

Archaeological evaluation at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO2 9DQ

September 2017



by Dr Elliott Hicks

figures by Ben Holloway and Sarah Carter

fieldwork by Nigel Rayner with Jane Roberts, Harvey Furniss and Ziya Eksen

commissioned by Alex Drouet, Barnes Construction

NGR: TL 9763 2324 (centre)

Planning ref.: 171579

CAT project ref.: 17/08I

ECC code: ECC4057

Colchester Museum accession code: COLEM 2017.121

OASIS ref.: colchest3-293426



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CAT Report 1167
October 2017

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (five trial-trenches) was carried out at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex in advance of the demolition of the existing school and erection of a new secondary school with associated works. The evaluation detected remains which are potentially those of the Gosbecks-Colchester Roman road. Additionally, one ditch, three tree throws and a possible linear/natural feature were identified.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex which was carried out on 4th-5th September 2017. The work was commissioned by Alex Drouet of Barnes Construction in advance of the demolition of the existing school and erection of a new secondary school with associated works, and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER/CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). This recommendation was for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and was based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for a Trenched Archaeological Evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCAA 2017), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2017).

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* (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 Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER).

A desk-based assessment of the archaeological and historical assets on and around the development site was produced by CAT in July 2017 (CAT Report 1124). The following summary is taken from that report:

The school lies in an area of high archaeological importance. It is inside the oppidum of Camulodunum, and approximately 1km north-east of the major Late Iron Age and early Roman 'small town' at Gosbecks, with its Roman temple and theatre, and network of fields and living sites. In addition, a Roman road crosses the school site, and there are other cropmarks which (although not examined archaeologically) are most likely to be the same date as those excavated at Gosbecks.

The building of the school will have had a major negative impact on these remains, but there is a strong possibility that some of the deeper features (including the

Roman road ditches?), will survive below the modern infrastructure. Local archaeological interventions show that significant remains may be found at approximately 0.5m below modern ground.

The Roman road leading from Gosbecks to Colchester is of particular interest as it passes through a part of the development site highlighted as not being previously built on (see below).

4 Results (Figs 2-4)

Five trial-trenches were excavated within the development site.

Trench 1 (T1): 10.5m long by 1.8m wide

T1 was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.24-0.31m thick), and subsoil (L2, c 0.11-0.27m thick) onto natural (L3).

Undated ditch F1 was aligned NE-SW, and measured 1.13m in width and 0.3m in depth.

Trench 2 (T2): 20m long by 1.8m wide

T2 was excavated through L1 (0.26-0.36 thick) and L2 (0.17-0.23m thick) onto L3.

Natural features F2-F4, which are probably tree throws, were present.



Photograph 1 T2 oblique view – looking south southeast

Trench 3 (T3): 10m long by 1.8m wide

T3 was excavated through L1 (c 0.2m thick) and buried topsoil (L4, c 0.35-0.4m thick) onto L3.

No significant archaeological remains were encountered.

Trench 4 (T4): 20m long by 1.8m wide

T4 was excavated through L1 (c 0.26-0.38m thick), L4 (c 0.12-0.21m thick), L2 (c 0.19-0.23m thick) and gravel surface/natural gravel (L6) onto L3.

Undated ditch F5 was aligned NE-SW, and measured 0.8m in width and 0.11m in depth.

Undated ditch or silt patch F6 was aligned NE-SW, and measured 0.95m in width and 0.18m in depth.



Photograph 2 T4 trench shot – looking west northwest

Trench 5 (T5): 19.5m long by 1.8m wide

T5 was excavated through L1 (0.24-0.28m thick) and L2 (0.36-0.38m thick) onto L3.

Undated linear or ?natural feature F7 was aligned E-W, and measured 1.26m in width and 0.21m in depth.

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

A single small, thin iron disc was the only find recovered during the evaluation. This comes from layer L4 (2) in Trench 2 (T2) which is described as a buried topsoil that directly seals the undisturbed natural (L3). The object is a flat, circular disc and has a diameter of 40 mm, weighs 12 g and is approximately 2-3 mm thick. The surfaces are entirely obscured by corrosion. Although not closely-dated, it is probably not of any great age, nor of any significant archaeological importance.

6 Environmental results

by Lisa Gray MSc MA ACIfA Archaeobotanist

Introduction – aims and objectives

One sample was taken from an undated ditch F5. The aims of this assessment are to determine the significance and potential of the plant macro-remains in the samples, consider their use in providing information about diet, craft, medicine, crop-husbandry, feature function and environment.

Sampling and processing methods

Thirty litres of soil were sampled and processed by Colchester Archaeological Trust. All samples were processed using a Siraf-type flotation device. Flot was collected in a 300-micron mesh sieve then dried.

Once with the author the flots were scanned under a low powered stereo-microscope with a magnification range of 10 to 40x. The whole flots were examined. The abundance, diversity and state of preservation of eco- and artefacts in each sample were recorded. A magnet was passed across each flot to record the presence or absence of magnetised material or hammerscale.

Identifications were made using uncharred reference material (author's own and the Northern European Seed Reference Collection at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London) and reference manuals (such as Beijerinck 1947; Cappers *et al.* 2006; Charles 1984; Fuller 2007; Hillman 1976; Jacomet 2006). Nomenclature for plants is taken from Stace (Stace 2010). Latin names are given once and the common names used thereafter.

