

**Stage 2 archaeological evaluation,  
Colchester Garrison Alienated Land Area E  
(formerly Meeanee & Hyderabad Barracks)  
Colchester, Essex**

**July 2011**



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## 1 Summary

*There have now been two stages of archaeological evaluation at Colchester Garrison Alienated Land Area E, both carried out as part of a programme of archaeological evaluation of land purchased by Taylor Wimpey in order to provide the site for a school to be designed and built by Essex County Council. The first, in 2004, was an evaluation by four trial-trenches which led to the discovery of 25 Roman features, and a post-medieval ditch which was possibly part of the remains of the 1648 siege-works: CAT Report 274). The second, reported here, involved the excavation of a further two trial-trenches in the central part of the site, which was unavailable in 2004. These new trenches brought the coverage up to 4.17%, beyond the 3% required Colchester Borough Council, and will enable a more informed view to be taken on how the proposed school will impact the archaeological remains.*

*The 2011 discoveries consist of Roman ditches, post-holes, a quarry pit, substantial quantities of brick and tile, and a buried pot (possibly a ritual deposit). These remains have added to the picture gained by the 2004 work, that there was a Roman-period ditched enclosure here containing what was probably a relatively small Romanised domestic structure, and associated post-built structures. Together these defined what may have been a small villa-type establishment set in its own fields, similar to those found at the Kirkee & McMunn Barracks, 1540m to the SW, and at Goojerat Barracks (GAL Area L/N), 883m to the SW. It may be the case that the Roman inhumation cemetery excavated at the Hyderabad barracks (GAL Area A1, site H, 125m to the NE) contains the burials of the farmers who lived and worked on the current site.*

*The only significant post-Roman find was a continuation of the 1648 siege works ditch, which may have been part of the defences connected with Fort Needham.*

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

The development of the Colchester Garrison Alienated Land (GAL) is now nearing its completion. It involved the redevelopment, primarily for residential use, of areas of the former Colchester Garrison and adjacent farmland owned by the MoD. The construction of the new garrison allowed a phased decanting of the existing Garrison personnel into the new garrison (now named the Merville Barracks), thus facilitating phased release of the former Garrison areas.

In response to the proposed development and redevelopment, a programme of further archaeological evaluation by means of trial-trenching was now required. This work was undertaken by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in 2004 on Areas C, O and E as a continuation of the partial evaluation of alienated land conducted by CAT in 2002 for *The New Garrison Composite Environmental Statement* (Masefield 2002) and based on information produced by the 2002 evaluation and presented in CAT Reports 197, 203, 205, 207, and particularly CAT Reports 206, 271 and 272.

Area E is centred on National Grid Reference TL 9986 2427, and is located on the west side of Mersea Road and the east side of Circular Road East to the east of Abbey Field (Fig 1). The site was formerly a sports pitch, and is a more or less flat piece of land, with a terrace along the northern side separating the cricket pitch to the north of Area E from the sports pitch of Area E. The drop is about 0.5m, indicating that Area E has been subject to some levelling. Drift geology of the area is predominantly sands and gravel. This is occasionally in a clay matrix, and is sometimes capped by cover loam.

Area E is 1.32ha in extent. The agreed coverage of 3% is therefore 396m<sup>2</sup> of trenching, or 220m of 1.8m-wide trench. This had already been reached in 2004. However, extra trenching (up to 4.17% of the site) was undertaken to provide more informative coverage, because the centre of the site was unavailable for trenching in

2004. The extra trenching in the middle of the site will also facilitate the determination of the impacts of the proposed school on the archaeological remains.

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by RPS on behalf of Taylor Wimpey and was carried out by CAT under RPS project management between July 7th and July 18th 2011. Post-excavation work took place in July and August 2011. The project was monitored by the CBCAO and RPS.

The investigation followed a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by RPS in association with CAT, dated April 2004, and agreed by CBCAO (RPS 2004b). The WSI was produced in accordance with a research design prepared by RPS in 2004 (RPS 2004a). This report mirrors the standards and practices contained in Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on the standards and practice for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CM 2008a) and *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums* (CM 2008b), and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

### **3 Aims and objectives**

- 3.1** The aims and objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to assess the location, extent, date, character, condition, quality and importance of any surviving archaeological features or deposits which may be impacted by the development.
- 3.2** To integrate the results of the 2011 evaluation with those of the 2004 evaluation.
- 3.3** This information will inform any mitigation strategies that may be required ahead of or during development.
- 3.4** The results of the previous evaluation in Area E enables the following issues to be identified as research priorities for Area E (RPS 2004b):
  - define the enclosure whose ditches were initially found in 2004
  - use of the landscape prior to the construction of Camulodunum
  - the nature of spatial organisation within the *oppidum*
  - the relationship between town and countryside
  - the nature and structure of the Roman urban fringe to the south of the town
  - the effect of the establishment of the Roman town on the agricultural hinterland

### **4 Archaeological background**

- 4.1** The archaeological and historical setting of the proposed development has already been comprehensively explored in the desk-based assessment or DBA (CAT Report 97), and is only summarised here (ie the *oppidum* and cropmark sites), followed by information on the Roman burials, cartographic evidence and some recent work. This section is also based on CAT Report 206, RPS 2004a and RPS 2004b.

Much of the land to the south and west of the modern town centre, including Area E, falls within the area of the pre-Roman *oppidum* of Camulodunum. The surviving above-ground remains of the *oppidum* consist of some of the linear banks and ditches of the defensive dyke system which surrounded it. Centres of occupation, trackways, boundary ditches and roads have been identified from cropmarks. The Garrison PFI site occupies the eastern edge of the *oppidum* which is defined by the Berechurch Dyke; this crosses the extreme south-east of the PFI site.

As presently understood, the *oppidum* had two main centres of activity: at modern Gosbecks Farm (2km west of the Garrison PFI site), which was a late Iron Age rural farmstead (possibly the home of Cunobelin), and at Sheepen (2km to the north of the Garrison PFI site), which was an industrial and trading centre. It is possible that other such centres existed within the *oppidum*. Apart from these two large centres, it is likely that there were a number of smaller sites, industrial or domestic, that await discovery

within the *oppidum*. One such site has been recorded at Kirkee McMunn Barracks (Shimmin 1998), and another more recently in the former Goojerat Barracks (GAL Area L/N: CAT Report 588 - forthcoming). The cropmarks within the Garrison PFI site may represent the trackways and field boundary ditches that are associated with such sites.

A large number of cropmarks have been recorded over the southern part of the Garrison PFI site. Geophysical survey has partially confirmed and also added to the pattern of these cropmark features (CAT Report 184). Interpretation based on limited excavation (CAT Report 412) would indicate that these are late prehistoric and/or Romano-British in date and represent the trackways, paddocks and field boundaries of a rural landscape. Overlapping of the cropmarks suggests that multiple phases of activity are represented.

- 4.2** In addition to the pre- and early Roman activity relating to occupation and agriculture that is associated with the *oppidum*, the land immediately to the south of the walled town includes part of the area of its Roman southern extra-mural cemetery and therefore Area E has some potential to contain burials of a Roman date (CAT Report 271).

Roman burials were recorded within the area of the Garrison PFI site throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. One of these discoveries comprised three burials, including a lead coffin, found in Mersea Road opposite the Officers' Mess in 1937 (Hull 1958, catalogue no 146a, UAD event no 1080, NGR TL 994 2432), and two Roman cremations were also found in the bank of Mersea Road (Hull no 146a, UAD event no 1080, NGR TL 994 2432). Roman graves have been recorded to the south-east of Area E (the southern part of Abbey Field: Hull no 200, UAD event no 1099). The burials in Abbey Field were previously noted by Hull during hut-building activities 'to the north of the military hospital' in 1939 (Hull 1958 nos 133 & 133, UAD event no 1073, EHER nos 11893-11894, NGR TL 9960 2395). These recorded burials of the Roman southern extra-mural cemetery have been found over a wide area and the density of the burial appears to vary greatly. It would seem that areas of this cemetery were designated as intensive burial plots (such as the site of the sports pitch at the north end of Abbey Field), while other areas of the cemetery to the south contain far less dense distribution of burial groups (CAT Report 54; CAT Report 97; CAT Report 138). Roman burials have also been found during the current programme of evaluation in Area C1 and C2, in May 2004 (CAT Report 271).

