

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING REPORT

SCCAS REPORT No. 2010/020

**Gulling Green Barn, Brockley
BKY 022**

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Digital report submitted to Archaeological Data Service:
<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>

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Summary

An archaeological monitoring was carried out in September 2009 during ground-works at Gulling Green Barn, Brockley, a moated site containing a set of 18th century barns being converted to a residential property. Despite truncation of the moat platform a monitored soil strip of a small area identified evidence of both medieval and post-medieval activity. A small medieval finds assemblage of 12th-14th century pottery was collected indicating early occupation on the site while several wall foundations were observed and are thought to relate to a building extant in the 19th century. There is a high probability therefore that the remainder of the moat platform contains archaeological deposits relating to the past occupation and development of the site.

Additional monitoring of the removal of the floor within one of the 18th century barns identified two small areas of brickwork flooring, possibly surviving from a pre-existing structure.

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1. Introduction

A programme of archaeological monitoring of groundworks, during the conversion and development of farm buildings into a residential property at Gulling Green Barn, Brockley, was carried out in September 2009. The work was required to fulfil a condition which had been placed upon planning application SE/08/0873 following the advice of the SCC Archaeological Service Conservation Team. The work was funded by the developer, Mr G Baber.

The planning condition had been placed as the site had high potential for important archaeological deposits that might be disturbed or destroyed by the development and so archaeological monitoring was required to record any affected deposits.

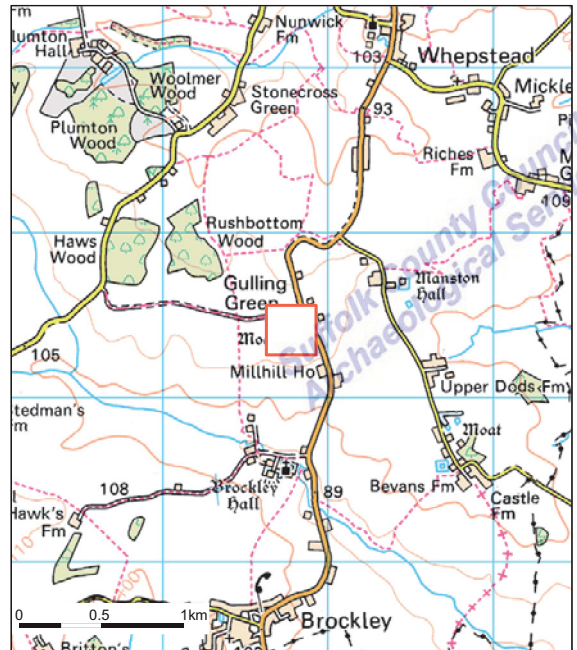
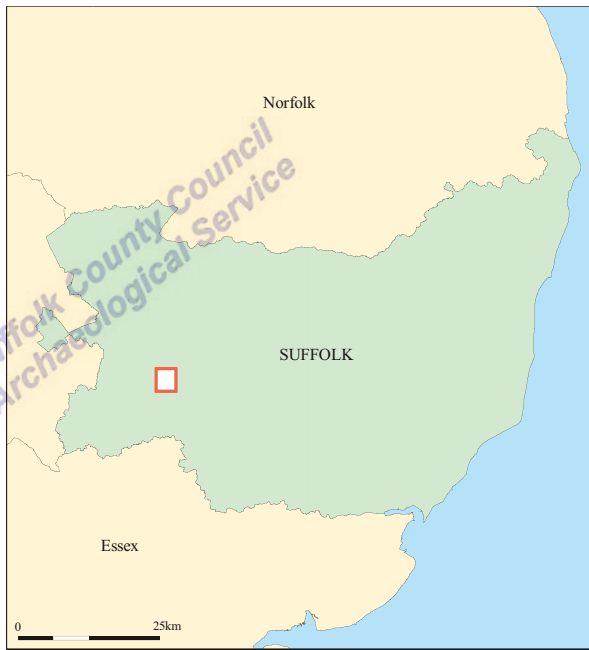
2. Geology and topography

The site is situated at TL 8278 5640 and lies some 1.5km to the north of the main village of Brockley at a height of c.110m, atop a ridge of high ground overlooking the Chad Brook some 700m to the south. The site geology is of clayey soils over chalky till (Ordnance Survey 1983).

3. Archaeological and historical background

Gulling Green Barn is a partially moated site, recorded in the County Historic Environment Record as BKY 002, surrounding a set of 18th century barns and stables. The site lies on the southern edge of a medieval green and is one of several moated Halls or farmsteads in the vicinity, lying between the settlements of Brockley and Wepstead.

