

**An archaeological watching brief  
and limited excavation at  
60-66 East Street,  
Colchester, Essex  
May 2003-April 2004**

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on behalf of  
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## 1 Summary

Archaeological investigations were carried out within the interior of 60-66 East Street. The ceramic evidence indicates a start date for occupation on the site in the 12th century or possibly slightly earlier. This phase of habitation was followed by the mid 14th-century timber-framed open hall building. A wall plinth, probably from the 14th-century building, was recorded under the floorboards in Room G12. This may have been for a timber wall which divided the open hall from a parlour. The eastern extent of the 14th-century open hall building is uncertain. A sequence of medieval and post-medieval clay floors and occupation layers were exposed within this part of the building, indicating uninterrupted occupation till the present day. The peg-tile hearth in Rooms G6/G7 is likely to relate to an intermediate phase of the building (not 14th century). However, the main hearth to the open hall remains undiscovered. There is nothing in the pottery assemblage which would suggest that the building was anything other than a domestic structure. A second peg-tile hearth at the east end of the present (17th-century) building, in Room G2, provided evidence of another medieval building adjacent to the 14th-century one.

There was also evidence of subsequent occupation and changing layout of the building in the 15th and 16th centuries. Three wall plinths of this period, made of various combinations of flint and peg-tile, roughly follow the alignment of the walls to the standing building.

Various late post-medieval or modern brick partition wall foundations were exposed just under the floorboards.

A 'witch bottle' was retrieved from behind the wooden laths at the exterior of no 60. This had probably been inserted as a protection against evil spirits in the 19th or 20th century.

Unfortunately, the contractors' trenches and the archaeological excavation were restricted, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions about the structural development of the building. What can be stated is that there was a complex sequence of structures on the site and more than a neat replacement of the 14th-century open hall with the 17th-century hall (Leigh Alston pers comm).

## 2 Introduction (Plate 1 and Fig 1)

- 2.1 This is the report on an archaeological watching brief and limited excavation carried out by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) at 60-66 East Street, Colchester, Essex (formerly Charles Brown and Sons commercial premises), between May 2003 and April 2004. No work was undertaken at no 66 as part of these investigations. This report relates to investigations on the ground floor of the property and not to investigations to the rear of the property which will be covered in a separate report.
- 2.2 Planning permission was given to Harding Homes for the refurbishment of the property fronting East Street and the erection of thirteen new properties to the rear (planning application no F/COL/01/1848).
- 2.3 The former Charles Brown and Sons has a frontage of approximately 40m in length and a depth of 40m. It is a grade II listed property.
- 2.4 The building is located approximately 1.2 km east of Colchester town centre, on the north side of East Street. It is situated near the River Colne and is centred on National Grid Reference TM 0079 2536.
- 2.5 This report follows the standards set out in the Borough Council's *Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CM 2002) and *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums* (CM 2003), and the IFA's *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IFA 1999a), *Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation* (IFA 1999b), and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IFA 2001). Other sources are

*Management of archaeological projects (MAP 2), and Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment (EAA 3), Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy (EAA 8), and Standards for field archaeology in the East of England (EAA 14).*

### **3 Archaeological background (Fig 2)**

- 3.1** The site lies approximately 600m at its closest point to the historic town wall of Colchester, and would have been situated on the north side of the major Roman and medieval road leading east from Colchester out of the east gate. Extensive Roman cemeteries have been recorded on all sides of the walled town, but are largely absent on this eastern side (Hull 1958; *CAR 9*). This area, by the East Bridge and near the junction of the roads to the ports of Ipswich and Harwich, was a flourishing hamlet in medieval and later times, as shown by the buildings on John Speed's map of 1610. Many of the buildings on Speed's map survive today (eg the Siege House). The Rose and Crown hotel nearby is a 14th-century aisled hall (Menuge 1998). Some residents may have used the river for industrial activities such as tanning and fulling, and a mill has existed on the site of the east mill since the 13th or 14th century (*VCH 9*, p 259). East Street and the east bridge were the site of some action during the Siege of Colchester in 1648, and buildings must have been damaged at the time.
- 3.2** The property is a long, gable-fronted, timber-framed building. Most of what remains of the building above ground dates to the 17th century; however, the central part of the property (nos 62 and the eastern half of no 64 East Street) began as a mid 14th-century building with an open hall. Recent recording of the building by architectural historian Leigh Alston identified features from this structure, ie a first-floor traceried window and a moulded beam with soot encrustation which formed an internal jetty (Leigh Alston pers comm). The surviving evidence indicates that the building had been a wealthy merchant's house or an inn. During the 15th century, a large new building was added to the west of the hall (no 66 and the western half of no 64 East Street). This building was jettied and had further traceried windows. It included a large gateway leading into the rear courtyard. The 14th-century hall was replaced in the mid 17th century by another building, featuring wall-paintings on the first floor. The eastern end of Charles Brown and Sons (no 60 East Street) was added soon afterwards.

### **4 Aims**

The aim of the watching brief and excavation trenches was to identify and record any features or finds which would have been disturbed by the groundworks. Two of the excavation trenches (Trench or T11 and T14) were dug specifically to locate walls and a hearth of the 14th-century hall.

### **5 Methodology**

- 5.1** Five archaeological excavation trenches and pits were dug by CAT within the building (T1-T3, T11 and T14). Six test slots of variable sizes and depths were dug by Meridian Soils to test the ground, mainly to the rear of the building (Test slots 1-6) and ten trenches were dug by Tendring Construction for services, new foundations and for the removal of contaminated soil within the building (T5, T7-T10, T12-T13 and T15-T17). Tendring Construction also removed some floorboards and reduced the ground-level inside the building by hand.
- 5.2** The Meridian Soils test slots were dug using a mechanical excavator with a toothed bucket. An archaeologist from CAT was always in attendance to monitor the work.

Inside the building, trenches were hand-dug by Tendring Construction with monitoring visits being made by a CAT archaeologist during digging or after the trenches had been dug. The six archaeological excavation trenches/pits were hand-dug by CAT. The width, length and depth of the trenches varied.

- 5.3 Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features and deposits were entered on pro-forma CAT record sheets.
- 5.4 Section drawings showing features and layers were made at a scale of 1:10. Plans of features were made at a scale of 1:20.
- 5.5 Colour photographs of site shots and all important contexts were taken using a transparency camera and digital camera.
- 5.6 Finds were registered on CAT record sheets and assigned find numbers and small find numbers according to context. Finds were washed, marked and bagged according to context.
- 5.7 The prefix 'G' before each room number is an abbreviation of 'ground floor'.

## 6 Results

### 6.1 Watching brief on Meridian Soils' test slots, May 2003 (Test slots 1-6)

#### Test slot 1

north-west corner of Room G13, where T15 was later dug (see section 6.2)  
300mm x 300mm, 1m deep  
No information is available for this trench.

#### Test slot 2

north-eastern part of the site, next to a buried fuel tank  
4m x 1.2m, 1.5m deep  
Topsoil with modern demolition debris sealed mid brown sandy loam with brick and mortar fragments. Within this layer were two upright timbers, one of which was packed with bricks and mortar. The base of the deepest timber was at 530mm below ground-level. These had been dug into a layer of orange sandy clay with some stones. At 900mm below ground-level, contaminated natural grey clay was encountered.

#### Test slot 3

north-eastern corner of the site, next to a buried fuel tank  
3.3m x 1.2m, 3m deep  
Concrete and mid brown sandy loam with modern demolition debris sealed 1.1m of orange-mid brown sandy loam. Natural contaminated grey clay was encountered at 1.6m below ground-level.

#### Test slot 4

south-eastern corner of the site  
3m x 1m, 3m deep  
Topsoil with modern demolition debris sealed 500mm of dark brown loam. Orange sandy clay natural was encountered at 1m below ground-level.

#### Test slot 5

centre of the site  
3m x 1m, 3m deep  
Topsoil mixed with modern demolition debris sealed 700mm of mixed dark brown sandy loam. At 1m below ground-level, natural ground was encountered, with the orange sandy clay becoming more gravelly.

### **Test slot 6**

north-west part of the site

3m x 1m, 3m deep

Topsoil mixed with modern demolition debris sealed 900mm of mixed dark brown sandy loam. Natural orange sandy clay was encountered 1.3m below ground-level.

Except for the timber posts in T2, no features were recorded within the test slots and nor were any finds retrieved.

## **6.2 Watching brief on ground-reduction and trenches dug for services, replacement foundations and removal of contaminated soil by Tendring Construction (T5, T7-T10, T12-T13 and T15-T17) (Fig 2)**

The floorboards were removed in Room G12 in May and June 2003 for the laying of a new floor. This room occupies the western end of the 14th-century open hall building. Mixed sandy silt surface debris (Layer or L1) containing peg-tile, mortar and two copper-alloy studs was removed. A shallow, 200mm-wide wall foundation was exposed, extending north to south. This was constructed of peg-tile set into a 100mm thick mortar sub-base (Feature or F1) and is thought to be a plinth of a medieval timber wall, possibly an internal wall to the open hall building (Figs 2-3). One piece of Roman painted wall-plaster formed part of F1 and another piece was found in the layer below (L42). The top of the wall foundation was 280mm below the modern floorboards. A light brown silty clay layer (L35) was observed abutting F1 to the west. L35 is thought to have been a clay floor as it was seen across most of the room, underneath L1. A small archaeological trench was dug on the eastern side of the wall F1 (see T2; section 6.3; Fig 3).

In August 2003, another visit was made after all the floors had been removed. The western side of Room G12 was examined and a section drawn. There was no evidence of the exterior wall to the 14th-century open hall building under the present wall.

### **Trench 5** (September 2003), Room G13

400mm x 400mm

A small trench was dug on the western side of the room to underpin the brick fireplace. During this work a piece of dressed stone (350mm x 200mm in size) was retrieved from below the fireplace (find no 15). This room was part of the 15th-century building.

### **Trench 6**

[No T6.]

### **Trench 7** (August 2003), Room G13

5.3m x 500mm

A shallow trench was dug along the southern edge of the room to replace a wall foundation. A brick wall foundation (F3) was exposed which was only three bricks wide. It followed an east to west direction, along the frontage with East Street but 200mm north of it. This probable post-medieval foundation was made of unfrogged red bricks which were 65mm thick. It did not extend the whole width of the room.

### **Trench 8** (August 2003), Room G12

5.8m x 400-800mm wide, 750mm deep

This trench is within the 14th-century open hall building but all the deposits recorded post-date it. The trench dug to replace the foundation in Room G13 was extended into Room G12. A solid mortar wall with some septaria and a course of bricks extending along its southern edge was exposed (F4). The bricks were red, unfrogged and 45mm thick. The whole wall was 300mm wide and aligned in an ENE-WSW direction. The top of the wall was 300mm below the modern floorboards. F4 had cut through light brown silty sand with patches of yellow brown clay (L36). Under this layer was a buff sandy silt with abundant small rounded stones (L37). The small size of the bricks of wall F4 indicates that it is post-medieval. This feature does not appear to follow the same

alignment as the other wall foundations, so it is unclear how it fits in. Mortar was also observed in the south-facing section of the trench and may represent a continuation of wall F1.

