

**OLD GORHAMBURY
BACON'S HOUSE
ST ALBANS
HERTFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION,
RECORDING AND ANALYSIS**

Project: OG1392
Document: 2008/82
Version: 1.0

Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Mark Phillips	Joe Abrams	Drew Shotliff

4th September 2008

Produced for:
RH Partnership Architects

© Copyright Albion Archaeology 2008, *all rights reserved*

Contents

Structure of the Report	3
Key Terms	3
Non-technical Summary	5
1. INTRODUCTION	6
1.1 Project Background	6
1.2 Site Location and Description and Historical Background	6
1.3 Previous Archaeological Work	7
1.4 Project Objectives	8
1.5 Methodology	8
2. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS	10
2.1 Results	10
2.2 Area 1	10
2.3 Area 2	12
2.4 Area 3	12
2.5 Area 4	15
3. SYNTHESIS	16
3.1 Interpretation and Significance of Results	16
4. BIBLIOGRAPHY	17
4.1 References	17
4.2 Sources	17
5. APPENDIX 1	18
5.1 Context Summary	18

List of Figures

- Figure 1: Site location plan showing Investigation Areas 1-4
Figure 2: Modern extent of ruin superimposed on plan of 1821 (After Rogers 1933)
Figure 3: Plan of visible remains
Figure 4: Plan and elevation of well and culvert in Area 1
Figure 5: Elevation of masonry at junction of hall and Area 1
Figure 6: Elevation of masonry fragment in Area 1
Figure 7: Area 4 elevation and plan
Figure 8: Plan of Area 3

List of Plates

- Plate 1: Area 1, well and culvert
Plate 2: Area 1, masonry at the junction of the hall and Area 1
Plate 3: Area 3, looking north
Plate 4: Area 3, looking east
Plate 5: Area 3, looking south
Plate 6: Area 3, looking west

Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation and submission of this document and all statements are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

Fieldwork for this project was undertaken by Mark Phillips (Project Officer) and Jeremy Mordue (Assistant Archaeological Supervisor). This report has been prepared by Mark Phillips (Project Officer) with contributions from Joan Lighting (CAD Technician). It was edited by Joe Abrams (Project Manager). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

Albion Archaeology is grateful to Helen Axworthy of RH Partnership Architects for commissioning the project. We would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Matthew Webster and Vicki Roulinson of Haymills Conservation. Jeff Dyer (English Heritage), Dr Geoffrey Parnell (Keeper of Tower History at the Royal Armouries Museum HM Tower of London) and Clive Orton (Editor, London Archaeologist) all provided information on the various previous episodes of archaeological work on the site. This information assisted in the production of this report.

Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	4 th September 2008	n/a

*Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford, MK42 0AS
☎: 01234 294002
Fax: 01234 294008
e-mail: office@albion-arch.com*

Structure of the Report

Section 1 is an introduction to the project. Section 2 presents the results and Section 3 assesses their significance. Section 4 is a bibliography. Appendix 1 contains detailed descriptions of the deposits recorded on the site.

Key Terms

Throughout this project design the following terms or abbreviations are used:

Albion	Albion Archaeology
Client	RH Partnership Architects
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
EH	English Heritage

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

NMR National Monuments Record

Procedures Manual *Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork, 2nd Edition 2001.*
Bedfordshire County Council

Non-technical Summary

During masonry repair and conservation works co-ordinated by RH Partnerships Architects at Old Gorhambury, Bacon's House, St Albans, Hertfordshire, some of the exposed below ground level structural remains were to be buried and a new drainage sump to be excavated. English Heritage (on behalf of DCMS) consented to the works at this Scheduled Ancient Monument, subject to them being carried out under archaeological supervision. RH Partnerships issued a brief (on behalf of English Heritage) specifying a programme of archaeological works. Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake these works.

Old Gorhambury (Bacon's House) is centred at TL 1101 0760 within the Verulam Estate, to the west of St Albans. The estate is owned by the Earl of Verulam who lives in Gorhambury House c.500m north-east of the ruins. Construction on Old Gorhambury (also referred to as Bacon's House) began in 1563 for Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Elizabeth I. The house was further extended by his son Sir Francis Bacon, who developed the wider estate and water gardens around a separate banqueting house. The house passed out of the Bacon family in the mid 17th century and was repaired in the 1670's by Sir Harbottle Grimston. By 1778 it had fallen into such disrepair that it was abandoned and replaced by the present Gorhambury House. Previous archaeological works have uncovered parts of the Bacon House and remains of a late medieval/early Tudor building beneath the Elizabethan house.

The present archaeological works comprised the recording of structural remains in some basement areas (Areas 1 and 3) and limited archaeological excavation for construction of a new drainage sump (Area 2) and to allow visual examination of foundations (Area 4, Figure 1). The excavations did not uncover evidence of the earlier buildings on the site.

In Area 1 the recording of masonry in a basement room adjoining the hall basement, showed a straight join between the two sections of masonry suggesting they were built in separate construction phases.

Limited excavation in Area 2 within the basement showed undisturbed geology with no archaeological deposits present.

In Area 3 recent backfill and debris were removed to enable the masonry to be recorded. This area had a relatively complex development sequence. It would originally have formed part of a larger basement area c.11m by c.3.5m with a single floor level. Subsequently, an east-west cross-wall was inserted to form the southern side of Area 3. This was probably the basement level of a wall whose main function was the subdivision of the west range on the floors above. This cross-wall is aligned at ground floor level with a possible corridor to an adjacent stair tower. Later, Area 3 was deepened to form a small cellar area. A brick cross-wall was inserted to form its northern boundary and the base of the east and south walls were lined with brick.

Limited excavation in Area 4 adjacent to the base of a stair tower uncovered construction deposits within the foundation cut of this structure.

The completed site archive will be deposited with the Verulamium Museum, St Albans. Prior to deposition the archive will be kept in secure storage at Albion's offices in St Mary's Church, Bedford.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Project Background**

RH Partnership Architects co-ordinated a programme masonry repair and conservation works at Old Gorhambury, Bacon's House, St Albans, Hertfordshire (NMR TL 10 NW 36). As part of these works some of the exposed below ground level structural remains were to be re-buried and a new sump excavated.

English Heritage (acting on behalf of DCMS) consented to the works at this Scheduled Ancient Monument, subject to them being carried out under archaeological supervision. RH Partnership Architects (client) issued a brief on behalf of English Heritage, specifying the necessary programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording required. Albion Archaeology prepared a project design (Albion 2008), and this was approved by English Heritage prior to the start of works.

1.2 **Site Location and Description and Historical Background**

The site is centred at TL 1101 0760 within the Verulam Estate (to the west of St Albans). The estate is owned by the Earl of Verulam who lives in the 18th-century Gorhambury House situated c.500m to the north-east of the ruins.

The historical background of the house is detailed in the project brief (RH Partnership Architects 2008) and by Hill (1996). The following is a summary. Until the dissolution of the monasteries the manor of Gorhambury had been owned by the Abbey of St Albans. Sir Nicholas Bacon, Lord Keeper of the Great Seal to Elizabeth I bought the manor in 1561 and began construction of a new house with the initial phase of construction undertaken between 1563 and 1568. The house was subsequently extended during the 1570s by the addition to its western side of a large east-west aligned range with a ground floor in the form of a loggia. Further alterations to the house were made during the first quarter of the 17th century when the house was in the ownership of Sir Francis Bacon.

After the house passed out of the ownership of the Bacon family further alterations were carried out by Sir Harbottle Grimston who bought the house in 1652. By 1778 it had fallen into such disrepair that the 3rd Viscount Grimston constructed a new house (Gorhambury) to the north-east to the design of Sir Robert Taylor and the old house was abandoned. A plan of the house was prepared by Charlotte Grimston in 1821 (Figure 2). This was a ground floor plan of the building at its largest extent in the late 18th century with the names or function of the rooms indicated in a key. A significant amount of the building had been demolished by 1821 and the plan must therefore have been based on an earlier survey or memory. The plan is reproduced in an article in by *Country Life* (Rogers 1933).

