

Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1926
issued May 2023**

**An archaeological evaluation on land south of
Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, CO2 9PT:
April 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2022/12b
ECC code: ECC4776**

**An archaeological evaluation on land south of
Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, CO2 9PT:
April 2023**

NGR: TL 9730 2282

Planning ref.: pre-planning

**CAT project ref.: 2022/12b
CAT Report 1926**

**ECC code: ECC4776
OASIS id: colchest3-514174**

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commissioned by Ross Bain, Vaughan & Blyth Ltd

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Issued:	04.05.2023	

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Fig 1 Site location.

Fig 2 Results.

Fig 3 Detailed trench plans.

Fig 4 Trench locations and geophysics results.

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex in advance of the pre-planning application for a residential development on the site. The development area was located adjacent to the Colchester-to-Gosbecks Roman road (MCC2529). Despite lying within an archaeologically rich landscape, the evaluation only uncovered eight contexts, including one ditch, three pits and five natural or geological features. None of the features could be dated.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex on the 17th and 18th April 2023. The work was commissioned by Ross Bain of Vaughan & Blyth Ltd and took place in advance of the pre-planning application for a residential development.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER/CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). This recommendation was for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and was based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation*, written by Dr Simon Wood and detailing the required archaeological work (CBCAA 2023), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2023).

In addition to the brief and 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* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER numbers) accessed via the Colchester Heritage Explorer (www.colchesterheritage.co.uk).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site is London clay formation (clay, silt and sand, comprised of bioturbated or poorly laminated, blue-grey or grey-brown, slightly calcareous, silty to very silty clay), with superficial deposits of cover sand (blanket deposits of very fine grained sand).

The proposed development lies within an area of significant archaeological potential, specifically the site is adjacent to the Late Iron Age and Roman complex at Gosbecks (scheduled monument NHLE 1002180; MCC7470) which is known from aerial photographs, geophysical surveys, and multiple investigations and excavations (Hull 1958, 259-71; CAR 11, 95-105; CAT Reports 30, 45 and 127). Archaeological remains at Gosbecks include: dykes, droveways and field systems; a large enclosure (MCC7044), thought to potentially be Cunobelin's farmstead (MCC7044); a small Roman fort of probable Claudian date (MCC7472); a Romano-British temple (MCC2849), surrounded by a monumental portico (MCC7043); a Roman theatre (MCC2831); a Roman water-main, possibly leading to a bath-house (MCC2903); and a road leading to the walled Roman town (MCC2529). Many of these remains are located within Gosbecks Archaeological Park.

¹ British Geological Survey – <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>

In 1995-6, CAT carried out excavations to the immediate north of Gosbecks Archaeological Park. On Site A (immediately adjacent to the current site), the excavation of the Roman road demonstrated the presence of four ditches in two pairs forming a central carriageway which was approximately 7m wide, with narrower tracks approximately 2m wide on each side of the central carriageway. None of the road surface itself survived. There were a few residual prehistoric finds on Sites B and C, mostly of Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age date, although there was no evidence of any activity dating to the Middle Iron Age. The Late Iron Age and Roman occupation was located on two adjacent sites at the western end of Cunobelin Way. The earliest features were part of a large ditched enclosure and several smaller ditches of Late Iron Age-early Roman date. Some small pits or post-holes and three ovens were associated with these features (CAT Report 127).

In the early Roman period, a series of rectilinear ditched enclosures was established, bounded by a large ditch, and part of the enclosed area was occupied by a large number of substantial pits. There were two, possibly three, timber buildings which are probably all of Late Iron Age-early Roman date. A few finds of Flavian to 2nd- to early 3rd-century date from some of the features indicate continued activity, but at a much reduced level. At some point in or after the early 2nd century, a wooden water-main was laid across the area and a ditched track or driveway was constructed which connected to the large boundary ditch. A number of Roman burials, both cremations and inhumations, were focused around the large boundary ditch. One of the cremation burials was located in a small square ditched enclosure and may be pre-Flavian, while another probable cremation burial may date to the 4th century. The inhumation burials had all been provided with coffins and there were a few pottery grave goods, although almost no bone survived. All the inhumation burials lay beyond the large boundary ditch, and all but one were aligned along it. Although the burials are not well dated, one is of the mid 3rd-4th century, and all probably date from the late Roman period. Identifiable post-Roman activity was limited to a few post-medieval features, mostly ditches (CAT Report 127).

The current site originally formed part of a larger plot for development. CAT carried out a desk-based assessment in 2014 for this area (CAT Report 771). An evaluation by GPR geophysical survey and fieldwalking was also carried out in 2014. The geophysics revealed very few anomalies except indications for the known Roman road, and finds from the fieldwalking were generally quite sparse, with the vast majority being of a post-medieval date (CAT Report 792).

The site was surveyed again in 2015 by ArcheoPhysica (Roseveare 2015). The magnetometer survey identified several anomalies of potential archaeological interest. An evaluation was then carried out by Archaeology South-East on behalf of the Gosbecks Farm Business Park. The evaluation trenching revealed a low to moderate incidence of below-ground archaeological features consisting of pits, ditches and gullies primarily within the site's south-easternmost end. However, the majority of these remains were undated because they contained no or very few closely-datable artefacts. The exceptions to this comprised a prehistoric pit containing sherds of Neolithic and Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age pottery in Trench 37, and post-medieval ditches in Trenches 15, 18, 25, 22, 30 and 37. Most of the retrieved artefacts came from ditch fills and define two different phases of land enclosure; an early phase dating to the 16th century, and a later one dating to the post-medieval/modern period (ASE Report 2015450).

Prior to the current evaluation, CAT commissioned Magnitude Surveys to carry out a ground penetrating radar geophysical survey of the proposed development area and the adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument covering the line of a Roman road (Murray, Lane & Wilkinson 2023). Their results concluded the following:

- Reflections indicative of the continuation of the Roman road from Gosbecks- Colchester have been detected. A possible earlier road/trackway and a possible Roman feature to the west has also been identified. An area of hard standing to the south and natural variations have also been identified throughout the survey area.

