

Colchester Archaeological Trust



CAT Report 2120
issued December 2024

**Archaeological monitoring and recording on land to
the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex,
CM0 7DE: December 2024**



CAT project ref.: 2024/04b
CHER code: EEX60895

**Archaeological monitoring and recording on land to
the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex,
CM0 7DE: December 2024**

NGR: TQ 95802 99765 (centre)

**Planning district: Maldon
Planning ref.: MAL/23/01026**

**CAT project ref.: 2024/04b
CAT Report 2120**

**CAT code: EEX60895
OASIS id: colchest3-524333**

**Report prepared by Dr Patrick Spencer
With contributions from Dr Matthew Loughton
and Laura Pooley**

Fieldwork by Ziya Eksen

**Commissioned by John James of John James
Associates
On behalf of the Landowner**

Prepared by:	Dr Patrick Spencer	Site Assistant
Reviewed by:	Laura Pooley	Post-Excavation Manager
Reviewed and approved by:	Howard Brooks	Senior Associate
Issued:	18/12/24	

Colchester Archaeological Trust

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

tel.: 01206 501785

email: services@catuk.org

web: www.catuk.org

Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Geological and archaeological background	1
4	Aim	2
5	Results	3
6	Finds	5
7	Conclusion	5
8	Acknowledgements	5
9	References	5
10	Abbreviations and glossary	6
11	Archive deposition	7

Figures after p7

OASIS Data Collection Form

List of maps, photographs, tables and figures

Cover: General site shot, looking south-east.

Map 1	Extract of Plate XIX Chapman and André map, with the site in red.	2
Photograph 1	Representative section 1, looking south-south-east.	3
Photograph 2	Foundation trenches, looking east.	4
Photograph 3	Foundation trenches, looking south-east.	4
Photograph 4	Foundation trenches, looking north-west.	5
Table 1	Context list.	3
Fig 1	Site location.	
Fig 2	Close-up location plan.	
Fig 3	Detailed plans and sections.	

1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was conducted on land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex, during the construction of a new dwelling. Despite being located within the historic settlement of Southminster, no archaeological remains were uncovered by the groundworks.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for archaeological monitoring and recording on land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7DEB, carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on the 11th-12th December 2024. The work was commissioned by John James of John James Associates, on behalf of the landowner, and was carried out during groundworks for the construction of a new dwelling.

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 work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological monitoring and recording at site rear of 10 High Street, Southminster*, written by Maria Medlycott, the Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor (ECCHEA 2024). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT (2024a) in response to the brief and agreed with the ECCHEA in advance of the groundworks.

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* (ClfA 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 Geological and archaeological background

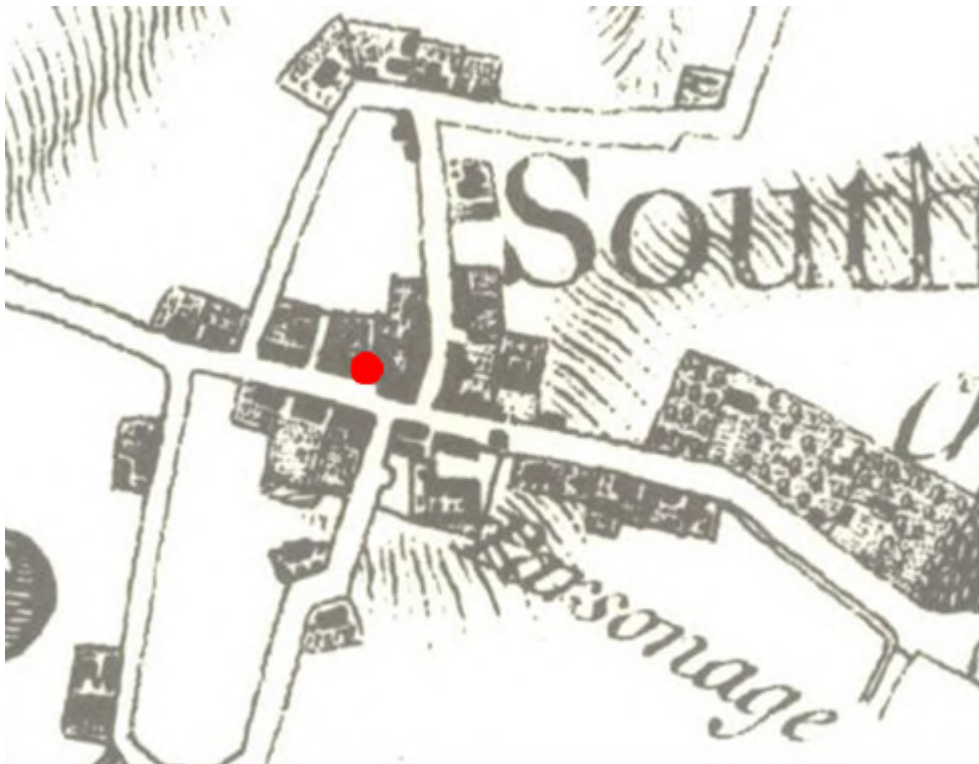
The following archaeological background draws on the archaeological brief, Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Essex Historic Environment Record (accessible via the Heritage Gateway website (www.heritagegateway.org.uk)).

