

**An archaeological evaluation
at the Thatcher's Arms,
North Street, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex
October 2009**

**report prepared by
Howard Brooks and Ben Holloway**

**commissioned by
Paul Newbould Planning & Building Design Services
on behalf of
Thompson New Homes Ltd**

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1 Summary

The site lies on the northern edge of both the modern village of Tolleshunt D'Arcy and its historic medieval core.

A 10% evaluation by seventeen trial-trenches revealed evidence of medieval, post-medieval and modern activity concentrated on the street frontages of North Street and Chapel Road. Evidence of medieval activity took the form of two pits, and a gully. Most of the excavated features were connected with the post-medieval and modern phases of the Thatcher's Arms public house.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report on an archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at the former Thatcher's Arms public house, North Street, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex, commissioned by Paul Newbould Planning & Building Design Services on behalf of Thompson New Homes Ltd, and carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in October 2009. Post-excavation work was carried out in November 2009.

The Thatcher's Arms is located at the junction of North Street and Chapel Road, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex (centred on NGR TL 93100 12029). It comprises the former public house, its car park and its garden. Although the site is referred to for convenience as 'the Thatcher's Arms', it also includes the gardens of the two properties to the east (ie nos 33 and 31 Chapel Road, respectively). The total site area is approximately 3,000 m².

Planning background

A planning application was submitted in June 2009 for the demolition of nos 31 and 33 Chapel Road, partial demolition of the Thatcher's Arms building, change of use of the remainder of the Thatcher's Arms building to offices, and the erection of nine residential properties (planning application no MAL/09/00429). As the site lies within an area of archaeological potential, a full archaeological condition was recommended by the Essex County Council Historic Environment Management (HEM) team. This condition states:

'... No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the planning authority ...'

A brief detailing the required archaeological work (an evaluation by trial-trenching) was written by the HEM officer (Maria Medlycott: HEM 2009). All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) produced by CAT in response to the HEM team brief and agreed with the HEM team (CAT 2009).

In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with CAT's *Policies and procedures* (CAT 2008), Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums* (CIMS 2008), the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008b). The guidance contained in the documents *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (MoRPHE) and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) was also followed.

3 Archaeological and historical background

This section is based on records held by the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) and Medlycott 2003.

The Domesday Book records that in 1086 the *vill* of Tolleshunt D'Arcy comprised 63 households. Although most of these would have been scattered farms and

cottages, there was probably already a focus of settlement in the area of the modern village (EHER no 45182).

The Chapman and André map of 1777 clearly shows settlement along North Street and at the junction of Chapel Road. This indicates that evidence of that settlement probably survives below ground on the evaluation site. The area to the rear of the public house and including the gardens of nos 31 and 33 Chapel Road may have contained undisturbed archaeological evidence of domestic and industrial activities in the medieval and post-medieval periods.

Previous excavation within the village has demonstrated the existence of well-preserved archaeological deposits.

4 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to establish the character, extent, date, significance and condition of any archaeological remains and deposits likely to be affected by the redevelopment of the site.

Specific attention was paid to evidence of earlier settlement or activity, or of the medieval and post-medieval development of Tolleshunt D'Arcy.

5 Results of the evaluation (Figs 1-2)

An archaeological summary of each evaluation trench with a tabulation of context and finds-dating information follows below. Unless stated otherwise, these trenches were excavated through modern topsoil (L1) and an accumulated layer (L2), and into natural sands and gravels (L3).

Trenches 1-4 (T1-T4) were located in the overgrown back garden of no 31 Chapel Road.

Trench 1: summary

T1 was located at the southern end of the back garden of no 31 Chapel Road, and was also the southernmost evaluation trench on the site.

T1 contained two modern features: a pit (F1) and a grubbed-out foundation (F2). This may have been the foundation of a shed or an animal shelter used by previous owner to keep goats (developer, pers comm).

