An archaeological watching brief at the Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility, Abbey Field, Colchester, Essex

September 2012- March 2013



report prepared by Adam Wightman with a finds report by Stephen Benfield

commissioned by PJB Architectural Design Ltd on behalf of RMPA Services

Planning references: F/COL/11/2172, F/COL/12/0647

CAT project code: 12/7b

Colchester & Ipswich Museums accession code: 2012.05

NGR: TL 9946 2433 (c)



Colchester Archaeological Trust Roman Circus House,

Off Circular Road North, Colchester,

Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 07436 273304

email: archaeologists@catuk.org

CAT Report 686 March 2013

Contents

1	Summary	1
2	Introduction	1
3	Archaeological background	1
4	Results	2
5	Finds	4
6	Discussion	6
7	Acknowledgements	7
8	Archive deposition	7
9	References	7
10	Contents of archive	ć

Figures after page 9

EHER summary sheet

List of figures

- Fig 1 Site location
 Fig 2 Results
 Fig 3 Combined results of 2000 excavation on all-weather sports pitch site and 2013 watching brief on new pavilion

List of plates (page 3)

- Plate 1 Site shot showing footings trenches
- Plate 2 The trench for the new services
- Plate 3 The pit for a new soakaway
- Plate 4 Ditch F1 cut into the natural sand (L3)

1 Summary

A watching brief by Colchester Archaeological Trust during the construction of a new pavilion at the Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility on Abbey Field recorded eight archaeological features. Of these, three ditches and one pit are tentatively dated to the Roman period. Two of the ditches were north-south orientated, and formed part of a ditched trackway. The third ditch was an east-west orientated boundary ditch that appeared to abut the eastern edge of the trackway.

An apparent absence of burials may indicate that the site lies to the south of the cemetery boundary (possibly delineated by the east-west orientated ditch F2) or that preparation works for the site of the Athletics club in 1925 destroyed any Roman burials on the site.

2 Introduction

This report describes the archaeological watching brief carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on behalf of PJB Architects Ltd and RMPA Services at the Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility during groundworks for a new single-storey sports pavilion situated to the south-east of the existing pavilion (Fig 1). The site is located south of Colchester town centre, immediately south and adjacent to Circular Road North, in an area known as Abbey Field (at NGR TL 9946 2433 (c); Fig 1). This block of land forms a major open space of 29 hectares, and consists of mixed parkland and open air sports facilities.

Following the submission of a planning application (LPA Ref Nos. 112172 & 120647) to Colchester Borough Council (CBC), a condition was attached to the consent which required the applicant to commission an archaeological watching brief during groundworks. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a brief written by Martin Winter, the Colchester Borough Council Archaeology Officer (CBC 2012), and a corresponding written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT (CAT 2012).

All fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CIMS 2008a), *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester and Ipswich Museums* (CIMS 2008b), and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IfA 2008b). The guidance in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) was also followed.

3 Archaeological background

The site is located within one of the Roman cemeteries which cover a broad area extending south and west of Colchester (east from St Clare Road for 2.5 km, across Abbey Field as far south as the former Sobraon Barracks, and south-east to the modern Mersea Road cemetery). A detailed description and discussion of Colchester's Roman cemeteries may be found in *Roman Colchester* (Hull 1958) and more recently in *CAR* **9** (Crummy *et al* 1993).

Roman burials have been recorded in the vicinity of the Garrison Athletics Facility throughout the 20th century. In 1925, twenty-eight cremation burials were recorded when this part of Abbey Field was originally levelled for sports pitches (Hull 1958, no 200, p 296; UAD event no 1099, EHER 12384). A further cremation burial was found in 1931 when goalposts were being erected (CEMAR 1932). The top of this burial was only 10cms below the surface. A Roman kiln and rubbish pit was found on the site of the NAAFI, now the Arena Leisure Centre, in 1946 (Essex Historic Environment Record 13232). Early in 2000, prior to the conversion of an existing grassed pitch to an all-weather sports pitch (AWSP), excavation revealed 72 Roman burials, some of which were only 300mm below existing ground-level (CAT Report 138). A north-south ditch-defined trackway was also plotted running

approximately through the middle of the AWSP. Further concentrations of Roman burials were excavated in 2004 and 2005, during the Garrison Urban Village development, at Areas C2 (66 burials) and J1 North (360 burials). These were a mixture of inhumations and cremations (CAT Report 412). Finally, excavation of the site of the Abbey Field car-park to the immediate south of the site in 2007 revealed a further seven cremation burials against a Roman trackway that appears to border the southern edge of this cemetery area (CAT Report 424).