**Trench 9** (September 2003), south-western corner of Room G1  
1m x 750mm, 1.4m deep

This trench was dug in the 17th-century part of the building. In the north-facing section of the trench, the brick wall foundation to the southern exterior wall was seen to extend to 650mm below modern ground-level. This foundation was built on top of what looked like an earlier foundation made of narrower bricks (45mm thick) and mortar. This earlier work may have been the original 17th-century foundation.

**Trench 10** (September 2003), eastern side of Room G13  
1m x 750mm, 500mm deep

No features or finds of archaeological significance were recorded in this trench.

**Trench 12** (October 2003), south-western side of Room G3 (Fig 4)  
3.4m x 450mm, 800mm deep

This trench is probably just inside the 14th-century open hall building, possibly within an eastern service cross-wing. The ground-level here is 200mm higher than in the adjacent room, Room G7. The following soil profile was observed (Section or Sx 2):

L13 – 50mm-thick modern concrete floor.

L14 – 150mm of brick and mortar rubble; sub-base for floor.

L15 – mid brown silty clay with dark brown smears, underlying L14; contained peg-tile, 12th-/13th-century pottery sherds mainly at the base of the layer, plus charcoal flecks.

L16 – mid brown silty clay with abundant charcoal (flecks and streaks) which is likely to be an occupation layer. At the bottom of L16 (600mm below ground-level) were sherds from one medieval vessel which dates the layer to the 12th or 13th century (find no 27). Although there was clearly evidence of burnt material in the layer, it was not black enough to represent *in situ* burning. It may be some burnt material which was dumped onto the clay floor L19 below. In terms of levels, the top of L16 is 200mm lower than medieval hearth F14 in T14 and therefore is likely to be earlier than the hearth. This layer was seen in both sections and extended to the northern limit of the trench.

L17 – within L16 was a patch of moist reddish brown silt with charcoal flecks, possibly staining from wood.

L18 – just above L16 and L17 and sealed by L15 was a pocket of pale yellow sand and gravel.

L19 – underlying L16 was a light brown silty clay with mortar flecks and tile fragments – a medieval floor associated with 12th- to 13th-century occupation layer L16 above. The 12th- or 13th-century pottery found at the base of L19 suggests that this phase of occupation pre-dates the 14th-century open hall building.

F12 – a pit cutting L16 and L19 - it is not clear whether it cuts or is sealed by L15; its upper fill (12a) consisted of mid brown silty clay, similar to L15. The lower fill (12b) of the feature consisted of a grey brown silty clay with one piece of slate at the base. If not for the one piece of slate, this feature would appear to be medieval because it is cut from quite low down. This feature was only seen in the east-facing section.

L20 – darkish brown sandy clayey silt garden soil, with oyster shells in one area, sealing L16 and L17. It was seen in the northern part of the trench to the north of F13.

F13 – a narrow linear feature in the northern part of the trench extending east to west. It cuts charcoal rich occupation layers L16 and L17 and the clay floor L19. To the south it also cuts L15 and to the north it cuts L20. F13 could have been a beam slot for the back wall of either the open hall or a service cross-wing.

**Trench 13** (October 2003), Room G3

6.75 x 500mm, 500mm deep

The trench had a similar profile to T16, ie there were no features (see T16 below). In April 2004, a probable clay floor was recorded 500mm below previous ground-level in this room which corresponds to L48 in T3 (see section 6.3). This was exposed during ground reduction for a new floor.

**Trench 15** (October-November 2003), Rooms G13 and G14 (Fig 5)

2.1m x 1.6m, between 1.1m and 1.25m deep

A deep trench was dug to remove contaminated soil after a paraffin pump had been removed.

Underneath the modern concrete floor and brick rubble (L34) were the remains of a wall (F21) extending from east to west along the northern edge of the trench. The wall, which was between 170mm and 200mm wide, then returned to the north. This feature extended to a depth of 1.25m and was not bottomed. This was similar to F8 in T11 and T14 (see section 6.3), being made up of large nodules of flint and septaria, layered with peg-tile and bonded with mortar. However, it was less ornate and of much greater depth, and therefore it was not a plinth for a timber wall. The wall had been cut away by a large straight-sided ditch (F22) filled by mid brown silty clay with clay patches and containing peg-tile. To the south of F21 there were no occupation layers abutting the wall, merely garden soil L20.

A small square-sided pit observed in the north-facing section of the trench is likely to be the backfilled archaeological trench 3 from 2003 (see section 6.3).

In the east-facing section (Sx 3) and north-facing section, no evidence of medieval occupation layers was recorded, suggesting that this area did not lie within the footprint of the earliest building.

Natural ground was reached at 1.05m below modern ground-level (L28).

**Trench 16** (October 2003), Room G8

3.7m x 400mm, 330mm deep

This was an extension of T11 and followed a north-west to south-east direction. The modern floor-level in Room G8 has been built up higher than that in Room G7. 50mm of modern concrete overlaid 20mm of modern brick rubble. This overlaid sandy loam with tile and mortar. No features were recorded.

**Trench 17** (January 2004), Room G2 (Fig 6)

5m x 500mm, 1m deep

At the eastern end of the building (no 60 East Street), contractors replaced the rear foundation wall and exposed another hearth (F24). This feature was only seen in the south-facing section of the trench (Sx 4). It was made of upturned peg-tiles, similar to F14, and had been cut by a modern pit. To the west of the hearth was a surface consisting of small flint cobbles. This hearth was found within the later 17th-century part of the building but is not this late. Both F24 and F25 started 400mm below ground-level.

**6.3 Archaeological excavation trenches dug by CAT (T1-T3, T11 and T14)**

**Trench 1** (May-June 2003), by the fireplace on the western wall in Room G13 (Fig 7)

530mm x 300mm, 500mm deep

The following profile was recorded (Sx 5):

L38 – lime mortar and brick and tile.

L39 – dark greyish black sandy loam with inclusions of loose brick, peg-tile and mortar.

L40 – light brown sandy clay/loam with occasional daub, tile, mortar/plaster and charcoal flecks.

L41 – mid-dark brown loam with flecks of charcoal, tile and mortar/plaster.

There was no definite dating evidence from these layers.

**Trench 2** (May-June 2003), in the north-eastern corner of Room G12 (Fig 3)  
430mm x 300mm, 700mm deep

This trench was dug on the eastern side of wall F1 and is within the 14th-century open hall. It was dug to a depth of 700mm below the modern floorboards. The following profile was observed (Sx 1):

- F1 – this was seen to have a 100mm thick mortar sub-base (see section 6.2).
- L42 – F1 sealed a 100mm band of dark greyish black brown sandy loam containing flecks of tile and charcoal, possibly a previous medieval occupation layer. This layer contained modern sugar tongs (find no 11) and floor bricks but these may have come from L1 and been mis-assigned.
- L43 – underlying L42 was a 100mm-thick layer of light-mid brown yellowish sandy clay with occasional stones and charcoal flecks, a possible floor.
- L44 – a stone surface 40mm thick.
- L45 – mid brown sandy loam, possibly natural ground; this was reached at 650mm below modern ground-level.

**Trench 3** (May-June 2003), by the staircase in the north-west corner of Room G13 (Fig 7)

550mm x 300mm, 650mm deep

This trench was dug to a depth of 650mm below the floorboards. It was later dug through by T15 (see section 6.2). The following soil profile was recorded (Sx 6):

- L1 – a loose fine sandy silt.
- L46 – yellowish-mid brown clay mixed with dust plus building brick and stone material, a possible post-medieval floor.
- L47 – dark greyish black sandy clay mixed with white mortar/plaster fragments.
- L48 – yellowish mid-brown sandy clay with abundant flecks of brick and mortar (very loose), a possible floor surface. Contains one sherd of 12th- or 13th-century pottery.

**Trench 11** (September 2003), Rooms G6 and G7 (Figs 8-9)

400mm x 1m, between 200mm and 320mm deep

This trench was excavated by CAT for a service trench. It was dug within the oldest part of the building (the 14th-century open hall), after the partition wall dividing Rooms G6 and G7 had been taken down. The following features and layers were recorded, starting with the most recent:

- L1 – 100mm of surface debris; mixed loose sandy silt, with burnt wood and charcoal.
- F5, F6 and F7 – three shallow modern slots for joist supports, filled by dark grey silty dust and cut into L1.
- F9 – a wall built of one course of red unfrosted bricks, probably post-medieval. The wall is aligned in a north to south direction. The cut for the wall (F10) returns to the west but the bricks do not survive here. This is not the base for the partition wall between Rooms G6 and G7 but it does follow the same alignment (Sx 8).
- F10 – the cut for F9.
- F8 – a small portion of a stone and flint wall layered with peg-tile. This is a plinth to a late medieval timber wall (ie 15th to early-mid 16th century) that no longer survives. The wall was constructed of rounded stones and flint nodules, with courses of peg-tile, held together with white powdery mortar. It was seen to be aligned in a roughly north to south direction, almost parallel to F9 (Sx 7).
- F11 – cut for wall F8, filled by dark grey-black silty clay with common charcoal and the occasional mortar fragment.
- L2 – in the southern end of the trench, abutting F8 and sealed by L1, was a patch of light yellow clay with occasional crushed tile - a late medieval or post-medieval floor, probably associated with the wall F8 and the same as L31 in T14.
- L3 – on the same level as L2 and possibly part of the same floor, was a patch of mid orangey brown sandy clay with occasional small charcoal flecks.

- L4 – on the same level as L2 was a dark brown silty clay layer containing common brick, tile and mortar flecks with occasional charcoal flecks and pieces of early to mid 17th-century pot and a post-medieval lace-end - cut by F9.
- L6 – dirty yellow-brown clay layer in the northern part of the trench, probably a late medieval or post-medieval floor - cut by F9/F10.
- L5 – a thin layer of yellow clay – a late medieval or post-medieval floor, cut by F9.
- L9 – a very thin layer underlying L5, of mid-dark brown grey clay containing common charcoal, possibly part of floor L5.
- L10 – a layer of mid reddish brown silty clay at the base of the trench, which seems to have been exposed to heat in places; this is interpreted as being a medieval occupation layer underneath L9.
- L7 – patchy demolition debris? – a mixture of light greyish yellow sand, silt and crushed mortar; sealed by L2 and L4, cut by F9, and containing 15th- to 16th-century pottery.
- L8 – a mid grey clay containing common charcoal flecks, the occasional fragment of mortar and pieces of oyster shell - a probable occupation layer underlying L7, sealed by L4 and cut by F9.
- L11 – dark yellow brown layer at the base of the trench, containing occasional charcoal fragments, pieces of tile and occasional medium rounded stones - a medieval occupation layer, sealed by floor L2 and appearing to seal L12, cut by F8 and F11 and therefore earlier.
- L12 – probable late medieval demolition layer, consisting of mid grey sandy silt with common pieces of tile, 'Tudor' bricks, large pieces of stone and septaria and occasional fragments of charcoal; L12 appeared to be going under L6 and L11 which would indicate demolition from a building pre-dating F8. This was not tested because the agreed depth of the trench had been reached.

