

CODNOR CASTLE, DERBYSHIRE EARTHWORK ANALYSIS

SURVEY REPORT

Magnus Alexander and Jonathan Millward



**CODNOR CASTLE
CODNOR
DERBYSHIRE**

EARTHWORK ANALYSIS: SURVEY REPORT

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SUMMARY

This report describes the results of an earthwork survey at Codnor Castle, a fortified medieval residence in Derbyshire. The building remains consist of a substantial but decayed residential block that formed part of an Upper Court which was originally surrounded by a moat, with a Lower Court to the south. The earliest fabric is probably early 13th century with 14th-century additions. The residential block and the Lower Court are probably also 14th-century but this is uncertain. Development continued until the early 17th century and by the mid 17th century stone was being removed for building. This survey demonstrated that in the 12th century the moat could have contained water right around the Upper Court and that there were probably medieval garden enclosures to the south-west. The northern part of the Upper Court was perhaps remodelled in the 14th century and the moat here filled to create gardens. It was probably at about this time that the Lower Court was enclosed; the moat remained but the earlier gardens probably became less significant. To the east the gardens developed into the 17th century, with the creation of a substantial terrace and mount, but they may have been left unfinished.

CONTRIBUTORS

The survey was undertaken by Magnus Alexander of English Heritage's Archaeological Survey and Investigation Team, Cambridge and Jonathan Millward whilst on an EPPIC placement with that team. The photographs, illustrations and report were produced by Magnus Alexander.

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ARCHIVE LOCATION

The archive consists of a single field plan. This has been deposited with the NMR, Swindon. The digital archive is currently held on the English Heritage server, Cambridge.

DATE OF SURVEY

The survey was undertaken between 22nd October and 9th November, and on the 20th and 21st of November 2007. The earthwork plan was prepared during the spring of 2008 and checked in the field on the 14th and 15th of May 2008.

Cover: Part of the South Front. The original blocked entrance lies in shadow to the left of centre with the more complete bastion to the left, the damaged bastion in the centre and remains of one of the corner towers to the right. The residential tower block rises up behind.

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	I
TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY	2
PREVIOUS RESEARCH	3
DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE FOR THE HISTORY OF THE SITE	4
Early history	4
The Greys	5
The Lords Grey of Codnor	8
The Zouches	10
Later history	11
The settlement pattern	11
The castle buildings	12
The park	19
DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE REMAINS	21
Period 1: A precursor to the stone castle?	21
Period 2: The first stone castle	23
Period 3: Later developments	28
Period 4: Final developments	33
Later features	35
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS	38
METHODOLOGY	43
REFERENCES	45
Published sources	45
Maps	47
APPENDIX	48
Appendix I - Permanently Marked Survey Station	48

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Location	2
Figure 2: The location of the Time Team trenches showing masonry remains	13
Figure 3: The fireplace in the north wall of the residential block	15
Figure 4: The junction between the south front of the Upper Court (left) and the west wall of the Lower Court (right).	16
Figure 5: Profiles across the site	22
Figure 6: The central part of the survey area	23
Figure 7: Arch springs within the western bastion of the gatehouse, looking south	24
Figure 8: The south-western part of the survey area	27
Figure 9: The central northern part of the survey area	28
Figure 10: The central southern part of the survey area	30
Figure 11: The eastern part of the survey area	34
Figure 12: Viewshed analysis.	41
Figure 13: Survey reference plan	49

INTRODUCTION

In June 2006 the English Heritage (EH) Archaeological Survey and Investigation team (Cambridge) received a request from EH East Midlands Region to examine the earthworks at Codnor Castle (NMR SK44NW10, DHER 16001). The site had been brought to the attention of the producers of Time Team by the Codnor Castle Preservation Society and it was intended that an episode of the programme would be recorded during summer 2007. Though input from the Archaeological Survey and Investigation team was requested at this stage it proved impossible to undertake a full earthwork survey prior to the Time Team investigations which took place in June 2007 and provided an opportunity to highlight the investment by UK Coal in the consolidation and restoration of the standing remains of the castle.

Even though the Time Team investigations had already taken place a full analytical earthwork survey was still felt to be fundamental to gaining a proper understanding of the archaeological remains and to inform their future management. This survey extended the description and phasing of the site already put forward by Stewart Ainsworth and provided an unusual opportunity to feed information from recent excavations (Wessex Archaeology 2008) into the interpretation of the earthworks and the castle's wider landscape context.

The site consists of the ruinous remains of a substantial medieval residence, made up of two 'courts', with associated earthworks. The site is owned by UK Coal and much of the surrounding area was subject to opencast mining that has recently been reinstated. Most of the earthworks are a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM DRI00/315722) whilst the standing remains of the castle, the farmhouse and an associated building are all Grade II Listed (LB79044, 79045, 79046 respectively). In 1993 the Codnor Park Conservation Area was designated by Amber Valley District Council. This covered an area roughly equivalent to the castle's medieval park. The standing remains of the castle are on the Heritage at Risk register though consolidation work by UK Coal has significantly improved the situation. The farm buildings to the south-east of the site are currently occupied by a tenant of UK Coal. The site is accessible to the public though the buildings themselves are fenced off.

TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

Codnor is a village in the Amber Valley district of East Derbyshire and a former mining community, with a population of about 5,000. It is approximately 19km north-east of Derby, 23km north-west of Nottingham and lies close to the county's border with Nottinghamshire.

Codnor Castle is located at NGR SK 4335 4996 over 1km west of Codnor village. It stands at about 130m AOD on undulating grassland a little below the summit of a broad ridge. The land drops away markedly to the east and more gently to the south and there are extensive views over the Erewash Valley into Nottinghamshire.

Codnor Castle lies on the East Pennine Coal Measures, sedimentary rocks that comprise inter-bedded mudstones, siltstones and sandstones with subordinate beds of coal and ironstone. Ironstone outcrops locally and the remains of small scale surface workings are common in the area (BGS).

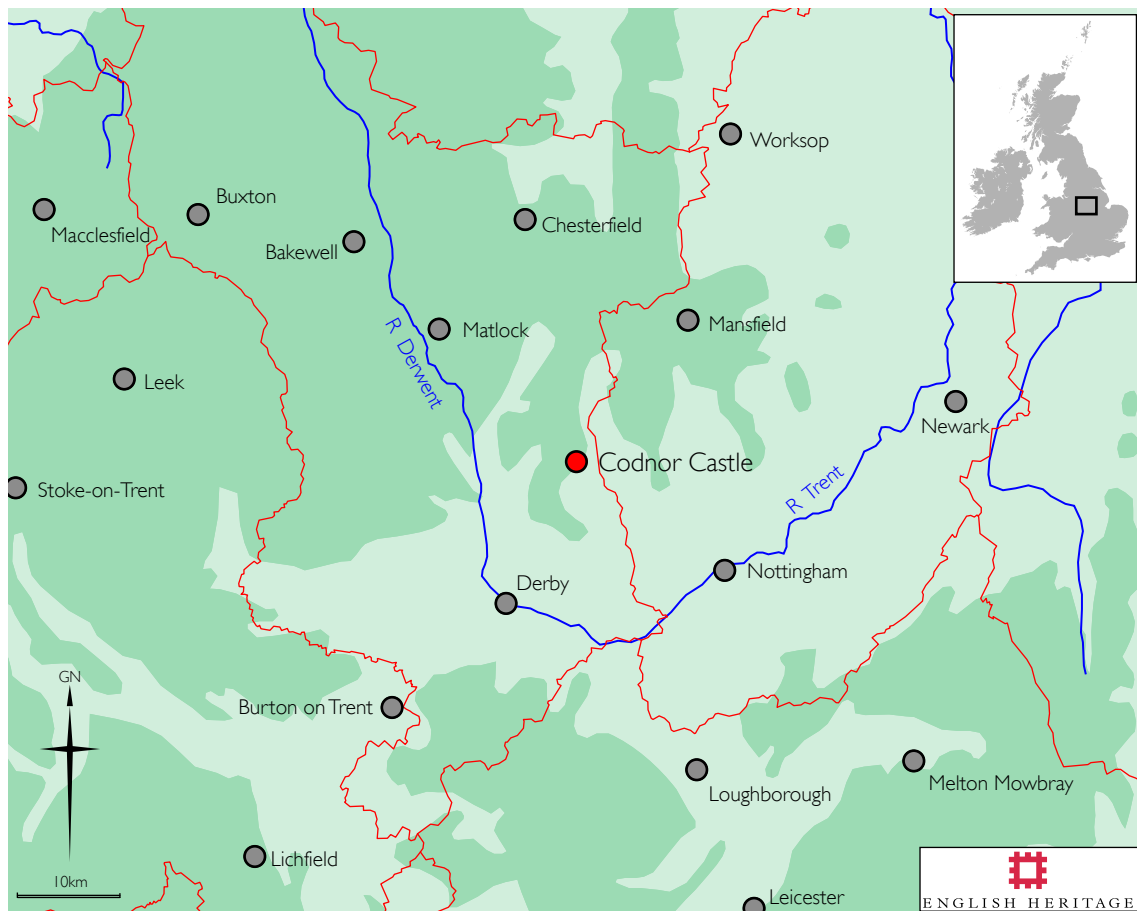


Figure 1: Location

PREVIOUS RESEARCH

The Victoria County History for Derbyshire does not cover Codnor in any detail but several articles relating to Codnor Castle were published in the late 19th and early 20th century. More recently the castle has been recorded by Pevsner (1986) and Emery (2000) and an MA dissertation has examined the available documentary evidence for the site, concentrating on the Greys (Meek 2002).

No details of any early archaeological activity, other than some 19th century finds have been recorded (Corfield 1893). A survey, carried out by Trent & Peak Archaeological Unit in 1986, involved record photography, metric survey of the standing remains and a basic survey of the earthworks (Franklin & Knappett 2007). A more detailed survey of the standing remains at the castle was undertaken by the architects ST Walker and Partners in 1993 and included photogrammetric and condition survey of all the standing fabric but was not investigative or interpretative (ST Walker and Partners 1993). A geophysical survey was undertaken by Dearne Valley Archaeological Services (DVAS) for Codnor Castle Preservation Society in March 2007 which identified a number of anomalies of possible archaeological origin within the area of the Upper Court of the castle (DVAS 2007, Wessex Archaeology 2008).

Time Team examined the site in June 2007. Their work involved the excavation of a number of trenches and documentary research (Wessex Archaeology 2008) as well as a Level 1 earthwork survey and analysis (English Heritage 2007) undertaken by Stewart Ainsworth of English Heritage's Archaeological Survey and Investigation team (York).

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE FOR THE HISTORY OF THE SITE

Early history

Codnor's history during the Anglo-Saxon period remains obscure. No Anglo-Saxon charters are known that relate to Codnor or any other estates in the vicinity and the first documentary reference to Codnor is in Domesday Book (DB).

Codnor's place-name is likely to be early, perhaps originating as early as the 5th century (Gelling & Cole 2000, xix). It consists of an unrecorded Old English (OE) personal name *Cod(d)a* combined with OE *over* (Cameron 1959, 434; Gelling & Cole 2000, 202). The element *over* describes a 'flat topped ridge with a convex shoulder' which was used with great consistency across the country and appears to be associated with ancient roads, probably arising from the perceptions of travellers (Gelling & Cole 2000, 199-200). Such could have been the case at Codnor Castle as the ridge it is sat upon only has this appearance when seen from the east by travellers along the Erewash Valley, a major through-route. This suggests that this ridge was the original bearer of the name, rather than the area occupied by the current village. Codnor's place-name is clearly topographical, describing its physical setting without any reference to buildings or settlement; 'such names should always be considered as potentially the earliest English ones in any region' (Gelling 1997, 126). It is likely that many topographical place-names actually referred to settlements at the topographic feature they describe rather than simply the feature itself and are thus 'quasi-habitative' (Gelling & Cole 2000, xvii), and they were 'regularly used for the main settlement in large conglomerate estates, within which there may be a number of less important settlements with habitative names' (Gelling 1997, 123). It is therefore possible that Codnor was an early Anglo-Saxon centre, possibly the caput of an estate.

At the time of DB (DB Derby 1978) Codnor was a part of the honor of Peverel together with Bolsover, Glapwell, 'Snodeswick', (South) Normanton, Shireland, Ufton (Fields), Heanor, Langley, 'Smithycote', Peak's Arse (Peak's Cavern), Bradwell, Hazelbridge, Litton, Hucklow, Abney, Waterfield, and (South) Wingfield, all in the Wapentake of Morleston in the east of the county as well as several other estates around the country. Peak's Arse was recorded as 'the land of William Peverel's castle', clearly the caput of the honor, but the entry describes a relatively small holding suggesting that the caput, and probably therefore the honor itself, was a recent Norman creation, rather than an established Anglo-Saxon territorial unit.

Codnor is recorded in DB in a single entry with Heanor, Langley and *Smithycote*, a 'lost' settlement apparently once about 1km east north-east of Loscoe where there were two fields known as 'Smithy Coats' (Cameron 1959, 434). They formed a discrete block of territory held from William Peverel by Warner who also held Shireland and Ufton (Fields). That Codnor is listed first implies it was the primary estate within the holding, either the caput or the most valuable. The names of the last two listed places are suggestive of secondary status; Langley most likely indicates a clearing in woodland, an assart, and Smithycote the dwelling site of a *cotarius*, a low status landholder.

DB hints that there may have been recent changes in the tenorial structure of the holding. That it was held by eight thanes in 1066 suggests both dispersed settlement and dispersed control. However the population figures given at the time of the survey suggest a more centralised pattern. There were a relatively high number of villeins, who were closely tied to their lord occupying small plots which they worked themselves in return for substantial labour dues to the lord. This suggests that much of the holding was closely controlled by the lord and the number of ploughs in lordship (3 of 8½) also indicates that there was a significant amount of land in demesne. The number of smallholders (bordars) is low but combined with the presence of three freemen, who held and worked their own land and owed only the most basic dues to their lord, suggests areas of looser control, probably marginal to the core. The places-names Langley and Smithycote might be significant in this context. It thus seems possible that there was a relatively centralised area under tight lordly control but with more independent areas, perhaps on the periphery of the estate.

After DB there is a record of a Robert *Fitz Warner* giving lands in Toton, Nottinghamshire to Lenton Abbey in the early 12th century (Kerry 1892, 19) and it seems probable that this Robert was the son of the same Warner who held Codnor as a Warner also held Toton in DB.

The Peverels remained the chief lords of Codnor until 1154 when the fourth William Peverel forfeited his lands in Derbyshire to the king as a result of his involvement in the death of Ranulf, Earl of Chester (Kerry 1892, 19). This would not necessarily have had any direct effect upon sub-tenants and there is no evidence that Codnor did not continue to pass down through the same family. The former Peverel holdings were still described as a part of 'the kings ancient escheat' in 1272 (Yeatman 1886, 276-7).

A Robert fitz William de Codenour was recorded in the Pipe Rolls for 1180 as holding half a knight's fee in Ratcliff (Radcliffe in Nottinghamshire, Kerry 1892, 19). It may be going beyond the evidence to assume that because Robert fitz William had 'of Codnor' appended to his name he was the holder of the whole manor. Radcliffe may have descended to the Greys but it was as a full fee which suggests that Robert was a sub-tenant. Less than a century later in 1272 'one Thomas *de Codenore* came to Barton [Yorkshire] bringing Sir John de Grey's writ (Yeatman 1886, 276-7, author's emphasis) which shows that he was Sir John's man rather than the holder of the estate, and the same could have been the case with Robert. If he was a sub-tenant then the actual holders of Codnor at the time are unnamed but could have been the Bardolfs (see below) who had the income from several manors in the district at about this time (Yeatman 1886, 114).

