

Elite Landscapes in Late Medieval and Early Modern East Anglia: Families, Residences and the Development of Exclusivity

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Abstract

This thesis examines the changing boundaries between the elite and the vernacular landscape during the fifteenth, sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The study takes an explicitly individualistic approach, considering the careers, allegiances, relationships and ambitions of the people who created and inhabited elite landscapes. By including historicised biographies within the framework of a regional landscape study it has been possible to look beneath broad cultural and social themes and identify some of the motives and ambitions that may have influenced the development of exclusivity at particular locations. For the purposes of this thesis *exclusivity* refers to the process of expanding the area of demesne in order to create consciously orchestrated elite landscapes. This thesis will argue that a range of scenarios expressed the exclusivity of the elite landscape and demarcated it from the vernacular. The ability to control and direct movement around and through elite landscapes was an important aspect of exclusivity, access to some areas being denied, whilst being actively encouraged where status-display was the paramount concern. Impressions of rank and superiority were conveyed by the careful management of potential interaction with various social groups, different messages being presented to audiences depending on their perceived position in society.

The period under consideration is usually divided between the specialisms of medieval and early modern history and is rarely considered as a unity. However, by dismissing conventional periodisation it has been possible to examine the processes that gradually changed the relationship between residences, elite households and their surroundings. The research presented here traces the rise and decline of families and their houses as they responded to the challenges and opportunities offered during a time of momentous change. Detailed micro-studies have been combined with a synthesis of evidence from a multiplicity of sources and set within the context of the transition from medieval to early-modern society. The adoption of the Landscape Approach has provided a framework within which theoretical concepts could be tested by empirical research. The resulting thesis argues that the expansion of exclusivity promoted the development of landscapes that were designed to legitimise the status and authority of the people who created them and provide them with idealised settings for their residences.

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Abbreviations

ACA	Arundel Castle Archive
BL	British Library
EHER	Essex Historic Environment Record
GIS	Geographic Information System
HER	Historic Environment Record
HL	House of Lords
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
NAU	Norfolk Archaeology Unit
NCM	Norwich Castle Museum
NHER	Norfolk Historic Environment Record
NMR	National Monument Record
NRO	Norfolk Record Office
OD	Ordnance Datum
OS	Ordnance Survey
PC	Private Collection
RCHME	Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England
SHER	Suffolk Historic Environment Record
SRO, B	Suffolk Record Office, Bury St. Edmunds
SRO, I	Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich
SRO, L	Suffolk Record Office, Lowestoft
TNA: PRO	The National Archives: Public Record Office

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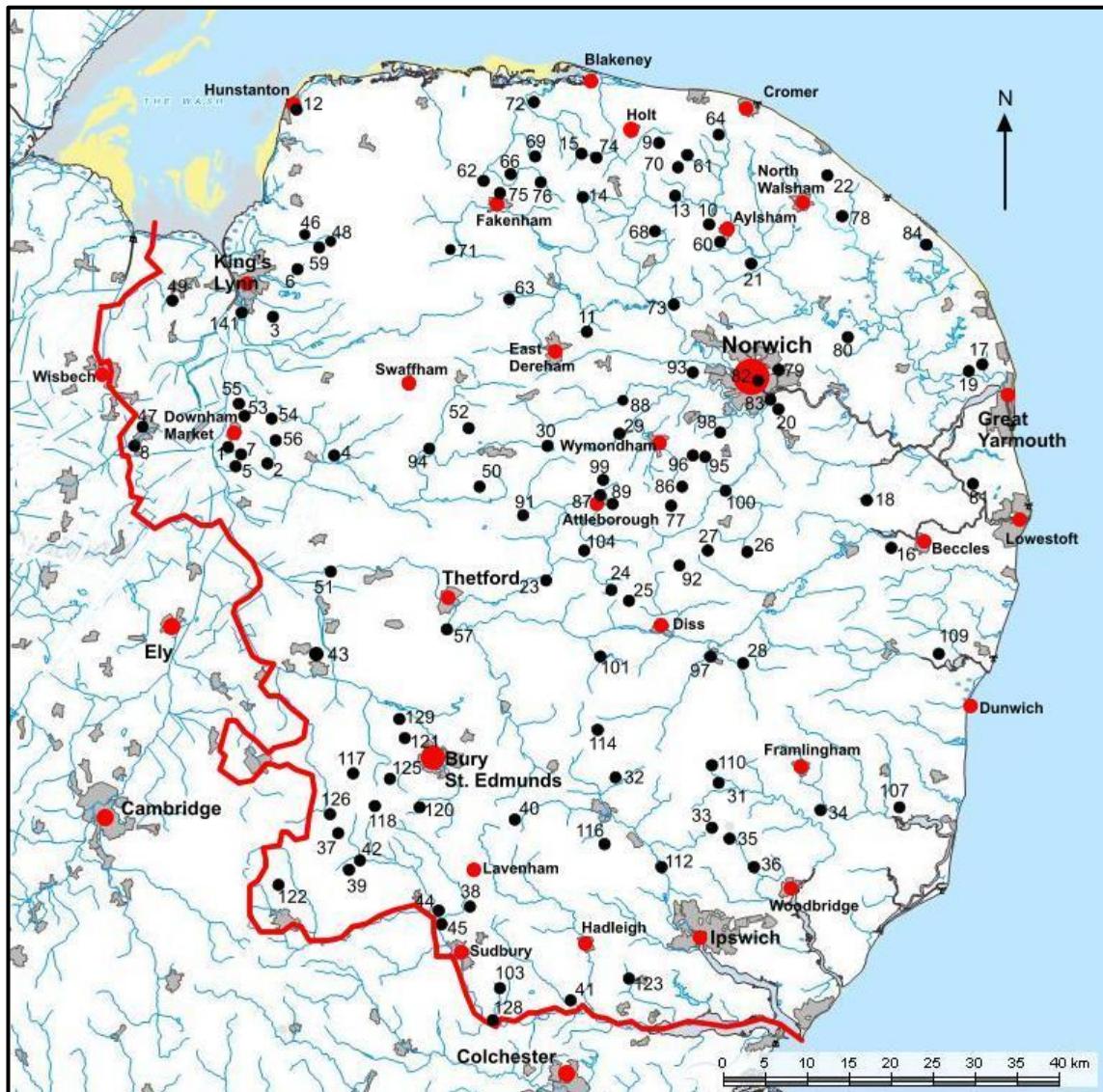


Figure 1: East Anglian residences mentioned in the text

When a residence is mentioned in the text the reference number relating to this map will be given in brackets, along with the grid reference. Town names have changed over time therefore to avoid confusion present-day forms will be used in this study. Details of the properties shown on the above map can be found in Appendix 1, page 334.

Chapter 1: Introduction

A manorial extent conducted in 1495-6 recorded the vernacular and elite landscapes that constituted the manor of Kimberley Hall in central East Anglia.¹ The manor had come to Sir John Wodehouse through his wife, Margaret Fastolf who inherited Kimberley from her father, Sir Thomas Fastolf in 1384.² The Fastolfs had occupied a moated residence standing beside a rivulet and on the edge of a deer park but during the fifteenth century the Wodehouses chose to create a moated hall in a different location. The new Kimberley Hall (29; TG 0761 0405) was built in a shallow declivity, on a south-facing slope above the valley floor, 920 metres north-west of Fastolf's manor. Exactly when the new residence was built is open to debate but for much of the first half of the fifteenth century the Wodehouses had been embroiled in both protracted property disputes³ and fighting in the French wars, where they served with distinction.⁴ As the century progressed, they gradually consolidated their estates in Kimberley by acquiring the adjacent manor of *Kimberley Butordes* in 1446 and by redeeming lands previously mortgaged.⁵ The acquisition of the lands of *Butordes* manor may have allowed the westward extension of the park towards Kimberley church. Alternatively, the *Lord's Park* may have been created from the *certyn lands in Kymberley* that Thomas Wodehouse wished to purchase with the ten pounds he borrowed from his father-in-law as part of a settlement drawn up prior to his marriage to Thomasina Townsend in 1488.⁶ The manorial extent of 1495-6 recorded that by that time the park covered three hundred acres, with the park meadows to the east and the lord's warren to the south. The new hall and gardens were surrounded by parkland, which separated the residence, the church and messuages around *Carrow Green* 450 metres to the west. *Norwich Way* skirted to the west of the park and the road to Wymondham known as *Hall Lane* lay between the park and the lord's warren on *Holforde Howe*.⁷

¹ NRO KIM 1/7/12 Extent of the manors of Kimberley Hall, Carleton Hall, Thuxton Hall; 7, Henry VII, 1495-6.

² NRO NCC, will register, Heydon, 234; 1384.

³ Despite confirmation by Henry IV in 1405 (NRO KIM 2S/1) of Sir John Wodehouse's right to inherit the Fastolf property legal challenges persisted for decades, for example NRO KIM 2H/25A; 1442, Arbitration between John Wodehouse, Esq. and William Berdwell, concerning Kimberley Manor.

⁴ NRO KIM 9/2 Manuscript book of pedigrees and family histories.

⁵ NRO KIM 2F/4B Conveyance by John Sket to John Wodehouse of Butordes manor in Kimberley; 14th April, 1446.

⁶ NRO KIM 4/2/1 Marriage settlement between Thomas Wodehouse, esquire and Thomasina Townsend, daughter of Sir Roger Townsend of Raynham, 1488. The settlement also witnessed that Sir Roger was willing to redeem mortgaged manors in return for two thirds of their annual value.

⁷ NRO KIM 1/7/12 Extent of the manors of Kimberley Hall, Carleton Hall and Thuxton; 1495-6.

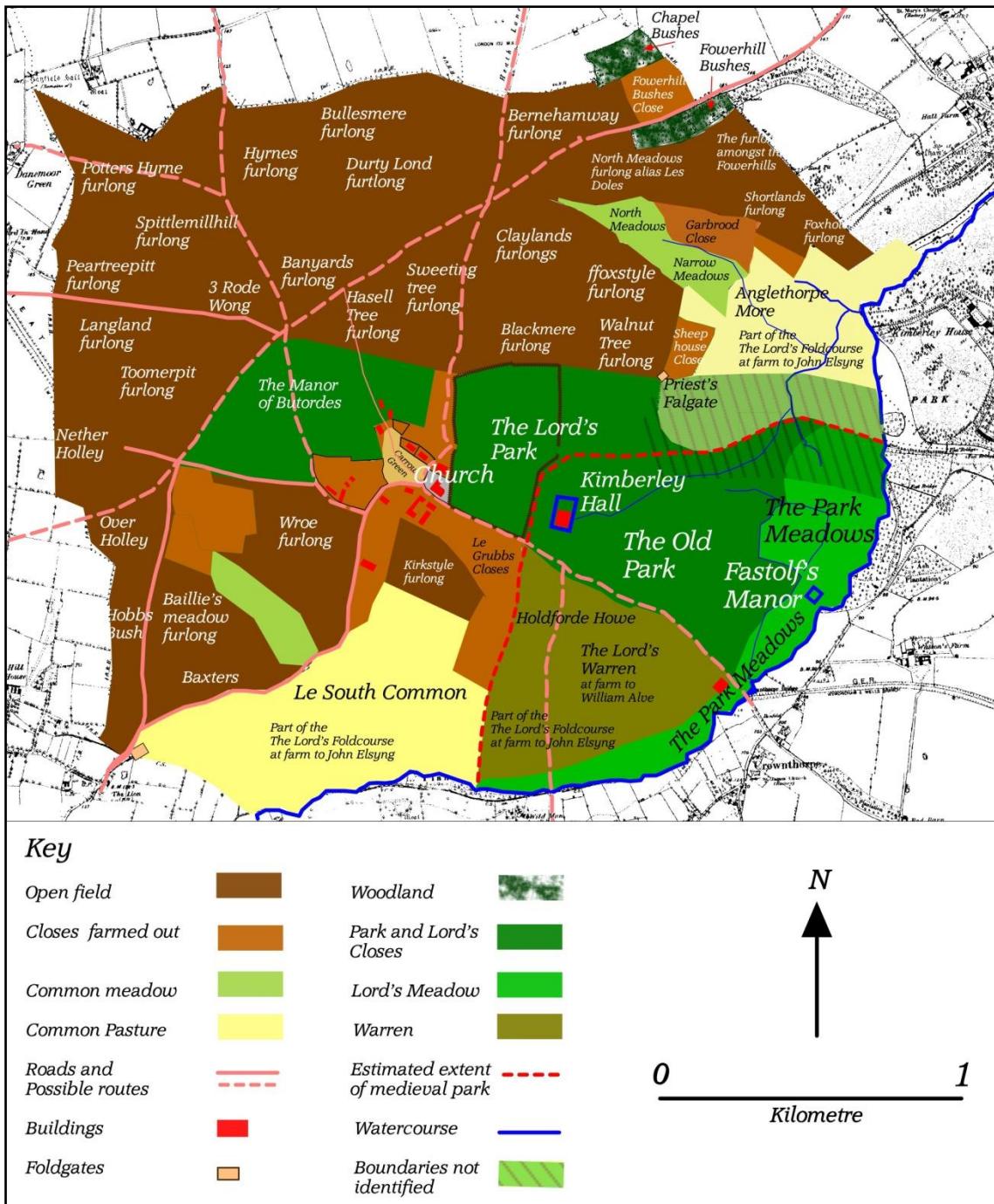


Figure 2: Kimberley Hall and the surrounding landscape circa AD 1500, reconstructed using information from contemporary and later sources, earthwork surveys and aerial photographs.⁸ Base map First Edition 1:10,560 Ordnance Survey, Place-names as recorded circa AD1500.

The presence of the roads and settlement would have led to interaction between the occupants of the hall and the local inhabitants; some passing by, others going about

⁸ NRO KIM 1/7/12; Extent 1495-6; NRO KIM 4/2/1, Settlement, 1488; NRO KIM 2F/4B, Conveyance 1446; NRO KIM 1/7/13 Early sixteenth-century field book and survey ND circa 1530; NRO KIM 3/11/32, Enclosure Agreement for Anglethorpe Common. 1555; NRO KIM 2J/28D, Documents relating to enclosing of part of Kimberley Common including sketch map. 1580; NHER 8918 Kimberley Hall, Kimberley Secondary File; Earthwork survey and report by B. Cushion; Aerial Photographs TG0703A-E, TG0704A-G 1946, RAF; TG0704/AB - AH,AJ - AL. Edwards, D.A.. 1995.

their daily work. Seasonal tasks in *Blackmere* and *Walnut Tree* furlongs, which abutted the northern bounds of the park extension and in *Kirkstyle Field* and *Le Grubbes Closes* to the immediate south of the park, would have added to the zone of interaction between the residence and community. Both the warren and the foldcourse rights at Kimberley were leased out, resulting in a further loss of control over the movements of both people and livestock. The leasing out of all or part of the demesne was common practice in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, lords finding it more profitable to lease at fixed rent or ‘farm’ rather than keeping demesne in hand.⁹ This arrangement whilst financially viable reduced the lord’s control over the demesne and could increase the levels of interaction around elite residences. The warren lay close to the hall at Kimberley as did the open fields and foldcourse but the location of the new mansion had some advantages in that it would have made it more visible than the earlier manor house and the site afforded more extensive outlooks than the valley floor location. However, the rights of the lessees, the multiple freeholders and the customary tenants who made their living in the fields and commons abutting the park and travelled along the local roads would have to be addressed before the Wodehouses could expand the area set aside for the exclusive use and enjoyment of themselves and their guests.



Figure 3: The site of Kimberley Hall from Kimberley Churchyard, looking across the Lord’s Park.

⁹ Keen, M. H., (1973) *England in the Later Middle Ages*. Reprinted 1995, London, Routledge, p.194-5.

The construction of the new hall at Kimberley was replicated at sites across East Anglia, from the beginning of the fifteenth century until the upheavals of Civil War and the Interregnum in the mid-seventeenth century. During this time, many elite residences were constructed, extensively remodelled or refurbished, some of which survive to the present day, adapting to the design requirements of a succession of owners, whilst others succumbed to the changing fortunes and objectives of their owners. The research presented here is based on a large sample of residences from the region of East Anglia, with examples drawn from both extant properties and those whose demise has left invaluable traces of their early development. In order to place the East Anglian data in a wider context, evidence from properties in other English regions and London will also be considered in the analysis.

1. Historiography

The manipulation of medieval elite landscapes in order to create particular arrangements of symbolic features or aesthetically pleasing vistas has been recognised and debated by archaeologists and historians since the late twentieth century. Prompted initially by the surveys of the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England, and in particular by the work of Christopher Taylor, the topic of designed landscapes has been the focus of much research over the intervening years.¹⁰ Some studies have dealt with individual sites such the influential work on Bodiam Castle in Sussex by Taylor, Everson and Wilson-North, or Richardson's study of Clarendon Palace and park.¹¹ Other research has examined components of elite landscapes such as parks, warrens, gardens and the residences themselves¹². More rarely, works have looked at the development of elite landscapes from a wider perspective for instance Liddiard's *Castles in Context* and Johnson's *Behind the Castle Gate: from Medieval to Renaissance*.¹³ In *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages* Oliver

¹⁰ For example, RCHME (1975 – 84) *An Inventory of the Historical Monuments in the County of Northamptonshire*, 6 Volumes, London, HMSO.

¹¹ Oosthuizen, S. M. & Taylor, C. C., (2000). “‘John O’Gaunt’s House’, Bassingbourn, Cambridgeshire: a fifteenth-century landscape” *Landscape History, Volume 22*, pp. 61-76.

Richardson, A., (2007) *The Forest, Park and Palace of Clarendon, c.1200 –c.1650: reconstructing an actual, conceptual and documented landscape*, Oxford, BAR.

Taylor, C. C.; Everson, P. and Wilson-North, R. (1990) “Bodiam Castle, Sussex” in *Medieval Archaeology* 34, pp. 155-7.

¹² Cooper, N. (1999) *Houses of the Gentry 1480 – 1680*, Yale University Press, New Haven & London, for The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art in association with English Heritage.

Harvey, J., (1981) *Medieval Gardens*, London, Batsford.

Liddiard, R. (Editor) (2007a) *The Medieval Park: New Perspectives*, Bollington, Windgather.

Williamson, T., (2007) *Rabbits, Warrens and Archaeology*, Stroud, Tempus.

¹³ Creighton, O. H. (2009) *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages* Woodbridge, The Boydell Press. Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: from Medieval to Renaissance*. London,

Creighton has argued cogently for the existence of designed landscapes during the medieval period, presenting evidence dating from as early as the twelfth century.¹⁴ However, it was also pointed out that there were seldom distinct boundaries between the designed and utilitarian elements of the medieval landscape; ‘taskscapes’ and elite zones could share the same tract of land, or at least be intervisible. Nor, Creighton suggests, were there distinct divisions between aesthetics, symbolism and functionality in medieval elite landscapes.¹⁵ Given these scenarios, the levels of interaction between the late-medieval elite and the wider community would have been relatively high, both within and beyond the bounds of the manorial *curia*. The enclosure that surrounded the seigneurial complex would have declared the status of the residence and buildings within, but in many cases the extent of the *curia* was limited and the manor stood in close proximity to the working landscape and the lives of the local inhabitants. However, it has been noted that during the fifteenth century, as in the example of Kimberley above, there was an increasing tendency for elite residences to be surrounded by an area of parkland, so that levels of interaction between the elite and vernacular spheres were restricted.¹⁶ The parkland, in effect, extended the medieval idea of the *curia* and separated the residence from the day-to-day lives of the inhabitants. Members of the local community could gain admittance but usually for the purposes of undertaking maintenance work or assisting with the hunt. Mileson has suggested that hunting could be seen as a means of ordering social relations and emphasising authority in medieval hierarchies.¹⁷ Inhabitants might be ordered to enter the park at the behest of their lord but excluded at other times. Laws associated with parks and the killing of game were an effective means of controlling access to parkland and provided a means enforcing exclusivity. As we shall see, at locations lacking a medieval park, owners might resort to the creation of a *Great Close*, which could be imbued with similar characteristics, in that it could be enclosed with banks and hedges and perhaps stocked with a small herd of deer. These closes were frequently the precursors to more extensive managed landscapes and seventeenth-century parks, as at Ryston Hall (7; TF 6238 0114)

Routledge. Liddiard, R. (2005) *Castles in Context: Power, Symbolism and Landscape, 1066-1500*, Bollington, Windgather.

Taylor, C. C., (2000) “Medieval Ornamental Landscapes” in *Landscapes 1:1*, pp. 38-5.

¹⁴ Creighton, O. H. (2009) *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages*, Woodbridge, Boydell.

¹⁵ Creighton, O. H. (2009) *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages*, p 220

¹⁶ Creighton, O. H. (2009) *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages*, p 217

¹⁷ Mileson, S. A., (2007) “The Sociology of Park Creation in Medieval England” in *The Medieval Park New Perspectives*, edited by R. Liddiard. Macclesfield, Windgather, p. 16.

Hunting continued to be an important part of elite lifestyles throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, King James I and his court being particularly fond of the sport. However, there was also a growing interest in the creation of extensive pleasure grounds, which required large areas of land to be in the hands of an individual owner. For the most part, these were not classically inspired, integrated designs where house and gardens were part of a grand plan that spread over the wider landscape, although by the end of the period under consideration here East Anglia would have some notable examples of Renaissance design. From the early fifteenth century, families from all sections of the elite were devising elaborate pleasure grounds that required large amounts of land, money and labour. The resulting landscapes demonstrated that those responsible for creating them had the power and resources to organise both the landscape and its inhabitants to their own liking.

2. Elite Landscapes and the Concept of Exclusivity

This thesis will argue that during the late-medieval period members of the elite were amassing blocks of demesne land in the vicinity of their residences in order to control and manipulate how such land was used and experienced by the wider community. The land in question was acquired by a number of means including purchase, exchange, or by revoking tenancies, and was held in severalty. The resulting blocks of demesne were sometimes used to expand existing parks and pleasure grounds or create new ones. In other cases the land became part of the managed demesne of the manor or was leased out under terms dictated by the owner. For the purposes of this thesis such areas of land will be referred to as elite landscapes, defined as being free of any customary rights of use or access by the wider community and subject to the authority of a recognised member of an elite group, or their representatives. The individuals included in this study range from parish gentry to members of the nobility and include both arrivistes and people of ancient lineage. Land not held in severalty by a member of the elite will be referred to as the vernacular landscape and defined as the grounds and settlements where the wider community lived and worked, either as freeholders or as manorial tenants exercising communal rights, privileges and responsibilities. An important aspect of the vernacular landscape was the ability to move freely along public highways and footpaths. In contrast to this freedom of movement, the owners of elite landscapes could endeavour to manipulate access through and around their property and thus control levels of interaction with the wider community. The process of controlling the way an

elite landscape was experienced by people is one aspect of the concept of exclusivity, sole ownership of the land in question is another. A third facet of the concept is the display of power and status through the creation of areas specifically designed to convey messages of manorial authority, wealth and patronage to a variety of audiences.

It will be argued here that *exclusivity* encompassed more than the physical and legal act of enclosing a piece of land but involved the conscious positioning of landscape features, roads, buildings and boundaries in order to influence the experiences of those who came into contact with elite landscapes and residences. Here *exclusive* will be used to describe the act of excluding some groups from certain areas by physical means, but also by implication through the creation of subliminal barriers that reinforced ideas of status or legal jurisdiction. The imposition of controlled access and movement around the residence created in turn an impression of *exclusivity*, in the sense of high-status. Impressions of rank and superiority were conveyed by the careful management of potential interaction, different messages being presented to varying social groups. Thus, the definitions have a cumulative effect when applied to landscapes, and will be used in this study to express the combined consequences of exclusion, selection and the display of status. The concept of exclusivity therefore, encompasses more than the physical enclosure of land; more too than the divergence of the symbolic and the functional, resulting from the emergence of modern ideas of production and tenure, as expressed in Johnson's concept of *closure*.¹⁸

Control appears to have been an important aspect of exclusivity, particularly over areas where interaction with the wider community was inevitable or even actively sought. By managing access, movement and land use in the landscape around an elite residence the owner could choose how messages of power and superiority were communicated to various audiences. The display of status had always been part of seigneurial life and the placing of manorial perquisites in strategic locations a recognised phenomenon.¹⁹ However, by controlling the way the residence was approached or passed, different scenarios could be presented to different groups. For example, at Hales Hall (18; TM 3706 9602) a magnificent barn was built next to the boundary with Hales Green where it could be seen by the local inhabitants from their common-edge messuages and local roads. The inhabitants of Hales Green may well have had barns of their own but the size

¹⁸ Johnson, M (1996) *An Archaeology of Capitalism* Oxford, Blackwell, pp. 77-8.

¹⁹ For example, Liddiard, R., (2005) *Castles in Context: Power Symbolism and Landscape 1066-1500*, Macclesfield, Windgather, pp. 106-7.

and fabric of their lord's barn would have emphasised the extent of the resources under his command and perhaps also his power over their livelihoods. The barn formed the south side of a courtyard built between the residence and the common with a range of ancillary buildings and a service gate along the east side. In contrast, the imposing gatehouse on the north side of the courtyard was approached through the park, visitors having travelled along a raised causeway beside an outer moat before arriving at the gates. The park, moat and gatehouse left guests in no doubt about the lordly rank of the person who they were visiting whilst the refinements of Sir Henry Hobart's new hall and gardens were for the delectation only of those allowed across the inner moat.

2.1 The Appurtenances of an Exclusive Landscape

The Residence

The halls and mansions under consideration in this study were, in most cases, the principal residences of the family to whom they belonged. Some were secondary residences or were occupied by relatives or senior retainers of the family in question. Given that many members of the elite had multiple properties at their disposal, this thesis will examine the possible motives for choosing a particular location as the site for a new principal residence.

Groups of Ancillary Buildings

The arrangement and form of the ancillary buildings around the residence will be investigated to access their role in the process of creating exclusivity. Barns, stables and lodging ranges were often placed in close proximity to the hall and were built using similar materials suggesting they were an integral part of the seigneurial setting. This study will examine whether the status of these buildings and their role within the surroundings of elite residences changed over time. Dovecotes held particularly strong connotations of status and privilege, their ownership being strictly confined to those of lordly rank. At a basic level the dovecote was a productive unit, that provided supplies of fresh meat and rich manure; however, their significance went far beyond mere productivity. The sight of the doves, on the wing and on the fields and gardens of the local inhabitants was a far-reaching reminder of the lord's power over both nature and the livelihoods of the surrounding community. The birds were protected by law, however much damage they inflicted on crops, and were imbued with religious iconography as symbols of peace and the Holy Spirit. Dovecotes were often constructed

from high-value materials and located between the residence and areas of interaction, such as roads or commons where they made a potent statement about the exclusivity of the land they stood on. The birds in turn took that message beyond the manorial complex, out into the vernacular landscape.

Parks, Managed Demesne, Warrens and Pleasure Grounds

Deer parks had been a crucial means of expressing the status, authority and resources of their owners throughout the medieval period. Parks were one of the most potent expressions of exclusivity, their physical boundaries reinforced in law and access strictly controlled. The desire to own or create parks in the late medieval and early modern period will be examined along with the development of alternatives such as blocks of demesne pasture studded with trees often referred to as *The Great Close*. Not all land acquired during the process of expanding elite landscapes was used for the creation of parkland and the research presented here will discuss the various ways elite landscapes were utilised. From secluded pleasure grounds to the transitional status of rabbit warrens, the various levels of exclusivity will be examined and categorised.

Moats, Water features and Meadows

The changing form of moats during the period under consideration here and role of moats in the demarcation of exclusivity will be examined, along with their distribution and survival. Fishponds and their contents were also highly symbolic features of elite landscapes, their construction again expressing control over the natural world, in this case precious water resources, which may have been diverted to fill the ponds. The process of creating a series of breeding and rearing ponds, known as *vivararia* required control of the land and over water supplies, in addition to sufficient manpower to dig the ponds and associated dams and sluices. From the later thirteenth century, ponds had been stocked with carp, an imported species, creating another distinction between the controlled environment within the elite landscape and the rivers and streams beyond. Both water and fish held strong religious associations, iconography which would have been familiar to almost everyone in the late medieval and early-modern period. The combination of religious symbolism and worldly wealth and power expressed by

fishponds made them symbols of exclusivity and resulted in ponds sometimes being used to demarcate the transition from the vernacular to the elite landscape.

Roads and Approaches

The manipulation of movement through and around elite landscapes is an important aspect of the concept of exclusivity therefore the position of approach routes and the realignment or closure of public roads and paths will be examined in detail in several of the case studies presented in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

3. The Choice of Location for a New Residence

The careful positioning of high-status features was an effective means of expressing the exclusivity of a location, marking the ‘otherness’ of the landscape where they stood. By controlling the passage of people around and through elite landscapes, different messages could be conveyed to diverse audiences depending on whether they needed to be impressed, awed or deterred. The relationship between location, exclusivity and the creation of ornamental landscapes will be a central theme of the thesis. Established members of the aristocracy and even local gentry often had several manorial sites available for redevelopment, whilst wealthy merchants and professionals could afford to buy a desirable location. Whether refurbishing an existing manor house or building a new mansion the evidence suggests that, during the late medieval period there was an increasing tendency for the aesthetic opportunities offered by a particular location to be taken into consideration. What constituted the ideal location changed over time, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth century, with some sites proving more adaptable than others. In cases where a high-status residence existed for only a brief time, leaving little documentary or physical evidence, the location can in itself provide valuable insights to both the spatial arrangements of the residence and the ambitions of the builder. The fine mansion built by Sir John Wodehouse, known as The Rey (6; TF 6958 2313), and the Earl of Surrey’s residence built on a monastic site on the outskirts of Norwich (79; TG 2418 0884) are examples of prestigious but short-lived houses where the location can illuminate aspects of the brief history of the residences. The factors governing the choice of location for a new residence were subject to a number of considerations other than straightforward topography or resources. Family associations with a particular site had a powerful influence in many instances, as did the implication of such associations for many arriviste owners, who might hope to gain some reflected cachet from

occupying an ancient manorial seat. The historic tenurial structures around a residence could either assist or impede the ability of individuals to gain exclusive ownership over landscapes. Locations in areas where large numbers of freeholders held small amounts of the surrounding land could limit the expansion of areas of exclusivity, as could large areas of common land.

The potential to acquire land held in severalty, without customary rights of use or access, was then a factor governing choice of location that was to grow in importance throughout the early-modern period. The acquisition of land and resources allowed owners the freedom to create elaborate pleasure grounds or invest in large-scale reorganisation of the landscape. Water supplies could be diverted to feed moats, ponds and meadows, and park pales erected with impunity. However, the process was not always straightforward and a number of strategies could be adopted, with varying degrees of success. If they succeeded in gaining control over the necessary land, landowners could begin the process of reducing levels of interaction between the residence and the community. However, the desire for privacy had to be balanced against the desire to display the house to a wide audience, as a testament of the owner's status, taste and wealth. This dichotomy will be discussed, with particular reference to the position of approaches, ancillary buildings and water features.

The ability to create a designed landscape was mitigated not only by the need to manage access to the location but also the need to control natural resources, one of the most vital being water supplies. In addition to domestic and agricultural requirements, water was an essential component of aesthetic features and was laden with symbolic references. The use of water in both productive and ornamental settings changed considerably from the late medieval era, with the dividing line between functional and aesthetic uses of water becoming increasingly blurred during the time period under consideration here. The thesis will examine the role of water as both a physical and subliminal method of reinforcing zones of exclusivity and will argue that the need for a reliable source of water was an important factor in the choice of location for many new residences. The evidence suggests that there were distinct differences in the type and form of water feature created across the region of East Anglia.

4. Research Framework

4.1: The Research Questions

In order to examine the development of exclusivity within elite landscapes in the late-medieval and early-modern period the research addressed the following questions -

1. What factors influenced the choice of location for a new elite residence?
 - 1.1 Did these factors change over time?
 - 1.2 Did the choice of location influence the future development of a particular residence?
2. Is there evidence that members of the elite wished to increase the area of land they held in severalty in the vicinity of their residences during the late-medieval and early-modern period?
 - 2.1 If so, how was the transition from the vernacular to the elite landscape achieved?
 - 2.2 Is there evidence that elite landscapes were divided into areas or zones with differing functions and varying levels of accessibility?
 - 2.4 Is there evidence for the creation of specific areas or zones where the status of an owner might be conveyed to the wider community?
 - 2.4 Is there evidence of the deliberate manipulation of movement through and around elite landscapes in order to present a range of scenarios to the wider community?
3. Did the personal circumstances and family history of members of the elite influence the locations they chose for their principal residences and the landscapes they created around those residences?

4.2: The Spatial Context



Figure 4: Location map, East Anglia
Maps supplied by Edina Digimap



Figure 5: The Study Area

Exclusivity and its effect on the evolution of design could have been researched within the context of a general countrywide study but a regional focus provides the opportunity for detailed research using a wide range of sites and sources. The ambition of presenting a landscape study that integrates historicised biographies with field and manuscript evidence is best served by such an approach. Within the parameters of a region a wide range of groups within elite society can be researched in conjunction with spatial information from parts of the region with diverse tenurial and economic histories, and a variety of topographies.²⁰ Regional studies provide the research context for work in many disciplines and can enhance understanding in a number of ways. Within history and archaeology there have been instances where the study of a broad concept has been dominated by evidence from one region, for example the influence of the Midland region in settlement studies.²¹ In these circumstances, comparative studies from other regions can redress perceived imbalances in the analysis.²² Detailed regional landscape

²⁰ Williamson, T. (2004) "Designed Landscapes: The Regional Dimension" in *Landscapes*, Volume 2, pp. 16-25.

²¹ Lewis, C., Mitchell-Fox, P & Dyer, C., (2001) *Village, Hamlet and Field: Changing Medieval Settlements in Central England*, Macclesfield, Windgather.

²² Williamson, T. (2003) *Shaping Medieval Landscapes*, Bollington, Widgather. Rippon, S. J.; Fyfe R. M., & Brown, A. G., (2006) "Beyond Villages and Open Fields: The Origins and Development of a Historic Landscape Characterised by Dispersed Settlement in South-West England" *Medieval Archaeology*, 50, 1, pp. 31-70.

research can also contribute to debates surrounding major national and international concepts, such as Andy Wood's work on social conflict in the Peak District²³ or Chapman and Seeliger's study of enclosure in southern Britain;²⁴ through the examination of provincial responses such research can augment understanding of both regional variations and the wider concept. In *The Lie of The Land* edited by Robert Wilson-North the archaeology and history of designed landscapes in South West England are examined from a range of approaches.²⁵ Contributions range from studies of individual sites such as "The Downes, Hayle" by June Fenwick²⁶, to investigations of a class of landscape feature in Peter Herring's contribution on "Cornish Medieval Deer Parks".²⁷ Further chapters include discussions of broad themes, within the context of the south west region, for example, Paul Everson's "Medieval Gardens and Designed Landscapes".²⁸ The contributions to *The Lie Of the Land* demonstrate how detailed studies of individual sites can be used in conjunction with analyses of landscape features and discussions of wider concepts, all within the framework of a regional study.

The adoption of a regional research framework has resulted in the need to treat the two component counties as a single entity, but the area involved was too large to be discussed without reference to some geographic divisions. It was also important to be able to recognise variations in the evolution of elite landscapes across the region. Evaluating the reasons for any such regional differences would allow conclusions to be drawn for areas with similar characteristics in other regions. Colloquial sub-divisions such as 'West Norfolk' or 'High Suffolk' could lead to confusion so a process of identifying sub regions within East Anglia was undertaken. The resulting divisions are illustrated in **Figure 6** and the attributes and character of East Anglia and the sub regions will be discussed further in Chapter 2, Methodology.

²³ For example, Wood, A. (1999) *The Politics of Social Conflict: The Peak Country, 1520 – 1770*. Cambridge University Press.

²⁴ For example, Chapman, J & Seeliger, S. (2001) *Enclosure, Environment and Landscape in Southern England*, Tempus, Stroud.

²⁵ Wilson-North, R. (Editor) (2003) *The Lie of the Land: Aspects of the Archaeology and History of the Designed Landscape in the South West of England*, The Devon Gardens Trust and The Mint Press, Exeter.

²⁶ Fenwick, J. (2003) "The Downes, Hayle" in Wilson-North (editor) *The Lie of the Land*.

²⁷ Herring, P., (2003) "Cornish Medieval Deer Parks" in Wilson-North (editor)

²⁸ Everson, P. (2003) "Medieval Gardens and Designed Landscapes" in Wilson-North (editor)

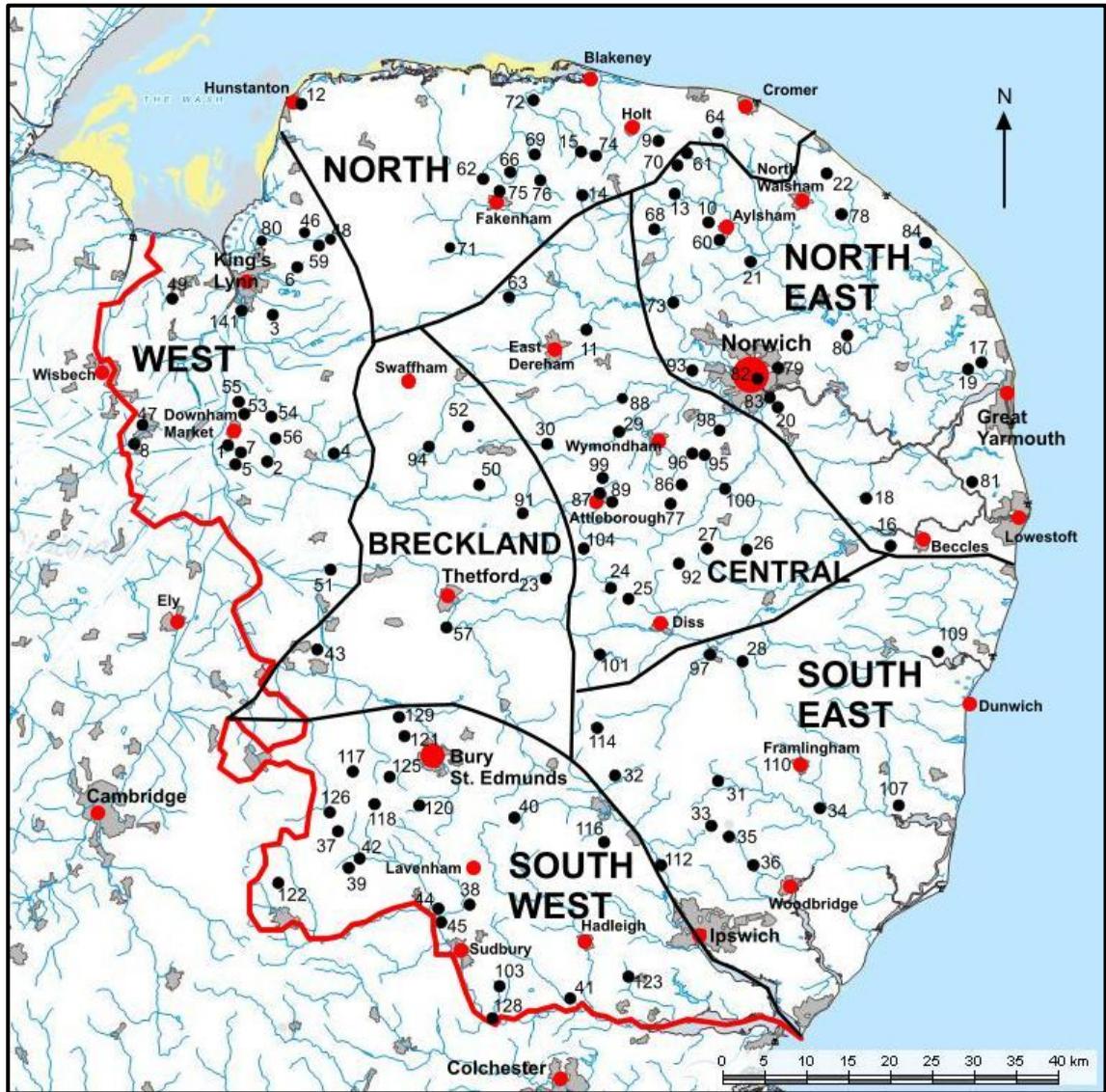


Figure 6: East Anglia, with seven sub-regions. Map supplied by *Edina Digimap*

4.3: The Periodisation of the Thesis

The decline of feudalism and the rise of the capitalist land market took place over several centuries, as did the scientific, philosophical and artistic developments of the Renaissance. Other influences, confined to England, such as the dispersal of religious property during the Reformation, took place over a relatively short space of time but had a major and long-lasting effect. Landscape approaches, which tend to consider the *longue durée* and are less concerned with traditional chronological divisions than historical studies, have offered fresh interpretations of both the elite built environment and the genesis of designed landscapes, in a number of contexts. The research for this study has therefore not been based in one conventional historical period but examines

both the late-medieval period and the beginning of early-modern era. Paul Courtney has argued that adhering to standard periodisations can stifle examination of cultural transition by denying access to the true origins of change, which may lie beyond a traditional temporal demarcation. Such constructs can also blur continuities and inhibit analysis. In his contribution to *The Age of Transition*, Courtney also suggested that institutional bounds between periods and specialisms can limit interdisciplinary research by restricting the flow of knowledge between specialists.²⁹ In the same volume, Helmut Hundsibichler commented, from the *Annales* perspective, on the lack of studies that examined the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as a unity. He proposed that during this time there had occurred a fundamental change in mentality, which provided the stimulus for change in both material culture and society. Hundsibichler goes so far as to suggest that processes of change began as early as the mid-fourteenth century and continued beyond 1600, and cites the legitimisation of intellectual curiosity as a major stimulus for the transition from medieval to early modern *mentalities*.³⁰ His argument that *mentalities* and structures affect both material culture and the daily lives of individuals, has relevance for the present thesis.

Matthew Johnson has similarly argued that scholarship in a range of disciplines has encouraged an artificial split between the medieval and Renaissance worlds, assigning the transition to an array of dates from 1465 to the 1530s. Johnson suggests that this demarcation is unhelpful as it tends to result in concepts such as “symmetry” and “order” being attributed to the Renaissance whilst discounting the possibility that such principles might have existed in the medieval era. This restrictive outlook, he suggests, may be one reason why scholars were slow to recognise the existence of formal landscapes dating from the medieval period.³¹ By adopting a flexible temporal context, unrestricted by standard demarcations it should be possible to identify the transformations in thought and social structure that stimulated the desire to amass land that could be used to create large-scale exclusive landscapes.

The majority of properties included in the research for this thesis were built or extensively remodelled between 1400 and 1600 although their settings continued to

²⁹ Courtney, P. (1997) “The Tyranny of Constructs: some thoughts on periodisation and culture change” in Gaimster & Stamper (editors) *The Age Of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture 1400-1600*, The Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 15; Oxbow Monograph 98, Oxbow Books, Oxford, pp. 9-19.

³⁰ Hundsibichler, H. (1997) “Sampling or Proving ‘Reality’? Co-ordinates for the evaluation of historical/archaeological research. In *The Age of Transition*, pp. 45-59.

³¹ Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate* Abingdon, Routledge, pp. 106 -108.

evolve. Residences and locations dating from between 1400 and 1539 will be described as ‘late-medieval’. This falls well beyond the dates considered by some historians to mark the end of the medieval period, such as 1485³² or 1500.³³ However, for the purposes of this thesis, discussion of the late-medieval period will include the first four decades of the sixteenth century when material culture retained aspects of the medieval and elite society still valued military prowess and chivalric ideals. Many sectors of society had yet to experience the consequences of religious reformation, the spread of Humanist thinking and the growth of a market economy, and much of the population led daily lives little altered from those of the late-fifteenth century.³⁴

By the mid-sixteenth century changes had taken place within the administration of the state, which saw the decline in the power and influence of churchmen and the higher nobility, who were replaced by professional civil servants, many of whom had trained as lawyers and would wield ever greater authority throughout the sixteenth century.³⁵ Thomson suggests that the nobility began to retreat to their estates, where they could focus their attention on the creation of profits and the acquisition of lands. The Dissolution of monastic estates continued throughout the 1540s and contributed to the expansion of existing manorial holdings and the creation of new secular estates. The social mobility that resulted from these changes brought new families into the realms of the landed elite and changed long-standing tenurial structures and social relationships within communities. Chapter Five will analyse the influence of both established and *arriviste* landowners on the evolution of elite landscapes and will discuss opposition to the expansion of exclusivity. The East Anglian elite were well represented at court and monarchs progressed through the region, expecting to be entertained and delighted by the landscapes created by favourites, and by those whose loyalty was in doubt. Several ambitious and prodigiously expensive landscape projects were undertaken in anticipation, or dread, of inclusion in the monarch’s itinerary. The drive to outdo their peers drove some individuals to verge of bankruptcy as they endeavoured to display their status, wealth, accomplishments and loyalty. Some families never recovered their fortunes and particularly those who, in the later sixteenth century, maintained their

³² Collinson P., (editor)(2002) *Short Oxford History of the British Isles: The Sixteenth Century*. Oxford University Press. The contributions to this volume begin with the accession of Henry VII in 1485.

³³ Keen, M (1990) *English Society in the Later Middle Ages 1348 – 1500*, London, Penguin.

³⁴ Wrightson, K., (2002) *Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain 1470-1750* London Penguin. Mark Girouard suggests that some aspects of life in the great households remained largely unchanged during much of the sixteenth century. Girouard, M (1978) *Life in the English Country House*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, p. 82.

³⁵ Thomson, J. A. F., (1983) *The Transformation of Medieval England 1370 – 1529*, London, Longman, p. 373.

Roman Catholicism and had to deal with the strictures placed on recusants. Towards the end of the century however, some members of the East Anglian elite were beginning to adopt new approaches to the design of both their houses and grounds, where the residence and the landscape were treated as a single entity. By the beginning of the seventeenth century, knowledge of design principles was becoming part of a gentleman's intellectual repertoire and many strove to create innovative landscapes around their new mansions.

4.4: The Social Context

The landscapes and residences examined in this thesis were the result of ideas and ambitions in the minds of men and women who wanted to convey messages about their status and their resources, or who wanted to legitimise their attempts to join the elite classes. Whilst the choices they made would undoubtedly have been influenced by broad cultural and social trends the personal concerns of the people commissioning new building projects or extending their park pales also had a strong bearing on the form and location of the resulting house or landscape. Some may have wished to assert their authority in an area where they had not previously held property, or hoped to discourage a rival magnate from challenging for a share of local power. Others were anxious to show that their financial resources could compensate for a less than impressive pedigree and some needed to create their own estates, having too many elder brothers to have a hope of inheritance or the most lucrative marriages. The biographies of families and individuals can provide indications of the motives that drove people to build a certain style of house in a particular location, or encouraged them to create exclusive landscapes around their residences. Power struggles, political rivalries, dynastic ambitions and social climbing could all affect decisions about where and what to build, therefore this thesis aims to take an explicitly historicised approach to the study of late-medieval and early modern landscapes. Analysis of buildings and their surroundings will be informed by biographical details of the families and individuals who were responsible for their instigation, with the aim of identifying their motives and the means employed to achieve their ambitions.

One significant means by which new residences were financed was through the additional income generated from the estates of a wealthy wife. As we shall see, a successful marriage to an heir or coheir could transform the finances of the groom's

family. Marriage alliances and their consequences will feature in the analysis of material culture and the lives of families as whole will be considered alongside the history of individual lords. Wives, sons, daughters, dowagers, and kinsfolk all had important roles to play in the creation and evolution of elite residences and will be included where appropriate.

Members of many regional families had roles and obligations that took them beyond East Anglia, to estates in other parts of Britain, to Parliament, to court, or abroad on diplomatic or military missions. One such was Sir Nicholas Dagworth, who retired to his estates at Blickling (10; TG 1786 2866; North) in the late fourteenth century, after a successful military career and many years as an envoy to the courts of Europe on behalf of Edward III and Richard II.³⁶ His endeavours were rewarded with a pension of one hundred marks a year, which doubtless helped pay for his new house at Blickling.³⁷ Sir John Wodehouse and his son were Esquires to the Body to Henry IV and Henry V, fighting with such distinction that the family were subsequently known by the sobriquet *The Agincourt Wodehouses*.³⁸ The Wodehouse coat of arms includes a banner bearing the word Agincourt between two wildmen, also known as green men or *woodhouses*.³⁹ The Wodehouses built elaborate residences on their manors of Roydon (6; TF 6958 2313; West) and Kimberley (29; TG 0761 0405; Central) and held estates across the region. Others who spent prolonged time abroad serving Henry V included Sir John Fastolf and Thomas Lord Scales both of whom remained in France to administer the captured territories for which they had fought.⁴⁰ They returned to their East Anglian estates when duties permitted or on retirement, having gained prestige and wealth from their exploits, and having experienced the society and material culture of Continental Europe. Fastolf, a member of a minor gentry family excelled as a professional soldier and amassed a considerable portfolio of property in both England and France.⁴¹ In the 1430s he built a substantial moated, turreted castle at his ancestral home, the manor of

³⁶ Blomefield F., & Parkin, C., (1807) 'Hundred of South Erpingham Blickling', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 6*, pp. 381-409.

³⁷ 'Close Rolls, Richard II: January 1398', *Calendar of Close Rolls, Richard II: volume 6*: 1396-1399 (1927), pp. 190.

³⁸ NRO KIM 9/2, Manuscript book of Pedigrees and Family history, 1659.

³⁹ NWHCM : 1954.138, Todd 4, Forehoe, 184 : F Engraving of Wodehouse of Kimberley Coat of Arms

⁴⁰ G. L. Harriss, 'Fastolf, Sir John (1380–1459)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, Online Edition.

⁴¹ Richmond, C., "Sir John Fastolf and the Land Market: An Enquiry of the Early 1430s Regarding Purchasable Property" in Harper-Bill, C., Rawcliffe, C., & Wilson, R. G., Editors (2002) *East Anglia's History: Essays in Honour of Norman Scarfe* Woodbridge, Boydell Press in association with the Centre for East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia, pp 107-121.

Caister, near Yarmouth (17; TG 5044 1226) to which he retired in 1439.⁴² In circa 1450, Lord Scales also invested in a new residence, choosing a site in his manor of Middleton for the mansion known as Middleton Tower (3; TF 6687 1755; West).⁴³

The Middleton property was amongst the lands and titles acquired by Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, following his marriage to Elizabeth, widow of Lord Scales. From gentry stock, Rivers was considered a *parvenu* by his brother-in-law Edward IV. He was, however, a well-travelled and cultured man, with an extensive library of humanist literature.⁴⁴ Earl Rivers became a close ally of Sir John Paston, who was married to Woodville's kinswoman Anne Haute. The alliance was political as well familial, Earl Rivers supporting the Paston's right to inherit Caister Castle (17; North East) following the death of Sir John Fastolf.⁴⁵ The Pastons, along with the Heydons and Hobarts were amongst the families to rise to prominence through their abilities as lawyers and administrators, roles that allowed them to amass property, wealth and status. Their material success may have caused some resentment amongst the more established families and magnates in the region, for example, it has been noted that unlike some other regions of England, East Anglia adhered to the Ordinance of 1426 that discouraged the appointment of lawyers as Sheriffs, effectively barring members of many leading families from holding the office.⁴⁶

The political turbulence caused by the dynastic struggles of the later fifteenth century had a profound effect on some East Anglian families, particularly those of the nobility who declared for Henry VI or the Yorkists in the battles preceding the second term of Edward IVs reign; or those who took to the field in support of Richard III at Bosworth. *The Paston Letters* refer to men killed or injured in battles such as Towton, Barnet and Tewksbury.⁴⁷ John Paston of Gelston was injured at Barnet but some of those reported to be dead had in fact survived, such as Lord Willoughby of Parham and Earl Rivers,

⁴² Turner, D (1842) *Sketch of the History of Caister Castle near Yarmouth* London, Whittaker & Co., pp 30-31.

⁴³ NHER 3393 Middleton Tower; Blomefield F., & Parkin, C., (1808) 'Freebridge Hundred: Middleton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 9*, pp. 20-34.

⁴⁴ Hicks, M., *Woodville [Wydeville], Anthony, second Earl Rivers (c.1440–1483), magnate* Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Online Edition.

⁴⁵ *The Paston Letters: 1422-1509 A Reprint of the Edition of 1872-5. In Three Volumes* Gairdner, J., editor (1900) Westminster, Archibald Constable & Co., Ltd. Vol. II, pp 344-5

⁴⁶ Virgoe, R "The Crown, Magnates and Local Government in Fifteenth-Century East Anglia" in Barron, C; Rawcliffe, C & Rosenthal, J.T. (editors) (1997) *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late Medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe* Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia, p. 82.

⁴⁷ *The Paston Letters: 1422-1509*, Gairdner, J., editor (1900). Towton Vol II, pp. 5-8; Barnet Vol III, pp 3-6; Tewksbury, Vol III, pp. 6 -10.

who both survived the carnage of Towton. Following the decisive battle of Tewkesbury Edward IV knighted several of his East Anglian supporters such as Sir Edward Wodehouse, Sir William Brandon and Sir James Tyrell⁴⁸, all of whom would go on to expand and embellish their properties. The relative stability and prosperity following the conflicts of 1471 and before Bosworth in 1485 appears to have encouraged the creation of several notable new elite residences in East Anglia. These included Oxburgh Hall (4; TF 7425 0122; West) completed circa 1480,⁴⁹ Shelton Hall (26; TM 2273 9059; Central) completed 1470-1490,⁵⁰ Baconsthorpe Castle (9; TG 1214 3809; North), where work commenced in the 1470s⁵¹ and Gedding Hall (40; TL9537 5858; South West) where work on the fifteenth-century hall is likely to have stopped by 1488.⁵²

Notable casualties of the 1480s included Earl Rivers, executed in 1483, after which some of his East Anglian estates were inherited by the Pastons and by John de Vere, Earl of Oxford. De Vere subsequently backed Henry Tudor's claim to the throne and was to benefit greatly from the death of John Howard, the first Howard Duke of Norfolk, at the Battle of Bosworth. The Howard estates were subject to attainder, the Duke's son, the Earl of Surrey was imprisoned until his title, and some lands were restored in 1489. In the mean time, Henry VII rewarded de Vere with Howard lands and offices, leading to a shift in the regional balance of power.⁵³ Unlike some of East Anglia's most powerful magnates, many of the lesser gentry were not penalised for their former allegiances by the new regime. The lawyers and state officials who had benefited from the patronage of the Howards and the Plantagenet monarchs went on to prosper under the Tudors. Soon after Henry VII came to the throne in August 1485, Sir John Paston became the first of his family to be elected sheriff of the dual shrievalty. Sir Thomas Lovell of Harling and Elsing, Henry VII's Chancellor of the Exchequer, rose from the rank of esquire to be created a Knight of the Garter, while Sir James Hobart of Hales Hall, Loddon, served as Attorney General and a Privy Councillor to Henry VII.

⁴⁸ *The Paston Letters, Vol II, I* pp. 9-10.

⁴⁹ Sir Edmund Bedingfield inherited the manor in 1476 and the residence may have been complete before Edward IV granted a Royal Patent for its construction in July 1482. Pevsner & Wilson *The Buildings of England: Norfolk, Vol.2, North-West & South*, London, Yale University Press.

⁵⁰ NHER 10175 The Site of Shelton Hall.

⁵¹ Dallas, C., & Sherlock D., Editors (2002) *Baconsthorpe Castle: Excavations and Finds 1951 – 1972 East Anglian Archaeology 102*. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, p. 14

⁵² In this year Sir Robert Chamberlain was placed under house arrest in Surrey and was executed in 1491, discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

⁵³ MacCulloch, D., (1986) *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County 1500-1600*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 55.

East Anglian merchant families also took advantage of greater social mobility during the late medieval period, the Kitsons of Hengrave and the Boleyns of Salle amongst those to acquire property, education and propitious marriages for their sons and daughters. Thomas Boleyn was the accomplished grandson of Jeffrey Boleyn, merchant and former Lord Mayor of London, who had bought Blickling Hall (10: TG 1786 2866: North) from Sir John Fastolf in 1450. Thomas's skills as a linguist and diplomat made him an invaluable member of Henry VIII's council and saw him travel widely in Europe. It also allowed him to place his daughter Mary in the retinue of Mary Tudor, who was briefly Queen Consort of France and his other daughter Anne, firstly, at the Burgundian court, presided over by the Archduchess Margaret of Austria and subsequently at the court of Claude, consort of the French King Francis.⁵⁴ Such individuals, whether nobility or *arriviste*, courtiers or soldiers, would have experienced Continental elite landscapes and may well have been influenced by the innovative spatial arrangements and architecture they witnessed.

On their return to England, members of the East Anglian elites who had spent time in Europe had to establish new roles for themselves and reassert their status amongst the resident population. After years of fighting and living abroad, lauded for their achievements and well rewarded financially, these individuals needed to impress their peers and show that they had acquired more than wealth and military success whilst in Europe. By investing in the creation of new brick-built residences surrounded by carefully arranged pleasure grounds, approaches and parks, men like Wodehouse and Fastolf could announce their presence to both their peers and the wider population. Whilst their mansions retained military motifs such as towers and battlements they were designed for a more a more individualistic comfortable style of living and utilised the attributes of the chosen location in carefully managed settings.

In the sixteenth century, the tensions between established families and *arrivistes* may have encouraged the creation of imposing new buildings set in extensive managed landscapes. Cardinal Wolsey's great palace of Hampton Court was built between 1515 and 1525 on the site of a small manor house leased from the Knight Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem. The palace was surrounded by a purpose-built moat, still under construction in 1518, within which lay fishponds, walled orchards, a knot garden, privy

⁵⁴ Ives, E., (2004) *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* Oxford, Blackwell, pp. 15 -18.

gardens and kitchen gardens.⁵⁵ Standing by the river, the immense grandeur and opulence of the palace, built by the successful but lowly born Cardinal, may have provoked some of the nobility to embark on ambitious building projects in an attempt to assert their superiority over Wolsey. The Duke of Norfolk, the senior peer of the realm, began work on Kenninghall Palace in Norfolk, just as Hampton Court was nearing completion. The Duke's palace was said to have rivalled Wolsey's in both fabric and size and may have been a very early example of an H-plan house.⁵⁶ Meanwhile Henry VIII's brother-in-law Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk built and refurbished several residences in the 1520s including Westhorpe and West Stow in Suffolk where he made extensive use of terracotta mouldings created for him by Italian craftsmen.⁵⁷ Some East Anglian lords built residences that presented traditional images of rank, ancestry and power but were sufficiently innovative to distinguish them from the houses of men of lesser rank and accomplishment. Rivalries and social tensions may have been an important factor in the adoption of new ideas amongst both the nobility and other elite groups within East Anglian society as they strove to gain or hold their desired places in both the regional and national hierarchy.

Whilst the secular elite were undoubtedly influential in shaping the late-medieval and early-modern landscape of East Anglia it is also true that, until the Dissolution, religious institutions held a great many East Anglian manors. The great monastic estates belonging to the houses of Bury St Edmunds, Norwich and Castle Acre for instance, held manors throughout the region as did houses from out-with East Anglia such as Ramsey, Ely and Lewes. Most of these manors and lands served as sources of income for the religious community but some properties were used as retreats for members of the religious hierarchy. These, along with the sites of some of the parent monastic houses, provide evidence of extensive zones of exclusivity, both in the sense of physically enforced and subliminally suggested areas. The Abbot of St Edmund's retreat at Chevington in Suffolk was located on a four-acre moated platform, with a large bank around the inner edge and an enlarged section of moat where the site abutted Chevington Common. The dispersal of monastic lands certainly hastened a similar

⁵⁵ Christianson, C. P., (2005) *The Riverside Gardens of Thomas More's London*, Yale University Press, pp. 91-2.

⁵⁶ Head, D. M., (2009) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune; The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk*, University of Georgia Press, p. 84.

⁵⁷ Anderson, S., (2004) "Architectural Terracotta from Westhorpe Hall", *The Archaeological Journal*, 160, pp. 125-159.

process in the secular landscape but the secular elites were not seeking total seclusion from the outside world; rather they wished to control interaction so that they could maintain exclusivity whilst displaying their status and achievements.

As the sixteenth century progressed members of the East Anglian nobility and gentry such as the Howard Dukes of Norfolk, the Tollemaches, the Sheltons and the Drurys continued to serve a succession of Tudor monarchs and for the most part survived the political and religious upheavals of the sixteenth century. The region lay at just sufficient distance from London and the court to make it an ideal place to wait out a period of disfavour or avoid the intrigues of more ruthless colleagues. Thus we find Jane, Viscountess Rochford retiring to Blickling for a time, following her part in the trial and subsequent executions of her husband George Boleyn and sister-in-law Anne Boleyn.⁵⁸ Charles Brandon, elevated to the Dukedom of Suffolk in 1514 by Henry VIII, retired to Suffolk to avoid the King's wrath following his clandestine marriage to the King's sister and dowager Queen of France, Mary Tudor.⁵⁹ The new Duchess resided at West Stow Hall (129; TL 8159 0879; South West) and Westhorpe Hall (114; TM 0509 6915; South East), where she died in 1533. Both houses were decorated with innovative terracotta work including plaques and architectural details.⁶⁰ Thomas Howard, the third Duke of Norfolk retreated to Kenninghall (24; TM 0650 8549; Central) for a time in the 1530s and prior to his arrest and attainder in 1546-7.⁶¹ The Duke's properties were forfeited to the crown, allowing the staunchly Catholic Mary Tudor to withdraw to Kenninghall whilst her Protestant brother Edward VI was dying and the succession was in doubt. Spanish envoys reported her reasons for going to Kenninghall thus –

Beyond this we have been informed that he intends to seize my Lady Mary, and that he [the Duke of Northumberland] has men ready to do so as soon as the King dies. For this reason the lady has retired to Kenninghall, which is distant some 60 miles from this place, taking as an excuse a dangerous malady that has smitten some of her servants. She believes she will there be in greater safety than she would enjoy nearer this town of London. As she is loved in the kingdom, especially in that part where she now is, where she has the support of

⁵⁸ Fox, J., (2007) *Jane Boleyn*, London, Phoenix, p. 252.

⁵⁹ MacCulloch, D., (1986) *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County 1500-1600*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 58.

⁶⁰ SHER WSW 047 – West Stow Hall Terracotta plaque with the arms of Mary Tudor, Queen of France (d.1533). SHER WTP 002 – Westhorpe Hall, 187 fragments of terracotta recovered from the moat.

⁶¹ 'Henry VIII: April 1538, 6-10', *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 13 Part 1: January-July 1538* (1892), pp. 260-276.

*several gentlemen and others who are devoted to her and hate the Duke, she hopes she will be able to shelter herself from the first storms and disturbances, and not be as easily arrested as if she were near Court*⁶²

The machinations of Tudor politics continued to enhance the careers of many lawyers and state administrators, who marked their success by building new residences within exclusive settings. This group, along with merchants and minor gentry, were among those to acquire former monastic estates after the Dissolutions of the sixteenth century. Williams Butts, physician to Henry VIII gained the former Episcopal manors of Thornage (74; TG 0475 3629; North) and Thornham,⁶³ whilst Edmund Beaupre of Beaupre Hall (47; TF 5151 0456; West) obtained grants of extensive monastic lands in Marshland.⁶⁴ The additional property gave him sufficient substance to be selected for the Commission of the Peace in 1543.⁶⁵ Sir Nicholas Hare of Stow Bardolph (53; TF 6332 0606; West) was a successful lawyer who held several offices and was elected a knight of the shire for Norfolk in 1539-40. He, along with other East Anglian lawyers such as the Gawdys and Roger Townshend of Raynham (71; TF 8820 2578; North), acquired extensive monastic estates throughout England.⁶⁶ Former monastic land was frequently leased or sold on, as was the case of the precinct of St Mary's Abbey, West Dereham (2; TF 6615 0072; West) and West Dereham Grange (56; TF 6715 0325; West). The lands were initially granted to the Duchess of Richmond but were eventually acquired by a minor gentry family, the Derehams of Crimpleshaw, who had prospered as lawyers and used the estates as the foundation for a rapid, if brief, rise through the social ranks.⁶⁷

Many monastic properties, such as West Dereham Grange (56; TF 6715 0325), stood in relatively isolated locations, which simplified the process of creating areas of exclusivity and provided scope to develop large-scale elite landscapes. After the Dissolution this new source of land and building materials was a factor behind the expansion of arriviste society in East Anglia during the sixteenth century. The new lords were less concerned with retinues and feudal connections but eager to demonstrate their

⁶² 'Spain: July 1553, 1-10', *Calendar of State Papers, Spain, Volume 11: 1553* (1916), pp. 69-80.

⁶³ Swale, T. H., (1954) "The Redistribution of the Monastic Lands in Norfolk at the Dissolution" in *Norfolk Archaeology Volume 34*, p. 17.

⁶⁴ Swale, The Redistribution of the Monastic Lands in Norfolk at the Dissolution" p. 26.

⁶⁵ MacCulloch, D., (1986) *Suffolk and the Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County 1500-1600, Appendix II.*

⁶⁶ Swale, T. H., (1954) "The Redistribution of the Monastic Lands in Norfolk at the Dissolution" pp. 33.

⁶⁷ Dallas, P., (2007) "Seventeenth Century Garden Earthworks at Grange Farm, West Dereham, Norfolk." *Norfolk Archaeology, Volume XLV, Part II*, pp. 188 – 197.

intellectual and fiscal prowess through the construction of innovative houses and surroundings, as already noted. Some members of the aspirational gentry chose to enhance their status by purchasing estates associated with high-ranking established families.

