

**An archaeological watching brief
at East Hill House, 76 High Street,
Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UF
April 2014-March 2017**

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**commissioned by
OMC Investments Ltd**



NGR: East Hill House TM 0008 2524

CAT project ref.: 14/04b

Colchester and Ipswich Museums accession code: COLEM 2014.107

CBC planning application number: 146280



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CAT Report 1202

January 2019

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1 Summary

A series of groundworks was monitored by CAT in 2014-17 to the west and south of East Hill House. The contractor's trenches were fairly shallow and Roman remains were not reached. The groundworks on the western side of East Hill House took place mainly in a courtyard to the east of the Coach House. Resurfacing work in the southern part of the courtyard revealed a large well with a rubble lining that was probably of late medieval or early post-medieval date. Brickwork in the upper part of the well suggests it continued in use into the 19th century. Other remains in the courtyard included a stone-and-mortar foundation that contained fragments of peg-tile but was otherwise not closely dated. It was sealed by a cobbled surface that was recorded in several places in the courtyard and was probably of 19th-century date. To the south of East Hill House, a few post-medieval/modern brick features were uncovered in a narrow pipe trench.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

- 2.1** An archaeological watching brief took place during the refurbishment of East Hill House, 76 High Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UF. The archaeological work was commissioned by OMC Investments Ltd and was carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) between April 2014 and March 2017.
- 2.2** East Hill House is an 18th-century town house that is located at the eastern end of the High Street, on its southern side. The house is a Grade I listed building. The grounds extend for approximately 45 m to the south of East Hill House, although they were formerly more extensive. Much of the East Hill House site is designated as a scheduled ancient monument. It forms part of a large scheduled area in the south-eastern corner of the walled town (SAM 1002153). Where necessary, scheduled monument consent was obtained for the groundworks.
- On the western side of East Hill House lies the Coach House. This two-storied building was probably added in the mid-19th century. It is unlisted, and both it and the courtyard immediately to the east of it lie outside the SAM. The whole site is situated within the Colchester Town Centre Conservation Area.
- 2.3** The redevelopment of the site includes the conversion of both East Hill House and the Coach House into hotel and office accommodation (CBC Planning Application No.146280). They will form an annexe to Grey Friars hotel, which is situated on the opposite side of the High Street. The East Hill House site covers an area of approximately 0.55 hectares. The modern ground level across the site is fairly level, with a slight north-west to south-east incline. The High Street frontage lies at approximately 24.5 m AOD. Vehicular access is from the rear via Lewis Gardens. The NGR for East Hill House is centred at TM 0008 2524 and for the Coach House at TM 0005 2522.
- 2.4** This report follows the standards set out in Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CIMS 2008a), and also those in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014a) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014b). The guidance contained in English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE 2006), and in the documents *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 8), *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14), and *Research and archaeology revisited: a revised framework for the Eastern Counties. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 24), was also followed.

3 Archaeological background (Figs 1 & 7)

- 3.1** The site is located in the south-eastern part of the walled area of the Roman town. It is situated approximately 200 m to the south-east of the site of the Temple of Claudius, which lies directly beneath the Norman castle. The High Street frontage wall of East Hill House overlies Roman Colchester's main east-west street. The Roman *insula* that the site is located in is referred to as Insula 31/32, because the position of the north-south street between these two *insulae* has not been established. The eastern edge of the site lies about 54 m west of the Roman east gate, which survived until the 17th century (VCHE 9, 250).

Archaeological work has taken place on the site and in the surrounding area over many years. The more significant and relevant discoveries are summarised briefly below.

- 3.2 About 55 m to the south of the site, a mosaic pavement was uncovered in Lewis Gardens in 1923 (UAD 321; Hull 1958, 218). Known as the Berryfield mosaic, it is now set into the floor of the Firstsite art gallery, close to the site of its discovery. Further to the south and west, excavations in 1955 and 1958 revealed remains of Roman buildings, including foundations, hypocausts, tessellated floors, and fragments of painted wall plaster (Richardson 1961; UAD 3069, 3070 and 3365).
- 3.3 Work took place a short distance to the south-east of the site at the Mulberry Tree Family Centre in 1983-84 (CAR 6, 375-8; UAD 3033). Part of the east-west Roman street between Insula 31/32 and Insula 39/40 was uncovered, with remains of Roman buildings on either side of it. This street passes approximately 25 m to the south of the East Hill House site. Two inhumation burials of probable late Roman date were also found (CAR 6, 375-6).
- 3.4 A series of archaeological investigations took place between 2003 and 2008 in advance of the construction of Firstsite (CAT Reports 234, 305 & 477). Among the Roman remains uncovered were further exposures of the metalled street between Insula 31/32 and Insula 39/40, and parts of a Roman town house immediately to the north of it. Evidence for post-Roman activity was sparse, but included cess pits as well as finds such as pottery and clay tobacco pipe 'wasters'. The investigations included several small test pits that were dug along the eastern edge of the East Hill House site. These were subsequently amalgamated to form a single north-south cable trench, approximately 75 m long ('2006-07 trench A' in Fig 1; CAT Report 477, 4-7).
- 3.5 In 2009, CAT carried out an evaluation at East Hill House (CAT Report 520). This consisted of three trial trenches in the western part of the site (T1-T3, Fig 1). The remains of two Roman town houses were uncovered in T1 and T3. One had a hypocaust and other at least one area of tessellated pavement. Among the remains in T2 were a couple of post-medieval and/or modern brick surfaces.
- 3.6 In 2010-11, a watching brief took place to the south and west of the site, during landscaping works and the installation of services (CAT Report 599). Roman remains were revealed to the south of the site, including part of the metalled street between Insula 31/32 and Insula 39/40, and a foundation from a Roman town house that lay to the north of it. In the north-south access road, immediately to the west of the East Hill House site, a Roman tessellated floor and a late medieval/post-medieval well were identified (Fig 1).
- 3.7 In July 2017, an archaeological evaluation took place on the western edge of the East Hill House site (CAT Report 1151). Three test-pits were dug, 0.52-0.65 m deep, on the proposed line of a new boundary wall (TP1-TP3, Fig 1). Probable Roman demolition material was reached in two of the test pits, while in the other (TP2) a post-medieval cobbled surface was uncovered.
- 3.8 In July and August 2018, a watching brief was carried out during groundworks in the western part of the site, between the Coach House and the north-south access road (CAT Report 1348). The groundworks consisted mainly of foundation trenches for the new boundary wall and for a short length of east-west wall (Fig 1). Among the remains uncovered were a couple of brick foundations and several brick surfaces, all of post-medieval and/or modern date.
- 3.9 East Hill House is a fine early 18th-century, three-storied town house, with much of its original character preserved. It was built for George Wegg, in red brick, and nine houses were pulled down to make way for it (VCHE 9, 151). Formerly it was known as Berryfields and its grounds were more extensive (VCHE 9, fig 12). Within these grounds were a post-medieval ice house and a summerhouse (Fig 7). The latter, known as 'the folly', is now in the grounds of the Minorities. The East Hill House site lies immediately to the west of the church and graveyard of St James the Great. Further information about East Hill House can be found at: <https://historicensland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1168783>.

The two-storied Coach House was probably added c 1850. It is discussed in a heritage statement produced in November 2014 (Balcombe 2014).

4 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were to record the depth and extent of any archaeological remains uncovered during the groundworks, and to assess the date and significance of these remains.

