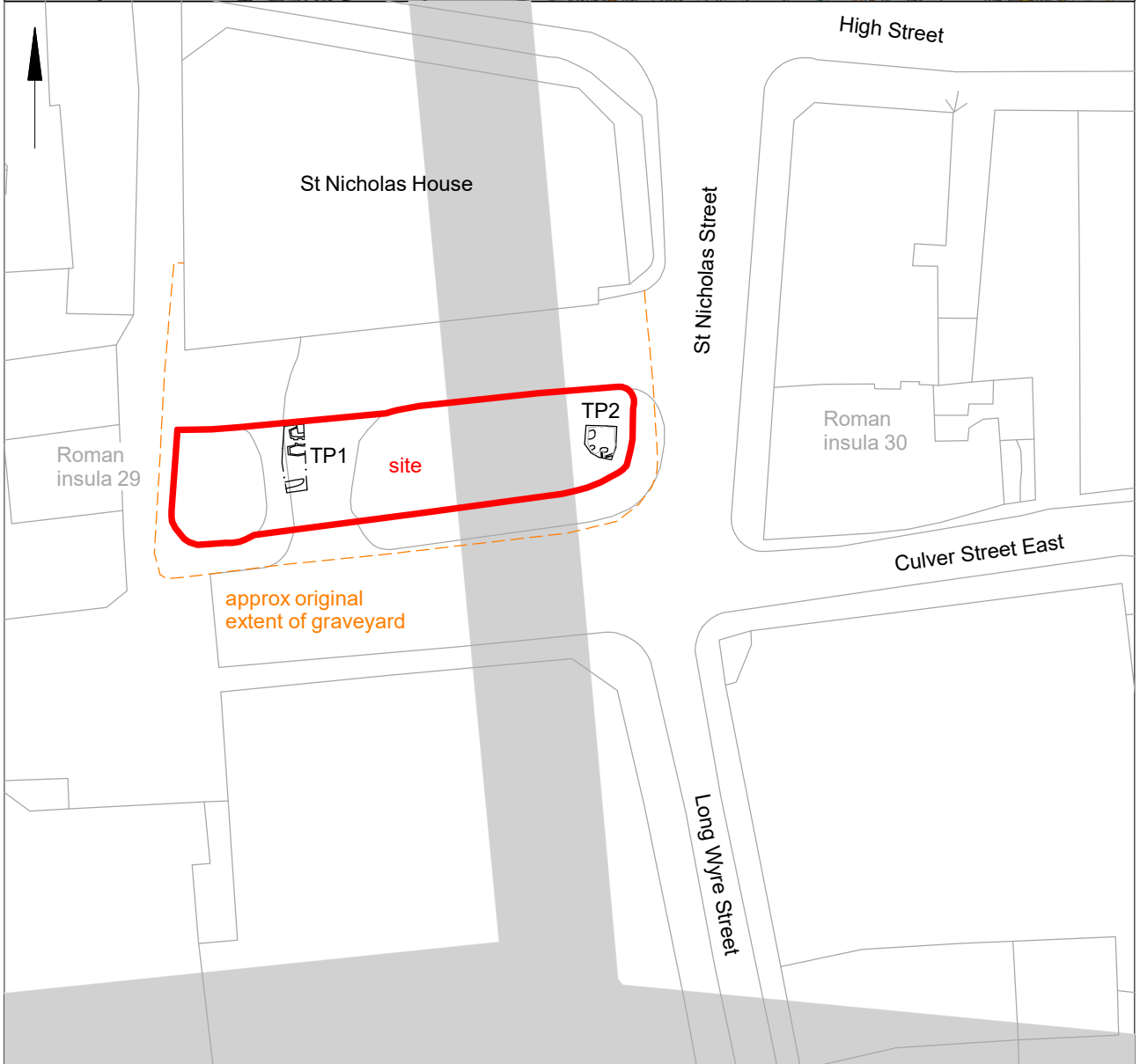
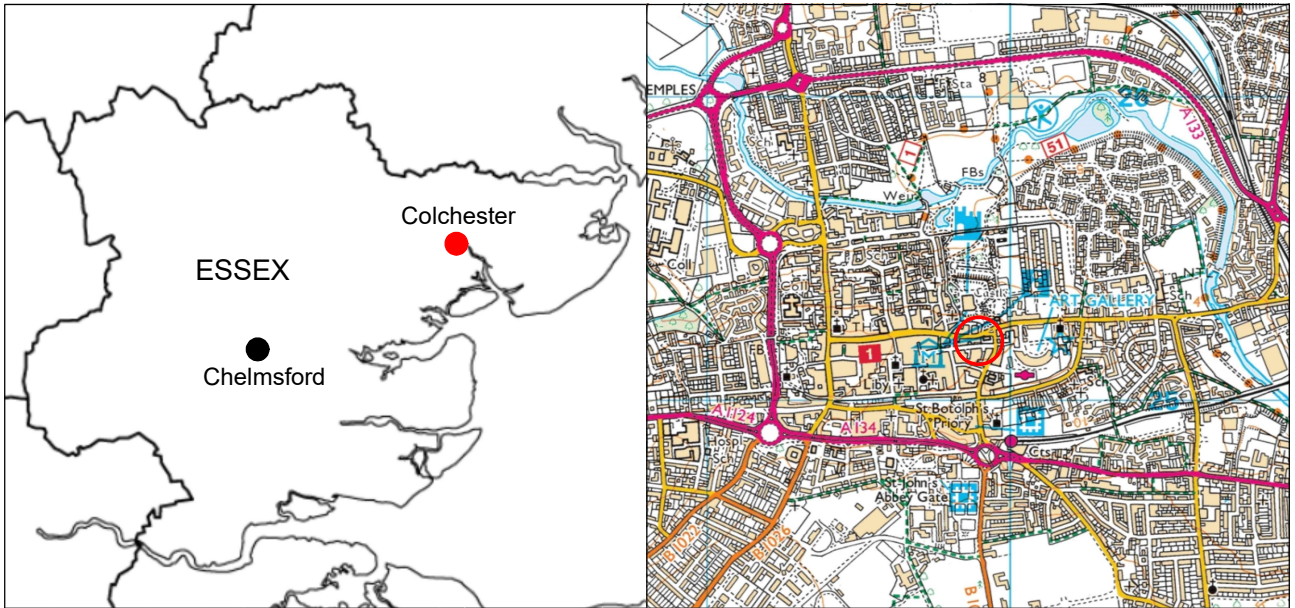
### Appendix 3 CBM list

