

# Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1907  
issued March 2023**

**Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to  
Corner Cottage, Banters Lane, Great Leighs,  
Essex, CM3 1NT: February 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/01s  
ECC code: GLCC23**

**Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to  
Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Great Leighs,  
Essex, CM3 1NT: February 2023**

**NGR: TL 73540 18200 (centre)**

**Planning ref.: 22/01726/FUL**

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**ECC code: GLCC23  
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**report prepared by Ben Holloway**

**fieldwork by Ben Holloway with  
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**commissioned by the landowner**

|                                  |               |                         |
|----------------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land adjacent to Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Great Leighs, Essex in advance of the construction of four new dwellings. The site lies to the east of the Main Road, which follows the route of the Roman road linking Braintree and Chelmsford. Numerous historic buildings dating to the late medieval and post-medieval periods lie within the vicinity of the site. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, only four undated pits and a modern tree-throw were uncovered.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land adjacent to Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Great Leighs, Essex on 16th-17th February 2023. The work was commissioned by the landowner, and took place in advance of the construction of a development of four new dwellings.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor 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 2021).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation at Land adjacent Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Gt Leighs* written by Mark Baister and detailing the required archaeological work (ECCPS 2023), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2023).

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 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 includes extracts of the ECC Brief (ECCPS 2023), CAT report archives and Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The proposed development is located in an archaeologically-sensitive area. The site lies some 300m east of Main Road, which follows the route of the Roman road linking Braintree and Chelmsford (EHER 6057), and it is possible that Roman remains associated with this historic thoroughfare may exist within the vicinity. BanTERS Lane is also a historic road. First depicted cartographically on Chapman and André's map of Essex, compiled in 1777, it likely has its origins in the medieval period, and there is a possibility that archaeological remains relating to medieval or post-medieval occupation lie along the street frontage.

BanTERS Lane extends southwards from the site to Gubbions Hall, a Grade II listed, 17th-century timber-framed house (EHER 5962) surrounded by a medieval moated enclosure (EHER 5961; NHLE 1016802), which lies some 420m south south-east of the development area. In 2017, CAT carried out a trial-trenched evaluation at Gubbions Hall, but no significant archaeological remains were encountered (CAT Report 1130; EHER 49007).

Within a 1km radius of the site are numerous historic buildings dating to the late medieval and post-medieval periods, all of which are Grade II listed:

- North Whitehouse Farmhouse, timber-framed, c 525m to the ESE (EHER 30472);

- Hope Cottage, a timber-framed house dating to around 1600 (EHER 30480) and Half Thatch, a 17th-century timber-framed house with an 18th-century extension (EHER 39330), c 560m to the SW;
- Moulsham Hall, 600m to the NW, timber-framed and plastered house built in the 17th century with further alterations made in the 18th century (EHER 30493);
- Blue Barns Farmhouse, a 16th-century timber-framed farmhouse, 620m to the SE;
- Balloch Myle and Norrells, two 17th- or 18th-century timber-framed cottages, 670m to the SW (EHER 30479);
- Cherry Tree Cottage, 18th- or early 19th-century timber-framed cottage, 770m to the SW (EHER 30478); and
- Bateman's Farmhouse, late 15th- or early 16th-century timber-framed, 820m to the ENE (EHER 27573).

A small cluster of Grade II listed buildings are located c 380m SW:

- Walnut Tree Cottage, an 18th- or 19th-century timber-framed cottage (EHER 30481);
- Apple Tree Cottage and Brenswood Cottage, an early 19th-century timber-framed house range, now divided into two dwellings (EHER 30482); and
- Champions, a 17th-century timber-framed house (EHER 30483).

A small cluster of Grade II listed timber-framed houses are also located c 700m to the SE (The Cottage, Jasmine Cottage, Rose Cottage and Millar's Cottage) all of which date to the 16th or 17th centuries apart from Millar's Cottage, which dates to the 18th or 19th century (EHER 30471; EHER 30468; EHER 30469; EHER 30470).

The development site also lies in the midst of numerous cropmark complexes. Linear cropmarks likely indicating the presence of post-medieval woodland boundaries are located immediately to the north of the site, south-west of Bushy Wood (EHER 13951). Cropmarks of field boundaries depicted on early Ordnance Survey mapping of the area are situated at Essex Show Ground, some 600m north north-west of the site (EHER 13952). A further cropmark, interpreted as part of an enclosure, lies next to Essex Show Ground, 400m to the west north-west (EHER 9979). Further cropmarks of linear features have been observed south of Shackles Farm, 650m east south-east of the site (EHER 45495), while cropmarks of probable post-medieval field boundaries are located at Chase Side Nurseries, 800m south-west of the site (EHER 13950), and of linear features and field boundaries at Mill Lane, 720m to the south south-east (EHER 17198).

