



# Chapel House Farm

*Feckenham Road, Hunt End, Redditch, Worcs.*

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*Feckenham Road, Hunt End, Redditch, Worcs., B97 5QG.*

## Archaeological Recording (*watching brief*)

NGR: *SP 02968 63833*

Site code: *feck21*

HER no: *wsm77473*

OASIS ID: *110archa1-504197*

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*5th February 2022*

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*Front cover; Chaple house farm from the northeast.*

## *SUMMARY*

Archaeological recording (*watching brief*) was carried out during September 2021 at Chapel House Farm, Feckenham Road, Hunt End, Redditch, Worcs., during the construction of a single-storey side extension. The area of the development lay adjacent to a large, moated site and fishpond at Hunt End Farm. Within the moated area are the remains of C16 Jacobean House. The Feckenham Estate Map of 1591 shows a H-shaped building in the northern half of the moat and two buildings in the southern half, one T-shaped and one small rectangular.

The excavations were small in scope comprising a narrow strip foundation trench within what was historically a yard adjacent to the east side of the former farm. The remains of a single drain feature constructed in brick and stone was recorded during excavation, no finds were recovered from the soil deposit filling the drain which is likely to have been built during the C18.

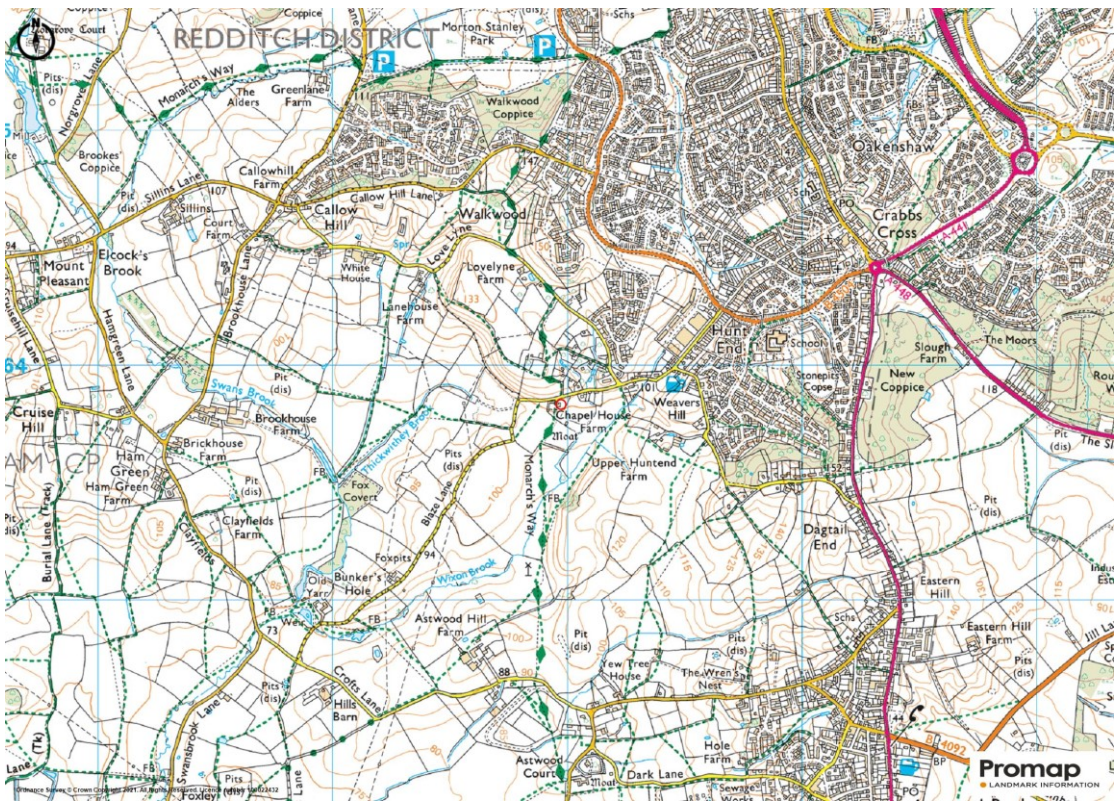


Fig. 1; site location (circled in red)