1.3 **Previous Archaeological Work**

A number of campaigns of clearance, conservation and excavation have been undertaken on the site in the past. The history of conservation works carried out, with particular reference to the porch, has been documented by Hill (1996). The first major programme of work on the site was undertaken by the Ministry of Works during the 1960s and 70s. This comprised removal of vegetation, clearance of basement areas, consolidation and repairs to the remains. Photographs held by the National Monument Records (NMR04.08.08, Section 4.1) show some of the work undertaken at the site between 1954 and 1979.

Photographs taken in March 1960 show the condition of the site at the start of work. The ruins were covered in vegetation and the porch was supported by an internal brick arch and massive external brick buttress constructed during the late 19th century (Hill 1996). The basement was filled to the present ground level. Photographs taken in January 1964 show the finished repairs to the porch.

A series of photographs taken in August 1971 show another phase of work. The clock tower was surrounded by scaffolding, suggesting that repair or consolidation work was underway. The accumulated rubble and fill had been removed from the basement within the hall range and the west range. The basement in the hall range shows evidence of some plant re-growth. The basement in the west range, including the current Area 3, appears to have been freshly opened or cleaned. Two trenches inside the building within the current Area 2 suggest that clearance of this basement room was underway.

During the late 1970s and early 1980s a further series of archaeological excavations were undertaken with trenches opened to the north and south of the standing building remains. It has not been possible at the present time to locate the excavation archives but the available information is summarised below.

A series of photographs in the NMR archives taken in December 1979 show the condition of the site at that time. The basement in the current Area 1 had been opened and consolidated. The porch was fully enclosed by scaffolding and corrugated sheets. A large area on the north side of Area 1 and the hall had been excavated. This area contained various north-south and east-west aligned walls surrounded by fresh gravel. An octagonal brick plinth situated a few metres north of Area 1 is described in a caption as a recently replaced statue dais in the cobbled courtyard. In addition to the remains of the Elizabethan house these excavations uncovered evidence of a late medieval building of manorial proportions beneath and on a slightly different alignment to the house built by Sir Nicholas Bacon. These remains included a large cellar on an approximately south-west to north-west axis, located immediately south of the hall in the Bacon house (Dr Geoffrey Parnell pers. comm.). The results of the work undertaken in the early 1980s were summarised in *London Archaeologist* (1980-81).

Entry for 1980:

Work this year concentrated on the north side of the Main Court. The surface of Nicholas Bacon's court was found to seal a large cobbled area bounded by buildings on two sides. These remains, of early Tudor date, presumably represent a final remodelling of the medieval manor before Bacon's complete rebuilding in 1563-68.

Entry for 1981:

During this final session of work more of the c.1500 manorial complex was uncovered including part of a substantial cellar with entrance passage. The foundations of part of the west range of Sir Nicholas Bacon's later manor (1563-68) were revealed while the area around the inner court porch was examined in order to complete the display and consolidation of this important piece of Renaissance architecture.

1.4 Project Objectives

The project objectives detailed in the Project Design (Albion 2008) were to:

- i. Record the below ground walls in Area 1 (Figure 1) prior to the infilling of this Area.
- ii. Remove modern debris from Area 3. Investigate and record extant archaeological deposits within it. Identify their character and importance.
- iii. Record the below ground walls in Area 3 prior to the infilling of this Area.
- iv. Excavate a 600mm diameter and 600mm deep soak-away in Area 2. Investigate and record extant archaeological deposits within it. Identify their character and importance.
- v. To pay particular attention to possible remains of the late-Medieval manorial structure recorded below Bacon's House.
- vi. Establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation revealed by the above works;
- vii. Establish the relationship of any remains found to surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- viii. Recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- ix. Recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

1.5 Methodology

1.5.1 Introduction

Fieldwork was undertaken between 11th and 15th August 2008. The extent of the works and details of the archive for each of the areas investigated are summarised below.

1.5.2 Area 1

Work undertaken in this area involved the recording of the visible building fabric in advance of the infilling of this part of the basement. The record consists of a photographic survey in digital and monochrome film format, elevations and plans recorded at a scale of 1:10 of selected details and a written record.

1.5.3 Area 2

Work undertaken in Area 2 consisted of the archaeological excavation of a sump measuring 0.6m diameter by 0.6m deep for the construction of a pebble-filled drain. The record for this area consists of digital photographs, a written record and measured sketch location plans and sections.

1.5.4 Area 3

The work undertaken here comprised the removal of backfill and accumulated debris from a cellar area to examine and record it in advance of infilling of the cellar area up to the surrounding ground levels. No excavation was carried out beyond the removal of modern infill. The exposed building fabric was then cleaned and recorded. The record comprises photographs in digital and monochrome film format, a plan at a scale of 1:10 a written record and sketch elevations.

1.5.5 Area 4

Area 4 consisted of a small test-pit excavated to examine the foundations of the clock tower due to apparent subsidence of masonry on the southern side of the doorway. Archaeological works here comprised observation and recording of the foundation and associated deposits. The record consists of digital photographs, a plan and elevation at a scale of 1:10 and a written record.

1.5.6 Standards

A full methodology is provided in the project design (Albion 2008). The project adhered throughout to the standards set out in the following documents:

IFA	<i>Codes of Conduct</i>
IFA	<i>Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i>
IFA	<i>Guidelines for Finds Work</i>
English Heritage	<i>Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice (2006)</i>
RCHME	<i>Recording Historic Buildings: A Descriptive Specification. Third Edition (1996)</i>
Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork 2nd Edition (2001)</i>

2. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

2.1 Results

The location and extent of the archaeological areas are shown in Figure 1. Detailed technical information can be found in Appendix 1.

2.2 Area 1

Area 1 (Figures 4, 5 and 6) consisted of a basement room which was exposed and consolidated as part of the archaeological works undertaken during the late 1970s (Section 1.3). It was situated within the central range of buildings that lay on the north side of the main courtyard. It was joined to the eastern end of the hall.

2.2.1 Walls

The room was 9m long and 5.5m wide with its long axis aligned broadly E-W (Figure 5). The walls survived to a height of 1.5m, up to the level of the present ground surface.

The base of the wall stood on a brick plinth (114) of at least three courses. The majority of this appeared to be the product of modern consolidation works with a mixture of old and new bricks. A possible indication that the brick plinth would have been an original component of the wall was visible in the south-east corner of the room. At this point, where the inner facing of the wall survived, the bricks appeared original and had not been re-pointed in the modern period. It is possible that a band of tiles above these bricks had been inserted as part of the consolidation works.

The main part of the wall (112) consisted of random flint rubble in mortar. The inner facing of the wall had largely gone, leaving a slightly sloping, irregular surface. A section of the southern wall *c.*2m long in the south-east corner retained some of the inner face, also of flint rubble. The majority of the surface appeared to be the product of consolidation works, the gaps between flints being filled by hard grey cement with coarse flint aggregate. It is likely that the upper surface of the wall had been partially reconstructed with re-set flints. The walling included some roughly squared quoin stones at the corners of the building. At the eastern end these were single large squared blocks of a hard grey stone in the north and south walls.

Photographs held by the NMR taken in December 1979 (NMR 04.08.08) show Area 1 shortly after it had been consolidated. These photographs record matching quoins in the eastern wall; these are no longer present. At the west end of the south wall (junction with hall) there were at least two blocks of stone superimposed. These stones were partly obscured by the cross-wall of the hall where the lower part of the cross-wall was thickened. At the junction of the hall basement and the north wall of Area 1 there was evidence of a straight join with quoin stones on either side (Figure 5, Plate 2). A certain amount of reconstruction has occurred at this point. The reset brick plinth

continued a short way under the quoin at the corner of the hall wall and some of the other bricks forming the corner of the hall appeared to be modern replacements.

2.2.2 Masonry fragment

A large, discrete block of masonry was situated in the south-eastern part of Area 1 (Figure 6). The block was c.2m long, 0.9m thick and 0.9m high. It was parallel to the southern wall of the room, leaning slightly towards the south at its top. The upper part of the block had been consolidated with a layer of flint and cement (103) identical to the finish applied to the walls of Area 1. Below this was a single lacing course of brick, showing as headers on both faces of the wall. The main body of the block consisted of flint rubble (108). At the eastern end of the block, a right-angled recess on the southern face was lined with brickwork (106) with a squared limestone block (107) in the lower part of the recess. More bricks formed the north-western corner and western face of the block.

