

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**  
**ON**  
**THE WALLED GARDEN AT GREAT TEW ESTATE,**  
**GREAT TEW, OXFORDSHIRE**

**NGR SP 3970 2906**

*On behalf of*  
*Great Tew Estate*

**OCTOBER 2015**

<b>REPORT FOR</b>	Great Tew Conservation and Restoration LLP The Estate Office Great Tew Chipping Norton Oxfordshire OX7 4AH
<b>PREPARED BY</b>	David Gilbert and John Moore
<b>ILLUSTRATION BY</b>	David Gilbert
<b>AUTHORISED BY</b>	John Moore
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<b>ENQUIRES TO</b>	John Moore Heritage Services Hill View Woodperry Road Beckley Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ  Tel: 01865 358300 Email: <a href="mailto:info@jmheritageservices.co.uk">info@jmheritageservices.co.uk</a>
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## **SUMMARY**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief during work within the Walled Garden of Great Tew Park.*

*A few small features pre-dating the Walled Garden were considered to be medieval in date.*

*Records of the built structure including old repairs were made along with observations of below ground garden features.*

*This report is on work undertaken only in the Walled Garden, and up to and including 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013, the latest that JMHS was informed of work being carried out. At that date the proposed work in the Walled Garden was not complete.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

Great Tew House is located to the south of Great Tew village within Great Tew Park (NGR SP 3970 2906). The underlying geology is Marlstone Rock Bed and Upper Lias Clay and the site lies at approximately 170m OD. The development is within the grounds of the Registered Historic Park.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

West Oxfordshire District Council granted planning permission under 10/0024/P/FP to erect extensions to Great Tew House and the Stables, to construct a pool pavilion, changing rooms, plant room and a new swimming pool within the walled garden, create a new drive and construct a new tennis court. Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area a condition was attached to the permission requiring a watching brief to be maintained during the course of building operations or construction works on the site. Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS), as it was at the time, prepared a *Brief* for such archaeological work. John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS 2010) carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) approved by OCAS.

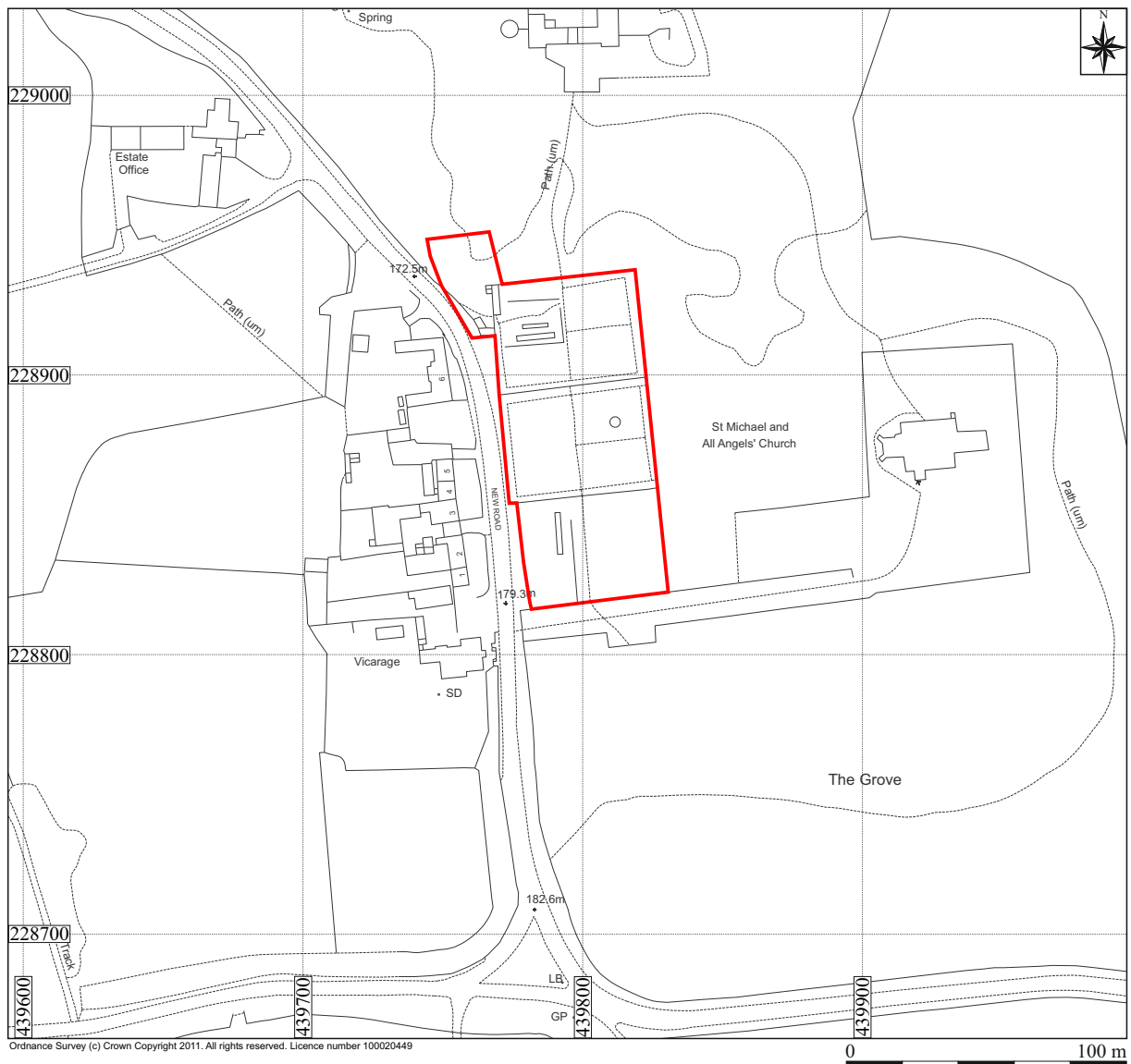
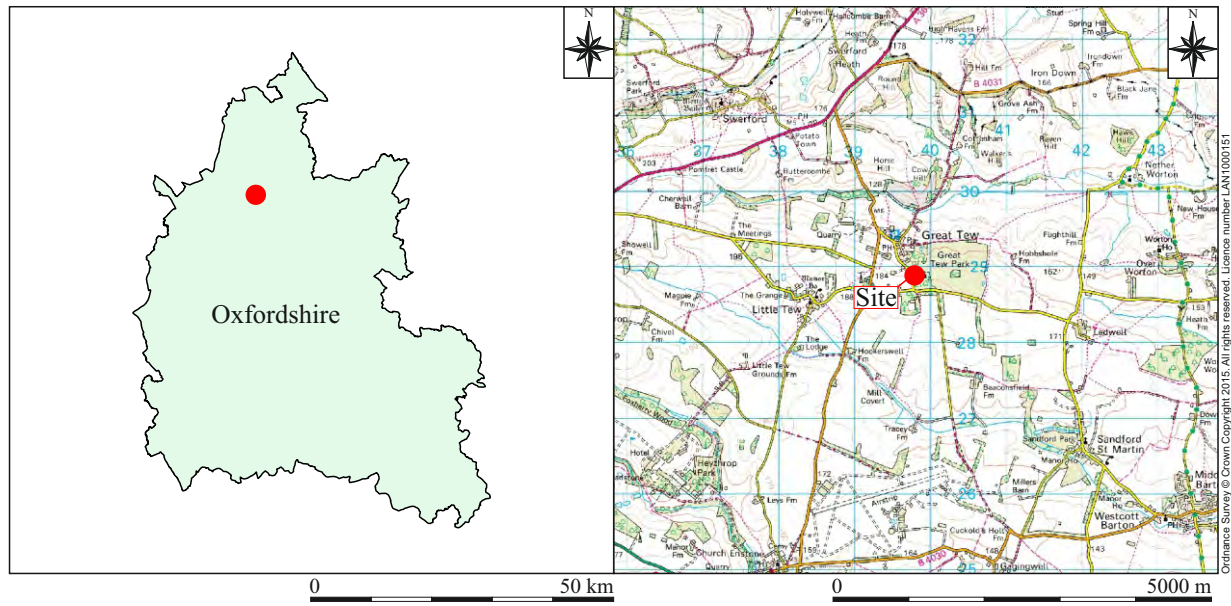
### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The permitted development is within Great Tew Park that is a Grade II Park and Garden (4972). The almost square old park lies to the east of the house, pleasure grounds, and village and is enclosed by a stone wall which has been breached in places. A gateway flanked by tall stone piers stands at the centre of the north wall, providing access to the agricultural land to the north. At the centre of the old park lies a small wood, The Warren, which is surrounded by parkland laid to pasture with many trees scattered in singles and in clumps. A broad avenue, probably laid out in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, formerly extended northwards from the centre of the park for c 2.5km, terminating at the B4031 (Loudon 1812). It may have been aligned on the

gateway in the north boundary. The avenue was shortened in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, its northern end terminating after that time at the stream which runs through the valley bottom. All trace of the avenue trees has been lost in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century. Long views extend northwards from the park across the valley to the detached parkland of Horse, Cow and Walker's Hills, and east and north-east towards distant hills. Repton's suggestion for rebuilding the house was to place it close to the west side of what is now The Warren, with the attached garden adjacent to the east of the house, leading into The Warren, and aligned on the south end of the avenue.

