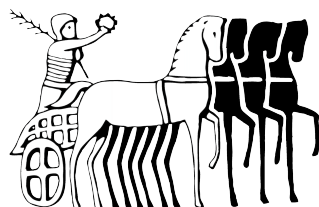


Colchester Archaeological Trust



**CAT Report 2199
issued August 2025**

**Archaeological evaluation at Pound End Mill,
South Street, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1ES: August 2025**



**CAT project ref.: 2025/06d
ECC code: EEX61822**

**Archaeological evaluation Pound End Mill,
South Street, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1ES: August 2025**

NGR: TL 75810 22862 (centre)

**Planning district: Braintree
Planning ref.: 23/01808/FUL**

**CAT project ref.: 2025/06d
CAT Report 2199**

**ECC code: EEX61822
OASIS id: colchest3-535111**

report prepared by Sarah Veasey

fieldwork by Sarah Veasey with Ziya Eksen

**commissioned by Craig Pallett, BDA Architecture
on behalf of ADB Investment Ltd**

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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to the proposed development (dashed blue lines).

Fig 2 Results in relation to the proposed development (dashed blue lines).

Fig 3 Representative section.

1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out at Pound End Mill, South Street, Braintree, Essex, in advance of the construction of a block of flats. The proposed development was previously inhabited by a terrace of workers houses associated with the adjacent Pound End Mill, (NHLE 1119619, EHER15836), a 19th-century silk production mill. The only archaeological horizon encountered during the evaluation was a demolition layer associated with the destruction of the workers houses.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at Pound End Mill, South Street, Braintree, Essex on 4th-6th August 2025. Work was commissioned by Craig Pallett of BDA Architecture on behalf of ADB Investments Ltd and took place in advance of the construction of a new block of flats.

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 2024).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) prepared by CAT (2025a) and agreed with the ECCHEA.

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 2025b).

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 (accessible via <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk>).

Braintree has a long history connected to the cloth trade, dating back to medieval times, which played a crucial role in its economic growth and development. The proposed development site is located adjacent to Pound End Mill, a Grade II listed building (NHLE 1119619, EHER15836). The mill was constructed in 1818 by George Courtauld for the production of silk and represents a good example of industrial architecture. The mill was sold to Daniel Walters in 1822 as Courtauld shifted production away from horse-powered mills to the more efficient water-powered mills. Pound End Mill continued to produce silk until Walters expanded operations to New Mills (NHLE 1122485, EHER15098) on the opposite side of South Street. Subsequently, Pound End Mill was repurposed as a warehouse. Together with the Earls Colne Mill, it remains one of the few surviving mills from the Courtauld business, preserving a key element of the region's silk trade heritage.

The development site was formerly occupied by a short terrace of five dwellings. Present on the 1845 tithe apportionment map, the houses were most likely constructed to accommodate workers employed at Pound End Mill.

Although no archaeological investigations have been recorded within the footprint of the proposed development site, a survey was conducted in 1973 directly to the north of the site. Two trenches were excavated across the area of the former cattle market (now occupied by Tesco's Supermarket) (EHER6355). The excavation revealed an undated ditch approximately 1.5 m wide and 0.45 m deep, located just beneath the top of the subsoil. The lack of medieval features and buildings, combined with the depth of the soil, suggested that the site had remained open land until the 18th century, when development began on the eastern portion.

In 2006, an archaeological excavation was carried out to the west of the site at 95–103 High Street. Evidence of activity dating from the Iron Age to the post-medieval period was recorded.

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) indicates that the bedrock geology of the site to be London Clay Formation (clay, silt, and sand) with superficial deposits of the Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup (sand and gravel).

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.

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

Specific research aims for the project were to look for:

- Evidence relating to the identified post-medieval buildings and possible industrial activity.
- Evidence relating to earlier settlement activity.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

Two trial-trenches, arranged in an L-shape, were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. T1 was 14m in length and T2 was 5m. The trenches were excavated through a modern layer of tarmac and concrete (L1, c 0.15-0.20m thick), a demolition layer associated with the building previously located on the plot (L2, c 0.25-0.61m thick, hard, dry, light grey brown clayey silt with common building debris), a layer of subsoil (L3, c 0.44-0.71m thick, hard, dry, light orangish grey brown clayey sandy silt with common stones) and into the natural geology (L4, encountered c 0.95-1.21 below current ground level, firm, dry yellowish orange brown sandy clay with patches of gravel). A sondage was excavated in T1 to confirm the identification of the natural. No archaeological features were uncovered.



