

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

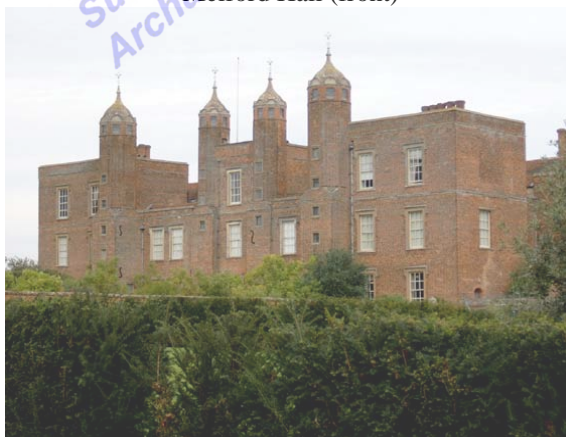
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## Melford Hall, Long Melford Drainage Improvement Works LMD 058

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING, 2005-6



Melford Hall (front)



Melford Hall (rear)

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## Summary

Monitoring of the trenches excavated for the installation of new drains at Melford Hall, Long Melford demonstrated that archaeological deposits associated with the earlier medieval buildings and occupation survive on the site. Evidence of structural features, probable pits and occupation layers were recorded and indicate that the extent of this activity seems to coincide fairly precisely with the footprint of the present hall and service yard. This supports the theory that the current hall was built over the site of the previous medieval manorhouse. There were no medieval occupation deposits beyond the area of the hall, but the deep soil profile recorded in the surrounding gardens shows evidence of the landscaping that has occurred to shape the current grounds and indicates that the pre-16th century ground levels are still intact.

## SMR information

Planning application no.	N/A
Date of fieldwork:	September 2003-May 2006
Grid Reference:	TL 8664 4616
Funding body:	The National Trust
OASIS Ref	Suffolk c1-10759

## Introduction

A project to improve the drains at Melford Hall was undertaken between 2005 and 2006. A new pumping station and run of drains were to be installed to support the existing system, part of which had its origins in the 16th century. The new drains were to be laid in fresh cut trenches to the north and west of the hall, through the current service yard and walled garden. The work was commissioned and funded by The National Trust and the fieldwork followed a specification issued by Angus Wainwright, the Trust's archaeologist responsible for the site, in consultation with Mr. R.D. Carr of Suffolk County Council's Archaeological Service Conservation Team.

Melford Hall lies at TL 8664 4616, on the eastern side of Long Melford Green and separated from the town to the south by the river Stour (Fig.1). The Hall itself is Grade I listed and was constructed from c.1556-59 by Sir William Cordell who had purchased the manor at the time of the Dissolution. The hall is built on the site of a medieval moated house, which prior to the Dissolution belonged to the Abbots of Bury St Edmunds. The moat survives on the north, west and south sides, along with large fish ponds to the south of the house. The moat on the east side was infilled and the north arm of the moat drained when the park was remodelled in the 18th century.

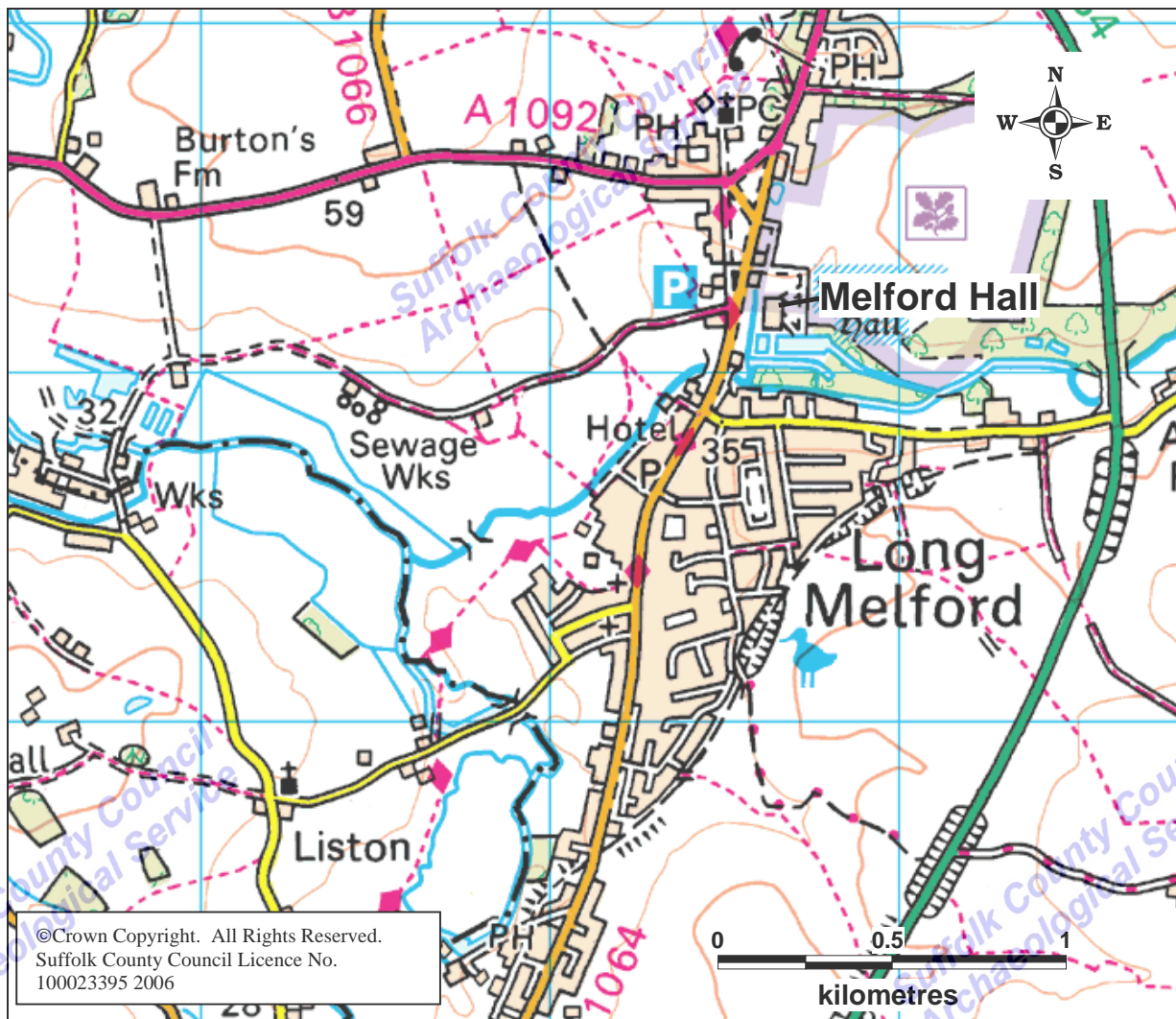


Figure 1 Site location plan

## Methodology

The monitoring visits were scheduled in consultation with the drainage contractors who gave notice of each phase of work. The monitoring programme commenced with a series of five engineering test-holes excavated by hand in advance of the works. The trenches were excavated by machine fitted with a 0.5m wide bucket. The start of excavation on each phase of work was undertaken in the presence of the monitoring archaeologist who assessed the potential and the need for a continual attendance during excavation. Trenching through sensitive areas, within the courtyard and in front of the western elevation of the hall, were continuously monitored and the entire run of drains was seen prior to backfilling. Examples of the trench sides and section of excavated features were drawn at 1:20 and planned at 1:50 and the trench positions plotted onto an Ordnance Survey OS plan.

