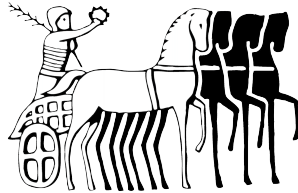


Colchester Archaeological Trust



CAT Report 2220
issued November 2025

**Archaeological evaluation at land to the south of
Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EB:
October 2025**



CAT project ref.: 2025/10b
ECC code: [tbc](#)

**Archaeological evaluation at land to the south of
Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EB:
October 2025**

NGR: TL 80408 23093 (centre)

**Planning district: Braintree
Planning ref.: 21/01772/OUT**

**CAT project ref.: 2025/10b
CAT Report 2220**

**ECC code: [tbc](#)
ECC monitor: Teresa O'Connor
OASIS id: colchest3-537591**

**report prepared by Tabitha Lawrence
with contributions from Dr Matthew Loughton**

**fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Alice Parker-Shirley
and Matt Perou**

**commissioned by Mark Jackson, Mark Jackson Planning
on behalf of McDonnell Mohan Limited Ltd**

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

Fig 2 Trench results.

Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (seven trial-trenches) was carried out at land to the south of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, in advance of the construction of six dwellings. The proposed development site is located on the outskirts of the village of Bradwell in an area of known Roman, medieval and post-medieval archaeology. The evaluation revealed three features: two undated post-holes and an undated gully or bioturbation. Only one sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at land to the south of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex on 30th October 2025. Work was commissioned by Mark Jackson, of Mark Jackson Planning, on behalf of McDonnell Mohan Limited and took place in advance of the construction of six new dwellings.

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 2025).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with a *Brief for Trial Trenching and Excavation at Land South of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EB* written by Teresa O'Connor (ECCPS 2025), and a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) prepared by CAT (2025a) in response to the brief.

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, 2025, 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 and Geological 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>).

The proposed development site is located adjacent to the historic settlement of Bradwell, formerly known as Blackwater. A settlement known as Blackwater is depicted on the Chapman & André map of 1777, located both north and south of Coggeshall Road and extending along The Street and Church Road. Houses dating to the 16th century or earlier survive along The Street and the village is likely to be medieval in origin. The Church and Bradwell Hall were located beyond the settlement at Blackwater to the east. The former Parsonage, known as the Rectory on historic maps, was located at the end of The Street within the settlement at Blackwater. The former farmstead associated with the Rectory is no longer extant however the Rectory building survives. The Coggeshall Road follows the course of the Roman Road known as Stane Street which ran from Braintree to Colchester (HER 8646, 1226) (ECCPS 2025).

North/north-east of the proposed development are several cropmarks. North of Bradwell shows a cropmark of a linear feature (SMR 8793). North-east of Bridge Hall are various linear features, some of which are former field boundaries depicted on the OS 1st edition (SMR 14199). There are also cropmarks of a ring-ditch with a pit within, rectangular enclosure (with pits within) and linear features (SMR 8788).

Archaeological evaluation at The Forge, The Street, Bradwell (CAT Report 1612)

170m south-east of the development an archaeological evaluation (of two L-shaped trial-trenches) was carried out at The Forge, Bradwell, in advance of the construction of two new dwellings. Three ditches were uncovered, two undated and one post-medieval. Finds included animal bone, post-medieval glass, as well as pottery and ceramic building material dating from Roman to post-medieval

Historic building recording of The Forge, The Street, Bradwell (CAT Report 1615)

170m south-east of the development a programme of historic building recording was also carried out by CAT at The Forge. The building was a late 19th-century single-storey brick-built structure which would have originally been divided into two rooms. Surviving on the north-eastern wall was a forge, almost entirely intact and with ash and debris from its last firing. Also within the building were two hardwood tables that were probably original to the structure. An original window with shutters survived on the north-western elevation which had iron straps added on the interior for increased security.

Listed buildings in the vicinity of the proposed development:

- Tippetts Wade (NHLE 1123850) a 16th-century and 18th-century timber-framed house
- Ruffles (NHLE 1123851) an early 17th-century timber-framed cottage
- The Swan Inn (NHLE 1168479) an early 16th-century timber-framed house, now public house.
- 113 and 114 Coggeshall Road (NHLE 1168479) a late 16th-century/early 17th-century timber-framed house, now two cottages.
- The Cottage and Ripstowe (NHLE 1123887) a late 16th-century/early 17th-century timber-framed house, now two cottages.

