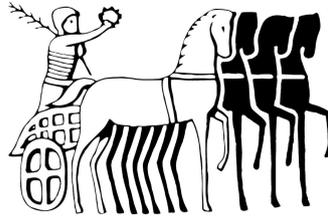
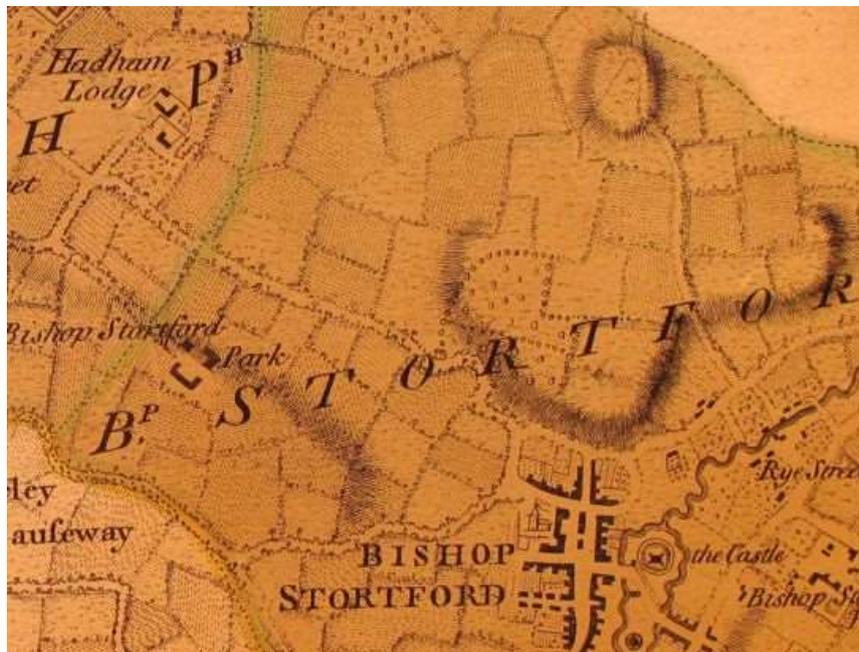


Colchester Archaeological Trust



CAT Report 2007
issued December 2023

**Archaeological evaluation at Parking Court 7,
Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishops Stortford,
Hertfordshire, CM23 1JG: November 2023**



CAT project ref.: 2023/07e
ECC code: EHT9212

**Archaeological evaluation at Parking Court 7,
Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishops Stortford,
Hertfordshire, CM23 1JG: November 2023**

NGR: TL 47494 23116 (centre)

Planning ref.: 3/20/2309/FUL

**CAT project ref.: 2023/07e
CAT Report 2007**

**HCC code: EHT9212
OASIS id: colchest3-518001**

**report prepared by Dr Elliott Hicks
with contributions by Dr Matthew Loughton**

fieldwork by Ben Holloway with Ziya Eksen

**commissioned by Hazel Izod (Sworders) on behalf of
David Harvey**

Prepared by:	Dr Elliott Hicks	Junior Project Officer
Reviewed by:	Laura Pooley	Post Excavation Manager
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Issued:	08/12/2023	

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OASIS summary sheet

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1 Summary

An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out at Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire in advance of the construction of a car park. Wickham Hall is a farm complex purportedly located at the site of a late medieval hall, and contains buildings dating back to the 17th century. Previous excavations at the complex revealed extensive Roman remains dating to the 3rd and 4th centuries which were thought to evidence the existence of a Roman villa at the site. Despite lying in an archaeologically-significant area, however, the only feature uncovered during the present investigation was a modern ditch.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the report for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire which was carried out during 8th-9th November 2023. The work was commissioned by Hazel Izod of Swords on behalf of David Harvey in advance of the creation of a new car park, and was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT).

In response to consultation with Hertfordshire County Council Environmental Resource Planning (HCCERP), Historic Environment Advisor Alison Tinniswood advised that in order 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 (NPPF 2021)*.

In response to this condition a written scheme of investigation (WSI) was prepared by CAT (CAT 2023b) and agreed with the Historic Environment Advisor. All work was carried out in accordance with this WSI.

In addition to the WSI, all fieldwork and reporting was undertaken in accordance with:

- *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (Historic England 2016),
- Professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2020a-d, 2022),
- East of England standards and frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011) and the recent review updates on <https://researchframeworks.org/eoe/>
- CAT Health and Safety Policy (CAT 2023a).

