

Archaeological monitoring at 2-3 Priory Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2PY

January-February 2018



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1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at 2-3 Priory Street, Colchester during the excavation of seven test-pits dug at the request of building control. The development site is located within the precinct of St Botolph's Priory, and inhumation burials have been previously identified on the site.

The test-pits were excavated through modern layers which overlaid undated accumulation sealing a horizon of demolition/levelling. Two articulated burials were excavated, both females, 25-35 years old (Skeleton 1) and 17-25 years old (Skeleton 2). Samples taken from both skeletons produced radiocarbon dates of 1050-1290 AD and 1040-1270 AD respectively. A third articulated burial on the edge of one of the test-pits was left in situ and unexcavated. In addition, a quantity of disarticulated human bone was recovered from the test-pits (totalling 2974g) along with some animal bone (345g). It is estimated that the disarticulated human bone came from 6 or more individuals.

Evidence would suggest that the development site is located within a medieval lay cemetery associated with St Botolph's Priory or possibly an earlier church thought to predate the priory.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This report presents the results of archaeological monitoring at 2-3 Priory Street, Colchester, Essex which was carried out during 23rd January – 2nd February 2018. The work was commissioned by Chris Young of Unity Structures Ltd, on behalf of Colchester Islamic Cultural Association, during the excavation of seven exploratory test-pits and was undertaken by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in February 2014 (application No.140569) proposing internal alterations to the existing building and extensions to the side and rear of property no.3. In February 2017 groundworks for the alterations/extensions took place without an archaeological mitigation strategy in place and, consequently, several inhumation burials were disturbed. In March 2017, a recovery excavation was conducted by CAT (see CAT Report 1138).

Following the conclusion of the building work, in late 2017 a structural engineer ordered that seven test-pits should be excavated to ascertain the structural integrity of the concrete foundations underpinning the rear and side extensions.

As the site lies within an area identified by the Colchester Historical Environment Record (CHER) as possessing a high potential for archaeological deposits, following consultation with Colchester Borough Council Planning Services (CBCPS), Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor Jess Tipper advised that 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).

As this current phase of test-pitting followed on from the 2017 recovery excavation, all current archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Excavation*, written by Jess Tipper (CBCPS 2017), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with CBCPS (CAT 2017).

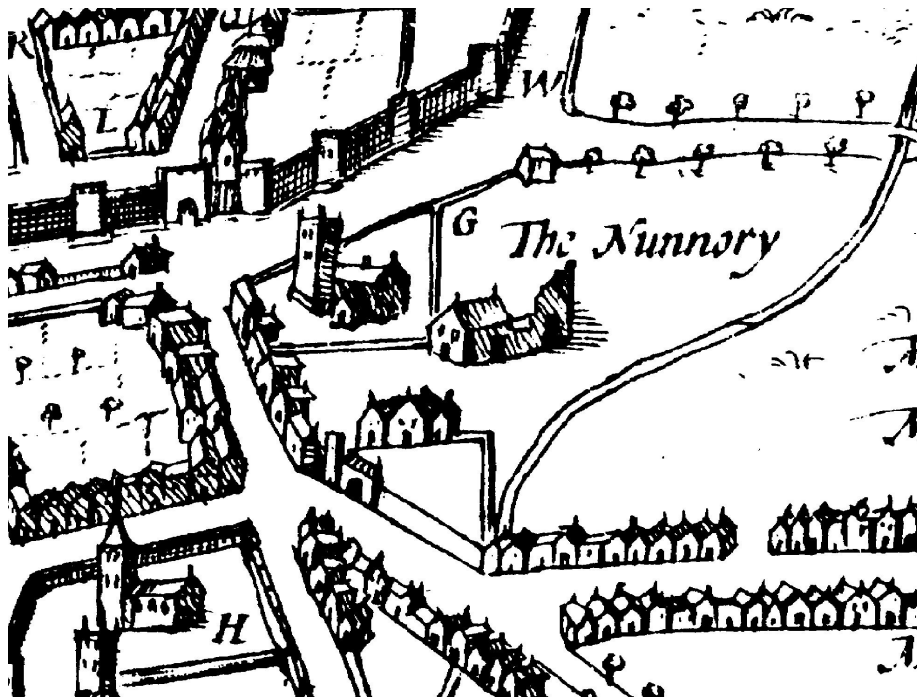
In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (English Heritage 2006), and with *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14 and 24). This report mirrors standards and practices contained in the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological*

watching brief (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2014b).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive, and also the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) accessed via the Colchester Heritage Explorer.

The development site is located outside and immediately to the south of the historic Roman walled town and a number of Roman remains have been found in the vicinity. It is also located within the precinct of St Botolph's Priory Church (CHER MCC425). The scheduled monument of St Botolph's Priory (NHLE no. 1013764) was founded in 1104, probably on or near a pre-existing church (Crummy 2001, 150). It was the first Augustinian foundation in Britain but was not wealthy, which probably explains why the church was not finished or dedicated until 1177 (*ibid*, 149). It was eventually demolished following the Dissolution in 1536. The nave continued to function for parish and civic services but was badly damaged during the Siege of 1648 and the building consequently fell out of use. Now only the walls of the nave of the priory church remain standing. The full extent of the Priory precinct is not known, but it is assumed to stretch from Priory Street southwards to Magdalen Street and west to St. Botolph's Street. The eastern boundary is unknown.



Map 1 Speed's map of 1610 showing St Botolph's Priory Church.

Hull noted the discovery of nine skeletons in this area in 1939 (MCC1396-1404) with others along Priory Street (MCC9296), which were assumed to be medieval in date, though it is possible they may have been Roman (Hull 1958, 293;). Roman cemetery areas surround the town on all sides, though burials are much less frequent on this side of the historic town (Hull 1958 and CAR 9).

Trial-trenching to the northeast of the standing remains of the Priory in 1986 revealed traces of the north transept (Shimmin 1988). Two burials of probable medieval date were located to the north of the transept. Further details of the east end of the church,

including a possible crypt and more burials, were uncovered during excavations in 1991 (Crummy 2001, 150). The remains of a Roman building were also revealed, which was considered probably part of an extra-mural settlement rather than a Roman church or 'martyrium' (Crummy 2001, 150) (MCC2067-2098).

It is unclear to what extent the other priory buildings were reused following the Dissolution. Limited evidence of these was uncovered to the south of the priory church during exploratory excavations in 1987 (Col Arch 2, 15). During the 19th and 20th centuries, buildings began to encroach significantly onto the former precinct of the priory.

Excavations in 1970 some 35m to the east at 30 St Julian Grove revealed stratified deposits of the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD (MCC2083). A floor of red tessera has been recorded to the north under Priory Street adjacent to the property in question (MCC1091). Monitoring in 2010 (CAT Report 567) within the Priory as part of landscaping works uncovered gravestones and a well of probable 18th- or 19th-century date.

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on the development site in 2014 (CAT Report 800). Roman deposits, including at least one *in situ* surface and debris from the demolition of a Roman building, were identified at the northern end of the evaluation trench. The Roman deposits on the site had been truncated by medieval inhumation burials associated with the Priory of St Botolph's. A significant quantity of disarticulated human bone was recovered and reburied and two articulated skeletons, both young individuals, were uncovered at depths of only 0.68m and 0.74m below the modern ground level.

In March 2017, a recovery excavation was conducted by CAT (see CAT Report 1138) in response to a series of groundworks (for alterations/extensions) which had taken place without an archaeological mitigation strategy in place and were therefore not archaeologically monitored. The recovery excavation revealed the disturbed remains of a minimum of eleven, possibly twelve, human skeletons probably from a cemetery most likely associated with St Botolph's Priory cemetery. Animal bone and a piece of worked bone were also recovered.

4 Aim

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken to excavate and record any surviving archaeological remains disturbed by the building control test-pits.

5 Results (Figs 2-4)

Seven test-pits were excavated by the contractor under archaeological supervision. Each pit was of a slightly different size and shape, and excavated to varying depths, until either natural was reached or the concrete foundations were fully observed. The layers encountered in each test pit are described below, see Table 1 for full descriptions. Finds from layers were noted on site but not retained for post-excavation analysis.

Test-pit 1 (1.2m by 1m): Concrete and crush (L1, c 0.2m thick) overlaid a modern accumulation layer (L2, c 0.55m thick) which sealed an earlier accumulation layer (L3, c 1.6m thick). At the base of the test-pit was a layer of demolition / levelling (L10).