The Geology of Britain viewer (1:50,000 scale¹) indicates that the bedrock geology of the site is part of the London Clay Formation, consisting of clay, silt, and sand. Superficial deposits are identified as the Kesgrave Catchment Subgroup, primarily composed of 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.

5 Results (Figs 2-3)

Seven linear trial-trenches were machine-excavated under the supervision of a CAT archaeologist.

The trenches measured:

- T1 = 16m long
- T2 = 17m long
- T3 = 14m long
- T4 = 20m long
- T5 = 13m long
- T6 = 11m long
- T7 = 20m long

All the trenches measured 1.8m in width and varied in depth between 0.39-0.5m. The trenches were excavated through a modern layer of grassy topsoil (L1, c 0.3m thick) and an undated subsoil (L2, c 0.1-0.15m thick) into the natural geology (L3, encountered c 0.3-0.45m below current ground level). There were no archaeological remains in trenches 3, 5, 6 or 7.

Trench 1

Near the northern end of Trench 1, possible gully or bioturbation F2 was identified aligned approximately east to west. It had irregular edges with an undulating base. A slot of 1m in length was excavated, with a width of 0.26m and a depth of 0.10m. Only one sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered, although this is likely residual given the rooting disturbance present in the feature.

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

Trench 2

Post-hole F1 was sub-circular in plan with gentle sides and a concave profile, 0.45m by 0.3m and 0.20m deep. There were no finds recovered from the feature.

Trench 4

Post-hole F3 was circular in plan with moderate sides and a concave profile, 0.37m by 0.27m and 0.09m deep. There were no finds recovered from the feature.



Photograph 1 Trench 1, looking south-south-west.



Photograph 2 ?Gully F2 in T1, looking east.



Photograph 3 Trench 2, looking north-north-east.



Photograph 4 Post-hole F1 in T2, looking north-north-east.



Photograph 5 Trench 4, looking east.



Photograph 6 Post-hole F3 in T4, looking south-west.



Photograph 7 Trench 5, looking south.



Photograph 8 Trench 7, looking west.

6 Finds

Pottery

by Dr Matthew Loughton

One sherd (2g) of post-medieval red earthenware (fabric F40) came from F2. This sherd was not retained.

7 Conclusion

An archaeological evaluation (seven trial-trenches) was carried out at land to the south of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, in advance of the construction of six dwellings. The proposed development site is located on the outskirts of the village of Bradwell in an area of known Roman, medieval and post-medieval archaeology. The evaluation revealed three features: two undated post-holes and an undated gully or bioturbation. Only one sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT would like to thank Mark Jackson of Mark Jackson Planning and McDonnell Mohan Limited Ltd for commissioning and funding the project. The project was managed by A Wightman and C Lister, with fieldwork carried out by B Holloway with A Parker-Shirley and M Perou. Figures were compiled by T Lawrence and E Hicks. The project was monitored for ECCPS by Teresa O'Connor.

9 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in PDF format at www.catuk.org

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10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	a single unit of excavation, which is often referred to numerically, and can be any feature, layer or find
ECC	Essex County Council
ECCHEA	Essex County Council Historic Environment Advisor
ECCPS	Essex County Council Place Services
EHF	Essex Historic Environment Record
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
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
Roman	period from AD 43 to AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
WSI	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of archive

Finds: None retained.

Digital:

CAT Report 2220

ECC evaluation brief, CAT written scheme of investigation

Digital photographs

Site data

Survey data

12 Archive deposition

The digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust but will be permanently deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

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Distribution list:

Mark Jackson of Mark Jackson Planning

McDonnell Mohan Limited

ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Finds no.	Interpretation	Description	Date
L1	-	Topsoil	c 0.3m thick. Soft moist dark brown silt with coal and brick fragments.	Modern
L2	-	Subsoil	c 0.1-0.15m thick. Firm moist medium grey/brown silty clay with charcoal flecks.	Undated
L3	-	Natural	Encountered c 0.3-0.45m below current ground level. Firm mid yellowy brown sandy silt with frequent manganese inclusions and small stones.	Post-glacial
F1	-	Post-hole	0.45m by 0.3m and 0.20m deep. Soft moist medium brown silty clay sand	Undated
F2	1	?Gully or bioturbation	1m slot by 0.26m and 0.10m deep. Soft moist mid brown sandy silt with rare small stones, occasional manganese and frequent rooting.	Undated
F3	-	Post-hole	0.37m by 0.27m and was 0.09m deep. Soft dark brown sandy silty clay with occasional stones and slight rooting.	Undated

