

**Report on the Character of the Eastern Town Walls
(Nos. 11- 57 Roman Road and the Quaker Burial
Ground), Colchester, Essex
January and February 2009**



**Report prepared by Kate Orr
On behalf of Colchester and Ipswich Museums
February 2009**

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1 Summary

Colchester and Ipswich Museums commissioned Kate Orr, a freelance archaeologist, to undertake a visual and photographic survey of the inner face and cap of the eastern town walls. The survey was carried out prior to a programme of repair works taking place. The survey involved visiting the private properties along Roman Road in which the wall forms a rear boundary, in order to establish the character of the wall and any access issues.

2 Introduction

The survey was carried out between the 21st and 31st of January 2009 with the project architect, Simon Marks of Purcell Miller Tritton. With the exception of the north-eastern section of the wall, which forms the boundary of the Quaker burial ground, the eastern stretch lies within private gardens of nos. 11-57 Roman Road. The stretch of wall which is the subject of this investigation is approximately 235m in length and is on a north to south alignment. It is centred on National Grid Reference TM 00177 25395.

Colchester's town wall is one of the best preserved Roman walls in the country and is afforded protection by law as a scheduled ancient monument (Essex SAM no 7). It is the subject of a management plan which outlines a maintenance and repair programme to ensure the long term survival of the wall (Colchester Museums 2007). A survey of the exterior of the eastern town walls was carried out in 2006 (Colchester Archaeological Trust, 2006).

3 Archaeological Background

The 2,844m wall circuit was constructed between AD 65/80 and AD 125, in response to the Boudican attack on the *colonia*. The original width of the wall was 2.67m including offsets at the base. It is of standard ashlar construction, the interior and exterior faces being formed of alternating horizontal bands of 4 courses of brick and four courses of dressed septaria. The core was formed by filling the space between the faces with alternating layers of mortar and septaria. Today the wall stands as high as 2.6m above ground level in places (Crummy, 2003, 44). A full archaeological background can be found in the town wall management plan (Colchester Museums 2007).

4 Methodology

The survey was carried out in accordance with a specification provided by Philip Wise, Heritage Manager for Colchester and Ipswich Museums. Each visit sought to establish several details which were then recorded on pro-forma sheets; the state of the preservation of the wall, its height above garden level, the presence

of any Roman fabric, the presence of any vegetation cover or planting on or near the wall and the presence of fencing on or adjacent to the wall. A discussion took place with each house owner/occupier regarding access to the wall during the repair works. Management issues concerning future planting and fence-building on the wall were also discussed. Where names and contact details of owners/occupiers were not previously known, these were noted. Colour photographs were taken with a digital camera and recorded on a pro-forma sheet.

5 Results

The results are set out on a property by property basis starting with the most southerly property and working north.

11 Roman Road

Owner: Mrs Walling. *Tel:* 01206 570946.

Date of visit: 22/1/09.

Length of wall: 7.3m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 1m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall is largely in septaria. However, certain details argue for it to be a rebuild i.e. the lack of Roman brick in the northern stretch, the presence of occasional non-Roman fabric and the type of mortar used. The northern part is very narrow (one stone thick) and unstable. In the southern part of the garden the wall is attached to a pier 1m x 700mm wide and 1.2m high. The pier is made entirely of Roman brick and septaria, built in courses and on first sight appears Roman. Its location corresponds to an internal wall turret marked on Hull's plan of the town walls and Crummy's plan (Hull, 1958, plate XLI; Crummy, 2003, fig. 5.1). However, the brick coursing on the pier does not follow the normal pattern and it is, therefore, more likely to be a rebuild. One possible interpretation is that the pier is an 18th century invention for a garden to one of the East Hill properties, (re)constructed before the properties on Roman Road were built.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

Ivy is growing on the wall and is especially prolific at the southern end, on the pier structure. One piece of trellis with a rose growing up it will need to be removed temporarily in the northern part of the garden in order to allow access to the inner face of the wall. Mrs Walling is happy for this to be done by the contractors.

Arrangements for access: Mrs Walling gave permission for contractors to work at the bottom of the garden repairing the inner face and the pier. The wall is too high to climb over so they will need to come through the side passage.