An evaluation (Gill 2008) established that there was no evidence for a western arm to the moat, suggesting that the moat did not originally form a continuous circuit. Study of historic mapping, where an Estate map of 1739 did not show any moat as being present (Fig. 9), suggests that the moat may not be medieval in origin but may instead be



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Figure 1. Site location plan

contemporary with the 18th century barns. Later 19th century tithe and Ordnance survey maps (Figs. 10-12) show the various ditches and ponds in much the same position as exists currently. These latter maps all show the 18th century barns, together with another large building lying to the east.

The barns however reuse timbers from earlier farm buildings and a well constructed high-status house, dating from the early part of the 16th century. This implies that, even if the moat was of a later date, the site itself may have high status medieval origins. The evaluation results suggested that, despite the modern history of the site as a working farm, shallow cut post-medieval features survived and so there was potential for evidence of the sites medieval origins to also survive.

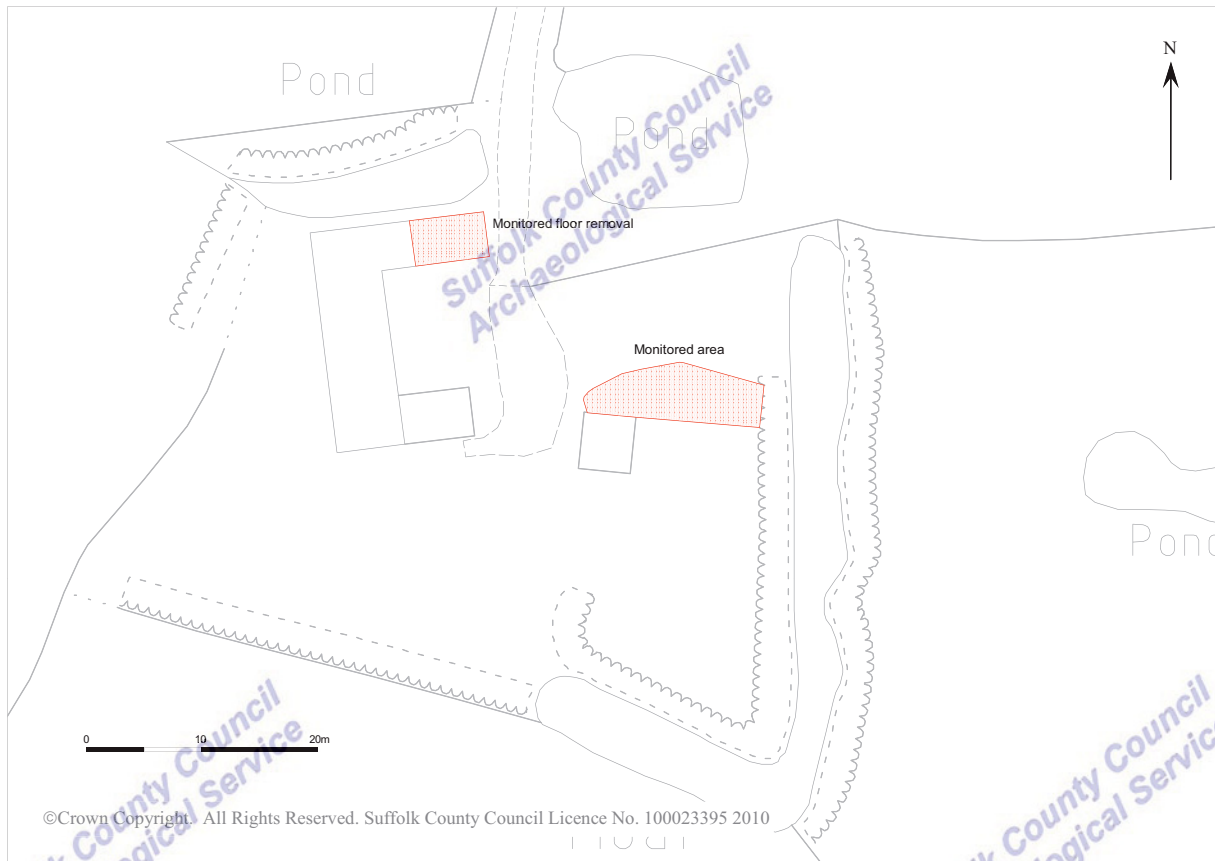


Figure 2. Site layout plan

4. Methodology

Visits were made to the site during the site strip in advance of the creation of a new bridge and driveway across the eastern moat and part of the central platform and during some initial works to the existing buildings (Fig. 2).

