

An archaeological watching brief at the County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex

September 2001

**on behalf of
Tendring Construction Company Ltd**

HAMP site code: CCHS01
CAT project reference: 01/7g
Colchester Museum accession code: 2001.171
Planning application no: CC/COL/0068/01
NGR: TL 9802 2462



Colchester Archaeological Trust

12 Lexden Road,
Colchester,
Essex CO3 3NF

tel.: (01206) 541051

tel./fax: (01206) 500124

email: archaeologists@colchester-arch-trust.co.uk

CAT Report 155

Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Aims and objectives	1
5	Methodology	1
6	Results	2
7	Discussion	2
8	Archive deposition	2
9	Acknowledgements	2
10	References	2
	Figures	after p 3
	EHCR summary sheet	

List of figures

- Fig 1 Site location with previous archaeological discoveries, scale 1:2000.
Fig 2 Plan showing areas monitored, scale 1:200.
Fig 3 Drawing of a typical section, scale 1:10.

1 Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at the County High School for Girls, Colchester, Essex during works for an extension to the main building. No features or finds of archaeological interest were observed.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 This is the report on an archaeological watching brief carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on the 4th and 11th of September 2001 at the County High School for Girls, Colchester, Essex. The work was necessitated by the construction of a new tennis court and an extension to the east of the existing building, which was given planning permission by Essex County Council under application number CC/COL/0068/01 with the condition for a watching brief.
- 2.2 The school is situated on the western side of Colchester, in between Park Road and Norman Way, to the south of Lexden Road. The site is centred at National Grid Reference TL 9802 2462 (Fig 1).
- 2.3 The work was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation prepared by CAT in August 2001 which in turn follows a brief written by Essex County Council's Heritage Advice Management and Promotion (HAMP) section. This report follows the standards set out in the IFA's *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (1994).

3 Archaeological background

The County High School for Girls is in an area of high archaeological importance. This potential is underlined by some important previous discoveries, ie a Romano-British amphora burial and earthworks possibly related to a Roman fort to the west of the site (now playing fields: Essex Heritage Conservation Record or EHCR 11881-11882); a palisade trench and wattle-and-daub construction, and pits and gullies, all south of the nearby Altnacealgach House (EHCR 12632); and a late Bronze Age spearhead (EHCR 12625). A triple ditch system was recorded on the site of the school in 1955, and there was a reasonable chance of seeing the top of three ditch cuts in the proposed foundation trenches, if the ground was undisturbed (EHCR 12630-12631). Details of these discoveries are given in Hawkes and Crummy 1995 (also Fig 2 in this report).

4 Aims and objectives

The aim of the archaeological work was to identify and record any features of archaeological interest exposed by groundworks. Particular attention was paid to confirming the existence of previously-known remains, particularly the triple ditch which crosses the site.

5 Methodology

- 5.1 The trenches were machine dug.
- 5.2 The fieldwork was undertaken by Howard Brooks of CAT. The whole of the western foundation trench to the extension was monitored. The strip foundations were 800mm wide and 550mm deep. The interconnecting pads were 2.5m x 2.5m wide and 500mm deep. The eastern, northern and southern foundation trenches were not monitored. A trench dug to establish the depth of existing foundations of the main school building was monitored.

- 5.3 A record of the position of the site excavations was made which has been reproduced as Figure 2. Soil-types were noted. A section drawing was made of the layers which has been reproduced as Figure 3.
- 5.4 The spoil heap was checked for artefacts.

6 Results

- 6.1 The following soil-profile was observed in the western foundation trench:

Layer 1 – tarmac and sub-base, 0-150mm.
L2 - light brown loamy topsoil, 150-450mm.
L3 - orange/brown gravel, 450-550mm.

A cable and various services ran through the length of the trench, and part of a brick culvert was recorded at the southern end. No archaeological features or finds were recorded.

- 6.2 No features or finds of archaeological interest were seen in the trench which was dug to test the depth of the foundations.

7 Discussion

Although the ground was fairly undisturbed, no features or finds of archaeological interest were observed. The triple ditch system was not in evidence and it is thought to follow a course outside the area of the current excavations.

