

Archaeological strip, map and excavation at Colchester County High School For Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US

January 2021



by Sarah Carter

figures by Chris Lister, Ben Holloway and Emma Holloway

fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Matthew Perou and Megan Seehra

**Commissioned by Lyndon Hopkins (Alpha Trust)
On behalf of Colchester County High School for Girls**

NGR: TM 98023 24646 (centre)

Planning ref.: 172464

CAT project ref.: 20/11i

ECC code: ECC4578

OASIS ref.: colchest3-408550



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CAT Report 1624

January 2021

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1 Summary

An archaeological strip, map and excavation was carried out before the construction of a soakaway associated with a new sports hall. The site is situated in the grounds of Colchester County High School for Girls, on land that was formerly part of the estate of the Victorian mansion Altnacealgach House. A number of archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the grounds of the school since its construction, uncovering a 'tripled-ditched dyke', pits, ditches and post-holes dating to the Roman period. In this excavation two undated features were uncovered, a ditch and a pit, along with one natural feature. Due to the location of the features in relation to previous excavations it is likely these features are Roman in date.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological strip, map and excavate at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex which was carried out on 5th January 2021. The work was commissioned by Lyndon Hopkins of Alpha Trust on behalf of Colchester County High School for Girls in advance of groundworks for the construction of a new sports hall, and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

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). This recommendation was for an archaeological excavation and was based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, CO3 3US*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Dr Richard Hoggett (CBCAA 2020), 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 the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (Gurney 2003; Medlycott 2011). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (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 Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) (accessed via Colchester Heritage Explorer, <https://colchesterheritage.co.uk>).

The development site is located within the grounds of Colchester County High School for Girls, a purpose-built complex of buildings opened in 1957 on land that was formerly part of the estate of Altnacealgach House (locally listed), a Victorian mansion designed by acclaimed local architect Horace Darken and built in 1888 to be the home of Arthur Thomas Osborne, heir to a successful brewing business. The school lies to the south-west of the house.

The site is located within the Late Iron Age oppidum of Camulodunum, to the west of the Roman walled town and within an area of Roman cemeteries which was dubbed 'the western cemetery' by Hull (1958), but which is more generally referred to as the Lexden cemetery (MCC7525-9 and MCC7647). This is an area of Iron Age and Roman burial grounds located either side of Lexden Road (the main Roman road leading from the walled town to London). Many Roman burials and cremations have been found and reported upon in this area (see Hull 1958 and CAR 11). Of particular note in this respect is a Roman amphora burial which was found to the west of Altnacealgach House (MCC7676). A trial-trench evaluation on a site south of Park Road, conducted in 2006, defined Roman occupation remains, including two cremation burials

(MCC3091; ECC FAU report 1711). The school also lies some 425m east of Lexden Tumulus (MCC1356 & MCC7523), an Iron Age barrow which, when excavated in 1924, was found to contain a rich Belgic burial with the remains of funerary bronze, gold and silver objects and a coin with the head of Augustus mounted as a medallion. The burial mound has variously been thought to be the resting place of Addedomarus (CAR 11, 85-94; Foster 1986) or Tasciovanus (Philip Crummy, *pers comm*).

Excavations in 1939 revealed an early Roman curving ditch, possibly the corner of a fort, to the north of the school (ECC851 and MCC2173). The same excavations revealed two parallel ditches, which were thought by Hull to represent an annexe lying to the south of this fort (Hull 1958, 273). It was later shown, however, that these form a continuation of Heath Farm Dyke North (CAR 11, 32). In February 1996, CAT monitored an area on the corner of Norman Way and Park Road for a car park. A ditch was recorded running east-west parallel to the footpath, but was thought to be medieval or later and not associated to Hull's ditch (CAT Report 1000, 96/2b).

In 1955, prior to the construction Colchester County High School for Girls, a 'triple-ditched dyke' was excavated by R.J. Martin beneath what was to become the main school building. The ditches were 4m wide, although their depths are unknown (ECC714, MCC2177; CAR 11, 127). Additionally, on the south edge of the school, postholes and a ditch indicated the possible presence of a building surrounded by a diagonal ditch dated to the 2nd century and a large pit, also dated to the 2nd century. Further excavations undertaken by John Wachter to the east of the High School the following year revealed palisade trenches, an irregular wattle-and-daub structure, gullies and pits (ECC970, MCC8175 and MCC2064-5; CAR 11, 124-126).

CAT have carried out a number of watching briefs and evaluations in this area. A watching brief undertaken by CAT in 2001 on an extension to the school revealed no trace of the ditches of the dyke seen in 1955 (CAT Report 155). A further watching brief in 2005 for a new music and careers block recorded four undatable pits or ditches (CAT Report 348). At least two of the ditches of the dyke should have been visible within the footprint of the new building and one of its soakaways, but were not observed. A substantial ditch recorded in a second soakaway was not in alignment with those seen in 1955 and it was concluded that the 'triple-ditched dyke' either turns a corner or does not in fact exist.

