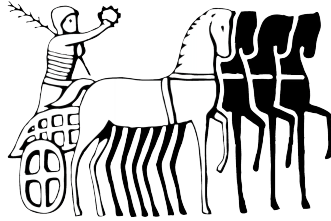


Colchester Archaeological Trust



CAT Report 2138
issued February 2025

**Archaeological evaluation at 97 Chapel Street,
Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LR: February 2025**



CAT project ref.: 2024/10f
EHER code: EEX61246

**Archaeological evaluation at 97 Chapel Street,
Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LR: February 2025**

NGR: TQ 67520 94314 (centre)

**Planning district: Basildon
Planning ref.: 23/00517/FUL**

**CAT project ref.: 2024/10f
CAT Report 2138**

**EHER code: EEX61246
OASIS id: colchest3-529446**

report prepared by Dr Patrick Spencer

fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Tabitha Lawrence

**commissioned by Russell Jarvis,
Jarvis Developments**

Prepared by:	Dr Patrick Spencer	Field Assistant
Reviewed by:	Laura Pooley	Post-Excavation Manager
Reviewed and approved by:	Howard Brooks	Senior Associate
Issued:	17/02/2025	

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	Archaeological background	1
4	Aims	3
5	Results	3
6	Finds	6
7	Conclusion	6
8	Acknowledgements	6
9	References	6
10	Abbreviations and glossary	7
11	Contents of archive	8
12	Archive deposition	8
	Appendix 1 Context list	9
	Figures	after p9

OASIS Data Collection Form

List of photographs and figures

Cover: The trench, looking north-west.

Photograph 1	The trench 1, looking north.	4
Photograph 2	Pit F1, looking north.	4
Photograph 3	Tree-throw F2, looking north.	5
Photograph 4	Ditch/gully F3, looking west.	5

Fig 1 Site location.

Fig 2 Results. Modern disturbance and services highlighted grey. Proposed development dashed blue.

Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex, in advance of a new residential development. The site is located within an area of archaeological potential and in the vicinity of several listed buildings. The evaluation revealed three undated features, a pit, ditch/gully and tree-throw, along with some modern disturbance.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex, which was carried out on 6th February 2025. The work was commissioned by Russell Jarvis of Jarvis Developments and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust after the property had been demolished but in advance of the construction of two new semi-detached houses.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor advised that, 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 2023).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Trial Trenching at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay*, written by Robin Mathieson (ECCPS 2024). A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in response to the brief and was agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2025).

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 2025).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the ECC Brief and Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The proposed development lies within the extent of the historic settlement of Billericay. Medieval Billericay (EHER 5410) is a 13th-century creation by the Cistercian monks of Stratford Langthorne Abbey. The name itself is not recorded until 1291, although there may well have been a market on the site since 1253. Billericay was built on wasteland, where the Mountnessing and Great Burstead parish boundaries met, and the urban area incorporated land from several manors. In 1345, a chapel was built in Billericay (EHER 5411-2). Roman burials have been found close to the proposed site on the western side of Chapel Street (ECCPS 2024).

The proposed site is in the vicinity of several listed buildings. Close to 97 Chapel Street is the Old Vicarage and attached wall, gate piers and gate (EHER 27207). The vicarage is a listed building which dates to the early 19th-century. 54-56 Chapel Street (EHER 27206) are situated 85m north-west to the proposed site and comprise 17th- and 18th-century timber-framed cottages. The Chequers Inn (EHER 25907) is a 16th-century timber-framed house, 7-9 Chapel Street (EHER 25900) are a pair of 17th- and 18th-century timber-framed houses, 11 and 13 Chapel Street (EHER 25901) is an 18th-century timber-framed house.

CAT has undertaken a series of archaeological investigations in Billericay. Evaluation and monitoring at 101 Laindon Road revealed that the Late Iron Age and Roman settlement, identified underneath the adjacent school in the 1970s, continued into the development site. Seven LIA/Roman features were excavated (a ditch, five pits and a pit/posthole) and a small selection of finds from a rural settlement of probable 1st to mid/late 3rd century date recorded (CAT Reports 1006 & 1057). Evaluation at Elizabeth Cottage, 4 High Street revealed the remains of a modern extension which was never completed, along with two 19th- to 20th-century pits and a post-medieval/modern pit, all likely associated with the cottage. Evidence of earlier activity consisted of a 17th- to 18th-century pit (CAT Report 1312). Archaeological investigations along Deerbank Road, at Minstead (CAT Report 1406) and Cefn Coed and Foxborrow (CAT Report 466) did not identify any archaeological remains.

