

Archaeological Watching Brief

**23 Bell Street,
Sawbridgeworth,
Hertfordshire, CM21 9AR**

**ASE Project No: 170005
Site Code: BES17**

ASE Report No: 2017458



November 2017

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Sawbridgeworth,
East Hertfordshire, CM21 9AR**

NGR: TL 48257 14863

Planning Ref: 3/16/1879/FUL

**ASE Project No: 170005
Site Code: BES 17**

**ASE Report No: 2017458
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By Paulo Clemente

**With contributions by
Isa Benedetti-Whitton, Trista Clifford and Elke Raemen,**

Illustrations by Andrew Lewsey

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|----------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Prepared by: | Paulo Clemente | Archaeologist |
| Reviewed and approved by: | Mark Atkinson | Project Manager |
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**Archaeology South-East
27 Eastways
Witham
Essex
CM8 3YQ**

**Tel: 01376 331470
Email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
Web: www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeologyse**

Abstract

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by Archaeology South-East at 23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, East Hertfordshire, CM21 9AR, between the 23rd and 25th October 2017. The fieldwork was commissioned by Mr Robbie Nelson and was carried out during construction works for an extension to the rear of the historic building.

The frontage building, a timber-framed house of early/mid 16th-century origin, was subject to historic building recording works in March 2017, prior to its refurbishment.

The watching brief observed the excavation of foundation trenches for a building measuring c.8m x 3.5m. The archaeological remains of two pits, a probable well, a possible ditch and various made-ground deposits were identified.

These recorded remains appear to span the post-medieval period, potentially from the 16th century onwards, and are interpreted to relate to activities and amenities within the rear plot of the historic standing building on the Bell Street frontage.

All these remains were sealed by levelling layers probably related to the construction of an earlier, timber-framed, extension to the rear of the property in c.1800 and its subsequent alteration/improvement.

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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), was commissioned by Mr Robbie Nelson to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording during the excavation of foundation trenches for a replacement rear extension at 23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, East Hertfordshire.
- 1.1.2 23 Bell Street is statutorily listed at Grade II (List Entry nos. 1347818), along with No.21 Bell Street. In view of this designation, and in accordance with the requirements of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, East Herts District Council specified the requirement for an archaeological watching brief to be carried out during alteration works.
- 1.1.3 Prior to this, a historic building survey was undertaken at No.23 ahead of the building's refurbishment (ASE 2017b).

1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The town of Sawbridgeworth is located on the eastern edge of East Hertfordshire district, on the border with the county of Essex. The site, No.23, is located on the north side of Bell Street in the historic town centre (NGR TL 48257 14863; Figure 1). Together with 21 Bell Street, it forms an east/west aligned range, with its principal elevation facing south. Each property has a small yard/garden to its rear.
- 1.2.2 The area to the immediate rear of the standing building was until recently occupied by a timber-framed two-storey extension. Beyond this was a generally flat yard/garden area. The extension was recorded by the preceding building recording survey prior to its demolition.
- 1.2.3 The solid geology of the area is formed from Lowestoft Formation - Diamicton. Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period. (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 Planning permission was granted (planning ref: 3/16/1879/FUL) for the part change of use of retail unit (A1) to residential (C3) to form one 2 bedroomed dwelling, comprising replacement single and two storey rear extensions. This consent included an archaeological condition which stated:

Condition No. 2

No development shall take place within the proposed development site until the applicant, or their agents, or their successors in title, has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, which has been submitted to the planning authority and approved in writing. This condition will only be considered to be discharged when the planning authority has received and approved an

archaeological report of all the required archaeological works, and if appropriate, a commitment to publication has been made.

- 1.3.2 The scope of the works were determined in consultation with the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Advisor, Alison Tinniswood, and undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (ASE 2017a) that was approved prior to the commencement of fieldwork.
- 1.3.3 The planning consent also required historic building recording works to be carried out under the same condition (Condition 12). This work was undertaken in March 2017 and has been reported upon separately (ASE 2017b).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

- 1.4.1 The groundworks were judged to have the potential to expose evidence of earlier phases of development and activity on the site. As such, the general aim of the work was to monitor the above and below-ground works in order that any evidence relating to the dating and development of the existing building or previous phase of development on the site could be recorded and analysed, and used to enhance its understanding.
- 1.4.2 Specific project objectives identified in the WSI were all related to the Historic Building Recording works. However, themes of potential relevance to this site, relating to the Regional Research Framework (Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Medlycott 2011), are as follows:

- Can the urban development of Sawbridgeworth, through the medieval and post-medieval periods, be discerned? (cf. Brown *et al* 2000,45)
- Can archaeological remains indicative of the social organisation and economy of the medieval town be identified and explored? (cf. Ayers 30-1).

'Almost all the small towns and several of the larger ones lack the basic data necessary to allow the establishment of chronological sequences, the definition of social differentiation or the characterisation of economic life. Priority questions, therefore, for towns both large and small are often fundamental but need to be stated, with data acquisition targeted towards:

- *the establishment of basic chronologies*
- *the ranking of settlement*
- *the examination of settlement morphology*
- *the definition of status'*

(Ayers 2000, 30)

- Can archaeological remains reveal when the plot was first occupied, and help address the issue of changes over time and also identify industrial and commercial buildings and structures? (cf. Medlycott 2011,70)
- Can synthesis of evidence for the above-ground and below-ground built environment signify economic and social importance of classes of historic buildings within an area? (cf. Medlycott 2011,70)
- Can archaeological remains identify and record shops, public houses, work shops and commercial premises? (cf. Medlycott 2011,78)

- Can material culture contribute to the study of the post-medieval and particularly modern periods? (cf. Medlycott 2011,78-79)
- Can late medieval and post-medieval small metal artefacts contribute to the understanding of whether these objects are copied widely but produced locally, or if they are being produced in a limited number of places and distributed widely? (cf. Medlycott 2011,79)
- Can archaeological remains reveal important aspects in recording the historic urban environment including the development of 19th/20th-century housing, the economic and social influences of town? (cf. Medlycott 2011,80)

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report describes and assesses the significance of the results of the archaeological monitoring of the foundation trench for the building extension to the rear of the property. The fieldwork was carried out by Paulo Clemente between 23rd and 25th November 2017 and was project managed by Andrew Leonard.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A Heritage Statement has previously been prepared for the property (Prime Meridian 2016).

