

**Archaeological Watching Brief on Drainage Works
West of the Walled Garden
Crossing Temple, Crossing
Essex, CM77 8PD**

NGR: TL 79940 18739

**ASE Project No: E8030
Site Code: CT35**

**ASE Report No: 2013168
OASIS No: 154113**



August 2013

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**by
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August 2013

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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Bakers of Danbury Ltd to undertake an archaeological watching brief at Cressing Temple, near Braintree, during their groundworks for a new rainwater soakaway and associated drainage trench.

The works were located just to the west of the Tudor Walled Garden, within the historic farm complex. The remains of a brick foundation belonging to the corner of an 18th-19th century building were exposed in the soakaway pit. Incorporating re-used Tudor bricks, the building appears to have been built on to the Walled Garden. Cartographic research suggests that it was demolished sometime in the earlier 20th century, prior to the construction of the Dairy.

Other than a 20th century drain, no significant archaeological remains were identified within the drainage trench excavation.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (CAA), Institute of Archaeology (IoA), University College London (UCL) were commissioned by Bakers of Danbury Ltd to undertake a watching brief during the excavation of a new rainwater drainage trench and soakaway. The trench ran for 11.5m in a northerly direction from the north side of the garage to the position of the soakaway located 5m north-west of the dairy (Figure 1).

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The underlying natural geology comprises a glacial substratum of changeable chalky boulder clay overlying deep gravel beds. In places the chalky boulder clay is dissected by a series of periglacial channels and hollows filled with clean brown clay. When viewed from above these channels form regular shapes known as ice wedge polygons.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 The site is part of a Scheduled Monument protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 (SM 1002122). Scheduled Monument consent for the drainage works was granted by the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), following the advice of Debbie Priddy, Inspector of Ancient Monuments for English Heritage.

1.3.2 The small-scale nature of the drainage works meant that they were not subject to the usual planning regulations. The Historic Environment team of Essex County Council were, however, informed of the work and a site code ascertained.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to record, excavate, analyse and report on any archaeological remains present within the excavated trenches, thereby *preserving by record* those features/deposits threatened by the proposed drainage works.

1.4.2 The results of this archaeological work is discussed, where pertinent, with reference to regional research assessments and objectives identified in *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties, 2. research agenda and strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

1.5 Scope of Report

1.5.1 This report details the results of the watching brief on the groundworks for the new soakaway and drainage trench carried out by Trevor Ennis (Senior Archaeologist) on the 24th and 25th June 2013. The fieldwork was managed by Adrian Scruby.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The following background is based on the published papers from the conference on Cressing Temple held in 1992 (Andrews 1992) and a recent published guide to the site (Wadhams *et al* 2012). The largely unpublished results from investigations undertaken from the 1970s onwards are also alluded to.

2.1 Historical Overview

2.1.1 Cressing Temple was originally established by a community of the Knights Templar in the 12th century. The Knights Templar were granted the estate of Cressing by Queen Matilda in 1137. In 1147-8, King Stephen granted the Templars the manor and half hundred of Witham in addition to Queen Matilda's earlier grant, and it is thought that by 1300 Cressing was the nucleus of an estate comprising some 2000 acres. In the late 13th century the popularity of the Templars waned and by 1308 the order was suppressed and Cressing Temple passed into the hands of the Knights Hospitallers.

2.1.2 The later 14th century was a period of considerable unrest which, as a result of an increase in the already unpopular poll tax, saw the Peasant's Revolt.

As the master of the Hospitallers was also the Treasurer of England, Hospitaller sites became prime targets for retribution resulting in the sacking of Cressing Temple in 1381. The site was again threatened during the civil war as the then owners of Cressing Temple, the Smyth/Neville family, were sympathetic to the Royalist cause.

2.1.3 From 1703 until the late 19th century the estate was owned by the Olmius family and Cressing Temple became a tenanted farm. In 1882 it was bought by the Ford family and then bought by Frank Cullen, a local seed grower, in 1913. The estate was split up in 1987 when the farmstead (with its two substantial 13th century barns) and surrounding land were purchased by Essex County Council to develop as its heritage flagship site.