There are also records of an Anglo-Saxon burial in the vicinity of Area E close to Mersea Road and of another one in the north-west area of Meeanee Barracks in 1938 (UAD event 935, TL 9993 2473; CAT Report 97).

- 4.3** Cartographic evidence suggests that this area was farmland in the 18th century (Chapman & André map of 1777). The site of the T A Centre to the immediate south was used by the military from at least 1876, with Area E shown as open ground on the OS 1st Edition of 1874-1876 and the 2nd Edition of 1893-1904. Area E is labelled as being part of the Garrison cricket ground by 1921. The six World War Two air-raid shelters are shown on MoD maps of 1949 (CAT Report 97). The remainder of the area is shown as open ground, probably already with its current use as a sports pitch.
- 4.4** A series of trial-trenches was excavated in 2002 within the area of the new garrison (Areas A and V), located to the north, east and south of Area E (CAT Report 206). In Area A (within Meeanee Barracks), a single burial was recorded although it was not possible to precisely date the remains as either Roman or Anglo-Saxon. Trial-trenching in 2002 at the southern extent of Abbey Field (Area V) to the south-west of Area E showed that the area had been heavily disturbed by modern services and no significant archaeological remains were recorded (CAT Report 206).

## 5 The trial-trenching (Figs 1-6)

### 5.1 Introduction

Two trenches were machine-cut under archaeological supervision. As the 2004 trenches were numbered Trenches 1-4 (T1-T4), the 2011 trenches were numbered T5-T6. Table 1 below gives grid co-ordinates for the ends of each trench, trench length, and heights above Ordnance Datum for modern ground-level and the level of natural subsoil. Next, a summary and list of contexts is given for each trench (section 5.2 below). This is followed by a general discussion of the archaeology in section 7.

**Table 1: Trench co-ordinates and heights above OD for modern ground-level and natural subsoil (T1-T4 2004, T5-T6 2011).**

Trench no	Terminal co-ordinates	Trench length	OD on ground level*	OD on archaeological level*
T1	E: 599885.55, 224314.76 W: 599831.66, 224304.14	55m	32.41 32.53	32.26 32.28
T2	N: 599908.73, 224316.85 S: 599971.15, 224267.37	50m	32.56 32.32	32.32 31.43
T3	E: 599898.80, 224245.51 W: 599845.52, 224234.85	54m	32.08 32.26	31.47 31.84
T4	N: 599804.43, 224285.02 S: 599814.55, 224231.51	54m	32.30 32.07	31.82 30.97
T5	E: 599908.33, 224296.60 W: 599829.04, 224271.67	83m	32.25 32.50	31.53 31.82
T6	N: 599911.38, 224270.39 S: 599916.04, 224250.78	10m	32.04 31.87	30.88 30.97

\*in the original 2004 evaluation report (CAT Report 274), the OD heights for modern ground-level and archaeological level were incorrectly transcribed. The corrected 2004 levels are included in this table. 'Archaeological level' coincides with top of natural ground L3.

### 5.2 Description of the archaeological sequence (Figs 2, 3)

This section gives an archaeological summary of trenches 5-6 (T5-T6), with a tabulation of context and finds dating information. (For T1-T4, see CAT Report 274).

#### T5: summary

T5, in the former sports pitch, was located along the W-E axis of Area E in order to cut through the centre of the enclosure whose ditches were intercepted in 2004 T1 and T2.

The trench was cut through a compact topsoil horizon (L1) an accumulation deposit (L2), thereby exposing natural material L3 in which the archaeological features were visible. Trench depth (ie, from modern ground to natural L3) was 0.68m at the west end and 0.72m at the east end. This shows that the construction of the modern sports pitch has masked true ground level, which drops slightly from west to east.

From west to east, archaeological features were a quarry pit (F13), a natural feature (F11), a ditch F2, natural features F10 and F12, a cremation or placed deposit F1 cutting the terminal end of ditch F17, and two post-holes (F15 and F16).

Ditch F2, 1.75m wide and 0.27m deep, was in the correct position to be the western side of the enclosure, and the same as ditch EF9 in 2004 T1. It is also assumed that it turned a right angle beyond (south of) T5, and continued to the east to appear as ditch EF22 in 2004 T2.

Within the Roman enclosure defined by ditch F2 (above) the most interesting features were the cremation or placed deposit F1, which was in a cut 0.53m wide and 0.27m deep (Fig 5). In turn, F1 had been cut into the terminal end of 0.45m-deep and 0.70m-

wide ditch F17. F1 contained no human bone, but did contain a variety of sherds of 1st-3rd century date. However, given that F1 was cut into F17, and that F17 was dated to late 2nd-3rd century, it follows that F1 must contain residual material, and have been deposited no earlier than the late 2nd century, or probably in the 3rd. F17 also contained most of a broken mortarium (Fig 4), which may itself be a ritual deposit.

The post-holes F15 and F16 (0.13m and 0.18m deep respectively) may represent parts of an internal fence line within the enclosure, or, given the proximity of the robber trenches found in 2004 T1 only 5m to the east, they may be connected with that robbed-out structure.

At the western end of T5 was a 5.8m portion of a large cut feature (F13). Judging by the curve of its edge, this continued beyond the western end of the trench, and may have been up to 25m across (its size is determined by its absence from 2004 T4). Roman pottery and imbrex from its fill shows it is of Roman date (the greyware pottery cannot be more closely dated than 'Roman'). Due to the apparent large size of F13, a sondage was machine-dug at the western end of T5 to an approximate depth of 0.83m. An auger was used to establish that the bottom of F13 (or close to it) was a further 0.62m down (ie, the bottom of F13 was 1.45m below trench bottom and 2.11m below modern ground level). Pits of this size are normally interpreted as quarries or quarry pits, used for the extraction of minerals for building (in this case possibly for the Roman structure at the eastern end of the Area E Roman enclosure).

The leached fills and irregular profiles of natural features F10-F12 indicate that they are tree-throw pits.

Two modern service-runs, a large drainage run and a water supply spur, are not shown on plan.

**Table 2: T5 contexts and finds data.**

Context no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F01	cremation burial or placed deposit	pot	Roman
F02	ditch	pottery , tile	Roman
F10	natural pit	--	-
F11	natural pit	--	-
F12	natural linear feature	--	-
F13	quarry pit	pottery , tile	Roman
F15	post-hole	pottery	Roman
F16	post-hole	pottery	Roman
F17	ditch	pottery, animal bone, tile	Roman

### **T6: summary**

Located in the south-eastern corner of Area E, T6 was excavated through topsoil L1, accumulation horizon L2, thus revealing natural material L3 in which archaeological features were visible. Trench depth (ie, from modern ground to L3) was 0.16m at the north end and 0.9m at the south end, showing that the modern sports pitch has masked true ground level, which drops considerably from south to north. However, L1 was thicker here than elsewhere on the site, and contained fragments of consolidated asphalt and shallow concreted pads which are probably to be associated with the large military depot (now the TA Centre) immediately south of Area E.

T6 contained eight archaeological features. From south to north, these were F14, a post-medieval ditch, Roman ditches F9 and F7 on the southern and northern sides of a compacted gravel surface F8, a Roman pit F6, and a Roman ditch F4 cut by two Roman post-holes F3 and F5.

Ditch F14 aligned with and appeared to be of the same dimensions as ditch EF11 in 2004, ie, 4.6m wide and 0.5m deep. In T6 it was 3m wide and 0.5m deep. However, given amount of truncation seen in Area E, it is likely that ditch EF11/F14 was originally deeper than it appeared in the 2004/2011 excavated sections. Seven peg-tile fragments

and a post-medieval glass bottle base (dated late 17th or 18th century) indicate that the ditch was infilled in the later 17th century (finds report in section 7, below). This dating, as well as the alignment and character of the ditches, and the fact that the Colchester Siege Map shows ditches in this area means that we can be fairly certain that F14/EF11 was a civil war period ditch, quite probably connected with Fort Needham.

