


Colchester Archaeological Trust

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

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CAT Report 1525 Archaeological monitoring at 30 Northgate Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1EZ: February 2020	Parish: Colchester
	Planning reference: 190584
	CHER Event no.: ECC4425
	OASIS ref.: colchest3-381561
	Grid Reference: TL 99513 25521 (centre)
	Number of site visits: 1
Dates of visits: 26th February 2020	
Nature of the work: Observation of groundworks for a new extension to the rear of the property.	
Reason for condition: The site lies immediately adjacent to the Roman wall.	
% of total seen: 100% of the groundworks.	
Results: All groundworks were monitored by a CAT archaeologist in response to a brief set by Dr Jess Tipper of Colchester Borough Council Planning Services. An area measuring 11.4m ² was reduced by 0.32-0.5m. Two layers were recorded: a) modern topsoil, a firm, moist dark brown silt with CBM flecks, 0.12m thick; b) accumulation layer, a firm, moist dark grey/brown silt.	
	
Photograph Working shot	
No archaeological features or material were encountered as excavations did not extend below modern layers.	
Recorded by: Dr Elliott Hicks (eh2@catuk.org)	Date: 11.03.2020
Checked by: Philip Crummy (pc@catuk.org)	Date: 12.03.2020

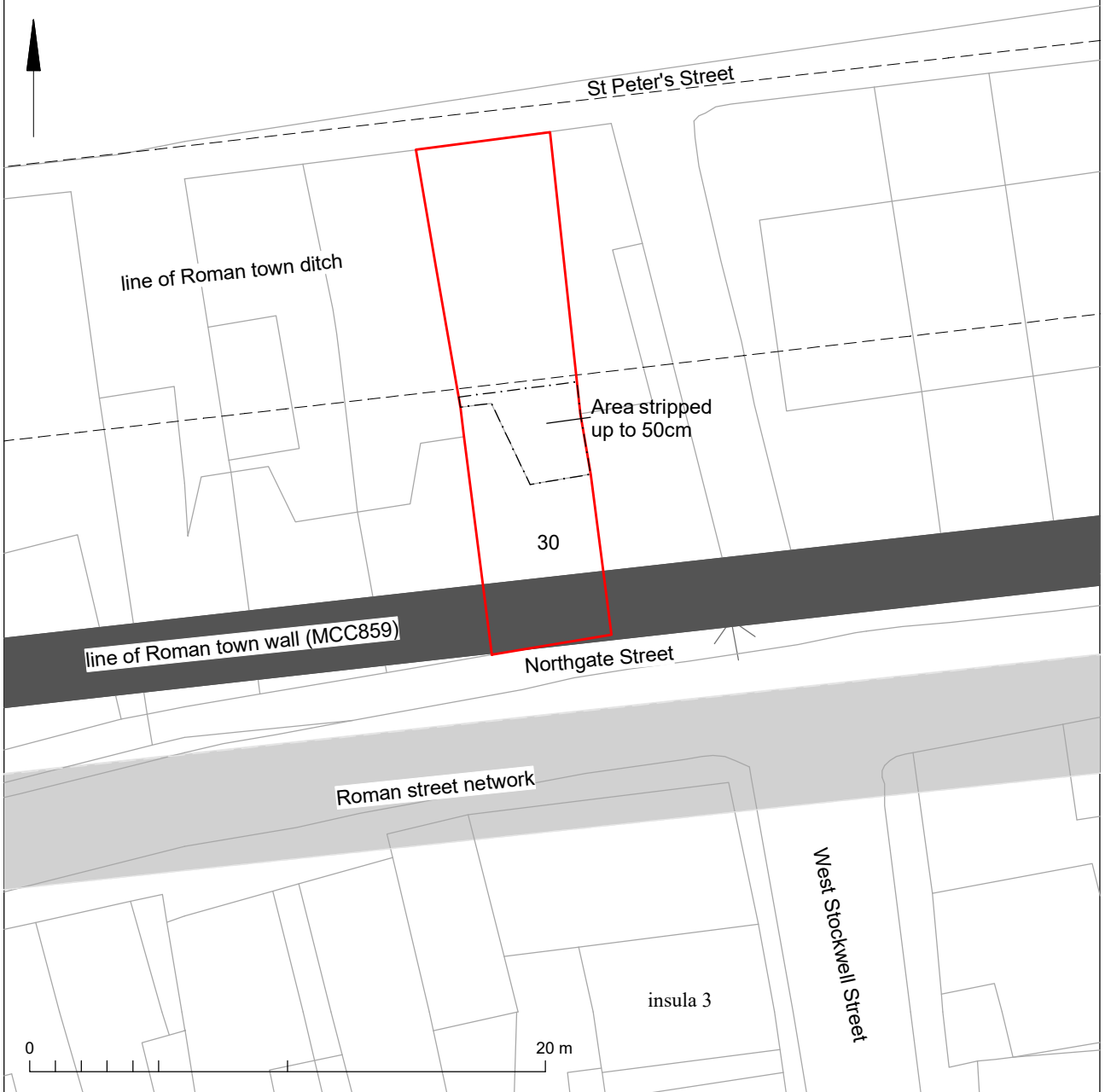
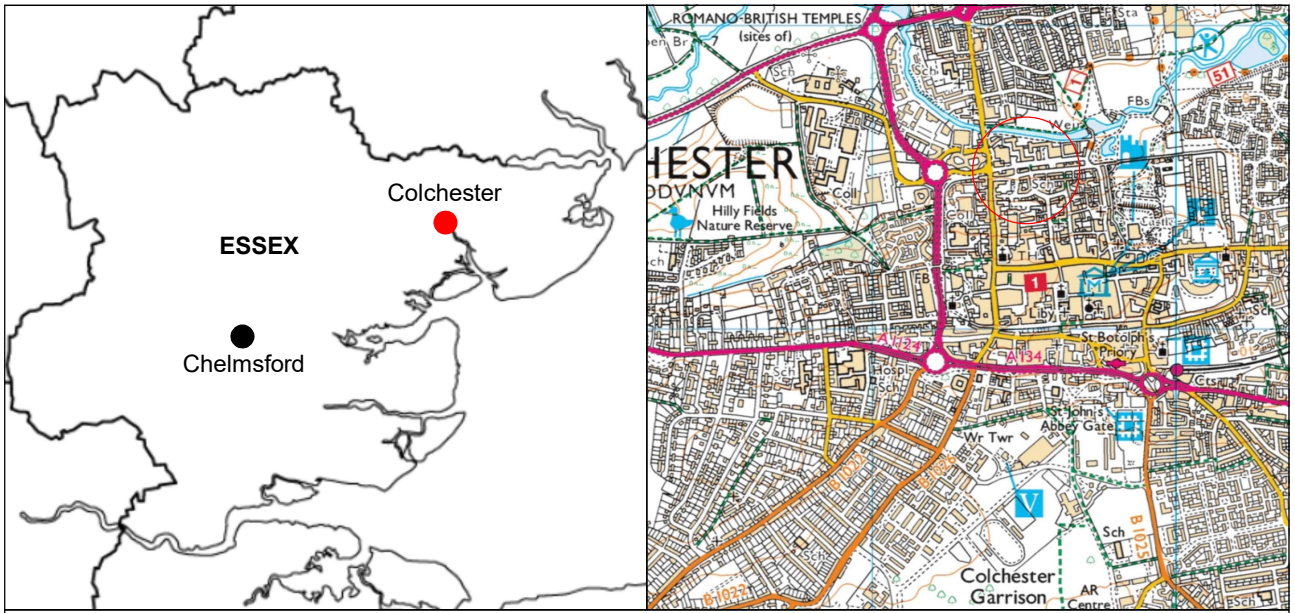


Fig 1 Site location in relation to the Roman defences and street network.

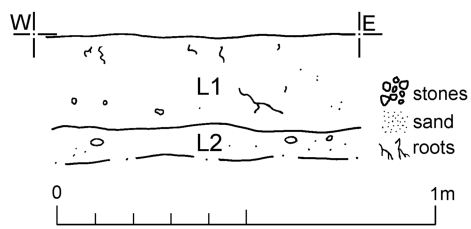


Fig 2 Reprtentative section.

Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an archaeological investigation at 30 Northgate Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1EZ.