2.2 Period Summaries

2.2.1 There is evidence of a prehistoric presence on site in the Bronze Age and Middle Iron Age. A scattering of Bronze Age pottery, flint tools and flakes have been recovered from across the site and three pits of Middle Iron Age date have been excavated.

2.2.2 Residual finds of Late Iron Age and Roman date have been found throughout the building complex. A decapitated human burial found in the walled garden is believed to be of Roman date. Evidence of extensive Late Iron Age and Roman settlement, spanning the 1st-4th centuries, has been found to the east of the complex beneath the car park, its approach road, the Visitors centre (Garwood 1997) and in Dovehouse Field (see below).

2.2.3 A small amount of early Saxon occupation remains of latest 4th or 5th century date have also been found in Dovehouse Field.

2.2.4 Excavated buildings relating to the Templar period include the foundations of a 12th century chapel, a stone hall and two chambers. The two extant barns were built in the 13th century and part of the present farmhouse may date to the 14th century. In the 16th century the Smyth family constructed a Tudor Great House (demolished after 1703) and the extant walled garden to its rear.

2.2.5 Other extant buildings include the early 17th Granary, a rebuilt 18th century barn and a cart lodge dating to around 1800. Parts of the existing farmhouse date to the early 17th century with further alterations occurring in the 18th and 19th centuries. The small building known as the dairy was constructed in the early 20th century. The date of the nearby garage building has not been firmly established beyond the post-medieval period but the structure is believed to contain traces of Tudor brickwork (Robey 1992, 49).

2.3 Recent Archaeological Investigation

2.3.1 Several phases of archaeological work have been undertaken at Cressing Temple. This initially comprised excavation in the late 1970's by the Brain Valley Archaeological Society (BVAS) under the direction of John Hope. Subsequent work in the late 1980's and 1990's was undertaken by Essex County Council (ECC) and includes the excavation of the access road and car park, excavations within the walled garden, as well as limited excavations within the standing buildings and during groundworks on site.

2.3.2 Excavations in Dovehouse Field between 1998 and 2003 were undertaken as part of an annual archaeological field school organised by the then ECC Field Archaeology Unit. Archaeological remains mainly dating to the late Iron Age and Roman periods were uncovered characterised by large enclosures bounded by ditches and banks, with working hollows, pits, fence-lines, possible agricultural buildings and occasional human and animal burials.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

3.1.1 The groundwork contractor's machine-excavation of the soakaway and pipe trench was observed by an archaeologist. The soakaway pit was 1.5m square and was initially excavated to the top of the archaeological horizon at a depth of c.0.5m. Archaeological remains within the pit were found to be cut by the trench for a modern metal water pipe. After consultation between Bakers and their client it was agreed to enlarge the trench by 0.7m to the west to enable the soakaway to be excavated to its full depth without damage to the water pipe. Further archaeological remains were exposed in

the enlarged trench.

3.1.2 The enlarged soakaway pit was rectangular in plan and measured 2.2m x 1.5m x 1.5m deep (max.). The connecting drainage trench was 11.5m long by c.0.35m wide and 0.3-0.35m deep. All machining was undertaken under archaeological supervision apart from the removal of natural clay from the very base of the soakaway.

3.1.3 Exposed archaeological remains were cleaned, photographed and recorded. All work was carried out in accordance with IfA (Institute for Archaeologists) by-laws and guidelines and complied with Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (Gurney 2003). Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout.

3.2 The Site Archive

3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited at Braintree Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are summarised below (Table 1).

Number of Contexts	10
No. of files	1 file
Plan and sections sheets	1
Photographs	19
Bulk finds	3 bricks (to be discarded)

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Turf/topsoil was hand removed from both the soakaway pit and drainage trench and the underlying deposits were removed by machine. Natural chalk-flecked yellow/brown boulder clay was only exposed in the soakaway. The list of recorded contexts is presented below (Table 1).

