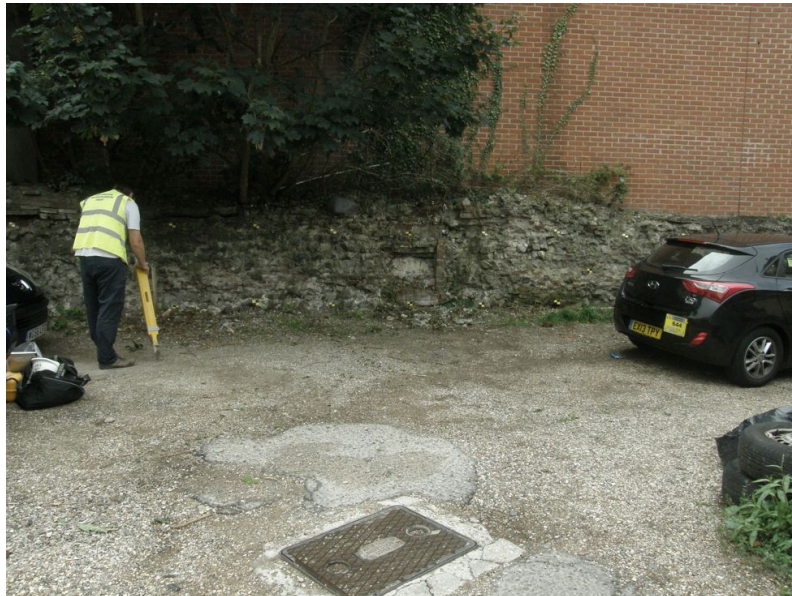


**Historic building recording at  
Town Wall Section 21,  
Rear of 1 Middleborough,  
Colchester, CO1 1WD**

**August 2017**



**report prepared by Mark Baister**

**commissioned by  
Colchester Borough Council**

CAT project ref.: 17/08e  
NGR: TL 9942 2550 (c)  
CHER event number: ECC4044  
Colchester Museum accession code: COLEM 2017.140  
OASIS project id: colchest3-291837



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**CAT Report 1183**  
October 2017

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## 1 Summary

*A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust at Section 21 of the town wall, to the rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester in August 2017.*

*Trenching carried out on the site in 1987 showed that the wall has lost 1m of its width above ground. The current septaria and tile facing on the north elevation was probably added in the 14th century, during extensive renovation works carried out on the wall, and the rebuilding of nearby North Gate.*

*Until recently (at least 1938) the wall had structures built up against its northern elevation, and evidence of this still exists in the form of sections of modern brickwork. Now it is exposed, the section of wall has begun to decay at an increasing rate, and conservation work is required to preserve it.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report on a historic building recording of Section 21 of the Town Wall at Colchester, in advance of proposed conservation work. The recording work was commissioned by Colchester Borough Council, and carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in August 2017. Section 21 is located on the north-west corner of Colchester's town wall (scheduled monument NHLE no. 1003772), specifically at NGR TL 9942 2550 (Fig 1).

As the wall is a scheduled monument, Historic England (HE) advised Colchester Borough Council that a Historic England Level 3 building survey of this section of wall would be required prior to any conservation work taking place. This recommendation is based on the guidance given in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT 2016) and agreed with the CBCAA. All work was carried out in accordance with this WSI.

All work was carried out according to standards and practices contained in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2014a), *Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2014b), *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (Historic England 2015), *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) and *Research and Archaeology Revised: A Revised Framework for the East of England* (EAA 24). In addition, the guidelines contained in *Understanding Historic Buildings, A guide to good recording practice* (Historic England 2016) were followed.

## 3 Aims

The aim of the building recording was to provide a detailed record and assessment of the section of wall prior to conservation. The building recording was carried out to Level 3 (Historic England 2016).

In particular the record considered:

- Plan and form of the site
- Materials and method of construction.
- Date(s) of the structure.
- Function and layout.
- Original and later phasing, additions and their effect on the internal/external fabric and the level of survival of original fabric.
- The significance of the site on a regional level.

## 4 Methodology

Prior to the building recording survey being carried out the section of wall was cleared of overgrowth and vegetation. All plants growing from the wall were trimmed back, with the roots left intact to avoid damage to the scheduled monument. The exception was a tree growing from the top of the section of wall, which was left in place.

The following are included in this report:

- A documentary, cartographic and pictorial survey of the evidence pertaining to the history and evolution of Section 21 of the town wall.
- A large-scale block plan of the site.
- Annotated elevations of the remains at a scale of 1:40.
- A detailed description of the wall. The description addresses features such as materials, dimensions, method of construction and phasing.
- A photographic record, comprising digital photographs of both general shots and individual features. Selected examples of the photographic record are clearly tied into the drawn record and reproduced as fully annotated photographic plates supporting the text. The photographic record is accompanied by a photographic register detailing location and direction of shot (Appendix 1).

## 5 Historical and archaeological background (Fig 3)

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive, the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) accessed via the Heritage Gateway:

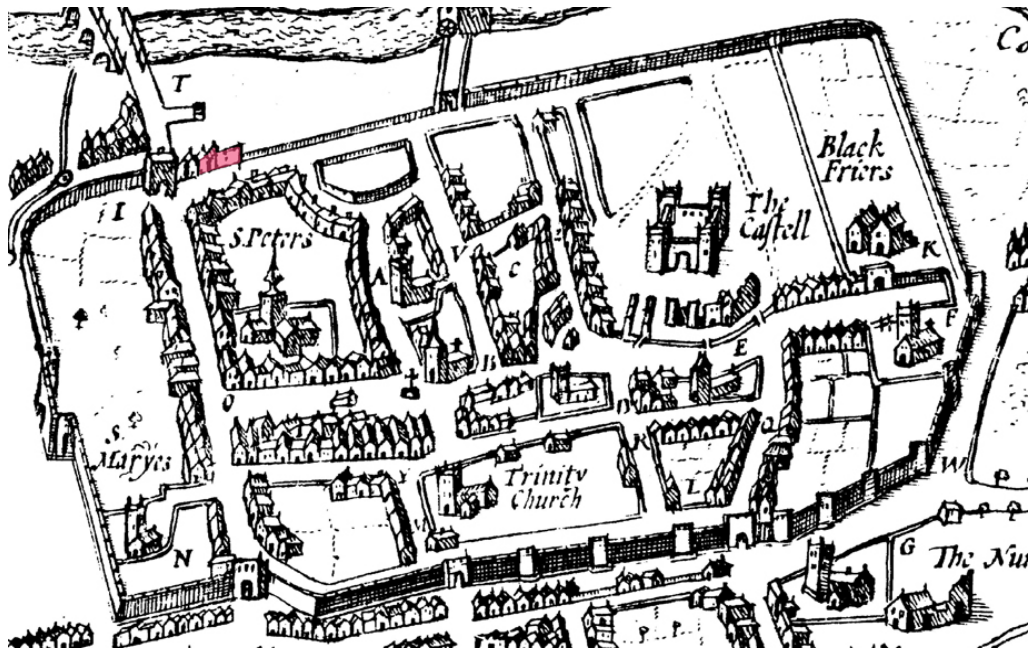
Section 21 is located on the north-west corner of the Roman Town Wall. The section numbers originate from a drawing project of the standing town wall undertaken in the 1980-90s. The sections are numbered from 1 to 28, starting from Balcerne Gate and going anti-clockwise around the wall circuit (Fig 3). The wall was built around the town in the later 1st century AD following the revolt led by Boudica. It is constructed of a core of layered septaria and mortar with coursed septaria and tile on each face.

A recent study has concluded that the wall has an average width of 2.67m (including offsets) which is equivalent to precisely nine Roman feet (*pedes monetales*). A hypothetical cross-section of the wall shows the foundations as being 3.77m wide (Crummy 1997). Previous work shows that some of the wall foundations were surprisingly shallow at 600mm deep (Hull 1958, 25-6). Work by CAT at the Sixth Form College in 2005 shows the stone foundations to be 1.2m deep with wooden piles below (CAT Report 347), although, being water-logged, ground conditions here presumably explain their exceptional depth. Trial-holes have confirmed that survival of the foundations varies. Where they have not been robbed away, the foundations extend 2.1m from the existing face of the wall and are in a sound state of preservation.

Above ground, the survival of the wall is very patchy. Some sections are in relatively good condition, with large areas of intact facing surviving (such as around Balcerne Gate to the west of the town). The section of the wall to the north of the town, however, is in far worse condition, with long stretches of the wall not surviving at all above ground, and what is still standing containing very little in the way of original fabric. The majority of the surviving wall to the north has been refaced or completely rebuilt in brick and stone.