Other: In the south of the property but behind the modern boundary fence there is visible a low section of the Roman wall that appears original. This is outside no. 11's boundary and within a plot of private land. The plot of land belongs to a property on East Hill (currently The East Anglian School of Philosophy). This

section of wall is covered in ivy and in need of repair. A sycamore is growing out of it on its inner face. It is not clear whose responsibility it is to remove this sycamore. Mrs Walling was advised to speak to Philip Wise in order to come to some arrangement over how to proceed.

Photo nos: 050-057.

12 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Woodland. *Tel:* 01206 524312.

Date of visit: 29/1/09.

Length of wall: 7.5m approx.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0-650mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: There appears to be original wall core surviving up to the height of the ground level of the garden (although most of the exterior has been refaced). The top 650mm above garden ground level is a rebuild, some in septaria, some in brick. The wall here is only 300mm wide and some of the septaria from the inner face has fallen off. The owners report that approximately 20 years ago a piece of the south part of the wall collapsed. A piece of it is still lying at the base of the exterior wall, below the property.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is some garden furniture and planting against the wall; a garden seat, a low fence with trellis (where the wall fell down), and some plant pots. These are not a major obstacle and Mr and Mrs Woodland are happy to remove the fence, seat and pots and will try and tie back the rose and the lavender bush to allow access to the contractors.

Arrangements for access: The contractors will be able to come over the wall so do not need to come through the house. The owners are happy for them to work in their garden.

Photo nos: 114 – 120.

13 Roman Road

Owner: Not known.

Date of visit: Not visited because there is no Roman wall in this property, it is in the ownership of no. 14 Roman Road.

14 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Nicholson. *Tel:* 01206 577905.

Date of visit: 21/1/09.

Length of wall: 12.8m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0 - 200mm. However, there may be up to 600mm height exposed when the garden beds are removed.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: Septaria and Roman brick is visible from the original Roman wall. However, it is somewhat obscured by a trellis fence in south part of garden (to the rear of no.13) and by garden beds and planting on the north side. The width of the wall is unclear. It may extend back as far as the concrete fence pad which forms the boundary with no. 15.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is very heavy vegetation on the exterior face of the wall including ivy, sycamore and elder. Within the garden there is no garden planting next to the wall behind no. 13. However, the northern part (to the rear of no. 14) features a garden bed up against the wall containing various plants and trees (bay, holly, elderberry and others). This bed is higher than the ground in the south part of the garden and digging it out will probably expose up to 600mm height of Roman wall. There is a high trellis in the southern part that may prove to be on top of the wall. Fortunately Mr and Mrs Nicholson are keen to have the wall exposed and repaired and will remove the trellis and all the trees and shrubs that need to be removed.

Arrangements for access: Access through their property is not required as the contractors can enter the property from the other side.

Other: When the inner face is exposed it will need to be recorded archaeologically.

Photo nos: 010-021.

15 Roman Road

Owner: Mrs Wendy Anderson: *Tel:* 01206 545154.

Date of visit: 21/1/09.

Length of wall: 12.6m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0 – 300mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall appears to be original Roman wall core, up to 1m wide. However it is obscured by vegetation. The south part of the garden contains a portion of wall which stands up to 300mm high above garden level and here its inner face is visible. To the north the ground has been leveled up to the top of the wall so the inner face is not visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is no fencing, but there is some chicken wire attached to some trees in one place. There is a dense growth of trees and bushes in the garden, adjacent to the wall including ivy, holly, acer, ?sycamore, elder and shrubs. Ivy and holly are growing on the wall itself. The vegetation on the wall as well as the row of trees in the garden which are immediately adjacent to the wall needs to be removed.

Arrangements for access: The inner face can be accessed from the other side and Mrs Anderson is happy for contractors to work at the bottom of her garden.

Other: Some archaeological recording of the inner face may be required once the vegetation is removed.

Photo nos: 022 – 028.

17 Roman Road

Owner: Marianne Gilbert. *Tel:* 01206 768898.

Date of visit: 23/1/09.

There is no Roman wall in this property. It is in the ownership of no. 21 Roman Road.

19 Roman Road

Owner: not known.

There is no Roman wall within this property. It is in the ownership of no. 21 Roman Road.

21 Roman Road

Owner: Mr Evans and Mrs Hammond.

Date of visit: 23/1/09.

