

**Archaeological Excavation**

**West Curtain Wall, Walden Castle Keep  
Saffron Walden  
Essex**

**ASE Report No: 2015271**



**August 2015**

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### **Abstract**

*Archaeological excavation was undertaken by Archaeology South-East within the keep of Walden Castle in the spring of 2015. This work formed part of a wider programme improvement and consolidation works to the monument and its immediate surrounds, and was commissioned by Uttlesford District Council.*

*The excavation involved hand digging of a 2m by 4m trench, to a maximum depth of c.1.2m, for the construction of a buttress up against the interior of the west curtain wall of the keep.*

*A late 17th century, or later, layer of made-ground, cut through and partially removed by the south-west corner of a large, possibly recut, pit were encountered. The pit, perhaps a robber cut or an inspection pit, contained late post-medieval/modern artefacts and lay beneath gravel and topsoil. Most of the artefacts retrieved comprised ceramic building material or pottery sherds including Staffordshire-type slipware, modern stoneware and flower pots of 18th to 20th century date range. A small quantity of residual 13th to 14th century pottery sherds presumably derive from the castle's medieval heyday.*

*No below-ground traces of the west curtain wall foundation were found within the excavation area. It is clear that post-medieval robbing of the keep fabric was undertaken down to the underlying natural chalk at this location.*

*The results of the excavation suggest that much of the archaeological deposits within the western half of the keep relate to late landscaping and robbing of the castle fabric and are less than 150 years old. As such, the insertion of the buttress is likely to have a low impact upon the below-ground heritage resource of this location.*

## CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction**
- 2.0 Archaeological Background**
- 3.0 Archaeological Methodology**
- 4.0 Results**
- 5.0 Finds**
- 6.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

**Bibliography**  
**Acknowledgements**

**HER Summary Sheet**  
**OASIS Form**

**Appendix 1:** List of Recorded Contexts  
**Appendix 2:** Pottery Quantification

## FIGURES

Front Cover: Excavation in progress, looking North-West

Figure 1: Site Location  
Figure 2: Location of Excavation and Areas of Previous Archaeological Work  
Figure 3: Excavation Area  
Figure 4: Sections 1 to 4

## TABLES

Table 1: Quantification of Site Archive  
Table 2: Finds Quantification  
Table 3: Overview of the Roof Tile Fabrics  
Table 4: Overview of the Brick Fabrics

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Background**

1.1.1 Uttlesford District Council commissioned Archaeology South-East to undertake the hand excavation of a large foundation trench for the construction of a supporting buttress within the keep of Walden Castle. The foundation trench was to measure 2m wide and 4m long and to be located on the west side of the curtain wall. The function of the buttress was to provide support to a cantilevered section of the west wall of the keep. Archaeology South-East is the contracting division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology, University College London.

1.1.2 The archaeological excavation was undertaken in Spring 2015, as part of a wider programme of consolidation and restoration of the remains of the castle keep.

### **1.2 Geology and Topography (Fig. 1)**

1.2.1 Walden castle is located within the grounds of Saffron Walden Museum, within the north-eastern part of the historic town core of Saffron Walden. The castle sits on the promontory of Bury Hill and overlooks the valley of the River Slade to the north-west.

1.2.2 The natural bedrock composes chalk of the Lewes and Seaford Formations, covered by patches of grey glacial clay (British Geological Survey 1:50,000 scale geological mapping available on-line).

### **1.3 Planning Background**

1.3.1 Walden Castle is a Scheduled Monument (SM 20671) protected under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979. Scheduled Monument consent for the repair works to the keep and the related archaeological investigation was granted by the Secretary of State for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport, following the advice of Deborah Priddy, Inspector of Ancient Monuments for Historic England.

### **1.4 Scope of Report**

1.4.1 This report presents the results of a small archaeological excavation located on the line of the west curtain wall of the Walden Castle keep, carried out on 06-07/05/15 and 2/06/15. It describes and interprets the results of the work and assesses their archaeological significance.

## **2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND**

2.1 The following archaeological background makes use of the historic town survey for Saffron Walden and a published report on previous archaeological excavations within the town and castle (Medlycott 1998; Bassett 1982).

### **2.2 Historical background (Fig. 1)**

2.2.1 Saffron Walden originated as a late Saxon settlement and developed into prosperous market town during the early medieval period. The town was a major centre for the cloth trade and the producing of saffron during the 13th to 16th centuries.

2.2.2 The keep and inner bailey of Walden Castle lie within the grounds of Saffron Walden Museum. Some of the surrounding streets, Castle Street and Museum Street in particular, mark the course of the inner bailey. The keep sits within the eastern half of the inner bailey, with the forebuilding projecting from its north-west corner.

2.2.3 It seems likely that the castle was founded during the mid 12th century, after Geoffrey de Mandeville was given permission to transfer the market at nearby Newport to Saffron Walden in 1141. The castle had inner and outer baileys, with the outer bailey to the west of Museum Street containing the parish church of St Mary and the original market place.

2.2.4 The town expanded in the early to mid 13th century, with a planned rectilinear street grid and a new market place added to the south of the castle's outer bailey. This enlarged form of the town was enclosed within a new defensive earthwork, the 'magnum fossatum' (great ditch), although the northern stretch of the town's defences used the existing outer bailey ditch. It is probable that the castle's keep and inner bailey were still intact when Humphrey de Bohun was given permission to crenellate in 1347 (Bassett 1982, 16).

2.2.5 Buildings within the castle complex appear to have been maintained in the later medieval period as evidenced by repairs to the roof of a hall in 1393 (Cromarty 1967, 105). Documentary and archaeological evidence suggests that the castle had become ruinous by 1594 and that the fabric of the keep was regularly robbed into the mid 18th century (Bassett 1982, 50). The keep was used as a barn in the later 18th and 19th centuries and repairs were made to the structure in 1796 which included the construction of a small turret above the forebuilding (Bassett 1982, 48-50).