All pre-modern finds were retained for analysis and the site data has been input onto an MS Access database. The finds and site records have been archived in the small and main stores of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds and with the County Sites and Monuments Record under the parish code LMD 058. A copy of the report has also been lodged with the OASIS on-line database (ref. suffolk c1 110759).

## Results

### The test pits

Eight engineering test pits were hand excavated in advance of the works to assess the condition of the original drains and determine soil conditions. All of the testholes were in the gardens and yards to the south of the hall and the positions of these are shown on Figure 2 and each described below.

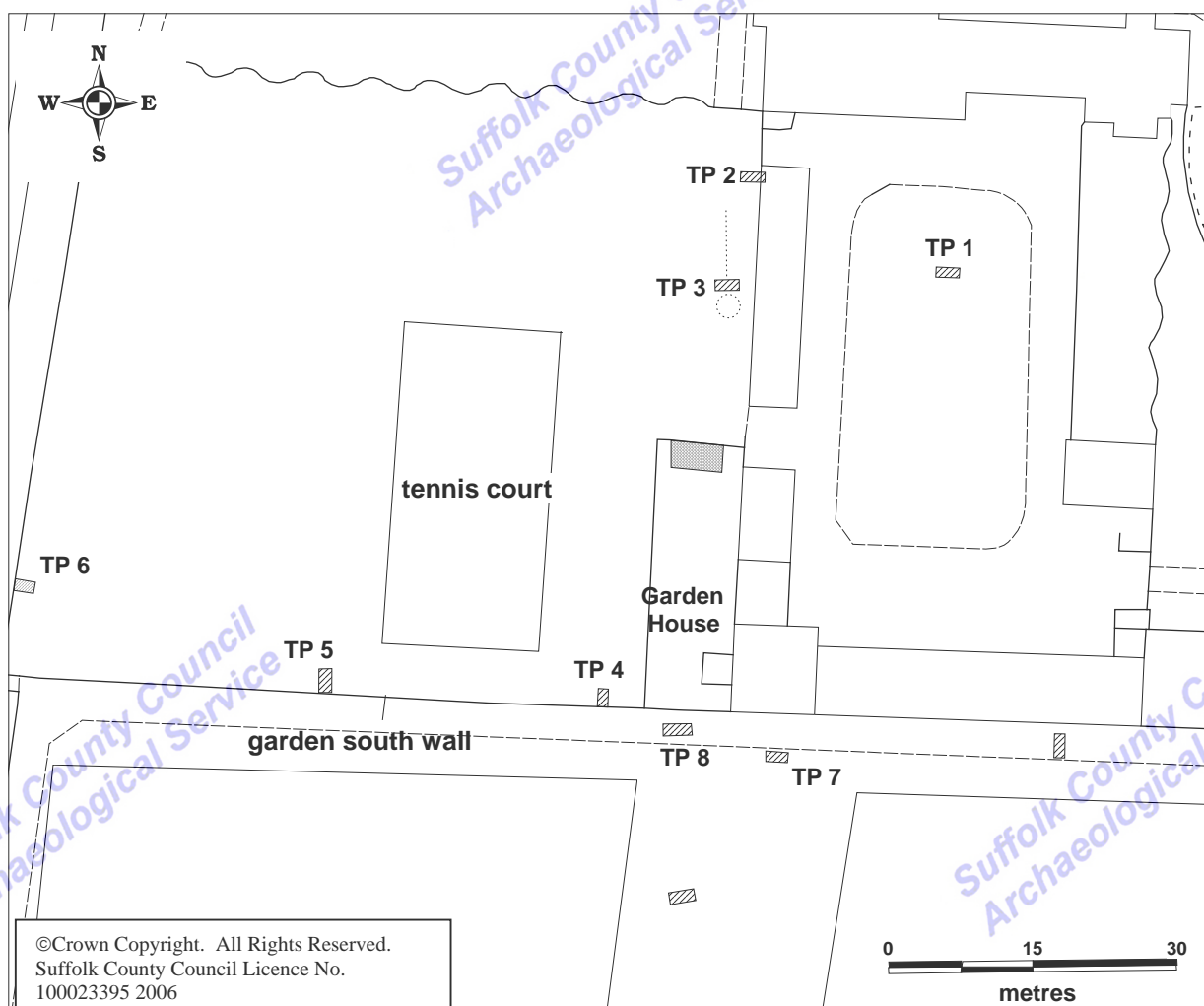


Figure 2. Location of Test Pits



### *Test pit 1*

Test pit 1 was excavated in the service yard to examine the existing drain. A hole 1.40m x 0.8m x 0.3m deep was excavated into the topsoil exposing a concrete paving slab over a 20th century inspection cover. The topsoil was well sorted with finely crushed fragments of brick and tile.

### *Test pit 2*

Test pit 2 was to inspect the existing culverts; these are part of the original system, laid in the 16th century, for taking storm water away from the hall. The planned testhole was abandoned as an inspection chamber or manhole covered by a limestone flagstone existed nearby. The manhole was situated at a change in angle in the run of the culverts (Fig.3). The upper part of the chamber had been reconstructed in modern brick and a salt glazed pipe set into the base of the culvert. A recent storm drain, laid over the top of the culvert, fed into the inspection chamber. The bricks used in the construction of the culverts were comparable with those used in the hall and the head of the culvert was 0.55m below the ground surface.



Figure 3. Test pit 2 at junction of culverts

### *Test pit 3*

In test pit 3 turf was removed to expose a modern drain cover.

### *Test Pit 4*

Test pit 4 was excavated against the north face of the garden south wall close to the *Garden House* (Fig.2). The wall is constructed of brick laid in English bond. The bricks are in a red-firing clay with coarse flint and grog inclusions, and the clay is poorly mixed. The bricks measure 9¼" x 2-2½" x 4½", the same as those used in the house suggesting that this section of wall is broadly contemporary with the hall. The test pit exposed the footing of the wall; a trench filled with loose brick rubble and mortar (Fig. 4). The rubble was made up of broken bricks of a similar size and fabric as those used in the construction of the wall itself. Above the rubble the bottom course of the bonded wall projected forming a stepped footing. The soil profile within the section shows that the ground level within the garden to the north of the wall has been raised 0.7m with imported soil, 0003. The deposition of this post-dated the building of the wall and buried 6-7 courses of bonded brickwork. Below the imported soil was a paler brown silt loam, 0004, this probably represents the original topsoil and the interface between 0003 and 0004 the original ground level. Soil layer 0004 had also been reworked and was flecked throughout its visible depth with fragments of charcoal. Fragments of glazed pottery and glass from a wine bottle recovered from this layer date it to the early part of the 18th century. The footing trench for the wall was cut from the top of 0004 and bonded brickwork began at this level.