At this stage, to allow comparison between samples, numbers have also been estimated but where only a very low number of items are present they have been counted. Identifiable charred wood >4mm in diameter has been separated from charcoal flecks. Fragments this size are easier to break to reveal the cross-sections and diagnostic features necessary for identification and are less likely to be blown or unintentionally moved around the site (Asouti 2006, 31; Smart and Hoffman, 1988, 178-179). Charcoal flecks <4mm diameter have been quantified but not recommended for further analysis unless twigs or roundwood fragments larger than 2mmØ were present.

Results (Appendix 2)

The plant remains

One charred barley/wheat (*Hordeum/Triticum* sp.) grain fragment was recorded. Moderate quantities of uncharred seeds of ruderal plants were present.

Fauna

Moderate quantities of terrestrial snail shells were present

Inorganic remains

No artefactual inorganic remains were found.

Discussion

Biases in recovery, residuality, contamination

Nothing with regards biases in recovery, residuality or contamination was highlighted for any of this sample. All the terrestrial snails were *Ceciliodes acicula* (Müller). This is a snail that burrows well below the ground surface (Kerney & Cameron 1979, 149) and can be indicative of bioturbation and oxygenation of the soil.

Quality and type of preservation

No waterlogged or mineralised plant remains were found.

Charred plant remains were present, consisting of flecks and fragments of charcoal and one charred grain. Charring of plant macrofossils occurs when plant material is heated under '...reducing conditions...' where oxygen is largely excluded (Boardman and Jones 1990, 2) leaving a carbon skeleton resistant to biological and chemical decay (English Heritage 2011, 17). These conditions can occur in a charcoal clamp, the centre of a bonfire or pit or in an oven or when a building burns down with the roof excluding the oxygen from the fire (Reynolds, 1979, 57).

Significance of the samples and recommendations for further work

Where only one poorly preserved charred grain is found in a 30 litre sample, as is the case with this sample, it is possible that the grains are not associated with the context in which they have been found. A recent study of intrusion and residuality in the archaeobotanical record for central and southern England (Pelling *et al.* 2015) has highlighted the problem of assigning solitary or scarce charred plant macro-remains to the dated contexts they were taken from because it is possible that these durable charred

plant remains survived being moved between contexts by human action and bioturbation so cannot be properly interpreted unless radiocarbon dates are gained from the plant macro-remains themselves. That is the only way to secure a genuine date for the charred plant macro-remains like these (Pelling *et al.* 2015, 96).

However, evidence for bioturbation and stratigraphic movement is low so it is possible that these plant remains are the same date as the feature date.

No further work is recommended on these samples.

7 Discussion

Archaeological evaluation at Alderman Blaxill School revealed four undated ditches and three tree throws. Trenches T2 and T4 were positioned to target the projected route of the Roman road running between Gosbecks and Colchester. The evaluation found mixed evidence to indicate the presence of this road.

Difficulty in identifying the Gosbecks-Colchester road is nothing new. A section across it was excavated by Hull in 1936 at Rayner's Farm (now Willett Road and Mason Close, 200m north-east of the development site, CHER: MCC7087). The problems encountered by CAT in identifying the road echo Hull's own uncertainty over its composition (Hull 1958, 10). In 1989, in advance of the construction of Cunobelin Road, it was again proven by CAT that the ditches and metalling were hard to detect (Hawkes & Crummy 1995, 121). The road has been conclusively fully-sectioned only once, in 1995, which showed that it consisted of four ditches set out in two pairs defining two footways *c* 2m wide with a main carriageway *c* 7m wide in the centre (see CAT Report 127). Two parallel features uncovered in T4, F5 and F6, defining an area *c* 2m in width, are reminiscent of this arrangement. F5 and F6 were both similar in width but much shallower. It is possible that some of the road has been lost due to activity at this site, and that these features represent the remains of the ditches bordering the road. However, no further ditches were detected *c* 7m on either side of these features, as would have been expected if these ditches conform to the layout identified by Hull in 1936 and CAT in 1995. Gravel uncovered in T4, which may represent the remains of road metalling is more likely to be natural in origin. Nor was any trace of F5 and F6 picked up in T2 to the south-west, which instead contained natural features, although there is the possibility that these tree throws have truncated the remains of the road.

The lack of finds from any of the excavated features may also be an indication that this section of the Gosbecks-Colchester road had little or no nearby settlement. This in turn may have contributed to a poorly-defined or at least poorly-maintained section that has proven difficult to identify.

The difficulty in stating for certain whether evidence for the Gosbecks-Colchester road was located in the evaluation is directly related to the on-site constraints. Due to existing services and root protection zones there was limited space available to place trenches of adequate length to confirm the survival and orientation of the road. It is possible that an additional trench to the north-east of the evaluation trenches, located parallel to Walnut Tree Way and of sufficient length to compensate for a range of possible alignments, would confirm the presence/survival of the road. Unfortunately, as this area is outside of the development, it may be some time before there is an opportunity to evaluate in this location. It is hoped that the works subject to the Continuous Monitoring and Recording phase of the project may provide additional evidence for the road.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Alex Drouet of Barnes Construction for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by N Rayner with J Roberts, Z Eksen, A Tuffey and H Furniss. Figures are by B Holloway and S Carter. The project was monitored for Colchester Borough Council by Jess Tipper.

