

Archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park (Halloween Scare and Christmas Market), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ

September 2017



by Sarah Carter

fieldwork by Sarah Carter

commissioned by Will Jenkins
on behalf of Colchester Borough Council

NGR: TL 99870 25334 (centre)

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CAT project ref.: 17/09k

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CHER ref: ECC4129/ECC4130

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CAT Report 1213
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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out in Upper Castle Park to the north and east of Colchester Castle (a Scheduled Monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the set-up and removal of the 2017 Halloween scare and Christmas Market. The site is in an area of the highest archaeological importance, surrounding the Norman Castle and the Roman Temple of Claudius in insula 22 of the Roman town. Aside from a few tent/fence pegs through topsoil, at no point did any works penetrate below ground level. No damage was caused to any of the standing remains and no significant archaeological horizons were damaged as they were buried too deeply (c 800mm deep).

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park, Colchester, Essex which was carried out from 29th September 2017 to 11th January 2018. The work was commissioned by Will Jenkins on behalf of Colchester Borough Council during of the construction of the 2017 Halloween event and later the Christmas Market. It was undertaken by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT). The area extended located on the north and east sides of Colchester Castle.

In response to consultation with Colchester Borough Council Planning Services (CBCPS), Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor Jess Tipper 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 paragraphs 128, 129 and 132 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

All fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology (listed below), and also on the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) (formerly UAD, Urban Archaeological Database).

The monitoring site is located in Upper Castle Park to the south of Colchester Castle Museum and in an area of outstanding archaeological importance. It is within the Roman town, within the precinct of the Temple of Claudius, and within the grounds of the Norman castle¹. The well-published archaeological background (see, for example, Hull 1958, Crummy 1997) need not be repeated here, but it will be useful to summarise the more relevant sites (below) by referring to the Colchester Urban Archaeological Database (UAD).

The temple of Claudius, and its precinct (UAD MONuments 785, 713).

The Temple of Claudius, Insula 22. Founded in the AD 50's (there is some debate whether it would have been built before or after the death of Claudius in AD 54.) The temple served as the centre of the Imperial Cult in the province and dominated the eastern half of the city. It was surrounded by a large precinct. Much of the podium of the temple survives below Colchester castle, although none of the superstructure has survived. The base provides a clear indication of

¹ The site is a Scheduled Monument (EX 1, HA 1002217).

the scale of the building and based on the principles of Roman architect Vitruvius the building would have been over 20m high. The podium measures 32 x 23.5m.

The precinct and monuments within it (UAD MON 713)

A large walled precinct belonging to the Roman Temple of Claudius situated off the modern High Street and within the Castle Park. The current site is only 30m north of the northern edge of the southern precinct wall.

The arcade probably continued to stand until, in C11th it was demolished to provide material for the Norman castle and the foundation of the outer rampart. A watching brief during the excavation of trenches for an extension to the north-west corner of the Conservative Club revealed a N-S wall foundation (ELM1046) constructed mainly of mortared septaria with occasional tile fragments. To the east of the foundation was a thick clay loam deposit assumed to be makeup associated with the wall. The wall and clay deposit appear to be Roman and perhaps marks the western boundary of the temple precinct. The eastern part of the clayey deposit was possibly cut by the castle bailey ditch.

An abortive excavation (EVT3091) was undertaken by the Morant Club in search of the castle ditch and forum wall in 1921. A single trench was cut northwards from the north kerb of High Street, on the site of the War Memorial, opposite All Saints Church. This revealed a wall which Hull believed to be Roman.

The Norman Castle and its bailey ramparts (UAD MONs 679, 764).

MON 679 Norman ditch around the Castle bailey rampart, constructed in 11th century.

Antiquarian Philip Morant wrote: *'The (castle) bailey was formerly encompassed on the south and west sides by a strong wall, in which were two gates. That on the south was the chief. This wall was taken down by Robt. Norfolk Esq. who erected in the room of it a range of houses now standing in the High Street. The west wall reached as far as the east side of St Helen's Lane. On the north and east sides the castle was secured by a deep ditch and strong rampart of earth... This rampart is thrown upon a wall that formerly encompassed either the Castle or Palace of Coel, on the site whereof the Castle is built; the buttress and other parts of which wall have lately been discovered'*. See also EVT3068, EVT3057, EVT3105.