An evaluation at the High School in 2014 in the area of the proposed rear or southern car park revealed a Roman ditch dating to the late 1st century AD (CAT Report 762). The ditch was aligned parallel to the ditches seen in the 1939 excavations (i.e. Heath Farm Dyke North). What is unclear is whether the 2014 ditch is merely an agricultural field ditch, or whether it is part of a wider defensive scheme including the Heath Farm Dyke and the 'triple-ditched dyke' on the school site. An evaluation undertaken by CAT in 2016 towards the centre of the County High School for Girls identified a Roman ditch aligned north-east to south-west (CAT Report 975). This was recorded along with five modern and two natural features. Another evaluation was carried out in January 2018 in advance of the construction of a multi-functional hall and two additional car parks. Three undated pits, two post-Roman pits and two natural features were recorded (CAT Report 1211).

In 2019, CAT carried out a further evaluation and excavation immediately to the south of the current site, in advance of the construction of a new building. Excavations revealed a concentrated area of Roman remains consisting of six ditches and nine pits. These features produced a substantial assemblage of 3rd- and 4th-century pottery and CBM which suggested that a Roman villa may have stood in the vicinity during this period, possibly to the south-east of the excavation area. Two ditches, a pit and a pit/tree-throw dating to the medieval or post-medieval periods were also uncovered (CAT Reports 1449 & 1507).

In April 2020, CAT undertook another excavation to the south of the school, prior to the extension of a classroom (CAT Report 1549). This excavation uncovered only a single modern pit or digger bucket cut, further emphasising that the main focus of Roman activity lies to the north and east of the school.

4 Aim

The aim of this investigation was to excavate and record all archaeological horizons due to be destroyed during the proposed development.

5 Results (Figs 2-5)

An area measuring 9m by 5m was mechanically excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. It was cut through L1 (c 0.10-0.13m thick), which sealed a topsoil layer (L2, c 0.27-0.29m thick), then a subsoil (L3, c 0.18-0.20m thick) sealing the natural sands and gravels (L4, c 0.57-0.60m below current ground level). A full context list can be found in Appendix 1.

Two undated features were excavated along with one natural feature (F1).

Ditch F2 was NNE-SSW aligned and was truncated by a large square modern feature (not excavated). F2 was 0.84m wide and 0.16m deep with a wide U-shaped profile.

Pit F3 was 0.55m wide, 0.90m long and 0.08m deep.



Photograph 1 F2 with representative section – looking north-east

6 Finds

There were no finds.

7 Environmental Assessment

A 40L sample was taken from F2 (sample 1). It was processed by CAT but, aside from modern rootlet fragments, was devoid of any environmental material.

8 Conclusion

Two archaeologically significant features were uncovered in this excavation. Although both features were undated, due to the proximity of previous excavations it is likely they are Roman

in date (Fig 4). Ditch F2 is probably associated with the series of ditches excavated by CAT in 2019.

9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Lyndon Hopkins (Alpha Trust) and Colchester County High School for Girls for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with M Perou and M Seehra. Figures are by C Lister, B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for Colchester Borough Council by Dr Richard Hoggett.

10 References

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

Brown, D	2011 (2nd ed.)	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
CAT	2020	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2020	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological strip, map and excavate at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US</i> By M Baister
CAT Report 155	2001	<i>An archaeological watching brief at the County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: September 2001</i> , by K Orr
CAT Report 348	2005	<i>An archaeological watching brief at the Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: May-November 2005</i> , by K Orr
CAT Report 762	2014	<i>Archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: March 2014</i> , by B Holloway
CAT Report 975	2016	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: June 2016</i> , by L Pooley
CAT Report 1000	forth-coming	<i>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 1211	2018	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: January 2018</i> , by E Hicks
CAT Report 1449	2019	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: July 2019</i> , by E Hicks
CAT Report 1507	2020	<i>Archaeological excavation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: December 2019</i> , by E Hicks
CAT Report 1549	2020	<i>Archaeological excavation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, COE 3US: April 2020</i> by E Hicks
CBCAA	2020	<i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, CO3 3US</i> , by R Hoggett
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i>
CifA	2014c	<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	2016	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Hull, MR	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 Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

11 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c 500 – 1066
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust

CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
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	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
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

12 Contents of archive

Finds: None

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1624)

Site digital photos and log

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1624)

CBC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Site data

Survey data

13 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 project ref. ECC4578.

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Distribution list:

Colchester County High School for Girls

Dr Richard Hoggett, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services

Essex Historic Environment Record



Colchester Archaeological Trust

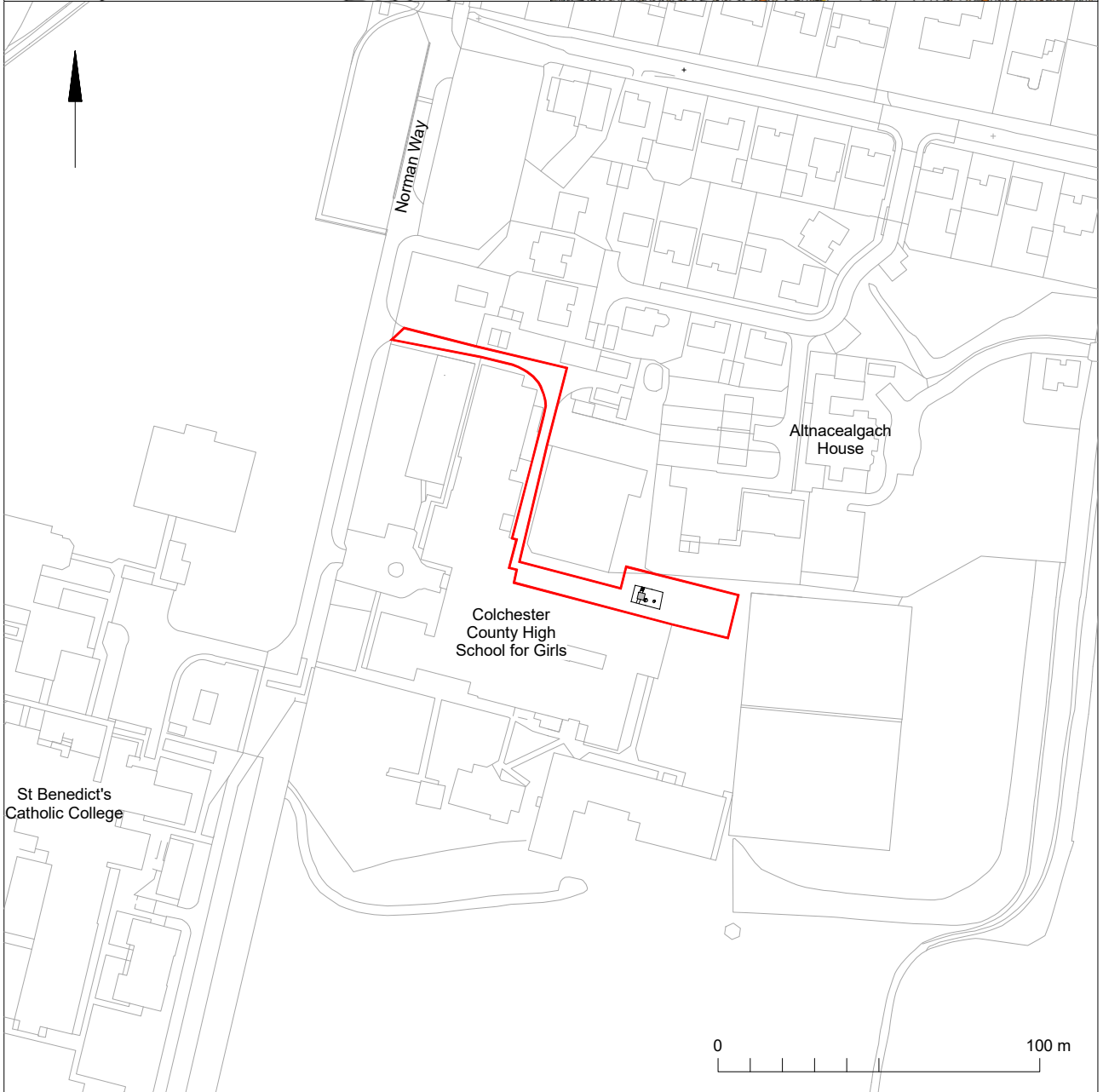
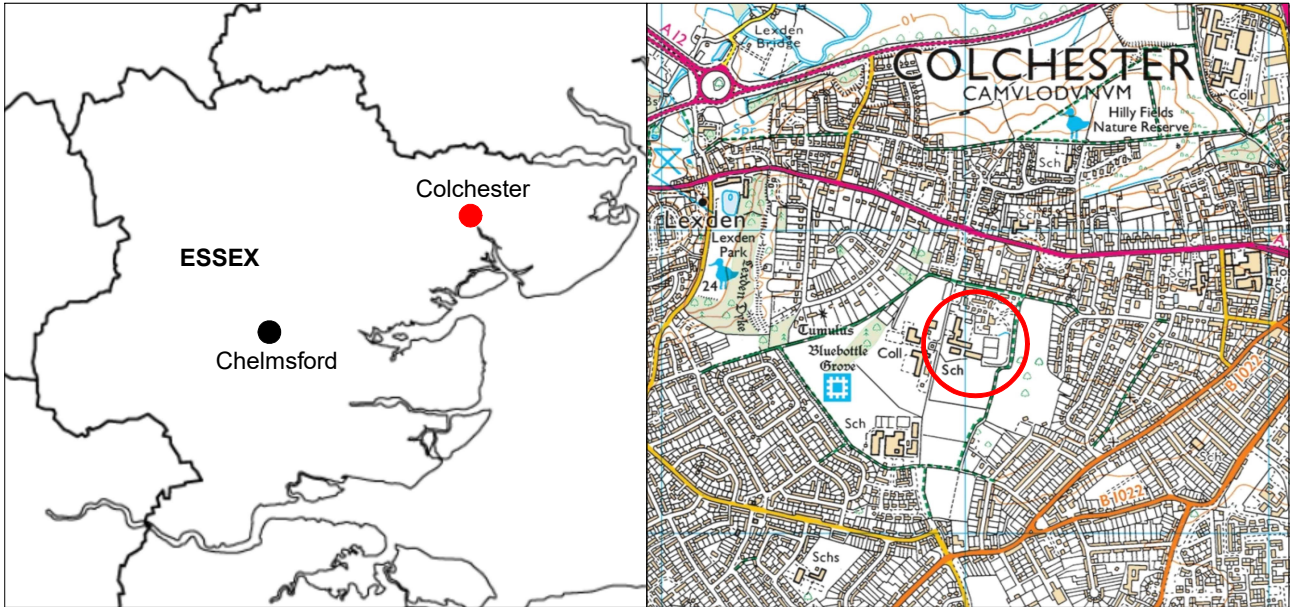
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Checked by: Philip Crummy
Date: 15/01/2020

