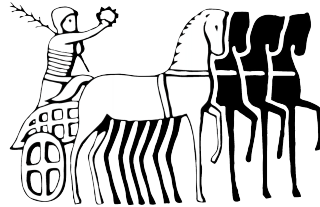


# Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 2051  
issued May 2024**

**Archaeological evaluation on land at Fyfield Road,  
Ongar, Essex, CM5 0AY: April 2024**



**CAT project ref.: 2024/03c  
ECC code: ORFYRD2**

**Archaeological Evaluation on land at  
Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, CM5 0AY: April 2024**

**NGR: TL 55202 04272 (centre)**

**Planning ref.: EPF/1480/23**

**CAT project ref.: 2024/03c  
CAT Report 2051**

**ECC code: ORFYRD24  
OASIS id: colchest3-524112**

**report prepared by Ben Holloway & Dr Elliott Hicks  
with contributions by Dr Matthew Loughton**

**fieldwork by Ben Holloway  
with Matthew Perou & Ziya Eksen**

**commissioned by Tim Murphy  
on behalf of Murphy McKenna Ltd**

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## 1 Summary

*An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out on land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, in advance of the construction of a new residential development. The site lies to the north of a possible Roman iron-working site, and Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age remains have been uncovered to the east. Excavations revealed a medieval or post-medieval ditch, two undated ditches, and a series of post-holes which likely represent the remains of a modern fence.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) on land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex between the 22nd-23rd April 2024. The work was commissioned by Tim Murphy on behalf of Murphy McKenna and took place in advance of the construction of a new residential development.

In response to consultation with Essex County Council Place Services (ECCPS), the Historic Environment Advisor advised that, 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 2023).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Archaeological Evaluation and Excavation on land at Fyfield Road, Ongar* written by Robin Mathieson (ECCPS 2024). A written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT in response to the brief and agreed with ECCPS (CAT 2024a).

In addition to the project Brief and WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was undertaken in accordance with:

- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2015),
- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2020a-b, 2022, 2023a-b),
- East of England standards and frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Brown & Glazebrook 2000; Gurney 2003; Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- Relevant health and safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2024b).

## 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 site is located in an area of archaeological interest, to the north of the historic town of Ongar. Immediately to the south is the site of the former Ongar War Memorial Hospital (EHER 15644). The hospital was opened in 1932 by the Lord Lieutenant of Essex and has since been redeveloped.

Archaeological investigations conducted to the east of the development area, at Ongar Academy, identified a small quantity of prehistoric features (EHER 48883). A number of possible Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age pottery sherds, along with several struck flints, were recovered (PCA Report R12512). In 1953, excavations to the south of the development site, at the Red Cow public house, identified a possible Roman iron-working site, revealing an occupation layer thought to be associated with iron smithing and containing charcoal, slag, animal bones and Roman pottery (EHER 4246).

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale<sup>1</sup>) shows the site has a bedrock geology of London Clay Formation (clay, silt and sand) with superficial deposits of Lowestoft Formation (chalky till with sands and gravels, silt and clay).

#### 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 excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. All trenches were 30m long and 1.8m wide. The trenches were cut through modern topsoil (L1, c 0.18-0.4m thick) and subsoil (L2, c 0.18-0.21m thick) onto natural (L3, encountered at a depth of 0.38-0.6m below current ground level [bcgl]). A full context list with soil descriptions and dimensions can be found in Appendix 1.

##### Trench 1

Ditch F3 extended along the length of the trench on a west north-west/east south-east alignment. It produced some medieval or post-medieval peg-tile.

Ditches F4 and F8 entered the centre of the trench from the south on a north north-east/south south-west alignment. The features were cut by F3 and did not extend to its north. Neither produced any dating evidence.

Post-holes F5, F6 and F7 extended through the western half of the trench on a roughly west north-west/east south-east alignment, F6 cutting F3. The postholes contained modern CBM and coal fragments.



