

## Report on an archaeological investigation: CAT Report 416

**Site address:** The Playground, Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex  
**Date of fieldwork:** 5th and 8th January 2007  
**NGR:** TL 99979 25368  
**CBCAO brief?:** No (verbal instruction only)  
**Plans attached?:** Yes (Fig 1)  
**Museum accession code:** 2007.33  
**CAT project code:** 07/1g

### Archaeological background

Castle Park is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Essex SAM no 1) due to the wealth of its Roman and medieval archaeology. Its main archaeological significance is the Roman temple dedicated to the Emperor Claudius, which survives in part below the Norman Castle. There have been many investigations on this site. For more information see *Roman Colchester* (Hull 1958) and *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester* (CAR 1). The trench reported here was dug within *insula* 15 of the Roman town. Within this *insula* (to the east of the playground) is a building once identified as a Roman Mithraic Temple but now thought to be a water works (Hull 1958).

### Results

Scheduled Monument Consent was obtained by Colchester Borough Council for a trench to be dug by CAT in the southern end of the playground, in order to ascertain the depth below ground level of the archaeological deposits.

The trench measured approximately 1.5m x 1m. The highest layer consisted of 100mm of wood chippings and 150mm of modern overburden. This sealed a modern geotextile membrane. The membrane was removed to expose a mixed mid-brown soil with patches of sand. This layer contained Roman brick and tile fragments but did not appear to be 'dark earth'. It is more likely to be topsoil. It was decided to excavate the eastern side of the trench down to natural. The mid-brown soil continued until natural sand was encountered at approximately 500mm below ground level. There did not appear to be an intervening layer between the topsoil and the natural. Two ditch or pit-like features cut the natural at approximately 500mm below ground level.

### Finds

Medieval and post-medieval pottery - 36g  
Roman pottery - 35g  
Peg tile - 65g  
Roman brick and tile fragments including 1 *tessera* - 890g  
2 pieces of greensand stone - 38g  
1 lump of slag  
2 Fe objects

### References

Hull, MR 1958, *Roman Colchester*. Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries Report XX  
CAR 1, 1981 *Aspects of Anglo-Saxon and Norman Colchester*. By P Crummy

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**Report date:** March 2007

**Distribution list:**

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**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

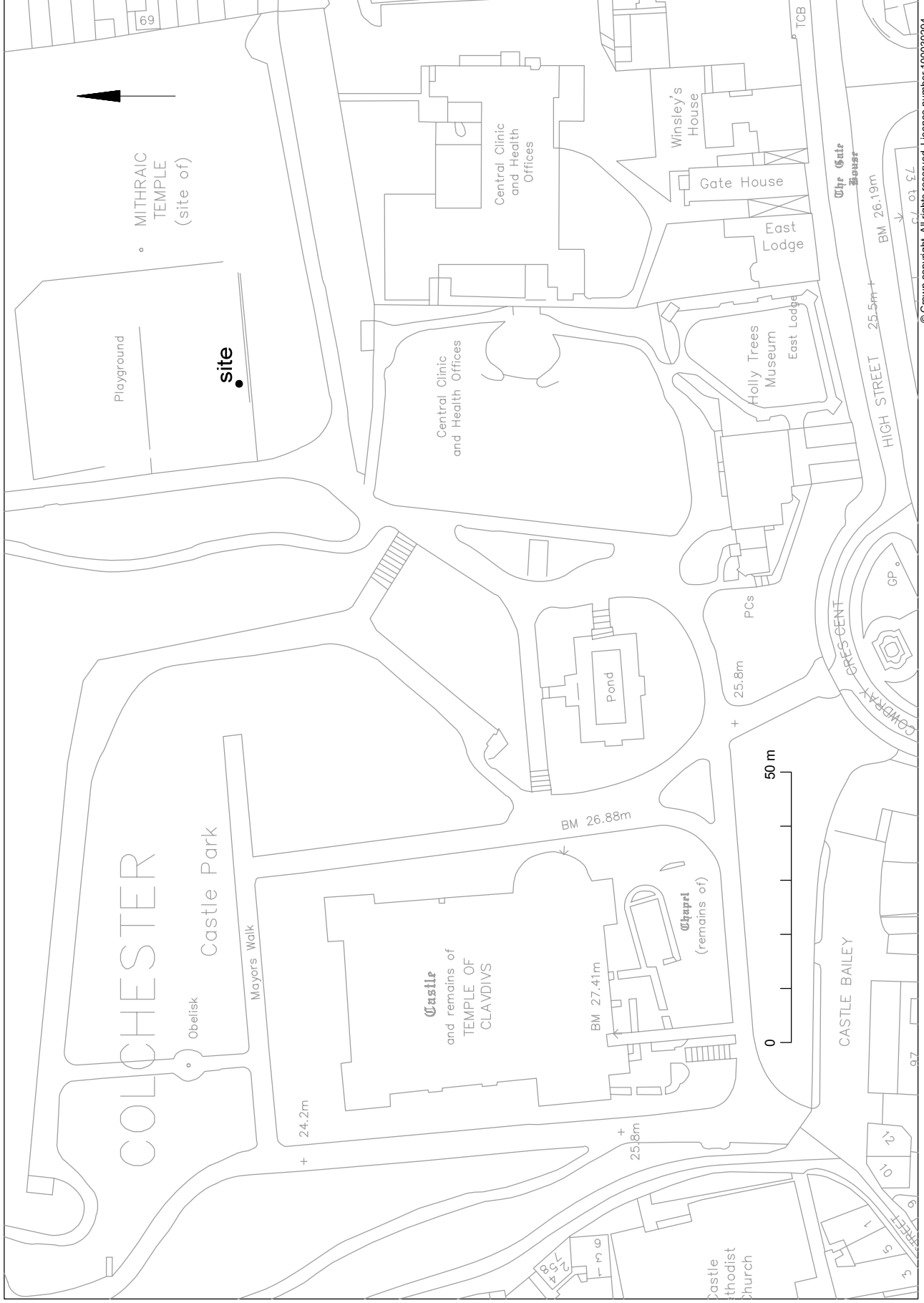
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Fig 1 Site location.

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

## Summary sheet

<b>Site address:</b> The Playground, Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 99979 25368	<b>Site code:</b> Museum Accession Code 2007.33
<b>Type of work:</b> <i>Excavation of a trial hole</i>	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> January 2007	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 1.5m x 1m
<b>Location of finds/curating museum:</b> Colchester Museum (Accession Code 2007.33)	<b>Funding source:</b> Colchester Borough Council
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related EHER nos:</b>
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 416	
<b>Periods represented:</b> Modern, post-medieval	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> Scheduled Monument Consent was obtained by Colchester Borough Council for a trench to be dug by CAT in the southern end of the playground, in order to ascertain the depth below ground level of the archaeological deposits.</p> <p>The trench measured approximately 1.5m x 1m. The highest layer consisted of 100mm of wood chippings and 150mm of modern overburden. This sealed a modern geotextile membrane. The membrane was removed to expose a mixed mid-brown soil with patches of sand. This layer contained Roman brick and tile fragments but did not appear to be 'dark earth'. It is more likely to be topsoil. It was decided to excavate the eastern side of the trench down to natural. The mid- brown soil continued until natural sand was encountered at approximately 500mm below ground level. There did not appear to be an intervening layer between the topsoil and the natural. Two ditch or pit-like features cut the natural at approximately 500mm below ground level.</p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> CAT Reports 102, 190, 286, 397	
<b>Author of summary:</b> Kate Orr	<b>Date of summary:</b> March 2007