

**Archaeological watching briefs
at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill Farm,
East Mersea Road, West Mersea,
Essex, CO5 8SL
July & September 2014 & July 2016**

**report prepared by
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**on behalf of
Colchester Borough Council**



NGR: TM 0228 1434

CAT project refs: 14/07h & 16/06n

Colchester and Ipswich Museums accession codes: COLEM 2014.73 & 2016.66

UAD ref: ECC3806



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1 Summary

Archaeological watching briefs took place at Mersea Barrow in 2014 and 2016 during works to improve visitor access and amenities. No significant archaeological deposits were uncovered, although a small quantity of Roman roof tile fragments was recovered from the modern topsoil on the eastern side of the barrow. The form of the tegulae lends support to a recent redating of the burial and the barrow to the mid-2nd century, rather than the later 1st century as put forward by Warren following the 1912 excavation.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

- 2.1** Archaeological watching briefs were carried out at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill Farm, East Mersea Road, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8SL, during works to improve visitor access and amenities. The watching briefs were commissioned by Philip Wise on behalf of Colchester Borough Council (CBC), and were undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in July and September 2014 and in July 2016.
- 2.2** Mersea Barrow is located on the north side of Mersea Island, immediately to the north of East Mersea Road, close to the junction with Dawes Lane. The barrow is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Scheduled Monument No: SM 32425; NHLE no. 1019019). The works fell partly within the SAM area, and Scheduled Monument Consent was obtained.
- Mersea Barrow lies on relatively elevated ground overlooking the Pyefleet Channel and is situated approximately 800 m south-east of the southern end of the Strood. The modern ground level at the foot of the barrow is at approximately 20 m AOD.
- 2.3** The improvement works included: the laying of an electricity supply cable for lighting within the barrow; the resurfacing of the access path leading up to the entrance into the barrow, on its eastern side; and the installation of an interpretation panel a short distance to the east of the barrow. The works were centred on NGR TM 0228 1434. The relevant planning application number for these works is 101371.
- 2.4** For the installation of the interpretation panel, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by CAT in June 2016 (WSI 2016; appended below). This WSI outlined the excavation and recording methods used, and also set out proposals for post-excavation work, the production of a report, an archive and (if necessary) publication texts. It followed a brief written by Colchester Borough Council's Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA) in June 2016 (CBC 2016).
- 2.5** This report follows the standards set out in Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CIMS 2008a), and also those in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b). The guidance contained in English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE 2006), and in the documents *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 8), *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14), and *Research and archaeology revisited: a revised framework for the Eastern Counties. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 24), was also followed.

3 Archaeological background (Figs 1-2)

- 3.1** Mersea Barrow was excavated in 1912 (Warren 1913). The excavation consisted of a trench dug from the eastern side of the barrow into its centre, where a larger central shaft was opened out. A Roman cremation burial was located near the centre of the barrow. It lay within a chamber constructed of Roman roof tiles (*tegulae*) set in mortar. The chamber contained a lead casket inside which was a glass urn containing the cremated human remains. In 1912 the barrow survived approximately 33.5 m in diameter and 6.9 m high. No trace was discovered in 1912 of a ditch around the

barrow. The 1912 excavation trench was subsequently roofed over and concreted to form a tunnel to allow visitors access to the burial chamber from the eastern side of the barrow.

- 3.2 The burial was dated in the original site report to the late 1st century (Warren 1913, 138). The date of the burial and barrow was subsequently reassessed by Hull to AD 100-120 (*VCH* 3, 160). More recently, it has been suggested that a mid-2nd century date is more likely for the construction of the barrow (Benfield and Black 2014, 67 & 72).
- 3.3 The cremated human remains were re-examined in 2012-3 by Jacqueline McKinley of Wessex Archaeology (McKinley 2014). The bone came from a male aged between 35 and 45. There is evidence of spinal lesions and excessive bony growths, indicating that he suffered from diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis (DISH). This is a disease of the joints that today is found mainly in men over 50. The presence was also detected of exotic items, including pine resin and frankincense (Brettell *et al* 2014). These were probably added to the bone after cremation, and suggest an elaborate funerary ritual.
- 3.4 Other Roman remains known on Mersea Island include a possible villa, or more likely a cluster of buildings, in the vicinity of West Mersea church, approximately 2.3 km to the south-west of Mersea Barrow (Crummy 2001, 71-2). About 140 m to the east of these Roman remains, an unusual circular mausoleum and a Roman cremation burial, both of probable 2nd century date, have been recorded (Howlett 2012, 57-60). The burial was set in a tile cist and consisted of a glass urn, with a lead lid, housing the bones of a child. A ceramic lamp was also recovered. There is an unconfirmed report that two Roman rings and fragments of a tessellated pavement were found fairly close to the Mersea Barrow in nearby Bower Hall Lane (unpublished letter to D.T-D Clarke dated 28.8.1980 from Mrs J W M Read; Howlett 2012, 66 & 76).

4 Aims

The aims of the watching briefs were to record the depth and extent of any archaeological remains uncovered during the improvement works, and to assess the date and significance of these remains.

