

# Archaeological monitoring and recording at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester, Essex

**March 2016**



**by Pip Parmenter**

**on behalf of Mr and Mrs Skeet**

CAT project ref: 15/11j  
NGR: TL 98068 24149  
Colchester Museum accession code: 2016.40  
Planning ref: 152100  
UAD ref: ECC3745  
OASIS ref: colchest3-232218



**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

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**CAT Report 942**  
April 2016

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavations of foundations for a two-storey extension at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester, Essex. No archaeological features were identified during the work. A single sherd of 12th/13th century pottery and a piece of Roman CBM were recovered from a buried topsoil layer.*

## 2 Introduction (Figs 1 - 2)

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester, Essex, which was carried out during March 2016. The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Skeet in advance of the construction of a rear extension to the existing dwelling on the site, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

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 evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCPS 2016), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with CBCPS (CAT 2016)

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 field evaluation* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) created by Colchester Borough Council and now accessed via the *Heritage Gateway* website.

The UAD shows that the proposed development lies in an area of known archaeological potential, situated to the south of known Roman cemeteries that cluster around the former Roman roads radiating out of Colchester. One of these roads, linking the town to Gosbecks, is projected to run through the gardens between Audley Road and Maldon Road. It is likely that Roman burials or buildings will be aligned with the orientation of this road and may be encountered in the footings for the proposed extension. Finds recovered in the immediate vicinity include Roman coins from the rear gardens of 12 and 22 Audley Road (UAD EVT 924 & 932)

## 4 Results (Fig 3)

The site was continually monitored while foundations for a rear extension to the existing building were excavated. Five layers were identified: a modern topsoil of mid/dark grey sandy silt (L1), which sealed a modern surface and underlying sand (L2); this modern surface and underlying sand sealed a mid grey sandy silt buried topsoil with occasional stone inclusions (L3), beneath which was a deep mid brown sandy loam subsoil with frequent stone inclusions (L4) and then the natural yellow sand and gravel (L5).

A single sherd of 12th/13th century pottery and a piece of Roman CBM were recovered from the buried topsoil (L3), which also contained small fragments of red brick. All other finds were post-medieval and modern and were not retained.



Plate 1: Stratigraphy of foundation trenches



Plate 2: General site shot

## 5 Discussion

No archaeological features were observed during the monitoring of groundworks at the site. Five layers were observed: a modern topsoil (L1), a modern buried surface with underlying sand (L2), a buried topsoil (L3), a deep subsoil (L4) and the natural geological horizon (L5). A single sherd of medieval pottery (12th/13th century) and a piece of Roman CBM were recovered from the buried topsoil. These were the only finds of any archaeological relevance. Such sparse material makes it likely that the presence

of these finds was as a result of manuring rather than of any direct archaeological activity.

## 6 Acknowledgements

The Trust would like to thank Mr and Mrs Skeet for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed and carried out by C Lister and A Wightman. Site plans and sections were prepared by R Mathieson. The project was monitored for the CBCPS by Jess Tipper.

## 7 References

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

CAT	2016	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for continuous archaeological recording at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3TR</i>
CBCPS	2016	<i>Brief for Continuous Archaeological Recording at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester, CO3 3TR</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Dept of Communities and Local Government.
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, <b>14</b> . Ed. D Gurney
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> , by Maria Medlycott
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage)

## 8 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
post-medieval	from Henry VIII to c AD1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, e.g. a Roman coin in a modern pit
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 9 Contents of archive

### Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:  
The report (CAT Report 942)  
CBCPS Evaluation Brief  
CAT Written Scheme of Investigation  
Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record)  
Site digital photographic log  
Architectural Plans  
Attendance register  
Trench record sheet  
Finds register  
Original Plans  
Risk assessment

## 10 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: 2016.40

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Mr and Mrs Skeet  
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services



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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 26/04/2016