Test-pit 2 (1.35m by 1.3m): A layer of modern imported soil (L5, c 0.32m, probably dump from the February 2017 unsupervised groundworks) overlaid a concrete slab and crush (L1, c 0.17m thick). Beneath was an accumulation layer (L3, c 1.4m thick) sealing a layer of demolition / levelling (L4, c 0.2m thick). Two thick patches of lime mortar were given the context numbers F1 and F3 during fieldwork. These patches are now

thought to be part of demolition / levelling layer L4. Inhumation burial F2 was excavated (see below for details).

Test-pit 3 (1.3m by 0.85m): A layer of modern imported soil (L5, c 0.3m, probably dump from the February 2017 unsupervised groundworks) overlaid a concrete slab and crush (L1, c 0.2m thick). Beneath was an accumulation layer (L3, c 1.4m thick) sealing a layer of demolition / levelling (L4).

Test-pit 4 (1m by 1m): A layer of modern imported soil (L5, c 0.24m, probably dump from the February 2017 unsupervised groundworks) overlaid a concrete slab and crush (L1, c 0.18m thick). Beneath was an accumulation layer (L3, c 0.95m thick).

Test-pit 5 (0.85m by 0.8m): Test-pit 5 was excavated within the footprint of the 2014 CAT evaluation trench (CAT Report 800) which was backfilled and covered in concrete. A layer of modern imported soil (L5, c 1.27m, probably dump from the February 2017 unsupervised groundworks) overlaid a concrete slab and crush (L1, c 0.25m thick). Beneath was an accumulation layer (L3, c 0.75m thick), which in this trench was probably the backfill of the 2014 evaluation trench. This sealed a layer of demolition / levelling (L4, c 0.6m thick). Natural sand (L11) was encountered at a depth of c 2.87m.

Neither the metallised surface nor compact layer of mortar and silty-clay identified in the 2014 evaluation trench (CAT Report 800, L4-L5) were recorded in this test-pit. However, as the test-pit stepped in slightly as it was excavated, it may have missed these layers which would have been on the far western edge of the test-pit.

Test-pit 6 (1.7m by 1.3m): A layer of modern imported soil (L5, c 0.37m, probably dump from the February 2017 unsupervised groundworks) overlaid a concrete slab and crush (L1, c 0.16m thick). Beneath was an accumulation layer (L3, c 0.7m thick). Inhumation burial F4 was excavated (see below for details).

Test-pit 7 (1.3m by 1.1m): A layer of modern hardcore (L6, 0.1m thick) overlaid modern levelling (L7, c 0.3m thick) and accumulation layers (L8, 0.35m thick). Beneath was an accumulation layer (L3, c 0.8m thick) sealing a layer of demolition / levelling (L9).

Layer no.	In test-pit nos.	Layer	Layer description	Date
L1	1, 2, 4, 6	Concrete	Concrete slab and crush	Modern
L2	1	Modern accumulation	Friable/firm, moist, dark black sandy-loam with inclusions of hardcore, CBM, slate, charcoal and oyster shell	Modern
L3	All pits.	Accumulation	Soft/friable, dry dark brown/black silty-loam with fragments/flecks of oyster shell and daub, <4% CBM fragments and <5% stone.	-
L4	2, 3, 5	Demolition / levelling	Friable/firm, dry, medium brown silty-clayey-sand, <6% CBM, <5% stone, occasional to frequent fragments of lime mortar. Two thicker patches of lime mortar in test-pit 2 were numbered F1 & F3 during fieldwork, but are now thought to be part of L4.	-
L5	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	Imported soil, probably from Feb 2017 unsupervised groundworks	Friable/firm, medium-dark brown/black silty-loam with inclusions of oyster shell and daub, <5% CBM and <5% stone.	Modern

L6	7	Hardcore	Layer of hardcore.	Modern
L7	7	Levelling layer	Soft, dry, dark brown sandy-loam with inclusions of modern CBM, cement and concrete.	Modern
L8	7	Modern accumulation	Firm, moist, dark brown sandy-loam with inclusions of modern CBM and concrete.	Modern
L9	7	Demolition / levelling	Lime mortar and septaria.	-
L10	1	Demolition / levelling	Soft, moist, medium brown silty-clayey-sand with frequent lime mortar, and occasional CBM, septaria fragments and stone	-
L11	5	Natural	Natural sands	Post-glacial

Table 1 List of layers

Undated accumulation layer L3 appears to seal a demolition / levelling horizon (variously numbered as L4, L9, L10, F1 and F3). This horizon seemingly crosses the whole development site, and was only missed in test-pits 4 and 6 as they did not go deep enough.

Articulated inhumation burials were identified in test-pits 2 and 6 (see below), as well as a quantity of disarticulated human bone from all of the test-pits.



Photograph 1 Test-pit 1, looking NE



Photograph 2 Test-pit 5, looking W



Photograph 3 Test-pit 7, looking SSE

The inhumation burials

Inhumation burial F2, test-pit 2 (Skeleton 1)

The partial remains of an east-west inhumation burial (F2) were excavated in test-pit 2.

The grave had been cut through L4/F3 and sealed by L3, and was located at approximately 16.34m AOD. The bottom half of the skeleton had been removed by recent unsupervised groundworks, but most of the rest of the body had survived. Buried supine, it was the skeleton of a young adult female, approximately 25 to 35 years old (see Section 7 below for a full analysis).

As no dating evidence was recovered from the burial, a sample of skeletal bone from this individual was submitted for radiocarbon dating at SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory (SUERC-80509; see Appendix 2). A 2-sigma calibrated date (at 95.4% confidence) of 1050 to 1290 AD was produced, indicating that the skeleton was buried between these dates.

The partial remains of a second articulated skeleton were noted immediately to the south of F2, but as no further excavation of this test-pit was required, it was left *in-situ*.



Photograph 4 Inhumation burial F2, looking W

Inhumation burial F4, test-pit 6 (Skeleton 2)

Most of an east-west inhumation burial (F4) were excavated in test-pit 6.

The grave-cut was difficult to determine but it was sealed by L3 and is likely to have been cut through the demolition/levelling horizon recorded across the site, but which was not fully exposed in this test-pit. It was located at approximately 17.48m AOD. The

feet of this skeleton appeared to have been removed during the unsupervised groundworks, but otherwise had mostly survived. Buried supine, it was the skeleton of a young female, approximately 17-25 years old (see Section 7 below for a full analysis).

As no dating evidence was recovered from the burial, a sample of skeletal bone from this individual was submitted for radiocarbon dating at SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory (SUERC-80510; see Appendix 2). A 2-sigma calibrated date (at 95.4% confidence) of 1040 to 1270 AD was produced, indicating that the skeleton was buried between these dates.



Photograph 5 Inhumation burial F4, looking west

6 Finds

There were no archaeological finds other than animal bone, which is recorded below along with the human remains.

7 Human and animal bone

by Julie Curl

Introduction

A total of 6245g of bone was recovered from the 2018 excavations, consisting of 440 elements, which are quantified in Table 2.

Two articulated skeletons and a large number of mixed bones were recovered from test-pits. The bulk of these are disturbed and redeposited human remains, but the assemblage included a number of animal bones.

The analysis has shown remains of several people, with a wide range of ages including adults and children. The animal remains include elements from two small dogs.

Skeleton number / test-pits	Total number of elements	Total weight
Skeleton 1 (F2)	141	1225g
Skeleton 2 (F4)	124	1821g
Test Pits	175	3199g
TOTALS	440	6245g

Table 2 Quantification of the bone assemblage

7.1 Human remains

Methodology

The human bone was examined to assess the elements present. Skeletons were recorded following guidelines by Mays (2005) and Brickley and McKinley (2004). The most frequent, femurs and humeri, were set aside for counts to determine the minimum number of individuals (MNI). Femurs were generally fragmented, one almost complete was measured for a height estimation and femur heads were measured to determine sex (following Bass, 1995). Humeri were measure to demonstrate size range. Juvenile bones, when complete, were measured to estimate age (following Schaefer; Black and Schueuer, 2009). Fusion of bone and tooth eruption and wear were noted when possible to allow estimation of ages following Brothwell (1981).

The human assemblage (Appendix 1)

Quantification

A total of 416 pieces of human bone, weighing a total of 5900g, was recovered at this site, these amounts are quantified further in Table 3.

Skeleton Number / Test Pits	Total number of elements	Total weight
Skeleton 1 (F2)	141	1225g
Skeleton 2 (F4)	121	1701g
Test-pits	154	2974g
TOTALS	416	5900g

Table 3 Quantification of the human bone

Minimum number of individuals (MNI)

The most frequent limb bones in the assemblage were the femurs and humeri and these were used to estimate the MNI. It is estimated that there were at least eight individuals in this assemblage (including the two articulated burials), possibly more.

