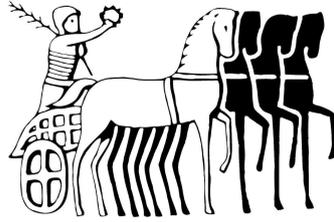


Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 2011
issued December 2023**

**Archaeological monitoring at Rivers Hall Farm, land
west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5TB:
December 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/10b
ECC code: ECC4827**

**Archaeological monitoring at Rivers Hall Farm, land
west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5TB:
December 2023**

NGR: TM 00564 34448 (centre)

Planning ref.: n/a

**CAT project ref.: 2023/10b
CAT Report 2011**

**ECC code: ECC4827
OASIS id: colchest3-519549**

report prepared by Dr Elliott Hicks

fieldwork by Ziya Eksen

**commissioned by Alex Moore de Luz (SCC)
on behalf of Suffolk County Council**

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Issued:	15th December 2023	

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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring took place at Rivers Hall Farm, land west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex during groundworks for the construction of six new foot drains and two large scrape areas to create shallow depressions to seasonally hold water for wildlife. The development site is located in the midst of cropmark complexes indicating the presence of Bronze Age round barrows or Iron Age enclosures. Despite lying in an archaeologically sensitive area, however, no archaeological features or material were encountered.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring undertaken by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Rivers Hall Farm, land west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex on 6th-7th December 2023. The work was commissioned by Alex Moore da Luz of Suffolk County Council and took place during groundworks for the construction of six new foot drains and two large scrape areas to create shallow depressions to seasonally hold water for wildlife.

In response to consultation with Colchester City Council Planning Services (CCCPS), the Colchester City Council Archaeological Advisor Richard Hoggett 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).

No brief for this project was issued by the CCCPS, but as the site has been identified as having a high potential for archaeological remains, it was recommended that archaeological monitoring of all groundworks should be carried out. A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in response to this recommendation and agreed with the CCCPS (CAT 2023b).

In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was undertaken in accordance with:

- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015),
- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2020a-b, 2022),
- East of England standards and frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- CAT Health and Safety Policy (CAT 2023a).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER/ECC numbers, which are accessible via Colchester Heritage Explorer (<https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/map>)).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) shows the bedrock geology of the site is comprised of Thanet formation and Lambeth group (clay, silt and sand with subsidiary flint, mudstone and sandstone) with superficial deposits of river terrace deposits 2 (sand and gravel, with local lenses of silt, clay or peat).

The site is located along the southern side of the River Stour in an area of rolling valley farmlands. Little archaeological work has been undertaken in the area but cropmarks indicate a landscape of historic agricultural systems (such as field boundaries and stock enclosures), and numerous ring-ditches which usually represent the ploughed out remains of Bronze Age round barrows or enclosures surrounding Iron Age settlements.

Cropmarks indicate the presence of ditches within the site and the area surrounding it. Approximately 155m south-west of the site are cropmarks of one large ring-ditch c 40m in

¹ British Geological Survey – <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>

diameter with four smaller ring-ditches each measuring c 14m in diameter which may represent a small Bronze Age cemetery (MCC9069). Cropmarks of two ring-ditches and a long ditch are located to the east of the site (MCC9067) while to its south-west further cropmarks indicate the presence of another large ring-ditch, ditches and a rectangular enclosure (MCC7230).

4 Aims

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

5 Results (Fig 2)

All groundworks were carried out by a mechanical excavator under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. The following groundworks were observed:

- a) trenches for foot drains, 313m long, 2m wide and 0.15-0.4m deep;
- b) two scrape areas totalling 573m² and 0.65-0.7m deep.

The trenches were cut through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.15-0.25m thick, soft, moist dark grey/brown silty-clay) into subsoil (L2, soft, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay with 1% stones). The scrape areas were cut through L1 and L2 into natural (L3, soft, wet light yellow/grey/brown silty-clay, encountered at a depth of c 0.4m below current ground level).

