

Archaeological monitoring and recording at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9SY

January 2017



by Laura Pooley

figures by Emma Holloway and Laura Pooley

fieldwork by Mark Baister and Ben Holloway

**commissioned by Ross Bain
on behalf of Miss C Clarke & Mr C Wilson**

NGR: TL 95804 25965 (centre)

Planning reference: 162598

CAT project ref.: 16/12i

Colchester Museum accession code COLEM: 2016.124

CHER ref: ECC3927

OASIS reference: colchest3-271533



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CAT Report 1059

January 2017

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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex in advance of the construction of a side extension, garage and new highway access. Despite being located close to a Bronze Age cemetery, Gryme's Dyke North and several cropmarks, no archaeological remains were encountered during groundworks.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at Lower House, Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex which was carried out on 23rd January 2017. The work was commissioned by Ross Bain, on behalf of Miss C Clarke and Mr C Wilson, during the construction of a side extension, garage and new highway access, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Colchester Borough Council Planning Services (CBCPS), the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor Jess Tipper 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 paragraphs 128, 129 and 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Continuous Archaeological Recording*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCPS 2016), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with CBCPS (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 watching brief* (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 draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), and also on the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The development site is located in an area rich in archaeological remains. It lies within the Late Iron Age *oppidum* of Camulodunum, which was defined by a system of defensive dykes. Gryme's Dyke north extends roughly north-south 20m to the west of the site (EHER 11637). The Triple Dyke also extends roughly north-south 500m to the southeast of the site. The Triple Dyke was added to the dyke system after the Roman conquest to strengthen the line of Shrub End Dyke at its northern end (CAR 11, 52-61) (EHER 11635).

Archaeological excavations 500m to the north in 1977 revealed a Bronze Age cemetery consisting of seven ring ditches, at least thirteen urned cremations (upright and inverted), ten cremations without urns, 26 prehistoric pits, and two linear ditches; forming three phases of activity (Crummy 1977). Archaeological excavation 100m north in 1973 revealed a prehistoric ditch aligned NE/SW which was likely a continuation of one of the linears excavated in 1977 (Petchey 1977).

Cropmarks within a 500m radius of the site include MEX11922 (single large ring ditch with possible hut circles) to the SW, MEX39212 (field boundaries, linear features and

possibly extraction pits) and MEX33926 (subrectangular enclosure, ring ditch and field ditches) to the W, MEX34720 (trackway, pits, linear features) to the NW, MEX33920 (subrectangular enclosure) to the NE, MEX33933 (pits, linear features, rectilinear enclosures) to the E/SE.

Archaeological evaluation in 2013 at the 'Hunter's Rough' on the southern end of Chitts Hill revealed only one post-medieval ditch (CAT Report 687) and a watching brief at 128 Halstead Road, Chitts Hill in 2000 revealed only modern features (CAT Report 88).

4 Results (Figs 2-3)

All groundworks were carried out by the contractor under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Foundation trenches for the extension and garage measured 0.6m wide by 1m deep (extension) and 0.7m deep (garage). They were excavated through 0.1-0.12m of tarmac onto modern topsoil (L1, c 0.1m thick, medium brown sandy-silt) which sealed natural sands and gravels (L2). The new highway access was stripped of tarmac (0.1-0.12m thick) only. No archaeological features or finds were observed.



Photograph 1 Extension: foundation trenches fully excavated, looking SW



Photograph 2 Garage: foundation trenches fully excavated, looking NW

5 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

6 Discussion

Despite being located close to a Bronze Age cemetery, Gryme's Dyke and several cropmarks, no archaeological remains were encountered during groundworks with modern topsoil sealing natural.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Ross Bain, Miss C Clarke and Mr C Wilson for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by M Baister and B Holloway. Figures were prepared by E Holloway and L Pooley. The project was monitored for CBCPS by Jess Tipper.