The park is separated by the village and an area of agricultural land to the north from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century parkland on the opposite side of the valley on which Horse, Cow and Walker's Hills run contiguous from west to east respectively. This detached area of parkland is laid to pasture with mature trees and copses, and contains a network of broad tracks laid out by Loudon which largely follow the contour at the level of the stream. The detached parkland is bounded to the south-west by Mill Lane, and immediately to the south of this by the stream in the valley bottom, along which stand several mature yews. Mill Lane leads south-east as a path from the B4022, c 1.2km north-west of the house, and is overlooked by the parkland of Horse and Cow Hills to the north. Some 700m north of the house, having broadened out into a track, Mill Lane meets The Avenue, a lane giving access from the village to the south. Mill Lane curves around to the north-east at the bottom of Cow Hill meeting the west end of Groveash Lane, another estate track, 1.3km north-east of the house. Close by to the east, Groveash Lane crosses the remains of Lodge Ponds, a series of narrow ponds, now largely silted up and enclosed in trees, which were formed by Loudon from widening the stream for c 500m. The Ponds provided water to power his mill (Lambert 2001). The parkland extends north from Groveash Lane, bounded to the west by the continuation northwards of Mill Lane. At the north end of Lodge Ponds formerly stood Loudon's Tew Lodge, which was demolished by the 1830s. North of the site of Tew Lodge stands the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cottenham Farm, set in undulating parkland which extends north to a point adjacent to the B4031.

By the end of the 16<sup>th</sup> century a park at Great Tew had been created, divided into Inner, Middle, and Outer Parks. Further related enclosure took place in the early 1620s, when Sir Lawrence Tanfield enclosed land including Cow Hill. By this time Great Tew was almost all in single ownership (VCH 1983). In 1626 Lucius Cary (1610-43) inherited the Great Tew estate from Tanfield, his grandfather, and in 1633 inherited his father's title, becoming the second Viscount Falkland. Falkland was a poet and renowned philosopher who was influential at nearby Oxford University, and it is likely that the three linked, stone-walled gardens which were erected close to the manor house were constructed and laid out under his direction. The 17<sup>th</sup> century manor landscape, which included the manor house, walled gardens, The Grove, and the park, enclosed the parish church and churchyard (Lambert 2001). A great avenue was probably created at this time, running northwards from the centre of the park across the valley below to high ground beyond. Falkland died at the age of thirty-three at the Battle of Newbury, fighting for the Royalists, and his heirs sold the estate in 1698 to Francis Keck. After Keck's death in 1728 his nephew John Tracy, who took the name Keck, inherited the estate and was responsible for the enclosure of the remainder of the parish in 1763. This resulted in many small parcels of land being amalgamated under his management and ownership. John Keck died in 1774, and subsequently a substantial part of the estate was bought by the nabob George Stratton,



Key  Site boundary

Figure 1: Site location

who bought the remainder in 1793, amassing an estate of several thousand acres.

Following Stratton's death in 1800, his son, George Frederick, inherited what was generally considered to be one of the finest estates in the county and quickly demolished much of the manor house which stood on a platform north-west of the church. G F Stratton moved into the Keck dower house to the north, which at that time stood at the top of the street running up from the village green (VCH 1983). In 1803 G F Stratton consulted Humphry Repton (1752-1818) about improvements to the estate, particularly on the construction of a new mansion. Repton's advice was presented in a Red Book dated 1804 containing written suggestions and watercolour illustrations of his suggestions. He suggested that the new mansion should be built in the centre of the walled park, aligned very close to the south end of the old avenue.

His principal landscape improvements concerned the south-facing valley-side to the north of the park, as this would form such a prominent feature in the view from the new mansion. The new house was never built, and it appears that Repton's landscape suggestions were not immediately implemented.

In 1808 Stratton leased much of his farmland to the young John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843) for a demonstration of 'Scotch husbandry', having read Loudon's treatise, an immediate and effectual mode of raising the rental of landed property (1808). Loudon only stayed until 1811, and his tenure was not a success, with Stratton spending large sums for little return. Loudon did however lay out a series of substantial farm roads on the north side of the valley, north of the house and main park, centred on Tew Lodge, a model farmhouse built for him by Stratton and demolished by the 1830s (OS 1833). Loudon may also have laid out the adjacent Cow Hill and its environs as parkland, incorporating Repton's general suggestion, and widened a brook into a narrow lake close to the Lodge. The Lodge Ponds, as the lake was called, had also been suggested by Repton, but Loudon's purpose was to form the reservoir for a threshing mill. Loudon went on to become the foremost influence of his day on landscape design.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.
- In particular to record any evidence relating to the prior arrangement of the walled garden and park

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services.



The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), current at the time of work.

### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist was present on site during the course of any groundwork that had the potential to reveal or disturb archaeological remains. At times work went ahead without JMHS being notified.

Any archaeological deposits and features revealed were cleaned by hand and recorded in plan before being excavated and recorded at an appropriate level. Any archaeological features or other remains i.e. concentrations of artefacts, were recorded by written, drawn and photographic record. Where archaeological features were exposed during any ground reduction but otherwise would remain unaffected they were recorded only by plan and written description. Where remains would be impacted on then they were sample excavated. All artefacts were collected and retained except for concentrations of building material where a representative sample was kept.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was also produced.

## **4 RESULTS**

### **4.1 The Walled Garden**

The walled garden is Grade II listed. In this listing it is described as late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century in date. The walls are noted to be of limestone rubble and coursed squared marlstone with a brick lining; while the garden is split into a series of three rectangular enclosures. The walls are approximately 3m high and have a two-course triangular coping, various shallow buttresses, segmental-arched 19<sup>th</sup> century doorways to west and other square-headed doorways with angle roll which may be 17<sup>th</sup> century reset. Interior walls have some flared bricks and partly built-up archways.

The garden was formerly listed as part of Great Tew Park together with the Dovecote, stable quadrangle with gateway and garden walls. In this listing it was described as 17<sup>th</sup> century, stone-built walled gardens standing 120m south-east of the mansion. An ornamental doorway at the centre of the north wall leads into the northernmost of the three rectangular walled gardens, which are now largely overgrown. A further doorway in similar style, at the centre of the dividing wall on the south side of this compartment, gives access to the south to the second, central compartment, with a further doorway in the south wall of this compartment giving access to the southernmost walled garden. This third compartment contains several mature conifers, including a monkey puzzle tree (*Araucaria araucana*). A doorway in the south side of the third walled garden gives access to the church path, and beyond this to the south, to The Grove. The walled gardens were formerly laid out with a formal pattern of paths.

## 4.2 Architectural Observations

The walled garden is rectangular, measuring c. 116m by 52m, with two internal walls forming three roughly equal garden spaces within. A single external shed structure remains at the north-western corner of the garden.

### Eastern wall

The wall is bonded to the northern garden wall in the northeast corner. This corner has stressed ashlar quoins. Its external face is of smooth-faced rubble ironstone masonry in uneven courses. The internal face is red brick in a Flemish bond. The bricks appear hand made and measure on average 215mm by 100mm by 65mm. The wall is capped with curved ironstone capstones.

These courses are built off of a slightly wider plinth of uneven coursed rough faced ironstone, with the upper most stone chamfered.

The wall runs the entirety of all three gardens. Towards the northern end, from roughly half-way along the wall are five unevenly spaced buttresses. These buttresses are later additions; irregular holes have been excavated into the wall facing to allow a form of bonding to take place; however, the majority of the buttress is butted against the wall. These buttresses are ashlar with an uneven coursed rubble core.



Plates 1 & 2: Detail of buttresses on eastern wall

Towards the centre of the wall section within the northern garden is a portion that has been lowered by roughly 1m. The sides of this lowered section are at roughly 45°. The upper 0.5m of the wall in the northern garden appears to be repaired or rebuilt; this work appears under the lowered section possibly indicating the lowering took place during this repair. The section has capstones the same as the rest of the wall and it is

possible that the entire wall was recapped at the same time as the lowered section would require more stones than a straight run. It is also possible this feature was an original aspect of the wall.



Plate 3: Clairvoyance viewed from inside the northern garden



Plate 4: Exterior view of clairvoyance

It is speculated this lowered feature is a “clairvoyance” to allow a better view of the church from the northern garden. If so, the best viewing spot is not from the centre of the garden or the northern garden entrance, but from the northwest corner where there was a glasshouse and the entrance to the back shed.

There is a single doorway in this wall that is located just south of the centre of the wall in the southeast corner of the middle garden. It has sandstone ashlar jambs with a moulded arched lintel.





Plate 5: Interior view of door in middle garden



Plate 6: Exterior view of doorway to middle garden



Plate 7: View along eastern wall showing series of small holes

Either side of this doorway, on the exterior wall face, are a series of small square holes that appear to be later in date than the wall itself. These features are approximately 1.5m above present ground level and are likely to be related to two structures recorded on the 1881 1:2,500 OS map.