The northern face of the block had the remains of a layer of pink plaster that had been incised to imitate bricks. The plaster was pink in colour due to the inclusion of fragments of crushed brick or fired clay. This same type of plaster survives on the external, southern face of the hall where it occurs below the level of the chamfered plinth. The plaster was partially overlain by a later layer of hard cement render (109), possibly part of consolidation works. At the base of the northern face of the masonry, a fillet of flint and concrete (111) appears to be part of modern consolidation works, possibly to stabilise the block.

The block of masonry is a detached fragment from the external wall of Area 1. It probably came from the upper part of the basement walls where these projected above ground level. The presence of the imitation brickwork on its northern face and a recess for a window revealed on the southern side shows that it turned through 180° as it rolled into the basement void.

2.2.3 Well and culvert

A brick-lined well and associated culvert were situated within Area 1, close to the northern side of the room (Figure 4).

The well (101) was circular, 1.3m in diameter externally and 0.85m internally. It was constructed of brick laid in a header bond. The bricks were fitted into the circular shape by trimming some diagonally on one side at their inner edge. At the outer edge, small pieces of brick and tile had been used to fill the spaces. The top of the well stood above the surrounding floor level formed by a modern gravel surface, with three courses of brick visible on the outside face. Inside, the well was open to a depth of 0.65m with eight courses of brick visible in the sides. Below this it appeared to be filled with brick rubble. The bricks used in the well were a mixture of original and modern replacements. The modern bricks were matched for colour and size but were identifiable by their more regular finish with sharper edges and a narrow frog. The well appeared to have been extensively repaired with a relatively large proportion of modern bricks visible at the top and around the opening of the culvert.

A brick-lined culvert (102) entered the well from the north. The sides of the culvert were formed from a single thickness of brick and the base consisted of bricks laid flat. The arch over the culvert was formed with a single layer of bricks laid edgewise. Those visible in the face of the arch had been trimmed into wedge shapes to form voussoirs. The culvert had internal dimensions of 0.19m wide and 0.34m high.

2.3 Area 2

Area 2 was situated within a range of rooms on the western side of the main courtyard (Figure 7). This room measured 3m square with a current floor level *c.*0.90m below ground level on its southern and western sides. The walls consisted of flint rubble with some brick used in the corners and as lacing courses. There was a brick-lined alcove high in the eastern wall similar to ones that occur in the rest of the basement. A recess situated low down in the western wall is lined with brickwork.

Work in this room consisted of excavation and recording in advance of the construction of a stone-lined sump. This entailed the digging of a circular hole 0.6m diameter and 0.6m deep. The deposits within the excavation consisted of a modern gravel surface (202). This lay above a 60mm thick layer of mid to light yellow clay (201) which may have been either a modified geological deposit or an imported deposit to build up the floor level. Below this was undisturbed geological material (200) consisting of orange clay with occasional flints.

2.4 Area 3

Area 3 was a basement room situated near the northern end of a range of rooms on the west side of the main courtyard (Figure 8). Internally, it was 3.3m E-W and 2m wide N-S. It was lit by a single window set high in the east wall. Photographs show that this room had been opened during clearance and consolidation works undertaken in 1971. It had subsequently become filled with soil, rubble and organic litter. Work in this area consisted of clearing the accumulated infill and recording the structure before it was re-buried. The room contained up to 0.5m of debris, the upper part being mainly loose leaf litter and the lower part a mixture of soil with flint and brick rubble. After this was removed it could be seen that the room was a small cellar with a floor level *c.*1m below the rest of the basement.

The western wall (311) consisted of flint rubble masonry that survived up to the level of the main basement floor (Plate 6). The northern wall (Plate 3) consisted of a lower section (307) of eight courses of hand-made brick in an irregular bond consisting of a mixture of headers and stretchers. The upper part of the wall (306) consisted of three courses of modern bricks laid in a regular English bond.

The eastern wall (Plate 4) consisted of a variety of material. The upper part (308) consisted of flint rubble and blocks of clunch roughly coursed. The lower part of the wall (to the south of a ragged vertical slot in the wall)

consisted of a mixture of flint rubble and brick (309). It is possible that the brickwork here may have framed a recess to the north of the slot. The lower part of the wall (310) to the north of the slot consisted of bricks laid in a stretcher bond. These varied in colour from orange to dark blue-grey. Immediately above these bricks, a band of tiles laid diagonally had been used to fill the gap between the bricks and masonry (308).

The southern wall (Plate 5) ended in straight join at its eastern and western ends showing that it was built after the side walls. It consisted of a lower section in brick (303) with an upper section of flint and limestone rubble walling (302). The lower part (303) was formed of at least thirteen courses of brick laid in stretcher bond. A single course of tile occurred at the top of the brickwork in the western half of the wall. Towards the eastern end of the wall there was a vertical slot, *c.*0.25m wide, through the brickwork. It is uncertain if this formed a part of the original construction of the wall or was cut through later. The edges of the slot appeared uneven and ragged, as though cut. However, the brickwork to the east of the slot was different in character from the rest of the wall, with the upper seven courses in English bond, in contrast with the stretcher bond used elsewhere in the wall. The central part of the wall contained small holes formed by the use of a three-quarter length brick to leave a gap of *c.*90mm high and 70mm wide. Two of the holes occurred one above the other in the third and eleventh courses from the floor. A third gap occurred in the eleventh course, 0.65m to the east, though this was filled by a piece of brick. Another uncertain hole was identified in line with this at the base of the wall. There was a larger hole towards the western end of the wall in the fifth to seventh course of bricks. It was 310mm wide and 230mm high. The east side of this hole fell directly above the eastern face of an internal wall, (305). The upper part of the wall survived to height of 0.45m above the brickwork. It consisted of a mixture of flint and limestone rubble throughout. Only a small proportion of the face of the wall remained, most having been demolished or eroded.

The room was floored with bricks (300) laid face up in rows aligned E-W (Figure 8). The bricks were generally butted up neatly against the base of the walls. At the base of the north wall the floor had been fitted to the base of the wall using small fragments, suggesting that construction of the floor began against the south side of the room.

Within the pattern of bricks there were two areas of irregularity. At the east side of the room, below the vertical slot in the wall, the flooring did not quite reach the wall as though respecting a feature that has now gone. On the western side of the floor three of the bricks were aligned north-south.

At the western end of Area 3 a north-south aligned brick wall (305) separated a rectangular compartment from the rest of the room (Plates 3 and 6). The compartment was subdivided by an E-W aligned wall (304) into two spaces, each *c.*0.6m square internally. The walls had been partially demolished. Only one facing course of (305) remained with a rough deposit of brick rubble and mortar behind in the southern half of the wall. Wall (304) survived to a height

of three courses. It consisted of two thickness of brick laid in stretcher courses. The base of the southern compartment when emptied of modern backfill consisted of undisturbed natural orange clay (314). A layer of clay with mortar fragments (312) was found inside the northern compartment.

Stairs (301) in the north-west corner of room consisted of a flint and brick rubble in mortar faced with brick (Plate 3 and 6). The lowest two courses of the facing were laid as stretchers with the bottom step formed from bricks laid on edge, one of which survived against the north wall. The top of the stairs appeared to be set back at an angle of 45° with the topmost brickwork surviving beneath the modern brick capping (306) of the north wall.

2.4.1 Interpretation of Area 3

Area 3 is likely to have originally been part of a larger basement area with the east and west walls being the earliest surviving masonry. It is uncertain how the basement level would have been subdivided, although it is possible that Area 2, Area 3 and the space to the north would have originally formed a single undivided basement space.

The area was modified by the insertion of a cross-wall on its south side (302). The wall has straight joins where it meets the walls to the east and west showing that it post dates these. The positioning of this wall appears to be determined by the arrangement of the floor above (the ground floor) where the line of the wall continues westwards to form the south side of a short corridor connecting with the west side of a stair tower (clock tower). This arrangement may have been to modify circulation within rooms close to the dais end of the hall, possibly in connection with the construction of the western range during the 1570s.