- Broad reflections have been identified running in a linear north-east/south-west orientation. Clearly distinct, linear, stronger reflections have been identified, which is indicative of a series of ditches.
- A further set of broad reflections have been identified just east of the probable Roman road. The response of these reflections may be suggestive of a former trackway/road predating the probable Roman road.
- A fairly strong, flat and shallow response has been identified within the south of the survey area. This response may be indicative of an area of ploughing activity or may be indicative of hardstanding from an access road associated with the construction of the adjacent roads/properties.

Reflections of an undetermined origin have been identified throughout the survey area at varying depths. These may be reflective of modern activity and/or natural variations. However, an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out entirely.

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 CBCAA to determine if further investigation is required.

5 Results (Appendix 1 and Figs 2-4)

Four trial-trenches (each 25m long by 1.8m wide) were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. For dimensions of features see Appendix 1.

In trenches 1-3, a layer of modern topsoil (L1, 0.11-0.26m thick) was present, as well as a make up layer (L2, 0.17-0.26m thick). Layers L1 and L2 were both deliberately deposited over a compacted layer of modern material (L4, 0.04-0.24m thick). Natural (L3) was sealed beneath L4 and encountered at an average depth of 0.6m below current ground level. This westernmost parcel of the development area had previously been used as a work compound during the erection of the housing estate to the immediate north of Gosbecks View, and it appears as though the site was stripped to the natural at this time.

Layer L4 was not present in Trench 4, while layers of undisturbed topsoil (L5, 0.2-0.25m thick) and subsoil (L6, 0.24-0.28m thick) were encountered, both overlying the same natural (L3) observed in trenches 1-3.

Trench 1

Three tree-throws (F1, F2, and F3) were uncovered within Trench 1. No finds were recovered.

Trench 2

Two features were uncovered within Trench 2, including a pit (F4) and a ditch (F5) aligned NW-SE. No finds were recovered.

Trench 3

A single pit (F7) was uncovered within Trench 3. No finds were recovered.

Trench 4

Two features were uncovered within Trench 4 including a tree-throw (F6) and a pit (F8). No finds were recovered.



Photograph 1 Site shot view north-east.



Photograph 2 Trench 1, view west.



Photograph 3 Trench 2, view north.



Photograph 4 Trench 3, view north-west.



Photograph 5 Trench 4, view south-west.



Photograph 6 F1, view north.



Photograph 7 F2, view north.



Photograph 8 F3, view north-east.



Photograph 9 F4 including representative section, view east.



Photograph 10 F5, view south-west.



Photograph 11 F6 view north-west.



Photograph 12 F7 view north north-east.



Photograph 13 F8 view north-east.

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

7 Conclusion

There was always potential for archaeological contexts during this evaluation given that the development area was a matter of metres away from the Colchester-to-Gosbecks Roman road and adjacent to the Gosbecks Roman complex to the south. However, during the Roman period this particular parcel of land was not necessarily as busy as the nearby archaeological landscapes would suggest. Land between the Roman walled town of Colchester and the Gosbecks complex would have likely been rural farmland or woodland. The sparse nature of this particular area was reflected in the archaeology uncovered at the land south of Gosbecks View.

The features were all sterile and largely uneven in their compositions both in profile and in plan, suggesting that they were more likely to be part of the land clearance of trees and scrubland in preparation for farming practices in antiquity.

The geophysical surveys from 2015 (ArchaeoPhysica Ltd) and 2023 (Magnitude Survey) both showed readings across the development area which our trenches attempted to resolve. The 2023 geophysical survey identified a buried surface labelled as 1d (Magnitude Survey 2023) which has since been revealed to be the compacted modern compound material as witnessed in trenches 1-3 (Fig 4). However, the 2015 geophysical survey showed a linear-shaped response on an almost N-S alignment through the eastern end of the development area (ArchaeoPhysica Ltd 2015) which was not identified during the evaluation.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Ross Bain and Vaughan & Blyth Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by A Wightman, and fieldwork was carried out by H Furniss with T Gulliver-Lawrence and G Smith. Figures are by C Lister, H Furniss and E Holloway. The project was monitored for Colchester Borough Council by Dr Richard Hoggett.

9 References

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|---|
| ArchaeoPhysica Ltd | 2015 | <i>Land at Gosbecks Farm, Gosbecks Way, Colchester – Geophysical Survey Report, by MJ</i> |
| 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) |
| CAT | 2023 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CAT | 2023 | <i>Written scheme of investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, CO2 9PT</i> |
| CAT Report 127 | 2008 | <i>Excavations of Late Iron Age and Roman features and a Roman road north of Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester, Essex 1995-1996, by S Benfield</i> |
| CAT Report 771 | 2014 | <i>A desk-based assessment of the archaeological remains around Gosbecks Farm, Colchester, Essex, By H Brooks</i> |
| CAT Report 792 | 2014 | <i>An archaeological investigation by fieldwalking and geophysical survey, Gosbecks Business Park, Colchester, Essex: September 2014, by M Baister & T Dennis</i> |
| CCC | 2023 | <i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, by S Wood</i> |
| CIfA | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation.</i> Updated June 2020. |
| CIfA | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.</i> Updated June 2020. |
| CIfA | 2014c | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Updated October 2020. |
| CIfA | 2014d | <i>Code of Conduct.</i> Revised Oct 2022 |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14) |
| Historic England | 2016 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> |
| Magnitude Surveys | 2023 | <i>Geophysical Survey Report of Land to the south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, by M Murray, C Lane, PG Dip & D Wilkinson</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 | 2021 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. |

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Late Iron Age	Period from c 100 – 50 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of digital archive

CAT Report 1926
CBC evaluation brief
Digital photographs
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 the Archaeological Data Service.

