

# Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1930  
issued May 2023**

**Archaeological monitoring at  
Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, CO6 3RS:  
April 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/04b  
CHER code: ECC4782**

**Archaeological monitoring at  
Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex,  
CO6 3RS: April 2023**

**NGR: TL 90612 25775 (centre)**

**Planning district.: Colchester  
Planning ref.: 222116**

**CAT project ref.: 2023/04b  
CAT Report 1930**

**CHER code: ECC4782  
CCC monitor: Dr Richard Hoggett  
OASIS id: colchest3-514718**

**report prepared by Alexander Smith  
and Laura Pooley**

**fieldwork by Megan Beale**

**commissioned by the homeowner**

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<b>Issued:</b>	31/05/2023	

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## 1 Summary

Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex during groundworks for the construction of a new garage and store. Despite being located close to a listed building, the only feature uncovered was a field boundary ditch backfilled in the 20th century.

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for archaeological monitoring carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex, from 20th-25th April 2023. The work was commissioned by the homeowner during groundworks for the construction of new garaging and store with air source heat pumps adjacent to the listed building.

As Hoe Farm House is Grade II listed and 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 City Council Archaeological Advisor (CCCAA). The recommended archaeological condition is based on the guidance given in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (MHCLG 2021).

A *Brief for Archaeological Monitoring at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham*, was produced by Simon Wood detailing the required archaeological work (CCC 2023), and a written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with CCC in advance of the groundworks (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 excavation* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b).

## 3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Colchester Archaeological Trust report archive and the Colchester Historic Environment Record (ECC/MCC numbers, which are accessible via Colchester Heritage Explorer (<https://colchesterheritage.co.uk/map>)).

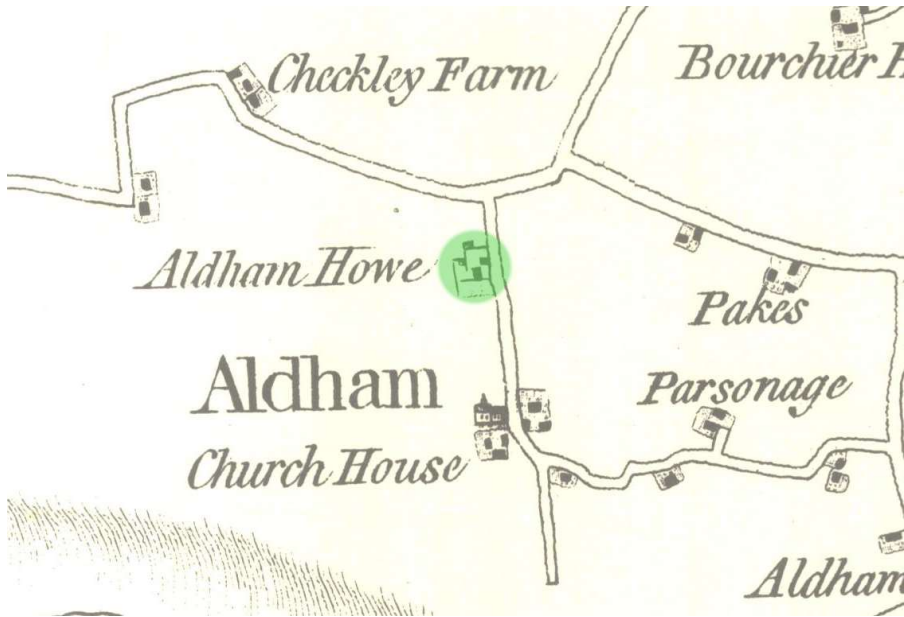
The ancient parish of Aldham lies on the southern bank of the River Colne. In the Domesday book of 1086, it was recorded as having a population of four households, putting it in the smallest 20% of recorded settlements

Hoe Farm House (NHLE No. 1337413, MCC3706) is a Grade II listed building with origins in the 16th century and 18th-century additions. The house and proposed development is located on the platform of a moat (MCC10203), which may relate to Hoe Farm House or to an earlier house on the site. Two Grade II listed barns are also present on Hoe Farm. The barn north-east of the farmhouse (NHLE No. 117334, MCC3707) is listed as late 15th/early 16th century while the other (NHLE No. 177335, MCC3708) is 16th century.