Cxt	Feature type	Find no.	Trench	NR	GR.	MSW	Discard	Typology	Sub-type	FL CORN	FL TH	FL W	FL H	MINI	LCA	UCA	UCA L	Stamp	Sign.	Tally	Graf PE	Animal	Shoe	Scored	Comb.	Roller	Circ. Vt.	Rect. Vt.	Bl. Vt.	PH SQ	PH SQ	Blind	2 Pns	L	BR	TH	Mortar	Overfired	Abraded	Modif.	Comments	Date			
F003	BRICK TOMB	1		1	2797	2797		BR	UN-FROGGED	0																																ORANGE SANDY	18TH-19TH CENTURY		
F003	BRICK TOMB	3		5	1974	395		RIDGE TILE		0																																	DECORATED RIDGE TILE, MESH/MATTING IMP ON UNDERSIDE	18TH-20TH CENTURY	
F003	BRICK TOMB	3		1	138	138		RIDGE TILE		0																																DECORATED RIDGE TILE	18TH-20TH CENTURY		
F003	BRICK TOMB	4		2	2993	1497		BR	UN-FROGGED	0																																	ORANGE SANDY	18TH-19TH CENTURY	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	6	445	74	X	PT																																				MEDIEVAL-POST MEDIEVAL	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	288	288	X	RB																																			ROMAN		
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	2	230	115	X	RT		54	24	19																															ROMAN		
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	114	114	X	BR																																			POST-MEDIEVAL		
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	235	235	X	BR	UN-FROGGED																																		POST-MEDIEVAL		
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	2	57	29	X	RBT																																			ROMAN		
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	64	64	X	RB																																			ROMAN		
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	140	140	X	RT																																				PALE YELLOW	ROMAN
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	63	63	X	RI		0																																		PALE YELLOW	ROMAN
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	5	2	1	23	23		Mortar		0																																		MODERN	
L003	GRAVEYARD SOIL HORIZON	6	1	1	216	216	X	RT		0	40	22	22																															ROMAN	



## Appendix 4 Catalogue of small finds and iron nails

SF	Context	Find no.	Object type	Description	Qt.	Wt. g	Length mm	Width mm	Thickness mm	Diameter mm	Date
1	L3, TP2	8	Coin	Copper-alloy halfpenny, worn and completely illegible	1	6.5				27.7	Post-medieval/modern
2	L3, TP2	8	Coin	Copper-alloy halfpenny, worn and completely illegible	1	6.3				27.3	Post-medieval/modern
3	L3, TP2	5	Key	Virtually complete barrel tap key with oval bow (hexagonal in cross-section with rasp marks of the internal diagonal sides), round-sectioned shaft (flares towards bit) and incomplete, hollow, D-shaped bit with external ridge along the straight edge. Bow: 34.9mm by 23.5mm, hexagonal edge: 4.8mm by 4.5mm. Shaft: 5.8-6.1mm diameter. Bit: 12.8mm long, 12.9mm by 12.4mm across. (Bailey 2001, 60-63).	1	20.4	54.0				Post-medieval, c 18th-19th century
4	L3, TP1	9	Disc	Lead disc, complete but edge damaged, plain	1	7.8	29.5	28.0	3.1		Post-medieval/modern
5	L3, TP1	10	Wire	Length of brass wire, complete, bent into an S-shape	1	2.3	47.3			2.5	Post-medieval/modern
6	L3, TP2	5	Coffin handles	a) Iron, rounded coffin handle with rounded cross-section, expanded in centre, terminals damaged. b) Iron, rounded coffin handle with rounded cross-section (broken into two joining pieces). Small fragments of the iron grip plate are corroded onto the handle at both ends, suggesting that the looped attachments might still be in place but the object is too corroded to be certain.	1 1	57.4 84.7	130.8 136.0				Post-medieval
7	L3, TP1	6	Coffin handles	a) Iron, rounded coffin handle with rounded cross-section, expanded in centre. b) Iron, angular handle (one arm missing), fragment of iron grip plate corroded onto the back of the handle. c) Fragment from one end of a coffin handle with part of the grip plate attached. The looped attachment might still be in place but the object is too corroded to be certain. d) Fragment of iron sheet, possibly part of a grip plate.	1 1 1 1	70.0 121.0 86.9 8.5	132.0 130.3 67.7 53.0		66.0		Post-medieval
8	F3, TP1	4	Stone block	Worked stone block, broken at one end, rectangular in plan and cross-section. ?Limestone	1	1,710	152.3	136.2		39.8	Post-medieval/modern
9	F3, TP1	2	Stone slab/panel	Two fragments of stone slab/panel. Both fragments have two original edges and two broken edges. Both fragments also have two roughly dressed surfaces (one more rough and irregular than the other). ?Purbeck limestone.	2	2,223	200.0 206.0	191.0 153.0		c 20.0 c 20.0	Post-medieval/modern
	L3, TP2	5	Nails	a) Complete, round-sectioned shank, small flat round head (8.9mm diameter) b) Complete, shape of shank uncertain, shank clenched at 45°, flat round head (c 20mm diameter). c) Complete, shape of shank uncertain, flat round head (c 14mm diameter).	1 1 1	13.3 24.2 20.2	102.3 62.4 62.6				Post-medieval/modern
	L3, TP1	6	Nails	a) Complete or with tip missing, ?round-sectioned shank, flat round head (23.5mm diameter). b) Complete, shape of shank uncertain, flat round head (c 12mm diameter). c) Shanks or with head obscured in corrosion, mineralised wood on one, 39.8mm and 35.4mm long.	1 1 2	14.9 6.5 13.6	48.2 42.8				Post-medieval/modern
	F5, TP1	7	Nails	a) Complete, round-sectioned shank, small flat round head (10.0mm diameter). b) Complete, round-sectioned shank clenched at 45° close to head, small flat round head (10.0mm diameter) c) Virtually complete with tip missing, round-sectioned shank, small flat round head (12.6mm diameter)	1 1 1	9.1 10.8 9.0	82.5 78.9 56.2				Post-medieval/modern