**Photograph 1** T1 trench – looking west north-west.

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

## Trench 2

Ditch F2 passed through the centre of the trench on a west north-west/east south-east alignment. It represents a continuation of F3 in T1, to the west.



**Photograph 2** T2 trench shot – looking north north-east.

## Trench 3

Pit F1 was uncovered at the western end of the trench. It produced fragments of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile.

## 6 Finds

*by Dr Matthew Loughton*

Three sherds of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile with a weight of 119g were recovered from pit F1 and ditch F3. The material was not retained.

## 7 Conclusion

Eight features were uncovered during excavations at this site: four ditches, a pit and three post-holes. Ditch F2/F3 was dated to the medieval or post-medieval period based on the presence of peg-tile in its fill. The feature is not depicted on Ordnance Survey mapping of the area compiled in the late 19th century, and it is likely that this feature is a field boundary ditch predating this period. Pit F1 also belongs to this phase of activity. A series of modern post-holes were also uncovered. These likely represent the remains of a fence.

## 8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Murphy McKenna Ltd for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman, with fieldwork carried out by B Holloway with M Perou and Z Eksen. Figures were compiled by B Holloway and E Holloway. The project was monitored for ECCPS Robin Mathieson.

## 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	2024a	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching and excavation on land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, CM5 0AY</i> , by S Veasey.
CAT	2024b	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
CIfA	2020a	<i>Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020.
CIfA	2020b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2020.
CIfA	2022	<i>Code of Conduct.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists; published 2014, revised 2022.
CIfA	2023a	<i>Standard for archaeological field evaluation.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
CIfA	2023b	<i>Universal guidance for archaeological field evaluation.</i> CIfA Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
ECC	2008	<i>Tendring District Historic Environment Characterisation Project</i>
ECCPS	2024	<i>Brief for trial trenching and excavation at Land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, CM5 0AY</i> , by R Mathieson
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	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
MHCLG	2023	<i>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
PCA Report R12512	2016	<i>The Ongar Academy, Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, CM5 0GAL: An Archaeological Evaluation</i> , by P Alexander

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
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	<b>O</b> nline <b>A</b> ccess to the <b>I</b> ndex of <b>A</b> rchaeological <b>I</b> nvestigations, <a href="http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main">http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main</a>
post-medieval	from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
WSI	written scheme of investigation

## **11 Contents of archive**

**Finds:** none retained

**Digital:**

CAT Report 2051

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Site digital photographs

Graphic files

Site data

Survey data

## **12 Archive deposition**

The 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 the Archaeology Data Service (digital archive).

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### **Distribution list:**

Murphy McKenna Ltd

ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



### **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	All	-	Topsoil	Soft, moist medium/dark grey/brown silty-clay. 0.18-0.4m thick.	Modern
L2	All	-	Subsoil	Soft, moist medium brown silty clay. 0.18-0.21m thick.	Undated
L3	All	-	Natural	Firm, moist medium yellow/grey clay. 0.38-0.6m bcgl.	Post-glacial
F1	T3	1	Pit	Soft, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay. 0.45m wide and 0.1m deep. Sub-round in plan; U-shaped profile.	Medieval/ post-medieval
F2	T2	-	Ditch	Firm, moist medium brown clay with CBM flecks and 1% stones. 0.6m wide and 0.1m deep. Shallow U-shaped profile.	Medieval/ post-medieval
F3	T1	2	Ditch	Firm, moist medium grey silty-clay. 0.79m wide and 0.2-0.22m deep. Slightly irregular U-shaped profile.	Medieval/ post-medieval
F4	T1	-	Ditch	Firm, moist medium grey silty-clay. Excavated to a width of 0.5m wide; 0.31m deep. U-shaped profile.	Post-medieval at latest
F5	T1	-	Posthole	Firm, moist dark grey/brown silty-clay. 0.21m wide and 0.08m deep. Sub-round in plan; irregular U-shaped profile.	Modern
F6	T1	-	Posthole	Firm, moist dark grey/brown silty-clay. 0.17m wide and 0.07m deep. Sub-round in plan; U-shaped profile.	Modern
F7	T1	-	Posthole	Firm, moist dark grey/brown silty clay. 0.22m wide and 0.05m deep. Sub-round in plan; shallow U-shaped profile.	Modern
F8	T1	-	Ditch	Firm, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay. 0.99m wide and 0.29m deep. Slightly irregular U-shaped profile.	Post-medieval at latest

