



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological desk-based and building
assessment with trial excavation in the walled
garden at Rockingham Castle, Northamptonshire



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Northamptonshire
County Council

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Report 11/34

February 2011



**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
FEBRUARY 2011**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED AND BUILDING ASSESSMENT
WITH TRIAL EXCAVATION IN THE WALLED GARDEN AT
ROCKINGHAM CASTLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
FEBRUARY 2011**

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

| PROJECT DETAILS | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Project name | The walled garden, Rockingham Castle | |
| Short description | A desk-based assessment was carried out to determine the history and development of the walled kitchen garden at Rockingham Castle. A building assessment recorded the remains of the southern enclosure of the garden and dated the structure to the second half of the nineteenth-century. The trial excavation revealed evidence of planting trenches and garden paths dating to the nineteenth-century, but no earlier activity. | |
| Project type | Desk-based and building assessment, trial excavation | |
| Site status | Structure unlisted, garden falls within Grade II* registered Park and Garden | |
| Previous work | None | |
| Current Land use | Redundant walled kitchen garden | |
| Future work | Construction of swimming pool, pavilion and tennis court | |
| Monument type/ period | Post-medieval | |
| Significant finds | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | | |
| County | Northamptonshire | |
| Site address | Rockingham Castle, Rockingham, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 8TH | |
| Study area | Southern part of walled garden, c2,400sq m | |
| OS Easting & Northing | SP 86790 91010 | |
| Height OD | c125m above Ordnance Datum | |
| PROJECT CREATORS | | |
| Organisation | Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) | |
| Project brief originator | None | |
| Project Design originator | Joe Prentice (NA) | |
| Director/Supervisor | Joe Prentice (NA) | |
| Project Manager | Steve Parry (NA) | |
| Sponsor or funding body | Rockingham Castle Estate | |
| PROJECT DATE | | |
| Start date | February 2011 | |
| End date | February 2011 | |
| ARCHIVES | Location (Accession no.) | Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc) |
| Physical | | None |
| Paper | | |
| Digital | | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY | | |
| | Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report) | |
| Title | Archaeological building and desk-based assessment with trial excavation in the walled garden at Rockingham Castle, Northamptonshire | |
| Serial title & volume | 11/34 | |
| Author(s) | J Prentice | |
| Page numbers | 13 text, 9 figs, 24 plates | |
| Date | February 2011 | |

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-BASED AND BUILDING ASSESSMENT
WITH TRIAL EXCAVATION WITHIN THE WALLED KITCHEN GARDEN
AT ROCKINGHAM CASTLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JANUARY 2011**

Abstract

A desk-based assessment was carried out to determine the history and development of the walled kitchen garden at Rockingham Castle. A building assessment recorded the remains of the southern enclosure of the garden and dated the structure to the second half of the nineteenth-century. The remains of a later glasshouse were also included, though no significant remains were encountered. The trial excavation revealed evidence of garden paths dating to the late nineteenth-century, but no earlier activity.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Rockingham Castle lies approximately twenty-three miles (thirty-eight kilometres) north-east of Northampton and just to the north of Corby (NGR SP 86790 91010; Fig 1). The owners of the castle are proposing to construct a swimming pool, pavilion and tennis court within the southern enclosure of the walled kitchen garden which lies to the south-east of the castle. No formal application has yet been made to the local authority and as a consequence, no conditions have been applied, however, the owners are keen that archaeological investigation is carried out to ensure that no historic remains are endangered. Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) has been commissioned to undertake this investigation by the Rockingham Castle Estate.
- 1.2 As there is as yet no application, and no conditions, there was no archaeological Brief but after verbal consultation with English Heritage (EH) and the local authority, Corby Borough Council (CBC), a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) has been prepared. This outlined the proposed investigation and was approved by both EH and CBC.
- 1.3 The geology of the area is of Till, mid Pleistocene Diamacton over Lower Lincolnshire Limestone Member (BGS website). The building assessment and trial excavation were carried out on 26 and 27 January 2011.

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The principal aims of the archaeological evaluation were:
 - To provide detailed information regarding the sequence and character of archaeological remains at the site, at the depth of the proposed construction disturbance
 - To interpret the archaeology of the site within its local, regional and national archaeological context
 - To inform a possible mitigation strategy.

The work was carried out in accordance with the investigative frameworks defined in *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006), following these general themes:

- Understanding the detailed pattern and evolution of rural settlements
- Understanding the landscape of castles as a high priority
- The value of geophysical survey, excavation and environmental analysis in shedding light on garden development.

2.2 All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008) and the *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010). A three part approach was adopted, consisting of:

- Desk-based assessment
- Buildings recording
- Trial trench evaluation

Desk-based assessment

2.3 The works are to be put into their appropriate context through a thorough appraisal of published, non-published and cartographic sources through consultation with the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER), which was undertaken before fieldwork commenced. The historic map evidence for the area was also examined using maps held at the Northamptonshire Record Office (NRO). Sources held by Rockingham Castle Estate were also consulted.

Building recording

2.4 An examination and photographic survey of the historic garden walls and buildings was carried out in accordance with the standards, conventions and specifications defined in English Heritage's *Understanding Historic Buildings, A guide to Good Recording Practice* (EH 2006a) to Level I/II, and in particular the records made as part of the work conformed to the following:

- A written account complying with components 1-3 and 6 of EH 2006a. This takes the form of pre-printed record forms, filled in with free-text and cross-referenced to other record types.
- A drawn record conforming to components 1 and 7 of EH 2006a. It included annotation and verification of existing Ordnance Survey Maps, scaled up to show block-use of individual structures. Architect's or specialist surveyor's plans (where supplied) were annotated at a scale of between 1:20 and 1:50, measurements verified and redrawn to show any developmental sequence, including alterations to openings and divisions.
- A photographic record conforming to components 1, 2 and 4 of EH 2006a. It entailed both general and specific photographs to show exteriors, all general interiors and specific items and fixtures/fittings, if significant. For archive purposes the photographs were primarily of black and white negative with related prints, backed up by digital photos as appropriate.

All works were conducted in accordance with the procedural documents *The Management of Research Projects on the Historic Environment* (EH 2006a, revised 2009); *Standard and*

Guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings or structures (IfA revised 2008).

Trial trench evaluation

- 2.5 The evaluation comprised trial trenching. A total of 43m of trenching, 1.8m wide, was excavated. The trench locations were focused on areas of proposed development intrusion as far as on-site constraints permitted, and were carried out in two separate areas (Fig 2).

The trenches were machine-excavated using a flat toothless bucket under continuous archaeological supervision, with the topsoil and subsoil stacked separately and adjacent to the trenches. Mechanical excavation proceeded to the top of the archaeological deposits, or to the natural substrate where no archaeology was encountered.

Archaeological excavation and recording followed the guidelines outlined in the NA Archaeological Fieldwork Manual (2006). Each feature or deposit was given a unique number consisting of the trench number and an individual context number (eg 102, Trench 1, context 2). The details of each context were recorded on pro-forma sheets. The trenches were planned and sections drawn where necessary at an appropriate scale. Levels, which were related to Ordnance Datum, were taken on the trenches at appropriate points, on section datum and on all major features. Trench locations were related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A photographic record was made of the excavation, using 35mm black and white negative film, supplemented by digital images.

All works were carried out accordance with the WSI prepared by NA (NA 2011), and the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (1985, revised 2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1994, revised 2008). All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety provisions and Northamptonshire Archaeology Health and Safety at Work Guidelines.

3 DESK BASED ASSESSMENT by Joe Prentice

3.1 Background.

Rockingham Castle was built by William I (c1028-1087) and its earliest main phase comprised a motte with two baileys, one each to the north and south. It was used primarily as a hunting lodge and administrative centre for Rockingham Forest by successive kings and queens until the fifteenth century when it fell into disrepair (English Heritage 2000). Edward Watson obtained the lease of the castle and park in 1544, and over the next forty years he built a large but architecturally simple house based on the old banqueting house in the north bailey. That building campaign was completed by his grandson, Lewis, who bought the freehold of the castle in 1619.