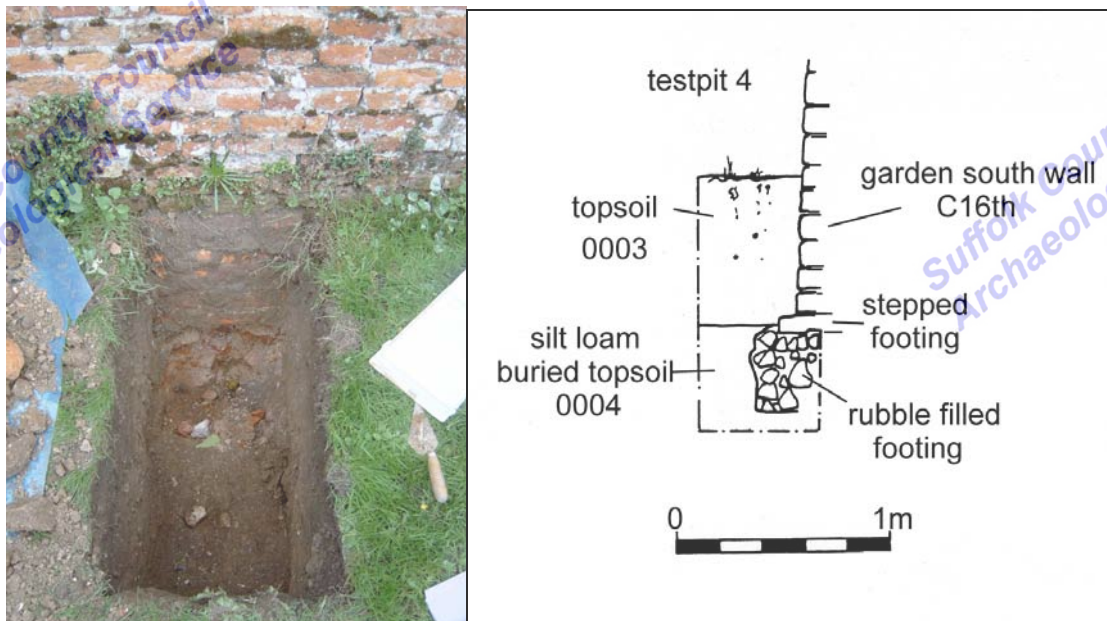


Figure 4. Test pit 4

### *Test pit 5*

Test pit 5 was excavated mid-way along the garden south wall to examine the foundation. Soil profile was similar to test pit 4 but the depth of imported soil was 0.4m less than previously seen.

### *Test pit 6*

Test pit 6 was excavated against the garden west wall; the soil profile was a continuation of that seen in TP4 and TP5 with a further reduction in the depth of the imported soil to 0.3m.

### *Test pit 7*

Test pit 7 was excavated south of the conservatory on the south side of the *Garden House* at the junction of two original brick-built culverts; a main culvert running north-south from the house to the ponds and a secondary one branching off to and running north-east (Fig. 5). The top of the culverts, an arch of bonded brickwork, was exposed at 0.5m below the ground surface. The cut of the trench for the culverts could not be seen and the soil profile of the trench was a homogenous dark silt loam.

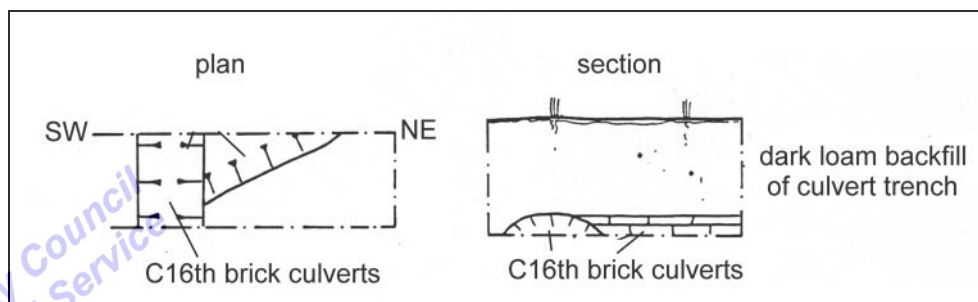


Figure 5. Test pit 7 plan and section

### *Test pit 8*

Test pit 8 was excavated south of the garden wall on the line of an existing drain. The drain was uncovered 0.4m below the ground surface beneath a layer of dark silt loam the drain was set within a narrow trench that cut a buried soil layer of re-worked paler brown silt which was flecked with chalk and brick fragments. The surface of this layer is thought to represent a former ground surface (Fig. 6).

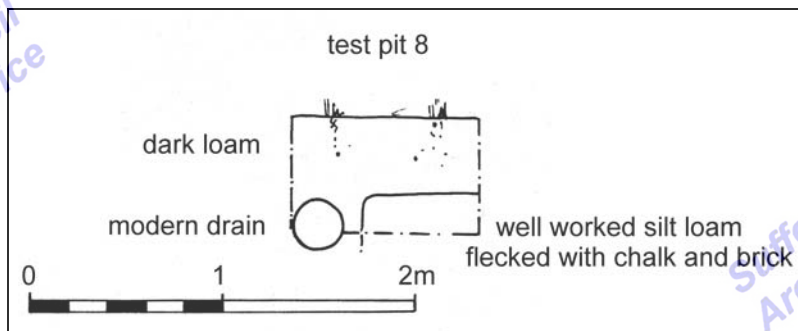


Figure 6. Test pit 8

## Monitoring of the Drainage Runs

### *The new pump station to the south west corner of the Hall*

The excavations for the installation of a new underground pumping station and trenches for the pipes to and from the pump station were monitored during December 2005 and January 2006. All of the sections showed a deep soil profile of stratified deposits and indicate that the ground levels in this area have been raised.