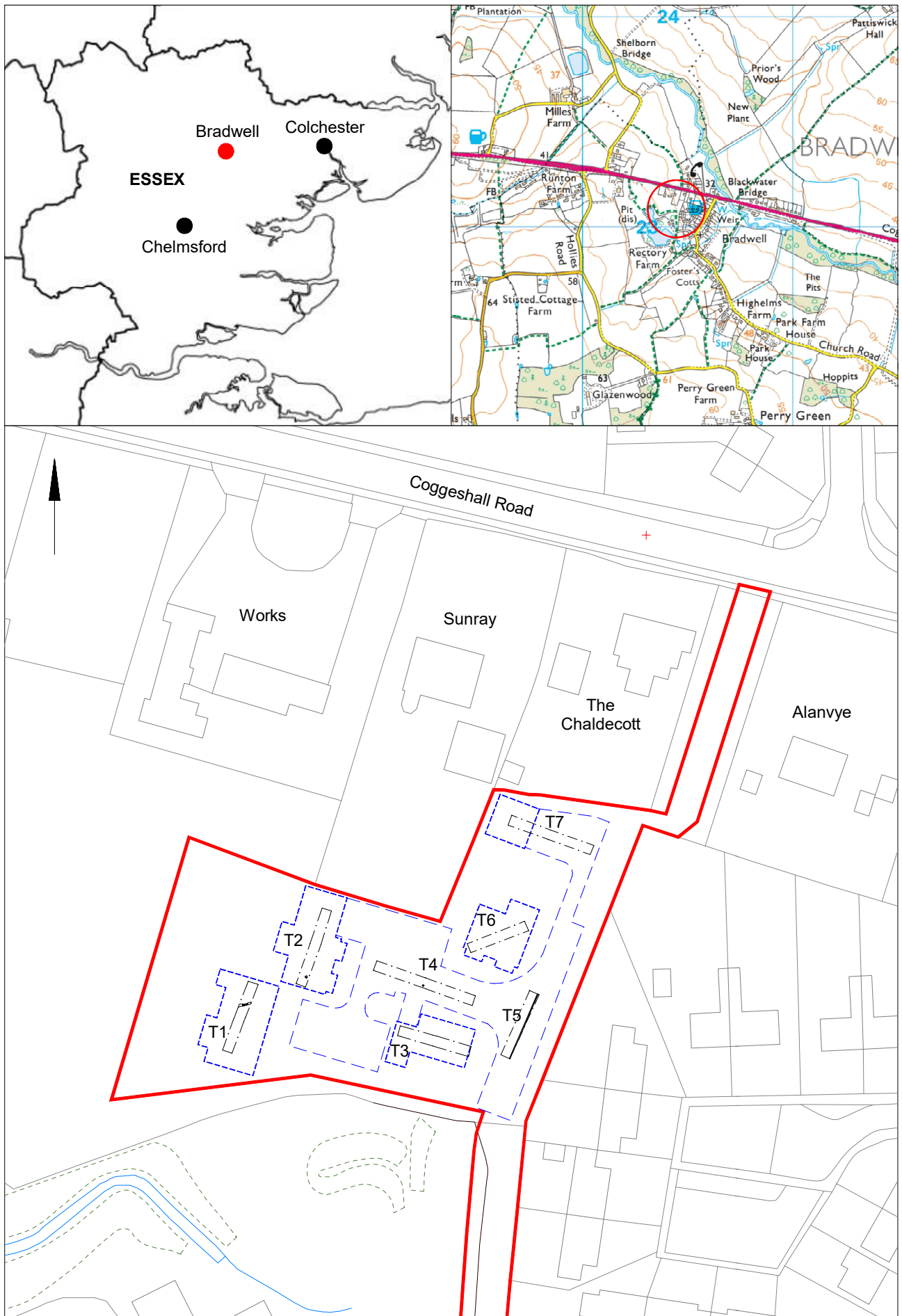


Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).

