

**An archaeological trial-trenching evaluation  
at the Hope Inn,  
16 High Street, Tollesbury, Essex**

**July 2011**



**commissioned by Plater Claiborne  
on behalf of Mr Robert Cannon**

**report prepared by Howard Brooks**

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CAT project ref.: 11/4f

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NGR: TL 9552 1046 (c)



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**CAT Report 614**  
September 2011

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## 1 Summary

*The Hope Inn is located in the centre of the historic settlement of Tollesbury. This is the report on an evaluation by three trial-trenches which revealed compact clay layers (almost certainly clay floors) on the High Street frontage. These may be the remains of a late medieval or early post-medieval building (or buildings) cleared from this site when the original Hope Inn was built in the 19th century.*

## 2 Introduction (Figure 1)

- 2.1 This is the archive report on the archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at the Hope Inn, 16 High Street, Tollesbury, Essex (site centre : NGR TL 9552 1046)
- 2.2 The proposed development comprises the demolition of the Hope Inn and the redevelopment of the site for housing.
- 2.3 A planning application for the development of the site was submitted to Maldon District Council in 2010 (MAL/10/1087).
- 2.4 Given the archaeological potential of the site, and following *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (DCLG 2010), a full archaeological condition was recommended to be attached to the planning consent.
- 2.5 A brief detailing the required archaeological work (a photographic record of the building, and an evaluation by trial-trenching) was written by the Historic Environment Management (HEM) team officer (Maria Medlycott: HEM 2011). Following this, a photographic survey of the standing building was commissioned by Plater Claiborne and was carried out by CAT in April 2011 (CAT Report 592). The second half of the HEM brief was fulfilled by CAT carrying out the evaluation described here in accordance with a WSI (Written Scheme of Investigation) produced by CAT and agreed with HEM (CAT 2011).
- 2.6 The trial-trenching evaluation was carried out on 19th July, with a subsequent site visit on 26th July 2011. Post-excavation work took place in September 2011.
- 2.7 The evaluation was carried out according to standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008b), *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (MoRPHE), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

## 3 Archaeological and historical background

The site has potential for surviving archaeological remains of medieval or later date. The area is thought to lie within the medieval historic core of Tollesbury (EHER 45657, Medlycott 2007). The extent of the village in the medieval period can be estimated from the distribution of surviving medieval buildings. The area is shown as built-up on the Chapman & André map of 1777. The 'Hope Inn' named on the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1881 was replaced in 1923 by the present Hope Inn. In the Conservation Area Appraisal the Inn is described as a 'landmark' structure, typical of its date, with Arts and Crafts elements in its styling.

## 4 Aim

The aim of the evaluation was to record the extent, depth, condition, importance and date of any archaeological remains which would be destroyed by the redevelopment of the site. The results of the evaluation would enable an informed view to be taken on the likely effect of the development on the buried archaeological remains.

## 5 The archaeological evaluation (Figures 1-4)

### 5.1 Methodology (Figures 1-2)

Three trenches were cut by machine under archaeological supervision in the positions shown on figures 1-2. Overlying modern strata were removed by machine until the archaeological level was reached. Below that level, all work was done by hand. Other methodology was as described in the WSI (CAT 2011). A detailed description of each trench follows in section 5.2 below. As it was assumed that CAT would be carrying out the next stage excavation, site levels are at present only related to a working site datum of 50m. However, Fig 3 gives station position and heights, which will enable heights to be re-established and tied to OS datum.

### 5.2 Trench results (Figures 1-4)

#### Trench 1: summary (Fig 2)

The following layers were removed by machine: L1 modern tarmac (60mm thick), and L2 post-medieval make-up (310mm thick). This exposed three archaeological horizons and a cut feature, as follows. At the west end of T1 was L9 a soily layer, possibly a garden soil, which was cut by medieval or post-medieval pit F7. A compacted clay layer/clay floor (L7) occupied approximately 8.8m of the centre of the trench. Finds from L7 were 16th-18th century in date. This may indicate the date of the clay floor (and the building of which it formed a part). Its east end was cut by F6, which may be a gravel path, or possibly the top fill of a cut feature (foundation trench?). Beyond F6 at the east end of the trench was L8, a band of gravelly soil (very likely to be a yard surface). Compacted clay L7 was heavily cut by (unnumbered) modern features.

