

# Archaeological evaluation on land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex, CO7 8GH

July 2022



**by Ziya Eksen and Laura Pooley**

with contributions by Dr Matthew Loughton and Adam Wightman  
figures by Chris Lister and Sarah Veasey

fieldwork by Sarah Veasey with Ziya Eksen and Karl Davies

**commissioned by Steve Williams, Hills Building Group**

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**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk,  
Colchester,  
Essex, CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: [lp@catuk.org](mailto:lp@catuk.org)

**CAT Report 1829**  
August 2022

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex in advance of the construction of a new mixed-used building. Cropmarks surround the development site with nearby archaeological investigations revealing Bronze Age, Iron Age and Late Iron Age/early Roman occupation evidence. The evaluation revealed a small concentration of seven features (one pit, four tree-throws and two ditches), most undated with one producing two later prehistoric worked flints and another a sherd of Roman grey ware pottery.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex from the 18th to 20th July 2022. The work was commissioned by Steve Williams on behalf of Hills Building Group Ltd in advance of the construction of a new mixed used building with associated access, parking, landscaping and groundworks.

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 2019).

A brief was not issued, but all archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in consultation with ECCPS and agreed in advance of the work commencing (CAT 2022).

In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016), 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 includes extracts of the ECC brief and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

Cropmarks surround the development site. Approximately 300m north is the cropmark of a ring-ditch with linear features (EHER 3176), and to the north of the ring-ditch (at The Grange) a curvilinear enclosure, a possible rectilinear enclosure and probable field boundaries (EHER 17253). Approximately 900m north-east are cropmarks of a field system with rectangular enclosure, circular ditch, pits and linear features (EHER 6559). Immediately east, various linear features included a possible trackway and old field boundaries corresponding with the first edition OS map (EHER 46882). A small ring-ditch and series of ditches have also been identified to the east of the development area (EHER 3661).

Directly west of the excavation area, previous archaeological investigations have revealed an area of Bronze Age and Iron Age remains, including ditches, pits, a possible ring-ditch and small pottery assemblages (Cotswolds Archaeology 2017; Wardell Armstrong 2018).

CAT has also undertaken three archaeological investigations close to the development site. Immediately east, an evaluation of 34 trenches uncovered ten modern features, ten tree-throws, 18 undated pits and ditches and a medieval/post-medieval pit and ditch (CAT Report 1031). Approximately 350m west at Sturric Farm, 20 trenches revealed part of a possible droveway and prehistoric field system (CAT Report 794). Evidence of a Late Iron Age/early Roman

settlement was uncovered during an evaluation (13 trenches) followed by an open area excavation c 400m to the east (CAT Report 1740). The site was the first large-scale excavation in the Great Bentley area that provided evidence for a thriving Late Iron Age/early Roman settlement.

Approximately 300m to the east is the site of Great Bentley Pumping Station (EHER 15580). Originally developed in 1903 by the Clacton-on-Sea, it was later acquired by Tendring Hundred Waterworks Co in 1962. Further south from the pumping station is the site of a demolished post-medieval windmill (EHER 47449).

#### **4 Aims**

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were 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 2-4)**

Four trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Each trench was 30m long by 1.8m wide and was stripped through topsoil (L1, c 0.16-0.27m thick) and subsoil (L2, c 0.12-0.34m thick) into natural (L3, identified at c 0.38-0.55m below current ground level). A full context list with soil descriptions and measurements can be found in Appendix 1.

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

There were no archaeological remains in Trench 1.

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

Pit/tree-throw F1 was a sub-round or sub-oval feature with a shallow concave base. Pit/tree-throw F2 was larger with an uneven base, and pit F3 was a small, circular feature which produced two pieces of prehistoric worked flint.

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

Ditch F7 was located towards the south-western end of the trench on a north/south alignment. Pit/tree-throw F6 was a small, oval feature with moderately sloping sides and concave base. Both were undated.

##### **Trench 4 (T4)**

Ditch F4 was aligned south-west/north-east and produced a worn sherd of Roman grey ware pottery. Pit/tree-throw F5 was a small, circular undated feature.





