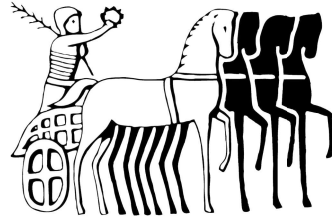


Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1929
issued May 2023**

**Archaeological evaluation on land at Rascasse,
Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex, CM8 3PJ:
April 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/03k
ECC code: SESL23**

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Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex, CM8 3PJ:
April 2023**

NGR: TL 81218 20000

Planning ref.: 20/01451/FUL

**CAT project ref.: 2023/03k
CAT Report 1929**

**ECC code: SESL23
OASIS id: colchest3-514516**

report prepared by Harvey Furniss

**fieldwork by Harvey Furniss
with Ziya Eksen and Alice Parker**

**commissioned by Steve Higgon, HGN Design Ltd
on behalf of Zero Three Care Homes**

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Issued:	XX	

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out on land at Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex in advance of the construction of a new residential development. The site lies on the periphery of the historical village of Silver End in the district of Braintree. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, the only feature excavated was a post-medieval ditch in the southernmost trench on site.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land at Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Braintree, Essex on 26th to 27th April 2023. The work was commissioned by Steve Higgon of HGN Design Ltd, on behalf of Zero Three Care Homes, and took place in advance of the construction of a new residential buildings, car park and services.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor stipulated that in order to establish the archaeological implications of this application, the applicant should be required to commission a scheme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2021).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for a trial trenching evaluation and excavation on land at Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex* written by Teresa O'Connor and detailing the required archaeological work (ECCPS 2023), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2023).

In addition to the brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was done in accordance with *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016), 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

The following archaeological background includes extracts of the ECC Brief (ECCPS 2023) and Essex Historic Environment Records (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex (accessed via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

The site is located within a large area of complex multi-period archaeological remains. Recent investigation to the north-west of the site has revealed Bronze Age and medieval settlement, and to the north-east, ongoing archaeological investigations at Bradwell Quarry have revealed multi-period archaeological evidence, most recently an enclosed Roman settlement and medieval settlement. To the south-east an enclosed Later Iron Age farmstead has been identified, with medieval and later activity, closer to Bower Hall moated site (NHER 8092).

4 Aims

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to record the extent of any surviving archaeological deposits and to assess the archaeological potential of the site to allow the ECCHEA to determine if further investigation is required.

5 Results (Figs 2-4)

Three trial-trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. The trench plan stated in the WSI was to have a fourth trench to the north-west of T1, however on-

site constraints inhibited the original plan and a new one was agreed with the ECCPS monitor (Fig 1). Trench 1 was extended to the north-west in order to compensate for losing T4, as well as to cover the footprint of the proposed road layout without encroaching into the contaminated zone. The other trenches were adjusted slightly due to vegetation encountered on site, but were otherwise in their intended places.

Across site modern topsoil (L1, c 0.30m thick) sealed a buried soil (L2, c 0.26m thick) which overlay natural (L3, encountered at a depth between 0.46-0.65m below current ground level). A layer of modern made ground (L4, c 0.14m thick) was observed in Trench 1 cutting into L1.

Trench 1

T1 was opened on a NW-SE alignment and measured 38m in length and 1.8m in width. There was an unexcavated modern pit which was encountered within the make up of the topsoil. No other archaeological contexts were encountered within trench 1.

Trench 2

T2 was opened on a NW-SE alignment and measured 25m in length and 1.8m in width. There were no archaeological contexts encountered within trench 2.

Trench 3

T3 was opened on a NE-SW alignment and measured 24.5m in length and 1.8m in width. Ditch F1 was on a NW-SE alignment and measured at c 1.17m in width and c 0.21m in depth. The feature yielded abraded post-medieval CBM within the single fill.



Photograph 1 Trench 1, view south-east.



Photograph 2 Trench 2, view north-west.



Photograph 3 Trench 3, view north-east.



Photograph 4 Trench 1 representative section, view east.



Photograph 5 Ditch F1, view south-east.

6 Finds

Abraded fragments of post-medieval CBM from F1 were not retained for post-excavation analysis. There were no other archaeological finds from the evaluation.

