YORK ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

STAYLEY HALL, HOWARD STREET,

STALYBRIDGE,

TAMESIDE

WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

by B. Antoni

REPORT NUMBER 2013/50

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YAT York Archaeological Trust

AOD Above Ordnance Datum

BGL Below Ground Level

1. SUMMARY

Between November 2010 and June 2012 York Archaeological Trust undertook a watching brief at Stayley Hall, Howard Street, Stalybridge, Tameside (Figure 1). The objective was to record any archaeological remains exposed during the excavation of a number of new foundation and service trenches accompanying the conversion of the Hall and a series of outbuildings to form new dwellings.The findings of the watching brief showed, with the exception of trackways serving two of the outbuildings and a large midden base, that any archaeological features or deposits any earlier than the 19th century had been removed by late 19th/early 20th century quarrying, or by this latest re-development of the site.

2. INTRODUCTION

York Archaeological Trust undertook an archaeological watching brief at Stayley Hall, Howard Street, Stalybridge, Tameside (NGR SJ97569971, SMR no.619; Figure 1). The watching brief was undertaken on several occasions between November 2010 and June 2012, and was primarily concerned with recording stone sett trackways located in Buildings 5 and 6, a large midden base, and the internal floor surfaces of building 7, before they were partially destroyed by foundation trenches of new dwellings. Buildings 5 and 6 were demolished, whereas the external walls of building 7 were retained, restored and subdivided to create 3 new dwellings. The latter part of the watching brief was concerned with observations made during the excavation of a series of new drains and a large flood attenuation tank (Figure 2).

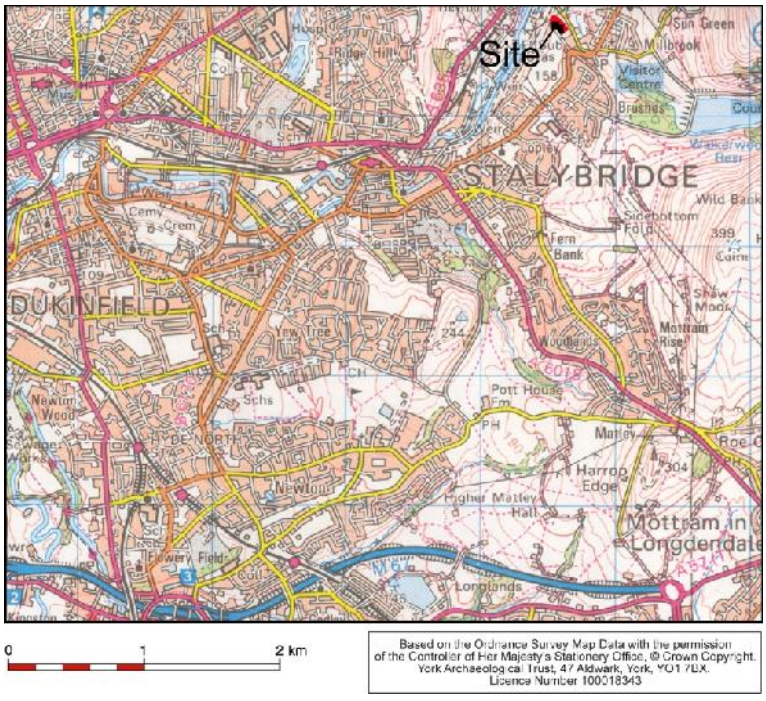

Figure 1 Site Location

The work was carried out at the behest of Persimmon Homes North West, in compliance with an application for Listed Building Consent for the alteration of Stayley Hall and associated barns and outbuildings into residential use (09/00841/LBC), under planning approval 09/00840/FUL. Archaeological conditions were set on the application by Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council's Planning Officer, Ms C Blacket, under consultation with County Archaeologist, Norman Redhead (GMAU).

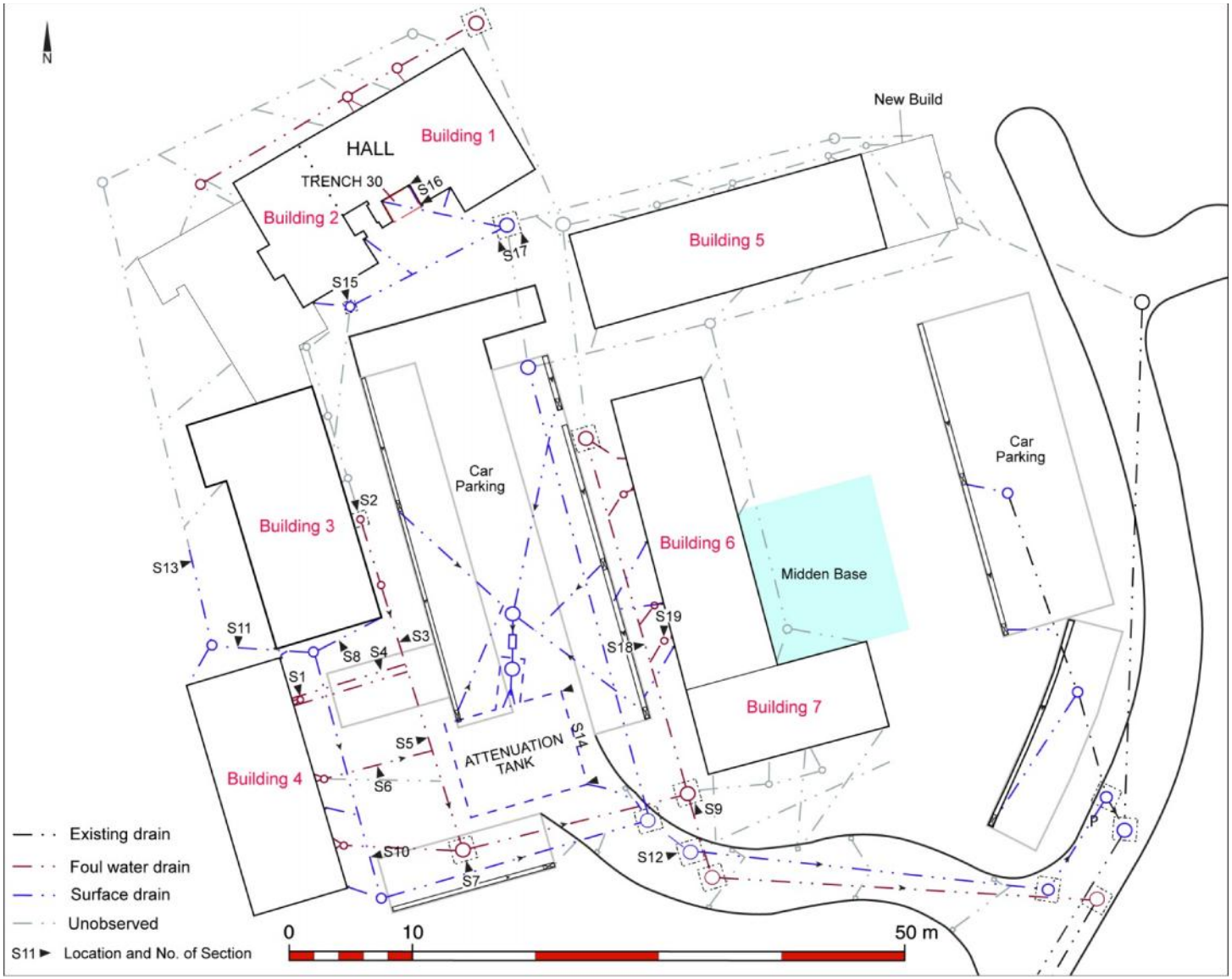

Figure 2 Locations of drainage trenches and sections

3. METHODOLOGY

The watching brief involved observations on several aspects of the development, primarily concerning the recording of stone sett surfaced trackways in buildings 5 - 6, any internal floor surfaces associated with building 7, and a stone sett surfaced, large midden base located east of building 6. This work was undertaken before the surfaces were partially truncated or, as in the case of building 7, destroyed by the development of the site.

This part of the work was followed by observing and archaeologically recording the excavation of several drainage trenches intended to serve the new and/or substantially re-built dwellings (1 – 7, Figure 2). A large attenuation tank was integrated with the surface water drainage system, to alleviate the risk of flooding in times of prolonged or heavy rainfall.

Lengths of individual drainage trenches were cut down to finished depth before sections (S1-19, Figure 2) were selected for hand cleaning and archaeological recording. In many instances there was little variation in the deposit sequences across the drainage runs, hence it was deemed unnecessary to illustrate and describe all of them in this report. Those not used can be found in the site archive if further reference is required.

The stone sett track-ways located in buildings 5 and 6 (Figures 5 and 6?) were machine cleared of overburden before they were cleaned, recorded and photographed in advance of being partially destroyed by new foundation trenches. With regard to Building 6, this also included the demolition and clearance of all the standing walls and their foundations before the track-way could be properly uncovered and recorded.

The midden base was exposed and recorded before a new foundation trench was cut along its western edge. The remainder was, without an archaeologist present, lifted and re-laid at a later date.

Trench 30 (Figure 2) was located in a recess on the external, southern facade of the Hall. This was located over Trench 9 of an archaeological assessment undertaken in 2003 (Gore, E, YAT Report 2003/26). It was re-excavated because the archaeological features observed in the assessment were to be destroyed by the drainage works, as well as the area being lowered to match the formation level of a new garden and walkways fronting the hall.