**Table 1: summary of T1 contexts and dating.**

context	description	finds	date
F6	foundation trench, or possible path?	Mainly mortar, with brick and some charcoal fragments. Fragment of peg-tile on eastern edge.	medieval, post-medieval?
F7	pit	Large amount of oyster shell. None retained. Medieval pottery.	M12-M14C
L1	modern topsoil/tarmac	-	modern
L2	post-medieval build up	pottery, peg-tile, animal bone	post-medieval
L7	Compacted clay floor surface. Very similar to L6, but with heavy post medieval/modern truncation.	peg-tile and pottery pressed into surface.	L16-18C with residual medieval
L8	Possible yard surface? Very compacted. No finds recovered.	-	medieval?
L9	? (not excavated)	-	?



**Plate 1: T1 view W. L8 (soily layer or yard surface) foreground, F6 (gravel or foundation), and L6 (clay floor) beyond. Bricky L2 visible in sides of trench under L1 tarmac.**



**Plate 2: T1 view East. Clay floor L6 with area of burning (hearth?) foreground**



**Trench 2: summary** (Fig 2)

The following layer was removed by machine: L1 topsoil / tarmac mix (180mm thick). This revealed L5 soil accumulation with oyster shells, overlying clay floor L6 (whose surface was at 330mm below modern ground level).

L5 and L6 were cut and damaged by modern brick foundations F5 (a group number for two separate walls). A test pit was dug alongside the easterly F5. This produced post-medieval and medieval pottery. On reflection, it seems that this test pit coincided with a post-medieval linear cut running E-W along the south edge of T2.

**Table 2: summary of T2 contexts and dating.**

Context	Description	Finds	Date
F5	foundations cutting clay floor	-	modern
L1	modern tarmac	-	modern
L5	soil accumulation with oyster shells	pottery, peg-tile	15-16C with residual medieval
L6	compacted clay floor surface	west end had large amounts of peg-tile pressed into it (perhaps derived from L5)	medieval
adjacent to F5	test pit into L5	pottery, post-Roman CBM	L16-18C with residual medieval



**Plate 3: T2 view east. Modern brick foundation F5 foreground and centre**



**Plate 4: T2 view west. Modern brick foundation F5 centre**



**Plate 5: view north showing representative section of T2 (L1 topsoil over L5 oysters over L6 clay floor)**



Plate 6: sondage showing thickness of clay floor L6 (65mm)

**Trench 3: summary** (Figs 2, 4)

The following layers were removed by machine: L1 topsoil (160mm thick), L2 rubblely make up with clay and bricks (360mm thick). This revealed a soil layer L3 (presumably garden soil, 240mm thick). Under L3 was natural L4, into which the archaeological features were cut. These were small pit or post-hole F1, and pits F2-F4. As a group, these were dated by peg-tile and clay tobacco pipe.

**Table 3: summary of T3 contexts and dating.**

Context	description	finds	Date
F1	post-hole/small pit	post-Roman brick, clay pipe	post-medieval: L17-E18C
F2	pit	modern bricks on surface	modern
F3	pit	peg-tile	post-medieval
F4	pit	peg-tile	post-medieval
L1	modern topsoil/tarmac	-	modern
L2	post-medieval rubblely make-up	Fabric 40 pottery, post-medieval glass, peg-tile	post-medieval
L3	garden soil	post-Roman brick, peg-tile, clay pipe	post medieval: 16/17-19C
L4	natural sand	-	natural





**Plate 7: T3 view north. Post-medieval pit F3 in foreground, post-hole F1 and pits F2, F4 beyond.**



**Plate 8: T3 representative section (topsoil/tarmac L1, over rubblely make-up L2, over L3 post-medieval topsoil, over L4 natural).**

## 6 Finds from the evaluation (Plate 9) by Stephen Benfield

A small quantity of bulk finds of medieval and post-medieval date, consisting of pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), vessel glass, clay pipe, animal bone and shell, was recovered from nine contexts divided between three evaluation trenches. There was also one metal small find (SF1). These finds are listed and described in Table 4. The medieval and post-medieval pottery fabric types recorded refer to the Essex post-Roman fabric series (Cunningham & Drury 1985; CAR 7 2000) and are listed in Table 5. Some of the sherds from L5 are shown in plate 9 below.