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Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at

<http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

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| CBC | 2017b | <i>Brief for continuous archaeological monitoring and recording at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, CO2 9DQ</i> |
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10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of A rchaeological I nvestigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsi	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1167)

ECC 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

12 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
2017.121

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Distribution list:

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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 17/10/2017

Appendix 1 Context list

Context Number	Find Number	Feature Type	Description	Date
F1	-	Ditch	Firm, dry, light brown sandy-silt	Undated
F2	-	Tree throw	Soft, moist, medium orange/brown sandy-silt	Undated
F3	-	Tree throw	Firm, moist, medium orange/brown/yellow silty-clay	Undated
F4	-	Tree throw	Soft, moist, medium to dark grey/brown silty-clay	Undated
F5	-	Ditch	Soft, moist medium grey/brown sandy-silt	Undated
F6	-	Ditch / silt patch	Firm, dry, medium yellow/brown sandy-silt with occasional stone piece inclusions	Undated
F7	-	Linear / natural feature	Soft, dry, light yellow/brown silty-clay with occasional stone piece inclusions	Undated
L1	-	Topsoil	Friable, dry to moist, light grey/brown loamy-silt with occasional stone and brick/tile piece inclusions	Modern
L2	-	Subsoil	Firm, dry to moist, light mottled yellow/grey/brown silt with occasional stone piece inclusions	Undated
L3	-	Natural geological deposits	Firm, dry to moist, medium orange/yellow/brown silty-clay	Glacial
L4	1	Buried topsoil	Hard, dry, medium grey/brown silty-clay with occasional charcoal fleck inclusions	Undated
L5	-	Silting	Soft, moist, light orange/grey/brown silty-clay with occasional charcoal and chalk fleck inclusions	Undated
L6	-	Gravel surface / natural gravel	Very hard, dry, light to medium, grey/brown silty-sandy-clay with very frequent stone piece inclusions	Undated

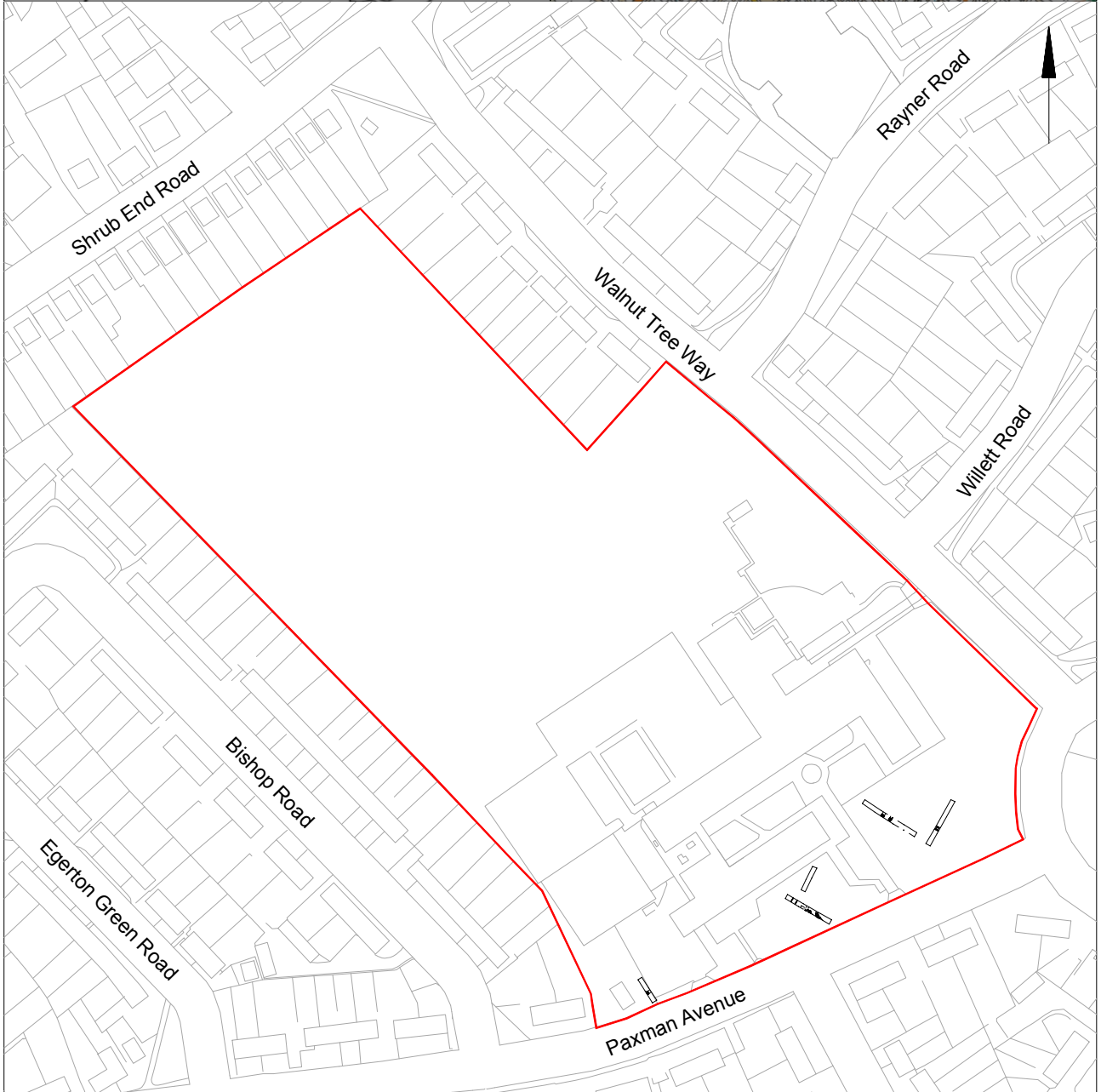
Appendix 2 Environmental results

Sample	Finds number	Description	Bulk volume (L)	Flot volume (ml)	Charred grains			Charred wood >4mmØ	Charred wood <4mmØ	Uncharred seeds			Modern root/rhizomes	Terrestrial mollusca	Details – main and significant taxa
					a	d	p	a	a	a	b	c	a	a	
1	1	F5, ditch	30	5	1	1	2	1	3	2	1	3	3	2	1 charred barley/wheat (<i>Hordeum/Triticum</i> sp.) grain; uncharred seeds of elderberry (<i>Sambucus nigra</i>), lime fruit (<i>Tilia</i> sp.), wild cabbage/mustard (<i>Brassica/Sinapis</i> ps.); moderate numbers of <i>Ceciliodes acicula</i> snails

