

**An archaeological watching brief
at Gosbecks Archaeological Park,
Colchester, Essex
March 2015**

**report prepared by
Donald Shimmin**

**on behalf of
Colchester Borough Council**

NGR: TL 9672 2286
CAT project ref.: 15/03j
Colchester and Ipswich Museums accession code: COLEM 2015.30



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CAT Report 822
July 2015

**Essex Historic Environment Record/
Essex Archaeology and History
CAT Report 822
Summary sheet**

Site address: Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester	
Parish: Shrub End	District: Colchester Borough
NGR: TL 9672 2286	Site codes: Museum accession code: COLEM 2015.30 CAT project code: 15/03j
Type of work: Watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 18th March 2015	Size of area investigated: 0.07 sq m
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: CBC
Further seasons anticipated? Not known	Related EHER and UAD nos: EHER 11644
Final report: CAT Report 822 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: post-Roman	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: An archaeological watching brief took place during the installation of an interpretation panel in Gosbecks Archaeological Park, which lies approximately 3 km south-west of the walled area of Colchester town centre. The panel is sited in the north-western corner of the park, close to the car park accessed off Maldon Road (Fig 1). The planning application number is 150573. The modern ground level in this area is at approximately 35 m above Ordnance Survey datum.</p> <p>The important Late Iron Age and Roman complex at Gosbecks (Scheduled Monument 1002180; EHER 11644) is known from aerial photographs, geophysical surveys, and excavations (Hull 1958, 259-71; <i>CAR 11</i>, 95-105; CAT Report 127). Archaeological remains at Gosbecks include: dykes, driveways and field systems; a large enclosure, possibly Cunobelin's farmstead; a small Roman fort of probable Claudian date; a Romano-British temple, surrounded by a monumental portico; a Roman theatre; a Roman water-main, possibly leading to a bath-house; and a road leading to the walled Roman town. Many of these remains are located within Gosbecks Archaeological Park.</p> <p>The post hole for the interpretation panel was dug approximately 260 mm square and 550 mm deep. The deposits encountered during the digging of the post hole were as follows. The upper 100 mm was turf and modern topsoil. This sealed a greyish-brown layer, approximately 250 mm thick, which was probably post-Roman ploughsoil. The lower 200 mm consisted of a yellowish-brown sandy deposit with abundant gravels, which was probably natural subsoil.</p> <p>Finds from the spoil included a small undiagnostic fragment of brick or tile and a small modern glass shard (not retained).</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Reports 62, 127 & 235	

Keywords: post-Roman ploughsoil	Significance: neg
Author of summary: Donald Shimmin	Date of summary: July 2015

References

- CAR 11 1995 *Colchester Archaeological Report 11: Camulodunum 2*, by C F C Hawkes and P Crummy
- CAT Report 127 2008 Excavations of Late Iron Age and Roman features and a Roman road north of Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester, Essex 1995-1996, CAT archive report, by Stephen Benfield
- Hull, M R 1958 *Roman Colchester*, RRCSAL, **20**

Acknowledgements

CAT is grateful to Colchester Borough Council for commissioning and funding the archaeological investigations, and in particular Philip Wise, CIMS Collections and Curatorial Manager. We would also like to thank the contractors, Whitnell, for their help on site. The work was monitored by Jess Tipper, CBC Archaeological Advisor.