In a subsequent construction phase Area 3 was deepened to form a small cellar. A wall was constructed in brick across its northern side and the floor lowered by *c.* 1m. The lower parts of the east and south walls or their foundations were surfaced with brick. The use of stretcher bond in these walls suggests that it consists of a single thickness of brick. The reason for brickwork of a different character in the south-east corner of the room is not known.

The brick walls (304), (305) forming compartments in the south-east corner of the room may have supported a shelf, formed storage spaces or possibly formed part of previous arrangement of steps. It appears these walls were reworked at some time as the pattern of bricks in the floor appears to respect a larger northern compartment. These changes may have occurred when the brick steps were inserted. The lowest course of bricks in the steps overlies part of the brick floor showing that the steps post-date the floor and the earlier arrangement of brick compartments. Holes in the south wall of Area 3 may have contained woodwork to support an internal structure such as shelves.

It is unclear how the basement of Area 2 would have been accessed after the creation of the cellar in Area 3.

2.5 Area 4

Area 4 consisted of a small test pit situated against the outer north-west face of the remains of the clock-tower (Figure 7). The test-pit was excavated to expose a small section of the foundations in order to assess apparent subsidence of this part of the structure. The test-pit measured 0.5m by 0.35m by 0.45m deep.

The lower part of the tower walls (402) consist of two bands of brick and a band of flint rubble below a chamfered plinth. This was set above foundations (403) consisting mainly of flint and mortar with some brick rubble. The upper part of the foundation is flush with the face of the wall. The foundations extend up to 0.25m and 0.35m below the present ground surface to form a foundation plinth. Within the confines of the narrow excavation it was not possible to see a construction cut for the foundations. A layer of mortar (404) abutting the foundation plinth was probably set into a construction cut for the foundations. A layer (401) of yellow brown silt containing lumps of re-deposited clay natural, numerous fragments of mortar and pieces of brick and stone is situated above the foundation plinth. This mixed layer is probably backfill of the foundation trench into which some building debris was incorporated.

3. SYNTHESIS

3.1 *Interpretation and Significance of Results*

Documentary and archaeological evidence indicate that Old Gorhambury was constructed on the site of an earlier manorial centre that it replaced. The initial phase of construction by Sir Nicholas Bacon, undertaken between 1563 and 1568, was based on quadrangular, symmetrical plan. This was a plan type frequently used for courtier houses of the early Tudor period that continued to be used into the Elizabethan period. Examination of the junction between the north wall of the Area 1 room (where it meets the north wall of the adjacent hall) shows a straight join between these two blocks of masonry. It suggests that although the new house was constructed to a unified plan it was built, at least in part, as separate units or construction phases.

Limited excavation in the basement Area 2 showed that the floor of this area lay directly above undisturbed geological deposits. It is likely that construction works in the 1560s will have removed the remains of earlier activity within the basement areas unless these occurred as deeper intrusions such as wells or cellars. The available information on the excavations conducted during the late 1970s and early 1980s indicates that the most substantial remains of the earlier manorial complex were identified beneath the main courtyard of the 1560s house, to the south of the existing ruin.

Examination of the remains in Area 3 indicates a complex construction sequence, reflecting the continued development of the house from its inception in the 1560s up to its abandonment in the later 18th century. It is likely that Area 3 began as part of the general basement space of 11m by 3.5m with its long axis aligned north-south forming the western arm of the basement area. The southern wall in Area 3 appears to be a later subdivision. This wall was probably inserted to support a wall on the ground floor (above). In plan, this wall lines up with a short continuation wall, forming the southern side of a corridor connected to a ground-floor door in the west side of the clock tower. It appears that Area 3 was subsequently deepened and lined with brickwork to form a small cellar space.

In Area 4, a small exploratory trench was dug on the south-west side of the clock tower. Stratified deposits survived adjacent to the wall under a turf and topsoil layer approximately 0.3m thick. The extent of the excavations undertaken in the 1980s is uncertain. It is likely that subsurface deposits remain *in situ* in this part of the site.

4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

4.1 References

Albion Archaeology, 2008. *Old Gorhambury, Bacon's house, St Albans, Hertfordshire: Project Design for a Programme of Archaeological Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication*

Hill, N, 1996. *Conservation and Decay: Two Centuries at Old Gorhambury*. ASCHB Transactions 21.

London Archaeologist, 1980-81. *Excavation Round-up*. Vol. 4, Number 2, p.50

Nick, N. 1996. *Conservation and Decay: Two Centuries at Old Gorhambury ASCHB Transactions Vol 21, p36-48*

RH Partnership Architects, 2008. *Archaeological Watching Brief: Old Gorhambury, Bacon's House, St Albans, Hertfordshire*.

Rogers, J.C. 1933. 'Old Gorhambury' *Country Life* Dec 16th 1933, p.649-651

4.2 Sources

NMR 04.08.08 Black and White Department of the Environment photographs taken on 5th December 1979.

NMR 04.08.08 Black and White photographs taken by the Ministry of Public Works taken between 1954 and 1971.

5. APPENDIX 1

5.1 Context Summary



Area: 1

Description: Basement area. Situated at eastern end of the main range of the building on northern side of main court.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
101	Well lining	Brick lining of circular well. Bricks laid in header bond. Many appear to be modern replacements suggesting that the structure has been extensively reconstructed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Culvert	Brick lining consisting of one thickness of brick forming sides and arch over culvert.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Wall	Random flint nodules set in concrete with subangular flint gravel aggregate. Modern consolidation layer set over top of remains of wall fragment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Wall	Single layer of bricks forming header course at face of wall. Lacing course within flint rubble wall.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Wall	Pink render layer made of mortar and crushed brick with incised lines to represent a brick pattern.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Wall	Brick quoining at edge of flint rubble walling lining a probable window opening and reveal.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Window	Large limestone block set in what was probably the head of a window opening.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
108	Wall	Rubble masonry made of roughly coursed flint nodules set in white/cream coloured mortar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Wall	Layer of hard cement render applied to north face of wall fragment within Area 1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
110	Wall	Brickwork forming part of masonry block within Area 1. Possible remnants of window quoining.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
111	Wall	'Fillet' of flint nodules set in concrete situated at base of north face of masonry fragment in Area 1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
112	Wall	Rubble walling forming walls of Area 1. Consists of large flint nodules in mortar. Heavily consolidated with re-set flint nodules and concrete made with sub-angular flint gravel aggregate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
113	Wall	Brick and stone quoining at junction of northern wall of Area 1 basement and hall basement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
114	Brickwork	Brick plinth at base of flint rubble wall (112). The plinth consists of three visible courses of brick generally laid in alternating header and stretcher courses. The bricks are a mixture of reused old bricks and newer bricks. The plinth appears to be mostly a modern replacement although a section of the original brick plinth appears to survive in the SW corner of the room where the wall above retains its facing layer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
115	Wall	Flint rubble walling forming south face of north wall of hall.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Area: 2

Description: Small excavation for soakaway in room on western side of main court.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Natural	Undisturbed geological deposit, mid orange clay with occasional flint nodules (clay with flints).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
201	Layer	Mid to light yellow clay layer only 60mm thick found above undisturbed natural. Deliberate construction make-up layer or possibly modified/weathered upper geological deposit, remnant of subsoil.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Layer	Thin layer of sub-rounded/sub-angular flinty gravel with dark brown-grey soil matrix. Modern pebble top-dressing to form a protective surface layer within remains of building.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Area: 3