The earliest known map of Colchester, by John Speed in 1610 (Map 1), shows the town walls as largely intact. However, a stretch of wall to the north, adjacent to Section 21, is depicted as lower in profile than the rest of the circuit. Also depicted are a series of structures built against Section 21, to the east of North Gate. Whether this lower profile is indicative of damage to the wall, and these structures are the same buildings shown in later mapping, is unclear (see below). Also of note is the North Gate on this

map, which, with its square-headed gateway, appears to have been rebuilt at some point in the medieval period (Baggs *et al* 1994).



**Map 1** John Speed's map of Colchester, 1610. Approximate location of Section 21 highlighted in red.

Philip Morant's map of Colchester from 1748 (Map 2) shows the town in more detail, and again shows buildings adjacent to Section 21. This map also shows that parts of the town wall are starting to be demolished or built upon to make way for new construction, particularly to the north and south of the town. Apart from the buildings adjacent to the west, Section 21 was largely free-standing at this point.



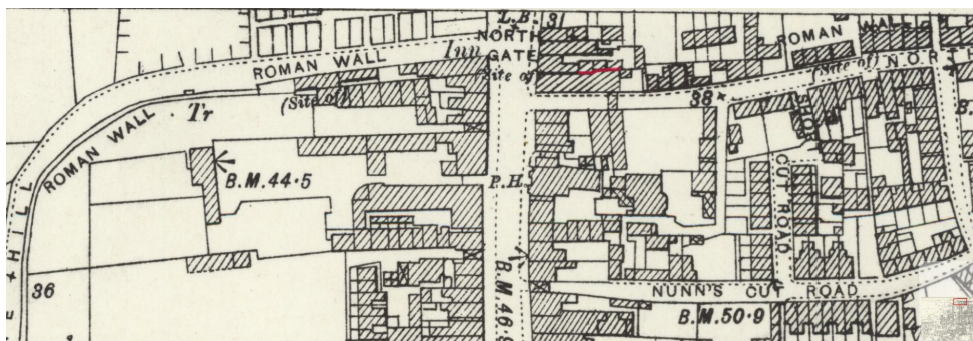
**Map 2** Philip Morant's map of Colchester, 1748. Approximate location of Section 21 highlighted in red.

Monson's Map of Colchester from 1848 (Map 3) shows significantly more detail than its predecessors. Clearly visible are an increased number of buildings built up against the north of the wall, while the southern elevation of Section 21 is unimpeded by later structures. The building shown immediately to the east of North Gate on Morant's map (Map 2), is no longer standing. The map also shows evidence of the continuing demolition of the wall, with less visible above ground than in previous mapping.



**Map 3** Monson's map of Colchester, 1848. Location of Section 21 highlighted in red.

The 1896 OS map shows the footprint of the wall reduced even more, with Section 21 being one of the only remaining segments to the east of the site of North Gate. Section 21 is now enclosed on all sides by buildings. A large building to the south (which is now the site of a mid 1990s housing development) completely covers the southern elevation of the wall.



**Map 4** 1896 OS map. Location of Section 21 highlighted in red.

A later OS map from 1938 (Map 5) shows that the building to the south of the wall has been demolished, which would have exposed the southern elevation. The modern layout of the site (Fig 2) shows another building has since been constructed in this location, once again obscuring the southern elevation, and that some of the structures built along the north elevation of the wall have been demolished, exposing the northern face (which is detailed in this building recording).



**Map 5** 1938 OS map. Location of Section 21 highlighted in red.

Section 21 of the town wall was previously examined by CAT in 1987 (detailed in CAT Report 144 and (forthcoming) CAT Report 1000). Three trenches (A, B and C) were excavated alongside the standing remains of the wall, and exposed the original Roman facing. Reproduced below is the description from CAT Report 144:

*“In 1987, three small trenches were dug at the request of the landowner Mr F Clater at the rear of no 1 Middleborough, to determine the position of the Roman town wall. Trench A revealed the core of the wall immediately below the tarmac surface at the base of the upstanding wall. The tarmac surface starts to fall away about 1m from the core of the wall to a depth of 0.8 m where the wall face was encountered. This consisted of a course of four tiles, and below this two courses of dressed squared septaria were exposed (this being the limit of the excavation at 1.2 m). This face was unrobbed though weathered and set in pink opus signinum mortar. The face started 0.8m below the modern surface. The trench started to show signs of stratigraphy at a depth of 0.9 m, with the dark silty clay loam being replaced by a silty clay, possibly indicating some activity other than simple build-up of dark earth. Trench B was dug to a depth of 0.5 m without encountering any wall, apart from large amounts of debris derived from the wall. Trench C revealed the top of the core. The north side of the wall dropped steeply away, suggesting robbing. The exact position of the face was not defined. The most northerly exposed masonry was north of the probable line of the north face of the wall (assuming it to be about 2.6 m wide), and therefore was presumably part of the foundation.”*

Judging from the report quoted above, its associated figure (Fig 4), and archive photographs of the trenching (Photographs 1-4), the north elevation of the wall at Section 21 has lost approximately 1 metre of its width above ground. What is left standing is either Roman core or medieval and later repairs (see descriptive record below).

The south elevation of Section 21 was examined in 1989 (again detailed in CAT Report 144). Four trenches were dug beneath the floor of a warehouse (since replaced by modern housing), two of which exposed the southern face of the wall (Fig 4).



**Photograph 1** Section 21 of town wall during 1987 trenching. Trench A visible to right of frame. Photograph taken facing south-east.



**Photograph 2** Detailed photograph of Trench A during 1987 trenching. Intact facing of wall below ground visible. Photograph taken facing south.





**Photograph 3** Section 21 of town wall during 1987 trenching. Trenches B and C visible in centre of frame. Photograph taken facing south-west.



**Photograph 4** Detailed photograph of Trench C during 1987 trenching. Core of wall visible sloping eastwards, suggesting robbing of the face has taken place. Photograph taken facing south.

## 6 Building recording descriptive record (Fig 5)

Section 21 of Colchester's town wall is one of the only segments of wall surviving above ground between the location of North Gate and Castle Park (Fig 3).

To the east, west and south of Section 21, the wall is built upon, and obscured, by structures along Northgate Street and North Hill (Photograph 5).



**Photograph 5** Section 21 of the wall before removal of vegetation.  
Photograph taken facing south-east.

Section 21 is 14.7m in length, and survives to a height of approximately 1.5m above modern ground level (although very little of the original fabric is visible – see below). The original height of the wall would have been at least 6m (Crummy 1997, 89), and although the Roman ground level would have been lower (judging by the 1987 trenching which found facing material 1.2m below current ground level), this still represents a significant loss of height. In comparison, Section 23 of the wall (to the west of the site of North Gate (Fig 3)) survives to a height of 3.4m above modern ground level.

The north elevation of Section 21 is constructed of a mix of septaria, Roman tile and modern bricks (Photograph 6). The top 300-400mm of the entire section is bound in modern concrete, and consists largely of bricks or (re-used) Roman tile. This is also visible in the 1987 photographs, and appears to be a 'capping' that has been added, presumably in an attempt to prevent water seeping into the fabric of the wall. Also present built against the wall are several sections of brick, which are likely to be associated with the buildings visible on the 1896 OS map (Map 4).

Aside from the modern capping, most of Section 21 of the wall is covered in a facing of septaria and Roman tile, bound in mortar. Beneath this, and visible in some areas (Fig 5), is the septaria and mortar core of the wall (Photograph 7). As it was established through excavation in 1987 that the original Roman face of the wall would have been some 1m further north, the face of septaria and tile on this section must be medieval in origin.



**Photograph 6** Section 21 of the wall after removal of vegetation. Photograph taken facing south-east.



**Photograph 7** Section of wall highlighted to show differing phases of fabric. At the top is the modern concrete capping, the middle is medieval facing, the bottom is the Roman core. Photograph taken facing south.

This facing was presumably added sometime in the 14th century during extensive restoration works to the wall (as detailed by Morant 1748, 6). Its irregular courses of tile and septaria mimic the original Roman ashlar facing, and it is similar in make-up and appearance to the nearest other visible face of the wall, Section 23 on the west side of North Hill (drawn in 1990 and reproduced as Fig 6).

Section 21 is overgrown and its fabric is deteriorating. During the course of this investigation it was clear that it was in a state of decay, with several lumps of septaria and mortar scattered around the site that had recently fallen from the wall.

## **7 Discussion**

Section 21 of Colchester's Roman town wall only exists above ground for a short stretch, but is significant as one of the few surviving sections to the east of the site of North Gate.