During the Civil War the castle was held by Parliamentary troops under Colonel Horseman and much of the north and west wings were destroyed. At the end of the war the curtain wall was demolished together with the keep, leaving only the drum towers and eastern section of the wall intact. Lewis's son Edward carried out a major restoration and it is possible he also created the terraces and mount out of the rubble of the walls and keep. Little was done until Richard Watson inherited the castle and brought in Anthony Salvin to refurbish in 1836.

- 3.2 The south bailey survives only as earthworks across the neck of the natural spur on which the main body of the castle is situated. The castle and the surrounding area are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM number 13638; Fig 3). The area

includes not only the castle and the two baileys, but also an area of medieval earthworks and warrens, primarily to the north-west and north-east of the site. To the south-east Top Moat and Bottom Moat are included. The bailey ditch is approximately 12m wide and 1m deep with a bank of roughly the same height (RCHME 1979).

The walled garden comprises two separate, but inter-connected, areas with brick walls partly faced on the outside with stone and lies to the south of this earthwork. The kitchen garden was constructed in c1840 south-east of the south bailey and south-west of the early nineteenth-century cottages and stables (English Heritage 2000, fig 3). The English Heritage register of parks and gardens records that these cottages were built c1800, however, they are not present on the Ordnance Survey Preparatory map of 1810, and it is not clear where this suggested date comes from.

- 3.3 To the south-west of the kitchen garden lies a deer park, enlarged c1485 from an earlier park which certainly existed in 1256. Sometime in the nineteenth century the park was further enlarged to the west (HER No 4184/4-MNN2610). It is understood that deer ceased to be kept in the 1930s. The boundaries of the later park are marked on a map of 1615 by Edward Mansell, a copy of which is on display within the castle (Fig 4). The castle is indicated along with a rectangular body of water to the south of the present walled garden; this appears to have been enlarged at some date to become what is now known as Top Moat. The area where the present walled garden is situated is shown simply as a field with no divisions or buildings.
- 3.4 A map of 1810, the Ordnance Survey Preparatory map, does not indicate anything in the area of the walled gardens (Fig 5). Top Moat is not indicated, but Bottom Moat is, surely a cartographical error.
- 3.5 A search of records held at the Northamptonshire Record Office did not reveal other early maps, and the earliest map to show the area accurately is the tithe map of 1849 (NRO T.158, not illustrated). Whilst the buildings of the castle are shown clearly the area immediately to the south is left blank, although by this time Top Moat has assumed its modern proportions and Bottom Moat is present. It is not clear why nothing is shown in the area between, but if the buildings and walled garden were present at this time it would be expected that they would be shown.
- 3.6 An Estate map of 1856 (NRO map 740) shows the gardeners cottages and the larger, eastern compartment of the walled garden (Fig 6). The garden is divided by a single cross path but with no peripheral paths. The area where the smaller, western compartment now lies is indicated as a narrow strip, though this does not appear to be the present walled area nor are any paths indicated. To the immediate south of the garden a track leads from the drive to the castle into the park, but no avenue of trees is indicated, though it is not certain if they were present and just not indicated as no other trees are shown on this map.
- 3.7 By the time of the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880 the two walled compartments are shown as they remain today (Fig 7). The larger compartment is divided now by cross paths with a peripheral border path and the southern compartment is divided into two, unequal, parts with a peripheral path also. The long range of glasshouses is shown in the north-east corner and the presence of paths leading up to the enclosing walls indicate that both doorways were present. No boiler house is indicated to the north of the north wall suggesting that the glasshouse was not at this time heated (see below, section 4.6).
- 3.8 The castle, whilst holding a large quantity of photographs, does not have any images of the walled gardens, a not uncommon situation where family photography would

generally concentrate on the pleasure gardens around the castle and the castle itself. The NRO holds a number of photographs relating to Rockingham, one of which was listed as "Gardeners in the veg garden" (NRO P.8729/141). The photograph is dated c1910 and shows a group of gardeners posing on, and to either side of, the central path of the larger compartment, looking south-eastwards with the lime avenue in the background (Plate 1). The smaller compartment is out of the frame on the far right of the photograph. However, the information of the larger compartment is interesting and shows dense planting, with the trees in full leaf indicating it was taken during the summer. The paths are wide and edged with the Staffordshire blue edging tiles found in the southern compartment (see below, section 4.6). Also visible are drains with iron covers close to the junction of the paths. The planting within the garden area appears to be dense, and though this is not entirely certain, appears to be mostly flowers rather than neat rows of vegetables, and there are certainly spikes of what appear to be either lupins or delphiniums. Whilst it is assumed that this was primarily a vegetable growing area, flowers were also grown in kitchen gardens for cutting for the house as well, and it may simply be that in this view the flowers are located in the foreground.

It is unfortunate that nothing can be seen of the second, smaller compartment to indicate what the planting was there.

- 3.9 The Northamptonshire HER lists known archaeological sites or find-spots within the county and records, and whilst there are many entries for the castle itself, and also for earthworks which fall within the area of the SAM there are none within the area of the walled garden.

4 BUILDING ASSESSMENT by Joe Prentice

- 4.1 The southern compartment of the walled garden was recorded to Levels I/II, and whilst the remainder of the walled garden was not included, a brief visual assessment was made at the same time to place the section which is the focus of this report in a wider context. The southern compartment is understood to have been always used as an orchard (EH 2000). For ease of description the four walls of the garden will be described as being related to the four cardinal points; the short wall closest to the castle garden the north, the dividing wall between the two sections of garden the east, the short section at the south-east end the south, and the south-western length the west (Fig 8).

Fully cultivated walled kitchen gardens are nowadays a relative rarity but at one time were far more widespread, and though they represent the pinnacle of horticultural innovation were simply an extension of an economy where almost all food was grown by those who required it or who could not travel far to obtain it. Becoming more common throughout the eighteenth century, they reached the peak of their production during the nineteenth century and the years of the twentieth century leading up to the Second World War when the loss of gardeners to the conflict compromised their effectiveness, and the increasing mechanisation after it, along with the break-up of many large estates made them uneconomic.

There is no specific formula for the layout of such gardens but they do, where possible, share a number of desirable features though these vary considerably from site to site and reflect the wealth (or interest) of the estate to which they belong. The most obvious of these are the surrounding walls which provided not only a sheltered micro-climate but protected the plants inside from animal vermin and potential theft by humans. The walls could be stone or brick, ideally at least ten feet (3m) high, though sometimes much higher. Where both materials were readily sourced, they were ideally of brick on the internal faces and stone on the external since it was regarded that brick retained the

heat better than stone which was regarded as cold and damp. Sometimes the walls were hollow and could be heated to protect the blossom of delicate specimens such as nectarines and apricots against the frost, and such hollow walls might enclose the whole garden, be limited to certain areas or indeed be free-standing across the centres of the garden. These were expensive to build and to heat, and are therefore less common than standard, solid walls.

The topography of the site was also important, ideally sloping down from the north to the south so that natural sunlight could bathe the slope for the longest possible amount of time and be oriented in such a way as to provide hot, south facing walls, and cool, north facing walls to provide a variety of growing habitats for different species. Glass houses would be built against the inner, south facing, walls with boiler houses behind on the outside along with potting sheds and other ancillary buildings. The repeal of the Glass Tax in 1845 increased the use of plate glass in all architecture, but significantly within gardens (Campbell 2006). If possible water would be provided within the garden either in the form of a well, pump or dipping pool where the gardeners could dip their watering cans, and if the latter it was most likely to be placed in the centre of the garden thus providing a visual focal point as well. Ideally the garden would be divided into at least four main plots (though often more depending on the size of the enclosed area), with a path around the periphery with beds between it and the walls.

Before the eighteenth century kitchen gardens were located as close as possible to the main house, but as they became larger (they could be enormous, that at Windsor was eventually enlarged to 31 acres) and the production of vegetables and flowers for cutting became almost industrial, it became more desirable to position the kitchen garden farther away so that the large number of (potentially noisy) staff would not be too close to the house, the tall walls would not spoil the view and the smoke from the boilers would not pollute the air of those in the family house. Before the advent of inorganic fertilizers a close proximity to the stables or home farm was also preferred so that this ready source of manure was close by.