During the excavation of a pipe trench in 1983 (EVT3015), the inner bailey ditch was traced for a total of just over 100 metres. During excavations in 1950 (EVT3121), the ditch inner edge was located where it had removed the metalling of two Roman streets.

In September 1964, demolition of 5 Maidenburgh Street prior to use of the site as a car park made an area of 38m x 10m available for excavation, which was undertaken for 6 weeks in September – October 1964 under the direction of BRK Niblett (Dunnett) for the Colchester Excavation Committee. Two trenches were cut across the line of the Norman rampart which crossed the east end of the site. Beneath 0.6m of modern rubble and garden soil a series of tips of sand, gravel and Roman tile and mortar. The maximum thickness of the deposit was 0.6m which represents the remnant of the rampart. Immediately in front of the rampart on the edge of the bailey ditch was an inhumation burial, possibly of Saxon date. Several loose bones indicated the possibility of other burials. The eastern lip of the Norman bailey ditch was located immediately in front of the rampart.

In 1969 a warehouse at the south end of Ryegate Road was demolished prior to the construction of the Methodist Church. Four trenches were excavated to a depth of 2 m, located so as not to affect the foundations. The east (inner) lip of the bailey ditch was revealed as was its western edge. Part of the bailey rampart was also excavated. The lower levels of this remained intact to a depth of up to 1 m.

Norman bailey rampart surrounding Colchester Castle (UAD MON 764)

Trenches were dug into the north side of the rampart in 1950 (EVT3121). The Norman bank was found to have been built over structural remains walls of the Roman temple precinct (MON713). These remains were covered by a thick level of debris containing occupation material and broken bricks/tile. It was on a layer of chalk which sealed these remains that the rampart was built. The excavations also showed that the Norman bank had been added to in later medieval times.

2015/16 Winter Wonderland assessments

In 2015 a Winter Wonderland event was located in exactly the same place as current works. Two archaeological assessments were carried out in advance on the potential impact of this event on the buried and standing remains in Castle Park (CAT Report 838 and 850). They showed that the significant archaeological remains were too deeply-buried to be affected by the surface-building of the proposed Winter Wonderland. They also highlighted that the only place where standing remains might be impacted upon was the southeastern corner of the ice rink and the eastern side of the skate exchange which would be close to the Norman rampart.

2015 Winter Wonderland (CAT Report 920), 2016 Christmas Market (CAT report 1054)

No significant archaeological horizons were damaged as a result of either previous Christmas event as the remains were buried too deeply (c 800mm deep) and temporary floors were constructed at or above ground level. No damage was caused to any standing remains.

4 Results (Fig 2, Fig 3)

The set-up and removal of the 2017 Halloween scare event and Christmas Market at Castle Park was continuously monitored by CAT staff to ensure that 1) no part of the marquees or market impacted upon below ground archaeology and 2) that no standing remains were compromised or damaged.

The infrastructure of the Halloween event consisted of three large marquees. These were located on the grassed areas to the north and east of the castle. The marquees were held in place by a combination of above ground large water-filled weights, small concrete weights and metal pegs driven in to the ground, none of which penetrated further than the topsoil (200mm).

The infrastructure for the Christmas market consisted of a selection of small funfair rides, chalet stalls, market stalls and a large ice slide. These were all located to the north and east of the castle. Heavy-duty temporary flooring was located on grassed areas below the attractions where the most foot-fall was anticipated. The market stalls, consisting of different sizes small marquees, were erected on the grass. A small number of tent pegs were used to secure these, none long enough to penetrate below topsoil (200mm).

See Appendix 1 for annotated photographs.

5 Outcome

Aside from a few tent/fence pegs through topsoil, at no point did works penetrate below ground level. From previous assessment (based on excavations in Castle Park) it has been concluded that archaeological remains survived at least 800mm below modern ground level, meaning no significant archaeological horizons were damaged due to these events. Furthermore, standing remains, like the Norman rampart and the Castle, showed no impact as a direct result of these events.

6 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Will Jenkins and Colchester Borough Council for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by S Carter. Site plans were prepared by S Carter. The project was monitored for CBCPS by Jess Tipper.

