

Archaeological monitoring on barns at Beaumont Hall, Church Lane, Thorpe Le Soken, Essex, CO16 0AZ

November 2021



by Megan Seehra

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**commissioned by David Allison
on behalf of Stone Crest Homes Ltd**

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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out on the barns at Beaumont Hall, Thorpe le Soken ahead of their conversion to six new dwellings. The village of Beaumont cum Moze appears in 13th-century records, and the barns at Beaumont Hall are Grade II listed with 17th-century origins. Evidence of prehistoric and Roman features have been found nearby to the site as well. Four features were recorded during monitoring, two of them modern and likely related to changing land use at the development site over the years.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Beaumont Hall, Church Lane, Thorpe le Soken between the 1st and 4th November 2021. The work was commissioned by David Allison of Stone Crest Homes Ltd, and took place during the conversion of the barns and outbuildings to six new dwellings.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Planning Services (ECCPS), the Tendring District Council Archaeological Advisor Teresa O'Connor 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* (MHCLG 2019).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Investigation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Teresa O'Connor (CBCPS 2021), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2021).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016), 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 (Fig 2)

The following archaeological background primarily includes extracts from the Brief and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessible to the public via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

Beaumont Hall is a Grade II* listed brick mansion of the later 17th century distinguished by a profusion of Dutch gables (EHER 34335). The current site is to the immediate northwest of the Hall where there are a group of barns partially enclosing a courtyard. Three of these buildings are Grade II listed (barn and granary EHER 34336, byre EHER 34337 and barn EHER 34338).

The following is from a heritage statement by David Andrews (2021):

Beaumont is not listed in Domesday (1086) but is recorded by the 13th century when it was held by the De Veres. It later passed to the Crown and was given by Edward VI to Thomas lord Darcy of Chich. It stayed in the possession of his descendants until the 18th century when it was sold to Guys Hospital. In the 1780s, the Beaumont Hall farm amounting to 653 acres was let on 21 year leases at £400 a year. The land use was almost equally divided between arable and pasture, there being slightly more arable, and much of the pasture being grazing marshes. By 1811, the rent had been raised to £750 (ERO D/DGh E15/6). Essex County Council bought the estate amounting to 1540 acres in Beaumont and Great Oakley in 1920, and sold the Hall farm in 1925. In 1992, the Hall was put up for sale separated from the farmland but retaining 17 acres and the old farm buildings.

The site is surrounded by a landscape of cropmarks recorded through aerial photography. To the east of Beaumont Hall cropmarks show a system of rectilinear enclosures, a curvilinear

enclosure and part of a ring-ditch (ECC3183). To the southwest cropmarks show a double ring-ditch (EHER 3188), and to the northwest on land east of Elm Farm are cropmarks of possible enclosures (EHER 3161). All around the site are numerous find spots recording primarily Bronze Age and Roman finds. These could suggest the ring-ditches identified by the cropmarks are the ploughed out remains of Bronze Age round barrows with a possible Roman villa somewhere close associated with the enclosures. A field examination prior to a tree planting scheme at Beaumont Hall exposed pottery from prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods (EHER 17746).

The current site is located opposite the Church of St Leonard. The church was originally constructed in the 14th century but completely rebuilt in c 1854 by C Hakewill and paid for by the Byng family who owned Beaumont Hall at the time (EHER 34334).

4 Aims

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken to excavate and record any archaeological deposits which were exposed by the groundworks.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

A total of 628m² of trenching was machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. There were five areas monitored, and they are as follows: the road (Trench A), soakaways in the piggery (Trench F), soakaways to the northwest (Trenches D and E), septic tanks to the south (Trench B) and trenching within the courtyard (Trench C). They will henceforth be referred to by their trench letters.



Photograph 1 Shallow excavation of Trench A from north-west end, looking south.