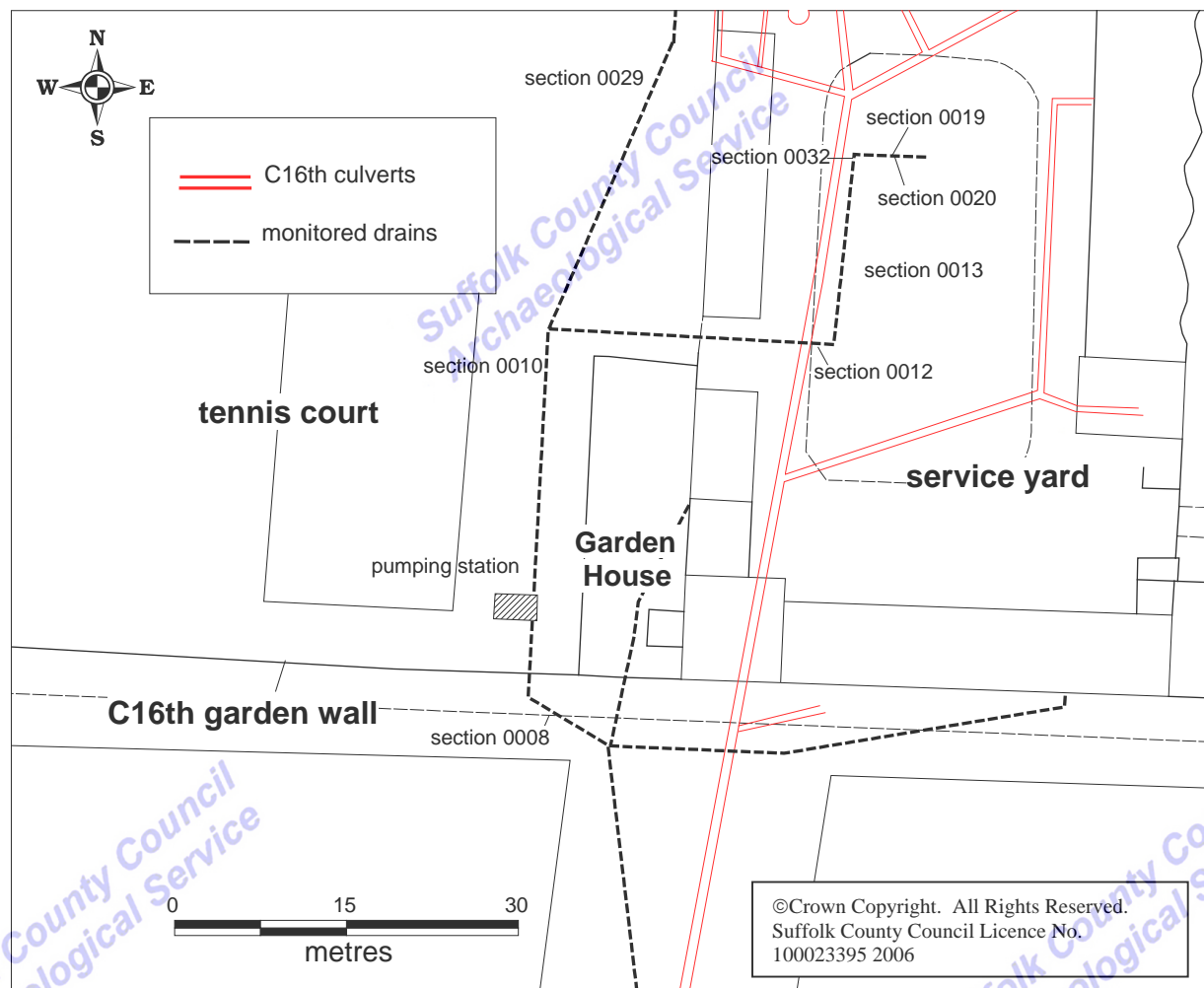


Figure 7. Plan of drain runs south of the hall, showing the position of the drawn sections

A 2m<sup>2</sup> hole was excavated for the pumping station, the soil profile was recorded and shown in Figure 8. All of the faces of the excavated hole were the same; the subsoil was 1.5m below the surface and the section showed that the ground level was built up by the deposition of a sequence of soil layers laid in level horizons. This depth of stratigraphy was repeated in the other



excavation in this area indicating that this was the result of the build-up over the whole area rather than the infill of a pit or deep hole.

At the base of the section was a layer of brown silt loam. This was interpreted as the level of the original topsoil which had been worked and contained a small amount of charcoal. It was sealed by a second silty loam layer similar to the basal layer but which contained more charcoal. This second layer was a continuation of 0004 in the test holes against the garden wall and the layer into which the footing for the garden wall was cut.

At mid depth there was a layer of brick and lime mortar rubble; this material was similar to the fabric of the 16th century garden walls. It was observed continuing along the pipe trench northward and extended to the footing of a demolished section of wall. The footing, 0011, ran E-W across the trench and aligned with the wall that extends from the service yard and supports the *Garden House's* greenhouse. Evidence suggests that the footing was a continuation of this wall and repair work, to tidy up the end of the standing remains, indicates that the wall has been truncated. The manner of footing in the trench was the same as the main wall around the south and west sides of the garden and consisted of a trench packed with brick rubble. The soil profile to the north of the wall differed from that to the south. The point of change was defined by a vertical line rising from the north edge of the footing. This separated garden soils that were built up against the north side of the wall from the rubble layers associated with its demolition and show that the wall fell to the south when it was pulled down. The base of the rubble layer indicates the ground level at the time of the demolition and suggests that the ground levels inside (north of) the wall were once higher than those outside it.

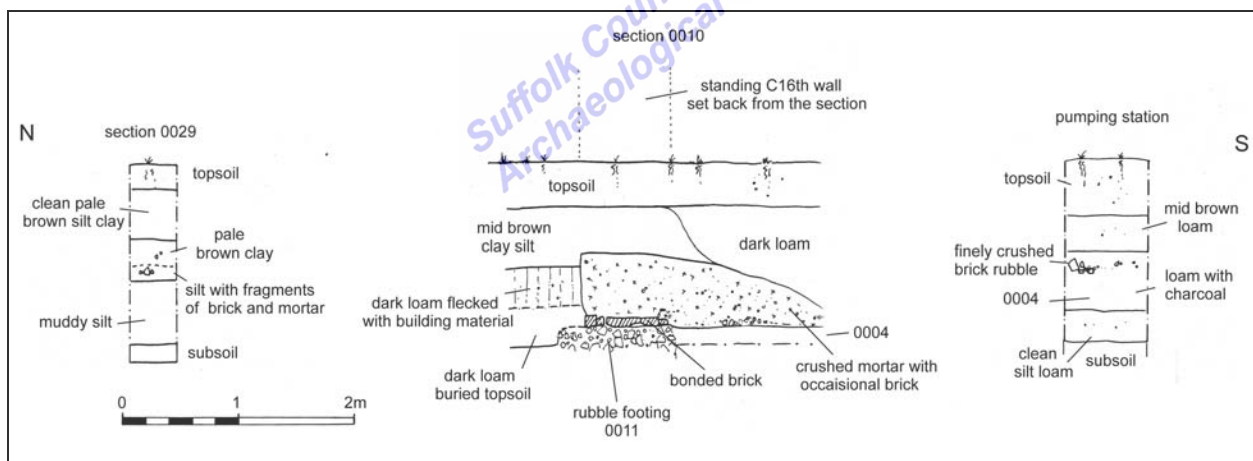


Figure 8. Sections between the new pump station and the southwest corner of the Hall

## Discussion

The sections show that the ground level within this area has been built up and this appears to have occurred in two major phases. The build-up of silty soils recorded at the base of the section predates the construction of the garden walls in the 16th century. These were extensive layers and were recorded universally in all sections without regard to the positions of the walls and are cut by the wall footings. Because of the fine silt nature of these soils and proximity to the fishponds it is tempting to suggest that the lower layers are part of the medieval landscaping and associated with the excavation or cleaning out of the ponds.

The wall was built off this level and the section of the testholes show that change from rubble footing to the bonded brickwork of the above ground wall coincide with the top of the silts. The layer of rubble associated with the demolition of part of the wall also occurs at this level and shows that the layout of the walled garden has been remodelled or the area enclosed extended. The length of wall to which the green house is attached, is 16th century but is only a fragment

and has been truncated at each end. The footing crossing the trench demonstrates that it once extended further west and at the east end the wall is not keyed into the later service yard building. The ground levels to the north of this wall were raised and there was a step in levels between either side of it. When the wall was demolished the ground surface was further raised by the importing of clean topsoil and levelled, this sealed the layer of rubble associated with the demolition of the wall from the service yard and buried the bottom courses of the main garden wall. Finds from the earlier ground level close to the base of the wall shows that this occurred sometime after the start of the 18th century. There were two distinct soil layers in the upper part of the section suggesting that the raising of the soil levels within the wall garden has occurred twice. The soil levels outside the garden to the south has also been raised with additional soil to maintain an even level.

### *From the pump station to the ponds*

The stub of a buried wall was recorded 1.5m to the south of the garden wall and running parallel to it. The bricks were post dated the main garden wall but were bonded with a lime mortar suggesting that the may predate the latter part of the 19th century and the use of Portland cement. The wall was insubstantial and probably part of a lean-to structure built against the wall.