Key: a = abundance [1 = occasional 1-10; 2 = moderate 11-100; and 3 = abundant >100]

d = diversity [1 = low 1-4 taxa types; 2 = moderate 5-10; 3 = high]

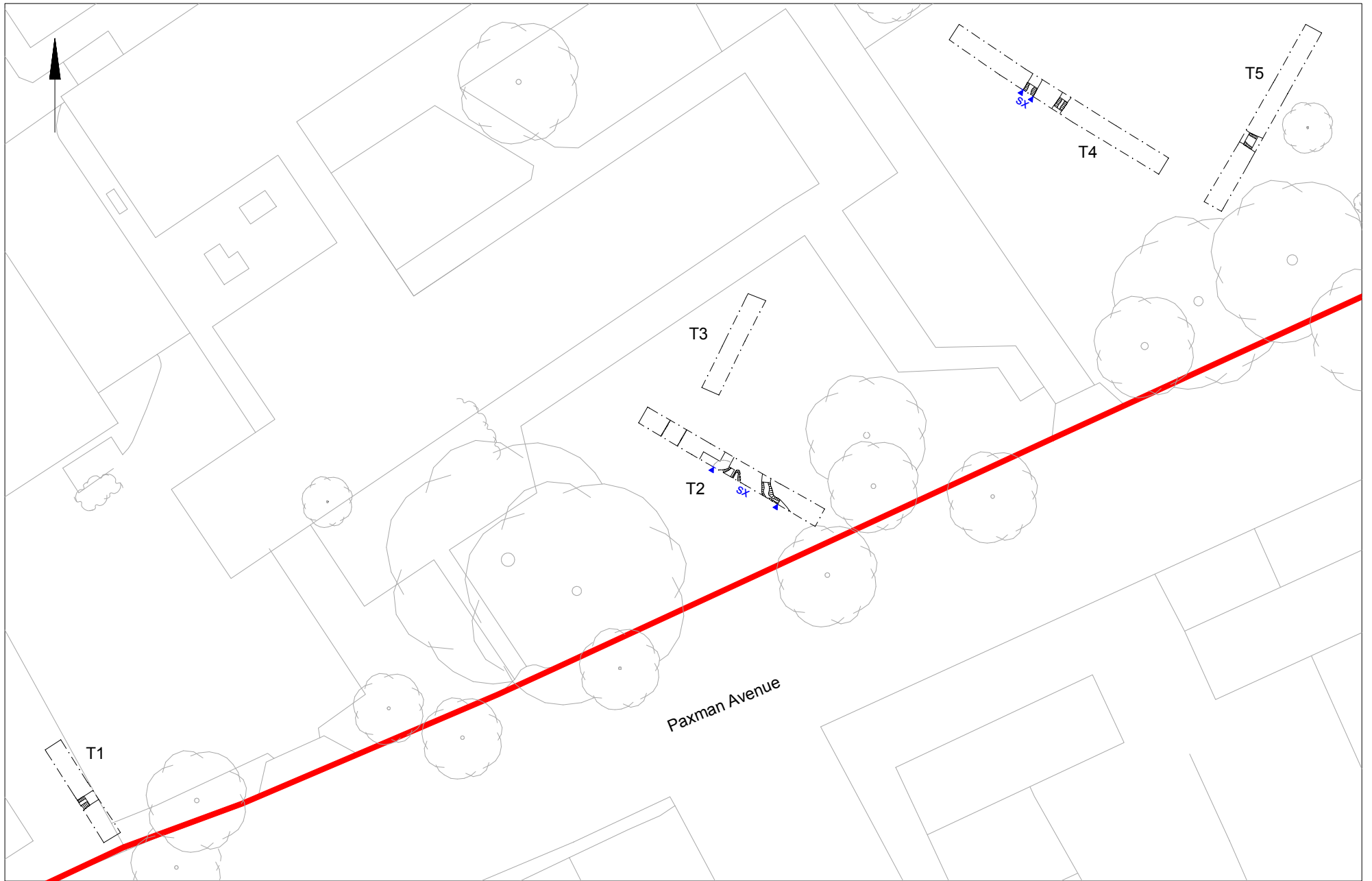
p = preservation [1 = poor (family level only); 2 = moderate (genus); 3 = good (species identification possible)]



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Fig 1 Site location.





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Fig 2 Results.