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Fig 1 Site location.



■ Roman street layout

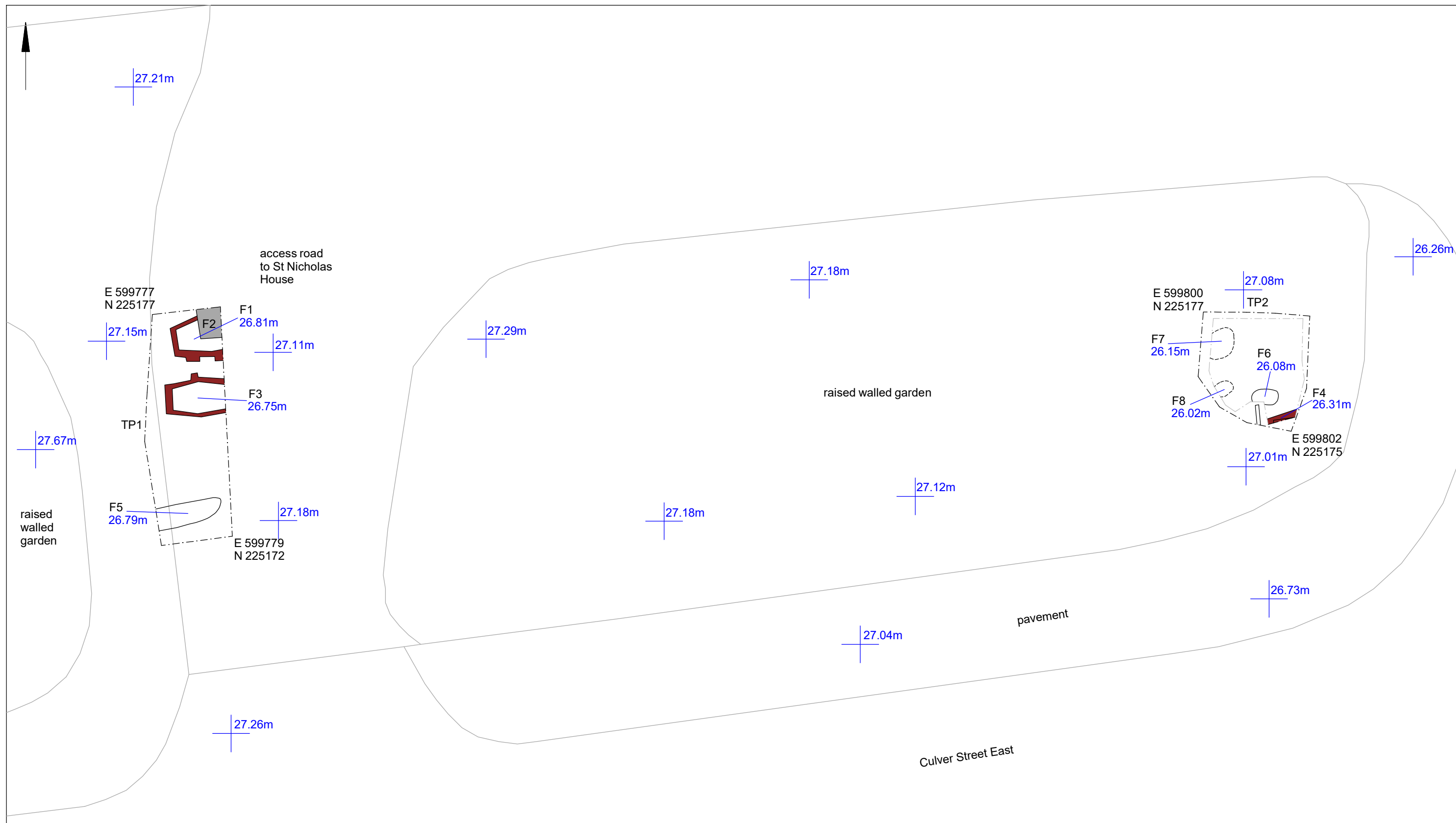


Fig 2 Evaluation results, showing Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) heights in blue.



