

**Historic building recording  
at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street,  
Earls Colne, Essex, CO6 2PG**

**July 2016**



**report prepared by Chris Lister**

**commissioned by Steve Belchem on behalf of Mr Richard Pascoe**

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**Colchester Archaeological Trust**  
Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk,  
Colchester,  
Essex, CO2 7GZ

*tel.:* 01206 501785  
*email:* [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)

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## 1 Summary

A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street, Earls Colne in July 2016. Oxford House is a Grade II listed building (NHLE no. 1337931) with elements dating to the 15th century and alterations/extensions dating to the 16th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. The building has been a documented inn since the early 17th century and may have been used for this purpose from the 16th century. It is located close to the Priory, the site of a medieval Benedictine monastery.

## 2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report on the historic building recording at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street, Earls Colne, Essex, undertaken in response to an application for its conversion to residential use. The work was commissioned by Steven Belchem on behalf of Mr Richard Pascoe and carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in July 2016. The site comprises a Grade II listed building on a large plot with an outbuilding (NHLE no. 1337931). The building is centred at NGR TL 86427 28723 (Fig 1).

A planning application was submitted to Braintree District Council in April 2014 (planning ref. 14/00587/FUL) proposing the conversion of the existing structure and the erection of a detached two storey dwelling. Given the listed status of the building and its local historic significance, it was recommended that a historic building record be undertaken prior to the conversion. This recommendation is in line with the guidance given in Paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

In response to this condition a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT 2016) and agreed with the Braintree District Council Listed Buildings Officer. All work was carried out in accordance with this WSI.

All work was carried out according to standards and practices contained in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2008), *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (MoRPHE), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14). In addition, the guidelines contained in *English Heritage: Understanding Historic Buildings, A guide to good recording practice* (2006) and *RCHME: Descriptive Specification 3rd Edition* were followed.

## 3 Aims

The aim of the building recording was to provide a detailed record and assessment of the building prior to conversion. The building recording was carried out to Level 3 (English Heritage, 2006).

In particular the record considered:

- Plan form of the site.
- Materials and method of construction.
- Date(s) of the structures.
- Function and internal layout.
- Fixtures and fittings.
- Original and later phasing, additions and their effect on the internal/external fabric and the level of survival of original fabric.
- Context of the Inn within the historic settlement of Earls Colne and wider landscape setting.

In addition, the outbuilding was the subject of a Level 2 historic building record.

#### **4 Building recording methodology**

The following are included in this report:

- A brief documentary and cartographic survey of the evidence pertaining to the building and its history.
- A large-scale block plan of the site based on pre-existing architects' drawings.
- Scaled current floor plans and elevations, based on existing architects' drawings, using the English Heritage (2006) drawing conventions. The floor plan depicts positions of doors, framing including studs and rafters, windows, internal partitions, stairs, bay divisions/truss positions and the positions of surviving technology, fixtures and fittings plus later additions and evidence of phasing.
- A detailed description of the building. The description addresses features such as materials, dimensions, method of construction including brickwork, joinery, fenestration, spatial configuration, phasing, re-used timbers, carpentry marks/graffiti and any evidence of original fixtures and fittings.
- A discussion of the history and development of the building, including its design, date, form and function and any significant modifications/reuse.
- A full photographic record, comprising digital photographs of both general shots and individual features (external and internal). Selected examples of the photographic record are clearly tied into the drawn record and reproduced as fully annotated photographic plates supporting the text (Appendix 1). The photographic record is accompanied by a photographic register detailing location and direction of shot (Appendix 2).



## 5 Historical background (Maps 1-5, Photographs 1-3)

Oxford House lies within the historic core of the village of Earls Colne (EHER 18469) the largest of the four Colne parishes, which has its origins in the Anglo-Saxon period (a minster is mentioned in documents from 1045). At the time of the Norman Conquest the manor of Earls Colne was held by Wulfin and comprised the village, a hall and two mills (Medlycott 1999). After 1066 William I granted the manor to Aubrey de Vere and it remained in his and his descendants', the Earls of Oxford, possession until the 16th century. During the years 1101-1107 Aubrey de Vere founded a small Benedictine priory, located between Earls Colne and White Colne. As a result of this, Earls Colne became administratively two manors, the earldom manor and the priory manor. At some point before 1309 (possibly around 1250), the settlement was granted a market by the de Veres.

Earls Colne remained a small but prosperous market town until the nineteenth century when the main employment focus became the Atlas Ironworks. Its association with the Earls of Oxford and the presence of the Priory are two reasons which explain why a small medieval/post-medieval market town has such a high number of quality timber-framed buildings surviving in its urban area (45 buildings dating from the 14th-19th centuries).

The structure that is the focus of this historic building record has most recently been known as 'Oxford House' (presumably a reference to the de Veres). Prior to this it had a short-lived existence under the name of 'The Carved Angel', was called 'The Coachman Inn' during the 1990s and before this was known as 'The George' from 1671.

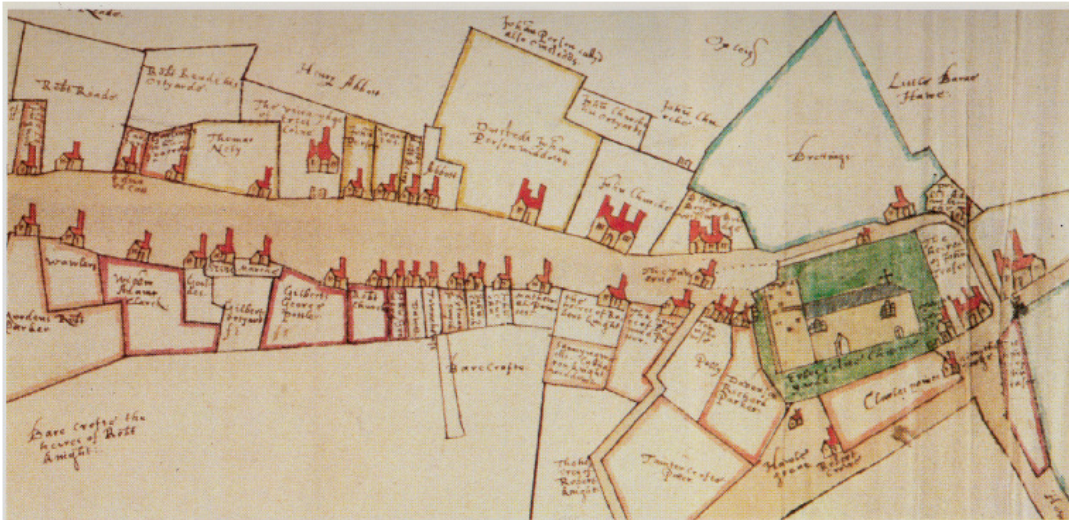
The earliest part of Oxford House dates to the 15th century. It is located close to the Priory, the medieval Benedictine monastery founded by Aubrey de Vere, and the priory smithy is believed to have been located on the site before the construction of the 15th-century building. The medieval town is thought to have grown up around the Priory and ribbon development is known to have continued along Upper Holt Street.

The historic buildings of Earls Colne were comprehensively surveyed by the Earls Colne branch of the Workers' Educational Association from 1977-83 and published in *Wherein I dwell, A History of Earls Colne Houses from 1375*, the definitive work on the historic houses of the village. This describes the house as:

*'Hall and one cross-wing date from late C15. A second cross-wing and other alterations were carried out in the C16. The present roof dates from circa 1780, but one C16 window remains at first-floor level.'*

Research undertaken by the WEA into the manorial records shows that the site was the priory forge during the medieval period. The earliest rental of the building plot was to a blacksmith, John Sigg, in 1400. The manorial records refer to the site as 'Smiths Forge' well into the 17th century, after the 15th-century date of the surviving structure, so it seems extremely likely that a forge continued to operate from the site after the hall was constructed, possibly on the site of the outbuilding. John Bridge became the tenant in 1537

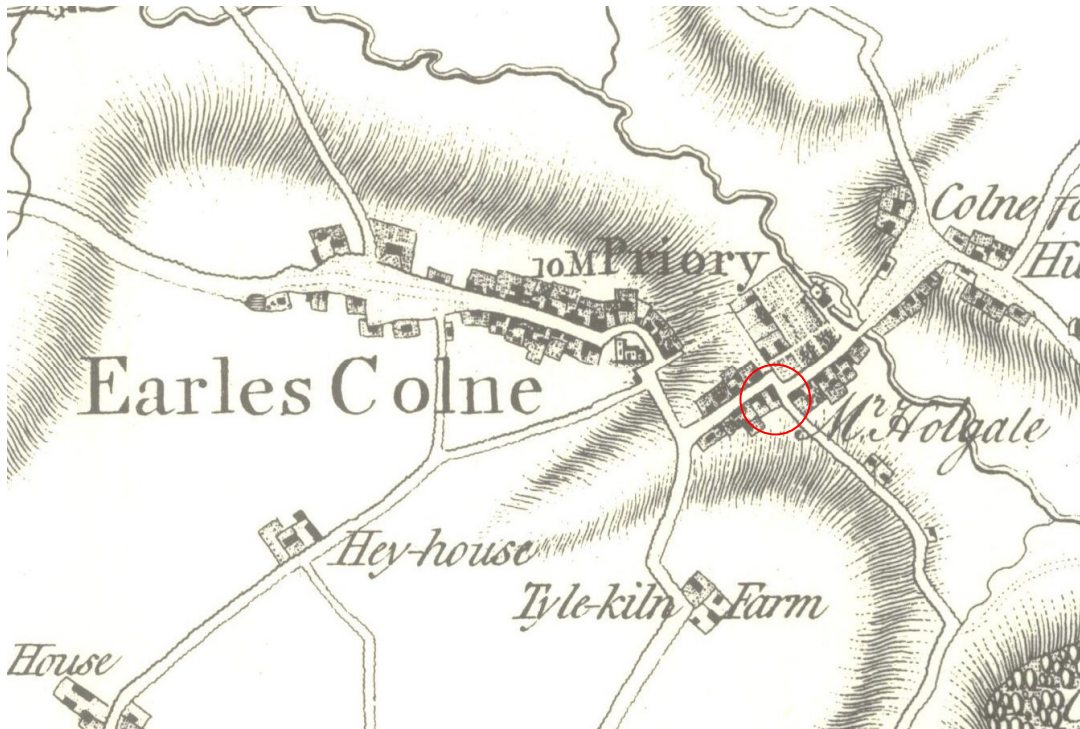
and was succeeded by his son Thomas by 1598. It was the Bridge family who constructed the second cross-wing and undertook other alterations to the building, possibly to convert the premises to an inn. The 16th-century building is represented on a 1598 map of Earls Colne by Israel Amyce (Map 1). However, Amyce used stylised representations of the buildings in the village rather than accurate plan forms and the 16th-century version of the building that would become Oxford House is shown as a dwelling with a single chimney stack, door and window, the same symbol that he used for 135 of the c. 140 dwellings shown on his map. Amyce also made no attempt to distinguish between public inns or private dwellings (MacKinnon, 2014).



**Map 1** 1598 map of Earls Colne by Israel Amyce, included for illustrative purposes and not showing Holt Street or the survey building (ERO D/DPr 626)

Robert Crowe became the tenant in 1604 and was described as an 'innholder' but the first named reference to the inn appears as 'The George' in 1671 when it was inherited by Robert Crowe's son, Giles.

The George is shown on the 1777 Chapman and André map of Essex (Map 2). This depicts a north-west to south-east aligned building in the exact location of the 15th-century range, but does not show the 16th-century cross-wing or any outbuildings. This is probably for the same reason as the Israel Amyce map and does not preclude the presence of outbuildings on the site at this time.



**Map 2** 1777 Chapman and André map of Essex (sheet 8)

The first map evidence that accurately depicts the inn is the 1838 tithe map (Map 3). This shows the 15th-century range as well as the 16th-century cross-wing, but it also clearly shows an extension along the north side of the 16th-century cross-wing, a small projection on the rear of the 15th-century range and an outbuilding to the immediate south of the inn. The tithe award lists parcel 97 as the George Inn, owned by Mrs Elizabeth Hardy and rented to William Lay.



**Map 3** 1838 tithe map (ERO D/CT 101)



The 1876 and 1898 editions of the Ordnance Survey (Maps 4 and 5) show the same information as the 1838 tithe map, although the plan form is a little clearer. In particular, the outbuilding is clearly visible. By the 1898 edition this appears to have increased in size.



Map 4 1876 6 inch edition Ordnance Survey map (sheet XVII)



Map 5 1898 6 inch edition Ordnance Survey map (sheet XVII SE)

The earliest photographic image of the building dates to *circa* 1900 and depicts the George Inn much as it appears in the 21st century (Photograph 1). Noticeable differences are a second doorway in the 19th-century lean-to extension on the north-east elevation of the building and what appear to be slates rather than peg-tiles on its mono-pitch roof.

