

# Archaeological evaluation at Forres, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DD

February 2020



**by Dr Elliott Hicks**

with contributions by Dr Matthew Loughton and Laura Pooley  
figures by Chris Lister, Ben Holloway and Sarah Carter

fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Robin Mathieson, Nicholas Pryke and Alexander Smith

**commissioned by Heather Organ, Arcady Architects Ltd  
on behalf of Neil Naphine**

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## **Colchester Archaeological Trust**

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**CAT Report 1527**  
March 2020

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation of six trial-trenches was carried out at Forres, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex in advance of the construction of eight new dwellings. Four medieval/post-medieval ditches and three undated ditches were uncovered, two of which corresponded with a cropmark which passes through the centre of the site. These appear to form part of a medieval or post-medieval agricultural landscape. Two modern gullies were also recorded.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Forres, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, which was carried out on 19th-20th February 2020. The work was commissioned by Heather Organ of Arcady Architects Ltd on behalf of Neil Naphine in advance of the construction of eight dwellings and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor 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 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological trial trenching*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2016), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2020).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with Historic England's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*, 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)*, *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 site lies within an area of archaeological potential. Aerial photography has revealed a landscape of cropmarks surrounding the village. In particular, a possible trackway crossing the site is indicated by two parallel linear features running NW-SE which extend across the landscape for over 800m, leading from the village at Elmstead Market (Fig 1). Cropmarks to the north of the site indicate the presence of a rectilinear enclosure (EHER 2665), linear features (EHER 17568) and ring ditch and pits (EHER 2596).

Some archaeological work has been undertaken around Elmstead Market, within or close to areas of recorded cropmarks. In 2017, CAT carried out an evaluation at Blue Barn farm, approximately 450m southeast of the present site. One of the trenches was positioned to investigate the trackway cropmark leading from the village. While a medieval ditch may correspond with the northernmost cropmark of the trackway, the southerly track was not detected. A further medieval ditch, three undatable (though likely also medieval) ditches and three pits/postholes were also recorded (CAT Report 1094). Another evaluation was undertaken by the former Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit at Lodge Farm, north northwest of the current site, in 2009. Five undatable ditches, a thin scatter of flint and a small amount of prehistoric pottery were

recorded (EHER 46845). It was speculated that some of the deposits represented the remains of an Early to Middle Iron Age farmstead. Other remains consisted of field ditches of probable post-medieval and modern date. Another more recent evaluation carried out by CAT on land adjacent to Market Field School, School Road, in August 2018 found no features corresponding to cropmarks extending across the site. However, a possible Roman quarry pit, a post-medieval pit, two post-medieval ditches (one of which represents the remains of a field boundary shown on 19th-century OS mapping), an undated pit and four undated ditches were detected (CAT Report 1320). A further evaluation at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, did not reveal any significant remains (CAT Report 1376).

The Colchester Road-Bromley Road, to the north of the site, has its origins in the Roman period. It led directly from the Roman town of Colchester (Camulodunum) to the west of Elmstead Market (EHER 2534).

Historic buildings dating to the 15th century survive within the village of Elmstead Market, and further 17th- and 18th-century buildings are located along Colchester Road. An archaeological evaluation, followed by excavation on land at the former Elmstead Delivery Office, in Clacton Road, revealed a number of features and building remains associated with the delivery office dating from the 17th to the late 20th centuries. These remains included the rear wall of the former delivery office and two outbuildings, one of which was possibly a scullery dated to the late 18th to early 19th century. The other of was early 20th-century in date. A small number of post-medieval and modern pits/postholes were also excavated (CAT Reports 1285 & 1334).

A number of finds spots are located to the west/southwest of the site. The artefacts recovered include prehistoric axes (EHER 2353-4), an Iron Age coin (EHER 51841) and a post-medieval seal (EHER 54639).

#### **4 Aim**

The aim of the archaeological evaluation was to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits, and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow ECCPS to determine if further investigation is required.

#### **5 Results (Figs 2-3)**

Six archaeological trial-trenches were machine excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. All trenches measured 30m long by 1.8m wide, and were excavated to natural. A sondage was excavated in T4 to ensure that natural had been reached.

