

**THE CHAPEL
CASTLE STREET, SAFFRON WALDEN
ESSEX**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
AND
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING**



**Essex County Council
Field Archaeology Unit**

August 2006

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CASTLE STREET, SAFFRON WALDEN
ESSEX**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING

Client: Tigerlake Limited

FAU Project No: 1652

NGR: TL 539 387

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OASIS Record: essexcou1-17647

Dates of Fieldwork: 3-5th July 2006

SUMMARY

Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching and historic building recording was undertaken on the former chapel site (more recently Burton's butchers) on the corner of Castle Street and Castle Hill, Saffron Walden. These works were undertaken in advance of redevelopment of part of the site and conversion of the former chapel to residential use, to establish the below-ground archaeological potential and to create an archive record of the above-ground historic structure.

The site lies within an area of archaeological significance, being within the inner bailey of Saffron Walden Castle, nearby parts of which are a scheduled ancient monument.

A single trial trench excavated at the northern end of the site revealed floor surfaces and walls to a 19th-century street frontage building. Further excavation revealed a brick foundation pier built into the cellar wall of an earlier structure, which in turn cut through the presumed inner bailey ditch where it curves around the north-east corner of the castle keep.

The chapel was built in 1836 by the Primitive Methodists. Its interior was extensively altered in the 20th-century through various commercial uses. Despite this the exterior retains much of its earlier form and character.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report presents the results of an archaeological evaluation undertaken in advance of the proposed construction of a new residential dwelling on land known as the Chapel, on Castle Street, Saffron Walden. It also presents a descriptive record of the former non-conformist chapel which occupies the southern part of the site and will be retained as part of the development.

Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit (ECC FAU) carried out these works for the property owner, Tigerlake Limited. The archaeological and building recording works were carried out in accordance with a design brief issued by the ECC Historic Environment Management team (ECC HEM). The site archive will be deposited at Saffron Walden Museum. A copy of this report will be deposited with the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) and a further digital copy will be uploaded to the OASIS database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/oasis/index.cfm>).

Both the fieldwork and the reporting have been carried out to professional standards and guidance issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the ALGAO standards for fieldwork (Gurney 2003).

The report is structured to describe the background to the project, followed by an assessment of the results of the fieldwork, followed by a discussion of the further archaeological potential and historic significance of the vicinity. Appendices include context and finds information, details of the archive contents and the EHER summary. All illustrations are placed together towards the back of the report and include a representative selection of photographic images of the chapel.

2.0 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography (Fig. 1)

The c.400sq m site is located immediately to the south-west of the junction between Castle Street and Castle Hill in Saffron Walden. It is also bounded by the properties of 1-3 Castle Court to the west and by that of 4 Castle Court to the south. Of particular note, the site lies c.20m to the north-east of the remains of Saffron Walden Castle keep.

The former chapel building occupies the southern end of the site and the remainder is laid to tarmac and used for car parking. A low modern brick wall bounds the site along the road frontages, with entry points onto both Castle Street and Castle Hill. On the east side of the chapel, a higher modern wall screens part of the east elevation from the road.

The open area of the site slopes noticeably down to the north and northwest, away from the chapel, the rear of which appears to be terraced into the hill. On the road to the north-west of the site, the OD height is 66.50m, beside the chapel the height is approximately 68.10mOD.

2.2 Geology

The undisturbed natural geology of this vicinity is solid chalk at 67.06mOD, barely 0.34m from present ground level at the north end of the site.

2.3 Historical and archaeological background

The archaeological background for this and other parts of Saffron Walden has previously been given extensive and detailed discussion by Bassett (1982) and summarised/reviewed by Medlycott (1999). In view of this, only a summary of the most pertinent and previously unreported information is presented here.

Medieval:

Saffron Walden, as a town, is a medieval development; founded in the 11th century around the castle (EHER 0408). The castle was built, c.1141, to dominate the area and its plan determined the subsequent street layout. The Castle consisted of an inner and outer bailey, both of which were ovoid. The inner bailey comprised the domestic and defensive buildings of which only the keep now survives. Within the outer bailey a church was built and two main streets established; Church Street and Castle Street. By the 13th century the town had changed hands from the de Mandevilles to the de Bohuns, around which time the outer bailey ditch was backfilled and in its place a large town enclosure, known as the Battle or Repell ditches, was constructed (EHER 0443). Within the enclosure new streets were laid and a market place established. This part of Saffron Walden is recorded on court rolls to be occupied by dye workers in the 14th century. Dye vats were apparently located within the bailey ditch.

Although no archaeological investigation has previously been undertaken within the development site, excavations have been carried out in and around the remains of the keep in Castle Meadow in the 1970s. These revealed the presence and survival of earthworks remains, made-ground and other medieval cut features, some of which lay only c.40m to the south of The Chapel site (Bassett 1982, 48-61). A short distance to the west of the Chapel site, in the rear of the plot of 54-56 Castle Street, extensive 19th century terracing of the hillslope had removed any remains that might have once been present, though slight remnants of the original topography survived in the southeast corner, behind the museum (Letch 2002). Archaeological investigation at 63A Castle Street, to the west, on the opposite side of the road, located the outer bailey ditch of the castle which was open through the 12th to 14th centuries (Ennis 2005). It is postulated that the eastward continuation of

this ditch would have been located c.50m directly to the north of The Chapel site. Furthermore, it is possible that the site overlies the north-eastern part of the inner bailey ditch, which is speculated to be in the vicinity of the Castle Street frontage (Bassett 1982, 19 and Fig.10).

Most recently, monitoring of construction works at the immediately adjacent 4 Castle Court site identified a sequence of mounded deposits associated with the construction of the keep and an underlying original buried land-surface (Atkinson 2006). No remains of the inner bailey ditch were recognised.

Post-medieval:

By the post-medieval period, Castle Street was occupied by road frontage buildings and there are a number of extant listed buildings of 16th century and later origin (Medlycott 1999). E.J Eyre's 1758 map of the town (ERO T/M 123) provides a good depiction of the layout of occupation plots and buildings along and behind the Castle Street frontage, in the vicinity of the Castle keep (Fig. 2). As part of the urbanisation of this area of the town, the eastern end of the former inner bailey of the castle was redeveloped and the thoroughfare of Castle Hill constructed across it in the 1820s to create a more direct north-south route (Bassett 1982, 61).

Three cottages formerly occupied the Castle Street frontage to the north of the site. Following the creation of Castle Hill, the non-conformist chapel was inserted in their rear plots. It is probable that the dwelling at 4 Castle Court was also constructed as part of this infilling of the rear ends of the plots. The three Castle Street frontage cottages were reputedly demolished in the modern period to facilitate the remodelling of the junction of Castle Street and Castle Hill and the former chapel has had a variety of commercial uses during the 20th century.

The Chapel:

Methodism was introduced to Saffron Walden by two Wesleyan wealthy lady preachers, Mrs. Charlotte Berger and Mrs. Webster, who were invited from London to combat irreligion in the town and surrounding area. In 1821 they began preaching from a barn in Castle Street, possibly on the site of the present gothic-style chapel, built in 1865. In this year there were five dissenting chapels in the town (Marius Wilson 1870-72). Mrs Berger and Mrs Webster initially encountered hostility from the unruly townsfolk, who resented the idea of women preachers (Brighten Roundtree 1951). They settled in 1823 in a house close to the barn. By 1823 the barn had been converted to a chapel, although it retained its "unceilinged and unfloored" character (Cooper 2000).