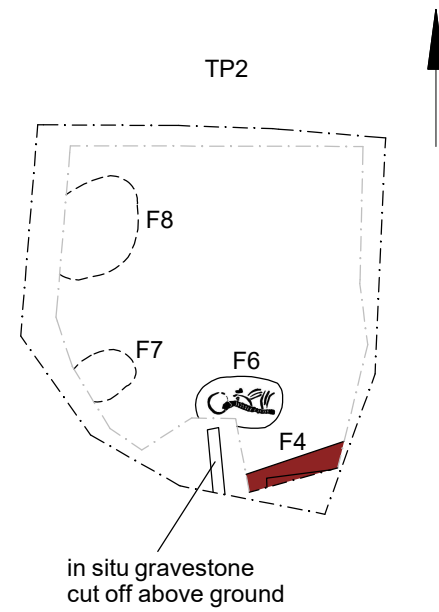
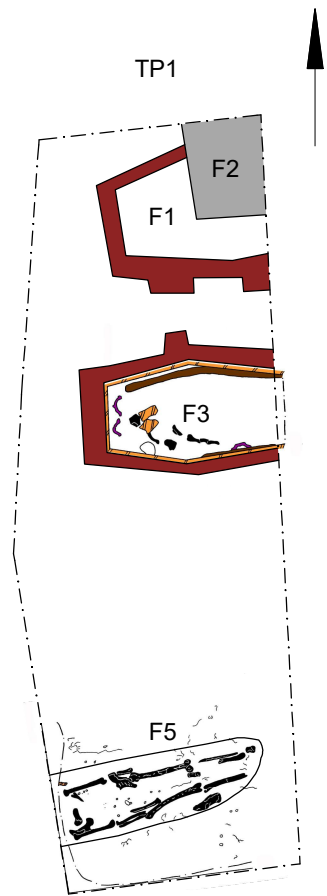


Fig 3 Detailed test-pit plans.



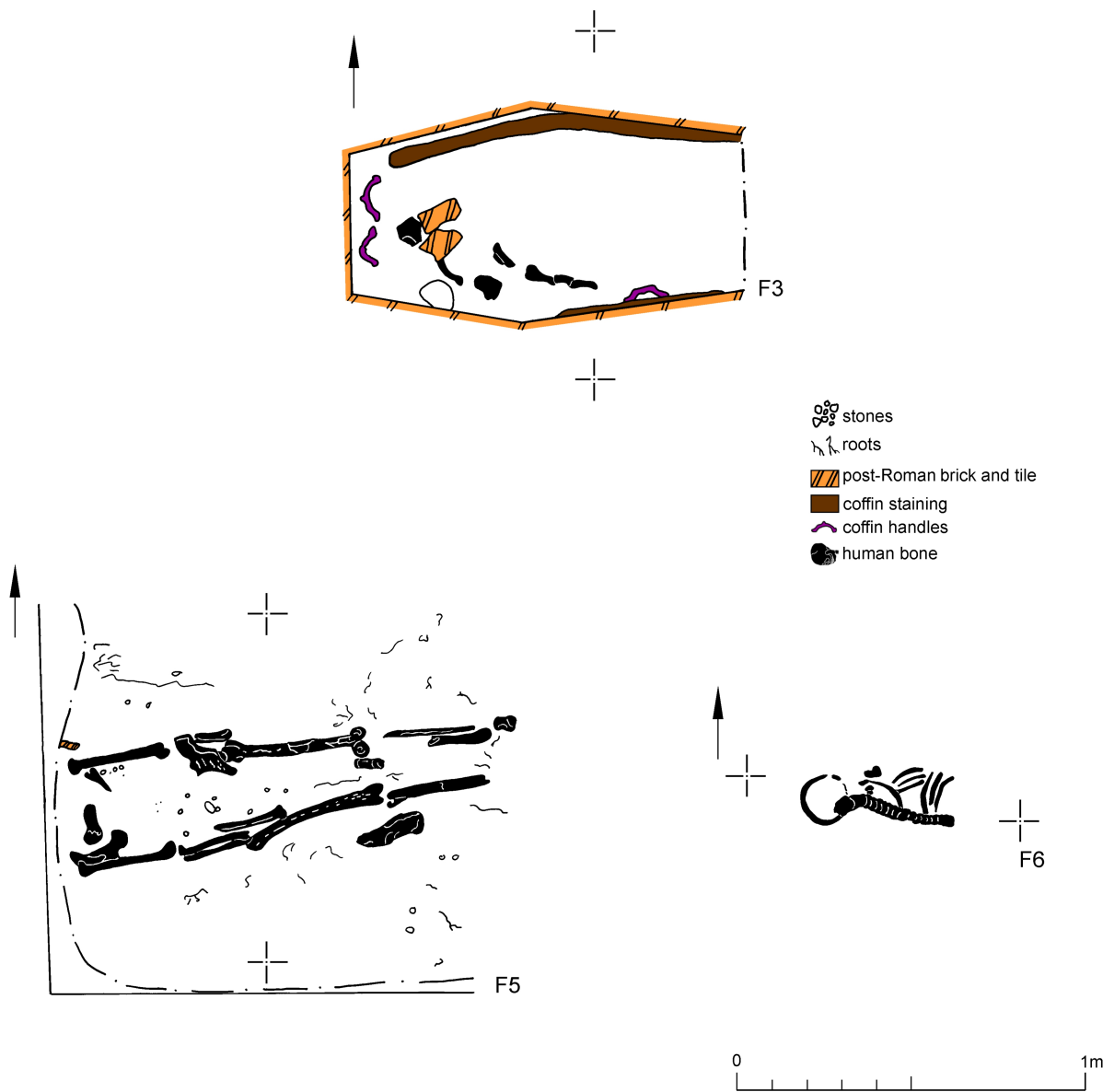


Fig 4 F3, F5 and F6 plans.

