

Sheffield Museum Excavations 1976-80



Excavations in the Inner Courtyard: Open Day

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for the University of Sheffield
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Note on Sources:

The following report is based on the unpublished interim reports for 1976-80 and the 2002 Archaeological Assessment in the Manor Lodge archive at Museums Sheffield. Also consulted were the published summary reports (Cherry 1977; Moorhouse 1977, 1978, 1979) listed in References at the end of the report. This material is also available in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

The site record notebooks for 1976 and 1977 (volumes 13-16) in the Manor Lodge archive provided further detailed information on the progress of excavation.

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I. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The excavations from 1976 to 1980 sought to explore the main Manor house for potential future work. A five-metre square grid system was set up in alignment with the features previously excavated. Excavations from 1976 to 1980 constituted Phase III of excavation as outlined prior to initial work in 1968 (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1968-70*).

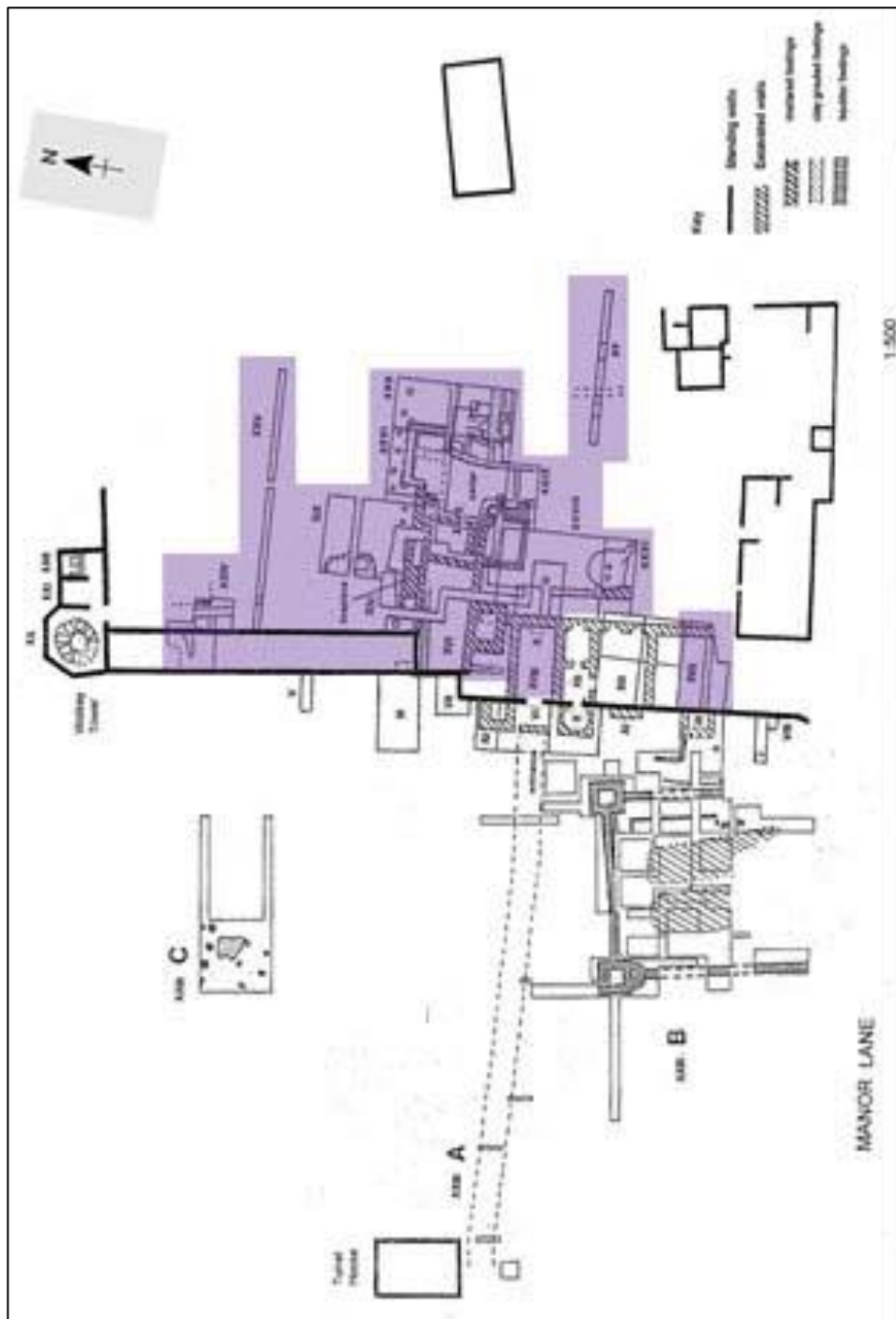


Fig. 1. Plan of Trenches (1968-71) with excavations in 1976-80 highlighted.

