

**An archaeological watching brief  
at nos 1-3 Queen Street  
(Colchester Visitor Centre),  
Colchester, Essex  
May-July 2005**

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**on behalf of  
Colchester Borough Council**



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## 1 Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at nos 1-3 Queen Street, the property which currently accommodates the Colchester Visitor Centre. The watching brief was focussed on the ground floor where nine trenches of various depths and dimensions were excavated by the building contractor. The groundworks were mainly in no 3, but there were also two trenches in no 2 and one in the property's inner courtyard to the rear.

In places, the works provided very limited exposures of what appears to be the remains of a substantial Roman house in the form of a robber trench for a foundation and Roman demolition debris. There were no surviving medieval deposits other than the 12th- to 13th-century robber trench.

Unfortunately, the archaeological investigation was very restricted, making it difficult to draw firm conclusions about the structural development of the standing building. However, its fabric shows no 1 to be a late 18th-century construction (originally one unit incorporating the present 67-67a High Street). It is a red-brick two-storey house with attic. Nothing appears to survive above ground of its predecessor. No 2 is also mainly a rebuilt red-brick edifice of the late 18th century. However, there is evidence indicating a late medieval origin, and showing that this house was once part of no 3. The southern part of the Visitor Centre (no 3) was erected in the 15th or possibly early 16th century. Originally it was a three-storied, jettied, half-timbered building with a narrow carriage archway at its southern end. A large red-brick chimney was inserted into nos 2 and 3 in the early 17th century.

## 2 Introduction

- 2.1 Planning permission was obtained by Inkpen Downie Architecture & Design Ltd on behalf of the Colchester Borough Council for the refurbishment of the Colchester Visitor Centre (planning application nos F/COL/04/1488 and LB/COL/04/1485). This is the report on an archaeological watching brief carried out during the subsequent work between May and July 2005 by the Colchester Archaeological Trust (CAT) for the Colchester Borough Council. No archaeological investigations had been undertaken at the premises prior to this investigation.
- 2.2 The Visitor Centre is located in the eastern part of Colchester's walled town centre, at the top of East Hill. It sits at the corner of Queen Street and the High Street facing on to Queen Street (Fig 1, Plate 1). The property is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 99958 25226.
- 2.3 The Visitor Centre has a frontage of approximately 19m with nos 1-3 measuring 5.25m, 5.25m and 8.5m respectively. All three buildings making up the property are Grade II listed.
- 2.4 This report follows the standards set out in Colchester Borough Council's *Guidelines on standards and practices for archaeological fieldwork in the Borough of Colchester* (CM 2002) and *Guidelines on the preparation and transfer of archaeological archives to Colchester Museums* (CM 2003), and the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IFA 1999) and *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (IFA 2001). Other sources used are *Management of archaeological projects* (MAP 2), and *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource assessment* (EAA 3), *Research and archaeology: a framework for the Eastern Counties 2. Research agenda and strategy* (EAA 8), and *Standards for field archaeology in the East of England* (EAA 14).

## 3 Scope of work

The archaeological watching brief was limited to recording plans and sections of trenches excavated by the building contractor. Major groundwork was carried out within buildings nos 2 and 3. Because the trenches were not excavated by a CAT archaeologist, the data are limited, not very precise and not very conclusive. They

are often quite hypothetical, since the taphonomic complexity of urban deposits and the small size of the trenches, combined with problems of residuality, present interpretational difficulties.

Nine trenches were excavated by the contractor's employees and recorded by a CAT archaeologist (Fig 2). The size and depth of the trenches varied (Table 1). Altogether, they covered an area of 11m<sup>2</sup>, with an average depth of 0.67m (from 0.28m to 1.02m). Six trenches were located within no 3 Queen Street (Trench or T1, T2, T4, T5, T6, T7), one trench was excavated within no 2 Queen Street (T3), one trench (T8) was excavated behind the eastern outer wall of no 2, and one trench (T9) was dug in the property's inner courtyard (not recorded in detail because of its purely late Victorian-modern contents). In total, 62 contexts were recorded, dating from the Roman, early medieval, late medieval, post-medieval and early Victorian to late Victorian and modern periods. Relatively scanty dating material was supported by the analysis of the building's superstructure. This allowed for relatively secure phasing of some of the recorded contexts. However, dating of many of the features remains quite doubtful.

Because no groundwork was conducted within no 1, the archaeological investigation did not yield any new data concerning this part of the Visitor Centre.

## 4 Archaeological background

4.1 The Colchester Visitor Centre lies within the eastern part of the historic Roman and medieval walled town. The Centre stands at the junction of two important roads, the High Street (on the line of the Roman *via decumanus*, running east-west through the town to the east gate), and the medieval Queen Street, running south from opposite the castle on the High Street, through the eastern part of the town, to the former south gate (Fig 1). It is located in the north-western corner of the Roman town's Insula 31.

Pre-Flavian occupation in the area is poorly documented, although residual pottery of this period from the grounds of East Hill House (CAT Report 305) indicates that some Roman buildings were located in this vicinity. The site of the Visitor Centre lies at the eastern limits of the site of the Roman fortress and the early pre-Boudican town which immediately followed it (see CAR 6). The full eastern extent of the large annexe which was attached to the east side of the Roman fortress has not yet been determined, but the site of the Visitor Centre is likely to have been close to its eastern edge (Crummy 1999, 91-3, fig 3). The remains of the Roman temple of Claudius and the Norman keep, which was erected on the temple's foundations in the late 11th century, are approximately 100m north-west of the Visitor Centre (Hull 1958, 176-92; see also CAR 6).

In 1925, 'masses of white mortar and rubble' (of probable Roman date) were found under the pavement of no 1 Queen Street at the High Street side of the building (site 159 in Hull 1958, 207 & 221). A plain tessellated pavement is reported to have been seen in the same place but perhaps nearer the corner by Horace Calver in 1970 (Crummy 1971, 108-9). Part of a plain tessellated pavement was recorded in the cellar of no 7 Queen Street (Dunnett 1971, 86), and excavation at the rear of no 5 Queen Street in 1966 revealed a substantial building with mortared foundations. The building seems to have been of at least three structural phases, the latest incorporating a hypocaust originally overlain by a mosaic floor (UAD no 3065; Dunnett 1971, 86). Taken together, these remains suggest that the north-west corner of Insula 31 was occupied by a large private Roman house rather than a public building.

Further afield but still in Insula 31, flue-tiles and painted plaster were recorded in the nearby Minorities' garden (70m east from nos 1-3 Queen Street; Hull 1958, 207). Also, Roman tessellated pavements and 'floor foundations' were uncovered in the grounds of East Hill House in 1924 and 1951 (sites 158 and 191 in Hull 1958, 206). These remains are consistent with another private house.

West of Queen Street was Insula 30, lying opposite the temple of Claudius, which one would expect to have contained important public buildings. Not much evidence for these has been found so far other than substantial foundations (Crummy 1971;

Crummy 1997). The closest to nos 1-3 Queen Street is Hull's site 113 (40ft south of the war memorial), where part of a Roman wall of 'anomalous position' was exposed (Hull 1958, 204-5).

- 4.2 There is scanty archaeological evidence from the Anglo-Saxon period around the site. A few post-Roman (possibly Anglo-Saxon) burials to the east of the site (in the grounds of East Hill House) may relate, for obvious reasons, to an area of open land east of Queen Street and south of East Hill known in the past as the Bury or Berry Field (CAR 6, 375-7; Crummy 1997, 129-30). It has been suggested (VCH 9, 39) that Queen Street is Anglo-Saxon in origin. The street does not correspond to the Roman street grid but runs diagonally to the site of the south gate in a reasonably straight line, and may have originated as a path across agricultural or open land. The earliest (and still standing) buildings at the northern end of Queen Street date from the 14th and 15th centuries.

## 5 Brief account of the property

- 5.1 No 1 Queen Street is a late 18th-century red-brick two-storey building with attic. Originally it included nos 67 and 67A High Street (LBSAHI, 110-11). Under its ground floor, there is a small cellar with a staircase leading from inside the building, and an opening onto the High Street. The construction of the cellar would have destroyed any archaeological remains within the footprint of the building.

No 2 Queen Street is mostly a red-brick building of the late 18th century, although it incorporates remnants of an earlier timber phase. Like its neighbour, no 3 Queen Street, with which it may have formed one property, the original building probably took the form of a three-storied, jettied dwelling-house with shops on the ground floor (Fig 3).

The largest of the houses (no 3) seems to have been built at the end of the 15th century or early 16th century. It was a long, gable-fronted, timber-framed building with a tall, narrow carriage archway at its southern side, which survives in part within the existing building. In a study by Richard Shackle (pers comm) on the house's remaining 15th- to 16th-century elements, he reconstructs it as a three-storied, half-timbered building, with jetties projecting onto Queen Street (Figs 4-6). The spaces between the timber-frames were infilled with wattle-and-daub and brick, with plastered faces on the interior. The timbers were visible both inside and outside the building. A chimney with a large red-brick fireplace was installed in the ground floor in the early 17th century between houses nos 2 and 3. Its construction presumably reflects the revolution in interior planning which started a century earlier across the country with the abandonment of open halls in favour of upstairs and downstairs rooms heated by a massive central chimney. This chimney provided flues for the back-to-back inglenooks in the ground-floor rooms. In the late 17th or early 18th centuries, no 3 underwent a series of changes so that the carriage arch was incorporated into the house structure and the top floor was largely removed (Stenning 2004; R Shackle pers comm).

The three houses which comprise the property had become one unit by the late 19th or 20th centuries.

As with many houses in East Anglia, some of the properties on Queen Street were enriched and rebuilt in the late 16th and first half of the 17th centuries. Changes in the buildings' interiors in that period reflect the growing wealth and improving living standards for some people at the time. During this period, Colchester was one of the most prosperous textile towns in England. Most urban houses of that period on main streets had shops in at least part of their street frontage, often with a parlour or hall fronting onto the street. Further down Queen Street, no 7 is a relatively well-preserved example of the sort of building which stood at nos 1-3. It is a 14th-century half-timbered house with a ground-floor shop (Cooper 2000), currently *The What Bar*.

Nos 1-3 Queen Street are depicted on John Speed's map of Colchester (1610) as two separate units (Fig 7), one facing the High Street and the other facing Queen Street. Almost all the houses shown on the map for Queen Street are of similar size. The map shows Colchester from an angled bird's-eye view, with buildings drawn in a simplified way, with practically no detail, as being simple single-storey structures.

However, in the early 18th century, nos 2-3 Queen Street were elaborately built three-storey houses.

The drawing of Jean Puget de la Serra's with the view of Colchester from a point inside the east gate (showing the convoy of carriages of Maria de' Medici travelling through Colchester in 1638) also depicts a house at the corner of the High Street and Queen Street, which would be part of the current Visitor Centre (ie no 1), although, as P Crummy notes, 'The houses in the immediate foreground to the right and left don't look genuine...' (2004, 12). His study concludes that de la Serra made the lithograph based on written accounts of the queen's journey and on Speed's map. Interestingly, the house on the lithograph which corresponds to no 1 is depicted as a three-storied, jettied, half-timbered building (with attic) facing the High Street. In spite of the fact that, as has been shown (Crummy 2004), the drawing cannot be used as a source for specific analysis of Colchester's vernacular architecture, it is interesting to note that it corresponds to a degree with the reconstruction of the houses at nos 2-3. Moreover, the drawing (even if it is mostly made up using Speed's map) represents houses in this part of the town as being relatively rich at this time. This is typical of the pictorial depiction of late medieval and early post-medieval towns in which a mixture of stylised fantasy and realism are used, with 'artistic licence', in de la Serra's picture of Colchester, to create balance and symmetry in the composition. Thus the drawing may be considered as an artistic expression of the view of the town, with its own political agenda, rather than an accurate record, and it provides an interesting counterbalance to the poor depictions of the town's houses in John Speed's map of 1610.

- 5.2 It was probably in the early 17th century that a great chimney with a red-brick fireplace was added to the northern side of the central room of no 3. This demonstrates the results of the revolution in interior planning which started a century earlier across the country with the abandonment of open halls in favour of upstairs and downstairs rooms heated by a massive central chimney (eg in Colchester, see Crummy 1976). This chimney provides flues for the back-to-back inglenooks in the ground-floor rooms. The placing of the large fireplace at the northern end of the house (thus also heating no 2) indicates that nos 2 and 3 were possibly part of the same property at that time.

## 6 Aims

The aim of the watching brief was to record earlier features exposed by the groundworks and structural alterations. The post-excavation studies were aimed at:

- the analysis of the recorded deposits and finds,
- the correlation of the recorded contexts with the basic chronologies of the building and the area, and
- the assessment of the status of the building and the site in each period.

## 7 Methodology

- 7.1 Eight trenches were dug inside the building (T1-T8). Another (T9) was dug in the property's inner courtyard for the construction of new supporting walls and piles. The width, length and depth of the trenches varied (Table 1).