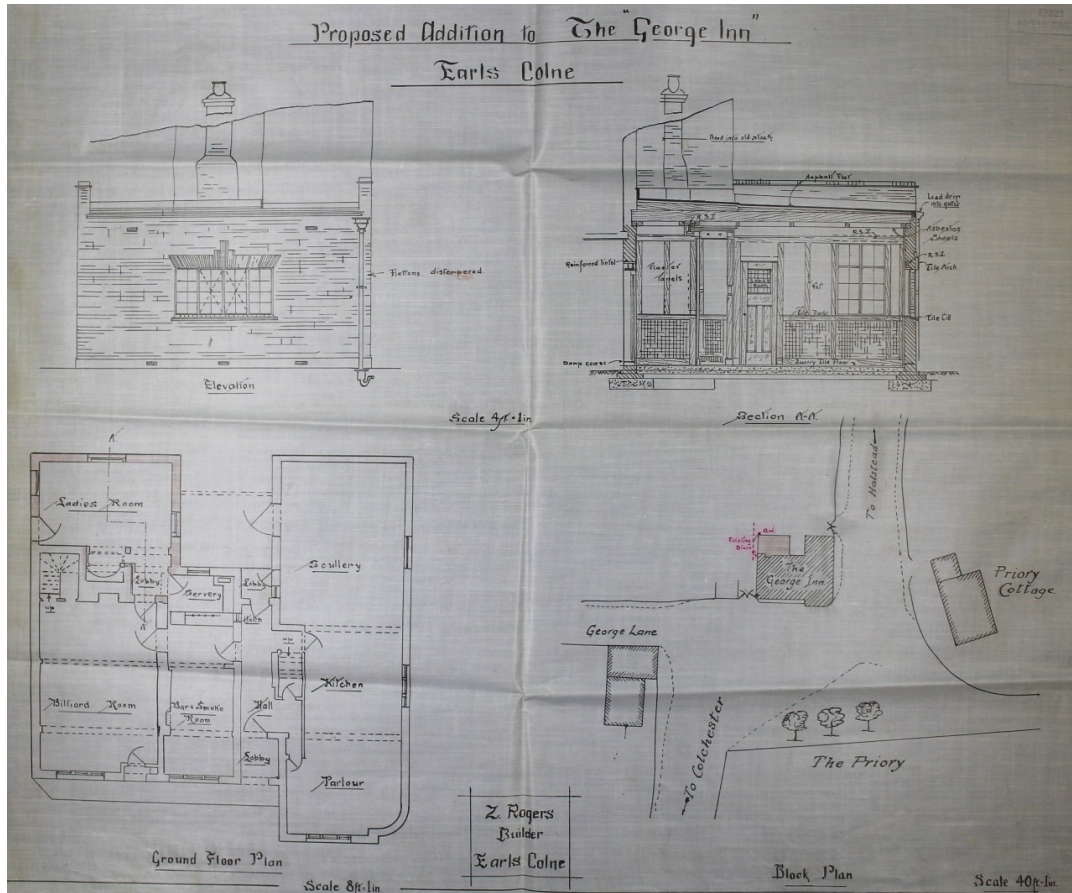


**Photograph 1** The George Inn *circa* 1900 (Earls Colne Heritage Museum)

A building plan of a proposed extension to the George Inn, dated 1923, is held at the Essex Records Office (Photograph 2). This records the owner at this time as the New London Brewery Company who contracted Zachariah Rodgers, a third generation Earls Colne brick-maker and builder based on the adjacent Tey Road, to construct a 'Ladies Room' at the rear of the 15th-century range. This plan includes the layout of the ground floor of the inn in the early 20th century, which is similar to that in the 21st century but shows a more compartmentalised layout.

A photograph taken *circa* 1930 (Photograph 3) shows part of the 19th-century lean-to extension on the north-west elevation of the George Inn. Although the focus of this photograph appears to be the large oak tree standing outside the Priory wall, enough of the building is visible to notice that the roof of the lean-to is formed of slates rather than the peg-tiles that were present in 2016, the same as the roof of the lean-to extension on the north-east elevation in the *circa* 1900 photograph.





Photograph 2 Building plan of proposed addition to the George Inn, 1923 (ERO D/RH Pb1/31)



Photograph 3 Upper Holt Street with the George Inn to the right, circa.1930 (ERO I/Mb 104/2/2)

## 6 Descriptive record (Figs 2-8)

For the purposes of the following descriptive record the ground floor and first floor of Oxford House have been assigned area/room designations GF1-GF5 and FF1-FF8 which are not period specific.

### External description

The structure known as Oxford House comprises a two-storey main range, aligned north-west to south-east, and a two-storey cross-wing, aligned north-east to south-west, with single-storey extensions at the rear (Fig 2). A free-standing outbuilding is located immediately south-east of the inn (Fig 1, Fig 8). The main range dates to the 15th century and is of oak construction. It has a 19th-century single-storey lean-to extension that extends the full length of the frontage, terminating where the cross-wing projects beyond the main range (Fig 4, Photograph 1). Both the main range and the cross-wing have gabled roofs covered in peg-tiles, as does the lean-to extension, although, as discussed in Section 5, an earlier (if not original) covering was slate. The north-east elevations of the main range and the cross-wing have white-painted rusticated render and inserted sash windows of 8/8 lights on the first floor. The WEA assessment of the building claims the roof was rebuilt *circa* 1780, a date which fits with the style of window and which was a time when rusticated render was highly fashionable. The ground floor of the cross-wing has a 19th-century sash window of 8/8 lights with margin lights of 2/2, which has replaced an earlier window. The lean-to extension is built from white-painted brick with dimensions of 230mm x 115mm x 65mm laid in Flemish bond. There were originally two entrances to this extension but one has been blocked in. Original 19th-century sash windows of 10/10 lights with margin lights of 4/4 flank the remaining doorway.

The north-west elevation comprises the 16th-century cross-wing with an 18th-century extension projecting from its north end, both constructed from oak. A 19th-century single-storey lean-to extension extends the length of the cross-wing (Fig 5, Photograph 2). The roof at the south end of the cross-wing is hipped unlike the roof of the 18th-century extension at the north end which is gabled. As the roof was rebuilt in the late 18th century, it is not possible to say if the hipped roof reflects the original style of its 16th-century forerunner. There is a chimney rising from the roof of the cross-wing: it was not possible to record the brick dimensions of this but stylistically it appears to date to the early 19th-century and is most likely contemporary with the 19th-century single-storey lean-to extension. The first floor of this elevation has the same rusticated render as the front elevation and has a 19th or 20th-century casement window adjacent to an 18th-century sash window of 8/8 lights. The lower part of the elevation is obscured by the 19th-century single-storey lean-to extension extending the length of the building. This is constructed from white-painted brick with dimensions of 230mm x 115mm x 65mm laid in Flemish bond and has a peg-tile roof, although the photograph from *circa* 1930 shows this is a replacement for an earlier slate roof. The brickwork at the north end is curved, presumably

to provide protection from cart wheels as the building's corner is directly on the road. There were originally two window openings in this extension. The surviving example is a sash window of 2/2 lights with margin lights of 1/1, all with horns. The other window opening has been replaced by vents and modern brickwork. A casement window and a horizontal sash window have been inserted into this elevation.

The south-west elevation comprises the plain brickwork of the 19th-century extension, the hipped roof end of the 16th-century cross-wing and the 15th-century main range, much of which is obscured by 20th-century single-storey extensions (Fig 6, Photograph 3). What can be seen of the 15th-century range is limited to a small expanse of white-painted rusticated render with an inserted window and pair of French doors. There is an external chimney stack located off-centre to the main range and a second stack rising from the roof of the main range. The external stack is constructed from red brick with dimensions of 225mm x 100mm x 60mm and appears to date to the late 18th century. Bonded to the exterior of this chimney is a stack associated with one of the 20th-century single-storey extensions, specifically the one from 1923. This is constructed of red brick with dimensions of 230mm x 110mm x 65mm. The chimney rising from the roof of the 15th-century range is constructed from red brick with identical dimensions to the 1923 chimney. This chimney is not shown on the 1923 building plan but is probably not much later. Adjacent to the external chimney stack a section of the peg tile roof flares out covering an external staircase that probably dates to the 18th-century (Photograph 4). The end of the 16th-century cross-wing has white-painted render to the first floor (not rusticated), whilst the ground floor is constructed from white-painted brick with dimensions of 230mm x 115mm x 65mm laid in Flemish bond with a casement window. The fact that the brickwork is identical to that of the 19th-century extensions on the north-east and north-west elevations suggests that the lower register to the timber frame of the cross-wing was replaced at the same time as the single-storey extensions were constructed. The lack of rustication to the render of the upper register suggests this is not the original 18th-century render. A 19th-century sash window of 2/2 lights with horns in the upper register is most likely a replacement for an earlier window. The single-storey extensions at the rear comprise two separate phases of 20th-century building. The earliest dates to 1923 and is a brick flat-roofed extension projecting from the rear of 15th-century main range and the 18th-century external staircase. The other phase dates to the late 20th-century and comprises a slate-roofed conservatory and a flat-roofed structure infilling the space between the 16th-century cross-wing and the 1923 extension.

The south-east elevation comprises the gable end of the main 15th-century range and the probable 18th-century external staircase, flanked to the north by the 19th-century single-storey lean-to extension and to the south by the two phases of 20th-century extensions (Fig 7, Photograph 5). Behind all of this (and nearly obscured by it) is the 16th-century cross-wing with its 18th-century extension. Although the 15th-century gable end is rendered, it lacks the rustication common to the other elevations and the exposed ends of



the wall plate project through the plaster. It is possible that, as this elevation was the only one that was not easily visible from the street, the render was left intentionally undecorated. A casement window has been inserted to the ground floor. The external staircase has a blocked entranceway, probably the original point of egress to this structure, with a small inserted window above it (Photograph 6). The 19th-century single-storey lean-to extension has white-painted brickwork but no further embellishments. The brickwork of the 1923 extension has been rendered to match the main range although, once again, the rustication has been omitted. A window with a sill and a flat arch, both formed from creasing tiles and original to this extension, has been blocked. The south-east elevations of the 16th-century cross-wing and its 18th-century extension both have rusticated render. Only a small part of the first floor to the 16th-century cross-wing is visible and this has a pair of French doors inserted into it, but surviving next to this is an original 16th-century casement window (Photographs 7 and 8).

### **Internal description**

The ground floor of Oxford House comprises five distinct areas, labelled GF1 – GF5 on Fig 2.

GF1 comprises the remains of the 15th-century main range and the 19th-century single-storey extension (Fig 2). With the exception of the south-east wall, the majority of the stud work in the timber framing of the ground floor has been removed leaving the corner posts and storey posts (Photograph 9). The original mortises in the underside of the girding beam of the north-east wall give an indication of what the original framework would have been (Photograph 10). The removal of the framing has created a large open plan space and the work must have been undertaken in the mid to late 20th century as the 1923 plan shows partitions that are no longer present. Some timbers have been repositioned to replicate the missing studwork but they are clearly modern attempts to recreate a medieval look for the building. The surviving frame of the south-east wall has closely-spaced studs typical of the period and internal bracing which is not (Photograph 11). The bracing may have been an attempt to increase the structural integrity of the building when the front framing was removed in the 19th century. A fireplace with a brick surround and an embedded timber mantel dating to the 18th century has been inserted into the rear frame (Photograph 12). The bricks above the mantel have dimensions of 223mm x 108mm x 63mm, whilst those below are 223mm x 100mm x 49mm. Both areas of brickwork are laid in English bond but the upper brickwork is probably a 20th-century embellishment. To the left of this fireplace is a modern partition wall which has blocked access to the probable 18th-century external staircase. Chiselled carpenters' marks were observed on the storey post of the north-east wall and at the junction of the supporting post and the bridging beam (Photograph 13). A possible apotropaic mark is cut into the central storey post (Photograph 14).

GF2 comprises the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing and part of the 19th-century lean-to extension (Fig 2). The floor of GF2 is at a lower level to the rest of the

building and the curved brickwork of the 19th-century extension is prominent (Photograph 15). The 18th-century extension was originally joined to the north-east elevation of the 16th-century cross-wing and the studs of the earlier timber frame have been removed, probably when the extension was added. An original window opening in the north-east wall has been replaced by a larger sash window which has removed part of the girding beam and the head of a centrally-located bridging beam originally carried on the girding beam, necessitating the strapping of this timber (Photograph 16). The studs of the north-west wall of this extension were completely removed when the 19th-century lean-to extension was constructed and the corner post of the 16th-century cross-wing was cut off level with the underside of the girding beam. As this structurally weakened the frame of the cross-wing, a strengthening beam was bolted to the rear of the front girding beam with one end bedded into the brickwork of the lean-to wall (Photograph 17). One advantage of these alterations was that part of the external frame of the 18th-century extension has been preserved and is visible, showing the frame had external bracing (Photograph 17). Connected to the construction of the 19th-century lean-to was the insertion of a fireplace and chimney stack, located just inside the 16th-century cross-wing (Photograph 18). This has a modern brick fire surround of red brick with dimensions of 222mm x 109mm x 61mm but the original brickwork can still be seen within the hearth. The brickwork of this has dimensions of 220mm x 110mm x 57mm. There is a fitted and glazed corner cupboard adjacent to the chimney breast dating to the 19th century.

GF3 comprises the bulk of the 16th-century cross-wing and two thirds of the 19th-century lean-to extension (Fig 2). However, almost nothing remains of the medieval fabric as this part of the building has been extensively altered in the 19th and 20th centuries. A storey post and part of the girding beam to the 16th-century cross-wing may survive concealed behind modern materials (Photograph 19). The remains of a staircase to the first floor are located on the south-east wall of the cross-wing. This was blocked off sometime after 1923 but the slope to the underside of the staircase, visible in the cupboard below the stairs, indicates this had a steep incline. The steepness of the stairs combined with the style of the door to the cupboard (Photograph 20) suggests this may have been inserted in the late 18th century. In 1923 the inn's kitchen and scullery were located in GF3 and probably had been there since the lean-to extension was constructed. In the later 20th-century further alterations to this part of the building included the creation of a toilet block at the south end.

GF4 comprises the late 20th-century single-storey extensions at the rear of the inn (Fig 2). These are unremarkable and make use of modern materials.

GF5 comprises the 18th-century external staircase and the remains of the 1923 extension (Fig 2). The external staircase was probably constructed at the same time as, or soon after, the 18th-century chimney stack. It was originally accessed through a doorway in the south-east elevation that provided a route into the 15th-century range and thence up the stairs to the first floor. The entire staircase and its orientation were altered in the 20th-century, blocking the access from the 15th-century range and moving the foot of the stairs.

The rest of GF5, comprising the remains of the 1923 extension has also been extensively remodelled in the late 20th century and bears little resemblance to its original plan form.