The monitored driveway area measured c.15m by 5m and was excavated to a formation depth of c.0.15m. The site was planned at a scale of 1:50 on gridded A3 permatrace and located by hand in relation to existing buildings. Context numbers were issued from 0020, continuing the sequence from the earlier evaluation. Digital colour and black and white photographs were taken at all stages of the fieldwork. Excavated spoil was examined for finds.

An OASIS form has been completed for the project (reference no. suffolkc1-71544) and a digital copy of the report submitted for inclusion on the Archaeology Data Service database (<http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/catalogue/library/greylit>).

The site archive is kept in the main store of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service at Bury St Edmunds under HER No. BKY 022.

5. Results

The site strip for the roadway was relatively shallow and only partly exposed the natural subsoil, mainly in the central area of the site, instead often leaving a mixed layer of post-medieval/modern rubble etc *in situ* (Figs 3-5).

Contexts 0020-0023 were issued to four spot locations of pottery collected from the reduced ground surface. 0020 and 0021 were impressed into the top of the exposed subsoil surface while 0022 and 0023 lay amidst a spread of scattered gravel and oyster shell, 0028, that was set into the surface of the compacted natural clay. 0029 was a circular spread, c.1.5m in diameter, of lime mortar lying on the north side of 0028.

The remaining features on the site, four different section of wall foundations, lay to the east and west of the site in areas where the subsoil surface was not exposed.

0024 was an apparent corner of a wall foundation, only partially visible, comprised of several large complete and unworked stones which may have derived from clearance during ploughing of nearby fields.

0025 was a right angled stretch of foundation, constructed from flint and mortar with red brick at the corner, measuring c.0.35m wide. At its western end it was adjoined by 0026, another right angled foundation, constructed from brick and ranging from 0.3m to 0.5m wide. 0026 was thought to be later in date than 0025 but it was unclear whether it abutted 0025, or cut or overlaid it.

0027 was a length of red brick constructed foundation at the eastern end of the site. It was not a substantial structure consisting of a single line of brick.