The Greys

It has generally been stated that Codnor came into Henry de Grey's possession through his marriage to Isolde 'the heiress of Codnor' (Kerry 1892, 19), and that prior to this his main holdings had been in Essex, particularly (Greys) Thurrock which had been granted to him by Richard I in return for his service.

It is not clear that it was as simple as this though. It seems that there was a long-standing tenurial link between Thurrock and Codnor that went back at least as far as DB. As already noted, at this time Codnor was held by William Peverel and formed a part of his honour in Derbyshire. William Peverel also held two estates in Essex, one of which was Thurrock (DB Essex, 48/1-2). Thurrock was taken from the Peverels and given to the Ferrers family, who were the Earls of Derby, in about 1154 (VCH Essex 8 1983, 40). They held it for most of the remainder of the 12th century until it was bought from them by Isaac the Jew, son of Josce the Rabbi, some time before 1190 (VCH Essex 8 1983, 40). It therefore seems probable that the acquisition of the estate by Isaac was the first time since Domesday Book that the relationship between the Derbyshire estates and Thurrock had been broken. This separation may go back to the escheat of 1154 however, as soon after this the Ferrers appear to have been in disgrace in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire as they had lost the income from their estates (Yeatman 1886, 105) and the Derbyshire estates remained in the king's escheat in 1272 in contrast with Thurrock which was still a part of the Ferrers' honour (ibid, 276-7).

According to the charter of June 1195, Henry had already bought Thurrock from Josce the son of Isaac the Jew by this time (Tatchell 1967), a purchase that must have taken place between 1190 when Isaac held the estate and 1194 when Richard I seized the estate from his son (VCH Essex 8 1983, 40). The charter was therefore confirming the earlier transaction, presumably made shortly before the estate was seized by the crown. Rather than making a new grant and perhaps, rewarding a favourite, Richard may actually have been avoiding alienating a potential supporter. Henry was certainly supporting Richard a year later in 1196 as he was excused payment of scutage because he was with the king's army in Normandy (Kelly 1892, 20). It seems likely that Henry held his estates in Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, including Codnor, by 1199, perhaps less than five years after his purchase of Thurrock. He was assessed for 12 marks scutage in the two counties for the coronation of King John (Yeatman 1886, 146), and since each knight's fee was assessed at two marks he must have held six fees which later evidence suggests were Beeley, Heanor, Normanton, Radcliffe, Shirland, and a half each in Codnor and Toton (Meek 2002, 77). He appears to have remained in favour under John as the king took over some of his debts in 1203 (Meek 2002, 74-7).

It is uncertain exactly when the marriage between Henry and Isolde took place but it must have been before 1208 when one of the witnesses to a charter issued by 'Henry de Grey and Ysoud, my wife' died (Kerry 1892, 19). Isolde's is most commonly described as the daughter of Hugh Bardolf; 'and one of the 5 sisters and coheirs of Robert Bardolf, of Great Carlton, co. Lincoln, and Hoo, Kent, which Robert Bardolf (parson of 30 churches) succeeded his brother the said Hugh Bardolf' (Cockayne 1890, 133n). This seems very likely as in her Inquisition Post Mortem of June 1246 she had 'a moiety of the manor [of Hoo], held by an exchange made with her four coparceners, by service of ½ a knight's fee, but only 1/5 of the manor came to her by inheritance' (Yeatman 1886, 14). Also, her son and heir Richard later confirmed a grant of pasture made by Robert Bardolf to the Abbey of Barlings (Cockayne 1890, 133n). If Codnor and the other estates did come to Henry through his marriage to Isolde then it is likely that they were married by 1199.

The overall impression of these dealings is that Henry saw an opportunity and took it. It appears that the Ferrers had to sell Thurrock and that Henry was in a position to buy when it was sold on, and by so doing gained himself an entry into the Bardolf family that within five years or so had allowed him to marry one of the heiresses to the family estates. Initially this must only have been a small share in each estate but the record of an exchange noted above provides a hint of the way in which the part shares in various estates could have been consolidated through various deals to later form the foundation of the de Grey lands. Henry must have died between 1219 when he was assessed for scutage, and 1221 when Isolde herself was assessed, implying that she was widowed (Meek 2002, 77, 79).

Isolde appears to have retained a degree of control over the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire de Grey estates throughout her marriage. In 1239 Isolde gained the right of free warren over her demesne lands in Codnor but it was her son Richard who gained these rights in Thurrock (Yeatman 1886, 238) indicating that she had retained control over Codnor, suggesting that it was her primary residence, but that Thurrock had already been passed to Richard, presumably for his independent support. After remarrying in 1229 her new husband, Richard de Mendre, appears on scutage lists assessed for 'six [knight's] fees of Henry de Grey' but after her death, probably in 1246 (Meek 2002, 79), there appears to be no continuing connection between these fees and de Mendre (Kerry 1892, 21). Isolde left them to her surviving three sons; one of whom, Richard, became lord of Codnor (Meek 2002, 79).

After his mother's death Richard de Grey received Codnor, Heanor, Langley, Ratcliff, Shirland, Toton, Ufton, and several other estates in addition to Thurrock (Kerry 1892, 21). Richard was highly successful under King Henry III and from 1227 he received an annual payment to maintain himself in the king's service. At various times he was the Constable of the castles of Devizes, Bamburgh, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Kenilworth, Dover and the Tower of London. He was the warden of the Channel Islands, Sheriff of Northumberland, Sheriff of Essex and Hertford, seneschal of Gascony and Poitou, Warden of the Cinque Ports and Chamberlain of Sandwich. He was granted the land of his father-in-law and Simon de Courcy when they rebelled, as well as several other estates and throughout this period he received many gifts from the King including oak trees, probably as timber for building works. Though clearly important, and probably wealthy, it is unclear how much time he spent at Codnor. From 1258 he supported Simon de Montfort strongly suggesting that he was a Ferrers man as Robert Ferrers also supported the barons (VCH Derby 2, 98). Eventually his uncle Sir John Grey seized his lands and in 1265 Eleanor, wife of Prince Edward, was granted 'land of the king's enemies' including Codnor (Meek 2002, 79-81).

Richard's son John appears to have recovered the family lands but only held them for a brief period before his death. In his Inquisitions Post Mortem of early 1272 (Yeatman 1886, 176-7) John's holdings are listed in detail and bear some attention as they emphasise the importance of Codnor in the district. In Derbyshire they were listed as: Codnor which included two parks, two mills and the advowson of Heanor, held 'of the honour of Peverel of the king's ancient escheat' for half a knight's fee; Heanor which was sub-let to Nicholas de Hanower for a knight's fee, two shillings to Codnor manor and

suit at Codnor court; Shirland was held by Reginald de Grey of the honour of Codnor, service unknown; Normanton was held by Ranulf le Pouer of the same honour for a knight's fee; as well as Beeley and *Eslessbecke* in the Peak. In Nottinghamshire John held: the manor of Toton 'also of the honour of Peverel, which is the king's escheat' for a knight's fee; the manor of Radcliffe 'held by barony pertaining to Toton' of the king in chief (except the advowson of the church), no other service recorded; and in *Estweit* township two parts of one carucate of land, a toft 'where was in old times the capital messuage of the fee', half a mill and the advowson of the church, tenure unspecified, as well as half a carucate of land held by Robert Kinmarley of the fee of Codnor, rendering half a mark yearly and suit at the court of Codnor. This last entry sounds as though it might be half a knight's fee rendered in cash. As well as these holdings in the vicinity of Codnor he held the manor of Thurrock of the Earl of Ferrers for half a knight's fee, Hoo and Aylesford in Kent for half a fee and one fee respectively, both of the king in chief, Barton (Yorkshire) and Sheringham (Norfolk both also of the king in chief, Evington (Leicestershire) and Newbold (Northamptonshire) of the honour of Leicester and Upton and Tunworth (Hampshire) of John de Sancto Johanne.

Codnor was clearly the primary seat of the family at this time being described as an honour. That several estates were held directly from the king suggests that the de Codnors already had baronial ambitions and the holding of two estates by 'barony' (Radcliffe and Ewynton) further supports this. Most of these estates were described as 'manors' but several were not which seems to be a deliberate distinction indicating secondary status. There is good reason to think that the township of *Estweit*, and the non-manorial holdings of Heanor, Shirland Normanton and probably Beeley and *Eslessbecke* were all subsidiary parts of the honour of Codnor.

The Lords Grey of Codnor

John's son Henry inherited Codnor whilst still a minor aged between 13 and 16 in 1272 (Yeatman 1886, 276), presumably coming into his lands by about 1280, at the age of 21. In February 1293 Edward I visited Codnor for a single day (VCH Derby 2 1907, 100) and the castle and grounds may have been improved in preparation for this visit (McLean 1981, 108). Henry was summoned to Parliament in 1299 as a baron, thereby becoming the first Lord Grey of Codnor. The castle at Codnor was mentioned in 1300 together with 120 acres of arable, 40 acres of meadow, two mills, pasture and a park. Henry died in 1308 (Meek 2002, 83-4).

Henry's son Richard, 2nd Lord Grey was a career soldier in Edward III's wars in Scotland and France apparently finding favour as he had relief of his debts in 1324 and 1327. In March 1322 the king visited Codnor (VCH Derby 2 1907, 101), probably again prompting improvements.

John, 3rd Lord Grey, took possession of his father's lands upon Richard's death in 1335. He was perhaps even more successful than his father. He also fought in Scotland with Edward III and was granted the lands of Robert de Moreby and marriage of the heir, Eleanor. He also received respite for debts, in 1335 and 1336, and in 1337 arrangements were made to allow him to pay his debts to the exchequer in instalments. In 1345 he

received an annual income from several priories as aid for his expenses in royal service and was in the Crécy expedition and at the siege of Calais (1346-7). In 1359 he was made keeper of Rochester town and castle, close to the family holdings at Hoo and Aylesford, positions confirmed for life in 1370, perhaps indicating a stronger connection with Kent than the Codnor area. In 1371 he was given exemption for life from all offices including being called to parliament due to his long service and failing health, though he lived another twenty years and was again summoned to parliament in 1392, attending until his death in 1392 (Meek 2002, 87-90).

John's son died before him so he was succeeded by his grandson Richard, 4th Lord Grey, who also made a successful military career under Henry IV and Henry V. In 1395 he went to Ireland in the king's service and was granted 80 marks a year for life. In 1402 he was given sweeping powers in the Welsh Marches and was also the king's Admiral towards the North, his allowance being increased to 100 marks. The next year he was appointed Admiral towards the East and from this time was referred to as the king's kinsman. In 1404 he was created Knight of the Garter and was made the king's chamberlain. In 1405 he was responsible for assembling forces from Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Staffordshire to serve against the Scots and in 1406 was made constable of Nottingham Castle and Master Forester of Sherwood for life, perhaps indicating a closer connection with the Codnor area than his grandfather. He must have been very wealthy; in 1407 he lent money to the king to pay those serving in Calais. He was granted keeping of part of the English lands of Conches Abbey during the French wars and received all the fees of the Chamberlain of England from the holder's death until the new appointment was made, both of which must have been highly lucrative. That he was specifically mentioned in Henry IV's will further demonstrates his status. He continued to serve under Henry V; in 1415 he led forces defending the East March of the Scottish Border and he was also listed in the Agincourt rolls (Meek 2002, 90-93).

Upon his death in 1418 Richard was succeeded by his son John, 5th Lord Grey, who seems to have been less enthusiastic and apparently had an unexceptional career. In 1419 he was delaying in Wingfield, not far from Codnor, when he should have been serving with the king in Normandy and it was not until 1421 that he finally crossed the channel to give homage and fealty for his father's lands. He died in 1430 and was succeeded by his brother Henry. A coal mine of his was mentioned after his death though the location is not known (Meek 2002, 93, 97).

John's brother, Henry, 6th Lord Grey (1430-44), seems to have been troublesome becoming involved in numerous disputes in the district, particularly with his local rival Richard Vernon, and in 1440 was ordered to surrender himself to the Tower. The same year he made a gift of all his goods and chattels to a group led by the Earl of Huntingdon and in 1441 leased numerous manors, including Codnor, to a group headed by the Duke of Gloucester for five years. A week later there was a recognisance of 1000 marks as security for his good behaviour and for keeping the peace. He was pardoned for all serious crimes in 1441 and again in 1442 and must have regained at least some of his lands. Also in 1442 he was named in a commission to treat with the people of Nottinghamshire to lend money to the king, so appears to have been trying to work his way back into favour. However, ten days before his death in 1444 he made Ralph Bassett

trustee of Radcliffe, apparently an attempt to defraud the king of the marriage and wardship of the heir (Meek 2002, 98).

Henry's son, also Henry, was only nine when his father died and did not enter into his possessions until 1457 at the age of 21. In contrast with his uncle and father he seems to have been reasonably successful. From 1459 he led forces into battle supporting Henry VI and was at the battle of St Albans in 1461. Later that year he was appointed the king's armourer for life. He too became involved in disputes with the Vernons and in 1468 was involved in inquisitions 'concerning treason, trespass and other evil doings in Derbyshire'. There appear to have been no lasting effects from these disputes as he became one of the king's council and in 1473 Edward IV granted him land in Ulster. He was also appointed king's steward, given dies to mint money, and in 1480 received a general pardon for all offences and debts due the king. He supported Richard III who gave him several manors for service against the rebels and fought on his side at Bosworth. This appears to have done him no harm however as he received a general pardon in 1492 from Henry VII (Meek 2002, 100). In 1459 Henry had confirmed the appointment of a custodian of his parks at Codnor and Aldercar and the tenancy of a house and land in Codnor. He appears to have been interested in mining; he apparently obtained a license for the transmutation (smelting) of metals in 1463 and was appointed one of the king's commissioners of mines in 1486 (Meek 2002, 99). It may have been Henry who first saw the industrial potential of the Codnor area, though his uncle, Richard, also held a mine (above). He was married three times but had no legitimate children and died without heir in 1496 at the age of 60 (Meek 2002, 100).

There was another estate in the area known as Ormonde Fields (Corfield 1893, 108). This was separated from the main Codnor estate and came into the hands of the Clarke family at some point. It was never held by the Zouches (ibid) so this must have taken place before about 1500 when the rest of the Codnor estates came into their hands. A John Clarke was appointed keeper of the parks at Codnor and Aldercar some time between 1435 and 1443 and a John Clarke was confirmed in post in 1458, though it is unclear if this was the same man or a descendant (ibid, 109). Sometime in the middle of the 15th century would therefore seem a probable period for this estate being created and granted away. A map of 1722 shows areas to the south and west of Codnor Castle as held by Sir Gilbert Clarke, presumably a descendent of the original Clarks.

The Zouches

Upon Henry's death Codnor passed to his uncle John Zouch, the second son of William, Lord Zouch of Harringworth, Northamptonshire (Stevenson 1920, 57), possibly by marriage through a niece or an aunt (Stevenson 1920, 57; Kerry 1892, 29). There is though a record of an indenture of 1500 that refers to the sale of the manor and castle to John Zouch by Henry Grey (Meek 2002, 137) and another from 1508 when Henry VII allowed the estate's sale to John Zouch junior, presumably his son (Meek 2002, 137), so the transfer was apparently complex. At about this time a John Zouch apparently made Codnor his capital residence (Stevenson 1920, 57) but which John is unclear.

