

Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 2076
issued August 2024**

**Archaeological monitoring and recording at
129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RZ:
July-August 2024**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/12g
ECC code: BR25**

**Archaeological monitoring and recording at
129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RZ:
July-August 2024**

NGR: TQ 59213 93696 (centre)

**Planning district.: Brentwood
Planning ref.: 23/01417/FUL & 23/01418/LBC**

**CAT project ref.: 2023/12g
CAT Report 2076**

**ECC code: BR25
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**Commissioned by Sophie Matthews,
Walsingham Planning**

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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at 129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex during groundworks for extensions to the current building. Located within the medieval town, the property is Grade II listed and dates from the early 18th-century. Groundworks revealed the remains of a brick foundation to the rear of the property likely associated with outbuildings shown on early Ordnance Survey maps. The only other feature present was a small tree-throw.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for archaeological monitoring at 129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex which was carried out between 8th July and 1st August 2024. The work was commissioned by Sophie Matthews of Walsingham Planning, and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) during groundworks for extensions to the current building.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS). This recommendation was for archaeological monitoring and recording and was based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2023).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Monitoring at 129 High Street, Brentwood* written by Mark Baister (ECCPS 2024). A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2024a).

In addition to the project Brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was undertaken in accordance with:

- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015),
- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2020a-b, 2022, 2023a-b),
- East of England standards and frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Brown & Glazebrook 2000, Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- Relevant health and safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2024b).

3 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>)).

Brentwood has historic origins within the medieval period. The area seems to have begun in the 12th century as a traditional forest clearing, with the lord of the manor of Costed licensed to build a chapel in 1221 and subsequently a market and fair six years later. This new township developed thanks partly to a local cult of St. Thomas the Martyr, to whom the local chapel was dedicated. Its location along the main Ongar to Tilbury road as well as its market allowed it to flourish in the following centuries. The proposed development is within the core of the medieval town (EHER 525) and opposite the medieval marketplace (EHER 18430). Therefore, the likelihood of surviving medieval archaeology within this area is extremely high.

129 High Street is Grade II listed (NHLE 1297236, EHER 25951) and is described as an early 18th-century structure with later alterations from the 19th and 20th centuries. It is likely backyard activity related to the existing structure and the post-medieval period in general will survive. This may include refuse pits, wells or metal surfaces.

Limited archaeological investigation has been undertaken within the town centre. However, an excavation 240m north-east of the proposed development did reveal substantial archaeology (CAT Report 1076). This included six main periods of activity with the earliest structure on site

dated to the 13th-14th century. A timber-framed house was constructed in the 15th and 16th century and has been hypothesised to be a coaching inn. Among the last phases of activity in the 18th to 19th century were the cutting of a cellar and erection of a three-roomed brick structure.

The High Street is also on the line of the original Roman road leading from London to Chelmsford (EHER 565). Consequently, there is the potential for Roman extramural remains to survive in proximity to the Roman road, probably in the form of roadside ditches.

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site is comprised of the Bagshot formation (mainly sand) with superficial deposits of the Stanmore Gravel Formation (sands and gravels). The geology to the west of the development area changes to solely the Bagshot formation which continues along the edge of the town.

4 Aim

The aim of the archaeological monitoring was to identify, excavate and record any archaeological contexts revealed during the works.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

Two foundation trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. The first to the rear of the property was 25m long, 0.7-0.8m wide and excavated to a depth of 0.8-0.9m through concrete (L1, 0.25m thick), modern made ground (L2, 0.6-0.65m thick) and onto natural (L3). The remains of a brick foundation (F2), two bricks or 0.6m wide, was aligned north-east to south-west along the rear boundary of the property. It was identified on site as being of 19th-century date. The only other feature present was a tree-throw (F1).



Photograph 1 Rear foundation trench, representative section and tree-throw F1, looking north.

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



Photograph 2 Rear foundation trench, wall foundation F2, looking south-south-east.



Photograph 3 Rear foundation trench (west side), looking north-north-west.



Photograph 4 Rear foundation trench (east side), looking north.

The second foundation trench was located to the side of the property. It was 9.5m long, 0.7m wide and excavated to a depth of 0.75m through L1 (0.15m thick) and L2 (0.6m thick) onto L3. There were no archaeological remains in this trench.



Photograph 5 Side foundation trench, looking south.

