

# Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1996  
issued December 2023**

**Archaeological evaluation at  
Willows Green Solar Park,  
land east of School Road and Main Road,  
Felsted, Essex: September-October 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/02a  
ECC code: FLWG23**

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Willows Green Solar Park,  
land east of School Road and Main Road,  
Felsted, Essex: September-October 2023**

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**commissioned by Digby Willoughby  
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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (70 trial-trenches) was carried out at Willows Green Solar Park, land east of School Road and Main Road, Felsted, Essex in advance of the construction of a new solar photovoltaic farm. The site is located within the vicinity of a number of archaeological investigations, which have identified activity dating from the prehistoric period through to the post-medieval period. A total of 34 features were uncovered: 15 pits, eleven ditches, three gullies, a possible post-hole, a tree-throw and three natural features. Only a small quantity of the features produced datable finds, but these included prehistoric, Iron Age/Roman and medieval finds. The most notable artefact recovered was a polished flint axe dating the Neolithic period found in the topsoil.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Willows Green Solar Park, land east of School Road and Main Road, Felsted, Essex from 18th September till 13th October 2023. The work was commissioned by Digby Willoughby on behalf of Clearstone Energy, and took place in advance of the construction of a new solar photovoltaic farm.

As the site lies in an area of potential archaeological sensitivity, the Historic Environment Advisor (HEA) at Essex County Council Place Services recommended 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 an *Archaeological Brief for Trial Trenching and Excavation at Willows Green Solar Farm, Felsted* written by Katie Lee-Smith detailing the required archaeological work (ECCPS 2022), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) 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 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* (CIfA 2020a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2020a).

## 3 Archaeological background (Fig 2)

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the ECC Brief (ECCPS 2022) 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 in an archaeologically-sensitive area. During the early 1990s, fieldwalking surveys were carried out at Great Notley Garden Village to the east. Artefacts recovered included prehistoric flints, two concentrations of burnt flint, a handful of sherds of Roman pottery and a fragment of Roman brick, medieval pottery sherds at the northern and eastern parts of the surveyed area, and post-medieval pottery and tile which was distributed over most of the site (EHER 14605; EHER 14606; EHER 14607; EHER 14608). Trial-trenched evaluations were subsequently undertaken at the two concentrations of burnt flint, at the Southern Balancing Pond, immediately to the east of the site, and in the Manor House area, some 430m further to the east. Worked flints, burnt flint and a sherd of prehistoric pottery were recovered during the first investigation (EHER 9984), while the second only uncovered a medieval or post-medieval field ditch (EHER 14603; EHER 14604).

Further archaeological investigations were undertaken in advance of the construction of the Great Leighs Bypass in the early 1990s. Three prehistoric worked flints, likely Bronze Age in

date, three sherds of 13th-16th pottery, and modest amounts of post-medieval pottery and tile were recovered during fieldwalking along the route of the new road, approximately 460m east south-east of the site. A subsequent trial-trenched evaluation did not reveal any significant archaeological remains (EHER 14580; EHER 14582; EHER 14586).

More recently, an archaeological evaluation was carried out on land west of the A131, Great Notley, some 335m east north-east of site, in 2019. Excavations revealed several Roman features in the northern part of the site, dating from the 2nd to the 4th century, some of which produced Late Iron Age or early Roman pottery, as well as a possible quarry pit containing late Roman pottery. Crop-processing waste was recovered from two features. A post-medieval quarry pit and a post-medieval or modern field boundary ditch were also uncovered, along with a number of undated features (EHER 49582). The following year, another evaluation was undertaken on land at Horizon 120 Business and Innovation Park, Great Notley, approximately 370m east north-east of the site. A pit containing Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age pottery, a Late Iron Age or early Roman ditch and pit, post-medieval field boundary ditches and evidence of post-medieval quarrying were uncovered (EHER 49579). Medieval and post-medieval ditches and hollows were recorded during another evaluation at Blackley Quarry, immediately to the south of the site (EHER 49178), while further trial-trenching at 15 Evelyn Road, Great Leighs, 540m south-west of site, revealed several modern features (EHER 49188). A medieval Papal Bull was also found during metal-detecting within the present site (EHER 45694).

The proposed development site also lies within the midst of numerous historic buildings. A Grade II-listed 15th- or 16th-century timber-framed barn lies some 370m to the east south-east (EHER 27570). Blackleys, a Grade II-listed open hall house, built in the 15th century, is situated approximately 315m to the west south-west (EHER 37176), while Mountgate, a Grade II-listed late 15th-century hall house, lies 500m to the west south-west (EHER 37179). Milch Mill House, a Grade II-listed brick and timber-framed house built in the 17th century with 18th- and 19th-century additions, is situated 500m north-west of the site (EHER 37178). To the north, Milch Mill Cottage, a Grade II-listed 17th-century timber-framed house, lies 120m from the site (EHER 37177). Further historic buildings are clustered to the south-west of the site. Approximately 290m from the site, Willows Farmhouse is a Grade II-listed late 16th-century timber-framed house with a Grade II-listed late 15th-century timber-framed barn or byre (EHER 37183; EHER 37185). Lower Rays Farmhouse, a Grade II-listed 15th-century timber-framed house, is located 435m from site (EHER 37184). Oak Cottage, a Grade II-listed mid 17th-century three bay barn converted into a dwelling during the 18th century, lies 550m away (EHER 37186). Cromwells, a Grade II-listed 17th-century timber-framed house, is situated 640m to the south-west (EHER 37188). Another Grade II-listed timber-framed house which has its origins in the 17th century or earlier, Rambler Cottage, lies 655m from site (EHER 37187), while Peeches Farmhouse, a Grade II-listed early 15th-century timber-framed house, is located 660m from the site (EHER 37189).

In 2022, a geophysical survey was carried out at the site. It identified numerous undetermined magnetic anomalies (Magnitude Surveys 2022).

#### **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 3-13)**

Seventy trial-trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. All of the trenches were 30m long and 1.8m wide, equalling a total length of 2,100m. A full context list, with context descriptions and dimensions, can be found in Appendix 1.

Most of the trenches were excavated through a layer of topsoil (L1, c 0.18-0.35m thick) into the natural geology (L3, encountered c 0.18-0.41m, below current ground level [bcgl]), with some trenches also exhibiting a thin layer of subsoil (L2, c 0.04-0.13m thick) between L1 and L3.

Sondages were excavated in trenches 24, 41, 45, 47, 50 and 52 to confirm the identification of the natural geology.

No archaeological horizons were identified in trenches 2, 4, 7-17, 19, 21-24, 28-34, 36, 38-40, 42, 44-54, 57, 59, 65 and, 68-70.



**Photograph 1** Trench 1, looking south-west.

#### **Trench 1**

Undated ditch F14 was the only feature excavated in T1. It had a wide U-shaped profile and was aligned north-east/south-west.

#### **Trench 3**

Undated ditch F20 had an east-west orientation with an asymmetrical U-shaped profile. Ditch F20 was the only feature located in T3.

#### **Trench 5**

Of the four features identified in T5, only one produced any dating material. Two small sherds of prehistoric pottery were recovered from the fill of pit F15. Two undated pits, F17 and F18, were located to the south of pit F15.

Undated ditch F16 was also located in T5. It was aligned north-west/south-east and had U-shaped profile. Ditch F16 possibly represents the cropmark crossing this trench.

#### **Trench 6**

Large modern pit, F19, was the only feature located in T6. Due to the presence of modern CBM and coal on the surface it was not excavated.

### **Trench 18**

Gully F24 was located towards the north-eastern end of T18. It was on a north/south alignment and had a wide, shallow U-shaped profile. A single sherd of post-medieval earthenware was recovered from the fill of the gully. Undated pit F23 was located adjacent to the western edge of gully F24.



**Photograph 2** F24 section, looking north.

### **Trench 20**

Modern ditch F21 was situated in the centre of T20 while possible post-hole F22 was in the south-eastern end of the trench. Ditch F21 was not excavated as slate, coal and modern CBM fragments were identified on the surface. Possible post-hole F22 was undated.