T1 – context and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F1	pit	pottery, brick, peg-tile	modern
F2	grubbed-out footing	-	modern

Trench 2: summary

T2, located at the southern end of the back garden of no 31 Chapel Road, contained no archaeological features.

Trench 3: summary

T3, located in the back garden of no 31 Chapel Road (and north of T2), contained a modern, backfilled ornamental pond (F3). The pond had been backfilled with a variety of materials including brick fragments, carpet tiles, and other garden and building debris. None of these were retained.

T3 – context and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F3	backfilled ornamental pond	brick fragments, carpet tiles (not retained)	modern

Trench 4: summary

T4, located in the back garden of no 31 Chapel Road (and north of T3) contained a modern backfilled pond (F4). It also contained modern domestic rubbish, including glass and coal fragments, probably associated with structures which occupied the site prior to the construction of the existing building; a terrace of 19th-century houses survives to the east of this property.

Trench 4 – contexts and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F4	backfilled pond	pottery, animal bone, glass	modern

T5-T8 were located in the overgrown back garden of no 33 Chapel Road (ie west of T1-T4 to the rear of no 31), in an area of overgrown scrub.

Trenches 5-7: summary

T5-T7 contained no archaeological features.

Trench 8: summary

Located at the south end of the back garden of no 33 Chapel Road (and south of T5-T7), T8 contained a shallow, modern pit (F5), which was probably a flowerbed.

T8 – context and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F5	pit (?flowerbed)	pottery	modern

T9-T16 were located in the garden and areas of hard-standing in the car-park associated with the Thatcher's Arms public house.

Trench 9: summary

T9, located at the southernmost end of the garden of the Thatcher's Arms public house, contained no archaeological features.

Trench 10: summary

Located in the garden of the Thatcher's Arms public house (and north of T9), T10 contained a medieval gully (F6). F6 had a shallow, V-shaped cut and was aligned approximately south-west to north-east. Although appearing to head towards T9 to the south and T11 to the north, it was not seen in either of those trenches.

T10 – context and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F6	gully	pottery	medieval

Trenches 11-13: summary

Located along the boundary between the Thatcher's Arms plot and the western boundary of no 33 Chapel Road, T11-T13 contained no archaeological features.

Trench 14: summary

Located near the northern frontage of the site and parallel to the south-east end-wall of the Thatcher's Arms building, T14 contained no significant archaeological features. However, it did reveal substantial modern disturbance. The north-eastern end of the trench was occupied by two large sewers (unnumbered), which may join up with those found in T17 (below).

A modern post-hole (F7) in the centre of the trench marked a former fence-line in the public house garden. There was also a gas-pipe (unnumbered) at the south-western end of T14.

T14 – context and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F7	post-hole	pottery	modern

Trench 15: summary

Located on the western edge of the site to the south-west of the Thatcher's Arms building, T15 was excavated through a layer of poor-quality tarmac hard-standing (L4) in the car-park. T15 contained four archaeological features: two medieval pits (F11, F12), a modern pit (F9), and a modern foundation (F10).

F9 was a shallow pit containing post-medieval pottery and clay tobacco-pipe fragments. It was cut by modern foundation F10. Both contexts may be associated with F13, an area of disturbed ground possibly connected with the demolition of an external structure. F11 and F12 were both small pits containing medieval pottery.

T15 – contexts and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F9	pit	pottery, clay pipe	modern
F10	foundation	brick (not retained)	modern
F11	pit	pottery, animal bone	medieval
F12	pit	pottery	medieval
F13	demolition debris	none	modern

Trench 16: summary

Located in the northernmost angle of the site close to the junction of North Street and Chapel Road, T16 was excavated through modern concrete slab with tarmac top (L4). It contained a post-medieval pit (F8) filled with substantial quantities of post-medieval pottery and building debris. This may have been dumped demolition debris.