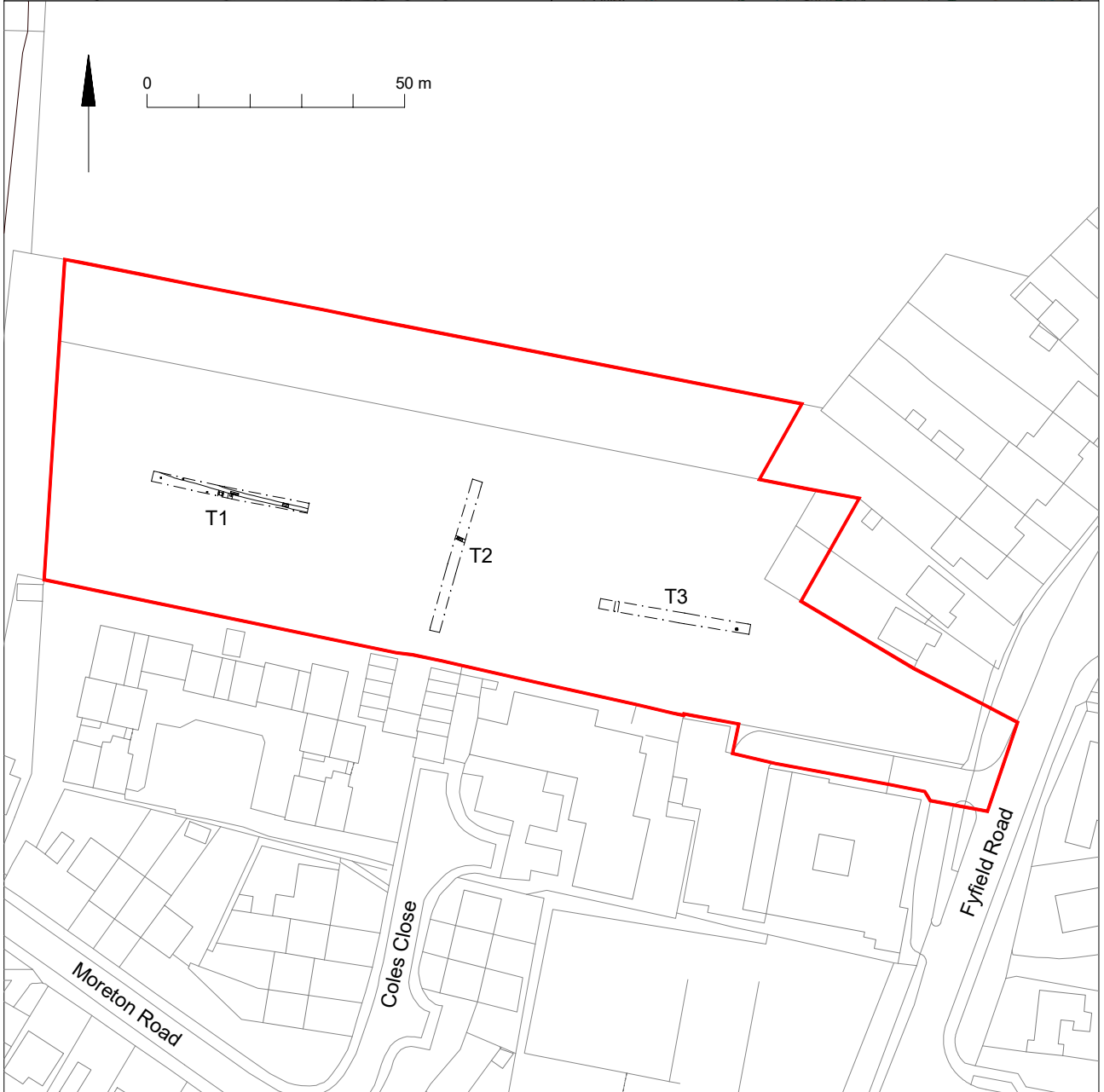