**Trench 14** (October 2003), Rooms G6 and G7 (Figs 8 and 10, Plate 2)

4.6m long, irregular width, between 250mm and 650mm deep

This trench was dug by CAT within the oldest part of the building (the 14th-century open hall), after the partition wall dividing Rooms G6 and G7 had been taken down. The following features and layers were recorded, starting with the most recent:

- L1 – surface debris.
- F16 – a footing extending east to west made of unfrogged bricks; this is further back than the existing front wall of the building and may be part of the mid 17th-century rebuilding (Sx 11).
- F8 – a continuation of the wall recorded in T11 (Sx 9 and Sx 10 in T14). The width of the wall was 240mm and it extended the whole length of the room. Both sides of the wall were exposed. Although it followed a roughly north to south alignment, it was not exactly parallel with the wall to the present building. The wall was seen to be rather ornate and so therefore must have been intended to be visible above ground. There were only two bricks within the wall's fabric, making it unlikely to be later than 16th century in date. At one point the base of the wall is deeper, perhaps to fill a pot-hole.
- F15 – a narrow peg-tile and mortar wall at right angles to F8, faced with mortar on the south side; this is probably a base to a timber partition wall defining a room with a clay floor (L31), and contemporary with F8.
- L31 – light brownish yellow clean clayey silt abutting walls F8 and F15 and possibly a late medieval floor, probably the same as L2 in T11.
- L29 – a mixed layer of reddish brown silt with buff and orange clayey silt with charcoal, tile and mortar flecks - an occupation layer sealing floor L27 and hearth F14.
- F17 – a wall or foundation on an east to west alignment, partially below F16, made of large squared pieces of flint bonded with mortar; wall F8 was found to butt up against F17 and is probably part of the front wall to the same late medieval or early post-medieval building.

- L21 – reddish brown silt layer containing charcoal flecks and abundant peg-tile under L1; a late medieval occupation layer sealing floor L22 and probably contemporary with F8 and L31.
- L22 – compact buff clayey silt with a band of orange clayey silt and occasional daub – a late medieval or early post-medieval floor surface.
- F14 – a medieval hearth 900mm x 600mm wide, made of upturned peg-tiles set into light brown sandy silt. Walls F8 and F15 were constructed directly on top of the hearth. The hearth has a tile border around the eastern edge. The western side has no border and has a ragged edge as if some tiles have been removed. The tiles and the earth of the eastern part of the hearth had been burnt, as one would expect. Inexplicably, however, on the western side there is no evidence of burning apart from one small patch of reddening near the centre. The south-eastern edge of F14 has been cut away.
- L27 – the occupation layer surrounding hearth F14, a mid brown silty clay with flecks of burnt orange clay and frequent smears and flecks of charcoal. To the east of F14, L27 has been burnt very black. To the south of wall F15, L27 is sealed by clay floor L31.
- L23 – dark brown sandy silt, blackened by soot, probably from sweepings from the hearth F14; contemporary with F14 and L27, cut by later medieval wall F8.
- L26 – red burnt silty layer sealing L25 in one part of the trench; possibly part of L23.
- L25 – stone surface between 10mm and 100mm thick, consisting of large and small rounded and angular flint, mixed in with pebbles, but with no mortar. This may be a gravel yard surface laid outside before the 14th-century hall was built. However, it seals L24 which appears to have been a floor inside a building.
- L24 – orangey brown clayey silt with a narrow seam of darker material dividing this layer from L28 below; may be a floor from an earlier phase of occupation pre-dating the building with the hearth F14.
- L28 – orangey brown natural silty sand appearing at 450mm below modern ground-level, similar to L24 above but redder, with gravel appearing at 650mm below modern ground-level.



**Plate 2** Hearth F14 and wall F8.

## **7 Conclusion**

### **7.1 12th- or 13th-century floor and occupation level**

In T12 in Room G3 (the western edge of no 60 East Street), evidence of an earlier phase of occupation was recorded, ie a clay floor. Subsequent occupation layers contained burnt material and late 12th- to early 13th-century pottery. These layers lie within the open hall building but pre-date it. They probably belong to an earlier building, perhaps a detached kitchen which would explain the burnt material. Apparently there was an earlier building to the east of the 14th-century open hall building (Alston 2004, 27).

### **7.2 Other medieval and post-medieval floor-levels and occupation layers**

In Rooms G12 and G6/G7 (no 64 and the western half of no 62 East Street), medieval and post-medieval clay-floor surfaces and occupation layers were recorded. These were exposed during ground reduction and also within the archaeological trenches T11 and T14. These included medieval floor surfaces and occupation levels below the level of and presumably earlier than the hearth F14 (see section 6.4). Unfortunately, a lack of stratified pottery makes close dating of these layers impossible.

### **7.3 Probable 14th-century wall foundation to parlour**

In Room G12 (no 64 East Street), a shallow, 450mm-wide wall foundation was exposed (F1). This followed a north to south alignment and was constructed of peg-tile set flat into a 100mm-thick mortar sub-base. One piece of Roman wall-plaster had been used in the fabric. This room occupies what was the western end of the 14th-century open hall building. The feature is likely to have been a plinth of a medieval timber wall, which probably divided the high end of the open hall from a parlour cross-wing. The wing was jettied into the hall to create a projecting canopy of honour above the dais; the moulded beam being still visible. The top of this wall foundation was 280mm below the modern floorboards. A clay floor was recorded to the west of it. Other plinths of this type have been excavated in Colchester, in Building 76 at the Middleborough excavations of 1979, and dated to 1450-c 1600, although those with re-used Roman building materials and peg-tile were dated c 1350-1450 (Brooks & Crummy 1984, 199-200). The 14th-century open hall building may have featured a service cross-wing at its eastern end, but this cannot be proved. 60-66 East Street is not the first medieval open hall building to be excavated in Colchester. The New Market Tavern at Middleborough was recorded by CAT before being demolished in 1978 (Building 76 in Brooks & Crummy 1984, 198-203). Building 75 also included an open hall.

Other buildings in Colchester which began as medieval open hall buildings are the Rose and Crown Hotel nearby on East Street, which is an early 14th-century aisled hall building (Menuge 1998, pp 22-3); Port Reeves House, on the corner of Brook Street and East Bay; and the former Army and Navy shop (no 27 Head Street). The occurrence of such buildings suggests affluence perhaps related to trade; three of them are situated on a major road and near the River Colne.

### **7.4 Late 14th- to 16th-century hearths**

In Rooms G6/G7 (no 62 East Street), a trench was dug by CAT within the oldest part of the building (T14). A hearth consisting of upturned peg-tiles with a border around the eastern edge was exposed (F14; Fig 3, Plate 2). Hearths of these types have been previously recorded at excavations of medieval houses in Colchester, for example at Middleborough, and have been found to date from the later 14th to the 16th centuries (Brooks & Crummy 1984, 190, 201). The open hall would have required a large central hearth to provide warmth for the residents, particularly as windows would have been unglazed at this time. However, hearth F14 being only 600mm x 900mm in size, would not have been able to hold a large enough fire to heat the main room. However, the ragged western edge may mean that some of the hearth has been removed.

Additionally one would expect the main hearth to be further west, in what would have been the centre of the open hall. Inexplicably, only the eastern half of the hearth showed signs of burning, and therefore it may be that this feature had an alternative function. A peg-tile hearth showing no signs of burning was excavated in the south wing of Building 75 at the Middleborough site (Brooks & Crummy 1984, 194). It may be that the main

hearth in this open hall, which caused the sooting on the jettied beam, still awaits discovery, T11 not having been dug deep enough to expose it.

In Room G2 (no 60 East Street), another hearth was exposed (F24). This feature was only seen in the south-facing section of the trench. It was made of upturned peg-tiles, similar to F14, and had been cut by a modern pit. To the west of the hearth was a surface consisting of small flint cobbles (F25). Although this hearth was found within the later, 17th-century part of the building, it is not this late. The similarity of F24 to F14 make it likely that they are of similar date (later 14th-16th century). By the 17th century, these types of open hearths had gone out of use as large central chimney stacks with fireplaces were inserted into medieval properties (Harris 1987, 18-19; Brooks & Crummy 1984, 195). This second hearth may well relate to a separate building, possibly contemporary with or one century later than the open hall building (Leigh Alston pers comm). The clay floors found in G3 (section 6.2) may relate to the same building as hearth F24.

#### **7.5 Possible evidence for rear wall of the 14th-century open hall or service cross-wing**

T12 on the border of nos 60 and 62 East Street contained possible evidence for a back wall (northern wall) of the 14th-century open hall or service cross-wing (F13). This was a linear cut on an east to west alignment, seen in both sections, and cutting a 12th- or 13th-century floor and occupation layer. This could be interpreted as a beam slot for a timber wall. F13 is on the right alignment and is the right distance back from the front of the hall to be its rear wall. There was one piece of 12th- or 13th-century pottery within F13 but this may have come from L15. However, there was no other dating evidence from F13 and it could be an unrelated feature.

#### **7.6 15th- to mid 16th-century wall foundations**

T11 in Rooms G6/G7 (no 62 East Street) was dug within the area of the 14th-century open hall. A flint and mortar foundation with courses of peg-tile was exposed (F8; Fig 3). A further trench was excavated by CAT in which more of this feature was recorded (T14). F8 is interpreted as having been a plinth for a timber wall which no longer survives. The plinth would have been partly above ground, thereby raising the wooden ground plate off the ground and preventing it from becoming rotten. There were only two bricks within the plinth's fabric, making it unlikely to be later than medieval or early post-medieval in date. Therefore a date of the 15th to mid 16th century is likely. It was built directly on top of the hearth (F14), and therefore post-dates it. Something similar was excavated in Building 75 at the Middleborough site, a 16th-century plinth built directly onto a 15th-century hearth (Brooks & Crummy 1984, 194).

A narrower wall plinth made of peg-tile and mortar was also exposed, at right angles to F8 and to the east of it (F15). This had also been built on top of the hearth F14 and is therefore likely to be contemporary with F8. It would have supported an internal partition timber wall that divided two rooms.

On the south side of the room, the north-south plinth (F8) butted at right angles against a flint and mortar wall (F17) which could be the foundation for the frontage of the 15th- or 16th-century building.

A trench (T15) was dug by contractors on the northern edge of Room G13 in the 15th- century part of the building (no 64 East Street). A wall (F21) was recorded, which extended from east to west, with a return to the north. Although it had been cut away by a pit, much of F21 still remained. The wall was constructed of large nodules of flint plus some septaria, layered with courses of peg-tile and bonded with mortar. It did not contain any brick and therefore a 15th- or earlier 16th-century date is suggested. The fabric of this feature was similar to F8 but it was seen in section to be 1.25m in depth and is therefore interpreted as having been a wall rather than a plinth to a timber wall. No occupation layers or floors abutted the wall to the south, only garden soil. This suggests that the wall was part of an outbuilding to the north of the main building. The partition wall between Room G13 and Room G14 had been recently taken down as part of the refurbishments. F21 cannot have been a foundation to this wall because it was not quite in line with it and because it was sealed by a layer of brick rubble and concrete.

### 7.7 Later post-medieval or modern walls

Narrow foundations of unfrogged red brick and mortar were recorded in Rooms G6, G7, G12 and G13. Most of these were on the same alignment as existing walls and probably represent previous internal partition walls.

### 7.8 'Witch bottle'

A 19th- or 20th-century ceramic stoneware bottle was retrieved from behind the wooden laths at the exterior of no 60 East Street (Room G4). It had been stoppered with a plaster bung, and inserted into the wall before it had been plastered over. The bottle has been X-rayed to determine whether the contents contain any of the usual iron nails and pins; the X-ray showed that it may contain a cork but was otherwise inconclusive. These bottles are usually termed 'witch bottles' and they contained objects such as hair or urine which were believed to ward off witches and other evil spirits. They were placed between walls, under buildings and in roof spaces to protect the inhabitants from spells by reflecting them back at the witch responsible. Witch bottles have been found to be very common from the 17th and 18th centuries. This is one of the latest examples known in Colchester.

