

Colchester Archaeological Trust

CAT Report 1578

Archaeological monitoring at 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8AB: June 2020

Planning reference: 192769 CHER Event no.: ECC4511 OASIS ref.: colchest3-392841

Grid Reference: TM 0107 1242 (centre)

Number of site visits: 4

Dates of visit: 5th May, 8th, 23rd June &

20th July 2020

Nature of the work: Observation of groundworks for a new extension, a trench for a new pipe with accompanying soakaway, and the removal of a staircase and a pit for a trampoline in the garden.

Reason for condition: The site lies within a known area of Roman settlement containing concentrated remains including a wheel-shaped mausoleum and a brick tomb.

% of total seen: 100% of the groundworks.

Results: The following groundworks were monitored by a CAT archaeologist in response to a brief set by Dr Jess Tipper of Colchester Borough Council Planning Services.

- a) The reduction of an area measuring 187.9m² to accommodate the new extension. The excavation occurred through topsoil (L1, c 0.4m thick, friable, dry medium grey/brown sandy-silt) onto natural sands (L2, soft, dry medium yellow/brown sand). This area was overlain with a piling mat 0.15-0.2m thick and then twenty-five foundation piles, 0.5m wide and 1.4m deep, and a foundation beam, 84.1m long, 0.5m wide and 0.3m deep linking the foundation piles were excavated through the piling mat into L2.
- b) The removal of a flight of stairs in the garden, which impacted L1 to a depth of c 0.4m over an area measuring 61.1m².
- c) Excavation of a pipe trench, 8.5m long, 0.5m wide, and 0.25m deep, and accompanying soakaway pit, 0.9m by 1m and 1.2m deep, which was dug through L1 (1.07-1.09m thick) into L2.
- d) Excavation of a circular trampoline pit, 3.8m in diameter and 1m deep, which was dug through a modern levelling layer and L1 (0.25-0.29m thick) into subsoil (L3, friable, dry medium brown sandy-silt).

No archaeological features or material were encountered.



Photograph 1 Area of extension during ground reduction – looking west



Photograph 2 Demolition of staircase – looking east



Photograph 3 Pipe trench – looking south



Photograph 4 Trampoline pit – looking southwest

Recorded by: Dr Elliott Hicks (eh2@catuk.org)	Date: 28.07.2020
Checked by: Philip Crummy (pc@catuk.org)	Date: 29.07.2020