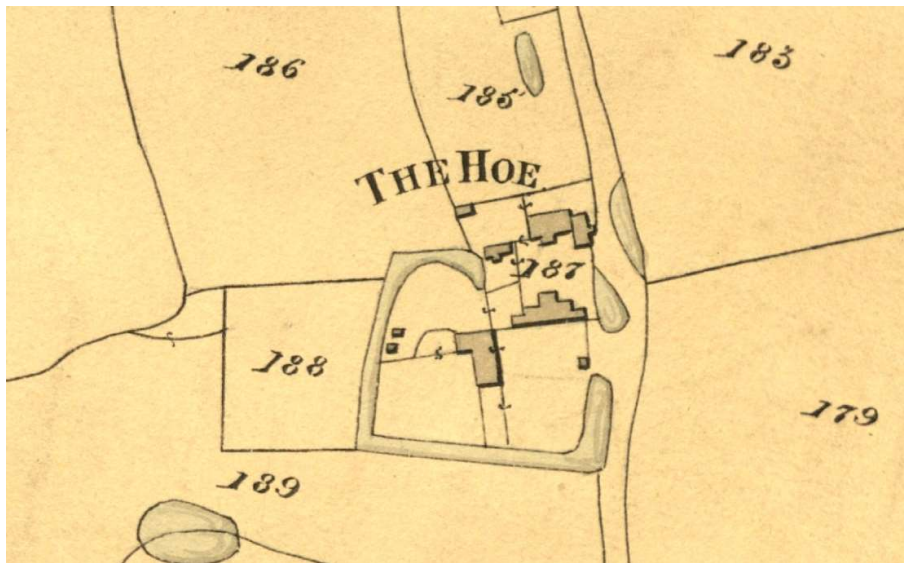
The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale<sup>1</sup>) shows the bedrock geology of the site to be London clay formation (bioturbated or poorly laminated blue-grey or grey-brown slightly calcareous, silty to very silty clay) with superficial deposits of Lowestoft Formation (chalky till with outwash sands and gravels, silts and clays).

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<sup>1</sup> British Geological Survey – <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>



**Map 1** Extract of the 1777 Chapman and André map. Hoe Farm labelled as 'Aldham Howe' (highlighted in green).



**Map 2** Extract of the 1839 tithe map showing the moat surrounding Hoe Farm (labelled as 'The Hoe').

#### 4 Aims

Archaeological monitoring was undertaken to excavate and record any archaeological deposits which were exposed by the groundworks.

#### 5 Results (Figs 2-3)

Two large trees were initially removed from the development site. Approximately 33m of foundation trench was then machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. The trench was c 0.7m wide and between 1.1m to 2.6m deep with a modern topsoil (L1, c 0.25-0.4m thick) sealing natural clay (L2). An additional area of land to the north-east of the foundation trench was reduced by c 0.4m through L1. To the south of the site was east/west boundary ditch F1 (over 13m long, over 2.3m wide and at least 2m deep), which had been backfilled by the mid 20th-century and then cut by a land drain.





**Photograph 1** Western tree-throw, looking south.



**Photograph 2** Foundation trench, looking north-west.





**Photograph 3** Foundation trench, some concreted, looking east.



**Photograph 4** F1 in section, looking north.





**Photograph 5** Soil reduction area, looking north-west.

## 6 Finds

*by Dr Matthew Loughton, Laura Pooley and Adam Wightman*

### **F1 upper fill, finds no. 3**

- Three fragments of peg-tile (86g), seven fragments of post-medieval/modern brick (267g), fragment of 19th- to 20th-century field drain (644g) and three fragments of 20th-century brick (634g).
- Sherd (54g) from a large bowl/pancheon (EVE:0.03) in post-medieval red earthenware (F40).
- Fragment from the push-up base of a straight-sided, dark olive green, wine bottle (436g), 18th-20th century.
- Complete iron horseshoe (460g), large, possibly from a heavy-horse. The toe-clip dates the shoe to the 19th-20th century (Sparkes 1976, 24).
- Piece of oyster shell (11g).