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Distribution list:

Ross Bain, Vaughan & Blyth Ltd
Dr Richard Hoggett, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record

Appendix 1 Context list

Context no.	Trench no.	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
L1	1-3	-	Topsoil	Friable, moist dark blueish-brown sandy silt	Modern
L2	1-3	-	Make up layer	Firm, dry mid blueish-grey sandy silt	Modern
L3	1-3	-	Natural	Compact mid mottled brownish-orange gravelly clay	Post-glacial
L4	1-3	-	Modern compound layer	Very compact, light brownish-grey silt with frequent modern rubbish and building material throughout	Modern
L5	4	-	Topsoil	Friable, moist dark blueish-brown sandy silt	Modern
L6	4	-	Subsoil	Firm, dry mid blueish-grey sandy silt	Modern
F1	T1	-	Tree-throw	Firm, dry mid greyish-brown silty sand with occasional stone inclusions 0.83m (L) x 0.57m (W) x 0.13m (D)	Undated
F2	T1	-	Tree-throw	Firm, dry mid greyish-brown with rooting and occasional stone inclusions 0.66m (L) x 0.53m (W) x 0.07m (D)	Undated
F3	T1	-	Tree-throw	Firm, dry mid brownish-grey silty sand with occasional iron panning, rare charcoal and CBM fleck inclusions >1.93m (L) x 0.95m (W) x 0.22m (D) (The feature extended beyond the LOE)	Undated
F4	T2	-	Pit	Compact, dry, mid greyish-brown silt with occasional stone inclusions >0.75m (L) x 1.18m (W) x 0.31m (D) (The feature extended beyond the LOE)	Undated
F5	T2	-	Ditch	Firm, dry mid brownish-orange silt with occasional stone inclusions >2.24m (L) x 1.34m (W) x 0.61m (D) (The feature extended beyond the LOE)	Undated
F6	T4	-	Tree-throw	Very soft, moist greyish-brown silty sand 1.58m (L) x 0.83m (W) x 0.23m (D) (The feature extended beyond the LOE)	Undated
F7	T3	-	Pit	Firm, mid greyish-brown silt with frequent rooting and small stone inclusions >2.04m (L) x 1.57m (W) x 0.57m (D) (The feature extended beyond the LOE)	Undated
F8	T4	-	Pit	Very soft, moist mid greyish-brown silt >0.92m (L) x 1.76m (W) x 0.44m (D) (The feature extended beyond the LOE)	Undated

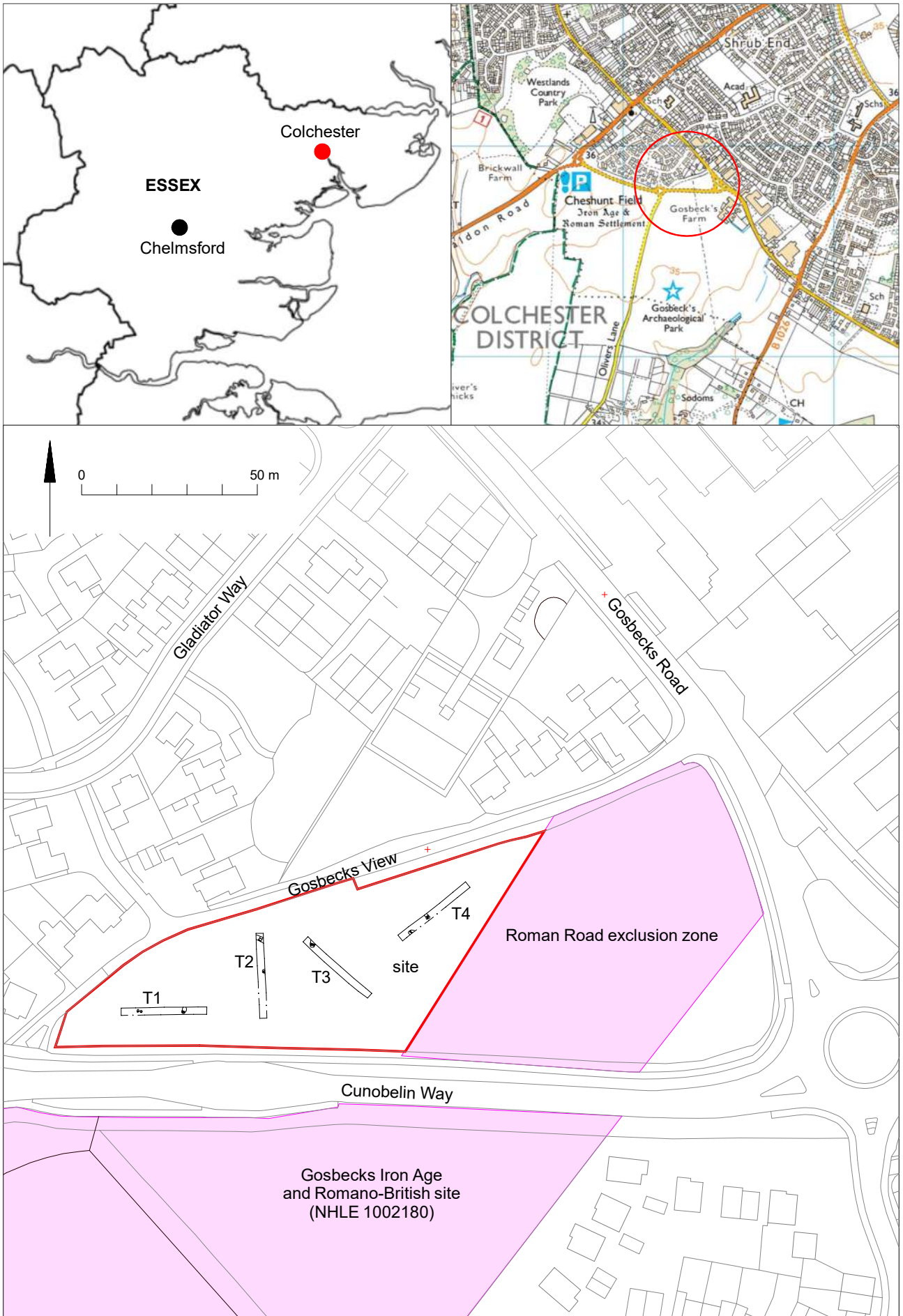
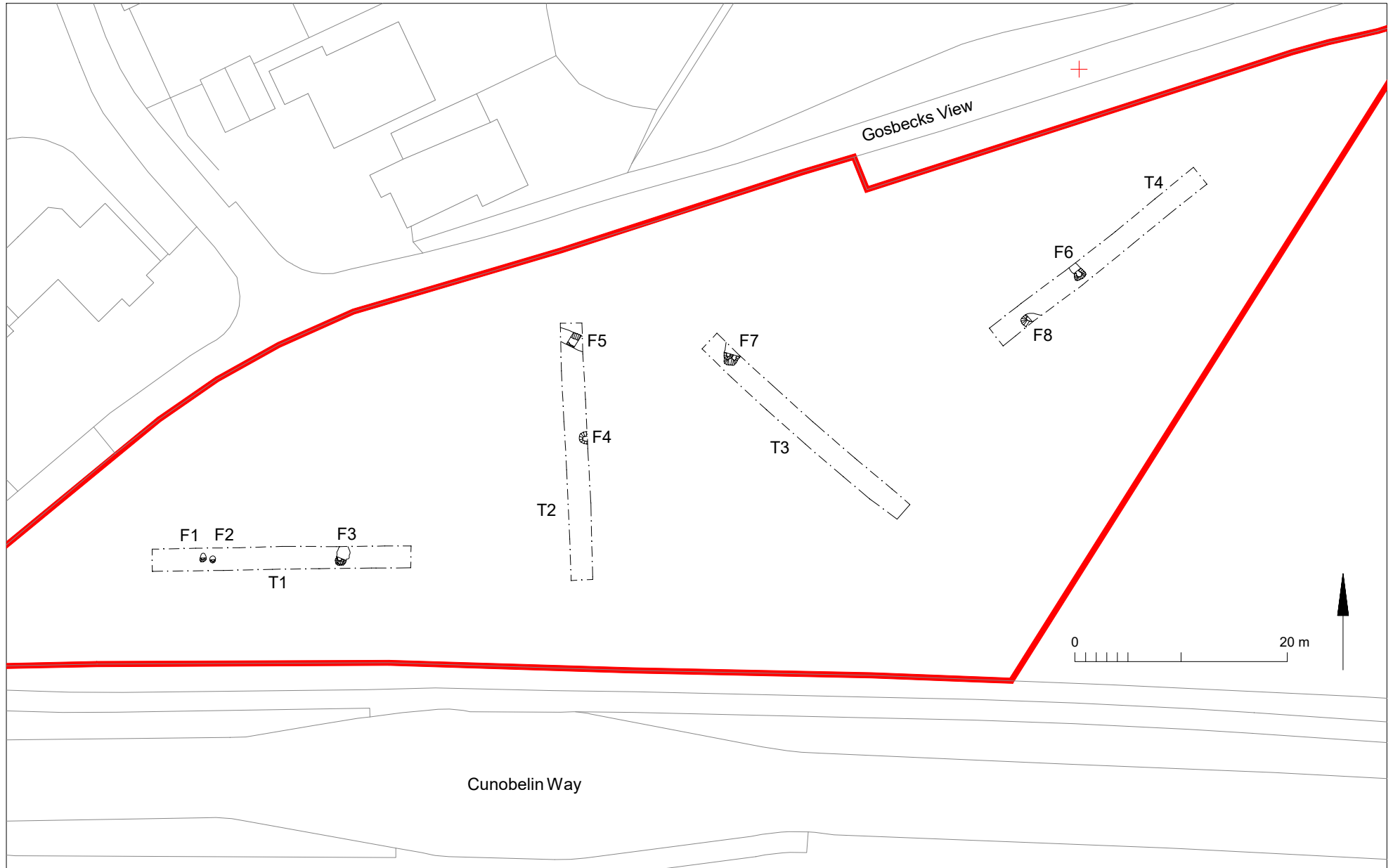