However desirable these features might be there are almost as many configurations of layouts as there are walled gardens, and they might include all, some, or fewer of the desired elements.

- 4.2 The topography of the site is ideal for (the larger compartment of) a walled garden comprising a gentle south-west facing slope at the eastern end of a valley which lies to the south of the castle. That larger compartment of the garden (approximately 80m x 87m) as it now stands is earlier and forms a roughly square enclosed area with a row of gardeners cottages along the northern side. The north-west side of the compartment is of relatively soft red brick, 230mm x 70mm x 115mm (9 x 3 x 4 ½ inches) on the internal face and ironstone on the outer face, all bonded in lime mortar (Plate 2). This was apparently because this face could have been seen from the castle gardens. There is a single, two-centre arched doorway of dressed limestone roughly in the centre of the north side facing the castle gardens. The cottages are also built of ironstone, although some adjacent service buildings around the yard to the north are of brick. It is not clear if the original compartment was completely walled in its original phase since there is a clear butt end immediately to the north of the present doorway connecting the two compartments on the south-west side, though it would be unusual if this was the case, and the map evidence indicates that it was fully enclosed. It is not known exactly when the northern compartment was built, it is not present on the 1810 Ordnance Survey Preparatory map, but is shown on a map of 1856 of the estate and so therefore must have been built between those dates. A programme of work was carried out at the castle by the architect Salvin in the 1830's and it is possible that the walled garden was created at the same time, though there is no evidence to suggest that Salvin was directly

involved. By the time of the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880 the southern compartment is present indicating that it was added between 1856 and 1880 (Figs 6 and 7). The junction of the two phases of wall can be most clearly seen on the north side where the brick of the later, smaller compartment abuts the ironstone of the earlier wall (Plate 3).

4.3

The enclosing walls of the southern compartment of the walled garden (approximately 80m x 30m) are constructed entirely of red brick bonded in lime mortar (Fig 8, Plate 4). The bricks are 230mm x 70-75mm x 110mm (9 x 3 x 4 ¼ inches) in size and of a fairly hard fabric. The bonds used are primarily English Garden Wall Bond on the north, east and west sides with the south wall having a small section of Flemish Garden Wall Bond, though there does not appear to be any obvious reason for this, or indication that the latter is a section of re-build. All of the walls, where the lower courses were exposed, appeared to be built above a narrow offset formed by a simple step out of the lower courses below ground level. There are regular buttresses of roughly half the full height of the walls on both the internal and external faces topped with bullnose bricks laid on edge to throw off rainwater (Plate 5). The tops of the walls are capped with Staffordshire blue ceramic saddleback coping blocks, all moulded with drip grooves on either side and a central deep groove which would not only have helped the copings to dry before firing but which would also have improved grip when they were mortared onto the wall tops (Plate 6). They measure 310-315mm wide by 95mm high at the middle with the drip grooves 270mm apart. These coping bricks are still being produced in the same fabric and shape by the Ketley Brick Company although the exact source of those on site is unknown.

The only complete side of the garden is the north wall, this retains the entire structure and, as far as can be seen since the eastern end is covered in ivy, the entire length of coping. It retains a single doorway (see below, section 4.4).

The central section of the east side is missing, though both stub ends of the walls have been re-built with narrower buttresses capped with plinth headers to throw the water off (Plate 7). The date of the re-build to the stub ends is not known, but the use of cement rather than lime mortar indicates a modern date. This length of wall appears to have been raised, the upper six courses are distinctly different from those below and are of a more orange-red colour though laid in the same way as the lower courses (Plate 4). This raising of the wall may have occurred when the glasshouse was added at the northern end, though why it was continued for the whole length is unclear.

The south wall has fallen at the eastern end where it joined with the east wall of the larger compartment (Plate 8). This loss was apparently caused when the Top Moat, situated to the south, overflowed and caused a significant build-up of water against the outside of the wall. The pressure of water eventually caused the wall to collapse sending bricks almost the entire length of the garden (pers. comm. Richard Stibbly, castle gardener). The date of this collapse is not entirely certain, but is thought to have occurred during the 1960s.

The west side of the garden is the least intact with the majority of it missing, and only about 25m standing at the southern end (Fig 8, Plate 9). A very short section stands at the northern end close to the corner with the north wall, about 4m of full height wall, a slightly longer section of lower wall not to full height and then a modern pedestal or double buttress at the south end (Plate 10).

4.4 In the north-east corner of the compartment are two pedestrian doorways; that in the north wall has a two-centre arch formed of two rows of edge-laid bricks, the jambs

flanked and partly obscured by buttresses on both faces of the wall, the doorway in the east wall is of a similar shape and size but has only a single row of edge-laid bricks which form the arch (Plates 11 and 12). The doorway here is narrower, the jambs to either side partly infilled with brickwork and fitted with a timber frame, though the door is now missing. The doorway in the north wall retains its timber frame and door which comprises horizontal planks on the interior and vertical planks on the exterior. These are fitted to a shaped frame with a further horizontal external brace, integral to the frame (which is simply moulded), at the level from which the arch springs. The door is hinged on the inner face with simple iron strap hinges which are almost the full width of the door. There is evidence that the door could be locked from both sides, though what is not clear is whether the visible locks/bolts are original.

- 4.5 There is evidence on the majority of the standing walls to indicate that plants had been grown against them. The north and east walls retain plain galvanised iron bars driven horizontally into the mortar between bricks, (three bricks apart) each bar with a single hole at the outer end to retain a wire. These wires were anchored in straining bolts placed at either end of the wall so the wires could be tightened, and trees grown close to the walls with their branches trained along these wires in cordons (Plate 13). This form of permanent cordon was recommended by William Robinson, and is thought to derive from a French style of growing (Campbell 2005). In 1868 he wrote that this was longer lasting 'whereas nails had to be cut and shreds (pieces of cloth used to tie the branches on) cut, annually'. Whilst there are also a large number of nails around the garden walls, the author of this report does not consider them to be worthy of further attention; they simply represent the positioning of nails into the walls when and where a branch needed tying in.

Three galvanised metal or zinc plant labels remain, of a classic, elegant, shape (Fig 8). Two are legible, the third is not. The two legible labels are both on the east wall, facing west (in reality, south-west). The one closest to the former glasshouse bears the (pencil?) inscription *Violette Hâtive* (Plate 14). This is a variety of nectarine, roundish and of medium size, yellowish-green to purplish-red in colour which ripens in early September (Watson 1933). The second inscribed label, to the eastern end of the same wall bears the name *Imperatrice* (Plate 15). This appears to be most likely a plum, *Ickworth Impératrice*, a dessert fruit with a bright purple bloom and greenish-amber flesh ready in early October (Watson 1933). The location of these label ties, on the south-west facing wall, corresponds with general walled garden planting where the hottest walls are those that get the most sun and therefore are most suitable for more tender varieties. The shorter walls would perhaps have had pears and apples grown against them, and the west wall (north-east facing) was generally used for cherries. This is the location of the third, illegible label.

A number of pear and apple trees are extant in the centre of the garden, though these have only been here since the mid 1960s when they were transplanted from an orchard outside the garden (pers. comm. Richard Stibbly). The trees are not of any unusual or rare varieties, having been checked by a specialist on behalf of the Estate. The south compartment is thought always to have been principally used for fruit tree growing and it is assumed that the larger compartment was used for vegetables and cutting flowers.

