



Colchester
Archaeological
Trust

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

CAT Report 1453	Parish: Colchester
67 Churchfields West Mersea Colchester Essex	Planning reference: 190241
	CHER Event no.: ECC4347
	OASIS ref.: colchest3-353455
Address: 67 Churchfields West Mersea Colchester Essex CO5 8QN	Grid Reference: TM 00846 12867
	Number of site visits: 2
	Dates of visits: 22nd and 23rd July 2019
Nature of the work: Observation of groundworks for a single-storey garden room to the side of the property.	
Reason for condition: The site lies within a known area of Roman occupation, near to the Church of St Peter and St Paul, which has its origins in the 11th century, and in the vicinity of the medieval priory, the precise location of which is unknown.	
% of total seen: 100% of the groundworks.	
Results: The excavation of foundation trenching for a garden room was archaeologically monitored in response to a Brief set by Jess Tipper of Colchester Borough Council Planning Services. A CAT archaeologist supervised the excavation of 16m of foundation trenching, 0.45m wide and 1.5m deep to the side of the property and a soakaway measuring 1m by 1m and 1.5m deep. Groundworks occurred through modern paving (L1, c 0.1m thick), modern topsoil (L2, c 0.4m thick, soft, dry/moist medium grey/brown silty-sand) and subsoil (L3, c 0.45m thick, soft, dry medium/dark grey/brown sandy-silt) onto natural (L4, firm, dry/moist medium orange sand).	
	
Photograph 1 Foundation trenching – looking northeast	

No significant archaeological remains or material were encountered.