No archaeological features or material were observed.



Photograph 1 Foot drain – looking west north-west



Photograph 2 Scrape area – looking north-east

6 Finds

There were no finds.

7 Conclusion

Despite lying in an archaeologically sensitive area, no archaeological features or material were encountered during groundworks at this site. Three of the foot drains extend along two adjoining linear cropmarks; it is possible that these cropmarks denoted the presence of land disturbances which did not reach the natural geology.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Alex Moore da Luz and Suffolk County Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, A Wightman and L Pooley and carried out by Z Eksen. Figures were prepared by C Lister and E Hicks. The project was monitored for CCCPS by Dr Richard Hoggett.

9 References

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

Brown, D	2011	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
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	2023a	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2023b	<i>Written scheme of investigation for archaeological monitoring at Rivers Hall Farm, land west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5TB</i>
CIfA	2020a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> Published 2014, revised June 2020

CIfA	2020b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> . Published 2014, revised October 2020
CIfA	2022	<i>Code of Conduct</i> . Revised. Published 2014, revised October 2022.
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

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CCC	Colchester City Council
CCCAA	Colchester City Council Archaeological Advisor
CCCPS	Colchester City Council Planning Services
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'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	O nline A ccess to the I ndex of A rchaeological I nvestigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsj	written scheme of investigation

11 Archive deposition

Digital record: This project falls within the CIfA definition of a sterile project (<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>), and as such the preserved archaeological archive will take the form of a single digital document that incorporates all the relevant elements from the project archive. 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 (for example context sheets, section drawings).

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Distribution list

Alex Moore da Luz (Suffolk County Council)
 Dr Richard Hoggett, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
 Essex Historic Environment Record