The development site is located on the Southminster-Tillingham ridge near the eastern end of the Dengie Peninsula. The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows that the London Clay Formation forms the bedrock of the site, distinguished by bioturbated or poorly laminated, blue-grey or grey-brown, slightly calcareous, silty to very silty clay, clayey silt and sometimes silt, with some layers of sandy clay. Superficial deposits in the district consist of river terrace deposits of sand and gravel with subsidiary clay and silt that form the ridge. This facies complex relates to the former pre-Anglian glaciation course of the River Medway and contain important Pleistocene remains. The ridge reaches a maximum elevation of around 37m OD at St Lawrence. The ridge has attracted settlement since earliest times, and finds of Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age, material are known from quarrying and other ground disturbance. The river terrace gravels have been identified as likely to contain important Palaeolithic deposits similar in nature to those known to exist in the Clacton area (ECC 2008, 50-1).

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

The Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) shows that the proposed development is sited within the historic settlement of Southminster (EHER 19416). At the end of the Saxon period the Domesday Book records the presence of 50 households belonging to the Bishop of London in his manor of Southminster and a further 23 households, including those of 15 free men, that had been taken by King Canute (Rumble 1983, 3). This is quite a sizeable population and although it would have included outlying farms on the edge of the marsh, there was probably also a village centred on the Minster church at Southminster itself. In 1086 the manor of Southminster was held by the Bishop of London. It had a total of 79 households. The focus of the village was on the High Street immediately adjacent to the church (EHER 11250), with Southminster Hall (EHER 11359) located to the east. There were also a number of small outlying cottages and farms.

The post-medieval period saw gradual development along the roads leading from the village centre, and the construction of a number of community buildings, including the Police Station. The site is shown as having a building on it on the 1777 Chapman and André map of Essex (see Map 1).



Map 1 Extract of Plate XIX Chapman and André map, with the site in red.

A test-pit, excavated to the south of the proposed development area, recovered post-medieval pottery (EHER 48860), whilst one to the west recovered medieval and post-medieval pottery (EHER 48859). Nos 12-14 High Street are Grade II Listed buildings. These have their origins in the 16th century or earlier (EHER 38674, NHLE 1237454). A single trench in advance of the construction of The Hawthorns to the rear of No. 14 identified garden soils relating to the properties on the frontage (EHER 46228).

For a full background of the area see the Southminster Historic Town Assessment Report (Medlycott 1999).

