

Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1910
issued March 2023**

**Archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of
1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex CM9 5QW:
February 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/01q
ECC code: MD69**

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1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex CM9 5QW:
February 2023**

NGR: TL 84768 07066

Planning ref.: FUL/MAL/22/00626

**CAT project ref.: 2023/01q
CAT Report 1910**

**ECC code: MD69
OASIS id: colchest3-512684**

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fieldwork by Harvey Furniss with Alexander Smith

**commissioned by
Graham Holdgate, Moreland Limited**

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out on land to the rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex, in advance of the construction of a new dwelling. Maldon's Anglo-Saxon *burh* ditch was projected to cross the site, but no trace of this was present within the evaluation trench. The evaluation did, however, reveal a prehistoric ditch that may relate to the earlier settlement of Maldon, and an undated post-hole.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land to the rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex on 22nd February. The work was commissioned by Graham Holdgate of Moreland Limited, and took place in advance for the construction of a new dwelling with associated landscaping, parking and other groundworks.

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 the *Brief for trial trenching and excavation at land rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon* written by Maria Medlycott 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 where groundworks might potentially impact on remains relating to the origins and development of Maldon. The town is first documented in the historical record of AD 913, when Edward the Elder stationed part of his army and fleet here during his war against the Danes. In 916, Edward ordered that a *burh* (Anglo-Saxon fortification or fortified settlement) be constructed at Maldon and, during the following year, it was besieged by East Anglian Danes, who were repelled. It has been postulated that the *burh* was constructed at the site of an ancient earthworks, either prehistoric or Roman in date. Nothing is known about its internal arrangement. It is now largely obliterated and its precise location has not been identified, although London Road seems to align with two of its former entrances. The town of Maldon subsequently developed around the east gate of the *burh*, and a small market was established at the crest of the hill slope (Brown 1986; EHER 7718, EHER 7766). The curving layout of Silver Street and the top of the High Street has led to speculation that an enclosure was constructed here during the Late Anglo-Saxon period with a ditch and bank extending along this line and the *burh* bank forming its rear defence. The King's Hall and possibly a mint may have been located within this enclosure (EHER 18787).

The development site itself is located within the area of the *burh*, the ditch of which is projected to pass through the site. Archaeological investigations conducted at 9 London Road in the 1980s what may have identified this ditch. However, no trace of the latter was observed during archaeological monitoring at the same site in 2016, although patches of compacted dirty gravel

possibly forming a metalled yard or street surface were seen, along with three post-medieval pits cutting this surface (EHER 16858) (CAT Report 993).

Excavations at the former Youth Hostel site, some 300m west northwest of the present site, revealed evidence for Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age settlement, perhaps relating to an earlier defensive structure on the hilltop (EHER 7768-7771). Prehistoric features were also identified at 20-22 London Road (EHER 47134) along with medieval and modern remains. Excavations around Gate Street have similarly revealed features and finds from the Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern periods (EHER 14547-9). However, no significant archaeological remains were encountered during monitoring at 40 London Road (EHER 48091). In 2019, CAT monitored groundworks in advance of a new rear extension at 34a London Road, approximately 140m west northwest of the present site. The excavations revealed three brick wells and an associated pipe structure dating from the mid 19th to the early 20th centuries (CAT Report 1418).

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; Appendix 1)

A trial-trench, 10m long and 1.8m wide, was excavated through topsoil (L1, c 0.3m thick), subsoil (L2, c 0.5m thick) and into natural (L3). A layer of demolition material (L4, c 0.21m thick) was observed at the northern end of the trench between L1 and L2.



Photograph 1 Trench view, looking north north-east.

Ditch F1 (c 1.0m wide by 0.34m deep) was on a north-east to south-west alignment at the northern end of the trench. Finds from the ditch consisted of prehistoric pottery sherds, a fragment of worked flint blade, a piece of burnt flint and two pieces of animal bone, one of which

had cut marks. After excavation and recording, a wider slot was excavated across F1 to confirm that this was actually a discrete feature and not a layer within the backfill of the burh ditch.

Undated post-hole F2 (0.27m in diameter by 0.06m deep) was located on the southern edge of ditch F1.



Photograph 2 Ditch F1, looking south-west.