5 Methods (Fig 2)

- 5.1 Initially, a shallow trench was hand-dug by the contractors, Bowling Garrard, on 30th July 2014 to house an electricity cable to supply lighting to the entrance tunnel and burial chamber. The trench extended for approximately 5.65 m, from the gravelled track and vehicle turning area on the eastern side of the barrow, to the timber revetment baulk on the northern side of the entrance into the barrow. The trench was roughly 150 mm wide and 300 mm deep. Further east, the electricity cable had already been laid under the track, which lies outside the SAM.
- 5.2 Subsequently, an area was stripped by hand by the contractors, NCC Ltd and Lings, on 4th September 2014, in advance of the resurfacing of the access path on the eastern side of the barrow. The stripped area extended for approximately 6.5 m east-west, from the gravelled track to the eastern ends of the timber baulks at the entrance to the barrow. The stripped area was dug roughly 150-200 mm deep, and was approximately 1.3 m wide at its eastern end, widening out to 1.9 m at its western end. It extended across the cable trench that had been dug previously. Many roots, and some possible animal disturbance, were encountered during the trenching and stripping.
- 5.3 An interpretation panel was installed by the contractors, Whitnell, on the eastern side of the barrow on 22nd July 2016. It is located outside the SAM, on a grass verge adjacent to the gravelled track. The panel was mounted on a lectern with a single post. The posthole for it was dug approximately 400 mm square and 500 mm deep. After the panel was installed, two paving slabs were laid at its base.
- 5.4 During these groundworks, CAT staff were given time to investigate, clean and record any archaeological deposits uncovered, and to collect up the finds unearthed. Individual records of archaeological contexts, such as layers or features, as well as finds, were entered on CAT pro-forma record sheets. Plans were drawn at 1:20 and section drawings were made at 1:10. Standard record shots of the site and of

individual contexts were taken on a digital camera. Further details of the recording methods used can be found in the WSI (WSI 2016) and in the CAT document *Policies and procedures* (CAT 2014).

6 Results

6.1 The natural subsoil was not reached during the watching briefs.

6.2 Roman Barrow

6.2.1 No part of the barrow mound, nor any other significant Roman deposits, was encountered during the watching briefs.

6.3 Post-Roman deposits (Fig 2)

6.3.1 The earliest deposit uncovered in the stripped area to the east of the barrow, as well as in the bottom of the cable trench, was a brownish layer (L2). It lay approximately 200 mm below the modern ground level. This deposit probably consisted mainly of subsoil, reworked as a result of later activity, such as cultivation. It remained largely unexcavated, although a few centimetres of L2 were removed in the bottom of the cable trench.

6.3.2 At the western end of the stripped area, L2 was sealed by a thin layer of gravel (L3). This gravel spread was approximately 40 mm thick, and extended out from the west section of the stripped area for approximately 1.6 m. It was perhaps the remains of a previous path surface, and, although undated, was probably modern in date. It was only partially removed during the stripping.

6.3.3 Dark greyish-brown modern topsoil (L1) extended over the whole of the stripped area. At the western end of the area it sealed the gravel spread L3, and elsewhere it overlay L2. The modern topsoil in this area was 150-200 mm thick. A small quantity of finds was recovered from L1 in the cable trench and the stripped area. The finds included several fragments of Roman tile, most if not all from *tegulae*; a couple of fragments of post-Roman tile; and some sherds of modern pottery and glass (finds number (3)). Not all of the modern finds were retained. A piece of worked stone (SF1) came from L1 at the eastern end of the cable trench.



Photo 2 Stripped area for access path, viewed from the east.

6.3.4 Also, a number of pieces of iron were unearthed in the cable trench and the stripped area. These included several 'angle bars' with an L-shaped profile. Some of these

were lying horizontally in L1 and were over 1 m in length, while others were set vertically into the ground. The latter were left in place, although they were cut off by the contractors at the formation level. Two large modern-looking iron nails or bolts were also recovered (finds numbers (2) & (3)). A couple of metres from the west end of the cable trench, a piece of iron sheet was uncovered, lying horizontally at the interface between L2 and L1. It measured approximately 350 mm across.

These pieces of iron were probably modern in date. It seems likely that the angle bars had formed part of a fence and/or a gate. This perhaps dated to around the time of the 1912 excavation.

- 6.3.5** Dark greyish-brown, loamy modern topsoil (L1), at least 450 mm thick, was encountered in the posthole for the interpretation panel. The topsoil was capped by a thin, brownish modern deposit, approximately 50 mm thick. A small quantity of modern finds was recovered from the posthole (finds number (4)).

7 Finds

7.1 Introduction

A quantity of finds was recovered during the watching brief. Where appropriate the finds were washed, marked and bagged according to context, in line with the recommendations in *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b). A fragment of worked stone is described in section 7.2. The remaining finds are listed by context in Table 1 in Appendix 2.

7.2 The worked stone

SF 1. (1) L1. Modern topsoil. A fragment of a worked stone slab. Both sides smooth, mortar adhering to one side. Maximum dimensions 160 by 140 mm, maximum thickness 25 mm; weight 910 g. Probably limestone. Undated.