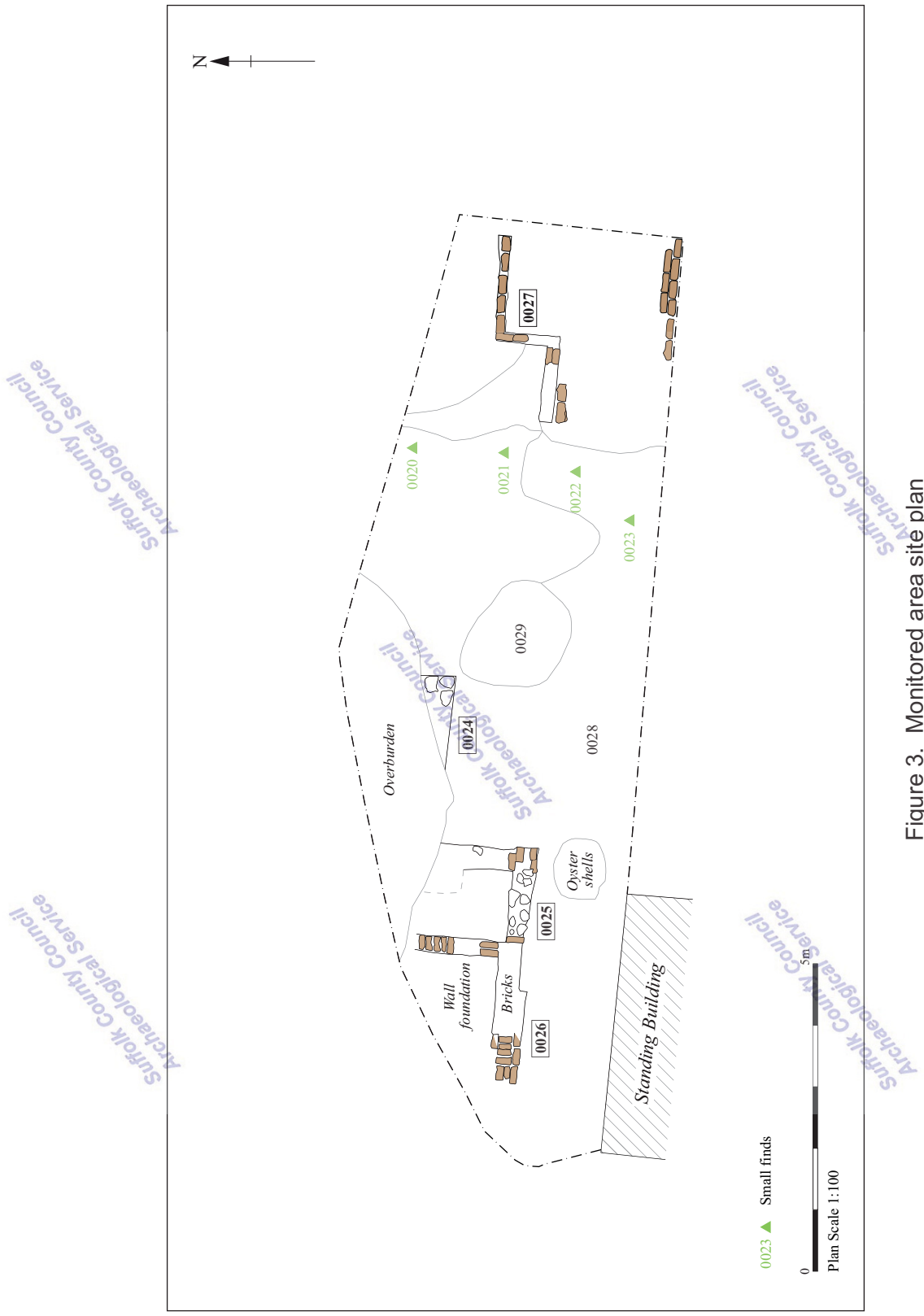


Figure 3. Monitored area site plan



Figure 4. Site looking west , 0027 in foreground



Figure 5. 0025/0026 facing west

The second area of works monitored was the removal of a concrete floor in the northern barn. This exposed two sections of brickwork flooring (Figs 6 and 7) amongst possible areas of a former cobbled surface although this was frequently masked by spreads of modern hardcore.

The first section, 0030, was situated in the north-east corner of the barn and measured c.1.5m². It consisted of c.24 courses of brick with a white/yellow fabric, laid in a stretcher bond pattern, with a defined edged border on its southern side. A possible drainage gully was seen along its northern edge.

The second section, 0031, which lay midway along the southern wall of the barn (Fig. 7), was again composed of c.1.5m² of white/yellow bricks laid in a stretcher bond pattern, with an edging comprised of three linear courses of brick on its southern side. To the north and west the brickwork appeared to respect a partially visible stone built wall foundation that had similarities to 0024.



Figure 6. Interior of north barn, facing east, showing 0030 and 0031



Figure 7. 0031 brickwork, facing east

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6. Finds and Environmental Evidence

Richenda Goffin

Introduction

Finds were collected from 4 contexts, as shown in the table below.

Context	Pottery		Animal bone		Spotdate
	No.	Wt/g	No.	Wt/g	
0020	1	24			12th-E13th C
0021	13	111			12th-14th C
0022	3	69			12th-E13th C
0023	2	26	1	2	12th-14th C
Total	19	299	1	2	

Table 1. Finds quantities

Pottery

A total of 19 fragments of medieval pottery were recovered weighing 0.299kg. Four different vessels were represented altogether.

The rim of a sooted cooking pot dating to the L12th-Early 13th century was present in 0020 of Hollesley type ware. The remains of second vessel was identified in 0021, consisting of several sherds from the lower part of a sooted coarseware dating L12th-14th century. Three joining sherds of another medieval coarseware cooking vessel were recovered from 0022. The vessel is made in a thickwalled hard sandy grey fabric with occasional carbonaceous/organic inclusions and clay pellets. There are thumb impressions on the outer upper part of the rim and finger tip decoration on the shoulder of the vessel, and curiously, visible girth grooves on the body of the pot reminiscent of Ipswich-type ware (Fig 8). The rim and decoration indicate that the vessel also dates to c12th-E13th century. Two fragments of the base of another thickwalled greyware vessel were found in 0023 and may be earlier in date.

Animal bone

A small and undiagnostic fragment of animal bone was collected from 0023.