The trenches were excavated through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.18-0.44m thick, firm, moist dark grey/brown sandy-silt with occasional stones) onto natural (L2, firm, moist medium orange/brown silty-sand with occasional stones, encountered at a depth of 0.34-0.44m below current ground level). In the area of T6, L1 overlay a subsoil (L3, firm, moist dark brown sandy-silt). A sondage was excavated in T4 to confirm the identification of L2 as natural.

There were no archaeological features in T1 or T6.

##### **Trench 2 (T2): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

Medieval/post-medieval ditch F9 lay on a WNW-ESE alignment and was 1.47m wide and 0.33m deep. The feature continued on to the east southeast as F8 (T3).

##### **Trench 3 (T3): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

Undatable ditch F3 was oriented WNW-ESE and was 1.22m wide and 0.38m deep.

Medieval/post-medieval ditch F8 was aligned WNW-ESE and was 1.67m wide and 0.42m deep. It represented a continuation of F9 in T2.



**Photograph 1** T3 trench shot –  
looking north

**Trench 4 (T4): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

Two modern gullies, F6 and F7, both aligned NNE-SSW, were uncovered at the western end of the trench. The features were not excavated.

Medieval/post-medieval ditch F1 was oriented NNE-SSW and was 0.46m wide and 0.16m deep.

Ditch F5 was aligned NNE-SSW and was 2.28m wide and 0.48m deep. The feature continued on to the southwest as F2 (T5). F5 was a re-cut of medieval/post-medieval ditch F4, which was similarly oriented NNE-SSW and was 1.55m wide and 0.52m deep.



**Photograph 2** T4 trench shot –  
looking west

### **Trench 5 (T5): 30m long by 1.8m wide**

Ditch F2, which was medieval in date at earliest, was aligned NE-SW and was 2.02m wide and 0.3m deep. It represented a continuation of F5 in T4.

## **6 Finds**

### **6.1 Ceramic building material**

*by Dr Matthew Loughton*

The evaluation produced a small assemblage of peg-tile and post-Roman brick with seven sherds with a weight of 267g. Non-diagnostic brick fragments were recovered from ditches F1 and F4 while ditch F9 contained three sherds of peg-tile (Appendix 1). These three features can only be broadly dated to the medieval/post-medieval period.

### **6.2 Worked stone**

*by Laura Pooley*

A fragment of worked stone, probably part of a quernstone, came from ditch F2 (finds no. 2). No original edges survive except for a small part of what appears to be a central spindle. Both surfaces survive, one worn, with no obvious signs of being dressed. Although now damaged, the fragment has been squared-off on two sides (either side of the central spindle) suggesting that the piece had been reused, possibly as building stone. The stone is a very fine-grained sandstone, 200mm by 170mm and 52mm thick, 2.72kg.

## **7 Conclusion**

Excavations at 'Forres' revealed a series of ditches which appear to form part of a medieval/post-medieval agricultural landscape similar to that uncovered during excavations at Blue Barn Farm, some 450m to the southeast of the current site (CAT Report 1094).

Trenches T2 and T3 were positioned to investigate two NW-SE aligned cropmarks which pass through the middle of the site. Medieval/post-medieval ditches F8 (T3) and F9 (T2) correspond with the most northerly of these cropmarks. While F3 in T3 seemed to correspond to the southern cropmark, however, despite concerted efforts no archaeological remains were uncovered in that part of T2 through which it passed. There are a number of reasons for the absence of remains here. The southerly cropmark is quite fragmentary, meaning that only parts of the putative underlying ditch survive. Alternatively, the ditch may be quite undulating, and this part may have originally been quite shallow.

Two modern gullies were also uncovered but were not excavated.