8 Discussion

- 8.1** The works at Mersea Barrow were carried out in order to improve visitor access and amenities, and to enhance the setting and interpretation of the monument. The ground disturbance during these improvements was small-scale in extent, and was designed to have a minimal impact on any surviving archaeological remains. As there was still a slight possibility that ancient levels could be damaged, the works were monitored by CAT on behalf of CBC.
- 8.2** In the event, significant archaeological deposits were not disturbed during the improvement works. Those deposits that were uncovered were recent in date, and consisted mainly of modern topsoil. A small quantity of finds was recovered during the watching brief. These were largely modern in date, but included a few residual fragments of Roman roof tile. These were recovered from the modern topsoil in an area that was stripped immediately to the east of the barrow.
- 8.3** The Roman tile fragments recovered during the watching brief were probably all fragments of *tegulae*. A fragment of *tegula* was also found in this area in 1912 (Benfield and Black 2014, 59). It is unclear how the Roman tile fragments came to be incorporated into the modern topsoil. Some of the fragments could have derived from the tile and mortar burial chamber, which was apparently robbed in the years following the 1912 excavation, mainly by souvenir hunters. However there is little trace of mortar on the tile fragments found during the watching brief. An alternative explanation is that they were surplus material left by the barrow builders.
- 8.4** It has been suggested that typological changes in the form of *tegulae* over time can provide a rough indication of date (Warry 2006, 56). The *tegulae* found during the watching brief have a thickness of approximately 20 mm. The fragment of *tegula* found nearby in 1912 has a thickness of 17-20 mm (Benfield and Black 2014, 59). *Tegulae* of this thickness are more likely to date from the mid-late 2nd century than earlier (Ernest Black, pers. comm.; Benfield and Black 2014, 59). Assuming the *tegulae* are broadly contemporary with the burial, the recent finds appear to reinforce the suggestion that the burial is late Hadrianic-Antonine in date (Benfield and Black 2014, 67), rather than later 1st century as originally put forward by the excavator (Warren 1913, 138).

- 8.5** The Roman building materials found at the barrow perhaps derived from a substantial Roman building, such as a villa (Benfield and Black 2014, 62). This possibly lay fairly close to the barrow, rather than at some distance away (Benfield and Black 2014, 70-2). There is an unconfirmed report of a Roman building a couple of hundred metres away from the barrow, in nearby Bower Hall Lane (Howlett 2012, 66 & 76). Such a location may be a more plausible source for the building materials than the Roman 'villa' site near to West Mersea church or another possible Roman site at East Mersea (Howlett 2012, 65-6).
- 8.6** Among the other remains uncovered during the watching brief were a gravel spread (L3) and some ironwork. These were both probably modern in date, and perhaps date to around the time of the 1912 excavation. The gravel spread was presumably the remains of an earlier path surface leading to the barrow entrance. The ironwork, which included several angle bars, had possibly formed part of a fence and/or a gate.

9 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Survey datum point based on mean sea level at Newlyn, Cornwall
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CIMS	Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service
context	specific location on an archaeological site, especially one where finds are made; usually a layer or a feature
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford
feature	an identifiable context, such as a pit, a wall or a posthole
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists (now the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists)
<i>Imbrue</i>	curved Roman roof tile
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c AD 1500
modern	period from c 1850 onwards to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
OASIS	Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigations
pan-tile	an S-shaped, post-medieval or later roofing tile, which overlaps with its neighbour
peg-tile	rectangular roof tile of medieval or later date; intact examples usually have two peg-holes
post-medieval	period from c 1500 to c 1850
residual	finds that were deposited earlier than the context in which they were found
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
RRCSAL	Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London
SAM	scheduled ancient monument
SMC	scheduled monument consent
<i>tegula</i>	flanged Roman roof tile (plural <i>tegulae</i>)
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database, maintained by Colchester and Ipswich Museums
U/S	unstratified, ie without a well-defined context
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

10 References

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------|--|
| Benfield, S & Black, E | 2014 | 'The West Mersea Roman Barrow (Mersea Mount)', in <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 4 , Fourth series (2013), 59-73 |
| Brettell, R C, Stern, B & Heron, C P | 2014 | 'Mersea Island Barrow: molecular evidence for frankincense', in <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 4 , Fourth series (2013), 81-7 |
| CAR 7 | 2000 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester 1971-1985</i> , by John Cotter |
| CAT | 2014 | <i>Policies and procedures</i> , Colchester Archaeological Trust |

CBC	2016	Brief for continuous archaeological recording at installation of interpretation panel at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill, West Mersea, by Jess Tipper
CIfA	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>
CIMS	2008a	<i>Guidelines on standards and practice for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester</i> (CBC)
CIMS	2008b	<i>Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums</i> (CBC)
Crummy, P	2001	<i>City of Victory: the story of Colchester - Britain's first Roman town</i>
EAA 3	1997	<i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. resource assessment</i> , ed by J Glazebrook
EAA 8	2000	<i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. research agenda and strategy</i> , ed by N Brown and J Glazebrook
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , ed by D Gurney, ALGAO East
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: a revised framework for the Eastern Counties. Research agenda and strategy</i> , ed by M Medlycott, ALGAO East
Howlett, S	2012	<i>The Secrets of the Mound, Mersea Barrow 1912-2012</i> , Mersea Island Museum Publications
IfA	2007	<i>Archaeological archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
McKinley J I	2014	'Mersea Island Barrow: the cremated bone and aspects of the mortuary rite', in <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 4, Fourth series (2013), 74-80
MoRPHE	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> , English Heritage
VCHE 3	1963	<i>A history of the County of Essex, 3: Roman Essex</i> , ed by W R Powell, The Victoria History of the Counties of England
Warren, S H	1913	'The Opening of the Romano-British Barrow on Mersea Island, Essex', in <i>TEAS</i> , n.s., 13, 116-40
Warry, P	2006	<i>Tegulae: Manufacture, typology and use in Roman Britain</i> , BAR, British Series, 417
WSI	2016	Written Scheme of Investigation for continuous archaeological recording at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8SL, by Laura Pooley

11 Acknowledgements

CAT is grateful to Colchester Borough Council for funding the archaeological watching briefs, and in particular to Philip Wise, CIMS **Collections and Curatorial Manager**, who commissioned the work. We would also like to thank the contractors, Bowling Garrard, NCC Ltd, Lings, and Whitnell, for their help on site. Robin Mathieson carried out the 2016 fieldwork. Stephen Benfield helped identify the finds; and we are grateful to Ernest Black for his comments on the Roman tile. The work was monitored by Philip Wise, and by Jess Tipper, CBC Archaeological Advisor.

