

# STRATTON PARK MOATED ENCLOSURE, STRATTON, BIGGLESWADE, BEDFORDSHIRE A LANDSCAPE SURVEY AND INVESTIGATION SURVEY REPORT

David McOmish, Sarah Newsome, Wesley Keir, Jo Barker and Drew Shotliff



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**STRATTON PARK MOATED ENCLOSURE  
STRATTON, BIGGLESWADE  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**A Landscape Survey and Investigation**

David McOmish, Sarah Newsome,  
Wes Keir, Drew Shotliff and Jo Barker

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## **SUMMARY**

This project completes a body of work that commenced in 1993 with the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (RCHME) survey of the surviving earthworks immediately to the east of the Stratton moated enclosure (Kenny 1993). This initial investigation, undertaken at the request of Bedfordshire County Council, focused on an area of diffuse and plough-eroded enclosures and paddocks on the south-eastern fringes of Biggleswade in the area of Stratton Park. The results of the survey were largely inconclusive beyond a conviction that the remains represented, in all likelihood, the remnants of medieval and later field enclosures and paddocks as well as poorly defined elements of deserted dispersed settlement. These were important surviving components of a formerly more extensive spread of medieval and post-medieval field remains and cropmarks examined in advance of road and housing developments on the eastern periphery of Biggleswade. The most significant extant element in this earthwork complex, the Stratton Park moated enclosure, however, was excluded from detailed assessment due to the prohibitive nature of the vegetation cover. Scrub clearance on the site has taken place and this current report presents the results of the Level 3 (English Heritage 2007) investigation that was subsequently carried out on the moated enclosure by the English Heritage Archaeological Survey and Investigation, Cambridge team and Albion Archaeology. The project has been logged by English Heritage as RaSMIS number 5732.

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

The survey was undertaken by David McOmish, Sarah Newsome from Archaeological Survey and Investigation, English Heritage and Wesley Keir, Jo Barker from Albion Archaeology. Drawings were produced by David McOmish, photographs by David McOmish and Alun Bull, and the text was produced by David McOmish, Wesley Keir and Drew Shotliff.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## **ARCHIVE LOCATION**

The project archive is located at English Heritage, 24 Brooklands Avenue, Cambridge but will, in due course, be transferred to the National Monuments Record, Swindon.

## **DATE OF SURVEY**

February – March 2009.

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## INTRODUCTION

Developmental pressures in the immediate vicinity of the site are intense so, as a result, much of the integrity of the fabric of the local historic environment is either compromised or directly under threat. Those fragments that do survive exist as islands in a sea of arable cultivation and pasture fields, new housing developments, recent road construction and other service facilities. Previous investigation in advance of development work, in particular, areas to the west and north of the moated enclosure, revealed a landscape that was densely settled with, notably, a strong pre-Conquest focus. Excavation on the north-western periphery of the moat, for example, uncovered 7th and 8th century material deriving from settlement and industrial zones, as well as an extensive cemetery, and this was, in turn, superseded by Saxo-Norman occupation. Contiguous with this, and extending for some distance to the north and east, excavation revealed further remains of deserted and plough-reduced settlement, and this complex incorporated at least one other moated enclosure to the north of Stratton Park moat (NMR No. TL 24 SW 9).

Remarkably, this is the first detailed analytical investigation undertaken at the Stratton Park moated enclosure, and the results, combined with those of the earlier survey, clearly indicate a site of regional significance. It is a large banked and ditched enclosure, furnished with one definite, and another probable, entranceway, enclosing a central platform which itself hosts evidence of multi-period activity.

### Location

The site lies on the south-eastern fringes of the Bedfordshire town of Biggleswade, in Central Bedfordshire close to Stratton Park, NGR TL 2070 4376, and is enclosed on the north and west by the Stratton Park Drive mobile home development (Figure 1). To the south it is flanked by the Dunton to Biggleswade road, and on the east, by the pasture fields surveyed by the RCHME in 1993. It is a scheduled ancient monument, county number BEDS 42 and is recorded in the National Monuments Record Centre as TL 24 SW 3. Despite this there has been minor encroachment from the mobile home development, particularly on the outer edges along the northern flank of the moat.

The moated enclosure is located on what superficially appears to be level ground approximately 300m to the south-west of Stratton Park Farm at c. 60m above Ordnance Datum. Now, currently on the south-eastern peri-urban periphery of Biggleswade, it formerly stood within a far more extensive concentration of post-Roman and later settlement as well as industrial activity. Surviving elements of this were recorded in the earlier survey exercise undertaken by the RCHME. Today, much of the area of the moated enclosure is cloaked in fairly dense vegetation, particularly so, on the outer lip of the moat close to the north-western apex. Likewise, a substantial stretch of the outer elements of the moat and counterscarp bank on the east were unsurveyable due to the vegetational cover. Extensive clearance has, however, taken place and as a result much of the remainder of the moat ditch circuit is open and accessible. The central platform, too, has been cleared of scrub vegetation. Here, there are a number of surviving fruit trees, reflecting the site's more recent usage as an orchard, but a range of slight banks, ditches and scarps have also emerged as a result of the ground clearance.

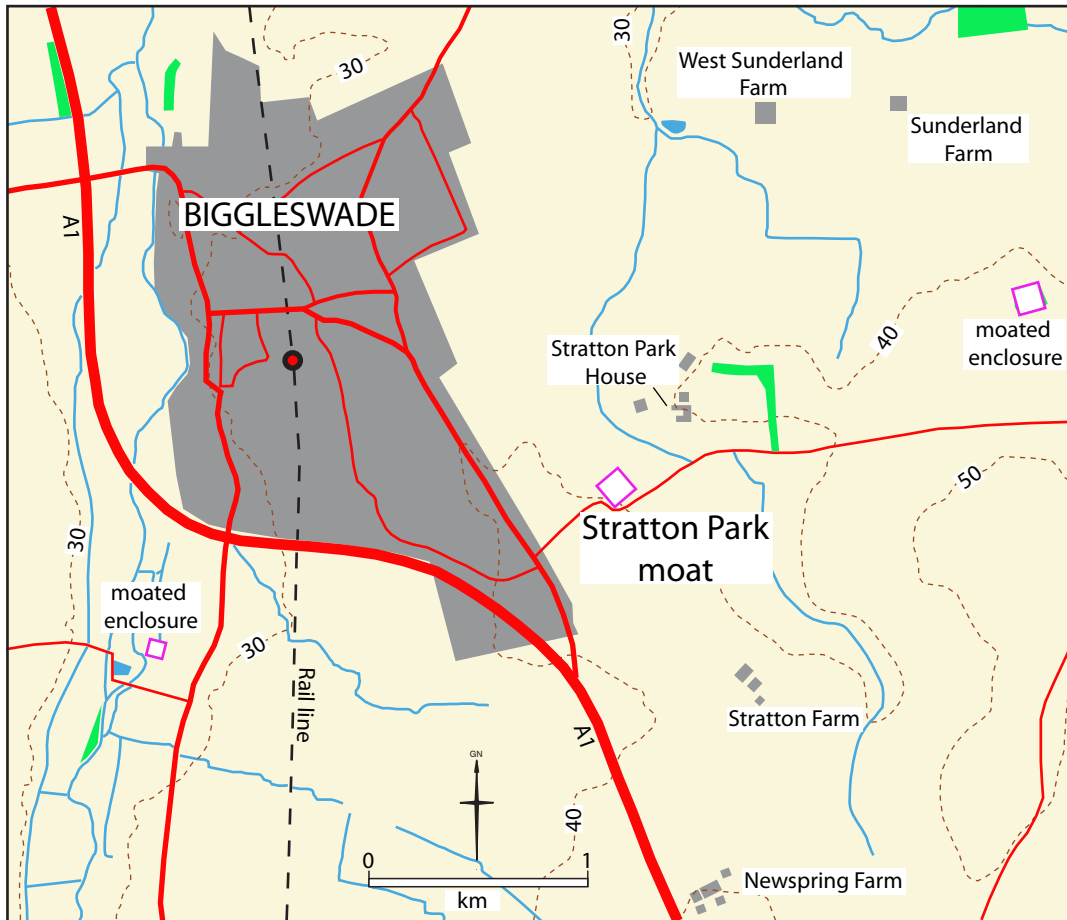


Figure 1: Location Stratton Moated Enclosure

The moat is wet for most of the winter months but the source of water is unknown at present. It dries quickly during the summer but is soon replenished by rainfall and it may well be that the moat has been constructed on, or close to, a natural springline: early cartographic sources (e.g. Ordnance Survey 1st edition 6-inch map) show a general scatter of ponds and springs in the vicinity of the moat. There is a significant breach in the north-western apex of the counterscarp bank, blocked by what appears to be a sluice gate, now buried in dense vegetation and silt, and this may reflect the original location of a water supply to the moat. A number of minor streams and other watercourses, however, flow close to the moated enclosure. The nearest lies c. 300m to the north-east and appears to emanate from a spring close to the Dunton Road. Another significant watercourse originates to the south of Stratton Farm. And that which emerges close to Newspring Farm, 2km to the south of the moated enclosure, flows roughly north-westwards (like all of the streams in the area) to join the River Ivel on the western side of Biggleswade.

The local geology is dominated by underlying green and brown sands and sandstones but this is overlain by an extensive spread of drift geology comprising glacial gravels. These give rise to fairly coarse loamy soils, occasionally sandy in texture, ideally suited for a diverse range of agricultural activities.

## DOCUMENTARY AND CARTOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

The derivation of the Stratton place-name is well understood: it has an Old English root and means 'place on the Roman Road' (Mawer and Stenton 1926, 101-2), but neither the intensity nor extent of Roman date settlement in the vicinity of the moated enclosure is well understood. Excavations in advance of housing development to the north of the moated enclosure did reveal features of Roman date but, again, the nature and extent of these is not clear. Other elements of Roman period activity, including ditched paddocks and related enclosures (possibly settlement compounds), were found in the near vicinity of the moated site, notably to the south in the area now occupied by the Industrial Estate, some 300m distant.