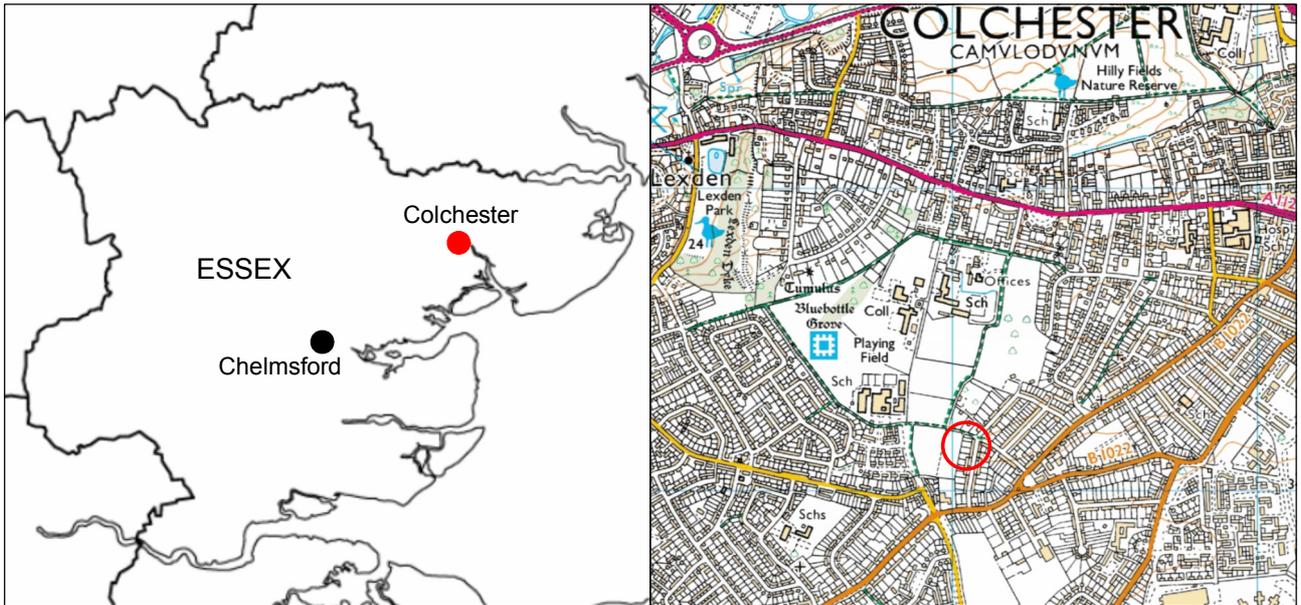


Fig 1 Site location.

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Fig 2 Results.

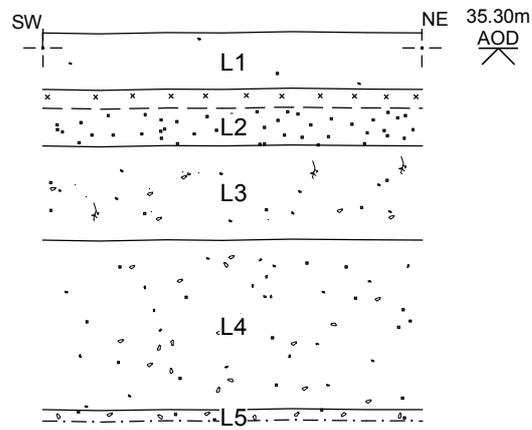


Fig 3 Representative section.

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)  
for continuous archaeological monitoring and  
recording (a watching brief) 31 Irvine Road,  
Colchester, Essex, CO3 3TT

**NGR:** TL 98068 24149 (centre)

**Planning reference:** 152100

**Client:** Mr & Mrs Skeet

**Agent:** Mr Kevin Hall

**Curating Museum:** Colchester

**Museum accession code:** 2016.40

**UAD Event number:** ECC3745

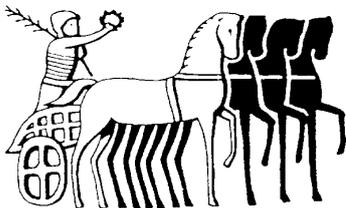
**CAT Project code:** 15/11j

**Oasis Project ID:** colchest3-232218

**Site Manager:** Ben Holloway

**CBC Monitor:** Jess Tipper

**This WSI written:** 30-11-2015



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## **Site Location and Description**

The proposed development site lies 1.2km to the south-west Colchester's historic walled town, on the southern edge of known Roman cemeteries. The site is within a residential area. Site centre is TL 98068 24149 (Fig 1).