## 4 Aims

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

## 5 Results (Figs 2-3)

Four trial-trenches (1.8m wide) were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Trench T1 was 20m long (divided into two to maintain site access), trenches T2 and T3 12m long, and trench T4 15m long.

Site stratigraphy was modern topsoil (L4, 0.2-0.25m thick) above a modern buried soil layer (L2, 0.25-0.35m thick) which sealed natural (L3, encountered at a depth of 0.55-0.60m below current ground level). In the north of T1b and the west T2, topsoil was replaced by a compacted gravel and associated sub-base (0.3m thick) from an old driveway/turning head.

There were no archaeological remains in trench T2.

### Trench 1a & 1b

There were three undated pits in Trench 1a: F4 (0.43m by 0.34m, 0.1m deep), F5 (0.29m by 0.23m wide, 0.15m deep), and F7 (0.58m diameter, 0.15m deep). Feature F6 in Trench 1b consisted of an area of modern disturbance which contained a large amount of root debris and

re-deposited natural and topsoil. Plastic fragments were also observed in the fill. The client stated that a large tree stump had been removed from this location in the mid 1990s.



**Photograph 1** Trench 1, looking north-west.

### **Trench 3**

Pit F1 was 0.67m by at least 0.5m and 0.15m deep. It contained no datable material with evidence of rooting on its southern edge.



**Photograph 2** Trench 3, looking north-east.

#### Trench 4

Pit F2 was 0.45m by 0.5m and 0.05m deep. No archaeological material was recovered from the fill.



Photograph 3 Trench 4, looking south.

#### 6 Finds

No archaeological material was recovered from the excavated features. Modern debris, concrete and plastic were observed in L1, L4 and in the backfill of F6. Coal flecks were observed in L2. None of this material was retained.

#### 7 Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Corner Cottage, Banters Lane, Great Leighs revealed five undated pits. The profiles and evidence of rooting suggest that they are small tree-throws or similar features associated with the removal of shrubs/plants in garden of the property. An area of modern disturbance in Trench 6 represents the removal of a tree stump in the mid 1990s and gravel in T1b/T2 the remains of an old driveway/turning head.

#### 8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank the landowner for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, A Wightman and L Pooley, with fieldwork carried out by B Holloway with A Smith and A Parker. Figures were compiled by B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Mark Baister.

#### 9 References

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

|                          |       |  |
|--------------------------|-------|--|
| Brown, N & Glazebrook, J | 2000  | <i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8) |
| CAT                      | 2023  | <i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>  |
| CAT                      | 2023  | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for an evaluation by trial-trenching at Land adjacent to Corner Cottage' BanTERS Lane, Gt Leighs, Essex, CM3 1NT</i>    |
| CIfA                     | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation.</i> Revised October 2020   |
| CIfA                     | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Revised October 2020                |
| CIfA                     | 2014c | <i>Code of Conduct.</i> Revised October 2022   |
| ECC                      | 2006  | <i>Chelmsford Borough Historic Environment Characterisation Project.</i> Essex County Council Historic Environment   |
| ECCPS                    | 2022  | <i>Brief for Archaeological evaluation and excavation at and adjacent to Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Gt Leighs,</i> by M Baister                         |
| Gurney, D                | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14)                                      |
| Historic England         | 2015  | <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                    | 2021  | <i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.  |

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 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                                       |
| ECC           | Essex County Council   |
| 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 (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         | 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> |
| post-medieval | from c AD 1500 to c 1800   |
| Roman         | the period from AD 43 to c AD 410  |
| section       | (abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s  |
| wsI           | written scheme of investigation  |

## 11 Archive deposition

This project falls within the CIfA definition of a sterile project (<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>) and therefore the preserved archive will take the form of a single digital document that incorporates all the relevant elements from the project. This document will be uploaded to OASIS and released into the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) library, from where it will be curated by the ADS. The single digital document will include the report, brief, WSI, photographs, and original site data (eg context sheets, section drawings).

