

# Archaeological evaluation at the Maldon Road Care Home, Danbury, Essex, CM3 4QL

October 2016



**by Laura Pooley**

with contributions by Stephen Benfield  
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**commissioned by John Bell, ADG Architects  
on behalf of Oakland Primecare**

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Chelmsford Museum accession code CHMRE: 2016.115

OASIS ref.: colchest3-264306



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**CAT Report 1026**

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching was carried out on land at the Maldon Road Care Home, Danbury, Essex in advance of the construction of the care home. Despite being located close to the remains of a scheduled Early Iron Age fort and on the line of a Roman road, no significant archaeological horizons were identified.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching on land the new Maldon Road Care Home, Danbury, Essex carried out on the 7th October 2016. The work was commissioned by John Bell, ADG Architects, on behalf of Oakland Primicare, in advance of the construction of the care home, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), Historic Environment Advisor Alison Bennett 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* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for archaeological evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Alison Bennett (ECCPS 2016), and a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2016).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), 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 utilises the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford.

Approximately 700m to the west of the site lie the partial earthwork remains of a scheduled Early Iron Age fort (SM 79; EHER 5608). Excavations have revealed that the site was used as a defended enclosure and settlement from the Early Iron Age. Occupation may have continued through to Roman times (EHER 5609). The line of a Roman road runs east-west past the northern boundary of the fort. The development site lies along this Roman road which ran from Chelmsford past Danbury. As such, the potential for roadside settlement and/or activity is high.

In medieval times, a church was built on the site of the defended enclosure and a medieval settlement would have been located close by. The church of St John the Baptist dates from the 13th century (EHER 30315). To the north of the church and approximately 400m to the north-west of the site, the remains of a medieval tile kiln have been excavated (scheduled monuments SM 188; EHER 5628) representing an organised industry which is thought to have operated from c 1275 to 1335.

*The historic environment characterisation report for Chelmsford Borough* (Chelmsford Borough Council 2006) includes the proposed site within the former extent of Danbury Common (HECRBC, 5.7). The report states that, 'The woodland and common are likely to preserve earthworks and below-ground deposits of pre-medieval date'.

Earlier prehistoric flint tools have been recovered at the Iron Age fort and kiln sites (EHER 5627, 5607), indicating settlement or activity from at least the Bronze Age. Documentary and cartographic evidence shows that two windmills dating from before 1777 existed close by, to the immediate east of the site (EHER 5666, 5723). The mill house for one of the mills is extant (EHER 30351) and dates from the 16th-17th century. Due to the historic land use of the proposed site, there is a high potential for the survival of well-preserved archaeological deposits of prehistoric to post-medieval date.

In 2009 an evaluation was carried out before the Danbury Medical Centre was constructed (CAT Report 503). The fourteen evaluation trenches revealed a post-medieval or modern field boundary, and two pits and a post-hole which probably related to the site's previous use as a paddock for horses. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.

#### **4 Results** (Figs 2-3)

Two trial-trenches were machine excavated under archaeological supervision. They were located within the footprint of the new medical centre (T1) and car park (T2).

Three layers were identified. Modern topsoil (L1, c 100-280mm thick) sealed a medium grey silty-sand subsoil (L2, c 90-170mm thick), which sealed natural mid-orange/brown silty-sand (L3).

##### **Trench 1 (T1) – T-shaped, 60m and 30m long by 1.8m wide**

A single modern tree-throw containing flecks of coal (F1) was excavated. No significant archaeological horizons were identified.

##### **Trench 2 (T2) – 30m long by 1.8m wide**

No significant archaeological horizons were identified.



**Photograph 1** T1, looking E



**Photograph 2** T2, looking S

## 5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Context	Description	Date
T1, L2 (1)	Medieval pottery: Fabric 20* base/body sherd (12g) from a medieval cooking pot	13th-14th century
T2, L2 (2)	Post-medieval pottery: Fabric 40* rim sherd (66g) from a large bowl/pancheon	Late 16th-17th century

**Table 1** All finds by context (\*CAR 7)

## 6 Discussion

Despite being located within an area of archaeological importance no significant archaeological horizons were identified.