The first floor of Oxford House comprises eight distinct areas, labelled FF1 – FF8 on Fig 3.

FF1 comprises a large room in the 15th-century main range and the landing of the 18th-century external staircase (Fig 3). There are no observable indications of the 15th-century timber frame in FF1 apart from an exposed storey post in the south-east wall. The timber framing of the upper floor has been concealed behind 18th-century renovations (Photograph 21). These renovations include the chimney stack with its cast-iron register grate (Photograph 22 - fire surround is modern) and the sash windows inserted into the north-east wall (Photograph 23). A dado rail present in the room is probably a modern embellishment rather than an original feature. Just outside the entrance to FF1, on the upper landing of the external staircase, a low cupboard is built into the chimney stack (Photograph 24). This appears to be an original feature and may have been for airing linens.

A lath and horse hair plaster wall divides FF1 from FF2, most likely 18th-century in date. This would originally have divided the upper floor into two equal-sized chambers, each with a window but 20th-century stud walls have subdivided this second chamber into FF2 and FF3. FF2, a modern kitchen, has the 15th-century central storey post with the dividing wall built around it and a 20th-century chimney stack in one corner. A pair of French doors has been inserted into the rear wall, providing access to a flat-roofed seating area constructed on top of GF4 (Photograph 25). FF3 comprises a shower room accessed off a corridor linking FF1 to FF2 and a bathroom accessed from the 16th-century cross-wing. A window has been inserted through the rear wall of FF3. The corridor linking FF1 to FF2 terminates at an entrance to the 16th-century cross-wing.

FF4 comprises the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing (Fig 2). As with GF2 below the floor level drops upon entry to the extension. The north-east timber frame of the 16th-century cross-wing has been obscured by modern plaster and a cupboard has been created where the 19th-century chimney stack has been inserted behind this wall (Photograph 26).

FF5 comprises the landing and hallway outside of the rooms located in the 16th-century cross-wing (Fig 2). Until at least 1923 the landing received the head of the staircase from GF3, which accounts for the greater width of the landing at the north-east end (Photograph 27). This area also contains a small cupboard built into the cavity formed by the 19th-century chimney stack, similar to the one built into the side of the 18th-century chimney in FF1, although this one is raised off the floor (Photograph 28). This cupboard may also have been used to air linens. A doorway into FF3, inserted through the framing of the 15th-century main range, opens off FF5. Located at the south-west end of FF5, just outside the entrance to FF8, is an original 16th-century wrought-iron casement window with leaded glazing, complete with an iron catch and stay (Photographs 8 and 29).

FF5 is separated from FF6 and FF7 by lath and horse hair plaster walls (Fig 2). These walls probably date to the late 18th century and originally enclosed a single room with a sash window and one doorway. The insertion of a stud wall, a second doorway and a casement window in the 20th century turned this room into two separate chambers (Photograph 30). Concealed behind the wall paper in FF6 is a piece of pencilled graffiti recording for posterity:

*'Decorated by Dick Elms in January 1977, landlord 1969 - 19?'*

Clearly Mr Elms was proud of both his decorating and his role as landlord, in which he expected to continue for future years.

FF8 is the final room in the 16th-century cross-wing. It has a pair of French doors inserted into the south-west wall, providing access to the flat-roofed seating area constructed on top of GF4 and there is a 19th-century sash window in the south-west wall (Photograph 31).

### **Roof description**

The roof above the 15th-century main range was partially accessible via a loft hatch in the ceiling of FF3. Due to safety concerns regarding the state of the roof flooring and the presence of wasps' nests, only a visual inspection was made. It was not possible to access the roof above the 16th-century cross-wing, although some observations are recorded below. The research of the Earls Colne WEA claims the roof was rebuilt *circa* 1780 and the author finds no reason to disagree with this statement.

The roof is formed from large-section rafters which are a combination of re-used timbers displaying mortises and peg holes and timbers that are original to the building. There is a single purlin to each pitch, supported on a collar and double-pegged to the principal rafters (Photograph 32). Intermediate high collars are nailed to the heads of the rafters with large square-headed nails and there is a ridge board present (Photograph 33). The tie beams are offset to the collars and comprise wide-section timbers. There are wind braces between every principle rafter below the purlins, falling in opposite directions along the axis of the building (Photograph 32). The south-east gable has ten studs above the wall plate and four above the collar. The ends of the purlins extend into the timbers of the roof above the 16th-century cross-wing and rest on the purlins of that roof. Although access was limited to the roof above the cross-wing, it was possible to see that the roof is a side purlin construction with the purlins carried on collars, ie both roofs are constructed in the same style (Photograph 34). As with the roof above the main range, the roof above the cross-wing includes re-used timbers, probably deriving from the original roof. Only one example of carpenters' marks was noted and this was on a re-used rafter. A modern breathable membrane sits between the rafters and the battens carrying the peg-tiles, indicating that the roof has been re-laid relatively recently.

## **Outbuilding** (Fig 8)

The free-standing outbuilding adjacent to Oxford House was subject to a Level 2 Historic Building Record. As it comprises three bays, these have been labelled OB1-OB3 on Fig 8.

This structure appears on the tithe map and probably dates to the early 19th century. Externally it appears as a single-storey timber-framed building clad in weatherboard and with one gable end replaced by Fletton brickwork (Photographs 35 and 36). The roof covering of corrugated asbestos sheeting is obviously 20th-century and the three sets of double doors in the north-west elevation are formed from smaller doors sourced from other structures and held on a variety of mismatched hinges.

An inspection of the interior revealed that, although the structure comprises three bays, the northernmost one (OB1) is earlier than the other two which date to the 20th-century.

OB1 is a soft-wood timber-framed structure with a loft supported on posts (Photographs 37 and 38). The modern entrance to OB1 has been created by removing the studs of the frame and an original entrance (now blocked) is located in the north-west corner. The floor is formed from pale yellow paviours and incorporates drainage channels set into it. These channels and a scar for a dividing wall indicate this was originally two stalls for stabling livestock. This is reinforced by the presence of tethering rings attached to the studs.

OB2 and OB3 are formed predominantly from Fletton brickwork laid in Flemish bond and are open to the modern roof. The floors are of concrete. OB3 is constructed in front of an irregular-shaped section of brickwork, partially laid in English bond that may date to the 18th century (Photograph 39). It is unclear what this brickwork represents but it is likely to be the remains of an earlier outbuilding.

## 7 Discussion

Oxford House is an example of a structure that has evolved and continued to reinvent itself over a period spanning more than five hundred years. It also appears to have maintained the same function as an inn for almost as long. Although a great deal of the original 15th and 16th-century architecture has either been lost or concealed behind later alterations, enough remains to reveal the development of these building components.

If the assessment of the building as outlined in this report is accurate, then there have clearly been periods in its history when the building has been subjected to increased levels of alteration. The late 18th century would appear to be one such period. It seems logical that, if the roof was rebuilt *circa* 1780, then such a major undertaking might also have been accompanied by the construction of the chimney stack, external staircase and the other features noted on Figs 2 and 3. Of course, it is equally possible that the alterations, although dating to the 18th century, were carried out as and when funds became available and span a longer period of time. The exposed external timber framing of the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing calls into question the age of the rusticated render. Stylistically it fits with an 18th-century date but clearly, if part of the north-west elevation was render free in the early 19th century, then so too would the rest of it have been. Thus the rusticated render is probably a 19th-century feature or possibly even later. The author has known the inn for better than thirty years and can personally vouch that the render is at least that old.

The early 19th century appears to have been another period when significant changes were carried out, if not at the same time, then certainly close together. The similarities of the two lean-to extensions, their brick dimensions and the original slate roofs certainly suggest that these elements were constructed at the same time.

The 20th-century alterations reflect changing attitudes to pubs and inns. The early part of the 20th century saw attempts to influence society's attitudes towards the consumption of alcohol. A desire to move away from 'vertical drinking' where seating was scarce and encourage a more genteel atmosphere was promoted and this may have been the reason behind the construction of a 'Ladies Room' in 1923. Of course an inn was historically always more of a place for travellers to obtain rest and refreshment than a drinking establishment and this continuing trend was reflected in the size of the kitchen that was created in the 19th century (GF3) and the dining area that was built in the late 20th century (GF4).

A particularly interesting historical feature revealed by this survey is the possible apotropaic mark identified on one of the storey posts in the 15th-century range. It does not resemble the most common forms of apotropaic markings, which often take the form of scratched letters, crosses or daisy wheels, and invoke the protection of the Virgin Mary and the Sun from the effects of witchcraft (Easton, 1999) but it could be interpreted as a poor-quality or unfinished Chi Rho symbol. The witch trials in north Essex and Suffolk

during the mid 17th century certainly fuelled fears of the occult and gave rise to many such markings, so this may be one such example.

Oxford House is important for a number of reasons. Earls Colne is a good example of a small medieval/post-medieval market town which has retained a significant amount of its original built environment and much of which is of high quality. The completeness of the documentary record chronicling its development aids the historian and archaeologist in understanding and interpreting the past. Oxford House in particular is historically linked to the priory and can provide information on this as well. Perhaps the most important point to make about Oxford House is that for 350 years (if not longer) it functioned continuously as an inn and that fact alone is worthy of respect.

## 8 Acknowledgements

Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Mr Richard Pascoe for funding the building recording.

Plans are adapted from surveys provided by ADP.

The building recording was carried out by Chris Lister and Mark Baister with additional research by Laura Pooley.

The project was monitored by Teresa O'Connor, Essex County Council.

## 9 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in .pdf format at

<http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

CAT	2016	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation and historic building recording at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street, Earls Colne, Essex CO6 2PG</i>
CAT	2014	<i>Health and Safety Policy</i>
CIFA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
CIFA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures</i>
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Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the</i>

		<i>East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)</i>
WEA	1983	<i>Wherein I dwell, A History of Earls Colne Houses from 1375</i> , pub. Earls Colne Workers' Educational Association

Websites consulted include:

<http://www.echm.org.uk> Earls Colne Heritage Museum

## 10 Abbreviations and glossary

apotropaic marks	ritual symbols used to protect buildings from witchcraft
carpenters' marks	symbols scratched, incised or chiselled into timber to assist in assembly
CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
collar	horizontal member in a roof spanning between a pair of inclined members such as principal or common rafters
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by the ECC
ERO	Essex Records Office
HE	Historic Environment
girding beam	a timber beam placed horizontally in a wall frame at a level between the sill and the tie beam or wall plate.
modern	period from the 19th century onwards to the present
NGR	National Grid Reference
post	in wall frames vertical members which rise the full height of the frame, being either main posts at the bay divisions or intermediate posts within the bay
post-medieval	after Henry VIII to around the late 18th century
purlin	longitudinal roof timbers, intermediate between wall-plate and ridge, carried by roof trusses and giving support to rafters
rustication	incised lines in stone or plaster to create the illusion of dressed ashlar blocks
sill beam	the beam at the foot of a timber-framed wall from which rise the all the studs (and usually the posts)
tie beam	beam tying together the post-heads of a timber-framed wall or the upper surfaces of a solid wall
truss	a frame consisting of several pieces of timber, jointed and triangulated in order to retain its shape under load
wall plate	a timber running horizontally along the top of a wall to receive the ends of common rafters

## 11 Archive deposition

The paper and digital archive is currently held by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Roman Circus House, Roman Circus Walk, Colchester, Essex CO2 7GZ, but will be permanently deposited with Braintree Museum under accession code (requested).

## 12 Contents of archive

One A4 document wallet containing:



## **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Copy of ECC Place Services Brief
- 1.2 Copy of WSI produced by CAT
- 1.3 Risk assessment
- 1.4 Copies of existing plans and elevations

## **2 Site archive**

- 2.1 Digital photographic record.
- 2.2 Digital photographic contact sheet.
- 2.3 Attendance register
- 2.4 Site photographic record on CD

## **3 Research archive**

- 3.1 Client report

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### **Distribution list**

EHER  
Teresa O'Connor, ECC Place Services Historic Environment Advisor  
Mr Richard Pascoe



### **Colchester Archaeological Trust**

Roman Circus House  
Circular Road North,  
Colchester,  
Essex CO2 7GZ

tel.: 01206 501785

email: [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)

checked by: PC  
date: 26/01/2017

**Appendices**  
**Appendix 1**  
**Selected photographs**



**Photograph 1** North-east elevation - view south-west.



**Photograph 2** North-west elevation - view south-east.





**Photograph 3** South-west elevation - view north-east.



**Photograph 4** South-west elevation of the 15th-century main range with the 18th-century chimney stack and the flared roof covering the probable 18th-century external staircase - view east.





**Photograph 5** South-east elevation - view west.



**Photograph 6** South-east elevation of the 1923 extension with blocked window and an earlier blocked doorway to the 18th-century staircase on the right - view north-west.



**Photograph 7** South-east elevation of the first floor to the 16th-century cross-wing with a surviving 16th-century casement window to the right - view north-west.



**Photograph 8** 16th-century casement window in south-east wall of 16th-century cross-wing - view north-west.





**Photograph 9** Interior of GF1, 15th-century main range with inserted 18th-century fireplace and repositioned stud work - view west.



**Photograph 10** Exposed mortises in underside of 15th-century beam in GF1 with strengthening beam bolted to the external face – view south.



**Photograph 11** Original 15th-century studs in south-east wall of GF1, with later internal bracing - view south-east.



**Photograph 12** 18th-century fire surround in GF1 with blocked access to the external staircase on the left - view south-west.





**Photograph 13** Detail of chiselled carpenters' marks on bridging beam and post in GF1.



**Photograph 14** Detail of possible apotropaic mark on post in GF1.





**Photograph 15** Interior of GF2 showing the curved brickwork of the 19th-century single-storey extension on the north-west elevation – view north.



**Photograph 16** 19th-century sash window with margin lights inserted into north-east framing of the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing (GF2) – view east.