Trenching in 1987 (CAT Report 144) revealed evidence of robbing, and that the section of wall has lost 1m of its width to the north. The exposed core has been subsequently refaced in the medieval period, most likely in the 14th century, with reused Roman tile and septaria.

Evidence of the robbing of building materials has been observed around the wall's circuit, including at Culver Street (CAR 6, 63). Similarly, medieval refacing of the wall has also been observed around the town, most notably during the excavations at Lion Walk (CAR 3, 84). The refacing of the wall at Section 21 (and Section 23) almost certainly coincided with the medieval rebuilding of North Gate (suggested by its square-headed gateway in Speeds map in 1601 – Map 1). This is certainly the case with other medieval additions to the wall; the construction of a medieval bastion at Lion Walk was found to be entirely "contiguous and contemporary with a refacing of the Roman wall" (CAR 3, 84).

Although the wall would have been offered some measure of protection when the structures built up against it to the north were extant (as shown on the 1896 OS map), since their demolition the wall has been exposed to the elements. The medieval facing is now beginning to decay, and in places has exposed part of the original core (Fig 5), which is also beginning to degrade.

The wall as it stands now is in dire need of repair. Although the exact speed of any decay is difficult to measure, continued effects of rain and frost will only result in further deterioration to the wall's fabric.

## 8 Acknowledgements

Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Colchester Borough Council for commissioning and funding the historic building recording.  
The recording was carried out by Mark Baister and Gareth Morgan.  
Figures are by Mark Baister, except for Fig 4 taken from CAT Report 144 and elevation of town wall from CAT archives (Fig 6 - drawn in 1990).  
The project was monitored by Dr Jess Tipper for Colchester Borough Council.

## 9 References

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

Baggs, A P, Board, B, Crummy, P, Dove, C, Durgan, S, Goose, N R, Pugh, R B, Studd, P and Thornton, C C	1994	<i>A History of the County of Essex: Volume 9, the Borough of Colchester. "Walls and gates" p248-251. Eds. Cooper, J and Elrington, C R</i>
CAR 3	1984	<i>Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex</i>
CAR 6	1992	<i>Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilbert School, and other sites in Colchester 1971-85</i>
CAT Report 144	2000	<i>Colchester town wall: miscellaneous sites from 1987 to 2000</i>
CAT Report 347	2009	<i>Roman buildings, the rear face of the Roman town wall and archaeological investigations in Insulas 1a, 1b, 9a and 9b, at the Sixth Form College, North Hill, Colchester, Essex April 2005-March 2006</i>
CAT Report 356	2006	<i>An archaeological investigation of the Roman town wall at Roman Road, Colchester, Essex: October 2004 and February 2006</i>
CAT Report 955	2016	<i>A survey of the Town Wall in the Bus Depot, Queen Street, Colchester, Essex</i>
CAT Report 1000	forthcoming	<i>A miscellany of Colchester and Essex sites: 1984-2000</i>
CAT Report 1022	2016	<i>Historic building recording and test-pit evaluation at Duncan's Gate, Colchester, CO1 1UN, July 2016</i>
CAT Report 1184	2017	<i>Historic building recording at Town Wall Section 11, Rear of 62 Priory Street (Priory Lodge), Colchester, CO1 2QE, August 2017</i>
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures</i>
Crummy, P	1997	<i>City of Victory: the story of Colchester – Britain's first Roman town</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National planning policy framework</i>
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England East Anglian Archaeological occasional papers 14 by Gurney, D.</i>
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England, East Anglian Archaeological occasional papers 24 by Medlycott, M</i>
Historic England	2015	<i>MoRPHE: Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i>
Historic England	2016	<i>Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice</i>
Hull, M.R.	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i>

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by the ECC
HE	Historic Environment
modern	period from the 19th century onwards to the present
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> cces <b>S</b> to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
septaria	a compacted clay used as building material by the Romans

## 11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museum (under accession code COLEM 2017.140).

## 12 Contents of archive

### Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:  
The report (CAT Report 1183)  
Original site record (layer sheets, finds record, plans, sections)  
Site digital photos and log, attendance register, risk assessment

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### Distribution list

Dr Jess Tipper, CBCAA  
Sarah Poppy, Historic England  
EHER



### Colchester Archaeological Trust

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checked by: Philip Crummy  
date: 17/10/2017

**Appendix 1:  
Full digital photographic record  
(images on accompanying CD)**

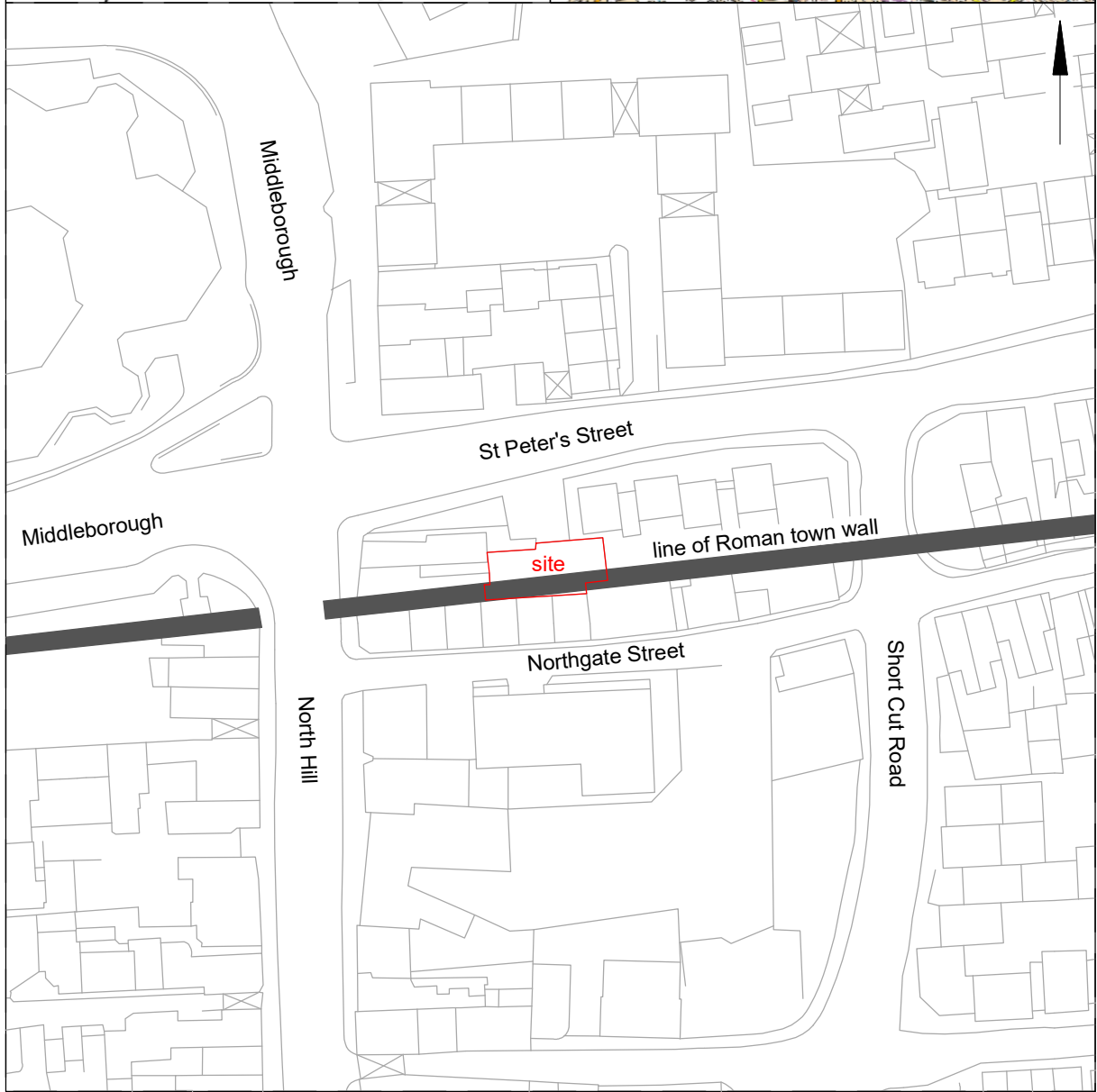
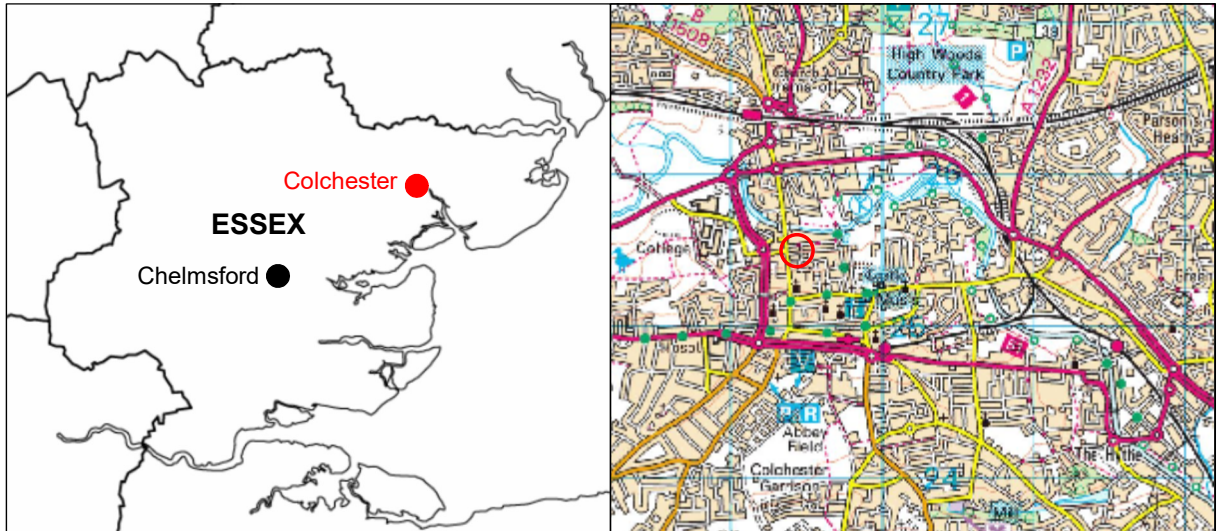
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 001.JPG	Shot showing wall between Middleborough and Northgate street. Photograph taken facing north-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 002.JPG	Southern half of Section 21 before removal of overgrowth. Photograph taken facing south-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 003.JPG	Southern half of Section 21 before removal of overgrowth. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 004.JPG	Wall before removal of overgrowth. Photograph taken facing north-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 005.JPG	Site shot, showing rear of 1 Middleborough. Photograph taken facing north.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 006.JPG	Southern half of Section 21 before removal of overgrowth. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 007.JPG	Shot showing tree growing from town wall. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 008.JPG	Detailed shot of brickwork on wall prior to overgrowth. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 009.JPG	Section 21 before removal of overgrowth. Photograph taken facing north-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 010.JPG	Southern half of Section 21 before removal of overgrowth. Photograph taken facing south-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 011.JPG	Detailed shot of south of Section 21, showing wall beneath buildings on Northgate Street. Photograph taken facing south-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 012.JPG	Northern half of Section 21 before removal of overgrowth. Photograph taken facing north-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 013.JPG	Site shot showing use of site as a car park. Photograph taken facing south-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 014.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #1. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 015.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #2. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 016.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #3. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 017.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #4. Photograph taken facing west.

Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 018.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #5. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 019.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #6. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 020.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #7. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 021.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #8. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 022.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #9. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 023.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #10. Photograph taken facing west.
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Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 025.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #12. Photograph taken facing west.
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Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 031.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #18. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 032.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #19. Photograph taken facing west.



Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 033.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #20. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 034.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #21. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 035.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #22. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 036.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #23. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 037.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #24. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 038.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #25. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 039.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #26. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 040.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #27. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 041.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #28. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 042.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #29. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 043.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, going from south to north #30. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 044.JPG	Shot of Section 21 during survey. Photograph taken facing south-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 045.JPG	Shot of Section 21 during survey. Photograph taken facing north-west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 046.JPG	Shot of Section 21 during survey. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 047.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, retaken after car moved #31. Photograph taken facing west.

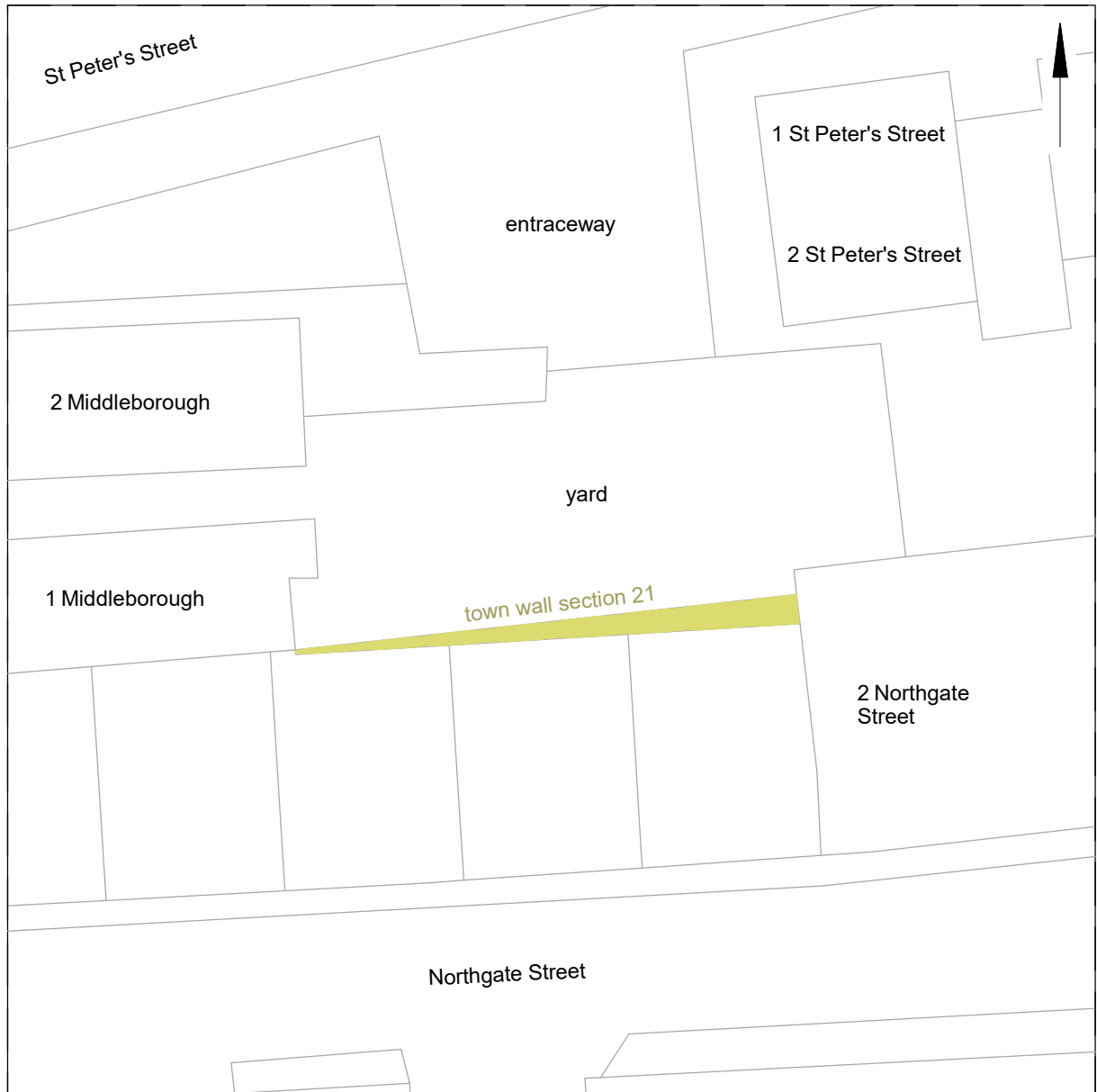
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 048.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, retaken after car moved #32. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 049.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, retaken after car moved #33. Photograph taken facing west.
Town Wall behind 1 Middleborough, Colchester HBR 050.JPG	Detailed photograph with grid points for the creation of a rectified elevation, retaken after car moved #34. Photograph taken facing west.



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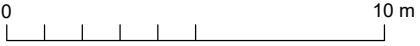
Fig 1 Site location.





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Fig 2 Detailed plan of site, showing surviving town wall.