Fig 1 Site location



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Fig 2 Results.

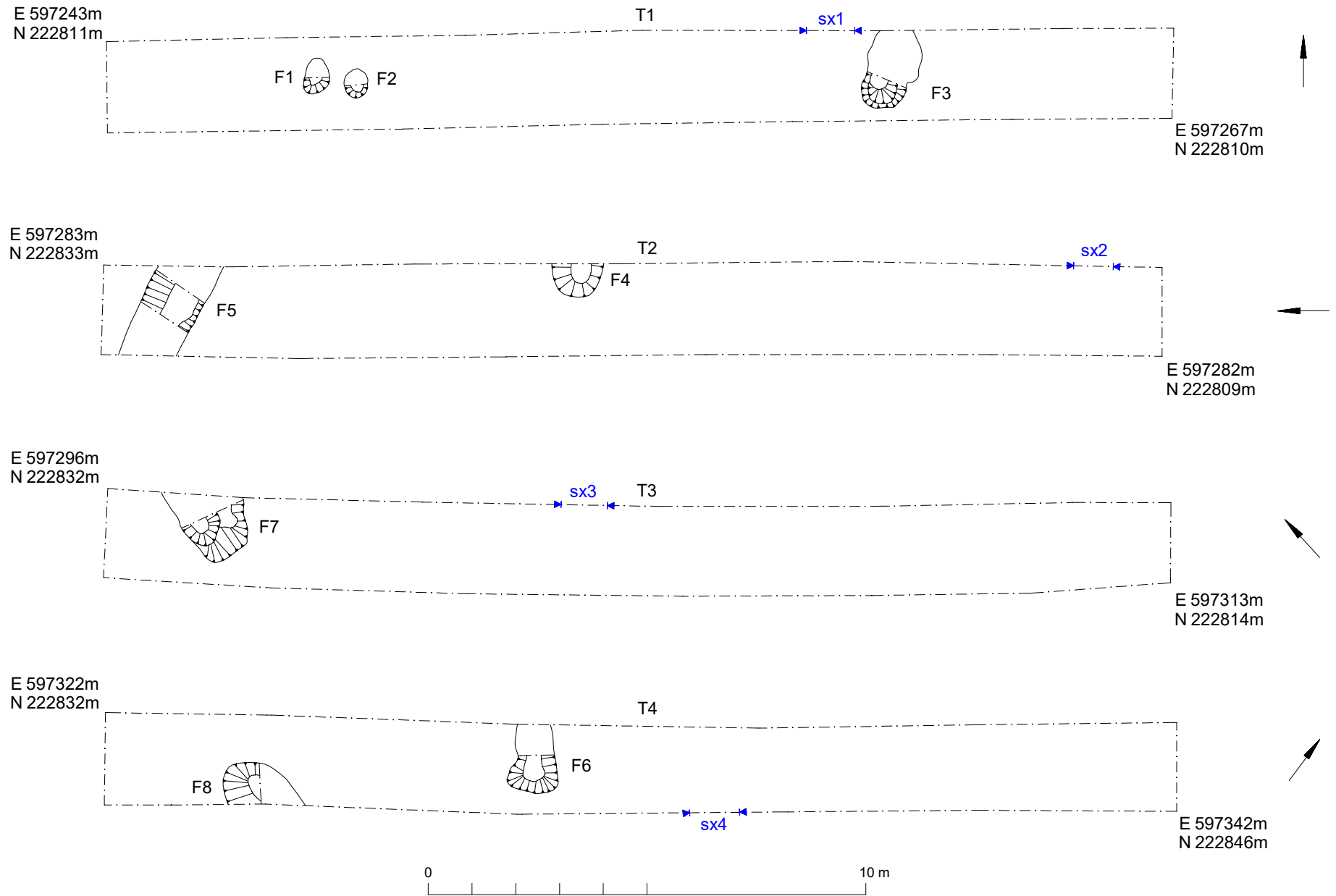


Fig 3 Detailed trench plans

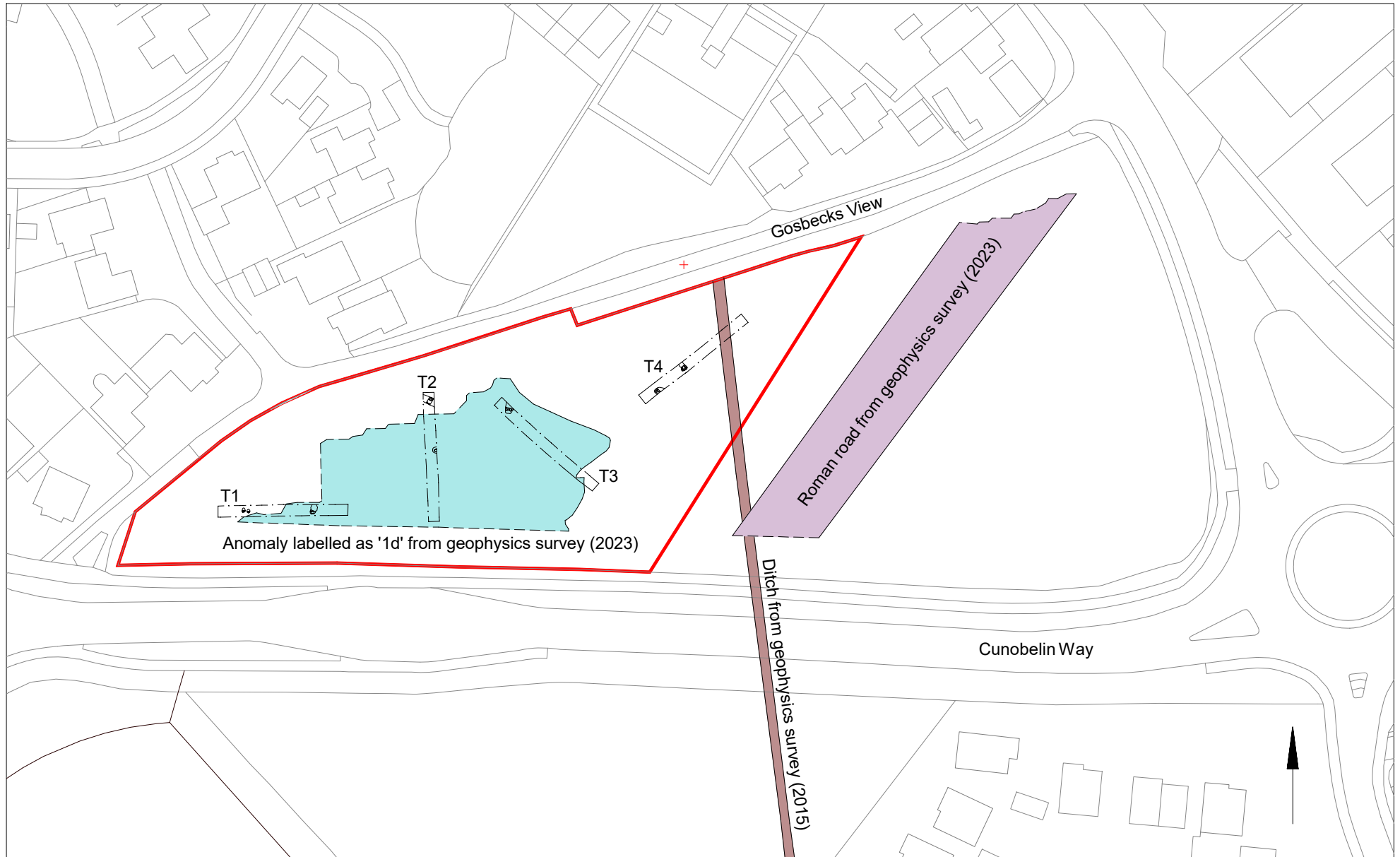


Fig 4 Trench locations and geophysics results.