- 4.6 Against the west side of the east wall in the north-east corner of the garden are the remains of a lean-to glasshouse which is indicated on the 1880 Ordnance Survey map (Figs 7 and 8). It is not original to the southern compartment as where the west wall of the glasshouse abuts the north wall of the walled garden it can be seen that the courses of brickwork are not bonded and do not match in height. Very little of this structure now remains apart from the stubs of the footings and the outline of the building, painted white, against the east and north walls (Plate 16). The former glasshouse was divided

into three parts by two lateral internal walls visible now only as stubs of walls at ground level and scars on the east wall; that at the northern end being the smallest, the middle section the next largest and the southern section over double the length of the middle section (Fig 8, Plate 17). These lateral walls were also not well bonded into the east wall and were only slightly taller than the buttresses; presumably they were glazed above this height so as not to block too much light.

Nothing now remains of the superstructure of the glasshouse apart from a single piece of timber loosely attached to the apex of the wall towards the northern end and a line of lead flashing along the length of the former structure. It is assumed that the walls along the west and south sides were only about three feet high and above that would have been a vertical timber frame holding glass, and in the southern gable, a doorway (indicated now only by a hook attached to the east wall which would have been used to hold the door open). The remainder of the structure would have been a single pitch sloping roof maximising both light and growing space. It is possible that there were racks or shelves along the west side either in part or all of the glasshouse, but given that it was divided into three, it seems likely that each section was for different plants and growing conditions. The glasshouse was heated since there is remaining *in situ* a short section of cast iron pipe which can be seen from the north side of the north wall, to the east of the doorway there (Plate 18). There was a small boiler house here (pers. comm. Richard Stibbley) where the hot water or steam was heated, and the scar of the flue can be seen on the face of the north wall, however, this boiler house is not shown on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1880.

There remain various lengths of cast iron floor grilles which would have originally been positioned over the heated pipes in the floor though they are not now in their original positions and appear to have been re-used as pathways and pegged to the ground with metal spikes. Their original locations are unknown, and the use of two different patterns and widths might indicate at least two phases of construction or repair. One is 360mm wide although the original length is unknown since no complete sections were seen. It has a central pierced panel with an octagonal honeycomb pattern and a border of a stylised floral motif (Plate 19). The other panels are slightly wider, 410mm wide, and similarly incomplete in length. Their central panel is of a diamond reticulated pattern with a border of pierced quatrefoils (Plate 20).

A length of Staffordshire blue edging tiles are present within the footprint of the former glasshouse, though it is not clear if they remain *in situ* or have been moved. Each tile is 300mm x 215mm x 10mm in size and has a shaped top edge with two projecting pointed and rounded nibs, alternating, so that when laid end to end the edging produces a continuous pattern (Plate 21, see also Plate 1 where they are present in the photograph of the larger garden compartment c1910). These tiles became common from the middle of the nineteenth-century and were produced by, amongst others, Barham Brothers of Bridgewater who illustrated such tiles in one of their catalogues, the date of which is unknown, but the company was established in 1857.

5 TRIAL EXCAVATION by Tim Upson-Smith

- 5.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches (Fig 2). Due to the presence of mature apple trees in the central part of the garden Trench 1 was excavated in the south-east part of the garden. It was 25m long and aligned north-west to south-east. Trench 2 was excavated in the north-western part of the garden as a T-shape, the long arm was 14m long aligned north-east south-west, with a 4m long spur on its north-western side.

5.2 Trench 1

The natural buff coloured boulder clay (103) was exposed at a depth of c0.3m below present ground surface. Three narrow loam filled gullies (c0.7m wide and 0.25m deep) were observed cutting the subsoil (102), a light grey to brown clay loam and the natural (103). At the north-western end of the trench the limestone hardcore surface of a 1.5m wide path was exposed (110). All of the features in the trench were aligned north-east to south-west and were therefore parallel to the short south side of the garden, and perpendicular to the long west side. None were dated by finds but it is known that prior to the garden becoming an orchard in the 1960s that this part of the garden was used for a commercial crop of runner beans (pers. comm. Richard Stibbly) and the features are likely to be the planting trenches for these or a similar crop (Fig 9, Plate 22).

Adjacent to the path (110) were five blue engineering brick edging tiles, complete examples of which survived within the remains of the greenhouse (Fig 9, Plate 23). There was no indication that the path was topped by a surface of fine gravels. The line of the path was faintly visible as a low earthwork in the grass, and corresponds with the location of a path indicated on the 1886 Ordnance Survey map of the garden. There was no visible evidence for drains.

All of the features were overlain by a layer of mid grey-brown loam topsoil (101) between c0.07 and 0.2m thick. It is assumed that this represents the garden soil, though the relative lack of a clear distinction between this and the subsoil suggests that it was not heavily cultivated over along period of time.

5.3 Trench 2

The natural buff boulder clay (203) was exposed at a depth of between c0.7m in the north-eastern part of the trench and c0.3m in the south-western part of the trench below present ground surface (Figs 2 and 9 section 4, Plate 24). The only feature exposed in the trench was a 2.1m wide garden path (204), cutting the subsoil (202) and natural in the short arm of the trench (Fig 9).

The path was aligned north-east to south-west and corresponds with that shown bordering the garden on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map. The loose nature and depth of the path makeup would perhaps suggest that it had a secondary purpose acting as a drain for the lowest part of the garden, obviating the need for a piped drain lying as it does, at the northern end of the garden at the lowest point. The path was overlain by between c0.2m and c0.4m of mid grey brown clay loam topsoil (201).

6 FINDS by Tora Hylton and Joe Prentice

6.1 Given the location of the site, and the total length of the trenches, remarkably few finds were recovered. Architectural elements have previously been described (copings, path-edgings and heating grilles) along with the structures.

6.2 From the trenches the only finds recovered were terracotta flower pot and nineteenth-century domestic china fragments. From Trench 1, topsoil, a small quantity of flower pot was recovered along with a single oyster shell. The flower pot pieces come from a variety of vessels of varying sizes, all are unglazed and have the typical V-shaped straight sided profile with a thickened rim. A few examples bear a single, horizontal scored line below the rim and one has the letters AY stamped into the body. It is not known what this represents, for whilst the company Sankey were, and are still, well known producers of flower pots, the letters A and Y do not appear consecutively in their company name.

From the hardcore path base a broken brick was observed, the height and width are the same dimensions as those of the surrounding walls, the length is unknown since it is incomplete. It is assumed to be a broken fragment from that structure, and of the same date. It was not retained.

- 6.3 From Trench 2, topsoil (201), a similar quantity of flower pot fragments was recovered along with a single piece of underglaze transfer decorated china, probably a small plate. None of the flower pot was stamped.

A single base sherd from a bottle in dark-green glass was recovered from the same layer. The diameter of the base (c140mm) and the curvature of the wall suggest that it probably originates from a type of wine bottle dating from the late seventeenth-early eighteenth-century (c1680-1730). Stylistically, the bottle is squat with a short neck and it is often referred to as an "Onion" bottle.

From the upper surface of the subsoil (202) two pieces of nineteenth-century domestic china were recovered, both un-patterned and of low quality. From the hardcore path base (204) two further pieces of similar, un-patterned china were recovered of similar quality.

Table 1. Pottery quantification, weight in grammes.

| FABRIC TYPE | TRENCH/CONTEXT NUMBER | | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|-----|--------|
| | 101 | | 201 | | 202 | | 204 | |
| | No | Weight | No | Weight | No | Weight | No | Weight |
| Post-Medieval Pottery | | | | | | | | |
| Underglaze transfer printed | | | 1 | 3 | | | | |
| Utilitarian Whites wares | | | | | 2 | 148 | 2 | 40 |
| Flower pot | 19 | 169 | 17 | 275 | | | | |
| Total | 19 | 169 | 18 | 278 | 2 | 148 | 2 | 40 |

7 CONCLUSIONS

Nothing was found during the evaluation within the southern compartment of the walled garden which relates to the early history and development of Rockingham Castle. The site lies to the immediate south of the southern bailey ditch which remains as an earthwork, but there is no additional knowledge of how, or if, this area was occupied. In keeping with other military sites of this period, it is most likely that the area was kept clear as a matter of course. Similarly nothing was found from the period of the English Civil War.

The earliest of the site maps shows the area of the evaluation to be apparently laid to pasture, and it appears to have remained so until the early years of the nineteenth century. It also lies outside the medieval deer park.