II. 1976 SEASON

Under the direction of P. Beswick, excavation resumed at Manor Lodge after a year's break in 1975. Work took place from 9 August to 28 August 1976. Three sites, laid out within the gird, were situated in the inner courtyard, establishing excavation 'Sites' adjacent to that of the 1968-70 trenches. The numbering sequence of trenches begun in the 1968-70 excavations (I-XII) of the entrance and main front of the house was resumed. Summary reports were published in the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* (Moorhouse 1977) and *Post-Medieval Archaeology* (Cherry 1977).

II.1 SITE LIST (See plan Fig. 1)

Site XIII

This trench was initially laid out in 1970 as a southern extension to Trench XII. A third room had been partly discovered here, leading off two rooms behind one of the Towers (A) that flanked the main entrance (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1968-70*). In 1976, the trench was re-opened and the room completely excavated. The room was 5.9m by 7.9m, quite a large room with two window embrasures opening into the inner courtyard. The walls survived to 2m in the east in which the lower parts of the window embrasures were situated. Kiln debris (saggers and wasters) of the 18th century was found in large amounts in the demolition layers, related to the kiln excavated in 1971 (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1971*). Additional 18th century pot forms were also discovered, adding to the known repertoire of Manor made pottery forms. Cistercian wares were found, as they had been in 1970, in the sealed mix-clay floor layer.

Next to the southern side of the large third room was a non-connecting fourth room with a stone-line drain, which continued under the dividing wall into the third – large – room. This drain had been detected in the 1970 excavations when it was reported that a sliver groat of 1550 had been found in the disturbed floor level. Disturbance from the 19th century extended quite deeply in this fourth room, with little 18th century kiln material. Evidence for a newel staircase was detected at the southwest corner of the room. Given the absence of kiln debris and the large amount of 19th century fill material, it was suggested that this room had remained in use in the 18th century.

Both the large room 3 and room 4 appear to be contemporary with the west front, rooms 1 and 2 and towers of the main house. The date, based on historical and architectural evidence, has been suggested to be c. 1525 for this phase. Also, the absence of fireplaces in any of these four semi-basement rooms probably indicated they had been used for storage.

Site XIV

A trench was situated in site XIV in the inner courtyard near the southern end of the Long Gallery in order to investigate the possibility of a cross-wing. Substantial masonry features, found beneath an 18th century road surface were the remains of at least two rooms in this possible east cross-wing. In the north wall was found the footings for a substantial fireplace. Several earlier clay

footings for walls, at different alignments, were found beneath the mortared masonry features where the bedrock fell away. These walls possibly represent two earlier phases of construction although no dating evidence was found. A number of 19th century pits intruded into the north end of the cross-wing building. It was concluded that further excavation was warranted in this area.

Site XV

Site XV was a 19m long trial trench, 1m wide, situated further to the east to explore for the extension of the east wing. A number of stone footings were detected, but much evidence had been destroyed by 18th and 19th century drains and activity associated with garden cultivation. It was speculated on the sparse evidence of one wall, 0.9m wide, that appeared to align with the 'porter's lodge' to the south and had no corresponding outer wall, that the east wing rooms did not continue. However, the trench was concluded to be too restricted to allow for full interpretation.

III. 1977 SEASON

The primary aim of this season's excavations was to uncover more of the semi-basement rooms of the west wing, including the junction with the cross-wing discovered the previous year. Work began on 8 August and continued until 27 August 1977 under the direction of P. Beswick. A summary report appeared in the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* (Moorhouse 1978).

