

Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1956
issued July 2023**

**Archaeological evaluation at 28 Grove Road,
Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9EY: June 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/06c
ECC code: CF102**

**Archaeological evaluation at 28 Grove Road,
Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 9EY: June 2023**

NGR: TL 70795 06201 (centre)

Planning ref.: 22/00119/FUL

**CAT project ref.: 2023/06c
CAT Report 1956**

**ECC code: CF102
OASIS id: colchest3-516318**

**report prepared by
Ben Holloway**

**fieldwork by Nigel Rayner with Robin Mathieson
and Madison Ellis**

commissioned by the Homeowner

Prepared by:	Ben Holloway	Project Officer
Reviewed by:	Laura Pooley	Post Excavation Manager
Reviewed and approved by:	Philip Crummy	Director of Archaeology
Issued:	15/07/2023	

Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: bh@catuk.org

web: <https://catuk.org/>

Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Aims	2
5	Results	2
6	Finds	3
7	Conclusion	4
8	Acknowledgements	4
9	References	4
10	Abbreviations and glossary	4
11	Archive deposition	4
	Appendix 1 Context list	6
	Figures	after p6
	OASIS summary sheet	

List of photographs and figures

Cover: general site shot

Photograph 1	Trench 1, looking south-west.	2
Photograph 2	Trench 2, looking south-east.	3
Photograph 3	Representative section and sondage, looking south-west.	3
Fig 1	Site location.	
Fig 2	Evaluation results.	
Fig 3	Representative sections.	

1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford in advance an extension to the property. The evaluation took place within an area of archaeological significance, with remains dating to the Late Iron Age and subsequent Roman settlement of Caesaromagus close to the development site. However, no archaeological remains were encountered during the evaluation.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford on 15th of June 2023. The work was commissioned by the homeowner, and took place in advance of the construction of a new single-story extension to the rear of the property.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor 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 2021).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford* written by Mark Baister (ECCPS 2023). A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2023).

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 2016), 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 background includes extracts of the ECC Brief and Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The proposed development site is located at the southern end of the city of Chelmsford, in an area know as Moulsham. Moulsham Street (located approximately 80m north-west of the site) follows the line of the main Roman road that travelled south from the settlement of *Caesaromagus* (a precursor to modern-day Chelmsford). Roman remains, including burials, have been found on both sides of this historic routeway. Two Roman burials were identified on land adjacent to the proposed development, one buried in a stone coffin within a timber mausoleum which had been destroyed by fire, and the other with high status jet grave goods (EHER 17558).

Immediately west of the site, a series of excavations in the 1970's and 80's uncovered a multi-phase site. Pre-Roman remains comprised pits, post/stake-holes and "pre-Roman plough marks", which produced pottery sherds and worked flints (EHER 5844). The pottery was not closely datable but was thought to have been no later than Early Iron Age. Roman remains included part of the ditches that surrounded the Roman town, as well as evidence of the Roman road, a gateway, a timber-lined well, a rampart and timber-framed buildings (EHER 5845). Several late 1st-century hearths and ovens have also been identified to the north-west (EHER 16133). The earliest post-Roman activity identified in the excavations appears to have begun in the 12th century and had an agricultural nature (EHER 5846). In the 16th century a building was

erected on the site, which was subsequently extended and a second building added, before they were both demolished sometime in the 20th century (EHER 5847).

Further to the west of 28 Grove Road, a small-scale excavation revealed evidence of 1st- and 2nd-century yard areas and drains, presumably located to the rear of buildings fronting the Roman road, and an undated V-shaped ditch (EHER 16134). Less than 100m to the east of the development site are the remains of a Roman *mansio* (an inn and posting station for government officials) (EHER 5835). Evidence that the *mansio* had an associated precinct, bathhouse and defensive ditch has also been uncovered.

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site is London Clay Formation (clay, silt and sand), with superficial deposits of Head (clay, silt, sand and gravel).

