

# Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 1986  
issued October 2023**

**Archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of  
Brimpton House, 59a High Street, Kelvedon,  
Essex, CO55 9AE: September 2023**



**CAT project ref.: 2023/02c  
ECC code: KL43**

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Brimpton House, 59a High Street, Kelvedon,  
Essex, CO5 9AE: September 2023**

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**commissioned by Lisa Skinner, Phase2Planning  
on behalf of Weathersfield Developments Ltd**

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out on land to the rear of Brimpton House, 59a High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, in advance of the construction of two bungalows. The site lies within a known area of Iron Age settlement, and in the midst of extensive Roman remains, including the purported site of an early Roman fort. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, however, only two modern pits were uncovered.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land to the rear of Brimpton House, 59a High Street, Kelvedon, Essex during 25th-26th September 2023. The work was commissioned by Lisa Skinner of Phase2Planning on behalf of Weathersfield Developments Ltd, and took place in advance of the conversion of the rear of the building into flats and the construction of two bungalows.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor advised 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 at Brimpton House, 59a High Street, Kelvedon* written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2023). A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was 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* (CIfA 2020a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (CIfA 2020b).

## 3 Archaeological background

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

The proposed development lies within the historic core of Kelvedon. Kelvedon is a village in the southeastern corner of Braintree District, having developed at the point where the Roman road linking Colchester and Chelmsford crossed the River Blackwater. The route of the Roman road broadly followed that of the High Street.

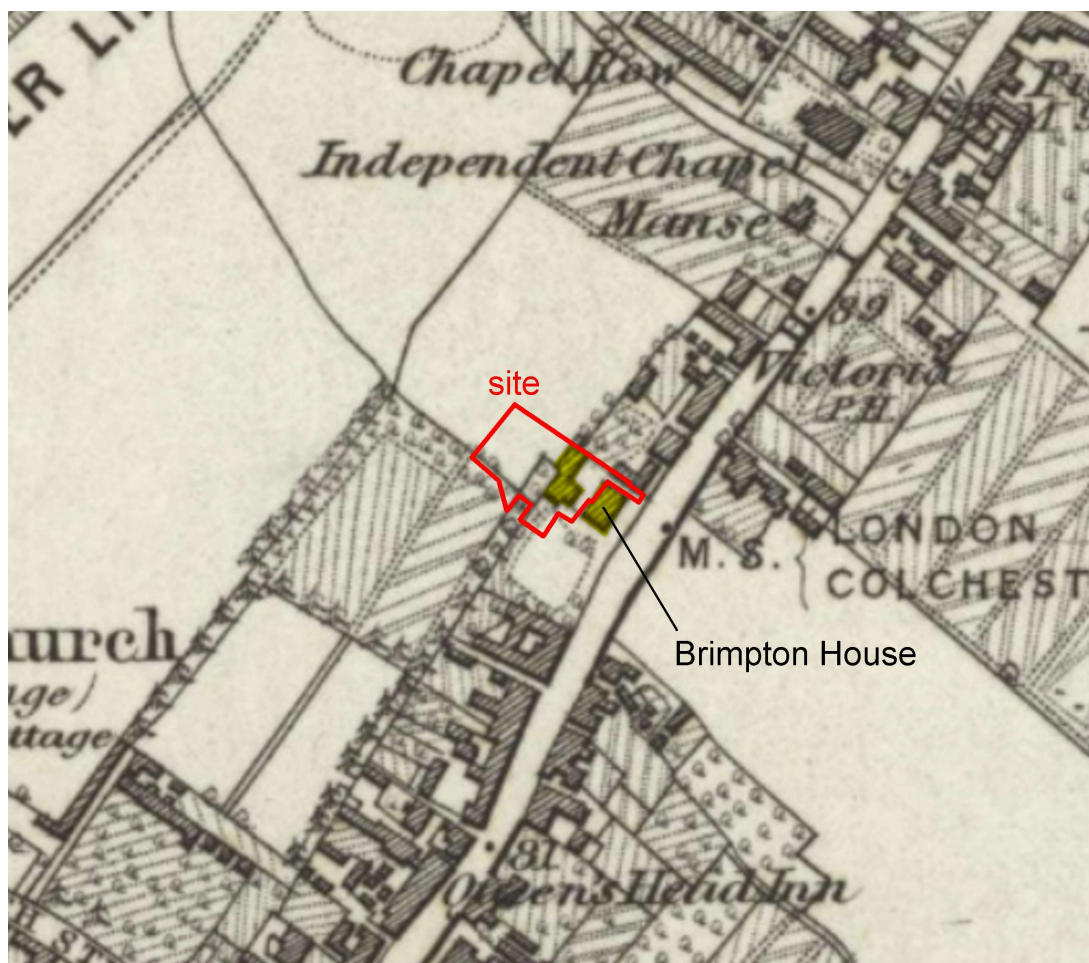
Excavations carried out in the 1980s at The Chase, northeast of Abbeyfield House, approximately 90m northeast of the site, revealed evidence of a Middle Iron Age and Late Iron Age settlement as well as the remains of a small Roman town (EHER 8287-8290). These deposits included the intersection between three ditches, the remains of three rectangular buildings, an oven and pits. Further excavations conducted to the east of the site during that same decade identified a military-style ditch associated with military equipment dating to the mid-1st century AD. These remains were interpreted as the site of a possible Roman fort, probably built in the aftermath of the Boudiccan revolt (EHER 18762).