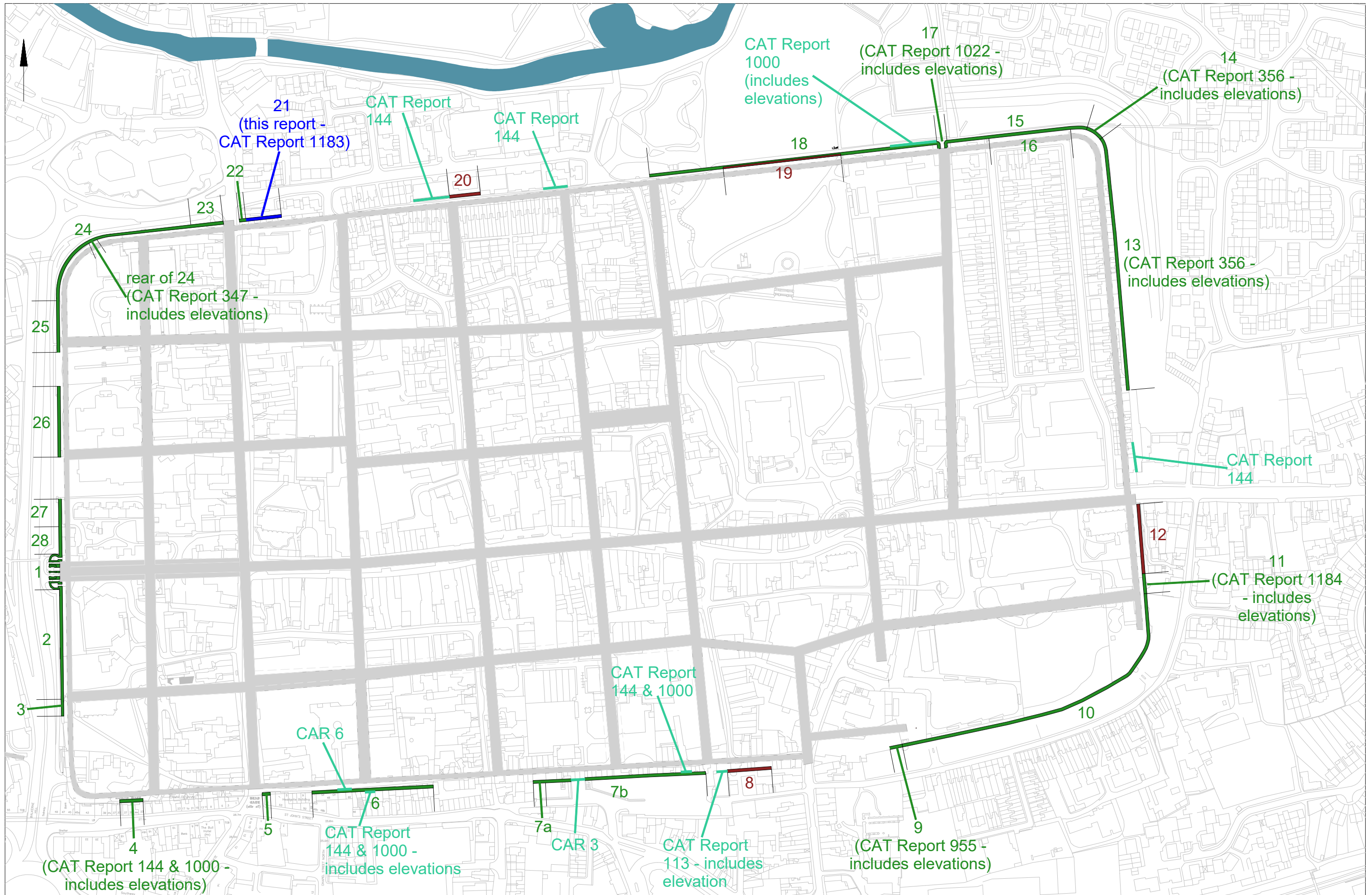
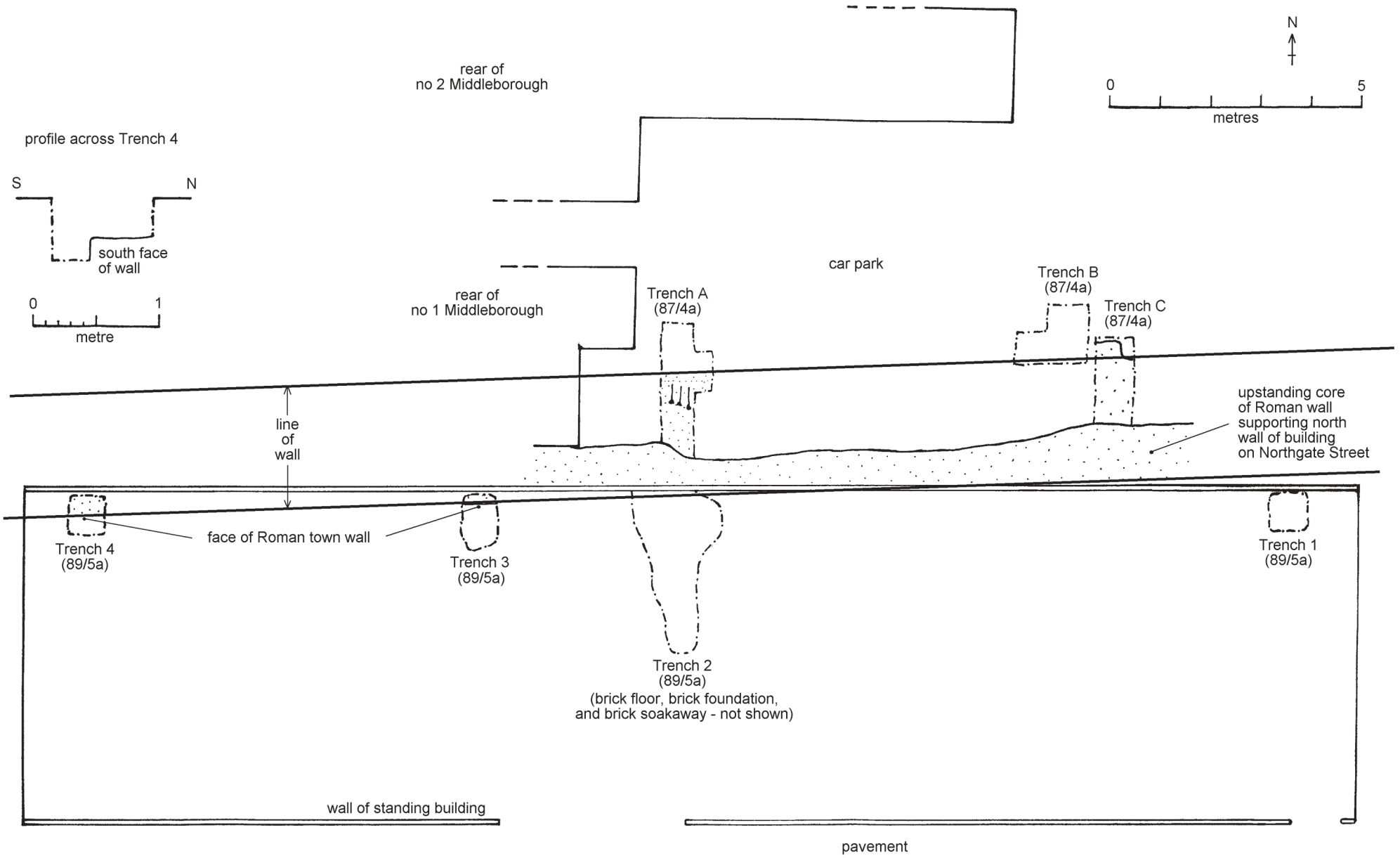


Fig 3 Plan showing previous recording of the town wall. Section numbers of standing elements of wall are as per the drawing project undertaken in the 1980-90s (unpublished). Any associated CAT reports and CAR's detailing sections of wall are noted.

drawn
  not drawn

0 200 m

Fig 4 Detailed plan of 1987 and 1989 trenches around Section 21 of the town wall. Reproduced from figure 2 of CAT Report 144.