Length of wall: 17.5m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0 -1.4m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: This is the longest piece of original Roman wall fabric of all the properties visited. Courses of brick and septaria are visible on the interior which is probably the inner face of the wall although badly eroded. The width is approximately 500mm. This property has an L-shaped garden including what used to be the rear gardens of nos. 17 and 19. Behind nos. 17 and 21 the wall survives only to the ground level of the garden. Behind no. 19 it rises to 1.4m in height.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: All the way along the top of the wall and on its exterior thick ivy, elder, sycamore and other scrub is growing, some with thick roots. The ivy in the central portion, behind no.19, is particularly dense and there may be a risk of collapse when the ivy is removed. Behind nos. 17 and 19, the owners inserted railway sleepers alongside the wall to inhibit scrub encroachment. Between the wall and the sleepers is modern shingle which will need to be removed to expose the inner face.

Arrangements for access: Contractors can access the property from the other side. The owners are happy to allow access and will keep the working width clear.

Other: The inner face will need to be photographed by an archaeologist after the ivy and shingle is removed.

Photo nos: 065 – 077.

23 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Nixon.

Date of visit: 26/1/09.

Length of wall: 5.8m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: This stretch appears to be original Roman fabric but does not survive above garden level.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: There is a 6 ft wooden fence along the inside of the wall which does not appear to be actually on the wall and does not need to be removed. There is no deliberate garden planting on or next to the wall, however there is prolific sycamore, elder and ivy growing on top of the wall and on its exterior.

Arrangements for access: All work can be carried out without needing to enter their property.

Other: This section of wall can be better viewed from no. 23.

Photo nos: 062 – 064 and 105 – 109.

25 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Sunkin. *Tel:* 01206 572065.

Date of visit: 24/1/09.

Length of wall: 12m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: No Roman fabric could be seen, however much of the wall is masked by vegetation. The width of the wall could not be determined. The wall is at garden height, therefore no inner face is exposed.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: Ivy is growing on top of the wall. To get to the wall from the garden one has to go through very thick woody undergrowth including ivy, conifers, a lilac tree and other trees. There is a 6 ft fence along the boundary which may or may not be on top of the wall. This fence can probably stay. The lilac tree appears to have roots that are growing into the wall and may therefore need to be removed. Mr Sunkin would prefer it to stay for the sake of security and has not given permission for it to be removed. The other trees and shrubs in the garden can stay.

Arrangements for access: The work can be carried out from the other side so there is no need for access.

Photo nos: 097 – 104.

27 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Ford. *Tel:* 01206 572530.

Date of visit: 23/1/09.

Length of wall: 12.25m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall is at ground level and appears to be rebuilt in stone with a few modern bricks. There is no original fabric visible. The exterior has several holes in it.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: The owners put up railings in the north and south part of the garden adjacent to the inner face of the wall. The central part of the boundary has a rose and a tree growing on top of the wall. The tree on top of the wall will have to be removed. The ivy all along the wall top will need to be removed. The railings can stay.

Arrangements for access: All work can be done from the other side so there is no requirement for access.

Photo nos: 077- 079.

29 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Barker.

Date of visit: 21/1/09.

Length of wall: 12m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 1m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: There is no original fabric. The wall here has been rebuilt in brick although there are patches of Roman wall core at the exterior, below the property.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is a wooden fence built on top of the wall which can stay. Adjacent to the wall is a shed and a garden bed. However, nothing appears to be growing into the wall from their garden. There is ivy all along the top of the wall and trees growing out of the exterior. The exterior brickwork needs repointing.

Arrangements for access: There is no work to be done on the inner face therefore access to their property is not required.

Photo nos: 036 – 040.

31 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Fitt. *Tel:* 01206 766372.

Date of visit: 21/1/09.

Length of wall: 6.75m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0 – 100mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The south part of the wall has been rebuilt in brick with some concrete and is 300mm wide. The northern part has been rebuilt in stone but a substantial portion has collapsed. This happened when the stump of a dead sycamore in the wall fell down. There is no original fabric visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is some holly on the wall cap and there is an abundance of scrub growing out of the exterior of the wall (sycamore?). There is no planting in the garden adjacent to the wall. The owners have erected a pergola on the line of wall to function as a barrier where the wall collapsed. This has two posts and will need to be taken down. The owners are happy to do this and to remove the holly. The owners were advised to avoid putting posts in the ground when they re-erect the pergola.