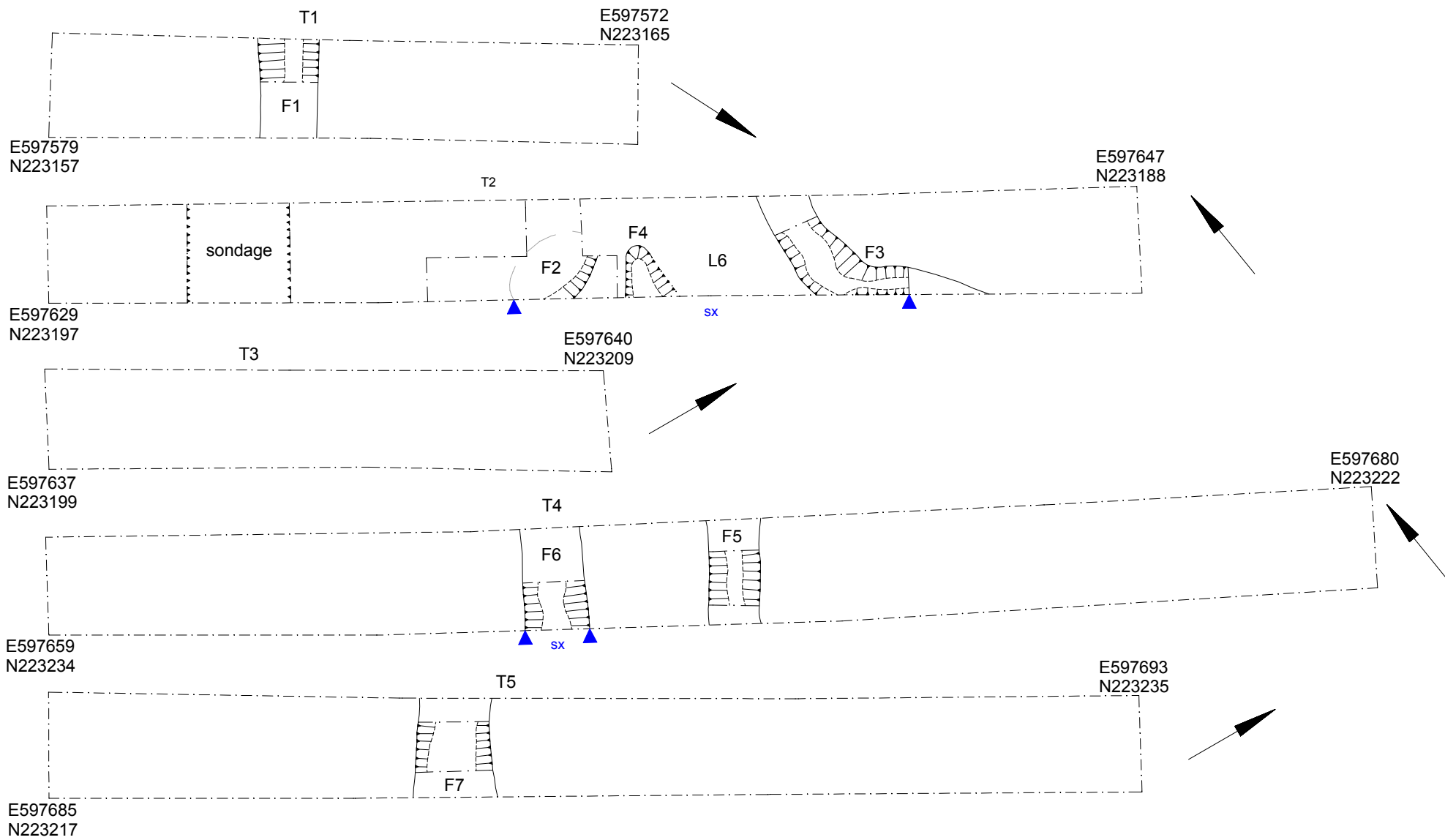
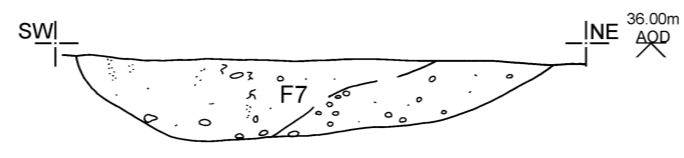
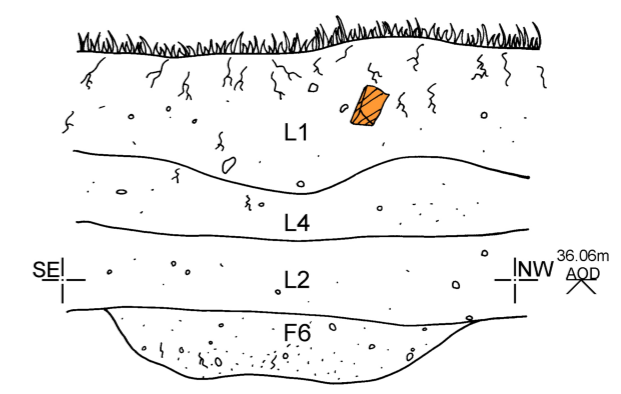
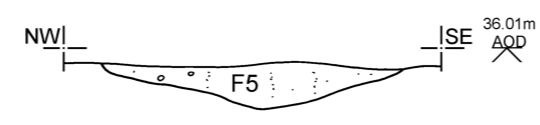
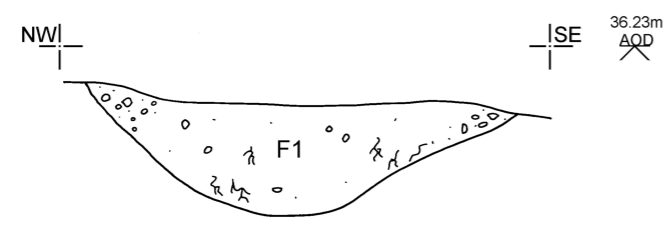
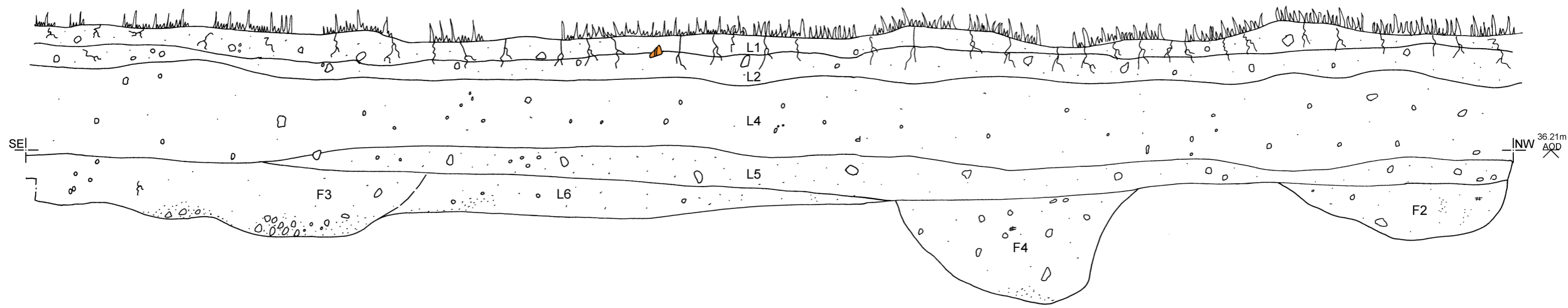