**Photograph 1** Trench 1, looking north



**Photograph 2** Trench 3 with ditch F7 in the foreground, looking north-west





**Photograph 3** Trench 4 showing ditch F4 and pit/tree-throw F5, looking north-east

## **6 Finds**

### **6.1 Pottery**

*by Dr Matthew Loughton*

One worn sherd of Roman grey ware pottery (8g, fabric GX) came from ditch F4 (finds no.2).

### **6.2 Worked flint**

*by Adam Wightman*

There were two flints from pit F1 (finds no. 1):

*Flake* – greyish-brown flint with water-worn cortex (suggesting the raw material derived from a local secondary gravel source), c 40% cortex retained on distal surface (secondary flake), hard-hammer struck, one previous removal, plunge fracture at distal end, no evidence of any edge modification. Later prehistoric (Mesolithic-Bronze Age).

*Bladelet* – brownish-grey flint, no cortex on distal surface, soft-hammer struck, 3/4 previous removals, broken (possibly intentionally snapped) at distal end, no evidence of any edge modification. Mesolithic or Early Neolithic.

## 7 Conclusion

Evaluation on land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex revealed seven features, four pits/tree-throws, one pit and two ditches. Most were undated, but the pit produced two pieces of later prehistoric worked flint and one of the ditches a sherd of Roman pottery. An archaeological evaluation c 400m to the east had previously revealed evidence for a Late Iron Age/early Roman settlement (CAT Report 1740), and ditch F4 from this current evaluation may well be part of the associated field system. That only one small sherd of pottery was recovered from the fill also suggests that the ditch was located away from the main focus of occupation. Very small quantities of prehistoric worked flint (Mesolithic to Bronze Age) have also been found during previous archaeological investigations close to the development site (CAT Reports 794, 1031 and 1740), and flints from the current evaluation add to evidence for small-scale, temporary and sporadic use of the landscape over a long period of time.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Steve Williams and Hills Building Group Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman, with fieldwork carried out by S Veasey with Z Eksen and K Davies. Figures were compiled by C Lister and S Veasey. 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, N & Glazebrook, J | 2000  | <i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8)                          |
| Cotswolds Archaeology    | 2017  | <i>Land West of Heckfords Road, Great Bentley, Colchester, Essex</i> by Cotswolds Archaeology Report 17132.   |
| CAT                      | 2022  | <i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>   |
| CAT                      | 2022  | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Land North of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex, CO7 8GH</i> |
| CAT Report 794           | 2014  | <i>Archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at Sturrick Farm, Sturrick Lane, Great Bentley, Essex: October 2014</i> , by H Brooks  |
| CAT Report 1031          | 2016  | <i>Archaeological evaluation on land at Admirals Farm, Heckfords Road, Great Bentley, Essex, CO7 8RS: September-October 2016</i> , by L Pooley                                      |
| CAT Report 1740          | 2021  | <i>Archaeologic evaluation and excavation on land east of Heckfords, Heckfords Road, Great Bentley, Essex, CO7 8RS: February-May 2021</i> , by S Veasey                             |
| CifA                     | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation.</i> Revised October 2020  |
| CifA                     | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Revised October 2020   |
| CifA                     | 2014c | <i>Code of Conduct.</i> Revised October 2021  |
| 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>   |
| 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.   |
| Wardell Armstrong        | 2018  | <i>Land West of Heckfords Road, Great Bentley, Essex, Archaeological Strip, Map and Excavation Report: January 2018</i>   |

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services

EHER evaluation	Essex Historic Environment Record a limited programme of non-intrusive and/or intrusive fieldwork, which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area. This may take the form of an intrusive investigation of a percentage of the site, geophysical or topographical survey. The results of this investigation will establish the requirements for any further work.
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
Mesolithic	period from c 10,000 – 4000BC
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	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, <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
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
ws	written scheme of investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** One bag (all finds)

**Digital record:**

The report (CAT Report 1829)

CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs and photographic log

Scans of original site data (section drawings)

Graphic files

Site data

Survey data

## 12 Archive deposition

The 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 reference no. GBEMW22 (finds) and with the Archaeological Data Service (digital).