Photograph 1 Trench 1 overview, looking north-west.



Photograph 2 Trench 1 representative section, looking east.



Photograph 3 Trench 2 overview, looking west.

6 Finds

Numerous post-medieval bricks (both frogged and unfrogged) and fragments of slate were observed, but not collected, from demolition layer L2.

7 Conclusion

The archaeological evaluation at Pound End Mill was undertaken to try to identify building remains associated with a terrace of workers cottages present on historic mapping. Although no *in-situ* remains were present in the trench, a demolition layer associated with these buildings was identified.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Craig Pallett of BDA Architecture and ADB Investments Ltd for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by C Lister and A Wightman, with fieldwork carried out by S Veasey with Z Eksen. Figures were compiled by S Veasey. The project was monitored for ECCPS Teresa O'Connor.

9 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

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10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
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 1540
modern	period from AD 1901 to present day
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
post-medieval	period from AD 1540 to 1901
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	written scheme of investigation

11 Archive deposition

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

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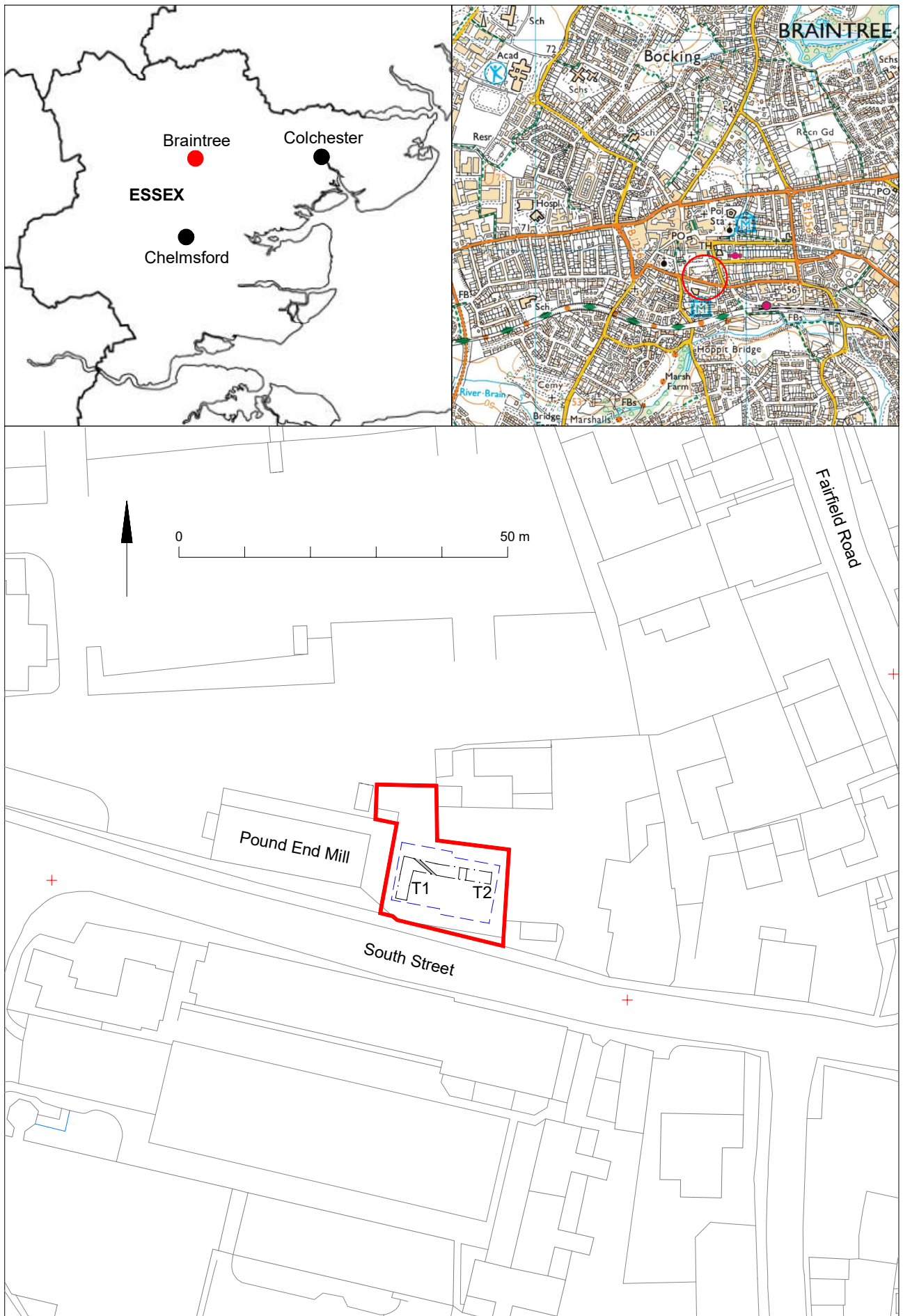
Distribution list:

Craig Pallett, BDA Architecture

ADB Investment Ltd

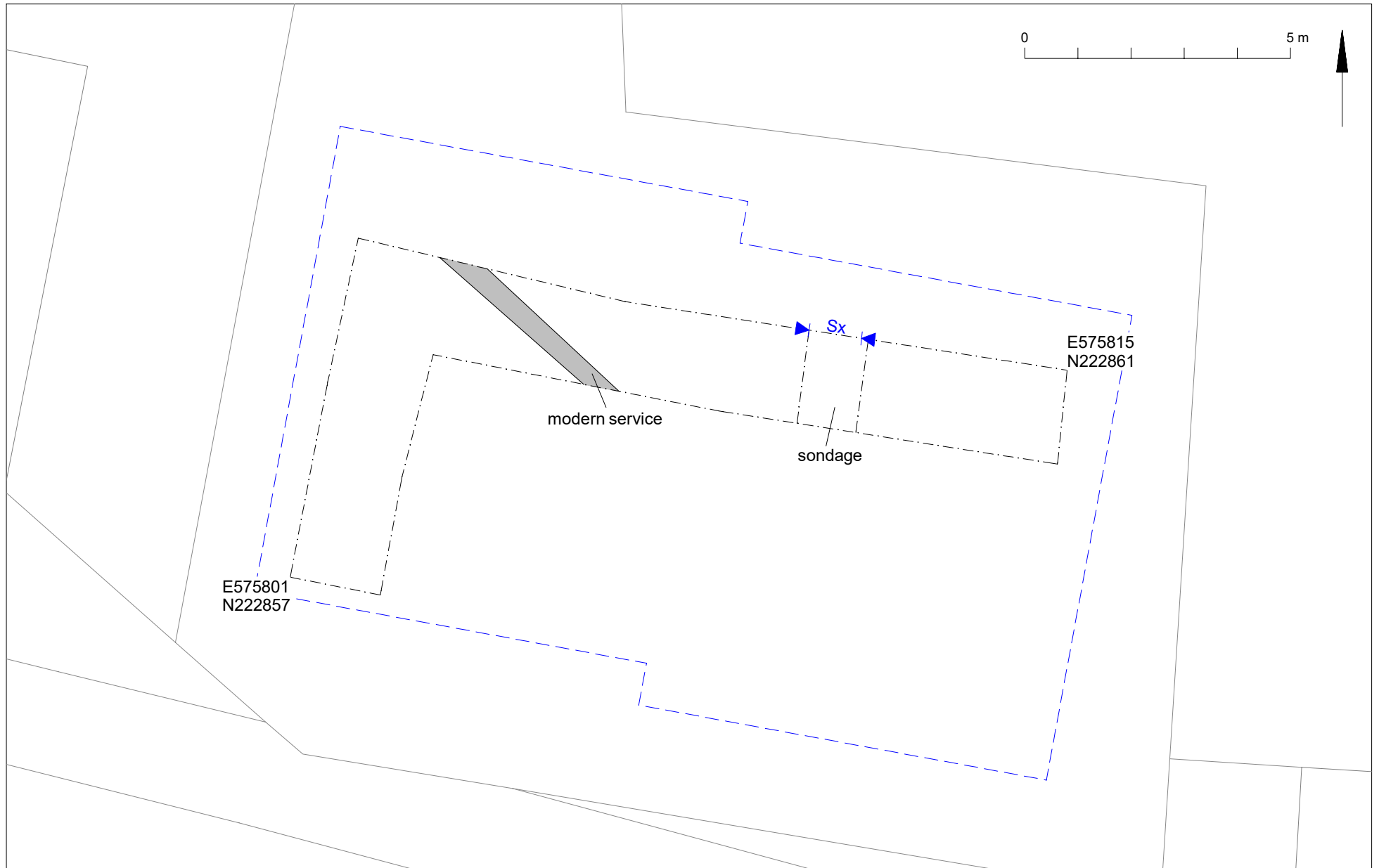
ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to the proposed development (dashed blue lines).



