



## UK Tentative List of Potential Sites for World Heritage Nomination: Application form

Please save the application to your computer, fill in and email to:  
[UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

The application form should be completed using the boxes provided under each question, and, where possible, within the word limit indicated.

Please read the [Information Sheets](#) before completing the application form. It is also essential to refer to the accompanying [Guidance Note](#) for help with each question, and to the relevant paragraphs of UNESCO's *Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention*, (OG) available at: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines>

Applicants should provide only the information requested at this stage. Further information may be sought in due course.

### (1) Name of Proposed World Heritage Site

Colchester - Camulodunum and Colonia Victricensis

### (2) Geographical Location

Name of country/region

United Kingdom

Grid reference to centre of site

Gosbecks site: TL 968224; Colonia site: TL 997251

Please enclose a map preferably A4-size, a plan of the site, and 6 photographs, preferably electronically.

### (3) Type of Site

Please indicate category:

Natural  Cultural  Mixed  Cultural Landscape

### (4) Description

Please provide a brief description of the proposed site, including the physical characteristics. 200 words

Colchester is Britain's oldest recorded town; a site of beginnings in cultural, architectural and town-planning history. It is the site of Britain's first urban civilization; the place where it crossed the threshold from prehistory into history. It is where the British tribes joined the Roman Empire, where their first revolt against Roman rule took place and where Romano-British culture first flourished.

Iron Age Camulodunum was established in a position of strategic importance, with easy access to continental Europe. It was a large rural oppidum containing sites of activity and occupation, defended by river valleys and a dyke system.

The Gosbecks site was the major centre of Camulodunum, home of Britain's most powerful rulers, sitting on a low plateau (35m above sea level). It contains remains of Britain's largest Roman theatre, a Romano-British temple and high status Iron Age enclosures.

The Colonia site was the Roman foundation within Camulodunum, on an east-west ridge (up to 30m), 4km north-east of Gosbecks. It contains remains of major buildings including Britain's only known Roman circus and largest known classical temple.

Today the Colonia site is the centre of Colchester, a busy market town with an exceptional mix of Roman, medieval, late and modern architecture. The Gosbecks site is undeveloped agricultural and park land

## **(5) History**

Please provide a short summary statement of any significant events in the history of the site. 200 words

The settlement of Camulodunum dates to at least the 1st century BC. By the early 1st century AD it was the most significant tribal centre in Britain and was the objective of the Roman invasion of AD43, where the Emperor Claudius personally received the submission of British rulers.

This was the last major expansion of the Roman Empire in Western Europe and was important in improving Claudius' poor reputation in Rome.

A Legionary Fortress was established and replaced in AD49 by a Colonia, the highest rank of city, capital of the new province of Britannia and including major public buildings as a model of Mediterranean-centred Roman culture.

The Temple of Claudius, centre of the Imperial Cult, was described by Tacitus as a "citadel of eternal domination" and in AD60/61 the city was the prime target of the Boudican Revolt. It was sacked but re-established to flourish as a major centre of British Roman culture, evidenced by theatres, temples, Britain's only known Roman Circus, opulent houses and one of the first Christian churches in Britain (c.330).

Colchester's renaissance occurred in the 11th-12th centuries, including the construction of the largest Norman castle keep, defending against Danish invasion, on the massive foundations of the Roman Temple of Claudius and St Botolph's Priory, the first Augustinian house in England.

## **(6) Why do you think this site should be inscribed as a World Heritage Site?**

Give reasons. 200 words

Colchester has Outstanding Universal Value, as defined by UNESCO, by virtue of its status as the first location of the urban revolution in Britain, its unique Iron Age and Roman significance and remains, and its association with the two defining events of the period, both of which underline the differences between Iron Age and Roman cultures in Western Europe.

Iron Age and British Roman cultures are significant in the global history of civilization, but are under-represented on the current WHS List. Colchester is the most significant and representative site for both these cultures, their comparison and contrast, and its inscription will fill this gap.

The local community will benefit from a greater sense of pride in the recognition of their heritage, and there will be increased opportunities for education, conservation, protection and interpretation. For the wider community, including visitors, inscription will highlight the significance of Iron Age and British Roman cultures, the first urban revolution in Britain, and increase awareness and understanding of the contrast between rural and urban cultures, both ancient and modern.