3 Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HHER), request number 60.23.

The proposed development is located in Area of Archaeological Significance No. 115, as identified in the local plan. This covers Wickham Hall (HHER 10918) and the fields immediately to the east. The oldest recorded structure at Wickham Hall is the farmhouse (NHLE 1308087), which is a Grade II listed 16th- or 17th-century timber-framed building.

The Hertfordshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) shows that the development site is located within an area characterised as informal parkland (type code ip) associated with Wickham Hall. To the immediate south is a landscape characterised as post-1950s enclosure (te), with later enclosure (18th century or later) (le) to the south-west. Beyond the A120 (mr, communications – motorways) to the south-east, the landscape within the search area is characterised largely as post-1950s enclosure (te) and a built-up area (urban development) (ba) with smaller areas of

ancient woodland (aw), pre-18th century 'irregular' enclosure (if), 19th-20th century woodland plantation (wp), enclosed meadow pasture (mp), allotments (ag), mineral extraction (me) and industrial (in) use.

Wickham Hall Farm is a post-medieval farmstead with medieval origins consisting of a Grade II-listed 16th- or 17th-century timber-framed farmhouse, two 17th-century aisled barns and an outbuilding arranged around a central courtyard (NHLE 10916-9), and includes a 17th-century dovecote (NHLE 10920; HHER 6291, now a house). These buildings, along with a small number of mid to late 19th- to 20th-century farm buildings, have all been converted into retail units within the last decade.

There are references to a probable manorial site at this location dating back as far as 1487, suggesting that Wickham Hall has its origins in the medieval period, with the original manor house being replaced sometime in the 16th or 17th century. There are also references to an earlier medieval settlement, possibly a deserted village, related to earthworks to the south-east of the farm and north-west of the farmhouse, and pottery has been recovered from this area (HHER 1024; Letch 2010). The settlement may even have had Anglo-Saxon origins as Wickham is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and the place-name is an Old English form (*ibid*).

Wickham Hall Farm has already been the subject of several archaeological investigations:

1) Roman pottery was recovered from test-pits excavated prior to the construction of a stable block in 1999 (Heritage Network Report 80). This building was subsequently demolished.

2) A comprehensive archaeological desk-based assessment, site inspection and preliminary trial-trenching was carried out by the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit in October 2010 (Letch 2010). Although documentary evidence and pottery finds suggested the possibility of Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval remains, no archaeological remains were identified in the three trial-trenches. Two trenches showed a build-up of 0.4-0.5m of subsoil and topsoil above natural and the third suggested that parts of the central area of the farm may have been levelled with clay within the modern era (*ibid*).

3) A comprehensive historic building recording of all farm buildings due to be converted was carried out by CAT in 2012 (CAT Report 733).

4) A small test-pit evaluation was simultaneously carried out during the historic building recording. Five test-pits were dug through the floors of the buildings highlighted for conversion, to assess the impact of groundworks required for new floors, underpinning works, etc (CAT unpublished summary report by A Wightman 2012). This work concluded that, with the possible exception of the larger of the aisled buildings, any trace of original floors has been destroyed by subsequent activity (ie. the laying of concrete floors), and that it was unlikely that groundworks would have any significant impact on underlying archaeology.

5) An archaeological evaluation and subsequent excavation was carried out in 2018-19 (HHER 31647, CAT Reports 1288 & 1339). The evaluation consisted of four 30m-long trenches and the excavation of two areas. Little evidence related to the historical 16th- or 17th-century farmstead was found, although a backfilled pond presumably associated with this settlement was uncovered. The features identified during both phases of work included a metalised surface, multiple pits and ditches, as well as a considerable amount of Roman building material and domestic waste. These remains were thought to evidence the existence of a 3rd-4th century Roman villa at the site. Other features and material found during the course of the excavation demonstrated periodic activity at this site from the Neolithic period to the 1st or 2nd centuries AD.

Beyond the development site are a number of significant prehistoric, Roman, medieval, post-medieval and modern archaeological deposits within a 1km search radius of the site, a summary of which is included below (see Fig 2 for locations).