4.2 Soakaway Pit

4.2.1 Revealed at a depth of c.0.5m was the right-angled corner of brick wall foundation [05]. The wall foundation was aligned east-west and north-south and extended beyond the soakaway pit, to the east and south. As exposed, the east-west foundation was 1.8m long and the north/south foundation was 1.4m long, both were 0.50m wide and survived to a height of 0.28m. The wall was constructed from a variety of whole and half to three quarter length, large and unfrogged, hand-made bricks bonded with sandy yellowish brown lime mortar (Munsell – 7.5YR 5/8). It consisted of three courses, of which the upper two were fairly random but did approximate to a rough header bond over a lower course in rowlock bond (Figure 5). The top of the natural clay was nearly level with the top of the uppermost brick course implying that the foundation had been inserted into a construction trench. Vague traces of a narrow (c.0.05m wide) backfilled construction cut were noted on the inside of the east/west foundation. No associated floor surfaces were present.

4.1.2 The top of the foundation was truncated by the cut of a trench for a modern metal water-pipe [07]. The backfill [06] of this trench could not be easily discerned from the overlying layer of greyish brown silty gravel with occasional small fragments of modern looking brick [04] and it is reasonable to assume that these are contemporary. This layer was very compact and its top, though fairly uneven and irregular, may have been utilised as a form of yard surface. Separating layer [04] from the turf/topsoil [01] was 0.20m of mixed gravel consisting of firm lower brown material [03] and slightly looser upper dark grey brown material [02].

4.2 Drainage Trench

4.2.1 No natural clay was observed in the drainage trench, which was generally about 0.30-0.35m deep. A layer of greyish brown gravel [10] in the base of the trench was cut by the trench for a ceramic field drain. Its rubble backfill contained fragments of frogged brick of late 19th/20th century date. The rubble appeared to be overlain by a band of pale creamy mortar [09] which was present in the centre of the drainage trench (the area north of the dairy path). Concrete rubble at a similar depth was noted in the south of the

drainage trench. Sealing these deposits was a thin layer of grey pea gravel [08] overlain by the turf/topsoil [01].

4.2.2 The drainage trench was slightly deeper (c.0.40m) at its northern end where it joined with the soakaway. Here it was possible to trace the foundation [05] for an additional 0.6m southwards from the edge of the soakaway before the trench became too shallow and the line of the trench and foundation began to diverge.

Context	Type	Description
01	Layer	Dark grey sandy silt (turf/topsoil), 0.10m deep
02	Layer	Dark grey/brown gravel & pea gravel, 0.12m deep
03	Layer	Mid brown sandy clay and gravel, 0.10m deep
04	Layer	Greyish brown silty gravel, 0.22m deep
05	Wall	L-shaped wall foundation, 1.8m+(E/W) x 1.4m+ (N/S) x 0.50m wide x 0.28m deep
06	Fill of 07	Greyish brown gravel & brick rubble
07	Cut	Modern pipe trench, 1.5m+ x c. 0.30m x 0.10m+ deep
08	Layer	Grey pea gravel, 0.05m deep
09	Layer	Pale creamy mortar, 0.05m deep
10	Layer	Greyish brown gravel, 0.12m+

Table 2: List of recorded contexts

5.0 FINDS

5.1 General

5.1.1 Other than bricks from wall foundation [05], no archaeological finds were retrieved from either the soakaway pit or drain trench excavations.

5.2 Brick

5.2.1 Three whole sample bricks were recovered from the foundation [05]. All were large and irregular in appearance with rough bases and ranged in colour from orange to light red. The first two bricks (Table 3 below) fall comfortably within the usual measurement range (c.230-250 x 100-120 x 45-65mm) for 16th to early 17th century Tudor 'place' bricks in Essex (Ryan 1996, 95; Ryan and Andrews 1992, 97). The third brick is slightly larger, but bricks measuring up to 255mm (10 inches) in length and 128mm (5 inches) in width are not unknown (Ryan and Andrews 1992, 94).