All groundworks were undertaken by the use of a 5 ton, 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision. Archaeological deposits and

features were hand cleaned and recorded as drawn plans at a scale of 1:20 or 1:100, sections at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10. Deposits and features were described using pro-forma context recording sheets, following the procedures laid down in the Trust's fieldwork manual (YAT 2005) and a series of digital colour photographs was taken throughout. The site records are currently stored with York Archaeological Trust, under Portland Basin Museum accession code ASTMS: 2011.38. No finds were recovered.

4. LOCATION, GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The site is located on the western edge of the Pennines, on a spur of land which extends towards the north and overlooks the Tame Valley and Millbrook. The solid geology of the area comprises Millstone Grit, Culm Measures and solid sandstone beneath glacial drift deposits of sands and gravels. The site lies at c.150m OD and the surrounding land falls away steeply in all directions except towards the south, where the site is approached up gently sloping ground.

5. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The history of the development area has been previously covered in a report on the 2003 archaeological evaluation of the site (Gore, E, 2003, YAT report number 2003/26). This section will, therefore, comprise an abridged version of the facts laid out in that report.

The place-name Stayley, meaning 'the place where staves are got' probably originates from the early Norman period Nevell (1991, 95). Stayley is not mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, however, although it may have been part of Mottram manor at that time (Nevell 1991, 43). Details of subsequent land ownership and tenants in the manor of Stayley from 1200 to the 15th century are summarised by Nevell (1991, 43-4).

The first suggested use of the site in the medieval period was in around 1343, when it is thought that a manor house was constructed on or near the current location of Stayley Hall. This is implied by two references, the first mentions 'le chaumbur' of Robert de Stavelegh in 1343. The second talks of 'the new halle' in a set of accounts of Sir Ralph Staveley from the period 1399-1420. These documents have been described in greater detail by Sandy Haynes, archivist to the Stalybridge Estate. This may have been replaced by a timber-framed, jettied hall by Sir William Booth in 1556, with a western annexe added nine years later. The hall was encased in stone sometime in the early 17th century by William Booth's son, George. Haynes (2003, 5) believes the stone rebuild took place c.1600 during a period when Sir George Booth carried out building work on all his other estates. The status of the Hall had declined in significance by the end of the 17th century when it was let out to tenant

farmers, remaining occupied up until the 1940s, only to be used as a cow byre in its final days.

Agricultural outbuildings (Figure 2, Buildings 3 – 7), which were added to the south of Stayley Hall between the late 17th and 19th century, remained in use up until the latter 20th century.

6. RESULTS

6.1 BUILDING 5 AND 6 WATCHING BRIEF

6.1.1 BUILDING 5

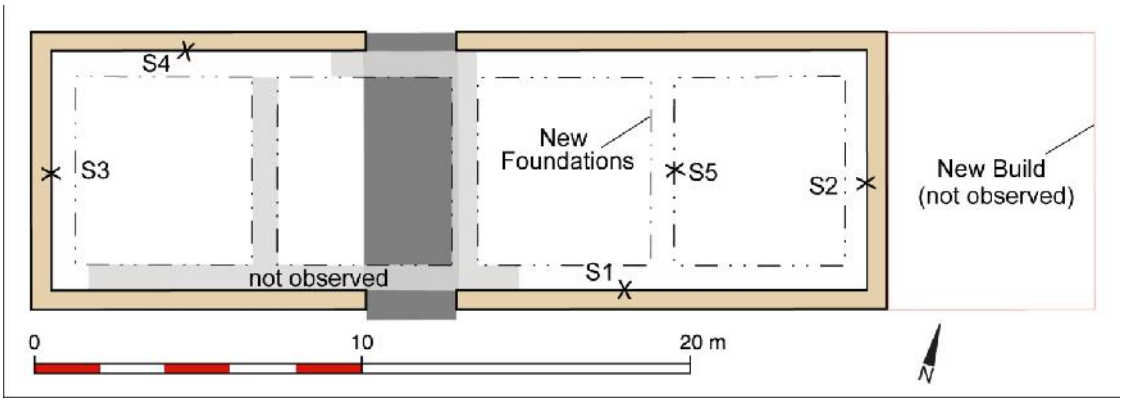

Figure 3 Plan of Building 5 showing layout of new foundation trenches and location of recorded sections (S1 – 5).

Building 5 was located adjacent to the south-east corner of the hall (Figure 2). This former Barn was west-north-west / east-south-east aligned and was, externally, 26m long and 11.2m wide. The walls, up to 0.50m thick, were constructed from random coursed small – large, flat or blocky sandstone fragments, mostly unworked, bonded with a desiccated, friable to stiff crumbly clay and chopped straw mixture.

The space within Building 5 was to be divided to form 4 new dwellings (Figure 3). This was undertaken by the excavation of a series of foundation trenches up against the inner face of the standing walls. The barn was then subdivided into separate units by cutting a second set of trenches across the main axis of the building. The last part of this work involved cutting away a track way to accommodate the new footings wherever necessary (Figure 3). This was not undertaken at the time of the watching brief as the building had to be abandoned when the unshored walls at the southern corner of the barn collapsed, destabilising the roofing timbers and rendering the rest of the building unsafe. Because of this, the building was abandoned for many weeks, pending a decision from a structural engineer as to the

best way to continue. The building was subsequently made safe and the works completed without an archaeologist present.

The foundation trenches were 0.80m wide up against the barn walls, 0.60m wide elsewhere. They were all machine excavated to a depth of between 1 – 1.80m BGL. The variation in depth was brought about by cutting the trench base to a horizontal level within an area of ground which sloped up gently from east (S2) to west (S3).

Any floor surfaces inside the building were, with the exception of the track way, absent but Section 4 (Figures 3 and 4, Plate 1?) has been chosen as appropriate to represent the whole.

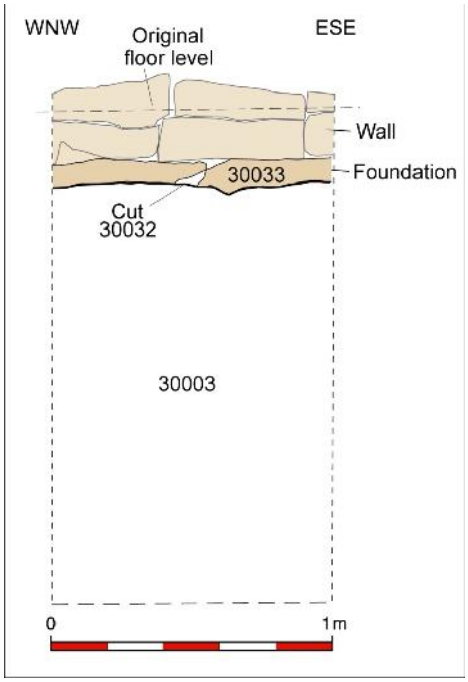

Figure 4 Building 5, South-south-east facing Section No.4

In this location, the foundation trench was up to 1.72m deep and the earliest deposit encountered was a 1.50m thick, natural subsoil (30003) comprising a mixed loose, light to mid brownish orange sand and pebble gravel which continued beyond the base of the trench (Plate 1).

Plate 1 Building 5, South-south-east-facing Section No. 4. 0.50m scale divisions

The top of 30003 was truncated by the construction cut (30032) for the foundations of the barn (30033). The depth of this could not be ascertained as the floor level(s) within the barn had been reduced before the watching brief commenced. All that could be said is that the construction cut in this location was c. 0.12m deep and had a flat, irregular base. It contained a single foundation course of large, dry bonded, flat un-worked sandstone fragments (30033), up to 0.18m thick. A single course foundation was used throughout the building, suggesting that the footing stones had been laid within a shallow construction trench cut into the top of the original, sloping ground surface. The first course of the walls was dry bonded directly on top of foundation 30033, the slope down in the foundations being levelled off in the upper wall courses during construction.

Both the foundation course and inner faces of the walls were sealed by re-deposited natural sands, reaching to a height of 0.18m above foundation 30033. As the depth of this deposit tended to increase towards the eastern end of the building it suggested that it had most likely been laid down to rectify the naturally sloped ground level inside the building, once the outside walls were partially built or completed. The top of it was cut into by the clearance cut for a stone sett track way.

The track way (Figure 5, Plate 2) comprised 80 x 160mm setts and had been laid across the width of the barn to connect opposed 2.75m wide doorways, as well as provide a through access across the building.

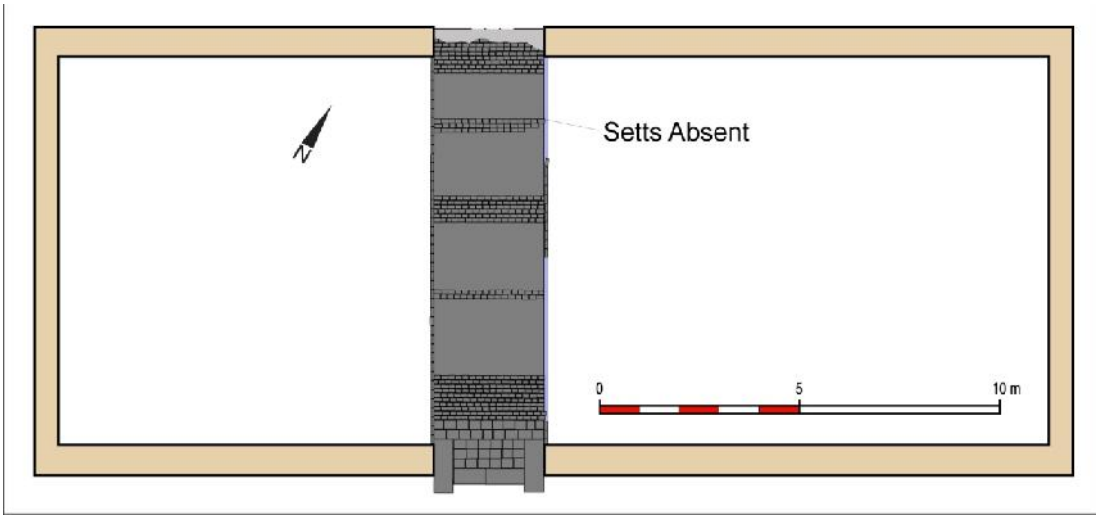

Figure 5 Track way, Building 5

The track way was up to 2.9m wide, over 11m long and the southern end projected 0.17m beyond the outer face of the southern barn wall. At this end of the track way, a noticeably different build was employed. The first metre of the surface at the southern entrance was strengthened with five rows of large, 170 x 290mm stone setts, edged by large sandstone ashlar on three sides (Plate 3).

