

**An archaeological evaluation at
the Mercury Flats, Balkerne Gardens,
Colchester, Essex
July-August 2005**

**report prepared by
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**on behalf of
Balkerne Gardens Trust plc**

CAT project ref: 04/8e
Colchester Museums accession code: 2004.349
NGR: TL 9927 2530.



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CAT Report 331
August 2005

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1 Summary

This site lies in Insula 17 of the Roman town just a few metres away from the west gate (Balkerne Gate) that gave access to the main Roman route to London (Londinium) via Chelmsford (Caesaromagus).

It is proposed to demolish an existing building, and rebuild on the same site. The archaeological evaluation had two main aims: first, to measure the position of the highest significant archaeological deposits in relation to modern ground level; second, to assess their date, importance, and condition.

Five evaluation trenches were cut, four to the north of the present Mercury Flats, and one to the south (ie on the Mercury Theatre side). All five trenches showed that the highest significant deposits were Roman in date, and lay at (no higher than) 1.50m below modern ground on the south side of the site, and between 0.70-1.00m below modern ground on the north side of the site. In terms of absolute heights AOD, the top of the Roman deposits was below 31.38m on the south side of the site, and between 31.62m and 31.97m AOD on the north side.

As well as a number of modern, post-medieval and medieval features and layers, the archaeological remains exposed included two in situ Roman walls (one partially robbed), a Roman mortared structure (either a floor or a wall), several Roman floor and dump layers and a complete Roman pot probably buried as a foundation deposit. A large quantity of Roman material (brick and tile, pottery, animal bone, etc) was recovered from the site including three late Roman coins.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

- 2.1 This is the archive report on an archaeological evaluation by five trenches carried out at the Mercury Flats, Balkerne Gardens, Colchester, Essex (Fig 1).
- 2.2 The archaeological work was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on behalf of the Balkerne Gardens Trust, via Stanley Bragg Partnership Ltd. Site work took place between 25th July and 5th August 2005, and post-excavation work up to 31st August 2005. Planning permission for development is being sought at the time of writing.
- 2.3 The development site is situated on the south edge of the Balkerne Gardens, and north of Balkerne Passage. The centre of the present Mercury Flats is at National Grid Reference TL 9927 2530. The site slopes down from south to north, losing 0.78m in height in the area affected by this evaluation.
- 2.4 This report mirrors standards and practices contained in Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines for the standards and practice of archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CM 2002) and *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums* (CM 2003), the IFA's *Standard and guidance for an archaeological field evaluation* (1999) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IFA 2001). The guidance contained in the documents *Management of archaeological projects* (MAP 2), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 8), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) was also followed.

3 Archaeological background

- 3.1 The site lies within the historic Roman and medieval town of Colchester.
- 3.2 Colchester has been the subject of antiquarian and archaeological interest for some centuries, culminating in modern large-scale archaeological excavations in the town centre and suburbs. There is a large corpus of published information on the town's archaeological and historical background (CAR 1, CAR 3, CAR 6, CAR 9, Crummy 1997, Hawkes and Hull 1947, Hull 1958).
- 3.3 Within the Roman town, the Mercury Flats are almost due east of the Balkerne Gate (the west gate of the Roman town) and as a consequence the flats are directly over the top of the Roman street running east-west through the Balkerne Gate. The main part of

Balkerne Gardens lies within Insula 17a to the north of the street, with the entrance gate area in Insula 17b to the north. A north-south Roman street passes through Balkerne Gardens, running under the conservatory at Freda Gunton Lodge.

- 3.4** Numerous archaeological discoveries have been recorded in this area over many years. Outside the site, large-scale excavations were carried out on the site of the Mercury Theatre in 1965 (Holbert 1966), and the present theatre scenery store was the subject of an evaluation in 1997. Holbert's excavations produced a tessellated floor and a wall to a later Roman house fronting the Roman street. Earlier clay floors were also found as well as the remains of a north south 'service road' and a possible kiln. There was also evidence of Saxon occupation at the site.
- 3.5** Extensive Roman remains have been found within Balkerne Gardens. A Roman tessellated floor was recorded on the south edge of Balkerne Gardens, close to the north edge of the present Parsley House (Hull 1958). Other Roman material has been recorded in front of Papillon House (Gas Board trench in 1975), in advance of the extension of Freda Gunton Lodge and Parsley House (1977 and 1978), on the site of the lift shaft (1986), at Freda Gunton Lodge (the 1994 and 1995 extension), and in 1999, when the Roman gravel street running through Balkerne Gardens was found under the conservatory (source, *CAT Report 60*)

4 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to identify and record the location, depth, nature, quality and date of any archaeological remains exposed in the trenches.

5 Method

- 5.1** Five trenches were located within the site. Trenches 1 to 4 were located on the north side of existing building (Fig 1). They were: Trench 1, 1.2m by 2.2m; Trench 2, 1.4m by 2.2m; Trench 3, 2.45m by 1.3m; and Trench 4, 1.6m by 1.2m. Trench 5 was located on the south side of the existing building. Trench 5 was 1.1m by 0.75m. All trenches were CAT scanned before excavation began.
- 5.2** Trenches 1 to 4 were machine dug with a flat-edged ditching bucket in shallow spits to the first archaeological layer. All archaeological features and layers were then cleaned and excavated by hand. Trench 5 was completely excavated by hand.
- 5.3** Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features and deposits were entered on CAT pro-forma record sheets
- 5.4** All trenches, features and deposits were manually planned at 1:20 and sections drawn at either 1:10 or 1:20. A digital survey of the site was also produced.
- 5.5** A photographic record was kept consisting of general site and trench shots and shots of all archaeological features.
- 5.6** A metal detector was used to scan all key deposits and spoil heaps.

6 Results (Figs 2 - 6)

6.1 Trench 1 (Fig 2 – section only)

Trench 1 should have been a trench 2.2m x 1.2m but it was crossed by two service pipes and a brick wall so excavation was limited to an area of 1.00m x 0.85m. Three layers of modern and post-medieval topsoil (L1, L18 and L19: approximately 1.00m thick) were dug to a depth of 31.97m AOD where the first Roman layer was revealed. This Roman layer (L20) was a light yellowish-brown silty clay. Clay deposits of this type are commonly found in Colchester, and are usually interpreted as soil dumped to raise ground level before the construction of Roman buildings (usually town-houses) in the 2nd or 3rd century AD. The dumped soil itself is derived from earlier buildings whose clay walls have been demolished, and the site leveled off in preparation for the new building.

In summary, the following sequence may be suggested for the deposits in this trench (earliest at bottom):

- L1: modern topsoil
- L18: modern topsoil
- L19: post-medieval topsoil
- L20: Roman soil dump

Excavation of this trench stopped at a depth of 31.89m AOD.

6.2 Trench 2 (Fig 2 - 3)

Trench 2 was 2.2m x 1.4m. Between 0.44m and 0.74m of modern and post-medieval topsoil (L2) was removed by machine which revealed a thin strip of brick and concrete debris (F2) at 31.93m AOD. When a similar feature was seen in Trench 3 (below) it became clear that this was the footing of a brick wall which used to run across the north side of the Mercury Flats, but had since been demolished to make way for the construction of the garden beds. A robber trench (F1) associated with the removal of the wall was identified in section, but had been removed during machining. Below the brick wall footing a thin layer of dark soil (L8) was then removed to reveal the top of the first Roman deposit at 31.78m AOD.

This first Roman deposit consisted of a layer of medium brown clay (L9) at 0.26m thick. Layer 9 is a Roman layer of dumped soil equivalent to L20 in Trench 1 (see above). The floors that would have lain over L9 have not survived but the line of one of the house walls was identified through robber trench F3. In the robber trench the stone robbers had removed the best quality stone blocks from the Roman footing and had dropped back into the trench the low quality pieces of stone and mortar debris. The layers identified in robber trench F3 were (from top to bottom): L11 and L12 (layers of mortar, tile and septaria debris, the former with a higher content of dark soil); L13 (a thin layer of a mid brown silt mixed with lumps of septaria and a pale yellowish-brown mortar); and L10 (a layer of gravel which was probably re-deposited when gravel surface L15 (see below) was cut by the robber trench). Below these layers of the robber trench part of the wall (F9) had survived. The remains of this wall (at 0.20m thick) consisted of pieces of tile/brick and stone set into a hard yellowish-brown mortar.

The remains of the wall (F9) and the clay dump layer (L9) represent the latest phase of Roman building activity in this trench. However, further excavation underneath these features and layers revealed earlier phases of activity. Layer 9 had been dumped over a sequence of earlier deposits. The highest was a 0.09m thick band of clean brown clay (L14), which was almost certainly a floor level. This lay over a substantial layer of gravel (L15). It is difficult to establish from this small sample whether the gravel was an earlier surface, or whether it was simply the foundation for clay floor L14. In the view of this writer, the former is more likely. No dating evidence was obtained from this sequence, but the fact that the layer under the gravel (L16) contained several lumps of red-burnt clay (L17) would suggest a post-Boudican date.