Plate 9: finds from L5 (overlying clay floor L6). Bottom left: glazed floor tile; top, 3 sherds of fabric 21a Colchester-type ware

Trench	context (F/L) no.	finds no	context type	finds	spot date
T1	F7	10	pit (upper fill)	<b>pottery</b> medieval: Fabric 20 1@26 g, base sherd, some external sooting (dated M12-M14C)	M12-M14C
T1	L7	9	surface	<b>pottery</b> medieval: Fabric 20 2@14 g, shoulder sherd (dated M12-M14C); Fabric 40 (glazed) 1@ 1 g (dated L16-18C) <b>CBM</b> post-Roman: peg-tile 2@185 g, 12 mm thick, round fixing hole 12 mm diameter	L16-18C with residual medieval
T2	F5	7	test pit adjacent to foundation F5	<b>pottery</b> medieval: Fabric 21A 1@30 g, oxidised handle sherd with white slip/paint (dated 13-14C); p-med 2@17g Fabric 40, internal glazed, one sherd abraded (dated L16-18C) <b>CBM</b> post-Roman: peg-tile 5@169 g, 10-12 mm thick, round fixing holes	L16-18C with residual medieval

Trench	context (F/L) no.	finds no	context type	finds	spot date
				12 mm diameter; Brick 3@99 g, one piece heated/burnt, black/brown fabric with buff sandy mortar on face, two pieces (fragments) in orange fabric <b>Animal bone</b> 5@13 g, poorly preserved and degraded	
T2	L5	6	accumulation	<b>pottery</b> medieval: Fabric 21A, 10@379 g, includes a body sherd from a decorated vessel, probably a jug, decorated with dot impressed clay strips and X marked clay pellets on strip joins with small X also cut into body surface, body covered in white slip with green glaze over (dated c 1250-1350) (see Plate 9). Jar with external lid-seating white slip with green glaze over suggesting an early example (dated c 15-E16C: see plate 9), black surface sherd with cream painted line (dated c 1400-1550) and similar black surface rim from a jug(?), also several unglazed oxidised sherds (dated 15-16C) <b>CBM</b> post-Roman: peg-tile 2@346 g, 10-12 mm thick, round fixing hole 15 mm diameter; Glazed floor tile 1@194 g corner piece, 20 mm thick, maximum surviving length 100 mm, bevelled sides, red sandy fabric, areas of clear and yellow glaze on surface over white slip or wash, white lime mortar on base and sides (dated medieval-post-medieval: see plate 9)	15-16C with residual medieval
T2	L5	8	accumulation	<b>CBM</b> post-Roman: peg-tile 4@661 g, 10-12 mm thick, round fixing holes 12 mm diameter <b>shell</b> Oyster shell 1@1 g	
T3	F1	3	p-hole/pit	<b>CBM</b> post-Roman: brick 1@42 g, abraded piece in red-brown fabric <b>Clay pipe</b> 2@ 24 g, stem fragment and complete bowl, bowl type (dated c 1680-1710 (CAR 5 Type 8)) <b>Animal bone</b> 1@1 g <b>shell</b> Oyster shell 4@8 g, degraded and flaking	L17-E18C
T3	F3	4	pit	<b>CBM</b> post-Roman: peg-tile 2@48 g, 10-12 mm thick; one with white lime mortar on base and side	
T3	F4	4	pit	<b>CBM</b> post-Roman: Peg-tile 1@57 g, 13-14 mm thick; Brick 1@24, edge piece, orange fabric <b>Animal bone</b> 1@18 g	
T3	L2	1	accumulation	<b>Pottery</b> post-Roman: 3@110, all from same vessel, open bowl with grooved rim, glazed internally, Fabric 40 (dated L16-18C) <b>Glass</b> 2@1g, small pale blue-green coloured sherds from the neck of a vessel with a tall, thin neck, opalescent flaking surfaces <b>CBM</b> post-Roman: peg-tile 2@193 g,	L16-18C

Trench	context (F/L) no.	finds no	context type	finds	spot date
				one 14 mm thick, round fixing hole 9 mm diameter, (note: visually finer fabric and different dimensions to other peg-tiles recovered), other piece 12 mm thick <b>Animal bone</b> 2@400 g, cattle humerus from large mature animal, shaft sawn through	
T3	L3	2	garden soil	<b>CBM</b> post-Roman: peg-tile 2@104 g, 13-14 mm thick <b>Clay pipe</b> 1@ 3 g, stem fragment (dated 16/17-19C) <b>Metal object</b> (Small Find 1) copper-alloy tube, weight 10 g, diameter 10 mm, maximum surviving length 65 mm, formed from sheet with butted seam, barley-twist pattern relief decorated surface produced by folding, tube probably cut through at one end, other end broken (fragmented) with indication of small fixing hole 5 mm diameter surviving on edge of break	16/17-19C