Plate 2 Building 5 track way. Looks north-north-west. 0.5m scale divisions

The edging comprised a single block, 1m long, up to 0.50m wide to east and west, whereas the southern side was bounded by two 0.30m wide blocks, one being 0.83m long and the other 0.91m long, each laid end to end to span the width of the doorway.

Plate 3 Detail showing larger setts and stone surround at southern entrance. Note remains of iron door runner to top left. Looks south-south-east. 0.5m scale divisions

Despite not being fully excavated, enough of the floor within the northern door opening was exposed to show that it lacked the large stone edging and that the smaller setts continued beyond it (Plate 4).

Plate 4 Northern doorway. Looks north-north-west. Note parallel wheel ruts left and right of scale. 0.5m scale divisions.

This suggested that the track way had been strengthened in the southern entrance only, implying that a one-way system may have been used. Laden horse drawn carts most likely entered through the south door for unloading before leaving via the northern doorway. This avoided the necessity of reversing a horse cart back through a relatively narrow doorway...

A short length of round iron bar (Plate 3), affixed to one of the edging stones in the southern entrance, showed that the barn door(s) latterly slid opened on runners. This was also most likely to have been the case at the northern entrance as a steep, up to 0.40m high, rise in the ground level outside the barn would have prevented hinged doors being opened outwards.

Elsewhere, the track way was constructed from the smaller 80 x 160mm setts, laid with their longer sides parallel with the main axis of the barn. Down each side of it, however, a single course width retaining kerb was formed level with its surface. The kerb used similar sized setts but in this instance they were aligned 90° to the surface of the rest of the track way.

The efficacy of the strengthening of the southern doorway was evidenced by its condition being significantly better than the well used, buckled and rutted state of the surface to the north of it (Plate 5).

Plate 5 Record shot showing kerbstones along western edge (foreground) and buckled, rutted surface away from southern entrance. Looks east-south-east. 0.5m scale divisions.

The degradation of the surface was exacerbated by the lack of a firm bedding deposit. The individual setts were laid within a shallow bedding trench which, at up to 0.15m deep, had the same dimensions as the track way and was cut directly into the top of the natural sands. In some instances a soft lime mortar was used to infill between the setts, although a loose, medium – coarse grained dirty brown grey sand was the norm.

The stone sett track way may have been constructed around the same time as the barn but, as the construction of the new build was partially completed before the archaeologist re-visited the site, this remains uncertain.

6.1.2 BUILDING 6

Building 6 (Figure 2), another former barn, was located c.6m to the south of building 5. It was a rectangular, north-north-west / south-south-east aligned building c. 25m long and 7m wide externally. The external walls of Building 6 were constructed in a similar manner to those of Building 5 but, at 0.60m wide, were slightly thicker. Building 7, a former cart shed and/or granary appeared to be of a contemporary construction. The southern end of the eastern wall of Building 6 was tied in with the northern wall of Building 7 and the western wall of both was continuous. (Figure 6, Plate 6).

Plate 6 Elevation showing remains of western wall of Building 6/7 at north-west corner of Building 7 (far right). 0.10m scale divisions.

The external walls of Building 6 were reduced to ground level to allow the construction of a terrace of four new properties over the footprint of the original barn (Figure 6). The exception was the eastern wall of the new build which was located immediately outside the line of the original barn wall, necessitating the removal of part of a former midden base.

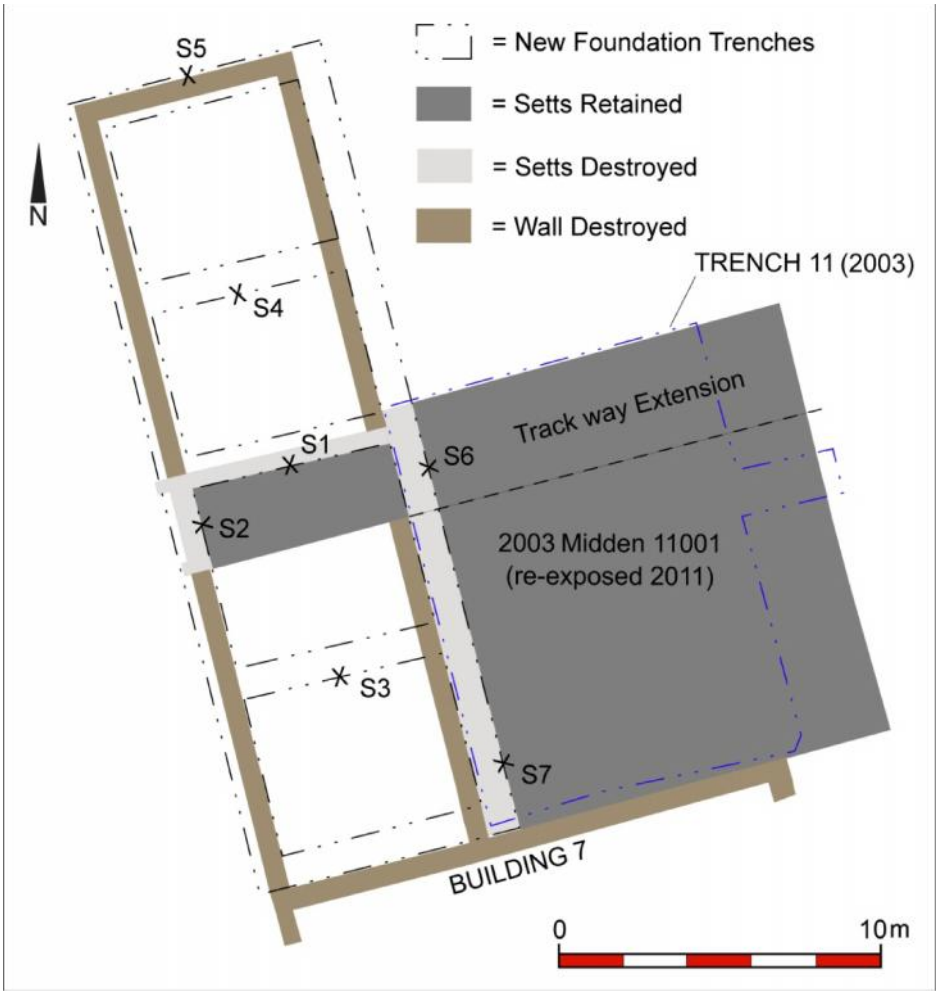

Figure 6 Locations of new foundation trenches and damaged areas.

The foundation trenches were up to 1m wide and 1.17m deep. A gentle north – south fall in the ground level was rectified by stepping up the trench base, by an average 0.04m, where necessary. As with building 5, internal floor surfaces were removed before the watching brief commenced, hence only Section 4 (Figure 7) was chosen to represent the general deposit sequence.

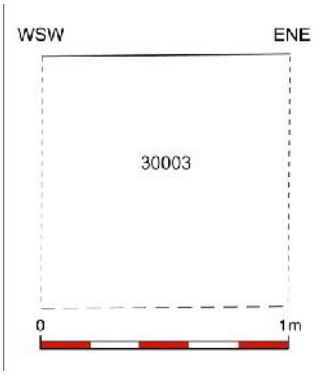

Figure 7 Building 6, North-north-west facing Section No. 4

The foundation trench was cut through natural subsoils (30003) down to a depth of 1m BGL. The natural varied across the development. In this location it comprised mixed bands of pale – mid orange brown loose, clay silt sand interleaved with medium - coarse pebble gravels (Plate 7). The only variation on this was in the make-up of the stone sett track way and the midden base.

Plate 7 Building 6, North-north-west facing Section No. 4. 0.50m scale divisions.

The track way in this building (Figure 8, Plate 8) was up to 3.08m wide and comprised 200 x 140 x 120mm sized stone setts throughout. It was laid slightly offset to south of centre across the width of the barn, to provide a through access to the building (Figure 8).