2.2 Medieval

- 2.2.1 The 13th century church of Great St Mary (HHER 1104) has its origins in the Saxon period and Sawbridgeworth is first mentioned in the Domesday Book as 'Sawbrixworde' and was owned by Geoffrey de Mandville. In 1222 Geoffrey de Say received the grant of a market to be held at Sawbridgeworth on a Saturday. The medieval marketplace was located west of the church (HHER 9533). In the 18th century the town developed as part of the malting and river transport industries of West Essex and East Hertfordshire.

- 2.2.2 The distinctive square street layout is thought to be a rare example of medieval town planning. Bell Street makes up the south side of the square. The town thrived in the medieval period (HHER 17) as a market town specialising in the saffron trade.

- 2.2.3 No.23 Bell Street lies in the medieval core of Sawbridgeworth, on the northern side of the street, and comprises the easternmost part (service end) of a c.15th-century (possibly 13th-century) timber-framed hall house (Historic England, National Heritage List, ref. 1347818; HHER 9537). The original hall house faces onto the street, and includes 21 Bell Street (within the former parlour) and the retail space within the west of 23 Bell Street.

2.3 Post-Medieval

- 2.3.1 The site is situated within a townscape of 16th- to 18th-century buildings along Bell Street and beyond, with the Sawbridgeworth Tithe Map of 1839 showing a complex of buildings to the rear of 21-23 Bell Street. In the post-medieval period, the town was known for its maltings which are in evidence on the 1879-1890 Ordnance Survey map. In fact, parts of two former maltings survive on Bell Street (HHER 6274, 6275) and historic maps depict a building labelled 'Malthouse' attached to the north side what is now Sayesbury Manor (HHER 9417)

- 2.3.2 The hall was floored over and an extension was added to the east end of the property (to the rear of No.23) in the 17th-century. The building was refaced in brick during the 19th-century. An additional timber-framed and timber-clad extension was added to the rear of the property c.1800.

- 2.3.3 The footprint of the building was already established by the time of the 1879-90 map, on which it is depicted as three properties. The footprint does not change on any subsequent maps.

2.4 Previous Archaeological Investigation

- 2.4.1 Various archaeological investigations have been carried out elsewhere along Bell Street, at nos.9, 17 and 22-26, but only post-medieval garden features,

garden soils and a stable block found (HHER 12815, 13144, 17462, 17538). However, the remains previously found during a trial-trench evaluation at 19-23 Bell Street (ECC FAU 2004) included a single posthole of 13/14th century date, as well as a 18/19th century pits and a brick wall foundation.

- 2.4.2 A 2002 trial-trench evaluation (HHER 11916) and watching brief/excavation in 2012 c.60m to the south of Bell Street, within the grounds of Sayesbury Manor, established that this vicinity had been disturbed by 19th century landscaping, garden and drainage activity (ECC FAU 2012).
- 2.4.3 Most recently, the Historic Building recording and monitoring of No.23 was undertaken prior to the commencement of clearance and construction works. The reported results provide a detailed account of the building's development, including a record of the demolished historic timber-framed extension (ASE 2017b).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 Fieldwork Methodology

- 3.1.1 The methodology specified for the archaeological work can be found in full in the WSI (ASE 2017a).
- 3.1.2 The watching brief comprised the monitoring of groundworks for the construction of an extension to the rear of the building (Figure 2).
- 3.1.3 Excavation was undertaken by mechanical excavator or else by hand, by the construction works contractor
- 3.1.4 Standard ASE excavation, artefact collection and recording methodologies were employed throughout, with all work carried out in accordance with the ClfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a), *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014b) and in compliance with *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014c).
- 3.2.5 All stratigraphy was recorded using the ASE context recording system. Where possible within the confines of the groundworks, exposed archaeological features and deposits were cleaned, recorded and excavated, except obviously modern features and disturbances.
- 3.2.6 Features were excavated using hand tools, planned using digital survey equipment (GPS) and sections hand-drawn at 1:10 scale on drawing film sheets. A full digital photographic record was compiled.
- 3.2.7 All artefacts were collected from excavated features and deposits and retained for processing and specialist identification and study.

3.3 Site Archive

- 3.3.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE. The contents of the archive are tabulated below (Table 2).
- 3.3.2 All retained finds will be kept with the site record. Subject to the consent of the legal landowner, the full archive will be deposited with the Bishops Stortford Museum in due course.

| | |
|----------------------|----|
| Context sheets | 13 |
| Section sheets | 2 |
| Plans sheets | 1 |
| Colour photographs | 0 |
| B&W photos | 0 |
| Digital photos | 37 |
| Context register | 13 |
| Drawing register | 0 |
| Watching brief forms | 3 |
| Trench Record forms | 0 |

Table 1: Quantification of site paper archive

| | |
|--|--------|
| Bulk finds (quantity e.g. 1 bag, 1 box, 0.5 box 0.5 of a box) | 4 bags |
| Registered finds (number of) | 0 |
| Flots and environmental remains from bulk samples | 0 |
| Palaeoenvironmental specialists sample samples (e.g. columns, prepared slides) | 0 |
| Waterlogged wood | 0 |
| Wet sieved environmental remains from bulk samples | 0 |

Table 2: Quantification of artefact and environmental samples

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Foundation trench monitored between 23/10/17 and 24/10/17