III.1 SITE LIST (See plan Fig. 1)

Site XVI

This area was located at the base of the Long Gallery, between XIV excavated in 1976 and the area where the mortared walls of the cross-wing butted up to, but not bonded to the west front. The early walls, identified by clay grouted footings, found at a different alignment of the cross-wing walls in 1976 were shown in this area to pre-date the front west wall as it now stands. A robber trench, sealed in a clay-grouted wall, contained Cistercian ware of the first half of the 16th century. A brick-lined well (Fig. 2 and Fig. 3) was discovered in the area of the northern junction of the cross-wing, delaying excavation of the cross-wing at that time. The well, which was partly excavated, was thought to date to the 18th century.



Fig. 2. Brick-lined well in Site XVI

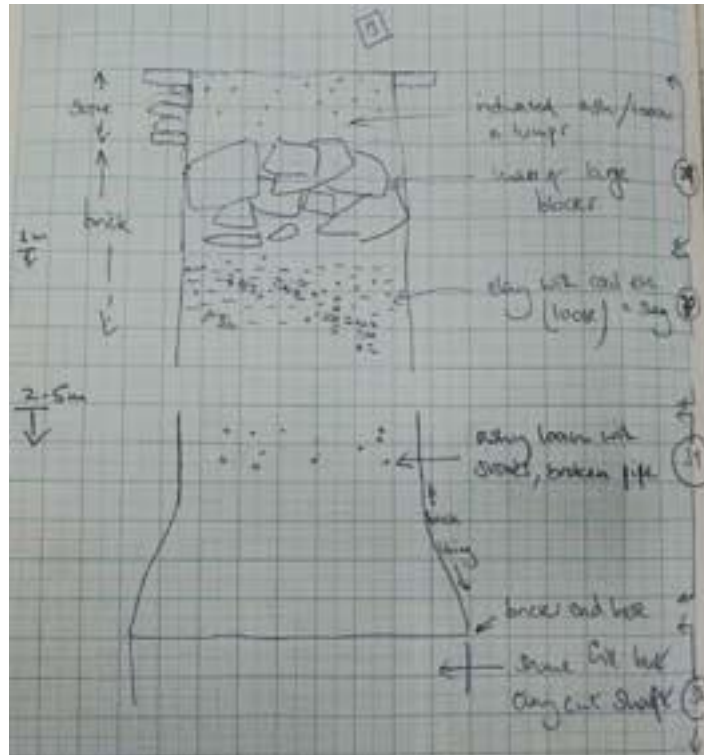


Fig. 3. Section of brick-lined well in Site XVI (Site Record 1977 vol. 16, p. 15)

Site XVII

Excavation included the continuation of excavation of several squares in Site XIII, opened in 1976. To the east of this was opened Site XVII. The window masonry found in the demolition debris of the two rooms (numbers 3 and 4) suggests that they were bay window footings for lofty mullioned windows along the inner courtyard side. The large room (number 3) was fully excavated and showed no evidence of a fireplace. Furthermore, a stone-lined tank was found in this room in the northwest corner by the door, which may relate to the room's usage. Both this room and the adjacent room (number 4) had a drain that sloped south, running the entire length of the rooms. The dividing wall found in room 4 was a later addition, constructed of padstones that had probably been the original floor slabs. To the south of this wall some original floor slabs survive. It was suggested that these rooms had been used for storage. Further evidence for the use of room 4 in the 18th century after the demolition of the manor house was demonstrated by the find of an occupation deposit of over 100 bronze pins and early 18th century so-called 'Manor Ware' pottery.

Site XVIII

This site was situated over the entrance to the main house, originally flanked by two octagonal towers (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1968-70*). Excavation was incomplete in 1977, exposing a paved area in the inner courtyard directly opposite the entrance.

IV. 1978 SEASON

Excavation entered its 10th season of work, taking place from 31 July to 26 August 1978 under the directorship of P. Beswick. Site numbers began in 1978 with XIX and then jumped to XXIV and XXV due to the earlier 1971 numbering sequence XX-XXII and the designation of the outer courtyard (1972-4) as site XXIII. Work in 1978 carried on from 1977 in areas XVI and XVIII with new areas opened in the northern section of the inner courtyard. A summary report appeared in the *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* (Moorhouse 1979).