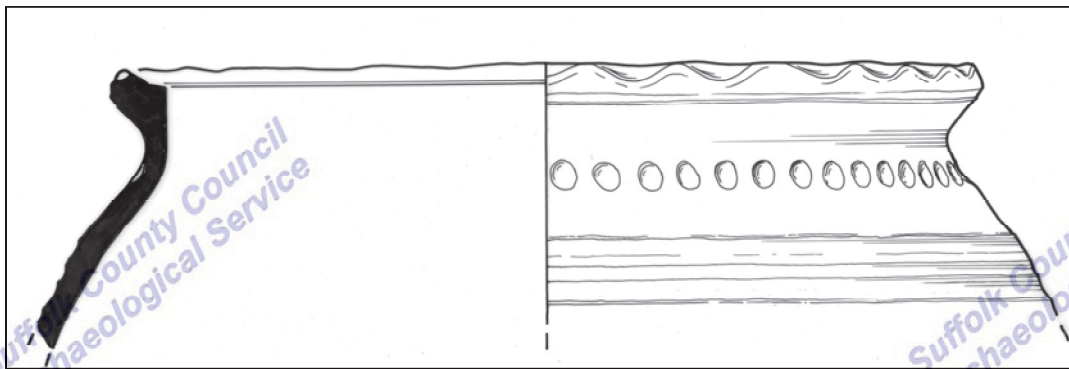


Figure 8. 0022 pottery illustration, shown at 1:2

7. Discussion

Monitoring of the area stripped for the new access route demonstrated that, despite the shallow depth of the subsoil surface, presumably caused by truncation of the moat platform during the post-medieval/modern history of the farm, there was surviving archaeological evidence of earlier activity.

Medieval occupation at the site is indicated by the small assemblage of 12th-14th century pottery and it is likely that the site has been continuously occupied and developed through the medieval, post-medieval and modern periods. The 0024 section of wall foundation was thought at the time of monitoring to be of a relatively early date but otherwise no cut features or structures of medieval date were identified. The undressed stone material used appears to have been collected from the natural clay subsoil.

The majority of the structural evidence identified, the three sections of wall foundations 0025, 0026 and 0027, are thought to be of post-medieval date and probably relate to the large building shown on both the 1847 Tithe map and the 1st and 2nd Edition Ordnance Surveys (Figs 10 - 12). The position and alignment of these three sections of wall appear to correspond quite closely to the southern wall of the building, although there is no evidence for 0025 and 0027 to be a continuous structure.

It is possible that this building may have been the domestic house as it stands separate to the barns complex and a possible different use for the structure is hinted at by its unshaded depiction on the 2nd Edition map in contrast to the shaded barns.

Finally the brickwork flooring, 0030 and 0031, that was exposed in the northern barn is also of uncertain date. The barn itself is shown on both the 1st and 2nd edition Ordnance surveys with an unchanged layout to the current structure. Neither section of floor appears to relate to the barn itself, 0030 having a defined edge in the centre of the barn and 0031 tying into a wall foundation again in the barns centre. They could be areas of repair or modification to the internal structure or layout of the barn but also there is a possibility that the two sections may pre-date the existing post-medieval structure.