5 Methods (Figs 1-3)

- 5.1** The archaeological watching brief commenced in April 2014, when hoarding was put up around the southern part of the site. Archaeological monitoring resumed on 10th November 2014, with the start of groundwork in and around the Coach House, and it continued intermittently until 9th March 2017. The main episodes of monitoring are outlined briefly below.
- 5.2** In April 2014, hoarding was erected along the southern edge of the site (Fig 1). The holes for the posts that supported the hoarding were approximately 400-600 mm deep. Two entrances were incorporated into the hoarding, and the holes for the gateposts were approximately 800 mm deep.
- 5.3** In November 2014, a series of trenches for drains was dug inside the Coach House, after the floors had been taken up (Fig 2). The trenches extended from west to east and were approximately 300 mm wide. They varied in depth from approximately 500 mm to 250 mm.
- 5.4** Also in November 2014, work began laying drains in the courtyard to the east of the Coach House. Initially, five small trenches for manholes (MT1-MT5, Fig 2) were dug in the courtyard, up against the east wall of the Coach House. These trenches were roughly square-shaped. They varied in size from approximately 800 mm to 1.2 m square, and from 800 mm to 950 mm deep.
- 5.5** In November-December 2014, several narrow pipe trenches were dug in the courtyard. After the modern tarmac surface and concrete base had been broken out, the trenches were dug 500-600 mm wide and 600 mm-1.0 m deep. The trenches linked up the manhole trenches MT1-MT5 (Fig 2). Another pipe trench was dug from west to east up against the north wall of the Coach House, and then extended from the north-east corner of the Coach House for roughly 7 m south-eastwards.
- These pipe trenches all extended to a trench for a manhole (MT6) that was situated in the northern part of the courtyard, between the Coach House and East Hill House. This manhole trench was just over 1 m square and approximately 1 m deep.
- 5.6** In January 2016, a narrow trench for a gas pipe was dug in a tarmacked path immediately to the south of East Hill House (Fig 3). This trench, which lay within the SAM, was approximately 22.5 m long and 250-300 mm wide. It was dug approximately 700 mm deep, although the western end was shallower. It was necessary to divert the eastern part of the trench around a modern brick manhole that was encountered during the machine-trenching.
- 5.7** In October 2016, recording was carried out by CAT during resurfacing work at the northern end of the courtyard, to the north-east of the Coach House. This took place immediately to the west of the front gate that gives access onto the High Street and lies immediately to the west of East Hill House (Fig 2).
- 5.8** In March 2017, CAT recorded a well (Feature or F3) that was uncovered during resurfacing work in the southern part of the courtyard, to the east of the Coach House (Fig 2). Following recording, the well was left open, and the developers hope to put it on display in the courtyard.
- 5.9** The series of groundworks was monitored by CAT staff during intermittent site visits. The trenches outside the existing buildings were dug using a mini-digger with a toothless bucket, while those inside were dug by hand. The machine trenching within the SAM was monitored continuously. CAT staff were given time by the contractors to investigate and record any archaeological remains uncovered, and to collect up the finds unearthed. Live and redundant services were encountered frequently during the watching brief, particularly in the courtyard outside the Coach House.
- 5.10** Individual records of archaeological contexts, such as layers or features, as well as finds, were entered on CAT pro-forma record sheets. Site plans were usually drawn at 1:20 and sections at 1:10. Standard record shots of the site and of individual contexts were taken on a digital camera. Further details of the recording methods used can be found in the CAT document *Policies and procedures* (CAT 2018).

6 Results

- 6.1** The trenches dug by the contractors were fairly shallow and the natural subsoil was not exposed during the watching brief. Although the well (F3) in the courtyard to the east of the Coach House was dug into the natural subsoil, the latter was not visible in the sides of F3.

6.2 Roman remains

6.2.1 Roman deposits were not reached during the watching brief, although a few residual Roman potsherds and brick/tile fragments were observed in spoil from the groundworks.

6.3 Post-Roman topsoil or 'dark earth' (Figs 2, 3 & 6)

6.3.1 Deposits of dark greyish-brown, post-Roman topsoil (Layer or L3) were uncovered in several places during the watching brief. Only the uppermost parts of these deposits were exposed, but they were probably comparable to the thick layers of 'dark earth' that are well known on sites in Colchester town centre (CAR 3, 92). These often seal the latest Roman deposits.

6.3.2 In the courtyard to the east of the Coach House, the top of the post-Roman topsoil L3 was observed at or close to the bottom of several trenches. It lay at a depth of approximately 700-750 mm below the modern ground level, and was most noticeable in the manhole trenches MT1, MT2 (Sx 2, Fig 6), and MT6. These were dug slightly deeper than most of the other trenches in the courtyard. In places, there was not a clear-cut boundary between L3 and the overlying post-medieval/modern deposits (L2). This was perhaps due in part to the presence of pits, with edges that were difficult to distinguish. The post-Roman topsoil L3 tended to be darker and more homogeneous, with less inclusions, than L2.

6.3.3 Elsewhere on the site, the trenches were fairly shallow and the evidence for 'dark earth' L3 was less conclusive. Dark greyish-brown topsoil was visible in places inside the Coach House at approximately 300-400 mm below the modern floor level, notably in the room adjacent to MT1 (Fig 2). Also, dark topsoil was observed in places in the bottom of the pipe trench to the south of East Hill House at approximately 700 mm below the modern ground level (Fig 3).

6.4 Late medieval/post-medieval well (Figs 2, 4 & 5)

6.4.1 In the southern part of the courtyard to the east of the Coach House, a large, circular well (F3) was uncovered during resurfacing work. It lies approximately 27 m back from the High Street frontage and 3.4 m east of the most southerly room in the Coach House. The well was initially revealed when the contractors removed some later brickwork, including a probable brick capping. This brickwork lay only about 100 mm below the modern yard surface and was roughly 600 mm thick. The backfill of the well was then dug out by the contractors to a depth of approximately 3.6 m below the top of the surviving brickwork. The circular lining of the well was thus exposed approximately 3 m deep.

6.4.2 The well had an internal diameter of approximately 1.65-1.7 m. The lower 2.7-2.75 m of the circular part of the well had a rubble lining, while the upper 300 mm or so was of brick (Sx 1, Fig 5). The well-constructed rubble lining consisted largely of fragments of stone, re-used Roman brick/tile and post-Roman peg-tile, set in pale brown mortar. The stone was mainly septaria, with some greensand and flint. Most or all of the stone probably derived, directly or indirectly, from Roman structures. In places the rubble lining was coated with a thin layer of pale brown mortar. This mortar coating survived best over the south side of the well, and also over part of the north-eastern corner.

There were slight indications that the rubble lining was less well preserved immediately below the level that the backfill was dug out to; but not enough was visible to confirm this.

6.4.3 Above the rubble lining, in the circular part of the well, there were several courses of post-medieval/modern brick (Sx 1, Fig 5; Photos 2-3). The number of brick courses varied from 3 to 6, and measured approximately 200 to 400 mm in depth. The bricks were reddish, unfrogged, and roughly 230 x 110 x 63 mm in size. They looked later in date than those used in the construction of East Hill House and possibly dated to the early-mid 19th century.

The brick lining was in effect a rebuild of the uppermost part of the well, perhaps where it projected above the surrounding ground level. However the bricks in the lining looked similar to those in the brickwork that overlay the well. So it is possible that the brick lining and the overlying brickwork were both added after the well went out of use.

6.4.4 A number of small holes or gaps in the brick courses were recorded (a-e in Fig 4; Photos 2-3). At least five of these holes were observed, several of which still had soil from the backfill in them. They varied slightly in size, from about 140 to 180 mm wide by 80 to 120 mm high. The holes all lay at about the same level in the well; just above the junction of the brick courses with the rubble lining below them. The holes possibly housed a timber structure, but

whether this was associated with the well's lifting mechanism or something like a guardrail or a cover was unclear.

- 6.4.5** The brick courses in the upper, circular part of the well were sealed by the brickwork that had been partially removed by the contractors in 2017. This brickwork was approximately 350-600 mm thick. It survived mainly on the eastern side of the well, including over its eastern edge (Fig 4; Photo 2). The contractors informed CAT that the brickwork they removed included a 'dome'. This was presumably a capping over the well. The contractors also said that there was a gap in the brickwork over the north-western part of the well.

Those bricks that it was possible to examine were reddish and unfrosted. They looked similar to the bricks in the upper, circular part of the well, and were probably also early-mid 19th century in date. The later brickwork was not fully exposed, so it was uncertain how far it extended beyond the edges of the well.



Photo 2 Well (F3), viewed from the south.

This shows the brick courses in the upper part of the well, together with what survived of the brickwork that overlay it. One of the small holes in the brick courses is visible in the north-western part of the well.

- 6.4.6** The backfill in the upper part of the well was dug out by the contractors in 2017. They informed CAT that the well was almost full when they initially uncovered it. They probably therefore removed about three metres of backfill (Sx 1, Fig 5). The backfill that was left consisted mainly of dark greyish-brown sandy loam. In places it was quite soft, especially at the edges, near the rubble lining. The contractors recovered a range of finds from the excavated backfill. The finds were probably of late 19th century and/or early 20th century date, and presumably derived from East Hill House, its associated outbuildings, and the grounds.
- 6.4.7** The finds from the backfill included a few potsherds, mainly from stoneware vessels and from plates in Staffordshire-type earthenwares. A quantity of glassware was also recovered, including bottles, jars and bowls; both whole and broken. The glass was mainly clear, although there were also at least one blue vessel and one dark green vessel. In addition, there were the remains of several white enamelled 'tin' vessels, consisting of a small can or mug and a few bowls, including a couple of possible chamber-pots. Some pieces of worked stone were also retrieved, including two small marble slabs, a cylindrical bollard, and several other carved fragments that perhaps derived mainly from garden features. Among the other finds were the remains of a leather shoe, some animal bone fragments, a metal

door handle, a small iron-spoked pulley wheel, and a small corroded metal model car of 20th-century type. Photographs of the finds from the well are available in the site archive.



Photo 3 Well (F3), viewed from the east.

One of the small holes in the brick courses is visible in the north-western part of the well.