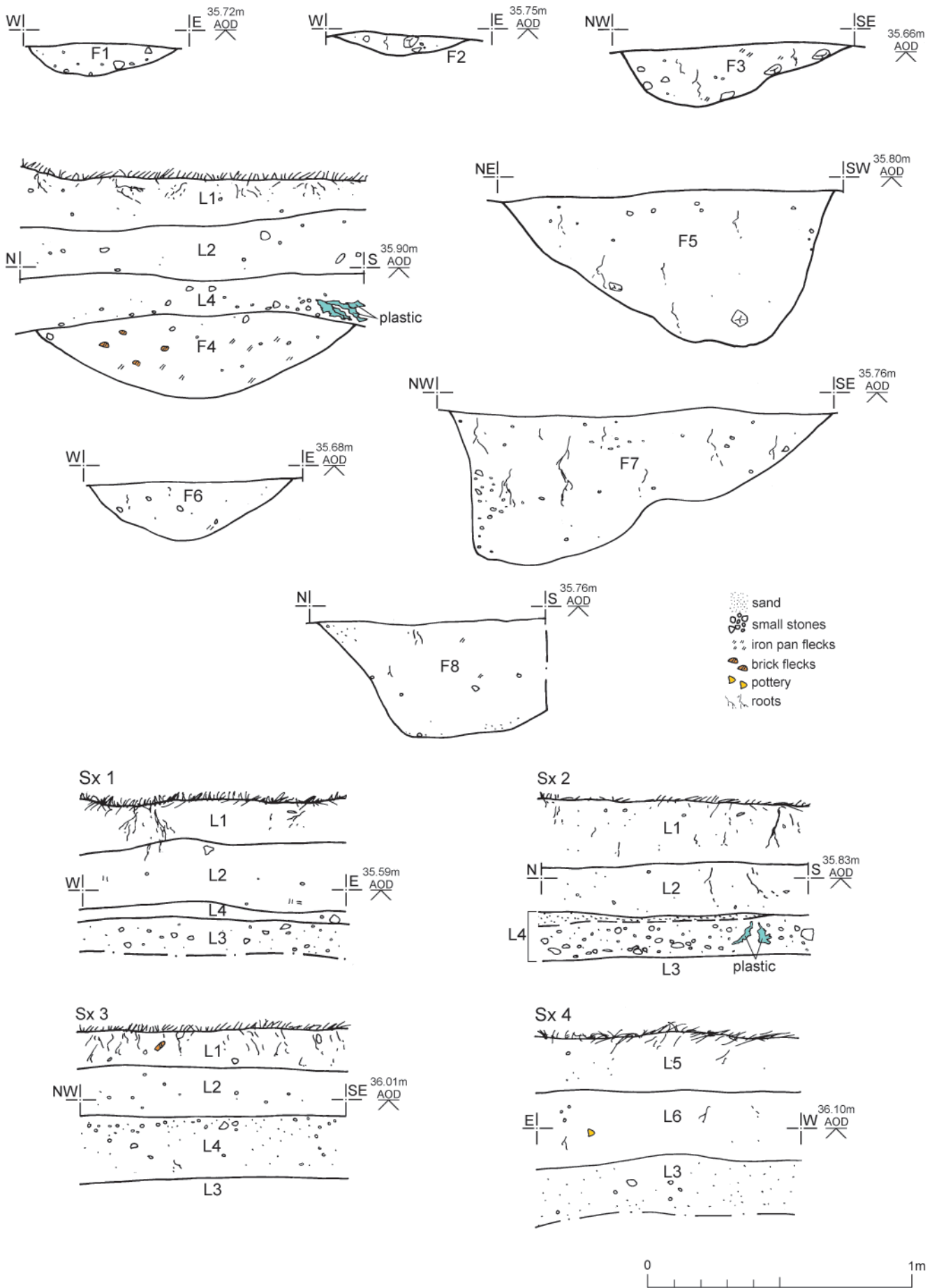


Fig 5 Feature and representative sections.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, CO2 9PT	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9730 2282 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 2022/12b CHER ref.: ECC4776 OASIS ref.: colchest3-514174
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 17th and 18th April 2023	Size of area investigated: 0.4458 hectares
Location of curating museum: Archaeological Data Service	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related CHER/SMR number: MCC2529; MCC7470
Final report: CAT Report 1926	
Periods represented:	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex in advance of a planning application for a residential development on the site. The development area was located adjacent to the scheduled ancient monument Colchester-to-Gosbecks Roman road. However, despite lying within an archaeologically rich landscape the evaluation works south of Gosbecks View only uncovered eight undated contexts including one ditch, three pits and five natural or geological features.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Reports 30, 45 and 127	
CBC monitor: Simon Wood and Richard Hoggett	
Keywords:	Significance: *
Author of summary: Harvey Furniss	Date of summary: April 2023

Colchester Archaeological Trust



**Written scheme of investigation
for an evaluation by trial-trenching on
land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex,
CM2 9PT**

April 2023

**CAT project ref.: 2022/12b
CHER code: ECC4776**

**Written scheme of investigation for an evaluation by
trial-trenching on land south of Gosbecks View,
Colchester, Essex, CM2 9PT**

April 2023

NGR: TL 9730 2282

**Planning district.: Colchester
Planning ref.: pre-planning**

CAT project ref.: 2022/12b

**CHER code: ECC4776
CCC monitor: Dr Rik Hoggett
OASIS id: colchest3-514174**

**WSI prepared by: Emma Holloway
Figure by: Chris Lister**

**Commissioned by: Ross Bain (Vaughan & Blyth)
Client: Vaughan & Blyth Ltd**

Prepared by:	Emma Holloway	Junior Project Officer
Reviewed and approved by:	Chris Lister	Contracts Manager
Issued:	23/03/2023	
Revised by:	Emma Holloway	Junior Project Officer
Re-issued:	03/04/2023	

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Site location and description

The site is located approximately 3.3km south-west of the core of historic Colchester City Centre on land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex (Fig 1). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 9730 2282. The site is a 0.44 hectare parcel of land, roughly triangular in shape, which is currently laid to grass.

Proposed work

Pre-determination trenching is required in advance of a planning application for a residential development on the site.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER/ECC numbers, which are accessible via Colchester Heritage Explorer (<https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/map>)).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site is London clay formation (clay, silt and sand, comprised of bioturbated or poorly laminated, blue-grey or grey-brown, slightly calcareous, silty to very silty clay), with superficial deposits of cover sand (blanket deposits of very fine grained sand).