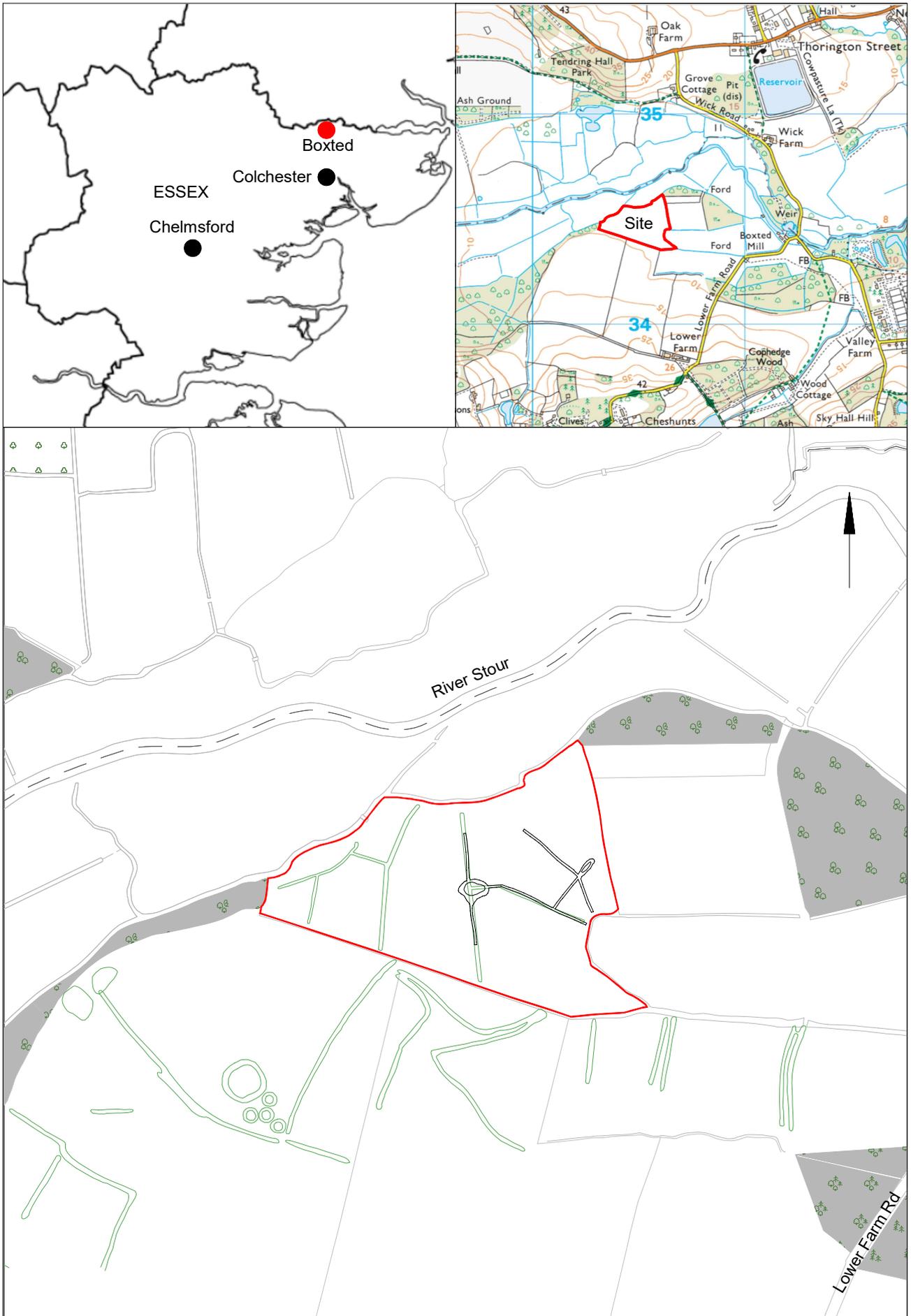


Fig 1 Site location (cropland in green)

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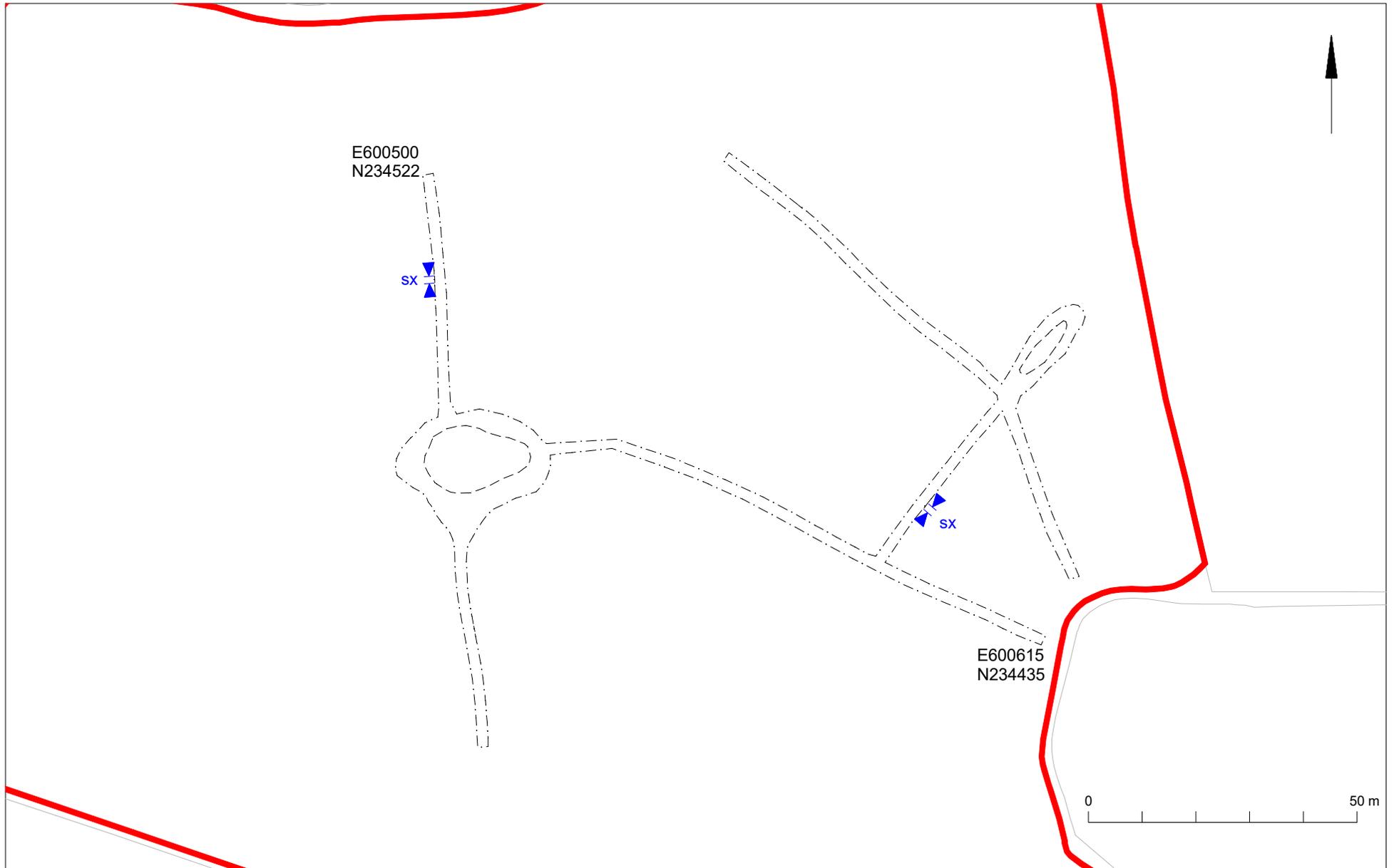