## **8 Acknowledgements**

CAT thanks Heather Organ of Arcady Architects Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with R Mathieson, N Pryke, M Perou and A Smith. Figures are by C Lister, B Holloway and S Carter. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

## **9 References**

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

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper <b>8</b> (EAA <b>8</b> )
CAT	2019	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 1094	2017	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Blue Barn Farm, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DF: April 2017</i> , by L Pooley
CAT Report 1285	2018	<i>Archaeological evaluation on land at the former Elmstead Delivery Office, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7AB: June 2018</i> , by M Baister
CAT Report 1320	2018	<i>Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Market Field School, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7ET: August 2018</i> , by E Hicks
CAT Report 1334	2018	<i>Archaeological excavation on land at the former Elmstead Delivery Office, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7AB: August-September 2018</i> , by L Pooley
CAT Report 1376	2019	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Avonleigh House, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DA: February 2019</i> , by E Hicks
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
ECCPS	2016	<i>Brief for trial-trenching at Forres, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market</i> , by T O'Connor
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>14</b> (EAA <b>14</b> )
Historic England (HE)	2015	<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 & J Sidell
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> (EAA <b>24</b> )
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
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	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> ccess 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>
peg-tile	rectangular thin tile with peg-hole(s) used mainly for roofing, first appeared c AD1200 and continued in use to present day, but commonly post-medieval to modern
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** One fragment of worked stone  
**Paper record**

One A4 document wallet containing:  
The report (CAT Report 1527)  
ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation  
Original site record (trench sheets, sections)  
Site digital photos and log  
Inked section drawings

**Digital record**

The report (CAT Report 1527)  
ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation  
Graphics  
Site digital photos and log  
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 Colchester Museum under accession code COLEM 2016.120.