## 8 Acknowledgements

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The fieldwork was carried out by Stephen Benfield, Liam King, Kate Orr, Mike Ripley and Karly Weller of CAT, supervised by Howard Brooks.

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## 10 Archive deposition

The finds, paper and digital archives are held by CAT at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, but will be deposited permanently with Colchester Museums under the accession code 2003.213.

## 11 Site data

### 11.1 List of all contexts

Context	Room and trench no	Description	Date
F1	G12, T2	Wall constructed of peg-tile set in mortar, containing 1 piece of Roman wall-plaster	later 14th to 16th century
F2		[no F2]	
F3	G13, T7	Red brick foundation extending east to west - bricks (unfrogged, 65mm thick)	post-medieval?
F4	G12, T8	Mortar foundation with a single line of bricks (unfrogged, 45mm wide); aligned ENE-WSW	post-medieval?
F5	G6-G7, T11	Shallow trench for joist support bricks, filled by dark grey silty dust	modern
F6	G6-G7, T11	Shallow trench for joist support bricks, filled by dark grey silty dust	modern
F7	G6-G7, T11	Shallow trench for joist support bricks, filled by dark grey silty dust	modern
F8	G6-G7, T11	Wall plinth made of stones and flint, interleaved with peg-tile and bonded with mortar; aligned north to south - built on top of F14	late medieval or early post-medieval (15th century to early-mid 16th century)
F9	G6-G7, T11	A single course of red unfrogged bricks, 55mm thick, aligned north to south and returning to the west.	post-medieval or modern
F10	G6-G7, T11	Medium brown silty clay with occasional mortar flecks – packing for F9	post-medieval or modern

F11	G6-G7, T11	Dark grey-black silty clay with common charcoal and occasional fragments of mortar – cut for wall F8	late medieval or early post-medieval (15th century to early-mid 16th century)
F12	G3, T12	Small pit filled by upper fill (a) of mid brown silty clay and lower fill (b) of grey brown silty clay plus charcoal flecks	post-medieval
F13	G3, T12	Linear feature; possibly cut for beam slot to open hall - cuts L19	?medieval (?14th century)
F14	G6-G7, T14	Hearth made of upturned peg-tiles set into light brown sandy silt, surrounded by L27 - eastern side is burnt	medieval – later 14th-16th century
F15	G6-G7, T14	Narrow partition wall aligned east to west and made of layers of peg-tile and bonded with mortar, at right angles to F8; may be a base to a timber partition wall - faced with mortar on its southern side. Defines a room with a clay floor (L31/F18)	late medieval or early post-medieval (15th century to early-mid 16th century)
F16	G6-G7, T14	East to west footing made of three courses of red unfrogged bricks in mortar; extends east to west but not under present wall - sits on earlier wall F17	modern or post-medieval
F17	G6-G7, T14	Footing or wall constructed of large squared pieces of flint and mortar extending east-west under F16 with F8 at right angles to it	late medieval or early post-medieval
F18		no F18	
F19		no F19	
F20	G13-G14, T15	Small straight-sided pit, probably archaeological trench T3, backfilled - upper fill of lumps of clay with flint, septaria, tile, mortar and charcoal and lower fill of dark grey brown clayey silt with charcoal and mortar flecks, tile and pot	modern
F21	G13-G14, T15	Wall foundation extending east to west made of large nodules of flint plus other stone, peg-tile, bonded with yellowish mortar; seen in section up to 160mm below modern ground-level but cut away by F22	late medieval or early post-medieval
F22	G13-G14, T15	Large straight-sided pit filled by mid brown silty clay with clay patches and common peg-tile - cut through F21 - sealed by modern rubble L34	modern
F23	G13-G14, T15	Small square pit for wooden post, filled by grey brown sandy silt	post-medieval?
F24	G2, T17	Hearth made up of upturned peg-tiles	later 14th-16th century
F25	G2, T17	Surface consisting of small flint cobbles, to the west of F24	later 14th-16th century
L1	various trenches	Surface debris under the floorboards consisting of dirty mixed yellow brown silt	modern or post-medieval
L2	G6-G7, T11	Light yellow clay with occasional flecks of tile - seals L4	late medieval or post-medieval
L3	G6-G7, T11	Patch of mid orangey brown sandy clay underlying L1, with occasional small charcoal flecks	late medieval or post-medieval
L4	G6-G7, T11	Dark brown silty clay containing common brick, tile and mortar flecks with occasional charcoal flecks and sherds of post-medieval pot - cut by F9	post-medieval
L5	G6-G7, T11	Thin layer of yellow clay; floor - sealed by L1, cut by F9	late medieval or post-medieval

L6	G6-G7, T11	Dirty yellow brown clay - damaged floor surface, cut by F9 and F10	late medieval or post-medieval
L7	G6-G7, T11	Mixture of sand, silt and crushed mortar, light greyish yellow in colour - demolition debris? - sealed by L2 and L4, contains 15th- to 16th-century pottery	late medieval?
L8	G6-G7, T11	Mid grey clay containing common charcoal flecks and occasional fragments of mortar and pieces of broken oyster shell - sealed by L4 and cut by F9	post-medieval
L9	G6-G7, T11	Dark-mid grey brown clay containing common charcoal – floor, may be part of L5	medieval?
L10	G6-G7, T11	Mid reddish brown silty clay which appears to have been exposed to heat in places – occupation layer?	medieval?
L11	G6-G7, T11	Dark yellow brown soil containing occasional charcoal fragments, pieces of tile and occasional medium rounded stones – floor surface or occupation layer? – sealed by L2, cut by F8 and F11	late medieval?
L12	G6-G7, T11	Mid grey sandy silt with common pieces of tile, post-medieval bricks, large pieces of stone and septaria and occasional fragments of charcoal – demolition layer?	late medieval or post-medieval
L13	G3, T12	Concrete floor surface	modern
L14	G3, T12	Brick and mortar rubble under L13	modern
L15	G3, T12	Mid brown silty clay with smears of dark brown silty clay contains charcoal flecks, peg-tile and 12th-/13th-century pottery at base of layer	post-medieval
L16	G3, T12	Mid brown silty clay with abundant charcoal streaks; medieval pottery at the base of the layer – an occupation layer below L15 with a dump of burnt material (seen in both sections)	medieval – 12th-13th century
L17	G3, T12	A patch of reddish brown moist silt within L16, with charcoal flecks (seen in both sections) - possible wood staining	medieval – 12th-13th century
L18	G3, T12	Pocket of gravel and pale yellow sand within L16	medieval or post-medieval
L19	G3, T12	Light brown silty clay with mortar and tile flecks and charcoal fragments – clay floor associated with L16 and L17	medieval – 12th-13th century
L20	G3, T12	Darkish brown sandy clayey silt garden soil at the northern end of the trench	?
L21	G6-G7, T14	Reddish brown silt with abundant peg-tile, post-medieval bricks plus charcoal flecks, and late 12th- or early 13th-century pottery - an occupation layer? - sealed by L1 and seals L22	early post-medieval
L22	G6-G7, T14	Compact buff clayey silt with a band of orange clayey silt, contains daub - a floor	late medieval or early post-medieval
L23	G6-G7, T14	Dark brown sandy silt blackened by soot; occupation layer contemporary with F14 and L27? - contains sweepings from the hearth? underneath F8	medieval – mid 14th century?
L24	G6-G7, T14	Orangey brown clayey silt with a narrow seam of darker material dividing L24 from L28 below – earliest medieval floor?	medieval – pre-mid 14th century?
L25	G6-G7, T14	Stone surface between 10mm and 100mm thick, consisting of large and small rounded and angular flint, mixed in with pebbles, but with no mortar -	medieval – pre-mid 14th century?

		this may be a gravel yard surface laid outside before the 14th-century open hall was built	
L26	G6-G7, T14	Red burnt silt sealing L25, possibly part of L23	medieval – mid 14th century?
L27	G6-G7, T14	Occupation layer surrounding hearth F14; west of F14, L27 is a mid brown silty clay with flecks of burnt orange clay and frequent smears and flecks of charcoal, east of F14, the layer has been burnt very black	medieval - mid 14th century?
L28	G6-G7, T14 & G14, T15	Natural orangey brown silty sand	-
L29	G6-G7, T14	Mixed layer of reddish brown silt with buff and orange clayey silt with charcoal, tile and mortar flecks. An occupation layer sealing floor L27 and hearth F14	medieval – post-14th century
L30	G6-G7, T14	Layer of mortar 150mm thick under L1 and L29 and sealing F14 – demolition layer?	medieval? – post 14th century?
L31	G6-G7, T14	Thick layer of light brownish yellow clayey silt. Very clean and compact, similar to L2 – clay floor associated with F8, F15 and F17?	late medieval or early post-medieval
L32	G13-G14, T15	mid to dark brown clayey silt with charcoal flecks – surface layer under floorboards	post-medieval
L33	G13-G14, T15	Orangey brown clayey silt, stony mortar and charcoal in places	post-medieval?
L34	G13-G14, T15	Concrete floor and underlying brown silty sand with brick rubble	modern
L35	G12	Compact light brown silty clay floor throughout the room to the west of F1 containing modern glass and brick	modern
L36	G12, T8	Light brown silty sand with patches of yellow brown clay	post-medieval?
L37	G12, T8	Buff sandy silt with abundant small rounded stones, sealed by L36	post-medieval or medieval?
L38	G13, T1	Lime mortar and peg-tile	post-medieval
L39	G13, T1	Dark greyish black sandy loam with brick?, tile and very loose mortar	post-medieval
L40	G13, T1	Light brown sandy clay with occasional daub, mortar/plaster and charcoal flecks – a floor?	post-medieval
L41	G13, T1	mid-dark brown loam with flecks of charcoal, brick? and mortar/plaster	post-medieval
L42	G12, T2	Dark greyish black/brown sandy loam with Roman wall-plaster and flecks of tile and charcoal, sealed by F1 – the Tudor brick, 18th- or 19th-century floor brick and modern sugar tongs must have been mis-assigned	14th-16th century
L43	G12, T2	Light-mid brown yellowish sandy clay with occasional stones 1-3cm in size plus charcoal flecks – floor?	medieval
L44	G12, T2	Stone surface made up of sub-angular and sub-rounded stones, 2-6cm in size	medieval?
L45	G12, T2	Mid brown sandy loam – possibly natural ground, reached at 650mm below modern ground-level	medieval or natural
L46	G13, T3	Yellowish mid brown clay mixed with L1 surface material, brick and medieval pottery	post-medieval
L47	G13, T3	Dark greyish black sandy clay mixed with white mortar/plaster flecks	post-medieval?
L48	G13, T3	Yellowish-mid brown sandy clay with abundant flecks of tile and very loose mortar- possible floor surface, contains 12th- or 13th-century pottery and Roman tile	medieval?