### **2.3 Previous archaeological investigation within the keep (Fig. 2)**

2.3.1 Small-scale research excavation within the castle keep in 1973 established that over a metre thickness of stratigraphy had been removed from inside the keep in 1881. Further discoveries comprised primary construction remains, including three post-holes for scaffolding and spreads and layers of construction material, such as mortar (Bassett 1982, 51-57).

- 2.3.2 Small-scale excavation took place within the forebuilding of the keep in 1978. Removal of over 1m of modern overburden revealed the remains of a probable 19th century lime kiln that utilised existing parts of the keep's structure. Also revealed were two floors and a dry flint wall (Couchman 1979, 70-72).
- 2.3.3 Hand excavation of three small trenches to a depth of 1m alongside the forebuilding immediately west of the west curtain wall, in June 2013, revealed sequences of chalk and flint rubble and clay silt layers, probably related to levelling and landscaping around the vicinity of the keep during the 19th to 20th century (Ennis 2013).
- 2.3.4 Various other investigations, mostly small-scale, have been undertaken outside the keep, and within the castle inner bailey (e.g. Andrews 1987; Atkinson 2006; Bassett 1982; Ennis 2011, 2012 and 2013; Letch 2006). The most recent of these has been that of the site of a stag beetle loggery, undertaken earlier this year (Germany 2015).

## **2.4 Project Aims and Objectives**

- 2.4.1 The aim of the archaeological excavation was to record, excavate, analyse and report on any remains within the bounds of the site excavation, thereby preserving by record deposits and features threatened by the proposed repair works.
- 2.4.2 Specific aims of the excavation were to gain greater understanding of the nature and use of the medieval curtain wall and any later alterations to which it had been subjected.
- 2.4.3 If significant archaeological remains were discovered then appropriate research objectives were to be formulated, in relation to those identified by *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties 2, Research Agenda and Strategy* (Brown and Glazebrook 2000), and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

### **3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Fieldwork Methodology**

- 3.1.1 The excavation site measured 4m long and 2m wide and was positioned centrally, up against the partly overhanging surviving interior edge of the west curtain wall (Fig. 2). The maximum depth of the trench was 1.08m, although this was subsequently stepped to 1.44m.
- 3.1.2 All deposits were dug by hand, with the arisings neatly stockpiled alongside at a safe distance. When the excavation was completed, the trench was left open, to serve as the as the foundation hole for the forthcoming buttress.
- 3.1.3 A GNSS Global Navigation Satellite System was used to take spot heights and to locate the trench and its sections. All sections were drawn by hand at a scale of 1:10. Photographs were taken of deposits and features and of work in progress. For safety reasons, the base of a large pit [60], measuring more than 1.4m deep, was only partially exposed. Context numbers began with [50].
- 3.1.4 Artefacts were retrieved from all deposits during their excavation and retained for identification and study. No suitable deposits were identified that merited sampling for environmental study.

#### **3.2 Archive**

- 3.2.1 The site archive is currently held at the offices of ASE and will be deposited with Saffron Walden Museum in due course. The contents of the archive are tabulated in Table 1.

Number of Contexts	11
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	5
Bulk soil samples	0
Photographs	65
Bulk finds	0
Registered finds	1
Environmental flots/residue	0

Table 1: Quantification of site archive



## **4.0 RESULTS**

### **4.1 Summary**

4.1.1 The excavation area revealed the presence of five fills [52, 54, 56, 57 and 58], three layers [50, 51 and 55] and two cut features [59 and 60]. In addition, a small stone structure [53] lay partially buried beneath topsoil, close to the site's north-eastern corner. Further details about each deposit and feature can be found in Appendix 1.

4.1.2 No below-ground trace of the west curtain wall foundation was found within the excavation area, it clearly having been entirely robbed down to the level of the underlying natural chalk.

### **4.2 Results (Figs 3 and 4)**

4.2.1 The earliest deposit composed layer [55], a c.0.3m thick layer of light brownish yellow silty clay. It overlay undisturbed chalk and extended across the entirety of the south end of the site. Artefacts contained within it included a small sherd of 13th century coarseware pottery and a large piece of 17th to 20th century jar or jug.

4.2.2 Layer [55] was no longer present in the north half of the site, probably because it had been removed by the south-west corner of what was probably a single large pit [60] - possibly a robber cut as it appeared to cut into and slightly undermine the inside face of the west curtain wall. The pit had steep sides and a flat base. It measured 1.44m deep and was in excess of 2.4m long and 2.3m wide. Three fills were recorded within it, [52, 57 and 58], and probably related to its deliberate backfilling.

4.2.3 The primary fill [58] comprised loose chalk rubble and lay slumped against the west wall of the keep. This deposit occupied the west side of the pit. Artefacts from it included ceramic building material and sherds of post-medieval and modern pottery. One of the finds comprised a decorated clay tobacco pipe bowl, dating to c.1840 to 1890 (RF<1>).

4.2.4 A slight deposit of loose, light yellowish grey chalk [57] overlaid fill [58], but could perhaps have been part of the same deposit, since they were very similar in composition and colour. No finds were retrieved from it.

4.2.5 Both fills [57] and [58] may originally have extended across the entire cut. Although not recorded as such in the field, the markedly concave slope of the interface between them and later fill [52], is suggestive of a distinct cut or recut (Fig. 4, sections 1 and 2). Fill [52] consisted of white/yellowish brown compact sandy silt with occasional small to mid-sized flints and frequent small to medium sized pieces of chalk. Present within it were a large amount of ceramic building material and pieces of pottery. While some pot sherds dated to the 17th century or later, three sherds dated to the mid 13th-14th century and although evidently residual presumably derived from the medieval use of the keep. Whether the fill of a distinct cut/recut or not, [52] was of similarly late date as [57] and [58] and likely closely associated.