Two evaluation trenches were excavated within the footprint of the new sport pavilion in January 2012. Substantial deposits of topsoil were observed to a depth of 600mm. Archaeological features were encountered at 650-700mm below ground level and consisted of an undated linear feature, a ditch containing Roman tile and a pit containing a single Anglo-Saxon pottery sherd (CAT Report 634).

4 Results

Twenty-six monitoring visits were made by CAT archaeologists between September 5th 2012 and March 1st 2013. Continuous archaeological supervision was undertaken during the following groundworks:

- The pit for a percolation test, c 1.8m deep (Fig 3 & Plate 1).
- The foundation trenches for the relocated floodlights, c 1.8m deep (Fig 2).
- The footings for the new pavilion, c 1.1m deep (Fig 2).
- The pit for a new pump station, c 2m deep (Fig 2).
- The trench for the new services, c 0.6m deep (Figs 2 & 3, Plate 2).
- The pit for a new soakaway, c 2m deep (Fig 3 & Plate 3).

The development site was covered by a layer of turf and a homogenous dark brown sandy-silt topsoil (L1). L1 was generally around 300mm deep and contained modern and post-medieval finds. Beneath L1 was a layer of buried topsoil (L2, c 350mm thick) which was discernibly lighter in colour than L1 and did not contain modern finds. L2 sealed natural ground (L3), a medium orange sand with isolated patches of gravel.

The archaeological features were cut from within the buried topsoil (L2) and were only distinguishable once natural L3 had been reached (Plate 4). Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery sherds, animal bone, clay pipe, nails, glass, and a traders token were all collected from L2 (see finds section below). Numerous modern services, mostly electricity cables, were also encountered within L2.

Eight archaeological features were identified (F1-F8, Figs 2 & 3). Three of these, ditches F1, F2 and F4, were encountered in numerous footings trenches and in the trench for the new services (Fig 2). Ditches F1 and F4 were both north-south aligned and ran parallel to each other c 8m apart (Fig 2). Both ditches were a similar width at the junction between the buried topsoil (L2) and the natural (L3) (c 1.7m wide) and at the base of the footings trenches (between 1m and 1.3m wide). Both ditch fills were medium brown/grey sandy-silts similar to the overlying buried topsoil (L2) (Plate 4). Roman finds were recovered from F1 in three of the footings trenches (Sx1, Sx2 & Sx4). These finds consist of a piece of Roman tile, three unworked pieces of limestone tufa and numerous sherds from the lower half of a Roman jar which may have been displaced from a burial (see finds section below). One fragment of Roman CBM was also recovered from F4 (Sx1).

Ditch F2 was east-west aligned (Fig 2) and had a similar fill to ditches F1 and F4. One piece of Roman CBM was recovered from F4. Where F4 cut the natural it was c 1.8m wide and at the base of the footing trenches it was c 0.9m wide. F2 did not appear to continue to the west to the west of F1 (Fig 2). However, it was not possible to ascertain the relationship between the two ditches.

A ?pit (F5) was identified in the south-western corner of the new pavilion (Fig 2). F2 continued below the base of the footings trench and had a light brown sandy-silt fill from which a sherd of Roman pottery was recovered (see finds section below). F5 was cut by one of a series of modern post-holes (F6, Fig 2). These are presumed to be modern or post-medieval in date as many of them still contained the remnants of wooden posts. A single post-hole (F3) was also identified to the

north-east of F6 (Fig 2). A fragment of peg-tile was recovered from the dark brown sandy-silt fill of F3.

Two undated pits (F7 & F8), both with a high concentration of charcoal in the fill, were also identified during the monitoring. F7 was located in the new service trench and F8 was identified in the large pit for the soakaway (Fig 3). Both pits were shallow and contained no finds or cremated bone.



Plate 1 Site shot showing footings trenches.



Plate 2 The trench for the new services.



Plate 3 The pit for a new soakaway



Plate 4 Ditch F1 cut into the natural sand (L3).

.

