

Archaeological evaluation at Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1PB

April 2019



by **Laura Pooley**

with contributions by Dr Matthew Loughton and Emma Holloway
figures by Alec Wade, Ben Holloway and Sarah Carter

fieldwork by Alec Wade

commissioned by Tollgate Partnership Limited

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Colchester Museum accession code COLEM: 2019.25

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CAT Report 1425

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out within a rear extension to Rebow House, Colchester, Essex in advance of the demolition of this extension and the construction of a new one. Rebow House is a Grade II listed building (NHLE no. 1337728) of late 17th-century date with medieval cellar and 18th-century frontage. It is also located within the Roman fortress and Insula 34 of the Roman walled town.*

The test-pits were excavated to a depth of 0.8m below current ground level (bcgl) to determine the extent of archaeological remains.

Test-pit 1: Modern layers (0-0.26m bcgl) sealed post-medieval deposits likely associated with either the construction or occupation of Rebow House, c 1700 (c 0.26-0.5m bcgl). Layers of late medieval/early post-medieval make-up/levelling (or possibly accumulation) were present at c 0.5-0.8m bcgl.

Test-pit 2: Modern layers sealed a late 17th to early 18th century brick drainage culvert. The culvert was identified at a depth of 0.26m bcgl and extended below the base of the test-pit.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation at Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, Essex which was carried out between 4th-8th April 2019. The work was commissioned by Graham Cranfield of Tollgate Partnership Limited in advance of the demolition of a rear extension and the construction of a new one, and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the EHER/CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). This recommendation was for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and was based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2018).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for an Archaeological (SI) Test Pit Evaluation*, detailing the required archaeological work, written by Jess Tipper (CBCAA 2019), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2019).

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 field evaluation* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

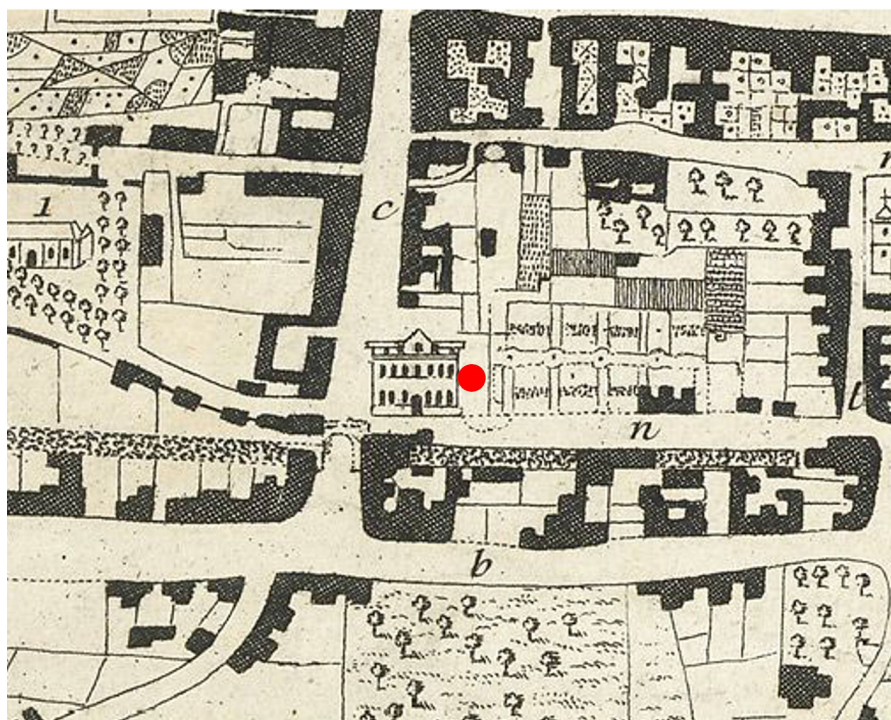
3 Archaeological background

by Emma Holloway

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology, CAT Report 1102 and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (accessed via Colchester Heritage Explorer (<https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/map>)).

Rebow House is a Historic England Grade II* listed building (HA 1337728, CHER 3344). The entry for the property by the Colchester Historic Buildings Forum describes the property as a large late 17th-century house with medieval cellar and 18th-century frontage. Known as Headgate House or Rebow's House (the Rebow family were one of the richest and most important within the town in the 17th to 18th centuries and Sir

Isaac Rebow is said to have entertained King William III here). The house is comprised of two storeys and attics (two hipped dormers at the rear), timber-framed and plastered and tiled roof. The building is half H-shaped in plan with wings extending east from the rear; these wings have a coved eaves cornice of plaster. The roofs are hipped at the east end. The front is plastered and has a parapet, five-window range with central oriel window to the first floor with modillioned coricing. Morant's map of Colchester shows that to the rear of the property there were large planned gardens (see below).



Map 1 Extract of Morant's map of Colchester 1748 showing Rebow House with large planned gardens to the rear (marked red).

The site lies in an extremely rich area of archaeology along the lower edge of the main historic core of the Roman and later walled town (CHER MCC9314). Directly to the east of the site CAT undertook large-scale excavations in advance of the Culver Square shopping precinct development between 1981-2 and 1984-5 (CAR 6, CHER ECC337). The excavations yielded a vast amount of information on the development of the town, especially the Roman military fortress (CHER MCC477) and the transition into a Roman colony (see CAR 3, 3-9 and CAR 6, 7-20). The site lies within the southern edge of the fortress which later became part of Insula 34 of the Roman town. The site sits just to the north of a narrow street which extends around the inside of the Roman town wall (CHER MCC859). It is also located to the north of Head Gate (CHER MCC1760), the southwest entrance to the town.

The closest part of the Culver Square excavations to the proposed development site was 'Area H' (CAR 6, 21-126; CHER MCC860, MCC905, MCC918, MCC931). Key finds include surviving patches of burnt floor, gravel surfaces, postholes and robber trenches for plinths belonging to AD49-60/1. By c AD 150/200 a Roman building (CAR 6, Building 118) was situated at the east end of the southern yard of another building. An earlier building on the site may have been a preliminary phase of this structure as 'the positions of the north and west walls of both buildings were more or less the same'. The building's west wall was represented by a line of three large rectangular postholes, two of which were joined by a shallow slot, possibly for a ground-plate. The north and south walls each had a foundation of septaria and tile fragments set in mortar. The building initially had a floor of sandy clay which was later replaced by a sequence of four mortar floors. The main internal features included an oven and two later pits.

Associated with the second mortar floor was a wooden tank set in a pit containing traces of decayed timber. A square-cut drain led into the west side of the tank suggesting it was for holding water. A second tank was associated with the latest floors of the building. This was constructed out of mortared tile fragments and was probably for holding liquids. Along the outside of the building's south wall was a drain, and along its west side was a narrow gully which may also have been for drainage. The destruction debris which resulted from the demolition of this building included a lot of tile from the roof and was sealed by the gravel yard belonging to the later building on the site.



Photograph 1 The Rebow House site (right, with parked cars) in relation to the excavation at Culver Street Area H, looking south towards Sir Isaac's Walk.

Post-Roman remains on Area H mostly comprised of pits and linear features thought to relate to a large planned garden of Rebow House (see Map 1). To the north of a medieval cellar were the fragmented foundations of a small rectangular building (CAR 6, Building 129). The building measured 4.7m by at least 3.4m. The foundations were shallow, coursed septaria and peg-tile, probably supporting a timber-frame. This was probably an outbuilding of 15th- to 16th-century date belonging to one of the houses fronting onto Head Street.

4 Aim

The aim of the archaeological test-pit evaluation was to assess the archaeological potential of the site to help the CBCAA determine if further archaeological investigation would be required.

5 Results (Figs 2-4)

Two test-pits were hand-dug by a CAT archaeologist inside the existing extension to Rebow House, within the footprint of the proposed new extension. Both test-pits were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m as contractor's groundworks (a raft foundation for the new extension) are not proposed to go deeper.

Test-pit 1 (1m by 1m by 0.8m deep)

The excavation of test-pit 1 revealed:

- The wooden floor (F1) of the existing mid-19th to late-20th century extension which was set on a layer of concrete (L1).
- The original back wall (now an internal wall) (F7) of Rebow House set on a foundation of septaria and sandstone blocks in mortar (F6). This wall has been dated to c 1700 or before (Alston 2016).
- Layer L4 probably pre-dates Rebow House as it is cut by F6.
- Layers L2, L3, L11 and features F2 and F8 are therefore either associated with the construction of Rebow House, activity to the rear of the house, or the construction of the later extension.
- Beneath L4 were six layers (L5, L6, L9, L10, L12 and L13) of make-up/levelling. Three of the layers contained peg-tile (L5, L9 and L13) as well as earlier residual finds. Peg-tile is dated in Essex from the 14th century onwards (Ryan 1996). Rebow House is recorded as having a medieval cellar and an exposed fragment of 15th-century timber-frame has been recorded internally (Alston 2016). These six layers may actually be layers of accumulation associated with activity to the rear of the medieval building.



Photograph 2 Test-pit 1, looking south

Context	Finds No.	Feature Type	Description	Date
L1	-	Floor base	Crushed concrete and brick/tile base for the existing wooden floor (F1). Sealed by F1, seals L2, L4, L11, F6 and F8. 0.1-0.17m thick	Modern
L2	-	Make-up	Firm, dry, medium-dark grey silt containing fragments of brick/tile and white mortar. Sealed by L1, seals L3, L4 and F2. 0.08-0.14m thick	Post-medieval
L3	-	Make-up / levelling	Dry, medium grey/brown sandy-silty clay with rare flecks of charcoal and very occasional flecks of CBM. Sealed by L2, cut by F2, seals L4. Up to 0.08m thick.	Post-medieval
L4	3	Make-up / levelling	Layer of compacted sand. Firm, dry, light-medium orange/brown sand with rare flecks of charcoal and CBM. Sealed by L3, F6 and F8, seals F3. 0.04-0.28m thick.	Post-medieval
L5	2	Make-up / levelling	Firm, dry, dark grey/brown silty-clay with flecks of charcoal, daub and CBM, 1% stone. Sealed by L4 and L12, cut by F2 and F3, seals L10. Up to 0.08-0.32m thick.	Later medieval/ early post-medieval
L6	1	Make-up / levelling	Firm, dry, medium-dark grey/brown silty-clay with occasional flecks of charcoal, oyster shell, daub and CBM. Sealed by L10, seals L9 and L13. At least 0.06-0.12m thick.	Later medieval/ early post-medieval
L9	6	Make-up / levelling	Loose, dry, medium-dark grey/brown silty with frequent flecks of oyster shell and occasional flecks of CBM. Sealed by L6, ?cut by L13. Up to 0.08m thick.	Later medieval/ early post-medieval
L10	-	Make-up / levelling	Firm, dry, light-medium yellow/orange/grey/ brown silty-clay with occasional to frequent flecks of charcoal and daub. Sealed by L5, seals L6. 0.06-0.1m thick	Later medieval/ early post-medieval
L11	-	Make-up/ levelling	Firm, dry, yellow/orange/green/brown sandy-silt with rare charcoal flecks. Sealed by L1, cut by F8, seals F2. Up to 0.1m thick	Post-medieval
L12	-	Make-up/ levelling	Firm, dry, medium-dark yellow/orange/grey/ brown sandy-silty clay with occasional flecks of charcoal and daub. Sealed by L4, cut by F2, seals L5. 0.2m thick.	Later medieval/ early post-medieval
L13	4	?Floor material	Firm, dry, yellow/brown silty-clay. Sealed by L6, ?cuts L9. Up to 0.14m thick.	Later medieval/ early post-medieval
F1	-	Wooden floor	Wooden floor and support joists. Seals L1, butts up against F7.	Modern
F2	-	?Structural feature	Large rounded stones loosely set above a white mortar base. Sealed by L1, L2, L11 and F8, cuts L3, L4, L5 and L12. 0.18m thick.	Post-medieval
F3	-	?Structural mortar	Small patch of hard medium-dark grey mortar.	Post-medieval

			Sealed by L4, cuts L5. 0.4m thick	
F6	-	Wall foundation	Stone wall foundation made of two courses of large stones (roughly-shaped blocks), upper block is septaria, lower block is a yellow ?sandstone. They are cemented with a mid pale to mid grey fine mortar chard. Sealed by F7 and L1, cuts L4.	Post-medieval, c 1700 or earlier
F7	-	Brick wall	Brick wall built on top of foundation F6. Seals F6 and L1.	Post-medieval, c 1700 or earlier
F8	-	Cut	Firm, dry, dark grey silty-clay with flecks of charcoal and CBM, 1% stone. Sealed by L1, cuts L4 and L11. 0.26m thick.	Post-medieval

Table 1 Context list for Test-pit 1

Test-pit 2 (1.4m long by 0.75m wide and c 0.8m deep)

The excavation of test-pit 2 revealed:

- The concrete base (L9) for the existing mid-19th to late-20th century extension which sealed a layer of backfill (L7).
- The backfill (L7) had been laid over a brick culvert (F4) which was orientated north to south. Bricks sampled from the culvert have been dated from the late 17th to early 18th century, suggesting that the culvert was probably constructed at around the same time as Rebow House.
- A later brick arch (F5) had been added to the western side of the culvert. A void in this arch shows it had been backfilled (L8).



Photograph 3 Test-pit 2, looking east

Context No.	Finds No.	Context	Description	Date
L7	-	Backfill	Friable, firm, moist, dark grey silty-clay with frequent brick inclusions, 2% stone. Sealed by L9, cut by F10 and seals F4 and F5.	Post-medieval (later than F4)
L8	-	Backfill within void below F5	Loose, moist, medium-dark grey/brown silty-clay with frequent CBM and mortar inclusions, 1% stone. Sealed by F5, seals F4.	Post-medieval (later than F4)
F4	5	Brick culvert	Brick culvert orientated north-south. Sealed by L7, F5 and L8.	Post-medieval, late 17th-early 18th century
F5	-	Brick arch	Brick arch bonded onto F4. Sealed by L7, seals L8 and F4	Post-medieval (later than F4)
F9	-	Floor	Hard mid-grey concrete floor. Sealed by L1, butts against F7, seals L2. 0.8m thick	Modern
F10	-	Concrete	Concrete and rubble, vertical sided. Sealed by L1, cuts F9 and L7	Modern

Table 2 Context list for Test-pit 2

6 Finds

6.1 Ceramic finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

The evaluation uncovered 24 sherds of pottery and ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) with a weight of just under 3kg (Table 3). Most of this is CBM and includes Roman brick and medieval/post-medieval peg-tile and brick (Table 4). There were only two sherds of pottery: one sherd of locally-produced Roman coarse grey ware (fabric GX) (CAR 10) and one sherd of early medieval sandy ware (Fabric 13) (CAR 7). Nearly all of this material was recovered from L4, L5, L6, L9 and L13. Two samples of unfrosted brick with a weight of 1,583g came from brick culvert F4 (5). These appear to be comparable to late 17th- to early 18th-century bricks, according to Ryan's Essex brick typology (1996, 95).

Ceramic material	No.	Weight (g)	MSW/g
Roman pottery	1	2	2
Post-Roman pottery	1	29	29
Ceramic Building Material (CBM)	22	2,879	131
All	24	2,910	121

Table 3 Details on the main types of ceramics and pottery

CBM code	CBM type	No.	Weight (g)	MSW/g
Roman				
RB	Roman brick	4	725	181
Post-Roman				
PT	Peg-tile	14	554	40
BR	Brick	2	1,583	792
Mortar		2	17	9
Grand total		22	2,879	131

Table 4 CBM by period and type

6.2 Animal bone by Adam Wightma

Four fragments of animal bone (72g) came from L5 (finds no.2): 1) large mammal tibia; 2) pig fibula; 3) large mammal rib with cut mark; and 4) medium mammal humerus.

7 Conclusion

Test-pits 1 and 2 were excavated to assess the archaeological potential of the site in advance of the construction of a proposed raft foundation. The foundation would be a 0.3m deep slab of reinforced concrete, thickening to 0.5m at the edges, which would cover an area of 51 square metres.

Test-pits 1: Modern layers (0-0.26m below current ground level (bcgl)) sealed post-medieval deposits likely associated with either the construction or occupation of Rebow House, c 1700 (c 0.26-0.5m bcgl). Layers of late medieval/early post-medieval make-up/levelling (or possibly accumulation) were present at c 0.5-0.8m bcgl, and could be associated with the earlier medieval building. The raft foundation would destroy the modern and post-medieval deposits, possibly extending into the late medieval/early post-medieval deposits around the edges.

Test-pit 2: A late 17th- to early 18th-century brick culvert was aligned north to south along the rear of the property. It was probably constructed at the same time as Rebow House for drainage. The raft foundation would demolish the top of the culvert and the later brick arch butted against it.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Graham Cranfield and Tollgate Partnerships Limited for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by A Wade. Figures are by A Wade, B Holloway and S Carter. The project was monitored for Colchester Borough Council by Jess Tipper.

9 References

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

Alston, L	2016	<i>Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester: Heritage Asset Assessment.</i>
CAR 3	1984	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 3: Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex</i> , by P Crummy. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.
CAR 6	1992	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 6: Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilbert School, and miscellaneous sites in Colchester 1971-1985</i> , by P Crummy. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.
CAR 7	2000	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 7: Post-Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-85</i> , by J Cotter. Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.
CAR 10	1999	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 10: Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , by R Symonds & S Wade (ed). Colchester: Colchester Archaeological Trust Ltd.
CAT	2018	Health & Safety Policy
CAT Report 1102	2017	<i>A desk-based assessment of the archaeological and heritage remains on and around Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, CO12 1PB: May 2017.</i>
CBCAA	2019	<i>Brief for an Archaeological (SI) Test Pit Evaluation at Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, CO1 1PB</i> , by J Tipper
CifA	2014a	Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation

CIfA	2014b	Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials
English Heritage	2006	Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)
Gurney, D	2003	Standards for field archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14)
Medlycott, M	2011	Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2018	National Planning Policy Framework. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
Ryan, P	1996	<i>Brick in Essex from the Roman Conquest to the Reformation</i> . Chelmsford: Pat Ryan.

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
CIfA	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
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological InvestigationS, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
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
wsI	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: none retained

Paper record

One A4 document wallet containing:

The report (CAT Report 1425)

CBC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

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

Site digital photos and log

Digital record

The report (CAT Report 1425)

CBC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs, thumbnails and log

Graphic files

Survey data

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: 2019.25.

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Distribution list:

Graham Cranfield, Tollgate Partnership Limited
Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Planning Services
Essex Historic Environment Record



Colchester Archaeological Trust

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Roman Circus Walk,
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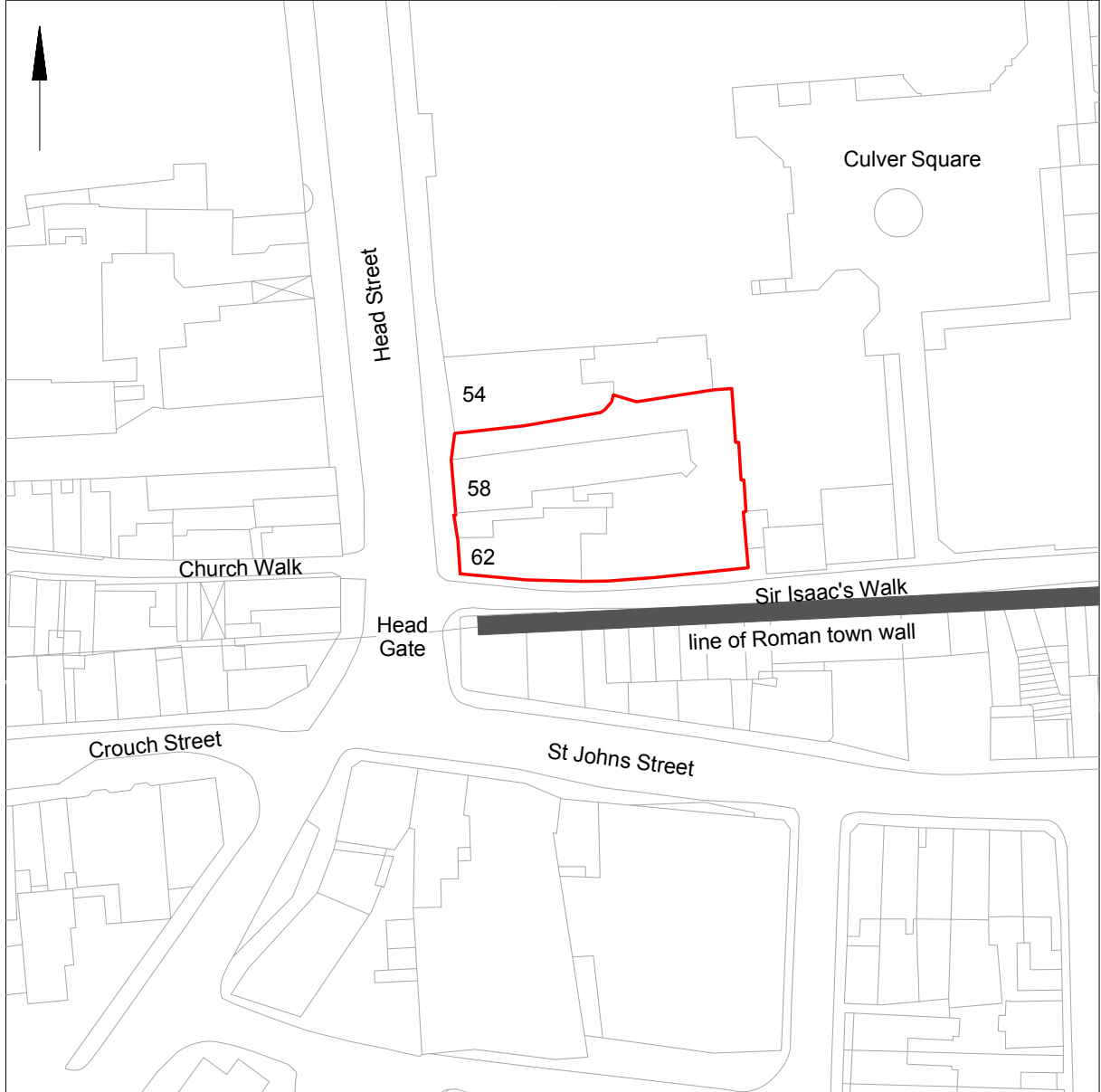
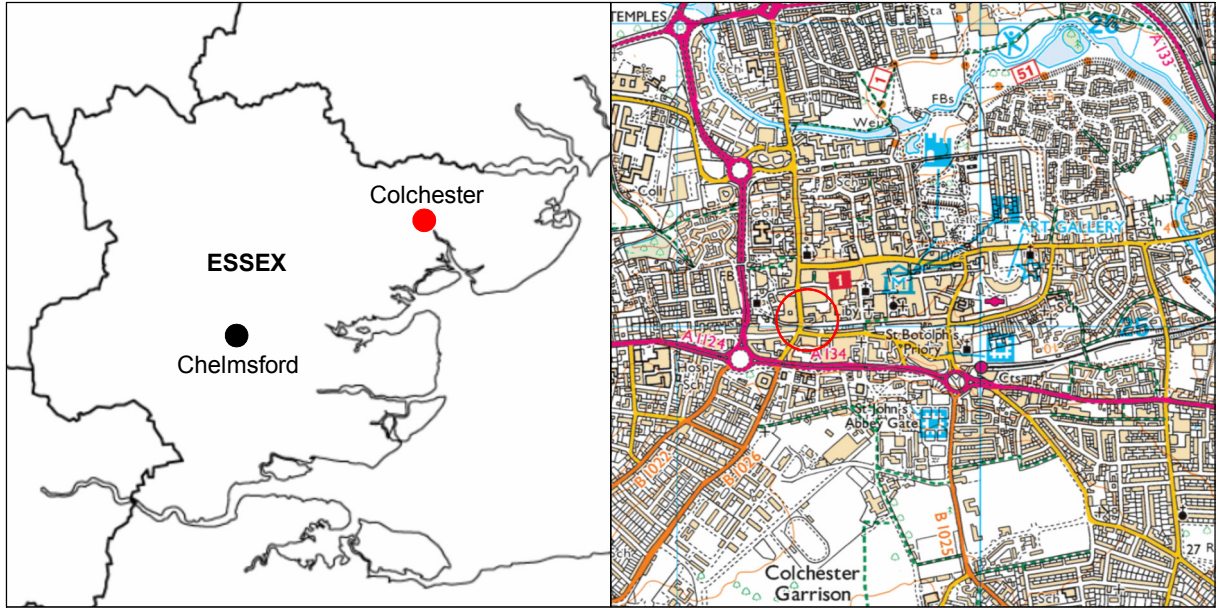
email: lp@catuk.org

Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 6.6.2019

Appendix 1 Ceramic catalogue

Context	Find no.	Find Type	Fabric Group	No.	Weight g	Rim	Handle	Base	Form	Comments	Date
F4	5	CBM	-	1	771	-	-	-	BR	48 x 98 x 80+ mm, no frog	Late 17th-early 18th century
F4	5	CBM	-	1	812	-	-	-	BR	49 x 105 x 90+ mm, no frog	Late 17th-early 18th century
L4	3	CBM	-	1	23	-	-	-	PT	11mm thick	Medieval-Post Medieval
L5	2	CBM	-	4	225	-	-	-	PT	11-12mm thick, one with trace of mortar (reused)	Medieval-Post Medieval
L5	2	Pottery	F13	1	29	0	0	0	-		1000/1050-1225
L5	2	CBM		2	600				RB	30mm & 33mm thick, one very sandy piece	Roman
L5	1	CBM	-	5	204	-	-	-		11-13mm thick, some traces of mortar (reused)	Medieval-Post Medieval
L6	1	CBM	-	2	17	-	-	-	Mortar		-
L6	1	CBM	-	1	98	-	-	-	RB	36mm thick	Roman
L9	6	CBM	-	3	53	-	-	-	PT	9-12mm thick	Medieval-Post Medieval
L9	6	CBM	-	1	27	-	-	-	RB		Roman
L13	13	CBM	-	1	49	-	-	-	PT	13mm thick	Medieval-Post Medieval
L13	13	Pottery	GX	1	2	0	0	0	-		Roman



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Fig 1 Site location.





Fig 2 Test-pit locations

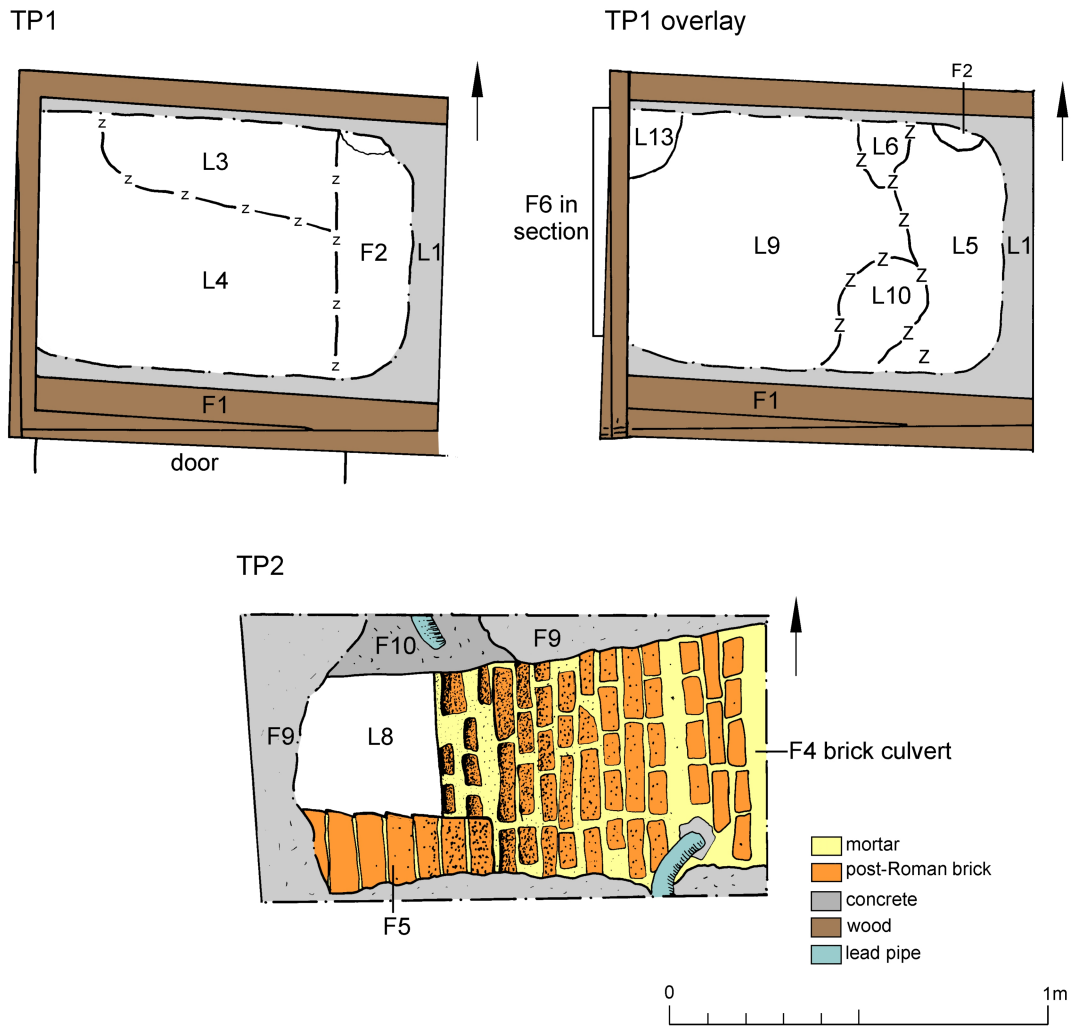


Fig 3 Test-pit 1 and 2 plans.

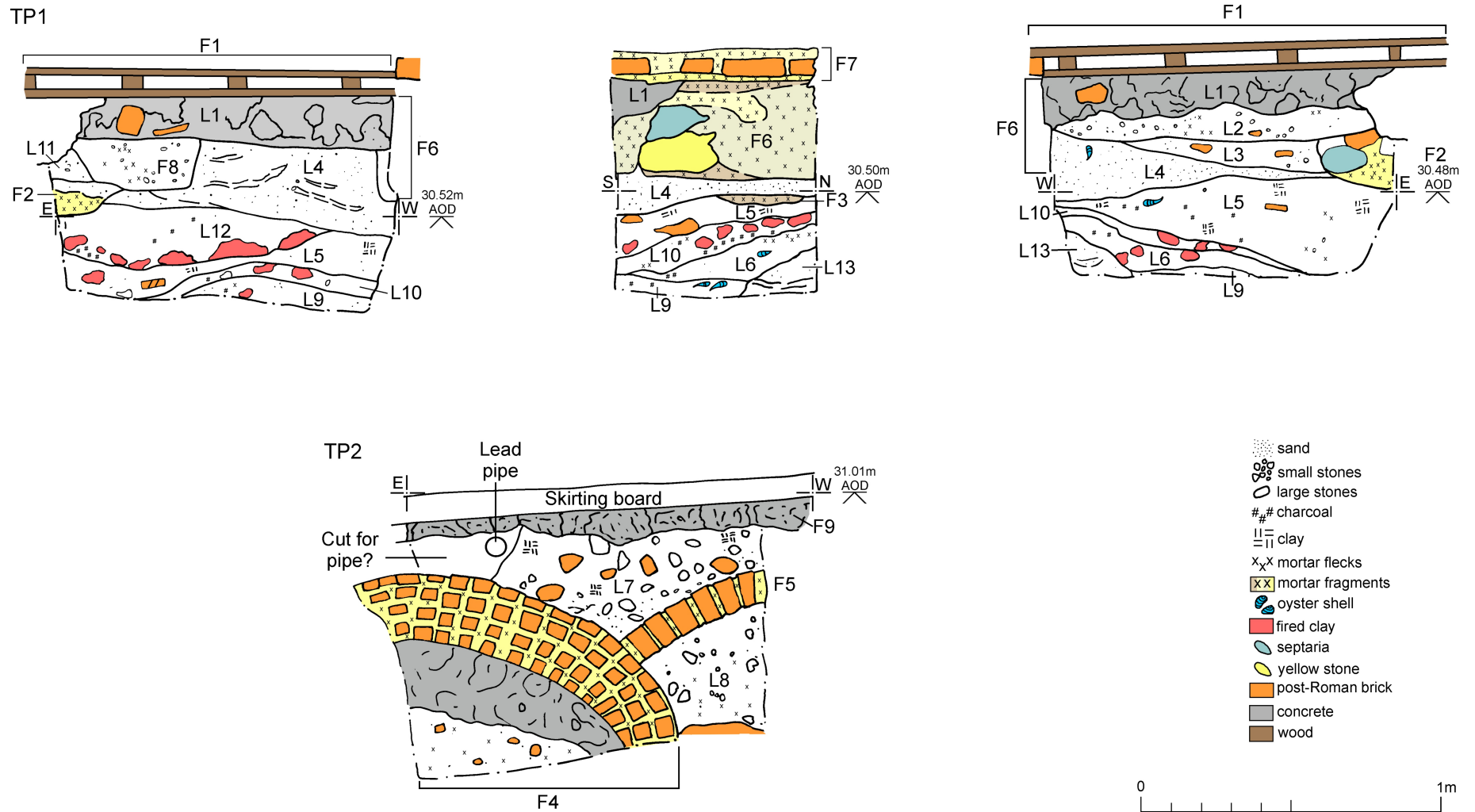


Fig 4 Test pit sections.

Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, CO1 1PB	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 99438 25018 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 2019/03I CHER ref: ECC4321 OASIS ref: colchest3-346384
Type of work: Test-pit evaluation	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: 4th-8th April 2019	Size of area investigated: 0.1ha
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code COLEM: 2019.25	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? Not known	Related CHER numbers: MCC337, MCC477, MCC859, MCC860, MCC905, MCC918, MCC931, MCC1760, MCC3344, MCC3344
Final report: CAT Report 1425	
Periods represented: Late medieval/post-medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p>An archaeological evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out within a rear extension to Rebow House, Colchester, Essex in advance of the demolition of this extension and the construction of a new one. Rebow House is a Grade II* listed building (NHLE no. 1337728) of late 17th-century date with medieval cellar and 18th-century frontage. It is also located within the Roman fortress and Insula 34 of the Roman walled town.</p> <p>The test-pits were excavated to a depth of 0.8m below current ground level (bcgl) to determine the extent of archaeological remains.</p> <p>Test-pit 1: Modern layers (0-0.26m bcgl) sealed post-medieval deposits likely associated with either the construction or occupation of Rebow House, c 1700 (c 0.26-0.5m bcgl). Layers of late medieval/early post-medieval make-up/levelling (or possibly accumulation) were present at c 0.5-0.8m bcgl.</p> <p>Test-pit 2: Modern layers sealed a late 17th to early 18th century brick drainage culvert. The culvert was identified at a depth of 0.26m bcgl and extended below the base of the test-pit.</p>	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Report 1102	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: -	Significance: *
Author of summary: Laura Pooley	Date of summary: June 2019

**Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)
for an archaeological (SI) test pit evaluation and
continuous archaeological recording at
Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester,
CO1 1PB.**

NGR: TL 99438 25018 (centre)

Planning references: 181160

Commissioned by: Graham Cranfield (Tollgate Partnership Limited)

Client: Tollgate Partnership Limited

Curating museum: Colchester

Museum accession code: tbc

CHER number: ECC4321

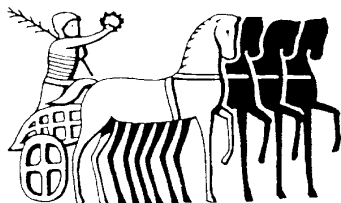
CAT project code: 2019/03I

OASIS project number: colchest3-346384

Site manager: Chris Lister

CBC monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 20/03/2019



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,
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Site location and description

The proposed development is located on the eastern side of Head Street, at the southwestern corner of the core of the historic walled settlement within Colchester Town Centre at Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1PB (Fig 1). The site is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 99438 25018.

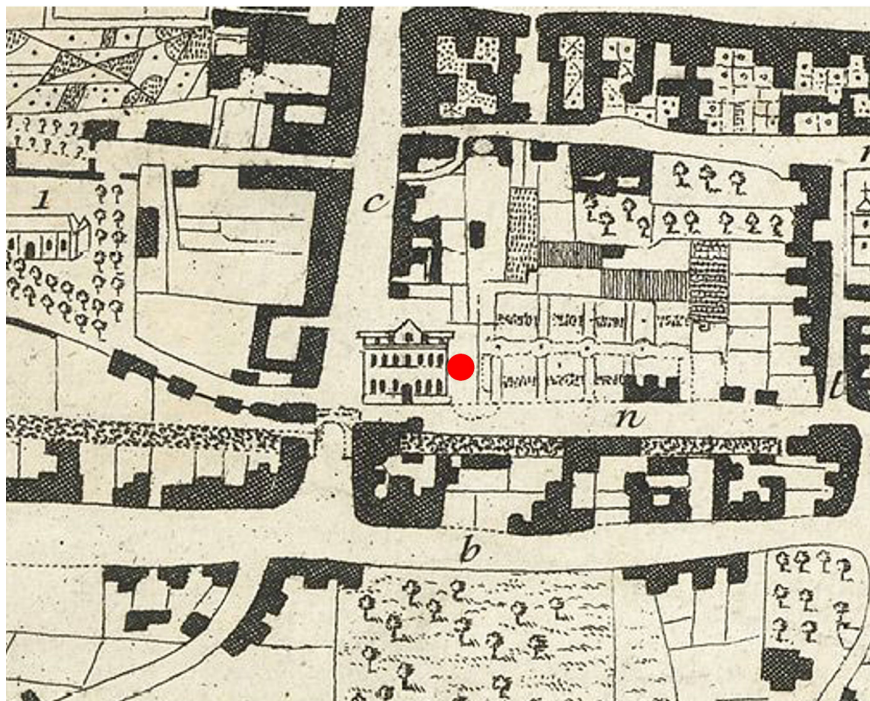
Proposed work

The development comprises the demolition of an existing rear single storey extension, to be replaced with a new one, and any associated groundworks.

Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the major published sources for Colchester archaeology, CAT Report 1102 and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (accessed via Colchester Heritage Explorer (<https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/map>)).

Rebow House is a Historic England Grade II* listed building (HA 1337728, CHER 3344). The entry for the property by the Colchester Historic Buildings Forum describes the property as a large late 17th-century house with medieval cellar and 18th-century frontage. Known as Headgate House or Rebow's House (the Rebow family were one of the richest and most important within the town in the 17th-18th centuries and Sir Isaac Rebow is said to have entertained King William III here). The house is comprised of two storeys and attics (two hipped dormers at the rear), timber-framed and plastered and tiled roof. The building is half H-shaped in plan with wings extending east from the rear; these wings have a coved eaves cornice of plaster. The roofs are hipped at the east end. The front is plastered and has a parapet, five-window range with central oriel window to the first floor with modillioned corncicing. Morant's map of Colchester shows that to the rear of the property there were large planned gardens (see below).



Map 1: Extract of Morant's map of Colchester 1748 showing the Rebow House site with large planned gardens to the rear (marked red).

The site lies in an extremely rich part of archaeology along the lower edge of the main historic core of the Roman and later walled town (CHER MCC9314). Directly to the east of the site CAT undertook large-scale excavations in advance of the Culver Square shopping precinct development in two phases between 1981-2 and 1984-5 (CHER ECC337). The excavations

yielded a vast amount of information on the development of the town, especially the Roman military fortress (CHER MCC477) and the transition into a Roman colony (see CAR 3: 3-9 and CAR 6: 7-20). The site lies within the southern edge of the fortress which later became part of Insula 34 within the Roman town grid system. The site sits just to the north of a main Roman street (*Via Sagularis*), running east-west, just to the north of the Roman town wall (CHER MCC859) and Head Gate, the southwest entrance to the town through the wall (CHER MCC1760).

The closest area of the Culver excavations to the proposed was Area H. Key finds include surviving patches of burnt floor, gravel surfaces, post-holes and robber trenches for plinths were recorded as belonging to AD49-60/1 (CAR 6, fig 3.12). By c AD 150/200 a Roman building (CAT Building 118, CAR 6, 83) was situated at the east end of the southern yard of another building (CHER MCC905). An earlier building on the site (CHER MCC860) may have been a preliminary phase of this structure as 'the positions of the north and west walls of both buildings were more or less the same'. The buildings west wall was represented by a line of three large rectangular post-holes, two of which were joined by a shallow slot, possibly for a ground-plate. The north and south walls each had a foundation of septaria and tile fragments` set in mortar. The building initially had a floor of sandy clay which was later replaced by a sequence of four mortar floors. The main internal features included an oven and two later pits. Associated with the second mortar floor was a wooden tank set in a pit containing traces of decayed timber. A square cut drain led into the west side of the tank suggesting it was for holding water. A second tank was associated with the latest floors of the building. This was constructed out of mortared tile fragments and was probably for holding liquids too. Along the outside of the buildings south wall was a drain and along its west side was a narrow gully which may also have been for drainage. The destruction debris which resulted from the demolition of this building included a lot of tile from the roof and was sealed by the gravel yard belonging to the later building on the site (CHER MCC918).



Photo 1: The Rebow House site (right, with parked cars) in relation to the excavation at Culver Street Site H, looking south towards Sir Isaac's Walk.

Post-Roman remains mostly comprised of pits and linear features thought to relate to a large planned garden, stretching from the rear of buildings on Head street, which are visible on Morant's map of Colchester 1748 (see Map 1). To the north of a medieval cellar (CHER MCC931) were the fragmented foundations of a small rectangular building (CAT Building 129) The building measured 4.7m by at least 3.4m. The foundations were shallow, coursed septaria and peg-tile, probably supporting a timber-frame. This was probably an outbuilding of 15th to 16th century date belonging to one of the houses fronting onto Head Street.

Directly to the south of the site is the Roman town wall (Scheduled Monument NHLE no. 1003772, CHER MCC859). The Roman town wall was built around the town in the later 1st century AD following the revolt by Boudica. It is constructed of a core of layered *septaria* and mortar faced with coursed *septaria* and tile. A recent study has concluded that the wall has an average width of 2.67m (including offsets) which is equivalent to precisely nine Roman feet (*pedes Monetales*).

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in May 2018 (application No.181160) proposing to *demolish the existing single storey rear extensions and erection of replacement single storey extension*.

As the site lies within an area highlighted by the CHER as having a high potential for archaeological deposits, an archaeological condition was recommended by the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2018).

Requirement for work

The required archaeological work is for an archaeological test pit evaluation and continuous archaeological monitoring and recording for the raft foundation and groundworks. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2019).

Specifically:

1) Test pit evaluation

Two test pits, 1m x 1m in area area to be excavated at the rear of the property against the walls of the extension to be demolished.

The purpose of the test pitting is to assess the archaeological potential of the site and to determine if further archaeological investigation is required. Decisions on the need for any further archaeological investigation before any groundworks commence and/or monitoring during groundworks will be made by the CBCAA on the basis of the results of the evaluation.

2) The monitoring and recording

Monitoring of the raft foundation, which is being undertaken to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site. The proposed raft foundation involves a 300mm deep slab of reinforced concrete which thickens to 500mm at the edges.

If unexpected remains are encountered the CBCAA will be informed immediately and the CBCAA will decide if amendments to the brief are required to ensure adequate provision for archaeological recording.

General methodology

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a, b)

- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2018)
- the Project Brief issued by the CBCAA (CBC 2019).

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to CBCAA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER). This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A unique HER event number will be obtained from the CBCAA prior to the commencement of fieldwork alongside a project or site code from the curating museum. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

Staffing

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One CAT officer for the duration of the groundworks.

Test-pitting methodology

The test-pits will be hand excavated to 700mm below ground level.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered, time will be allowed for these to be planned and recorded.

If any features or deposits uncovered are to be destroyed by the proposed development, time will be allowed for these features to be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc), 10% of linear features (ditches, etc) and 100% of all complex features and burials (see Human Remains policy below).

Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used to examine spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

Monitoring methodology

As above, except there will be sufficient on-site attendance by CAT staff to maintain a watch on all contractors' ground works to record, excavate or sample (as necessary) any archaeological features or deposits.

Site surveying

Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas and trenches will be located by NGR coordinates.

Environmental sampling policy

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer/Lisa Gray whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course, but only if they are datable. Any processing and reporting will be done by VF/LG. If any complex or outstanding deposits are encountered, VF/LG will be asked onto site to advise. EH Regional Adviser is available for further advice.

Human remains

CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure or unless advised to do so by the project osteologist or ECCHEA. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the trial-trenching, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them and seek advice from the project osteologist. Following HE guidance (HE 2018) if the human remains are not to be lifted, the project osteologist should be available to record the human remain *in situ* (i.e. a site visit). Conditions laid down by the DoJ license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and ECCHEA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Matthew Loughton (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

animal bones (small groups): Alec Wade / Adam Wightman

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum / Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation)

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black / Ian Betts (MOLA)

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Nigel Brown

Other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure

is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to CBCAA.

A contingency will be made in the budget for absolute dating of appropriate finds/deposits

Results

Notification will be given to CBCAA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (HE 2015).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to CBCAA as a PDF.

The report will contain:

- Location plan of the groundworks in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of the site will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and supplied to CBCAA.

Results will be published, to at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance will be made in the project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series

Archive deposition

It is a policy of Colchester Borough Council that the integrity of the site archive be maintained (i.e. all finds and records should be properly curated by a single organisation), with the archive available for public consultation. To achieve this desired aim it is assumed that the full archive will be deposited in Colchester Museums *unless otherwise agreed in advance*. (A full copy of the archive shall in any case be deposited).

By accepting this WSI, the client agrees to deposit the archive, including all artefacts, at Colchester & Ipswich Museum.

The requirements for archive storage will be agreed with the curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum and provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration and analysis) as appropriate.

The archive will be deposited with Colchester & Ipswich Museum or an alternate repository (approved by COLEM and CBCAA) within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to CBCAA.

Monitoring

CBCAA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given to CBCAA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with CBCAA prior to them being carried out.

CBCAA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of CBCAA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

References

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

Brown, D	2007	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation</i>
CAR 3	1984	Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex
CAR 6	1992	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 6: Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilbert School, and miscellaneous sites in Colchester 1971-1985.</i> By P Crummy
CAT	2018	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 1102	2017	<i>A desk-based assessment of the archaeological and heritage remains on and around Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, CO12 1PB: May 2017.</i> By H Brooks
CBCAA	2019	<i>Brief for an Archaeological (SI) Test Pit Evaluation at Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, CO1 1PB.</i> By J Tipper
Cifa	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
Cifa	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England (HE)	2015	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Historic England (HE)	2018	<i>The Role of the Human Osteologist in an Archaeological Fieldwork Project.</i> By S Mays, M Brickley and J Sidell
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)
MHCLG	2018	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

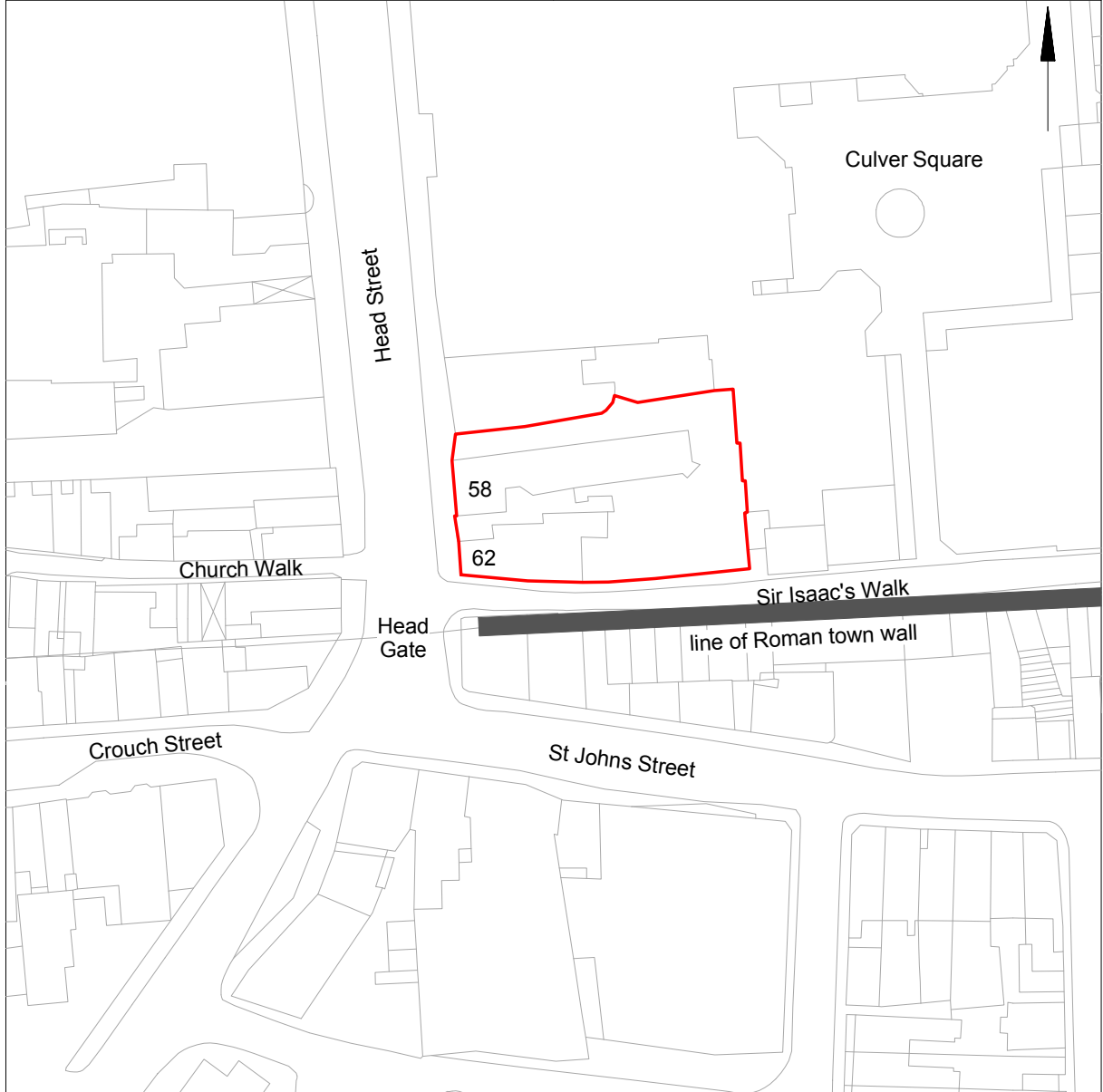
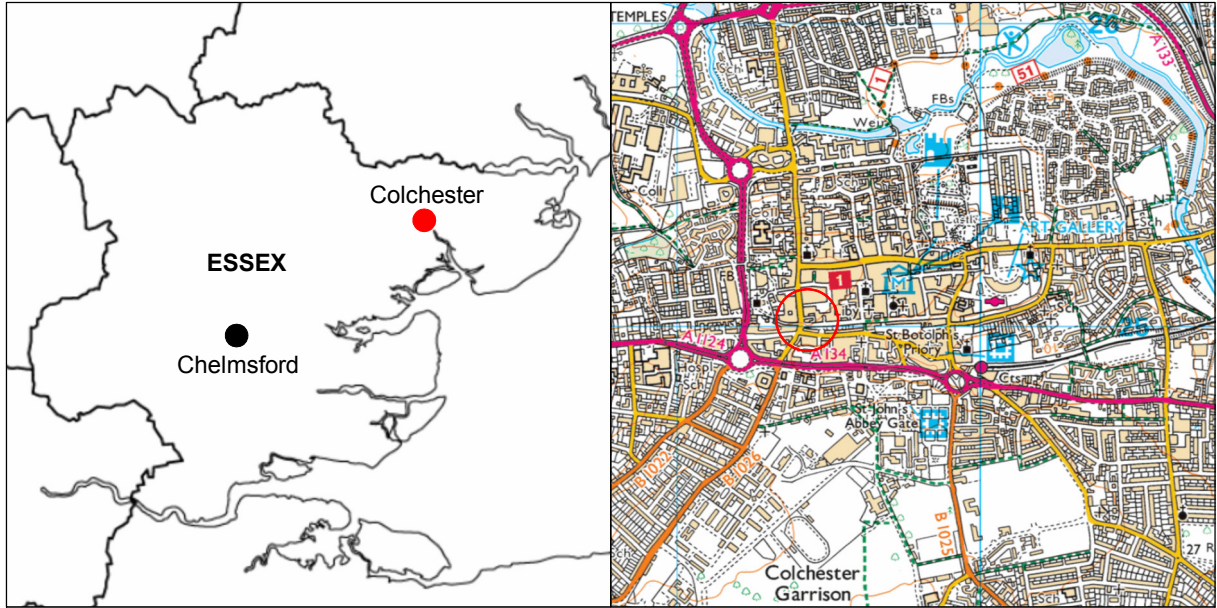
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Fig 1 Site location.





Fig 2 Test pit location plan.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-346384

Project details

Project name	Archaeological evaluation at Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1PB
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation (two test-pits) was carried out within a rear extension to Rebow House, Colchester, Essex in advance of the demolition of this extension and the construction of a new one. Rebow House is a Grade II* listed building (NHLE no. 1337728) of late 17th-century date with medieval cellar and 18th-century frontage. It is also located within the Roman fortress and Insula 34 of the Roman walled town. The test-pits were excavated to a depth of 0.8m below current ground level (bcgl) to determine the extent of archaeological remains. Test-pit 1: Modern layers (0-0.26m bcgl) sealed post-medieval deposits likely associated with either the construction or occupation of Rebow House, c 1700 (c 0.26-0.5m bcgl). Layers of late medieval/early post-medieval make-up/levelling (or possibly accumulation) were present at c 0.5-0.8m bcgl. Test-pit 2: Modern layers sealed a late 17th to early 18th century brick drainage culvert. The culvert was identified at a depth of 0.26m bcgl and extended below the base of the test-pit.
Project dates	Start: 04-04-2019 End: 08-04-2019
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	181160 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2019/03L - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4321 - HER event no.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM: 2019.25 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 3 - Retailing
Monument type	WALL FOUNDATIONS Post Medieval
Monument type	BRICK CULVERT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Test Pits"
Development type	Urban commercial (e.g. offices, shops, banks, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, CO1 1PB
Postcode	CO1 1PB
Study area	0.1 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 99438 25018 51.88746099663 0.898437367302 51 53 14 N 000 53 54 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Emma Holloway
Project director/manager	Chris Lister
Project supervisor	Alec Wade
Type of	Owner

sponsor/funding
body

Name of
sponsor/funding
body Tollgate Partnership Limited

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
Digital Archive recipient Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID COLEM: 2019.25
Digital Contents "other"
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID COLEM: 2019.25
Paper Contents "other"
Paper Media available "Context sheet", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title Archaeological evaluation at Rebow House, 58-62 Head Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1PB: April 2019
Author(s)/Editor(s) Pooley, L.
Other bibliographic details CAT Report 1425
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Issuer or publisher Colchester Archaeological Trust
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Description A4 ringbound loose-leaf
URL <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/all-reports.html>

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