The medieval town of Kelvedon partially overlies its Roman predecessor, the location of each being determined by the Roman road and the river-crossing. The original focus of the settlement is thought to have lain around the church at the western end of the town. Rodwell has suggested that the church of St Mary the Virgin (Grade I, listed building no. 1337631, EHER

8147) was possibly founded in the 10th century by Westminster Abbey, or possibly the Bishop of London, who held the church in the early medieval period. While the western wall of its nave is 12th-century in date, the majority of the structure dates to the 13th and 14th century and built in the Transitional style (Rodwell, 1988). Limited evidence of medieval and post-medieval activity was uncovered during a strip, map and sample excavation on land to the rear of 32 High Street (EHER 46718).

It is considered that the Saxon and medieval village centre was situated between the church, Church Hall Farm and the present High Street. In 1978, M.R. Eddy excavated trenches in Church Street, (approximately 285m southwest of the current site) to test this theory (EHER 8143). Saxon features were recorded, though they were disturbed by early 17th-century occupation. The investigation also showed that the area was intensively occupied from the 14th century onwards (Eddy, 1978). Just to the north of the care home is the possible original location for the town's marketplace. No documents exist for the granting of the market but it is presumed the medieval town would have had one. The site of the Common Well is a logical location (EHER 18771). During an evaluation at the nearby Gardens Bungalow, excavations revealed medieval remains including a large pit or well and a ditch (EHER 17545).

Brimpton House is a Grade II-listed early 18th-century house constructed of gauged stock brick facing onto the High Street and surrounded by numerous listed buildings (EHER 30084, LB no. 1337638). Early historic mapping show that there was previously an additional building located to its rear (highlighted yellow on Map 1).



**Map 1** Extract of the OS six-inch map of England and Wales sheet XXX, published 1881

For more information on the background of Kelvedon see the *Kelvedon Historic Town Assessment Report* (Medlycott, 1999).

#### 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 2-3)

Three trial trenches were excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. Trenches T1 and T2, which were both L-shaped trenches, were 14m long and 1.8m wide, and trench T3 was 8m long and 1.8m wide.

Trenches T1 and T2 were cut through a modern yard surface (L4, c 0.14-0.21m thick) and a layer of modern made ground (L5, 0.11-0.18m thick) onto natural (L3, encountered at a depth of 0.32-0.34m below current ground level [bcgl]). Trench 3 was cut through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.05-0.09m thick), and a layer of buried soil (L2, c 0.37-0.39m thick) onto natural (L3, encountered at a depth of 0.42-0.45m bcgl).