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**Distribution list:**

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Date: 18.03.2020

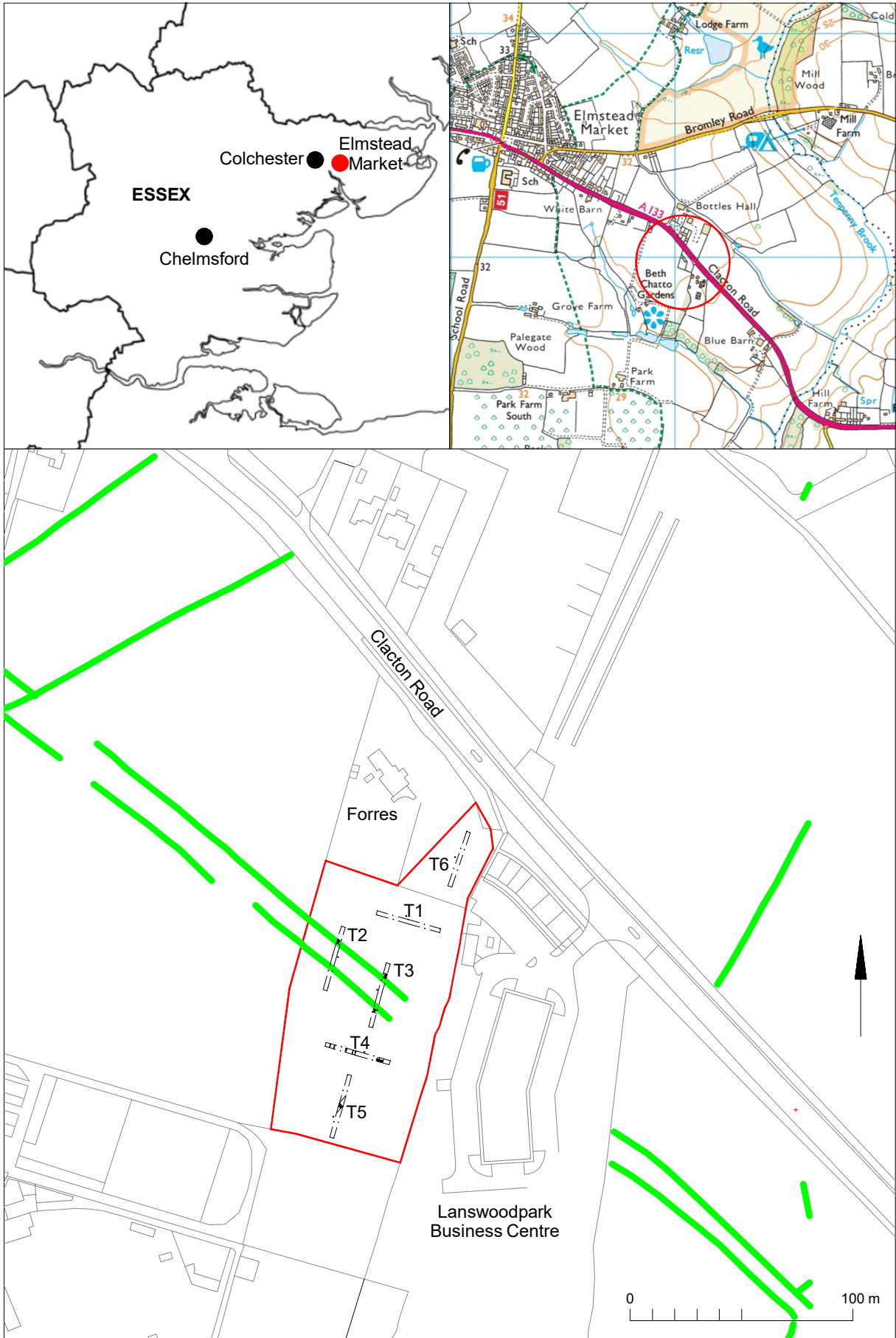


## **Appendix 1 Context list**

<b>Context number</b>	<b>Trench number</b>	<b>Finds number</b>	<b>Feature / layer type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Date</b>
L1	All	-	Topsoil	Dark grey/brown sandy-silt with occasional small stones	Modern
L2	All	-	Natural	Medium orange/brown sandy-silt with occasional small stones	Post-glacial
L3	T6	-	Subsoil	Dark brown sandy-silt with occasional medium and small stones	Undatable
F1	T4	1	Ditch	Dark grey/brown sandy-silt with frequent small- to medium-sized stones	Medieval / post-medieval
F2	T5	2	Ditch	Medium grey/brown sandy-silt with occasional stones	Medieval at earliest
F3	T3	-	Ditch	Soft, moist medium grey sand with frequent stones	Undatable
F4	T4	3	Ditch	Dark grey/brown sandy-silt with frequent stones	Medieval / post-medieval
F5	T4	-	Ditch	Dark grey/brown sandy-silt with frequent stones	Medieval at earliest
F6	T4		Gully	Medium grey/brown sandy-silt	Modern
F7	T4	-	Gully	Medium grey/brown sandy-silt	Modern
F8	T3	-	Ditch	Medium grey sandy-silt with occasional small stones	Medieval / post-medieval
F9	T2	4	Ditch	Medium grey sandy-silt with occasional small stones	Medieval / post-medieval

