

Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7GZ
Tel.: 01206 501785 Email.: services@catuk.org

CAT Report 1627

Archaeological monitoring at St Mary's Upper School, Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3RB: July-September 2020

Planning reference: 200963

CHER Event no.: ECC4595

OASIS ref.: colchest3-399254

Grid Reference: TL 98190 25007 (centre)

Number of site visits: 2

Dates of visit: 22nd July and 2nd September 2020

Nature of the work: Observation of groundworks for a new extension and a new decking area.

Reason for condition: The site lies within a known area of Late Iron Age and Roman burial grounds.

% of total seen: 100% of the groundworks.

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

Foundation trenching totalling 10.3m in length, 0.5m wide and 1.3m deep was excavated to accommodate the new extension. Further trenching was subsequently excavated for the new decking area. It was 20m long, 0.5m wide and 0.75m deep.

The trenching for the new extension was cut through modern block paving and sand bedding (L1, 0.11m thick), a layer of modern made ground (L2, c 0.25m thick, hard, dry light grey/yellow/brown silty-sand with very frequent CBM and concrete pieces) and a layer of buried topsoil (L3, c 0.46m thick, soft, moist dark brown/black silty-loam) onto natural (L4, friable, dry medium orange sand with abundant gravel, encountered at a depth of c 0.82m below current ground level [bcgl]). The trenching for the decking area was cut through L1 (c 0.3-0.32m thick) and L3 (0.38-0.46m thick) onto L4 (encountered at a depth of 0.7-0.76m bcgl).

Modern pit F1 was uncovered within the northeastern corner of the foundation trenching for the new extension and in the southeastern corner of the foundation trenching for the decking area. The feature extended beyond the limit of excavation and so its full dimensions could not be ascertained but its exposed extent was 3.6m across.