The Primitive Methodists, a more rabble-rousing, working class branch of Methodism, arrived shortly after the Wesleyans. Their origins are ambiguous. One source (Brighten Roundtree 1951)

states that in 1836 they built a Chapel on Castle Hill, while another source (Cooper 2000) claims that in the Primitives were using the old barn chapel by 1839, presumably alongside the Wesleyans. Although this was made possible after the Methodist Union of 1832, it seems unlikely that the two groups shared a chapel.

The important distinctions between the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists were mainly to do with their background and approach. The Wesleyan ministry tended to be drawn from the more wealthy socially conscious middle classes who saw it as their duty to confer their views and morals onto the masses, described at the time as “for the people” (Cooper 2000). In contrast, the Primitive preachers tended to be the more gritty, inspired rabble-rousing zealots from the lower classes, i.e. “of the people” (Cooper 2000). Their popularity with the lower classes meant they established themselves in the rural and industrial areas. The primitives were spread wide, but were thin on the ground. In the Saffron Walden district in 1851 there was only one Wesleyan chapel (in the town) with a congregation of 250, while there were eight Primitive chapels serving only 687 ‘souls’ (Marius Wilson 1870-72).

Eyre’s map of 1758 (fig. 2) shows a vacant plot behind the street frontage before the houses and land to the east of Castle Hill were absorbed into the grounds of Castle Hill House, above the Common. An unprovenanced 1835 plan of Saffron Walden (c.f. Everett & Newman 1998) is perhaps the most informative. This pre-dates the assumed construction date for the chapel by one year (fig. 3). In it the plot is split into two parts, with an oblong structure standing where the chapel stands today, but facing onto Castle Hill rather than Castle Street. There is a smaller structure to the west that occupies the position of no. 4 Castle Court, the subject of archaeological works on land adjacent (Atkinson 2006). It is not clear on the 1877 OS map (fig. 4) that the chapel has been built by this date, although a chapel is labelled as present. Although the documentary evidence mentions a build date of 1836, the map appears to show the same layout as before. A track that formerly ran from Little Church Street (later Museum Street) to the Agricultural Hall on Bury Hill has now been extended further to the east to meet Castle Hill, possibly contemporary with it. It appeared from the survey that the main façade of the chapel faced the south, onto the track, overlooking the ramparts, which are also clearly shown on this side. By 1947 the track had gone out of use, and is not indicated on the OS map from that year. The Chapel is clearly shown on the proceeding 1897 OS map (fig. 5) in its present form, alongside the present no.4 Castle Court without its later 20th-century side additions. The larger scale gives more detail, and the Primitive Chapel is labelled as such for the first time. The map evidence suggests the present chapel was built between 1877 and 1897, rather than 1836. A single cottage stands on the Castle Street frontage. The primitive chapel continued to operate until 1947 and probably beyond. Since it closed as a chapel, it functioned as a printing works and ice cream factory, before becoming a butcher’s

shop. The frontage onto Castle Street was mainly open, with a single structure linked to No. 1 Castle Court. This was probably removed (and the front part of no.1) in the modern period to facilitate the car park and create access from Castle Street. The front part of no.1 was subsequently rebuilt.

3.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The general aim of the project was to identify and record any surviving archaeological remains present within the development area and to create a low level photographic and drawn record of the chapel before conversion. In reality, the chapel had already been converted several times and, apart from the exterior, retained none of its internal characteristics, fixtures and fittings.

4.0 METHODS

All *IFA* standards and by-laws (1999) and *ALGAO's* Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003) were adhered to throughout the project.

4.1 Archaeological evaluation methodology

The archaeological evaluation comprised the excavation of a single trial trench, measuring 6m x 2m, located in the northern part of the site and within the proposed footprint of the new dwelling (Fig.1). The tarmac and underlying rubble foundation layer was broken-out and the trench excavated by machine under the supervision of a professional archaeologist. Due to the presence of clearly 19th century material throughout a sequence of rubble deposits, the trench was wholly excavated by machine to an approximate depth of 1.8m below present ground surface level. A brick structure encountered at the north end of the trench was recorded *in situ* part-way through machining, then removed to enable the exposure and investigation of surrounding and underlying remains.

All exposed surfaces of the trench were manually cleaned and inspected for archaeological features, deposits and artefacts. Standard FAU methodologies were employed with regard to the archaeological recording. The trench was planned and sections drawn at a scale of 1:20. A full written and photographic record was also made of all significant deposits and features. The site was surveyed in relation to the adjacent buildings and has since been related to the OS national grid. Levels were taken in relation to OS datum for the section drawings.

On completion, the trench was backfilled and compacted with the machine bucket.

4.2 Building recording methodology

Existing plans and elevations supplied by the client were used during the survey, forming the basis for floor plans shown in this report. External architectural descriptions were made and photographs taken in digital, colour medium format and 35mm black & white prints. Sample photographs were taken internally to show the extent to which the chapel had already been converted through commercial usage in the second half of the 20th-century and beyond. A representative selection of photographs is reproduced at the back of the report as plates 1-13. The remainder can be found in the archive.

A cartographic and documentary assessment was carried in order to understand the origins and development of the chapel more fully.

5.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION RESULTS

Trial trench excavation established that the site contained deeply stratified deposits of potential archaeological significance, predominantly dating to the post-medieval period, but provisionally to the medieval period too. These largely comprised of backfilled material within a substantial probable cellar cut and part of the presumed inner bailey castle ditch, both dug into the natural chalk. Apart from a degree of modern-period truncation of the upper part of this sequence, these remains were largely undisturbed and well-preserved. The recorded sequence is described and interpreted below. Context numbers assigned to individual features, structures and deposits are denoted by brackets in the text and further context information can be found in Appendix 1.

The trench measured 2 by 6m and was 1.8m at its deepest part, yet was not bottomed onto the natural chalk. It was located at the north end of the site close to the Castle Street entrance and existing street frontage. By positioning the trench along the centre length of the footprint to the proposed dwelling, a sample of the archaeological deposits within its ground plan was recorded. Natural chalk was encountered at 66.29m OD only 0.35m from current ground level, immediately below the 20th-century tarmac/rubble bedding layer for the car park. The trench was dug to 65.78m OD.

The earliest deposits within the sequence belong to the fills of a feature at the north end of the trench, cut into the natural chalk. It was slightly curved in plan and had a fairly steep profile. Because it was badly-truncated to the south, by feature 3, its full extent and depth could not be established. Two fills were identified, the first, context 11, a redeposited chalk and the second, (10) a clean brown silt deposit. Both deposits appeared to be the product of natural silting from the

edges. No finds of any type were found within the feature to provide dating evidence. It is possible that this is the northern edge of the inner bailey ditch where it curves around the north-east of the keep.

Ditch 4 was truncated to the south by the construction cut to a possible cellar dug into the bailey ditch (context 3). The cellar perhaps belonged to a building on the street frontage at the establishment of Castle Street in the later medieval period, after the ditch went out of use. Its cut extended beyond the limit of excavation to the south (over 3.5m) and below the depth of the trench, removing evidence for the bailey ditch entirely at this point. Inside the trench, the feature was badly truncated by a late 19th-century foundation cut (context 24) associated with the former cottage. In fact, only a 0.15m-wide portion of the northern edge remained, cut almost vertically into solid chalk in the lower part of section 2 (fig. 8). From the evidence, the cellar was not lined in flint as others are in Saffron Walden (Medlycott 1999). There was no evidence within the evaluation trench for the cellar floor or the associated structure above.