Trench A

Trench A was approximately 122m long and c 3.3m wide. The majority of this trench was only excavated down by 0.2-0.3m (Photograph 1), but the last 22m to the north was dug down by 0.8m (Photograph 2). Three layers were recorded. Topsoil (L1, 0.3m thick) sealed subsoil (L5,

0.3-0.45m thick), which covered natural (L4, from c 0.6m below current ground level (bcgl)). Two tree-throws (F2 and F3) were found in the deeper section of this trench. F2 was oval in shape, 0.15m deep and 0.8m long. F3 was only visible in section, and was 0.3m deep and 0.7m wide.



Photograph 2 Deeper excavation of Trench A at north-west end, looking north-east.

Trench B

Trench B consisted of trenches totalling approximately 47m long by 0.5m wide and 0.8m deep, along with two holes for septic tanks. These were c 2.3m by c 2m and 2.3m deep. Topsoil (L1, 0.2m thick) sealed subsoil (L5, 0.4m thick) which covered natural (L4, from c 0.6m bcgl). No archaeological features were present.



Photograph 3 Trench B from north-west end, looking south-east.



Photograph 4 Trench C representative section, looking roughly west.

Trench C

Trenching within the courtyard totalled c 74m in length, were between 0.4-0.8m wide, and reached depths of at least 2m. The concrete courtyard sealed c 1m of modern made-ground with natural (L4) identified beneath. Natural (L4) was seen from c 1m deep. Full measurements could not be taken due to unsafe working conditions. No archaeological features were noted.



Photograph 5 Excavation in Trench C, looking roughly north.



Photograph 6 Excavation in Trench C, looking roughly north-east.

Trench D

Trench D totalled c 19m in length, was 0.5m wide, and between 0.4 and 0.8m deep. The connecting soakaway was 1m by 1m and 2.7-3m deep. Topsoil (L1, 0.25m thick) covered a layer of make-up (L3, 0.3m thick) with natural sealed beneath (L4, from c 0.65m bcgl). No archaeological features were present.



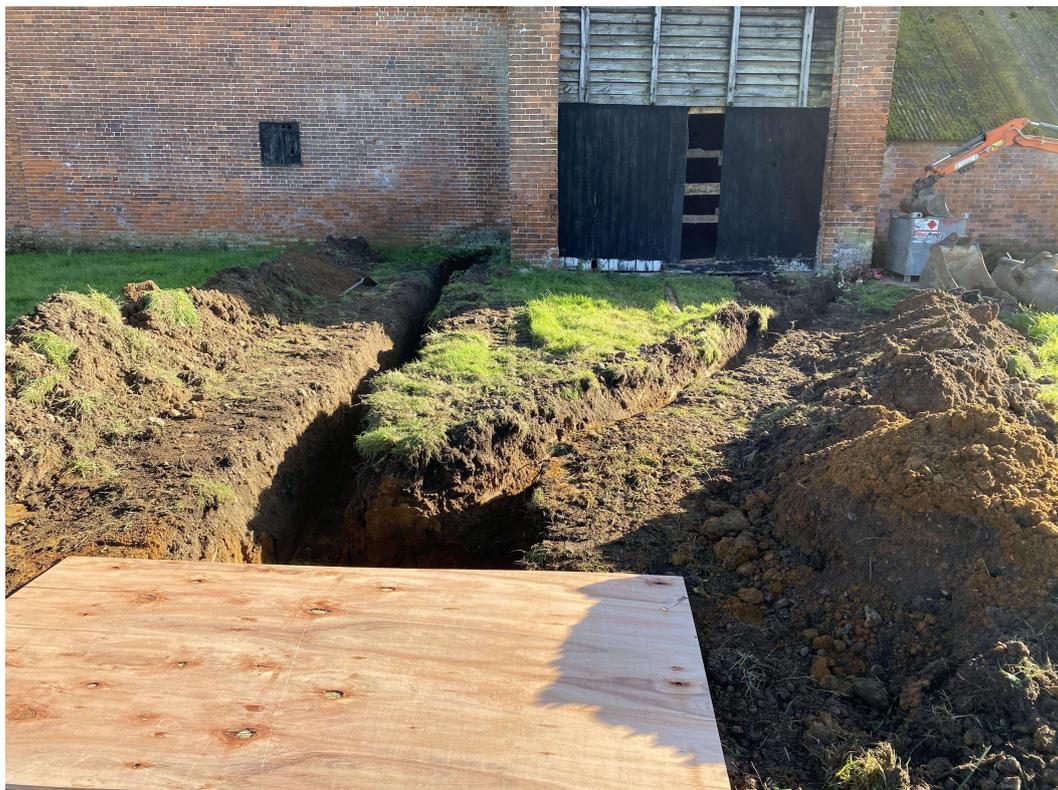
Photograph 7 Trench D, looking south-east.