6 Finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

Monitoring uncovered a small assemblage of pottery and ceramic building material from made ground L2 (Table 1).

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
Pottery	5	332	66	0.13
CBM	5	1,879	376	-
All	10	2,211	221	0.13

Table 1 Summary of the pottery and CBM.

Post-medieval and modern pottery

Post-medieval and modern pottery was recorded according to the fabric groups from *CAR 7* (Cotter 2000) (Table 2). The number of vessels was determined by rim EVE (estimated vessel equivalent). Pottery of note included a post-medieval Border ware (fabric F42) tripod pipkin (EVE:0.13), a modern English stoneware (fabric F45M) ginger-beer bottle and a late slipped kitchenware (fabric F51A) storage jar.

Fabric code	Fabric description	Fabric date range guide
F42	Border ware	1500-1700
F45D/5	Cologne and Frechen stonewares	c 1500-1700
F45M	Modern English stoneware	1800-2000
F48D	Staffordshire-type white earthenware	1800-2000
F51A	Late slipped kitchenware	1800-2000

Table 2 Post-medieval and modern pottery fabrics recorded.

Fabric group	Fabric description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
F42	Border ware	1	7	7	0.13
F45D/E	Cologne and Frechen stonewares	1	63	63	0.00
F45M	Modern English stoneware	1	122	122	0.00
F48D	Staffordshire-type white earthenware	1	89	89	0.00
F51A	Late slipped kitchenware	1	51	51	0.00
Total		5	332	66	0.13

Table 3 Summary of the post-medieval and modern pottery.

Ceramic building material (CBM)

CBM consist of one fragment (127g) of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile, two pieces (876g) of pan-tile (17th-century onwards) and two fragments of cement.

Conclusion

Table 4 summarizes the dating evidence for finds from layer L2. The evidence indicates that L2 is modern with residual post-medieval material included within the fill. None of the pottery or CBM was retained.

Context	Post-medieval & modern pottery	CBM	Date Approx.
L2	F42 (Tripod pipkin), F45D/E, F45M (Ginger beer bottle), F48D, F51A (Storage jar)	PT PANT CEMENT	Modern

Table 4 Finds spot dates.

7 Conclusion

Archaeological monitoring and recording at 129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex revealed the remains of a brick foundation and a tree-throw. Early Ordnance Survey maps of Brentwood published in the late 19th-century show outbuildings in the northwestern corner of the property, and the brick foundation found during monitoring is likely to be from the last of these outbuildings. It is also possible that L2 and the post-medieval/modern material within it came from the demolition of these structures in the 20th century.



Map 1 Ordnance Survey 2nd edition 25" map, 1896. Outbuilding highlighted in orange.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Sophie Matthews and Walsingham Planning for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by A Wightman and C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by Z Eksen. Figures are by L Pooley and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Mark Baister.

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). |
| CAT | 2024a | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological monitoring and recording at 129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RZ,</i> by Tabitha Lawrence. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust. |
| CAT | 2024b | <i>Health & Safety Policy.</i> Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust. |
| CAT Report 1076 | 2017 | <i>Commercial activity in 15th-19th-century Brentwood: 2016 excavations at 73 High Street,</i> by H Brooks. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust. |
| ClfA | 2020a | <i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.</i> ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020. |
| ClfA | 2020b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020. |
| ClfA | 2022 | <i>Code of Conduct.</i> ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published |

		2014, revised 2022.
CIfA	2023a	<i>Standard for archaeological monitoring and recording</i> . CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
CIfA	2023b	<i>Universal guidance for archaeological monitoring and recording</i> . CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
Cotter, J P	2000	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> . Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.
ECCPS	2024	<i>Brief for archaeological monitoring at 129 High Street, Brentwood</i> , by Mark Baister.
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	2023	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHER	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
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of Archaeological Investigation S , http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
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
wsj	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds archive: None retained.