A small cut (F11) of indeterminate form through the surviving wall (F9) also revealed a sequence of earlier deposits. Immediately below F9 was a 0.12m thick layer of compacted gravel (L22) which was set into a mid-brown sandy silt. This layer could have either been an early surface or the foundation for the wall F9. This gravel layer sealed two earlier layers of clay. The first layer (L23), located immediately below L22, was a 0.29m thick layer of a light brown-grey silty clay which contained numerous charcoal patches. The bottom layer of the sequence (L24), which was sealed by L23, was a light grey clay. It was impossible to determine, from the small area excavated, what these layers are likely to be – it is possible that, as with layers L9, L14 and L16, they were either soil dumps from earlier buildings or were earlier floors.

In summary, the following sequence may be suggested for the deposits in this trench (earliest at bottom):

- L2: post-medieval and modern topsoil
- F1: wall demolished (20th century)
- F2: brick wall constructed (19th -20th century)
- L8, L3: post-medieval soils accumulate over site
- F3 (L10, L11, L12, L13): robber trench: Roman walls robbed in medieval period
 - F11: small cut made through Roman wall F9
 - F9: surviving Roman wall: 1st – 2nd/3rd
- LAYERS CUT BY F9:-
- L9: Roman soil dump: later 2nd century?
- L14: clay floor: 2nd century AD

L15: gravel surface: late 1st - early 2nd century
L16/L17: soil dump: later 1st century AD?
LAYERS SEALED BY F9:-
L22: gravel surface or foundation for wall F9
L23: clay floor or dump: ?1st^t – 2nd century
L24: clay floor or dump

Excavation of this trench stopped at a depth of 30.48m AOD.

6.3 Trench 3 (Fig 4)

Trench 3 should have been a trench 2.45m x 1.3m but it was crossed by two modern pipe trenches so excavation was limited to a triangular shaped area 1.94m long by 1.26m wide. Most of the post-medieval topsoil layer (L3) was removed by machine, down to a thin strip of brick and concrete debris (F2), which was the footing of a recent brick wall removed from this spot to allow for the construction of the present garden beds. A robber trench (F1) associated with the removal of the wall was identified in section, but had been removed during machining. Feature 1 and F2 were also seen within Trench 2.

Under (and around) footing F2 an approximately 0.60m thick layer of post-medieval soil (L6) was removed by hand. This revealed a Roman layer of brown clay (L7) and part of a Roman wall (F4) at 31.85m AOD. Layer 7 was a layer of dumped soil (equivalent to L20 in Trench 1 and L9 in Trench 2) and F4 was the remains of a wall that had been cut through L7. The construction cut for the wall was numbered F7.

In summary, the following sequence may be suggested for the deposits in this trench (earliest at bottom):

L3: modern topsoil
F1: wall demolished (20th century)
F2: brick wall constructed (19th -20th century)
L6: modern topsoil
F4: wall of a Roman house
F7: construction cut for the wall of a Roman house: 3rd – 4th century
L7: Roman soil dump: 3rd – 4th century

Excavation of this trench stopped at a final depth of 31.49m AOD.

6.4 Trench 4 (Fig. 5)

Trench 4 was 1.6m x 1.2m. A thick (0.40-0.50m) layer of modern topsoil (L4) was removed by machine. A modern cable trench (F5 – for an electrical conduit) was cut into this layer of modern topsoil but was removed to reveal the archaeological deposits below (the electrical conduit itself was left hanging across the trench). Once L4 had been removed, F8, a probable medieval robber trench or pit, was revealed. During excavation, L5 and F6 were identified as a separate layer and feature respectively. However, it has since become apparent that they were both silty loam layers within F8. Feature 8 cut through a number of Roman layers and down onto a Roman feature.

On the western edge of the trench F8 had cut through brown clay layer L29, which was probably a Roman soil dump (found at a height of 31.62m AOD). Layer 29 was only partially excavated to a depth of about 0.05-0.10m and excavation on the western side of the trench stopped at this point (31.57m AOD). Most of a jar was recovered from the top of this layer and may represent the remains of a foundation deposit.

On the eastern side of the trench F8 had cut through two Roman layers – L21 (a brown loamy sand and orange clay) and L26 (a brown silty clay). A mid brown clay layer, L28 (Layer 28 was originally given the number F10. Finds from F10 should be viewed as finds from L28), was found sealed under L26. These layers are probably also Roman soil dumps. From the dating evidence it would appear that L29 was the latest soil dump, followed by L21, then L26 and L28. Due to the disturbance caused by F8 on the eastern side of the trench, and the fact that excavation stopped at L9 on the western side it is uncertain if L29 did seal these earlier layers.

Directly underneath F8, in the middle of the trench, was the remains of a Roman mortared structure (F12). This feature could have been either a wall or the eastern edge

of a floor. As L29 (on the western side of F12) was not fully excavated, we are uncertain as to whether this structure continued eastwards (making it a floor) or stopped (making it a wall). This feature appears to have been sealed by the soil dump layers mentioned above.

In summary, the following sequence may be suggested for the deposits in this trench (earliest at bottom):

- F5: modern electrical cable
- L4: modern topsoil
- F8 (L5 and F6): medieval robber trench/cut
- L29: Roman soil dump: mid 3rd - late 3rd/early 4th
- L21: Roman soil dump: early 2nd – early-mid 3rd century
- L26: Roman soil dump: early 2nd – early 3rd century
- L28(F10): Roman soil dump
- F12: Roman floor or wall

Excavation of this trench stopped at a final depth of 30.87m AOD.

6.5 Trench 5 (Fig. 6)

Trench 5 was 1.1m x 0.75m. However, part of the wall of the existing building projected out into the trench making the final area excavated 1.1m x 0.60m. A layer of modern topsoil (L25) was removed by hand down onto a layer of post-medieval or medieval topsoil (L27). Excavation was stopped within L27 as the trench was too narrow to work in. This trench was positioned to locate a Roman street. However, a road-spike was pushed a further 20cm below the bottom of the trench and no hard surface was found.

In summary, the following sequence may be suggested for the deposits in this trench (earliest at bottom):

- L25: modern topsoil
- L27: post-medieval or medieval topsoil

Excavation of this trench stopped at a final depth of 31.38m AOD.

7 Finds

7.1 Small Finds

by *Nina Crummy*

Five copper-alloy objects were recovered, including three late Roman coins. All five items are unconserved. The coins are covered in a thick layer of copper corrosion products and cannot be closely dated. One of the other objects, either an awl, needle or pin, is in better condition but still cannot be accurately identified. The remaining object is a tiny piece of sheet.

- SF 1. (10) L7. Soil Dump. Roman. Copper-alloy coin. 3rd - 4th century.
- SF 2. (11) L7. Soil Dump. Roman. Copper-alloy coin. 3rd - 4th century.
- SF 3. (13) L7. Soil Dump. Roman. Copper-alloy coin. 3rd - 4th century.
- SF 4. (16) F3. Robber Trench. Medieval. Tiny fragment of copper-alloy sheet.

Maximum dimensions 12mm by 5mm.

- SF 6. (45) L21/L29. Soil Dump. Roman. Short awl, needle or pin; complete.
Length 44mm, diameter 2.5mm.

7.2 Roman pottery

by *S Benfield (CAT)*;

In this report Roman pottery vessel form numbers follow those of the Camulodunum (Cam) Roman pottery type series (Hawkes & Hull 1947, and Hull 1958). Roman pottery fabrics are those devised for **CAR 10**.

Table 1: Roman pottery fabric codes and the corresponding fabric name used in this report

Fabric code	Fabric name
AA	amphora, all excluding Dressel 20 and Brockley Hill/Verulamium amphora
AJ	amphora, Dressel 20
BA	plain samian forms. BA(CG) Central Gaulish samian
CB	Colchester red colour-coated roughcast ware
CH	oxidised Hadham wares
CL	Central Gaulish (NE) and Rhenish-type (NF) fine colour-coated wares
CZ	Colchester and other red colour-coated wares
DJ	coarse oxidised and related wares
EA	Nene-Valley colour coated wares
EZ	other fine colour-coat wares, mostly white/buff
FJ	Brockley Hill/Verulamium region oxidised ware
GA	BB1: black –burnished ware, category 1
GB	BB2: black burnished ware, category 2
GP	fine grey wares (Colchester, London-type and north Kent wares)
GX	Other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares
HD	shell-tempered and calcite-gritted wares
HZ	large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered grey wares
KX	black-burnished ware (BB2) types in pale grey ware
MP	Oxfordshire-type red colour-coated wares
MQ	white slipped fine wares and parchment wares
MR	brown colour-coated ware
ON	mica-gilt wares
TN	Oxford mortaria with red/grey fabric and cream slip
TZ	mortaria, Colchester and mortaria imported from the continent

Discussion

The Roman pottery recovered during the evaluation is, in the main, typical of that which would be expected from contexts in the town dating from the 2nd to the 4th century (the mid and late Roman periods). However, there is little pottery which can definitely be attributed to the early Roman period (1st century) and none which need be of pre-Flavian date (43 - 69 AD).