IV.1 SITE LIST (See plan Fig. 1)

Site XVI (continuation from 1977)

This is the small, narrow area to the west of the Long Gallery wall where an 18th century well had been partially excavated in 1977. Further investigation confirmed the following:

1. The cross-wing wall abutted the main west wall.
2. The west front wall's early masonry wall (just south of the Long Gallery) was of roughly dressed rectangular blocks. Based on the short length of this rough masonry wall, it was speculated that it may have formed the gable end of a building on an E-W axis; other traces of which were probably removed by the later building activity.
3. A stone floor was found in Long Gallery north of the cross-wing. This was similar to the 18th century "road surface" discovered in XIV in 1976 in the cross-wing.

Site XVIII (continuation from 1977)

Work continued in the entrance area begun in 1977. Several features were uncovered:

1. A section of wall footing, oriented N-S, pre-dated the entrance.
2. Possible remains of a staircase were discovered in the south east corner of the entrance 'lobby'.
3. The paving in the inner courtyard was shown to be less extensive than originally thought, assymetrical to the entrance. To the east of the paving, a square masonry block was set surrounded by stones on edge, possibly used as a base. A 3m wide potential walkway was located to the south of the paved area, possibly the start of a covered walkway.
4. A deep cutting in the bedrock filled with clay was found in the south east section of site XVIII
5. From under the baulk between XVI and XVIII, evidence showed that the projection from the cross-wing was likely to have been a garderobe tower.

Site XIX

Located north of site XIV that had been excavated in 1976 in the inner courtyard (Fig. 4). What had been speculated to be possible earlier walls in the north of XIV were shown not to be early structures, but part of a large rectangular addition to the cross-wing, possibly the footings for a bay window. Additionally, in the east of the area were found two post-holes that appeared contemporary with the cross-wing, possibly forming part of an entrance porch to the wing from the northern courtyard. The northern courtyard in this area had been disturbed in the 18th and 19th centuries when the area was divided into cottage gardens. A substantial stone foundation was found in this disturbed area, set 2m deep in a pit, with no dating evidence except the final fill of 18th century kiln material.



Fig. 4. Excavations in inner courtyard in 1978: Sites XIX (foreground) and XXIV (background)

Site XXIV

Near the north end of the Long Gallery (Fig. 4) at the location of a cross wall, exploratory work was carried out in advance of restoration work. Trenches were laid in the interior of the gallery and immediately on the other side of the inner wall into the courtyard.

South of the cross wall in the interior of the Long Gallery, two floor levels were detected. The lower floor level was contemporary with the cross wall, both later features as the cross wall had not been bonded onto the Long Gallery walls. Related to this lower floor was a gap in the Long Gallery wall, leading to an enclosure paved with brick settings associated with manor made pottery, and therefore of possible 18th century date. To the east of the enclosure was uncovered a brick arched cellar with no evidence of a surface structure above. The latest floor level was 19th century in date built on kiln debris and kiln building material. Any earlier floor levels had been destroyed.

North of the cross wall was a flagged floor with 20th-century fill. The wall on the inner courtyard side of the Long Gallery was shown to be of two different dates. The upper courses had a plinth, which, according to early 20th-century photographic evidence, supported padstones for a timber-framed wall.

Site XXV

A long 1m wide test trench was laid across the northern courtyard. It confirmed that the area had been cultivated down to bedrock in the 18th and 19th centuries.

VI. 1979 SEASON

Excavation continued in the inner courtyard of the main Manor House, from 30 July to 26 August 1978. Investigation concentrated on the cross-wing and area opposite the entrance. Work could not continue in the northern courtyard due to the on-going structural problems with the Long Gallery and the backlog of consolidation work.

VI.1 SITE LIST (See plan Fig. 1)

Site XXVI and Site XXVII

Situated next to each other, these sites were laid out to further investigate the structure in the cross-wing that was found in XIX (1978) and XIV (1976). The design and structural history of the cross-wing proved to be very complex.

A fragmentary wall of weathered boulders (running E-W) in XXVII was the earliest feature discovered (see below in XXVIII where further traces of the building were discovered). Traces of an associated clay floor lay to the south, which had been cut into by the south wall of the cross-wing.

Next to the room with the fireplace (see XIV excavated in 1976), was another smaller room with a similar floor make-up.

Parallel with the north wall of the cross-wing were discovered a line of four substantial post-holes cut into bedrock. These are similar to the two post-holes discovered nearby in 1978 in XIX. The fill indicated that they were contemporary with the 16th-century building. Because they were more substantial than scaffolding holes such as those found in front of Tower A (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1968-70*), it was speculated that they may have held temporary buttressing for an unstable wall. The north wall showed indications that it had two different building phases, at slightly different alignments. Documentary evidence indicated that there had been earthquake activity in the Sheffield region in the latter half of the 16th century.