- 4.1.1 The monitored groundworks comprised mechanical and hand excavation of a foundation trench, to the north of 23 Bell Street (Figure 2). The trench was excavated to the north (rear) of the standing building, following the rectangular layout of the c.8m x 3.5m in extension, and was 0.8m in width by a maximum of 1.36m in depth.
- 4.1.2 The natural deposit [007] was revealed in the trench at 0.88-0.51m BGL, moderately sloping downwards to the south. This consisted of light yellowish grey firm clay with abundant chalk overlain by orangey brown firm clay, both containing occasional poorly sorted flints, and cut by pit [009].
- 4.1.3 Pit [009] was located within the western segment of the trench. The surviving north side was moderately steep, gradually breaking into a flat base (Fig. 3, section 2). Its single fill [008] consisted of greenish grey silty clay, from which one fragment of brick (86g) and four of roof tiles (376g) were recovered. A collective c.16th century date is proposed for these artefacts (See 5.3). Due to the restricted nature of the trench excavation, it was not possible to establish the shape and function of the feature.
- 4.1.4 At the northwest corner, another possible pit [011] was partially exposed within the trench and truncated the north edge of [009]. Although not bottomed, its sides appeared moderately steep (Fig. 3, section 3). It was infilled by [010] of greyish brown, firm clay, from which one bodysherd of decorated Colchester-type ware, dated 14th to mid-16th century, was recovered. Again, the function of the pit is unknown, but presumably evidences activity to the rear of, and associated with, the frontage building.
- 4.1.5 Also in the west segment, immediately west of the protruding chimney stack of the standing building, was a probable lined well [013]. This may have originally cut infilled pit [008], but modern truncations to its north associated with the insertion of a metal water pipe and an earlier Victorian ceramic pipe obscured this relationship. This well would have been both outside the original 16th century building and its c.1800 extension.
- 4.1.6 The well shaft was c.1m in internal diameter and at least 1.6m deep (Fig. 3, section 1). Its lower portion consisted of a vertical shaft constructed of poorly-sorted flint nodules bonded with sandy brown mortar which extended up to c.0.8m below the modern ground level. The flint-and-mortar walls were surmounted by the remains of a vault constructed of red brick, bonded with light grey indurated lime mortar [012], of Victorian appearance. Whether this brickwork originally capped the well or served to create a narrowed well-head is uncertain, as the upper portion of this structure had been truncated.
- 4.1.7 Presumably more recently capped in some way until disturbed by the current groundworks, much of the well shaft interior was an empty void. Fill was observed at approximately 1.6m below ground level, but not investigated. The well remains were partially covered by the backfill of the service runs mentioned above and sealed by 0.32m of topsoil [001].

- 4.1.8 Infilled pits [009] and [011] were overlain by a layer of made-ground [006], which consisted of light yellowish grey firm chalky clay and contained very small fragments of brick, although none were recovered. This layer was seemingly produced by the removal and re-deposition of natural soil when part of the area was truncated/landscaped, which is supported by the absence of buried horizons underneath. Elsewhere along the norther trench segment, a stratigraphic sequence consisting of natural [007] overlain by this made-ground layer [006], which in turn was overlain by topsoil [001], was observed.
- 4.1.9 In both east and west segments of the foundation trench, a possible SE/NW aligned ditch [005] was recorded in section, cutting into made-ground [006] to the west, where it was found to be more substantial (Fig. 3, sections 2 and 4). The sides were moderately steep, gradually breaking into a slightly concave base. Its single fill [004] was light grey firm sandy clay, containing occasional chalk fragments, a brick fragment (344g) and a roof tile fragment (73g). Although these CBM fragments have been dated to early in the post-medieval period, (c.16th century), it is likely that they were residual in this fill. This possible ditch did not run parallel with the back of the original house, so its function in relation to it is not clear. Its remains would appear to have run under, and therefore predated, the c.1800 extension.
- 4.1.10 Ditch [005] was sealed by made-ground layer [003]. This was a grey firm silty clay with occasional small chalk fragments. It was observed to contain CBM fragments, bottles and a copper alloy object, all suggesting a late 19th- or 20th-century date (see 5.2, 5.4 and 5.5). This layer was probably formed to level the area and was found below modern made-ground [002] of light greyish brown firm silty clay with occasional surrounded pebbles and rubble, which in turn was overlain by topsoil [001]. This dark grey soft clayey silt topsoil, was found thicker outside the former extension. These upper deposits were all heavily disturbed, presumably as a consequence of the presence and eventual demolition of the extension.

| Context | Type | Interpretation | Max. Length m | Max. Width m | Thickness / Depth m |
|---------|---------|------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| 001 | Layer | Topsoil | Trench | Trench | 0.16-0.38 |
| 002 | Layer | Made-ground | 7.20 | 3.50 | 0.22-0.30 |
| 003 | Layer | Made-ground | 7.20 | c. 3.00 | -0.46 |
| 004 | Fill | f/o [005] | 3.50 | 1.60 | 0.48 |
| 005 | Cut | Ditch | 3.50 | 1.60 | 0.48 |
| 006 | Layer | Made-ground | c. 8.00 | 3.50 | 0.50 |
| 007 | Layer | Natural | Trench | Trench | N/A |
| 008 | Fill | f/o [09] | 4.44 | Trench | 0.60 |
| 009 | Cut | Pit | 4.44 | Trench | 0.60 |
| 010 | Fill | f/o [11] | 2.11 | 1.52 | 0.54 |
| 011 | Cut | Pit | 2.11 | 1.52 | 0.54 |
| 012 | Masonry | Brick vault | 1.30 | 0.30 | 0.48 |
| 013 | Masonry | Flint well shaft | 1.20 | 0.20 | 0.92 |

Table 3: List of recorded contexts

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary

5.1.1 A small assemblage of finds was recovered during the watching brief. These are probably all post-medieval in date and are summarised in Table 4.

| Context | Pottery | | CBM | | Metal | | Glass | |
|--------------|----------|------------|----------|------------|----------|-----------|----------|------------|
| | Ct | Wt | Ct | Wt | Ct | Wt | Ct | Wt |
| 3 | 1 | 120 | | | 1 | 28 | 3 | 878 |
| 4 | | | 2 | 422 | | | | |
| 8 | | | 5 | 468 | | | | |
| 10 | 1 | 4 | | | | | | |
| Total | 2 | 124 | 7 | 890 | 1 | 28 | 3 | 878 |

Table 4: Finds quantification

5.2 Medieval to Post-Medieval Pottery by Helen Walker

5.2.1 A small quantity of late medieval and post-medieval pottery (2 sherds, 124g) was retrieved from two contexts; made-ground deposit [003] and pit fill [010].