The pottery from the mid Roman period includes local colour-coat wares (fabric CZ & CB) and black burnished ware category 2 (fabric GB). There are a number of beakers of form Cam 391, in fabric CB, which date to the 2nd and early 3rd century and a few bead rim dishes of form Cam 37A, in fabric GB, of 2nd or early 3rd century date. Of note are a few sherds of Rhenish wares (fabric CL) which at Colchester appear in the 3rd century (CAR10 p 275).

The pottery of the later Roman period (the mid-3rd – 4th century) is dominated by regional imports. There are fine wares from the Nene Valley potteries (fabric EA), which are represented by pottery sherds from beakers, and coarse ware forms (jars Cam 279C and bowls Cam 305A) from Dorset (fabric GA) which date from the mid third century onwards. Also, of late Roman date (3rd-4th century; but typical of the 4th century) are products from the Hadham potteries (fabric CH) which are represented by one or two sherds. Among the latest Roman pottery reaching Colchester and present from this site are products from the Oxford potteries (fabrics MP, MQ(D) and TN). Examples of these here include sherds from a flanged bowl (Cam form 136) and mortaria (gripped mixing bowls). Oxford products are known to appear in Colchester in archaeological contexts dated to between c 350 and 400 AD, though up to 75% of Oxford wares from the town are recorded as residual pieces in post-Roman contexts (CAR 10, 304). From this evaluation Oxford pottery sherds come from F8 (bag 34), L6 (bag 6) and L7 (bag 7).

In contrast to the mid and late Roman periods, identifiable early Roman pottery is very scarce. While some of the pottery represented by sherds may be of 1st century date (eg sherds in fabric DJ which are likely to come from flagons, and sherds from amphoras (other than the Dressel 20 and some Gaulish forms) in fabric group AA), there is little amongst the pottery which need date to the 1st century. The earliest dated pot form from the site is a Cam 243-244/246 bowl (F8 bag 34) which is of 1st – early 2nd century date. Also there is a sherd from a 1st century samian cup of form 33a (F6 bag 28). Otherwise there is nothing which need date earlier than the early 2nd century, and it is noticeable that common 1st century forms such as jars of form Cam 266, bowls of form Cam 218 and beakers of form Cam 108 are not recorded amongst the pottery. In addition, forms and fabrics which are specifically of early Roman pre-Flavian date are absent.

In addition, there are sherds found together (bag 40, L29) representing almost all of a one pot, a Cam 268 jar (dated mid 2nd – late 3rd/early 4th century) though much of the very uppermost part of the pot (rim and shoulder) are missing. This appears to be the remains of a votive pot.

Table 2: Roman pottery by fabric and sherd count

context F/L	context number	find	Roman pottery (no. of sherds)	spot date for Roman pottery in the context
F	2	12	CZ (1) early 2nd - mid-late 3rd GX (10) Roman	residual (early 2nd - mid-late 3rd)
F	3	8	CZ (1) early 2nd - mid-late 3rd GX (6) Roman HZ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (early 2nd - mid-late 3rd)
F	3	21	CZ (1) early 2nd - mid - late 3rd DJ (2) 1st -2nd EA (1) mid 3rd-4th GB (1) early 2nd – mid-late 3rd GX (8) Cam 268, mid 2nd -early 4th HD (1) ?later 4th HZ (2) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (mid 3rd-4th ?later 4th)
F	3	25	DJ (1) 1st -2nd GX (4) Roman HZ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (Roman ?1st-2nd)
F	5	19	AA (2) 1st – earlier 2nd	residual (?1st - 2nd)
F	6	20	BA (1) 2nd - early 3rd DJ (2) 1st -2nd GA (1) ?Cam 279, early 2nd-4th GX (2) Roman MQ (1) Roman	residual (2nd+)
F	6	23	EA (1) mid 3rd-4th GA (2) Cam 279, Cam 305A, mid 3rd-4th	residual (later 4th)

context F/L	context number	find	Roman pottery (no. of sherds)	spot date for Roman pottery in the context
			GB (2) Cam 40B, early 2nd – mid-late 3rd GX (18) Roman KX (2) Cam 305B, mid 3rd-4th MQ (1) later 4th TZ (1) 1st mid-late 3rd	
F	6	28	AA (1) Gaulish amphora, 1st-3rd HZ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (1st-3rd)
F	6	28	BA (1) form 33a, 1st CZ (1) Cam 392, late 2nd - mid - late 3rd EA (1) beaker base, mid 3rd-4th GB (1) Cam 40A early 2nd - mid-late 3rd GP (1) ?1st-2nd GX (14) Cam 268, Cam 407, mid 3rd- early 4th HZ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (mid 3rd-4th)
F	6	30	DJ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd CB (1) Cam 391 early 2nd-early 3rd GB (3) early 2nd- mid-late 3rd GX (4) includes half of a lid, Roman	residual (early 2nd- mid 3rd)
F	7	22	CZ (1) Cam 391 early 2nd - early 3rd GX (2) Cam 268, mid 2nd -early 4th MR (1) ?3rd-4th	?3rd-4th
F	7	29	DJ (1) flagon handle, 1st -2nd GX (1) Roman	Roman ?1st-2nd
F	8	34	BA (CG) (2) form 18/31 or 31, 2nd CB (3) Cam 391 (3) early 2nd-early 3rd CZ (2) early 2nd - mid-late 3rd DJ (2) 1st-2nd/3rd GA (1) Cam 279 A/B early 2nd- early 3rd GB (11) Cam 37A, Cam 278, early 2nd – mid- late 3rd GX (17) Cam 243-44/246, Cam 268, mid 2nd- late 3rd/early 4th HZ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd MP (2) (Cam 316) later 4th MQ (1) ?later Roman ON (1) folded beaker TN (1) later 4th	residual (later 4th)
F	8	36	AA (2) 1st-2nd CZ (1) early 2nd- mid-late 3rd DJ (2) 1st-2nd/3rd GB (9) Cam 37A (early 2nd-early 3rd), early 2nd-mid-late 3rd GP (1) dot decorated beaker Cam 122/123, later 1st - late 2nd GX (18) Cam 268 mid 2nd- late 3rd/early 4th HZ (2) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (early 2nd - early 3rd)
F	8	39	EA (1) beaker base, mid/late 3rd-4th	residual (mid/late 3rd - 4th)
F	9	47	AA (1) handle from Gaulish amphora 1st- 2nd/3rd	1st-2nd/3rd
F	10	44	GB (9) Cam 278 (2 -3 pots) + bowl, early 2nd- mid-late 3rd GX (9) Cam 268, mid 2nd - late 3rd/early 4th TZ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd	later 2nd - earlier 3rd
F	10	48	CB (2) Cam 391, early 2nd-early 3rd GX (12) Roman	early 2nd-early 3rd
L	2	2	GX (1) Roman	residual (Roman)
L	4	4	AJ (1) Dressel 20, 1st - early 3rd CH (2) late 3rd - 4th - probably 4th CZ (1) Cam 407, mid - late 3rd DJ (3) 1st -2nd GA (1) Cam 279, early 2nd - 4th GB (2) early 2nd - mid-late 3rd GX (7) Cam 268, mid 2nd -early 4th HZ (2) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (late 3rd - 4th - probably 4th)

context F/L	context number	find	Roman pottery (no. of sherds)	spot date for Roman pottery in the context
L	4	15	DJ (1) 1st -2nd EA (1) mid 3rd - 4th GX (6) Roman	residual (mid 3rd - 4th)
L	4	17	KX (1) ?Cam 278 early 2nd - mid-late 3rd	residual (early 2nd - mid-late 3rd)
L	5	5	DJ (1) 1st -2nd GX (4) Cam 268, mid 2nd -early 4th	residual (2nd-3rd)
L	6	6	GB (1) early 2nd - mid-late 3rd GX (2) Roman TN (1) later 4th	residual (later 4th)
L	7	7	BA (1) form 80, later 2nd - early 3rd GX (1) ?Cam 268, mid 2nd -early 4th MQ(D) (1) later 4th	later 4th
L	7	14	CL(NE) (1) 3rd EZ ?EA (1) 2nd-4th ?mid 3rd-4th GA (1) ?Cam 279, early 2nd-4th GX (3) Roman	3rd - 4th
L	7	27	AJ (10) Dressel 20, 1st - early 3rd BA (1) form 80, later 2nd - early 3rd CL(NF) (1) 3rd CZ (2) early 2nd - mid-late 3rd EA (1) mid 3rd - 4th GX (5) Roman	mid 3rd - 4th
L	7	27	AJ (10) Dressel 20, 1st - early 3rd	1st-early 3rd
L	8	9	AA (1) 1st-earlier 2nd DJ (1) 1st -2nd GB (2) early 2nd - mid-late 3rd GX (9) Roman	residual (early 2nd - mid-late 3rd)
L	10	37	DJ (4) 1st-2nd/3rd	residual (?1st-2nd)
L	18	32	EA (1) beaker base sherd (joins F8 bag 39), mid/late 3rd-4th	residual (mid/late 3rd - 4th)
L	19	33	BA (1) ?2nd GX (5) Roman	residual (?2nd+)
L	21	43	AA (1) Gaulish amphora 1st-2nd/3rd BA (1) form 33, 1st CB (2) Cam 391 (2) early 2nd-early 3rd GB (7) Cam 278, Cam 40B, early 2nd - mid-late 3rd GX (12) Cam 268, mid 2nd – late 3rd/early 4th	early 2nd - early-mid 3rd
L	23	41	GX (1) Roman ?1st – 2nd	Roman ?1st-2nd
L	25	49	DJ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd (though possibly CH 4th) GB (1)Cam 39, early 2nd- mid-late 3rd GX (4) Roman TZ (1) 1st-2nd	residual (early 2nd-3rd ?4th)
L	26	46	DJ (1) 1st-2nd/3rd CB (1) early 2nd-mid 3rd FJ (1) possibly fabric FJ, 1st-early 2nd GB (5) Cam 37A (early 2nd-early 3rd), Cam 39, early 2nd-mid-late 3rd GX (18) includes lid sherd, Roman	early 2nd - early 3rd
L	29	40	GX (37 sherds, some large), Cam 268 jar, almost all of one pot though much of shoulder and rim missing, mid 2nd - late 3rd/early 4th	mid 2nd - late 3rd/early 4th