By 1542 the estate was in the hands of a George Zouch probably the son of the second John Zouch. Another John Zouch, son of George, held Thurrock in 1563, suggesting that George had died by this time, but sold it in 1567, perhaps indicating that the family were in need of money for some reason (VCH Essex 8 1983, 40). He died before 1597 (Burton 1909, 37) and was succeeded by his son, also John, who was born in 1559 and died in 1610 (Burton 1909, 37). There are records of the Zouches mining coal and ironstone at Codnor by 1597 and they had an ironworks at Loscoe a few kilometres to the south-west (Meek 2002, 107). This John Zouch was in turn succeeded by his son, yet another John Zouch who was knighted at some point between 1618 and 1631 (Burton 1909, 38). By the early 17th century the Zouches were apparently bankrupt, perhaps as a result of losses in their mining activities (Meek 2002, 107). It is not known when this John died but he was once more succeeded by another John Zouch who sold the Codnor estates to the Bishop of York, Richard Neile, in 1634, apparently as soon as he reached his majority and was able to do so. He then moved to Ireland and later emigrated to Virginia (Burton 1909, 35).

Later history

The castle and park were bought from Richard Neile's grandson by Sir Streynsham Masters in 1692 (Meek 2002, 7) and the family, probably 'L Masters esqr' whose name appears on Burdett's map of 1791 against Codnor Castle, leased mineral rights to Outram and Jessop in 1790, the year the first furnace was erected in Butterley a few kilometres to the north-west. In 1862 the estate was purchased by the Butterley Company who had ironworks at the village of Codnor Park to the north (Meek 2002, 107-8). In 1965 there was a proposal to demolish the ruins which the County Council supported but this was successfully opposed by the District Council. In 1968 the estate was sold to a Mr Swain and in 1978 the estate was again sold on to the National Coal Board, on its demise passing on to RJB Mining, now UK Coal (Meek 2002, 108-9).

The settlement pattern

At Codnor, the castle and the village occupy sites over a kilometre apart with a marked valley between them and are not inter-visible. Though today the castle appears to occupy a peripheral position in the landscape this was probably not the case at the time of its construction.

It seems highly likely that the modern village of Codnor was a secondary settlement. No medieval buildings have been recorded in the village (Meek 2002, 18) and the current parish church only dates from 1843 (Pevsner 1986, 154), the Zouches were buried in Heanor church (Corfield 1893, 106). The village is clearly shown on both Burdett's map (2nd edition published in 1791, but substantially based upon a survey of 1767) and the 1791/2 enclosure map (Derbyshire Record Office M1015) as a collection of buildings around the edge of a substantial open common situated at the junctions of several roads and extending into Loscoe to the south. Settlements characterised by a medium to large area of common land, frequently with substantial boundary ditches and often situated at road junctions, around which are farmsteads and houses have been described as 'green-side' settlements. They are generally on higher ground and marginal within the parish,

typically at some distance from the main settlement and church, indicating that they are secondary features in the landscape (Martin & Satchell 2008, 17). Codnor village, as depicted in the late 18th century, clearly conforms to this description and though the name form compounded with 'Green' does not survive there is a reference to a field named 'Codnor grene' from about 1551, and a green is mentioned at Loscoe even earlier, in 1277 (Cameron 1959 VII, 435). More generally place-names with the element 'Green' are not uncommon in the area (Roberts & Wrathmell 2000, 38). Place-name evidence suggests that 'Greens' were rare before the 12th century and the archaeological evidence in Suffolk, which has one of the largest concentrations of places with this name form, suggests that these settlements originated in the late-11th or 12th centuries (Martin & Satchell 2008, 16-17). Origins as early as the late Saxon period have also been suggested though (Warner 1987, 13), and the number of free men recorded in Domesday Book provides some support for this. It has been suggested that 'greens' originated when woods were felled, or wood pasture over-grazed, as a result of population expansion in the centuries before the Black Death. In some places lords appear to have responded by emparking areas to preserve woodland which in turn increased the importance of the areas of common grazing remaining. Green-side settlement seems to have led to a shift from some settlements in core areas often leaving earlier churches and manors isolated. This pattern of development would fit well with that seen at Codnor. Some early settlement sites apparently remained occupied though; for example, the place-name Stoneyford probably had an Anglo-Saxon origin (Cameron 1959, 435) and the settlement may have survived in the area between the parks at Codnor and Aldercar.

It therefore seems likely that Codnor Castle was constructed at or near the site of the original manorial caput, which probably had an Anglo-Saxon origin, and that the development of several parks and consequently the settlement around the common land led to a shift in the settlement pattern during the 12th and 13th centuries resulting in a more nucleated pattern at the expense of smaller farms and settlements (such as Smithycote perhaps).

The castle buildings

According to some sources (eg Emery 2000, 368), the de Codnors built a motte and bailey on the ridge above the Erewash valley that was later acquired by the Grey family but the evidence for this is not known.

The standing fabric of Codnor Castle consists of the remains of a substantial three storey residential tower block that almost certainly formed the eastern range of a group of buildings around a courtyard, today called the Upper (or inner) Court, with a Lower (or outer) Court to the south. The Upper Court was surrounded by a moat.

The principal approach to Codnor Castle was probably always from the south; the original main frontage and gate are on the south side of the castle and the elaborated Lower Court is also on this side, enhancing a formalised approach. Whilst the current road runs around the castle to the west, almost along the crest of the ridge, with a spur running down to the east, past the front of the Lower Court to Castle Farm, as late as 1835 the approach road from the south ran directly up to the castle and then turned

sharply west to meet the line of the existing road (Sanderson 1835). The same layout also appears to be shown in 1767 and 1722 (Burdett 1791; Anon). The line of this southern approach can still be seen as a hollow way running across the field to the south of the castle.

The Upper Court

The earliest remaining part of the castle is probably the South Front of the Upper Court (see front cover) which was about 30m wide and consisted of a substantial wall with a developed plinth, with two round corner towers at each end and smaller bastions either side of a central gateway (Emery 2000, 368). The lower part of the Upper Court's eastern wall to the south of the residential block was also 'clearly coeval' with the round towers (Kerry 1892, 16-7). It is not known if the garderobes in this section of wall were original. The earliest fabric has been dated to about 1200 and was probably the work of Henry de Grey, constructed soon after the estate came into his possession at about this time (Kerry 1892, 24). Note that Emery says that this eastern wall was coeval with the main residential tower block but references Kerry, apparently confusing which tower he is referring to (2000, 368 & n3, 369).

These early walls are about 1.5m thick and constructed of fairly regularly coursed roughly faced local sandstone, known as 'skerry', with rubble cores (Kerry 1892, 17). Time Team located the footings of a substantial north/south wall and circular bastion to the west of

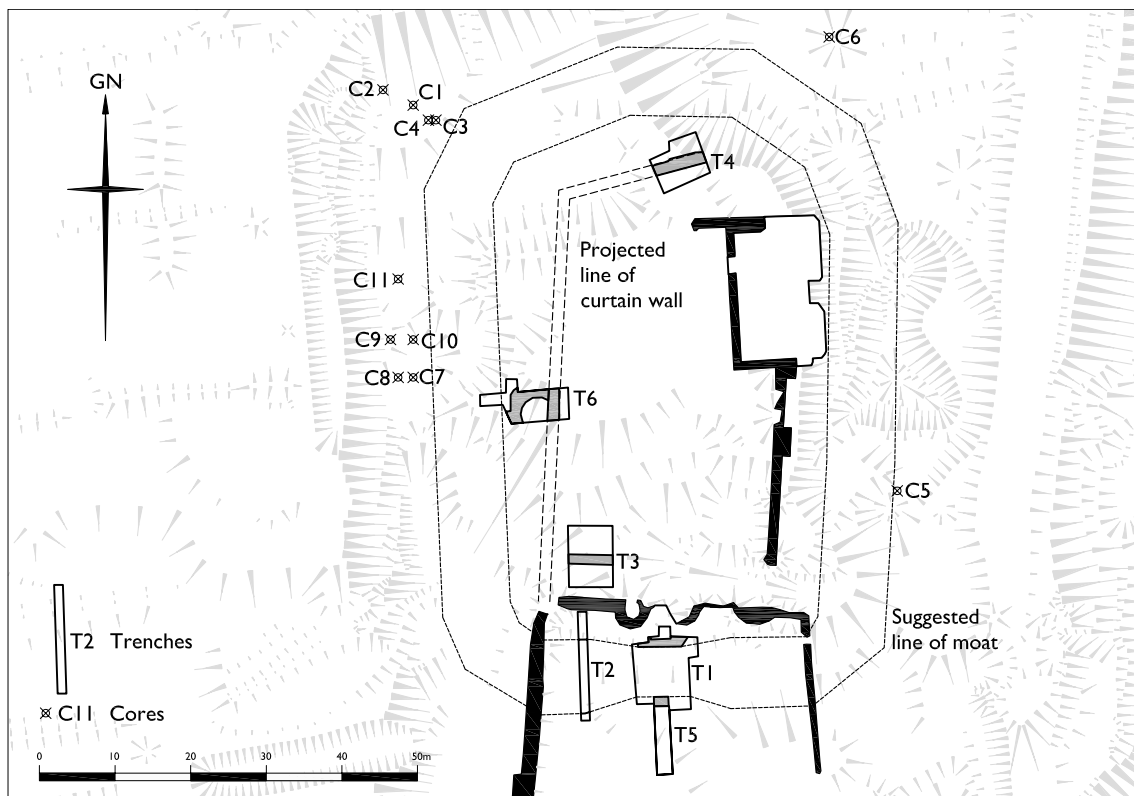


Figure 2: The location of the Time Team trenches showing masonry remains
Based upon Wessex Archaeology 2008, Fig 3 and Vaughan Birbeck (pers comm).
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the standing remains (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 12 & Fig 3 (Trench 6)). Since this wall was of very similar construction to the South Front and east wall, aligned on the south-west corner tower and parallel to the eastern wall (which are both at right angles to the South Front), it is very probable that this was the western curtain wall. Time Team also located a substantial east/west wall, which they suggested was the northern curtain wall (Wessex 2008, 12 & Fig 3). This was of the same construction as the other walls of the upper court and though it was not oriented parallel to the South Front there is no reason to assume that the Upper Court was completely rectangular; given the topography some deviation might be expected. That the construction was similar to the other walls does not necessarily mean that it was of the same phase though; the west wall of the lower court was clearly later than the south front but was of similar size and construction. Without firm dating evidence the question remains open, though if this wall were later it might be expected to respect the alignment of other later features in the vicinity (below).

The Upper Court was surrounded by a moat which was examined within the Lower Court by Time Team. One of the lower fills (though not the lowest fill) was dated to the 13th to 15th century demonstrating that it was open during this period. The upper fills were dated to the later medieval and post-medieval periods which suggested that the moat was not an important defensive feature by this time (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 11) and was silting up. Immediately in front of the gateway in the South Front the moat was revetted in stone and about 6.5m wide and 2.7m deep. Wood remains from the base of the moat suggest a bridge or drawbridge here and a roughly metallised surface extended south from the moat indicating a track. The revetment and track were not dated. To the west the moat was 9m wide and over 2.5m deep with less regular sloping sides (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 10), which was probably more typical of its size and form around the remainder of the Upper Court.

A second phase of activity is represented by shale masonry capping the earlier eastern wall, which has been dated to about 1330 (Kerry 1892, 16) and it is possible that the garderobes here were added at this time. An ogee window inserted into the western part of the South Front is also of a similar date (Kerry 1892, 17; Emery 2000, 368; Stevenson gives 'temp Edward II' (1327-77), 1920, 46).

The date of the main residential block is unknown. It is in poor condition and no architectural detail survives but, as it sits astride the line of the 12th century east wall of the Upper Court and is on a different alignment, it is probably later. Pevsner recorded that the masonry dates to the early 13th and early 14th centuries but gave no detail and may have been referring to the whole complex (Pevsner 1986, 154). Emery wrote that 'it has been attributed to the thirteenth century on no strong evidence and may well be a century later' and noted that it is similar in plan to a solar tower of 1350-60 at Edlingham Castle, Northumbria (Emery 2000, 368). The residential block could therefore be contemporary with the additions of the second quarter of the 14th century but could be from half a century or more either side of this; reasonable contexts for its construction can be suggested for several periods from the 1290s through to the early 1400s.



Figure 3: The fireplace in the north wall of the residential block

The residential block must formerly have extended further to the north as there is a fireplace on the north side of the north wall (Fig 3). An engraving by Samuel & Nathaniel Buck from 1727 shows Codnor Castle from the west (reproduced in Emery 2000, 369). Though far from accurate, it shows another section of wall in front of what are probably the standing remains of the residential block indicating that the buildings on the east side of the Upper Court originally extended further to the west, though it is probable that some of these buildings were of different phases.

Several parts of the residential block have brick insertions and repairs indicating developments in the late 15th or 16th centuries (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 16) and the bastion on the western curtain wall revealed by Time Team had had a brick-lined fireplace inserted indicating that it was still in use at this time (ibid, 12). This activity has been associated with the acquisition of the site by the Zouches about 1500 (Stevenson 1920, 56-7).

The Lower Court

The Lower Court is certainly a later addition (Kerry 1892, 17; Pevsner 1986, 154; Emery 2000, 368); it is clear that both its east and west walls abut the south front (see Fig 4). The visible remains of the court consist of two walls running away from the earlier south front of the Upper Court, but these were very different from one another which suggests that they may not have been contemporary. There was apparently an arch in the east wall which would have allowed water in the moat to run around this side of the castle (Meek 2002, 27) and it seems likely that there was also an arch in the west wall for the same purpose. There may have been a southern wall that created a



Figure 4: The junction between the south front of the Upper Court (left, with thicker courses) and the west wall of the Lower Court (right).

fully enclosed area and, as it is thought that the main approach to the castle was from the south, it is possible that there was a gatehouse here (eg Stevenson 1920) a notion perhaps supported by the track within the Lower court revealed by Time Team (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 10).

The western wall directly abuts the south-western tower of the Upper Court at close to a right angle to the South Front as though intended to continue the line of the west wall of the Upper Court. It survives to a height of over 3m in places and is about 1.5m thick which suggests that it was originally considerably higher. It is similar to the other standing walls of the castle as well as those seen in the Time Team excavations but has no dateable features, though as it abuts the south front of the Upper Court it must have been later, perhaps contemporary with the works of about 1330. There is a rectangular block, containing two mural chambers, that projects westwards from this wall, of a similar size and proportion to the projecting garderobe block on the east wall of the Upper Court and might therefore be of a similar date. As late as 1920 there was a second, apparently identical, block about 10m further south (Stevenson 1920, Fig 1 & 51-2). To the north and south of the entrances to the mural chambers are substantial fireplaces facing into the Lower Court suggesting that there was some form of building against this wall, probably of two stories given its height. The mural chambers are crudely constructed which suggests that any rooms here were relatively low-status (Stevenson 1920, 54). Stevenson proposed (though presented as fact) that there was a series of apartments at ground floor level along this side of the court and that the two projections formed the bases of substantial chimneystacks for fireplaces which served a 'long room' above (Stevenson 1920, 57-8). Whilst this fits the evidence available, it seems to be going

some way beyond it considering that the west wall was 'wholly innocent of brickwork or dateable feature' (Stevenson 1920, 51) and that it is based in part of the assumption that the east wall is of the same date as the west, which seems unlikely. At St Peter's Monastery, Gloucester guests were provided with a separate set of apartments with a gallery where they could exercise in bad weather and look down on a flower garden below by about 1360 (McLean 1981, 108), so whilst not necessarily a 'long room' in the formal sense, the arrangement described by Stevenson could have been possible at a considerably earlier date.