- 6.4.8** The evidence for the date of construction of the well is limited. The rubble lining of the well contained fragments of peg-tile and was probably therefore 13th century or later in date. The other brick/tile fragments in the rubble lining appeared to be reused Roman material. Certainly, no bricks of 18th century or later date were observed, but there is a slight possibility that a few fragments came from post-Roman bricks earlier than the 18th century. In conclusion, a late medieval date, possibly in the 14th or 15th century, seems most likely for the rubble lining of the well, and thus presumably for the making of the well itself.
- 6.4.9** The well seems to have continued in use throughout most of the post-medieval period. It presumably served one of, or perhaps a group of, the houses that are shown on the High Street frontage on Speed's map of 1610 (Fig 7 top), although the well itself is not marked. It is unclear whether it was a private well or a public well at this time. In the early 18th century, nine of the houses were demolished to make way for the construction of East Hill House (VCHE 9, 151). A piped water supply became available in Colchester town centre during the 18th century, but it was not very reliable (VCHE 9, 290; CAR 3, 27). Even though East Hill House may have been connected up for a time in the 18th century, the well appears to have

continued in use. Large quantities of water would of course have been required in the running of the house and stables. The well does not seem to be shown on the early maps that show East Hill House, such as Morant's map of 1748 (Fig 7 centre) and Chapman and André's map of 1777.

6.4.10 Wells increasingly became redundant in Colchester during the 19th century, following the construction of an improved water-supply system in 1808 (*VCHE 9*, 290-1; *CAR 3*, 27-8). It seems likely that the owners of East Hill House would be quick to take advantage of such improvements, and the limited archaeological evidence backs this up. Thus, the bricks in the uppermost part of the well and in the overlying brickwork indicate that the well probably went out of use and was 'domed' over during the first half of the 19th century.

This is reinforced by the cartographic evidence. An east-west wall is shown extending over the position of the well on an OS map published in 1876 (Fig 7 below), as well as on later OS editions. Monson's map of 1848, although less accurate than the OS maps, shows an east-west wall in a similar position. Therefore the well had clearly been built over by 1876, and had probably gone out of use before 1848. The brickwork that was found overlying the well in 2017 presumably formed part of the east-west wall, and/or its foundation, that is shown on these maps. A slight circular thickening of the line of the wall on the 1876 map (Fig 7 below) perhaps represents the brick capping over the well.

6.4.11 By the later 19th century, municipal water-supply systems had become widespread in Colchester and these provided most of the town's water supply by 1899 (*VCHE 9*, 291). The finds that were recovered from the upper part of the backfill of the well dated to around this time or later. The toy car for example looked *circa* 1930's in date. However, the well had probably by then long been out of use and built over. This can be explained if the well was backfilled through the gap in the later brickwork that was seen by the contractors in 2017. Another possibility is that the upper part of the backfill was added through this gap and accumulated in a void in the top of the well that was left after settlement of an earlier phase of backfilling.

6.4.12 The depth of the well is uncertain, as only the upper few metres were examined. Over 20 post-Roman wells are known in Colchester town centre. The well at Colchester Castle is 1.27 m (5 feet) wide and over 12 m (40 feet) deep (Clarke 1985, 17). At the Cups Hotel site in 1973, CAT investigated a well that was approximately 1.65 m (5.4 feet) wide (*CAR 6*, 335-6). This was similar in width, and perhaps also in date, to the well at East Hill House. The Cups Hotel well had not been backfilled and was about 15 m (50 feet) deep. East Hill House is situated in a fairly elevated part of town, at approximately 24.5 m (80 ft) AOD, although it is slightly lower than both Colchester Castle and the Cups Hotel site. The East Hill House well would therefore probably need to be dug between roughly 9 m (30 feet) and 12 m (40 feet) deep in order to reach the water table, which of course fluctuated.

In recent years, several wells have been found in the area surrounding East Hill House, including a brick-lined well that was uncovered by CAT in 2011 on the west side of the access road between the East Hill House site and the Minories (Fig 1; CAT Report 599, 6).

6.5 Late medieval/post-medieval foundation (Figs 2 & 6)

6.5.1 On the west side of the courtyard, a probable foundation (F1) was uncovered. It lay approximately 1.5 m to the east of the Coach House. The foundation was observed in the western section of a pipe trench that extended north-eastwards from MT3 (Fig 2). It was probably aligned east-west, but was not visible in the eastern section of the pipe trench. Perhaps in this area it had been destroyed by later activity. The top of F1 lay approximately 350 mm below the existing yard surface.

6.5.2 The foundation F1 was constructed of fragments of stone and peg-tile set in a pale yellowish-brown mortar. It was approximately 300 mm wide, and survived at least 400 mm high in the side of the trench (Sx 3, Fig 6). However, there were also traces of pale brown mortar immediately below F1 in the bottom of the trench, at approximately 900 mm below the existing yard surface. It was unclear whether these traces of mortar were part of F1 or the remains of something earlier.

6.5.3 There was little evidence for the date of foundation F1, apart from the presence of peg-tile and the absence of brick. It was sealed by the cobbled yard surface L4 (Sx 3, Fig 6), which was probably of 19th-century date. Thus it seems likely that F1 was late medieval or post-medieval in date. Perhaps it belonged to one of the buildings that were cleared away in the 18th century to make way for East Hill House (*VCHE 9*, 151). Alternatively, it could have

been part of a structure that was associated with East Hill House, possibly pre-dating the Coach House.

6.6 Cobbled courtyard surface (Figs 2 & 6)

6.6.1 The remains of a cobbled surface (L4) were recorded in several places in the courtyard to the east of the Coach House. The cobbling was observed mainly in the sides of trenches in the northern half of the courtyard. Also, a couple of small areas of cobbling were uncovered at the northern end of the courtyard. The cobbles were set in a layer of brownish-yellow sand, approximately 200 mm thick, and lay just below the modern yard surface. Although not much of L4 was exposed, it was clear that the type of cobbling varied from large, squared stone blocks to small, rounded cobbles.

6.6.2 Initially, the cobbled surface L4 was recorded in the manhole trenches MT1-MT3 (Fig 2 & Sx 2, Fig 6). Subsequently, it was observed in places in the pipe trenches to the east of MT1-MT3 and also between MT3 and MT4 further south. In these trenches, L4 seemed to consist mainly of large, squared stone blocks that measured roughly 150-300 mm across. They lay at a depth of 140-160 mm below the existing tarmacked yard surface (L1). The large stone blocks appeared to extend for approximately 4 m to the east of the Coach House, and then to give way to smaller cobbles. However, as only a small number of the latter were seen, it was not possible to confirm this. The foundation F1 that lay to the north-east of MT3 was sealed by L4 (Fig 2 & Sx 3, Fig 6). Elsewhere L4 usually sealed post-medieval and/or modern dump/make-up layers (L2).

6.6.3 More cobbling was uncovered during resurfacing work at the northern end of the courtyard, between two short lengths of north-south brick wall. These lay to the west of the front gate that gives access onto the High Street, immediately to the west of East Hill House (Fig 2). Between the more easterly brick wall and a concrete slab, an area of fairly large cobbles was exposed (Photo 4). This area measured approximately 1.8 m north-south by 0.8 m east-west. Each cobble had been roughly squared off and measured 100-150 mm across. The cobbles lay approximately 100 mm below the modern ground level.

Slightly further to the north-west, an area of smaller, rounded cobbles was partially uncovered. It lay in the angle formed by the western brick wall and the frontage wall (Fig 2). These cobbles covered an area of at least 1.7 m east-west by 1 m north-south.



Photo 4 Large, squared cobbles (L4) at the northern end of the courtyard, viewed from the south-west.

6.6.4 The cobbling (L4) exposed during the watching brief presumably belonged to a former yard surface. It was revealed mainly over the north-western part of the courtyard to the east of the Coach House. How far it extended eastwards and southwards is unclear. In some places L4 appeared to be absent, although this was perhaps because in these areas it had been destroyed by later activity, such as the digging of pits and service trenches. The cobbled surface lay immediately below the modern tarmacked yard surface (L1). No firm dating evidence was recovered for L4, but possibly it was laid down around the time that the Coach House was built, probably in the mid-19th century. Its proximity to the existing yard surface perhaps indicates that it continued in use into the 20th century.

A cobbled surface was uncovered to the west of the Coach House during an archaeological evaluation in 2017 (CAT Report 1151, 4, figs 3-4). It lay 550-570 mm below the modern ground level in TP2.