7.3 Post-Roman pottery
by Howard Brooks (CAT)
to follow in archive report

7.4 Other finds
by Howard Brooks (CAT)

The list below excludes those finds listed in the finds reports above.

D = discarded

Context Number	Find Number	Quantity	Weight (in g)	Description of Find	D	Finds date	Context date
F3	8	2	689	tegula flanges		Roman	medieval
F3	8	1	21	tile	D	Roman	medieval
F3	8	2	367	imbrex	D	Roman	medieval
F3	8	1	201	brick	D	Roman	medieval
F3	8	1	10	animal bone		-	medieval
F3	8	2	20	fe concretions		-	medieval
F3	21	8	1949	tegula flanges		Roman	medieval
F3	21	141	141	curious imbrex? piece		Roman	medieval
F3	21	1	160	tegula flange		Roman	medieval
F3	21	3	58	tile/brick	D	Roman	medieval
F3	21	1	16	tessera?		Roman	medieval
F3	21	5	69	animal bones		-	medieval
F3	25	2	557	tegula flanges		Roman	medieval
F3	25	2	80	tesserae		Roman	medieval
F3	25	1	189	brick		Roman	medieval
F3	25	5	657	imbrex	D	Roman	medieval
F3	25	1	137	tegula	D	Roman	medieval
F3	25	7	124	animal bone		-	medieval
F5	19	1	227	tegula flange		Roman	20th-21st cent
F6	20	1	60	box tile		Roman	medieval?
F6	20	1	46	animal bone		-	medieval?
F6	23	1	554	opus signinum lump	D	-	medieval?
F6	23	5	108	oyster shells	D	-	medieval?
F6	23	7	63	animal bone		-	medieval?
F6	23	2	4	charcoal	D	-	medieval?
F6	23	1	176	tegula flange		Roman	medieval?
F6	23	1	189	buff tegula flange?		Roman	medieval?
F6	23	2	100	tegula	D	Roman	medieval?
F6	23	1	25	tessera		Roman	medieval?
F6	23	1	20	septaria	D	-	medieval?
F6	23	1	31	slag	D	-	medieval?
F6	28	1	36	brick	D	Roman	medieval?
F6	28	1	242	oyster shells		Roman	medieval?
F6	28	3	87	animal bone		-	medieval?
F6	28	1	906	mortar from under imbrex		-	medieval?
F6	28	4	1274	tegula flanges		Roman	medieval?
F6	28	1	61	buff tile	D	Roman	medieval?
F6	28	1	12	fe nail	D	-	medieval?
F6	30	6	7	red painted wall plaster		Roman	medieval?
F6	30	6	102	animal bone		-	medieval?
F6	30	1	41	oyster shell	D	-	medieval?
F7	22	2	52	pale brown mortar lumps	D	Roman?	late Roman
F7	22	1	10	septaria lump	D	Roman?	late Roman
F7	22	1	21	brick	D	Roman	late Roman
F7	22	1	6	tile		Roman	late Roman
F7	29	1	48	buff brick	D	Roman	late Roman
F7	29	1	9	brick	D	Roman	late Roman
F7	29	3	25	brown mortar lump		Roman?	late Roman
F7	29	1	1	Glass		modern-intrusive?	late Roman
F7	29	1	14	fe nail		Roman?	late Roman
F7	29	1	2	fe blade end? SMALL FIND		Roman?	late Roman
F7	29	1	10	fe stud? SMALL FIND		Roman?	late Roman
F7	29	1	32	animal bone		Roman?	late Roman
F8	34	11	392	pale brown mortar lumps	D	-	medieval?
F8	34	3	64	oyster shell	D	-	medieval?
F8	34	1	8	whelk shell	D	-	medieval?
F8	34	1	1	mussell shell	D	-	medieval?
F8	34	1	10	septaria	D	-	medieval?
F8	34	15	193	animal bone		-	medieval?
F8	34	1	58	buff imbrex		Roman	medieval?
F8	36	3	27	animal bones		-	medieval?
F8	36	4	106	oyster shell	D	-	medieval?
F8	36	1	9	whelk shell	D	-	medieval?

F8	36	1	10	tile scrap	D	Roman	medieval?
F8	36	1	109	septaria	D	-	medieval?
F8	36	4	117	pale brown mortar lumps	D	-	medieval?
F9	47	8	6892	brick		Roman	Roman
F9	47	7	2369	tile		Roman	Roman
F9	47	5	1249	imbrex		Roman	Roman
F9	47	1	870	septaria		Roman?	Roman
F10	38	4	21	fe lumps		Roman?	Roman
F10	38	1	3	animal bone		Roman?	Roman
F10	38	1	11	oyster shell	D	Roman?	Roman
F10	44	1	10	fe nail		Roman?	Roman
F10	44	2	25	animal bones		Roman?	Roman
F10	48	2	4	red painted wall plaster		Roman	Roman
L1	1	1	142	brick, 48mm thick	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L1	1	1	8	peg tile	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L1	1	3	37	brick/tile frags	D	-	20th-21st cent
L1	1	2	17	fe nails	D	-	20th-21st cent
L1	1	1	14	fe frag	D	-	20th-21st cent
L1	1	2	14	oyster shell	D	-	20th-21st cent
L1	1	2	6	glass	D	modern	20th-21st cent
L1	1	2	3	animal bone	D	-	20th-21st cent
L1	1	1	9	fabric 48d plate	D	-	20th-21st cent
L1	31	1	138	tile	D	Roman	20th-21st cent
L1	31	4	271	brick	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L1	31	2	9	animal bone		-	20th-21st cent
L1	31	3	8	clay pipe stem		post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L1	31	1	9	fe nail	D	-	20th-21st cent
L1	31	2	15	glass	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L1	31	1	4	coke	D	-	20th-21st cent
L2	2	6	310	slag	D	post-med/mod	20th-21st cent
L2	2	4	227	peg tiles	D	post-med/mod	20th-21st cent
L2	2	6	83	brick/tile frags	D	post-med/mod	20th-21st cent
L2	2	1	61	brick frag	D	Roman	20th-21st cent
L2	2	2	26	flowerpot frags fabric 51b	D	19th-20th century	20th-21st cent
L2	2	1	13	fe nail	D	-	20th-21st cent
L2	2	2	10	animal bone	D	-	20th-21st cent
L2	2	1	11	Elizabeth II florin, 1962		1962	20th-21st cent
L2	2	1	2	clay pipe stem		post-med	20th-21st cent
L2	2	1	4	greyware sherd		Roman	20th-21st cent
L2	2	2	4	fabric 48d sherds		19th-20th	20th-21st cent
L3	3	1	39	oyster shell	D	-	20th-21st cent
L3	3	12	194	post-medieval bottle frags	D	17th-18th?	20th-21st cent
L3	3	1	20	peg tile	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L3	3	1	6	clay pipe bowl and stem frag		post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L3	3	1	15	flowerpot rim fabric 51b	D	19th-20th century	20th-21st cent
L3	3	1	22	horn core		-	20th-21st cent
L4	4	5	243	tegula	D	Roman	20th-21st cent
L4	4	3	223	buff brick frags	D	Roman	20th-21st cent
L4	4	1	81	brick	D	Roman	20th-21st cent
L4	4	1	20	peg tile	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L4	4	2	48	oyster shell	D	-	20th-21st cent
L4	4	4	38	animal bone	D	-	20th-21st cent
L4	4	1	11	fe nail	D	-	20th-21st cent
L4	4	2	26	tesserae		Roman	20th-21st cent
L4	15	1	1	tile sliver	D	-	20th-21st cent
L4	17	1	14	oyster shell	D	-	20th-21st cent
L4	18	5	583	tegula flanges		Roman	20th-21st cent
L6	6	2	361	imbrex	D	Roman	post-med
L6	6	1	29	tile	D	Roman	post-med
L6	6	7	58	animal bone		Roman	post-med
L6	6	1	37	pale brown mortar lump	D	Roman?	post-med
L6	6	1	486	tegula flange		Roman	post-med
L6	6	3	31	glass		Roman	post-med
L6	6	1	11	oyster shell	D	-	post-med
L6	6	1	7	clay pipe bowl		post-medieval	post-med
L7	7	4	41	oyster shell	D	Roman?	Roman
L7	7	5	16	animal bone		Roman?	Roman