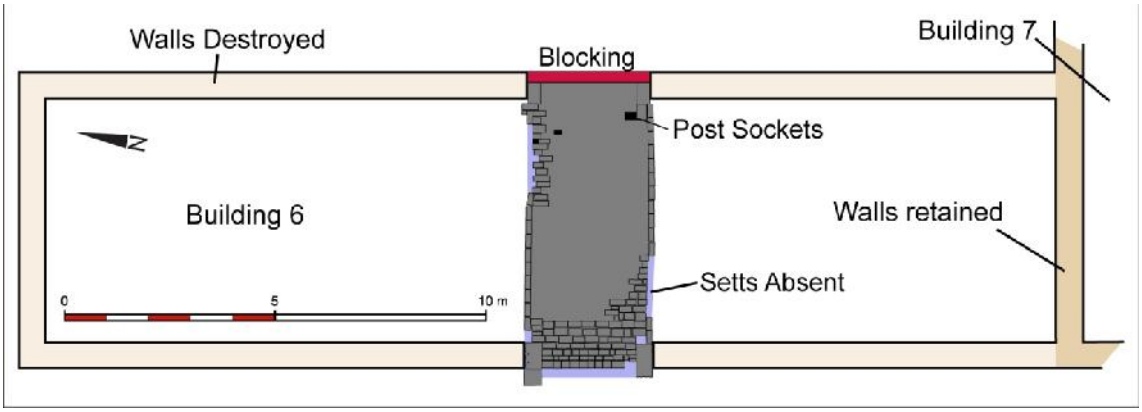

Figure 8 Track way, Building 6

Section No. 1 (Figure 9) has been chosen to illustrate the deposit sequence pertaining to its construction. In this location the new foundation trench was excavated down to 1.07m BGL

and the earliest deposit encountered was natural 30003, 0.50m thick, which continued beyond the base of the trench (Figure 9, Plate 8).

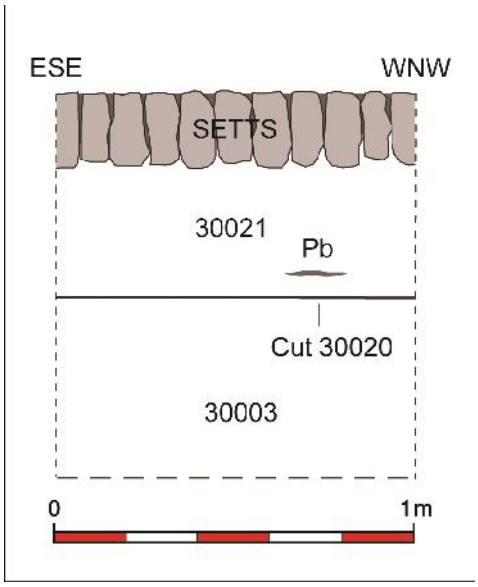

Figure 9 Building 6, North-north-east facing Section No. 1

Plate 8 Building 6, North-north-east facing Section No. 1

The top of 30003 was truncated by a linear, east-south-east / west-north west aligned cut (30020), 0.37m deep, with a flat base and, presumably, vertical sides. It contained a lead water pipe and was backfilled with a mixed, loose deposit of mid orange brown silt sand and gravel, with occasional charcoal flecks (30021). The track way was founded directly on top of 30021 but, elsewhere, a shallow, up to 0.25m deep, construction trench, cut into the top of 30020 was used. The dimensions of the construction cut matched those of the track way. The lack of any indication of a pipe trench in the surface of the track way suggested that the pipe was installed before the track was laid.

The build style used for the track way was similar to that observed in building 5, but in this case the larger sized setts used in its construction negated the need for strengthening at the entrances. In the east and west doorways, both ends were retained by large flat kerb stones, those in the eastern door way remained mostly hidden by later deposits. At the western doorway, however, the outer or western edging stones were absent and only northern and southern flanking kerbs remained (Plate 9)

Plate 9 Track way, Building 6 before new foundations cut. Western entrance In foreground. 0.50m scale divisions.

Of these, only the northernmost of the kerbings survived to its full extent. This was 0.93m long, 0.41m wide and a slot and series of holes cut into the top of it suggested that it had anchored a bottom runner for a set of sliding doors (Plate 10). An in situ runner was

observed beneath the blocking in the eastern entry. Sufficient time was only available for it to be recorded photographically (Plate 11).

Plate 10 Building 6, Detail showing arrangement of slot and holes in top of kerbstone at western entrance, north side of doorway. Looks north. 0.10m scale divisions.

Plate 11 Building 6, record shot of iron door runner (bottom left – top right) after blocking removed. Looks south-east.

The eastern end of the track was extended when a large midden base was added outside and to the east of Building 6 (Figure 6) – NB Building 6 is not labelled on Figure 6.

6.1.3 THE MIDDEN BASE

The midden base (Figure 6) was first exposed and recorded under identifier 11001 in Trench 11 of an archaeological assessment undertaken by YAT in 2003 (Gore, E, 2003. YAT report 2003/26). To avoid repeating the in depth description of the midden base given in the 2003 document, only a brief description of new findings as regards the construction method and its layout will be included in this report. Section No. 7 (Figure 10) has been selected to demonstrate the sequence in general.

The new foundation trenches in this area were up to 0.40m wide and were excavated down to a depth of 0.80m BGL. The earliest deposit encountered was natural and comprised pale yellow brown silt sand clay (30003, Figure 10). The top of it was observed at 0.80m BGL and the surface of it rose gently towards the north, to 0.32m BGL. The top of it had been truncated by a large, up to 0.68m deep clearance cut (30022) which extended beyond the excavated area.

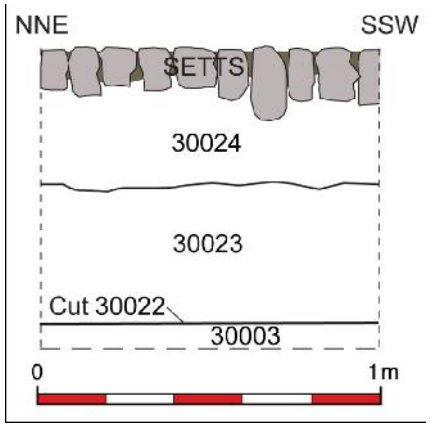

Figure 10 Building 6, west-south-west facing Section No.7

The presence of this cut suggested that the area may have been occupied by an earlier, un-surfaced midden or fold yard for livestock. This had probably become churned to such an extent through use that it necessitated digging down to firm ground before the stone sett surface could be laid. Initially the base of cut 30022 was consolidated with a deposit of compacted, dirty grey brown sand clay, small to medium pebbles and re-deposited natural (30023), with occasional small brick and slate fragments, up to 0.40m thick. The top of it was sealed beneath a deposit up to 0.28m thick of compacted mid grey and purple brown cinders (30024), which formed a bedding layer for the stone sett surface of the midden base (Plate 12).

Plate 12 West-south-west facing Section No. 7. 0.10m scale divisions.

The construction of the midden base also involved widening the track-way by 0.80m towards the north, as well as extending it by at least 10m to the east (Plate 13), where it ran beyond the footprint of the new build. It was thought to have been contemporary with the midden as they both used a similar construction method (Plate 14).

Plate 13 Shot of midden base showing extended track way leading from Building 6 (top left to right). Looks north-north-west. 0.50m scale divisions.

Plate 14 General view of midden base with track way extension in foreground. East end of Building 7 top centre. Damage in foreground of shot was noted in 2003 assessment. Looks south-south-east.

The midden may have gone out of use when the eastern door way of Building 6 was blocked by a brick and sandstone ashlar infill (Figure 8), probably in the first half of the 20th century. The doorway appeared to have been blocked in advance of the alteration and/or subdivision of the internal spaces of the barn. The only evidence for this was the survival of three square post sockets cut into the track way adjacent to the eastern doorway (Plate 15). The size of these varied between 150 x 130 x 100mm and 280 x 150 x 70mm and probably carried a series of uprights for divisions and/or supports for a second floor hay loft, tool or feed store. As the building had been mostly demolished before the watching brief commenced this will, however, remain far from certain. Most of the features above were further compromised by the cutting of the new foundations (Plate 16).

Plate 15 Last surviving course of blocking in east doorway (behind scales). Post sockets? run from far bottom left (only part shown) to top right. Looks east. 0.10 and 0.50m scale divisions.

Plate 16 General view across Building 6 (right) showing part of midden base (diagonal far left) after foundations cut. Truncated sett track way runs diagonally across centre of shot. Looks south.

6.1.4 BUILDING 7

The watching brief within Building 7, a former cart shed / granary (Figure 2), involved the recording of floor surfaces which, as they were not removed at the time, were recorded in situ. They were subsequently cut away when the internal space was divided to form two new dwellings. Most of the original floors had been grubbed out before the new development commenced, when a concrete floor was poured. According to local knowledge this was probably undertaken when the building was altered for use as a vehicle and machinery workshop (Figure 11). Internally the building was 14.25m long, 6.15 wide and had a 3m wide entrance at the eastern end of the south facing wall. Foot access could also be gained via a centrally placed doorway, c.0.80m wide, in the western gable end.

The earliest deposit encountered was a levelling layer of re-deposited natural. This was located against the inner face of the southern wall and comprised a mixed pale – mid yellow brown sand clay (30003) with moderate small patches of pale – dark grey silty clay and sparse charcoal flecks. The top of it was sealed beneath an up to 0.10m thick deposit of medium – coarse grained clay sand (30028) which extended to cover most of the western half of the building. It probably continued across the rest of the interior but this could not be verified as it was hidden beneath later deposits.