6.7 Other post-medieval/modern deposits (Figs 2-4 & 6-7)

6.7.1 A friable, light greyish-brown deposit (L5) was uncovered in the western part of the narrow pipe trench to the south of East Hill House (Fig 3). It was traced in the bottom of the trench for approximately 3 metres east-west. The layer contained large amounts of loose mortar, as well as fragments of stone and brick/tile. Not much of L5 was examined, but the stone appeared to be mainly septaria, while peg-tile and probable post-medieval brick were identified among the brick/tile. There were also a few oyster shells. The deposit L5 seemed to be a layer of post-medieval demolition debris. It was reached approximately 550 mm below the modern ground level and was at least 150 mm thick, although it continued below the bottom of the trench (Sx 4, Fig 6). Perhaps it was just a bedding layer for the brick feature F2 that sealed it.

6.7.2 The shallow brick feature (F2) that sealed L5 was traced for just under 3 metres in the narrow pipe trench to the south of East Hill House (Fig 3). The brick feature was aligned roughly east-west and extended beyond the limits of the pipe trench in both directions. The southern face of F2 was visible in the north section of the east-west part of the trench for approximately 2 m. Where the pipe trench changed alignment from east-west to northwest-southeast, F2 was cut through. It was approximately 500 mm wide. It survived two brick courses, or approximately 220 mm, high (Sx 4, Fig 6). The bricks were set in pale greyish-brown mortar. The top of F2 lay 320-340 mm below the modern ground level. Pieces of ceramic pipe were visible where F2 was cut through, so the brick feature presumably housed a drainpipe.

Only a small number of bricks from F2 were examined, and these were unfrogged. They included bricks in both buff and reddish fabrics. Some were whole and measured approximately 220 x 110 x 50 mm, while others were fragments. The bricks looked late 18th or early 19th century in date. This perhaps suggests a rough date for F2, although the bricks could of course have been reused.

6.7.3 Two post-medieval and/or modern brick foundations were cut through during the digging of the eastern part of the pipe trench to the south of East Hill House (Fig 3). One of these foundations extended east-west and was located about 2 m south of East Hill House, near the eastern end of the pipe trench. This foundation was approximately 350 mm wide and lay 200-240 mm below the modern ground level. Approximately 4 m to the south-west, another brick foundation was uncovered. This one extended north-south and lay about a metre to the west of a large brick manhole. It was approximately 300 mm wide and lay 450-600 mm below the modern ground level. Both foundations seemed to be constructed of unfrogged red brick and perhaps dated to the first half of the 19th century. Their significance is unclear, but they were perhaps associated with a terrace to the south of East Hill House.

6.7.4 Between the two brick foundations, a large brick manhole was partially uncovered. The eastern part of the pipe trench had to be diverted around it (Fig 3). The manhole was probably rectangular in shape, although its northern edge was not exposed. It measured approximately 1.6 m east-west by at least 1.1 m north-south. The sides of the manhole were constructed of bricks set in a whitish mortar. The manhole was covered by a large steel sheet that was supported on the brick sides. It was not possible to examine the bricks in the manhole in detail. Their appearance, together with the presence of the steel cover, suggests that the manhole was probably modern in date.

There appeared to be a thick layer of light brownish clay around the edges of the manhole. This clay layer seemed to be fairly extensive, as it was traced to the north-east of the manhole as far as the east-west brick foundation. In places, where the pipe trench was deep enough, it was observed that the clay deposit rested on a layer of bricks that projected

out from under the manhole, at approximately 700 mm below the modern ground level. Perhaps the clay deposit was intended as waterproofing around the manhole.

- 6.7.5** In the southern part of the courtyard to the east of the Coach House, the remains of a couple of post-medieval and/or modern brick foundations were uncovered. One was observed in the east section of the trench between MT4 and MT5 (Fig 2). This foundation was approximately 300 mm wide and probably extended east-west. Further south, another brick foundation was traced for approximately 3.3 m during resurfacing work (Figs 2 & 4). It extended roughly north-south and was 220-230 mm wide. It was constructed of red unfrogged bricks that were perhaps of early to mid-19th-century date. It lay approximately 2.2 - 2.5 m to the east of the Coach House and 800 mm to the west of the well F3. The foundation seems to be shown on an OS map published in 1876 (Fig 7 below), as well as on later OS editions.
- 6.7.6** Extensive post-medieval and modern dump/make-up deposits (L2) were encountered in most of the trenches that were examined during the watching brief. These deposits varied in thickness, but were typically about 400-600 mm thick. They consisted mainly of mixed, greyish-brown deposits, containing fragments of brick, peg-tile, stone, mortar, and gravel. In places there were also a few other inclusions, such as oyster shells, modern potsherds, and pieces of concrete.
- 6.7.7** Where the groundworks took place outdoors, the existing surfaces (L1) were mainly of tarmac. In the courtyard to the east of the Coach House, the tarmac was roughly 60 mm thick and was laid on a concrete base that was approximately 80 mm thick. Immediately to the north of the Coach House, the existing surface was of unfrogged buff bricks set on edge and was approximately 110 mm thick. The tarmacked path to the south of the garden front of East Hill House was 50-100 mm thick and was laid on a deposit of reddish-yellow hoggin, 60-150 mm thick.

7 Finds

No finds were retained during the archaeological watching brief.

8 Abbreviations and glossary

AOD	above Ordnance Survey datum point based on mean sea level at Newlyn, Cornwall
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CBCAA	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor
CBCAO	Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Officer
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
CIMS	Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service
context	specific location on an archaeological site, especially one where finds are made; usually a layer or a feature
dark earth	post-Roman topsoil, that was probably the result of long-term cultivation, refuse disposal and pit-digging.
DBA	desk-based assessment
EHES	Essex Historic Environment Record, held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford
feature	an identifiable context, such as a pit, a wall or a posthole
greensand	a form of sandstone, also known as Kentish Ragstone, imported from south of the Thames.
hypocaust	Roman underfloor heating system
<i>insula</i>	an area or block within the grid pattern of a Roman town (plural <i>insulae</i>)
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c AD 1500
modern	period from c 1850 onwards to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online AccesS to the Index of archaeological investigationS
OS	Ordnance Survey
peg-tile	rectangular roof tile of medieval or later date; intact examples usually have two peg-holes
post-medieval	period from c 1500 to c 1850
residual	finds that were deposited earlier than the context in which they were found
Roman	period from AD 43 to c AD 410
RRCSAL	Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London

SAM	scheduled ancient monument
SMC	scheduled monument consent
septaria	calcareous, clay concretions found on the Essex and Suffolk coast
tessellated	Roman floor consisting of small ceramic cubes or <i>tessera</i> (plural <i>tesserae</i>).
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database, maintained by Colchester and Ipswich Museums
U/S	unstratified, ie without a well-defined context

9 References

Note: all CAT reports (except DBAs) are available online in .pdf format at <http://cat.essex.ac.uk/>

Balcombe, D	2014	<i>Coach House at East Hill House, High Street, Colchester: heritage statement</i>
CAR 3	1984	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 3: Excavations at Lion Walk, Balkerne Lane, and Middleborough, Colchester, Essex</i> , by P Crummy
CAR 6	1992	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report 6: Excavations at Culver Street, the Gilbert School, and other sites in Colchester 1971-85</i> , by P Crummy
CAT	2018	<i>Policies and procedures</i> , Colchester Archaeological Trust
CAT Report 234	2003	<i>An archaeological evaluation at the First Eastern National bus station, Queen Street, Colchester, Essex: May-June 2003</i> , CAT archive report, by Ben Holloway
CAT Report 305	2005	<i>An archaeological evaluation and watching brief in the grounds of East Hill House and the Colchester bus station, Colchester, Essex: October 2004, 2: main report</i> , CAT archive report, by Carl Crossan
CAT Report 477	2011	<i>Roman houses and streets in Insulas 31/32 of Roman Colchester: excavations in advance of the construction of the Visual Arts Facility, East Hill, Colchester, Essex: November 2006-December 2007 and June 2008</i> , CAT archive report, by Howard Brooks, with Kate Orr and Will Clarke
CAT Report 520	2010	<i>An archaeological evaluation at East Hill House, Colchester, Essex: April-June 2009</i> , CAT archive report, by Chris Lister
CAT Report 599	2012	<i>A watching brief at firstsite, Lewis Gardens, High Street, Colchester, Essex: December 2010-March 2011</i> , CAT archive report, by Adam Wightman
CAT Report 1151	2017	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Lewis Gardens, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1JH: July 2017</i> , CAT archive report, by Laura Pooley
CAT Report 1348	forth-coming	<i>Archaeological monitoring at East Hill House, High Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UF: July-August 2018</i> , CAT archive report, by Dr Elliott Hicks
Clarke, D T-D	1985	<i>Colchester Castle. A history, description and guide</i> , 6th edition (CBC).
CifA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
CifA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
CIMS	2008a	<i>Guidelines on standards and practice for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester</i> (CBC)
CIMS	2008b	<i>Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums</i> (CBC)
EAA 3	1997	<i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment</i> , ed by J Glazebrook
EAA 8	2000	<i>Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy</i> , ed by N Brown and J Glazebrook
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> , ed by D Gurney, ALGAO East
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: a revised framework for the Eastern Counties. Research agenda and strategy</i> , ed by M Medycott, ALGAO East
Hull, M R	1958	<i>Roman Colchester</i> , RRCSAL, 20
Morant, P	1748	<i>The history and antiquities of the most ancient town and borough of Colchester</i>

MoRPHE	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i> , English Heritage
Richardson, K M	1961	'Excavations in Lewis's garden, Colchester, 1955 and 1958', <i>TEAS</i> , 3rd series, 1 , 7-36
Speed, J	1610	<i>The Theatre of the Empire of Great Britain</i>
VCHE 9	1994	<i>A history of the County of Essex, 9: the Borough of Colchester</i> , ed by J Cooper, The Victoria History of the Counties of England

10 Acknowledgements

CAT is grateful to OMC Investments Ltd for commissioning and funding the archaeological watching brief. We would particularly like to thank Jamie Dann, OMC Project Manager, and the contractors for their help on site. The work was monitored by Martin Winter, Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Officer (2014) and Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (2015-17).