**Table 4: Spot dated list of finds by context**

Fabric code	Description	Fabric period /common date range
20	medieval sandy grey wares (general)	M12-M14C
21A	Colchester-type ware	13-16C
40	post-medieval red earthen wares (general)	16/17-18C

**Table 5: Pottery fabrics recorded showing period/common date range**

## 7 Discussion

This evaluation has shown that significant archaeological deposits survive at the Hope Inn site. These take the form of compact clay surfaces exposed in trenches 1 and 2 (T1, T2), on the High Street frontage. The clay layers are not far below modern ground level (at 0.37m in T1, and 0.33m in T2). At such depths, they may be regarded as vulnerable to damage and destruction during redevelopment.

The clay layers are very likely to be the remains of clay floors of a building or buildings which once stood on the southern edge of the Hope Inn plot (essentially on the High Street frontage, and in line with surviving properties either side of the Hope Inn). A burnt patch on the clay floor in T1 may be a hearth.

Other material found by the evaluation includes layers of gravel which may be associated yard or path surfaces, and possible garden soils. The finds associated with the clay floors indicate a medieval or late medieval/early post-medieval date for these buildings, which have clearly been demolished (at a date which is not known, but must predate the earlier Hope Inn which had been built by 1881).

The clay floor in T2 had been badly damaged by modern brick footings, but that in T1 survived quite well, with its potential hearth. T3 only contained post-medieval pits, presumably dug during the life of the recent Hope Inn. These are not considered to be of great importance.



## 8 Acknowledgements

Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Plater Claiborne for commissioning the evaluation.

The fieldwork was conducted by Adam Wightman and Chris Lister. The project was monitored by Maria Medlycott on behalf of Essex County Council Historic Environment Branch.

## 9 References

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

- |                                      |       |  |
|--------------------------------------|-------|--|
| CAR 5                                | 1988  | The post-Roman small finds from excavations in Colchester 1971-85, <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 5</i> , by Nina Crummy                                      |
| CAR 7                                | 2000  | Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester 1971-85, <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7</i> , by John Cotter  |
| CAT                                  | 2011  | <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Building Recording and Evaluation by Trial Trenching at the Hope Inn, 16 High Street, Tollesbury, Essex.</i> |
| CAT Report 592                       | 2011  | <i>Archaeological building recording at The Hope In, 16 High Street, Tollesbury, Essex, May 2011</i>   |
| <i>Cunningham, C, &amp; Drury, P</i> | 1985  | Post-medieval sites and their pottery: Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, <i>CBA Research Report 54</i>  |
| DCLG                                 | 2010  | <i>Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment.</i> Dept of Communities and Local Government  |
| EAA 14                               | 2003  | <i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, <b>14</b> , ed by D Gurney                            |
| HEM                                  | 2011  | Archaeological Building Recording and Trial-Trenching, The Hope Inn, 16 High Street, Tollesbury, Essex. <i>Essex County Council brief</i> (by Maria Medlycott)     |
| IfA                                  | 2008a | <i>Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation</i>   |
| IfA                                  | 2008b | <i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>  |
| Medlycott, M                         | 2007  | Tollesbury Historic Settlement Assessment Report. ECC  |
| MoRPHE                               | 2006  | Management of research projects in the historic environment ( <i>English Heritage</i> )  |

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBA	Council for British Archaeology
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by the ECC
feature	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a floor; can contain 'contexts'
HEM	Historic Environment Management Team
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
layer	distinct or distinguishable deposit of soil
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from the 19th century onwards to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	after Henry VIII to around the late 18th century

## 11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex CO3 3NF, but it will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museum under accession code 2011.35.

## 12 Context list

context	Trench	description	date
F1	3	post-hole/small pit	post-medieval: L17-E18C
F2	3	pit	modern
F3	3	pit	post-medieval
F4	3	pit	post-medieval
F5	2	foundations cutting clay floor	modern
F6	1	foundation trench, or possible path?	medieval, post-medieval?
F7	1	pit	M12-M14C
L1	1, 2, 3	modern topsoil/tarmac	modern
L2	1, 3	post-medieval rubblely make-up	post-medieval
L3	3	garden soil	post medieval: 16/17-19C
L4	3	natural sand	natural
L5	2	soil accumulation with oyster shells	15-16C with residual medieval
L6	2	compacted clay floor surface	medieval
L7	1	Compacted clay floor surface. Very similar to L6, but with heavy post medieval/modern truncation.	L16-18C with residual medieval
L8	1	Possible yard surface? Very compacted. No finds recovered.	medieval?
L9	1	garden soil?	?