8 References

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

CAR 11	1995	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 11: Camulodunum 2</i> , by CFC Hawkes and P Crummy
CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written scheme of investigation (WSI) for continuous archaeological recording at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9SY</i>
CAT Report 88	2000	<i>Watching brief report: 128 Halstead Road, Chitts Hill</i>
CAT Report 687	2013	<i>Archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at 'Hunter's Rough', Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex: March 2013</i>

CBCPS	2016	<i>Brief for continuous archaeological recording at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, CO3 9SY</i>
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Crummy, P	1977	<i>A Bronze Age Cemetery at Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex, Essex Archaeology and History 9</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).</i>
Hull, M.R.	1958	<i>Roman Colchester, RRCSAL 20</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)</i>
Petchey, M R	1977	<i>A prehistoric enclosure at Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex Archaeology and History 9</i>

9 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record (previously UAD, Urban Archaeological Database)
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain ‘contexts’
Late Iron Age (LIA)	period from c 100 – 50 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	placed deposit/spreads of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c AD 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
wsi	written scheme of investigation

10 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1059)

CBCPS 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 Colchester Museum under accession code: COLEM 2016.124

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Distribution list

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Miss C Clarke & Mr C Wilson
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



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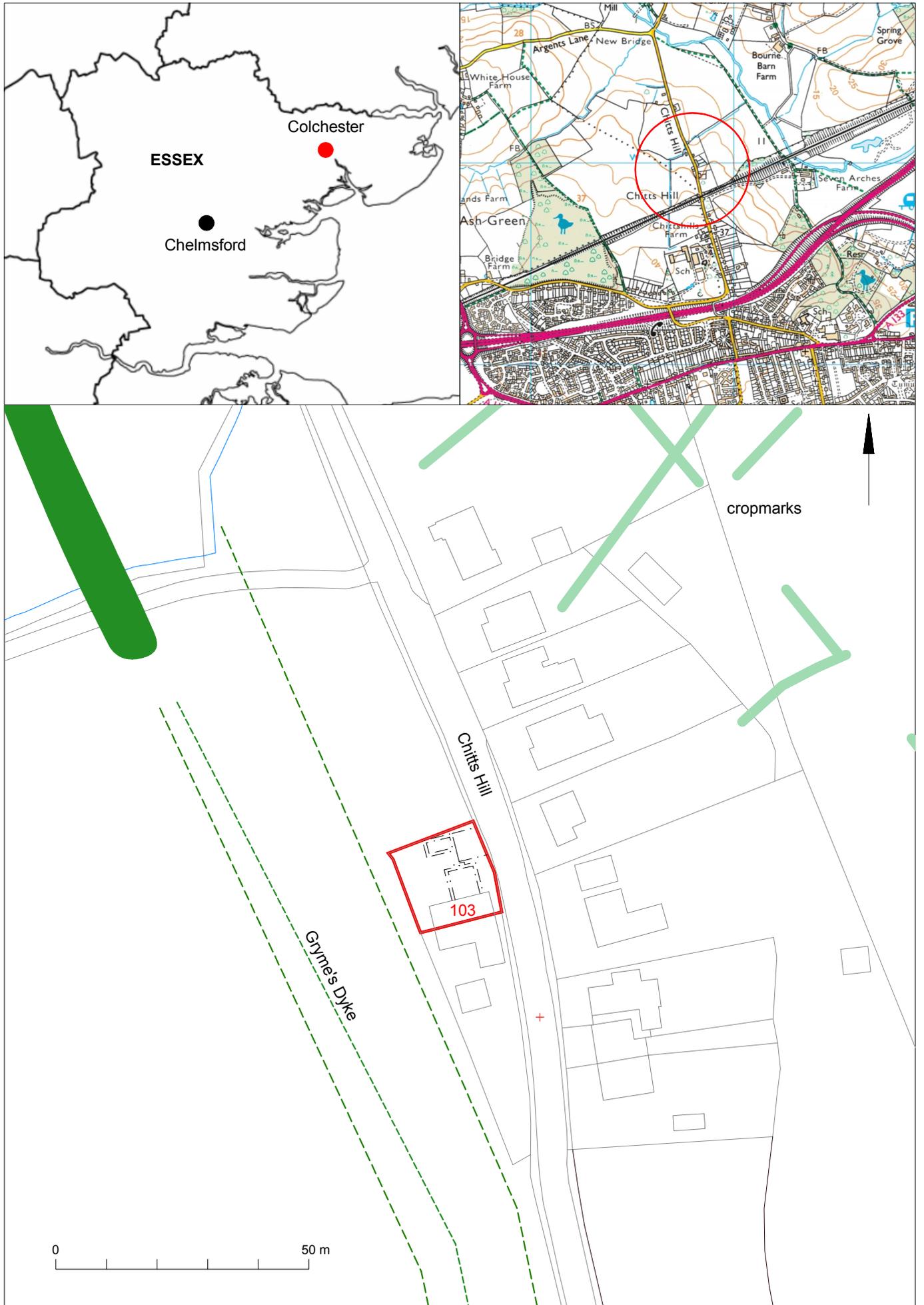