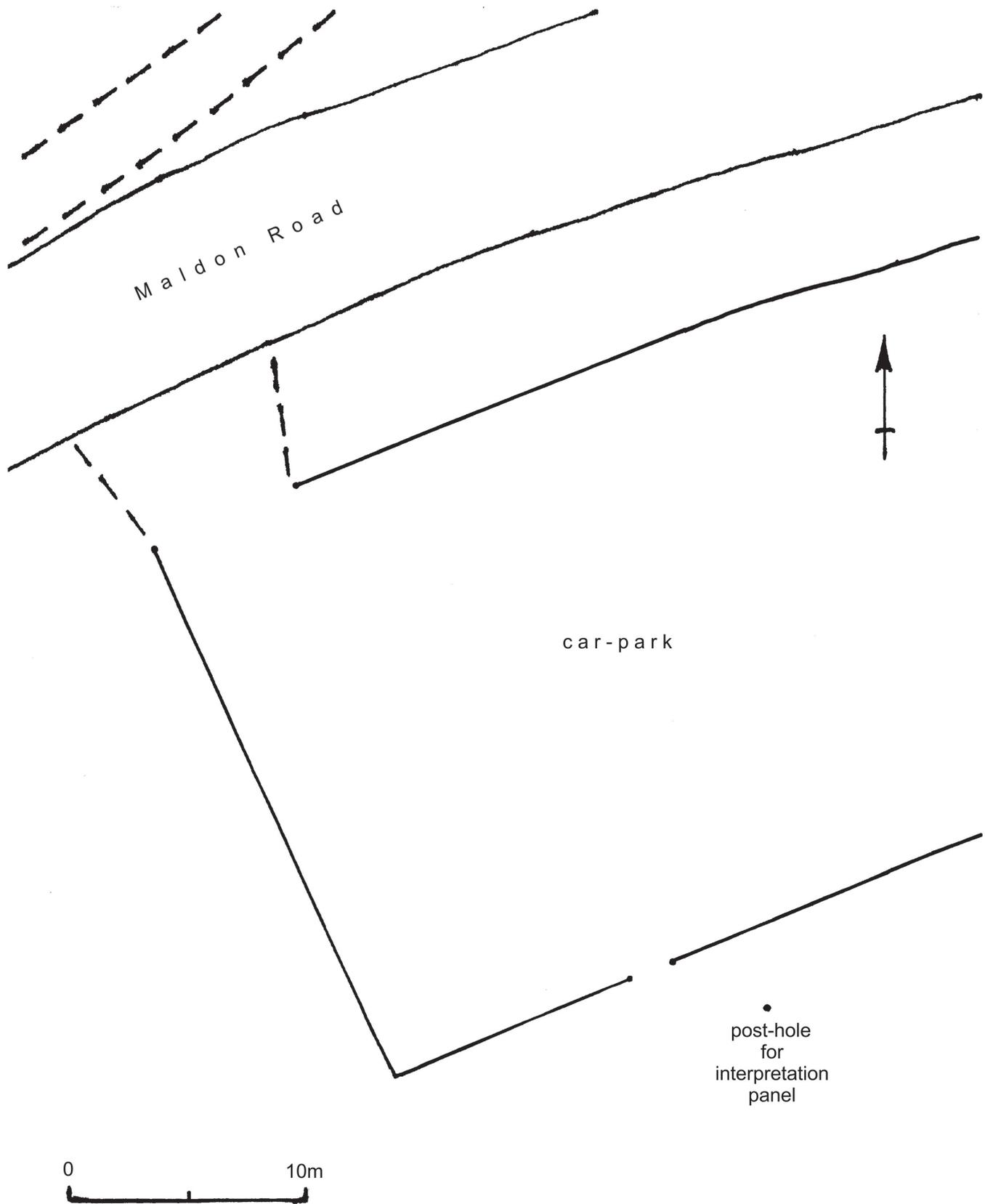


Fig 1 Plan showing the position of the interpretation panel.

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)
for continuous archaeological recording
at Gosbecks Archaeological Park,
Colchester, Essex

NGR: TL 0965 0227 (centre)

Planning reference: tba

Client: Colchester Borough Council

Agent: Philip Wise, Colchester & Ipswich Museums

Curating Museum: Colchester

Museum accession code: 2015.30

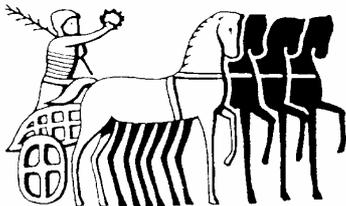
ECC Project code: n/a

CAT Project code: 15/03j

Site Manager: Don Shimmin

CBC Monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 16-03-2015



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Site Location and Description

The proposed development site lies to the south-west of Colchester town centre, within Gosbecks Archaeological Park. The site is centred at TL 0965 0227 (Fig 1).

Proposed work

The development comprises the installation of an interpretation panel.

Archaeological Background

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

The EHER shows that the proposed development lies in an area of known archaeological potential, namely within the Iron Age and Roman-British complex at Gosbecks Archaeological park (EHER 11644), one of the two centres of the Iron Age territorial oppidum and Romano-British town of Camulodunum, (Scheduled Monument 1002180).

The archaeological park covers an extensive area, and comprises nationally important archaeological remains of the late Iron Age and Roman periods. The site was the centre of Cunobelin's capital 'Camulodunum' (Cunobelin was the king of the Catuvellauni tribe). It was criss-crossed by Iron Age droveways and field systems. Camulodunum was defended on the western and southern sides by a system of dykes. The focal point of the settlement at Gosbecks was a large enclosure, thought to have been Cunobelin's farmstead. A small fort was constructed by the Roman army probably during the Claudian invasion; the site of this lies to the north-west of the park. Subsequently, the Romans built a religious complex at Gosbecks which included a Romano-British temple surrounded by a monumental portico, plus a theatre and a road leading to the walled Roman town. Knowledge of the site is based largely on an extensive aerial photographic record supported by some small excavations.

Planning Background

A planning application is in the process of being submitted to Colchester Borough Council for the proposed work (above: Planning reference to be arranged). As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and 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 and recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant, and approved by the planning authority."