**Photograph 17** External studwork of the first floor to the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing concealed by the 19th-century single-storey extension on the north-west elevation (GF2) – view north.



**Photograph 18** Inserted 19th-century fireplace with modern fire surround in GF2 and 19th-century corner cabinet – view west.





**Photograph 19** Interior of 19th-century single-storey extension on north-west side of GF3 with possible surviving 16th-century storey post and girding beam concealed beneath modern materials – view north.



**Photograph 20** 18th-century under stairs cupboard between GF1 and GF3 – view south-west.



**Photograph 21** Interior of FF1 with 15th-century storey post to the left and 18th-century cast-iron register grate to the right – view south.



**Photograph 22** FF1, 18th-century cast-iron register grate with modern fire surround – view south-west.





**Photograph 23** 18th-century sash window in north-east wall of FF1 – view north.



**Photograph 24** Interior of small cupboard built against chimney stack on landing outside FF1 – view west.



**Photograph 25** 18th-century dividing wall between FF1 and FF2, built around 15th-century storey post and with 20th-century chimney stack and French doors to roof – view south-east.



**Photograph 26** Interior of FF4 showing the front of the 16th-century cross-wing (timber frame obscured by modern plaster), with the cupboard to the right – view west.





**Photograph 27** FF5, 16th-century cross-wing with the 18th-century extension to the rear and the access to the 15th-century range on the right – view north-east.



**Photograph 28** Cupboard built against chimney stack off FF5 – view north-west.



**Photograph 29** 16th-century casement window in south-east wall of FF5 – view east.



**Photograph 30** 18th-century sash window in FF7 with 20th-century stud wall to the right – view north-west.





**Photograph 31** Interior of FF8 with inserted 19th-century sash window – view south-west.



**Photograph 32** Roof timbers above 15th-century main range (FF1-3) – view south-east.





**Photograph 33** Intermediate high collars and ridge board above 15th-century main range (FF1-3) – view south-east.



**Photograph 34** Purlin of main range supported on purlin above 16th-century cross-wing – view north-west.





**Photograph 35** North-west elevation of outbuilding – view south.



**Photograph 36** South-west elevation of outbuilding – view north-east.





**Photograph 37** Interior of OB1 – view east.



**Photograph 38** Loft above OB1.



**Photograph 39** Interior of OB3 with possible 18th-century brickwork to the rear – view south-east.

## Appendix 2

### Full list of digital photographic record (images on accompanying CD)

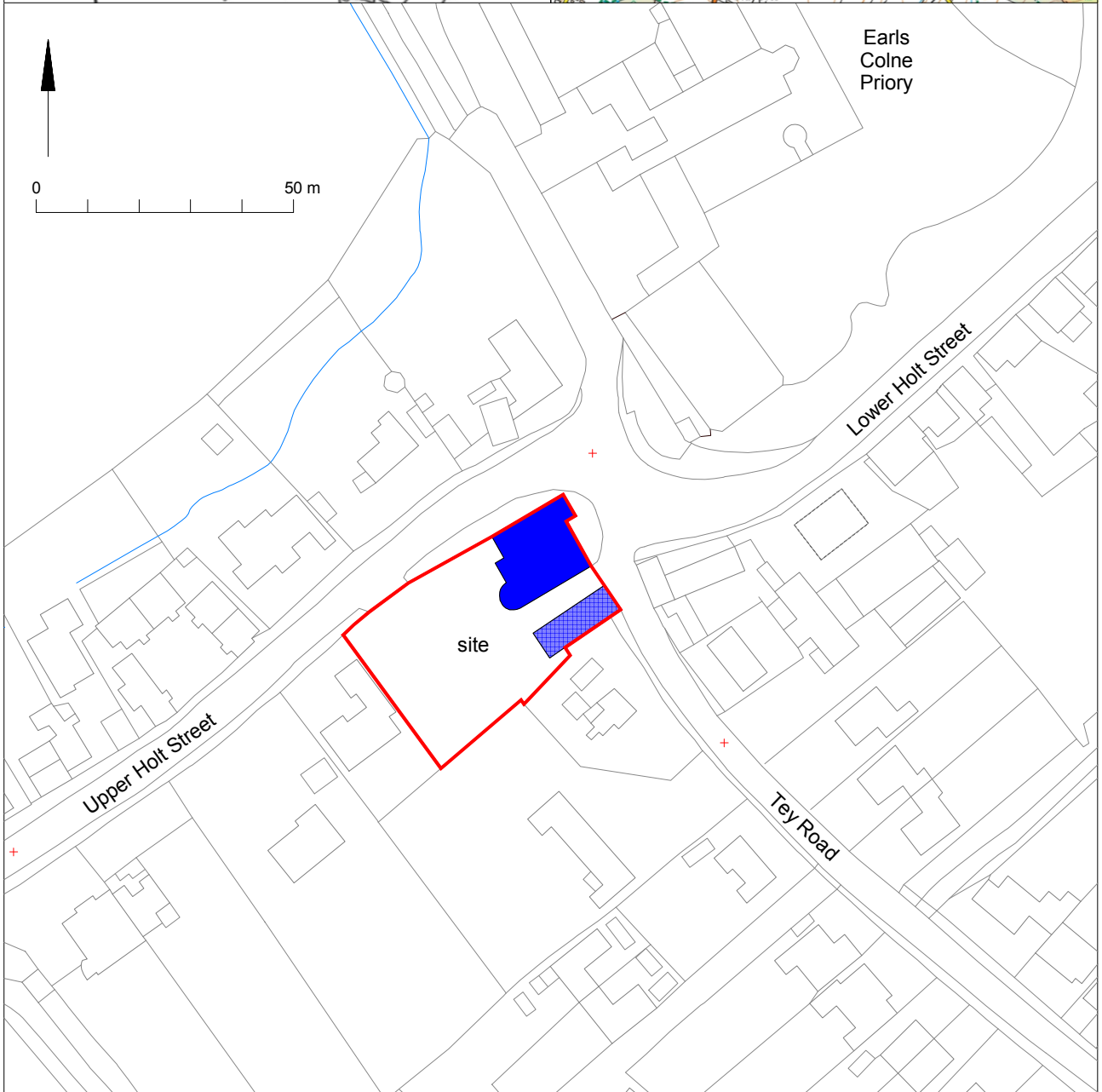
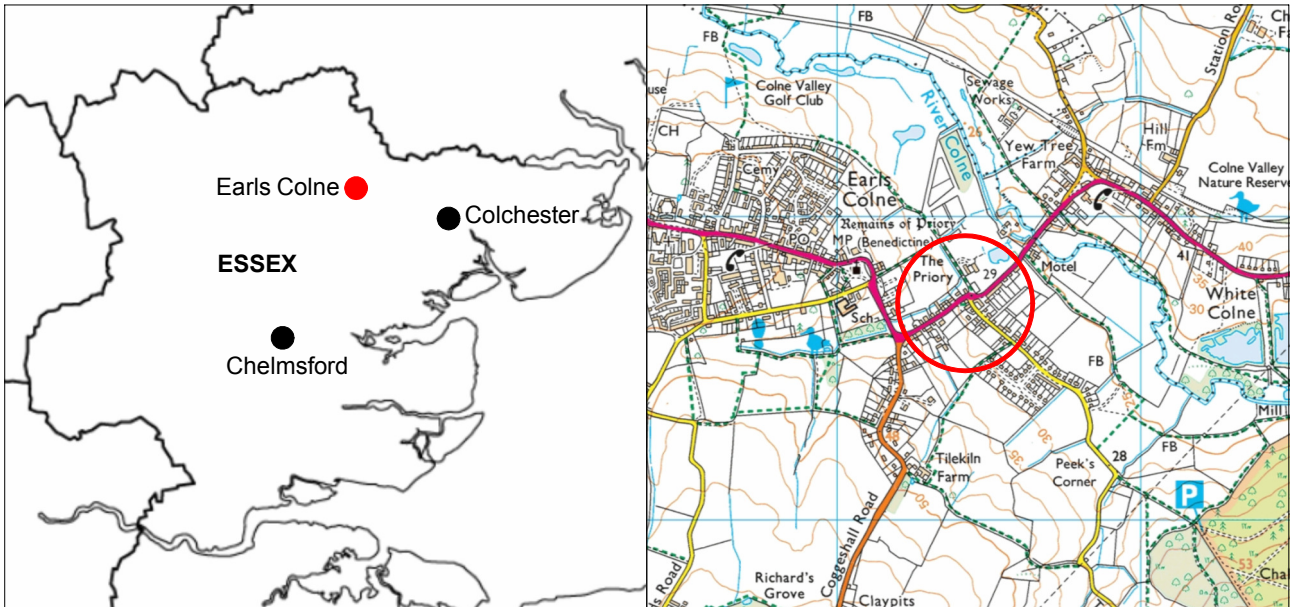
001.jpg	North-east elevation - view west.
002.jpg	North-east elevation - view west.
003.jpg	North-east elevation - view south-west.
004.jpg	North-east and north-west elevations - view south.
005.jpg	North-east and north-west elevations - view south.
006.jpg	North-west elevation - view south-east.
007.jpg	Bracket for pub sign on north corner of building - view south.
008.jpg	Chimney stack in 16th-century cross-wing - view south.
009.jpg	South-west elevation - view north-east.
010.jpg	South-west and south-east elevations- view north.
011.jpg	South-west and south-east elevations- view north.
012.jpg	South-east elevation- view north.
013.jpg	South-east elevation - view west.
014.jpg	Entrance to GF1 in 19th-century extension on north-east facade - view south-west.
015.jpg	Wall plate beams projecting through the plastered gable of the south-east elevation - view north.
016.jpg	South-east elevation showing blocked window and doorway to 1923 extension with an earlier blocked doorway to the staircase on the right - view north-west.
017.jpg	South-east elevation of 1923 extension with blocked window and an earlier blocked doorway to the staircase on the right - view north-west.
018.jpg	South-east elevation of 1923 extension adjacent to the external staircase at the rear of the main 15th-century range - view north-west.
019.jpg	South-east elevation of the first floor to the 16th-century cross-wing with a surviving 16th-century window to the right - view north-west.
020.jpg	South-west elevation of the 15th-century main range with the later external staircase and chimney stack - view east.
021.jpg	South-west elevation of the 15th-century main range with the later external staircase and chimney stack - view east.
022.jpg	South-west elevation of the 15th-century main range with the later external staircase and chimney stack - view east.
023.jpg	South-west elevation of the 15th-century main range with inserted French doors and window - view north-east.
024.jpg	Chimney stack inserted into the 15th-century main range - view north-east.
025.jpg	South-west elevation of the 15th-century main range with 1923 chimney stack bonded into the earlier external chimney stack - view north-east.
026.jpg	Head of the 1923 chimney stack bonded into the earlier external chimney stack - view north-east.
027.jpg	South-west elevation of the 15th-century main range with 1923 chimney stack bonded into the earlier external chimney stack - view east.
028.jpg	Chimney stack inserted into the 15th-century main range - view north-east.
029.jpg	Heads of the chimney stacks on the south-west elevation - view north.
030.jpg	View from the roof of the 1923 extension showing contemporary dwellings along Upper Holt Street - view west.
031.jpg	Head of the chimney stack inserted into the 16th century cross-wing - view north-east.
032.jpg	North-east elevation of 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing with 19th-century sash window with side-lights - view south-west.
033.jpg	Original sash window in upper north-east elevation of 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing - view south-west.
034.jpg	18th-century sash window inserted to upper north-east wall of 15th-century main range - view south-west.
035.jpg	Interior of GF1, 15th-century hall with inserted fireplace - view west.
036.jpg	Interior of GF1, 15th-century hall - view south-west.
037.jpg	Interior of GF1, 15th-century hall with modern window inserted through framing and original access to external staircase (left of fireplace) no blocked - view south.
038.jpg	Interior of GF1, showing 19th-20th-century alterations and stud walls - view east.
039.jpg	Interior of GF1, 15th-century hall showing modern dividing wall - view south.
040.jpg	Interior of GF1, 15th-century hall with modern inserted wall frame - view south-east.
041.jpg	Interior of GF1, 15th-century hall with 19th-century lean-to extension to the rear - view east.
042.jpg	Interior of GF1, 15th-century hall with 19th-century lean-to extension to the rear - view east.
043.jpg	18th-century fire surround in GF1 - view south-west.
044.jpg	Original 15th-century studs in south-east wall of GF1, with later internal bracing - view south-east.