	Length	Width	Depth
Brick 1	245mm	118mm	62mm
Brick 2	250mm	118mm	65mm
Brick 3	252mm	123mm	64mm

Table 3: Brick measurements

5.2.2 After cleaning, traces of a second paler coating was noted adhering to the bricks beneath the yellow brown sandy lime mortar used to bond the foundation. The underlying paler substance appeared to be a cream-coloured lime wash rather than mortar and was evident on at least two of the brick samples. The presence of the lime wash suggests that the bricks may have been re-used.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Discussion

6.1.1 The earliest feature encountered was the right-angled wall foundation [05]. This would appear to be the corner of a rectangular structure built to the west of the walled garden. The wall was roughly aligned with the front of the garage building and perpendicular to the west wall of the walled garden to the immediate north of a new buttress. The wall should have been apparent within the construction cut for this new feature. However, no sign of an east/west wall foundation was observed (pers comm. D. Andrews), though it is possible that the foundation may have been previously removed or did not extend right up to garden wall. That the building associated with the wall foundation did previously meet the garden wall was implied by a vertical tar stain on the garden wall just to the north of the new buttress and a corresponding change in design to the top of the wall (Figure 6).

6.1.2 The rectangular building was constructed within the post-medieval period. It is clearly later than the 16th century walled garden which it abutted and the re-use of Tudor bricks, possibly reclaimed from the demolished Great House or an associated outbuilding, might imply a post-1703 date. Along with several of the site's other agricultural buildings, it is likely that it was constructed in the 18th or 19th century, when Cressing Temple was in use as

a tenanted farm.

6.1.3 A building in the correct position (to the north of the garage) is shown on 1:2500 Ordnance Survey maps of 1875, 1897 and 1922, whilst 1:2500 maps from 1953 onwards only show the smaller dairy building. The rectangular building was therefore seemingly demolished post-1922 and the early 20th-century dairy building constructed not long after. The rectangular building had been truncated to foundation level and was cut by a modern water pipe. The compact nature of overlying layer [04] suggested that a rough yard surface formerly sealed the foundations. Further research could perhaps identify the function of this former building within the functioning of the farm complex.

6.1.4 Only a single ceramic field drain of 19th or 20th century date was observed within the drainage trench. While an absence of medieval and early post-medieval in this area of the Cressing temple site is indicated, this at least attests to the continued general development/maintenance of the farmstead up to the modern day.

6.2 Conclusion

6.2.1 The watching brief has recorded a part of the foundations of a previously unknown rectangular building of probable 18th or 19th century date prior to their destruction by the drainage works. Although these results are small-scale, they contribute to the understanding of the later development of the Cressing Temple site and help inform the future management of its heritage resource.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Bakers of Danbury Ltd for commissioning the archaeological work and for their assistance throughout the project, and Debbie Priddy of English Heritage for her guidance and monitoring. The watching brief was undertaken by Trevor Ennis of Archaeology South-East. Andrew Lewsey produced the figures for this report, Adrian Scruby project managed the fieldwork and Mark Atkinson project managed the post-excavation process.

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Appendix 1: EHER Summary Form

Site name/Address: Drainage works west of the Walled Garden, Cressing Temple, Witham Road, Cressing, near Braintree, CM77 8PD	
Parish: Cressing	District: Braintree
NGR: TL 79940 18739	Site Code: CT35
Type of Work: Watching brief	Site Director/Group: T. Ennis, Archaeology South-East
Date of Work: 24-25 June 2013	Size of Area Investigated: c.7.3m sq
Location of Finds/Curating Museum: Braintree Museum	Funding source: client
Further Seasons Anticipated?: No	Related HER Nos:
Final Report: EAH roundup	OASIS No: 154113
Periods Represented: post-medieval, modern	
SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:	
<p><i>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during contractor's groundworks for a new rainwater soakaway and associated drainage trench. The works were located just to the west of the Tudor Walled Garden, within the historic farm complex.</i></p> <p><i>The remains of a brick foundation belonging to the corner of an 18th-19th century building were exposed in the soakaway pit. Incorporating re-used Tudor bricks, the building appears to have been built onto the Walled Garden. Cartographic research suggests that it was demolished sometime in the earlier 20th century, prior to the construction of the Dairy.</i></p> <p><i>Other than a 20th century drain, no significant archaeological remains were identified within the drainage trench excavation.</i></p>	
Previous Summaries/Reports:	
Author of Summary: M. Atkinson	Date of Summary: 13/08/13