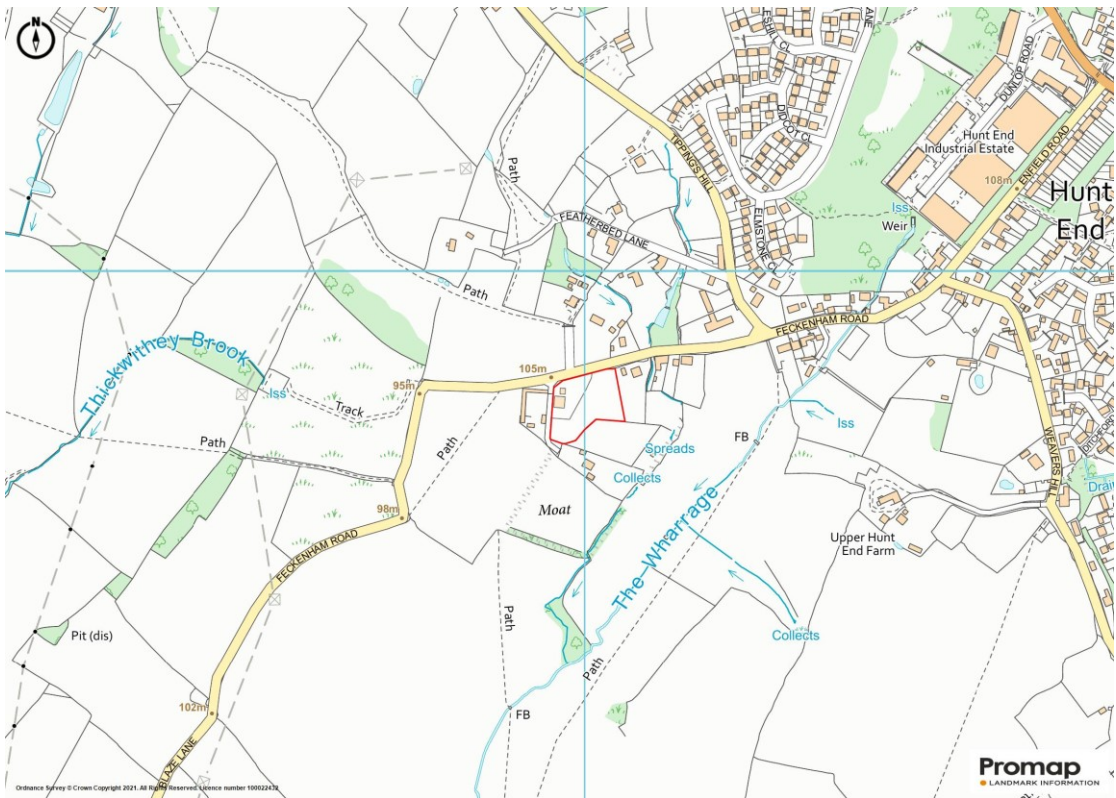


Fig. 2; area of study (outlined in red)

## *INTRODUCTION*

### *Location and scope of works*

This document details the results of archaeological recording ('watching brief') carried out during 20th September 2021 at Chapel House Farm, Feckenham Road, Hunt End, Redditch, Worcs., B97 5QG. Planning permission has been granted (planning Ref: 19/01159/FUL) for the single-storey rear/side extension. The permission was subject to condition comprising the archaeological monitoring and recording (watching brief) of all groundworks likely to expose, damage or destroy any archaeological remains that may be present, principally the reduction of ground levels/topsoil stripping/ drainage and service channels. The application site lay directly adjacent to a Scheduled Monument, the Medieval moated site of Hunt End ([national ref: 1017809](#)). This is a large trapezoidal moat containing the remains of C16 Jacobean House. The moat still survives as an earthwork but is now dry. The proposed extension lies outside the Scheduled area but the new foundations for it will lie within 10m of the edge of the moat. There was high potential for below ground remains associated with the Scheduled Monument. Chapel Farmhouse is also recorded on the HER as an undesignated Heritage Asset ([wsm43724](#)): Unlisted early to mid-C19 farmhouse.

### *Geology and Topography*

Historically, the hamlet of Hunt End along with Callow Hill lay within the north of the parish of Feckenham, the hamlets of Astwood Bank and part of Crabbs Cross were in the east, on the borders of Warwickshire. Chapel House Farm (Formerly named Hunt End Farm; OS 1884) is located to the west of Hunt End along the Feckenham Road at a height of about 105m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), the proposed development consists of an area totalling about 35m<sup>2</sup>. The underlying geology comprises a red-brown Mudstone (BGS, 1989). Hunt End is a district of Redditch in Worcestershire, England. The area sits within an intermediate and undulating to rolling lowland topography based on bedrock geology made up of mudstone and sandstone, with superficial geology made up of alluvial, which follows the Wixon Brook.

## *Archaeological and Historical Background*

An Historic Environment Record (HER) search was carried out on a 500m radius of Chapel House Farm. There are 5 archaeological activities and 12 HER monuments recorded within the search area, including 1 Scheduled Monument.