Fig 2 Results

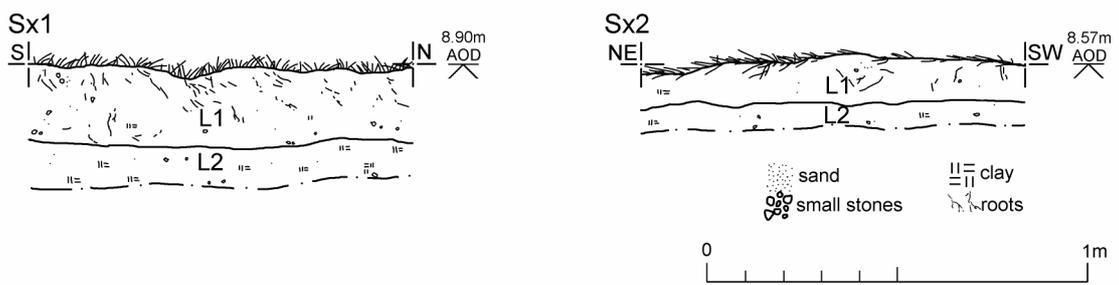


Fig 3 Representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-519549

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-519549
Project Name	Archaeological monitoring at Rivers Hall Farm, land west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5TB: December 2023
Sitename	Rivers Hall Farm, land west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5TB
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	2023/10b, 2023/10b
Activity type	Watching Brief
Planning Id	
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Pre application
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	06-Dec-2023 - 07-Dec-2023
Location	Rivers Hall Farm, land west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex, CO4 5TB NGR : TM 00564 34448 LL : 51.9722989661135, 0.918527000454151 12 Fig : 600564,234448
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Colchester Parish : Boxted
Project Methodology	Monitoring was carried out as per the WSI.
Project Results	Archaeological monitoring took place at Rivers Hall Farm, land west of Boxted Mill, Boxted, Essex during groundworks for the construction of six new foot drains and two large scrape areas to create shallow depressions to seasonally hold water for wildlife. The development site is located in the midst of cropmark complexes indicating the presence of Bronze Age round barrows or Iron Age enclosures. Despite lying in an archaeologically sensitive area, however, no archaeological features or material were encountered.
Keywords	
Funder	County Council Suffolk County Council
HER	Colchester Borough Council - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A Wightman
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - ECC4827
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;