### **Trench 25**

Undated pit F1 was located in the eastern end of T25 but was not fully exposed due to the trench edge.

Two natural features were also located in T25.

### **Trench 26 (L-shaped trench)**

A ditch and a gully, both undated, were located in the east/west length of T26. Ditch F4 was aligned roughly east/west and had a slight curve to its shape. The profile of the ditch was U-shaped with a flat base. Gully F5 was shallow with a north-east/south-west orientation. It had an undulating U-shaped profile.





**Photograph 3** F4 in plan, looking west.



**Photograph 4** F7 section, looking east.

### **Trench 27**

Undated pit F7 was excavated next the eastern baulk of T27 and was truncated by a modern land drain. The lower fill of the pit was rich with charcoal but did not produce any datable artefacts.

Natural feature F6 was also excavated in T27.

### **Trench 35**

A single Late Iron Age/Roman pit, F8, was uncovered in T35. It was wide and shallow in profile and produced the sites largest assemblage of finds, with 99 sherds of pottery.



**Photograph 5** F8 in plan, looking north-east.

### **Trench 37**

Undated gully F9 was the only feature identified in T37. It was on an east/west alignment and had a shallow U-shaped profile.

### **Trench 41**

Ditch F11 was excavated in T41. It had a rough north/south orientation and U-shaped profile. Four small fragments of brick recovered from the fill of the ditch dated it to the post-medieval/modern period.

### **Trench 43**

Two large pits were located in T43. Pit F13 produced the sites second largest assemblage of finds, dating to the medieval period, while pit F12 only produced three sherds of peg-tile, with a date of medieval/post-medieval.



**Photograph 6** F13 oblique, looking west.



**Photograph 7** Trench 55, looking north-east.

**Trench 55**

Post-medieval/modern ditch F27 had a V-shaped profile and was on a north-west/south-east alignment. The base of the ditch was not identified so as to preserve the land drain located within the ditch.

**Trench 56**

Undated pit F25 was the only feature uncovered in T56.

**Trench 58**

A single undated tree-throw, F26, was excavated in T58.

**Trench 60**

Undated pit F28 was not fully exposed to the limit of excavation (LOE) of T60.

**Trench 61**

Ditch F31 was recorded but not excavated as modern brick was identified on its surface. It is represented on the 1st edition OS map from 1874.

**Trench 62**

Undated ditch F32 was aligned north-west/south-east and had a U-shaped profile.

**Trench 63**

Two pits, F29 and F30, were identified in T63. Both were undated.

**Trench 64**

Pit F33 was uncovered in the northern end of T64. It was not fully exposed and produced no dating material.



**Photograph 8** Trench 66, looking north-east.

### Trench 66

Undated pit F34 was not fully exposed to the western LOE of T66. It was the only feature identified in this trench.

### Trench 67

Post-medieval/modern ditch F10 was not excavated due to its presence on historic OS mapping. Several small fragments of brick were recovered from its surface.

## 6 Finds

### 6.1 Pottery and CBM

*by Dr Matthew Loughton*

The evaluation uncovered a small assemblage pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) with a total of 25 sherds with a weight of 794g and EVE of 0.07 (Table 1). The mean sherd weight is 32g. This material was recovered from seven features (Table 2).

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
Pottery	118	3,424	29	0.00
CBM	24	135	6	-
<b>All</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>3,559</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Table 1** Summary of the pottery and CBM.

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
F8	Pit	99	3,338	34
F10	Ditch	8	23	3
F11	Ditch	14	25	6
F12	Pit	3	56	19
F13	Pit	15	115	5
F15	Pit	2	1	1
F24	Gully	1	1	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>142</b>	<b>3,559</b>	<b>25</b>

**Table 2** Quantities of pottery and CBM by context.

#### Prehistoric pottery

A small crumb of handmade pottery (2 sherd at 1g) came from pit F15.

#### Late Iron Age-Roman pottery

Pit F8 produced 99 sherds with a weight of 3,338g from a Late Iron Age-Roman storage jar (fabric HZ).

#### Medieval and post-medieval pottery

The medieval and post-medieval pottery assemblage was recorded according to the fabric groups from CAR 7 (Cotter 2000) while the number of vessels was determined by rim EVE (estimated vessel equivalent) (Table 3). There was a small-sized assemblage of pottery with 17 sherds with a weight of only 85g (Table 4). The majority of this material came from ditch F11 and pit F13, while one sherd of post-medieval red earthenware (fabric F40) came from gully F24 (Table 5). Ditch F11 contained a small number of medieval pottery sherds dating from the mid-12th to the mid-16th century, although there were no closely-dateable diagnostic elements (Table 18).

Fabric code	Fabric description	Fabric date range guide
F12C	Early medieval slightly sandy shelly wares (sand predominant)	11th-early 13th century
F13	Early medieval sandy wares	11th-early 13th century
F20	Medieval sandy greywares	c 1150-1375/1400
F21	Colchester-type ware	c 1200-1550
F40	Post-medieval red earthenwares	c 1500-19th/20th century

**Table 3** Medieval and post-medieval pottery fabrics recorded.

Fabric Group	Fabric description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
F12C	Early medieval slightly sandy shelly wares (sand predominant)	2	23	13	0.00
F13	Early medieval sandy wares	1	5	5	0.00
F20	Medieval sandy greywares	7	27	4	0.00
F21	Colchester-type ware	6	29	5	0.00
F40	Post-medieval red earthenwares	1	1	1	0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Table 4** Details on the medieval and post-medieval pottery.

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
F13	Pit	16	84	5	0.00
F24	Gully	1	1	1	0.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0.00</b>

**Table 5** Quantities of medieval and post-medieval pottery.

### Ceramic building material (CBM)

There was a small quantity of CBM at 24 fragments with a weight of 135g (Table 6) which was recovered from four features (Table 7). CBM consisted of five pieces of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile from ditches F10 and F11, and pit F12, and eight small brick fragments (18g) also from ditches F10 and F11.

CBM code	CBM type	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
Medieval/post-medieval				
PT	Peg-tile	5	51	10
BR	Brick	11	66	6
Undated				
Baked clay		11	66	624
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>6</b>

**Table 6** CBM period and type.

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
F10	Ditch	8	23	3
F11	Ditch	4	25	6
F12	Pit	3	56	19
F13	Pit	9	31	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>24</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>6</b>

**Table 7** Quantities of CBM.

### Conclusion

Table 8 summarizes the dating evidence for the features which contained dateable pottery and CBM.

Context	Description	Prehistoric Pottery	Late Iron Age-Roman	Medieval/post-medieval pottery	CBM	Date Approx.
F8	Pit	-	HZ	-	-	Late Iron Age-Roman
F10	Ditch	-	-	-	BR	Post-medieval/modern
F11	Ditch	-	-	F20, F21	BR, PT	Medieval/post-medieval
F12	Pit	-	-	-	PT	Medieval/post-medieval
F13	Pit	-	-	F12C, F13, F20	-	Medieval
F15	Pit	HM CRUMB	-	-	-	Prehistoric
F24	Gully	-	-	F40	-	1500-1800/1900

**Table 8** Approximate dates for the individual features.

## 6.2 Animal Bone

by Alec Wade

The only animal bone recovered from the evaluation was two fragments of a butchered cattle scapula from F13, a pit of medieval date in T43.