Construction cut 24 was dug into the hard chalk of the north cellar wall to contain a vaulted brick foundation pier (context 2) that helped support the rear of the late 19th-century cottage (context 1). The cut extended 0.9m northwards and continued eastwards beyond the limit of excavation obliterating much of the cellar wall on this side. The structure inside measured 1.15 x 0.90m in plan (fig. 6) and fitted snugly within the cut. It consisted of a curved central portion, 0.70m wide, running approximately north/south, with 0.35m wide parallel walled abutments either side, one of which extended partially outside the eastern edge of excavation (fig. 7). Its depth could not be established. The foundation appears to have been built on the chalk floor of the open cellar and the cellar backfilled prior to further construction of the 19th-century cottage.

The arch of the foundation pier was loosely filled with material similar to that found within the latest cellar backfill deposit, context 5. This was a dark brown mixed deposit spread across much of the trench containing brick rubble and pottery datable to the 19th-century. Stratigraphically below was a sequence of contemporary dumped deposits (contexts 6-9, 18 and 19) identified through varying degrees of chalk and brown silty soil in the matrix. These and context 5 were dumped in a sequence against the foundation pier, thus infilling the earlier cellar and reinstating the ground at the rear of the property. Unlike context 5, these lower fills had a low incidence of finds.

The vaulted foundation supported partial remains of the former street frontage cottage, context 1, and associated internal floor surfaces (fig. 6 B, plate 1). The back wall of the cottage was defined by brick foundations, again dated to the 19th-century and sharing identical dimensions and character to context 2. Context 1 formed the south-west corner of the building. A second robbed-

out wall (context 17) formerly headed westwards, representing an attached frontage building on this side (fig. 6 B).

Overlying part of the foundations to the north were two contemporary external surfaces (context 23) post-dating the cottage demolition. They comprised areas of yellow stock floor bricks and broken tile on a mixed mortar bedding and continued beneath the edge of excavation on three sides. It is likely that they are associated with a light Fletton brick-built structure, context 14, constructed in the 20th-century.

6.0 STANDING BUILDING RECORDING RESULTS

The chapel structure has not been empty for long and is therefore dry and in a good standard of repair. However, due to the differing requirements of the various companies that have utilised the building since the chapel closed, the exterior has undergone much alteration and little remains of its original internal character. At least three different firms have used the chapel since its closure, each of which probably took its toll on the fabric and fittings of the building and its open-plan interior. The most apparent changes are the insertion of the first floor into the presumably open interior and the addition of extra windows to light the new level. It is unclear when or by whom the work was carried out, but the first floor was used as living accommodation/office space by the butcher's shop.

Nonconformist chapels were open-plan and invariably sparsely furnished, with timber panelling and pews and a small room for the minister. Some had galleries. Judging from the evidence, Primitive Methodist chapels were no different, and the Castle Hill chapel conforms to the style and proportions of many built in the later part of the 19th-century. However, in the more remote areas there may have been more of a propensity to preach in the outdoors or use existing structures, much as the early Wesleyan arrivals had done in 1823. No evidence remains to show how the chapel appeared inside. Externally, the main entrance appears to have been on the east elevation, fronting onto Castle Hill. The doorway has been blocked in the modern period and a wall built in front. Many such chapels from this era have a porticoed entrance, but as the entrance is only a single one, this is unlikely. Today the prominent shop elevations are painted but originally the brickwork would have been exposed to display the contrasting red brick and gault dressings and architectural detailing, which, on the south and west elevations, are still used to good effect.

6.1 External description

The chapel stands at the rear (south end) of the plot on an east to west alignment facing the car park. It is brick-built in Flemish bond with white brick dressings, best seen on the south and east elevations, which have not been painted over. The bricks are partly creased red bricks of a standard size (c.22 x 10.5 x 7cm), both early 19th-century characteristics consistent with a 1836 (or later) build date. They are placed within a lime mortar partially repointed in cement. Prominent contemporary elevations face the two roads to north and east (plates 3 & 4), the former of which contains the shop front facing onto the car park. Both elevations have painted brickwork and 'Burton & Sons Family Butchers' signs. That to the east bears a partially observed earlier sign underneath (plate 4), alluding to the former printers or ice cream makers here. Evenly-spaced buttresses define three bays, the tops of which are decorated with dog-tooth corbelling that continues across at eaves level (plate 6). The roof appears to be clad in slate with gables pitched at 40° with plain stepped brick corbels. Set centrally in each are blocked circular windows that formerly lit the roofspace and are best seen in plate 5.

Original well-proportioned and attractive round-headed windows light the top floor on all elevations except that to the west, which due to its proximity to no. 4 Castle Court (fig. 1) was, apart from the gable light, built blind (plate 7). Additional modern windows have been fitted on the north and east elevations, with the division of the top floor into a flat above the shop. Apart from the long central window on the north elevation (plate 3), no original windows remain at present ground floor level, and it is possible there were none originally. There are several blocked apertures for square windows on the south and east elevations (plates 5 & 6), whose spacing and proportions may indicate a contemporary date, but whose concrete lintels suggest later work. A blocked central doorway on the east side is likely to have been the main entrance, leading from Castle Hill, although it is not a particularly wide entry point (fig. 9a, plate 5). There is no evidence for a removed porticoed entrance. A rear doorway led from the north side and was remodelled to become the flat entrance. The window above is slightly shorter to allow room for the doorway (plate 3). Any other original apertures were removed when the butcher's shopfront was inserted into the wall fabric.

6.2 Internal description

Butcher's shops have high hygiene standards enforced upon them and the inside was partitioned, floored and lined out to ensure cleanliness. Had there been internal features, they are likely to have been lost at least on the ground floor, at this stage of use, if not before. A shop area, cold store and rendering area were created downstairs (fig. 9 A) and windows on this level blocked for privacy and to maintain temperature inside. A staircase was fitted from the bottom corridor to gain

access to the flat over the shop that also included the main offices for the firm. The flat was accessed via the former rear entrance and internally through the shop itself.

Internally, the ground and first floors are completely stripped of any earlier fixtures and features, to create the working and living areas shown on fig. 9. Plate 8 shows the stripped-out shop and plate 9 the kitchen upstairs. The round headed windows are original features that mainly open inwards from the arched top (plate 10). A few windows are fixed or vertical sashes, but all are contemporary in materials and style. Their positions are shown in fig. 9b. The most prominent window is the long central one on the north elevation, a vertical sliding sash that retains its wheeled rope pull (plate 11), in use before the first floor was added.

A machine-sawn softwood king post strut roof frame can be seen through the loft hatch in the bathroom ceiling (plates 12 & 13). Some of the rafters appear to have been replaced. The wooden frame in the foreground of plate 13 supports a modern water tank.

7.0 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL MATERIAL

7.1 Finds by Joyce Compton

Small groups of finds were recovered from four contexts during the trial trenching evaluation. In addition, sample bricks were collected from Structure 2. All of the material has been recorded by count and weight, in grams, by context. Quantification details can be found in Appendix 2. Most of the finds are dated 18th to 20th century and are described by category below.

Sample bricks

Three sample bricks (Structure 2) are in a red fabric with small flint inclusions. The bricks are regular in shape with creased surfaces, resulting from pressing the clay into a mould. Much of the surfaces are coated with creamy-white sandy mortar which has flint and sparse shell inclusions. The brick dimensions are a uniform 215 by 105 by 50mm deep. Following the brick typology in Ryan (1996, 94-6), it can be seen that these are late 17th to early 18th-century brick types. A more precise date of early 18th century has been provided by Pat Ryan.