## 7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks John Bell (ADG Architects) and Oakland Primecare for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by N

Rayner, R Mathieson and Alec Wade. Figures are by CL, L Pooley and AW. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Alison Bennett.

## 8 References

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

CAR 7	2000	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by John Cotter
CAT	2014	<i>Health and Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation at the Maldon Road Care Home, Maldon Road, Danbury, Essex, CM3 4QL</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Cunningham, C	1985	'A typology for post-Roman pottery in Essex' in Cunningham, C., & Drury, P., <i>Post-medieval sites and their pottery: Moulsham Street, Chelmsford</i> , CBA Research Report 54
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Dept of Communities and Local Government.
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14. Ed. D Gurney
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24, by Maria Medlycott
ECCPS	2015	<i>Brief for Archaeological Evaluation at Maldon Road Care Home, Danbury</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> (English Heritage)

## 9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
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'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
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 Henry VIII to c AD 1800
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
Section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation

## 10 Contents of archive

**Finds:** none retained

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1026)

ECC Evaluation Brief, CAT Written Scheme of Investigation

Original site record (Feature and layer sheets, Finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log, Architectural plans, Attendance register, Risk assessment

## 11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital 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 Chelmsford Museum under accession code CHMRE: 2016.115

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### Distribution list:

John Bell, ADG Architects

Oakland Primecare

Historic Environment Advisor, Essex County Council Place Services

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



### Colchester Archaeological Trust

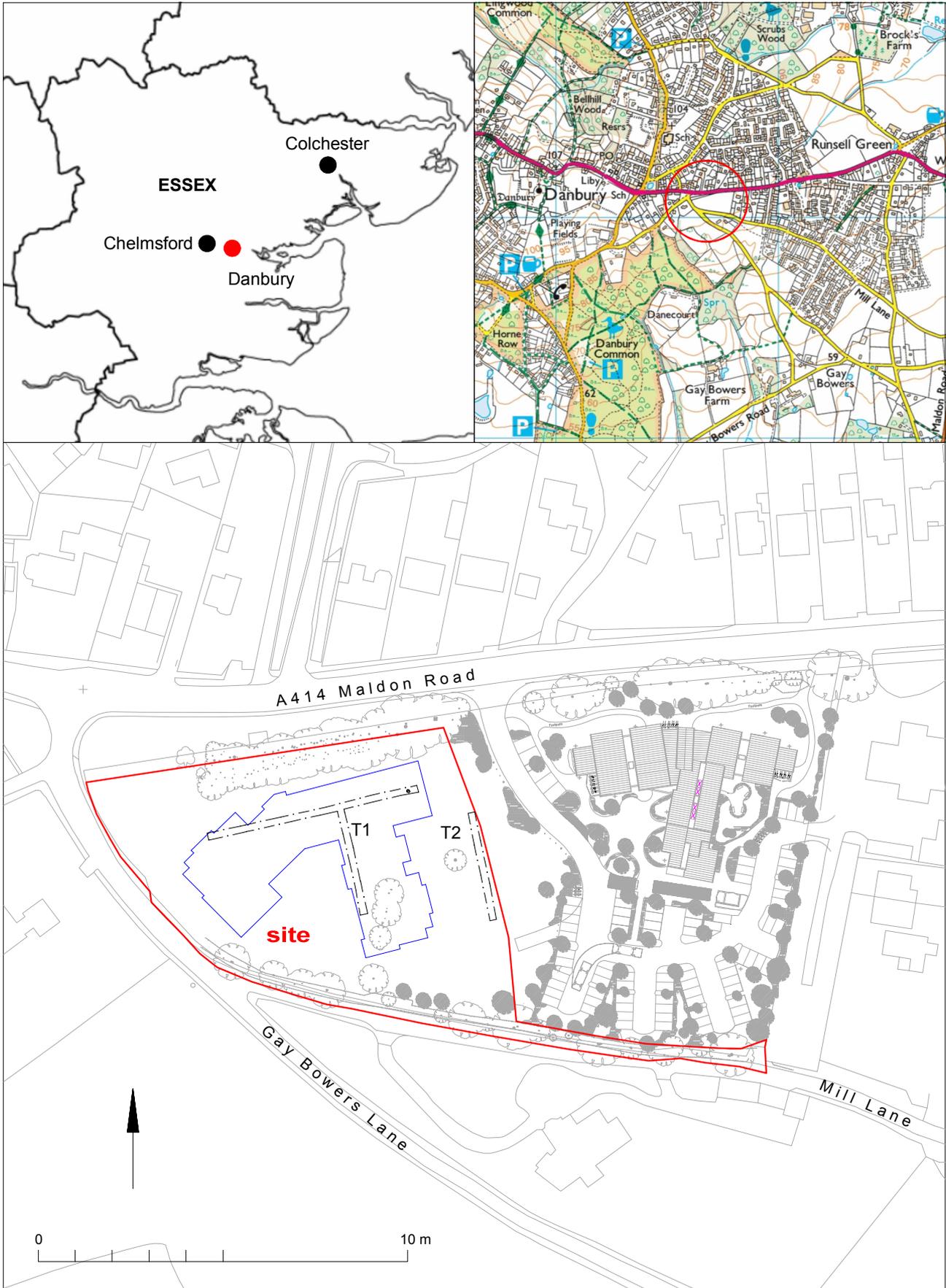
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Fig 1 Site location in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).