L7	7	1	65	box tile		Roman	Roman
L7	7	3	13	whelk shells	D	Roman?	Roman
L7	7	1	17	fe nail		Roman?	Roman
L7	14	2	31	pale brown mortar lumps	D	Roman?	Roman
L7	14	1	3	whelk shell	D	Roman?	Roman
L7	14	5	65	oyster shell	D	Roman?	Roman
L7	14	2	47	fe nail		Roman?	Roman
L7	14	6	54	animal bone		Roman?	Roman
L7	27	3	31	tile	D	Roman	Roman
L7	27	1	10	fe nail		Roman?	Roman
L7	27	11	35	animal bone		Roman?	Roman
L7	27	1	77	tegula flange		Roman?	Roman
L7	27	1	110	septaria	D	Roman?	Roman
L8	9	2	85	peg tiles	D	post-medieval	med/post-med
L8	9	3	244	tegula flats	D	Roman	med/post-med
L8	9	1	12	septaria	D	-	med/post-med
L8	9	1	16	brick	D	modern	med/post-med
L8	9	6	67	brick	D	Roman	med/post-med
L8	9	1	10	oyster	D	-	med/post-med
L8	9	1	9	glass	D	modern	med/post-med
L8	9	1	7	Hedingham fine ware body sherd		med/post-med	med/post-med
L8	9	1	2	fabric 20 sherd		med/post-med	med/post-med
L8	9	7	88	animal bones		-	med/post-med
L10	37	1	125	tegula		Roman	medieval
L10	37	4	54	animal bone		-	medieval
L10	37	1	2	charcoal		-	medieval
L18	32	1	105	brick	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L18	32	1	12	tile	D	Roman	20th-21st cent
L18	32	1	19	peg tile	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L18	32	1	14	clinker	D	-	20th-21st cent
L19	33	1	170	brick	D	20th century	post-med
L19	33	2	100	imbrex frags	D	Roman	post-med
L19	33	4	54	tegula frags	D	Roman	post-med
L19	33	2	27	animal bones	D	-	post-med
L19	33	1	5	glass	D	modern	post-med
L19	33	1	6	fe nail	D	-	post-med
L19	33	1	2	charcoal	D	-	post-med
L19	33	5	34	clay tobacco pipe stem and bowl fragments		post-medieval	post-med
L21	43	50	10	much degraded glass sherd		Roman?	Roman
L21	43	3	14	red painted wall plaster		Roman	Roman
L21	43	8	286	oyster shell		Roman?	Roman
L21	43	1	19	clam shell?		Roman?	Roman
L21	43	1	2	mussel shell		Roman?	Roman
L21	43	8	47	animal bone		Roman?	Roman
L21	43	1	49	pale brown mortar	D	Roman?	Roman
L21	43	1	20	septaria	D	Roman?	Roman
L21	43	1	16	buff tessera?		Roman	Roman
L21	43	2	3	charcoal		Roman?	Roman
L21	43	1	3	tile spall	D	Roman	Roman
L21	43	1	25	fe nails		Roman?	Roman
L21	43	1	12	fe lump		Roman?	Roman
L23	41	1	718	brick, 50mm thick	D	Roman	early Roman
L23	41	1	281	imbrex fragment	D	Roman	early Roman
L23	41	2	81	daub/brick	D	Roman	early Roman
L23	41	1	7	wall plaster - no face	D	Roman	early Roman
L23	41	2	18	animal bone		Roman?	early Roman
L25	42	1	3	animal bone		-	20th-21st cent
L25	42	1	1	clay pipe stem		post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L25	49	25	349	animal bone	D	-	20th-21st cent
L25	49	3	41	fe lumps	D	-	20th-21st cent
L25	49	2	46	peg tile	D	post-medieval	20th-21st cent
L25	49	6	269	tile	D	Roman	20th-21st cent
L25	49	1	36	beer bottle base		19th century	20th-21st cent
L25	49	8	30	clay pipe stem and bowl frags		post-medieval	20th-21st cent

L25	49	1	3	window glass	D	modern	20th-21st cent
L25	49	1	9	stoneware (fabric 45m) jam jar frag	D	19th-20th cent	20th-21st cent
L25	49	4	64	fabric 40 PMRE sherds		med/post-med	20th-21st cent
L25	49	2	113	fabric 21a Colchester-type ware handle frags		med/post-med	20th-21st cent
L26	46	2	76	oyster shell		Roman?	Roman
L26	46	1	10	tile	D	Roman	Roman
L26	46	2	7	white painted wall plaster		Roman	Roman
L26	46	1	13	fe nail		Roman?	Roman
L26	46	2	4	mussel shell		Roman?	Roman
L26	46	8	100	animal bone		Roman?	Roman

Trench 4, layer 4 finds quantification

Roman brick and tile debris was very common in all contexts, and was fully quantified in the topsoil layer (Layer 4 or L4) in Trench 4 (or T4), as follows:

Type	Number of fragments	total weight (grammes)
Roman brick	9	3060
Roman tile (tegula)	13	872
Tegula with flange	5	610
Imbrex	2	110
unident tile/Brick	13	350
beach pebble	2	172
septaria	21	3086
peg tile	3	159
mortar lump	2	208
totals	70	8,627

8 Discussion

8.1 A total of five modern service trenches, two modern walls (one with an associated robber trench), 15 modern and post-medieval/medieval layers, two medieval features, 14 Roman layers, and four Roman features were recorded within the five evaluation trenches.

8.2 Once the modern, post-medieval and medieval features/layers were removed a series of archaeologically significant Roman deposits was revealed within the trenches.

8.3 The archaeologically significant deposits of each trench can be summarised as follows:
Trench 1 – the one and only significant archaeological deposit within Trench 1 was a layer of soil (L20) that had been dumped from the demolition of an earlier Roman structure/house to raise the ground level for a later Roman building. No dating evidence was recorded from this layer.

Trench 2 – Trench 2 had a number of significant Roman deposits within it. The latest Roman feature was wall F9, which had been partially robbed away by medieval robber trench F3. This wall had been cut through four Roman layers, which included one soil dump (L9) which sealed three probable earlier floors/surfaces (L14, L15, L16/L17). The wall itself sealed a further three earlier floor or dump layers (L22, L23, L24). The earliest layers appear to be 1st to 2nd century in date while the latest layer dated to the later 2nd century. These dates would mean that the wall within this trench is at least late 2nd century (if not 3rd century) in date.

Trench 3 – Trench 3 also contained the remains of a Roman wall (F4) which cut through a layer of dumped soil (L7). The pottery recorded from L7 dates from the 3rd to the 4th century, meaning that the wall is also probably 3rd/4th century in date.

Trench 4 – Trench 4 contained a series of Roman dump layers (L21, L26, L28 and L29). These layers sealed a mortared structure (F12) which could either be identified as part of an earlier wall or floor. Layers L21 and L26 dated from the early 2nd to the early-mid 3rd century. An almost complete pot was found within the topmost level of L29. This pot was probably placed here as a foundation deposit of a later building that would have been erected over L29. So, rather than using this pot to date L29, we should perhaps instead see it as providing a date (mid 2nd to the late 3rd/early 4th century) for the construction of this late Roman building.

Trench 5 – No Roman deposits were revealed within Trench 5.

8.4 In conclusion, there were various significant archaeological deposits located within four of the five trenches. The Roman remains are mainly structural in nature and are likely to have been the result of several phases of building activity on the site. Later building activity seems to date from the 3rd to the 4th century, while earlier activity (represented mainly within Trench 2) dates from the 1st to the 2nd century. Finds recovered from the site included large quantities of building material (brick, tile, imbrex, stone, mortar and wall plaster) as well as domestic material such as pottery, animal bone, oyster and other shell, and three late Roman coins.

8.5 All five trenches showed that the highest significant deposits were Roman in date, and lay at (no higher than) 1.50m below modern ground on the south side of the site (Trench 5), and at between 0.70-1.00m below modern ground on the north side of the site (Trenches 1-4). In terms of absolute heights AOD, the top of the Roman deposits was below 31.38 on the south side of the site (Trench 1), and between 31.62m and 31.97m AOD on the north side (Trenches 1-4).

9 Archive deposition

The finds and the paper and digital archive are held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but both will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museums under accession code 2005.87.

10 Acknowledgements

CAT is grateful to the Balkerne Gardens Trust PLC for commissioning and funding the work, via Stanley Bragg Partnerships. We are grateful to the Balkerne Gardens Trust for on-site welfare provision, and for the interest and encouragement of the site staff under Mrs Amanda Westbrooke. We are grateful to Stanley Bragg Partnerships for kindly providing plans and guidance on planning matters.

