

**Archaeological monitoring (watching brief)
At 6 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex
September 2011 – February 2012**



**report prepared by
Ben Holloway**

**on behalf of
Hills Building Group**

CAT project ref.: 11/07f
NGR: TM 1055 2471

Colchester and Ipswich Museum accession code: COLM: 2011.55



Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House,
Circular Road North,
Colchester,
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 07436273304

email: archaeologists@catuk.org

CAT Report 629
June 2012

Essex Historic Environment Record/*Essex Archaeology & History*

Summary sheet

Archaeological Watching Brief at 6 Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex

CAT Report 629

Address: 6, Meadow Lane, West Mersea, Essex	
Parish: West Mersea	District: Colchester
NGR: TM 1055 2471	Site code: CAT project code – 11/7f
Type of work: Watching Brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: September 2011 -February 2012	Size of area investigated: 37m (linear)
Location of curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museum accession code – 2011.55	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER number: EHER 0038, 2109
Final report: CAT Report 629	
Periods represented: modern	
SS	Summary of fieldwork results: The proposed development site lies in an area of archaeological potential on the southern edge of the historic town of West Mersea. Approximately 140m to the NW is the church of Saints Peter & Paul (and its now-demolished hall) where there have been many reports of Roman mosaics, tessellated floors, and walls since the 18th century (EHER 2214 & 2274). West Mersea may have been a small Roman town, or at least an extensive villa complex. For a summary of Roman W Mersea, see <i>VCH Essex III</i> (Powell, WR (ed), 1963). Approximately 32m to the north of 6 Meadow Lane is scheduled Roman mausoleum, first discovered in 1896 (EHER 0038). This structure is approximately 20m in diameter with a hexagonal central chamber, and is made of tile on foundations of mortar and ragstone. CAT conducted a small evaluation here (CAT Report 255, November 2003). A watching brief at 4 Meadow Lane in (CAT, April 2007) proved negative (CAT Report 420). Another watching brief at 6 High Street (approx 90m SW) in July 2010 uncovered Roman tile and pottery (CAT Report 576). There is also a Roman brick tomb near the mausoleum (EHER 2109). The site of a Benedictine Priory lies immediately west of the church, and a number of skeletons have been found in this area (EHER 2187). An archaeological Watching brief was carried out between September 2011 and February of 2012, in accordance with a brief issued by Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Officer (CBCAO). Archaeological monitoring was carried out during all the intrusive groundwork associated with the removal of the existing property and the new build work (ie, removal of existing foundation beams (after demolition of the former bungalow), ground reduction for construction of a piling mat, excavation of the piles themselves, and the

subsequent excavation of the foundation beams for the new dwelling).

No significant archaeological material or features were identified. A thin topsoil horizon was removed during the initial demolition and level reduction, which directly sealed a natural sand/clay matrix. Material upcast from the piling indicated no archaeological activity. Foundation beams were cut 500mm into the sand/clay matrix.

Ground level on Meadow Lane appears to be substantially lower than that to the immediate north, and it seems likely that there has been terracing between Meadow Lane and Pharos Lane. Further terracing is evident on the south side of Meadow Lane, as ground level drops toward the seafront. It is likely that this terracing has removed any archaeological features or horizons which may have existed.

Previous summaries/reports: None

Keywords: -

Significance: neg

Author of summary:

Ben Holloway

Date of summary:

June 2011

CBC Archaeological Monitor:

Martin Winter

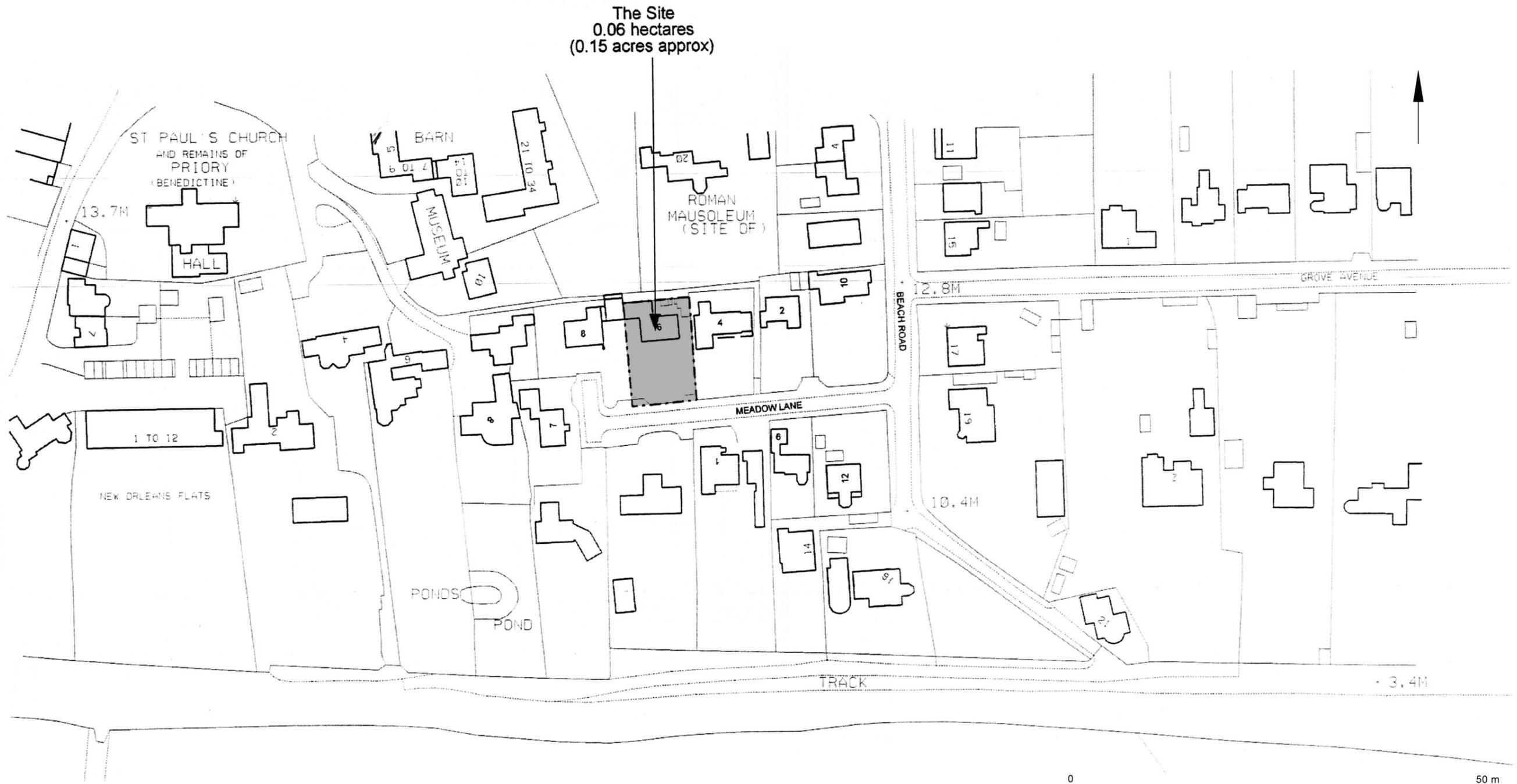


Fig 1 Site location plan.