Fig 3 Trench detail plans.





- sand
- small stones
- large stones
- √ roots
- ### charcoal
- ▨ post-Roman brick



Fig 4 Representative and feature sections

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO2 9DQ	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 9763 2324 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 17/08l CHER ref: ECC4056 OASIS ref: colchest3-293426
Type of work: Evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 4th-5th September 2017	Size of area investigated: 5.63 ha
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM 2017.121	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? no	Related CHER/SMR number:
Final report: CAT Report 1167	
Periods represented: -	
Summary of fieldwork results: An archaeological evaluation (five trial-trenches) was carried out at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex in advance of the demolition of the existing school and erection of a new secondary school with associated works. The evaluation detected remains which are potentially those of the Gosbecks-Colchester Roman road. Additionally, one ditch, three tree throws and a possible linear/natural feature were identified.	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: -	Significance: none
Author of summary: Dr Elliott Hicks	Date of summary: September 2017

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation and continuous archaeological monitoring at recording at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, CO2 9DQ

NGR: TL 9763 2324 (centre)

Planning reference: 171579 (demolition of existing)

Commissioned by: Alex Drouet (Barnes Construction)

On behalf of: Barnes Construction

Curating museum: Colchester

Museum accession code: [tbc](#)

CHER project code: **evaluation** – ECC4056; **monitoring** – ECC4057

CAT project code: **evaluation** – 17/08l; **monitoring** – 17/08m

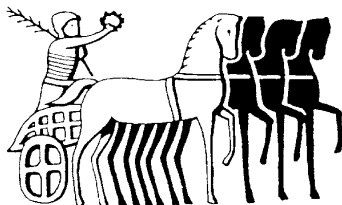
Oasis project ID:

evaluation – colchest3-293426; **monitoring** – colchest3-293428

Site manager: Chris Lister

CBC monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 29.8.2017



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Site location and description

The proposed development site is located 3km to the southwest of Colchester town centre at the Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester (Fig 1). Site centre is NGR TL 9763 2324.

Proposed work

The development comprises the demolition of the existing school and erection of a new secondary school with associated works.

Archaeological background

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

A desk-based assessment of the archaeological and historical assets on and around the development site was produced by CAT in July 2017 (CAT Report 1124). The following summary is taken from that report:

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The building of the school will have had a major negative impact on these remains, but there is a strong possibility that some of the deeper features (including the Roman road ditches?), will survive below the modern infrastructure. Local archaeological interventions show that significant remains may be found at approximately 0.5m below modern ground.

The Roman road leading from Gosbecks to Colchester is of particular interest as it passes through a part of the development site highlighted as not being previously built on (see below).

Planning background

A planning application (171579) was submitted to Colchester Borough Council in 2017 for the proposed demolition of the existing school. Proposed development works include the erection of a new secondary school on the site with associated works.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER / CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). This recommendation was for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and was based on the guidance given in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

Requirement for work (Fig 1)

Evaluation

The required archaeological work is for a trenched archaeological evaluation to be carried out in advance of any groundworks to cover the area of the proposed bus parking, visitor parking and staff car park to the south of the site (ie in those parts of the site not previously built on). This will enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2017a).

Specifically, five trial-trenches totalling 80m long by 1.8m wide will be laid-out over the area highlighted as previously undeveloped ground (Fig 2). The trenches have been located to target the Roman road while avoiding tree-protection zones and modern services.

The trial-trenching is required to:

- Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- Establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

Monitoring

The required archaeological work is for continuous archaeological monitoring and recording of all other groundworks (ie previously developed land). Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2017b).

Specifically:

The monitoring and recording is being undertaken to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits which appear during earth moving operations (including services and landscaping). If identified, the archaeological contractor will be given enough time to excavate and record these deposits.

If unexpected remains are encountered the CBCAA will be informed immediately and the CBCAA will decide if amendments to the brief are required to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

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 ECC Historic Environment Advisor (ECC 2017)

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 ECCHEA 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 ECCHEA and/or the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

Evaluation

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One supervisor plus four archaeologists for two days.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway

Monitoring

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT officer for the duration of the groundworks.

Methodology

Evaluation – Trial-trenches will be machine stripped under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a CAT archaeologist. This will be undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket and will stop at the top of the archaeological horizon.