- 4.2.6 A thin layer of gravel [51] largely overlaid pit [60], perhaps deliberately capping it. Layer [55] and was in turn overlaid by a 0.25m thick layer of mid to dark greyish brown topsoil [50] which extended across the whole excavated area.
- 4.2.7 A small shallow pit [59] containing three fills [54, 55 and 56] cut through the topsoil and was identified predominantly in section, at the south-west corner of the excavation area. It contained no finds.
- 4.2.8 The fragment of a small structure [53], partially buried beneath loose topsoil, close to the site's south-western corner was seemingly un-associated with pit [59] below it. It comprised a pad of hardened cement and measured roughly 0.62m square. Pressed into the cement surface of the structure were three large rounded stones and impressions of a further five or six cobbles which were no longer in situ. The structure was left in situ, and its function remains enigmatic though it is probably the latest remains found.
- 4.2.9 Although the partially-robbled upstanding remains of the west curtain wall bounded its west side, no below-ground continuation of the wall foundation was encountered anywhere within the excavation area. Although certainly originally thicker than the surviving remains, the inner face of the wall and some of its core had evidently been robbed down to the base of its foundations.

## 5.0 FINDS

### 5.1 Summary

5.1.1 The excavation revealed a small assemblage of finds, all of which were subsequently washed and dried or air dried as appropriate, before being quantified by count and weight and bagged by material and context (Table 2). A decorated clay tobacco pipe (weight 12g) was assigned a registered finds number (RF <1>). The finds were packed and stored according to CIFA guidelines (2014). None require further conservation.

Context	Pot		CBM		Bone		Shell		Stone		CTP		Glass	
	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt	Ct	Wt
51			5	938										
52	18	542	38	10682	3	16					1	<2		
55	3	112	16	1564										
58	6	206	6	394	2	42	1	38	1	84	1	12	1	426
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>860</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>13578</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>426</b>

Table 2: Finds Quantification, by count and weight (g)

### 5.2 Post-Roman Pottery by Helen Walker

5.2.1 A modest amount of pottery, twenty-seven sherds weighing 1010g, was excavated from three contexts (Appendix 2) and has been catalogued according to Cunningham's typology of post-Roman pottery in Essex (Cunningham 1985, 1-16). All contexts produced pottery of a mixture of dates. The only medieval pottery from layer [55], at the bottom of the sequence, was a single sherd of medieval coarseware showing the faint remains of a thumbled applied strip and most likely dates to the 13th century. It was accompanied by an abraded post-medieval red earthenware thickened or pad base from a bowl or jar showing an all over glaze and an internal ?limescale deposit, although this could be post-depositional as there is also a white deposit on the breaks. In addition, there is a sherd of English salt-glazed stoneware from a large rounded vessel perhaps a jar or jug. The pad base is likely to date from the 17th to 18th centuries and the stoneware sherd spans the late 17th to 20th centuries, although an 18th to 19th century date is more likely.

5.2.2 Context [58] the lower fill of cut [60] produced a base sherd of Staffordshire-type slipware from a jar or a large wide cup probably dating to the early to mid-18th century when this ware was at its peak. Also from this context is the thickened rim from a large flowerpot. It is heavily encrusted with mortar on both surfaces and on the breaks. Perhaps the fragment was used for packing in a wall. Although it could be as early as 18th century and the contemporary of the slipware sherd, it is more likely modern, belonging to the 19th to 20th centuries. Of definite modern date is a sherd from the shoulder of a cylindrical stoneware bottle, perhaps an ink bottle, and joining fragments from a large ironstone china bowl or jar showing a pale grey pattern, which appears to be emulating marble. Both vessels are Victorian or 20th century in date.

- 5.2.3 The largest assemblage came from context [52], the upper fill of pit [60]. Here, there were three medieval sherds - a thick-walled sherd of medieval coarseware, which appears to be of a later type dating to the 14th century and two sherds of unglazed sandy orange ware. These include the upper handle attachment from a jug; it has an everted rim and the strap handle attaches at the rim, rather than at the neck. There are two thumb-made grooves on the rim at the point of attachment and the surface colour varies, with patches of red-brown, grey and ochre. As is typical of other finds in the town, these medieval sherds have fabrics unlike those found in central Essex and a separate manufacturing site in the area of Saffron Walden area is postulated. The jug handle is dated to the mid 13th century on the grounds of stylistic similarities to Hedingham coarseware jugs of this date.
- 5.2.4 A few sherds from fill [52] are 18th century. There is another sherd of Staffordshire-type slipware, a body sherd from another jar or cup showing bands of brown slip, and two stoneware sherds, the rim of a large cylindrical tankard, and a Nottingham/Derbyshire stoneware hollow pedestal base from a large vessel, possibly a punch bowl (cf. Hildyard 1985, no.256). Otherwise the pottery is modern, table-wares comprise a single sherd of creamware, which has an off-white glaze rather than the buttery glaze of mid-18th century creamware and is most likely to date to the early 19th century. There are also sherds of transfer-printed modern white earthenware, one of which shows a red transfer print, a colour not introduced until the mid-19th century. Kitchen-wares/storage wares comprise the base of a yellow ware bowl and a number of modern stoneware fragments from cylindrical bottles, one perhaps an ink bottle, and a fragment from a ?large jar. Some of this material could easily be 20th century.
- 5.2.5 To conclude the small amount of medieval material, spanning the 13th to 14th centuries, could relate to the original functioning of the castle keep. Otherwise the material is 18th century or modern.