Plate 8: Detail of OS map of 1881 (not to scale)

### Northern Wall

As previously noted the eastern wall and the northern wall are bonded with each other. The northern wall is of a similar construction as well. Its external face is of smooth-faced rubble ironstone masonry in uneven courses. The internal face is red brick in a Flemish bond. The bricks again appear to be handmade and measure on average 216mm by 100mm by 64mm.

In the centre of the wall is a rounded arch entrance (Plate 11 and 13). The arch is built in brick springing from ashlar ironstone piers. At a later date this entrance was reduced in width to a single doorway; the space under the arch being filled with uneven courses of smooth-faced rubble ironstone masonry. This masonry is clearly butted against the piers and arch fabric.

The resulting doorway was c. 1m wide and had ironstone jams and lintel. Above the lintel a row of rough ironstone was laid to form a decorative band and demarcate a



line between the lower stonework and that which fills the arched space above the lintel.



Plates 9 & 10: Corner of eastern and northern walls

The brick archway mimicked the arches seen on the internal walls (see below) and is likely to be contemporary. To the east of the entrance the wall appears to have been raised roughly 1m higher with stone butting against the lower portion of the arch. To the west the wall may have had further rebuilding work done to it, as the character of the stone was not the same as to the east.



Plate 11: Northern entrance to the walled garden

The majority of the wall to the west of the entrance was obscured by a large mound of earth at the time of the initial site visit (Plate 12). This mound also obscured the



external corner with the western wall. This mound is not marked on the 1881 OS map (Plate 8).



Plate 12: Mound to the west of the entrance

The interior of the wall was constructed of brick in the same manner as the eastern wall. To the west of the main entrance was a blocked door. The frame was moulded sandstone in a Tudor style and may represent a reused element of the earlier manor house (Plate 14).



Plate 13: Northern entrance (internal)



Plate 14: Blocked door

This doorway was blocked with brick and unfortunately was removed by site workers without monitoring. It is unknown if this was originally an access way or had been



inserted as a decorative feature. When the initial site visit was conducted the mound behind this section of wall was still in place and the wall could not be inspected for signs of a doorway on the exterior. It is certainly possible that this was an entrance to a shed on the north side of the garden (see section 4.4).

In the north western corner of the northern garden where the northern and western wall met was the remains of a glasshouse (Plate 15). The northern wall at this point may have had the brick lining rebuilt to accommodate this building. Internal to the glasshouse pairs of bricks had been set on end so they protruded from the wall surface. The roof of the glasshouse had also been accommodated by a groove cut into the north wall through the brick lining (Plate 16).



Plate 15: The Glasshouse



Plate 16: North wall inside Glasshouse (showing roof line)



The wall facing the garden of this glasshouse was originally 0.8m high, the rest of the structure would originally have been a wooden frame. The northern wall was reduced in height at the point (Plate 17). A moulded ironstone block formed a sweeping curve from the higher eastern section to the lower western one: a drop of c. 5 brick courses.



Plate17: Lowering of the northern wall

### Western Wall

Its external face is ashlar ironstone masonry. The western wall was designed to be seen from the road and the exterior is different to that of the other exterior walls (Plate 18), being of higher quality.



Plate 18: Exterior of western wall

Nine buttresses are placed relatively evenly along the wall, with two either side of the northern doorway. These are of a different construction to those seen on the eastern wall. The western buttresses are considerably smaller and are bonded into the fabric of the main wall, unlike the eastern ones.

This outer wall is slightly thicker with a stepped narrower upper portion (Plate 18). The step is marked with an overhanging ironstone wedge shaped capping stone, forming a false roof.

The internal face is red brick in a Flemish bond. The interior face of the wall inside the northern garden shows that the wall has been repaired or rebuilt in several phases.

The corner with the northern wall is bonded but appears to have been rebuilt at a later date. The wall appears to be bonded to the northern wall, with the section to the north of the doorway rebuilt. These bricks that appear handmade are on average 235mm by 115mm by 75mm.

Close to the northern corner, just after the end of the glasshouse is a doorway providing access to a back shed on the western side of the garden (Plate 19). It has sandstone ashlar jambs with a moulded arched lintel and is very similar to that seen in the eastern wall in the middle garden.



Plate 19: Interior view of doorway in northern garden

The lowest courses of bricks to the south of the doorway, at least 14 courses high, appear to be handmade and measure on average 215mm by 100mm by 65mm. These are identical to those of the eastern wall. The wall is capped with curved ironstone capstones.

The southern section of the western wall has been removed presumably during widening of the road. The upper portion of the wall curves down to the level of the overhanging tabature capping stones and the wall finishes in a stub just beyond the level of the southern garden internal wall (Plate 20).





Plate 20: The break in the western wall

At this point the western wall has been rebuilt in ashlar ironstone with no internal brick lining (Plate 21). The continuation of the western wall butts against the southern internal wall archway (Plates 20 and 22).



Plate 21: Internal view of the southern end of the western wall

The western wall turns a smooth curved corner to continue into the southern wall (Plate 23). The southern wall had been rebuilt along roughly half its length. This rebuilding was presumably contemporary with the western wall. However, an access way had been broken through the western wall just north of the corner so it was difficult to ascertain the exact relationship.



Plate 22: West wall butt joint



Plate 23: South-western corner

### Southern Wall

In the centre of the southern wall is a doorway. The frame and horizontal lintel are squared off with minimal moulding and probably of a 17<sup>th</sup> century date. The entire length of the southern wall had been rebuilt in ironstone ashlar to the west of this doorway and was slightly higher than the original wall (Plate 24).



Plate 24: Southern doorway



To the east of the doorway the original southern wall was of similar construction to the eastern wall. Its external face is of smooth-faced rubble ironstone masonry in uneven courses. The internal face is red brick in a Flemish bond. The bricks appear handmade and measure on average 215mm by 100mm by 65mm. The eastern wall appears to butt against the southern wall at the south-eastern corner (Plate 25).



Plate 25: South-eastern corner (looking west)

There was a narrow buttress built to the south of the south-eastern corner. The southern wall was capped with ironstone corbelling (Plate 26), not the curved ironstone caps seen on the other walls.



Plate 26: South-eastern corner (looking north)

### Internal Dividing Walls

These two walls subdivided the garden into three roughly equal spaces. Both were of similar brick construction. These walls were capped with curved ironstone capstones as seen on the exterior walls. Each had an arch in the centre allowing access between the gardens and also had an arch at either end where the internal wall butted against the outer walls. The arches sat on top of brick built piers and sprang from moulded marlstone pier-caps. The two outer arches were later filled with bricks a single brick thick. This infilling noticeably butted against the piers of the arches (Plate 27). In places this infilling was quite crudely executed with large gaps left. Foundations of this wall were the entire width of the garden and present even under the area of the arches, although not as deep.



Plate 27: Arch of internal wall inside middle garden looking north

This infilling appears to have been done to expand the size of the wall that plants were grown against. Both sides of these in-filled panels displayed nail holes from holding support wires and tags.

During the development work on the garden the bricks from several of these panels were removed, it is not certain if they were rebuilt.

### **4.3 The Three Gardens**

The lowest deposits encountered was the bedrock; above this was a natural geological layer of yellow sand (307) between 0.3m and 0.7m thick that had loose stone bands in discrete patches (339). Above this was a sterile brown-orange sand-clay (303) roughly 0.5m to 0.7m thick. This layer displayed considerable bioturbation in the form of root and worm penetration. In the southern garden this layer was at least 1.5m thick and heavily disturbed by tree roots; here it was recorded separately as (308).