Context	Find no.	No. of pieces	Weight (g)	Species	Comments
F13	5	2	16	Cattle	Two fragments of the caudal border of a right scapula with three short transverse cut marks.
<b>Total</b>		<b>2</b>	<b>16</b>		

**Table 9** Animal bone summary.

## 6.3 Lithics

by Adam Wightman

Part of a ground and polished flint axe (Fig 14) and a secondary flake were collected from the surface of the topsoil, to the north of T62, during the archaeological fieldwork. The polished axe (finds no. 8) is Neolithic in date, would have been hafted into a wooden handle and is likely to have been used for woodland clearance in the close vicinity. The butt end of the axe has been broken away and a large chunk is missing from one of the lateral edges. The level of patination on the breaks is similar to the patination seen on the faces of the axe suggesting that the breaks are old and could have occurred during use. The axe is relatively thin in profile and appears to be lenticular or double-convex in cross section, indicating that it probably had a thin butt end (Butler 2002, 145). The axe appears to have had either straight or slightly convex edges. It is well polished around the cutting edge and through the centre of the piece, but some flake scars have not been polished out along the lateral edges (although many are smooth and have been polished to a lesser extent). Other flake scars on the lateral edges do not appear to have been polished and could have been caused by use-damage or from the re-flaking of the edge. As the butt of the axe is missing it is not possible to say whether the axe was polished all over or just at the cutting end. The flint raw material is mid-brown in colour which, based on the predominance of black/grey flint in the East Anglian region, could indicate that this piece was imported into the area. The secondary flake (finds no. 9) was detached from its parent core with a hard hammer, has two areas of possible retouch (left lateral edge dorsal face and right lateral edge ventral face) and is broken at the distal end. It is not possible to date this piece more closely than Mesolithic-Bronze Age.

## 7 Environmental assessment

by Bronagh Rae-Quinn

### Introduction

One sample was taken during the evaluation, was floated by a trained member of CAT staff and analysed by the author. The sample was processed using a serif-style flotation device which produced a flot and a larger residue, both of which were analysed by the author. The flot was collected in a 300 micron mesh and scanned using a microscope (magnification x10), while the larger residue was scanned by eye and any charcoal/charred wood removed by hand.

Sample	Context no.	Feature type	% Sampled	Provisional Date	Sample Volume (L.)
1	F7	Pit	20	Undated	20

**Table 10** Sample information

### Results

The sample produced only charcoal in a low density with no further environmental remains (Tables 11-12).

<b>Sample No.</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>F7</b>
Charcoal >10mm	x
Charcoal <4mm	xxx
Charcoal >4mm	xxxxx
<b>Sample volume (litres)</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Volume of flot (litres)</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>% flot sorted</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### Key

x	0-10
xx	10-25
xxx	25-50
xxxx	50-100
xxxxx	100+

**Table 11** Volume of flots.

<b>Sample No.</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>F7</b>
Charcoal 4-10mm	xx

**Table 12** Amount of charcoal recovered from residues.

### Potential, significance and recommendations

The sample taken from the evaluation produced a low density of environmental remains with minimal significance to the overall interpretation of the site. No further analysis of the environmental remains is recommended. Although the environmental potential of the current assemblage is limited, further works on the site could produce additional plant macrofossil evidence. It is recommended that any future works continue to take soil samples in line with the CAT environmental policies outlined in the WSI.

## 8 Discussion

Thirty-four features were identified during the evaluation at Willows Green Solar Park, Felsted: 15 pits, eleven ditches, three gullies, a possible post-hole, a tree-throw and three natural features. Artefactual evidence was sparse, with only eleven features producing datable material. The earliest sign of activity was provided by two worked flints, both of which were residual in the topsoil near T62. The most notable of the two flints, and of all the finds recovered during the works, was a Neolithic polished flint axe. These flints attest to some low-level prehistoric activity in the area, which could possibly date to early as the Mesolithic period. The earliest dated feature uncovered was more broadly dated to the prehistoric period, as only small fragments of non-diagnostic pottery were recovered from its fill.



A single pit was dated to the Late Iron Age/Roman period, which produced the sites largest finds assemblage, with 99 sherds of pottery recovered. All of the sherds in the assemblage are fragments of a storage jar.

Pit F13 was the only feature with a medieval date, producing a small assemblage of finds with a date range of 11th century to the early 15th century. Ditch F11 and pit F12 were dated more generally to the medieval/post-medieval period, although the proximity of pit F12 to medieval pit F13 indicates it may be of medieval date, particularly as it was only dated by fragments of peg-tile. Ditch F11 produced a small quantity of pottery sherds dated to the medieval period, along with peg-tile and a later brick fragment. It seems most plausible the brick fragment is intrusive and the ditch is medieval is date.

Six of the eleven dated features were post-medieval or modern, with two of the ditches, F31 in T61 and F10 in T67, represented on the 1st edition OS map from 1874 (Map 1).



**Map 1** Extract of the 1874 6-inch OS map. Ditch F31 in T61 highlighted in blue and ditch F10 in T67 highlighted in green.

Geophysical surveying of the site identified a number of anomalies across the development area. Despite targeting the trench locations to investigate these anomalies, no remains uncovered corresponded to them indicating they likely represent variations in the natural geology.

The archaeological finds and features identified during this evaluation seem to provide evidence for small-scale and sporadic use of the landscape over a long period of time. It is possible, however, the isolated nature of the features may be able to be attributed to the thin distribution of trenches across such a wide area.

## 9 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Digby Williams and Clearstone Energy for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, A Wightman and L Pooley, with fieldwork carried out by B Holloway and S Veasey with Z Eksen, M Perou and A Ronn. Figures were compiled by C Lister and S Veasey. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Katie Lee-Smith.

## 10 References

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

CAR 7                      2000      Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman Pottery from Excavations

CAT	2023	<i>in Colchester, 1971-85</i> <i>Written scheme of investigation for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on Willows Green Solar Park, land east of School Road and Main Road, Felsted, Essex</i> by E Hicks
CIfA	2020a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological evaluation</i>
CIfA	2020b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
CIfA	2022	<i>Code of Conduct</i>
ECCPS	2022	<i>Archaeological Brief for Trial trenching and Excavation at Willows Green Solar Farm, Felsted</i> by K Lee-Smith
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	Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)
MHCLG	2021	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Medlycott, M	2008	<i>Tendring District Historic Environment Characterisation Project</i> . Essex County Council
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)

## 11 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Late Iron Age	period from c 100 – 50 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
Mesolithic	period from c 10,000 – 4000BC
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	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> ccess to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
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
WSI	written scheme of investigation

## 12 Contents of archive

**Finds:** one box  
**Digital data:**  
 CAT Report 1996  
 ECCPS Brief, CAT written scheme of investigation  
 Digital photographs  
 Survey data  
 Site data

## 13 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

Saffron Walden Museum under project ref. FLWG23 (finds) and with the Archaeology Data Service (digital).