**Distribution list:**

Steve Williams, Hills Building Group  
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

Roman Circus House,  
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Essex, CO2 7GZ

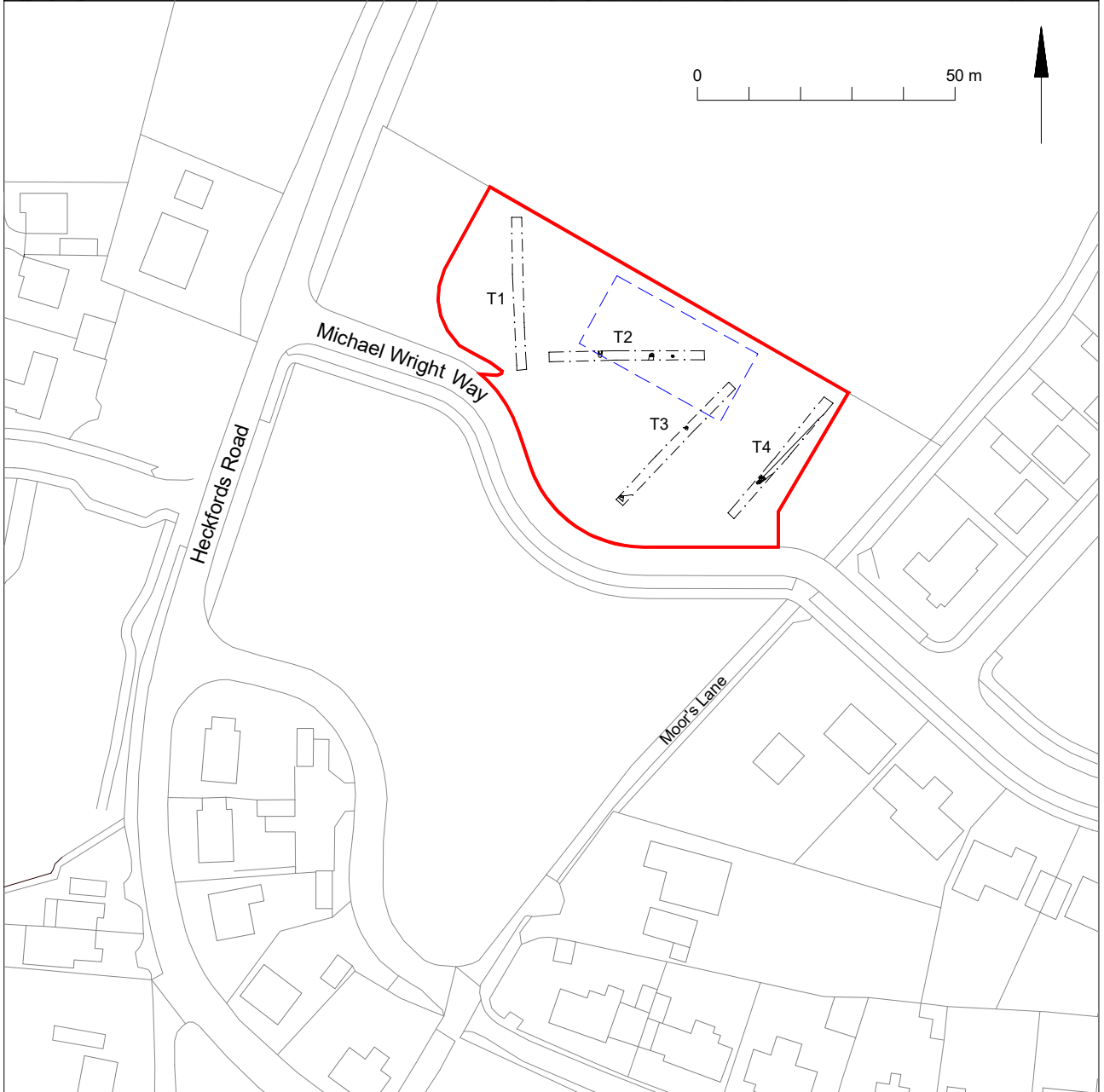
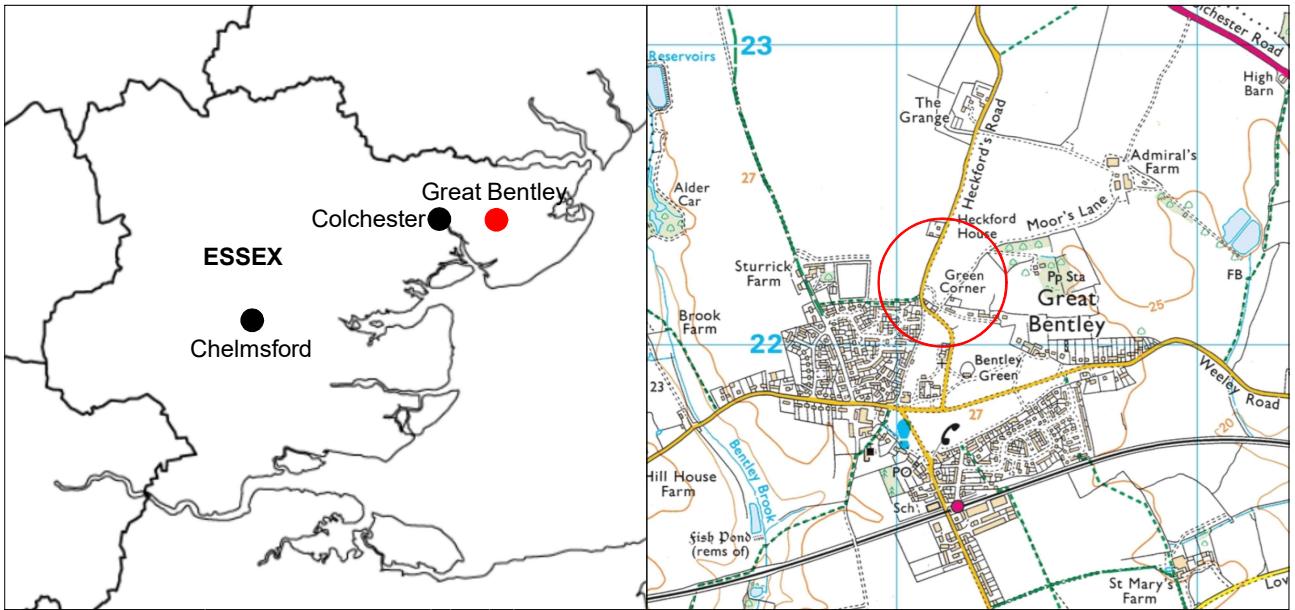
tel.: 01206 501785

