

Archaeological evaluation on land west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle, Essex, CM1 3YA

September 2018



by Laura Pooley

figures by Ben Holloway and Emma Holloway

fieldwork by Ben Holloway and Emma Holloway

commissioned by Gillian Holtom

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out on land to the west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle, Essex in advance of the construction of a new dwelling. Located within the historic settlement of Writtle, which has its origins in the late Anglo-Saxon period, evaluation revealed one modern pit and four sherds of medieval pottery.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle, Essex which was carried out on 27th September 2018. Commissioned by Gillian Holtom in advance of the construction of a new dwelling, work was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Alison Bennett advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2018).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Alison Bennett (ECCPS 2018), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2018).

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

3 Archaeological background

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

The EHER shows that the development sites lies within the historic settlement of Writtle, which has its origins in the late Anglo-Saxon period. On The Green, immediately south of the development, lie a number of listed buildings (EHER 30926-30933) reflecting its historic location. Test-pits dug between 2009-2013 recovered evidence for medieval and post-medieval occupation to the east, south and west of the site (EHER 48702, 48703, 48810, 48826, 48827, 48828, 48831, 48892).

Approximately 350m to the northeast lies the cropmark of a circular enclosure (EHER 18180) and the supposed site of a camp (EHER 18584). All Saints Church (EHER 705) is location 250m to the south, in the grounds of which Roman finds have been discovered.

4 Aims

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to determine the location, extent, date, and character of any surviving archaeological remains, to identify evidence of late Saxon, medieval or post-medieval settlement and to identify any evidence of earlier activity.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

A single L-shaped trial-trench, totalling 20m long by 1.8m wide, was machine excavated within the footprint of the proposed new dwelling under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

The trench was excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.24-0.3m thick) and a layer of post-medieval/modern accumulation (L2, c 0.52-0.7m thick) into natural silty-clays (L3). A sondage was excavated to confirm the identification of L3 as natural.

Modern pit (F1) was the only archaeological feature present. It was half-sectioned but not fully excavated as it exceeded the safe dig limit of 1.2m below current ground level. A small quantity of residual medieval pottery was recovered from the pit along with post-medieval and modern finds.



Photograph 1 Excavation of F1, looking south



Photograph 2 Trench shot, looking east

6 Finds

by Laura Pooley, pottery identified by Howard Brooks

A small quantity of medieval, post-medieval and modern finds were recovered from accumulation L2, pit F1 and unstratified from the spoil heap. All finds are described in Table 1, pottery fabric descriptions follow CAR 7.

Context no.	Finds no.	Description
L2	1	<p>Post-medieval and modern pottery: Five sherds (55g) of post-medieval red earthenware (Fabric 40, CAR 7), c 1550-1750; one sherd (44g) of flower pot in unglazed red earthenware (Fabric 51B, CAR 7), 19th to 20th century.</p> <p>Post-medieval ceramic building material: Incomplete paving brick (830g), 95mm wide by 40mm thick, ?17th/18th century; four fragments of peg-tile (312g).</p> <p>Clay pipe: Three fragments of clay pipe stem, two joining (16g), post-medieval.</p> <p>Heat-altered stone: One fragment of burnt flint (24g).</p>
F1	2	<p>Medieval, post-medieval and modern pottery: Two sherds (26g) of medieval sandy greyware (Fabric 20), c 1175-1400; two sherds (14g) of Colchester-type ware (Fabric 21a), c 1200-1600; frilled base sherd (32g) from a post-medieval red earthenware jug (Fabric 40), c 1550-1750; and one sherd of flower pot (6g) in unglazed red earthenware (Fabric 51B), 19th to 20th century.</p> <p>Post-medieval ceramic building material: Fragment of brick (122g) and seven fragments of peg-tile (390g), post-medieval.</p> <p>Animal bone: Two fragments of animal bone (26g) from a medium mammal.</p> <p>Clay pipe: Fragment of clay pipe stem (2g), post-medieval.</p> <p>Iron nail: Complete iron nail, shaft has round cross-section, round-head, clenched at tip, 40mm long.</p> <p>Coke/clinker: Two fragments (1g).</p>
-	-	<p>Items collected by the landowner/visitors from the spoil heap:</p> <p>Post-medieval and modern pottery: Sherd of post-medieval red earthenware (Fabric 40, CAR 7) (2g), c 1550-1750; four sherds of flower pot (Fabric 51b, CAR 7) (46g), 19th-20th century; two sherds of Staffordshire-type white earthenware (Fabric 48D, CAR 7) (6g), 19th-20th century.</p> <p>Post-medieval/modern tile: Two fragments of roof tile (116g).</p> <p>Clay pipe: Two fragments of clay pipe stem (6g).</p> <p>Metal objects: 1) lead washer, modern (6g); 2) fragment of lead (26g); 3) copper-alloy wheel from an old pulley washing line (80g).</p>