Prehistoric

Significant prehistoric archaeological remains close to the development site include a Late Bronze Age pit with residual Neolithic pottery (HHER 30302, 575m east south-east); two Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age pits (HHER 30788, 700m south); a Late Iron Age circular enclosure/barrow (HHER 30299, 680m east south-east); an Early to Middle Iron Age D-shaped enclosure linked by a long ditch with a second enclosure, with associated roundhouses and four-post structures (HHER 17569, 830m south south-west); Late Bronze Age pits, post-holes and three urned cremations (HHER 30298, 950m south south-west); Late Iron Age ditches and pits (HHER 3031, 945m south-east); and Middle Iron Age, Late Iron Age and Roman features (HHER MHT31622, 630m east north-east).

Roman

Roman monuments include early Roman cultivation ditches (HHER 30416, 810m south).

Medieval

Medieval monuments include a pit (HHER 17641, 830m south south-east).

Post-medieval

Post-medieval monuments include field boundaries (HHER 17570, 500m south-east and HHER 30417, 880m south-east)

Modern

Modern military remains are numerous and include the barracks of the 1st Hertfordshire Light Horse Volunteer Corps (HHER 10760, 1km south with target butt and rifle range 10759, 1km south-east); a World War I rifle range (HHER 18708, 870m south-west); foxholes and practice trenches (HHER 30787, 980m south south-west) and a World War II fighter plane crash site (HHER 18660, 950 south-west).

Undated

Six hundred and fifty metres to the south-west of the development site are undated cropmarks of pits and possible cut features (HHER 16756).

4 Aims

Archaeological evaluation was undertaken to ascertain the extent of any existing archaeological deposits at the site, and to determine whether further investigations are necessary.

5 Results (Figs 3-5)

Three trial trenches were excavated within the development site. Trenches T1 and T3 were 12m long and 1.8m and trench T2 was 16m and 1.8m. Trench T1 was cut through a modern crush layer (L1, c 0.19-0.2m thick), a layer of buried modern topsoil (L2, c 0.33-0.36m thick) and subsoil (L3, c 0.23-0.25m thick) onto natural (L4, encountered at a depth of c 0.79-0.8m below current ground level [bcgl]). Trenches T2 and T3 were cut through L2 (c 0.15-0.22m thick) and L3 (c 0.36-0.4m thick). In trench T2 L3 overlay ditch F1, which occupied the entirety of the trench; in trench T3 it overlay L4 (encountered at a depth of 0.54-0.6m bcgl).

Trench 1

Ditch F1 passed through the southern half of the trench on an east/west alignment. The feature was 4.35m wide; its depth was not recorded.

Trench 2

Ditch F1 occupied the entirety of the trench. It was 0.33m deep.

Trench 3

Ditch F2 extended through the centre of the trench on an east/west alignment. It was 4.5m wide and was excavated to a depth of 0.43m. The feature represents a continuation of F1 in trenches T1 and T2.



Photograph 1 T1 trench shot – looking north north-east



Photograph 2 T2 trench shot – looking east south-east



Photograph 3 T3 trench shot – looking north north-east

6 Finds

by Dr Matthew Loughton

A small assemblage of ceramic building material (henceforth CBM) was recovered from ditch F2. This consisted of one sherd (21g) of medieval/post-medieval peg-tile, one fragment of modern pipe/drain (190g) and two brick fragments (2,618g) including one complete unfroged example with dimensions of 220 mm x 160 mm x 60 mm which dates to the 19th century. None of this material was retained.

7 Conclusion

Excavations at Wickham Hall revealed a single modern ditch. According to the landowner, this feature was utilised to drain away waste water from a nearby cattle shed and was backfilled during the 1960s (pers. comm.). Given the concentrated area of Roman remains uncovered during previous investigations at Wickham Hall, their absence during the most recent excavations is perhaps significant. It may be that any such remains which may have existed in this area were truncated by the ditch. On the other hand, the results of this investigation might indicate that the locus of Roman activity may lay further to the south.

8 Acknowledgements

CAT thanks Hazel Izod of Sworder and David Harvey for commissioning and funding the work. The project was managed by C Lister, fieldwork was carried out by B Holloway with Z Eksen. Figures are by C Lister, E Hicks and E Holloway. The project was monitored for Hertfordshire County Council by Alison Tinniswood.