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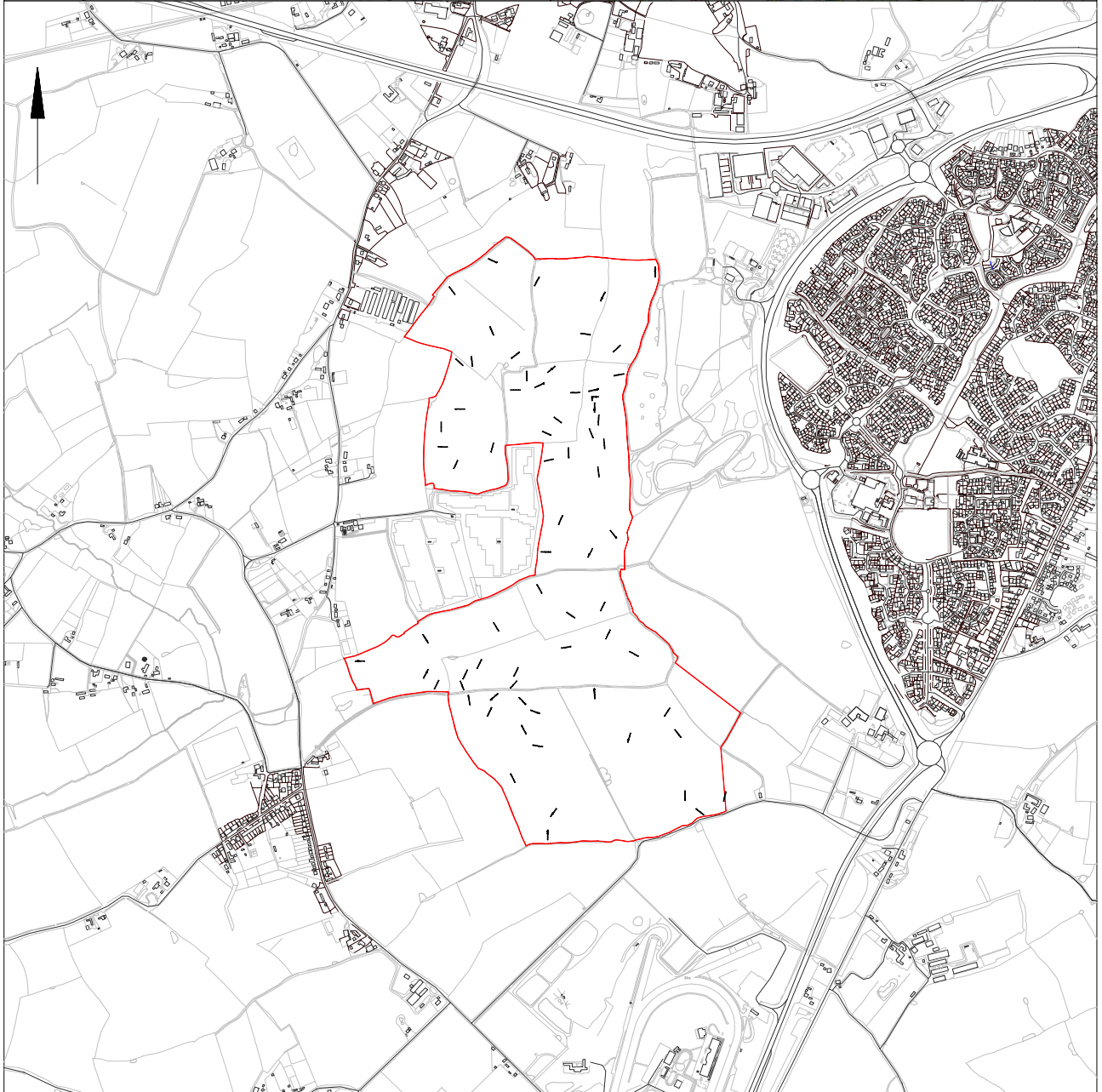
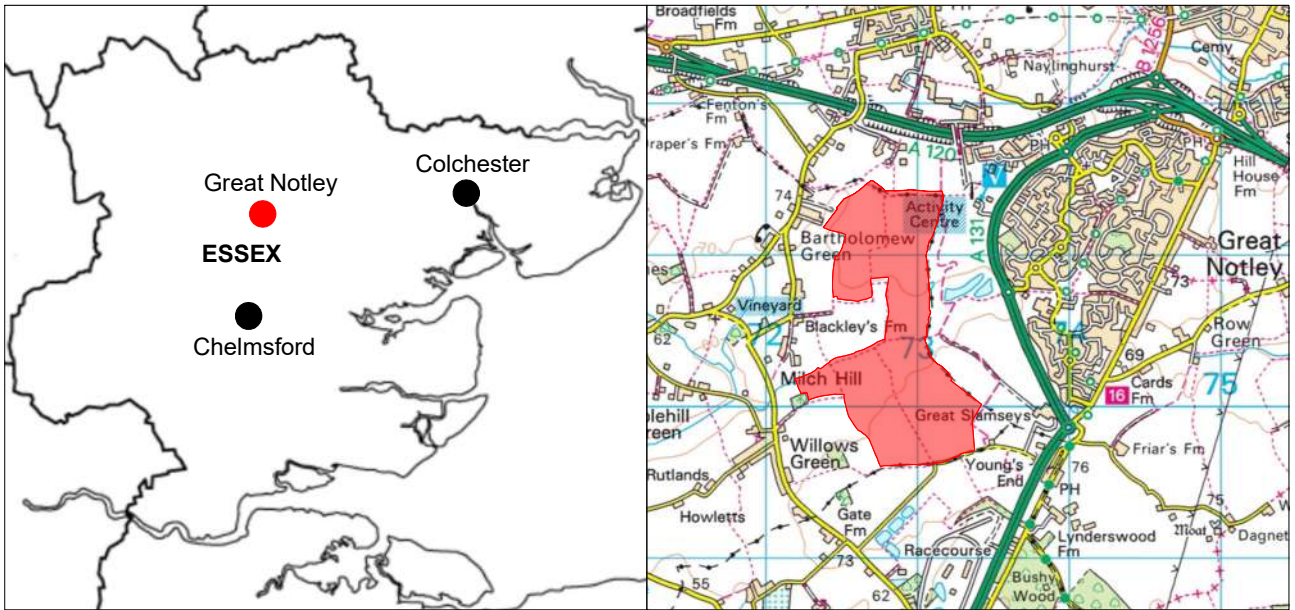
**Distribution list:**

Digby Willoughby, Clearstone Energy  
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

## Appendix 1 Context List

Trench no.	Context	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
	L1	8, 9	Topsoil	Soft/friable dry dark brown silt sand clay and inclusions of: stone 2%	Modern
	L2	-	Subsoil	Friable/firm dry medium grey/brown silty clay and inclusions of: stone 5%	Post-glacial
	L3	-	Natural	Friable/firm dry medium brown/yellow/orange silty clay and inclusions of: stone 9%	Post-glacial
T25	F1	-	Pit	Friable/firm dry medium grey/brown silty clay with daub flecks, tile flecks and inclusions of: stone 2% Exposed area 0.53m by 92m and 0.18m deep	Undated
T25	F2	-	Natural feature	Soft/friable dry light grey sand clay and inclusions of: stone 3% Exposed area 0.85m by 0.71m and 0.16m deep	Post-glacial
T25	F3	-	Natural feature	Soft dry medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks 0.70m by 82m and 0.06m deep	Post-glacial
T26	F4	-	Ditch	Firm medium grey/brown silty clay with brick flecks and inclusions of: stone 2% Exposed area 0.52m by 3.34m and 0.16m deep	Undated
T26	F5	-	Gully	Friable/firm dry medium grey/brown silty clay and inclusions of: stone 4% Exposed area 0.79m by 1.99m and 0.07m deep	Undated
T27	F6	-	Natural feature	Soft/friable dry light grey/brown silty clay Exposed area 0.68m by 1.14m and 0.04m deep	Post-glacial
T27	F7	-	Pit	Fill A: Friable dry medium grey silty clay with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 3% Fill B: Friable dry dark black silty clay with charcoal and fired clay flecks Exposed area 0.95m by 1.07m and 0.30m deep	Undated
T35	F8	1	Pit	Firm moist medium orange/grey/brown silty clay and inclusions of: stone 2% pot 3% 1.56m by 0.90m and 0.07m deep	Late Iron Age/ Roman
T37	F9	-	Gully	Loose/soft dry light grey/brown silty clay and inclusions of: stone 2% Exposed area 0.54m by 2.50m and 0.06m deep	Undated
T67	F10	2	Ditch	Friable/firm dry medium grey/brown silty clay with brick flecks and inclusions of: tile/brick 5% Exposed area 5.14m by 1.90m	Post-medieval/ modern
T41	F11	3	Ditch	Soft dry light grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks, tile flecks and inclusions of: gravel 5% stone 10% Exposed area 3.82m by 1.93m and 0.66m deep	Medieval/ post-medieval
T43	F12	4	Pit	Firm moist dark grey/brown silty clay Exposed area 8.07m by 1.80m	Medieval/ post-medieval
T43	F13	5	Pit	Firm moist medium yellow/grey silty clay Exposed area 5.18m by 1.86m and 0.66m deep	Medieval
T1	F14	-	Ditch	Soft moist medium grey/brown sandy silty clay Exposed area 0.61m by 2.27m and 0.1mm deep	Undated
T5	F15	6	Pit	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks	Prehistoric