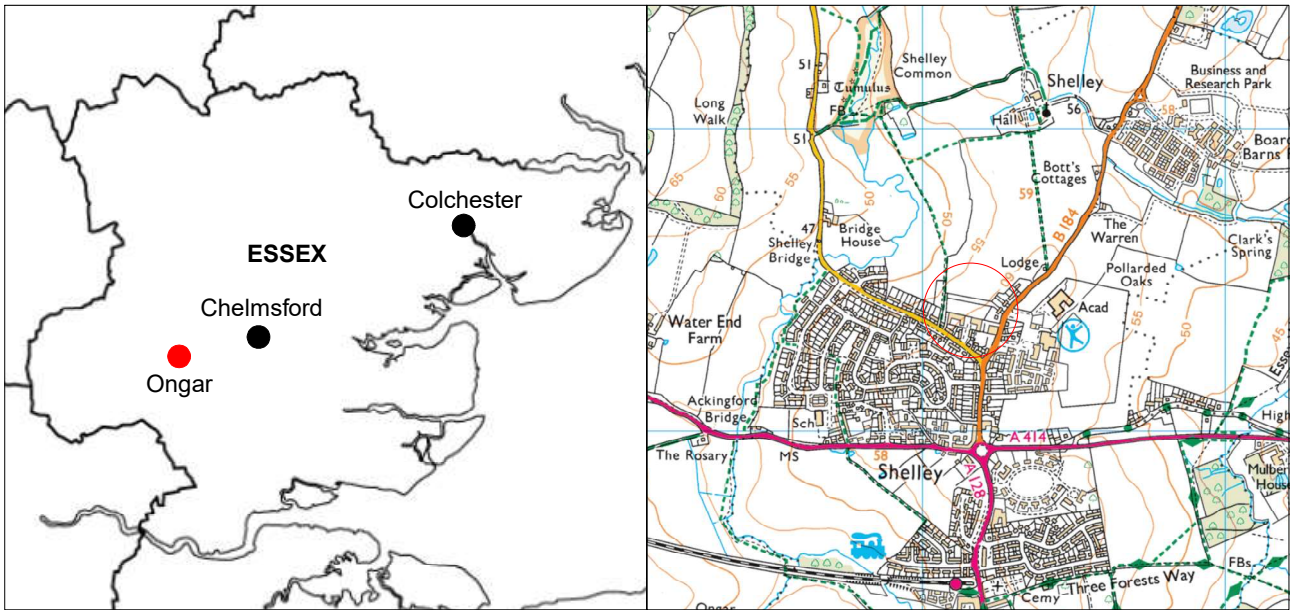