Although they do not share the alignment of the main Roman enclosure ditches (T5 F2, T2 EF22), ditches F4 (1.05m wide and 0.2m deep), F7 and F9 (0.4m and 0.45m deep respectively, and both 0.17m deep) represent Roman-period activity outside the enclosure. F7 and F8 flank a gravel strip F8, and may collectively define a pathway leading towards the enclosure. Or it is possible that they, and other ditches which do not share the alignment of the enclosure (ie, 2004 EF1, EF24, and 2011 F4 and F17) show that there are in fact several periods of activity here. In support of this idea is the fact that post-holes F3 and F5 also cut ditch F4.

**Table 3: T6 contexts and finds data.**

Context no	Type	Dated finds	Phase
F03	post-hole	tile	Roman
F04	ditch	tile, pottery	Roman
F05	post-hole	tile	Roman
F06	pit	tile, pottery	Roman
F07	ditch	tile, pottery	Roman
F08	compacted gravel surface	--	Roman
F09	ditch	tile, pottery	Roman
F14	ditch	peg-tile, glass	post-medieval

## 6 Finds (Fig 4)

by Stephen Benfield

### Introduction

The types of bulk finds recovered from the evaluation are listed in Table 4 and are listed by context in Table 5. In addition there are two individually numbered metal small finds reported below.

Bulk finds types	no.	wt (g)
Pottery (excluding complete storage jar)	139	3737
Ceramic building material (CBM)	49	12208
Animal bone	60	50
Quernstone	8	585
Glass	1	20

**Table 4. Type and quantities of bulk finds**

F no	finds no	finds type and description	spot dating summary
F1	2	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 1@1g; Fabric GTW 1@11g; Fabric GX 7@32g Cam 119 (M1-E4C), Cam 218(?) (M1-E2C); Fabric HZ 4500g near complete (broken) Cam 270B storage jar, part of neck and rim missing Eve 0.70 (M1-2/3C)	Rom M1-3C (cuts feature with 2nd-3rd century pot)
F1	3	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 3@8g; Fabric GX(BSW) 11@90g; Fabric GX 6@52g, inc. Cam 119 Butt-beaker decorated with comb stab dots, (M1-E4C) and rim sherd from greyware jar <b>CBM</b> 1@2g (abraded frag.) <b>Bone</b> : 50@40g, fragmented long bone	Rom
F1	sp1	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 2@1g frags. <b>CBM</b> Roman: frag.1@1g	Rom

F no	finds no	finds type and description	spot dating summary
F1	sp2	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 2@4g; Fabric GX 4@18g (Cam 119 Butt-beaker ?)	Rom
F1	sp3	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 2@10g; Fabric GX(BSW) 2@35g, inc. base sherd	Rom
F1	sp4	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 2@6g	Rom 1-2/3C
F1	sp5	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 2@44g; Fabric GX 1@7g (Cam 119 Butt-beaker??) <b>CBM</b> Roman: flat tile prob. teg 1@205g (21 mm thick)	Rom
F1	sp6a	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 1@3g; Fabric GX 4@41g, Cam 119 Butt-beaker decorated with comb stab dots, (M1-E4C); Fabric HZ 1@1g <b>CBM</b> Roman: flat tile prob. teg 2@283g (21 mm thick)	Rom M1-3/E4C
F1	sp6b	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric GX 1@9g, (Cam 119 Butt-beaker ?)	Rom
F1	sp7	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 1@1g; Fabric GX(BSW) 1@2g; Fabric GX 9@62g, Cam 119 Butt-beaker decorated with comb stab dots, (M1-E4C); <b>CBM</b> Roman: teg 1@996g (21 mm thick); flat tile prob. teg 1@381g (20 mm thick)	Rom
F1	sp7a	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 12@70g; Fabric GX 11@108g, Cam 119 Butt-beaker decorated with comb stab dots, (M1-E4C); Fabric HZ 2@6g <b>CBM</b> Roman: flat tile prob. teg 2@283g (21 mm thick)	Rom M1-3/E4C
F1	sp7b	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric DJ 2@50g; Fabric GX(BSW) 2@157g inc. large single sherd from a high shouldered jar (1-2C)	Rom M1-2C
F2	10	<b>CBM</b> Roman: RB 1@223g	
F4	6	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric GX (BSW) 3@ 17g Cam 218(?) (M1-M2C) <b>CBM</b> Roman: RB 2@482g (one red fabric, corner piece, 9 mm+ side, thickness 40 mm; other fabric red with moderate-common small stone	Rom M1-M2C(?)
F6	8	<b>CBM</b> Roman: teg 1@695g (20 mm thick) upper cut-away Warry (2006) Type D1 (dated M3C+) (note - type recorded among Boudican assemblage from Lion walk (Crummy 1984)	Rom
F7	12	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric GX(BSW) 3@22g, necked jar with groove/offset (M1-2C?); Fabric GX 2@12g; Fabric HZ 1@43g <b>CBM</b> Roman: teg 6@526g, inc. lower cut-away Warry (2006) Type D15 (dated M3C+) (note – type recorded among Boudican assemblage from Lion walk (Crummy 1984); imb 1@32g; RFT 2@158g, combed surface (2C+); RBT 9@854g	Rom M1-2/3C(?)
F13	11	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: fabric DJ 1@7g; Fabric GX(BSW)2@27g; Fabric GX 1@10g <b>CBM</b> Roman: imb 1@186g; RBT 1@154g, fabric red with moderate-common small stone	Rom
F14	7	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric HZ 1@22g (1-2/3C)(abraded) <b>CBM</b> Roman: RBT 2@302g; post-Roman: PT 7@283g (med-mod) <b>Glass</b> P-med bottle base 17th/18C	post-med mod 17/18C
F15	9	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric GX(BSW) 1@5g	Rom
F16	13	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric GX 7@11g (some with oxidised fabric)	Rom
F17	14	<b>Quern</b> lava quernstone pieces 8@585	Rom-med
F17	15	<b>Pottery</b> Roman: Fabric AJ 1@156g; Fabric GB 3@46g, Cam 278, acute lattice (M2-E/M3C); Fabric GX(BSW) 6@77g; Fabric GX 6@95g; Fabric HZ 2@137g; Fabric TZ 6@2224g 70% of one mortarium, Eve 0.60, joining large sheds, Cam 504/504 variant (CAR 10 TZ 216-21) (L2-3C) <b>CBM</b> Roman: fabric red sandy, teg 2@1037g (frag. of lower cut-away); RBT prob. teg 3@844g, (teg tiles all 22 mm thick with one at 16 mm) imb 1@121g; RB 2@1358g (one corner, 14 mm side survives, tile is 35 mm thick, other is 60 mm thick); RBT prob. RB 4@1671g; RB 2@1414g fabric red with moderate-common small	Rom L2-3C

F no	finds no	finds type and description	spot dating summary
		stone (35-40 mm thick) <b>Bone:</b> 5@10g fragmented long bone	

**Table 5: List of bulk finds**

RBT=Roman brick/tile, RB=Roman brick, RFT=Roman flue tile, PT=peg-tile

## Pottery

### Introduction

All of the pottery recovered can be dated to the Late Iron Age and Roman period (Table 5). Excluding a near complete (broken) large storage jar (F1(2))<sup>1</sup>, for which the sherd number was not counted, a total of 139 sherds of Roman pottery were recovered together weighing 3,737g. The large storage jar weighs approximately 4,500g so that the total weight of Roman pottery recovered is approximately 8,237g.