The international significance of Colchester has been recognised by its inclusion in two projects: Most Ancient European Town Network (1994) and Conservation and Accessibility of Roman Europe (1997).

**(7) Please say why the site has Outstanding Universal Value and specify the main features which underpin its importance. 200 words**

Colchester is a place of beginnings in cultural and town-planning history, and of British history itself.

Prior to AD43, British Iron Age culture had few centres of major settlement, none recognisable as urban. Pre-eminent among these, objective of Roman invasion and site of British submission to the Emperor, was Camulodunum.

This submission marked the last major expansion of the Roman Empire in Western Europe and, with the foundation of the Colonia in AD49, improved Claudius' reputation in Rome.

The Colonia, capital of the new province of Britannia, introduced regular town-planning, urban streets, right-angular and stone-and-mortar architecture.

At Colchester, for the first time, Britain had crossed the threshold from a rural to an urban culture, from prehistory to history, a transition of ultimately global significance.

The Gosbecks site remains rural. The Colonia site, the centre of the modern town, retains significant remains of buildings indicative of its status within the Empire, including the classical temple, theatre, church, city walls, gate and the only known Roman Circus in Britain, as well as major 11th-12th century buildings re-using Roman sites and material.

Colchester perfectly illustrates the transition from rural to urban culture, the two sites each being the prime example of its type in Britain.

### (8) Outstanding Universal Value

Please state which of the [10 UNESCO criteria for Outstanding Universal Value](#) the proposed site meets, and describe briefly why the criteria were chosen. Please see criteria note at the end of the form.

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
(i)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Colchester is the site of the first urban revolution in Britain and the beginning of a new hybrid Romano-British culture.</p> <p>Colonia Victricensis was the first Roman city in Britain, established within the rural oppidum of Camulodunum, bringing urban life and immigration from across the Empire. It introduced new building techniques using mortar, bricks, stone vaults, plastered walls and rectangular grid town-planning. These can be seen in remains of original buildings, in the re-use of Roman brick in the design and decoration of Saxon and Norman buildings, in the layout of the modern town and in the contrast between the rural Gosbecks and urban Colonia sites.</p>
(iii)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>The Gosbecks site, within the rural oppidum of Camulodunum, was the major administrative and religious centre during the late Iron Age, served by a complex of</p>

UNESCO criterion	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Why was this criterion chosen? 100 words
		<p>trackways and defended by an extensive dyke system. After the Roman invasion major buildings were added which, in plan, scale and appearance were rooted in the Mediterranean-centred world.</p> <p>The Romanised Gosbecks site and the new city of Colonia Victricensis became prime showpieces for Roman culture in Britain. Together, they provide unique testimony to the rural Iron Age and urban Roman cultures and the relationship between them.</p>
(iv)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Colchester possesses remains of an ensemble of Roman buildings indicative of its status within the Empire and illustrating the introduction of civilization and urban culture, Many are the first or largest of their type known in Britain: the largest classical temple, unique as the centre of the Imperial Cult; two theatres, including the largest; the only known Roman Circus, the largest single Roman building; one of the first Christian churches; the first and most extensive original Roman city walls; the largest and best preserved Roman gateway.</p> <p>Later buildings re-using Roman sites and materials include the largest Norman castle keep in Europe.</p>
(v)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(vi)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<p>Colchester is directly and tangibly associated with both defining events of the British Iron Age and Roman periods: the surrender of British rulers to Emperor Claudius, marking the beginning of Roman rule; and the Boudican Revolt, recorded by Tacitus and evidenced by a burnt layer underlying the town centre.</p> <p>Colchester is also directly and tangibly associated with other key figures of the period including: Cunobelin (Cymbeline), described as "King of the Britons", Caratacus and King Coel.</p> <p>It has been argued that the mythical name "Camelot", added to Arthurian romances in 12th century France, is drawn from references to Camulodunum in earlier literature.</p>
(vii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(viii)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(ix)	<input type="checkbox"/>	
(x)	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### **(9) Authenticity (for cultural or mixed sites only)**

Authenticity concerns the current state of conservation of a cultural or mixed site; especially whether its importance, its Outstanding Universal Value, is still obvious from its physical condition. Please outline the condition of the site. 200 words

The significance of Camulodunum and Colonia Victricensis is evidenced by contemporary literature\*, monumental inscriptions in Rome, coinage and Samian ware production. The location of Camulodunum and Colonia Victricensis at modern Colchester is not disputed, not least because of the scale and importance of surviving buildings, features and town-planning. Most of these buildings and features, (city walls, gates, circus, temples, theatres), are still characteristic of their culture and unambiguous in their form and design.