Digital archive:

CAT Report 2076

CAT WSI, ECC Brief

Digital photographs

Survey data

Site 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:

Sophie Matthews, Walsingham Planning
Mark Baister, Essex County Council Place Services
Essex Historic Environment Record

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Finds No.	Context type	Description	Date
L1	-	Concrete	0.15-0.25m thick	Modern
L2	1	Made ground	Soft, moist, mid brown silty-clay with frequent small founded stones and roots, occasional CBM fragments. 0.6-0.65m thick.	Modern
L3	-	Natural	Natural sands and gravel.	Post-glacial
F1	-	Tree-throw	Mid brown silty clay, rare small stones, occasional roots. 0.6m by 0.3m and 0.1m deep.	Modern
F2	-	Brick foundation	Brick foundation, incomplete and now only 1.7m long, formed by two rows of brick laid side-by-side, 0.6m wide in total (bricks 0.3m wide). Aligned north-east to south-west and parallel to the rear boundary of the property.	Modern, 19th century

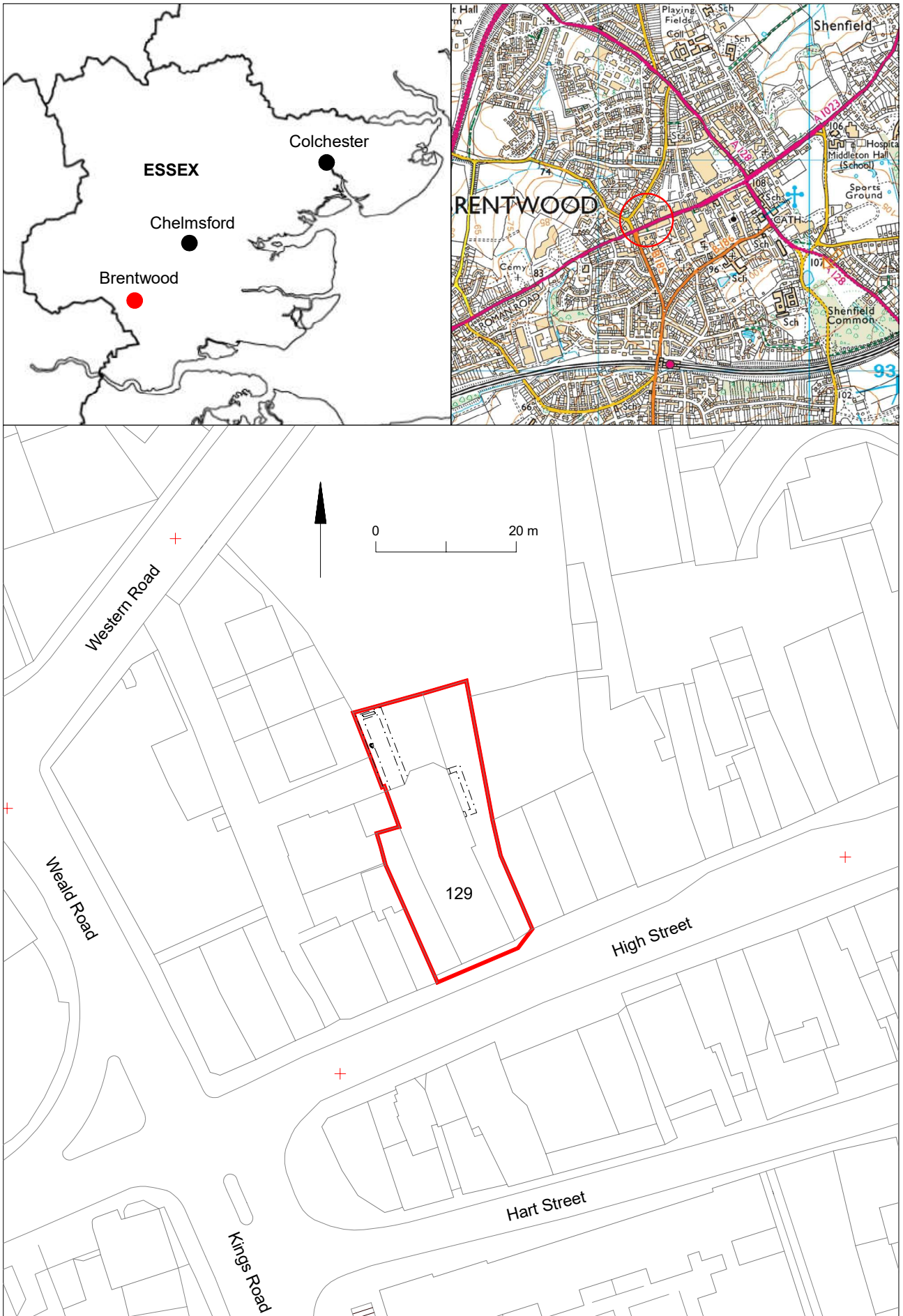


Fig 1 Site location.