7 Conclusion

Despite the development area being located within a landscape high in potential for archaeological contexts, the only feature that was excavated during the work was a post-medieval ditch which likely represented an out of use field boundary (F1). The field boundary isn't represented on any ordnance survey maps meaning the ditch went out of use before the late 19th century.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Steve Higgon of HGN Design Ltd and Zero Three Care Homes Ltd for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister with fieldwork carried out by H Furniss with Z Eksen and A Parker. Figures were compiled by C Lister, H Furniss and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

9 References

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

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8)
CAT	2023	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2023	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for an evaluation by trial-trenching on land at Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex, CM8 3PJ</i> by H Furniss
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation.</i> Revised October 2020
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Revised October 2020
CifA	2014c	<i>Code of Conduct.</i> Revised October 2022
ECCPS	2023	<i>Brief for a trial trenching evaluation and excavation on land at Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex,</i> by T O'Connor
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14)
Historic England	2016	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</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	2021	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CifA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
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	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
residual	something out of its original context, eg a Roman coin in a modern pit
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

Digital record

CAT Report 1929

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Digital photographs

Survey data

Site data

12 Archive deposition

The 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 the Archaeological Data Service.

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Distribution list:

Steve Higgon, HGN Design Ltd

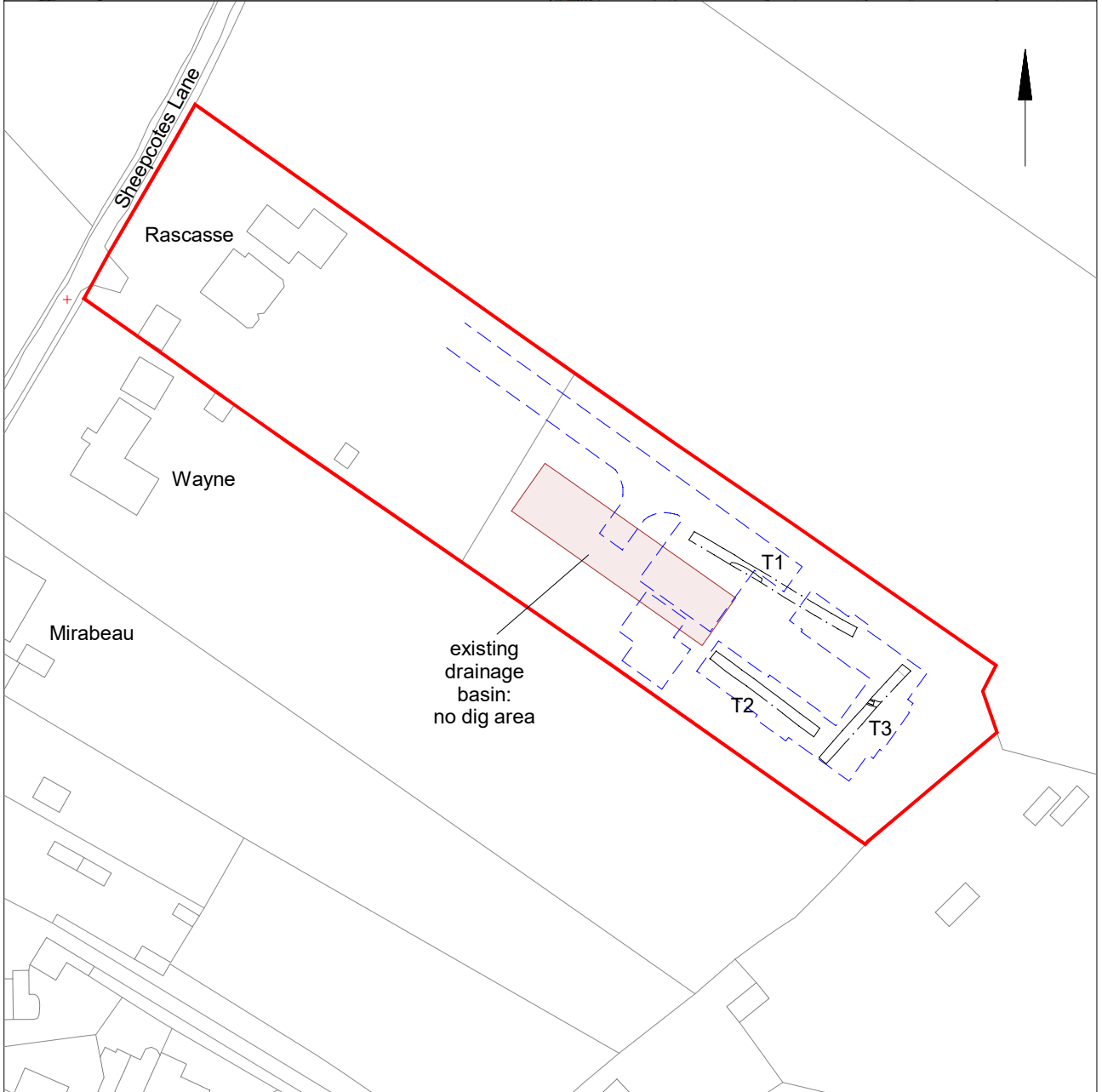
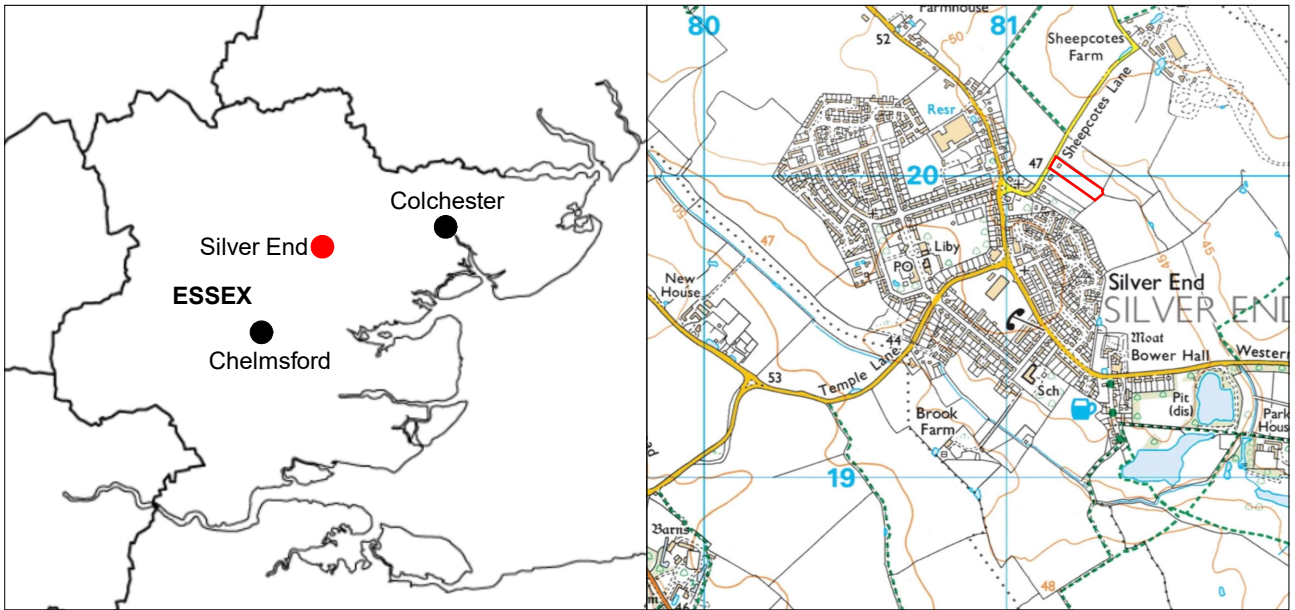
Zero Three Care Homes

ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Trench	Finds no.	Feature / layer type	Description	Date
L1	All	-	Topsoil	Firm, moist, dark blueish-brown silty sand.	Modern
L2	All	-	Buried soil	Firm, light yellowish-brown sandy silt.	Modern
L3	All	-	Natural	Compact, moist, light orangey-brown clay with gravel lenses.	Post-glacial
L4	T1	-	Made ground	Loose, mid yellowish-orange gravelly sand.	Modern
F1	T3	-	Ditch	Firm, mid greyish-brown silty clay sand with occasional stone inclusions. >2.01m (L) x 1.17m (W) x 0.21m (D)	Post-medieval



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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).