The Gosbecks site remains rural, as was Camulodunum. At the Colonia site, the Roman city wall, the most extensive surviving example in Britain, still defines the modern town centre, the main streets of which follow the regular lines of the first urban streets. Remains of the classical temple and theatre are also on public display.

The use of vast quantities of brick of remarkable durability has resulted in Roman buildings of distinctive appearance, and their re-use in major 11th-12th century buildings continues the tradition, affecting their design and architecture also.

\*Ptolemy, Pliny, Dio Cassius, Suetonius, Seneca, Tacitus, The Antonine Itinerary, The Peutinger Table, The Ravenna Cosmography.

Main modern sources:

Philip Crummy; City of Victory; 1997,

Janet Cooper, (ed.); VCH, Essex, Volume IX; 1994.

### **(10) Integrity**

For cultural or mixed sites, please state how much original fabric is included in the proposed site, and its condition. For guidance on how the test of integrity is met for natural sites under criteria (vii) – (x), please refer to the OG 90-94. Information Sheet 6 also provides help on this point. 200 words

The Gosbecks site is an archaeological site. The original Iron Age trackways, enclosures and field system are indicated by extensive crop marks. These are defended by contemporary, surviving earthworks. The Gosbecks site Roman temple and theatre are also visible as crop marks. The site retains its original rural character, unaffected by later development and undamaged by deep ploughing.

The Colonia site includes the most extensive original Roman city walls (up to 5m high), largest surviving and best preserved Roman gate (5m), massive foundations of the Temple of Claudius (visible beneath the Norman castle

keep), and bases of walls of the Roman church and theatre, all in good condition. Uncovered archaeological remains are rich, deep and well preserved, Roman masonry standing to 3m under castle embankments and 1m elsewhere.

Roman town-planning is visible in the layout of the modern town centre, main streets following lines of the first urban streets in Britain. Colchester High Street following the Via Praetoria of the Legionary Fortress, with some modern property boundaries super-imposed on original Roman boundaries. The Norman castle keep and St Botolph's Priory church are built almost entirely of Roman material, and the exceptional and rare tower (12m) of Holy Trinity church shows Saxon architectural features expressed in brick.

**(11) Are there other examples of this kind of site already on the World Heritage List?**

Yes  No

If yes, please list. 100 words

**(12) What distinguishes this site from other similar sites?**

150 words

There are no other sites that demonstrate the relationship between British Iron Age and Roman cultures as significantly or visibly as Colchester. It is unique as the first site of the urban revolution in Britain, the objective of Claudius the only time he left Italy as Emperor and the prime target of the Boudican Revolt. The only known Roman Circus in Britain and the centre of the Imperial Cult are both at Colchester, indicating its exceptional status.

Of the two other early British Roman towns: Verulamium (St Albans) was a smaller Iron Age settlement and Londinium (London) was founded on a site of no known earlier importance. There is no evidence either achieved the status of Colonia.

11th-12th century buildings include the largest Norman castle keep in Europe and the first Augustinian priory in England. Continuing smaller scale developments make Colchester "more impressive than any other town in England [for] the continuity of its architectural interest", (Nikolaus Pevsner; Essex)



**(13) How does the site contribute to meeting UNESCO’s priorities for a balanced World Heritage List?**

200 words

Both Iron Age and British Roman cultures are significant in the global history of humanity and civilization, but are under-represented on the current World Heritage Site list. Colchester is the most significant and representative site for both of these cultures, the relationship between them, their comparison and contrast.

Colchester's inscription will fill this gap.

The urban revolution, which arrived in Britain at Colchester with the founding of the Roman Colonia, or colony, has substantially and lastingly affected how humanity uses and interacts with the natural landscape.

Colchester's inscription will help place the urban revolution within the context of a cultural landscape.

The arrival of the urban revolution in Britain was a key moment in its global spread and would eventually have implications for British settlements in Ireland and the New World; the British colonization of other countries having historical parallels with the earlier Roman colonization of Iron Age Britain.

Colchester's inscription will help to highlight historical parallels with later developments in other countries.