The fieldwork was carried out by Nicky Garland, Jessamy Doman, and Howard Brooks of CAT. The site was supervised by Howard Brooks; manual plans were drawn by Nicky Garland and Jessamy Doman; and the site digital survey was carried out by Chris Lister. The site plans and sections were inked by Emma Spurgeon and digitised and labelled by Maureen MacDonald.

The project was monitored by Martin Winter, Colchester Borough Council Archaeology Officer.

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12 Glossary

- | | |
|---------|--|
| context | specific location on an archaeological site, especially one where finds are made, usually a layer or a feature |
| dump | dumped soil (sometimes before construction) |
| feature | an identifiable man-made structure or excavation such as a pit, a wall, a drain, a floor |

IFA	Institute of Field Archaeologists
make-up	soil dumped to make up ground level before construction
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c AD 1500
modern	period from the 20th century onwards to the present
NGR	National Grid Reference
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	period from c 1500 to c 1900
Roman	the period from AD 43 to AD 410 approximately
small find	an interesting, precious, or unusual find (ie coin, brooch)
U/S	unstratified, ie no context
septaria	a local mudstone

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Appendix 1: AOD Heights

	T1	T2	T3	T4	T5
<i>AOD height of modern ground level at trench top</i>	32.91	32.80 * ₁	32.65* ₂	32.08	32.88
<i>AOD height of top of significant archaeology</i>	31.97	31.78	31.85	31.62	level not reached
<i>AOD height of limit of excavation</i>	31.89	30.48	31.49	30.87	31.38

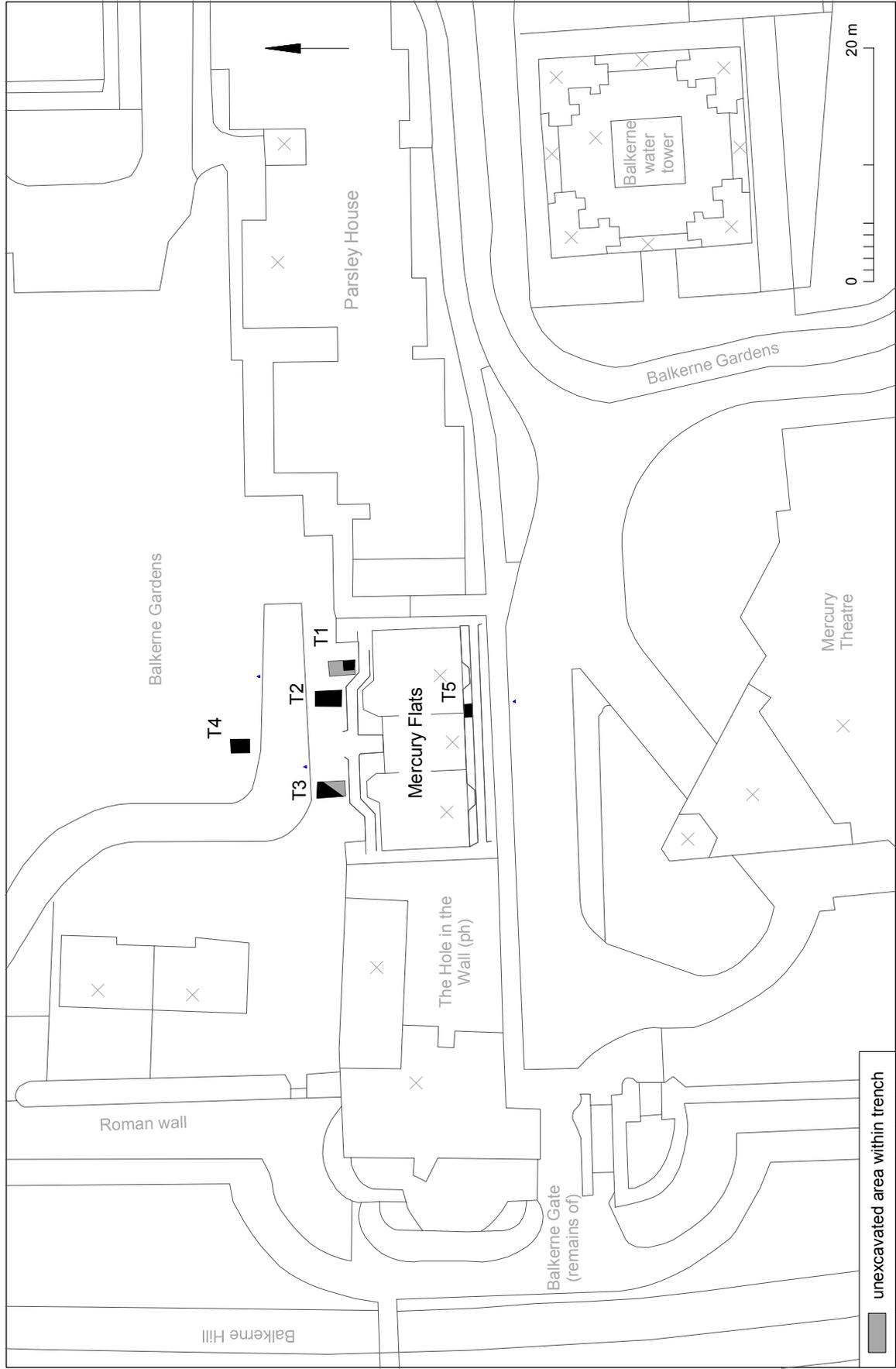
*₁ AOD height of modern ground level at trench top in T2 is an approximation as the ground level stepped down from concrete to flower bed and then the ground level of the flower bed slopes away to the north.

*₂ AOD height of modern ground level at trench top in T3 is an approximation as the ground level slopes away to the north.

Appendix 2: context data

Context Number	Trench Number	Description of Context	Date of Context	Find Numbers
F1	2, 3	robber trench	late 20th cent	
F2	2, 3	wall	post-medieval	
F3	2	robber trench	medieval	8, 12, 16, 21, 25
F4	3	tile wall	late Roman	
F5	4	electrical conduit	late 20th/early 21st century	19
F6	4	fill of F8	medieval?	20, 23, 28, 30
F7	3	construction cut of wall F4	late Roman	22, 29
F8	4	robber trench/pit	medieval?	34, 35, 36, 39
F9	2	wall foundation	Roman	47
F10		BECAME L28		38, 44, 48
F11	2	small cut through F9	Roman	
F12	4	edge of mortared structure - floor or wall	Roman	
L1	1	topsoil	modern	1, 31
L2	2	topsoil	modern	2
L3	3	topsoil	modern	3
L4	4	topsoil	modern	4, 15, 17, 18
L5	4	fill of F8	medieval?	5
L6	3	topsoil	modern/post-medieval	6
L7	3	soil dump	Roman	7, 10, 11, 13, 14, 26, 27
L8	2	topsoil	medieval/post-medieval	9
L9	2	soil dump	Roman	
L10	2	fill of F3	medieval	37
L11	2	fill of F3	medieval	
L12	2	fill of F3	medieval	
L13	2	fill of F3	medieval	
L14	2	clay floor	mid Roman	
L15	2	gravel layer	mid Roman	
L16	2	clay layer	early Roman	
L17	2	burnt patches (Boudican?) in L16	early Roman	
L18	1	topsoil	modern	32
L19	1	lower topsoil	post-medieval	33
L20	1	soil dump	Roman	
L21	4	soil dump	Roman	40, 43, 45
L22	2	gravel layer sealed by Roman foundation F9	early Roman	
L23	2	clay layer sealed by Roman foundation F9	early Roman	41
L24	2	clay layer sealed by Roman foundation F9	early Roman	
L25	5	topsoil	modern	42, 49
L26	4	soil dump	Roman	46
L27	5	lower topsoil	post-medieval/medieval	
L28	4	soil dump	Roman	
L29	4	soil dump	Roman	

Find number 24 - VOID



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Fig 1 Trench location plan.