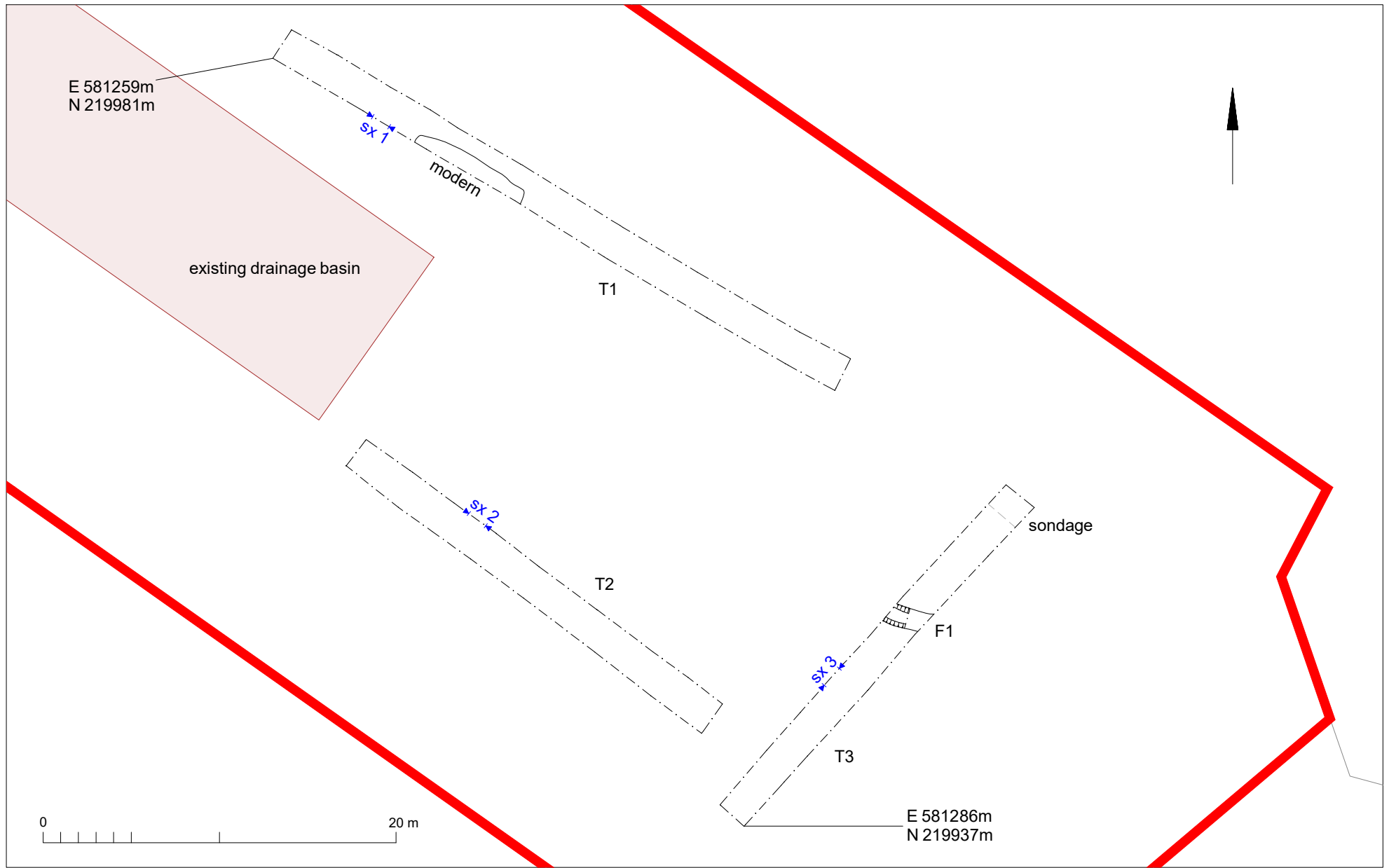


Fig 2 Trench results.