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**Distribution list:**

The landowner  
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

## Appendix 1 Context list

| Context | Trench | Finds no. | Feature / layer type    | Description  | Date         |
|---------|--------|-----------|-------------------------|--|--------------|
| L1      | T2     | -         | Gravel/<br>hardstanding | Compact gravels, associated crushed concrete sub-base.       | Modern       |
| L2      | All    | -         | Buried soil             | Friable, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay with coal flecks | Modern       |
| L3      | All    | -         | Natural                 | Friable, moist light yellow/brown clay                       | Post-glacial |
| L4      | All    | -         | Topsoil                 | Friable, moist dark grey/brown silty-clay with CBM flecks    | Modern       |
|         |        |           |                         |  |              |
| F1      | 2      | -         | Pit                     | Friable, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay                  | Undated      |
| F2      | 4      | -         | Pit                     | Friable, moist medium/dark grey/brown silty-clay             | Undated      |
| F3      | VOID   | VOID      | VOID                    | VOID   | VOID         |
| F4      | T1a    | -         | Pit                     | Friable, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay                  | Undated      |
| F5      | T1a    | -         | Pit                     | Friable, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay                  | Undated      |
| F6      | T1b    | -         | Pit                     | Friable, moist dark grey/brown silty-clay                    | Modern       |
| F7      | T1a    | -         | Pit                     | Friable, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay                  | Undated      |

