

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

## Feoffee Farm, The Street, Ashbocking ABK 017

**OASIS ID: suffolkc1 – 22855**

A REPORT ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, 2007  
(Planning app. no. 1123/06)

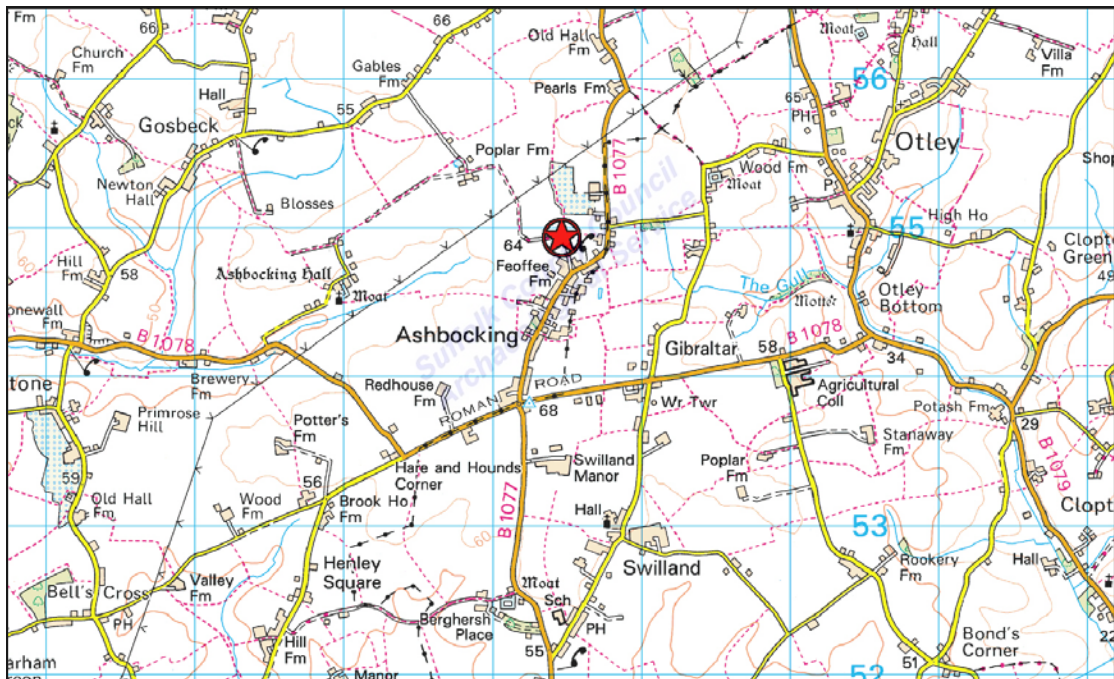


Figure 1: Location of site

Jezz Meredith  
Field Team

Suffolk C.C. Archaeological Service

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Lucy Robinson, County Director of Environment and Transport  
Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX

## Summary

Trail trenching to the north of a moated enclosure containing a 16<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse showed that no archaeological remains could be detected in this area. The site under investigation has been badly affected by modern truncation and intrusions. A trench positioned across a northern branch of the moat (as shown on early editions of the Ordnance Survey map) was inconclusive. A deep moat was not revealed but c.700mm of 20<sup>th</sup> century backfill could be filling a less substantial pond or drain.

A documentary survey conducted by Anthony Breen also calls into question the existence of this being a moated site. The tithe map of 1838 does not indicate a moat but shows a series of ponds to the west of the farmhouse. Records indicate that this was always a modest farmstead. If this had been on the site of an earlier ecclesiastical centre it would have been exempt from the payment of tithes and if it had been a significant manorial site it would not have been subject to 'quit rents'.

## SMR information

Planning application no. 1123/06  
Date of fieldwork: 10<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
Grid Reference: TM 1847 5472  
Funding body: Newport Developments

## Introduction

The Planning Authority (Mid Suffolk District Council) has been advised by the Conservation Team of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service that an archaeological evaluation be conducted as a condition of planning consent for a development of four new houses. An evaluation was therefore proposed to determine the archaeological potential of the area and trial trenching was required (Appendix 1). A documentary survey was also requested (Appendix 2).

The site is located towards the north end of Ashbocking on the B1077 (figure 1). This is an area of flat ground at an elevation of c.65m OD. The site is positioned on heavy clay drift geology and is within an area of many ponds and water-filled ditches. The site is adjacent to an L-shaped pond, forming two sides of a possible moat.

The area under consideration is to the north of a grade II listed farmhouse, Feoffee Farm, of 16<sup>th</sup> century construction with 17<sup>th</sup> century and later additions. The farm has the remains of a moat to the west and south. A northern branch of the moat is shown on the early editions of the Ordnance Survey map (figure 2). A pronounced dip was observed in the front garden of the farmhouse, running north to south (see figure 3). This could possibly represent an eastern branch of the moat.

Documentary research by Anthony Breen (Appendix 2) has indicated however that the moat was absent from the tithe map of 1838. On this map a scatter of ponds are shown to the west, suggesting that these were formalised into a moat sometime in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Historical research has also shown that there appears

to be little status associated with the site and thus was probably never originally moated or held a manor house or similar prestigious residence.

In view of the proximity of the site to the moated enclosure and the presence of the farm of late medieval / early post-medieval date, trial trenching was proposed with the following objectives:

- To see if the north wing of the moat, shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey maps, extended into the development area.
- To characterise and record the moat ditch, if encountered, by excavating a cross-section through the fills.
- To see if any settlement or other evidence of medieval or post-medieval use extended into the development area, paying particular attention to those areas within the footprint of the four proposed dwellings.

The evaluation was undertaken during the morning of the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2007.