NGR: TL 99513 25521 (centre)

District: Colchester

Planning references: 190584

Commissioned by and on behalf of: Mr & Mrs Dixon

Curating museum: Colchester

CHER number: ECC4425

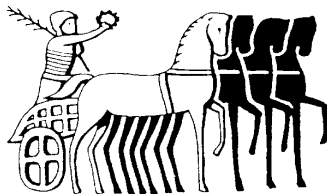
CAT project code: 2020/01h

OASIS project number: colchest3-381561

Site manager: Chris Lister

CBC monitor: Jess Tipper

This WSI written: 21/01/2020



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Site location and description

The proposed development site is located within the historic core of Colchester town centre, to the immediate north of the Roman Town Wall at 30 Northgate Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1EZ (Fig 1). The site is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 99513 25521.

Proposed work

The development comprises the removal of existing single storey element to be replaced with a new rear extension, which includes a 600mm deep raft foundation, new service runs and any other associated groundworks.

Archaeological background

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

The Roman wall (CHER MCC859) was built around the town in the later 1st century AD following the revolt led by Boudica. It is constructed of a core of layered septaria and mortar faced with coursed septaria and tile (CAR 3, 14). 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*). A hypothetical cross-section of the wall shows the foundations as being 3.77m wide (Crummy 2003). Some previous work shows that the wall foundations were surprisingly shallow at 600mm deep (Hull 1958, 25-6). Work by CAT at the Sixth Form College in 2005 shows the stone foundations to be 1.2m deep with wooden piles below (CAT report 347, ECC2829), although, being water-logged, ground conditions here presumably explain their exceptional depth. Trial-holes confirmed that survival of the foundations varies. Where they have not been robbed away, the foundations extend 2.1m from the existing face of the wall and are in a sound state of preservation.

Above ground, the survival of the wall is very patchy. Some sections are in relatively good condition, with large areas of intact facing surviving (such as around Balkerne Gate to the west of the town). The section of the wall around Duncan's Gate however, has lost up to 2.4m in width and nothing of the original exterior face survives, only the core. The majority of what is standing has been refaced or completely rebuilt in brick and stone.

CAT have been carrying out a programme of historic building recording of the town wall. The current property is located to the east of Section 21 investigated in August 2017. Trenching carried out on the site in 1987 showed that the wall has lost 1m of its width above ground. The current septaria and tile facing on the north elevation was probably added in the 14th century, during extensive renovation works carried out on the wall, and the rebuilding of nearby North Gate (CAT Report 144 and project 97/10c CAT Report 1000). Until recently (at least 1938) the wall had structures built up against its northern elevation, and evidence of this still exists in the form of sections of modern brickwork. Now it is exposed, the section of wall has begun to decay at an increasing rate, and conservation work is required to preserve it (CAT Report 1183).

CAT have carried out numerous archaeological investigations in this area. Of particular note is an evaluation and excavation at 21 St Peters Street (CAT Report 556, ECC2887). The centre of the site was dominated by part of a Roman street heading northwards towards the river. The street was flanked by wooden drains, one on the west and two on the east (MCC3076). The thick gravelled metalling was typical of the streets found inside the walled town as was the presence of flanking wooden drains, as were the flanking drains and the width of the street. Various strands of evidence suggest that the street had been contemporary with the wall but was laid a short while before its construction. The presence of three drains seems excessive and unusual and suggests that their main function was to channel away unwanted water from a spring directly uphill from the site (in other words, from the south). This must be the spring that was later to feed medieval Stockwell. The drains were all cut through and effectively rendered useless by the trench for the foundation of the new wall. Small pits with upright logs in the centre were dug into the street between the redundant gate

and the town ditch (MCC3078). Some of these were sealed by a thin layer of metalling showing that they are Roman in origin and late in the sequence of metalling. Their position in relation to the gate and street indicates that they post-date the use of both as a ingress and egress into the town. The most likely explanation for the pits is that they were lilia - defensive devices containing sharpen posts pointing upwards. Very few lilia have been found in Britain or abroad.



Plate 1: The Roman wooden drain (F7) recorded during the 21 St Peter's Street excavation.

Planning background

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in March 2019 (application No. 190584) for the *proposed rear extension with removal of existing single storey element*.

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 2019).

Requirement for work

The required archaeological work is for an archaeological investigation of all groundworks. Details are given in a Project Brief written by CBCAA (CBC 2020).