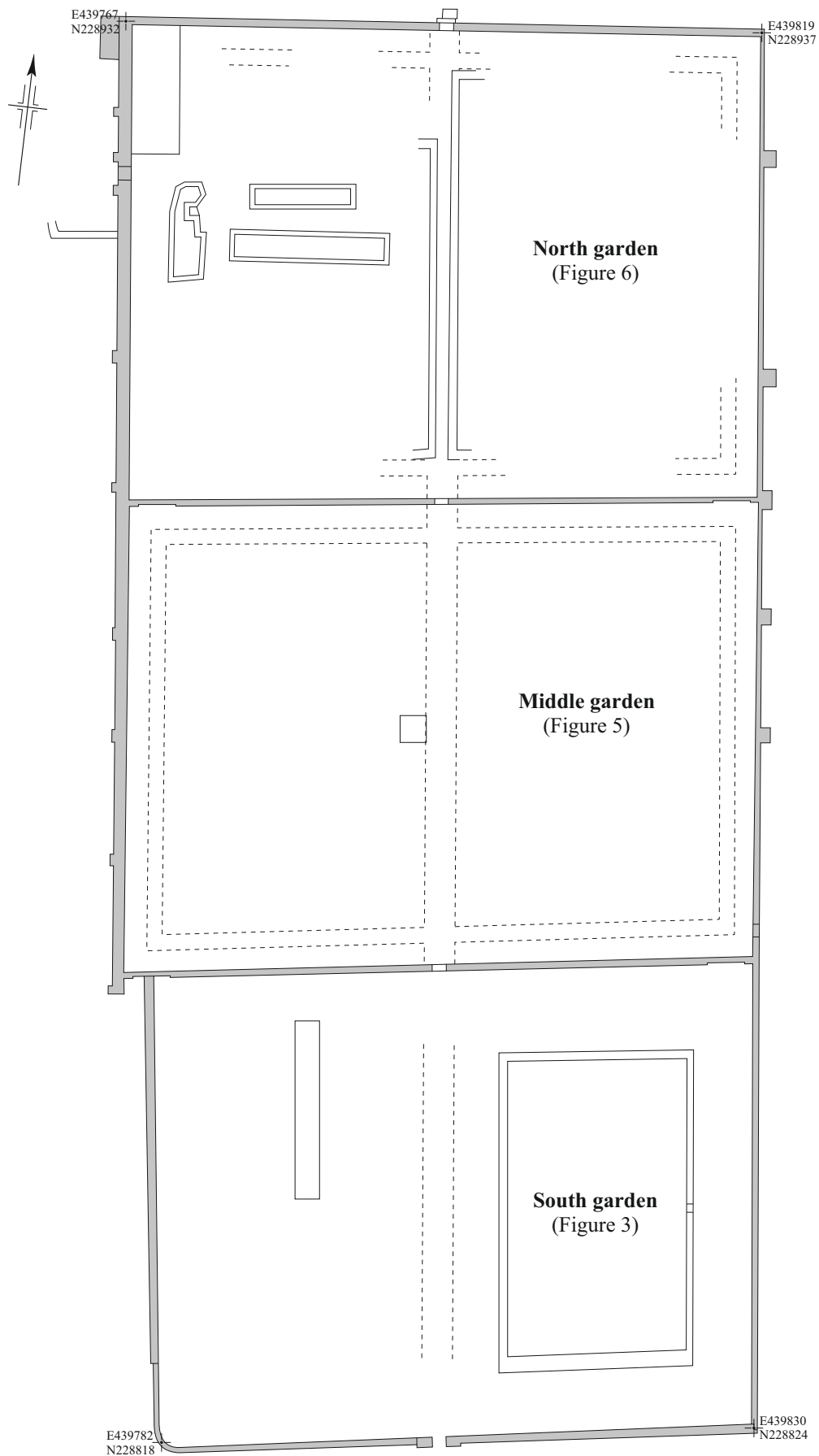


Figure 2: Garden - pre-excavation plan



### Southern Garden

The ground level of the garden sloped down from south to north prior to the excavation taking place (Fig. 2). Ground work was undertaken within the garden in stages; however the final stage saw the considerable reduction of ground level and a flattening of the area, prior to construction work and landscaping using imported soils. Some of this ground reduction, including underpinning work on the south wall, was undertaken without monitoring as JMHS were not informed that work was taking place (Plate 28).



Plate 28: Unmonitored excavation and underpinning

The soil sequence was not uniform across the entire garden. In the southwest part of the garden, garden deposit (303)/(308) was only 0.2m thick and was overlain by a 0.1m to 0.15m thick deposit of mottled yellow-grey sand-clay (337) containing quantities of stone fragments, degraded brick and mortar fragments. A sherd of Brill/Boarstall ware was recovered from this deposit. A similar patch to the north of (337) was recorded as deposit (340). In places this was replaced with a deposit of orange-brown sand-clay (313) 0.1m thick and flecked with charcoal. Overlying layer (337) was a 0.3m to 0.5m thick layer of sterile brown-orange sand-clay (336); this was so similar to deposit (303) and is likely to be re-deposited natural clay presumably associated with excavation in the area or landscaping.

Cut into the surface of layer (336) were three features (Fig. 3). The first was a linear gully 316 that was aligned roughly east to west. It was 0.75m wide, 0.1m deep with a shallow U-shaped profile and over 8m long. It was filled with a mid grey sand-clay (317). Gully 316 was cut by a later pit 314. This was circular in plan, roughly 1.2m in diameter, 0.1m deep with a relatively flat base. It was filled with a grey-brown sand-clay (315) flecked with charcoal and containing a sherd of medieval Minety type ware.



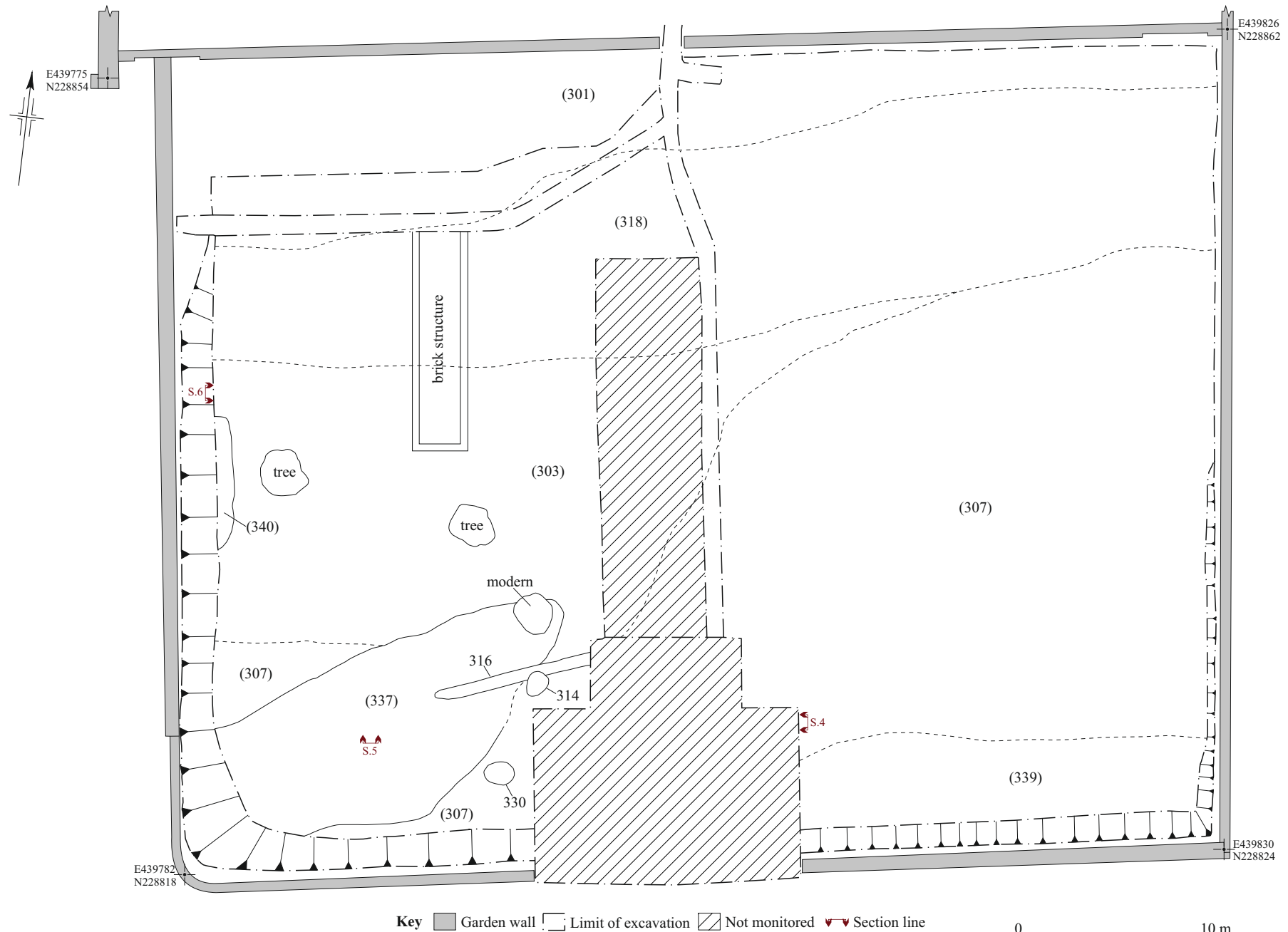


Figure 3: South garden - plan

Close by was a second pit 330, this was sub-circular in plan roughly 1.5m across and 0.1m deep; filled with a grey-brown sand-clay (331) flecked with charcoal. All three features were sealed by layer (335).

Above this layer (336) was a layer of pale grey to orange-brown sand-clay (335) containing sparse flecks of charcoal that was roughly 0.2m thick. This was in turn overlain by a 0.1m thick band of dark grey sand-clay (334) that was rich in charcoal. This was overlain by a dark grey-brown sand-loam (318) garden soil flecked with charcoal and containing sherds of red earthenware pottery. This layer was up to 0.5m thick in places.

To the northwest of the garden this lower garden soil (318) lay directly above layer (303)/(308). To the southeast layer (303)/(308) was at it thickest up to 1.5m and was overlain by a 0.4m thick deposit of dark grey-brown sand-loam (309) that was similar in composition to layer (318) but contained noticeably greater quantities of stone fragments.