8 Archive deposition

The full archive will be permanently lodged at Colchester Museum under accession code 2001.171.

9 Acknowledgements

The Colchester Archaeological Trust is grateful to the following for their co-operation at various stages of the project:

Tendring Construction Company Ltd
Pat Connell, HAMP Officer of Essex County Council
Colchester County High School for Girls

10 References

- Hawkes, C F C, & Crummy, P, 1995 *Camulodunum 2*, Colchester Archaeological Report 11

© Colchester Archaeological Trust 2001

Distribution list:

Tendring Construction Company Ltd
Pat Connell, Heritage Advice Management and Promotion (Essex County Council)
Essex Heritage Conservation Record (Essex County Council)
Colchester Urban Archaeological Database (Colchester Borough Council)



Colchester Archaeological Trust

12 Lexden Road,
Colchester,
Essex CO3 3NF

tel.: (01206) 541051
tel./fax: (01206) 500124
email: archaeologists@colchester-arch-trust.co.uk

Checked by: *Howard Brooks*
Date: *05.10.01*

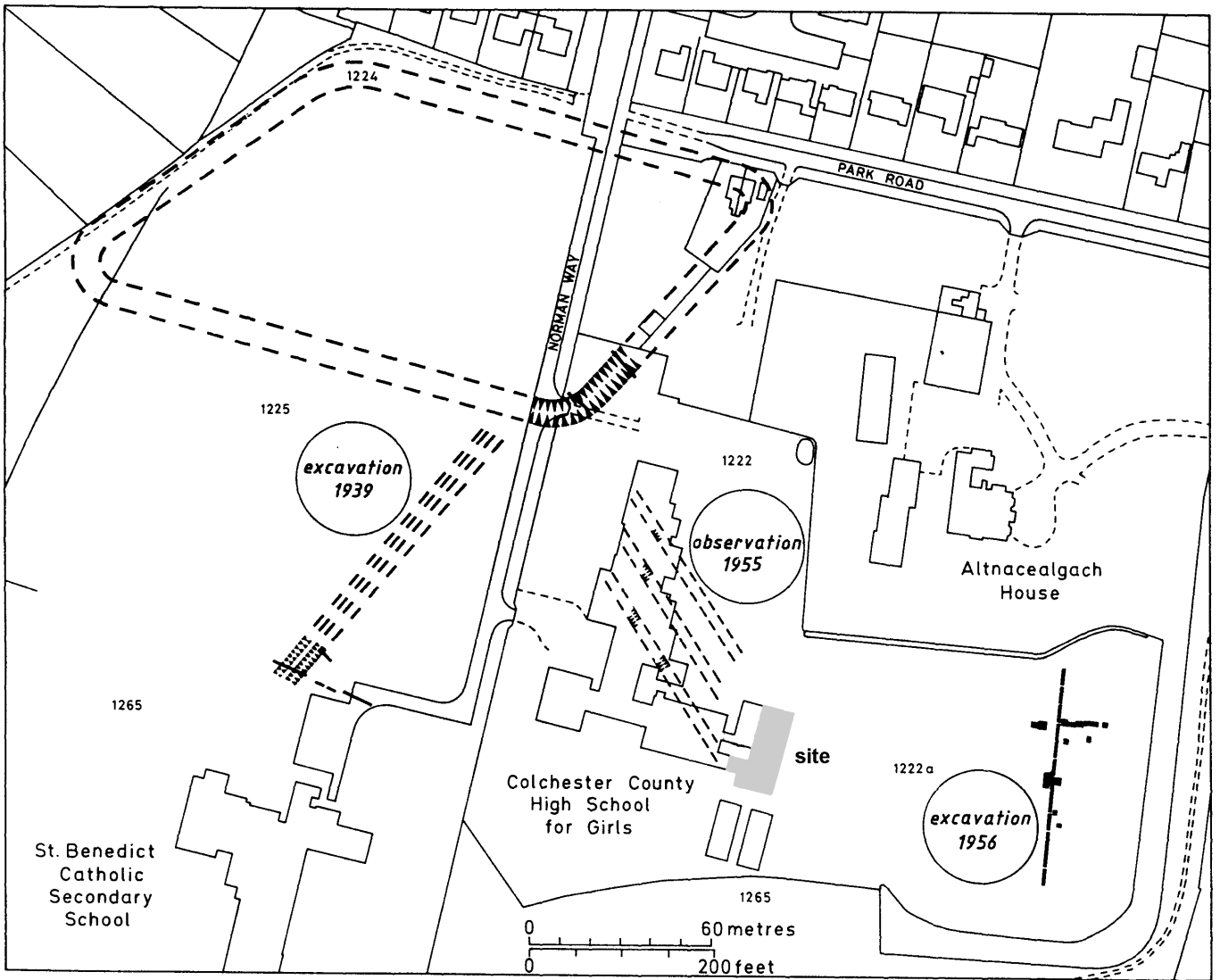


Fig 1 Site location with previous archaeological discoveries, scale 1:2000.