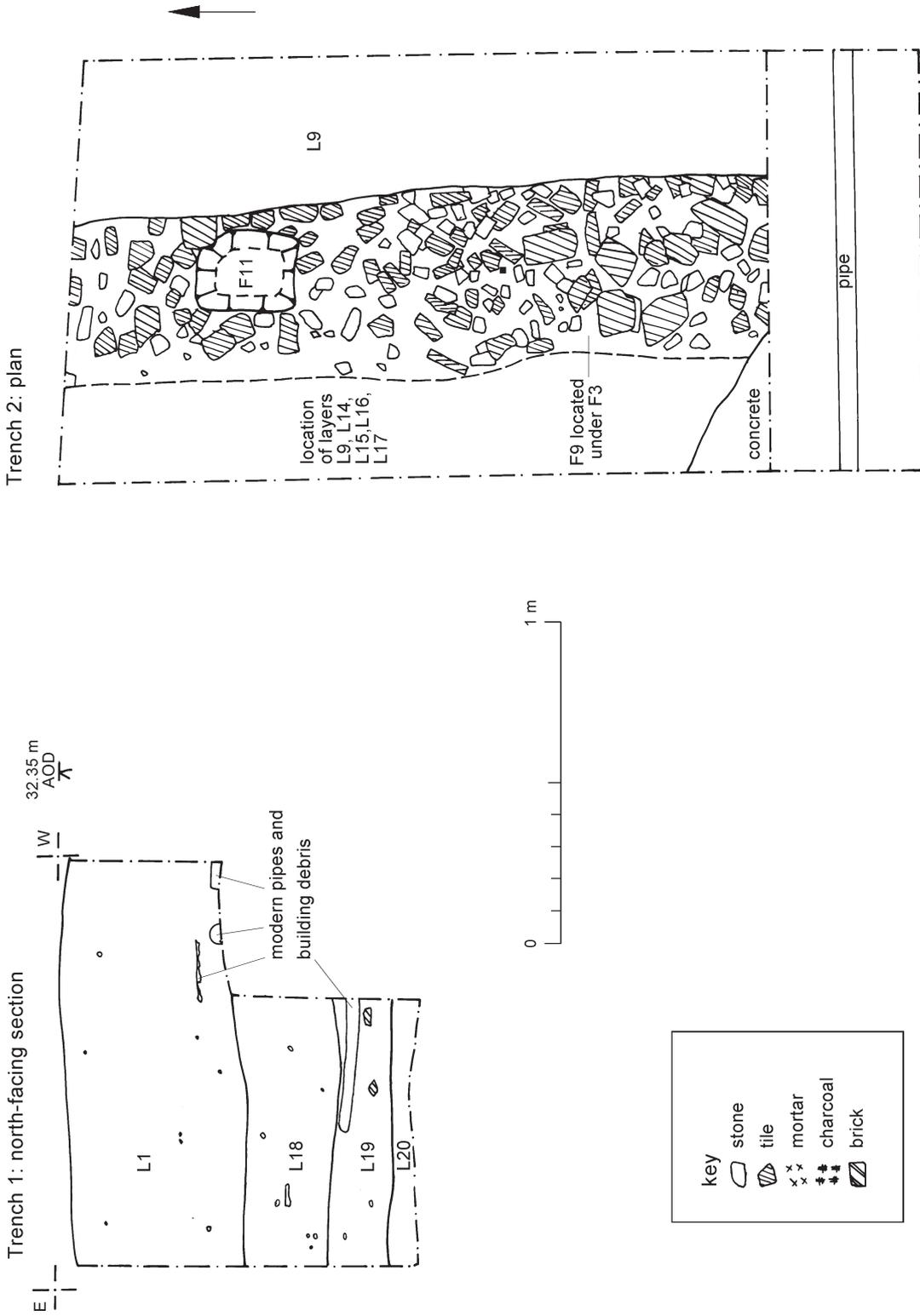


Fig 2 Trench 1: section and Trench 2: plan.

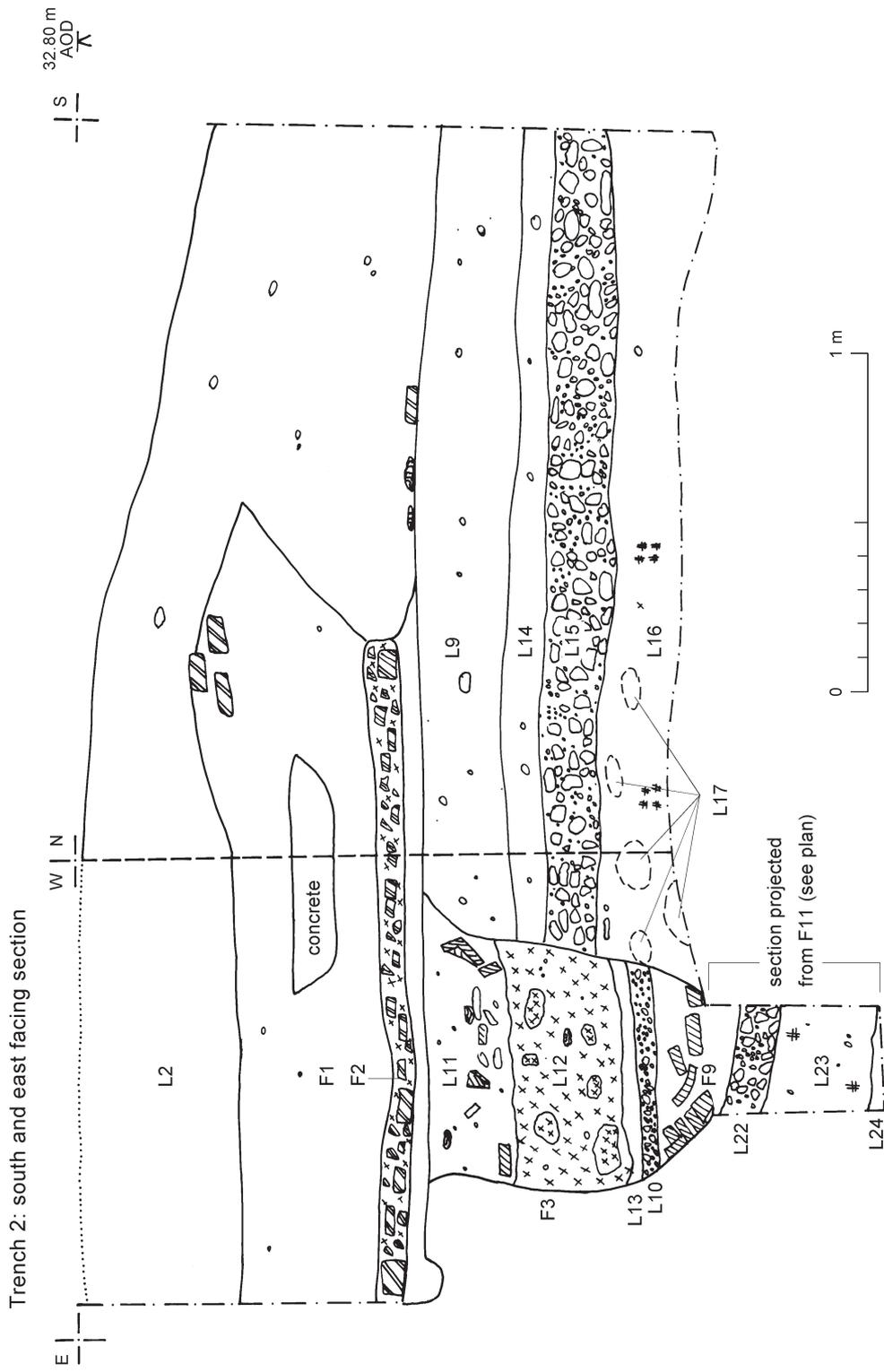


Fig 3 Trench 2: section.