Description: Basement/cellar room on western side of main court.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
300	Internal surface	Bricks laid flat to form cellar floor.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
301	Brickwork	Mixture of brick rubble and flint nodules set in yellow sandy mortar to form core/infill of brick steps down into cellar of Area 3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
302	Wall	Limestone wall forming upper part of south wall of Area 3. Consisted of flint nodules with some limestone blocks brought to rough courses. Approximately five courses surviving to a height of 0.45m. Abuts east and west walls of Area 3 in straight joins, suggesting that it is a later insertion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
303	Wall	Brick wall forming lower part of south wall of Area 3. A least thirteen courses of brick laid in stretcher bond. This changes to the east of a vertical gap in the wall where the bonding consisted mainly of alternating header and stretcher courses. Deliberate gaps in the brickwork (3, possibly 4 small 90mm by 70mm and one larger gap 310mm by 230mm) may have been for internal fittings in the cellar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
304	Wall	Brick wall forming part of internal structure within Area 3. The wall was aligned east-west. Its western end abutted the western wall of Area 3 in a straight join while its eastern end runs out close to the north-south wall (305). It survived to a height of three courses. It consisted of two thickness of brick laid in stretcher courses with no headers apparent in the surviving portion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
305	Wall	Brick wall forming part of an internal structure within Area 3. The wall was aligned north-south. Its southern end abutted the south wall of Area 3 in a straight join. Its north end was possibly overlain by the steps (301). Only one course of brick remained. It consisted of a single width of brick stretchers backed by a deposit of brick rubble and mortar in its southern half.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
306	Wall	Modern brickwork forming upper part of northern wall of Area 3. This consisted of three courses of bricks laid as alternate header and stretcher courses inserted above brick wall (307) as part of modern consolidation works.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
307	Wall	Brick wall forming northern wall of cellar. Eight courses of bricks in an irregular bond were visible above the brick floor of the cellar.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
308	Wall	Flint and clunch wall forming upper part of eastern wall in Area 3. Flint nodules and irregular blocks of clunch bough to courses in lower part but more random above.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
309	Wall	Brick wall forming lower, southern part of eastern wall in Area 3. This consisted of a mixture of brick at the base with brick and flint rubble above.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
310	Wall	Brick wall forming lower, northern part of eastern wall in Area 3. This consisted of ten courses of brick laid in stretcher bond with a band of diagonally laid tiles inserted above the brick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
311	Wall	Flint rubble wall forming western wall of Area 3 which survived up to the level of the adjacent basement floors. It is not clear if it originally continued above this level.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
312	Layer	Construction debris. A layer of clay with mortar fragments found inside the base of the compartment formed by walls (304), (305), (311) and the southern side of steps (301) beneath backfill deposit (313).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Area: 3

Description: Basement/cellar room on western side of main court.

313	Backfill	Modern backfill and debris filling cellar. Mixture of brick rubble, flint nodules and soil. Upper part consisted of accumulated leaf litter with some recent refuse items.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
314	Natural	Undisturbed geological deposit within Area 3. This was mid orange clay with occasional flint nodules, seen in the base of southern compartment of internal brick structure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Area: 4

Description: Small excavation adjacent to south-western side of clock tower.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
400	Topsoil	Turf and topsoil layer of dark silty loam, 0.28m deep.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
401	Layer	Mid yellow brown clay silt with lumps of re-deposited natural orange clay, 0.15m deep. It contained numerous small mortar fragments and occasional fragments of brick and stone. This layer may have formed at the time of the construction of the clock tower with a mixed deposit including re-deposited natural from the foundation cut and fragments of building material.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
402	Wall	Wall of clock tower. The lower part consists of a limestone, chamfered plinth above two bands of brickwork separated by a band of flint rubble.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
403	Foundation	The foundation of the clock tower consisted of flint nodule and brick rubble set in mortar. It continued down, in line with the face of the wall for c.0.2m. Below this it expanded to form a foundation plinth which projected up to 0.25m from the face of the wall.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
404	Layer	Layer of off-white, cream coloured mortar. This material is construction debris or foundation material. It probably occupies the construction cut for the foundation, however this could not be seen within the limits of the trench.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

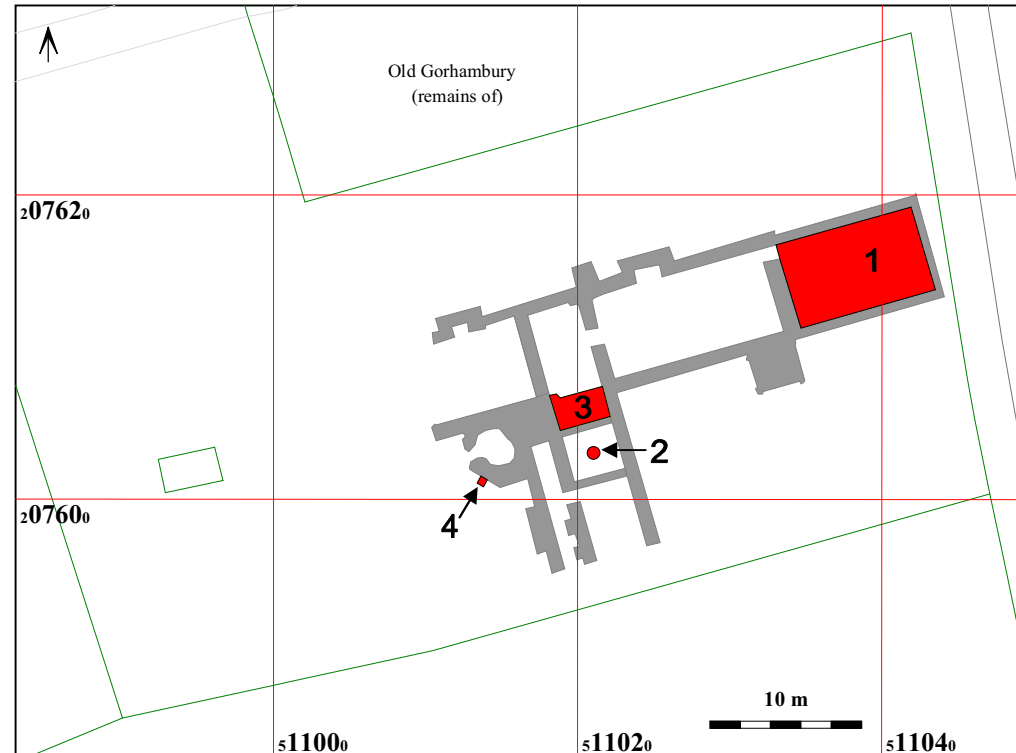
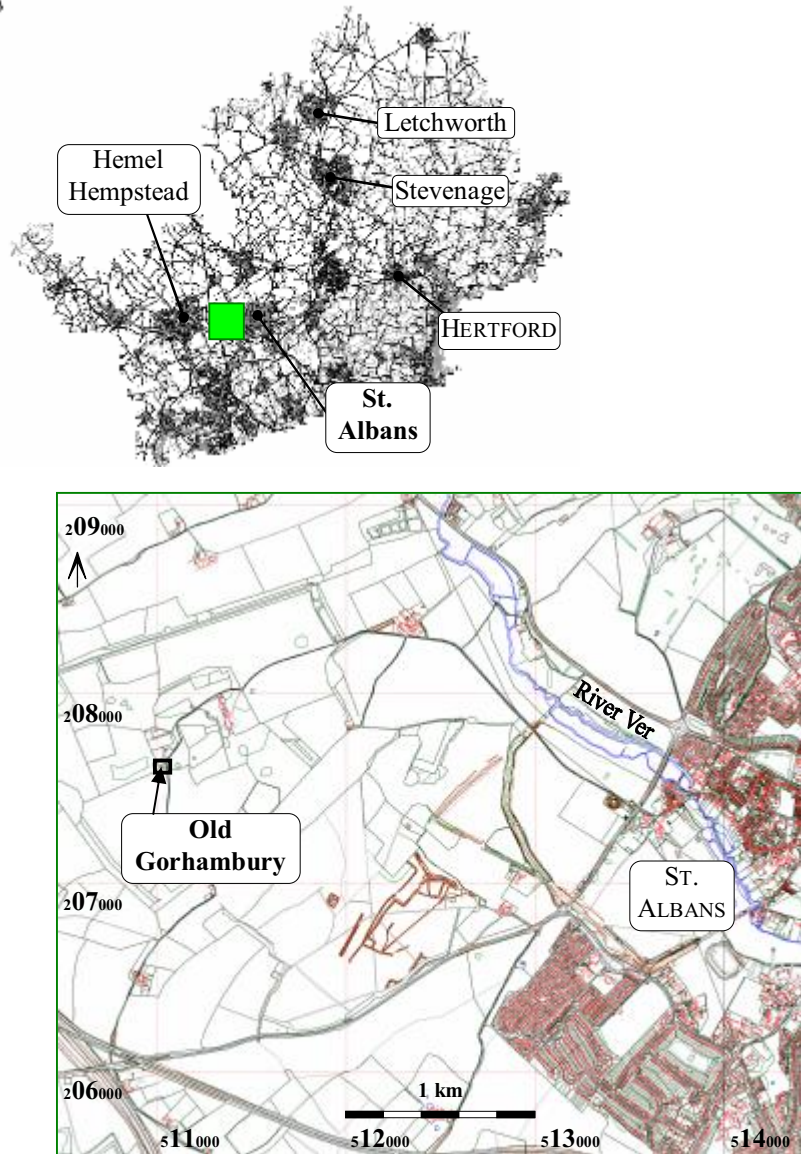
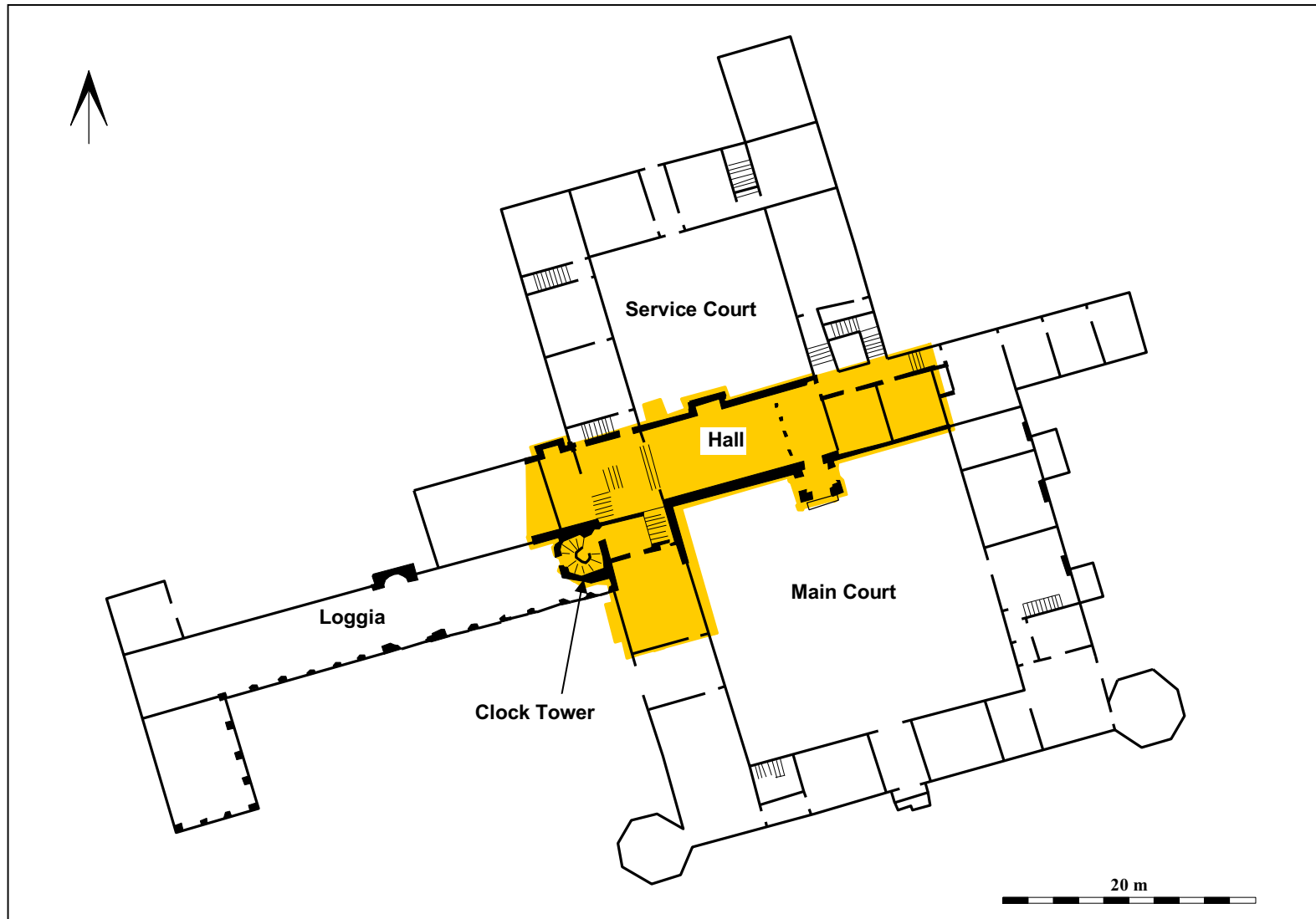