Articulated remains – Skeletons 1 and 2

Skeleton 1 (F2)

Skeleton 1 is that of a female aged from tooth wear to approximately 25-35, probably nearer to the maximum in her age range, possibly older. The skeleton found is incomplete, with the skull mostly intact, the mandible, scapulas, vertebrae, sacrum, pelvic bones and some of the right arm. The bones are quite gracile indicating a quite small woman of a probable light build. The features and shape of the skull suggest some mixed race and probable Asian ancestry. This female had strong muscle attachments on the upper right humerus, which would suggest some manual labour. Degenerative disease was observed on all the vertebrae seen, again suggesting probable manual effort. One right rib shows a healed break, with such injuries common

and even resulting from vomiting or sneezing, as well as conflict. Severe anaemia was seen in both upper orbits, which could indicate heavy menstrual bleeding, a poor or restricted diet or even tumours or parasites, which can all result in a prolonged and severe lack of iron. A sinus infection was possible on the right side of the face. The teeth present are in good condition, although showing some wear from a coarse diet, with just a little calculus formation on the front teeth and molars.

Skeleton 2 (F4)

Skeleton 2 is a young female, aged from tooth wear to approximately 17-25 years, with probable age near to the lower end of this range. The skull was incomplete, part of the mandible was present, along with some ribs, vertebrae, upper right arm, the left arm, pelvic bones and most of the legs, although fragmented. All of the bones seen are unfused and sutures on the skull mostly unfused. There is very little wear on the first and second molars and the third molars were visible in the mandible, but they were unerupted. A little calculus was seen on the front teeth. The measurements of the femur provide an estimate of the height of Skeleton 2 of 157cm or around 5 feet 2 inches. Both of the upper humeri of skeleton 2 showed strong muscle attachments, but those on the left arm were more pronounced, which could suggest she was left-handed or that she had a manual task involving greater effort with the left arm.

General assemblage observations

Ages of individuals present in this assemblage

One juvenile limb bone was recovered complete and could be measured to estimate the age (following Schaefer; Black and Schueuer. 2009). Ages were estimated on fusion of bones for most of the test-pit remains.

Infants and the under fives

Younger children's limb bones were recovered. The youngest child in the test-pit assemblage was estimated to be approximately 4.5 to 5 years old. The previous assemblage from this site (Curl, 2017) did include a similar aged child, along with individuals as young as a few months old. These are likely to be children given to the priory by parents unable to look after them themselves.

Teenage

SK2 has most limb bones and sutures on the skull unfused and her teeth show little wear, all suggesting she was in her late teens, most likely between 16 and 19.

Adults

Most remains are from adult individuals, although none from this assemblage suggest mature. Some arthritic changes were seen, along with regular degenerative wear on the vertebrae, both can be indicators of more mature individuals, but can also suggest a hard life, perhaps with a poor diet and regular physical activity that can cause strain and wear.

The burial SK1 is a relatively young adult female of approximately 25 to 35 years old.

Sexes of the remains

Femurs were the most frequent bone present that would allow determination of sex in the test-pit remains. The test-pit bone produced four elements identifiable as male and one as female.

Both of the articulated skeletons were identified as female.

Stature

Although much of this assemblage produced elements that were not complete, some indications of stature were clear from the size of fragments and their robustness. The females in the assemblage was small, although the teenager could have potentially

grown more. Males varied considerably, with small individuals to a large and robust male. One complete humerus suggests a height of one adult at approximately 165cm or 5 feet 5 inches, which is around average. The frugal diet in the priory, if the residents spent their life there, might have contributed to this.

Pathologies

Degenerative wear

Degenerative wear was seen on many vertebrae, with most extreme wear seen on lumbar vertebrae. This can be an age related problem and can suggest occupational wear and may indicate manual labour. Manual labour is also suggested by many bones showing strong muscle attachments.

Arthritic problems

Arthritic changes were seen, but none were particularly severe. Some arthritic changes were seen on humeri, the radius and the proximal tibia, more so around shoulder and knee joints, again perhaps indicating manual labour or occupational damage.

Dental attrition and pathologies

Wear of the occlusal surfaces was seen on some of the teeth recovered, suggesting a coarse, grainy diet with probable gritty inclusions, especially from the grinding of flour for the bread.

Cavities and tartar were virtually non-existent, suggesting a reasonably healthy diet and one that is low in sugar.

Anaemia

Skeleton 1, a female in the age group of 25-35 years old, showed quite severe pitting in the upper orbits, a common sign of anaemia. Anaemia can have several causes, for women, heavy bleeding during menstruation can be a cause, especially if there is a problem such as fibroids (uterine tumours) or endometriosis. Blood letting, a common practice in religious institutions, can obviously exacerbate this problem for a woman. General tumours can cause anaemia, as can intestinal parasites. People of Asian or African origin can sometimes suffer with sickle-cell anaemia and the skull of this skeleton shows some mixed race features that might suggest some Asian origins or ancestry. A poor diet can sometimes have an effect on anaemia, especially diets that reduce red meat or green leafy vegetables and beans; so perhaps a restricted diet in the Priory might have contributed to the problem.

Levels of activity

There are many adult bones in this assemblage that show strong muscle attachments in the arms and legs, suggesting manual labour. A further indication of strain on the body comes from the frequent degenerative wear seen on vertebrae and the frequent arthritic changes and some arthritic problems.

Interesting is the variation in the strong muscle attachments on humeri with the two female skeletons in the assemblage. With SK1, the strong muscles were on the right arm, with SK2, the strongest muscle attachments were on the left arm; this might suggest that SK2 could have been left-handed or that she had tasks that required greater effort with the left arm.

Discussion

St Botolph's Priory was a small foundation in close proximity to the more powerful St John's Abbey, with St Botolph's probably existing in relative poverty. Absence of wealth is certainly suggested by the state of health of the individuals present. A frugal diet is suggested, with coarse grain and a lack of sugars from the health of the teeth. Poor diet may have contributed to the anaemia. The skeletons showed little evidence of the wealth, dietary excess and subsequent ill-health that is observed with the more wealthy

religious institutions. The frugal diet might be suggested by the faunal remains recovered with the human bones in this assemblage, which suggested more poor cuts of meat and a simple range of domestic stock used, quite unlike the wide range of meats, expensive dishes and lavish meals consumed at wealthy Benedictine establishments.

The priory residents were expected to be male, and the assemblage is mixed as was the previous assemblage (Curl, 2017). The presence of the two female burials in this assemblage, including a teenager, would suggest residents. It may be possible that the older woman (Skeleton 1) in this assemblage had been resident at the priory for care of the children, perhaps the teenager (Skeleton 2) had been a child given to the priory. It was common practice for a variety of people to give unwanted children to such institutions for their care, even newborns, which would need the care of a wet-nurse. At least three to four very young children are in the previous assemblage (Curl, 2017) and one infant in this assemblage, so a woman may have been in charge of their care.

Many strong muscle attachments were seen and although arthritis was present and there was degenerative wear, none was especially severe and a good deal of labour might have been in the form of involvement with vegetable and food production and cleaning duties and maintenance of the priory.

7.2 The animal bone assemblage (Appendix 1)

A total of 345g of animal bone, consisting of twenty-four elements, was recovered from the human bone assemblage. Most of these remains are distributed amongst the test pit, with three elements from Skeleton 2. A summary of the animal bone is shown in Table 4.

Test-pit	Finds number	Animal count	Animal species	Comments
1/3	1	1	cattle	cattle rib fragment, chopped.
1	2	1	cattle	cattle intermediate phalange.
7	3	1	cattle	radius fragment
3	4	2	sheep	metacarpal, radius
6	6	1	sheep	metatarsal
7	7	1	sheep	left half of chopped skull
6	8	6	sheep, pig, dog	sheep metatarsal and metacarpal and distal femur; pig jaw fragment, small dog femur (terrier sized).
2	9	2	cattle, sheep	cattle rib heavily cut, sheep femur
6	11	2	cattle, pig	cattle pph, pig juv calcaneus
6	17	3	sheep, dog	sheep MTs, small dog tibia 140mm
SK 2	SK2	3	sheep	metacarpal, radius, fragment of shaft from a large mammal

Table 4 Summary of the animal remains

Cattle (5 contexts) and sheep (7 contexts) are the most frequent of the animal remains. Most of these from lower leg and foot bones, with some better quality meat-bearing bones such as the radius and rib present. Half a sheep skull was found in test-pit 7 (finds number 7); the skull had been chopped in half, which would suggest access to the brain for meat. One test pit produced porcine remains: a juvenile pig calcaneus (finds number 11) and a pig jaw fragment (finds number 8). Much of the cattle, sheep and pig was butchered, attesting to the use for meat.