5.2.2 A cylindrical stoneware bottle was recovered from [003]. This is the body of a modern stoneware vessel. The scar where the neck joins the shoulder indicates this is a blacking bottle as these have wide everted rims. Blacking was used to polish boots and fire-grates, etc. The bottle has an internal lead glaze and external salt glaze, but lacks manufacturer's or retailer's marks.

5.2.3 A single bodysherd of unabraded medieval, Colchester-type ware, pottery comes from [010]. It shows partial external plain lead glaze and band of incised grooves

| Context | Fabric / form | Comments | Count | Weight | Date |
|---------|------------------------------|----------------------|-------|--------|--------------------|
| 003 | Stoneware cylindrical bottle | | 1 | 120g | mid-19th to 1920s |
| 010 | Colchester-type ware | Decorated, unabraded | 1 | 4g | 14th to mid-16th C |

Table 5: Pottery assemblage

5.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM) by Isa Benedetti-Whitton

5.3.1 Seven pieces of ceramic building material (CBM) weighing a total of 879g, and comprising five pieces of tile and one piece of brick, were collected from two contexts: ditch fill [004] and pit fill [008]. All the material was quantified by form, weight and fabric and recorded on standard recording forms. This information was then entered into a digital Excel database. Fabrics were identified with the aid of a x20 binocular microscope and catalogued using Museum of London Archaeology's (MOLA) fabric reference codes, listed below in Table 5.

5.3.2 The bricks were each in a different fabric, 3033 and 3223, both of which have a long use period. 3033 was in use from c.1450-1700, and 3223 from c.1400-1900. However, the surviving dimensions and general character of the brick pieces suggest an early post-medieval date, potentially as early as the late

15th century although a date of any point during the 16th century is also likely.

5.3.3 The tile fragments were all in lightly sandy fabrics that are all variations of roof tile fabric 2586. This fabric is not dateable in isolation as it was used from c.1180-1800, but there is nothing to suggest a date that conflicts with the c.16th century and so it is probable that all the CBM collected is of early post-medieval date.

5.3.4 All the CBM has been discarded following recording and analysis.

| Fabric | Description |
|---------------|---|
| 2586 | Orange roof tile fabric with varying quantities (moderate-common) of medium and coarse quartz. |
| 3033 | Fine fabric with scatter of quartz (up to 0.8mm), calcareous/calcium carbonate inclusions (up to 1.5mm) and black iron oxide (up to 1.5mm). Occasional flint fragments and small pebbles (up to 7mm). |
| ?3223 | Gritty-looking sandy fabric with abundant fine-medium quartz, common mica and black iron oxide speckle. |

Table 6: Fabric descriptions for ceramic building material

5.4 The Bulk Metalwork by Trista Clifford

5.4.1 A single a copper alloy object was retrieved from made-ground deposit [003]; possibly a crudely made posy holder. The object is hollow and conical in shape with a wide flange around the aperture which is decorated with oblique incised lines around the edge. There is a single hole below the flange. The opposite end of the object is pinched together and folded over. A late 19th to 20th century date is proposed for this object.

5.5 The Glass by Elke Raemen

5.5.1 Three complete glass bottles were recovered from made-ground [003].

5.5.2 Included is a green glass cylindrical beer bottle with embossing "RAYMENT&Co" and "PELHAM". This brewery was founded in 1860 and produced beer up to the 1980s. The bottle, with surviving cork, is of late 19th- to early 20th-century date.

5.5.3 A small pale blue panelled bottle (weight 108g) dates to the 19th to early 20th century, whereas an amber jar with diamond pattern is of late 19th- to mid-20th-century date.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence

- 6.1.1 The observed groundworks exposed the natural geological deposit of Lowestoft Formation clays sloping downwards to the south, which was truncated on top. This was encountered at 0.88-0.51m below the present ground level.
- 6.1.2 The remains of two pits, a probable well and a possible ditch, and apparent made-ground layers, were recorded above the natural deposit. These in turn, were overlain by late post-medieval/modern levelling layers and made-ground, some probably associated with the former c.1800 building extension, or else landscaping and topsoil around it.

6.2 Deposit survival and existing impacts

- 6.2.1 It is likely that the site has been subject to multiple episodes of truncation and disturbance in the post-medieval and modern periods. The various made-ground deposits attest to the excavation and re-deposition of the natural and no buried land surfaces were identified.
- 6.2.2 The c.1800 construction of an extension to the rear of the standing building (recently demolished) evidently caused disturbance and truncation of site deposits. Modern service runs associated with this building have been recorded to intrude upon underlying archaeological remains.

6.3 Discussion of archaeological remains by period

- 6.3.1 The watching brief has identified remains of activity from the early post-medieval period onwards. No demonstrably earlier features or artefacts were found.

Post-Medieval

- 6.3.2 The two large pits perhaps attest to quarrying and/or rubbish disposal at this location, perhaps as early as the 16th century. It is possible that these were contemporary with the early occupation of the frontage building, in which case they would have been located within the rear of the plot.
- 6.3.3 Although the date of the construction of the probable well was not established, it is conjectured that it served as the external water supply to the early house, being conveniently positioned immediately to its rear. Similarly, it is unclear as to when the well passed out of use. It is possible that it functioned into the Victorian period, when it was either modified or capped with a brick-built dome. It is possible that this was carried out when the property was refaced in brick during the 19th century. The well may have continued to function as a water source through the 19th century, perhaps now serving the workshop extension.
- 6.3.4 Ditch [005] was evidently a later post-medieval feature, overlying one of the 16th-century pits. It evidently predated the construction of the c.1800 extension and presumably provided some drainage or garden function to the rear of the property.

6.4 Consideration of research aims

- 6.4.1 The groundworks did not expose evidence of phases of development and activity on the site predating the post-medieval period. As such, results have no potential to contribute to the understanding of the medieval origins and development of Sawbridgeworth or indeed its social organisation and economy.
- 6.4.2 Although features and deposits indicative of activities undertaken to the rear of the post-medieval building, and likely contemporary with its occupation and use, were recorded, the limited scope of this evidence offers little potential to identify their precise nature in terms of industrial and commercial functions, etc. Perhaps the most interesting discovery is that of the well, which informs as to the nature of water provision to the post-medieval household / premises.