The pottery was recovered from eight contexts (F1, F4, F7, F13, F14, F15, F16 & F17) although significant quantities (more than ten sherds) were only associated with the pit F1 and ditch terminal F17, each of the other features producing a total of six sherds or less. Excluding the large storage jar, F1 produced a total of ninety-three sherds (829g); including the storage jar this would amount to approximately 5,329g of pottery. F17 produced a total of twenty-four sherds (2,735g). The proportionally large total weight for F17 in relation to the number of sherds is influenced by the presence of a near complete, broken mortarium.

The pottery fabric codes (Table 6) refer to those listed in *CAR 10*. Fabric GX (other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares) has been divided between Black surfaced wares (Fabric GX(BSW)) commonly with a red-brown fabric and other coarse (grey) wares (Fabric GX).

Fabric code	Fabric name
AJ	amphorae, Dressel 20
DJ	coarse oxidised and related wares
GB	BB2: black-burnished ware, category 2
GTW	grog tempered wares
GX(BSW)	Romanising and other black-surfaced coarse wares
GX	other coarse wares, principally locally-produced grey wares
HZ	large storage jars and other vessels in heavily-tempered grey wares
TZ	mortaria, Colchester and mortaria imported from the Continent

Table 6 Late Iron Age and Roman pottery quantity by fabric type

### The assemblage

The pottery assemblage is made up entirely of coarse wares. The only pottery which is clearly not a local or regional product is a sherd from an imported, Spanish Dressel 20 oil amphora from F17(15).

Sherds from four vessels dominate the assemblage. Three of these are from F1. These are a near complete (Eve 0.70) broken large storage jar (Fabric HZ) of form Cam 270B, sherds from a Butt-Beaker (Fabric GX) of form Cam 199 and a number of body sherds in Fabric DJ, probably most of which are from a single, unidentified oxidised vessel.

The lower third of the large storage jar F1(2) was located intact in the base of a small pit, which was not much larger than the girth of the pot and was probably dug to receive it. Sherds from the upper part of the jar were recovered from spoil and pit fill, but most came from within the surviving pot base (removed while excavating spits (sp) 1-7). This

<sup>1</sup> in this section, where a Feature or Layer number is followed by a bracketed number, the latter is the *finds number*. (ie F1(2) means *finds number* 2 in Feature 1).

shows that the jar had been put upright into the pit as a complete vessel, most of the body of which remained an empty void. This suggests that the pot may have had a cover or lid. The upper part was possibly later cracked by soil pressure and/or damaged by disturbance.

Sherds from the Butt-Beaker and the oxidised pot were also recovered from the pit fill F1(3), but most came from the lower fill of the large storage jar (sp 1-7). However, it should be stressed that in neither case do the sherds from these two pots appear to represent a near complete vessel and only body sherds from the oxidised vessel were recovered. These two pots, along with a small number of sherds from other coarse wares vessels (Fabric GX(BSW) & Fabric GX)) and one very large sherd, comprising part of the shoulder and lower body of a jar (Fabric GX(BSW)), appear to represent rubbish which had been put into the pit, presumably after its use life. Although, that most of these sherds are from just two vessels, with one very large sherd from another also present, this may suggest deliberate selection.

Complete vessels are commonly associated with burials. In this instance there is no indication that the pot is associated with a burial and the vessel can be seen as buried in the ground for another purpose. Complete, or near complete Roman pots are encountered in cases of hoarding, ritual deposits and in domestic situations. There are a number of large vessels, including large storage jars and amphorae, which have been excavated from domestic situations in Colchester (CAR 10 fig 206, Appendix 8, fiche). These were probably for storage or industrial purposes and it can be noted that the bases of these vessels are intact so that they would have been able to retain either liquid or dry materials. A similar range of purpose can be proposed for the large storage vessel from F1.

The other near complete vessel is a mortarium (Fabric TZ), which came from the lower (base) fill of the ditch terminal F17(15). The vessel is broken into six large joining sherds, with about one quarter of the upper part missing (Eve 0.60) and old breaks on the edges adjoining the missing sherds. The form can be described as a Cam 501/504 variant, which can be dated to the late 2nd-3rd century. The interior is worn from use, but not excessively so.

### *Dating*

The predominance of coarse ware sherds associated with most of the features makes close dating difficult. There is one sherd with some grog-temper, from F1(2), which could date to the Late Iron Age or Early Roman period. Otherwise all of the pottery is of post-conquest date. Apart from the vessels associated with the pit F1 and the ditch terminal F17, no vessel form types were able to be recognised. The more closely dated pottery is of mid 1st-3rd/early 4th century date; although there is no pottery present which need date to the late 3rd or 4th century among the assemblage.

The pottery from the ditch terminal F17 includes a near complete mortarium (Fabric TZ) of form Cam 501/504 variant (probably of late 2nd-3rd century date) and sherds from a Cam 278 jar (Fabric GB) with acute burnished lattice. The mortarium is not well dated, but a date range of late 2nd-3rd century is likely. The lattice decorated jar can be dated to the mid 2nd-early 3rd century.

The pottery from F17 provides a *terminus post-quem* for the pit F1 which cut F17. The pit contained a large whole storage jar pot of form Cam 270B (Fabric HZ). The Storage jar, which is in a coarse-tempered red-brown to grey fabric with abraded black surfaces, would not be considered to be current beyond the late 3rd century. The oxidised, part pot, recovered from its interior, although broadly of Roman date, would be most common among assemblages of the mid 1st-early 3rd century, while the Butt-Beaker form Cam 119 is long-lived, originating in the 1st century but is probably not current after the late 3rd-early 4th century. It can be noted that among sherds associated with feature F1 are a sherd from a deep bowl probably of from Cam 218 (dated mid 1st-early 2nd century), a very large sherd from a shouldered jar, the form of which suggest a mid 1st-mid 2nd century date and a sherd from a Dressel 20 amphora which is not current beyond the mid 3rd century.

## **Ceramic building material (CBM)**

### **Roman CBM**

#### *Introduction*

In total forty-nine pieces of Roman CBM were recovered with a total weight of 12,208g (Table 5). Most of the CBM was recovered from three contexts, the pit F1 (nine pieces weighing 2,151 g), ditch F7 (eighteen pieces weighing 1,570 g) and the ditch terminal F17 (fourteen pieces weighing 6,445 g). The fabric of almost all of the CBM is fine-sandy and red in colour. A few pieces were visually distinct having a fabric which contained moderate quantities of small stones and white flint or quartz, most notably two pieces of Roman brick from F17.

#### *The assemblage and dating*

The recognised brick/tile types in the assemblage consist of pieces from *tegula* roof tiles and Roman bricks, with one piece of *imbrex* roof tile and a piece from a combed flue tile. A number of thin, flat piece of tile (approximately 20 mm thick) are probably also from *tegula* roof tiles. None of the tile had any mortar adhering to it. All was recovered as loose pieces from contexts where it had been discarded making any comment on its function at the site, whether from buildings or pieces collected from elsewhere for secondary use, difficult to ascertain; although the quantity suggests the common presence of tile on the site

Close dating of most Roman tile is not really possible at the present time; although a dating scheme for *tegula* tiles has been proposed based on lower cut-away forms (Warry 2006) and a broad dating relating to the thickness of the tile base from recorded assemblages in Colchester (Black 2004). Three lower cut-aways were recorded on the *tegula* tiles of which two could be identified to form types (Warry 2006, fig. 1.3). Both are cut through the top of the flange. One from F6(8) is Type D1 and the other, from F7(12) is Type D15. Warry suggests that these types date to the mid 3rd century or later. There is no associated dating evidence with the tile from F6, but a small quantity of pottery from F7 suggests a date range of mid 1st to mid-late 3rd century. While possibly a general guide to the types of lower cut-aways most common in particular periods, dating of tiles using these types must be treated with great caution as lower cut-aways of Warry's D Types have been recorded among tile debris dated as Boudican at Lion walk, Colchester (Crummy 1984, fig 203 D & E). In relation to tile thickness the identified *tegula* tile pieces from the site are consistently about 20 mm-22 mm thick. Black has suggested that *tegula* tiles which are consistently less than this thickness only become common from the later 2nd century (Black 2004), possibly indicating a 1st-2nd century date for the *tegula* tile pieces here. One piece of combed flue-tile from F7(12) can be dated to the late 1st/early 2nd century or later

### **Post-Roman CBM**

Seven pieces of peg-tile, together weighing 283 g, were recovered from F14(7). Based on the archaeological sequence at Harwich (Essex), peg-tiles appear in contexts dating from the 13th century, but probably only become relatively common from the 14th century onward (Ryan 1993, 97). The standard peg-tile, produced from the late medieval period onwards, remains basically unchanged into modern times so that pieces are not closely datable, although a post-medieval date appears most likely in relation to F14.