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Fig 2 Results in relation to the proposed development (dashed blue lines).

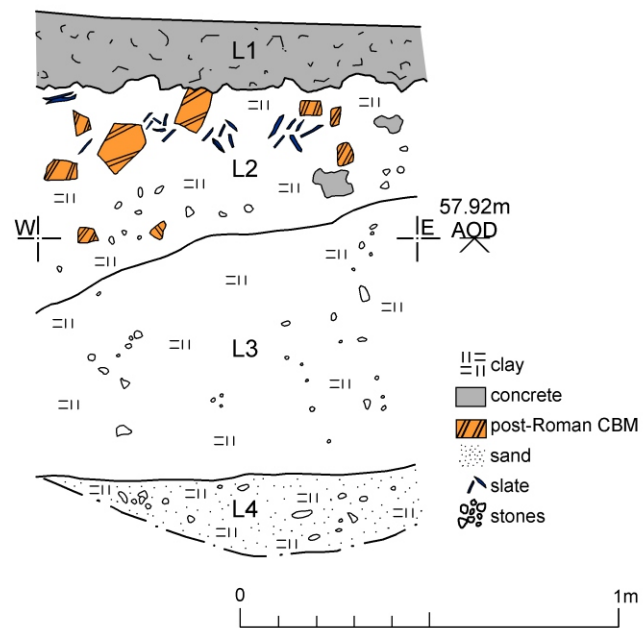


Fig 3 Representative section.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-535111

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-535111
Project Name	Evaluation at Pound End Mill, South Street, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1ES
Sitename	Pound End Mill, South Street, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1ES
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	2025/06d
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	23/01808/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	04-Aug-2025 - 06-Aug-2025
Location	Pound End Mill, South Street, Braintree, Essex, CM7 1ES NGR : TL 75810 22862 LL : 51.87661092060966, 0.552644446065227 12 Fig : 575810,222862
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Braintree Parish : Braintree, unparished area
Project Methodology	Two trial-trenches, arranged in an L-shape, were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist. T1 was 14m in length and T2 was 5m. The trenches were excavated through a modern layer of tarmac and concrete (L1, c 0.15-0.20m thick), a demolition layer associated with the building previously located on the plot (L2, c 0.25-0.61m thick, hard, dry, light grey brown clayey silt with common building debris), a layer of subsoil (L3, c 0.44-0.71m thick, hard, dry, light orangish grey brown clayey sandy silt with common stones) and into the natural geology (L4, encountered c 0.95-1.21 below current ground level, firm, dry yellowish orange brown sandy clay with patches of gravel).
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (two trial-trenches) was carried out at Pound End Mill, South Street, Braintree, Essex, in advance of the construction of a block of flats. The proposed development was previously inhabited by a terrace of workers houses associated with the adjacent Pound End Mill, (NHLE 1119619, EHER15836), a 19th-century silk production mill. The only archaeological horizon encountered during the evaluation was a demolition layer associated with the destruction of the workers houses.
Keywords	
Funder	Private or public corporation BDA Architecture
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A Wightman, C Lister, L Pooley
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - EEX61822

Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;
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