## 11.2 List of finds

Find no	Small find no	Room no and trench no	Context	Weight (in g)	Description
1		G13, T1	L38	596	peg-tile
2	4	G13, T1	L39		Cu-alloy button cover
3		G12, T2	F1	600	peg-tile
3		G12, T2	F1	254	one piece of Roman painted wall-plaster
4		G12, T2	?L42	12	modern pottery
4		G12, T2	?L42	177	plaster or mortar
4		G12, T2	?L42	29	Victorian glass bottle base
4		G12, T2	L42	52	animal bone
4		G12, T2	?L42	8	Fe nails
5	6	G12, T2	U/S		Cu decorated disc – 19th-20th century
6		G12, T2	L42	600	peg-tile
6		G12, T2	L42	107	one piece of Roman painted wall-plaster
6		G12, T2	L42	427	19th-century floor brick, 30mm thick, buff coloured
6		G12, T2	L42	1170	'Tudor' brick, 48mm thick - 16th or 17th century
6		G12, T2	L42	30	animal bone
6		G12, T2	L42	16	post-medieval or modern pottery
7		G13, T3	L1	12	modern plaster
7		G13, T3	L1	14	late medieval or early post-medieval pottery
7		G13, T3	L1	31	glass
7		G13, T3	L1	5	modern Fe nails
7		G13, T3	L1	70	animal bone
8		G13, T3	L46	373	brick 55mm thick, and peg-tile
8		G13, T3	L46	42	medieval pottery
9		G13, T3	L48	216	Roman tile
9		G13, T3	L48	48	post-medieval brick or floor-tile fragment, buff coloured
9		G13, T3	L48	74	peg-tile
9		G13, T3	L48	76	glass base of Victorian wine bottle
9		G13, T3	L48	33	medieval pottery
10		G13, T1	L39	5	animal bone
10		G13, T1	L39	9	Fe nail
11	5	G12, T2	?L42		metal alloy sugar tongs - modern
12		G12	F1	550	peg-tile and oystershells
13		G12	L1/L35	144	animal bone
13		G12	L1/L35	23	Victorian glass
13		G12	L1/L35	215	modern brick
13		G12	L1/L35	17	modern Fe nails
13		G12	L1/L35	2	Cu-alloy studs
14		G4, exterior wall	U/S	361	modern ceramic 'blacking' bottle, used as a 'witch bottle'
15		G13, T5	U/S	1850	worked piece of stone, 350mm x 200mm
16		G13, T5	U/S	1113	unfrogged brick, 520mm thick
17	1	G6-G7, T11	F7		George II coin, dated 175(3)
18		G6-G7, T11	F7	34	post-medieval pottery
19		G6-G7, T11	L1	62	medieval and post-medieval pottery
19		G6-G7, T11	L1	589	peg-tile

19		G6-G7, T11	L1	16	Fe object
20		G6-G7, T11	L4	45	post-medieval pottery
20		G6-G7, T11	L4	43	animal bone
20		G6-G7, T11	L4	3	flint flake
20		G6-G7, T11	L4	116	peg-tile
21	2	G6-G7, T11	L4		Cu-alloy stud – late medieval
22	3	G6-G7, T11	L4		Cu-alloy lace end – late medieval
23		G6-G7, T11	L7	7	late medieval and post-medieval pottery
24		G6-G7, T11	F11	6	post-medieval pottery
24		G6-G7, T11	F11	35	animal bone
24		G6-G7, T11	F11	15	peg-tile
25		G6-G7, T11	F9	4500	2 bricks, 55mm thick, 110mm wide and 240mm long
26		G3, T12	U/S	161	medieval pottery
26		G3, T12	U/S	81	ceramic stoneware bottle neck
26		G3, T12	U/S	12	clay-pipe bowl
27		G3, T12	L16	147	medieval pottery
28		G3, T12	U/S	37	medieval and Roman pottery
29		G3, T12	L15	7	medieval pottery
30		G3, T12	L15	77	medieval pottery
31		G3, T12	L15	10	medieval pottery
32		G6-G7, T14	L21	582	post-medieval floor bricks, one piece burnt
32		G6-G7, T14	L21	1200	peg-tile
32		G6-G7, T14	L21	8	shell
32		G6-7, T14	L21	>1	animal bone
32		G6-G7, T14	L21	2	medieval pottery
33		G6-G7, T14	L22	109	daub
33		G6-G7, T14	L22	28	Fe object – door hinge or latch?
33		G6-G7, T14	L22	1	shell
33		G6-G7, T14	L22	2	animal bone
34		G6-G7, T14	L1?	31	post-medieval pottery
34		G6-G7, T14	L1?	59	Fe nails
35		G6-G7, T14	L27	6	medieval pottery
36		G6-G7, T14	F16	31	post-medieval pottery
37		G14, T15	U/S	329	peg-tile
37		G14, T15	U/S	329	post-medieval pottery
38		G14, T15	F20	887	brick, 50mm thick
38		G14, T15	F20	40	post-medieval pottery
39		G7/G11	U/S	105	modern pottery
40		G15, ceiling arch	U/S	55	1 lead weight, 2 Victorian military buttons, and one marble? (found by contractors)

Cu A = copper alloy  
Fe = ferrous  
U/S = unstratified

**Distribution list:**

Harding Homes

Roy Grimwade Architects

Martin Winter, Colchester Borough Council Archaeology Officer at Colchester Museums

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## 12 Appendices

### 12.1 Appendix 1: the post-Roman pottery

by Howard Brooks

#### Introduction

This is the report on 1.99kg of post-Roman pottery from the watching brief and excavation at 60-66 East Street (formerly the premises of Charles Brown and Sons), Colchester, Essex. The material will be deposited with Colchester Museums under accession code 2003.213.

#### Description of pottery

Fabrics present are as follows (after Cunningham 1985 and *CAR 7*): Fabrics 13 (early medieval ware); 20 (early medieval ware); 21a (Colchester-type ware); 22 (Hedingham ware); 23 (medieval white ware); 40 (post-medieval red earthenware); 42 (Surrey-Hampshire white ware - 'Border Ware'); 45d (Frechen stoneware); 45m (English stoneware); 48d (modern ironstone); 50 (Staffordshire slipware). Pottery weights are listed below in Table 1 (unidentified fabrics are not listed). Full details in archive.

**Table 1: weight (in g) of fabric types per bag and context (stratified material only).**

+R = plus residual earlier material

Bag	Trench	Context	Fabrics											Context date (by century)	
			13	20	21a	22	23	40	42	45d	45m	48d	50		
4	T2	L42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	late 18th? or 19th-20th
6	T2	L42	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 17th-18th, or 19th
7	T3	L1	0	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15th-16th
8	T3	L46	0	42	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 12th or early 13th
9	T3	L48	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 12th or early 13th
14	Room G4		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	361	0	0	19th-20th
18	T11	F7	0	0	0	0	0	34	0	0	0	0	0	0	17th-18th
19	T11	L1	0	1	17	18	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 16th or early 17th +R
20	T11	L4	0	0	0	0	0	26	16	3	0	0	0	0	early-mid 17th
23	T11	L7	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15th-16th
24	T11	F11	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	17th-18th
26	T12	U/S	48	0	110	0	0	0	0	0	0	79	0	0	U/S mixture
27	T12	L16	0	147	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 12th or early 13th
28	T12/ Room G3	U/S	0	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	U/S mixture with 13th-century and Roman
29	T12	L15	0	0	0	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13th
30	T12	L15	0	77	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 12th or early 13th
31	T12	F13/L15	0	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 12th or early 13th
32	T14	L21	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 12th or early 13th
34	T14	L1?	0	0	27	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	17th, possibly earlier
35	T14	L27	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13th
36	T14	F16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	0	0	0	0	late 16th
37		F20	0	0	0	0	0	120	0	0	0	0	0	209	late 17th-mid 18th
38	T15	F20	0	0	0	0	0	40	0	0	0	0	0	0	late 17th-mid 18th
39	Rooms G7/G11	U/S	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	105	0	probably 20th century
		<b>Totals</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>299</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>485</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>259</b>		<b>1,990</b>

## Discussion

### Pottery and the site

The medieval and late medieval transitional wares form 32% of the whole group, and the post-medieval and modern wares 68%. There were two residual Roman sherds.

This group shows a fairly normal range of medieval to modern pottery from a town centre or suburban site. Commonest fabrics were modern stonewares (Fabric 45m - 24% of the total group), post-medieval red earthenwares (Fabric 40 – 15%), and medieval sandy wares (Fabric 20 – 14%). There were smaller weights of modern ironstones (Fabric 48d – 8%), and Colchester-type wares (Fabric 21a – 10%).

This is a relatively small group, so detailed comment is not worthwhile; a few general points will suffice. First, the ceramic evidence points to a start date in the 12th century (possibly very slightly earlier, but not by much). This may well be the date of the first structure on the site. Second, the weight of modern stonewares is skewed by a complete ceramic bottle. This was probably a bottle containing blacking for domestic use on grates and kitchen ranges, but it had later been stoppered with a plaster bung, and inserted into a wall. In these circumstances, it is undoubtedly a witch bottle. It has been X-rayed to determine the contents; the bottle was found to contain a cork but the X-ray was otherwise inconclusive.

There is nothing in the assemblage which is particularly noteworthy; there are no sooted cooking-pots which might indicate a kitchen, nor are there any vessels which suggest that the building was anything other than a domestic structure.

## 12.2 Appendix 2: small find report

*by N Crummy*

SF 1. 17 F7. Modern trench. George II halfpenny, dated 175(3?). Diameter 27mm.

SF 2. 21 L4. Post-medieval layer. Small flat-headed stud with riveted shank; much of the head is missing. Diameter 11 mm, length 8.5mm.

SF 3. 22 L4. Post-medieval layer. Copper-alloy lace-end (in two pieces) of Colchester Type 2, with the sides turned in to grip the lace. Length 29mm. Date-range: century 1550/75-1700+ (*CAR 5*, 12-13), which places the context in the post-medieval rather than late medieval period. These tongs are thought to have come from a later layer and to be intrusive in this layer.

SF 5. 11 ?L42. Medieval layer. White-metal-alloy sugar tongs with well-sprung bow, plain spoon-shaped grips, and chased double wavy-line decoration on the blades (probably Edwardian Regency-style). The blades narrow above the terminals and below the bow, and each upper constriction is marked by a central vegetal motif. Length 107 mm. There is a partly-obscured manufacturer's mark on the inner face of the bow, -/ED. Date-range: late 19th to early 20th century.

SF 6. 5, unstratified. Copper-alloy machine-pressed appliqué disc with central flower motif and part of a flat extension with vegetal decoration on the rim. Diameter 50mm. Date-range: 19th to early 20th century.