Table 1 All finds by context

7 Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation on land west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle revealed a modern pit that also contained four sherds of residual medieval pottery. There were no other significant archaeological remains.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Gillian Holtom for commissioning and funding the work, and Gordon Ingram and Dave Stock of Heritage Writtle for their advice. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway and E Holloway. Figures are by B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Alison Bennett.

9 References

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

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

Brown, N and Glazenbrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2 – Research Agenda and Strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology
CAT	2018	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2018	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation on land west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle, Essex, CM1 3YA</i>
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2016	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
ECCPS	2018	<i>Brief for archaeological evaluation at land west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Medlycott, M	2011a	<i>Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c AD 500 to 1066
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHES	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
ws	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained (returned to landowner as requested)

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1331)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (feature and layer sheets, finds record, sections)

Digital photographic thumbnails and log

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1331)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphics

Survey data

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 Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMRE: 2018.021.

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Distribution list:

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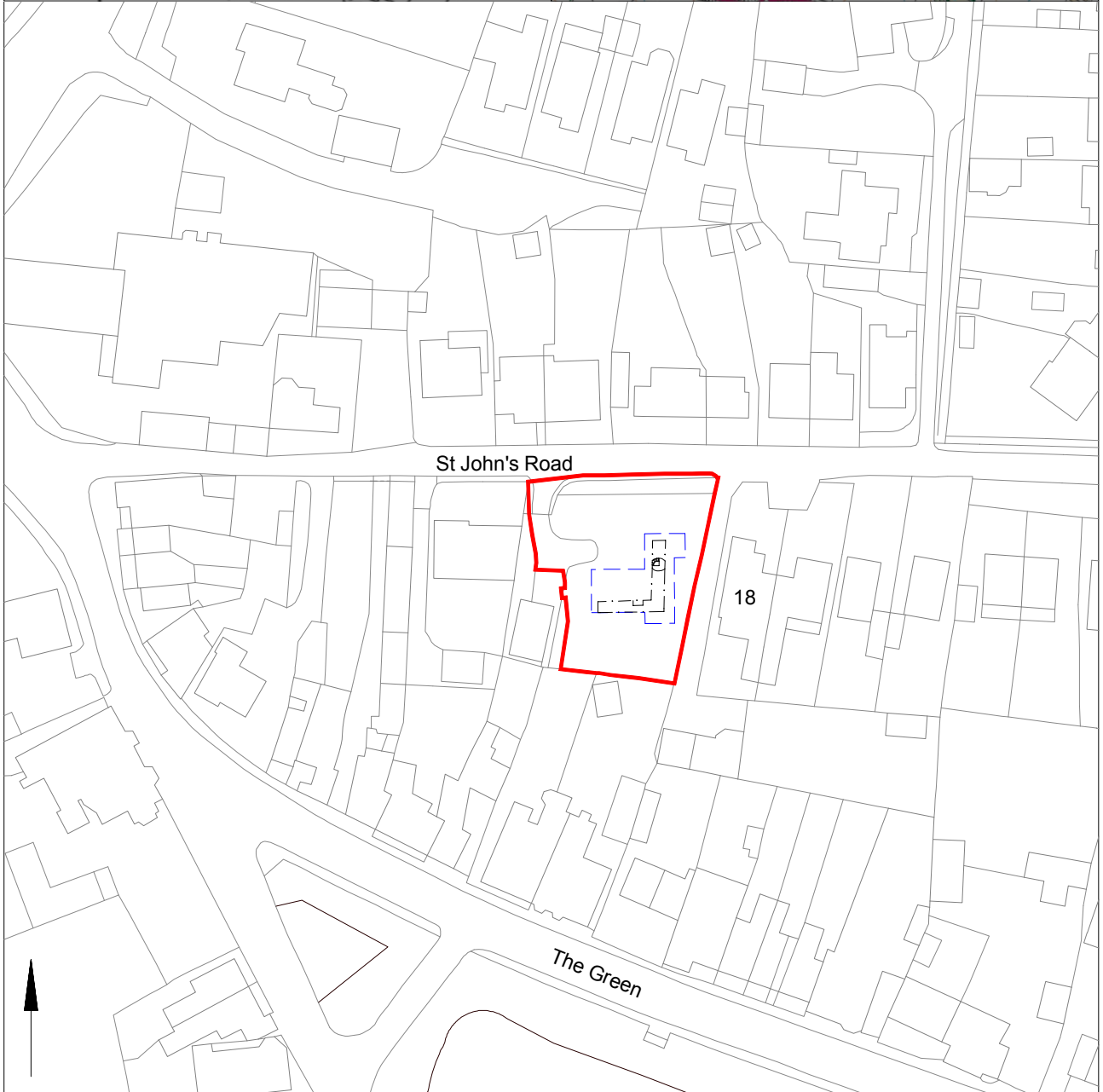
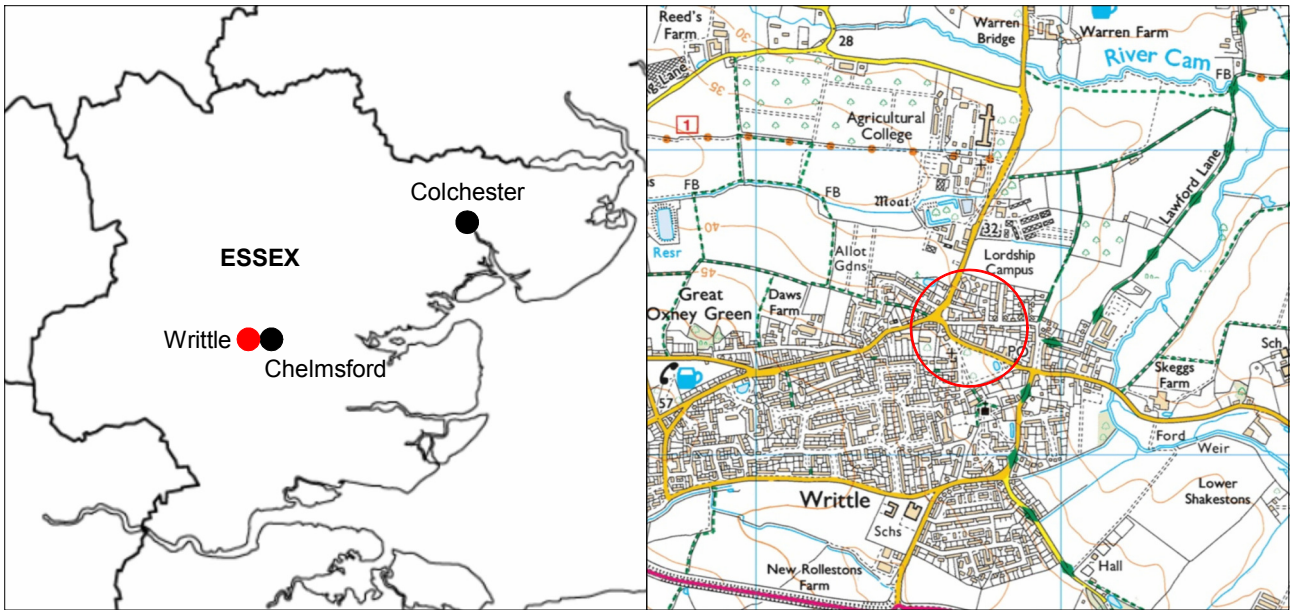
email: lp@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 8.10.2018