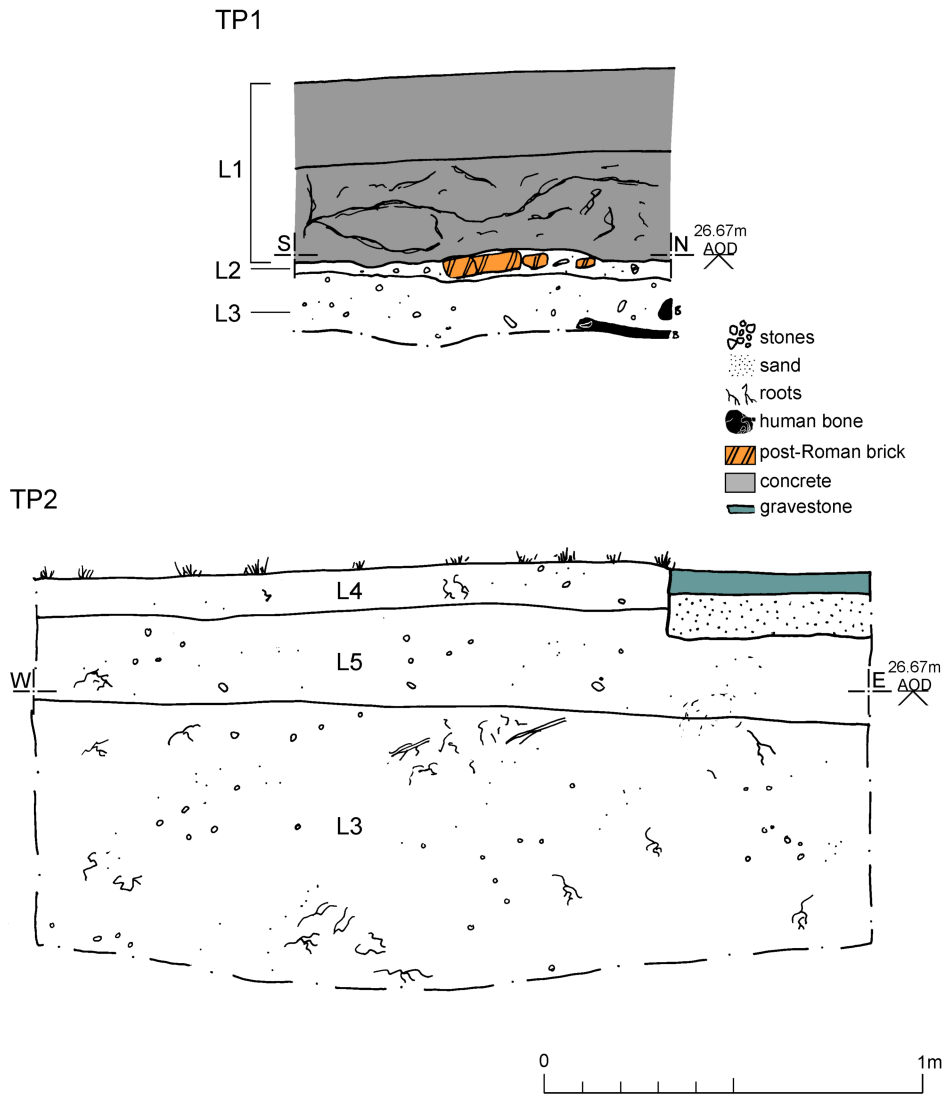


Fig 5 Representative sections.

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1LB	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 99787 25178 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project ref.: 2020/12c CHER ref: ECC4586 OASIS ref: colchest3-410040
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 15th September - 19th December 2020	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 15.25m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Colchester Museum	<b>Funding source:</b> Developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> unknown	<b>Related CHER/SMR number:</b> MCC1570, MCC406-7
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 1625	
<b>Periods represented:</b> 19th-20th century	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>  An archaeological test-pit evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex in advance of the redevelopment and landscaping of the site. The site is located within the churchyard of St Nicholas Church, which was demolished in 1955. Two inhumation burials, three brick burial vaults and two probable pits containing disarticulated bone were uncovered. Finds of a 19th-20th century date were retrieved from the burial soil, although as the site has been a burial ground since the 12th century it is unclear if these find represent the date of the uncovered burials or are the result of modern disturbance.	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> Hull 1960	
<b>CBC monitor:</b> Dr Richard Hoggett	
<b>Keywords:</b> burial	<b>Significance:</b> *
<b>Author of summary:</b> Mark Baister	<b>Date of summary:</b> January 2021

# Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1LB

**NGR:** TL 99787 25178 (centre)

**District:** Colchester

**Planning references:** Pre-planning

**Commissioned by:** Alison Fogg (Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd)

**On behalf of:** Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd

**Curating museum:** Colchester

**CHER number:** [tbc](#)

**CAT project code:** 2020/12c

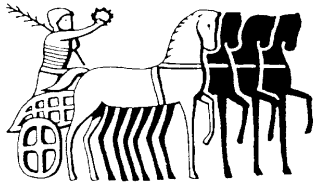
**OASIS project number:** colchest3-410040

**Site manager:** Chris Lister

**CBC monitor:** Dr Richard Hoggett

**This WSI written:** 07/12/2020

**Revised:** 10/12/2020



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## Site location and description

The proposed development site lies within Colchester town centre, 140m SW of Colchester Castle, at St Nicholas' Square. (Fig 1). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 99787 25178.

## Proposed work

The development comprises the redevelopment and hard landscaping of the gardens known as St Nicholas' Square.

## Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER, ECC/MCC numbers) accessed via the Colchester Heritage Explorer ([www.colchesterheritage.co.uk](http://www.colchesterheritage.co.uk)).

Colchester has been the subject of antiquarian and archaeological interest for some centuries, culminating in modern large-scale archaeological excavations within the town centre and suburbs. There is a large corpus of published information on the town's archaeological and historical background (Morant 1748, Hull 1958, *CAR 1*, *CAR 3*, *CAR 6*, *CAR 9* and Crummy 1997).