The search area sits within an intermediate and undulating to rolling lowland topography based on bedrock geology made up of mudstone and sandstone, with superficial geology made up of alluvial, which follows the Wixon Brook. The surrounding region in the south has a small to medium scale field pattern with a modern to high level of dispersed farmsteads and clusters of wayside cottages. Land use is mainly pastoral with relic patches of ancient woodland, often associated with densely scattered hedgerow oaks. The historic landscape survives reasonably well, as there has been little boundary loss. In the north, the rural areas are under pastoral use with farmsteads and wayside dwellings and a small to medium scale piecemeal enclosure field pattern. The Walkwood housing estate and the golf course were former woodland, with relic patches of ancient woodland, also associated with densely scattered hedgerow oaks and streamside cover. Within the search area clustered settlement, modern expansion and new town are surrounded by public open space and industrial complexes in the north and large expanses of piecemeal enclosure and field amalgamation and smaller area of Parliamentary enclosure.

The search area includes the Scheduled Monument of the moated site ([wsm00074](#)) and fishpond ([wsm00075](#)) at Hunt End Farm. Within the search area lie 3 Historic England Listed buildings and 34 unlisted, historic buildings. The structures date to the C17 and include timber-framed farmhouses. The Historic Farmsteads of Worcestershire project recorded 6 farmsteads ([wsm54842](#), [wsm54843](#), [wsm55325](#), [wsm00074](#), [wsm00074](#), [wsm00074](#)), C16 to the C19 and 3 outfarms ([wsm51646](#), [wsm54842](#), [wsm54842](#)), C17 and C19.

There are records for medieval, post medieval and modern monuments which includes a medieval shrunken village ([wsm00050](#)), post medieval farm buildings ([wsm00074](#)) and a WW2 ordnance factory ([wsm33271](#)).

The Portable Antiquity Scheme has not recorded finds other than modern within the search area.

There have been few intrusive archaeological investigations, desk-based assessment, building recording and test pits. Archaeology within the region sees multiple medieval earthworks, which includes a scheduled moat ([wsm00074](#)) and fishponds ([wsm00075](#)) and listed buildings ([wsm00074](#)), but also includes other undesignated moated farmsteads ([wsm00074](#)) and farm buildings ([wsm00074](#)).

The Ordnance Survey First Edition County Series plan of 1884 shows the farm was formerly called Huntend Farm, the adjacent medieval moated site was also included in the survey.