- 045.jpg Original 15th-century studs in south-east wall of GF1, with later internal bracing, both cut by inserted modern window - view south-east.
- 046.jpg Repair to original 15th-century stud in south-east wall of GF1 - view south-east.
- 047.jpg Re-used timber in studwork of south-east wall in GF1 - view south-east.
- 048.jpg Re-used timber in studwork of south-east wall in GF1 - view south-east.
- 049.jpg Original door to 19th-century lean-to extension on north-east facade - view north-east.
- 050.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark on bridging beam and post in GF1.
- 051.jpg Possible apotropaic mark on post in GF1.
- 052.jpg Chiselled carpenter's mark on post in GF1.
- 053.jpg Exposed mortises in underside of 15th-century beam in GF1 with strengthening beam bolted to the external face - view south.
- 054.jpg Exposed mortises in underside of 15th-century beam in GF1 - view west.
- 055.jpg Interior of GF2 showing the curved brickwork of the 19th-century single-storey extension on the north-west facade - view north.
- 056.jpg Chimney breast and fire surround in GF2 with Victorian corner cabinet - view west.
- 057.jpg Interior of GF2 showing inserted doorway and modern dividing wall - view south.
- 058.jpg Rebuilt fire surround in GF2 shown extending into the 19th-century single-storey extension on the north-west facade - view south.
- 059.jpg External studwork of the first floor to the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing concealed by the 19th-century single-storey extension on the north-west facade (GF2) - view north.
- 060.jpg ?19th-century sash window with side lights inserted into north-east framing of the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing (GF2) - view east.
- 061.jpg Detail of chamfering to bridging beam in GF2.
- 062.jpg Replacement framing to south-east wall of GF2 - view south-east.
- 063.jpg Exposed mortise with single peg hole in underside of girding beam of the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing (GF2).
- 064.jpg Exposed mortises with single peg holes in underside of girding beam to the 18th-century extension to the 16th-century cross-wing (GF2) - view north-west.
- 065.jpg Junction of cross beam and girding beam with storey post in 16th-century cross-wing (GF2) showing how the lower portion of the storey post has been cut flush with the underside of the beams necessitating a strengthening beam to be attached to the rear of the cross beam, one end of which is bedded into the brickwork of the 19th-century single-storey extension on the north-west facade - view south-west.
- 066.jpg Exposed mortises in underside of cross beam in GF2 with strengthening beam bolted to its rear - view south-west.
- 067.jpg Exposed mortises in underside of cross beam in GF2 with strengthening beam bolted to its rear - view north-west.
- 068.jpg Exposed mortises in underside of cross beam in GF2 with strengthening beam bolted to its rear - view south-east.
- 069.jpg External studwork of the first floor to the 16th-century cross-wing concealed by the 19th-century single-storey extension on the north-west facade (GF2) - view north-east.
- 070.jpg Interior of GF3 - view west.
- 071.jpg 18th-century under stairs cupboard between GF1 and GF3 - view south-west.
- 072.jpg Interior of GF3 - view north-east.
- 073.jpg 20th-century cold store in GF3 - view east.
- 074.jpg Interior of 19th-century single-storey extension on north-west side of GF3 - view north.
- 075.jpg Interior of south-west end of GF3 - view north-west.
- 076.jpg Access to GF1 from GF4 - view north-east.
- 077.jpg Interior of GF4, 20th-century extension - view south.
- 078.jpg 20th-century bar in GF4 - view east.
- 079.jpg Small cupboard built against chimney stack on landing outside FF1 - view west.
- 080.jpg Interior of small cupboard built against chimney stack on landing outside FF1 - view west.
- 081.jpg Doorway to FF1 - view north-east.
- 082.jpg Interior of FF1 - view north.
- 083.jpg Interior of FF1 - view east.
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- 085.jpg Interior of FF1 - view west.
- 086.jpg 18th-century fireplace in FF1 - view south-west.
- 087.jpg Detail of 18th-century fireplace in FF1 - view south-west.
- 088.jpg Detail of lock to FF1.
- 089.jpg Storey post in south-east wall of FF1 - view south-east.
- 090.jpg 18th-century sash window in north-east wall of FF1 - view north.
- 091.jpg Modern hallway leading from FF1 to FF5 - view south-east.
- 092.jpg Modern hallway leading from FF1 to FF5 - view north-west.
- 093.jpg Interior of FF2 with French doors leading to roof terrace - view south-west.

- 094.jpg Dividing wall between FF1 and FF2, probably 18th century, built around storey post – view south-east.
- 095.jpg Modern stud wall between FF2 and FF3 – view north.
- 096.jpg Door to FF4 – view north-east.
- 097.jpg Detail of door handle to FF4.
- 098.jpg Detail of lock to FF4.
- 099.jpg Interior of FF4 – view north.
- 100.jpg Interior of FF4 – view west.
- 101.jpg Interior of fitted cupboard in FF4 – view south-west.
- 102.jpg Staggered brickwork of the chimney stack between FF4 and FF6.
- 103.jpg Cupboard built against chimney stack between FF4 and FF6 – view north-west.
- 104.jpg Interior of cupboard built against chimney stack between FF4 and FF6, concealed behind modern airing cupboard – view north-west.
- 105.jpg Graffiti in FF6.
- 106.jpg Door to FF6 – view south.
- 107.jpg Interior of FF5 – view north-east.
- 108.jpg 18th-century sash window in FF7 – view north-west.
- 109.jpg Doors to FF7 and FF6 – view west.
- 110.jpg Interior of FF7 – view south-west.
- 111.jpg 16th-century casement window in south-east wall of FF5 – view north-west.
- 112.jpg 16th-century casement window in south-east wall of FF5 – view east.
- 113.jpg Interior of FF8 – view north-east.
- 114.jpg Interior of FF8 – view south-west.
- 115.jpg Roof timbers above main range (FF1-3) – view south-east.
- 116.jpg Roof timbers above main range (FF1-3) – view south-east.
- 117.jpg Short brace joining rafters to purlin – view east.
- 118.jpg Short braces joining rafters to purlin – view south-east.
- 119.jpg Wind braces to rafters below purlins in roof of main range – view south-east.
- 120.jpg Wind braces to rafters below purlins in roof of main range – view south-east.
- 121.jpg Ceiling joists.
- 122.jpg Carpenter's mark and open mortise with peg on re-used timber utilised as a rafter.
- 123.jpg Collar with trenched purlins – view south-east.
- 124.jpg Purlin of main range supported on purlin of 16th-century cross-wing – view north-west.
- 125.jpg Roof timbers of 16th-century cross-wing showing roof to be of side purlin construction – view north-west.
- 126.jpg Rafters of the 16th-century cross-wing – view north-west.
- 127.jpg Re-used collar pegged to rafter of 16th-century cross-wing – view north-west.
- 128.jpg North-east elevation of outbuilding – view south-west.
- 129.jpg North-west elevation of outbuilding – view south.
- 130.jpg South-west elevation outbuilding – view north-east.
- 131.jpg Doorway to OB1 – view south-east.
- 132.jpg Detail of hinge to doorway to OB1.
- 133.jpg Detail of hinge to doorway to OB1.
- 134.jpg Interior of OB1 – view east.
- 135.jpg Brick pavior floor to OB1.
- 136.jpg Brick pavior floor to OB1 showing removed partition wall and drainage gully.
- 137.jpg Composite door to OB1.
- 138.jpg Remnant of original partition wall located in OB1.
- 139.jpg Loft above OB1.
- 140.jpg Rear framing of OB1 – view south-east.
- 141.jpg Tether ring on stud of rear wall to OB1.
- 142.jpg Mortises in underside of wall plate above doorway to OB1.
- 143.jpg Mortises in underside of wall plate above doorway to OB1.
- 144.jpg Blocked entrance to outbuilding in north-east wall of OB1 – view east.
- 145.jpg Brick plinth to outbuilding, concealed behind modern boarding – south-west.
- 146.jpg Timber dividing wall between OB1 and OB2 – view north-east.
- 147.jpg Modern roof to outbuilding.
- 148.jpg Fletton brick walls to OB2 – view south.
- 149.jpg Detail of timber framing to dividing wall between OB1 and OB2 – view north-east.
- 150.jpg Interior of OB3 – view south.
- 151.jpg Interior of OB3 – view south-east.
- 152.jpg Dividing wall between OB2 and OB3 – view north-east.



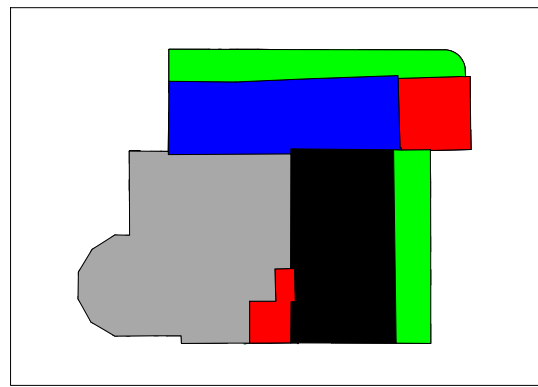


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Fig 1 Site location.

Level 3 Historic Building Record

Level 2 Historic Building Record



- 15th century
- 16th century
- 18th century
- 19th century
- 20th century

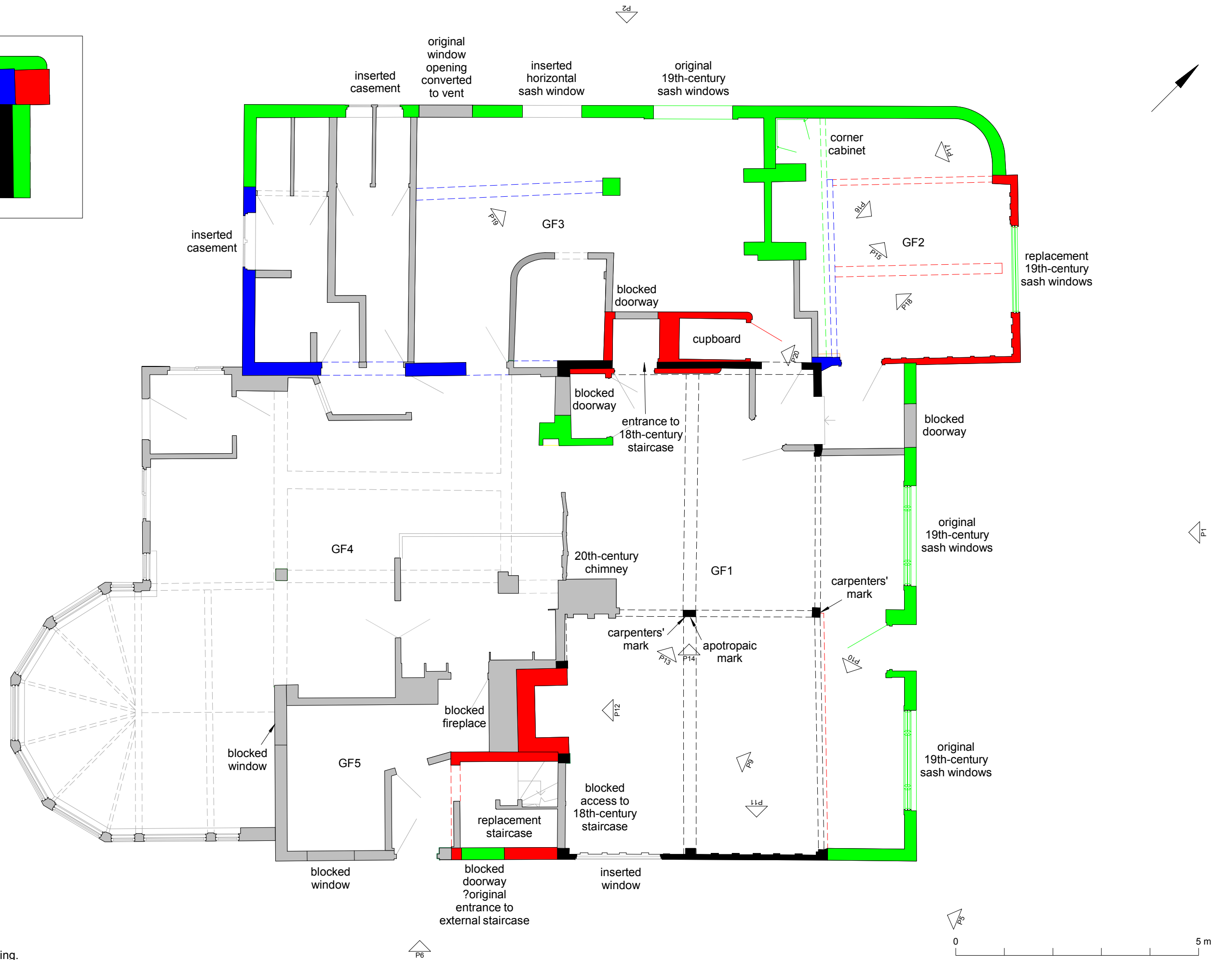


Fig 2 Ground floor plan with phasing.



- 15th century
- 16th century
- 18th century
- 19th century
- 20th century

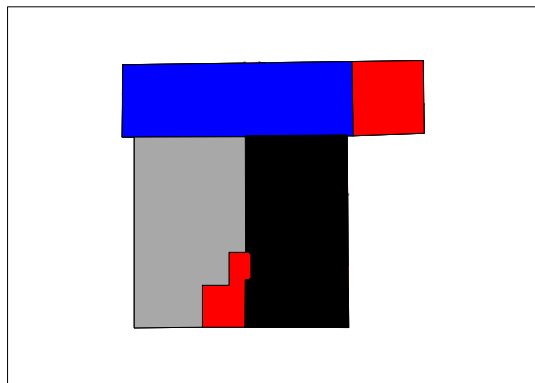


Fig 3 First floor plan with phasing.