9 References

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

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J	2000	<i>Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8 (EAA 8)
CAT	2023a	<i>Health & Safety Policy</i>
CAT	2023b	<i>Written scheme of investigation for an archaeological evaluation by trial-trenching at Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, CM23 1JG</i>
CAT Report 733	2013	<i>Historic building recording at Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire: August 2012</i> , by C Lister
CAT Report 1288	2018	<i>Archaeological evaluation at Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 1JG: June 2018</i> , by M Baister
CAT Report 1399	2019	<i>Archaeological monitoring and excavation at Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 1JG: October 2018 – May 2019</i> , by E Hicks
ClfA	2020a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation.</i> Published 2014; revised October 2020
ClfA	2020b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials.</i> Published 2014; revised October 2020
ClfA	2022	<i>Code of Conduct.</i> Revised October 2022
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14)
Heritage Network report 80	1999	<i>Wickham Hall Farm, Bishops's Stortford, Herts. Archaeological Field Assessment</i>
Hertfordshire Association of Museums	2023	<i>Hertfordshire Archaeological Archive Standards</i>
Historic England	2016	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Letch, A	2010	<i>Wickham Hall, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire: Archaeological desk-based assessment, site inspection and preliminary trial-trenching.</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England.</i> East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)
NPPF	2021	<i>National Planning Policy Framework.</i> Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.
Wightman, A	2012	<i>Summary of test-pitting at Wickham Hall, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire</i>

10 Abbreviations and glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from c 500 – 1066
Bronze Age	period from c 2500 – 700 BC
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBM	ceramic building material, ie brick/tile
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
context	specific location of finds on an archaeological site
feature (F)	an identifiable thing like a pit, a wall, a drain: can contain 'contexts'
HCCERP	Hertfordshire County Council Environmental Resource Planning
HHER	Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record
Iron Age	period from 700 BC to Roman invasion of AD 43
layer (L)	distinct or distinguishable deposit (layer) of material
medieval	period from AD 1066 to c 1500
modern	period from c AD 1800 to the present
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
Neolithic	period from c 4000 – 2500 BC
NGR	National Grid Reference

OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
peg-tile	rectangular thin tile with peg-hole(s) used mainly for roofing, first appeared c AD1200 and continued in use to present day, but commonly post-medieval to modern
post-medieval	period from c AD 1500 to c 1800
prehistoric	pre-Roman
Roman	the period from AD 43 to c AD 410
section	(abbreviation sx or Sx) vertical slice through feature/s or layer/s
wsi	written scheme of investigation

11 Contents of digital archive

Finds: none retained

Digital data:

CAT Report 2007

CAT written scheme of investigation

Digital photographs

Survey data

Site data

12 Archive deposition

The archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

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Distribution list:

Hazel Izod (Sworders)