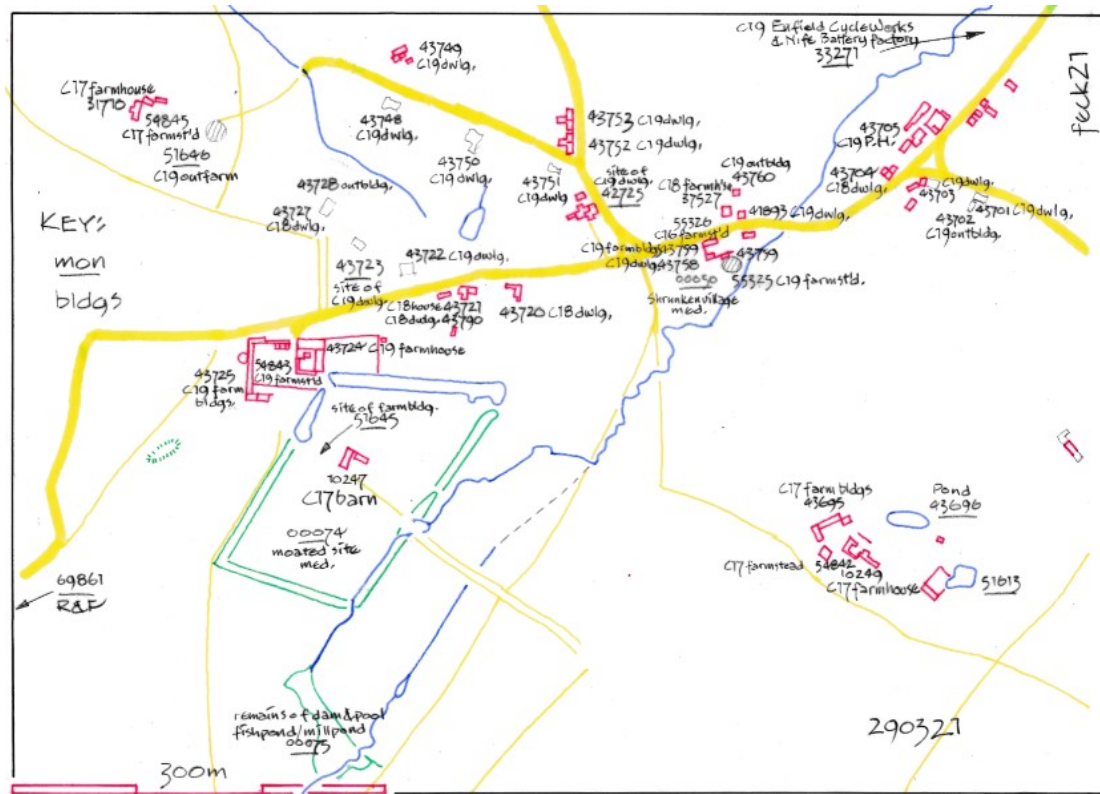


Fig. 3; HER monument locations

## RESULTS

### *Method and nature of the excavation*

The objective of the archaeological recording was to obtain an appropriate record of the archaeological deposits and finds disturbed or exposed during excavation of the foundations for the new extension which comprised a strip trench 0.6m wide and 1m deep. Machine excavation was only used for the removal of non-archaeologically significant material (modern deposits) and was used to excavate these layers stratigraphically using a toothless bucket, removing the overlying soil layers and exposing the surface of the natural clay substrate.



## Description of deposits

The natural substrate (101) which comprised a stiff red clay was exposed throughout the trench at a level height of 103.43m AOD. Truncating this clay was a former drain (102) built in brick and stone. It was aligned northeast-southwest, the base was about 0.40m wide, formed by two bricks laid end on end. The side walls, which were 0.26m high, consisted of three courses of single bricks which were capped by flat lias stones about 0.06m thick. Filling the construction trench and sealing the drain was the backfill deposit (103) consisting of a dark greyish-brown, clayey-silt. This was in turn sealed by a former topsoil (100), about 0.20m thick at the east end tapering to 0.10m at the west end. The upper ground comprised a 0.15m thick layer of modern gravel.

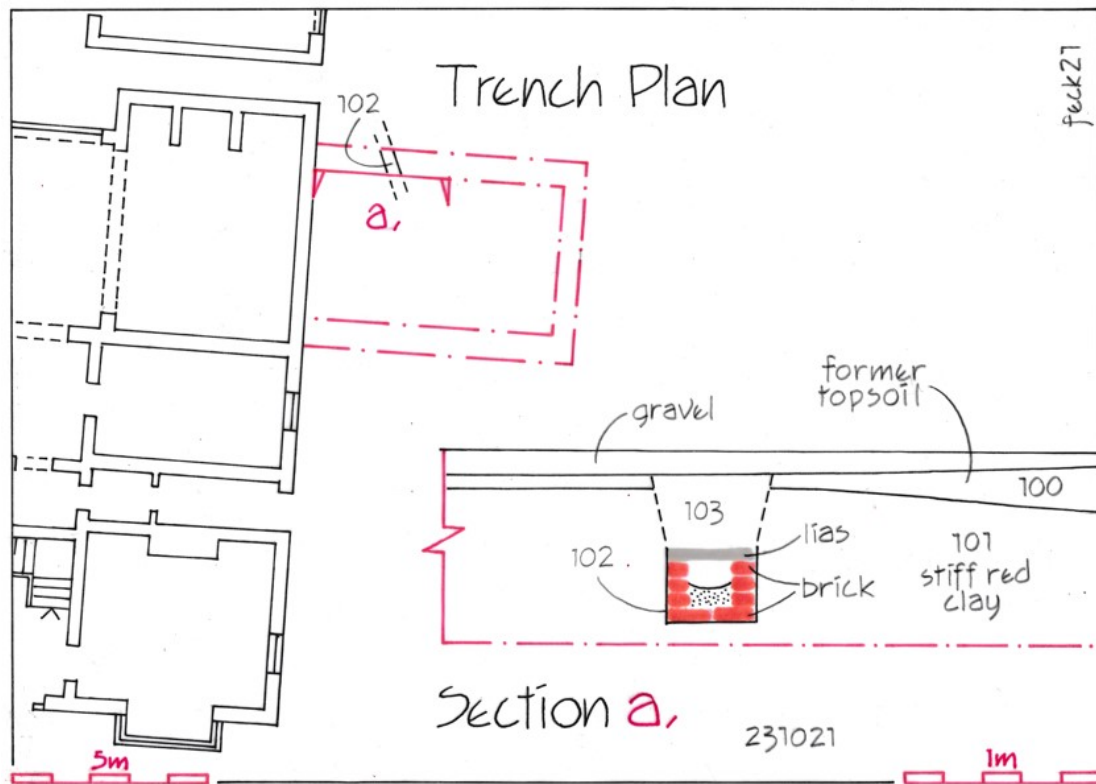


Fig.4; trench plan and section.

