

# Archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park (Winter Wonderland), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ

November 2015-February 2016



by **Laura Pooley**

fieldwork by **Chris Lister**

commissioned by **Ian Baalham**  
on behalf of **Colchester Borough Council**

Planning reference: 151298

CAT project ref.: 15/10f

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Colchester Museum accession code: COLEM: 2016.24

UAD ref: ECC3719

OASIS reference: colchest3-244046



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**CAT Report 920**

February 2016

## Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Results	3
5	Finds	6
6	Discussion	6
7	Acknowledgements	6
8	References	6
9	Abbreviations and glossary	7
10	Contents of archive	7
11	Archive deposition	7

Figures after p8

Appendix 1 CAT WSI

Appendix 2 OASIS Summary

## List of photographs, figures and tables

Cover: general site shot

Photographs 1-2	North and east sides of Colchester Castle before construction work, looking W and S	3
Photographs 3-4	North side of Colchester Castle during and after the construction of the temporary flooring, looking W	3
Photographs 5-6	North and west sides of Colchester Castle with funfair and Christmas market chalets, looking W and S	4
Photographs 7-8	East side of Colchester Castle before construction work, looking W and NW	4
Photographs 9-10	East side of Colchester Castle during construction of raised floor for ice rink, coffee hut and skate exchange, looking SE	4
Photographs 11-12	East side of Colchester Castle with raised floor for ice rink and coffee hut/skate exchange marquee, looking NE and east side of Colchester Castle after removal of Winter Wonderland and raised floor, looking SE.	5
Photographs 13-14	East and north side of Colchester Castle after raised floor and temporary floor removed, looking N and NE	5
Photographs 15-16	North side of Colchester Castle with after temporary floor removed, looking NW and after rotivation of damaged grass, looking S	5
Photographs 17-18	North sides of Colchester Castle after rotivation of damaged grass and after grass had been reinstated, looking W	6

Fig 1 Site location

Fig 2 Plan showing layout of Winter Wonderland

## 1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out in Upper Castle Park to the north, east and west of Colchester Castle (a Scheduled Monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the set-up and removal of the 2015 Winter Wonderland. The site is in an area of the highest archaeological importance, surrounding the Norman Castle and the Roman Temple of Claudius in insula 22 of the Roman town. No significant archaeological horizons were damaged as they were buried too deeply (c 800mm deep) and temporary floors were constructed at or above ground level. Rotivation of part of the grassed area after removal of the temporary flooring did not penetrate below topsoil.

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park, Colchester, Essex which was carried out between November 2015-February 2016. The work was commissioned by Ian Baalham on behalf of Colchester Borough Council in advance of the construction of the 2015 Winter Wonderland and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT). The Winter Wonderland was located on the north, east and west sides of Colchester Castle.

In response to consultation with Colchester Borough Council Planning Services (CBCPS), Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor Jess Tipper advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with paragraphs 128, 129 and 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCPS 2015), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with CBCPS (CAT 2015).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), and also on the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) created by Colchester Borough Council, and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The monitoring site is located in Upper Castle Park to the south of Colchester Castle Museum and in an area of outstanding archaeological importance. It is within the Roman town, within the precincts of the Temple of Claudius, and within the grounds of the Norman Castle<sup>1</sup>. The well-published archaeological background (see, for example, Hull 1958, Crummy 1997) need not be repeated here, but it will be useful to summarise the more relevant sites (below) by referring to the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database (UAD).

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<sup>1</sup> The site is a Scheduled Monument (EX 1, HA 1002217). SAM was applied for and granted [Case No. S00114732]

### **The temple of Claudius, and its precinct** (UAD MONuments 785, 713).

The Temple of Claudius, Insula 22. Founded in the AD50's (some debate whether it would have been built before or after the death of Claudius in AD54). The temple served as the centre of the Imperial cult in the province and dominated the eastern half of the city. It was surrounded by a large precinct. Much of the vaulted podium base of the temple has been preserved below Colchester castle, although none of the superstructure has survived. The base provides a clear indication of the scale of the building and based on the principles of Roman architect Vitruvius the building would have been over 20m high. The podium measures 32 x 23.5m.