There were no archaeological features in trench T1.

##### Trench 2

Pit F2 occupied much of the northwest-southeast aligned section of trench T2. Modern detritus was observed on its surface and so it was not excavated.



**Photograph 1** T2b trench shot – looking southeast

##### Trench 3

Modern pit F1 was uncovered at the northern end of the trench. The feature produced two sherds of 19th- or 20th-century pottery, three fragments of medieval or post-medieval peg-tile, a fragment of Roman brick or tile, some unidentified animal bone and an iron nail.



**Photograph 2** T3 trench shot – looking southwest

## 6 Finds

### 6.1 Pottery and ceramics

*by Dr Matthew Loughton*

The evaluation produced a small assemblage of pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) which all came from pit F1. This consisted of two sherds (14g) of Staffordshire-type white earthenwares (fabric F48D) dating to 19th-20th century, three (154g) sherds of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile and one sherd (61g) of Roman brick or tile (RBT). None of this material was retained.

### 6.2 Miscellaneous finds

*by Laura Pooley with animal bone identified by Alec Wade*

Found in pit F1 (finds no. 1) were three fragments (5.3g) of unidentifiable large-mammal bone (5.3g) and an iron nail (20.8g). The nail is complete with a flat round head. None of this material was retained.

## 7 Conclusion

Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, only two modern pits were uncovered.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank the landowners for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by C Lister, A Wightman and L Pooley, with fieldwork carried out by E Hicks with A Smith. Figures were compiled by C Lister, E Hicks 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 & 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2.*

Glazebrook, J		<i>Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8)
CAT	2023	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
ClfA	2020a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation.</i> Published 2014; revised October 2020
ClfA	2020b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Published 2014; revised October 2020
ECCPS	2023	<i>Brief for a trial trenching evaluation and excavation at Brimpton House, 59A High Street, Kelvedon,</i> by T O'Connor
Eddy, MR	1979	<i>Excavations in Essex, 1978 11</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	2015	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Medlycott, M	1999	<i>Kelvedon Historic Town Assessment Report.</i> Essex County Council
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
Rodwell, K A	1988	<i>The Prehistoric and Roman Settlement at Kelvedon</i>

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c 500 – 1066
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBM	ceramic building material, ie brick/tile
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHF	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, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
peg-tile	rectangular thin tile with peg-hole(s) used mainly for roofing, first appeared c AD1200 and continued in use to present day, but commonly post-medieval to modern
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
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 digital archive

CAT Report 1986  
 ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation  
 Site digital photographs  
 Graphic files  
 Site data  
 Survey 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 Archaeology Data Service.