11 Archive deposition

The archive from the archaeological watching brief, including the site records and photographs, will be permanently deposited with Colchester and Ipswich Museums, under accession code COLEM 2014.107, in accordance with *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester & Ipswich Museums* (CIMS 2008b) and *Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives* (ClfA 2014b).

12 Appendix: contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing:

1 Project management archive

- 1.1 Site plans provided by the developer on paper & CD
- 1.2 Correspondence and plans relating to scheduled monument consent on paper & CD

2 Site archive

- 2.1 Attendance register
- 2.2 Context sheets
- 2.3 Photographic record sheets
- 2.4 Site plans/sections on 2 sheets of A3 drafting film
- 2.5 Site plans/sections on 4 sheets of A4 paper
- 2.6 Site photographs on CD
- 2.7 Site diary/notes on 6 sheets of A4 paper
- 2.8 Sundry papers

3 Research archive

- 3.1 Copies of final report (CAT Report 1202) on paper & CD

4 Finds archive

- 4.1 None retained

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Distribution list:

OMC Investments Ltd

Debbie Priddy, Ancient Monuments Inspector, Historic England

Jess Tipper, Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor

Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



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Checked by: Philip Crummy

Date: 10.01.19

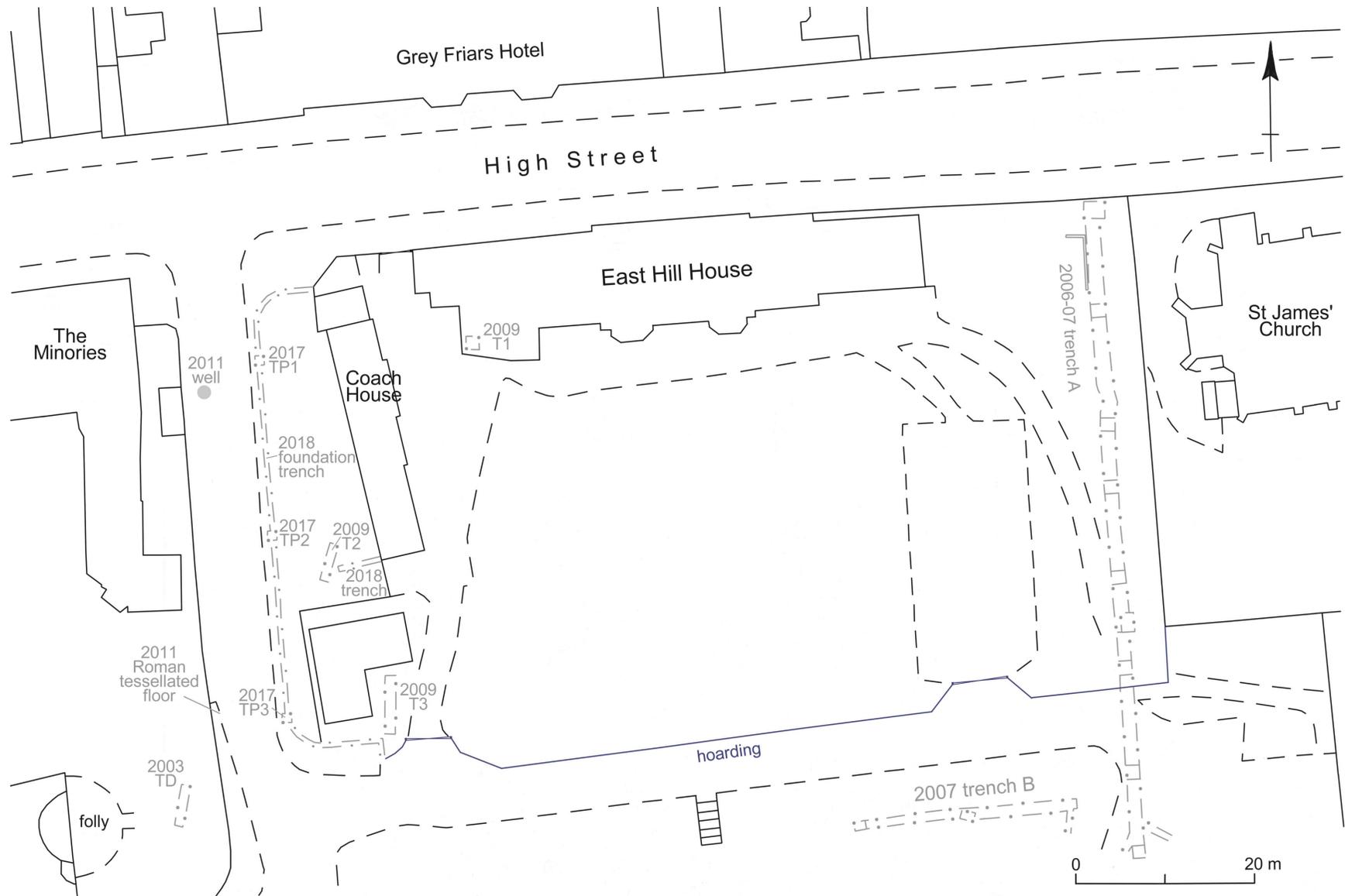


Fig 1 Site location plan.
 Previous and subsequent archaeological trenches and discoveries are shown in grey.