				0.33m by 0.41m and 0.09m deep	
T5	F16	-	Ditch	Soft moist medium grey/brown sandy silty clay Exposed area 0.71m by 2.21m and 0.24m deep	Undated
T5	F17	-	Pit	Soft moist medium grey/brown sandy silty clay 0.49m by 0.63m and 0.06m deep	Undated
T5	F18	-	Pit	Soft moist medium grey/brown sandy silty clay 0.65m by 0.69m and 0.06m deep	Undated
T6	F19	-	Pit	Dark brown silty clay with brick flecks, tile flecks Exposed area 2.36m by 1.80m	Modern
T3	F20	-	Ditch	Soft moist medium grey/brown sandy silty clay Exposed area 0.72m by 2.37m and 0.12m deep	Undated
T20	F21	-	Ditch	Friable/firm dry dark grey/brown silty clay with brick flecks, tile flecks Exposed area 3.46m by 1.80m	Modern
T20	F22	-	?Post-hole	Moist medium grey sandy silty clay 0.19m by 0.28m and 0.06m deep	Undated
T18	F23	-	Pit	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay with daub flecks 0.39m by 0.49m and 0.14m deep	Undated
T18	F24	7	Gully	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal and manganese flecks and inclusions of: stones 3% Exposed area 1.60m by 2.37m and 0.15m deep	Post-medieval/ modern
T56	F25	-	Pit	Friable dry medium orange/grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks 1.35m by 1.28m and 0.23m deep	Undated
T58	F26	-	Tree-throw	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay 0.77m by 0.52m and 0.09m	Undated
T55	F27	-	Ditch	Firm/hard dry medium brown silty clay with brick flecks, tile flecks and inclusions of: stone 5% Exposed area 2.20m by 1.95m and 0.75m deep	Post-medieval/ modern
T60	F28	-	Pit	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay Exposed area 0.45m by 0.62m and 0.12m deep	Undated
T63	F29	-	Pit	Loose firm dry medium grey silty clay 0.67m by 0.58m and 0.09m deep	Undated
T63	F30	-	Pit	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay 1.04m by 0.88m 0.10m deep	Undated
T61	F31	-	Ditch	Soft moist medium grey/brown silty clay Exposed area 5.85m by 1.83m	Modern
T62	F32	-	Ditch	Soft/friable dry medium grey/brown silt silt with charcoal flecks and inclusions of: stone 3% Exposed area 1.29m by 2.01m and 0.40m deep	Undated
T64	F33	-	Ditch	Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay and inclusions of: stone 2% Exposed area 1.31m by 1.76m and 0.13m deep	Undated
T66	F34	-	Pit	Soft/friable dry medium brown sandy silty clay with charcoal flecks Exposed area 0.45m by 1.15m and 0.14m deep	Undated



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Fig 1 Site location.





Fig 2 Evaluation results. Geophysical anomalies shown in green and light blue, cropmarks in dark blue.

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Fig 3 Evaluation results. Geophysical anomalies shown in green, blue and purple.





Fig 4 Evaluation results. Geophysical anomalies shown in green and blue.





Fig 5 Evaluation results. Geophysical anomalies shown in green and blue.

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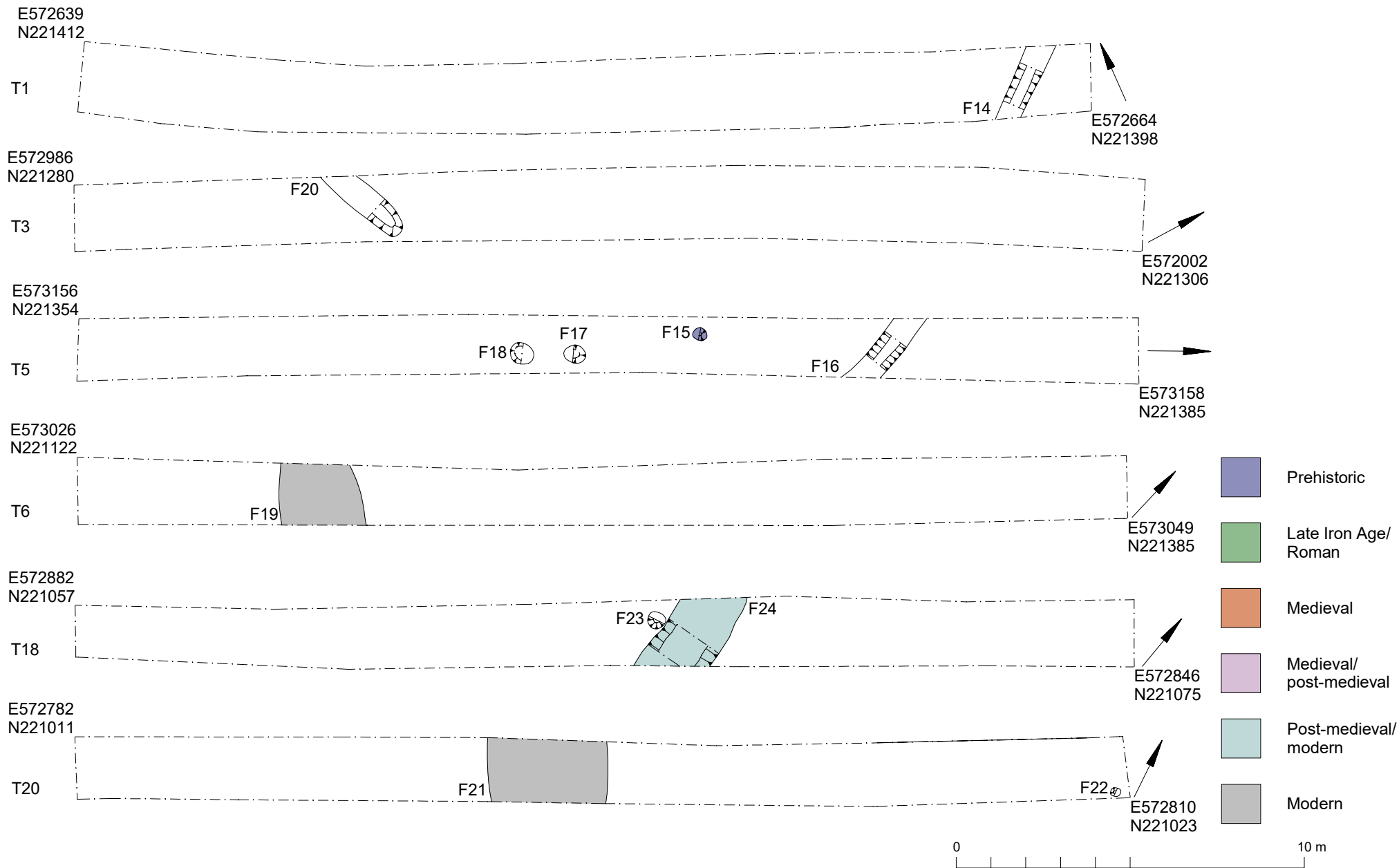


Fig 6 Detailed trench plans.