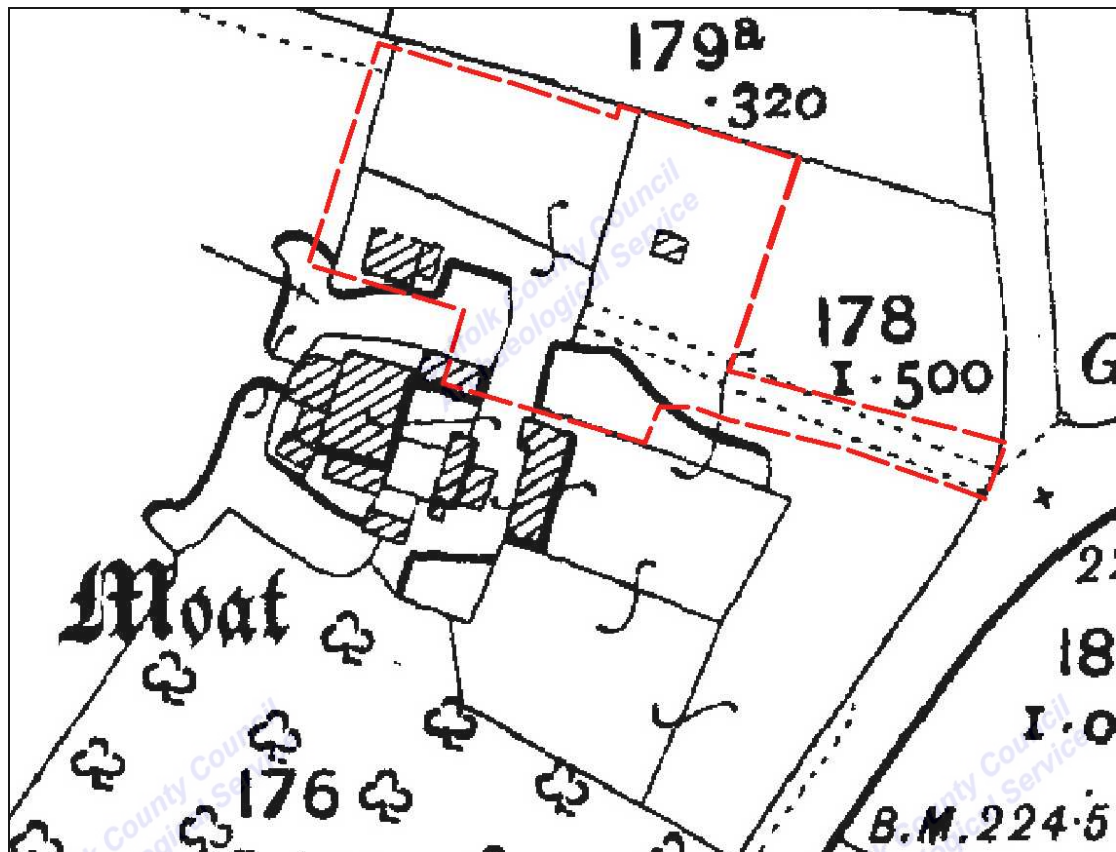


Figure 2: Outline of development area (dashed red line) superimposed over the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map of 1904. This map indicates branches of the moat on the south, west and north sides of the farmhouse complex.

## Method

Trenching was conducted using a 360° mechanical digger equipped with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket. Three trenches were positioned within the footprints of the proposed houses. The trenches had to avoid a number of obstacles including piles of broken and crushed concrete and a large, water-filled brick-lined tank, previously used as a slurry pit.

All machining was observed by an archaeologist standing adjacent to or within the trench. Overlying dumped material, topsoil and subsoil were removed by the digger to reveal natural deposits of chalky clay. Potential features of archaeological interest would be observable at this level.

The upcast soil was checked visually for any archaeological finds. All potential archaeological features observed in the base of the trench were cleaned and investigated. No archaeological features were identified in Trenches 1 and 2, which kept dry. A possible peat-filled feature in Trench 3 could not be sampled as the trench filled with water.

Records were made of the position, length and depth of trenches. Observations were made of the depth of topsoil and other deposits encountered.

The site archive will be deposited with the Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service in Ipswich. The site code ABK 017 will be used to identify all elements of the archive associated with this project.



**Figure 3: Trench plan showing the total site area (dashed red line), the brick-lined slurry pits (light blue), the existing section of the moat (dark blue) and the proposed new buildings (yellow).**



## Results

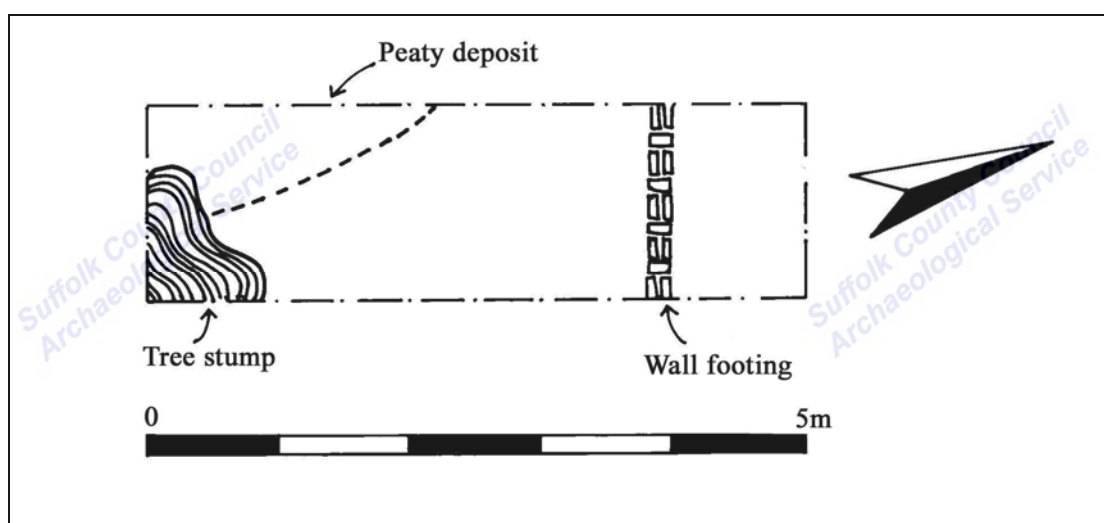
The locations of trenches are shown in figure 3. The only possible archaeological feature encountered was a peat-filled feature in Trench 3 which rapidly filled with water before it could be properly investigated (see figure 4 below). The lengths and depths of trenches are recorded in table 1.

Trench no.	Length	Depth (max)	Topsoil	Subsoil
1	11m	500mm	350mm	----
2	13.5m	600mm	300mm	200mm
3	5m	800mm	----	----

**Table 1: Trench lengths and depths, with thickness of modern surfaces, topsoil and subsoil.**

In Trenches 1 and 2 the topsoil was a dark brown clay loam with the top 100mm consisting of churned mud containing hardcore and demolition material. Trench 1 had no subsoil and had a sharp contact between topsoil and the natural clay suggesting truncation in this area. Under the topsoil, a mid brown silty clay subsoil did survive to 200mm thickness in Trench 2. A number of possible archaeological features were observed in the base of the trench but these all proved to be the product of root action. No archaeological features or finds were observed in either Trench 1 or 2.