Fig 1 Site location.

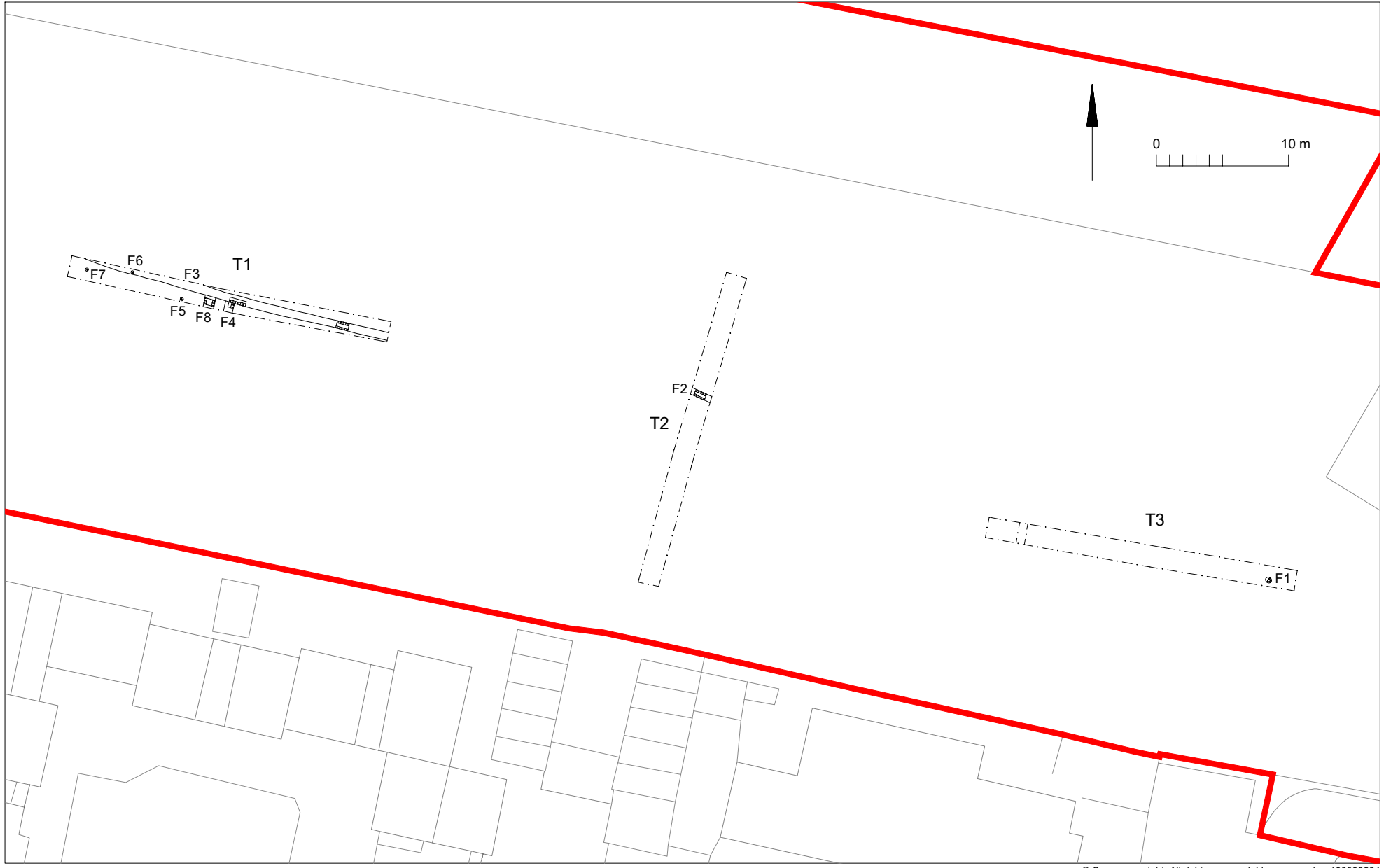


Fig 2 Evaluation results.