6.5 Conclusions

- 6.5.1 A stratified sequence of archaeological remains, comprising pits, made-ground deposits, a probable ditch and a well was exposed within the observed groundworks and recorded.
- 6.5.2 The recorded remains appear to span the post-medieval period and relate to activities and amenities within the rear plot of the historic standing building on the Bell Street frontage.
- 6.5.3 Although the results of this watching brief provide few insights into the nature of land use within this plot and into the origins and development of the town, they demonstrate the survival of archaeological remains in these rear-plot locations within the historic core of the settlement.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ASE would like to thank Mr Robbie Nelson for commissioning the work and for his assistance throughout the project, and the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Unit their guidance and monitoring. The fieldwork was undertaken by Paulo Clemente. The author would like to thank Andrew Lewsey who produced the figures for this report. Andrew Leonard project managed the fieldwork and Mark Atkinson managed the post-excavation process.

Appendix 1: HER Summary

| | | |
|---|--|--------------------|
| Site name and address: 23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire CM21 9AR | | |
| County: Hertfordshire | District: East Herts | |
| Village/Town: Sawbridgeworth | Parish: | |
| Planning application reference: 3/16/1879/FUL | | |
| HER Enquiry reference: | | |
| Funding source: Developer | | |
| Nature of application: Construction of replacement extension to rear of building | | |
| Present land use: Rear garden / former building extension. Commercial? | | |
| Size of application area: c. 30sq m | Size of area investigated: c.15sq m | |
| NGR (to 8 figures minimum): TL 48257 14863 | | |
| Site code (if applicable): BES17 | | |
| Site director/Organization: Paulo Clemente, Archaeology South-East | | |
| Type of work: watching brief | | |
| Date of work: | Start: 23/10/2017 | Finish: 25/10/2017 |
| Location of finds & site archive/Curating museum: Currently ASE Witham office. To go to Bishops Stortford Museum | | |
| Related HER Nos: | Periods represented: Post-medieval, modern | |
| Relevant previous summaries/reports ASE. 2017b, <i>23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, Hertfordshire. Historic Building Watching Brief</i> . ASE unpubl. rep. 2017107 | | |
| Summary of fieldwork results: <p>The frontage building, a timber-framed house of early/mid 16th-century origin, was subject to historic building recording works in March 2017, prior to its refurbishment.</p> <p>The watching brief was carried out during construction works for an extension to the rear of the historic building.</p> <p>The watching brief observed the excavation of foundation trenches for a building measuring c.8m x 3.5m. The archaeological remains of two pits, a probable well, a possible ditch and various made-ground deposits were identified.</p> <p>These recorded remains appear to span the post-medieval period, potentially from the 16th century onwards, and are interpreted to relate to activities and amenities within the rear plot of the historic standing building on the Bell Street frontage.</p> <p>These remains were sealed by modern levelling layers probably related to the construction of an earlier, c.1800, extension to the rear of the property.</p> | | |
| Author of summary: Paulo Clemente | Date of summary: 22/11/2017 | |

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-299432

Project details

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Project name | 23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth |
| Short description of the project | The watching brief was carried out during construction works for an extension to the rear of the historic building. It observed the excavation of foundation trenches for a building measuring c.8m x 3.5m. The archaeological remains of two pits, a probable well, a possible ditch and various made-ground deposits were recorded. These recorded remains appear to span the post-medieval period, potentially from the 16th century onwards, and are interpreted to relate to activities and amenities within the rear plot of the historic standing building on the Bell Street frontage. These remains were sealed by modern levelling layers probably related to the construction of an earlier, c.1800, extension to the rear of the property. |
| Project dates | Start: 23-10-2017 End: 25-10-2017 |
| Previous/future work | Yes / No |
| Associated project reference codes | BES 17 - Sitecode 170005 - Contracting Unit No. |
| Type of project | Recording project |
| Site status | Listed Building |
| Current Land use | Residential 1 - General Residential |
| Monument type | PIT Post Medieval WELL Post Medieval DITCH Post Medieval |
| Significant Finds | CBM Post Medieval POTTERY Post Medieval GLASS Post Medieval |
| Investigation type | "Watching Brief" |
| Prompt | Listed Building Consent |

Project location

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Country | England |
| Site location | HERTFORDSHIRE EAST HERTFORDSHIRE SAWBRIDGEWORTH 23 Bell Street |
| Postcode | CM21 9AR |
| Study area | 15.6 Square metres |
| Site coordinates | TL 48257 14863 51.8122375127 0.150930838512 51 48 44 N 000 09 03 E Point |

Project creators

| | |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Name of Organisation | Archaeology South-East |
| Project design originator | Archaeology South-East |
| Project director/manager | Andrew Leonard |
| Project supervisor | Paulo Clemente |
| Type of sponsor/funding body | Developer |