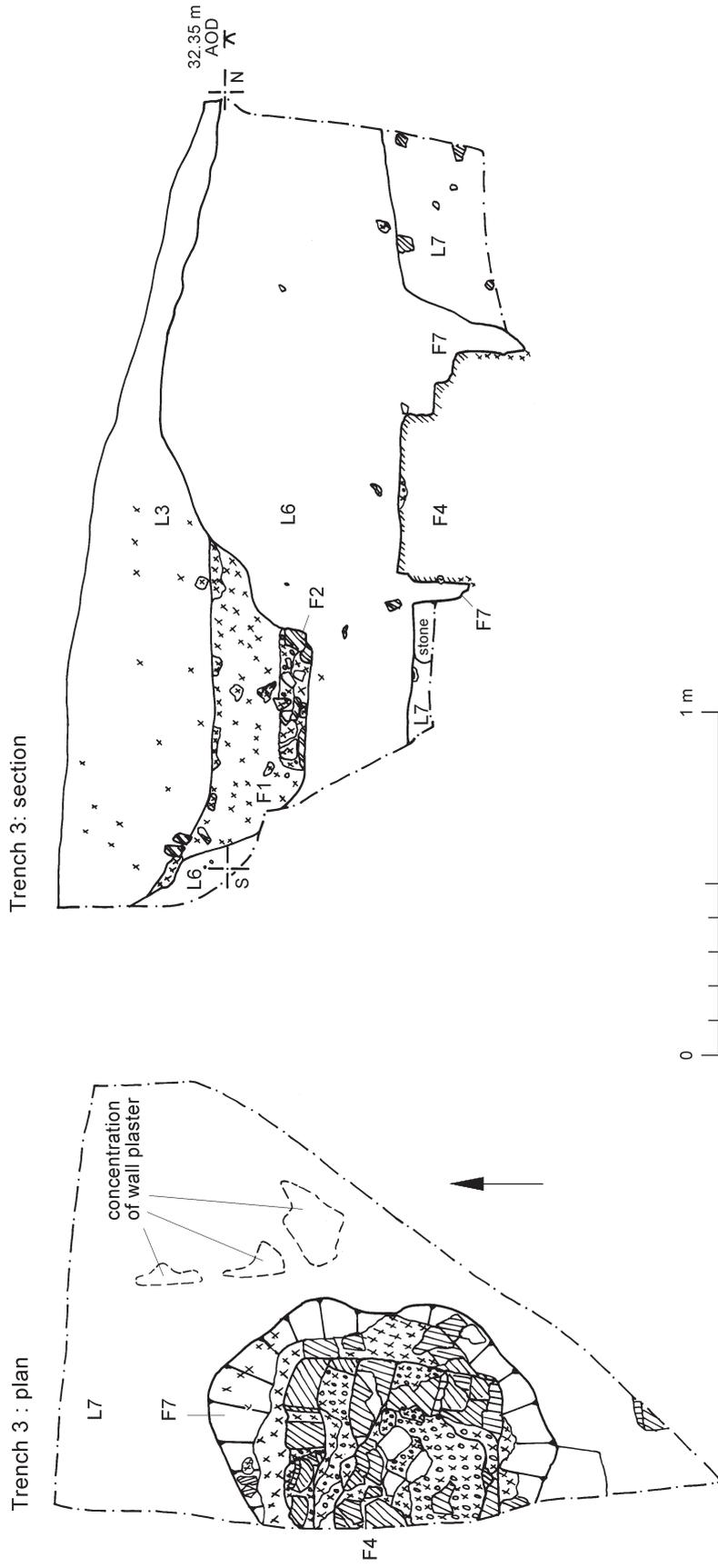
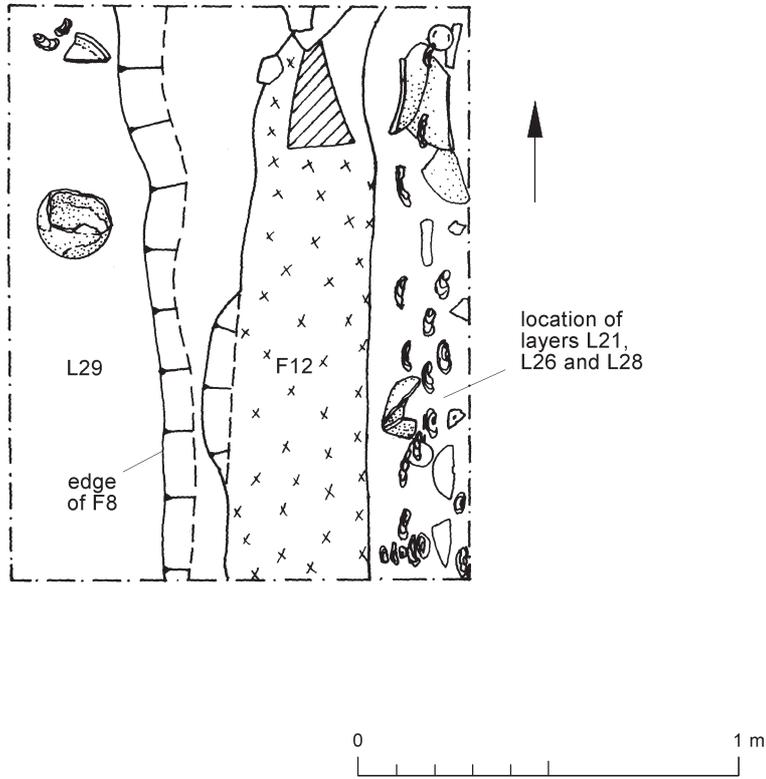


Fig 4 Trench 3: plan and section.

Trench 4: plan



Trench 4: south and west facing section

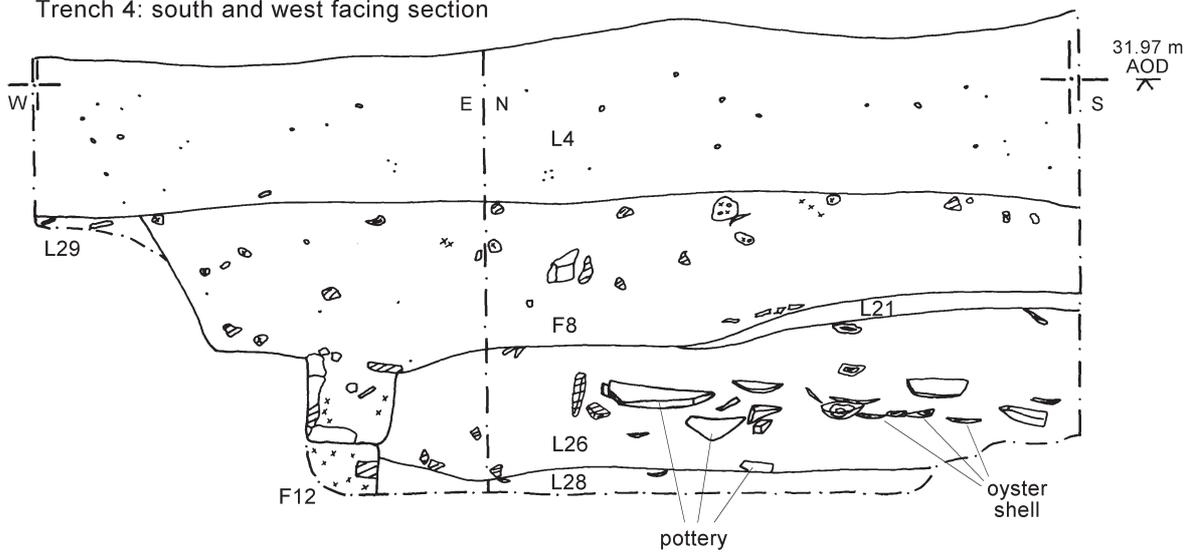
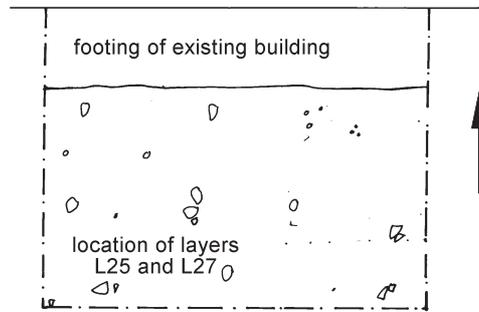


Fig 5 Trench 4: plan and section.

Trench 5: plan



Trench 5: east-facing section

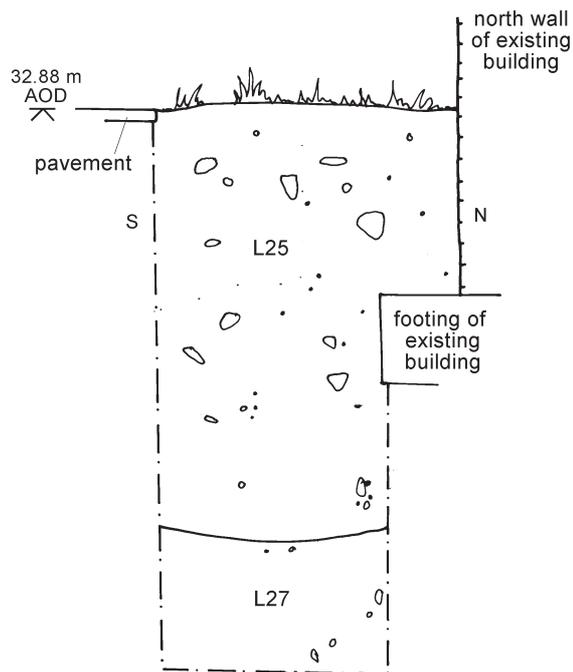


Fig 6 Trench 5: plan and section.

**Essex Historic Environment Record/
Essex Archaeology and History**

Summary sheet

Site address: Mercury Flats, Balkerne Gardens, Colchester, Essex	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester Borough
NGR: TL 9927 2530	Site code: Museum accession code 2005.87
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: July-August 2005	Size of area investigated: Five small trenches
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester Museums	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? uncertain	Related EHER nos:
Final report: CAT Report 331 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: Roman, medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>This site lies in insula 17 of the Roman town just a few metres away from the west gate (Balkerne Gate) that gave access to the main Roman route to London (Londinium) via Chelmsford (Caesaromagus).</i></p> <p><i>It is proposed to demolish an existing building, and rebuild on the same site. The archaeological evaluation had two main aims: first, to measure the position of the highest significant archaeological deposits in relation to modern ground level; second, to assess their date, importance, and condition.</i></p> <p><i>Five evaluation trenches were cut, four to the north of the present Mercury Flats, and one to the south (ie on the Mecury Theatre side). All five trenches showed that the highest significant deposits were Roman in date, and lay at (no higher than) 1.50m below modern ground on the south side of the site, and between 0.70-1.00m below modern ground on the north side of the site. In terms of absolute heights AOD, the top of the Roman deposits was below 31.38 on the south side of the site, and between 31.62m and 31.97m AOD on the north side.</i></p> <p><i>As well as a number of modern, post-medieval and medieval features and layers the archaeological remains exposed included two in situ Roman walls (one partially robbed), a Roman mortared structure (either a floor or a wall), several Roman floor and dump layers and a complete Roman pot probably buried as a foundation deposit. A large quantity of Roman material (brick and tile, pottery, animal bone, etc) was recovered from the site including three late Roman coins.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
Author of summary: Howard Brooks and Laura Pooley	Date of summary: August 2005