The eastern wall does not directly abut the south-eastern corner tower of the Upper Court as the western wall does, but has a short western return at its northern end. It is also at a more obtuse angle to the southern frontage. It is a relatively light structure, only about 0.6m thick, mainly constructed of stone with crenellations decorated with late 15th or 16th century brick details around the embrasures and merlons, and was less than 3m high (Stevenson 1920, 49). The use of brick and the probable form of this wall suggests a date in the later 15th or earlier 16th centuries though the decoration could have been added to an existing wall. Stevenson argued that the standing wall was most likely to have been built after the end of the War of the Roses in 1485 and, as it was unlikely that Henry, the last Lord Grey, was in a position to undertake any modernising works, he assigned its construction to the Zouches (Stevenson 1920, 56-7). Such embellishments might be expected in garden architecture at about this time (for example at Thornbury, Gloucestershire (Strong 1984, 24)).

There are two other high status residences or 'castles' with two court plans in Derbyshire; Haddon Hall and Wingfield Manor, which have rather different histories to one another. Haddon Hall is perhaps more comparable to Codnor as it evolved over a similar period though here the two court plan was created by the insertion of a cross wing into a larger ward some time in the 14th century (Pevsner 1986, 224-5 & n). Nonetheless, the period at which it was felt desirable to create two separate courts might be comparable. On the other hand, whilst Wingfield Manor's two court plan is superficially more similar to Codnor it was principally built as a single scheme during 1440s and 1450s (ibid, 322) and it seems that any similarities might be superficial. Other moated sites might also provide parallels but most moats tend to be in more marginal locations (for example Roberts 1977) and the moat here seems to be a defensive feature of the castle rather than a defining feature of the site itself.

It cannot be safe to assume that the two standing walls of the lower court were built at the same time and the resemblance to the plan of Wingfield Hall (eg Meek 2002, 53)) has probably been overstated. The west wall runs away from the south front of the Upper Court at close to ninety degrees and a symmetrical wall to the east would have created an almost rectangular Lower Court more closely reflecting the upper (Kerry 1892, Fig opp 16). The eastern wall could have been added later, at a more obtuse angle, to retrospectively imitate Wingfield, but it is unclear why it should be several metres east of a line from the south-east tower which would have preserved the symmetry of the main castle frontage. Perhaps it was built before an existing wall, symmetrical with the western wall, was demolished. This leaves the date of the west wall open but a similar

period to the residential block seems most likely given the similarity in construction and the form of the garderobe block.

Apparently there was a chapel within Codnor Castle. In 1542 there was a 'Decree in a suit between Sir Robert Peygden al. Peygden priest, complainant, and George Zouche, esq. defendant, before the "King's Counsaile", by which it is determined that the said Robert Peygden is to retain possession of the Free Chapel called St Nichols' Chapel within the castle of Codnor, with the "mancyon house" attached and the commodities attached to the said chapel, to which he was presented by the late John Zouche, knt, by his deed also subscribed by the same George, from which chapel the latter had deforced him' (Jeayes 1906, 111). From this it appears the Sir Robert Peygden was the priest of St Nicholas' Chapel at Codnor Castle and had been left it by John Zouche upon his death some time before, together with a residence and other assets. George Zouch had apparently initially accepted this, subscribing the deed, but had later forced Robert out, who had then appealed and been awarded the chapel and other assets. It is probable that George Zouche was resident at Codnor at this time as the last Zouch to reside there was apparently his great, great-grandson (Burton 1909, 36). If so, then the 'mancyon house' was unlikely to have been the main residential block of the castle. Perhaps it was in the Lower Court; a local newspaper article of 1921 refers to gravestones set up around the walls here (Franklin & Knappett 2007, 3)

Traditionally though, the site of the chapel at Codnor Castle was about 500m to the west, on the edge of 'Church Close' and close to the crest of the ridge so visible from both the castle and Codnor village (NMR SK44NW6, DHER 18204). Some physical remains were recovered during the mid-19th century, apparently from this area, including a font, a key, a carved stone female head, a possible window moulding and some probable interments consisting of human remains and parts of coffins (Corfield 1893, 105-6). The font is described as Early Decorated Gothic (probably late 13th century), though it may actually have been an *aspersorium*, *lavabo* or *piscina* (ibid, note 105), and the head was thought to show a dress style of late 14th century date (ibid, 106). It therefore seems possible that this was a late 13th century chapel that remained in use until the late 14th century at least. The location given may be incorrect though as the site lies outside the immediate environs of the castle, within the Ormonde Fields estate which was probably granted away during the 15th century (above). An earlier chapel outside the castle may however have been taken down or abandoned and a new one constructed within the castle itself, possibly in the early 15th century if the suggested date the Ormonde Fields estate was granted away is correct (above), since the land would be unlikely to be given up with an active chapel still on it. This date would also coincide with the period when Richard, 4th Lord Grey, was the Constable of Nottingham Castle and when, following his death, his two sons were apparently also spending considerable time in the area (above).

Much significance has been attached to Leland's record of about 1540: 'Codnore sumtymme longynge to the lorde Greys [...]. It is now al ruinose' (Toulmin Smith 1908, 31). This has been taken to show that it is unlikely that there was any significant development of the castle proper after this date. In fact several headings below 'castelles in Derbeshire' are followed by blank space and it is clear that this section of his work

'consists of many notes' (Toulmin Smith 1908, vii). It seems probable that the reference to Codnor is reported hearsay which does not indicate that Leland ever visited the site and so cannot be relied upon. Even if correct it is unlikely that it applied to all the castle buildings since the Zouches appear to have remained in residence at Codnor until they sold it in 1634 (Stevenson 1920, 57). The earliest record of stones being taken from the castle for building elsewhere is 1649 though it is possible that they were being sold by 1648 (Meek 2002, 108).

There was also a 'great rudely built dovecote' (Stevenson 1920, 54. NMR SK44NM12, DHER I6004) about 50m to the south-west of Castle Farm shown on a plan accompanying Kerry's article as being about 10m in diameter (Kerry 1892, plan opp 16). The dovecote was described as being 'of no great age, but has been derived from the same quarry of hewn stones [the castle], and has been constructed by some tenant of the farm long after the glories of the castle had passed away' (ibid, 18). This seems rather unlikely as the dovecote apparently had 400 nesting boxes (Meek 2002, 108) which implies a considerable investment in time, money and grain in order to produce fairly large quantities of meat, an enterprise more in keeping with the castle economy than that of the later farm. Its position, probably to one side of the main approach to the castle, also suggests that it was intended to be seen as part of the display of status associated with the castle. Other writers have proposed dates for its construction from as early as the 13th century. The dovecot was demolished in 1969 (Meek 2002, 108). There was also a large pond to the south of the castle close to the dovecote (Kerry 1892, Fig opp 16) which still held water in the 20th century (Meek 2002, 21) demonstrating that there must have been a water supply local to the castle..

The present farmhouse is of about 1640 (Pevsner 1986, 154). It was a new building, though using some earlier stone, rather than the conversion and extension of any existing structures (Meek 2002, 107). The farm was clearly extended in the 19th century to create a formal farmyard surrounded by barns and sheds all built as a single unit. It remains in use though many of the buildings are much decayed.

The park

There appear to have been several parks in the immediate vicinity of Codnor Castle; that attached to the castle itself, Codnor Park (NMR SK44NW11, DHER I6002); another at Aldercar a few kilometres to the south-east and one at Butterley a similar distance to the north-west.

The charter of 1208 ('The Greys' above, Kerry 1892, 20-1) refers to an exchange of land with one William fitz Robert. It records Henry granting to William 'an angular space of our park of Shirland' to act as a boundary with 'his park of Alfreton' apparently in exchange for land 'on this side of the stream which runs between our park of Codnor and his wood of Alfreton' presumably in order to allow the expansion of his park up to that stream. It appears to be re-affirming a previous agreement with William's father, perhaps as a result of Robert's death. There is no indication that the park was new and it appears that it must have been in existence by this time for at least a generation. Perhaps Codnor Castle had its origins as a hunting lodge. Alfreton lies some way to the

north and the first watercourse in this direction is that which runs along Golden Valley. The area to the north of this is called 'Newlands' which is suggestive of assarting. It therefore seems likely that the park extended at least this far by the early 13th century. In 1246 Henry III made a gift of four living bucks and six does to Sir Richard Grey for his park at Codnor (Meek 2002, 62). In an Inquisition Post Mortem of 1272 the manor was recorded as having two parks (Yeatman 1886, 276-7). Since it is known that Henry, the last Lord Grey of Codnor, confirmed John Clarke in the office of Keeper of the Parks of Codnor and Aldercar with a salary of two pence a day in 1458 (Kerry 1892, 29) it seems possible that these were the two parks being referred to 180 years earlier. It was recorded that deer were illegally taken from the park at Codnor twice in 1317 (Meek 2002, 84-85).

A map of 1722 shows the extent of the park at this time, which covered about 400 hectares. It seems highly likely that the eastern and northern boundaries were those of the medieval park as they followed the Erewash Valley, along which were mills belonging to the manor throughout the medieval period, and Golden Valley, probably the boundary by 1208 (above). The southern and western boundaries of the park were irregular and failed to show the curvilinear form typical of park pales. It seems likely that land may have been bought up in this area to extend the estate, possibly to offset land lost to industry. There is a curvilinear boundary running from the Erewash up to Codnor Castle and two of the fields to the south of this boundary were named 'New Close' and 'Little New Close' suggesting recent acquisition. No such development could readily be seen along the western side of the park and the medieval boundary here remains uncertain.

The 1722 map shows a field called 'Coney Green' immediately to the west of the survey area suggesting that there had been a rabbit warren here. Rabbits were introduced to England after the Norman Conquest and the first documentary reference to rabbits in Britain is probably from 1135. Whilst warrens persisted well into the post-medieval period 'to begin with rabbits were usually kept in relatively small enclosures [...], located close to castles, monasteries or manor houses, and especially in deer parks' (Williamson 2006, 6-7). This indicates that if there was a warren here it was probably associated with the castle and suggests that this area was within the park.

It is not known when Codnor was disparked but it was probably at least partly enclosed by 1596 when an indenture refers to the park's 'closes and grounds' and gives several field-names that also appear on the 1722 map (Meek 2002, 62, 64). Fields names shown on this map, such as 'Onion piece' and 'Three Cow Closes' show that it was being farmed and industrial activity was also represented by fields such as 'Coal Close' and 'Furnace piece'. Its history as a park though was preserved in several field names using the term 'lawnd' which referred to open areas between the park's woods.

DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE REMAINS

For the sake of clarity the following description has been divided up into periods. It is likely that as described here, each represents a series of related developments over some time rather than a single phase of activity and that development at the castle consisted of periods of more intense activity with relative lulls in between.

Period 1: A precursor to the stone castle?

The Upper Court of Codnor Castle consists of a rectangular area defined by a moat and originally enclosed by a curtain wall. Within this the northern part is a level area forming a pronounced raised platform with its surface at over 128m OD, which drops towards the south, and during the medieval period this slope was likely to have been somewhat steeper (see Period 2 below). The east/west profile (Profile A, Fig 5) shows that the platform was largely a positive feature created by building earth up on the natural topography. Neither the slope to the south nor the level area to the north conform to the natural topography of the site.

Since the area generally slopes down to the east and south it would not have been difficult to construct a much more level Upper Court by locating the castle a little to the west, or, if the intention were to raise the level of the inner court above the entrance, this could also be achieved more easily by using the natural slope and positioning the entrance to the east or south-east. It seems unlikely that this slope would have been deliberately created as part of the castle design. It also seems improbable that the platform would have been thrown up after the Upper Court was constructed as this would have involved considerable work to create an awkwardly sloping main court and Time Team's excavations revealed natural deposits at too high a level for this to be the case (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 30).

It therefore seems possible that the level northern area and slope to the south formed a raised platform that existed before the stone castle was built. If so, it is likely that the castle was built on the site *because* the platform was there. This earlier site was probably the caput which circumstantial evidence seems to suggest (the early topographic place-name, the hints of centralisation in Domesday Book, the 'de Codenour' name in the 12th century, the possible existence of the park in the 12th century, the secondary nature of settlement at Codnor village, and the presence of a chapel in the vicinity of the castle, all discussed above) but for which no evidence has been identified. Time Team recovered some residual Stamford Ware pottery which might indicate activity on the site between the Conquest and the first visible building phase of about 1200 but no certainly earlier material was found, though they did not excavate to a level where such material might be expected (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 22). The most likely explanation would seem to be that the castle was built as a replacement for an existing residence probably to assert the wealth and status of the new owner (Liddiard 2006, 248).

The extent of later development on the site makes it impossible to be sure what form any possible precursor might have taken though the platform was clearly a largely positive feature, though on the uphill side it may have been cut into the slope. Its size is not

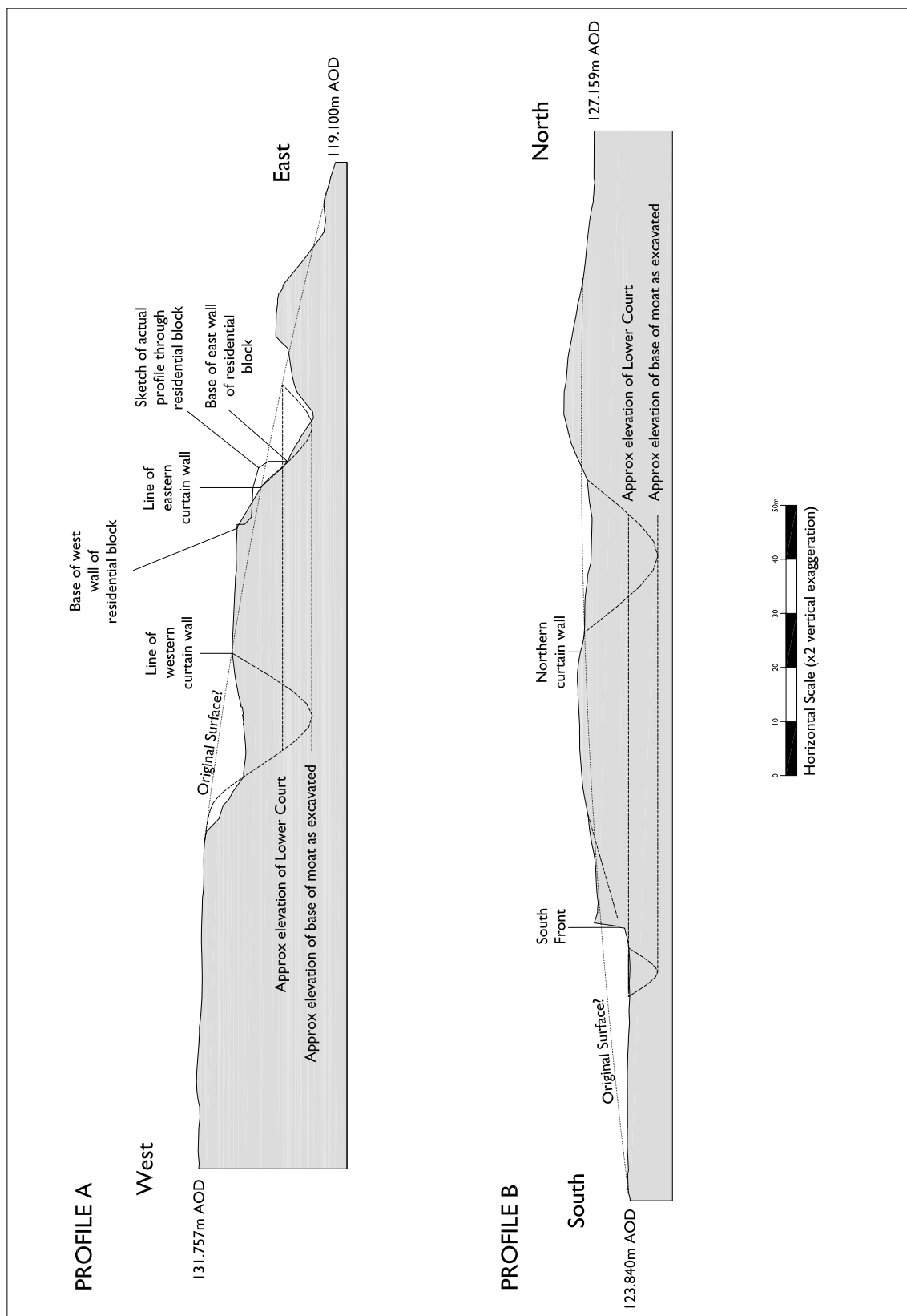


Figure 5: Profiles across the site
Locations are marked on Figure 13

known but it may have been similar to the level part of the later Upper Court; about 30m across.