Arrangements for access: Access will not be required as the work can be done from the other side. However there is a right of way along the back of the gardens between nos. 31 and 39 inclusive.

Other: The wall needs to be rebuilt where it has collapsed. However this goes beyond the brief of the current project.

The wall is shifting eastwards and needs to be stabilized. Again this is beyond the scope of the project.

Photo nos: 029 – 034.

33 Roman Road

Owner: Jackie Jans. *Tel:* 01206 765625.

Date of visit: 24/1/09.

Length of wall: 4.65m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall has been rebuilt in stone and is approximately 250mm wide. A modern low brick wall has been built on top of the stone wall and neither stands above the ground level of the garden.
Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: A fence has been built adjacent to the inner edge of the wall. The concrete posts to this fence may go into the stone wall. There is no garden planting up against the wall. Ivy and elder are much in evidence on the exterior face.

Arrangements for access: All the work can be done from the other side so there is no need for access.

Photo nos: 093 and 095 – 096.

35 Roman Road

Owner: Mr G Evans and ?

Date of visit: 21/1/09 (visited from no. 37's garden).

Length of wall: 3.7m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall appears to have been rebuilt in stone and is approximately 250mm wide. The modern low brick wall in no. 33 which is on top of the wall continues into this property. Neither stands above the ground level of the garden.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: There is no planting against the interior of the wall. Alongside the brick wall is a wooden fence (continuation of that in nos. 33 and 37) which rests on top of the wall and whose concrete posts appear to go into the stone wall. There is ivy and other vegetation on the exterior and on the top of the wall.

Arrangements for access: No access is required as the works can be done from the other side.

Photo nos: 004, 006 – 009 and 094.

37 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Moss. *Tel:* 01206 766481.

Date of visit: 21/1/09.

Length of wall: 4.61m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: This section has been rebuilt in stone and no Roman material is visible. The wall does not stand above the ground level of the garden.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: There is no planting on or adjacent to the interior of the wall. Ivy and other vegetation is in evidence on the exterior and at the top of the stone wall.

Arrangements for access: No access is required as the works can be done from the other side.

Photo nos: 001-003, 007-009.

39 Roman Road

Owner: Stephanie Brock. *Tel:* 0207 005 8942 (work), 07887 505457 (mobile).

Date of visit: 31/1/09.

Length of wall: 4.65m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall has been rebuilt in brick and no Roman fabric is visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is a tall wooden fence with trellis adjacent to the wall, probably just inside it. There is no planting in the garden up to the fence, but there is vegetation on the top of the wall and on its exterior face. The fence should be able to stay.

Arrangements for access: The vegetation can be cleared off from the other side. The brick wall may need repointing but this can be done from the other side.

Photo nos: 132 – 135.

41 Roman Road

Owner: Rosie White. *Tel:* 01206 547770.

Date of visit: 21/1/09.

Length of wall: 5.8m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 100mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall has been rebuilt in brick and is in good condition. Nothing of the original fabric is visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is no garden planting adjacent to the wall. There is a 6 ft wooden fence with trellis along the inside of the wall but not on it.

Arrangements for access: No access is required as the works can be done from the other side. The wall may not need repointing. The vegetation can be cleared from the other side.

Photo no: 035.

43 Roman Road

Owner: Mr JW Nicholls.

Date of visit: 26/1/09.

Length of wall: 5.6m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 100mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall has been rebuilt in brick and is in good condition. Nothing of the original fabric is visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is no fencing or planting on or adjacent to the wall apart from the pyracantha which is growing up the exterior of the wall (see below). Ivy is also evident especially at the boundary with no. 45.

Arrangements for access: No access is required as probably no repointing will be needed. If repointing is needed, the work can be carried out from the other side.

Other: The house is no longer flats. Mr Nicholls planted a pyracantha at the bottom of the exterior of the wall to provide a deterrent to intruders. He claims to have a letter from the council giving him permission to do this. Fortunately this probably will not need to be removed as it is not growing into the wall and the

wall is unlikely to need repointing. However, if it does need to be removed, Mr Nicholls should be contacted first.

Photo nos: 110 – 113.