A gap in the stonework of the north wall had been cut by a north-south sloping ramp, possibly representing a collapsed drain originally boxed in wood.

In the southern half of the cross-wing an extensive cellar had been discovered, but only partly excavated. Cut into the bedrock, the walls survive up to 2m high in parts. A small stone sink with a drain hole and stone lid were uncovered in the northeast corner, set into the flagged floor. Remains of two staircases survive: one in the southwest corner, which had been blocked by the later south wall, and the other in the east wall, possibly indicating a replacement stair at some point. The fill included demolition rubble – moulded plaster, carved stone and internal fittings of the 16th century house as well as debris from the first half of the 18th century.

Site XXVIII

This large site was situated within the southern part of the inner courtyard. In the subsoil, a prehistoric (possible Mesolithic) flint scrapper was found. It was

suggested that their may have been a prehistoric site located here that was destroyed by the later medieval and post-medieval activity.

Evidence of two walls located in the north part of the trench together with the weathered boulder wall discovered in XXVII (see above) constituted an earlier building. Architecturally it is distinct from other buildings with the wall foundations of weathered boulders (some scarred by the plough) and a floor of clay. The building was 5.5m wide, sealed below the 16th century sandy under-flooring of the 16th century flagged area. Dating evidence is inconclusive, but a penny of Henry V (1420-22) was located nearby in a disturbed area.

The Tudor (16th century) courtyard level was sealed beneath deposits of soil and ash. The paved area uncovered in the previous two years was completely exposed in 1979. The paved area was opposite the main entrance and may have continued as a paved path around the north side of the courtyard.

Further evidence for the covered portico or 'loggia' was detected, in some places making use of earlier wall footings.

Beyond the possible portico, and probably independent of the house, was a 4m diameter rough paved circular area. Three courses of clay-grouted sandstone slabs remained from the substantial footing. It was speculated that the courtyard feature may have been ornamental, possibly a fountain base although no channels or drains were discovered.



Fig. 5. Circular Feature in XXVIII

V. 1980 SEASON

On 19 July 1980, shortly before the twelfth season of excavation, P. Beswick presented a paper on the Manor excavations, summarizing the work done to date. An abstract appeared in the *Archaeological Journal* (Beswick 1980).

Excavation took place from 21 July to 23 August 1980. This was determined to be the final season of the current excavation programme. Investigation concentrated on the southern courtyard and the cross-wing as it had done in 1979. Work was under the direction of P. Beswick. After twelve years of work, it was decided to concentrate on a full post-excavation analysis before any further work took place.

V.1 SITE LIST (See plan Fig. 1)

Site XXVI (continuation from 1979)

The cross-wing cellar discovered in 1979 was fully excavated, revealing at least two and probably three rooms, each with their own staircase. The rooms had probably been added during different building phases. The earliest is room 1, located in the northeast sector of site XXVI. It had clay-grouted, rough-cut stone walls with its staircase in the northeast corner (discovered in 1979). Room two was situated in the northwest sector of site XXVI and had ashlar masonry. The blocked staircase in the southwest corner discovered in 1979 belonged to this room. Room 3, on the south end of room 1, was the last to be added. Its staircase was on the west side and seemed to still have been in use when the building was demolished in 1708. At this final stage, rooms 1 and 2 may have been one room. The demolition fill contained many fine dressed masonry pieces including stones and lintels from fireplaces.

Site XXIX

Located south of XXVI, the area was opened to discover more of the early clay floored structure distinguished by its rough boulder wall footings. The north and east sides of the structure had been cut by the later cellar and their staircases. However, the southeast corner of the structure remained along with evidence for an internal partition wall. Possible traces of a fireplace were suggested by burnt clay in the foundation. Post-holes in the corners of the building indicate a possible above ground timber framed structure.

Site XXX

This area was opened to the east of XXVI as far as the modern boundary wall. A return wall of the cross-wing was discovered north of the cellar, forming a projection into the northern courtyard. What had been thought to be a collapsed drain in this area, excavated in 1979, proved to be a robbed out wall trench. Further post-holes were found on the northern courtyard side of the projecting rooms comparable to those found in 1979.