### **Quernstone**

Eight pieces of lave quernstone, with a total weight of 585 g, were recovered from the ditch terminal F17(14). They are probably part of one quernstone. There are no clear traces of tooling on any surviving surfaces and the full thickness of the original quernstone may not be represented by any of the pieces; although the thickest of the

pieces is a maximum of 40 mm. The context is associated with Roman pottery dated to the later 2nd-3rd century. Lava quernstones were imported in to Britain from the beginning and throughout the Roman period. The trade was established again in the middle-late Anglo-Saxon period, continuing through the medieval period (Crummy 1983, 75). The pieces recovered from F17 are undoubtedly of Roman date.

### **Bone**

Small quantities of degraded animal bone, consisting of long bones shaft fragments of large mammal, were recovered from two contexts, F1(3) and F17(15). The bone is laminating and powdering. The pit F1 cut the ditch terminal F17 and the similarity of the bone from both contexts suggests that it is almost certainly all from one single long bone. The bone could not be identified to a specific bone or to a species. In total there are sixty pieces (including small fragments) with a combined weight of 50 g so that the overall average weight for each piece is less than one gram. The relatively poor quality and low proportion of bone in relation to the finds assemblage could suggest that bone is not particularly well preserved on the site.

### **Glass**

A single piece of late post-medieval (20 g), from the base of a bottle of a type common in the later 17th and 18th centuries was recovered from the ditch F14(7).

### **Small finds**

There are two individually numbered metal small finds (SF). One is almost certainly a Roman copper-alloy coin (SF1) from the upper fill of the pit F1, the other is a small iron object (SF2), possibly an 'ox goad' which came from the ditch F7. The detail of both small finds is obscured by corrosion products. Neither is closely dated. Finds of Roman date (pottery & tile) were recovered from both contexts and the context from which the coin was recovered is probably of 3rd century date.

**SF1** F1(1) Copper-alloy disc, almost certainly a coin. Surfaces obscured by adhering dirt but clearly badly corroded beneath, size and weight suggest a Roman coin of 1st-M3C date. Weight 7.7g, diameter 27 mm.

**SF2** F7(12). Fe object. Possibly an example of a class of object commonly referred to as 'ox goads' (Wardle 1990 fig 131 nos. 406-08). Corroded. Shape suggests a round, hollow(?) body (14 mm long), there is a single point (10 mm long), with a slightly flattened shaft, projecting (in line) from the edge. Weight 14 g, diameter of body 22 mm.

## 7 Discussion (Fig 2)

As in 2004, the current evaluation has demonstrated that significant terracing has taken place across Area E. In T5 and T6 natural subsoil L3 was found between c 680mm and c 900mm below modern ground level (bgl) respectively, and in several places it was below 1m bgl. As in 2004 (CAT Report 274), this strongly indicates that soil was moved from north to south as the site was levelled to create the sports pitch playing surface.

Again, as in the 2004 evaluation, most of the archaeological features in T5 and T6 were Roman pits, postholes, and ditches, the exception being a large quarry pit in T5. The ditches were of similar character and alignment to those found previously across the Colchester Garrison site, and are best interpreted as field boundaries associated with Iron Age and Roman-period farming and occupation within the *oppidum*. However, pottery in ditches F4, F7 and F9 indicates that they were all of Roman date, and that there are no Iron Age fields in what is now Area E.

The western edge of the rectangular Roman enclosure identified in 2004 as EF9, EF10, EF13 and EF22 (CAT Report 274) was also intercepted in T5 as F2 (Fig 2). The two postholes to the east of T5 (F15 and F16) are almost certainly structural in nature, connected to either a fence line associated with the enclosure itself, or a building located within it. This would support the 2004 conclusion that there were buildings at the eastern side of the enclosure, and indeed most of the archaeological activity is on the eastern side of the Roman enclosure (and also of Area E).

A large greyware urn (damaged by recent agricultural activity as well as at the time of evaluation) was found in T5, more or less in the centre of the enclosure. There were no associated human remains, so rather than interpreting this as a Roman cremation burial, a ritual interpretation is possible. This is supported by the fact that the pot had been cut into the terminal end of ditch F17, which contained substantial amounts of late 2nd or 3rd century Roman pottery (including a fragmentary mortarium). This would imply a third century date for the placed deposit.

The thirty-one inhumation burials recently excavated on a site at Hyderabad Barracks (across Mersea Road and to the north-east of the current site) may be associated with the enclosure on Area E (GAL area A1, site H: CAT report forthcoming).

This evaluation has added to the picture provided by the 2004 evaluation, and strengthened the conclusions formed in that report that most of the archaeological activity was at the eastern edge of the site, and that this activity defined a Roman-period ditched enclosure on this site containing at least one substantial brick-built structure and possibly several other post-built structures. The presence of structures within the enclosure is supported by the discovery of large quantities of Roman building material, including roofing tile (*tegula* and *imbrex*) in post-Roman ploughsoil L2, and finds of domestic pottery from both stages of evaluation. Also, the presence of flue-tile among the CBM shows that a hypocaust system was located nearby. Whether this heated a floor, or a bath-house of some sort is not known – either way, a structure with some pretensions to a Romanised style of life is indicated. There is evidence for some activity outside the enclosure too, in the form of postholes (F3 and F5), ditches (F4 and EF1) and a possible gravel pathway (F8) flanked by ditches (F7, F9) leading towards the enclosure (F8). The misalignment of some of these ditches with the enclosure, and the fact that post-holed F3 and F5 cut ditch F4 may indicate that there are actually several phases of activity here.

The most likely interpretation of such a collection of structures is a villa-type complex surrounded by its own fields, similar to the sites discovered at the Kirkee & McMunn Barracks (Shimmin, 1998) and at the Goojerat Barracks (GAL Area L/N: CAT Report 588 - forthcoming).

No evidence of prehistoric, Anglo-Saxon or medieval activity was encountered in any of the evaluation trenches. The only non-Roman, non-natural feature uncovered during the evaluation was a post-medieval ditch (F14) running E-W across the southern end of T6.

Its fill contained peg-tile and a 17th or 18th-century glass fragment, and it aligned well with similar ditch EF11 found in 2004 T4 (Fig 2). This alignment makes it very likely that the ditch was part of a larger system connecting various elements of the Parliamentary forts and gun emplacements by which Colchester was surrounded during the siege of 1648. The siege map of Colchester shows east-west siege works ditches to the south of St John's Abbey through what is now the northern end of the Garrison site (CAT Report 97; CAT siege leaflet 1998). It is quite likely that post-medieval ditch F14/EF11 is a surviving fragment of these siege works.

**Table 7: number of features per trench.**

	prehistoric	Roman	medieval	post-medieval	modern	undated	natural	Total
<b>T1</b>	-	3	-	-	2	1	1	<b>7</b>
<b>T2</b>	-	11	-	-	1	2	-	<b>14</b>
<b>T3</b>	-	4	-	-	7	-	-	<b>11</b>
<b>T4</b>	-	4	-	1	-	-	-	<b>5</b>
<b>T5</b>	-	6	-	-	-	-	3	<b>9</b>
<b>T6</b>	-	7	-	1	-	-	-	<b>8</b>
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>35</b>	-	<b>2</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	

## 8 Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned and funded by Taylor Wimpey. The project consultants were RPS. The project was monitored by CBCAO.