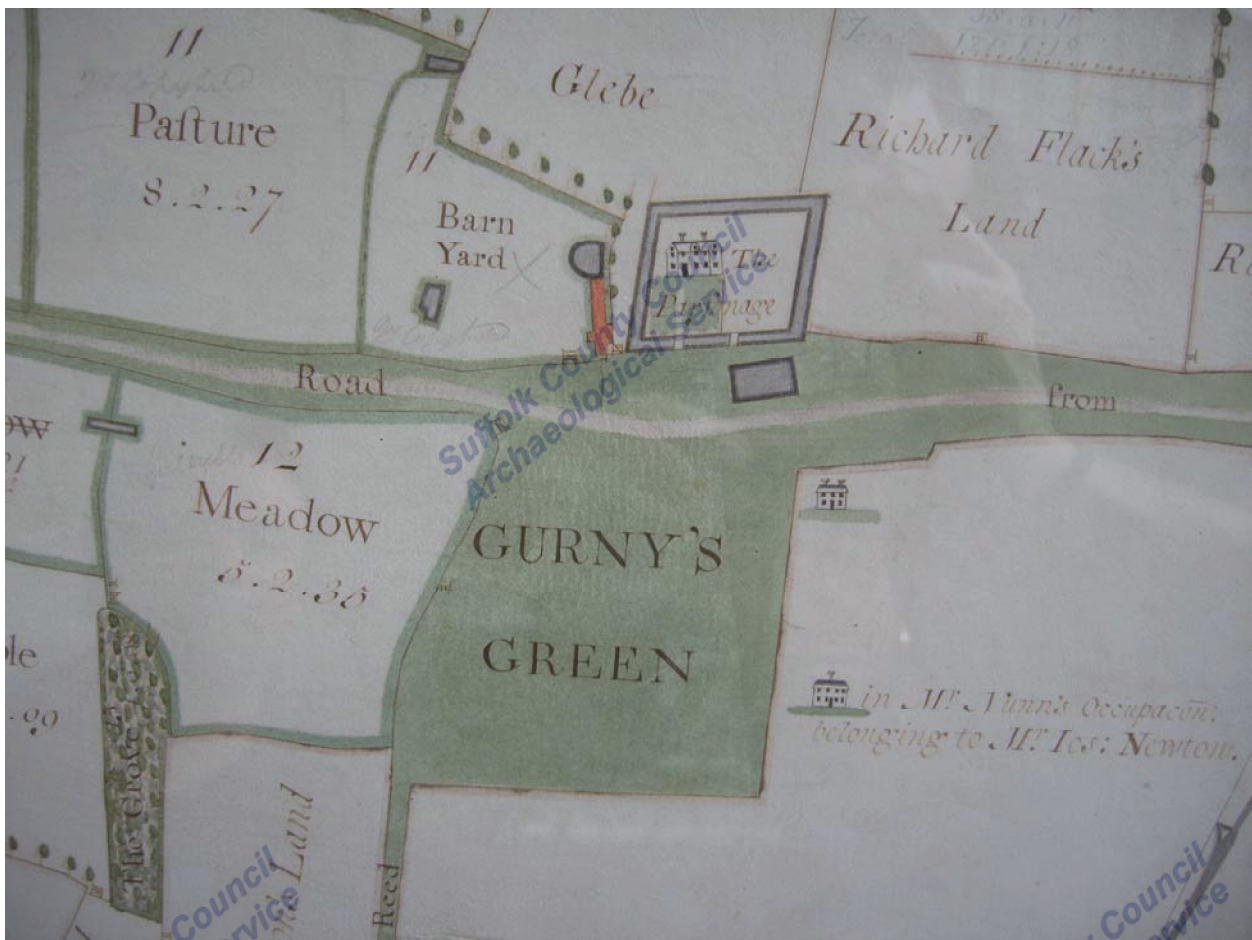


Figure 9. 1739 Estate map (North to left)