Photograph 3 Post-hole F2, looking north-east.

6 Finds

6.1 Pottery

by Dr Matthew Loughton

Ditch F1 (finds no. 1 and from sample no. 1) produced a small assemblage of prehistoric pottery with a total of four sherds with a weight of 27g. There was two sherds (18g) of possible Bronze Age handmade flint-tempered (fabric HMF) pottery, one sherd (6g) of handmade sand and grog-tempered (fabric HMSG) pottery, and one possible sherd (3g) of handmade sand-tempered (fabric HMS?) pottery from a fineware jar or bowl with an everted rim (EVE:0.03) which could date to the Iron Age.

6.2 Animal bone

by Alec Wade

The animal bone assemblage amounted to just two fragments, both recovered from prehistoric ditch F1 (sample no 1). One piece was part of a cattle scapula and the other a fragment from either a sheep or a goat humerus. Both pieces were in fair to poor condition with some loss of surface detail.

No. of pieces	Weight (g)	Species	Comments
1	50	Bos taurus (cattle)	Fragment of a right scapula with five (possibly six) short cut or chop marks on the medial side of the posterior border.
1	6	Medium-sized mammal (sheep/goat)	Fragment of distal left humerus.

Table 1 Catalogue of animal bone from F1 (sample no.1).

Five or six short parallel cut or chop marks were present on the medial side of the posterior border of the cattle scapula fragment. These varied in length from five to thirteen millimetres and were approximately equidistant from each other, covering an area 40mm across. The purpose or activity related to the creation of these marks is not definitive as they are generally not typical of either butchery practice or bone working.



Photograph 4 The cut or chop marks on the cattle scapula.

6.3 Flint & burnt flint

by Laura Pooley and Adam Wightman

Sample <1> from ditch F1 produced fragments of worked (1.8g) and burnt flint (22.4g). The worked flint is a proximal end of a tertiary blade with the distal end broken/snapped off. There is evidence of platform preparation prior to the removal of the blade from the core. There is no

retouch, but evidence of use-wear/edge-damage on both lateral edges. Could be Mesolithic in date, but more likely to date to the Early Neolithic.

7 Environmental assessment

by Bronagh Quinn

One sample (10L) was taken from the fill of ditch F1. The sample was floated by a trained member of CAT staff and the flot (of <0.1 litres in volume) was analysed by the author. Nomenclature for all plant remains is taken from Stace (2010).

The sample contained minimal environmental remains, with a single grain of suspected *Hordeum sp.* (barley), two grains of *Triticum sp.* (wheat) and a small amount of charcoal. All of the environmental material was preserved through charring. Such a small amount of environmental material suggests that this was residual and not part of a purposeful deposit.

In conclusion, the sample produced a very small amount of environmental remains with minimal significance to the overall interpretation of site. The presence of these remains could suggest further remains would be present if a later stage of excavation was to take place. It is recommended that further sampling should take place if more work is undertaken at this site.

8 Conclusion

Archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon revealed a prehistoric ditch and undated post-hole. It has been postulated that the Anglo-Saxon *burh* was constructed on the site of ancient earthworks, either of prehistoric or Roman date. Therefore the discovery of a prehistoric ditch on the site is significant, possibly providing evidence for a prehistoric settlement on which the *burh*'s layout was based. According to Paul Brown (Brown 1986), the Anglo-Saxon *burh* ditch is projected to pass through the current development area. However, there was no trace of the ditch or any other Anglo-Saxon remains within the evaluation trench.

9 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Graham Holdgate for commissioning the work. The project was managed by A Wightman and L Pooley, with fieldwork carried out by H Furniss with A Smith. Figures were compiled by C Lister, H Furniss, R Mathieson and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Maria Medlycott.