89/5a 2 Northgate Street  
87/4a (part of) and 1 Middleborough

Northgate Street

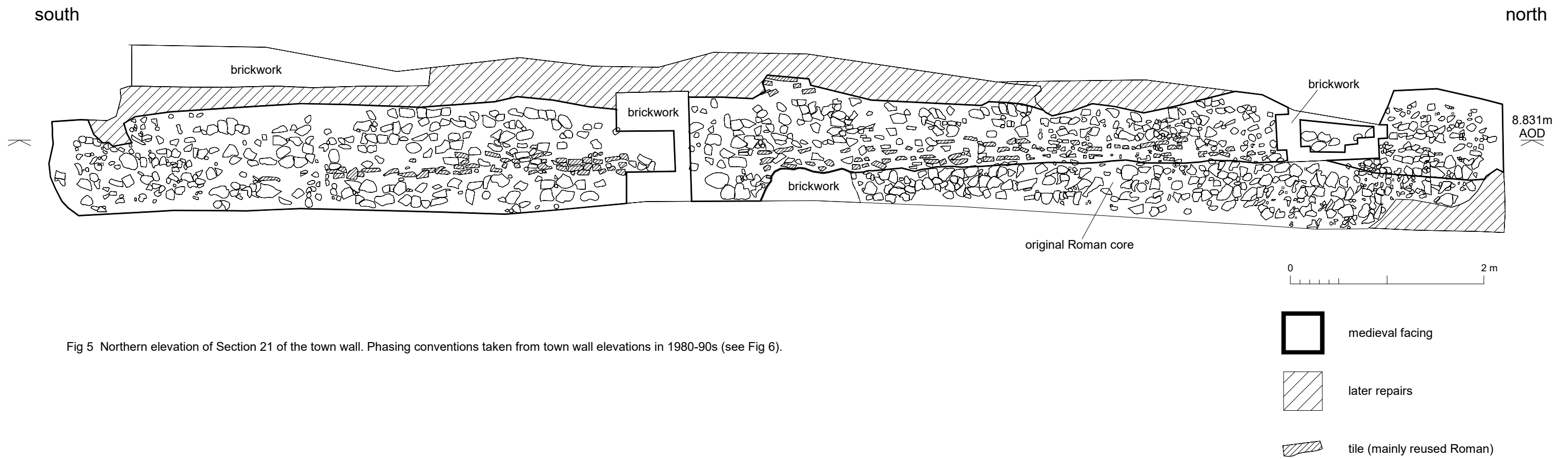
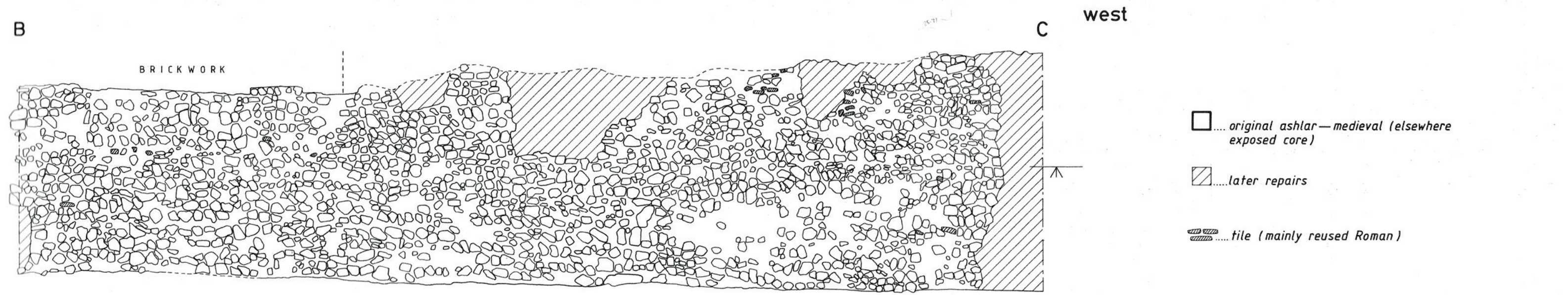
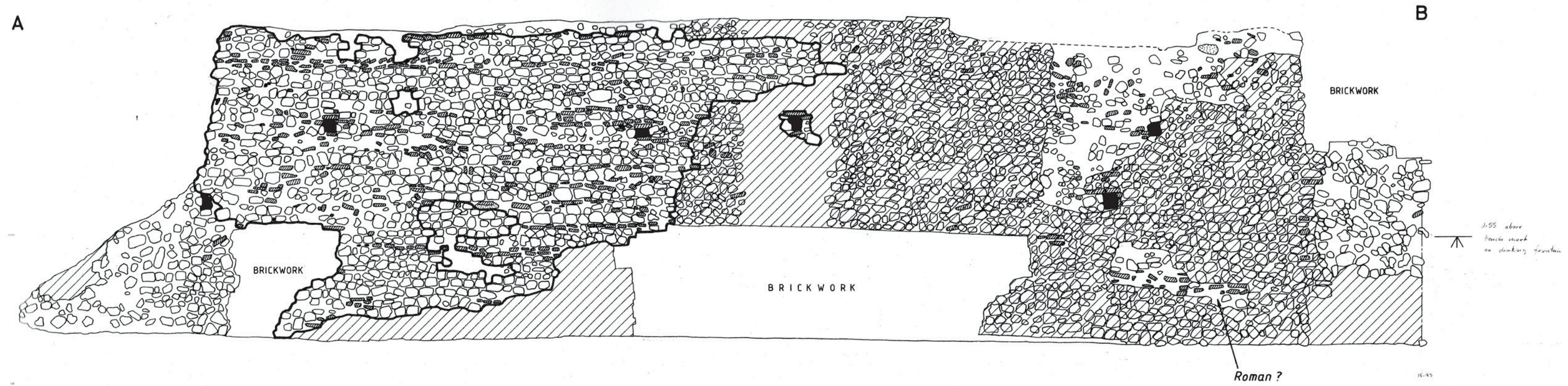


Fig 5 Northern elevation of Section 21 of the town wall. Phasing conventions taken from town wall elevations in 1980-90s (see Fig 6).



THE ROMAN TOWN WALL, COLCHESTER, ESSEX      Section 23  
 1990      Drawing No. 3411

Fig 6 Elevations of Section 23 of town wall. Drawn in 1990.



# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester, CO1 1WD	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 9942 2550 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project ref.: 17/08e CHER ref: ECC4044 OASIS ref: colchest3-291837
<b>Type of work:</b> Historic Building Recording	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> August 2017	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 8 square metres (approximately)
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Colchester museum accession code: 2017.140	<b>Funding source:</b> Colchester Borough Council
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related CHER/EHER number(s):</b> -
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 1183	
<b>Periods represented:</b> Roman, Medieval, Modern	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust at Section 21 of the town wall, to the rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester in August 2017.</p> <p>Trenching carried out on the site in 1987 showed that the wall has lost 1m of its width above ground. The current septaria and tile facing on the north elevation was probably added in the 14th century, during extensive renovation works carried out on the wall, and the rebuilding of nearby North Gate.</p> <p>Until recently (at least 1938) the wall had structures built up against its northern elevation, and evidence of this still exists in the form of sections of modern brickwork. Now it is exposed, the section of wall has begun to decay at an increasing rate, and conservation work is required to preserve it.</p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> CAT Report 144	
<b>CBC monitor:</b> Jess Tipper	
<b>Keywords:</b> town wall	<b>Significance:</b> *
<b>Author of summary:</b> Mark Baister	<b>Date of summary:</b> October 2017

# Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for historic building recording at Town Wall Section 21, Rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester, CO1 1WD

**NGR:** TL 99424 25505 (centre)

**Planning reference:** n/a

**Client:** Mark Wicks, Colchester Borough Council Homes

**Curating Museum:** Colchester

**Museum accession code:** [tbc](#)

**CAT Project code:** 17/08e

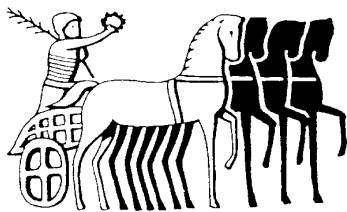
**CHER Event number:** [tbc](#)

**OASIS ref:** colchest3-291837

**Site Manager:** Mark Baister

**CBC Monitor:** Jess Tipper

**This WSI written:** 02-08-2017



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,  
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*tel:* 01206 501785  
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## Site location and description

Section 21 of Colchester's Town Wall is located on the north-west corner of the Town Walls in the centre of Colchester, Essex, just off of St Peter's Street, at the rear of 1 Middleborough (currently occupied by the retail business 'King Kebab'). The site is centred on NGR TL 99424 25505 (Fig 1 & 2).

## Proposed work

The proposed work comprises the conservation of the section of wall.

## Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive, the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record accessed via the Heritage Gateway:

Section 21 of the town wall is located on the north-west corner of the Roman Town Wall (scheduled monument NHLE no. 1003772). The wall was built around the town in the late 1st-century AD following the revolt led by Boudica. It is constructed of a core of layered septaria and mortar with coursed septaria and tile on each face. A recent study has concluded that the wall has an average width of 2.67m (including offsets) which is equivalent to precisely nine Roman feet (*pedes monetales*). A hypothetical cross-section of the wall shows the foundations as being 3.77m wide (Crummy 1997). Previous work shows that some of the wall foundations were surprisingly shallow at 600mm deep (Hull 1958, 25-6). Work by CAT at the Sixth Form College in 2005 shows the stone foundations to be 1.2m deep with wooden piles below (CAT Report 347), although, being water-logged, ground conditions here presumably explain their exceptional depth. Trial-holes confirmed that survival of the foundations varies. Where they have not been robbed away, the foundations extend 2.1m from the existing face of the wall and are in a sound state of preservation.