Fig 1 Site location, show in relation to Gryme's Dyke and nearby cropmarks



Fig 2 Monitoring results

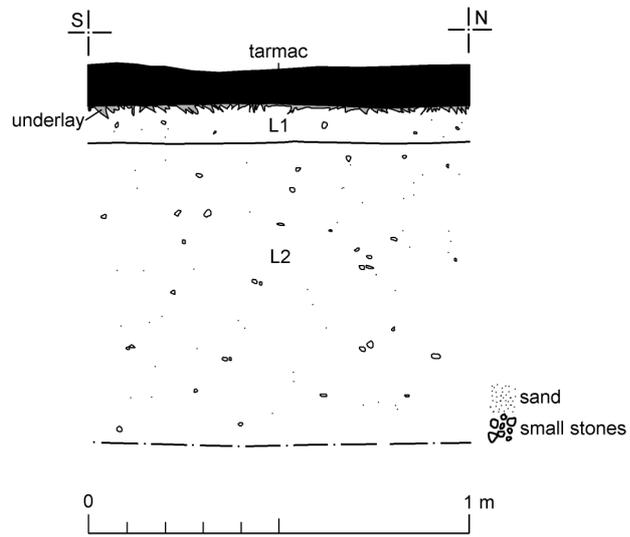


Fig 3 Representative section.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9SY	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 95804 25965 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 16/12i CHER ref: ECC3927 OASIS ref: colchest3-271533
Type of work: Watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 23rd January 2017	Size of area investigated: 315m ²
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2016.124	Funding source: Owner
Further seasons anticipated? no	Related UAD/SMR number: EHER 11635, 11637
Final report: CAT Report 1059	
Periods represented: modern	
Summary of fieldwork results: Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex in advance of the construction of a side extension, garage and new highway access. Despite being located close to a Bronze Age cemetery, Gryme's Dyke North and several cropmarks, no archaeological remains were encountered during groundworks.	
Previous summaries/reports: –	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: –	Significance: none
Author of summary: Laura Pooley	Date of summary: January 2017

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for continuous archaeological recording at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9SY

NGR: TL 95804 25965 (centre)

Planning references: 162598

Commissioned by: Ross Bain

On behalf of: Miss C Clarke and Mr C Wilson

Curating Museum: Colchester

Museum accession code: [tbc](#)

UAD Event number: ECC3927

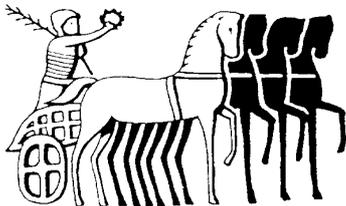
CAT Project code: 16/12i

OASIS project number: colchest3-271533

Site Manager: Chris Lister

CBC Monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 16.12.2016



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Site location and description

The proposed development site lies approximately 4km west of Colchester town centre at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester (Fig 1). Site centre is NGR TL 95804 25965.

Proposed work

The development comprises a two-storey side extension, garage and new highway access.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), and also on the Urban Archaeological Database (UAD) created by Colchester Borough Council, and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The development site is located in an area rich in archaeological remains. It lies within the Late Iron Age *oppidum* of Camulodunum, which was defined by a system of defensive dykes. Grimes Dyke north extends roughly north-south 20m to the west of the site. The Triple Dyke also extends roughly north-south 500m to the southeast of the site. The Triple Dyke was added to the dyke system after the Roman conquest to strengthen the line of Shrub End Dyke at its northern end (CAR 11, 52-61) (EHER 11635).

Archaeological excavations 500m to the north in 1977 revealed a Bronze Age cemetery consisting of seven ring ditches, at least thirteen urned cremations (upright and inverted), ten cremations without urns, 26 prehistoric pits, and two linear ditches; forming three phases of activity (Crummy 1977). Archaeological excavation 100m north in 1973 revealed a prehistoric ditch aligned NE/SW which was likely a continuation of one of the linears excavated in 1977 (Petchey 1977).