Brick and tile

Two contexts, fills 7 and 8 of cellar cut 3, produced fragments of roof tile, and a piece of brick was recovered from fill 8. The tile fragments are not closely datable, but the brick is similar to the sample bricks in Structure 2, with a depth of 50mm. The fragment has probably derived from a

further early 18th-century brick. A third brick fragment was recovered from fill 5 of cellar cut 3. This is curved, as for use as coping, but the mortar appears to be adherent to one side only, with the opposing side worn.

Pat Ryan has examined the curved brick from fill 5, and reports:

“This fragment is probably from a semi-circular coping brick. It is possible that some of the features described may be the result of re-use rather than original. The fragment is red in colour; 140+ x 95 x 100mm in overall dimensions. In Essex, most ‘common’ bricks are usually not any larger than 250 x 115 x 70mm, and ‘specials’ generally have similar overall dimensions. The brick was made in a mould of semi-circular shape. Fine striations can be seen on the face opposite the curved surface. These were made by the brick-maker’s strike or bow, when excess clay was removed before the brick was turned out of the mould. One face has gritty lime mortar adhering, similar to that attached to the sample bricks. The opposite flat face shows signs of wear, similar to that found on flooring bricks, and has traces of curved score marks, possibly made by the bottom of an ill-fitting door. Coping bricks of this shape are more often found on 18th-century, and later, walls.”

Pottery

Single sherds of pottery were recorded in three contexts, all fills of cellar cut 3. The three sherds comprise modern white and yellow earthenwares, not in production before the 1790s.

Clay pipe stems

Two clay pipe stems were recovered, neither of which can be closely dated within the post-medieval period. Clay tobacco pipes were manufactured from the 1580s (following the introduction of tobacco-smoking) into the 20th century.

Further work on any of the finds will not be required, due to the small amounts and recent nature of the material. None of the finds needs to be retained beyond the archiving stage.

7.2 Environmental remains

No deposits with perceived environmental potential were identified during the trial trenching evaluation and so no soil samples were collected. All soils were chalky and free-draining, and no substantial deposits of charred material present.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

Through recording a stratigraphic sequence of cuts and deposits spanning the possible medieval to modern periods, the archaeological trial trenching and standing building recording at the former Burtons Butcher's on Castle Hill, has provided an important insight into the development of Saffron Walden. The results are summarised below under the specific phases.

Phase 1: Medieval

The sequence showed a large cut feature, possibly the inner bailey ditch which is believed to follow the street pattern around Bury Hill. If this is the case, it is the first time the north-east curve of the ditch has been recorded and means that its progress can be traced further round. Recent excavation on the property next door (4 Castle Court) revealed mounded deposits associated with castle construction. The deposits contained within the ditch are presumably primary silting deposits tentatively dated from soon after its creation in c.1141, although no datable finds were present.

By the 14th-century the castle had ceased to dominate the townscape. Around this time, Castle Street was established along the outer line of the ditch, with cellared buildings standing along the street frontage. Remains of probable medieval cellared buildings have been recorded around the town centre, often with flint linings (Medlycott 1999). Court rolls state that by the end of the 14th-century dye works were centred in and around the castle bailey and using the ditch to hold the dyeing vats (Medlycott 1999). So far none of these features have been identified in excavation.

Phase 2: Post-medieval

The nature of site use, nominally from the 16th century, until the mid 19th century is not clearly understood. Evidence is largely limited to cartographic evidence for the latter part of the period. From Eyre's map (1758) up until the second edition OS (1897) the plot front is shown as open ground, even though the physical evidence from the evaluation trench (the large open cellar) clearly suggests the presence of an overlying structure on the site. No remains of an associated building were identified during the fieldwork, although these could perhaps lie in the wider site area around the posited cellar.

The excavated evidence shows that a new building was constructed on the site in the late 19th century whose foundations survive below the current car park. Its rear wall lay along the line of the north wall of the medieval cellar. The chalk edge of the cellar was dug into to provide a stable base for a vaulted brick foundation in the south-west corner. This carried the rear wall of the structure along the edge of the cellar. The cellar was backfilled, up against the pier and foundations, thus reinstating the ground to the rear of the dwelling.

It is difficult to assess exactly when the Primitive Chapel was constructed. Literary sources (Brighton Roundtree 1951) state the chapel was erected in 1836, but this conflicts with the cartographic sources, that suggest a date between 1877 and 1897. In fact the 1877 map labels a chapel in the vicinity, but it is clearly the same building shown on the 1835 map. Perhaps the building was the barn that the Primitives took over from the Wesleyans. More research is required to clarify the position.

Phase 3: Modern

The late Victorian cottage was demolished in the 20th-century and the foundations covered over with tile and brick paving associated with a flimsy Fletton brick-built structure standing behind the existing street frontage. After the chapel closed in the second half of the 20th-century, the area was cleared and tarmaced over to create a car park. Exactly when this happened, and under whose ownership, is difficult to establish. Chapel interiors were removed and a first floor level inserted during the subsequent commercial ownership. However, the exterior, especially to the south with its exposed red brickwork and gault brick dressings, was retained. Should the paint be removed from the north and east shop front elevations, the structure will regain much of its earlier character.

On stylistic and architectural grounds the chapel is more likely to belong to the latter part of the 19th-century (1877-97, according to the maps) than 1836. Many dissenting chapels still stand in the area (English Heritage 2002), though their importance historically and architecturally has yet to be fully appreciated. Some are inspired neo-Georgian pieces, with pediments and porticos, such as the Congregational Chapel at Finchingfield (1779). Others like the Primitive Methodist Chapel at Castle Hill, have Georgian proportions but are more austere, with more subtle architectural detail expressed through corbels, windows and dressings. The neo-Gothic style can be seen near to the site at the Castle Street Methodist Church (1864).

At its conception, the chapel, with its exposed brickwork, dressings and detailing and prominent location at the top of Castle Hill, would have made an impressive sight. Much of the character, externally at least, remains the same. Originally, it would seem, there were only windows on the equivalent first floor level, which is a characteristic of some similar chapels. The building stands as a testament to the Primitive Methodism, a version of Methodism 'by the people and for the people' that was popular in the working class industrial and rural areas of the country. This was better suited to the labouring men and women than the Church of England with its liturgy, ritual and middle class clergy (Harrison 1981).

Acknowledgements

This work was commissioned by Tigerlake Ltd. The assistance and co-operation of Messrs Nick Bowditch and Douglass Lee is appreciated. Staff of John Jossaume Plant Hire Ltd are also thanked. A. Letch carried out the fieldwork and reporting, with the assistance of A. Turner. A. Lewsey prepared the illustrations and J. Compton identified and dated the finds and Pat Ryan identified and dated the bricks. Richard Havis of ECC HEM monitored the work on behalf of Uttlesford DC planning department.