4 Aim

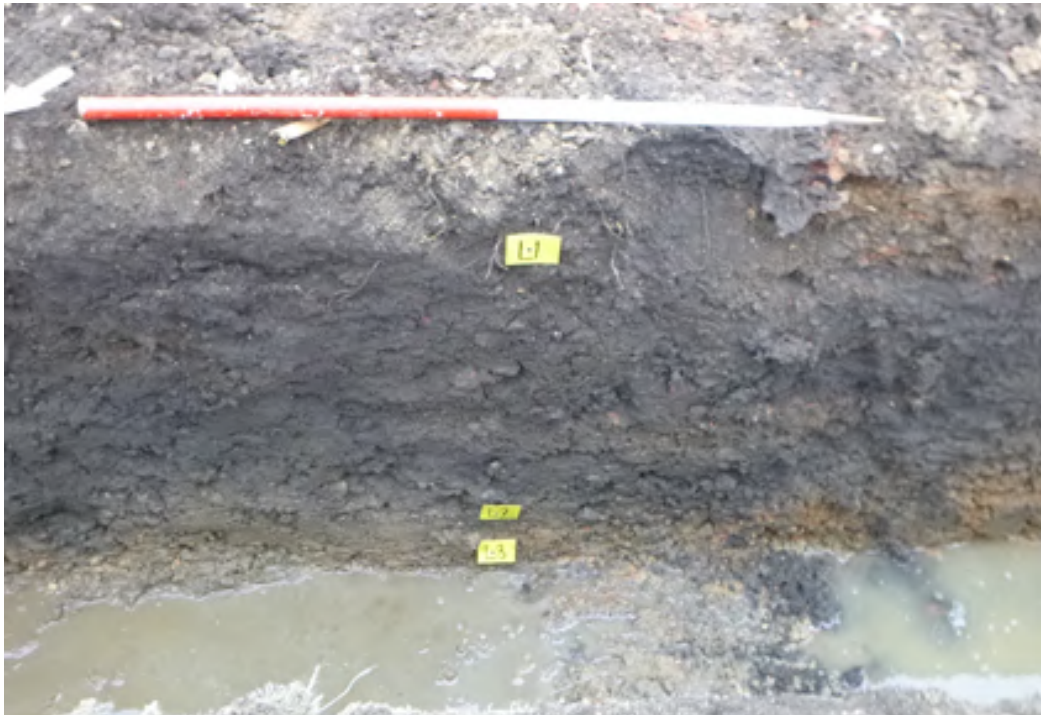
The aim of the archaeological monitoring was to identify and record any archaeological contexts revealed during the groundworks.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

In total 45m of foundation trench was excavated at 0.6m wide and 1.2m deep. Prior to groundworks beginning a concrete slab with crush underneath was broken up and removed, the remnants of which were still present around the edges of the site (c 0.4m thick). The trenches then cut through a thick layer of topsoil (or garden soil) (L1, c 0.4-0.75m thick) and subsoil (L2, 0.1-0.15m thick) onto natural clay (L3, encountered at a depth of 0.8-0.9m below current ground level).

Context	Type	Description	Date
L1	Topsoil or garden soil	Moist, dark brown silty/clayey sand with occasional small stones and post-medieval/modern CBM fragments (not retained for post-excavation analysis).	Post-medieval/modern
L2	Subsoil	Mid-grey silty clay with occasional small stones.	Undated
L3	Natural deposit	Clay.	Post-glacial
L4	Hardstanding	Concrete surface with crush underneath.	Modern

Table 1 Context list.



Photograph 1 Representative section 1, looking south-south-east.



Photograph 2 Foundation trenches, looking east.



Photograph 3 Foundation trench, looking south-east.



Photograph 4 Foundation trenches, looking north-west.

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

7 Conclusion

Despite being located within the historic settlement of Southminster, no archaeological remains were revealed by groundworks on land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks John James of John James Associates and the landowner 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 Z Eksen and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECC by Maria Medlycott.

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 on land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7D,</i> by Emma Holloway. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust. |
| CAT | 2024b | <i>Health & Safety Policy.</i> 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. |

CIfA	2020b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020.
CIfA	2022	<i>Code of Conduct.</i> CIfA 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.
ECC	2008	<i>Maldon District Historic Environment Characterisation Project.</i> Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch.
ECCH EA	2024	<i>Brief for archaeological monitoring and recording on site rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, by Maria Medlycott,</i> Place Services, County Hall, Chelmsford.
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	1999	<i>Southminster: Historic Town Assessment Report.</i> Essex County Council
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
Rumble, A (ed.)	1983	<i>The Domesday Book: Essex,</i> 32

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
ECCH EA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
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 1066 to 1540
modern	period from 1901 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of A rchaeological I nvestigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from 1540 to 1900
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
ws i	written scheme of investigation