### **5.3 Ceramic Building Material (CBM) by Elke Raemen**

- 5.3.1 A small assemblage comprising sixty-five fragments of ceramic building material (CBM), weighing just over 13kg, was recovered from four individually numbered contexts. The entire assemblage is of post-medieval date.
- 5.3.2 The assemblage was recorded in full on *pro forma* sheets for archive and data was entered onto a digital spreadsheet. The material was quantified by count, weight, fabric and form. Fabrics were established with the aid of an x20 binocular microscope. Fabric samples were retained; the remainder of the assemblage does not hold any potential for further study and has been discarded.

#### *Roof Furniture*

- 5.3.3 The vast majority of the assemblage (sixty-one fragments) comprises roof furniture. Included are thirty-eight pan tile fragments, dating to the 18th or 19th centuries. No complete dimensions survive although some retain part or all of the nib. A further nine fragments are curving and are likely to

represent pan tile too, although they could also be from ridge tiles. The remainder consists of peg tile (ten fragments) and undiagnostic pieces of roof tile. Eight different fabrics were encountered, two of which have been subdivided further (Table 3). Two fragments, both peg tile with circular nail holes, are of possible medieval date (contexts [52] and [54]). Both are in fabric T4B however, which does occur in material of definite post-medieval date too. The remainder of peg tile, some with surviving circular peg holes, can be dated broadly to the post-medieval period.

<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Fabric Description</b>
T1	Orange fabric with abundant fine quartz, moderate medium quartz and rare to moderate black iron oxides to 1mm
T1B	Orange fabric with common very fine quartz, moderate fine/medium quartz and rare black and red iron oxides to 1mm
T2	Orange fabric with common medium quartz, moderate coarse quartz, moderate very fine/fine quartz, rare chalk to 0.5mm, rare red iron oxides to 0.5mm and rare very fine to fine black iron oxides
T3	Orange fabric with abundant very fine/fine white specks, moderate fine quartz, rare black and red iron oxides to 1mm and rare chalk to 2mm
T4	Brownish orange fabric with abundant very fine/fine quartz and common coarse quartz
T4B	Coarser version of T4A: Orange fabric with abundant fine/medium quartz, common coarse quartz, rare black iron oxides to 1mm and rare very coarse quartz to 2mm
T5	Reddish orange fabric with moderate very coarse quartz to 1.2mm, common marl (50% calcareous). Some with bands of clay with moderate marl. Moderate very fine to fine quartz
T6	Yellow fabric with moderate fine/medium quartz and rare coarse quartz. Moderate voids and rare black and red iron oxides to 1mm
T7	Orange fabric with abundant very fine to fine quartz and common very fine black specks. Rare red iron oxides to 0.5mm and rare chalk to 0.5mm
T8	Beige to pink fabric with common very fine to fine quartz, moderate very fine to fine red iron oxides and rare chalk/marl pellets to 0.5mm

Table 3: Overview of roof tile fabrics

### *Bricks*

- 5.3.4 Only four brick fragments were found. All four are un-frogged although with relatively sharp arrises. Three different fabrics were discerned (Table 4). Three bricks are from pit fill [52], including a fragment measuring 105mm wide, 43mm high and 213mm+ long (fabric B3). It is of probable 15th to early 17th century date. The same context contains two further fragments (fabrics B1 and B2), one of which measures 126mm wide and 57mm thick, both dating to the 17th to 18th century. An un-frogged brick fragment (fabric B1) from layer [55] is likely to be of the same date.

<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Fabric Description</b>
B1	Yellow fabric with common fine/medium quartz, moderate coarse quartz and rare red and black iron oxides to 1mm.
B2	Orange fabric with common medium/coarse quartz, rare iron oxides to 1mm and rare flint pebbles to 20mm.
B3	Orange fabric with common fine to medium quartz, common very fine quartz, moderate coarse quartz and rare flint pebbles to 23mm

Table 4: Overview of brick fabrics

#### **5.4 Clay tobacco pipe by Elke Raemen**

- 5.4.1 Two clay tobacco pipe fragments (weight 13g) were recovered from pit [60] (fills [52] and [58]). Context [52] contained a plain, straight cut mouth piece. The fragment dates between c.1750 and 1910. Fill [58] contained a complete bowl with moulded decoration (RF <1>), dating to c.1840-90. Four large moulded petals cover the bowl and the stem has leaves and a bark texture moulded onto it.

#### **5.5 Glass by Elke Raemen**

- 5.5.1 A single wine bottle base (weight 426g) was recovered from pit [60] (fill [58]). The fragment, with a full diameter of 136mm, dates to c.1680-1730.

#### **5.6 Geological Material by Luke Barber**

- 5.6.1 The archaeological work recovered a single piece of stone from the site (fill [58] of cut [60]). This consists of a strip fragment (72mm long) with tapering profile (sides in section 12 x 27 x 18 x 32mm) from a polished trimmed slab of white Carrera marble. The fragment is almost certainly from a later post-medieval marble-topped wash-stand or similar piece of furniture.

#### **5.7 Animal Bone by Gemma Ayton**

- 5.7.1 A small assemblage of moderately well preserved animal bone was retrieved by hand from pit fills [52] and [58]. A total of five fragments have been recovered weighing 58g. Context [52] produced a medium-mammal sized rib, a goose tarsometatarsus and a large-mammal sized vertebrae fragment which displays small cut marks on the edge of the bone. Context [58] produced a distal sheep/goat tibia and the proximal shaft of a sheep/goat humerus which displays evidence of canid gnawing. No evidence of pathology or burning is noted.