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Appendix 1: Context data

Context	Type	Description	Period
1	Structure	Brick wall foundations to probable late 19thc cottage	L19th C
2	Structure	Brick vaulted foundation pier 1 within cut 24	L19th C
3	Cellar cut	Large cut pre-dating cottage. Possible medieval cellar. Dimensions unknown, 1.8m + depth. Filled by 5-9 & 18-19	?med
4	Ditch	North-east outer curve of ditch. Filled by 10 & 11. Over 0.8m deep. Full dimensions unknown	?med
5	Fill	Dark rubble loam backfill to cellar 3. Upmost deposit: 0.5m thick	L19th C
6	Fill	Silty chalk backfill to cellar 3. 0.3m thick	L19th C
7	Fill	Mottled brown chalky silt backfill to cellar 3. 0.35m thick	L19th C
8	Fill	Light brown clay silt backfill to cellar 3. 0.5m thick	L19th C
9	Fill	Thick, chalky backfill to cellar 3. 0.7m thick	L19th C
10	Fill	Silty fill to ditch 4. 0.12m thick	No date
11	Fill	Chalky fill of ditch 4. 0.36m thick	No date
12	Layer	Modern made ground & tarmac. Depth 0.24m	Modern
13	Fill	Hard rubblely fill ?robber trench 20	Modern
14	Structure	Fletton brick wall extension to rear of 1	Modern
15	Layer	Bedding for floor inside structure 14	Modern
16	Deposit	Rubble fill of robber trench 17	Modern
17	Cut	Removed rear wall of cottage 1	Modern
18	Deposit	Chalky silt backfill of cellar 3. 0.4m thick	L19th C
19	Deposit	Silty clay backfill of 3. Last fill observed in sequence. 0.4m thick	L19th C
20	Cut	Linear ?robber cut parallel to 17	Modern
21	?Structure	Low brick foundations, probable fallen-in wall at base of west section	19th C
22	Layer	Made ground-tarmac bedding	Modern
23	Layer	Floor surfaces over wall foundation 1	20th C
24	Cut	Cut for vaulted pier 1	L19th C

Appendix 2: Finds data

Context	Feature	Count	Weight	Description	Date
2	Structure	3	6550	Sample bricks; red fabric, 215 x 105 x 50mm, mortar adhering to most surfaces	Early 18thC
		1	4	Pottery; body sherd, modern earthenware, yellow glaze inside and out	19th/20th C
5	3	1	4	Clay pipe stem	Post med.
		1	1350	Brick fragment, curved (100mm radius), 90mm deep	18th C
		1	12	Pottery; plate rim sherd, white earthenware, blue transfer-printed border	19th/20th C
7	3	1	74	Roof tile fragment	Post med.
		1	1	Pottery; body sherd, modern earthenware, yellow glaze with brown, white and blue stripe decoration	19th/20th C
8	3	1	4	Clay pipe stem	Post med.
		1	66	Roof tile fragment	Post med.
		1	260	Brick fragment, depth 50mm	Post med.

Appendix 3: Archive index

Site name : The Chapel, Castle Street, Saffron Walden (SW 50)

Index to the Archive

File containing:

- 1. Research Archive**
 - 1.1 ECC HEM brief
 - 1.2 ECC FAU written scheme of investigation
 - 1.3 Client/archive Report
 - 1.4 Transfer of title agreement

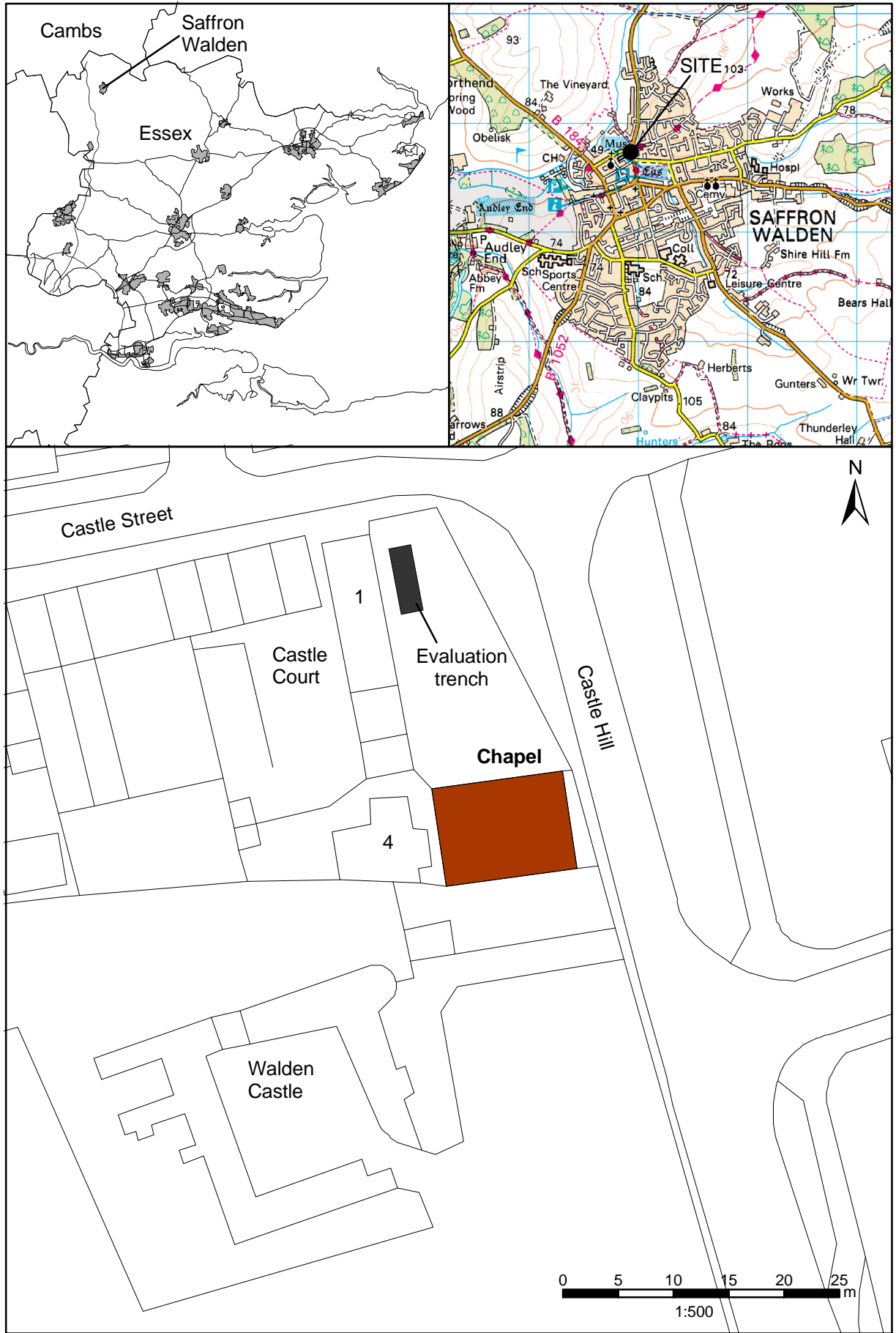
- 2. Site Archive**
 - 2.1 24 context sheets (+ 1 register sheet)
 - 2.2 2 plan/section sheets
 - 2.3 Photographic record (+ register sheets)
 - 2.4 Miscellaneous plans, maps and notes

Not in file:

- 1 (part) box of finds

Appendix 4: EHER Summary sheet

Site Name/Address: The Old Chapel, Castle Hill, Saffron Walden	
Parish: Saffron Walden	District: Uttlesford
NGR: TL 539 387	Site Code: SW 50
Type of Work: Archaeological evaluation & Historic building recording	Site Director/Group: A. Letch ECC Field Archaeology Unit
Date of Work: July 2006	Size of Area Investigated: 2 x 6m trench
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Saffron Walden Museum	Funding Source: Developer (Tigerlake Ltd)
Further Work Anticipated? Yes	Related EHER Nos:
Final Report: N/A	
Periods Represented: ?Medieval, late 19th C, modern	
<p>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</p> <p><i>Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching and historic building recording was undertaken on the former chapel site (more recently Burton's Butchers) on the corner of Castle Street and Castle Hill, Saffron Walden. The works were undertaken in advance of residential redevelopment of the site, including conversion of the former chapel and construction of a house on the street frontage, to establish the below-ground archaeological potential and to create an archive record of the above-ground historic structure.</i></p> <p><i>The site lies within an area of archaeological significance, being within the inner bailey of Saffron Walden Castle, nearby parts of which are part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 20671).</i></p> <p><i>A single trial trench excavated at the northern end of the site revealed brick foundations to a probable late 19th-century street frontage building. Further excavation showed an unusual vaulted brick foundation pier. This had been built to support the south-west corner of the structure whose rear wall lay close to the edge of a postulated cellar to a possible medieval structure. In turn this cut through the presumed north-east curve of the inner bailey castle ditch, which was badly truncated.</i></p> <p><i>The chapel was probably built in the late 19th-century (between 1877 and 1897) by the Primitive Methodists, although a build date of 1836 has been published (which does not conform to the cartographic evidence). In form and architecture it is a sombre but attractive building with austere Georgian proportions and late Victorian detailing. The construction is in red brick with gault brick dressings. Sometime after the second world war the chapel closed and the building was used for commercial purposes. During its commercial function, the car park was laid, the interior stripped of any original fittings and first floor flat inserted. The exterior was changed by painting some elevations and adding extra windows, but retains much of its original character.</i></p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports: N.A.	
Author of Summary: A. Letch (ECC FAU)	Date of Summary: August 2006