45 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Butterfield.

Date of visit: 22/1/09.

Length of wall: 5.3m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 0m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: This section has been rebuilt with brick and septaria. No original fabric is visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is a low wooden fence alongside the interior of the wall. There is no garden planting up against this fence. However, there is thick ivy cover on top of the wall. The ivy is particularly thick at the boundary with no. 47 where a large bush with thick roots is growing into the wall and has grown to above the height of the boundary fence.

Arrangements for access: Access to their property is not needed as work can be done from the other side.

Other: The contractor will have to clear the ivy from the wall including the roots. This will probably cause the ivy forming a boundary between no. 47 and no. 45 to die, thus leaving a gap. Mr Butterfield is happy for contractors to go ahead with this and will wait to see what happens. There are two horizontal parallel steel rods on top of the wall which may need to be removed.

Photo nos: 046 – 049.

47 Roman Road

Owner: The landlord is Empire House Investments Ltd, 49 High Street, West Mersea, CO5 8JE. *Tel:* 01206 386633. *Contact person:* Mr S Marfleet.

Date of visit: 22/1/09.

Length of wall: 6.86m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 400mm?

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall is rebuilt in brick and septaria. No Roman fabric is visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is no deliberate planting and no fence. However the ivy and brambles are very dense (see no. 45).

Arrangements for access: There is no need for access through the property as the wall is low and contractors can come over the top to remove vegetation and repoint the inner face.

Other: On the 22/1/09 we met Lawrence Islip, the tenant of the ground floor flat. On the 4/2/09 I spoke to someone at Empire House Investments who took a message for Mr Marfleet. I explained when the works were taking place and what it would involve. I explained that access could be gained from the other side of the wall but that the removal of the ivy may leave a gap at the boundary with no.

45. I left my number and Philip Wise's number as a contact should Mr Marfleet want to contact us.

When the next letter is sent out, send one to Mr Marfleet at the above address in addition to the occupiers of the flats.

Photo nos: 041 – 045.

49 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Cura. *Tel:* 01206 512153.

Date of visit: 31/1/09.

Length of wall: 6.25m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 500mm approx.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall has been refaced in septaria and is approximately 1m wide. Some concrete is evident. No Roman fabric is visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

The owners have erected at 5 ft wooden fence with trellis along the inside of the wall, which appears not to touch the wall. Attached to the trellis are a rose and other plants that will need to be removed as they are growing onto the wall. The fence may need to be temporarily removed in order to expose the inner face of the wall. The owners are happy for anything attached to the trellis to be removed but would rather the fence stayed.

Arrangements for access: Removal of the vegetation will not require access, however if the inner face needs to be repaired access will be needed.

Other: Wait to see what the removal of the vegetation reveals and then decide about removal of the fence.

Photo nos: 127 – 131.

51 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Stacey. *Tel:* 01206 547388.

Date of visit: 22/1/09.

Length of wall: 6.6m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 600mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: Refaced, mainly in septaria. No Roman fabric visible.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is no deliberate garden planting adjacent to the wall apart from one tree which is not actually on the wall and can stay. However, wall flowers and other plants have seeded into the wall cap. The cap needs to be removed and replaced. The owners have dug out earth on the inner face of the wall in order to level the ground out. Pieces of clunch (from the brickworks?) found during this digging have been placed on top of the wall. The plants and clunch need to be removed. The owners have temporarily erected a tent to store tools.

Arrangements for access: The owners are happy for contractors to come over the wall in order to remove the plant growth, recap and repoint the inner face.

They will remove the tent by the time the works start

Photo nos: 058 – 060.

53 Roman Road

Owner: Miss Macgregor and Mr Deacon. *Tel:* 01206 525660.

Date of visit: 29/1/09.

Length of wall: 5.9m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 700mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: This section has been refaced in septaria. Some concrete is visible higher up. Some possible Roman fabric is visible. The wall is 1.3m wide here including the battering at the foot of the wall. Loose rubble from the inner face has fallen into the garden bed.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is no fencing. Most of the garden planting will not get in the way of contractors repairing the inner face. Miss Macgregor is happy to remove the pots and ornaments and also the buddleia if it is found to be growing into the wall. There is ivy and moss on the wall and sycamore growing into of the exterior.