**L1, finds no.1** – sherd (2g) of 19th-20th century Staffordshire-type white earthenware (fabric 48D), three fragments of peg-tile (51g) and a fragment from the push-up base of a straight-sided, dark olive green, wine bottle (224g) of 18th-20th century date.

**Unstratified, finds no. 2** – fragment of 17th-century pantile (340g), fragment of post-medieval/modern floor tile (707g), two fragments of 19th- to 20th-century brick (1,002g), eight pieces of oyster shell (69g) and a fragment of animal bone (13g) from a medium-sized mammal that has been dog-gnawed at both ends.



## 7 Conclusion

Archaeological monitoring at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex revealed an east/west boundary ditch on the southern edge of the site that is visible on OS maps until the mid-20th century (Map 3). The boundary ditch was eventually replaced by the leylandii trees removed as part of the current groundworks.



**Map 3** Ordnance Survey map, surveyed 1875, published 1881. Boundary indicated by the blue arrow.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks the homeowner for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, A Wightman and L Pooley, fieldwork was carried out by M Beale. Figures are by A Smith and E Holloway. The project was monitored for CCC by Dr Richard Hoggett.

## 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 &amp; Safety Policy.</i>  |
| CAT                      | 2023  | <i>Written scheme of investigation for archaeological monitoring at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex – April 2023.</i>                           |
| CIfA                     | 2014a | <i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief.</i> Revised October 2021   |
| 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.   |
| CCC                      | 2023  | <i>Brief for Archaeological Monitoring at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex</i> by Dr S Wood.   |
| 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	Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers <b>24</b> (EAA <b>24</b> )
MHCLG	2021	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i> . Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Sparkes, I G	1976	<i>Old Horseshoes</i> . Shire Album 19, Shire Publications Ltd.

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CCC	Colchester City Council
CHER	Colchester Historic Environment Record
ECC	Essex County Council
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
post-medieval	period from c AD 1500 to c 1800
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> cces <b>S</b> to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigati <b>S</b> , <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsj	written scheme of investigation

## 11 Archive deposition

**Digital record:** This project falls within the ClfA definition of a sterile project (<https://www.archaeologists.net/selection-toolkit/sterile-projects>), and as such the preserved archaeological archive will take the form of a single digital document that incorporates all the relevant elements from the project archive. This document will be uploaded to OASIS and released into the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) library, from where it will be curated by the ADS. The single digital document will include the report, brief, wsi, photographs, and original site data (for example context sheets, section drawings).

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### Distribution list:

Homeowner  
Dr Richard Hoggett, Colchester City Council  
Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



## Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Finds no.	Context type	Description	Date
L1	1	Topsoil	Friable dry medium grey/brown loamy silt and inclusions of: stone 2%	Modern
L2	-	Natural clay	Firm dry/moist medium orange clay and inclusions of: stone 5%	Post-glacial
F1	3	Ditch	A) Friable moist/wet medium orange/brown silty clay with brick flecks B) Wet medium brown-grey clay with rare stones + CBM	Post-medieval/ modern
U/S	2	-	-	-