The creation of exclusive landscapes was often achieved by negotiation or exchange, purchase or by tenanted lands reverting to the hands of the lord, all of which happened at the manor of Blickling during the late sixteenth century.⁶⁸ However, when plans for expansion impinged on the rights and livelihoods of other inhabitants, those affected had a number of means of having their concerns heard, or of seeking restitution. Proposed road closures were liable to be investigated under the terms of a writ *Ad Quod Damnum*. An inquisition then considered if the stoppage would damage the interests of the monarch or the people, taking depositions and returning a verdict. However, on occasion, roads were closed without such enquires and footpaths were only rarely subject to a writ *Ad Quod Damnum*. Such cases could lead to dissent amongst the local community, as was the case when Agnes Ball and Clement Spycer, inhabitants of Paston, accused Agnes Paston of stopping up the King's highway near the church. Agnes argued that, having already obtained a royal licence and granted land in exchange, the road was '*no wey but myn owyn*'.⁶⁹ The matter was raised in the manor court and Agnes heard that, in addition to being fined by suit of that court –

*Serteyn men had sentt to London to gete a commyssyon owt of the chaunstre to putt downe ageyn the wall and the dyk*⁷⁰

The Paston's status and legal expertise did not deter the local population from attempting to reopen the road or obtain more in compensation. Local communities had for centuries dealt with such matters through the auspices of the manor courts, and in many cases continued to do so. However, during the period under consideration in this thesis, there was an increasing tendency to apply to the central courts such as the Chancery Court in the above example. Nicola Whyte has examined how the collective force of local inhabitants could foil attempts to undermine their rights, particularly in cases where new landowners disregarded the traditional methods of manorial

⁶⁸ For example - NRO NRS 8582/21C2, Manorial Survey 1563; NRO NRS 12085 Lands, late Wilkenson's now in the hands of Edward Clere 1582; NRO NRS 10516 John Allen's to Edward Clere, The demesne of the manor of Blickling 1569.

⁶⁹ *The Paston Letters, Vol I* p216-220. The dispute will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

⁷⁰ *The Paston Letters, Vol I*, p. 219.

organisation.⁷¹ Leading members of the parish community had access to the central courts, where they could defend their customary rights of use and access in the Chancery or Star Chamber. It has been suggested that the indifference of some incoming landowners to the manor courts, and the readiness of the community to apply to higher authorities combined to weaken the institution of the manor.⁷²

5. The Designed Landscape Debate

This examination of the factors that influenced the evolution of elite landscapes has been prompted, in part, by the ongoing debate about the origins of designed landscapes. The idea that, during the medieval period, the location of buildings and features considered to be of symbolic or economic value, were consciously positioned to create ‘designed landscapes’ has become widely accepted. The arrangement of approach routes, bodies of water, park boundaries and resources such as mills, dovecotes and warrens have all been cited as evidence for the development of concepts of design in medieval elite landscapes. From the 1980s, the arrangement of landscape features around high-status properties such as castles and episcopal palaces has been the subject of much research and debate. Initially, the role of design within these landscapes was treated with caution, for example the early work on the much discussed sites of Somersham Palace⁷³ and Bodiam Castle⁷⁴ by landscape archaeologists such as Christopher Taylor, Paul Everson and Robert Wilson-North, suggested the *possibility* that features may have been positioned to give pleasure or create impact. However, by the mid 1990s studies of these and other sites, routinely employed the term ‘designed landscapes’ when describing the surroundings of high-status buildings.

In 1998 the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England published a volume of conference papers edited by Paul Pattison entitled *There By Design: Field Archaeology in Parks and Gardens*.⁷⁵ In “From Recording to Recognition”, Christopher Taylor’s contribution to this volume, he argued that analytical field archaeology was

⁷¹ Whyte, N., (2009) *Inhabiting the Landscape: Place Custom and Memory, 1500-1800*. Oxford, Windgather, p.166.

⁷² Whyte, N., (2000), p.166.

⁷³ Taylor, C. (1989) “Somersham Palace, Cambridgeshire: A Medieval Landscape for Pleasure?” in M. Bowden, D. Mackay and P. Topping (eds.), *From Cornwall to Caithness*. Oxford, BAR 207, pp. 211-224.

⁷⁴ Taylor, C., Everson, P. and Wilson-North, R. (1990) “Bodiam Castle, Sussex” in *Medieval Archaeology* 34, pp. 155-7.

⁷⁵ Pattison, P (editor) (1998) *There By Design: Field Archaeology in Parks and Gardens. Papers presented at a conference organised by the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England and the Garden History Society* British Archaeological Report, British Series 267. RCHME in association with Archeopress.

particularly well suited to the discovery of early gardens and designed landscapes. Taylor asserted that because the discipline was accustomed to operating across all periods and with all relicts of the past analytical fieldwork had led to the discovery of several medieval designed landscapes.⁷⁶ Paul Everson provided field evidence for several such sites in his paper, including those at Whorlton Castle, North Yorkshire and Shotwick Castle, Cheshire.⁷⁷

The acceptance of the existence of such landscapes was confirmed during the first decade of the new millennium with the publication of many papers and volumes arguing the case for early designed landscapes. For example, in 2003 Paul Everson stated that -

*... the crucial point is the acceptance of the presumption that these great medieval residences of royalty, secular lords and prelates would routinely – invariably – have been supported by manipulated, designed landscapes involving careful forethought, planning, effort and cost not dissimilar to those attending designed landscapes of later eras.*⁷⁸

In his contribution to *Medieval Landscapes* in the *Landscape History After Hoskins* series of volumes, published in 2007, Robert Liddiard argued that -

*While there can be no doubt that landscape design did not begin in the sixteenth century, the origins of medieval landscapes are, currently, obscure. One achievement has however, been to push the origins of design back as far as the twelfth century.*⁷⁹

The conclusion of the piece, however, pointed out that the term 'designed landscape' has been only loosely defined and the suggestion was made that future studies should try to establish where a line might be drawn between production and aesthetics, and

⁷⁶ Taylor, C., (1998) "From Recording to Recognition" in *There By Design: Field Archaeology in Parks and Gardens* edited by Paul Pattison, pp. 1-2.

⁷⁷ Everson, P., (1998) " 'Delightfully Surrounded by Woods and Ponds': Field Evidence for Medieval Gardens in England" in *There By Design: Field Archaeology in Parks and Gardens*, pp. 34-37.

⁷⁸ Everson, P. (2003) "Medieval Gardens and Designed Landscapes" in *The Lie of the Land: Aspects of the archaeology and history of the designed landscape in the South West of England*, edited by R. Wilson-North. The Mint Press, Exeter, pp 30-31.

⁷⁹ Liddiard, R., (2007) "Medieval Designed Landscapes: Problems and Possibilities" in *Medieval Landscapes; Landscape History after Hoskins, Volume 2*. Edited by M. Gardiner and S. Rippon, Bollington, Windgather, p. 203.

what could be described as designed or non-designed.⁸⁰ This cautionary note has been followed by a detailed critique of the validity of the concept of early designed landscapes by Robert Liddiard and Tom Williamson in which they query the use of the term ‘designed’ when describing medieval high-status landscapes.⁸¹ They argue that before a landscape can be said to be designed it must have been created using recognisable design principles or formulae. Liddiard and Williamson argue that large scale landscape planning would have been difficult to accomplish without an understanding of perspective combined with a level of surveying and planning expertise not available to medieval lords. And, crucially, extensive planned landscapes required that the land be owned by one individual and not subject to complex feudal rights and obligations. They have therefore proposed that the chronology and definition of the ‘design threshold’ be subject to re-examination. The evidence presented in this thesis seeks to address some of the points outlined above, by examining the processes that were undertaken prior to the creation of elite landscapes and by identifying examples of deliberate planning that included aesthetic elements, which appear to have been created using recognised design principles.

7. The Value of the Landscape Approach

The choice of research framework from which to conduct a study of elite residences and landscapes has been informed by the imperative of producing a study in which the spatial organisation of residences and their surroundings would be considered in conjunction with an examination of the perceptions and experiences of those who interacted with elite landscapes. The landscape approach encourages multi-disciplinary research, drawing data from a range of sources and taking into consideration a wide social milieu. The architectural and art-historical approaches tend to focus on either the built environment, or gardens, or parks, without reference to how these elements interacted with each other or with the wider landscape.⁸² For example, Nicholas Cooper’s architectural history of the *Houses of the Gentry 1480 – 1680* is a detailed and lavishly illustrated analysis of the development of gentry residences but does not place the houses in the context of either their immediate surroundings, or their place within the context of the social landscape.⁸³ The art history approach tends to examine sites of

⁸⁰ Liddiard (2007), p. 213.

⁸¹ Liddiard, R. & Williamson, T., (2010) “There by Design? Some reflections on medieval elite landscapes.” *The Archaeological Journal* 165 (1), pp. 520-35.

⁸² Williamson, T., (1998) *The Archaeology of the Landscape Park: Garden Design in Norfolk, England c. 1680-1840*. British Archaeological Report No. 268, British Series, p. 1.

⁸³ Cooper, N. (1999) *Houses of the Gentry 1480 – 1680* Yale University Press, New Haven and London.

national importance, either individually or within a general study, and discuss the cultural and aesthetic influences that brought about various trends and fashions in landscape design, with little regard for regional variations in layout or style. There is an emphasis on high-status properties, noteworthy for extensive, innovative schemes that were funded by prodigious wealth, or debt. For example, in her 2005 publication *The Tudor House and Garden*, Paula Henderson addresses the architecture and setting of sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century elite residences.⁸⁴ The volume contains a wealth of illustrations, and claims in the introduction, to be a study of both houses and their settings. However, the emphasis is on the architecture of houses and their ancillary buildings, with only the immediate setting, rather than the wider landscape coming under consideration. The final chapter of *The Tudor House and Garden* is entitled 'The House and The Landscape' and contains a mere eleven pages most of which describe the architectural innovations that allowed the landscape to be viewed from the house. The chapter goes on to describe the decoration of residences with depictions of nature and landscapes, along with the use of fresh flowers and plants within the house. Many of the illustrations in this volume are to be found in other publications dealing with the Tudor and Stuart period, such as Timothy Mowl's volume *Elizabethan and Jacobean Style*.⁸⁵ This is an inevitable shortcoming of confining research to well-documented, high-status properties of national and even international significance, which lend themselves to the art historical approach.

In contrast medieval and early-modern parks have been the focus of several studies, which have adopted a broadly landscape approach. In 1997 Twigs Way presented a study of the impact of emparkment on the social landscape of part of Eastern England.⁸⁶ This comprehensive evaluation of the consequences of emparkment was conducted as a detailed regional landscape study. The value of an interdisciplinary landscape approach can be assessed in Amanda Richardson's 2005 study of the landscape archaeology of Clarendon in Wiltshire. The thesis considered the relationship of the park to the palace and the surrounding forest, within the context of the cultural, aesthetic and social concerns of contemporary society.⁸⁷ The 2007 volume *The Medieval Park: New*

⁸⁴ Henderson, P., (2005) *The Tudor House And Garden*. Published for The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art by Yale University Press, New Haven and London.

⁸⁵ Mowl, T. (1993) *Elizabethan & Jacobean Style*, London, Phaidon.

⁸⁶ Way, T., (1997) *A Study of the Impact of Imparkment on the Social Landscape of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire from c.1080 to 1760*. British Archaeological Report 258, British Series, Oxford.

⁸⁷ Richardson, A. (2005) *The Forest, Park and Palace of Clarendon, c.1200 – c.1650: reconstructing an actual, conceptual and documented Wiltshire Landscape*. BAR British Series, 387. Archaeopress, Oxford.

Perspectives also demonstrated how multi-disciplinary approaches can advance our understanding of medieval landscapes.⁸⁸ The contributors examined the park from a wide range of perspectives including sociology, zooarchaeology, historical ecology, landscape history and environmental archaeology. The range of sources and approaches presented in this volume, have indeed provided new perspectives on the changing role of the park within medieval society. The parks and landscapes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have often been the subject of art-historical studies but Tom Williamson's *The Archaeology of the Landscape Park* demonstrated how the landscape archaeology approach could be used to analyse the complex relationships between the practice of landscape design, the development of the vernacular landscape and changing patterns of social organisation.⁸⁹ These studies, published under the broad aegis of landscape archaeology and history, emphasise the dynamic and open-minded nature of the landscape approach. Most contemporary landscape historians and archaeologists consider theoretical frameworks to be essential to balanced analysis of both landscapes and the people who inhabited them. The landscape approach provides a flexible framework within which historicised biographical evidence can be combined with an analysis of buildings and landscapes.

The disciplines of landscape archaeology and landscape history have been criticised by post-processual archaeologists and post-modernist writers, who accuse the landscape approach of being 'empiricist', 'positivist' and 'over reliant on maps and other cartesian devices'. Matthew Johnson has argued that medieval and post medieval landscape history is mired in empiricism and Romanticism, venerating unquestioningly those who influenced the development of the disciplines, such as W. G. Hoskins and O. G. S. Crawford, whilst excluding cognitive and anthropological approaches.⁹⁰ In his review of *Ideas of Landscape* Andrew Fleming agreed that there is a role for archaeological theory and fresh research agendas within modern landscape archaeology and history. However, he countered with the assertion that scientific empiricism and traditional landscape skills of observation and reconstruction are also essential when tackling major interpretive issues.⁹¹ Jonathan Finch has also advocated the benefits of combining theory and practice in order to understand how landscapes of the modern period were used and perceived in the past. In *Recognising People and Place in the Modern*

⁸⁸ Liddiard, R. (Editor) (2007) *The Medieval Park: New Perspectives*. Windgather Press, Bollington.

⁸⁹ Williamson, T (1998) *The Archaeology of the Landscape Park*. BAR British Series 268, Archaeopress, Oxford.

⁹⁰ Johnson, M. (2007) *Ideas of Landscape*, Blackwell, Oxford.

⁹¹ Fleming, A., (2008) "Don't Bin Your Boots" *Landscapes*, Volume 8, No. 1, pp. 85-99.

Landscape, he points out that the perceived familiarity of modern landscapes means they are seldom given an active or symbolic role in social processes. Even when ornamental or designed landscapes are interpreted in the light of changing social relationships, studies often fail to people the landscapes of modern period. He suggests that, because of the abundance of source material from the period, modern landscapes can be successfully approached through the concept of a socially integrated landscape.⁹² In his study of seven Yorkshire estates, Finch examined how economic, social, political and aesthetic values were placed and perceived in the modern landscape. The late-medieval and early-modern landscape may be less familiar than that of the modern period, but sources for East Anglia are plentiful and varied, making it possible to approach the subject of elite landscapes through the history of the people who created the residences and grounds under consideration here. The ‘otherness’ of pre-modern society can be acknowledged within such a concept, but so too can links with contemporary society, given that many of the residences featured in the research for this thesis are still inhabited and function within the systemic context of the modern landscape.

An historicised landscape study focusing on the lives of individuals and families requires a comprehensive body of sources such as those held in Norfolk and Suffolk archive centres. East Anglia is fortunate to have substantial collections of material relating to the families, residences and lands of the regional elite. The archives also contain copious manorial records, which provide valuable evidence for the social organisation of the region, and for the way different social groups perceived each other and their surroundings. In addition, the Historic Environment Records for both Norfolk and Suffolk hold a wide range of primary data for the built environment and the wider landscape. The analysis of spatial organisation has been assisted by the large number of extant buildings and landscape features that were first constructed during the period dealt with here. This is particularly true in the south of the region, where prodigious numbers of pre-modern houses and water features survive.

The fact that many of the residences included in the data set for this research remain as extant standing buildings has proved useful when investigating the possible advantages offered by their locations, albeit allowing for the inevitable changes wrought over the course of five or six centuries. It has been possible to identify potential outlooks or

⁹² Finch, J. (2007) “Recognising People and Place in the Modern Landscape” in Barnwell P. & Palmer M. (Editors) *Post-Medieval Landscapes*, Bollington, Windgather.

vistas; to assess the impact created by the interaction between approach routes, buildings and major water features; and consider the intervisibility between the residence and the wider landscape. The impact of the creation of exclusive zones upon the wider community has been investigated by examination of *Inquisitions Ad Quod Damnum*, licences to empark and documentation arising from disputes between lords and local inhabitants. Residences demolished or significantly reduced in size or status, before the modern era, provided invaluable evidence for the evolution of design in the pre-modern era. Such locations have frequently escaped the remodelling that obliterated the medieval and early-modern surroundings of many extant residences. The survival of major features, in the form of earthworks or images revealed in aerial photographs of fossilised sites can supply useful information that may not be available from other sources. Such sites can also offer the possibility of experiencing early landscapes in a manner not possible at properties that have undergone major redevelopment. Investigating the connections between people, locations and the creation of exclusive landscapes within a regional context, utilising a large dataset of properties, has presented several methodological and presentational challenges. These will be discussed in detail in the following chapter, along with an outline of the sources used and definitions of the terminology employed in the text.

The research questions will be addressed through analysis of a series of case studies presented in Chapters 3 to 6. The development of exclusivity around some residences continued throughout the period of this study and these will appear in all four chapters, providing valuable evidence for the creation of elite landscapes. Other houses may feature only once having fallen victim to the changing fortunes or priorities of their owners but when first built may have illustrated significant aspects of the concept of exclusivity. The thesis has been divided chronologically into four periods, 1400-1470; 1471-1500; 1501-1560 and 1561-1630. Chapter 3 will examine the period from 1400 to 1470 when political rivalries were rife in East Anglia and increased social mobility brought new families into the ranks of the elite. The houses and landscapes created by the 'old guard' and the arrivistes will be discussed along with the motives and ambitions of the protagonists. The residences of late fifteenth-century East Anglia will be the focus of Chapter 4. The three decades from 1471 to 1500 witnessed the construction of a number of important and prestigious houses in East Anglia. The case studies provide evidence for the replication of certain spatial arrangements and design features at residences across East Anglia. The familial connections and political allegiances of the

resident families will also be discussed along with examples from outwith the study area. The methods employed to acquire land by members of the elite will be discussed in Chapter 5 along with examples of opposition by local inhabitants to the expansion of exclusivity between 1501 and 1570. Chapter 6 examines the utilisation of elite landscapes by different sections of elite society from parish gentlemen to the upper echelons of the nobility from 1571 to 1630. Part of this chapter investigates the impact of possible inclusion in the itinerary of a royal progress on families and the exclusivity of their estates. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the significance of the expansion of exclusivity during the fifteenth and sixteenth century to the ambitions of owners who wished to create landscapes inspired by Renaissance ideals of design in the early seventeenth century. Chapter 7 will present the conclusions reached as a result of the research undertaken for this thesis.

Chapter 2

Definitions, Sources and Methodology

The methodology presented here aims to synthesise archaeological, historical and environmental evidence in order to produce a study that addresses both the material and mental aspects of elite landscapes. An examination of exclusivity could lend itself to an exploration of what Richard Bradley has described as “the superstructure of meanings and values through which particular landscapes were experienced in prehistory” to the exclusion of the physical elements of the material landscape such as settlements, land use and the remains of everyday life.¹ Although Bradley was discussing prehistoric landscapes his warning that pursuing either method at the expense of the other is unproductive, applies equally to the period under consideration in the forthcoming chapters. An analysis of the changing relationship between elite and vernacular landscapes should address how those changes were perceived and encountered by individuals in their daily lives. In phenomenological terms the areas where the two landscapes met could be said to be both perceptual and existential spaces, the former defined by Tilley as “the constructed life space of the individual, giving rise to a sense of awe, emotion, wonder or anguish in spatial encounters”. The latter he describes as being in “a constant process of production and reproduction through the movements and activities of members of a group”.² Boundaries are said to be the means by which existential spaces are structured, therefore, as much of this thesis is concerned with the effects of shifting boundaries, due consideration will be given to the interaction between existential, architectural and perceptual spaces.

The individuals who inhabited and moved through these settings reacted in different ways to the creation of exclusive spaces. Different audiences perceived exclusivity in a wide variety of ways, imbuing what they experienced with a range of meanings. The elite landscapes that form the core of this thesis were part of a wider environment, surrounded by communities, fields, commons, roads and other components of the vernacular landscape. As such, any changes envisaged by the elite were subject to both the customary and statutory rights of those who might be affected by the creation of exclusive spaces. The residences of the gentry and nobility could not function in

¹ Bradley, R., (2000) ‘Mental and Material Landscapes in Prehistoric Britain’ in *Landscape the Richest Historical Record*, edited by Della Hooke. Society for Landscape Studies Supplementary Series , p 2.

² Tilley, C., (1994) *A Phenomenology of Landscape*. Oxford, Berg, pp. 16-17.

isolation from other groups in society, nor were elite landscapes totally divorced from their surroundings, display being an important component of exclusivity.

In 'From Recording to Recognition' Christopher Taylor stressed that collections of data must be put into context. It is not sufficient to record sites, features and buildings. Taylor suggested that field evidence should be combined with historical research in order to reveal the interaction between human activity and nature.³ Had this thesis set out to examine elite residences and their grounds in isolation then a much narrower set of data might have sufficed. However, this would have denied the role of those who created the properties, their motives and relationships, both with other elite groups and with other groups within society. The aspirations, beliefs, allegiances and agency of the owners influenced how a residence was presented to the world, and the same criteria affected how the house and its setting were perceived by other social groups. The purpose of this chapter is to present the research strategies adopted in order to ensure that landscape, residence and society were considered as a whole when investigating the creation of elite landscapes.

1. The Research Framework

1.1 The Region of East Anglia

Having decided to research the development of exclusivity and landscape design within a regional context, the choice of region was governed by a number of factors, including the availability of source material for elite families and residences, and sources relating to other social groups in regional society. A diverse range of topographies and tenurial structures was also required along with boundaries that could be justified and defined objectively. East Anglia fulfilled these requirements and has therefore been chosen as the spatial parameter for this thesis. The term East Anglia can be used in a general sense meaning eastern England but the original meaning was the geographical extent of the kingdom of the East Angles, covering the modern counties of Norfolk, Suffolk and parts of Cambridgeshire but excluding Essex, the kingdom of the East Saxons.⁴ The advent of Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) and other English Heritage sponsored

³ Taylor, C. C (1998a) "From Recording to Recognition" in Pattison, P. (Editor) *There By Design: Field Archaeology in Parks and Gardens*.

⁴ Scull, C.,(1992) "Before Sutton Hoo: Structures of Power and Society in Early East Anglia" in *The Age of Sutton Hoo*, edited by Martin Carver Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, p. 4.

research projects have provided new spatial parameters for some regional landscape studies.⁵ In their study of historic field systems in East Anglia, Martin and Satchell based their research in the ‘Anglia’ and ‘Wash’ sub-provinces of the ‘South-eastern Province’ of England as defined by Roberts and Wrathmell in the *Atlas of Rural Settlement in England*.⁶ However, the research presented in this thesis has been conducted within a region made up of the historic counties of Norfolk and Suffolk and referred to here as East Anglia.

The region of East Anglia, in common with all such divisions of territory, contains many different districts or *pays*, each with different characteristics. At a basic level, it could be subdivided into “the two landscapes of Lowland England” as defined by Oliver Rackham, with ‘planned countryside’ to the north and west, and ‘ancient countryside’ to the east and south of East Anglia.⁷ Rackham’s division contrasts areas historically dominated by open field arable and little woodland with wood-pasture districts, where isolated farms stand in an anciently enclosed landscape. This is clearly an oversimplification and a more detailed view can be had by looking at soil associations and landscape regions. These have been combined in **Figure 7** and reveal a more complex picture, comprising ten areas based on the characteristics of the underlying soil type and resulting patterns of land use and tenure. The landscape regions of East Anglia, as defined here by Wade-Martins and Williamson are useful as the characteristics of soils and landscape regions affected the location of elite residences and the type of grounds that could be created around a mansion.

⁵ Geographic Information System based, large scale mapping that attempts to characterise the historic landscape by creating polygons representing various categories of field systems and other extant features. Approaches to historic landscape analysis vary between individual HLC projects.

⁶ Martin, E., & Satchell, M., (2008) *Wheare most Inclosures be - East Anglian Fields: History, Morphology and Management: East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 124*, Suffolk County Council Archaeology Service; Roberts, B. K., & Wrathmell, S., (2000) *An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England* London, English Heritage

⁷ Rackham, O., (1995 edition) *The History of the Countryside* London Weidenfeld & Nicolson, pp. 3-5.

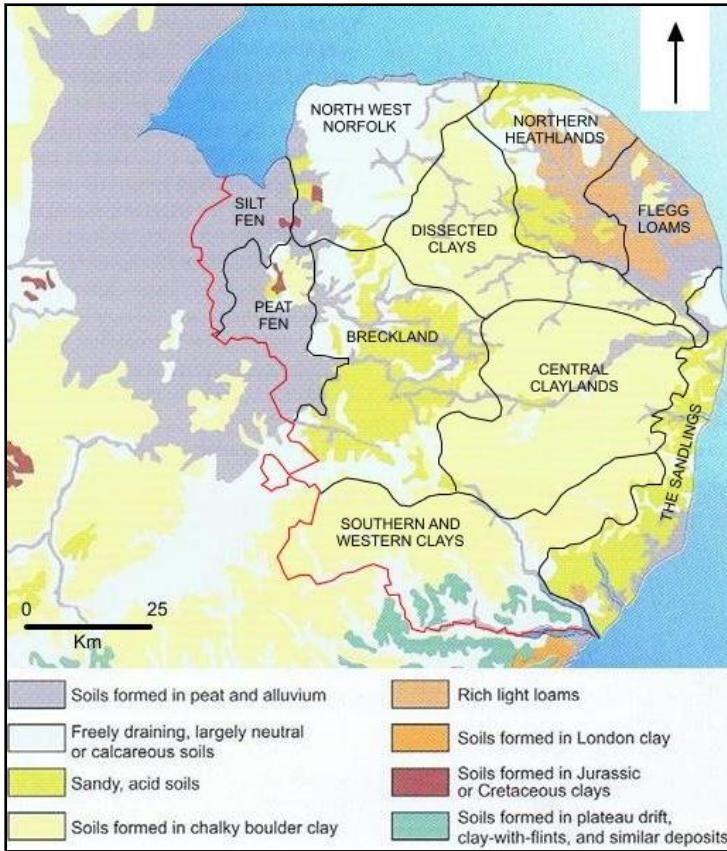


Figure 7: The Principal Soil Types and Landscape Regions of East Anglia⁸

The predominant forms of land use and tenure also had a significant impact on the way an elite landscape could be developed. Whether land was held by freeholders who had the right to buy sell or exchange their holdings, or by unfree tenants who held their land at the will of the lord or by copyhold could greatly affect the ability to create large areas of managed

demesne around a residence. Extensive open fields where the pieces were occupied by large numbers of freeholders could prove difficult to acquire, whereas the acquisition of a tenement that consisted of a block of enclosed fields around a homestead might be more straightforward. A large expanse of common pasture near to an elite residence would have increased the levels of interaction between the inhabitants and the elite whilst an existing block of in-hand demesne around a new residence greatly eased the process of creating exclusive spaces.

The nature of settlement in East Anglia is of considerable relevance to the research presented in this thesis. In addition to the work of Roberts and Wrathmell several other historical and archaeological studies have been taken into consideration. A considerable body of research into settlement desertion and contraction in East Anglia exists, several studies having been published as *East Anglian Archaeology* reports.⁹ These indicate that

⁸ Soil types after Williamson (2006) *England's Landscape: Volume 2 East Anglia* p 2; Landscape regions after Wade-Martins, S., and Williamson T., (1999) *Roots of Change*. The Agricultural History Review, Supplement Series 2, p. X.

⁹ For Example - Davison, A., (1988) *Six Deserted Villages in Norfolk*, *East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 44*. Norfolk Archaeology Unit, Norfolk Museums Service; Davison, A., (1990) *The Evolution of Settlement in Three Parishes in South-East Norfolk*. *East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 49*. Norfolk Archaeology Unit, Norfolk Museums Service; Butler L., & Wade-Martins., P. (1989) *The Deserted Medieval Village of Thuxton*; *East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 49*. Norfolk Archaeology Unit, Norfolk Museums Service; Dymond, D., & Virgoe, R., (1986) 'The Reduced Population and Wealth of Early fifteenth-century Suffolk' *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology XXXVI, Part 2*, pp.

in many parts of East Anglia there were a greater number of settlements than recorded in the nineteenth century sources. In addition, the density of dispersal appears to have been greater in the west of East Anglia than suggested in the *Atlas of Rural Settlement*.¹⁰ Another important factor to consider when looking at differences in settlement patterns across East Anglia is the phenomenon known as common-edge drift. From the eleventh century nucleated settlements around churches began to break up, with new homesteads being established around the edge of fens, heaths and greens.¹¹ The movement continued throughout the medieval period, creating ribbons of settlement along the edge of commons, as in the example from West Lexham in **Figure 10** (page below). East Anglia had more common-edge settlements than any other region of England, with a particular concentration towards the north. It has been argued that this may be the result of very high population levels in the medieval period, combined with a complex manorial structure and a greater than normal number of free tenures, which encouraged the early colonisation of extensive areas of waste.¹²

Whilst settlement patterns and land use influenced the development of elite landscapes so too did the presence of major commercial and administrative centres. The assizes brought large numbers of the gentry to Norwich and Bury St. Edmunds to dispense justice, and both were important markets and centres of ecclesiastical authority. Added to this were the networks of trade and production, spreading out from the ports of King's Lynn, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft and Blakeney, and from the market towns to settlements across East Anglia along roads and waterways. These communication routes continued into the rest of England, to London and via the North Sea, to Europe and beyond. The hinterlands of major centres such as Bury St. Edmunds and Norwich provided locations for the residences of individuals whose rank or business interests required their presence at assizes or other gatherings. Those with sufficient resources could live further afield whilst also maintaining a town house, or in the case of the Dukes of Norfolk, a city palace.

73-100; Rogerson, A., (1997) *Barton Bendish and Caldecote: Fieldwork in South-West Norfolk East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 80*. Norfolk Archaeology Unit, Norfolk Museums Service

¹⁰ Roberts, B. K., & Wrathmell, S., (2000) *An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England* London, English Heritage, pp. 20 & 22.

¹¹ Williamson, T., (1993) *The Origins of Norfolk*, Manchester University Press, pp. 167-8

¹² Williamson, T. (2003) *Shaping Medieval Landscapes*, Bollington, Windgather, p. 160.

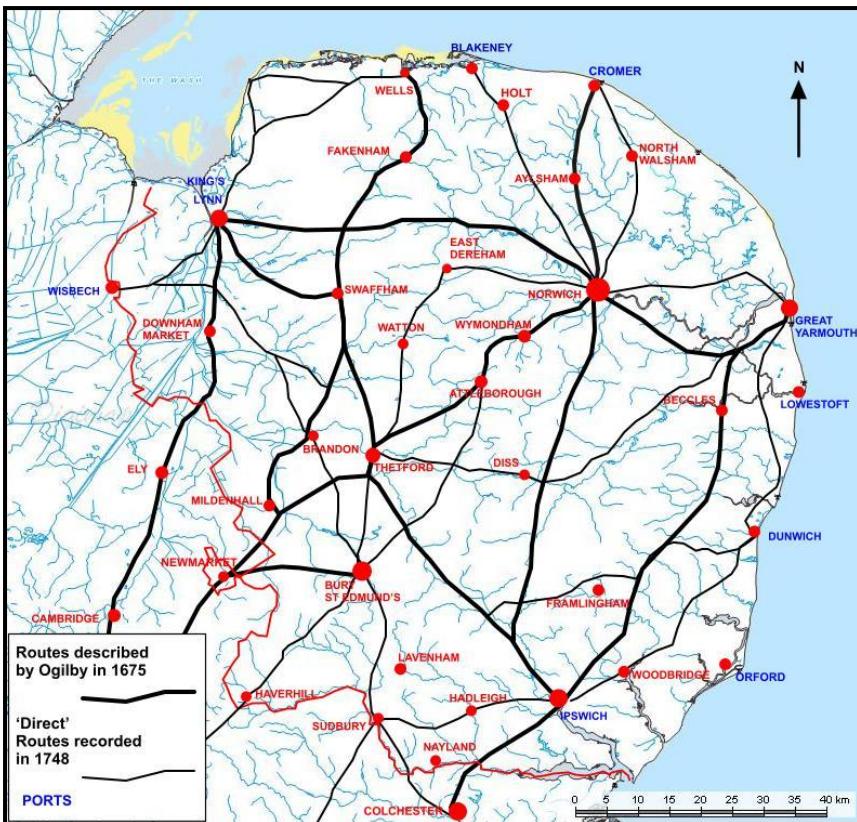


Figure 8: East Anglian Roads and Ports.

Routes described by John Ogilby in 1675 and roads recorded in 1748 as 'Direct' routes.¹³ Significant ports in late-medieval and early-modern East Anglia.¹⁴

The routes shown above were recorded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries so can only give an indication of possible medieval and sixteenth-century roads, or of the myriad of minor roads and paths that allowed people to move around East Anglia. However, the principal routes are likely to have been in existence in some form and would have allowed the elite to travel between residences and places of business both within and out with East Anglia. The routes taking travellers towards London, through Hertfordshire and Essex, were of particular significance for courtiers and officers of state, who made frequent journeys between East Anglia and the capital. These roads also allowed livestock, agricultural produce and other merchandise to be taken to London. Coastal ports and navigable waterways were conduits for goods and people, allowing trade with, and transport to and from other regions of Britain and Europe.

¹³ Britannia depicta or, Ogilby improved by Emanuel Bowen. Facsimile Edition 1970 Newcastle upon Tyne, Graham, plates 43; 46; 52; 74 & 76. Thomas Kitchin, 1748 'Norfolk' in *The London Magazine*

¹⁴ Bailey, M., (2007) *Medieval Suffolk*, Woodbridge, Boydell; Rutledge, E., (2005) "Medieval and Later ports, trade and fishing up to 1600" in *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk, Third Edition*. Edited by Trevor Ashwin and Alan Davison. Chichester, Phillimore.

1.2 The Seven Sub-Regions of East Anglia used in this thesis

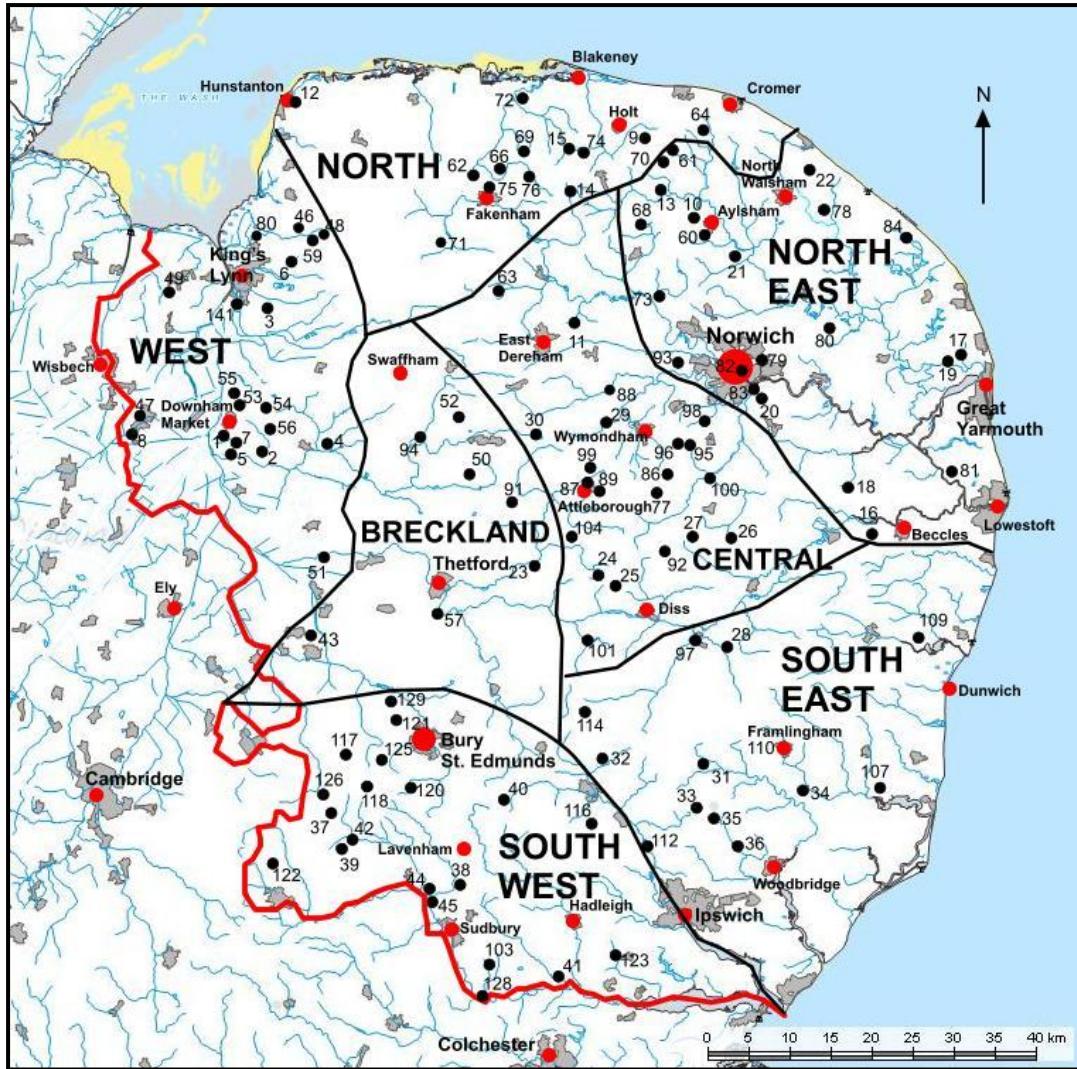


Figure 9: The Regional Subdivisions informed by the factors discussed above and showing the location of residences mentioned in the text.

North

The North sub-region of East Anglia lies to the east of the chalk escarpment that runs south eastwards from Hunstanton. The terrain is predominantly hilly, with river valleys that flow east, west and north from a watershed creating some of the most marked contrasts in relief in East Anglia. Light calcareous or neutral soils, and sandy acid soils cover much of this sub-region, surrounding a small area of heavier dissected clays to the east of Fakenham. It may seem perverse to create a sub-region from an area with both light lands and clay landscapes, and a significant natural boundary in the form of the watershed, however, a number of characteristics suggest that it should be treated as a coherent entity. A lower percentage of land was held in free tenures than in other parts of East Anglia, and lordship was stronger. The abbeys of North Creake and Walsingham

were amongst the religious houses to hold manors in this sub-region, along with powerful secular lords such as the L'Estranges of Hunstanton and the Heydons of Baconsthorpe. The strength of manorial control perhaps encouraged a more nucleated settlement pattern over much the North sub-region than in some parts of East Anglia.¹⁵ However, the nucleations were interspersed with common edge settlements around heaths and low commons, as at West Lexham, shown in **Figure 10**.

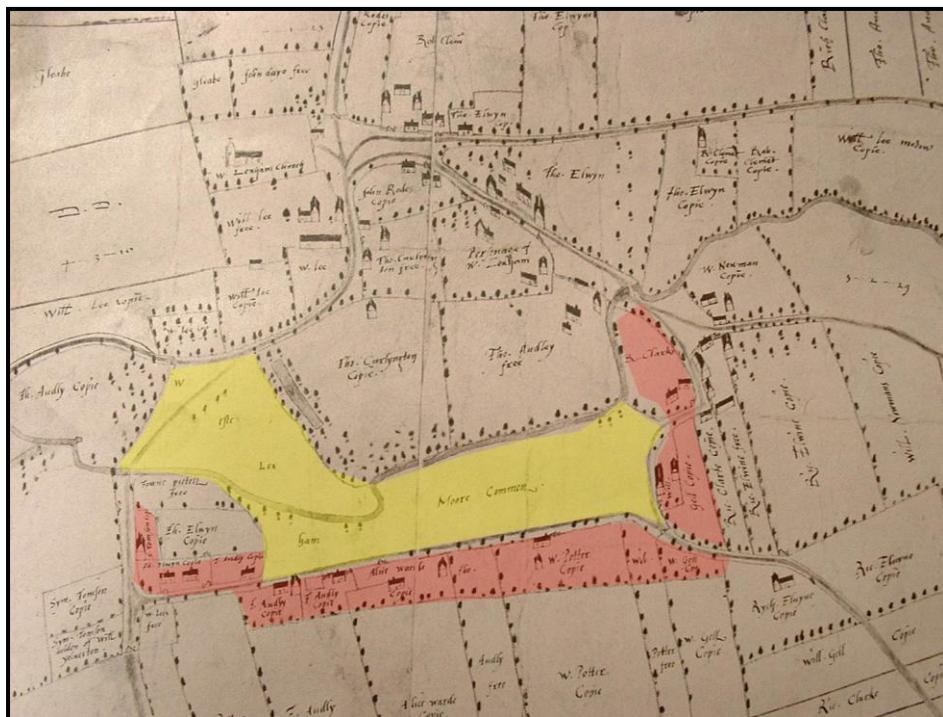


Figure 10:
Map of
West
Lexham,
surveyed
by Ralph
Agas in
1575
NRO MS
21128
(Centre TF
844 168)

The common-edge settlement (highlighted in red) extended around Moore Common (yellow) but only the messuages around the church remained by the nineteenth century. Few late-medieval elite residences were established on the light soils of the North sub-region but were built instead around the periphery where the lighter soils abutted areas of clay, or in river valleys. In the late-medieval and early-modern period, the North sub-region derived much of its wealth from grain production using the foldcourse version of sheep-corn husbandry.¹⁶ Open fields lay adjacent to heaths and commons for the grazing of sheep, reared primarily to fertilise the soil when folded on the arable land. Woodland was scarce where the soils were light, supplies of timber and wood being sourced from areas of heavier clay soil or elsewhere in East Anglia. For instance, the L'Estrange family of Hunstanton Hall (12; TF 6911 4184) obtained supplies of wood and timber from their manor of Gressenhall, almost forty kilometres to the south-east of

¹⁵ Roberts, B. K., & Wrathmell, S., (2000) *An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England*, p. 22.

¹⁶ Allison, K. J., (1957) 'The Sheep-Corn Husbandry of Norfolk in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries' *Agricultural History Review* Vol 5, pp. 12 – 30.

Hunstanton.¹⁷ The L'Estranges had been members of the region's elite for generations, in contrast to the Heydons had risen through the ranks of the legal profession before commencing work on Baconsthorpe Castle (9; TG 1214 3809). Across the North of East Anglia, established families and arrivistes created innovative residences and landscapes throughout the period of this study. From the suggestion of early vistas at Baconsthorpe Castle, to the expression of Renaissance ideals at Nicholas Bacon's Stiffkey Hall (72; TF 9746 4257) and Palladian influences in the architecture of Raynham Hall (71; TF 8820 2578), the North of East Anglia witnessed some significant steps in the evolution of design.

North East

The city of Norwich stands within this sub-region and was the commercial and administrative centre for much of East Anglia throughout the late-medieval and early-modern period. Roads and waterways connected the city to the wider world and, as the seat of regional power and jurisdiction it attracted the most influential and wealthy of the East Anglian elite. Beyond the city, the market towns of Aylsham, North Walsham and Beccles served local communities, and trade passed through the port of Great Yarmouth. In addition to acid heathland, and low-lying coastal marshes, the North East sub-region has extensive areas of fertile loams to the east and north of Norwich. Dissected by river valleys, with interspersed heathland, the rich loams supported a mixed arable economy throughout the medieval and early-modern period, commanding some of the highest rental values in England.¹⁸ Despite variations in terrain and soil landscapes, three factors were common across the North East sub-region. Firstly, a dispersed settlement pattern which included medium to high densities of settlement dispersion as defined by Roberts and Wrathmell. Much of the dispersion was around common pastures and heaths, a pattern that continued to the south of the River Waveney particularly in the south-eastern extremity of the sub-region. Secondly, this was one of the most densely populated areas of East Anglia, if not England, in the medieval period, with a high proportion of free men and soke men recorded in the Domesday Survey.¹⁹ Thirdly, small manors predominated, with high numbers of relatively prosperous freeholders and low levels of manorial control. These factors made the creation of extensive landed estates difficult and expensive. However, a number of elite residences

¹⁷ NRO LEST/NA 53 & NRO LEST/NF 5

¹⁸ Campbell, B.S. (2005) "Medieval Land Use and Values" in *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk, Third Edition*. Edited by Trevor Ashwin and Alan Davison. Chichester, Phillimore, p. 23.

¹⁹ Williamson, T., (2006) *England's Landscape: East Anglia*, p. 46.

were established including the Paston's original eponymous manor of Paston Hall (22; TG 3230 3456); Mautby Hall (19; TG 4883 1137) and Oxnead (21; TG 2302 2396). Blickling Hall (10: TG 1786 2866) had been part of Fastolf's property portfolio before passing to the Boleyns, Cleres and Hobarts. **Figure 11**, below shows part of the Smallburgh Hall estate and records a mix of small enclosures, open fields, heath, marsh and woodland typical of the North East sub-region.

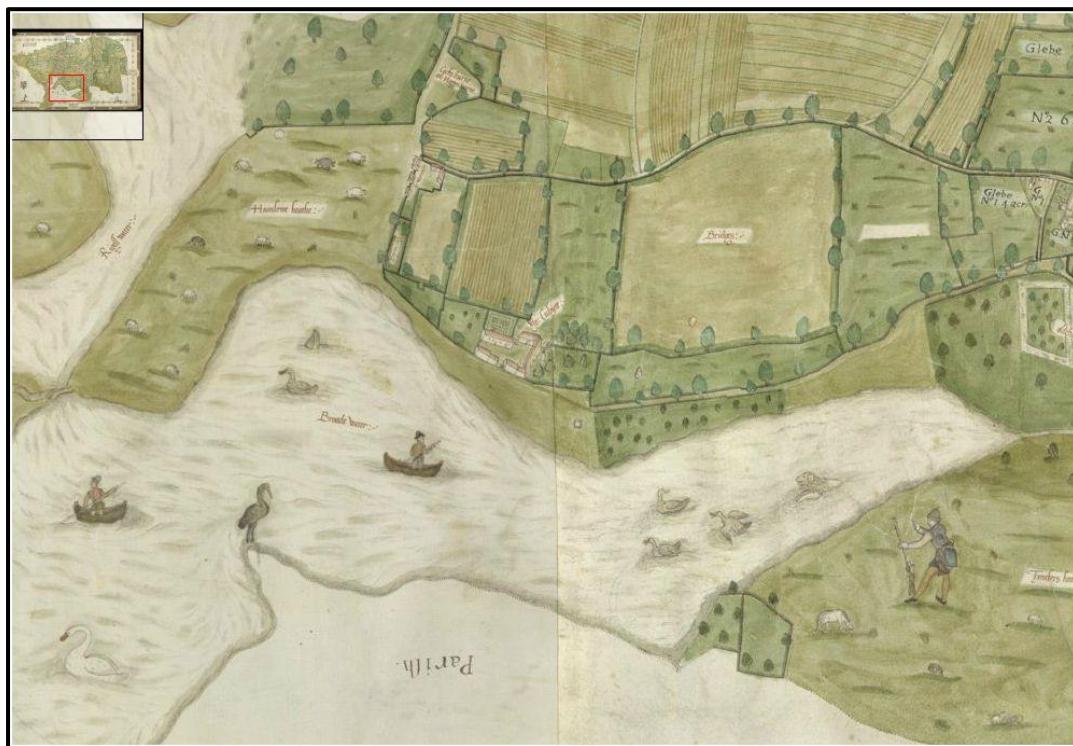


Figure 11: Part of the Smallburgh Hall estate mapped in 1582 by John Darby (south at top). BL Maps Dep. No. 1741 (centre TG 337 246 approx.)

Central

Unlike the North and North East, the Central sub-region stands on predominately clay soils, those in the northern part being more dissected by river valleys than the clay plateau in the south of this sub-region. The heavy soils created a 'wood pasture' economy, where dairy cattle and bullocks were reared in pasture closes and grazed on large commons. The commons also supported sheep flocks used to fertilise arable fields on the dissected clays, for example at Kimberley, Gressenhall and Morley, and were interspersed with areas woodland and pasture closes. The proportion of arable decreased from north to south in this sub-region, but dispersed settlement patterns existed across the Central area, the population often having drifted to the edges of commons. The parish of Tibenham was typical of many in southern part of this sub-region, areas of

settlement having been established in isolated locations and along the edge of *Longmoore Green*. **Figure 12** is an extract from a survey of the lands of Channons Hall Manor (92; TM 148 884) in Tibenham in 1640. Channons Hall stood in an area of parkland next to Aslacton Common and adjacent pasture closes were surrounded by hedgerow trees. A small area of open field survived in 1640 but appears to have been the focus of early piecemeal enclosure. The Central sub-region was more densely wooded than either the North or North East of East Anglia and the bosky nature of this wood-pasture landscape is clear in **Figure 12**.



Figure 12:
The Manor
of Channons
Hall
surveyed in
1640 by John
Harris NRO
MC 1777/1

The hall and messuages have been highlighted in yellow, the church in red and the open field land in light brown.

In the sixteenth century the Central sub region was densely settled, numerous scattered rural settlements interspersed by small market towns such as Dereham, New Buckenham, East Harling and Diss. The towns of Wymondham and Attleborough stood

beside an important route from London that entered East Anglia at Newmarket and passed through Thetford and onward to Norwich. Several high-status residences were built in this sub-region in the fifteenth century including Kimberley Hall (29; TG 0761 0405), Shelton Hall (26; TM 2273 9059) and Thomas Lovell's Harling Hall (23; TL 9911 8680). During the sixteenth century, the road network and the proximity of Norwich appear to have encouraged the members of both the established and arriviste elites to establish new residences. The Dukes of Norfolk moved their powerbase from Framlingham in the South East sub-region, to Kenninghall (24; TM 0650 8549) in the 1520s and Sir Nicholas Bacon built a fine mansion at Redgrave (101; TM 050 760) in the 1580s. A plethora of residences were constructed or refurbished in the area between Attleborough and Norwich during the late sixteenth century such as Ashwellthorpe Hall (86; TM 1500 9782); Morley Old Hall (99; TM 0564 9840) and Hethel Hall (96; TG 1632 0131).

South East

In general, the terrain in this part of East Anglia is gently undulating in character, dissected by river valleys and with fewer marked contrasts in relief than the North or South West sub-regions. The underlying soils are derived mainly from chalky boulder clay and the sub-region is characterised as a 'wood pasture' area, which in the early-modern period was exploited in a mix of irregular open fields, pasture closes, woodland and parkland. The hinterlands of towns along the Waveney Valley, such as Diss, Harleston and Bungay lie in both Norfolk and Suffolk and soils formed from chalky boulder clay created similar terrain, settlement patterns and land use to either side of the valley. The clayland landscapes continue southwards over a subtle topography that incorporates part of the boulder clay plateau known as 'High' Suffolk.²⁰ Despite this epithet, the difference in relative relief is less marked in the South East sub-region than in, for example, the North of East Anglia, much of the south east taking the form of a plateau dissected by river valleys. Near the coast the clays meet a low plateau of acid sandy soils, which in turn give way to peat and alluvial soils along the coastline.²¹ The juxtaposition of clay and light acid sands led to an interesting distribution of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century residences and parks along the edge of the claylands, supported

²⁰ Martin, E., (1989) "The Soil Regions of Suffolk" in *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk, 2nd Edition*, edited by David Dymond and Edward Martin. Ipswich, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, pp. 14 & 15.

²¹ Warner, P., (1996) *The Origins of Suffolk*. Manchester University Press, p.10.

by extensive estates on the lighter soils to the east.²² Henham Hall (109; TM 4510 7820), built in the 1520s by Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, was an early example of this arrangement. Friston Hall (107; TM 4050 6028), in contrast, was situated on light acidic soils above the estuary of the River Alde. The manor was acquired by Cardinal Wolsey in 1524, had previously belonged to Snape Priory.²³ However, the majority of the residences were situated further west, often over-looking the river valleys that cut through the clay plateau. Several of these properties lie on or near the route of the present day B1077, which ran from Ipswich, passing through Debenham and Eye before joining the road to Norwich near Scole. As with the areas to either side of the route from Newmarket to Norwich this suggests that communication links encouraged the elite to establish principal residences nearby.

South West

The boundary of this sub-region passes through Ipswich but Bury St. Edmunds was the most influential town in the sub-region and was second only to Norwich in late-medieval East Anglia, in terms of ecclesiastical and judicial administration. The town had a wide sphere of influence that spread west towards Cambridge, south to Colchester and north towards Thetford. Because of this wide sphere of influence the boundaries of the South West sub-region have been drawn to include part of the area of light soils to the north of Bury St Edmunds known as 'Fielding' and often referred to as part of Breckland. Whilst acknowledging that in terms of land-use this terrain differed greatly from the wood pasture of the claylands south of Bury, the town was none-the-less a commercial, administrative and religious hub for the population who inhabited some of the Breckland parishes to the north. The topography of much of the South West sub-region is distinguished by marked contrasts in relief; the boulder clay plateau, which often rises to over 100 metres OD, is dissected by many narrow river valleys. The clay soils are better drained and more fertile than the heavier, more water retentive clays to the east, with a range of clay loams and well drained chalky and glaciofluvial based soils on valley slopes, and alluvial rather than peaty soils on the valley floors.²⁴ This resulted in areas of arable cultivation on the valley slopes and ribbons of meadow beside rivers and streams. Areas of open field existed in the sixteenth and seventeenth

²² Williamson, T., (2005) *Sandlands: The Suffolk Coast and Heaths* Suffolk County Council & Windgather, Macclesfield, p. 115.

²³ Northeast, P., (1989) "Religious Houses" in *An Historical Atlas of Suffolk*, 2nd Edition, edited by David Dymond and Edward Martin, pp. 54-5.

²⁴ Williamson, T. (2003) *Shaping Medieval Landscapes*, Bollington, Windgather, p. 101.

century, as for example at Gedding and Badmondisfield but early piecemeal enclosure had taken place early over much of the South West sub-region, aided by the lack of customary grazing of stubble.²⁵ The presence of valuable meadows in the river valleys meant few areas of ‘low’ common grazings existed in comparison to other sub-regions. In contrast to the extensive commons further north in East Anglia, the greens of the South West were smaller but often attracted settlement, creating a combination of dispersed hamlets, isolated farmsteads and more nucleated settlements where the church, manor and messuages were ranged around a green.

The slump in both grain and sheep prices in the mid fifteenth century affected all of East Anglia but the South West sub-region remained relatively prosperous, due in part to profits from the production of woollen cloth.²⁶ The profitability of the cloth industry can be gauged from the fact that of the ten wealthiest towns in the county of Suffolk in 1524, eight lay in this sub-region.²⁷ The prosperity of the towns was reflected in the number of elite residences scattered across the countryside of the South West, such as Hengrave Hall (121; TL 8234 6857), West Stow Hall (129; TL 8159 0879) and Hawstead Place (120; TL 8428 5997) near Bury St Edmunds. Further residences including Kentwell Hall (44; TL 8634 4793) and Melford Hall (125; TL 8664 4615) stood in the south of this sub-region.

Breckland

This distinctive part of East Anglia lies on an area of acid sandy soils that did not readily support the production of cereal crops. As a result population levels were lower here than on the claylands to the east and south of Breckland and fewer elite residences were established in this sub region.²⁸ The arable land in Breckland lay in open fields as in other parts of East Anglia but the holdings were dispersed across the town fields unlike the more clustered holding encountered in other sub regions. Mark Bailey has suggested that this was done as a form of ‘risk aversion’ to ameliorate the affects of the poor soils, in the hope that a reasonable harvest might be had from at least some of the land.²⁹ Another tactic for maximising production was the occasional cultivation of

²⁵ Scarfe, N., (2002) *The Suffolk Landscape*. Chichester, Phillimore, p. 140.

²⁶ Bailey, M., (2007) *Medieval Suffolk*, pp. 272 – 276.

²⁷ Bailey, M., (2007) *Medieval Suffolk*, p. 282.

²⁸ Williamson, T. (2003) *Shaping Medieval Landscapes*, Bollington, Windgather, p. 33.

²⁹ Bailey, M., (1989) *A Marginal Economy? East Anglian Breckland in the Later Middle Ages* Cambridge University Press, p. 51.

areas of heathland which were then allowed to revert to grassland to recover some degree of fertility. These were often referred to as ‘brakes’ ‘breaks’ as well as ‘brecks’.



Figure 13: Tottington, Norfolk NRO WLS XVII/4, 1775 by Henry Keymer

The map shows *Dogshead Brake* and *Honey Horn Break* lying between the remnants of Tottington field and the common.

The practice of fold coursing was of particular significance on the sandy, infertile soils of Breckland, the intensive manuring by penned sheep adding valuable fertility, whilst the extensive common heathlands provided fodder for the sheep. The heaths were also utilised as rabbit warrens, the dry conditions providing the ideal environment for the ‘coneys’. The Breckland warrens were a major part of both the landscape and the economy, making an important contribution to the incomes of landowners until the nineteenth century.³⁰

The principal town of Breckland is Thetford, the ancient capital of East Anglia, standing beside the Little Ouse River on the boundary between the lands of the ‘North Folk’ and the ‘South Folk’ and at the time of Domesday was one of the largest towns in England with nine hundred and fifty two burgesses and twelve churches.³¹ In contrast to the Central sub-region, this area was not a popular location for the principal residences of the sixteenth-century elite. Established families such as the de Greys of Merton (50; TL 9117 9775) and the Lovells of East Harling (23; TL 9911 8680) built fine mansions on their ancestral manors and newly wealthy graziers such as the Jennnys and the Hoogans purchased former monastic manors to add to their estates. The residences that were established in the Breckland sub-region tended to lie towards the periphery of the sub

³⁰ Williamson, T., (2007) *Rabbits, Warrens and Archaeology*. Stroud, Tempus, p.18.

³¹ *Domesday Book, Norfolk, Part 1* 1,69;70;210 & 9,1. Edited by Philippa Brown (1984 edition) Chichester, Phillimore.

region where better soils and a wider range of resources existed, or to either side of the routes that crossed the sub region from Newmarket and Thetford. However, the arid conditions and open aspects of the landscape appear to have deterred many from taking advantage of low land values and population levels until the eighteenth century.

West

The West of East Anglia from the Wash, south through Marshland and the Fens is predominately low-lying with slightly more undulating terrain towards the east, along the fen edge. King's Lynn was the principal port and commercial centre, being part of the Hanseatic League trading with ports along the North Sea and Baltic coasts.³² The port and market at Wisbech in Cambridgeshire would have also served the West sub-region along with the towns of Downham Market and Stoke Ferry, which at this time provided a crossing point over the River Wissey for a road towards Thetford. The Wissey, the Nar and Little Ouse provided inland navigation routes from the River Great Ouse, connecting relatively isolated settlements to a communications network that stretched far into Midland England and outwards to the North Sea and beyond.

In the late-medieval and early-modern period this sub region exhibited characteristics associated with both East Anglia and the East Midlands, including a mix of nucleated and dispersed settlement patterns and both 'Champion' and 'wood pasture' landscapes. The West sub-region is a good example of a 'frontier district', where the boundaries between recognised landscape types are blurred.³³ This inter-weaving was particularly apparent along the Fen edge, where the peats and silts of Fenland and Marshland met the mixed soilscapes of the Fen edge. Here areas of acid sands are intermixed with calcareous soils and pockets of Jurassic or Cretaceous clays, with peaty valleys dissecting the slightly more elevated terrain. Settlements and elite residences were established along the Fen Edge, on the silts of Marshland and on islands of higher ground in the peat fens but tended to avoid the damp expanses of Fenland. A mixed economy exploiting the resources of both the marshes and the fertile uplands provided good incomes for tenants and substantial rents for lords. During the medieval period the Abbeys of Ely, Ramsey and West Dereham held many large, high value manors in the West sub-region but these were interspersed by smaller manors and the lands of freeholders. The redistribution of sequestered monastic lands following the Dissolution

³² Rutledge, E., (2005) *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk, Third Edition*. Edited by Trevor Ashwin and Alan Davison. Chichester, Phillimore, p. 78-9.

³³ Williamson, T. (2003) *Shaping Medieval Landscape*, p. 114.

allowed several minor lords and wealthy yeomen to expand their land holdings during the sixteenth century.³⁴

As demarcated in this thesis, the West sub-region covers much of what Phythian-Adams has described as an overlap zone between the cultural provinces of the ‘Wash/Ouse’ to the west of that river, and the ‘Dutch Sea’ province, equated to East Anglia.³⁵ Roberts and Wrathmell defined the area covered by the West sub-region as one where nucleated settlement predominated.³⁶ However, evidence suggests that before widespread engrossment and Parliamentary enclosure the pattern of settlement was more dispersed than suggested in *An Atlas of Rural Settlement*, particularly where settlements had drifted to the edge of commons. The western part of East Anglia has often been considered together with parts of the region lying to the northeast and east, which has distorted analysis of this distinctive part of eastern England. Academic attention has not tended to focus on the elite residences of the West sub-region, to help address that imbalance the early development of properties such as Welle Manor (8; TF 5059 0273); Ryston Hall (7: TF 6238 0114) and Middleton Tower (3; TF 6687 1755), along with more familiar residences such as Oxburgh Hall (4; TF 7425 0122).

2. The Social Context

2.1 Definitions

In order to maintain a consistent phraseology throughout the thesis the following terms will be used to describe the components of late-medieval and early-modern society that formed the basis of this study.

Elite

The term *elite* will encompass levels of society who perceived themselves to be gentry, or above, in the social hierarchy of East Anglia. This is an intentionally broad definition, which will include both long established families and those who joined the ranks of the elite through commerce, state service or other means. The aim of this inclusive definition is to provide a range of people with very diverse motives for

³⁴ Swales T. H., (1954) “The Redistribution of Monastic Lands in Norfolk at the Dissolution” *Norfolk Archaeology, Volume 34*. Norfolk and Norwich Archaeological Society, pp. 14- 45.

³⁵ Phythian-Adams, C., (2000) ‘Frontier Valleys’ in Thirsk, J., Editor. *Rural England: An Illustrated History of the Landscape*. Oxford University Press, p.239.

³⁶ Roberts, B. K., & Wrathmell, S., (2000) *An Atlas of Rural Settlement in England* London English Heritage.

embracing the concept of designed surroundings. In addition a broad range of elite will provide more levels of social interaction within both space and time, allowing the factors that influenced the design threshold to be analysed at a greater number of levels within a more socially integrated landscape.

Residence

The house is the ‘capital messuage’ owned or held or occupied by one or more members of the elite, as defined above; who, along with family members, retainers and servants, comprise the household. The head of the household is considered, for the purposes of this study, to be the person who has the power to alter the social and spatial arrangements of the residence. The definition also refers to the array of features within the immediate vicinity of the house, over which the head of household has control. These are deemed to include gardens, courtyards, agricultural buildings, yards, orchards, water features, park, approaches and ancillary buildings, such as dovecotes, gatehouses and lodges. The residence is thus understood in terms of a physical structure, a social group and a locality, within the social and spatial organisation of the wider region.

Local inhabitants

The local inhabitants are considered here to be groups or individuals who lived and worked in close proximity to the residence, as servants, tenants or freeholders, and would include labourers, artisans, widows, inn keepers, wealthy yeomen and the clergy. As a group they were likely to be subject to the jurisdiction of the manor court but could also make use of the central courts, particularly from the beginning of the early-modern period. The local inhabitants were the most likely group to come into contact with the residence and interact with the elite landscape. Many would have relied on the residence for at least part of their living but likewise the elite relied on the local inhabitants to ensure the successful operation of the residence and its surroundings.

Surrounding community

This describes a multi-faceted entity comprising of people who lived and/or worked in neighbouring parishes or nearby settlements in similar roles to the local inhabitants. Also included within the definition ‘surrounding community’ are neighbouring elite families and their residences, of perceived higher or lower status than the residence in question.

Wider community

Groups or individuals who might come into contact with the residence and/or its surroundings from time to time, such as tradesmen, merchants, lawyers, physicians. This definition is also applied to other members of the regional elite who were aware of, or visited the residence.

Elite Landscapes

In this thesis, elite landscapes will refer to land that was held by an individual who had exclusive rights to organise the spatial arrangements of the area, and could control access to the terrain. These landscapes may have been spatially limited, for example a gentry residence with a small demesne, located in a dispersed settlement, surrounded by freehold properties. Conversely, extensive elite landscapes might exist around the residence of a high-status family, where a large park and land held in severalty encircled the residence. In addition to a clearly defined deer parks, many residences had access to areas of ‘managed estate’ for the exclusive use of the household. For example, the meadows around Old Boyland Hall (25; TM 0854 8442; Central), which may have provided a hay crop but appear to have been primarily part of the extensive pleasure grounds described in 1590 as ‘our gardens’.³⁷ In areas where multiple residences existed in close proximity to each other, such as Old Boyland Hall and Kenninghall Palace (24; TM 0650 8549; Central) the grouping might result in interconnected elite landscapes that influenced the development and social organisation of such spaces. Elite landscapes could be both manipulated and designed, given the necessary resources.

Vernacular Landscape

The vernacular landscape is taken to be the land and settlements in which the local inhabitants and members of the surrounding community lived and worked, and over which they exerted a level of control. Parts of the vernacular landscape might be the property of freeholders held outright or be part of a tenancy, whilst other elements might belong to the lord but be controlled by the jurisdiction of the manor court. For example, common pastures were held by the lord of the manor but were accessed and utilised through the auspices of the manor court, where the customary rights of tenants could be defended. The definition will include settlements, open fields, closes, meadows and woodlands used by the local inhabitants, communication routes and commons. In some circumstances parts of the elite landscape were incorporated into the vernacular

³⁷ Survey of Boyland Hall Estate, 1590. My thanks to Nic Spaull and Philip Aiken for access to information from this survey.

zone, for instance, when a rabbit warren was established on an area of common pasture, thus creating possibly controversial area of interaction between the two worlds.

3. The Analytical Framework

The landscape history and archaeology approach required the synthesis of data from a wide range of resources, the results of which were used as the basis for the arguments presented in the succeeding chapters. The research was divided into three broad sections dealing with locations, residences and society, the evidence for each being recorded in a database. The filtering and searching capabilities within the database format are better suited to the analysis of text than a spreadsheet format. However, where necessary, database fields were exported to spreadsheets in order to create GIS map layers. In addition to acting as a storage system, the database fields were analysed either individually or in groups to reveal, for example, similarities between locations in a sub region or patterns of spatial organisation repeated at residences across East Anglia.