5 Finds

by Stephen Benfield

Introduction

A small quantity of Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds was recovered from five features (F1-F5), two layers (L1 & L1/L2), and collected as unstratified (US) finds. The bulk finds consist of pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), clay pipe, glass, animal bone, coal and an iron nail. These are listed by context and described in Table 2. Roman pottery (total: 22 sherds weighing 379 g) was recorded with reference to the Colchester Roman pottery fabric series (*CAR* 10) with the addition of Black surface wares (Fabric BSW) (Martin 2003). Post-Roman pottery (total: 3 sherds weighing 48 g) was recorded with reference to the Colchester post-Roman pottery fabric series (*CAR* 7). The pottery fabrics recorded are listed in Table 1. In addition there is one small find (SF1), a traders token dated to 1652.

Fabric	Description	
Roman:		
BSW Black surface wares		
GX other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares		
TZ mortaria, Colchester and other mortaria imported from the continent		
Post-Roman:		
20 Medieval sandy grey wares (general)		
40 Post-medieval red earthenwares (general)		

Table 1 Pottery fabrics

ctxt	ctxt type	finds no	descriptio n of finds	finds spot dating
F1	ditch	1	Pottery Roman (21@ 147 g) Fabric GX, abraded, much of base and other body sherds from one jar in Black surface ware (Fabric BSW) poss. displaced from a burial? (poss. M1-2/3C), one other greyware sherd	Rom (M1-2/3C?)
F1 (Sx 1)	ditch	8	CBM Roman (1@ 257 g) very abraded flat tile piece, thickness up to 14-16 mm, reddish-brown slightly silty fabric, appears to be from a tile corner - although relatively thin the piece does not appear likely to be peg-tile and is most likely from the back corner of a <i>tegula</i> roof tile, some undulation on the surface close to the corner along one edge may indicate and upper (back) cut away scar	Rom
F1 (Sx 2)	ditch	3	Stone limestone tufa (3@ 3674 g) unworked pieces, two large, one small (presumed Rom)	Rom?
F2	ditch	2	Pottery Roman (2@ 202 g) Fabric GX small abraded sherd in a BSW (prob M1-2C); Fabric TZ abraded rim/flange, Cam 497 variant (M2-E3C)	Rom (M2-E3C)
F3	post-hole	5	CBM Post-Roman (1@ 11 g) peg-tile (prob. 13C - 18/19C) CBM unidentified - possibly Roman (2@ 11 g) abraded fragments,	Med-Post-med
F4	ditch	6	CBM Roman (1@ 78 g) piece of Roman brick or tile	Rom
F5	?pit	10	Pottery Roman (1@ 3 g) Fabric GX, abraded, similar to fabric of jar from F1(1),	Rom (M1-2/3C?)

ctxt	ctxt type	finds no	descriptio n of finds	finds spot dating
			(poss. M1-2/3C)	
L1	topsoil	11	Pottery post-medieval (1@ 9 g) Fabric 40 body sherd (16-18C)	Post-med (16- 18C)
L1/2	Topsoil/ subsoil	4	Pottery medieval (1@ 17 g) Fabric 20 (12-14C) Pottery post-medieval (1@ 11 g) Fabric 40 rim from jar or bowl/chamber pot (16-18C) Clay pipe (1@ 10 g) stem with part of flat round/oval foot, bore 2.5-3 mm (dated prob. 17C) A bone (2@ 138 g) one cow lower leg bone, split (degraded), one medium size mammal lower leg bone (sheep?) Iron nail (1@11 g) light corrosion, probably post-med/mod Coal (1@ 4 g) (prob. post-med/mod)	Post-med/mod
L2	subsoil	7	Pottery Roman (2@ 27 g) Fabric GX one abraded (Rom); Pottery post-medieval (1@ 11 g) Fabric 40 (1@ 7 g) abraded small bowl rim (16-18C) Bone (1@ 35 g) large mammal rib bone (prob cow), sawn through at one end - presumed butchery cut (other end broken) Glass (2@ 652 g) two bottles, one: near complete clear glass mineral water bottle with glass ball stopper, lettering on body in descending scroll: H W STEVENS. OWN BOTTLE. COLCHESTER. IPSWICH. CLACTON on SEA; other: lower part of green glass bottle, lettering on body in edge border to roundel: LIMITED THE COLC(HESTER), part of motif in centre of roundel (bottles dated 19-E20C)	mod
US	unstratified	9	Small Find (SF1) Complete, circular copper-alloy traders token (farthing) in good condition, diameter 16 mm, legend rev. HENREY ARDLEY AT - image of man making candles; obv. Legend BOCKING IN ESSEX centre HA 1652	dated 1652 (post- med)
			(Essex Type 24)	