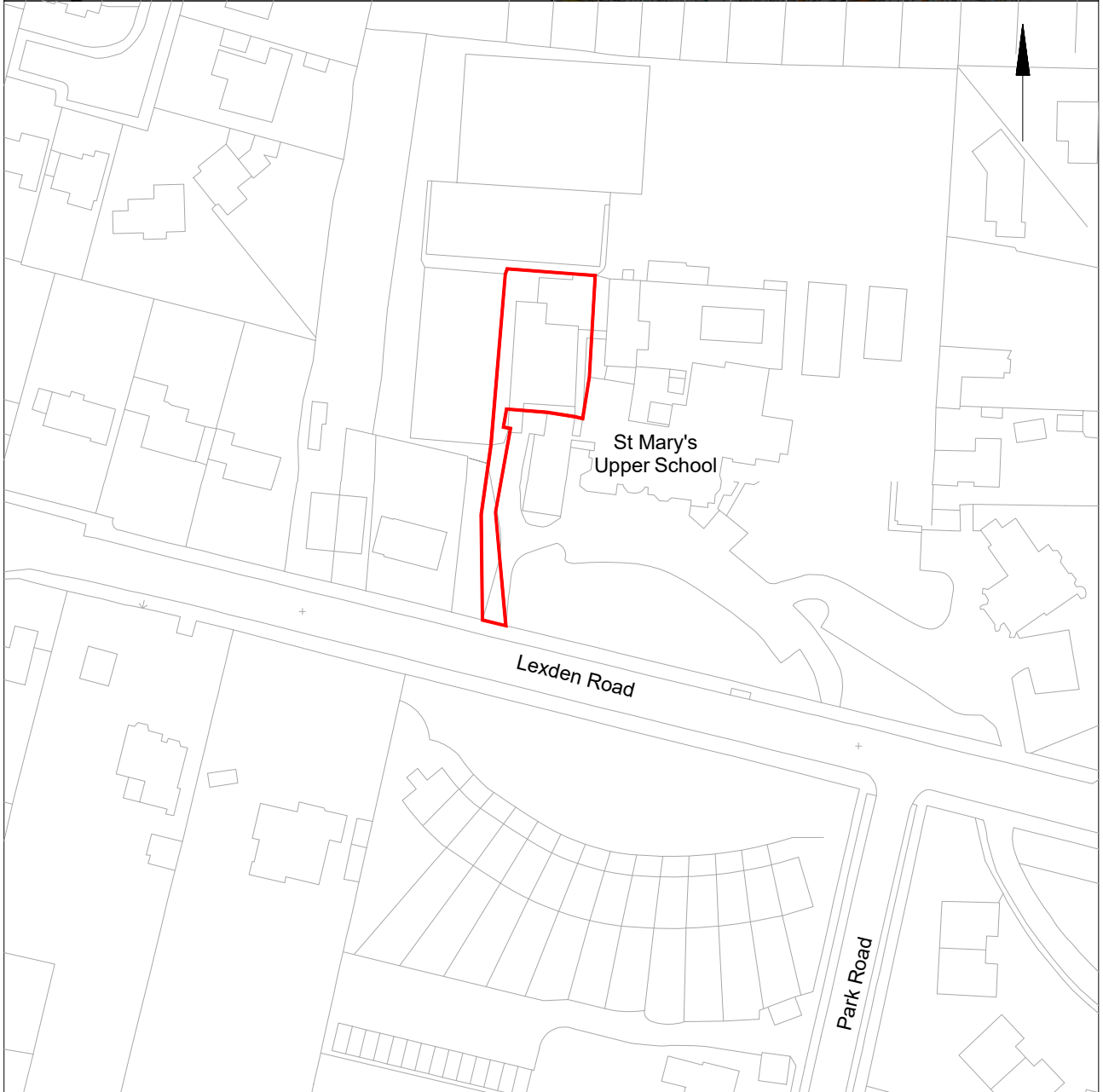
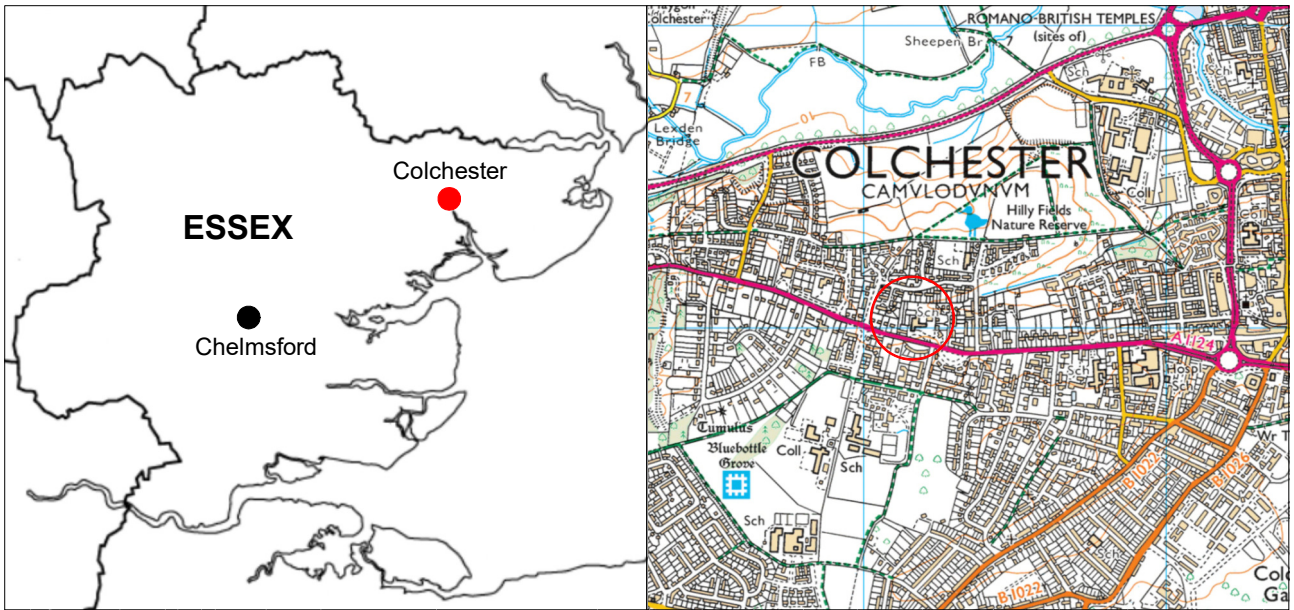
Photograph 1 Site shot

Recorded by: Dr Elliott Hicks (eh2@catuk.org)

Date: 28.01.2021

Checked by: Philip Crummy (pc@catuk.org)

Date: 29.01.2021



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100039294.