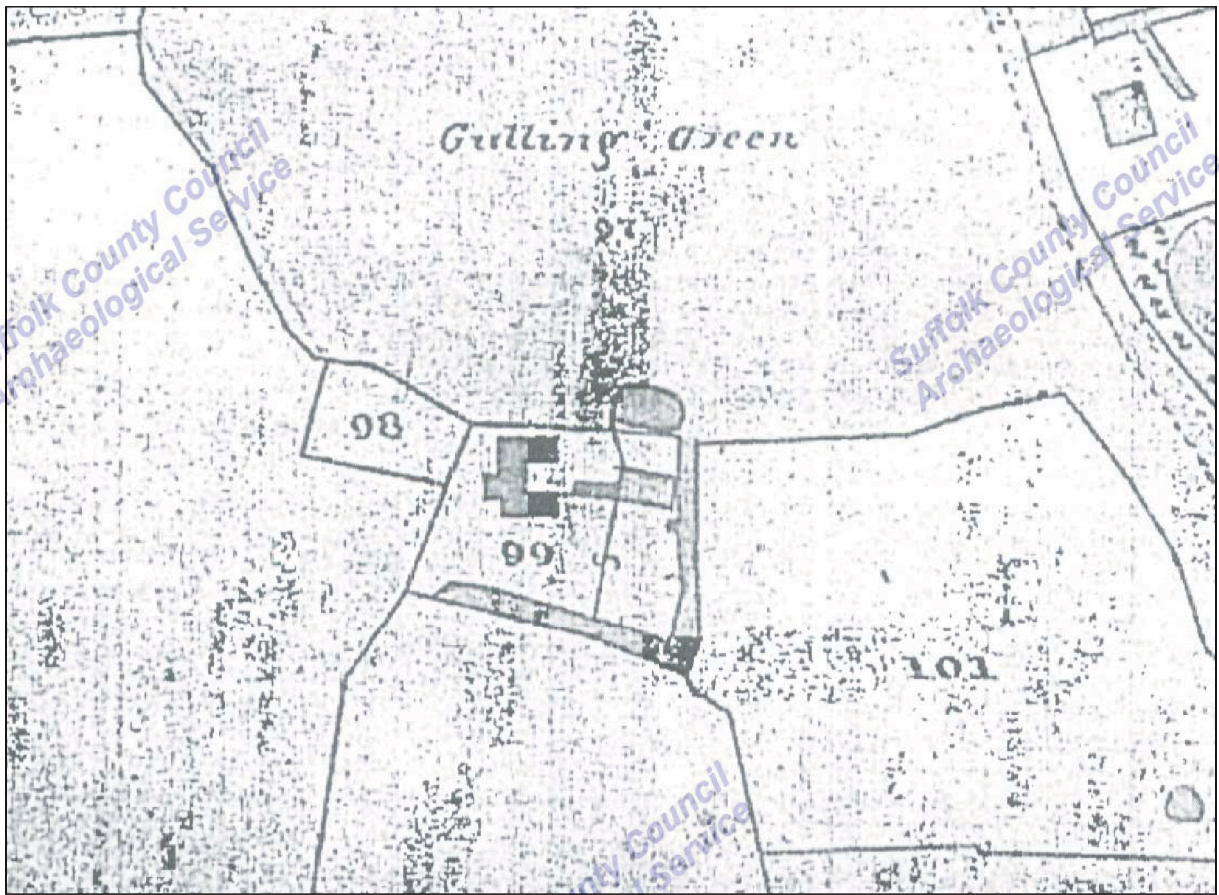


Figure 10. 1847 Tithe map

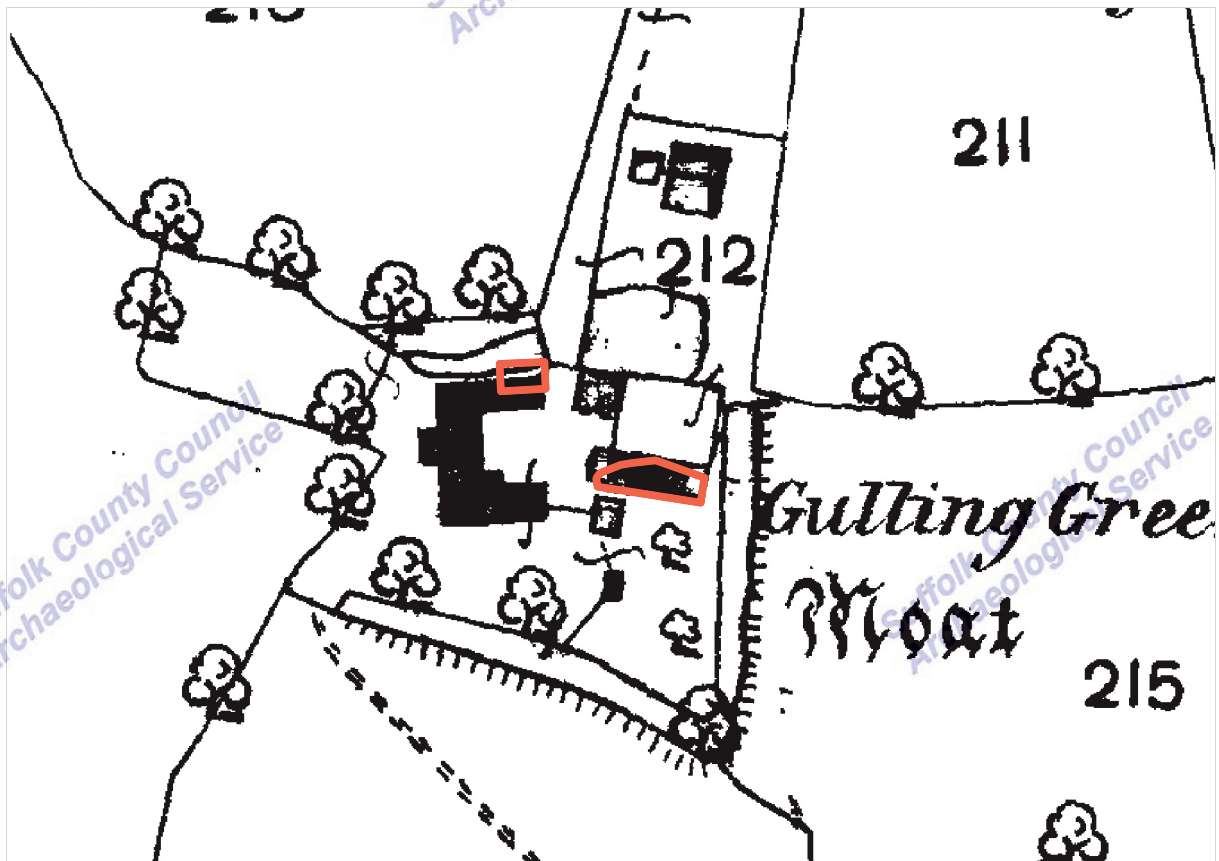


Figure 11. 1st Edition Ordnance survey, 1885

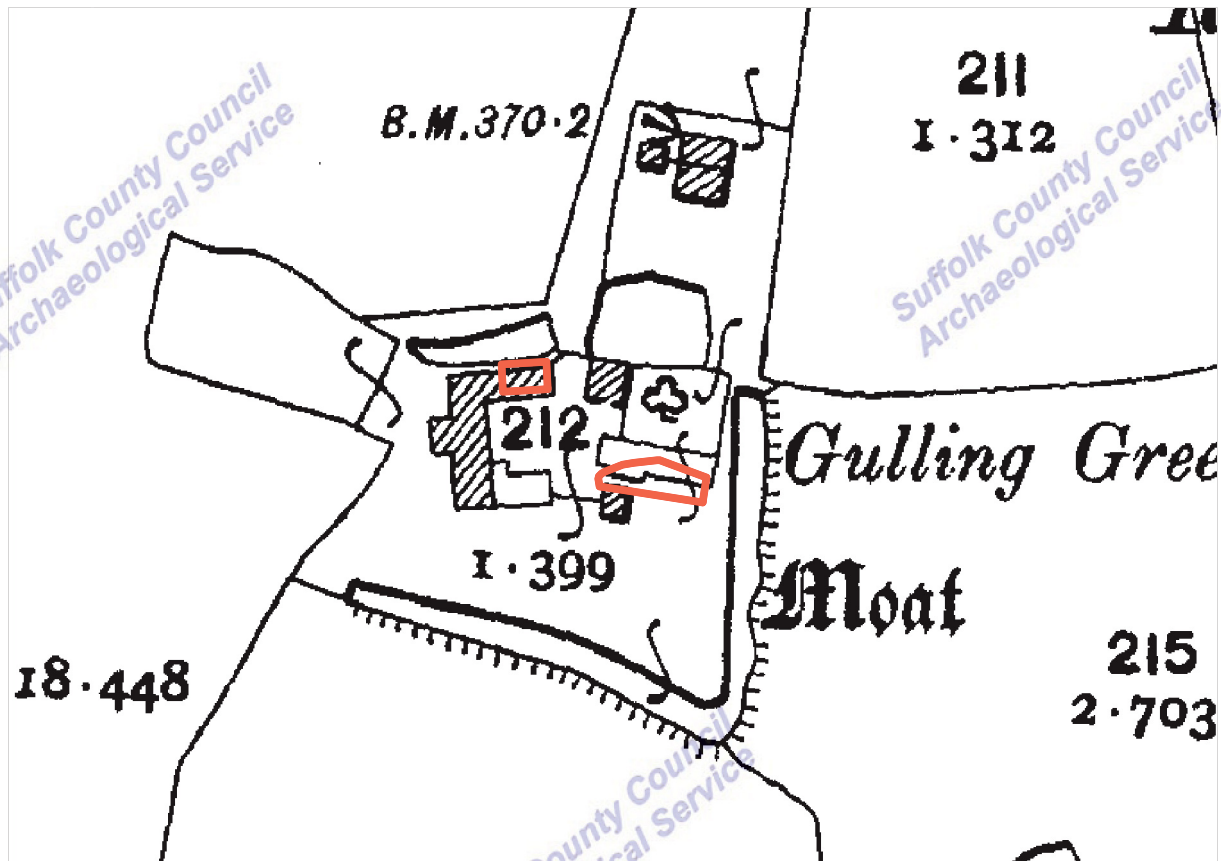


Figure 12. 2nd Edition Ordnance survey, 1904

8. Conclusions and significance of the fieldwork

The monitoring of the building works, while quite limited in physical size and level of archaeological investigation, has identified evidence of both medieval and post-medieval activity within the moat platform, despite apparent truncation in recent years. There is a high probability therefore that the remainder of the moat platform contains archaeological deposits relating to the past occupation and development of the site.

Medieval activity on the site was demonstrated by the presence of a small finds assemblage. No contemporary features were identified but this absence may have been caused by the fact that post-medieval masking deposits remained *in situ* across a large proportion of the stripped area. Evidence of the post-medieval occupation of the site also survives, with several wall foundations relating to a building extant in the 19th century being identified.

9. Archive deposition

Paper and photographic archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds.

Digital archive: T:\arc\archive field proj\Brockley\BKY 022 Gulling Green Barn\Monitoring

Finds and environmental archive: SCCAS Bury St Edmunds.

10. Contributors and acknowledgements

The monitoring fieldwork was carried out by Andrew Tester Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service, Field Team who also managed the project and provided advice during the production of the report.

The post-excavation was managed by Richenda Goffin. Finds processing was carried out by Jonathan Van Jennians, the digital site plan was produced by Crane Begg and the specialist finds report by Richenda Goffin.

11. Bibliography

Gill, D., 2008, *Archaeological Evaluation Report: Gulling Green Barn, Brockley*. SCCAS Report No. 2008/273.

Ordnance Survey, 1983, *'Soils of England and Wales' Soil survey of England and Wales, sheet 4 Eastern England 1:250,000*. Harpenden.