Cropmarks within a 500m radius of the site include MEX11922 (single large ring ditch with possible hut circles) to the SW, MEX39212 (field boundaries, linear features and possibly extraction pits) and MEX33926 (subrectangular enclosure, ring ditch and field ditches) to the W, MEX34720 (trackway, pits, linear features) to the NW, MEX33920 (subrectangular enclosure) to the NE, MEX33933 (pits, linear features, rectilinear enclosures) to the E/SE.

Archaeological evaluation in 2013 at the 'Hunter's Rough' on the southern end of Chitts Hill revealed only one post-medieval ditch (CAT Report 687) and a watching brief at 128 Halstead Road, Chitts Hill in 2000 revealed only modern features (CAT Report 88)

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in October 2016 (application No.162598) proposing a two-storey side extension, garage and new highway access.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER / UAD as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

Requirement for work

The required archaeological work is for continuous archaeological monitoring and recording of all groundworks. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2016).

Specifically:

The monitoring and recording is being undertaken to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site.

If unexpected remains are encountered the CBCAA will be informed immediately and the CBCAA will decide if amendments to the brief are required to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

General methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a, b)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- the Project Brief issued by the CBCAA (CBC 2016).

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to CBCAA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from the curating museum. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT officer for the duration of the groundworks.

Monitoring methodology

There will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' ground works to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be planned and recorded.

If any features or deposits uncovered are to be destroyed by the proposed development, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc).

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used to examine spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

All features and layers or other significant deposits will be planned, and their profiles or sections recorded. The normal scale will be site plans at 1:20 and sections at 1:10, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be appropriate.

Site surveying

Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas and trenches will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer/Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course, but only if they are datable. Any processing and reporting will be done by VF/LG. If any complex or outstanding deposits are encountered, VF/LG will be asked onto site to advise. EH Regional Adviser is available for further advice.

Human remains

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the monitoring, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and CBCAA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Pip Parmenter

animal bones (small groups): Pip Parmenter

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer (Loddon)

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey

Other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to CBCAA.

Results

Notification will be given to CBCAA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAA as a PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of the groundworks in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of the site will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and supplied to CBCAA.

Results will be published, to at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series

Archive deposition

It is a policy of Colchester Borough Council that the integrity of the site archive be maintained (i.e. all finds and records should be properly curated by a single organisation), with the archive available for public consultation. To achieve this desired aim it is assumed that the full archive will be deposited in Colchester Museums *unless otherwise agreed in advance*. (A full copy of the archive shall in any case be deposited).

By accepting this WSI, the client agrees to deposit the archive, including all artefacts, at Colchester & Ipswich Museum.

The requirements for archive storage will be agreed with the curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAA.

Monitoring

CBCAA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to CBCAA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with CBCAA prior to them being carried out.

CBCAA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of CBCAA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|---|
| Brown, D | 2007 | <i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i> |
| CAR 11 | 1995 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 11: Camulodunum 2</i> , by CFC Hawkes and P Crummy |
| CAT | 2014 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CAT Report 88 | 2000 | <i>Watching brief report: 128 Halstead Road, Chitts Hill</i> |
| CAT Report 687 | 2013 | <i>Archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at 'Hunter's Rough', Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex: March 2013</i> |
| CBCPS | 2015 | <i>Brief for continuous archaeological recording at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, CO3 9SY</i> |
| CIfA | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> |
| CIfA | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> |
| Crummy, P | 1977 | <i>A Bronze Age Cemetery at Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex</i> , Essex Archaeology and History 9 |
| DCLG | 2012 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> |
| English Heritage | 2006 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> |
| Gurney, D | 2003 | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14). |
| 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) |
| Petchey, M R | 1977 | <i>A prehistoric enclosure at Chitts Hill, Colchester</i> , Essex Archaeology and History 9 |