10 References

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

- | | | |
|--------------------------|-------|---|
| Baker, P & Worley, F | 2019 | <i>Animal bones and archaeology: recovery to archive</i> . Swindon: Historic England. |
| Binford, LR | 1981 | <i>Bones: ancient men and modern myths</i> . New York: Academic Press. |
| 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) |
| Brown, P | 1986 | <i>The Maldon Burh Jigsaw</i> |
| CAT | 2022 | <i>Health & Safety Policy</i> |
| CAT Report 993 | 2016 | <i>Archaeological monitoring and recording at 9 London Road, Maldon, Essex, CM9 6HD: July-August 2016</i> , by L Pooley |
| CAT Report 1418 | 2019 | <i>Archaeological monitoring at 34a London Road, Maldon, Essex, CM9 6HD: April 2019</i> , by E Hicks |
| 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 |
| ECCPS | 2023 | <i>Brief for trial trenching and excavation at Land rear of 1-3 Gate Street</i> , |

Gurney, D	2003	<i>Maldon</i> , by M Medlycott <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14)
Hillson, S	2016	<i>Mammal bones and teeth: an introductory guide to methods of identification</i> . Abingdon: Routledge.
Jacomet, S <i>et al.</i>	2006	<i>Identification of cereal remains from archaeological sites</i> . 2nd ed.
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	2021	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Schmid, E	1972	<i>Atlas of animal bones</i> . Amsterdam: Elsevier Publishing Company.
Stace, C	2010	<i>New Flora of the British Isles</i> . 3rd edition.

11 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c. 500 – 1066
Burh	an Anglo-Saxon fortification or fortified settlement
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
modern	period from cAD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	from c. AD 1500 to 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
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

12 Contents of archive

Finds: two small bags
Digital record
 CAT Report 1910
 ECCPS brief
 Digital photographs
 Site data
 Survey data

13 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 (finds) and the Archaeological Data Service (digital files).

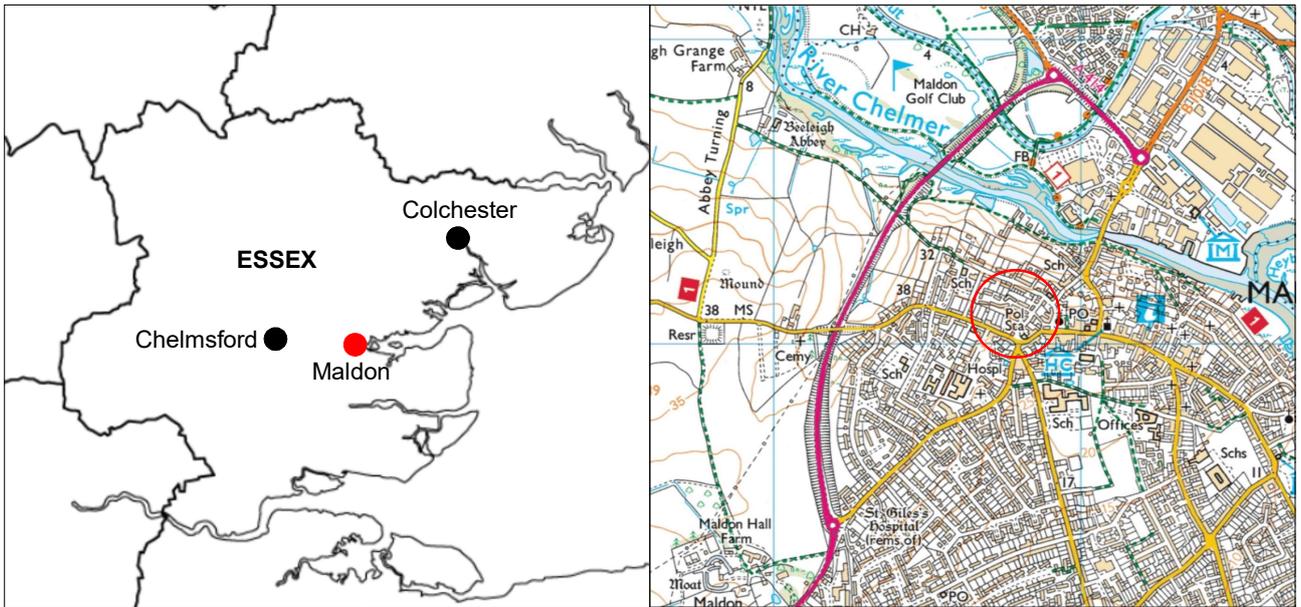
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Distribution list:

Graham Holdgate, Moreland Limited
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