email: [lp@catuk.org](mailto:lp@catuk.org)

Checked by: Philip Crummy  
Date: 02/08/2022

### **Appendix 1 Context list**

<b>Trench no.</b>	<b>Context</b>	<b>Finds no.</b>	<b>Context type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
All	L1	-	Topsoil	Soft, dry, dark grey/brown sandy silt and inclusions of: gravel 2%, 0.16-0.27m thick	Modern
All	L2	-	Subsoil	Dry, firm, light grey/brown sandy silt and inclusions of: gravel 2%, 0.12-0.34m thick	Undated
All	L3	-	Natural	Firm, dry, medium yellow/orange silty sandy clay inclusions of: gravel 1%. 25.23-25.9m AOD.	Post-glacial
T2	F1	1	Pit	Firm, dry, light yellow/grey silty-sand with occasional stone. At least 1.25m long by 0.7m wide, 0.22m deep.	Prehistoric
T2	F2	-	Pit/tree-throw	Firm, dry, light yellow/grey silty-sand. At least 1.32m long by 0.88m wide, 0.11m deep	Undated
T2	F3	-	Pit/tree-throw	Firm, dry, light yellow/grey silty-sand. 0.6m long by 0.44m wide, 0.11m deep	Undated
T4	F4	2	Ditch	Firm, dry, light, grey/orange sandy-silt with rare stones. Recorded for a distance of 18.1m long, c 0.7m wide, 0.2m deep.	Roman
T4	F5	-	Pit/tree-throw	Firm, dry, light grey sandy-silt with rare manganese flecks. At least 0.52m by 0.76m, and 0.14m deep	Undated
T3	F6	-	Pit/tree-throw	Firm, dry, light grey silty-sand. 0.73m by 0.56m and 0.10m deep	Undated
T3	F7	-	Ditch	Firm, dry, light grey/brown silty-sand. Not possible to measure, 0.25m deep.	Undated