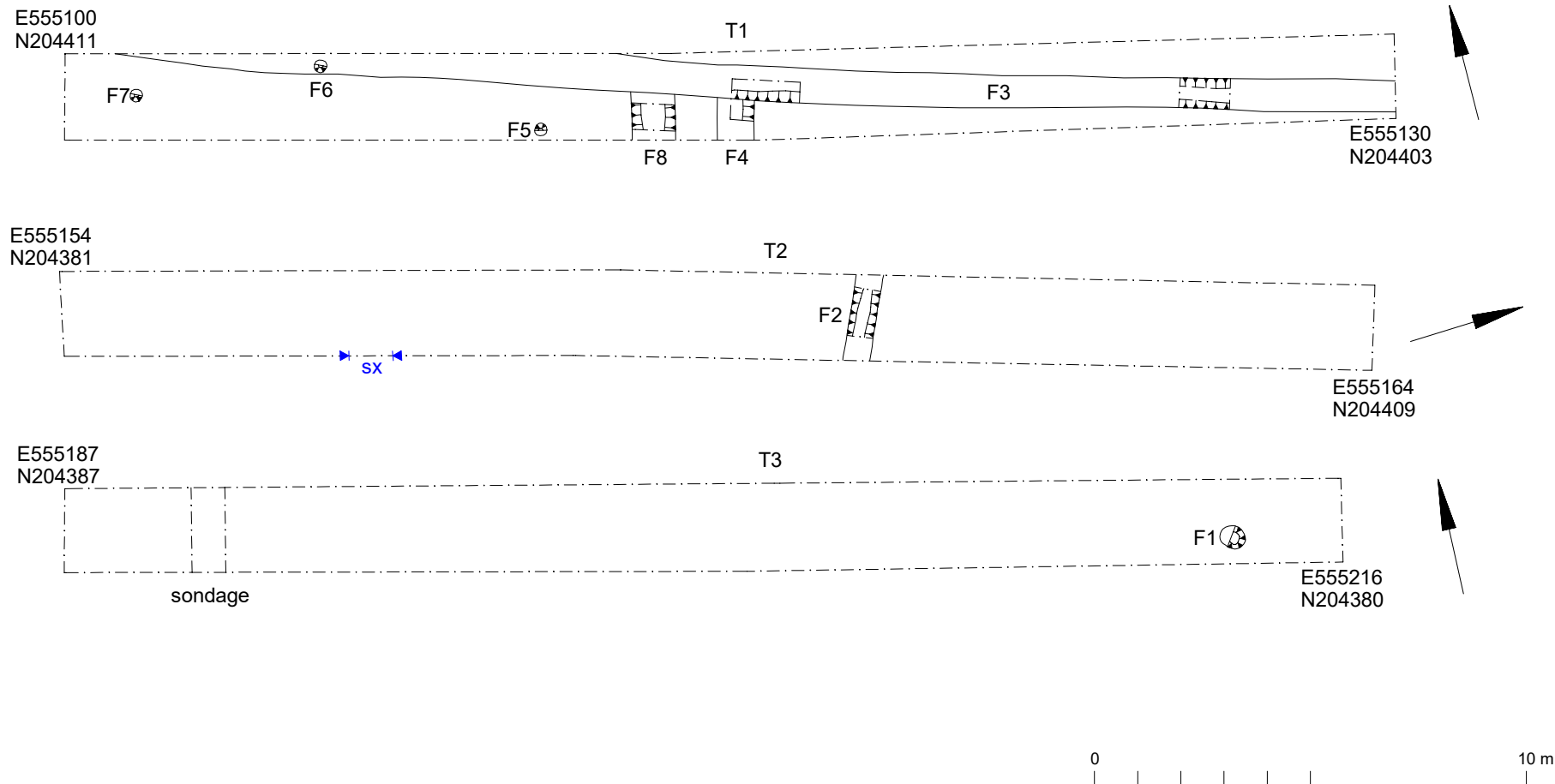


Fig 3 Trench plans

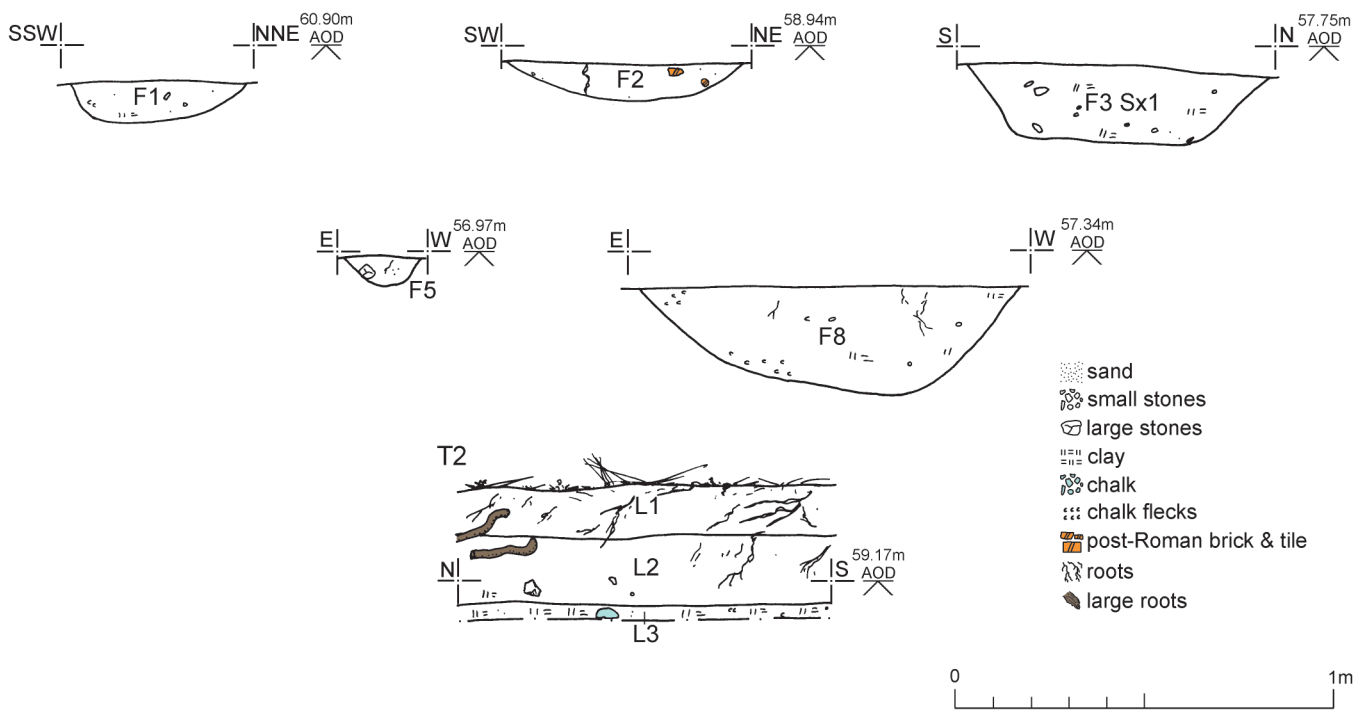


Fig 4 Feature and representative sections.

# OASIS Summary for colchest3-524112

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-524112
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation at land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, CM5 0AY: April 2024
Sitename	land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, CM5 0AY
Sitecode	ORFYRD24
Project Identifier(s)	2024/03c
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	EPF/1480/23
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	22-Apr-2024 - 23-Apr-2024
Location	land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, CM5 0AY NGR : TL 55202 04272 LL : 51.7157082739919, 0.24521795993919 12 Fig : 555202,204272
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Epping Forest Parish : Ongar
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) carried out as specified in the project brief and wsi.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out on land at Fyfield Road, Ongar, Essex, in advance of the construction of a new residential development. The site lies to the north of a possible Roman iron-working site, and Late Bronze Age or Early Iron Age remains have been uncovered to the east. Excavations revealed a medieval or post-medieval ditch, two undated ditches, and a series of post-holes which likely represent the remains of a modern fence.
Keywords	Ditch - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Ditch - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Fence - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types
Funder	Private or public corporation developer
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Adam Wightman, Chris Lister
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - ORFYRD24
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;