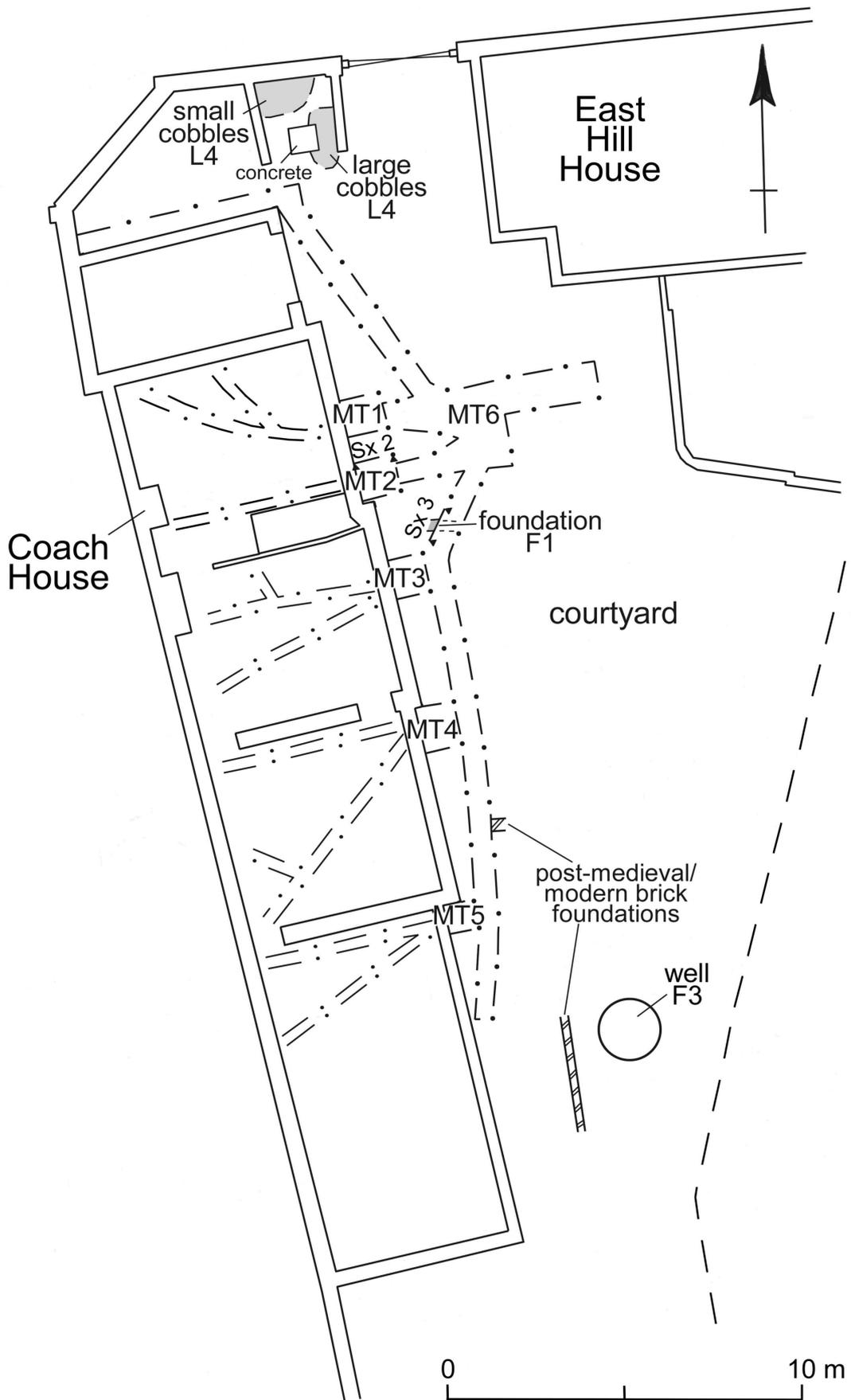


Fig 2 Plan of the Coach House and the adjacent courtyard.

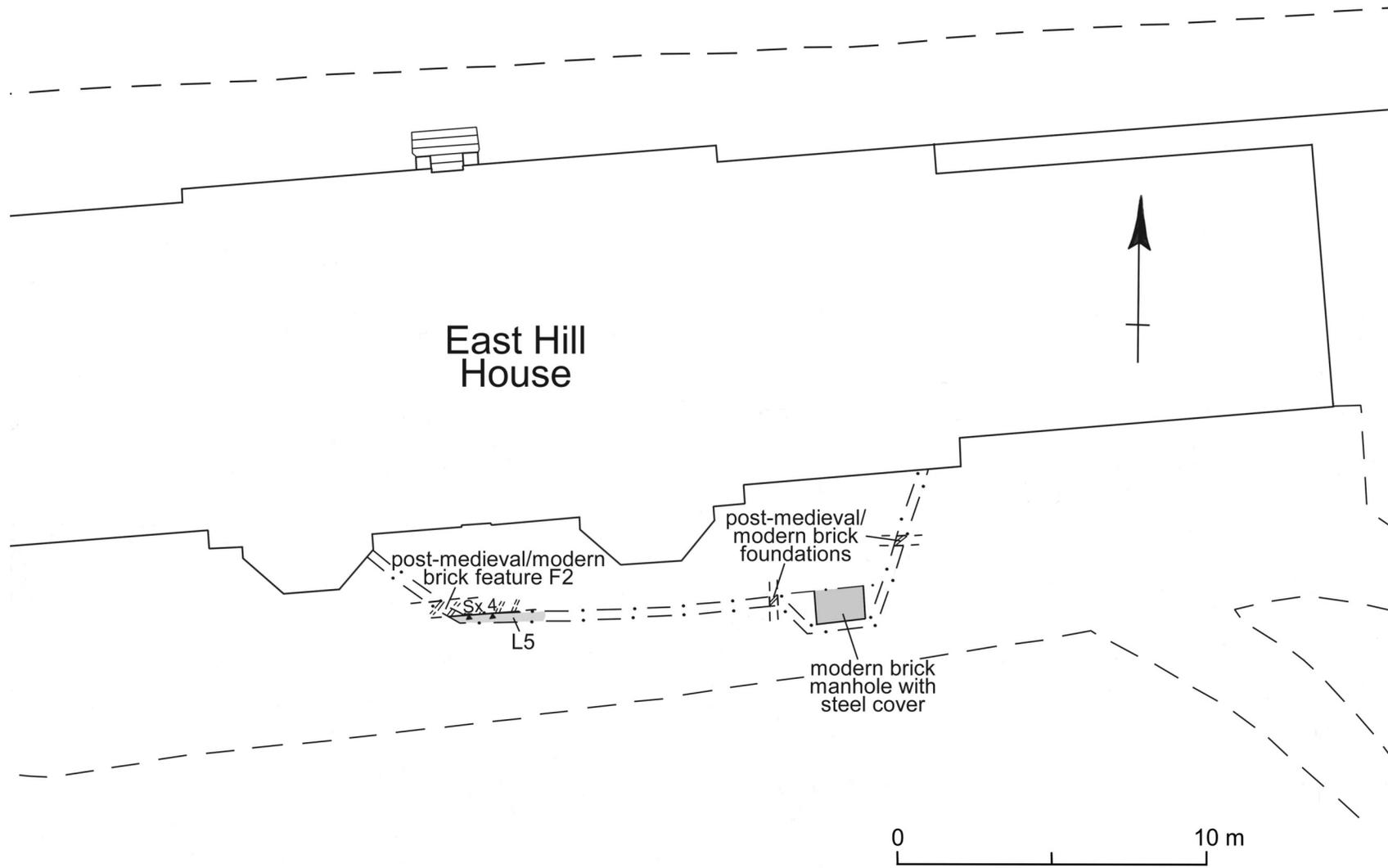


Fig 3 Plan of the pipe trench to the south of East Hill House.

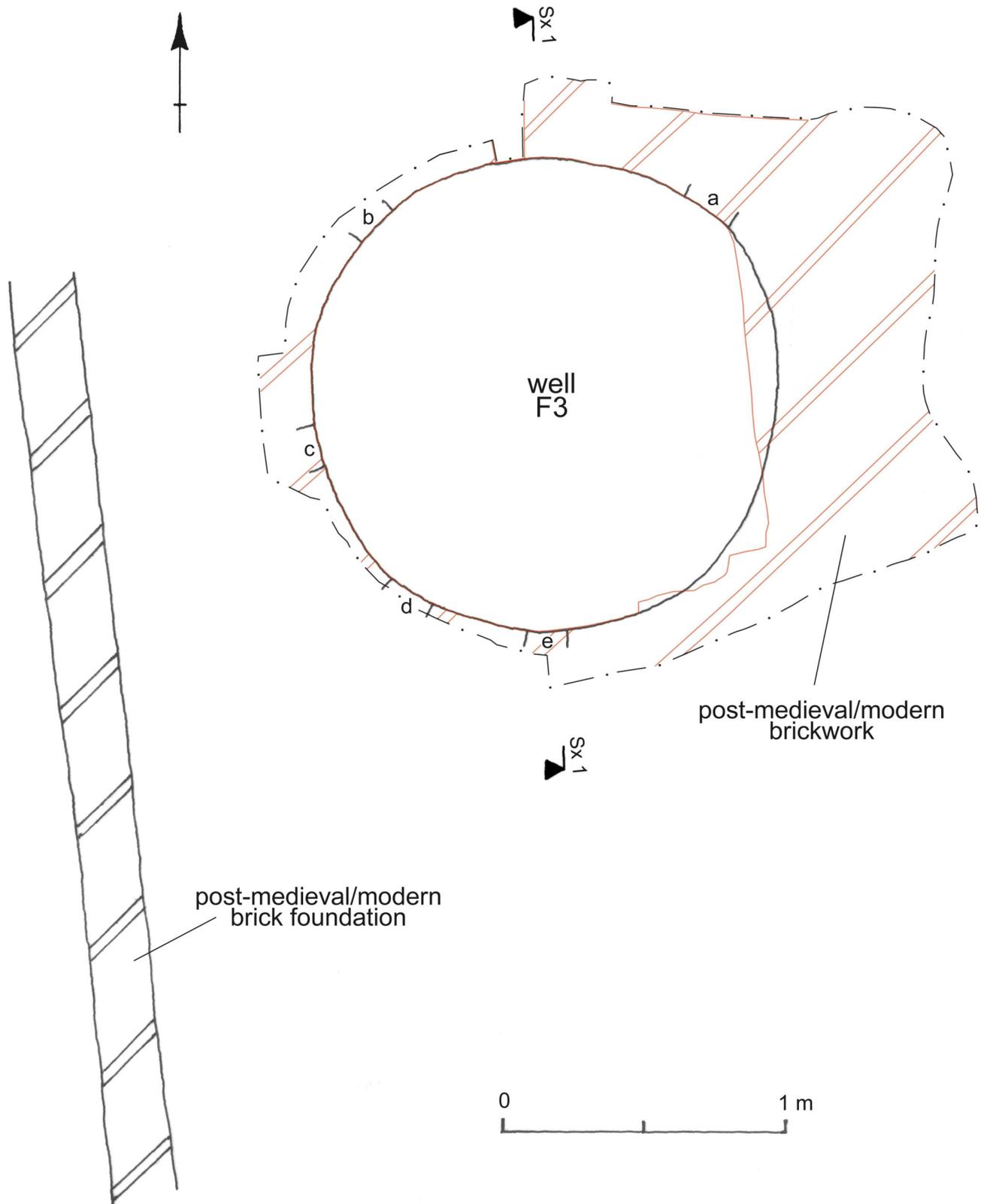


Fig 4 Well (F3): plan.