There is certainly good evidence, however, for pre-Conquest activity in the area around the moat. Some of this may well be of 6th- or 7th-century date but, again, the extent and overall form of this activity is unclear. Excavations in advance of housing development (Albion Archaeology 2003 unpublished ms) have identified settlement and potential industrial areas immediately adjacent to the moated enclosure on the north and west. In addition, there is a pre-Conquest cemetery pre-dating the moat but close to its north-western periphery.

Stratton was included within the Biggleswade Hundred at the time of the Domesday assessment. It appears to be one of three townships within the Hundred, the others being Biggleswade and Holme. Domesday also records four separate estates at Stratton. At this time, the holding was larger than Biggleswade and the largest landowner was Ralph d'isle, who held a manor assessed at 4 hides, as well as land in Biggleswade and Holme townships; these lands were previously held by Archbishop Stigand of Canterbury. Significantly smaller lands were held by Walter of Flanders; Walter Gifford and Countess Judith (the Conqueror's niece). These smaller manors were all held by freemen or sokemen. A sokeman belonged to a class of tenants, found chiefly in the eastern counties, occupying an intermediate position between the free tenants and the bond tenants or villeins. As a general rule they had personal freedom, but performed many of the agricultural services of the villeins. Historians generally suppose they bore the rank of 'sokemen' because they belonged within a lord's soke or jurisdiction. Brown and Taylor (1989; 1991) have assessed the descent of a number of the numerous moated homesteads in north Bedfordshire, an area of dispersed woodland-pasture, and suggested that these were Domesday soke holdings.

Those lands held at Domesday by Countess Judith became the honour of Huntingdon in the 12th and 13th centuries and had two separate manors: Stratton and Sutton, with other areas intermixed with the Biggleswade estate. It is suggested here that the Stratton Park moated enclosure was the site of caput of the Huntingdon manor of Stratton. It is also plausible that the moat to the north (see discussion below), is possibly associated with the Sutton sub-manor.

In 1242-3, Stratton manor was held by Robert del Hoo, who married Amia Rikespaud. By 1297, taxation returns indicate that the manor was held by Margaret Rikespaud (grand-daughter of Amia). Margaret Rikespaud's land is recorded as predominantly containing wheat, together with smaller amounts of drage (an oats/rye mixture) and

rye. Sheep are mentioned on tenants' lands and on William Latimer's Sutton holding. Hay and forage are also recorded. Peas were grown on most holdings across the three townships of Stratton, Biggleswade and Holme, while mares, cows and oxen are also widely recorded.

In 1322 Margaret granted land in Stratton to William Latimer (TNA:PRO C25/1/4/48, no. 20) and upon the death of his grandson in 1381, the manor of Stratton comprised 160 acres of arable worth 25s-8d per annum and rents of assize of 33s-4d (TNA:PRO C136/15/6).

Throughout the medieval period, Biggleswade parish maintained the tripartite division into three townships or hamlets, namely, Biggleswade, Holme, and Stratton, each with its own main settlement and contingent field system (Dawson 1994). The medieval village of Stratton was a substantial settlement but by the early 14th century its near neighbour Biggleswade had begun to assume local primacy as a centre of commerce and settlement (*ibid.*, 133). The urban development of Biggleswade is probably the result of a deliberate attempt by the Bishops of Lincoln (who held the manor between the 12th and 16th centuries) to capitalise on its role as a hundredal and market centre (it had been granted market charter status in the 13th century), favourably sited, from a commercial viewpoint, on a branch of the Great North Road. By the 15th century Stratton 'hamlet' was held by the Enderby family (see discussion below) and account rolls of 1425-7 record two tofts, two orchards and forty acres of arable land in Stratton (TNA:PRO SC6/1124/1-2).

The manor subsequently passed through several different families, including Lord John de Neville and Lord Willoughby of Eresby. Towards the end of the 14th century it was acquired, as has been stated, by the Enderby family who retained tenure throughout the 15th century. They had a permanent residence in Stratton, and also held land in Stratton belonging to Sutton manor. As lords of the manor, it is likely that the Stratton moated site was the main Enderby residence.

In the 16th century the manor passed by marriage to the Piggott family and then, in 1588, to the Andersons whose chief residence was at Eyworth in Bedfordshire. This date coincides with the abandonment of the moated enclosure as the main manorial residence and the initial construction of a manor house on a new site, called Stratton Park House, 300m to the north-east. It is likely, though, that the moated site continued in use as the home farm until Stratton Home Farm was built on the south side of the road. Home Farm has been rebuilt and refurbished on a number of occasions but it has an origin in the 17th century (Simco 1986).

By the middle of the 17th century, the manor had passed into the hands of Sir John Cotton, son of Sir Robert Cotton, founder of the Cottonian Library. During the Civil War, the library (now part of the British Library's collections) was removed from Westminster to Stratton for safe-keeping.

The desertion and final abandonment of Stratton is directly linked to Parliamentary Enclosure and its remodelling into a 'classic' estate landscape during the 17th and 18th centuries. The 1801 census suggests the numbers of tenant houses (15) had halved from

the figures quoted in the 1670 Hearth Tax (8). Enclosure in Stratton largely appears to have been undertaken sometime between 1639 and 1802, by the end of which only two acres remained unenclosed (BL Add Ms 9408, f.16). The Stratton estate was purchased by the Barnett family, who were the chief landowners in the 19th century. Following the sale of Stratton Park in 1910, the house was used as a boarding school and much of the estate was given over to market gardening (Webb 1985, 13). During World War II the house was used as an army barracks and prior to it being demolished in 1960, it was being used for rearing of pigs and chickens (ibid., 18-23).

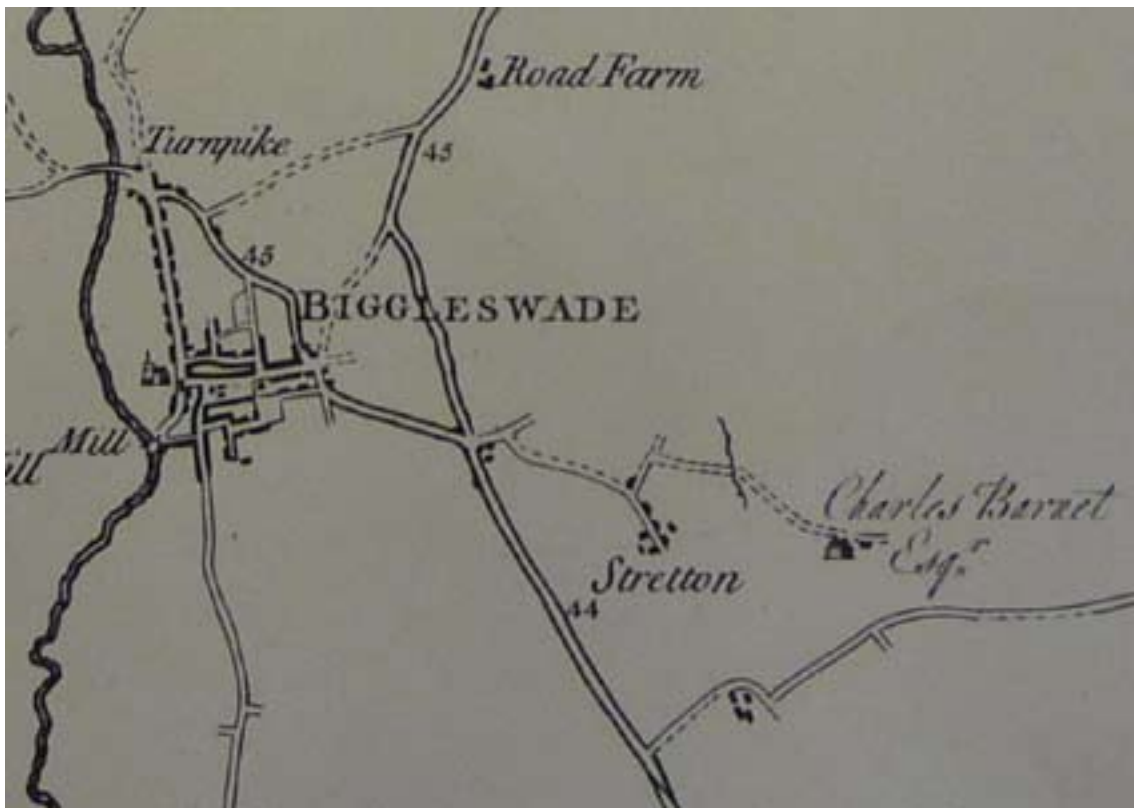


Figure 2: Extract from Jeffery's map of 1765 © Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service

The earliest known cartographic source for the village of Stratton is Jeffery's map of 1765 (Figure 2). On this it is shown as occupying the area which later hosted Stratton Lodge. Dunton Lane appears as it is today but another route is shown leading to Stratton village with a road branching off towards Stratton Park House. This appears to be broadly followed by subsequent alignments of footpaths notably that shown on the 1881-2 Ordnance Survey (OS) 6-inch map (Figure 3). The moated enclosure is not shown, however, 'Charles Barnett Esq' is written adjacent to what is, presumably, Stratton Park House.

The earliest OS 1-inch coverage (1801-1836) details the extent of Stratton Park with the main house lying approximately centrally within its estate; on this map it is connected to Dunton Lane via a formal track. The moated enclosure is only partly depicted, close to the south-western corner of Park, alongside the walled garden.



Figure 3: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 6-inch map of 1881



Figure 4: Extract of 1838 Tithe Map

Bryant's map of 1826 depicts the complete circuit of the walled garden but the moated enclosure is absent and it is only partly depicted on the Tithe Map dating to 1838 (MAT 5/1) (Figure 4). On this, Stratton Park and House are evident but the area of the moat is shown as a wooded area with just a water-filled northern arm depicted. It may well be that at the time of survey, the rest of the moat was dry, infilled or simply too inaccessible due to overgrown vegetation. The walled garden is, again, formally depicted on the Tithe Map and the Award describes the area of the moat as being a garden and orchard.

The location of the second moat (to the north of the Stratton Park Moat and excavated by Albion Archaeology) is shown as a rectangular wooded area and described as a plantation in the Award.