It is also possible that a second levelled area where the Lower Court is now may have existed at this time. As the South Front has a well-built plinth it seems likely that it was constructed across a levelled area and was intended to be seen from such. The area was probably levelled at the time the South Front was constructed but it could have had an earlier origin, contemporary with the platform to the north.

Period 2: The first stone castle

The Upper Court

As already described ('The castle buildings' above), the first stone castle consisted of a roughly rectangular court about 30m (east/west) by 50m (north/south), within an enclosing curtain wall constructed of local sandstone. There was a gateway with flanking bastions in the centre of an ornate South Front and round towers on the two southern corners. Halfway along the western wall was a circular bastion but it is not known if there was a similar one on the east wall or if there were corner towers on the two northern corners of the Upper Court, though this seems likely.

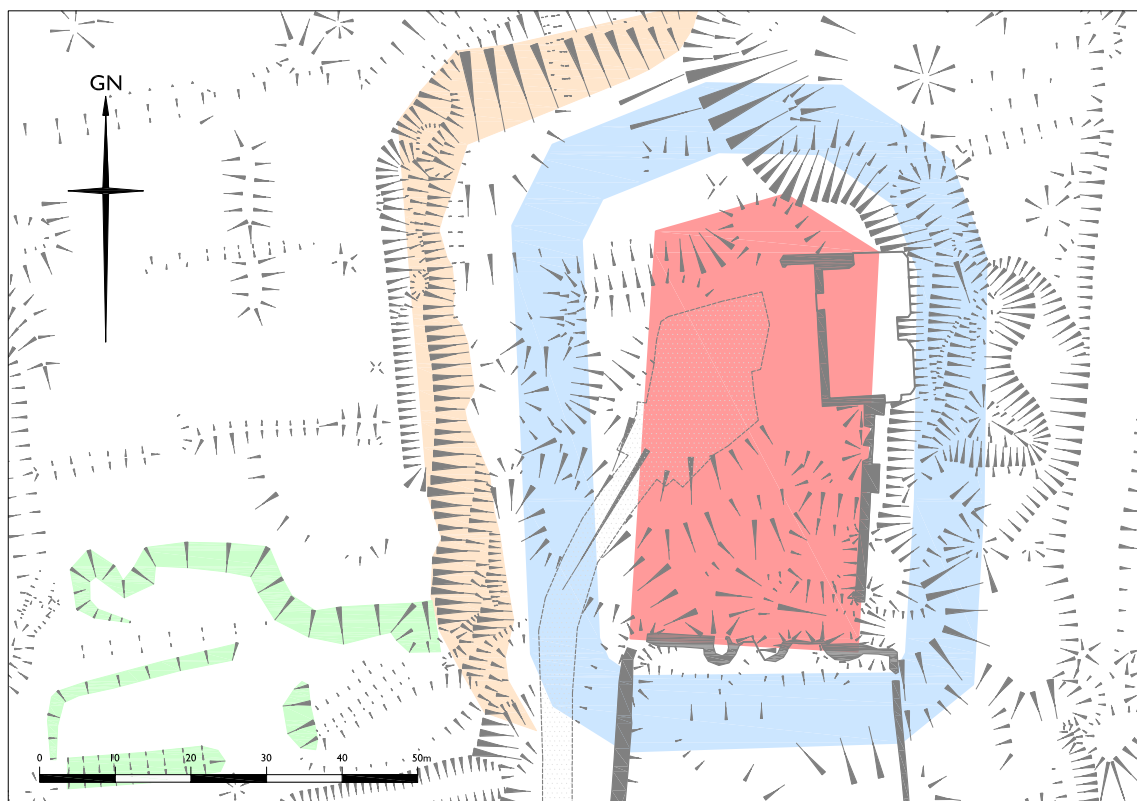


Figure 6: The central part of the survey area
Upper Court in red, probable line of moat in blue, outer moat earthworks in orange
(possible garden earthworks - green).
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Little detail of the original moat and platform is clearly visible in the earthworks due to later activity. Below the standing eastern wall of the Upper Court much of the substantial east-facing scarp probably follows the original line of the slope down from the platform to the moat. Moderate scarps drop away northwards from the line of the possible north curtain wall seen in the Time Team trench though this area contains several later features. To the west there is a general fall away from the line of the curtain wall but here it is even more obscured by later features and probably by collapse deposits though a mound in the centre of this wall line may represent the bastion here (as demonstrated by Time Team) and earthworks to the north may be the remains of a north-western corner tower.

As noted above (Period I), within the area of the curtain wall the northern part of the Upper Court forms a pronounced platform with its surface at about 128.30m AOD rising slightly to 128.70m AOD towards the residential block. Excavations have shown that there was some collapse debris and disturbance here (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 12, 31-2) so the medieval surface was probably slightly lower, and perhaps more level. From this higher area the Upper Court slopes down to the south. This is not a smooth fall but a series of scarps, some of which apparently represent changes in level where the fall was accommodated within the design of buildings. To the west of the southern gateway the ground may have originally been lower as shown by the arch springs in the adjacent bastion (see Fig 7) revealed during the consolidation work at about 127.70m AOD. If they are in situ (their relationship with the arrow loops in the bastion strongly suggests that they are) then the floor level must have been about 1.8m or more below them, at or below 126m AOD. Immediately to the north-west Time Team uncovered a probable threshold and estimated that the medieval floor level here was at about



Figure 7: Arch springs within the western bastion of the gatehouse, looking south

126.33m AOD so the rooms or buildings probably stepped up the slope. Two south facing scarps to the north of this threshold suggest that there were further changes of level in this area though these might be the result of quarrying for ironstone in the 19th century (Kerry 1892, 17). From this area the ground drops markedly to the east and west forming a mound banked up behind the South Front, probably collapse debris from a gatehouse here, the lower ground level on the other side of the entrance suggests that there may not have been a similar structure here, despite the symmetrical bastion. A clearer pattern of stepped levels can be seen along the inside of the eastern curtain wall where two platforms probably result from differing floor levels within different rooms of the same building.

The moat

The Upper Court was surrounded by a moat, probably from the time of its construction but it has been much modified. The area to the north and east of the Upper Court has been extensively remodelled and little of the moat's original form can be seen. Around the north-west corner it has been filled almost to the level of the Upper Court but the substantial outer scarps remain and the moat is readily traceable here. Within the area of the Lower Court it had been filled in but could be seen as a broad shallow depression running across it (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 6).

The external scarps where the moat was cut into the uphill slope were extensively remodelled during later phases of activity (below). The only area that may not have been significantly affected is at the south end of the east-facing external scarp on the west arm of the moat, though even here poaching and vehicle tracks have caused significant damage. Along the rest of this scarp the lower part of the slope probably represent the original line of the external moat scarp but a later terrace has been cut into it and it seems possible that the lower part was also remodelled. The north-west corner is disturbed by pitting and poaching and the western part of the northern external scarp was perhaps later remodelled to reduce the incline which would have pushed its alignment to the north.

It has generally been assumed that the moat was dry, due to the steeply sloping nature of the site. This is not necessarily correct. As noted above the area of the Lower Court was probably level when constructed and so the moat was also level on this side, as demonstrated by excavation (above). The area to the east of the Upper Court has seen the most extensive remodelling and features from this period are difficult to identify but it is likely that the moat also ran along this side of the platform. By comparing the levels of the Lower Court (about 124m AOD) and the bottom of the moat in front of the gatehouse, as excavated by Time Team (about 121.30m AOD; Wessex Archaeology 2008, 10), with the east-west profile through the platform (Profile A, Fig 5) it seems clear that both the east and south arms were capable of holding water with a retaining earthwork probably only being required around the south-east corner. Elements of this dam could have survived to the east of the Lower Court but extensive later modification has made them impossible to identify as surface features. The depth of the western and northern arms and how far they would have held water is less certain. A core examined by Time Team in the area of the north-western corner of the moat (NGR 443318

350013) gave some indication of the depth of made ground here as it reached a depth of 4.25 m but was still not bottomed (Vaughan Birbeck, Wessex Archaeology, pers comm). This was in the highest part of the moat so the actual depth reached was still over 124m AOD but as it was located slightly outside the probable line of the moat and did not strike rock it seems possible that the moat could have held water around its full circuit. A very substantial amount of earth must have been removed but it is unclear where it went. Some at least was probably dumped outside the moat to raise the level on the north side where the natural topography drops away.

On the eastern side of the castle it is likely that part of the original moat remains visible. Immediately to the north-east of the main residential block is a gully, which curves around the base of the slope down from this corner of the castle. Though some collapse debris in this gully gives it a somewhat irregular appearance, this is probably a remnant of the original moat that has been partially filled from the south-west by the construction of the residential block. The same was probably true for much of the moat south of this point which, after the construction of the residential block, would have been reduced in width and significance. Later, the moat was modified in this area (below) and this has removed any evidence for this phase. Towards the south end of the short section of remaining moat is a slight earthwork spur on the eastern side. This might mark the position of an earlier dam perhaps to accommodate a change in level, the equivalent remnant on the opposite side being hidden by the expansion of the Upper Court to accommodate the residential block.

Outer/garden earthworks

On the more level ground to the west and north-west of the main castle earthworks are several scarps that appear to define a series of roughly rectangular enclosed areas partially terraced into the slope. These are on two slightly different orientations and they may represent more than one phase. Though it is sometimes difficult to determine which scarps relate to one another the enclosures probably measure between 20m and 30m across. In the area between the enclosures and the original south-west corner of the moat, is a broad platform defined by moderate scarps that appear to merge with those that define one of the enclosures. There is a slight curving scarp overlying this platform but it did not form a coherent feature and may or may not have been associated. To the south of this is what appears to be a smaller, more irregular platform defined on its west by a scarp also apparently associated with one of the enclosures, but the slope on its south side is associated with a later track up from the moat area and the 'platform' is either illusory or much modified.

The enclosures and platform may be the remains of early gardens associated with the castle. If so then it seems most likely that they were for orchards or vineyards. Though it is not certain how relevant it is to England, a Frankish law gives an indication of the likely size of a small orchard; it defined the minimum size as twelve trees within an enclosure (Landsberg nd, 17), which, at a typical spacing of about 5 or 6m (ibid), would give an enclosure of about 15-20m by about 20-25m, clearly within the range of sizes seen here. In contrast, the enclosures were probably too small to be paddocks and too big to be herbers, which would typically be located within the castle itself. Another possible

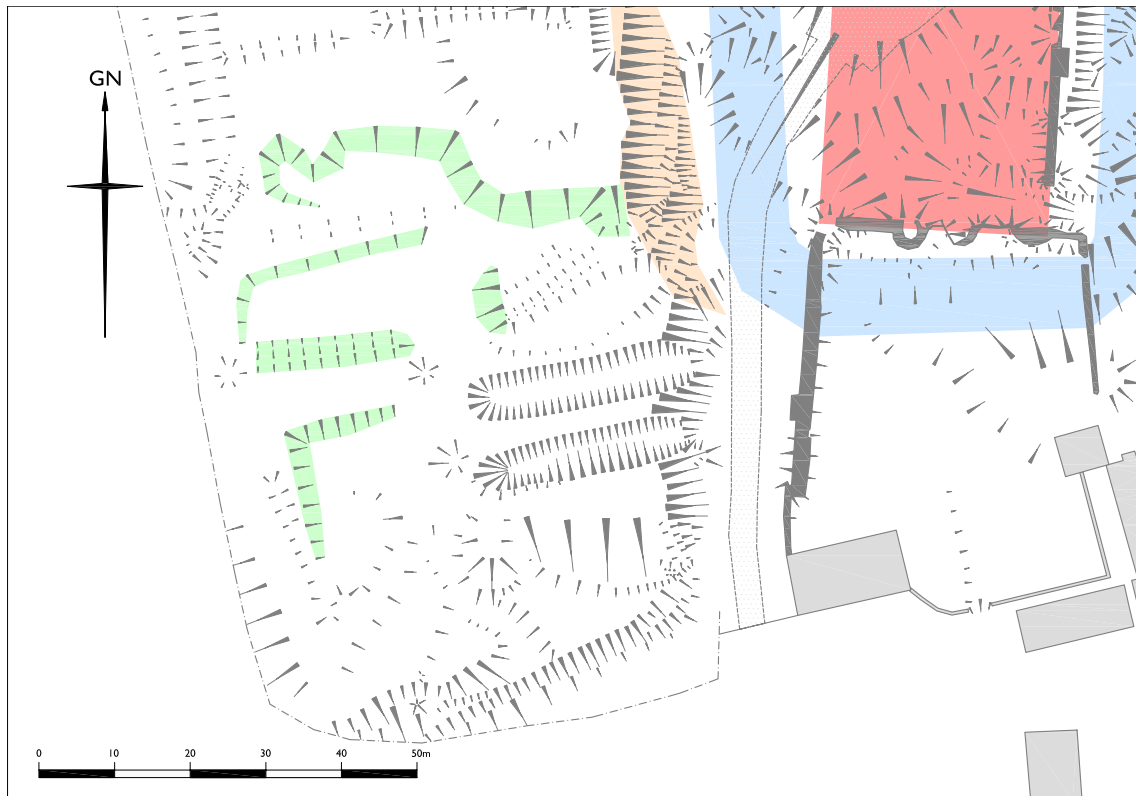


Figure 8: The south-western part of the survey area

Possible garden earthworks in green (Upper Court - red, moat - blue, outer moat earthworks in orange).

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example of a pleasure garden to one side of an axial approach has been recorded at Stow park, Lincolnshire (Everson 1998, 32).

There is no clear relationship between these earthworks and any dateable features due to the presence of several later features in the area between them and the castle as well as the general level of poaching and disturbance. Prior to the construction of the Lower Court the enclosures were probably directly accessible from the main gate on the South Front, but after the construction of the western wall of the Lower Court, and particularly the cutting to its west, they would have been far less accessible and it therefore seems that they have a more coherent relationship with the first stone castle rather than its later more developed form. If correct then these would be very early examples of medieval garden earthworks.

In the far north-west of the site is a field boundary that consists of an east facing scarp with a grown out hedge on top and a ditch and counterscarp to the east. A level area to its west suggests accumulated hill wash and its original form was probably a bank and ditch. At its southern end the boundary is heavily disturbed by poaching but it seems that some of the later garden earthworks (below) overlie it. It is difficult to see how any intermediate phase in the development of these earthworks would provide a context for this and it therefore seems most likely to be contemporary with the first stone castle or possibly even earlier, though probably relating to agricultural activity rather than gardens. It is possible that the ditch and outer bank seen further to the south (below) are also

remnants of this feature and may suggest that the early castle was contained within an outer enclosure, perhaps originally agricultural in nature.