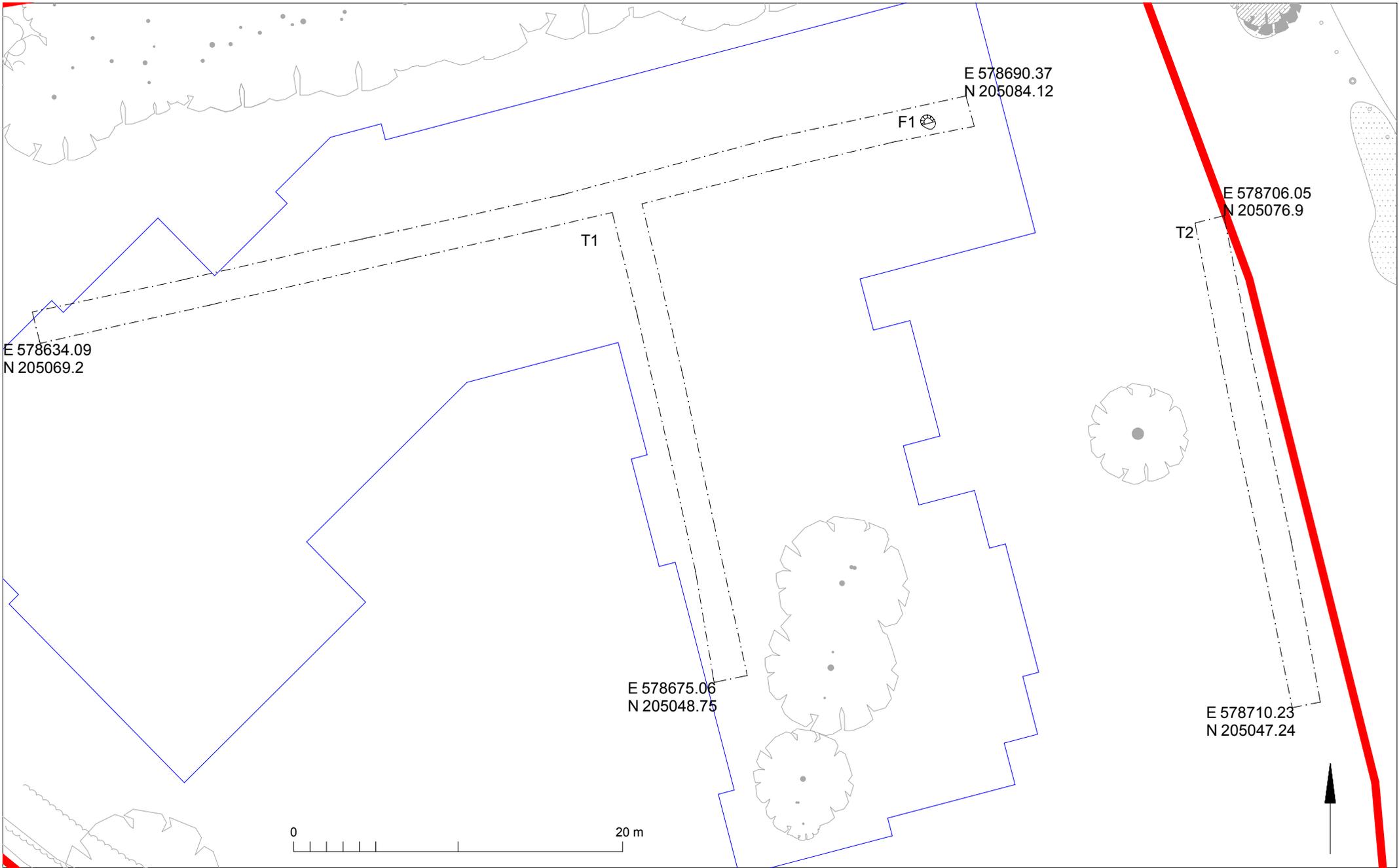
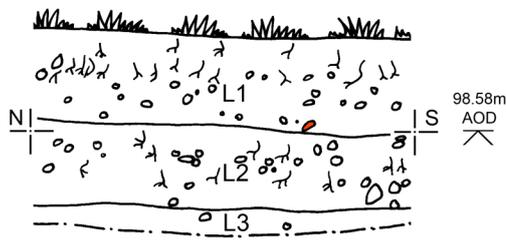
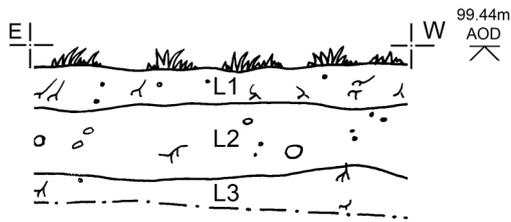
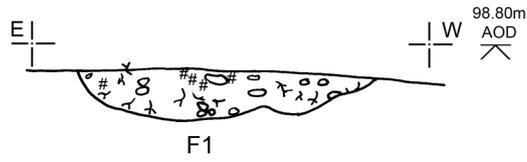