Table 2 Finds by context and find number

Finds discussion

The earliest closely dated finds are Roman. Three ditches (F1, F2 & F4), which are clearly associated, produced no finds dated later than Roman. The pottery from ditch F1 includes sherds from the lower half of a Roman jar of probable mid 1st-2nd century date (F1(1)). That most of the lower part of the pot is present suggests it may be a disturbed placed pot, possibly from a burial. There is also a large piece of Roman CBM, probable *tegula* roof tile from the mid fill (F1(8)). Ditch F4 produced a piece of Roman tile and the ditch F2 produced pottery dating to the mid 1st-2nd/3rd century, including a sherd from a mortaria of form Cam 497 (variant) which can be broadly dated to the mid 2nd-early 3rd century and is probably Antonine. All of the Roman pottery and the tile piece from ditch F1 are abraded indicating some earlier depositional history (following breakage) before arriving in these contexts.

A small quantity of limestone tufa, probably of Roman date, was recovered from ditch F1(3). Calcareous tufa forms from lime rich spring and steam water in and around deposits of limestone and chalk (Gaunt & Buckland 2002, 141). It can form as a compacted layer, or as here can be porous with voids. It has a low inherent

strength but is a very light stone which is easily worked, however, it is not suitable for detailed carving. Its main recorded uses are in vaulting, although, during the Roman period, its use as an insulating material in bath buildings has also been suggested (Gaunt & Buckland 2002, 141). It was imported into Colchester from an early date as this stone type is associated with the Roman monumental arch (which preceded the Balkerne gate) which can be dated to the period of the early colonia (CAR 3, 122). However, it appears to be a relatively rare building stone type in Colchester, although small quantities have been recovered from a number of excavations in the town. In situ pieces have been recorded used in the construction of the basin of a Roman garden pool or nymphaeum at the Head Street site (CAT Report 268) and chamfered pieces were used in the base of the enclosing wall of a large Roman funerary monument located at the Colchester Royal Grammar School (CAT Report 345).

Two of the ditches which contain Roman finds (F1 & F4) run parallel to each other and correspond with two ditches (F58 & F120) dated as Roman located on the Garrison sports pitch just to the north of the present site (CAT Report 138). Together these features appear to form parts of a ditched trackway.

Apart from a single sherd of Roman pottery from F5 the remainder of the closely dated finds are of medieval, post-medieval and modern date, with almost all being post-medieval and modern. Of interest is an unstratified (US) 17th century traders token, in good condition, of Henrey Ardley of Bocking (Essex) dated 1652 (Williamson 1889, Volume 1, 211, no 24). These traders tokens were struck between 1648-1672 in response to a shortage of official minted small change and were semi-officially tolerated. The value is usually one farthing, a halfpenny or one penny and where not stated is usually a farthing, as is the case with the token here.

6 Discussion

The two north-south orientated ditches appear to correspond with two parallel ditches identified during archaeological excavations at the AWSP to the north of the present site in 2000 (F58 & F120; CAT Report 138) (Fig 3). The ditches were not excavated in 2000 as they were exposed at the limit of the excavation for the new pitch and were not considered to be vulnerable to damage from the groundworks (CAT Report 138, 1). The ditches probably define an 8m wide trackway. No discernable metalling was identified in the 8m corridor between the two ditches in either the 2000 excavations or during this watching brief. The presence of Roman pottery and CBM in the ditch fills and the absence of post-Roman finds suggests that the trackway dates to the Roman period.

The trackway is orientated towards the southern edge of the Roman Circus, the remains of which were identified 150m north of the present site (CAT Report 412). The trackway is laid out on an almost exact north-south alignment (1.9 degrees to the west of true north) and is also roughly at a right angle to the Roman circus (88.8 degrees). This suggests that the trackway was set out by using true north like the legionary fortress, the colony which replaced it, and the Roman circus (CAT Report 412, 1309). However, it is unlikely that the trackway continued to the edge of the Roman circus as the two parallel ditches were not identified during the excavations on Circular Road North (CAT Report 412, 1193). Moreover, burials have been excavated on the alignment of the trackway near the northern edge of the AWSP (CAT Report 138) and beneath Circular Road North (CAT Report 412) (Fig 3). These burials date to the 3rd-4th century which is consistent with the date of the burials to the east of the trackway further south. This suggests that the trackway was in use in the late Roman period and that its northern limit is located somewhere near where ditch F49 identified during the 2000 excavation cuts across the trackway (Fig 3).