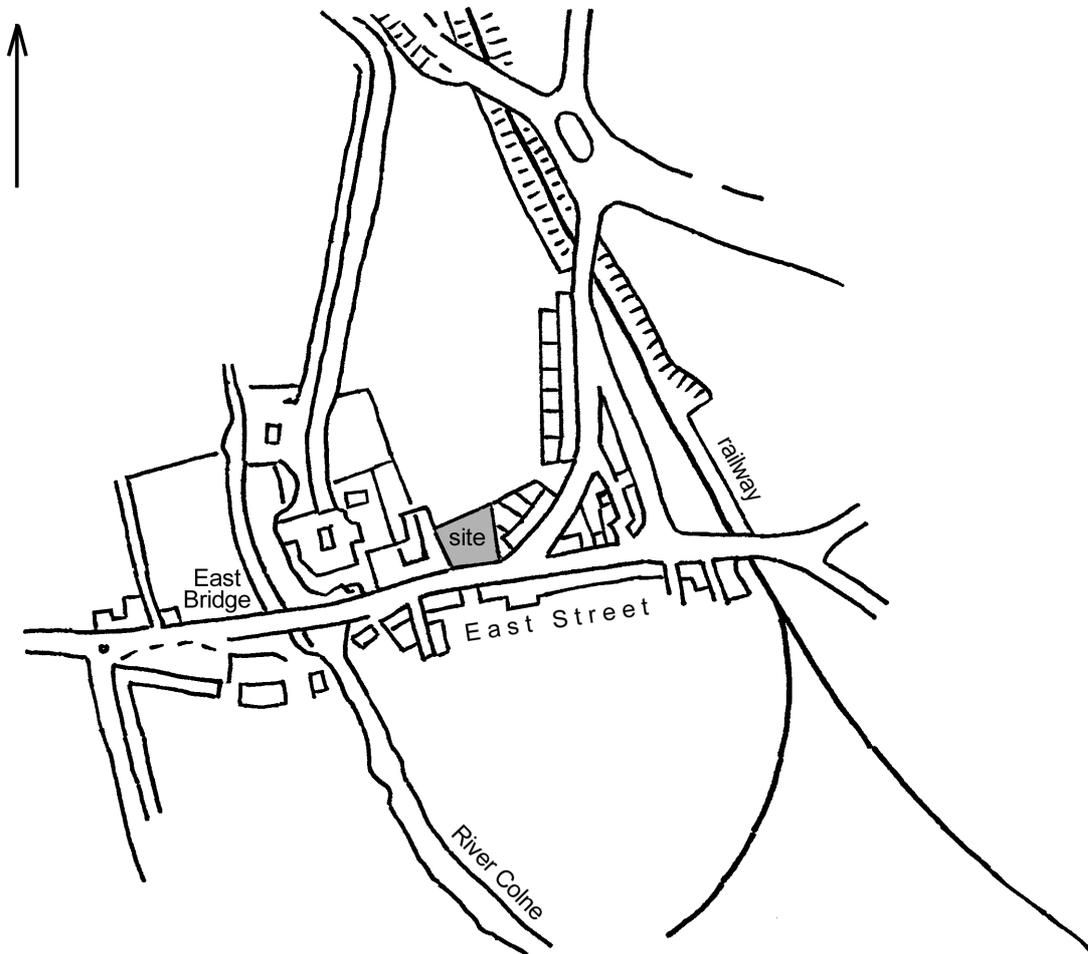


Fig 1 Site location (not to scale).

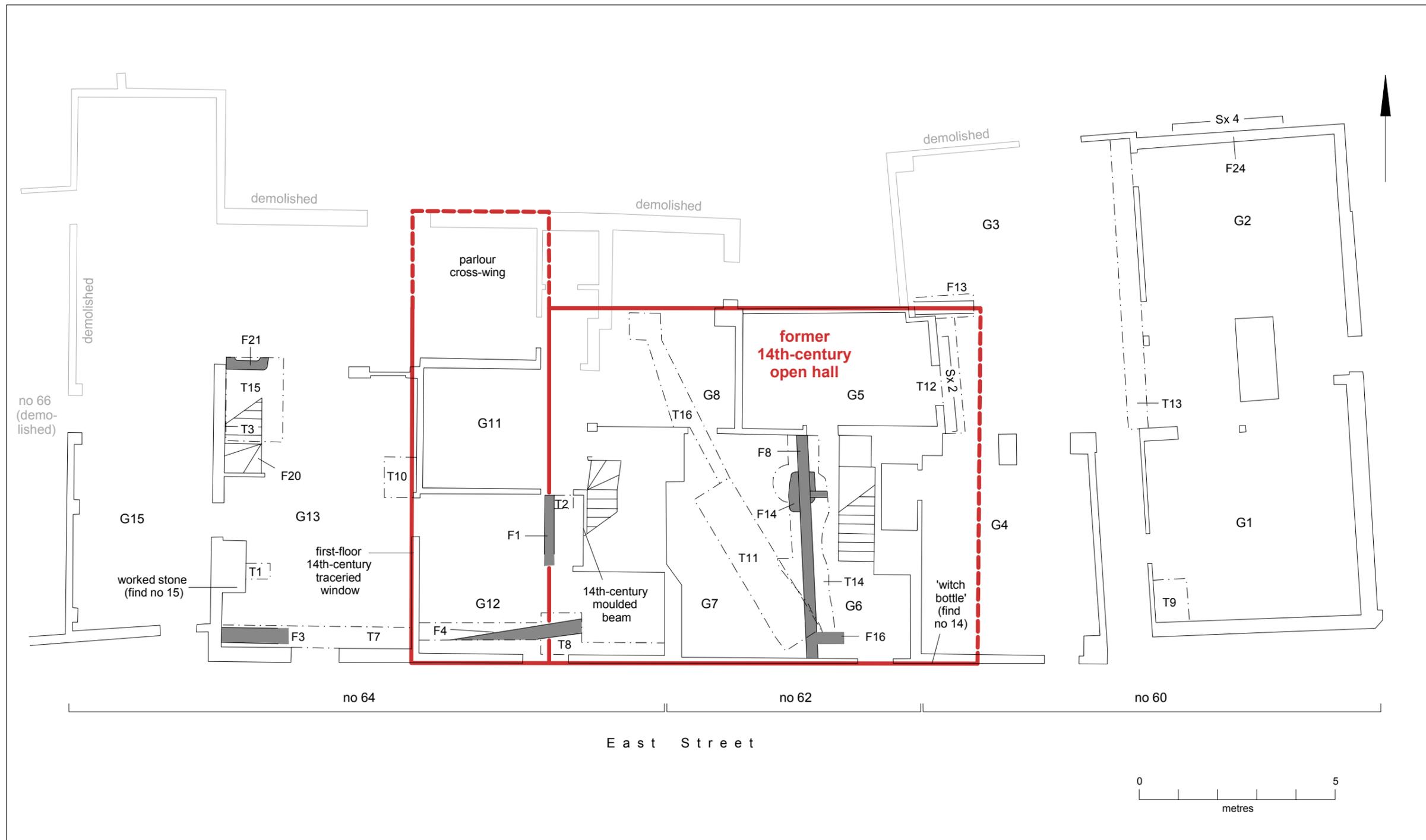


Fig 2 Plan of 60-66 East Street, showing the trenches and main archaeological features (shaded).

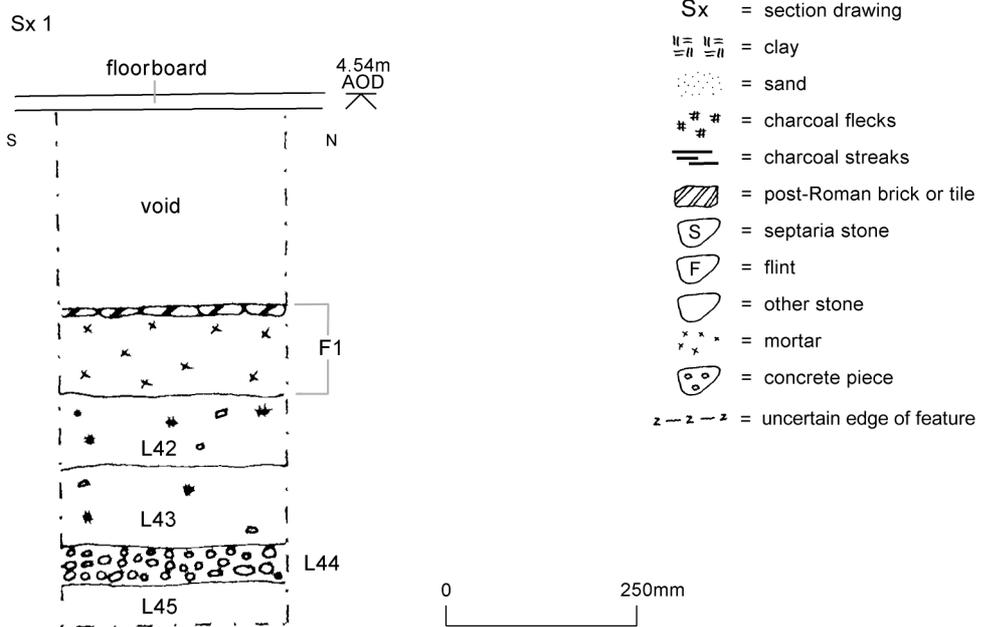
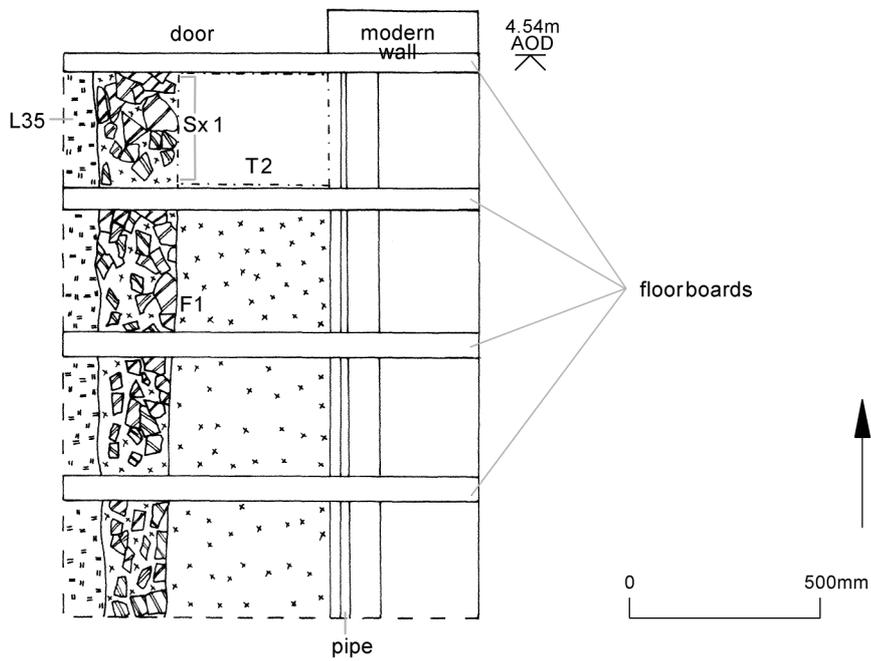


Fig 3 T2: F1; plan and east-facing section.