Fig 2 Results



-  Unidentified ceramic building material
-  Charcoal fragments
-  Small roots



Fig 3 Feature and representative sections

## Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

### Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Maldon Road Care Home, Maldon Road, Danbury, Essex, CM3 4QL	
<b>Parish:</b> Danbury	<b>District:</b> Chelmsford
<b>NGR:</b> TL 7868 0506 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project code: 16/09e ECC project code: DYMR16 OASIS project ID: colchest3-264306
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 7th October 2016	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> Two trenches (totalling 120m linear at 1.8m wide or 216m <sup>2</sup> )
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Chelmsford Museum accession code CHMRE: 2016.115	<b>Funding source:</b> developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related EHER number:</b> EHER 5607-9, 5627-8, 5666, 5723, 30315, 30351
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 1026	
<b>Periods represented:</b> post-medieval, modern	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> An archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching was carried out on land at the new Maldon Road Care Home, Danbury, Essex in advance of the construction of the care home. Despite being located close to the remains of a scheduled Early Iron Age fort and on the line of a Roman road, no significant archaeological horizons were identified.	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> CAT Report 503 (land adjacent)	
<b>Keywords:</b> –	<b>Significance:</b> –
<b>Author of summary:</b> Laura Pooley	<b>Date of summary:</b> October 2016