4 Aims

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were 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 and Appendix 1)

An 'L' shaped trial-trench covering an area of 7.7m² (7m long by c 1.05-1.15m wide) was machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. The trench was excavated through a modern demolition deposit, consisting of the remains of the base of a recently demolished outbuilding (L1, 0.05-0.1m thick). This sealed a modern made-ground, containing occasional coal and clinker flecks (L2, 0.1-0.26m thick), overlying natural geology (L3, observed to a depth of 0.4-0.9m below ground level). Sondages was excavated to check for the presence of masking deposits although none were found. There were no archaeological remains.



Photograph 1 Trench 1, looking south-west.

¹ British Geological Survey – <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>



Photograph 2 Trench 2, looking south-east.



Photograph 3 Representative section and sondage, looking south-west.

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds. Modern building material was observed in L1 but not retained.

7 Conclusion

No archaeological remains were uncovered during the evaluation at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford with modern layers sealing natural. Despite its promising location, there was no evidence of Iron Age or Roman settlement associated with the Roman town of *Caesaromagus*.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank the homeowner for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by C Lister, A Wightman and L Pooley, with fieldwork carried out by N Rayner with R Matherson and M Ellis. Figures were compiled by B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Mark Baister.

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 (EAA8)
CAT	2023	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2023	<i>Written scheme of investigation for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford</i> by S Veasey
CIfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i> . Revised October 2020
CIfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> . Revised October 2020
CIfA	2014c	<i>Code of Conduct</i> . Revised October 2022
ECCPS	2022	<i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford</i> by M Baister
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA14)
Historic England	2016	<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	2021	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
Late Iron Age	period from c 100 – 50 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
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
WSI	written scheme of investigation

11 Archive deposition

Digital record: This project falls within the CIfA definition of a sterile project (<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>), and as such the preserved

archaeological archive will take the form of a single digital document that incorporates all the relevant elements from the project archive. This document will be uploaded to OASIS and released into the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) library, from where it will be curated by the ADS. The single digital document will include the report, brief, wsi, photographs, and original site data (for example context sheets, section drawings).