Requirement for Work

The required archaeological work is for the monitoring of the groundworks undertaken by the building contractor. All groundworks will be carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (Brief for Continuous Archaeological Recording at Interpretation Panel, Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester, - CBC 2015).

It is anticipated that this work will comprise the removal of an existing panel and the installation of the replacement version.

Specific research aims are:

- To identify the nature of prehistoric and Roman activity on the site
- To preserve by record any archaeological remains that may be destroyed by the

development.

General Methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a-c)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- required standards of fieldwork in Colchester Borough (CM 2008a, b)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- the Project Brief issued by CBCAA (CBC 2015)

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to CBCAA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

A project or site code will be sought from the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the finds bags and boxes, and the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Written Scheme of Investigation

Prior to start of work, a Written Scheme of Investigation will be submitted to CBCAA. The WSI will describe in appropriate detail how the *Brief* from CBCAA will be implemented in fieldwork, post-excavation, reporting and publication stages.

The WSI shall be submitted to CBCAA, and fieldwork will not commence prior to approval of WSI from CBCAA.

The WSI will include a location plan of the development site showing area of proposed excavation or trench layout.

OASIS Record

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.

At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to CBCAA and EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows – one archaeologist to continually monitor the groundworks.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Don Shimmin.

Continuous archaeological recording (watching brief) methodology

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' ground reduction, footings work, service trench digging, and all related works to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction, which will be done with a toothless bucket should a mechanical excavator be employed.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be planned and recorded.

If any features or deposits uncovered are to be destroyed by the proposed development, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc).

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used to examine the site, spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

Site surveying

Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas and trenches will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphological and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough)

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer (Loddon) whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Val Fryer will do any processing and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF and/or the English Heritage Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking monolith samples.

Human remains

Policy depends on the age of the burial. If it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed.

If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and CBCAA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Allowance will be made in the budget and timetable to allow a human bone specialist to visit site to advise on recording and lifting human remains (inhumations), and for an experienced conservator to visit site and advise on recording and lifting of fragile grave goods.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

Post-excavation assessment

If a post-excavation assessment is required by CBCAA, it will normally be submitted within 2 months of the end of fieldwork, or as quickly as is reasonably practicable and at a time agreed with CBCAA.

Where archaeological results do not warrant a post-excavation assessment, preparation of the normal site report will begin. This is usually a PDF report available as hard copy, and also published on the CAT website and on the OASiS website.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

animal bones (small groups): Adam Wightman

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Nina Crummy.

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer (Loddon)

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey

Other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to CBCAA.

End of Fieldwork, and Report

Notification will be given to CBCAA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate report will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The draft report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork for approval by CBCAA.

Final report will normally be submitted to CBCAA as PDF, but printed copy can be provided on request.

The report will contain:

- The aims and methodology adopted in the course of the archaeological project
- Location plan of site and excavated area in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each trench / excavated area will be given 10 figure grid references.
- A section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Detailed archaeologists results including list of sites resulting from an EHER/UAD search, and historic maps to show changes and development of site, with a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.
- As Appendices, the OASIS entry and the WSI.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and attached as Appendix to the site report, which will be emailed as PDF to CBCAA.

Results will be published, to at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series

Archive Deposition

A site archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards given in CM 2008, ClfA 2014b, and MoRPHE (EH 2006).

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAA.

A Drawing Interchange File (.dxf) will be supplied to for integration in the UAD/HER. AutoCAD files will also exported and saved into a format that can be imported into MapInfo.

Monitoring

CBCAA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to CBCAA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with CBCAA prior to them being carried out.

CBCAA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of CBCAA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CBCAA	2015	<i>Brief for Continuous Archaeological Recording at Interpretation Panel, Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester, Essex</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological excavation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and</i>