T16 also contained two levelling horizons (L5, L6). L6 was a dump of material containing post-medieval pottery and brick which, like the material in the fill of F8, may be associated with the demolition of nearby buildings. L5 was a layer of coarse sand, possibly redeposited natural. It was of a consistent thickness throughout the trench and was sealed directly by concrete slab with tarmac top L4.

T16 – context and dating.

Context no	Context type	Dated finds	Phase
F8	pit	pottery	post-medieval

Trench 17: summary

Located in the front garden of no 31 Chapel Road, T17 contained no archaeological features, but the northern edge of the trench was occupied by a large sewer probably associated with that seen in T14 to the west.

6 Finds

6.1 The post-Roman pottery

by Howard Brooks

Description of pottery

Post-Roman pottery fabric descriptions are after *CAR 7*. Fabrics present include: Fabric 13 (early medieval sandy ware); Fabric 20 (medieval sandy grey ware);

Fabric 21 (sandy orange ware); Fabric 45c (Raeren stoneware); Fabric 40 (post-medieval red earthenware - PMRE); Fabric 48d (modern ironstone); and Fabric 51b (flowerpot). A list of fabrics by context is given in the catalogue below.

Catalogue of pottery

F1

Finds number 1

Fabric 40 (PMRE), 1 sherd, 2g.
Fabric 48d (modern ironstone), 2 sherds, 11g.
Fabric 51b (flowerpot), 1 sherd, 8g.

F5

Finds number 3

Fabric 48d (modern ironstone), 2 sherds, 7g.

F6

Finds number 4

Fabric 13 (early medieval sandy ware), 4 sherds, 27g.

Finds number 6

Fabric 20 (medieval sandy grey ware), 1 sherd, 4g.

F7

Finds number 7

Fabric 48d (modern ironstone), 1 sherd, 2g.

F9

Finds number 11

Fabric 45f (Westerwald stoneware), 1 sherd, 5g.
Fabric 40 (PMRE), from a large cistern or storage jar, 25cm in diameter, internal and external glaze; re-used in building rubble (mortar on break), 4 sherds, 1,732g.

F11

Finds number 12

Fabric 13 (early medieval sandy ware), 1 sherd, 6g.

F12

Finds number 13

Fabric 13 (early medieval sandy ware), 1 sherd, 26g.

L2

Finds number 5

Fabric 21 (sandy orange ware), 5 sherds from handle, 134g.

L6

Finds number 9

Fabric 40 (PMRE), 9 sherds from several vessels, 325g.
Fabric 45f (Westerwald stoneware), 1 sherd, 5g.

Comment

This small group (25 sherds, 1,969g) is of medieval, post-medieval, and modern date.

A group of medieval sherds from F6, F11 and F12 demonstrates some purely medieval activity here; no medieval sherds were residual in layer contexts.

The majority of the pottery is of post-medieval and later date. There is little of archaeological interest, except for the fragments of a large cistern from F9. Although mortar on the breaks of these fragments shows that they have been re-used, the cistern may originally have been associated with the public house.

6.2 Animal bone

by Adam Wightman

Seven fragments of animal bone were recovered from two features and one layer. Four of the fragments were recovered from modern contexts (L5, F4) and were in excellent condition. The other three fragments were recovered from a medieval pit (F11) and exhibited some surface decomposition. The modern *bos* (cattle) and large

mammal bone exhibited clear butchery marks, probably made using a heavy cleaver (rib and humerus from L5) and a saw (tibia from F4). The bone from the medieval pit F11 did not exhibit clear butchery marks, although the axial break down the *bos* radius shaft and the absence of the articulation may indicate that the bone was broken open to extract marrow. Another fragment from F11 appears to be a piece of humerus. It exhibits an area of strange growth which is most likely to have been caused by disease.

This very small sample represents domestic consumption/butchery waste and indicates the consumption of *bos* in the vicinity of the site in medieval/post-medieval and modern times.

6.3 Clay tobacco-pipe, glass, and ceramic building materials

by Howard Brooks

F1

Finds number 1

1 fragment from body of green glass beer bottle, 12g. 19th-20th century.