Monitoring – There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' groundworks. All groundworks carried out by a machine will be done using a toothless ditching bucket.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered time will be allowed for these to be excavated, sampled (as necessary), planned and recorded.

All features or deposits will be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) and 100% of complex features (burials, etc) unless it can be proven that they will not be disturbed by building works and can be left *in situ*. If they will be disturbed/destroyed, it may be necessary to extend beyond the limits of the trench/groundworks to obtain the full extent of any complex archaeological remains.

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.

Site surveying

The evaluation trenches, features and areas of monitoring will be surveyed by Total Station, unless the particulars of the features/areas indicate that manual planning techniques should be employed. 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 evaluation/monitoring areas will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

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

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

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

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer / Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Trained CAT staff will process the samples and the flots will be sent to Val Fryer or Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

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

Human remains

During evaluation/monitoring work 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 the remains from the site during the evaluation phase, 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

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Pip Parmenter / Laura Pooley

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

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

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum / Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation)

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 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAA as a PDF.

It is currently envisaged that two reports will be produced. One for the evaluation phase and the other for the monitoring.

The reports will contain:

- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the archaeological project.
- Location plan of the trenches/areas of monitoring in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each area will be given 10 figure grid references.
- 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.

EHER summary sheets will also be completed 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 paper 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

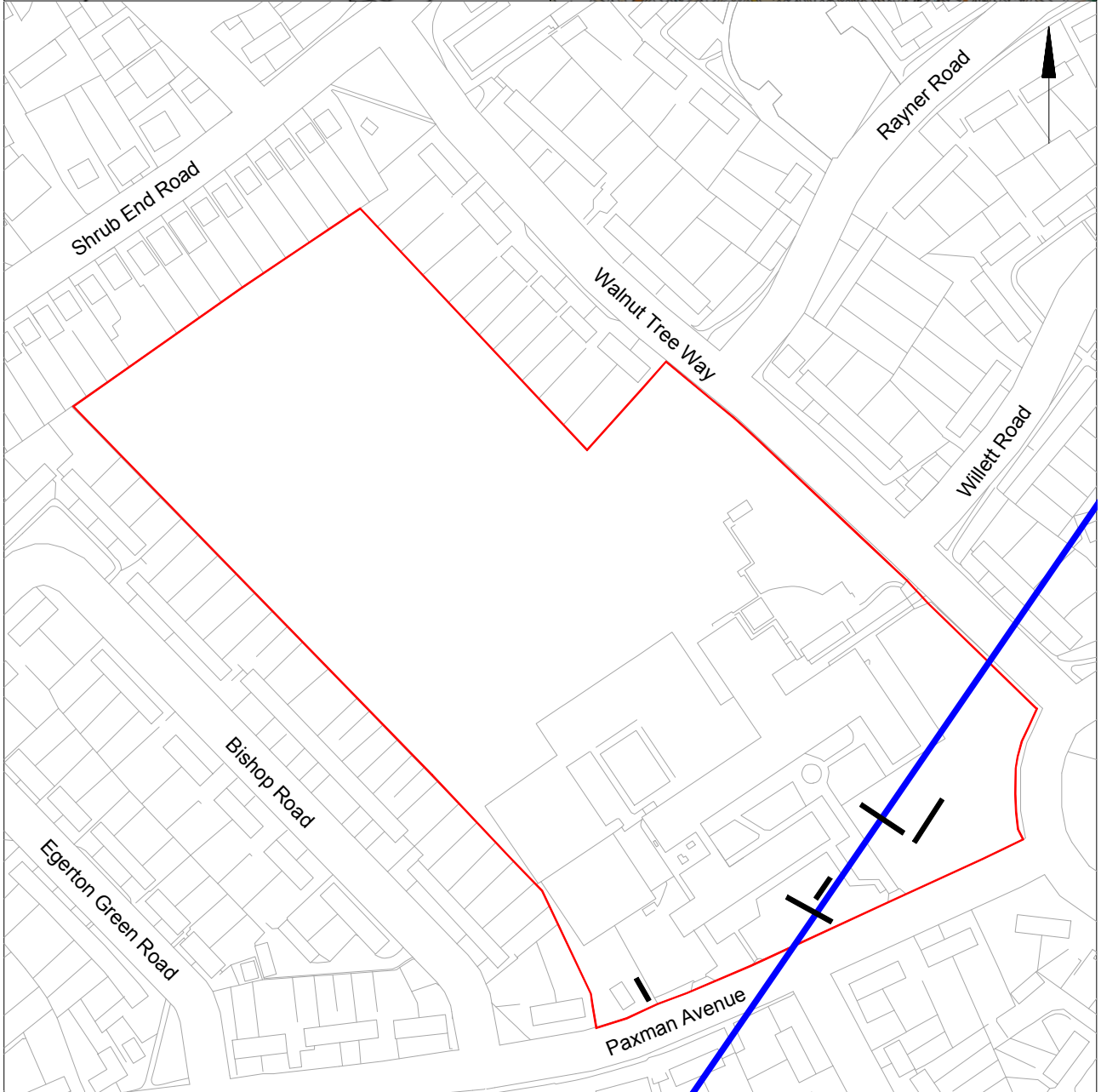
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|------------------|-------|---|
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| CAT | 2014 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CAT Report 1124 | 2017 | <i>A desk-based assessment of the archaeological and historical sites on and around Alderman Blaxill School, Walnut Tree Way, Colchester, CO2 9BU</i> |
| CBC | 2017a | <i>Brief for trenched archaeological evaluation at Alderman Blaxhill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, CO2 9DQ</i> |
| CBC | 2017b | <i>Brief for continuous archaeological monitoring and recording at Alderman Blaxhill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, CO2 9DQ</i> |
| CifA | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i> |
| CifA | 2014b | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs</i> |
| CifA | 2014c | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
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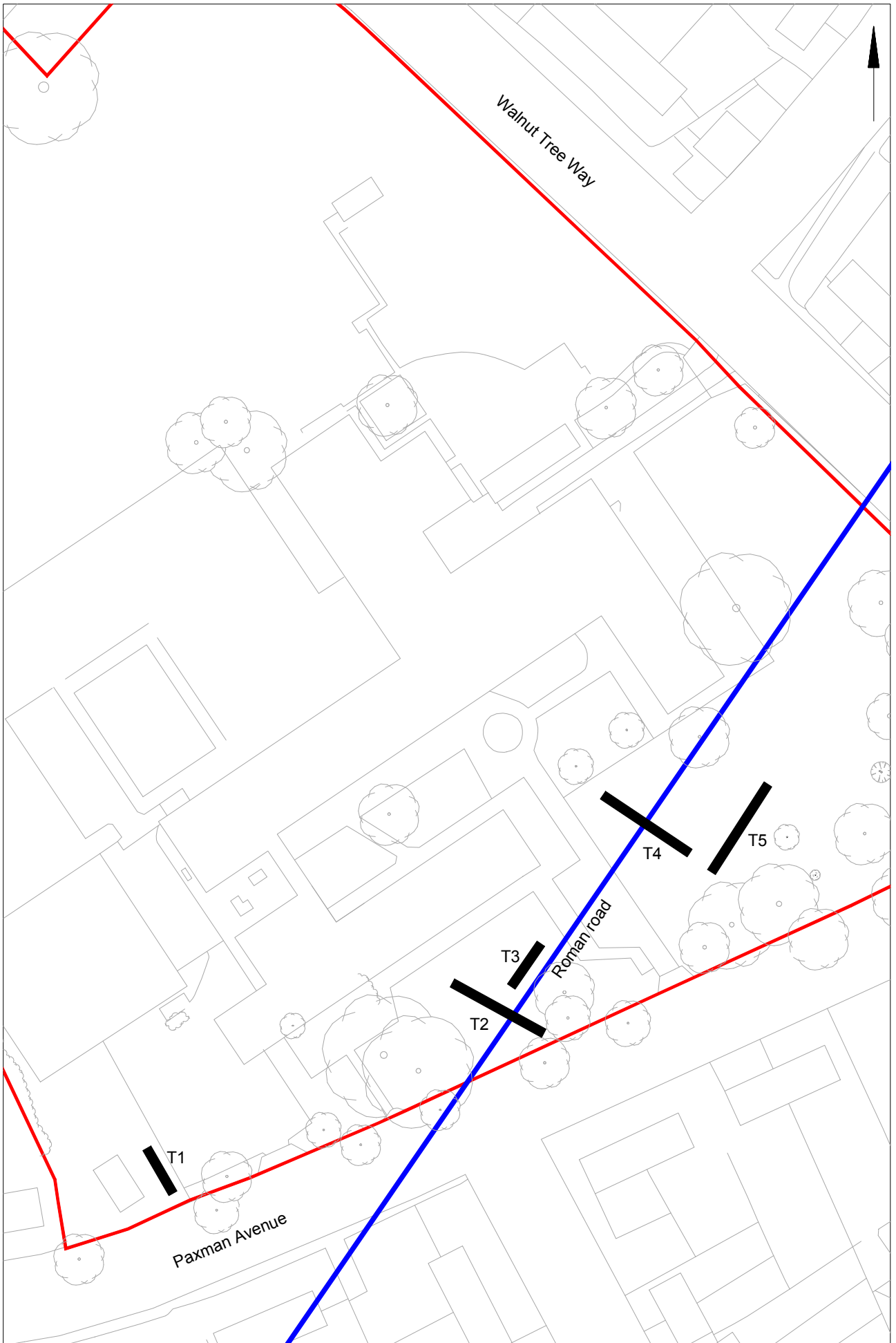
tel: 01206 501785
email: lp@catuk.org