Above ground, the survival of the wall is very patchy. Some sections are in relatively good condition, with large areas of intact facing surviving (such as around Balkerne Gate to the west of the town). The section of wall to the rear of 1 Middleborough, however, is much diminished in height, and has suffered from recent collapse.

## Planning background

As a scheduled monument, the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA) advised that an archaeological impact assessment would be required in the form of a Historic England Level 3 building survey of the surviving wall. This specification is laid out in a brief for the required archaeological work, to be undertaken in advance of the conservation work. This recommendation is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

Colchester Archaeological Trust has prepared this Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) in response to the CBCAA's brief for submission to Colchester Borough Council Planning Department.

Any variations to this WSI will be agreed beforehand with the Archaeological Advisor of CBC (CBCAA).

## Requirement for work

The required archaeological work is for historic building recording. Details are given in a Project Brief written by the CBCAA (*Brief for historic building recording* - CBC 2017).

## Building recording

The building recording will comprise a Historic England Level 3 survey of section 21 of Colchester's Roman Town Wall.

The remains will be described, drawn and photographed. Specifically this will consider:

- Plan form of the site.
- Materials and method of construction.
- Date(s) of the structure.
- Function and layout.
- Original and later phasing, additions and their effect on the internal/external fabric and the level of survival of original fabric.
- The significance of the site on a regional level.

## **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, c)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2017)
- the Project Brief issued by CBC Archaeological Adviser (CBC 2017)

Professional CAT archaeologists will undertake all specified 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 the CBCAA one week before start of work.

Vegetation will need to be cleared from the wall to facilitate good recording. Any plants will be cut back to face of the masonry but the roots left intact to avoid damage to the scheduled monument.

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 CBCAA 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**

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows:

Building recording: One building recorder and one surveyor for one day.

## **Building Recording Methodology**

A Historic England Level 3 survey of section 21 of the Town Wall will be undertaken.

A documentary, cartographic and pictorial survey of the evidence pertaining to the history and evolution of the section of wall will be made. Sources consulted will include:

- Essex Historic Environment Record.
- Colchester Historic Environment Record.
- Essex Records Office.
- The site owner.

A large-scale block plan will be made of the site using the current OS 1:2500 map extract.

Plans and elevations at a scale of 1:100 will be made of the wall, tied into the descriptive text and accompanying photographic record.

The wall will be viewed, described and photographed. The description will seek to address materials, dimensions, method of construction and phasing.

A full photographic record will be made comprising colour digital photographs. This record will include both general shots and details of features (ie structural detail). A photographic scale will be included in the case of detailed photographs. Rectified photographs will be created of the entire section of wall. The photographic record will be accompanied by a photographic register detailing (as a minimum) location and direction of shot.

The completed plans will be clearly annotated to show the location and orientation of photographs taken as part of the survey.

Fully annotated photographic plates supporting the text will be reproduced as colour laser copies.

The guidelines contained in *Historic England: Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice (2016)* will be adhered to. In addition, RCHME: *Descriptive Specification 3rd Edition*, ClfA's *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures (2014)* and the appropriate sections of the *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (East Anglian Archaeology occasional paper 14, 2003)* and *Research and Archaeology Revised: A Revised Framework for the East of England (EAA 24, 2011)* and *Management of research projects in the historic environment (MoRPHE)* will be used for additional guidance in the design of the project specification, the contents of the report, and for the general execution of the project.

## Results

Notification will be given to the 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)*.

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

The report will contain:

- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the investigation.
- A brief history of this section of the Roman Town Wall.
- Location maps, plans and annotated drawings tied into the OS Grid.
- Labelled re-productions of a representative sample of the photographs.
- Detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and supplied to the 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 at Colchester & Ipswich Museum.

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

The archive will be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum within 3 months of the completion of the final report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to the CBCAA.

## Monitoring

The 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 the CBCAA one week in advance of its commencement.

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

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

## References

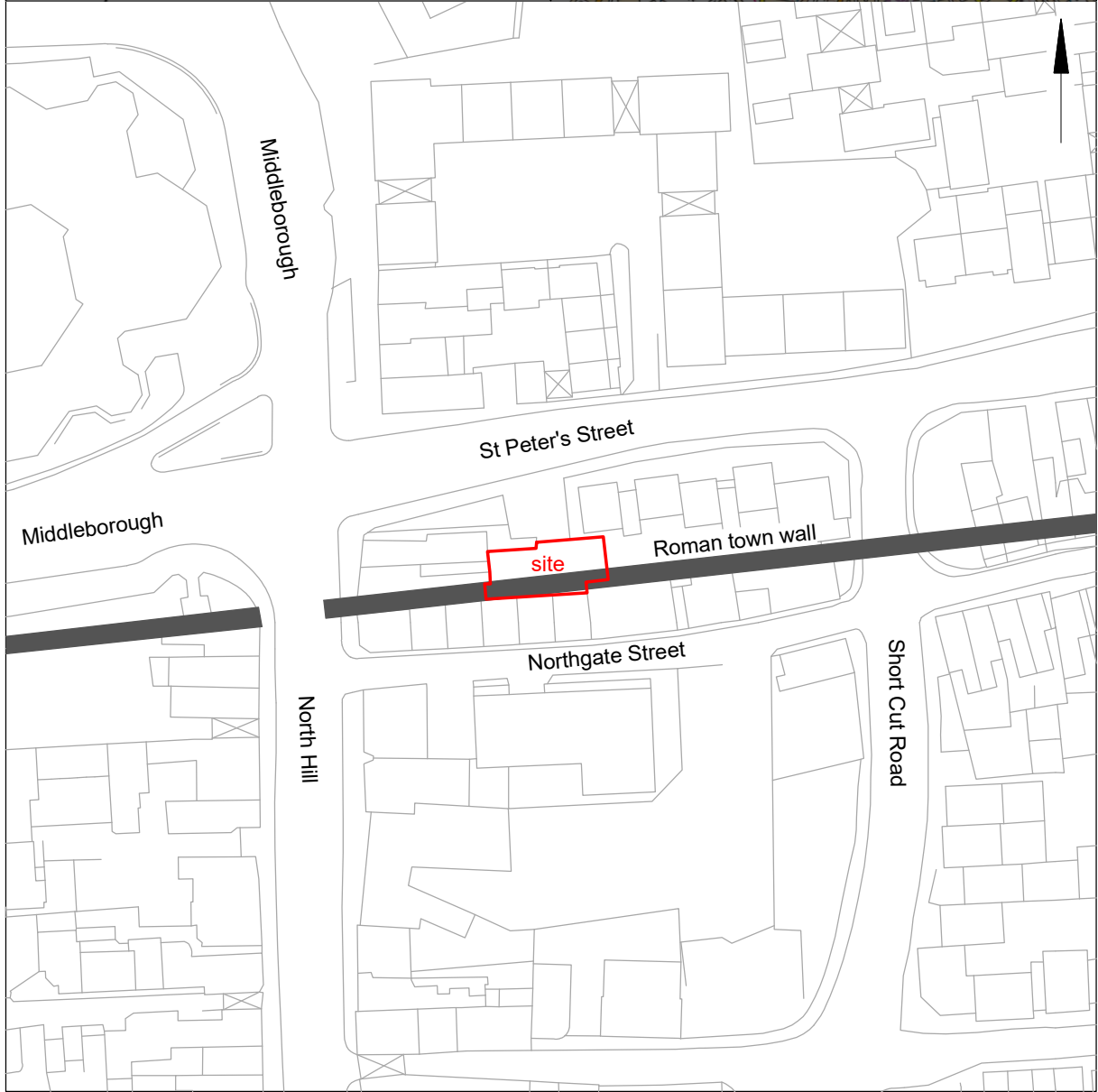
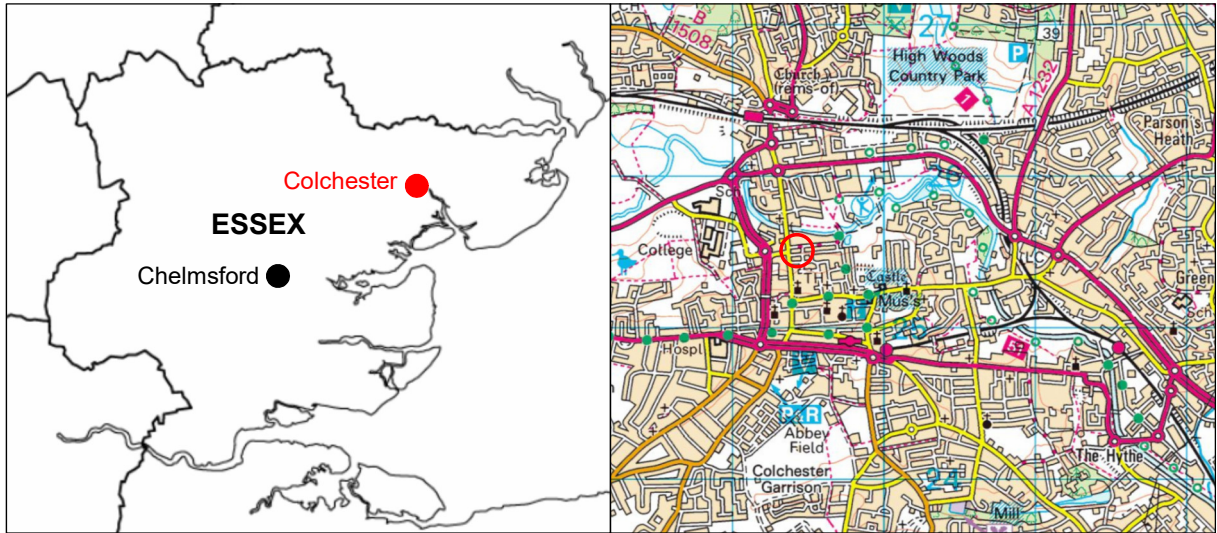
CBC	2016	<i>Brief for Historic Building Recording at Town Wall Section 21, Rear of 1 North Hill, Colchester</i> by Jess Tipper
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures</i>
CAT	2017	<i>Policies and procedures</i>
CAT Report 347	2009	<i>Roman buildings, the rear face of the Roman town wall and archaeological investigations in Insulas 1a, 1b, 9a and 9b, at the Sixth Form College, North Hill, Colchester, Essex: April 2005-March 2006</i>
Crummy, P	1997	<i>City of Victory the story of Colchester - Britain's first Roman town</i>
Crummy, P	2003	'Colchester's town wall' in <i>The archaeology of Roman towns: studies in honour of John S Wachter</i> , ed by P Wilson
DCLG	2012	<i>National planning policy framework</i>
Historic England	2015	<i>MoRPHE: Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i>
Historic England	2016	<i>Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice</i>
Gurney, D.	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> East Anglian Archaeological, occasional papers 14 ( <b>EAA14</b> )
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> , RRCSAL 20
Medlycott, M.	2011	<i>Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeological Occasional Papers 24 ( <b>EAA 24</b> )