Trench 3 was positioned to detect the northern branch of the moat seen in the early Ordnance Survey maps (figure 2). A short section of trench was opened before it was covered with water – breaking through a footing at the north end of the trench released water and mud that had accumulated behind the wall which flooded the trench. The trench revealed c.700mm of 20<sup>th</sup> century backfill containing much hardcore. Below this was a chalky clay base which revealed the remains of a tree-stump and a peat-filled feature running towards the western edge of the trench. These features were quickly planned (figure 4) but were flooded before the peat-filled feature could be sampled by excavation.



**Figure 4: Plan of Trench 3**

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The evaluation indicates that a certain amount of soil truncation has occurred in the vicinity of Trench 1 and a large area of disturbance (the slurry pits) would have destroyed any possible archaeology along the northern edge. Better conditions for preservation exist in the area of Trench 2, but no archaeological features or finds were found here either.

Trench 3 showed no obvious signs of a deep moat, although the 700mm of modern backfill and hardcore could have been used to fill a shallow pond. The 20<sup>th</sup> century building material found in this deposit would be consistent with a feature known to still be open until at least the 1920s (3<sup>rd</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map).

The peat-filled feature, running north-south across Trench 3, would be more consistent with a buried moat. Its orientation however does not correspond to that seen in earlier plans and possibly represents a terminal end. The western branch of the moat is bordered by several large gnarled willows and it is likely that the buried tree trunk was a remnant of one similar to these.

Given the possibility that the site of Feoffee Farm was never originally moated (as Breen suggests in Appendix 2) it could be that the Ordnance Survey map is showing a series of shallow ponds. These could have been dug to extend the deeper 'moat' to the west and offer drainage and protection from stock to the farmhouse.

As the ground was very saturated, conditions were wet and Trench 3 quickly became flooded it is recommended that further monitoring be undertaken in the vicinity of Trench 3 and that open footing trenches in this area (Plot 4) be observed.

## Disclaimer

**Any opinions expressed in this report about the need for further archaeological work are those of the Field Projects Division alone. The need for further work will be determined by the Local Planning Authority and its archaeological advisors when a planning application is registered. Suffolk County Council's archaeological contracting service cannot accept responsibility for inconvenience caused to clients should the Planning Authority take a different view to that expressed in the report.**

# APPENDIX 1

## SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE - CONSERVATION TEAM

### *Brief and Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation*

#### FEOFFEE FARM, ASHBOCKING

*The commissioning body should be aware that it may have Health & Safety and other responsibilities, see paragraphs 1.7 & 1.8.*

#### 1. Background

*This is the brief for the first part of a programme of archaeological work. There is likely to be a requirement for additional work, this will be the subject of another brief.*

- 1.1 Outline consent [0808/05] with an archaeological planning condition has been granted for development. A detailed application (1123/06) is under consideration.
- 1.2 The planning consent contains a condition requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work before development begins (Planning Policy Guidance 16, paragraph 30 condition). **An archaeological evaluation of the application area is required as the first part of such a programme of archaeological work; decisions on the need for, and scope of, any further work will be based upon the results of the evaluation and will be the subject of additional briefs..**
- 1.3 The development area lies immediately north of a known medieval moated enclosure recorded in the County Sites and Monuments Record (ABK 004); the size of this enclosure and the land parcel adjacent suggests strongly that this is part of a moat complex which included the development area (which is included in the archaeologically designated area).  
  
There is high potential for medieval settlement evidence at this location. Earlier development on the site had the potential to truncate archaeological deposits, but this has not been demonstrated. The site has since been cleared.
- 1.4 All arrangements for the field evaluation of the site, the timing of the work, access to the site, the definition of the precise area of landholding and area for proposed development are to be defined and negotiated with the commissioning body.
- 1.5 Detailed standards, information and advice to supplement this brief are to be found in *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 14, 2003.

- 1.6 In accordance with the standards and guidance produced by the Institute of Field Archaeologists this brief should not be considered sufficient to enable the total execution of the project. A Project Design or Written Scheme of Investigation (PD/WSI) based upon this brief and the accompanying outline specification of minimum requirements, is an essential requirement. This must be submitted by the developers, or their agent, to the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (Shire Hall, Bury St Edmunds IP33 2AR; telephone/fax: 01284 352443) for approval. The work must not commence until this office has approved both the archaeological contractor as suitable to undertake the work, and the PD/WSI as satisfactory. The PD/WSI will *provide the basis for measurable standards* and will be used to establish whether the requirements of the planning condition will be adequately met.
- 1.7 Before any archaeological site work can commence it is the responsibility of the developer to provide the archaeological contractor with either the contaminated land report for the site or a written statement that there is no contamination. The developer should be aware that investigative sampling to test for contamination is likely to have an impact on any archaeological deposit which exists; proposals for sampling should be discussed with this office before execution.
- 1.8 The responsibility for identifying any restraints on field-work (e.g. Scheduled Monument status, Listed Building status, public utilities or other services, tree preservation orders, SSSIs, wildlife sites &c.) rests with the commissioning body and its archaeological contractor. The existence and content of the archaeological brief does not over-ride such restraints or imply that the target area is freely available.

## 2. **Brief for the Archaeological Evaluation**

- 2.1 Establish whether any archaeological deposit exists in the area, with particular regard to any which are of sufficient importance to merit preservation *in situ* [at the discretion of the developer].
- 2.2 Identify the date, approximate form and purpose of any archaeological deposit within the application area, together with its likely extent, localised depth and quality of preservation.
- 2.3 Evaluate the likely impact of past land uses and natural soil processes. Define the potential for existing damage to archaeological deposits. Define the potential for colluvial/alluvial deposits, their impact and potential to mask any archaeological deposit. Define the potential for artificial soil deposits and their impact on any archaeological deposit.
- 2.4 Establish the potential for waterlogged organic deposits in the proposal area. Define the location and level of such deposits and their vulnerability to damage by development where this is defined.



- 2.5 Provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological conservation strategy, dealing with preservation, the recording of archaeological deposits, working practices, timetables and orders of cost.
- 2.6 This project will be carried through in a manner broadly consistent with English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (MAP2), all stages will follow a process of assessment and justification before proceeding to the next phase of the project. Field evaluation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential. Any further excavation required as mitigation is to be followed by the preparation of a full archive, and an assessment of potential, analysis and final report preparation may follow. Each stage will be the subject of a further brief and updated project design, this document covers only the evaluation stage.
- 2.7 The developer or his archaeologist will give the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council (address as above) five working days notice of the commencement of ground works on the site, in order that the work of the archaeological contractor may be monitored.
- 2.8 If the approved evaluation design is not carried through in its entirety (particularly in the instance of trenching being incomplete) the evaluation report may be rejected. Alternatively the presence of an archaeological deposit may be presumed, and untested areas included on this basis when defining the final mitigation strategy.
- 2.9 An outline specification, which defines certain minimum criteria, is set out below.