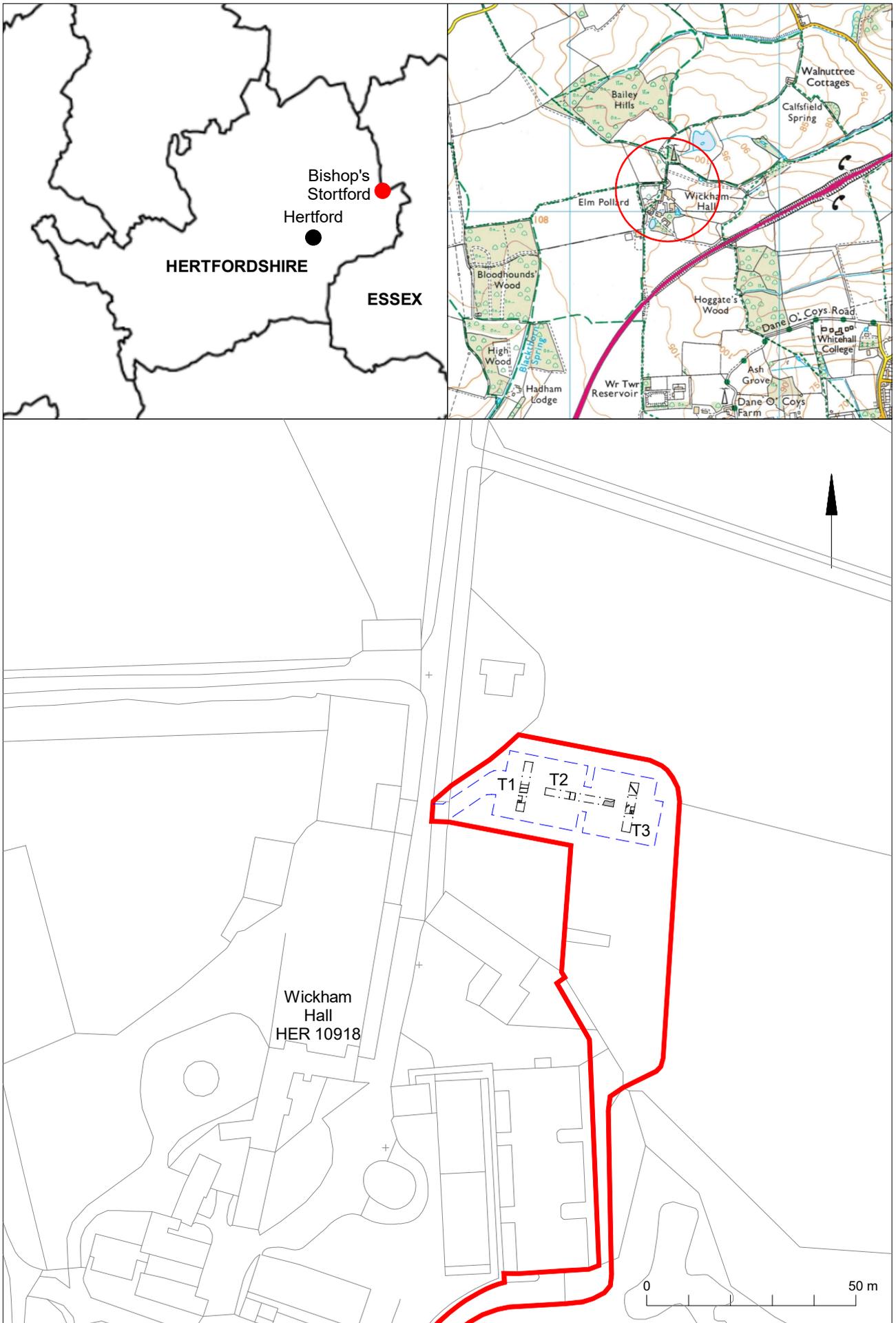
David Harvey

Alison Tinniswood, Hertfordshire County Council Environmental Resource Planning

Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record

Appendix 1 Context list

Context	Trench no.	Finds no.	Interpretation	Soil description	Period
L1	T1	-	Crush	Soft, moist light grey/brown silty-sand with concrete and CBM pieces and 5% stones	Modern
L2	All	-	Topsoil	Soft, moist medium/dark brown sandy-silt	Modern
L3	All	-	Subsoil	Soft, moist medium grey/brown sandy-silty-clay	Undated
L4	All	-	Natural	Firm, moist light grey/brown silty-clay	Post-glacial
F1	T1 and T2	-	Ditch	Firm, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay	Modern
F2	T3	1	Ditch	Firm, moist medium grey/brown silty-clay	Modern