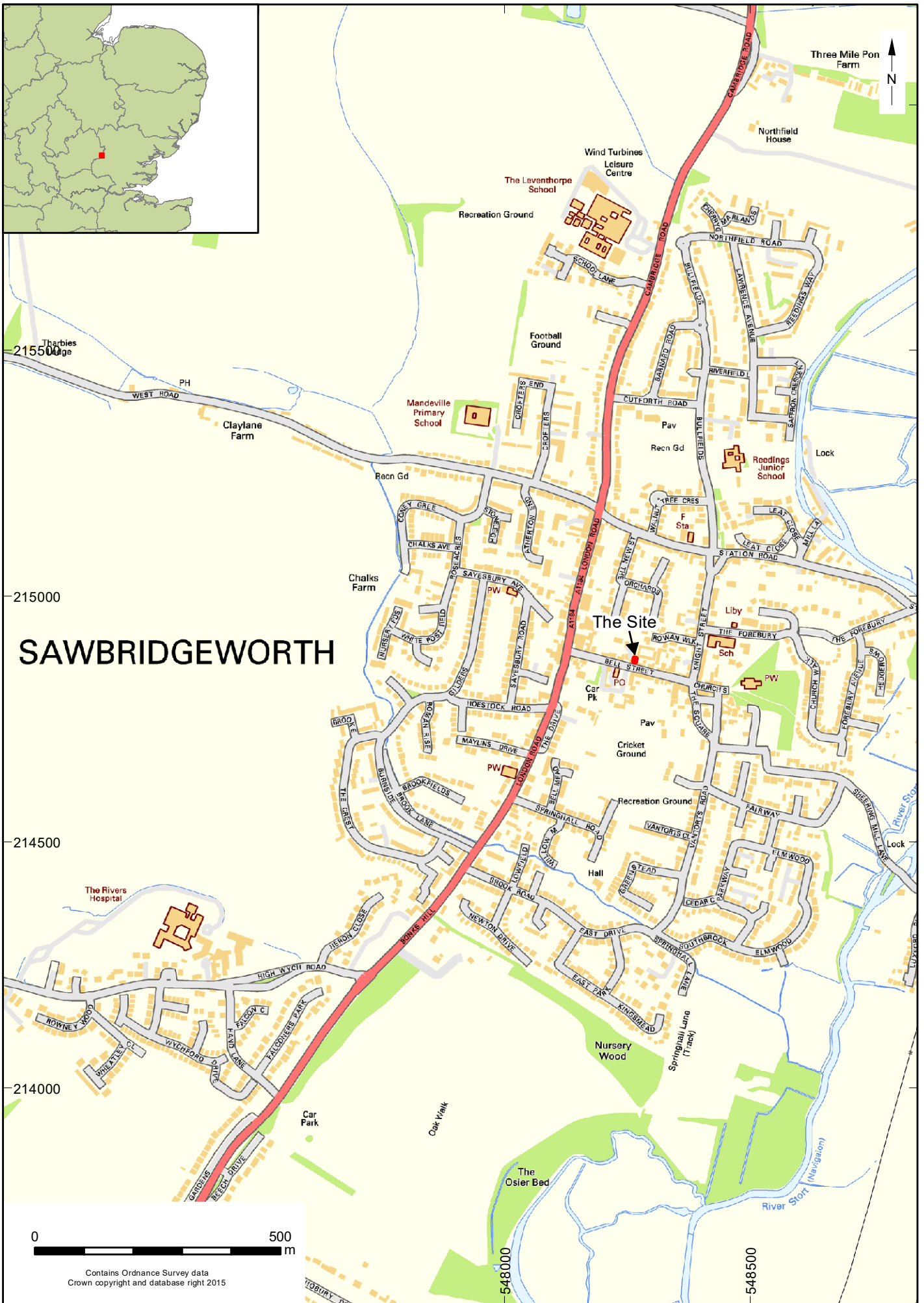
Project archives

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Physical Archive recipient | Bishops Stortford |
| Physical Contents | "Metal", "Ceramics", "Glass" |
| Digital Archive recipient | Bishops Stortford |
| Digital Contents | "Ceramics", "Glass", "Metal", "Stratigraphic" |
| Digital Media available | "Images raster / digital photography" |
| Paper Archive recipient | Bishops Stortford |
| Paper Contents | "Ceramics", "Glass", "Metal", "Stratigraphic" |
| Paper Media available | "Context sheet", "Drawing", "Miscellaneous Material", "Plan", "Report", "Section" |