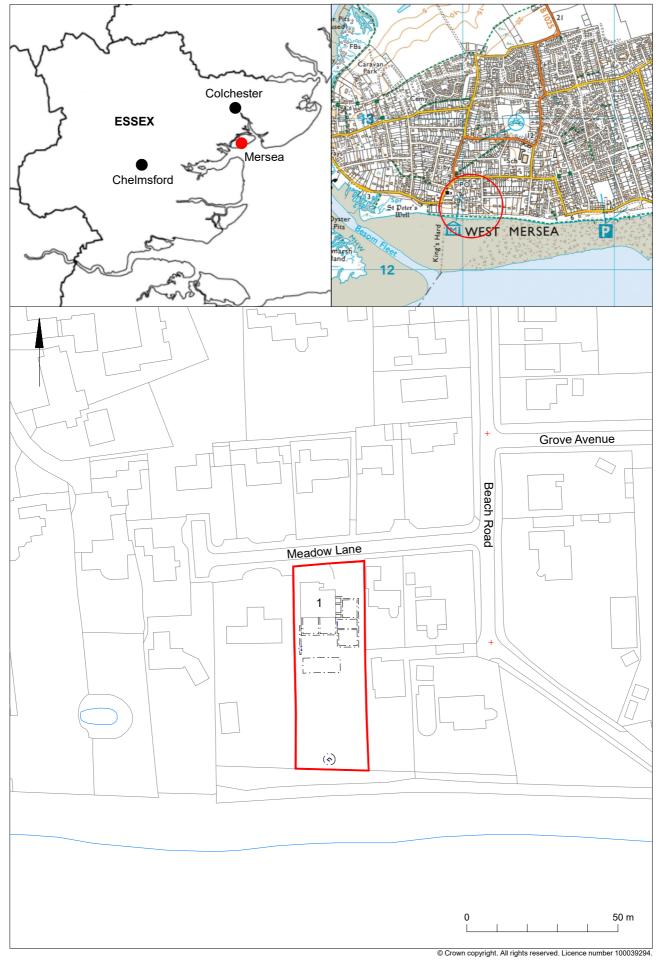
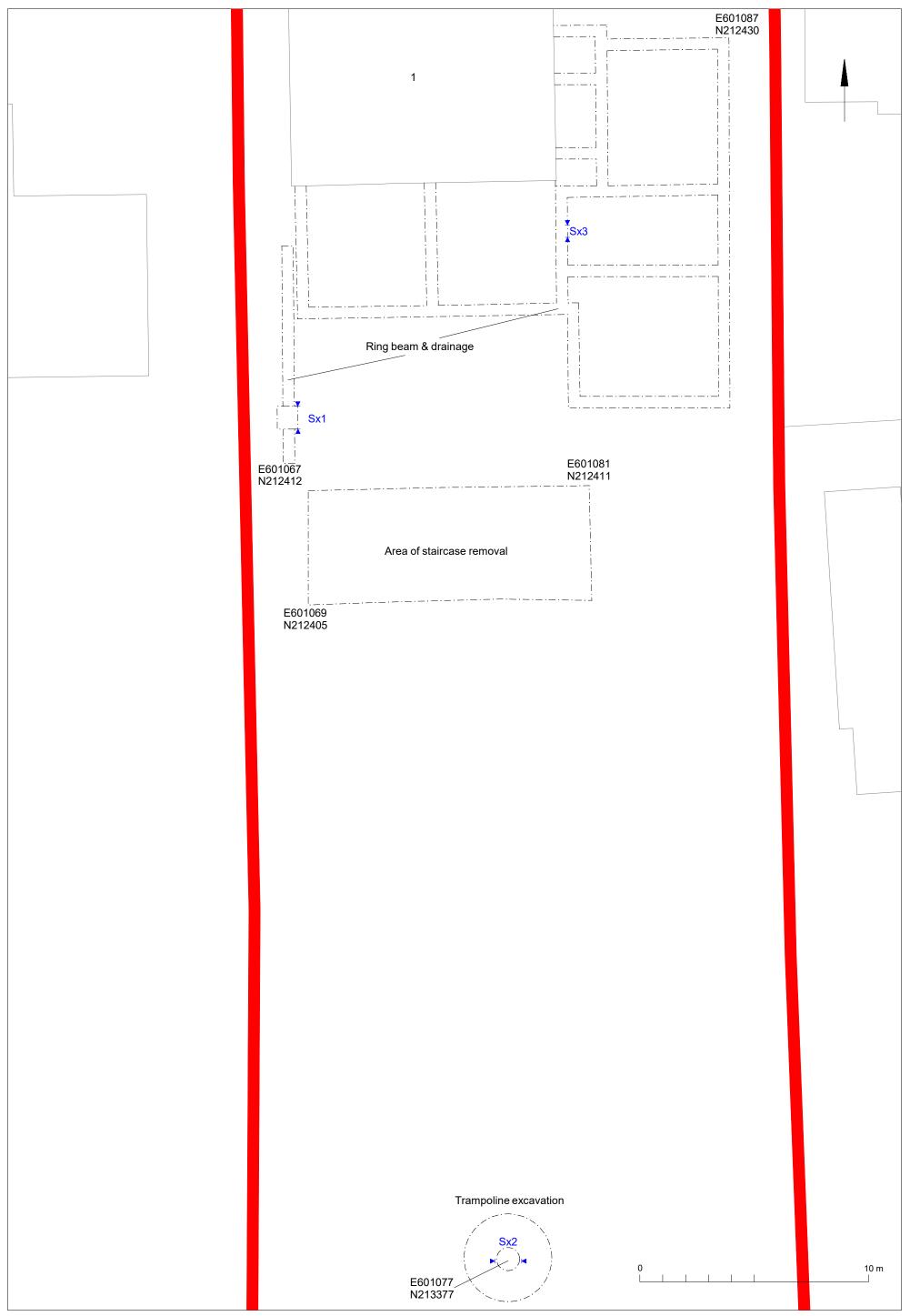


Fig 1 Site location.