12 Archive deposition

The archive from the watching briefs, including the site records, photographs and finds, will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession codes COLEM 2014.73 and 2016.66, in accordance with *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums* (CIMS 2008b) and *Archaeological archives: a guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (IfA 2007).

13 Appendices

Appendix 1: contents of archive

Two A4 document wallets containing:

1 Project management archive

- 1.1 Copies of SMC application and letter of consent, on paper and CD
- 1.2 Copy of the brief for the interpretation panel issued by CBCAA, on paper and CD
- 1.3 Copy of the WSI for the interpretation panel produced by CAT, on paper and CD
- 1.4 Copies of maps, plans and sections provided by CBC and English Heritage, on paper and CD
- 1.5 Copies of correspondence/emails, on paper and CD

2 Site archive

- 2.1 Attendance register
- 2.2 Context sheets
- 2.3 Photographic record sheets
- 2.4 Site plans/sections on 3 sheets of A4 paper
- 2.5 Site diary/notes on 2 sheets of A4 paper
- 2.6 Site photographs on CD

3 Research archive

- 3.1 Copy of final report (CAT Report 992) on paper and CD
- 3.2 Copy of plan from 1913 site report on paper

Not in wallets:

4 Finds archive

- 4.1 Several plastic bags containing the finds; taking up roughly ¼ museum box.

Appendix 2: list of finds by context

All weights are in grammes. The glass is clear, unless stated otherwise. The fabrics of the ceramic building materials are reddish in colour, unless stated otherwise. The post-Roman pottery fabric codes follow those used in *CAR 7* (identifications by Stephen Benfield).

Table 1: finds list

Context	Finds no	Qty	Description	Wt (g)	Comments
L1	3	3	<i>tegula</i> fragments	1,134	incl 2 large joining pieces, 20mm thick, with flange & cutaway; other is small fragment, 20mm thick with flange
		3	Roman brick/tile fragments	388	possibly all <i>tegula</i> fragments; 2 are 20mm thick; other is probable flange fragment
		3	modern pottery sherds	58	Fabric 48D
		1	modern glass shard	5	green glass
		1	pan-tile fragment	115	14mm thick
		1	peg-tile fragment	21	15mm thick
		1	iron nail/bolt	46	110mm long, round head & shaft, screw visible at end, probably modern
L2	2	1	iron nail/bolt	72	58mm long, square shaft & round head, probably modern
L1	4	1	modern pottery sherd	54	Fabric 45M: neck/rim from stoneware vessel
		1	modern glass shard	<1	dark green glass
		1	?peg-tile fragment	16	17mm thick

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Distribution list:

Philip Wise, Colchester and Ipswich Museums
Deborah Priddy, Ancient Monuments Inspector, Historic England
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