The OS 6-inch 1st edition (1881-2) and the 25-inch 1st edition of 1884 (Figure 5) fully depict the moated enclosure much as it is today and describe it as an orchard. The 25-inch illustrates a small building on the outer bank at the south-west corner of the moat. Other notable features depicted include a trackway aligned north-south branching off from the route that leads to Stratton Park House and then traverses the field to the east of the moat; this corresponds with a hollow-way shown on the RCHME survey.

Subsequent OS mappings show the moat to varying degrees of completeness and also record the damage in the surrounding environment wrought by cultivation. The 3rd edition 6-inch of 1927 shows the area to the north of the moat sub-divided into arable fields. Notably, the northern moat is drawn simply using pecked lines and described as 'moat (site of)' suggesting that it had, by then, succumbed to ploughing – it had been completely erased by 1960. It is also noteworthy that the walled garden was still in use at the time of mapping. The area within the moat is described as being wasteland, whilst the area of the earthworks to the east is recorded as meadow.

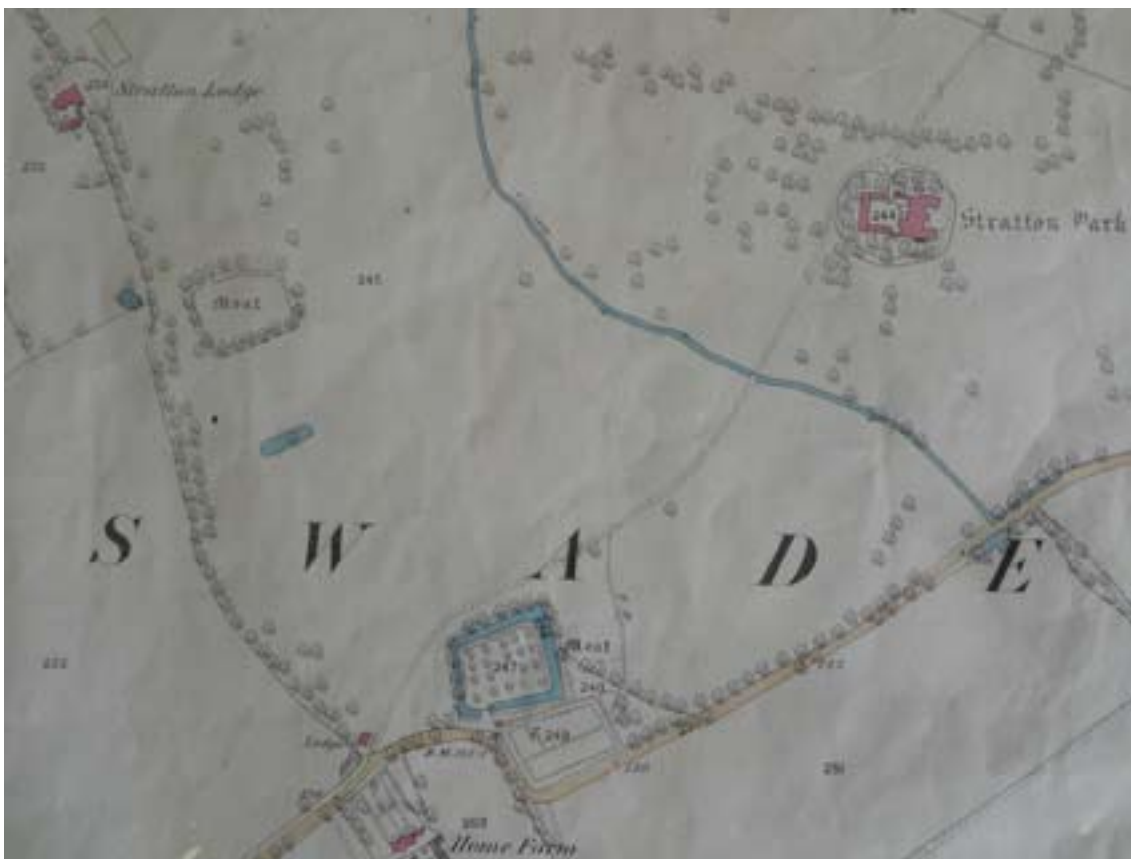


Figure 5: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 1st ed 25-inch map of 1884

## PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

A large swathe of land to the north of the Stratton Park moated enclosure was investigated by Albion Archaeology in advance of housing development (Figure 6, at rear of report). These excavations, on the Stratton Residential Development Area (SRDA), covered an area of c. 12ha to the north-west of the Stratton Park moated site. The earliest settlement evidence probably dates to the 6th- or 7th century. By the medieval period the settlement took the form of a linear row arranged along a slightly curving street aligned on roughly north-south axis. This lay roughly equidistant between the former Roman road to the west and a small stream to the east and extended north-westwards, linking Dunton Lane with the centre of Biggleswade, c. 1.5km away. It was a long-lived landscape feature which became incorporated into field boundaries shown on earlier OS maps and still partly survives as a public footpath.

In the southern half of the excavated area there were at least four farmsteads of medieval date defined by ditched enclosure boundaries on either side of the street, together with an area of marginal, low-lying, possibly marshy, land. Probably in the early 13th century, a second moat was dug, c. 150m to the north of the Stratton Park moat. It was increased in size in the late 13th century and may have remained occupied into the 15th century, as evidenced by a series of recuts of the ditch. Only the western half of the moat fell within the excavation area, however, its depiction on OS maps indicates that it was trapezoidal in outline, measuring 55m in length and 40m in width, narrowing to a width of 28m on the east. A causeway in the north-west corner appears to have afforded access to the platform, on which pits, postholes and a tentative beam slot were identified. The latter may be an ancillary structure with the main residential building lying in the unexcavated part of the moat.

In the 15th century, a stone-built house was constructed in one of the farmsteads at the southern end of the excavated area, c. 130m west of the Stratton Park moat. This appears to have been later associated with a dovecote and may possibly represent an intermediate manorial site, occupied after the moat was abandoned but before Stratton Park House was built in the 16th century. Interestingly, in the 14th/15th century another dovecote was also constructed 180m to the north-west of the second moat.

The remains within the SRDA probably do not represent the full extent of the settlement associated with the medieval township of Stratton. Dunton Lane itself may have provided a second focus of linear settlement. Salvage excavations as part of the construction of a balancing pond identified a number of 13th-century pits and ditches, approximately 400m to the east of the moated site on the south side of the Lane. Immediately to the east, possible settlement earthworks survive in a field of pasture on the Dunton Lane frontage.



## THE EARTHWORKS

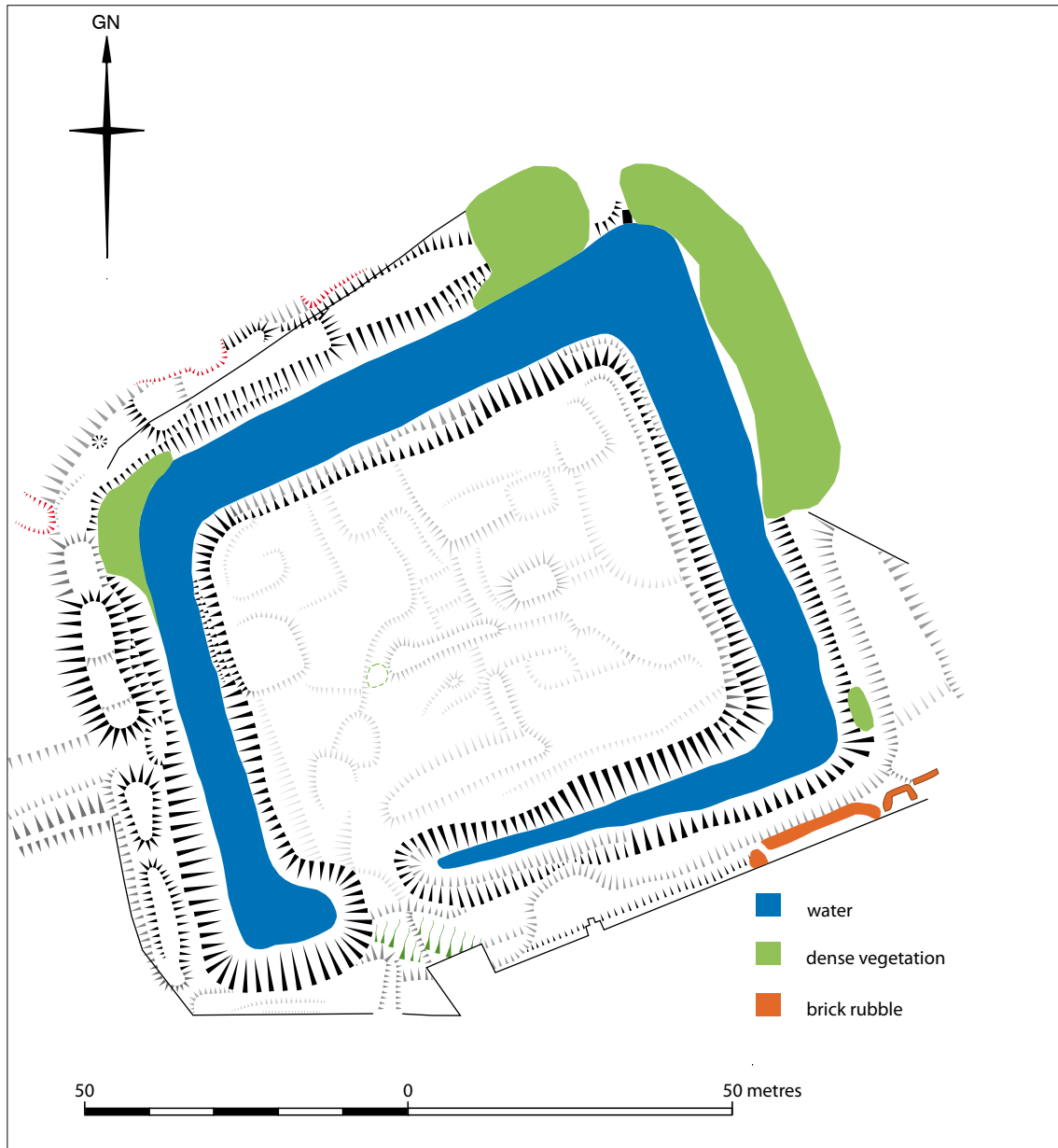


Figure 7: Earthwork plan of Stratton Park moated enclosure. Areas of recent damage along the north-facing counterscarp are shown in red; collapsed wall and rubble flanking the garden wall on the south are depicted in orange.