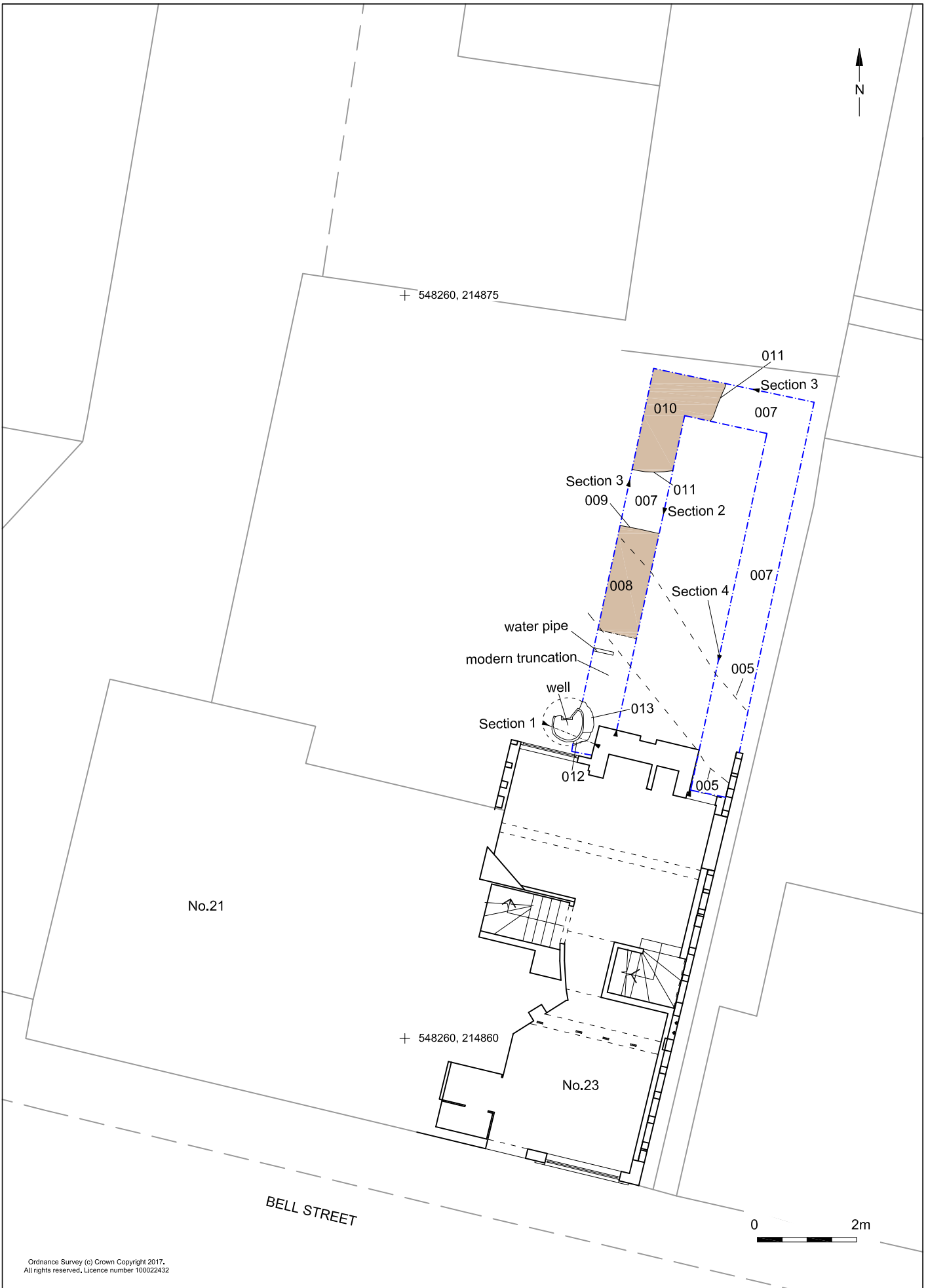
Project bibliography

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Publication type | Grey lit |
| Title | An Archaeological Watching Brief at 23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth, East Hertfordshire, CM21 9AR. |
| Author(s)/Editor(s) | Clemente, P. |
| Other bibliographic details | ASE rep. 2017458 |
| Date | 2017 |
| Issuer or publisher | Archaeology South-East |
| Place of issue or publication | Witham |
| Description | A4 size pdf |

| | |
|------------|---|
| Entered by | Mark Atkinson (mark.atkinson@ucl.ac.uk) |
| Entered on | 24 November 2017 |