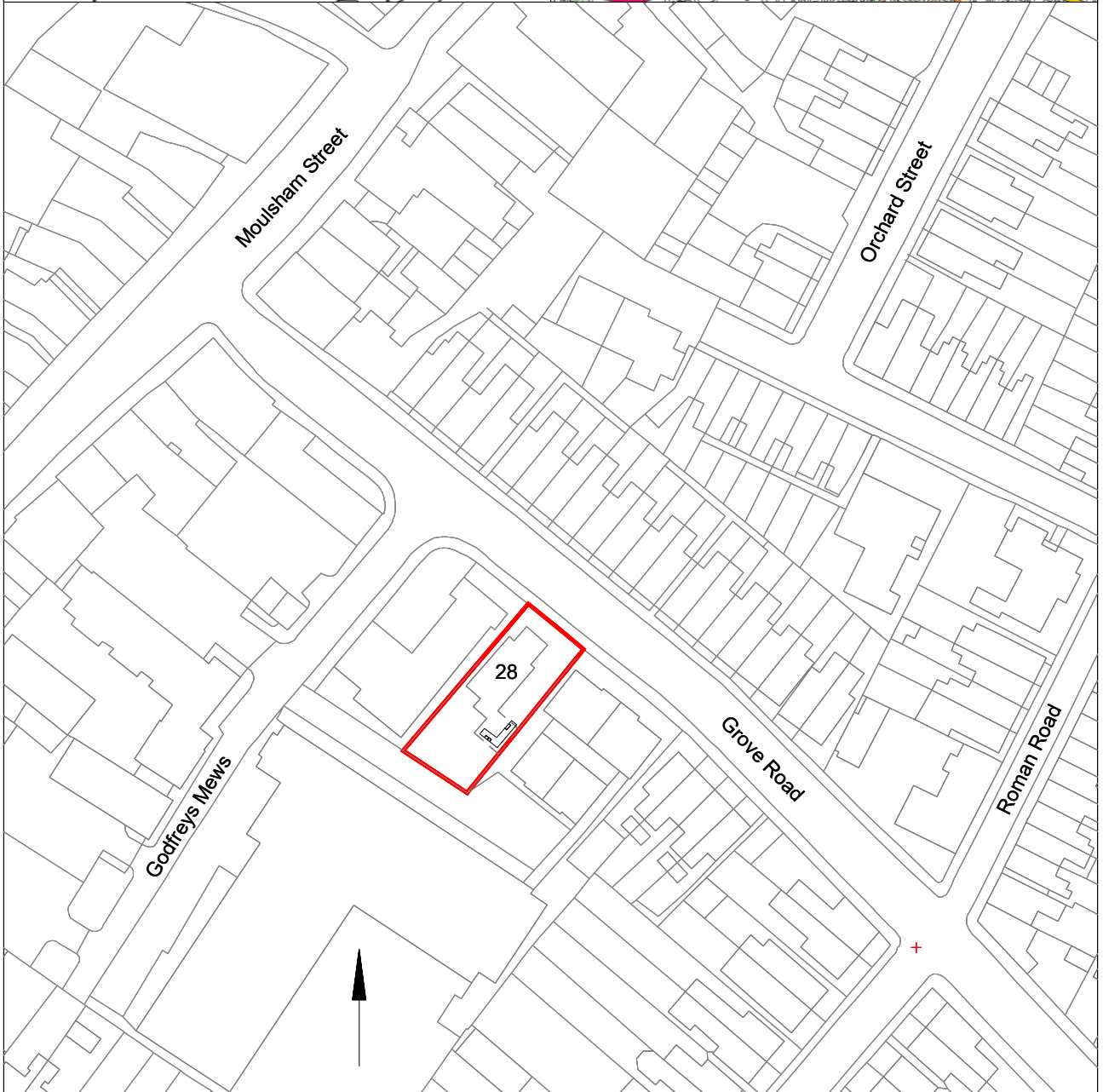
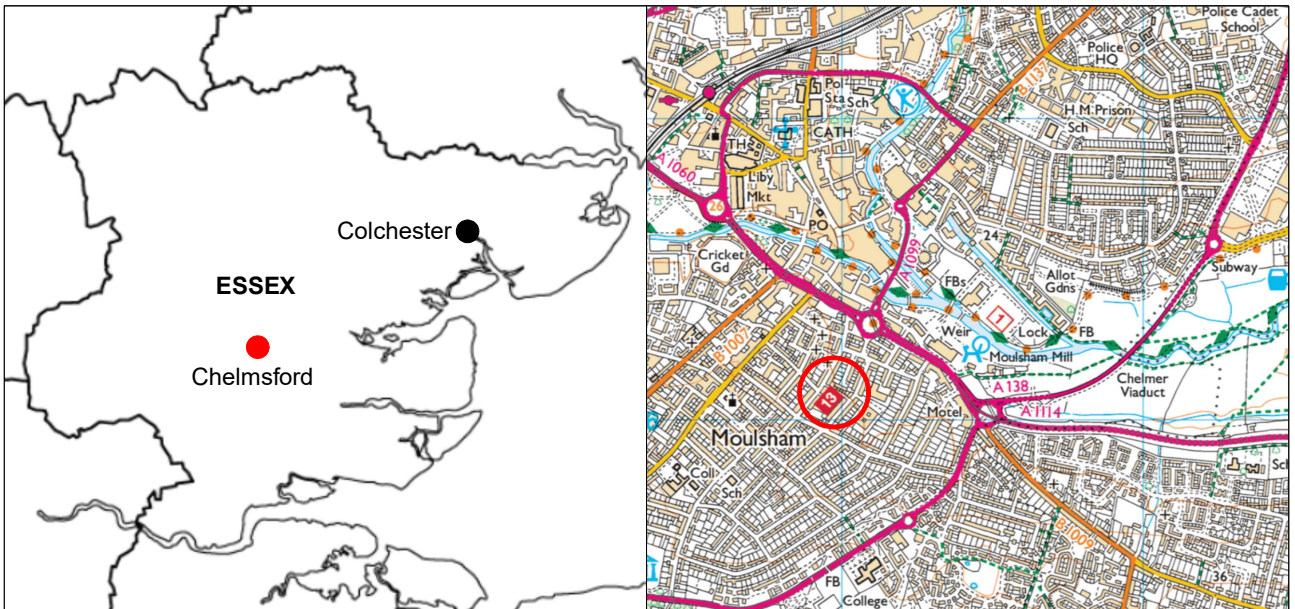
© Colchester Archaeological Trust 2023