Surface observation of the site, and its immediate topographical setting, suggests that the choice of location for the moat, although almost certainly predicated to a certain degree on the morphology and extent of pre-existing structures, was deliberately selected in order to maximise its visual impact. Indeed, when viewed from the north and east, the moat appears to have been constructed on a slightly higher ridge of ground that continues to rise to the south and west. As a result, and this is particularly noticeable at the south-west corner of the moated enclosure, it would appear that the moat has been deliberately terraced into the natural lie of the land in order to create a level platform for

its full development. Responses to this variation in ground topography are reflected in the range and composition of the earthworks themselves.

The moated enclosure is trapezoidal in outline and consists of a wide and deep, currently water-filled, moat, enclosed on all but the southern side by an external counterscarp bank (Figure 7). The moat envelops a sub-square central platform, 0.25 hectares in area, reached via a substantial causeway close to its south-western corner: very slight surface remains of possible structural elements are visible on the central platform.

The enclosure is at its widest along the southern flank where it reaches a maximum width of c.100m, measured from external base of counterscarp bank at the south-west corner to that on the south-east. Thereafter, the enclosure narrows slightly and is c.90m wide along the northern-facing flank. Likewise, the enclosure widens from west to east. On the latter it attains a maximum width of c. 85m but on the west-facing side it narrows substantially to c. 70m in width.

## The Counterscarp Bank

The counterscarp bank is generally better defined around the western half of the enclosure and this reflects both the effect of terracing into the natural slope, so that the natural ground surface hosting the counterscarp is higher, but also, perhaps, the increased scale of earthwork construction required to shield or protect the lower-lying elements of the central platform.

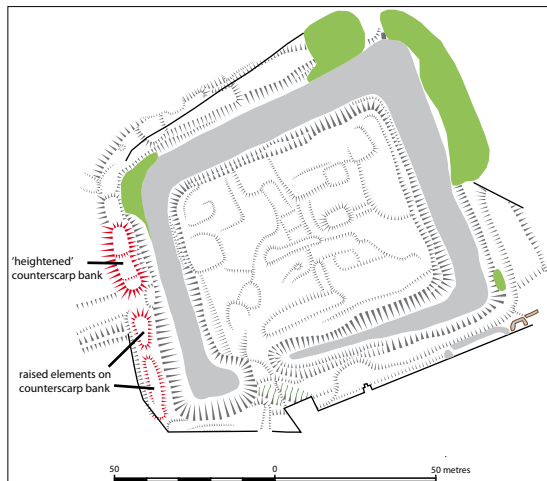


Figure 8: Alterations to the western counterscarp bank. Clear, heightened, segments are visible and these may well result from deliberate additions to an existing structure. It is likely, though, that the form reflects the impact of later cultivation to the west

On the western side the counterscarp has two clear elements to it (Figure 8). Firstly, a low spread platform 7.0-9.0m wide, standing to a height of 0.2m above exterior ground level, upon which a subsidiary bank has been built (Plate 1). This is best observed on the southern stretch of counterscarp bank on the west and here, two individual oval mounds are present. The southern constituent is longer at 16.0m in length, reaches a maximum width of 6.0m and survives to a height of 0.3m.



*Plate 1: View, looking to the south, along the crest of the counterscarp bank on the western side of the enclosure © David McOmish*

Initial observation would seem to suggest that although the component to the north is shorter and wider, the stratigraphical relationship with the basal platform is, again, clear: it overlies it, and is thus a later addition. The relationship is blurred somewhat along this

flank, however, and it may well be that the form of earthworks recorded has been heavily altered by the impact of later cultivation to the west of the enclosure. Slight traces of ridge-and-furrow cultivation were noted here, with the ridges set perpendicularly to the axis of the counterscarp. Indeed, it is plausible that the apparent sequencing noted with the counterscarp bank is, in fact, an artefact of later cultivation: ploughing impacting and eroding the form of the bank: the bank may well have been used as a headland within this later field layout (Plate 2).



*Plate 2: The remains of a slight ledge, presumably a negative lynchet resulting from cultivation to the west, can be seen close to the south-western corner of the counterscarp bank © David McOmish*

The counterscarp bank to the north, leading to the north-western apex of the enclosure is, again, very substantial though without any hint of an underlying primary, (or plough damaged) component. One elongated segment is visible and this stands to a height of 0.5m above the exterior ground surface and approximately 3.0m above the water level in the moat ditch. It is 10m at its widest, mid, point, with a slighter extension leading towards the north-west corner. A couple of minor heightenings along its crest suggest that it, too, has been re-worked on occasion. This mound, and those elements immediately to the south, give the very strong appearance of having been deliberately enhanced at some stage and altered by subsequent cultivation.



Plate 3: The original entrance to the moated enclosure, close to the midpoint on the western flank © David McOmish

The breach between the two segments is noticeably wide, well developed and has the appearance of a formal interruption (Plate 3 and Figure 9).

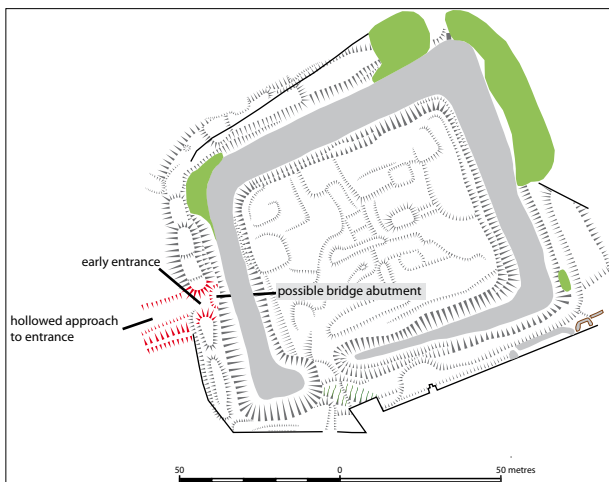


Figure 9: The original entrance to the moat is approached via a narrow but well defined hollow way

It reaches a maximum basal width of 1.2m and there is no hint of any continuation of the underlying bank between both terminals. These, themselves, are well-formed and rounded and when viewed from the central platform they are certainly substantial, prominent, features. A sharp ledge 0.3m in height, defining a narrow rectangular platform 6.0m in length and 1.9m wide, is evident linking the eastern segments of

each terminal, and terraced into the slope above the moat. This pronounced gap in the counterscarp is approached externally by an embanked hollow way. Vegetational constraints restricted access to these features and only a stretch c. 10m in length was recorded (Plate 4).



*Plate 4: The hollowed approach track to the western entrance is deeply buried in dense undergrowth and recently cleared scrub © Alun Bull*

Nonetheless, the form of the trackway is clear and consists of a spread bank 0.4m high and 6.0m wide extending perpendicularly from the southern terminal of the counterscarp gap. The bank is flanked on the north by a shallow but flat-bottomed track, 0.3 deep and 5.5m wide, the northern side of which extends from the northern terminal of the counterscarp bank. It is clear that this gap and hollow way are part of an earlier, formal, entrance to the moated enclosure replaced, subsequently, by the causeway built close to the south-western corner. If correct it obviously implies that the earlier entranceway was connected to the central platform via a bridge or timber structure and it is suggested here that the sharply defined ledge noted immediately to the west of the gap was part of the constructional layout of the bridge; it may well have provided level ground for a timber bridge support or, even, hosted a timber gateway.

The counterscarp bank along the northern side of the moat, although still largely mirroring the form on the west, has been heavily altered by later activity (Plate 5). Vegetation cover prohibited survey at the north-western apex but it would appear from those remains visible that the substantially heightened elements noted further to the south, especially in the area of the earlier entrance, are not universally present. Indeed, from the corner and eastwards, the outer scarp of the counterscarp bank has been truncated and re-modelled due to the construction of narrow garden terraces as well as the creation of small parking bays by residents of the adjacent mobile homes (Plate 6). Close to the corner of the moat, relatively unaltered fragments of the counterscarp survive to a height of 0.3m above ground level. Internally, the bank stands to a height of 2.5-3.0m above the current water level but breaks in slope observed on this side may well relate to earlier, and higher, water levels. Alternatively, they may represent episodes of re-cutting the moat and embellishment of the accompanying external bank.



*Plate 5: The counterscarp bank on the north-facing flank is well preserved but in places it has been used as a dumping ground for later building detritus © David McOmish*



*Plate 6: Along the northern stretch, on the external face, the counterscarp bank has been severely truncated. This is due to either the creation of residents' parking spaces or the creation of small garden plots © David McOmish*

The crest of the bank varies between 3m and 5m in width and it, too, appears to have been disrupted by later activities. Closer to the eastern end, large quantities of modern building material, including brick and cement, have been dumped on top of the bank and the outer face has been vertically truncated to accommodate a parking space. Sections along the western segment of this northern flank have, however, been heightened and a raised element 10.0m in length adding a further 0.2m to the height of the counterscarp is evident. This may well result from the dumping of cleared material from the moat ditch.

The encroachment of vegetation precluded detailed survey at the north-eastern apex of the counterscarp bank but there are hints of a sluice, or cut, through the boundary close to the corner. Modern concrete steps, now deeply buried in vegetation, are evident leading from the cut down to the moat and this section of the moat has been incorporated into an extension to a garden constructed in recent years.