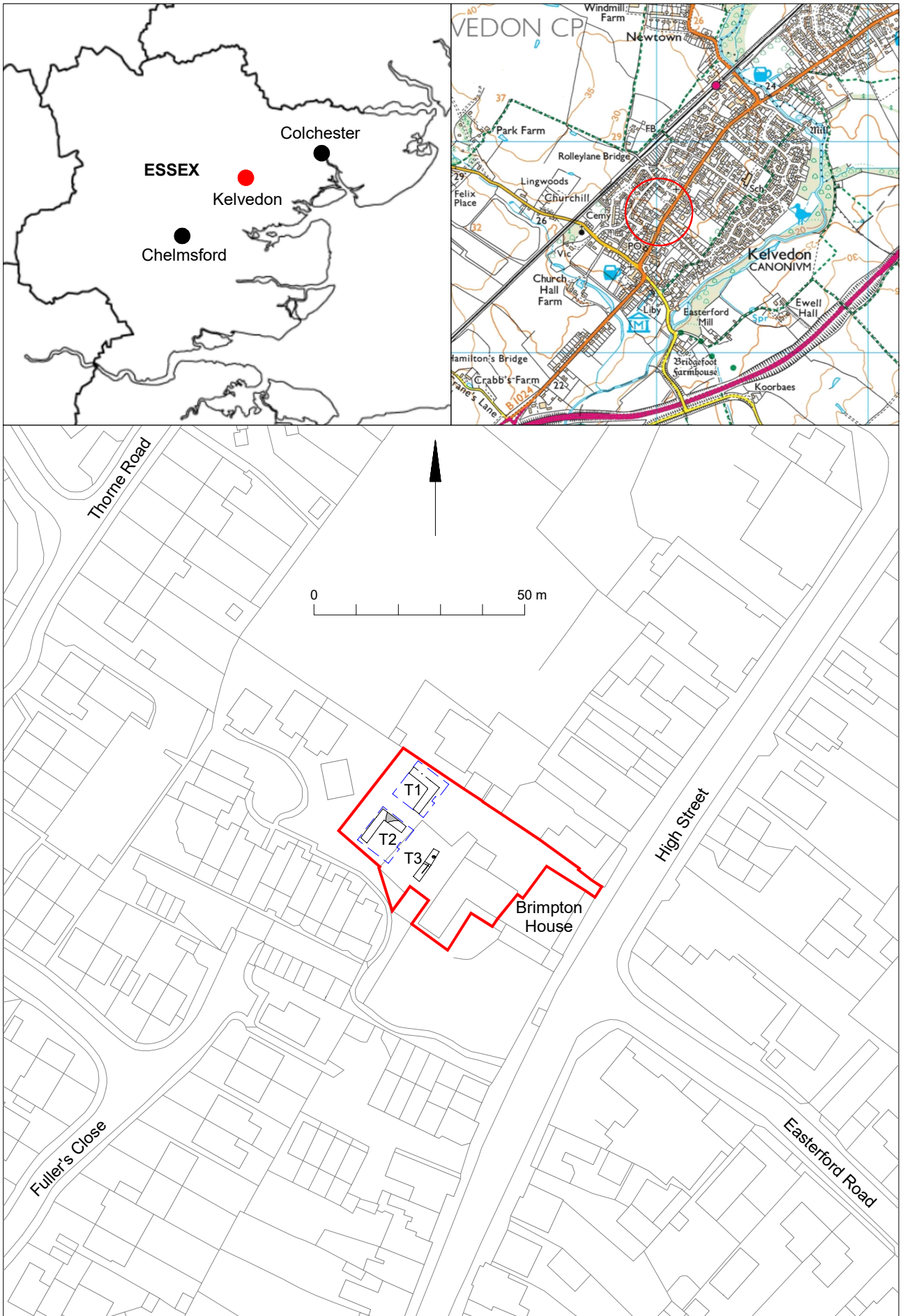
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### **Distribution list:**