The walled kitchen garden compartments at Rockingham Castle can clearly be dated to two separate phases; the larger being the earliest, certainly built after 1810 but before 1856, and perhaps at the same time that the castle was re-modelled by Salvin in the 1830s. There is not, however, any evidence to indicate that he was directly responsible for the walled garden or the adjacent cottages. This large, roughly square enclosure is typical of a walled garden of the mid nineteenth-century. It occupies a fairly ideal site

being located on a south-west facing gentle slope, and it is not too far away from, nor too close to, the main residence. The provision of cottages and a farmyard close by allowed the workers to be conveniently close to their work, and to a source of manure for the gardens, whilst being out of sight from the pleasure gardens.

It is likely that during the time when this was the only walled compartment, fruit trees were grown against the walls, and perhaps in an unenclosed orchard, or one bounded by hedges, to provide additional cropping. At some date after 1856 but before 1880 the southern compartment was added, and again at an unknown later date, a glasshouse was built in the north-east corner.

The walls of the southern walled garden and the glasshouse in the north-east corner have suffered degradation during the twentieth century, and only vestiges of the glasshouse now survives, part of a national pattern of loss. Too little survives now to ascertain which parts were used for growing specific types of fruit, vegetables and probably, also, flowers.

Two paths present on the First edition Ordnance Survey map, a peripheral border path and cross path, were located and one has been confirmed as having been edged with Staffordshire blue edging tiles (which can be seen in a photograph of c1910 of the other garden compartment). A closer dating is not possible for these tiles since they are ubiquitous throughout the latter half of the nineteenth-century, and are still being produced today.

Few finds were recovered, all apart from a single fragment of bottle glass dating to the nineteenth-century, and being predominantly flower pot fragments. They unsurprisingly mostly relate directly to gardening, representing primarily flower pots with a few pieces of domestic china which may have derived from composting or manuring. The only planting trenches uncovered appear to relate to late twentieth-century cultivation which suggests that the area was, as had previously been thought, an orchard rather than more intensely cultivated vegetable and flower garden which was apparently located in the larger compartment. The shallow depth of cultivated topsoil also suggests that the compartment was not heavily dug-over for any length of time, and certainly shows no signs of double-digging.

The current proposals by the castle's owners include the construction of a swimming pool, tennis court and pavilion within this smaller compartment of the walled garden complex. This will involve the repair of the surrounding walls to their original height with the re-use of existing materials where possible, and new materials as close to the original as possible. This will restore the visual integrity of the complex which at present is only partial. There are no plans to re-build the glasshouse since too little survives to accurately reconstruct its original form. The construction of the proposed new internal features will remove some sections of paths within the area, though not entirely so with large areas being retained *in situ*. None are historically significant, and elements of the edging materials are preserved in perfect condition elsewhere within the complex. It is understood that *ex situ* path edging elements will be incorporated within the new complex, thus providing some continuity of design. The two doorways into the garden are to be retained.

Further archaeological investigation is not thought to be necessary during the works to create the tennis court, swimming pool or pavilion given the essentially blank findings of the evaluation, and merely uncovering larger areas of late nineteenth-century paths and twentieth-century bedding trenches is not thought to be justifiable archaeologically.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are extended to the owners of Rockingham Castle and estate workers for their assistance during the works and the opportunity to copy the map held at the castle.

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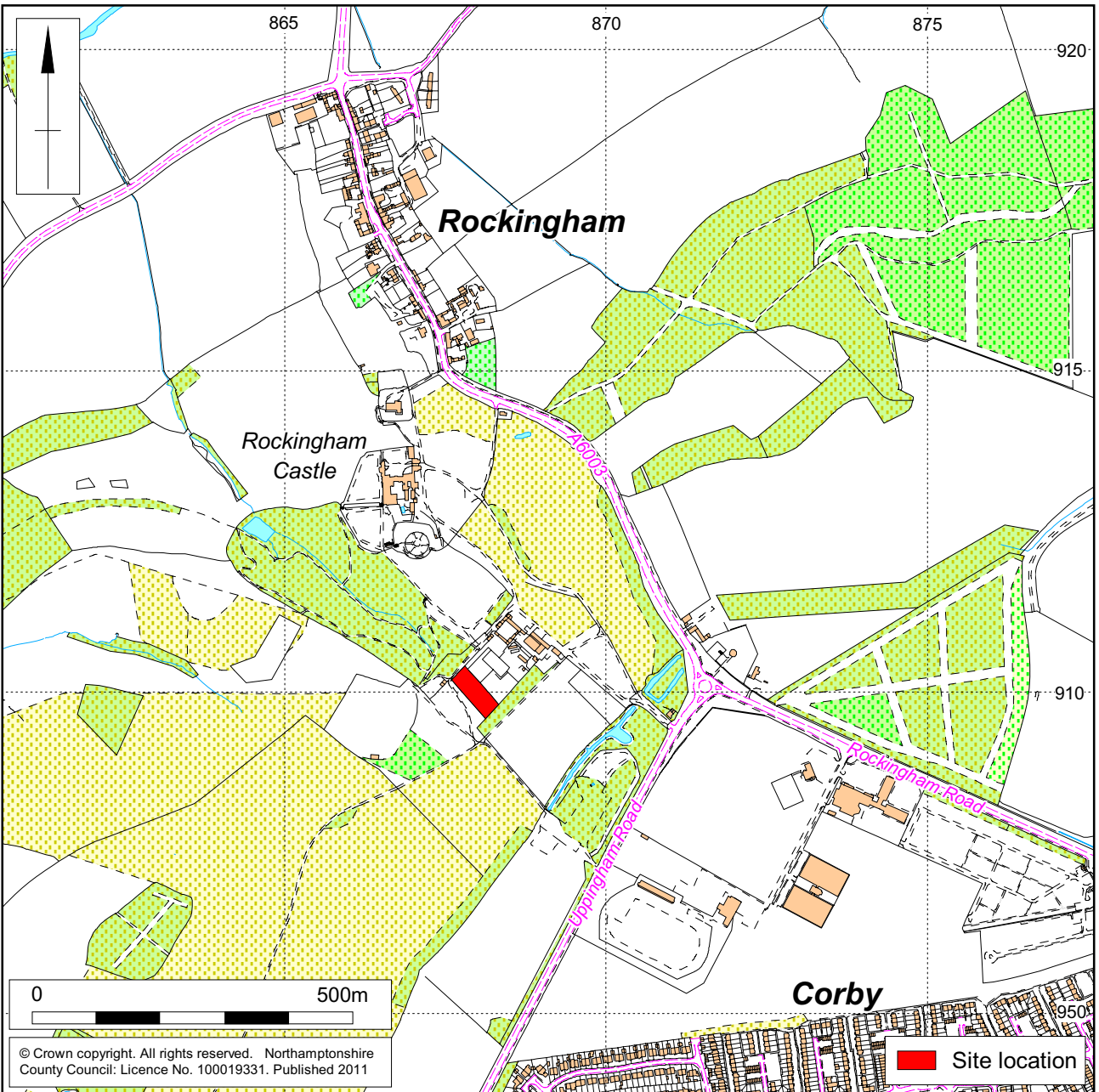
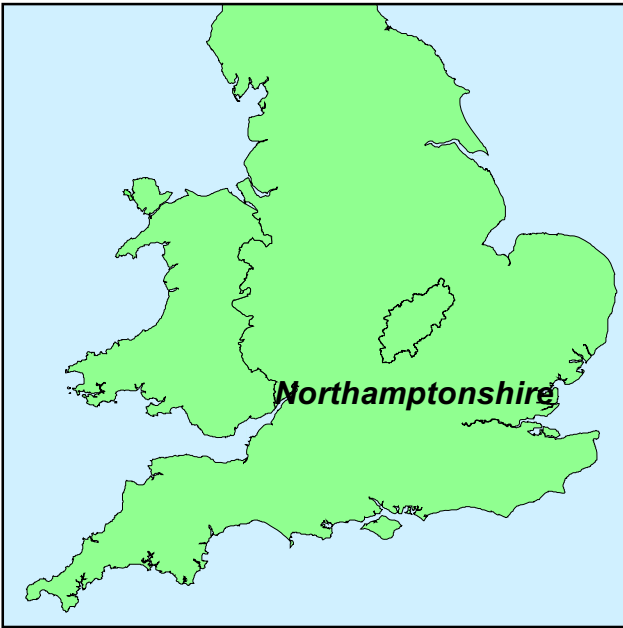
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Glossary