### 3. **Specification A: Desk-Based Assessment**

- 3.1 Consult the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), both the computerised record and any backup files.
- 3.2 Examine all the readily available cartographic sources (e.g. those available in the County Record Office). Record any evidence for historic or archaeological sites (e.g. buildings, settlements, field names) and history of previous land uses. Where permitted by the Record Office make either digital photographs, photocopies or traced copies of the document for inclusion in the report.
- 3.3 Assess the potential for documentary research that would contribute to the archaeological investigation of the site.
- 3.4 Provide a transcription of archaeological features from all available air photographs held by Suffolk County Council Environment and Transport Department and its SMR, at a scale of 1:2500.

#### 4 **Specification B: Field Evaluation**

- 4.1 Trial trenches are to be excavated to cover a minimum 5% by area of the development area and shall be positioned to sample all parts of the site. Linear trenches are thought to be the most appropriate sampling method. Trenches are to be a minimum of 1.8m wide unless special circumstances can be demonstrated. If excavation is mechanised a toothless 'ditching bucket' must be used. The trench design must be approved by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service before field work begins.
- 4.2 The topsoil may be mechanically removed using an appropriate machine fitted with toothless bucket and other equipment. All machine excavation is to be under the direct control and supervision of an archaeologist. The topsoil should be examined for archaeological material.
- 4.3 The top of the first archaeological deposit may be cleared by machine, but must then be cleaned off by hand. There is a presumption that excavation of all archaeological deposits will be done by hand unless it can be shown there will not be a loss of evidence by using a machine. The decision as to the proper method of further excavation will be made by the senior project archaeologist with regard to the nature of the deposit.
- 4.4 In all evaluation excavation there is a presumption of the need to cause the minimum disturbance to the site consistent with adequate evaluation; that significant archaeological features, e.g. solid or bonded structural remains, building slots or post-holes, should be preserved intact even if fills are sampled.
- 4.5 There must be sufficient excavation to give clear evidence for the period, depth and nature of any archaeological deposit. The depth and nature of colluvial or other masking deposits must be established across the site.
- 4.6 The contractor shall provide details of the sampling strategies for retrieving artefacts, biological remains (for palaeoenvironmental and palaeoeconomic investigations), and samples of sediments and/or soils (for micromorphological and other pedological/sedimentological analyses. Advice on the appropriateness of the proposed strategies will be sought from J Heathcote, English Heritage Regional Adviser for Archaeological Science (East of England). A guide to sampling archaeological deposits (Murphy and Wiltshire 1994) is available.
- 4.7 Any natural subsoil surface revealed should be hand cleaned and examined for archaeological deposits and artefacts. Sample excavation of any archaeological features revealed may be necessary in order to gauge their date and character.
- 4.8 Metal detector searches must take place at all stages of the excavation by an experienced metal detector user.

- 4.9 All finds will be collected and processed (unless variations in this principle are agreed with the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service during the course of the evaluation).
- 4.10 Human remains must be left *in situ* except in those cases where damage or desecration are to be expected, or in the event that analysis of the remains is shown to be a requirement of satisfactory evaluation of the site. However, the excavator should be aware of, and comply with, the provisions of Section 25 of the Burial Act 1857.
- “Guidance for best practice for treatment of human remains excavated from Christian burial grounds in England” English Heritage and the Church of England 2005 provides advice and defines a level of practice which should be followed whatever the likely belief of the buried individuals.
- 4.11 Plans of any archaeological features on the site are to be drawn at 1:20 or 1:50, depending on the complexity of the data to be recorded. Sections should be drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 again depending on the complexity to be recorded. Any variations from this must be agreed with the Conservation Team.
- 4.12 A photographic record of the work is to be made, consisting of both monochrome photographs and colour transparencies.
- 4.13 Topsoil, subsoil and archaeological deposit to be kept separate during excavation to allow sequential backfilling of excavations.

## 5. **General Management**

- 5.1 A timetable for all stages of the project must be agreed before the first stage of work commences, including monitoring by the Conservation Team of SCC Archaeological Service.
- 5.2 The composition of the project staff must be detailed and agreed (this is to include any subcontractors).
- 5.3 A general Health and Safety Policy must be provided, with detailed risk assessment and management strategy for this particular site.
- 5.4 No initial survey to detect public utility or other services has taken place. The responsibility for this rests with the archaeological contractor.
- 5.5 The Institute of Field Archaeologists’ *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Desk-based Assessments* and for *Field Evaluations* should be used for additional guidance in the execution of the project and in drawing up the report.

## 6. Report Requirements

- 6.1 An archive of all records and finds must be prepared consistent with the principles of English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects*, 1991 (particularly Appendix 3.1 and Appendix 4.1).
- 6.2 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 6.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 6.4 An opinion as to the necessity for further evaluation and its scope may be given. No further site work should be embarked upon until the primary fieldwork results are assessed and the need for further work is established.
- 6.5 Reports on specific areas of specialist study must include sufficient detail to permit assessment of potential for analysis, including tabulation of data by context, and must include non-technical summaries.
- 6.6 The Report must include a discussion and an assessment of the archaeological evidence. Its conclusions must include a clear statement of the archaeological potential of the site, and the significance of that potential in the context of the Regional Research Framework (*East Anglian Archaeology*, Occasional Papers 3 & 8, 1997 and 2000).
- 6.7 Finds must be appropriately conserved and stored in accordance with *UK Institute of Conservators Guidelines*. The finds, as an indissoluble part of the site archive, should be deposited with the County SMR if the landowner can be persuaded to agree to this. If this is not possible for all or any part of the finds archive, then provision must be made for additional recording (e.g. photography, illustration, analysis) as appropriate.
- 6.8 The site archive is to be deposited with the County SMR within three months of the completion of fieldwork. It will then become publicly accessible.
- 6.9 Where positive conclusions are drawn from a project (whether it be evaluation or excavation) a summary report, in the established format, suitable for inclusion in the annual 'Archaeology in Suffolk' section of the *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology*, must be prepared. It should be included in the project report, or submitted to the Conservation Team, by the end of the calendar year in which the evaluation work takes place, whichever is the sooner.