Distribution list:

Homeowner
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Finds no.	Identification	Description	Date
L1	-	Topsoil	Soft, moist mid grey silty clay with >1% stone.	Modern
L2	-	Made-ground	Firm moist dark grey/brown silty clay occasional small stones CBM and coal flecks	Modern
L3	-	Natural	Firm, friable moist light orangish grey clay with occasional small stones.	Post-glacial



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

Fig 1 Site location.



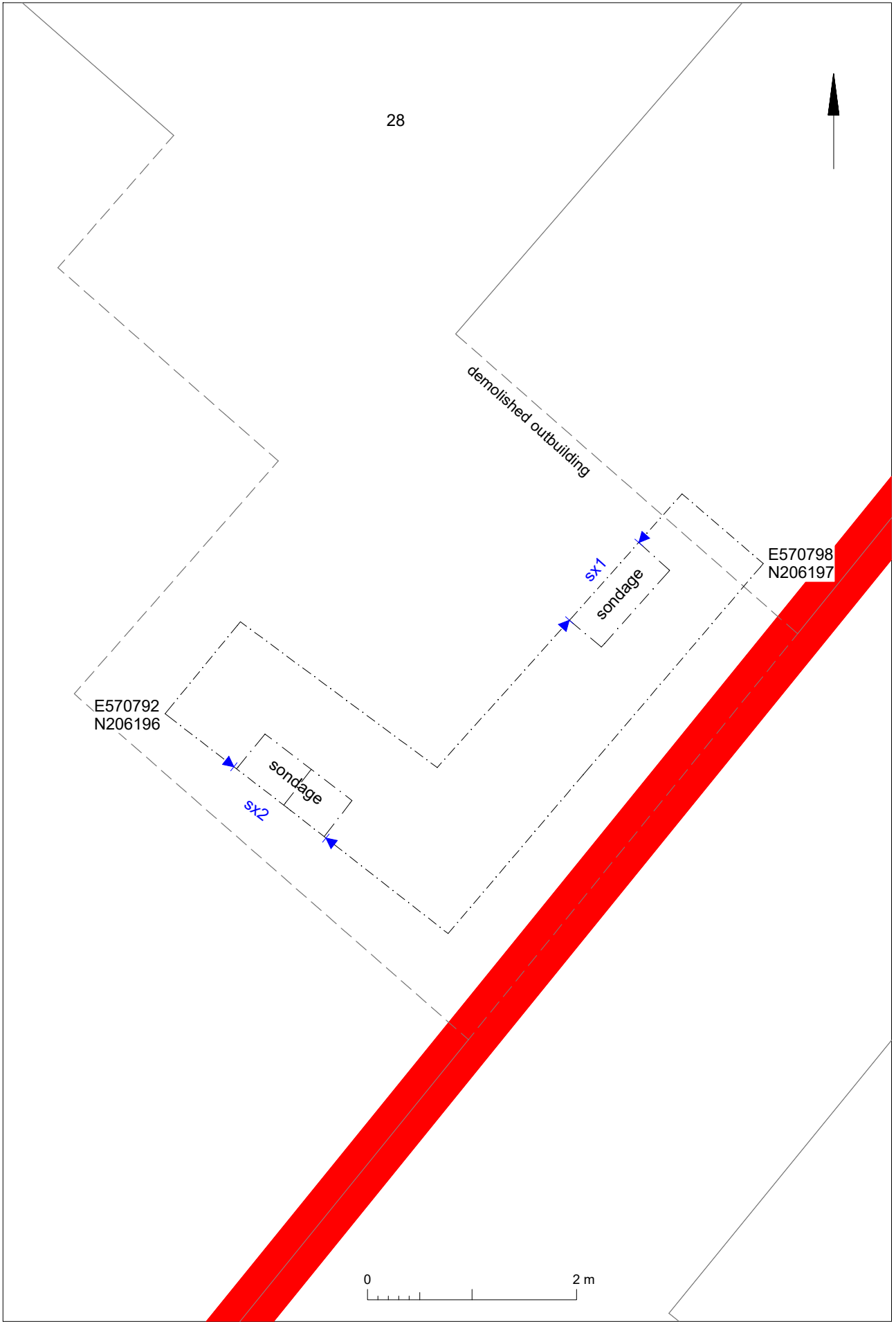


Fig 2 Evaluation results.

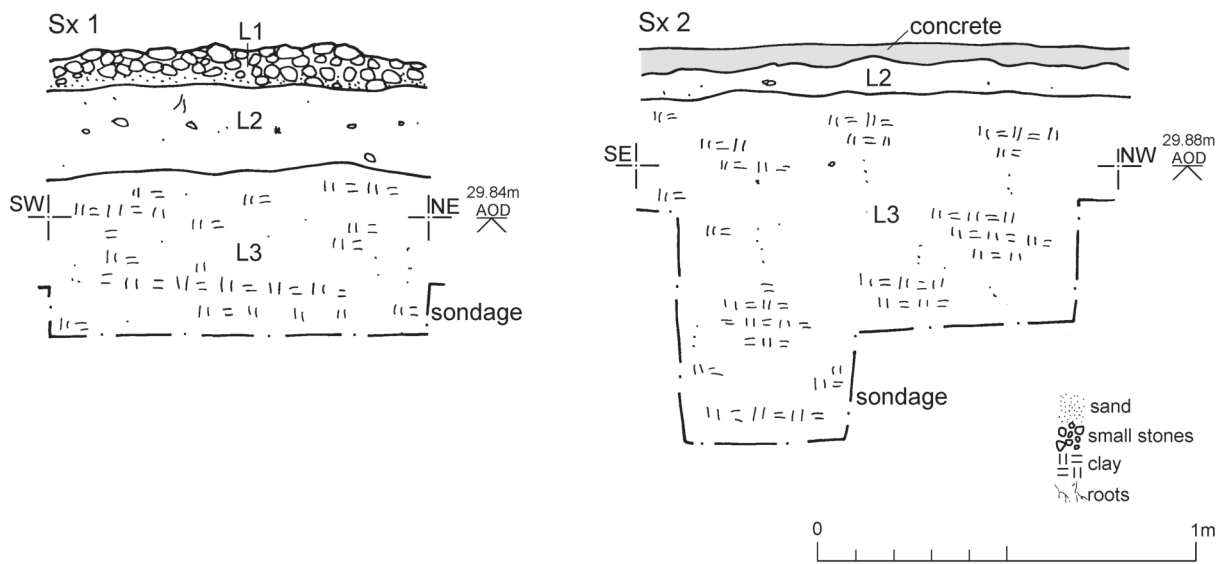


Fig 3 Representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-516318

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-516318
Project Name	Evaluation at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford
Sitename	28 Grove Road, Chelmsford
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	2023/06c
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	22/00119/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	15-Jun-2023 - 15-Jun-2023
Location	28 Grove Road, Chelmsford NGR : TL 70795 06201 LL : 51.72850899228001, 0.471662734215828 12 Fig : 570795,206201
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Chelmsford Parish : Chelmsford, unparished area
Project Methodology	Archaeological Evaluation at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford, Essex:June 2023 carried out in line with specification laid out in ECC brief and subsequent WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out at 28 Grove Road, Chelmsford in advance an extension to the property. The evaluation took place within an area of archaeological significance, with remains dating to the Late Iron Age and subsequent Roman settlement of Caesaromagus close to the development site. However, no archaeological remains were encountered during the evaluation.
Keywords	
Funder	Private individual
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	C Lister
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - CF102
Archives	