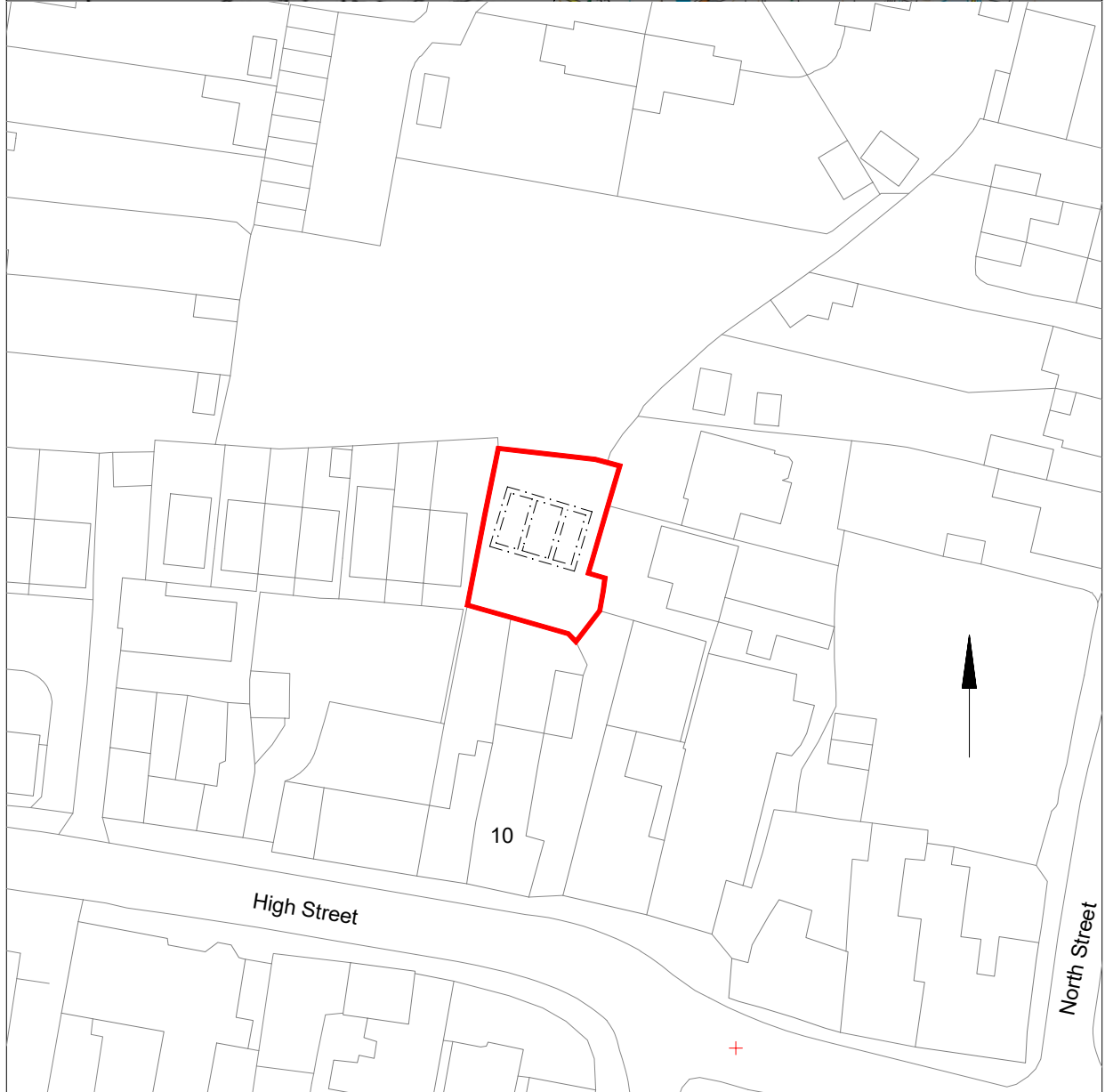
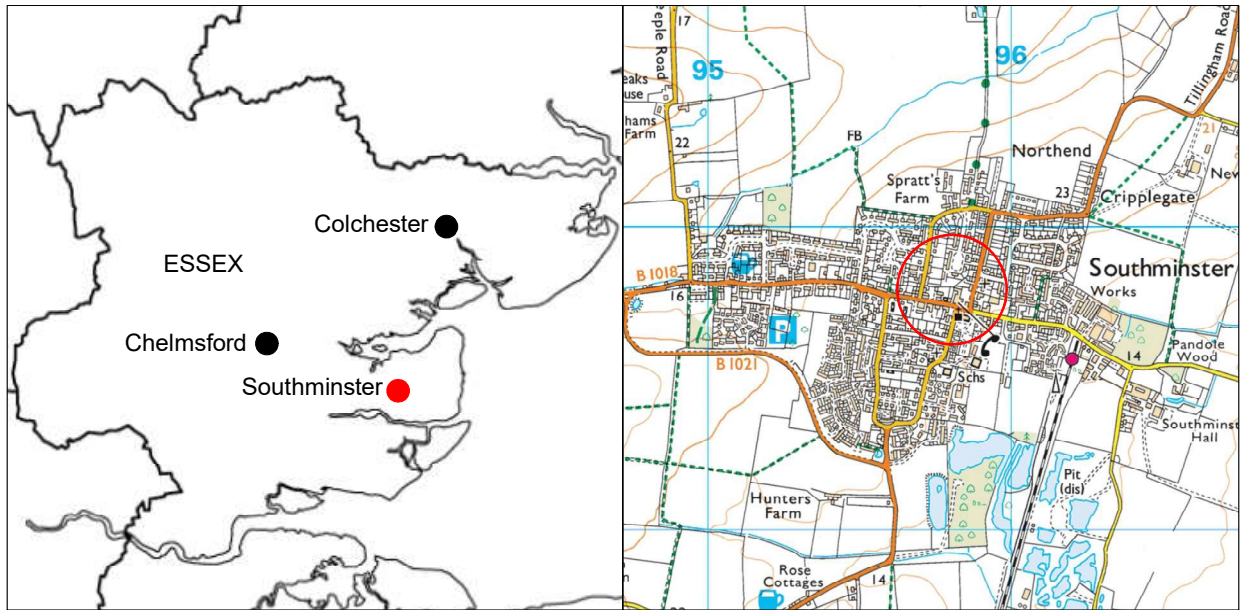
11 Archive deposition