Fig 1 Site location.

0 50 m

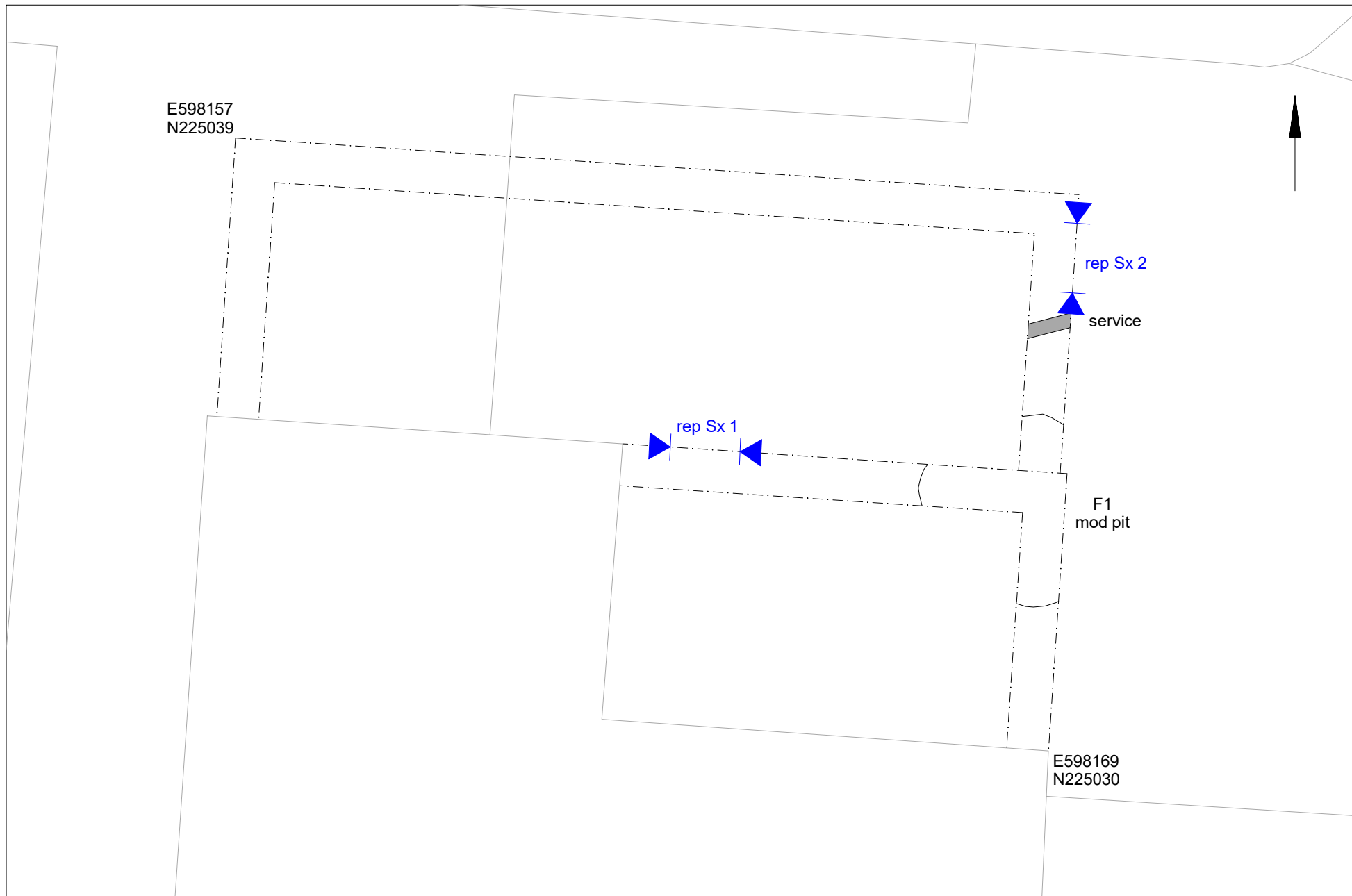


Fig 2 Results.

© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100039294.



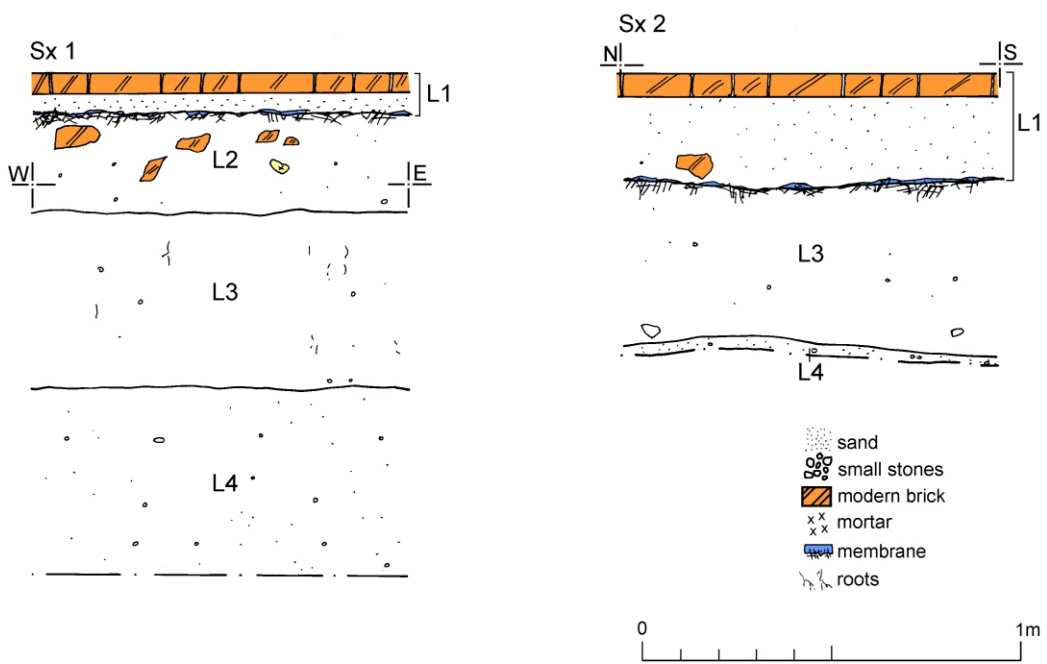


Fig 3 Representative sections.

**Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)
for an archaeological investigation at
St Mary's Upper School, 91 Lexden Road,
Colchester, Essex, CO3 3RB.**

NGR: TL 98190 25007 (centre)

District: Colchester

Planning references: 200963

Commissioned by: Craig Woods (Purcell)

Client: St Marys School

Curating museum: Colchester

CHER number: tbc

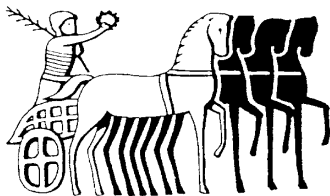
CAT project code: 2020/07e

OASIS project number: colchest3-399254

Site manager: Chris Lister

CBC monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 17/07/2020



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,
Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex, CO2 7GZ

tel: 01206 501785

email: eh@catuk.org

Site location and description

The proposed development site is located c 1.43km west of the main historic core of Colchester town centre at St Mary's Upper School, 91 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex (Fig 1). The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 98190 25007. The site to be developed is currently an open paved area.

Proposed work

The development comprises an extension to the rear of the dining room area, remodelling of the kitchen, levelling out of the area to the north of the new extension with a new decking area and any associated groundworks.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background includes extracts from CAT Report 1067, 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 St Mary's Upper School which opened in 1908. It 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 termed 'the western cemetery' by Hull (1958), but more generally known as the Lexden cemetery and (MCC7525 and MCC7527). The Lexden cemetery area encompasses a number of Iron Age and Roman burial grounds on both sides of Lexden Road (the main Roman road leading from the walled town towards London and Braughing) (Hull 1958 and *CAR 11*). In particular a Roman lead coffin was found immediately to the east of the development site in 1880 (MCC1415), with many other burials found close-by.