In the southern section of the trench, evidence for a series of complex internal room arrangements were traced, indicating re-arrangements had been made on a number of occasions.

Site XXXI

This trench was situated at the south end of site XXVIII opened in 1979. The circular footings found in 1979 proved to be non-circular with straight alignments on the south and west sides. A substantial stone-built drain was uncovered in the southeast corner and a shallow trench along the south side that might have held a water pipe. Evidence of the drains, along with the thick clay grouting of the stones, supports the idea that the structure may have been a fountain base.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

The excavations in 1976 emphasised the complex nature of the structural development of the main house. The succeeding years, 1977 to 1980, served to define provisional building phases during its years of occupation, summarized by P. Beswick in an unpublished Archaeological Assessment of the site c. 2002 (Fig. 6). Two major stages, each subdivided by separate construction phases, were detected:

- ❖ Earlier structures under the cross-wing, termed the 'Hunting Lodge'
- ❖ 16th century Manor House.

The Hunting Lodge remains were almost entirely sub-surface while the Manor House still has substantial remains above ground.

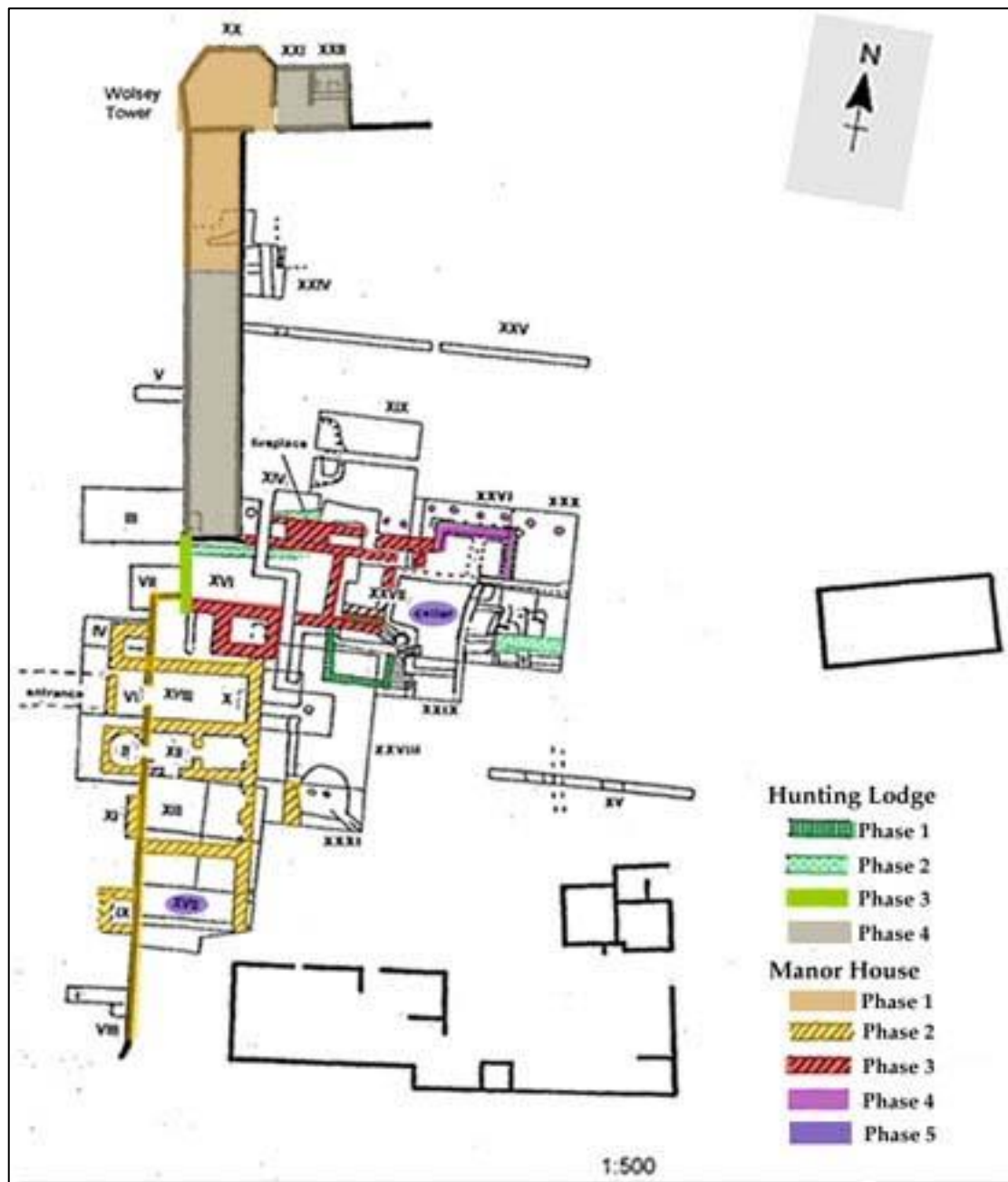


Fig. 6. Plan showing approximate areas of building phases
(Based on descriptions in the 2002 Archaeological Assessment by P. Beswick)

Hunting Lodge (?12th-13th century to early 16th century)

Phase 1.

The earliest phase represented was the clay-floored structure with rough boulder wall footings under the southern end of the cross-wing although no dating evidence was found.

Evidence in: XXVII (1979), XXVIII (1979), XXIX (1980)

Phase 2.

Subdivided into Phase 2a and 2b, representing two phases of alignment. The walls of the first sub-division are in alignment with the building discovered in the outer courtyard (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1972-4*). The second are at right angles to the Long Gallery wall.

Evidence in: XIV (1976), XV (1976), XVI (1977), XVII (1977), XXV (1978), XXVI (1979), XXX (1980),

Phase 3.

The rough masonry wall, standing at the base of the Long Gallery, represents this phase.

Evidence in: XVI (1978)

Phase 4.

The lower part of the Long Gallery wall belongs to this phase. The east wall was perhaps further east, given the evidence of an entrance door from the south. In addition, the tower room may pre-date the construction of the hexagonal room, with a suggested date of 15th century based on architectural evidence.