Appendix 2: OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-154113

Project details

Project name	Cressing Temple drainage works: watching brief
Short description of the project	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during contractor's groundworks for a new rainwater soakaway and associated drainage trench. The works were located just to the west of the Tudor Walled Garden, within the historic farm complex. The remains of a brick four belonging to the corner of an 18th-19th century building were exposed in the soakaway pit. Incorporating re-used Tudor bricks, the building appears to have been built onto the Walled Garden. Cartographic research suggests that it was demolished sometime in the earlier 20th century to the construction of the Dairy. Other than a 20th century drain, no significant archaeological remains were identified within the drainage trench excavation.
Project dates	Start: 24-06-2013 End: 25-06-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	CT35 - Sitecode E8030 - Contracting Unit No. 1002122 - SM No. 6012 - Related HER No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument
Current Land use	Other 14 - Recreational usage
Monument type	WALL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Scheduled Monument Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX BRAINTREE CRESSING Cressing Temple
Postcode	CM77 8PD
Study area	7.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 79940 18739 51 0 51 50 15 N 000 36 43 E Point

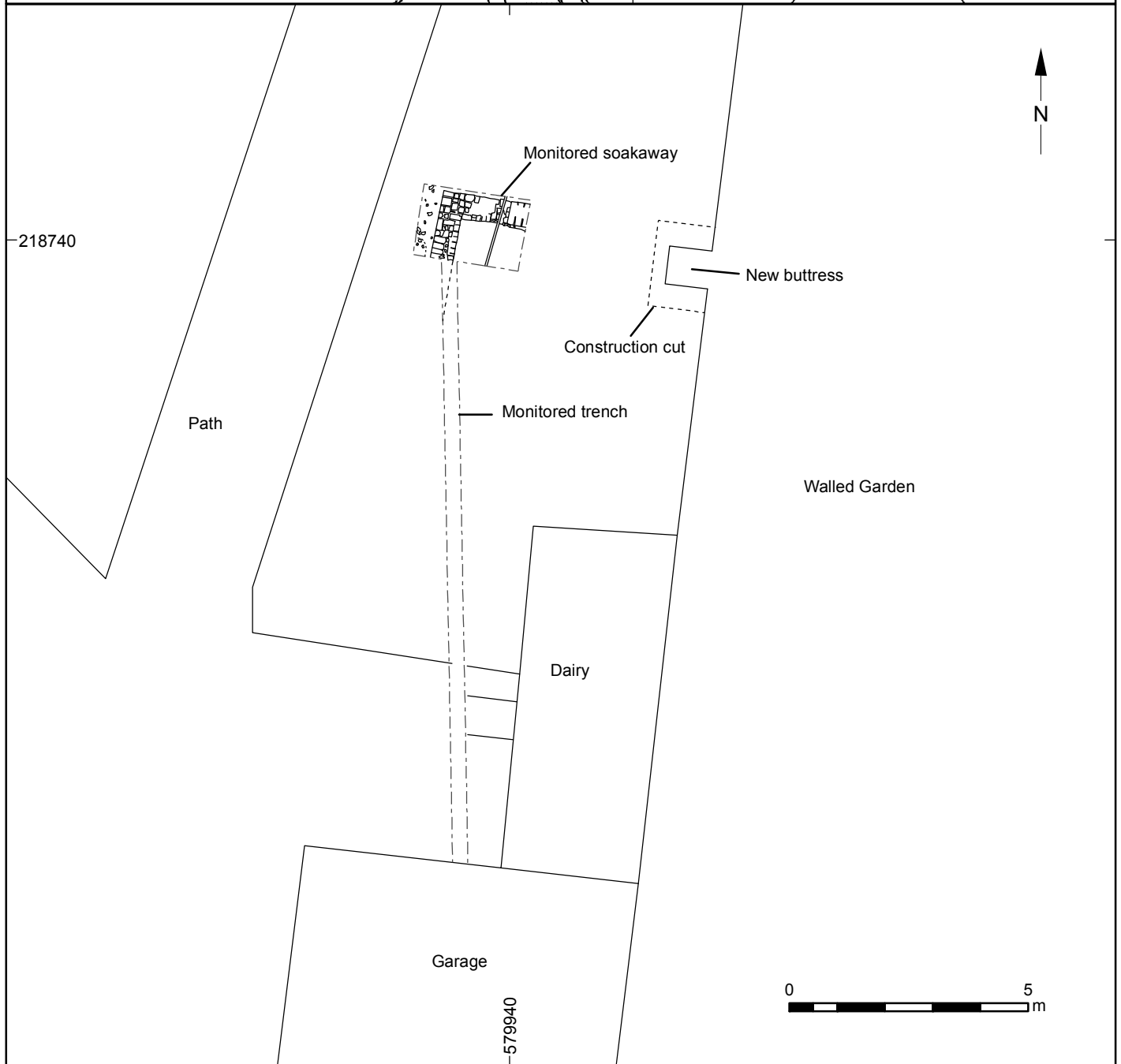
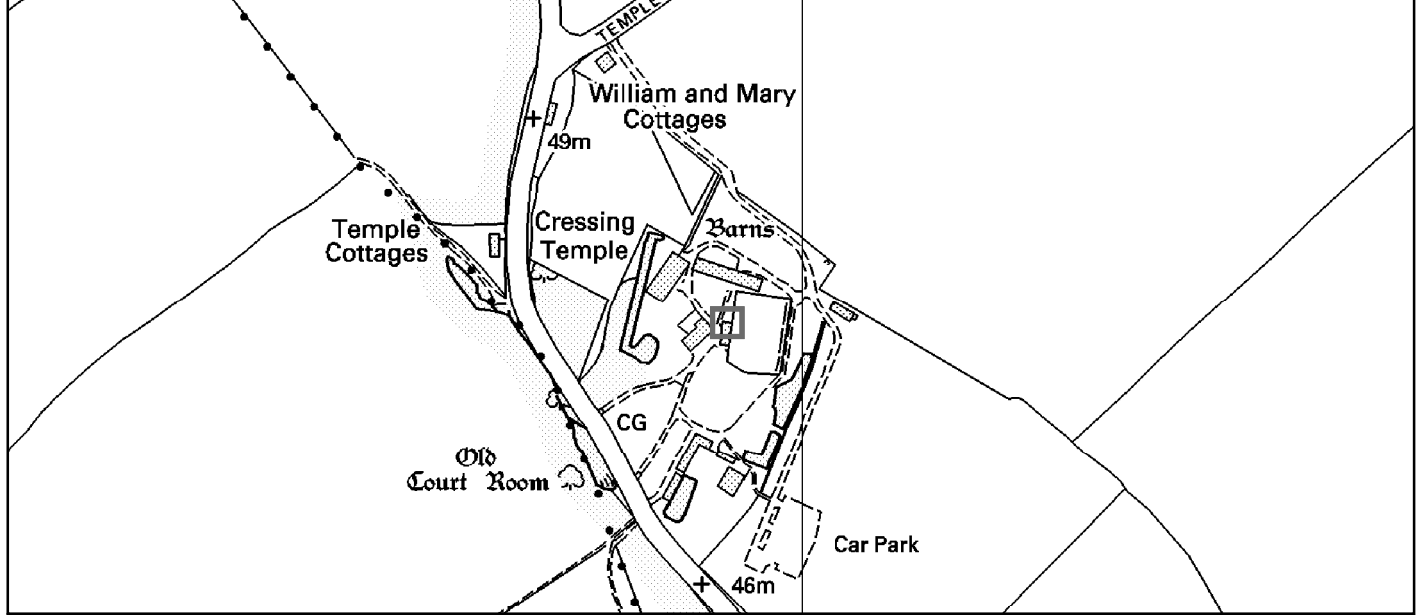
Project creators

Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	None
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Adrian Scruby
Project supervisor	Trevor Ennis
Type of sponsor/funding body	client

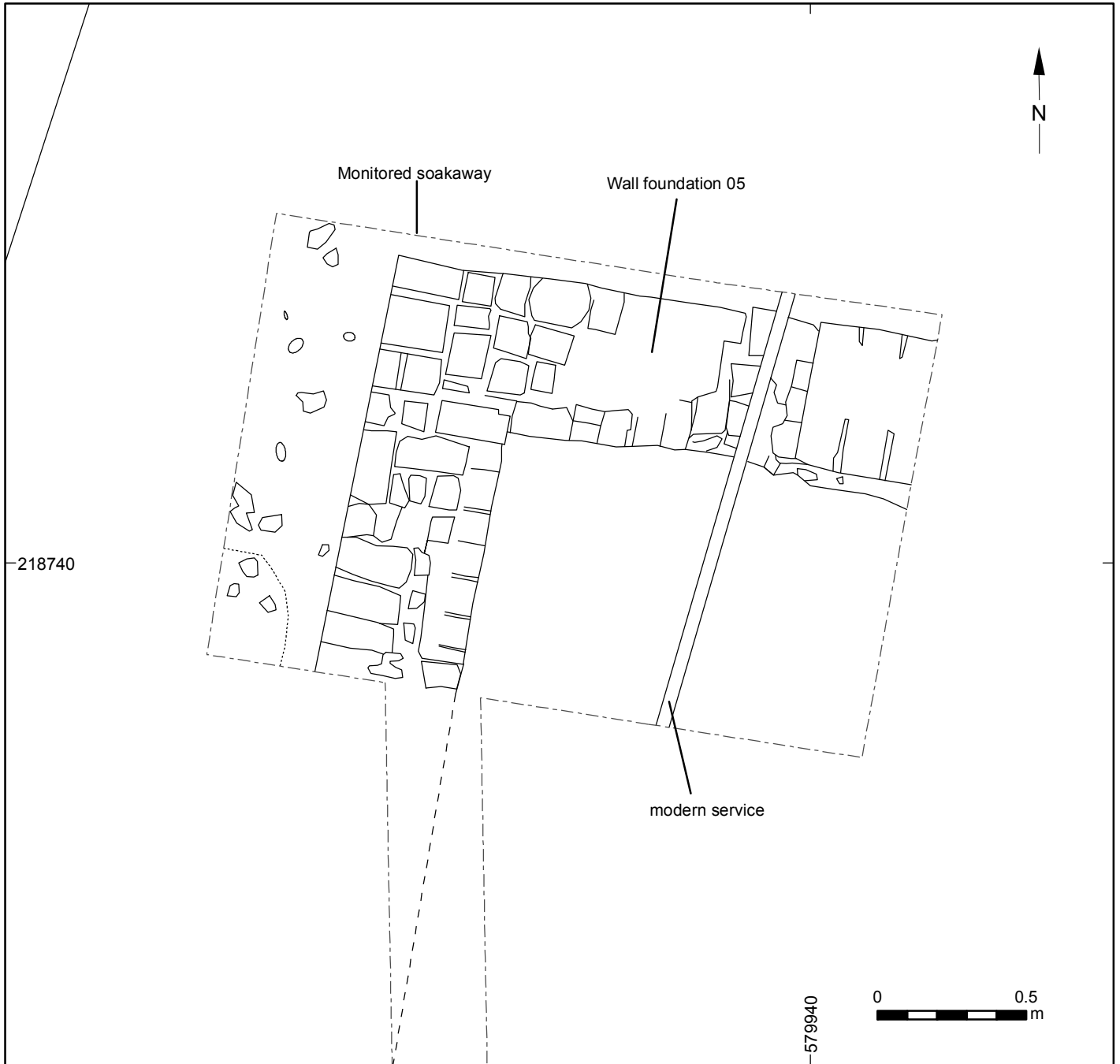
Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Physical Archive recipient	n/a
Digital Archive recipient	Braintree Museum
Digital Archive ID	CT 35
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Digital Archive notes	digital images on CD-Rom
Paper Archive recipient	Braintree Museum
Paper Archive ID	CT 35
Paper Contents	"Ceramics", "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Plan", "Report", "Section"