Other companies have carried out archaeological investigations in and around the area. Archaeology South-East carried out a 27-trench evaluation on land at Kennel Lane, of which 18 contained archaeological features. These remains comprised ditches, pits, a pond, a cobbled surface and possible structural remains. Medieval remains were found in the centre-west and north-east of the site, mostly comprising ditches and gullies. Possible structural features and domestic rubbish may indicate associated domestic occupation in the north-east of the site. Post-medieval activity was limited to a ditch system in the centre of the site that is shown on late 19th-century historic mapping. At least some of these are probably associated with the dated medieval remains (ASE 2020).

Pre-construct archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation and excavation on land at 76-78 High Street in 2019. A number of medieval postholes were revealed along with two late 18th-/19th-

century walls and some extraction pits containing domestic waste and post-medieval ceramic building material (PCA 2019).

Archaeology South-East previously carried out an archaeological watching brief to the rear of 137-139 High Street. Other than a late 19th-/early 20th-century pit/soakaway, no archaeological finds, features or deposits were recorded (ASE 2017).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site to be Bagshot Formation (sand) with superficial deposits of Stanmore gravel formation (sands and gravel).

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 2-3)

A single trial trench was machine excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. The trench was north/south aligned, 15m long and 2m wide. It cut through a layer of crush/demolition (L1, 0.25-0.3m thick) and subsoil (L2, 0.1-0.15m thick) onto natural (L3, reached at a depth of 0.5m below current ground level). All features were sealed by L2 and cut into L3.

Undated pit F1 was partially uncovered in the north-east corner of the trench. As revealed it was 0.7m by 0.65m and 0.35m deep, and had an evenly curved edge, suggesting it was sub-circular in plan. F1 did not produce finds.

Undated tree-throw F2 was oval in plan, 0.8m by 0.7m and 0.12m deep, with a moderately irregular profile, slightly undulating base and rooting. No finds were recovered.

Undated ditch or gully F3 passed through the trench on an east/west alignment. It was 0.84m wide and 0.22m deep and had an approximately V-shaped profile and shallow slightly concave sides. The north edge of F3 had been partly truncated by modern demolition activity. It did not produce finds.

Also present within the trench were two areas of modern disturbance, likely the result of the demolition of no. 97, and a service trench. These features were not excavated.

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



Photograph 1 The trench, looking north.



Photograph 2 Pit F1, looking north.



Photograph 3 Tree-throw F2, looking north.



Photograph 4 Ditch F3, looking west.

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

7 Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex revealed a pit, ditch/gully and tree-throw. Because of the absence of finds these features could not be dated. Modern demolition activity had partially truncated F3 and may have potentially truncated archaeological features elsewhere on the site.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Russell Jarvis of Jarvis Developments for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by A Wightman and C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway and T Lawrence. Figures are by B Holloway and C Hill. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Robin Mathieson.

9 References

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

Archaeology South-East. 2017. *Archaeological Watching Brief Report 137-139 High Street, Billericay, Essex*, by M Germany. Witham: ASE Report No: 2017188.

Archaeology South-East. 2020. *Archaeological Evaluation at land at Kennel Lane, Billericay, Essex* by R Cullum. Witham: ASE Report No: 2019337.

Brown, N. & Glazebrook, J. 2000. *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8).

CAT. 2024. *Written scheme of investigation for an archaeological trial trenching at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LR*, by Chloe Hill. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust.

CAT. 2025. *Health & Safety Policy*. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust.

CAT Report 466. 2008. *An archaeological excavation at Cefn Coed and Foxburrow, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex: April 2008* by A Wightman. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust.

CAT Report 1006. 2016. *Archaeological evaluation at 101 Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LG: August 2016* by L Pooley. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust.

CAT Report 1057. 2017. *Archaeological monitoring and recording at 101 Laindon Road, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LG: November 2016* by L Pooley. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust.

CAT Report 1312. 2018. *Archaeological evaluation at Elizabeth Cottage, 4 High Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9BQ: August 2018* by L Pooley. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust.

CAT Report 1406. 2019. *An archaeological evaluation on land at Minstead, Deerbank Road, Billericay, Essex: April 2019* by Dr E Hicks. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust.

ClfA. 2020a. *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*. ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020.

ClfA. 2020b. *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*. ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020.

ClfA. 2022. *Code of Conduct*. ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2022.

ClfA. 2023a. *Standard for archaeological field evaluation*. ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

ClfA. 2023b. *Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation*. ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

Essex County Council Place Services. 2024. *Brief for Archaeological Trial Trenching at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay*, by Robin Mathieson. Chelmsford: Essex County Council Place Services.