Trench E

Trench E totalled c 18m in length, was 0.5m wide, and between 0.4 to 0.8m deep. The connecting soakaway was 1m by 1m, and 2.7-3m deep. Topsoil (L1, 0.25m thick) covered a stony band (L2, 0.15m thick) which sealed make-up layer L3 (0.3m thick). Natural (L4) was identified at c 0.65m bcgl. Pit/tree-throw F1 was recorded in section. It had an uneven base and steep edges, and was 0.6m wide and between 0.2-0.3m deep.

Trench F

The last trench totalled c 35m in length, and was between 0.4-0.5m wide and c 0.6m deep. The two associated soakaways were c 2m by c 3.3m and 2.3m deep. Excavations cut through concrete and modern debris which sealed natural (L4, from c 0.8m deep). Remains of a partial brick foundation (F4) was found at the east end of the trench, likely in a northwest-southeast orientation. It is at least 1m wide and 0.3m thick.



Photograph 8 Trench E, looking south-east.



Photograph 9 Excavation of Trench F from south-east end, looking north-west.



Photograph 10 North-west soakaway in Trench F, looking roughly north.



Photograph 11 F4 section, looking roughly north.

A full context list can be seen in Appendix 1.

6 Finds

6.1 Ceramic and Pottery finds

by Dr. Matthew Loughton

The watching brief uncovered a small assemblage of pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) of 20 sherds weighing 1,650g with an EVE of 0.05 (Table 1). CBM accounts for the bulk of this material by sherd count and by sherd weight. Pottery and CBM was recovered from two features and two layers (Table 2).

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
Pottery	3	73	24	0.05
CBM	17	1,577	93	-
Total	20	1,650	83	0.05

Table 1 Details on the main types of ceramics and pottery.

Context	Description	No.	Weight (g)	MSW (g)	EVE
F1	Pit/tree throw	4	87	22	0.00
F4	Brick foundation	3	634	211	0.00
L1	Topsoil	6	472	79	0.05
L6	?Makeup	7	457	65	0.00
Total		20	1,650	83	0.05

Table 2 Quantities of pottery by features and layers.

All the pottery consisted of sherds of post-medieval red earthenwares (Fabric F40), including a large bowl/pancheon (EVE: 0.05) which came from the topsoil L1.

The CBM consists of a variety of medieval, post-medieval and modern material. Modern brick fragments were recovered from pit/tree throw F1 and wall foundation F4, while a sherd of unidentifiable modern CBM was recovered from topsoil L1. Medieval/post-medieval peg-tile was recovered from F1, L1 and L6. Finally, L6 contained a fragment of nib-tile (NT) dating from the 12th century onwards.

Table 3 summarises the dating evidence for the contexts which produced dateable ceramic finds. Most of the features and layers are modern while L6 could date to the medieval/post-medieval period. None of the pottery or ceramic finds were retained.

Context	Feature type	Post-Roman	CBM	Overall date approx.
F1	Pit/tree throw	-	BR PT	19th century
F4	Brick foundation	-	BR	19th-20th century
L1	Topsoil	F40 (large bowl/pancheon)	PT Unidentified modern CBM	Modern
L6	?Makeup	-	PT NT	Medieval/post-medieval

Table 3 Approximate dates for the individual features and layers.