A new discovery of this watching brief is that an east-west orientated ditch abutted the trackway at right-angles (Fig 3). The absence of a second ditch to the south of this ditch indicates that it is not another trackway, but is probably the southern boundary of the burial plot. A similar east-west orientated ditch was observed during the 2000 excavation at the AWSP (F49, CAT Report 138).

However, due to an absence of datable finds and based on its relationship with the trackway, this ditch was considered to be post-Roman (CAT Report 138, 11).

The only possible evidence of burial activity in the area is a possible disturbed placed pot and two undated charcoal-rich features. The lack of definite burials is surprising, considering the number of inhumations and cremations previously excavated in this area (Fig 3). Previous excavations in this area including the installation of the electricity cables for the lights in 2007 (CAT Report 452) and the evaluation trenches within the footprint of the new pavilion in 2012 (CAT Report 634), also failed to identify any burials in this area. This would suggest that either the burials are very low density in this area and have not coincided with the investigated areas, or that there is a cemetery boundary somewhere to the north, (perhaps ditch F2), and that burials do not continue into this area. Moreover, (only one other feature can be postulated as Roman) the absence of other Roman-dated features, with the possible exception of F5, indicates that this area was subject to little Roman activity and was perhaps simply an agricultural field.

Alternatively, given the 0.6m-plus depth of modern deposits over the site, it is possible that preparation works for the site in 1925 destroyed Roman burials on that site, particularly as more recent excavations to the north have demonstrated that burials were sometimes only 300mm below ground-level (CAT Report 138).

7 Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Keith Rush of PJB Architects Ltd on behalf of Oliver Hornett, RMPA Services. The project was managed by Adam Wightman, and the site work was carried out by Adam Wightman, Emma Spurgeon, Patrick Spencer and Chris Lister. The project was monitored for Colchester Borough Council by Martin Winter.

8 Archive deposition

The finds, paper and digital archive are held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, off Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession code 2012.05

9 References

Note: all CAT fieldwork reports are available online in .pdf format at http://cat.essex.ac.uk

CAR 3	1981	Colchester Archaeological Report 3: Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex, by P Crummy
CAR 7	2000	Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester 1971-85, by J Cotter
CAR 9	1993	Colchester Archaeological Report 9, Excavations of Roman and Later cemeteries, churches and monastic sites in Colchester, 1971-88, by N Crummy, P Crummy and C Crossan
CAR 10	1999	Colchester Archaeological Report 10: Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86, by R P Symonds and S Wade, ed by P Bidwell and A Croom
CAT	2012	Written scheme of investigation for Archaeological Attendance and monitoring at Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility, Abbey Field, Colchester, Essex
CAT Report 138	2001	Archaeological excavations at the Garrison sports pitch, Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex (Abbey Field), C Crossan
CAT Report 268	forth- coming	Archaeological excavation at 29-39 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, by H Brooks

CAT Report 292	2005	The Colchester Garrison PFI project, Colchester, Essex: a report on the 2003 excavation of Areas 2, 6, 10, August-November 2003. CAT/RPS client report by Howard Brooks and Robert Masefield
CAT Report 345	2006	A Roman temple-tomb at Colchester Royal Grammar School, 6 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, August-September 2005, by H Brooks
CAT Report 412	2011	Archaeological investigations on the 'Alienated Land', Colchester Garrison, Colchester, Essex May 2004-October 2007, by L Pooley, P Crummy, D Shimmin, H Brooks, B Holloway, and R Masefield
CAT Report 424	2007	An archaeological excavation on the Abbey Field carpark, Circular Road North, Colchester, January-February 2007, by H Brooks and B Holloway
CAT Report 452	2007	Report on a negative watching brief (Colchester Garrison athletics track, Circular Road North, Colchester, Essex).
CAT Report 634	2012	Archaeological evaluation at Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility, Abbey Field, Colchester, Essex, January 2012, by C Lister and B Holloway
CBC	2011	Brief for Archaeological Attendance, Recording and Excavation, Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility, Colchester, Essex, by Martin Winter.
CEMAR	1932	The Colchester and Essex Museum Annual Report 1932, by MR Hull
CIMS	2008a	Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester
CIMS	2008b	Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester and Ipswich Museums
EAA 14	2003	Standards for field archaeology in the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology, Occasional Papers, 14, ed by D Gurney
Gaunt, G & Buckland, P	2002	'Sources of building materials in Roman York' in Wilson, P., & Price, J., eds, <i>Aspects of industry in Roman Yorkshire and the north,</i> 133-44
Hull, M R	1958	Roman Colchester
IfA	2008a	Standard and guidance for archaeological evaluation
IfA	2008b	Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials
Martin, T	2003	'Roman pottery' in Germany, M., Excavations at Great Holts Farm, Boreham Essex, EAA 105, 129-134
MoRPHE	2006	Management of research projects in the historic environment (English Heritage)
Williamson, G	1889	Trade tokens issued in the 17th century