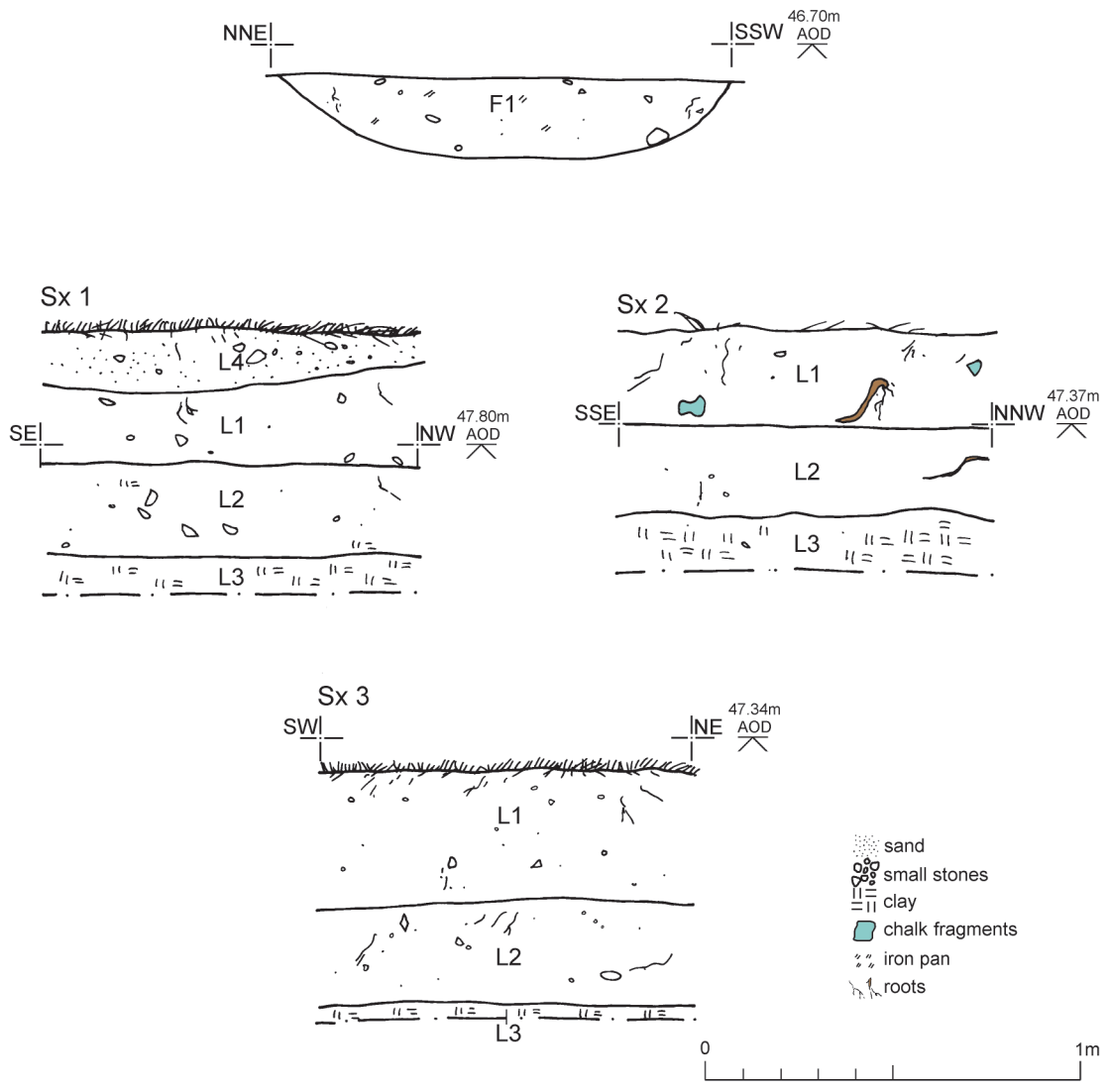


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

Summary for colchest3-514516

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-514516
Project Name	Evaluation at Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex, CM8 3PJ
Sitename	Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex, CM8 3PJ
Activity type	Evaluation
Project Identifier(s)	2023/03k
Planning Id	20/01451/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	26-Apr-2023 - 27-Apr-2023
Location	Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex, CM8 3PJ NGR : TL 81218 20000 LL : 51.84917653898669, 0.629620173877475 12 Fig : 581218,220000
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Braintree Parish : Silver End
Project Methodology	An archaeological evaluation (three-trial trenches) was carried out as specified in the project brief and WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (3 trial-trenches) was carried out on land at Rascasse, Sheepcotes Lane, Silver End, Essex in advance of the construction of a new residential development. The site lies on the periphery of the historical village of Silver End in the district of Braintree. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, the only feature excavated was a post-medieval ditch in the southernmost trench on site.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - SESL23
Archives	