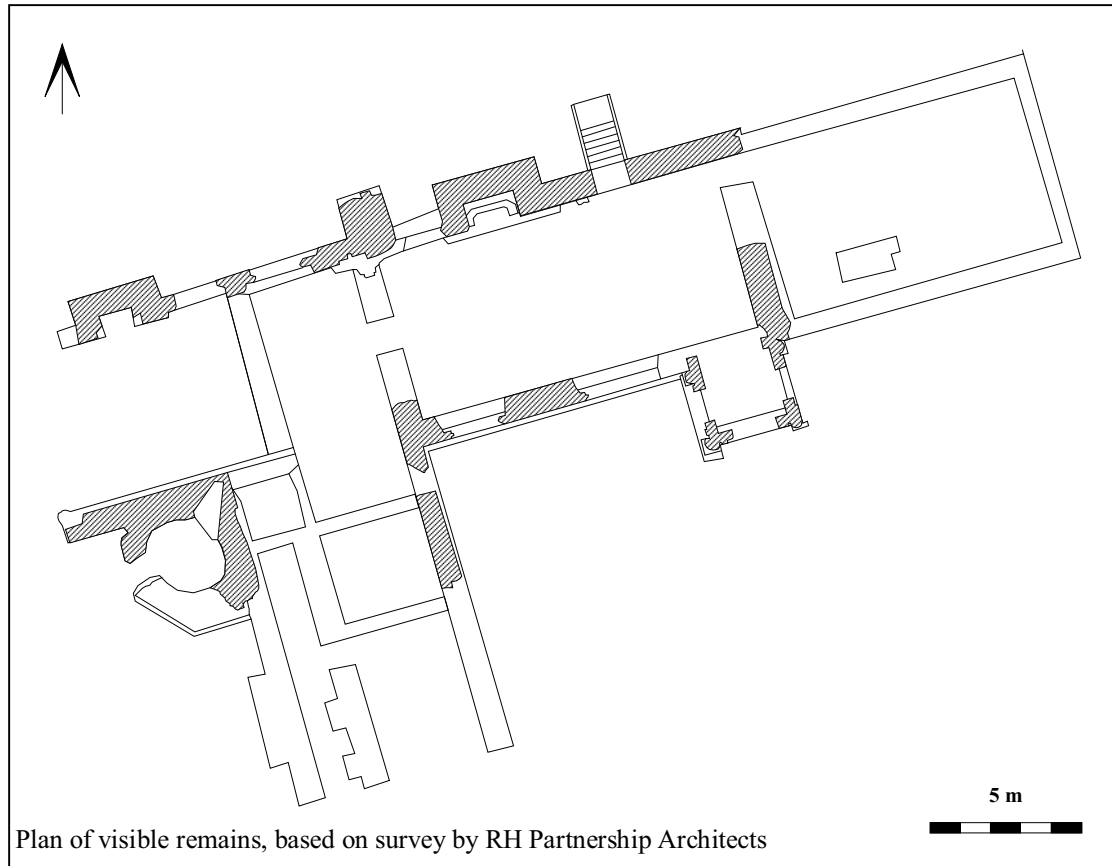
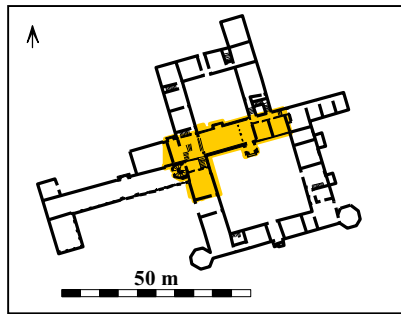
Figure 1: Site location plan showing Investigation Areas 1-4

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Land-line Map (2004), with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, by Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Bedford. OS Licence No. 100017358.. © Crown Copyright.