Entered by	Mark Atkinson (mark.atkinson@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	13 August 2013



© Archaeology South-East		Crissing Temple	Fig. 1
Project Ref: E8030	July 2013	Location of archaeological monitoring	
Report Ref: 2013168	Drawn by: APL		



© Archaeology South-East		Crossing temple	Fig. 2
Project Ref: E8030	July 2013	Detail of wall foundation 05	
Report Ref: 2013168	Drawn by: APL		



Figure 3: Wall 05, looking north (1m scale)



Figure 4: Wall 05, looking south (1m scale)



Figure 5: Wall 05 coursing detail, looking west (0.5m scale)

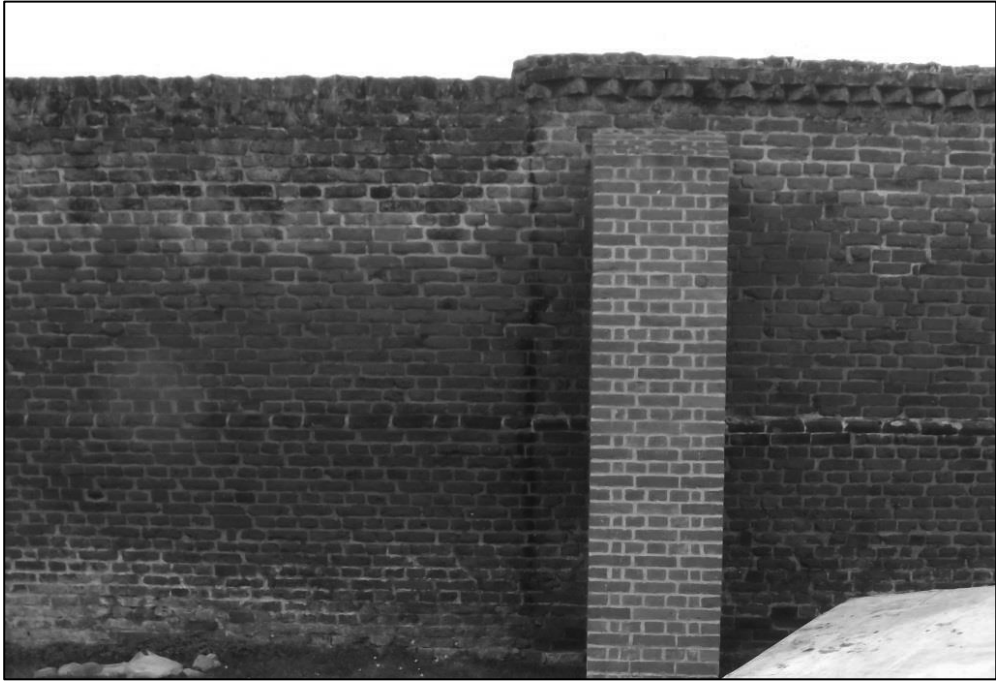


Figure 6: Garden wall with tar stain looking east

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