The fieldwork was supervised by Ben Holloway and carried out by Mark Baister and Richard Ward. Plans by Mark Baister, figures by Emma Spurgeon.

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- |                |      |   |
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| CAR 10         | 1999 | <i>Colchester Archaeological Report 10, Roman pottery from excavations in Colchester, 1971-86</i> , by R P Symonds and S Wade, edited by P Bidwell and A Croom  |
| CAT Report 54  | 2000 | <i>An archaeological evaluation at the Garrison sports ground, Circular Road North, Colchester</i> , unpublished CAT archive report by Howard Brooks  |
| CAT Report 97  | 2000 | <i>An archaeological desk-based assessment of the Colchester Garrison PFI site</i> , unpublished CAT archive report by Kate Orr   |
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CAT Report 412	2011	<i>Archaeological investigations on the 'Alienated Land', Colchester Garrison, Colchester, Essex May 2004-October 2007.</i> Unpublished CAT archive report, by L Pooley, P Crummy, D Shimmin, H Brooks, B Holloway, and R Masfield
CAT Report 588	forthcoming	<i>Stage 2 archaeological excavation, Alienated Land Area L/N (Goojerat Barracks), Colchester Garrison, Colchester, Essex: June-July 2010:</i> unpublished CAT archive report, prepared by Howard Brooks and Ben Holloway
CAT Report forthcoming		<i>Excavations at Hyderabad barracks (GAL Area A), 2011.</i>
CAT siege leaflet	1998	<i>The Siege of Colchester 1648</i> , produced by the Colchester Archaeological Trust
C&A	1777	<i>Chapman and Andre map of 1777</i>
CIM	2008a	<i>Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester.</i>
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RPS	2004a	<i>Research design for archaeological investigations for the alienated land, Colchester Garrison</i>
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## 10 Glossary and abbreviations

box flue tile	hollow tile associated with hypocausts (under-floor heating systems)
<i>CAR</i>	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report</i>
CBCAO	Colchester Borough Council Archaeology Officer
CBM	ceramic building materials (brick, tile)
context	specific location on an excavation site, and location of finds
CuA	copper-alloy
ditch	a linear cut, usually to define the edge of a field
EHF	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by Essex County Council
<i>imbrex</i>	semi-cylindrical Roman roofing tile, used in conjunction with <i>tegula</i>
Iron Age	7th century BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
Late Iron Age	c 200 BC-AD 43
medieval	from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	19th and 20th centuries
NGR	National Grid Reference
OD	Ordnance Datum
pit	a hole dug principally for the disposal of rubbish
post-medieval	after Henry VIII and to the end of the 19th century
prehistoric	pre-Roman, or generally the years BC
residual	something out of its original context (ie a Roman coin in a Victorian pit)
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 430
RPS	RPS Planning (project consultants)
Anglo-Saxon	the period from c AD 430 to AD 1066
septaria	local stone used as building material by Romans
SF	small find
<i>tegula</i>	flat Roman roofing tile, used in conjunction with <i>imbrex</i>
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database, held by Colchester Museums

## 11 Archive deposition

The finds, paper and digital archive are held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3NF, but will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums under accession code 2011.54.

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## **12 Contents of Archive**

### **Finds**

- 2 Museum boxes with bulk finds (pottery, CBM)
- 1 Sealer box with small finds

### **Paper record**

One A4 document wallet containing  
CAT Report 607

Copy of the WSI produced by RPS/CAT  
CAT Report 274 (2004 evaluation)  
Digital photo record  
Attendance register  
Context sheets (F1-F17, L1-L3)  
Trench sheets (T5-T6)  
Finds register  
Site photographic record on cd  
A3 section sheets