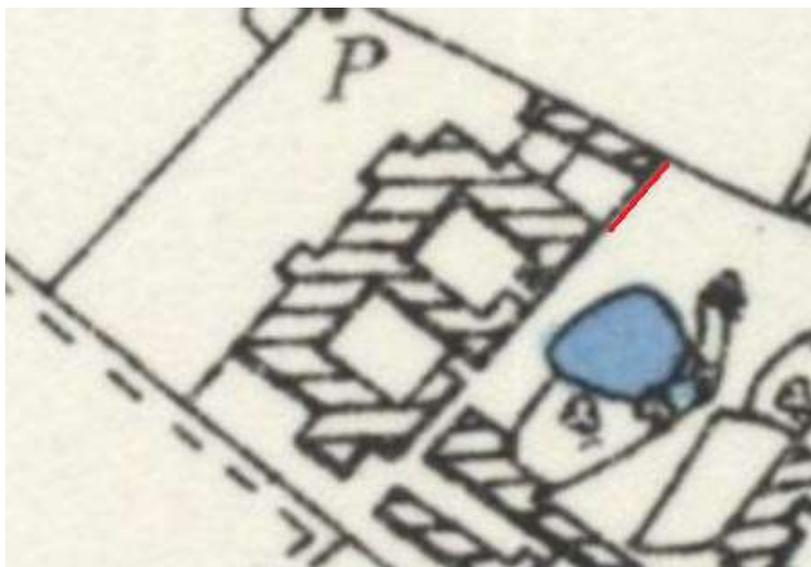
6.2 Miscellaneous finds

by Laura Pooley

A modern iron bolt head and nail were recovered from L1 (finds nos. 1 and 6 respectively). Both have been discarded.

7 Conclusion

Archaeological monitoring at the barns at Beaumont Hall resulted in four features, two undated tree-throws and a modern pit/tree-throw and a modern wall foundation. The possible wall foundation (F4) appears to correspond to a wall as seen in Map 1 from 1888-1913 (Map 1), highlighted in red. The nib-tile from L6 indicates activity at the development site from the medieval period, as mentioned in the Archaeological Background. The mix of periods in layers are unsurprising and corresponds with agricultural activity and the active past of Beaumont Hall from the past 400 years.



Map 1 Map of Beaumont Hall from 1888-1913, showing a former wall (underlined in red) which seems to correspond with F4.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks David Allison of Stone Crest Homes Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman and carried out by M Seehra and N Pryke. Figures were prepared by S Veasey and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

9 References

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

- | | | |
|------------------|-------|---|
| Andrews, D | 2021 | <i>Beaumont Hall Barns, Beaumont-cum-Mose: Heritage Statement</i> |
| Brown, D | 2011 | <i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i> |
| CAT | 2021 | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological monitoring on barns at Beaumont Hall, Church Lane, Thorpe Le Soken, Essex, CO16 0AZ</i> by E Holloway |
| CIfA | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> . Revised June 2020 |
| CIfA | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> . Updated October 2020 |
| CIfA | 2014c | <i>Code of Conduct</i> . Revised October 2019 |
| ECCPS | 2021 | <i>Brief for Historic Building Recording and Archaeological Monitoring at Beaumont Hall Clacton</i> by T O'Connor |
| Historic England | 2016 | <i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i> |
| 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) |
| MHCLG | 2019 | <i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. |

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find.
ECCPS	Essex County Council Planning Services
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) 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
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of Archaeological Investigation S , http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
ws	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1751)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (plan/sections)

Site digital photos and log

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1751)

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The 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 reference number TSBH21.

Distribution list

David Allison, Stone Crest Homes Ltd
Teresa O'Connor, Essex County Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 14/12/21

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Finds No.	Context type	Description	Date
L1	1, 3, 6	Topsoil	Soft/friable moist medium grey/brown loamy silt	Modern
L2	-	Stony band	Friable medium grey/brown sandy silt and inclusions of: stone 95%	Undated
L3	-	Make-up	Soft/friable light/medium grey/brown sandy silt with brick flecks	Modern
L4	-	Natural	Firm medium yellow/orange sandy clay	Post-glacial
L5	-	Subsoil, leached	Friable dry/moist light/medium grey/brown sandy silt	Undated
L6	-	?Make-up	Firm moist medium grey/brown clay with iron panning	Medieval/ post-medieval
F1	2	Pit/tree-throw	Soft dry/moist medium/dark grey/brown sandy silt and inclusions of: stone 1%	Modern
F2	-	Tree-throw	Friable dry medium grey/brown loamy silt	Undated
F3	-	Tree-throw	Friable dry medium grey/brown loamy silt	Undated
F4	4	Wall foundation	-	Modern