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0 50 m

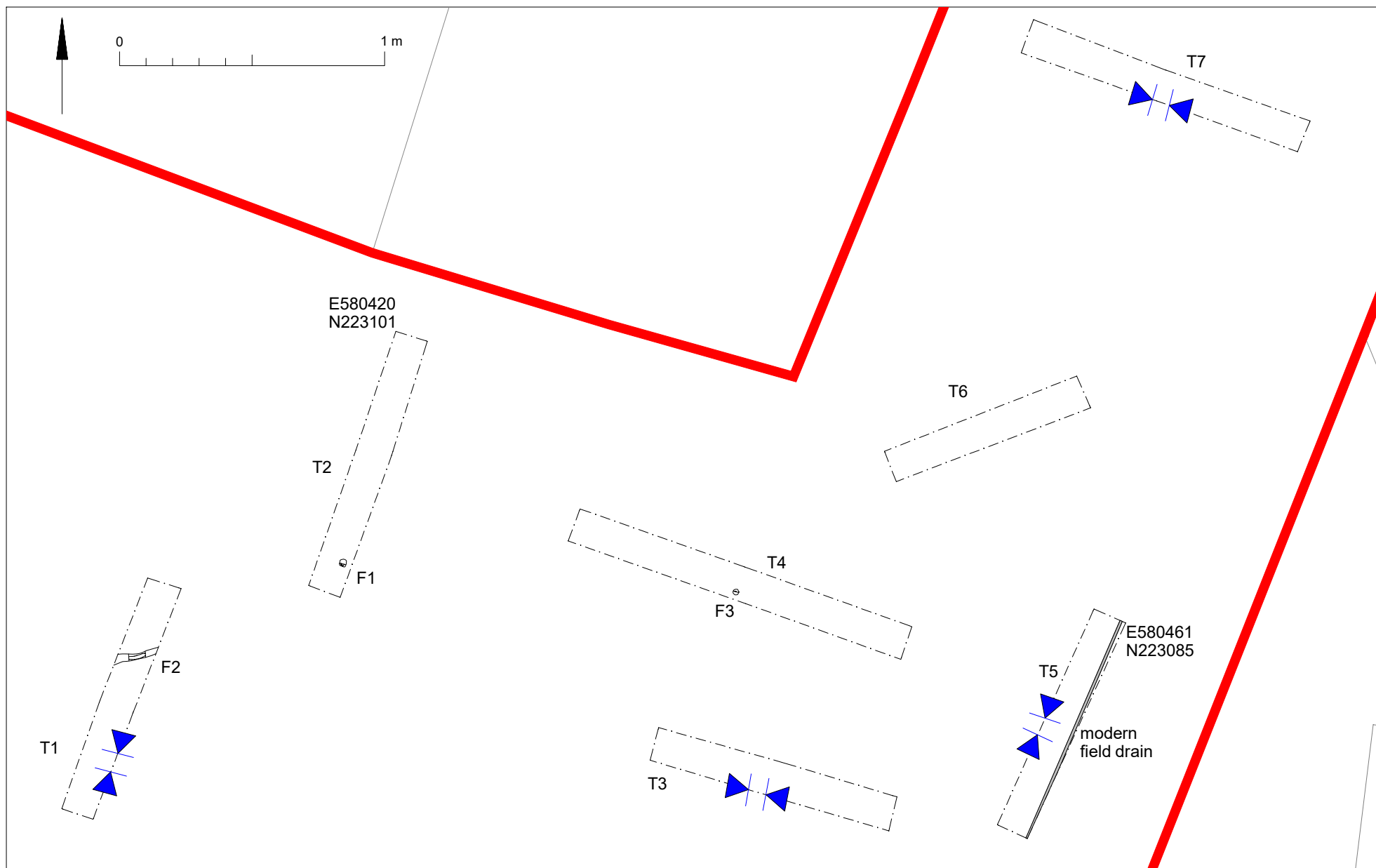


Fig 2 Trench results.