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Fig 1 Site location with demolished building shown







Fig 2 Results of evaluation

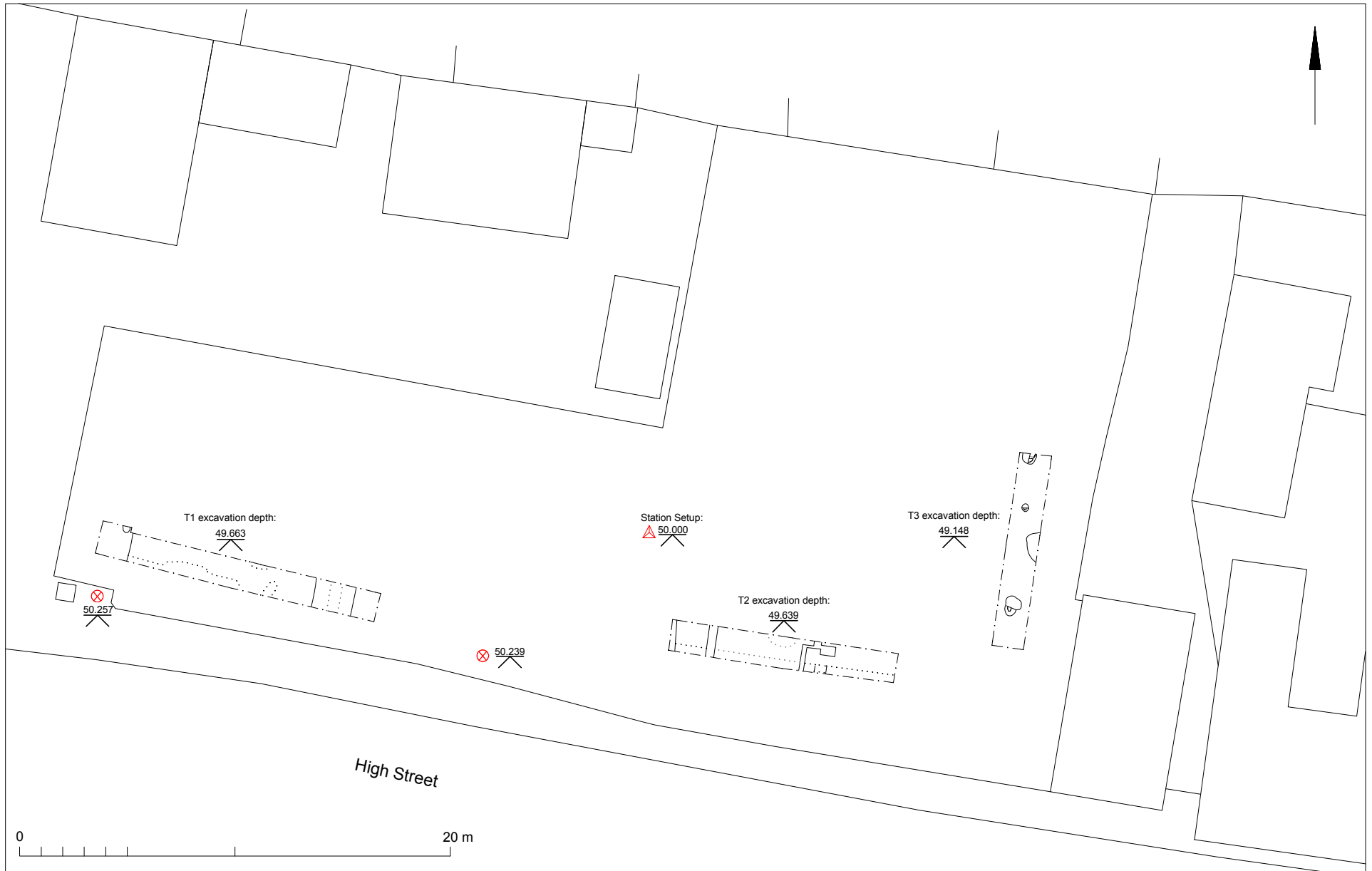


Fig 3 Results with the station setup, survey points and uncalibrated heights shown.