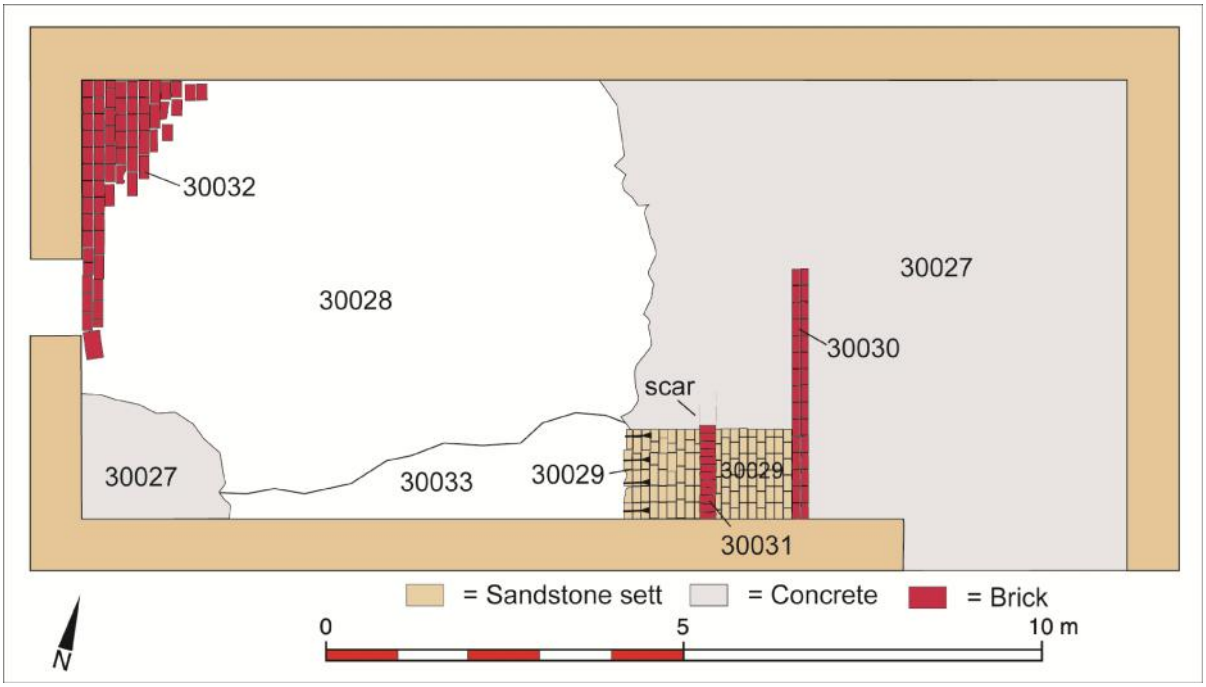

Figure 11 Building 7, plan showing internal floor surfaces.

Deposit 30028 was used as the bedding for a brick floor (30032). The 240 handmade 120 x 70mm bricks were laid wide face down and were tentatively dated to the first half of the 19th

century. These might have been sole survivors of the original floor surface in the western half of Building 7 (Plate 17).

Plate 17 Detail showing brick floor (30032) in north-west corner Of Building 7. Looks north. 0.10m scale divisions.

All that survived of the floors in the western half of the building was a 2.30m long, 1.30m wide patch of up to 220 x 130 x 120mm sized sandstone setts (30029; Figure 11, Plate 18) The setts most likely extended further towards the east, west and north but this could not be verified as they had been removed by later activity. All that could be said with any degree of certainty was that they were founded on top of deposit 30033, but were most likely contemporary with Floor 30032. It would appear that the sandstone setts had been chosen to tolerate much heavier use than the brick floor (30032). Their proximity to the main doorway suggests that they were specifically chosen to withstand the weight of carts and other sundry vehicles entering the eastern end the building.

A length of walling (30031), founded directly on top of setts 30029, was constructed at 90° to the southern wall of the building, some 2.90m west of the main access. Wall 30031 was 1.30m long and comprised a single course width of brick headers bonded with a moderately hard, black flecked pale grey lime mortar. The northern end of it had been truncated by later activity (Plate 18). Not enough was left to suggest a function, yet a combined partition wall and/or support for an upper floor would seem most likely. The fact that it used the same brick as Floor 30032 in its construction suggested that the building was subdivided, or alterations made, once the floors were in place.

Plate 18 Record shot showing Setts 30029 with Wall 30031 founded on top. Later brick wall (30030) runs diagonally from centre left of shot. Note scar in concrete just in front of wall 30031. Looks south.

In the mid – late 20th century, any setts surviving beyond surface 30029 were removed when a second, 3.5m long, 0.23m wide brick wall (30030) was constructed (Figure 11, Plate 18). This was aligned at 90° to the southern internal face of the building, hard against the eastern side of remaining setts 30029. The 215 machine made 102 x 75mm sized bricks were laid as two course width stretchers, at least one course deep, bonded with a hard pale grey / white cement mortar. Wall 30030 was itself sealed in by the last vestiges of concrete floor 30027, at least 0.15m thick.

A scar in the top of Surface 30027 (Plate 18), just to the north of Wall 30031, suggested that a further wall was constructed some 1.30m to the west and parallel with Wall 30030. It would seem highly likely that Wall 30031 had itself been incorporated into this new build. Why these two walls were constructed so close together is uncertain, although they may have served to support machinery such as a feed mill or, more likely, a fuel storage tank.

Walls 30030/31 were most likely swept away when the building was gutted. Some of this work appeared to have involved part removal of the concrete floor in the western half of the building and levelling the resultant hole (and the rest of the floor) with dumps of concrete, rubble and sand (30034), up to 0.15m thick. This was undertaken before the current redevelopment of the site.

6.1.5 TRENCH 30

Trench 30 (Figure 2) was located hard against the southern façade of Stayley Hall, within the footprint of Trench 9 of the 2003 archaeological assessment (Plate 19). An in depth account of the findings for this trench can be found in the assessment report, hence the following text will only describe new features and deposits observed in 2012. The identifier Trench 30 was allocated for the 2012 watching brief works to avoid confusion with the results/finds arising from the 2003 excavations.

Plate 19 2003 Trench 9 features before preservation by reburial. Looks north. 0.10m scale divisions.

When overburden was removed for the 2012 watching brief, it was apparent that the area had suffered damage in the intervening period (Plate 20). How or why this had occurred is not known to the archaeologist. What survived (Figure 12) was swept away by the excavation of the new surface water drains (Figure 2), removing all archaeological features down to the original foundation level of the Hall.

Plate 20 Trench 30 showing extent of damage suffered between 2003 and 2012. Looks north-west. 0.10m scale divisions.

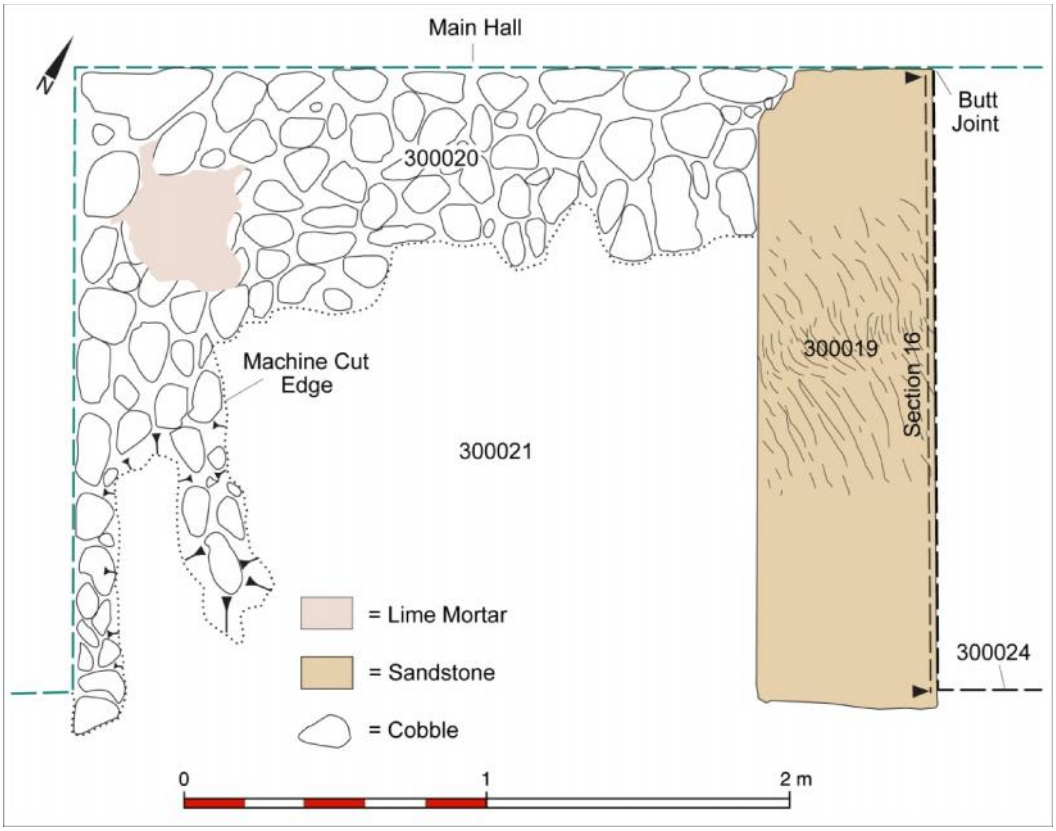

Figure 12 Plan showing Trench 30 before 2012 ground reduction.

Trench 30 was north-east / southwest aligned, 2.84m long, 2.08m wide and was excavated down to c. 0.50m BGL. Natural deposits were not reached. The earliest feature encountered was the top of a Stayley Hall foundation course (300022, Figure 13). These were only partially exposed and they comprised unworked, irregular dry bonded blocks of sandstone up to 0.42m long, over 0.30m wide and 0.15m thick.