Appendix 1 Context list

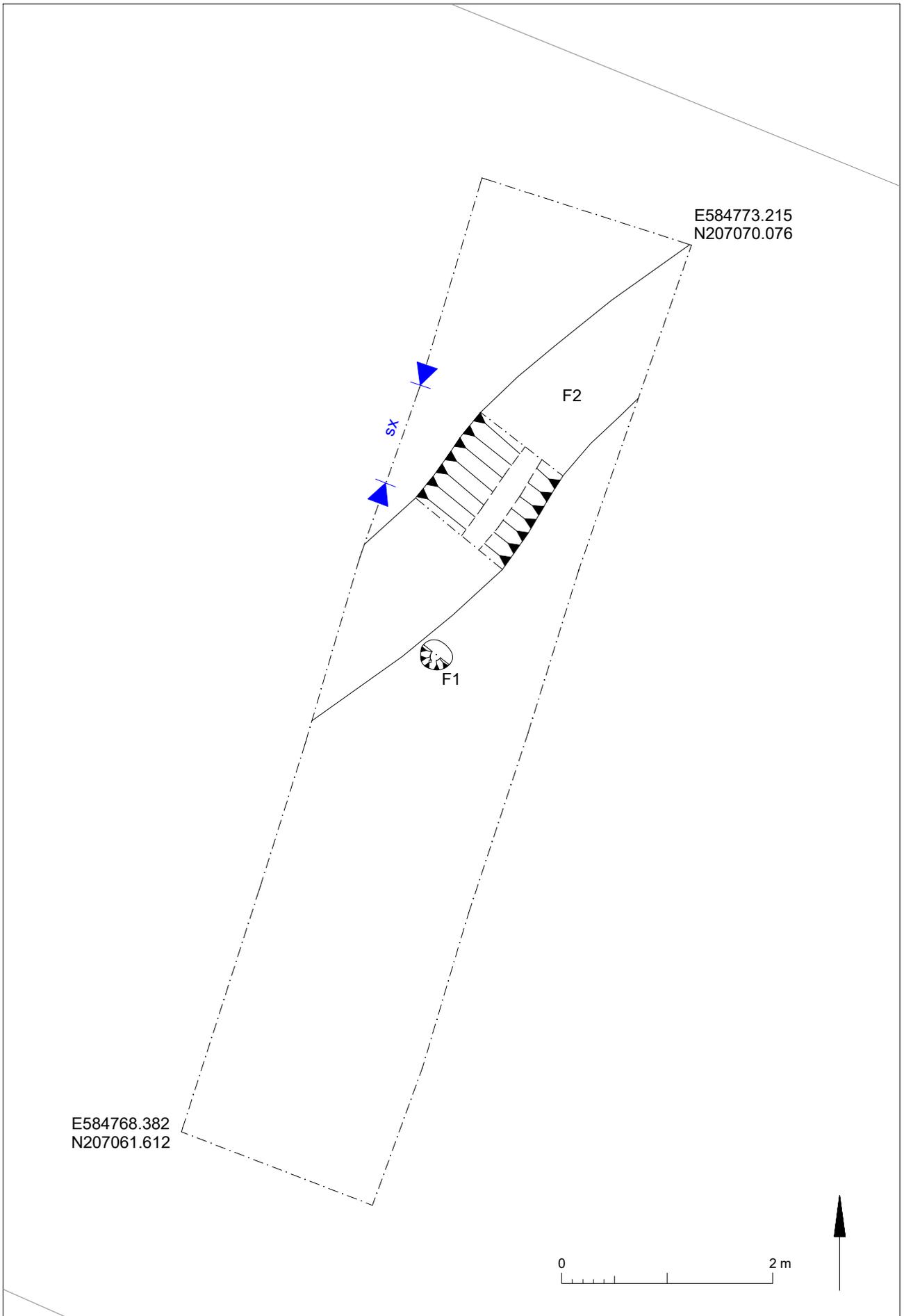
Context	Finds no.	Sample no.	Context type	Description	Date
L1	-	-	Topsoil	Friable, dark blueish-grey sandy silt with occasional stone inclusions with heavy rooting	Modern
L2	-	-	Buried topsoil	Friable, dark grey sandy-silt with occasional stone inclusions with infrequent rooting. Late post-medieval to modern blue china was present in the make-up of L2.	Post-medieval/ modern
L3	-	-	Natural	Compact, mid yellowish-grey gravel/firm, moist mid brownish-orange clay.	Post-glacial
L4	-	-	Demolition layer	Firm, mid orangey-brown mortar filled layer. Layer made up mostly of mortar and broken CBM pieces.	Post-medieval/ modern
F1	1	<1>	Ditch	Soft, dark blueish-grey sandy silt with infrequent stone inclusions. 0.28m (L) x 0.28m (W) x 0.07m (D)	Prehistoric
F2	-	-	Post-hole	Friable, moist mid to dark greyish-brown silty clay with occasional charcoal and frequent stones. >5.39m (L) x 1.05m (W) x 0.34m (D)	Undated