Period 3: Later developments

Many of the later developments at Codnor Castle are undated and do not have direct relationships with one another but can probably be assigned to one broad period so long as it is recognised that this could have covered an extended time-frame.

The Upper Court

The main development of the standing fabric was the construction of the residential block which, as noted above, sits astride the earlier eastern wall line, projecting beyond it to the east and on a slightly different orientation to both the east and possible north curtain walls suggesting a later date for its construction; this was probably sometime during the 14th century but remains uncertain (above).

The northern wall of the residential block has a fireplace on its northern side showing that there must have been a northern extension that was at least two storeys high, which has collapsed. The earthworks in this area consist of a low mound and a moderately sloping area defined by much steeper slopes down to the north and east.

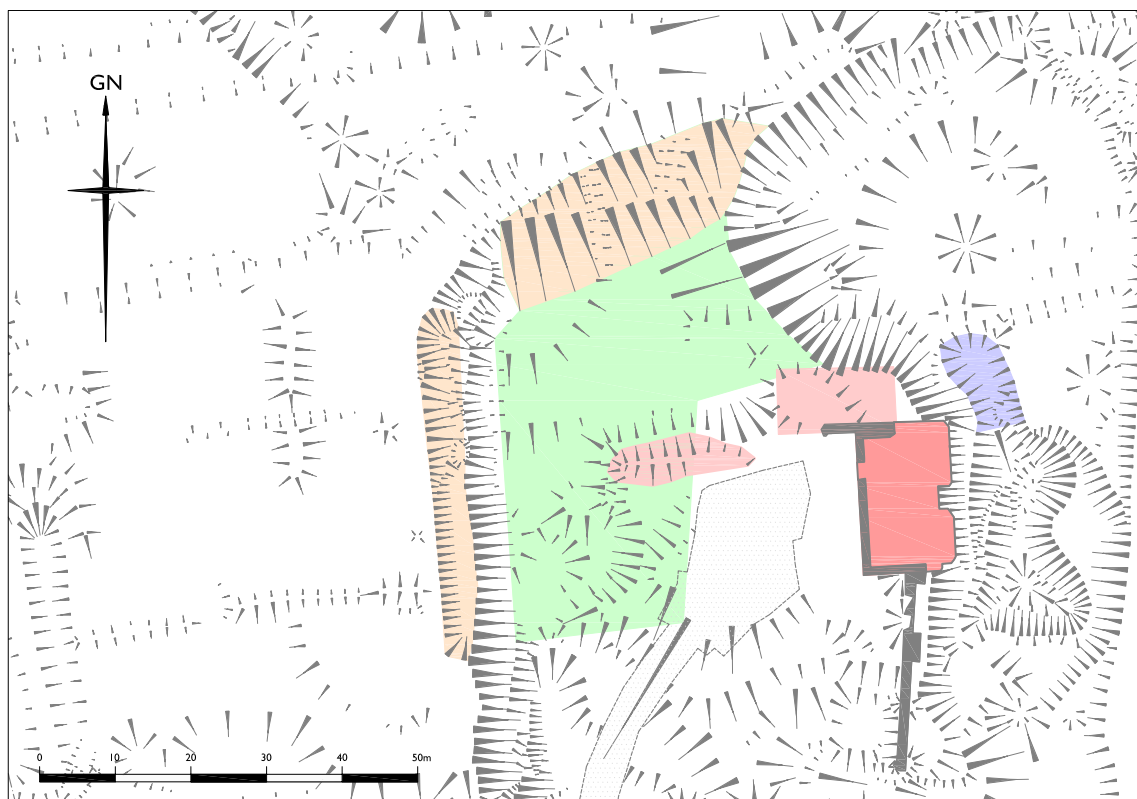


Figure 9: The central northern part of the survey area

New structure in red, possible building platforms in pink, reworked outer earthworks in orange, moat cutting infilled for gardens in green, remnant of moat in blue.

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These suggest that the missing part of the building was offset to the west relative to the residential block.

The earthwork evidence suggests that the north-western part of the platform may also have been remodelled. There is a low but clearly defined ridge here running east/west on approximately the same alignment as the standing north wall of the residential block, though on a line slightly to the south of it. This suggests a wall line that projected about 11m beyond the western curtain wall. The bank sat upon a low platform with clear scarps to the north and west and an irregular fall to the south, and it seems possible that there was a building here. That these earthworks extended beyond the line of the curtain wall suggests that the moat may have been filled in here to accommodate this building. It is possible that this building is of the same period as the main residential block, as it appears to have been on the same alignment though this is far from certain. It is also possible however that these earthworks represent collapse debris from a corner tower though they appear to be too regular for this.

The moat

The construction of the tower block probably required the expansion of the main platform to the north and east to accommodate it and this may have led to the partial infilling of the moat below. The irregular gully curving around below the north-east corner of the residential block is probably a remnant of this narrowed moat.

Around the north-west corner of the moat the ground level is almost as high as that within the Upper Court. One of the Time Team cores in this area reached a depth of over 4.5m without recording bedrock and it seems that what must have been a very substantial cutting for the moat has been filled in. The possible construction of a building at the northwest corner of the court would probably have post-dated the infilling of the moat here as it projected well beyond the line of the curtain wall, but, as noted above, this is uncertain.

It is not clear if the primary reason for infilling the moat was to allow the construction of a building here or to create an open area adjacent to the Upper Court. In either case, it was probably used as a garden; it was near the primary residential structures (which in turn suggests that there may have been direct access to this area from the castle) and immediately above it is a well engineered terrace cut into the existing east facing external moat scarp, probably to provide a walk allowing this area to be viewed from above. This terrace extended from a point roughly opposite the central bastion on the western curtain wall probably as far as the north-western corner of the moat earthworks, which gives some indication of the probable extent of the gardens here. The terrace was probably contemporary with the infilling of the moat as the spoil from its construction could have been used to partly backfill the moat, though not to complete the job. Since the slope to the north is of a significantly lower gradient than that to the west it seems possible that it was cut back, perhaps to provide material to fully infill the moat, but maybe also to allow easier access out onto the ground beyond, perhaps a 'little park' (Way 2006, 21).

The southern part of the west arm of the moat, to the south of the in-filled area is considerably lower than the northern part and it seems likely that it remained open throughout the life of the castle. The slope up from the area of the south-west corner of the moat to the in-filled north-west part is irregular and Time Team coring indicated that the deposits in this area may consist of collapse debris, perhaps overlying a scarp up from the moat level to the raised garden area, similar to that seen to the north-east.

The Lower Court

The existing open area in front of the South Front was probably first enclosed during this period to create the Lower Court (see 'Castle buildings' above). On balance it seems likely that the west wall can be assigned to this period though this is not certain. It is likely that there was once a south wall to the Lower Court presumably with a gatehouse, but this has now completely gone, with any earthworks lost under the modern farm track and mine buildings. The ground falls away to the south-east from the possible line of a south wall, suggested by the position of the two mural chamber blocks, if they were centrally placed, but this could be the result of later changes. The eastern wall of the Lower Court is very different and more likely to be from a later period though it may have replaced an earlier wall on a similar line.

The east facing scarp to the west (shown in orange on Fig 10) represents a new cut at the time of the Lower Court's construction; it is on a slightly different line to the earlier



Figure 10: The central southern part of the survey area

Possible original extent of Lower Court in red, later extension in pink, earthworks of new cutting in orange.

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scarp to the north and so there is a slight disjunction where they meet. It has been used by modern farm tracks and was probably originally deeper but no work has been done to ascertain its original depth or if it ever contained water, though this was certainly possible. The area to the east of the Lower Court has been extensively remodelled in later periods and nothing can be certainly identified from this period, but the overall topography was probably similar to that visible today with the land falling away from the Lower Court to the east and from the area of the suggested retaining dam/bank for the moat (above) to the south-east. The existing farmhouse is constructed across a significant drop with its rear (east) being at least 2m lower than its front and it appears that the scarp dropping away eastwards from the Lower Court extended along all of this side, south of the presumed moat dam.

Outer/garden earthworks

To the north-east of the castle, and beyond the line of the moat, is a broadly circular level area below and to the north of the residential block with its surface at a little below 124m AOD, a similar level to the Lower Court though it seems much lower with the residential block towering above. This seems to have been created by cutting back the outer moat scarp in the north-west and using this material to build up the ground to the north-east and east. The uniformity of the slope up to the higher area to the west suggests that it was created by cutting back into the already in-filled north-west corner of the moat (above) and that this lower compartment was therefore later. It is possible however that the two areas were created at the same time as elements of a single scheme. Counterscarps to the north suggest that some of the spoil from this work was deposited outside to raise the level of the enclosing scarps where the natural topography drops away, perhaps to increase privacy. The external scarps to the north-east are complex and probably represent several phases of activity, some of which very probably post-date the creation of this compartment though some may have been contemporary.

This area also seems to have been laid out to form gardens. In the centre is a well defined circular hollow; coring here indicated standing water suggestive of an ornamental pond (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 9). Curving around this feature from the north-east to the north-west is a fairly broad level terrace about 0.5m above the central area of the compartment, probably a raised walkway around the central pool or perhaps a bank intended to provide seating (Strong 1984, 24). To the south, slight east/west scarps and an east/west gully may mark the positions of paths or other more ephemeral garden features such as beds or hedgerows intended to divide the space, and south of these is a second, slightly smaller hollow that might be another ornamental pond, though it seems slightly less regular than the one to the north and may be a small quarry pit. The eastern side of this levelled area is overlaid by later features but it was probably originally somewhat larger.

Given its location it seems likely that this garden area was intended to be viewed from private chambers within the residential block above. This suggests that it was probably constructed after the residential block was built though potentially it was always considered as part of the same scheme (McClean 1981, 106). Although the main residential accommodation was probably always on this side of the castle, the gardens

were unlikely to have been constructed prior to this as it appears that until the tower block was constructed, the moat was open and the defensive aspects of the castle's role dominated.

The eastern limit of the castle earthworks consist of a very substantial east facing scarp aligned to run across the natural slope with a moderately shallow and somewhat irregular ditch below, with a slight counter-scarp forming a faint outer bank. In its northern half the scarp, ditch and outer bank were generally quite uniform apart from some small scale poaching and erosion. To the south though, the scarp becomes more complex with an area which has apparently been cut back, a small spur and several breaks in the slope. The ditch also deepens and has a more pronounced outer bank, but is interrupted by a fan of material derived from the area that has been cut back, which seems too substantial to simply be an erosion deposit. To the south of this area the main scarp continues with several breaks in its slope and it curves around slightly to the east before merging with substantial earthworks to the south-east of the castle, forming a pronounced bowl. The overall impression is that the southern part of this east facing scarp and associated earthworks is different to the northern part and therefore of a different period; the northern part probably associated with the construction of the north-eastern garden and the southern part an extension of the earlier construction to tie it into a later, more developed, garden scheme.

Directly to the east of the residential block the alignment and levels suggest the moat was deepened and excavated further to the east and that a probable bridge abutment or dam (though the lack of an equivalent earthwork opposite rather suggests the former) was created by leaving the central section less deeply excavated. To the east of this, a level area defined by a curving west facing scarp, probably accommodated the eastern end of the bridge, presumably intended to provide a direct link between the residential block and the gardens around this side of the castle. These scarps appear to be overlain by the flat-topped bank, in which case they were likely to be of this period, but thick vegetation made it difficult to be sure of this and these works could be of a later period. South of this the moat had been filled but it is not possible to be certain how or when this took place. It seems likely that this occurred as the result of collapse at the end of the castle's life as, if it had been intentionally back-filled to create a symmetrical pond then the remnant arm to the north would probably also have been filled in. The crucial south-western part of the pond feature was probably overlain by 19th century features and parts were obscured at the time of survey by felled trees and have since been partially backfilled by the consolidation contractors.

It seems possible that the later features to the east of the Lower Court overlie a mound that is from this period or perhaps even earlier. The mound itself does not appear to be coherently placed in relation to the later earthworks and the change in the nature of the east facing scarp described above, suggests that the underlying earthwork was extended to provide a level connection with the existing mound. The narrowing and change of orientation of the terrace at its southern end gives some support to this and might also explain the level area at its far southern end, which is over half a metre lower than the earthworks to the north and might represent the top of the earlier mound. Continual remodelling of the earthworks in this area makes it difficult to

determine the source of the material for the mound but perhaps it came from the area of the moat remodelled to form the substantial pond immediately below the east front of the residential block, or, if the mound was an even earlier feature then the excavation of the moat along this side of the castle could have provided the material. However, it is also possible that the mound was built as part of the later development of the garden and that any apparent phasing in the earthworks is constructional; the change in orientation of the terrace and associated features being to respect the east wall of the Lower Court rather than to meet an existing feature. The most likely function for this feature was a viewing platform or 'mount', the earliest known example of which, at Whittington in Shropshire, dates to the 14th century (Ugnow 2004, 43).

Period 4: Final developments

Within the castle buildings this period is marked by the extensive use of brick in the residential block, apparently for patching and modification of features such as the fireplaces, rather than any new building. Brick was also seen in the bastion attached to the western curtain wall in Time Team Trench 6 and is visible in the eastern wall of the Lower Court. This use of brick is likely to date to from after 1485, the end of the Wars of the Roses, probably soon after the estate was acquired by the Zouches (see 'Castle buildings' above).

Outer/garden earthworks

The garden earthworks to the east of the site are dominated by a substantial terrace bank, over 90m long, which overlies most of the other earthworks. It has a consistent width of 8-9m with a level top, albeit with some deep vehicle ruts in its surface, and runs slightly west of south for just under 90m before it begins to narrow and curve slightly to the east for another 10m or so.

At its north end the terrace is relatively low and the surrounding earthworks are complex and rather confused suggesting several phases of activity, some of which may have been unfinished. It is possible that a few of these features are contemporary with the earlier garden compartment to the west though none could be identified as such with any certainty. The earthworks to the north-east overlie the easternmost ditch below the main east-facing scarp indicating that some of the elaboration in this area post-dates the underlying earthworks that the terrace sits upon. Somewhat amorphous mounds to the northwest appear to form banks overlying the terrace, perhaps intended to separate this end of it from the garden area to the west or may represent earlier turf seats, though they are ill defined and may have been unfinished. They may however have been disturbed or be later dumps. Several irregular features cut into the east side of the terrace but these are probably tree throws or poached areas. Overall little sense could be made of the features here.

To the south the terrace earthworks peter out and merge with more confused earthworks consisting of a small mound, hollow, and several areas of poaching. To the south of these is a larger mound, roughly triangular in shape, with a flat top less than 0.30m above the level of the terrace, and south of this is a broad flat area about 1m

below the top of the triangular mound, which curves around the south and east sides of it dropping slightly to the east where poached tracks run down the steep east-facing scarp to the field below.

These features sit upon a large artificial spur or mound which raise this area by several metres above the natural topography. As noted above this may have been an earlier mound but it is also possible that the spur was constructed to provide a fitting focus to the garden at this point and that any apparent phasing in the earthworks is constructional. It could be that the change in orientation of the terrace and associated features at its south end was to respect the east wall of the Lower Court rather than to meet an existing feature though this doesn't explain the lack of overall coherence in the earthworks here and if this feature were from this later period then it is difficult to see where the material for its construction came from.