### **The Precinct and monuments within it** (UAD MON 713)

A large walled precinct belonging to the Roman Temple of Claudius situated off the modern High Street and within the Castle Park. The current site is only 30m north of the northern edge of the southern precinct wall.

The arcade probably continued to stand until, in C11th it was demolished to provide material for the Norman castle and the foundation of the outer rampart. A watching brief during the excavation of trenches for an extension to NW corner of the Conservative Club revealed a N-S wall foundation (ELM1046) constructed mainly of mortared septaria with occasional tile fragments. To the east of the foundation was a thick clay loam deposit assumed to be makeup associated with the wall. The wall and clay deposit appear to be Roman and perhaps marks the W boundary of the temple precinct. The eastern part of the clayey deposit was possibly cut by the castle bailey ditch.

An abortive excavation (EVT3091) was undertaken by the Morant Club in search of the castle ditch and forum wall in 1921. A single trench was cut northwards from the north kerb of High Street, on the site of the War Memorial, opposite All Saints Church. This revealed a wall which Hull believed to be Roman.

### **The Norman Castle and its bailey ramparts** (UAD MONs 679, 764).

MON 679 Norman ditch around the Castle bailey rampart, constructed in 11th century.

Antiquarian Philip Morant says *'The (castle) bailey was formerly encompassed on the south and west sides by a strong wall, in which were two gates. That on the south was the chief. This wall was taken down by Robt. Norfolk Esq. who erected in the room of it a range of houses now standing in the High Street. The west wall reached as far as the east side of St Helen's Lane. On the north and east sides the castle was secured by a deep ditch and strong rampart of earth... This rampart is thrown upon a wall that formerly encompassed either the Castle or Palace of Coel, on the site whereof the Castle is built; the buttress and other parts of which wall have lately been discovered'*. See also EVT3068, EVT3057, EVT3105 to do.

During the excavation of a pipe trench in 1983 (EVT3015), the inner bailey ditch was traced for a total of just over 100 metres. During excavations in 1950 (EVT3121) the ditch inner edge was located where it had removed the metalling of two Roman streets.

In September 1964, demolition of 5 Maidenburgh Street prior to use of the site as a car park made an area of 38mx 10 m available for excavation, which was undertaken for 6 weeks in September - October 1964 under the direction of BRK Niblett (Dunnett) for the Colchester Excavation Committee. Two trenches were cut across the line of the Norman rampart which crossed the east end of the site. Beneath 0.6 m of modern rubble and garden soil a series of tips of sand, gravel and Roman tile and mortar. The maximum thickness of the deposit was 0.6 m which represents the remnant of the rampart. Immediately in front of the rampart on the edge of the bailey ditch was an inhumation burial, possibly of Saxon date. Several loose bones indicated the possibility of other burials. Eastern lip of Norman bailey ditch was located, immediately in front of rampart.

In 1969 a warehouse at the S end of Ryegate Rd was demolished prior to the construction of the Methodist Church. Four trenches were excavated to a depth of 2 m, located so as not to affect the foundations. The east (inner) lip of the bailey trench was revealed as was the western edge. Part of the bailey rampart was also excavated. The lower levels of the rampart remained intact to a depth of up to 1 m.

### **Norman bailey rampart surrounding Colchester Castle** (UAD MON 764)

Trenches were dug into the north side of the rampart in 1950 (EVT3121). The Norman bank was found to have been built over structural remains walls of the Roman Temple Precinct (MON713).

These remains were covered by a thick level of debris containing occupation material and broken bricks/tile. It was on a layer of chalk which sealed these remains, that the rampart was built. The excavations also showed that the Norman bank had been added to in later medieval times.

#### Winter Wonderland assessments

Two archaeological assessments were carried out on the potential impact of the Winter Wonderland on the buried and standing remains in Castle Park (CAT Report 838 and 850). They showed that the significant archaeological remains were too deeply-buried to be affected by the surface-building of the proposed Winter Wonderland. They also highlighted that the only place where standing remains might be impacted upon was the southeastern corner of the ice rink and the eastern side of the skate exchange which would be close to the Norman rampart.

## 4 Results (Fig 2)

The 2015 Winter Wonderland included the construction of an ice-skating rink with coffee hut and skate exchange, a small stage, fairground rides, catering facilities and a Christmas market. These were located around the north, east and west sides of Colchester Castle. The set-up and removal of the Winter Wonderland was continuously monitored by CAT staff.