The brick courses in the top of the well and the remains of the brickwork that overlay it are shown in red.

Section 1

— approximate level of courtyard surface
= approximate level of top of surviving brickwork overlying well

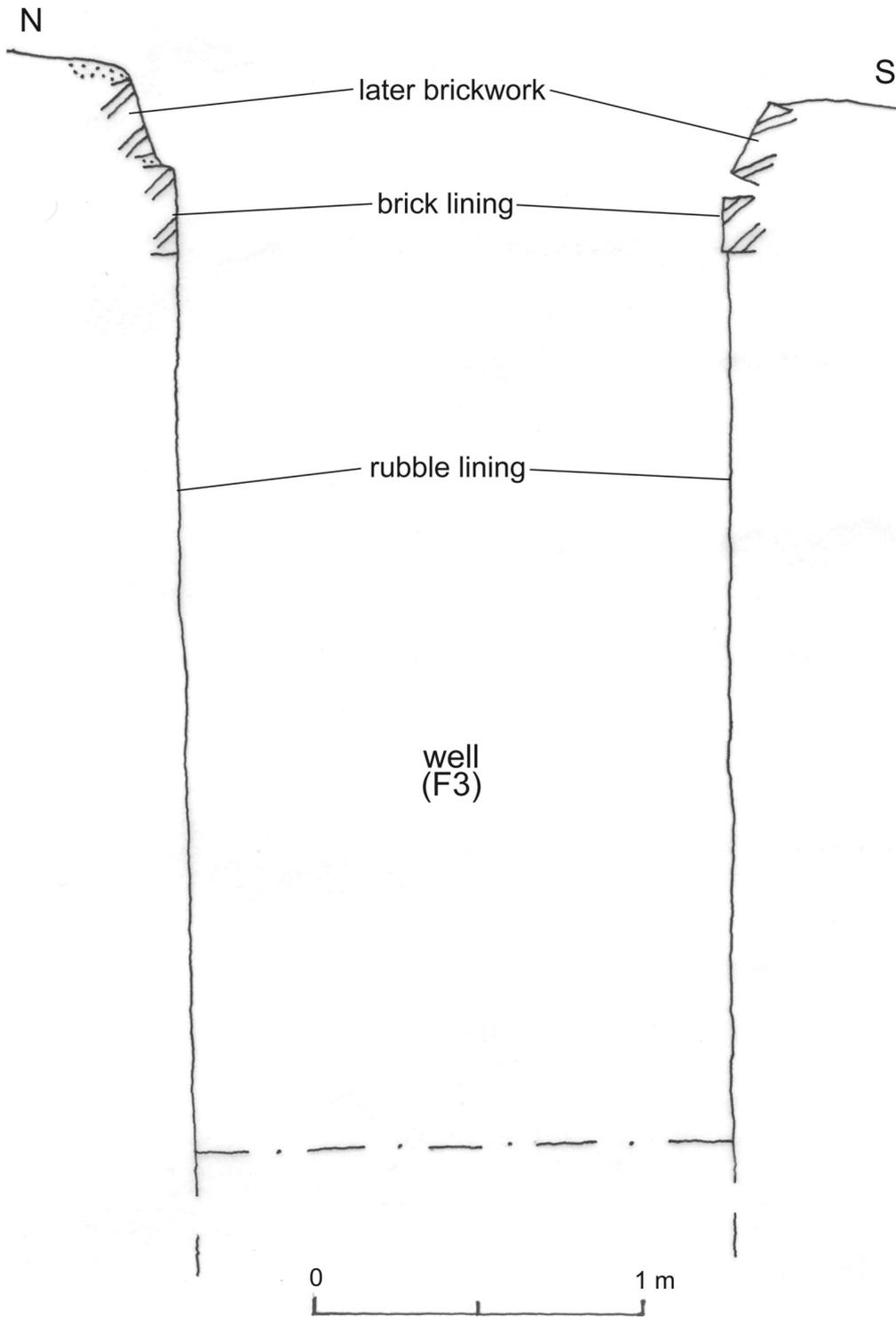
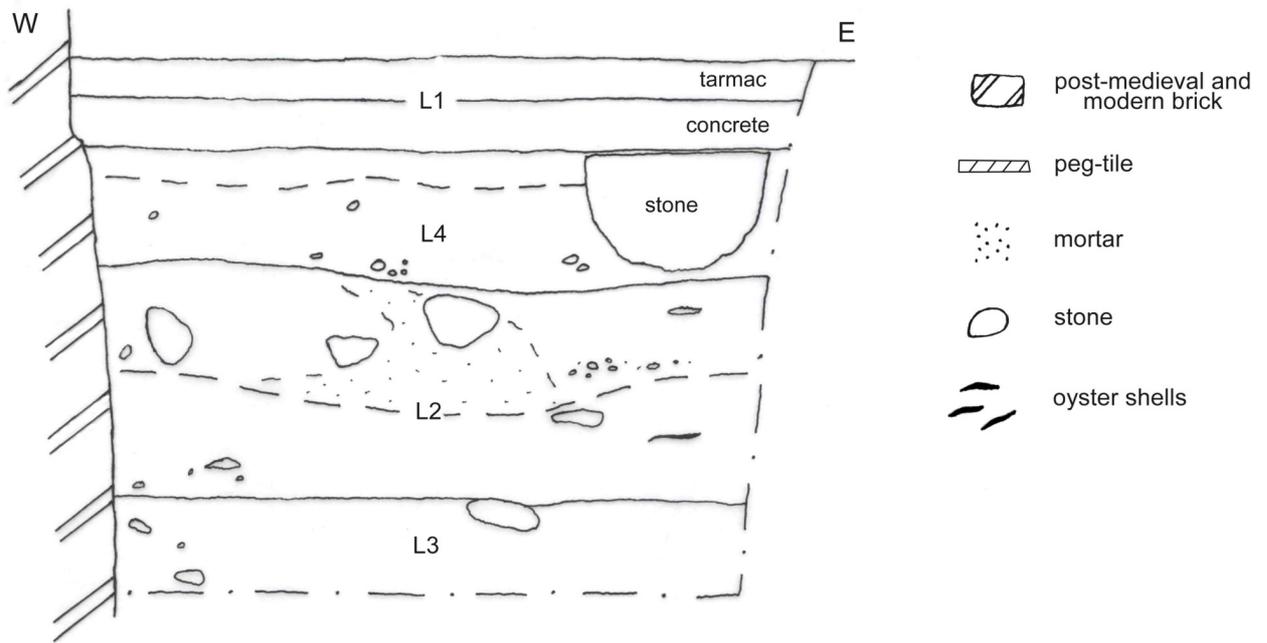
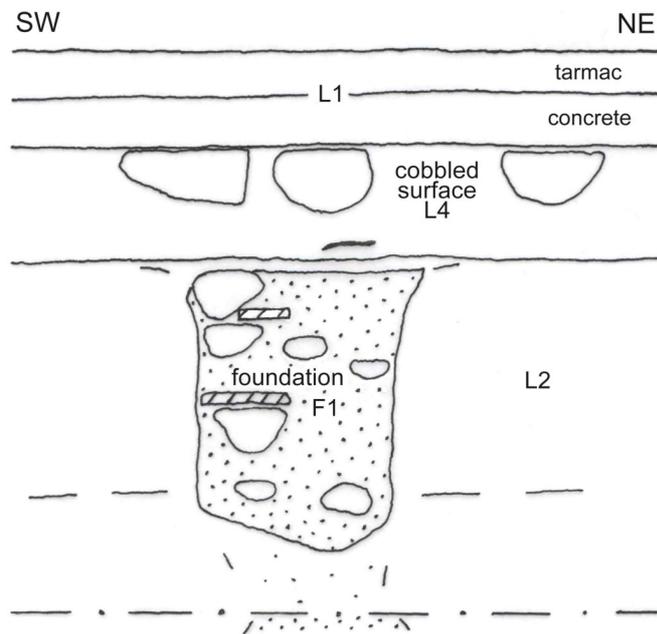


Fig 5 Well (F3): section 1.