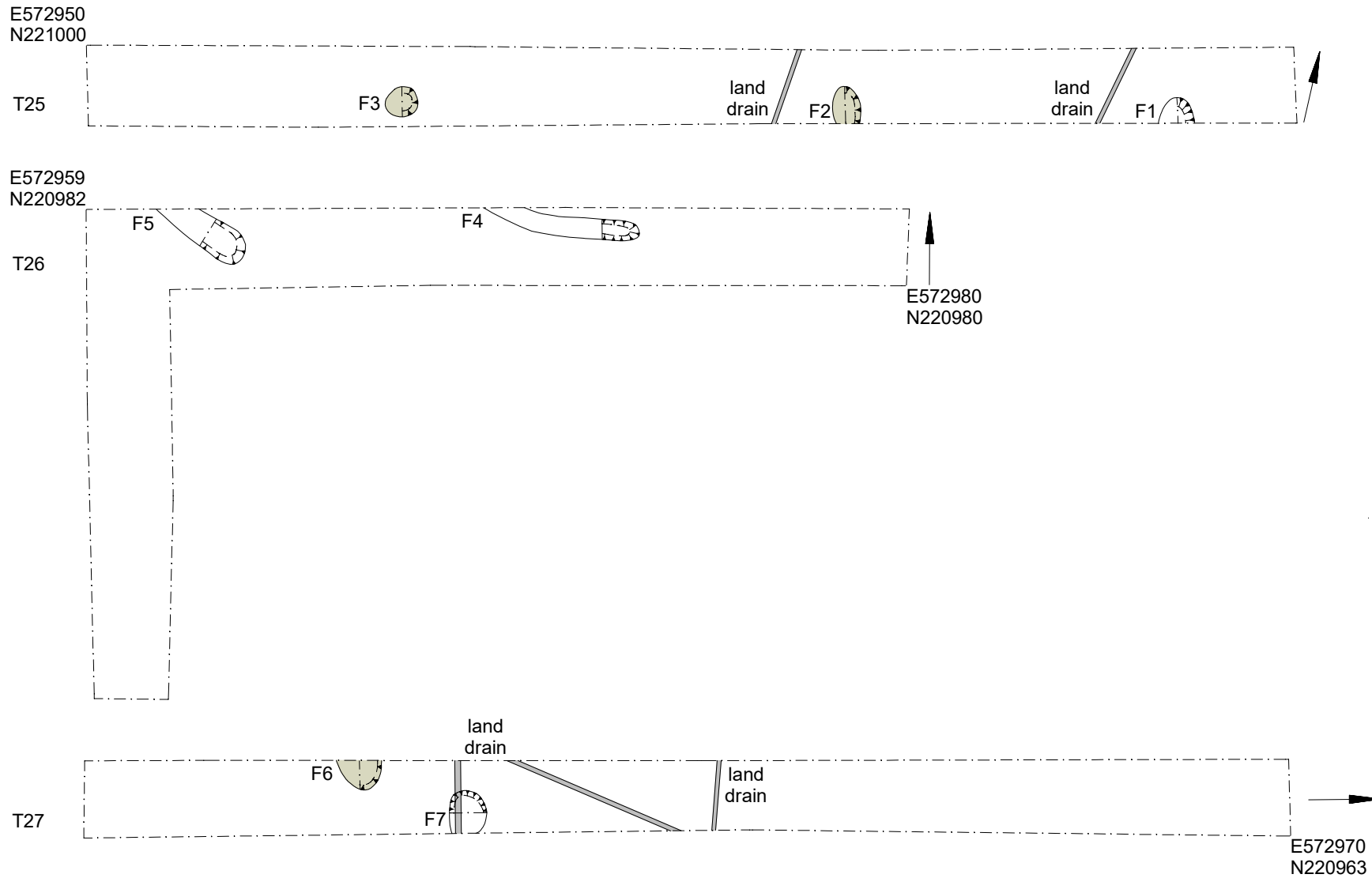


Fig 7 Detailed trench plans.

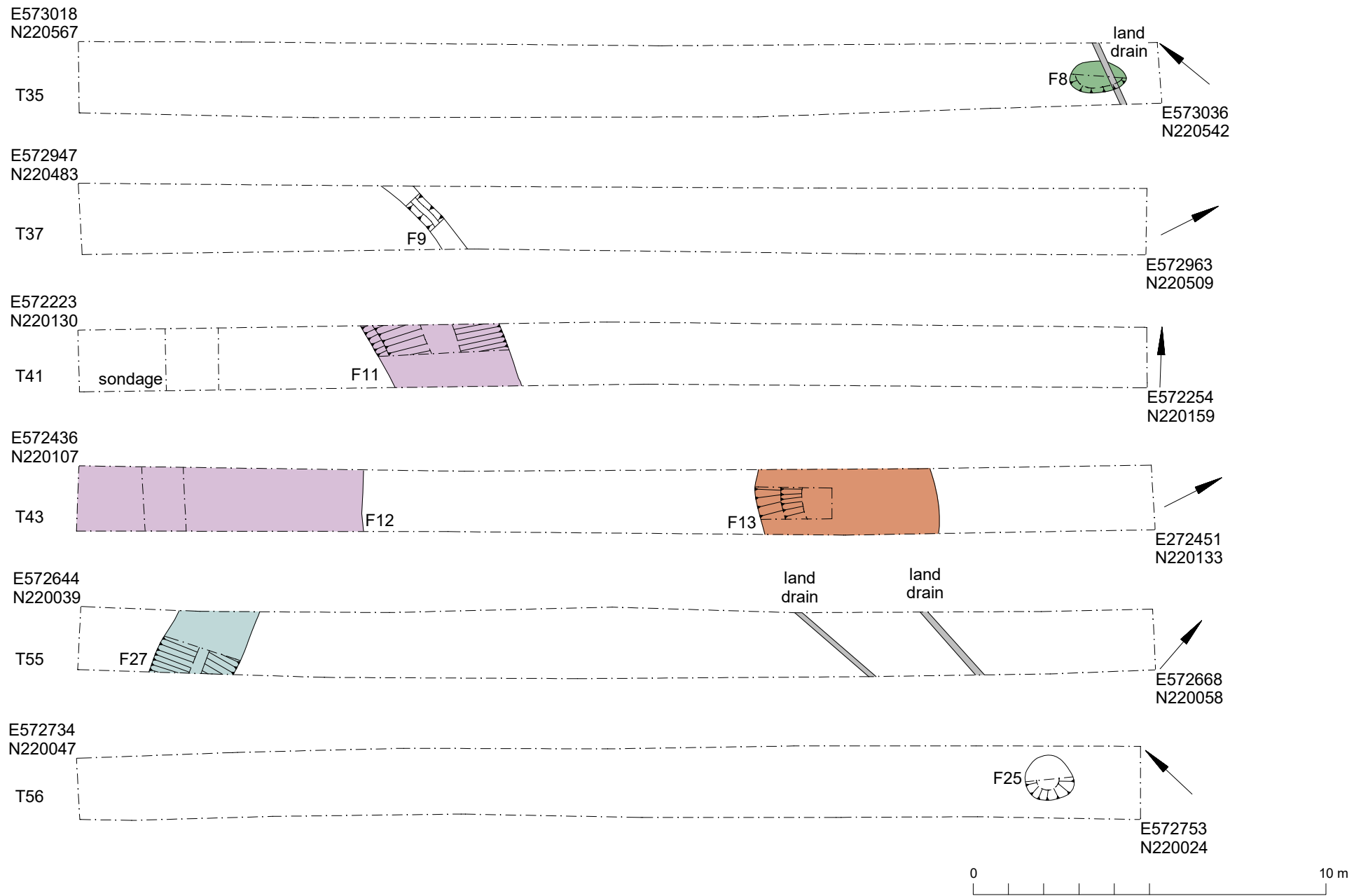


Fig 8 Detailed trench plans.