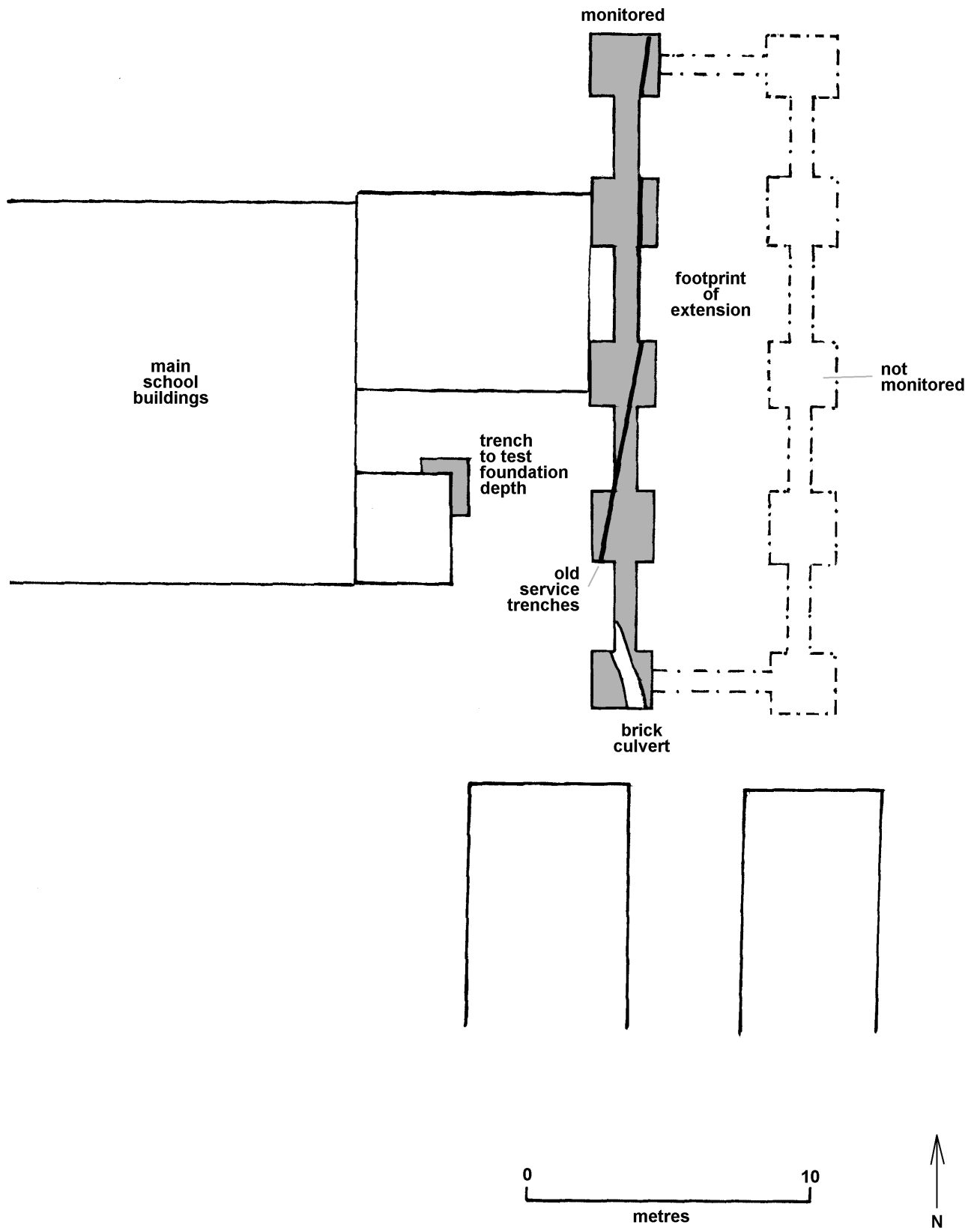


Fig 2 Plan showing areas monitored, scale 1:200.

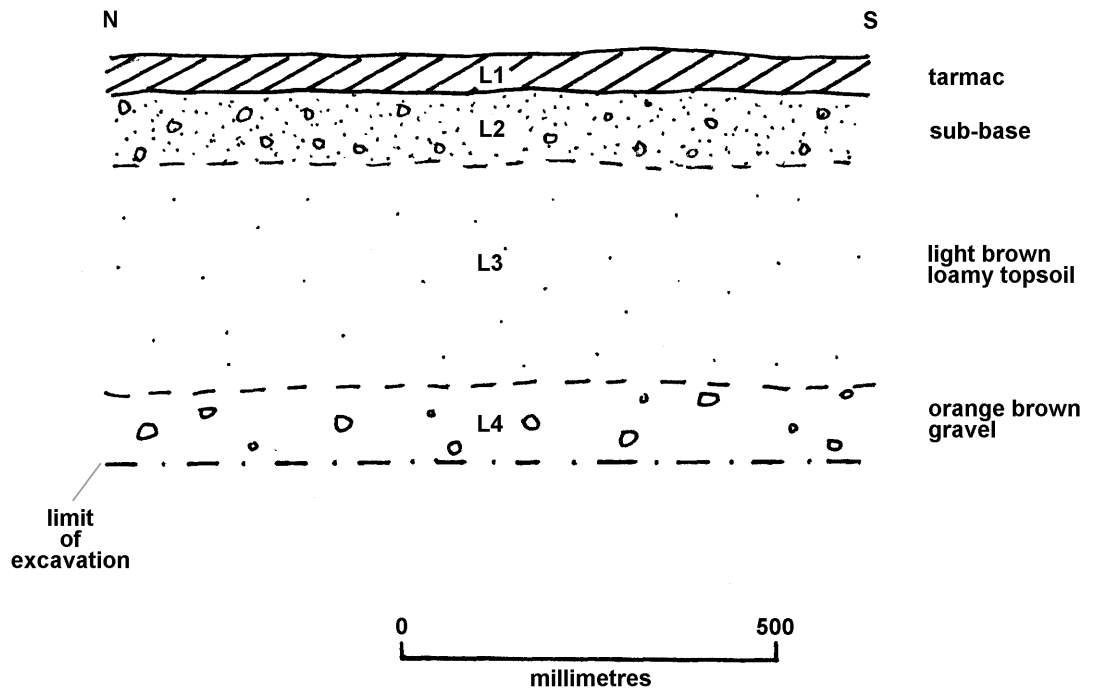


Fig 3 Drawing of a typical section, scale 1:10.

**Essex Heritage Conservation Record/
Essex Archaeology and History**

Summary sheet

Site name/address: County High School for Girls, Norman Way, Colchester, Essex	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester Borough
NGR: TL 9802 2462 (centre)	Site code: CCHS01
Type of work: Watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: September 2001	Size of area investigated:
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester Museum	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related SMR nos: 11881-11882, 12632, 12625, 12630-12631
Final report: CAT Report 155 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: None	
Summary of fieldwork results: An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at the County High School for Girls in Colchester during works for an extension to the main building. No features or finds of archaeological interest were observed.	
Previous summaries/reports: N/A	
Author of summary: Kate Orr	Date of summary: September 2001