**(14) What benefits do you think World Heritage Site inscription would bring?**

Please indicate the main opportunities and benefits.

Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Tourism	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Regeneration	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Conservation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Protection	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other benefits	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please describe. 100 words.

Colchester's inscription will increase opportunities for conservation and interpretation of the site's unique heritage, as well as for re-assessment of how the community and heritage can work towards mutual benefit.

With local authority support, this application is made by an independent community organisation whose object is to promote and improve Colchester for the benefit of its residents, workers and visitors, across all social groups. WHS status is a key goal in achieving this object.

The main beneficiary will be the local community in terms of education, local pride, well-being, opportunities to welcome new visitors, and taking an active

role in WHS management.

**(15) Are there any known threats to the proposed World Heritage Site?**

Yes  No

Please indicate any proposed developments, or other potential impacts on the site.

<b>Impact</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Please describe.</b> 100 words for each issue.
Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Like all continuously occupied town centres with multiple ownership, the Colonia site is subject to minor ongoing development, but all the key elements contributing to Colchester's OUV benefit from statutory planning protection. The two potential larger developments are the Cultural Quarter, which will enhance the setting of the Berryfield Scheduled Ancient Monument, and Vineyard Gate, which will improve protection and appreciation of the Roman city wall, but lies largely outside the proposed site. The Gosbecks site is protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and is under no threat from development.
Environmental	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no known environmental threats.
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	There are no known other threats.

**(16) Legal Protection**

Please list any legal and other protections, including cultural and natural designations, which cover the whole or part of the proposed site. 200 words

The Gosbecks site is covered by Scheduled Ancient Monument protection. The Colonia site is largely covered by the Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area (CA), with almost all key elements also Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) and/or Listed Buildings. The Roman church has been placed on the draft Local List and is protected by PPS5 as a building of significant heritage interest.

Roman city walls and Balkerne gate: CA, SAM, Listed  
Colchester castle and Temple of Claudius: CA, SAM, Listed  
St Helen's chapel and Roman theatre: CA, Listed  
Holy Trinity church: CA, Listed  
St Botolph's priory: CA, SAM, Listed  
Roman church: PPS5, draft Local List  
Roman circus: SAM

Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas within Colchester are also protected by the Colchester Borough Council Local Plan, (Question 18). Uncovered archaeology is also protected by Guidelines on Standards and Practices for Archaeological Fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester: "Colchester... has major archaeological remains surviving above ground as monuments..., while below ground rich archaeological deposits are also preserved to a remarkable extent. These, together with relevant documentary information, comprise an incomparable archaeological resource which Colchester Borough Council is committed to preserve, record and interpret for public benefit and enjoyment."

### **(17) Ownership**

Please list the main owners of the site, where possible.

The Colonia site is in multiple ownership, being a town centre, with Colchester Borough Council a major owner.  
The Gosbecks site is owned by Colchester Borough Council.

Do the owners support the application? Yes  No

A statement of support from the principle owners of the proposed site should be attached to the application, preferably electronically.

### **(18) Local Authority support for the site**

Please list all Local Authorities with an interest in the proposed site.

Colchester Borough Council (Planning Authority)  
Essex County Council

Does the proposed site have local Authority support? Yes  No

Please attach a statement of support from each one in relation to the application.

Please indicate whether the site is included in the local plan/s by specific policies.

Yes  No  Partly

Please describe. 200 words.

The sites are covered by the following policies in the adopted Local Plan, (UEA9 is specific to the Gosbecks site; 15.8 is specific to the Colonia site; UEA1 and UEA7 apply to both sites):

UEA1. Within Conservation Areas, all those buildings, open spaces, trees, views and other aspects of the environment which go to make up the character or appearance of such places will be protected.

UEA7. There will be a presumption against development that would adversely affect Scheduled Ancient Monuments and other nationally important archaeological remains and their setting, whether scheduled or not. Other sites of archaeological significance will be safeguarded from development which would adversely affect them where the significance of the remains outweighs the benefits of the development.

UEA9. The Gosbecks Archaeological Park will be safeguarded for its archaeological importance. A major archaeological visitor attraction will be located within the Park. (6.46. The major visitor attraction will ... need to be consistent with preserving the archaeological importance of the site.)