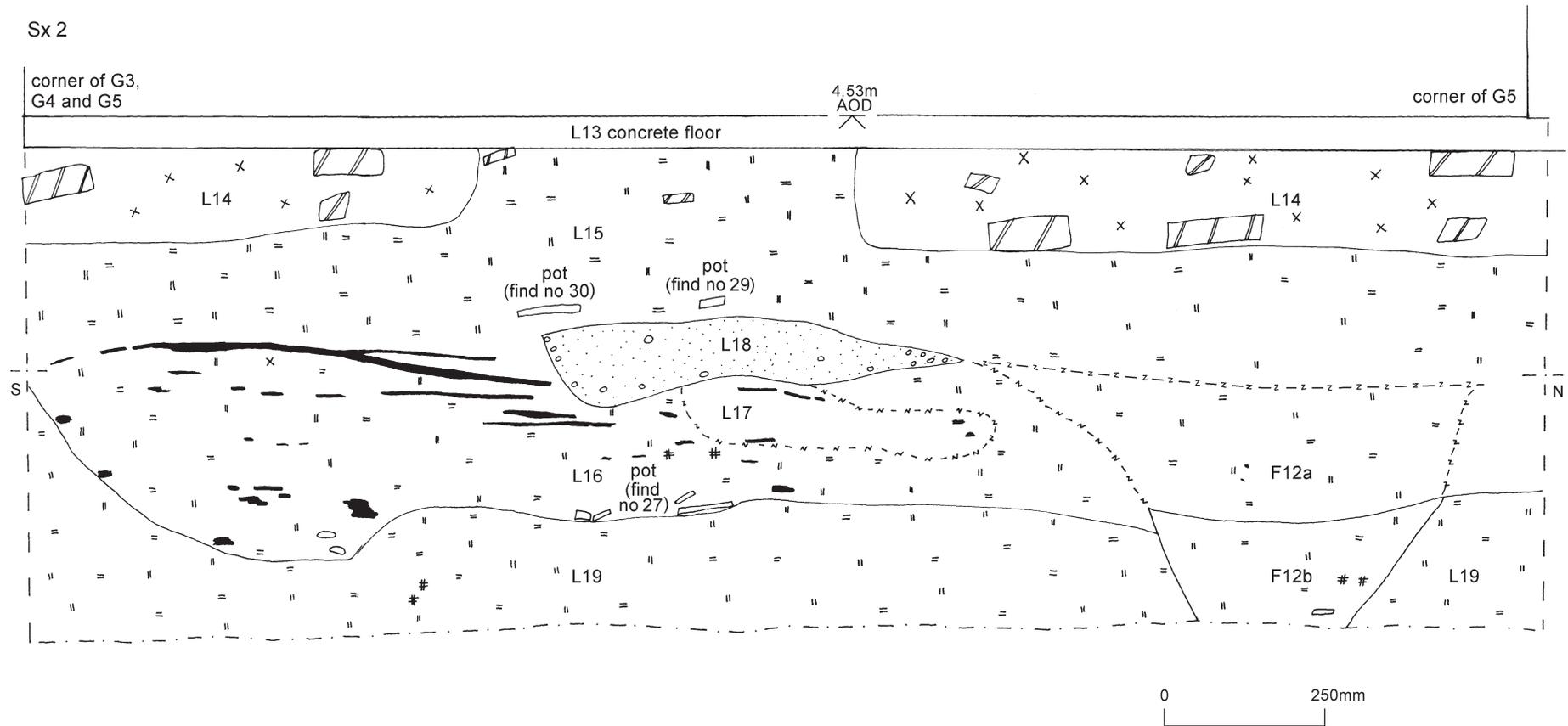


Fig 4 T12: east-facing section. (For key, see Fig 3.)

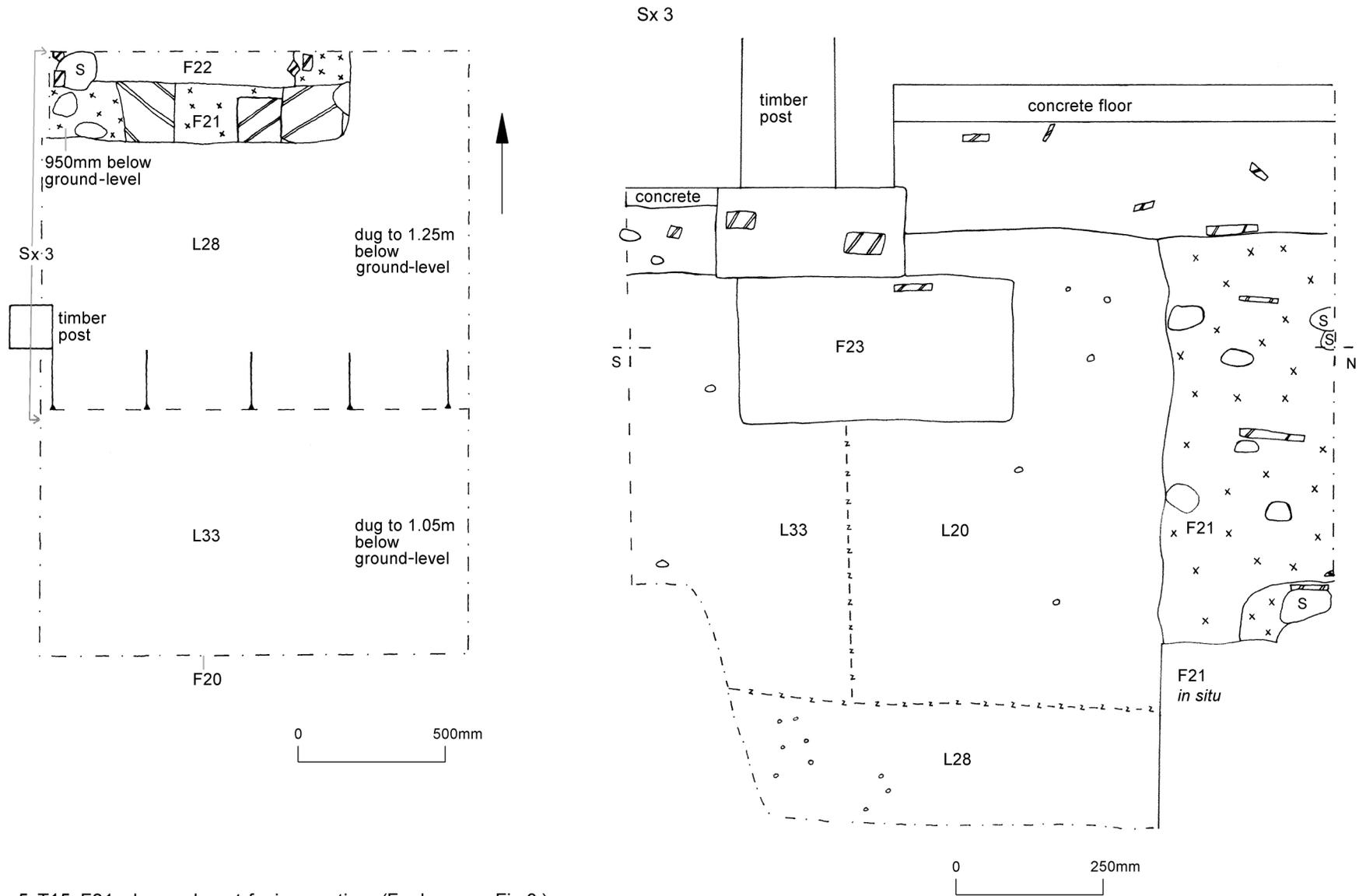


Fig 5 T15: F21; plan and east-facing section. (For key, see Fig 3.)

Sx 4

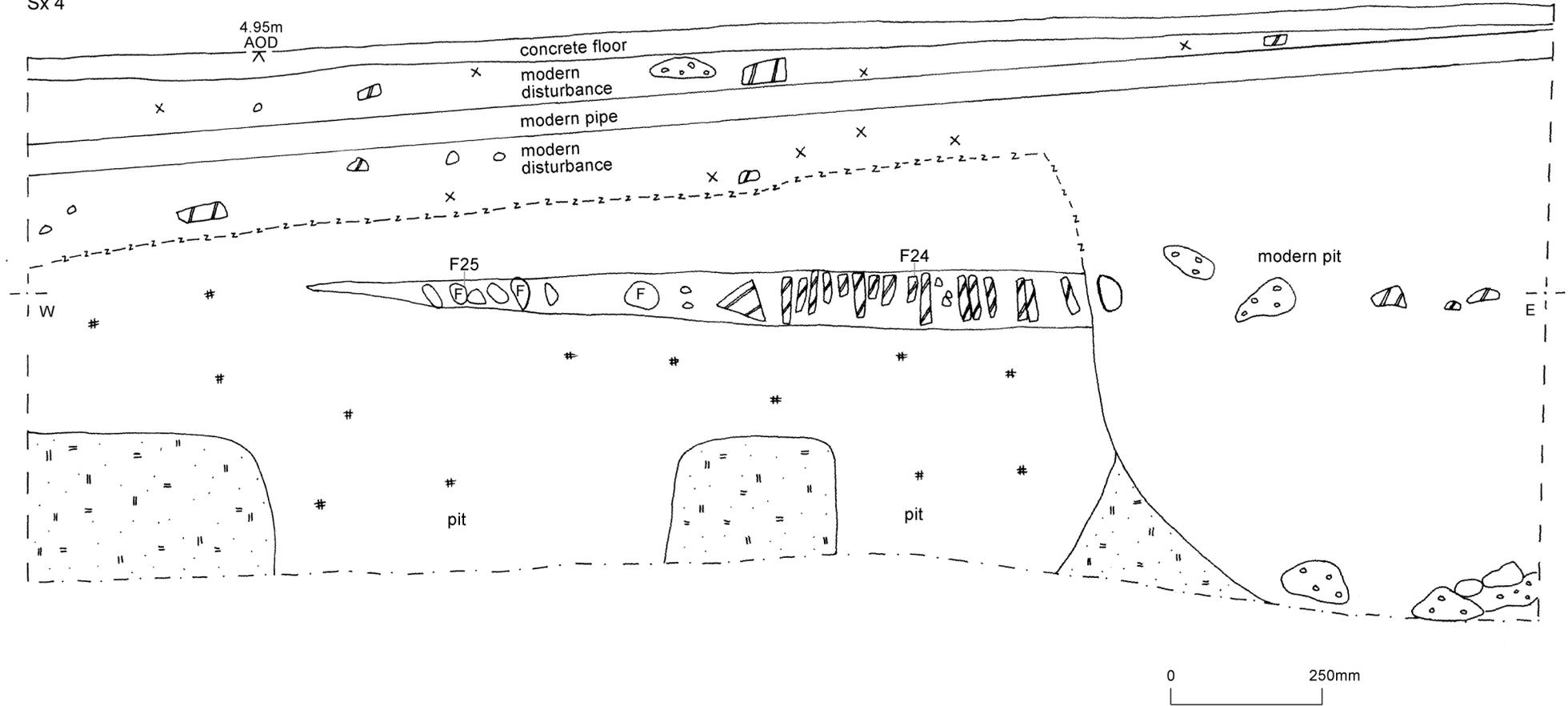
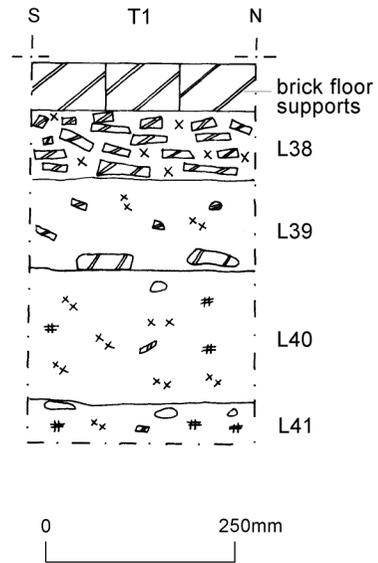


Fig 6 T17:F24; south-facing section. (For key, see Fig 3.)