The development site is also located within the Roman walled town of *Camulodunum* (MCC9314). Evidence for archaeological remains from Culver Street East, between Queen Street and St Nicholas Street/Long Wyre Street, includes approximately six north-south foundations, an east-west one, and possibly part of a tessellated pavement (Hull 1958, 203-6), which probably belonged to buildings in Insula 30 (MCC1029). Further evidence for these was found on the south side of Culver Street East in a shaft dug in 1948 (MCC8326-7, *ibid*, 206) and in watching briefs under Sainsbury's and Caters (now Savers/ Poundland) (MCC2194 and MCC2687, Crummy 1971), and also on the north side of Culver Street East at 61-2 High Street (MCC1506, *CAR 6*, 995-6). The discovery of a north-south drain at 65 High Street in 1976 (MCC1597, *CAR 6*, 820) may indicate that Insula 30 was subdivided by a north-south street. At least one large public building may have occupied Insula 30, although the evidence for this is very limited (Crummy 1971, 107). Gas replacement works in 2008 along Queen Street and Culver Street East revealed early Roman daub-block walls, burnt during the Boudican uprising of AD 60/1, and post-Boudican foundations and floors, street metalling, and a drain, as well as post-Roman pits and robber trenches (CAT Report 498).

Evidence from Culver Street East to the west of St Nicholas Street/Long Wyre Street included several Roman foundations and many fragments of marble (MCC8319, Hull 1958, 202-3). The north-south street between Insulas 29 and 30 was located on the St Nicholas' Church site in 1955 (MCC1570, Hull 1960, 315-16). The west end of Culver Street East lies immediately to the north of the extensive Lion Walk excavations of 1971-4<sup>1</sup> (*CAR 3*, 31-92).

The development site lies within the area of the former churchyard (MCC407) of the demolished church of St Nicholas (MCC406). The church was originally 12th century, but entirely rebuilt twice, in the 14th century and the late 19th century. It became redundant in 1952 and was demolished in 1955. Excavations after demolition revealed the nave and chancel of the Medieval church had used Roman walls for the foundations. All that survives of the churchyard is a small garden containing tombstones to the rear of St Nicholas House. It is not clear from historical accounts how many burials, if any, have been cleared from the site.

There is also a high potential for Roman and earlier deposits, if not disturbed by the medieval burial ground. A series of work undertaken by CAT at 5-6 St Nicholas Street, adjacent to the east, revealed archaeological deposits up to 3.65m below current ground level (CAT Report

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<sup>1</sup> Includes CHER no.s MCC8311, MCC482, MCC238, MCC677-8, MCC688, MCC694-5, MCC697, MCC702, MCC703, MCC733, MCC735-8, MCC757, MCC794, MCC802, MCC959.

1125, CAT Report 1614). Possible remains of a Roman bath house were uncovered, this included walls and floors, and a vast array of finds.

## **Project background**

Pre-planning consultation was sort from Colchester Borough Council prior to the design and planning application. The results of the evaluation with inform the design of the scheme.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, including the possibility of churchyard burials, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

## **Requirement for work** (Fig 1 and 2)

The required archaeological work was for an archaeological test-pit evaluation. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2020).

The brief requires the excavation of two 3m x 3m test pits. One will be situated within the eastern of the two walled areas, and the other within the line of the access road between the eastern walled area and St Nicholas House to the north. Due to the need to maintain a viable fire escape route this second trench will need to measure 5m x 1.8m. Both test-pits have been located to avoid known services and other site constraints (walls, trees, etc.) (Fig 2).

The evaluation is required to enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified. It is also 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, condition and significance of environmental evidence.
- Include a contingency for soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floor and dark earth deposits. In addition, particular attention should be given to the collection of micro-remains preserved within and/or directly over floors.
- Establish the potential for the survival and condition of environmental evidence.
- Establish an archaeological deposit model for below-ground archaeological remains across the site.
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

Further archaeological investigation could be required if unusual deposits or other archaeological finds of significance are recovered, this decision will be made by the CBCAA and will be the subject of an additional brief and WSI.

## **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* (CIfA 2014a, b)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2020)
- the Project Brief issued by the CBCAA (CBC 2020).

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.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to CHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A unique HER event number will be obtained from the CBCAA prior to the commencement of fieldwork. The curating museum will be notified of the details of the project and the event code, which will be used to identify the project archive when depositing at the end of the project.

## **Staffing**

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One supervisor plus two archaeologist for four days.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Mark Baister

## **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, or on the rare occasion where full excavation (or exhumation in the case of burials) is necessary to achieve the objectives of the evaluation.

Burials, if encountered, will be left *in situ* at this evaluation stage with an on site human bone specialist available to record as much information as possible (see human remains section below).

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 the trench, contexts and spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on proforma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

### **Site surveying**

The evaluation trench and any features will be surveyed by Total Station or GPS, 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.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of evaluation trenches 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 process the samples and the flots will be sent to Val Fryer or Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF or LG will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF/LG 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.

A contingency will be made in the budget for scientific assessment/analysis if suitable deposits are identified. This can include soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floors and dark earth deposits and/or absolute dating (such as archaeomagnetic and radiocarbon). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice.

### **Human remains**

CBCAA will be notified immediately if any human remains are encountered during the evaluation.

Burials, if encountered, will be left *in situ* at this evaluation stage. Following HE guidance (HE 2018) if the human remains are not to be lifted, the project osteologist will be available to record the human remains *in situ* (i.e. a site visit).

If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site, the following criteria would be applied; 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 Department of Justice for a licence to remove them. Conditions laid down by the DoJ license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and the CBCAA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Human remains removed from site for analysis may be sent for radiocarbon dating.

## **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. Digital site photographs will be taken and archived as per Historic England guidelines (HE 2015a).

## **Finds**

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number. CAT may use local volunteers to assist the CAT Finds Officer with this task.

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT Staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Howard Brooks (Deputy Director). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton

animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman, small groups only)

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley

flints: Adam Wightman

environmental processing: Bronagh Quinn

project osteologist (human remains): Meghan Seehra

or to outside specialists:

animal and human bone: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

radiocarbon dating: SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, Glasgow

conservation/x-ray: Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation) / Norfolk Museums Service,  
Conservation and Design Services

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

flint: Hazel Martingell

prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey

Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Val Rigby /  
Gwladys Monteil

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black / Ian Betts (MOLA)

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

small finds: Nina Crummy

other: EH 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.