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bullnose bricks | Bricks with one rounded corner, often used on the jambs of doors and windows. Primarily used to prevent sharp corners causing injury to livestock, but often used elsewhere |
| Plinth header | Brick with one corner cut off at an angle of 45 degrees, often used to form the surface of a plinth in a wall |
| Saddleback coping | Triangular capping stones or ceramic blocks used to provide a weatherproof top to walls to prevent water ingress |



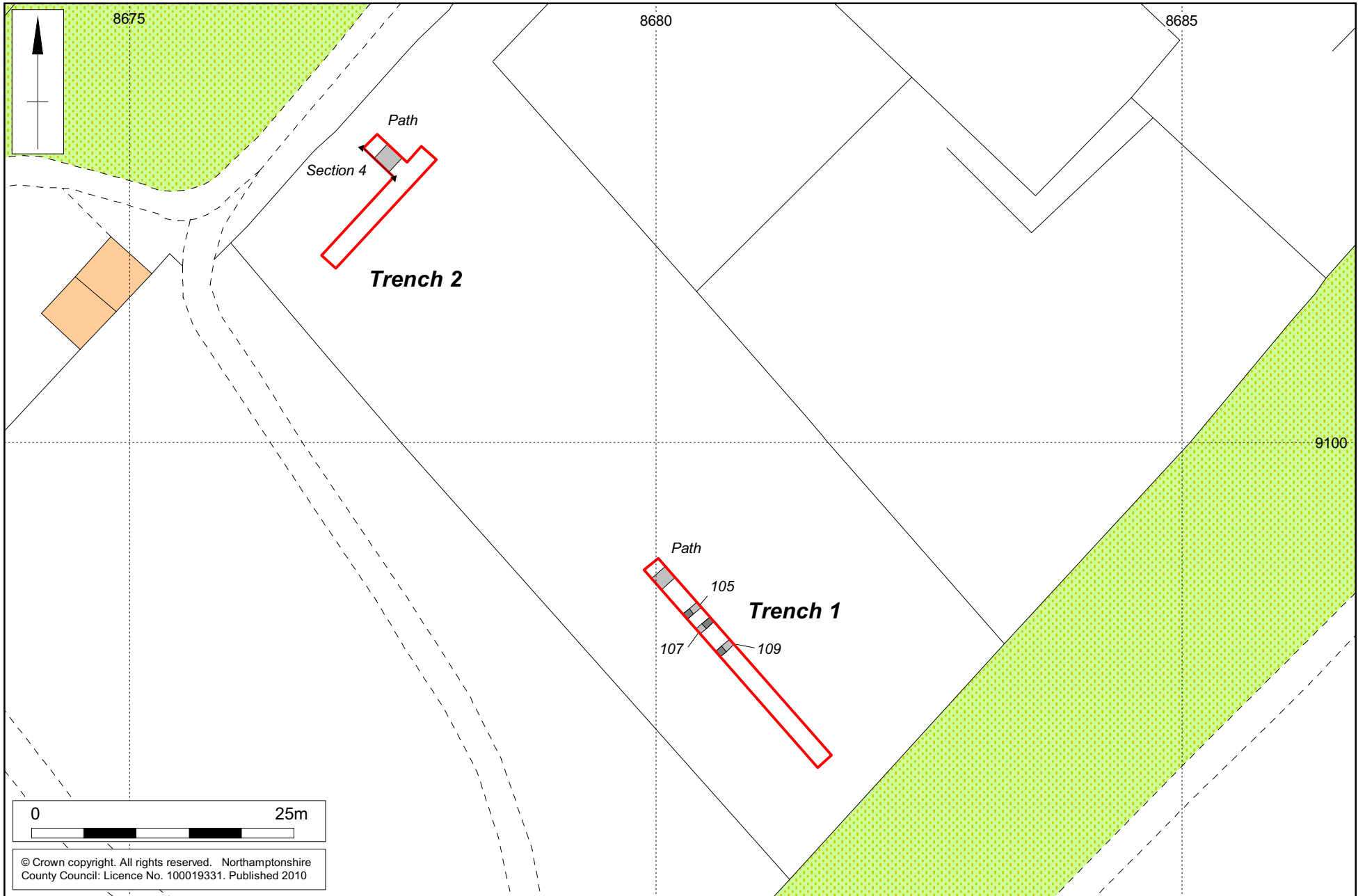
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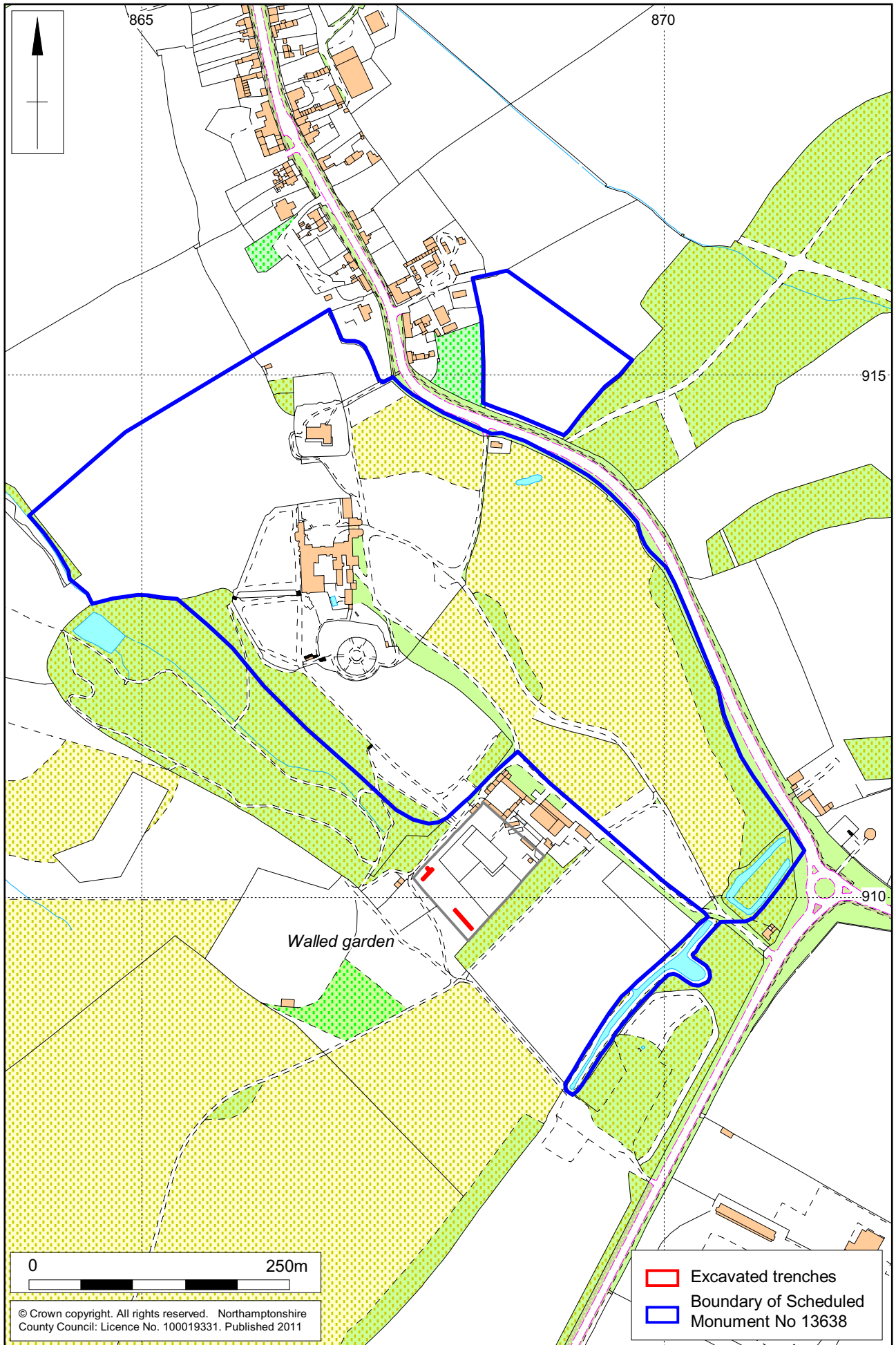
Site location Fig 1