#### **5.8 Marine Shell by Elke Raemen**

- 5.8.1 Three fragments of Common Oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) were recovered from [60] (fills [52] and [58]). Fills [52] and [58] each contained a mature left valve, one of which displays small amounts of parasitic activity. Fill [52] also contains a small abraded fragment.

## **6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1 Overview of stratigraphic sequence**

- 6.1.1 The excavation has revealed a late 17th century or later layer [55] cut by a large modern pit [60], overlain in turn by layers of gravel and topsoil [51 and 50]. Other remains comprise a very modern, shallow pit [54] and a small stone structure [53] of unknown function. The stratigraphic sequence is clear-cut and securely dated by finds, most of which comprise diagnostic pieces of pottery and ceramic building material. The top of archaeological deposits is encountered at 67.50m AOD, directly beneath c.0.3m of topsoil.
- 6.1.2 Layer [55] directly overlies undisturbed natural chalk and is the earliest deposit or feature to have been discovered by the archaeological excavation. The reason for its presence remains uncertain, although it could be relatively recent made-ground since it directly overlies undisturbed chalk and contains pieces of 17th century or later post-medieval red earthenware. If that is so, the excavation area contains no in-situ deposits predating the 17th-century or later; perhaps due to later truncation and landscaping. The nearby excavation recorded by Bassett (1982) (Fig. 2), by contrast exposed primary construction remains, including three post-holes for scaffolding and spreads and layers of construction material, including mortar. The results from both sites suggest that below-ground preservation within the area of the keep is variable at best, with some areas, including alongside the west wall, containing no in situ medieval deposits.
- 6.1.3 The internal face of the west curtain wall has clearly been robbed of its stone and it appears that, at least in the area of this excavation, some of its rubble core was quarried too, being removed right down to the base of its foundation. Certainly, no trace of the below-ground continuation of the wall foundation was encountered anywhere within the excavation area.
- 6.1.4 In view of the absence of the curtain wall remains, feature(s) [60] can be suggested to be the south-west corner of a large robber cut, as it appears to dig into the fabric of the extant wall, creating a small overhang in the process. If that is the case then it was probably dug to extract flint nodules from the existing fabric, for reuse in other buildings. Consequently, the robbing of the castle fabric, which is known to have been taking place during the mid 18th century (Bassett 1982, 50), may also have continued during the Victorian period or later. The possibility that pit [60] was recut or otherwise disturbed by another intrusion suggests that late activity inside the keep remains was fairly concerted. The three fills [52, 57 and 58] largely comprise loose, redeposited chalk and are probably deliberate rubble backfills deriving from the robbing activity, with gravel [51] denoting capping or consolidating of the tops of these features.
- 6.1.5 The remains of the medieval keep have clearly been exploited and utilised ever since it ceased to be a fortification and as late as the 19th century. Although poorly understood, shallow pit [59] and cemented cobbles [53] would seem to relate to this latest use, prior to the keep remains becoming a curated monument.

- 6.1.6 The recovery of residual 13th and 14th century pottery sherds, all of which appear to be reasonably large and unabraded, suggest that medieval deposits were at least disturbed by this 17th to 19th century activity within and around the keep remains. It is possible that some below-ground remnants of medieval features and deposits still survive within the keep. Better preserved deposits perhaps survive within the east half of the keep, as suggested by the archaeological work recorded by Bassett (1982, 51-57).
- 6.1.7 The impact of the excavation of the foundation pit for the buttress on the below-ground archaeological resource has been demonstrated to be minor due to the fact that no deposits or features predating the 17th century, particularly those of the medieval keep wall, were encountered within the confines of the excavated area.



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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The archaeological excavation was undertaken by Archaeology South-East and was commissioned by Uttlesford District Council. The archaeological work was managed by Adrian Scruby and directed by Mark Germany, assisted by Adam Dyson and Samara King. The finds were analysed and reported on by Gemma Ayton, Luke Barber, Elke Raemen and Helen Walker.

## HER Summary Form

<b>Site name/Address:</b> Walden Castle, Museum Street, Saffron Walden	
<b>Parish:</b> Saffron Walden	<b>District:</b> Uttlesford
<b>NGR:</b> TL 53904 38716	<b>Site Code:</b> SW61
<b>Type of Work:</b> Archaeological excavation	<b>Site Director/Group:</b> Mark Germany, Archaeology South-East
<b>Date of Work:</b> 6/5/15 - 7/5/15, and 7/5/15	<b>Size of Area Investigated:</b> 8 sq m
<b>Location of Finds/Curating Museum:</b> Saffron Walden Museum	<b>Client:</b> Uttlesford District Council
<b>Further Seasons Anticipated?:</b> No	<b>Related HER Nos:</b>
<b>Final Report:</b> Essex Archaeology & History Annual roundup	<b>OASIS Ref:</b> 217733
<b>Periods represented:</b> Medieval, post-medieval, modern	
<b>SUMMARY OF FIELDWORK RESULTS:</b>	
<p>Archaeological excavation was undertaken within the keep of Walden Castle as part of a wider programme improvement and consolidation works to the monument and its immediate surrounds.</p> <p>A 2m by 4m trench, for the construction of a buttress up against the interior of the extant west curtain wall of the keep, was hand excavated to a maximum depth of c.1.2m.</p> <p>A late 17th century, or later, layer of made-ground, cut through and partially removed by the south-west corner of a large, possibly recut, pit, were encountered. The pit, possibly a robber cut or an inspection pit, contained modern artefacts and lay beneath gravel and topsoil. Most of the artefacts retrieved comprised ceramic building material or sherds of 18th to 20th century pottery, including Staffordshire-type slipware, modern stoneware and flower pots. A small quantity of residual 13th to 14th century pottery sherds presumably derive from the castle's medieval heyday.</p> <p>The results of the excavation suggest that much of the archaeological deposits within the western half of the keep relate to late landscaping and robbing of the castle fabric and are less than 150 years old. No traces of the wider original width thickness of the west curtain wall were present in the excavation area, having been robbed down to the underlying natural chalk.</p>	
<b>Previous Summaries/Reports:</b> None	
<b>Author of Summary:</b> Mark Germany	<b>Date of Summary:</b> August 2015