Appendix 1 Context list

Context number	Finds number	Feature type	Description	Date
L1	-	Crush	Firm, moist, dark grey/brown loam with brick	Modern
L2	-	Topsoil	Soft, moist, medium grey/brown silty-loam	Modern
L3	-	Subsoil	Firm, moist, medium grey/brown sandy-silt	Post-medieval
L4		Natural	Firm, moist orange/grey silty-sand	Post-glacial
F1	-	Natural pit	Firm moist light yellow/brown sandy-silt	Post-glacial
F2	-	Ditch	soft moist medium/dark grey/brown loamy-silt sand and inclusions of: stone 15%	Undated
F3	-	Pit	Friable moist dark grey/brown sandy-silt	Undated



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Fig 1 Site location.

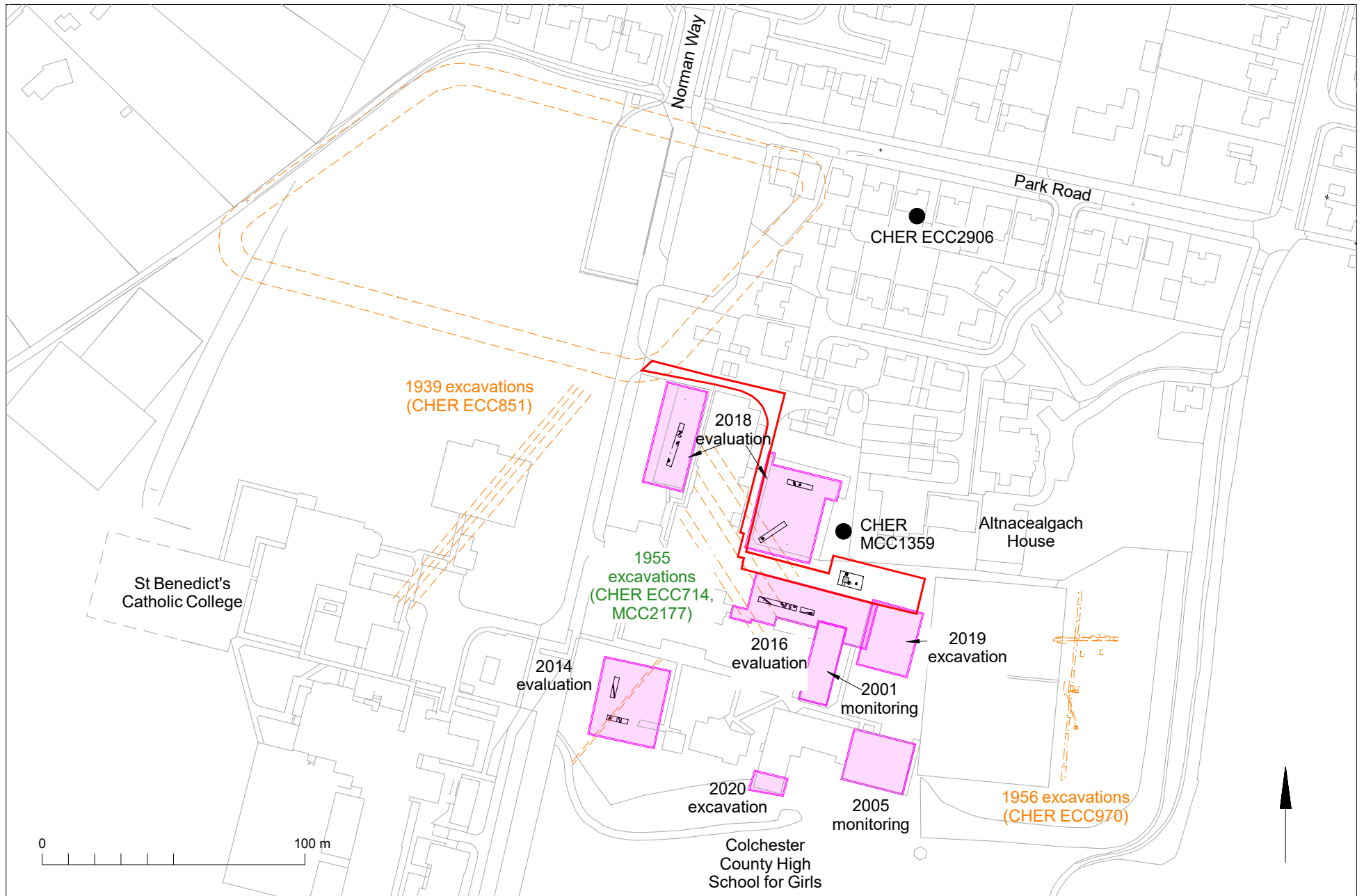


Fig 2 Site location (in red) in relation to previous archaeological work.