Arrangements for access: The contractors can climb over the wall instead of coming through the house. Miss Macgregor is happy for them to work at the end of the garden.

Photo nos: 121 – 126.

55 Roman Road

Owner: Mrs Courtaud. *Tel:* 01206 575798.

Date of visit: 24/1/09 and 31/1/09.

Length of wall: 6.3m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 450mm.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: The wall has been refaced in septaria with a concrete cap. No Roman fabric is visible. The inner face mainly consists of modern brick and needs repointing. The wall is approximately 1.5m wide including the battering at the foot of the wall.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall:

There is no fencing. There is a garden bed in front of the inner face of the wall containing shrubs and flowers. There is honeysuckle growing in the bed and tumbling over the wall.

Arrangements for access: Access through the property is not required as the contractors can come over the wall.

Other: Although Mrs Courtaud was originally not happy about the removal of the honeysuckle and some of the plants, when we visited again when her daughter was present she accepted the need for it. The family will move the honeysuckle back from the wall and remove any plants temporarily. The trees can stay. She is happy for contractors to come over the wall and work in the end of her garden and accepts that they may trample anything that is not removed or tied back.

Other: In the next letter please remind her about informing her insurers.

Photo nos: 086-092.

57 Roman Road

Owner: Mr and Mrs Barnett. *Tel:* 01206 514187.

Date of visit: 23/1/09.

Length of wall: 8.9m.

Height of wall above garden ground level: 1.45m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: This stretch has been refaced mainly in septaria, although a patch of Roman tile is visible. The wall is 1.4m thick here including the battered base. This portion was repaired by the council approximately 10 years ago and is in good condition.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: There is no fencing and no garden planting. There is some vegetation to be removed on the exterior.

Arrangements for access: There is no need for access as any work can be carried out from the other side.

Other: There is an overhanging piece of wall between no. 57 and no. 55 which is unstable and needs to be partially taken down to remove the sycamore roots and then be rebuilt.

Photo nos: 081 – 082.

The Quaker Burial Ground

Owner: The Society of Friends. *Tel:* 01206 525885 (keyholder) and 01376 561518 (clerk to the trustees).

Date of visit: 23/1/09.

Length of wall: 53m approx.

Height of wall above garden ground level: Up to 2.2m.

Presence or absence of any remaining wall fabric: This stretch has been refaced, mainly in septaria, and is in good condition. Patches of original fabric are visible on the exterior. This portion was repaired by the council approximately 10 years ago.

Character of garden planting, vegetation and fencing adjacent to or on the wall: There is no planting, only some scrub on the top and exterior and some wall flowers on the inner face.

Arrangements for access: Via the keyholder.

Photo nos: 083-085.

6 Conclusions

The height and width of the town wall varies considerably along its eastern course. The maximum height of the wall is at the northern end, in the Quaker burial ground at 2.2m above the graveyard ground level. Next door at no 57 Roman Road it decreases in height to 1.45m above garden ground level. At the southern end, at no. 21 Roman Road the wall survives to a height of up to 1.4m above garden level. At no. 11 Roman Road a rebuilt stretch of wall survives to 1m above garden level. For the remainder of its length the wall is either at garden ground level or just higher. Its surviving width is between 250mm and 1.5m.

The character of the wall is also far from consistent. The majority has been refaced in stone or rebuilt entirely of brick. Roman fabric was observed at nos.

11, 12, ?14, ?15, 21, 23, ?53 and ?57 Roman Road. Further Roman fabric may have been visible without the vegetation cover. Where there is original Roman wall fabric surviving it is, in most cases, the core of the wall and not the original inner face. The exception to this is no. 21 Roman Road where courses of tile and dressed septaria are visible which resemble the inner face, although badly eroded. The general lack of survival of the inner face reflects the situation on the exterior face. The survey of the exterior of the eastern town wall carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust revealed that the wall had lost up to 1.4m of its width. Nowhere along this eastern stretch was original exterior wall facing recorded (CAT, 2006).

Certain portions of original Roman wall that stand to a height above garden level will need to be recorded archaeologically during vegetation removal. Those sections are within nos. 14, 15 and 21 Roman Road.

All residents gave permission for the repair works to take place within or adjacent to their gardens and most were willing to remove trees, plants or fences that were in the way.

7 References

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