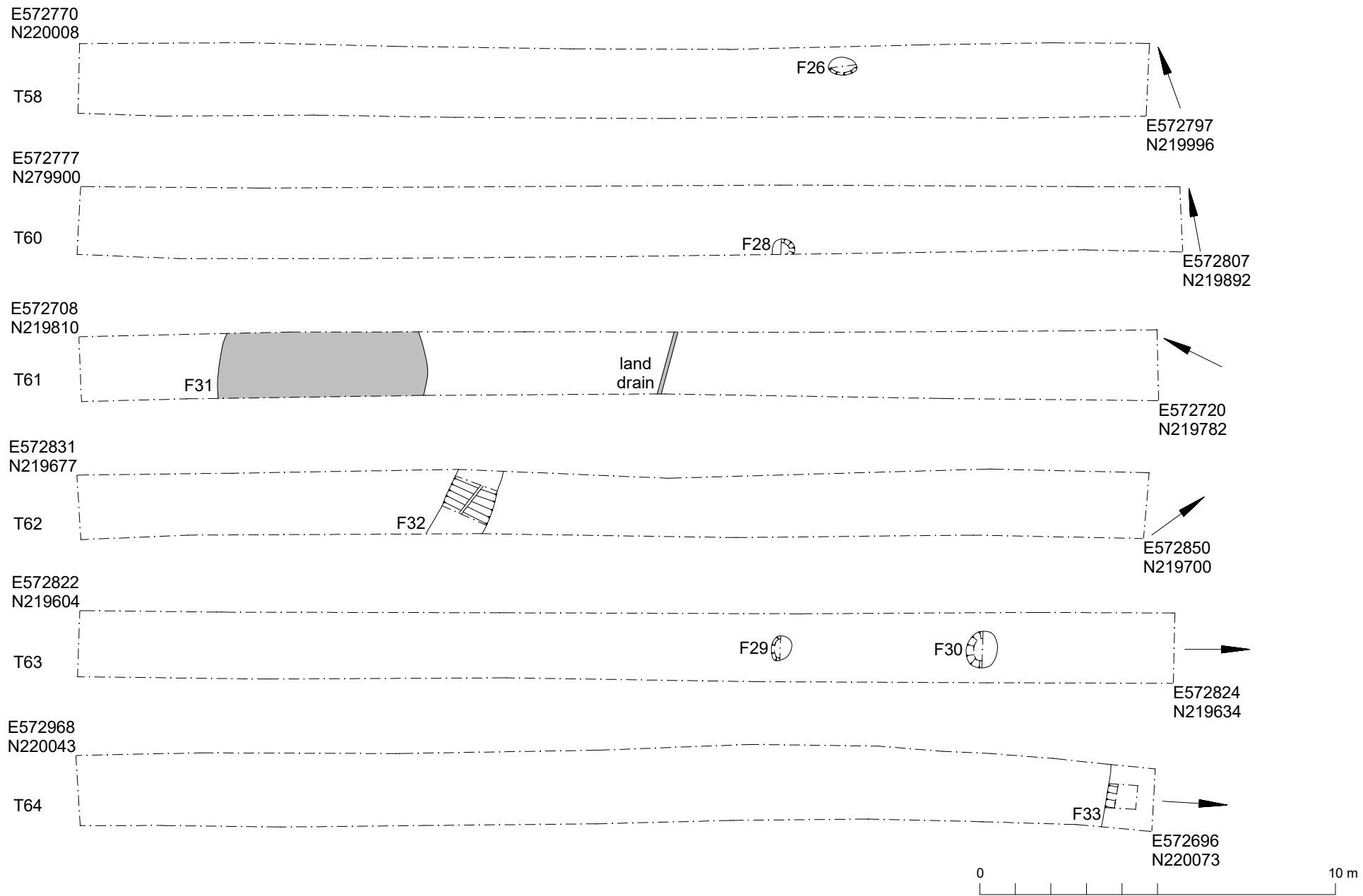


Fig 9 Detailed trench plans.

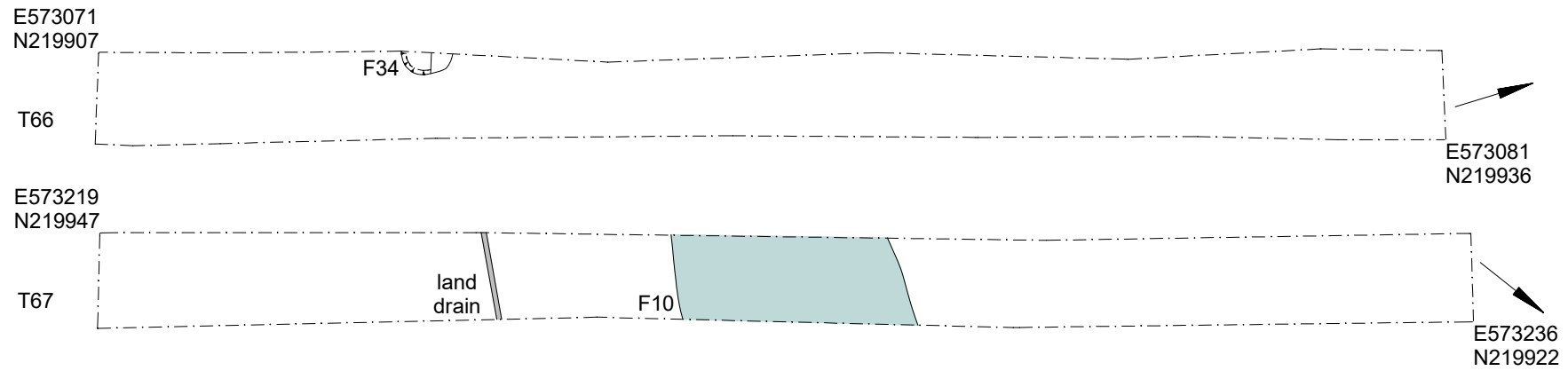


Fig 10 Detailed trench plans.

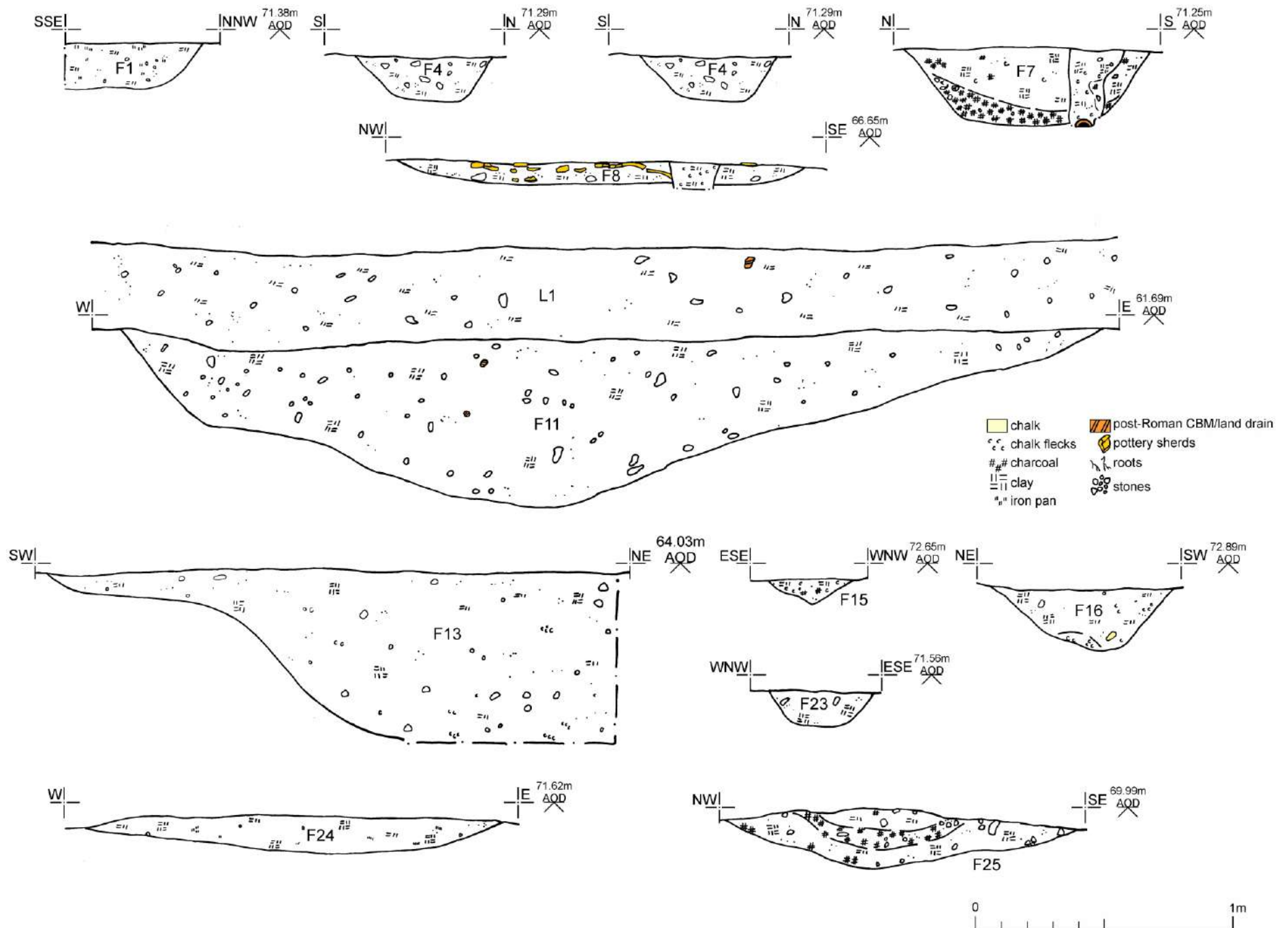


Fig 11 Feature and representative sections.



