

Archaeological evaluation at the Colne Community School, Church Road, Brightlingsea, Essex, CO7 0QL

March 2021



by Laura Pooley

figures by Laura Pooley and Sarah Carter

fieldwork by Adam Wightman and Harvey Furniss

**commissioned by Matthew Mackenzie
on behalf of Morgan Sindall**

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CAT Report 1638

March 2021

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out on land at the Colne Community School, Church Road, Brightlingsea, Essex, in advance of the construction of a new teaching block. There were no significant archaeological remains.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land at the Colne Community School, Church Road, Brightlingsea, Essex which was carried out on 4th and 5th March 2021. The work was commissioned by Matthew Mackenzie on behalf of Morgan Sindall Construction in advance of the construction of the demolition of the existing caretakers house and modular store and the construction of a new teaching block, together with associated access, services, landscaping and parking. The evaluation was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Teresa O'Connor advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a brief *Programme of archaeological evaluation on land at Clacton County High School*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2021), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2021).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological includes extracts of the ECC brief and the Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>)

The school is located on the ridge overlooking the Colne estuary to the south. This ridge has always had a high potential for archaeological remains, and the presence of a large number of cropmarks identified by aerial photography in close proximity suggests an extensive multi-period landscape.

A large number of the cropmarks to the west of the school have been destroyed by quarrying, but included at least two prominent sub-rectangular enclosures, a number of ring-ditches, trackways and numerous field boundaries (EHER 2234; 500m-1.3km west). Some archaeological investigation of these cropmarks had been undertaken prior to quarrying, and in 1989-90 an extensive Middle Bronze Age burial complex was excavated (Clarke & Lavender 2008; EHER 2142). This exposed 31 ring-ditches and 48 cremation burials, 34 of which were urned (Clarke & Lavender 2008, 10). Also observed were three boundary ditches and several postholes and pits of unknown dates. The only dated feature outside of the ring-ditches and cremations was a pit in the south-west of the site which was radiocarbon dated to the Anglo-Saxon period (Clarke & Lavender 2008, 15). In 2002-2004, CAT carried out monitoring work in advance of further quarrying. This exposed substantial prehistoric landscape features (CAT Reports 214, 252 and 280). Multiple field boundaries were also observed.

In 2013-2015 CAT conducted an excavation approximately 860m to the west of the school, in advance of a substantial expansion of Brightlingsea Quarry (CAT Report 1097). This led to the discovery of a large multi-period site with evidence for occupation from the early Neolithic to the late Anglo-Saxon period. A multitude of tree-throws were excavated and tentatively identified as being the result of extensive deforestation in the late Neolithic period. A partially-surviving Bronze Age field system crossing the west of the site was uncovered as well as a substantial Bronze Age ring-ditch. A Late Iron Age/early Roman field system with several associated burials was also excavated to the east of the site, and aligned north-east to south-west across the centre of the site was a mid-Roman trackway. Most of the archaeological features were located in the south and west of the site, where the remains of an Anglo-Saxon settlement was excavated. Large numbers of finds were recovered from pits and structural features, including at least ten Grubenhäuser and two post-built buildings.

Further excavation at Brightlingsea Quarry in 2017-2018 (CAT Report 1458) uncovered a continuation of the archaeological landscape discussed above, with another Grubenhäuser and more prehistoric and Roman field systems and trackways.

To the north and east of the school (c 500m) are further cropmarks, interpreted as rectangular enclosures (EHER 2141, 2276) and enclosures, pits and field boundaries (EHER 46923). Although none of these cropmarks have been archaeologically investigated it is likely they belong to the same multi-period landscape as identified during excavations further to the west of the development site at Brightlingsea Quarry.

4 Aim

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

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

One trial-trench, both 15m long by 1.8m wide, was machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist within the footprint of the proposed new building.

The trench was cut through modern tarmac and sub-base (L1, c 0.12-0.17m thick) and a layer of modern accumulation (L2, c 0.7-0.76m thick). Sealed by L2 was a layer of sandy-clay (L3, c 0.33-0.45m thick) which was most likely a glacial deposit. Sondages dug through L3 revealed natural sand and gravels beneath (L4, encountered at a depth of c 1.22-1.33m below current ground level). Natural glacial feature F1 cut L4 and was filled with the same sandy-clay as L3.

There were no archaeological features.



Photograph 1 Trench, looking southwest



Photograph 2 Geological feature F1, looking west

6 Finds

There were no finds.