A belt of deep vegetation extended along the northernmost segment of the eastern flank of the moat and so it was not possible to undertake detailed recording here. The previous survey (Kenney 1993) did, however, assess the area immediately contiguous with moated enclosure at this point and noted the presence of a wide and spread bank flanking the ditch. Although the previous work suggested that this feature was a component in the local field system, it may well be that it was originally part of the counterscarp bank subsequently used as a field boundary, in all likelihood a headland. The counterscarp bank does, however, stand to a height of 1.5m above the current water level and, in marked contrast to the western element and the western section of the northern flank, it is approximately level with the ground surface on the central platform (Plate 7).



*Plate 7: View of the central island from the crest of the counterscarp bank on the east. In contrast to that on the west, the counterscarp bank here is approximately at a similar level to the island © David McOmish*



Towards the south-eastern apex, the counterscarp bank is low and spread, 12.0m wide and 0.3m in height above external ground level, and extends for some distance into the field to the east. In here, there are traces of ridge-and-furrow cultivation aligned parallel to the bank and it is likely that the slight and diffuse form of the latter reflects the impact of over-ploughing. As noted at several locations around the periphery of the moated enclosure, this cultivation is later (perhaps indicating that the moat had been abandoned by that stage) and has resulted in the use of the counterscarp as either a furlong boundary or a headland. The effect on the counterscarp has been universal too, and a shallower, less monumental, earthwork survives as a result.

The counterscarp bank on the east, and south, is separated from the outer lip of the moat ditch by a narrow ledge (Figure 10). This varies between 0.5m and 2.0m in width and extends in a regular manner from at least the mid-point on the eastern arm of the moat, south and along southern flank. It is certainly wider and better preserved on the southern flank, even though slumping and localised dumping of material has impinged upon it in one or two locations. The ledge strongly resembles a walkway or formal path constructed around the outer lip of the moat but only present on the southern and eastern flanks.

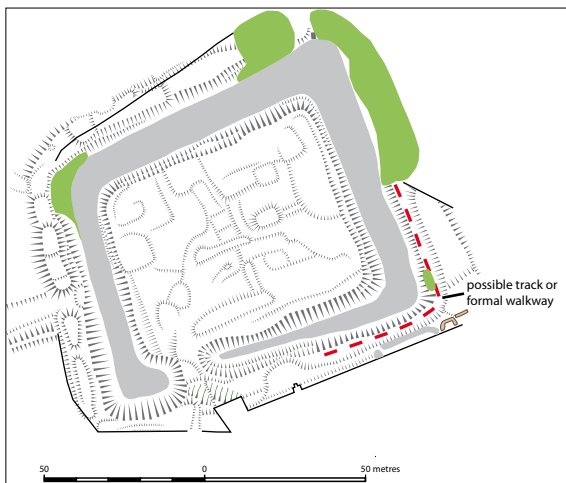


Figure 10: A slight ledge, remnants, perhaps, of a formal pathway around the moated enclosure, is visible in the south-east corner. Its continuation to the north and east is masked by dense vegetation and later activity

## Walled Garden Compound

No coherent trace of a counterscarp bank survives on the southern flank. Instead, the presumed surviving inner face, forming the upper scarp of the putative pathway, can be seen. This is now a spread and much diminished feature, standing to a height, at best, of 0.2m and is overlain in a number of places by dumps of brick rubble and isolated sections of collapsed walling. These are clearly elements that belonged to earlier phases of the walled garden boundary that dominates this southern section, or structures relating to it. The wall, built largely in Flemish Garden Wall bond, lies centrally on what would have been the counterscarp bank and may well have taken its axial cue from it (Figure 11).

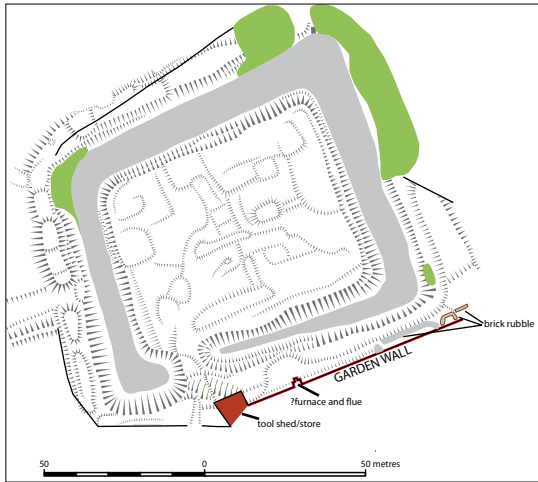


Figure 11: The garden wall and associated structures, part of an enclosed garden to the south, are visible on the southern flank of the moated enclosure



Plate 8: View of the garden wall and brick rubble (foreground) looking west from the south east corner of the moated enclosure. The wall rests of a wider plinth and there are suggestions of later modifications and episodes of re-building © David McOmish

The wall stands to a height now of 3m and is supported on a wider brick plinth (Plate 8). The walled garden extended to the south of the moat and enclosed an irregularly rectangular area. Much of the circuit remains intact but there is a significant gap close to the south-western corner. The interior still retains the faint traces of former raised beds,

possibly very recent in origin, and the marked outlines of now demolished structures built along the walls. These, presumably, included buildings designed as hothouses or heated greenhouses ranged along the south-facing section of the wall, i.e. that stretch superimposed on the counterscarp bank. The remains of what appear to be a brick-built furnace can be seen on the external face of the wall c.20m from its western corner (Plate 9).



*Plate 9: Brick-built furnace attached to the external face of the garden wall close to its midpoint. This probably provided heat for a series of hot- and greenhouses placed along the interior face of the walled garden © David McOmish*

A brick-lined pit abutting the wall survives, accessed via a shallow descending flight of steps: on the wall itself and extending upwards from the pit there is a well built flue and a stoke hole for fuel. Detritus from the heating process, including ash and coal, litters the area around the brick-lined pit and, indeed, a thick talus-like deposit has formed in a shallow arc c.0.2m in height at best, spreading away from the wall and overlying the inner lip of the moat ditch (Plate 10).

The north-western corner of the walled garden currently hosts one substantial building externally, again integrated with the garden wall and accessed by way of a narrow door through it. A second structure lay contiguously on the west, but this has now been largely demolished and is partly represented by a spread mound of brick, mortar and fragments of metal. These structures are, in all likelihood, the remnants of former tool sheds and storage huts and were contemporary with the main use of the walled garden

in the mid-19th and early-20th centuries (Plate 11).



*Plate 10: A talus-like deposit of coal, ash, and slate spread from the furnace towards the edge of the moat ditch, obscuring the counterscarp bank and walkway here © David McOmish*



*Plate 11: Partly collapsed tool shed/fruit store at the north-western corner of the walled garden © David McOmish*

## The Moat Ditch

The south-western corner of the moat ditch has been interrupted by the construction of a raised causeway, 5m wide and c. 9m in length, providing access to the central platform of the moat from the current accessway (Figure 12 and Plate 12). The date of this entrance is unclear but it may well be secondary to the construction of the main moated enclosure boundary. The approach route to the causeway flanks the western side of the walled garden and sharply descends what is evidently an enhanced natural scarp here marking the outer lip of the moat. There are no hints of substantial wear-and-tear on

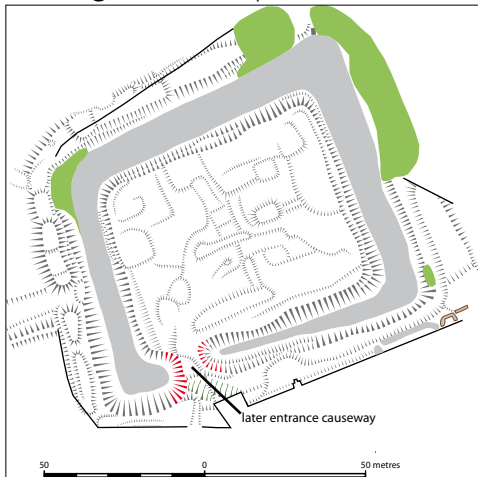


Figure 12: The entrance causeway close to the south-western apex of the moated enclosure is likely to be a secondary (later) approach. It may well have been established at the same time as the walled garden which lies immediately to the east



Plate 12: View, from the centre of the island, of the entrance causeway close to the south-west corner. This is likely to be secondary to that on the western flank of the moated enclosure and may well date to the construction of the walled garden immediately to the east © David McOmish

this approach which is telling given the form of the counterscarp bank immediately to the east and west. It is plausible that a previously extant counterscarp bank has been removed by more recent activity, some of which may well be connected to the use of the site in the post-medieval period.

The ditched component of the enclosure is now, largely, a water-filled moat. It does dry up during the summer months but is quickly replenished after heavy rainfall. The source of water for the moat, beyond rainfall, is unknown but it may well be that the ditch has been built on, or close to, a springline. The moat is at its widest and deepest on its northern and eastern arms. Here, it attains a general width of between 8m and 10m but it extends to a maximum width of 14m close to the north-western apex (Plate 13). On average, it varies between 0.5m and 0.9m below the level of the internal platform and it is flanked externally by noticeably higher scarps on the north-west, west, and south-west.



*Plate 13: The north-western apex of the moat ditch viewed from the counterscarp bank on the north. The moat ditch is at its widest on the north and east © David McOmish*

Here, the fluctuating water level lies some 3.5m below the crest of the counterscarp bank. The moat narrows somewhat along the east and even further on the south at which point the heavily silted causeway terminal is barely 3m wide. Slight steps in the profile of the outer face of the moat along the southern stretch do indicate, however, previously higher water levels.

The enclosure ditch at the south-west corner (on the western side of the causewayed

entrance) is of a very different character to its near neighbour. Although, silting has again occurred, the moat ditch is of much greater dimensions at this point, varying between 7m and 11m in basal width. It is, furthermore, dwarfed by the counterscarp bank/ external terrace at the corner but, unlike its eastern counterpart, the moat terminal has an angular, regular, appearance (Plate 14). It may well be that this form reflects the impact of successive re-workings of the enclosure ditch as well as the construction and maintenance of the causewayed entrance.



*Plate 14: The western terminal of the entrance causeway at the south-west corner. The counterscarp bank dwarfs the moat and island at this point: largely due to a rise in the height of the underlying topography along this section © David McOmish*



*Plate 15: View of the central island looking north-east. The raised terrace hosting a rectangular building platform (centre) can be seen, and the drawing board (centre right) rests on the top of the building platform close to the centre point of the island. The south-west facing edge of the terrace is marked by the ranging poles © David McOmish*

## The Central Platform

The central platform of the moat encloses 0.25 hectares and is trapezoidal in outline. As with the counterscarp, the platform widens from west to east and narrows from south to north: it varies between 45m and 52m in width on the former, and 55m to 60m on the latter (Plate 15).

On all but the western side it is defined by a pronounced edge dropping steeply to the water-filled ditch; on the west, the platform edge is less sharply preserved and exhibits

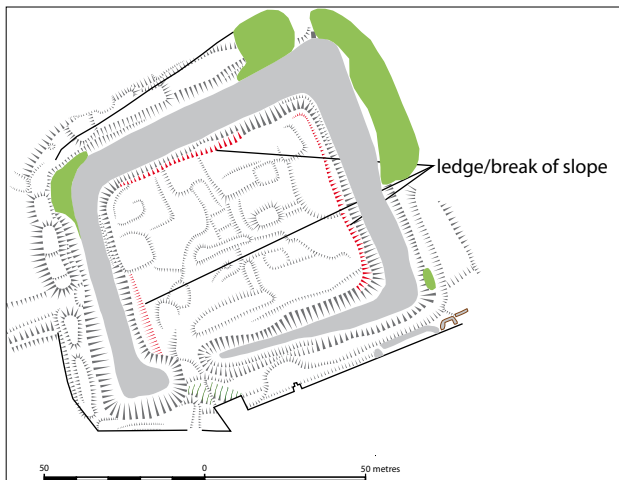


Figure 13: The outer edge of the central platform is flanked on three sides by a steep ledge or break in slope. This may well represent the remains of a former hedge or fenceline.



Plate 16: The western edge of the moat island, in contrast to the remainder of its circuit, is ill-defined and has the appearance of having been heavily worn, perhaps by stock accessing the water © David McOmish



a more 'rounded' decline into the moat. A very slight ledge can be observed here, and although this replicates the form elsewhere, it appears to have been heavily modified



Plate 17: The eastern (and northern) edge of the moat is sharply defined by a ledge or break of slope. This may well reflect the former presence of a hedge or fence/stockade boundary around the island © David McOmish

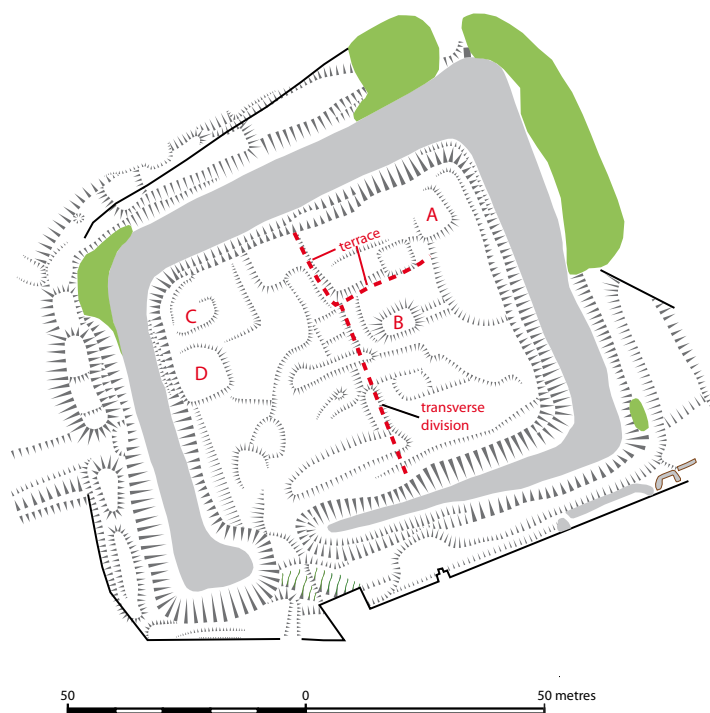


Figure 14: The central island hosts a number of suspected building platforms and there are clear internal sub-divisions too. The eastern half of the island is noticeably higher and the north-eastern corner is the most prominent element defined by a terrace and building platform

by subsequent use, and there is a more gradual, superficially weathered, slope to the water level (Plate 16). The outer perimeter of the platform is fringed by a break in slope immediately below the platform edge, particularly evident along sections on the north, south and east (Figure 13). That along the eastern and southern flanks is noteworthy as it survives, partly, as a pronounced ledge. It may well be that this break of slope/ledge is the remnant of a structure, such as a fence or palisade boundary, that formerly enclosed the central platform (Plate 17).

Survey reveals that the central platform plays host to a variety of slight earthwork features (Figure 14). A succession of low, but nonetheless significant, scarps and banks can be seen and these appear to sub-divide the interior into a series of quadrants. Ground observations confirm that, in general, the eastern half of the enclosure is higher than that to the west and, strikingly, the north-east quadrant is more prominent than any other point on the platform. Here, a raised rectangular terrace 25m in length and 12m wide survives, flanked on the north by the edge of the central platform, and on the south and west by a well defined scarp 0.1-0.3m in height. The eastern limit of the terrace is occupied by a rectangular plinth, 9.0m by 6.0m in area surviving to a height of 0.1m at best and this, plausibly, represents the remains of a former building (Figure 14, 'A').

The alignment of the western façade of this terrace is extended to the south by other insubstantial scarps and low banks and together these form a transverse division that neatly divides the interior in half. A dense concentration of features is evident close to the midpoint of the interior and includes a low bank set at right angles to the transverse division and, apparently, overlying it. Immediately to the north-east of their intersection is a substantial low mound, rectangular in outline but with rounded corners, c.9m by 6m at maximum basal width surviving to a height of 0.3m above ground level: again, this is likely to be a building platform (Figure 14, 'B'). Indeed, survey suggests that there may well have been a range of buildings placed close to the edge of the platform on the north, east and south. Two notable examples can be seen on the western segment of the platform close to its north-western apex (Figure 14, 'C' and 'D'). The smaller, northernmost, of the two is sub-rectangular in outline reaching a maximum length of 8.0m and width of 4.0m, standing to a height of no more than 0.1m. Immediately adjacent on the south there is a larger square platform again very slight, surviving to a height of 0.1m, covering an area of 10.0m by 10.0m. The location of this platform, perhaps marking the position of a former structure, is interesting as it lies opposite the suggested earlier entrance into the moat and it is worthwhile speculating that it may well have hosted a gatehouse or related structure.

A number of other slight features are evident too and these may well represent subsequent phases of activity. Intermittent indications of a hollowed track can be seen emanating from the entrance causeway: two elements are evident leading towards the midpoint of the enclosure. One line bifurcates to the north and terminates in a rectangular hollowed area adjacent to the raised platform in the north-eastern quadrant, the other flanks the southern side of the low bank set at right angles to the transverse division. These may well relate to the use of the moat in more recent times as an orchard and reflect the wear-and-tear of traffic to and from the site. Indeed, the rectangular hollowed area may well have been used as a parking space for a vehicle or other farming

machinery.

Other notable features within the interior include the low L-shaped mound located in the south-west quadrant adjacent to the entrance causeway (Figure 15, 'A'). This extends

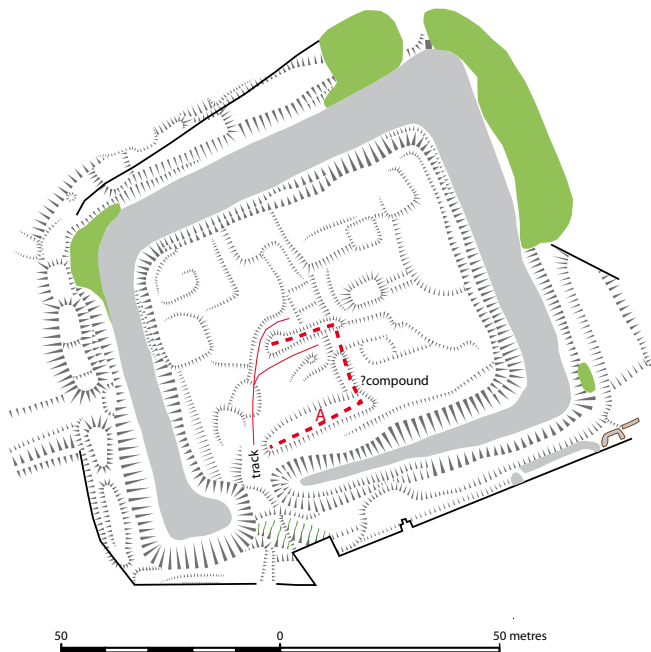


Figure 15: An embanked compound, possibly related to more recent gardening activities, can be seen at south-western corner of the island

parallel to the moat edge for a distance of c.22.0m, and is wide and spread reaching a maximum width of c.6.0m and a height of 0.1m in height. It turns sharply to the north at its eastern end, narrows substantially, and adopts the alignment of the transverse cross-division. The low bank close to the centre and set perpendicularly to this division extends for 15.0m with an average width of 3.0m wide, and clearly overlies it. This, together with the L-shaped structure give the impression of forming an incomplete compound in the south-western quadrant and may well relate to more recent activities, again related to the use of the site as a kitchen garden/orchard.

In addition, there are a range of slighter hollows and indentations that are 'tree throws', the locations of former fruit trees, or other, as yet unspecified structures/activities. The two most prominent of these are situated in the western half of the central platform and at least one of them post-dates a pre-existing feature. This example consists of a square depression, 5m by 5m in area, truncating the southern flank of the raised area in the north-east quadrant. The other, of similar dimensions, lies immediately to the east of the low L-shaped bank.

## DISCUSSION

Moated sites are amongst the most ubiquitous archaeological features in the English landscape. As a class of monument they are readily identifiable based on the most obvious morphological cues:

- a ditch (the moat), either wet or dry
- central platform surrounded by the moat, occasionally occupied by contemporary or later structures.