Scale 1:500

General site plan showing excavated trenches

Fig 2





Scale 1:5000

Rockingham Castle, Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 13638

Fig 3



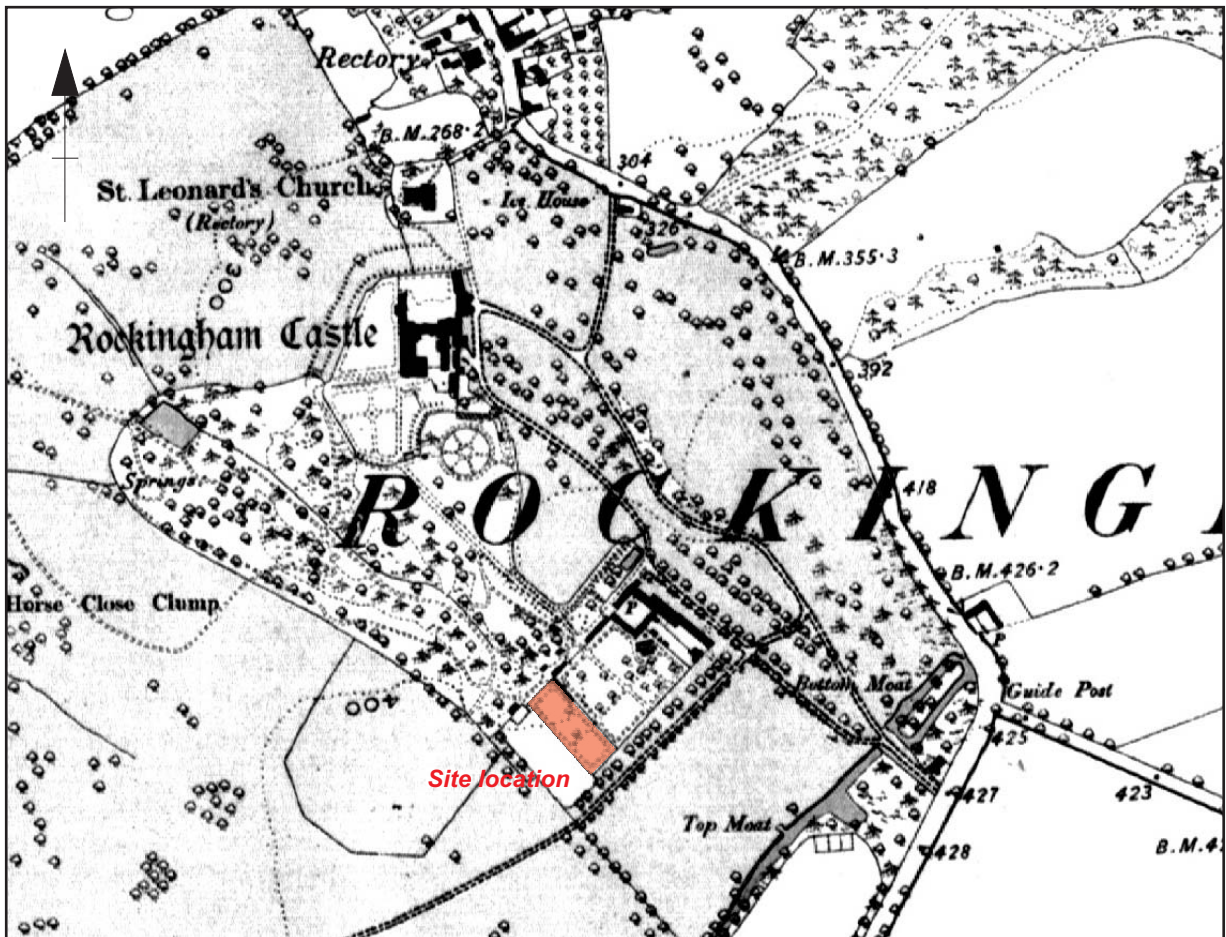
1615 Estate map by Edward Mansell. Copyright the Rockingham Castle Estate Fig 4



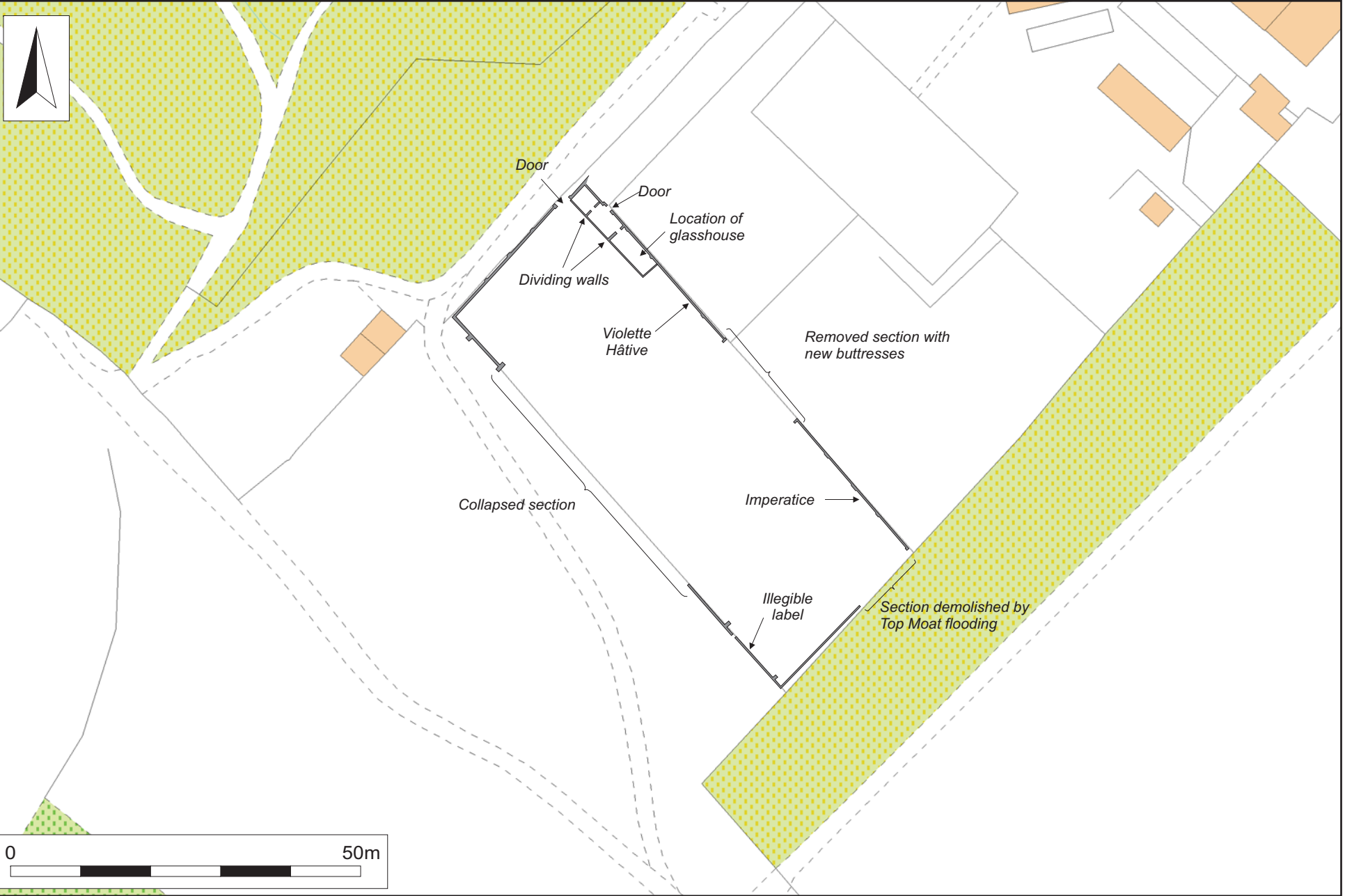
1810 Ordnance Survey Preparatory map Fig 5