7 Conclusion

There were no features of archaeological significance.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Matthew Mackenzie and Morgan Sindall for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by A Wightman and H Furniss. Figures are by L Pooley and S Carter. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor

9 References

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|---|
| Brown, N & Glazebrook, J | 2000 | <i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8) |
| CAT | 2020 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CAT | 2021 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological evaluation at Clacton County High School, Walton Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, CO15 6DZ</i> |
| CAT Report 214 | 2002 | <i>An archaeological watching brief and recording at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex: March-April 2002</i> , by H Brooks |
| CAT Report 252 | 2003 | <i>An archaeological watching brief and recording at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex: October 2003</i> , by H Brooks |
| CAT Report 280 | 2004 | <i>An archaeological watching brief and recording at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex: June-July 2004</i> , by L Pooley |
| CAT Report 1097 | 2017 | <i>Archaeological monitoring and excavation at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex: June 2013-April 2015</i> , by M Baister |
| CAT Report 1458 | 2019 | <i>Archaeological monitoring and excavation at Brightlingsea Quarry, Moverons Lane, Brightlingsea, Essex: December 2017 – January 2018</i> , by M Baister |
| 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> |
| Clarke, C & Lavender, N | 2008 | <i>An Early Neolithic ring-ditch and Middle Bronze Age cemetery: excavation and survey at Brightlingsea, Essex.</i> East Anglian Archaeology 126 |
| ECCPS | 2021 | <i>Programme of archaeological evaluation on land The Colne Community School, Church Road, Brightlingsea</i> , by T O'Connor |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14) |
| Historic England | 2015 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> |
| Medlycott, M | 2011 | <i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24) |
| MHCLG | 2019 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government |

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c 500 – 1066
Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Cifa	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services

EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
Neolithic	period from c 4000 – 2500 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsis	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1638)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (trench sheets, sections)

Site digital photos and log

Inked sections

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1638)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Site data

Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The 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 reference BGCC21.

Distribution list:

Matthew Mackenzie, Morgan Sindall
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



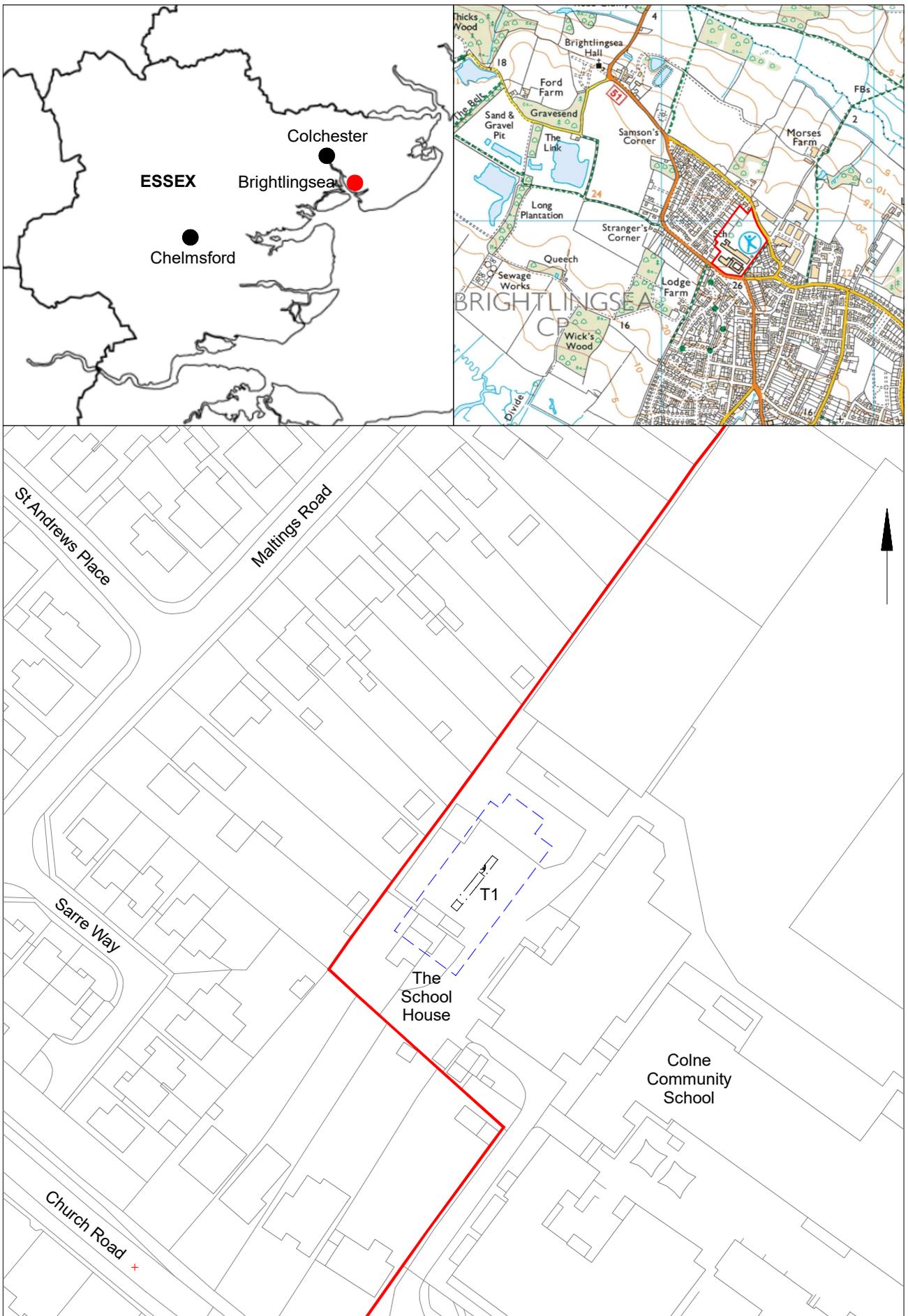
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Date: 16.3.2021



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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout, proposed development dashed blue.