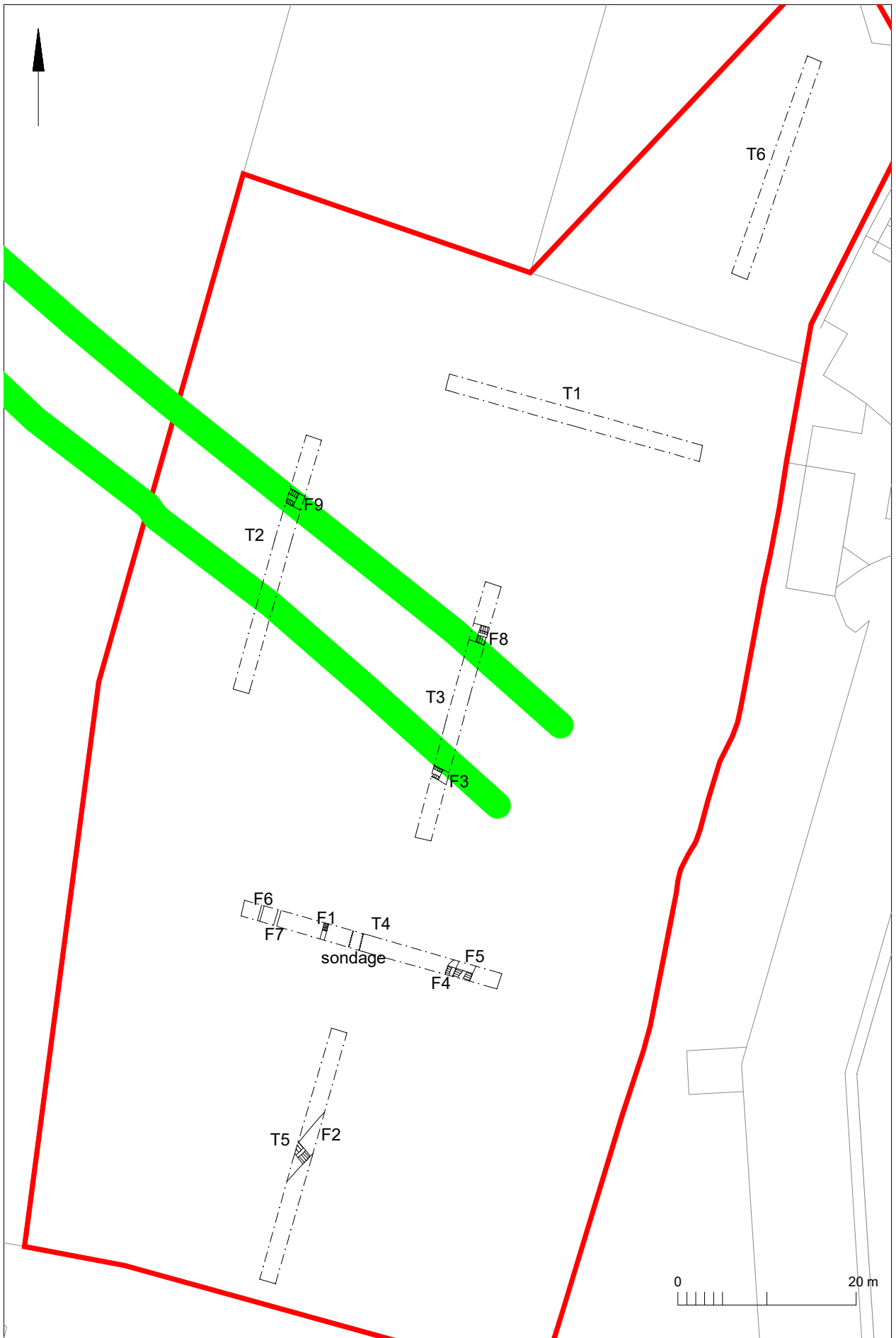
**Appendix 2 CBM list**

Cxt	Feature type	Find no.	TR	NR	GR.	MSW	Discard	Typology	Sub-type	Flange			Cut Aways			Marks 1			Marks 2		Flue tile					Peg-tile			Brick dim.			Burnt	Abraded	Modif.	Comments	Date		
										NR FL	MNI	FL H.	FL W.	FL TH.	LGA	LCA L.	UCA	UCA L.	Stamp	Sign	Tally	Graff PF	Arinal	Shoe	Scored	Comb	Roller	Circ. VT	Ret. VT	Bl VT	PH R						PH SQ	2 Pths
F1		1		3	13	4	X	BR																														Medieval-Post Medieval
F4		1		1	160	160	X	BR																										X	Very worn, smoothed edges	Medieval-Post Medieval		
F9		4		3	94	31	X	PT																													Medieval-Post Medieval	



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Fig 1 Site location and trench scheme, cropmarks shown in green



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Fig 2 Results, cropmarks shown in green.