Recorded by: Dr Elliott Hicks

Date: 24th July 2019



Colchester Archaeological Trust

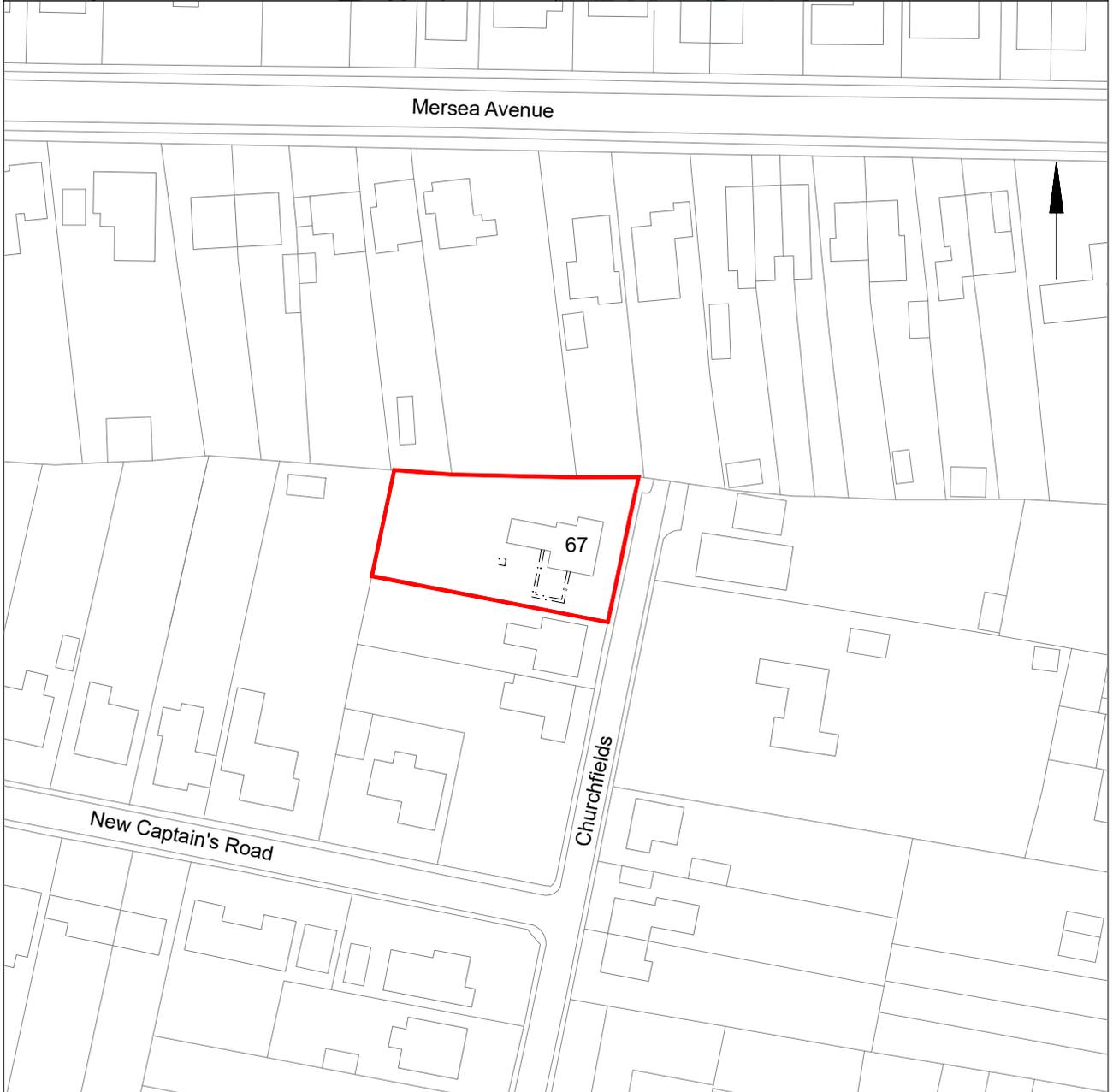
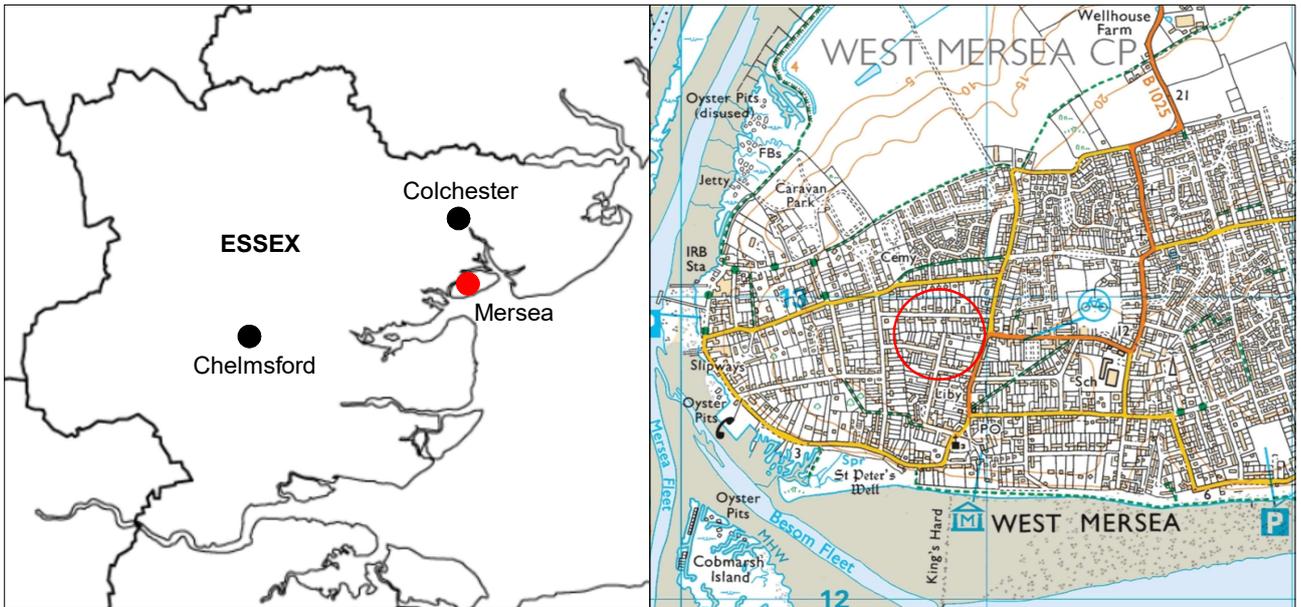
Roman Circus House,
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email: eh2@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy

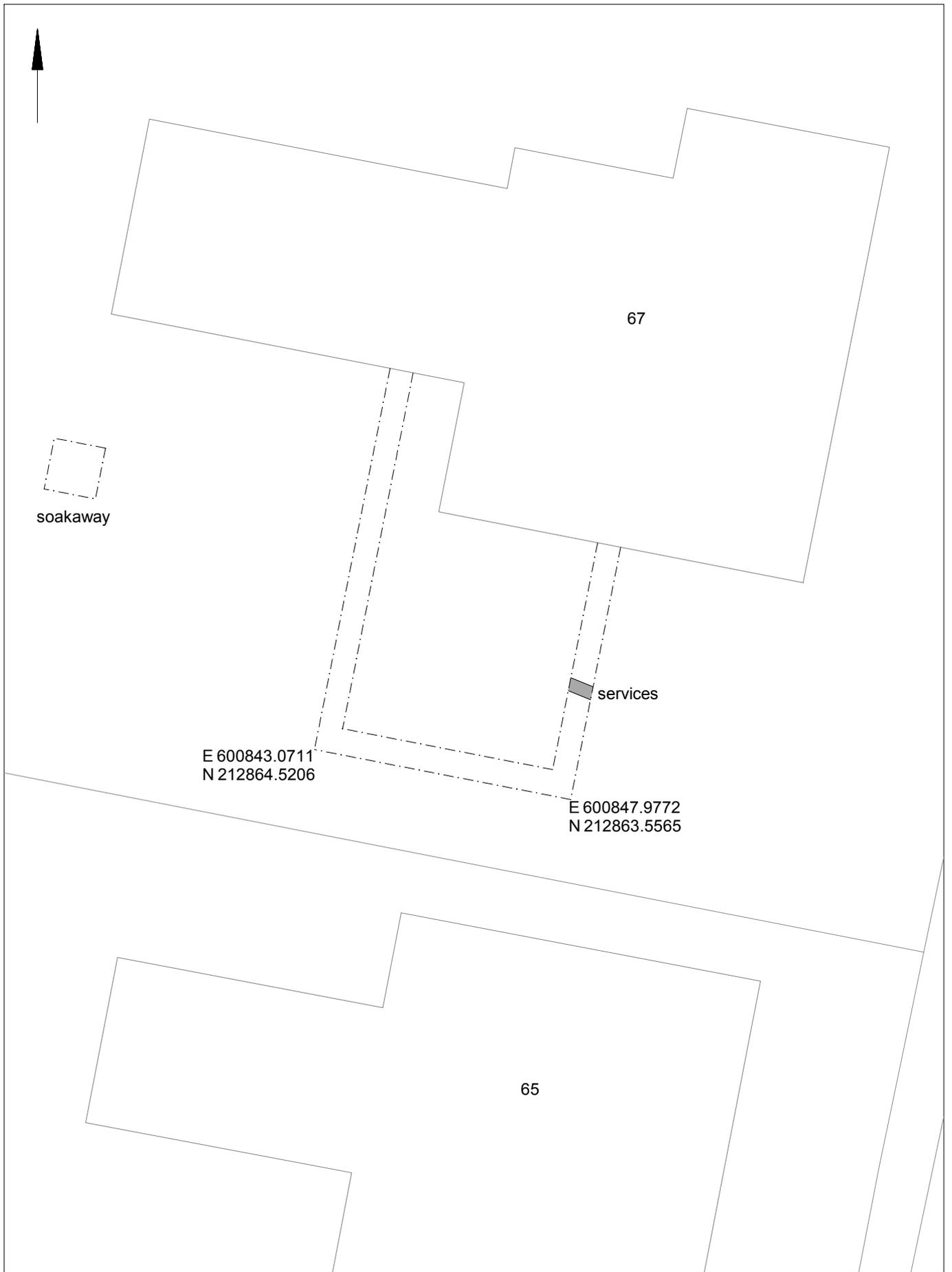
Date: 30.07.2019



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Fig 1 Site location.





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Fig 2 Results.



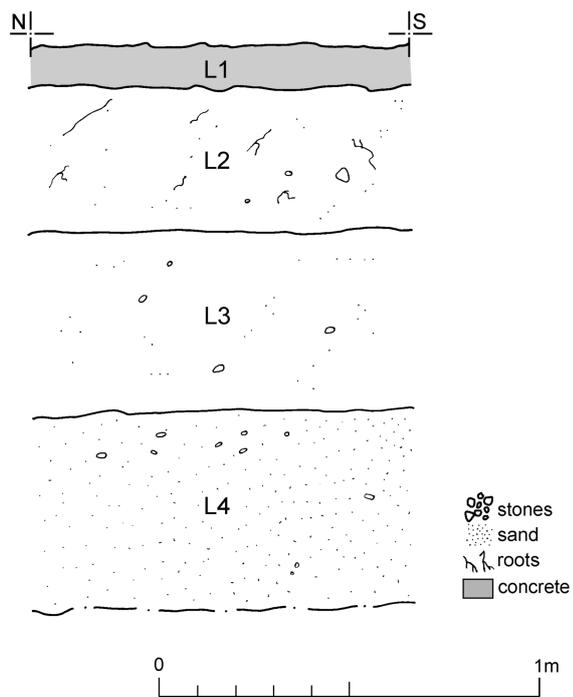


Fig 3 Representative section.

**Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)
for continuous archaeological monitoring and
recording at 67 Churchfields, West Mersea,
Colchester, Essex, CO5 8QN.**

NGR: TM 00846 12867 (centre)

Parish: West Mersea

Planning references: 190241

Commissioned by: Kevin Smith

On behalf of: James Woodhead

Curating museum: Colchester

CHER number: ECC4347

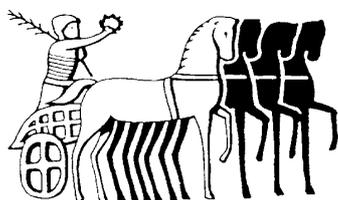
CAT project code: 2019/05r

OASIS project number: colchest3-353455

Site manager: Chris Lister

CBC monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 31/05/2019



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Site location and description

The proposed development site is located on the southwestern edge of Mersea Island at 67 Churchfields, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8QN (Fig 1). The site is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TM 00846 12867.

Proposed work

The development comprises the erection of a single storey garden room on the southern side of the dwelling and any associated groundworks.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (accessed via Colchester Heritage Explorer (<https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/map>)).

The proposed development lies within an area of high archaeological potential, specifically, within an area of Roman occupation, revealed by multiple sightings of wall foundations and floors and medieval remains related to the nearby church and priory. Development along the High Street have included a small excavation at Bonheur in 1922, which revealed a Roman stone wall set in *opus signinum* (CHER MCC8837). Further work by Hull in 1927 revealed Roman pottery, a bone pin and an iron knife (CHER ECC3540, **VCH** vol 3 p161). To the immediate east of the current site on land between the High Street to Captains Lane a possible Roman wall was recorded (CHER MCC8860). Adjacent to this in 2016 a Roman ditch was recorded during a watching brief by Britannia Archaeology (CHER MCC10065). A University of Cambridge Higher Education Field Academy outreach project in the area involved a series 1m² test pits (TPs) in open spaces (mostly private gardens). At 5 Mersea Avenue c 100m to the east-northeast, TP5 found a sherd of Roman and eight sherds of post-medieval pottery (MCC5729). TP3, at the rear of 32 St Peter's Road recovered Middle Iron Age and post-medieval pottery (MCC5727).

Approximately 360m to the south-southeast is West Mersea parish church (Church of St Peter and St Paul). The church is constructed of re-used Roman Kentish ragstone walls with Roman, and later brick. The earliest evidence (the lower part of the tower) appears to be 11th century in date (CHER MCC8909 & MCC4666). The area around the churchyard has had a number of sightings of finds. Cromwell Mortimer recorded seeing a mosaic and Roman remains in 1730 (**VCH** vol 3 p158-9). In 1896 Henry Laver observed a Roman wall (CHER MCC8858). CAT excavated three trial pits in 1991 prior to extensions to the church. Only some residual Roman finds were recorded (CAT Report 1000 vol 3).

To the west of the church is thought to be the location of a medieval priory. Although the exact location is uncertain, it was recorded to have been established in 1046 AD (CHER MCC8835). Within this area Roman pavement and tesserae have been noted on more than one occasion (CHER MCC8838, CHER MCC8858 & MCC8909). On the southern side of Coast Road a well is thought to relate to the priory (CHER MCC9356).

On land to the north of Church Road CAT was called out by the Curator of West Mersea Museum to record where workmen had uncovered human remains in trenches for a sewerage trench for a new bungalow. Although the workmen had removed all the bone (?3 partial skulls, some limb and vertebrae bones) before the first visit, on the second visit the location of a human skull was recorded. The skeletal remains were interpreted as medieval in date. It was also noted fragments of daub as well as Roman tile/brick fragments were seen in the backfill (CAT Report 1000 vol 3).