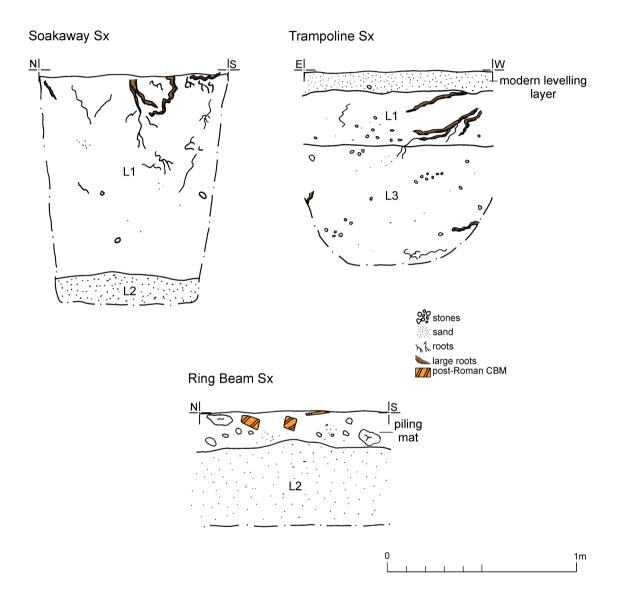


Fig 3 Representative sections.

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological investigation at 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8AB.

NGR: TM 0107 1242 (centre)

District: Colchester

Planning references: 192769

Commissioned by: Andrew Ransome (ADP)

On behalf of: Mr & Mrs L Tyler

Curating museum: Colchester

CHER number: ECC4511 CAT project code: 2020/04g

OASIS project number: colchest3-392841

Site manager: Chris Lister **CBC monitor:** Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 29.04.2020



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Site location and description

The proposed development site is located on the southern edge of central West Mersea, approximately 128m north of the sea, at 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8AB (Fig 1). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TM 0107 1242.

Proposed work

The development comprises the modification and extension to the existing dwelling and garage, replacement of an outbuilding, landscaping and any associated groundworks. In order to preserve the archaeological remains the development no longer includes the lower level swimming pool.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER, ECC/MCC numbers) accessed via the Colchester Heritage Explorer (www.colchesterheritage.co.uk)

Meadow Lane

CAT have carried out two previous watching briefs at Meadow Lane (CAT Report 420, MCC2740 and MCC629). Although no archaeological features were identified during either site, at 6 Meadow Lane it was noted that the ground level seemed substantially lower than the land to the immediate north, with further terracing to the south of the site towards the sea front (CAT Report 629).

Yorick Road/Beach Road area

CAT carried out a series of archaeological investigations at 20 Yorick Road. The rear of the property includes the location of a Roman wheel-shaped *mausoleum* (MCC8355 Scheduled Monument no. 1002195). The mausoleum was discovered in 1896 and initially thought to be the remains of a Roman lighthouse. The structure is 20m in diameter with a hexagonal chamber in the centre from which radiate six walls. These walls meet the 1m-thick encircling wall and project beyond it for over a metre as external buttresses. Between each pair of walls there is an extra buttress, making twelve in all. The structure is made of tile on foundations of mortar and Kentish ragstone. Dressed stone and roof tiles have also been found. A geophysical survey of the site was carried out by English Heritage in 1989. An exploratory trench was undertaken to assess the exact location and condition of the *mausoleum* (MCC2973, CAT Report 255) followed by a watching brief exposing part of a Roman wall foundation (MCC5406, CAT Report 330). Although the exact location is uncertain the CHER has records of a brick tomb found a few yards east of the wheel tomb on a property off Beach Road. The tomb contained a glass urn with a lead lid and inside was cremated bone of a child and a small clay lamp (MCC8786).