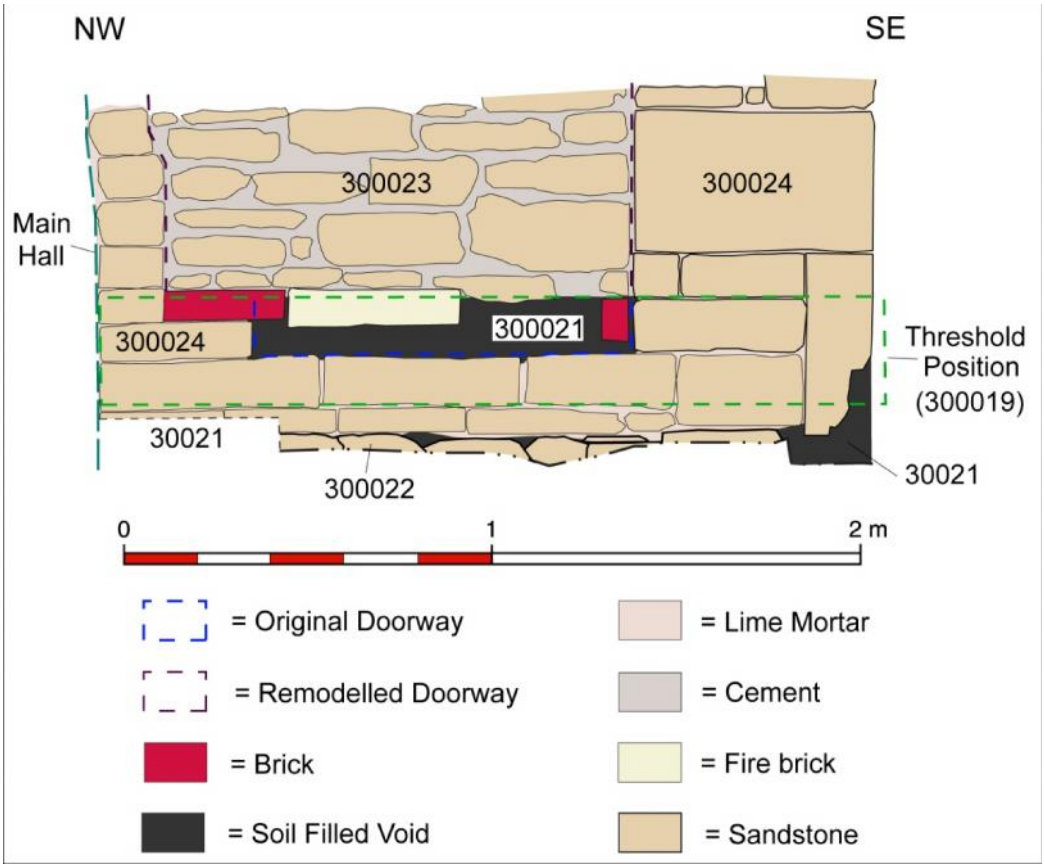

Figure 13 South-west facing Section No. 16

These were sealed beneath a 0.09m + thick deposit of compacted loose, dark greyish brown ash and cinder rich clay sand silt (30021) which formed a bedding deposit for a large, 2.10m long, 0.60m wide, 0.09m thick sand stone threshold (300019; Figure 12, Plate 20). The threshold was laid dry jointed hard up against the outer face of the hall. Once the threshold was in place, cobble surface 300020 (Figure 12) was laid up against it.

Removal of the threshold and levelling deposit 30021 revealed a sequence of adaptations to a former door way (Plate 21). The earliest of these ('Original Doorway', Figure 13) was 1.02m wide and had probably been constructed with the fabric of the Hall, when it was clad in stone in c.1600. This was then blocked up in an ad hoc fashion.

Deposit 300021 was also used as a bed for flat laid dry bonded fragments of house brick and a large piece of firebrick. There may have been other fragments behind and below them but this could not be verified as they were concealed by deposit 300021. The top of the brickwork coincided with the top of threshold 300019, which infers that both it and cobble surface 300020 were laid down when the doorway was widened. ('Remodelled Doorway', Figure 13). The types of brick used suggested that this had taken place sometime after the mid-19th century. The new doorway was 1.26m wide, the increased width accommodated by cutting back the fabric of the hall down the north-west side of the original. This alteration was only noticeable from the way that the random coursed fabric of the hall had been abutted by an infill comprising a single course width of soft, lime mortar bonded, 200 x 230mm (max), sandstone blockwork (Figure13, Plate 21). This 'remodelled' doorway appeared to have been used up until at least the early 20th century (this date has only been postulated because the irregular coursed, random sandstone blocking was bonded with a hard, pale grey cement). After the remodelled doorway was blocked up, the threshold and cobble surface were left in situ, to become hidden beneath a gradual build up of leaf mould, weeds and rubbish.

Plate 21 Section No. 16, elevation showing sequence of doorways and Hall foundations (below scales). Inserted ashlar blockwork can be seen vertical centre left to top left of shot Looks north-east. 0.10m scale divisions.

6.1.6 THE DRAINAGE TRENCHES

The watching brief on the excavation of the drainage trenches (Figure 2) showed that little, if any, of the deposits and features concerned with the history and development of the Hall and its surrounds had survived. The uniformity of the deposits observed render it unnecessary to illustrate all of the drawn sections. Several of them have been chosen to highlight the deposit sequence in the open forecourt to the south of the Hall. Sections 2, 3, 6, 8 and 10 are all located down the west side of the forecourt, Sections 12, 17 and 18, down the east side and Section 14, the centre. Those down the west side will be discussed first.

Section No. 2 (Figure 14) was located in an inspection chamber excavated immediately outside Building 3, eastern side (Figure 2).

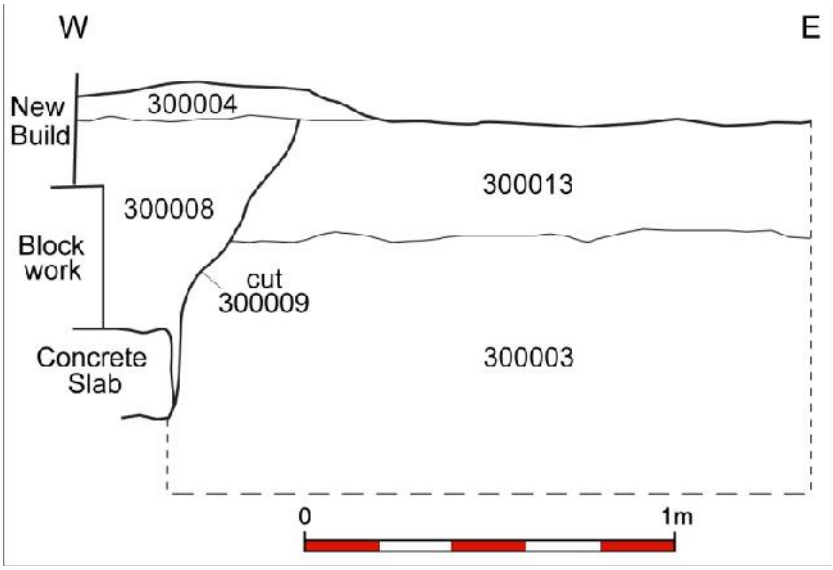

Figure 14 South facing Section No.2

The Inspection chamber was approx. 2m² and up to 1m deep. The earliest deposit in this trench was a moist, slightly friable pale orange brown silt sand natural (300003), up to 0.70m thick. It was observed at 0.30m BGL and continued beyond the base of the trench. The top of it was sealed beneath a 0.30m thick levelling deposit (300013) comprising a pebble gravel rich, loose mid brown coarse grained silt sand with occasional medium pebbles, small to large plastic pieces and polystyrene fragments of modern origin.

The top of 300013 was truncated by the eastern edge of the construction cut for the new build (300009). It was 0.60m wide, 0.80m deep and had a steep 'V' shaped profile. The base was sealed by a concrete foundation with a single course of breeze block above. The random coursed sandstone stone of the rebuilt walls of Building 3 were put up from the top of the block work. Except for the addition of frequent, pale orange brown sand marbling, Cut

300009 was backfilled with the same material as Deposit 300013. Backfill 300008 was sealed by a small deposit of waste concrete (300004), 0.08m thick.

Section No 3 was located some 2.5 m south-west of the south-south-west corner of Building 3 (Figure 2). This section (and No. 8, below) was selected to illustrate that the decorative cobble surface exposed in Trench 8 of the 2003 archaeological assessment (Plate 22) had been destroyed in the intervening period.

Plate 22 Decorative cobble surface in 2003 Trench 8 before being reburied for protection. Former cow house/stable (behind) demolished to make way for construction of 2012 Building 3 on almost identical footprint. Looks north-west. 0.50m scale divisions.

West facing Section No.3 (Figure 15) was located within a new, 0.60m wide, up to 1.25m deep foul water drainage trench.

The earliest deposit in this location was observed at 0.40m BGL and it comprised a pale yellow brown silt sand natural (300003) which, at 0.94m thick, continued beyond the base of the trench.

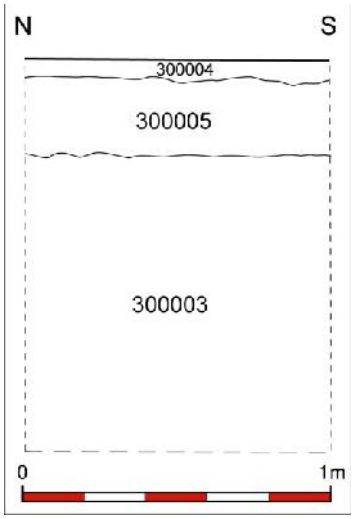

Figure 15 West facing Section No. 3

The earliest deposit in this location was observed at 0.40m BGL and it comprised a pale yellow brown silt sand natural (300003) which, at 0.94m thick, continued beyond the base of the trench. The top of it was sealed beneath a 0.25m thick deposit of compacted dark grey – black silt sand, with frequent small – large pebbles and occasional brick and plastic fragments (300005). It was directly below a 0.05m thick deposit of builders concrete and rubble waste (300004), which formed the ground level at the time the watching brief was undertaken.