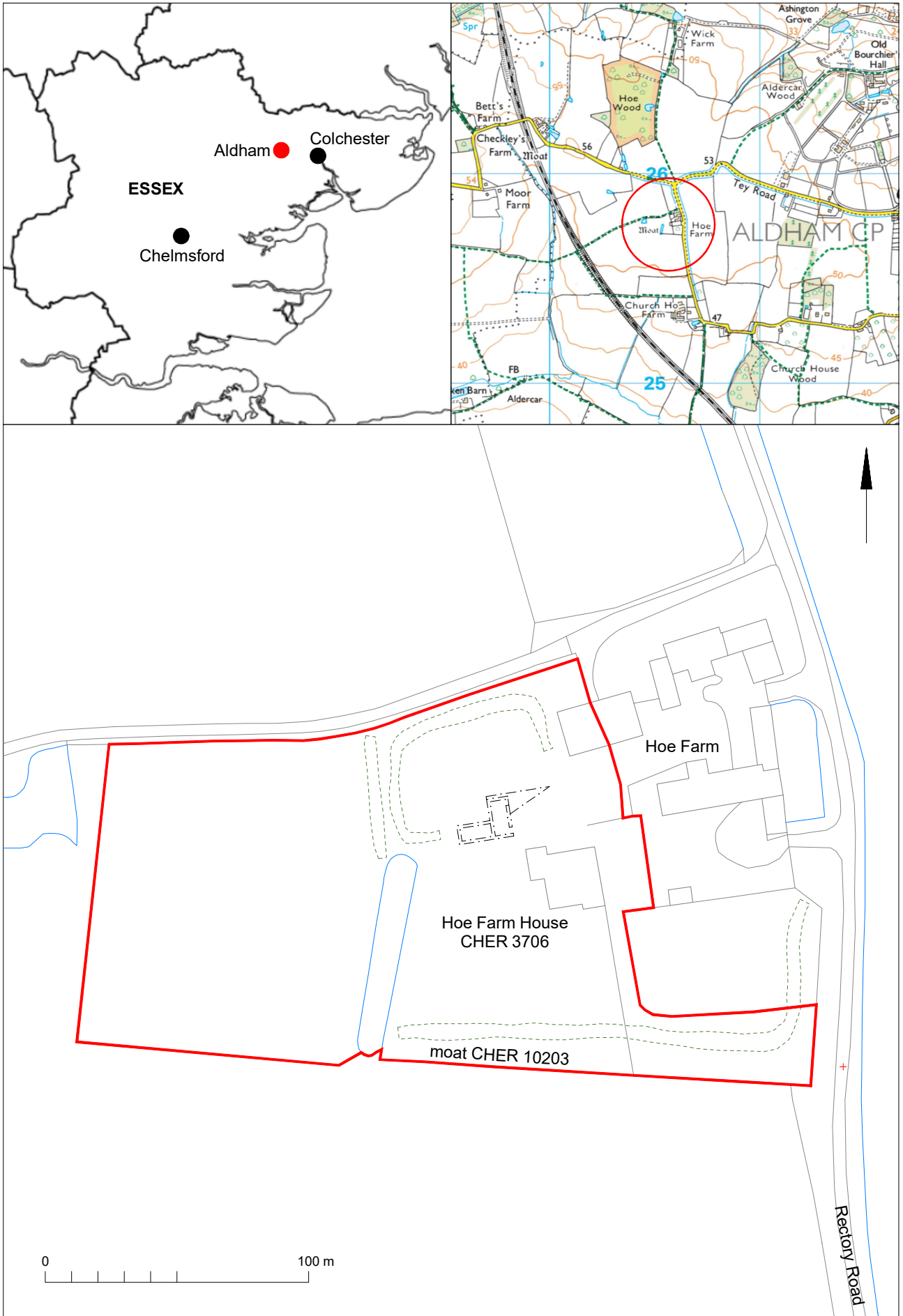


Fig 1 Site location.