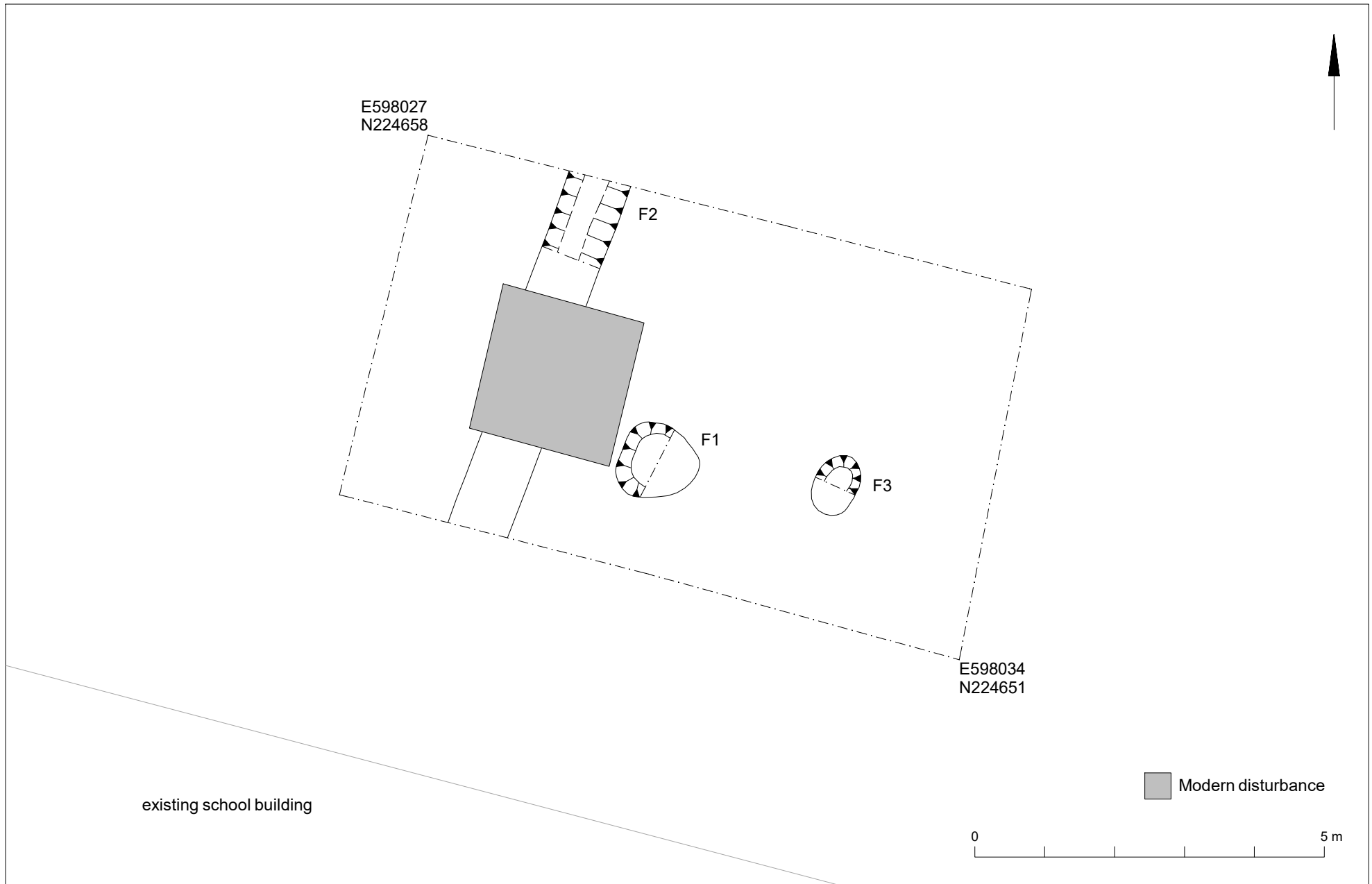


Fig 3 Results.



Fig 4 Results in relation to previous archaeological work.

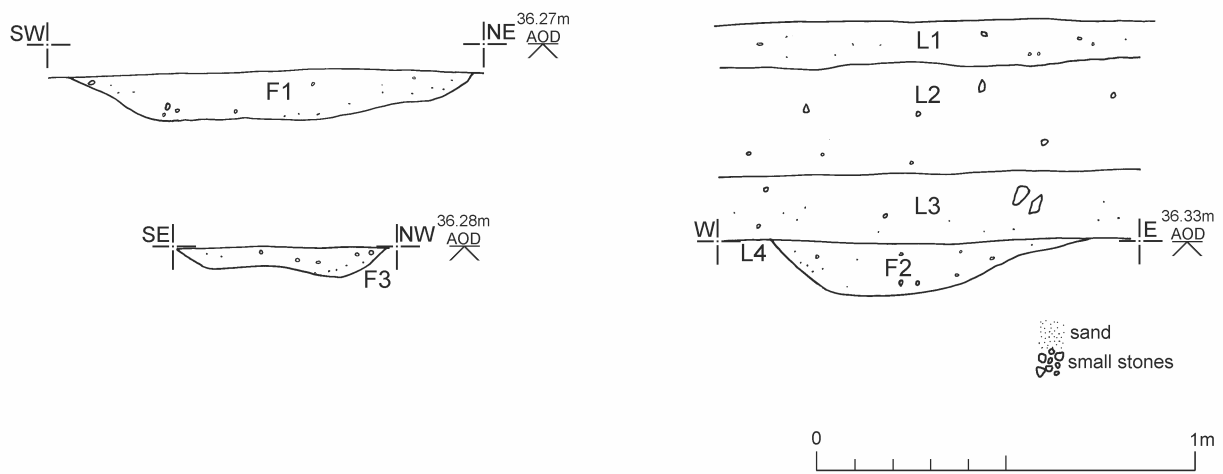


Fig 5 Sections.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TM 98023 24646 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 20/11i CHER ref: ECC4578 OASIS ref: colchest3-408550
Type of work: Strip, map and excavate	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 5th January 2021	Size of area investigated: 0.0045 ha
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related CHER/SMR number: CHER MCC1356, MCC2064, MCC2065, MCC2173, MCC2177, MCC3091, MCC7523, MCC7525, MCC7526, MCC7527, MCC7528, MCC7529, MCC7647, MCC7676, MCC8175; ECC714, ECC851, ECC970
Final report: CAT Report 1624	
Periods represented: Undated	
Summary of fieldwork results: An archaeological strip, map and excavation was carried out before the construction of a soakaway associated with a new sports hall. The site is situated in the grounds of Colchester County High School for Girls, on land that was formerly part of the estate of the Victorian mansion Altnacealgach House. A number of archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the grounds of the school since its construction, uncovering a 'triple-ditched dyke', pits, ditches and post-holes dating to the Roman period. In this excavation two undated features were uncovered, a ditch and a pit, along with one natural feature. Due to the location of the features in relation to previous excavations it is likely these features are Roman in date.	
Previous summaries/reports: -	
CBC monitor: Dr Richard Hoggett	
Keywords: -	Significance: -
Author of summary: Sarah Carter	Date of summary: January 2021

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological strip, map and excavate at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US

NGR: TL 98026 24646 (centre)
District: Colchester

Planning references: 172464

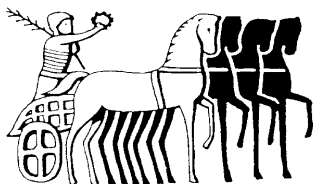
Commissioned by: Lyndon Hopkins (Alpha Trust)
On behalf of: Colchester County High School for Girls

Curating museum: Colchester
CHER number: ECC4578

CAT project code: 2020/11i
OASIS project number: colchest3-408550

Site manager: Chris Lister
CBC monitor: Dr Richard Hoggett

This WSI written: 20/11/2020
Revised: 21/12/2020



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Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
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Site location and description

The proposed development site lies approximately 1.7km east of Colchester town centre. It lies within the grounds of the Colchester County High School for Girls (Fig 1). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 98026 24646.

Proposed work

The development comprises the excavation of a soakaway associated with the construction of a new sports hall.

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).

The development site is located within the grounds of Colchester County High School for Girls, a purpose-built complex of buildings opened in 1957 on land that was formerly part of the estate of Altnacealgach House (locally listed), a Victorian mansion designed by acclaimed local architect Horace Darken and built in 1888 to be the home of Arthur Thomas Osborne, heir to a successful brewing business. The school lies to the south-west of the house.

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Excavations in 1939 revealed an early Roman curving ditch, possibly the corner of a fort, to the north of the school (ECC851 and MCC2173). The same excavations revealed two parallel ditches, which were thought by Hull to represent an annexe lying to the south of this fort (Hull 1958, 273). It was later shown, however, that these form a continuation of Heath Farm Dyke North (CAR 11, 32). In February 1996, CAT monitored an area on the corner of Norman Way and Park Road for a car park. A ditch was recorded running east-west parallel to the footpath, but was thought to be medieval or later and not associated to Hull's ditch (CAT Report 1000, 96/2b).

In 1955, prior to the construction Colchester County High School for Girls, a 'triple-ditched dyke' was excavated by R.J. Martin beneath what was to become the main school building. The ditches were 4m wide, although their depths are unknown (ECC714, MCC2177, CAR 11, 127). Additionally, on the south edge of the school, postholes and a ditch indicated the possible presence of a building surrounded by a diagonal ditch dated to the 2nd century and a large pit, also dated to the 2nd century. Further excavations undertaken by John Wachter to the east of the High School for Girls the following year revealed palisade trenches, an irregular wattle-and-daub structure, gullies and pits (ECC970, MCC8175 and MCC2064-5, CAR 11, 124-126).

CAT have carried out a number of watching briefs and evaluations in this area. A watching brief undertaken by CAT in 2001 on an extension to the school revealed no trace of the ditches of the dyke seen in 1955 (CAT Report 155). A further watching brief in 2005 for a new

music and careers block recorded four undatable pits or ditches (CAT Report 348). At least two of the ditches of the dyke should have been visible within the footprint of the new building and one of its soakaways, but were not observed. A substantial ditch recorded in a second soakaway was not in alignment with those seen in 1955 and it was concluded that the 'triple-ditched dyke' either turns a corner or does not in fact exist.

An evaluation at the County High School for Girls in 2014 in the area of the proposed rear or southern car park revealed a Roman ditch dating to the late 1st century AD (CAT Report 762). The ditch was aligned parallel to the ditches seen in the 1939 excavations (i.e. Heath Farm Dyke North). What is unclear is whether the 2014 ditch is merely an agricultural field ditch, or whether it is part of a wider defensive scheme including the Heath Farm Dyke and the 'triple-ditched dyke' on the school site. An evaluation undertaken by CAT in 2016 towards the centre of the County High School for Girls identified a Roman ditch aligned north-east to south-west (CAT Report 975). This was recorded along with five modern and two natural features. Another evaluation was carried out in January 2018 in advance of the construction of a multi-functional hall and two additional car parks. Three undated pits, two post-Roman pits and two natural features were recorded (CAT Report 1211).

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In April 2020, CAT undertook another excavation to the south of the school, prior to the extension of a classroom (CAT Report 1549). This excavation uncovered only a single modern pit or digger bucket cut, further emphasising that the main focus of Roman activity lies to the north and east of the school.

Project background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in November 2017 (application No. 201669) to for the construction of a new sports hall with changing rooms, group rooms and a classrooms, which included the excavation of a new soakaway measuring 24m x 4m x 1.32m (after engineering revisions this has been altered to 8m x 7.2m x 2m deep).

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 (Fig 1)

The required archaeological work as stated in the Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2020) was for an archaeological trial-trenching evaluation. After a Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared in accordance with this Brief, revisions to the design of the soakaway were made which reduced the overall area from 96m² to 57.6m². As the brief requires the excavation of a single linear trial-trench positioned over the location of the new soakaway measuring 24m in length and 1.8m in width (totalling 43.2m²) it was decided after discussion with the CBCAA to strip the entire footprint of the soakaway under archaeological supervision.

The excavation is required to enable the archaeological resource, both in quality and extent, to be accurately quantified. It is also required to:

- Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.

- Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses, and the possible presence of masking colluvial/alluvial deposits.
- Establish the potential for the survival, condition and significance of environmental evidence.
- Include a contingency for soil micromorphological and geochemical analysis of floor and dark earth deposits. In addition, particular attention should be given to the collection of micro-remains preserved within and/or directly over floors.
- Establish an archaeological deposit model for below-ground archaeological remains across the site.
- Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.

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 2020)
- 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 CHER. 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 supervisor plus one archaeologist for one day.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway/Mark Baister

Excavation methodology

Where appropriate, modern overburden and any topsoil stripping/levelling will be performed using a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. If no archaeologically significant deposits are exposed, machine excavation will continue until natural subsoil is reached.

Where necessary, areas will be cleaned by hand to ensure the visibility of archaeological deposits.

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

All features or deposits will be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) in 1m wide sections, and 100% of complex structures/features. Complex archaeological structures such as walls, kilns, ovens or burials will be carefully cleaned, planned and fully recorded, but where possible left *in situ*. Only if it can be demonstrated that the complex structure/feature is likely to be destroyed by groundworks will it be removed, or on the rare occasion where full excavation (or exhumation in the case of burials) is necessary to achieve the objectives of the evaluation.

Burials, if encountered, will be recorded and lifted with an on site human bone specialist available to record as much information as possible (see human remains section below).

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A representative section will be drawn of the excavation baulk to include ground level, the depth of machining within the excavation area and the depth of any sondages.

A metal detector will be used to examine the stripped area, contexts and 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

The excavation area and any features will be surveyed by Total Station or GPS, unless the particulars of the features indicate that manual planning techniques should be employed. 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 the excavation area 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 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 process the samples and the flots will be sent to Val Fryer or Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

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

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.

Human remains

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

Burials, if encountered, will be recorded and lifted. Following HE guidance (HE 2018) the project osteologist will be available to record any human remains encountered in order to maximise the amount of data recovered.

If burials are encountered and it is necessary to remove remains from the site, 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. 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.

Human remains removed from site for analysis may be sent for radiocarbon dating.

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: 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

prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey

Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Val Rigby /
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 three months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAA as a PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of groundworks. At least two corners of which 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.

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. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre [DCC 2013]) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive.

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: 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> . 2nd Edition
CAT	2020	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 155	2001	<i>An archaeological watching brief at the County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: September 2001</i> , by K Orr
CAT Report 348	2005	<i>An archaeological watching brief at the Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: May-November 2005</i> , by K Orr
CAT Report 762	2014	<i>Archaeological trial-trenching evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex: March 2014</i> , by B Holloway
CAT Report 975	2016	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: June 2016</i> , by L Pooley
CAT Report 1000	forth-coming	<i>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 1211	2018	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: January 2018</i> , by