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

0 20 m



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Fig 2 Results.

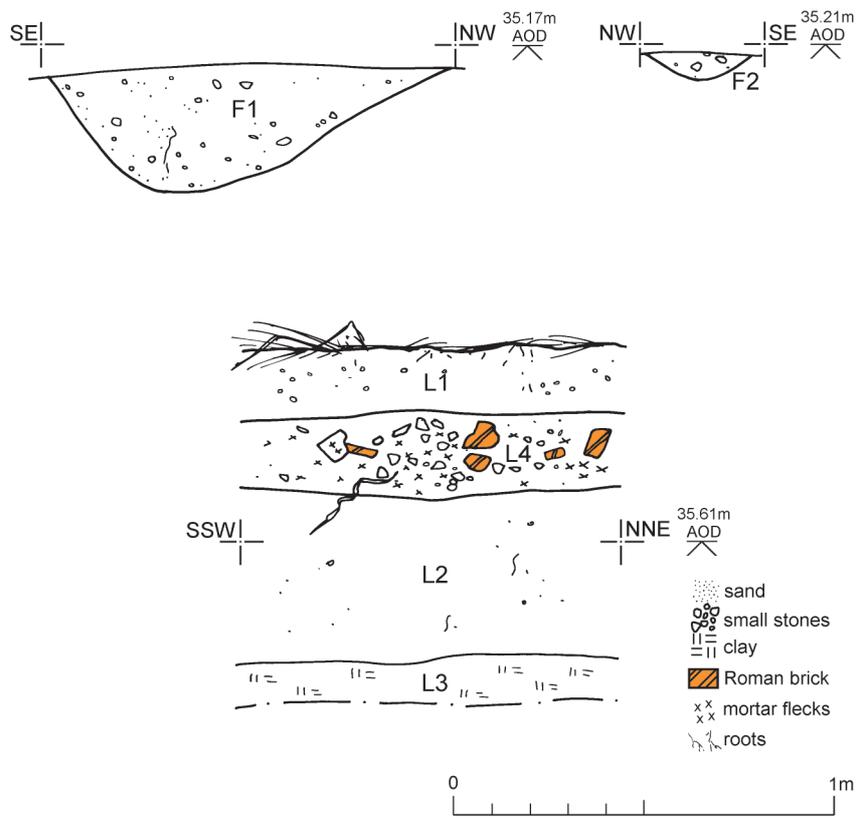


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

Summary for colchest3-512684

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-512684
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation at Land to the rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5QW
Sitename	Land to the rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5QW
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	2023/01q
Planning Id	FUL/MAL/22/00626
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	22-Feb-2023 - 22-Feb-2023
Location	Land to the rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5QW NGR : TL 84768 07066 LL : 51.7318511168461, 0.674217942752689 12 Fig : 584768,207066
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Maldon Parish : Maldon
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) carried out as specified in the project brief and wsi.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out on land to the rear of 1-3 Gate Street, Maldon, Essex, in advance of the construction of a new dwelling. Maldon's Anglo-Saxon burh ditch was projected to cross the site, but no trace of this was present within the evaluation trench. The evaluation did however, reveal a prehistoric ditch that may relate to the earlier settlement of Maldon, and an undated post-hole.
Keywords	Ditch - LATER PREHISTORIC - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	H, Furniss
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - MD69
Archives	Physical Archive, Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum Service (Colchester Collection); Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;