*Note: this plan does not include ancillary buildings to north and east

Figure 2: Modern extent of ruin superimposed on plan of 1821 (After Rogers 1933)



Plan of visible remains, based on survey by RH Partnership Architects



View from the north-east



View of the porch and hall from the south-east

Figure 3: Plan of visible remains

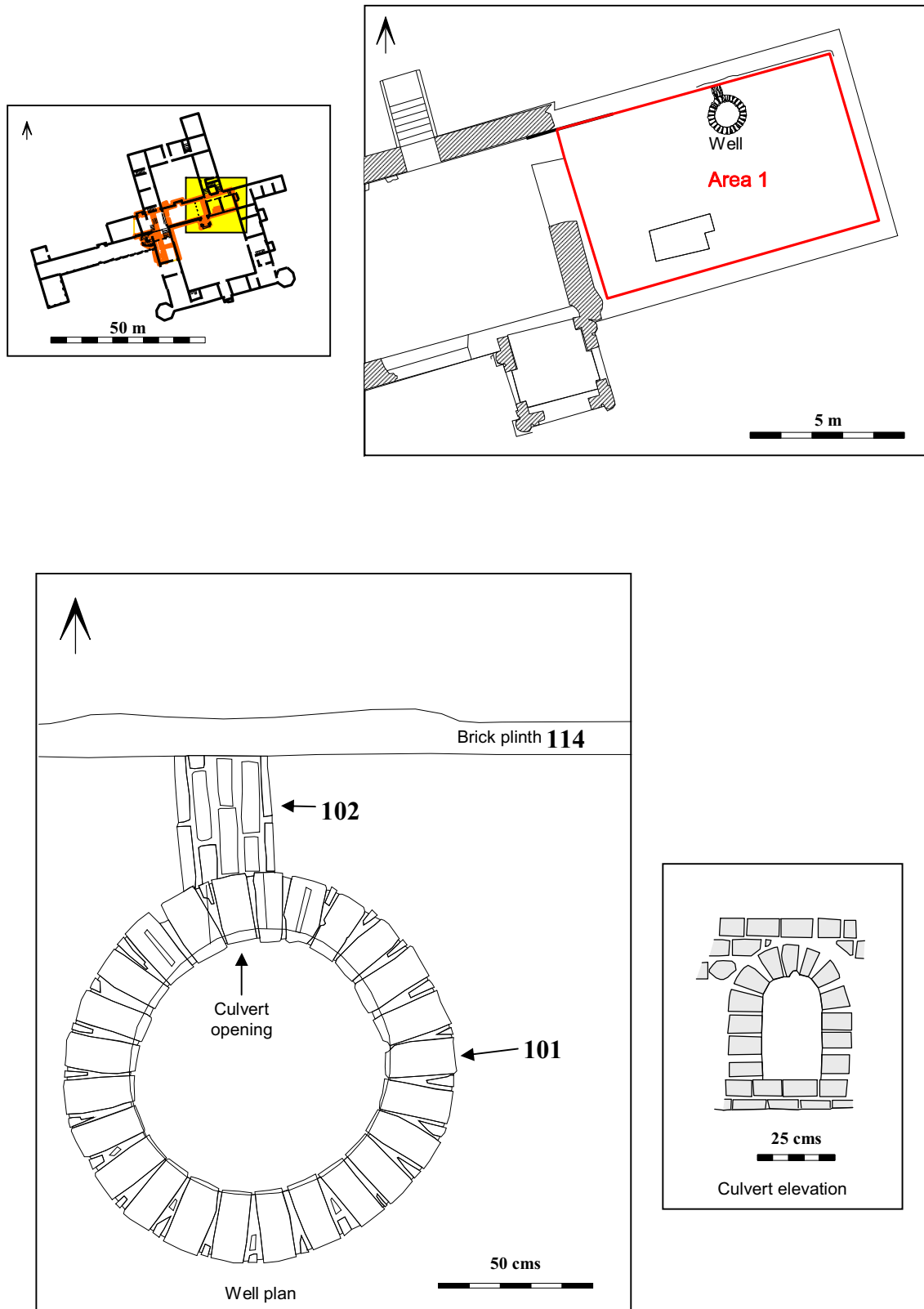


Figure 4: Plan and elevation of well and culvert in Area 1

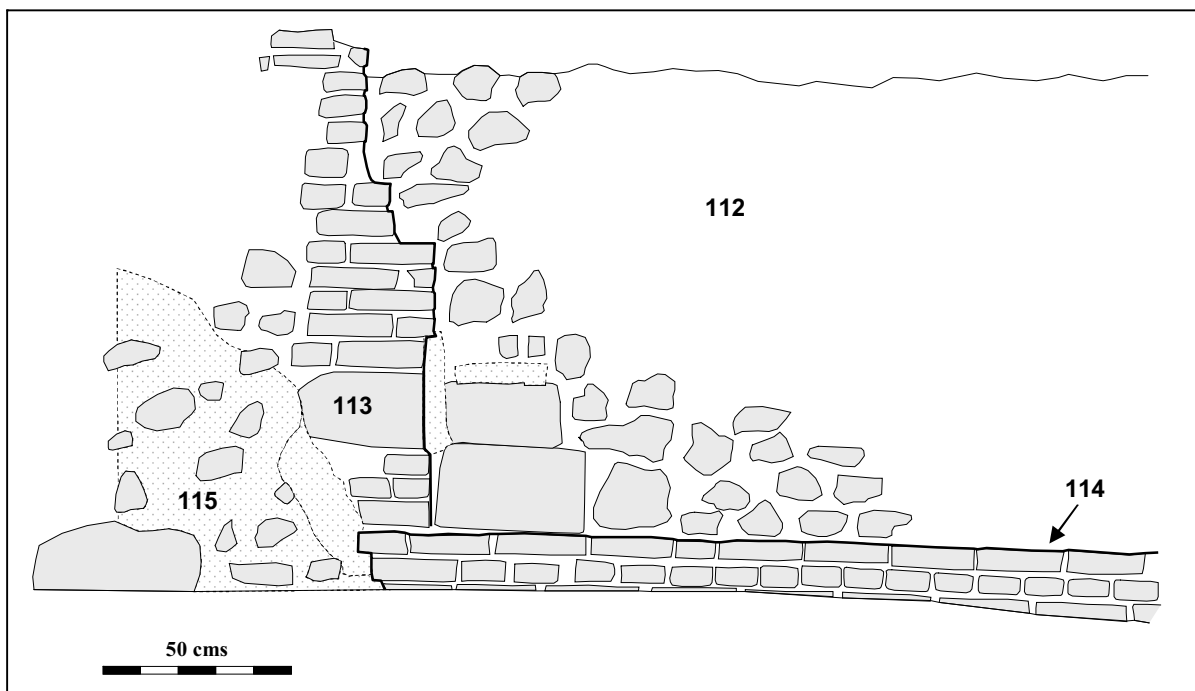
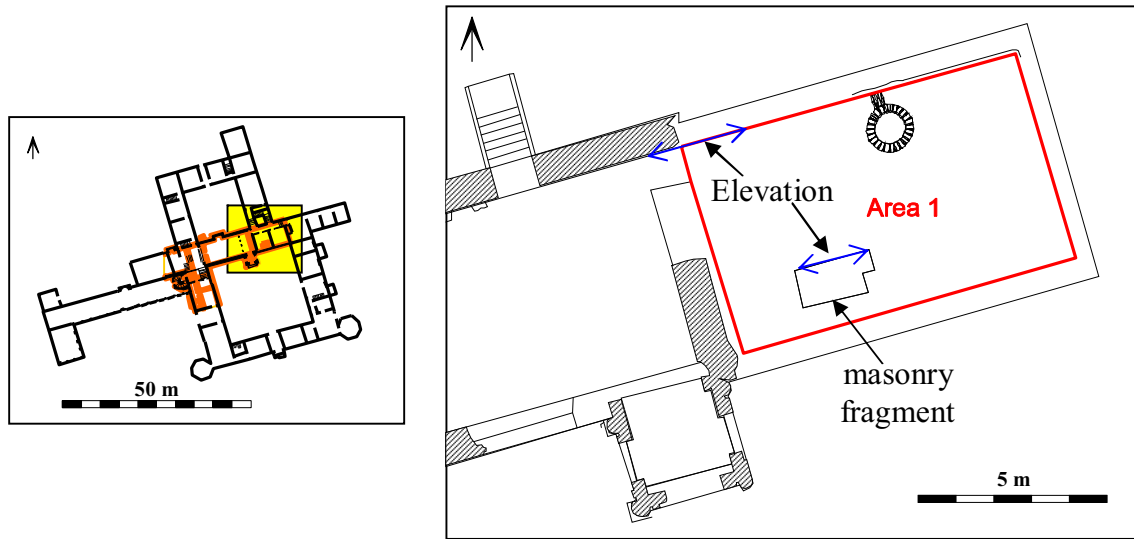