Between the 'mount' and the Lower Court/Castle Farm is a substantial gully. This has several south facing scarps running across it and a few small mounds. These cannot be dated with certainty but most probably post-date the farmhouse. Some though may be related to the first moat, and be the remnants of a retaining bank that ran around this corner of the moat, later use of this gully as a track has caused erosion and it is not possible to be certain.

Running along the western side of the survey area is a clear scarp which runs down to the current track along the western side of the castle (shown in part on Fig 8). On the survey plan this appears to be interrupted for a stretch but this was due to the very overgrown hedge here; whilst it could be seen to be continuous it was not possible to survey it accurately. This scarp is most likely to be associated with the track to the west of the castle. Though this is undated it appears to underlie probable post-medieval features and so may be of this period or earlier.

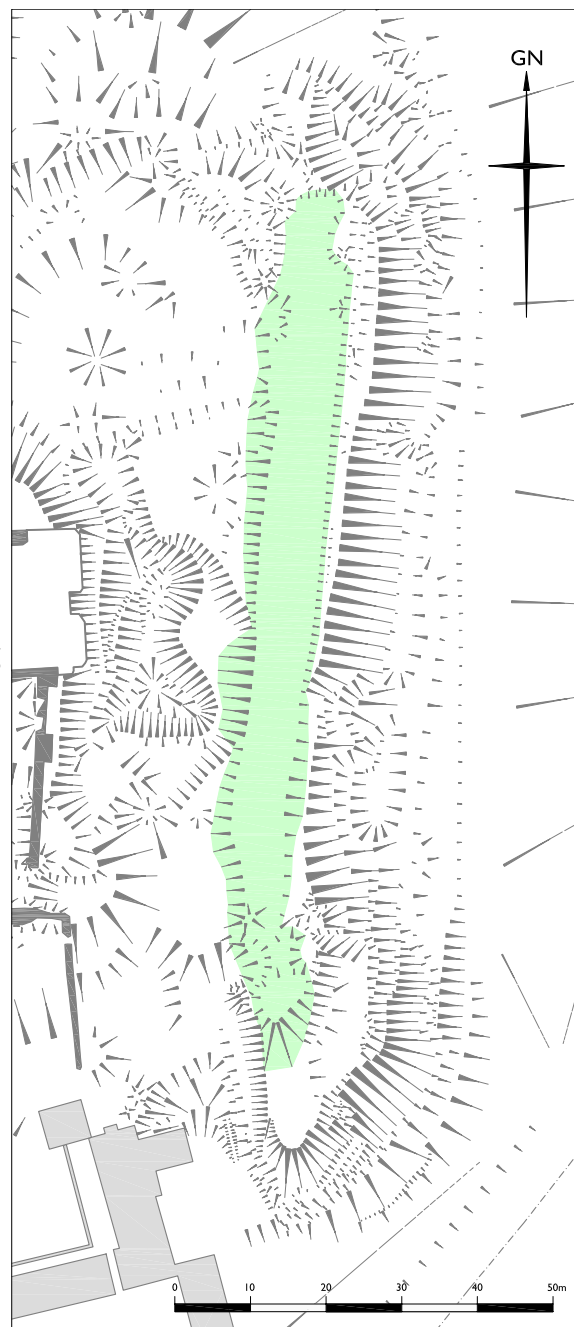


Figure 11: The eastern part of the survey area
Terrace bank in green.
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Later features

Demolition and collapse

It is clear that there would have been multiple phases of collapse or demolition of the castle buildings though it is not known to what extent the castle suffered from deliberate destruction or natural decay. As noted above ('Castle buildings') Leland described the castle as ruinous in the 1540s but it seems likely that most damage occurred after the mid 17th century when stone began to be removed for building, as the construction of the adjacent farm house in about 1640 demonstrates.

The western arm of the moat contains a series of irregular scarps sloping down to the south and west. Several cores in this area undertaken for Time Team hit stone at fairly shallow but irregular depths (0.5-1.75m) which would suggest an irregular rubble deposit below the surface, most probably resulting from the collapse of the western curtain wall and tower. It seems probable that the irregular nature of the earthworks in this area, if not the overall change in level, is the result of various collapse episodes, probably brought on, or exacerbated by, quarrying for building stone. The south-eastern part of the moat, outside the Lower Court, may also have been filled as a result of the collapse of part of the curtain wall here.

In many areas small mounds in the immediate vicinity of the standing castle buildings and banks running along the bases of walls represented modern decay of the castle fabric as they can be seen to overlie relatively recent features. Many of these have since been cleared away during the consolidation works.

Industrial activity

There is a scatter of depressions across the survey area many of which probably represent test pits associated with mineral prospection in the post-medieval period. Some however are shallow and amorphous and it is possible that these are tree throws; the 1722 map (anon) shows the whole area around the castle as wooded.

The area of the Upper Court was in use as a yard by the consolidation contractors at the time of survey and consequently few features could be seen. This area is recorded as being thoroughly turned over during the 19th century by quarrying for ironstone (Kerry 1892, 18) and Time Team located evidence of industrial activity in this area though its nature could not be determined (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 13). It should be noted though that some medieval features did survive here despite this (ibid, 11-12).

Running north away from the north-west corner of the moat, is a broad strip of disturbed ground consisting of three or four substantial depressions, with a substantial scarp above, where the ground has been cut away, and a terrace and scarp below, created by dumping, with several other mounds in the immediate area that are probably associated. This suggests small scale quarrying, rather than the test pitting seen elsewhere, probably following a seam of richer material, perhaps ironstone as worked in the Upper Court (Kerry 1892, 18), though field names within Codnor park include 'Cole Close' (1722 map).

The south-east corner of the site is defined by the earthwork remains of an incline for a railway apparently associated with mining, which runs up from the floor of the Erewash Valley to the top of the ridge. This must have been active well into the 19th century as the south east corner of the farm buildings were constructed so as to accommodate it.

Other earthworks

South of the probable 13th century garden enclosures to the west of the Lower Court is a pronounced but much disturbed south facing scarp that drops down to the east/west track which runs between Castle Farm and the modern road past the castle. Halfway along this scarp a modern track pushes up north onto the higher ground from the main east/west track. To the west of this is a disturbed area that may have resulted from quarrying and dumping but this is uncertain. Overall it appears that this slope marks the line of a track here on a slightly different alignment to the modern one. Its orientation suggests that the track either predates or post-dates the western wall of the Lower Court since it runs on a line that would have taken it to a part of the western wall not thought to have had an entrance (Stevenson 1920, Fig opp 46). It must be said though that this is largely supposition, as is the assumption that the entrance to the Lower Court was on the south wall of the Lower Court, the line of which is itself only inferred. At Wingfield Manor the entrance to the Outer Court is at the south end of its east side (Meek 2002, 58) and this scarp might be hinting that the entrance to the Lower Court at Codnor was at the south end of its west side. The relationship between the south facing scarp associated with the track and the east facing scarp associated with the west wall of the Lower Court (above) is not clear due to erosion and poaching, and close to the junction a modern, though now disused track up onto the higher ground further obscures this. On balance, it seems most likely that the scarp relates to a post medieval track that ran from the road to the west of the castle across to Castle Farm and which also connected to a track running along the west side of the Lower Court.

To the north of the same area of possible 13th century garden enclosures is a small but clear bank running east/west across the area, though interrupted for a few metres by a modern track, and there are faint traces of a parallel bank 45m to the north. The southern bank runs parallel to some of the scarps of the possible medieval garden compartments which suggests it was intended to respect them and the northern bank was perhaps aligned on the north-west corner of the moat. It is therefore possible that they date to the medieval period and that this level area may have contained paddocks intended to complement the gardens, to the south or east. This cannot be proven and it is equally likely that they are post-medieval in date.

Along the northern section of the west facing scarp associated with the current track west of the castle, at the highest point of the survey area, where the land was relatively level, is a counter scarp that formed a low but clear bank. This was probably a boundary, most likely a hedge bank associated with the track and/or the possible enclosures to the east, as a return to the south appears to align with one of those banks. This favours a later date for the possible enclosures described above.

At the south end of this bank, where the land begins to fall away to the south is a group of features of unknown function. These consist of two slightly irregular platforms, one of which had a small but discrete bank with a right angled turn suggestive of building remains. To the south of these is a substantial gully, apparently a cut feature, running north/south parallel to the existing field boundary, which deepens to the north as the natural topography rises and ends at a mounded area created by a bank which curves around the terminus, immediately south of the building/platforms. The gully and the platforms seem to be associated and these possibly overlie the scarp to the hollow way. There is no clear relationship with other features and to the south, where relationships to the medieval features might have been visible, the gully was truncated by a modern track associated with an abandoned and overgrown field entrance. The impression is that these were later, possibly post-medieval features perhaps associated with the farm to the west, outside the survey area, but this is not certain and their function cannot be determined.

A series of shallow parallel gullies run east/west down the natural topography across the north and north-western part of the survey area. They cut all earlier features and are probably field drains laid in the late 19th or early 20th centuries.

In the northwest corner of the site is an east/west gully which appears to cut through the hollow way scarp and merge with one of the much slighter field drain gullies as it ran downhill. This seems to mark the limit of the main earthworks to the south, and there are possible hints of ridge and furrow to the north so this gully may mark the limit of the castle grounds or perhaps those of the precursor on the site. However the thin strip between this gully and the track to the north, and the reinstated open-cast quarrying beyond that make it impossible to be sure. It is therefore possible that this is simply the remains of a post medieval track.

The southern part of the eastern Upper Court curtain wall is missing and a track runs out through this gap into the open area here. A photograph and an etching from the late 19th century (Meek 2002, 5) show what appears to be a recently constructed earthwork ramp which suggests that the track was deliberately pushed through here in the 19th century and that the substantial mound in this area is the remains of this ramp, rather than collapse debris from the castle or associated with the other earthworks in this area. It is possible that the moat here may have been filled in at this time.

Immediately to the west of the Lower Court are two large cigar-shaped trenches. These are modern silage clamps dug sometime between 1947 (NMR CPE/UK2009 4368 16-APR-1974) and 1962 (OS 1:10,560, 1962).

The site is popular with local walkers and in agricultural use as cattle pasture and consequently numerous modern paths and tracks ran across the site, as well as several areas of poaching, both active and inactive.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The earthworks hint at an earlier phase of activity on the site. The level northern half of the Upper Court and its sloping southern part suggest that there may have been a raised platform here before the construction of the first stone castle. This possibility is supported by a range of circumstantial evidence which indicates that if there was a precursor on the site, then it seems most likely that it had its origins as an Anglo-Saxon manorial centre that developed into the Norman period. Codnor is an early, topographic, quasi-habitative name of a form indicative of the caput of a multiple estate. Domesday Book suggests that Codnor was the head of a compact group of holdings also reminiscent of a fragmented multiple-estate. The current village of Codnor is very probably a secondary settlement that developed as a green-side settlement in the 12th century or perhaps a little earlier. The charter of 1208 implies that the park was also in existence before the castle and it may have been established in response to the development of settlement around the green, in order to preserve woodland which would have been threatened by the expansion of pasture in the former area of common. Given the likely existence of an Anglo-Saxon manorial caput it is also possible that this might have attracted a small post-Conquest earthwork castle in order to dominate the newly acquired territory (Liddiard 2006, 247-8) and the hints of centralisation in Domesday Book (above) possibly support this. This could have been a motte (now levelled) possibly above a small bailey. The levelled area within the Upper Court was about 30m across and such a size would not have been unusual for such an earthwork (Higham & Barker 2004, Figs 7.12b, 7.16b, 8.41, 8.53 & 8.54). There are relatively few earthwork castles in Derbyshire but they are not unknown. They include two mottes, two mottes with baileys and two ringworks, as well as another eight sites that are less certain (King 1983, 108-113). There is however, a complete lack of documentary evidence for any early castle at Codnor. This cannot be taken to indicate that there was not an earthwork castle here though, as 'many, probably a majority, of the earthworks representing timber castles have no documentary history at all. As archaeological monuments they may as well be prehistoric' (Higham & Barker 2004, 26).

The historical, architectural and archaeological evidence shows that the first phase of the standing castle probably dates to about 1200, shortly after Codnor came into Henry de Grey's hands. This consisted of a curtain wall with a developed south front with an ornate plinth, round corner towers and a central gateway with projecting bastions to either side. It was roughly rectangular in plan but may have been somewhat asymmetric at its northern end to accommodate the topography, and doubtless contained several buildings. This was surrounded by a moat which must have been very deeply cut in the north-west and which could probably have retained water right around the castle. On balance, it seems likely that it did since there was probably a water source available as demonstrated by the pond that held water into the 20th century and where possible fish 'stews' or ponds were 'almost as integral to the grounds as a well' (McLean 1981, 98) and the use of moats for this purpose is recorded (ibid, 99). The area of the later Lower Court was probably an open level area at this time.

It seems possible that some of the garden earthworks to the west of the castle originated at about this time. By the 12th century vineyards had become common,

orchards appear to have been increasing in numbers (Harvey 1981, 54), and the first references to small aesthetic gardens, or herbers begin to appear (ibid, 60). Medieval gardens were typically 'accessories to a lady's bower' (McLean 1981, 97) and since Codnor seems to have been closely associated with Isolde perhaps from before her marriage to Henry (in about 1200) until her death (in about 1246), and as she appears to have had some independent status and to have made Codnor her primary residence, it seems likely that there was a garden of some sort during this period. Common garden elements from at the time included orchards, vineyards, paddocks, herbers. The earliest castle gardens though were vineyards outside the castle walls (McLean 1981, 92) and this would fit the earthworks at Codnor. The enclosures were probably too small to be paddocks and a herber would typically be located within the castle itself. In fact, 'an orchard was the most rudimentary sort of garden a manor, palace or castle could have' (McLean 1981, 109) so perhaps it would be more surprising if Codnor did not have one. During the medieval period orchards and vineyards were intended to provide shaded walkways, arbours and so on as well as the produce from the trees (Landsberg nd, 16) so they were usually located so as to be accessible from the castle entrance. Prior to the construction of the Lower Court they were probably directly accessible from the Upper Court, the early core of the castle, but the construction of the Lower Court would appear to have cut them off somewhat, so they might pre-date its construction, though they could have continued in use.

In this period Codnor Castle therefore consisted of a primarily defensive structure with a formal entrance onto an open area, perhaps with orchards to the west. The defensive aspect seems to have dominated with the castle focussed on the formal approach, a public space. There is little distinction between public and private visible in the layout of the castle and grounds. Status was very much related to personal display and conspicuous consumption and lordship exercised through direct authority. At this time the park would have been defined by being private land separated from the more communally available resources (Hoppitt 1999, 10) rather than a space for hunting, perhaps intended to preserve access to resources, such as woodland, threatened by population expansion and shift, in part manifested through the growth of Codnor village itself. Most hunting in fact took place in the open countryside (Steane 2001, 272).

The next developments at Codnor probably took place in or about the second quarter of the 14th century. A few minor elements of the castle buildings can be dated to around the 1330s but much else, including the residential block and the western wall of the lower court, has been assigned to this period by association. The addition of the residential block astride the north-eastern corner of the curtain wall probably necessitated the enlargement of the mound here which led to the partial infilling of the moat below. The earthwork evidence suggests that another building may have been constructed across the north-western corner of the Upper Court opposite the main residential block and extending some way beyond the curtain wall into the moat.