Section 8 was located 5.25m west of Section No.3, some 0.70m south of Building 3 (Figure 2). This surface water drain trench was c. 0.60m wide and up to 0.80m deep (Figure 16).

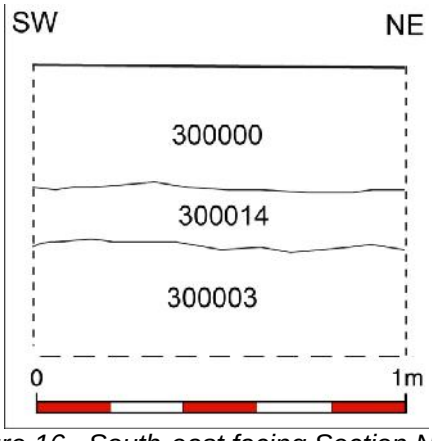

Figure 16 South-east facing Section No. 8

Natural sand (300003) was observed at 0.50m BGL and it was 0.30m thick and continued beyond the trench base. The top of 300003 was sealed by a 0.16m thick levelling deposit comprised friable dark brown silt sand (300014), with moderate small – medium pebbles,

concrete and occasional small, modern brick fragments. The top of it lay beneath a 0.36m thick consolidation layer of compacted limestone hardcore (300000) with frequent small – large pebbles and mid grey brown silt sand patches. The inclusions, only present in the upper 0.08 -0.10m of the deposit, graded away with depth. The surface of 300000 formed the ground level at the time of the watching brief.

Section 6 was located within another foul water trench, some 10.3m to the south of Section No. 8. The trench was 0.65m wide and up to 0.93m deep. A 0.44m thick deposit of natural, loose, mid reddish brown sand and gravel (300003, Figure 17) was the earliest deposit present. It was observed at 0.49m BGL and continued beyond the base of excavation.

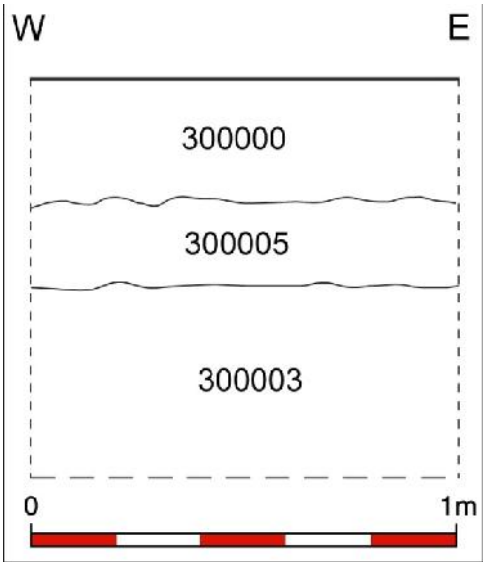

Figure 17 South facing Section No. 6

Directly above it was a 0.20m thick layer of modern disturbance comprising loose dark grey – black silt sand (300005) with occasional small modern plastic, brick and concrete fragments. This was overlain by a 0.29m thick layer of limestone hardcore (300000), which formed the modern ground surface.

Section No. 10 (Figure 2) was located at the southern edge of the development, some 7.5m south of Section No. 6. In this instance the surface water drainage trench was 0.60m wide and 0.58m deep. Natural coarse sand and pebble gravel (300003, Figure 18), 0.20m thick, was observed at 0.38m BGL and it continued beyond the trench base. Directly above it was a layer of modern disturbance comprised friable dark grey brown silt sand (300012) with moderate small – medium pebbles, brick and stone fragments, 0.25m thick.

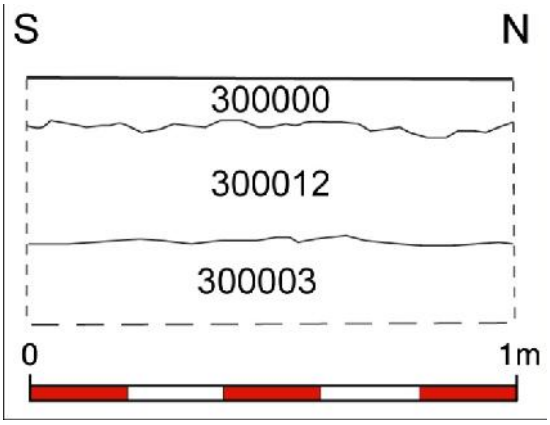

Figure 18 East facing Section No. 10.

The top of it was sealed beneath the 0.08m thick, modern compacted hardcore surface (300000).

Section No. 14 (Figure 19, Plate 23) was located on the eastern edge of the flood water attenuation tank construction trench. This was a large, 11.7m long, 9m wide, 1.40m deep, west-south-west / east-north-east aligned, rectangular cut located towards the centre of the development, close to its southern edge (Figure 2).

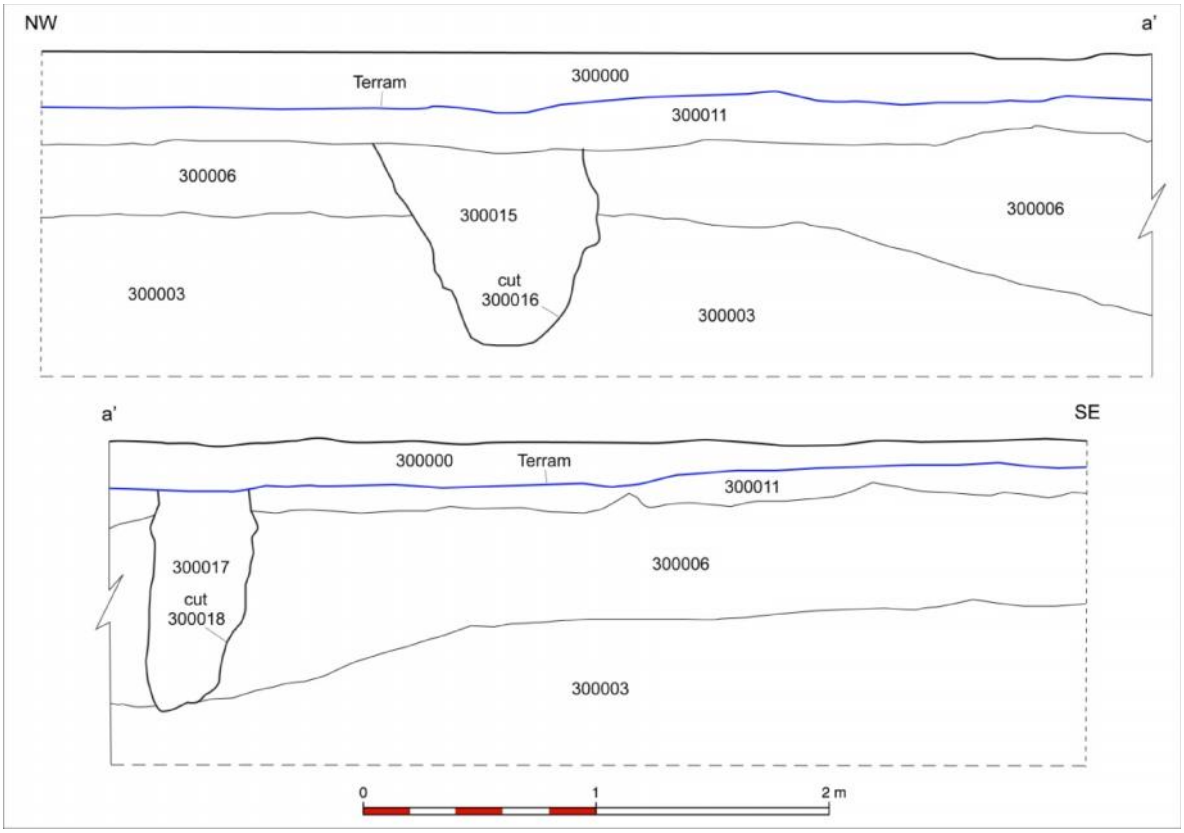

Figure 19 South-west facing Section No. 14.

Plate 23 South-west facing section No. 14. 0.50m scale divisions.

The earliest deposit in this trench was the natural, mid orange-brown banded sands and pebble gravels (300003) seen elsewhere. They were first observed at 0.80m BGL, were up to 0.70m thick and continued beyond the base of the trench. Deposit 300003 was sealed beneath an up to 0.80m thick dump of compacted, friable dark grey and purple brown cinders and clinker (300006). (A similar deposit (7007) was observed in Trench 7 of the 2003 assessment works. This was interpreted as the backfill of the large quarry pit (Cut 7005) excavated within the southern approach to the Hall. Its presence in the attenuation tank trench suggested that the quarry pit extended further to the south than was originally thought.) The top of it was truncated by a service trench (300016) containing a c. 0.20m Ø (diameter?) ceramic salt glazed sewer/surface water drain. Cut 300016 (Figure 19) was a 0.90m wide, 0.84m deep, linear, north-east / south-west aligned feature with a steep sided 'U' shaped profile. Its backfill (300015) was a friable mid greyish brown mix of coarse grained silt sand and gravel with occasional clinker and broken brick fragments.