- 6.10 County SMR sheets must be completed, as per the county SMR manual, for all sites where archaeological finds and/or features are located.
- 6.11 At the start of work (immediately before fieldwork commences) an OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/> must be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators forms.
- 6.12 All parts of the OASIS online form must be completed for submission to the SMR. This should include an uploaded .pdf version of the entire report (a paper copy should also be included with the archive).

Specification by: Robert Carr

Suffolk County Council  
Archaeological Service Conservation Team  
Environment and Transport Department  
Shire Hall  
Bury St Edmunds  
Suffolk IP33 2AR

Tel: 01284 352441

Date: 31 October 2006

Reference: /Feoffee Farm

**This brief and specification remains valid for 12 months from the above date. If work is not carried out in full within that time this document will lapse; the authority should be notified and a revised brief and specification may be issued.**

**If the work defined by this brief forms a part of a programme of archaeological work required by a Planning Condition, the results must be considered by the Conservation Team of the Archaeological Service of Suffolk County Council, who have the responsibility for advising the appropriate Planning Authority.**



# APPENDIX 2

## Feoffee Farm, Ashbocking

### Documentary Report Anthony M Breen January 2007

#### Introduction

The Suffolk Archaeological Unit has commissioned this report to examine documentary sources relevant to the archaeological assessment of part of the site of Feoffee Farm. The Unit have supplied copies of the first three editions of 1:2500 the Ordnance Survey maps of the site. On the first and second editions the farm is marked in gothic script as “Church Lands” and on the third edition published in 1926 as “Feoffee”. The name Feoffee Farm has been retained in modern maps. The farm buildings are situated within a moat with the house to the east flanked by a large rectangular pond to the north. The site is in Ashbocking and close to the parish boundary with the neighbouring parish of Otley. The unit have also supplied details of the house listed as a grade 2 building described as mid 16<sup>th</sup> century with mid 17<sup>th</sup> century additions “bequeathed by John Austin (will dated 1432) for the upkeep of the parish church and the residue to the poor of the parish”. The research for this report has been carried out at the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich with the main focus on the surviving records of the Feoffment Trust held in the Ashbocking Parish Collection.

The surviving records of the Feoffment Trust date from 1653 but include a copy of the will of John Austin or Aysten and memoranda dating from 1439 onwards. In the earliest records the farm’s name was “Bursis” and in a later printed source “Bursse”. The records offer details of the tenure of the lands consisting of 29 acres before 1838 and then following the more accurate tithe survey of that year 35 acres 3 roods and 1 perch. These were held in fee of two separate manors and the accounts detail payments to the respective lords of these manors. These references link the feoffment records to manorial documents and other sources. Through combining the references it is possible to indicate something of the status of the site. Further the feoffment accounts detail repairs to the buildings in particular they offer a specific date for the 17<sup>th</sup> additions to the house.

There are additional extant sources, now in private hands, that could be used to further examine the history of this site before the establishment of the Feoffment under the terms of John Austen’s will.

#### The Feoffment

It is important to clearly establish the nature of both a feoffment and to describe the uses of its funds. In feudal law a lord granted an estate described as fee or fief to his tenant on condition of homage and service. The term fee was then applied to land so held and a feoffment from the Old French *feoffer* to put in legal possession is a grant of land held as a fee. Those who held the land are described as feoffees. Unlike trustees who held land for specified uses described in the original grant in a feoffment

the uses are not specific. Under the terms of the grant the feoffees were able to assign their interest to another party and so to constantly renew the feoffment. On the death of a tenant the lands held of a manor were surrendered back to the lord and granted to the heir of the estate on the payment of an entry fine. As a feoffment could be continually renewed the entry fine would have been paid only once when the feoffment was first established. The lands were still subject to feudal service to the lord of the manor however in the late medieval period manorial tenants were able to covert these services into a fixed rent known as a quit rent. These rents would be paid annually to the lord of the manor and the payments recorded in manorial rentals.

### **The Charity Commissioners**

The operation of this feoffment is now under the supervision of the Charity Commissioners established through act of parliament in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Charity Commissioners report on the Town Estate first published in the Parliamentary Sessional Papers of 1828 describes the Feoffee Farms in the following terms:

“A farm called the Bursse, comprising a house, outbuildings, and about 26 acres of land, in different parcels, appears to have been originally settled or given for pious and public uses, by *John Austin*, in 1432, and has been vested from time to time in feoffees, upon trust, to apply the rents to the purposes mentioned in an ancient schedule, by which it is directed that the feoffees should let the tenement and lands to the best advantage, and for terms not exceeding three years, unless with the consent of the most part of the inhabitants: that the rents and profits should be kept in the church-hutch, of which the feoffees should have one key, and the churchwardens another, and be applied towards payment of fifteenths, the reparations of the church, and other things belonging to the church, by the direction of parishioners, and the residue, if any be bestowed and given to the poor of the town, by the direction of the feoffees: that accounts should be rendered of the rents and profits, and the application of them, yearly in All Saint’s-day, in the presence of so many of the parish as should attend: and that the feoffees when reduced to two or three, should, at the request of the inhabitants, or the greater number of them, convey the estate to 10 other honest men to the same uses.

The last trust-deed was made in 1789, by which John Medows Theobald esq, and others since deceased, were nominated trustees, and Mr Theobald has for many years solely acted as trustee in the management of the estate, and the receipt and application of the rents. The deed of 1789 does not appear to have been executed by all the parties, but the legal estate in the farm appears to be vested either solely in Mr Theobald, or partly in him and partly in Mileson Edgar esq the survivor of a former set of feoffees. It has become expedient that new trustees should be appointed; we have therefore recommended that proper persons should be chosen at a vestry-meeting of the parishioners, and that a conveyance should be made to them by Mr Theobald and Mr Edgar, which recommendation we are given to expect will be complied with.

The farm is occupied by Mrs Dawson, widow, as yearly tenant, at £25 a year. From 1803 to 1813 the rent was £24; from that year to 1823 £30 per annum, and was then reduced to £25. It seems, however, that the property might be let for £32 a year, and the rent ought therefore be raised.

Mr Theobald has applied the income in repairs of the farm-buildings, the payment of land-tax, and quit-rents, the repairs of the church, and in donations of money to poor belonging to the parish recommended by the churchwardens. He has generally retained a balance in hand, and the balance in his account ending in 1826 was £58 3s 10 ½ d.