Digital record: This project falls within the ClfA definition of a sterile project (<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>), and as such the preserved archaeological archive will take the form of a single digital document that incorporates all the relevant elements from the project archive. This document will be uploaded to OASIS and released into the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) library, from where it will be curated by the ADS. The single digital document will include the report, brief, wsi, photographs, and original site data (for example context sheets, section drawings).

© Colchester Archaeological Trust 2024

Distribution list:

John James of John James Associates
Landowner
Historic Environment Advisor, Essex County Council
Essex Historic Environment Record



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100039294.

Fig 1 Site location.



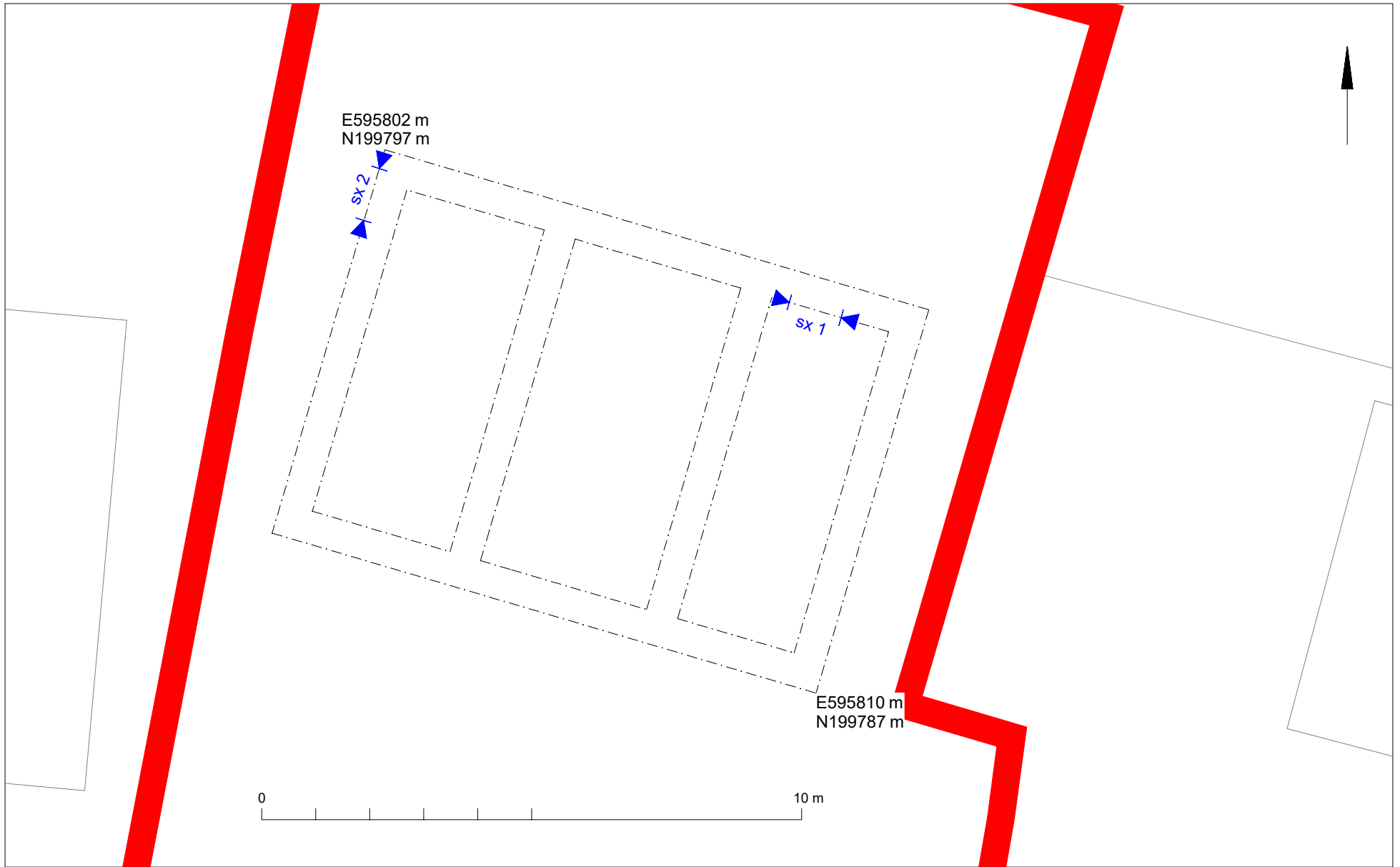


Fig 2 Results.

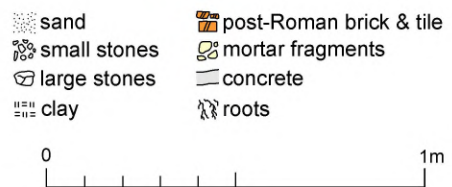
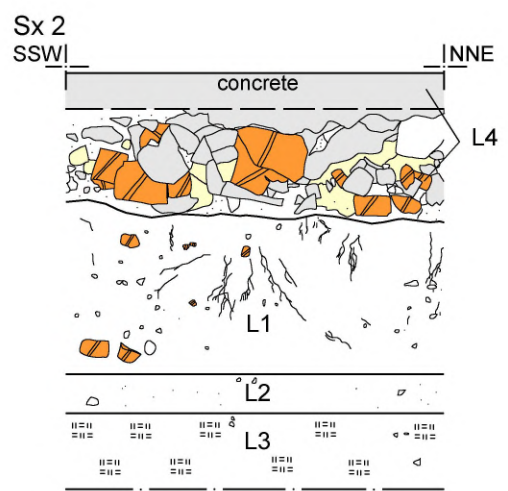
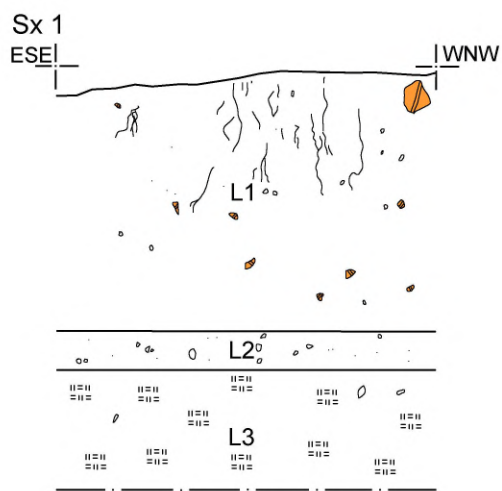


Fig 3 Representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-524333

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-524333
Project Name	Archaeological monitoring and recording on land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7DE: December 2024
Sitename	Land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7DE
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	2024/04b
Activity type	Watching Brief
Planning Id	MAL/23/01026
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	11-Dec-2024 - 12-Dec-2024
Location	Land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex, CM0 7DE NGR : TQ 95802 99756 LL : 51.66246404633265, 0.829696455303912 12 Fig : 595802,199756
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Maldon Parish : Southminster
Project Methodology	Archaeological monitoring and recording carried out as specified in the project brief and wsi.
Project Results	Archaeological monitoring and recording was conducted on land to the rear of 10 High Street, Southminster, Essex, during the construction of a new dwelling. Despite being located within the historic settlement of Southminster, no archaeological remains were uncovered by the groundworks.
Keywords	
Funder	Private individual
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Adam Wightman, Chris Lister
HER Identifiers	
Archives	

Report generated on: 17 Dec 2024, 14:00