**Table 1: trench dimensions and heights above Ordnance Datum.**

Trench no	Trench length (maximum dimension in metres)	Trench width (maximum dimension in metres)	OD level (metres)	
			top	bottom
T1	1.60	1.3	25.64	24.82
T2	1.10	0.9	25.50	24.76
T3	1.60	0.6	25.35	24.64

T4	3.50	0.5	25.25	24.23
T5	1.10	1.0	25.20	24.92
T6	1.10	1.0	25.25	24.78
T7	1.35	1.3	25.25	24.91
T8 (n)	2.10	0.6	25.36	24.38
T8 (s)	2.70	0.6	25.36	24.38
T9	0.50	0.4	-	-

- 7.2 The trenches were hand-dug by the contractor with monitoring visits being made by a CAT archaeologist both during digging and/or after the trenches had been dug.
- 7.3 Individual records of excavated contexts (features) and recorded finds were entered on pro-forma CAT recording sheets.
- 7.4 Section drawings showing features and layers were made at a scale of 1:10. Plans of features were made at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20.
- 7.5 Colour photographs of general site shots and all major contexts were taken using a digital camera.
- 7.6 Finds were registered on CAT record sheets and assigned find numbers and small find numbers according to context. Finds were washed, marked and bagged according to context.

## 8 Results

- 8.1 In the following sections, numbers preceded by an 'F' or 'L' refer to ground features or layers which were individually recorded. The recorded stratigraphy is listed below in Tables 1-8. Trench numbers are prefixed by a 'T'.

### 8.1.1 Trench 1 (Figs 2, 8; Tables 1-2)

T1 was located in the south-western corner of no 3. It was excavated to a depth of 0.8m below the floor level. Its western edge corresponded to the outer wall of the building (F59). The wall is red brick, built in stretcher bond, giving an earliest date of late Victorian (with clearly visible and substantial modern repairs). The trench's southern edge is at the building's southern outer wall (F58; Plate 2; 15th-/early 16th-century date). It consists of timber posts, studs, sill-beams (sole-pieces), noggin pieces, and painted wall plates. The spaces between the vertical studs are filled with wattle-and-daub as is typical of this type of construction. A space between the corner post and the last stud is filled with red brick set in header bond. This may be a 17th-/18th-century addition. As shown in studies conducted by R Shackle (pers comm) and D F Stenning (2004), the wall F58 was originally the outer wall of a narrow carriage arch (see also Alston 2004). This was probably incorporated into the house in the late 17th-early 18th century. Most of the timber studs are badly rotted at their ends. Under the corner post, probably in the 19th century, concrete was poured in to strengthen the decayed base. Under the sill-beam there is a single row of small tiles placed at a 45-degree angle. Both under the corner post and under the sill-beam there are foundation walls (recorded as part of F58) made of brick and mortar. The foundation walls are cut into a layer (L1) of loose dark brown (with patches of light brown) clayed sand containing a large amount of rounded and sub-rounded flint, small bits of building material (mortar, tile fragments), and organic material (animal bone fragments, oyster shells and charcoal). L1 appeared to be accumulated occupation debris. It pre-dates the 15th-century construction but cannot be dated more closely than medieval/early post-medieval as the layer was heavily disturbed by modern service trenches. At the northern edge of T1, a red-brick wall running east-west was exposed (F60). The wall started approximately 0.4m north of the wall F59. It was cut into L1 and was sealed by modern floor paving. The bricks in F60 are slightly different to the ones in F58. The feature is roughly dated to the post-medieval period.

**Table 2: T1 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F58	Half-timbered wall and brick foundation walls	Wall <i>in situ</i>	15th/early 16th century
F59	Wall	Bricks <i>in situ</i>	late 19th/20th century
F60	Wall	Bricks <i>in situ</i>	post-medieval?
L1	Layer – occupation debris	Brick fragments; post-medieval oyster shells; animal bone fragments	late medieval/early post-medieval?

### 8.1.2 Trench 2 (Figs 2, 9; Tables 1, 3)

T2 was located at the north-western part of no 3. Its northern edge was on the boundary between nos 2 and 3. It was 1.1m x 0.9m and 0.74m deep. It was situated just in front (west) of a large red-brick fireplace. The fireplace and its chimney seem to have been built probably in the early 17th century. The original fireplace and chimney were located within no 3, although, since they were placed at its northern edge (thus also heating no 2), one may conclude that the two buildings were already one property by that time. The chimney and its fireplace (F6) were later rebuilt, an open fireplace facing no 2 was added (F5), and some probable late Victorian additions (F4) were made to the southern part of the fireplace. Fireplace F6 is built of red brick, some set in English bond characteristic of the 16th-17th century. F5, despite being made of almost the same brick, uses header bond, which was popular in the 18th century. Under fireplace F6, a foundation wall (F18) was recorded, consisting of brick placed without mortar in firm dark greyish-brown-black sandy clay containing a large amount of charcoal, oyster shells, tile fragments and stone. Context F18 is cut on its southern side by F16 (a late Victorian/modern foundation wall under F4). F16 consists of brick and gravel bonded with mortar and sealed by a layer of concrete that separates F4 and F16. The 17th- and 18th-century fireplace (F6 and F5) and its foundation (F18) are all cut into L19, which is an occupation debris layer of sandy clay containing bits of charcoal, oyster shells and pieces of tile. The layer can thus be dated to between the 15th and 17th centuries (between the construction of the house and the central chimney). L19 seals L8, which is a layer of clay sand with pieces of mortar. L8 also included pieces of painted plaster, gravel, cockle and oyster shells, wild-boar tusk and animal bone, as well as reused Roman brick, post-medieval brick, and one glazed pot base fragment (17th- to 18th-century ware). A post-medieval date for the layer seems reasonable, although an earlier date is also possible since the pottery from T2 was not collected by an archaeologist and its stratigraphic provenance is dubious (the glazed sherd may be mistakenly attributed to L8). Moreover, the stratigraphy in T6 suggests an earlier date for F8 (see below).

A 0.46m-diameter hole dug by the contractor for a post-base exposed F2, L3 and L7. F2, sealed by L8, is a very hard dark brown-black layer consisting of gravel bonded with sandy clay, ie a metalled surface. It could be either the original building's floor surface (also recorded in T3 as F10) or a surface from an earlier structure, or possibly even a road surface. F2 seals L3, which consists of crushed brick/tile with mortar in clay sand. This seems to be a layer of demolition debris laid down as hardcore under surface F2. L3 seals L7, a layer of sandy clay with scarce inclusions (very similar to F8). In the south-west of T2, a post-hole (F9) was also recorded which cut into F2 and L3. Its contemporaneity with the 15th-/early 16th-century phase building is the most probable dating.

**Table 3: T2 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F2	Metalled surface	-	15th century? or earlier?
F4	Part of a fireplace	-	Victorian?
F5	Part of a fireplace	-	post-medieval – 18th century?



F6	Original fireplace	-	early? 17th century
F9	Post-hole	-	15th/17th century?
F16	Foundation wall	-	19th century?
F17	Floor	-	modern
F18	Foundation wall	-	17th century?
L3	Demolition debris/ hardcore under the floor	-	15th century? or earlier?
L7	Layer of clay – floor?	-	15th century? or earlier
L8	Layer of clay sand with mortar	Pot sherds, 17th-18th century; Roman brick fragment; brick, post- medieval; peg-tile fragment, post-medieval; 1 piece of plaster	medieval?/post- medieval?
L19	Occupation debris	brick fragments; small pieces of mortar and charcoal; bone, oyster shells	15th-17th century?

### 8.1.3 Trench 3 (Figs 2, 10; Tables 1, 4)

T3 was located in the south-west of house no 2, near the building's outer wall (facing Queen Street). The trench measured 1.6m x 0.6m and was approximately 0.7m deep (from the modern floor level). The stratigraphic sequence in T3 corresponds very well with the sequence of features in T2. The uppermost layer in T3 was F12, which consisted of modern floor layers, ie a concrete surface and hardcore consisting of crushed brick and cement. F12 is the same as F17 in T2, F48 in T4, and F57 in T5. The floor was sealed on its western side by F15, the building's outer wall. This feature is the same as F59 in T1 and F54 in T5 (late Victorian/modern red-brick wall). Under the modern floor layers, a metalled surface was exposed (F13). It is very similar to F2 in T2, except that F13 has no hardcore layer below it. Considering the stratigraphy of T2, a post-medieval date for F13 can be proposed. F13 seals L14, a layer of clayey coarse sand with a small number of inclusions (brick/tile, stone, small pieces of mortar). L14 resembles L8 in T2 (and also L42 in T6 and L28 in T7). By analogy, it may be dated to the post-medieval period, but a medieval date cannot be excluded. Moreover, underneath L14, another metalled surface was exposed (F10) which corresponds to F2 in T2. Similarly, in T3, under F10, there is a hardcore layer composed of crushed brick and mortar (L11) which is the same as L3 in T2. It was impossible to determine from the exposed fragment whether the surface F10 was a floor layer or (less likely) road metalling.

**Table 4: T3 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F10	Floor surface	Septaria stone with mortar; iron nail	15th century? or earlier
F12	Floor	-	modern
F13	Metalled surface	-	post-medieval?
F15	Wall	-	modern
L11	Layer of crushed brick – hardcore base for floor	-	15th century? or earlier
L14	Layer of clayey sand	-	medieval?/post- medieval?

### 8.1.4 Trench 4 (Figs 2, 11; Tables 1, 5)

T4 was located at the boundary between nos 2 and 3. It was 1m deep, 3.5m long and 0.5m wide, running north-south, under the building's original rear wall. The wall was partially removed when the rear wall was moved approximately 2m to the east (as evidenced in T7). A part of the original wall (F21) was recorded in the north-

facing section of T4. It is red brick laid in English bond and is tentatively dated to the late 17th/early 18th century. Adjacent to F21 (and partly built over it) is F24, a late Victorian/modern inner wall running east-west. Modern floor surface F48 seals a layer which is most probably a hardcore layer (L46) under the modern floor. It consists of clayey sand with a large number of pieces of brick and tile. L46 seals another floor surface, made of plaster (F47). This floor seems to be contemporary with the wall F21, which rests on a foundation (F22) built of clayey sand, brick/tile fragments, and stone bonded with mortar. The foundation is cut into L20, a layer of brown clayey sand with common inclusions of brick/tile fragments, oyster shells and animal bone. Thus L20 looks like a demolition rubble layer. Under L20 there was an approximately 8-10cm-thick layer of greyish mortar mixed with clayey sand (L23), which sealed a layer consisting of medium brown clay sand with a large number of inclusions (brick/tile, mortar, angular stone; F25). Most of the finds from this trench were retrieved from the contractor's spoil heap and thus are poorly provenanced. The pottery sherds are dated as Roman (from the 1st to early 3rd century), medieval (13th century), and post-medieval (17th-18th century). Some of this pottery probably belongs to F25. Considering that the context is on the same level as F30 and L32 in T8 – which are definitely of Roman date – the same dating can be proposed for F25. L23 (sealing F25) is probably also of Roman date (the layers could be a part of a 13th-century robber trench, as evident in T8). L20 (sealing L23) may be of medieval or more probably early post-medieval date. At the bottom of T4, part of another layer (F49) was exposed, of probable Roman date, consisting of rounded gravel in brown clay sand with occasional small pieces of brick/tile and small lumps of mortar and oyster shells. The stratigraphy of this was not obvious and it is difficult to state whether F49 is either sealed horizontally or cut by F25.

**Table 5: T4 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F21	Wall	-	post-medieval (late 17th/early 18th century?)
F22	Foundation wall	-	post-medieval (late 17th/early 18th century?)
F24	Wall	-	late Victorian/modern
F25	Robber trench?	Pot sherds, 1st-early 3rd century (location of the finds is not certain)	Roman demolition layer/Roman structure robbed out in 13th century?
F47	Plaster floor	-	post-medieval (late 17th/early 18th century?)
F48	Floor	Concrete slabs	modern
F49	Layer	Brick/tile fragment; lumps of mortar	Roman?
L20	Occupation debris	(badly stratified) Potsherds: 13th century (location not certain); potsherd: 17th-18th century; peg-tile: post-medieval; organic material	17th-18th century?
L23	Layer of mortar and sand	-	Roman?
L46	Demolition layer	-	modern?

#### 8.1.5 Trench 5 (Figs 2, 12; Tables 1, 6)

T5 adjoined the western side of T2 in the north-west corner of no 3. The western edge of this shallow (0.28m-deep) trench was on the building's outer west-facing wall F54. The wall is made of white bricks and both the bonding and the brick suggest a late 18th- to early 19th-century date. F54 is the same as F15 in T3 and F59 in T1,

although in the two latter cases the bricks are red and can be associated with alterations made in the late Victorian and modern periods. Against the wall F54 is F57, a modern concrete floor, under which are two courses of red brick (F56). The brickwork is either slightly earlier than or contemporary with the wall F54, and thus a 17th- to 18th-century date does not seem unreasonable. The western part of F54 sealed L55, an approximately 0.1m-thick layer of charcoal and mortar. L55 was only partially exposed in section; nonetheless it is possible that it is a remnant of the building's earlier timber-framed street frontage wall. Both L55 and F56 were laid on L29, which is a layer of clayey sand and gravel. This layer seems to be the same as L14 in T3, and probably also to L8 in T2. Its *terminus ante quem* in T6 would be late 17th-early 18th century, although the stratigraphy in T3 and T2 suggests that an earlier date is possible.

**Table 6: T5 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F54	Brick wall	-	late 18th/early 19th century?
F56	Brickwork – floor?	-	post-medieval (17th-18th century?)
F57	Concrete floor	-	modern
L29	Make-up/levelling	-	post-medieval? or earlier
L55	Charcoal and mortar – structural feature?	Charcoal, mortar	post-medieval? (late 17th/early 18th century?)

#### 8.1.6 Trench 6 (Figs 2, 12; Tables 1, 7)

T6 was located in the south-western part of no 3, approximately 1m north of T1. The trench lay on the course of the original southern outer wall of the ground-floor hall, and thus its stratigraphy is partly tied with a carriage archway formerly located in the southern part of the house. Two layers and three features were distinguished in T6. Under the modern concrete floor surface there is L62, a layer of clayey sand with small brick/tile and charcoal inclusions. No satisfactory dating material was collected from this layer and it cannot be dated more precisely than medieval or later. L62 seals L42, which is a layer of coarse sand with gravel. This layer seems to correspond to L14 in T3, and probably to L29 in T5, as well as L8 in T2. Into L62 and L42 are cut F39, F40 and F41, which are rectangular pits with rounded edges. They are approximately 0.3m x 0.2/0.24m. If these three features are post-holes, then a 15th-century date would be possible since they may be associated with the construction of the building's outer wall and carriage archway. This in turn would imply that L62 and L42 may be pre-15th century. However, considering the lack of dating evidence, they cannot be ascribed to an early period, and the interpretation of these features as post-holes is also uncertain.

**Table 7: Trench 6 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F39	Pit – post-hole?	-	late medieval (15th century) or later
F40	Pit – post-hole?	-	late medieval (15th century) or later
F41	Pit – post-hole?	-	late medieval (15th century) or later
L42	Layer of coarse sand and gravel	-	medieval or later
L62	Layer of clayey sand	Brick/tile fragment; charcoal	medieval or later

#### 8.1.7 Trench 7 (Figs 2, 12; Tables 1, 8)

T7 was located in the south-eastern part of no 3, and it seemed to lie precisely on the corner of the original (15th- or early 16th-century) house.

Seven features and layers were recorded in T7. F26 is a standing, north-south red-brick wall which appears to be associated with F21 in T4. It is probably of early 18th-century date, although later repairs are apparent. At the north-western corner of wall F26 there is a wooden post (F27), which may be a remnant of the building's original timber-framed wall. F26 is cut into L28 and L61. L28, a layer of coarse sand and gravel, was recorded in the southern part of the trench; it seems to correspond to L7 in T2, L14 in T3, L29 in T5, and L42 in T6. Considering the data from the other trenches, L28 can be dated to the late medieval or possibly even to the early medieval period. L61 (recorded in the eastern part of the trench) had a very similar structure to L28, except that it was slightly darker. However, dating the two layers to the same period seems reasonable. Resting on L61 was a layer of reused Roman tile fragments (L45), which appear to have been laid to form a surface. L28 and L61 are cut by F43/F44, which is a foundation or plinth constructed of septaria and greensand in pale greyish brown mortar. The exposed part of the foundation/plinth is L-shaped and its corner is exactly under timber post F27. A 15th- or early 16th-century date for F43/F44 (as the foundation/plinth for the original southern and eastern outer walls of the building) is probable.

**Table 8: T7 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F26	Wall	-	early 18th century-Victorian/modern
F27	Timber post	-	15th/early 16th century
F43	Foundation /plinth	Septaria, mortar	15th/early 16th century
F44	Foundation/plinth	Mortar, greensand	15th/early 16th century
L28	Layer of coarse sand and gravel	-	medieval (15th century or earlier)
L45	Tile layer – probable surface	Roman tiles, mortar, <i>opus signinum</i>	medieval/post-medieval
L61	Layer of coarse sand and gravel	Roman brick/tile fragment; pieces of mortar	medieval (15th century or earlier)

### 8.1.8 Trench 8 (Figs 2, 13; Tables 1, 9)

T8 was located in the eastern part of no 2. It was L-shaped with its longer part running east-west and joining the eastern edge of T4 at a point where the earlier stratigraphy had been cut by a recently laid concrete foundation and brick wall F51. The upper layers recorded in T8 (L36 and L38) seem to be demolition debris of Victorian and modern date. L38 (with concrete slabs at its base) appears to be cut by F37 (a pit?), with the latter cut by L36 (with concrete slabs at its top). These three features horizontally seal another demolition debris layer (L35) with a large amount of post-medieval brick/tile fragments. Underneath L35 is L50, a layer of dark brown clayey sand containing a large number of small brick/tile and stone fragments, oyster shells and charcoal. L50 seems to be accumulated occupation debris of probable post-medieval date and is possibly associated with L20 in T4. This material sealed three features: F33, L32, F30. F33, a 13th-century robber trench for the removal of a Roman foundation, contained large amounts of brick/tile fragments, pieces of grey mortar and potsherds dated to the 2nd-4th and 13th centuries. F33 appears to cut the western part of L32, a Roman demolition layer with a high content of mortar, brick/tile fragments, oyster shell and animal bone. L32 cuts F30, a layer of brown silty sand with a large amount of medium to medium/large-sized pieces of *opus signinum* and greensand. This may be interpreted as another robber trench for a Roman wall foundation or possibly the upper part of an *in situ* Roman foundation. No potsherds were recorded on the surface of F30, but its Roman date is fairly certain. The western side of F30 may also run through the northern part of T4, but it was not possible to establish its presence since that part of T4 had been filled with concrete before it could be inspected.

A Victorian/modern pit (F34) was also recorded in the northern part of T8. It is cut into L36, L35, L50 and F30.

**Table 9: T8 contexts.**

Context no	Description	Finds	Phase
F30	Robber trench (with part intact foundation?)	Roman brick/tile fragments	Roman
F31	Part of foundation wall	Roman brick/tile fragments	Roman
F33	Robber trench	Potsherd – 12th-13th century; potsherds – Roman (1st, 2nd, 3rd-4th century); tile/brick fragment; pieces of mortar – Roman; pieces of greensand; organic material – bone, oyster shells	Roman-early medieval
F34	Pit	-	Victorian/modern?
F37	Pit?	-	19th century/modern?
F51	Wall	-	2005
F52	Wall	-	15th century?
F53	Floor	Plaster	15th century?
L32	Demolition layer	Painted plaster – Roman (some of 2nd-mid 3rd century); pot sherds – Roman; pieces of <i>opus signinum</i> ; tile fragment – Roman; animal bone	Roman
L35	Demolition debris	-	post-medieval
L36	Demolition debris	-	19th century/modern?
L38	Demolition debris?	-	19th century/modern?
L50	Occupation debris	Roman brick/tile fragment	post-medieval?

### 8.1.9 Trench 9

T9 was located in the south-eastern part of the current building's inner courtyard. It was 0.5m x 0.4m, and 0.5m deep. Only modern and 19th-century rubble material was exposed in this trench, and therefore there is no need for further description.

### 8.2 Finds

Eleven bags of finds were collected from eight of the excavated trenches. Since an archaeologist did not excavate them, many of the finds were only collected from spoil-heaps and excavated sections. Consequently, most have poor stratification and so in many cases their use for context dating is questionable.

The most interesting are two unstratified (but almost certainly redeposited) finds from T8 and T4. The first (Find no 11) is an 18th-century English Delftware tile, measuring 127 mm x 129 mm. The tile is complete except for some small damage on the corners and some scratches on the surface. The design shows a pedestal dish containing grapes and other fruit.

Another interesting find was recorded in the fill of T4, ie Find no 10 (Fig 14). Unfortunately, it cannot be ascribed to any of the identified features. It is a large piece of worked limestone. The stone is clearly broken from a larger piece. It has two smooth and flat surfaces (0.36m x 0.15m; 0.54m x 0.32m), four flat and rough surfaces (0.21m wide), and a slot (triangular in section and rectangular in plan – 0.82m wide). Considering the proximity of the site of the temple of Claudius and other Roman public buildings, a Roman date for the stone is possible.

Other finds from the Visitor Centre include Roman, medieval and post-medieval pottery, organic material (bone, oyster shells and charcoal), building material (brick, tile, daub, plaster, mortar, *opus signinum*, and stone including greensand, septaria and flint). Of small finds, only one iron nail was recorded in T3, which was very poorly stratified, and a piece of Roman tile with rounded edges, which looks to have been a counter, and which was recorded in the fill of a robber trench (F33).

The total weight of collected building material is 7,234g. However, only a very small portion of excavated material lying on spoil heaps was collected as finds. The most interesting piece is the English Delftware tile described above. In T1, more than 500g of building material was collected from L1. The material is of post-medieval date, apart from one piece of Roman brick, which looks as if it was reused. In T2, a few pieces of septaria with mortar were recorded, but the finds were too badly stratified to be much help. A piece of peg-tile recorded in T4 (L20) supports a post-medieval date for this context. F20 also contained pieces of mortar and septaria. More interesting is CBM recorded in F25 (also in T4) consisting of fragments of tile with *opus signinum* on one of them. This suggests that the lower layers of T4 may be of Roman date (Roman demolition debris or a medieval robber trench). The upper fill of L32 in T8 contained many lumps of *opus signinum* and fragments of Roman tile. This, as well as potsherds, is clearly evidence for a Roman date for this feature.

Roman tile and septaria with *opus signinum* on the surface were also recorded in F33 in T8. Nevertheless, in this case, pottery evidence and other finds indicate that F33 is the medieval robber trench of a Roman wall.

Altogether, 201g of organic material was collected from the excavated trenches. L1 in T1 contained oyster and cockle shells, a small amount of charcoal, and a wild-boar tusk. In the fill of F20 in T4, a few pieces of animal bone, oyster shell and a piece of charcoal were recorded. Oyster shells and animal bone collected from the fill of F33 support interpretation of the context as a robber trench. Organic material (animal bone, Find no 9) from T8 is probably also from F33.

**Table 10: finds list.**

Pottery identification: Roman (S Benfield using the fabric series in *CAR 10*); post-Roman (H Brooks using the fabric series in *CAR 7*).

Find no	Context	Finds	Weight (in g)	Dating
1	T1, F1	<i>Stratification: good</i>		
		1 medium-sized glazed base fragment (Fabric 40; post-medieval red earthenware)	115	17th-18th century
		1 small/medium-sized piece of Roman brick (reused?) with mortar on it	-	-
		1 small/medium-sized piece of post-medieval brick (with mortar on it)	-	-
		2 medium-sized fragments of peg-tile	464	-
		2 small pieces of plaster, one painted white	57	-
		1 small bone fragment and wild-boar tusk	75	-
		oyster shells and 1 cockle shell	-	-
		1 small piece of charcoal	3	-
2	T3, F10 or L14 or F13	<i>Stratification: very poor</i>		
		2 small pieces of septaria stone with mortar on them	116	post-medieval
		1 iron nail		post-medieval
3	T4, L20?	<i>Stratification: poor</i>		
		1 potsherd: fragment of a bottom of large flagon (Fabric DJ, 1st-2nd century) 1 amphora fragment (Gaulish?): (Fabric AA, 1st-2nd/early 3rd century)	45	Roman
		1 medium-sized pot rim fragment (Fabric 20)	12	13th century
		1 medium-sized potsherd (Fabric 40, post-medieval red earthenware)	87	17th-18th century
		1 small/medium-sized piece of peg-tile	77	post-medieval
		1 small piece of an animal bone	41	-

		1 oyster shell	-	-
		a small piece of charcoal	-	-
		1 small/medium-sized piece of mortar (lime and very coarse sand)	412	-
		3 pieces of septaria stone (1 has mortar on its surfaces)	529	-
4	T4, F25	<i>Stratification: poor</i>		
		6 small/medium pieces of tile (1 with <i>opus signinum</i> on its surface)	1,443	Roman
5		VOID	-	
6	T8, F32	<i>Stratification: good</i>		
		2 small/medium-sized potsherds (Fabric JX, grey ware)	12	Roman
		1 piece of <i>opus signinum</i> mortar	294	Roman
		1 small piece of tile	55	Roman
		1 small piece of painted plaster – white	46	Roman
7	T8, F33	<i>Stratification: good</i>		
		1 small potsherd (Fabric 20, 13th century)	14	medieval
		1 small potsherd (Fabric EA, Nene Valley colour-coated ware, mid 3rd-4th century)	35	Roman
		2 small samian sherds – residual, plain, a cup rim sherd Drag 33 (South Gaulish 1st century) and 1 platter fragment – base sherd (central Gaulish, probably early 2nd century; not entirely unlikely to be a 1st-century form)		
		3 small/medium-sized tile fragments (one of them with rounded edges – a counter?)	367	Roman
		3 small/medium-sized pieces of septaria, some <i>opus signinum</i> mortar on one of them	786	
8	T8, F33	<i>Stratification: good</i>		
		1 small pot sherd (Fabric 20)	8	medieval
		1 small fragment of an animal bone	30	-
		1 oyster shell		-
9	T8, F31/ F33	<i>Stratification: poor</i>		
		1 small rim fragment (Fabric GB, form Cam 37B)	21	Roman
		1 body sherd, 1 small rim fragment	22	Roman
		8 small to large pieces of tile	2,579	Roman
		6 small animal bone fragments	52	
10	T4, U/S	large piece of worked limestone – one smooth and flat surface and one flat and rough surface, on their edge a triangular in section and rectangular in plan slot was hewn		Roman/ medieval?
11	T8, U/S	English Delftware tile, 127 mm x 129 mm; the edges of the tile are slightly undercut; the back of the tile has a 'sandy back'; it has gritty appearance and is rough to the touch; the back and edges of the tile are covered in mortar; a white or whitish tin-glaze and the glaze is cracked; colour blue; where the pigment is thickly applied it is perceptible to the touch; the design is of a pedestal dish containing grapes and other fruit; the tile is complete apart from some small damage to the corners and some scratches on the surface		18th century

## 9 Synthesis

### 9.1 Roman

Roman levels in the form of a possible robbed-out foundation (F33) and dump or demolition deposits were reached in only two trenches (T4 and T8). Too little was exposed to determine the nature of the building concerned, although the width of the probable robber trench (0.75m) is more in keeping with the foundation of a substantial private house rather than a major public building.

T4 was located more or less under the original outer eastern wall of no 3. A layer of loose mortar (L23) lay at a depth of 0.78m below modern floor level. No finds were retrieved from L23. However, a Roman date cannot be excluded since it seals F25, which is a demolition layer (or a robber-trench fill) containing Roman brick and tile fragments with *opus signinum* on their surfaces (Find no 4). Additionally, the poorly stratified finds from T4 (Find no 3) included Roman pottery sherds (fragments of a 1st- to 2nd-century flagon and an amphora fragment from the 1st to 2nd/early 3rd century) and a piece of septaria with mortar, all of which may be ascribed to F25. Probably also of Roman date is F49 (located just north of F25), a layer of clayey sand with a large amount of small sub-rounded stone. Only a small part of the feature was exposed, and thus its interpretation is quite difficult. A Roman date cannot be excluded for Find no 10 (Fig 14), the large carved limestone block from T4. The piece was unstratified but it appeared to derive from one of the upper layers and thus might be a redeposited part of a monumental building.

Dating of the contexts in T4 is supported by stratigraphy in T8, from where more precise data were obtained. T8 is located at the eastern side of no 2, and thus is just outside the original building (in its late medieval and post-medieval phases). Roman contexts were encountered here at a depth of approximately 1.0m below the modern floor level. F30 seems to be a remnant of a Roman foundation lying on a NW-SE axis. A large amount of medium- and medium/large-sized pieces of *opus signinum* lay in the upper fill of F30. South of F30, L32 seems similarly to have been Roman in date. On its surface were Roman pottery sherds, small pieces of *opus signinum*, a piece of white painted plaster, and brick/tile fragments (Find no 6). The layer also contained oyster shells and lumps of loose mortar. Also in T8, F33 (cutting L32?) appeared to be a robber trench for a Roman foundation. The trench contained sherds of Roman and Gaulish pottery dating to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd-4th centuries AD (Find no 7), a ceramic counter, fragments of brick/tile, and pieces of septaria with *opus signinum* on their surfaces. Other pottery sherds indicate that the robber trench is of 13th-century date (Find nos 7-8). Unstratified finds (collected from the T4 spoil heap) included Roman finds probably associated with F31, L32 and F33. These are Roman pottery sherds from the 2nd-mid 3rd century and medium/large pieces of Roman flat tile. L50, a layer sealing contexts F30-F33, contained a small amount of Roman CBM. However, this deposit seems to be associated with F33 and thus a medieval date is much more plausible.

Large pieces of Roman flat tiles or bricks with mortar and pieces of *opus signinum* forming a layer were found in T7 (L45). They could be part of a Roman demolition layer, but it is much more likely that they were reused in the medieval period (though the phasing in T7 is rather obscure).

### 9.2 Medieval (12th to 13th century)

Apart from the possible robber trench F33 mentioned in section 7.1 above, there are few remains from the excavated trenches which can be ascribed to the medieval period. Metalled surfaces with hardcore layers underneath in T2 and T3 (F2-F3 and F10-F11) are too deep to be 15th century (the original construction period of no 3), and thus a medieval date is proposed for them (although an earlier one cannot be excluded). F7, a layer of clay (a floor?), underneath the metalled surface in T2, may also be of pre 15th-century date, but again the dating is very weak. A similar sequence of deposits was found in T7. Reused Roman tiles (F45) sealed layers L61 and L28. All three contexts were cut by what appeared to be a 15th-century plinth (F43/F44), and therefore an early medieval date is feasible for all three. L50, a layer sealing Roman contexts in T8, may also be medieval, since it seems to be associated with F33, although it only contained Roman building debris. Lastly, a carved limestone block (see section 7.1) may derive from a nearby medieval stone building, but a Roman date for this cannot be excluded.



### **9.3 Nos 1-3 Queen Street**

#### **9.3.1 15th to early 16th century**

Nos 2 and 3 were probably erected in the late 15th or early 16th century as one property. A 15th- to 16th-century date can be ascribed to the outer southern half-timbered wall of no 3 (F58; Fig 4) and F27 (a free-standing wooden post), although the latter may be a product of alterations in the early 17th century.

Although the surviving parts of the timber-frames of nos 2 and 3 suggest a late 15th- (or early 16th-) century date for their construction, there was not a great deal of evidence in the ground to corroborate this. This may be due to the early 17th- and 17th-/18th-century rebuilding, which seems to have removed most of the building's original occupation layers. However, remains of probable late medieval date were found in T7 where the corner of a mortared rubble foundation or plinth was exposed. The foundation/plinth seems to be of an early date. The corner exactly matches the outline of the reconstructed 15th-century building and lies directly under the surviving timber post F27 which it presumably supported. The metallised surface with underlying hardcore in T2 and T3 (section 7.2; F2-F3 and F10-F11) may also be of 15th-century date, although an earlier date is more probable. A more possible 15th- to early 16th-century date may be given to L19 in T2, since it was cut by the slightly better-dated early 17th-century chimney. A late medieval date (prior to the construction of the chimney) may be ascribed to the post-hole F9 in T2, and three post-holes in T6 (F39, F40, F41) may also be from this period since they seem to align with the building's original outer wall. A red-brick wall aligned E-W (F60) in T1 may be of an early date (and thus be associated with the building's carriage arch), although a later date is more probable.

An attempt was made to obtain a precise date for the construction of no 3 through dendrochronological analysis was unsuccessful because, being fast-grown, the timber contained insufficient annual rings to achieve a statistically accurate match, a situation similar to that of the 60-66 East Street investigation (Alston 2004).

#### **9.3.2 Early 17th to 18th century**

Not too much evidence from this phase was found in the excavated trenches. However, it is apparent from their superstructure that nos 2-3 were subject to alterations at this time. A large red-brick chimney and fireplace (F6) is of probable early 17th-century date. A slightly later addition to the fireplace (F5) facing into no 2 may be also 17th century (using almost the same brick), but a later date (18th century) is more feasible. Moreover, the staircase in no 3 leads to a 17th-century wooden door (identified by Richard Shackle) which was subsequently reused as a cupboard.

#### **9.3.3 Late 17th/early 18th to late 18th century**

This phase is relatively well represented both in the Georgian building's superstructure and in the ground. It seems that the late 17th-/early 18th-century rebuilding works led to the removal of most of the earlier occupation layers. Wall F60 (section 7.3) seems to be post-medieval. Potsherds and tile fragments collected from the fill of L8 in T2 provide evidence for the context's post-medieval date, (although the pottery is not well stratified and it may derive from one of the layers above). L8 is located near the main fireplace. The north-south-aligned red-brick wall (F21) and its foundation (F22) also seem to be of post-medieval date; the wall is cut into L20, which contained a 17th- to 18th-century pot sherd. The mortar floor (F47) is contemporary with the wall and thus may be also be of post-medieval date. A layer of a double course of brick in T6 may be late post-medieval (possibly early Victorian).

#### **9.3.4 Late 18th to early 19th century**

No 1 was built in the late 18th century when the earlier standing remains were removed. No 2 was also substantially rebuilt at this time. Parts of no 3 were rebuilt in the 19th century, although the work involved more restoration and refurbishment than substantial rebuilding. The carriage arch was incorporated into the house and the building was reduced in size with the removal of the top floor. The walls fronting onto Queen Street (F59 in T1, F15 in T3, and F54 in T5) belong to the late 18th-early 19th century as does the rebuilt fireplace found in T2 (F4).

### 9.3.5 Late Victorian to modern times

Late Victorian and 20th-century changes in the building's interior are not substantial. Some internal walls appear to have been rebuilt during this time (eg an east-west internal wall (F24) in T4) and the outer wall of no 3 seems to have been repaired. It seems that it was during this time that no 1 was amalgamated with nos 2 and 3 to form a single property. Late Victorian/20th-century repairs in the walls and changes to the buildings' interior are visible. A photograph taken in 1923 shows the houses (with a military equipment shop in no 3) much as they look now (Denney 2004, 21). The change from a dwelling-house with shop premises on the ground floor to the Visitor Centre in the late 20th century did not alter the building's plan. More substantial changes have been introduced at the beginning of the 21st century during the recent refurbishment.

## 10 Archive deposition

The finds, paper and digital archives are held by CAT at 12 Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, but will be deposited permanently with Colchester Museums under the accession code 2005.143.

## 11 Acknowledgements

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### 13 Abbreviations

CA	The <i>Colchester Archaeologist</i> magazine
CAR	<i>Colchester Archaeological Report</i>
CAT	the Colchester Archaeological Trust
CAG	Colchester Archaeological Group
CBM	ceramic building material
CM	Colchester Museums
EAA	East Anglian Archaeology
EAH	<i>Essex Archaeology and History</i>
IFA	Institute of Field Archaeologists
LBSAHI	List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest
RRCSAL	Reports of the Research Committee of the Society of Antiquaries of London
UAD	Urban Archaeological Database held by Colchester Museums
U/S	unstratified

### 14 Glossary

Anglo-Saxon	period from the first half of the 4th century AD to AD 1066
CBM	ceramic building material
context	either a feature, layer or a complex of layers/features
<i>insula</i>	a block of land bounded by streets in a Roman town
medieval	period from AD 1066 to Henry VIII
modern	period from the early 19th century to the present day
natural	geological deposit undisturbed by human activity
<i>opus signinum</i>	Roman lime mortar containing crushed brick or tile
peg-tile	rectangular thin tile with peg-hole(s) used mainly for roofing, first appear c AD 1200 and continue to present day, but commonly post-medieval to modern
post-medieval	period from Henry VIII to around the end of 18th century
Roman	period from AD 43 to c AD 410

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Colchester Borough Council  
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Essex Historic Environment Record, Essex County Council



**Colchester Archaeological Trust**

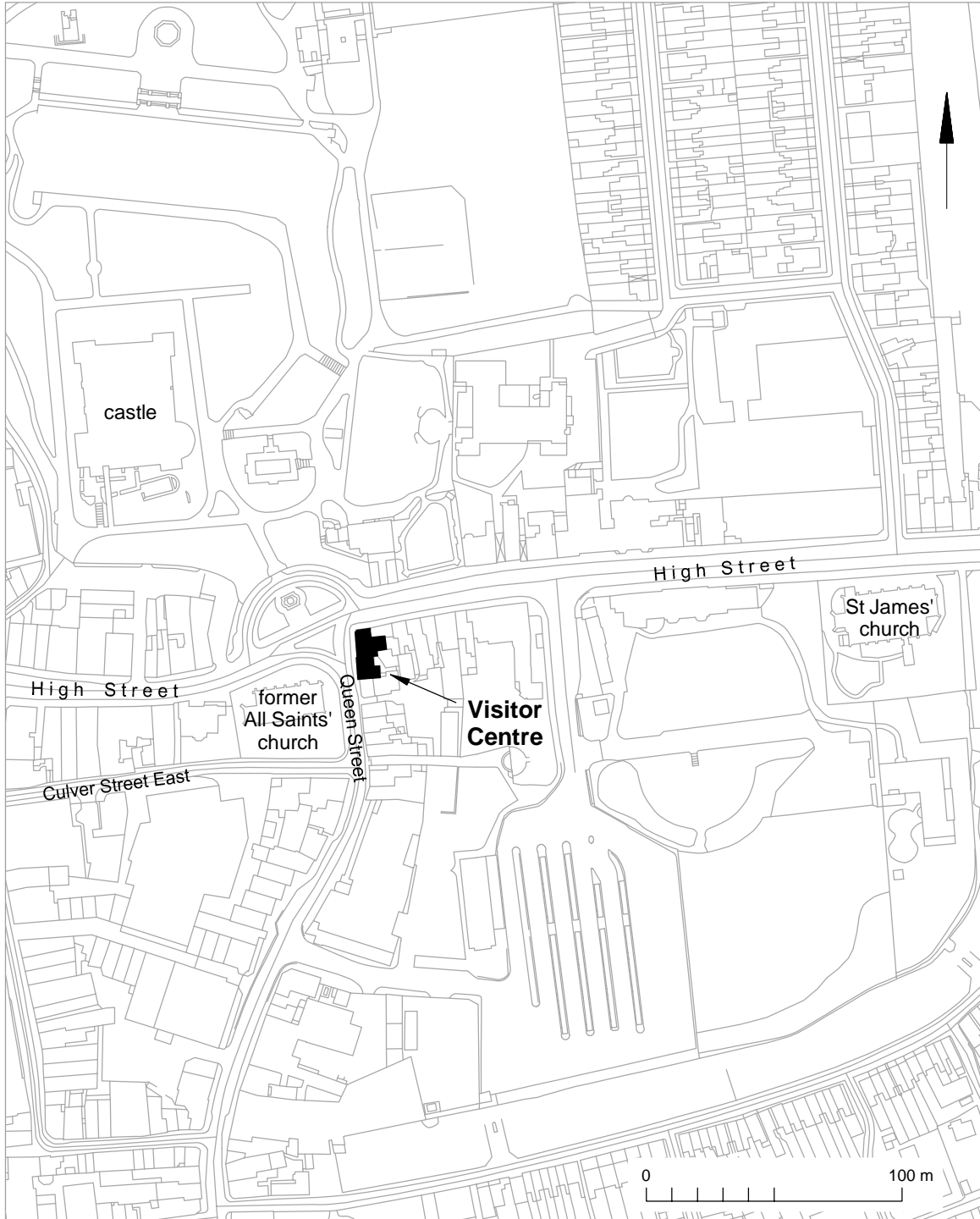
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Date: 17.07.06



**Plate 2** Southern wall of no 3: exposed timber frame, viewed from the north.



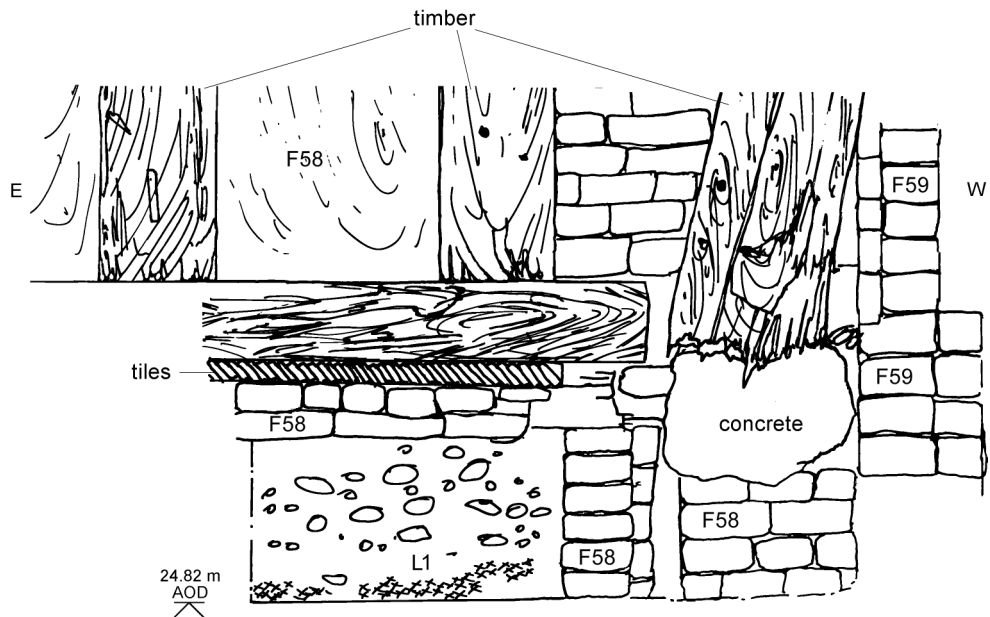
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Fig 1 Location of nos 1-3 Queen Street (Colchester Visitor Centre).



Fig 2 Nos 1-3 Queen Street: ground-floor plan with location of the trenches.

Trench 1: north-facing section



Trench 1: plan

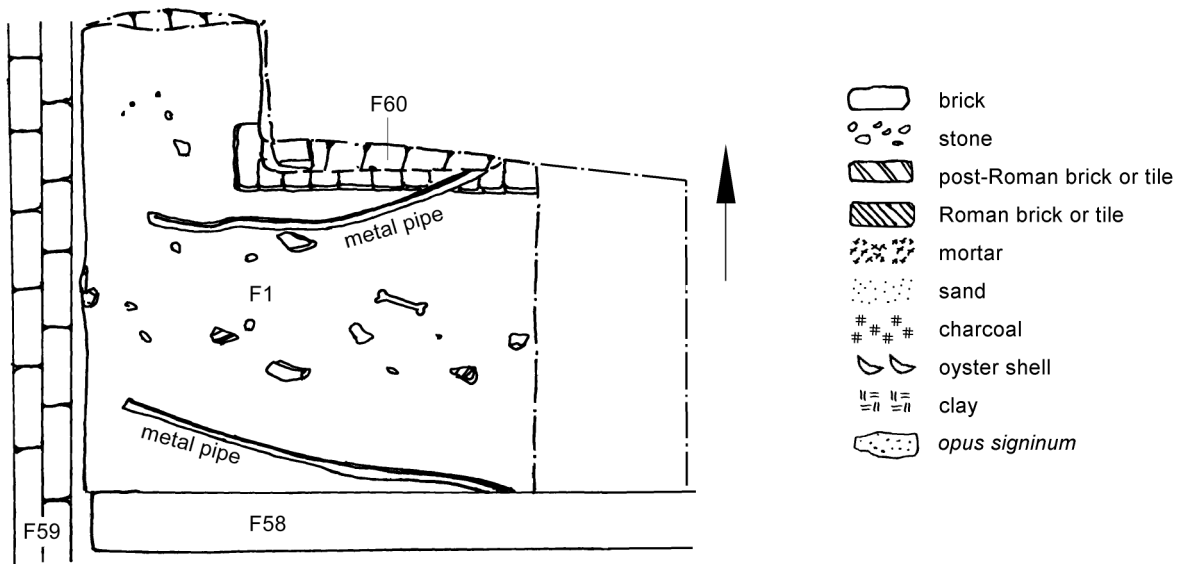
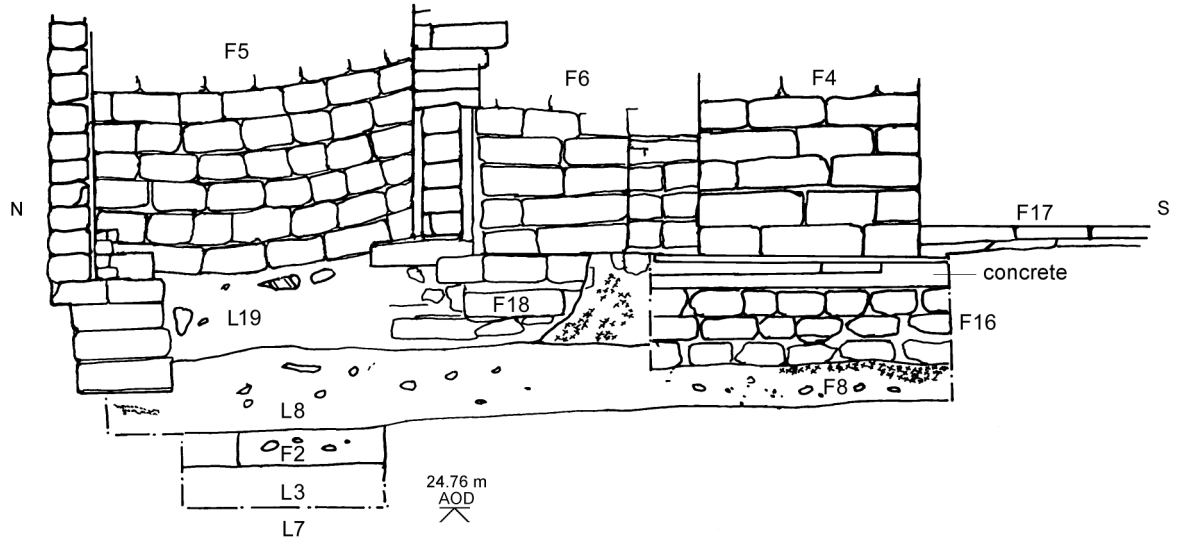


Fig 3 Trench 1: section and plan.



Trench 2: west-facing section



Trench 2: plan

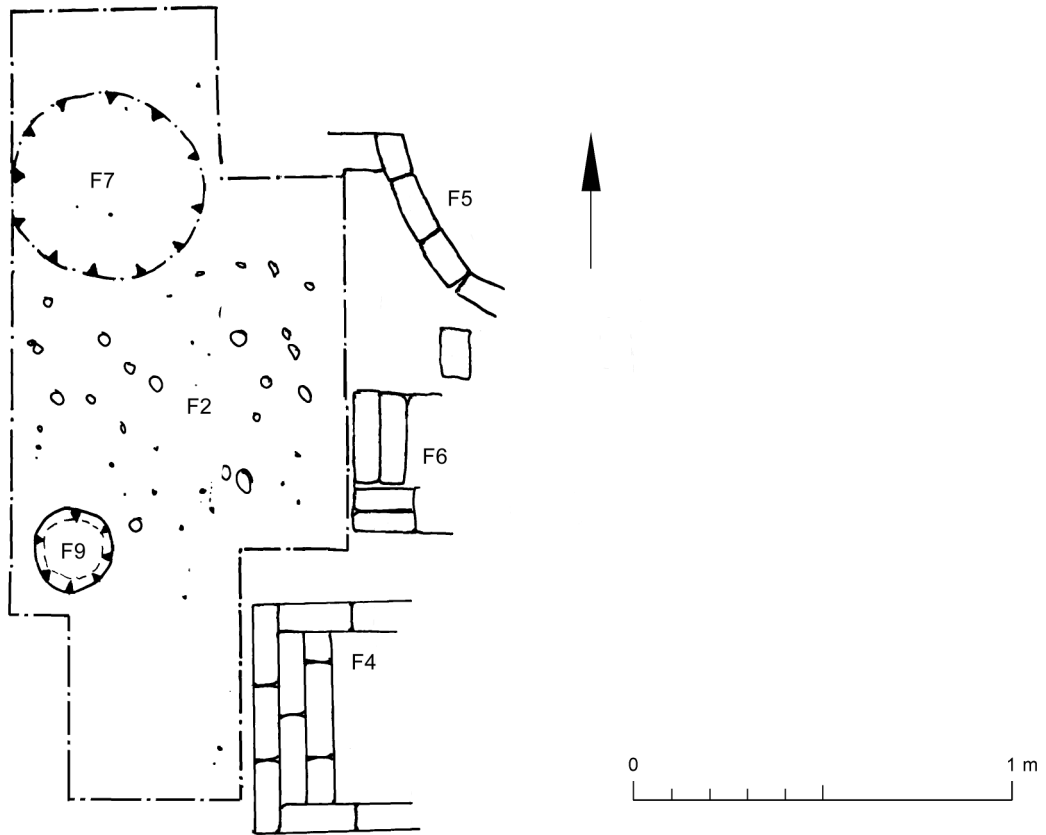
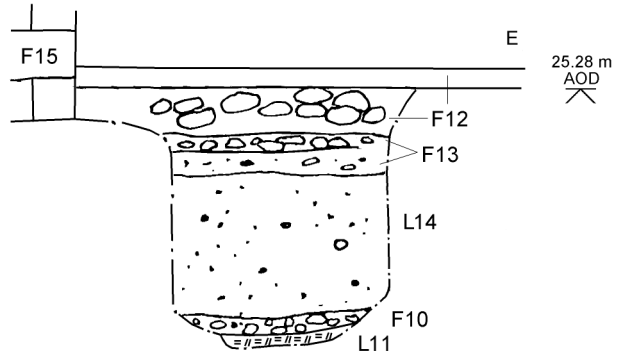


Fig 4 Trench 2: section and plan.

Trench 3: south-facing section



Trench 3: plan

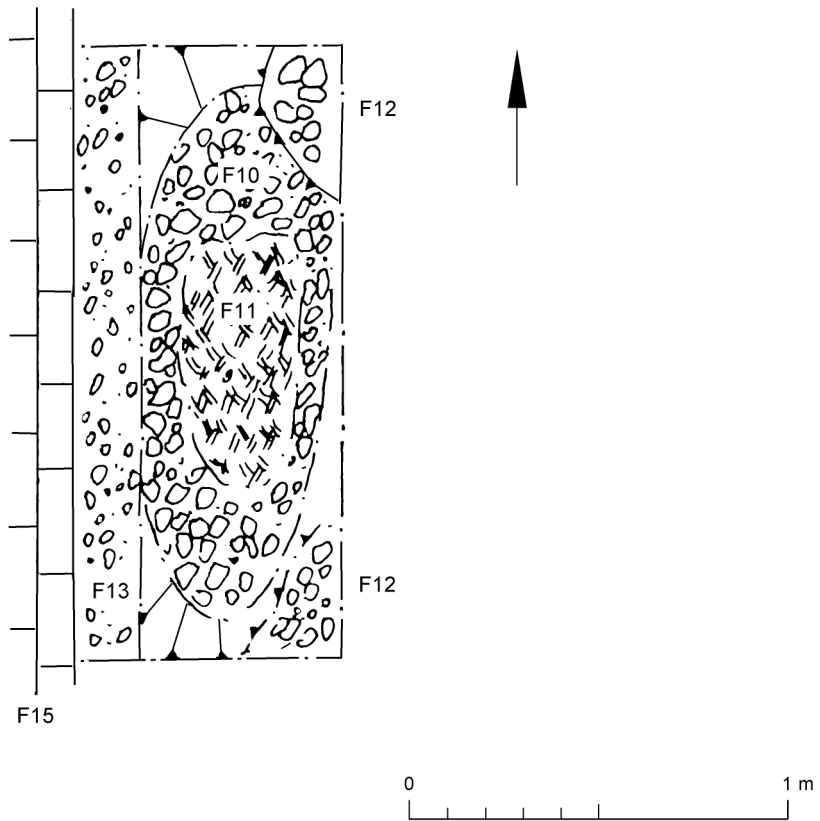


Fig 5 Trench 3: section and plan.

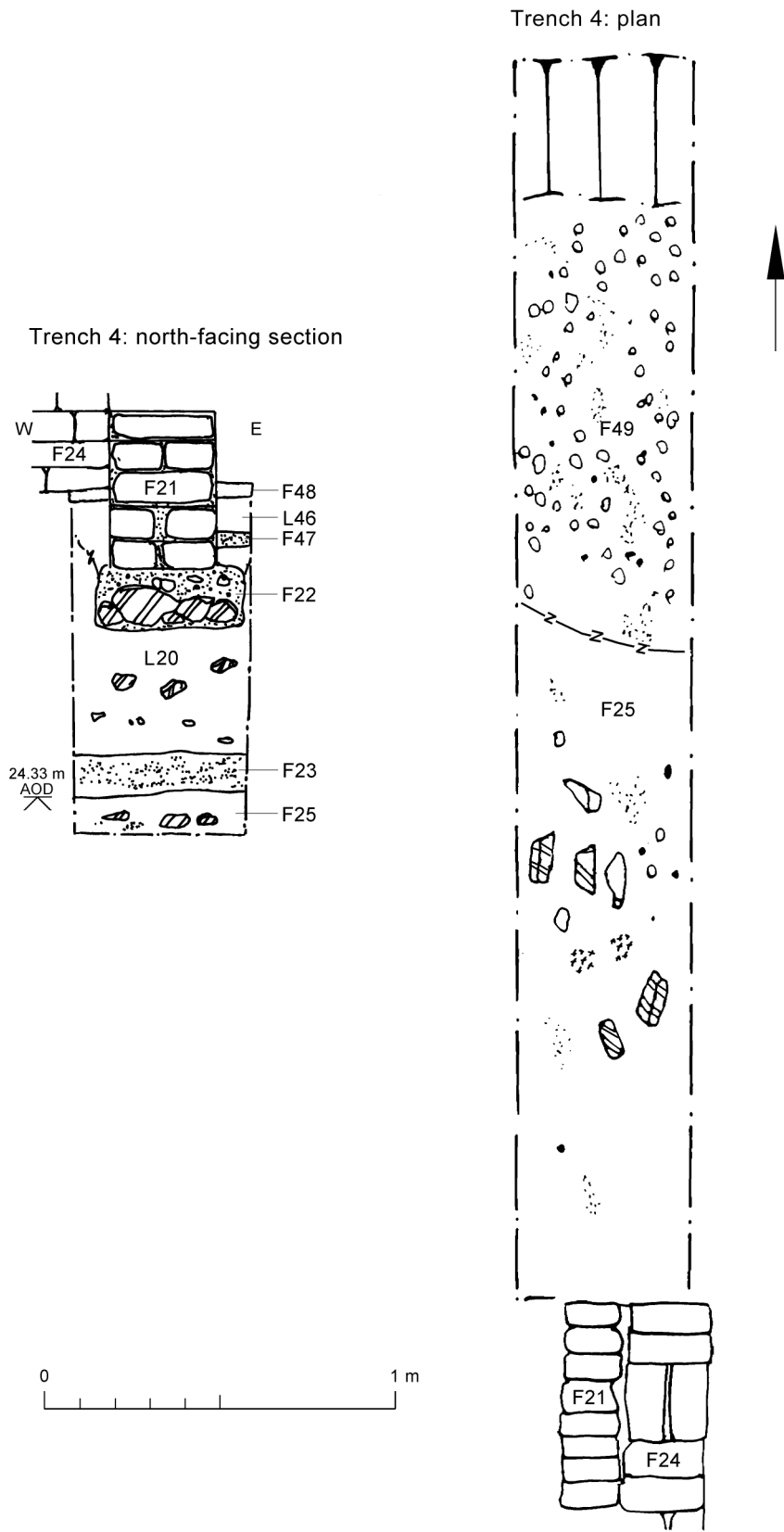
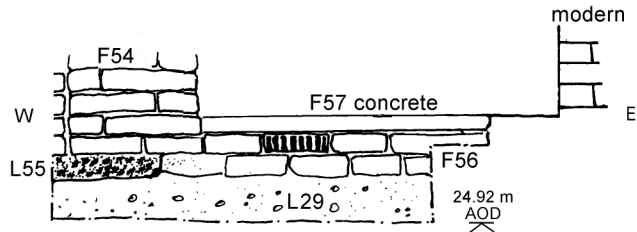
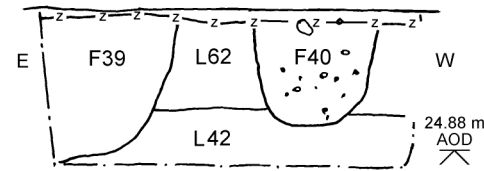


Fig 6 Trench 4: section and plan.

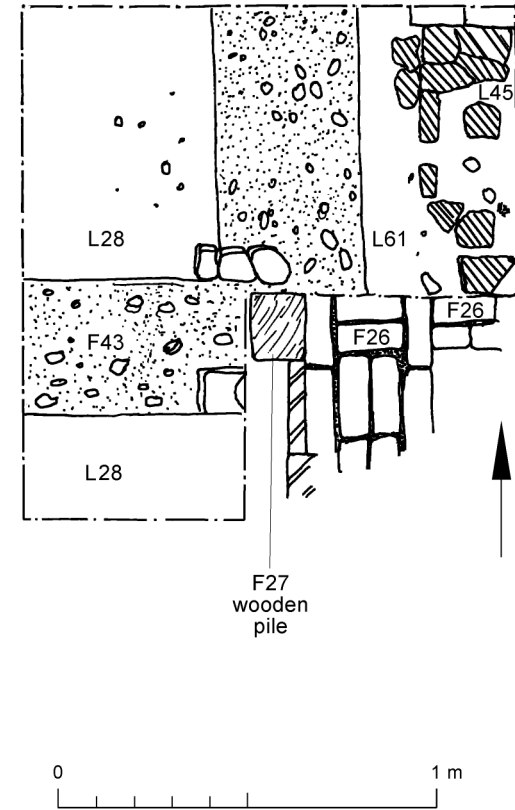
Trench 5: south-facing section



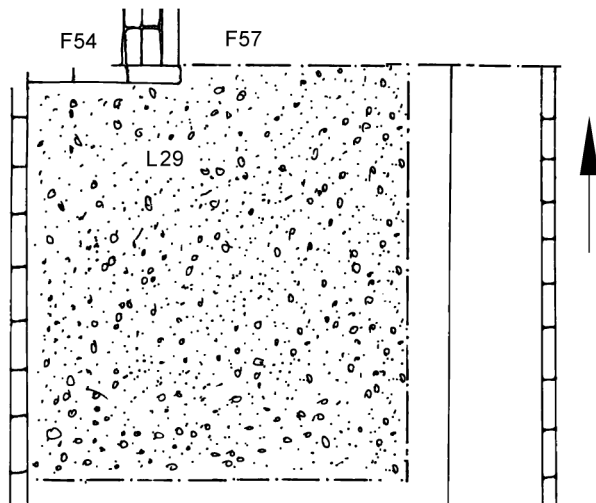
Trench 6: north-facing section



Trench 7: plan



Trench 5: plan



Trench 6: plan

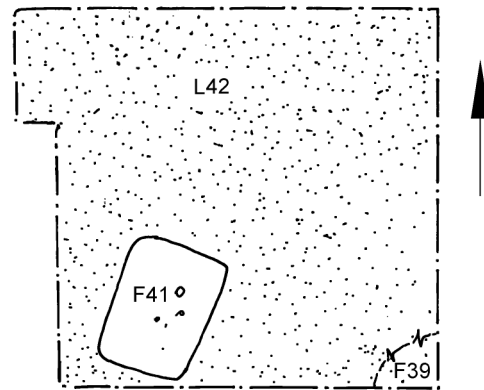
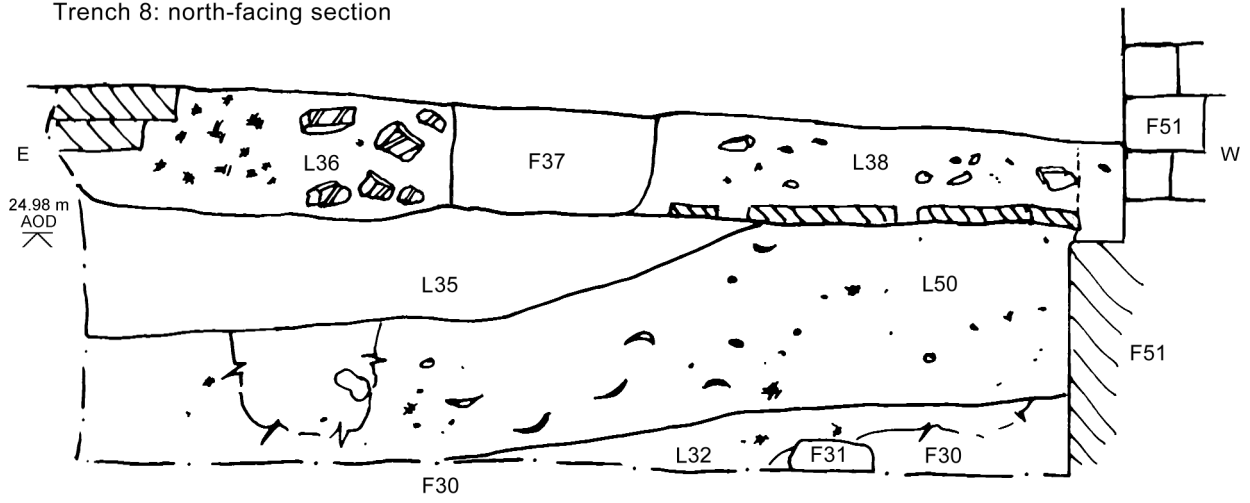


Fig 7 Trench 5: section and plan; Trench 6: section and plan; Trench 7: plan.

Trench 8: north-facing section



Trench 8: plan

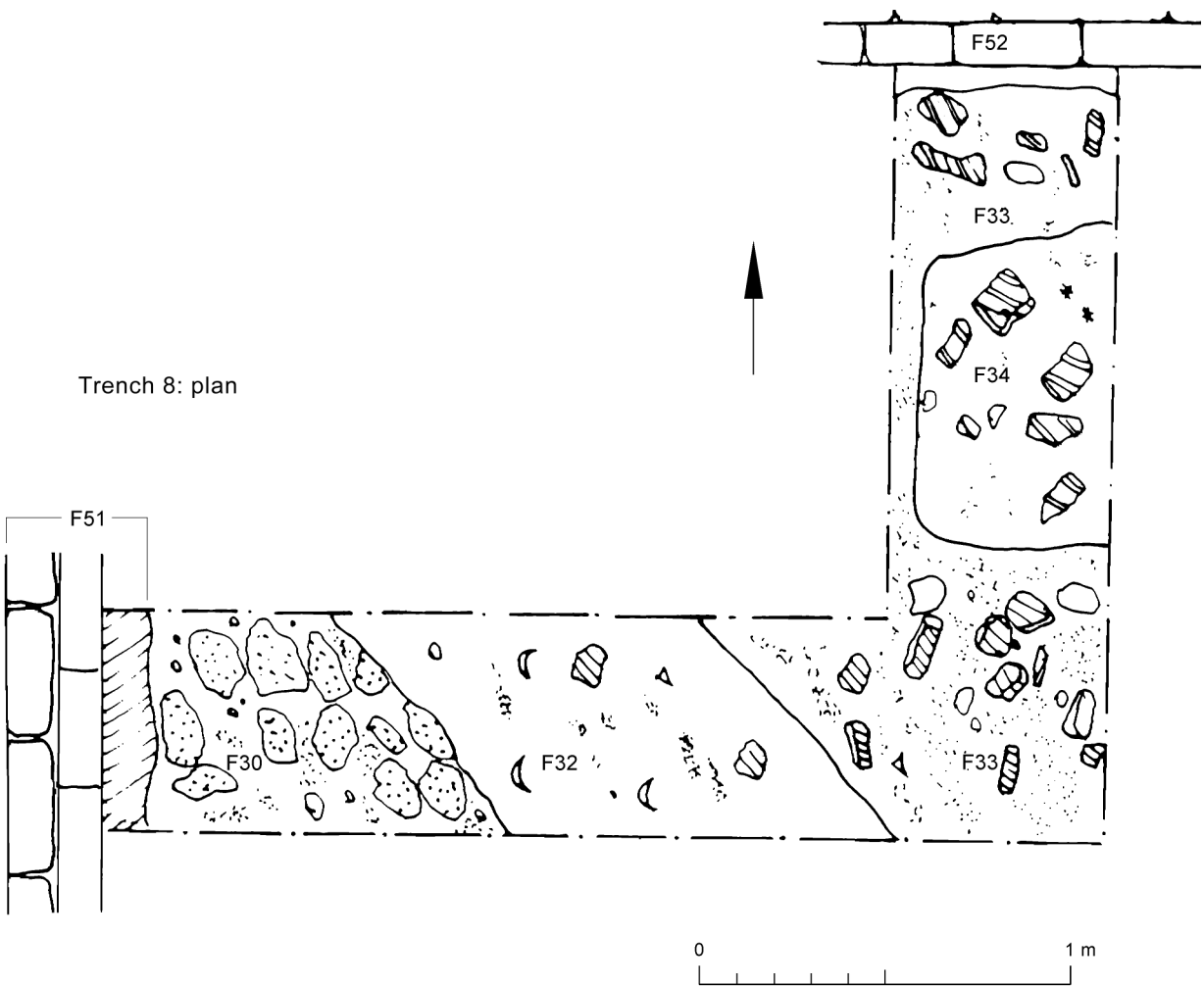


Fig 8 Trench 8: section and plan.

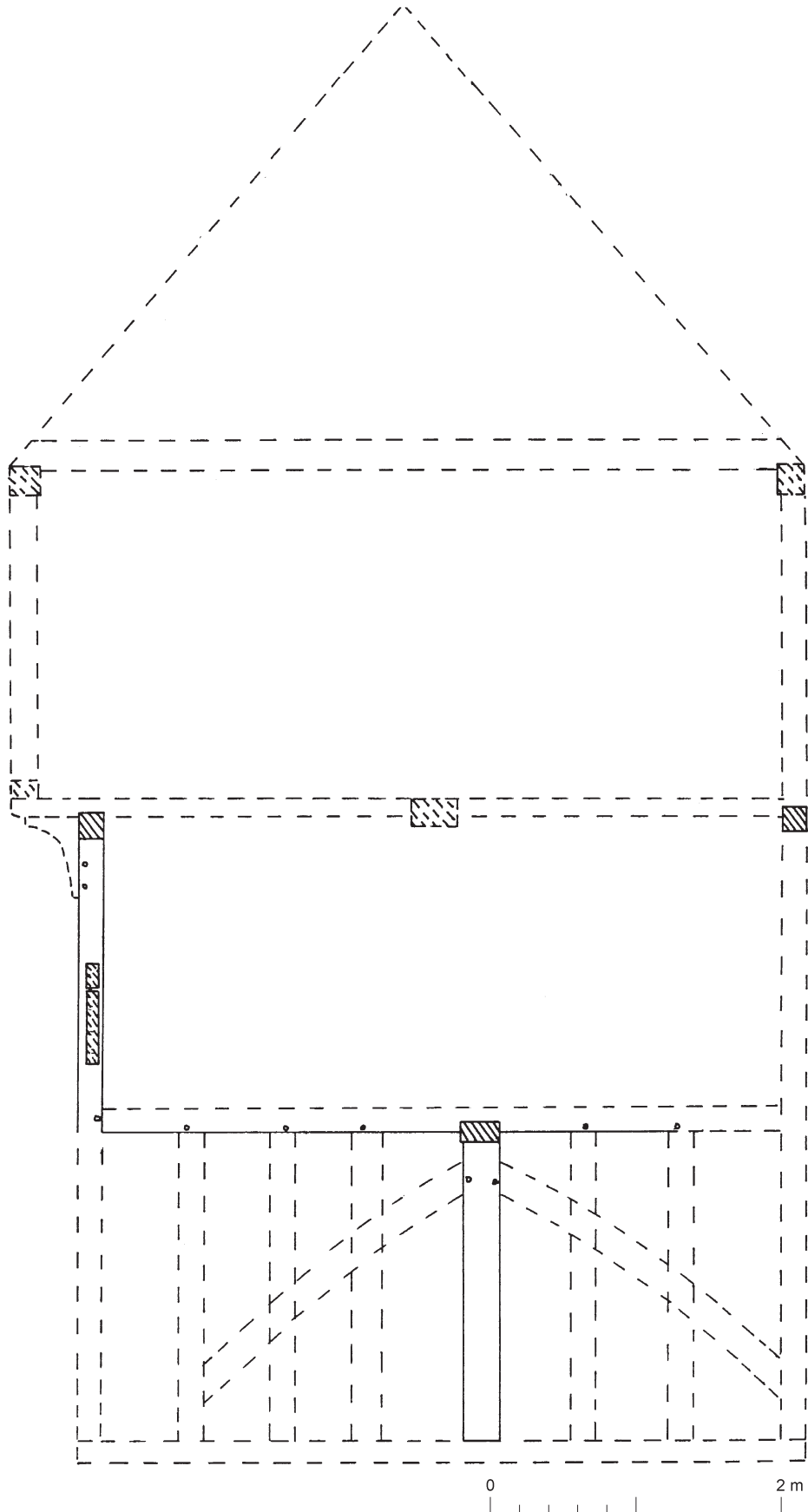


Fig 9 Reconstruction of the 15th- to 17th-century building at no 3 Queen Street: southern elevation (by R Shackle).

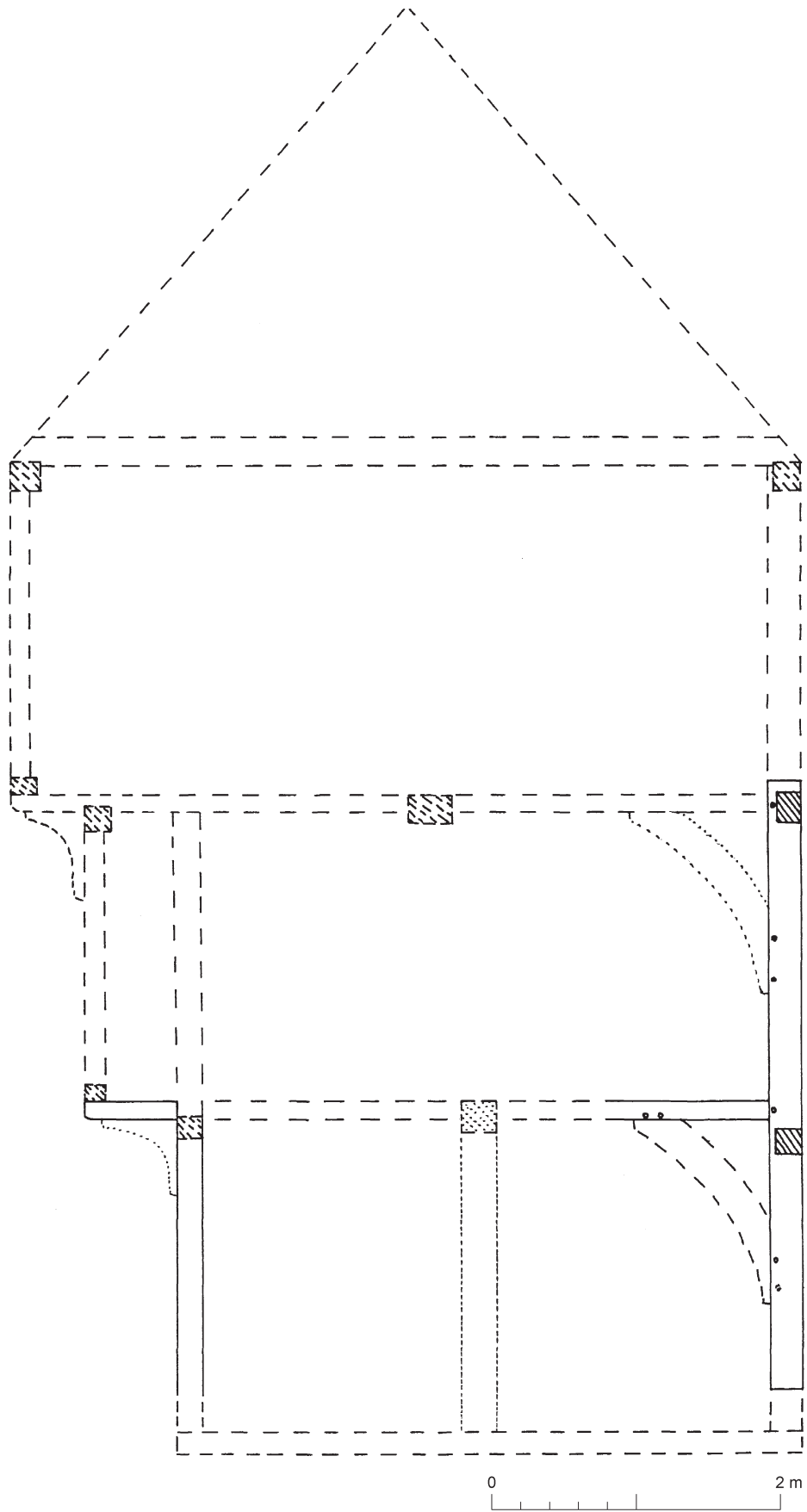


Fig 10 Reconstruction of no 3 Queen Street: cross-section (by R Shackle).

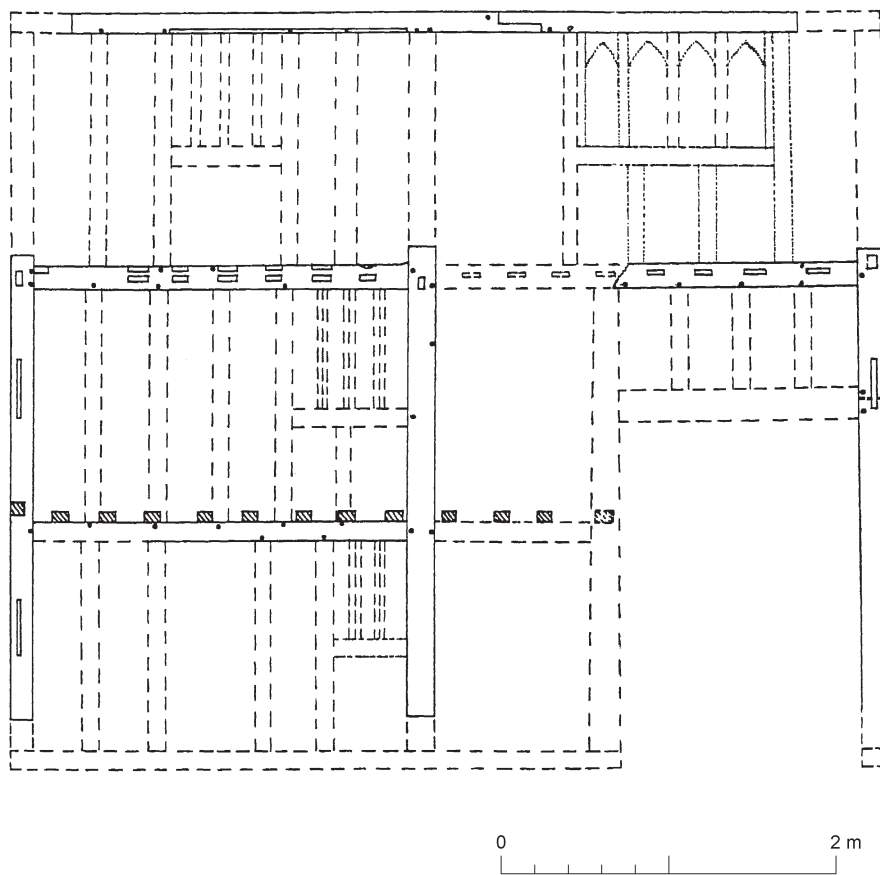


Fig 11 Reconstruction of timber frame of no 3 Queen Street:  
rear elevation with fragments of elaborate oriel window  
(by R Shackle).



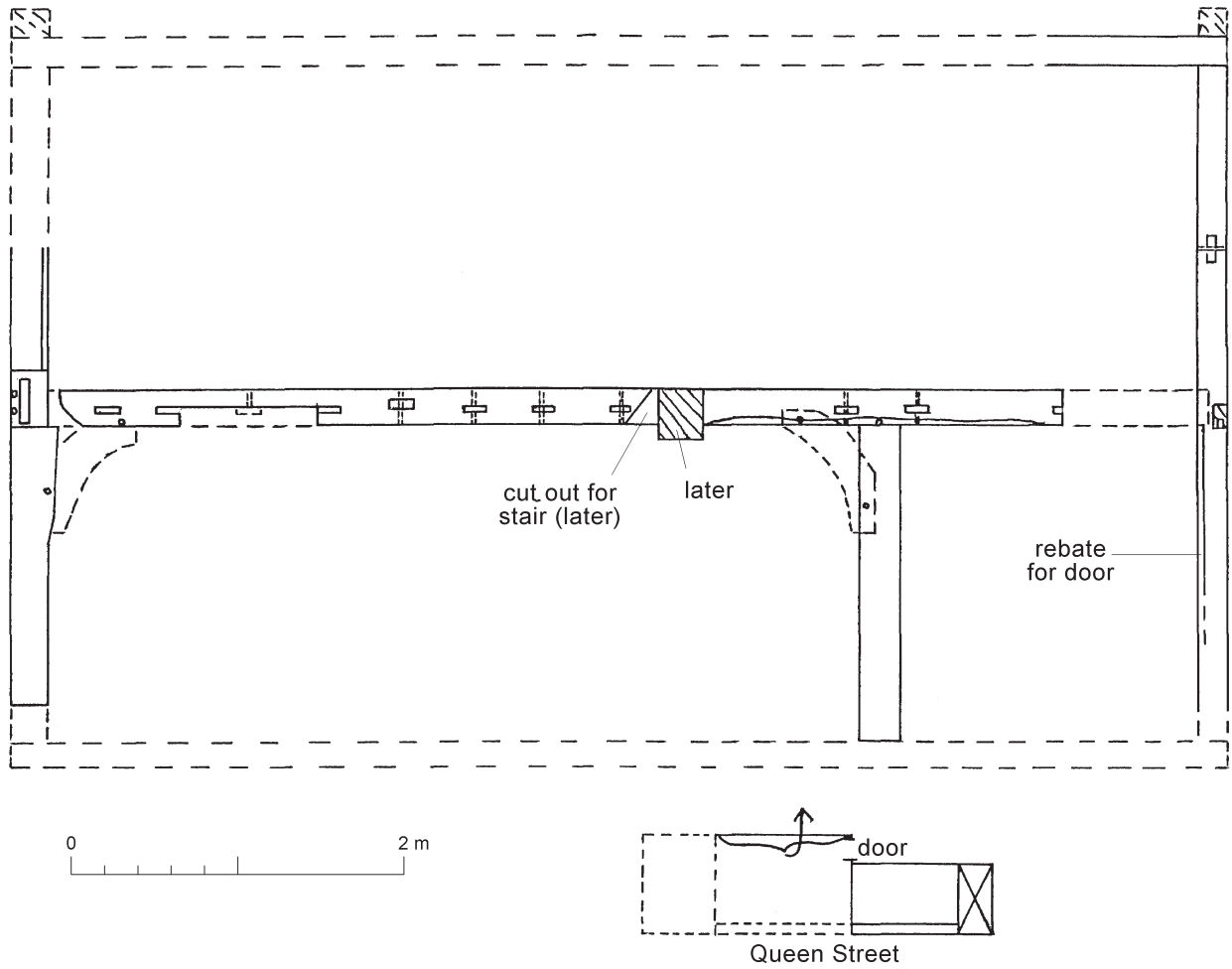


Fig 12 Rear elevation of no 2 Queen Street (by R Shackle).

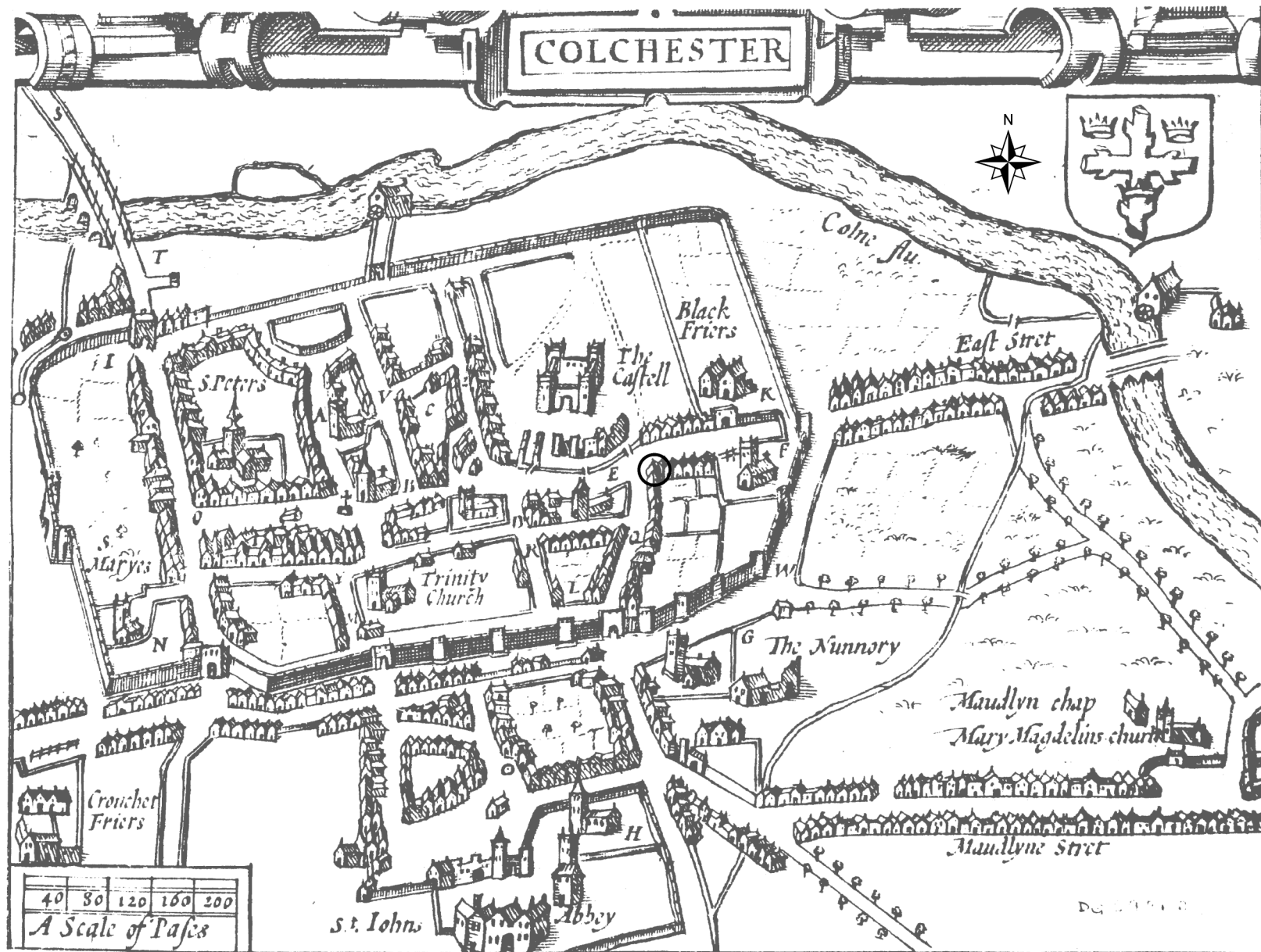


Fig 13 1610 Speed map of Colchester, showing locations of nos 1-3 Queen Street (circled). (Not to scale.)

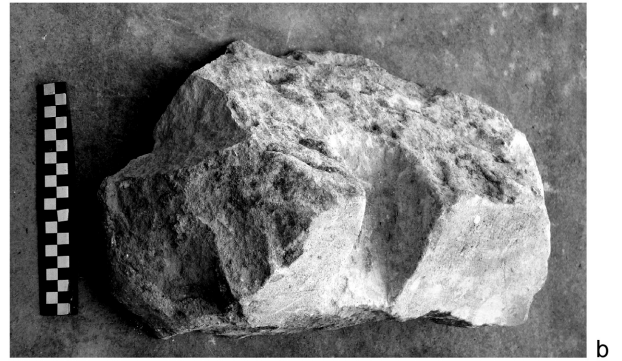
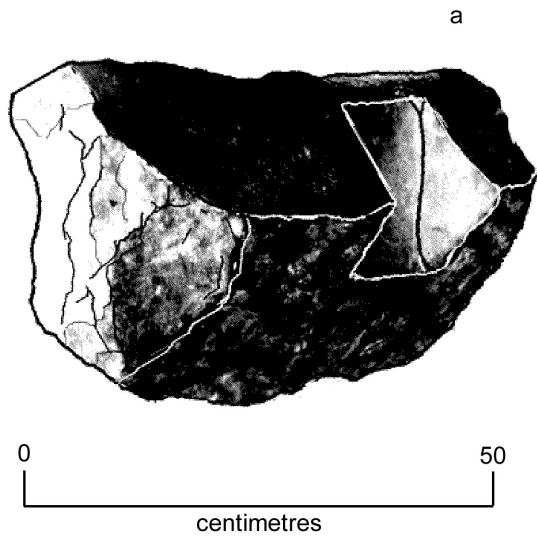


Fig 14 Carved limestone block from Trench 8:  
a drawing  
b photo. of ??  
c photo. of ??

**Essex Historic Environment Record/  
Essex Archaeology and History**

**Summary sheet**

<b>Site address:</b> Colchester Visitor Centre, nos 1-3 Queen Street, Colchester, Essex	
<b>Parish:</b> Colchester	<b>District:</b> Colchester
<b>NGR:</b> TL 99958 25226	<b>Site code:</b> 2005.143
<b>Type of work:</b> archaeological watching brief	<b>Site director/group:</b> Colchester Archaeological Trust
<b>Date of work:</b> May-July 2005	<b>Size of area investigated:</b> 9 trenches, covering altogether 11m <sup>2</sup> , average depth 0.67m
<b>Location of finds/curating museum:</b> Colchester Museums	<b>Funding source:</b> Colchester Borough Council
<b>Further seasons anticipated?</b> No	<b>Related EHER/UAD nos:</b>
<b>Final report:</b> CAT Report 376 and summary in <i>EAH</i>	
<b>Periods represented:</b> Roman, early medieval, late medieval, post-medieval, Victorian, modern	
<p><b>Summary of fieldwork results:</b>  <i>The watching brief was focussed on the ground floor where nine trenches of various depths and dimensions were excavated by the building contractor. The groundworks were mainly in no 3, but there were also two trenches in no 2 and one in the property's inner courtyard to the rear. In places, the works provided very limited exposures of what appears to be the remains of a substantial Roman house in the form of a robber trench for a foundation and Roman demolition debris. There were no surviving medieval deposits other than the 12th- to 13th-century robber trench. The fabric of the standing building shows no 1 to be a late 18th-century construction (originally one unit incorporating the present 67-67a High Street). It is a red-brick two-storey house with attic. Nothing appears to survive above ground of its predecessor. No 2 is also mainly a rebuilt red-brick edifice of the late 18th century although it seems to be of late medieval origin and was once part of no 3. The southern part of the Visitor Centre (no 3) was erected in the 15th or possibly early 16th century. Originally it was a three-storied, jettied, half-timbered building with a narrow carriage archway at its southern end. A large red-brick chimney was inserted into nos 2 and 3 in the early 17th century.</i></p>	
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b> No	
<b>Author of summary:</b> M I Górnjak	<b>Date of summary:</b> July 2006