Fig 2 Results

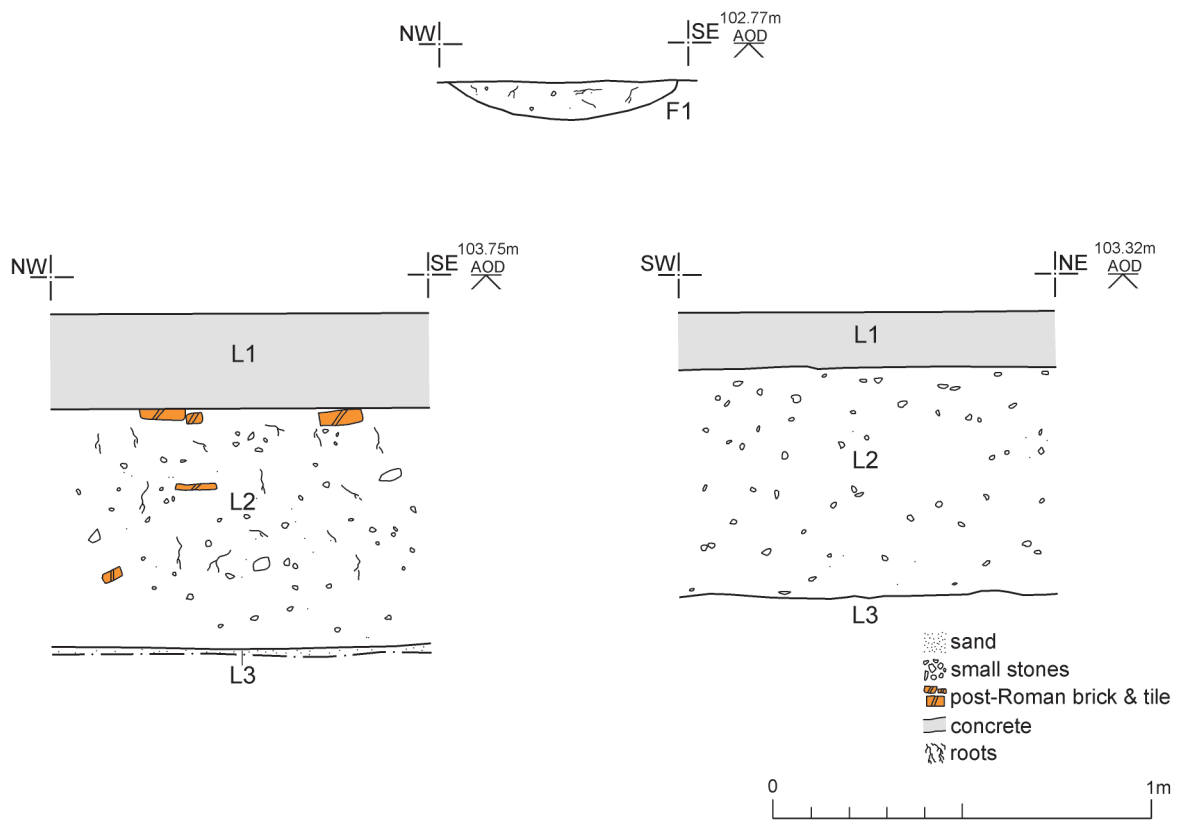


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-521976

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-521976
Project Name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at 129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RZ: July-August 2024
Sitename	129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RZ
Sitecode	BR25
Project Identifier(s)	2023/12g
Activity type	Watching Brief
Planning Id	23/01418/LBC, 23/01417/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	08-Jul-2024 - 01-Aug-2024
Location	129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RZ NGR : TQ 59213 93696 LL : 51.61957082928218, 0.298413983927264 12 Fig : 559213,193696
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Brentwood Parish : Brentwood, unparished area
Project Methodology	Archaeological monitoring and recording of all groundworks as specified in the project brief and wsi.
Project Results	Archaeological monitoring was carried out at 129 High Street, Brentwood, Essex during groundworks for extensions to the current building. Located within the medieval town, the property is Grade II listed and dates from the early 18th-century. Groundworks revealed the remains of a brick foundation to the rear of the property likely associated with outbuildings shown on early Ordnance Survey maps. The only other feature present was a small tree-throw.
Keywords	Building - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	Private or public corporation developer
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Adam Wightman, Chris Lister
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - BR25
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;