The development site is also located on the southern edge of the Late Iron Age and early Roman settlement and industrial complex at Sheepen (MCC7487, Scheduled Monument no. 1002173). Sheepen was extensively excavated in the 1930s (Hawkes & Hull 1947) and 1970s (Niblett 1985; *CAR 11*, 131-7). Finds were prolific, and evidence found included remains of a trackway and workshops, with evidence of metal-working and coin manufacture (Crummy 2001, 15- 16).

The Late Iron Age settlement at Sheepen was defended on its western side by the Sheepen Dyke (MCC498). This was a large earth bank and ditch, which was probably constructed by c AD 10 (*CAR 11* 161-2). A later addition to the Sheepen Dyke extended to the south-west for approximately 340m ('Ditch 1A') and was sectioned in several places in the 1930s (Hawkes & Hull 1947, 111-12). This stretch was possibly added shortly before the Roman invasion. It was projected to cross the southeastern corner of the Kingswode Hoe School. This ditch then continued towards the north bank of a stream, which is represented today by a marked dip in Sussex Road. The Sheepen Dyke was probably levelled and the ditch backfilled shortly after the Roman conquest (Crummy 2001, 90; Hawkes & Hull 1947, 51 & 112).

Many Roman pottery- and tile- kilns have been excavated nearby; to the north/north-east (MCC1822 and MCC7669) and in the grounds of Kingswode Hoe School (MCC8422, Hull 1963, 155-6). Recent investigations at Kingswode Hoe School have also revealed postmedieval/modern features (CAT Report 578) and part of the Sheepen Dyke along with two other Roman ditches (CAT Report 623).

Roman remains of an unspecified nature were found close to the school when 'The Turrets' (89 Lexden Road) was being constructed in 1816 (Hull 1958, 292, MCC2134).

An evaluation in the northeast corner of St Mary's School in 2000 did not reveal any significant archaeological remains (CAT Report 95) and an evaluation in 2017 as part of the re-organisation of the car-parking facilities revealed a single undated pit (CAT Report 1067)

The now demolished Second Post windmill also stood close to the site, it was erected c 1681 (MCC2286).

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in May 2020 (application No. 200963) for an *extension of dining room area and remodel of school kitchen plus associated 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 pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

Site surveying

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

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

Environmental sampling policy

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for

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

Brown, D	2011	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
CAR 11	1995	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 11: Camulodunum II, by Hawkes and Crummy</i>
CAT	2019	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 95	2000	An archaeological evaluation at St Mary's School, 91 Lexden