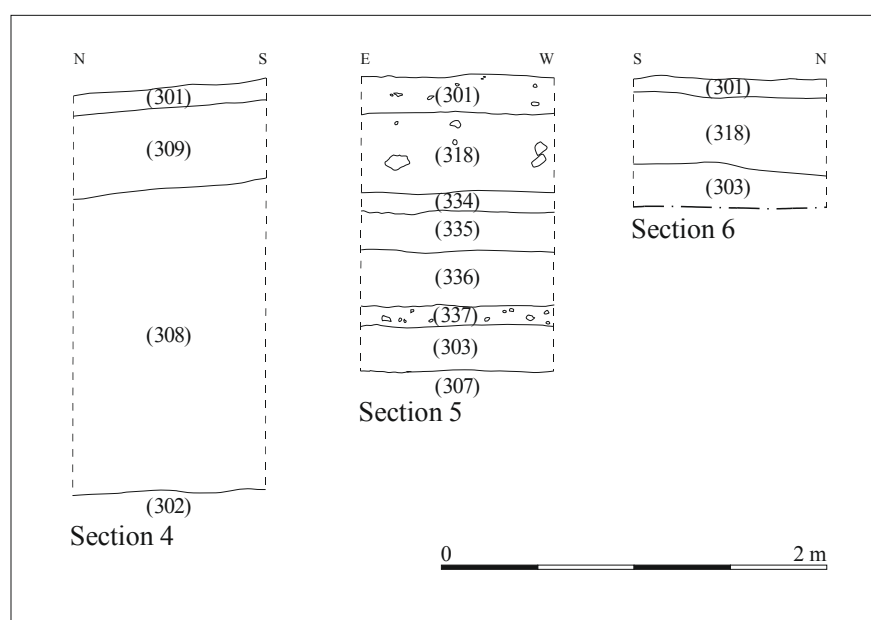


Figure 4: Southern Garden Sections

The southern entranceway had been rebuilt without monitoring. The door now had an arched lintel and was set into a larger arch (Plates 24 and 29). The eastern section of the southern wall was raised in height to match the western and both sections recapped.

Due to the methodology of excavation and the problems with unmonitored work it was difficult to ascertain the nature of the soil sequence seen in the southwest of the garden. It is possible this was the result of the filling of a large pit, although a possible cut could be seen in section and the sequence may be part of a deep planting bed (Plate 28).



Plate 29: Ground reduction in the southern garden.

It is a possibility that the early sequence of deposits (337) and (336) along with the associated gully and pits are medieval. These features are associated with a few sherds of medieval pottery and red earthenwares so common in the upper layers are completely absent. The uppermost layer in this garden was a 0.1m-0.2m thick dark brown clay loam (301) topsoil.



Plate 30: Southern garden prior to excavation

The last garden features preserved were a large rectangular planting bed with stone slab surround to the east of the garden and the remains of a brick built raised planting bed to the west of the central path (Plate 30 and Fig. 2).

### Middle Garden

Ground reduction work in this garden was considerably less than in the southern garden. A series of service trenches were excavated within the garden to accommodate water and electric services.

The lowest deposit encountered in this garden was the sterile brown-orange sand-clay layer (303). This was overlain by a mid grey-brown sand-loam (302) garden soil flecked with charcoal and containing sherds of red earthenware pottery. This layer was up to 0.35m thick in places.

Two large rectangular planting beds either side of a central path were recorded within this garden. They both measured roughly 30m by 20m and appeared to be cut through deposit (302). The western bed 353/355 was at least 0.5m deep with straight vertical sides. It was filled with a mid-dark orange-brown sand-loam (354)/(356) that also contained 19<sup>th</sup> century red and white earthenwares. The eastern bed 357 was similar, again it was filled with a mid-dark orange-brown sand-loam (358) that also contained 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery sherds. These planting beds matched the final phase garden layout and were inside surrounding pathways (Fig. 2), boot-scrappers were seen close to the paths (Plate 31).

Cut 351 was aligned east to west and seen under the central path. It was roughly 1m wide and filled with stone rubble (352). It was uncertain what this feature represented. It could be an earlier layout for planting beds or a form of drain.

A series of eight planting pits were seen along the northern internal wall, four each side of the central entrance. Excavations were not close enough to the eastern and western walls to encounter such pits, although the part of one may be present near the western wall. No pits were recorded along the southern internal wall.

The possible remains of a raised planting bed were seen in the south-eastern corner of the garden. An L-shaped foundation trench 347/349 0.5m deep was recorded. This was filled with stone rubble in a sand clay matrix (348/350). The northern side of the bed appears to have been removed with the digging of pit 345. This was circular in plan and roughly 2m in diameter; at least 0.6m deep although the base was not seen. The fill was stone rubble in an orange-brown clay matrix (346).

A second brick built raised planting bed was probably located just to the north of this. Cut 343 was roughly rectangular 6m by 2m in plan and 0.7m deep. The fill was stone and brick rubble in an orange-brown sand-clay matrix (344). Both of these beds had similar dimensions and are probably contemporary.

Two tree holes from recently removed trees were also seen to the east of the garden. These trees had presumably taken root in the years of abandonment after the Great War. The uppermost layer in this garden was a 0.1m-0.2m thick dark brown clay loam (301) topsoil.

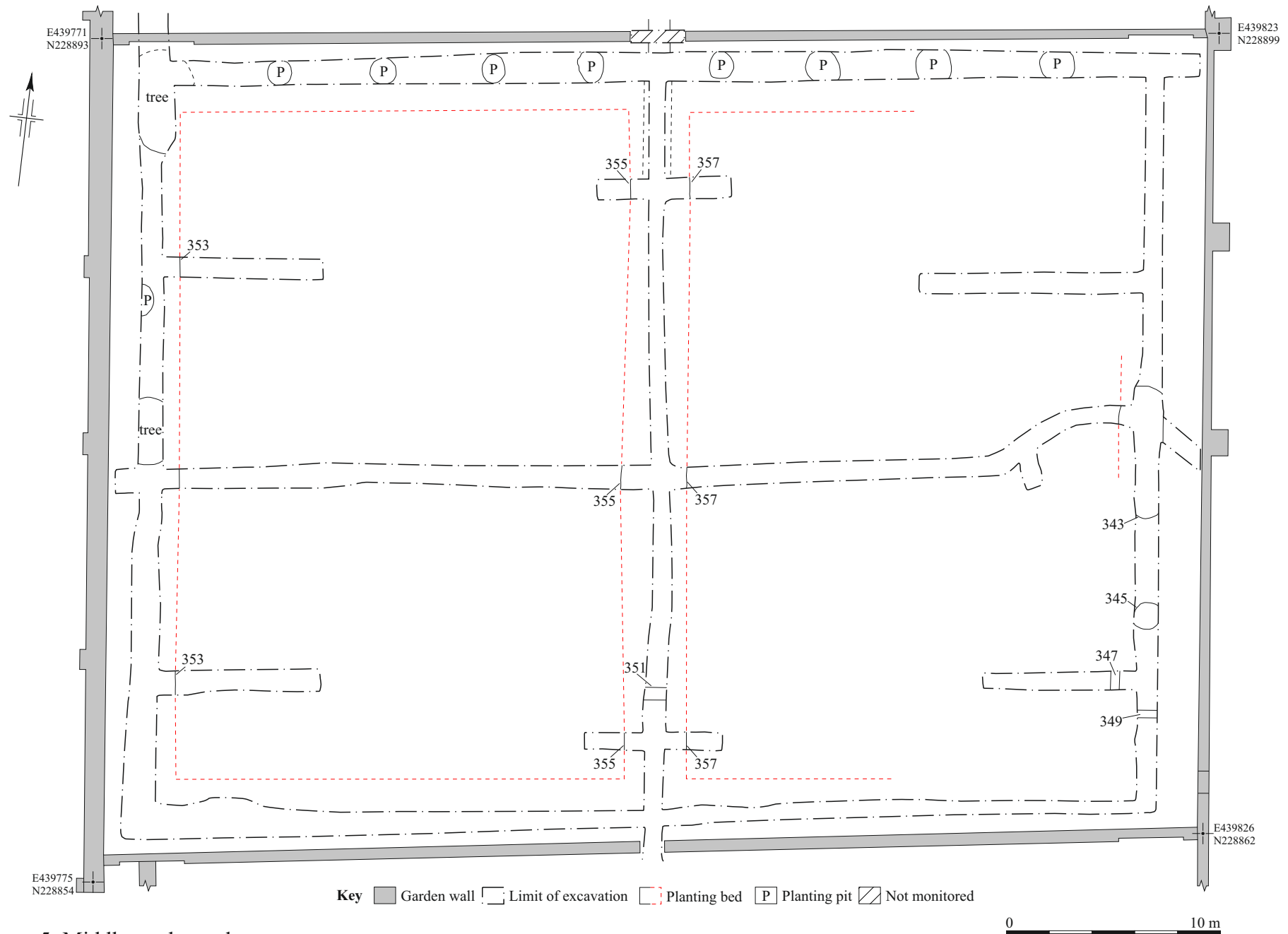


Figure 5: Middle garden - plan





Plate 31: Three boot-scrappers recovered during soil stripping

### Northern Garden

The southern portion of the garden was the subject of a soil strip that exposed the natural deposit (307) and the bedrock in some places. Overlying this, as seen in the south, was a layer (303).

Cut into this layer were a possible remnant of wall 311 and an area of burning (310). The possible wall 311 was 0.4m wide and over 10m long although its full extent was not seen. Within the cut for the wall were heavily degraded bricks (red exteriors with a dark black core) in a soft sandy fabric as well as patches of cream lime mortar (312).