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Fig 1 Site location with proposed development dashed blue

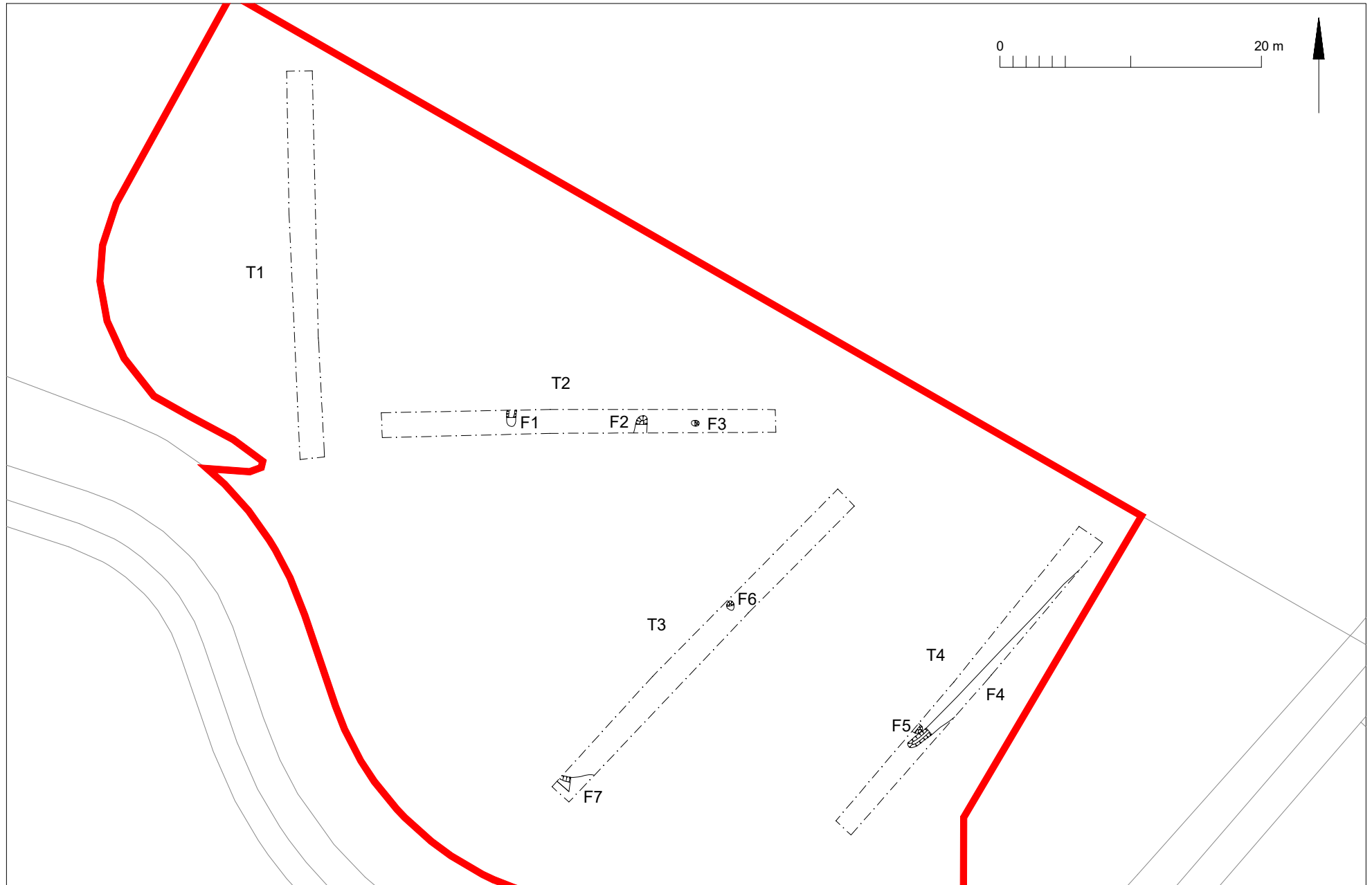


Fig 2 Results



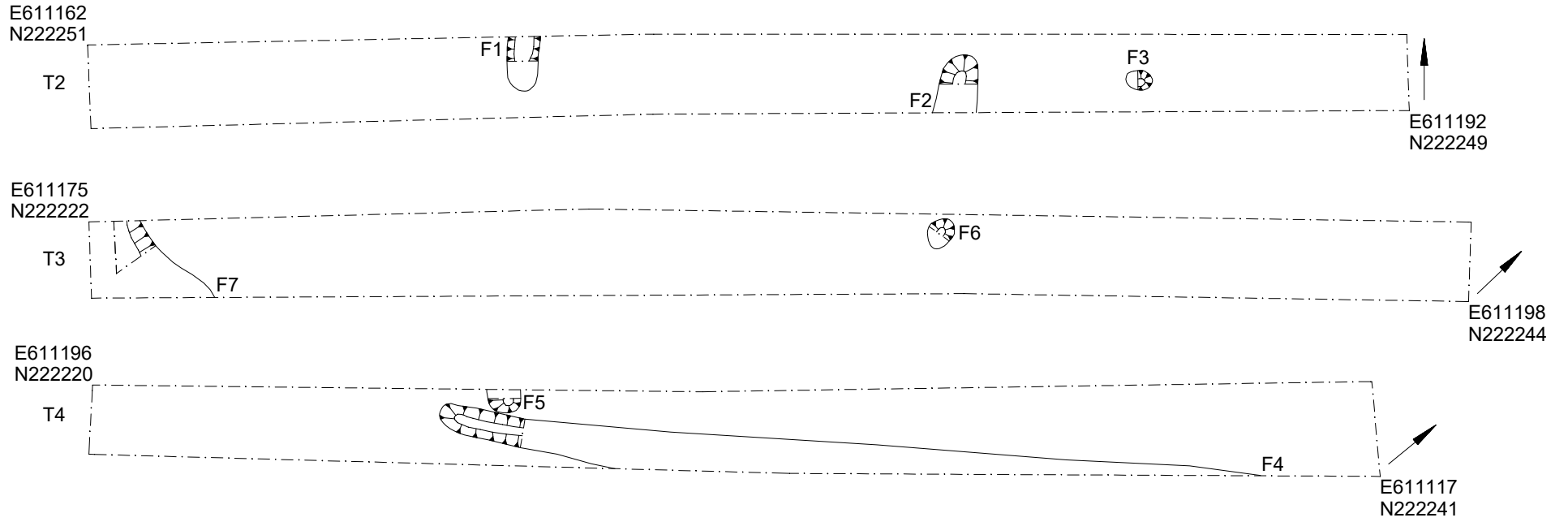


Fig 3 Detailed trench plans.

