

Archaeological monitoring and recording at Castle Park (Sensory Garden), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UG

November 2016 - January 2017



by Dr Elliott Hicks

figures by Sarah Carter

fieldwork by Sarah Carter, Chris Lister and Adam Wightman

on behalf of Ian Baalham, Colchester Borough Council

NGR: TL 99965 25311 (centre)

Planning reference: n/a

CAT project ref.: 16/10e

Colchester Museum accession code: COLEM: 2017.105

CHER ref: ECC 4026

OASIS reference: colchest3-290063



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CAT Report 1132

July 2017

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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at Castle Park, Colchester (a scheduled monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the construction of a sensory garden. No significant archaeological remains were uncovered.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at Castle Park, Colchester, Essex which was carried out from the 1st November 2016 to the 17th January 2017. The work was commissioned by Ian Baalham, Colchester Borough Council during construction of a sensory garden, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Colchester Borough Council Planning Services (CBCPS), Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor Jess Tipper advised that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this work, a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with paragraphs 128, 129 and 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) should be undertaken.

In addition to the 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* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The Sensory Garden in Castle Park forms part of the garden on the north side of Hollytrees house Museum, a Grade I listed building dating to 1718 (SMR no. 31233). The Sensory Garden was originally laid out in 1953 as part of Colchester's Coronation celebrations. A further major refurbishment was carried out in 1992 involving local artists. Colchester Borough Council proposes to refurbish the existing garden and incorporate new seating, pergolas and a water feature.

Hollytrees' garden originally sloped gradually to the north, becoming a meadow running down to the town wall. By 1768 a map drawn by local architect James Deane for Rev. Philip Morant's "The History and Antiquities of Colchester" showed that formal gardens had been laid out. Landscaping was undertaken to achieve this, making the ground level and creating a shallow terrace with a low brick retaining wall at the north end.

Colchester Castle Park is a site of great archaeological importance and is a Scheduled Monument (Essex No. 1). In the Roman period, the area of the sensory garden lay in insula 23 of the Roman town. Immediately to the west is insula 22, the largest and most important insula in the town, which was dominated by the Temple of Claudius, the earliest stone and mortar building in Britain (Drury, 1984; SMR no. 12223). To the north, in insula 15, recorded Roman remains include town houses which were excavated by Mortimer Wheeler, and a building once identified as a mithraeum but which is now thought to have been a waterworks. The principal published source for these discoveries is *Roman Colchester* (Hull, 1958). In the Medieval period, the remains of the Roman temple were used as a foundation for the Norman castle (SMR no. 12224), and much of what is now the park came within the ramparts defining the castle bailey (Drury, 1982).

4 Results

Archaeological monitoring at Castle Park was carried out on a series of occasions between November 2016 to January 2017 as and when new groundworks were carried out in the process of constructing a sensory garden. All groundworks were undertaken by the contractor under archaeological supervision.

On the 1st November 2016, a CAT archaeologist attended the excavation of a curved footing for a pergola. The footing trench measured approximately 13m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.5m in depth. Excavation occurred through a layer of tarmac-covered concrete (L1, 0.1m thick) onto a layer of modern crush (L2, 0.065m thick). L2 sealed a layer of modern sand (L3, 0.04m thick) which in turn sealed a modern make-up/dump layer (L4, excavated to a depth of 0.3m). Concrete footings from a now-demolished garden wall were uncovered at both ends of the trench. Nothing of archaeological significance was detected.



Photograph 1 South end of back trench - looking east

On the 3rd November 2016, a CAT archaeologist was present at the excavation of a further footing trench situated in parallel to that dug on the 1st. The trench measured approximately 23m in length, 0.5m in width and 0.8m in depth, and was excavated through the same stratigraphy detailed above. No significant archaeological horizons were encountered.

On the 8th November 2016, a CAT archaeologist supervised the excavation of around 0.3m in depth from the area of a test pit located immediately to the east of the pergola, which had been dug during archaeological investigations during 2014 (see CAT Report 814). The excavation of a further foundation footing for a set of steps leading to the northern entrance of the sensory garden was also overseen. The trenching measured approximately 26m in length and 0.3m in depth, and was excavated through modern topsoil. No significant archaeological remains were uncovered.

On 14th November 2016, a CAT archaeologist was present during the excavation of a soakaway pit towards the southern end of the sensory garden. It measured 0.8m by 0.8m and was excavated to a depth of 0.65m. Excavations occurred through modern mixed ground of dark grey sandy-silt with common peg-tile, slate, animal bone, pottery fragments and clay pipe, none of which was retained.