Colchester Archaeological Trust

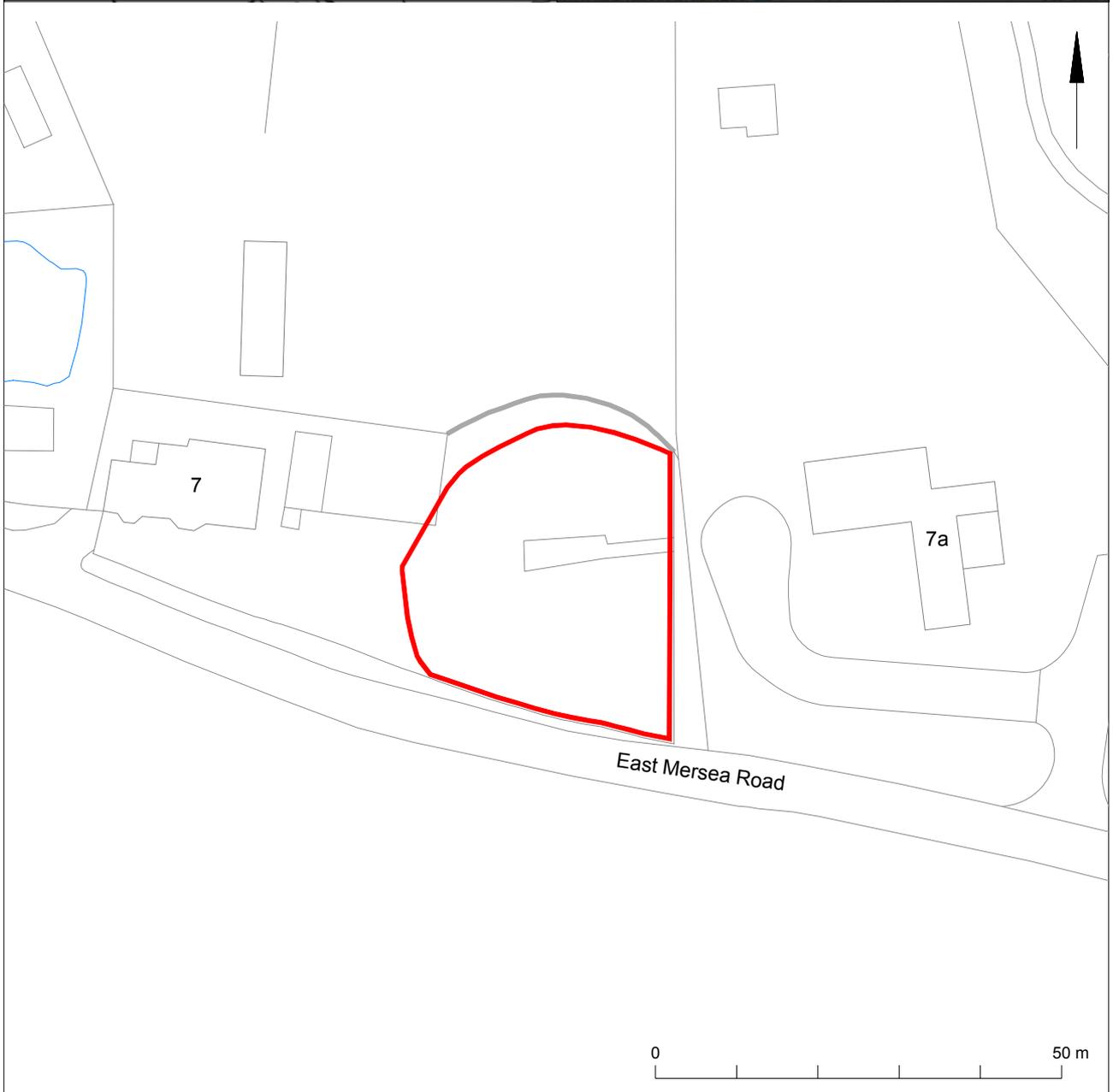
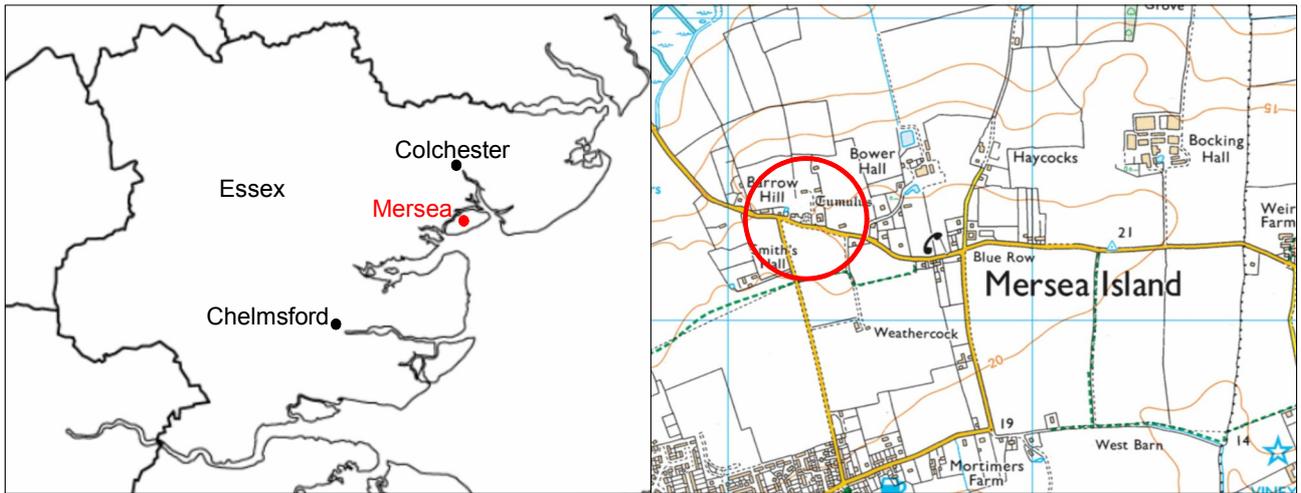
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Date: 29.09.2016



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Fig 1 Site location.