Heavy-duty ground protection (temporary flooring) was laid on top of the grass along the north and east sides of the Castle. The food stalls, funfair and stage were constructed on top of this floor. The chalets/huts for the Christmas market were placed over brackets at ground level on the west side of the Castle. None of the works penetrated below ground level.



**Photographs 1-2** North and east sides of Colchester Castle before construction work, looking W and S



**Photographs 3-4** North side of Colchester Castle during and after construction of the temporary flooring, looking W





**Photographs 5-6** North and west sides of Colchester Castle with funfair and Christmas market chalets, looking W and S

On the east side of the Castle the ice rink, coffee hut and skate exchange were constructed on a floor raised above ground level. None of the works penetrated ground level.



**Photographs 7-8** East side of Colchester Castle before construction work, looking W and NW



**Photographs 9-10** East side of Colchester Castle during construction of raised floor for ice rink, coffee hut and skate exchange, looking SE



**Photograph 11-12** East side of Colchester Castle with raised floor for ice rink and coffee hut/skate exchange marquee, looking NE and east side of Colchester Castle after removal of Winter Wonderland and raised floor, looking SE.



**Photograph 13-14** East and north side of Colchester Castle after raised floor and temporary floor removed, looking N and NE



**Photographs 15-16** North side of Colchester Castle with after temporary floor removed, looking NW and after rotivation of damaged grass, looking S

At the end of the Winter Wonderland the temporary flooring was removed and some of the grass was rotivated through c 100mm of topsoil ready for the turf to be reinstated.





**Photographs 17-18** North sides of Colchester Castle after rotivation of damaged grass and after grass had been reinstated, looking W

## 5 Finds

No finds of archaeological significance were identified.

## 6 Discussion

Previous assessment (based on excavations in Castle Park) concluded that archaeological remains survived at least 800mm below modern ground level. This meant that no significant archaeological horizons were damaged during the Winter Wonderland as they were buried too deeply and the temporary floors were constructed at or above ground level. Subsequent rotivation of the damaged grass did not penetrate below topsoil. Standing remains, like the Norman rampart, also showed no impact as a direct result of the Winter Wonderland.

## 7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Colchester Borough Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed and carried out by C Lister. Site plans were prepared by CL. The project was monitored for CBCPS by Jess Tipper.

## 8 References

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

CAT	2014	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) - Monitoring of set up and removal of Winter Wonderland, Colchester Castle Park</i>
CBCAA	2015	<i>Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording at Castle Park, High Street, Colchester</i> by J Tipper
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological excavation</i>
CifA	2014b	<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 &amp; Ipswich Museums</i>
Crummy, P	1997	<i>City of Victory: the story of Colchester – Britain's' first Roman town</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>



Hull, M.R.	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> RRC SAL 20
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)

## 9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CBM	brick/tile (ceramic building material)
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to c AD 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 10 Contents of archive

**Finds:** none retained

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 920)

CBCPS Evaluation Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, Architectural plans, Attendance register, Risk assessment

## 11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museum under accession code: COLEM 2016.24.

**Distribution list**

Ian Baalham, Colchester Borough Council  
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services  
Essex Historic Environment Record