Away from the wall a cut feature, possibly a pit, 0007 was recorded (Section 0008, Fig. 9) sealed beneath a layer of brick rubble, 0009, and topsoil. The pit cut a buried soil layer and probably the upcast silts associated with the excavation and maintenance of the ponds, but this relationship was unclear. The pit was deeper than the excavated trench, it was filled with brown silt and contained a large assemblage of bone from a single large animal, probably a horse. The overlying layers at the top of the section were part of extensive spreads of dumped soil and were recorded in all of the excavated holes.

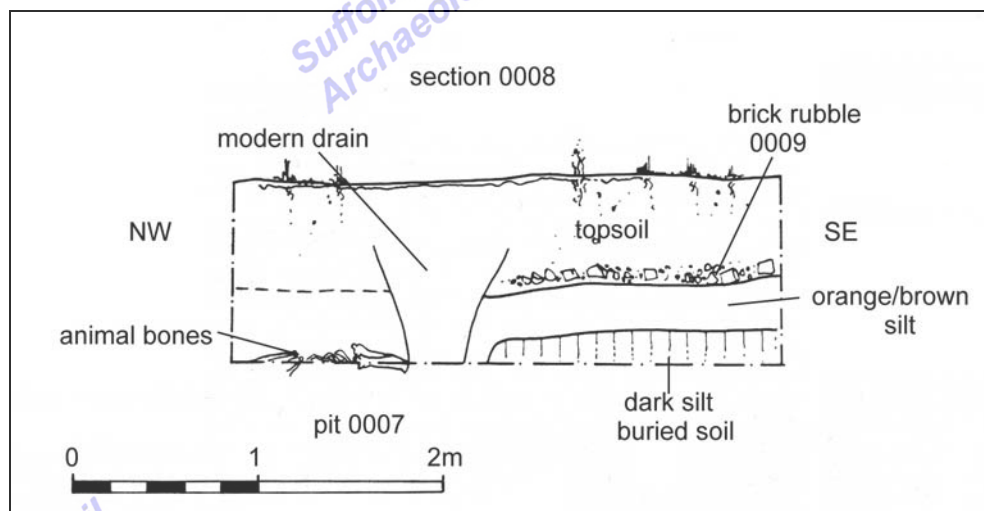


Figure 9. Section 0008

### *Across the service yards*

The trench across the service yard ran from the new north-south drain running off the pumping station to an existing junction/manhole at the north end of the service yard lawn (Fig.7). The ground level in the yard had been raised by importing soil and the trench sides demonstrate that a deep and complex stratigraphy exists. This shows evidence of the occupation from a period predating the 16th century hall to WWII. The whole length of the trench was drawn in five sections numbered 0012, 0013, 0014, 0019 and 0020.

### Section 0012 (Fig.11)

The drain trench crossed the line of the 16th century culvert that ran north-south along the western side of the yard. Section 0012 showed the brick culvert within its trench, cutting through occupation debris and demolition rubble layers that pre-date the culvert's construction. These layers consisted of mortar and brick rubble, fine dark silts and clean gravels laid in level horizons and which continued in section 0013. At the base of the trench was a spread of green/yellow clay up to 100mm thick, an edge to the clay was recorded in the north-south trench but its extent was otherwise unknown. The clay was over gravel which was initially interpreted as the natural subsoil but the evidence from the north-south trench suggests that this was sealing earlier underlying cut features.

### Section 0013 (Fig.10)

The clay initially recorded in section 0013 was at the base of a broad shallow hollow the north-south extent of which and the sloping north edge could be seen in section 0013. The hollow was infilled with a muddy silt and a band of gravel that lay directly over the clay and these were also recorded in section 0012. Across the top of the hollow was a thin spread of finely crushed brick mortar rubble, this was probably once a more extensive layer but was now preserved only where it had slumped into the hollow. The fabric of the rubble was consistent with the hall and probably dated to c.16th century, but as it was cut by the culvert trench in section 0012 this suggests that the rubble may be associated with an early phase, or the construction of the hall, rather than the demolition layer. The level of the rubble is just above the top of the culvert and indicates that this was the ground level in the 16th century and that the culverts were only just beneath the surface becoming more deeply buried later with the subsequent importation of soil.

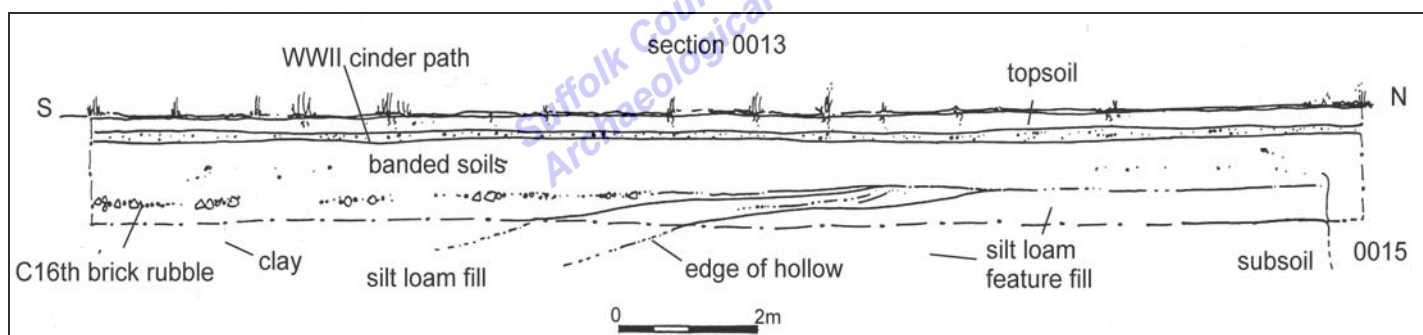


Figure 10. Section 0013

Almost the whole of the trench was excavated through the fill of an undefined cut feature or features. The depth of these extended beyond the depth of the excavation so that the floor and sides of the trench were within a homogenous brown silt loam fill for almost all of its length. Only at the north end of the trench was an edge to a cut and a small area of undisturbed subsoil recorded. The features are earlier than the hollow and culverts and probably predate the post medieval hall but there was an absence of finds with which to date them more closely.

### Section 0033 (Fig. 11)

Section 0033 was recorded at the north end of trench 0013 at the junction with 0019 (Fig.7). Here was a large rubble filled feature, 0015, which was 1.1m wide and deeper than the cut of the trench. It was a linear feature with vertical sides and was recorded in both faces of the trench and ran east-west in Section 0020 where it terminated in a sloping end. It was infilled with a loose rubble of broken bricks with white lime mortar and was interpreted as a possible footing of demolished structure. The bricks were similar to those used in the construction of the hall and therefore thought to be contemporary with it. 0015 was cut from a level 0.6m below the present ground surface and was sealed beneath layers of imported soil.