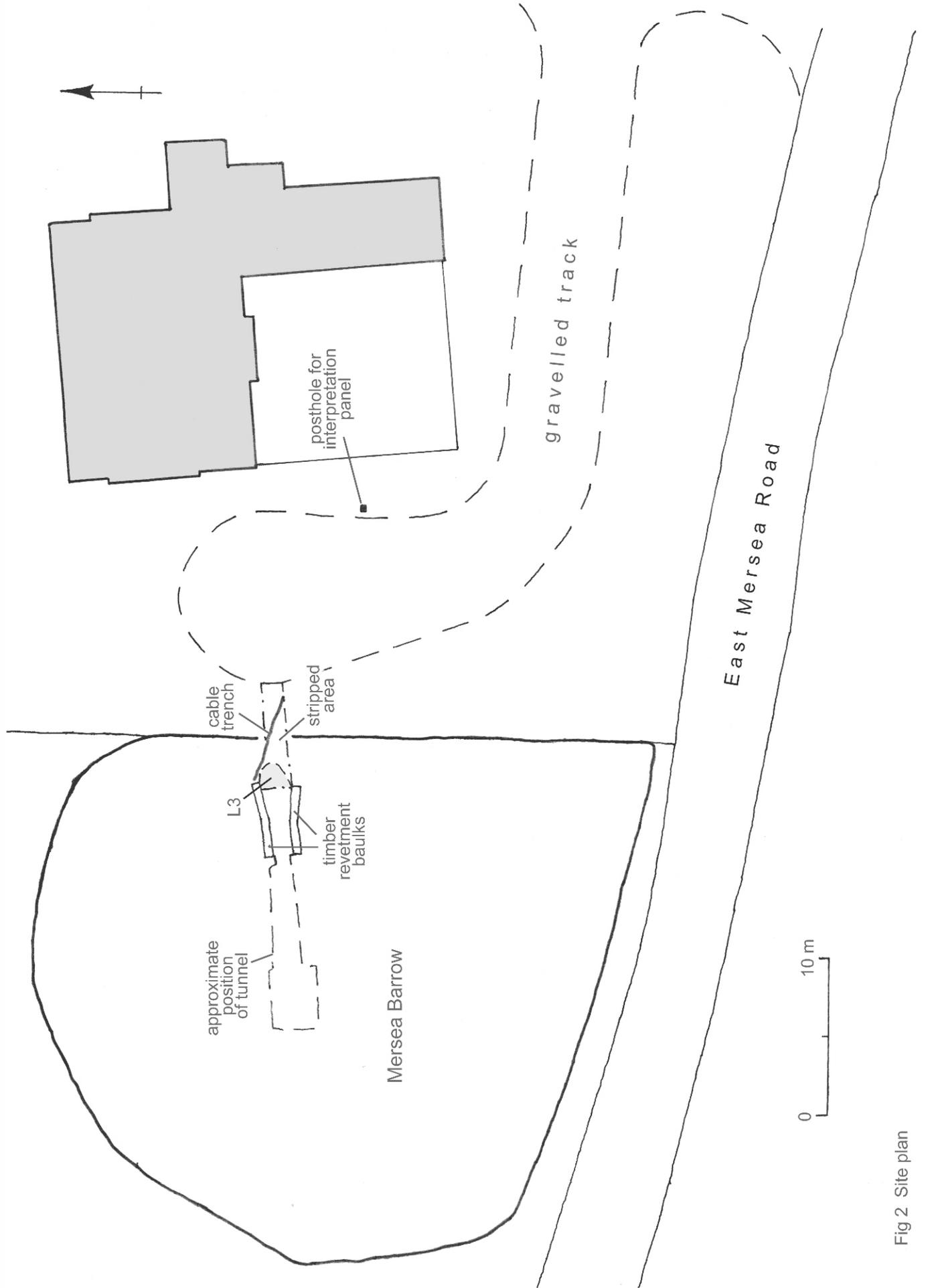


Fig 2 Site plan

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for continuous archaeological recording at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8SL

NGR: TM 02289 14342 (centre)

Planning reference: 101371

Client: Philip Wise, Colchester Borough Council

Curating Museum: Colchester

Museum accession code: 2016.66

ECC Project code: ECC3806

CAT Project code: 16/06n

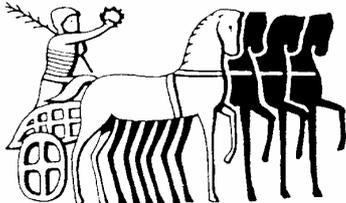
OASIS ref.: colchest3-255977

Historic England scheduled monument consent ref.: S00082675

Site Manager: Ben Holloway

CBC Monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 27.06.2016



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Site location and description

Mersea Barrow is located at Barrow Hill, Mersea, just off East Mersea Road and close to the junction with Dawes Lane (Fig 1). Site centre is TM 02289 14342.

Proposed work

Installation of an interpretation panel at Mersea Barrow.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background derives from the CBCAA brief with data from the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) and Historic England.

Mersea Barrow is a schedule ancient monument (NHLE no. 1019019) dating from the late 1st to the early 2nd century. It is located on relatively high ground at the north-west edge of the central plateau of Mersea Island, overlooking the Pyefleet Channel. It is a flat-topped conical mound 35m in diameter and 7m high. The top has a diameter of 5m. Excavations in 1912 revealed a burial chamber, sited slightly off-centre, measuring 0.45m wide by 0.54m high. The chamber was constructed from foundations of boulders and broken tile supporting a floor of two roof tiles. Seven courses of flanged roof tile formed the walls, with the two upper courses slightly corbelled to support the roof, a single tile 0.54m². Within the burial chamber was a small lead casket with wooden lid containing a glass flask with cremation. The structure of the mound comprised a consolidated central core of impure quartz sand, above which was mixed gravel and sand. Following the 1912 excavations, a passage was constructed into the burial chamber to allow for public access.

Analysis of the cremated bone in 2013 revealed that the individual buried within the barrow was a strong, active man, probably a walker, aged between 35 and 45, who had suffered from a rare bone disorder (diffuse idiopathic skeletal hyperostosis). The results also showed that the bones had been coated with frankincense from East Africa.

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in July 2010 (application No. 101371) proposing (among others) the installation of a new interpretation panel.

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 Advisor (CBCAA). 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 continuous archaeological monitoring and recording of all groundworks. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2016).

Specifically:

The monitoring and recording is being undertaken to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site.

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* (CIfA 2014a, b)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- the Project Briefs issued by the CBCAA (CBC 2016).