On 17th January 2017, a CAT archaeologist attended the excavation of a pit to accommodate a water feature. It measured 2m by 2m and 0.8m in depth. Excavation

occurred through modern mixed ground. No significant archaeological horizons were encountered.

5 Finds

No significant finds were recovered.

6 Discussion

No significant archaeological horizons were identified during monitoring as groundworks only disturbed modern layers.

7 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Ian Baalham, Colchester Borough Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister. Fieldwork was carried out by S Carter, A Wightman and C Lister. The project was monitored for the 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>

CAT Report 814	2015	<i>Archaeological investigations in Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex: April 2014-January 2015</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>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
Drury, P J	1982	'Aspects of the origins and development of Colchester Castle', <i>Archaeological Journal</i> 139
Drury, P J	1984	'The temple of Claudius at Colchester reconsidered', <i>Britannia</i> 15
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).
Hull, M.R.	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> RRCSAL 20
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)

9 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record (previously UAD, Urban Archaeological Database)
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
NGR	National Grid Reference
peg-tile	rectangular thin tile with peg-hole(s) used mainly for roofing, first appeared c AD1200 and continued in use to present day, but commonly post-medieval to modern
Roman section	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410 (abbreviation sc or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
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 1132)

Original site record (wsi)

Site digital photos and log, attendance register

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: 2017.105

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Distribution list

Ian Baalham, Colchester Borough Council

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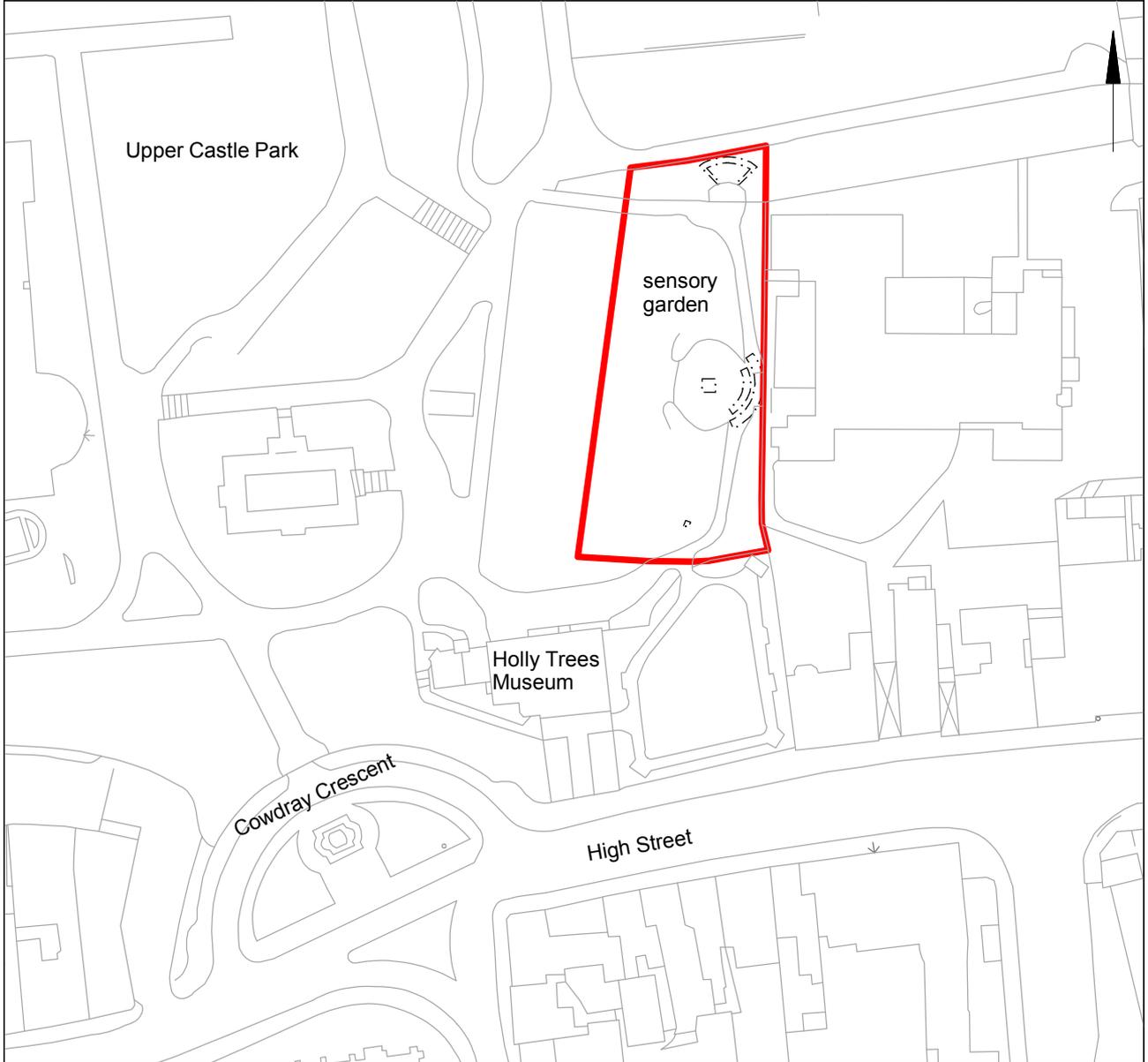
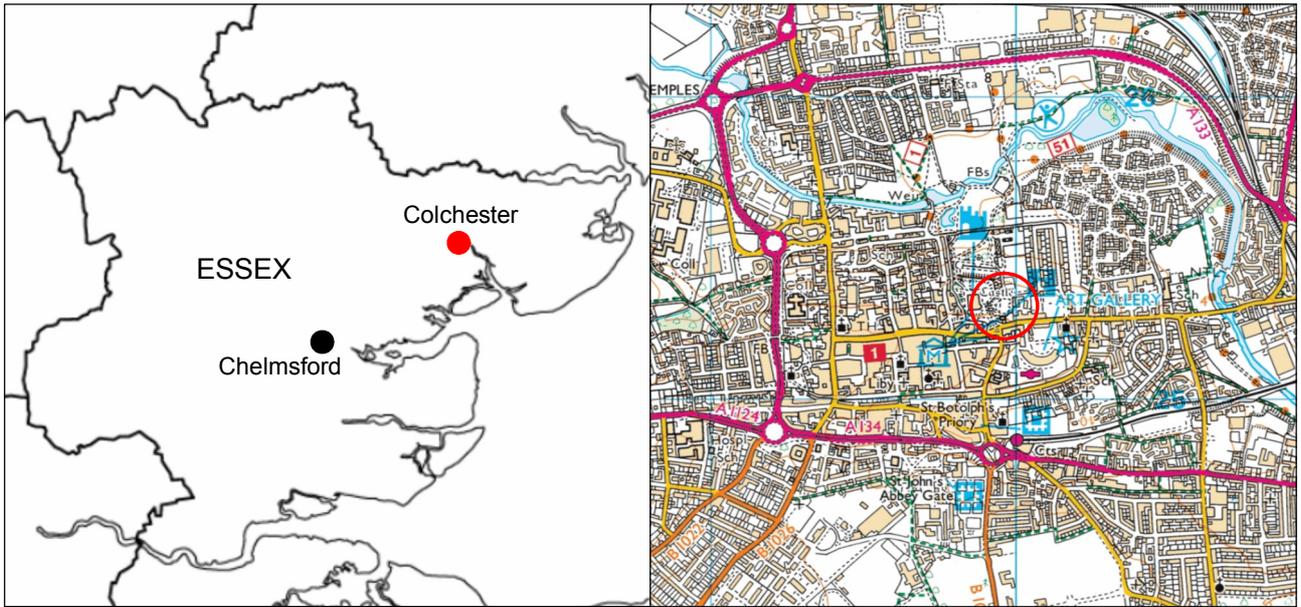


Fig 1 Site location.