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Checked by: Howard Brooks

Date: 26/02/2016

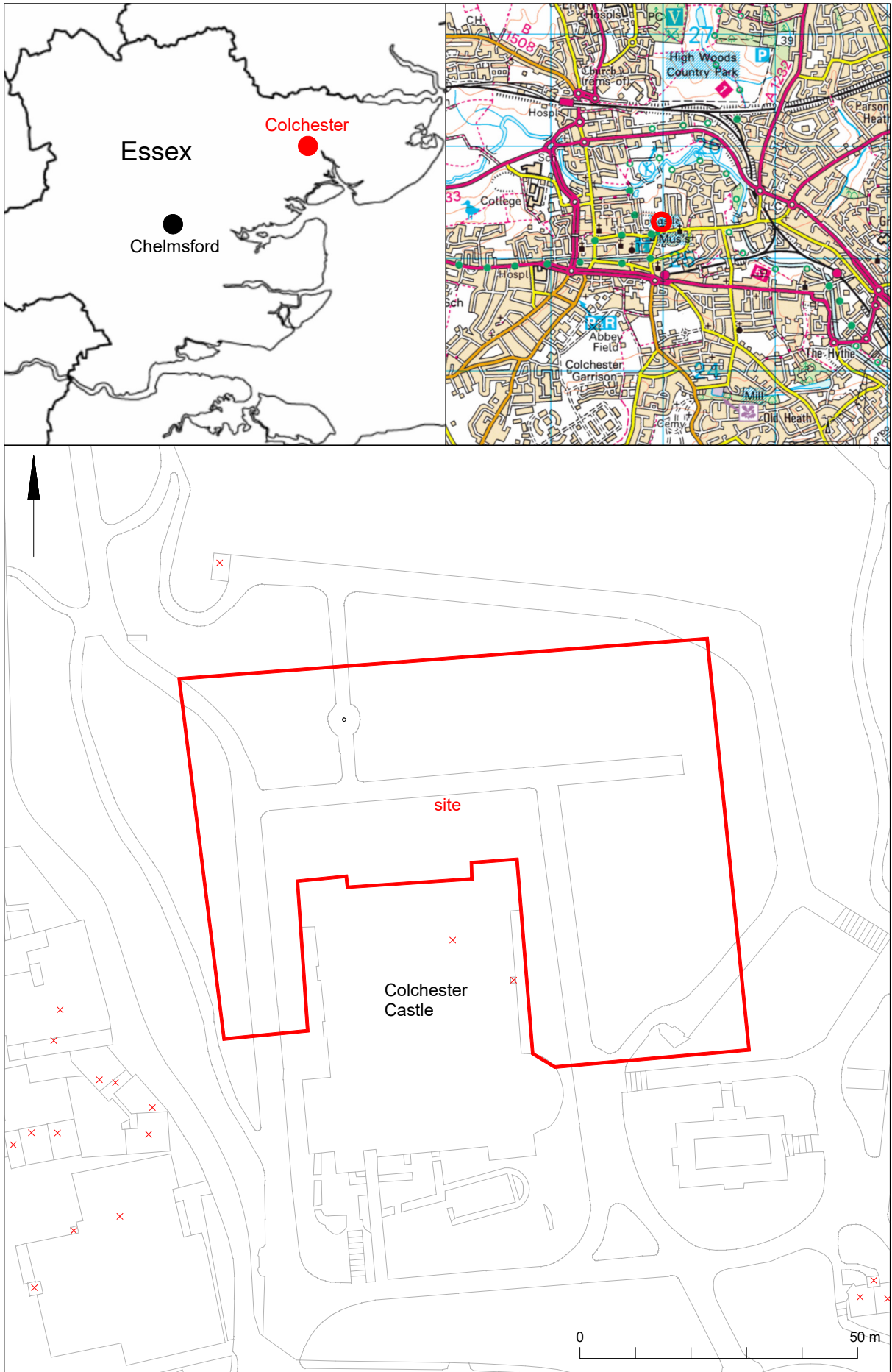
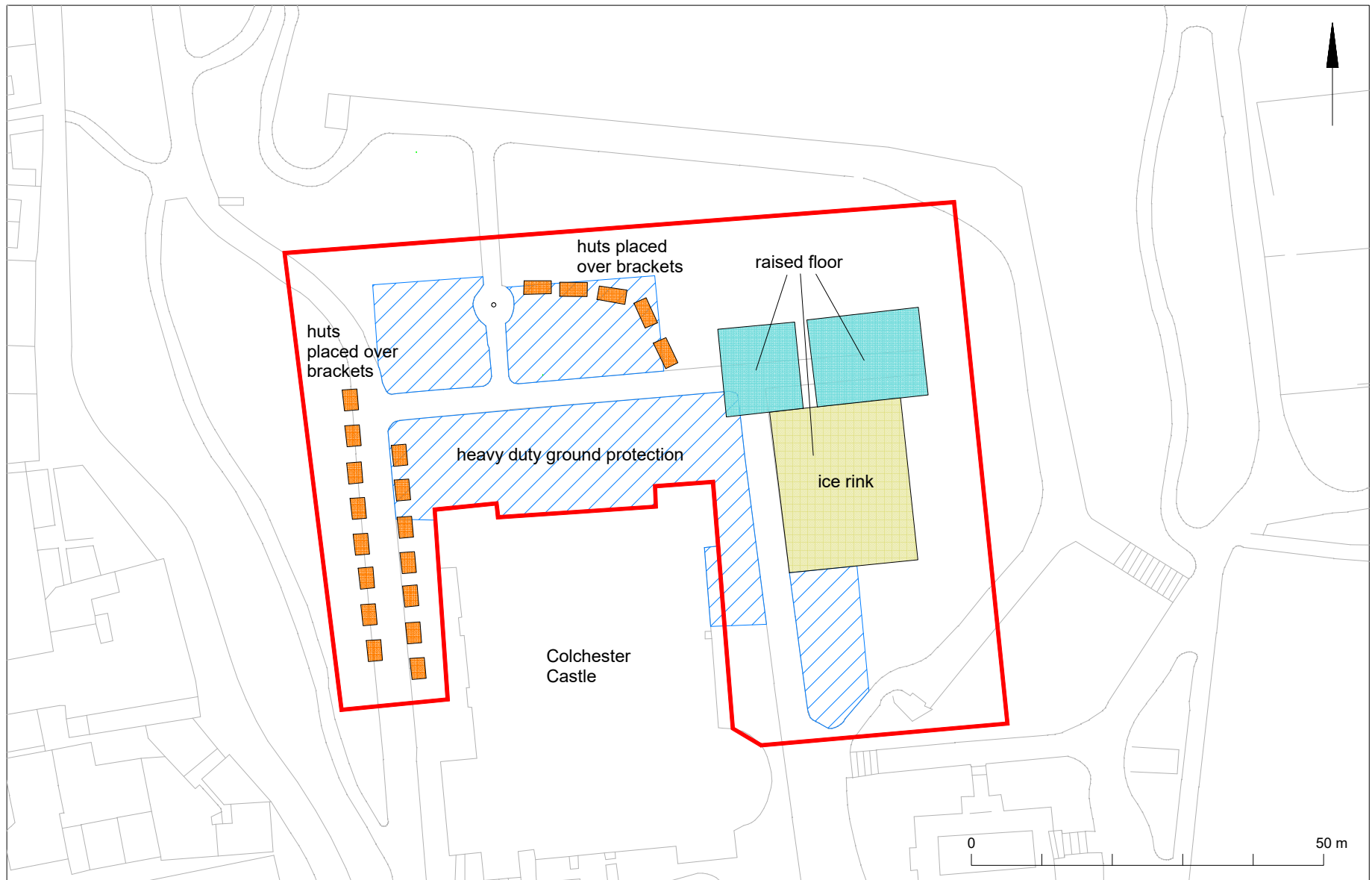


Fig 1 Site location.



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Fig 2 Plan showing layout of Winter Wonderland.



# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 99870 25334 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project ref.: 15/10f UAD ref: ECC3719 OASIS ref: colchest3-244046
<b>Type of work:</b> Watching brief	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> November 2015-February 2016	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> Approximately 3630m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2015.24	<b>Funding source:</b> Colchester Borough Council
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> no	<b>Related UAD/SMR number:</b>
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 920	
<b>Periods represented:</b> -	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out in Upper Castle Park to the north, east and west of Colchester Castle (a Scheduled Monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the set-up and removal of the 2015 Winter Wonderland. The site is in an area of the highest archaeological importance, surrounding the Norman Castle and the Roman Temple of Claudius in insula 22 of the Roman town. No significant archaeological horizons were damaged as they were buried too deeply (c 800mm deep) and temporary floors were constructed at or above ground level. Rotivation of part of the grassed area after removal of the temporary flooring did not penetrate below topsoil.	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> -	
<b>CBC monitor:</b> Jess Tipper	
<b>Keywords:</b> -	<b>Significance:</b> -
<b>Author of summary:</b> Laura Pooley	<b>Date of summary:</b> February 2016



## Written Scheme of Investigation

### Monitoring of set up and removal of Winter Wonderland, Colchester Castle Park

#### Aim

- To continuously monitor the set-up and removal of the Winter Wonderland
- To record, as appropriate, any impact of Winter Wonderland during its period of use.
- Ensure that the agreed method statement is adhered to in full, and does not damage the Scheduled Monument.
- To record the impact of the removal of Winter Wonderland facilities in January 2016, and any remedial/re-instatement works.
- To record of the impact of Winter wonderland on the keep, the earthworks and the buried archaeological remains.
- To report any damage to CBC and Historic England immediately, so that amendments can be made to the brief if required.