1 peg-tile fragment with circular peg hole, 17g.

1 pale brown floor brick; originally 30mm thick, but heavily worn on one side, 86g.

L5

Finds number 8

2 fragments from bodies of 2 green glass ?wine bottles, 34g. 18th-19th century.

L6

Finds number 9

Three stem fragments, 8g. Bore diameter 1.5mm. According to Clark (Clark 2001, 246), these date to the middle of the 19th century.

7 Discussion

With the exception of the modern features (F1-F5) in the back gardens of nos 31 and 33 Chapel Road, the majority of the excavated contexts were of post-medieval or modern date, and were concentrated around the rear of the Thatcher's Arms building.

Medieval activity on the site is confirmed to a limited extent by the discovery of two medieval pits and a gully (F11-F12, F6). The pits may represent domestic activity, presumably connected with an earlier building on the site of the Thatcher's Arms public house. The modern north-south property boundaries between no 33 Chapel Road and the Thatcher's Arms plot are on the same alignment as this gully (ie F6), indicating that they may have been laid out in the medieval period.

The other excavated features were connected with the public house. A patch of demolition debris and an old footing (F13, F10) may represent recent demolition of an outbuilding to the rear of the Thatcher's Arms public house.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Thompson New Homes for commissioning and funding the work, through Mr Paul Newbould. The project was managed and carried out by B Holloway, assisted by C Lister and A Wightman. Digital survey was by C Lister.

The project was monitored for the ECC HEM team by Maria Medlycott.

9 References

Note: all CAT reports, except DBAs (desk-based assessments) are available online at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk> in .pdf format.

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|------|------|---|
| CAR7 | 2000 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-1985</i> , by J Cotter |
| CAT | 2008 | <i>Policies and procedures</i> |

CAT	2009	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological trial-trenching at the Thatcher's Arms, North Street, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, September 2009</i>
CIMS	2008	<i>Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester and Ipswich Museums</i>
Clark, B	2001	'On dating from clay pipe stems found in Maldon', in <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 32 , 245-6
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14 , ed by D Gurney
HEM	2009	<i>Archaeological fieldwork at the Thatcher's Arms, North Street, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, August 2009</i>
IfA	2008a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
IfA	2008b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
MoRPHE	2006	<i>Management of research projects in the historic environment</i> , English Heritage
Medlycott, M	2003	<i>Tolleshunt D'Arcy. Historic settlement assessment</i> , ECC Planning Department

10 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Datum
axial	bones in the head and trunk of the body
<i>bos</i>	cow
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
context	specific location on an archaeological site, especially one where finds are made
ECC	Essex County Council
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by ECC
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
fill	the soil filling up a hole such as a pit or ditch
HEM	Historic Environment Management team of ECC
IfA	Institute for Field Archaeologists
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
Roman	the period from AD 43 to around AD 430

11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession code COLIM 2009.61.