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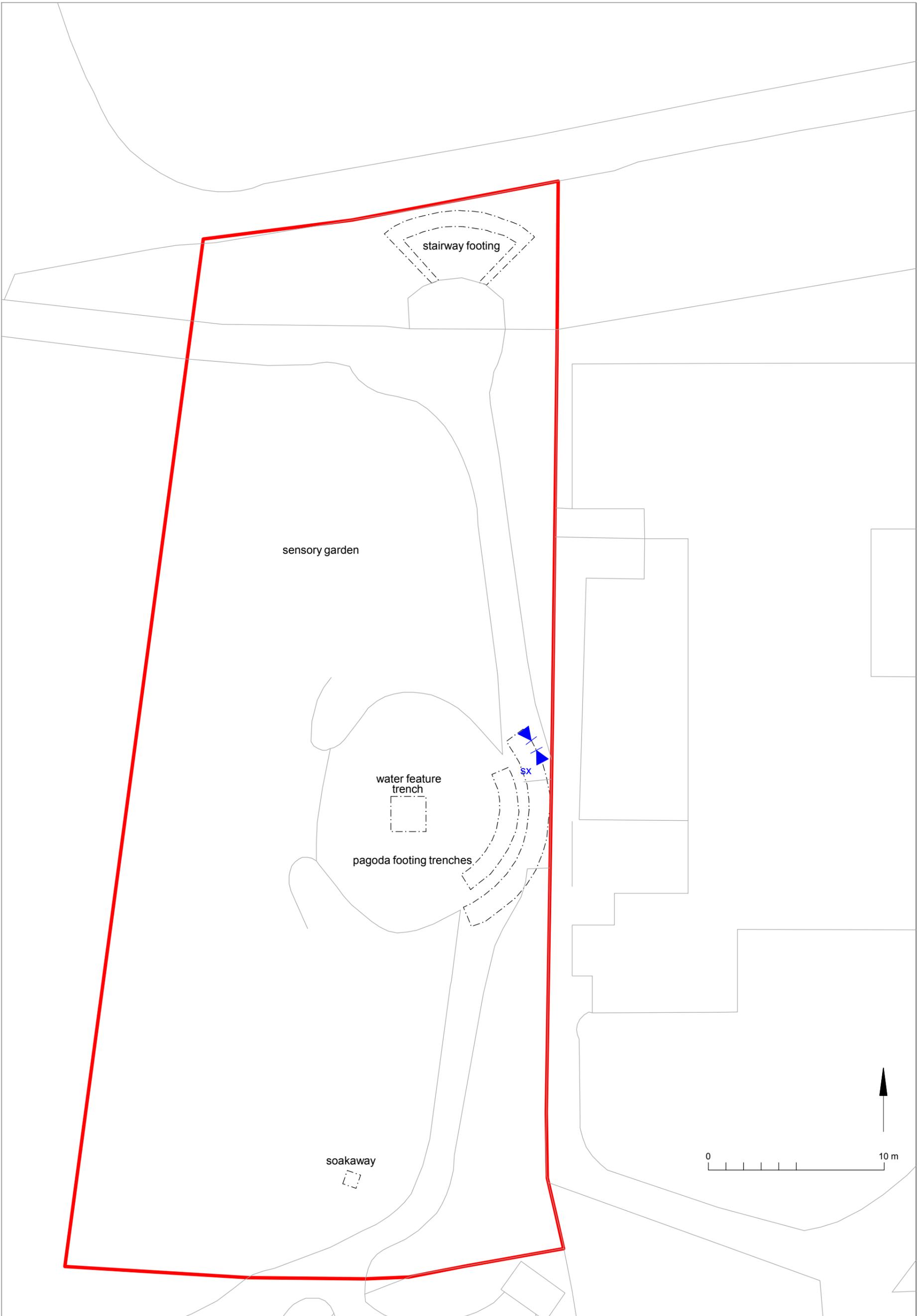


Fig 2 Results



Fig 3 Representative Section

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Castle Park (Sensory Garden), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UG	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TM TL 99965 25311 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 16/10e CHER ref: ECC 4026 OASIS ref: colchest3-290063
Type of work: Monitoring and recording	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 1st November 2016 – 17th January 2017	Size of area investigated: 0.14 ha
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code: COLEM: 2017.105	Funding source: Borough Council
Further seasons anticipated? no	Related CHER/SMR numbers: -
Final report: CAT Report 1132	
Periods represented: modern	
Summary of fieldwork results: <i>Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at Castle Park, Colchester (a scheduled monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the construction of a sensory garden. No significant archaeological remains were uncovered.</i>	
Previous summaries/reports: None	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: -	Significance: -
Author of summary: Dr Elliott Hicks	Date of summary: July 2017

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OASIS ID: colchest3-290063

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Castle Park (Sensory Garden), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UG
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at Castle Park, Colchester (a scheduled monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the construction of a sensory garden. No significant archaeological remains were uncovered.
Project dates	Start: 01-11-2016 End: 17-01-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	16/10e - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4026 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2017.105 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Castle Park (Sensory Garden)
Postcode	CO1 1UG
Study area	0.14 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 99965 25311 51.88990252937 0.906255511133 51 53 23 N 000 54 22 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Chris Lister
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Chris Lister
Type of sponsor/funding body	Borough Council

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.105
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.105
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report"

Project bibliography

1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Castle Park (Sensory Garden), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UG: November 2016 - January 2017
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1132
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust

Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A-4 loose-leaf ringbound
URL	http://cat.essex.ac.uk/
Entered by	Laura Pooley (lp@catuk.org)
Entered on	25 July 2017

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