The proposed development lies within an area of significant archaeological potential, specifically, the site is adjacent to the area of the important Late Iron Age and Roman complex at Gosbecks (Scheduled Monument NHLE no. 1002180; MCC7470) which is known from aerial photographs, geophysical surveys, and multiple investigations and excavations (Hull 1958, 259-71; CAR 11, 95-105; CAT Reports 30, 45 and 127). Archaeological remains at Gosbecks include: dykes, droveways and field systems; a large enclosure (MCC7044), though to potentially be Cunobelin's farmstead (MCC7044); a small Roman fort of probable Claudian date (MCC7472); a Romano-British temple (MCC2849), surrounded by a monumental portico (MCC7043); a Roman theatre (MCC2831); a Roman water-main, possibly leading to a bath-house (MCC2903); and a road leading to the walled Roman town (MCC2529). Many of these remains are located within Gosbecks Archaeological Park.

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¹ British Geological Survey – <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>

boundary ditch, and all but one were aligned along it. Although the burials are not well dated, one is of the mid 3rd-4th century, and all probably date from the late Roman period. Identifiable post-Roman activity was limited to a few post-medieval features, mostly ditches (CAT Report 127).

The current site originally formed part of a larger plot for development. CAT carried out a desk-based assessment in 2014 for this area (CAT Report 771). An evaluation by GPR geophysical survey and fieldwalking was carried out in 2014. The geophysics revealed very few anomalies except indications for the known Roman road and finds from the fieldwalking were generally quite sparse, with the vast majority being of a post-medieval date (CAT Report 792).

The site was surveyed again in 2015 by ArcheoPhysica (Roseveare, 2015). The magnetometer geophysical survey identified several anomalies of potential archaeological interest. An evaluation was then carried out by Archaeology South-East by the Gosbecks Farm Business Park. The evaluation trenching revealed a low to moderate incidence of below-ground archaeological features, consisting of pits, ditches and gullies primarily within the site's far south-east end. However, the majority of these remains were undated because they contained no or very few closely datable artefacts. The exceptions to this comprised a prehistoric pit containing single sherds of Neolithic and Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age pottery in Trench 37, and post-medieval ditches in Trenches 15, 18, 25, 22, 30 and 37. Most of the retrieved artefacts came from ditch fills and define two different phases of land enclosure; an early phase dating to the 16th century, and a later one dating to the post-medieval/modern period (ASE Report 2015450).

Prior to the current evaluation trenching CAT commissioned Magnitude Surveys to carry out a ground penetrating radar geophysical survey of the proposed development area and the adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument covering the line of a Roman road (Murray, Lane and Wilkinson, 2023). Their results concluded the following:

- Reflections indicative of the continuation of the Roman road from Gosbecks-Colchester have been detected. A possible earlier road/trackway and a possible Roman feature to the west has also been identified. An area of hard standing to the south and natural variations have also been identified throughout the survey area.
- Broad reflections have been identified running in a linear north-east/south-west orientation. Clearly distinct, linear, stronger reflections have been identified, which is indicative of a series of ditches.
- A further set of broad reflections have been identified just east of the probable Roman road. The response of these reflections may be suggestive of a former trackway/road predating the probable Roman road.
- A fairly strong, flat and shallow response has been identified within the south of the survey area. This response may be indicative of an area of ploughing activity or may be indicative of hardstanding from an access road associated with the construction of the adjacent roads/properties.
- Reflections of an undetermined origin have been identified throughout the survey area at varying depths. These may be reflective of modern activity and/or natural variations. However, an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out entirely.

Project background

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits the Colchester City Council Archaeological Advisor (CCCAA) was approached for advice about the potential development at pre-application stage. An archaeological evaluation was recommended. The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2021).

Requirement for work (Fig 1)

The archaeological work will consist of an evaluation by trial-trenching. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CCCAA (*Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at land adjacent to Gosbecks View, Colchester – CCC 2023*).

The evaluation will cover a 4% sample of the development area in the form of four linear trenches, positioned across the site in a systematic array but targeting the underdetermined signals on the Magnitude geophysical survey and area 1 on the ArchaeoPhysica survey. The trenches will each measure 25m long and 1.8m wide covering a combined area of 180m².

The initial work will comprise of the trial-trenching which will be followed by a site meeting with the CCCAA. Further archaeological work may be required. This will be decided by the CCCAA on completion of the trial-trenching and report.

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-c)
- East of England Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- Relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2022)
- the Project Brief issued by the Colchester City Council Archaeological Advisor (CCC 2023)

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 the CCCAA 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 the project (when the WSI is written) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed (Activity type, Location and Reviewers/Admin areas). At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A unique HER event number will be obtained from the CCCAA 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 CAT project officer and two archaeologists for two days.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway/Harvey Furniss

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 geology 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.

There will be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. All features or deposits will be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), at least 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) in 1m wide sections, and 100% of complex structures/features. Complex archaeological structures such as walls, kilns or ovens 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, and only then after discussion with the CCCAA, will it be removed.

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

The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits will be established. Therefore, 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 the natural geology.

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.

Trained CAT staff will use a metal detector to scan all trenches both before and during excavation. All spoil heaps will also be scanned and finds recovered.

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

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

The photographic record will consist of general site shots, and shots of all archaeological features and deposits. A photographic scale (including north arrow) shall be included in the case of detailed photographs. A photographic register will accompany the photographic record. This will detail as a minimum feature number, location, and direction of shot.

The trenches will not be backfilled until they have been signed off by the CCCAA.

Site surveying

The evaluation trenches 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 excavation areas will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small-sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphological and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough).

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- The range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality.
- Concentrations of macro-remains.
- 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.

Human remains

The CCCAA 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 Historic England guidance (2018), if the human remains are not to be lifted the project osteologist will be available to record the human remains in the ground.