The patch of burning (310) was rectangular in plan with rounded corners measuring 1.5m by 0.9m. The burnt deposit was 0.05m thick and included fragments of heavily burnt stone. Scorching to the surrounding natural deposit was also evident. This could represent the lowest remains of a hearth as it was situated close to wall 311.

Wall 311 appears to be on a similar alignment to the internal wall of the garden, therefore it could be an earlier internal garden feature and not a pre-garden building. These features were sealed by the lower garden soil (302).

Two deep planting beds were seen in the west half of the garden. These were long rectangular features, roughly 2m wide and cut into the bedrock to provide extra soil depth. Both were seen only where the soil reduction was deepest and further such planting beds may exist to the north of the two recorded.

Also recorded in the western half of the garden was a brick built water cistern. An inflow pipe was seen to the south and what was thought to be an overflow pipe was seen to the north. Again these features were sealed by the lower garden soil (302). As well as forming part of the garden drainage system this cistern also formed a reservoir for a small cast iron hand pump situated above it (Plate 32).

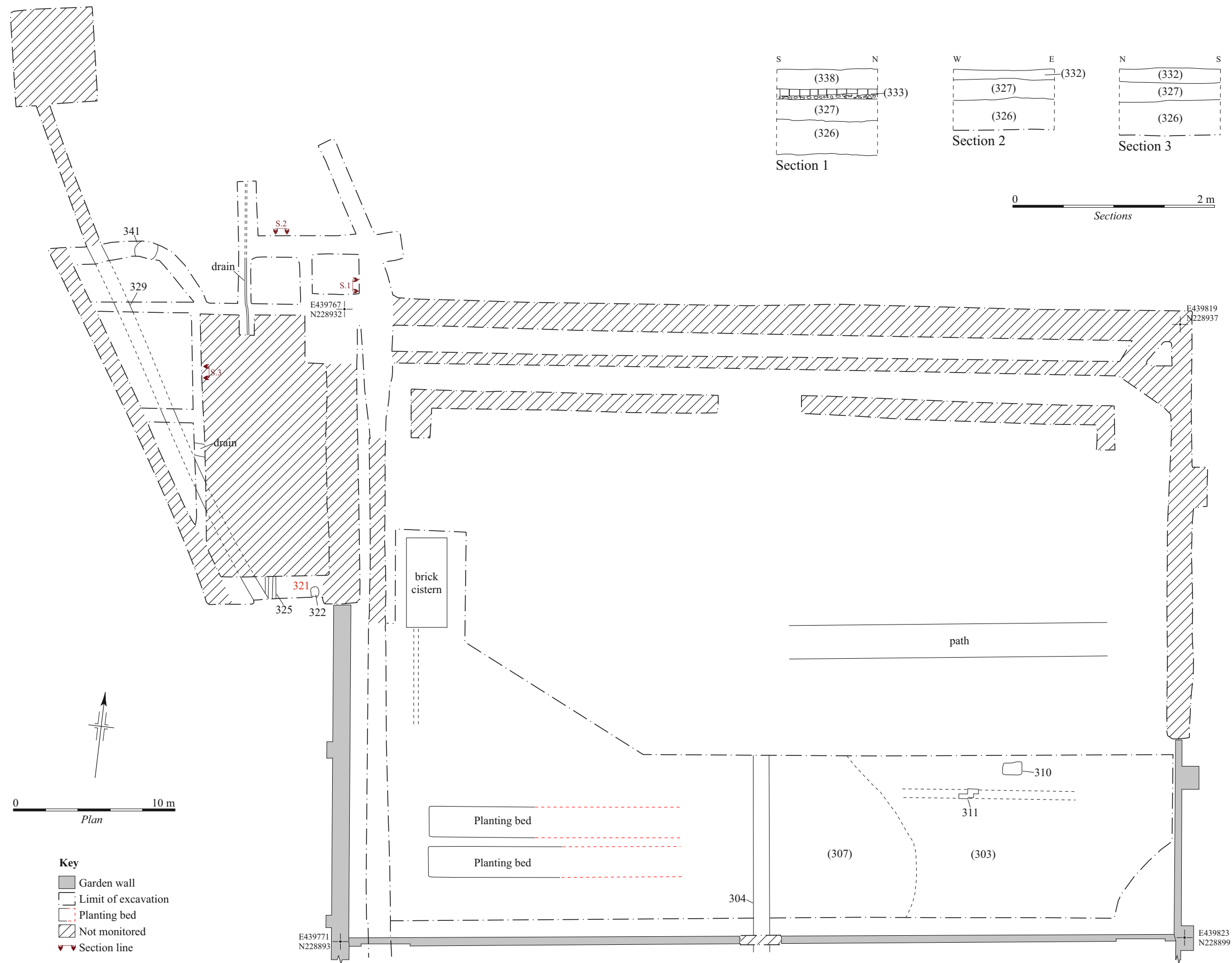


Figure 6: North garden - plan and sections



Plate 32: Pump in northern garden

Cut 304 into layer (302) were the foundations for a central path that linked this garden to the middle garden. The path's surface was missing leaving only the makeup layer of compact pale brown-yellow clay (305) with tabular stone roughly 0.4m thick. The pathway had been heavily disturbed in recent years.

Layer (302) was overlain by a 0.1m-0.2m thick dark brown clay loam (301) topsoil. The uppermost layer in the northern garden was a mixed dump of modern material (306) containing 20<sup>th</sup> century pottery, glass and metal objects that was not present across the entire garden.

Two large rectangular brick built raised planting beds were present in the western side of the garden along with an irregular stone built raised bed that accommodated the pump at the northern end (Fig. 2 and Plate 33).



Plate 33: Northern garden prior to redevelopment



Extensive work had been undertaken in the northern part of this garden. JMHS were not informed of this prior to it taking place and it was only seen after work had been completed. New drainage trenches had been excavated, two new internal retaining walls had been built and the entire northern wall and sections of the eastern and western wall had been taken down new foundations lain and the sections rebuilt (Fig. 6) with a breeze block core (Plates 34 and 35).



Plate 34: The rebuilt northern entrance (see Plate 11)



Plate 35: New internal walls and rebuilt northern wall

#### 4.4 Exterior to the Garden

The lowest formation recorded in this area was a blue-grey clay (326) mottled brown-grey in places. This was overlain by layer (307) that was elsewhere in the garden area. Above this was a layer roughly 0.2m thick of dark brown sand-clay (319) which also contained small quantities of stone. This was seen to the west of the garden, to the north a similar layer was recorded as deposit (327). In places this was sealed by a layer of yellow-orange-brown sand-clay (332) up to 0.1m thick.

##### The Back Shed

To the west of the walled garden was a back shed accessed through the western door in the northern garden (Plate 36). This was a later addition as the southern wall of this structure clearly butted against the main western wall (Plate 37).



Plate 36: Shed area (looking south)



Plate 37: Shed wall butting garden wall

A western wall was constructed at an angle initially it formed the boundary of the shed but was continued to the north to form the main boundary wall of the property. The northern wall of the walled garden appeared to continue past the joint with the western garden wall, at least for a little way. This may have extended further but the area was covered by an earth mound. At the time of the visit the area was heavily overgrown and difficult to access. Unfortunately by the time JMHS were informed of further work, this area of the garden wall had been completely demolished and much of the ground level reduced.

The roughly triangular enclosed area may not have been a single shed, but have held several small lean-to structures against the walls. Traces of lead flashing marking roof lines could be seen on the exterior of the western wall and the southern shed wall (Plate 37)



The remains of hanging pegs/nails were seen on the southern shed wall including one row on a wooden baton.



Plate 38: The western garden wall internal to the back shed area

A small wall stub was present aligned north to south and parallel to the western garden wall (Plate 38), possible bonded to the northern wall extension; it was not possible to full investigate it during the initial visit, and it had been removed without monitoring by the time of the next visit (Plate 39).



Plate 39: Shed area after demolition and rebuild of walls

A series of drainage and service trenches were monitored in this area (Plates 41 and 42), including pipe access under the southern shed wall. A small pit 322 was recorded that pre-dated the construction of the shed (Fig. 6). This pit or posthole was 0.3m in

diameter and 0.2m deep with a flat base. It was filled with a grey-brown sand-clay (323) flecked with charcoal. It was sealed by layer (319).

Also pre-dating the construction of the shed was a drain 324, this was aligned north to south and constructed of stone (325). The base was constructed of large flat stones c.0.5m wide, narrower stones c.0.15m high formed the sides and flat stones capped it. The cut for this drain was excavated through layer (319).

The southern wall 321 of the shed was cut 320/328 into layer (327). The wall sat upon stone rubble foundations (329) up to 0.2m thick. This was revealed during some underpinning work.

Cut into layer (327) was a circular pit 341 roughly 1.5m in diameter, 0.7m deep with a flat base. This was filled with a dark brown sand-clay (342) containing a high proportion of stone rubble.



