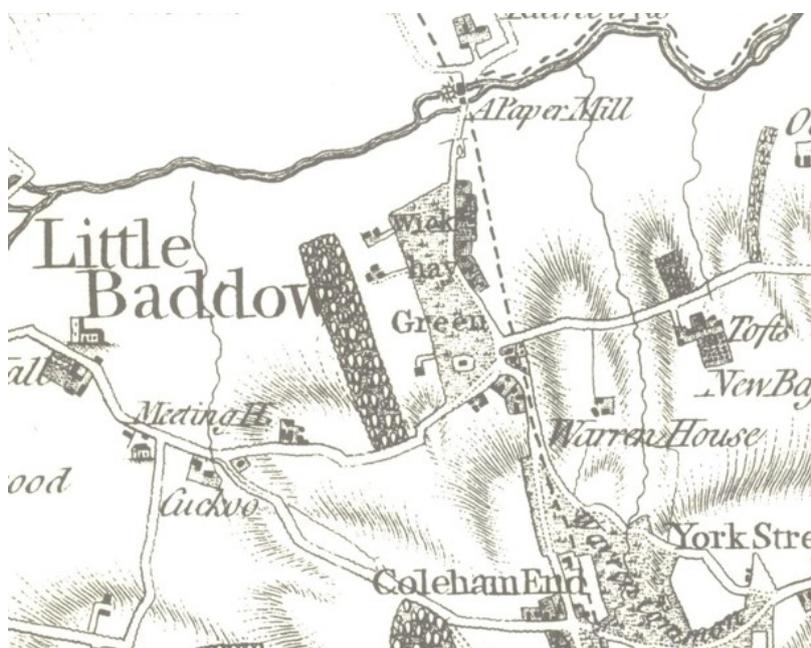


# Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 2162  
issued April 2025**

**Archaeological evaluation at Chelmer Cottage,  
North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, CM6 1FR:  
March 2025**



**CAT project ref.: 2025/03k  
ECC code: EEX61435**

**Archaeological evaluation at Chelmer Cottage,  
North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, CM6 1FR: March 2025**

**NGR: TL 77391 08457 (centre)**

**Planning ref.: 24/01780/FUL**

**CAT project ref.: 2025/03k  
CAT Report 2162**

**ECC code: EEX61435  
OASIS id: colchest3-532693**

**report prepared by Dr Elliott Hicks**

**fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Matt Perou**

**commissioned by the landowner**

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<b>Issued:</b>	11/04/2025	

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out at Chelmer Cottage, North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, in advance of the construction of a swimming pool in the garden of the property. The development site lies near to the medieval St Mary's Church and amid numerous cropmark complexes indicating the presence of archaeological remains which are likely prehistoric in date. Despite lying in an archaeologically sensitive area, no archaeological remains were encountered during the evaluation.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Chelmer Cottage, North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex on 7th April 2025. Work was commissioned by the landowner and took place in advance of the construction of a swimming pool in the garden of the property.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor advised that, 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 2024).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Trial Trenching and Excavation at Chelmer Cottage, North Hill, Little Baddow* written by Mark Baister (ECCPS 2025) and *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) prepared by CAT (2025a) in response to the brief.

In addition to the project brief and 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, 2023a-b),
- East of England standards and frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Brown & Glazebrook 2000; Gurney 2003; Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- Relevant health and safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2024b).

### **3 Archaeological background**

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

The proposed development site lies within an area potentially containing significant archaeological remains. The site lies amid cropmark complexes indicating the potential presence of ring-ditches, linear features, pits, sub-rectangular enclosures and a possible ritual henge monument (EHER 5749). These archaeological features are likely to be highly significant, and are probably prehistoric in origin, but have never been archaeologically investigated (ECCPS 2025).

St Mary's Church lies to the west of Chelmer Cottage. The church is a listed building, the earliest part of which is its nave, which is thought to date to the 11th century, with its remaining parts dating to the 14th-15th century (EHER 5589). The church lies within an area of cropmarks indicating the presence of ring-ditches, one of which appears to contain a square enclosure, and two of these ring-ditches appear to be triple ditched. One ring-ditch appears to be complete, with an opening located at its south-west quadrant, while the other is cut by a modern field boundary (EHER 5751). Further to the east, south-west of New Wood, are cropmarks denoting the presence of linear features which are likely historic field boundary ditches (EHER 8862).