10 Contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing:

1 Introduction

Copy of the brief issued by CBC Copy of the WSI produced by CAT Risk assessment 1 x A3 site plans provided by developer 1 x A1 site plans provided by developer

2 Site archive

2.1 Site digital photographic record Attendance register Context sheets (F1-F8, L1-L3) Finds register Site photographic record on CD

3 Research archive

Client report (this one) Finds report

Not in wallet

The finds (1 small bag)

© Colchester Archaeological Trust 2013

Distribution list:

Oliver Hornett, RMPA Services Keith Rush, PJB Architects Ltd Martin Winter, Archaeology Officer for Colchester Borough Council Essex Historic Environment Record



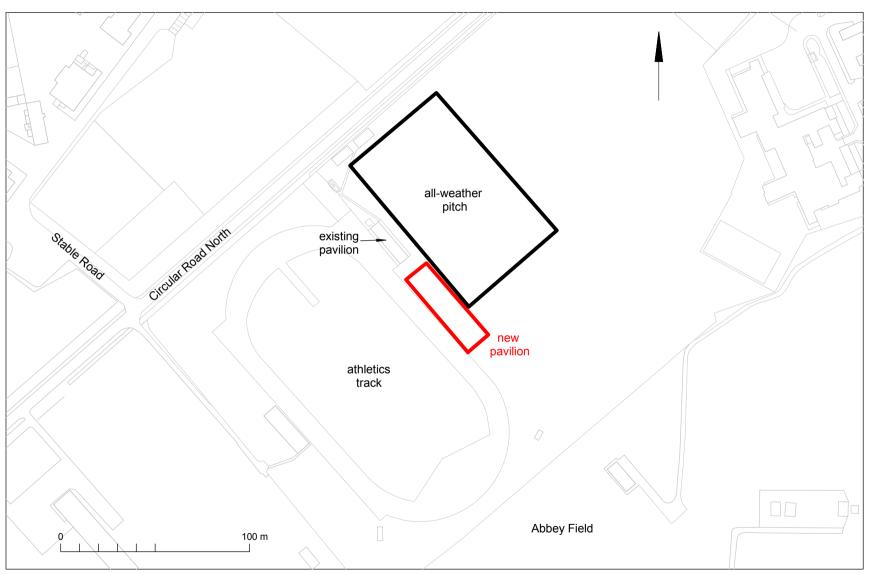
Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House, off Circular Road North Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 07436273304