Plate 40: External site work



Plate 41: Soil sequence outside garden

### Possible further sheds

To the north of the northern garden wall was the remains of a brick paved surface (333) that was roughly 0.1m thick. The paving bricks sat on a thin layer of sand and clay, which directly overlay layer (327). Overlying this surface was a deposit of brick rubble in a sand-clay matrix (338). It is uncertain what the full dimensions of this deposit originally were as work in this area had taken place without prior notification.

Prior to the redevelopment of the garden a large earthen mound was present against the north-western corner of the garden and the back shed (Plate 12). The antiquity of this mound was initially questioned; unfortunately it was removed without notification. The subsequent identification of surface (333) that was located under it



allows a more recent date to be assigned to this mound. Back sheds are usually arranged along the northern side of south-facing kitchen gardens (Campbell 1998) and would seem likely that the mound represents the demolition material from such sheds and surface (333), the remains of the floor of one such structure (Plate 42).



Plate 42: Surface (333) in section

#### 4.5 Garden Use

The brick lining of the main walls and the brick interior walls all displayed multiple nail holes from fixing support wires; some iron nails were still *in situ*. These appear to be square sectioned and hand-made. Simple L-shaped iron hooks were also noted (Plate 43).

Also present on some walls were triangular lead tags stamped with a number (Plate 44). These presumably refer to a planting patch or specific variety of plant grown. The position of these numbers was plotted and it is possible that Estate records preserve planting information that would relate to them (Fig. 7).



Plate 43: Iron hook



Plate 44: Lead tag

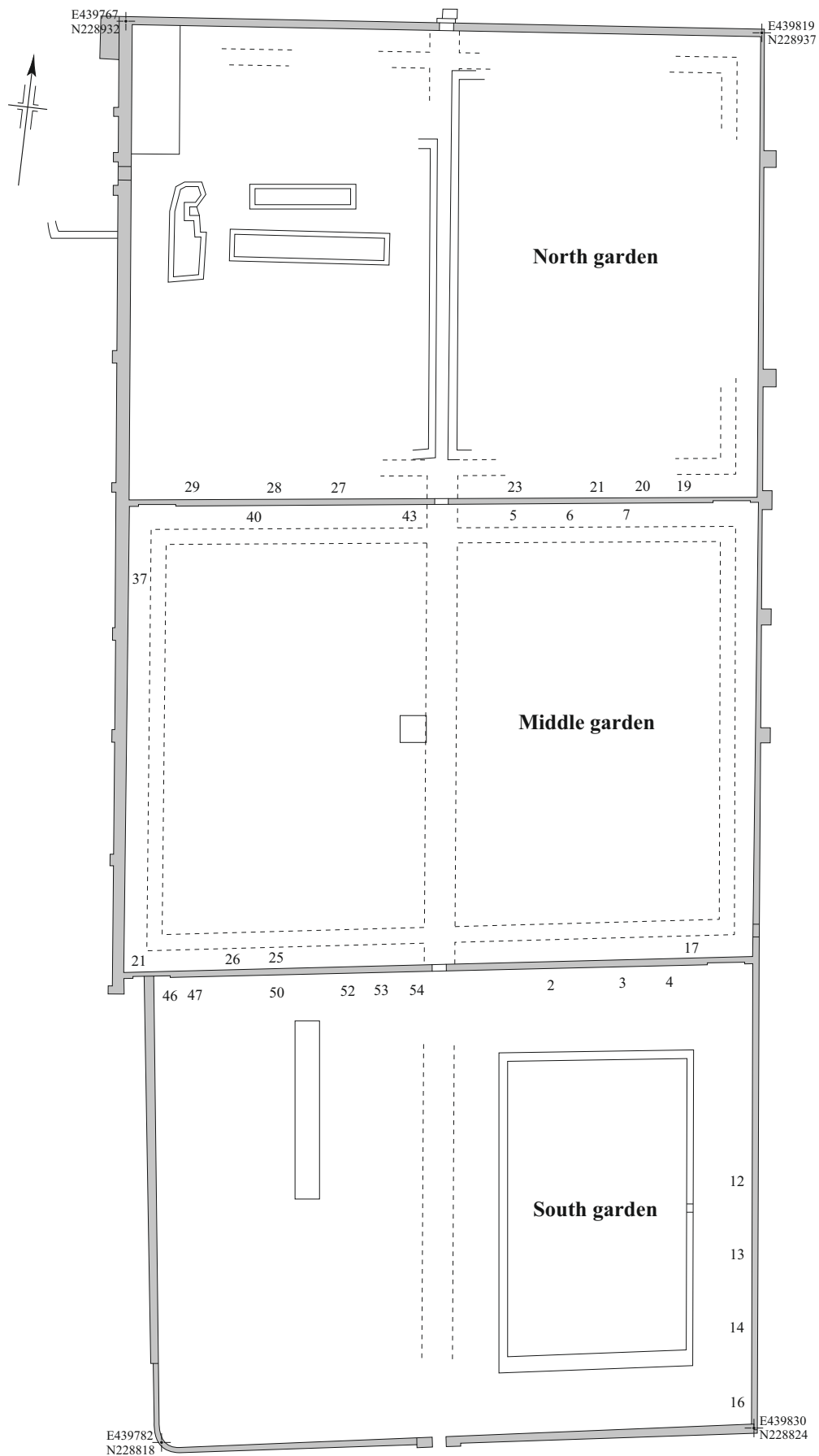


Figure 7: Planting tag locations

A metal plant tag was recorded that had been written on, possibly in indelible pencil (Plate 45). This tag read “Rosa (Mattock)” and under this where two other words that were too difficult to make out. Rosa Mattock probably refers to Mattock’s Roses of Nuneham Courtney that was established in 1875 selling superior quality roses. This was attached to the interior southern wall in the south garden and indicates by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century this garden was no longer used as a kitchen garden.



Plate 45: Late 19<sup>th</sup> century plant tag

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 6 sherds with a total weight of 164g. It was recorded using the conventions of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

<b>OX234:</b>	<b>Banbury ware</b> , L 11 <sup>th</sup> – L 14 <sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 54g
<b>OXAM:</b>	<b>Brill/Boarstall ware</b> , AD1200 – 1600. 2 sherds, 20g.
<b>OXBB:</b>	<b>Minety-type ware</b> . L12 <sup>th</sup> – 16 <sup>th</sup> century. 2 sherds, 34g.
<b>OXBK:</b>	<b>Medieval Shelly Coarseware</b> , AD1100-1350. 1 sherd, 42g.
<b>MOD:</b>	<b>All modern wares</b> , 19 <sup>th</sup> – 20 <sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 14g

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in northern Oxfordshire. The sherd of OXBB from context 119 is very abraded, and appears highly likely to be residual,

*Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type*

	OX234		OXBK		OXBB		OXAM		MOD		
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
315					1	16					L12thC
318	1	54	1	42							12thC
337							1	9			13thC
339							1	11	1	14	19thC
Total	1	54	1	42	1	34	2	20	1	14	

## 5.2 Ceramic Building Material by Simona Denis

A small assemblage of five ceramic building material fragments, of a combined weight of 3075g was recovered from two contexts. The state of preservation is generally fair, although none of the items is complete. Three of the objects were identified as brick fragments; a single medieval floor tile and a single edging tile complete the collection.

Four different fabrics were observed:

1. Orange-pink, fine sandy clay
2. Orange-pink, sandy with occasional small inclusions
3. Dark pink, gritty with frequent small to medium inclusions
4. Pink, gritty with small to medium inclusions.

### • Floor Tile

One small fragment of medieval ceramic floor tile, measuring 34x27 mm and weighing 21g was recovered from context (335) and attributed to the 'Stabbed Wessex' style, dating between the 1280 and 1330.

The item is made of an orange-pink, fine sandy clay and represents the corner of the original tile; it shows a single, pointed conical stabbed keying mark, 6 mm in diameter, on the lower face. The upper face preserves a small portion of the white inlaid decoration, but none of the glaze originally covering the tile. The decoration is composed by an inner, thin line parallel to an outer thicker, studded one, running along the side of the tile. The limited extension of the decoration prevented from positive identification of the type.

### • Brick

Context (212) yielded the three fragments of brick recovered during the excavation. The items are largely incomplete, the thickness being the only dimension preserved in all three; a single fragment is preserved to its full width of 120 mm.

Context	Fabric	Weight (gr)	Width (mm)	Thickness (mm)	Date Range
212	2	808	120, complete	65, complete	?16 <sup>th</sup> -18 <sup>th</sup> C
	4	587	90, incomplete	59, complete	
	3	1017	140, incomplete	45, complete	?18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> C



All of the fragments appear to be handmade; the two items tentatively dated to the 16<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> century show a rougher, more uneven texture pointing to a slightly earlier production date compared to the remaining fragment.

It is not recommended to retain the fragments due to their incompleteness.

- **Edging Tile**

A single incomplete tile fragment was collected from context (212). The fabric is very similar to the brick fragment recovered from the same context, although the external surface is significantly darker due to over-firing.

The corner fragment, measuring 120x146 mm, is relatively flat (25 mm in thickness) and preserves one flat edge and the rounded top edge. The item was identified as an edging tile and tentatively dated to the Victorian period or later.