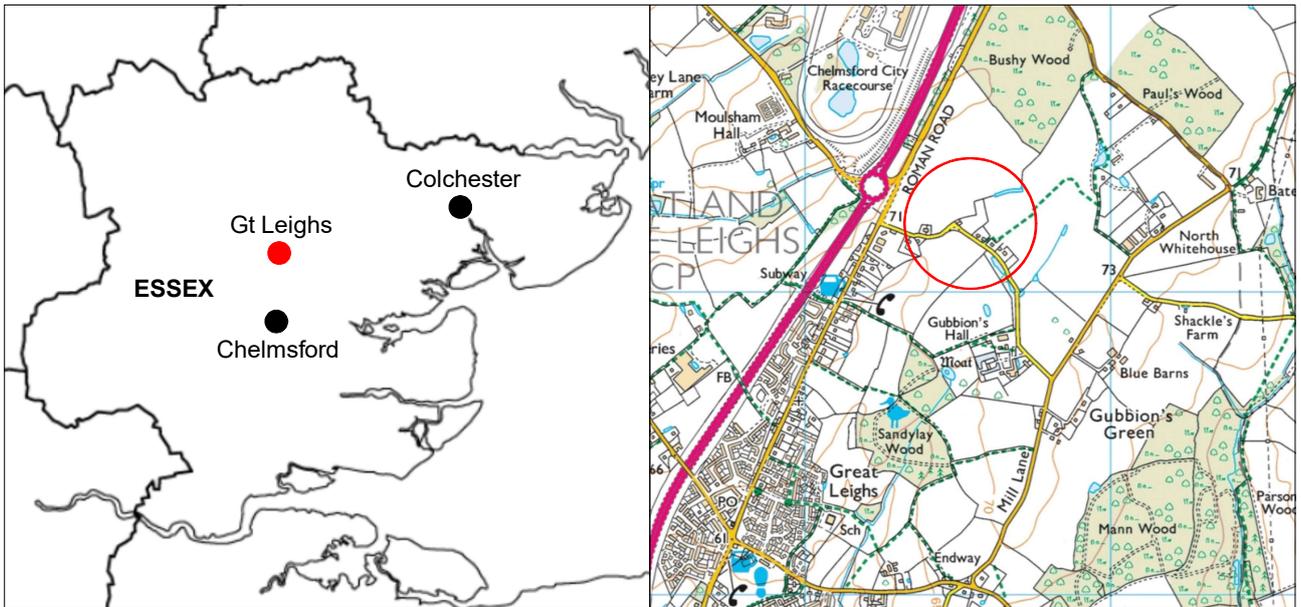
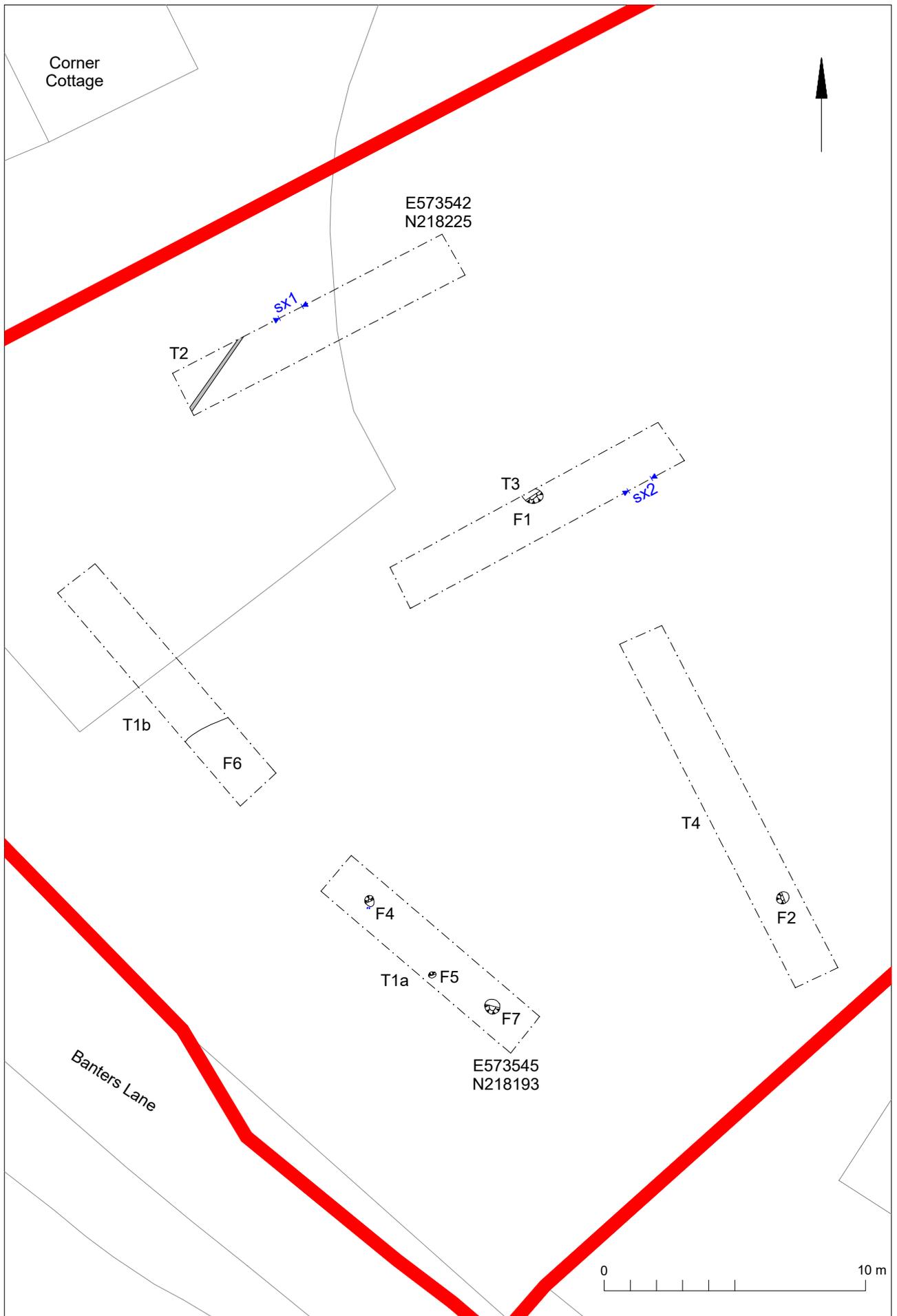


Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).



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Fig 2 Evaluation results (modern service in grey).