Rectangular and square forms predominate but, again, a wider variety of shapes is apparent including D-shaped and oval forms. The term 'moat', however, covers a great variety of type, landscape context, function and chronology. Often, the moated complex incorporates multiple enclosures and other minor paddocks as well as linear ditched features, some of which may well be related to water management. Stratton Park moated enclosure belongs to Class A: Homestead Moats according to the 1968 RCHME classificatory scheme and Group 1, in particular, i.e. simple enclosures bounded by a wet ditch and no associated enclosures.

Moated enclosures vary greatly in size and it is likely that those larger examples are more significant, perhaps wealthier, sites. Again, trend data suggests that a central platform area of 0.25 hectares or less (such as the Stratton Park example) is most commonly observed: rarity increases along with the scale of central island.

The peak period for construction of moated enclosures was from 1250 to 1400 but the origins of moated enclosures lie somewhat earlier in the decades succeeding the Conquest and the practice had certainly begun in earnest by the end of the 12th century. There is little in the archaeological record to suggest an obvious predecessor to the tradition of constructing moated enclosures: it is likely that they 'developed' from Late Saxon fortified manor houses such as Goltho or Sulgrave. Although similar sorts of structures are found on the near continent, they are later in date, generally, than those found in southern Britain. By the end of the 16th century, moated enclosures were being constructed in declining numbers (Le Patourel and Roberts 1978, 46).

There is no clear indication of a date for the construction of the Stratton Park moated enclosure. The earliest cartographic depiction dates to the first half of the 19th century on the OS 1st edition 1-inch series. The only artefactual material found on the platform appears to be Victorian garden detritus such as slate, tile, occasional bit of brick. One small sherd of 11th-14th century pottery was found, however, on the putative building platform at the north-eastern apex of the island.

Although they are one of the most prolific categories of field monument in England – it is likely that in excess of 5,500 moats are known in England and Wales (Aberg 1978, 1) – their distribution is by no means complete and the inventory is expanding on a regular basis as a result of new fieldwork. Further investigation of the distribution of moated enclosures indicates that strong regional trends are apparent and moats can often group together in fairly dense clusters. 'Fairly dense' approximates, in this instance, to moats having been constructed every 1-2km and this fits the pattern in the landscape including and surrounding Stratton Park. Baker (1978, 60) observed that moated enclosures occur

on all soils and altitudes in Bedfordshire but that there are clear clusters on heavier, clay, soils with diminishing numbers on lighter soils. Furthermore, many sites, including those within Stratton Park, are located clearly in an attempt to take advantage of local streams and rivers as well as spring points.

Moated enclosures are common in association with now deserted medieval villages often in connection with areas of settlement shrinkage or relocation. Generally speaking moated enclosures occur in greatest quantities in areas that are, or were, heavily wooded and may well have seen later clearance and colonisation. Three broad zones of construction are apparent: firstly, including that area bordering Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire and Essex; secondly, in an arc from Suffolk into Essex and; lastly, in the midland clays of the Birmingham region. The settlement patterns in these landscapes is often but not exclusively characterised by villages and hamlets incorporating both nucleated and dispersed elements. The form of these villages, particularly the dispersed elements, remains stubbornly ill-defined.

Of course, the chronological and functional relationship between the sites in Stratton Park and the surrounding landscape is unclear but it would be surprising if they were mutually exclusive in terms of dating; it may well be that this multiplication of moats relates to the number of manors within the parish of Biggleswade.

Although the moated enclosure at Stratton now survives as an isolated structure within the modern landscape of farming, housing and residential development, this is a misleading picture. It is clear from a wide range of local investigations and assessments that the site is the surviving element of a formerly complex and dynamic landscape that included elements of contemporary and earlier settlement. Cultivation and housing development has destroyed and disarticulated the connections but if preservation had been better, the moat at Stratton would be deeply embedded within a network of settlement, trackways and fields, much like that still surviving in the pasture fields to the east and detailed in the earlier RCHME survey (Figure 16, at rear of report).

It is probable that defence was not a primary consideration in the construction of the moated enclosure at Stratton Park and that the development of the isolated structure here, separated from the surrounding landscape by a wide and deep barrier, represented a desire for display in support of the moat resident's social status. In this respect, sites such as those at Stratton Park, were central places within a wider estate, i.e. they were manorial residences. It is worth noting, however, that Taylor (1978, 5) has suggested that large moats occur in densely settled areas in amongst nucleated villages whereas small moats occur in hamlets. Regardless, the construction of the moated enclosure at Stratton Park represented a very powerful statement of status and security in the contemporary landscape.

This notion of prestige is certainly underscored when the location of the Stratton Park moat is assessed. It does appear as if the topographical position was carefully selected to take advantage of a slight natural ridge which reaches its highest extent on the south-western flank of the enclosure. The moat has been terraced into this so that the raised ground forms a backdrop to the enclosure; the form of the enclosure reflects this and

the counterscarp bank, taking advantage of the rise in topography, dominates the close environment and overlooks the interior of the moat and its immediate wider setting. Indeed, from this position, the moat is highly visible and overlooks ground to the north and east.

The interplay with pre-existing features is unclear but it is likely that the moat overlaid and partly mirrored the alignment of underlying features such as ditched field boundaries. It is additionally plausible that the construction of the moated boundary, like that at Tempsford Park moat (Maul and Chapman 2005) simply fossilised an already important domestic residential space in a pre-existing settlement; the moat being employed to separate, isolate and thus further enhance the prestige of the residents of the site.

The extent and influence of abandoned ditched enclosure compounds should also be considered. As noted previously, the Albion Archaeology investigations revealed at least 4 settlement compounds or farmsteads to the west and north of the moat. Interestingly, these were broadly of a form and scale that matched the Stratton Park moat and, again, it is worth speculating that these components shaped and provided a template for the subsequent development of the post-Conquest environment at Stratton.

The survey evidence indicates that the circuit of the moat has been re-worked on a number of occasions. The ditch is certainly more sharply defined on the east and north suggesting, perhaps, that these arms have been remodelled on at least one occasion. It may well be that these segments have been used as a fishpond or were redesigned as part of an ornamental desire. Regardless, the disparity in scale, in all likelihood, is contingent upon the underlying topographical setting as it is frequently observed that moated enclosures constructed on sloping ground, as at Stratton Park, have narrower moats on the uphill flanks.

Reworking of the moat boundary is evident too, in the layout and location of the principal entrances. Survey suggests that which survives today, at the south-western corner, is secondary to an original placed at the midpoint on the western flank. This has evidently been blocked by soil and rubble but a clear gap is evident flanked on either side by wide, spread and prominent bank terminals. Externally, this entrance is approached via a well-formed hollow-way that leads from the west. This almost certainly extended towards the main north-south trackway noted by the Albion Archaeology work which connects Dunton Lane to the centre of Biggleswade and was evidently an important routeway in the early landscape of Stratton. It may well be significant that there was no direct access from Dunton Lane, itself an apparently ancient thoroughfare, suggesting a carefully choreographed, more discrete and formal, approach to a socially important site.

A low terrace cut into the counterscarp bank on the internal face is undoubtedly related to a more complex entrance arrangement. This, in all likelihood, incorporated a formal gateway structure on the counterscarp and a timber bridge leading to the central platform. On this, a rectangular raised terrace, at that point where the bridge abutted the central island, might represent a reciprocal gateway structure here. These earthwork remnants of a complex gateway and access arrangement are very rare survivals indeed.

The central island is roughly square in outline and it appears that the periphery was additionally defined by a low fence, hedge or wall. A number of more intensively investigated sites have produced evidence of similar low banks edging the ditch, e.g. at Motcombe, Dorset, where a fence built in 1260 replaced an earlier hedgeline.

Scrub clearance has revealed slight surface evidence of former structures and other activity on the central island. Survey indicates that the north-eastern quadrant of the enclosure is raised (perhaps to lessen the threat of flooding) and defined by low scarps, perhaps representative of former earthen banks. At least two pronounced rectangular raised platforms are evident: one close to the north-eastern apex of the island; the other located more centrally. Other similar structures are suspected, too, based on the presence of additional low mounds largely positioned on the outer edge of the island. These are likely to represent the remains of one significant (manorial) residential structure and a range of ancillary buildings including barns, and other service and storage fixtures. Linear sub-divisions, which appear to divide the interior into a series of regular quadrants, may well demarcate different activity zones including small-scale horticultural undertakings.

### **The After-life of the Moated Enclosure**

Stratton Park moat was the manorial caput of the Enderby family before the estate was sold to the Andersons in 1588. At this time it is suspected that the moat was abandoned in favour of a new residential site 300m to the north-east. It is likely that the resultant abandonment of the moat led to a shift in its status and subsequent usage. It may well have ceased to have a residential function but on analogy with other, frequently local, sites it still could have played an important role in the manorial landscape, principally as an important component in an ornamental and designed landscape.

Early OS maps indicate that a path extended from Stratton Park House towards the moated enclosure and this may well have marked the line, even approximately, of an earlier and formal routeway between the two. Indeed, it is suggested here that after the construction of the new house in the late 16th century, the moat was incorporated in a then newly developed designed landscape. A low terraced walkway is visible, particularly on the eastern and southern flanks of the moat, and it is probable that a choreographed perambulation around the wider landscape incorporated the location of the former manorial residence. The presence or condition of any contemporary structures on the moat island is uncertain but they may well have been in existence and acted as a focal point for participants in the walk.

The earliest dated depiction of the walled garden is the OS 1st edition one-inch series surveyed between 1801 and 1836. The walled garden served a very specific horticultural function providing the Stratton Park estate with fresh garden produce throughout the year. This may well have included exotic fruits: the garden was furnished with hothouses as indicated by the remains of a furnace and flue recorded externally along the northern wall. A tool shed or possible fruit store lies externally at the north-western apex of the walled garden and this is adjacent to the current entrance causeway leading onto the moat island.

This access point is a later construction but it evidently necessitated a remodelling of the moat ditch: the ditch terminal on the west is wide and deep with a 'squared off' appearance; that on the east is shallower, narrower and more rounded in profile. Regardless, this is a secondary entrance and is associated with more recent use of the island as a garden/orchard, probably co-eval with the construction of the walled compound. A worn, shallow, track leads from the causeway into the interior of the moat and various other slight earthworks clearly result from activities related to the use and maintenance of the garden/orchard into the 20th century.