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Fig 1 Site location.





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Fig 2 Site location and trench proposal in relation to the projected line of the Roman road.



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OASIS ID: colchest3-293426

Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at the Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO2 9DQ
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (five trial-trenches) was carried out at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex in advance of the demolition of the existing school and erection of a new secondary school with associated works. The evaluation detected remains which are potentially those of the Gosbecks-Colchester Roman road. Additionally, one ditch, three tree throws and a possible linear/natural feature were identified.
Project dates	Start: 04-09-2017 End: 05-09-2017
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	17/081 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	171579 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	""Sample Trenches""
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Alderman Blaxill County Secondar School, Paxman Avenue
Postcode	CO2 9DQ
Study area	5.61 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 9763 2324 51.872140511427 0.871179250209 51 52 19 N 000 52 16 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 35.94m Max: 36.24m

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	Nigel Rayner
Project supervisor	Mark Baister
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Barnes Construction

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM 2017.121
Digital Contents	"Survey"

Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM 2017.121
Paper Contents	"Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Notebook - Excavation',' Research',' General Notes","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological evaluation at Alderman Blaxill County Secondary School, Paxman Avenue, Colchester, Essex CO2 9DQ
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hicks, E
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1167
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	Comb-bound A4 report
URL	http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html
Entered by	Chris Lister (cl@catuk.org)
Entered on	17 October 2017

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