There seems no grounds for imputing misapplication; but we think accounts should be rendered to the parishioners, and we recommended that the trustees to be appointed should submit their accounts to inspection yearly at a vestry-meeting' and take the advice of the parishioners as to the application of the income for such of the purposes mentioned in the schedule as have not become obsolete. It has been suggested that a part of the revenues would be advantageously, for the poor inhabitants, applied towards the support of a Sunday-school; and such application, if the parishioners consent, would, it appears to us, be commendable”.

The reference in this lengthy quote to the parish-hutch is to the parish chest in which the parochial records were formerly kept. The early records have now been transferred to the care of the Suffolk Record Office in Ipswich.

### **Feoffment Accounts**

The earliest surviving accounts for the feoffment date from 1653 (ref. FB 34/L3/1). As a result of an enquiry into the administration of the funds details from original documents no longer extant were copied into the accounts. At an extraordinary meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March 1655 Mr John Aldhouse produced “*these writings following:- viz one worne paper containing an imperfect forme of a will made by John Austin of Ipswich ye Doner of ye Townelands, item four Ancient Feoffments in parchment and three leases in parchment – In all seven writings which are now appointed to be lockt up in ye Towne chest*”. John Aldhouse had received the documents following the death of his father Robert Aldhouse and in the following year the text of the will was transcribed into the account book

*“Thys ys the last wyll of John Aytsen made the tevyssday next after Saynt Edmonde the kynge the Confessor in the yere of owre Lord god m cccc xxxii Item furst the sayde John Aysten wyllleth that John Herfreys of Yppyswyche & John Rolff of Bockynge Aysshe feoffees in the tenement of the sayd John Aysten in Bockinge Asshe aforesaid called Bursis geven & delivered into the hands & posseshon of the feoffes of the assent of the towne of the Bockinge Aysshe and to there assynes or deputis agenst the subsedye of the said Towne & for all the inhabitants that now ys or hereafter shalbe in the towne of Bockinge Aysshe aforsayd for the xv of ower suffren lord the kynge or anye parte of the xv whan soever as so often as ys yt shalbe graunted to be payd be Acte of parlament except Edmond Bockynge and John Woodhowse & they that shalbe Lord or Lady of the mannor of Bockynge Asshe & Gryffeld Hall or farmars of the sayd mannares the whiche shalbe for there tyme they to be exonerated of the xv or any parte of the same that owght to be payd or hereafter shalbe payd and whan the sayd xv or any parsell thereof ys not graunted to be payd to our Suffren Lord the Kyng then the sayd John Aytsen will that the tent aforesaid do fynde the light before our Blyssyd Lady Marye the virgen in the Church of Bockyng Asshe”.*

The references in roman numerals to the 15th is the tax known as the lay subsidy granted in parliament to the use of the sovereign and raised in rural areas on a 15<sup>th</sup> of the value of moveable goods of those holding land above a certain value. This tax was last raised in 1623. The practice of paying for a large candle or “light” to burn continuously in front an image of Our Lady or separate side altar dedicated to her had ceased at the time of the reformation of the Church of England in the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The entry continues by noting that the “*will aforesaid had no name subscribed no seal nor witness according to our custom of making wills, yet it appears to be the true will for that we have the feoffment*”. There is in the account a list of the dates of the various deeds renewing the feoffment beginning in 1439 through to 1652. On reading the documents in that year the exemption clause concerning the holders of the manors of Bocking Hall and “*Greffeild Hall*” was found, though “*from time out of mind there had been no exception made*”. The feoffees “*heard clamour and complaints that profit was not used according to the intent of the giver for the benefit of the poor*” but concluded that “*By the said Will it most plainly appears that the gift was not given to the poor nor poorer sort but to ease some subsidy men (of which rank there could be very few)*”. Instead the feoffees had applied and applied the income from the farm’s rent to pay other taxes such as assessments, the poll tax of 1660 and the later hearth tax or “*Chimney Money*”. The money was also sufficient to pay local rates established through other acts of parliament such as the poor rates. They did take note of the exceptions and from that time the respective lords of the two manors situated within the parish paid their own taxes.

In the accounts for the 1<sup>st</sup> November 1653 the farm was rented out to Dorothy Blomfield at an annual rent of £14 per annum. Dorothy Blomfield married a John Stebbing and it was “*agreed that the farme be continued in ye occupation of John Stebbing till Michaelmas which shalbe Anno Dom 1658 at the former rent of fourteene pounds per annum besides ye Lord’s rent and charges of ye ordinary yearly meeting*”.

The reference to the “Lord’s rent” is the first mention of the quit rents payable to the manor. At various times it became the practice of the feoffees to meet in the tenant’s house and after deducting certain allowances and payments made by the tenant from the annual rent the remaining balance was paid over to the feoffees. In the accounts for 1676 there is a payment of £4 19s 8d “*to Mr Lambe for 11 years and an half Lords rent, due at Michaelmas last at 8s 8d per annum*”. In 1682 there are payments of “*3 years quit rent to Lord Huntingtower due at Michaelmas 1679 4s 3d, paid to my Lord Huntingtower 1 years quit rent due Michaelmas 1680 1s 5d, paid to my Lord Huntingtower 1 years quit rent for Michaelmas 1681 1s 5d*”. In 1697 there is a payment of two years “Lord’s rent” at 8s 8d per annum and in the accounts for there is the payment of £1 6s “*for three years Lord’s rent due to the manor of Barham-Hall at Michaelmas last past*”. In 1715 there is a payment of “*five years quit rent to the Rt Hon the Earle of Dysart*” and in the account for 1744 a payment of £1 5s 6d was “*paid to the Earl of Dysart for eighteen years Lords rent due to the manor of Kits de Campo*”. It appears that the quit rents were not paid regularly and were often in arrears. This was the result of losses of income from the feoffment’s property. In the later accounts the rents were paid regularly in 1786 the accounts record the payment of 10s 1d in quit rents to “*Barham & Kits Le Camps*” and in 1788 the amount is



divided in the account between 8s 8d to the Barham Hall and 1s 5d to “*Kits le Camps*”.

## **Buildings Repairs**

In the early accounts the repairs to the buildings seem to have been modest expressed in payments of 10 shillings for repairs to the barn in 1654, £1 was allowed for “*straw and thatching the barn*” in 1661, in 1664 the feoffees agreed that “*the cowshed be forthwith thatched and the side of the dairy laid with bricke*” and in 1677 there is a payment of £1 “*for dawbing the barne wall 48 ft at 5d per foot*”.