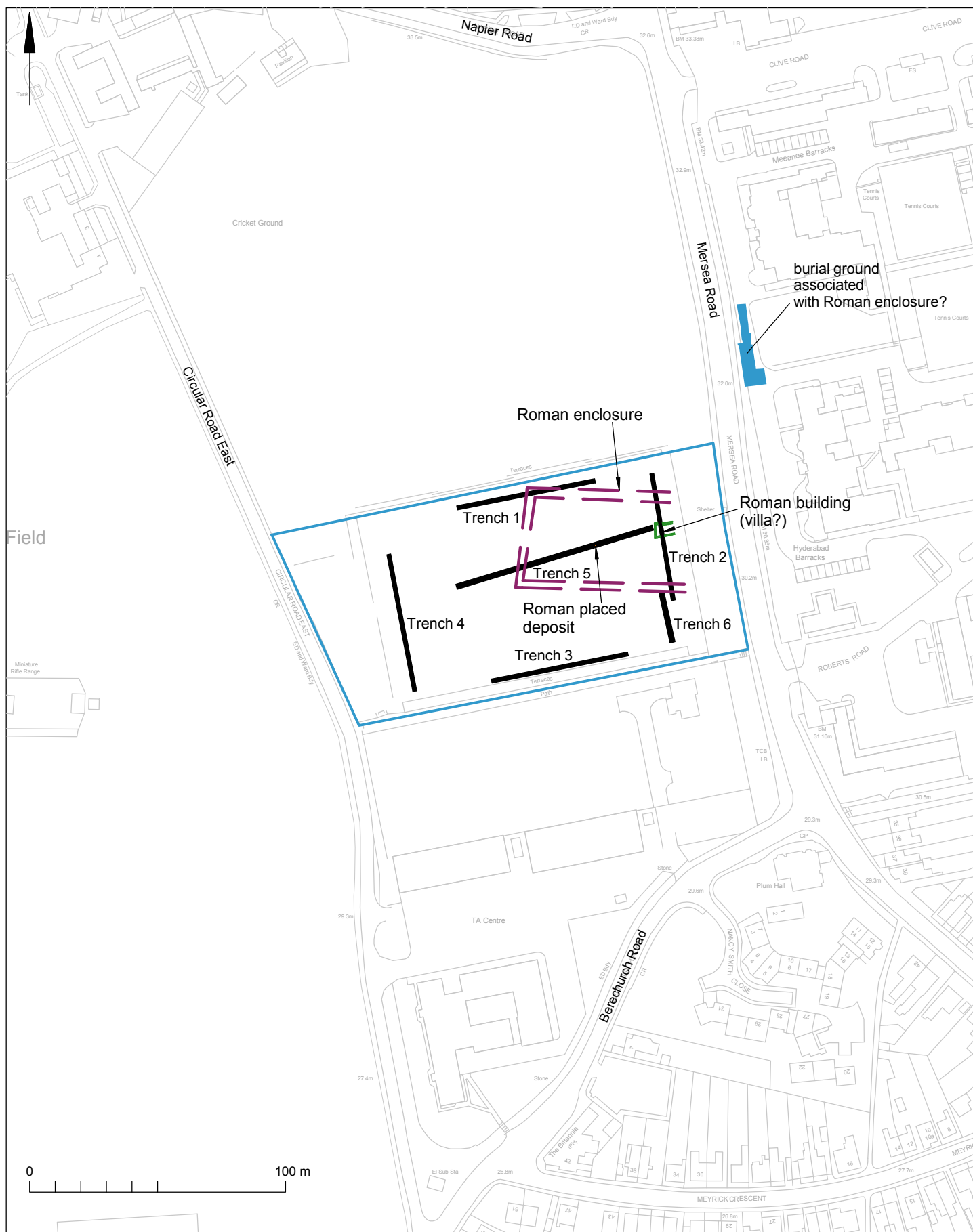


Fig 1 Site and trench location plan

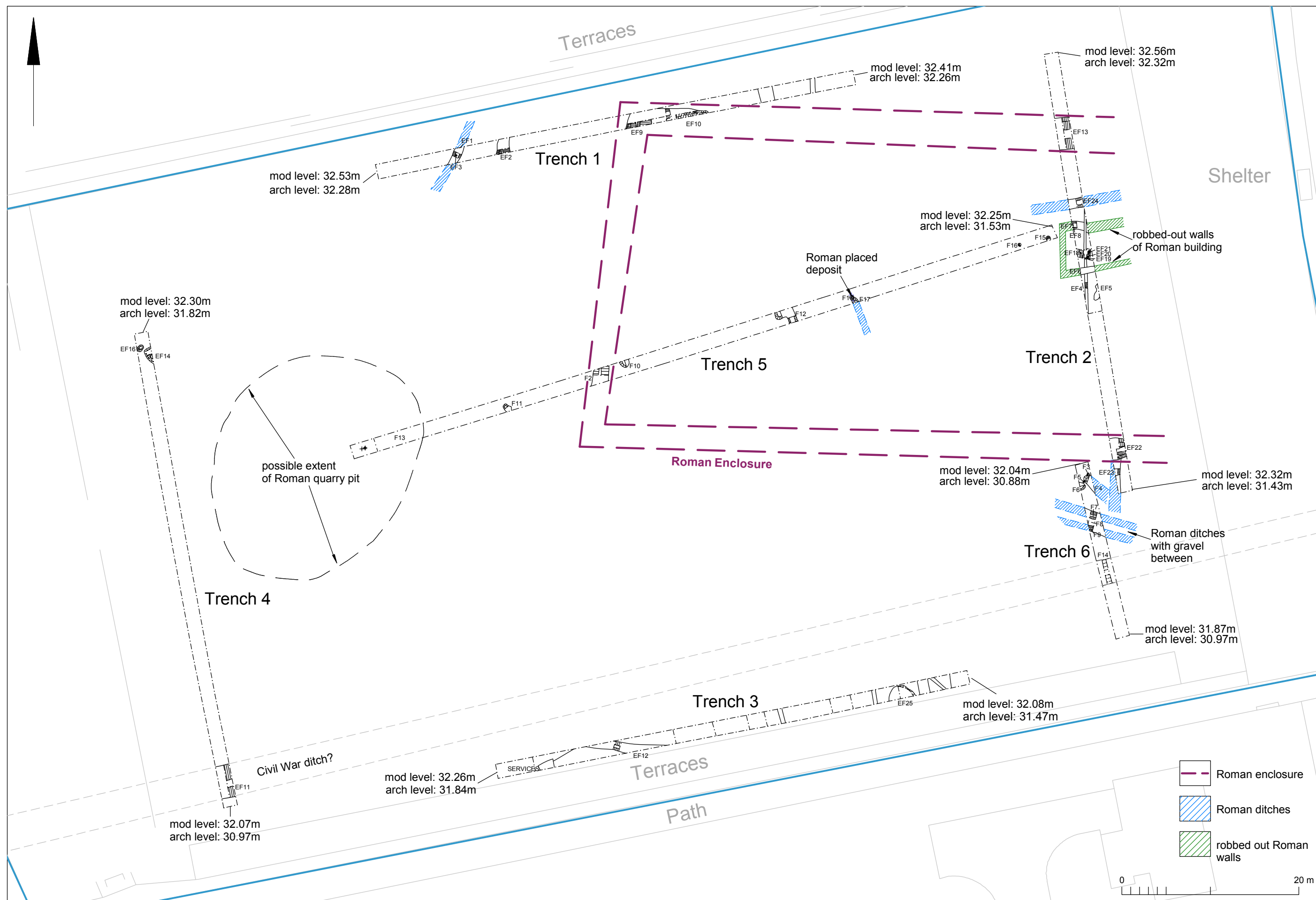


Fig 2 Trial-trenching results, showing 2004 (T1-4) and 2011 (T5-6) evaluation trenches (mod = modern ground; arch = archaeological).

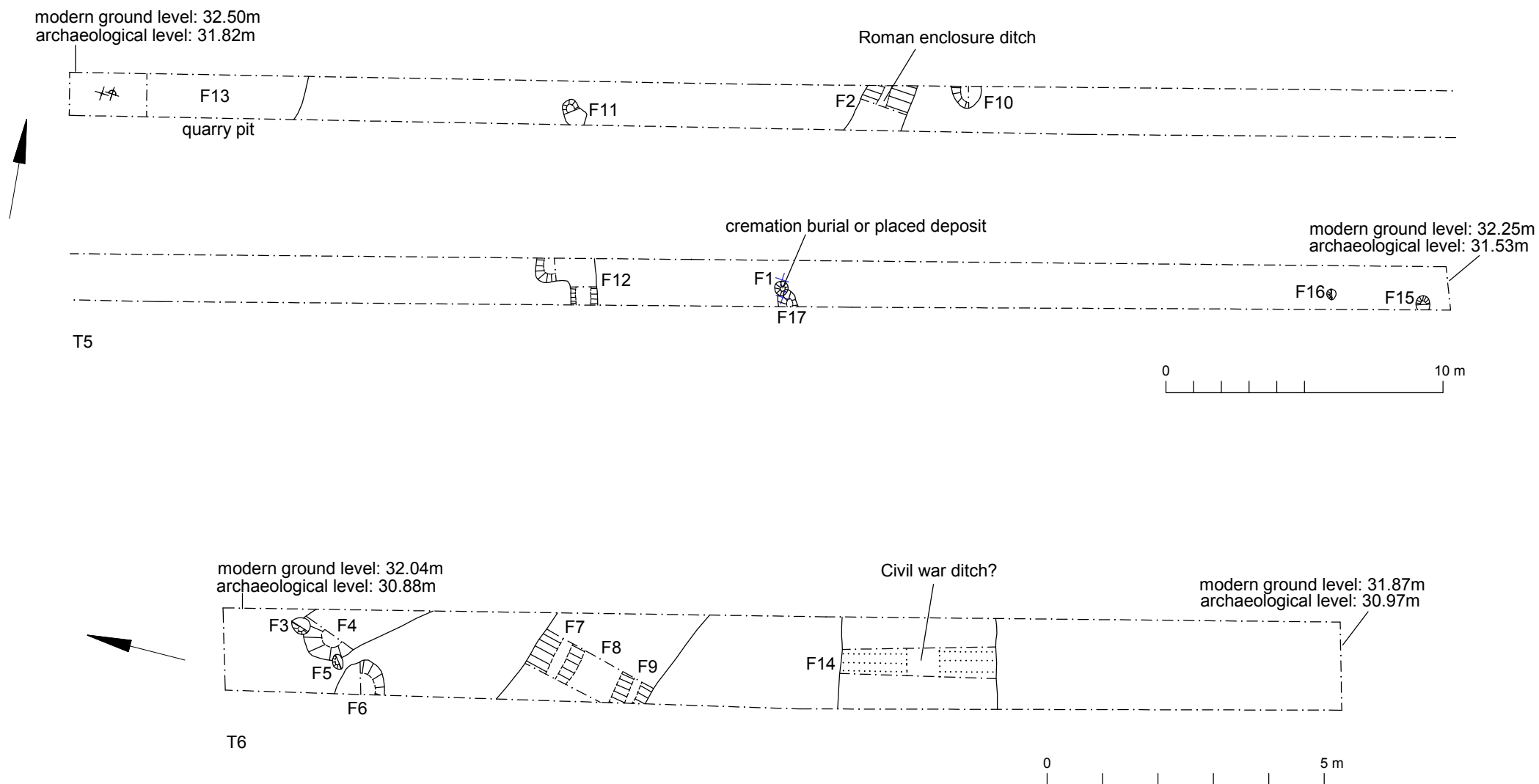


Fig 3 T5 detailed plan (above). T6 detailed plan (below).