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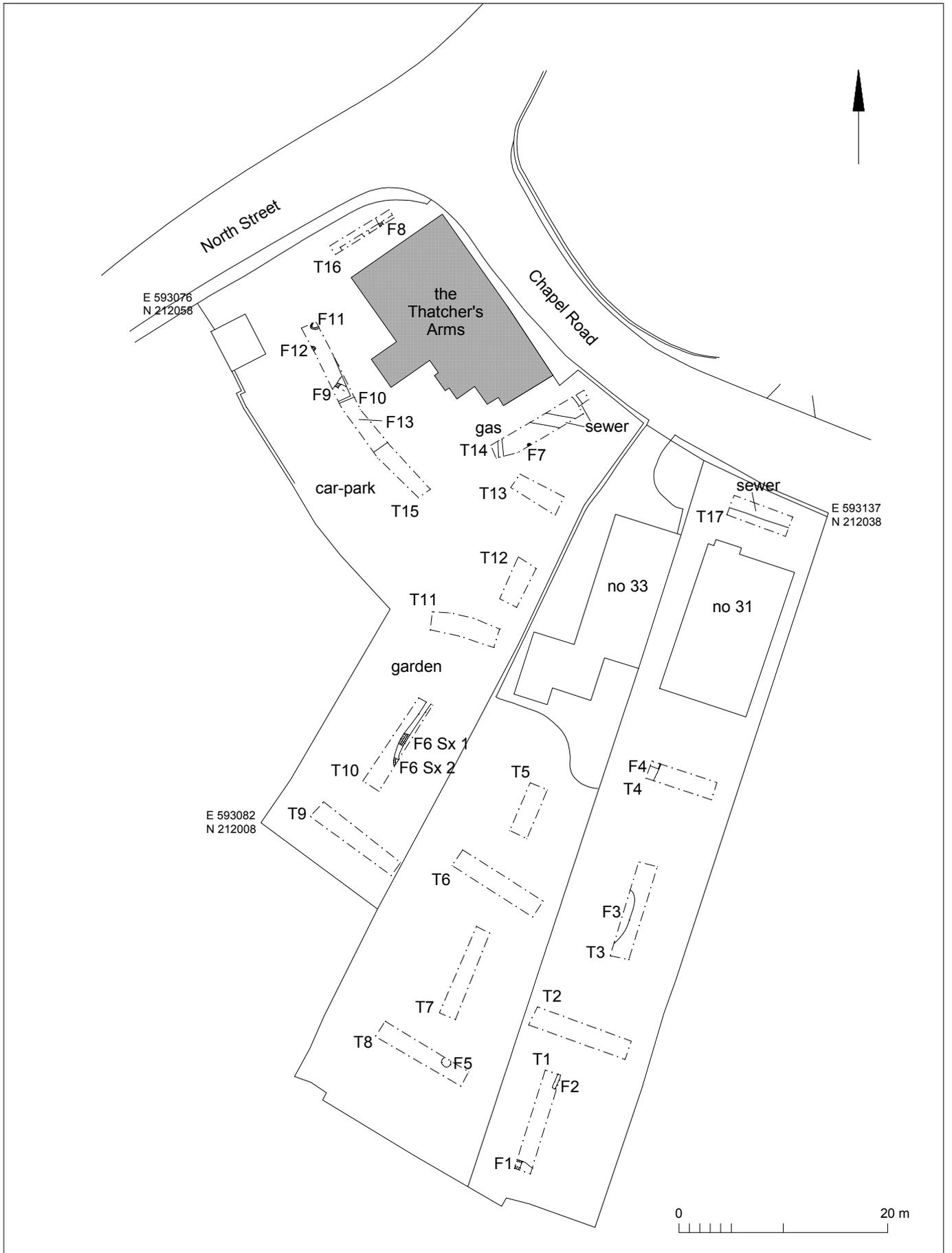
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Fig 1 Site plan.