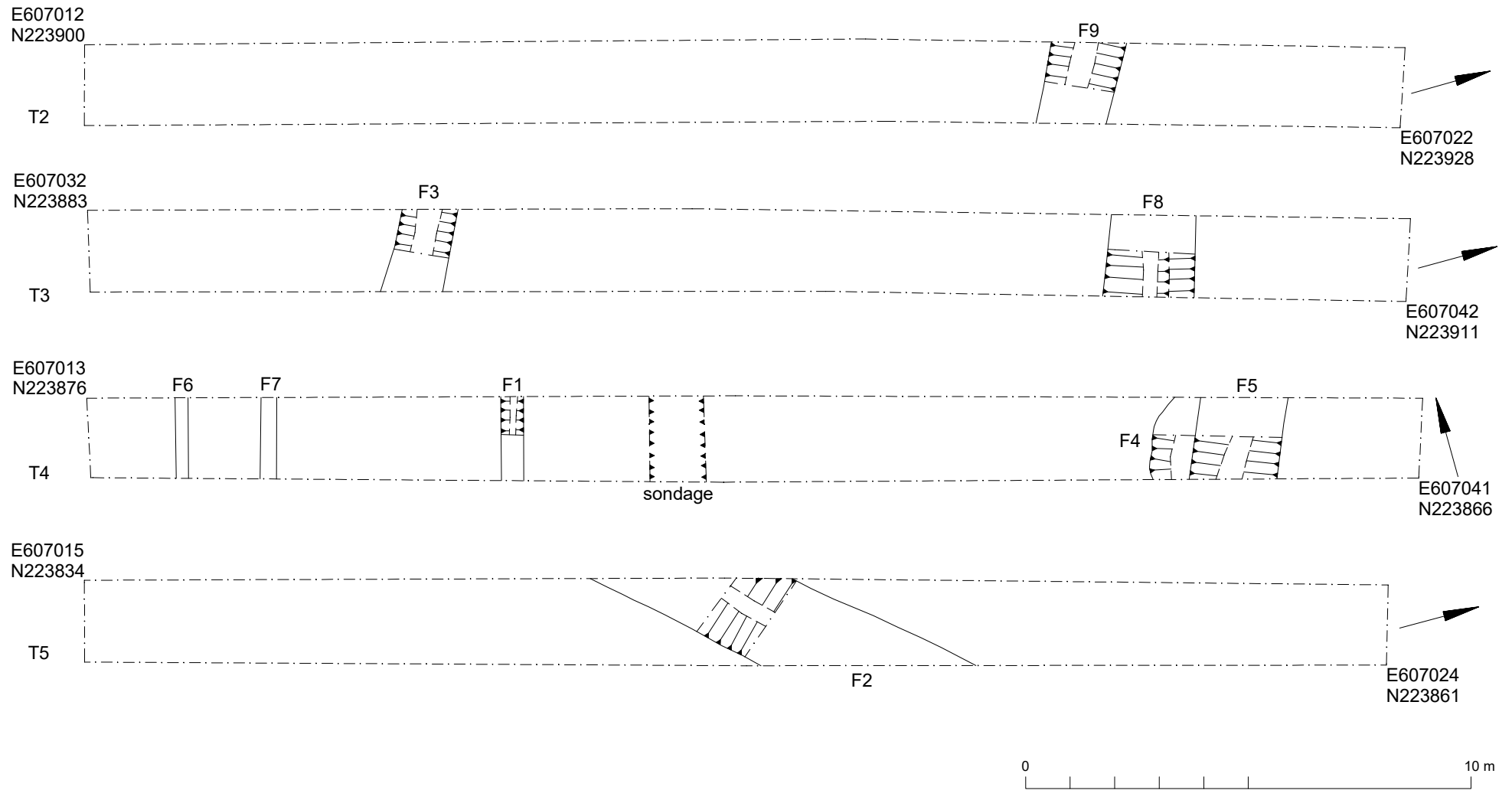


Fig 3 Detailed trench plans.

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**OASIS ID: colchest3-270922**

### Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at Forres, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex, CO7 7DD
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation of six trial-trenches was carried out at Forres, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market, Essex in advance of the construction of eight new dwellings. Four medieval/post-medieval ditches and three undated ditches were uncovered, two of which corresponded with a cropmark which passes through the centre of the site. These appear to form part of a medieval or post-medieval agricultural landscape. Two modern gullies were also recorded.
Project dates	Start: 19-02-2020 End: 20-02-2020
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	16/11k - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	16/01690 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ESTR16 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Monument type	GULLY Modern
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Significant Finds	PEG-TILE Medieval
Significant Finds	PEG-TILE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	WORKED STONE Uncertain
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches", "Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition

Position in the planning process After outline determination (eg. As a reserved matter)

### Project location

Country England  
 Site location ESSEX TENDRING ELMSTEAD Forres, Clacton Road, Elmstead Market  
 Postcode CO7 7DD  
 Study area 0.89 Hectares  
 Site coordinates TM 07023 23886 51.874517684878 1.007830406585 51 52 28 N 001 00 28 E Point  
 Height OD / Depth Min: 28.06m Max: 29.91m

### Project creators

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

### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Colchester Museum  
 Physical Archive ID COLEM: 2016.120  
 Physical Contents "Worked stone/lithics"  
 Digital Archive recipient Colchester Museum  
 Digital Archive ID COLEM: 2016.120  
 Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"  
 Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum  
 Paper Archive ID COLEM: 2016.120  
 Paper Media available "Context sheet","Photograph","Report","Section"

### Project bibliography 1

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