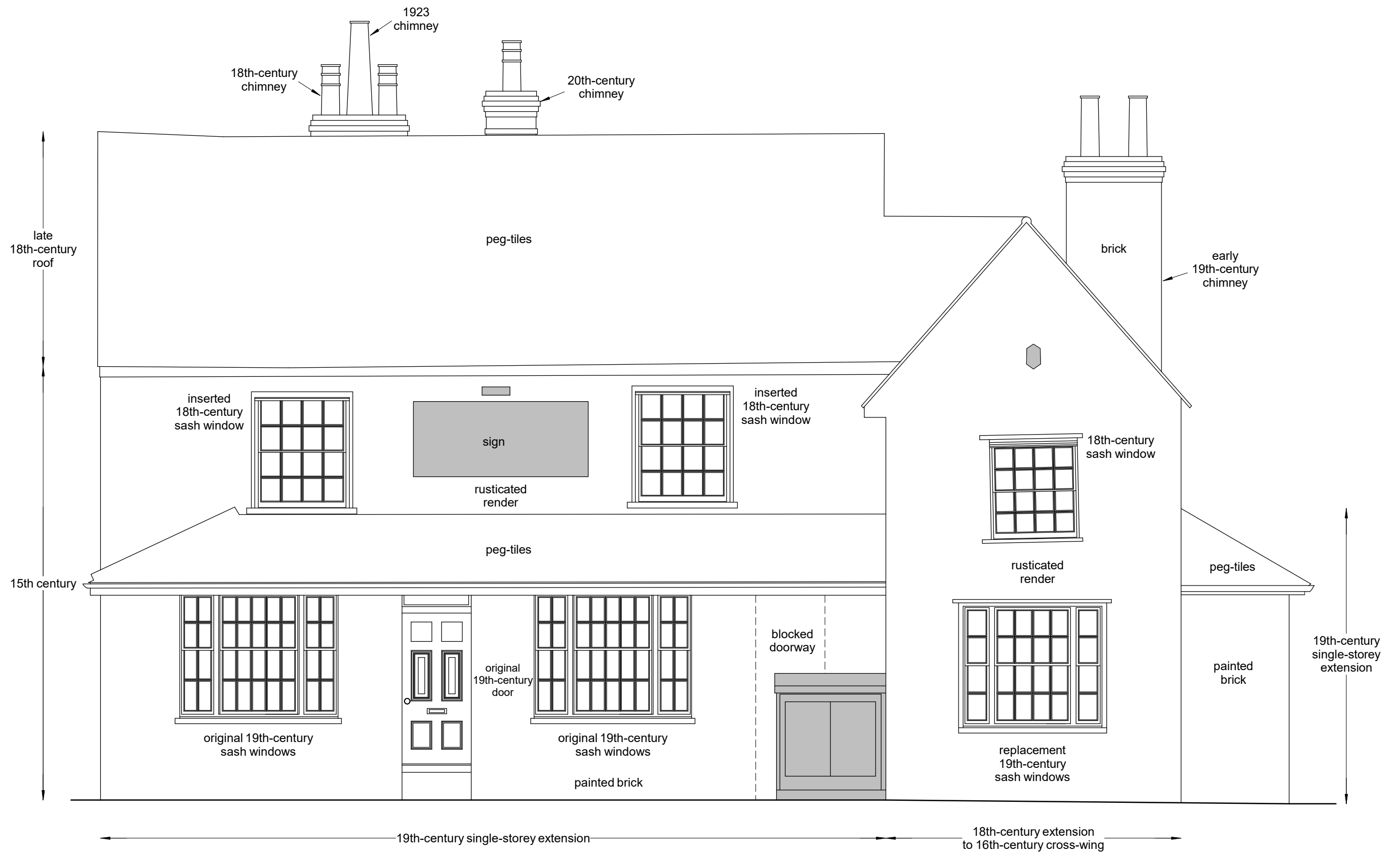


Fig 4 North-east facing elevation.

20th-century additions

0 2 m

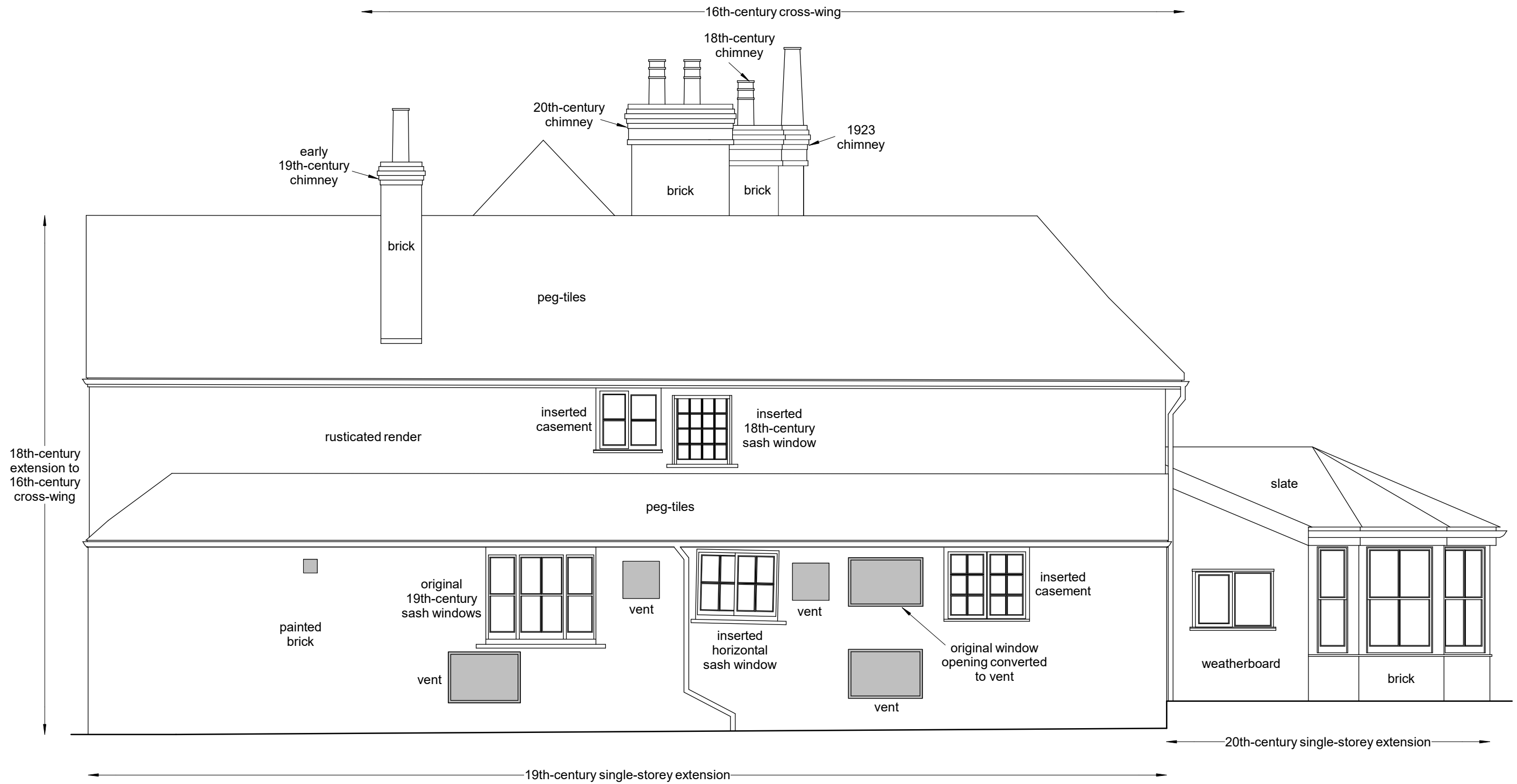


Fig 5 North-west facing elevation.

■ 20th-century additions

0 5 m

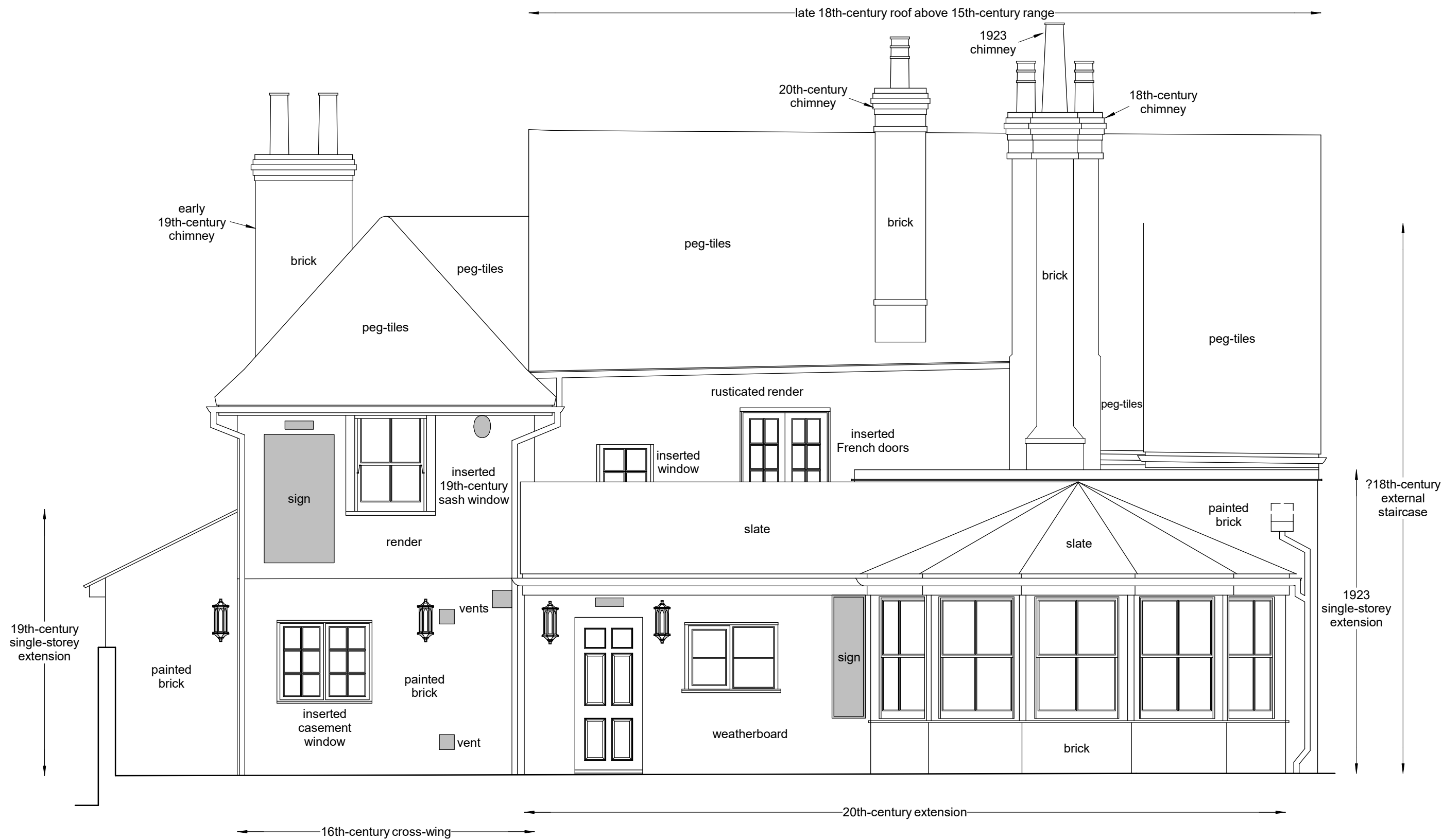


Fig 6 South-west facing elevation.

■ 20th-century additions





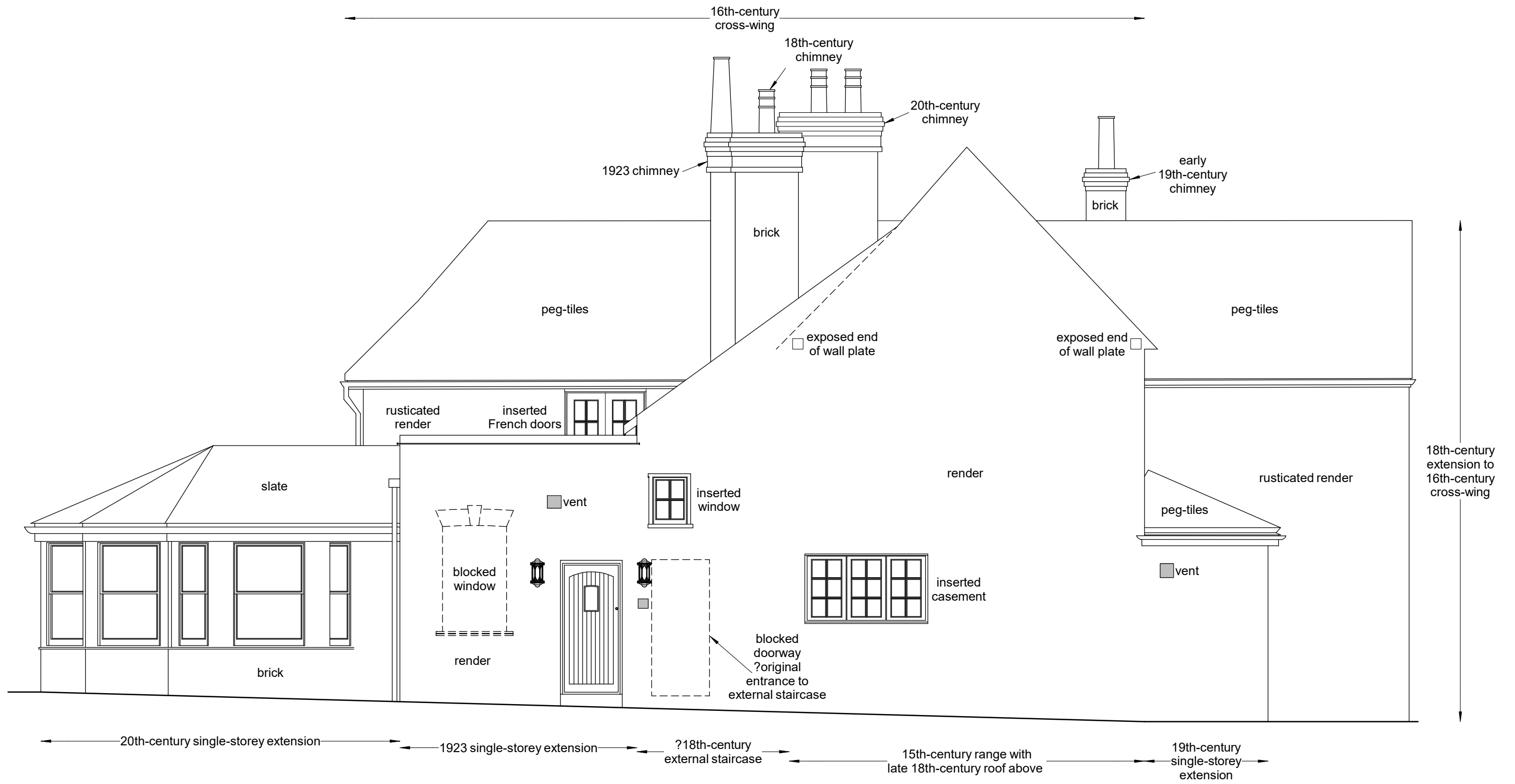


Fig 7 South-east facing elevation.