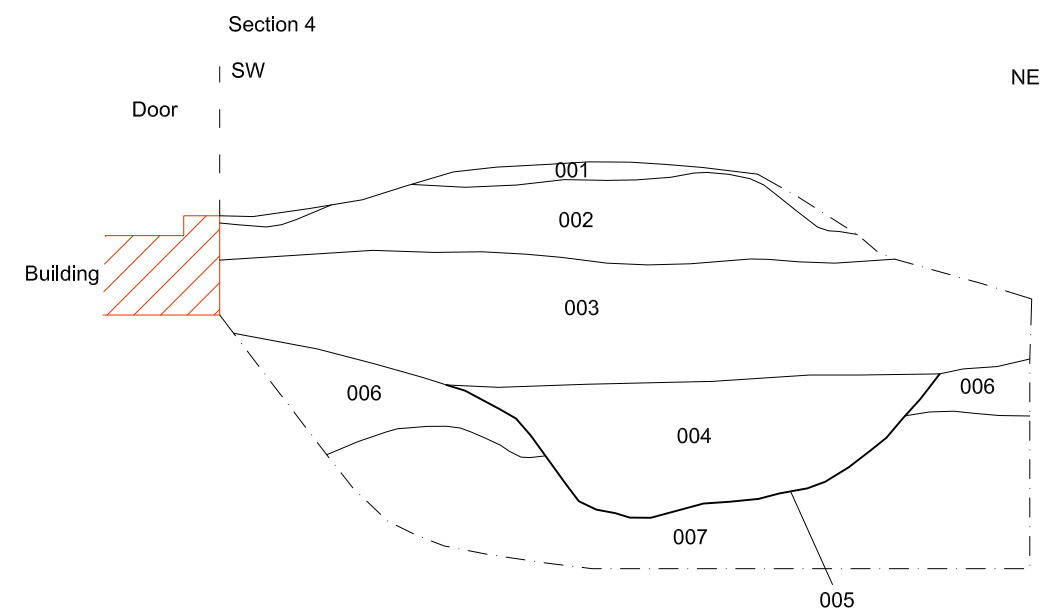
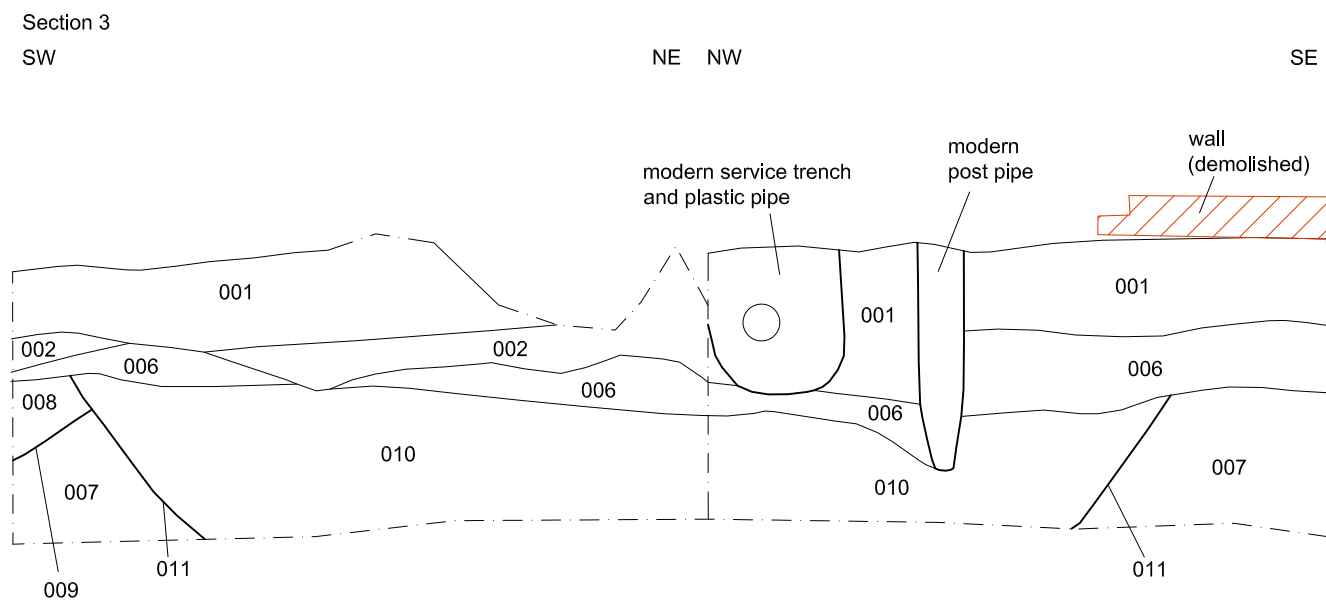
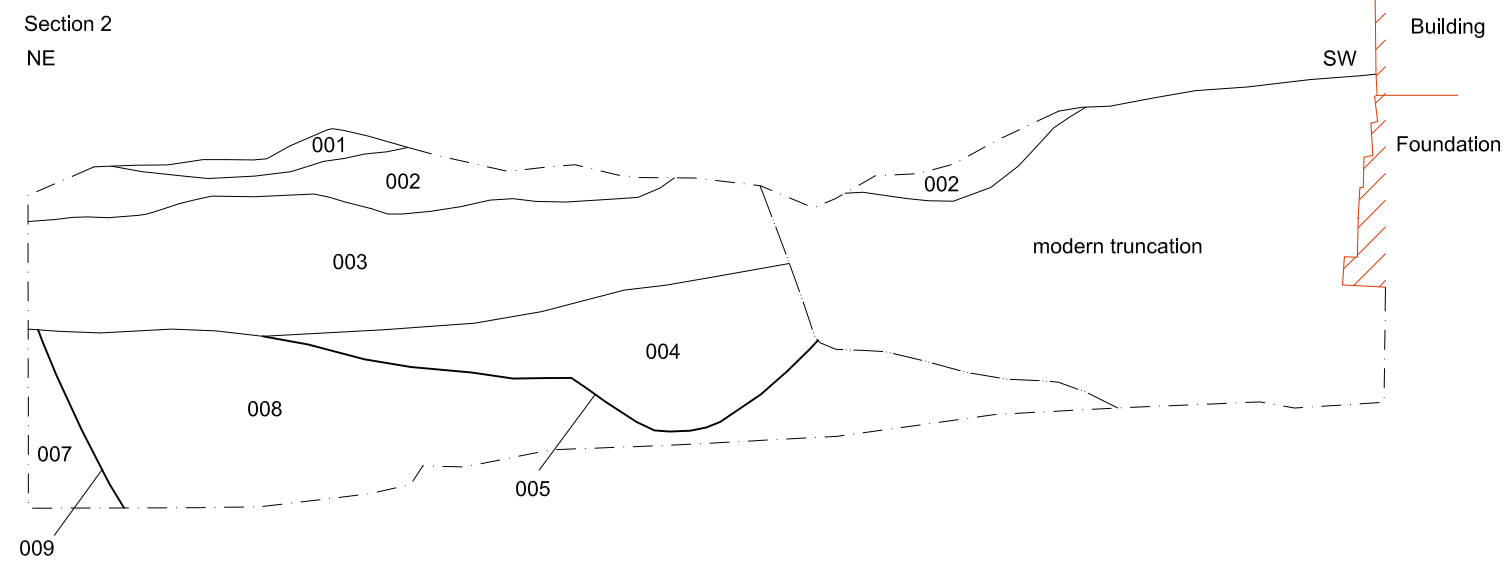
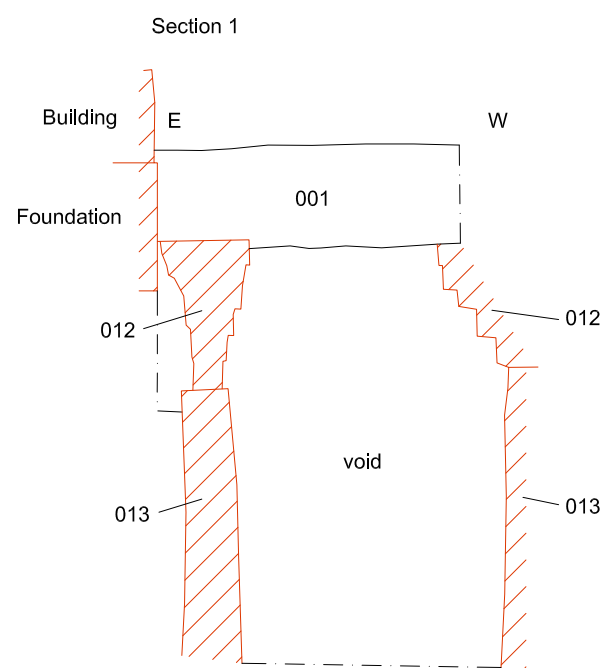


| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|--|--------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | 21-23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth | | Fig. 1 |
| Project Ref: 170005 | Nov 2017 | Site location | | |
| Report No: 2017458 | Drawn by: APL | | | |



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| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | 21-23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth | Fig.2 |
| Project Ref: 170005 | Nov 2017 | Site plan | |
| Report Ref: 2017458 | Drawn by: APL | | |



0 0.5m



Site view prior to groundworks, looking north-east



Pit [011], looking north



Well [012/013], looking south



Well [012/013] interior



Ditch [005], looking west



Basic sequence of natural, made-ground and topsoil deposits

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|-------|
| © Archaeology South-East | | 21-23 Bell Street, Sawbridgeworth | Fig.4 |
| Project Ref: 170005 | Nov 2017 | Selected photographs | |
| Report Ref: 2017458 | Drawn by: APL | | |

Sussex Office

Units 1& 2
2 Chapel Place
Portslade
East Sussex BN41 1DR
tel: +44(0)1273 426830
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeologyse

Essex Office

27 Eastways
Witham
Essex
CM8 3YQ
tel: +44(0)1376 331470
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/archaeologyse

London Office

Centre for Applied Archaeology
UCL Institute of Archaeology
31-34 Gordon Square
London WC1H 0PY
tel: +44(0)20 7679 4778
email: fau@ucl.ac.uk
web: www.ucl.ac.uk/caa