Figure 5: Elevation of masonry at junction of hall and Area 1

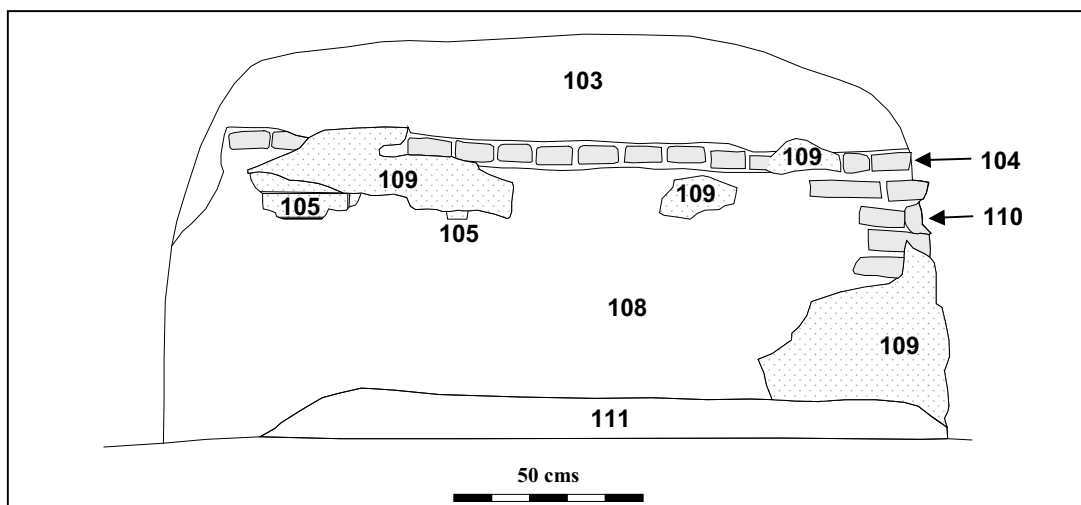


Figure 6: Elevation of masonry fragment in Area 1

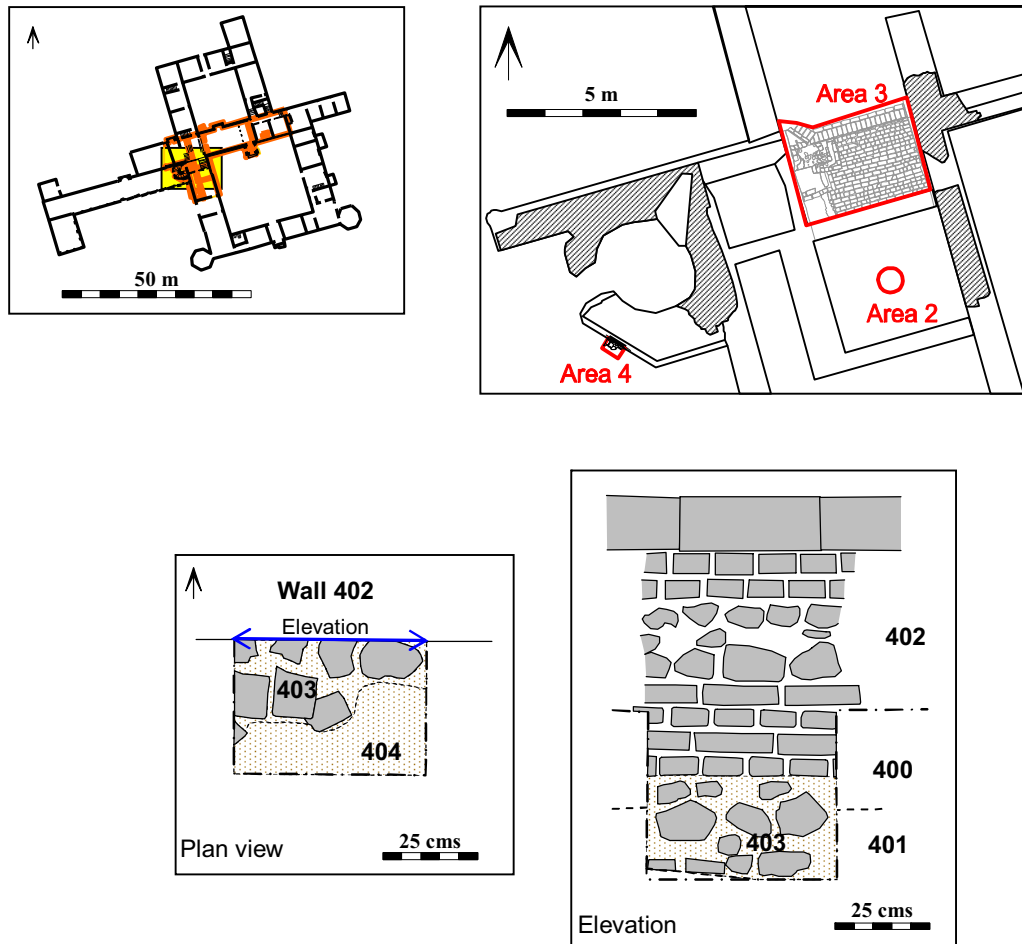


Figure 7: Area 4 elevation and plan

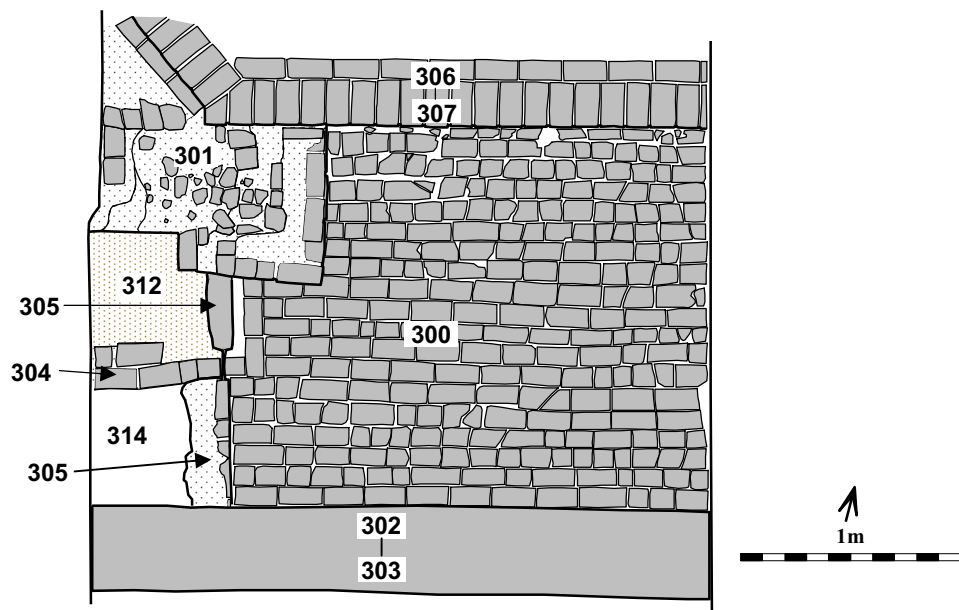


Figure 8: Plan of Area 3



Plate 1: Area 1, well and culvert



Plate 2: Area 1, masonry at the junction of the Hall and Area 1



Plate 3: Area 3, looking north



Plate 4: Area 3, looking east



Plate 5: Area 3, looking south



Plate 6: Area 3, looking west