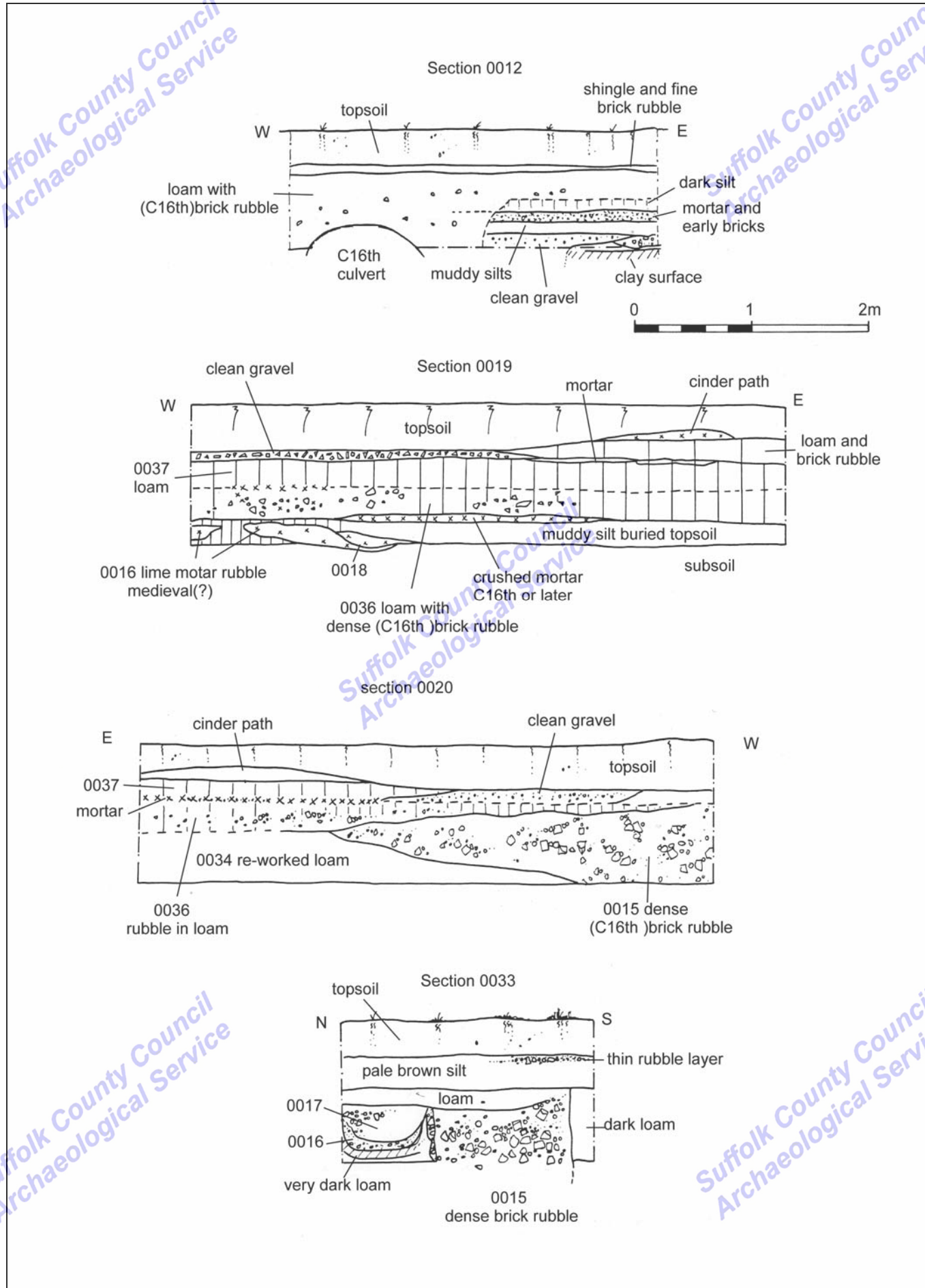


Figure 11. Sections across the service yard



At the very end of the trench and at the base of the section was a possible structural feature cut by 0015, numbered 0016. Section 0033 presented a cross-section of the feature and it continued east in the section 0019. 0016 consisted of a layer of set mortar and flint, the U-shape of the deposit suggested that the mortar had been wet laid in a cut trench. The mortar was coarse grained with large grit and chalk inclusions and darker than the finer white mortars used in the construction of the 16th century building. Finds associated with 0016 consisted of building materials and included a fragment of an architectural stone carved in a soft clunch, a glazed roof tile dating to 13th-15th century, a medieval brick and daub. These materials did not match those used in the construction of the 16th century hall and thought to be from an earlier building. 0016 continued in section 0019 as a broken layer where it was numbered 0018 and terminated in a shallow bowl shape.

### Section 0019 and 0020 (Fig. 11)

Sections 0019 and 0020 were opposing faces of the same trench. Features 0015 and 0016 recorded in Section 0033 continued into these sections. Feature 0015 was cut into a re-worked soil layer, 0034, at the base of the section, which probably represented the topsoil when 0015 was excavated in the 16th century. Layer 0036 contained a large quantity of brick and thin layers of mortar defined the top and bottom of the layer. 0036 was thought to be a spread of material associated with the demolition and infilling of 0015. The rubble filled layers were buried beneath a deposit of clean loam, 0037, which sealed the rubble layers; an imported topsoil presumably in advance of laying a lawn. Above this were layers of cinders, part of a series of paths leading to temporary buildings that were sited in the yard during WWII (Mick the Gardener's pers comm) and evidence of this was also recorded in the adjacent section 0014.

### *In front of the west elevation of the hall*

A trench was excavated in the path at a distance of 3m from the hall west elevation (Fig.12). The path and garden to the west is lower than the hall, which is situated on a low platform, and there are steps up to the hall from the path.

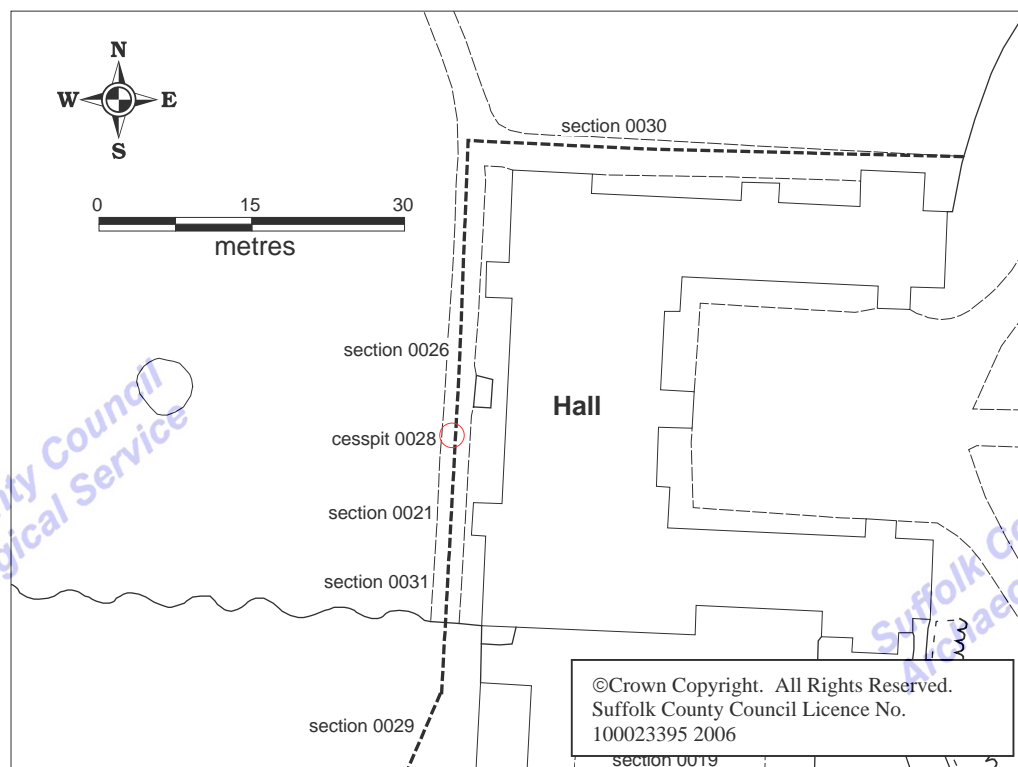


Figure 12. Plan showing drain runs alongside the west and north elevations of the hall

The trench sides showed a series of layers of disturbed or redeposited material laid in level horizons (Fig.13 Section 0031). None of the original soil profile was intact and the top of the subsoil was 0.8m below the surface of the path. An extensive demolition layer, 0038, containing a large density of pegtile spread over the southern half of the trench. This overlay a re-worked topsoil, 0039, at the base of the section and was sealed beneath a layer of imported loam 0040. At the northern end the trench ran close to the line of existing services and was in large part through already disturbed ground.