CAT carried out a series of work c 380m to the southeast at 20 Yorick Road. The rear of the property includes the location of a Roman *mausoleum* (CHER MCC8355 Scheduled Monument no. 1002195). An exploratory trench was undertaken to assess the exact location and condition of the *mausoleum* (CHER MCC2973, CAT Report 255). Followed by a watching brief exposing part of a Roman wall foundation (CHER MCC5406, CAT Report 330).

Several sites CAT have overseen during watching briefs in the area have proven devoid of any archaeological features or finds, including 63 Churchfields (CAT Report 1152), 6 High Street (CAT Report 576), 4 Meadow Lane (CHER MCC5553, CAT Report 420), 6 Meadow Lane (CAT Report 629), The Blackwater Hotel Church Road (CHER MCC5291, CAT Report 223), Howard's Cottage, 12a Church Road (CAT Report 1000 vol 3). It has been noted in some of these reports however that the land appeared to have comprised of made-up ground thought to be dated to the 1960s (8 High Street, CAT Report 118).

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in January 2019 (application No. 190241) proposing a *side garden room extension*.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

Requirement for work

The required archaeological work is for an archaeological investigation of all groundworks. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2019).

Specifically:

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

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 2018)
- the Project Brief issued by the CBCAA (CBC 2019).

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to CBCAA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER). This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A unique HER event number will be obtained from the CBCAA prior to the commencement of fieldwork. The curating museum will be notified of the details of the project and the event code, which will be used to identify the project archive when depositing at the end of the project.

Staffing

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

Monitoring methodology

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' ground works to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits. The investigation will involve monitoring of all groundworks and inspection of upcast soil.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be planned and recorded.

If any features or deposits uncovered are to be destroyed by the proposed development, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) and 100% of all complex features and burials (see Human Remains policy below).

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

Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas and trenches will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

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 micromorphological and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming the 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 do any processing and the flots passed to Val Fryer / Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF/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

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 or unless advised to do so by the project osteologist or CBCAA.

CBCAA will be notified immediately if any human remains are encountered during the investigation.

If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the monitoring, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them and seek advice from the project osteologist. Human remains removed from site for analysis this may involve radiocarbon dating (see finds section).

Following HE guidance (HE 2018) if the human remains are not to be lifted, the project osteologist should be available to record the human remain *in situ* (i.e. a site visit). Conditions laid down by the DoJ license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and the 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. Digital site photographs will be taken and archived as per Historic England guidelines (HE 2015a)

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number. CAT may use local volunteers to assist the CAT Finds Officer with this task.

Matthew Loughton (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley

animal bones (small groups): Alec Wade / Adam Wightman

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

animal bones (large groups)

project osteologist (human remains): Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

conservation of finds: staff at Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services / Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation)

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black / Ian Betts (MOLA)

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Nigel Brown

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.

A contingency will be made in the budget for scientific assessment/analysis. This can include soil micromorphological assessment, absolute dating in the event that archaeomagnetic and/or (more probably) radiocarbon dating is required, if burning is encountered or human remains (in which case it might be necessary to lift a small sample for absolute dating). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice on this.

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* (HE 2015b).

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

The report will contain:

- Location plan of the groundworks in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of the site will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

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

Results will be published, to at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series

Archive deposition

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

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

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

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum and provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration and analysis) as appropriate.

The archive will be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum or an alternate repository (approved by COLEM and CBCAA) within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAA. Digital archives will be curated with the Archaeology Data Service, or similar accredited digital archive repository, that safeguard the long-term curation of digital records.

The CBCAA will be notified of the archiving timetable throughout the project and once deposition has occurred.

A digital / vector drawing of the site be given to the CBCAA for integration into the HER.