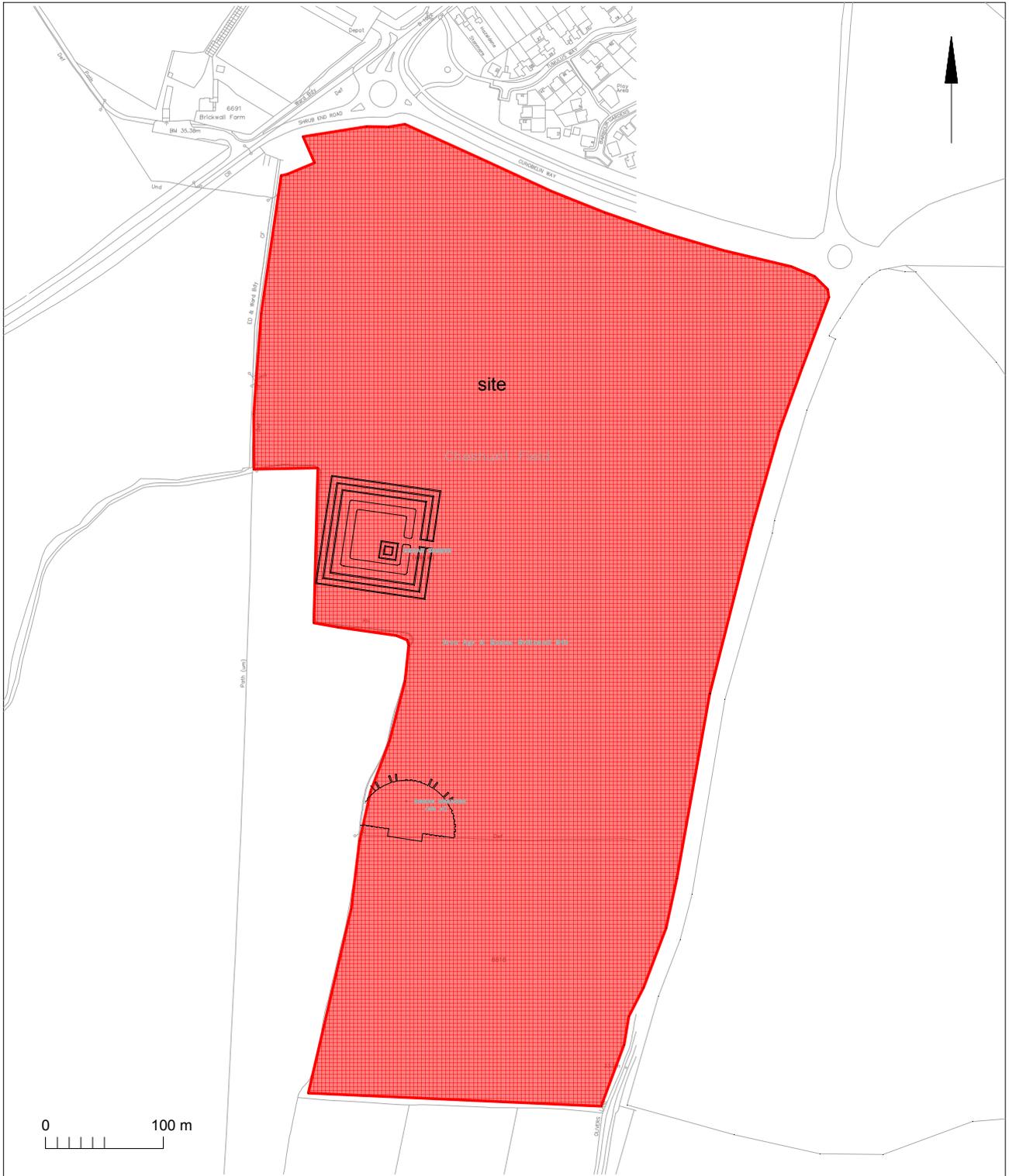
		<i>deposition of archaeological archives</i>
ClfA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
CM	2008	<i>Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester</i>
CM	2008	<i>Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)</i>

Chris Lister



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Fig 1 Site location.

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England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: colchest3-206867

Project details

Project name	Interpretation panel, Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester WB 2015
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief took place during the installation of an interpretation panel in Gosbecks Archaeological Park, which lies approximately 3 km south-west of the walled area of Colchester town centre. The panel is sited in the north-western corner of the park, close to the car park accessed off Maldon Road. Many of the important Late Iron Age and Roman remains at Gosbecks lie within the archaeological park. The post hole for the interpretation panel was dug approximately 260 mm square and 550 mm deep. The deposits encountered during the digging of the post hole were as follows. The upper 100 mm was turf and modern topsoil. This sealed a greyish-brown layer, approximately 250 mm thick, which was probably post-Roman ploughsoil. The lower 200 mm consisted of a yellowish-brown sandy deposit with abundant gravels, which was probably natural subsoil. Finds from the spoil included a small undiagnostic fragment of brick or tile and a small modern glass shard (not retained).
Project dates	Start: 18-03-2015 End: 18-03-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	15/03j - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM 2015.30 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument
Monument type	SETTLEMENT Late Iron Age
Monument type	SETTLEMENT Roman
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Prompt Planning condition

Project location

Country England
Site location ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Gosbecks Archaeological Park
Postcode CO3 4RN
Study area 0.07 Square metres
Site coordinates TL 9672 2286 51.8690510356 0.857760011406 51 52 08 N 000 51 27 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator Chris Lister
Project director/manager Philip Crummy
Project supervisor D Shimmin
Type of sponsor/funding body Borough Council

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID COLEM 2015.30
Digital Contents "other"
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Text"
Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID COLEM 2015.30
Paper Contents "other"
Paper Media available "Aerial Photograph","Map","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Plan","Report","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title An archaeological watching brief at Gosbecks Archaeological Park, Colchester, Essex: March 2015

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OASIS:

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