Specifically, the investigation is being undertaken to identify and record any surviving archaeological deposits that may exist on site. This work may encounter deep, stratified archaeological deposits and therefore for safety reasons shoring may be required.

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.

In the exceptional circumstances that important, well-preserved remains are discovered, which cannot otherwise be avoided by the development (and satisfactorily preserved in situ), a contingency will be required for the block-lifting of these archaeological remains and for subsequent conservation and presentation. A decision about the need for conservation and lifting of important archaeological remains will be made in consultation with specialist stakeholders (e.g, Historic England, Colchester Museum and Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services).

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 2019)
- the Project Brief issued by the CBCAA (CBC 2020).

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. The curating museum will be notified of the details of the project and the event code, which will be used to identify the project archive when depositing at the end of the project.

Staffing

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

Investigation methodology

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. The investigation will involve monitoring of all groundworks and inspection of upcast soil.

All topsoil removal and ground reduction will be done with a toothless bucket under the supervision and to the satisfaction of a professional archaeologist. If no archaeologically significant deposits are exposed, machine excavation will continue until natural subsoil is reached.

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.

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

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphical and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming the context is large enough).

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

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. Trained CAT staff will do any processing and the flots passed to Val Fryer / Lisa Gray for analysis and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF/LG will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF/LG and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

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 CBCAA.

CBCAA will be notified immediately if any human remains are encountered during the investigation.

If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove remains from the site during the investigation, 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. Human remains removed from site for analysis this may involve radiocarbon dating (see finds section).

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 the CBCAA 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. Digital site photographs will be taken and archived as per Historic England guidelines (HE 2015a)

Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number. CAT may use local volunteers to assist the CAT Finds Officer with this task.

Most of our finds reports are written internally by CAT Staff under the supervision and direction of Philip Crummy (Director) and Howard Brooks (Deputy Director). This includes specialist subjects such as:

ceramic finds (pottery and ceramic building material): Matthew Loughton

animal bones: Alec Wade (or Adam Wightman, small groups only)

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Laura Pooley

non-ceramic bulk finds: Laura Pooley

flints: Adam Wightman

environmental processing: Robin Mathieson/Bronagh Quinn

project osteologist (human remains): Meghan Seehra

or to outside specialists:

animal and human bone: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental assessment and analysis: Val Fryer / Lisa Gray

radiocarbon dating: SUERC Radiocarbon Dating Laboratory, Glasgow

conservation/x-ray: Laura Ratcliffe (LR Conservation) / Norfolk Museums Service, Conservation and Design Services

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

flint: Hazel Martingell

prehistoric pottery: Stephen Benfield / Nigel Brown / Paul Sealey

Roman pottery: Stephen Benfield / Paul Sealey / Jo Mills / Val Rigby / Gwladys Monteil

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

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

small finds: Nina Crummy

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 scientific assessment/analysis. This can include

soil micromorphological assessment, absolute dating in the event that archaeomagnetic and/or (more probably) radiocarbon dating is required, if burning is encountered or human remains (in which case it might be necessary to lift a small sample for absolute dating). The Historic England Regional Science Advisor will be consulted for advice on this.

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 2015b).

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. Digital archives will be curated with the Archaeology Data Service, or similar accredited digital archive repository, that safeguard the long-term curation of digital records. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre [DCC 2013]) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive.

The CBCAA will be notified of the archiving timetable throughout the project and once deposition has occurred.

A digital / vector drawing of the site be given to the CBCAA for integration into the HER.