In the decades following the Second World War, the moated enclosure ceased to be used as an orchard and the walled compound fell into a state of disrepair. The construction of a static mobile home park on the northern side of the moat has materially impacted upon its fabric. At numerous points along the northern arm, the external face of the counterscarp bank has been cut into, severely truncated and partly removed, in order to provide car parking spaces for residents or to create small discrete areas of garden.



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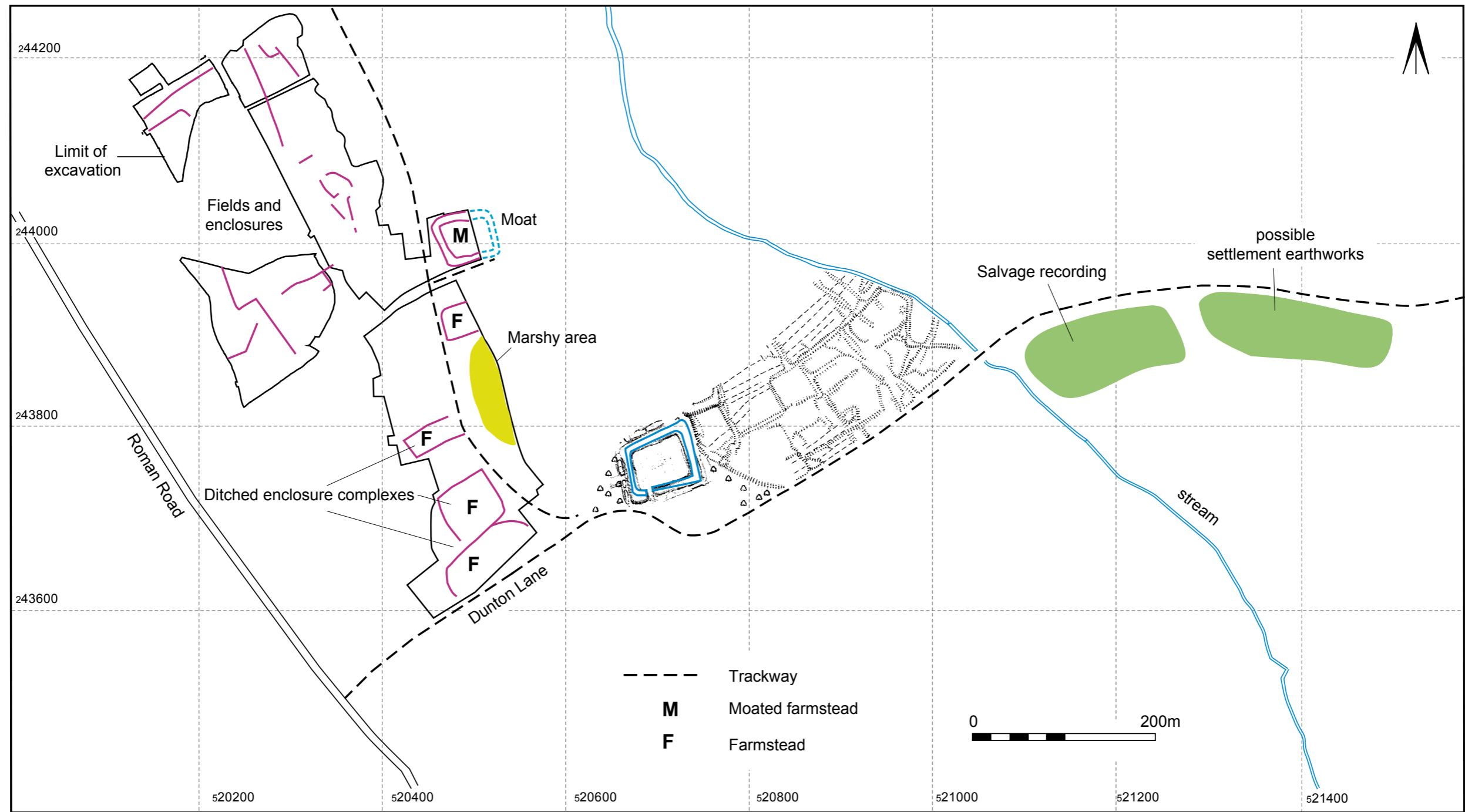


Figure 6: Stratton Park moated enclosure in its wider context as revealed by excavation © Albion Archaeology

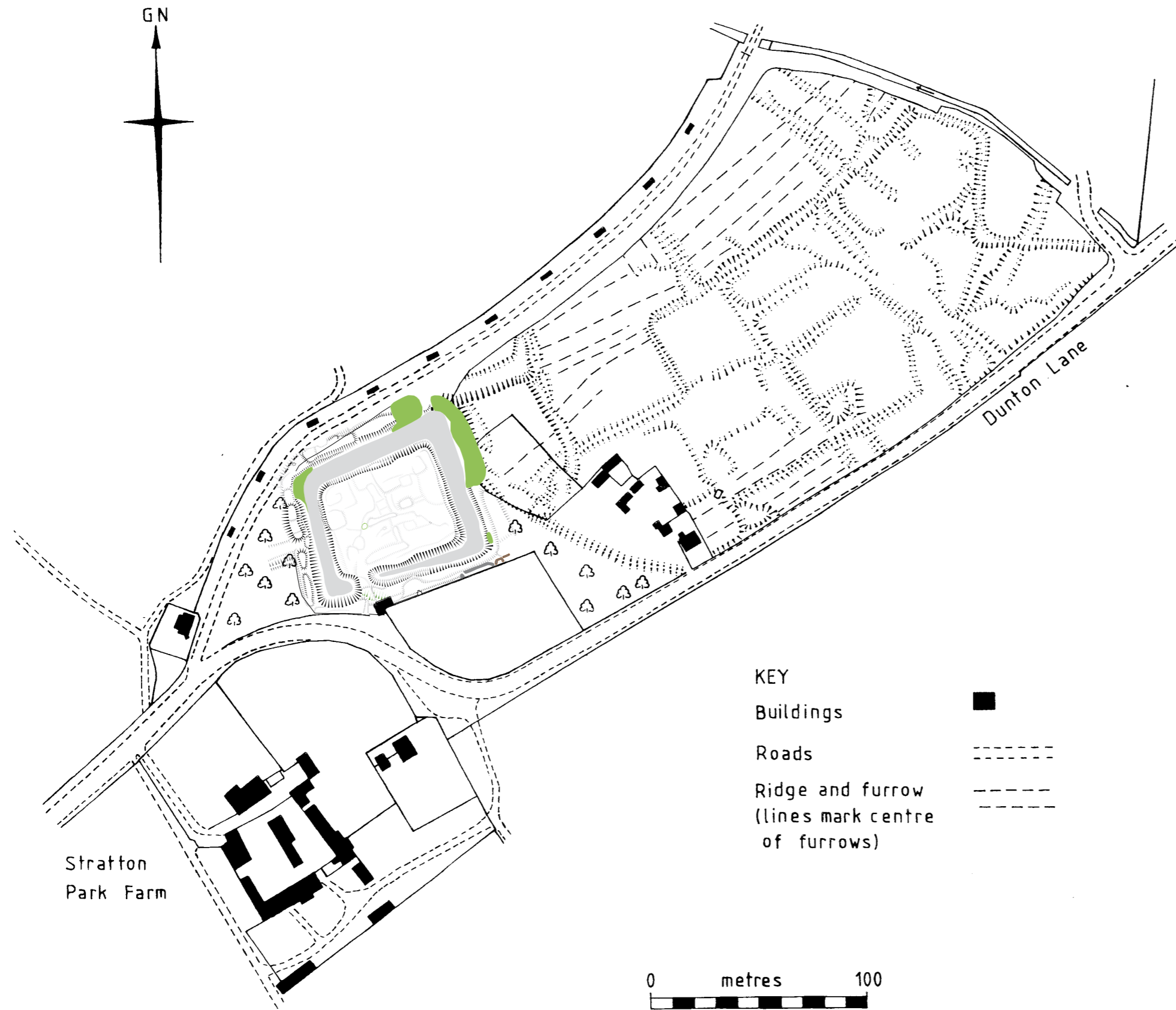


Figure 16: By combining the current survey with that undertaken by the RCHME, it becomes clear that the moated enclosure sits at the western end of a spread of earthwork enclosures, fields and tracks. Themselves, surviving elements in a once extensive spread of medieval and post-medieval landscape features



## **ENGLISH HERITAGE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT**

*English Heritage undertakes and commissions research into the historic environment, and the issues that affect its condition and survival, in order to provide the understanding necessary for informed policy and decision making, for sustainable management, and to promote the widest access, appreciation and enjoyment of our heritage.*

*The Research Department provides English Heritage with this capacity in the fields of buildings history, archaeology, and landscape history. It brings together seven teams with complementary investigative and analytical skills to provide integrated research expertise across the range of the historic environment. These are:*

- \* Aerial Survey and Investigation*
- \* Archaeological Projects (excavation)*
- \* Archaeological Science*
- \* Archaeological Survey and Investigation (landscape analysis)*
- \* Architectural Investigation*
- \* Imaging, Graphics and Survey (including measured and metric survey, and photography)*
- \* Survey of London*

*The Research Department undertakes a wide range of investigative and analytical projects, and provides quality assurance and management support for externally-commissioned research. We aim for innovative work of the highest quality which will set agendas and standards for the historic environment sector. In support of this, and to build capacity and promote best practice in the sector, we also publish guidance and provide advice and training. We support outreach and education activities and build these in to our projects and programmes wherever possible.*

*We make the results of our work available through the Research Department Report Series, and through journal publications and monographs. Our publication Research News, which appears three times a year, aims to keep our partners within and outside English Heritage up-to-date with our projects and activities. A full list of Research Department Reports, with abstracts and information on how to obtain copies, may be found on [www.english-heritage.org.uk/researchreports](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/researchreports)*

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