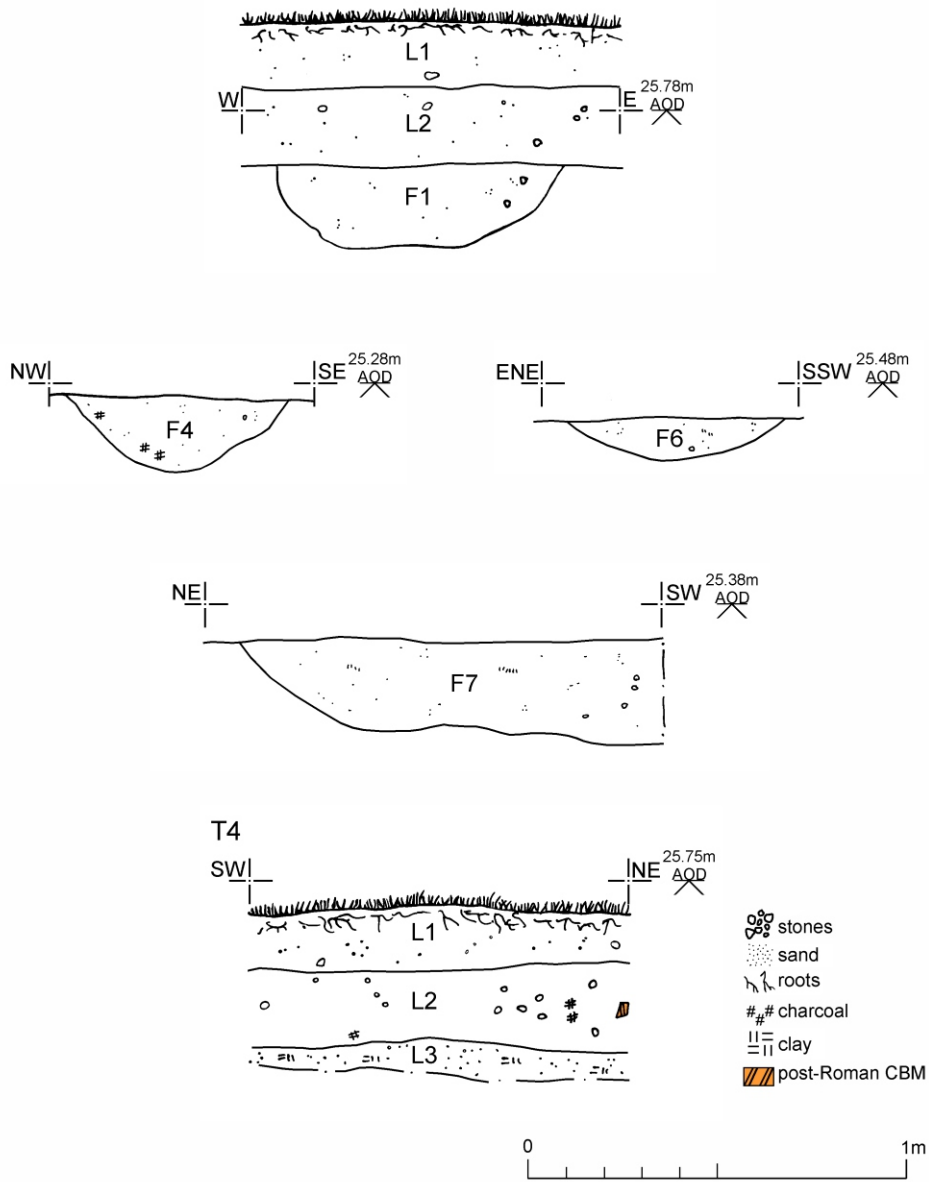


Fig 4 Feature and representative sections.

## Summary for colchest3-508001

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-508001
Project Name	Evaluation on land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex, CO7 8GH
Sitename	Land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex, CO7 8GH
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	2022/07g
Planning Id	22/00695/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	18-Jul-2022 - 20-Jul-2022
Location	Land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex, CO7 8GH NGR : TM 11174 22247 LL : 51.8588329489481, 1.06528596843297 12 Fig : 611174,222247
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Tendring Parish : Great Bentley
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation of four trial-trenches as outlined in the WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land north of Michael Wright Way, Admirals Green, Great Bentley, Essex in advance of the construction of a new mixed-used building. Cropmarks surround the development site with nearby archaeological investigations revealing Bronze Age, Iron Age and Late Iron Age/early Roman occupation evidence. The evaluation revealed a small concentration of seven features (one pit, four tree-throws and two ditches), most undated with one producing two later prehistoric worked flints and another a sherd of Roman grey ware pottery.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Z, Eksen, L, Pooley
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Physical Archive - to be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum Sevice (Colchester Collection); Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;