Lisa Skinner, Phase2Planning  
Weathersfield Developments Ltd  
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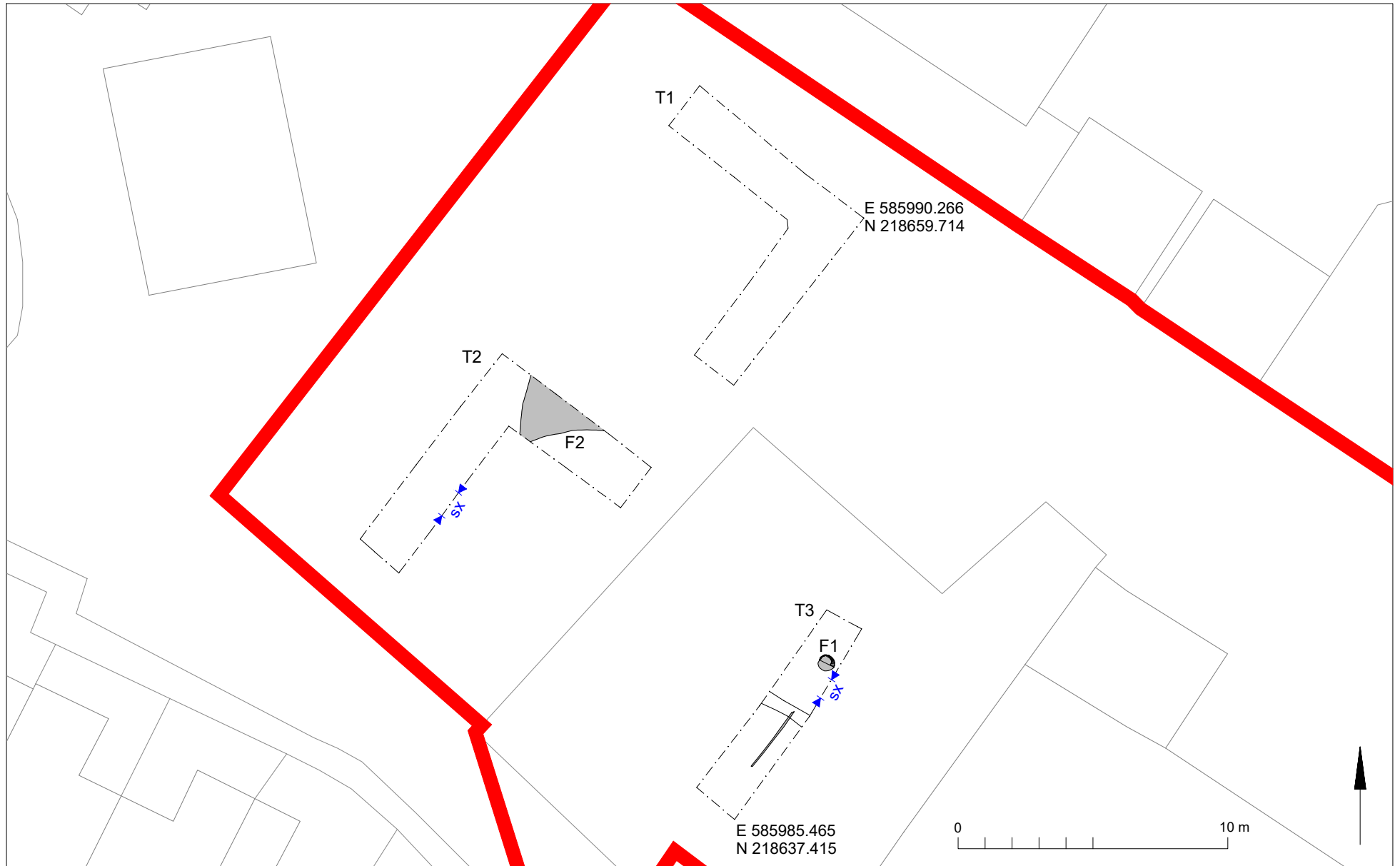
**Appendix 1 Context list**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Trench no.</b>	<b>Finds no.</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Soil description</b>	<b>Period</b>
L1	T3	-	Topsoil	Soft, dry medium grey/brown sandy-silt with 1% stones. c 0.05-0.09m thick	Modern
L2	T3	-	Made ground	Hard, dry medium yellow/grey/brown silty-sand with CBM flecks and 50% stones. c 0.37-0.39m thick	Modern
L3	All	-	Natural	Soft, dry/moist medium orange/brown silt. Encountered at a depth of 0.32-0.45m below current ground level	Post-glacial
L4	T1, T2	-	Yard surface	Tarmac overlying firm, dry/moist medium orange/brown sand with CBM flecks and 50% gravel. c 0.14-0.21m thick	Modern
L5	T1, T2	-	Made ground	Hard, moist medium grey/brown sandy-silt with CBM flecks and 2% stones. c 0.11-0.18m thick	Modern
F1	T3	1	Pit	Friable, dry dark grey/brown sandy-silt with 1% stones. 0.59m by 0.57m and 0.31m deep with an irregular U-shaped profile	Modern
F2	T2	-	Pit	Soft, moist medium orange/grey/brown sandy-silt with CBM flecks. Extended beyond the limit of excavation; exposed dimensions 3.38m by 1.8m	Modern



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Fig 1 Site location and results with proposed development dashed blue.