Several listed buildings are located in the vicinity of the development. They include Poleighs, a 16th- or 17th-century timber-framed house (EHER 30641); Walter's Cottage, an 18th-century brick house (EHER 30646); and Coleraines, a 17th-century timber-framed house with 18th-century blue brick front (EHER 30640). Finds spots recorded in the area include that of a Neolithic axehead, which was recovered some 300m south-east of Chelmer Cottage (EHER 53770).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale<sup>1</sup>) shows the bedrock geology of the site to be London Clay Formation (clay, silt and sand) with superficial deposits of River Terrace Deposits (sand and gravel).

### **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.

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

## 5 Results (Figs 2-3)

One trial-trench was machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. With the agreement of the archaeological monitor, the trench was extended to encompass the entire footprint of the proposed swimming pool; it was 11m long and 4.5m wide.

The trench cut through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.04-0.07m thick, firm, moist dark grey/brown silt with concrete and CBM fragments) and subsoil (L2, c 0.27-0.3m thick, firm, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay with charcoal flecks) onto natural (L3, firm, moist medium yellow/orange silty-clay, encountered at a depth of c 0.33-0.34m below current ground level).

An area of modern disturbance was uncovered; asbestos was observed on its surface and so it was left unexcavated.



**Photograph 1** Stripped area, looking south south-east.

## 6 Finds

There were no finds.

## 7 Conclusion

Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, no archaeological features or material were encountered during excavations at the site.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank the landowner for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman, with fieldwork carried out by B Holloway with M Perou. Figures were compiled by C Lister, B Holloway and E Hicks. 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. *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2: Research agenda and strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8).

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ClfA. 2020a. *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*. ClfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020.

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Gurney, D. 2003. *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).

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Medlycott, M. 2011. *Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24).

MHCLG. 2024. *National Planning Policy Framework*. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	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
EHER	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 AD 1901 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> cces <b>S</b> to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigati <b>S</b> , <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	written scheme of investigation