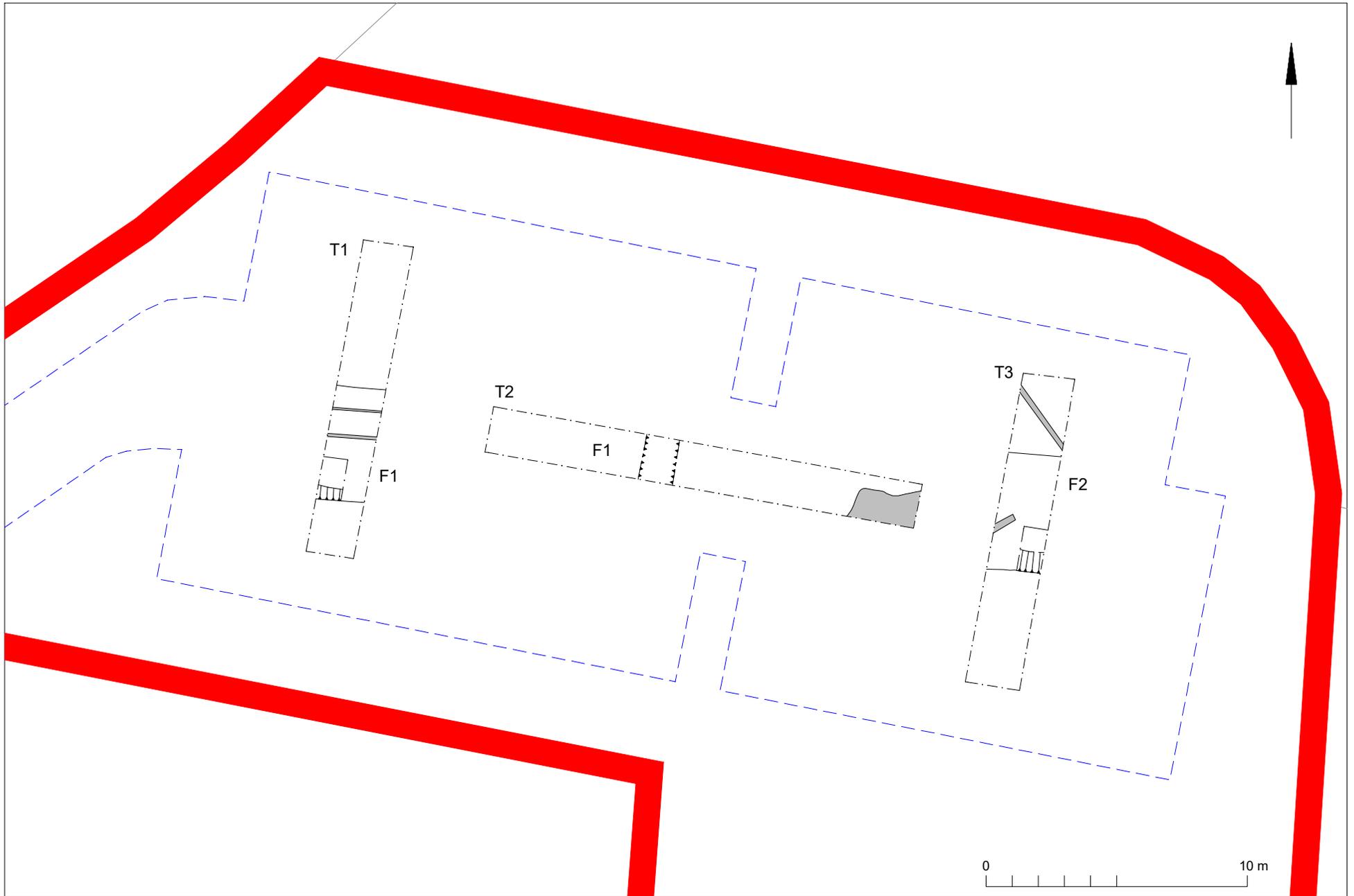
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Fig 1 Site location and trench layout in relation to proposed development (dashed blue lines).



Imagery ©2023 Bluesky, Getmapping plc, Infoterra. Ltd & Bluesky, Maxar Technologies, The GeoInformation Group, Map Data ©2023 Google
HER data ©2023 Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record

Fig 2 Development site shown in relation to nearby archaeological and historic monuments recorded on the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record



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Fig 3 Results (modern in grey)

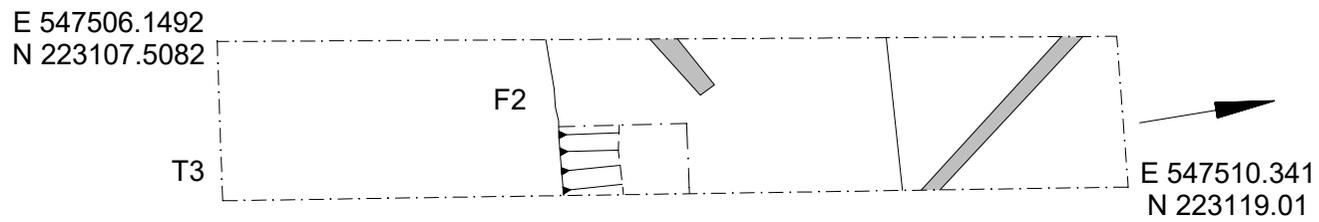
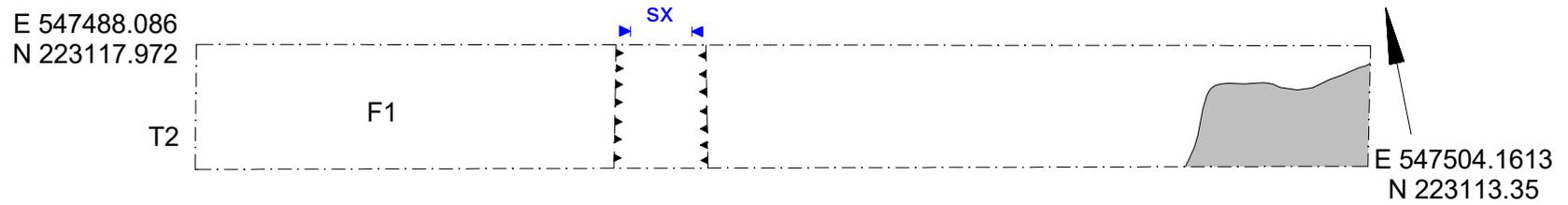
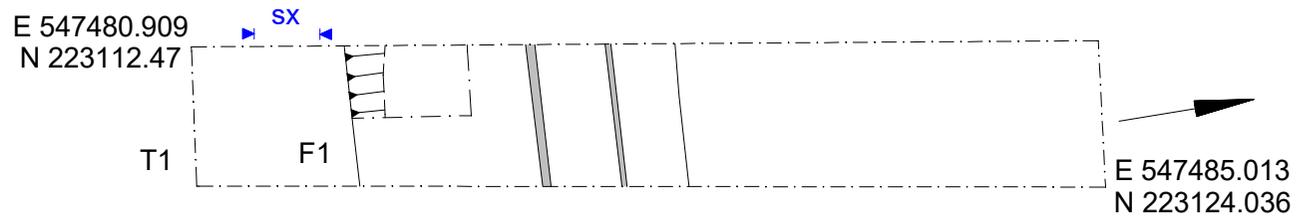


Fig 4 Trench results (modern in grey)