Gurney, D. 2003. *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers **14** (EAA **14**).

Historic England. 2015. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*.

Medlycott, M. 2011. *Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers **24** (EAA **24**).

MHCLG. 2023. *National Planning Policy Framework*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. 2019. *Archaeological evaluation and excavation, land at 76-78 High Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9BS* by A G Pullen. London: PCA Report No. R13722.

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	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
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to 1540

modern	period from AD 1901 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigation S , http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	period from AD 1540 to c 1900
Roman	the period from AD 43 to 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 2138
ECC Brief; CAT WSI
Digital photographs
Site data
Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7GZ but will be permanently deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

© Colchester Archaeological Trust 2025

Distribution list:

Russell Jarvis of Jarvis Developments
Historic Environment Advisor, Essex County Council Place Services
Essex Historic Environment Record

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Finds no.	Interpretation	Context information	Period
L1	-	Crush and demolition debris	Crush/demolition material from the demolition of 97 Chapel Street before redevelopment. Containing brick, concrete pieces, and plastic	Modern
L2	-	Subsoil	Accumulated subsoil deposit, occasional intrusive CBM flecks (compressed from L1 into L2).	Undated
L3	-	Natural	Sandy clay with interspersed occasional gravel lenses. Cut by all features	Post-glacial
F1	-	Pit	Firm, moist, medium grey-brown sandy silt, with frequent small sub-angular stones. Some thin sand lenses present. Infrequent manganese oxide deposits at the base of the cut. Minor rooting traces in upper fill.	Undated
F2	-	Tree-throw	Firm, moist, orange-brown silt with 10% small sub-angular stones.	Undated
F3	-	Ditch/gully	Firm, moist, dark grey-brown sandy silt with charcoal flecks. Occasional small sub-rounded to sub-angular stones. Some minor plant rooting in upper fill.	Undated

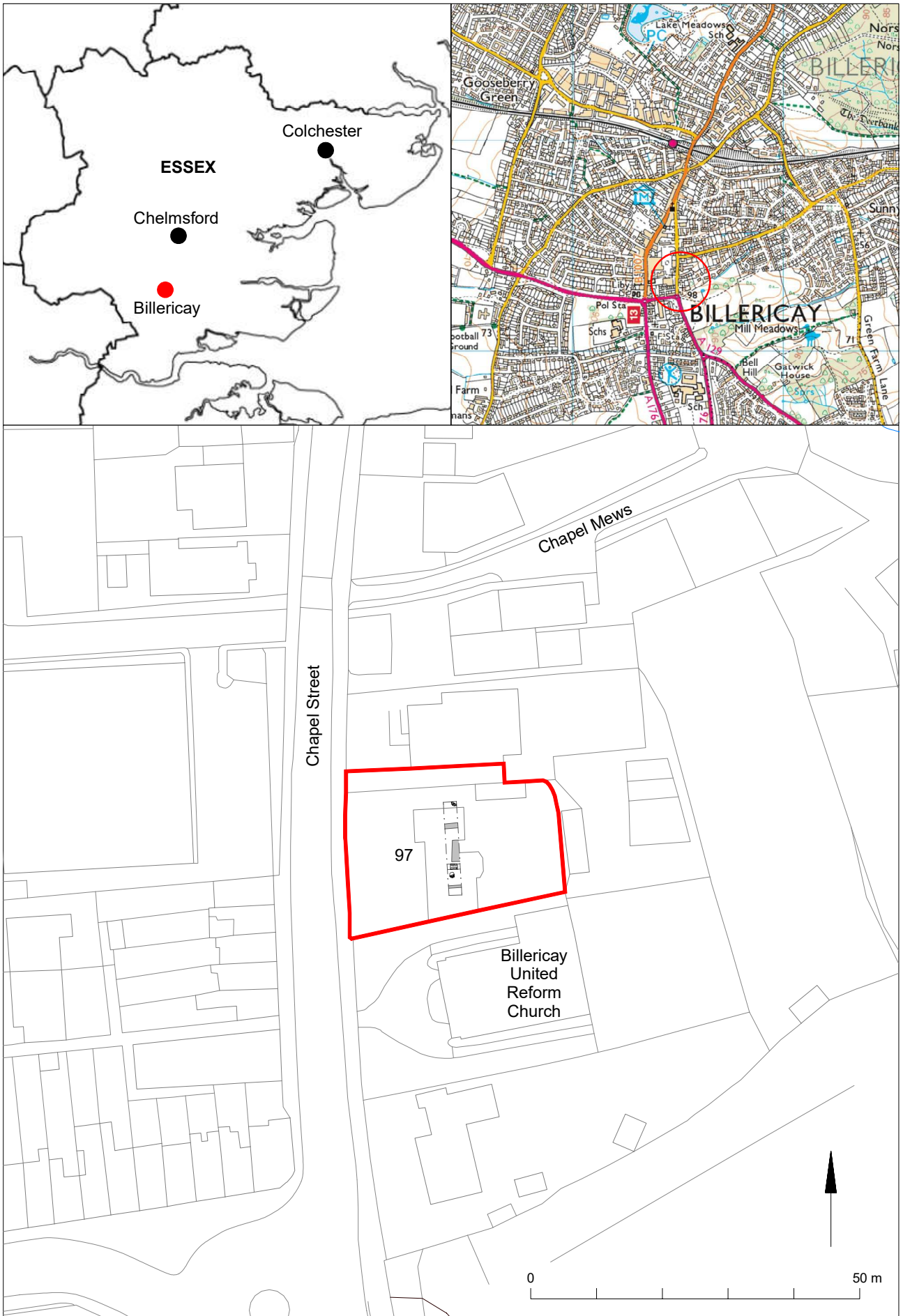
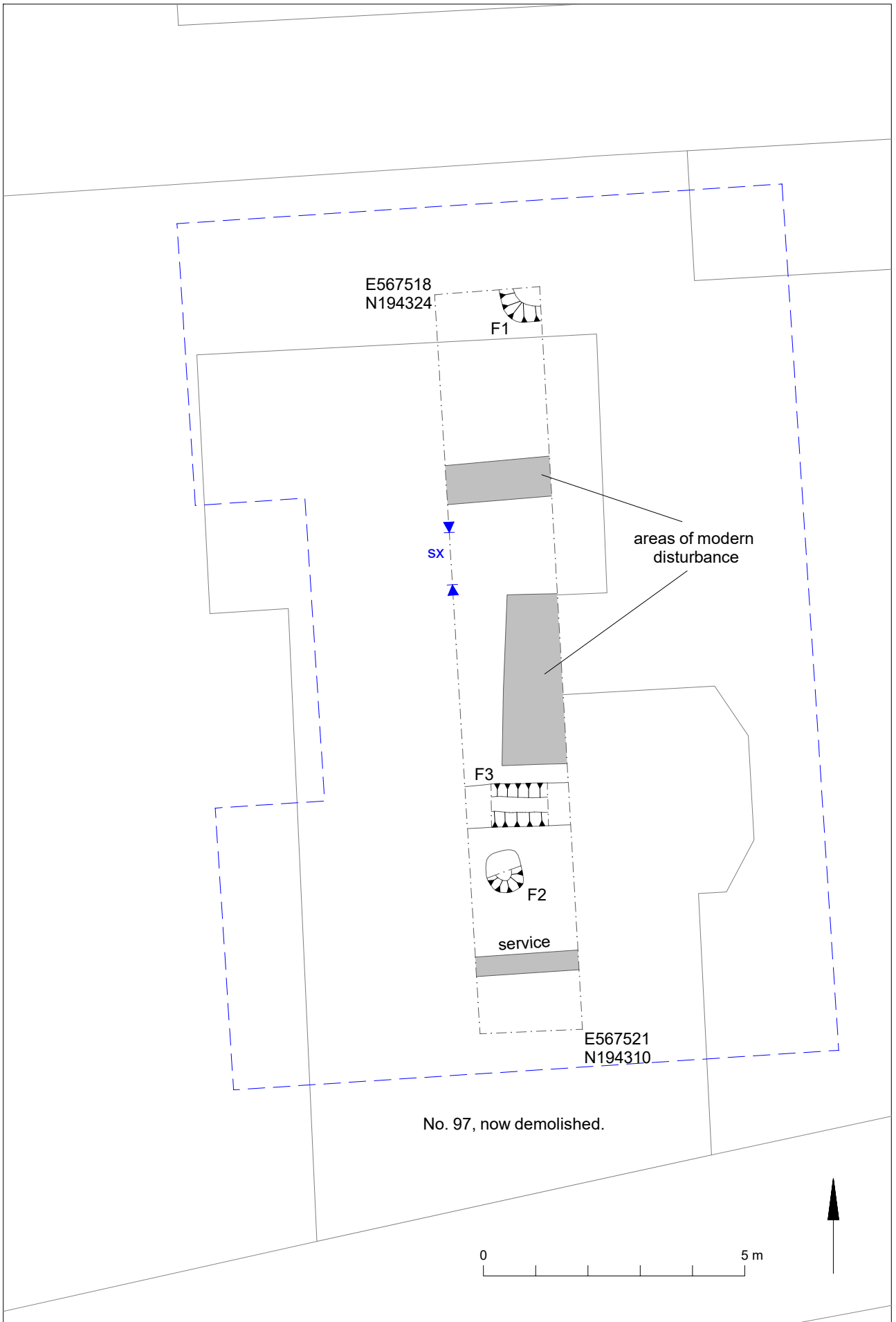


Fig 1 Site location.