0 50 m

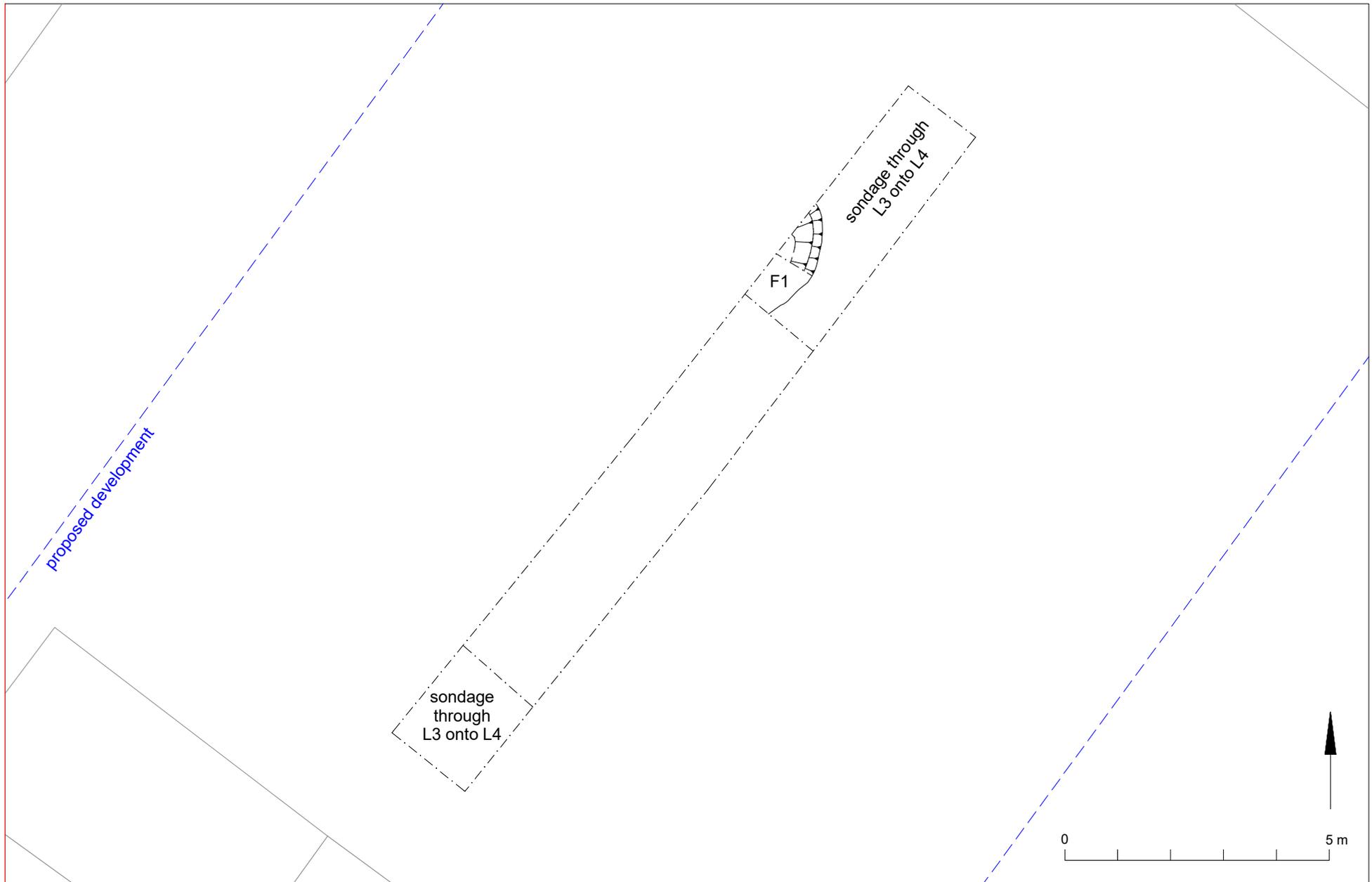


Fig 2 Results

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OASIS ID: colchest3-415426

Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at the Colne Community School, Church Road, Brightlingsea Essex, C07 0QL
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out on land at the Colne Community School, Church Road, Brightlingsea, Essex, in advance of the construction of a new teaching block. There were no significant archaeological remains.
Project dates	Start: 04-03-2021 End: 05-03-2021
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	2021/02f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	CC/TEN/114/20 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	BGCC21 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
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 TENDRING BRIGHTLINGSEA Colne Community School, Church Road
Postcode	CO7 0QL
Study area	0.2 Hectares
Site coordinates	TM 08280 17916 51.820440630256 1.022469912676 51 49 13 N 001 01 20 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 21.98m Max: 22.41m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	HEM Team Officer, ECC
Project design originator	Mark Baister
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Adam Wightman
Type of sponsor/funding body	School

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	BGCC21
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive	Colchester Museum

recipient
Paper Archive ID BGCC21
Paper Contents "other"
Paper Media available "Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Report","Section"

**Project
bibliography 1**

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