A contingency will be made in the budget for scientific assessment/analysis if suitable deposits are identified. This can include soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of

floors and dark earth deposits and/or absolute dating (such as archaeomagnetic and radiocarbon). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice.

## 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* (HE 2015b).

The report will be submitted within three months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAA as a PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of groundworks. At least two corners of which will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- 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 within four weeks 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.

A PDF copy of the full report will be uploaded by CAT to the OASIS website and the Colchester Archaeological Trust's Online Report Library (<http://cat.essex.ac.uk/>), both of which are publicly accessible.

## 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 or an alternate repository (approved by COLEM and CBCAA) within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAA. Digital archives will be curated with the Archaeology Data Service, or similar accredited digital archive repository, that safeguard the long-term curation of digital records. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre [DCC 2013]) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive.

The CBCAA will be notified of the archiving timetable throughout the project and once deposition has occurred.

A digital / vector drawing of the site be given to the CBCAA for integration into the HER.

## 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

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

Brown, D	2011	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i> . 2nd Edition
CAR 1	1981	<i>Aspects of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester</i> . Colchester Archaeological Report 1. By P Crummy
CAR 3	1984	<i>Excavations at Lion Walk, Balcerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex: Colchester Archaeological Report 3</i> , by P Crummy
CAR 6	1992	<i>Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilbert School, and other sites in Colchester 1971-85, Colchester Archaeological Report 6</i> . by P Crummy
CAR 9	1993	<i>Excavations of Roman and later cemeteries, churches and monastic sites in Colchester, 1971-88. Colchester Archaeological Report 9</i> . by N Crummy, P Crummy, and C Crossan
CAT	2020	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 498	2008	<i>An archaeological watching brief on trenches for gas mains in Queen Street and Culver Street East, Colchester, Essex - April-November 2008</i> . By D Shimmin
CAT Report 1125	2017	<i>Archaeological evaluation and monitoring at 5-6 St Nicholas Street and 60 Culver Street East, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1DW: April 2017</i> By L Pooley
CAT Report 1614	Forthcoming	<i>Archaeological excavation at 5-6 St Nicholas Street and 60 Culver Street East, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1DW: June-July 2019</i> By L Pooley
CBCAA	2020	<i>Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester</i> By R Hoggett
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>
Crummy, P	1971	<i>'Insula 30', Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society 3, 3rd series, part 1, 107-111</i>
Crummy, P	1997	<i>City of Victory. The Story of Colchester – Britain's first Roman town</i>
Digital Curation Centre (DCC)	2013	Checklist for Data Management Plan v. 4.0
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England (HE)	2015a	<i>Digital Image capture and File Storage: Guidelines for best practice</i> . By S Cole & P Backhouse
Historic England	2015b	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i>

(HE)		(MoRPHE)
Historic England	2018	<i>The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project.</i> By S Mays, M Brickley and J Sidell
(HE)		
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i>
Hull, M R	1960	<i>St Nicholas Church site, Colchester', Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society 25 (1955), 301-328</i>
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)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Morant, P	1748	<i>History and antiquities of the Borough of Colchester</i>

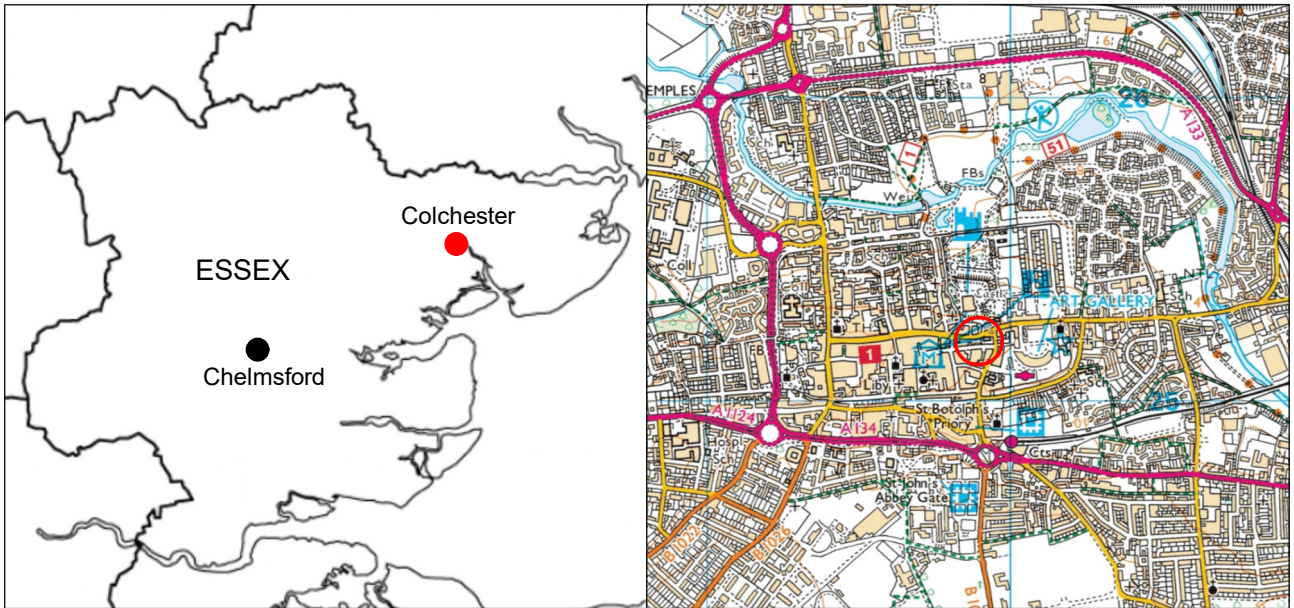
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Fig 1 Site location.