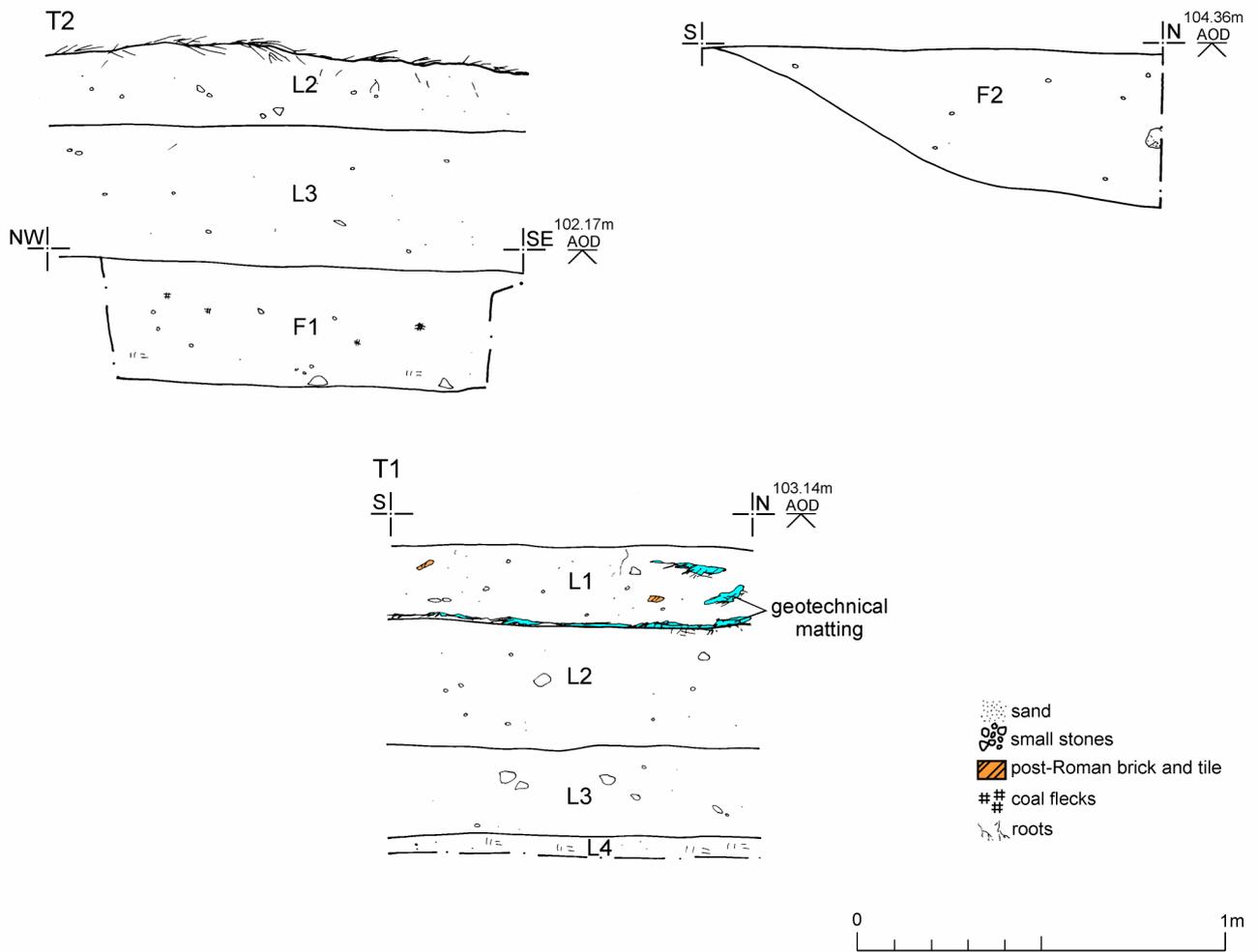


Fig 5 Feature and representative sections.

APPENDIX

HERTFORDSHIRE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD SUMMARY SHEET

Site name and address: Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishops Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 1JG		
County: Hertfordshire	District: East Hertfordshire	
Village/Town: Bishop's Stortford	Parish: Bishop's Stortford	
Planning application reference: 3/20/2309/FUL		
HER Enquiry reference: 60.23		
Funding source: Developer		
Nature of application: Creation of a new car park.		
Present land use: uncultivated land		
Size of application area: 0.43ha	Size of area investigated: 72m ²	
NGR (to 8 figures minimum): TL 47494 23116 (centre)		
Site code (if applicable): CAT project code 23/07e		
Site director/organisation: Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT)		
Type of work: Archaeological evaluation		
Date of work: November 2023	Start: 8th November 2023	Finish: 9th November 2023
Location of finds & site archive/curating museum: Bishop's Stortford		
Related HHER nos: HHER 1024, HHER 3031, HHER 6291, HHER 10918, HHER 17569, HHER 30298, HHER 30299, HHER 30302, HHER 30788, HHER 31647; HHER MHT31622	Periods represented: Modern	
Relevant previous summaries/reports: n/a		
Summary of fieldwork results: <i>An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out at Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire in advance of the construction of a car park. Wickham Hall is a farm complex purportedly located at the site of a late medieval hall, and contains buildings dating back to the 17th century. Previous excavations at the complex revealed extensive Roman remains dating to the 3rd and 4th centuries which were thought to evidence the existence of a Roman villa at the site. Despite lying in an archaeologically-significant area, however, the only feature uncovered during the present investigation was a modern ditch.</i>		
Author of summary: Dr Elliott Hicks	Date of summary: 07.12.2023	

OASIS Summary for colchest3-518001

OASIS ID (UID)	colchest3-518001
Project Name	Archaeological evaluation at Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire, CM23 1JG: November 2023
Sitename	Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishops Stortford, CM23 1JG
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	2023/07e
Activity type	Evaluation
Planning Id	3/20/2309/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project Dates	08-Nov-2023 - 09-Nov-2023
Location	Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishops Stortford, CM23 1JG NGR : TL 47494 23116 LL : 51.88709468563045, 0.141736992227959 12 Fig : 547494,223116
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Hertfordshire Local Authority District : East Hertfordshire Parish : Bishop's Stortford
Project Methodology	Archaeological evaluation was carried out as per the WSI.
Project Results	An archaeological evaluation (three trial-trenches) was carried out at Parking Court 7, Wickham Hall, Hadham Road, Bishop's Stortford, Hertfordshire in advance of the construction of a car park. Wickham Hall is a farm complex purportedly located at the site of a late medieval hall, and contains buildings dating back to the 17th century. Previous excavations at the complex revealed extensive Roman remains dating to the 3rd and 4th centuries which were thought to evidence the existence of a Roman villa at the site. Despite lying in an archaeologically-significant area, however, the only feature uncovered during the present investigation was a modern ditch.
Keywords	Ditch - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Tile - MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Tile - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Brick - POST MEDIEVAL - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus Drain Pipe - 20TH CENTURY - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	Private individual
HER	Hertfordshire HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	A Wightman
HER Identifiers	HER Event No - EHT9212
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive;