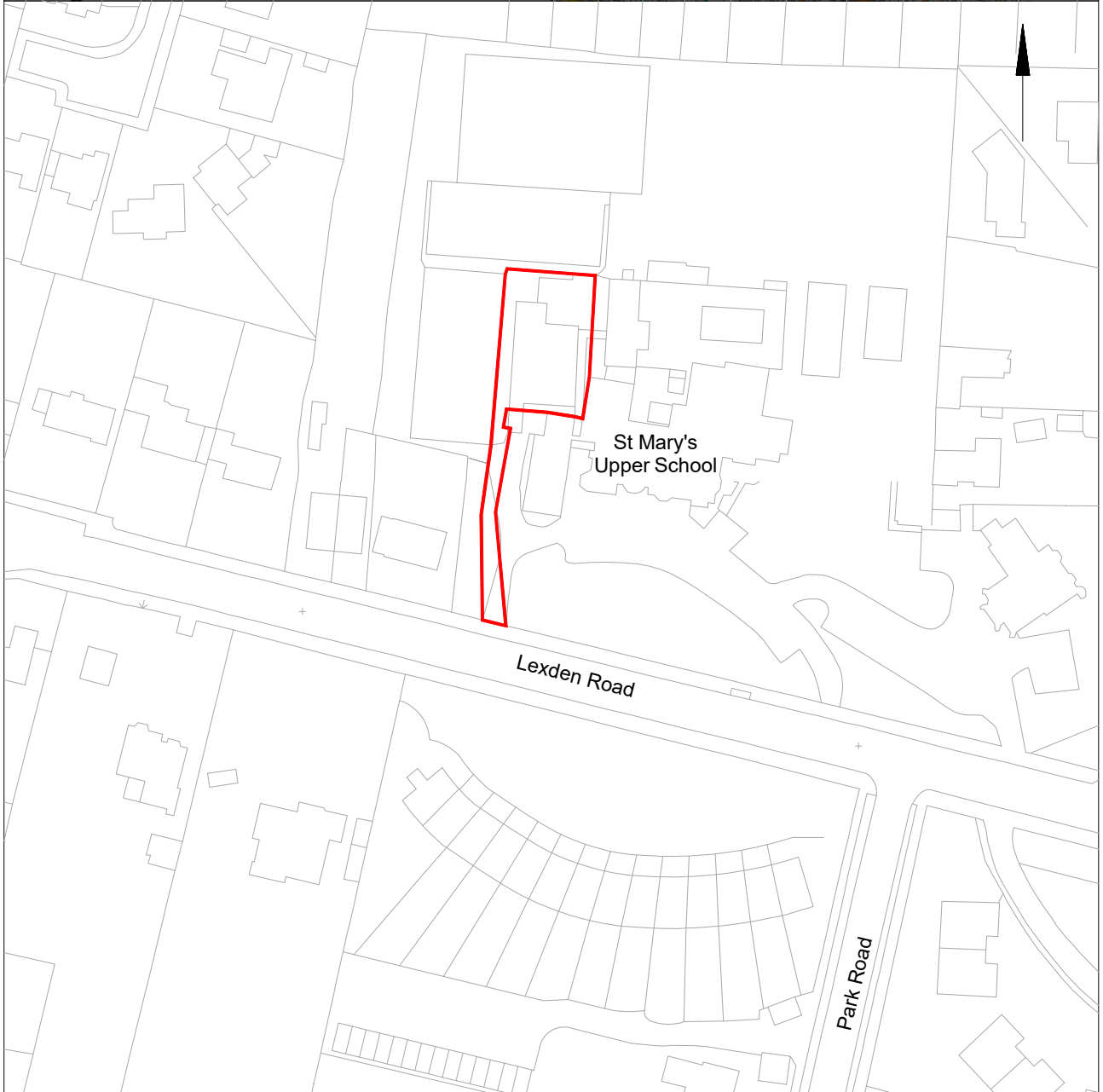
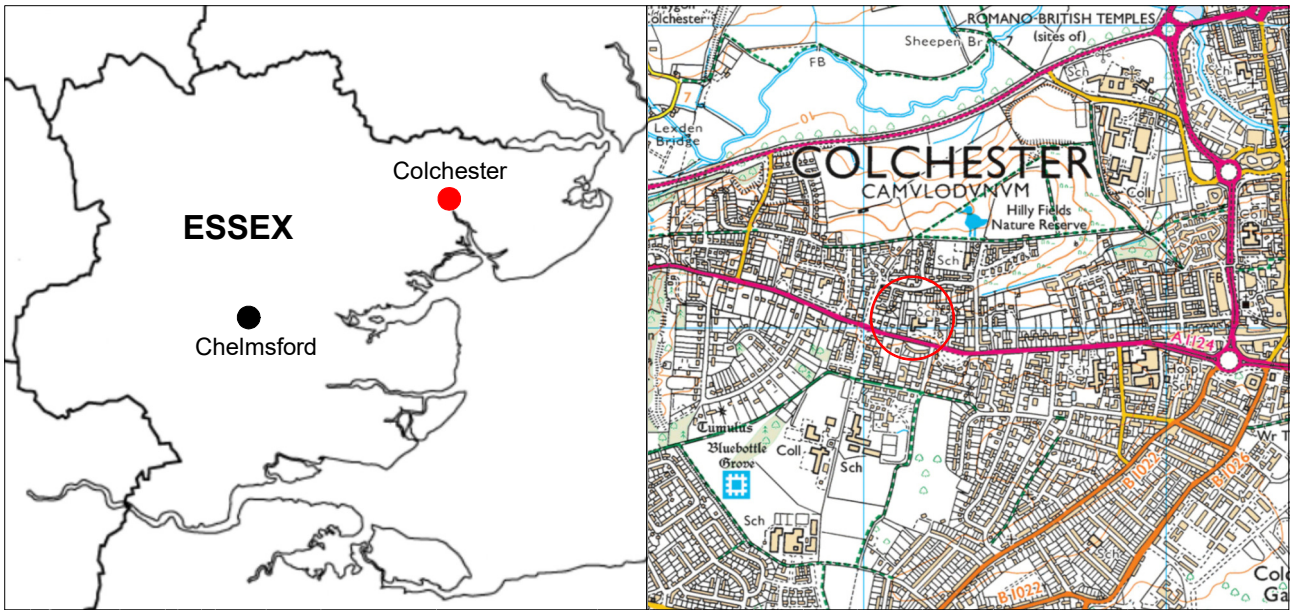
		Road, Colchester: September 2000
CAT Report 578	2010	Archaeological monitoring at Kingswode Hoe School, Sussex Road, Colchester, Essex: August-September 2010
CAT Report 623	2016	Archaeological investigations at Kingswode Hoe School, Sussex Road, Colchester, Essex: October 2011
CAT Report 1067	2016	<i>Archaeological evaluation at St Mary's Upper School, 91 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex – February 2017.</i> By L Pooley
CBCAA	2020	<i>Brief for an Archaeological Investigation at St Marys School, 91 Lexden Road, Colchester, CO3 3RB.</i> By J Tipper
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Crummy, P	2001	<i>City of Victory: the story of Colchester – Britain's first Roman town</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).
Hawkes, C.F C, & Hull, M R	1947	<i>Camulodunum, first report on the excavations at Colchester 1930-39,</i> RRCSAL, 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, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester,</i> RRCSAL, 20
Hull, M R	1963	<i>The Roman potters' kilns of Colchester,</i> RRCSAL, 21
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.
Niblett, R	1985	<i>Sheepen: an early Roman industrial site at Camulodunum,</i> CBA Research Report 57