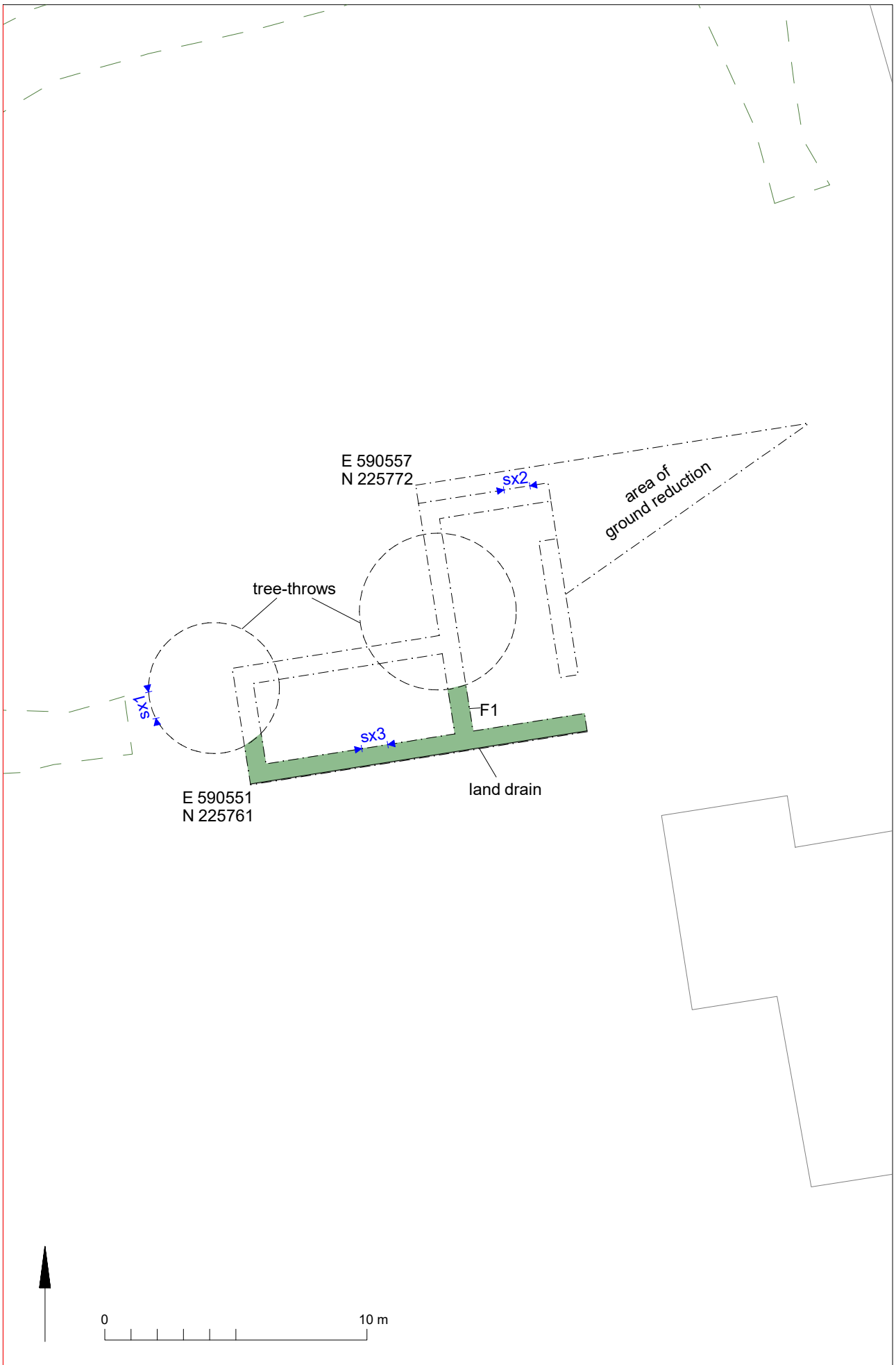


Fig 2 Results.