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Fig.1. Site location plan

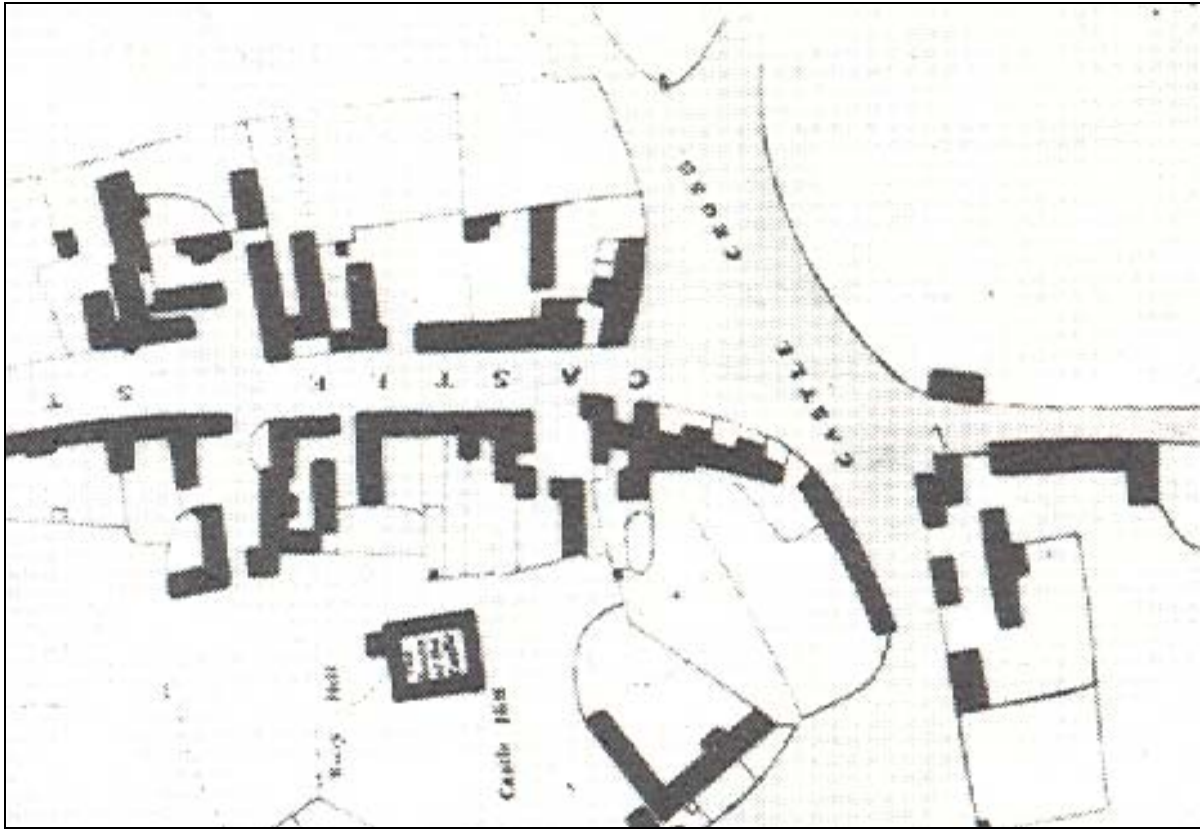


Fig. 2 Eyre's map of 1758



Fig. 3 Plan of Saffron Walden in 1835



Fig. 4 OS first edition, 1877

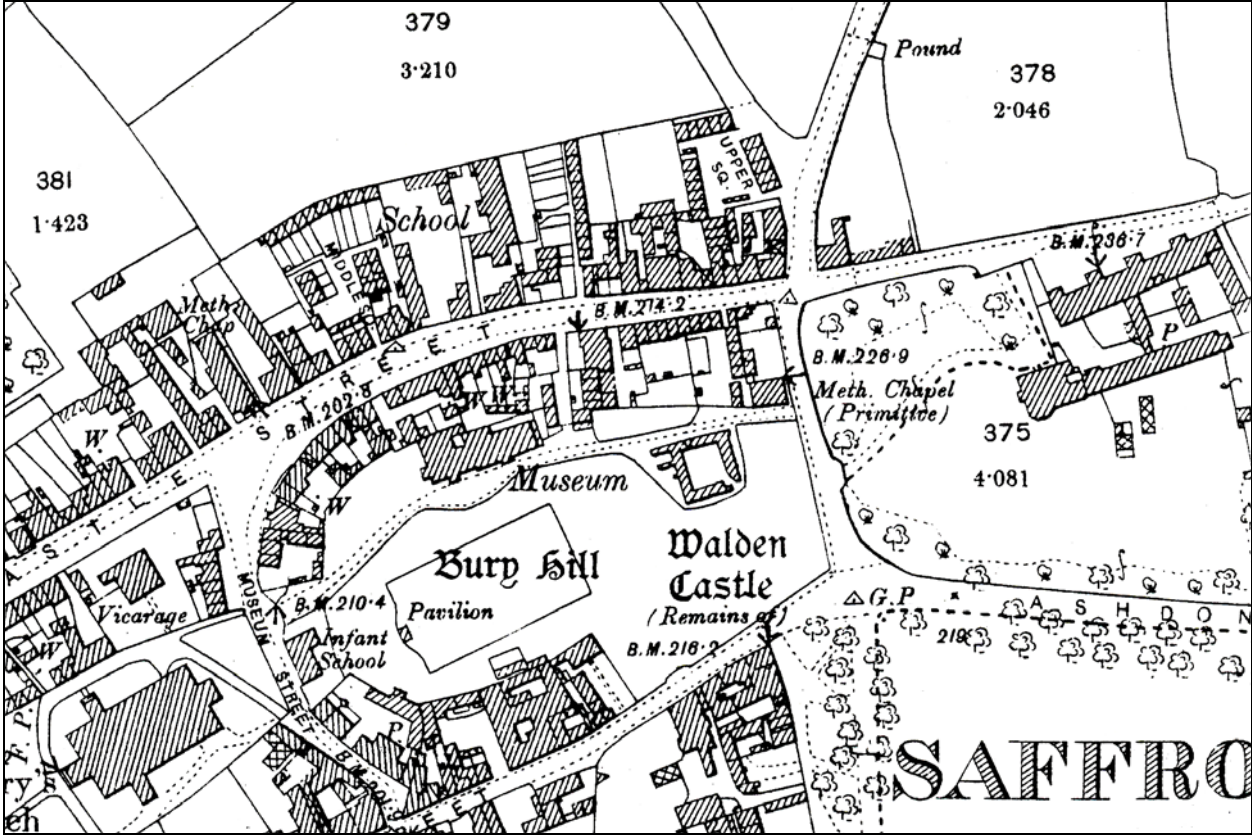


Fig. 5 OS second edition, 1897

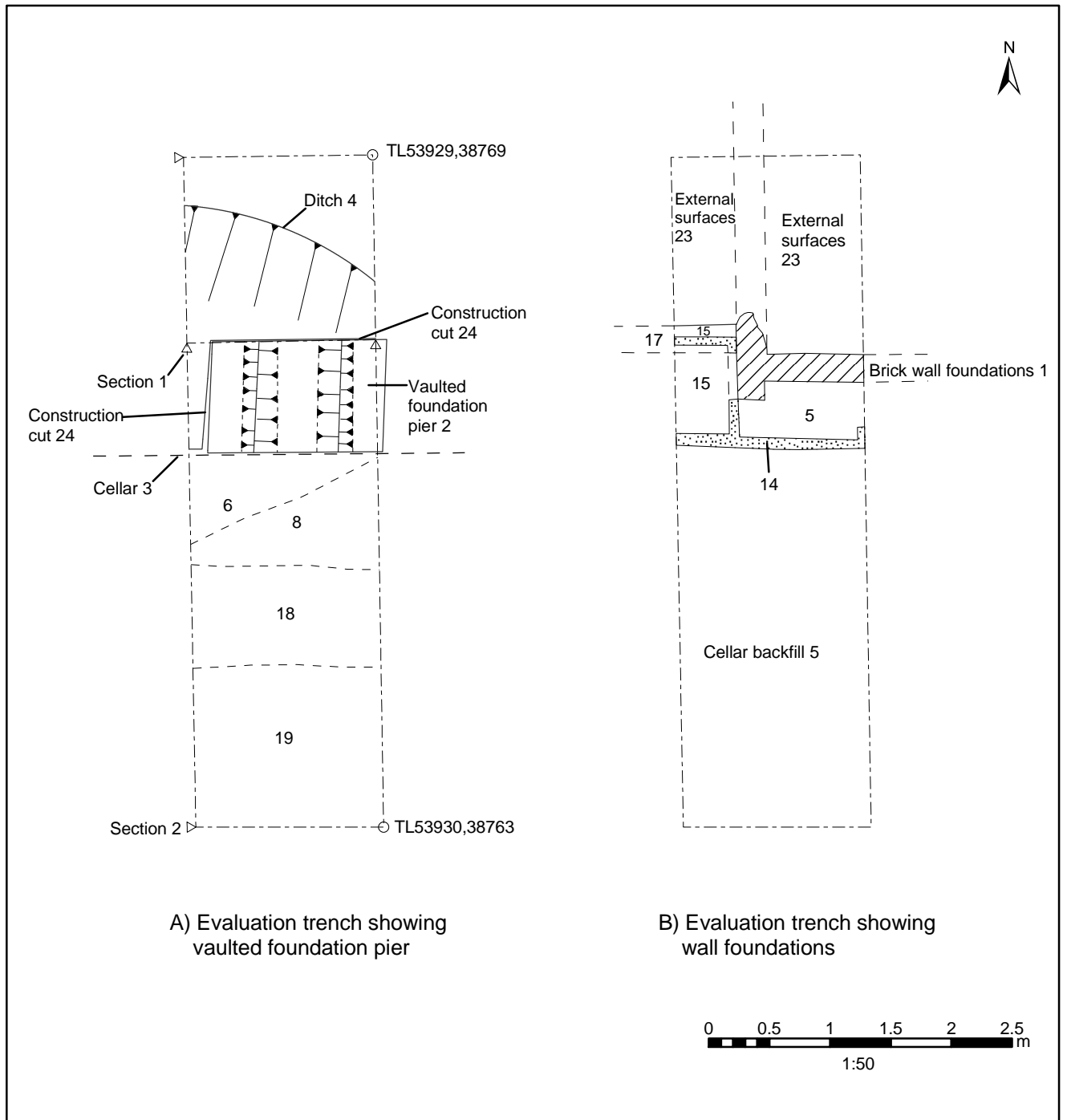


Fig.6. Evaluation trench plans

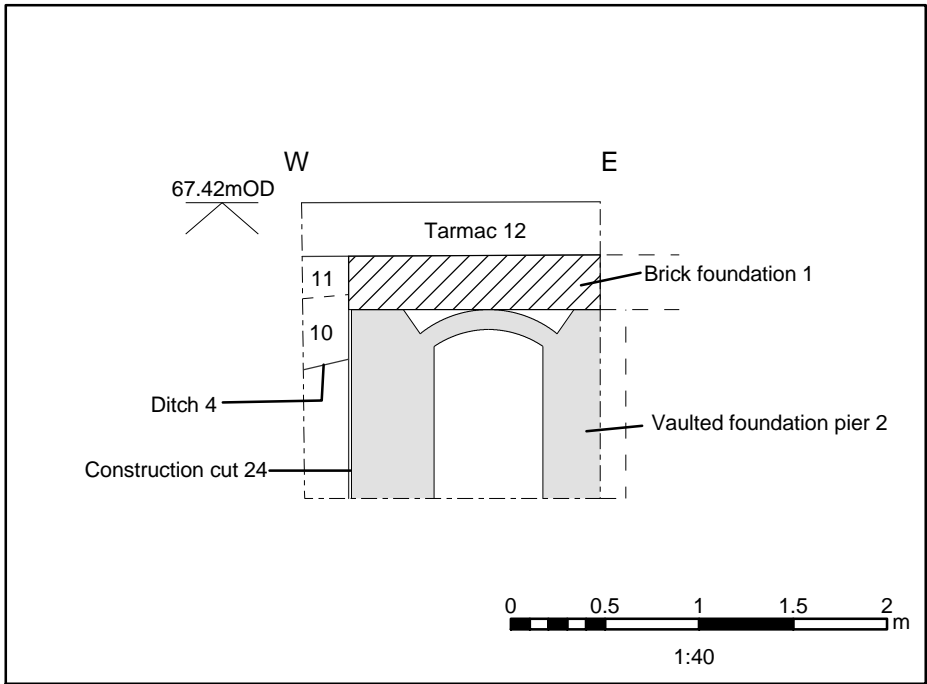


Fig.7. Section 1

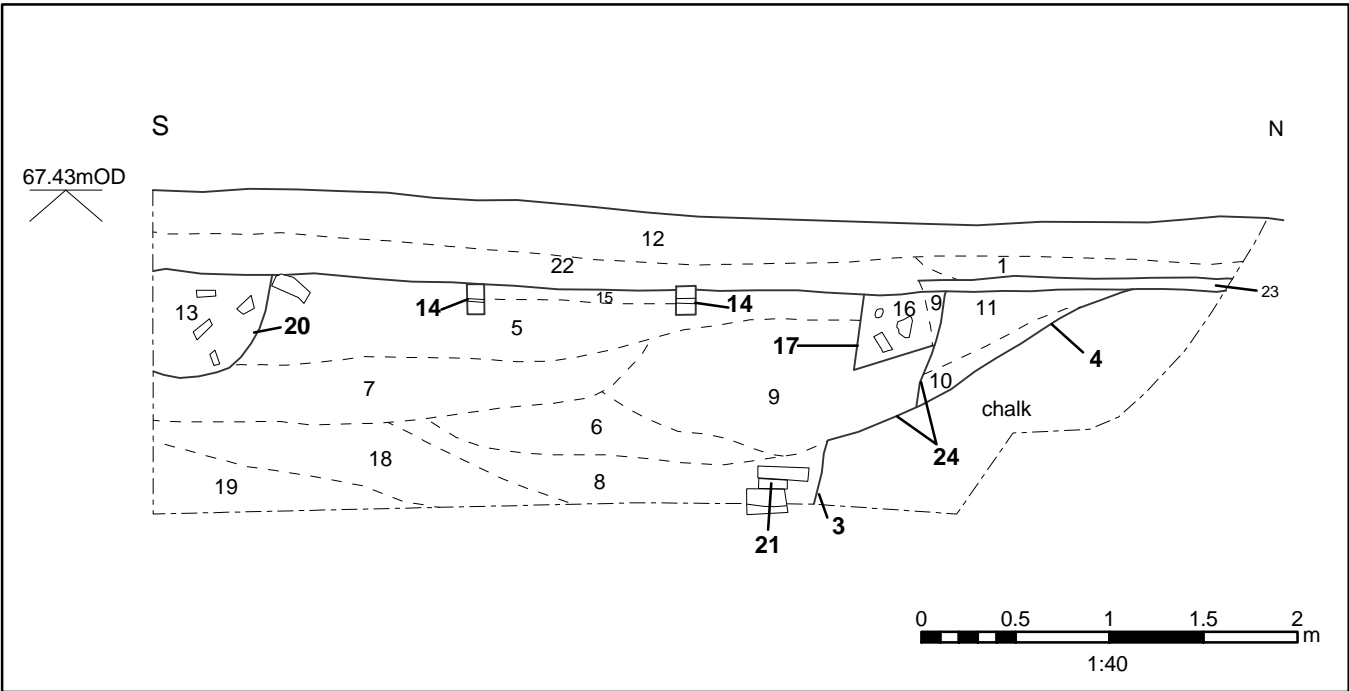


Fig.8. Section 2

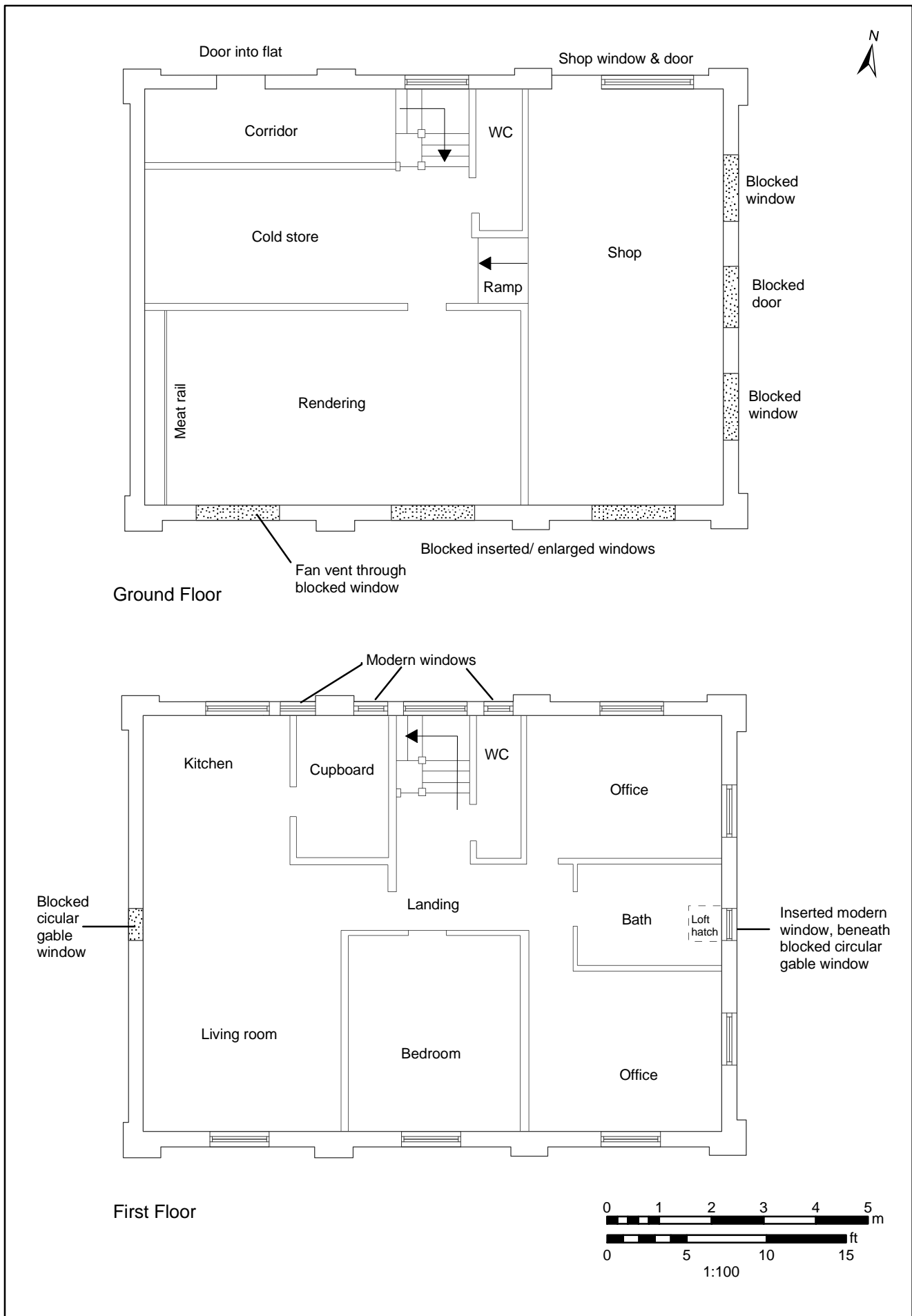


Fig.9. Ground and first floor plans



Plate 1 Curved brick foundation pier viewed from north



Plate 2 Wall foundations to former street frontage structure and later paved surfaces



Plate 3 North elevation of chapel



Plate 4 East elevation of chapel



Plate 5 Blocked central doorway and modern windows on east elevation



Plate 6 Exposed brickwork on south elevation of chapel



Plate 7 Blocked gable light on west elevation during building works



Plate 8 Stripped-out shop interior



Plate 9 Upstairs kitchen/living area



Plate 10 Top-opening window on east elevation



Plate 11 Stair window on north elevation



Plate 12 Loft hatch in bathroom



Plate 13 King post strut roof truss