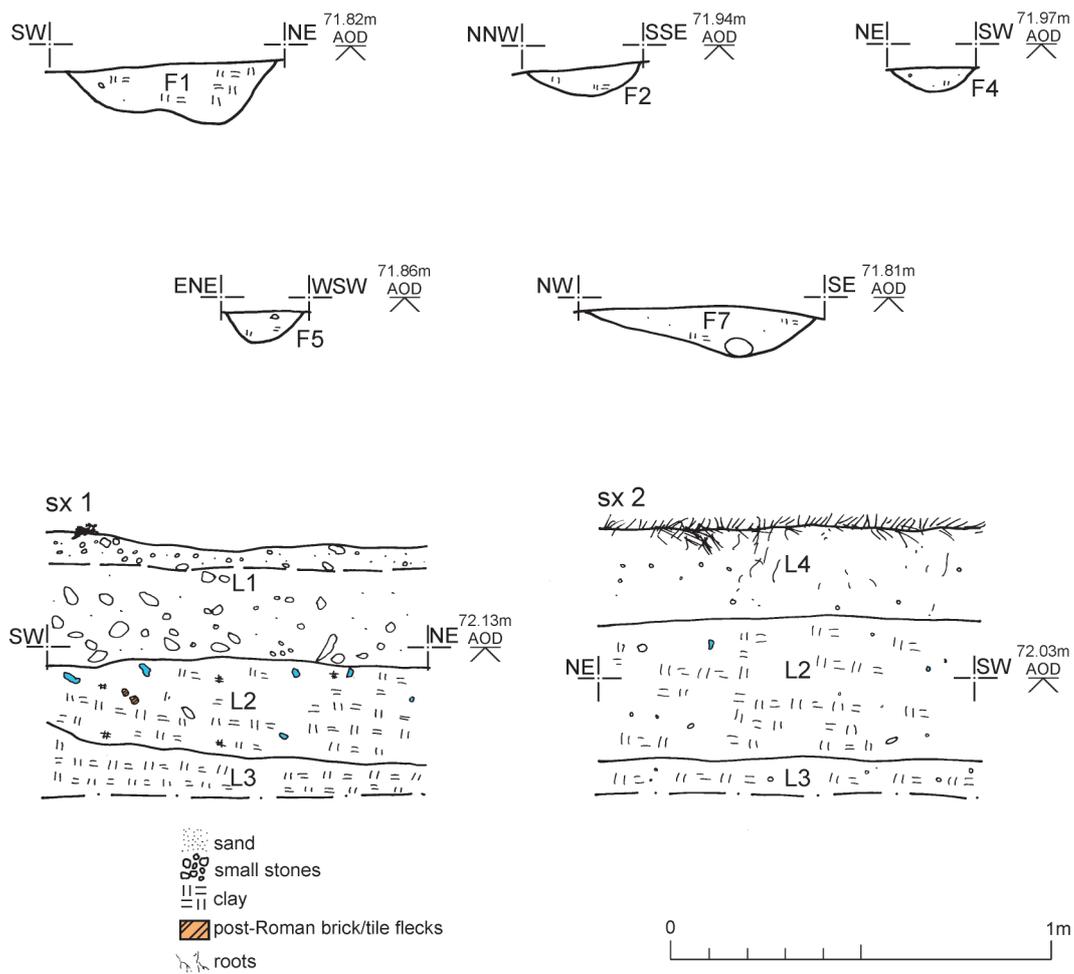


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

## Summary for colchest3-512803

|                                   |  |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| OASIS ID (UID)                    | colchest3-512803   |
| Project Name                      | Archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Great Leighs, Essex, CM3 1NT   |
| Sitename                          | Land adjacent to Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Great Leighs, Essex, CM3 1NT  |
| Activity type                     | Evaluation   |
| Project Identifier(s)             | 2023/01s   |
| Planning Id                       | 22/01726/FUL   |
| Reason For Investigation          | Planning: Post determination   |
| Organisation Responsible for work | Colchester Archaeological Trust  |
| Project Dates                     | 16-Feb-2023 - 17-Feb-2023  |
| Location                          | Land adjacent to Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Great Leighs, Essex, CM3 1NT<br>NGR : TL 73540 18200<br>LL : 51.8354461953265, 0.517362926389343<br>12 Fig : 573540,218200  |
| Administrative Areas              | Country : England<br>County : Essex<br>District : Chelmsford<br>Parish : Great and Little Leighs   |
| Project Methodology               | Archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) carried out as per the conditions specified in the project brief and wsi.  |
| Project Results                   | An archaeological evaluation (four trial-trenches) was carried out on land adjacent to Corner Cottage, BanTERS Lane, Great Leighs, Essex in advance of the construction of four new dwellings. The site lies to the east of the Main Road, which follows the route of the Roman road linking Braintree and Chelmsford. Numerous historic buildings dating to the late medieval and post-medieval periods lie within the vicinity of the site. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area only four undated pits and a modern tree-throw were uncovered. |
| Keywords                          |  |
| Funder                            |  |
| HER                               | Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD   |
| Person Responsible for work       | B, Holloway  |
| HER Identifiers                   | HER Monument No - GLCC23   |
| Archives                          |  |