#### Method

CAT Staff will be in attendance at all times when set-up and dismantling may have an effect on the buried remains. It may be anticipated that this will be more continuous in the first day or two of setup, and the last day or two of removal.

#### Work will be compliant with:

- the conditions laid down in the Scheduled Monument Consent from Historic England (HE 2015).
- the condition of *Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* (CBC 2015)

#### Particular attention will be paid to:

- negotiating with CBC and the contractors, to ensure programme is fully understood and can therefore be monitored.
- the potential for disturbance caused to buried archaeological remains and the fabric of the castle.

#### Preparation

Prior discussion will be held with CBC (Mr Ian Baalham) about the approach to this project, and a site meeting on Day 1 of installation will be an opportunity to clarify any outstanding issues.

Prior to start of work a **photographic survey** will consist of shots of the earthworks, grassy areas and trees, and the face of the Castle closest to the Winter Wonderland facilities. This will enable an assessment to be made of the effects of the construction and removal of WW.

A risk assessment will be carried out to minimise potential risks.

One week's notification of the start of work will be given to the CBC Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA).

### **Reporting**

Reporting should be commensurate with results (degree to which the monuments were affected by the set up and removal of WW). The report will contain, as appropriate: location (grid ref), planning application number, dates of visits, methodology, plan showing areas observed in relation to ground disturbance / proposed development (a digital vector plan when possible), depth of ground disturbance and soil profile in each area, observations as to land use history, etc.

Recording of any disturbance to consist of photographs, measured drawings, and written notes

Results will be related to the relevant known archaeological information held in the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) and Essex Heritage & Environment Record (EHER).

The written report will follow *East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers* 14 and 24 (2000 and 2011) as appropriate, and will be as agreed with CBCAA.

### **Archive**

An accession number for the work will be sought from Colchester and Ipswich Museums' Documentation Officer.

An Event number will be obtained from CBCAA.

An archive of all records and finds will be prepared to the satisfaction of Colchester and Ipswich Museums' Store and will be in accordance with *Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums* (2008).

### **References:**

- |                  |      |  |
|------------------|------|--|
| CBC              | 2015 | Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording (CBC 2006) at Castle Park, High Street, Colchester (Planning Application: 151298), by Jess Tipper, August 2015 |
| Historic England | 2015 | COLCHESTER CASTLE, COLCHESTER, ESSEX: Scheduled Monument No: SM EX 1, HA 1002217: Ref: 500114732.  |

H Brooks BA FSA MCIfA, 21st October 2015



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**OASIS ID: colchest3-244046**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park (Winter Wonderland), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out in Upper Castle Park to the north, east and west of Colchester Castle (a Scheduled Monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the set-up and removal of the 2015 Winter Wonderland. The site is in an area of the highest archaeological importance, surrounding the Norman Castle and the Roman Temple of Claudius in insula 22 of the Roman town. No significant archaeological horizons were damaged as they were buried too deeply (c 800mm deep) and temporary floors were constructed at or above ground level. Rotivation of part of the grassed area after removal of the temporary flooring did not penetrate below topsoil.
Project dates	Start: 09-11-2015 End: 09-02-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	15/10f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	151298 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	Case No. S00114732 - SM No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2015.24 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	ECC3719 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument



Monument type CASTLE Medieval  
Investigation type "Watching Brief"  
Prompt Scheduled Monument Consent

### Project location

Country England  
Site location ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Colchester Castle Park  
Postcode CO1 1TJ  
Study area 3630 Square metres  
Site coordinates TL 99870 25334 51.89014330882 0.904890040996 51 53 24 N 000 54 17 E Point

### Project creators

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

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
Digital Archive recipient Colchester Museum  
Digital Archive ID COLEM: 2015.24  
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography"  
Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum  
Paper Archive ID COLEM: 2015.24  
Paper Media available "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"

**Project  
bibliography 1**

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Entered on	26 February 2016

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