## FINDS

No finds were retrieved from the excavations.

## Environmental data

None of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.

## DISCUSSION

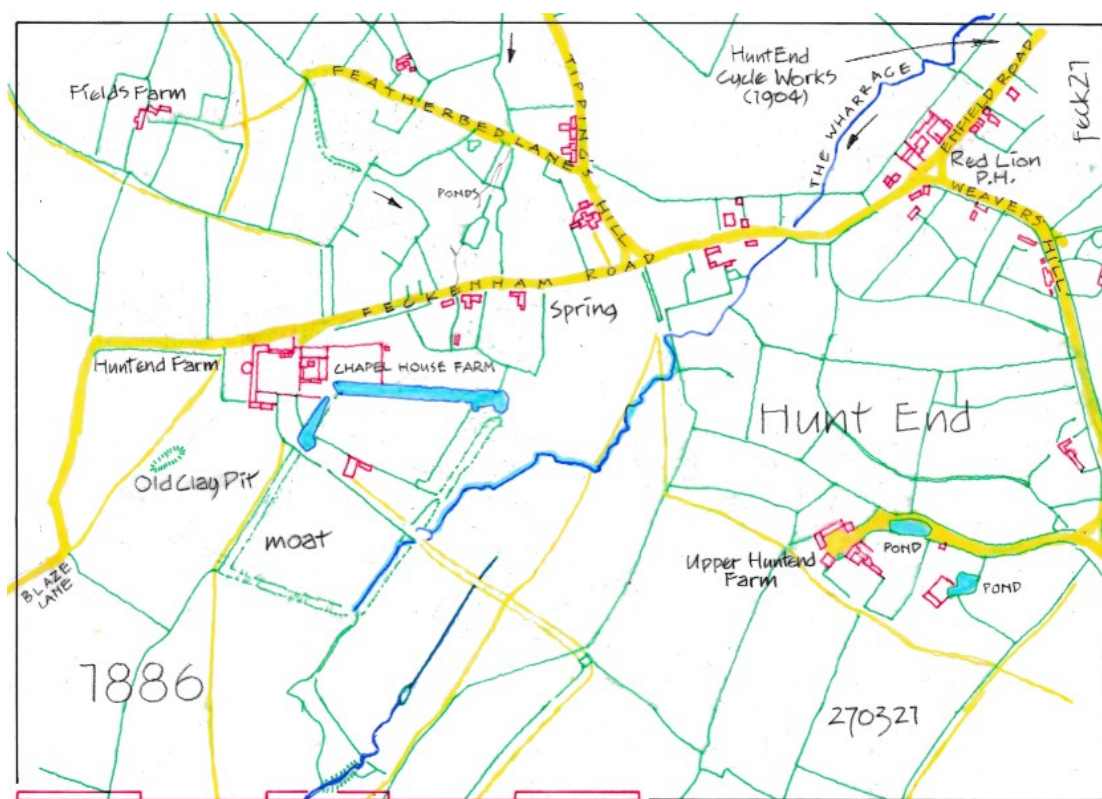


Fig. 5; The core of the settlement, showing the historic setting of the site.

The HER shows that area of the excavation lies adjacent to the large moated site and fishpond ([WSM00074](#)) at Hunt End Farm. It has been described (Aston, 1988) as perched in a flat watershed between a small valley to west and a large valley with a stream to the east. The moat is now all dry and is best presented on north side where it is cut into rising land. The east side is narrow and gully like with the leat of the fishpond to the east, flowing at the bottom. The west side is wide and the south side and the south half of the east and west sides are marked by low banks. Within the moated area are the remains of C16 Jacobean House. The Feckenham Estate Map of 1591 shows a H-shaped building in the northern half of the moat and two buildings in the southern half, one T-shaped and one small rectangular.

The excavation for the new extension was small in scope comprising narrow strip foundation trench within what was historically a yard adjacent to the east side of the former farm. The remains of a single drain feature constructed in brick and stone was recorded crossing part of the trench during excavation, no finds were recovered from the soil deposit filling the drain which based on its construction is likely to have been built during the C18.

## ***BIBLIOGRAPHY***

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## ***Archive Location***

A digital (pdf) copy of the report (referenced with OASIS) will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service.

*Plates*



*Plate 1; overall view of the foundation trench for the new extension.*



*Plate 2; drain (102)*



*Plate 3; drain (102)*



*Plate 4; drain (102)*