The remains of a small dog(s) were also found in test-pit 6 consisting of a femur (finds number 8) and tibia (finds number 17). Metrical data was retrieved from the tibia, which shows an estimated shoulder height of 40 to 41cm or approximately 16 inches. The

build of the dog is fairly light, suggesting a breed such as a small whippet, a taller terrier or spaniel.

The animal remains are broadly similar to the previous animal remains from the site, with a dominance of sheep and cattle, poorer cuts of meat and remains of small dog (Curl, 2017). The low number of the good quality main meat-bearing bones would perhaps indicate the frugal diet.

The dog bones from this excavation are of the same stature of the previous excavation. Small dogs may well have been kept for pest control. Black rats, mice and voles would have been a problem around food supplies, especially grain. Dogs might have a use for keeping the vegetable gardens and buildings free of pests. There is the possibility that the dogs may have been a companion and pet, and even small dogs can act as a guard dog. Reeves (1997) mentions that nuns would have pets such as rabbits and hounds and that 'the keeping of pets was common place among the nuns of Medieval England'. It is widely known that St. Julian of Norwich had a pet cat that she was very fond of, with which she is pictured in one window in Norwich cathedral.

8 Conclusion

Archaeological monitoring of test-pits at 2-3 Priory Street revealed modern layers overlaying undated accumulation which sealed a horizon of demolition / levelling. Cut into this horizon were two articulated inhumation burials, both females, 17-25 years old and 25-35 years old. A third articulated burial identified on the edge of one of the test-pits was left *in situ* and not excavated. In addition, a quantity of disarticulated human bone was recovered from the test-pits (totalling 2974g) along with some animal bone (345g). It is estimated that the disarticulated human skeletal remains came from 6 or more individuals, which included men, women, children, teenagers and adults. Furthermore, another 25kg of disarticulated human remains were catalogued as part of the 2017 recovery excavation (CAT Report 1138). It was estimated that this assemblage consisted of 11 to 12 individuals and included the remains of men, women, infants, teenagers and adults.

2-3 Priory Street is located within the precinct of St Botolph's Priory. The priory was founded in 1104, probably on or near a pre-existing church, but was not finished or dedicated until 1177 (Crummy 2001, 149-150). Radiocarbon dates from both inhumations, 1050-1290 AD (Skeleton 1) and 1040-1270 AD (Skeleton 2), indicate that the burials on the development site were of a medieval date, but could be contemporary with either the earlier church or the priory. On the basis of the 2-sigma calibrated date (at 95.4% confidence), there is a 92.4% chance that Skeleton 1 (F2) dates to between 1150 to 1290 AD, suggesting that it is perhaps more likely that these burials post-date the founding of the priory.

Other inhumation burials recorded to the east/northeast of St Botolph's Priory include: nine skeletons recorded by Hull in 1939 (CHER MCC1396-1404) with others located on Priory Street (MCC9296); two skeletons recorded in 1986 (MCC2067-2098); two inhumations discovered in footings in 2000 (CAT Report 96); and two east-west inhumation burials recorded (but not excavated) on the development site during an archaeological evaluation in 2014 (CAT Report 800). Little dating evidence was recovered from any of these burials, but given their proximity to St Botolph's Priory they were assumed to be medieval.

The location of the development site within the precinct of St Botolph's Priory, the radiocarbon dates from Skeletons 1 and 2, the discovery of remains of men, women and children, and the 15+ burials previously identified in the vicinity together indicate that 2-3 Priory Street is likely to lie within a medieval lay cemetery associated with St Botolph's Priory or possibly the earlier church.

9 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Chris Young of Unity Structures Ltd and Colchester Islamic Cultural Association for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister and carried out by N Rayner, E Hicks, A Tuffey and S Carter. Figures were prepared by B Holloway and S Carter. The project was monitored for the CBCPS by Jess Tipper.

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

- | | | |
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| CifA | 2014b | <i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i> |
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10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CBCPS	Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
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.
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	period from c AD 1500 to c 1800
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsj	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: all skeletal remains will be reburied

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1236)

CBCPS evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Original site record (feature and layer sheets, finds record, plans)

Site digital photos and log

12 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: 2017.32.

Distribution list

Chris Young, Unity Structures Ltd
Colchester Islamic Cultural Associaton
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



Colchester Archaeological Trust

Roman Circus House,
Roman Circus Walk,
Colchester,
Essex, CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: lp@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 30.4.2018

Date: 25.7.2018

Appendix 1 Skeleton record sheets for SK1 and SK2 and catalogue of all bone from test pits

SK 1 Inhumation

SK No	Other No's	Condition
SK1	F2	Good, but fragmented
Age	Age estimate	Sex
Adult	25 to 35	Female
Completeness	Fragment/Element count	Weight (g)
Incomplete	141	1225g
Associated with	Additional bone	Other finds
	None	None
Elements present		
Skull, mandible, teeth, vertebrae, ribs, scapulas, clavicle, humeri, radius/ulna, pelvis, sacrum, sternum,		

In situ tooth record

Right	Isolated teeth present												Left			
Right	LRM3	<i>LRM</i>	LRM1	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	LLM1	LLM2	LLM3	Left
		2														

Molar attrition scores:

	Right	M3	M2	M1	Left	M1	M2	M3
Maxilla								
Mandible		1-2	<i>isolated</i>	4+		4+	<i>isolated</i>	1-2

Dental

Calculus	Low, especially rear molars
Hypoplasia	none
Periodontal disease	none
Cavities	none
Abscesses	?possible abscess, more likely a sinus infection on right side close to eye

Cranial indexes

Cranial index	L = 155.4, breg-porion = 131.32, breg-basion = 130.02
Cranial Length-Height index	
Mean Height index	
Total facial height	
Upper facial index	101.8
Palatal index	
Nasal index	
Orbital index	Left: Ht = 35.4, bdth = 38.2 Right: Ht34.8, bdth = 40.5
Bigonial Bdth/W	
Max bicondylar Bdth	
Mandibular corpus L	73.3
Mand.Ht	60.2
Symph.Ht	28.1

Trauma	Healed fracture on rib
Pathologies	
Healed fracture on rib, degenerative disease on all vertebrae seen, severe anaemia, sinus infection/gum infection, some calculus	
Comments	
Some Mongaloid features (Bass, 1985) – sloping sides to skull, flat forehead	
Some fusing of sutures	
Strong muscle attachments on right upper humerus	

SK 2 Inhumation

SK No	Other No's	Condition
SK 2	F4	Good, but fragmented
Age	Age estimate	Sex
Teenager	16-19	Female
Completeness	Fragment/Element count	Weight (g)
Incomplete	124	1821g (120g is animal bone)
Associated with	Additional bone	Other finds
	Animal bones – sheep metacarpal, sheep radius, cattle/equid shaft fragment	3 animal bones which were 120g of the total weight.
Elements present		
Rear and base of skull, mandible, upper and lower limbs, scarce phalanges + MT's/MCs, scapulas, pelvis, few vertebrae, rib fragments		

In situ tooth record

Right				Left			
Right	LRM3	LRM2	LRM1	LLM1	LLM2	LLM3	Left
NE				NE			

Molar attrition scores:

	Right	M3	M2	M1	Left	M1	M2	M3
Maxilla								
Mandible		Not erupted	1-2	3		1-2	3	Not erupted

Dental

Calculus	Slight on front incisors
Hypoplasia	None
Periodontal disease	None
Cavities	None
Abscesses	None

Cranial indexes

Cranial index	
Cranial Length-Height index	
Mean Height index	
Total facial height	
Upper facial index	
Palatal index	
Nasal index	
Orbital index	
Bigonial Bdth/W	96.3
Max bicondylar Bdth	113.4
Mandibular corpus L	78.5
Mand.Ht	54.2
Symph.Ht	28.2

Trauma	
Pathologies	
Comments	<p>Quite large and robust skull, mandible female</p> <p>Pelvis and femurs female; Femur heads: L=41.5, right 41</p> <p>Very strong muscle attachments on LEFT humerus, right humerus muscle attachments not at notable – <i>this person may be left-handed</i> or an occupation that required more effort with left arm.</p> <p>Most bone still unfused, skull sutures mostly unfused</p>

Catalogue of all bone recovered from Test Pits. Listed in order of Test Pit number and then by finds number

Test Pit	Context	Total wt(g)	Total Count	HSR Qty	Male/F	HSR Age	Condition	HSR Elements	HSR Pathologies	Misc count	Gnaw	Burnt	Animal count	Animal species	Comments
1	2	435	14	5	male	adult + juv	good	hu, tarsal, fe's, pel		8			1	cattle	Animal: cattle intermediate phalange. HSR = 1 humerus at GI:320, Ht 1137, inc humerus, lge tarsal, male pelvis with acetabulum of 47.94, one juvenile unfused femur.
2	9	34	2										2	cattle, sheep	cattle rib heavily cut, sheel femur
2	10	265	12	4	unknown	adult	fragments	hu, cavicle, tibia frags	healed clavicle	8					healed fracture on clavicle
2	16	222	5	1	unknown	adult		femur		3			1		butchered large mammal frags
3	4	37	5							3			2	sheep	metacarpal, radius
3	18	525	12	3	male	adult	good	femur heads x 2, tibia		9					HSR Fe heads: 50.91 and 47.8
4	5	109	15	2	male	adult	fragments	femur, pelvis		13					HSR Fe head:47.34
6	6	145	10	9	unknown	adult	fragments	talus, rad, ulna, skull					1	sheep	metatarsal
6	8	220	32	6	inc male	adult + juv	fragments	jaw, vert, radius, tibia	degenerative wear on vertebrae, healed fracture on radius	20			6	sheep, pig, dog	Animal: sheep metatarsal and metacarpal and distal femur; pig jaw fragment, small dog femur (terrier sized). HSR: robust male mandible, vertebrae with wear, radius with healed fracture. Juvenile tibia - older child.
6	11	43	8	2	unknown	adult		phalanges		4			2	cattle, pig	cattle pph, pig juv calcaneus
6	17	111	6	3	unknown	adult		scap, rib, rad					3	sheep, dog	sheep MTs, small dog tibia 140mm
7	3	31	1				fragments						1	cattle	radius fragment
7	7	179	7	2	unknown	adult	fragments	tibia, fibula		4			1	sheep	left half of chopped skull

1/3	1	98	18	6		adult	fragments	tarsals, ribs, carpals		12					
1/3	1	69	5	2	female	adult		femur and fibula frag		3					HSR femur head 41.95
1/3	1	289	15	10		adult + juv	fragments	skull, A+J hu's, vert, rib	healed fracture on rib, degenerative wear on vert	4			1	cattle	Animal: Cattle rib fragment, chopped. HSR = skull, adult humerus, juvenile humerus, vertebrae with degenerative wear, ribs include one healed fracture. Juvenile humerus right arm estimated age of 4.5 to 5 years old.
L3	19	387	8	5	unknown	adult	good	tib, hu, rad, ulna, tarsal	hu + tibia arthritis	3					prox tibia and prox humerus arthritis

RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

10 July 2018

Laboratory Code SUERC-80509 (GU48069)

Submitter Laura Pooley
Colchester Archaeological Trust
Roman Circus House
Roman Circus Walk
Colchester
Essex CO2 7GZ

Site Reference 2-3 Priory St, COLEM: 2017.32

Context Reference F2, finds no. 13

Sample Reference Skeleton 1

Material Human bone – radius

$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -19.4 ‰

$\delta^{15}\text{N}$ relative to air 13.3 ‰

C/N ratio (Molar) 3.3

Radiocarbon Age BP 884 \pm 27

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Facility and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :



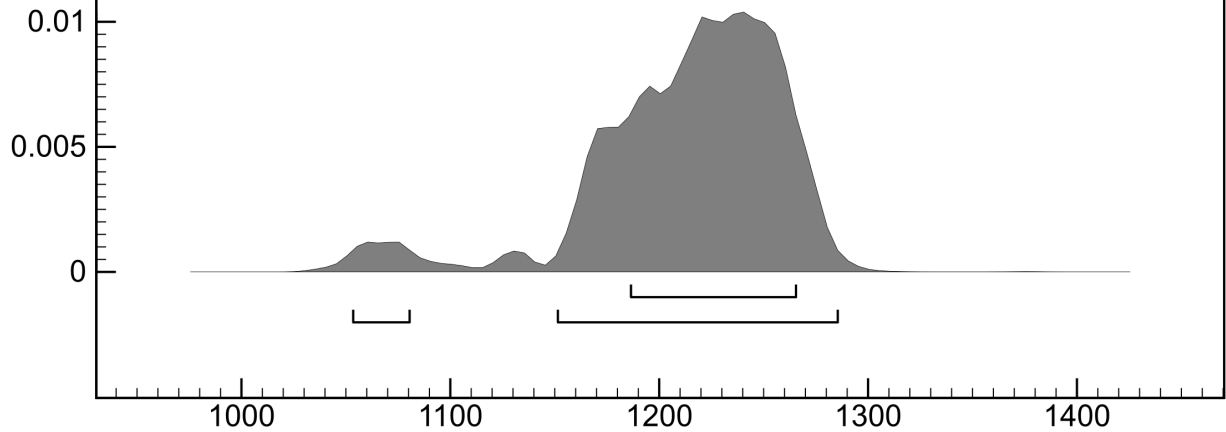
Checked and signed off by :



SUERC-80509 (884,27)

68.2% probability
1180 (68.2%) 1270AD
95.4% probability
1050 (3.0%) 1080AD
1150 (92.4%) 1290AD

Probability density



Calendar date (AD)

The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using a mix of the IntCal13 and Marine13 calibration curves. †

Human bone collagen with a $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ value above -20‰ , accompanied by a raised $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ value, is taken to indicate a marine component in the diet. The percentage contribution of this marine component is calculated using end-members of -21.0‰ (fully terrestrial) and -12.5‰ (fully marine) with an uncertainty of 10% applied.

The $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ value of -19.4‰ gives a 19% marine contribution ($\pm 10\%$).

A regional marine offset (ΔR) of 0 ± 50 years has been used in the calibration.

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

† Reimer et al. (2013) *Radiocarbon* 55(4) pp.1869-87

RADIOCARBON DATING CERTIFICATE

10 July 2018

Laboratory Code SUERC-80510 (GU48070)

Submitter Laura Pooley
Colchester Archaeological Trust
Roman Circus House
Roman Circus Walk
Colchester
Essex CO2 7GZ

Site Reference 2-3 Priory St, COLEM: 2017.32

Context Reference F4, finds no. 14

Sample Reference Skeleton 2

Material Human bone – fibula

$\delta^{13}\text{C}$ relative to VPDB -19.2 ‰

$\delta^{15}\text{N}$ relative to air 13.0 ‰

C/N ratio (Molar) 3.3

Radiocarbon Age BP 934 \pm 30

N.B. The above ^{14}C age is quoted in conventional years BP (before 1950 AD) and requires calibration to the calendar timescale. The error, expressed at the one sigma level of confidence, includes components from the counting statistics on the sample, modern reference standard and blank and the random machine error.

Samples with a SUERC coding are measured at the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre AMS Facility and should be quoted as such in any reports within the scientific literature. The laboratory GU coding should also be given in parentheses after the SUERC code.

Detailed descriptions of the methods employed by the SUERC Radiocarbon Laboratory can be found in Dunbar et al. (2016) *Radiocarbon* 58(1) pp.9-23.

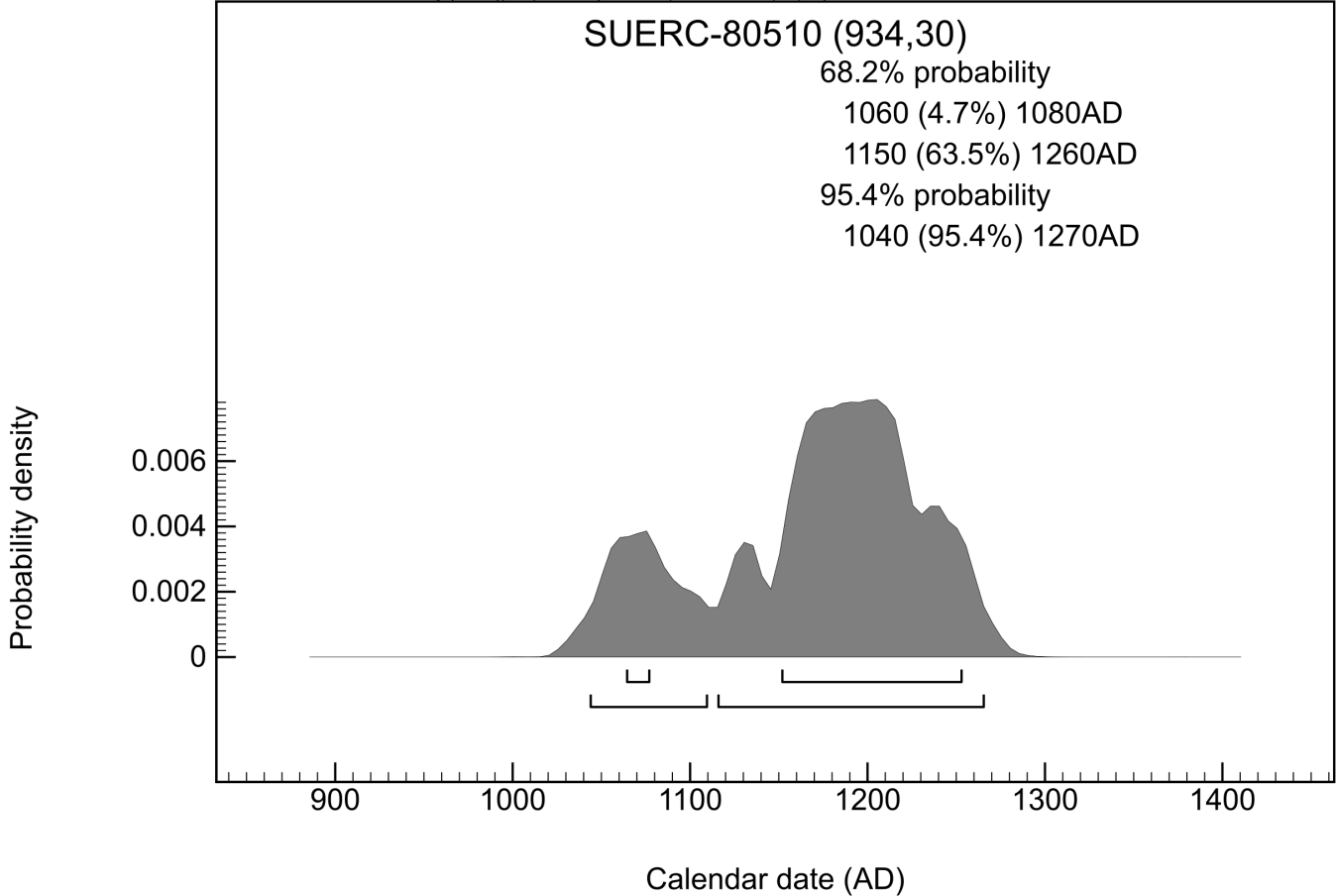
For any queries relating to this certificate, the laboratory can be contacted at suerc-c14lab@glasgow.ac.uk.

Conventional age and calibration age ranges calculated by :



Checked and signed off by :





The radiocarbon age given overleaf is calibrated to the calendar timescale using the Oxford Radiocarbon Accelerator Unit calibration program OxCal 4.*

The above date ranges have been calibrated using a mix of the IntCal13 and Marine13 calibration curves. †

Human bone collagen with a $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ value above -20‰ , accompanied by a raised $\delta^{15}\text{N}$ value, is taken to indicate a marine component in the diet. The percentage contribution of this marine component is calculated using end-members of -21.0‰ (fully terrestrial) and -12.5‰ (fully marine) with an uncertainty of 10% applied.

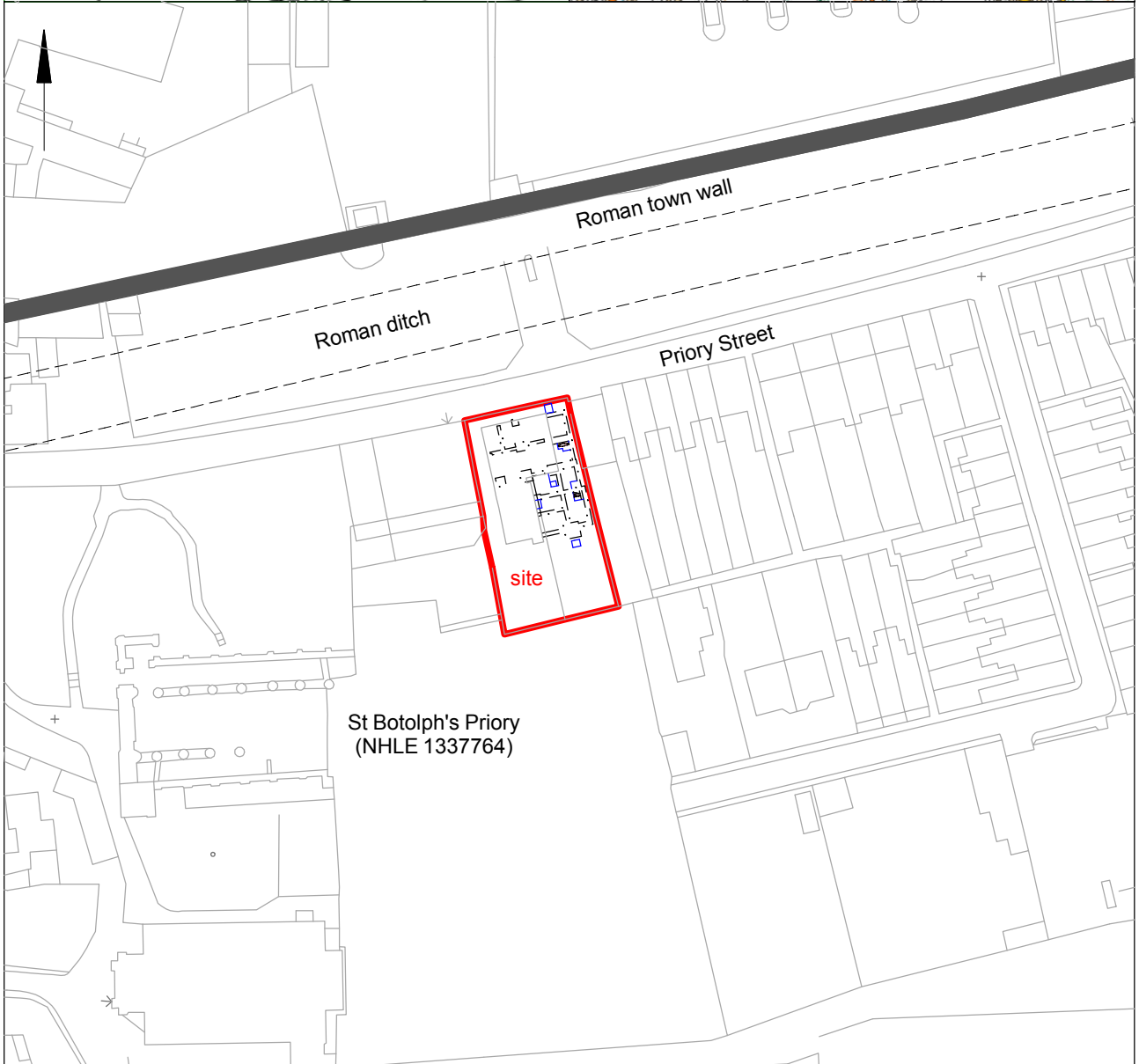
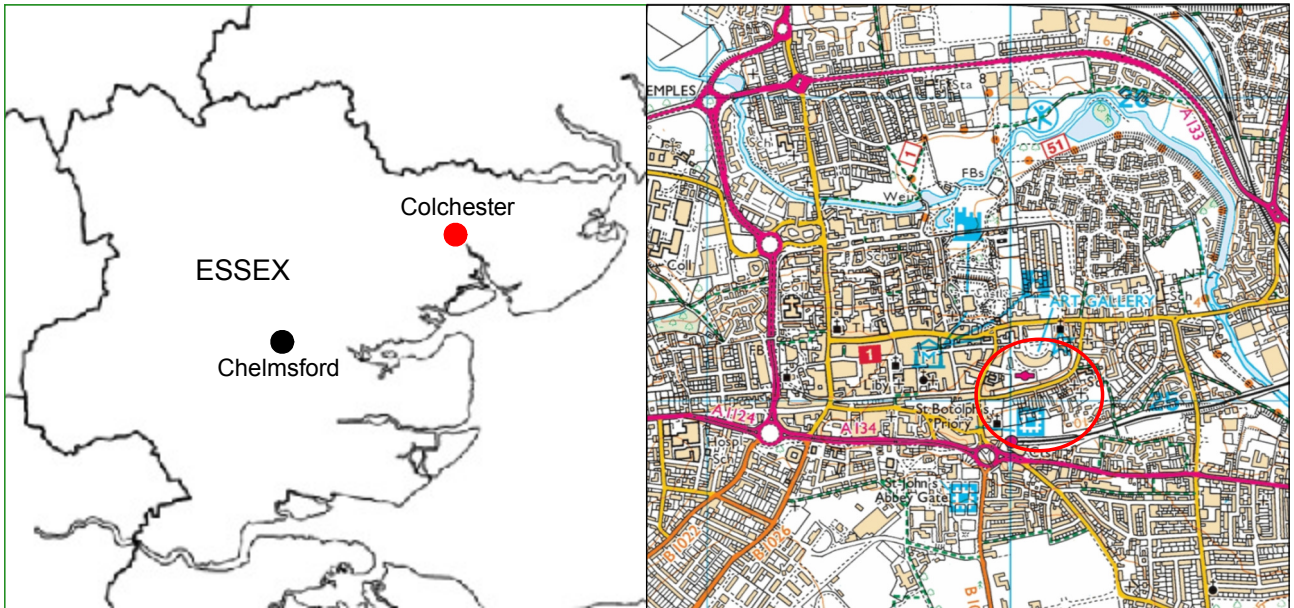
The $\delta^{13}\text{C}$ value of -19.2‰ gives a 21% marine contribution ($\pm 10\%$).

A regional marine offset (ΔR) of 0 ± 50 years has been used in the calibration.

Please contact the laboratory if you wish to discuss this further.

* Bronk Ramsey (2009) *Radiocarbon* 51(1) pp.337-60

† Reimer et al. (2013) *Radiocarbon* 55(4) pp.1869-87



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Fig 1 Site location in relation to significant archaeological sites



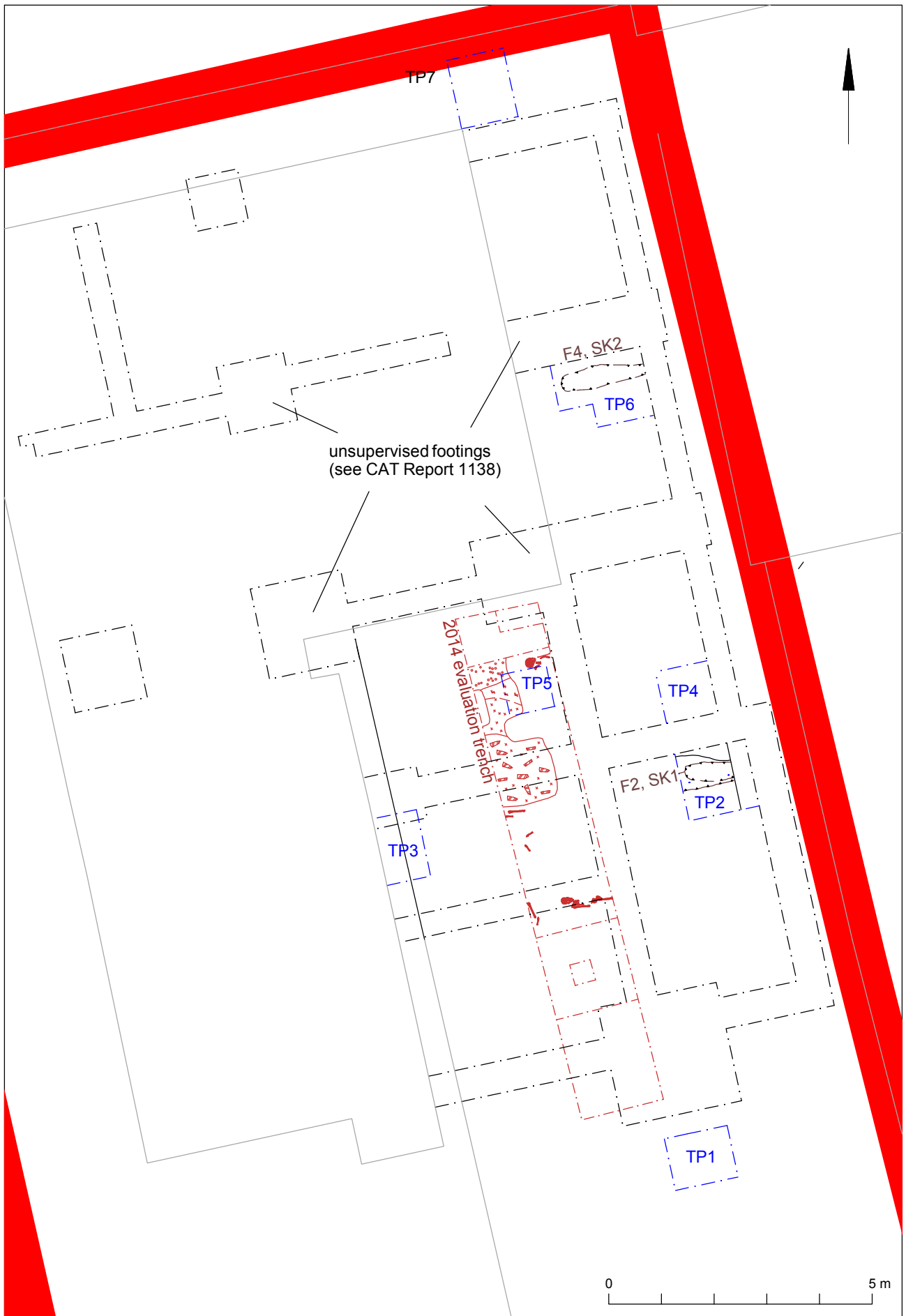
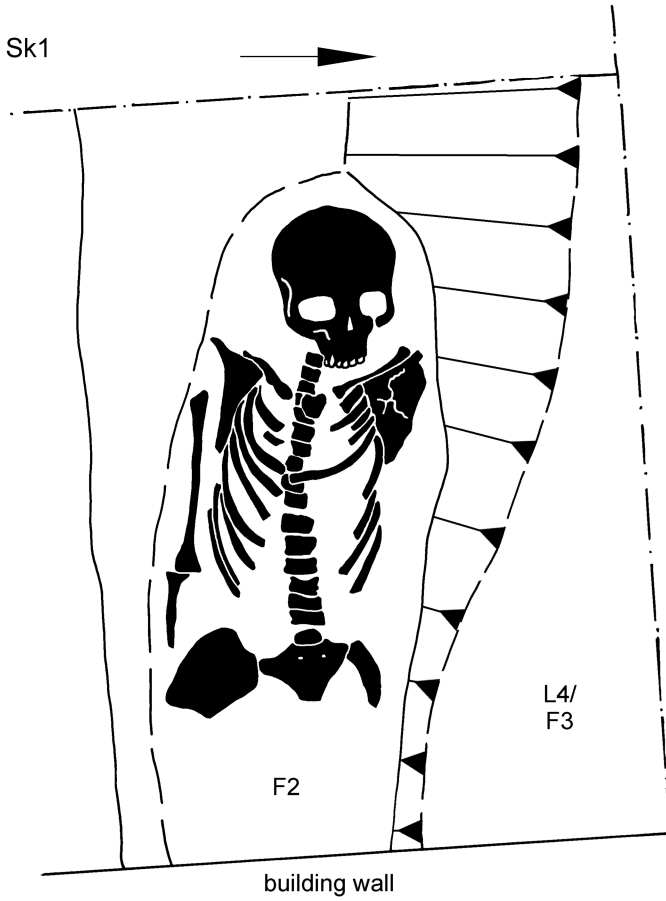
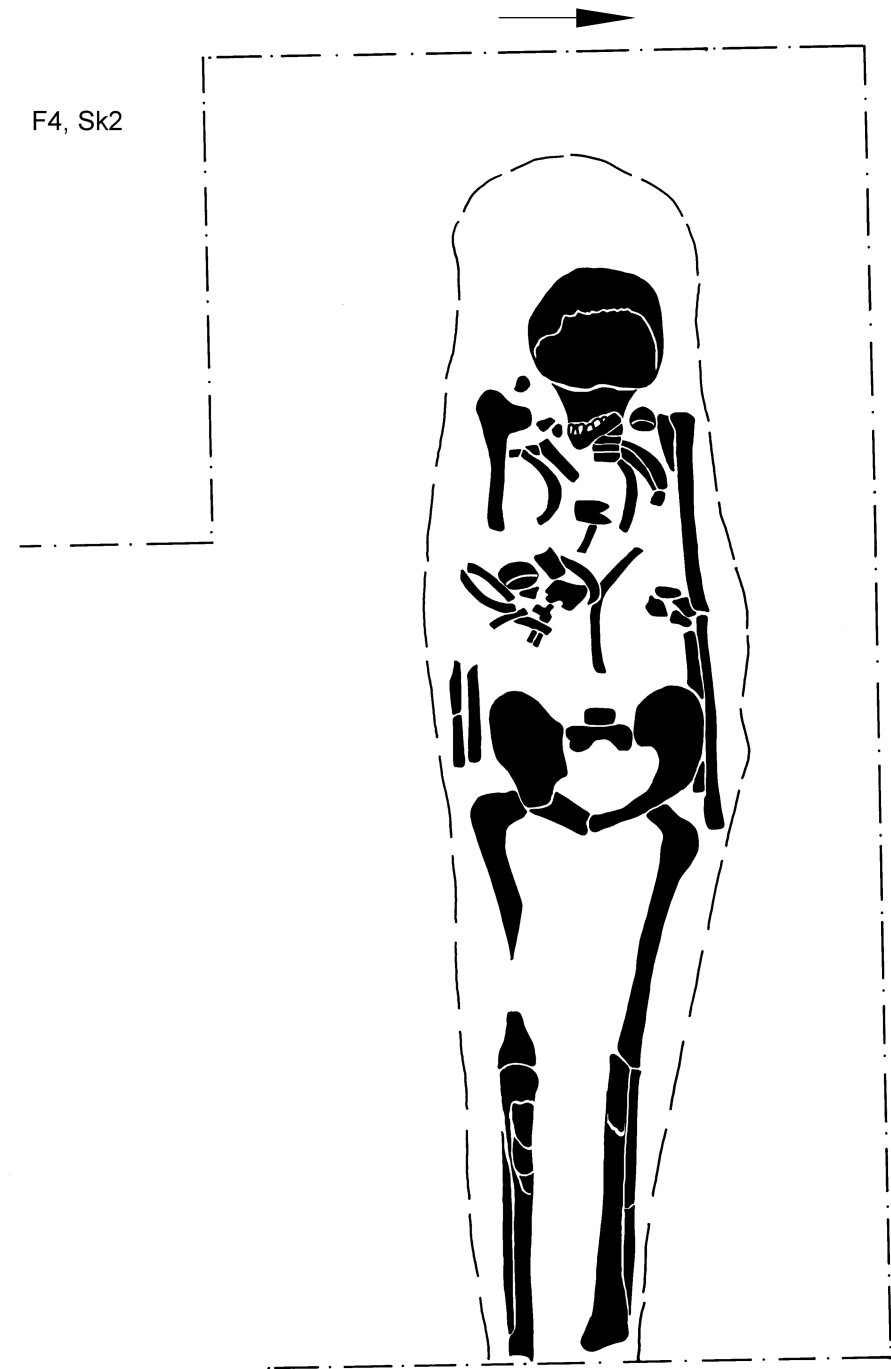