Emma Holloway



Colchester Archaeological Trust
 Roman Circus House
 Roman Circus Walk
 Colchester
 Essex
 CO2 2GZ

tel: 01206 501785
 email: eh@catuk.org



© Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100039294.

Fig 1 Site location.

0 50 m

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: colchest3-399254

Project details

Project name	Archaeological investigation at St Mary's Upper School, 91 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3RB.
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring was carried out at St Mary's Upper School, 91 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex during groundworks for a new extension and a new decking area. The site lies within a known area of Late Iron Age and Roman burial grounds. Despite being located in an archaeologically-sensitive area, however, only a modern pit was recorded.
Project dates	Start: 22-07-2020 End: 02-09-2020
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	200963 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2020/07e - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4595 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	PIT Modern
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER St Mary's Upper School, 91 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex
Postcode	CO3 3RB
Study area	0.06 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 98190 25007 51.887809390794 0.88031863415 51 53 16 N 000 52 49 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	Chris Lister
Type of sponsor/funding body	School
Name of sponsor/funding body	St Mary's School

Project archives

Physical Archive	No
------------------	----

Exists?
Digital Archive recipient Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID ECC4595
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID ECC4595
Paper Media available "Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Archaeological monitoring at St Mary's Upper School, Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3RB: July-September 2020
Author(s)/Editor(s) Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details CAT Report 1627
Date 2021
Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication Colchester
Description A4 loose-leaf brass-stapled
URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

Entered by Dr Elliott Hicks (eh2@catuk.org)
Entered on 29 January 2021

OASIS: Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice
© ADS 1996-2012 Created by [Jo Gilham](#) and [Jen Mitcham](#), email Last modified Wednesday 9 May 2012
Cite only: <http://www.oasis.ac.uk/form/print.cfm?id=413913> for this page

[Cookies](#) [Privacy Policy](#)