Church Road area

The site lies to the east of West Mersea parish church (Church of St Peter and St Paul). The church is constructed of re-used Roman Kentish ragstone 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 (Powell 1963, 3, 158-9). In 1896 Henry Laver observed a Roman wall (CHER MCC8858). And CAT excavated three trial pits in 1991 prior to extensions to the church. Only residual Roman finds were found (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 (CHER MCC8835). Within this area Roman pavement and tesserae have been noted on more than one occasion and could suggest there was a Roman villa nearby (CHER MCC8858 & MCC8909). On the southern side of Coast Road a well is thought to relate to the priory (CHER MCC9356).

February 2020 evaluation

CAT excavated four test pits at the current site, one of which contained archaeological remains (CAT Report 1523, ECC4429). Test-pit 1 contained a layer at its base which was

relatively rich in Roman material. Within the constraints of the test-pit it was unclear whether this layer was from within a discrete feature which lay largely outside of the bounds of the test-pit or whether it was part of a lens of material within L4, possibly deposited by tidal activity. L4 contained disturbed material including pottery sherds and CBM potentially dating from the medieval to modern periods.

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in November 2019 (application No. 192769) for the proposed modification and extension to the existing dwelling including creation of lower level floor; partial demolition of garage to provide covered parking area; replacement of outbuilding; provision of new outbuilding; associated landscaping works).

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). After the results of the evaluation an additional monitoring condition was added. 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 (including services and landscaping). Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2020).

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.

In the exceptional circumstances that important, well-preserved mosaic floors (or similar remains) are discovered, which cannot otherwise be avoided by the development (and satisfactorily preserved in situ), a contingency will be required for the block-lifting of these archaeological remains, e.g. well-preserved mosaic remains and/or exceptional burnt remains related to the Boudiccan destruction of AD 60/61, and for subsequent conservation and presentation. A decision about the need for conservation and lifting of important archaeological remains will be made in consultation with specialist stakeholders (e.g, Historic England, Colchester Museum and Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services).

The method and form of development will also be monitored to ensure that it conforms to the previously agreed locations and techniques upon which the brief is based. Any variations will be discussed with the CBCAA immediately.

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 2019)
- the Project Brief issued by the CBCAA (CBC 2020).

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.

Investigation 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 proforma 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 micromorphical 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.

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT Staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Howard Brooks (Deputy Director). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton

animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman, small groups only)

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley

flints: Adam Wightman

environmental processing: Robin Mathieson/Bronagh Quinn

project osteologist (human remains): Meghan Seehra

or to outside specialists:

animal and human bone: Julie Curl (Sylvanus)

environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

radiocarbon dating: SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, Glasgow

conservation/x-ray: Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation) / Norfolk Museums Service,

Conservation and Design Services

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

flint: Hazel Martingell

<u>prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Val Rigby / </u>

Gwladys Monteil

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

Roman glass: Hilary Cool small finds: Nina Crummy

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 if suitable deposits are identified. This can include soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floors and dark earth deposits and/or absolute dating (such as archaeomagnetic and radiocarbon). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice.

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	Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation,
		transfer and curation
CAT	2019	Health & Safety Policy
CAT Report 255	2004	An archaeological evaluation at 20 Yorick Road, West Mersea, Essex
		November 2003. By B Holloway

CAT Report 330	2005	An archaeological watching brief at 20 Yorick Road, West Mersea, Essex July 2005. By B Holloway
CAT Report 420	2007	Archaeological monitoring (watching brief) at 4 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex: April 2007. By K Orr
CAT Report 629	2012	Archaeological monitoring (watching brief) at 6 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex: September 2011 – February 2012. By B Holloway
CAT Report 1000	Forthco ming	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). By H Brooks
CAT Report 1523	2020	Archaeological evaluation at 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Colchester, Essex – February 2020. By P Parmenter
CBCAA	2020	Brief for an Archaeological Investigation at 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, CO5 8AB. By J Tipper
CIfA	2014a	Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation
CIfA	2014b	Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials
Gurney, D	2003	Standards for field archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England (HE)	2015a	Digital Image capture and File Storage: Guidelines for best practice. By S Cole & P Backhouse
Historic England (HE)	2015b	Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)
Historic England (HE)	2018	The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project. By S Mays, M Brickley and J Sidell
Medlycott, M	2011	Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2019	National Planning Policy Framework. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Powell, WR	1963	Victoria County History, Essex, Vol III (VCH). Vol 3, p161.