■ 20th-century additions

- ?18th century
- early 19th century
- early 20th century

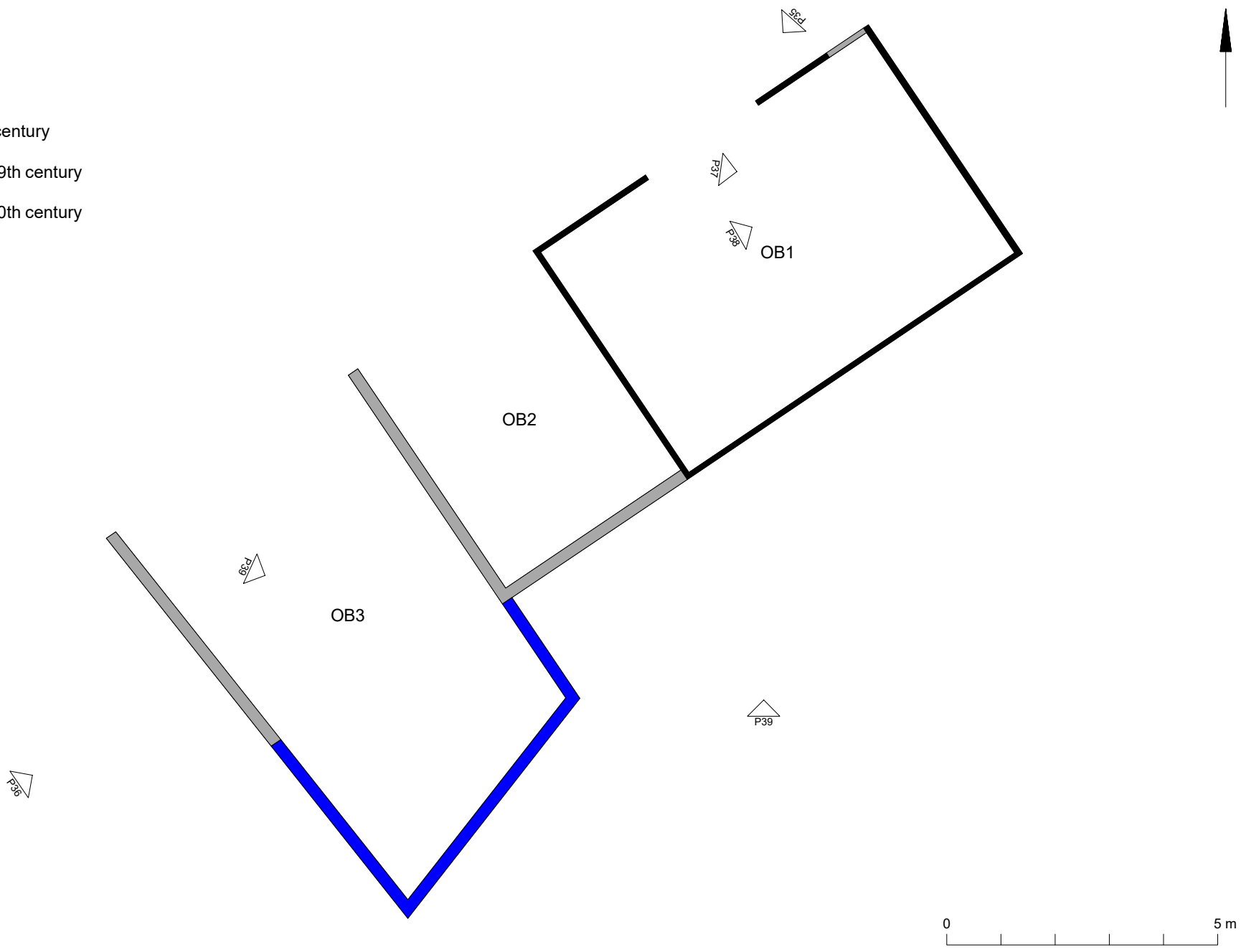


Fig 8 Plan of outbuilding.

0 5 m

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# Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological evaluation and historic building recording at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street, Earls Colne, Essex, CO6 2PG

NGR: TL 86427 28723

Planning reference: 14/00587/FUL

Agent: Steven Belchem, Architect ([steve@adpltd.co.uk](mailto:steve@adpltd.co.uk))

Client: Mr Richard Pascoe

Curating Museum: Braintree

## Evaluation

Museum accession code: TBC

ECC Project code: TBC

CAT Project code: 16/06k

Oasis project ID: colchest3-256038

## Building Recording

Museum accession code: TBC

ECC Project code: TBC

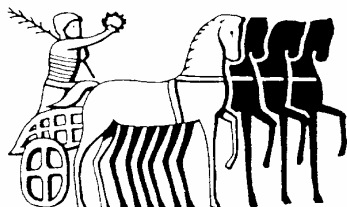
CAT Project code: 16/06l

Oasis project ID: colchest3-256040

Site Manager: Chris Lister

ECC Monitor: Teresa O'Connor

This WSI written: 28.06.2016



COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST,  
Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk  
Colchester,  
Essex, C02 7GZ

tel: 01206 501785

email: [archaeologists@catuk.org](mailto:archaeologists@catuk.org)



## Site location and description

The proposed development site is located at Oxford House, Earls Colne, Essex, on the corner of Upper Holt Street and Tey Road on the eastern edge of the village (Fig 1). Site centre is National Grid Reference TL 86427 28723.

## Proposed work

The development comprises the conversion of the existing Oxford House into two self-contained flats and the erection of a detached two-storey dwelling within the grounds of the property, both with associated works.

## Archaeological background

The following archaeological background draws on the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) held at Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex.

Oxford House lies within the historic core of Earls Colne (EHER 18469). Formerly known as both the 'The Carved Angel' and 'The Coachman Inn', Oxford House is a 15<sup>th</sup> century Grade II listed building on a large plot with curtilage outbuildings (NHLE no. 1337931). It is also located close to the Priory, a medieval Benedictine monastery, the remains of which are a scheduled monument. The medieval town is thought to have grown up around the Priory and ribbon development is known to have continued along Upper Holt Street.

The building now known as Oxford House sits in a prominent position within a large plot. It has two cross-wings dating from the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century and has been documented as being an inn since the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Its layout will have been altered over time to adapt to the changing needs of an inn, however there is the potential for the survival of fixtures and fittings relating to the original use and evolution of the building over the centuries that it has served as an inn. An outbuilding within the curtilage of the house survives which is likely to have had a service function to the inn and which retains a historic and architectural interest. Historic mapping depicts further outbuildings within the curtilage of the Inn that are no longer extant.

Historic England lists the building as:

House, now public house. C15, C16 and C17, altered in C18, C19 and C20. Timber framed, plastered, roofed with handmade red plain tiles. Hall range facing NE (along Lower Holt Street) with crosswings to left and right; left crosswing now oversailed by main range. Right crosswing projects to front. C19 lean-to extensions to front, and along right side. C20 extensions at rear. 2:1 window range of C18 sashes with glazing bars. C19 sashes with side-lights in front extension. Interior includes C18 fire surrounds and side-purlin roof, C15 original framing and window openings.

## Planning background

Planning application 14/00587/FUL was submitted to Braintree District Council in April 2014 for the conversion of the existing Oxford House into two self-contained flats and the erection of a detached two-storey dwelling within the grounds of the property, both with associated works. Given the potential impact of these works on the historic integrity of the site and building, it was recommended that a historic building record and archaeological evaluation be undertaken as a condition on the planning application in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012).

## Archaeological investigation

*"No development or preliminary groundworks of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted by the applicant and approved by the local planning authority."*

## **Building record**

*"No development or conversion of any kind shall take place until the applicant has secured the implementation of a programme of historic building recording in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to the applicant, and approved by the planning authority."*

## **Requirement for work**

The required archaeological work is for evaluation by trial-trenching and a historic building recording. Details are given in a Project Brief written by ECC (Brief for archaeological trial trenching and historic building recording - ECC 2016).

## **Evaluation**

The work will comprise the excavation of a single L-shaped trench positioned within the footprint of the new dwelling with the base of the L parallel and closest to the road. The trench will measure approximately 10m and 6m long by 1.8m wide (Fig 1).

Specific attention will be made to the potential for:

- Evidence of earlier medieval settlement and activity
- Earlier outbuildings associated with the house/inn

If important archaeological horizons are identified this may lead on to further archaeological work, potentially comprising the strip of the house plot and any other areas of significant groundwork.

## **Building recording**

The work will comprise a RCHME Level 3 record of the historic building to be affected by the proposed development. A Level 2 record will be made of the outbuilding.

Specifically the record needs to consider:

- Plan form of the site
- Materials and method of construction
- Date(s) of the structure
- Function and internal layout
- Fixtures and fittings
- Original and later phasing, additions and their effect on the internal/external fabric and the level of survival of original fabric
- Context of the Inn within the historic settlement of Earls Colne and wider landscape setting

## **General methodology**

All work carried out by CAT will be in accordance with:

- professional standards of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, including its *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014a, b, c)
- Standards and Frameworks published by East Anglian Archaeology (Gurney 2003, Medlycott 2011)
- relevant Health & Safety guidelines and requirements (CAT 2014)
- the Project Brief issued by ECC Historic Environment Adviser (ECC 2016)

Professional CAT field archaeologists will undertake all specified archaeological work, for which they will be suitably experienced and qualified.

Notification of the supervisor/project manager's name and the start date for the project will be provided to ECCHEA one week before start of work.

Unless it is the responsibility of other site contractors, CAT will study mains service locations and avoid damage to these.

At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms. At the end of the project all parts of the OASIS online form will be completed for submission to EHER. This will include an uploaded .PDF version of the entire report.

A project or site code will be sought from ECCHEA and/or the curating museum, as appropriate to the project. This code will be used to identify the project archive when it is deposited at the curating museum.

### **Archive deposition**

The requirements for archive storage shall be agreed with the Curating museum.

If the finds are to remain with the landowner, a full copy of the archive will be housed with the curating museum.

The archive will be deposited with the appropriate museum within 3 months of the completion of the final publication report, with a summary of the contents of the archive supplied to ECCHEA.

### **Monitoring**

ECCHEA will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project, and will be kept regularly informed during fieldwork, post-excavation and publication stages.

Notification of the start of work will be given ECCHEA one week in advance of its commencement.

Any variations in this WSI will be agreed with ECCHEA prior to them being carried out. ECCHEA will be notified when the fieldwork is complete.

The involvement of ECCHEA shall be acknowledged in any report or publication generated by this project.

### **Evaluation**

#### **Staffing**

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One supervisor plus one archaeologist for one day.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Ben Holloway.

#### **Trial-trenching methodology**

Machine stripping shall be undertaken using a toothless ditching bucket to the top of the archaeological horizon, under the supervision and to the satisfaction of CAT archaeologist.

If required, exposed sub-soil or archaeological horizon will be cleaned by hand after machine stripping, and any archaeological deposits or negative features planned.

CAT archaeologist(s) will be present during all topsoil removal and ground reduction, which will be done with a toothless bucket.

If archaeological features or deposits are uncovered time will be allowed for these to be planned and recorded.

All features or deposits will be excavated by hand. This includes a 50% sample of discrete features (pits, etc) and 10% of linear features (ditches, etc).



Fast hand-excavation techniques involving (for instance) picks, forks and mattocks will not be used on complex stratigraphy.

A metal detector will be used to examine spoil heaps, and the finds recovered.

Individual records of excavated contexts, layers, features or deposits will be entered on pro-forma record sheets. Registers will be compiled of finds, small finds and soil samples.

A meeting will be held on site once trial-trenching has been completed. A summary of the results and a plan of the findings with a completed spot-dating report of all finds will be available at the meeting.

### **Site surveying**

Normal scale for archaeological site plans and sections is 1:20 and 1:10 respectively, unless circumstances indicate that other scales would be more appropriate.

The site grid will be tied into the National Grid. Corners of excavation areas and trenches will be located by NGR coordinates.

### **Environmental sampling policy**

The number and range of samples collected will be adequate to determine the potential of the site, with particular focus on palaeoenvironmental remains including both biological remains (e.g. plants, small vertebrates) and small sized artefacts (e.g. smithing debris), and to provide information for sampling strategies on any future excavation. Samples will be collected for potential micromorphical and other pedological sedimentological analysis. Environmental bulk samples will be 40 litres in size (assuming context is large enough)

Sampling strategies will address questions of:

- the range of preservation types (charred, mineral-replaced, waterlogged), and their quality
- concentrations of macro-remains
- and differences in remains from undated and dated features
- variation between different feature types and areas of site

CAT has an arrangement with Val Fryer (Loddon) whereby any potentially rich environmental layers or features will be appropriately sampled as a matter of course. Val Fryer will do any processing and reporting.

Should any complex, or otherwise outstanding deposits be encountered, VF will be asked onto site to advise. Waterlogged 'organic' features will always be sampled. In all cases, the advice of VF and/or the Historic England Regional Advisor in Archaeological Science (East of England) on sampling strategies for complex or waterlogged deposits will be followed, including the taking of monolith samples.

### **Human remains**

During evaluation work CAT follows the policy of leaving human remains *in situ* unless there is a clear indication that the remains are in danger of being compromised as a result of their exposure. If circumstances indicated it were prudent or necessary to remove the remains from the site during the evaluation phase, the following criteria would be applied; if it is clear from their position, context, depth, or other factors that the remains are ancient, then normal procedure is to apply to the Department of Justice for a licence to remove them. In that case, conditions laid down by the license will be followed. If it seems that the remains are not ancient, then the coroner, the client, and ECCHEA will be informed, and any advice and/or instruction from the coroner will be followed.

## Photographic record

Will include both general and feature-specific photographs, the latter with scale and north arrow. A photo register giving context number, details, and direction of shot will be prepared on site, and included in site archive.

## Finds

All significant finds will be retained.