### **5.3 Glass by Simona Denis**

Three very small fragments of flat glass, of a combined weight of 1.1g were found in context (317). The extremely fragmentary nature and the very poor state of preservation of the finds allows very limited observations, although a dating to the medieval period is suggested based on their general aspect.

Two of the items show very similar characteristics, and probably belong to the same object. They are flat, very thin (2 mm in thickness) fragments, possibly part of a window panel; the original colour of the glass is not observable due to the advanced deterioration. However, the surface preserved a portion of reddish-brown paint; the larger of the two fragments (measuring 10x16 mm) shows a thin line running parallel to thicker band.

The remaining fragment weighs 0.7g and measures 14x15x3 mm, and was also tentatively identified as window glass.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The walled garden is described in the listing as being of late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century in date. The walled garden is rectangular, measuring c. 116m by 52m (approximately 0.6ha), with two internal walls forming three roughly equal garden spaces within. A single external shed structure remains at the north-western corner of the garden. Walled gardens tended to range in size from 0.4 hectares to 8-12 hectares. They were at the top of their productivity between 1800 and 1939 (Campbell 1998). The walled garden undoubtedly started as a kitchen garden but the building of the Kitchen Garden, or The New Gardens, to the south in c. 1852 meant that this probably became more of a flower/pleasure garden (see below).

The garden is enclosed by walls on each side constructed of external face of smooth-faced rubble ironstone masonry in uneven courses on the external side with the internal face in red brick in a Flemish bond. The exception is the western wall that is ashlar ironstone masonry. It was designed to be seen from the road and the exterior is

different to that of the other exterior walls. The cost of bricks was greater than using cheaper local stone but were used on the inner wall face as they were strong, dry and heat-retaining for fruit trees to be trained along them. Nails to support the trees can be knocked easily into the lime mortar between the bricks (Campbell 1998).

Modifications and repairs to the garden masonry structure have been carried out. These include the addition of five unevenly spaced ashlar block buttresses on the external side of the eastern wall. Towards the centre of the eastern wall section within the northern garden is a portion that has been lowered by roughly 1m. The sides of this lowered section are at roughly 45°. The upper 0.5m of the wall in the northern garden appears to be repaired or rebuilt; this work appears under the lowered section possibly indicating the lowering took place during this repair. The section has capstones the same as the rest of the wall and it is possible that the entire wall was recapped at the same time as the lowered section would require more stones than a straight run. It is also possible this feature was an original aspect of the wall. It is speculated this lowered feature is a “clairvoyance” to allow a better view of the church from the northern garden.

The northern wall has a rounded arch entrance in the centre. At a later date this entrance was reduced in width to a single doorway. To the east of the entrance the wall appears to have been raised roughly 1m higher with stone butting against the lower portion of the arch. To the west the wall may have had further rebuilding work done to it, as the character of the stone is not the same as to the east. To the west of the main entrance was a blocked door. The frame has moulded sandstone in a Tudor style and may represent a reused element of the earlier manor house.

Nine buttresses that may be original are placed relatively evenly along the western wall, with two either side of the northern doorway. The corner with the northern wall is bonded but appears to have been rebuilt at a later date as was the section to the north of the doorway. The southern section of the western wall has been removed presumably during widening of the road. The upper portion of the wall curves down to the level of the overhanging tablatore capping stones and the wall finishes in a stub just beyond the level of the southern garden internal wall. At this point the western wall has been rebuilt in ashlar ironstone with no internal brick lining. The southern wall had been rebuilt along roughly half its length. This rebuilding was presumably contemporary with the western wall.

In the centre of the southern wall is a doorway. The frame and horizontal lintel are squared off with minimal moulding and probably of a 17<sup>th</sup> century date. The entire length of the southern wall had been rebuilt in ironstone ashlar to the west of this doorway and was slightly higher than the original wall. To the east of the doorway the original southern wall was of similar construction to the eastern wall. Why the eastern wall appears to butt against the southern wall at the south-eastern corner is not understood. The southern wall was capped with ironstone corbelling not the curved ironstone caps seen on the other walls. Perhaps these were replaced during the rebuilding of half of this wall.

The two internal walls subdivided the garden into three roughly equal spaces. Both were of similar brick construction. Each had an arch in the centre allowing access between the gardens and also had an arch at either end where the internal wall butted

against the outer walls. The two outer arches were later filled with bricks, a single brick thick. This infilling noticeably butted against the piers of the arches. In places this infilling was quite crudely executed with large gaps left.

In the north western corner of the northern garden where the northern and western wall met was the remains of a glasshouse, the only one observed during the works. The apparent absence of others is one of the probable explanations for the new Kitchen Garden which incorporated them and heating structures. Another reason is the increase in size to approximately 1 hectare.

Within the south garden the early sequence of deposits along with the associated gully and pits may be medieval. These features are associated with a few sherds of medieval pottery, and red earthenwares so common in the upper layers are completely absent. The gully is at a different orientation to the layout of the Walled Garden. In the southwest of this garden it was difficult to ascertain the nature of the soil sequence seen; it is possible this was the result of the filling of a large pit, although a possible cut could be seen in section and the sequence may be part of a deep planting bed. The last garden features preserved were a large rectangular planting bed with stone slab surround to the east of the garden and the remains of a brick built raised planting bed to the west of the central path.

Within the middle garden two large rectangular planting beds either side of a central path were recorded. These planting beds matched the final phase garden layout and were inside surrounding pathways; boot-scrapers were seen close to the paths (they were typically situated at each corner of large beds). There were only 19<sup>th</sup> century finds from the fill of beds. An earlier feature aligned east to west was seen under the central path. It was roughly 1m wide and filled with stone rubble. It was uncertain what this feature represented; it could be an earlier layout for planting beds or a form of drain. A series of eight planting pits were seen along the northern internal wall, four each side of the central entrance. Excavations were not close enough to the eastern and western walls to encounter such pits, although the part of one may be present near the western wall. No pits were recorded along the southern internal wall. These planting pits pre-date the final layout of this garden.

The possible remains of a raised planting bed were seen in the south-eastern corner of the middle garden with the possible remains of a raised planting bed seen in the south-eastern corner of the garden. Both of these beds had similar dimensions and are probably contemporary.

In the south-eastern part of the northern garden was a possible remnant of a wall and an area of burning. The possible wall was 0.4m wide and over 10m long although its full extent was not seen. This may have been for what is called a 'melonry' or 'frame yard' where hotbeds were grouped together because they needed further protection from the cold, from theft and from interference by curious visitors. Also hotbeds looked somewhat unsightly with their necessary heaps of manure and coverings (Campbell 1998). It is probable that it extended westwards and finished just before the central doorway into the middle garden. The patch of burning which was rectangular in plan with rounded corners measuring 1.5m by 0.9m and scorching to the surrounding natural deposit could represent the lowest remains of a hearth close to the wall.

Two deep planting beds were seen in the west half of the northern garden. These were long rectangular features, roughly 2m wide and cut into the bedrock to provide extra soil depth. Both were seen only where the soil reduction was deepest and further such planting beds may exist to the north of the two recorded.

Also recorded in the western half of the garden was a brick built water cistern. As well as forming part of the garden drainage system this cistern also formed a reservoir for a small cast iron hand pump situated above it. The foundations for a central path that linked this garden to the middle garden were recorded along with two large rectangular brick-built raised planting beds in the western side of the garden as well as an irregular stone-built raised bed that accommodated the pump at the northern end

To the west of the walled garden was a back shed accessed through the western door in the northern garden. This was a later addition as the southern wall of this structure clearly butted against the main western wall. The roughly triangular enclosed area may not have been a single shed, but have held several small lean-to structures against the walls. A small undated pit was recorded that pre-dated the construction of the shed. Also pre-dating the construction of the shed was a drain; this was aligned north to south and constructed of stone.

To the north of the northern garden wall was the remains of a brick paved surface that was roughly 0.1m thick. The paving bricks sat on a thin layer of sand and clay. Prior to the redevelopment of the garden a large earthen mound was present against the north-western corner of the garden and the back shed. The antiquity of this mound was initially questioned; unfortunately it was removed without notification. The subsequent identification of the fore-mentioned surface that was located under it allows a more recent date to be assigned to this mound. Back sheds are usually arranged along the northern side of south-facing kitchen gardens (Campbell 1998) and would seem likely that the mound represents the demolition material from such sheds and the surface was the remains of the floor of one such structure.

The brick lining of the main walls and the brick interior walls all displayed multiple nail holes from fixing support wires; some iron nails were still *in situ*. These appear to be square sectioned and hand-made. Simple L-shaped iron hooks were also noted. Also present on some walls were triangular lead tags stamped with a number. These presumably refer to a planting patch or specific variety of plant grown. The position of these numbers was plotted and it is possible that Estate records preserve planting information that would relate to them.

A metal plant tag was recorded that had been written on, possibly in indelible pencil. This tag read "Rosa (Mattock)" and under this were two other words that were too difficult to make out. Rosa Mattock probably refers to Mattock's Roses of Nuneham Courtney that was established in 1875 selling superior quality roses. This was attached to the interior southern wall in the south garden and indicates by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century this garden was no longer used as a kitchen garden.

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