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

Fig 2 Results. Modern disturbance and services highlighted grey. Proposed development dashed blue.

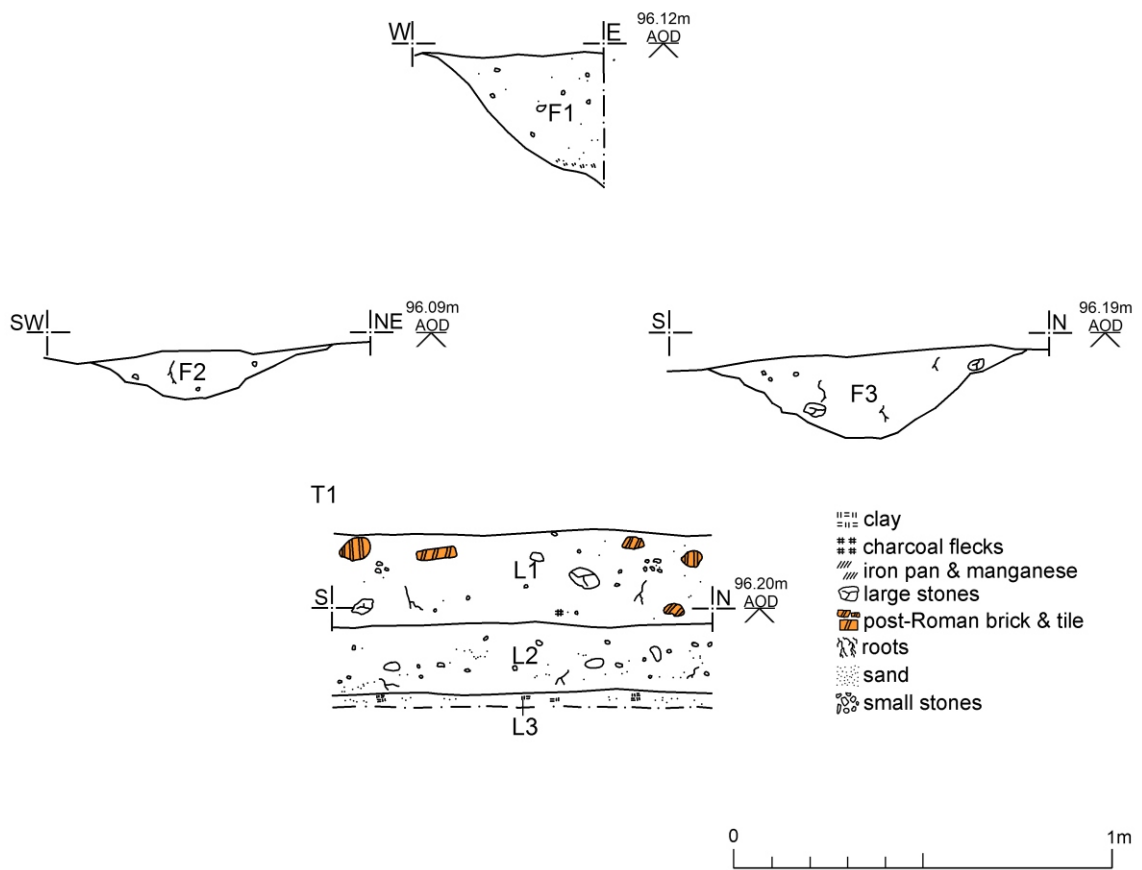


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-529446

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-529446
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LR: February 2025
Sitename	97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LR, United Kingdom
Sitecode	EEX61246
Project Identifier(s)	2024/10f
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	23/00517/FULL
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	06-Feb-2025 - 06-Feb-2025
Location	97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex, CM12 9LR, United Kingdom NGR : TQ 67528 94333 LL : 51.6228809236759, 0.418714659832244 12 Fig : 567528,194333
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Basildon Parish : Billericay
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) carried out as specified in the project brief and wsi.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out at 97 Chapel Street, Billericay, Essex, in advance of a new residential development. The site is located within an area of archaeological potential and in the vicinity of several listed buildings. The evaluation revealed three undated features, a pit, ditch/gully and tree-throw, along with some modern disturbance.
Keywords	Pit - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ditch - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Tree Throw - UNCERTAIN - 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 - EEX61246
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;