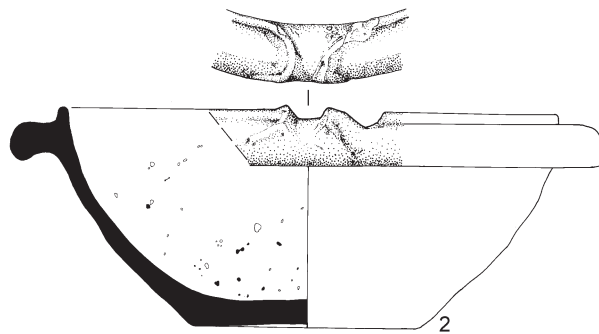
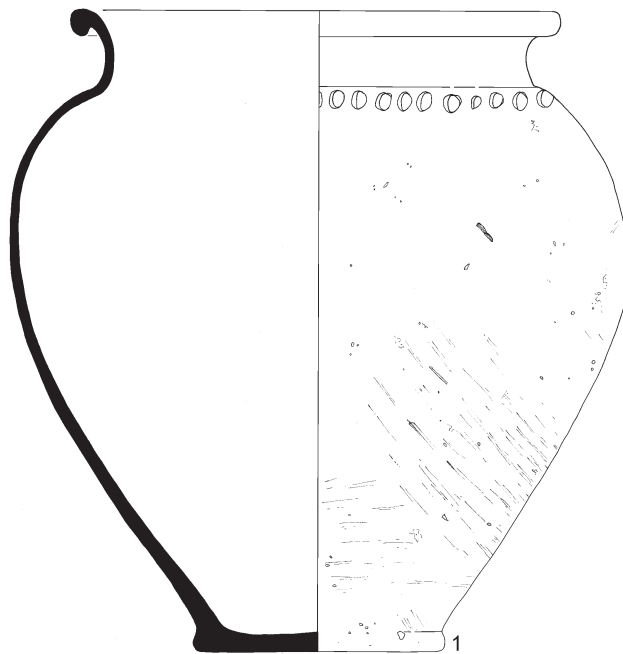


Fig 4 Roman pottery.

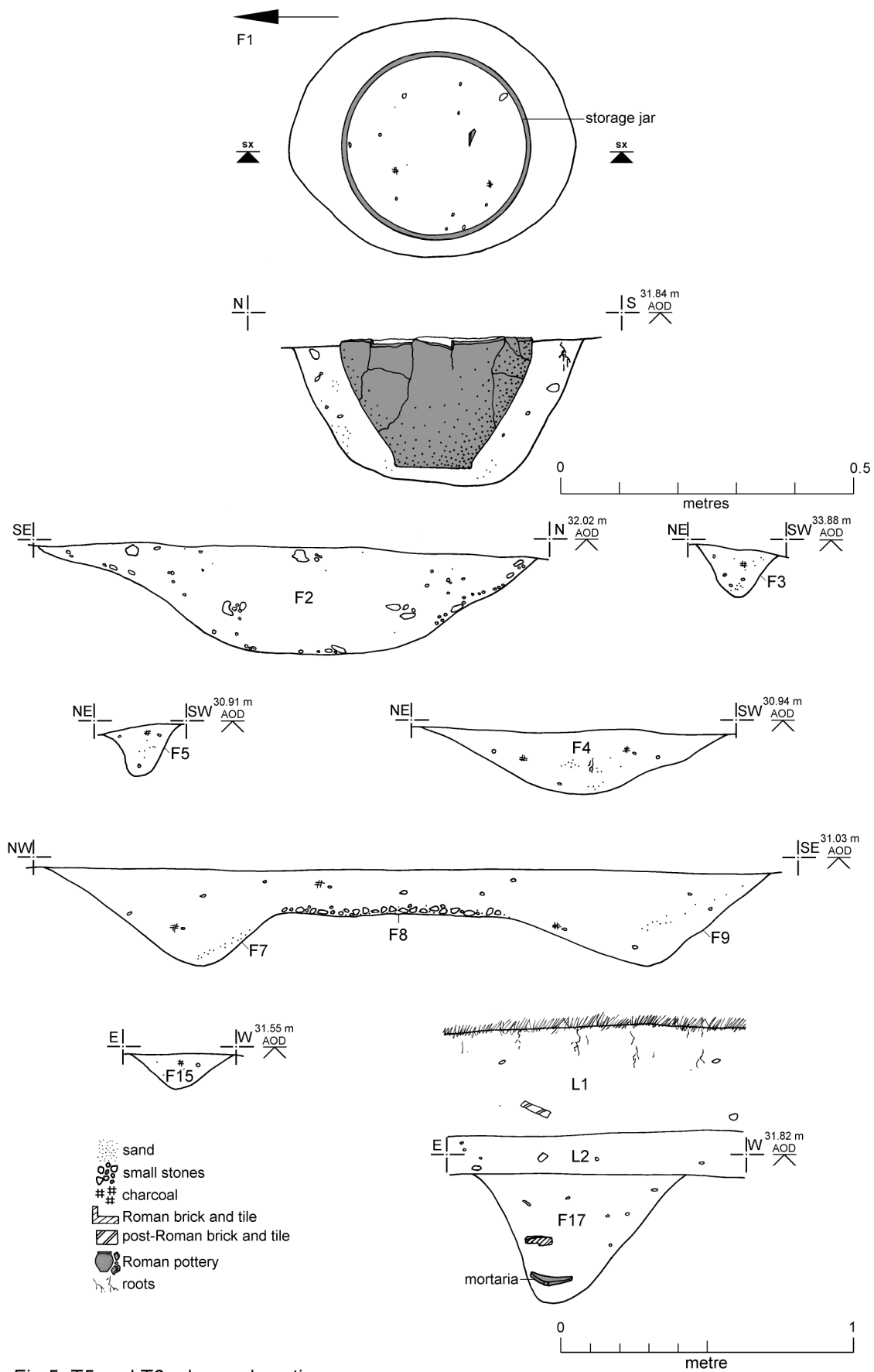


Fig 5 T5 and T6: plan and sections.

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Site address:</b> Stage 2 archaeological evaluation, Colchester Garrison Alienated Land Area E, (formerly Meeanee & Hyderabad Barracks), Colchester, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 9986 2427 (c)	<b>CAT Project code:</b> 11/7g
<b>Type of work:</b> Evaluation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> July 2011	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 2 trenches (total length 93m) in a site of approx 1.32 hectares (4 trenches totalling 158m had previously been dug in 2004)
<b>Location of finds/curating museum:</b> Colchester & Ipswich Museums: accession 2011.54	<b>Funding source:</b> Developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> Yes	<b>Related UAD/ EHER nos:</b> UAD event nos 935, 1073, 1080, 1099, EHER nos 11893-11894
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 607	
<b>Periods represented:</b> Roman, post-medieval	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b></p> <p><i>There have now been two stages of archaeological evaluation at Colchester Garrison Alienated Land Area E, both carried out as part of a programme of archaeological evaluation of land purchased by Taylor Wimpey in order to provide the site for a school to be designed and built by Essex County Council. The first, in 2004, was an evaluation by four trial-trenches which led to the discovery of 25 Roman features, and a post-medieval ditch which was possibly part of the remains of the 1648 siege-works: CAT Report 274). The second, reported here, involved the excavation of a further two trial-trenches in the central part of the site, which was unavailable in 2004. These new trenches brought the coverage up to 4.17%, beyond the 3% required Colchester Borough Council, and will enable a more informed view to be taken on how the proposed school will impact the archaeological remains.</i></p> <p><i>The 2011 discoveries consist of Roman ditches, post-holes, a quarry pit, substantial quantities of brick and tile, and a buried pot (possibly a ritual deposit). These remains have added to the picture gained by the 2004 work, that there was a Roman-period ditched enclosure here containing what was probably a relatively small Romanised domestic structure, and associated post-built structures. Together these defined what may have been a small villa-type establishment set in its own fields, similar to those found at the Kirkee &amp; McMunn Barracks, 1540m SW, and Goojerat Barracks (GAL Area L/N), 883m SW. It may be the case that the Roman inhumation cemetery excavated at the Hyderabad barracks (GAL Area A1, site H, 125m to the NE) contains the burials of the farmers who lived and worked on the current site.</i></p> <p><i>The only significant post-Roman find was a continuation of the 1648 siege works ditch, which may have been part of the defences connected with Fort Needham.</i></p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> CAT Report 274	
<b>Author of summary:</b> Howard Brooks and Ben Holloway	<b>Date of summary:</b> August 2011