■ Roman street layout

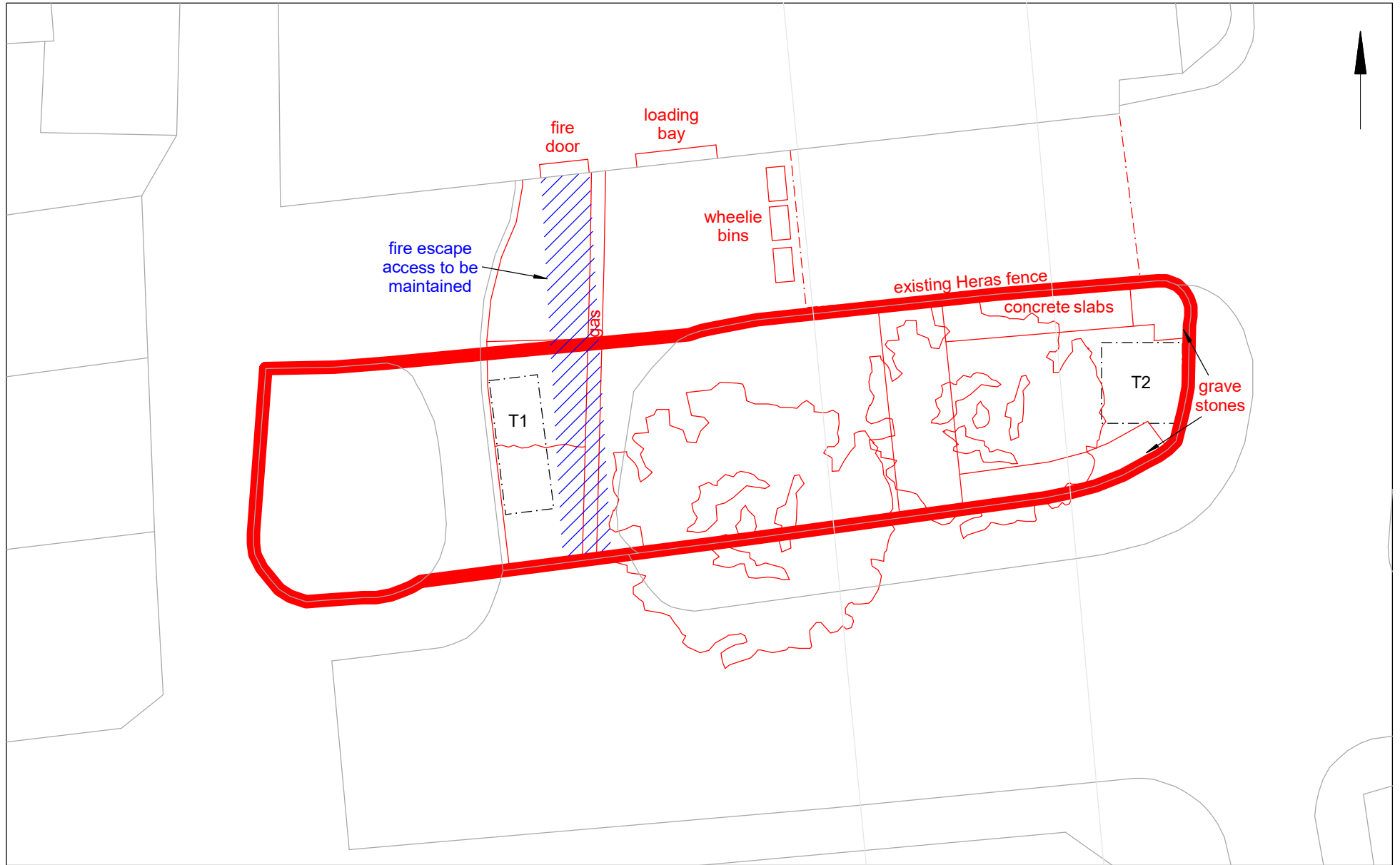


Fig 2 St Nicholas Square - site constraints dictating the locations of the trenches indicated in red.

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# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: colchest3-410040**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1LB
Short description of the project	An archaeological test-pit evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex in advance of the redevelopment and landscaping of the site. The site is located within the churchyard of St Nicholas Church, which was demolished in 1955. Two inhumation burials, three brick burial vaults and two probable pits containing disarticulated bone were uncovered. Finds of a 19th-20th century date were retrieved from the burial soil, although as the site has been a burial ground since the 12th century it is unclear if these find represent the date of the uncovered burials or are the result of modern disturbance.
Project dates	Start: 15-12-2020 End: 12-01-2021
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2020/12c - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4586 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	INHUMATION Post Medieval
Monument type	BURIAL VAULT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Methods & techniques	""Test Pits""
Development type	Amenity area (e.g. public open space)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Pre-application

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER St Nicholas Square, Colchester
Postcode	CO1 1LB
Study area	15.25 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 99787 25178 51.888772282561 0.903595040861 51 53 19 N 000 54 12 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBCAO
Project design originator	Sarah Carter
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Mark Baister
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

**Project archives**

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	ECC4586
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	ECC4586
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","Metal","other"
Paper Media available	"Miscellaneous Material","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

**Project bibliography 1**

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological evaluation at St Nicholas Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1LB December 2020
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Baister, M
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1625
Date	2021
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A4 bound report with clear plastic front and opaque black card back.
URL	<a href="http://cat.essex.ac.uk/summaries/CAT-1625.html">http://cat.essex.ac.uk/summaries/CAT-1625.html</a>
Entered by	Mark Baister (mb@catuk.org)
Entered on	12 January 2021

**OASIS:**

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