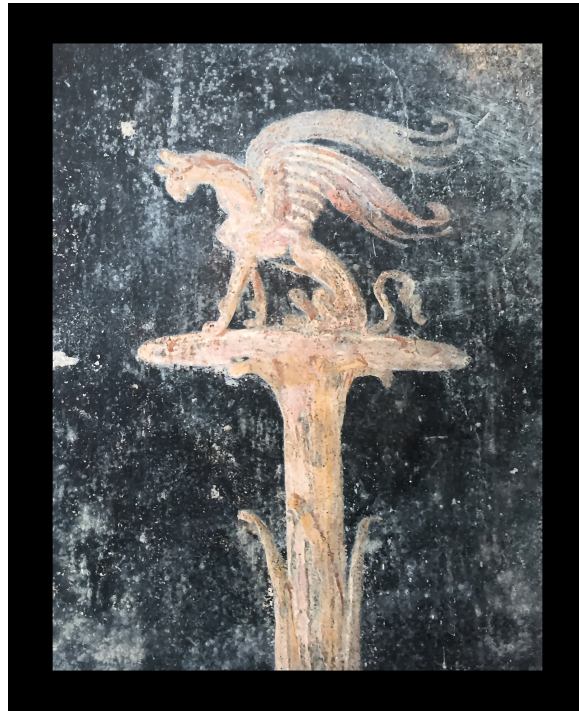


Archaeological Watching Brief

Boyton Hall, Toppesfield Road, Finchingfield, Essex CM7

4NZ



TOUCHSTONE ARCAHEOLOGY LTD

July 2016

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**Archaeological Watching Brief at Boyton Hall, Toppesfield Road, Finchingfield,
Essex CM7 4NZ**

Site Code: FFBH16

1.0 SUMMARY

*From 13th July to 14th July 2016, Touchstone Archaeology carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on the site of Boyton Hall during the ground works associated with a single storey extension to the south elevation of the existing house. The works were carried out on behalf of Mr N Loftus.
Planning Application Number: BDC/14/00414/FUL approved 24th March 2016.*

The Watching Brief revealed 20th century features.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

A planning application (BDC/14/00414/FUL) for the construction of a single storey extension to provide a garden room to the south elevation of the property was submitted to Braintree District Council. Essex County Council Place Services, on behalf of Braintree District Council requested that an Archaeological Watching Brief be undertaken in order to record any archaeological remains uncovered during associated groundworks. The following condition was attached to the planning consent:

Condition 4:

No development or preliminary groundwork's 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.

Reason To enable full investigation and recording of this site of archaeological importance.

2.2 Schedule of Visits

An experienced archaeologist attended the site and monitored the clearance of the modern brick terrace and the excavation of foundation trenches to form the new extension from the 13th July to 14th July 2016.

2.3 Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the monitoring and recording, as specified by Essex County Council was to:

‘in order to record the location, extent, date and character of any surviving archaeological remains’ (ECC 2014:5)

2.4 Proposed Groundworks

The ground works involved breaking up of the brick terrace with a hydraulic breaker and the machine excavation of four trenches to a depth of 1 metre (Plates 1-4).

2.5 Confidence Rating

No factors hindered the recognition of archaeological and geological deposits during the monitoring and recording exercise.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL & GEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The underlying geology at the site according to the British Geological Survey map is Thanet Sand and Lambeth Group.

Topographically the site comprises of five and a half acres located just outside the village of Finchingfield, a village in the Pant valley area of Essex. The house is currently the farmhouse to the L-Plan farmyard found to the east.

The principal archaeological site is the house itself, Boyton Hall, which is a Grade II Listed building dating to the 16th-17th century, surrounded by a manorial moat. Boyton Hall was recorded in the Domesday Book, owned at that time by a ‘freeman’. It later came under the ownership of Richard Fitz-Gislebert a large landowner in the area and from there to Juliana de Boyton, William de Reyne and finally the Bassett family. The Bassett family kept five hunting dogs for the Kings use and in return received two carucates of land. Sir Philip Bassett gifted the property to the Dean and Chapter of St Pauls Cathedral in 1260. In return the cathedral maintained three priests to celebrate mass continually at the altars of St Chad, St Nicholas and St Ethelbert to pray for his elder brother, the Bishop of London’s soul. The date of the moat is unknown, although the size and shape suggests post 12th century manorial status and was therefore probably installed under the church’s ownership. Moats are a common feature in the Braintree area due to the natural water holding geology of boulder clay and at least nine local properties have them. In the 16th century the current house was built and was later extended during the 17th century. Tenant farmers on behalf of the church would probably have farmed the property and the census records that record a farm bailiff living in the house in 1841 confirms

this. In 1852 the church sold the leasehold and from there it continued under private ownership. The position of the original manor house that pre-dated the current building is unknown.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

The Watching Brief was conducted in accordance with the specification compiled by Place Services and complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (1999). The works comprised the observation of all groundworks, including the inspection of subsoil and natural deposits for archaeological features and finds.

5.0 RESULTS

5.1 General

Trench 1 - 0.45m W x 2.85m L x 1.0m D – East-West Direction

Foundation of west elevation of house. Brick built capped well with grey silt fill (1.3m circumference). Modern metal and plastic pipes running north-south through trench. Made up ground. Natural was at a depth of 0.40m.

Trench 2 – 0.45m W x 6.15m L x 1.0m D – North-South Direction

Foundation of south elevation of house. Modern metal and plastic pipes running east-west through trench. Brick built tank with cementitious render finish with pea shingle fill and vertical slate divider. Black silt soil with small stone and oyster shell inclusions. Natural at 0.40m.

Trench 3 – 0.45m W x 5.7m L x 1.0m D – North-South Direction

Foundation of south elevation of house. Modern metal and plastic pipes running east-west through trench. Modern foundation relating to the proposed installation of patio doors (planning refused). Modern inspection chamber. Timber post 14" x 15" x 11" high, sawn base, charred top at a depth of 1m. Black silt soil with small stone and oyster shell inclusions. Natural at 0.40m.

Trench 4 – 0.45m W x 4.4m L x 1.0m D – East-West Direction

Foundation brick wall to south side of trench. Black silt soil with small stone and oyster shell inclusions. Natural at 0.40m.

The excavation of the foundation trenches (Plates 1-4) revealed 19th/20th century water supply and drainage features. The features were recorded in a plan drawing 001. The excavation of the trenches resulted in the exposure of the brick foundation of the existing house in three areas and these were recorded in section drawings 002/003/004 attached.

6.0 FINDS

A brick sample, 19th and 20th century pottery and a piece of unidentified studded copper.

7.0 DISCUSSION

The Archaeological Watching Brief carried out at Boyton Hall revealed 19th/20th century water supply and drainage features. The well, the tank, the wall, the terrace and the steps were built from the same bricks – a frogged red brick of 240mm x 115mm x 70mm (9 ½" x 4 ½" x 2 ¾") with yellow mortar.

The foundations of the house were also recorded and it was noted that there was a marked difference between the foundation of the west of the south elevation and the foundation of the east of the south elevation. To the west was a foundation of only one header course on a 100mm levelling layer of small stones, oyster shell and CBM on a layer of made up ground set on natural clay. To the east were four stretcher courses (similar in size and colour to those used in the features discussed previously) directly above a natural clay base. A levelling course of small rubble had been laid above the brickwork. At the third location, to the west elevation of the stairwell, the foundation had been disturbed and partly rebuilt, possibly due to the water pipe that had been installed. There were four courses below ground and one visible course above ground behind the render. The lower two courses were header courses but the courses above had stretchers, although modern bricks had been used in the repair and the bond was disturbed. All three areas appeared to be very different construction.

The area watched is shown on the Trench Plan Fig. 1.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The Archaeological Watching Brief has fulfilled the primary aims and objectives of the Specification. 19th/20th century features relating to the supply and drainage of water were recorded. The same bricks were used in the well, the tank, the foundation wall, the terrace and the steps. The size and colour of the brick points to a post-medieval date and it is probable that the well is the oldest feature among them. The well and an outbuilding are noted on the OS Map of 1876 and it is probable that the wall of the well was rebuilt at the time that the other water features and outbuilding were developed, possibly earlier in the 19th century for the provision and drainage of water, possibly to serve the outbuilding.

The well remains in situ, although a cut of 450mm in width through the centre of it for the new foundation reduced its height by 900mm and mitigation strategies were discussed between the builder and building control to bridge the feature for the creation of the new foundation. The water tank also remains in situ with the west wall removed. The south foundation wall was shallow and removed entirely.

The difference in the construction of the house foundations may suggest varying construction periods for the house or a difference in the use of parts of the building.

9.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Touchstone Archaeology would like to thank Mr N Loftus for commissioning the project. Thanks are also extended to Place Services (Essex County Council).

Zoe Schofield
July 2016

10. REFERENCES

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www.ancestry.co.uk

www.bgs.ac.uk

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<http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org/assets/MaM/SQR014B-The-SVHC-Landscape-History-v04.pdf>

<http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/gateway/chr/herdetail.aspx?crit=&ctid=95&id=4761>

www.findmypast.co.uk

MAPS:

Andres and Chapman: A map of the County of Essex 1777

Map of 'a new and correct map of Middlesex, Essex and Hertfordshire by Joseph Bland, Samuel Parker, Payler Smyth, John Warburton 1724

OS Map County Series 1:2500 1876

OS Map County Series 1:2500 1897

OS Map County Series 1:2500 1921

National Grid Map 1:2500 1961-62

National Grid Map 1:2500 1990-94

Archaeology Fieldwork Notification Form

(Section **A** and **B** to be filled in and sent to Essex County Council Historic Environment Adviser in advance of start of fieldwork. Section **C** to be completed and sent at end of fieldwork. Section **D** to be filled in and sent with completed report.)

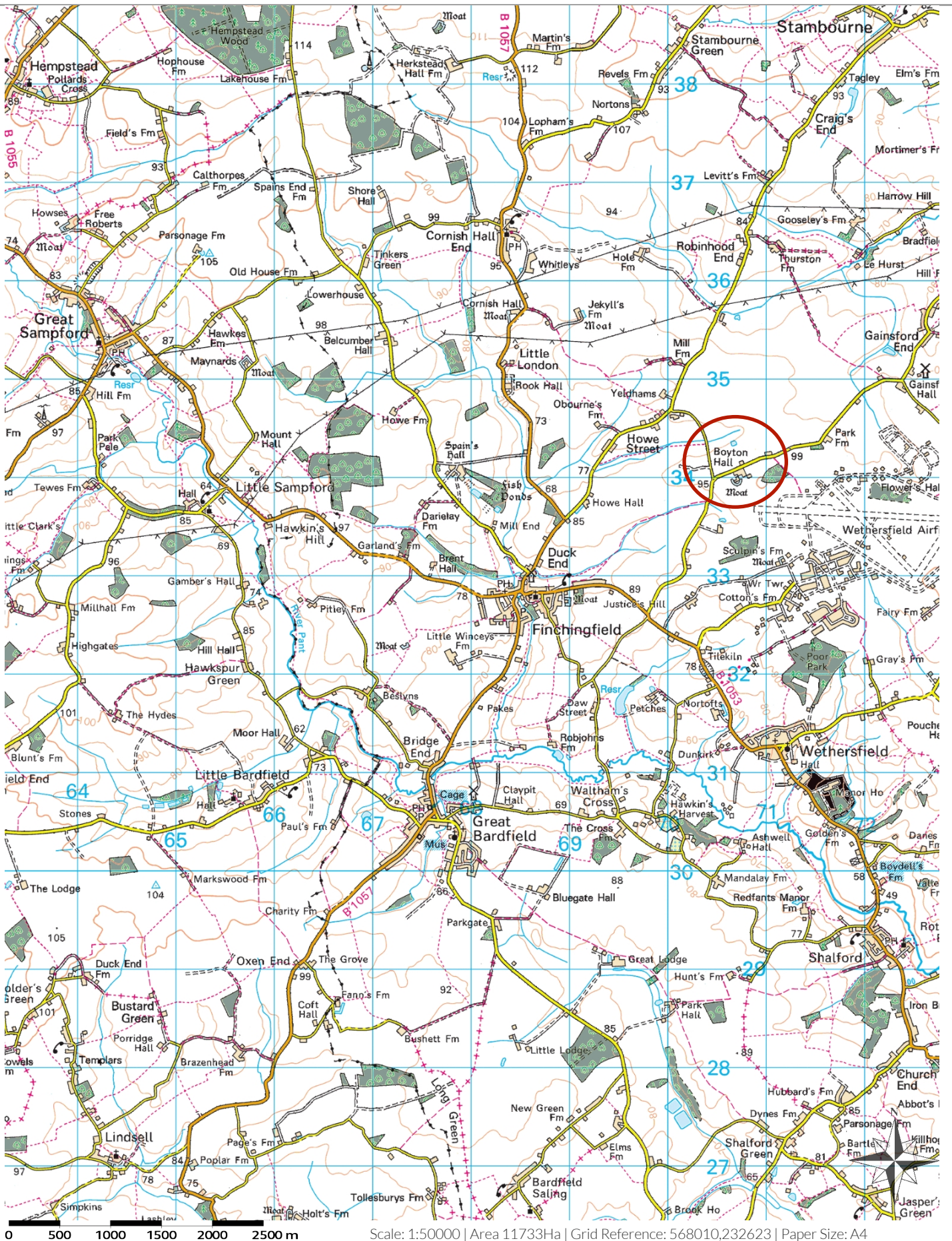
SECTION A - PROJECT DETAILS

Site/Project Name: FFBH16	NGR: TL 706340
Site Address: Boyton Hall, Toppesfield Road, Finchingfield, Essex CM7 4NZ	
Archaeological Contractor (inc name and address of project contact): Touchstone Archaeology Zoe Schofield, The Ridings, White Elm Road, Danbury, Essex CM3 4LR	
Commisioning Body/Client: Mr Loftus Nicholas Loftus & Co, Boyton Hall, Finchingfield, Essex CM7 4NZ	
Development Proposals/Reason for Fieldwork: A watching brief to the excavation of the foundation trenches of the new extension. To establish if there are archaeological fins or features particularly relating to the manorial history of the site.	Planning Reference: BDC/14/00414/FUL

SECTION B - COMMENCEMENT OF FIELDWORK

Type of Archaeological Fieldwork: Watching Brief to excavation of foundation trenches.	Site Supervisor: Zoe Schofield Site Contact Details: Tel: 07976 275180
Specification for Work: WSI Boyton Hall 2016	
Local Museum Notified: Braintree Date: 28th June 2016 Local Arch Soc Notified: No Date: TBA	Site Code: FFBH16
START DATE: 13th July 2016 ANTICIPATED DURATION: 3 Days	
I (archaeological contractor) confirm that all necessary provision has been made for the resources to complete the archaeological fieldwork, post-excavation analysis and reporting in accordance with the agreed specification. Name: Zoe Schofield On behalf of: Touchstone Archaeology	

Signed: <i>Zoe Schofield</i>	Date: 28th June 2016																																			
SECTION C - COMPLETION OF FIELDWORK																																				
Date Fieldwork Completed: 14th July 2016 Further Fieldwork Anticipated: No	Was fieldwork monitored by KCC/EH/Other? Who? N/a																																			
Brief summary of archaeological finds: (Continue on separate sheet if necessary) The excavation of four foundation trenches uncovered a 'Well' noted on the OS Map of 1876 and various 19th/20th century plumbing features - drainage and water pipes (Tr1,2 &4), a tank filled with pea shingle (Tr2 -possibly a soak away to take overflowing water from the well), an inspection chamber (Tr4) and a foundation wall. The wall may have been connected to a building that is seen on the OS Map of 1876. The foundations of the existing 16th/17th century were also recorded where exposed.																																				
Agreed Reporting Stages and Program: No further investigation required. The final report will be submitted on the 26th July 2016 Name: Zoe Schofield On behalf of: Touchstone Archaeology Signed: Zoe Schofield Date: 25th July 2016																																				
SECTION D - COMPLETION OF POST-EXCAVATION ANALYSIS & REPORTING																																				
Reports Submitted (Titles)	Copies to: (Number) <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="width: 12.5%;">ECC</th> <th style="width: 12.5%;">LPA</th> <th style="width: 12.5%;">Arch So</th> <th style="width: 12.5%;">Client</th> <th style="width: 12.5%;">EH</th> <th style="width: 12.5%;">Other</th> <th style="width: 12.5%;">Digital Copies</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td></td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> <td style="text-align: center;">N</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Oasis</td> <td style="text-align: center;">Y</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	ECC	LPA	Arch So	Client	EH	Other	Digital Copies	Y	Y	N	Y	N		Y	Y	Y	N	Y	N	Oasis	Y														
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Digital Mapping Data?	Y																																			
Location and Destination of Archive: Touchstone Archaeology, The Ridings, White Elm Road, Danbury, Essex CM3 4LR																																				
Name: Zoe Schofield On behalf of: Touchstone Archaeology Signed: Zoe Schofield Date: 25th July 2016																																				



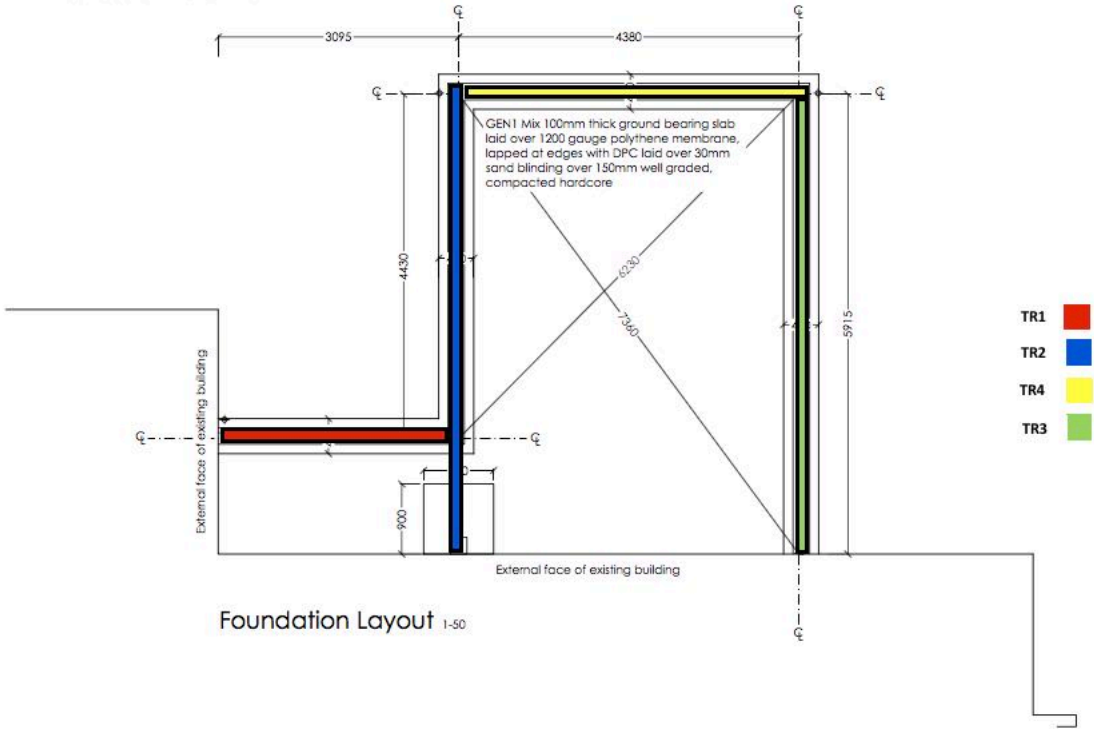
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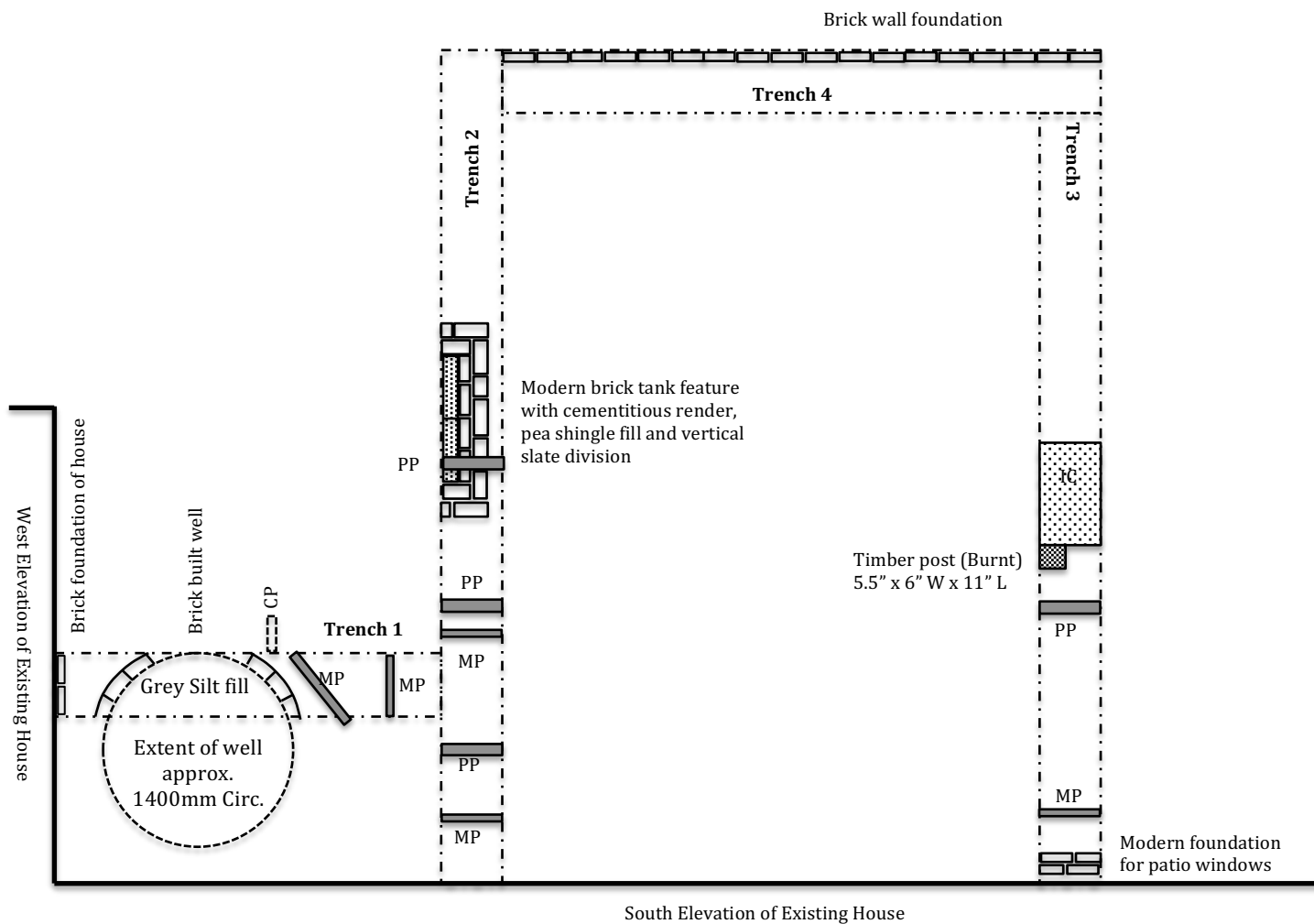
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Fig. 1. Boyton Hall, Toppesfield Road, Finchingfield, Essex CM7 4NZ
Foundation Trench Plan



Site Code: FFBH14
Drawing: 001
Date: 13.07.16
By: ZS
Scale: 1:50

0 100cm



Key

PP - Plastic pipe
 MP - Metal pipe
 CP - Clay pipe
 IC - Inspection Chamber

Site Code: FFBH16
Drawing:002
Date: 13.07.16
By: ZS
Scale: 1:10

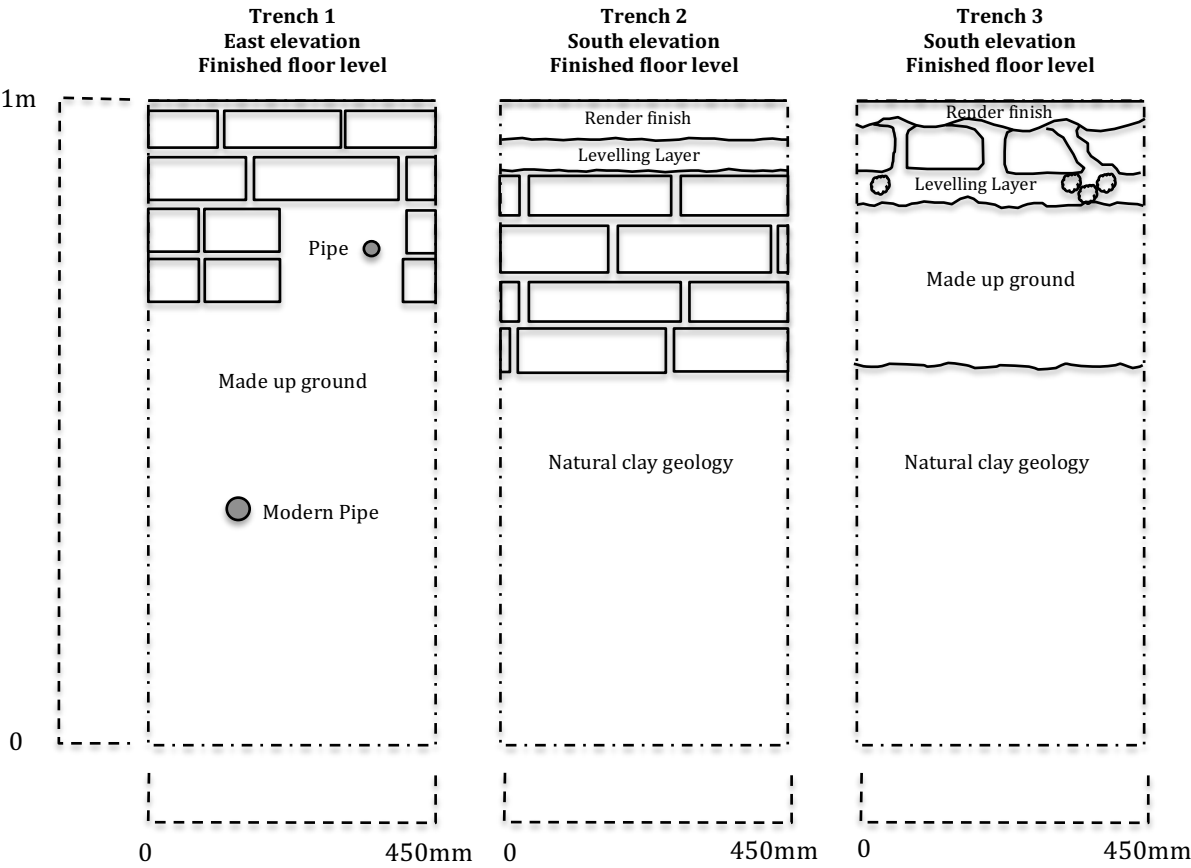
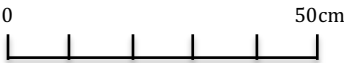




Plate 1. Trench 1 facing East



Plate 2. Trench 2 facing North

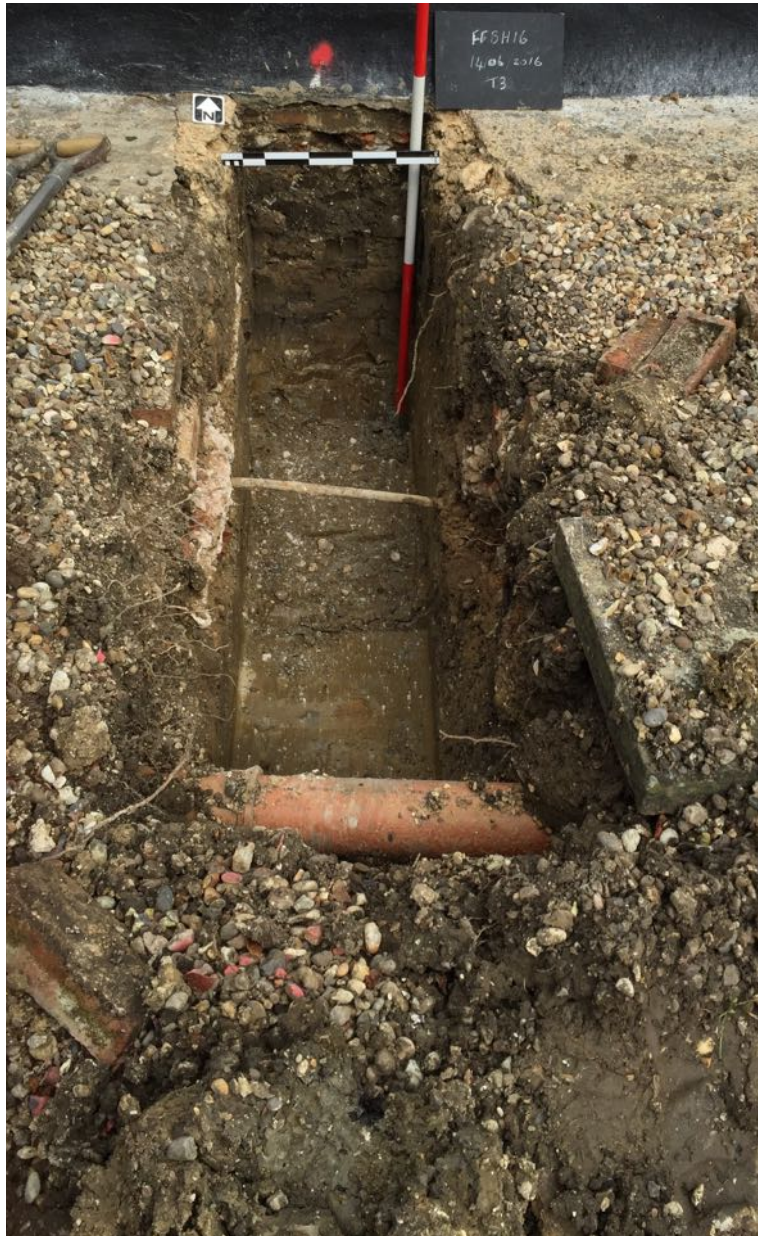


Plate 3. Trench 3 facing North (Excavated to point of modern inspection chamber)



Plate 4. Trench 4 facing East (Brick foundation wall to right wall of trench)