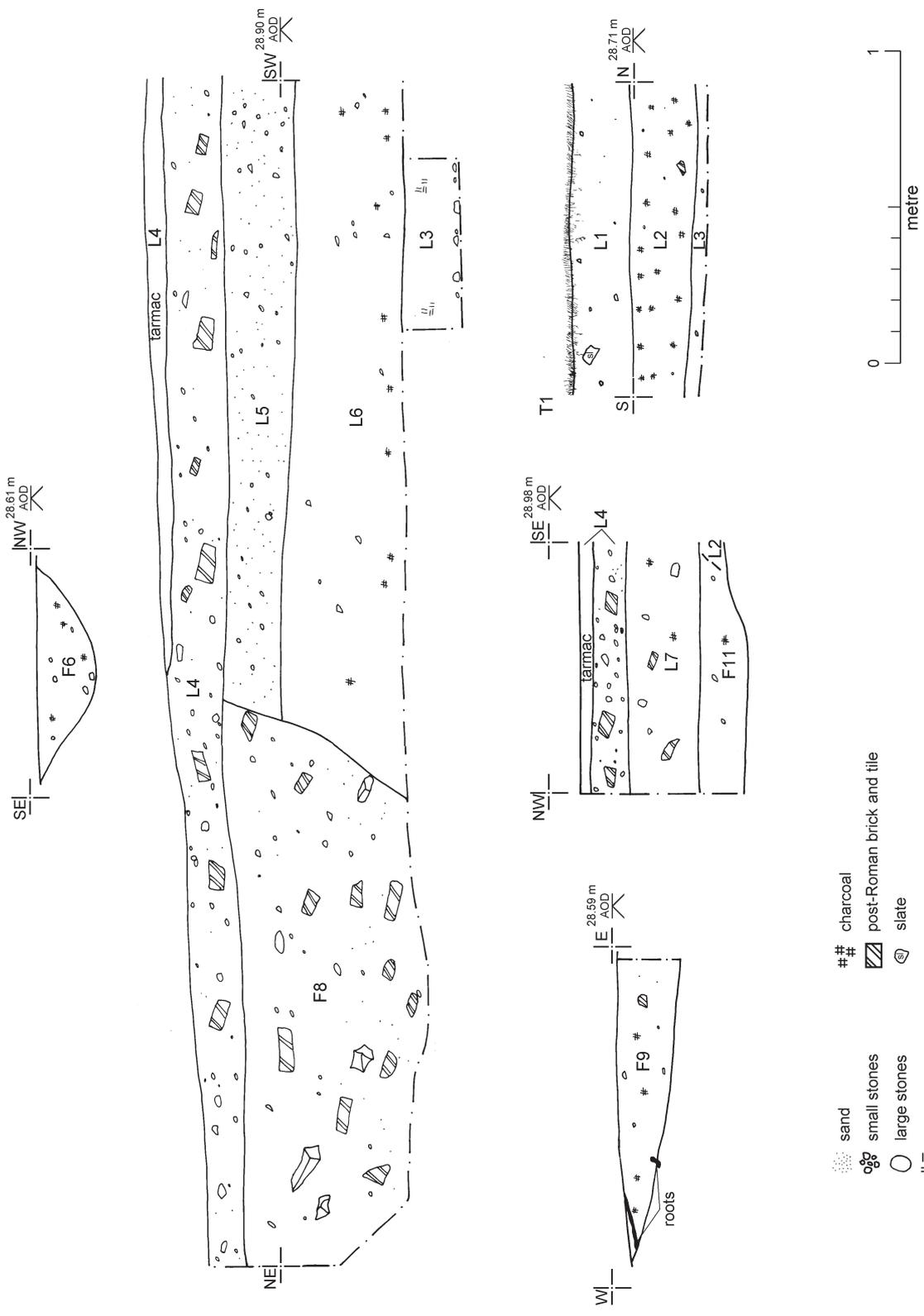


Fig 2 Sections: F6, F8, F9, F11; T1, representative section.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: The Thatcher's Arms, North Street, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex	
Parish: Tolleshunt D'Arcy	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 93100 12029 (c)	Site codes: CAT - 09/9b HEM - TDTA 09 Museum accession - COLIM 2009.61
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: October 2009	Size of area investigated: 190 m of trenching in a site of approximately 3,000 m ²
Location of curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER no: 45182
Final report: CAT Report 530 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: <i>The site lies on the northern edge of both the modern village of Tolleshunt D'Arcy and its historic medieval core.</i> <i>A 10% evaluation by seventeen trial-trenches revealed evidence of medieval, post-medieval and modern activity concentrated on the street frontages of North Street and Chapel Road. Evidence of medieval activity took the form of two pits, and a gully. Most of the excavated features were connected with the post-medieval and modern phases of the Thatcher's Arms public house.</i></p>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
Keywords: medieval, pits, gully, post-medieval, modern	Significance: *
Author of summary: Howard Brooks	Date of summary: November 2009