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.

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 for the duration of the groundworks.

Monitoring 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 with a toothless bucket.

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 CBCAA 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): Pip Parmenter

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Pip Parmenter

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.

Results

Notification will be given to CBCAA 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 2 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAA as a PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of groundworks. At least two corners of which will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- 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 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

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 CBCAA.

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

Brown, D	2007	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CBC	2016	<i>Brief for continuous archaeological recording at Instillation of interpretation panel at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill, West Mersea</i>
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation</i>

David Gurney	2003	<i>and research of archaeological materials</i> <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
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.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)

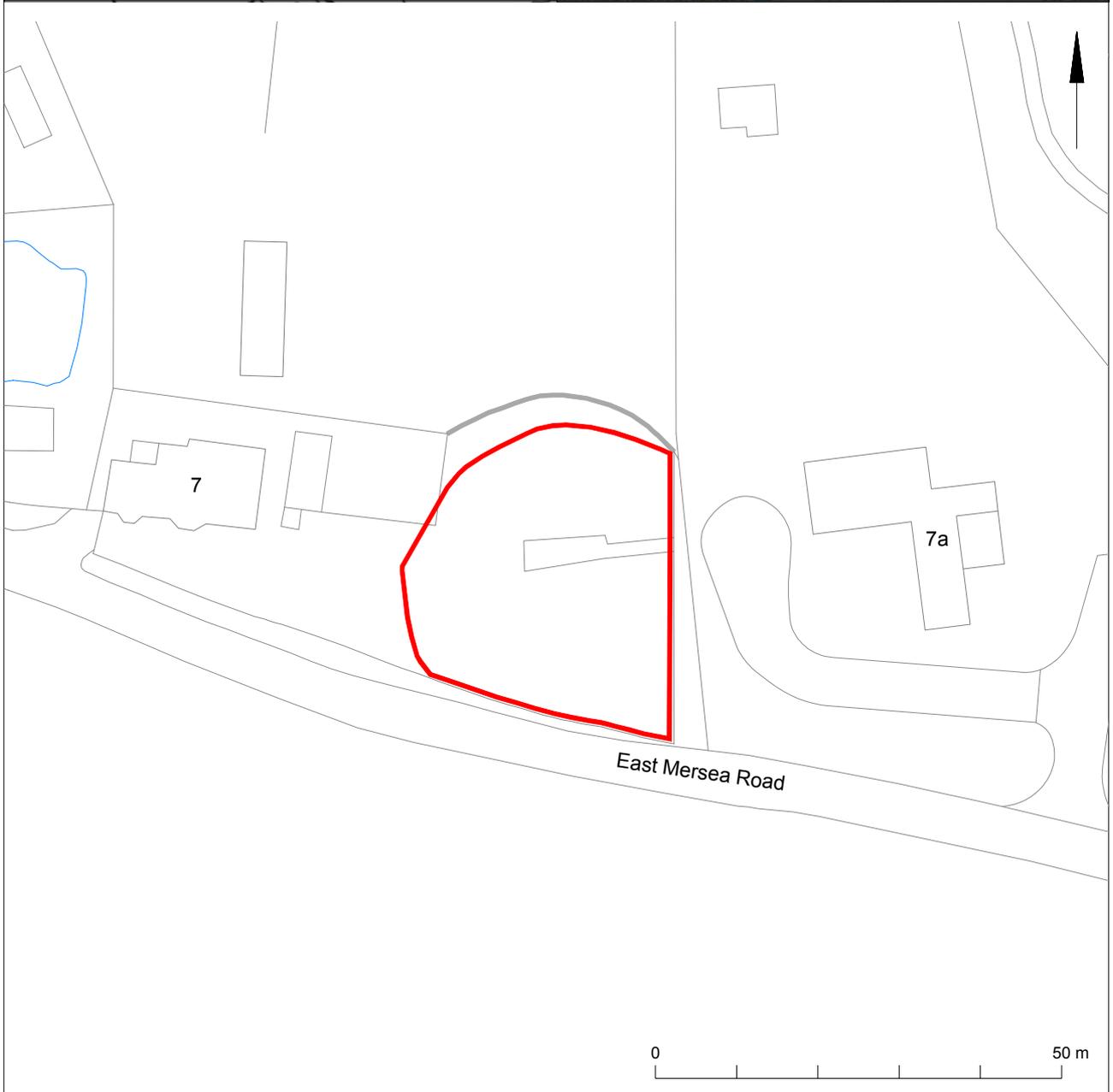
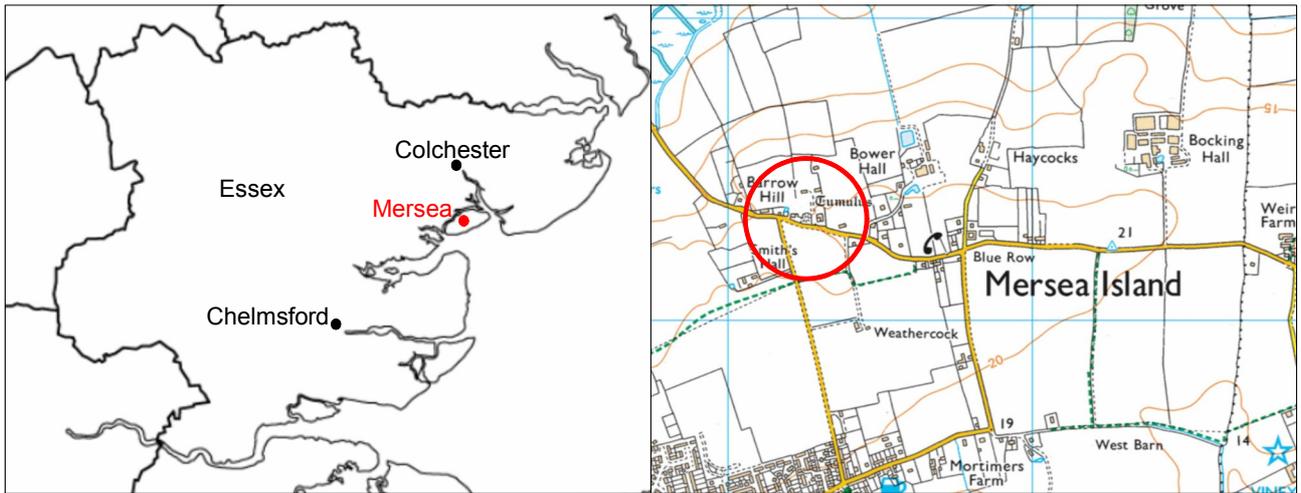
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Fig 1 Site location.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-192255

