

Historic building recording at the former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex CO5 7RJ

June 2020



**report prepared by
Mark Baister**

**commissioned by
Gail Baines**

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

tel.: 01206 501785
email: mb@catuk.org

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1 Summary

A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust at the former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex in June 2020.

The building was initially constructed as a national school in 1854 and was subsequently expanded in size several times in the 19th and 20th centuries with extra ranges and a porch extension. In 1902 a national education act transferred administration of the school from the Church of England to the local authorities. By 1933, amidst falling pupil numbers, the school was closed, with its remaining students transferred to Birch.

The building remained unused for 20 years, and fell into a partially derelict state. In 1953, after some refurbishment, it was reopened as a 'coronation hall' in celebration of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It remained in use as a village hall until the 1990s, when it was again closed down, this time over safety concerns due to the building's deteriorating fabric.

2 Introduction (Fig 1)

This is the archive report on a historic building recording of the former Village Hall in Great Wigborough, in advance of its proposed demolition. The recording work was commissioned by Gail Baines and carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) in June 2020. The site is located on the western side of School Lane at the northern edge of the village, approximately 7km to the south-west of Colchester, at NGR TL 96688 15291 (Fig 1).

A planning application was made to Colchester Borough Council in September 2019 (application no. 192329) proposing the demolition of the former village hall and erection of 2 detached dwellings, with associated vehicular access and garages.

In response to this planning application, the Colchester Borough Council Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA) recommended that a Historic England Level 3 building survey be made of the structure prior to its demolition (CBC 2020). This recommendation was given based on the former village hall being highlighted by the CHER as a building of historical interest. This recommendation was made based on the National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2019).

In response to this recommendation, a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the building recording was prepared by Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT 2020) and agreed with the CBCAA. 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 the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (2014a), *Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures* (2014b), *Management of research projects in the historic environment* (Historic England 2015), *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14) and *Research and Archaeology Revised: A Revised Framework for the East of England* (EAA 24). In addition, the guidelines contained in *Understanding Historic Buildings, A guide to good recording practice* (Historic England 2016) were followed.

3 Aims

The aim of the building recording was to provide a detailed record and assessment of the building prior to its demolition. The building recording was carried out to Level 3 (Historic England 2016) which is defined as:

"Level 3 is an analytical record, and will comprise an introductory description followed by a systematic account of the building's origins, development and use. The record will include an account of the evidence on which the analysis has been based, allowing the validity of the record to be re-examined in detail. It will also include all drawn and photographic records that may be required to illustrate the building's appearance and structure and to support an historical analysis."

The information contained in the record will for the most part have been obtained through an examination of the building itself. The documentary sources used are likely to be those which are most readily accessible, such as historic Ordnance Survey maps, trade directories and other published sources. The record may contain some discussion the building's broader stylistic or historical context and importance. It may form part of a wider survey of a number of buildings which will aim at an overall synthesis, such as a thematic or regional publication, when the use of additional source material may be necessary as well as a broader historical and architectural discussion of the buildings as a group."

In particular the record considered the:

- Plan form of the site.
- Materials and method of construction.
- Date(s) of the structure.
- Original function and layout.
- Original and later fixtures and fittings.
- Significance of the site in its immediate local context.

4 Methodology

The following are included in this report:

- A documentary, cartographic and pictorial survey of the evidence pertaining to the history and evolution of the site.
- A large-scale block plan of the site.
- Annotated and phased elevations and floor-plans of the building at a scale of 1:50.
- A description of the building. The description addresses features such as materials, dimensions, method of construction and phasing.
- A photographic record, comprising digital photographs of both general shots and individual features. Selected examples of the photographic record are clearly tied into the drawn record and reproduced as fully annotated photographic plates supporting the text. The photographic record is accompanied by a photographic register detailing location and direction of shot (Appendix 1).

5 Historical background (Fig 1)

The following historical background draws on cartographic sources, the Colchester Historic Environment Record (CHER) accessed via the Colchester Heritage Explorer (www.colchesterheritage.co.uk), the Essex Records Office (ERO) and the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) accessed via Heritage Gateway (www.heritagegateway.org.uk). In addition the local history website of www.merseamuseum.org.uk and a recent Heritage Statement of the site (Alderton 2019) were also consulted.

The former village hall lies on the west of School Lane on the northern edge of Great Wigborough (Fig 1). The Chapman and André map of 1777 (Map 1) shows the nearby church of St Stephen (NHLE no 418514, CHERs MCC4184, MCC7369 and MCC7370) and several farmsteads, but nothing in the location of the village hall.



Map 1 Extract from Chapman and André of 1777, with approximate location of the village hall highlighted.

Likewise, the Great Wigborough tithe map of 1839 shows no structures on the site. The accompanying tithe apportionment to the map lists the site as a 'Rectorial Glebe', under the administration of Reverend Godfrey Bird. Glebes were areas of land within a parish used to support the local priest, and any profits gained from them were returned to the church.

The first edition OS map of 1874 (Map 2) shows a building on the site for the first time, although it appears to have a smaller footprint than the current structure. Interestingly, the building is labelled as a "Parochial School", rather than a Village Hall.



Map 2 1874 6-inch OS map with building highlighted.

The Kelly's Directory of the same year lists the village as containing a national school, run by a Miss Susannah Humphrey.

This school is referenced several times in documentary sources from this point onwards, but the first reference to a school in Great Wigborough is actually from a House of Commons report in 1835, detailing the "State of Education in England and Wales":

WIGBOROUGH, GREAT, Parish (Pop. 434.)—*One Daily School (commenced 1826) in which 9 males and 8 females are instructed at the expense of their parents.*—
Two Sunday Schools: whereof one (commenced 1833) of 50 children of both sexes, is supported by the Rector; in the other are about 50 of each sex: this School is supported by subscription, and is connected with Congregational Dissenters.

Although the lack of any building on the 1834 tithe map precludes any of these schools being located on this site, it seems likely that one of them is the predecessor of the parochial school shown on the 1874 OS map.

The Colchester earthquake of 1884 caused substantial damage to the parishes immediately to the south of the town, and Great Wigborough was no exception. Contemporary reports (Medola & White 1885, 72) state that the parochial school was damaged by its chimney falling through its roof. Presumably this collapsed chimney was later rebuilt, although as the building today has had all its chimneys removed it is difficult to be certain (see descriptive record below).

The 1894 Kelly's Directory again describes the school in the village, this time in more detail:

"National School (mixed), built in 1854 & enlarged in 1889, for 80 children; average attendance, 52; Mrs. J. Hill, mistress"

This construction date of 1854 corroborates with the cartographical evidence, and strongly suggests that the schools predating this one, noted in the House of Commons report from 1835, must have been located elsewhere within the village.



Photograph 1 Early 20th-century class photo outside the ?north elevation of the school. Note the window in the background, different to those currently present on the building. Taken from merseamuseum.org.uk.

Various monthly instalments of the *Wigborough Parish Magazine* from the year 1895 onwards mention the school, reporting it opened 408 times "during the year ended November 30th, 1894", and listing the names of students who had attended most frequently. The magazine also notes that the first "parish meeting" was held at Great Wigborough school on Tuesday December 4th 1894. Several reports of social events held at the school are reported in the magazine, with the proceeds noted as being contributed to the "School Funds", highlighting the school's lack of public funding at this time.

Subsequent editions of the magazine provide further details as to the central role of the school in the local community, with the June 1895 edition including the report of the Diocesan Inspector and remarking:

"There is a marked improvement in the conduct of the School and in the structural condition of the School Buildings which now are spacious, light and airy."

Presumably this remark references the enlargement of the school in 1889, as mentioned in the Kelly's directory of 1894 (see above).

The OS map of 1895 clearly shows this enlargement; the school has a substantially larger footprint and has clearly been extended to the south (Map 3).



Map 3 1895 25-inch OS map, with building highlighted.

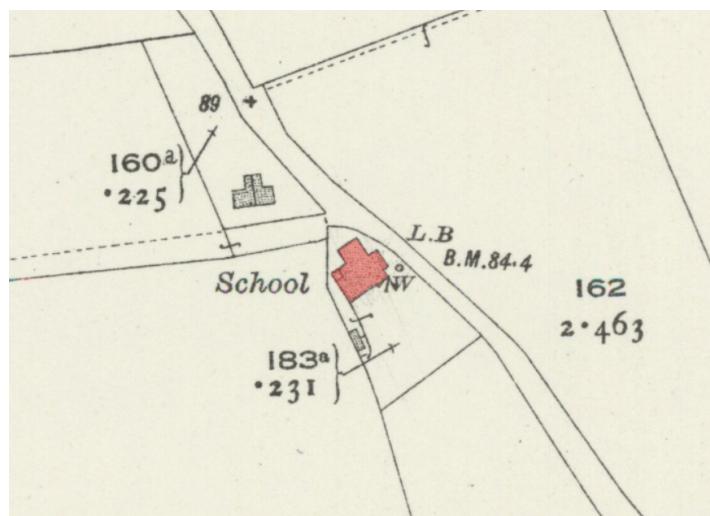
The 1899 Kelly's Directory describes the school again, showing the number of pupils has risen while the average attendance has dropped:

"National School (mixed), built in 1854 & enlarged in 1889, for 116; average attendance 40; Mrs. Margaret Whitehead, mistress"

The 1914 Kelly's Directory details the school once more, showing that it has been taken into state ownership, even as its average attendance drops further:

*"Public Elementary (Church of England) School (mixed), built in 1854 & enlarged in 1889, for 97 children; average attendance, 34; Miss Amy R. Talbot, mistress
This school is under the control of the Lexden & Winstree Education Sub-Committee"*

The OS map of 1921 (Map 4) shows the building with an eastern extension, and much the same footprint as it has today (Fig 1). Also visible is a small outbuilding to the south of the school, which has since been demolished.



Map 4 1921 6-inch OS map, with building highlighted.

Presumably due to a lack of funds and falling attendance rates, in 1931 the senior children at Great Wigborough were transferred to the school at Birch, and in 1933 the decision was made by the local authorities to close the school entirely, with the remaining junior children also transferred (www.merseamuseum.org.uk/mmresdetails.php?pid=GWG_SCH&ba=cke).

At a meeting of the Parochial Church Council in 1934, the chairman complained that the school had been left in a bad state of repair when it closed in 1933. It was not until 1953 that the building would be put into use again, when it was reopened as a "coronation hall" to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II (Photograph 2).



Photograph 2 Newspaper clippings detailing the reopening of the school as a "Coronation Hall", noting that since the school had closed it had been "more or less derelict". Taken from [merseamuseum.org.uk](http://www.merseamuseum.org.uk).

Throughout the mid-to-late 20th century the hall was in use as a centre of the village community (Photographs 3-4), until it was closed in the 1990s due to disrepair and safety concerns (Alderton 2019, 5).



Photograph 3 Tidying up after an event at the Village Hall. Note window in background differ to the buildings current windows. Taken from [merseamuseum.org.uk](http://www.merseamuseum.org.uk).



Photograph 4 A performance at the Village Hall. This suggests at one stage the building had a raised stage. Taken from [merseamuseum.org.uk](http://www.merseamuseum.org.uk).

A series of photographs in the ERO (D/DU 1464/42) taken sometime between 1950 and 1975 show the exterior of the building, presumably after its reopening as a village hall (Photographs 5-7). They include a photograph of a (since removed) postbox in the building's north-east wall, dating from the reign of Queen Victoria (Photograph 7). Additionally, these photographs show the building with a peg-tile roof and with three chimney-stacks, none of which survive today.



Photograph 5 South-east elevation of the building, taken sometime between 1950-1975. Photograph taken facing north-west. ERO D/DU 1464/42.



Photograph 6 North-east elevation of the building, taken sometime between 1950-1975. Postbox visible to left of porch. Photograph taken facing west. ERO D/DU 1464/42.



Photograph 7 Detail of postbox on north-east elevation of building, taken sometime between 1950-1975. Photograph taken facing south-west. ERO D/DU 1464/42.

In summary, the structure detailed in this report first appears on cartographic sources in 1874, labelled as a school. Local directories detailing the village describe the school as being built in 1854 and extended in 1889, and this extension is visible as an expanded footprint on the next cartographic source in 1895.

The school suffered declining attendance numbers and was closed in 1933, with its remaining pupils transferred to the school at Birch. The building would remain unused for 20 years, during which it fell into some level of disrepair. In 1953, presumably after some refurbishment, the building was re-opened as a village hall to celebrate the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Throughout the remainder of the 20th century it served as a central hub of the community, until it was permanently closed in the 1990s, due to structural and safety concerns.

The structural issues that have plagued this building appear to have only been exacerbated since its closure and were very evident during the survey, as detailed below.

6 Building recording descriptive record (Figs 2-4)

The former village hall is a north-west/south-east aligned and sub-square structure, with several differing ridge-lines and ranges. It is a single-storey brick-built building, measuring approximately 12.8m x 13.4m in size and covering around 126 square metres.

The building is comprised of a primary north-west/south-east gabled range with a gabled cross-wing at its southern end. Projecting off the south-western end of this cross-wing is a further, shorter, north-west/south-east gabled range. Infilling between this range and the cross-wing is a flat-roofed extension, and between this range and the original range is a small extension with a catslide roof. Finally, a gabled porch extension projects from the north-east of the building (Fig 2).

Exterior

All the windows detailed below have wooden frames and appear to be modern insertions or replacements.

The brickwork of the building is laid entirely in Flemish-bond, with fairly regular brick measurements of 220-225mm x 105-110mm x 60-65mm.

The entire roof of the building is covered in concrete pan-tiles (Photograph 8). No chimneys project from the structure's ranges, despite multiple internal fireplaces (see below). The majority of the building's exterior is bare brickwork, with the exception of the top of the gable on the north-east porch extension, which is covered in weatherboarding (Photograph 11), and the south-west elevation of both north-west/south-east ranges, which are rendered over (Fig 4). Most of the building's corners have decorated yellow brick quoins, possibly made of London stock bricks.



Photograph 8 South-east elevation of building. Note structural damage and modern windows with substantial concrete lintels.
Photograph taken facing north-west.

The south-east elevation of the building has three identical casement/awning windows, with substantial concrete lintels (Photograph 8). Four small tie-plates are present on this elevation, and are presumably the result of repair work. They have been limited in their effectiveness, however, as a substantial crack in the brickwork of this elevation is visible in the join between the flat-roofed extension and the gable-end (Photograph 8).

Also visible on this elevation is a series of graffiti marks on the brickwork, consisting of initials and several names (Photograph 9). Whether these are a result of the building's history as a school and were carved into the brickwork by former pupils is uncertain, but it is certainly a possibility.

This elevation of the porch extension has a small two-light fixed window, with a moulded yellow brick surround (Photograph 10).



Photograph 9 Example of graffiti on south-east elevation of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.



Photograph 10 South-east elevation of porch extension, showing small fixed window. Photograph taken facing north-west.

The external corners of the porch extension are also highlighted with yellow bricks (Photograph 10).

The north-east elevation of the building has another casement/awning window on the flat-roofed extension with a concrete lintel, as well as a smaller fixed-window in the gable of the cross-wing (Photograph 11). The porch extension on this elevation has a small fixed six-light window in its weatherboarded gable, as well as another small two-light sash window, this time with moulded brick corbelling above (Photograph 11).

Also on this elevation of the porch extension is a large plank and batten door, constructed of four vertical-planks and with a plain iron latch and hinges. Like the corners of the porch extension and the window on its south-east elevation, the door has a moulded yellow brick surround (Photograph 12).

The north-west/south-east range on this elevation has a tall twelve-light fixed/awning window that projects upwards into a flat-roofed dormer on the roof pitch (Photograph 13). Like other windows on this range of the building, it has a moulded yellow brick surround, although the moulded bricks continue below the current modern window; it appears that the lower section of the original window opening has been bricked-up when the modern window was inserted and the dormer added.



Photograph 11 North-east and south-east elevation of building.
Note postbox visible in earlier photographs has been removed.
Photograph taken facing west.



Photograph 12 Detail of door on north-east elevation of porch extension.
Photograph taken facing south-west.



Photograph 13 Detail of dormer window on north-east elevation of original range.
Photograph taken facing south-west.

Also on this elevation is a small tablet stone with the inscription:

“ANNO DOMINI
MDCCCXCVII
VICTORIAE REGINAE LX”

This inserted stone commemorates the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria on the 22 June 1897. It may indicate that the building was renovated around this time, possibly with the addition of the porch extension (see historical background above).



Photograph 14 Detail of tablet stone on north-east elevation of main range, commemorating Queen Victoria's Diamond jubilee.
Photograph taken facing south-west.

The north-west elevation of the building is dominated by a large 30-light fixed/awning window, again with a moulded yellow brick surround (Photograph 15). Like the dormer window on the north-east elevation, however, the surround continues below the current modern window, with the space below it having been bricked up. There is a smaller six-light awning/fixed window on this gable end with identical bricking-up and surrounds (Photograph 15).



Photograph 15 North-west elevation of building, showing inserted windows in original partially bricked-in window openings.
Photograph taken facing south-east.

The north-west elevation of the extension to the west is has no features apart from a full-height opening into the building, with no door-frame.

The south-west elevation of the building is largely featureless apart from a single four-light fixed window on the northern range (Fig 4). In addition, the small western extension has a substantial amount of its brickwork missing from this elevation (Fig 4).

Interior

The interior of the building is dominated by two large open rooms, one to the south and one to the north (Fig 2). Both of these rooms are the result of several phases of alteration and are examined below.



Photograph 16 Southern room of building, showing metal beams and damaged floorboards. Photograph taken facing east.

The southern room is formed by the entire footprint of the cross-wing and south-west range, combined with the flat-roof extension to the south. Any internal divisions have been removed and the room measures 11.1m x 5.8m in size (Photograph 16). The north-western wall of the room has two fireplaces, the eastern one of which is blocked, while the western one contains an inserted modern fireplace (Photograph 17). The floor of the room consists of regularly sized 130-140mm wide floorboards, many of which have been heavily damaged by rot (Photograph 17). The floor of this room is significantly lower than the rest of the building; the doorway leading into the northern room is some 400mm higher than this room's floor-level.



Photograph 17 Detail of inserted fireplace in western chimney-breast of southern room. Damaged section of floor visible in front. Photograph taken facing north-west.

Also on the north-west elevation of this room, looking into the northern room is an adapted fixed two-light window, with a permanent opening in the bottom half (Photograph 18).

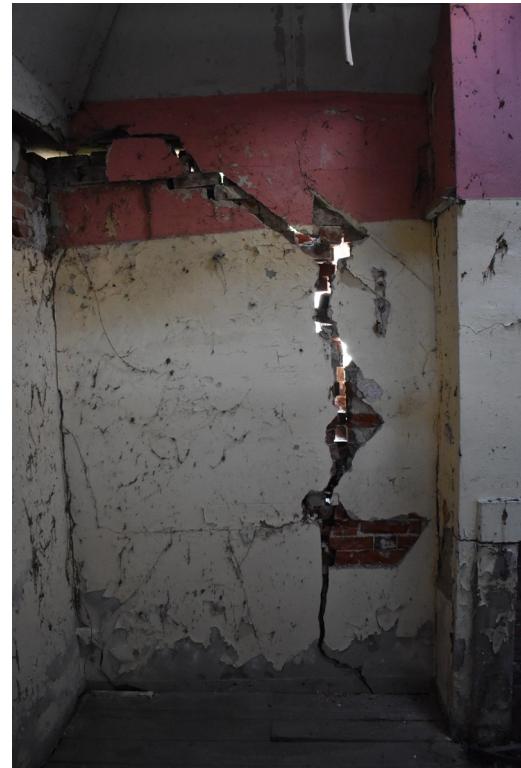


Photograph 18 Detail of internal window between southern and northern room in building. Photograph taken facing north-west.

This room, and indeed the building as a whole, has some serious structural issues. Most notably, there are several very substantial cracks in the brickwork on multiple elevations in this room (Photographs 19-20).



Photograph 19 Serious structural problems evident on south-east elevation of southern room. Photograph taken facing south-east.



Photograph 20 Structural problems adjacent to western chimney-breast on north-west elevation of southern room. Photograph taken facing north-west.

There are three inserted metal beams serving as tie-beams in this room, all of which project from the top of the south-eastern wall of the flat-roofed extension (Photograph 16). There is also a tie-rod joining each pitch of the cross-wings roof (Photograph 21). Both of these are clearly later additions to the structure, presumably added when the flat-roofed extension was constructed.

The roof structure of the cross-wing is partially visible and is entirely made-up of machine-cut timber (Photograph 21). It comprises rafters that meet at a ridge-board, supported by partially surviving collars and clasped purlins on each roof pitch (Photograph 21). The southern pitch of this roof appears to have been completely replaced, presumably, again, when the flat-roofed extension was constructed. The rafters of the south-west range are entirely obscured, but the roof structure appears to be identical.



Photograph 21 Detail of roof structure above cross-wing.
Rafters on left side are replacement timbers. Photograph taken facing north-west.

The northern room comprises the entirety of the northern range of the building, and measures 6m x 6.3m in size (Photograph 22). It is partially subdivided by a section of modern stud wall to form two bathrooms in its north-west corner (Fig 2). A section of original brick walling survives in the centre of the room that seems to be the remnants of a short corridor that lead to doorways into the northern and southern rooms (Fig 2). A short section of scarring on the floor at the end of this section of wall suggests it turned and joined the south-west wall of the northern room, presumably in the location of an original (since blocked) entrance into the building (Photograph 23).



Photograph 22 Northern room in building, with modern stud wall to left. Photograph taken facing north.

The current access into the northern room from the western extension is clearly a later addition, with a large concrete lintel and no door-frame (Photograph 26).



Photograph 23 Detail of scarring on floor of north room, showing location of original brick wall forming end of corridor. Location of original entrance into building to the left. Photograph taken facing north-west.

The floor of the northern room is rendered over with a concrete screed, but through the observation of damaged sections, it appears to be laid over floorboards. This room has a chimney-breast to the south-east, containing a modern fireplace. A sizeable amount of render has been removed from the brickwork of the chimney-breast, however, exposing the arch of the original fireplace above the modern insertion (Photograph 24). There is also a chimney-breast in the northern corner of the room. The fireplace is blocked, but again enough render has been removed to expose the original arch (Photograph 22).



Photograph 24 Detail of inserted fireplace in chimney-breast on south-east elevation of northern room. Arch of original fireplace visible above. Photograph taken facing south-east.

Like the southern room, the structure of this room has been severely compromised. In particular, the brickwork around the window opening on the rooms north-west elevation is cracking quite severely (Photograph 25).



Photograph 25 Northern room of building, showing structural damage evident to room's north-west elevation. Photograph taken facing north-west.

The roof of the northern room is largely obscured by an inserted modern ceiling, but a segment of the roof structure was visible through an access hatch, which showed it to be comprised of machine cut rafters meeting at a ridge-board.

In addition to the two large open rooms, the other rooms within the structure comprise the interior of the porch extension to the east and the smaller extension to the west. The western extension is very simple in form, with a concrete screed floor, machine cut rafters, and containing no features of note (Photograph 26). The porch extension also has a concrete floor, and also contains a central brickwork division that supports a metal beam above an opening. The roof of the porch extension is obscured.



Photograph 26 Interior of western extension, showing damaged north-west elevation. Photograph taken facing north-west.

7 Discussion

Even though records exist of active schools in Great Wigborough in the early 19th century (historical background pg 4), there is little reason to doubt the reported construction date of this building as 1854 (as stated in Kelly's Directory 1894). This date matches well with the cartographic evidence, as detailed in the historical background above.

Kelly's Directory describes the school as a 'national school' up until 1914, when it is described as being a public elementary school under the control of the "Lexden & Winstree Education Sub-Committee" (pg 5). This change, not unique to Great Wigborough, highlights a key moment in the history of education in England.

At the turn of the 19th century, the government had no direct hand in education or schooling. What few schools did exist were charity schools, set up by benevolent industrialists, or, more commonly, were 'Dame' and 'Ragged' schools, run by (often elderly) women and offering purely part-time education, barely stretching beyond basic literacy (Historic England 2010, 17). As more and more children survived beyond early childhood and the child labour laws became more stringent, the demand for education within communities grew.

So called 'national schools' were educational establishments set up by the '*National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church*', founded in 1811. As the name implies, the schools established by this society were intended to provide primarily religious education, but they (alongside the smaller, secular, '*British and Foreign School Society*', founded in 1810) were responsible for the first wide-ranging system of education established in England.

Initially such schools were funded primarily by charitable donations, their links to wealthy patrons and the Church of England. Starting in 1833, perhaps seeing the advantages of an educated workforce, the government began providing grants to the societies for the construction of new schools (Historic England 2010, 21). Although the government made no attempt to prescribe the curriculum of the national schools, they did advise and recommend on building plans and layouts. The construction of the school at Great Wigborough in 1854 would almost unquestionably have been the result of one of these grants.

As the 19th century progressed, the government took a closer interest in education and schooling, and in 1870 it passed an education act that allowed the construction of state schools for the first time (Historic England 2010, 33). These state schools (administered by newly created school boards) were initially only erected in locations where religious national schools could not practically be constructed. A series of acts and changes in policy in the following decades, however, encouraged the construction of state schools over the construction of new national schools. This culminated in the education act of 1902, which abolished the school boards and handed over administration of all schools, regardless of their origin, to the local authority within which they resided. It is this change that is reported in the Kelly Directory of 1914.

Based on observation of the building's fabric and its appearance on the 1874 OS map (Map 2), it seems that originally when the building was constructed in 1854 it was as a north-west/south-east range, with a smaller cross-wing at the southern end that projected out to the south-west (Fig 2). Initially, the building appears to have contained two large rooms that lead into a corridor that was itself accessed by a (since blocked) doorway on the south-west elevation of the main range (Fig 2). This plan form of a hallway leading to two separate large classrooms is not uncommon, with several similar plans suggested by the government's Education Committee in the mid-19th century (Historic England 2010, 22).

Subsequent to this original plan form the building has had various extensions and additions which can be grouped into three distinct phases of alteration:

The expansion of the school in 1889 (as mentioned in Kelly's Directory) is shown on the OS map of 1895 (Map 3). It seems to include the construction of a secondary range to the south-west, projecting off the cross-wing, and the flat-roofed extension infilling between the two. Given its location infilling between two existing ranges, however, the flat-roofed extension was probably constructed sometime shortly after the secondary south-west range. It also appears that at a similar time the small extension to the west was added (Fig 2).

By the time of the 1921 OS map the footprint of the school is as it is today and the porch extension to the east has been added (Map 4). The specific date of this addition is uncertain but the insertion of a tablet stone, commemorating the 1897 diamond jubilee of Queen Victoria, into the main range may be an indicator of the school having undergone renovation in that year. This may also be when the postbox (since removed) was inserted in the north-east elevation. Regardless of its date, it seems clear that the porch extension was intended to be the new primary access into the school building. It is probably around this time that the postulated original access on the south-west elevation (Fig 2) was bricked-up and the interior of the north hall was further subdivided.

The final stage of alteration is when the building was converted into a village hall in celebration of Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953. Although the footprint of the building remained unchanged, given that the building had become somewhat dilapidated (pg 6), it seems likely that several internal or external features would have been altered, repaired or replaced. Most notably, the replacement of all the windows with modern examples (including the partial bricking-up of the window openings on the original range; pg 12) seem likely to have been carried out around this time. Some alterations could, of course, have been undertaken sometime later in the 20th century. For example, the complete relaying of the roof with concrete pan-tiles and the removal of the chimneys may have occurred later, as attested by photographs from 1950-75 showing both those features still surviving (Photographs 5-7).

All of the subsequent extensions to the building detailed above are relatively sympathetic in their style, being constructed of similar bricks laid in the same bond. There are several examples of the corner quoins of the extensions being decorated with yellow brickwork, in the same manner as the original north-west/south-east range. The porch extension takes this further, with its doorway and southern window both with yellow brick decorative surrounds, again like the windows on the original northern range. The windows on the south-east elevation of the building lack this surrounding decoration, perhaps suggesting they are a later addition to the building, rather than replacing earlier examples.

Although of little architectural merit, the historical and social importance of this building as a centre of village life in Great Wigborough cannot be overstated. For almost 150 years it served as a centre of life in the village, first as its school and then subsequently as its village hall.

8 Acknowledgements

Colchester Archaeological Trust would like to thank Gail Baines for commissioning and funding the historic building recording.

The recording was carried out by Mark Baister.

Figures are by Mark Baister.

The project was monitored by Dr Jess Tipper for Colchester Borough Council.

The text was reviewed and edited by Philip Crummy, director of CAT.

9 References

Note: all CAT reports, except for DBAs, are available online in .pdf format at
<http://cat.essex.ac.uk>

Alderton, I.	2019	<i>Gt Wigborough: Heritage Statement for replacement of the village hall with two dwellings</i>
Brunskill, R.W.	1990	<i>Brick Building In Britain (1st ed)</i>
Brunskill, R.W.	1994	<i>Timber Building In Britain (2nd ed)</i>
CAT	2020	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for an historic building recording at the former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex, CO5 7RJ</i> by E Holloway
CBC	2020	<i>Brief for Level 3 Historic Building recording at Former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, CO5 7RJ</i> by J. Tipper
ClfA	2014a	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i>
ClfA	2014b	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures</i>
Digital Curation Centre (DCC)	2013	<i>Checklist for Data Management Plan v.4.0</i>
MHCLG	2019	<i>National planning policy framework</i>
EAA 14	2003	<i>Standards for field archaeology in the East of England</i> East Anglian Archaeological occasional papers 14 by Gurney, D.
EAA 24	2011	<i>Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England</i> , East Anglian Archaeological occasional papers 24 by Medlycott, M
Historic England (formerly English Heritage)	2010	<i>England's Schools: History, architecture and adaptation</i>
Historic England	2015	<i>MoRPHE: Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment</i>
Historic England	2016	<i>Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice</i>
Kelly's Directory	1874	<i>Great Wigborough</i> entry
Kelly's Directory	1894	<i>Great Wigborough</i> entry
Kelly's Directory	1899	<i>Great Wigborough</i> entry
Kelly's Directory	1914	<i>Great Wigborough</i> entry
Medola, R. & White, W.	1885	<i>Report on the East Anglian Earthquake</i>

10 Abbreviations and glossary

CAT	Colchester Archaeological Trust
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
ClfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
collar	a horizontal timber in a roof spanning between a pair of inclined timbers (such as rafters)
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record, held by the ECC
ERO	Essex Records Office
Flemish-bond	a brickwork bond created from alternating headers and stretchers within a single course
HE	Historic Environment
Kelly's Directory	more formally known as "Kelly's, Post Office and Harrod & Co Directory", it was a trade directory published annually in the Victorian period and the early 20th century. It listed, briefly, the pertinent details of each town or village in England, including facilities such as schools and the names of prominent local landowners and businessmen
London stock bricks	handmade brick used for majority of building work in London before the early 20th century. Also common in south-east England generally. They have a distinctive yellow colour.
modern	period from the 19th century onwards to the present
NGR	National Grid Reference
OASIS	Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations, http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main
pan-tile	a roof tile curved to form an S-shaped section, fitted to overlap its neighbour
purlin	a longitudinal timber giving support to the common rafters of a roof and normally set at right-angles to the slope of the rafters
rafter	an inclined timber following the slope of the roof
ridge-board	a plank-like timber running below the apex of the roof and receiving the ends of the rafters

11 Archive deposition

The paper 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 Colchester Museum under CHER number ECC4524.

The digital archive resulting from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (archaeologydataservice.ac.uk) to safeguard the long-term curation of the digital records. The CBCAA will be notified when the digital archive has been deposited. Prior to deposition CAT's data management plan (based on the official guidelines from the Digital Curation Centre [DCC 2013]) will ensure the integrity of the digital archive.

12 Contents of archive

Paper and digital record

One A4 document wallet containing:
The report (CAT Report 1594)
Original site record (plans, elevations and notes)
Site digital photos and log

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Distribution list
Gail Baines
Dr Jess Tipper, CBCAA
EHER



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

tel.: 01206 501785
email: mb@catuk.org

checked by: Philip Crummy
date: 27/08/2020

Appendix 1:
Full digital photographic record
(images on accompanying CD)

- ECC4524_Photograph_001.JPG South-east elevation of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_002.JPG Detail of modern window on south-east elevation of building.
Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_003.JPG Detail of south-west corner of building, showing yellow quoin decoration. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_004.JPG Detail of crack on south-east elevation. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_005.JPG South-east and north-east elevation. Photograph taken facing west.
ECC4524_Photograph_006.JPG Modern window on north-east elevation. Photograph taken facing south-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_007.JPG Modern window on north-east elevation. Photograph taken facing south-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_008.JPG South-east elevation of porch extension. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_009.JPG North-east elevation of building. Photograph taken facing south-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_010.JPG North-west elevation of porch extension. Photograph taken facing south-east.
ECC4524_Photograph_011.JPG Modern dormer window on north-east elevation of original range.
Photograph taken facing south.
ECC4524_Photograph_012.JPG North-east elevation of original range. Photograph taken facing west.
ECC4524_Photograph_013.JPG Detail of tablet stone commemorating Queen Victoria's diamond jubilee. Photograph taken facing south-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_014.JPG North-west elevation of building. Photograph taken facing south-east.
ECC4524_Photograph_015.JPG Detail of inserted modern window on north-west elevation of building.
Photograph taken facing south-east.
ECC4524_Photograph_016.JPG North-west and south-west elevation of building. Photograph taken facing south-east.
ECC4524_Photograph_017.JPG South-west elevation of building (largely obscured by hedgerow).
Photograph taken facing north-east.
ECC4524_Photograph_018.JPG South-west rendered elevation of shorter range. Photograph taken facing north.
ECC4524_Photograph_019.JPG North-west corner of shorter range, showing yellow quions.
Photograph taken facing south-east.
ECC4524_Photograph_020.JPG Interior of western extension, showing damage to south-west wall.
Photograph taken facing south-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_021.JPG Interior of north room, showing inserted W.C.s and scar on floor indicating original brick wall location. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_022.JPG Entranceway into north room from corridor. Photograph taken facing north-east.
ECC4524_Photograph_023.JPG Modern inserted W.C. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_024.JPG Modern inserted W.C. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_025.JPG Damaged ceiling above north room, showing lath and plaster.
ECC4524_Photograph_026.JPG Northern room of building. Photograph taken facing north.
ECC4524_Photograph_027.JPG Northern room of building, showing modern inserted stud walls partially blocking window. Photograph taken facing west.
ECC4524_Photograph_028.JPG Northern room of building, showing blocked fireplace and damaged window opening. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_029.JPG Detail of inserted modern ceiling below northern room. Photograph taken facing north-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_030.JPG Blocked fireplace in northern corner of north room. Photograph taken facing north.
ECC4524_Photograph_031.JPG Blocked fireplace in northern corner of north room. Photograph taken facing north.
ECC4524_Photograph_032.JPG Interior of blocked fireplace in northern corner of north room, showing burnt bricks. Photograph taken facing north.
ECC4524_Photograph_033.JPG Inserted modern window in north-west elevation of northern room.
Photograph taken facing west.
ECC4524_Photograph_034.JPG Inserted stud wall in northern room. Photograph taken facing south-west.
ECC4524_Photograph_035.JPG Detail of inserted modern ceiling below northern room. Photograph taken facing south-east.

- ECC4524_Photograph_036.JPG Detail of inserted modern ceiling below northern room. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_037.JPG Detail of roof above northern room through hatch. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_038.JPG Northern room of building. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_039.JPG Northern room of building, showing inserted fireplace in original fireplace. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_040.JPG Northern room of building, showing inserted fireplace in original fireplace. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_041.JPG Northern room of building, showing modern window leading into southern room. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_042.JPG Northern room of building, showing doorway into southern room. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_043.JPG Southern room of building. Photograph taken facing east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_044.JPG Southern room of building, showing window on south-east elevation of short range. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_045.JPG Southern room of building, showing western chimney-breast with inserted chimney and damaged floorboards in foreground. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_046.JPG Southern room of building, showing western chimney-breast with inserted chimney and damaged floorboards in foreground. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_047.JPG Southern room of building, showing western chimney-breast with inserted chimney and damaged floorboards in foreground. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_048.JPG Southern room of building, showing flat-roofed extension. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_049.JPG Southern room of building, showing windows on south-east elevation. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_050.JPG Southern room of building. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_051.JPG Southern room of building. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_052.JPG Southern room of building, showing flat-roofed extension. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_053.JPG Southern room of building, showing east chimney-breast. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_054.JPG Southern room of building, showing window leading to northern room. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_055.JPG Southern room of building, showing doorway to porch extension. Photograph taken facing north-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_056.JPG Southern room of building, showing metal beams. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_057.JPG Southern room of building, showing roof structure of cross-wing. Southern pitch (to left) has been completely rebuilt. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_058.JPG Southern room of building, showing damage to building's brickwork. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_059.JPG Southern room of building, showing damage to building's brickwork. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_060.JPG Southern room of building, showing damage to building's brickwork. Photograph taken facing north-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_061.JPG Southern room of building, showing cut bricks for inserted doorway into porch. Photograph taken facing north-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_062.JPG Porch extension, showing exterior door. Photograph taken facing north-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_063.JPG Porch extension, showing fixed window on south-east elevation. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_064.JPG Porch extension, showing brick division and metal beam above. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_065.JPG Porch extension, showing corner of original building. Photograph taken facing west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_066.JPG Porch extension, showing corner of original building, including rendered plinth. Photograph taken facing west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_067.JPG Porch extension, showing window on north-east extension. Photograph taken facing north.
- ECC4524_Photograph_068.JPG Porch extension, showing window gable. Photograph taken facing north.

- ECC4524_Photograph_069.JPG Doorway into northern room from southern room, showing difference in floor-levels. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_070.JPG South-east elevation of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_071.JPG South-east and north-east elevations of building. Photograph taken facing west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_072.JPG Roof of building, showing north-east pitch. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_073.JPG North-east elevation of porch and building. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_074.JPG Detail of door on north-east elevation. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_075.JPG Detail of door on north-east elevation. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_076.JPG Detail of dormer window on north-east elevation. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_077.JPG Detail of windows on north-west elevation. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_078.JPG North-west elevation of building. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_079.JPG Interior of west elevation, showing original external wall of building and repairs. Photograph taken facing south-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_080.JPG Southern room, showing repairs to wall after insertion of metal beam. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_081.JPG Southern room, showing repairs to wall after insertion of metal beam. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_082.JPG Southern room, showing damaged to fabric of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_083.JPG Southern extension, showing roof timbers. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_084.JPG Southern room, showing roof structure of cross-wing. Photograph taken facing north-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_085.JPG Southern room, showing roof structure of cross-wing. Photograph taken facing north-east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_086.JPG Southern room, showing metal beams in wall of flat-roofed extension. Photograph taken facing east.
- ECC4524_Photograph_087.JPG Southern room, showing flat-roofed extension with metal beams. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_088.JPG Southern room, showing flat-roofed extension with metal beams. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_089.JPG Porch extension, showing original exterior of building. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_090.JPG Porch extension, showing original exterior of building. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_091.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_092.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_093.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_094.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_095.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_096.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_097.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_098.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_099.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_100.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_101.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_102.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.

- ECC4524_Photograph_103.JPG Detail of graffiti on south-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_104.JPG Detail of door on north-east elevation of porch. Photograph taken facing south.
- ECC4524_Photograph_105.JPG Detail of graffiti on north-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_106.JPG Detail of graffiti on north-east wall of building. Photograph taken facing south-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_107.JPG Northern room, showing scarring in location of original brick wall. Photograph taken facing north-west.
- ECC4524_Photograph_108.JPG Northern room, showing possible location of original entrance into building. Photograph taken facing south-west.

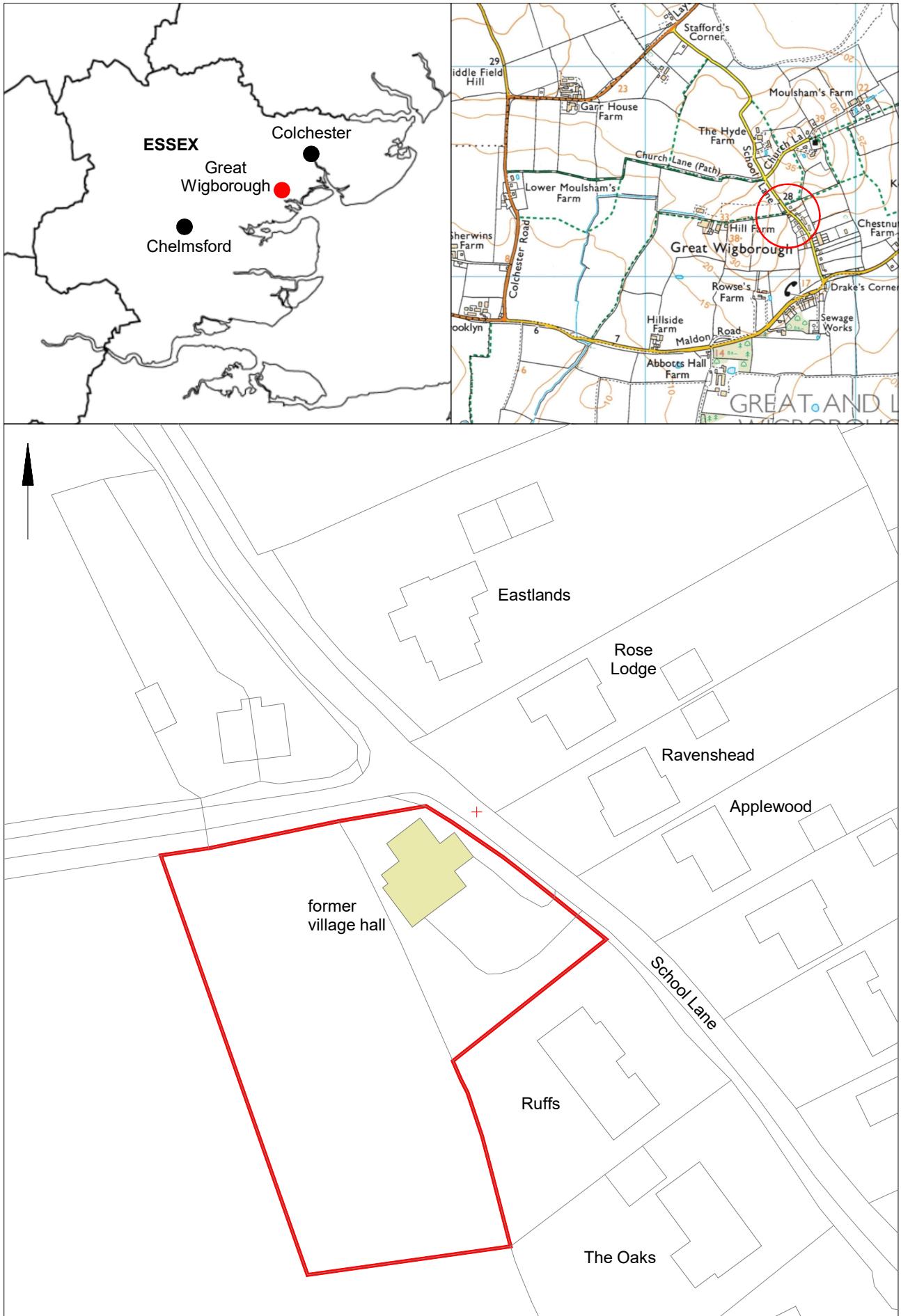


Fig 1 Site location.

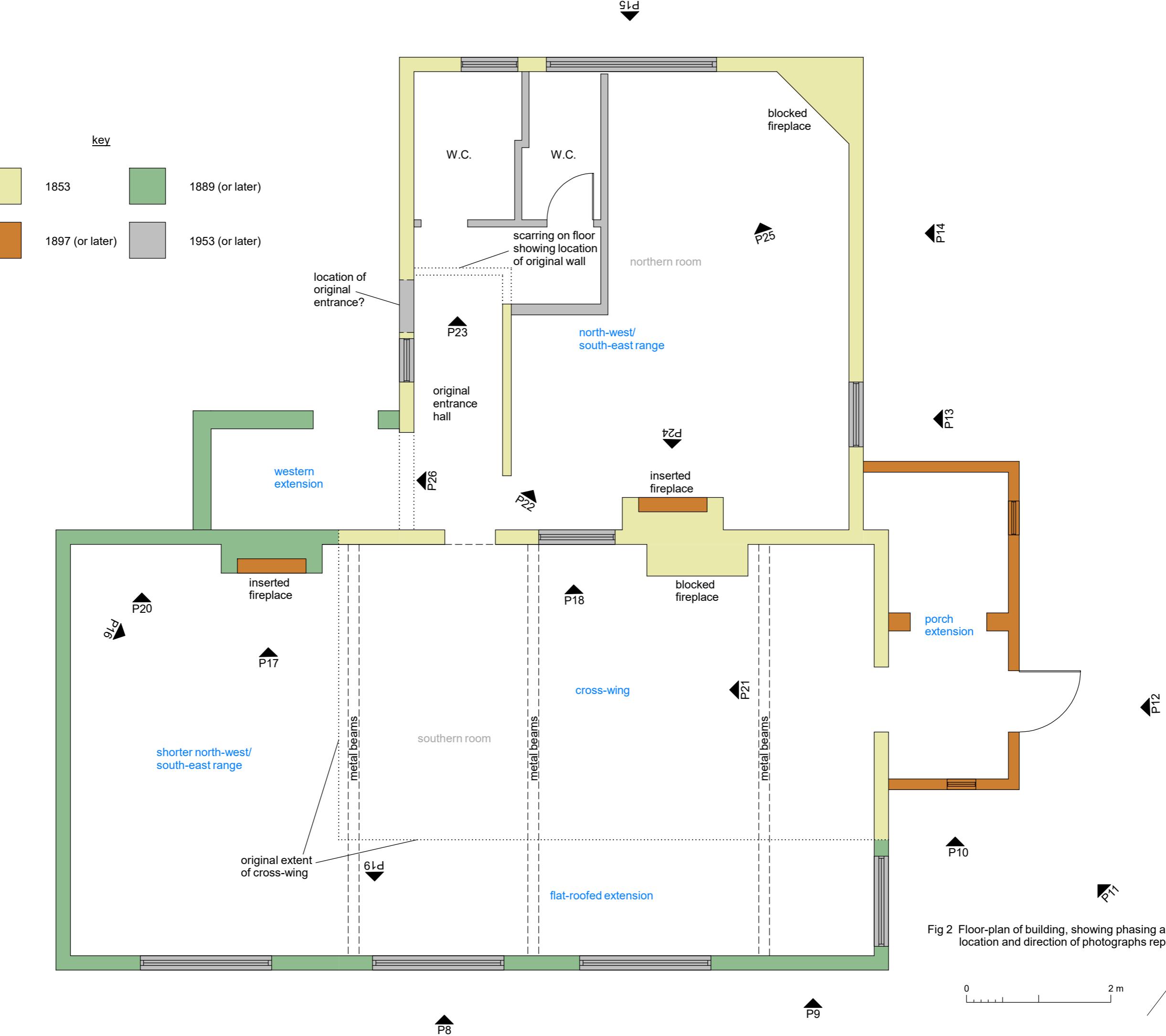
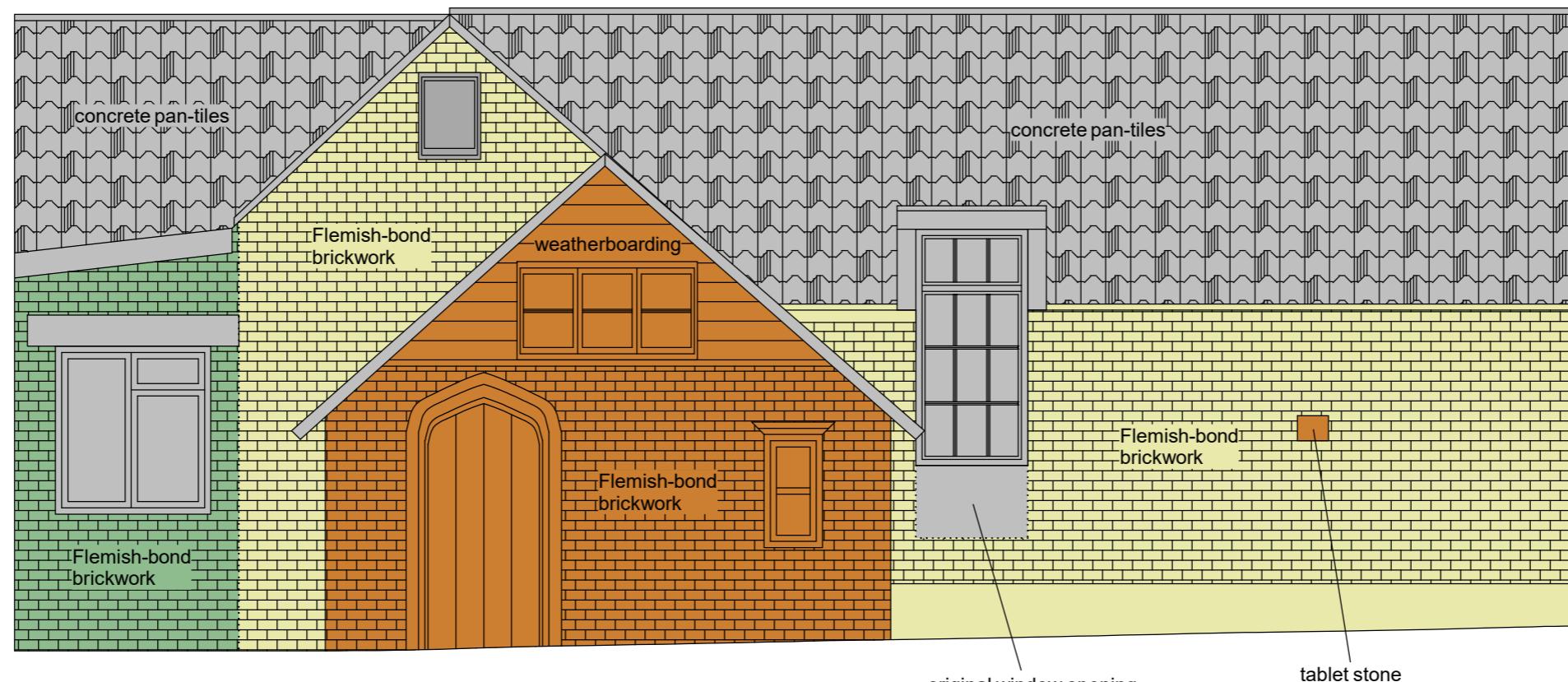


Fig 2 Floor-plan of building, showing phasing alongside location and direction of photographs reproduced in text.

SOUTH-EAST ELEVATION



NORTH-EAST ELEVATION

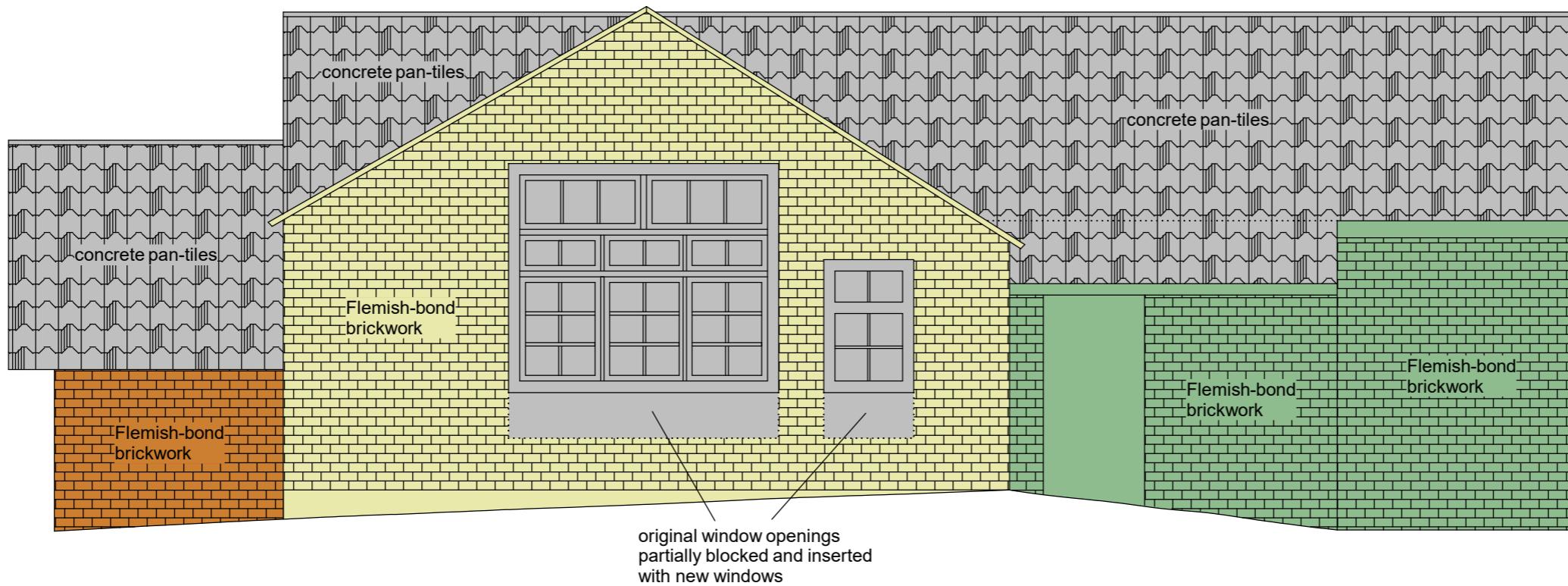


key

	1853
	1889 (or later)
	1897 (or later)
	1953 (or later)

Fig 3 South-east and north-east elevations of building, with phasing.

NORTH-WEST ELEVATION



SOUTH-WEST ELEVATION

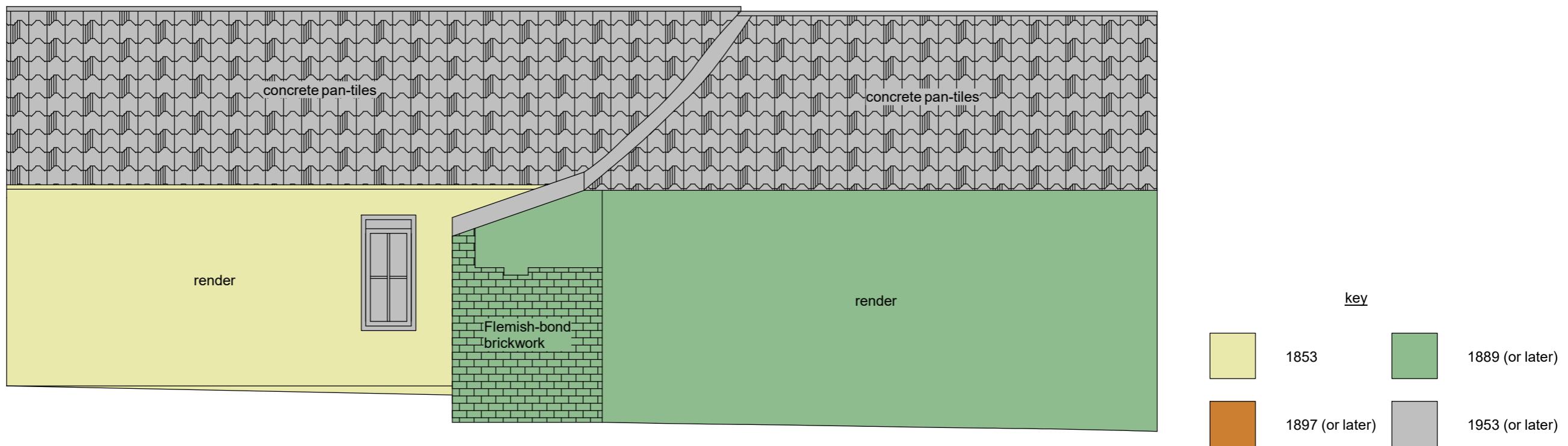


Fig 4 North-west and south-west elevations of building, with phasing.

0 2 m

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OASIS ID: colchest3-395321

Project details

Project name	Historic building recording at the former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex, CO5 7RJ.
Short description of the project	A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust at the former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex in June 2020. The building was initially constructed as a Church of England national school in 1854 and was subsequently expanded in size several times in the 19th and 20th centuries, with extra ranges and a porch extension. In 1902 a national education act transferred administration of the school from the Church of England to the local authorities. By 1933, amidst falling pupil numbers, the school was closed, with its remaining students transferred to Birch school. The building remained unused for 20 years, and fell into partially derelict state. In 1953, after some refurbishment, it was reopened as a 'coronation hall' in celebration of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It remained in use as a village hall until the 1990s, when it was again closed down, this time over safety concerns due to the buildings deteriorating fabric.
Project dates	Start: 09-06-2020 End: 01-09-2020
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	192329 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	2020/05h - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	ECC4524 - HER event no.
Type of project	Building Recording
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	SCHOOL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	FIREPLACE Post Medieval
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	ESSEX COLCHESTER GREAT AND LITTLE WIGBOROUGH Former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex
Postcode	CO5 7RJ
Study area	126 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 96688 15291 51.801087130253 0.852993224632 51 48 03 N 000 51 10 E Point

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Project brief originator	CBC Archaeological Officer
Project design originator	Emma Holloway
Project director/manager	Chris Lister

Project supervisor	Mark Baister
Type of sponsor/funding body	Owner
Name of sponsor/funding body	Gail Baines

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Digital Archive ID	ECC4524
Digital Contents	"Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Colchester Museum
Paper Archive ID	ECC4524
Paper Contents	"Survey"
Paper Media available	"Miscellaneous Material", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Survey"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Historic building recording at the former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex CO5 7RJ June 2020
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Baister, M
Other bibliographic details	CAT Report 1594
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	Colchester Archaeological Trust
Place of issue or publication	Colchester
Description	A4 bound report with clear plastic front and opaque black card back.
URL	http://cat.essex.ac.uk/summaries/CAT-1594.html
Entered by	Mark Baister (mb@catuk.org)
Entered on	1 September 2020



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Essex Historic Environment Record/ Essex Archaeology and History

Summary sheet

Address: Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex CO5 7RJ	
Parish: Great and Little Wigborough	District: Colchester
NGR: TL 96688 15291 (centre)	Site code: CAT project ref.: 2020/05h CHER ref: ECC4524 OASIS ref: colchest3-395321
Type of work: Historic building recording	Site director/group: Colchester Archaeological Trust
Date of work: June 2020	Size of area investigated: 126 square metres
Location of curating museum: Colchester museum accession code: ECC4524	Funding source: Developer
Further seasons anticipated? Unknown	Related CHER/EHER number(s): -
Final report: CAT Report 1594	
Periods represented: modern	
Summary of fieldwork results: A programme of historic building recording was carried out by Colchester Archaeological Trust at the former Great Wigborough Village Hall, School Lane, Great Wigborough, Essex in June 2020. The building was initially constructed as a Church of England national school in 1854 and was subsequently expanded in size several times in the 19th and 20th centuries, with extra ranges and a porch extension. In 1902 a national education act transferred administration of the school from the Church of England to the local authorities. By 1933, amidst falling pupil numbers, the school was closed, with its remaining students transferred to Birch school. The building remained unused for 20 years, and fell into partially derelict state. In 1953, after some refurbishment, it was reopened as a 'coronation hall' in celebration of the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. It remained in use as a village hall until the 1990s, when it was again closed down, this time over safety concerns due to the buildings deteriorating fabric.	
Previous summaries/reports: none	
CBC monitor: Jess Tipper	
Keywords: school, village hall	Significance: *
Author of summary: Mark Baister	Date of summary: August 2020