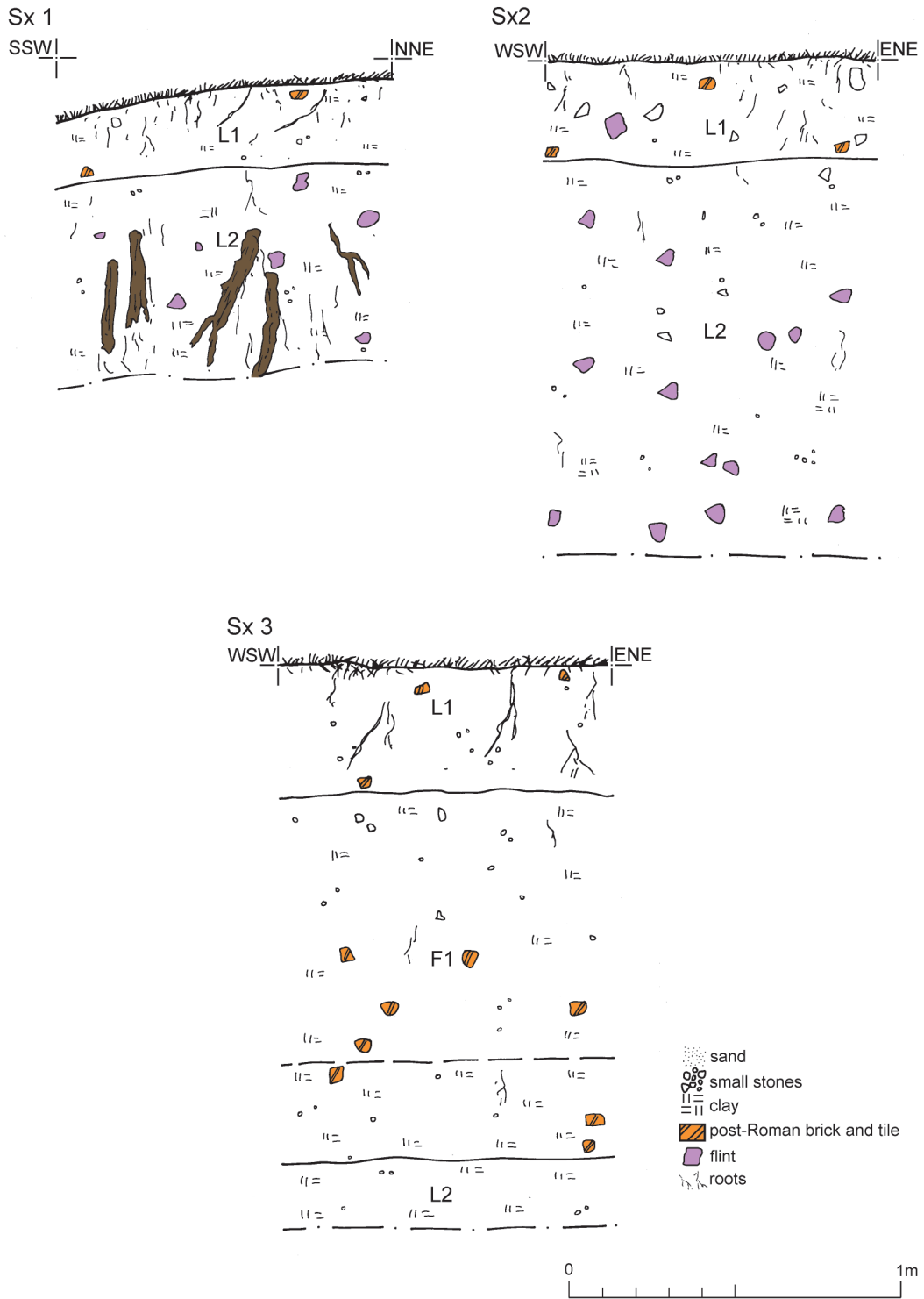


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.



## Summary for colchest3-514718

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-514718
Project Name	Archaeological monitoring at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex, CO6 3RS
Sitename	Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex, CO6 3RS
Activity type	Watching Brief
Project Identifier(s)	2023/04b
Planning Id	222116
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	20-Apr-2023 - 25-Apr-2023
Location	Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex, CO6 3RS NGR : TL 90612 25775 LL : 51.89791258649867, 0.769025750706518 12 Fig : 590612,225775
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Essex District : Colchester Parish : Aldham
Project Methodology	Archaeological monitoring of all groundworks as specified in the project brief and wsi.
Project Results	Archaeological monitoring was carried out at Hoe Farm House, Rectory Road, Aldham, Essex during groundworks for the construction of a new garage and store. Despite being located close to a listed building, the only feature uncovered was a field boundary ditch backfilled in the 20th century.
Keywords	
Funder	
HER	Colchester Borough Council - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A, Smith
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - ECC4782
Archives	