M Baister



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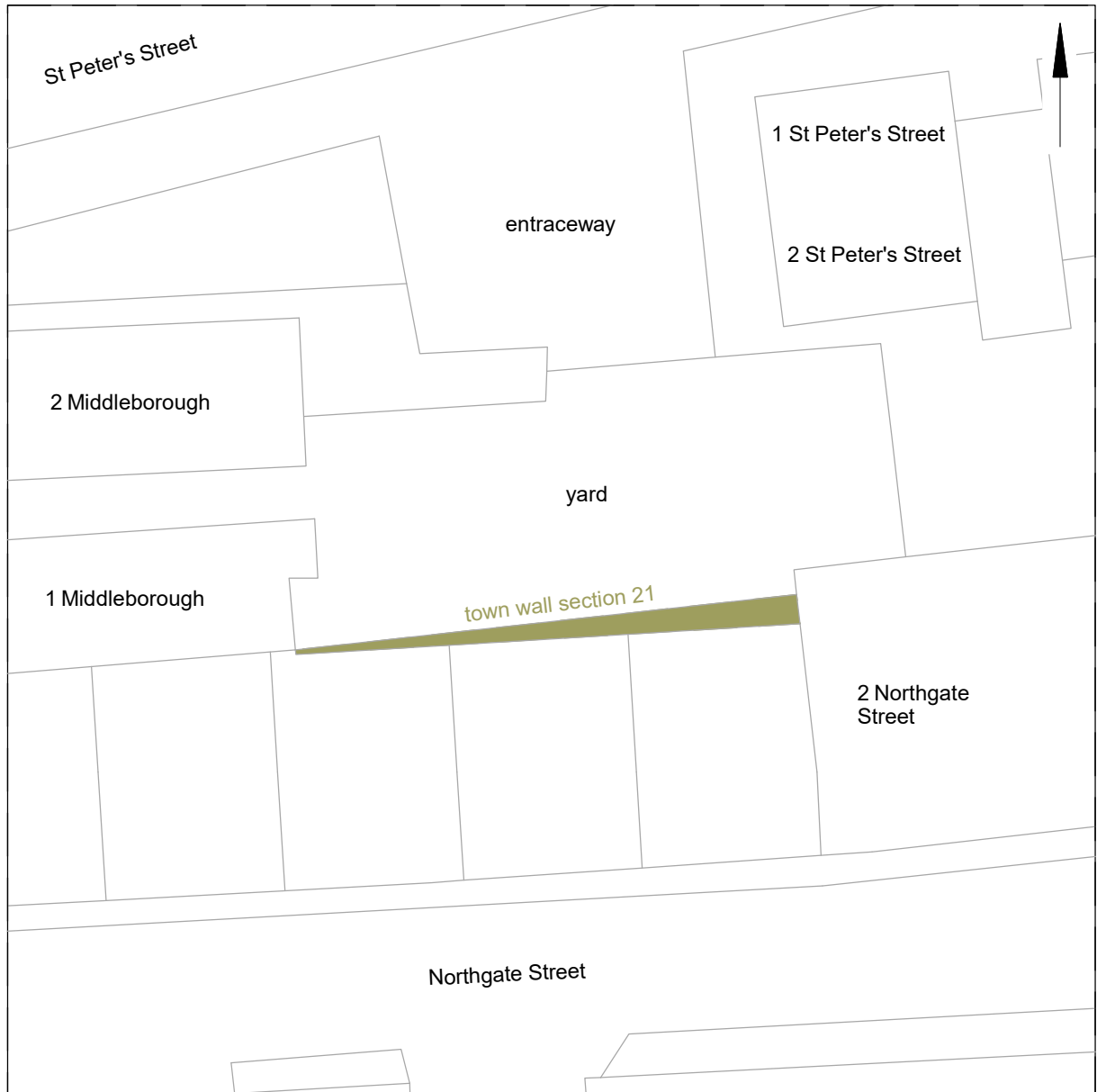


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Fig 1 Site location.







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Fig 2 Detailed plan of site, showing surviving town wall.

0 10 m

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## Printable version

**OASIS ID: colchest3-291837**

### Project details

Project name	A historic building recording at Town Wall Section 21, Rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester, CO1 1WD
Short description of the project	A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust at Section 21 of the town wall, to the rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester in August 2017. Trenching carried out on the site in 1987 showed that the wall has lost 1m of its width above ground. The current septaria and tile facing on the north elevation was probably added in the 14th century, during extensive renovation works carried out on the wall, and the rebuilding of nearby North Gate. Until recently (at least 1938) the wall had structures built up against its northern elevation, and evidence of this still exists in the form of sections of modern brickwork. Now it is exposed, the section of wall has begun to decay at an increasing rate, and conservation work is required to preserve it.
Project dates	Start: 21-08-2017 End: 17-10-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	17/08e - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	2017.140 - Museum accession ID
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4044 - HER event no.
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 6 - Land boundary
Monument type	TOWN WALL Roman
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	"Annotated Sketch","Measured Survey","Photographic Survey","Rectified photography","Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure"
Prompt	Conservation/ restoration

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Rear of 1 Middleborough

Postcode CO1 1WD  
 Study area 8 Square metres  
 Site coordinates TL 99424 25505 51.89183944138 0.898515756353 51 53 30 N 000 53 54 E Point

### Project creators

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

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
 Digital Archive recipient Colchester Museum  
 Digital Archive ID 2017.140  
 Digital Contents "Survey"  
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey"  
 Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum  
 Paper Archive ID 2017.140  
 Paper Contents "Survey"  
 Paper Media available "Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  
 Title Historic building recording at Town Wall Section 21, Rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester, CO1 1WD August 2017  
 Author(s)/Editor(s) Baister, M.  
 Other bibliographic details CAT Report 1183  
 Date 2017  
 Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust  
 Place of issue or publication Colchester  
 Description A4 bound report with clear plastic front and opaque black back.

URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/summaries/CAT-1183.html>

Entered by Mark Baister (mb@catuk.org)

Entered on 17 October 2017

## OASIS:

Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice

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