Two probable garden areas were also created around this end of the castle, one to the north-west by infilling the moat ditch and one to the north-east by expanding outwards and building up the ground. The construction of a building in the north west of the Upper Court would have necessitated at least the partial infilling of the moat so this area

of gardens may date from this period. Those to the north-east could have been later but remain undated. There was a 'close relationship between gardens and buildings in the medieval period, both in design and construction' (McLean 1981, 106) so it seems likely that both were probably contemporary with the buildings, or constructed soon after them as they were clearly related. This was also the most likely period when the eastern arm of the moat was widened and elaborated and a bridge possibly added to allow direct access from the residential block out into the north-east compartment. Bridges to reach gardens appear to have been relatively common and at Guildford Palace in Surrey a staircase was constructed from the Queen's apartments straight down into her garden in the 1280s (McLean 1981, 95, 102-3).

It remains uncertain when the Lower Court was added or even if it was a single phase of work. The overall similarity between the west wall and the other walls of the main castle suggest a date comparable with those structures, possibly in the earlier 14th century, at the same time as other improvements were being made at the site, but it could have been at anytime after the construction of the curtain wall about 1200. The use of brick in the east wall however, suggests a date in the late 15th or early 16th century for this structure. It therefore seems that there may have been at least two phases in the development. An arm of the moat was retained across the Lower Court throughout the castle's life; in part to enhance the formalised entrance as infilling to the north made it somewhat redundant defensively, though it probably always had a secondary role as a fish-pond (McLean 1981, 98-9). In front of the gatehouse the moat was revetted with stone and probably had a drawbridge (Wessex Archaeology 2008, 10).

The developments of this broad period show an evolution in the organisation of the castle and grounds. There appears to have been a decline in the defensive aspects of the site, shown by the infilling of parts of the moat, in favour of a more elaborate layout of both the castle and grounds, with a much clearer distinction between public and private spaces. The development of the northern part of the site with the residential block and other possible buildings, was at the far end of the complex away from the entrance and public areas, and the probably contemporary gardens were apparently designed to be seen from them but presumably to be private. It is possible that the gardens at Codnor may have been arranged in the concentric pattern idealised in the medieval period (Everson 1998, 36). There may have been a small enclosed herber within the Upper Court, beyond which there were apparently more open garden compartments immediately adjacent to the high status buildings at the northern end of the Upper Court and it seems possible that these might in turn have given access out into a 'little park' beyond. This would not be unusual; 'at Castle Rising, Castle Hedingham and Mileham the private chamber of the manor or castle has been noted as facing the [little] park' (Way 2006, 21). The whole was certainly contained within an outer 'great park' which by this date had probably become a primarily recreational space, 'hunting, from being a chivalric, became a gentlemanly pursuit' (Steane 2001, 273). The activities within the park could have been viewed from the residential block and it was thought that this might in part explain its height. A viewshed analysis (Fig 12) showed that the additional areas of the great park visible from the taller structure are minimal. The additional height does however allow some areas close to the castle to be seen better so it might have been to

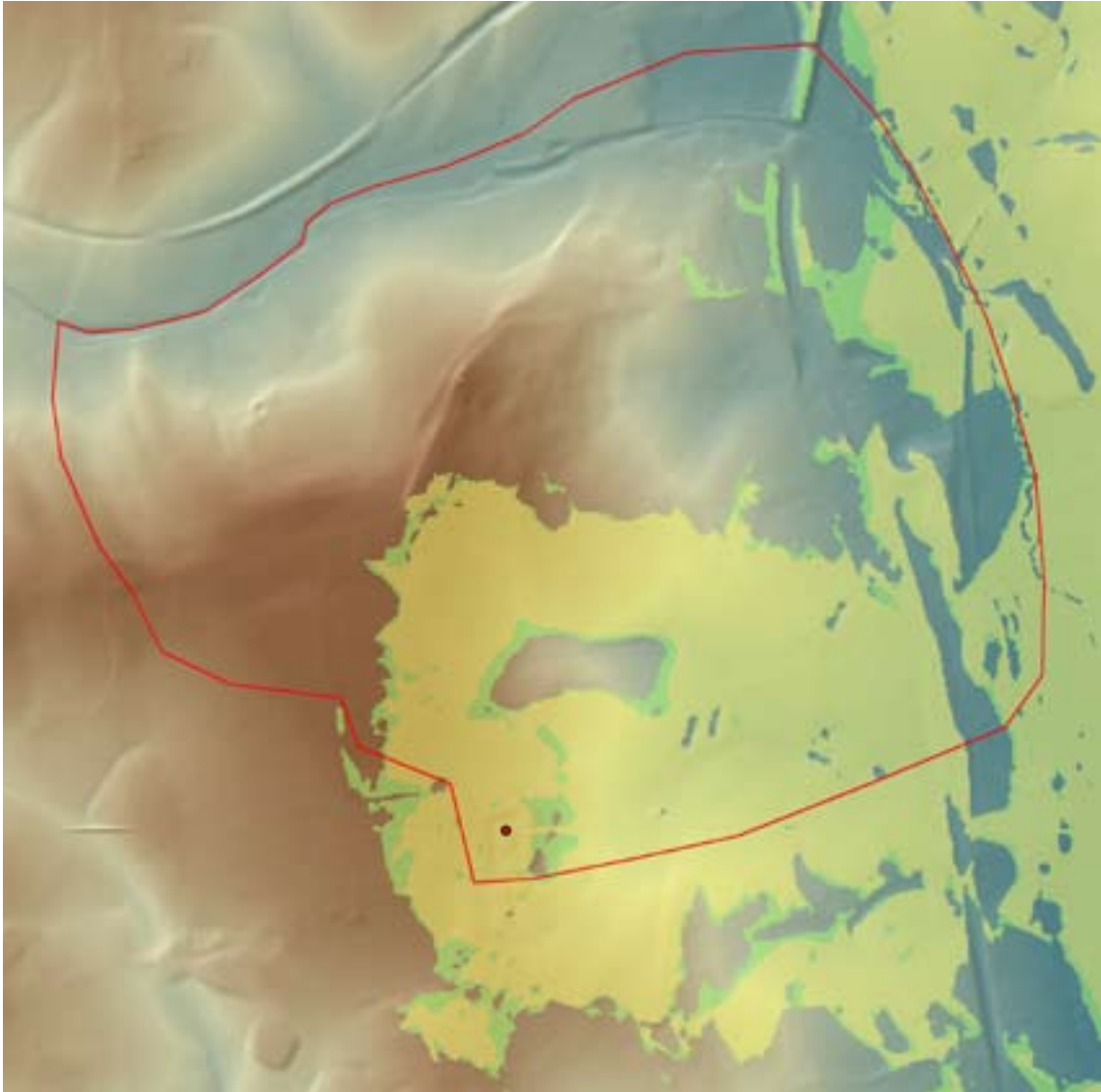


Figure 12: Viewshed analysis.

Residential tower block - red spot, probable extent of medieval park - red outline, yellow - areas visible from a 3m high curtain wall, green - additional areas visible from the top of a 7m high residential block

allow a better view of a little park but could have simply been related to contemporary building style.

The use of brick in many parts of the castle suggested repairs, modifications and enhancements of the castle during the late 15th or 16th centuries. This probably represented 'modernisation' in a Tudor style in the period of comparative peace following the Wars of the Roses, from 1485 onwards. Windows were probably enlarged and fireplaces opened out for example. These developments have been dated to the period after the castle was first acquired by the Zouches about 1500 ('Castle buildings' above).

The construction of the long flat-topped bank with complex associated earthworks at the north and south ends was probably the last period of development of the garden

associated with the castle. These works were probably associated with the east wall of the Lower Court, or at least the addition of brick decorated crenellations to it, as part of the elaboration of gardens in this area. If correct this probably dates these developments to the first half of the 16th century. These works were probably rather too early to be in the renaissance style as the best known, though not the first, early renaissance garden in England, at Hampton Court, was not started until the 1530s (Strong 1984, 25). As noted above many of the features on the eastern side of the castle were rather amorphous which suggests that the final works may have been unfinished; possibly abandoned half way through a transitional phase as the Zouches became increasingly short of money.

Some buildings on the site apparently remained occupied until they were sold off to the Bishop of York in 1634 but it is not known exactly which these were. Perhaps the older residential block had become too expensive to maintain and the Zouches retreated to less expensive accommodation as their wealth declined. Stone from the castle was being sold off by the mid 17th century and the castle was probably completely unoccupied by this time. Castle Farm dates to the 1640s.

Evidence for industrial activity is scattered across the site and probably dates mainly to the 18th and 19th centuries, though evidence from the local area suggests significant activity from the 17th century and mining might go back as far as the 15th century.

Despite the parks having a productive role right through the medieval period, intense agricultural activity was probably restricted until disparkment, possibly in the 16th century. Evidence from the site, such as the field drains, probably dates mainly from the 19th century onwards.

One feature of the site is the lack of water sources seen today. The presence of the moat and the evidence for both moving and standing water recovered from the Time Team cores however indicates that there must have been water on the site and there was a pond to the south of the castle into the 20th century. It may be that there was a spring in the area of the north-west corner of the moat that was buried by its later infilling. This raises the interesting possibility that it might have been possible to construct a conduit to the lower garden compartment at the north-east corner of the moat which could have not only fed the pool that was probably there but possibly a fountain. Meek reports that 'there is evidence that the moat was filled from nearby springs by conduit pipes made of solid wood' though her source was an article from the local newspaper and the original source of this information is not given (Meek 2002, 21). If correct though, then the conduits mentioned might relate to the pond or hypothetical fountain. It seems highly likely that mineral extraction in the vicinity, particularly the extensive open-cast mining, has substantially lowered the water table so the current lack of water on the site is perhaps not surprising.

METHODOLOGY

The earthwork plan was produced within Ordnance Survey National Grid coordinates using a combination of total-station theodolite (TST) and Global Positioning System (GPS) equipment.

Initially, a Trimble 5600 series TST was used to observe a ten station ring traverse. Due to the topography two link traverses with an additional five stations were also observed in order to allow full coverage of the site and where possible additional station shots were taken to improve the reliability of the traverse. Station 1 was permanently marked using a ground anchor to allow any future archaeological or conservation activity to be correlated to the earthwork plan precisely. Details are given in Appendix 1. From each station topographical observations were recorded directly into the TST.

Six of the traverse stations on the ring traverse were subsequently re-observed using GPS to enable transformation of the arbitrary local site grid to National Grid coordinates. For each observation a Trimble base station was set up over the point and an observed control point was recorded using real time differential data provided by the Ordnance Survey via VRS. This took approximately 3 minutes and was repeated for each station. Some infill work was undertaken with a Trimble R8 GPS rover recording directly to OS National Grid coordinates.

Traverse observations and topographic points were imported into Trimble GeoSite V software where the raw data was checked for errors. The traverse was analysed and the standard chi-squared test was passed after a single iteration of the adjustment routine. An overall accuracy of 1:7999 was achieved with an angular misclosure of 96.1 seconds and a height misclosure of 0.038m, all well within tolerances. These were then transformed to OS National Grid coordinates based upon the GPS observed control points. After transformation the maximum residual errors were 0.007m, 0.009m, and 0.050m, again well within tolerances. The infill GPS data was then imported and added to the TST derived data.

The survey was then transferred into AutoCAD 2007 3D Map software where some editing was undertaken to clean the survey data. A plan was then printed out, and hachured on polyester film in the field. This was then scanned, geo-referenced, digitally hachured, checked in the field and edited to produce the final earthwork plan.

The sections were not surveyed but were produced from the 3D survey data as corrected in GeoSite and based on a Triangulated Irregular Network (TIN) created from the survey points. This produces a fair reflection of the topography of the site particularly where the terrain is relatively level or the projected profile is close to survey points or break-lines (the lines surveyed as tops, bottoms or breaks of slope). In areas of less detailed survey however this does produce some anomalies. This is particularly noticeable on the east-west section in the area of the main residential block where only the main corners were surveyed. Here the internal ground level was lower than the external ground level and only the base of the eastern wall was surveyed. The profile

here gives the appearance of a steep, relatively uniform scarp, but this was not the case. A sketch of the actual profile has been added to this drawing.

Primary sources available through the Derbyshire Record Office and county Historic Environment Record were consulted. All aerial photographs of the area available from the National Monuments Record were examined but these were of a small scale and of limited value. All relevant readily available secondary sources were consulted.

The Codnor Castle ruins and earthworks are protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Derbyshire 100) under the 1979 Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act. The placement of survey markers and permanent stations was authorised under the provisions of the Ancient Monuments (Class Consents) Order 1994.

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1962 OS *Derbyshire* 6" to 1 mile, sheets 40 NE, SE, 32 SW

APPENDIX

Appendix I - Permanently Marked Survey Station

Station I

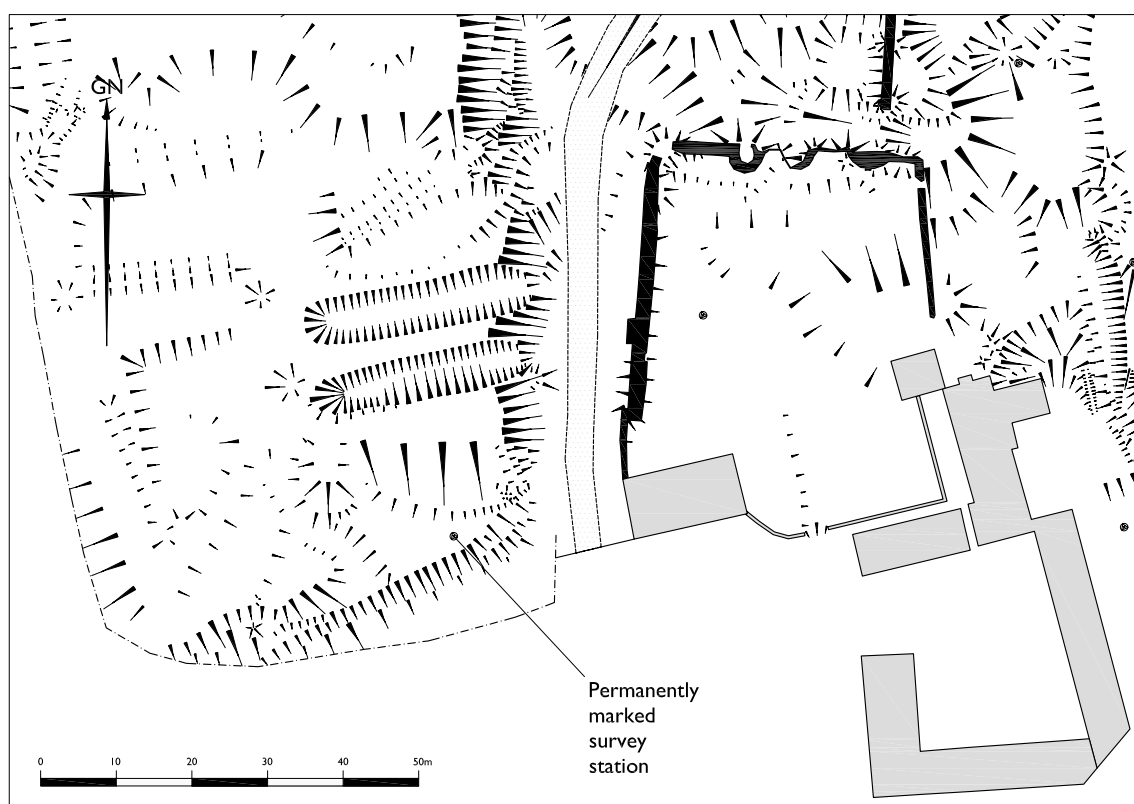
Description:

Metal 'land anchor' permanent station marker.

NGR details:

Easting: 443308.275, Northing: 349895.757, 126.119m AOD

Location plan:



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Figure 13: Survey reference plan
(1:1000 at A3)

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