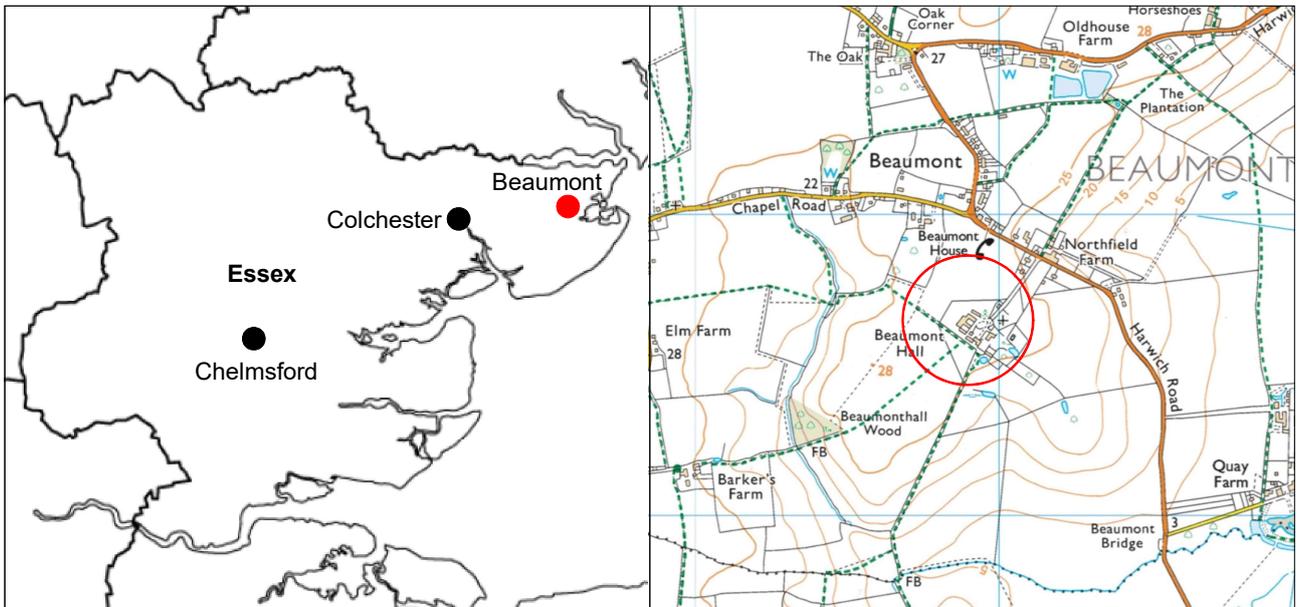


Fig 1 Site location (buildings for conversion coloured light blue).



Fig 2 Results.