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	2011	<i>Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation.</i> 2nd edition.
CAR 3	1984	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 3: Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex.</i> By P Crummy
CAT	2018	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT Report 144	2000	<i>Colchester town wall: miscellaneous sites from 1987 to 2000</i>
CAT Report 347	2009	<i>Roman buildings, the rear face of the Roman town wall and archaeological investigations in Insulas 1a, 1b, 9a and 9b, at the Sixth Form College, North Hill, Colchester, Essex April 2005-March 2006.</i>
CAT Report 556	2010	<i>An archaeological excavation at 21 St Peter's Street, Colchester, Essex in 2008.</i> By A Wightman
CAT Report 1000	forthcoming	<i>A miscellany of unpublished Colchester and Essex sites: 1984-2000 (sites not published in any Colchester Archaeological Report, or in the CAT Report Series from 1997).</i> By H Brooks
CAT Report 1183	2017	<i>Historic building recording at Town Wall Section 21, Rear of 1 Middleborough, Colchester, CO1 1WD: August 2017.</i> By M Baister
CBCAA	2020	<i>Brief for Archaeological Investigation at 30 Northgate Street, Colchester, CO1 1EZ.</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>
Crummy, P	1997	<i>City of Victory – the story of Colchester, Britain's first Roman town</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).
Historic England (HE)	2015a	<i>Digital Image capture and File Storage: Guidelines for best practice.</i> By S Cole & P Backhouse
Historic England (HE)	2015b	<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
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester, RRCSAL, 20</i>
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	2019	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

E Holloway



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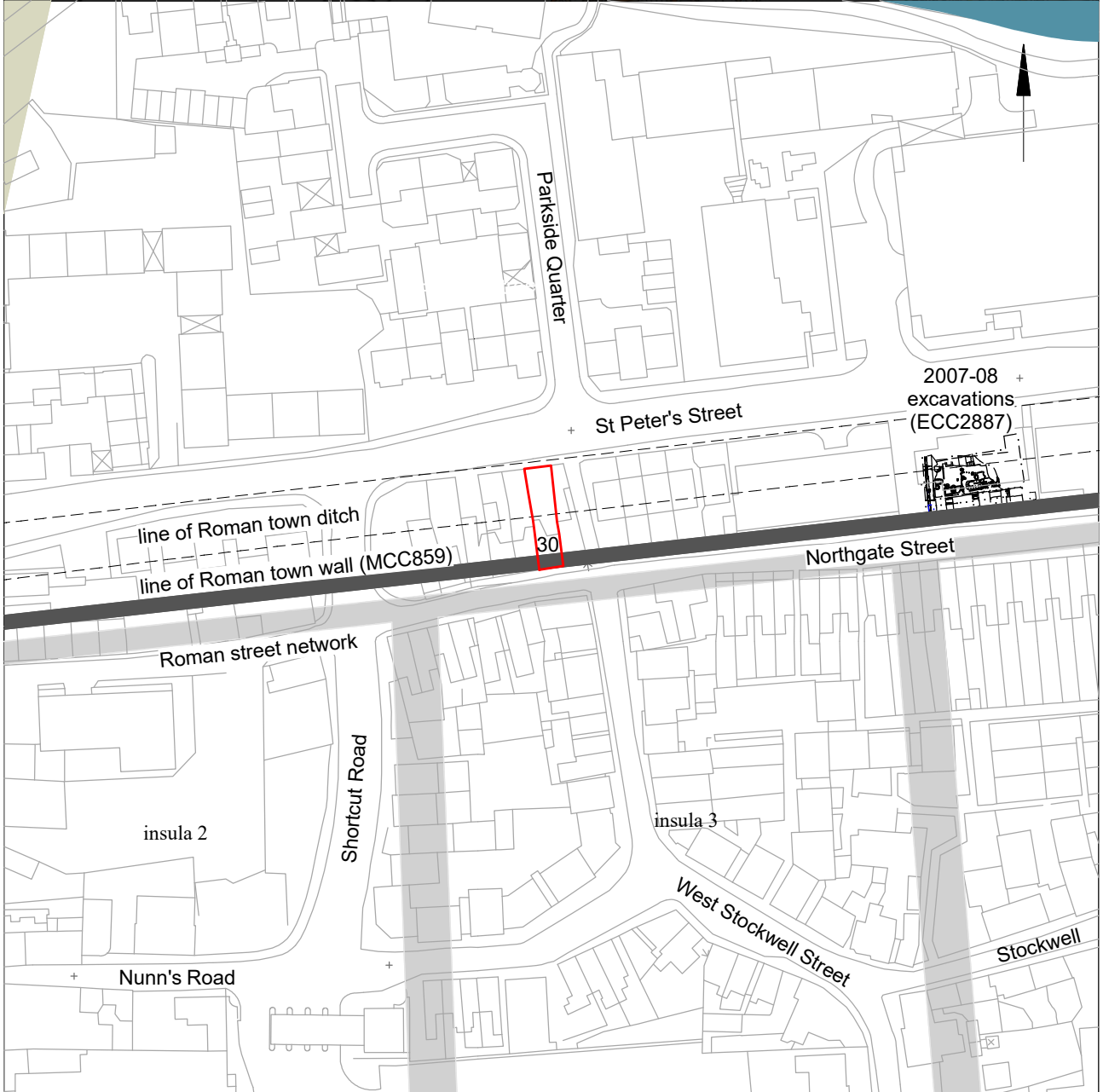