7 References

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

CAT Report 838	2015	<i>An archaeological assessment: Winter Wonderland, Castle Park, Colchester, Essex: June 2015</i>
CAT Report 850	2015	<i>An archaeological assessment: Winter Wonderland, Castle Park, Colchester, Essex: July 2015</i>
CAT Report 920	2016	<i>Archaeological monitoring and recording in Colchester Castle Park, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ: November 2015-February 2016</i>
CAT Report 1054	2017	<i>Archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park (Christmas Market), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ</i>
CAT	2014	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2015	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) - Monitoring of set up and removal of Christmas Market, Colchester Castle Park</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Crummy, P	1997	<i>City of Victory: the story of Colchester – Britain's' first Roman town</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> . East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Hull, M.R.	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> RRCSAL 20
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)

8 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record (previously UAD)
ClfA	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'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c AD 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database (now CHER)
ws	written scheme of investigation

9 Contents of archive

Finds: n/a

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1213)

Site digital photos and log, attendance register, risk assessment

10 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex, CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester Museum under accession code COLEM: 2018.6.

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Distribution list

Will Jenkins, Colchester Borough Council
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 17/01/2018

Appendix 1 Annotated photographs



Photograph 1 North side of Castle before the events, looking E



Photograph 2 East side of Castle before the events, looking S



Photograph 3 Marquee to the north of the Castle, looking E



Photograph 4 Water weights on marquees, looking E



Photograph 5 Solid weights on marquees, looking S



Photograph 6 Marquees to the north and east of the castle, looking SW



Photograph 7 All three marquees, looking SE



Photograph 8 Pegs securing marquees, looking S



Photograph 9 Damage to grass north of the Castle post-events, looking SE



Photograph 10 Damage to grass north of the Castle post-events, looking N



Photograph 11 Damage to grass north of the Castle post-events, looking SE



Photograph 12 Damage to grass and tyre tracks to north-east of the Castle, looking SW