Estate map of Rockingham, 1856 (NRO map 740) Fig 6



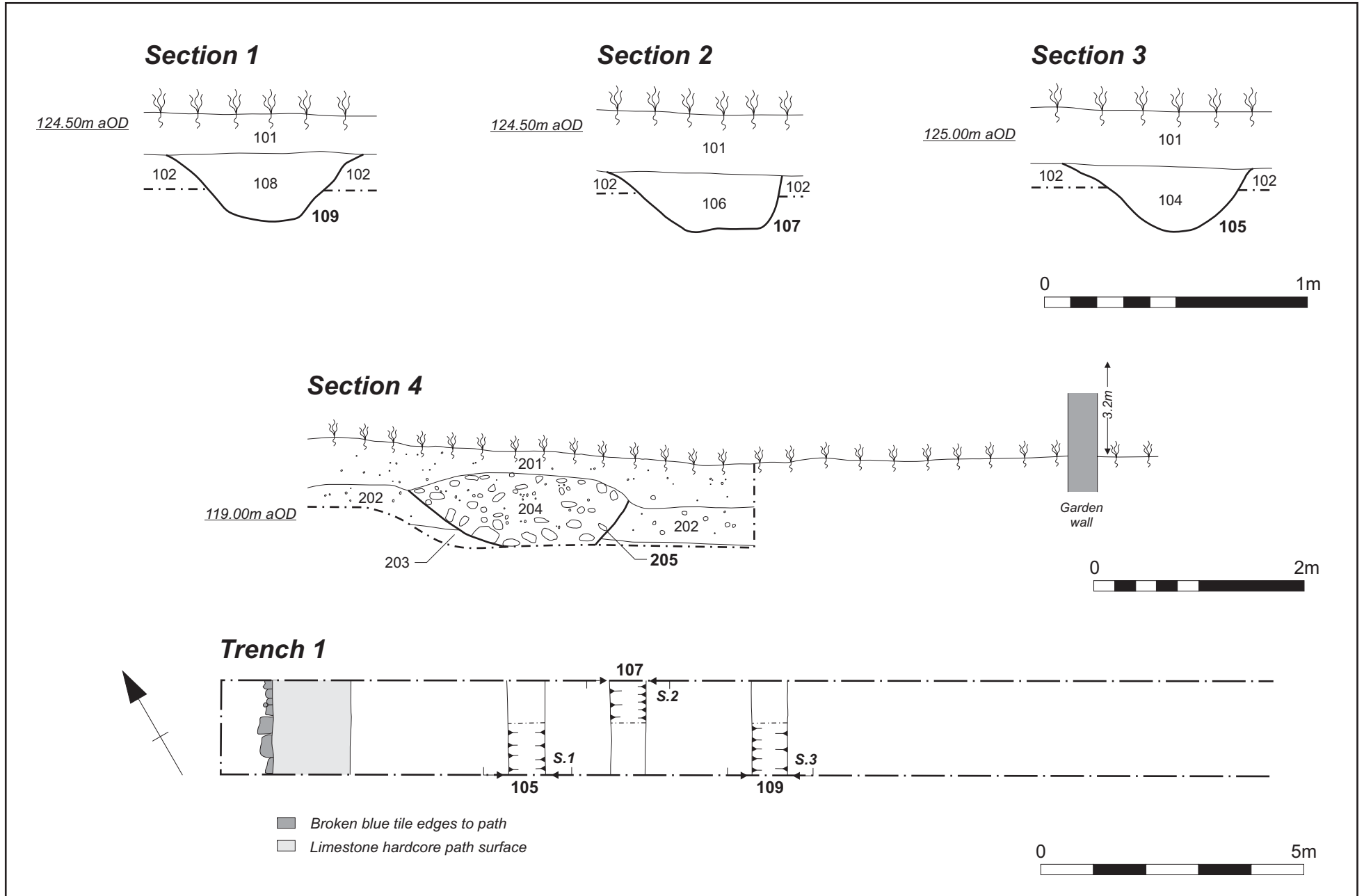
First Edition Ordnance Survey map of Rockingham, 1880 Fig 7



Scale 1:750

Plan of the southern compartment of the walled garden showing standing remains (Copyright The Rockingham Castle Estate)

Fig 8





Photograph c1910 showing gardeners in the larger compartment of the walled garden, looking south-east (NRO, P.8729/141) Plate 1



The north ironstone face of the original, larger, walled garden, looking south-west Plate 2



Join of the earlier ironstone faced walled garden, and the later, brick addition, looking south-west Plate 3



The configuration of the wall- English Garden Wall Bond Plate 4



Wall buttress with capping of bullnose bricks laid on edge Plate 5



Staffordshire blue ceramic saddleback coping block, scale in centimetres Plate 6



Re-built ends of the east wall with terminal buttresses, looking south-east Plate 7



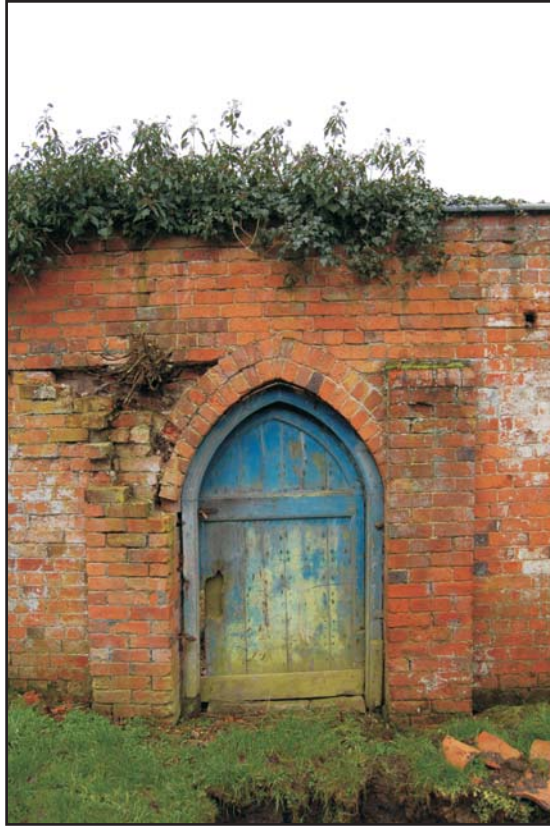
Collapsed section of the south wall (right of photo) from the south-west Plate 8



South end of the collapsed west side of the garden, looking south-east Plate 9



North end of the west side of the garden, looking east Plate 10



North side of the door in the north wall of the garden, looking south Plate 11



East side of the doorway between the larger and smaller compartments of the walled garden, looking west Plate 12



Straining bolts for the cordon wires on the south side of the north wall of the gardens, looking east Plate 13



Plant label *Violette Hâtive*, scale in centimetres Plate 14



Plant label *Imperatrice*, scale in centimetres Plate 15



Former glasshouse, looking north-east Plate 16



Scar of middle internal dividing wall within the glasshouse, looking east Plate 17



Remnant of cast iron heating pipe within duct from demolished boiler house on north side (foreground) of the garden, looking south Plate 18



Heating grille, scale 0.5m Plate 19



Heating grille, scale 0.5m Plate 20



Staffordshire blue ceramic path edging tile, scale in centimetres Plate 21



Planting trench 105, looking west Plate 22



Garden path (110) in Trench 1 with collapsed and broken path edging tiles, looking east Plate 23



Path base (204) in Trench 2, looking west Plate 24



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