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

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

Brown, D	2011	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
	2 nd ed	
CAT	2018	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 118	2001	<i>An archaeological watching brief at 8 High Street, West Mersea, Essex: December 2000.</i> By K Orr
CAT Report 223	2003	<i>An archaeological evaluation at the Blackwater Hotel, Church Road, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex: March 2003.</i> By L Pooley
CAT Report 255	2004	<i>An archaeological evaluation at 20 Yorick Road, West Mersea, Essex: November 2003.</i> By B Holloway
CAT Report 330	2005	<i>An archaeological watching brief at 20 Yorick Road, West Mersea, Essex: July 2005.</i> By B Holloway
CAT Report 596	2010	<i>An archaeological watching brief on land to the south of 'Serenity' 6 High Street, West Mersea, Colchester: July 2010.</i> By A Wightman
CAT Report 629	2012	<i>Archaeological monitoring (watching brief) At 6 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex September 2011 – February 2012.</i> By B Holloway
CAT Report 1000	forthcoming	<i>A miscellany of unpublished Colchester and Essex sites: 1984-2000 (sites not published in any Colchester Archaeological Report, or in the CAT Report Series from 1997).</i> By H Brooks
CAT Report 1152	2017	<i>Archaeological evaluation at 63 Churchfields, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8QN-August 2017.</i> By E Hicks
CBCAA	2019	<i>Brief for Continuous Archaeological Monitoring and Recording at 67 Churchfields, West Mersea, Colchester, CO5 8QN.</i> By J Tipper
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England	2015a	<i>Digital Image capture and File Storage: Guidelines for best practice.</i>

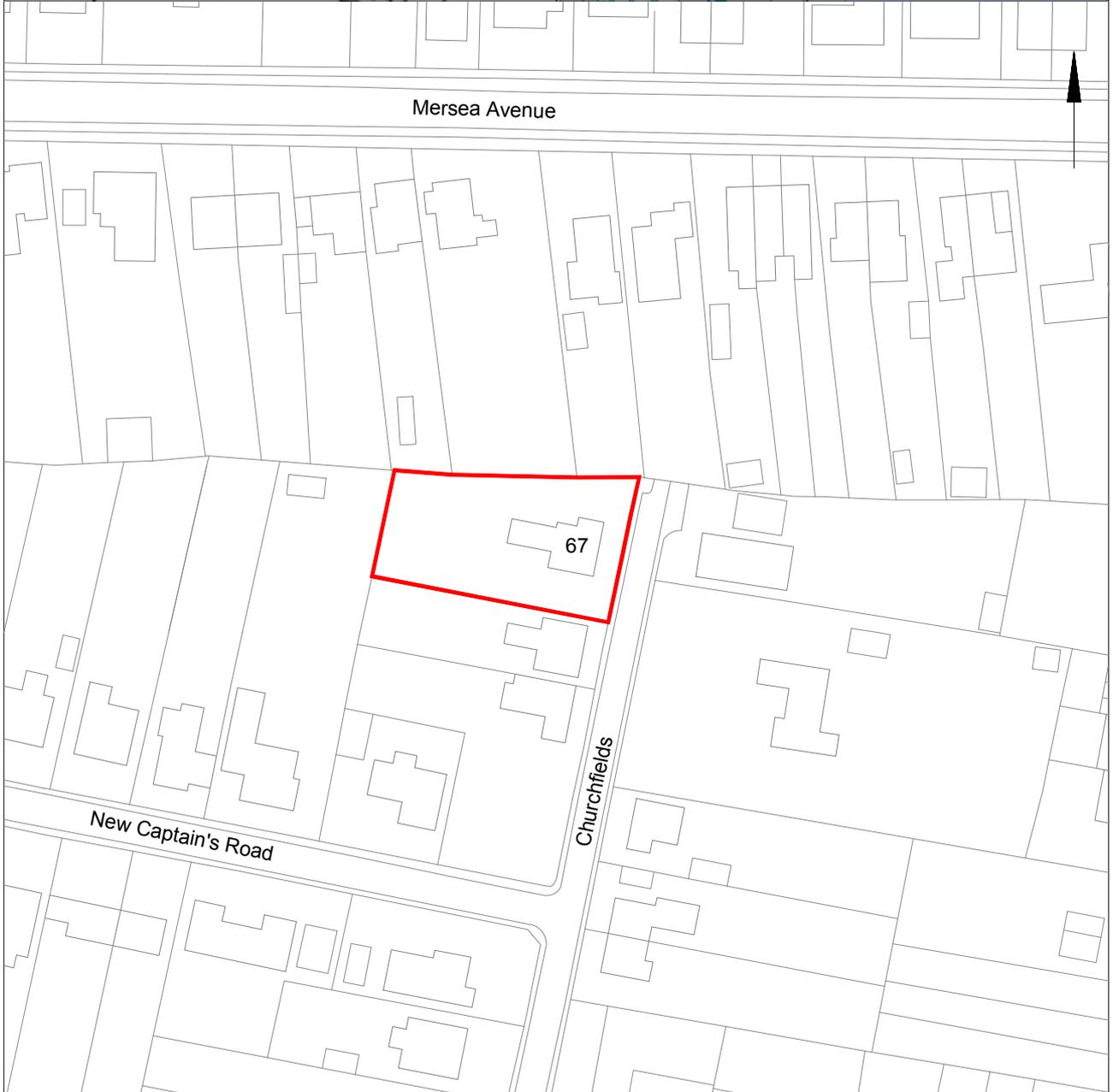
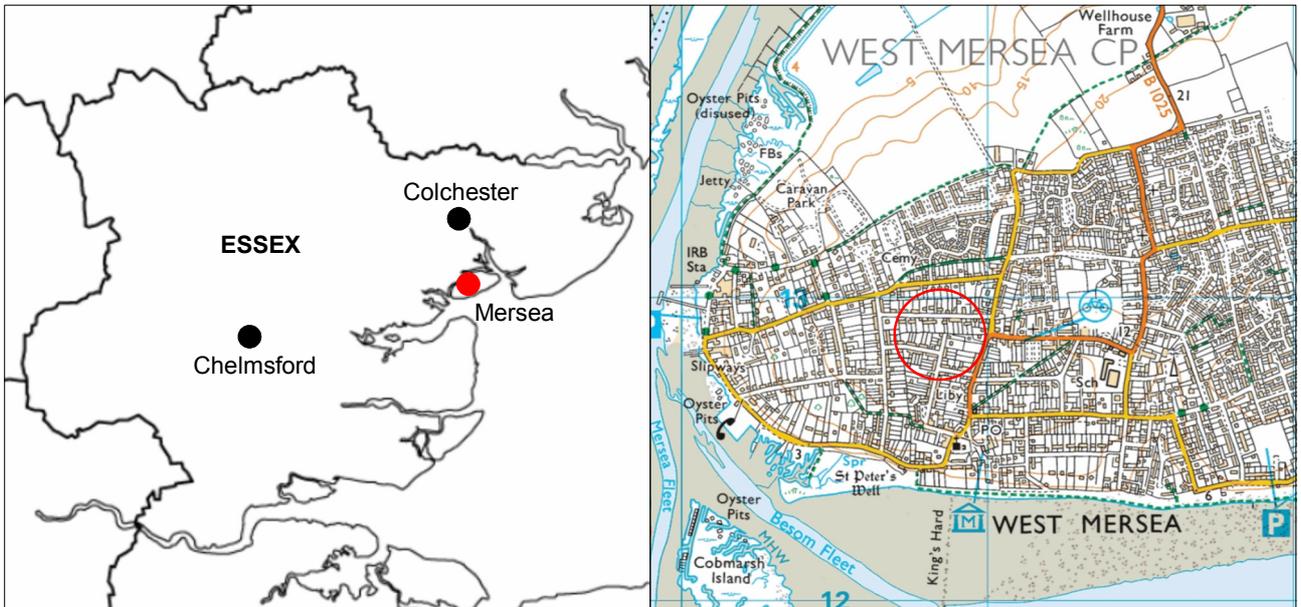
(HE)		By S Cole & P Backhouse
Historic England (HE)	2015b	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Historic England (HE)	2018	<i>The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project.</i> By S Mays, M Brickley and J Sidell
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester, RRCSAL, 20</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

E Holloway



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Fig 1 Site location.



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OASIS ID: colchest3-353455

Project details

Project name	Continuous archaeological monitoring and recording at 67 Churchfields, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8QN
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at 67 Churchfields, Mersea, during groundworks for a single-storey garden room. The site lies within a known area of Roman occupation, near to the 11th-century Church of St Peter and St Paul, and in the vicinity of a medieval priory, the precise location of which is unknown. Despite being located in an area of archaeological interest, no significant remains or material were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 22-07-2019 End: 23-07-2019
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	190241 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2019/05r - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4347 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER WEST MERSEA 67 Churchfields, West Mersea, Colchester
Postcode	CO5 8QN
Study area	0.07 Hectares
Site coordinates	TM 00846 12867 51.777833907487 0.91181933214 51 46 40 N 000 54 42 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Emma Holloway
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Robin Mathieson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Owner
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr J Woodhead

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	ECC4347
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	ECC4347
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Photograph","Report"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological monitoring at 67 Churchfields, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex, CO5 8QN: July 2019
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1453
Date	2019
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A4 loose-leaf ring-bound
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Entered on	30 July 2019

OASIS:

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