Photograph 13 Damage to grass at the bottom of Norman rampart, looking S



Photograph 14 Damage to grass east of the Castle, looking S



Photograph 15 Damage to the grass east of the Castle, looking NW

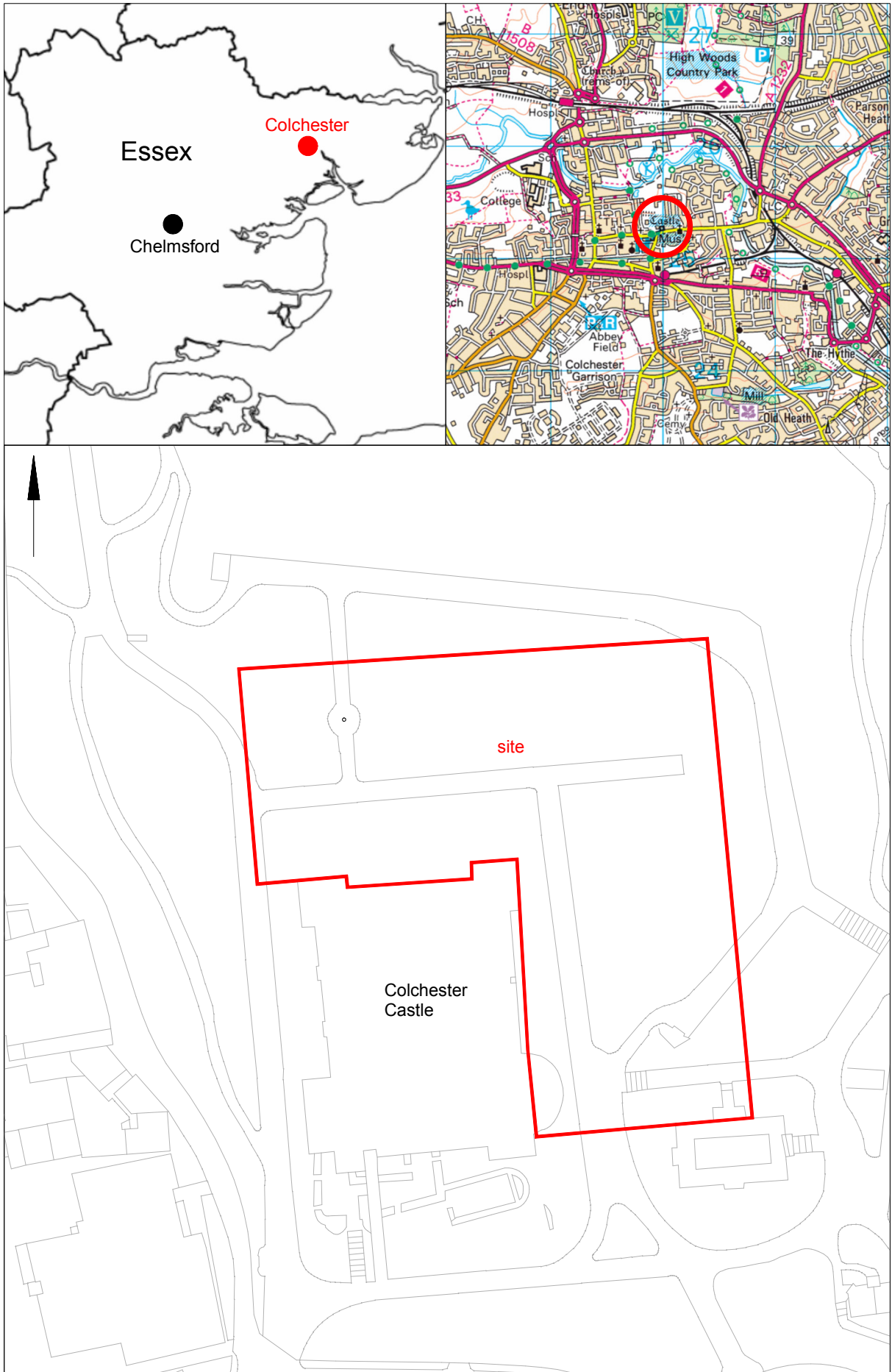


Fig 1 Site location.

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0 50 m



Fig 2 Plan showing layout of 2017 Halloween event.