In 1659 the tenancy of the farm passed to John Stebbing and in 1675 to his widow Ann Stebbing. With the annual rents set at £18 there was a surplus of £6 18s in 1672 though this had fallen to £1 0s 6d in 1673 due to £6 8s being paid “*for setting up the neathowse & repayring the hayhowse and stables*”. There were other payments for thatching these buildings. In 1675 the farm passed to Thomas Turner at the same annual rent producing a surplus of £4 9s 7d recorded in March 1678. There is then a gap in the accounts. By the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1682 the rent was three years in arrears due to the “*the 2 years last having proved very hard*” and £9 7s 8d were allowed to him “*for repairs as the bills appear on the file*”. In the following year £21 11s 1d were allowed to him “*for repairs and for badnesse of tymes*”. Despite further allowances the accounts record that Thomas Turner had “*died before Michaelmas 1687 ... unable to satisfy his debts*”. The feoffees “*in consideration of his property have consented that his son Thomas Turner who administrated his father’s goods leaving the hay upon the premises to the use of the feoffees and white brick standing in the yard*”. These entries suggest major repairs in the period and the presence of “white brick standing in the yard” suggests that they had not been completed before the death of Thomas Turner in 1687.

The son Thomas Turner had been allowed to take away the household goods and then absconded with out paying his father’s debts in full. Before a new tenant could be found a further £35 8s 4d were spent before 11<sup>th</sup> June 1688 on repairs including £9 for carpenters work, £3 3s for brick and carriage and £5 5s 4d for the bricklayers.

A new tenant William Rolfe had been chosen as successor to Thomas Turner with the annual rent at £16. He died before 1694 when his widow’s name appears in the accounts. There are further allowance for repairs including £5 2d in November 1694 “*The Barn being almost fallen down and the outhouses being very much decayed*”. A further £34 6s 11d was spent mainly on the barn with bills “*to the carpenter for stuffe and repairing the barn and making the hogstay new £5 10s 0d*” and for “*For casting of the Great Pond £3 12s 0d*”. After that date the sums spent on repairs are minor and included “*For brick and lime and mason’s work to mend the coper and oven 8s 10d*” in 1697. The feoffment was in debt though this did not prevent the feoffees allowing themselves £1 0s 4d for their annual dinner held at the farm in 1697 consisting of “*beef, a goose and bread and beare*”. In other years the sum for the annual dinner was higher and the fare included wine and tobacco. The feoffment also paid for a new silver flagon and patten for the church in 1706. Though rents were paid regularly the costs of various repairs and other charges meant that their were arrears of £60 17s 8d in the account for 1712. At the death of the Widow Rolfe recorded in the accounts for



November 1726 the allowance made to her for the various repairs during her tenancy meant that the accounts were still £18 in arrears.

Following the farm passed to Bridget Rolfe who married John Howard of Hemingstone. A new lease for 3 years was made out to him in June 1728 with an annual rent of £16. Unfortunately in the following year "*The said Thomas & Bridget Mann went away & the goods were seized and sold all for £9*". The feoffment was in debt and only £5 13s of a carpenter's bill of £16 9s 1d had been paid. Further repairs costing £6 5s to "*the east side of the head house*" were made in 1734. After this date regular receipts of rent from the new tenant Mr Gardeman meant that the accounts eventually produced a surplus.

The later records show that the feoffment's surplus income continued to grow and regular payments were made for church furnishings and to the poorer inhabitants of the parish. A surplus the sum of 15 guineas (£15 15s) is recorded in November 1792. The later accounts are more regular though perhaps less interesting (ref. FB 34/L3/2). A list of the feoffment documents dated 1860 pasted inside the front cover mentions a map of the estate though this does not appear to have survived. The farm and its buildings were insured with the Suffolk Fire Office in 1831. In 1860 the accounts record that a new shed in the yard was to be "*built of brick and tile 32 ft by 12ft with oak posts, horse bin & cow bin*". As the feoffment had sufficient funds a number of new buildings may have been added before the publication of the Ordnance Survey map in 1883. The surplus funds ensured that regular payments on behalf of the poor continued to be made.

## **Manorial Records**

According to Copinger's "Manors of Suffolk" the parish of Ashbocking contained two manors. In 1432 "Ashbocking Manor, Ash Hall or Bocking Hall Manor" was in the hands of Edmund de Bocking the family whose name had been added to the earlier village name of Ash. The other manor "Hervey's Harneys alias Aishe alias Ketts de Campo" was in the hands of John Woodhouse. These are the names mentioned in John Aysten's will. In Copinger's account of the later lords of the manor of Ashbocking there is no mention of Lord Huntingtower or the Earl of Dysart. The account of Harney's does mention that this manor had passed to Lionel Talmache in 1535. In his description of the manor of Helmingham he does state that a later Sir Lionel Tallemache became Lord Huntingtower in 1698 and later the 3<sup>rd</sup> earl of Dysart.

Barham manor had been held by the bishops of Ely until the reformation and then passed to the Southwell family until 1653 when it passed to John Lambe who is mentioned in the feoffment accounts. In a rental for the "Manor of Barham cum Gosbeck & Ash" dated 1690 there is a reference to the "Feoffees of Ash Fee 8s 8d" (ref. HA230/A1/6).

In the Iveagh Collection there are draft manorial court books for the manor of Ash Bocking for the years 1540–1571 and a late 16<sup>th</sup> century rental. This rental has a reference in Latin in 1601 to the "Inhabitants of the town of Asshe" who held as copy and free hold tenure "one messuage & iiii acres of land at Okesettinggrene late John Ayston per annum xvii d for a suit (at court) ii d William Pursse". The date of 1601 is entered on the page at the start of this document.

The early feoffment deeds are described in the accounts. These beginning with “*On the sixteenth of October in the seventeenth year of the reign of King Henry the Sixth 1439 John Herfrey and John Rolf made a feoffment unto William Rydewe, Edward Reynburgh, Thomas Bardy, John Goly, John Kell, John Bacon, William Archer & John Rolf*”. Some of these surnames appear in an earlier document in the Iveagh Collection. In the Iveagh collection catalogue there is a grant for life dated 16<sup>th</sup> January 1411 from Agnes formerly the wife of John Godfrey of Bokking Assh to John Ayston of Gippeswic’ (Ipswich) of “all lands and tenement which she holds as dower in Bokkyng Assh; to hold of chief lords of fees for accustomed services” (ref. HD 1538/115/1/9). The grant included a right of “reversion to the right heirs of John Godfrey”. The witnesses to this deed were “Richard Waryn, John Reynesburgh, William Downing, Robert Bacoun, John Gowty and others”. There were no fixed spellings of surnames in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. Reynesburgh in 1411 would be the same surname as Reynburgh, Goly in 1411 would be the same as Gowty in 1439 and Bacoun would later be Bacon. A dower was a widow’s right to a share, normally a third of her husband’s real estate. The property is not described in full in this deed though the lands possibly include the site of Feoffee Farm.