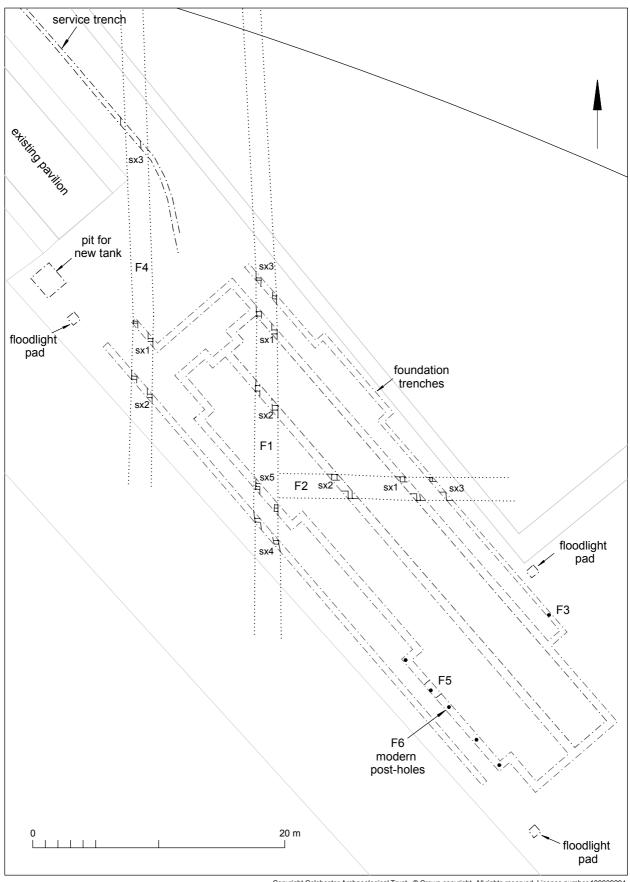
email: archaeologists@catuk.org

checked by: H Brooks date: 20/03/2013



Copyright Colchester Archaeological Trust. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100039294.

Fig 1 Site location.



Copyright Colchester Archaeological Trust. © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number 100039294.

Fig 2 Results.

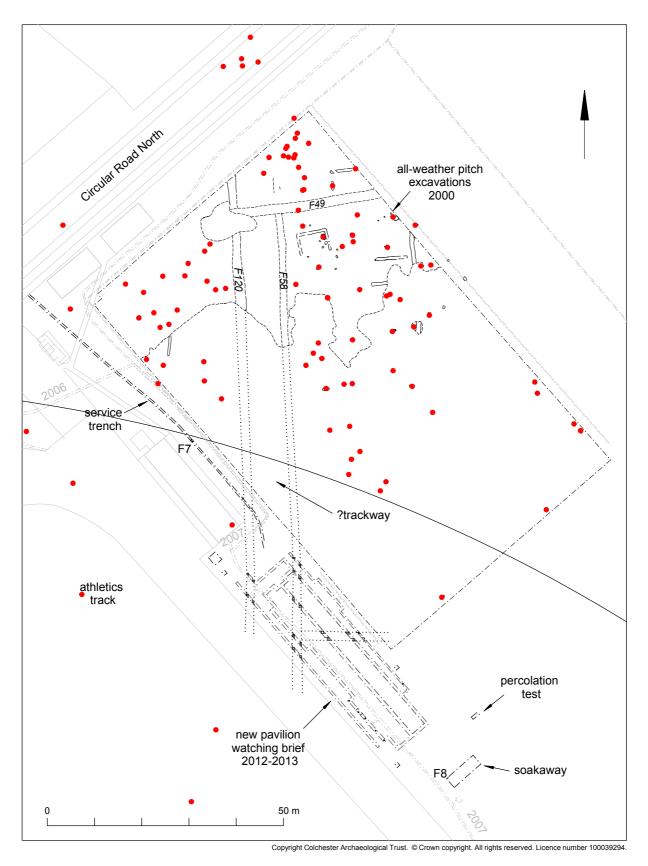


Fig 3 Combined results of the 2000 excavation on the all-weather sports pitch and the 2013 watching brief on the new pavilion. The red dots indicate individual cremation burials

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility, Abbey Field, Colchester, Essex				
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester			
NGR: TL 9946 2433 (c)	CAT Project code: 12/7b			
Type of work: Watching Brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust			
Date of work: September 2012 – March 2013	Size of area investigated: c 0.08 ha			
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester & Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Developer			
Monitored by: Martin Winter of Colchester Borough Council				
Further seasons anticipated? No	Related EHER nos: 13232, 12384			
Final report: CAT Report 686				
Periods represented: Roman, Post-medie	val			
A watching brief by Colchester Archaeological Trust during the construction of a new pavilion at the Colchester Garrison Athletics Facility on Abbey Field recorded eight archaeological features. Of these, three ditches and one pit are tentatively dated to the Roman period. Two of the ditches were north-south orientated, and formed part of a ditched trackway. The third ditch was an east-west orientated boundary ditch that appeared to abut the eastern edge of the trackway. An apparent absence of burials may indicate that the site lies to the south of the cemetery boundary (possibly delineated by the east-west orientated ditch F2) or that preparation works for the site of the Athletics club in 1925 destroyed any Roman burials on the site.				
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Reports 138, 412, 452, and 634				
Keywords: Roman, ditch, ?trackway?	Significance: */**			
Author of summary: Adam Wightman	Date of summary: March 2013			