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 CCCAA 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 photographic register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in the site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

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

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Laura Pooley (Post-excavation Manager). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton
animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman/Pip Parmenter - small groups only)
small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley
non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley
flint: Adam Wightman
environmental processing: Bronagh Quinn
osteology: (human remains): Megan Seehra

or to outside specialists:

animal and human bone: Julie Curl (Sylvanus)
environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray
archaeometallurgy: David Dungworth
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: Tom Lawrence
prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey
Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Gwladys Monteil
Roman brick/tile: Han Le (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 the CCCAA.

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.

Post-excavation assessment

An updated post-excavation assessment will be submitted within 2 months or at an alternatively agreed time with the CCCAA.

Where archaeological results do not warrant a post-excavation assessment then agreement will be sought from the CCCAA to proceed straight to grey literature / publication.

Results

Notification will be given to CCCAA 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 (Historic England 2015).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each excavated area will be given a 10 figure grid reference.

- 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.
- Appropriate discussion and results section assessing the site in relation to the Regional Research Frameworks (Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011. <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An OASIS summary sheet will be completed at the end of the project and supplied to the CCCAA. This will be completed in digital form with a paper copy included with the archive. A copy (with trench plan) will also be emailed to the Hon. Editor of the Essex Archaeology and History Journal for inclusion in the annual round-up of projects (paul.gilman@me.com).

Publication of the results at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in Essex Archaeology & History) shall be undertaken in the year following the archaeological fieldwork. 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

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

If finds are retained from the site the full archive will be deposited with Colchester Museum unless otherwise agreed in advance. (A full copy of the archive shall in any case be deposited). If there are no finds a full digital archive will be deposited with ADS Archaeology.

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 and provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration and analysis) as appropriate.

The digital archive resulting from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk) to safeguard the long-term curation of the digital records. The CCCAA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited. 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. A summary of the contents of the archives shall be supplied to the CCCAA at the time of their deposition.

The CCCAA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited.

Monitoring

The CCCAA 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 the CCCAA one week in advance of its commencement.

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

The CCCAA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

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

Public outreach

As part of CAT's public outreach programme, CAT is committed to engaging our local community with their archaeological resource. Among other activities, CAT regularly invites volunteers to engage in finds processing tasks at our office, such as washing, marking, sorting and packing bulk archaeological finds from commercial archaeological projects. Our volunteer programme is not designed to replace the work of paid archaeologists but to complement it, and to provide greater public benefit by means of community engagement and participation.

CAT volunteers are fully trained in all tasks they are engaged in and are fully supervised by a CAT employee at all times. Finds processing volunteers are managed and supervised by a Senior Post-Excavation Assistant, whose role is to ensure that all volunteer processing is carried out to the highest possible standard and within professional guidelines. This is overseen by the Post-Excavation Manager and Director.

CAT will never use volunteers in place of employees when funding is agreed for the latter, or if doing so would disadvantageously affect the timetable of works agreed between CAT and our clients.

CAT's liability insurance policies cover the activities of volunteers and liability towards them. All activities are carried out according to CAT's 'Volunteer and work experience policy' and 'Outreach, public relations and publicity policy'.

Events, activities and social media

In addition, the CAT website (www.thecolchesterarchaeologist.co.uk) and social media sites are updated regularly with information on our events and activities, with copies of our archaeological reports freely available at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/>. Staff regularly give talks/lectures to groups, societies and schools, information on which (including any fees) is available by contacting the office on 01206 501785. CAT also works in partnership with both the Colchester Archaeological Group and Young Archaeologists Club providing venues for their meetings, advice and assistance.

References

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

ASE Report 2015450	2015	<i>Archaeological Evaluation Land at Gosbecks Farm Business Park Gosbecks Road Colchester Essex</i> , by M Germany
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)
CAR 11	1995	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 11: Camunlodunum 2</i> by C F C Hawkes and P Crummy
CAT	2022	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 127	2008	<i>Excavations of Late Iron Age and Roman features and a Roman road north of Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester, Essex 1995-1996</i> , by S Benfield
CAT Report 257	2003	<i>An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at 282 Shrub End Road, Colchester, Essex: December 2003</i> , by B Holloway & L Pooley
CAT Report 771	2014	<i>A desk-based assessment of the archaeological remains around Gosbecks Farm, Colchester, Essex</i> , By H Brooks
CAT Report 792	2014	<i>An archaeological investigation by fieldwalking and geophysical survey, Gosbecks Business Park, Colchester, Essex: September 2014</i> , by M Baister & T Dennis
CAT Report 836	2015	<i>Archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 284-300 Shrub</i>

CCC	2023	<i>End Road, Colchester, Essex: May 2015</i> , by M Baister
CIfA	2014a	<i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester</i> , by S Wood
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i> . Revised October 2020
CIfA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> . Revised October 2020
Digital Curation Centre (DCC)	2013	<i>Code of Conduct</i> . Revised October 2022
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Checklist for Data Management Plan v. 4.0</i> .
Historic England	2015	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14)
Historic England	2018	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Hull, M R	1958	<i>The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project</i> , by S Mays, M Brickley & J Sidell.
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Roman Colchester</i>
MHCLG	2021	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
Murray, M, Lane, C & Wilkinson, D	2023	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
		<i>Geophysical Survey Report of Land to the south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex</i> . Magnitude Surveys report MSTL1480

Summary for colchest3-514174

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-514174
Project Name	Evaluation at Land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, CM2 9PT
Sitename	Land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, CM2 9PT
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	2023/12b
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Pre application
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	17-Apr-2023 - 18-Apr-2023
Location	Land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex, CM2 9PT NGR : TL 97300 22820 LL : 51.8690521230513, 0.864414560241287 12 Fig : 597300,222820
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Colchester Parish : Colchester, unparished area
Project Methodology	An archaeological evaluation (four-trial trenches) was carried out as specified in the project brief and WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land south of Gosbecks View, Colchester, Essex in advance of a planning application for a residential development on the site. The development area was located adjacent to the scheduled ancient monument Colchester-to-Gosbecks Roman road. However, despite lying within an archaeologically rich landscape the evaluation works south of Gosbecks View uncovered eight undated contexts including one ditch, three pits and five natural or geological features.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	Colchester Borough Council - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	
HER Identifiers	
Archives	