0 50 m

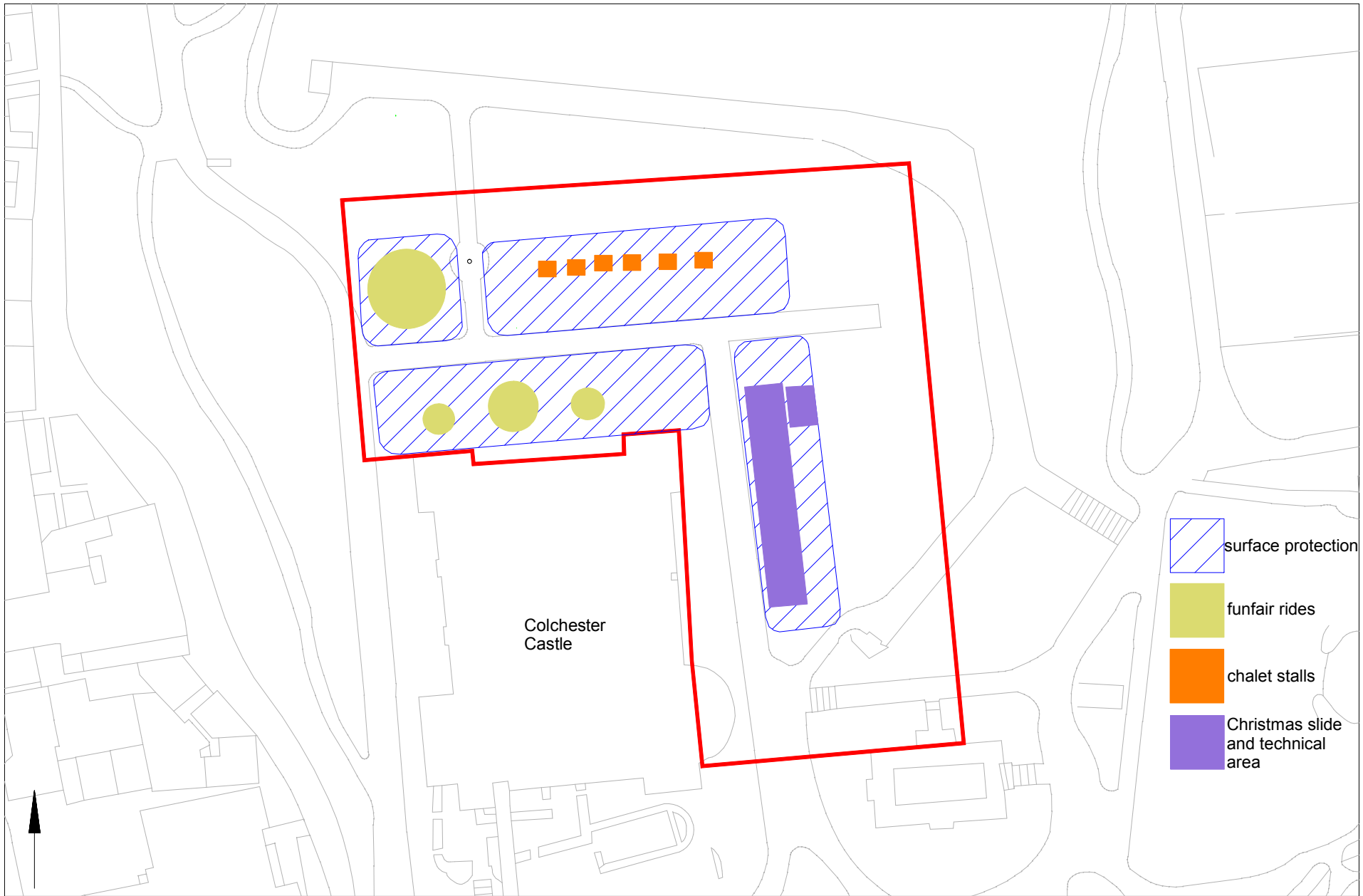


Fig 3 Plan showing layout of 2017 Christmas market.

0 50 m

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Upper Castle Park, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 99870 25334 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 17/09k CHER ref: ECC4129/ECC4130 OASIS ref: colchest3-305996
Type of work: Monitoring and recording	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: September 2017 – January 2018	Size of area investigated: 0.5 ha
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2018.6	Funding source: Colchester Borough Council
Further seasons anticipated? no	Related SM number: SM 1002217
Final report: CAT Report 1213	
Periods represented: –	
Summary of fieldwork results: Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out in Upper Castle Park to the north and east of Colchester Castle (a Scheduled Monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the set-up and removal of the 2017 Halloween event and Christmas Market. The site is in an area of the highest archaeological importance, surrounding the Norman Castle and the Roman Temple of Claudius in insula 22 of the Roman town. No significant archaeological horizons were damaged as they were buried too deeply (c 800mm deep) and, aside from a few tent through topsoil, at no point did any works penetrate below ground level. No damage was caused to any of the standing remains.	
Previous summaries/reports: –	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: –	Significance: –
Author of summary: Sarah Carter	Date of summary: January 2018

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: colchest3-305996

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park (Halloween Event and Christmas Market)
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring and recording was carried out in Upper Castle Park to the north and east of Colchester Castle (a Scheduled Monument, NHLE no. 1002217) during the set-up and removal of the 2017 Halloween event and Christmas Market. The site is in an area of the highest archaeological importance, surrounding the Norman Castle and the Roman Temple of Claudius in insula 22 of the Roman town. No significant archaeological horizons were damaged as they were buried too deeply (c 800mm deep) and, aside from a few tent through topsoil, at no point did any works penetrate below ground level. No damage was caused to any of the standing remains.
Project dates	Start: 29-09-2017 End: 11-01-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	17/09k - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4129 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4130 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2018.6 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Castle Park (Halloween scare and Christmas market)
Postcode	CO1 1TJ
Study area	0.5 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 99870 25334 51.89014330882 0.904890040996 51 53 24 N 000 54 17 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	none
Project design originator	none
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Sarah Carter
Type of sponsor/funding body	Borough Council

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2018.6
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2018.6

Paper Contents "Survey"
Paper Media available "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"

**Project
bibliography 1**

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Archaeological monitoring and recording at Colchester Castle Park (Halloween Scare and Christmas Market), Colchester, Essex, CO1 1TJ
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