Appendix 1 Context list

Context no.	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
F1	2	Pit	Firm/hard, dry, light orange/dark brown silty-clay, containing fragments of post-medieval pottery, tile and coal	Post-medieval
L1	-	Topsoil	Loose, soft, moist, dark brown loam	Modern
L2	1	Accumulation	Firm, dry, light-medium brown silt containing fragments of post-medieval pottery, brick/tile and clay pipe	Post-medieval
L3	-	Natural	Hard, dry, light/dark yellow/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial



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Fig 1 Site location in relation to the proposed development (dashed blue)



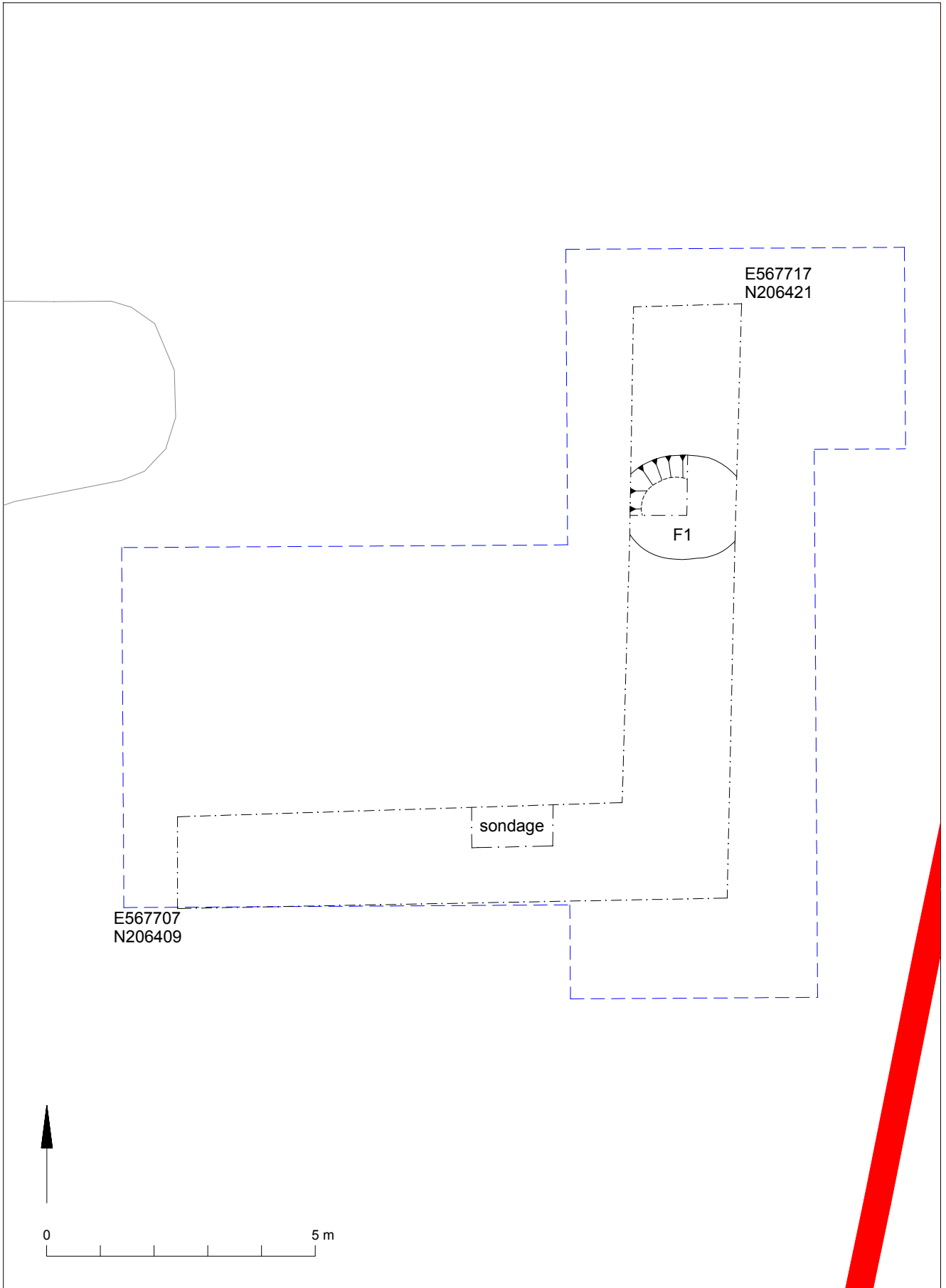


Fig 2 Results (proposed development dashed blue)

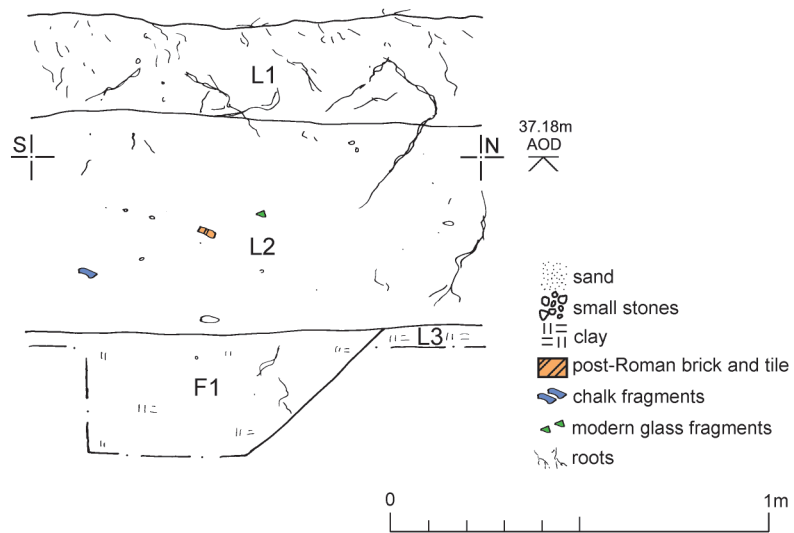


Fig 3 Feature and representative section.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-327220

Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation on land west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle, Essex, CM1 3YA
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out on land to the west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle, Essex in advance of the construction of a new dwelling. Located within the historic settlement of Writtle, which has its origins in the late Anglo-Saxon period, evaluation revealed one modern pit and four sherds of medieval pottery.
Project dates	Start: 27-09-2018 End: 27-09-2018
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	18/08i - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	CHL 18/01000/FUL - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	WRSJR18 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	CHMRE: 2018.021 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	PIT Modern
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CLAY PIPE Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX CHELMSFORD WRITTLE land west of 18 St John's Road
Postcode	CM1 3YA
Study area	0.07 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 6771 0641 51.730781757439 0.428817245491 51 43 50 N 000 25 43 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 36.74m Max: 36.88m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	HEM Team Officer, ECC
Project design originator	Sarah Carter
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Ben Holloway
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive notes	returned to landowner
Digital Archive recipient	Chelmsford Museum
Digital Archive ID	CHMRE: 2018.021
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Chelmsford Museum
Paper Archive ID	CHMRE: 2018.021
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic","other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological evaluation on land west of 18 St John's Road, Writtle, Essex, CM1 3YA: September 2018
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