Evidence in: XXV (1978)

Manor House

Phase 1.

Date: Early 16th century (c. 1525)

The Hexagonal room of Wolsey's Tower and the upper part of the Long Gallery wall are probably contemporary, based on structural evidence. Documentary evidence indicates that they were 'newly built' in 1529.

Evidence in: XX, XXI, XXII (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1971*);

Phase 2.

Date: Middle of the 16th century

It had been thought by the earlier excavators that the towers, together with the whole southern half of the west wing had been added around 1525. However, the date of mid-16th century was probably more accurate given architectural evidence, particularly the combination of the towers and the footings for lofty bay windows discovered in rooms 3 and 4. This probably

also dates to the time of the demolition of the earlier structure in the outer courtyard.

Also at this time, the earliest cross-wing walls of the main Manor House were dated.

A new garden may have been laid out in the inner courtyard, along the south front with paving and a possible loggia and fountain.

Evidence in: XXIIIB (see *Sheffield Museum Excavations 1972-4*), XVI (1977), XVII (1977), XXVIII (1979), XXXI (1980)

Phase 3.

Date: Later than Phase 2

This is probably the date of the mortared walls of the east-west cross-wing.

Evidence in: XVIII (1977)

Phase 4.

Date: Late 16th century

The cross-wing appears to have been re-constructed with projecting bays were added to the north wall. Scaffolding or temporary buttresses are demonstrated by a series of rock-cut postholes. This may have been a time of minor earthquakes in the Sheffield area.

Evidence in: XIX (1978), XXVI (1979), XXX (1980)

Phase 5.

Date: Early 17th century

After the death of the 6th Earl of Shrewsbury in 1590, the Duke of Norfolk inherited the estate and the estate fell into disrepair. During this time, there is evidence of continued use of some of the cellars – the large complex of cellars in the cross-wing and the southern half of the cellar off the west main wall.

Evidence in: XVII? (1978), XXVI (1979), XXVII (1979), XXIX (1980)

After demolition in the early 18th century, use of the Manor House was documented in many of the excavated areas. There was considerable disturbance to the original 16th and 17th century floor levels in the Long Gallery due to later 18th and 19th century rebuilding. The area was probably used as a finishing place for the pottery manufacture in the 18th century. Garden cultivation during the 18th and 19th century in the northern section of the inner courtyard obliterated any earlier structures.

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