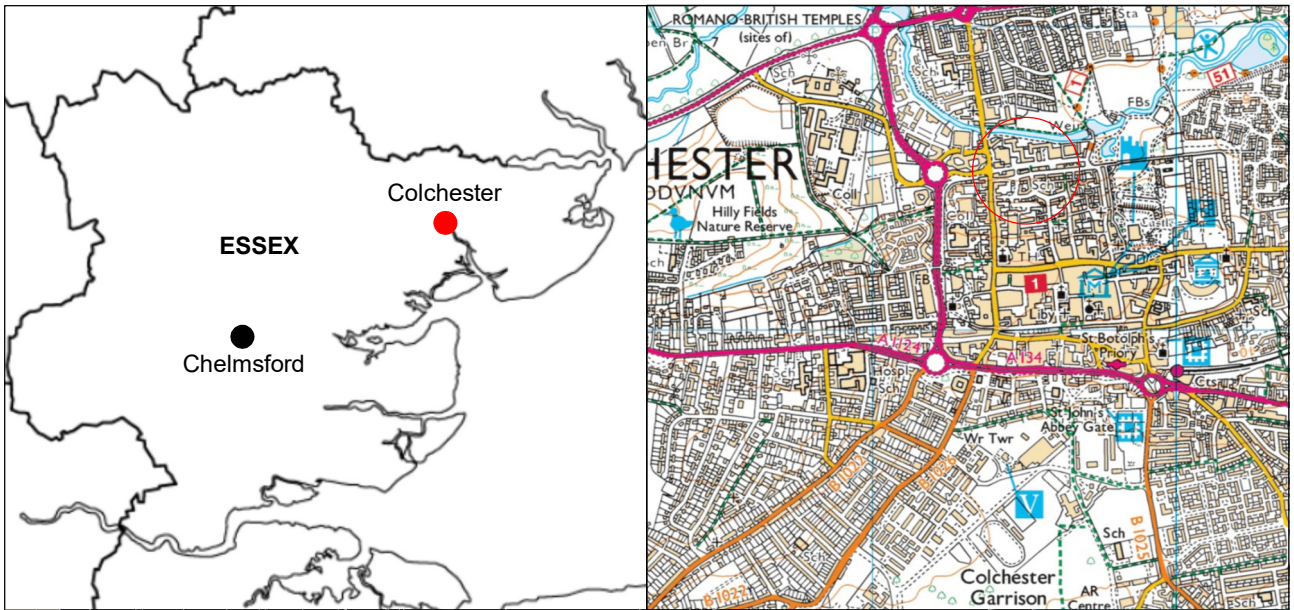


Fig 1 Site location in relation to the Roman defences and street network.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-381561

Project details

Project name	An archaeological investigation at 30 Northgate Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1EZ.
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring was carried out at 30 Northgate Street, Colchester, Essex during groundworks for an extension to the rear of the property. The development site is located immediately adjacent to the wall which surrounded the Roman town. Despite being located in an archaeologically-sensitive area, no significant archaeological remains were encountered.
Project dates	Start: 26-02-2020 End: 26-02-2020
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	190584 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2020/01h - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4425 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER 30 Northgate Street
Postcode	CO1 1EZ
Study area	0.01 Hectares
Site coordinates	TL 99513 25521 51.891951125282 0.899816790495 51 53 31 N 000 53 59 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	Ben Holloway
Type of sponsor/funding body	Owner
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr & Mrs Dixon

Project archives

Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	ECC4425
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	ECC4425
Paper Media available	"Drawing", "Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Report"

Project bibliography

1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological monitoring at 30 Northgate Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1EZ: February 2020
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Hicks, E.
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1525
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OASIS:

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