#### 15. TOWN CENTRE AND SHOPPING

15.8. Objectives in respect of the environment, employment and housing are as follows:

(a) To protect, preserve and enhance the historic environment of the Town Centre, in particular its Ancient Monuments, listed buildings and open spaces.

## **(19) Stakeholders**

Please list the main parties with an interest in the site. 100 words

The main stakeholder organisations with an interest in heritage in Colchester are:

destination Colchester community interest company  
Colchester Borough Council  
Essex County Council  
Colchester Archaeological Trust  
Colchester Archaeological Group  
Friends of CAT  
Colchester Historic Buildings Forum  
Colchester Civic Society  
Colchester2020 (Local Strategic Partnership)

The local community, and community groups, are also considered to be key stakeholders.

## **(20) How will the Site be managed?**

Please outline the management arrangements for the proposed World Heritage Site, including where the responsibilities lie. 200 words

At this stage, the no WHS co-ordinator model is proposed. Covering two sites and a variety of monuments in diverse ownership, the WHS will be managed by a steering group including key stakeholders and a series of technical panels and working groups with appropriate expertise. The local community will take an active role at all levels and the applicant, a community interest company, already operates successfully under this model on a wide range of initiatives.

A new organisation dedicated to WHS management will be established at the earliest opportunity. The new Colchester World Heritage Site management organisation will be constituted with the ability to employ staff and a dedicated WHS co-ordinator, as it sees fit, after consultation with national and international bodies.

Colchester Borough Council, a primary WHS management organisation stakeholder, already has plans and policies for the management, protection and interpretation of sites in the ownership of itself and others, but the new Colchester World Heritage Site management organisation will adopt responsibility for overseeing and co-ordinating the management of individual elements of the site.

### **(21) Funding: the nomination**

Please indicate how the preparation of the nomination would be funded.  
100 words

The nomination will be funded through partnership working and pooled resources between stakeholders, private sector contributions and community donation.  
Please note that community support for heritage in Colchester is very strong; demonstrated by a public campaign to preserve the Roman Circus site, "Save Our Circus", managed by the applicant, that recently succeeded in raising over £200,000 from the local community and local businesses within 2 months.

### **(22) Funding: management**

Please outline how the future management would be funded. 100 words

Management, protection and interpretation of the key elements of the site is currently funded by local authorities and national bodies, and this will continue with the potential to be better co-ordinated by the new Colchester World Heritage Site management organisation's dedicated WHS steering group or dedicated WHS co-ordinator.  
WHS inscription will provide leverage to attract greater funding and additional funding sources, building on the success of previous and current initiatives, such as the "Save Our Circus" campaign. Local community involvement will also continue through active involvement in sustainable fundraising and subscription schemes.

### **Name and Contact Details of Applicant**

Name	destination Colchester CIC
Status	Community interest company
Address	92 East Hill Colchester CO1 2QN
Telephone	01206 563138
Email	heritage@destination-colchester.com

Completed applications should be forwarded, preferably in electronic format, to the World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport at the following email address: [UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:UKTL.Application@culture.gsi.gov.uk)

Any material that cannot be sent electronically should be sent to the following address:

World Heritage Team, Department for Culture, Media and Sport  
2-4 Cockspur Street  
London  
SW1 5DH

The closing date for applications is 11th June 2010

## UNESCO's criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value (para 77 of the Operational Guidelines)

- (i) represent a masterpiece of human creative genius;
- (ii) exhibit an important interchange of human values, over a span of time or within a cultural area of the world, on developments in architecture or technology, monumental arts, town-planning or landscape design;
- (iii) bear a unique or at least exceptional testimony to a cultural tradition or to a civilization which is living or which has disappeared;
- (iv) be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history;
- (v) be an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement, land-use, or sea-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), or human interaction with the environment especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change;
- (vi) be directly or tangibly associated with events or living traditions, with ideas, or with beliefs, with artistic and literary works of outstanding universal significance.
- (vii) contain superlative natural phenomena or areas of exceptional natural beauty and aesthetic importance;
- (viii) be outstanding examples representing major stages of earth's history, including the record of life, significant on-going geological processes in the development of landforms, or significant geomorphic or physiographic features;
- (ix) be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing ecological and biological processes in the evolution and development of terrestrial, fresh water, coastal and marine ecosystems and communities of plants and animals;
- (x) contain the most important and significant natural habitats for in-situ conservation of biological diversity, including those containing threatened species of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation.