

Historic Structure Record

The Cellars of Heckfield
Place, Bramshill Road
Heckfield,
Hook, Hampshire

December 2010

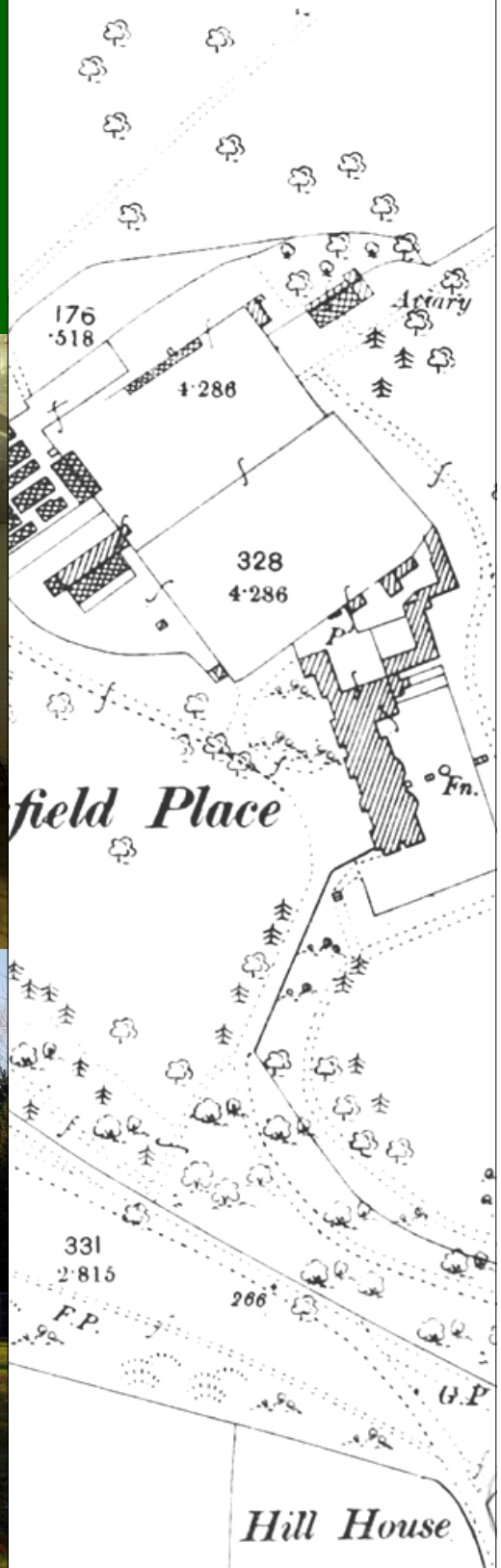


by
Martin Wilson

for
Operis Construction Ltd

Souterrain

Archaeological Services Ltd



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**The Cellars of
Heckfield Place, Bramshill Road, Heckfield,
Hook, Hampshire RG27 0LD**

Planning Application Reference No. 10/01861/MAJOR

by

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Souterrain Project No. SOU10/144

December 2010

for

Operis Construction Ltd

(cover map: reproduced from the 1871 Ordnance Survey map of Hampshire: 1:2,500
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Affiliated to the Council for British Archaeology (CBA)

CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	3
PREFACE	4
1. SCOPE OF THE REPORT	5
2. INTRODUCTION	5
3. SITE LOCATION	5
4. HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE	5
5. METHODOLOGY	6
6. OBSERVATIONS	6
7. COPYRIGHT AND CONFIDENTIALITY	7

List of Figures

- Figure 1 Location of site.
- Figure 2 Extract: 1819 Heckfield Place Estate Map
- Figure 3 Extract: 1840 Tithe Map
- Figure 4 Extract: 1871 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500 scale map
- Figure 5 Location of cellars and phase plan
- Figure 6 Photograph Viewpoints (Figs. 7 to 22)
- Figure 7 Viewpoint 1. The west end of the mansion house showing the remains of the westernmost cells (C and E)
- Figure 8 Viewpoint 2. Remains of barrel vaults C (left) and E (right)
- Figure 9 Viewpoint 3. Detail of vault: south-east corner of cell E
- Figure 10 Viewpoint 4. Phase 2 wall and corridor at the south end of cell A
- Figure 11 Viewpoint 5. Vaulted corridor, showing access from ground floor and doorway to cell D
- Figure 12 Viewpoint 6. Remains of barrel vault: cell C
- Figure 13 Viewpoint 7. Remains of barrel vault: cell C
- Figure 14 Viewpoint 8. Cell A: blocked passage between cells A and B
- Figure 15 Viewpoint 9. Interior of cell A
- Figure 16 Viewpoint 10. Interior of cell B and Phase 2 corridor along south wall
- Figure 17 Viewpoint 11. Interior of cell B, showing blocked light in north wall and secondary phase reinforcement arch
- Figure 18 Viewpoint 12. Interior of cell B, showing blocked passage from cell A (secondary reinforcement partition walls to left and right)
- Figure 19 Viewpoint 13. Interior of cell B. Blocked light in north wall
- Figure 20 Viewpoint 14. Interior of cell B: exposed brick 'toe' foundation of north wall
- Figure 21 Viewpoint 16. Relieving arches (above the barrel vault of cell D) in the lower west wall face of the mansion house
- Figure 22 Viewpoint 17. Relieving arches (above the barrel vault of cell D) in the lower west wall face of the mansion house

Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

The report was written by Martin Wilson BA Hons, MIfA, MIEnvSc, MEAGE, FSA Scot, who also undertook the building recording and analysis. The illustrations were produced by Mercedes Planas BA, MSc, MIfA, ICES.

1. SCOPE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report comprises a record of the historic cellar structures at Heckfield Place, Heckfield, Hampshire (NGR SU 730 612), made by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) on the 1st December 2010, during, and prior, to groundwork for an extension to the mansion house building (Fig. 1).

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Planning permission (Reference 10/01861/MAJOR) was granted by Hart District Council (HDC) on the 10th November 2010. The cellar area forms a part of combined development proposals which will include an extension to the basement area to the west of the historic Manor House, and is itemised as: '3. Demolition and re-construction of north gable wall of Manor House'.
- 2.2 Due to the archaeological sensitivity of the locality, Condition 04 of the planning consent required the applicant to secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), in order to enable archaeological records to be made within the area of new ground works. This was in accordance with the Department of Environment's Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS 5 2010), Hampshire County Council (HCC) policy and the saved policy CON11 of the Hart District Local Plan.
- 2.3 During a site visit on the 26th November 2010, Hampshire County Council's Planning Archaeologist (archaeological representative for Hart District Council) advised that a Historic Building Record would be the appropriate form of archaeological mitigation for the historic basement cellar area. A WSI would not be required for this element of the archaeological works.
- 2.4 The work was commissioned by Operis Construction Ltd, on behalf of Pomegranate Investments Ltd, the planning applicant and site owner.

3. SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Heckfield Place Park comprises 25.4 hectares classed as a Grade II Registered Park and Garden (England), No. 4037. It is located on high ground, the lower slopes of the estate facing northeast over the valley of the River Whitewater.
- 3.2 The mansion house is situated in the south-west part of the estate at approximately 79.50m above mean sea level. The cellars are located on the west side of, and partly beneath, the mansion house (Fig.1), covering an area of approximately 126sq.m.

4. HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

- 4.1 Little is known about the site on which Heckfield Place was built. In an historical gazetteer of the locality compiled in 1843, J G Robertson recalled: "a handsome modern building, worthy of a visit for its own merits" which occupied "the most sheltered corner of the Heath [i.e. Heckfield Heath], deeply embowered in the wood"¹. The Listing Building text for the Grade II edifice describes a 'large mansion of classical form, its earlier origin masked by 19th century restoration'².

¹ *A Tour Round Reading Being A Guide to its Environs*, J G. Robertson (ed), 1843, p.150)

² <http://www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-136778-heckfield-place-heckfield> [accessed: 16.06.2010]

- 4.2 The house was built by John Lefevre, a wealthy businessman of Huguenot descent who purchased the land in 1785 for the purpose of building a country house. Lefevre is thought to have built Heckfield Place for his daughter Helena. He had, in the previous year, bought The Grove, a small early 17th century mansion house which stood about 500m to the north-west of the development site. The Grove appears to have been the most significant property in this area at that time; it was demolished sometime around 1818 and archaeologically excavated in the 1990s³. Lefevre died in 1790, the same year of the completion of Heckfield Place. Helena and her husband inherited the estate⁴, adding two wings to the house in c.1818. The terraces and pleasure grounds were also laid out in the early 19th century creating the setting of a country house.

It is understood that there was a farmhouse somewhere in the vicinity of Heckfield Place called Baker's Farm, and it has been assumed that the stable yard and the cellars and at the northwest end of the house belonged to this farm⁵. Nineteenth century maps (Figs. 2 to 4) reveal little change to the layout of the mansion house.

5. METHODOLOGY

- 5.1 The archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and observed current Standard and Guidance⁶.
- 5.2 For ease of description, the main cellar structures are referred to as A to E in this report. Figure 5 shows the plan and suggested phasing of the structures, and Figure 6 shows the direction of photographic Viewpoints for subsequent Figures 7 to 22.
- 5.3 The photographic record comprises digital images and black and white prints, all of which are to be submitted as an archive, to Hampshire County Council's Archaeology and Historic Environment Record on completion of the project.
- 5.4 The Site Code/ Accessions Number allocated for this site by Hampshire County Council Museums Service is A2010.78

6. OBSERVATIONS

- 6.1 The cellar comprises two large barrel vaulted cells situated directly beneath the northeast corner of the mansion house (Fig.5, A and B), and three smaller barrel vaulted cells to the west and south west (Fig.5, C to E). There appears to have been two phases of construction, followed by alterations and additions made in the 19th century and in more recent years.
- 6.2 The cells hang off a single corridor of irregular width (Fig.5, 16 and 21), two on the south side (D and E) and three on the north side (A, B and C). The complex is accessed via a flight of steps at the northwest end of the ground floor (Figs.5 and 11).

³ By the North Hampshire Historical and Archaeological Society; HCCAHR Summary for 33255.

⁴ Victoria County History, *A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 4*, Author William Page (editor), 1911, Pages, 44-51, 'Parishes: Heckfield', A History of the County of Hampshire: Volume 4 (1911), pp. 44-51. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=56743&strquery=heckfield+place> Date accessed: 14 June 2010.

⁵ *History of Heckfield Place*, <http://www.heckfieldplace.com/v2/heckfield-place-hotel-hampshire-hook/heckfield-place-history> [accessed: 16.06.2010]

⁶ Standard & Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2001); Standard & guidance for Archaeological Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings and Structures; English Heritage (2006).

- 6.3 The two large cells, A and B (Fig.5), possibly represent the earliest building phase. Symmetrical in form, their original dimensions are c.7.45m x c.3.45m. Each was served by a light in the north wall (Figs.15 and 17); the one in cell B was later blocked in. It is probable that cell B was the inner store and accessed only through cell A and via a door in the dividing wall (Figs.14 and 18), the latter which was later blocked in when an access corridor was created from the south end of cell A. At some stage the roof structure of cell B was reinforced by three brick arched ribs, two of which were extended to ground level as internal partitions (Figs.16 and 18). A brick built shaft for a dumb waiter was a modern addition to cell A (Figs.5 and 10). Bricks used in the vaulting are in English Bond, comprised of alternating courses of stretchers and headers; brick dimensions being generally 222 x 100 x 60mm. Bricks used in the secondary phase are generally 222 x 100 x 70mm or 222 x 110 x 70mm. The height of cell A was c. 2.44m and cell B was 2.36m although the floor is likely to have been re-surfaced. Opening up works in the floor of cell B revealed the 'toe' foundation of the north wall to comprise at least three courses of brick (Fig.20).
- 6.4 Cells C, D and E (Fig. 5) probably represent a single construction episode. Cell D was separated from Cell C by a short length of barrel vaulted corridor (2.75m length x 2.29m width x 4.2m height; Fig.21). Cells C and D are partially situated beneath the 19th century west wing extension of the mansion house. There was no evidence of another cell to the west of cell C. As with cells A and B, the bricks used in the vaulting comprise alternating courses of stretchers and headers, and brick dimensions are generally 222 x 100 x 60mm.
- 6.5 Cell C (Fig. 5) measured c.4.28 x 1.9m and appears to have been appended to the west wall of Cell A. Most of the structure had been demolished at the time of recording although there was still evidence of the barrel vault (Figs. 7, 8, 12 and 13), its overall height being approximately 2.25m. Cell D measured approximately 4.78 x 2.03m; it was inaccessible, having been reinforced by brickwork throughout. Two relieving arches were exposed in the lower west wall face of the mansion house above the barrel vault of cell D (Figs.21 and 22).
- 6.6 Only the lower part of the east wall of cell E remained (Figs. 7, 8 and 9), though is thought to have been similar in dimensions to cell D.
- 6.7 There was no evidence to suggest that the cellars belonged to a previous farm building. It is reasonable to infer from the evidence, that the two larger cells (A and B) belonged to the original design of the 18th century mansion house, while other, smaller vaults were appended not long afterwards.

7. COPYRIGHT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

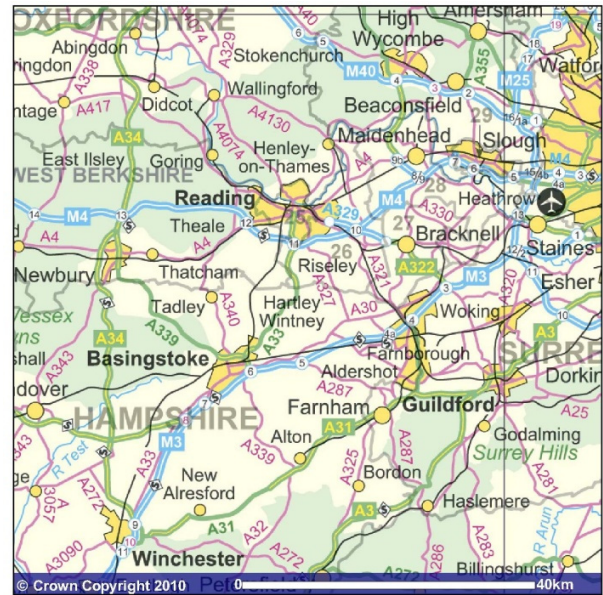
- 7.1 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd will retain full copyright of commissioned reports and project documents under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it will provide an exclusive licence to the Owner in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the WSI. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988. A licence is granted to Hampshire County Council's Archaeology & Historic Building Record (AHBR) for the use of all reports arising from projects for planning purposes and *bona fide* research requests. Souterrain undertakes to respect all requirements for confidentiality about the Owner's proposals provided that these are clearly stated. It is expected that owners respect

Souterrain's and the Institute for Archaeologists' general ethical obligations not to suppress significant archaeological data for an unreasonable period.

22nd December 2010

Fig. 1: Location of Site

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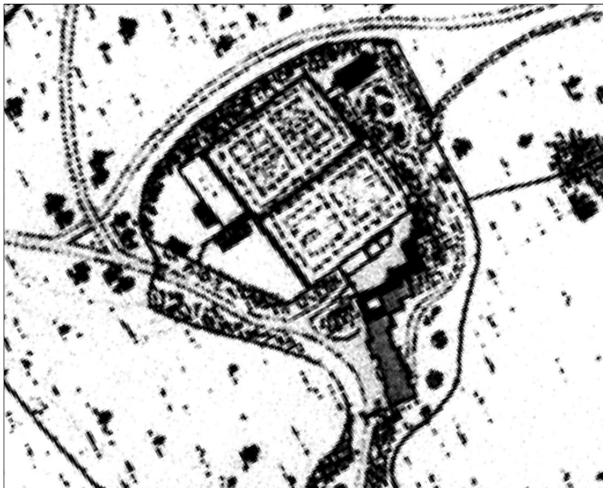


Fig.2. Extract: 1819 Heckfield Place Estate Map

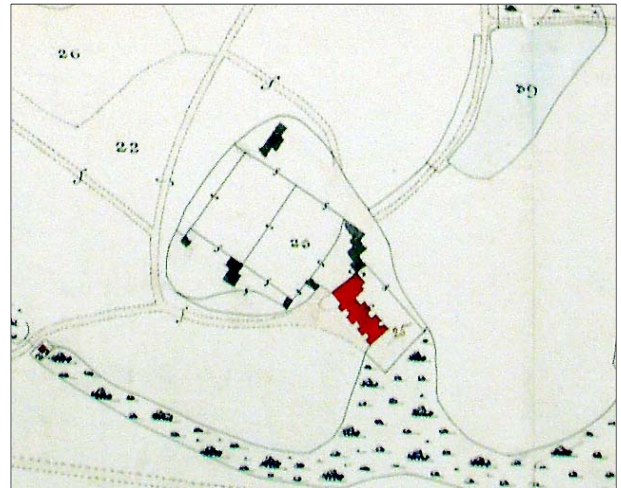


Fig.3. Extract: 1840 Tithe Map. Courtesy of Hampshire Record Office (HRO 2/M65/F7/114/2)

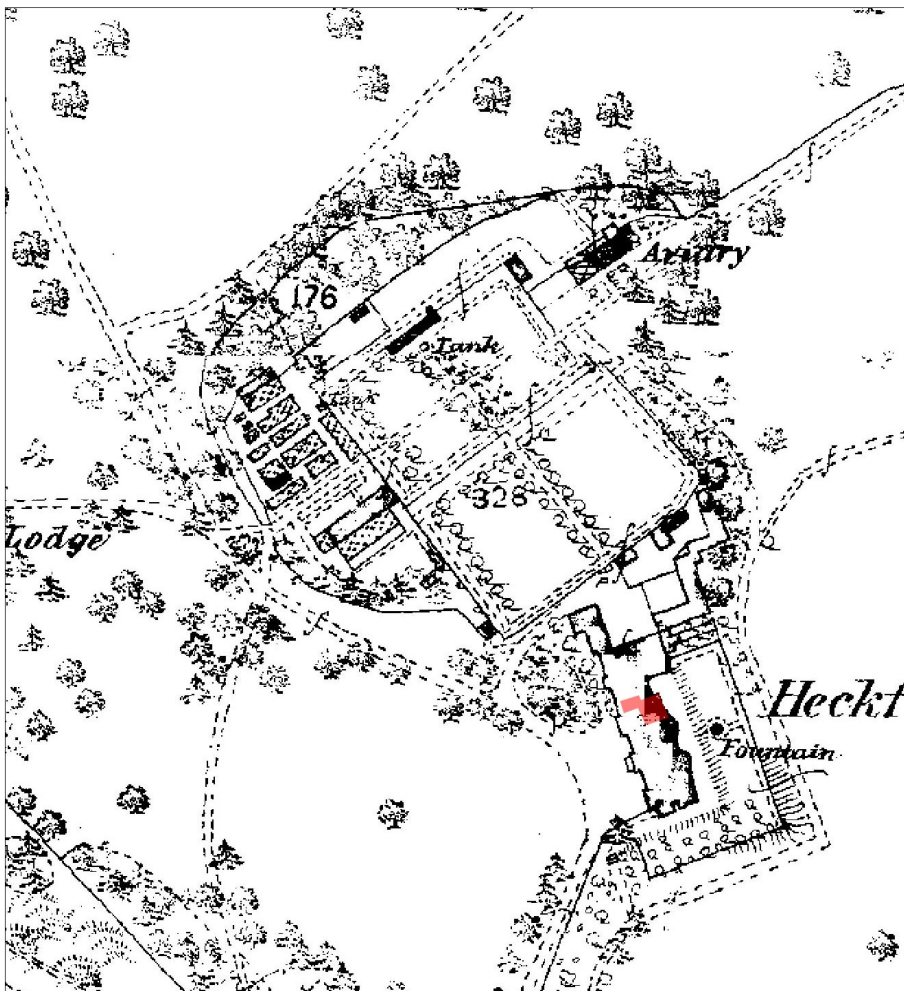
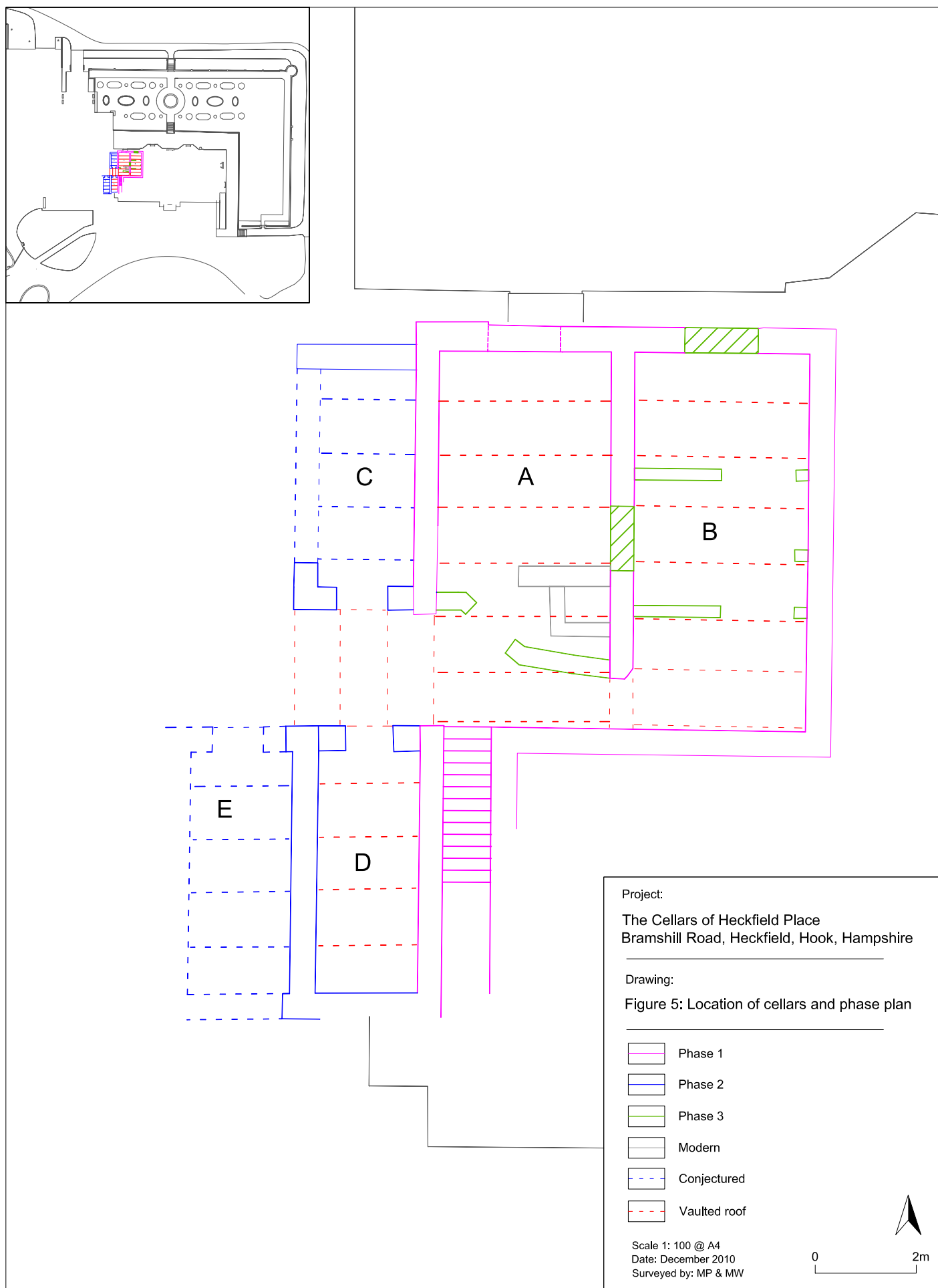


Fig.4. Extract: 1871 Ordnance Survey, 1:2,500 scale map
(approximate extent of Application Area in light red)

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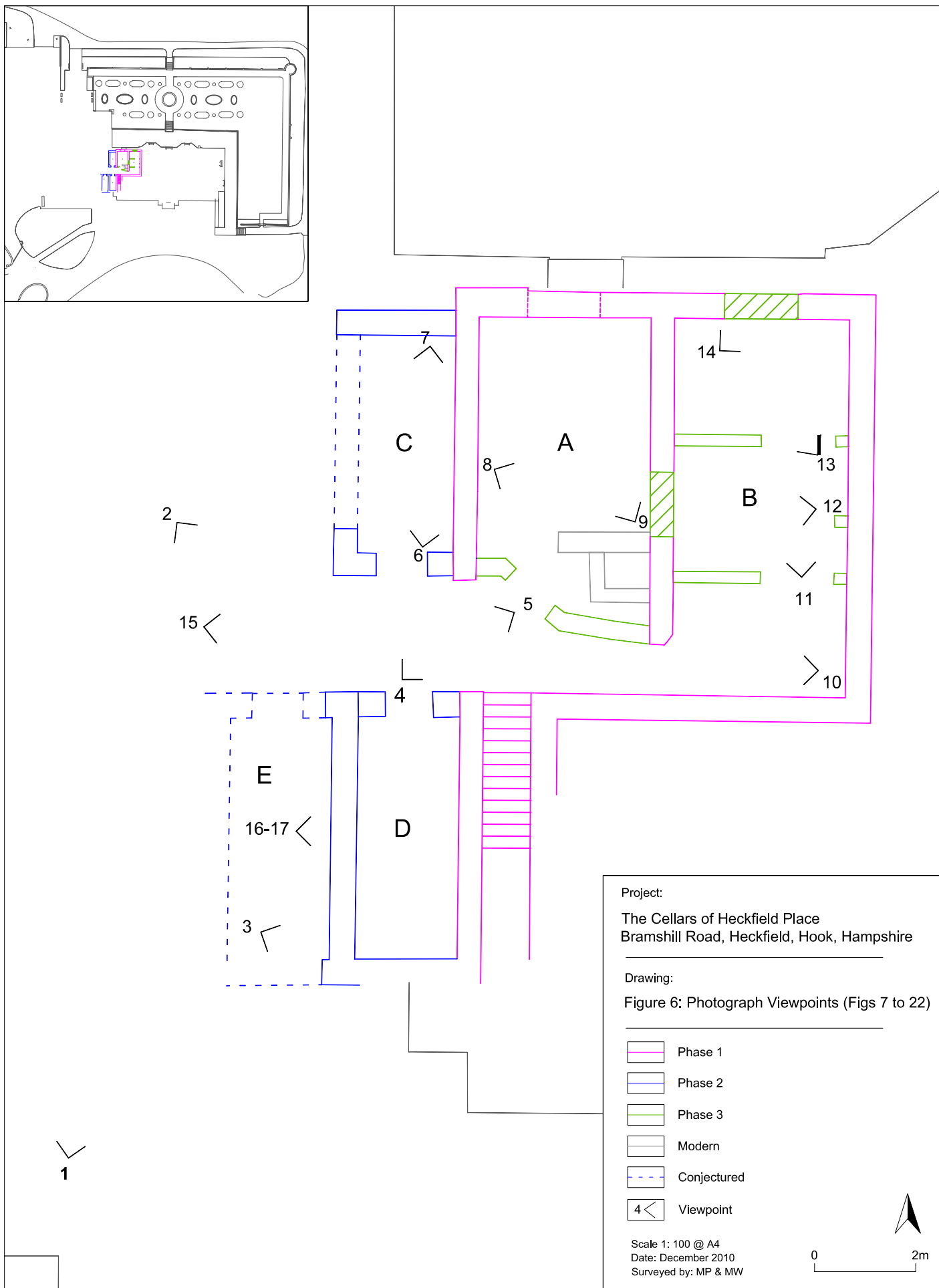




Fig. 7. Viewpoint 1. The west end of the mansion house showing the remains of the westernmost cells (C and E)



Fig. 8. Viewpoint 2. Remains of barrel vaults C (left) and E (right)



Fig. 9. Viewpoint 3. Detail of vault: south-east corner of cell E



Fig. 10. Viewpoint 4. Phase 2 wall and corridor at the south end of cell A (modern 'dumb waiter' beyond doorway to left)

Fig. 11. (below) Viewpoint 5. Vaulted corridor, showing access from ground floor and doorway to cell D



**Fig.12. Viewpoint 6.
Remains of barrel vault: cell C**



**Fig.13. (below) Viewpoint 7.
Remains of barrel vault: cell C**





Fig.14. Viewpoint 8. Cell A: blocked passage between cells A and B

Fig.15. (below) Viewpoint 9. Interior of cell A





Fig.16. (above) Viewpoint 10. Interior of cell B and Phase 2 corridor along south wall



Fig.17. (left) Viewpoint 11. Interior of cell B, showing blocked light in north wall and secondary phase reinforcement arch



Fig.18. Viewpoint 12. Interior of cell B, showing blocked passage from cell A (secondary reinforcement partition walls to left and right)



Fig.19. Viewpoint 13. Interior of cell B. Blocked light in north wall



Fig.20. Viewpoint 14. Interior of cell B: exposed brick 'toe' foundation of north wall



Fig.21. Viewpoint 15. Barrel vaulted corridor flanked by cells C (left) and D (right)



Figs.21 (top) and 22 (bottom) Viewpoints 16 and 17. Relieving arches (above the barrel vault of cell D) in the lower west wall face of the mansion house