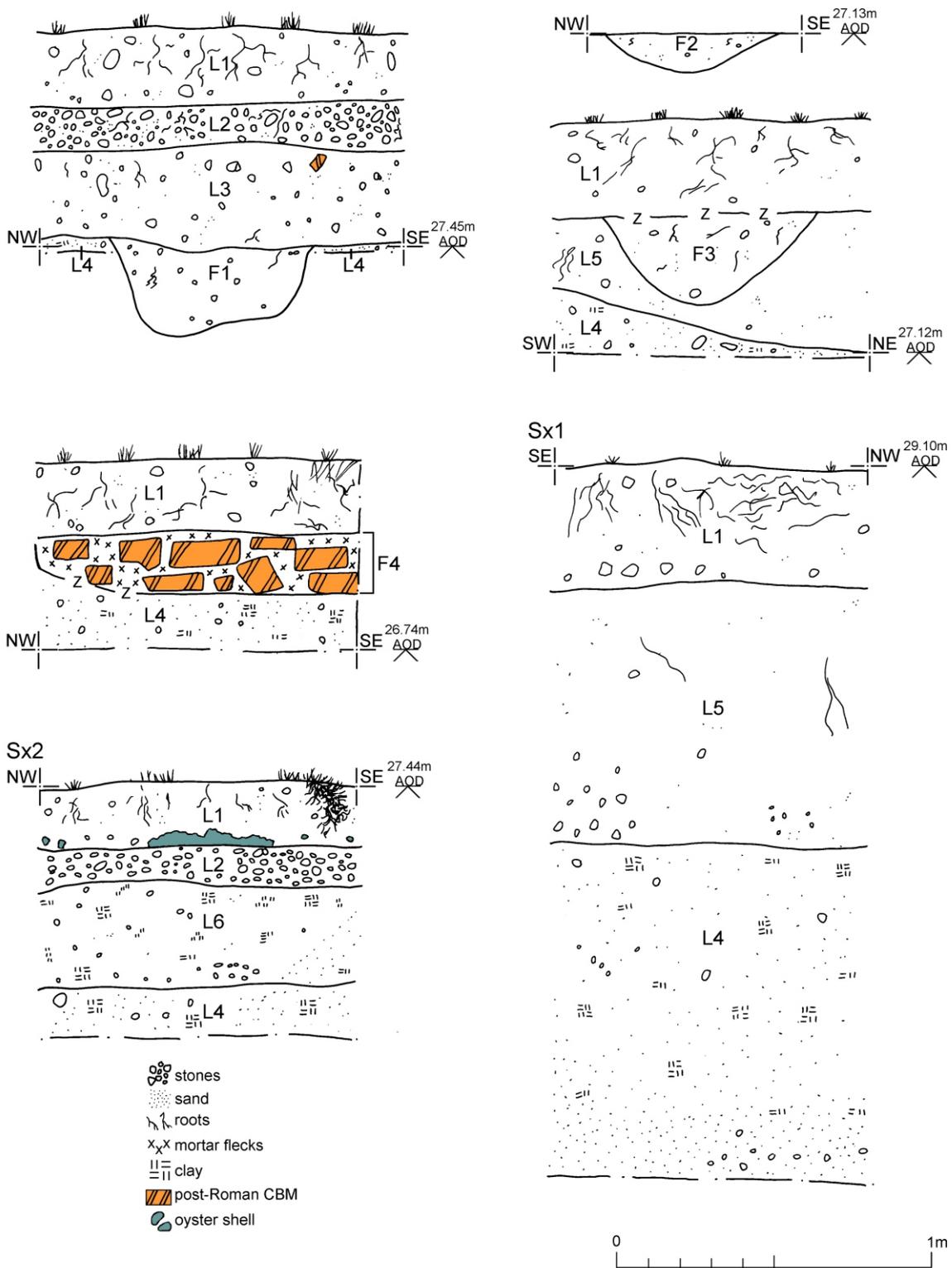


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

Summary for colchest3-427895

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-427895
Project Name	Archaeological monitoring at Beaumont Hall, Church Lane, Thorpe Le Soken, Essex, CO16 0AZ
Activity type	WATCHING BRIEF
Project Identifier(s)	2020/07L
Planning Id	19/01346/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	01-Nov-2021 - 04-Nov-2021
Location	Beaumont Hall, Church Lane, Thorpe Le Soken, Essex NGR : TM 17970 24560 LL : 51.8769864209557, 1.16527681667121 12 Fig : 617970,224560
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Tendring Parish : Beaumont-cum-Moze
Project Methodology	A total of 628m2 of trenching was machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. There were five areas monitored, and they are as follows: the road (Trench A), soakaways in the piggery (Trench F), soakaways to the northwest (Trenches D and E), septic tanks to the south (Trench B) and trenching within the courtyard (Trench C).
Project Results	This was not collected in OASIS IV when this record was originally created
Keywords	
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Physical Archive - to be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum Service (Colchester Collection) Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive