

# Archaeological monitoring and recording at DSG (Defence Support Group), Flagstaff Road, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7SR

October 2017



**by Laura Pooley**  
figures by Laura Pooley and Sarah Carter

fieldwork by Nigel Rayner

**commissioned by Rob Masefield of RPS Group Plc  
on behalf of RMPA Services Plc**

NGR: TL 99570 24554 (centre)  
Planning reference: n/a  
CAT project ref.: 17/10f  
Colchester Museum accession code COLEM: 2017.150  
CHER ref: ECC4109  
OASIS reference: colchest3-301283



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**CAT Report 1197**  
November 2017

## **Contents**

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Aims	1
5	Results	2
6	Finds	2
7	Conclusion	2
8	Acknowledgements	2
9	References	2
10	Abbreviations and glossary	2
11	Contents of archive	3
12	Archive deposition	3

Figures

after p3

OASIS Summary

## **List of photographs and figures**

Cover: general site shot

- Fig 1 Site location
- Fig 2 Results

## 1 Summary

*Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at DSG (Defence Support Group), Flagstaff Road, Colchester, during groundworks to cap off a water main. Despite being located within the Colchester Roman Circus scheduled area, there was no impact on the monument as all groundworks were confined to the backfill of the water main trench.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at ABRO, Flagstaff Road, Colchester, Essex, which was carried out on the 23rd October 2017. The work was commissioned and consultancy managed by Rob Masefield of RPS Group Plc on behalf of RMPA Services Plc, and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

As the development site lies within the Colchester Circus Scheduled Monument (English Heritage National Monument No. 35614), Deborah Priddy of Historic England required that continuous archaeological monitoring and recording be carried out on all groundworks.

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 briefs (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, and also on the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER).

The site is located within the Colchester Circus Scheduled Monument, an internationally important stone-built monumental Roman circus discovered in 2004. The circus is currently unique in Britain and has been investigated over multiple archaeological sites (CAT Report 412). Specifically, the site is located within the circus racetrack.

The circus was approximately 450m in length and 70m wide with a central barrier (spina). Elements identified to date include the stands, known as the 'cavea', with internal and external walls, entrances on the north and south caveas, a racetrack dirt surface, a segment of the semi-circular end of the circus, eight starting gates, and elements of the 'spina' including fragments of a turning post at the western end, a monument base in the centre of the spina at the modern cross roads of Flagstaff/Circular Road East with Napier Road/Circular Road North, and tank-like pits or cisterns within the east and west ends of the spina. A metalled trackway has also identified around the circus.

The circus appears to have been pulled down in the late Roman period, with rubble spreads to the exterior of the outer wall observed in excavations.

## 4 Aims

Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken to ensure that groundworks did not impact on the remains of the Roman circus scheduled monument.

## 5 Results

A short length of trench was excavated measuring 1.2m long, 0.6m wide and 0.7m deep. All excavations were carried out through the backfilled trench (a dark yellow/brown sandy-loam with crush) directly onto the water main.

## 6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds.

## 7 Conclusion

Despite being located within the Colchester Roman Circus scheduled monument, groundworks did not impact on the monument as all were carried out through the backfilled trench of the water main.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Rob Masefield of RPS Group Plc on behalf of RMPA Services Plc for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by N Rayner. Figures were prepared by S Carter and L Pooley. The project was monitored for the Historic England by Deborah Priddy.

## 9 References

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

CAT Report 412	2011	<i>Report on the archaeological investigations carried out on Areas C1, C2, E, J1, O, Q and S1 of the Alienated Land, Colchester Garrison, including the Time Team trenches and the Alienated Land watching brief: May 2004-January 2005</i>
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i>
CifA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</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>
Medycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)</i>

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
wsi	written scheme of investigation

## 11 Contents of archive

**Finds:** n/a

### **Paper and digital record**

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1197)

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

## 12 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: 2017.150.

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### **Distribution list**

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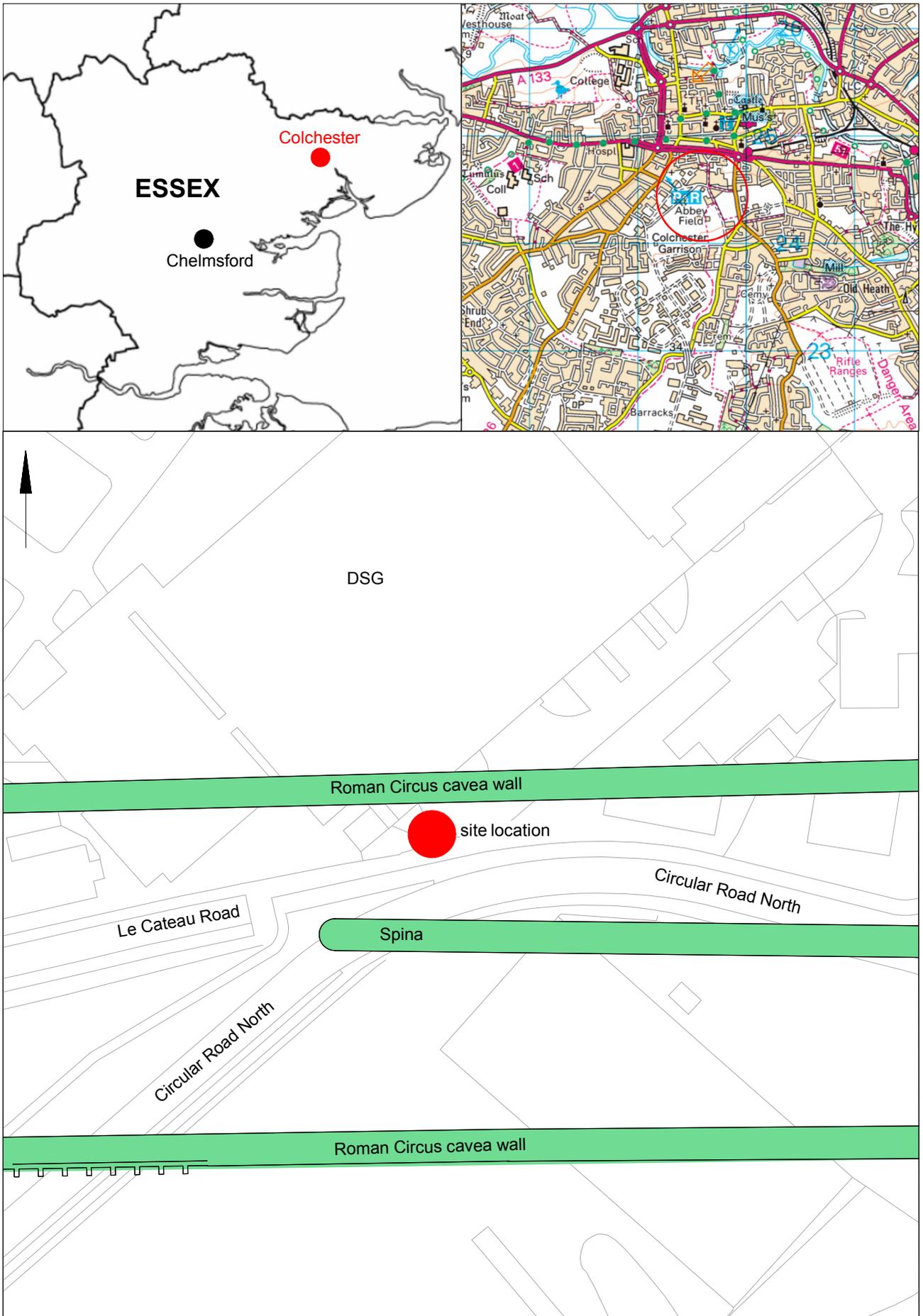
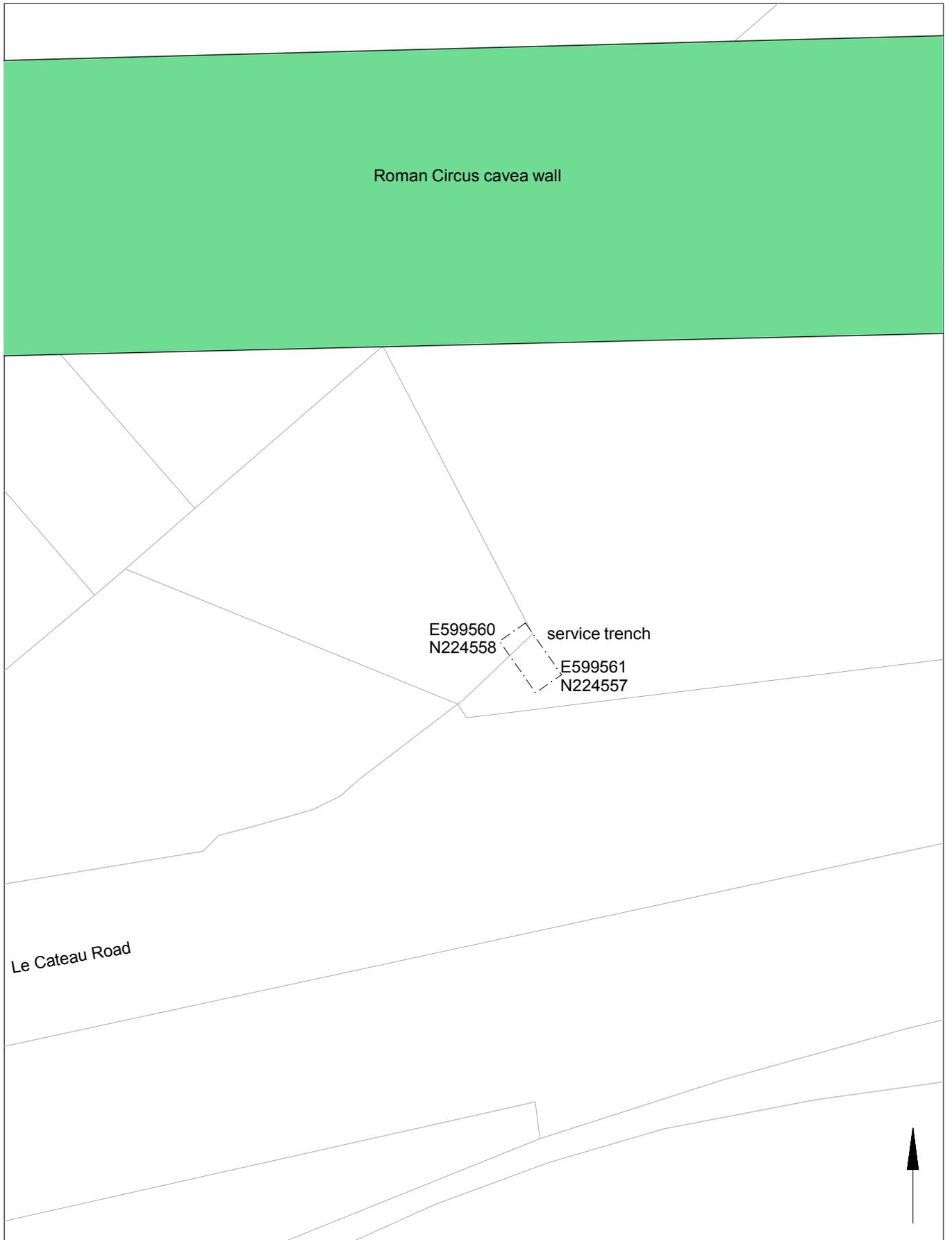


Fig 1 Site location

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Fig 2 Results



# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> Archaeological monitoring and recording at DSG (Defence Support Group), Flagstaff Road, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7SR	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 99570 24554 (centre)	<b>Site code:</b> CAT project ref.: 17/10f CHER ref: ECC4109 OASIS ref: colchest3-301283
<b>Type of work:</b> Monitoring and recording	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> 23rd October 2017	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 0.72m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2017.150	<b>Funding source:</b> Owner
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Not known	<b>Related CHER/SAM number:</b> Roman Circus SAM no.35614
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 1197	
<b>Periods represented:</b> modern	
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at DSG (Defence Support Group), Flagstaff Road, Colchester, during groundworks to cap off a water main. Despite being located within the Colchester Roman Circus scheduled area, there was no impact on the monument as all groundworks were confined to the backfill of the water main trench.	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> None	
<b>CBC monitor:</b> Jess Tipper	
<b>Keywords:</b> -	<b>Significance:</b> -
<b>Author of summary:</b> Laura Pooley	<b>Date of summary:</b> November 2017

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**OASIS ID: colchest3-301283**

## Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at DSG, Flagstaff Road, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7SR
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out at DSG (Defence Support Group), Flagstaff Road, Colchester, during groundworks to cap off a water main. Despite being located within the Colchester Roman Circus scheduled area, there was no impact on the monument as all groundworks were confined to the backfill of the water main trench.
Project dates	Start: 23-10-2017 End: 23-10-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	17/10f - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4109 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2017.150 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

## Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER DSG (Defence Support Group), Flagstaff Road
Postcode	CO2 7SR
Study area	0.72 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 99570 24554 51.883246672028 0.900084674455 51 52 59 N 000 54 00 E Point

## Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	none
Project design originator	none
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Nigel Rayner
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

## Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive Exists?	No
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.150
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Paper Media available	"Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report"

## Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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