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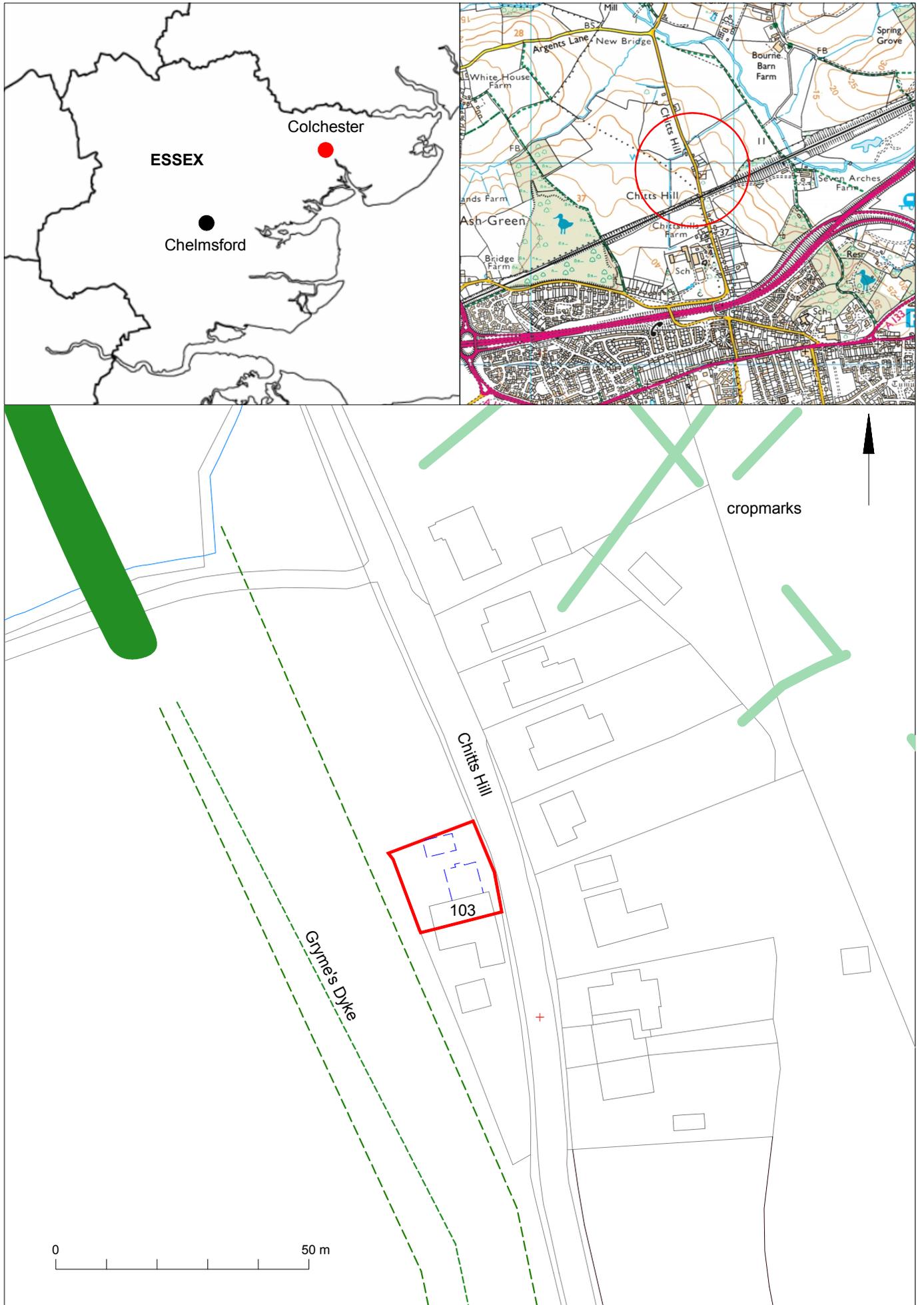


Fig 1 Site location, show in relation to Gryme's Dyke and nearby cropmarks (proposed development dashed blue)

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OASIS ID: colchest3-271533

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Lower House, Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex, CO3 9SY
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill, Colchester, Essex in advance of the construction of a side extension, garage and new highway access. Despite being located close to a Bronze Age cemetery, Gryme's Dyke North and several cropmarks, no archaeological remains were encountered during groundworks.
Project dates	Start: 23-01-2017 End: 23-01-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	16/12i - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	162598 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC3927 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2016.124 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Lower House, 103 Chitts Hill
Postcode	CO3 9SY
Study area	315 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 95804 25965 51.897260005989 0.846232981266 51 53 50 N 000 50 46 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Laura Pooley
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Ben Holloway
Type of sponsor/funding body	Owner

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2016.124
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2016.124
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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Entered on	24 January 2017

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