**OASIS Form**

<b>OASIS ID: 217733</b>	
<b>Project details</b>	
Project name	West Curtain Wall, Walden Castle Keep, Saffron Walden
Short description of the project	Excavation within the keep of Walden Castle in advance of consolidation and improvement works revealed modern deposits and a large post-medieval robber cut that had removed much of the thickness of the west curtain wall foundation. The contents of the robber cut contained sherds of late post-medieval to modern pottery, probably implying that it had been dug and backfilled within the last 100 years.
Project dates	Start: 06-05-2015 End: 02-06-2015
Previous/future work	No / No
Associated project reference codes	SW61 – Site code 8369 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Scheduled Monument (SM)
Current Land use	Other 8 - Land dedicated to the display of a monument
Monument type	CASTLE Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Modern
Investigation type	"Open-area excavation"
Prompt	Planning condition
<b>Project location</b>	
Country	England
Site location	ESSEX UTTLESFORD SAFFRON WALDEN Walden Castle, Saffron Walden
Study area	8.00 square metres
Site coordinates	TL 53904 38716 52.025025468 0.243454524524 52 01 30 N 000 14 36 E Point
<b>Project creators</b>	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South-East
Project brief originator	Archaeology South-East
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Adrian Scruby
Project supervisor	Mark Germany
Type of sponsor/	District Council

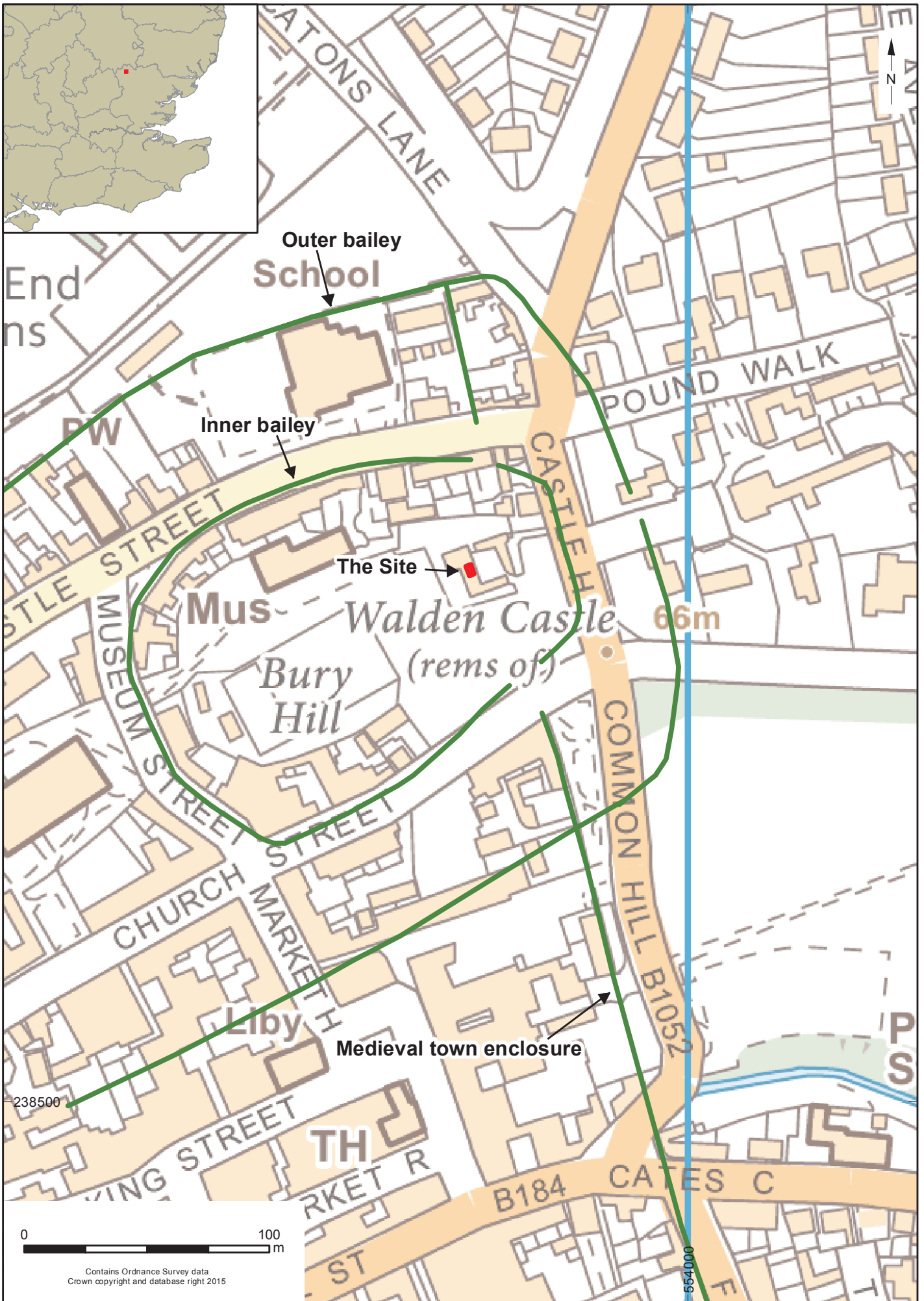
funding body	
Name of sponsor/ funding body	Uttlesford District Council
<b>Project archives</b>	
Physical Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Digital Contents	"Ceramics", "Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Survey", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Saffron Walden Museum
Paper Contents	"Ceramics", "Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Survey "
<b>Project biblio</b>	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Excavation: West Curtain Wall, Walden Castle, Saffron Walden, Essex
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Germany, M.
Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South-East
Place of issue or publication	Braintree, Essex
Description	A4. c.25 pages of text, plans and colour photographs
Entered by	Mark Germany (m.germany@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	15 July 2015