## 11 Archive deposition

**Digital record:** This project falls within the ClfA 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).

**Distribution list:**

Landowner

ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

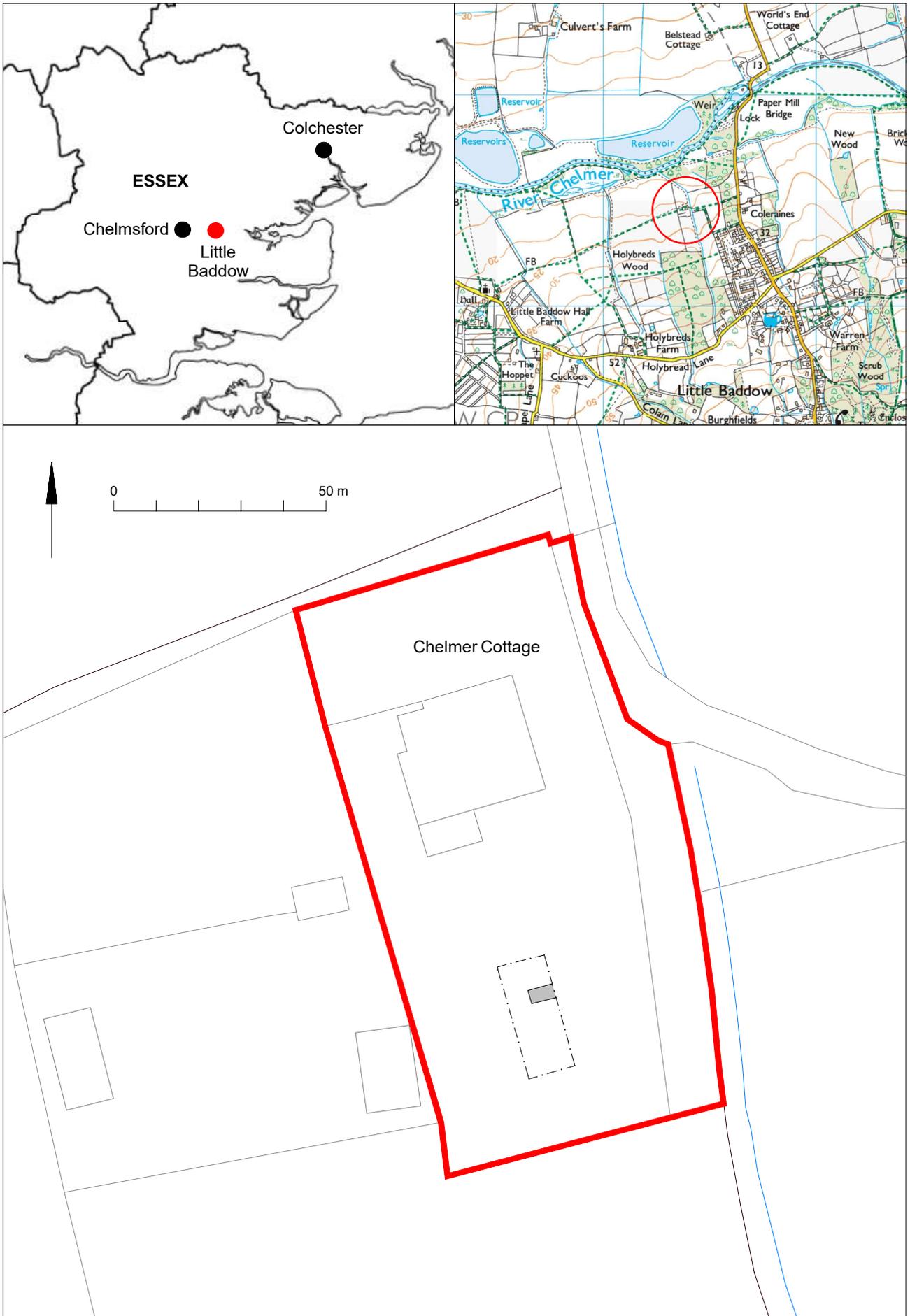


Fig 1 Site location

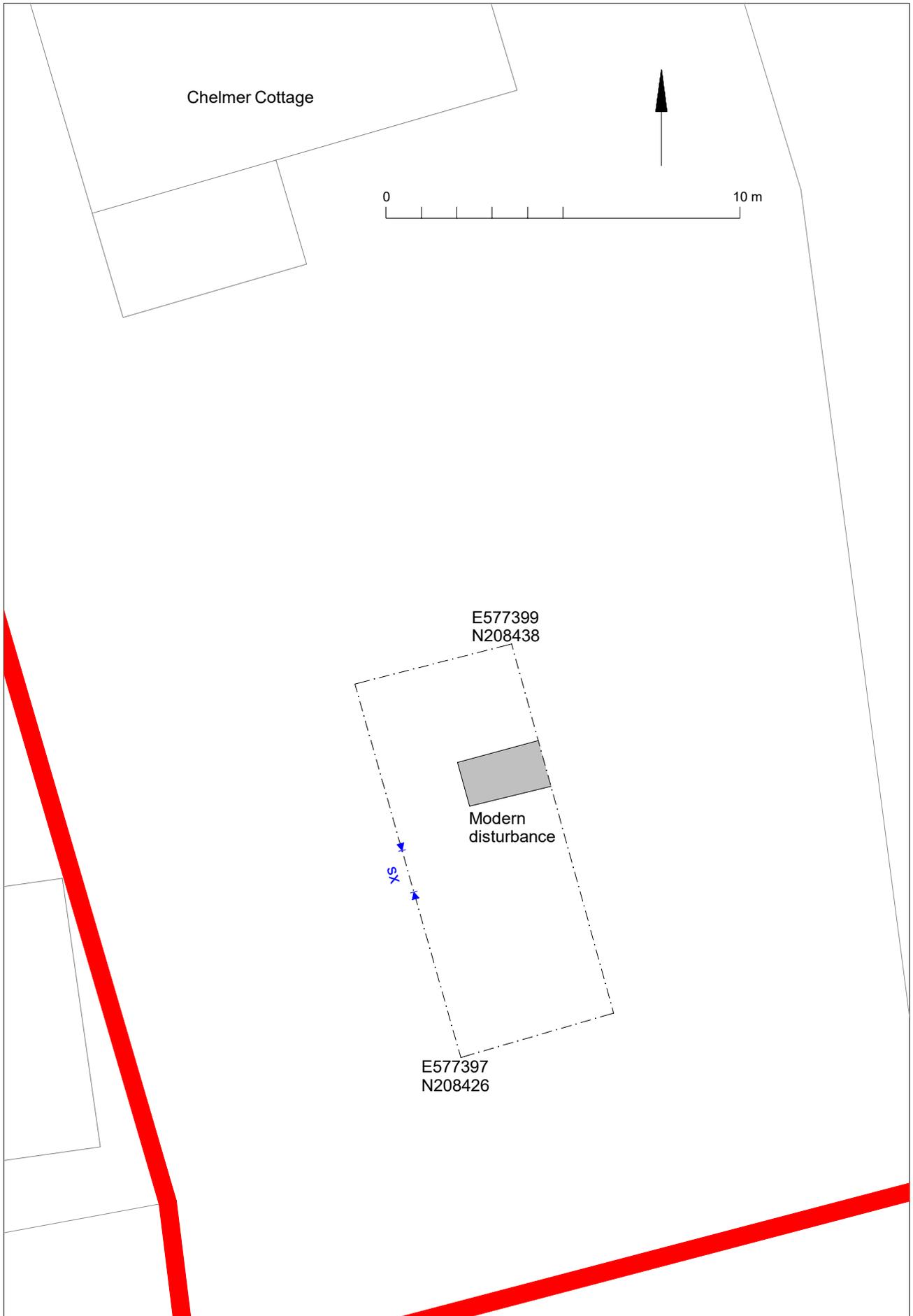


Fig 2 Results

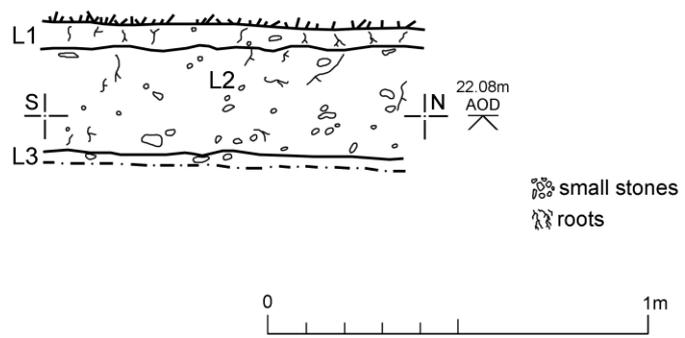


Fig 3 Representative section

# OASIS Summary for colchest3-532693

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-532693
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation at Chelmer Cottage, North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, CM6 1FR: March 2025
Sitename	Chelmer Cottage, North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, CM3 4TN, United Kingdom
Sitecode	2025/03k
Project Identifier(s)	2025/03k
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	24/01780/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	07-Apr-2025 - 07-Apr-2025
Location	Chelmer Cottage, North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, CM3 4TN, United Kingdom NGR : TL 77393 08458 LL : 51.746734544168774, 0.56824801251264 12 Fig : 577393,208458
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Chelmsford Parish : Little Baddow
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation was carried out as per the brief and WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (one trial-trench) was carried out at Chelmer Cottage, North Hill, Little Baddow, Essex, in advance of the construction of a swimming pool in the garden of the property. The development site lies near to the medieval St Mary's Church and amid numerous cropmark complexes indicating the presence of archaeological remains which are likely prehistoric in date. Despite lying in an archaeologically sensitive area, no archaeological remains were encountered during the evaluation.
Keywords	
Funder	Private individual
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A Wightman
HER Identifiers	
Archives	