In a catalogue of an out of custody collection there is a list of extant records for the manor of “Kits de Campo alias Harvey alias Ash” (ref. B 149 section 31/1-15). The records include court rolls for the years 1384, 1387 and more importantly for 1433 to 1444. There are also rentals for 1395-96 and later rentals for 1591, 1598 and 1622. There are some earlier documents relating to Ashbocking in the British Library’s Manuscript Collection amongst the additional charter series. They include another court roll for the years 1399-1400. The references to the British Library documents are given in Copinger’s “Suffolk Manuscripts”. Full access to these sources would offer scope for further research with a strong possibility of identifying earlier occupiers of the house and adjoining lands.

## **Tithe Map**

The 1838 tithe map is the earliest large-scale map of the site available at the record office in Ipswich (ref. FDA 5/A1/1b). The farm appears to be very different to that shown on the later Ordnance Survey maps. Instead of the large rectangular pond to the north of the house a range of out buildings is shown in this position. The moat is absent instead there is a single small square building marked within the area of the later moat with an elongated pond to the northeast. To the southwest there are another two circular ponds. Whether or not the moat had filled with vegetation and there was further need “*For casting of the Great Pond*” as in the feoffment accounts of 1694 cannot be determined.

The fields are listed in the apportionment and the field names are unremarkable, 118 New Inclosure, 120 Neathouse Piece, 122 Four Acres, 128 Barn Meadow etc.

On the evidence of this map there appears to be very little status to the site.

## **Later Records**

The income for the farm is mentioned in the parish glebe terriers for the first time in 1827 and the references largely unchanged except for a more accurate measurement of the acreage until 1912 (ref. FF569/A27). Before 1924 the farm had been sold and the monies invested in “Queensland Stock”. On 8<sup>th</sup> January in that year a new trust was established under the seal of the Board of Charity Commissioners following an application from the trustees made on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1923. The funds were divided between an ecclesiastical charity and a charity for the poor (ref. FB 34/L3/3).

## **Conclusion**

The references on the Ordnance Survey maps to “Church Lands” and a “Moat” suggest that the site had had some significance. The research for this report suggests that it was a modest farmstead held as other tenanted manorial lands though entrusted to feoffees. An early ecclesiastical site would have remained free from the payment of tithes and a significant manorial site would not have been subject to the payment of quit rents. There appears to have been significant repairs to the buildings in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century between 1682 and 1694 possibly as a result of decay or earlier neglect. The reference to casting the great pond may suggest a moat though this is contradicted on the later tithe map of 1838.

There are possibilities for further research if full access to the out of custody documents can be obtained. The catalogue entries of this material suggest that there should be further references to the farm in the period immediately before and after John Aysten’s will of 1432.

## **References: Suffolk Record Office Ipswich**

Archdeaconry of Suffolk

FF569/A27 Glebe Terriers Ashbocking 1827 – 1912

Iveagh Collection

HD 1538/115/1/9 Grant for life Agnes, formerly wife of John Godfrey of Bokking Assh to John Ayston of Gippewic’ (Ipswich) 16<sup>th</sup> January 1411.

HD 1538/115/2 Volume containing original documents including Rental Manor of Ash n. d late 16 century

Manorial Records

HA 230/A1/6 Rental for the Manor of Barham cum Gosbeck & Ash 1690

Maps

FDA5/A1/1a & b Tithe Apportionment and Map 1838 – 1839

## Parish Collection

FB 34/L3/1 Church/Town land feoffees accounts, memoranda of Trustees, 1654 – 1792

FB 34/L3/2 Feoffees Account Book 1803 – 1871 (inside cover – list of documents in the care of feoffees in 1860).

FB 34/L3/3 Printed Agreement of New Feoffment Trust January 1924

## Out of Custody Catalogue

B 149, Section 31/1-15 Manorial Records; Ashbocking Manor of Kits de Campo alias Harvey alias Ash

## Printed Works

Charity Commissioners “The Charities in the County of Suffolk selected from the Voluminous Reports of the Commissioners for Inquiring concerning Charities in England and Wales which began the 58<sup>th</sup> Year of the Reign of Geo III and ended the 7<sup>th</sup> of Will IV”. (1819-1837) London 1839

William A Copinger “Suffolk Records and Manuscripts” Volume 1, London 1904

William A Copinger “Manors of Suffolk: Bosmere and Claydon” Volume 2, Manchester 1908



**Tithe map of 1838**





Detail of tithe map of 1838

3

LANDOWNERS.	OCCUPIERS.	Numbers referring to the Plan.	Name and Description of Lands and Premises.	State of Cultivation.	Quantities in Statute Measure.		Amount of Rent-Charge apportioned upon the several Lands, & to whom payable. PAYABLE TO VICAR.
					A. R. P.	£. s. d.	
Aabocking Charity, the Feoffees of	Freeman, Edward	117	Meadow	Pas.	1	0	24
		118	New Inclosure	Ara.	0	1	27
		119	House, Yards, &c.		1	1	36
		120	Neathouse Piece	Ara.	5	1	10
		120 <sup>a</sup>	Road		0	1	24
		122	Four Acres	Ara.	5	0	1
		125	Three Acres	Ara.	3	0	38
		126	Middle Meadow	Pas.	4	0	24
		127	Second Field	Ara.	3	1	37
		128	Barn Meadow	Pas.	3	0	34
		136	Farther Field	Ara.	4	2	12
		137	Brundish	Ara.	3	1	11
							85
Bedwell	Gooding, George	19	{ Cottage and Garden }		0	0	31
	Taylor, Robert		{ Cottage and Garden }				
	Whiting, James	20	{ Cottage and Garden }		0	1	8
	Rose, John		{ Cottage and Garden }				
Bailey, William, Esq.	Harper, Searce	115	Part of Mill Field	Ara.	1	3	17
Baldwin	Unoccupied	50	Cottage and Garden		0	0	24
Batrum, Frederick	Fuller, Garnies	223	Pightle	Ara.	0	3	2
Capper, The Revd. George	Mc'Clure, David	241	New Inclosure	Pas.	1	2	35
					0	3	25

Tithe apportionment of 1838