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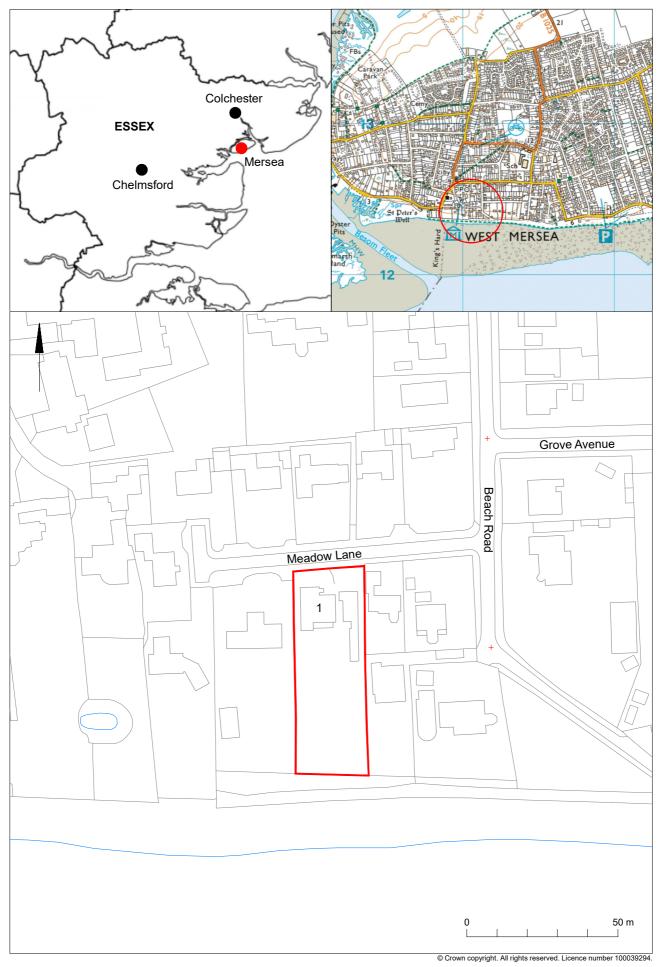


Fig 1 Site location.

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

List of Projects | Manage Projects | Search Projects | New project | Change your details | HER coverage | Change country | Log out

Printable version

OASIS ID: colchest3-392841

Project details

Project name Archaeological investigation at 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex, CO5 8AB.

Short description of the project

Archaeological monitoring was conducted at 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea during groundworks for the modification and extension to the existing dwelling and garage, replacement of an outbuilding. The site lies within a known area of Roman settlement containing concentrated remains including a wheel-shaped mausoleum and a brick tomb. Despite being located in an archaeologically-sensitive area, however, no archaeological remains or material were encountered.

Project dates Start: 23-06-2020 End: 23-06-2020

Previous/future work

Yes / Not known

Any associated project reference

192769 - Planning Application No.

codes
Any associated

project reference codes

2020/04g - Contracting Unit No.

Any associated project reference codes

ECC4511 - 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 1 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex

Postcode CO5 8AB
Study area 0.16 Hectares

Site coordinates TM 0107 1242 51.773738873664 0.914803447227 51 46 25 N 000 54 53 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

Landowner

body

Mr & Mrs L Tyler

Name of sponsor/funding

ina

Project archives

Physical Archive

No

https://oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm?id=399978

Digital Archive

Colchester Museum

recipient

Digital Archive ID

ECC4511

Digital Media available

"Text","Images raster / digital photography"

Paper Archive

Colchester Museum

recipient

Paper Archive ID

ECC4511

Paper Media available

"Context sheet","Photograph","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Hicks, E.

Other

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