Fig 2 Results

F2, Sk1

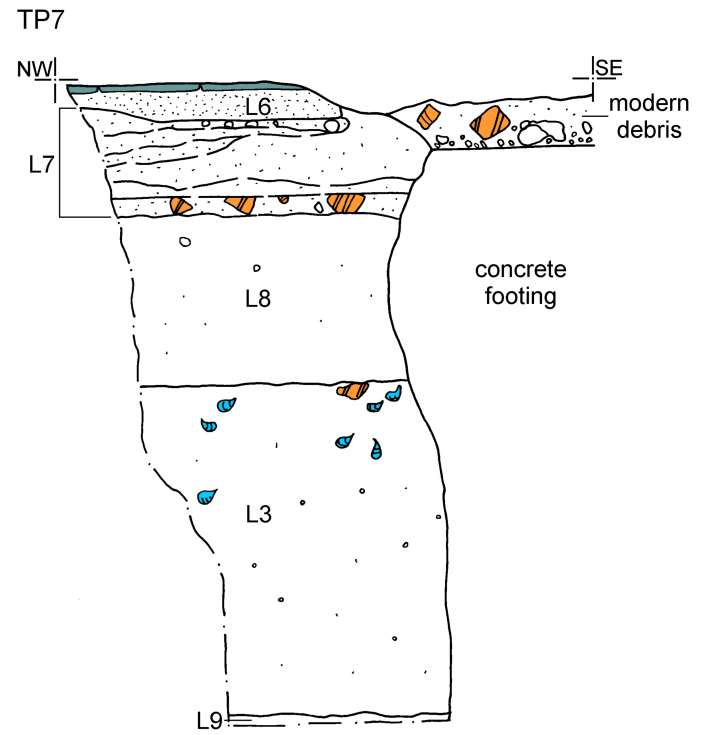
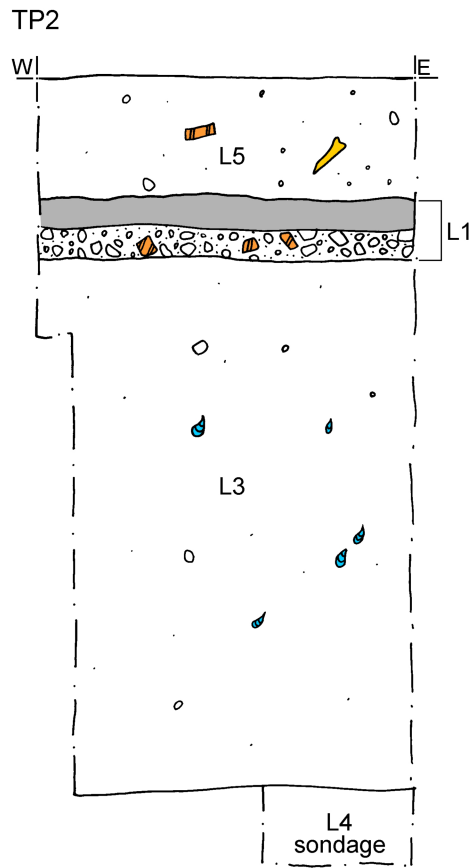


F4, Sk2



0 0.5m

Fig 3 F2 and F4 burial plans



- sand
- small stones
- large stones
- ▨ post-Roman CBM
- oyster shell
- animal bone
- concrete
- paving slab
- human bone



Fig 4 Test pit sections

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: 2-3 Priory Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2PY	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TM 00012 25004 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 18/01e CHER ref: ECC4149 OASIS ref: colchest3-310236
Type of work: Monitoring	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: January-February 2018	Size of area investigated: 0.05ha
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2017.32	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? no	Related CHER/SM number: CHER MCC425, NHLE no. 1013764 CHER MCC2083, MCC1091
Final report: CAT Report 1236	
Periods represented: medieval, modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: Archaeological monitoring was carried out at 2-3 Priory Street, Colchester during the excavation of seven test-pits dug at the request of building control. The development site is located within the precinct of St Botolph's Priory, and inhumation burials have been previously been identified on the site.</p> <p>The test-pits were excavated through modern layers which overlaid undated accumulation sealing a horizon of demolition/levelling. Two articulated burials were excavated, both females, 25-35 years old (Skeleton 1) and 17-25 years old (Skeleton 2). Samples taken from both skeletons produced radiocarbon dates of 1050-1290 AD and 1040-1270 AD respectively. A third articulated burial on the edge of one of the test-pits was left in situ and unexcavated. In addition, a quantity of disarticulated human bone was recovered from the test-pits (totalling 2974g) along with some animal bone (345g). It is estimated that the disarticulated human bone came from 6 or more individuals.</p> <p>Evidence would suggest that the development site is located within a medieval lay cemetery associated with St Botolph's Priory or possibly an earlier church thought to predate the priory.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Reports 800 & 1138	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: St Botolph's Priory, cemetery, inhumation burials	Significance: *
Author of summary: Laura Pooley	Date of summary: July 2018

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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[Printable version](#)

OASIS ID: colchest3-310236

Project details

Project name	Archaeological monitoring at 2-3 Priory Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2PY: January-February 2018
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring was carried out at 2-3 Priory Street, Colchester during the excavation of seven test-pits dug at the request of building control. The development site is located within the precinct of St Botolph's Priory, and inhumation burials have been previously identified on the site. The test-pits were excavated through modern layers which overlaid undated accumulation sealing a horizon of demolition/levelling. Two articulated burials were excavated, both females, 25-35 years old (Skeleton 1) and 17-25 years old (Skeleton 2). Samples taken from both skeletons produced radiocarbon dates of 1050-1290 AD and 1040-1270 AD respectively. A third articulated burial on the edge of one of the test-pits was left in situ and unexcavated. In addition, a quantity of disarticulated human bone was recovered from the test-pits (totalling 2974g) along with some animal bone (345g). It is estimated that the disarticulated human bone came from 6 or more individuals. Evidence would suggest that the development site is located within a medieval lay cemetery associated with St Botolph's Priory or possibly an earlier church thought to predate the priory.
Project dates	Start: 23-01-2018 End: 02-02-2018
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	18/01e - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4149 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2017.32 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	INHUMATION BURIALS Medieval
Significant Finds	HUMAN REMAINS Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Medieval
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER 2-3 Priory Street
Postcode	CO1 2PY
Study area	0.05 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 00012 25004 51.914133677328 -0.545775584895 51 54 50 N 000 32 44 W Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Laura Pooley
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Chris Lister
Type of sponsor/funding body	Owner

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	n/a
Physical Archive notes	all bone will be reburied
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum

Digital Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.32
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic","other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM: 2017.32
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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