#### **Structure 0022 (Fig. 13)**

A deposit of dense brick rubble was recorded within a 3.25m wide flat-bottomed and vertical sided shallow cut, 0022, this aligned precisely with, and was the same width as, the turret that projects from the corner of the southern wing of the hall (see cover picture). The shape of the cut implies that was a structural feature or part of a footing but the sample is too small for a fuller interpretation. The bricks, which were 2½" thick and dated to the 16th century and consistent with the fabric of the house, suggest that this is part of a demolished or redundant part of the hall. The rubble also contained fragments of architectural detailing in a clunch-type stone and a grindstone. 0022 is cut from high in the section and truncated by the current path.

#### **Structure 0023, 0024 and 0025 (Fig. 13)**

0022 was cut into a thick deposit of clay, 0024, which sealed two underlying earlier structural features. The clay was 0.75m thick and contained within a cut, it had been reworked or was a redeposited layer and included fragments of charcoal and mortar debris throughout its depth. The clay at its northern end butted against a block of clean clay that defined the extent of 0024 and was separated from a spread of mortared flint rubble and chalk, 0025. At the southern end the clay 0024 overlay a structured pad of bonded flint, 0023. This (0023) appeared only in the eastern section face and projected only a little way into the trench. The top had been truncated but was complete in plan suggesting that this was either a pad of masonry or the termination of an east-west wall stub. There is no artefactual material to date this early masonry but the absence of later building fabric within its construction and the character of the lime mortar used is consistent with medieval work.

#### **Well 0028**

The trench broke into a domed brick lined shaft, 0028, that had been infilled with early post medieval brick rubble. Amongst this was a shaped brick, part of a decorative detail, probably from an opening and the mortar adhered to the bricks had ash added to strengthen and speed up the hardening of the lime mix. The shaft was lined with a single skin of bricks and had an internal diameter of 1.6m. The bricks were early post medieval, possibly 17th century and later than the hall. Each brick was a segmented curve in plan and they were laid dry, without mortar, in a simple stretcher bond. The internal surface of the shaft was evenly coated with a dark brown tarry deposit, it was unclear whether this was an accumulated by product of the use or an applied treatment to the lining (a sample was retained). The infilling was to such a depth as to conceal any evidence of pipes going in or out of the shaft and there was no indication that it contained any form of machinery. The shaft is described as a cesspit on the blue print for the new drainage works and the porous of the unbonded brick would support this interpretation.

Although the structure has all the appearance of a well it is unlikely to be one as water for the hall is supplied from a spring which rises on the green and is piped to the hall. The spring-head is outside the boundaries of the grounds but is enclosed within a little brick building that mirrors the hall's architectural style.

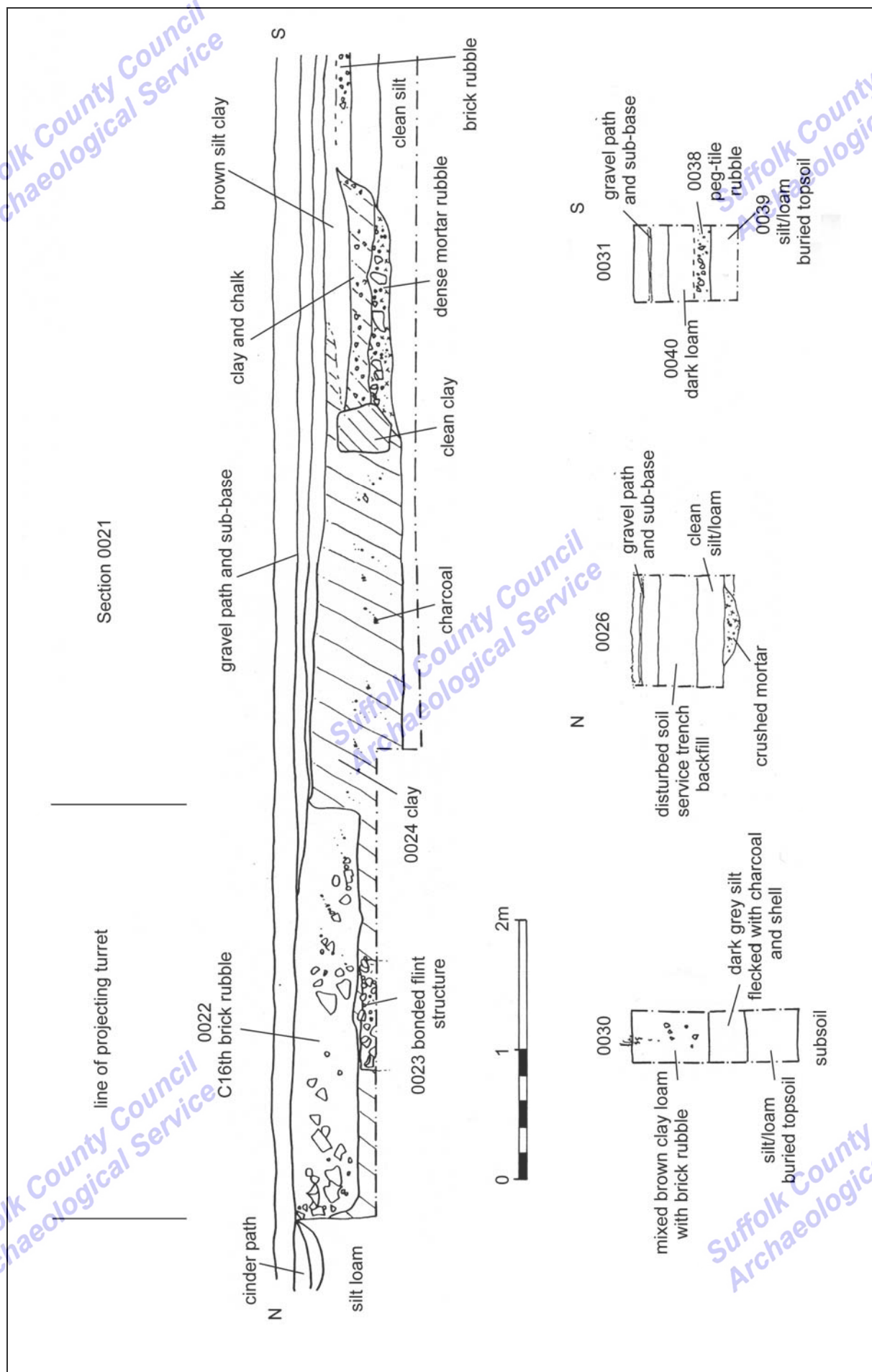


Figure 12. Trenches front of the west elevation of the hall

### Pit 0026 and layer 0040 (Fig 13)

A small, shallow mortar filled pit, 0026, was recorded cutting the subsoil north of the well and aligned with the north projecting turret, was a horizon of crushed plaster, 0040. The pit and layer were undated but were at the same stratigraphic level at the base of the section. It seems likely that these features were related to a structure predating the hall and were separated from it, sealed beneath a redeposited layer of clean silt loam.