The top of fill 300015 was sealed beneath an up to 0.20m thick layer of brick, brick rubble and occasional pebbles (300011) in a matrix of 300006. This has been interpreted as a levelling deposit used to both seal off and consolidate backfill 300006, to provide access to the courtyard area once more. The top of 300011 was cut by service trench? 300018. This was located 2.60m towards the south-east (Figure 19) of Cut 300016, and was on the same alignment but had a 0.44m wide, 0.94m deep, narrow almost vertical sided 'U' shaped profile. The black plastic PE pipe it contained was sealed beneath a single backfill (300017) comprising mixed elements of clinker 300006 and rubble 300011, with occasional small

pebbles. The top of it was sealed by a single layer of terram membrane. This was present in all elevations of the trench and it was sealed by an up to 0.20m thick levelling / consolidating layer of compacted limestone hardcore, 300000, which formed the ground surface when the watching brief was undertaken.

Section 17 was located within a deep surface water inspection chamber excavated south of the eastern wing of the hall (Figure 2, Plate 24).

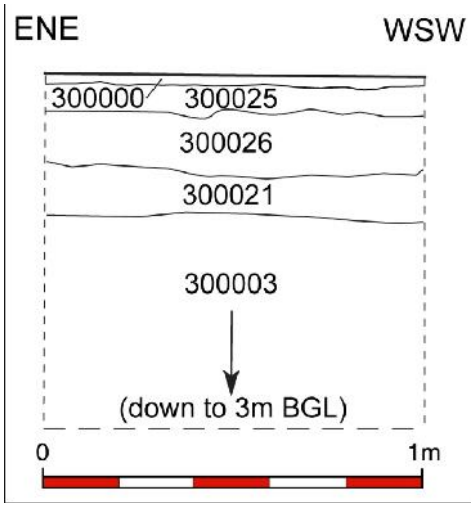

Figure 20 North-west facing Section No. 17

This trench was c. 2.5m² and was excavated down to a finished depth of 3m BGL. In this trench the top of the pale brownish orange natural sands and gravels (300003) was observed at 0.41m BGL and they continued beyond the base of the trench. Overlying it was a levelling deposit of pale to mid brown sand and pebble gravel with occasional dark grey silt patches (300021), 0.11m thick. This was in turn sealed by a 0.18m thick deposit, comprising compacted loose dark grey – brown cinders and clinker (300026), below a 0.08m thick deposit of mid – dark brown clay silt sand (300025) with moderate small brick rubble and occasional limestone hardcore inclusions. The top of it was sealed by limestone hard core 300000 which, at 0.04m thick, formed the ground surface when the work was undertaken.

Plate 24 North-west facing Section No. 17

Section 18 was located within a 0.65m wide, 1.80m deep foul water drainage trench which ran down the length of building 6, on its western side (Figure 2).

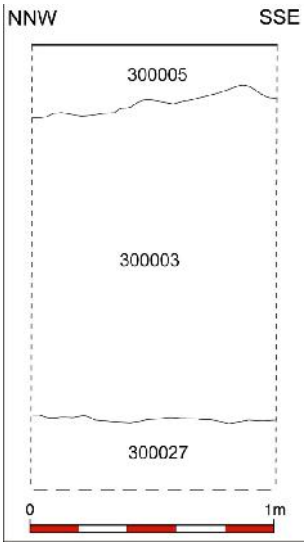

Figure 21 West-south-west facing Section No. 18

The earliest deposit in this location was a variation on the natural subsoils (300027) comprising soft medium grained pale yellow orange sand which was observed at 1.50 m BGL (Figure 21). This was 0.30m thick and continued beneath the trench base. It was sealed beneath a second 1.38m thick deposit of natural loose, fine grained, mid brown sandy pebble

gravel (300003), with moderate small to medium pebbles throughout. Directly above this was a compacted up to 0.30m thick layer of dark grey cinder and clinkers (300005) with occasional small brick and sandstone fragments, which formed the ground surface when recording was undertaken.

Section 12 was recorded within a surface water inspection chamber trench located 16m south of Section 18, within the access roadway of the development (Figure 2). This trench was c. 1.8m² and up to 1.44m deep (Figure 22).

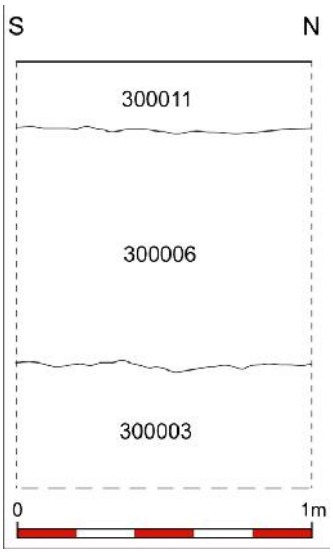

Figure 22 East facing Section No.12

The earliest deposit encountered was observed at 1.02m BGL and comprised natural, mid orange yellow sand and pebble gravels (300003). They were up to 0.42m thick and continued beyond the trench base. They were sealed beneath levelling/backfill deposit 300006, and comprised loose, powdery black ashy cinders, 0.80m thick. Directly above this was a levelling / ground consolidation deposit of compacted, machine made bricks and brick fragments 0.22m thick, which constituted the ground surface at the time the watching brief was undertaken.

6.1.7 DISCUSSION

The track ways crossing buildings 5 and 6 were mostly destroyed by the conversion works. The removal of all of the other internal floors within these buildings in advance of the watching brief (Plate 25) renders dating their construction difficult.

Plate 25 Part demolished northern wall of Building 6 showing elevated single course foundation above depth of internal floor reductions. 0.50m scale divisions

All that can be said is that the track way in building 5 was contemporary with the building's construction. Buildings started to be added to the south of Stayley hall between the late 17th and 19th century. Map evidence shows that Building 5 was one of the first to be put up and therefore can only be assumed to have been put up around the late 17th century. The presence of a sliding door fitting, a steel runner, adjacent to the southern doorway suggested that alterations and adaptations were still being undertaken in the late 19th/20th century.

The last of these buildings was added in the 19th century and the presence of a lead water pipe (Figure 9) beneath the track way in Building 6, which had no visible pipe trench cut showing in its surface, would suggest that it had been built around that time. The midden base on the east side of Building 6 appeared to have been added at a later date. The lead pipe was continued towards the east by a machine made steel water pipe (not shown). Although somewhat tenuous, a manufacture date of the late 19th/20th century for this kind of fitting would seem most likely. This pipe was sealed beneath the extended internal track way. (Figure 6). The lack of a trench scar in the surface of it also suggested that the pipe was laid in advance of its construction, rather than being cut through it at a later date. It appeared that

the new length of track way had been constructed as a unit with the midden base and had been intended to serve as its access to it.

By the earlier 20th century, the midden appeared to have gone out of use, the eastern doorway of Building 6 had been blocked up and the internal space of it subdivided and/or adapted for a different use. This was only attested to by the survival of a single course of rough brick-work across the eastern doorway (Plate 16?) and three post sockets cut into the top of the in-building track way (Figure 8). Both of the above would have barred vehicles of any size from entering / exiting the building on this side. The Hall was abandoned as a dwelling by the 1940s and both it and the buildings surrounding it began a steady decline into a ruinous state by the last quarter of the 20th century.

Trench 30 (6.1.5, Figure 12) was placed to reinvestigate features first observed in the 2003 assessment works (Plate 20). The initial clean of the area in 2012 showed that it had suffered damage in the intervening period (Plate 21). The re-excavation was driven by the need to cut through the area with new surface water drains and to reduce the ground to formation level in front of the Hall. Through this work it could be seen that the foundations of the Hall (300022, Figure 13) only comprised a single (?) course of flat laid, irregular fragments of sandstone. These were probably laid down when the Hall was altered and clad in stone by George Booth in c. 1600. It was also probably around this time that the original 1.20m wide doorway was integrated into the stone cladding works ('Original Doorway', Figure 13; Plate 22). This appeared to have remained in use up until the mid 19th? Century when the threshold of the earliest doorway was raised by 0.18m and the northern side of it widened by c 0.25m, to form a new entrance. The soil fast machine made brickwork used to raise the threshold height was tentatively dated to the 19th century by the excavator. The widening of the door way ('Remodelled Doorway', Figure 13) necessitated cutting back and/or dismantling the random coursed stone work between the new opening and the southern face of the Hall, only for it to be replaced by a single course width of small sandstone ashlar. The increased height of the step into the door way was also accompanied by raising the ground surface immediately outside of it, to form a level bed (300021) for a large sandstone threshold (300019, Figure 13, Plate 21) and cobble surface (300020). This work was probably undertaken at the same time as the doorway was altered. How long the later of the doorways remained in used is uncertain as it was itself blocked up with random coursed irregular sandstone (300023, Figure 13). The only indication of a date for this work was in the hard cement bonding used for the stone work, which suggested a 20th century date was most likely. The large threshold stone and metalled surface were left intact, only to become hidden by the build up of soil, leaf mould and rubbish disturbed by the 2003 assessment works.

The observations undertaken during the excavation of the service trenches showed that any features and deposits which related to the occupation and use of the hall forecourt before the 19th century had either been removed by quarrying works or the current development of the site. The most notable of these was the destruction of the last surviving fragment of the decorative surface of the 'hard garden' (Plate 23?), at some time between 2003 and 2012.

7. LIST OF SOURCES

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8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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