All finds, where appropriate, will be washed and marked with site code and context number.

Stephen Benfield (CAT) normally writes our finds reports. Some categories of finds are automatically referred to other CAT specialists:

animal bones (small groups): Pip Parmenter

flints: Adam Wightman

or to outside specialists:

small finds, metalwork, coins, etc: Pip Parmenter

animal bones (large groups) and human remains: Julie Curl (*Sylvanus*)

environmental processing and reporting: Val Fryer (Loddon)

conservation of finds: staff at Colchester Museum

Other specialists whose opinion can be sought on large or complex groups include:

Roman brick/tile: Ernest Black

Roman glass: Hilary Cool

Prehistoric pottery: Paul Sealey

Other: EH Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science (East of England).

All finds of potential treasure will be removed to a safe place, and the coroner informed immediately, in accordance with the rules of the Treasure Act 1996. The definition of treasure is given in pages 3-5 of the Code of Practice of the above act. This refers primarily to gold or silver objects.

Requirements for conservation and storage of finds will be agreed with the appropriate museum prior to the start of work, and confirmed to ECCHEA.

## Results

Notification will be given to ECCHEA when the fieldwork has been completed.

An appropriate archive will be prepared to minimum acceptable standards outlined in *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (English Heritage 2006).

The report will be submitted within 6 months of the end of fieldwork, with a copy supplied to the Historic Environment Officer as a single PDF.

The report will contain:

- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the archaeological project
- Location plan of trenches in relation to the proposed development. At least two corners of each trench will be given 10 figure grid references.
- Section/s drawings showing depth of deposits from present ground level with Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scale.
- Archaeological methodology and detailed results including a suitable conclusion and discussion and results referring to Regional Research Frameworks (Medlycott 2011).
- All specialist reports or assessments
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

An EHER summary sheet will also be completed within four weeks and supplied to ECCHEA as an appendix to the CAT site report.

Results will be published, to at least a summary level (i.e. round-up in *Essex Archaeology & History*) in the year following the archaeological field work. An allowance will be made in the

project costs for the report to be published in an adequately peer reviewed journal or monograph series.

## **Building Recording**

### **Staffing**

The number of field staff for this project is estimated as follows: One supervisor plus one archaeologist for one day.

In charge of day-to-day site work: Chris Lister

### **Building recording methodology**

An English Heritage Level 3 survey of Oxford House will be undertaken prior to its conversion along with a Level 2 survey of the outbuilding.

A documentary and cartographic survey of the evidence pertaining to the history and evolution of the present buildings will be made prior to the commencement of field survey works. Sources consulted will include:

- Essex Historic Environment Record
- Essex Records Office
- Local Studies Library
- The site owner/developer

A large-scale block plan will be made of the site using existing architects' drawings or the current OS 1:2500 map extract. The position of each building, structure, feature area and significant boundary will be shown and given a unique number noting date of construction and function.

Based on existing architect's drawings, current floor plans, long and transverse-sections will be completed at scale of 1:100 using the English Heritage (2006) drawing conventions. The floor plans will depict positions of doors, windows, internal partitions, stairs, bay divisions/truss positions and the positions of surviving fixtures and fittings.

All the features will be described in detail. The description will seek to address materials, dimensions, method of construction including brickwork, joinery, fenestration, spatial configuration, phasing, any evidence of original and/or later fixtures/fittings and mechanisation, carpentry marks.

A full photographic record will be made comprising colour digital photographs. This record will include both general shots and details of external and internal features (ie structural detail, joinery, fixtures and fittings joinery/carpenters'/Baltic-timber marks etc). A photographic scale will be included in the case of detailed photographs. The photographic record will be accompanied by a photographic register detailing (as a minimum) location and direction of shot.

The completed plans will be clearly annotated to show the location and orientation of photographs taken as part of the survey.

Fully annotated photographic plates supporting the text will be reproduced as colour laser copies.

The guidelines contained in *English Heritage: Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice (2006)* will be adhered to. In addition, RCHME: *Descriptive Specification 3rd Edition*, ClfA's *Standard and Guidance for the Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings or Structures (2008b)* and the appropriate sections of the *ALGAO Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (East Anglian Archaeology occasional paper 14, 2003)* and *Management of research projects in the historic*



*environment* (MoRPHE) will be used for additional guidance in the design of the project specification, the contents of the report, and for the general execution of the project.

## Results

A report detailing the building recording will be submitted to the ECCHEA within six months of the completion of the site work.

The building recording report will include:

- A brief overview of the history of the building, its form, function and role within the historic environment.
- Annotated drawings including a location map and an overall plan showing all buildings. Where appropriate, the plan drawings will be tied into the OS Grid.
- Labelled re-productions of a representative sample of the photographs
- A concise non-technical summary of the project results.

The site archive will be presented to Braintree Museum in accordance with their requirements

An HER summary sheet will be completed within four weeks and supplied to the Historic Environment Advisor. This will be completed in digital form and a copy attached to the final report. This will include a plan showing the position of the excavation.

Publication of the results, at least to a summary level, will be submitted, accompanied by appropriate resources, for publication in Essex Archaeology & History or another agreed publication within one year of the completion of the fieldwork.

## References

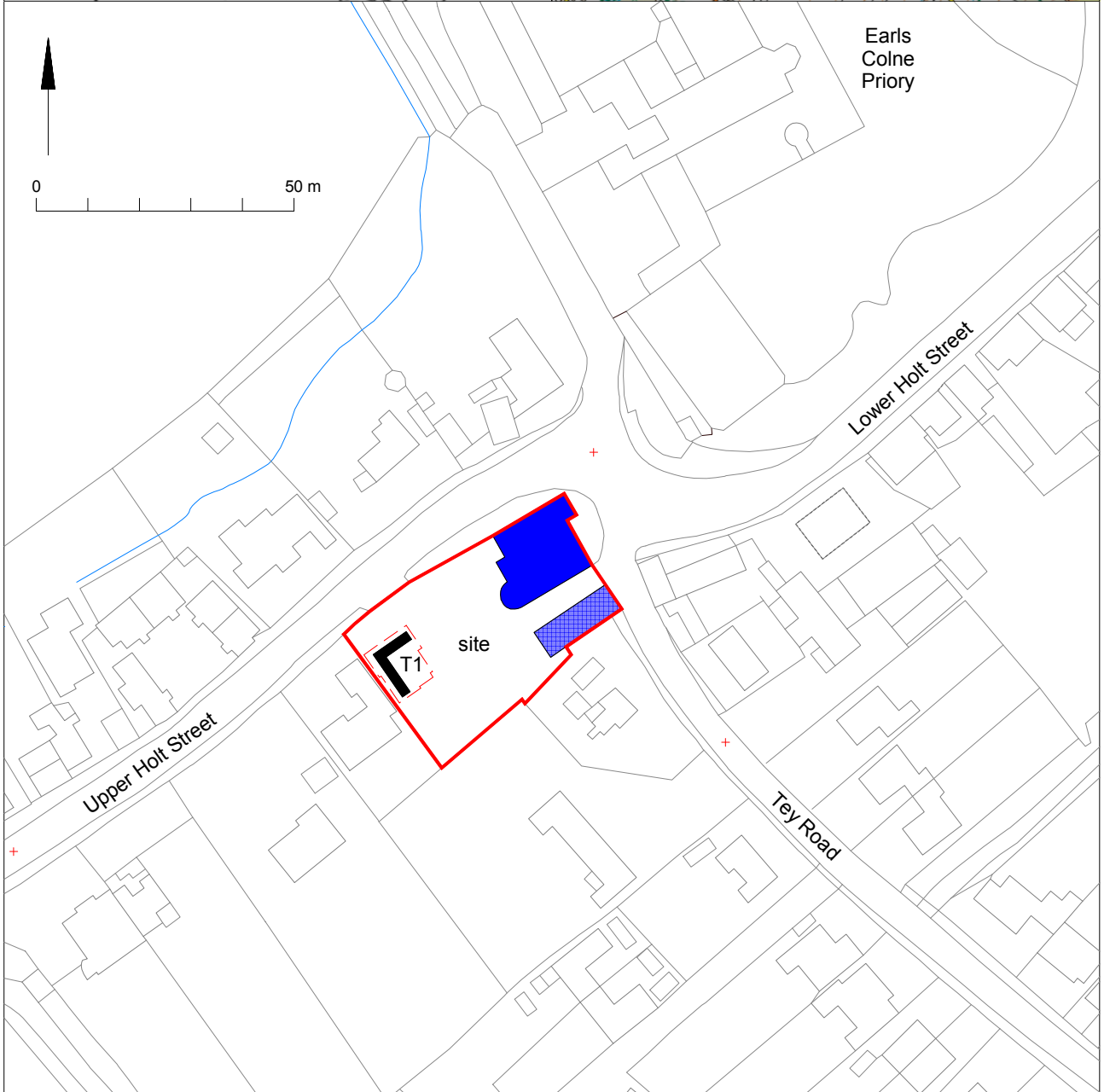
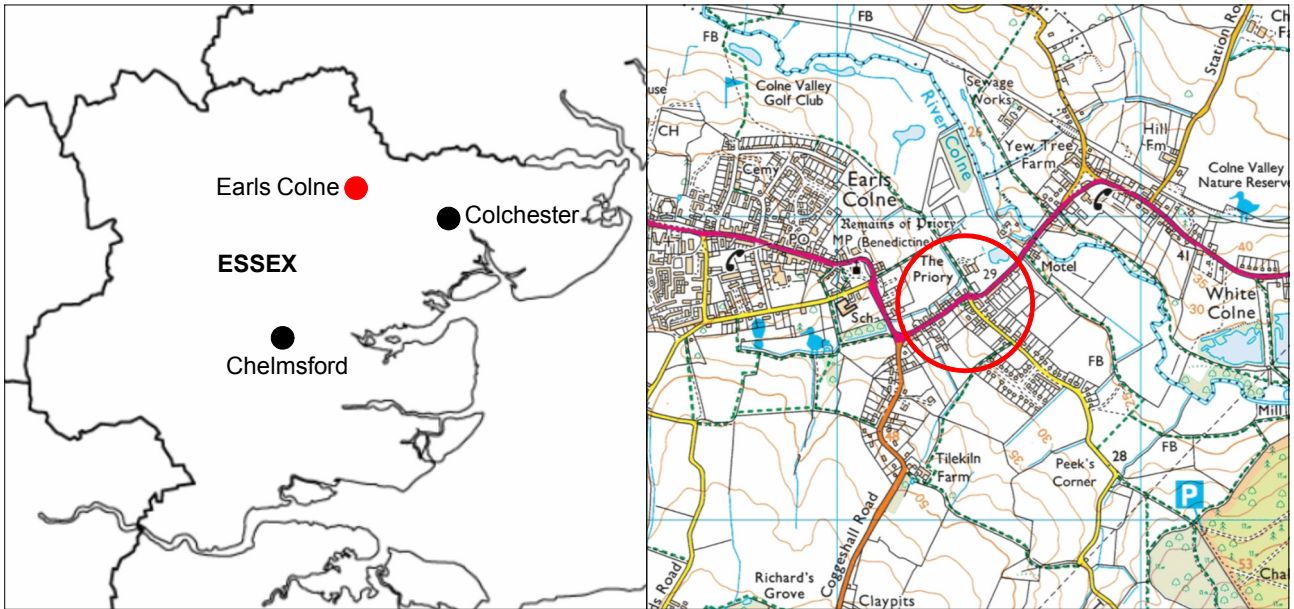
CAT	2014	<i>Health &amp; Safety Policy</i>
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and Guidance for archaeological evaluation</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
ClfA	2014c	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures</i>
DCLG	2012	<i>National Planning Policy Framework</i>
ECC	2016	<i>Brief for archaeological trial trenching and historic building recording at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street, Earls Colne, Teresa O'Connor, June 2016</i>
English Heritage	2006	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)</i>
Gurney, D	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14 (EAA 14).</i>
Medlycott, M	2011	<i>Research and archaeology revisited: A revised framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 24 (EAA 24)</i>

L Pooley



Colchester Archaeological Trust,  
Roman Circus House,  
Roman Circus Walk,  
Colchester,  
Essex, C02 2GZ

tel: 01206 501785  
email: [lp@catuk.org](mailto:lp@catuk.org)



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Fig 1 Site location and trench plan.



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### Printable version

**OASIS ID: colchest3-256040**

#### Project details

Project name	Historic Building Recording at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street, Earls Colne, Essex, CO6 2PG
Short description of the project	An Historic England Level 3 Historic Building Record was undertaken at Oxford House, Upper Holt Street, Earls Colne in July 2016 prior to the renovation of the building. Oxford House is a Grade II listed building (NHLE no. 1337931) with elements dating to the 15th century and alterations/extensions dating to the 16th, 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.
Project dates	Start: 15-07-2016 End: 15-07-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	16/06I - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	14/00587/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	TIMBER FRAMED BUILDING Medieval
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Photographic Survey"
Prompt	Listed Building Consent

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX BRAINTREE EARLS COLNE Oxford House, Upper Holt Street



Postcode CO6 2PG  
Study area 0 Square metres  
Site coordinates TL 86427 28723 51.92526170068 0.711589057149 51 55 30 N 000 42 41 E Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation Colchester Archaeological Trust  
Project brief originator HEM Team Officer, ECC  
Project design originator Laura Pooley  
Project director/manager Chris Lister  
Project supervisor Chris Lister  
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer  
Name of sponsor/funding body Pascoe Brothers

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
Digital Archive recipient Braintree Museum  
Digital Contents "none"  
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography", "Text"  
Paper Archive recipient Braintree Museum  
Paper Contents "none"  
Paper Media available "Photograph", "Plan", "Report"  
  
Entered by Chris Lister (cl@catuk.org)  
Entered on 9 February 2017

**OASIS:**

Please e-mail [Historic England](#) for OASIS help and advice

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