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Fig 2 Results

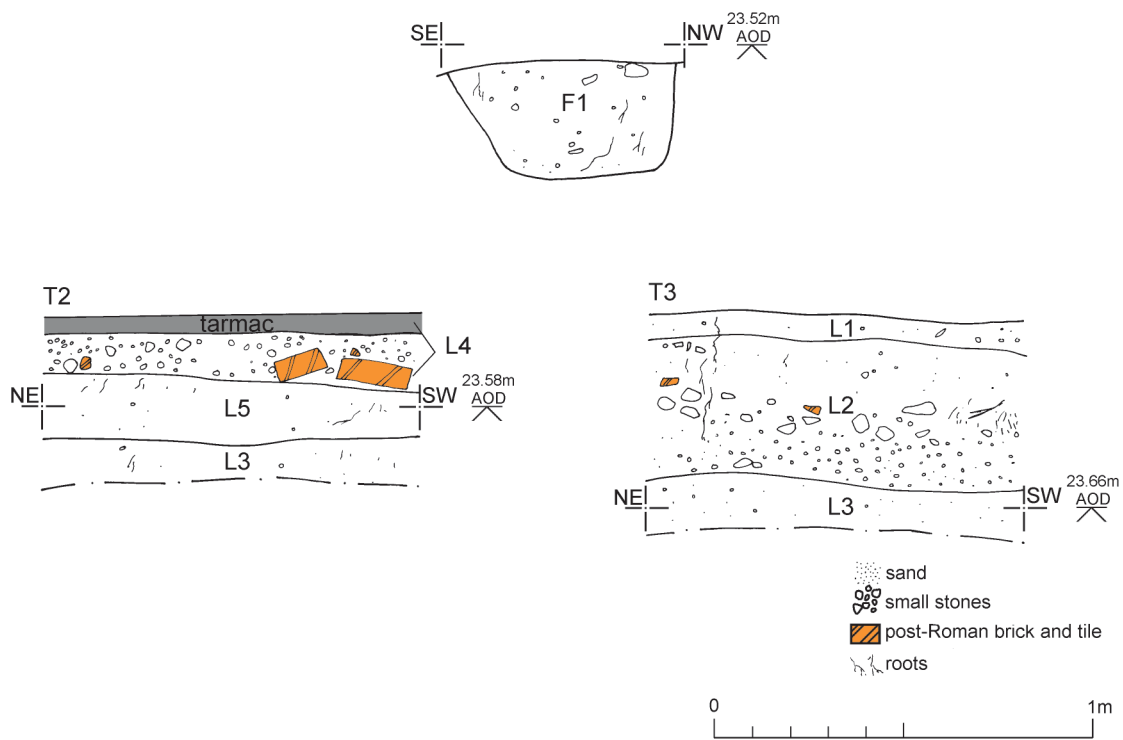


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

# OASIS Summary for colchest3-513386

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-513386
Project Name	Evaluation at Land to the rear of Brimpton House, 59A High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9AE.
Sitename	Land to the rear of Brimpton House, 59A High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9AE.
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	2023/02c
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	21/01701/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	25-Sep-2023 - 26-Sep-2023
Location	Land to the rear of Brimpton House, 59A High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, CO5 9AE. NGR : TL 85989 18644 LL : 51.8354305678874, 0.698077797766613 12 Fig : 585989,218644
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Braintree Parish : Kelvedon
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation was carried out as per the brief and WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out on land to the rear of Brimpton House, 59a High Street, Kelvedon, Essex, in advance of the construction of two bungalows. The site lies within a known area of Iron Age settlement, and in the midst of extensive Roman remains, including the purported site of an early Roman fort. Despite lying in an archaeologically-sensitive area, however, only two modern pits were uncovered.
Keywords	Pit - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Pit - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Brick - ROMAN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Tile - ROMAN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Tile - MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Tile - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Sherd - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Sherd - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Animal Remains - UNCERTAIN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Nail - UNCERTAIN - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	Private or public corporation Weathersfield Developments Ltd
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD

Person Responsible for work	C Lister
HER Identifiers	
Archives	

Report generated on: 20 Oct 2023, 08:26