Project details

Project name	Mersea Barrow watching brief 2014
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief took place at Mersea Barrow in 2014 during works to improve visitor access and amenities. No significant archaeological deposits were uncovered, although a small quantity of Roman roof tile fragments was recovered from the modern topsoil on the eastern side of the barrow.
Project dates	Start: 29-07-2014 End: 04-09-2014
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	14/07h - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM 2014.73 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument
Current Land use	Other 11 - Thoroughfare
Monument type	BARROW Roman
Significant Finds	TILE Roman
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER WEST MERSEA Mersea Barrow
Postcode	CO5 8SL
Study area	11 Square metres

Site coordinates TM 0228 1434 51.790542802864 0.933438452384 51 47 25 N 000 56 00 E Point

Project creators

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

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Physical Archive ID	COLEM 2014.73
Physical Contents	"Ceramics", "Glass", "Metal", "Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM 2014.73
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM 2014.73
Paper Contents	"Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Correspondence", "Diary", "Map", "Miscellaneous Material", "Notebook - Excavation", "Research", "General Notes", "Plan", "Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological watching briefs at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill Farm, East Mersea Road, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8SL: July and September 2014 and July 2016
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Shimmin, D
Other bibliographic	CAT Report 992

details

Date	2016
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A4 comb-bound report
URL	http://cat.essex.ac.uk
Entered by	D Shimmin (ds@catuk.org)
Entered on	15 September 2016

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OASIS ID: [colchest3-255977](#)

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8SL, 2016
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording took place at Mersea Barrow in July 2016 as an interpretation panel was installed by contractors. The panel is located on the eastern side of the barrow, on a grass verge adjacent to the gravelled access track. This lies outside the scheduled monument area. No significant archaeological deposits were uncovered in the posthole for the panel. A few modern finds were recovered from modern topsoil.
Project dates	Start: 22-07-2016 End: 22-07-2016
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	101371 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC3806 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	16/06n - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM 2016.66 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument
Current Land use	Other 12 - erge
Monument type	BARROW Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER WEST MERSEA Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill
Postcode	CO5 8SL
Study area	0.16 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 0229 1434 51.79053916932 0.933583266246 51 47 25 N 000 56 00 E Point

Project creators

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

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Physical Archive ID	COLEM 2016.66
Physical Contents	"Ceramics","Glass"
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM 2016.66
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM 2016.66
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Map","Miscellaneous Material","Plan","Report","Section","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological watching briefs at Mersea Barrow, Barrow Hill Farm, East Mersea Road, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8SL: July and September 2014 and July 2016

Author(s)/Editor(s) D Shimmin
Other bibliographic details CAT Report 992
Date 2016
Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication Colchester
Description A4 comb-bound report
URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

Entered by D Shimmin (ds@catuk.org)
Entered on 16 September 2016

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Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: Mersea Barrow, East Mersea Road, West Mersea, CO5 8SL	
Parish: West Mersea	District: Colchester Borough
NGR: TM 0228 1434	Site codes: Museum accession codes: COLEM 2014.73 & 2016.66 CAT project codes: 14/07h & 16/06n
Type of work: Watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Dates of work: July & September 2014 & July 2016	Size of area investigated: approximately 11 sq m
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Colchester Borough Council
Further seasons anticipated? Not known	Related UAD no: ECC3806
Final report: CAT Report 992 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: Roman & modern	
Summary of fieldwork results: Archaeological watching briefs took place at Mersea Barrow in 2014 and 2016 during works to improve visitor access and amenities. No significant archaeological deposits were uncovered, although a small quantity of Roman roof tile fragments was recovered from the modern topsoil on the eastern side of the barrow. The form of the <i>tegulae</i> lends support to a recent redating of the burial and the barrow to the mid-2nd century, rather than the later 1st century as put forward by Warren following the 1912 excavation.	
Previous summaries/reports: <i>TEAS</i> , n.s., 13 (1913), 116-40. <i>Essex Archaeology and History</i> , 4 , Fourth series (2013), 59-87	
Keywords: Roman tile	Significance: *
Author of summary: Donald Shimmin	Date of summary: September 2016