### Appendix 1: List of Recorded Contexts

Context	Type	Description	AOD
50	Topsoil	Dark greyish brown loose sandy silt with frequent small to mid-sized stones. 0.29m thick	67.70m
51	Layer	Loose gravel. 0.08m thick	67.50m
52	Fill	Light white/yellowish brown compact sandy silt with occasional stones and frequent small to mid-sized pieces of chalk. Latest fill of pit [60]	67.45m
53	Structure	Small structure constructed from hard pale grey sandy cement and large rounded stones. 0.63m long, 0.61m wide. Recorded and left in situ. Lies within topsoil [50]	67.70m
54	Fill	Dark grey loose to friable silty sand with occasional small stones. Primary fill of cut-feature [59]	67.06m
55	Layer	Light brownish yellow / white compact silt clay with occasional flecks and small pieces of chalk. 0.35m thick	67.45m
56	Fill	Brownish grey friable sandy silt clay with occasional small to large stones. Latest fill of [59]	67.70m
57	Fill	Light yellowish grey loose fragmented chalk. Secondary fill of [60]	67.58m
58	Fill	Light whitish grey loose fragmented chalk with infrequent small to mid-sized stones. Primary fill of [60]	67.45m
59	Cut	Cut feature, identified in section. 0.95m long, 0.15m deep	67.50m
60	Cut	SW corner of large, steep-sided robber cut. 2.2m+ long, 2.15m+ wide, 1.44m deep	66.26m
61	Fill	Not recorded. Secondary fill of cut-feature [59]	67.62m

## Appendix 2: Pottery Quantification

Con-text	Feature	Sherd Nos	Wt (g)	Pottery – ware and featured sherds	Date
52	60	1	28	Medieval coarseware: thick-walled body sherd, ?later type	14 <sup>th</sup> C?
		2	47	Sandy orange ware: unglazed sherds; includes upper handle attachment from a jug – grooved strap handle attaching at rim showing two thumb marks at point of attachment, everted rim, red-brown/grey/ochre surfaces	?mid-13 <sup>th</sup> C
		1	6	Staffordshire-type slipware: body sherd from hollow ware – jar or cup – showing bands of brown slip	Early to mid-18 <sup>th</sup> C
		1	156	Nottingham/Derby stoneware: hollow pedestal base from large dish or bowl, perhaps a punch bowl (e.g. Hildyard 1985, no. 256)	18 <sup>th</sup> C
		1	7	Creamware: later type where glaze is off-white rather than buttery coloured	Later 18 <sup>th</sup> to c.1830
		4	56	Modern white earthenware: transfer-printed sherds, two with willow pattern and one with red transfer print showing river-scape with bridge; also plain splayed base sherd from a hollow ware	Mid-19 <sup>th</sup> C or later
		2	56	Yellow ware: joining sherds of footring base from large jar or bowl	Late 18 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> C
		5	171	Modern stoneware: joining sherds from small cylindrical bottle, perhaps an ink bottle; sherd from a larger cylindrical bottle showing a lead glaze, sherd from a ?large jar; rim of a large cylindrical tankard with a brown wash	18 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> C
		1	19	Unidentified buff ware: fine sandy slightly vesicular fabric, everted edge, one smooth surface and one rough sandy surface, unglazed, possibly roof tile	Post-med or modern
55	layer	1	11	Medieval coarseware: body sherd showing remains of thumb applied strip	13 <sup>th</sup> C
		1	74	PMRE: pad base from bowl or jar, all over glaze, abraded; ?limescale internal deposit, but this may be post-depositional as there is also a white deposit on the breaks	17 <sup>th</sup> C or later
		1	29	English salt-glazed stoneware: sherd from large rounded vessel, perhaps a jar or jug	Late 17th to 20 <sup>th</sup> C
58	60	1	11	Staffordshire-type slipware: base sherd from jar or large, wide cup	Early to mid-18 <sup>th</sup> C
		1	24	Modern stoneware: shoulder of cylindrical bottle, perhaps an ink bottle, abraded	19 <sup>th</sup> to early 20 <sup>th</sup> C
		1	233	Flowerpot: thickened rim from large vessel, heavily encrusted with mortar on internal and external surfaces and breaks – perhaps was used as packing for a wall	18 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> C
		3	82	ironstone china: joining sherds from large bowl or jar showing pale grey marbled decoration	19 <sup>th</sup> to 20 <sup>th</sup> C
		<b>27</b>	<b>1010</b>		



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© Archaeology South-East		Walden Castle keep	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 8369	July 2015	Site location	
Report No: 2015271	Drawn by: APL		