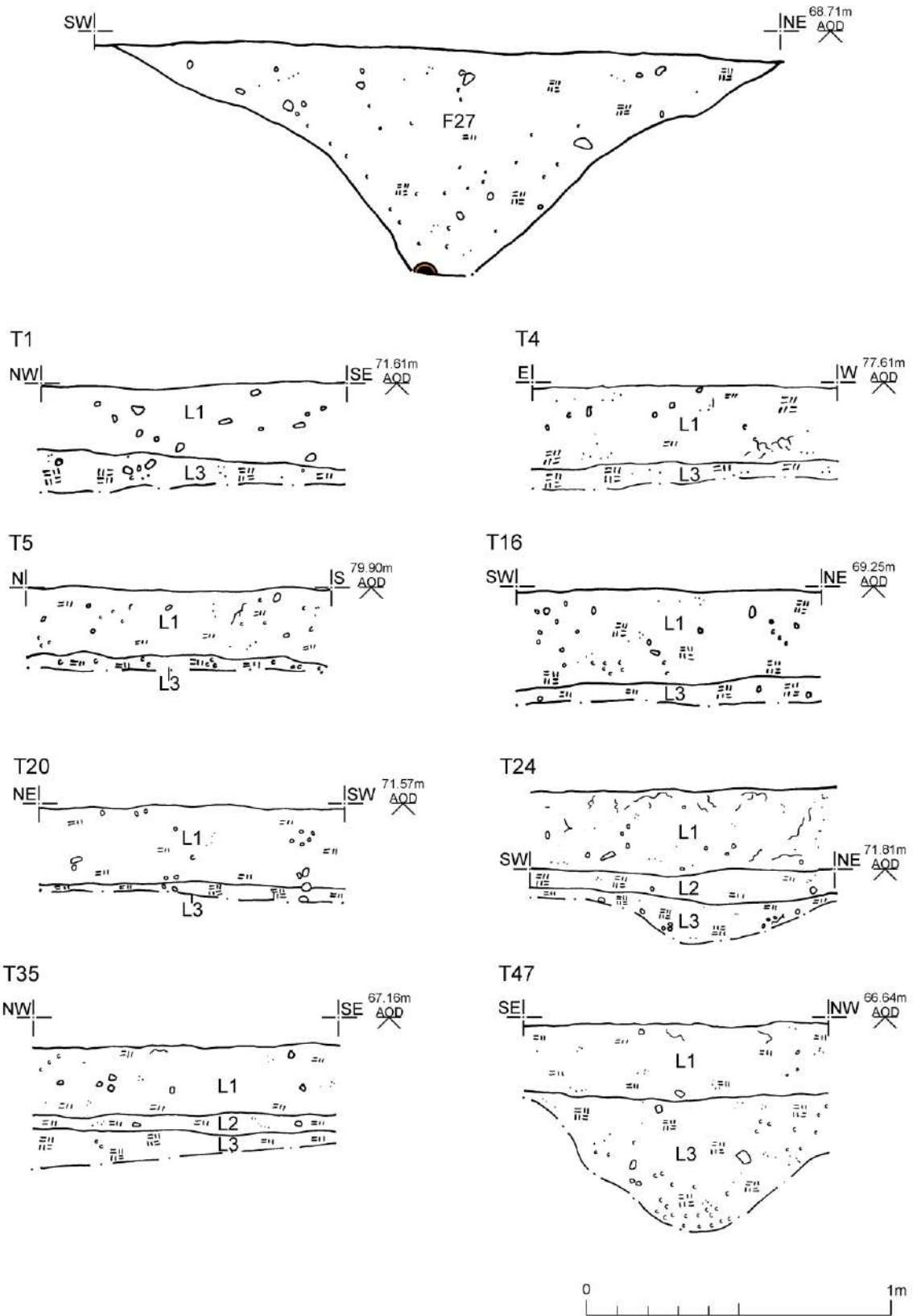


Fig 12 Feature and representative sections.

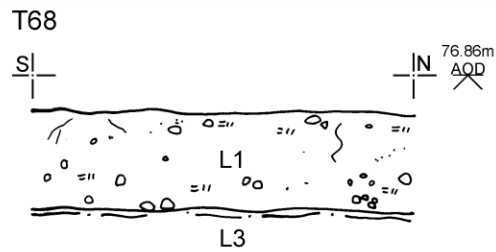
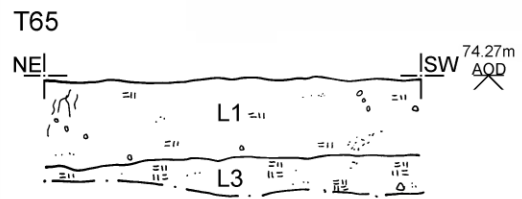
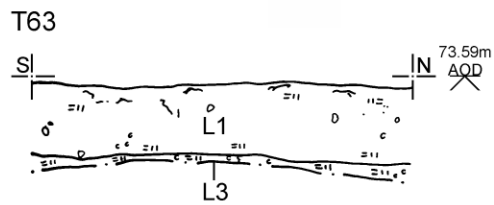
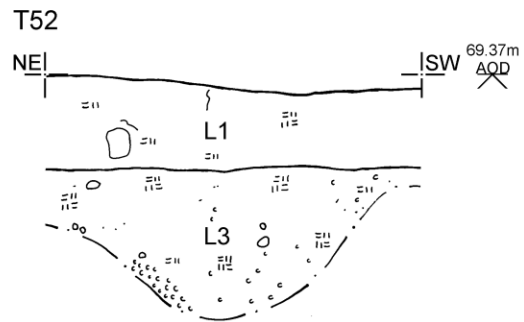


Fig 13 Representative sections.



Fig 14 Flint axe from L1.

# OASIS Summary for colchest3-512916

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-512916
Project Name	Evaluation at Willows Green Solar Park, land east of School Road and Main Road, Felsted, Essex
Sitename	Willows Green Solar Park, land east of School Road and Main Road, Felsted, Essex
Sitecode	2023/02a
Project Identifier(s)	2023/02a
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	UTT/22/0007/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Between application and determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	18-Sep-2023 - 13-Oct-2023
Location	Willows Green Solar Park, land east of School Road and Main Road, Felsted, Essex NGR : TL 72840 20248 LL : 51.8540588553773, 0.508236333609594 12 Fig : 572840,220248
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Uttlesford Parish : Felsted
Project Methodology	<p>Seventy trial-trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. All of the trenches were 30m long and 1.8m wide, equalling a total length of 2,100m. A full context list, with context descriptions and dimensions, can be found in Appendix 1.</p> <p>Most of the trenches were excavated through a layer of topsoil (L1, c 0.18-0.35m thick) into the natural geology (L3, encountered c 0.18-0.41m, below current ground level [bcgl]), with some trenches also exhibiting a thin layer of subsoil (L2, c 0.04-0.13m thick) between L1 and L3.</p> <p>Sondages were excavated in trenches 24, 41, 45, 47, 50 and 52 to confirm the identification of the natural geology.</p> <p>No archaeological horizons were identified in trenches 2, 4, 7-17, 19, 21-24, 28-34, 36, 38-40, 42, 44-54, 57, 59, 65 and, 68-70.</p>
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (70 trial-trenches) was carried out at Willows Green Solar Park, land east of School Road and Main Road, Felsted, Essex in advance of the construction of a new solar photovoltaic farm. The site is located within the vicinity of a number of archaeological investigations, which have identified activity dating from the prehistoric period through to the post-medieval period. A total of 34 features were uncovered: 15 pits, eleven ditches, three gullies, a possible post-hole, a tree-throw and three natural features. Only a small quantity of the features produced datable finds, but these included prehistoric, Iron Age/Roman and medieval finds. The most notable artefact recovered was a polished flint axe dating the Neolithic period found in the topsoil.

Keywords	Polished Axehead - NEOLITHIC - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Lithic Implement - NEOLITHIC - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Jar - ROMAN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Pot - MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Pot - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Peg Tile - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Brick - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Pot - LATER PREHISTORIC - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Pit - ROMAN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ditch - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ditch - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Pit - MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Pit - LATER PREHISTORIC - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Pit - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	Private or public corporation Clearstone Energy
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A Wightman, L Pooley, C Lister
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - FLWG23
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive; Physical Archive, Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Saffron Walden Museum;