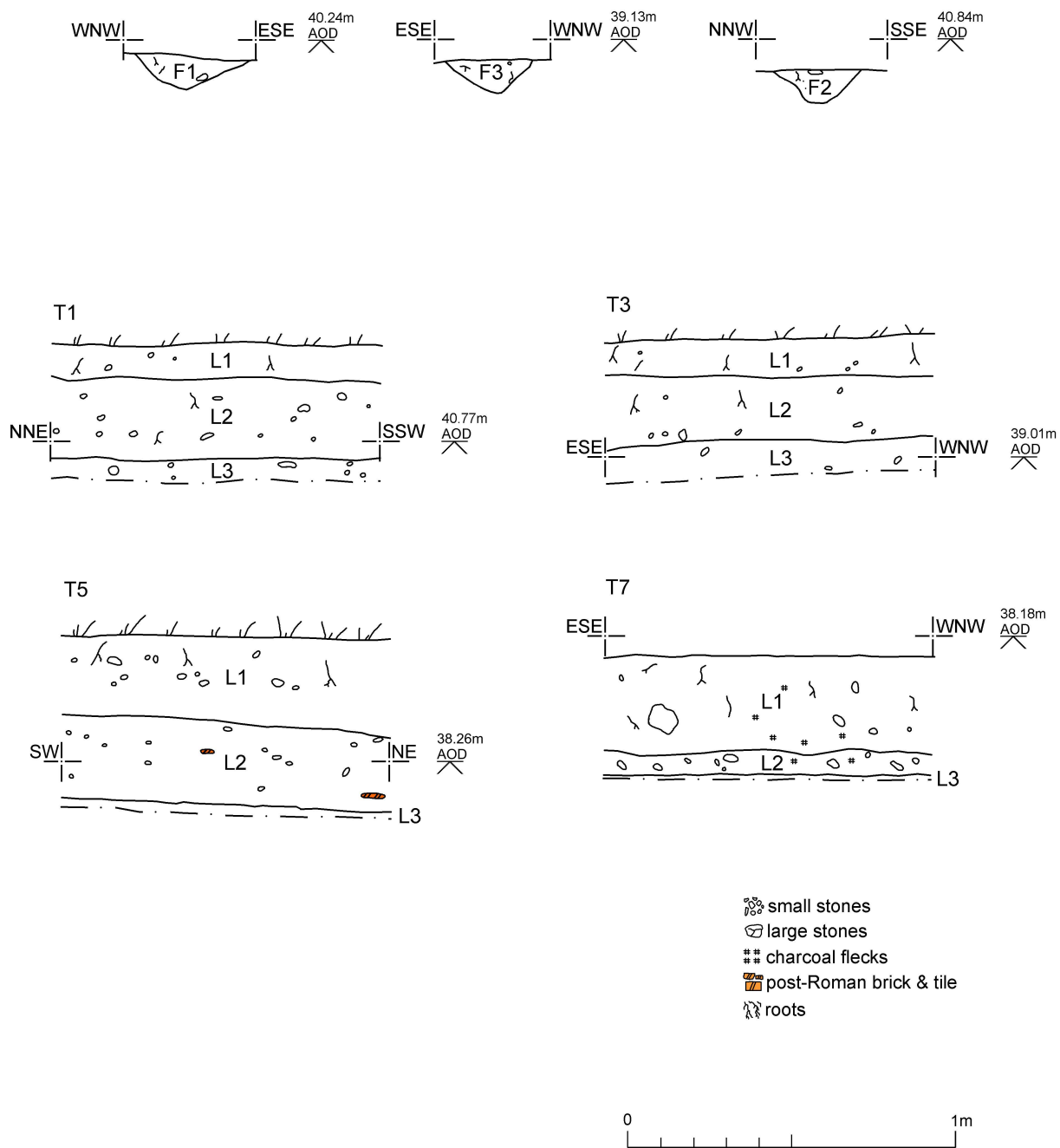


Fig 3 Feature and representative sections.

OASIS Summary for colchest3-537591

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-537591
Project Name	Evaluation at Land South of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EB, United Kingdom
Sitename	Land South of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EB, United Kingdom
Sitecode	2025/10b
Project Identifier(s)	2025/10b
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	21/01772/OUT
Reason For Investigation	Planning requirement
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	30-Oct-2025 - 30-Oct-2025
Location	Land South of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, CM77 8EB, United Kingdom NGR : TL 80393 23146 LL : 51.87769938205157, 0.619297360806627 12 Fig : 580393,223146
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Essex Local Authority District : Braintree Parish : Bradwell
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation of seven trenches carried out as specified in the wsi.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (seven trial-trenches) was carried out at land to the south of Coggeshall Road, Bradwell, Essex, in advance of the construction of six dwellings. The proposed development site is located on the outskirts of the village of Bradwell in an area of known Roman, medieval and post-medieval archaeology. The evaluation revealed three features: two undated postholes and an undated gully or bioturbation. Only one sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered.
Keywords	Post Hole - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Linear Feature - UNCERTAIN - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Vessel - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	Private individual
HER	Essex HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A Wightman
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;