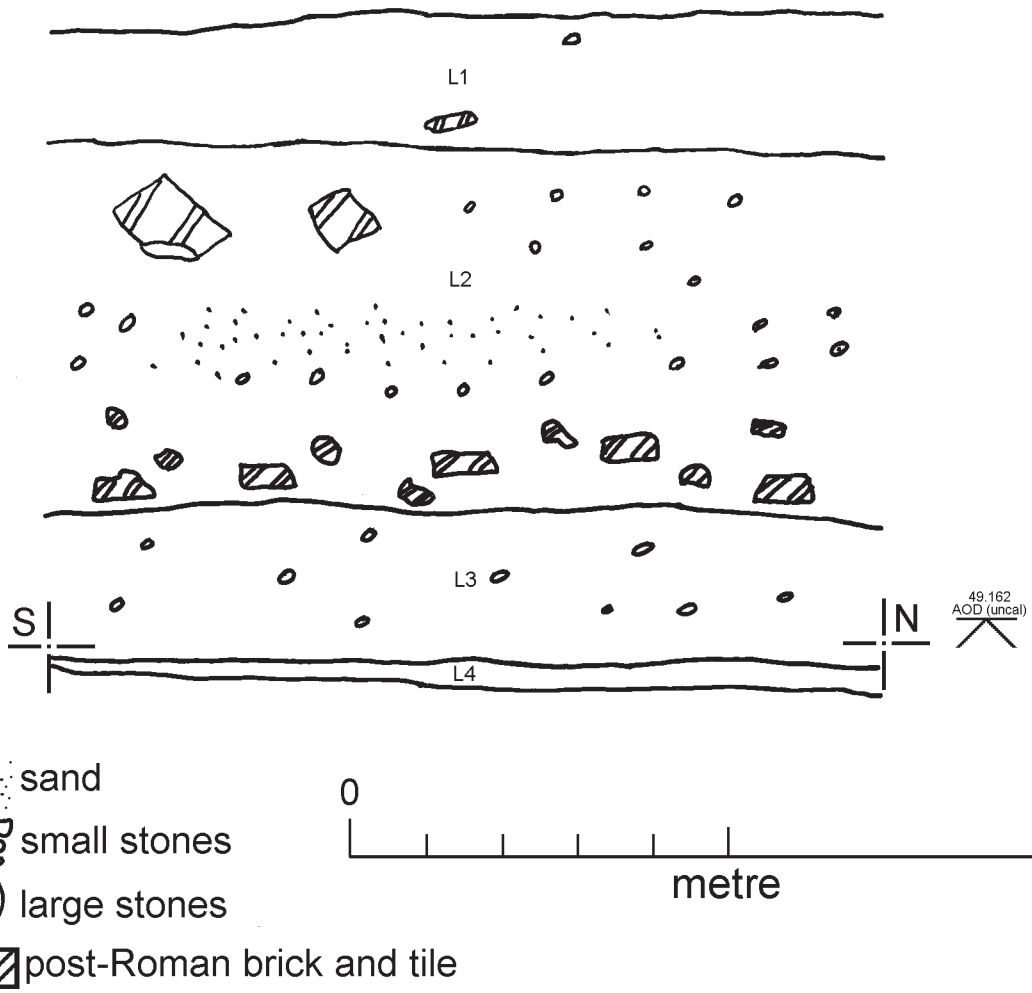


Fig 4 Representative section of T3

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Address:</b> The Hope Inn, 16 High Street, Tollesbury, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Tollesbury	<b>District:</b> Maldon
<b>NGR:</b> TL 9552 1046 (c)	<b>Site codes:</b> CAT project – 11/4f HEM code : TOHI 11
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> July 2011	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> Three trenches, total length 33m.
<b>Location of curating museum:</b> Colchester and Ipswich Museums accession - COLEM 2011.35	<b>Funding source:</b> Developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Yes (not necessarily by CAT)	<b>Related EHER numbers:</b> -
<b>Final report:</b>	CAT Report 614 and summary in <i>EAH</i>
<b>Periods represented:</b>	medieval, post-medieval, modern
<b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b> The Hope Inn is located in the centre of the historic settlement of Tollesbury. This is the report on an evaluation by three trial-trenches which revealed compact clay layers (almost certainly clay floors) on the High Street frontage. These may be the remains of a late medieval or early post-medieval building (or buildings) cleared from this site when the original Hope Inn was built in the 19th century.	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> CAT Report 592 (building survey)	
<b>Keywords:</b> medieval, clay floor	<b>Significance:</b> **
<b>Author of summary:</b> Howard Brooks	<b>Date of summary:</b> September 2011