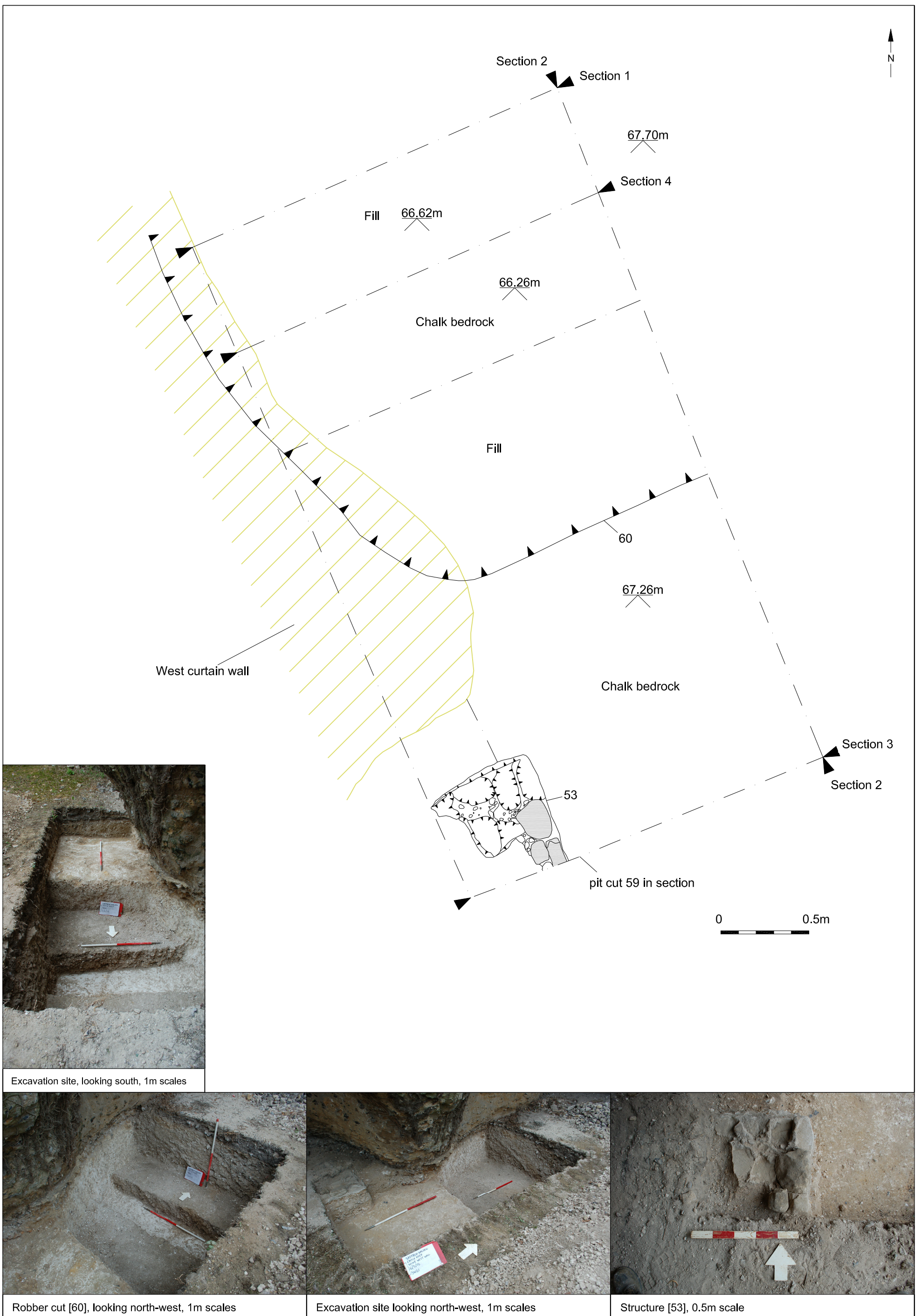


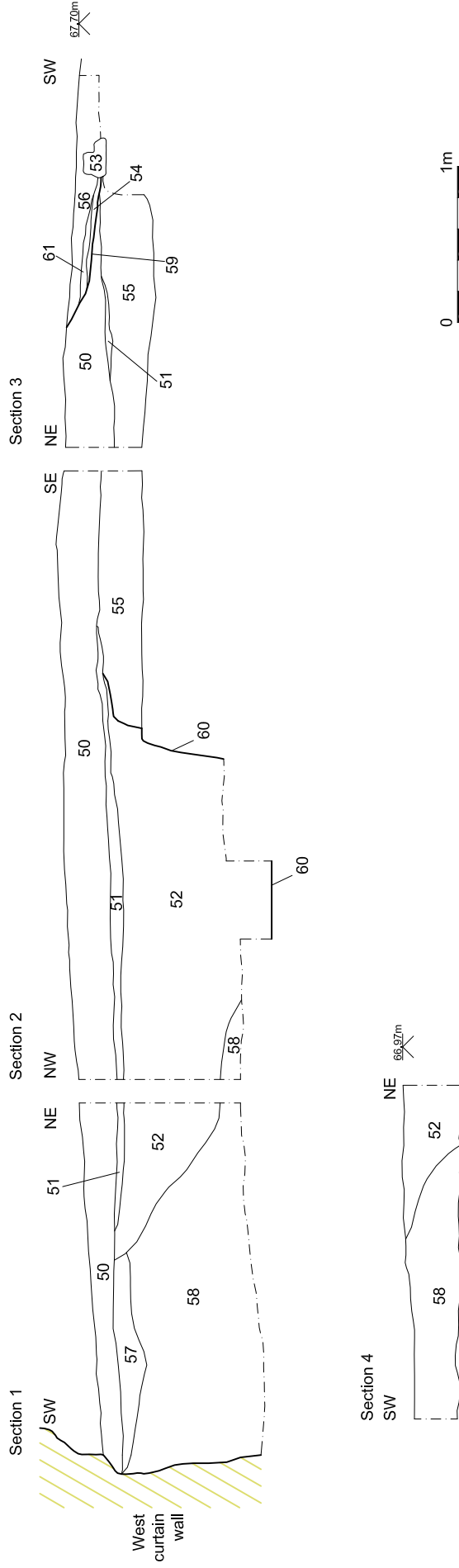


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© <b>Archaeology South-East</b>		Walden Castle, Saffron Walden	
Project Ref: 8369	July 2015	Location of excavation and areas of previous archaeological work	
Report No.: 2015271	Drawn by: APL		

Fig. 2





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