### *In front of the north elevation of the hall*

The garden on the north side of the hall is higher than the garden to the west and is part of the raised platform on which the present hall is built. The excavation presented a section of the soil profile illustrating the level of the possible original ground surface and how the ground has been built up (Fig 13).

## Finds evidence by Richenda Goffin

### Introduction

Finds were collected from five contexts, as shown in the table below.

OP	Pottery No.	Wt/g	CBM No.	Wt/g	Fired clay No.	Wt/g	Stone No.	Wt/g	Miscellaneous	Spotdate
0004	2	86	2	533					P-med bottle glass 5 frags @ 579g, 1 frag slag @ 101g	17th-18th C
0017			1	74	1	203	1	203		13th-15th C
0022			1	1865					1 frag lavastone @ 2030g	Post-med
0027			3	4490			1	5640	2 frags fe @ 257g	Post-med
0028			1	2160						Post-med
Total	2	86	8	9122	1	203	2	5843		

### Pottery

Two fragments of pottery were collected from the monitoring weighing 0.086kg. A sherd of Glazed red earthenware and a fragment of English stoneware were recovered from layer 0004, a buried topsoil and the ground level before the landscaping of the grounds. The ceramics date to the 17th - 18th century.

### Ceramic building material

Eight fragments of ceramic building material were collected, including several samples of bricks. The majority of the assemblage dates to the post-medieval period, but a small quantity of earlier material was identified. A piece of glazed roof tile made in an estuarine fabric dating to the 13th-15th century was found in mortar layer 0017 together with a fragment of fired clay and a small piece of fine-grained moulded stone. The tile is likely to pre-date the construction of the hall, and may be related to the original medieval buildings.

A substantial brick fragment found in the dense rubble feature 0022 was covered in a soft off-white lime mortar which was also present over a broken edge, indicating that it was re-used or redeposited. The dark red brick fabric contains frequent clinkery inclusions and sparse flint and has occasional voids. Although only the thickness and width of the brick can be measured, its dimensions and overall appearance suggests that it is early post-medieval, (no later than the 18th century), (Sue Anderson, pers. comm).



Another incomplete brick fragment recovered from the cesspit fill 0027 has also been re-used. It is made from an orange sandy post-medieval fabric, but is partially covered with a skim of cream mortar on one of its faces, as well as the remains of a grey mortar deposit containing frequent small coal-like or ashy inclusions. The same context contained a fragment of moulded brick with cream mortar on the broken-off edge, as well as one the two main faces. The brick has one concave and two straight facets. In addition a complete curved brick was collected from the lining of the shaft of the cesspit, is made from a dense orange fabric and still has the partial remains of a dark brown coating on the inner face. The thickness of the brick (62-65mm) suggests that it is also early post-medieval in date, possibly as late as the 17th century.

### **Fired clay**

A single fragment of fired clay was found in the mortar layer 0017. It is pale orange-pink in colour and contains frequent chalk inclusions up to 7mm in length. The clay shows frequent linear impressions of vegetal material such as grass or straw. There are no indications of any structural impressions, (for example, small wooden rods or laths), although it may be from the remains of wattle infilling. It was probably associated with the medieval structures predating the construction of the Hall in the middle of the sixteenth century.

### **Worked stone**

Two fragments were recovered from the monitoring. A small piece of fine-grained clunch-type stone was collected from layer 0017. It is polygonal and shows fine vertical and diagonal tooling marks on the surface. It may be part of an internal moulding, as such a soft stone had the advantage of being easily worked but could degrade rapidly upon exposure to the elements.

A second larger and heavier dressed stone was recovered from rubble infill 0027. It is made from limestone and is approximately rectangular with two broken-off sides. The stone is partially covered with the remains of a greyish mortar, which contains frequent coal-like glassy inclusions, which were also observed on the brick from rubble deposit 0027. The stone has a perforation for the attachment of a cramp or metal tie.

### **Metalwork**

Two post-medieval iron bar-like objects were found in the rubble infill 0027. These measure 237mm and 167mm in length respectively. The smaller one tapers slightly at one end. Their precise function is unknown, but they may be ties used for jointing structural elements such as stone.

### **Miscellaneous**

#### **Post-medieval glass**

Five fragments of dark green bottle glass were collected from layer 0004. The bases of two different wine bottles were present, together with a single wine bottle top with stringed rim. One of the bases has a shallow basal kick and is lighter in colour. The second base is much more pronounced and is likely to be later in date. The almost cylindrical neck of the wine bottle top suggests that it dates to the first half of the eighteenth century (Noel Hume, 63).

#### **Lavastone**

A large fragment of Rhenish lavastone was present in rubble infill 0022. The edges of the stone are broken and worn. The grinding surface is reasonably intact, whilst the opposite side is roughly dressed and partially tooled. It is large enough to be a millstone fragment, and has a diameter in the region of 0.50m. Lavastone imported from the Mayen-Niedermendig area of the

Eiffel region of Germany was used for domestic hand querns and millstones from the Roman period through to post-medieval times in Britain.

#### Slag

A single fragment of probable fuel ash slag was found in layer 0004. It is light and vesicular and contains some calcareous material.

### Discussion of the finds

A small number of artefacts pre-dating the construction of Melford Hall were redeposited into the possible structural feature 0016. These represent the scant remnants of structural remains which may have come from buildings forming part of the medieval moated complex belonging to the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds. The fine-grained moulded stone fragment and the glazed roof tile suggest buildings of some status.

The remainder of the artefacts recovered from the monitoring are post-medieval in date, and span the period of the 16th through to the 18th century. The decorative moulded brick deposited into the cesspit 0028 is likely to date to the period belonging to the construction of the Hall in the second half of the sixteenth century.

### Summary and Conclusion

The results of the monitoring demonstrate that archaeological deposits associated with the earlier medieval buildings and occupation survive on the site. Evidence of structural features, probable pits and occupation layers were recorded and indicate that the extent of this activity seems to coincide fairly precisely within the footprint of the present hall and service yard.

It is interesting to note that the structural features in the trench on the west side of the hall although part of different phases all align with each other and the turret on the hall. This coincidence of a prominent feature on the hall with evidence of an earlier structure suggests a continuity in the buildings and that the hall has been laid out in regard to the same factors that determined the plan of the previous building. This supports the theory that the current hall was built over the site of the previous medieval manor house.

The Hall is on a raised platform and the medieval occupation level within the yard is c 0.5m below the present surface and this has contributed to the preservation of the medieval layers. There were no medieval occupation deposits outside these areas, but the deep soil profile recorded in the surrounding gardens shows evidence of the landscaping that has occurred to shape the current grounds and indicate that the pre-16th century ground levels are still intact.

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### References

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