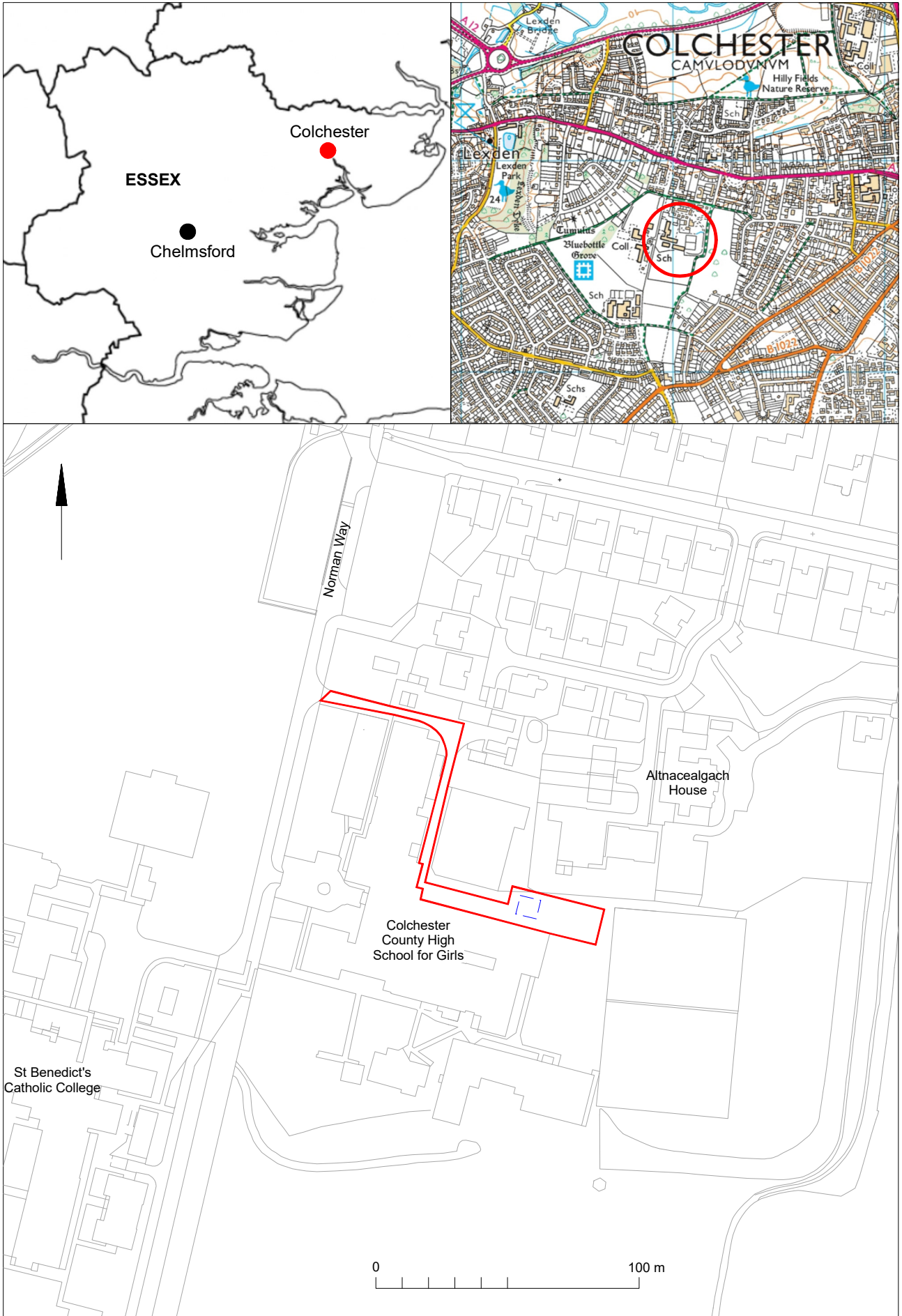
		E Hicks
CAT Report 1449	2019	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: July 2019</i> , by E Hicks
CAT Report 1507	2020	<i>Archaeological excavation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US: December 2019</i> , by E Hicks
CAT Report 1549	2020	<i>Archaeological excavation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, COE 3US: April 2020</i> by E Hicks
CBCAA	2020	<i>Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, CO3 3US</i> By R Hoggett
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>
Digital Curation Centre (DCC)	2013	Checklist for Data Management Plan v. 4.0
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England (HE)	2015a	<i>Digital Image capture and File Storage: Guidelines for best practice</i> . 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, MR	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 Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

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Fig 1 Site location and soakaway excavation (dashed blue lines).

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Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US
Short description of the project	An archaeological strip, map and excavation was carried out before the construction of a soakaway associated with a new sports hall. The site is situated in the grounds of Colchester County High School for Girls, on land that was formerly part of the estate of the Victorian mansion Altnacealgach House. A number of archaeological investigations have been undertaken in the grounds of the school since its construction, uncovering a 'tripled-ditched dyke', pits, ditches and post-holes dating to the Roman period. In this excavation two undated features were uncovered, a ditch and a pit, along with one natural feature. Due to the location of the features in relation to previous excavations it is likely these features are Roman in date.
Project dates	Start: 05-01-2021 End: 05-01-2021
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2020/11i - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	172464 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	PIT Uncertain
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches", "Environmental Sampling", "Metal Detectors"
Development type	Large/ medium scale extensions to existing structures (e.g. church, school, hospitals, law courts, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Colchester County High School for Girls
Postcode	CO3 3US
Study area	45 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 98026 24646 51.884625989987 0.877731230328 51 53 04 N 000 52 39 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design	Mark Baister

originator
 Project director/manager Chris Lister
 Project supervisor Ben Holloway
 Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive recipient Archaeological Data Service
 Digital Contents "none"
 Digital Media available "Database","Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
 Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum
 Paper Contents "none"
 Paper Media available "Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
 Title Archaeological strip, map and excavation at Colchester County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3US
 Author(s)/Editor(s) Carter, S
 Other bibliographic details CAT Report 1624
 Date 2021
 Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust
 Place of issue or publication Colchester
 Description A4 loose-leaf comb-bound
 URL cat.essex.ac.uk
 Entered by S Carter (sc@catuk.org)
 Entered on 20 January 2021

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