## **Proposed work**

The development comprises a two-storey rear extension.

## **Archaeological Background**

The following archaeological background draws on the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) created by Colchester Borough Council, and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The UAD shows that the proposed development lies in an area of known archaeological potential, situated to the south of known Roman cemeteries that cluster around the former Roman roads radiating out of Colchester. One of these roads, linking the town to Gosbecks, is projected to run through the gardens between Audley Road and Maldon Road. It is likely that Roman burials or buildings will be aligned to the orientation of this road and may be encountered in the footings for the proposed extension. Finds recovered in the immediate vicinity include Roman coins, from the rear gardens of 12 and 22 Audley Road (UAD EVT 924 & 932).

## **Planning Background**

A planning application was submitted to Colchester Borough Council for the proposed work (Planning reference 152100) in September 2015. As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER / UAD as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Officer (CBCAO). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

## **Requirement for Work**

The required archaeological work is for the continuous monitoring of all groundworks. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (Brief for Continuous Archaeological Recording at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester - CBC 2015).

Specific research aims are:

- 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, b)
- 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 the CBCAO (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 CBCAO 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.

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 EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from the curating museum. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

### **Staffing**

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT officer (Ben Holloway).

### **Watching brief methodology**

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

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done by hand.

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 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**

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course, but only if they are datable. Any processing and reporting will be done by Val Fryer. If any complex or outstanding deposits are encountered, VF will be asked onto site to advise. EH Regional Adviser is available for further advice.

## Human remains

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the monitoring, the following criteria would be applied; 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 CBCAO will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

## 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.

## 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 CBCAO.

## Results

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

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

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAO as a PDF.

The report will contain:

- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the archaeological project.
- Location plan of site in relation to Colchester street grid.
- A section drawing showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale (if this can be safely done)
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including 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.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and supplied to CBCAO.

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

It is a policy of Colchester Borough Council that the integrity of the site archive be maintained (i.e. all finds and records should be properly curated by a single organisation), with the archive available for public consultation. To achieve this desired aim it is assumed that the full archive will be deposited in Colchester Museums *unless otherwise agreed in advance*. (A full copy of the archive shall in any case be deposited).

**By accepting this WSI, the client agrees to deposit the archive, including all artefacts, at Colchester & Ipswich Museum.**

The requirements for archive storage will 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 Colchester & Ipswich Museum within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAO.

### Monitoring

CBCAO 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 CBCAO one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with CBCAO prior to them being carried out. CBCAO will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

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

### References

Brown, D	2007	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
CAR 9	1993	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 9: Excavations of Roman and later cemeteries, churches and monastic sites in Colchester, 1971-85</i> by N Crummy, P Crummy & C Crossan
CAT	2014	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CBC	2015	<i>Brief for continuous archaeological recording at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester, CO3 3TT: December 2015</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</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 (Colchester &amp; Ipswich Museums)</i>
CM	2008	<i>Guidelines on the Preparation and Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Colchester &amp; Ipswich Museums (Colchester &amp; Ipswich Museums)</i>
David Gurney	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>

L Pooley



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**OASIS ID: colchest3-232218**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological watching brief at 31 Irvine Road, Colchester
Short description of the project	Excavation of foundations for two-storey extension.
Project dates	Start: 02-03-2016 End: 29-03-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	15/11j - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential use
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER 31 Irvine Road
Postcode	CO3 3TT
Study area	13.5 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 98068 24149 51.880147699088 0.878055468161 51 52 48 N 000 52 41 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
	CBC Archaeological Officer

Project brief  
originator  
Project design  
originator Laura Pooley  
Project  
director/manager Ben Holloway  
Project  
supervisor Ben Holloway  
Type of  
sponsor/funding  
body Owner

### Project archives

Physical Archive  
Exists? No  
Digital Archive  
recipient Colchester Museum  
Digital Contents "none"  
Digital Media  
available "Images raster / digital photography","Text"  
Paper Archive  
recipient Colchester Museum  
Paper Contents "none"  
Paper Media  
available "Context  
sheet","Correspondence","Drawing","Photograph","Plan","Report","Unpublished  
Text","Unspecified Archive"  
Entered by Pip Parmenter (pp@catuk.org)  
Entered on 27 April 2016