Sx 5



Sx 6

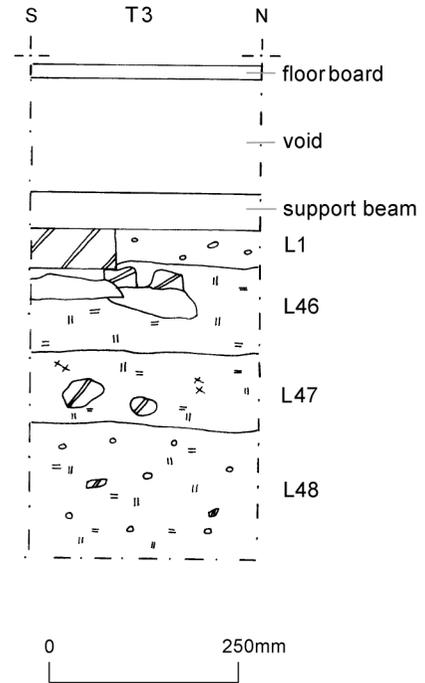


Fig 7 T1, east-facing section and T3, east-facing section.  
(For key, see Fig 3.)



Fig 8 T11 and T14: plan showing hearth F14 and wall F8. (For key, see Fig 3.)

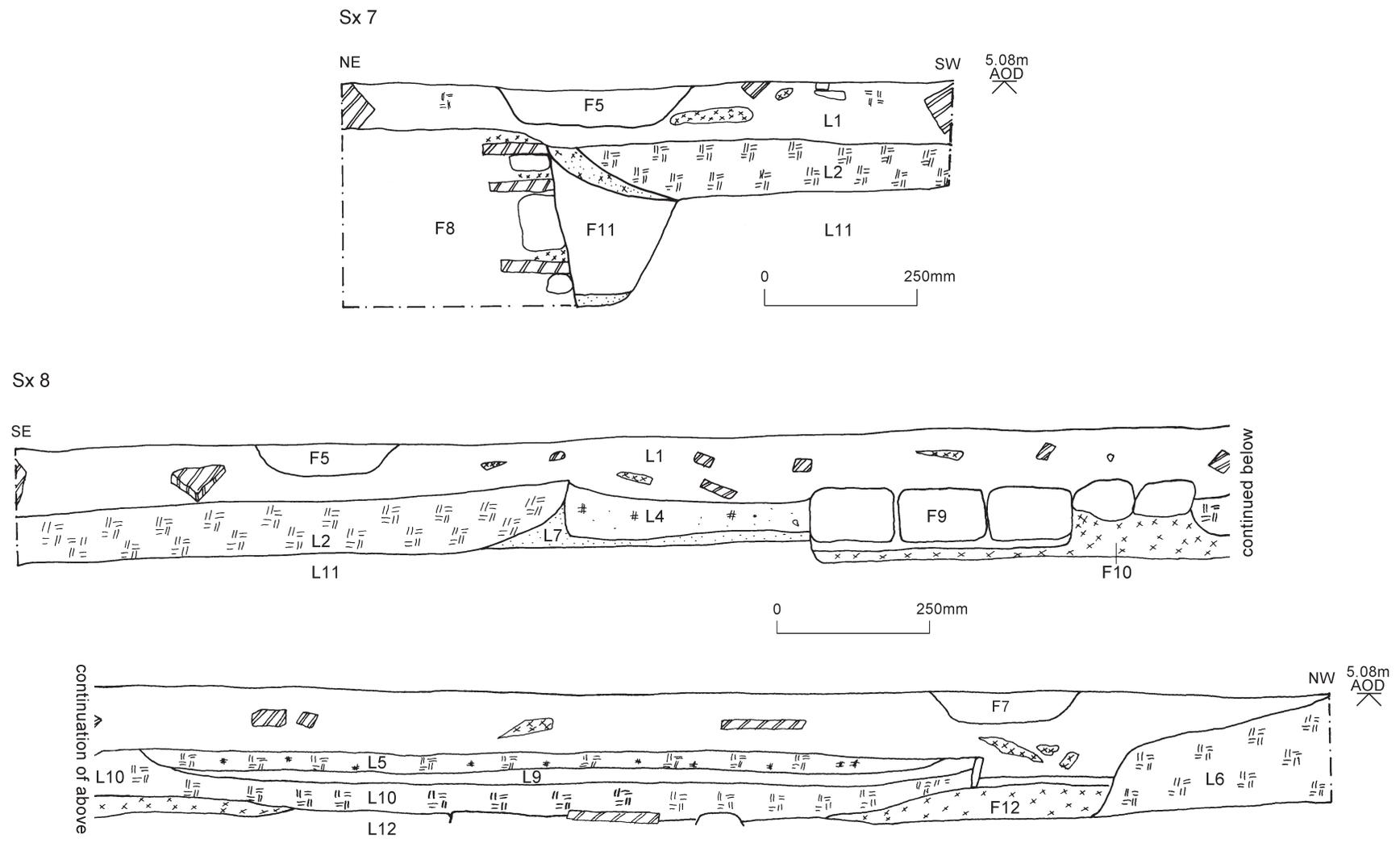


Fig 9 T11: top, north-west-facing section and bottom, north-east-facing section. (For key, see Fig 3.)

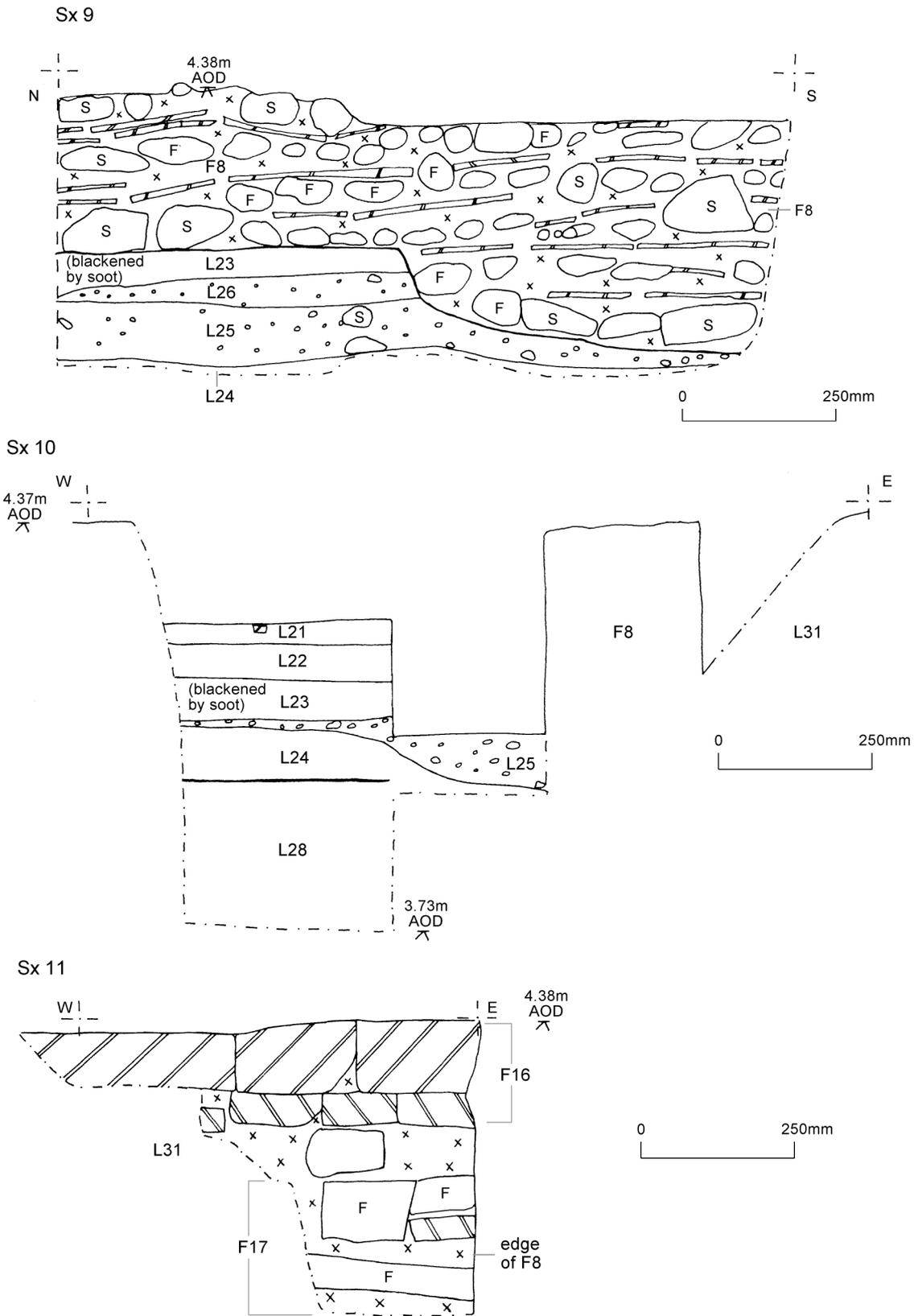


Fig 10 T14: F8, south- and west-facing sections and F16-F17, north-facing section. (For key, see Fig 3.)

# Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

## Summary sheet

<b>Site address:</b> 60-66 East Street (formerly Charles Brown and Sons), Colchester, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TM 0079 2536	<b>Site code:</b> 2003.213
<b>Type of work:</b> Watching brief and limited excavation	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> May 2003-April 2004	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 40m x 40m
<b>Location of finds/curating museum:</b> Colchester Museums	<b>Funding source:</b> CBC and developer
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related EHER nos:</b>
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 283 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
<b>Periods represented:</b> Medieval, post-medieval and modern	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>  <i>Archaeological investigations were carried out within the interior of 60-66 East Street. The ceramic evidence indicates a start date for occupation on the site in the 12th century or possibly slightly earlier. This phase of habitation was followed by the mid 14th-century timber-framed open hall building. A wall plinth, probably from the 14th-century building, was recorded under the floorboards in Room G12. This may have been for a timber wall which divided the open hall from a parlour. The eastern extent of the 14th-century open hall building is uncertain. A sequence of medieval and post-medieval clay floors and occupation layers were exposed within this part of the building, indicating uninterrupted occupation till the present day. The peg-tile hearth in Rooms G6/G7 is likely to relate to an intermediate phase of the building (not 14th century). However, the main hearth to the open hall remains undiscovered. There is nothing in the pottery assemblage which would suggest that the building was anything other than a domestic structure. A second peg-tile hearth at the east end of the present (17th-century) building, in Room G2, provided evidence of another medieval building adjacent to the 14th-century one.</i></p> <p><i>There was also evidence of subsequent occupation and changing layout of the building in the 15th and 16th centuries. Three wall plinths of this period, made of various combinations of flint and peg-tile, roughly follow the alignment of the walls to the standing building.</i></p> <p><i>Various late post-medieval or modern brick partition wall foundations were exposed just under the floorboards.</i></p> <p><i>A 'witch bottle' was retrieved from behind the wooden laths at the exterior of no 60. This had probably been inserted as a protection against evil spirits in the 19th or 20th century.</i></p> <p><i>Unfortunately, the contractors' trenches and the archaeological excavation were restricted, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions about the structural development of the building. What can be stated is that there was a complex sequence of structures on the site and more than a neat replacement of the 14th-century open hall with the 17th-century hall (Leigh Alston pers comm).</i></p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> None	
<b>Author of summary:</b> Kate Orr	<b>Date of summary:</b> July 2005