Section 2



Section 3



Section 4

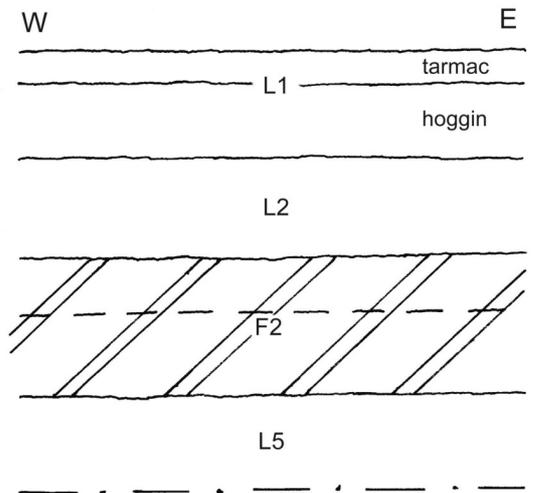


Fig 6 Sections 2-4.

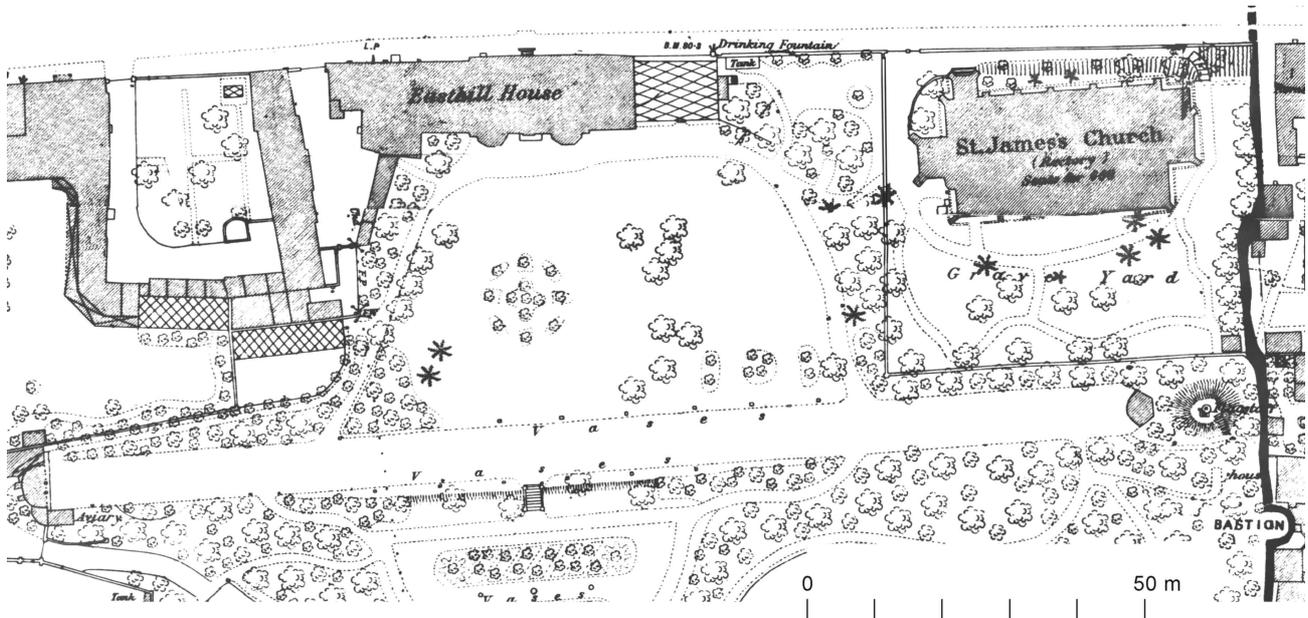
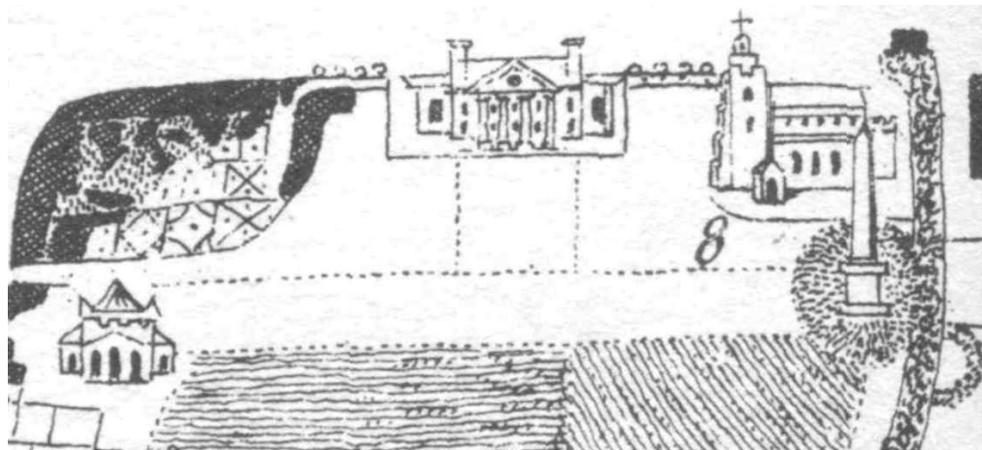


Fig 7 Top: detail of map published in Speed (1610).
 Centre: detail of map published in Morant (1748).
 Below: detail of OS map published in 1876.

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OASIS ID: colchest3-237410

Project details

Project name	East Hill House, High Street, Colchester, Essex watching brief 2014-17
Short description of the project	A series of groundworks was monitored by CAT in 2014-17 to the west and south of East Hill House. The contractor's trenches were fairly shallow and Roman remains were not reached. The groundworks on the western side of East Hill House took place mainly in a courtyard to the east of the Coach House. Resurfacing work in the southern part of the courtyard revealed a large well with a rubble lining that was probably of late medieval or early post-medieval date. Brickwork in the upper part of the well suggests it continued in use into the 19th century. Other remains in the courtyard included a stone-and-mortar foundation that contained fragments of peg-tile but was otherwise not closely dated. It was sealed by a cobbled surface that was recorded in several places in the courtyard and was probably of 19th-century date. To the south of East Hill House, a few post-medieval/modern brick features were uncovered in a narrow pipe trench.
Project dates	Start: 10-04-2014 End: 09-03-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	14/04b - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	COLEM 2014.107 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Site status	Listed Building
Site status	Conservation Area
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	WELL Post Medieval
Monument type	BUILDING Post Medieval
Monument type	COBBLED COURTYARD Post Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER COLCHESTER East Hill House, 76 High Street

Postcode	CO1 1UF
Study area	300 Square metres
Site coordinates	TM 0008 2524 51.889223470154 0.907883393918 51 53 21 N 000 54 28 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	English Heritage/Department of Environment
Project design originator	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project director/manager	Philip Crummy
Project supervisor	D Shimmin
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Physical Archive ID	COLEM 2014.107
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	COLEM 2014.107
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	COLEM 2014.107
Paper Contents	"Survey","other"
Paper Media available	"Aerial Photograph","Context sheet","Correspondence","Diary","Drawing","Map","Miscellaneous Material","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey","Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	An archaeological watching brief at East Hill House, 76 High Street, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1UF: April 2014-March 2017
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Shimmin, D
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1202
Date	2019
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A4 comb-bound report
URL	http://cat.essex.ac.uk

Entered by D Shimmin (ds@catuk.org)

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Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Site address: East Hill House, 76 High Street, Colchester, CO1 1UF	
Parish: Colchester	District: Colchester Borough
NGR: TM 0008 2524	Site codes: Museum accession code: COLEM 2014.107 CAT project code: 14/04b
Type of work: Watching brief	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: April 2014-March 2017	Size of area investigated: approximately 62 sq m
Location of finds/curating museum: Colchester and Ipswich Museums	Funding source: Client
Further seasons anticipated? Yes	Related EHER and UAD nos: UAD nos 321, 3033, 3069, 3070, 3365
Final report: CAT Report 1202 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
Periods represented: medieval, post-medieval & modern	
Summary of fieldwork results: A series of groundworks was monitored by CAT in 2014-17 to the west and south of East Hill House. The contractor's trenches were fairly shallow and Roman remains were not reached. The groundworks on the western side of East Hill House took place mainly in a courtyard to the east of the Coach House. Resurfacing work in the southern part of the courtyard revealed a large well with a rubble lining that was probably of late medieval or early post-medieval date. Brickwork in the upper part of the well suggests it continued in use into the 19th century. Other remains in the courtyard included a stone-and-mortar foundation that contained fragments of peg-tile but was otherwise not closely dated. It was sealed by a cobbled surface that was recorded in several places in the courtyard and was probably of 19th-century date. To the south of East Hill House, a few post-medieval/modern brick features were uncovered in a narrow pipe trench.	
Previous summaries/reports: CAT Reports 477, 520, 599, 1151 & 1348	
Keywords: well, foundation, cobbled surface	Significance: *
Author of summary: Donald Shimmin	Date of summary: January 2019