3.1 Generating the dataset

Phase 1

In order to find evidence for the motives and means of developing exclusivity it was necessary to consider a wide range of locations and residences. A better understanding of the role of exclusivity in the creation of elite landscapes would be had by including properties that declined due to changing fortunes and fashions as well as those belonging to successful and innovative owners. For this reason, the dataset needed to include abandoned sites, in addition to those that had continued in existence until the present day. In order to create a sample of both lost and extant elite residences a number of sources were consulted. The first phase of research involved a desk-based survey of the region using the First Edition of the six inch to one mile Ordnance Survey sheets for East Anglia. The high degree of accuracy and detail contained in the early editions of the Ordnance Survey (hereafter OS), combined with their availability online via the *Edina Digimap*³⁸ historic mapping service made the First Edition an ideal source for the first phase of research. The initial inspection of the OS revealed a large number of moats, ponds and other water features such as small, non-residential moat platforms which appear to have been used in an ornamental capacity, which Chris Currie termed

³⁸ Edina Digimap Collections, University of Edinburgh at <http://edina.ac.uk/digimap/>

*moat motifs.*³⁹ Extant water features and in some cases depictions of earthworks prompted further research to establish if these features had once been part of the grounds surrounding a high-status residence. The relevant Historic Environment Records (hereafter HERs) were consulted to establish if archaeological evidence was available for sites located by the map searches and for evidence of additional relict features found during excavations. The Norfolk HER is particularly useful, as it contains a great deal of aerial reconnaissance evidence, much of which was taken during the 1970s and 80s by Norfolk Archaeology Unit photographer Derek Edwards.

Phase 2

Following this initial research, online and archive centre catalogues were consulted along with published resources such as *Calendars of State Papers*. This phase of the investigation identified the availability of primary sources for use in conjunction with the archaeological evidence and indicated how much biographical evidence was available for the families and individuals associated with elite residences. At this point, the quality and quantity of the available evidence for the sites was graded to assess if it might address any of the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. The availability of manuscript and biographical evidence was defined on a scale rated 1 – 5 where 1 denoted evidence was scarce and 5 indicated that evidence was abundant. The quality of field and archaeological evidence was similarly assessed from 1, poor to 5, excellent. The main case studies were chosen from sites with a combined total of 6 or more over the two categories. Some sites with lower totals were included if they provided evidence that addressed a particular aspect of the research, or where the settlement history of a sub-region meant fewer elite residences were established during the relevant period. Some of the residences with lower combined totals had been inhabited by minor gentry, merchants, physicians and other professionals who were less likely to participate in regional or national administration. Their inclusion broadened the social context, which otherwise could have consisted mainly of those from the top of the regional hierarchy, who tended to leave the largest archives and the most substantial material remains. Considering sites where documentary evidence was scarce but the archaeology was compelling, ensured that residences developed by families whose success was short lived were not over-looked. The landscapes created by the aspiring elite were among some of the most ambitious in the region but on occasion their creation appears to have

³⁹ Currie, C. K., (1990) “Fish Ponds as Garden Features c. 1550 – 1750” *Garden History*, Vol 18, No. 1, p. 26.

been a major factor in the decline of the family. Elaborate schemes at sites such as East Bilney (63; TF 9453 1970; North) and West Dereham Grange (56; TF 6715 0325; West) were abandoned within a century of their creation. The only indication of the existence of these landscapes being substantial earthworks rather than references in published sources. A record of all the relevant documentary and archaeological evidence for residences and associated biographical information was collated in a database, which was then analysed for evidence of exclusivity, along with its impact on, and functions within, elite landscapes. A sample of the higher scoring properties from the seven sub-regions and spanning the chronological divisions of the research period, was selected for more detailed study. In addition to being the basis of this thesis, the data could be analysed in a number of different ways making it a useful resource for future research projects.

Phase 3

A number of residences from outwith the region were added to provide comparative evidence from across England. These included properties built or owned by families who also held residences in East Anglia such as West Wickham Court (TQ 3899 6475; now GLA, formerly Kent), which was built by the Heydons of Baconsthorpe (9; TG 1214 3809; North). Others were held by families of similar status to members of the East Anglian, for example, Leconfield Manor (TA0130 4311; East Yorkshire) which belonged to the Earls of Northumberland. The household regulations in force at Leconfield Manor were recorded by the fifth Earl of Northumberland and provide useful evidence of how high-status residences were organised in the early sixteenth century.⁴⁰ Houses created by powerful arrivistes such as Richard Rich, later First Baron Rich, provide evidence of the strategies new owners adopted when creating elite landscapes. Rich was granted Leighs Priory (TL 7008 1847; Essex) at the Dissolution and he made it his principal residence outside London. Residences where the architecture of the house or external spatial arrangements were innovative will also be discussed. For example the house and gardens at William Cecil's Theobalds, and properties owned by Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester will be discussed. The properties located outwith East Anglia widened the spatial and social context of this study and exhibited both

⁴⁰ *The Regulations and Establishment of the Household of Henry Algernon Percy, the Fifth Earl of Northumberland at his Castles of Wressle and Leckonfield in Yorkshire begun Anno Domini MDXII.* Transcribed by Bishop Thomas Percy 1770. New Edition published in 1905 by A Brown & Sons, London.

similarities and contrasts with sites in the regional dataset providing valuable comparative evidence for the expansion of exclusivity and elite landscapes.

3.2 Manuscript Sources

The families who created and maintained the residences in the data set are an important focus of this thesis, as are the members of communities who experienced the changing boundaries between vernacular and elite landscapes. The ambitions, resources and experiences of the East Anglian elite ensured that many grand residences and elaborate grounds were created during the years under consideration in this study. Rather than only looking at the buildings and their surroundings, a concerted effort has been made to identify the motives and concerns of the people who instigated the work. The personal papers of the regional elite have proved a useful source for their attitudes to, and perceptions of their peers, and those they considered to be of lower and higher status than themselves. Family correspondence has also illustrated the response of the elite to national and international issues. The correspondence of the Paston family frequently referred to personal news, manorial issues and matters of state within the space of one letter.⁴¹ Letters, probate documents and memorandum books can illuminate the political, religious and social concerns of families and their households. The same sources have also supplied information about building projects, finances and tenurial arrangements. Inquisitions Post Mortem have been consulted but the later examples are less detailed than those from the medieval period. Inventories, compiled for the purpose of probate, attaingder or title deeds, illustrated the spatial arrangements and material culture of residences. For example, the arrangements for the distribution of heirlooms between the residences of Lord Willoughby, confirmed that Parham Hall (now known as Moat Hall 34; TM 3119 5991; South East) was his ancestral home although Eresby Hall (TF 394 652; Lincolnshire) had become his principal residence.⁴²

The difficulty of ascertaining how families divided their time between various residences and the relative importance of houses in the hierarchy of property owned by a family was encountered by Nigel Wright in his thesis about the gentry houses of East Anglia.⁴³ The question of which property might be the subject of a major investment by an owner was important also for this thesis and the sources outlined above helped to

41 *The Paston Letters: 1422-1509* Gairdner, J., editor (1900) Three Volumes

42 TNA:PRO 2ANC3/A/41 4 May, 1526

43 Wright, N. (1990) *The Gentry and Their Houses in Norfolk and Suffolk from 1550 to 1850*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of East Anglia.

determine principal residences and identify some of the criteria informing the choice of location for a new residence. Studies of the political machinations of the fifteenth and sixteenth century revealed deep-set rivalries between those who wished to gain or maintain power in East Anglia. Personal animosities or allegiances could have a considerable influence on the choices people made about where or what to build, as did the ambitions of both grandees and arrivistes.

Legal documentation concerning property transactions such as deeds and leases have provided significant evidence for the evolution of landscape features around residences, in addition to changes in tenurial arrangements and corroborative evidence for cartographic sources. Terriers, extents, field books and surveys have provided invaluable evidence for the spatial arrangement of manors before the widespread adoption of cartographic techniques. A series of surveys, such as those for the Wodehouse estate at Kimberley (29 TG 0761 0405) mentioned above, can provide evidence for the extension of exclusive spaces and the removal of points of interaction. For example, an extent of 1563 recorded the early attempts to extend the parkland around Blickling Hall (10; TG 1786 2866), a process that was to continue throughout the following century.⁴⁴ The structure of manorial extents or surveys gives the impression that the surveyor or bailiff processed around the manor following roads and paths, measuring field strips and closes, noting tenements, outbuildings, water courses and all the minutiae of the local landscape. Whether the compiler actually measured every plot, or plagiarised earlier surveys, amending as necessary, is not always clear but whatever the method employed, the impression created when reading a late-medieval extent is that of moving through the landscape rather than viewing the manor from above as a single entity, as is the case in later cartographic surveys. A detailed written survey can in some cases, illustrate more effectively how people moved around the locality and how they may have interacted with elements of the elite and vernacular landscape. It is of course true that, in common with maps, extents were compiled for the use of landowners or the state and exhibit bias towards the elite perspective. However, there is evidence of input from local inhabitants with regard to tenancies, customary rights, changes in land use, disputed boundaries and minor place-names.

Some documentary sources provided only cursory information compared to more meticulous valuations or terriers, but were useful. For example, a particular of Boyland

44 NRO NRS 8582/21C2, 1563. Survey of the lands of Sir Edward Clere in Norfolk

Hall (25; TM 0854 8442; Central) from the later sixteenth century amounting to one small page and a similar example for Badmondisfield Hall (37; TL 7474 5700; South West) in 1532-3 recorded the acreages and value of the respective parks.⁴⁵ This, however, was insufficient evidence from which to reconstruct the contemporary landscape. In contrast, the most detailed surveys, such as the sixty-one page survey of manor of Oxburgh Hall (4; TF 7425 0122; West) written in the early seventeenth century, or the fifty-six pages describing the manor of Blickling in 1563 were used as the basis for reconstructions of the early-modern landscape.⁴⁶ The surveys and extents were translated, transcribed and the information stored in databases, from which it could be readily accessed. The resulting evidence was then compared with later map and place-name evidence to identify the position of landscape features such as furlongs, closes, commons and roads. By calculating the acreage of, for example, individual furlongs it was possible to piece together the earlier landscape and locate the position of features for which no later evidence existed. The First Edition OS 1:10,560 scale maps were overlaid with earlier manuscript maps and any available earthwork or aerial photographic information. This process allowed much of the data from the sixteenth and seventeenth-century surveys to be plotted with reasonable accuracy. Some manorial surveys, such as the Blickling example, and an early sixteenth-century survey of Kimberley, were in use over an extended period of time by subsequent lords or their stewards. Frequent alterations, scorings out, marginalia and insertions make these particularly difficult to transcribe but these amended documents allow changes in tenure and land use to be tracked over time. Series of individual surveys spanning the period under consideration in this study have been amongst the most useful sources for researching exclusivity. A series of terriers and extents for Ryston Hall (7; TF 6238 0114; West) began circa 1450 and continued into the late sixteenth century. These documents have been used in conjunction with a map of 1601, drawn up in connection with a dispute and an estate map of 1635, making it possible to trace changes in the land use and interaction over a period of almost two hundred years and create a sequence of reconstructions.⁴⁷

45 TNA:PRO SC12/30/33 Survey of Boyland Hall, Norfolk ND, Elizabeth I; TNA:PRO SC 6/HEN VIII/3379 Survey of the possessions of George Somerset at Badmondisfield; 1532-3

46 NRO PD 139/52 The manor of Oxburgh Hall; ND, early seventeenth century

NRO NRS 8582/21C2 Survey of the manor of Blickling Hall; 1563

47 NRO PRA 44 375x1, Terrier of the manor of Lovell's in Ryston and Roxham, circa 1450; NRO PRA 45, 375x1, Terrier of Ryston Hall with Walpole Hall, 1529 & 1558; NRO PRA 356, 376X5, Extent and Valuation Ryston Hall and Walpole Hall and Lovell's, 1548; NRO PRA 360, 379X5, Field Book & Dragg Ryston Hall and Walpole Hall and Lovell's, 1583; NRO PRA 470, 380X6, Plan of Roxham common showing surroundings in Ryston, 160; Map of the Estates of Gregory Pratt in Ryston, Roxham and elsewhere, 1635 Private Collection.

3.3 Cartographic Sources

The manorial surveys and extents described above continued to be produced throughout the period under consideration in this thesis but from the mid sixteenth century were increasingly supplemented by the creation of cadastral maps. Surveyors were commissioned by individual landowners, ecclesiastical authorities or by the Crown to map land holdings with ever-greater accuracy, recording the boundaries, dimensions and ownership of an area of land, creating what J. B. Harley refers to as “graphic inventories”.⁴⁸ However, even the most detailed of manuscript maps could only present a synopsis of the intricacies of tenure and local custom contained in a comprehensive manorial extent. Antique maps are a valuable and accessible means of understanding changes in the spatial organisation of the landscape, ideally used in conjunction with other sources but often significant in their own right. Oliver Creighton has pointed out that, as socially constructed forms of knowledge, early maps can illustrate past perceptions of the landscapes they depict.⁴⁹

The map in **Figure 14** is an example of how one individual’s idea of the landscape can differ from that of another individual or group. In 1581 Thomas Clerke surveyed the manor of Panworth Hall in the parish of Ashill. He presented Thomas Hoogan, knight with the *topographia* of the hall and its surroundings on the 2nd of May AD 1581.⁵⁰ The map shows the site of Panworth Hall, surrounded on three sides by yards and closes, including *The Newe Close*, which had been enclosed from the open field adjacent to Panworth Hall (52; TF89680479; Central). The map recorded that Panworth Common was divided into *sheepes courses* for the use of the manor of Panworth Hall and the inhabitants of Ashill. It seems likely that the map was drawn up to establish Thomas Hoogan’s version of the fold course bounds, perhaps as part of a dispute between Hoogan and the inhabitants of Ashill. This map is both detailed and highly decorative but it serves also as a reminder that maps and plans, being value-laden sources, often present a selective view of the post-medieval landscape.

48 Harley J. B., (1988) “Maps , Knowledge and Power” in *The Iconography of Landscape*, edited by Denis Cosgrove and Steven Daniels. Cambridge Studies in Historical Geography. Cambridge University Press, p. 285.

49 Creighton, O. H. (2009) *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages* P 42 quoting Hoogvliet, 2000, p. 30.

50 NRO MS 21123, 179x4; 1581.



Figure 14: The Manor of Panworth Hall, Ashill surveyed in 1581 (52; TF89680479; Breckland) showing the *Scite of the Mannor, Panworth Common and Part of Shepes Course of the Inhabitants of Ashell.* NRO MS 20927 47 B4.

J. B Harley has argued that the choice of content and the cartographic devices used in map creation can promote a biased view of the structure of the human world, presenting a version of the inhabited landscape from a particular perspective.⁵¹ Indeed it is likely that many of the inhabitants whose names and properties were recorded on an estate map never saw the completed document. However, Nicola Whyte has pointed out that local inhabitants were often called on to assist surveyors in the compilation of new cartographic surveys, providing essential local knowledge, particularly where a manor had been acquired by a new owner.⁵² Such input would have articulated a view of how the landscape was perceived by a wider section of society than might otherwise have been the case and supplemented the basic information about tenancies and acreages with

51 Harley J. B., (1988) "Maps, Knowledge and Power" in *The Iconography of Landscape*, edited by Denis Cosgrove and Steven Daniels, p. 278.

52 Whyte, N., (2009) *Inhabiting the Landscape: Place, Custom and Memory, 1500 -1800*. Oxford, Windgather, p. 12.

a host of minor place-names, boundary markers and notable features of the vernacular landscape. A functional sketch drawn on behalf of the inhabitants of Kimberley in 1580, to illustrate the position of intercommons and fold courses, provides a contrast with more detailed and highly decorative map of Panworth in **Figure 14**. Although rudimentary this map provided an indication of how the tenants perceived the expansion of ditched and fenced areas following exchanges of land with the lord of the manor.⁵³ This document provided valuable information for the reconstruction of the Kimberley landscape presented in Chapter 3, providing as it does, a glimpse of the landscape from the vernacular perspective.

Change of ownership or the granting of a lease could instigate the creation of a map demarcating the land included in the transaction, pre-empting possible disputes. Maps were also a means of presenting proposed locations and landscapes to owners. Not all such schemes were brought to fruition, as was the case at Kimberley where a plan drawn up by Samuel Gilpen in 1700 suggested a location for the new hall with avenues radiating across the surrounding countryside.⁵⁴ The plan was not executed, making this document a valuable reminder that maps must be subjected to the same critical appraisal as other documentary sources. The research for this thesis has made extensive use of manuscript maps but, wherever possible, additional corroborating evidence, either documentary or archaeological, was used in conjunction with cartographic evidence. In similar vein, the presence or absence of a feature was not assumed to be conclusive without comparative evidence. For example, at Tacolneston Hall (77; TM 1380 9552) a large L-shaped moated feature runs parallel to the south and east facades of the c.1600 hall. Further research revealed that the 'moat' had been created during the restoration of the grounds in 1886. However, during a site visit minor earthwork features were revealed, which suggested that a moat may have existed on a different alignment to that of the nineteenth-century feature. A plan attached to a footpath stoppage order of 1864 confirmed that an earlier moated feature had existed prior to the major redesign of the garden.⁵⁵

As surveying skills improved maps and plans gradually replaced extents and draggs as a means of recording terrain. This transition must have entailed not only cartographic expertise but a major shift in the way the landscape was perceived. The usual form of an

53 NRO KIM 2J/28D Sketch map of commons and foldcourses in Kimberley. 1580.

54 NRO Mf/RO 499/2 Proposed Site of the new Kimberley Hall by Gilpen, 1700.

55 NRO C/Sce2/22/3; 1864 Stoppage of footpath from Hall Road, Tacolneston to Street Road in Fundenhall.

extent takes the reader on a journey through the landscape, following paths, watercourses and bounds. Such written surveys noted man-made and natural features; recorded land area and tenurial arrangements, and chronicled any recent changes. This type of detailed information was also to be found on many early maps, and both forms of evidence could be employed for the purposes outlined above. However, a plan presents the observer with an entirely different means of perceiving the depicted terrain, removing the sense of moving through the landscape and creating instead a static, instantaneous view of an entire unit of land, be it a single tenement, a manor or a nation. Liddiard and Williamson have suggested that the development of cartography was one of the factors that promoted the creation of designed landscapes across land that the owner could now view from a new perspective.⁵⁶

In addition to the surveys and maps of individual manors and estates, the region was mapped in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century by the emerging group of cartographers including John Norden and Christopher Saxton. Saxton prepared an atlas for William Cecil, Lord Burghley in which the Norfolk map includes notes on estates and owners in Cecil's hand.⁵⁷ The 1595 version of Norden's map of Essex, viewed via the British Library Online Gallery, recorded valuable evidence of changes to the road layout around Leighs Priory in Essex and a more detailed view of the park at Layer Marney in the same county.⁵⁸ Whilst it would be preferable to consult manuscript evidence in person, practical and financial considerations make the use of online resources such the British Library gallery invaluable as a means of accessing primary sources.

The sources outlined above surveyed in the early-modern period do not, however, equate with a detailed, accurate source of regional cartographic evidence. The first steps towards such a source were taken by the publishers who produced county surveys in the late eighteenth century. William Faden published Joseph Hodskinson's *The County of Suffolk* in 1783 and was followed by *A Topographical Map of the County of Norfolk*, surveyed by Messrs. Donald and Milne and published by Faden in 1797. Both maps were surveyed at one inch to a statute mile and captured the East Anglian landscape prior to the changes wrought by widespread enclosure and developments in agricultural

56 Liddiard, R., & Williamson, T., (2008) "There by Design?: Some reflections on medieval elite landscapes." *The Archaeoloical Journal* 165 (1), pp. 520-35.

57 BL Royal MS. 18. D.111 folio 40 Norfolciae . British Library.

58 BL Add MS 31853 folio 10 A Chorographicall discription of the Several Shires and Islands of Middlesex, Essex etc. John Norden 1595.

practice that would transform the landscape over the ensuing century. The maps are available both in book form⁵⁹ and digitally⁶⁰ and despite some inaccuracies, provide a valuable source for the location and extent of features such as commons, open fields and parkland that might have been altered or obliterated before the advent of the Ordnance Survey national mapping programme in the nineteenth century. The notebooks and correspondence of eighteenth-century antiquarians such as Thomas Martin and Francis Blomefield were consulted. Martin included many sketches in his notes, mainly of churches but also some of halls and grounds, such as the conduit at Old Boyland Hall discussed in Chapter 6.⁶¹

3.4 Published sources

As mentioned above, connecting a residence with its occupants can be challenging but various printed sources and antiquarian volumes have assisted by suggesting connections that were researched subsequently in the archives. Francis Blomefield *An Essay Towards the Topographical History of the County of Norfolk* was valuable in this respect, as was ‘Some Norfolk Halls’ by Basil Cozens-Hardy.⁶² *The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk* by Alfred Suckling and *The Manors of Suffolk* by William Copinger were similarly useful.⁶³ Where ever possible original documents have been consulted, however, in some cases the manuscript sources have not survived other than in antiquarian volumes. The volumes published by the Historic Manuscript Commission and those of the county record societies provided additional manuscript evidence. Architectural information was collated from the county editions of *The Buildings of England*⁶⁴ in conjunction with the county Historic Environment Records and English Heritage Records of Listed Buildings for the region.

Works published during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries provide an insight to contemporary mentalities and concerns of both the elite and the aspirational. *The*

59 Hodskinson’s *Map of Suffolk in 1783* (2003); Faden’s *Map of Norfolk 1797* (1989) Both published by Lark’s Press, Dereham.

60 MacNair, A. Faden’s Map of Norfolk Digitally Redrawn at www.fadensmapofnorfolk.co.uk and

61 NRO NNAS C3/1/11, Notebook of Thomas Martin, 1719

62 Cozens-Hardy, B (1960) “Some Norfolk Halls” in *Norfolk Archaeology Volume 32*, pp. 163 – 208.

63 Suckling, Rev., A., (1846) *The History and Antiquities of the County of Suffolk*. London, John Wheale. Copinger, W. A., (1909) *The Manors of Suffolk: Notes on their History and Devolution, 7 Volumes*. Manchester, Taylor, Garnett, Evans & Co.

64 Pevsner, N. (1975 edition) *The Buildings of England: Suffolk*. London, Penguin; Pevsner N. & Wilson (2002) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 1 Norwich and North East & Norfolk and 2 North-West and South*.

English Courtier and the Country-Gentleman published in 1586, and the frontispiece declared that

*Wherein is discoursed, what order of lyfe best beseemeth a Gentleman (aswell for education as the course of his whole life) to make him a person fytte for the publique service of his Prince and Countrey.*⁶⁵

Contemporary husbandry manuals by Gervase Markham and Ralph Austin provided advice on the construction and maintenance gardens, orchards and grounds.⁶⁶ The works impart a sense of what was required from an early-modern garden, providing plans and planting diagrams, in addition to matters of husbandry. The popularity of works such as William Lawson's *A New Orchard and Garden*, first published in 1618, perhaps indicate the concerns of the upwardly mobile who may not have possessed a wealth of experience in such matters.⁶⁷ Other contemporary sources consulted include Camden's *Britannia*, *The Itineraries of William of Worcester*⁶⁸ and the *Diary of the Duke of Stettin-Pomerania through England in 1602*.⁶⁹

3.5 Archaeological Evidence

Throughout this study historical sources have been used in partnership with archaeological evidence. In addition to online Historic Environment Records, the staff of the county archaeology services made available secondary files for many of the sites in the dataset. The contents supplied both corroborative evidence for cartographic sources and specialist evidence, such as resistivity reports for the site of Harling Hall (23; TL 9911 8680; Central). Dating evidence for the brickwork used in water features at Old Boyland Hall (25; TM0854 8442; Central), East Bilney (63; TF 9453 1970; North) and Playford Hall (111; TM 2138 4764; South East), for example, helped to establish a chronology for the creation and maintenance of moats as a means of creating exclusivity. Archaeological evidence for the position of settlements and roads at the time residences were constructed enabled information recorded on later maps to be adjusted to represent more accurately late-medieval or early-modern arrangements. The

65 Anon, (1586) *The English Courtier and the Country-Gentleman*. London, Richard Jones.

66 Markham, G., (1982 edition, original 1613) *The English Husbandman*, Garland, New York & London
Austin R., (1665) *A treatise of fruit trees shewing the manner of planting, grafting etc.* Oxford, Printed by
William Hall for Amos Curteyne.

67 Lawson, William (1618) *A New Orchard and Garden with The Country Housewifes Garden*.
Facsimile edition published in 2003 by Prospect Books, Totnes.

68 Harvey, J. H., Editor (1969) *William Worcester, Itineraries*. Oxford, The Clarendon Press.

69 Gerschow, F. (1892) "Diary of the Duke of Stettin's Journey Through England in 1602". *Transactions
of the Royal Historical Society, Volume 6*.

published reports of the Fenland Survey have provided information about the pre-drainage landscape around sites in the west of the region such as Snore Hall, Fordham (5; TL 6242 9934), and Beaupre Hall, Outwell (47; TF 5151 0456).⁷⁰

Earthwork plans allowed the extent and complexity of early features to be identified at fossilised sites. Aerial photography has been consulted for many of the sites in the data set, the 1945 RAF series held by the Norfolk Historic Environment Service proving to be particularly valuable for the study of the many residences demolished during the 1950s. Aerial photographs from the 1940s and later decades also revealed traces of features now lying under grassland or crops. Garden enclosures and water features around the site of The Rey (6; TF 6958 2313; West), demolished after only a short existence, are visible on photographs from both 1945 and later aerial surveys. In the past, the remains of gardens or other ornamental features were not consistently identified as such, often being interpreted as abandoned tofts or agricultural features. However, during the late-twentieth century an increasing number of relict gardens and designed landscapes were recognised, initially through the work of RCHME and subsequently by an increasing number of specialists in the discipline of garden archaeology. Publications by landscape archaeologists such as A. E. Brown and Christopher Taylor presented evidence of relict gardens and brought new interpretations to the fore, as in “A relict garden at Linton Cambridgeshire” published in the *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*.⁷¹ Reinterpretation and recognition of ornamental landscapes has been an ongoing process since the 1980s and with this in mind, earlier designations of archaeological features as ‘medieval moats’ or ‘abandoned tofts’ have been re-examined during the course of the present study.

3.6 Fieldwork

Desk-based research using both manuscript and digital resources was corroborated and supplemented by fieldwork at many of the locations in the data set. Andrew Fleming has urged landscape archaeologists and historians not to neglect fieldwork as a means of revealing the development of our surroundings.⁷² Fieldwork ranged from short visits to

70 Silvester, R. J. (1988) *The Fenland Project, No.3: Marshland and the Nar Valley East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 45*, Norfolk Museums Service. Silvester, R. J. (1991) *The Fenland Project, No. 4: Norfolk Survey, The Wissey Embayment and the Fen Causeway. East Anglian Archaeology Report No. 52*, Norfolk Museums Service. Hall, D. & Coles, J. (1994) *The Fenland Survey: An Essay in Landscape and Persistence*. English Heritage.

71 Brown, A. E., & Taylor, C. C., (1992) “A relict garden at Linton Cambridgeshire” *Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society*, 80, pp. 62-67. Cambridge Antiquarian Society.

72 Fleming, A. (2008) “Don’t Bin Your Boots” *Landscapes, Volume 8 No.1*, pp. 85-99.

photograph significant features and views, to extended periods of field survey conducted over several days. Visiting sites made it possible to experience spatial arrangements and interconnections that might not have been forthcoming from a map or the wording of an extent. Subtle changes in slope can indicate former garden features, whilst variances in brickwork can illustrate the expansion of enclosed areas. Intervisibility between the residence and other features can be inferred from maps and aerial photographs but the best confirmation is gained by experiencing the view and taking photographic evidence. At Dereham Grange (56; TF 6715 0325), field walking helped to establish the extent of the seventeenth-century pleasure grounds and suggested the location of a banqueting house. Earthworks of earlier roadways confirmed the location of features described in a sixteenth-century survey of Blickling (10) and at Stradsett Hall (54; TF 6665 0577), the owner pointed out traces of a moat, shown on a map of 1635 but backfilled by 1700.

Visiting sites also provided evidence of how spatial arrangements described in documentary or cartographic sources might have functioned. By moving through the landscape it is possible to establish how a residence might have interacted with other elements of the social milieu, such as churches or settlements; the original route of a realigned road can be followed, or the proximity to the residence of long-demolished tenements established. Any attempt to reconstruct past landscapes, whether on paper or in the field, must allow for the inherent differences not only in the physical elements but also in the thought processes of the people who inhabited these spaces.

3.7 Minor Place Names

Minor place names referred to in manuscript sources and cartography have provided useful evidence for the spatial arrangements within elite landscapes and for the position of features in the vernacular landscape. Place names have been subjected to the same critical process as other sources used in this thesis and the occurrence of a particular place-name element has not been taken a definite indication that a feature such as a dovecote stood in that location. Rather the names have been taken as a suggestion that a feature or building *may* have existed at some point in time in that position unless other corroborating evidence such as field archaeology or aerial photographs can confirm its presence. Efforts have been made to trace possible interpretations of obscure names by

consulting standard texts on the subject and by consulting Middle English and Anglo Saxon dictionaries.⁷³

3.8 Digital Mapping Technology and GIS

Extensive use has been made of digital mapping technology such as the *Edina Digimap Collections*⁷⁴ online service and the interactive *Memory Map*⁷⁵ version of the current Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 of the region. This exercise allowed the relationships and interactions between residences, their immediate surroundings and the wider landscape to be analysed. In addition, three-dimensional images of OS maps and aerial photography have been used, including 'fly through' technology, to gauge how routes and spatial relationships might have been experienced. The 3D images have also been used to analyse possible instances of intervisibility between residences and other landscape features in order to establish points of intervisibility and to attempt to understand how areas of exclusivity might be perceived by those who encountered physical and subliminal boundaries. Oliver Creighton has suggested that the use of such technology could provide empirical evidence for phenomenological studies of how the landscape features were perceived and experienced in the past.⁷⁶

4. Analysing Locations

4.1 Topography

The location of any residence dictates how the surroundings of that residence can be utilised or modified and subsequently presented to, or secluded from, the wider community. One aim of this thesis was to establish if the criteria that might have influenced the choice of location for a new residence changed over the period of time under consideration here. The factors considered for the purposes of the research fell into three interconnected categories: tenure, topography and social interaction. The topography of a given location could have a significant effect on the landscape created around the residence, water supplies being of particular importance but also the potential for intervisibility and display of the house and grounds to the wider community. Some social interaction with the surrounding community was essential for

⁷³ Gelling, M., (1993) *Place-names in the Landscape: The Geographical Roots of Britain's Place-names*, paperback edition, London, Orion; Clark Hall, J. R., (2000 edition) *A Concise Anglo-Saxon Dictionary* Cambridge University Press; The Electronic Middle English Dictionary at <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med>

⁷⁴ Edina Digimap Collection supplied by the University of Edinburgh Data Library and accessed via UK federation login.

⁷⁵ *Memory-Map OS Edition Version 5.0* © 2005 Memory-Map. Inc. Under terms of a personal licence.

⁷⁶ Creighton, O. H. (2009) *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages*, p. 222.

the smooth operation of a great house and contact with the wider community allowed a family to present symbols of its status and resources to a wide audience. However, in order for exclusive zones to be both effective barriers and stages for display, a high level of control over movement around and through elite landscapes was required. Roads, approaches and paths were of great importance when establishing elite zones and were frequently manipulated to create the desired effect.

Due consideration has been paid to the fact that the environment of East Anglia underwent momentous change from the mid- seventeenth century and it was necessary to bear in mind the significant changes that have taken place over the ensuing centuries. Extensive drainage schemes resulted in the creation of many new waterways and the realignment of some existing rivers and streams. Vast areas of common fen were improved, divided and enclosed then allotted to the investors and commoners.⁷⁷ The drainage and enclosure of the Fenlands is particularly relevant to properties in the west of the region such as Beaupre Hall (47; TF 5151 0456), Snore Hall (5; TL 6242 9934) and Middleton Tower (3; TF 6687 1755) that were located on the edge of the marshes. Similarly, enclosure by both agreement and Parliamentary Act transformed the landscape of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century East Anglia. For example, the surroundings of Oxburgh Hall (4; TF 7425 0122) recorded on the First Edition OS have altered greatly from the landscape described in the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sources.⁷⁸ Therefore, wherever possible the position of commons, fields, nearby settlements and communication routes was taken from contemporary or near contemporary sources.

The location of the residence in the historic landscape was analysed using the interactive *Memory Map* digital version of the current 1:25,000 OS.⁷⁹ Three-dimensional images showing the site of a residence in comparison to the relief of the surrounding terrain were created to ascertain whether the surrounding topography influenced the evolution of elite landscapes. The relative position has been used in preference to Ordnance Datum height because the altitude of a location is only

⁷⁷ For example, NRO PRA 190, 378x6; copy, made in 1670, of allotment by commissioners of the Bedford Level Drainage of 320a. commons of the manor of Cavenham, claimed by owners of commonable messuages in Stoke Ferry, Wereham and Wretton, 1667.

⁷⁸ NRO PD 139/52, Dragg of the manor of Oxburgh, early seventeenth century; NRO BRA 2524/1, Map of the parish of Oxborough, showing the lands of Sir Henry Bedingfield, by Philip Wissiter, 1722.

⁷⁹ Both the three-dimensional images and the map keys are derived from the current 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey. The 3D image was created using Memory Map 3D World® systems under the terms of a personal licence.

significant if it is markedly higher or lower than most of the surrounding landscape. Examples of the technique are shown in **Figures 15 – 17**. The inset keys show the area included in the 3-D image and the direction of the sight line.

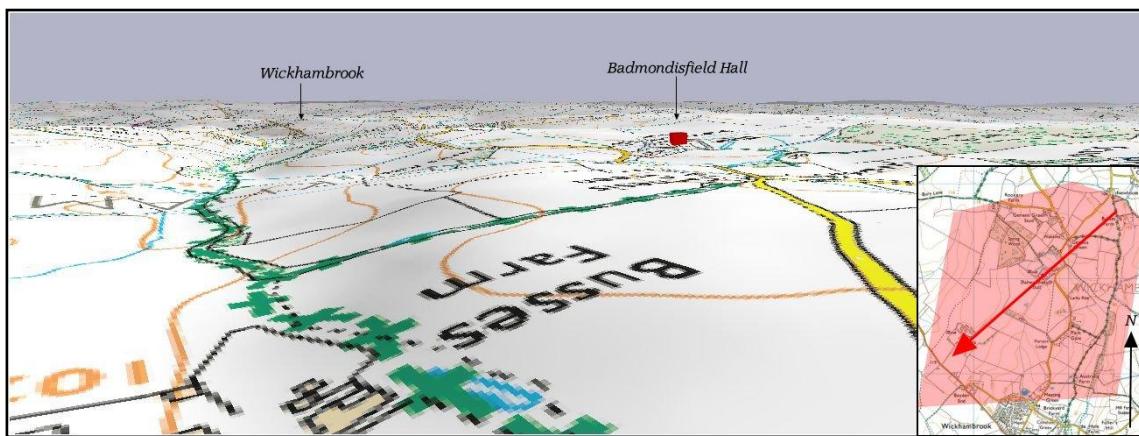


Figure 15: Badmondisfield Hall Three-dimensional view showing the location along the sight line in the map key.

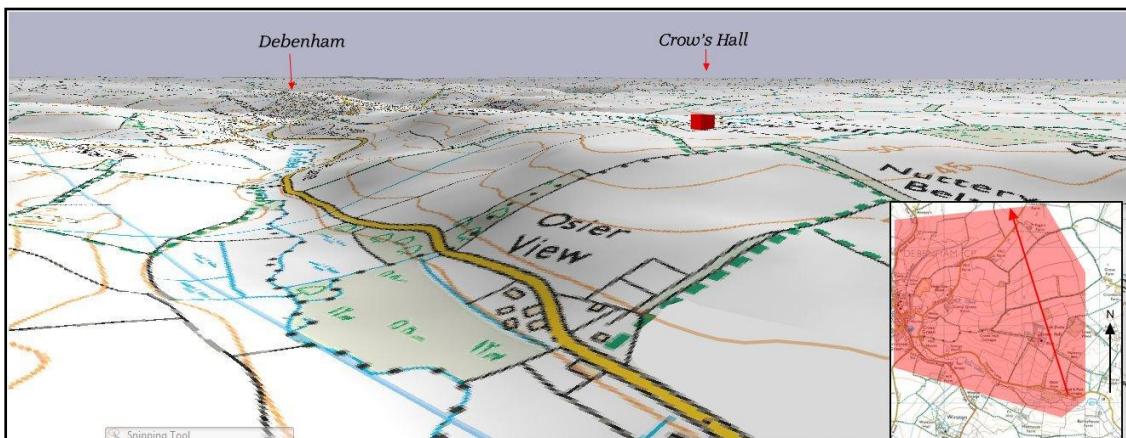


Figure 16: Three-dimensional view of the location of Crow's Hall, Debenham.

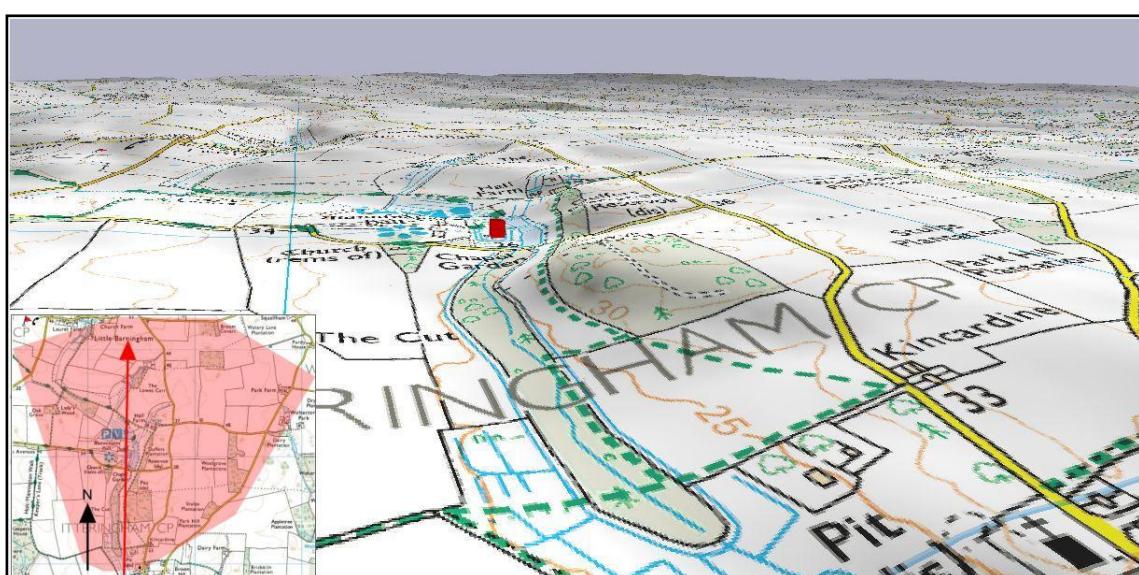


Figure 17: Three-dimensional view of Mannington Hall, located in the upper reaches of the River Bure.

4.2 The availability of water

The basic location data was supplemented by details of the nearest available water sources. It was possible for domestic water needs to be supplied by wells but much greater amounts would have required to service pond complexes, moats or water gardens. Valley sites near streams and rivers were favoured in parts of East Anglia where light soils made the creation of water features difficult, whilst rainwater and ground water capture were options on the clays. The aim of this part of the analysis was to gauge how important an influence water resources were when choosing the site of a new mansion, or when choosing which of a number of manors might be redeveloped as a principal residence. Several aspects of late-medieval status display relied on water, mills being important symbols of manorial privilege along with fishponds and fisheries. Moats expressed exclusivity of both access and ownership and meres or lakes could be seen as expressions of religious and chivalric ideals. During the early-modern era, the creation of ever more elaborate pleasure grounds was considered a sign of intellectual accomplishment but required copious quantities of water for ornamental and horticultural purposes. Many works have examined the results of such endeavours, describing water gardens and fountains, formal pools and shimmering meres but few have examined if water resources influenced the initial choice of site. The availability of water will therefore form an integral part of the locational evidence in the present study.

4.3 Communication routes

In analysing the locations of elite residences, the position of communication routes, both major and minor, has been given much consideration. Public roads and paths frequently passed within yards of a residence and traversed land that might otherwise be for the exclusive use of the household. Roads were major points of interaction and as such brought the elite into direct contact with the wider community, who had a legal right to use the *regia via* or King's Highway, along with common ways, sties, droves, paths and processional routes. Roads were essential both locally, and as part of the network of routes across the region and beyond, they took the ploughteam to the field and brought the tradesman to the residence. Justice was accessed via roads, as were places of worship and pilgrimage, markets and ports. Most of the population used at least a small proportion of the network every day and many donated the profits of commerce or bequeathed legacies for the upkeep of local stretches of highway. The upkeep of roads had been organised through the manor courts and by monastic houses but a statute of 1555 made parishes responsible for the maintenance of highways within

their bounds. Mark Bailey has commented that many roads in medieval Suffolk were maintained to a relatively high standard, rather than being the rutted, muddy tracks of popular belief.⁸⁰ Any individual who wished to close or divert roads, in which the local community had invested time, money and labour to maintain, was obliged to make such intentions known. Manor courts could deal with minor diversions but in the case of significant closures the individual was obliged to establish if doing so would be to the detriment of the king or others by the means of an *Inquisition ad Quod Damnum*. The process of reducing points of interaction by altering the road network has been traced through inquisitions, manorial surveys and extents and estate maps. As discussed in Chapter 1, official documentation in the form of Writs, Inquisitions and road orders have not always survived but footpaths and roads were sometimes described in manorial surveys in sufficient detail to enable the routes to be transcribed on to modern maps. Where this was possible the results were layered with information from later surveys and maps in order to establish which routes had been blocked or diverted. On a larger scale, the county surveys discussed above provided an overview of the routes across the region but were used, wherever possible, with earlier sources to confirm the presence of a route.

Fieldwork can reveal otherwise unrecorded roads and tracks, or confirm routes described in early documents. Earthworks and field boundaries confirmed the route of a lane mentioned in a sixteenth-century survey of Blickling (10). Field observations of vegetation at Dereham Grange (56) suggested a linear feature not shown on any cartographic sources. The compacted nature of buried road surfaces can restrict root growth and water uptake in plants making it possible to see changes in vegetation both in the field and on aerial photographs.

4.4 Commons

The relationships between residences and common land varied considerably across East Anglia, as did the nature of the commons. Common ‘wastes’ were neither waste in the modern sense, nor common to all who might wish to exploit them. The resources available on common marsh, fen, heath, greens and wood pastures were valuable and access to them regulated by customary right as decided by the manor courts. The resources varied depending on the topography and soils underlying the common, but

⁸⁰ Bailey, M., (2007) *Medieval Suffolk: An Economic and Social History 1200-1500*. Woodbridge, Boydell, p.166.

could include fuel in the form of peat, furze or wood; timber for repairs and construction; bracken, reeds and hedging materials; but the most important was grazing for livestock. The right of *Agistment* allowed a commoner to graze a stipulated number of livestock on the common and usually only those who held ‘commutable’ tenements within a manor were granted customary rights to use the commons. As discussed above, these tenements were often located around the margins of common land, allowing ease of access to grazing and other rights. In some parts of East Anglia, commoners had the right to plant and maintain trees on the common ‘at the gates of their tenements’, for their own use; a particularly valuable right in areas where common woodland was scarce.⁸¹ Those without the necessary customary rights could pay amercements or fines in the manor court for grazing some stock or otherwise exploiting the common resources. In sheep-corn areas, the lord of the manor or his lessee maintained the right of ‘foldcourse’ on extensive heaths and common pastures, which provided grazing for the flocks whose dung fertilised the arable.

The two county surveys discussed above recorded the region’s commons as they were before the major enclosure campaigns of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century. In the year 1796 Nathaniel Kent estimated that 80,000 acres of ‘waste’ existed in Norfolk.⁸² Given that piecemeal enclosure and fen reclamation had been eroding the area of waste for centuries it is likely that a considerably greater area of common land had existed in the late-medieval period. Some elite residences stood near the margins of commons, such as Oxburgh Hall (4; TF 7425 0122; West) or Badmondisfield Hall (37; TL 7474 5700; South West) and the regular routines of grazing livestock or gathering firewood would have increased the level of interaction between the residence and the inhabitants. Strategies for managing this contact or for removing customary rights of usage will be examined as part of the analysis of locations.

5. Analysing Motives, Exclusivity and Elite zones

The development of increasing levels of exclusivity around elite residences may have been, in part, a result of greater social mobility during the late-medieval era. Several of the individuals who will feature in this thesis achieved high-status through careers as advocates, merchants or soldiers rather than solely because of their ancestry. It is

81 Dallas, P., (2007) “Seventeenth Century Garden Earthworks at Grange Farm, West Dereham, Norfolk.” *Norfolk Archaeology, Volume XLV, Part II.* pp. 188 – 197.

82 Kent, Nathaniel (1796) *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Norfolk*, London, George Nicol, p. 82.

arguable that such men needed to justify their claims to a place among the elite and, as in the present day one of several strategies might be adopted to strengthen their social credentials. One option might be to marry a wealthy and well-connected heiress, or her younger sister depending on your circumstances. Alternatively, buy an ancient manor from a well connected, long established but impoverished family and refurbish it as ostentatiously as finances allow. Another strategy could involve the construction of a cutting edge, innovative residence on a green field site and incorporate the latest design concepts and modern conveniences. Examples of all these and other approaches will feature in succeeding chapters along with the tactics adopted by the established regional hierarchy in order to maintain their pre-eminence. Whilst the ‘old guard’ may have frowned on the excesses of the arrivistes, many were undertaking modest, or lavish, refurbishments of their own.

Margaret Paston, in a letter of circa 1452, reported to her husband that she had heard from Lady Hastings of the purchase of Blickling Hall (10; TG 1786 2866; North East) by the successful merchant, Jeffrey Boleyn. It is possible to detect the stir that such an acquisition caused amongst the local grandes; however, any doubts the Pastons may have had about the Boleyns seem to have been overcome by 1467 when Lady Alice Boleyn was considered as a potential bride for their son, John.⁸³ The regional marriage market was a close-knit affair with many alliances taking place between families resident in East Anglia. Diarmaid MacCulloch found that in the later sixteenth century seventy three percent of the wives chosen by the sons of Suffolk gentry came from the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk.⁸⁴ The figure could well have been higher in the fifteenth century and the flow of ideas between elite families may have influenced the design of new properties, as in the case of the Oxburgh and Shelton Halls where the Bedingfields and Sheltons were related by marriage.⁸⁵ Making a good marriage was one of the prime concerns of the East Anglian elite, taking up immense amounts of time and in some cases considerable amounts of money. The rewards of a successful alliance could transform the fortunes of families who may have had good pedigrees but empty coffers.

⁸³ Gardiner, J., (editor) (1904) *The Paston Letters A.D. 1422-1509, Volume II*, p 277.

⁸⁴ MacCulloch, D., (1986) *Suffolk and the Tudors*, p. 420.

⁸⁵ *The Visitation of Norfolk Vol I*

5.1 Defining Elite Zones

The new wealthy families who settled in the East Anglian countryside perhaps felt less connected with the local community and landscape than some of those who had held their manors for several generations. The changing relationship between the owners of elite residences and the fields, meadows, woods and commons of the working landscape will be examined, particularly the strategies used to control and manipulate access to, and views of, the residence. The strategies employed in order to display features imbued with symbolic allusions of rank or piety within the vernacular landscape will also be discussed. In order to quantify if and where any expansion of exclusive areas took place during the period researched for this thesis elite landscapes have been divided into a series of zones defined as follows –

Primary elite zone – the most exclusive area where access was controlled by both physical and subliminal barriers. Access was allowed at the lord's discretion or that of his representatives and likely to be limited to family members, retainers, guests and household staff. The area might be defined by water, bridges, walls, a gatehouse or gate piers. In addition, the conspicuous use of valuable materials in the fabric of these features and in the construction of the residence would convey the messages about the status of the owner and the exclusivity of the area within the primary zone. The level of interaction between the occupants of the residence and the surrounding community would be lowest within this zone.

Secondary elite or 'display' zone – areas adjacent to residence where the level of interaction is slightly higher but controlled and limited by the use of physical barriers but also by the use of liminal messages of authority and superiority. Bodies of water such as moats and fishponds might be employed to demarcate a secondary zone, or ornamental meadows and horse pastures, where the late-medieval equivalents of the expensive sport car might be displayed. The exclusive nature of the area was often expressed by the inclusion of manorial motifs such as dovecotes or occasionally mills but one of the most frequent components was the great barn, often very large and built of the same materials as the mansion. It is possible that the presence of unpolarded trees could have been used to imply that an area was for the exclusive use of the lord and not accessible by tenants or commoners.

Tertiary zone – Parts of the demesne set aside for the use of the lord and his household such as deer parks, in-hand pasture, warrens not located on common pasture and manorial woodlands. A degree of control would be exercised over access to these areas, for example through park pales and gates or by customary rights drawn up and regulated by the manor court. The tertiary zone could include areas that might otherwise have been considered secondary zones but which were situated in close proximity to elements of the vernacular landscape such as roads, paths, open fields, commons or meadows and thus subject to higher levels of interaction. In some instances minor place names might be used in surveys or on maps to indicate the exclusivity of an area, for example The Lord's Heath, The Dove House Close or The Park Meadow. The tertiary zones were often used to rear high-status animals such as deer and rabbits or exclusive birds such as swans, cranes or herons.

Detached zones – areas or features spatially separated from the residence but whose function, form or fabric connected the feature to the elite household. Detached exclusive zones could take the form of water features, gardens or ornamental buildings. For example a park lodge for the exclusive use of the lord and his guests would be considered a detached primary zone within the tertiary zone of the park. A block of demesne pasture separated from the park would be a detached tertiary zone. Deer parks or fishponds not in the immediate vicinity of the residence would also be considered detached elite zones.

Transitional zones – areas where the boundaries between two zones were not clearly defined, such as points along an approach route where an individual might be aware of passing into a more exclusive area without crossing a distinct boundary feature. The strip of common land abutting a park boundary known as a *freebord* would be a transitional zone because although it lay on the common the lord had the right to plant trees and shrubs there, to facilitate the killing of game and reduce the number of animals escaping from the park. The customs of the manor usually prevented tenants from cutting these trees or taking the game.⁸⁶

Mixed zones – areas such as rabbit warrens located on common pastures, where the rabbits competed for grazing with commoner's livestock and access was difficult to

86 Blomefield F., & Parkin C., , F., (1807) *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 1*, p 95 Also Dallas, P., (2010) 'Sustainable Environments: Common Wood Pastures in Norfolk' *Landscape History, Volume 31*, pp. 27-28.

control. In mixed zones the threat of legal proceedings might be used as a method of controlling access and movement rather than physical barriers. These areas were neither entirely exclusive nor vernacular.

The landscape beyond the elite areas defined above is referred to here as the **Vernacular zone**. The zone included ground over which the lord of the manor could not exercise direct control. Whilst a lord might own large areas of the surrounding landscape, resources such as common pastures or open fields were administered through the manor courts, where the customary rights of the tenants were not readily overturned. The presence of large numbers of relatively prosperous freeholders in East Anglia had a significant impact on the ability to expand exclusiveness across the landscape. Evidence of early piecemeal enclosure can be found across the region, particularly on the heavier soils, where scattered hamlets clustered around small greens surrounded by closes, with only limited areas of open field land. Settlements, whether dispersed or more nucleated in character have been included in the vernacular zone, as have roads, paths and navigable waterways. The parish church could be said to be part of both the elite and vernacular landscape, often subject to major investment on the part of a lord who was anxious to control not only the patronage of clerical appointments but also the appearance of the building itself. However, the church was also at the heart of the local community being, particularly before the Reformation, the focal point around which the day-to-day lives of the local inhabitants revolved.

Contact zones – areas where the elite landscape meets or interacts with the vernacular landscape. A road that passes through a secondary area, or the boundary between a park and an open field would constitute a contact zone, as would the presence of a settlement near to residence. A large common near the bounds of a residence would lead to intermediate levels of interaction, if not always direct contact, between those using the common and the occupants of the residence. Interaction was not necessarily a negative factor as most lords wanted to communicate their achievements to the wider community in the form of fine buildings and ornamental landscapes where they could display the trappings of rank and wealth. The key to creation of exclusive elite zones was the control and manipulation of people in order that the right messages were sent to the intended audiences. An example of the use of elite zones to demonstrate levels of exclusivity is given **Figure 18**, which shows the elite landscape around Kimberley Hall circa 1500. In this example the primary zone exists within the waters of the residential

moat, surrounded by a narrow secondary zone with the tertiary zone taking the form of a swath of parkland. The demesne of the manor of Butordes was a detached tertiary zone in the hands of the Wodehouses. The Warren has been designated a mixed zone because of the shared nature of the land use.

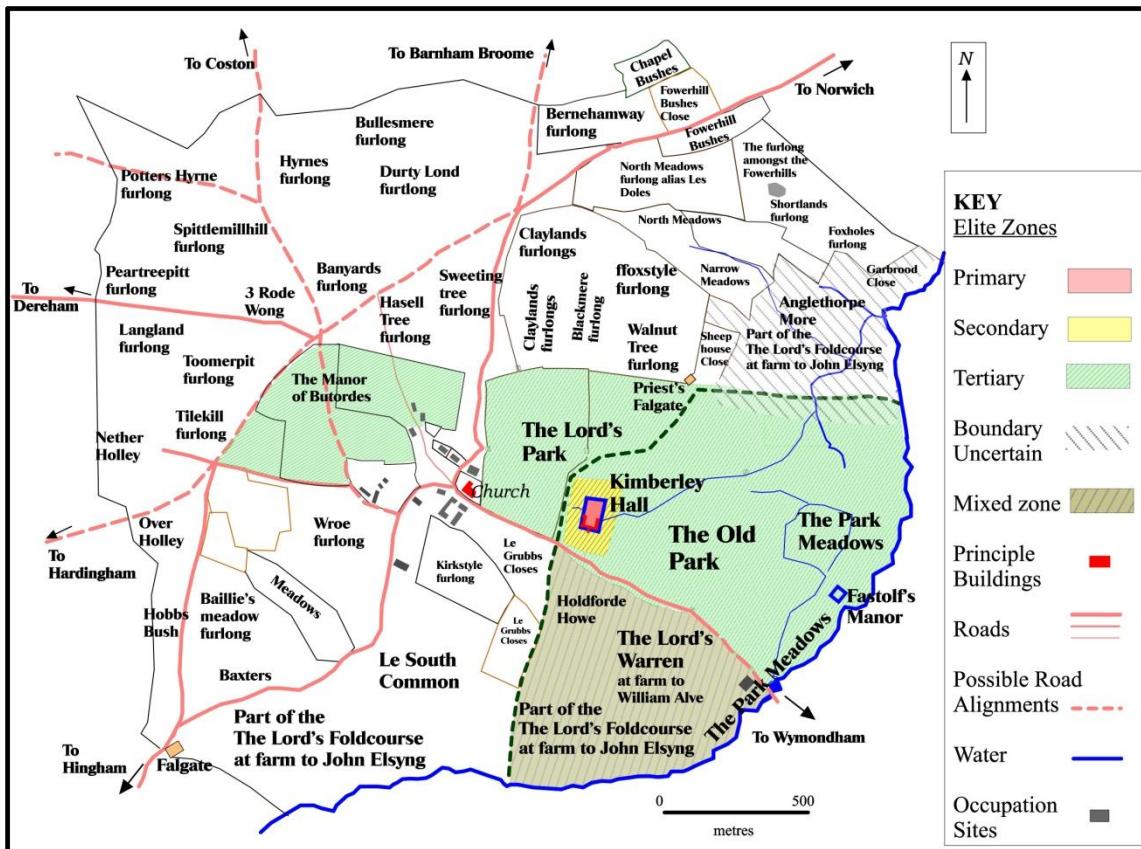


Figure 18: Example - The elite zones around Kimberley Hall, circa 1500

The following components will be examined when analysing the creation of exclusive landscapes.

- A house, the ground plan of which differs from that of earlier residences of similar status. Extensive use of high-value or rare materials including dressed stone, bricks, glass and terracotta in the fabric of the residence.
- The construction of an imposing gatehouse.
- A private chapel, either within the residence or the grounds.
- A square or rectangular moated platform, particularly those that appear to have been created to accommodate the exact dimensions of the residence.
- The presence of secondary moats, either attached to the house moat or lying adjacent, enclosing orchards and/or gardens. In addition, sites where a number of concentric moats surround the residence.

- The use of walls, gates, ditches or pales to demarcate zones of exclusivity.
- Large barns located close to the residence constructed using high-value materials.
- Extensive areas of garden and orchard, in particular those where water has been used to create boundaries and decorative features.
- The closure and/or relocation of roads and paths in the vicinity of the residence.
- A park around or adjacent to the residence.
- The deliberate positioning of manorial perquisites such as fishponds, mills or dovecotes near to zones of interaction with the vernacular landscape, such as roadways and commons. Also, the construction of detached gardens, parks or water features within the working landscape.
- The acquisition of land, to be held in severalty for the exclusive use of the lord.
- The deliberate use of symmetry in spatial arrangements and the creation of vistas or outlooks.
- Spatial arrangements that allowed the exclusive nature of the residence to be experienced from a distance, without incurring increased levels of interaction with the wider community.

Particular emphasis will be placed on the early development of exclusive areas, which were later utilised for the creation of designed landscapes where features have been deliberately placed to create a specific spatial arrangement. There will also be an examination of the position of approach routes in relation to the surrounding landscape and settlements to determine if the routes have been manipulated in order to control the movement of people around and through the elite landscape. The position and form of water features such as moats, fishponds and ornamental pools will form a central part of the analysis which, in addition, will consider the spatial relationship between the residence and other manorial buildings, in particular gatehouses, barns and lodgings. The arrangement of courtyards, gardens, orchards and parkland will be examined along with the means used to demarcate these areas from less exclusive parts of the landscape.

Chapter 3

Motives, Aspirations and the Role of Exclusivity: elite landscapes in East Anglia 1400 -1470

In the year 1401, Lady Alianora Dagworth found herself a young widow in possession of a fine mansion, recently built by her late husband Sir Nicholas Dagworth at his manor of Blickling in Norfolk. In the 1390s, as Sir Nicholas approached his three score years and ten, he had undertaken for the first time, both an ambitious building project and matrimony. The Norfolk historian Blomefield noted that Sir Nicholas gave up public life and -

...afterwards he retired to this place [Blickling], where he built the mansion or manor-house, and constantly resided here to the day of his death.¹

Dagworth had spent his life in the service of Edward III and Richard II, in his younger days as a soldier and commander and then as a trusted envoy and ambassador. A member of Richard II's Privy Council in the 1380s, he continued to travel across Europe on behalf of the king, visiting Germany, France and Italy.² After a life of service and travel, Sir Nicholas's motives for retiring to Blickling with generous pensions and a young bride may seem obvious. However, in common with many high achievers, Sir Nicholas appears to have found 'retirement' a difficult concept and continued to be involved in politics, being elected as one of the knights of the shire for Norfolk in 1397.³ The new mansion was no doubt intended to be a comfortable home for Alianora but he also needed a residence that would reflect his status as a highly-regarded courtier and former military commander. By building a grand new manor house, Sir Nicholas was perhaps hoping to assert his position in a county where he was known only by his reputation, not as a resident lord of long standing. Apart from considerations of comfort and display, the mansion at Blickling fulfilled the requirement that knights of the shire should be resident in the county where they stood for election.

1 Blomefield, F., (1807) 'Hundred of South Erpingham Blickling', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 6*, pp. 381-409.

2 Capp, B. S., (1967) "Sir Nicholas Dagworth: the career of a royal servant in the fourteenth century" *Norfolk Archaeology* 34 (2), pp. 111 -118.

3 Roger Virgoe suggested that Dagworth's election to Parliament might have been influenced by Richard II. Virgoe, R (1997) "The Crown and Local Government: East Anglia under Richard II" in Barron, C; Rawcliffe, C & Rosenthal, J.T. (editors) *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe* Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia, p. 33.

Throughout the fifteenth century, similar motives of ambition, status display and the assertion of authority inspired the creation of new elite residences across East Anglia. The accession of Henry IV and continuing war with France brought fame and wealth to some East Anglian families but also took lords away from the region for lengthy periods, creating shifts in the balance of power. National and regional politics had always been subject to the influences of various factions but the accession of the infant Henry VI in 1422 and his subsequent deficiencies as a ruler led to an escalation in the rivalry between those wishing to exercise power.⁴ As war with France finally drew to a close in the 1450s the struggle for national dominance between the houses of Lancaster and York intensified, leading to further conflict, this time at home. These national rivalries were reflected in East Anglia, where in the 1420s, John Mowbray, second Duke of Norfolk, was the greatest landowner and most influential courtier.⁵ The Duke's death in 1432 whilst his heir was still in his minority allowed the Earl of Suffolk, William de la Pole newly returned from France to gain pre-eminence and advance the careers of those under his patronage. Other courtiers who had fought in France and held court appointments, such as Sir John Fastolf, Sir John Wodehouse and Lord Grey of Ruthin and Lord Scales wanted to regain or retain their share of power in East Anglia during the early decades of the century.

Serving in the retinues of great men allowed clever, ambitious and sometimes ruthless individuals from the ranks of the minor gentry or landless younger sons to prosper and climb the social ladder. Often serving as stewards or lawyers, men like Thomas Tuddenham, John Heydon, William Paston and Thomas Danyell gained authority, influence and wealthy wives, enabling them to mount their own challenges for a share of power in East Anglia. For such individuals, a marriage alliance with an heir of one of the established families and the acquisition of a prestigious residence were important means of ensuring their upward mobility. Along with these men, wealthy and powerful mercantile families such as the Boleyns were also seeking roles in the administration of East Anglian affairs and they too needed wives and residences befitting their ambitions. William Paston, a successful lawyer and judge was the son of a minor Norfolk gentry family, married Agnes Berry the daughter and heir of Sir Edmund Berry. Agnes was an ambitious and indomitable woman who brought the Pastons status, substantial estates

4 Thomson, J A F (1983) *The Transformation of Medieval England 1370-1529* London Longman, pp. 201-205.

5 Virgoe, R (1997) "The Murder of James Andrews: Suffolk Faction in the 1430s" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 109.

and a determination to succeed.⁶ Thomas Danyell, an astute, wealthy and ruthless esquire, married Margaret Howard, sister of the future Duke of Norfolk, whilst Sir Geffrey Boleyn, a successful merchant and Alderman wed Anne, daughter and heir of Lord Hoo and Hastings. Thus, the intricacies of the East Anglian marriage market influenced the creation of residences and landscapes across the region.

Over the decades, power would shift between factions both at court and in the country and bring new men and families to the fore. Established magnates had to show that they had the resources, power and influence to protect and advance their followers, whilst those challenging for share of control had to demonstrate that they could outdo their rivals in both politics and the grandeur of their lifestyles. As we shall see, the building of new residences and the creation of elite landscapes was an important part of regional power struggles, as old and new families strove to assert their authority and vied for places in the ranks of the East Anglian elite.

From the hill forts of the Iron Age, to Roman villas and from Saxon palaces to Norman castles, building a new residence and manipulating the landscape around it had always been a means of demonstrating power and authority. In fifteenth-century East Anglia, the splendour of a residence and its surroundings transmitted messages about the rank, resources and influence of the owner. For the individual investing in a new residence, the house might be a means of gaining acceptance from those of a higher social standing, or of challenging those currently in power. An extensive area of new demesne or an elaborate arrangement of water features would imply the individual concerned had sufficient authority and wealth to gain control over both land and natural resources. New tenures or the closure of roads and paths would demonstrate the lord's power over, and ability to control, aspects of the lives of the local inhabitants. The powerful statements made by elite landscapes and residences made them an essential part of a fifteenth-century lord's armoury, whether he was upwardly mobile or endeavouring to maintain his place on the social and political ladder.

One man eager to consolidate his position in the East Anglian hierarchy was Sir John Wodehouse of Reydon (now Roydon), near King's Lynn. Sir John was a member of an influential East Anglian family who had held lands in Norfolk since the early fourteenth century. Sir John's father had risen from the ranks of the regional gentry to be a Privy

⁶ *The Paston Letters: 1422-1509*, 3 Volumes, Gairdner, J., editor (1900).

Councillor, an Esquire of the Body to Henry IV and the Constable of Castle Rising. Henry V bestowed the same honours on his son, also Sir John and in addition appointed him a Chamberlain of the Exchequer.⁷ The wars with France saw Sir John serve with distinction, his prowess at Agincourt bringing the Wodehouses lasting prestige, considerable wealth and the sobriquet “the Agincourt Wodehouses”.⁸ Sir John’s mother was Margaret Fastolf, daughter and heir of Sir Thomas Fastolf of Kimberley, a kinsman of Sir John Fastolf.⁹ His mother’s right to her inheritance was challenged but the Wodehouses gained the manor of Kimberley Fastolf’s and Kimberley Hall after many years of disagreements with co-claimants.¹⁰ Although Blomefield believed that Sir John and his wife Alice Furneaux lived at Kimberley Hall, it would appear that their principal residence was at Roydon. Sir John was referred to as ‘of Roydon’, his daughter Alice married Thomas Tuddenham at Roydon in 1418 and Sir John died there in 1430.¹¹ Sir John built a fine mansion at his manor of Roydon Hall, the new house known as The Rey (6; TF 6958 2313; West), reputedly costing 2000 marks [£1,333. 6s. 8d].¹² Construction was likely to have taken place after Sir John’s return from France and work was complete before his death in 1430. The building expenses no doubt were met from the proceeds of his campaigns in France and the perquisites of his court appointments. The site lay close to Castle Rising, and near the port and mercantile centre of King’s Lynn. William of Worcester described the residence as –

*the most beautiful manor house of Rey, built a mile from Castle Rising by the father of Henry Wodhous, esquire, nobly built on a grand scale.*¹³

The Rey stood on the southern edge of a demesne of 370 acres, on the floor of a wide, shallow valley between two streams and next to the extensive common pastures of Roydon and Grimston. The topography of the location chosen for The Rey is in marked contrast to that of Badmondisfield Hall (37; TL 7474 5700; South West), a favoured residence of Reynold, third Baron Grey of Ruthin (c. 1362 – 1440). Badmondisfield

7 Blomefield, F., (1808) 'Freebridge Hundred: Reydon, or Rydon', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 9, p. 60-61.

8 Coat of Arms, NCM

9 Blomefield (1805) 'Hundred of Forehoe: Kimberley', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 2, pp. 535-539.

10 For example, NRO KIM 2S/1 Confirmation 1405; NRO NAS 1/1/11/44; Grant 1413; NRO KIM 2J/11 Conveyance 1419.

11 Virgoe (1997) “The Divorce of Thomas Tuddenham” in *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe* p 123; Blomefield Vol 2, pp. 535-539.

12 *Itineraries of William of Worcester*. Edited and Translated by John H. Harvey (1969) Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 253.

13 *Itineraries of William of Worcester*, p. 253.

stood in an elevated location on the boulder clay plateau, overlooking the upper reaches of the River Glem.

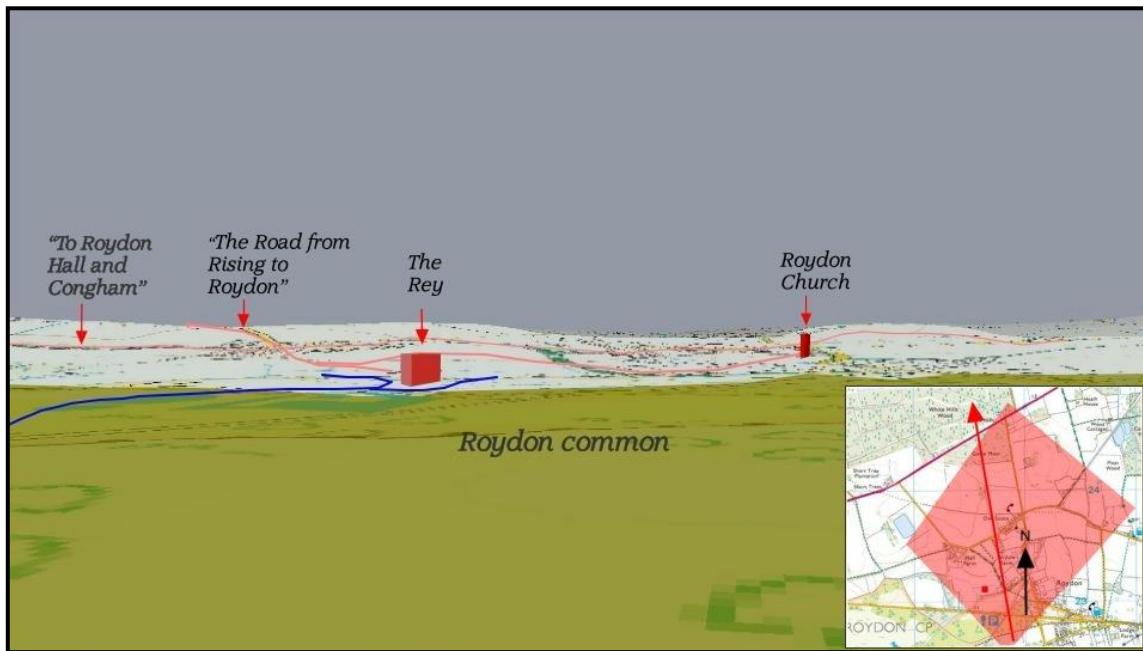


Figure 19: Three dimensional image showing the location of The Rey (6; TF 6958 2313; West)

Based on the current edition of the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 presented using *Memory Map 3D World®* systems. Roydon Common has been shaded in light green and the medieval course of the streams indicated in blue. Roads are highlighted in pink

Key: Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 showing approximate area included in 3D image shaded red and the red arrow indicates the sight line.

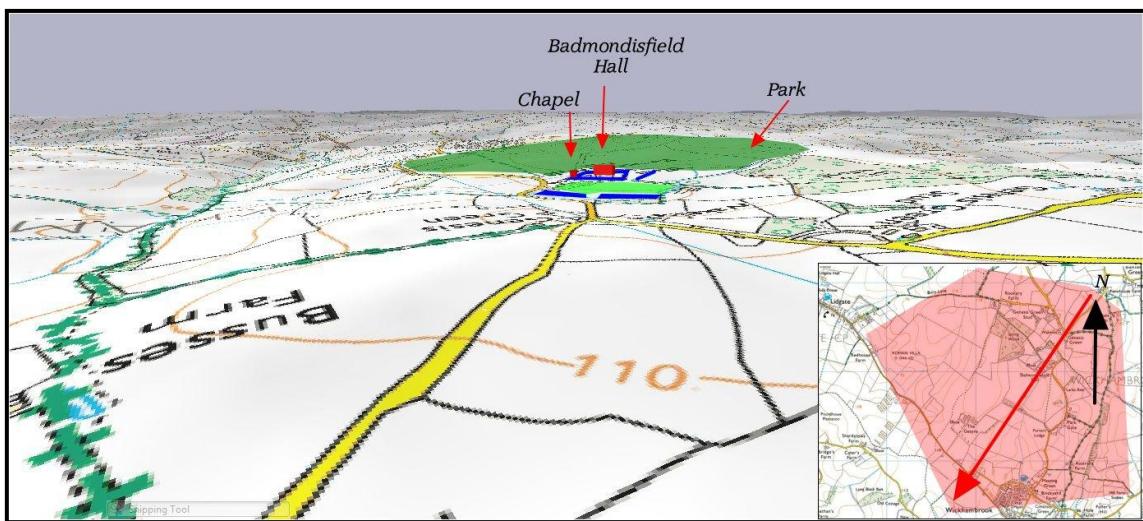


Figure 20: Three Dimensional Image showing the location of Badmondisfield Hall (37; TL 7474 5700; South West) The hall stood on the edge of two medieval parks and was surrounded by a large moat and fishponds.

The Greys of Ruthin had their main landholdings in Bedfordshire but also held the marcher lordship of Ruthin in Denbighshire. In 1389, the already considerable estates of Reynold, Lord Grey were enlarged when he inherited extensive lands in East Anglia and elsewhere in England, on the death of John Hastings, fourteenth Earl of Pembroke.¹⁴ Reynold, Lord Grey had three main residences in the early fifteenth century, his principal seat being the medieval manor of Wrest Park, near Silsoe in Bedfordshire (TL0912 3558), the site of the fine mansion built in the 1830s by Thomas Phillip, Earl de Grey.¹⁵ The thirteenth-century Castle of Ruthin in Denbighshire, Wales, was caput of the Greys lordship and their finances benefited from the prosperous pastoral economy of the Vale of Clwyd. The Greys also had extensive interests in the woollen cloth industry, which may be one reason why the former Hastings manor of Badmondisfield Hall was also a favoured residence.¹⁶ The production of woollen cloth was an important part of the East Anglian economy and was particularly significant in the South West sub-region, where centres such as Bury St. Edmunds, Sudbury, Long Melford and Lavenham were trading an ever-greater proportion of English cloth production between 1350 and 1460.¹⁷ Another motive for establishing a principal residence at a former Hastings property may have been the need for Reynold, Lord Grey to assert his authority over the East Anglian estates that had come to him through his grandmother Elizabeth Hastings. Apart from the pragmatic motives of economic interests and seigneurial control, Badmondisfield offered a fine setting, on the boulder clay plateau above a valley cut by the headwaters of the River Glem. Badmondisfield Hall was an important part of the Greys of Ruthin estates throughout the fifteenth century, visited regularly by Reynold, Lord Grey and then by his grandson and heir Edmund Grey (1416 – 1490), who was created first earl Kent by Edward IV in 1465.¹⁸ These two men owned Badmondisfield for over a century, investing in a new manor house and enhancing the surroundings, making it a suitable residence from which one of the great Baronial families could oversee their East Anglian estates.¹⁹

14 Jack, R. I. (2008) "Grey, Reynold, third Baron Grey of Ruthin (c.1362 – 1440)" *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* Online Edition Article 11553.

15 English Heritage Listed Buildings Entry No. 1311484, Wrest Park, Bedfordshire.

16 The list of principal early fifteenth-century residences as given by R. I. Jack (2008) "Grey, Reynold, third Baron Grey of Ruthin (c.1362 – 1440)" DNB.

17 Bailey, M., (2007) *Medieval Suffolk: An Economic and Social History 1200 – 1500* Woodbridge The Boydell Press, pp. 270-273.

18 Horrox, R., (2008) Grey, Edmund, first earl Kent (1416-1490) *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* Online Edition Article 11529.

19 SHER WKB005 Badmondisfield Hall, Moat, ponds and bridge; SHER WKB011 Medieval Deer Parks of Badmondisfield and Lidgate.

Apart from differences in the topography around The Rey and Badmondisfield Hall, some other notable differences are apparent, and some distinct similarities. The latter include the fact that both were owned in the early fifteenth century by men who had need to assert and maintain their positions amongst the East Anglian elite. Wodehouse had risen through service to the Crown and needed to maintain his new position in East Anglia, and Grey had to establish himself in his new role as lord of the former Hastings estates. Both men built a new residence on the site of existing manors and both made use of water features to demarcate areas of exclusivity around their new houses. A crucial disparity being, that whilst Badmondisfield still stands, though in a much-restored state, The Rey has been all but eradicated from the East Anglian landscape, leaving little but crop marks and a scatter of brick rubble.²⁰

An aerial photograph taken by the RAF in 1946 and another taken in 1988 reveal some of the spatial arrangements around The Rey.²¹ Despite the effects of intensive farming in recent decades, remarkably clear crop and soil marks have been recorded on aerial photographs, including a very clear indication of the moat around the hall. Several features show up strongly on both sets of photographs, including the moat, which is particularly clear on the 1988 photograph. Several strong linear features divide the area to the west of the moat and a curved feature runs roughly parallel to the existing field boundary with what appears to be two rectangular ponds just to the south, one of which is shown as an area of boggy ground on the First Edition OS. Crop marks in the 1946 photograph suggest that several watercourses flowed across *The Meadow* and into various water features. The fact that The Rey was destined to stand for only a few decades, and that no later building work occurred on or around the site of the house, means that the main features suggested in the aerial photographs can be dated with some confidence to the early fifteenth century.

20 NHER 3317 The Rey; Medieval moated site.

21 Aerial Photograph TF 6923A-D RAF 1946 and Aerial Photograph Norfolk County Council 1988 via Historic Map Explorer website.



Figure 21: Aerial photographs taken of site of The Rey in 1946 showing the moat, ponds and various rectilinear features. NHER3317 Aerial Photograph: TF 6923A-D, RAF 1946



Figure 22: Aerial photograph taken for Norfolk County Council in 1988. A large drain has been cut across the site but the moat, ponds and enclosures are clearly visible. The garden of Roydon Hall farm has been extended southwards over part of the site. *Norfolk Map Explorer*

The images in **Figures 21 and 22** have been amalgamated and plotted on the First Edition 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey to produce **Figure 23**.

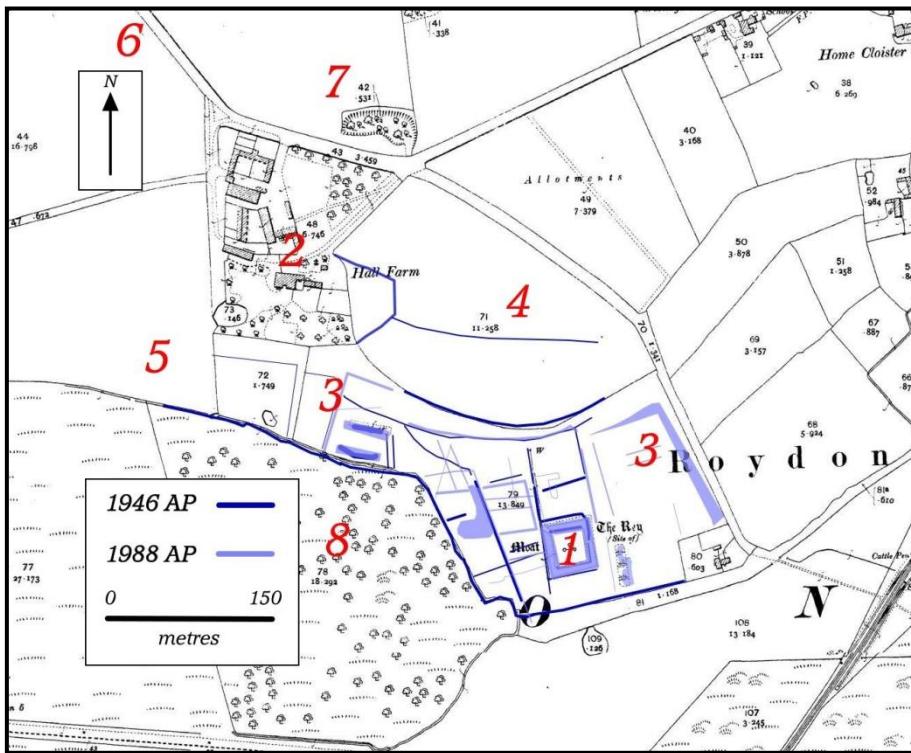


Figure 23:
information
from aerial
photographs
taken in 1946
& 1988
plotted on
the First
Edition
1:2,500OS

The present-day field boundaries around the site of The Rey have altered little from those recorded by the OS or those on an estate map of 1732, **Figure 24** below.²²

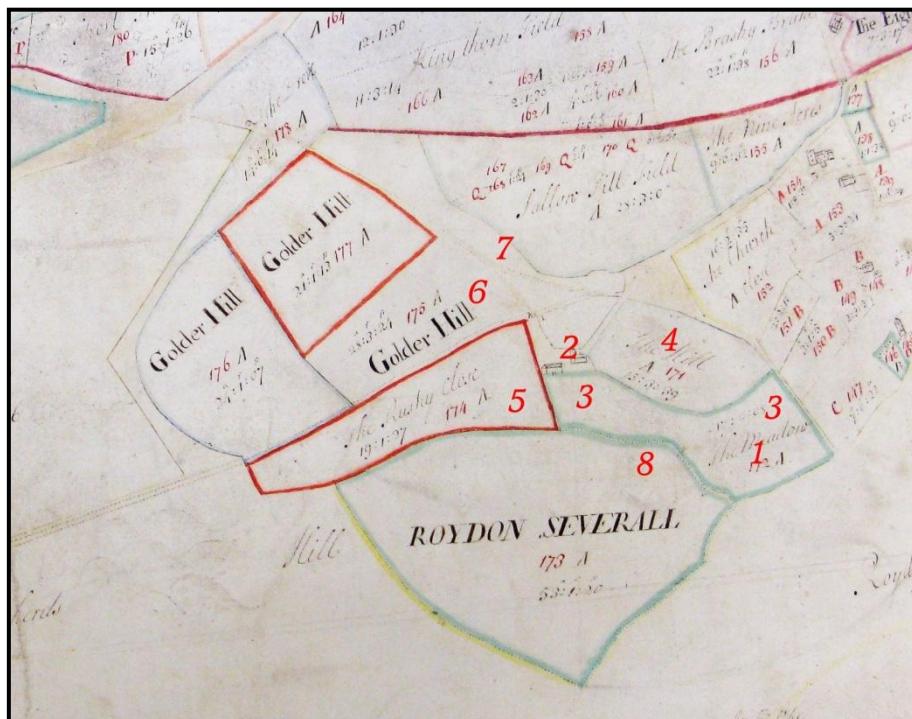


Figure 24:
Estate
Map of 1732
The surveyor
indicated the
lands of
Roydon Hall
with an A
The Rey 1
Roydon Hall
Farm 2
The Meadow 3
The Hill 4
Rushy Close 5
Golder Hill 6
The Drove 7
Roydon
Several 8

22 NRO MC 2485/1 Map of Castle Rising, Roydon and Bawsey surveyed by George Smith, 1732.

The evidence gathered in **Figure 23** suggests that the majority of buildings and pleasure grounds associated with The Rey stood within the enclosure known in 1732 as *The Meadow* (3). The lack of crop marks on *The Hill* (4) may be because it has been under cultivation since at least the eighteenth century however, an extension to the present-day enclosure around Roydon Hall Farm is suggested and a faint ditch line appears across *The Hill*, which may indicate a northern boundary of the *curia*. Alternatively, it is possible that the curving northern boundary of *The Meadow* as recorded in 1732 demarcated the late-medieval *curia*. Lying to the west of *The Meadow*, *The Severals* (8) were first cultivated in the second half of the twentieth century, yet little evidence of crop marks is revealed in either photograph. This has been taken as an indication that the *curia* of The Rey may have been located within *The Meadow* and the site of present day Roydon Hall Farm (2). Hall Farm was recorded in its current position in a field book of 1700, possibly on the site of late-medieval ancillary buildings.²³

The location chosen by Sir John Wodehouse for his ‘most beautiful mansion’ provided a strong link with his antecedents and was well placed for him to attend to his duties as Constable of Castle Rising (80; TF 6657 2455; West). It also allowed good communications with other parts of East Anglia via the port of King’s Lynn or by the various roads that led to Norwich and south into Suffolk. Having returned to his principal manor, Wodehouse may have felt the need to remind his peers that, following his exploits at Agincourt, he was now a man of even greater renown than his father had been. The high regard in which Wodehouse was held by Henry V and his offices of state had elevated his standing in the regional hierarchy but he needed to maintain his influence both at court and in East Anglia. The new mansion would have been a highly visible expression of his success, the use of brick in the construction marking it as a particularly lavish and rare building in the early fifteenth century.²⁴ The valley-floor site meant that water could be directed to the ponds and through the moat. In addition, the eighteenth-century *Meadow* surrounding the moat may well have been maintained as such in the fifteenth century, creating a lush green backdrop for the mansion, with formal pools and ditched garden enclosures. The meadow may have continued into *The Rushy Close*, which the name implies was a damp area. Crop marks and a boggy area recorded on the First Edition OS indicate that the area of meadow to the east of the moat may have been surrounded by a wide, shallow feature.

23 NRO HOW 555 348 Field Book; 1700-1 Castle Rising, Roydon and Congham.

24 Airs

The aerial photographs of the site of The Rey indicate that the moat was relatively small and almost square, the outer edges each measuring between fifty eight and sixty metres and the inner edges, approximately thirty metres. The grand mansion described by William of Worcester is likely to have filled most of this platform, perhaps arranged around a courtyard as suggested in **Figure 25**, below. It may have been similar in plan, if not fabric, to Ightham Mote (TQ 58476 53485, Kent), which was built circa 1340 on a slightly larger square platform, with sides of thirty five metres.



Figure 25:
Ightham Mote,
Sevenoaks,
Kent
(Photograph:
*Medway
Photographic*)

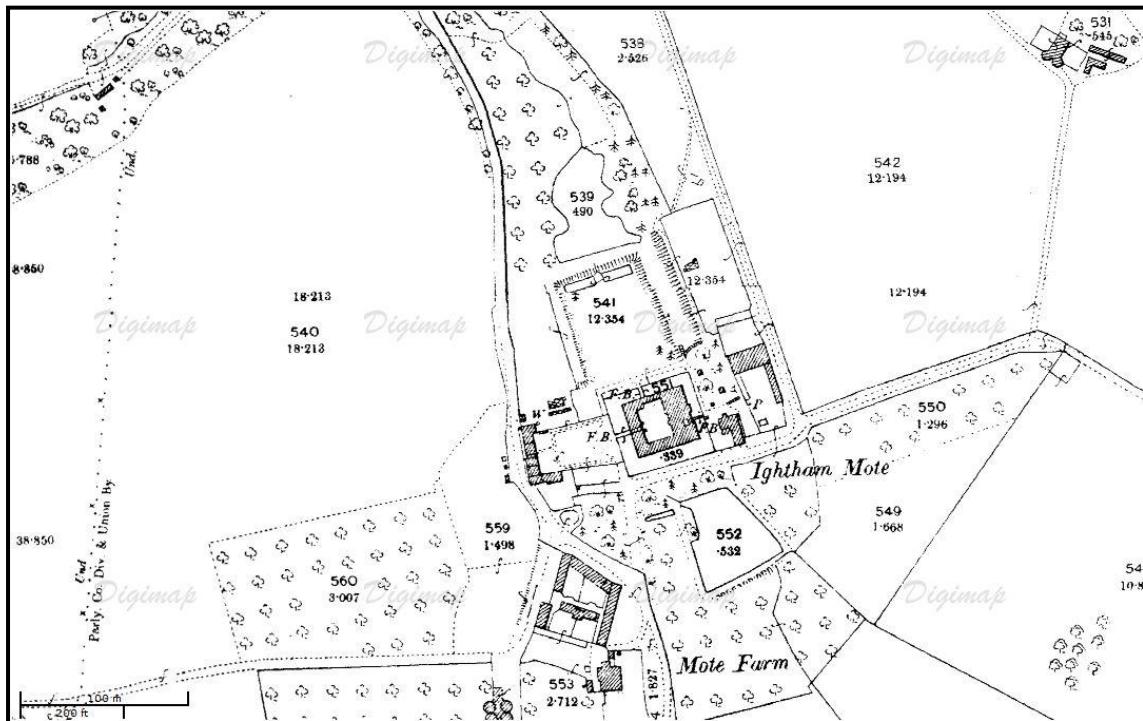


Figure 26: Ightham Mote, (TQ 58476 53485, Kent) Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 1st Revision. In common with The Rey, Ightham Mote was located on a valley floor site although in the case of Ightham the valley was narrow and steep-sided.



Figure 27: The Rey and surrounding landscape circa 1450 as suggested by –

License to Empark of 1446 (NRO NAS 1/1/18/3)
 Aerial photographs, TF 6923A-D, RAF 1946 & NCC 1988
 Field Book, 1700-1, (NRO HOW 555 348);
 Estate map of 1732 (NRO MC 2485/1)

The demesne is shown in shades of green.

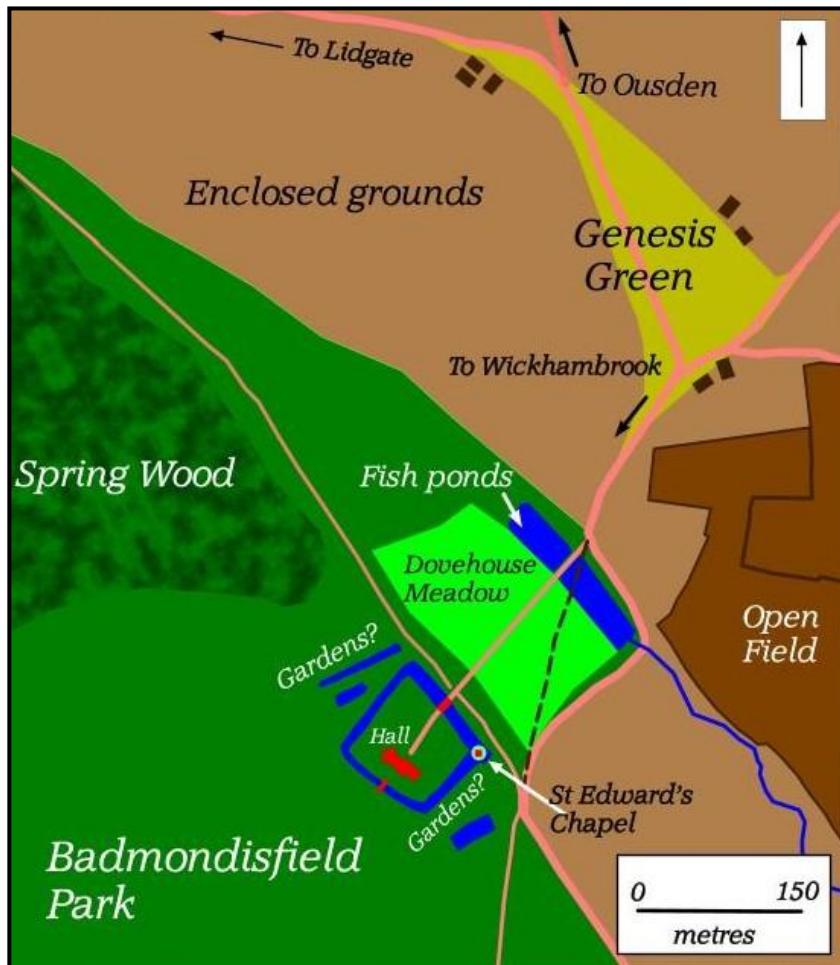


Figure 28: Badmondisfield Hall and the surrounding landscape as it may have been arranged circa 1450 as suggested by –

Particulars of 1532-3, TNA PRO SC 6/HENVIII/3379; Hodskinson's Map of Suffolk 1783; Wickhambrook Tithe Award SRO [B] F652/3/4(2) a & T128/1

The park is shown in green and a possible earlier road alignment is suggested by the hatched line.

At Badmondisfield Hall, the water features differ in both size and form to those as indicated by the crop marks at The Rey. The Badmondisfield moat is trapezoid with arms of varying widths encompassing a platform of over two acres. Badmondisfield Hall has stood on its present site since the thirteenth century, a medieval aisled hall lying at the heart of the extant fifteenth- and sixteenth-century residence.²⁵ The hall is timber framed with brick-infilling and some plasterwork and stands near the south-west arm of the moat, approached across a bridge believed to be contemporary with the hall.²⁶ In the eastern corner of the moat at the junction of the two widest arms, a small island once housed the medieval St Edward's Chapel.²⁷ To the south and west of the hall lay the medieval deer parks of Badmondisfield and Lidgate, mentioned in the Patent Rolls of 1388-9 and recorded as a single park on a map of 1598.²⁸ A tree-lined route towards the Lidgate road recorded on Hodskinson's map of Suffolk may have been part of the eighteenth-century remodelling at Badmondisfield but could be an earlier approach route from the northwest.²⁹ Whilst these two routes may or may not have existed in the late-medieval period, the line of the main approach route from the northeast is more certain.

The north-eastern approach route shown in **Figure 28** above, passed through an area to the north of the hall known, in 1841, as *Dove House Meadow*.³⁰ The field name suggests that a dovecote was located in this area and, along with the ponds, would have confirmed to a visitor that they had moved into a more exclusive landscape. For those passing by on the highway the fishponds would have signified the presence of a lordly establishment and indicated that the causeway between the ponds was not part of the common highway. The road from Ousden and Genesis Green changes direction at this point, skirting along the eastern pond before turning south along the bounds of *Dove House Meadow*. This arrangement gives a strong impression that the road may have been altered from the more direct route across the meadow. Without documentary evidence, it is impossible to say when such a diversion might have taken place but it would appear that there was a decision to move the points of interaction caused by

25 Pevsner, N (1974 edition revised by E. Radcliffe) *The Buildings of England: Suffolk* Yale University Press, pp. 487-8.

26 SHER WKB 005 The bridge was previously dated to the eighteenth century but is now believed to be of fifteenth-century construction.

27 Copinger, W. A., (1909) *The Manors of Suffolk: Notes on their History and Devolution, Volume 5*. Manchester, Taylor, Garnett, Evans & Co, p. 303.

28 Patent Rolls Richard II, pt. 2/2; Map of 1598, not traced in present day archives but mentioned in Copinger, *Volume V*, p. 303.

29 Hodskinson's *Map of Suffolk*, 1783 digitally redrawn by Andrew Macnair

30 SRO(B) F652/3/4(2)a & T128/1, Wickhampton Tithe Award and map, 1841

traffic on the road, thus creating or increasing an area of secondary exclusivity between the moat and the road. The arrangement of ponds to either side of an approach, at the point where it leaves the highway can also be seen at Chevington Hall (118; TL 7893 6019; South West) Mannington Hall (13; TG 1438 3201; North) and Helmingham Hall (33; TM 1868 5774; South East).

A chapel had been present in the moat at Badmondisfield since at least the fourteenth century and was mentioned in 1388-9 in the patent rolls of Richard II, following the death of John Hastings, Earl of Pembroke.³¹ The building was described in Exchequer depositions of 1591 concerning a dispute over tithes between the vicar of Wickhambrook and the then owners of Badmondisfield Hall. The chapel was said to be of timber-framed construction with panels of brick under a tiled roof.³² This sounds very similar to the fabric of the hall and it is possible that Reynold, Lord Grey rebuilt the chapel when he rebuilt Badmondisfield Hall, using the same materials and creating an even closer relationship between the residence and the place of worship. In parishes such as Wickhambrook, where settlement was highly dispersed, the parish church was sometimes less of a focus for devotion and elite benefaction than in parishes where the settlement was more nucleated and one family was dominant. A well-appointed chapel in a striking location would have conveyed similar messages about the wealth and piousness of the family as those engendered by lavish investment in a parish church.

The Badmondisfield chapel, in its watery setting would have been visible from the approaches to the hall and from the highway, its location within the moat making a clear statement that it was part of the seigniorial milieu. The position and the expensive construction materials allowed the owners to display their piety, their worldly wealth and their authority over the devotions of the local inhabitants. Oliver Creighton has pointed out that parish churches sited within manorial curiae exerted a form of social control over the inhabitants whilst also increasing the level of contact between the manor and the local inhabitants.³³ St. Edward's Chapel created a similar dichotomy, providing a platform to demonstrate both piety and power but also bringing the local population into contact with the elite when they were in residence, in this case a landed baronial family of ancient lineage. However, any interaction would have been under the tacit control of the lord or his officers and people would have understood where they

31 Copinger, W. A. (1909) *The Manors of Suffolk: Notes on their History and Devolution. Volume 5* Manchester, Taylor, Garnett, Evans & Co, p. 301.

32 Patent Rolls Richard II pt.1/6 1388-9, description of fabric in *Copinger Volume V*, p. 302.

33 Creighton, O. H., (2009) *Designs Upon the Land Woodbridge*, The Boydell Press, p. 217.

could and could not go by the arrangement of features and routes within the secondary area. In similar fashion, the fishponds and the dovecote would have been understood as elite appurtenances by most individuals using the Wickhambrook road. The ponds may have been dug at the same time as the road was realigned to emphasise the new route and discourage people from using an earlier alignment, or approaching the hall.

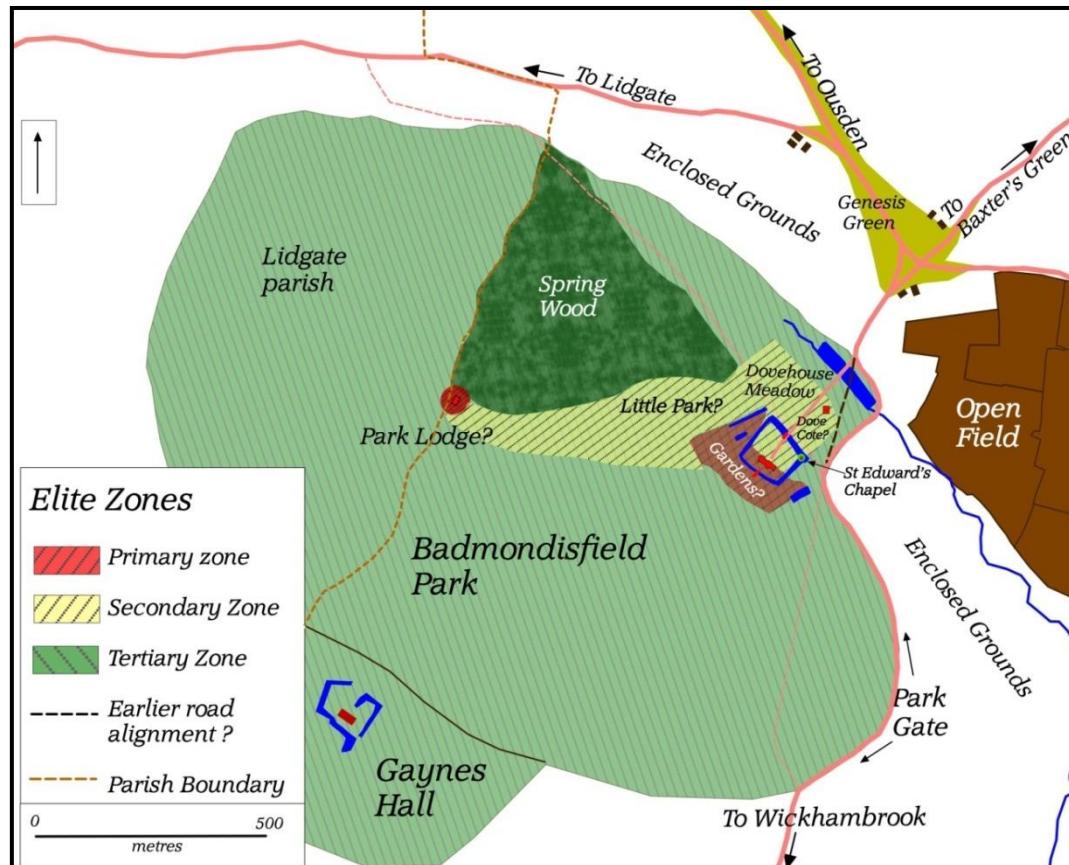


Figure 29: Badmondisfield Hall and Park: the zones of exclusivity around the hall

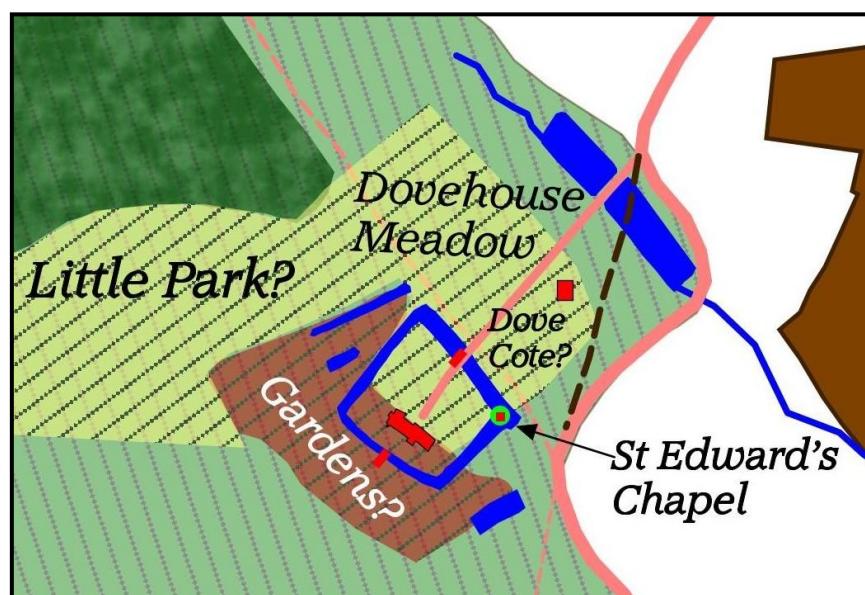


Figure 30: Detail of the area around Badmondisfield Hall: the position of the chapel, the fishponds and a possible location for the dovecote.

The hatched line suggests an earlier alignment of the road.

The position of the ponds, the meadow, the dovecote and the chapel in the moat would have signalled the transition from the vernacular into the tertiary and secondary elite zones, with the attendant increase in exclusivity. The moat itself and the brick-built bridge over it would have emphasised the even greater exclusivity of the residence within. All of these features were placed near areas of interaction with the wider community, in order to convey the status of the residence but perhaps also to act as liminal methods of influencing the movement of people around and within the site.

The regular presence of local inhabitants within the moat and the probable location of barns and ancillary buildings on the platform would have created points of interaction, albeit subject to a level of restriction. Such a large moat platform would have housed a range of buildings and yards where domestic and agricultural tasks would have taken place, requiring the presence of servants and labourers. For this reason, only the portion of the platform between the hall and the south-western moat arm has been considered the primary elite zone. The waters of the moat would have reminded individuals that they were in an area where certain groups such as guests, servants or worshipers were permitted, but access for others could be restricted or denied. The elongated pond to the north of the moat, which the SHER suggests was canalised in the eighteenth century, may have demarcated an area of late-medieval orchard or garden, accessed by a timber bridge across the south-west arm of the moat.³⁴ It is also possible that this area was an inner or *Little Park* – a more private and secluded area within medieval deer parks, often situated close to the residence and containing ponds, gardens and small buildings. As such, Little Parks created a setting for the residence and functioned as pleasure grounds rather than hunting grounds.³⁵

Badmondisfield and Lidgate parks were mentioned in the Patent Rolls of 1388-9 but by the end of the sixteenth century, they had been amalgamated and were recorded as a single park on a map of 1598. The map was viewed by Copinger who stated that the western bounds lay well into Lidgate parish.³⁶ The eastern boundary appears to have been bounded by the highway from Wickhambrook to Ousden, this stretch of which is known as Park Gate, ‘gate’ in this case meaning a way or lane. The landscape park

34 SHER 005 Badmondisfield Hall

35 Richardson, A., (2007) ‘The King’s Chief Delights’: A Landscape Approach to the Royal Parks of Post Conquest England’ in *The Medieval Park New Perspectives* edited by R. Liddiard, Macclesfield, Windgather, p. 40.

36 Patent Rolls Richard II, pt. 2/2; Map of 1598, not traced in present day archives but mentioned in Copinger, Volume V, p. 301.

shown on Hodskinson's map of 1783 appears to have been developed after 1755 and was presumably created from part of the medieval parkland.³⁷ The presence of extensive medieval parkland would have created a wide tertiary zone of wood pasture to the south east, south and west of the hall. No routes across the medieval parks, other than footpaths, were recorded in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources. A short spur from *Park Gate*, leading to a footpath could indicate the route of a private approach through the park to the hall. Alternatively, this may have been an earlier alignment of the route to Wickhambrook. For Reynold, Lord Grey the park at Badmondisfield would have been a useful means of reinforcing his credentials as a member of the Baronage, in a region where he had not previously been a major landowner. The large and long established park would have provided the perfect location for entertaining the East Anglian elite and an idealised setting for the new Badmondisfield Hall.

Located near the centre of the late-medieval Badmondisfield Park, *Lodge Farm* (TL74075710 demolished after 1888) is likely to have been the site of a park lodge located on the parish boundary near the bounds between the fourteenth-century parks of Badmondisfield and Lidgate. In hearth tax returns of 1674 Sir Henry North, then owner of Badmondisfield was assessed, in addition to the nineteenth hearths in the Hall, for 'three in the lodge' suggesting a quite substantial building.³⁸ Lodge Farm stood at the highest part of the park just above the 120-metre contour, overlooking the expanse of Badmondisfield Park, a typical location for a park lodge.³⁹ Lodges served several purposes, sometimes housing the park keeper; they were also venues from which the park and its deer could be surveyed. Spectators could view the spectacle of hunting from the lodge during the fifteenth century, they were used increasingly by the lord when visiting his residence rather than opening up the main residence. Park Lodges were often a venue for the ritual of 'secret house' in which the lord and small party of his officers would compile the annual accounts.⁴⁰ The lodge was therefore, an important component of an elite landscape, as a venue for lordly pursuits and as a means of expressing authority over the surrounding landscape.

37 Hodskinson; 1783 digitally redrawn by Andrew Macnair

38 Hervey, S H A (1905) "Suffolk in 1674 being the Hearth Tax Returns" *Suffolk Green Books, Issue 9, Volume 13* Woodbridge, p. 308.

39 Rowe, A., (2009) *Medieval Parks of Hertfordshire* University of Hertford Press, Hertfordshire Publications, p. 35.

40 Girouard, M (1978) *Life in the English Country House*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, p. 76.

The lodge at Badmondisfield would have been a visible reminder of the exclusive nature of the surrounding terrain and is likely to have been intervisible with the hall, 680 metres to the east. Situated on the highest point of the park the lodge would have drawn the eye and suggested the continuation of the park beyond the lodge, on the western down-slope. All the roles performed by park lodges were concerned with the pursuance of the lord's business and the building was under his direct control, whether that was the management and security of the deer, the supervision of hunting parties or as a lordly retreat. In addition, their usual location in a prominent position near the centre of a park, as at Badmondisfield, distinguishes lodges as symbols of lordly power and authority. It is possible that the lodge at Badmondisfield was built, or rebuilt, when Reynold, Lord Grey was rebuilding the hall and may have been constructed using similar materials. For these reasons, the lodge at Badmondisfield has been categorised as a detached area of primary exclusivity, entirely for the use and pleasure of the lord and his officers, but visible to the wider community as a symbol of seigniorial privilege.

Badmondisfield Park abutted the demesne of the manor of Gaynes Hall, which in the early fifteenth century was the property of Sir Richard Waldegrave and his heirs.⁴¹ The presence of another elite landscape would have meant that the tertiary zone of Badmondisfield merged with that of Gaynes Hall increasing the general exclusivity in that part of Wickham Brook. The presence of a large area of established medieval parkland may be one of the reasons that Badmondisfield became a favoured residence of Reynold, Lord Grey, providing as it did a suitably grand setting from which the Baron could manage his East Anglian estates and entertain his peers.

At both The Rey and Badmondisfield Hall, meadows and water features were used to denote an increase in exclusivity. The two residences stood in very different locations and the water features took different forms but they conveyed similar messages of status, authority and control over natural resources. Both of these residences were essentially 'domestic', without any serious defensive pretensions but two other East Anglian residences, Wingfield Castle and Caister Castle, were designed to convey ideas of military strength and the high-status of their owners.

One of the most elaborate watery settings created in fifteenth-century East Anglia was commissioned by Sir John Fastolf around his castle at Caister in the North East sub-

41 Copinger, (1909) *The Manors of Suffolk*, Vol. V, p. 304.

region. Sir John had spent many years away from East Anglia in the service of the Crown along with contemporaries such as Thomas, Lord Scales of Middleton and Sir John Wodehouse of Roydon. Despite owning property in many parts of England, Fastolf chose to build his imposing new residence at his family manor in West Caister. Having been the principal residence of his forebears since the 1360s, the manor would have held a strong familial attachment for Sir John but the decision to build Caister Castle in this particular location may also have been informed by the sacking of the Caister Manor during the uprisings of 1381. The medieval manor had been the base from which Sir John's family had conducted their extensive maritime activities and their roles as servants of the Crown. From the 1360s, the Fastolfs had been collectors of customs and subsidies in Yarmouth, Alexander Fastolf holding the office in 1380s. In addition, Sir John's grandfather Hugh Fastolf was one of the two chief receivers for the Crown of the subsidies mentioned in the *Calendar of Close Rolls* for 1382.⁴² These duties may be one of the reasons why the Fastolf's Caister manor attracted the attentions of the East Anglian rebels, who are said to have attacked and plundered the residence.⁴³ The imposing new castle with its five-storey tower, in addition to expressing his wealth, power and chivalric credentials, may also have been a visible reassertion of the dominance of the Fastolfs over the surrounding community some of whom may have been the families of former rebels.

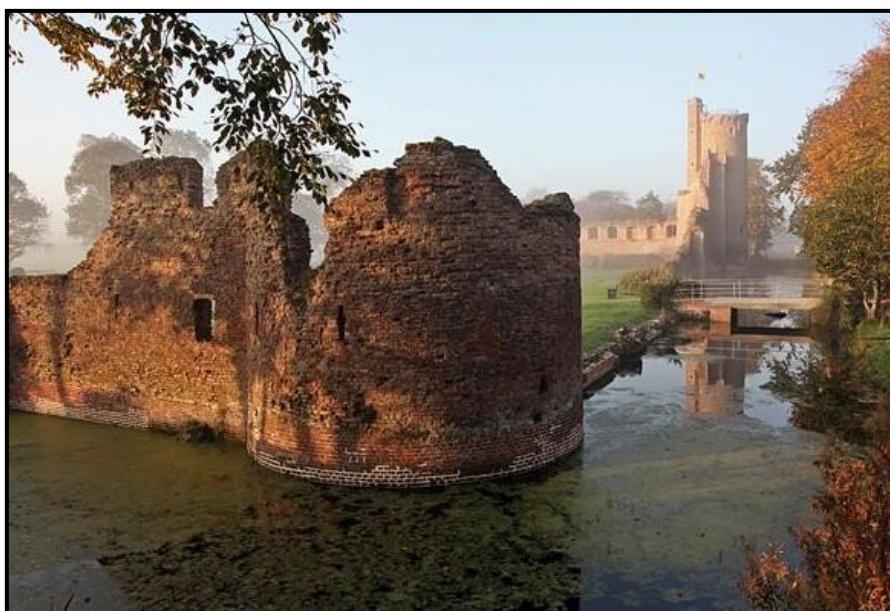


Figure 31:
Caister Castle
Photograph by
John Horner, East
Coast Images

42 : 'Close Rolls, Richard II: November 1382', *Calendar of Close Rolls, Richard II: volume 2: 1381-1385* (1920), pp. 191-194.

43 Johnson (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance*, p. 50.

Another motive for building may have been the return from France of William de la Pole, earl and later duke of Suffolk. De la Pole was immediately appointed to the council that governed the country during the minority of Henry VI and was made steward of the King's Household in 1433.⁴⁴ From this position of power, the earl proceeded to increase his lands and influence in East Anglia from his seat at Wingfield Castle, located near the border between Suffolk and Norfolk. Assisted by clever and ambitious men such as Thomas Tuddenham and John Heydon, William de la Pole aspired to dominate East Anglian politics and entered a long and acrimonious rivalry with the young heir of the late Duke of Norfolk, John Mowbray.⁴⁵ Sir John Fastolf, as a Knight of the Garter, Steward of the Duke of Bedford's Household and fellow member of governing council, perhaps felt that De la Pole threatened both his influence at court and his own role in East Anglian affairs. Fastolf's castle may have been a means of asserting his regional authority in the face of De la Pole's obvious desire to dominate East Anglia. Unlike many of his neighbours in the North East sub-region, Sir John surrounded his castle with the full panoply of water features, including a double moat, fishponds and a canal that linked the castle to the River Bure and beyond. It would appear that Fastolf wanted to recreate a scaled-down version of the watery surroundings of earlier castles such as Framlingham (110; TM 2868 6372; South East), Stokesay (Shropshire), Leeds (Kent) and he would undoubtedly have wanted to create a more elaborate landscape than that around De la Pole's Wingfield Castle, **Figure 32** below.



Figure 32:
Wingfield
Castle
(28 ; TM
2242 7724;
South East)

44 Virgoe, R "The Murder of James Andrew: Suffolk Faction in the 1430s" in Barron, C; Rawcliffe, C & Rosenthal, J.T. (editors) (1997) *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe* Centre of East Anglian Studies, University of East Anglia, p. 109.

45 Virgoe, R (1997), p. 109.

In 1383 Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, obtained a licence to crenellate the manor house at Wingfield and empark his woods and lands there.⁴⁶ However, as Copinger suggests it is possible that the extant Wingfield Castle was rebuilt by William de la Pole on his return from France in 1430. The castle stands on the edge of Wingfield Green and in contrast to The Rey, Blickling Hall or Caister Castle was located on a plateau between the River Waveney and a stream running northeast towards the Waveney. A wide, trapezoid moat surrounded the residence and the First Edition 1:2500 OS map shows what appear to be the remains of two other moated enclosures, possibly orchards or gardens and several additional ponds. Much of the castle was rebuilt as a manor house and farm complex in the sixteenth century but the south curtain wall with the gatehouse and polygonal corner bastions has survived, **Figure 32** above. The demesne and park extended to over four hundred acres and included one hundred and forty acres of pasture, meadow and woodland, along with two hundred acres of heath and marsh and seventy acres of arable land.⁴⁷ In addition, a College of Priests had been endowed by the de Wingfield family in the fourteenth century, the College standing in the churchyard of the parish church of St. Andrew to the south east of the castle.

Whilst not as venerable as Framlingham, the recently built Wingfield with its imposing gatehouse, bastions, moat and park conveyed some of the De la Poles ambition to dominate East Anglia. The death of the second Mowbray Duke of Norfolk in 1432, before his son had achieved his majority, gave William de la Pole the opportunity to become the preeminent magnate in East Anglia.⁴⁸ Fastolf would have been well aware of the threat to his own role in both the regional and national hierarchy and it may be no coincidence that work on Caister Castle was commissioned 1432 in anticipation of the coming power struggle. Sir John's historic connections with the manor of Caister Fastolf would have been a strong motive for choosing it as the site for his castle but it was also a good strategic location close to the boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk. In addition, inland waterways and roads provided access to much of East Anglia and the ports of Caister and Great Yarmouth made travel to other parts of England and the Continent relatively straightforward. However, Caister also offered other advantages to someone who wished to create a residence that would encapsulate his position as a senior courtier, acclaimed soldier and man of great wealth.

46 Copinger, W. A., (1909) *The Manors of Suffolk: Notes on their History and Devolution, Volume 4*. Manchester, Taylor, Garnett, Evans & Co, p. 110.

47 Patent Rolls, 13 Richard II, part ii 29d quoted by Copinger, p. 110.

48 Virgoe, R (1997) "The Murder of James Andrew: Suffolk Faction in the 1430s", p. 109.

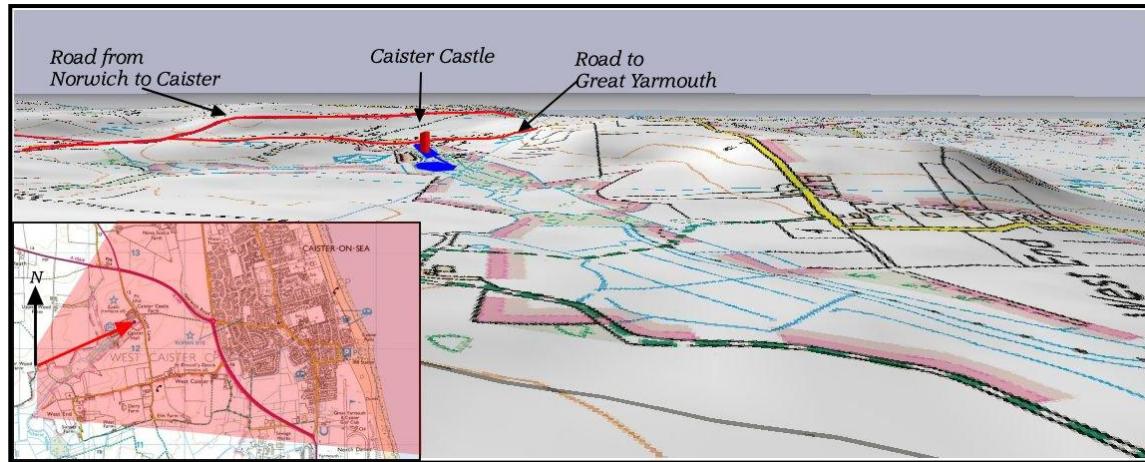


Figure 33: Three dimensional image of the location of Caister Castle, showing its position at the head of a shallow valley and the position of roads near the castle.

John Fastolf's castle was located at the head of a shallow valley, overlooked by the slopes of a low ridge to the south and east, beyond which lay the town of Caister. This valley floor location is in contrast to the more elevated position of Wingfield Castle on the boulder clay plateau, above the Waveney Valley, in the South East sub region.

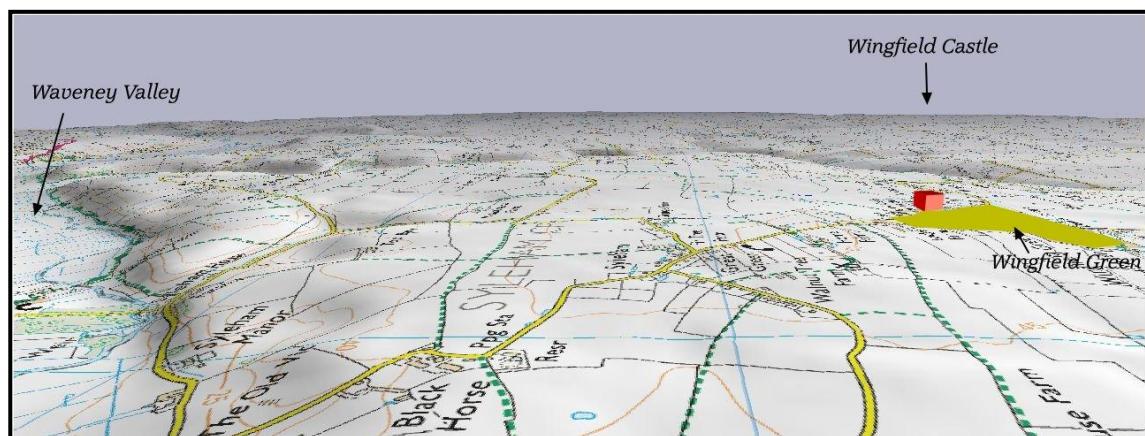


Figure 34 above: Three dimensional image of the location of Wingfield Castle, showing its position on a plateau to the south of the River Waveney, beside Wingfield Green.

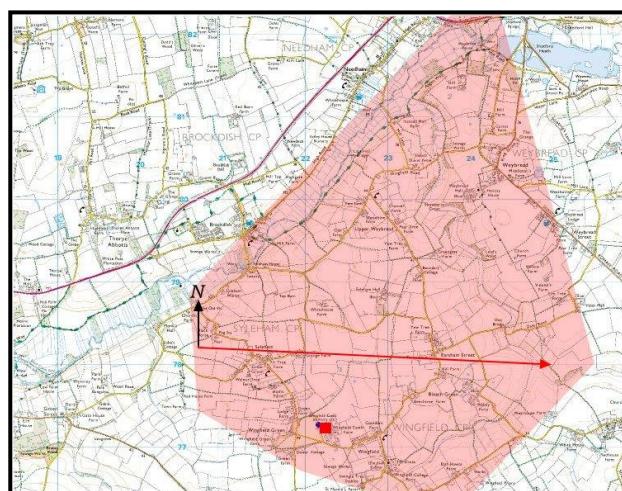


Figure 35 : Key showing the sight-line of the above image in red and approximate range of the image.

As discussed above, water features were vital components of fifteenth-century elite landscapes, an important means of expressing rank and control over resources and as indicators of changing levels of exclusivity. At Wingfield Castle the underlying clay soils would have made the retention of ground water a viable option for supplying the South East sub-region having some of the highest concentrations of moated sites in East Anglia. However, in the North East sub region, the light loamy soils were less amenable to construction of water features and the highly fertile land was at a premium, making the creation of elite landscapes a difficult and expensive undertaking. There was a surfeit of water available on the coastal marshes to the south of Caister where the loamy, clayey soils with naturally high groundwater could be used for a range of water features. However, this was not a location conducive to the creation of a high-status residence with impressive surroundings, as the low-lying, dank terrain of the tidal marshes lacked suitable sites for construction of a high-status residence and it would have been difficult to control seasonal flooding. The marsh also provided the perfect habitat for biting insects and the damp air was perhaps thought to encourage disease and ailments.

Fastolf's antecedents had overcome these problems by building their manor at the head of a shallow valley that runs north-eastward from the marshes, at the point where the loamy clays of the marshes give way to light fertile loams. This location provided Sir John with a site that was separated from the main expanse of the coastal marshes, whilst still providing more water retentive soils and the water supplies he needed for his ambitious plans. It seems likely that the creation of a carefully manipulated, extensive watery landscape around his castle was an important factor in Sir John's strategy to assert his position amongst the leading regional magnates such as De la Poles and Mowbrays.

Fastolf was a very wealthy man, having made a fortune during his years in France and through the profits of lucrative offices of state. In the years between 1415 and 1445 he is estimated to have spent almost £14,000 on property in East Anglia, Essex and elsewhere in England. The profits from these estates allowed Fastolf to build a fine moated house at Horsley Down in Southwark and invest £6,000 pounds on the construction of Caister Castle.⁴⁹ His fiscal resources allowed him to create a magnificent residence surrounded by moats, approached by a canal, with pools and

49 Woolgar, C. M., (1999) *The Great Household in Late-medieval England* London, Yale University Press, pp. 7-8.

possibly a mere, set amongst lush meadows. Sir John's expenditure on Caister makes the 2, 000 marks spent by Sir John Wodehouse on The Rey appear somewhat paltry in comparison. The building of Caister Castle and the creation of an elaborate watery setting would have sent powerful messages to his political rivals, to his allies and to the local inhabitants. Fastolf was letting De la Pole and his faction know that he was a force to be reckoned with both at court and in East Anglia, whilst allies could be assured that Fastolf had the authority, resources and influence to protect their interests. The local inhabitants and the populations of Caister and Yarmouth were sent an unequivocal statement that the manor of Caister Fastolf's was now a focus of Fastolf's power and authority and had been spectacularly rebuilt after the depredations by an earlier generation of rebels.

From a more practical perspective, apart from water resources, the raw materials for brick making were available nearby. Archaeological evidence has led to the identification of a brick-making site (TG 5106 1017) to the south of the castle near the River Bure.⁵⁰ The site - known as *The Brick Pits* - has been dated to the medieval or early post-medieval period and bricks found amongst the earthworks resemble those used in the construction of the castle. A second brickworks and a sandpit were recorded on the First Edition OS in the neighbouring parish of Mautby suggesting that the area around the castle was provided with adequate supplies of raw materials for Sir John's ambitious project. Supplies of stone, timber and other goods could have been shipped through the port of Great Yarmouth, two kilometres to the east, reaching the construction site via a watercourse known as *Pickerhill Holme* that connected the River Bure to the canal created for Sir John that brought barges into the castle precinct. On completion of the castle, the canal provided an efficient means of transport to the port of Yarmouth, with its links to the east coast of England and continental ports, whilst the River Yare gave access to Norwich. Apart from practicality, the canal allowed visitors to approach the castle along a route, created by, and under the control of Fastolf, from which they could be impressed by the landscape he had created and be aware of increasing exclusivity as they neared the castle.

The moats, turrets, curtain walls and soaring five-storey tower were doubtless intended to impress Sir John's peers and reflect his long military career, but would also have

50 NHER 8688, Brick Making Site, Caister St. Edmund.

supplied a degree of protection for the plate and coin in his treasury and chapel.⁵¹ Part of the original manor, which may have been moated, was preserved within the walls of the new building and a free chapel was retained.⁵² The interior apartments were lavishly furnished to provide a comfortable, well-appointed residence from which Sir John could manage his considerable political, financial and property interests.⁵³ Matthew Johnson has argued that Fastolf arranged the water features, buildings and approaches in order to reveal gradually the splendour of the residence, the visitor having to pause and change direction at specific locations to get the next view of part of the castle.⁵⁴ The plan of Caister and its surroundings can be understood in that way, but can also be interpreted as a succession of ever more exclusive areas. The various levels of exclusivity demarcated by physical features and by liminal and subliminal messages of control and authority.

The area around the castle is shown on the enclosure map for Caister –next-Yarmouth, dated 1815.⁵⁵ The landscape had altered considerably by this date, given widespread drainage in the area and piecemeal enclosure of the open fields prior to the Parliamentary Act. Much of the land between the River Bure and the point where the shallow valley leading to the castle begins lies at, or below, sea level and in the fifteenth century would have been a watery landscape of marsh and creeks. The valley leading from the marshes to the west front of the castle only rises a few metres along its length and it may have been the case that the small mere shown below the castle in 1815 was more extensive in the fifteenth century. The map suggests that barges approaching from the River Bure may have sailed into the mere before progressing into the canal that led to the castle, perhaps delaying arrival so that visitors could absorb the splendour of the scene before them. The canal then proceeded towards a turreted barge house, where boats passed under an archway into the barge yard. Such an approach could not fail to impress, whether the audience were boatmen delivering goods or honoured guests.

51 *The Paston Letters 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 1*, pp. 467-490.

52 NHER 8671

53 Inventory of Sir John Fastolf's Goods & Sir John Fastolf's Wardrobe *Paston Letters Vol 1*, pp. 467 – 490.

54 Johnson (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance*, pp. 50 -51.

55 NRO C/Sca 2/63, Enclosure Award 1815, map undated but circa 1815



Figure 36:
The site of Caister
Castle as shown on the
enclosure map of 1815
NRO C/Sca 2/63

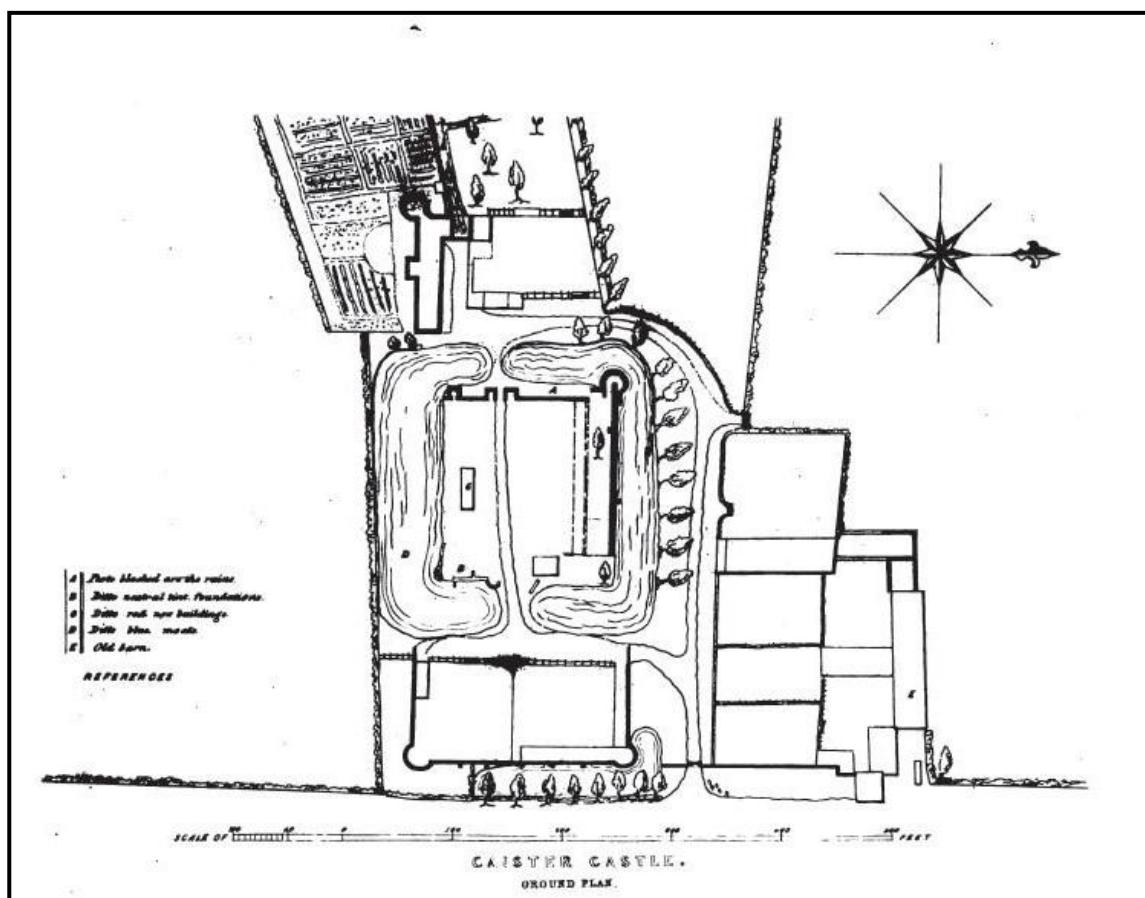


Figure 37: Eighteenth-century plan of Caister Castle reproduced in Dawson Turner's *Sketch of the History of Caister Castle near Yarmouth* London, Whittaker & Co. 1842

The paucity of contemporary documentation for the estate surrounding the castle has made reconstruction of the surroundings problematic. An eighteenth-century plan of the castle was reproduced by Dawson Turner in 1842 and is shown in **Figure 37**, above. This plan was used in conjunction with the Enclosure map and Tithe Award and the First Edition OS to create **Figure 38**.

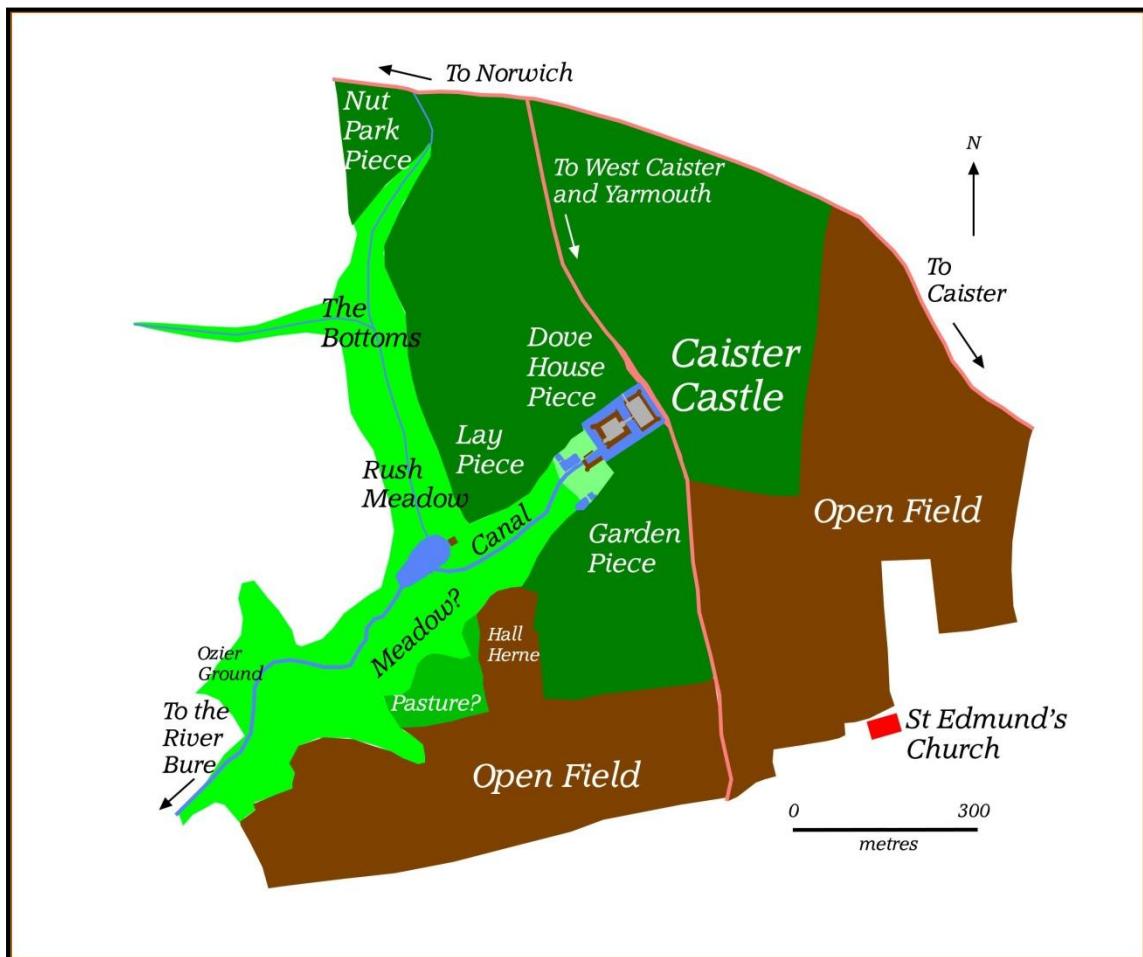


Figure 38: A plan of Caister Castle and the possible arrangement of its surroundings in the fifteenth century, showing part of the demesne in shades of green.

Both display and access were carefully orchestrated at Caister, the most exclusive views being reserved for those approaching along the canal. Those passing along the road between Caister and Norwich would have glimpsed the castle from a slightly elevated position, across the intervening open fields, its tower rising above the water of the moats and marking it as a residence of great significance. For those approaching or passing on the Yarmouth road the walls and turrets of the base court would have risen from the waters of the moat, indicating that a man of substance and rank occupied the castle without allowing any view of or access to the more exclusive parts of the

residence. Only those admitted, possibly through a lodge or gatehouse indicated in the 1760 plan, would be able to make their way into either the service yards or the base court. The latter housed the lodgings of relatives, household officers, servants and the staff accompanying guests. The majority of these individuals were accommodated in designated sleeping chambers not used for the pursuance of business or household duties.⁵⁶

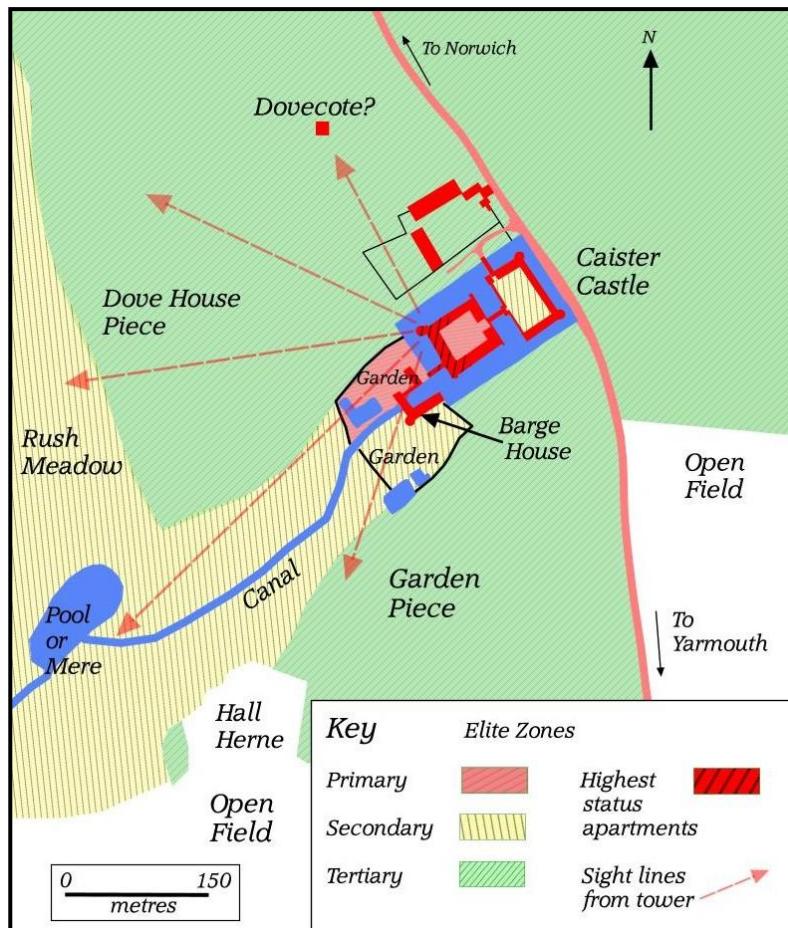


Figure 39:
Caister Hall
Elite zones

Guests and senior household officers were lodged within the main court in rooms described in two inventories dated 1448 and 1462.⁵⁷ The documents were used by C. M. Woolgar to identify the internal arrangements of the Principal Court and show that the two great halls, the guest suites, Sir John's suite of rooms and those of his wife, Lady Millicent occupied the west, south and north wings of the courtyard.⁵⁸ The most prestigious chambers were furthest from the Base Court and overlooked the carefully-manufactured landscape comprising the moat, gardens and barge yard, with the canal, meadows and mere to the west and Dove House piece to the north. These spatial

56 Woolgar, C. M., (1999) *The Great Household in Late-medieval England*, pp. 63- 65.

57 A detailed inventory of John Fastolf's goods and another of his wardrobe were included by Gairdner in his edition of *The Paston Letters Volume 1*, pp. 467-491.

58 Woolgar (1999), pp. 66-67.

arrangements suggest a zoning of the exclusivity both within the castle and in the surrounding grounds, fanning out from the great five-storey tower. The service court and base court with the walls and moat served as physical barriers, controlling access to and views of the most exclusive areas. The highest-ranking occupants could enter by the most prestigious route, along the canal through a landscape that expressed Fastolf's ability to control and manage natural resources. The mere may have acted as a holding area not only to allow the view to be appreciated, but to restrict access along the canal to those who had specific reasons for visiting the castle. In this way, Fastolf could also demonstrate his authority over the local population, and by implication the wider community. Despite his wealth and influence, Fastolf does not appear to have been able to create a significant area of parkland, the only place-name evidence being the small area of woodland called *Nut Park Piece* to the north of the meadows. Nor was his ambition to found a college of priests at Caister fulfilled, a college eventually being established at Oxford rather than Caister, contrary to the terms of his will.⁵⁹ In these two matters, Wingfield Castle surpassed Caister but Fastolf succeeded on all other levels and created what is considered to have been one of the finest residences in fifteenth-century England.⁶⁰ Whilst not as grand as some late-medieval residences in other regions, for example, Herstmonceux Castle in Sussex built by Sir Roger Fienes in the 1440s, Caister certainly appears to have fulfilled Fastolf's aspiration to create a residence that would help him to assert his authority within East Anglia. Sir John created a purpose-built residence that encapsulated his ancestry, rank, ambition and wealth and it could be argued that it out-shone both the medieval grandeur of Framlingham, the dour bulk of Wingfield and the reputed, opulent beauty of The Rey. As we shall see, Caister Castle would be a much admired and coveted residence for the remainder of the fifteenth century.

By the 1440s, William de la Pole had become the first duke of Suffolk and still held the balance of power in East Anglia, but he no longer wielded power from Wingfield Castle staying instead at Ewelme Palace, part of his wife's Oxfordshire estates, or in London, where he could better attend to affairs of state.⁶¹ It is interesting to speculate whether Fastolf's splendid castle had anything to do with his decision to abandon his historic

59 Richmond, C., (1996) *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century: Fastolf's Will*. Cambridge University Press

60 Pevsner, N. & Wilson, B. (2002 edition) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk*. Vol.1, Norwich and North-East London, Yale University Press, p. 715.

61 Virgoe R., (1997) "Three Suffolk Parliamentary Elections of the Mid-Fifteenth Century" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe* , p. 53.

caput of Wingfield Castle, which subsequently declined in status. The Duke of Suffolk relied increasingly on his principal supporters in East Anglia, such as Thomas Tuddenham and John Heydon to maintain his interests in the region. John Mowbray had attained his majority and was second Duke of Norfolk but was not considered an influential force either nationally or in East Anglia during the 1440s.⁶² A new challenger to the Duke of Suffolk's authority emerged from Mowbray's retinue in the person of Thomas Danyell, esquire. Danyell wielded considerable influence at court and seems to have noted the gap left by the John Mowbray's deficiencies and began developing a power-base in East Anglia, ostensibly as a supporter of the Duke of Norfolk.⁶³ Danyell married Margaret, the sister of a future Duke of Norfolk, John Howard, which increased his credibility in East Anglia as did the grant of the Constableship of Castle Rising by Henry VI. Danyell needed to acquire property in East Anglia in order to challenge the Duke of Suffolk's authority and so that he could fulfil the residency requirement to be elected a knight of the shire. In 1446, he obtained the quitclaim of a number of former Wodehouse manors including the manor of Roydon Hall and the The Rey from John Paston, as recorded in the Close Rolls of that year-

John Paston, son and heir of William Paston late of Norffolk, to Thomas Danyell esquire and his heirs. Quitclaim of the manors of 'Wellhalle,' Grymston, Rydoun and Congham co. Norffolk. Dated 20 November 25 Henry VI.
*Memorandum of acknowledgment, 26 November.*⁶⁴

The Pastons, like Danyell, were relatively new members of the East Anglian elite having risen from the ranks of the minor gentry through the skill of lawyer and judge William Paston, and greatly assisted by William's marriage to Agnes daughter and heir of Sir Edmund Berry in 1420.⁶⁵ The Pastons were related by marriage to Sir John Fastolf and like Danyell were amongst the Duke of Norfolk's supporters. It is unclear how John Paston acquired an interest in the Wodehouse manors but it was around this time that the Wodehouses were trying to consolidate their estates at Kimberley though often in straightened circumstances. However, Danyell's claim to the lands mentioned in the above extract was challenged by Henry Wodehouse and there followed a lengthy

62 Virgoe, R., (1997), p. 53.

63 Virgoe R., (1997) "Three Suffolk Parliamentary Elections of the Mid-Fifteenth Century", p. 53.

64 'Close Rolls, Henry VI: December 1446', *Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry VI: volume 4: 1441-1447* (1937)

65 Gairdner, J (1900) *The Paston Letters 1422 – 1509, Volume 1*, p. 11; Settlement between Sir Edmund Berre and William Paston prior to William's marriage to Agnes Berre,

and at times bitter dispute ensued between this long-established family and the new man who was making his way up the East Anglian hierarchy.⁶⁶ The Rey provided Danyell with a high-status residence, near Castle Rising, from which he could control the West of East Anglia, with the added cache of The Rey's renowned builder, Sir John Wodehouse of Agincourt fame. In a possible attempt to legitimise his claim to the Wodehouse lands, Thomas Danyell sought a licence to crenellate and empark The Rey, which was granted in 1446. The licence, which is one of the few documentary sources for the fifteenth-century landscape surrounding The Rey, gave permission to –

*imbattle, crenellate and fortify the manor of Roydon with stone and lime & impark 70a. marsh, 200a. pasture and 100a. meadow with pales and ditches & liberty of free warren.*⁶⁷

The application for a licence does not imply that Danyell intended to convert The Rey into a defensive structure; rather the licence was probably a means of reinforcing Danyell's claim to the property whilst increasing his own status and the exclusivity of the residence and its surroundings. Charles Coulson has argued that licences to embattle were part of the complex system of chivalric honour and knightly symbolism, and as such should not be taken as evidence of any defensive intent.⁶⁸ Robert Liddiard's assertion that such licences were often sought by lords who wished to demonstrate their close affinity to the monarch may be particularly relevant in this case given the dispute between Danyell and the Wodehouses.⁶⁹ However, in this case it may have been necessary for Danyell to request a licence as Roydon lay within the Rising Chase, which was in effect a royal forest making it essential rather than pretentious to obtain a licence to empark.⁷⁰

Field boundaries and eighteenth-century sources suggest that the three hundred and seventy acres of marsh, meadow and pasture mentioned in 1446 may equate with Congham Warren and the group of closes within an oval enclosure surrounding the site of The Rey, as shown in **Figure 40**. The two areas outlined by the red hatched line

66 Blomefield, F., (1808) 'Freebridge Hundred: Reydon, or Rydon', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 9, pp. 59-62.

67 NRO NAS 1/1/18/3

68 Coulson, C., (1994) "Freedom to crenellate by licence: an historiographical revision" *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 38, 86 -137, cited in Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate*, p. 24.

69 Liddiard, R., (2005) *Castles in Context* Macclesfield, Windgather, pp.43-4.

70 Roydon was recorded as one of the parishes lying entirely within Rising Chase on a map surveyed in 1588, NRO BL 71, Castle Rising and surrounding parishes, Nineteenth-century copy

covered 373 acres and 17 perches and may equate with the 370 acres described in the licence to embattle and impark granted in 1446-7.

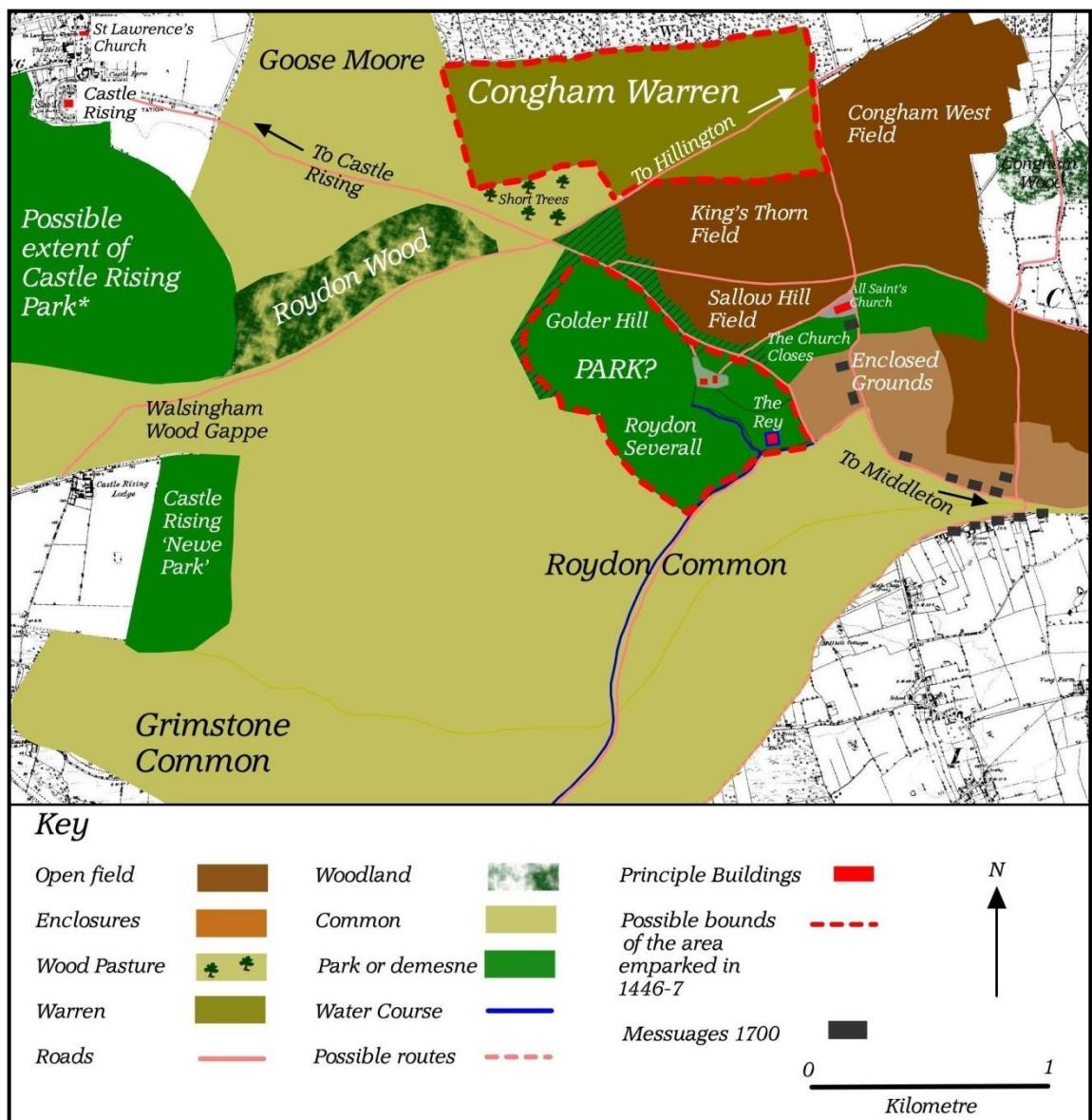


Figure 40: The landscape around The Rey as it may have appeared in the 1440s

Created using evidence from a licence to empark of 1446-7; Copy of a map of 1588; a field book of 1700 and a map of 1732.⁷¹ Castle Rising Park as estimated in Liddiard (2000)⁷². Base map - First Edition OS 1:10,560

The reconstruction in Figure 40 has been compiled by looking for correlations between minor place names and acreages in the eighteenth-century sources with those included in the licence to empark. Although many of the details from the field book had to be

⁷¹ NRO BL 71, Copy map 1588; NRO MC 2485/1, 1732; NRO HOW 555 348, Field Book, 1700; MC2485/1Estate ; NRO NAS 1/1/18/3, 1446 Copy of the license to empark and imbattle granted to Thomas Danyell.

⁷² As defined in Liddiard (2000) *Landscapes of Lordship: Norman Castles and the Countryside in Medieval Norfolk, 1066-1200* British Archaeological Report 309. Oxford, Archaeopress, p. 53.

disregarded, some were sufficiently similar to conclude that they referred to the same feature mentioned in the license. The map of 1732 (Figure 24, page 100) allowed the position of the feature or enclosure to be plotted along with information from the sixteenth-century map. The 1732 map was surveyed well before the enclosure and tree planting that took place in this area in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and has compensated for the paucity of earlier documentary evidence relating to The Rey. The stream was recorded before realignment and the areas of open field to the east of The Rey have been estimated from furlongs extant in 1732, field boundaries suggestive of piecemeal enclosure and field names. It is likely that the *West Field* in Congham and the area of open field to either side of Bradgate Lane were larger in the fifteenth century as there is some evidence of piecemeal enclosure around their boundaries. *King's Thorn Field* and *Sallow Hill Field* were outfield brecks not in regular cultivation in the eighteenth century and were presumably such in the medieval period.

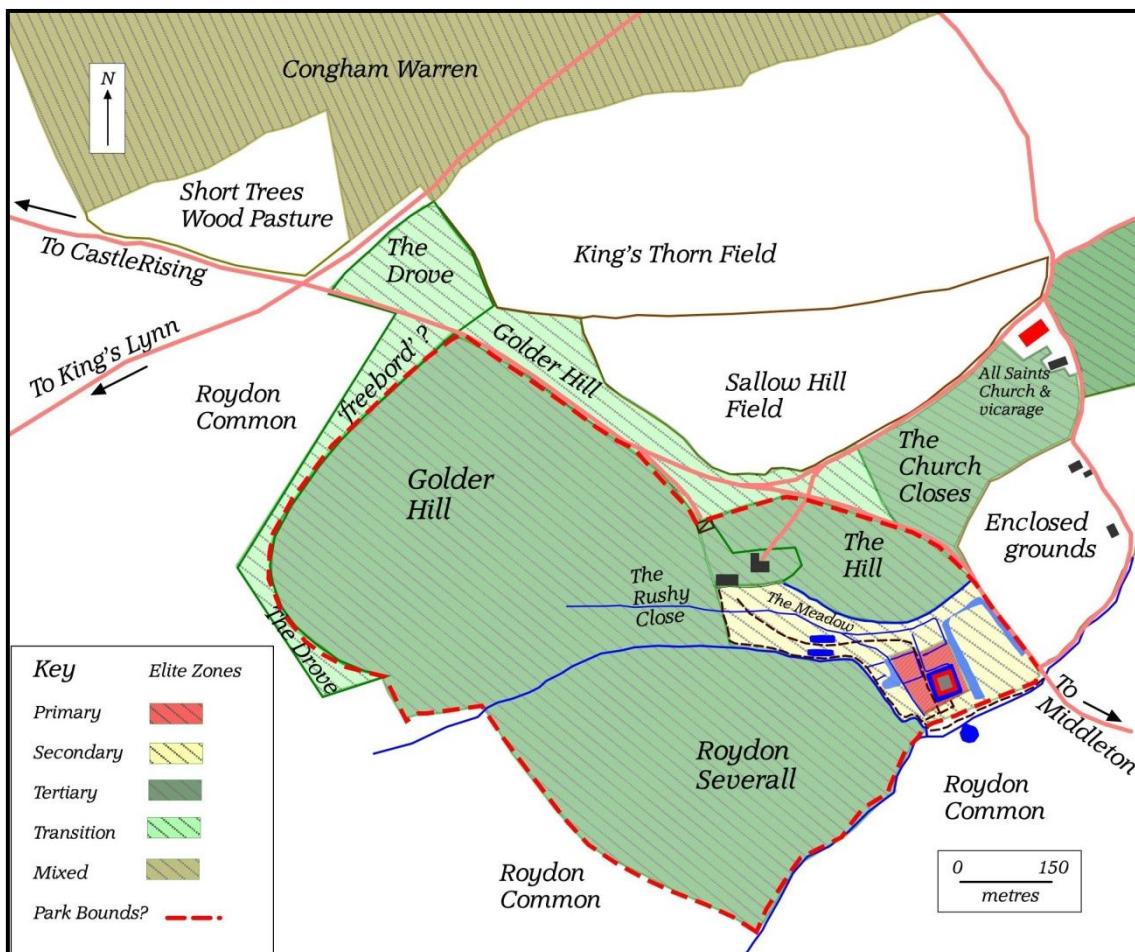


Figure 41: Levels of Exclusivity around The Rey circa 1450

Figure 41 shows four elite zones around The Rey after the emparkment of the 1546-7. An enclosure called *The Drove* on the 1732 map (Figure 42 below) was part of the

Roydon Hall demesne and for travellers on the Castle Rising road would have signalled that they were passing from Roydon Common into an area under the control of an individual. This area may have acted as a transitional zone between the vernacular landscape and the Park or demesne on *Golder Hill*, possibly in the form of a ‘freebord’. As mentioned in Chapter 2, these were areas of common land abutting the boundary of a park, where the lord had the right to plant trees for the purposes of game management.⁷³ By restricting the tenants’ rights in the ‘freebord’ a lord could in effect create a buffer zone between his park and the common pasture. Blomefield stated that the trees and shrubs on the ‘freebord’ were there to assist the killing of game and prevent escapes but the area would have been just as effective as a means of controlling poaching and keeping people away from the park bounds. *The Drove* may have functioned as a ‘freebord’ in the fifteenth century or as a similar form of transitional area between the vernacular landscape and the lands of Roydon Hall. The part of *Golder Hill* that carried the road and abutted the open fields has also been considered a transitional area, for whilst it was part of the demesne, it was subject to high levels of interaction with people using the roads and going about their work in the fields. *The Drove* was also important as it provided the only direct access between the demesne and Congham Warren, which was included in the Danyell’s license to empark.⁷⁴ The authority to create a warren extended, officially, the elite landscape around The Rey although this was not land exclusively under the control of the lord. Warrens could be established within parks or on other areas of demesne land close to an elite residence but they could also be created on common land or arable outfield, over which tenants also had rights.⁷⁵ In the sixteenth century, the proliferation of rabbits on Congham Warren and the resultant effect on local livelihoods caused the local inhabitants to challenge the legality of the warren in the central courts.⁷⁶ The lord of the manor or his lessee, could exert considerable control over the stocking of the warren and the customary rights of the tenants but warrens were not under the exclusive control of the lord and for the purposes of this study will be considered a ‘mixed zone’ where the elite presence is tempered by other interests.

The curving shape of the field boundaries around *Golder Hill*, *The Hill* and *Roydon Severall* suggest that these enclosures may have been part of the emparked area along

⁷³ Blomefield, F., (1807) *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: Volume 1*, p. 95. Also Dallas, P., (2010) ‘Sustainable Environments: Common Wood Pastures in Norfolk’ Landscape History Volume 31, pp. 27-28.

⁷⁴ NRO NAS 1/1/18/3

⁷⁵ Williamson, T., (2007) *Rabbits, Warrens and Archaeology* Stroud, Tempus, p. 89.

⁷⁶ Whyte, N., (2009) *Inhabiting the Landscape: Place, Custom and Memory 1500 to 1800* Oxford, Windgather Press, pp. 117 & 143.

with *The Rushy Close* and *The Meadow*. It would appear that the original demesne was assarted from Roydon Common and may have functioned as a park before Danyell's application for a license. These enclosures, along with *The Church Closes*, formed a tertiary elite zone, under the direct control of the lord but subject to interaction with the wider community where it abutted the common and local roads. The road from Castle Rising skirted the tertiary area, with a spur leading off to the *curia* of The Rey, the main route continuing towards Middleton. Another road branched towards Roydon Church and on to Hillington, however, a path across *Golder Hill* and Roydon Common recorded on the 1732 map was not shown on the map of 1588 or mentioned in the license to crenellate and empark.

People using the road across Golder Hill would have caught glimpses of The Rey and its surroundings and would have gathered that ahead lay a high-status site, distinct from the working landscape of the open fields and common. A spur leading towards The Rey left the Castle Rising Road and it is possible that buildings may have stood in similar locations to those recorded in 1732, their presence signalling the transition to a more exclusive landscape and encouraging travellers to stay on the main route. People travelling onwards towards Middleton would have skirted by *The Hill* which, given the evidence from sites such as Badmondisfield and Caister, might have been the site of a dovecote, another highly visible indication that the land beside the road was part of an exclusive landscape held by a family of rank.

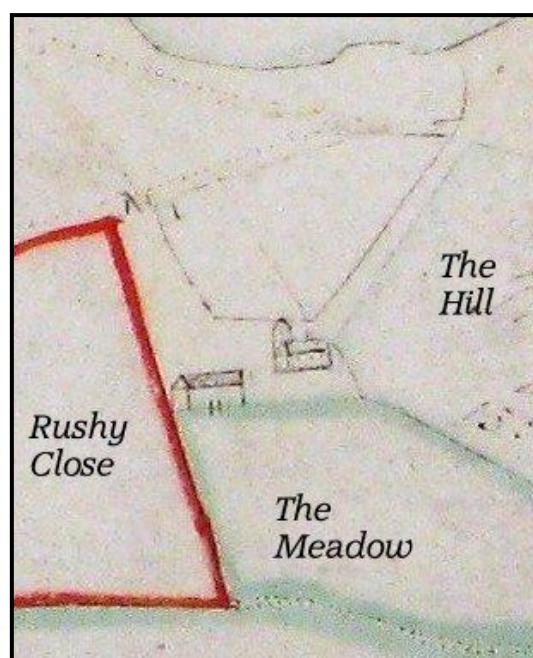


Figure 42:
Roydon Hall Farm in 1732

The two buildings appear to control access to *The Meadow* from the road system on Golder Hill. A gate and a small square enclosure stand at the point where the road enters the yard of Hall Farm. A similar arrangement of buildings and gates may have controlled access to The Rey in the fifteenth century, their presence indicating the increased exclusivity of the area beyond the yard. If a

gatehouse or other ancillary buildings stood in this area then much of the routine contact with local inhabitants and the wider community could take place here, allowing access to *The Meadow* and the Rey to be more selective.

The Meadow has been interpreted here as being an area of secondary exclusivity, where the lord or his officers could exert considerable control over who might be admitted. Apart from these restrictions, secondary zones also formed the setting for the residence and contained a range of high-status features that demonstrated control over resources as well as people. In the case of The Rey water resources appear to have been manipulated to create a range of ponds and enclosures. This area would appear from aerial photograph evidence to have been divided into a number of rectilinear, ditched enclosures with two very distinct linear features interpreted in the NHER and here as fishponds, shown at A in **Figure 43**, below.⁷⁷ A large three-sided area of positive crop marks (B), and an L-shaped positive crop mark (C) all imply that the square, sharply defined moat stood within a watery setting, with lush green sward providing a backdrop for the residence. A large almost circular pond (D) lies to the south of The Rey on Roydon Common and although it cannot be dated, of may have formed part of this watery composition beyond the bounds of *The Meadow*. The very deep drainage ditches constructed across the site in the 1980s suggest *The Meadow* was still a very damp location in the twentieth century. The rectilinear enclosures surrounding the moat have been interpreted as yards or gardens in the NHER.⁷⁸ The large three-sided positive crop mark at C in **Figure 43**, part of which coincides with a rectangle of boggy ground on the First Edition OS, may have been a shallow moat surrounding a garden or, more likely, an orchard. Such a feature would have conveyed a sense of orderly abundance to those passing along the adjacent road and separated the residence from direct contact with the roadway. An important role of the secondary zone in the early fifteenth century appears to have been as an area where the status and wealth of the lord could be displayed, to both those within the curia and those viewing it from the wider landscape. In effect, the secondary zone could be equally described as the ‘display zone’ where messages about the importance of the residence were conveyed to audiences both within and outside the elite landscape.

77 NHER 3317

78 NHER 3317 S. Massey, 2001

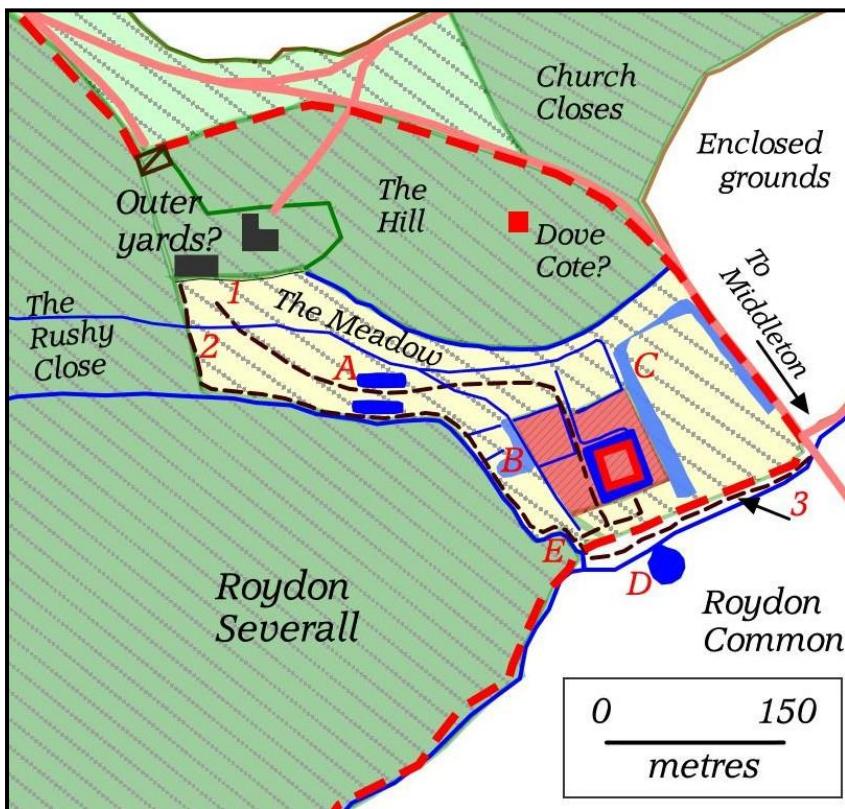


Figure 43:
Detail of the elite zones around The Rey

Three possible approach routes to The Rey are offered in **Figure 43**, the first (1) leaves the outer yard and travels between the two fishponds at A before turning south between two ditches to the west arm of the moat. A second (2) possible approach follows a path called *Stoney Lane* in 1732, which can be seen on the 1946 AP as parallel ditches. This route follows the bounds of The Meadow and turns towards the moat at E. The third approach leaves the Middleton road passing between the stream and the curia before entering *The Meadow* also at E. These proposed routes have been informed by the crop marks and the position of known approaches to other residences but the process made more difficult by the lack of evidence for the position of bridges across the moat. The only hint in the archaeological record is a negative crop mark in the western arm of the moat, which may be the result of rubble infill.⁷⁹ The primary zone was confined to a small area around the moat and includes possible garden enclosures defined by ditches that demarcate three sides of an area around the moat. This may have been the most ornamental part of the curia, perhaps one reason for William of Worcester's description of The Rey as being 'most beautiful'.⁸⁰ Nothing is known of the appearance of the house other than William's brief account but the implication was that it was a very grand, if not large, building. For those approaching from the south The Rey must have

⁷⁹ NHER 3317

⁸⁰ *The Itineraries of William of Worcester*, p. 253.

looked particularly attractive, its moat, gardens and meadows creating a stark and perhaps intentional contrast with the adjacent expanse of Roydon Common.

It is not difficult to understand why a man such as Thomas Danyell, who was seeking to challenge the Duke of Suffolk for dominance in East Anglia, might covet such a residence. By gaining The Rey and the manor of Roydon Hall, Danyell was emphasising his superiority over the established elite, in this case the Wodehouses. Danyell had not only been appointed Constable of Castle Rising, a post once held by Sir John Wodehouse, he had also gained their former principal manor and the house built by the most illustrious of the Wodehouse family. The exclusivity of The Rey, both in terms of prestige and in terms of the spatial arrangements of surroundings made it a powerful part of Danyell's strategy for gaining prominence in East Anglia. Part of the demesne may already have functioned as a park but was legitimised by the grant of a licence to empark. In addition, the elaborate setting of the mansion with its square moat and ditched enclosures would have added to its desirability.

However, the symbolic value of the site perhaps out-weighed its material value and led others to enter the negotiations over the fate of The Rey. The main protagonists were Thomas Danyell on the one hand, and Henry Wodehouses on the other. Thomas Lord Scales, a close friend of Henry Wodehouse, was involved but appeared to have kept his options open. The dispute, if that is what it was, took several bizarre turns. The Rey is mentioned in the correspondence of the Paston family on several occasions. For example, in a letter dated 6th October 1450 from Judge Yelverton's clerk to John Paston, the Judge warned that Danyell had stationed a garrison at Roydon. Yelverton implied that Danyell was over-reaching himself and might be in danger of attracting a charge of treason, stating that "*there is non other remedy but deth for Danyell*".⁸¹ With a garrison at Roydon and the attempts by the Wodehouses to challenge the legality of Danyell's title to The Rey ongoing, at some point before February 1451, Henry Wodehouse married Thomas Danyell's sister, Elizabeth in a somewhat clandestine manner. The Calendar of Close Rolls recorded –

the declaration of John, archbishop of Canterbury, that when he was chancellor, Thomas Danyell, being esquire, in his present, Henry Woodhouse esquire confessed before him in his chancery at Lambeth that he should have Elizabeth,

⁸¹ Gairdner, J, Editor (1900) *The Paston Letters 1422-1509 AD Volume 1*, p. 152. Letter from William Wayte to John Paston.

sister of Danyell to wife, and Thomas said not nay, that the confession was made long before the archbishop made and sealed any deeds at the prayer of Henry of any lands that Thomas had or claims of trust, in so much that the archbishop at the prayer of Henry gave him licence that he and Elizabeth should be married secretly to avoid his costs if they married openly.

Given at his manor of Lambeth 17 February 1451.

The most puzzling turn of events came in 1454, when William of Worcester reported that The Rey was entirely demolished by Lord Scales of Middleton, apparently with the permission of Henry Wodehouse. Worcester's account of the events is brief and given below

1454. About 21 September the most beautiful manorhouse of Rey, built a mile from Castle Rising by the father of Wodhous esquire, nobly built on a grand scale with domestic offices, was pulled down and razed by the council and assistance of Thomas, Lord Scales, a close friend of Wodhous the son and heir of the said [John] Wodhous, with his consent, because otherwise a certain Thomas Danyell esquire of Lancashire, formerly Sherriff of Norfolk, with the help and power of John Duke of Norfolk since he had married a young Howard kinswoman of the said Duke, pretended to have right and title to the said manor on the false pretence that he was heir of Wodhous who had given him the said manor. So with a large armed force of the dukes he several times entered upon the manor by force; and so Lord Scales, with good intentions although to the utmost damage of Wodhous's heir, had the said regal manor which cost in building over 2,000 marks sterling [£1,333. 6s. 8d] razed to the ground.⁸²

The account states that Lord Scales advised John Wodehouse that this would be an effective means of thwarting Danyell's plans for the residence. The tactic appears to have worked, in that Danyell gave up his claim to The Rey, but continued to challenge for a pre-eminent role in East Anglia until his attainder in 1472.⁸³ The version of the case offered by Worcester may have been given from a partisan viewpoint, as he was a member of Sir John Fastolf's household. Fastolf, the Pastons and Lord Scales were close allies and in regular correspondence. The possibility that the advice given to

⁸²*Itineraries of William of Worcester*. Edited and Translated by John H. Harvey (1969) Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 253.

⁸³ 'Edward IV: October 1472: Second Roll', *Parliament Rolls of Medieval England*.

Wodehouse by Lord Scales was not entirely altruistic is suggested by Blomefield's assertion that Lord Scales proceeded to use the materials from The Rey to construct his own new residence at Middleton.⁸⁴

On this occasion it would appear that the old knight out-smarted the new man, though at a high cost to the Wodehouses. However, across East Anglia, other families were increasing their social standing through official appointments and the acquisition of property and whilst not as ambitious as Thomas Danyell, they were determined to maintain their position amongst the established elite. The Pastons were active in regional politics, in the property market and in the marriage market. The lands brought to the Pastons by Agnes Berry had underpinned their rise through the social ranks and the marriage of her son John to Margaret, daughter and sole heir of Sir John Mautby of Mautby Hall further enhanced the family's property portfolio and social standing in East Anglia.⁸⁵ In addition, the marriage also brought John Paston's legal skills to the attention of Margaret's kinsman Sir John Fastolf, which would greatly enhance the Paston fortunes in the succeeding decades.⁸⁶ Margaret Mautby's lands included Mautby Hall (19; TG 4883 1137; North East), where Margaret supervised refurbishments to the hall and instigated the construction of a new south aisle in Mautby Church.⁸⁷

The Paston family held manors in several locations across East Anglia but they resided mainly at manors in the North East sub-region and in the city of Norwich. Several of their principal residences were unmoated, including Mautby Hall, Oxnead Hall and Paston Hall. The watery environments of broads and marshes near these residences, along with underlying light soils perhaps discouraged the creation of water features. However, despite the lack of moats at their properties, the Pastons were eager to aggrandise the houses and control access by the creation of walls and other physical boundaries. This led, in some instances to the closure and realignment of thoroughfares near their residences. For example, on 6th July, 1443 William Paston was granted a license to enclose a portion of highway in Paston and another at Oxnead, providing he made two new routes.⁸⁸ In a letter of 1445, Agnes Paston reported that the dooles,⁸⁹

84 Blomefield F.,(1808) 'Freebridge Hundred: Middleton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 9 , pp. 20-34.

85 *The Paston Letters*: 1422-1509 Gairdner, J., editor (1900) Vol. I, pp. 38-40.

86 *The Paston Letters*: 1422-1509 Gairdner, J., editor (1900)

87 *The Paston Letters*: 1422-1509 Gairdner, J., editor (1900)

88 Patent Roll, 21 Henry VI, p1, m10 quoted by Gairdner in *The Paston Letters* 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 1, p. 58.

89 Stones or small mounds used as boundary markers.

which had been set up to mark the realignment, had been pulled up by the vicar of Paston, who had previously agreed to the new route. The vicar –

*Seithe he wolle makyn a dyche fro the corner of his walle, ryght across the weye to the newe diche of the grete cloose*⁹⁰

The dispute hints at a local power struggle between the Pastons and the vicar, John Partrick, who was perhaps attempting to assert his position following the recent death of William Paston. The vicar, in effect did exactly what the Pastons had done by building a wall across a road although Partrick does not appear to have been granted the necessary license. *The newe diche of the Grete cloose* may also have been a source of local contention and disagreements about walls, roadways, dooles and ditches rumbled on for several years in Paston. As mentioned in Chapter Two, in 1451 the indefatigable Agnes Paston was still supervising the building of walls and fending off accusations of illegally closing the king's highway near Paston Church.⁹¹

The process of creating exclusive zones through aggrandisement and enclosure was by no means straight forward and it is clear from the Paston correspondence that local inhabitants and other members of the elite could object legally or violently to the creation of exclusivity in the landscape. It may be no coincidence that the vicar blocked the new route through Paston at the time when Agnes was supervising major building work at Paston Hall. The scale of the work being undertaken can be gauged by the fact that the joists required for the construction of a new chapel and parlour at Paston Hall were of such size and finish that they could not be found in East Anglia. Agnes asked her son Edmund to procure the joists in London as *here can non soche be hadde in this conttre.*⁹² The hall was demolished in the eighteenth century but some idea of its form and the results of Agnes's efforts can be had from a description by the eighteenth-century antiquary Francis Blomefield -

The old hall of this family stands near to the church, and had 2 courts; in the inner court is a well; the buttery hatch, with the hall, is standing, but the chambers over it, and the chapel, are in ruins. Over a door of the great

90 *The Paston Letters* 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 1, p. 58.

91 *The Paston Letters* 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 1, p. 216.

92 *The Paston Letters* 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 1, p. 58.

*staircase, out of the hall, the arms of Berry are carved. Sir William Paston the judge married a daughter and heir of Sir Edmund Berry.*⁹³

No doubt, Agnes's inheritance helped fund the building work at Paston and the acquisition of estates across the region. However, such advancement could cause resentment in both the local community and the established regional elite. As the Pastons created residences that are ever more elaborate and made concerted efforts to increase the exclusivity of their surroundings so they faced opposition from some quarters. It is important to emphasise here that the aspects of exclusivity that controlled access to the residence, not only increased levels of privacy but enhanced the security of a property. Disputes, whether over local road closures or the ownership of substantial estates, could descend into violence, as was the case when the inhabitants of Paston attempted to throw down one of the contested walls. A long-running property dispute with the Duke of Suffolk led Margaret Paston to tell her husband John in a letter of July 1465 that their servants at Hellesdon were

*dayly in fer of ther lyvys; The Duke of Suffolks men thretyn [them] daylyand gret affrayes have ben made uppon me and my felashep here on Monday last.*⁹⁴

There can be no doubt that along with heightened prestige and privacy, a good strong wall, some gates or a wide moat could hamper intruders, whether casual miscreants or a group of armed retainers. The revisionist view of late-medieval fortified buildings tends to emphasise the symbolic and aesthetic attributes of their form and location. Writers such as Liddiard, Creighton and Johnson have argued cogently that much of the militaristic and defensive appearance of late-medieval residences was emblematic rather than practical.⁹⁵ However, the fact that a gatehouse could be closed or that shots could be fired from, albeit less than ideal, gun-loops might discourage potential assailants. The Duke's men, rather than attacking the house, seem to have made do with destroying the undefended warren lodge.⁹⁶ The lodge was a symbol of the Paston's control over the wider landscape and by attacking it the Duke's men were perhaps challenging the

93 Blomefield, F., (1805) 'Tunstede Hundred: Paston', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 11 (1810), pp. 57-59.

94 *The Paston Letters* 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 2, p. 207.

95 Creighton, O., H. (2002) *Castles and Landscapes: Power, Community and Fortification in Medieval England* London, Equinox Publishing Ltd. Liddiard, R. (2005) *Castles in Context: Power, Symbolism and Landscape, 1066-1500*, Bollington, Windgather Press. Johnson (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance* Abingdon, Routledge.

96 *The Paston Letters* 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 2, p. 357.

Paston's right to hold the warren itself. Contemporary descriptions suggest that such incidents were not uncommon although much of the violence was small scale and might amount to no more than intimidation or a belligerent standoff, as at Hellesdon.

The journey up the social ladder was seldom trouble free and invariably required the assistance of wealthy wives, lucrative offices or good business acumen. Sir Jeffrey Boleyn's wealth came principally from the latter, being a successful merchant and Alderman, who was elected Lord Mayor of London in 1457.⁹⁷ Although residing in London, Sir Jeffrey's family hailed from Salle (TG 116 251) in the North East sub region, where they had interests in several manors.⁹⁸ Blickling stands some seven kilometres to the north east of Salle and this may have been one reason why Sir Geffrey set his sights on Sir Nicholas Dagworth's Blickling Hall. Following the death of Sir Nicholas, his widow Alianora had sold her rights in the property to Sir Thomas Erpingham, whose executors sold it in turn to Sir John Fastolf of Caister Castle for £1,647, making Blickling the most expensive acquisition Fastolf ever undertook.⁹⁹ Given that Fastolf was a hard-headed businessman with a reputation for parsimony, the purchase price suggests that Blickling was still considered a very fine residence. It is understandable that a wealthy and ambitious man like Sir Geffrey Boleyn might aspire to own such a property in his home county to complement Hever Castle, the mansion he had built on a moated site in Kent (TQ4778 4522). However, in fifteenth-century East Anglia property transactions were seldom straightforward, as this extract from a letter written by Margaret Paston to her husband John demonstrates –

*My Lady Hastings told me that Heydon hath spoken to Geffrey Boleyn of London and is a greid wytht him that he shuld bargeyn wyth Sir John Fastolff to bye the manor of Blyklyng as it were for hymselff and if Boleyn byet in trowght Heydon shal have it.*¹⁰⁰

The Heydon in question was John Heydon of Baconsthorpe in the North of East Anglia, a lawyer and one of the Duke of Suffolk's most trusted allies in the region. Heydon had a reputation for ruthlessness and, along with Sir Thomas Tuddenham of Oxburgh, was

97 Ives, E., (2005) *The Life and Death of Anne Boleyn* London Blackwell, p. 3.

98 Blomefield, F., (1807) 'Hundred of South Erpingham Blickling', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 6, pp. 381-409.

99 NRO NRS 10946, 25D6; 1449; Quitclaim. Sir Henry Inglose and John Lynford to Sir John Fastolf. Manor of Blickling; Griffiths, E., (2009) 'The Boleyns at Blickling' *Norfolk Archaeology, Volume XLV* part IV, p. 460.

100 *The Paston Letters 1422-1509 A.D. Vol 1*, p. 246. Undated but before 1452.

disliked by the Duke of Norfolk's faction, including the Pastons and Fastolf.¹⁰¹ Heydon had several manors in the North and North East of East Anglia but Blickling would have provided him with a prestigious residence to match his increasing power in East Anglia. However, it would appear that Heydon suspected Fastolf would not sell Blickling to him so he sought the collusion of Geffrey Boleyn to complete the deal on his behalf. It is likely that the very astute Fastolf was well aware of the intrigue but agreed a deal with Sir Geffrey, selling Blickling for £1,365 plus an annuity of £60 a year, a sum that was only £5 less than the annual value of the manor.¹⁰² Sir Geffrey had perhaps not expected Sir John to live until 1459 and in a letter to John Paston in 1460 was clearly still smarting over the total cost of Blickling –

*Whan I bowth of hym the maner of Blyclyng, consideryng the gret payment that I payed therfor, and the yerly annutye duryng his lyfe after his entent, was to me a gret charge.*¹⁰³

Despite the great cost of the property, Sir Geffrey did not sell Blickling on to John Heydon but settled there with his second wife Anne, daughter and joint heir of Thomas, Lord Hoo. The value of the manor and its evident desirability may have resulted from a combination of the association with Sir Nicholas Dagworth, the reputedly fine existing residence and the beauty of the setting. The moated site is located on the floor of a shallow valley beside a tributary of the River Bure, which watered an area of meadow to the south west of the residence and supplied the moat. There may have been a second area of meadow within the late-medieval park to the north west of the hall, where a lake was created in the eighteenth century. Although the location was attractive, the hall was not surrounded by extensive parkland in the fifteenth century and open-field arable abutted the pleasure grounds to the east.¹⁰⁴

101 *The Paston Letters 1422-1509 A.D.* Vol 1 Passim & Virgoe

102 Griffiths, E., (2009) 'The Boleyns at Blickling' *Norfolk Archaeology, Volume XLV part IV*, p. 461.

103 *The Paston Letters 1422-1509 A.D.* Vol 1, p. 539, Sir Geffrey Boleyn to John Paston, 1460.

104 NRO NRS 8582/21C2 Survey of the Manor of Blickling for Sir Edward Clere, 1563

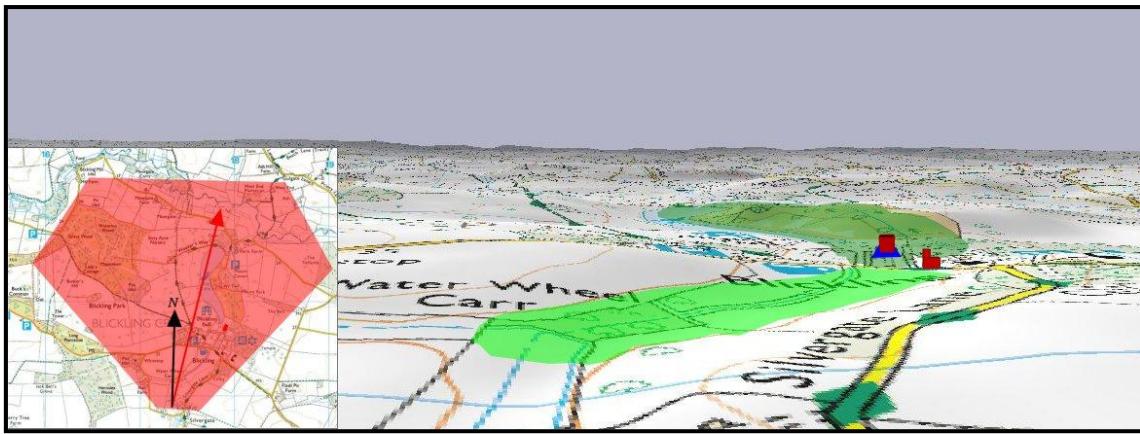


Figure 44: The Location of Blickling Hall, with meadow to the south west of the hall and a small area of parkland to the northwest.

Throughout the late-medieval period the parish of Blickling was divided between *Dagworth's Manor alias Blickling Hall*, which Geoffrey Boleyn bought and The *Bishop's Manor* two kilometres to the north west, used as a retreat by the Bishops of Norwich and reputedly the site of a fine park.¹⁰⁵ The fact that the Bishop of Norwich kept a manor and a park in Blickling may have added to the prestige of the location and enhanced the aesthetic appeal of the surroundings of both manors. A lengthy and comprehensive survey of the manor of Blickling Hall taken in 1563 was used, in conjunction with later sources, to create a detailed reconstruction of the sixteenth-century landscape around the hall, which will be discussed in Chapter 5.¹⁰⁶ However, the 1563 survey also contained evidence for the late-medieval surroundings of Blickling Hall, such as the location of open-field furlongs, heathlands, roads, meadows and parkland. Phrases such as 'formerly part of the heath' 'lately enclosed in the lord's park' or 'the new way to the west of the park' occurred occasionally in the survey and allowed the boundaries of the open fields and other landscape features to be adjusted accordingly. Because these snippets formed only a tiny percentage of the sixteenth-century evidence, they have been used with caution together with archaeological evidence in a report by Norfolk Archaeology Unit, to produce a tentative map of the Blickling landscape in the fifteenth century.¹⁰⁷ It is offered as a guide to the position and extent of major landscape features when Geoffrey Boleyn first settled at Blickling.

¹⁰⁵ Blomefield, F., (1807) 'Hundred of South Erpingham Blickling', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 6, pp. 381-409.

¹⁰⁶ NRO NRS 8582/21C2 Survey of the Manor of Blickling for Sir Edward Clere, 1563. This survey and the other sources used for the sixteenth-century reconstruction will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

¹⁰⁷ NRO NRS 8582/21C2 Survey of the Manor of Blickling for Sir Edward Clere, 1563; Norfolk Archaeology Unit Report 1399 on behalf of the National Trust, by Kenneth Penn 2008; NHER 5115 Blickling Hall

The reconstruction shows that Blickling, in common with many parishes in the North East and North sub regions, had a large area of open-field arable land and extensive heathland. The arable was owned by many individuals, whose strips tended to be located in the furlongs near their messuages. Two areas of settlement stood near St. Andrew's Church with other hamlets scattered around small areas of common or along roads. The Bishop's Manor occupied a valley floor site in the north west of the parish, surrounded by meadows and with an adjacent park, probably in the vicinity of 'Great Wood'. This park was separated from Blickling Hall by Wood Field, which appears to have abutted against the small area of park or meadow to the north west of the hall. The mansion stood within its moat surrounded by a relatively small area of pleasure grounds, with *The Lord's Meadow* to the south. The proximity of the fields, roads and settlements to Blickling Hall would have resulted in high levels of interaction with the local inhabitants and the wider community but this did not deter Sir Geffrey Boleyn from investing in the manor and settling there to raise his family and join the ranks of the East Anglian elite.

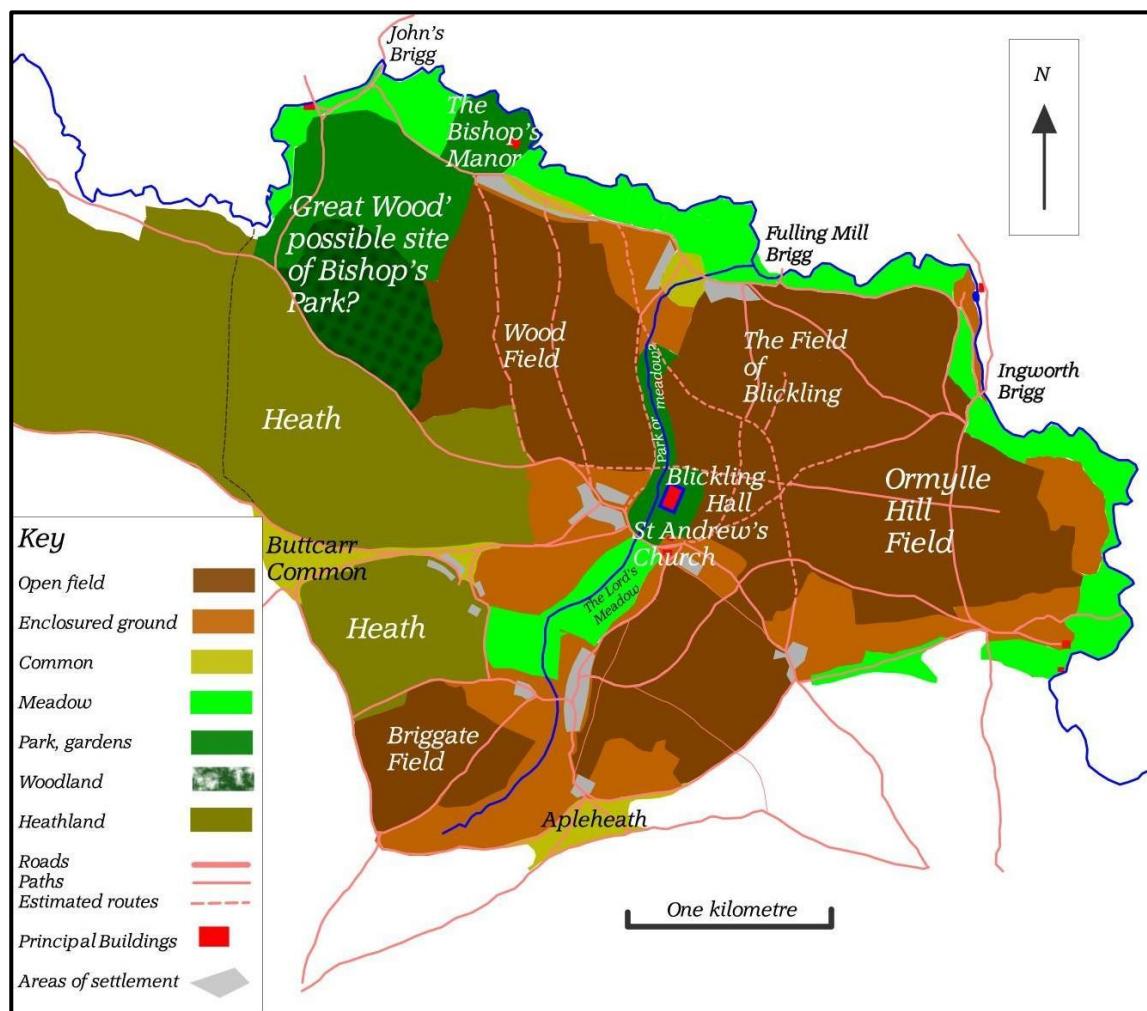


Figure 45: A guide to the Blickling landscape in the later fifteenth century.¹⁰⁹

Elizabeth Griffiths has argued that the Boleyn's, either Sir Geffrey or his son Sir William built a new brick house on the site of Dagworth's mansion, John Leland having suggested that this was the case in his *Itinerary*.¹⁰⁸ Griffiths suggests that it was this brick mansion that was incorporated in the Jacobean house built by Sir Henry Hobart, rather than Dagworth's earlier hall. Further evidence for this view comes from a comment found amongst Hobart family papers relating to the early history of Blickling. When discussing Sir Geffrey Boleyn the compiler notes that –

*This Sir Geffrey built a very large mansion here on the scite of which stands the present noble fabrick, he built the chapel of St. Thomas at the east end of the north isle of Blickling Church intending to be buried there.*¹⁰⁹

Building accounts for the construction of the seventeenth-century house confirm that large sections of an earlier brick building were retained within the new mansion but there is no evidence for the date of the retained fabric.¹¹⁰ However, given Sir Geffrey's wealth and that of his wife, and their ambition for good marriages for their children, it would not be surprising if they had built a new brick house at Blickling. Such an undertaking would have demonstrated to other members of the regional elite that the Boleyns were a family of substance, who could afford substantial marriage settlements for their daughters and provide their son with a fine residence. A new house at Blickling would also have been likely to irk John Heydon somewhat but the fifteenth-century house, whether built by Dagworth or Boleyn was surrounded by the working landscape. Despite Sir Geffrey's resources, he does not appear to have extended the pleasure grounds before his death in 1463 and, as we shall see, it would take another century for any significant expansion in the elite landscape at Blickling to occur.

The growing influence of families such as the Boleyns and the Pastons, the power of an outsider such as Thomas Danyell and the heavy-handed ruthlessness of Sir Thomas Tuddenham and John Heydon must have caused some consternation amongst the ancient seigniorial families. In the 1430s, Sir John Fastolf had sought to assert his authority by creating a splendid castle and elite landscape at Caister and it is possible that his friend and fellow veteran of the French campaigns Thomas, Lord Scales felt a

¹⁰⁸ Griffiths, E., (2009) 'The Boleyns at Blickling', p. 453.

¹⁰⁹ NRO COL 13/34/33 ND circa 1770 Notes on pedigrees and family history. Sir Geffrey died in London and was buried at St. Lawrence Jewry

¹¹⁰ Griffiths, E., (2009) 'The Boleyns at Blickling', p. 455.

similar need to emphasise his role in regional and national affairs by building a new residence at Middleton. Scales was a man of ancient lineage, a renowned soldier and a member of Henry VI's Great Council.¹¹¹ Having led a notable victory at Ry in France in 1436 he subsequently played a crucial role in the suppression of Jack Cade's rebellion in July 1450.¹¹² His loyalty earned him a substantial pension from Henry VI -

*Provided also that the said petition or act of resumption shall not extend or be prejudicial to Thomas, Lord Scales who has £100 of our grant to be paid each year in our exchequer for his long and continuous service in our realm of France and duchy of Normandy.*¹¹³

Whilst he was a powerful East Anglian magnate, Lord Scales did not have the financial resources to match Sir John Fastolf's efforts at Caister or Ralph, Lord Cromwell's great tower at Tattershall Castle, Lincolnshire. However, he may have hoped to strengthen his position against fellow courtier Thomas Danyell by his involvement in the dispute over The Rey, the re-use of the building materials by Scales perhaps adding insult to injury. The area of free warren described in the licence to embattle and empark the Roydon manor extended to the bounds of Thomas, Lord Scales' manor of Middleton, which may be another reason why he played such an active part in the wrangles between Danyell and Wodehouse. In addition to outsmarting Danyell, a fine new residence would emphasise Lord Scales' position as a courtier and a senior lord within East Anglia. Scales appears to have been on good terms with the Pastons often exchanging correspondence regarding local and national affairs but he may have felt the need to assert his seniority with the likes of the Pastons and Boleyns who were building and buying grand residences in the 1450s. Lord Scales held manors in Suffolk, Essex and Hertfordshire in addition to estates in West Norfolk, where he kept his principal residence at Middleton, near King's Lynn (3; TF 6687 1755; West). Other locations might have been more convenient for his role as a courtier but Scales appears to have had his power-base at Middleton, the manor having strong connections with Lord Scales' seigneurial forebears. The manor included the site of a motte and bailey castle possibly occupied by his antecedents, which stood on a site known as Middleton Mount (TF 6612 1639).¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Virgoe R., (1997) "The Composition of the King's Council 1437-1461" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 271-2.

¹¹² Keen, M. H., (1973) *England in the Later Middle Ages*. Reprinted 1995, London, Routledge, pp. 395 & 434.

¹¹³ 'Henry VI: November 1449', Parliament Rolls of Medieval England.

¹¹⁴ NHER 3394

That Scales spent an increasing amount of time at Middleton during the 1450s is suggested by the fact that much of his correspondence with Sir John Fastolf and the Pastons between the years 1448 and 1456 was sent from Middleton.¹¹⁵

If William of Worcester's account of Lord Scales's destruction of The Rey in 1454 was accurate it would imply that Scales began work on his new residence, known as Middleton Tower, after that date, perhaps in the spring of 1455. He may have reused the site of his existing manor although a site known as The Old Manor stands on the edge of Fairstead Green a kilometre to the southwest. Middleton Tower (3; TF 6687 1755; West) was built on the floor of a shallow valley next to a watercourse, and on the edge of the common fen of Middleton and Mintlyn, near an area of common-edge settlement. It is possible that this was the location of an earlier manor but the appearance of the surviving moat and the gatehouse suggests that they were conceived as a single entity rather than the residence being placed on an existing moat. A conscious decision was made not to build the Tower on or near the site of the castle on Middleton Mount, which stood on rising ground over a kilometre to the south west, near to the parish church. This location might have lent the new residence some degree of ancestral prestige but was rejected. It would appear that Lord Scales, in common with Sir Nicholas Dagworth, Sir John Fastolf and John Wodehouse decided to build his new residence on the floor of a valley, where ample water supplies and a level site could be exploited to create moats, ponds and enclosures. The move to valley floor sites has been noted by Robert Liddiard who found that from the thirteenth-century castle builders in Norfolk began to prefer low-lying locations where moats and associated features could be constructed.¹¹⁶

115 Gairdner, J (1900) *The Paston Letters 1422 – 1509*, Volume 1, pp. 70, 117, 118-120, 399 & 400.

116 Liddiard, R., (2000) *Landscapes of Lordship: Norman Castles and the Countryside in Medieval Norfolk, 1066-1200* BAR British Series 309, p. 109.

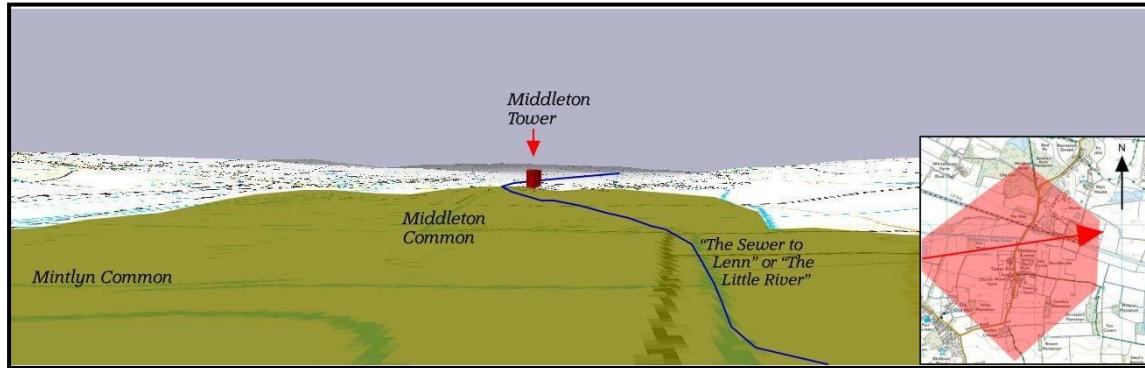


Figure 46: Three dimensional image showing the location of Middleton Tower. The position of the residence in relation to the watercourse and common fen have been derived from an early sixteenth-century map of Middleton and later surveys.¹¹⁷

A sketch of Middleton Tower and its surroundings was included in the early sixteenth-century map in **Figure 47**, in which the building is portrayed as a small moated castle, standing beside *The Tower Medowes* and the *Common of Myddleton*.¹¹⁸



Figure 47: Map of Middleton 1509 - 1547, showing the landscape around Middleton Tower in the early sixteenth century TNA:PRO MPI 1/64 South at top

117 TNA:PRO MPI 1/64 Map of Middleton, early sixteenth century TNA:PRO MPI 1/64 Map of Part of Middleton Parish. Surveyed during the reign of Henry VIII, 1509-1547. Possibly surveyed in connection with a protracted dispute between the inhabitants of Middleton and Messrs Gybbyn & Montford recounted in TNA:PRO REQ 2/8/79.

118 TNA:PRO MPI 1/64 Map of Middleton, early sixteenth century.

This early-sixteenth-century map was probably drawn up in connection with a long running case in the Court of Requests, between the men of Middleton and Thomas Thorysby, an alderman of Lynn who resided at *Haverlies Manor* in the neighbouring settlement of Mintlyn. Thorysby had been granted some of the Middleton estate by the Earl of Oxford who had inherited Middleton through Elizabeth Howard, the heir of Elizabeth de Scales.¹¹⁹ The dispute began in 1492 and continued throughout the reign of Henry VIII (1509-1547) dating the map to the first half of the sixteenth century.¹²⁰ The map is highly schematic but provides a wealth of information about settlement and land-use in Middleton circa 1500. In addition, it depicts the topography of a dispute about attempts to create an area of several land on ground considered to be part of Middleton common. By combining the information from the sixteenth-century map with later sources, a more geographically accurate plan of the vernacular landscape around Middleton Tower circa 1500 has been devised. A field book of 1644, a map of Haverlies Manor and Mintlyn, 1690 and a map of Middleton surveyed in 1751 provide acreages, boundaries and the approximate locations of major landscape features such as the commons, warrens and open fields.¹²¹ Place names, the routes of roads and paths and watercourses have been compared across the available sources in an effort to identify the elements that might have been present in the later fifteenth century. Whilst these later sources can only be back projected to a limited extent, they provide a more relevant indication of the late-medieval landscape than might otherwise be possible. The evidence from the combined sources has been used to create the plans in **Figure 48**, below, showing the location of Middleton Tower and its surroundings.

Figure 48, below, shows that Middleton Tower was constructed on a valley-floor site close to a small river and on the edge of the extensive commons of Mintlyn and Middleton. In this, the location resembles that of The Rey; however, the Tower was located much closer to both a through road and an area of settlement than was the Roydon residence. The sixteenth-century map shows three tenements along '*The Strete of Myddylton*' to the south of the Tower. Some of the earthworks to the east of the

¹¹⁹ Blomefield states that Elizabeth Howard was the heir of Elizabeth, Lady Scales Blomefield F.,(1808) 'Freebridge Hundred: Middleton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 9*, pp. 20-34.

¹²⁰TNA:PRO MPI 1/64 Map of Part of Middleton Parish, 1509-1547

¹²¹ NRO MC 308/1, 700 x1, Survey of the lands of Thomas Pettus, Bart. In Setch, West Winch and Middleton 1644; NRO Church Comms. 21843, map of the lands of Blackborough Priory in Middleton. 1751

Tower have been interpreted as medieval crofts and tofts, which would extend the medieval *Strete* well beyond the tenements recorded in the sixteenth century.¹²²

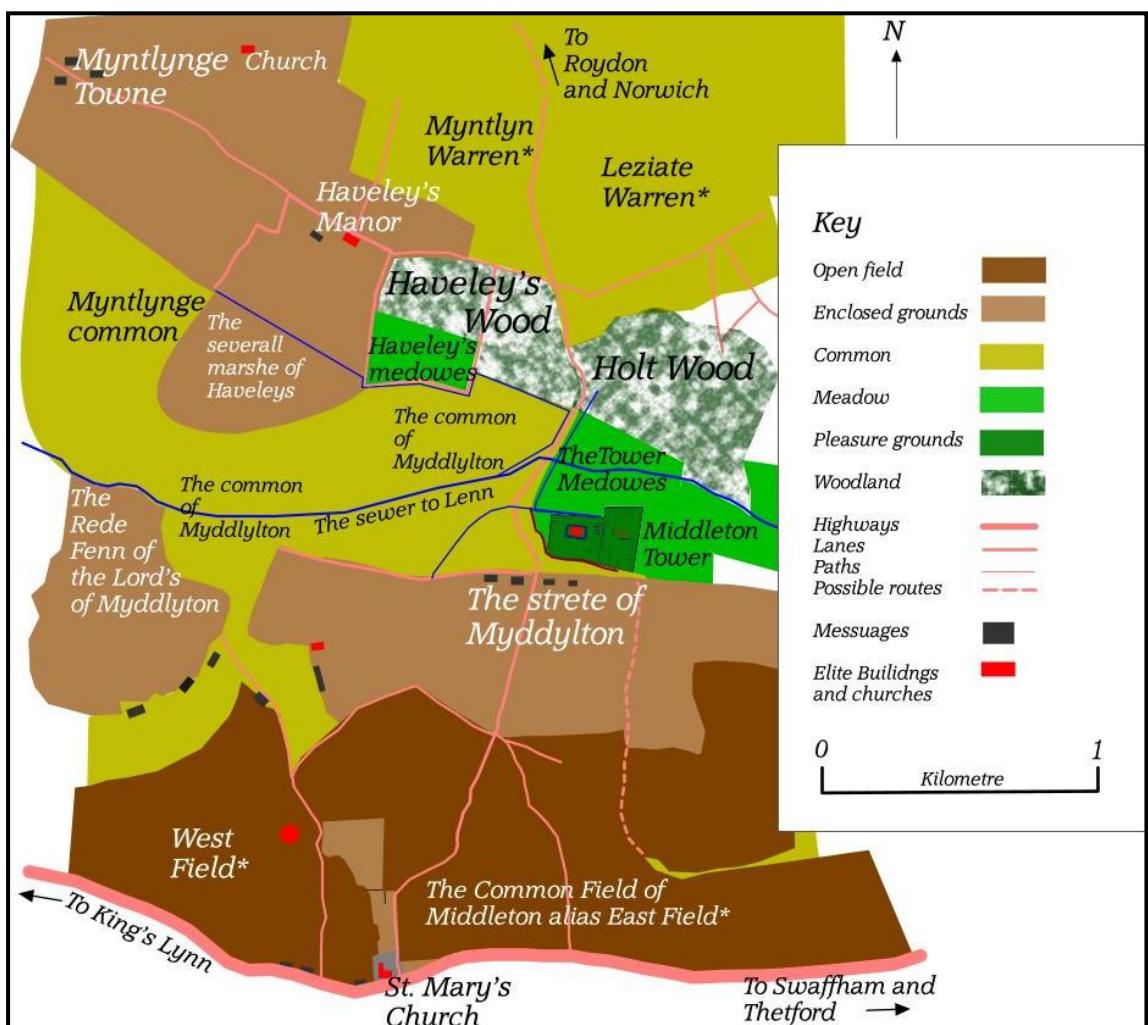


Figure 48: The location of Middleton Tower and the surrounding landscape as it may have been arranged in the late fifteenth century

In addition to this area of settlement, the road north from Middleton to Mintlyn, Bawsey and on towards Roydon and the Norwich road at Gayton, passed to the west of the Tower. Travelling southwards, this road joined the highway between King's Lynn and Swaffham, a useful route for a man like Lord Scales who needed to travel throughout East Anglia and to London. The road was blocked by a gate on or near the parish boundary, probably a measure to prevent animals straying between Middleton Common and Mintlyn Warren and Holt Wood immediately to the north. Immediately to the north of Middleton Tower, the river referred to as the *Sewer to Lenn* ran through the *Tower*

122 Norfolk HER3393 J. Albone (NMP), 11 January 2008

Medowes, whilst to the north-west tenements and woodland lay along the common edge, with *Mintlynge Towne* in the west. When the sixteenth-century map was drawn Mintlyn was still a viable community but by the eighteenth century it was reduced to one farm. On the far side of Middleton Common further tenements and another manorial site lay along the common edge as far as the ‘*The rede ffen of the Lords of Myddylton*’.

The open fields detailed in the 1641 field book may have extended further north in the late-medieval period across the *Diverse Enclosed Lands* to the south of the Tower. There is no evidence for the creation of a park near the Tower although Holt Wood may have functioned as a park and could have extended well beyond the area shown in **Figure 47, above, (page 141)** in the medieval period. The lack of early manorial surveys for Middleton has made it difficult to ascertain the extent of the demesne in the fifteenth century but it is possible that Holt Wood, if not a park, was an area of wood pasture, providing a bosky enclosure with park like characteristics. The lack of a park or the space to create one does not appear to have been of major significance when Lord Scales was choosing the location of his new mansion, nor did the proximity of roads or settlements dissuade him. These factors may even have been considered an advantage, allowing his residence to be viewed by the both the local inhabitants and passing travellers and providing convenient communications to points both within and beyond the region. Middleton Tower was surrounded on four sides by a moat, with an outer ditched enclosure, fishponds and meadows around the residence, the creation of which would have been simplified by the level contours and reliable water supply provided at this location. In this, the location of Middleton was similar to the sites of Caister, Blickling and The Rey, all which stood in valley-floor locations. The potential levels of interaction at Middleton were likely to have been relatively high, the vernacular landscape lying in close proximity to the residence, as at Blickling. However, Lord Scales may not have considered that as important as a level, watery location where his new residence could stand in full view of both local inhabitants and the wider community, on lands that had been part of his family estates for many generations.

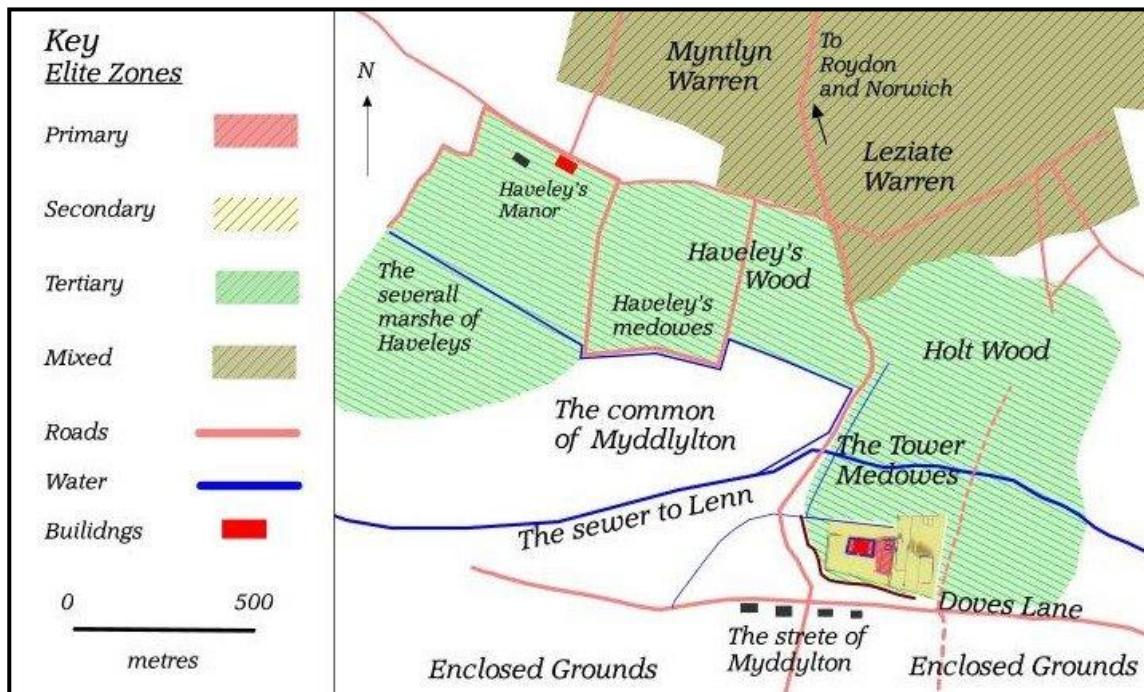


Figure 49: The elite zones around Middleton Tower including earthwork and aerial photographic evidence

The tertiary elite zone around Middleton Tower may have been larger than indicated here, perhaps extending further eastwards but it has not been possible to confirm this. However, Holt Wood has been considered part of this zone as it lay between the meadows and Leziate Warren, and abutted Haveley's Wood, part of the demesne of the adjoining manor. Levels of interaction would have been highest around the crossroads at *the strete of Myddylton*, adjacent to the curia of Middleton Tower. The estate map of 1650 suggested a large bank or boundary feature in this location, shown in **Figure 49** as a dark brown line. This feature may have been part of a more extensive boundary incorporating the ditches shown in the earlier map (**Figure 47**) and could demarcate the limit of the elite zones to the south west of the residence. The sixteenth-century map also shows what may be a roadway to abutting to the east of *Tower Meadows*, leading towards Holt Wood. A series of earthworks lie between Middleton Tower and the line of this road/path and these have been used to demarcate the secondary elite zone.

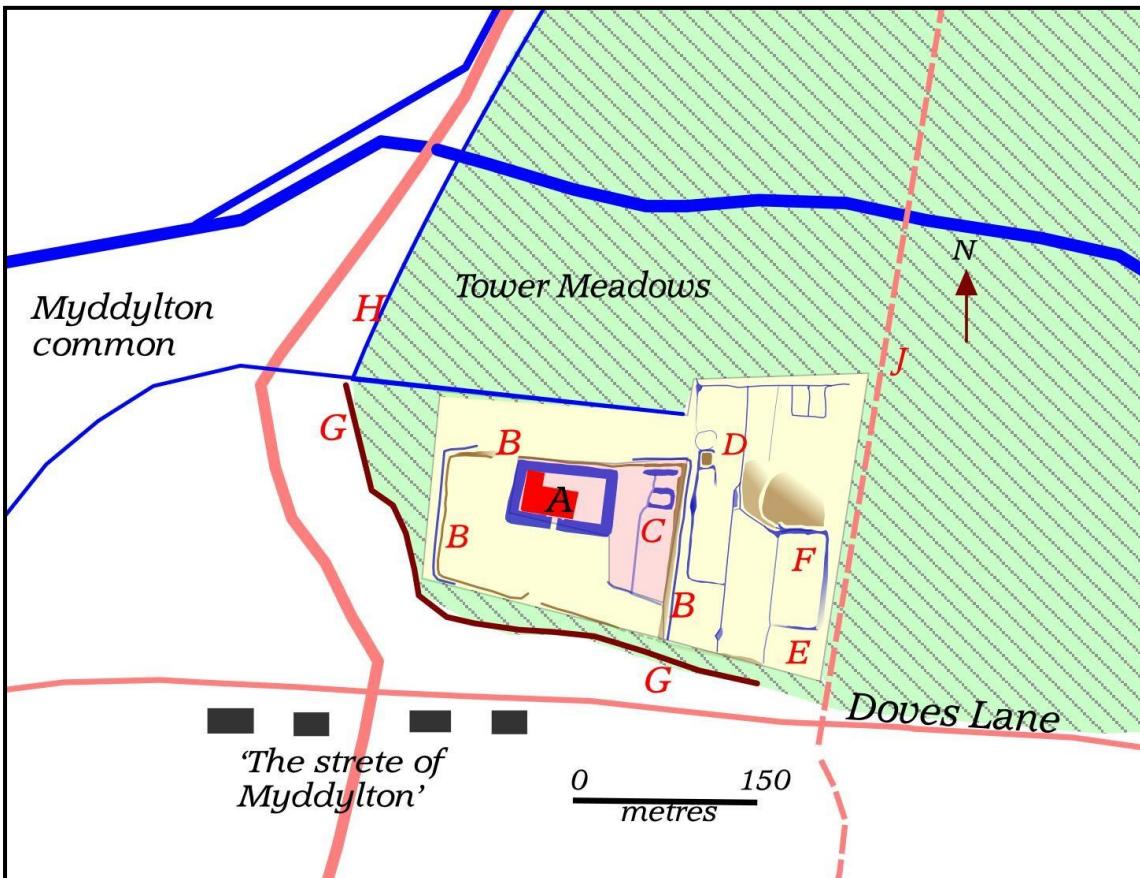


Figure 50: Middleton Tower: Detail of Secondary zone

Earthwork evidence has been combined with crop marks to create the detailed plan of the features within the secondary zone around Middleton Tower, in which degrees of slope of earthworks and positivity of crop marks have been indicated by depth of shading.¹²³ This has been superimposed over sixteenth- and seventeenth-century map evidence for watercourses, boundary features and place names. The outer enclosure at (B) is considered by Cushion and Davison to be contemporary with the Tower, whilst they suggest that two raised areas at (D) may include the site of two dovecotes, one circular and one square. The lane to the south was known as *Doves Lane* in the seventeenth century, strengthening the likelihood that a dovecote stood in this part of the site. This would be consistent with other ‘dove’ place names located within secondary or ‘display’ zones at residences such as Badmondisfield Hall and Caister Castle. The secondary area also contains a number of rectilinear enclosures, one at (E) suggested as a possible toft by Cushion and Davison. The other enclosures bear some resemblance to those around The Rey and Wingfield Castle, the pronounced positive crop mark around (F) perhaps having enclosed an orchard or garden. This area of

123 Earthwork plan by B. Cushion in Cushion, B and Davison A., (2003) *Earthworks of Norfolk. East Anglian Archaeology 104*. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, pp.117-8; Aerial photographs RAF 3G/TUD/UK/51 5132-3 31-JAN-1946 (NHER TF 6617C / TF 6716A). & NCC1988

earthworks, along with the ditched feature shown on the sixteenth-century map and the outer enclosure around the moat (B) have been used to define the secondary zone, where both the physical presence and symbolic qualities of the features proclaimed the increased exclusivity of the area, compared to the meadows of the tertiary zone. The tertiary area has been defined here by the boundary feature recorded in 1650 (G) and the ditched feature from the earlier map (H); it is unclear if, or how far, the eastern boundary went beyond the possible roadway at (J).

The primary zone includes the moat platform (A) and an area of possible garden where the earthworks and crop marks indicate the presence of fishponds (C). Ditches and the bank of the outer enclosure demarcate the area, access to which may have been limited to senior members of the household. A nineteenth-century residence was built around the remains of Lord Scales' tower but sufficient fabric remains to provide a mid-fifteenth-century date for the original building.¹²⁴ A print of Middleton Tower gives some idea of the grandeur and fine detailing of the gatehouse and shows some ruins of what appear to be curtain walls.¹²⁵ The building in the sketch bears some resemblance to the brick tower at Tattershall Castle in Lincolnshire (TF 2105 5754) built circa 1440 by Ralph, Lord Cromwell a contemporary of Lord Scales. Cromwell was a member of a minor gentry family who rose to be Treasurer of England between 1433 and 1443. The rewards of high office and marriage with a wealthy heiress, Margaret Deincourt brought wealth and power to Cromwell, who like many of his successful contemporaries invested in a number of ostentatious residences.¹²⁶ Lord Scales would have been well aware of Cromwell's rise to power and they may have been part of rival court factions. The new brick-built tower at Tattershall would have been very conspicuous in the Lincolnshire countryside and Lord Scales may have envisaged Middleton Tower creating a similar impact.

124 NHER 3393

125 NCM NWHCM : 1971.293 : F Drawing, 'Middleton Towers' by W. Millecent, brown ink on paper
126 Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance*, p. 55.



Figure 51: Sketch of Middleton Tower by W. Millicent undated NCM NWHCM : 1971.293 : F

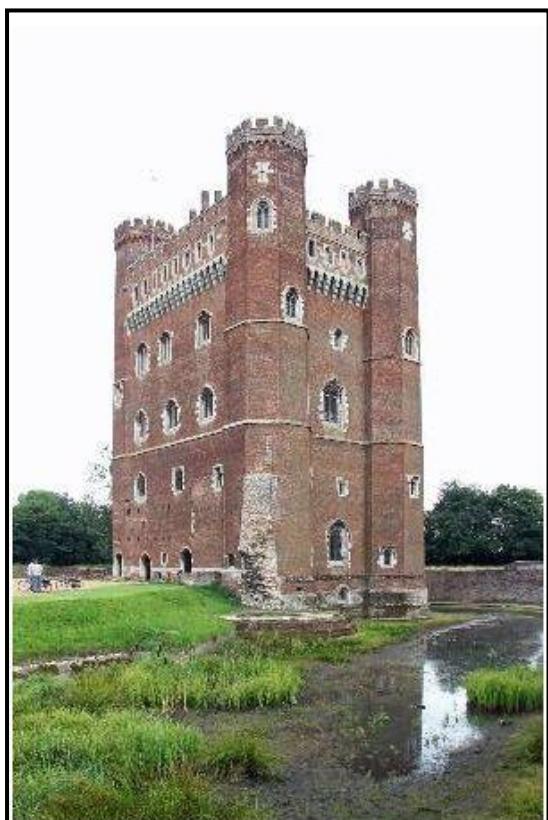


Figure 52: Lord Cromwell's Tower, Tattershall Castle, Lincolnshire.

It has been suggested that Middleton Tower was never completed.¹²⁷ However, it is possible that Lord Scales integrated his tower into an older building, as Cromwell did at Tattershall, the older building perhaps decaying more quickly than the later tower. It is also possible that construction work at Middleton ceased when in the late 1450s Lord Scales had to return to a more active role at court in support of the protectorate of Duke of York.¹²⁸ Lord Scales was killed defending

127 NHER 3393

128 Virgoe (1997), p. 271.

the Tower of London against the Earl of Warwick in July 1460, leaving his daughter Elizabeth as his sole heir. By 1462, Elizabeth had married Anthony Wodeville, brother of Edward IV's queen Elizabeth Wodeville and someone who that stalwart of the old guard, Lord Scales might have regarded as another of the 'new men'.¹²⁹ Wodeville became Lord Scales and later Earl Rivers, and became an influential and powerful magnate in both East Anglia and at court.

The Pastons were keen to gain Wodeville's patronage, Sir John (III) entering into a long engagement with Anne Haute, whom Wodeville described as *my nearest kinswoman*.¹³⁰ By the 1460s, the Paston family were secure in their role as members of the East Anglian elite and to crown their success they acquired Caister Castle under the terms of Sir John Fastolf's will. The will was the subject of a bitter dispute, which is the subject of several detailed studies including that by Colin Richmond.¹³¹ Suffice to say here that a long and sometimes violent dispute arose, which resulted in lengthy legal proceedings and saw the castle occupied by Anthony Wodeville by in 1466 and subsequently besieged and occupied by the Duke of Norfolk.¹³² The Pastons were understandably eager to retain Caister Castle, which was the grandest of their other residences and, perhaps significantly, was the only one to have a moat. When the Duke of Norfolk took possession of Caister Castle in 1472, Margaret Paston bemoaned that –

*if we losse that [Caister], we losse the fayereste flower in owr garlond.*¹³³

No doubt, the Duke of Norfolk and his fellow deponents were aggrieved at the loss of such a prestigious property but may also have been reacting to the expansion of the Paston's property portfolio and their increasingly high profile in East Anglian affairs. The regional elite may have felt that the Pastons were not yet worthy of the right to the moats and towers of Caister. Subtle and not so subtle means existed for deciding who might be accepted into the ranks of the elite, and to what level of exclusivity they might be permitted to aspire. Before the acquisition of Caister Castle, the Paston estates, although extensive, consisted of manor houses such as Paston Hall and Mautby Hall,

129 Blomefield F.,(1808) 'Freebridge Hundred: Middleton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: Volume 9*, pp. 20-34.; Virgoe, (1997) *East Anglian Society*, p. 179.

130 *The Paston Letters 1422 – 1509* Vol 2, p. 321.

131 Richmond, C., (1996) *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century*: Fastolf's Will Cambridge University Press.

132 Richmond, C., (1996), p. 168-9.

133 *The Paston Letters 1422 – 1509*, Vol 3, p. 45. Anne Haute appears to have been the niece of Anthony Wodeville and therefore also niece of his sister the Queen.

which were not moated and though grand stood within the community, surrounded by ancillary buildings and the messuages of the local inhabitants. Caister offered a much more exclusive setting, surrounded by water and at the time one of the finest houses in East Anglia, if not England. The violent and long-running disagreements resulting from the probate dispute may have been as much about curbing the ambitions of the Pastons as about the claims of the other executors.

In conclusion, the case studies examined above have highlighted the importance of fine residences and exclusive surroundings to the brokers of power and their challengers. Water played a crucial part in the creation of suitable settings for new and rebuilt mansions in fifteenth-century East Anglia and across Britain. The role of water in late-medieval elite landscapes has been recognised and evaluated by writers such as Christopher Taylor,¹³⁴ Paul Everson,¹³⁵ Matthew Johnson¹³⁶ and Oliver Creighton.¹³⁷ Since the 1990s, it has become accepted that moats, ponds and meres were an integral part of many elite landscapes created during the Middle Ages at locations such as Bodiam Castle, Somersham Palace, Cambridgeshire and Kenilworth Castle, Warwickshire. As an esquire to the Body of Henry V, John Wodehouse may well have spent time at Kenilworth with the King, enjoying the extensive mere that stretched to the west of the castle walls, or visiting the secluded residence on the double moated '*Pleasauns en Marys*' at the western end of mere.¹³⁸ Whilst The Rey and all the properties considered above were on a much smaller scale, the desire to surround residences with water features is apparent. However, the existence of intentional design in the arrangement of such landscapes has been the subject of recent debate. Robert Liddiard and Tom Williamson have urged caution when designating such surroundings as examples of medieval *designed* landscapes and questioned whether water features were positioned as a result of deliberate aesthetic planning, or were located where their lordly symbolism might be best appreciated by the wider community.¹³⁹

134 For example, Taylor C., (1989) "Somersham Palace, Cambridgeshire: A Medieval Landscape for Pleasure? In *From Cornwall to Caithness* edited by M. Bowden, D. Mackay and P. Topping. Oxford BAR 207, pp. 211-224.

135Everson, P (1998) "Delightfully Surrounded by Woods and Ponds" in *There By Design: Field Archaeology in Parks and Gardens* edited by Paul Pattison, pp.32-38. Everson, P., (2003) "Medieval Gardens and Designed Landscapes" in *The Lie of The Land*, edited by Robert Wilson-North, pp. 24-23.

136 Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance*. Chapter 2 "Watery Landscapes", pp. 19-54. Chapter 5 "Kenilworth"

137 Creighton, O., (2009) *Designs Upon the Land: Elite Landscapes of the Middle Ages*. Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, pp. 77-95.

138 Taylor, C. C., (1998) *Parks and Gardens of Britain from the Air* Edinburgh University Press; Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance*, p. 139.

139 Liddiard, R. & Williamson, T., (2008) "There by Design? Some reflections on medieval elite landscapes.", in *The Archaeological Journal*, No. 165(1), pp. 520-535.

The evidence from East Anglia suggests that water features were indeed placed where they might be viewed by a wide audience. However, in addition to the display of manorial status, the evidence presented above suggests that such features also had a role to play in demarcating varying levels of exclusivity within elite landscapes, indicating transitions between zones and emphasising liminal boundaries. The locations chosen for many late-medieval East Anglian residences would suggest that there was a strong preference for sites where water resources could be manipulated to create complex arrangements of moats, ponds, ditched enclosures and meadows. Meadows formed part of the chivalric setting recounted in the poem *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, which Liddiard has suggested was emulated around late-medieval castles to provide the perfect setting.¹⁴⁰ The poem described Sir Bertilak's castle *surrounded by a moat and erected in a meadow* and the connection between residences, moats and meadows was certainly strong in fifteenth-century East Anglia. The presence of meadows in the secondary elite zones of many of the houses discussed above correlates with the suggestion of chivalric symbolism, which was doubtless a powerful motivation for choosing a well-watered location for a new mansion. Whilst the chivalric connotations of meadows would be recognised and understood by members of the knightly classes, those not schooled in such matters may have formed a more prosaic interpretation of seigniorial meadowland. Those who understood the economic importance of meadows in predominantly arable areas might see them more as symbols of lordly control over two vital resources, water and grass. Their use within elite settings implied that the lord had an abundance of these resources reserved for his own personal enjoyment, rather than part of the working landscape. The frequency with which fifteenth-century elite residences were located within or adjacent to meadows would appear to confirm that lush grassland was considered the ideal setting for a mansion, creating a visual contrast with water features and walls. The illustrations of 'flowery meads' in medieval manuscripts may be an idealised version of the meadows at Badmondisfield or Middleton, studded with flowers and perhaps the location for small buildings or dovecotes.

The examples discussed above suggest that in the decades leading up to 1470, East Anglian elite residences were surrounded by small primary elite zones, including part of, or the entire, moat platform and areas of garden or pleasure ground demarcated by ditches or linear ponds. Moats appear to have been constructed wherever the topography of the site and the wealth of the owner would permit. It would appear the moat was a

140 Liddiard, R., (2000) *Landscapes of Lordship*, p. 118.

vital part of the symbolic narrative of the elite residence and on a more practical level afforded a degree of security from casual miscreants or raids by rival factions. In the secondary elite zones, access to the most exclusive parts of the curia could be controlled and directed, ensuring that the residence was approached by the most impressive route and only by the household, or those of sufficient status. In addition, the secondary zone created a buffer between the residence and the wider community and was the area where features imbued with manorial symbolism were placed. This arrangement emphasised the exclusivity of the secondary area in comparison to the tertiary zone or the vernacular landscape. At all the sites examined above the primary and secondary areas lay close to the vernacular landscape on at least one side, suggesting that display of the residence and its appurtenances was an important consideration when locating a residence. Tertiary zones of parkland, managed demesne or meadows, did not always envelop the secondary zone but tended instead to stretch outward from the primary zone, as at Badmondisfield. However, the medieval parks at Badmondisfield and at Wingfield Castle were not ubiquitous, several sites such as Middleton Tower and Caister Castle having relatively limited areas of managed landscape.

In an age of rivalries and factions, the creation of a new residence and an exclusive landscape was an important means of asserting or maintaining ones position in a society where talented, ambitious families challenged the old certainties of ancient lineage, military prowess and loyal service. The pursuit of a legal career, careful choice of marriage partner and the backing of a powerful magnate could transform the future of second sons or minor gentry. Fastolf, de la Pole and Scales had departed, leaving the Pastons, Heydons and Howards to rise in their place. The Wodehouses were temporarily bettered by Danyell but he would also depart, allowing the Wodehouses to re-emerge in some style. The machinations of politics and family affairs would continue to influence the houses and landscapes of East Anglia during the next seven decades, as they had from the beginning of the fifteenth century

Chapter 4

Late fifteenth-century East Anglia: costly ambitions and profitable alliances

The last decades of the fifteenth century saw Henry VI briefly regain the throne only to lose it, for a second and final time, to Edward IV in March 1471. As Edward consolidated his reign, his queen Elizabeth Wodeville ensured the advancement of her relatives, by securing for them titles, good marriages and lucrative appointments.¹ The impact of the new regime was felt in East Anglia, where the Queen held extensive estates, administered by her brother. As we have seen, the Queen's brother Anthony Wodeville, now Earl Rivers, had married Elizabeth the heir of Thomas, Lord Scales and used his wife's home at Middleton Tower as a convenient occasional residence from which to carry out his duties on behalf of the Queen.² The Earl was amongst those who coveted Caister Castle but he demurred to the Duke of Norfolk, who in turn released the castle to Bishop Wainfleet to fund Fastolf's college. The bishop eventually arrived at a deal with the Pastons that saw them reinstated at Caister but at great cost.³ The death of the fourth Mowbray Duke of Norfolk, and the death in 1481 of his only child Anne saw the dukedom pass to Richard, Edward IV's second son. The king had betrothed his son to Anne Mowbray when both were children in order to secure the Mowbray estates, thus disinheriting two descendants of the first Duke, John Howard and William Berkeley. However, John Howard was eventually granted the dukedom by Richard III but Howard lost both the title and his life at Bosworth in August 1485. The battle brought Henry Tudor to the throne and affected the lives and prosperity of many East Anglian families. Backing the wrong side was costly for some but others managed to ride out the turbulent times following Henry Tudor's accession and flourished under the new regime.

In the years between Edward IV's recovery of the crown and Bosworth, day-to-day life for the various groups that made up the East Anglian elite was much the same mix of political intrigue, marriage negotiations and property disputes that it had been in the past, but with slightly different *dramatis personae*. The Pastons, Boleyns and Heydons continued to consolidate their positions, whilst the marriage Edmund Bedingfield and Margaret, sister and heir of Sir Thomas Tuddenham had brought that lord's

1 Thomson, J A F (1983) *The Transformation of Medieval England 1370-1529* London Longman, pp. 127-8.

2 Richmond, C., (1996) *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century: Fastolf's Will* Cambridge University Press, p. 172.

3 Richmond, C., (1996) *The Paston Family in the Fifteenth Century: Fastolf's Will*, pp. 223 & 254.

considerable estates to the Bedingfields, an influential Suffolk family. In the 1470s Roger Townshend, esquire of Raynham, was beginning a legal career that would see him appointed to a justice of the Common Pleas by both Richard III and Henry VII. Marriage to Anne Brews, heir to a considerable inheritance ensured the Townshends a place amongst East Anglian society and secured successful matches for most of their twelve children.⁴ It is likely that Thomas Wodehouse's marriage to Thomasina Townshend of Raynham considerably improved the Wodehouse family's financial position.⁵ The last decades of the fifteenth century were a time of high taxation under both the Yorkist kings and Henry VII but the years between the battle of Tewksbury in 1471 and Bosworth in 1485 were relatively settled times for many of the elite.⁶ The redistribution of lands, titles and offices forfeited by men who opposed the accession of Richard III such as Anthony, Earl Rivers, William, Lord Hastings and the Duke of Buckingham, benefited many East Anglian families, including the Howards, and this may have been another factor in the expansion of house building during the 1480s.⁷ Whether aspiring or established, many East Anglian families refurbished their residences or built a new mansion during last years of the Yorkist regime, giving physical form to the ambitions, rivalries and new ideas circulating within late-medieval society.

The intellectual interests of men and women, and their experience of life in the households of the nobility or royal courts, either in England or abroad may also have been amongst the factors that influenced the decision to instigate work on prestigious new residences in the years after Edward IV's accession. Individuals and families might have been inspired to create their own interpretations of modes of living described in literature or witnessed in other localities, or they could have been swayed by the houses being built by their allies and rivals, across East Anglia. Most of these late fifteenth-century residences were typical moated courtyard houses that reflected the hierarchical nature of society in their floor plans. The arrangement of doors and windows overlooking the inner courtyards could be 'read' to indicate the internal arrangements of lower and upper end of the great hall, privy chambers and perhaps a chapel. The outer

4 Blomefield, F., & Parkin C (1805) 'Gallow and Brothercross Hundreds: Rainham', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 7*, pp. 121-151.

5 NRO KIM 4/2/1: 1488; Marriage settlement between Thomas Wodehouse and Thomasina, daughter of Sir Roger Townsend

6 Virgoe R., (1997) "The Benevolence of 1481" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late Medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe* p315-336. Ross, C., (1987) *The Wars of the Roses* London, Thames and Hudson, pp. 94 & 151. Ross notes that only seven elite families were extinguished as a direct result of civil war, the more common cause being failure of the male line.

7 Ross, C., (1987) *The Wars of the Roses* London, Thames and Hudson, p. 100.

facades of such houses were less likely to provide any sense of the internal spatial arrangements.⁸ However, there is evidence for a gradual adoption of more outwardly expressive fenestration at some late fifteenth-century East Anglian residences and for the creation of pleasure grounds beyond the walled courtyards around the mansion. Matthew Johnson has criticised references to the diffusion of ideas without a commensurate examination of the developments within society that caused groups or individuals to be receptive to new ideas.⁹ The fifteenth century witnessed the gradual adoption of intellectual pursuits, in addition to martial activities, amongst those of knightly status, encouraged in part by the greater availability of books in Latin and English following the advent of commercial printing. An inventory of the English books belonging to either Sir John Paston or his son John was made circa 1480 and included several manuscript volumes along with a copy of *The Game and Play of Chess*, which was described as being “*in preente*”.¹⁰ Apart from this very early printed book, the inventory included ten manuscript volumes of classical and chivalric literature, along with four books of “*blasonyngs and arms*”. An interesting aspect of the inventory was the evidence for the borrowing and lending of books amongst John Paston’s circle. The only religious text mentioned in the list, *Off the Medis of the Masse* was given to Paston by Percyvall Robsart, whilst Paston noted that, a book of ballads and poetry was “lent to Midelton”. He also somewhat ruefully recorded that he owned –

*A boke of Troylus whyche William Bra..... hath hadde neer x yer, and lent it to Dame Wyngfelde, and ibi ego vidi*¹¹ [I have seen]

The experience of losing a book to a friend on a ‘long loan’ is perhaps one aspect of medieval life that has remained unchanged to the present-day. However, the reference to the secondary loan of the book to Dame Wyngfelde implies the woman in question was literate and capable of appreciating the contents. In 1472 Sir John recounted the Earl of Arran had borrowed –

8 Cooper, N., (1997) ‘The Gentry House in the Age of Transition’ in GAIMSTER, D. R. M., STAMPER, P. (Editors) (1997) *Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture, 1400-1600*. The Society for Medieval Archaeology Monograph 15; Oxbow Monograph 98. Oxbow Books, Oxford, p. 117.

9 Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate* Abingdon, Routledge, p. 110.

10 *The Paston Letters: 1422-1509* Gairdner, J., editor (1900) . Towton Vol III, pp. 300-301. Gairdner estimated the date of the inventory to be a few years after the publication of *The Game and Play of Chess* in 1474.

11 *The Paston Letters: 1422-1509* Vol III, p. 300.

*A book of my syster Annys of the Sege of Thebes; when he hath doon with it ,
he promysyd to delyver it yow.*¹²

Similarly, a volume including the histories of several monarchs and *The Dethe of Arthr* was given to Paston by “*myn ostess at the George....*”¹³ There is no indication that it was particularly noteworthy that women in question should own or read such volumes. The women concerned were not from a noble background and further evidence that it was considered usual for women from gentry families to be familiar with medieval literature comes from the will, dated 1504, of Sir Henry Heydon of Baconsthorpe Castle, who bequeathed

*Item, I will that my wife divide and give all mine English books amongst my children as she shall deem, but first she is to chose for herself such thereof as she will have.*¹⁴

These books did not include the liturgical volumes and other books in the private chapel at Baconsthorpe, mentioned elsewhere in the will but as Sir Henry had three sons and five daughters it would seem he had a considerable library to bestow. The wording suggests that his wife, Elizabeth Boleyn, and possibly his daughters were literate, at least in English, and conversant with Sir Henry’s collection.

The marriage of John Heydon’s son Henry to Sir Geffrey Boleyn’s daughter, Elizabeth would have cemented what appears to have been a working relationship between Heydon and the Boleyns, given their collusion over Blickling and similar references in *The Paston Letters*.¹⁵ Henry Heydon followed his father into the legal profession and spent much of time in London, where he was steward to Cecily, Duchess of York the mother of Edward IV. John Heydon and Sir Thomas Tuddenham had been two of the most powerful men in East Anglia in the mid fifteenth century, when they were entrusted with furthering the interests of the William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk in the region. Following the attainder and death of the Duke in 1450 and the execution of Tuddenham in 1462, John Heydon lost some of his former power in East Anglia but his skills as a lawyer and administrator saw him recover much of his former influence by the 1460s. In the early 1470s, Heydon was counsellor to the sickly and ineffectual John,

12 *The Paston Letters*, Vol 3, p. 47. The Earl of Arran was married to Margaret, sister of Edward IV.

13 *The Paston Letters*, Vol 3, p. 117.

14 TNA: PRO, PROB 11/14, sig. 23 Will of Sir John Heydon. 1504.

15 *The Paston Letters*, Vol 1, p. 246; Vol 2, p. 304; Vol 3, pp. 46 & 334.

Duke of Norfolk and John Heydon was still a man of high rank, esteemed by some but not all, of his contemporaries.¹⁶ John Heydon was held in particular contempt by the Paston family and the many disparaging remarks about Heydon and Sir John Tuddenham in the Paston correspondence have influenced perceptions of the two men to the present-day.¹⁷

As we have seen, John Heydon was apparently not above a bit of double-dealing in his ultimately unsuccessful pursuit of Blickling Hall. Despite this failure, by the 1470s he had amassed a considerable amount of wealth and property holding manors across Norfolk, being described by the county historian Blomefield as *a feoffee and trustee to most of the great estates in this county*.¹⁸ After many decades spent amongst the machinations, intrigues and factions of East Anglian politics John Heydon decided to build a residence that would reflect his long and successful career. He no doubt hoped to create a comfortable home for his later years and a suitably grand edifice to bequeath his son Henry. There may also have been an element of one-upmanship, particularly if the Boleyns had indeed built a new hall at Blickling as discussed in Chapter 3. In addition, the Pastons had acquired Caister Castle in 1459-60, which, although not finally confirmed to them until 1476, must have rankled Heydon given their long-standing enmity.¹⁹

The site chosen for Heydon's new residence was the manor of Woodhall in Baconsthorpe, in the North sub region of East Anglia. John Heydon's father William had bought the manor along with the manor of Baconsthorpe Hall in 1416-17.²⁰ Whilst Baconsthorpe Hall stood next to the church, within the settlement of Baconsthorpe, the manor of Woodhall was located 1.45 km northwest of the settlement in a shallow valley near the source of the River Glaven. The location provided relatively unrestricted space to create a late medieval elite landscape, along with ample water supplies and a level site. **Figure 53** shows the site of the hall and the feeder streams that form the upper reaches of the River Glaven.

16 Virgoe R., (1997) "An election dispute of 1483" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late Medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 347.

17 Virgoe, R (1997) "The Murder of James Andrews: Suffolk Faction in the 1430s" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late Medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 109.

18 Blomefield, F., & Parkin C (1807) 'Hundred of South Erpingham: Baconsthorpe', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 6, pp. 502-513.

19 The sixteen years of disputes over ownership of Caister were finally concluded when a settlement was reached in May 1476 that saw the castle restored to the Pastons following the death of the Duke of Norfolk, the principal co-claimant. *The Paston Letters* Volume 3, pp. 164-165.

20 Dallas, C., & Sherlock D., Editors (2002) *Baconsthorpe Castle: Excavations and Finds 1951 – 1972* *East Anglian Archaeology* 102. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, p. 3.

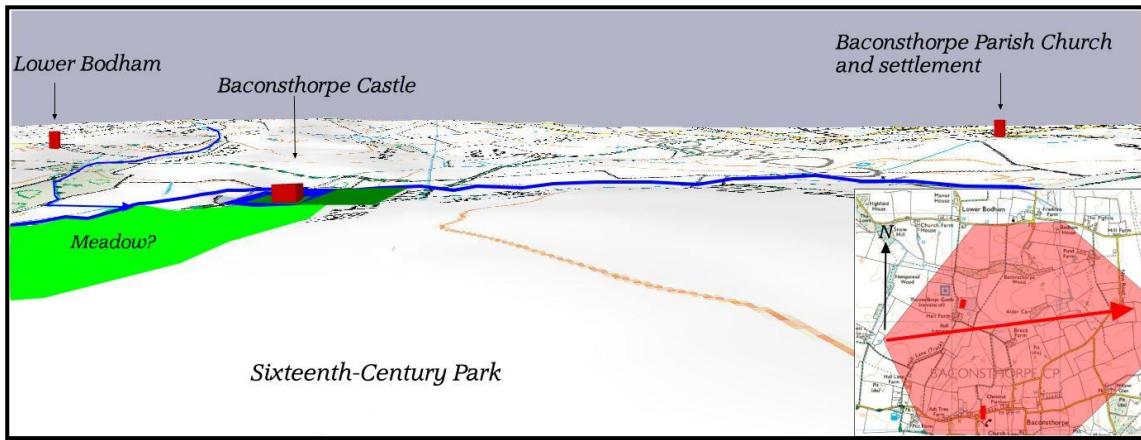


Figure 53: Three-dimensional image of the location of Baconsthorpe Castle (9; TG 1214 3809; North)²¹

Given the wide choice of sites available to Sir John Heydon, the fact that he chose to build his new residence at Woodhall suggests that he wanted to create an ornamental landscape around Baconsthorpe Castle, unhindered by the presence of a settlement, where levels of interaction with local inhabitants could be controlled and manipulated. The relatively isolated valley floor location allowed Sir John's descendants to create an extensive elite setting around the castle, including a large mere, formal gardens, terraces and ponds. It would have been very challenging to create anything comparable at the manor within the settlement of Baconsthorpe or at Heydon Hall in Saxlingham (TG 0269 3965).

The Woodhall site offered water supplies to service the moat, which appears to have been constructed specifically to house the castle. Archaeological investigations by Drury and Hall indicated that the moat was cut after building work on the first phase of the residence had begun, and was not completed until later in the second phase of construction.²² Everson and Wilson-North have pointed out how the outer and inner scarps of the western moat arm are markedly different in height to allow for the slope of the valley and that the platform was levelled before building work began. They suggest the mere to the east of the moated platform was a sixteenth-century addition, as was the outer courtyard and formal gardens.²³ The initial phase of construction saw the creation of a large gatehouse flanked by two turrets, placed centrally on the south edge of the

21 In the fifteenth and sixteenth century the residence was usually referred to as Baconsthorpe Hall but came to be known as Baconsthorpe Castle. To avoid confusion the latter will be used here.

22 Drury P., & Hall J., "The Standing Remains" in Dallas, C., & Sherlock D., Editors (2002) *Baconsthorpe Castle: Excavations and Finds 1951 – 1972* *East Anglian Archaeology* 102, p. 14.

23 Everson P., & Wilson-North, W R ., "The Earthworks" in Dallas, C., & Sherlock D., Editors (2002), p. 34.

moat platform, with a section of curtain wall to the east.²⁴ Work on Baconsthorpe ceased on the death of John Heydon in 1479 but the archaeological evidence indicates he had planned to build a large moated courtyard house, with a centrally placed gatehouse, perhaps in the style of Kirby Muxloe in Leicestershire (SK 5237 0461) where work commenced in 1480 on behalf of William, Lord Hastings.

Kirby Muxloe was left unfinished following the execution of Lord Hastings in 1483, when only the gatehouse and the west corner tower were near to completion. However, the foundations of other ranges had been laid and indicate that two-storey side ranges had been envisaged, with square corner turrets and three rectangular turrets placed centrally within the side ranges. Kirby Muxloe was constructed on a moat platform measuring eighty metres by sixty, located on a valley floor site near the existing medieval manor house.²⁵ The building accounts record that the moat was cut specifically for the new residence, four men being employed in October 1480 to dig the moat and the outlet to a nearby stream. By Christmas of that year eleven men were working in the moat, most of whom were Welsh and appear to have been brought in as experienced 'ditchers'. It is not clear whether the existing medieval manor house was moated but the 'warren moat' was in-filled with rubble from the site of the new residence as work commenced on the new moat.²⁶

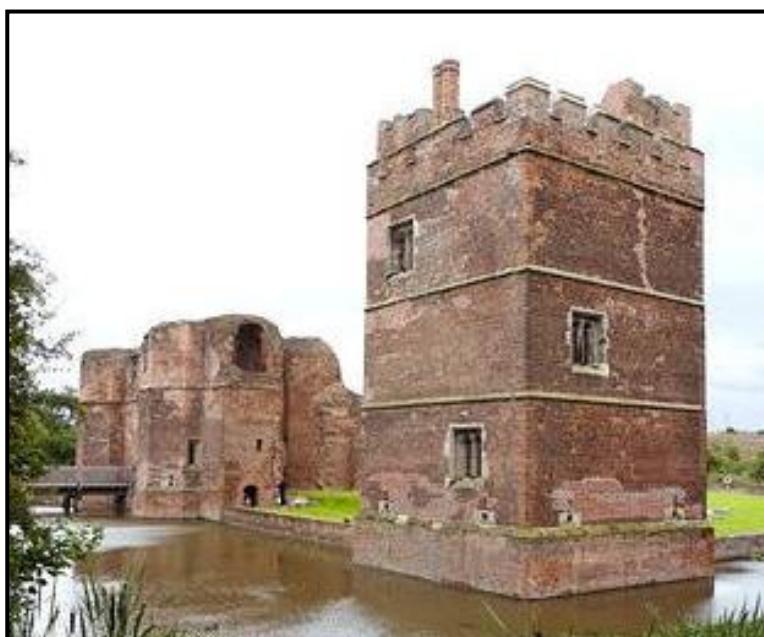


Figure 54:
Kirby Muxloe Castle,
Leicestershire
(SK 5237 0461)

Photo: English Heritage

24 Drury P., & Hall J., "The Standing Remains" in Dallas & Sherlock, pp. 12-13.

25 EH Scheduling Entry 188965 Kirby Muxloe Castle.

26 Hamilton Thomson, A., (1915) 'The Building Accounts of Kirby Muxloe Castle, 1480-84'. *The Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. Volume 11, parts 3 & 4*, pp. 194 -195.

When Sir Henry Heydon recommenced work in the 1480s a smaller house was constructed than that planned by John Heydon.²⁷ **Figure 55** shows conjectural floor plans by Drury and Hall, showing the gatehouse and section of wall completed before John Heydon's demise and the extent of the work carried out by Sir Henry.²⁸

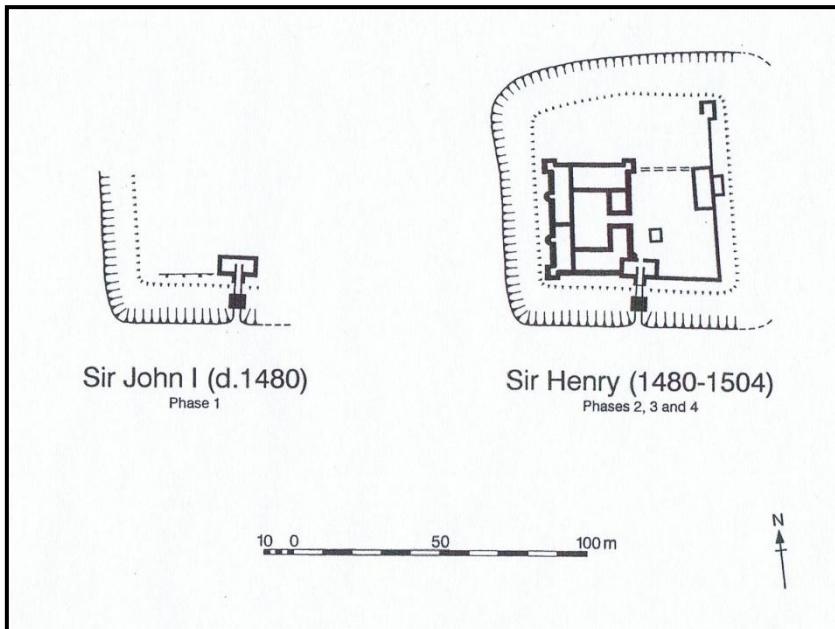


Figure 55:
Baconsthorpe
Castle
1470 – 1504
Based on Drury and Hall, p 30

The plan shows the initial phase of moat, curtain wall and gatehouse, followed by the possible layout of Sir Henry's house as suggested

by archaeological investigations.

The decision to build a smaller courtyard house on the moated platform may reflect the different focus of Sir Henry's activities, which centred on London and the court rather than East Anglia. Sir Henry had built himself a mansion during the 1470s, Wickham Court (TQ 3899 6475) (**Figure 56**), which stood near Bromley in Kent and therefore more convenient for London. The construction of Wickham Court would have taken time and resources, perhaps leaving less of either for the completion of his father's grand castle at Baconsthorpe. The mansion in Kent is a square house arranged around a small courtyard, with corner turrets and castellated pediments. The exterior walls had no windows, only loop-lights in the turrets, all the fenestration overlooking the small inner court. Wickham Court must have been an austere-looking house before the insertion of stone-mullioned casement windows in the outer facades in the sixteenth century.²⁹

27 Drury P., & Hall J., "The Standing Remains", in Dallas & Sherlock, p. 30.

28 Ibid.

29 EH Listed Buildings ID 358509



Figure 56 Wickham Court, Bromley, formerly Kent now GLA (TQ 3899 6475)

From Nigel Cooper's *Houses of the Gentry*, p. 94.³⁰

At Baconsthorpe, the gatehouse built by John Heydon has window openings looking out over the moat and the southern approach and the remains of the western wall of Sir Henry's courtyard house include embrasures for substantial windows.³¹ A drawing of 1588 shows a similar range of windows along the south range of Sir Henry's house, where the principal rooms of Great Chamber, lord's chamber and chapel appear to have been located.³² The tall windows in the drawing would have lit the rooms where the books mentioned in Sir Henry's will may have been kept and read, perhaps one motive for the increased outer fenestration at Baconsthorpe. The windows would have also allowed views across the southern approach to the castle and the park, or managed demesne, to the west. A license to empark and crenellate was obtained in 1561 but as discussed above this was more an affirmation of status than an indication that a park was about to be created.³³ The area of managed demesne used as parkland probably occupied a similar location to that described in 1561 and the topography would suggest that some of this area was meadow. The licence to empark states that of the fourteen hundred acres to be enclosed in the park, two hundred acres was meadow. This was a very large amount of meadow by East Anglian standards and must have covered much of the valley to the northwest and south of the hall. The approach may have been flanked by meadow providing a suitably Arthurian setting for Baconsthorpe Castle. One of the best-preserved features at Baconsthorpe is the great sixteenth-century barn

30 Cooper, N., (1999) *The Houses of the Gentry 1480 -1680*, London, Yale University Press, p. 94.

31 Drury P., & Hall J., "The Standing Remains", in Dallas & Sherlock, p. 15.

32 Drawing from a map of 1588, of the Weybourne fortifications. Private Collection Hatfield House, illustrated in Dallas & Sherlock, p. 1.

33 TNA:PRO CPR 976m1; November 1561, transcription in Dallas & Sherlock Appendix II, p. 89.

that flanks the approach and may stand in a similar position to an earlier barn mentioned in Sir Henry Heydon's will of 1503. Although not an exclusively a manorial appurtenance, a large barn in a highly visible location proclaimed the lord's authority over agricultural production and indicated the wealth that could be generated from grain and wool. Either John Heydon or Sir Henry would appear to have prioritised the building of a barn over completion of the domestic ranges on the moat platform. Barns appear to have been used as indicators of changing levels of exclusivity often forming one side of outer courtyards, where their symbolic and economic significance could be understood by the majority of the population, whether servant, steward or knight. Such an arrangement existed at Oxburgh Hall (4: TF 7425 0122; West), which had been one of the principal residences of John Heydon's associate Sir Thomas Tuddenham, before his execution in 1462.

Sir Thomas was granted the manor of Oxburgh by a cousin in 1426-7, which may have provided him with a convenient residence to retreat to after separation from his wife, Alice Wodehouse of Roydon. There followed a very public scandal in which Alice claimed their marriage had never been consummated and that her child had been fathered by John Wodehouse's chamberlain.³⁴ The subsequent divorce meant the details were common knowledge and the humiliation may have left Sir Thomas feeling he had something to prove, perhaps fuelling his reputation for ruthlessness. He did not remarry and at his death, Oxburgh along with all his estates were inherited by his sister Margaret the widow of Edmund Bedingfield, esquire, of Bedingfield in Suffolk.³⁵ The Tuddenham inheritance greatly increased the Bedingfield estates bringing Margaret's grandson, also Edmund, manors across East Anglia and beyond. However, when he inherited in 1474, it was at the manor of Oxburgh he chose to settle in with his first wife Alice Shelton.³⁶

It is interesting to consider what brought Bedingfield, the son and heir of a landed Suffolk family with extensive manors at his disposal, to a small settlement on the edge of the fens in Norfolk. Perhaps, he saw an opportunity to fill the gap left by the attainder of Thomas Danyell in 1472, or by the ineffectual authority of the fourth Mowbray Duke of Norfolk. Bedingfield's cousin by marriage, Sir Ralph Shelton belonged to one of the

34 Virgoe, "The Divorce of Thomas Tuddenham" in *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late Medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 118.

35 Blomefield, F., & Parkin C, 'Hundred of South Greenhoe: Oxburgh', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 6 (1807), pp. 168-197.

36 *Visitation of Norfolk Vol II*, p. 344.

‘second tier’ families who served on commissions, as Sheriffs and as members of Parliament.³⁷ Shelton may have offered to use his influence on Bedingfield’s behalf as may John Heydon, who although aging and no longer the force he once was, might have helped his old comrade’s heir to create a power base around the Tuddenham inheritance. Alternatively, Edmund Bedingfield might have recognised the financial benefits to be gained from the extensive lands that came with the manor of Oxburgh Hall.³⁸ The manor of Setchey included rich grazing grounds and arable on the silts of Marshland at Wiggenhall, Clenchwarton, Setchey and South Lynn. To the east and north of Oxborough, Bedingfield held over four hundred acres of arable and heath, with rights of foldcourse on the lighter soils of Beachamwell, Shingham and Cockley Cley.³⁹ As Mark Bailey has pointed, estates located between the Fens and areas of lighter soils could profit from the wide variety of resources such a situation could provide.⁴⁰ Oxborough had the added advantage being located where an area of rich earthy loams meets both the sandy soils of Breckland and the peaty fen-edge of the Wissey Valley.⁴¹

Oxborough had potential therefore, as a power-base and as a means of generating a substantial income; but the Bedingfields would not have been well known or particularly influential in the west of East Anglia in the 1470s. Thomas Tuddenham had been immensely powerful, perhaps more feared than respected, but he had begun the process of creating a power-base at Oxborough and Edmund Bedingfield may well have taken advantage of the perceived authority vested in one of Tuddenham’s principal manors. In addition, the parish was furnished with a fine recently built church, dating from the late fourteenth century and early fifteenth century and constructed in the Perpendicular style. Dedicated to St. John, with an immense tower and steeple, reputedly 150 feet (46 metres) in height, the new church eclipsed the tenth-century church of St. Mary Magdalene that continued to serve some of the community.⁴² The steeple of St John’s would have been visible over much of the surrounding countryside, indicating the power and wealth of the church’s patrons and a good starting point around which a young lord such as Bedingfield could build himself into the local

37 Virgoe, R (1997) “The Divorce of Thomas Tuddenham” in *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late Medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 31.

38 The settlement is known as Oxborough but the manor has traditionally been referred to as Oxburgh Hall and that convention will be followed here.

39 *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Henry VII Volume 2*, (1915) London HMSO IPM held following the death of Sir Edmund Bedingfield 1498, pp. 8 -13.

40 Bailey, M., (1989) *A Marginal Economy? East Anglian Breckland in the Later Middle Ages* Cambridge University Press, p. 195.

41 *Landis Soilscapes* Cranfield University.

42 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, p. 582; NHER 2628 St Mary Magdalene’s Church, Oxborough

hierarchy. The church and possibly some part of Tuddenham's manor house provided a base on which Sir Edmund Bedingfield would create a commanding array of fine buildings that would help him assert his authority in Norfolk.

Sir Edmund began by building a fine moated mansion, which may have been complete or at least partially built before a licence to crenellate was granted in 1482.⁴³ As discussed above, the licence was probably a tactic to help him to assert his authority and status in the locality, it did however, include a pardon 'for work already done'. The new house was probably built on or near the site of the hall occupied by Sir Thomas Tuddenham, there being no evidence of any other manorial earthworks nearby. It was noted in an early seventeenth-century survey that a piece of meadow lying near Oxburgh Hall at *Church Brigge* had been divided from the adjacent Gooderstone Common 'by an old dyke made by Sir Thomas Tuddenham'.⁴⁴ This could indicate that Sir Thomas had initiated the process of realigning the stream that flows near Oxburgh Hall to feed a moat or fishponds around his residence. Tuddenham certainly used his manor of Oxburgh as a base from which to administer, or, if the Pastons are to be believed, tyrannise the west of East Anglia on behalf of William de la Pole.⁴⁵ It is possible that Tuddenham erected a fortified manor house at Oxburgh, perhaps similar to Wingfield Castle (28; TM 2242 7724; South East) or Middleton Tower (3; TF 6687 1755; West). Edmund Bedingfield could have reused the foundations of such a building to create his new residence on an existing quadrangular floor plan, perhaps 'the work already done' mentioned in the licence to crenellate. The extant Oxburgh Hall rises from the moat without a berm on three of its four sides, the inner brick revetments continuing upwards to form the walls of the house. The outer edge of the moat is also supported by brick revetments, renewed in the nineteenth century, which formed a sharply defined square outline, with moat arms that were initially all of the same width. Such precision implies that the moat and platform were created specifically for either the present house or an earlier hall of exactly the same dimensions. A possible alternative to cutting an entirely new moat would be the re-cutting of an existing larger moat platform, which was then lined with brick revetments that continued upwards to from the walls of the new residence. However, the precision of the angles, and the symmetry of the moat platform within the moat, at Oxburgh and residences such as *The Rey* (6; West) and Helmingham Hall (33; TM 1868 5774; South East) make it more

43 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, p. 584.

44 NRO PD139/52 No date, early seventeenth century. Survey of the manor of Oxburgh Hall.

45 *The Paston Letters* Vol I, p. 203.

likely that house and moat were conceived as one entity. Whether cut as part of the construction process or remodelled from an existing moat such an integrated arrangement of house and moat would have required a great deal of careful planning and, as at Kirby Muxloe, a great deal of earthmoving.

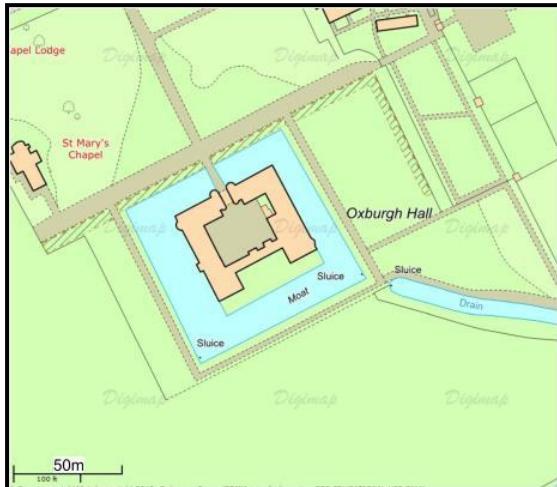


Figure 57: Oxburgh Hall



Figure 58: Kirby Muxloe Castle

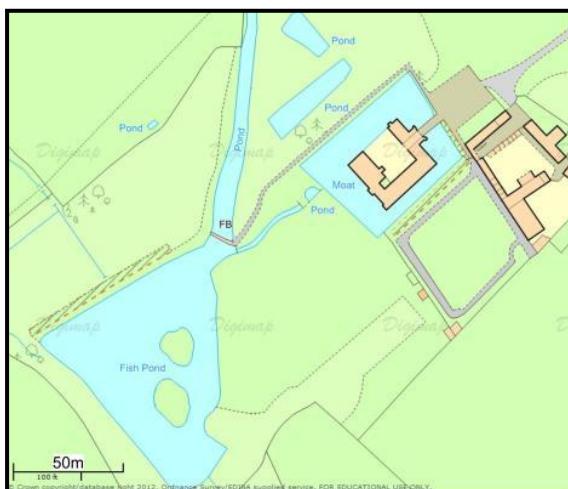


Figure 59: Baddeley Clinton Hall

OS Master Map at 1: 1,250 via Edina Digimap

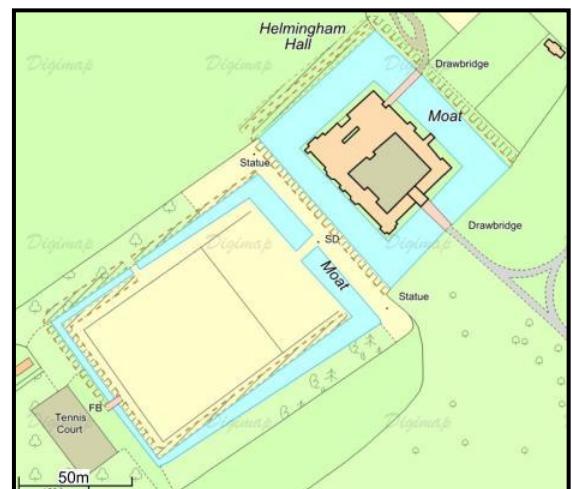


Figure 60: Helmingham Hall

The moats and platforms in **Figures 57** to **60** show a degree of precision in their construction, which would be difficult to achieve unless the residence and moat were conceived as a unity. At Kirby Muxloe, the residence and moat we know were created at the same time and it would appear that the same is true for Oxburgh, either under the initial direction of Sir Thomas Tuddenham, or Sir Edmund Bedingfield. Baddesley Clinton Hall (SP 1995 7146, Warwickshire) was bought in 1438 by John Brome, a successful lawyer from Warwick who built a courtyard house using stone from his own

quarries at Baddesley.⁴⁶ Although built in different materials the ground plan is similar to Oxburgh, given that both residences lost one range in the eighteenth century. Both rise straight from the waters of the moat without a berm and both had large integral gatehouses, although that at Baddesley Clinton was slightly offset rather than central, as at Oxburgh. The moat around the Warwickshire house was smaller and more of a trapezoid than a square but the two residences rose from the water on footings that formed a unity with the revetments of the moat. The same is true of Kirby Muxloe, where Aberg argues that the wooden trestle bridge was also an integral part of the construction process, as was the brick bridge at Blickling Hall (10; North East).⁴⁷

Helmingham Hall (33; TM 1868 5774; South East) was constructed between 1485⁴⁸ and 1530 for Sir Lionel Tollemache, who served twice as High Sheriff of Suffolk and Norfolk in 1512 and 1530. The moat platform sits centrally within a rectangular moat, which in size and the sharpness of its geometry resembles Oxburgh. The house however, does not rise directly from the moat, a narrow berm existing between the walls and the water. The present-day appearance of Helmingham is the result of eighteenth-century remodelling, when the timber-framed hall was encased in red brick. However, the basic structure and extent of the building were not altered and much of the original late medieval structure survives beneath the brick facades. The timber-framed gatehouse, faced in brick in the late sixteenth century, stands at the mid-point of the south facade. Helmingham is of interest because there is a suggestion in the SHER that the garden moat may pre-date the construction of the hall.⁴⁹ If this was the case then Sir Lionel could have built his mansion on the larger sub-rectangular platform but he appears to have chosen to excavate a new moat to fit precisely the dimensions of the late-medieval hall. The adjacent larger platform was used as a garden and it could be argued that if this moat post-dated the construction of the hall, or was contemporary with the hall moat, it would have been aligned more closely with the position of the latter.

Sir Edmund Bedingfield's house, in common with the examples above, comprised four ranges around the edge of the moat platform, with a gatehouse and bridge on at least one of the ranges. The gatehouse at Oxburgh was described by Pevsner as "the most prominent of the English brick gatehouses of the fifteenth century" and its seven tiers

46 EH Listed Buildings, List Entry Number 1035136

47 Aberg, F. A., (1978) *Medieval Moated Sites* CBA Research Report No. 17, pp. 30 -32.

48 SHER HLM 003

49 SHER HLM 003

still dominate the gentle contours of the surrounding landscape.⁵⁰ Originally, the moat was crossed via a drawbridge but this was been replaced by a brick bridge in the eighteenth century. Symmetrical side ranges flank the entrance and the original house was almost square, measuring 53 metres by 52, only slightly smaller than the area within the curtain wall at Baconsthorpe (9; North). The east range terminated in a square tower and a very fine hall stood in the south range. The hall is said to have had a hammer beam roof, with one dais window looking inward to the courtyard and a second looking out over the moat. A porch led from the hall to a bridge over the south arm of the moat. In a hierarchical house such as Oxburgh Hall the hall was positioned where it could express the lord's power and authority to the wider community and the hall at Oxburgh did this in some style.⁵¹ Those entering the primary elite zone through the gatehouse would see, as usual in such houses, the porch and door that led to the lower end of the hall and the oriel window that lit the dais at upper end.

At Oxburgh, the dais was illuminated by a second great window that overlooked the gardens and the common pasture of Oxburgh that abutted the grounds to the south. This outward looking window conveyed the presence of the great hall and the authority it represented to the local inhabitants going about their business on Oxborough Common. The hall range was demolished in 1775 and the house has undergone much rebuilding, particularly from the 1830s when J. C. Buckler and A. W. N. Pugin were commissioned to refurbish Oxburgh. The height of the south east tower was raised, battlements were added and much of the fenestration was renewed. During the 1860s, a new south range was constructed linking the south east tower and the west range. Fortunately, a plan of the ground floor was surveyed in 1760 by Mackintosh recording the layout before the loss of the south range and the great hall. The east range had been rebuilt by this time, having been badly damaged during the Civil War. An 1809 copy of Mackintosh's plan is shown in **Figure 61**.

50 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, p. 584.

51 Cooper, N., (1997) 'The Gentry House in the Age of Transition' in GAIMSTER, D. R. M., STAMPER, P. (Editors) (1997) *Age of Transition: The Archaeology of English Culture, 1400-1600*, p. 116.

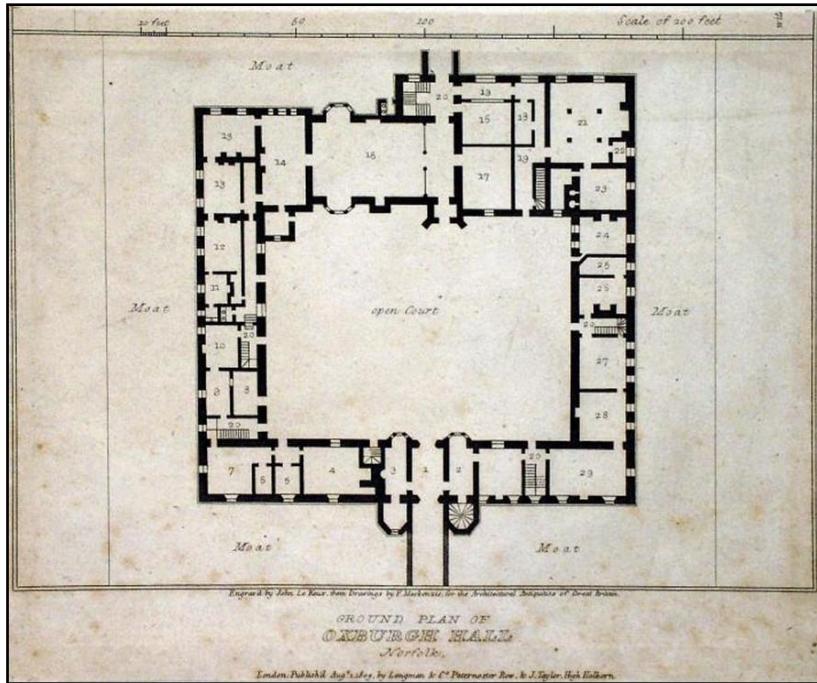


Figure 61:

A Ground Plan of Oxburgh Hall, by Mackintosh 1760
 Copy of 1809
 NCM NWHCM :
 1954.138, Todd 12, S
 Greenhoe, 141d : F

In addition to this plan, several views of Oxburgh were drawn before the major refurbishments of the 1830s took place. The sketch in **Figure 62** was drawn by J. P. Neale in 1819, when Oxburgh was considered almost a ruin and provides some idea of how the house may have looked in the late-medieval period. The dormers with crow-stepped gables may be eighteenth-century additions that were rebuilt during J. C. Buckler's refurbishments, which saw them furnished with new chimneys and windows. Buckler's design included a line of battlements that effectively raised the original facade, making the side ranges look slightly more in proportion with the gatehouse. In the 1819 sketch the gatehouse appears to dominate the two-storey side ranges, which it was probably intended to do but could Bedingfield have added the gatehouse to a house, or some part of a house, built by Sir Thomas Tuddenham?

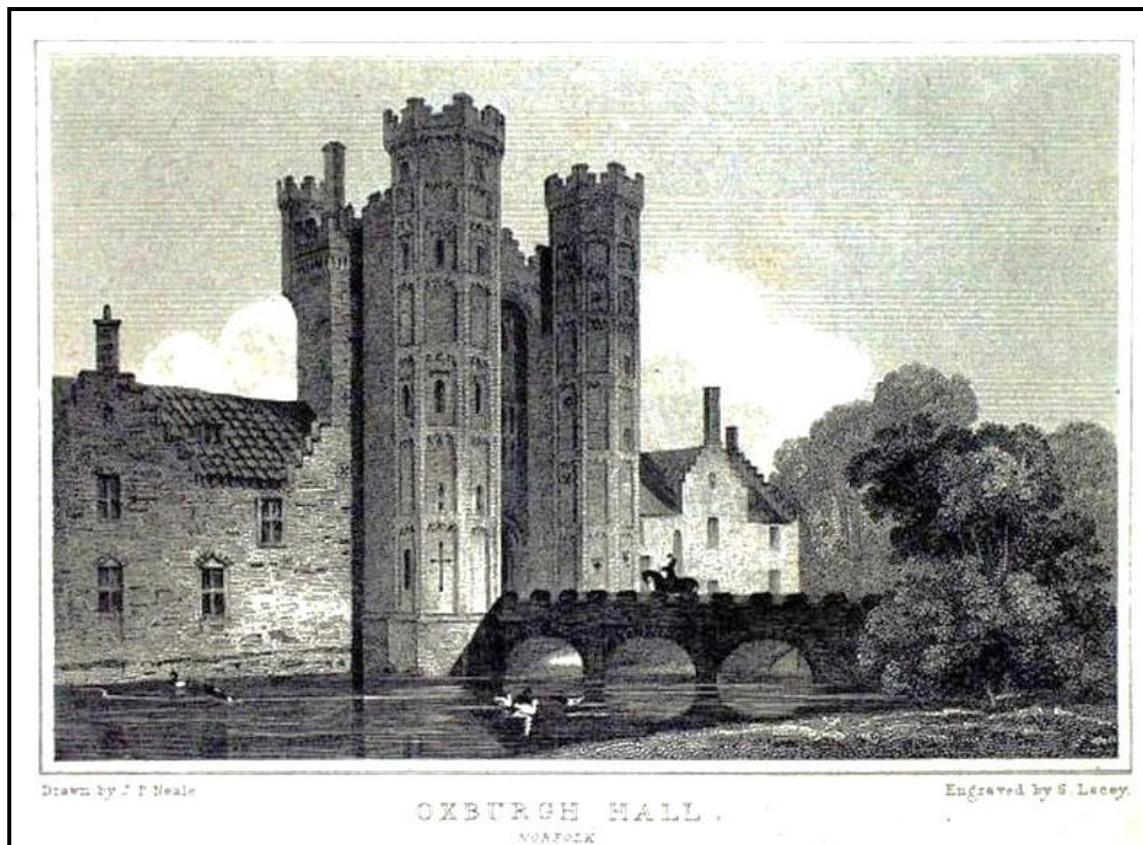


Figure 62: Oxburgh Hall, by J. P. Neale 1819 (NCM NWHCM: 1954.138, Todd 12, S Greenhoe, 120 : F)



Figure 63: Oxburgh Hall, present-day. Showing the nineteenth-century battlements, chimney stacks and fenestration designed by J C Buckler.

Whether or not this was the case, the gatehouse would have announced Sir Edmund Bedingfield's arrival in Oxburgh, to the local inhabitants and the resident elites. It is an uncompromising structure, exuding power and wealth; the use of brick was becoming standard in high status East Anglian residences by 1480 but it was used to particularly good effect in the Oxburgh Hall gatehouse, including an intricate spiral staircase in the west tower.⁵² Sir Edmund, having safely negotiated the transition from York to Tudor, was sufficiently confident of the building's quality to house Henry VII and Elizabeth of York in the rooms above the gate in 1487. The two windows above the gate indicated the status of the guest chambers in the tower to the outside world, as the second oriel window announced the authority of the hall to the wider community. The building work included the full panoply of manorial appurtenances, listed in a survey of c. 1620 as

*Site of the manor of Oxburgh with keep, barn, granary, stables, atrii (homes or halls or porches or lodgings?), gardens, courtyard, dovecote, other buildings and constructions, waters, fishponds, meadow, woodland and walks within the circuit of the bounds. Containing by estimation 20 acres.*⁵³

Although this Latin survey was undertaken in the early seventeenth century, the history of the Bedingfields in the later sixteenth century would indicate that investment in major projects after circa 1558 was unlikely and the survey may be a reasonably accurate account of the manorial precinct in the early sixteenth century. The family were staunch Catholics who prospered under Mary Tudor, Sir Henry being appointed Constable of the Tower of London, where he was custodian of the Princess Elizabeth.⁵⁴ On Elizabeth's accession, the Bedingfields retired from court and as prominent recusants lost much of their influence and appointments. The family's adherence to the Roman Catholic faith resulted in financial difficulties in the later sixteenth century and their support for Charles I led to Oxburgh being badly damaged and forfeited during the Civil War.⁵⁵ A subsequent fine of £47,000 saw the return of Oxburgh to the Bedingfields but the ensuing financial difficulties contributed to the virtual 'fossilisation' of Oxburgh and its surroundings until the late eighteenth century.

52 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, p. 585.

53 NRO PD 139/52, ND circa 1620 List of lands belonging to the manor of Oxburgh

54 A. Weikel, 'The rise and fall of a Marian privy councillor: Sir Henry Bedingfield, 1509/11–1585', *Norfolk Archaeology* Vol. 40, (1987–9)

55 Blomefield, F., & Parkin C., (1807) 'Hundred of South Greenhoe: Oxburgh', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: Volume 6, pp. 168-197 MacGill, Rev. G. H., (1885) "Oxburgh Hall" *Norfolk Archaeology* IV , pp. 283-4

The description of the site of the manor recorded circa 1620 includes some intriguing references, including the description of the residence as the ‘keep’ and multiple *atriis*, the singular of which, Latham defines as ‘a home’ or ‘father’s house’ or ‘porch’, whereas the Oxford Latin Dictionary translates *atrium* in the classic sense as ‘hall in a Roman house’ or ‘palace’.⁵⁶ The latter has been disregarded but ‘halls’ or ‘porches’ might be appropriate although it seems odd to list them after the ancillary buildings if the *atriis* were part of the ‘keep’ or residence. Another option is that the word refers to a lodging range separate from the main house, perhaps part of an outer courtyard. The ‘other buildings and constructions’ were probably the usual array of brew house, dairy and byres that lay in the vicinity of a late-medieval manor house, although there is the possibility that some were of a more ornamental nature.

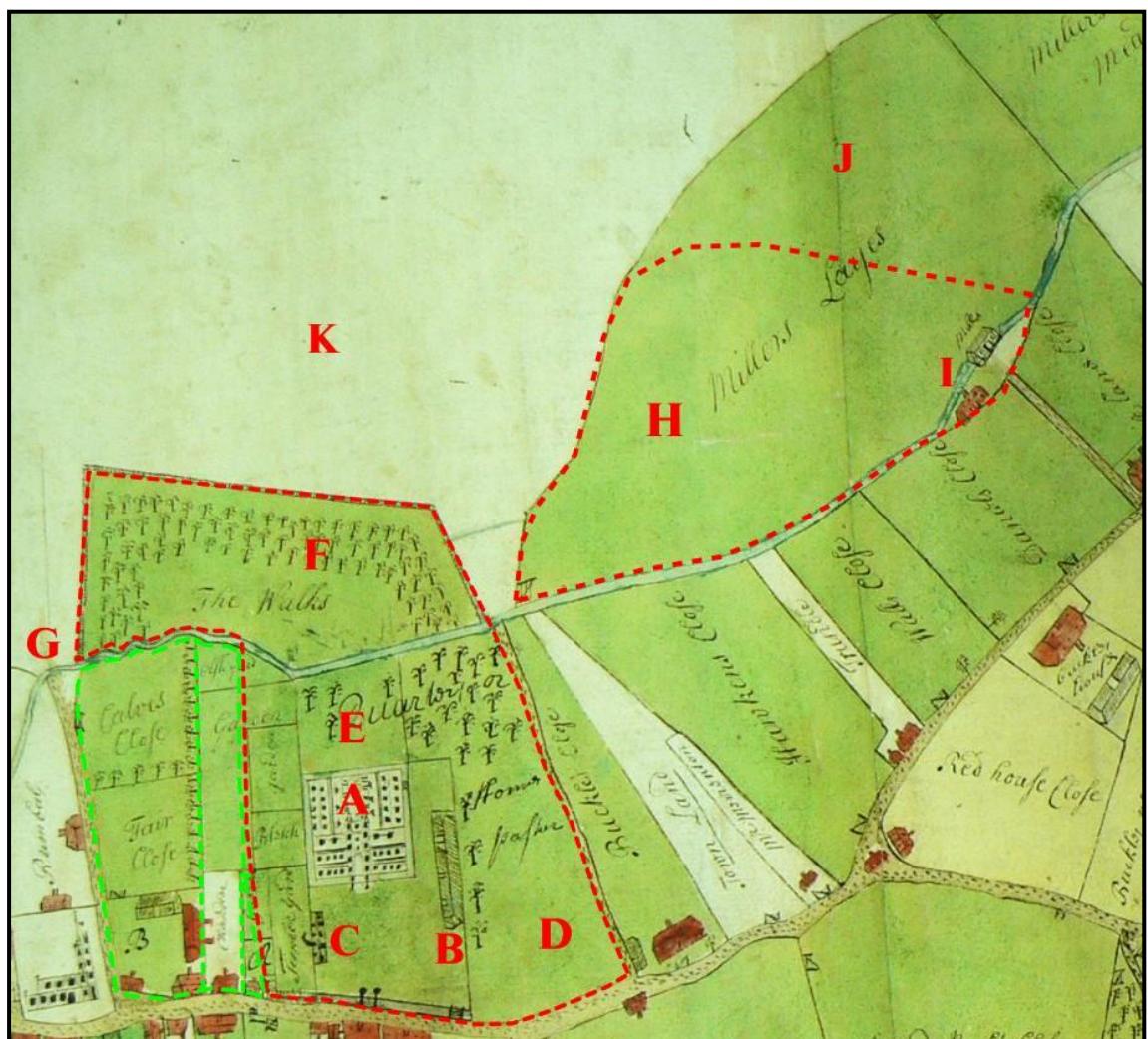


Figure 64: An extract from an estate map of 1722 South at top⁵⁷

56 Latham, R. E., (1999 edition) *Revised Medieval Latin Word-List* London, Oxford University Press for the British Academy, p. 36.

57 NRO BRA 2524/1, The Lands of Sir Henry Bedingfield by Philip Wissiter 1722

Of the buildings listed in the c. 1620 survey only two appear to have survived the depredations of the seventeenth century, to be depicted on an estate map of 1722. A very large barn is shown standing close to the west arm of the moat and a smaller building with windows on the opposite side of what appears to be an outer courtyard.

In **Figure 64**, the 1722 map has been layered over the current OS Mastermap, which allowed the areas within the broken red lines to be measured. The ground around Oxburgh Hall within the red line covers just over twenty acres it would appear to equate to the description of the site of the manor in the c.1620 survey. The three messuages to the east of the hall shown within the broken green lines were not part of the manorial precinct in the 1620s, the two larger enclosures, of 4 acres and 1½ acres, extended to the ‘common river’. The buildings at **B** and **C** appear to have formed part of an outer courtyard bounded by a wall and gate piers, which are extant, though rebuilt using the original materials in the nineteenth century.⁵⁸ The ‘other buildings’ listed in the c.1620 survey may have filled some of the gaps between the barn and the wall or the lodgings and the wall, forming an un-moated base court.

The barn **B** was located very close to the hall **A**, once again emphasising both the lord’s control over agricultural production and the income that could be generated from that production. The barn aligned with the end of the brick boundary wall and stood parallel with the western edge of the moat. The barn was recorded on the 1722 map and another of 1725 and on both it is shown as being almost as long as the western arm of the moat, which, if accurate, would mean the barn was over seventy metres long, making it by far the largest in region. Even allowing for cartographic exaggeration of about ten metres, the barn would still have been over sixty metres long but as it was demolished before the 1830s its size, fabric and date can only be surmised. However, there is a reasonable chance that it was built of brick or flintwork and for the reasons discussed above it could have been contemporary with the hall, or at least, date from the first half of the sixteenth century. The connotations of such an ostentatious building would be understood by all, from the poorest cottager to the grandest magnate without any reference to chivalric codes or medieval romances. The position of the Oxburgh barn, close to the hall in an outer court was repeated at several contemporary residences including, as we have seen, Baconsthorpe Castle.

58 Pevsner N., & Wilson B., (2002 edition) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk Vol 2, North-West & South*, London, Yale University Press, pp. 587-88.

The other potential survivor from the late-medieval outer court, the building at **C** in **Figure 64**, above (page 171) has been interpreted as a lodging range, perhaps for lesser household officials and servants. The steward and important guests would be more likely to be housed in lodgings within the residence.⁵⁹

Neither the 1722 nor 1725 map show the dovecote listed in the survey, implying that it may have been demolished during the incident that saw part of the hall burned down in the Civil War. Given the position of dovecotes at the residences discussed in Chapter 3, the enclosure known as *Horse Pasture* (**D**) would be a location where the dovecote and the doves could be easily seen from the main road, the adjacent lane and the surrounding messuages. A porch on the south range of the hall led to a bridge, which provided access to the area of garden at **E**. The garden lay across the moat from the dais window in the great hall and was accessed from the hall range, making this one of the most exclusive areas of the entire curia, neither directly overlooked by, nor accessible from, the vernacular zone. If the spatial arrangements in **Figure 64** were similar to those of the late medieval period then the enclosure at **E** would probably have been the privy garden, and for the purposes of this study, a primary elite zone. Another bridge would have been required to access the area known in the eighteenth century as *The Walks* **F**. This is almost certainly part of the curia described in the 1620s as, ‘*waters, fishponds, meadow, woodland and walks within the circuit of the bounds*’. In 1722, the trees were set back from what appears to be a pale, the ponds and meadow perhaps having once occupied the space between the trees and the stream. This area of pleasure ground would have marked a considerable departure from the enclosed *hortus conclusus* gardens of the medieval period. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century, it underwent various changes and was de-formalised but earthworks of earlier layouts survive under the grass of the present-day park. A group of features correspond to the area known as The Quarters in the eighteenth century and take the form of raised walkways, essential for the enjoyment in this rather damp, low-lying terrain. In *The Walks* there is evidence for the manipulation of the stream into several watercourses and a section of walkway near the present course of the stream.⁶⁰

The description in the 1620s survey and the earthworks suggest this would have been a very attractive part of the grounds, covering approximately 6.5 acres, and its position

59 Girouard, M., (1978) *Life in the English Country House*, London Yale University Press, pp. 55-6.

60 Williamson, T. (1998) *The Archaeology of the Landscape Park: Garden Design in Norfolk, England 1680-1840* BAR British Series 268, Oxford, Archaeopress, pp. 141-2.

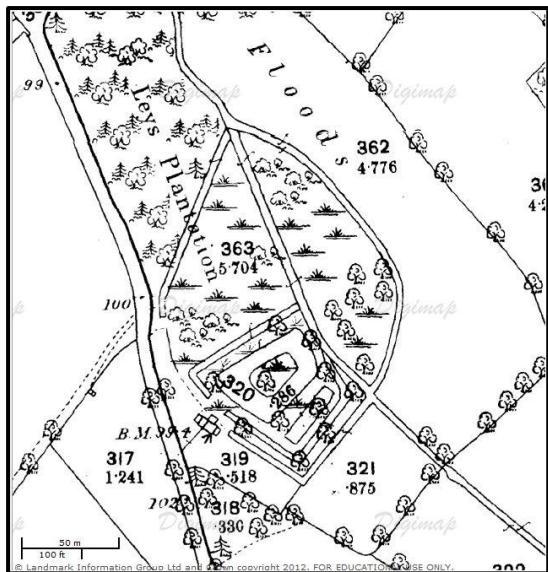
suggests that it was designed primarily for the pleasure and recreation of the household. Although its creation cannot be securely dated, the family's circumstances suggest that it must have been in place, in some form, by the mid sixteenth century. The dyke constructed by Thomas Tuddenham in the mid fifteenth century near *Church Brigg* (G) must have been part of the early development of *The Walks*. The location of *The Walks* would have created a very strong contrast between the elaborate ornamental grounds within the bounds and the working landscape of the common pasture on the other side of the pales (K). In addition, the fact that this enclosure lay beyond the watercourse emphasised the Bedingfield's control over the water supply and how it was used.

The stream, a tributary of the River Wissey was, and is, known colloquially as *The Gadder* but was referred to in the c.1620 survey as 'the common river of the lord'. It supplied the moat, the fishponds and the waters described above, before flowing into *Lez Layes* (H). This twelve-acre enclosure contained fishponds, pools and fisheries is an interesting area, apparently given over entirely to water features as there is no mention of meadow, pasture or woodland within the twelve acres. The name *Lez Layes* is similar for that used for groups of fishponds elsewhere in East Anglia such as the group of medieval ponds at Hoxne (TM 1857 7542; South East) called The Leys. This group cover 3.5 acres (1.4 ha) and their outline bears a close resemblance to the enclosure containing *Lez Layes* at Oxburgh although the latter covered almost three times the area of the Hoxne ponds.⁶¹ The Hoxne site is located in the valley of a small tributary of the River Dove two kilometres south east of the settlement. Another complex group of medieval fishponds (TM 1835 7074, South East) near Redlingfield Hall are also called The Leys and are enclosed by a channel that flows from a pond near the site of the Benedictine Priory.⁶² The place name element 'lēah' is usually associated with woodland clearings but in the case of these pond complexes 'Layes' or 'Leys' may have been derived from 'lœs' which can mean a meadow or pasture.⁶³

61 SHER HXN 005 Medieval fishponds and possible fishing lodge.

62 SHER RLG 001 Water bounded medieval fishpond complex.

63 Gelling, M., (1993) *Place-names in the Landscape: The Geographical Roots of Britain's Place-names*, paperback edition, London, Orion, pp. 198-199.



**Figure 65: The Leys, Hoxne
(TM 1857 7542)**

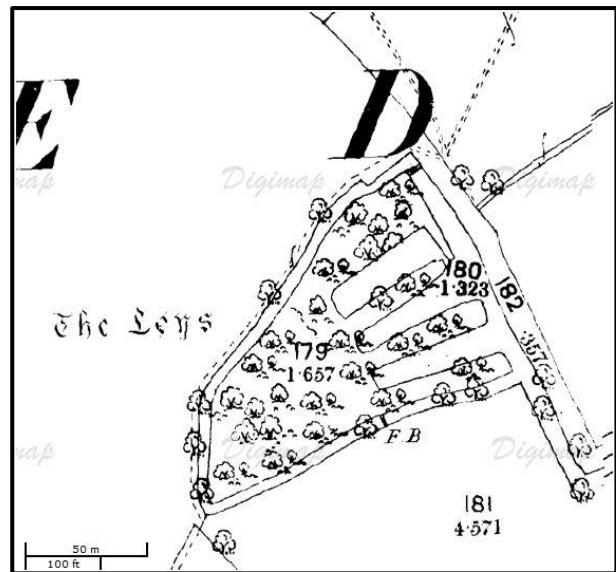


Figure 66: The Leys, Redlingfield
(TM 1835 7074)

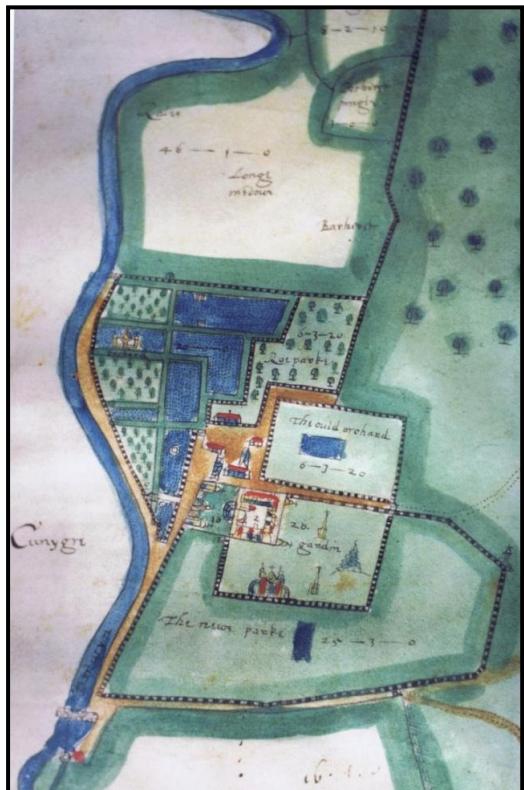


Figure 67: Chatsworth, Derbyshire
Map by William Senior, 1617
The Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth.
From Barnatt & Williamson (2005) p 27

The water gardens at Chatsworth in Derbyshire were larger than the Oxburgh *Layes* but similar in shape and may give some impression of the appearance of the Oxburgh feature.⁶⁴ Both at Oxburgh and Chatsworth the water features were adjacent to a meadow. The Chatsworth water gardens were created when Elizabeth of Hardwick and her husband built a new residence here in the 1550s.⁶⁵ This was the time when the Bedingfields were reaping the rewards of their support for Mary

Tudor and despite spending much time away from Oxburgh in his role as custodian of the Princess Elizabeth, Bedingfield may have been in a position to undertake major works at his Norfolk residence. As mentioned above, the accession of Elizabeth in 1558 brought to an end many of the Bedingfield's lucrative appointments and a downturn in

⁶⁴ Barnatt, J & Williamson, T., (2005) *Chatsworth: A Landscape History* Bollington, Windgather, p. 40.

65 Barnatt, J & Williamson, T., (2005) *Chatsworth: A Landscape History*, pp. 36-38.

their fortunes in the later sixteenth century. The three examples, discussed above give some indication of what the enclosure known as *Lez Layes* at Oxburgh Hall may have looked like, with multiple fishponds and water channels. Given that the Oxburgh enclosure covered twelve acres, it may also have contained one or more areas of open water for fishing or boating and perhaps a swannery. In addition to fish production, *Lez Layes* might also have had a significant ornamental role, perhaps as detached water gardens and pleasure grounds similar to *The Walks* but slightly detached from the curia.

Lez Layes were also the location of the lord's water mill I and *le Myllmedowe* at **J** in **Figure 64**. This mill was mentioned in the *Inquisition Post Mortem* carried out following the death of Edmund Bedingfield in October 1497.⁶⁶ The mill was a potent symbol of manorial authority, 'suit of mill' giving the lord a virtual monopoly over the milling of grain.⁶⁷ Local inhabitants could be fined in the manor court for possession of a quern or hand mill and the offending implements destroyed. A large scatter of quern fragments found during field walking near the medieval manor of Iron Hall, on the fen edge near Oxborough, may have been the result of verdicts against home milling in the manor court.⁶⁸ The recovered fragments belonged to numerous querns of different types, which appeared to have been deliberately smashed, suggesting that hand milling was an ongoing practice despite the efforts of the manor court to curtail it.⁶⁹

In some regions of England, the manorial mill formed part of the elite landscape close to the residence but only a few examples have been identified from late-medieval East Anglia. There may have been a mill associated with the *Mill Waters* adjacent to the Hunstanton Hall (**12**; TF 6911 4184; North) although no documentary or archaeological evidence has been recovered. The NHER suggests that the ponds may have been a means of regulating the water in the hall moats but by the eighteenth century, the feature appears to have been part of the ornamental landscape around Hunstanton Hall.⁷⁰

66 *Calendars Inquisition Post Mortem Henry VII*, p. 10-11.

67 Bailey, M., (2002) *The English Manor 1200 -1500* Manchester University Press, pp. 31-32

68 NHER 33251

69 A. Rogerson, NAU, personal comment

70 NRO LEST/OA2; 1760 Map of Part of the Hunstanton Hall Estate; NHER 1117



Figure 68: The Mill Water, Hunstanton Hall, Norfolk
NRO LEST OA2, 1760

This complex moat-like feature may have housed a mill but could also have been created from the clay pits referred to in the field name *Clay Pitt Close*. The *Mill Water* lay between the hall yards of Hunstanton Hall and the Parish Church. In the South West sub region, a medieval water mill

stood close to the sixteenth-century Melford Hall (45; TL 8664 4615), next to a suite of ponds and was recorded on a map of 1580 as the *Hall Myll*.⁷¹ In the North East sub region the River Bure provided sites for several watermills but most were at some distance from their associated manor house, for example the lord's mill at Blickling lay over two kilometres northwest of the hall. However, a sixteenth-century reference to *Monks's Myll Brigg* indicates that there may have been a mill on the Bure, close to the site of the Bishop's manor house (TG 168 305).⁷²

An example of an East Anglian mill standing within the manorial curia comes from Eriswell, in the Breckland sub region. Eriswell Hall (43; TL 7204 8068; Breckland) was the birthplace of Sir Thomas Tuddenham and both his grandfather and his sister and heir, Lady Margaret Bedingfield, were buried there.⁷³ The medieval curia at Eriswell appears to have included the hall, the church of St. Peter and a mill, located on an island within a three-armed moat.⁷⁴ Figure 69 shows the location of the eighteenth-century farmhouse that stands on the site of the medieval hall, the site of the church, the remains of which are now a farm building and the millponds in *Mill Meadow*. The curia stood between the great expanse of Mildenhall common fen and the heathlands and sandy soils of Breckland, on what Mark Bailey refers to as the 'breck-fen edge'.⁷⁵

71 Amyce I, A Map of the Manor of Melford Hall, Suffolk, 1580, National Trust Collection

72 NRO NRS 8582/21C2; 1563 Survey of the Manor of Blickling

73 Copinger *Manors of Suffolk* Vol 4, p. 154.

74 SHER ERL 082

75 Bailey, M., (1989) *A Marginal Economy? East Anglian Breckland in the Later Middle Ages* Cambridge University Press, p. 195.

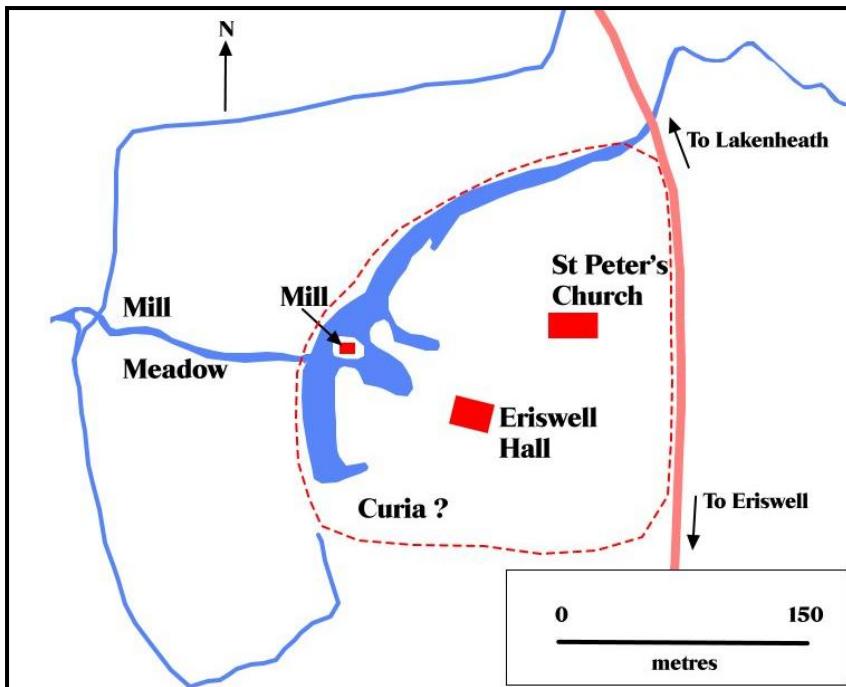


Figure 69:
Eriswell Hall, the location of the hall, church and mill

The mill pools and lade were fed by a watercourse that rose in Caudle Fen and then flowed through Mill Meadow. The SHER file suggests that the mill may

have stood on the island and that the pools may have been part of the ornamental setting around the medieval hall.⁷⁶ The remains of St. Peter's Church and neighbouring farm buildings contain fragments of Norman carving and thirteenth-century lancets. The surviving part of the church includes a Perpendicular window perhaps paid for by the bequest of £40 left by Margaret Bedingfield in 1474 for the beautification of St. Peter's.⁷⁷ The church was in ruins by 1720 and was partially demolished and turned into a dovecote in the later eighteenth century.⁷⁸ Mill meadow separated the curia from Mildenhall and Lakenheath Commons, and Caudle Common lay beyond the road to Lakenheath. The settlement of Eriswell and the thirteenth-century church of St. Laurence lie two and a half kilometres to the south of the hall, on the edge of Mildenhall common. It would appear that a settlement might have survived around the hall after a period of common-edge drift had caused homesteads and a second church to be established to the south.

76 SHER ERL 082

77 Copinger *Manors of Suffolk* Vol 4, p. 154.

78 SHER ERL 011

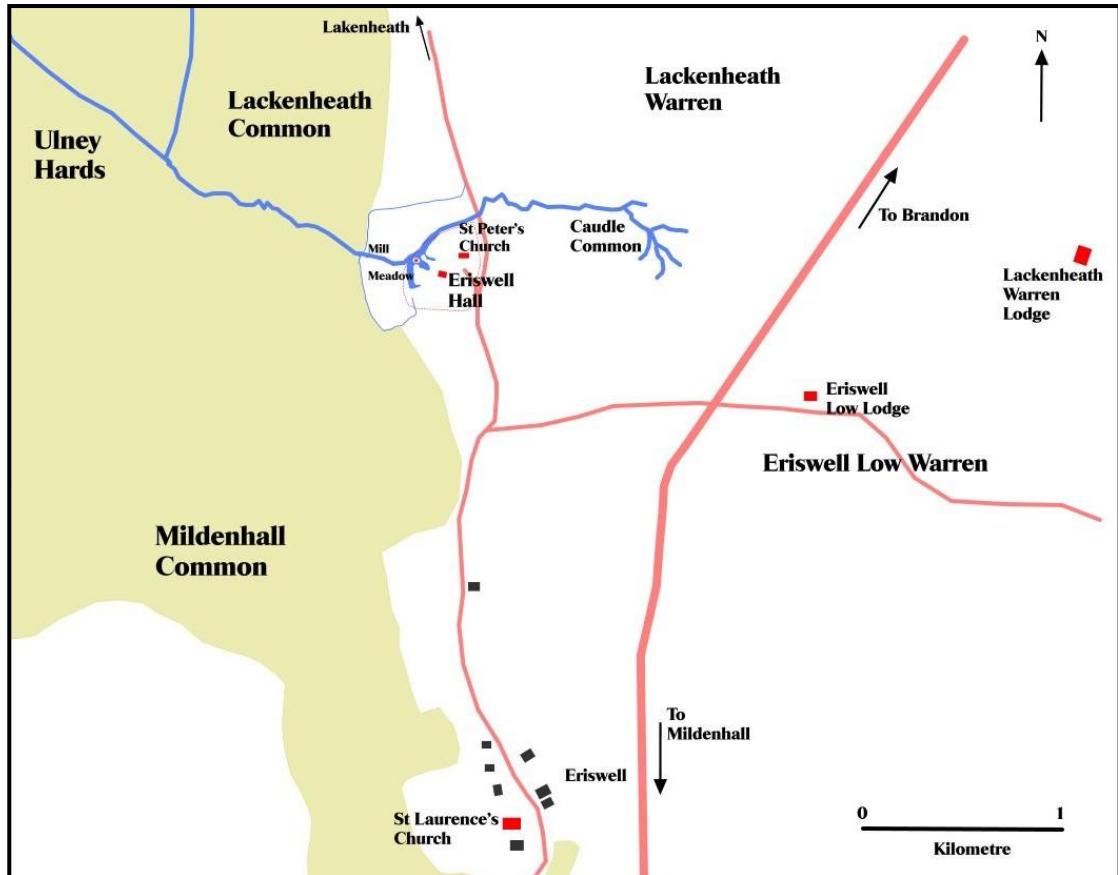


Figure 70: The wider landscape around Eriswell Hall circa 1500

Apart from the presence of a mill near both Oxburgh Hall and Eriswell Hall, there are other significant parallels between the surroundings of the two residences. **Figure 71**, below, shows Oxburgh Hall, standing close by St. John's Church, on the edge of the large area of common pasture that occupied the peaty soils of the Wissey Valley. A second church, the tenth-century St. Mary Magdalene, stood 1.2 km to the south west of the hall along with some homesteads. The mill belonging to Oxburgh Hall stood 400 metres from the residence and was part of a rather dispersed series of elite zones around the hall that comprised the curia and meadows. The map in **Figure 71** is a representation of the landscape around Oxburgh hall circa 1500, using the First Edition 1:10,560 as a base map with information from earlier sources superimposed. The general location and extent of common grazing and open field arable was taken from an estate map of 1722.⁷⁹ This map is an important source as it recorded Oxborough before extensive alterations to the road system and the enclosure of common grazings, which

were depicted in a map of 1725.⁸⁰ Evidence contained in an early seventeenth-century manorial survey was transcribed and translated, allowing landscape features and settlement to be plotted with reasonable accuracy with the help of the 1722 estate map.⁸¹ In order to represent the landscape as it may have been at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the position of features such as roads or boundaries recorded in sources after 1722 were disregarded. Similarly, the place names used in **Figure 71** are those used in the seventeenth-century manorial survey unless otherwise stated.

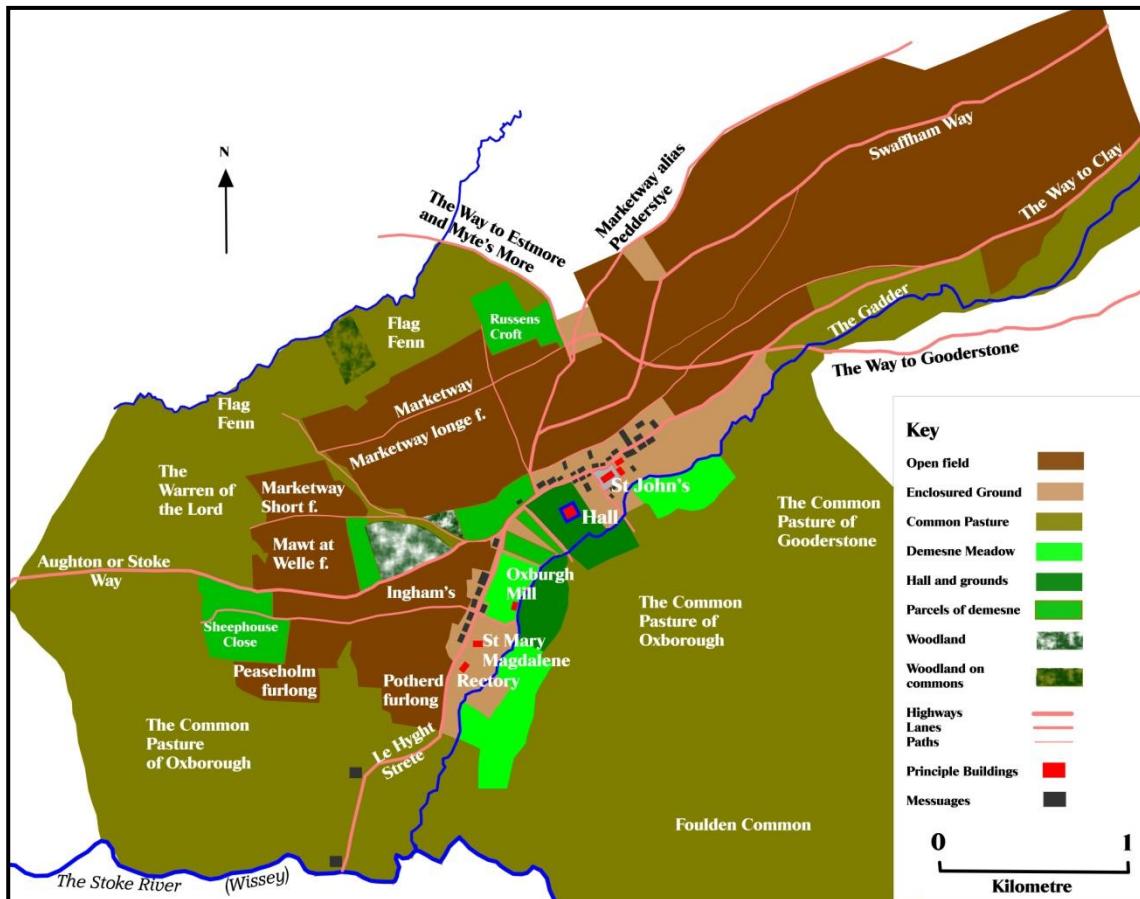


Figure 71: Oxborough, Late Medieval Landscape and Settlement

As discussed above, it is unlikely that major changes took place to the residence or surroundings of Oxburgh Hall in the later sixteenth century or seventeenth century when the Bedingfields incurred heavy financial penalties for their adherence to the Roman Catholic faith and allegiance to Charles I. These circumstances meant that the hall and the estate were in effect fossilised until the eighteenth century and the

⁸⁰ NRO BRA 2524/2, 1725 This is a detailed and visually attractive map but it seems unlikely that the major changes to the landscape it depicts could have been carried out in the space of three years. The map may have been a combination of surveyed features and proposals for change.

⁸¹ NRO PD139/52.

information in the early-seventeenth-century survey should provide a reasonable description of the landscape a century earlier as depicted in **Figure 71**.

In the late medieval period, the settlement of Oxborough stretched out along the road that led from the ferry crossing or ‘hythe’ on the River Wissey towards Swaffham and Cockley Cley. The drift of settlement away from the river can be tracked by the position of the tenth-century church of St Mary Magdalene and the adjacent rectory, compared to that of the fifteenth-century St. John’s and Oxburgh Hall. The Rectory may stand on the site of a medieval manor house, pre-dating the establishment of the present hall. The mill lies closer to the early church than it does to St John’s and it too may have been part of an earlier curia, around what is now the Rectory. In the early seventeenth century, one hundred and eighteen tenements and messuages lay along *Le Hyght Strete*, *Myddle Gate* and *East Gate*, their crofts backing onto the open fields or to banks of the Gadder. There appears to have been only two routes allowing access to the area of common pasture lying to the south and east of the hall, *Church Lane* passed between St. John’s Church and Oxburgh Hall and *Merten’s Lane* skirted the bounds of the curia to the west. *Millpathe* crossed *Hyght Strete* just to the north of St. Mary Magdalene Church and this may have been the main route from the west before the settlement drifted north eastwards. An enclosure close next to the *regia via* was called *Newe Way Close*, indicating that this road may have been a relatively recent route in the early seventeenth century. Enclosures of demesne pasture lay within the working landscape and did not form a cohesive block from which to create a tertiary elite zone or park. The position of the settlement, open fields and common pastures around Oxburgh Hall in the late medieval period resulted in elite zones that were limited in area and did not form a unified area of exclusivity.

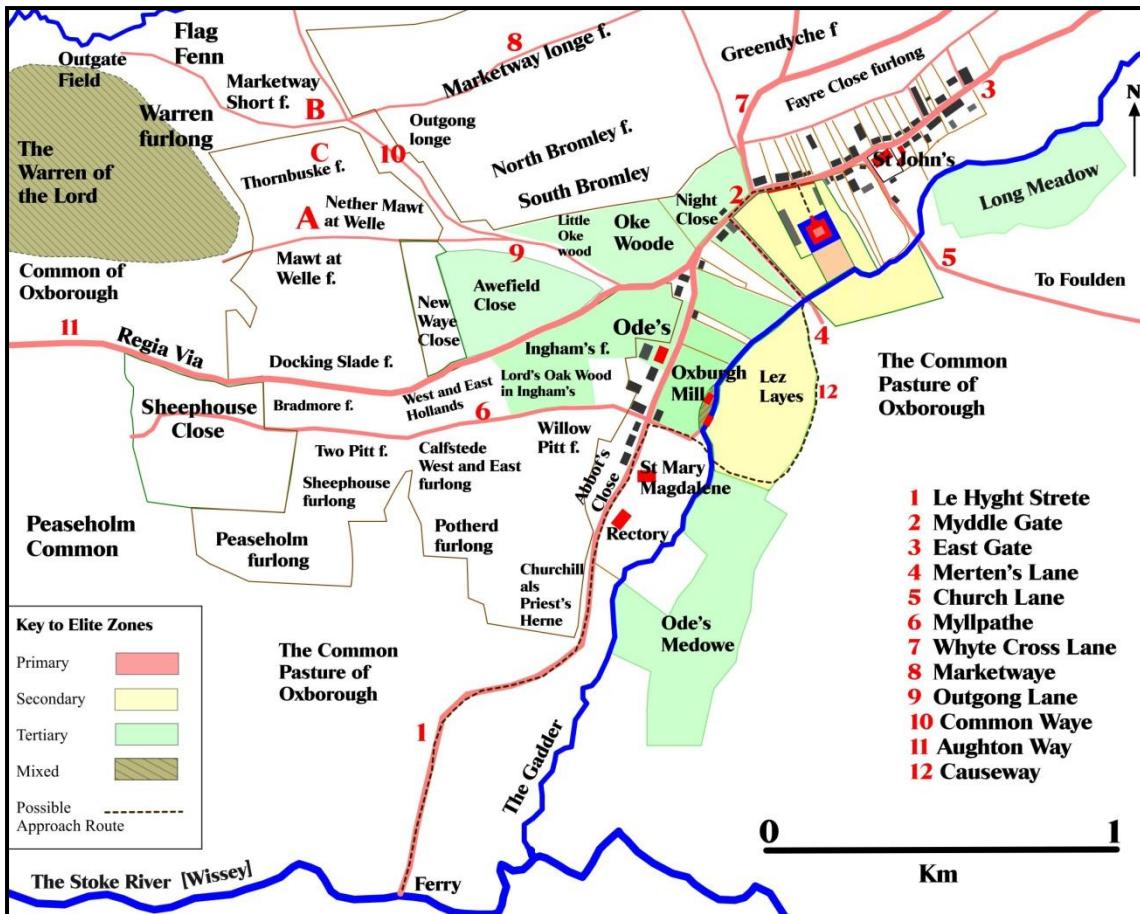


Figure 72: Oxburgh Hall, Elite Zones and surroundings

The plan in **Figure 72** shows Oxburgh Hall, the settlement and churches surrounded by common pasture and open fields. To the north west, the lord's warren lay on what would appear to be a mixture of outfield 'brecks' and common grazing. The acreage of the warren was not recorded in the seventeenth-century survey but it could be assumed to cover most of the drier areas of common pasture to the north of *Aughton Waye* (11) and possibly including *Outgate Furlong* and *Warren Furlong*. As discussed in the previous chapter the warren has been considered a mixed elite/vernacular zone. It has been suggested that a deer park may have existed in this area of Oxborough, perhaps because *Little* and *Great Park Closes* and *Park Furlong* were recorded on the eighteenth-century maps.⁸² However, the seventeenth-century survey does not use these names for the same pieces of land and the field names may have came about because the relevant pieces of land were held by one *John Parke*. *Great Park Close* (A) was known in the seventeenth century as *Nether Mawt at Well* furlong and it was noted in a later hand that three acres of the furlong had been enclosed by *John Parke*. The same

⁸² Liddiard, R., (2000) *Landscapes of Lordship: Norman Castles and the Countryside in Medieval Norfolk, 1066-1200* BAR British Series 309, p. 112.

individual held two acres in *Market Way Short Furlong*, ‘abutting le Common Drove to the south’ (10), which equates with the position of *Little Park Close* (B).⁸³ The furlong described as *Park Furlong* in the eighteenth century was known as *Thornbuske* and *Upper Mawt at Well* furlongs in the previous century. This evidence throws some doubt on the existence of a medieval deer park in this part of Oxborough, the indication being that the nomenclature came from an individual rather than a landscape feature. A medieval park could have existed in this location and been converted to arable at some point, but it would seem odd that no reference was made to this in the very detailed seventeenth-century document. The word *parcum* does not appear and when the words ‘Park’ or ‘Parke’ occur in the survey, they always refer to an individual rather than a piece of ground. It is possible that an apostrophe ‘s’ was conveniently left out by those compiling the eighteenth-century surveys and terriers, *Park Close* perhaps sounding rather grander than *Park’s Close*.

The *Inquisition Post Mortem* carried out following the death of Sir Edmund Bedingfield in 1497 does not mention a park at Oxborough but did describe a property of two messuages with two hundred acres of land, four closes and ten acres of meadow. The property known as *Odys* was worth £2 and can be identified in the seventeenth-century survey where it referred to as *Ode’s*. The arable land was scattered across the furlongs to the west and north of Oxborough but the enclosed ground and meadow lay along *Hyght Strete* and near the *Gadder*. *Ode’s* was an important part of the tertiary zone to the west and south west of Oxburgh Hall and included a small oak wood in *Ingham’s furlong* and *Ode’s Medowe*. The tertiary zones around Oxburgh Hall are of a different form to those at, for example, Badmondisfield Hall, where a large deer park abutted most of the secondary zone. The wooded closes to either side of the *regia via* would have presented a marked contrast to the more open fens and common grazings that the road passed over when approaching Oxborough from the west. For those arriving from the ferry crossing on the River Wissey and travelling along *Le Hyght Strete* (1), there may have been two ways to approach Oxburgh Hall. They could pass the lord’s mill and meadows and *Oke Woode* before continuing on to Myddle Gate (2). Alternatively, they might have taken the *Myllpathe*, towards the mill then travelled between Myll Meadow and *Lez Layes* before turning north on to a raised causeway, the earthworks of which are extant and indicated at 12 in **Figure 72**. The causeway appears to join *Merten’s Lane* at the point where it crossed the stream and a visitor would have been able to see the

83 NRO PD139/52 Early Seventeenth –century survey of Oxborough, folios 14 & 15

southern wing of the mansion and the south west tower. Whether passing by on Myddle Gate, or entering the curia, the striking gatehouse centrally placed in the north range would leave no doubts that this residence belonged to a high-ranking, wealthy family who wished their presence to be felt.

The grandeur of the hall, church and ancillary buildings at Oxburgh would have distracted attention from the lack of parkland or even a block of demesne pasture around the hall. The demesne was fragmented, and like the settlement was strung out along the edge of the commons and fields. The creation of a secondary zone by planting up the closes near roads with oaks and by the development of elaborate water features in the meadows made best use of what was available to the Bedingfields. The careful manipulation of approach routes, particularly by the causeway beside *Lez Layes*, would have conveyed to visitors that they were approaching an important residence that stood beside an equally impressive church. The crowded, busy landscape of Oxborough would have contrasted with the open, relatively quiet countryside around Baconsthorpe where the Heydons had more scope to develop elite zones around their castle.

Sir John Heydon and Sir Edmund Bedingfield undertook ambitious building projects in locations where they did not have long-standing family connections but, during the 1470s, other East Anglian lords were contemplating new residences at locations long associated with their ancestors. Amongst these were Lady Alice Bedingfield's cousin, Sir Ralph Shelton and Sir Robert Chamberlain. Both men were from 'second tier' families below the baronage, and both had inherited substantial estates from their fathers and made good marriages that brought them additional wealth and property. In 1472, Sir Robert Chamberlain was a knight of the body to Edward IV, a Member of Parliament for Suffolk and an influential courtier. His wife Elizabeth was co-heir to her father Sir John Fitz Ralph's extensive estates in East Anglia, Cambridgeshire and Essex.⁸⁴ As a trusted member of Edward IV's court, and with the support of the Duke of Norfolk, he had reached greater heights than his predecessors had and could expect to spend many years near the top of the East Anglian hierarchy.⁸⁵ The other knight, Sir Ralph Shelton, came from an equally venerable family who had administered East Anglian affairs as sheriffs, MPs and on commissions. Sir Ralph married Margaret, daughter of Robert Clere of Ormesby, a good match but perhaps not as lucrative as that

84 Copinger, *Manors of Suffolk Volume 6*, p. 274.

85 Virgoe (1997) "Three Suffolk Parliamentary Elections of the Mid-Fifteenth Century" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late Medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 58.

made by Chamberlain. The Sheltons had been active in regional politics but Sir Ralph appears to have been less involved in East Anglian affairs than his antecedents. His attendance at a commission of the peace is mentioned by John Paston in a letter of 1454 but his name does not occur in the Paston correspondence of the 1460s and 70s and Sir Ralph does not appear to have been nominated for Parliament or as sheriff during these decades.⁸⁶ He may have chosen to step back from the turbulence of regional politics to concentrate on running his considerable estates, or the Sheltons may have been amongst those, such as John Heydon, who lost influence after the fall of William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk in 1450, and the execution of Thomas Tuddenham in 1461.

Whilst Sir Ralph Shelton's position amongst the East Anglian power brokers was at best static, and probably lower than he might have wished, Sir Robert Chamberlain's influence had risen to encompass matters of state, thereby eclipsing many of his contemporaries. When the two men came to decide where they would build new principal residences, both had many manors available to them across East Anglia but both chose the location with which their families had the longest association. For the Chamberlains this was the manor of Gedding Hall (40; TL 9537 5858 South West), which they had held since the 1350s and was one of the family's principal residences.⁸⁷ Sir Ralph Shelton, chose the amalgamated manors of Overhall and Netherhall, known as Shelton Hall in the parish of Shelton (26; TM 2273 9059; Central). The Sheltons had held land there since the early thirteenth century but the burial places of senior members of the family suggests that Great Snoring (66; TF 9457 3451; North) and Brent Eleigh (103; TL 9414 4824; South West) had been the principal Shelton residences during the first half of the fifteenth century.⁸⁸

Chamberlain and Shelton may have had different motives for choosing ancient caputs as the location for their new residences, and the houses they built did not necessarily reflect the divergence between the positions of the two men in the East Anglian hierarchy. For instance, there is a certain degree of anomaly between Sir Ralph's rather demoted position within East Anglian society and the scale and grandeur of the new hall and church he built at Shelton. Sir Ralph may have hoped that his building campaign at

86 *The Paston Letters*, Vol 1 p277; MacCulloch, D., (1986) *Suffolk and The Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County 1500-1600*. Oxford, Clarendon Press. Appendix II Norfolk JPs 1485-1558, pp. 393-411.

87 Copinger, Vol 6, p. 274.

88 Blomefield, F., & Parkin C., (1806) 'Hundred of Depwade: Shelton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 5, pp. 263-274.

Shelton might emphasise his family's ancient lineage and long history of service, perhaps as part of a campaign to regain his family's former position amongst those who ran East Anglian affairs. Alternatively, his ambition may have been to create an impressive power base that would enhance the careers and marriage prospects of his three sons and two daughters. Either or both scenarios would have helped to re-establish the Sheltons amongst the regional elite, who by the 1470s were drawn from a more diverse range of backgrounds than had been the case at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

Apart from the lure of ancestral connections, the chosen site at Shelton lay in a more isolated position than the manor houses at Great Snoring and Brent Eleigh, which were situated, like Oxburgh, near their respective parish churches within areas of settlement. At Shelton, Sir Ralph utilised a site that lay over eight hundred metres to the southeast of Shelton parish church and five hundred metres from the settlement of Hardwick. John Heydon had made a similar choice at Baconsthorpe by building at Woodhall rather than at one of his manors in more crowded locations. It is possible that the space available around the Shelton site was an important factor in Sir Ralph's decision to build there and it is also worth speculating whether he might have wanted to show that he could out-do the wealthy lawyer of Baconsthorpe, in terms of both pedigree and resources. Whether the latter was true is uncertain but it must have taken a prodigious amount of capital, or credit, to construct the large turreted, ornate mansion at Shelton and the magnificent perpendicular church of St Mary.

It is unclear when work began at Shelton Hall but it may have been complete and the Shelton family in residence by 1481 when a wedding was performed '*in the oratory or chapel, in the manor-house of Sir Ralf Shelton*'.⁸⁹ This implies that the mansion was under construction at the same time as the first phase of Baconsthorpe and Edmund Bedingfield's Oxburgh Hall. It is also the most likely time for Sir Robert Chamberlain to have built Gedding Hall, when he was at the height of his career as a politician and as servant of the King. The mansion at Gedding stood within a rectangular moat, archaeological evidence and surviving fabric indicating that it consisted of four brick-built ranges, one with a centrally-placed gatehouse, as at Oxburgh. There are some obvious similarities between the four sites in terms of fabric and ground plan, or at least the initial plan in the case of Baconsthorpe. The outer walls of Gedding, Oxburgh and

⁸⁹ Blomefield, F., & Parkin C, (1806) 'Hundred of Depwade: Shelton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 5, pp. 263-274.

Shelton were all built on the revetments of the moat platform, causing the walls to rise straight from the water of the moat.



Figure 73: St. Mary's Church, Shelton

The church built by Sir Ralph Shelton may provide valuable clues about the fabric of Shelton Hall. St Mary's was erected circa 1490 and apart from the west tower, which was retained from an earlier church, is constructed from red bricks with blue diapering and stone dressings. It would seem highly probable that the hall was built from the same materials and perhaps even by the same workforce. The diapering in the walls of Kirby Muxloe Castle (1480-3) is almost identical to that of Shelton Church and lozenges of blue diapering survive on the north wall of the Gedding Hall gatehouse.⁹⁰ Two early drawings of the residences reveal other similarities between Shelton and Gedding. A pen-and-ink and watercolour sketch of Shelton Hall was made circa 1600, (**Figures 76 & 83, below**, pages 189 and 200). The hall was demolished circa 1790 and this drawing, which was the frontispiece to a manuscript armorial of the Shelton family, is the only known depiction of Shelton Hall.⁹¹ The Gedding gatehouse and the eastern

90 SHER GDD 001

91 BL Add MS 74644 Circa 1600 Armorial of the Shelton family of Norfolk including a pen-and-ink and watercolour view of Shelton Hall. The picture used here is from an exhibition catalogue *Connections: Books and Manuscripts in Early Modern Britain 1530-1680* Catalogue 1272, Maggs Brothers Ltd., London. The Norfolk historian Walter Rye did a pencil sketch of this picture and included it in his notes on the history of Shelton, NRO Rye Manuscript 17, Vol vi, p. 114.

wing of the gatehouse range are all that remain of the fifteenth-century hall and these have been subsumed in a major rebuilding of 1897.⁹² However, a nineteenth-century sketch captured the hall before the remodelling took place (Figure 74). The gabled roofs on the gatehouse bays are not thought to be original and if they are disregarded the Gedding Hall gatehouse bears some resemblance to the gatehouse in the drawing of Shelton Hall. There are also some similarities between the side ranges, although at Gedding two crow-stepped dormer gables rather than one at Shelton and Oxburgh. The water door appears to have been placed in a rather hazardous spot below the garderoberes.

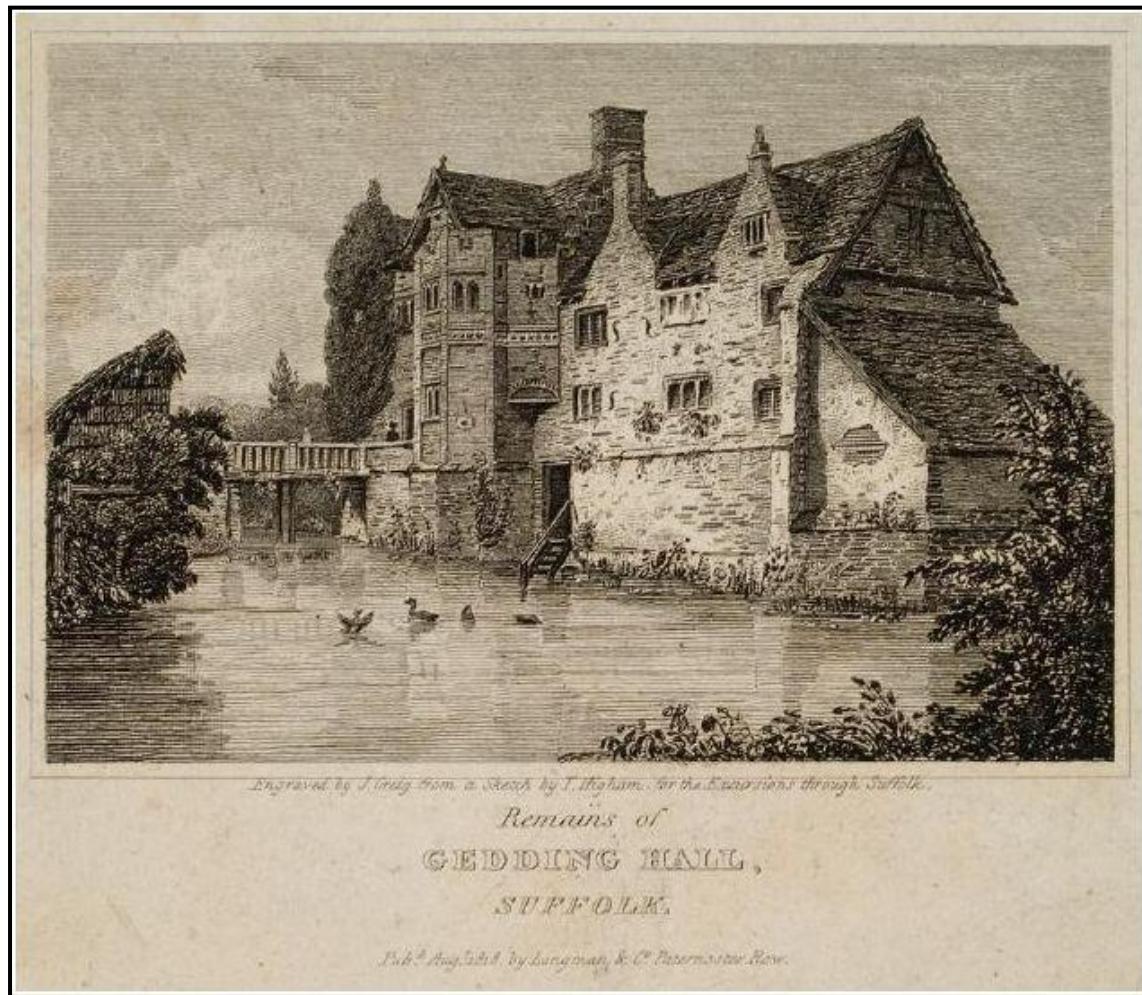


Figure 74: Gedding Hall in the early nineteenth century before the extensive remodelling of 1897 Christchurch Gallery, New Zealand, Engraving 78/179

Apart from the gatehouse and surviving parts of the south range, archaeological excavations carried out for the present owner have revealed the remains of a substantial section of revetment in the northwest corner of the moat platform, with a second section along the east arm. Evidence of wall footings at right angles to the moat have been

92 Pevsner, N., (2002 edition) *The Buildings of England: Suffolk* Yale University Press, p. 227.

interpreted as part of the north range of a courtyard house.⁹³ The excavations and a resistivity survey revealed an incomplete courtyard plan on the platform, which before infilling of the east arm of the moat measured approximately fifty-two metres by sixty.⁹⁴ Without the pitched roof and dormers over the turrets, the Gedding Hall gatehouse (**Figure 75**) would bear some resemblance to that of Shelton, (**Figure 76**) below, although the Shelton gatehouse appears to have been more elaborate, with greater detailing.



Figure 75: Gedding Hall, following the remodelling of 1897 *Photo: Images of England*

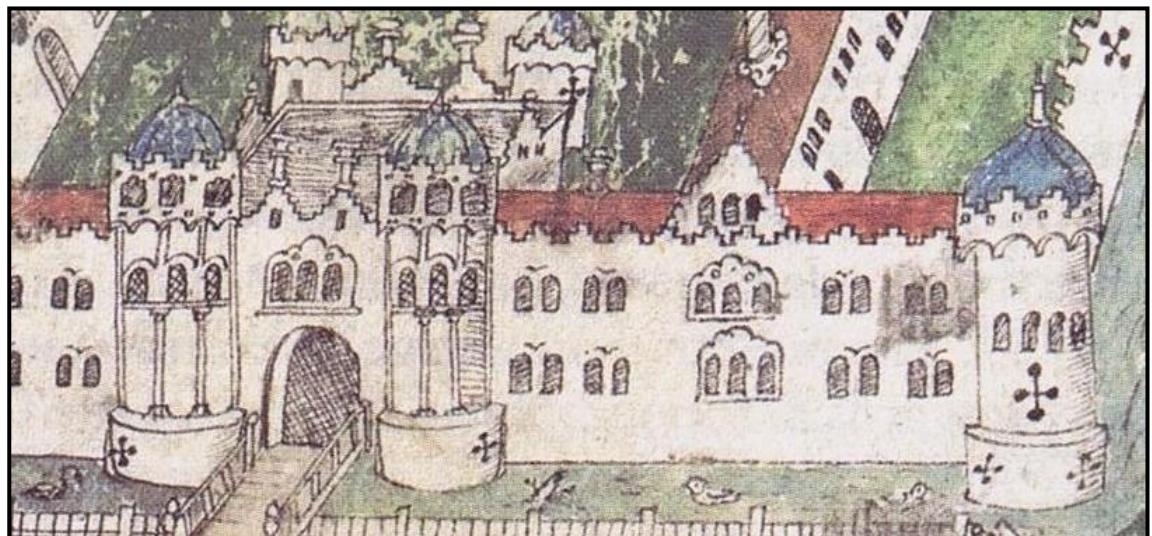


Figure 76: Shelton Hall Gatehouse, circa 1600 *BL Add MS 74644⁹⁵*

93 SHER Boulter S/1994/Gedding Hall: record of excavations/Report No 94/21 and Report No 95/21:Oct 1995 for Mr W Wyman. Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service reports.

94 Cole, M.(1993) Report on geophysical survey at Gedding Hall, Suffolk. (AML 41/93)

95 BL Add MS 74644; Circa 1600 Armorial of the Shelton family of Norfolk including a pen-and-ink and watercolour view of Shelton Hall The picture used here is from an exhibition catalogue *Connections: Books and Manuscripts in Early Modern Britain 1530-1680* Catalogue 1272, Maggs Brothers Ltd., London

The evidence suggests that Sir Robert Chamberlain had planned a large brick-built courtyard house at Gedding, of similar proportions to Shelton Hall and Oxburgh Hall. As Shelton Hall has all but vanished from the landscape it would be useful to examine Gedding Hall before returning to a detailed analysis of Shelton, beginning with Sir Robert's possible motives for choosing to build at Gedding. Among possible influences his ancestral connections with Gedding were no doubt a strong incentive for choosing this location. The site also provided ample supplies of water, which could be manipulated to the moat and fishponds via streams flowing towards the Rattlesden River, and the clay soil made the retention of water easier than on lighter land. The clay also provided the raw materials for a brick kiln located to the north west of Gedding Hall. Following excavations the fabric of the kiln has been radiocarbon dated to between 1480 and 1660 and bricks resemble those used in the construction of the gatehouse and revetments at Gedding. The ability to make bricks locally would have been an important consideration when conceiving the idea of a large brick structure in an area with a strong tradition of timber-framed construction. These advantages of the site may have been further enhanced by the proximity of Bury St. Edmunds, seven miles to the north west and the *via regia* from Woolpit to Bylston, which proceeded onwards through Essex to Westminster. In addition, the location was surrounded by a block of demesne with sufficient ground available to create the spatial arrangements suitable for the capital mansion of a prominent courtier.

A fine of levied on the manor of Gedding Hall in 1365 related that the manor included 1 messuage, 400 acres of land, 30 acres of meadow, 80 acres of pasture 20 acres of woodland and 40 shillings of rent in the surrounding parishes. The pasture formed a block of demesne around the hall that appears to have been extended in the fifteenth or sixteenth century to create an area of pasture with the attributes of a park if not the official designation. An abstract of the court rolls of the manor of Gedding Hall from 1607 makes frequent reference to business conducted in earlier centuries and records the existence of *the Lord's Park meadowe*. This meadow created a narrow strip of some twenty acres between the tenanted land next to the road to Felsham and the demesne pasture. The use of the word 'park' in the name of the meadow suggests the adjacent demesne pasture was regarded as the lord's park.⁹⁶ This arrangement is reminiscent of Helmingham Hall (33; South East) where a strip of meadows abutted a block of

96 Copinger, *Manors of Suffolk Vol 6*, p. 287.

demesne lying to the south of Helmingham Hall.⁹⁷ A number of tenanted properties abutted the south of the meadows in a similar fashion to Gedding. An entry in the Gedding court rolls described a tenement lying to the north west of the churchyard called *Biggon's Tenement* with –

‘appurtenances, hedges and ditches situate in Gedding between the demesne of this manor on both parts and abutts upon ye land of ye manor towards ye north and ye south’

The location of this tenement within the demesne and abutting the churchyard could indicate that *Biggon's* had been a former manor house that by the sixteenth century was held by a tenant or by a member of the Chamberlain household. The ‘fish pond’ shown on the First Edition OS near the site of *Biggons* was perhaps a remnant of the ditches mentioned above, which may have surrounded a predecessor of the fifteenth-century Gedding Hall. If this was the site of an earlier hall, it could indicate that Chamberlain may have built his hall on a new site and excavated the moat rather than recut an existing one.

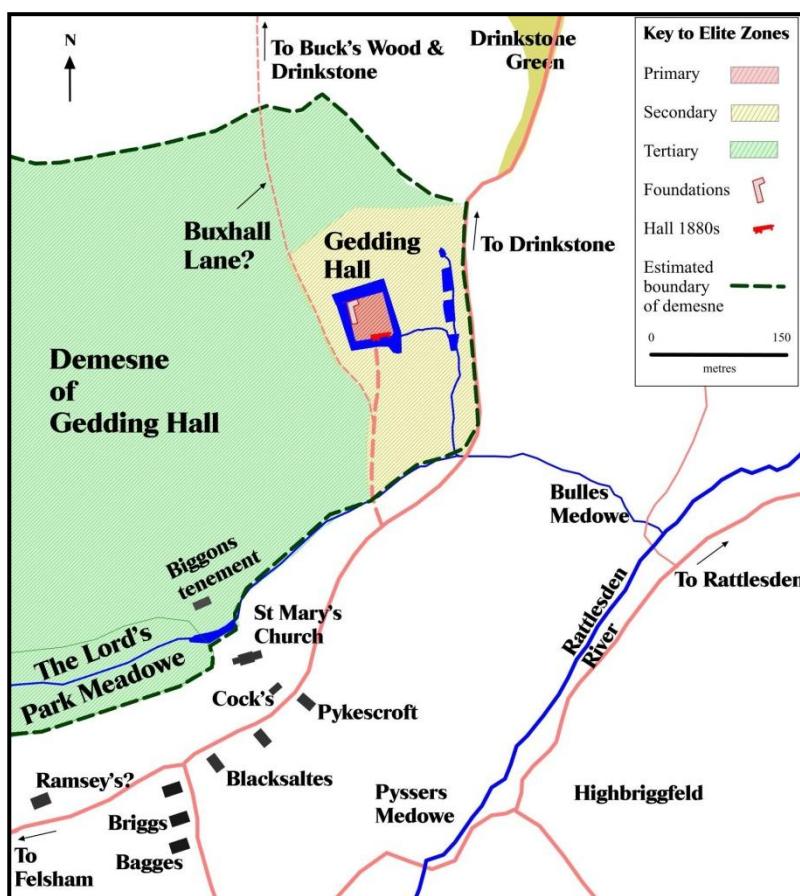


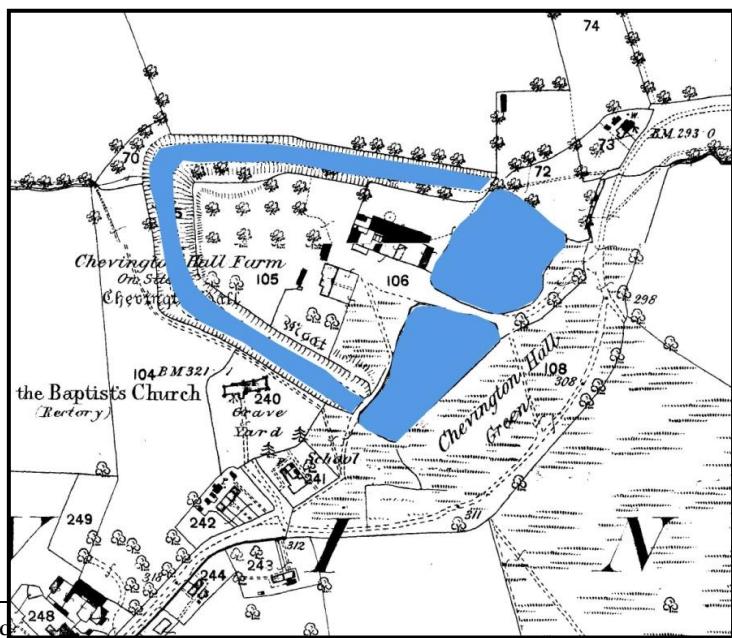
Figure 77: The possible extent of the elite zones around Gedding Hall circa 1500

The remainder of the settlement of Gedding lay to the south and south-west of the church, along the roads to Felsham and Rattlesden, with an area of open-field land called *Whytebredfeld* to the northwest of the hall beyond the demesne. Place name evidence indicated that

97 Podd, S., (2009) “Helmingham Park- A Complex Development” *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology and History*, Volume XLII, part 1, p. 46.

Highbriegfeld lay across the river to the south east of Gedding Hall and to the north east Drinkstone Green was recorded on Hodskinson's Map of Suffolk.⁹⁸

The road system around Gedding had changed little between Hodskinson's survey of 1783 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey 1: 10,560 of the 1880s. However, court rolls for 1563-4 suggest that the road from Felsham to Drinkstone was subject to realignment at some earlier date. The court roll directs the reader to '*see deposition to prove ye way of lord from ffelsham to Drinkston called Buxhall Lane*'.⁹⁹ Unfortunately, the relevant deposition has not been found but it is possible that the *Buxhall Lane* mentioned in the court rolls was once a public route to Drinkstone before becoming *ye way of ye lord*, a phrase that implies by the sixteenth century it was within the elite zones. The part of Drinkstone parish that lies immediately to the north of the Gedding demesne contains several 'Buck's' place names including Buck's Wood, Old Buck's and New Buck's Farm, possibly indicating the site of the medieval 'Buxhall'. The public may have been encouraged to use the road to the east of the hall rather than cutting through the demesne. A series of fishponds appears to have been intentionally placed where they could be seen from this road. This would have compromised the security of the fish but may have been a means of indicating the increased exclusivity of the area beside the road. It is also possible that the fishponds were a means of reinforcing a new road alignment as appeared to be the case at Badmondisfield Hall, in Chapter 3. A similar arrangement existed at Chevington Hall (118; TL 7893 6019; South West), where a large fishpond divided the moat platform from an area of common and a road.



99 Copinger, *Manors of Suffolk Vol*, p.288.

Figure 78: Fishponds between Chevington Hall and Hall Green.

Based on 2nd Edition 1:2,500 OS

The road bends around the edge of the green before entering the settlement. Chevington Hall was owned by the Abbot's of Bury St. Edmund's and was granted to the Kitson family of Hengrave Hall at the Dissolution. The ponds are undated but they would have created an impression of exclusivity whilst allowing the hall to be viewed from the road and green.

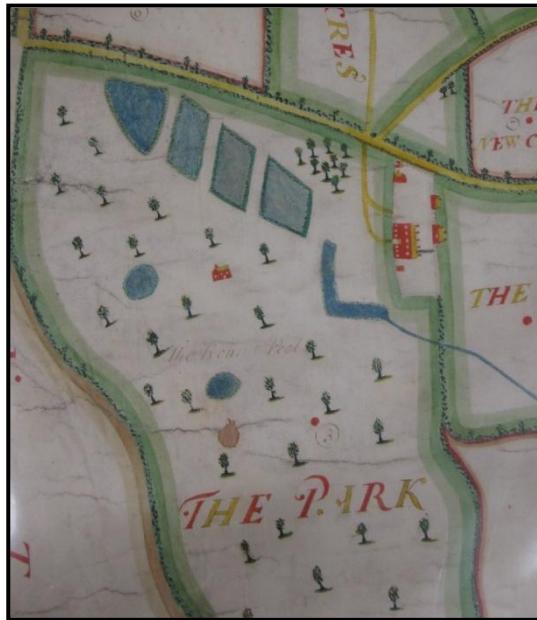


Figure 79: Melton Constable Hall, 1732
NRO H & S/ 82 M3 & 83 M4
Copy of map a map of 1674

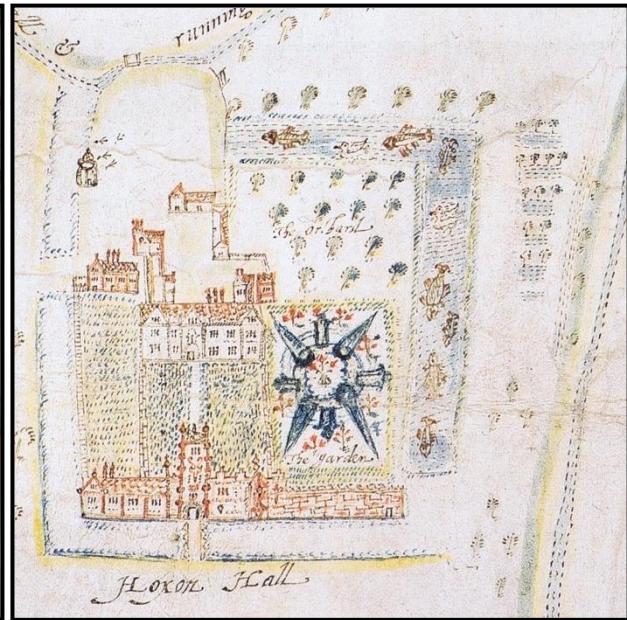


Figure 80: New Park, Hoxne Hall
SRO [L] HD40 422. 1619

In the North sub region, at Melton Constable Hall (14; TG 0313 3195) four large fishponds lay within the park on a slope next to a road.¹⁰⁰ At Hoxne Hall (97; TM 176 774; South East) a line of six fishponds are shown on a map of 1619, to the east of the moat and next to a lane through the park.¹⁰¹ The use of fishponds to mark the transition from the vernacular to a tertiary elite zone has also been noted at Helmingham Hall, where a large fishpond lay between the demesne and *Churchyard Pightle*, part of the Rector of Helmingham's land until 1802.¹⁰²

The linear arrangement of ponds at Gedding is typical of locations where narrow valleys can be readily dammed to create a series of either small *servatoria* or stew ponds as at

100 NRO Hayes & Storr Maps 82 M3 & 83 M4; 1732 copies of a map of Melton Constable Park 1674

101 SRO [L] HD40 422. Map of Hoxne New Park 1619

102 Podd, S., (2009) "Helmingham Park- A Complex Development" *Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology and History, Volume XLII, part 1*, p.46.

Gedding, or larger breeding ponds as at Hawstead Place (120; TL 8428 5997; South West).¹⁰³ The symbolism of both types of pond would be readily understood, as would connotations of control over water supplies and control over nature. The ability to rear an essentially wild creature such as a fish, or for that matter a deer or a swan, and control over natural resources proclaimed the extent of the lord's power. It could be argued that by displaying fishponds in the secondary elite zone near points of interaction, this statement of authority could be communicated to a wide audience. It is however, unclear if other features were displayed in the secondary zone although a dovecote might well have stood to the south of the hall. It is possible that Sir Robert Chamberlain's plans for his mansion and grounds were not realised in full during his lifetime. There are discrepancies in the dating of the standing remains at Gedding, the Suffolk HER suggesting that the moat, revetments and gatehouse may all date from circa 1480, whilst Pevsner and the English Heritage listed building report suggest an 'Early Tudor' or 'Henry VIII' date.¹⁰⁴ These anomalies might be resolved if work had stopped at Gedding following the accession of Henry Tudor in 1485 and did not resume until the reign of Henry VIII (1509 – 1547). This scenario is made more likely by the fact that, unlike Sir Edmund Bedingfield and Sir Ralph Shelton, Chamberlain did not make a successful transition from the Yorkist to the Tudor regime. The Calendar of Close Rolls for the reign of Henry VII reveal that Sir Robert, once a prominent member of Edward IV's court, was suspected of disloyalty by the new regime. The following extract records that Chamberlain was effectively under house arrest in Surrey during 1488.

The following mainprized for the loyalty and appearance in chancery at Easter of Sir Robert Chamberleyne, Sir John Norbury of Stoke co. Surrey in 300l., John Warde, alderman of London, Richard Page, gentleman of Horton co. Kent, John Norwode of Myddelton in 200l. each, Roger Appulton of Dertford co. Kent, gentlemen, Thomas Pynde, draper of London, in 100l. each, Thomas Wodoes, gentleman of Kymberley co. Norfolk, in 200 marks, Robert Ryngbell, grocer of London, in 100l., payable at the Nativity of St. John Baptist next.

The said Sir Robert Chamberleyne was ordered on 17 October last by the chancellor under pain of 500 marks, to abide within the town of Chartesey co.

103 Williamson, T., (2000) *Suffolk's Parks and Gardens: Designed Landscapes from the Tudors to the Victorians* Bollington, Windgather, p. 24.

104 Pevsner, N., (2002 edition) *The Buildings of England: Suffolk* Yale University Press, p. 227; English Heritage Listed Building Report 1032593

Surrey and not to proceed beyond a mile thence save by command of his highness.

*15th October, 1488. No. 372.*¹⁰⁵

Similar entries occurred during 1489 - 90 and continued until Sir Robert's execution in 1491.¹⁰⁶ It is therefore unlikely that work would have continued at Gedding during this period and may explain the anomalies in the archaeological record. However, it is clear that Sir Robert had intended to build a fine mansion to rival those of his contemporaries but his death and the forfeiture of the manor to the Crown for a period of four years would almost certainly have caused a cessation in construction. Sir Robert's heir, Fitz Ralph Chamberlain regained both royal approval and his patrimony during the early years of Henry VIII's reign.¹⁰⁷ Fitz Ralph may well have decided to restart work at Gedding but like Sir Harry Heydon at Baconsthorpe may not have built the residence planned by his father. It is possible that only part of the moat platform was utilised resulting in the incomplete plan revealed by archaeological investigations and the various dates for the remains of Gedding Hall.¹⁰⁸

Sir Ralph Shelton fared better under Henry VII than Sir Robert and by 1491, Sir Ralph's ostentatious mansion was complete and his church under construction.¹⁰⁹ Sir Ralph may have reused the site of an earlier mansion, mentioned in two *Inquisitions Ad Quod Damnum* dated 1379 and 1419-20, when permission was sought by two of Sir Ralph's ancestors to enclose a road 'which leads below the house of the said Ralph on the north side in the same, for enlarging his house'. The area in question measured 80 perches by 3 perches, approximately 402 metres by 15 and, as was customary, had to be replaced by an equivalent area from 'his own ground for the passing along there'.¹¹⁰ The wording of both Inquisitions is almost identical, apart from the fact that the fifteenth-century Inquisition referred to William de Shelton and dealt with a larger piece of land measuring 100 perches by eight (502 metres by 40, approximately). Unfortunately, the documents do not state which of the two manors in Shelton the house

105 'Close Rolls, Henry VII: 1486-1489', *Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry VII: volume 1: 1485-1500* (1955), pp. 104.

106 *Calendar of Close Rolls Henry VII, October 1491*

107 Copinger, *Manors of Suffolk* Vol 6, p. 274.

108 SHER GDD 001

109 Pevsner dates the church to circa 1490 but in his will dated 21st March 1498 Sir Ralph charges his executors "that they perform and make up completely the church of Shelton aforesaid in masonry, timber, iron and lead ... according to the form I have begun" *Visitation of Norfolk Vol II*, pp. 395-6 : Pevsner & Wilson, *Norfolk North-West and South*, p. 641.

110 TNA:PRO C143/394/7, 1378-9 request by Ralph de Shelton to enclose a road in Shelton TNA:PRO C 143/447/18, 1419-20 request by William de Shelton to enclose a road in Shelton

was situated at, Netherhall or Overhall; nor whether the second inquisition was reaffirming the earlier document or was required because further enlargement of the mansion was envisaged. However, it is possible that the closure of sections of the road ‘below the mansion’ created a block of demesne that could be used to create an elite landscape around the late fifteenth-century mansion, without the need for any further IAQDs. The manors of Overhall and Netherhall had been amalgamated by 1428 and Sir Ralph Shelton’s new mansion may have been built on the site of the former.¹¹¹ A moated site on the valley floor is a possible location of Nether or ‘lower’ Hall, it lies next to a stream in what was referred to as *Dark Park* on the First Edition 6” OS.

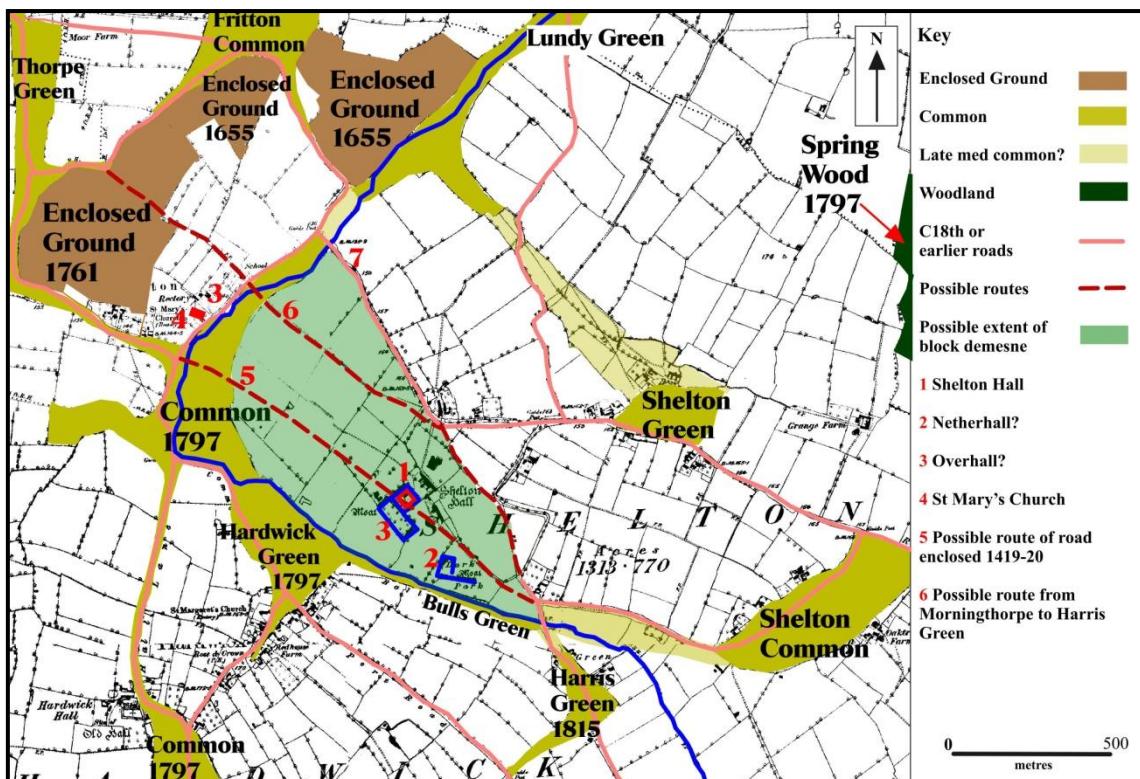


Figure 81: The location of Shelton Hall¹¹² Based on First Edition OS 1:10,560

Shelton Hall stood within a block of demesne pasture that sloped south and west towards a stream. Part of this pasture would be referred to as a park in a sixteenth-century *Inquisition Post Mortem* but references to a park have not been found in fifteenth-century IPMs or other sources.¹¹³ However, it is likely that the block demesne around the new hall had the attributes of a park and functioned in a similar manner. It

111 *Inquisitions and Assessments relating to Feudal Aids*, pp. 585-86. Lady Katherine Shelton held both manors

112 NRO NRS 27335 711x1, Map of parts of Shelton and Fritton. 1655; NRO 102 BCH, Map of part of Shelton. 1761; NRO C/sca2/143, 1815 Enclosure Award and map Hardwick; NRO DN/TA 25 Shelton and Hardwick Tithe Award 1838; *Faden's Map of Norfolk*

113 TNA:PRO C142/196/32, 1581-2. The park is described in Liddiard, R., (2010) *The Norfolk Deer Parks Project: Report for the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership*. Published online

allowed the creation of more unified tertiary and secondary elite zones than at Oxburgh Hall, whilst still providing a suitable display zone where dovecotes, a barn and water features could proclaim the status of the Shelton family.

Unlike Baconsthorpe, Kirby Muxloe and several of the residences discussed in Chapter 3, Shelton Hall (26; TM 2273 9059; Central) stood above the floor of a shallow valley, on a level site over two hundred metres from the associated watercourse. Settlements clustered around the greens and commons, which may have been more extensive in the late medieval period than recorded on the enclosure and tithe maps of 1797 and 1838.¹¹⁴ Field boundaries, as surveyed for the tithe map of 1838, suggest that Lundy Green may have joined Shelton Green and Bulls Green, Harris Green and Shelton Common may have connected as shown in **Figure 81**. The road system has been informed by *Faden's Map of Norfolk*, along with the enclosure and tithe maps referred to above. The pronounced dog-leg in the road northwest of Harris Green is shown on the tithe map but not on Faden and may be a nineteenth-century realignment but no relevant road orders have come to light for the area to the east of Shelton Hall. Two routes that may have crossed the block demesne at Shelton have been included in **Figure 81**. The route marked at 6 joins a series of nineteenth-century footpaths with a road from Thorpe Common recorded in 1761 and may have passed closer to Shelton Hall than shown in the figure. The road marked at 5 would have linked the settlement and church of Shelton to the settlements around Harris Green and Shelton Common. This route would have skirted the north of a possible location for Overhall at 3, and through the site of Shelton Hall, it would also have passed to the north of the moated site at 2, which may be the site of Netherhall.

The survival of extensive earthworks around the site of Shelton Hall has compensated for the paucity of documentary evidence relating to the fifteenth-century landscape and has allowed some conclusions to be drawn about the setting of the hall. During the late sixteenth century, the hall declined in status and its eventual demolition in 1790 meant that the earthworks were not subsumed under major redevelopment or landscaping. The earthworks, surveyed by Brian Cushion, although degraded by weathering and agricultural activities supply useful evidence for the spatial arrangements around the hall. They have been used in conjunction with aerial photographs and the circa 1600

114 NRO C/sca2/143, 1815 Enclosure Award and map Hardwick; NRO DN/TA 25 Tithe Award Shelton and Hardwick; *Faden's Map of Norfolk*

watercolour of Shelton Hall (Figure 83, below) to produce the composite plan of the site in Figure 82.¹¹⁵

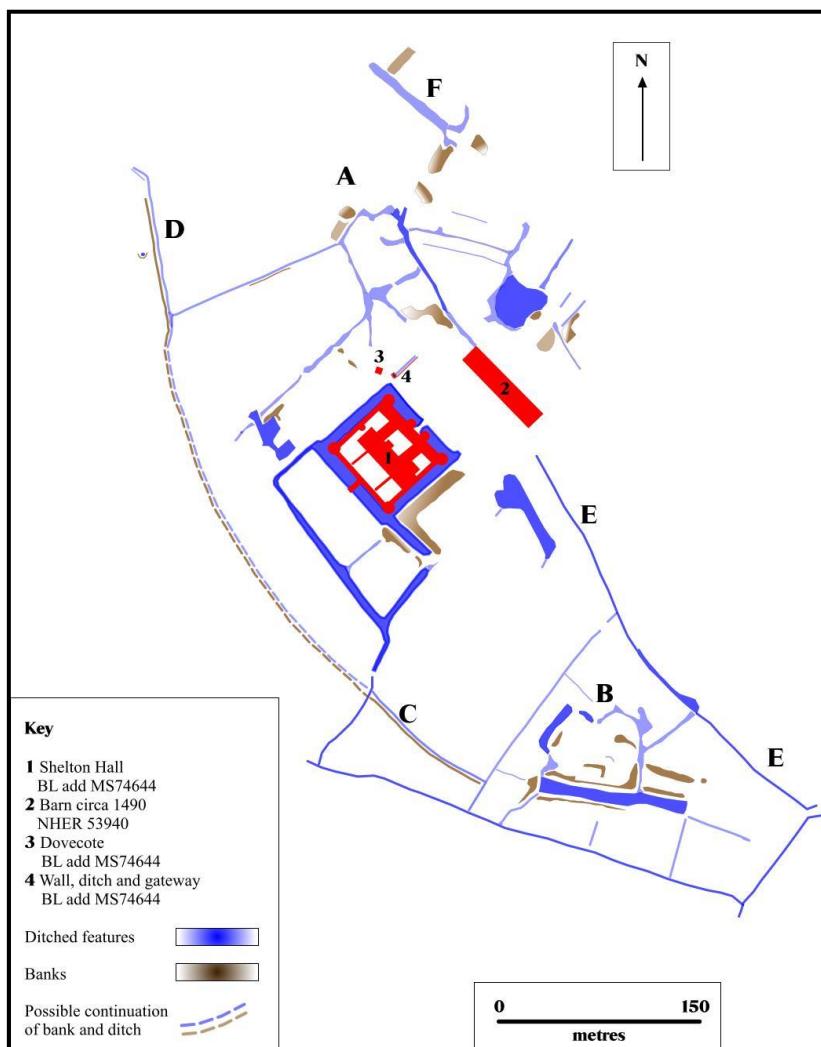


Figure 82: A composite plan of earthworks and aerial photography and additional information

Based on an earthwork plan by Brian Cushion with additional information¹¹⁶

The plan in Figure 82 shows Shelton Hall, the dovecote, gateway and stretch of courtyard wall as depicted in the seventeenth-century water-colour, the extant barn dated to circa 1490 by Edwin Rose, all set amongst the moats and earthworks of a complex curia. The features can be divided into three main areas, firstly the group of ponds, ditched features and banks to the north and west of the barn, which appear to demarcate a number of small enclosures and a pronounced mound or platform. A scatter of medieval roof tiles around the mound, which stands in a field named *Dove House Meadow* in the Tithe Award give strong indications that a dovecote once stood at this

115 Cushion, B and Davison A., (2003) *Earthworks of Norfolk*. East Anglian Archaeology 104. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, pp. 123-4.

116 Cushion, B and Davison A., (2003) *Earthworks of Norfolk*. East Anglian Archaeology 104. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, pp.123-4; NHER 10175 The site of Shelton Hall; NHER 53940, Barn at Shelton Hall; NHER 10182 Dark Park medieval moated site; Aerial photograph RAF 1946TM2290 M-P; TM2290 L & TM2290 E-G,K Unfortunately most of the site of Shelton Hall was missed in the APs but some of Dark Park was included; BL Add MS 74644 Water Colour of Shelton Hall

point indicated by the letter **A** in **Figure 82**.¹¹⁷ This arrangement of meadow, ponds and dovecote has been discussed at several sites in Chapter 3, including Badmondisfield Hall, The Rey and Middleton Tower and seems to have been a standard combination in secondary elite zones and displayed near to areas of interaction, such as roads or commons. To the south east of the hall, the banks, ponds and moated feature in the area known as Dark Park, indicated at **B**, have been tentatively suggested as the site of Netherhall by NHER and Cushion & Davison, who describe the features as ‘enigmatic’.¹¹⁸ It is certainly possible that this was the site of Netherhall, given its ‘lower’ position near the stream but it could be argued that the medieval moat of such a site might have been modified in the late-medieval period to create an area of water garden, fishponds and walks similar to that created at Oxburgh Hall. The similarity between the two sections of bank and ditch at **C** and **D** indicates that they may have formed part of a continuous feature linking *Dark Park* to the features north and west of the hall, the possible line of which is shown in the plan. This feature has been used to demarcate the secondary elite zone, along with the ditches at **E** and a linear water feature at **F**.

In addition to the earthwork evidence some remnants of the moat revetments survive along with fragments of walling and some foundations of the corner turrets.¹¹⁹ These, along with the pen-and-ink and watercolour sketch of Shelton Hall mentioned above, have allowed a ground plan of the hall to be reconstructed. The interior was divided into five courtyards by the hall range, two lodging ranges and two walls. The great hall and porch stood opposite the gatehouse, in what might be said to be the traditional position.¹²⁰ The impression given in the sketch, that the gatehouse range was narrower than the side curtain walls is not accurate as the foundations of the corner turrets indicate that the gatehouse range and the rear curtain wall were approximately fifty-seven metres wide, whilst the side curtain walls were each fifty metres long.¹²¹ These measurements are similar to those of the curtain wall at Baconsthorpe, which was fifty-six metres square, suggesting that John Heydon and Sir Ralph Shelton had equally ambitious projects in mind. However, because only the gatehouse and only a small

117 Cushion, B and Davison A., (2003) *Earthworks of Norfolk*, p123; Shelton and Hardwick Tithe NRO DN/TA 25, 1838.

118 NHER 10182 Dark Park medieval moated site.

119 NHER 10175 Shelton Hall: Moated site and traces of hall.

120 Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate* Abingdon, Routledge, p.76.

121 Measurements taken from the plan of the earthworks at Shelton by B. Cushion in Cushion, B and Davison A., (2003) *Earthworks of Norfolk*. *East Anglian Archaeology* 104. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service, pp. 123-4.

section of phase one curtain wall were completed before Heydon's death we do not know what ground plan he had envisaged. The gatehouse range of Shelton Hall was approximately four metres wider than that of Oxburgh, the corner turrets taking up the extra width. Allowing for artistic licence, the drawing in **Figure 83** suggests that the main facade at Shelton had more windows than the facade at Oxburgh and the fenestration was of a more elaborate style, including what appears to be a large round-arched window, perhaps lighting a second hall in guest lodgings. The end gables of two of the internal ranges create crow-stepped dormers in the roof of the facade, similar to those shown in the 1819 sketch of Oxburgh Hall (Figure 76, above).

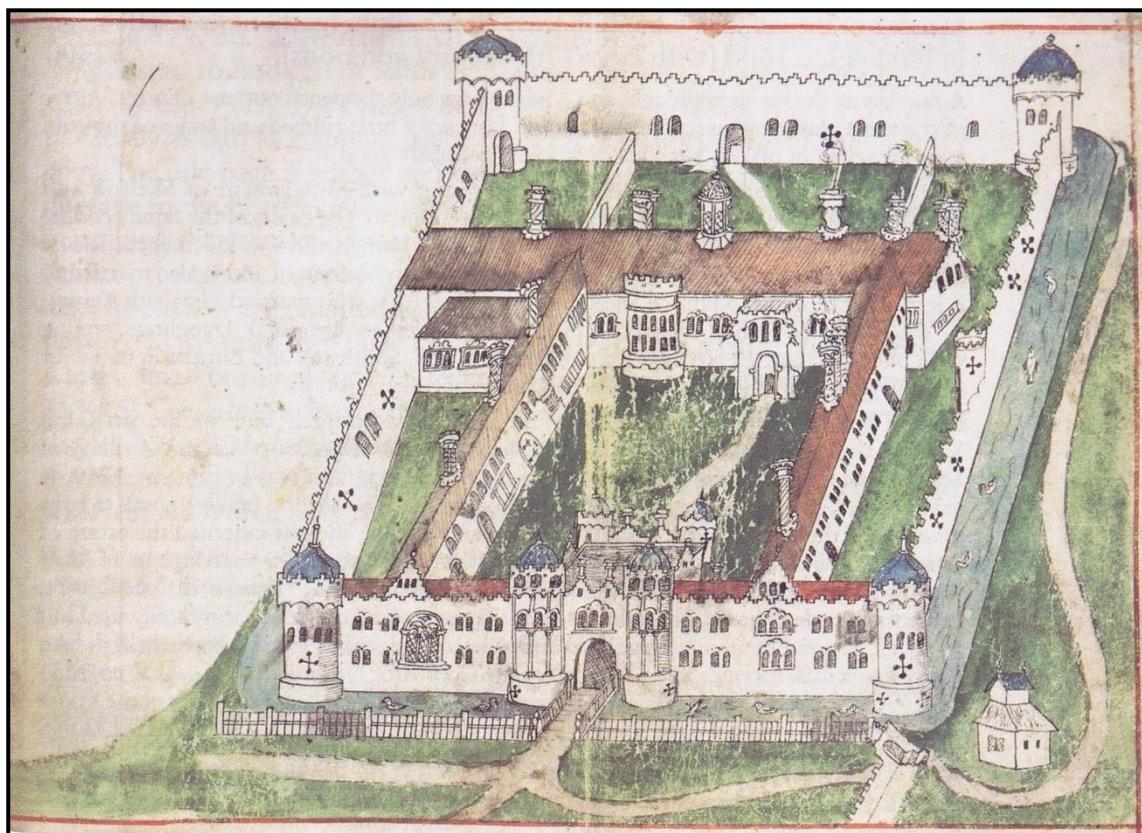


Figure 83: Shelton Hall in the early seventeenth century BL Add MS 74644¹²²

At the heart of the secondary zone, a walled outer courtyard with a gate at is shown in the seventeenth-century illustration of the hall and the courtyard at **G** would have created a transitional area between the secondary or 'display' zone and the primary zone within the moats. The barn **2** may have formed one side of this base court, along with other high-status ancillary buildings such as stables. This arrangement of a great barn forming one side of an outer unmoated courtyard was repeated at Oxburgh, Baconsthorpe and at sites across England and illustrates the importance of the barn as a

¹²² BL Add MS 74644 *Armorial of the Shelton and allied families, with watercolour view of Shelton Hall, co. Norfolk; circa 1600*

symbol of seigniorial authority just as potent, if not more so, than dovecotes and parks. Placed close to the hall, anyone approaching the Shelton gatehouse would see the barn before arriving at the bridge over the moat. The hall moat, as recorded in the earthwork survey and as drawn in the seventeenth century, is similar to that at Oxburgh and other examples discussed above. It is almost square and each arm of a near equal width, the hall rising straight from the water on brick revetments, traces of which survive. These arrangements bear a strong resemblance to Oxburgh, Gedding and the other examples discussed above. The geometric form of this moat and the manner in which the platform and hall are one unit make it possible that this moat could have been constructed specifically for the residence, perhaps utilising one arm of an existing moat that may have housed the mansion mentioned in the *Inquisitions Ad Quod Damnum*. A road passing to the north of the platform **H** would need to be moved to allow the creation of a new moat, envisaged by Sir Ralph's ancestors earlier in the fifteenth century (see **Figure 81**, above). Both Sir Ralph's grandfather and his father, Sir William spent many years in service abroad and Sir Ralph was barely three months old when his father died in 1430, all of which may have delayed the planned enlargement of the Shelton residence referred to in the IAQDs.¹²³

The hall moat was crossed by a fixed bridge from the base court, leading to the gatehouse and an inner courtyard. The great hall formed the back of the entrance courtyard and was a magnificent structure with a large bay window and a lantern light on the roof. To either side stood what appear to have been comfortable lodging ranges, equipped with chimneys, many windows and individual doorways. Some idea of the internal arrangements can be gleaned from a reference to some of the principal rooms of Shelton Hall in the will proved in November 1558 of Sir John Shelton, grandson of Sir Ralph. Sir John willed to his eldest son '*the lord's chamber at Shelton and the chamber next adjoining, wholly furnished as they now stand*' and to his eldest daughter Anne Godsalve '*the great tower, furnished as it now stands*'. The latter probably refers to the gatehouse, which appears to have been a full storey taller than the corner turrets, with windows overlooking the moat and outer base court and presumably also over the inner entrance court. The lodging ranges and two walls created four further inner courtyards, painted green in the illustration, implying that they were grassed or otherwise planted, perhaps as herbers.¹²⁴ The inner courtyards would have afforded a

123 *Visitation of Norfolk 1563*, Vol II, p.345; Blomefield, F., & Parkin C (1806) 'Hundred of Depwade: Shelton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 5, pp. 263-274.

124 Will of Sir John Shelton *Visitation of Norfolk 1563*, Vol II, p. 399.

great deal of privacy and exclusivity, in particular the two courts formed by the southeast curtain wall and the hall range.

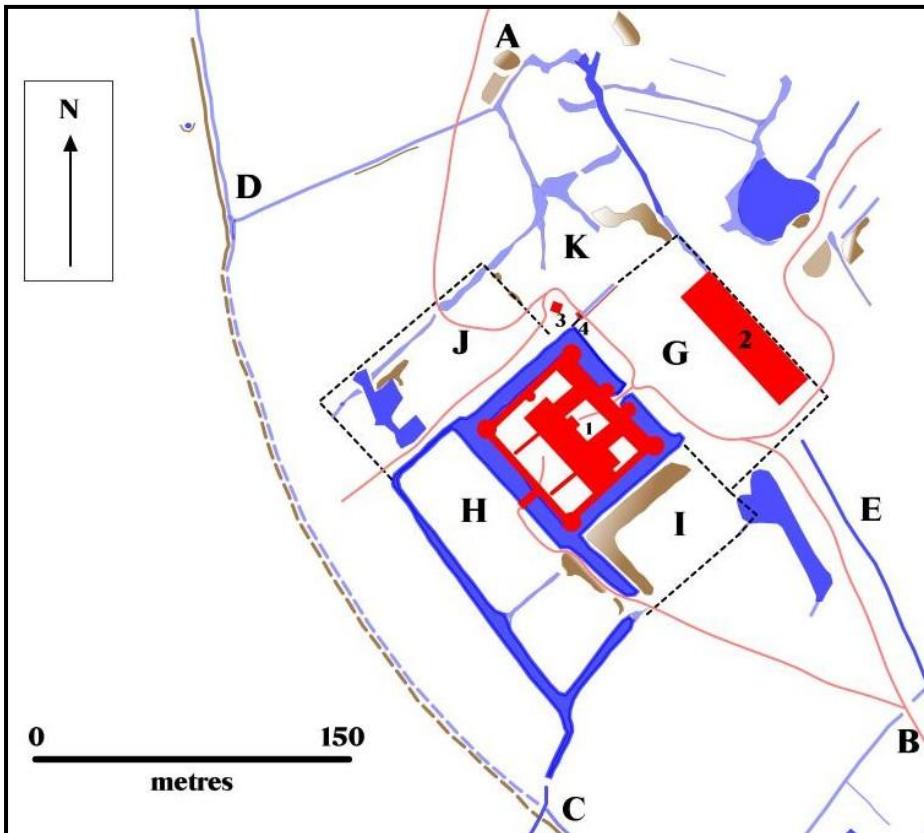


Figure 84:
Detail of the earthwork remains and Shelton Hall, with possible approach routes shown in pink

A gateway in the rear curtain wall led out to the second moat platform **H**, the form of which is irregular and whether or not it once contained an earlier manor house, it almost certainly was the site of a privy garden or orchard in the late-medieval period.¹²⁵ The arrangement is similar to that at Helmingham, where a second rectangular moat is believed to predate the hall moat, and was used as a garden enclosure, as discussed above. William Lawson recommended the benefits of surrounding the orchard by ditches or a moat –

*Moats, fish ponds (and especially at one side a river)..... will afford you fish, fence and moisture to your trees; and pleasure also...*¹²⁶

There are several such examples from Norfolk, including orchards within secondary moats, or in enclosures abutting the primary elite zone. The orchards at Channons Hall (92; TM 1480 8840; Central) and Swannington Hall (73; TG 1387 1930; North East) stood within a second moat, as suggested at Shelton. This may in part reflect the value of the fruit but also suggests that the orchard was seen as part of the ornamental landscape for the enjoyment of those able to access the primary zones. As such, the

125 This part of the site was described as an orchard in the Tithe award of 1838, NRO DN/TA 25.

126 Lawson, W., (1618) *A New Orchard and Garden*, pp.[46] & [47].

‘privy’ orchard can be considered part of the gardens rather than a part of the productive landscape beyond the residence.

The religious and philosophical connotations associated with blossom and fruit meant that orchards were often included in the secondary elite zone and even within the primary zone as may have been the case at Shelton Hall. Apart from the obvious productive uses of an orchard, it was also considered a place for enjoyment and relaxation. William Lawson commended the scents, sights and sounds of the orchard and stated that

*For whereas every other pleasure commonly fills some one of our senses, with delight; this makes all our senses swim in pleasure, and that with infinite variety, joined with no less commodity.*¹²⁷

The use of orchard produce as gifts between peers is recorded in a similar fashion to that of venison, both the produce of the orchard and the park being imbued with lordly status and exclusivity. Gifts of fruit were often sent over considerable distances to family members and friends or to impress superiors, as in the presents sent to Sir Bassingbourne Gawdy, sheriff of Norfolk that included game, poultry and fruit.¹²⁸ In the fourteenth century the Dominican friars of Norwich presented their monarch with apples –

*During a royal visit to Norwich in January, 1325-6, there was a pleasant interchange of gifts. Edward II gave an alms of 17s. 8d. for a day's food for the fifty-three friars then in residence, and on the morrow they presented him with fifty-three apples. Edward III when passing through Norwich in 1328, repeated the same alms for a like number of religious.*¹²⁹

The ‘orchard’ moat platform overlooked the demesne pasture at Shelton to the southwest and earthwork evidence shows that the platform was itself subdivided by a ditch, forming a smaller area with a bank or terrace overlooking the hall moat. Another L-shaped terrace or large bank may have been part of a garden area I abutting the south-

127 Lawson, W., (1618) *A New Orchard and Garden*, p. [87].

128 NRO NN8 S2/8 List of Presents sent to Sir Bassingbourne Gawdy, 1600-1605

129 Victoria County History 'Friaries: Norwich', *A History of the County of Norfolk: Volume 2* (1906), pp. 428-433.

eastern arm of the moat. A gap in the moat allowed access to **I** and the water features in *Dark Park* (**B**). Immediately to the north west of the hall, a rectangular ditched area **J** ran parallel with the moats and contained those familiar symbols of lordly status, fishponds. A path is shown here in the illustration of the hall, skirting the moat and passing behind the dovecote **3** before entering the base court by a bridge and gateway **4**. The dovecote stood in a ditched enclosure **K** containing a complex arrangement of earthworks, possibly gardens or yards with the second dovecote suggested by archaeological evidence at **A**. If Overhall and Netherhall were located in areas **H** and **B**, as postulated above, then each is likely to have had a dovecot, which might explain the earthwork and pictorial evidence for two dovecots at Shelton Hall. Even if Overhall was located somewhere near the church (Figure 81), Sir Ralph held both manors and therefore had the right to two dovecotes.



Figure 85: Shelton Hall Barn, in the foreground earthworks in area **K**

The hall moat, the curtain walls and the gatehouse proclaimed the bounds of the most exclusive area at Shelton, within which the great hall and the chambers of the lord would have been the most prestigious areas. The moated garden and possibly the embanked area at **I** were likely to have been restricted to the household and guests although some degree of interaction may have occurred due to the use of the postern gate for service purposes. However, the waters of the moats would have defined clearly the exclusive nature of the spaces within and created liminal messages to deter all but those with a specific need to enter. A number of ways of approaching the primary elite areas at Shelton have been offered in Figure 84, informed by the position of the

earthworks, the road network and the illustration in **Figure 83**. The enclosures at **G**, **H**, **I**, **J** and **K** bear some similarity to the arrangement of inner courtyards of Shelton Hall and the outer enclosures may have been created to frame or reflect the spatial arrangements and exclusivity inside the curtain wall. These enclosures brought together all the elements associated with secondary elite zones, repeating and concentrating the symbols of lordship that visitors would already have encountered as they moved from the tertiary zone of demesne pasture into the secondary zone. This arrangement was not found at any of the sites discussed thus far and perhaps reveals some of the messages Sir Ralph hoped his lavish new mansion would convey about his rank and his resources. Shelton Hall was also set deeper within the tertiary elite zone than the other properties possibly indicating that Sir Ralph wished to reduce potential interaction with the local inhabitants.

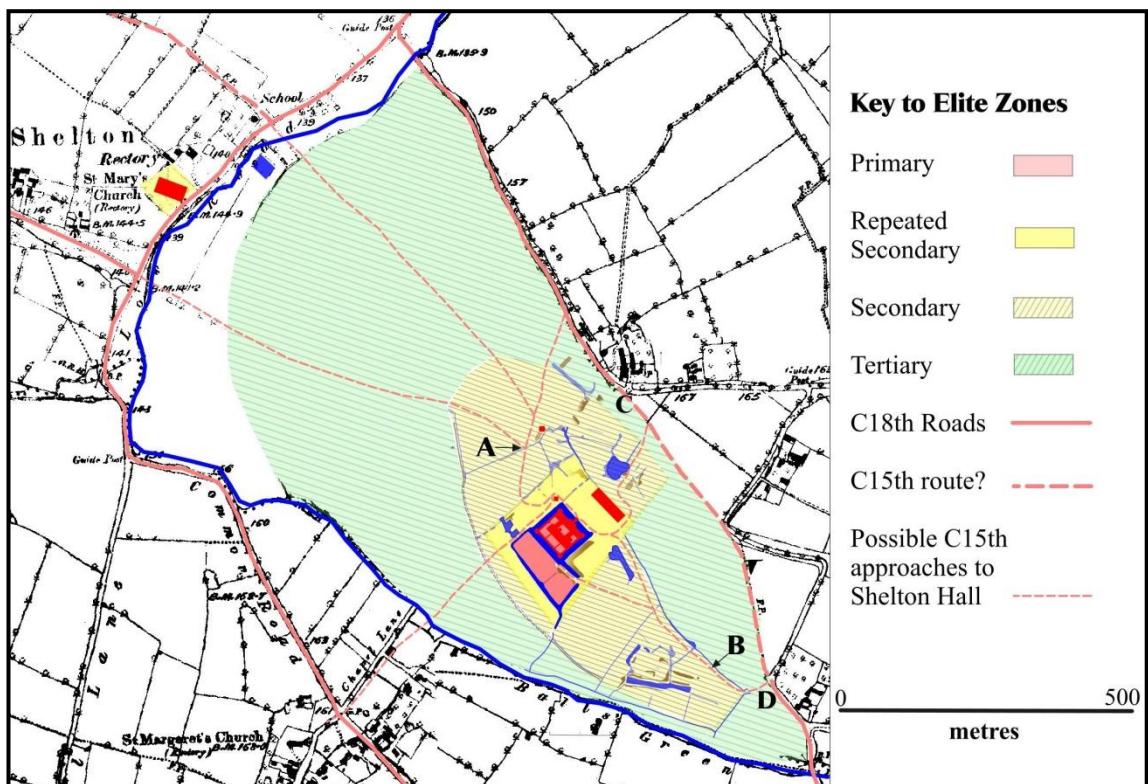


Figure 86: The Elite zones around Shelton Hall

A number of possible approach routes have been included in this figure, informed by the earthworks, the eighteenth-century road system and extant footpaths. Point **A** in the above figure indicates a gap in the ditched feature that runs between the curved bank and the site of the outer dovecote. The distance from point **A** to point **B** in *Dark Park* is approximately five hundred metres, the length of the enclosed area referred to in the

IAQD of 1419-20. An enclosure between **A** and **B** would have prevented through-traffic from crossing the secondary zone whilst the alternative route to the east of the tertiary zone between **C** and **D** would still allow the display of the symbolic manorial appurtenances such as the barn, ponds, dovecote and meadows. The blocked ways could have utilised as approaches to the hall, their alignment now under the control of the Sheltons. The routes taken by visitors could have been manipulated to give the best views of the hall and ensure that guests experienced an increasingly impressive display of Shelton affluence and power.

In addition to the ostentatious display of lordly rank in the secondary zone around Shelton Hall, Sir Ralph's concerns to be recognised as the head of an ancient and prestigious family were also expressed in extensive displays of heraldry throughout Shelton Hall and St. Mary's Church. It is clear from accounts of Shelton Hall that the lodgings and great hall were decorated with a large number of coats of arms, heraldic devices and the family rebus. These were repeated in the fabric of the parish church and recorded in detail in the early seventeenth-century manuscript that includes the watercolour of Shelton Hall in **Figure 83**. The Norfolk historian Blomefield, when describing St. Mary's noted -

In the windows of this church and chancel were all the matches of the Shelton family put up, many of which still remain; and the same were in the windows, and on the ceilings in Shelton-Hall. And many of the arms were in the chapel in Shelton-hall, where the several lodging rooms were called after the names of those families whose arms were placed in them, as Morley's chamber, Howard's chamber, &c.¹³⁰

130 Blomefield, F., & Parkin C, (1806) 'Hundred of Depwade: Shelton', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 5, pp. 263-274.

Figure 87: Shelton Church , East Window

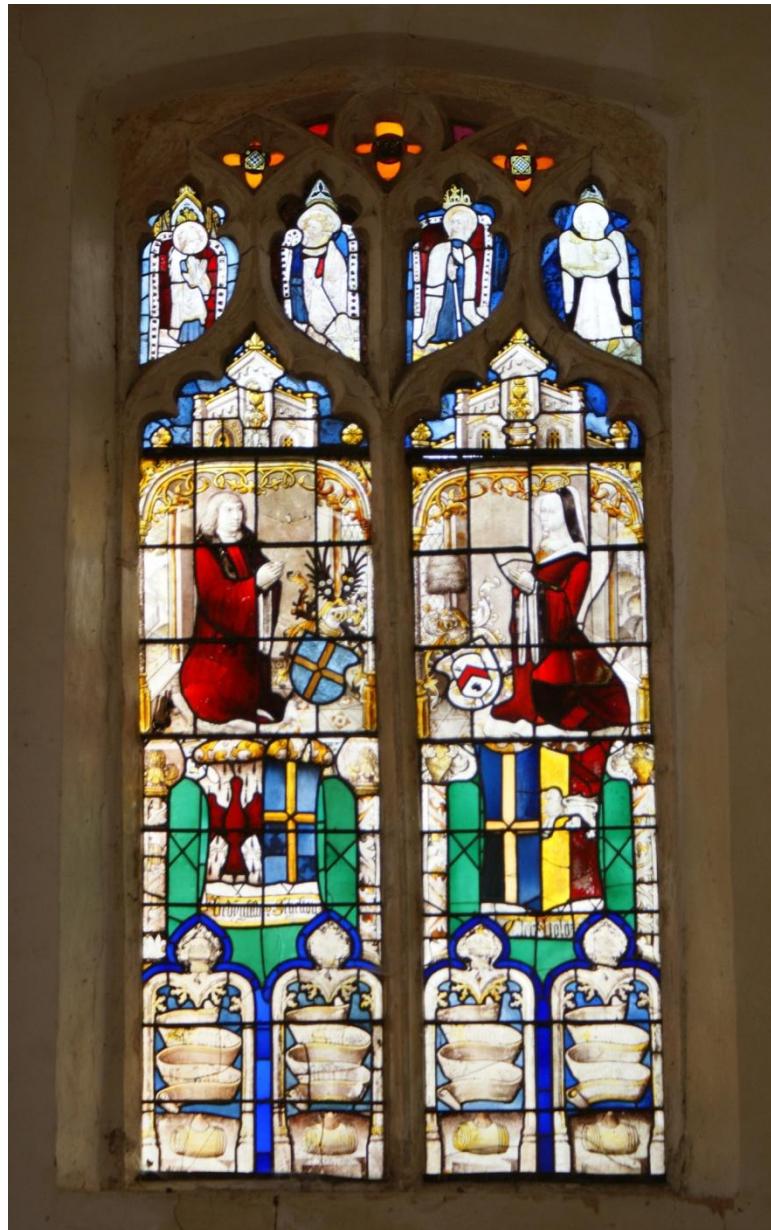
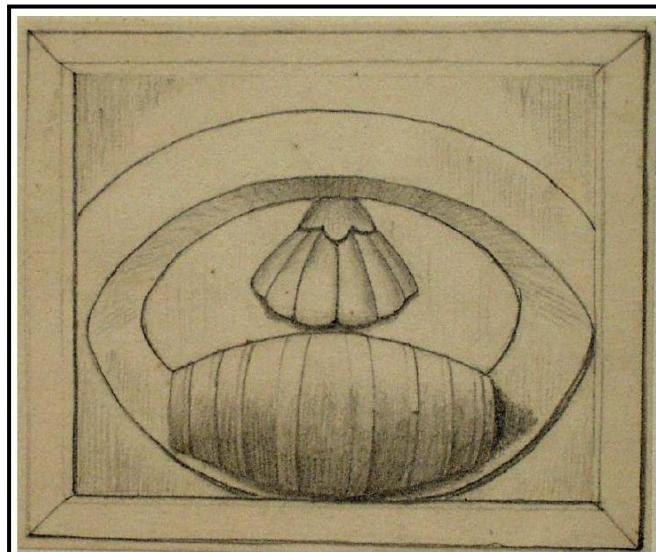


Figure 87 shows the East Window of St. Mary's with portraits of Sir John and Lady Anne Shelton in the glass, with examples of the arms described by Blomefield. Along the bottom of the window are four examples of the Shelton family rebus of a scallop shell and a tun, or barrel, which are repeated in the north window of the chancel.

Figure 88: The Shelton Rebus

NCM NWHCM : 1954.138, Todd 10, Depwade, 94A : F



This figure was repeated on walls, in windows and in the manuscript armorial. It bears a passing resemblance to the secondary elite zone around Shelton Hall. Matthew Johnson has noted the use of heraldry as a means of

connecting residence and church at sites such as Tattershall in Lincolnshire, where Sir

Ralph Cromwell repeated his family arms in his castle, the parish church and even on the market cross in Tattershall village.¹³¹ Thus, both Sir Ralph Cromwell and Sir Ralph Shelton hoped to achieve the triple objectives of conspicuous piety, ostentatious display of their status, whilst maintaining control over access to the most exclusive areas of their residences. From the point of view of the parishioners of St Mary's, the decoration of the church emphasised that their lord belonged to an illustrious family long associated with their settlement and they could be assured he was a man of substance and piety, who had the resources to furnish them with a splendid new church. St. Mary's was in effect a detached display zone, delivering messages of status and authority into the heart of the local community. The parishioners attending mass or those merely passing by on the road could all see the results of Sir Ralph's ambition. Even if they never approached the hall, which stood on a slight rise to the south, local inhabitants and visitors would recognise the links between the two buildings and understand the implications of the tombs and heraldry adorning the church.

Sir Ralph Shelton no doubt hoped that his hall and church would impress the various elites of East Anglia, reminding the newly landed families that the Sheltons came from a long and well-connected lineage, allied by marriage to many of East Anglia's leading families. To fellow members of the 'second tier' and the great magnates at the top of East Anglian society, Sir Ralph perhaps wanted to announce his family's return to the forefront of regional affairs. It may also have been the case that Sir Ralph was advertising the longevity and quality of the Shelton bloodlines to families with short pedigrees, deep purses and marriageable offspring. Perhaps Sir Ralph's magnificent church and grandiose mansion were built in an attempt to reassert his position amongst the lawyers and the merchants who were steadily gaining influence and power in East Anglia. However, his efforts may also have been directed towards ensuring his family could compete in the lucrative regional marriage market. If that was a motive, then it was a successful one, for Blomefield noted that in 1481

Master Archibald Davy, rector was licensed to solemnize matrimony between Sir Richard Fitz-Lewes, Knt and Eliz. Shelton, and between John son and heir of Thomas Heveningham, Esq. and Alice Shelton, in the oratory or chapel, in the

131 Johnson, M (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate: From Medieval to Renaissance* Abingdon, Routledge, p. 61.

*manor-house of Sir Ralf Shelton, Knt. father of the said Eliz and Alice, at his manor of Shelton.*¹³²

Sir Ralph's heir, Sir John married Anne, granddaughter of Sir Geffrey Boleyn and aunt of Anne Boleyn, Henry VIII's Queen. Sir John and Anne Shelton rose with the Boleyns, holding posts at court, Anne being appointed governess to the Princess Mary by her niece, Queen Anne. Sir John travelled swiftly up the social ladder, attaining all that his father could have wished for him, both at court and in East Anglia where he was twice elected sheriff, in 1505 and 1523.¹³³ The Sheltons managed to avoid the worst of political and physical carnage that followed the downfall of the Boleyns and Sir John was appointed controller of the joint household of Henry VIII's two daughters at Hatfield in July 1536.

Intermarriage between the leading East Anglian families allowed the transfer of both financial and social capital between the established and arriviste groups in East Anglian society. The alliances created by such marriages brought not only financial benefits but also sources of patronage and preferment. Men and women who served the great magnates or the monarchy had contacts that could further the careers of their spouse's family and widen the web of allegiance beyond East Anglia. In some cases, they could also bring experience of courtly society and royal residences. The houses built during late fifteenth-century East Anglia were inspired by the ambitions of their owners and paid for with the profits of alliances, both marital and political.

The residences built at Shelton, Gedding, Oxburgh and Baconsthorpe during the last decades of the fifteenth century had many similarities of both form and fabric and could be said to form a group. However, whilst it is true that the buildings were in many ways typical of the late-medieval period, there were some signs that three of the residences were more integrated with their surroundings than earlier East Anglian houses were. Sir John Heydon chose a site well away from areas of settlement, located on the floor of a valley, where he and his descendants could create courtyards, water features, gardens and meadows. Large windows connected the interior of the house with the landscape beyond the moat, which was free from the messuages and tenements that clustered around Sir Edmund Bedingfields great mansion at Oxburgh. What Oxburgh lacked in sylvan backdrop, it made up for in the grandeur of its buildings and the manipulation of

¹³²132 Blomefield, F., & Parkin C, (1806) 'Hundred of Depwade: Shelton'.

¹³³Visitation of Norfolk 1563 Vol II, p. 345.

water and approach routes created a suitably grand if somewhat fragmented secondary elite zone. The fenestration of the great hall and the soaring gatehouse proclaimed the status of the interior to the wider world and the creation of complex groups of ponds and walks took the exclusivity of the pleasure grounds beyond the confines of the curia. Sir Robert Chamberlain had the benefit of a block of demesne pasture where his hall could stand within a parkland setting and he may have manipulated both the road system and the water supply to create a boundary for the secondary zone around Gedding Hall. Had he not fallen foul of Henry Tudor he may have gone on to develop his residence as a rival to the ostentatious magnificence of Ralph Shelton's ornate mansion. In some respects, Shelton was a traditionally inward looking courtyard house but the curtain wall was studded with openings and a fine round-arched window graced the gatehouse facade, perhaps lighting a second hall or great chamber in the guest lodgings. Moats and ponds were central to all the elite landscapes discussed in this chapter and meadows too were still an essential part of the setting. The double moat at Shelton and the double layer of secondary zones around the hall point to a development in the concept of exclusivity in which the secondary or 'display' zone entirely surrounded the residence and was in turn surrounded by a tertiary elite zone.

Chapter 5

1500-1560: Creating, Expressing and Opposing Exclusivity in the Sixteenth Century

The six decades under consideration in this chapter were years of transition and adjustment, when society had to adapt, sometimes rapidly, to changes that would have profound effects on both lives and landscapes. At the beginning of the sixteenth century Henry Tudor had consolidated his hold on power by amassing great wealth at the expense of the nobility and gentry. The old elites and power brokers of the late fifteenth century were finding themselves increasingly marginalised as Henry came to rely on professional administrators, often talented men from humble backgrounds. The Reformation and suppression of the monasteries in the 1530s would see the end of many institutions that had supported a medieval way of life, in terms of worship, care for the poor and the organisation of large tracts of countryside. Opportunities for education, wealth creation and social mobility were bringing prosperity and status to many, who went on to forge new identities as gentlemen and landowners. The arrival of new lords led a weakening of the manorial system but greater access to central courts of justice led local inhabitants to defend their property rights against the imposition of new tenures or expansion of exclusivity. When the judicial system failed them or locally negotiated agreements were flouted dissent could escalate into open rebellion, of which there were many incidents, particularly during the 1540s. Throughout the sixteenth century, the supremacy of the nobility in matters of state and local administration was constantly challenged by men from relatively humble backgrounds who having benefited from schooling and a university education, or through their own innate abilities, rose to prominence as lawyers, churchmen and administrators. In the early sixteenth century when the nobility were still concerned with matters of chivalry and military prowess, the two universities of Cambridge and Oxford had places for the sons of all but the poorest in society, many going on to careers in the church, in the mercantile guilds, or in the burgeoning state bureaucracy. Those with some resources might enter the Inns of Court but these were less egalitarian than the universities, admitting only those who could claim to be gentlemen.¹ Men such as Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell, Richard Rich and Thomas Cranmer rose from the ranks of the minor gentry and mercantile classes to positions of power, from which they were instrumental in some of the most significant changes to occur during the transition from the medieval

1 Sharpe, J. A., (1997, 2nd edition) *Early Modern England: A Social History 1550-1760* London, Arnold, pp. 265-6.

to the modern era. Those who managed to negotiate the political, religious and social turmoil of the sixteenth century, whether of ancient lineage or recently elevated, were keen to express their success by establishing or expanding their estates. The numbers of resident gentry increased and the nobility, when not following the court, led less peripatetic lifestyles, investing large amounts in order to differentiate their properties from those of their peers.

The proportion of arriviste gentry within the elite rose markedly during the later sixteenth century. A study quoted by Aston and Bettey found that of the 211 leading families of Dorset at the beginning of the seventeenth century 103 had appeared for the first time during the sixteenth century.² In East Anglia, members of yeoman and minor gentry classes had been prospering throughout the late-medieval period, principally as lawyers, as in the case of the Heydons and Pastons, or as stewards to great magnates or through state appointments. During the sixteenth century, many successful individuals chose to invest their fortunes and maintain new lifestyles in keeping with the high rank they had achieved. One such individual was Sir James Hobart, a younger son of minor gentry family of Monk's Eleigh in Suffolk. He read law at Lincoln's Inn, where he was a governor in 1471 and a reader in 1478, his legal training making him a sought after attorney and steward to the leading families in East Anglia. James Hobart was steward to Elizabeth, Dowager Duchess of Norfolk and then to John Howard, Earl of Surrey. He was a friend and counsellor of the Pastons and was a commissioner and counsellor to William, Lord Hastings in Calais in 1482. Sir James was one of those to negotiate successfully the change of regime in 1485 and was made Attorney-General by Henry Tudor in 1487 and a Privy Councillor. During his long career, he spent as much time as he had available in East Anglia, serving on commissions as well as acting on behalf of the Mowbrays, Howards, Pastons and many other families. Margaret Paston relied on Hobart's legal skills and appears to have regarded him as a friend who she did not meet with often enough. In a letter to Margaret dated February 1478, her son John reported that she would soon see more of John Hobart because he –

Purposeth fro hensefor the duryng hys lyff to be a Norffolk man and to lye with in ii myle of Loddon, whyche is but viij or x myle at most fro Mautby³

2 Aston, M., and Bettey J., (1998) "The post-medieval rural landscape c. 1540-1700: the drive for profit and the desire for status" in *The Archaeology of Landscape* edited by Paul Everson and Tom Williamson. Manchester University Press, p. 118.

3 *The Paston Letters Vol 3*, pp. 218-9.

The location chosen by Hobart was the manor of Hales Hall in the parish of Loddon in the North East sub region although, in common with his fellow lawyer John Heydon, Sir James could have chosen from many manors across East Anglia. Sir James's gallant response to Margaret Paston's wish to see more of him at Mautby is unlikely to have been a major consideration behind his decision to purchase the manor of Hales Hall. More probable was the potential offered by Hales as a location for a grand new mansion set on the edge of large park that was close to roads between Norwich, Great Yarmouth Beccles and southwards to London. Throughout the 1480s, Sir James was undertaking commissions both in East Anglia and abroad on behalf of the crown, one of an increasing number of professional administrators who were replacing the gentry who had previously looked after the interests of the crown at local and regional level.⁴ He perhaps envisaged creating a base at Hales or at Little Plumstead, where he bought a manor in 1481- 2, from which to carry out his duties.⁵ However, after the accession of Henry VII his new roles as Attorney-General and Privy Councillor may have kept him away from his newly adopted shire. By 1500 Sir James Hobart had been Attorney – General for thirteen years and had diligently enforced the king's justice, if not necessarily the common law. Hobart had a reputation as one of Henry VII 'enforcers' who were creative in their use of the law in order to strengthen the power of the Tudor monarchy and fill the treasury with the fines and forfeits of potential enemies. Sir James was particularly zealous in his efforts to tighten Henry's hold over the church, leading one senior churchman to describe him as 'an enemy of God and his church'.⁶

Perhaps the fine new church built in Loddon by Sir James was a means of salving his conscience but more likely it was a means of announcing his presence in the area and extending the influence of his lordship into the heart of the community. As at Shelton and Oxburgh, the parish church provided a venue for a show of conspicuous piety for the display of lordly authority over the local community. Sir James's new residence stood on rising ground almost three kilometres southeast of Holy Trinity Church and the town of Loddon. The connection between church and the mansion was emphasised by the portrait of Sir James and Lady Margery in the south aisle of Holy Trinity and both buildings were of brick construction.⁷ By the early sixteenth century a further link

4 Virgoe R., (1997) "The Crown, Magnates, and Local Government in Fifteenth-Century East Anglia" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 87.

5 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., (1807) 'Blofield Hundred: Plumstede Parva', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 7, pp. 240-248.

6 Penn, T., (2012) *Winter King: The Dawn of Tudor England* Penguin, pp 276 & 281.

7 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk* 2, p. 378.

between the two existed in the form of an extensive tertiary elite zone that stretched northwards from Hales Hall towards the outskirts of Loddon. Again this is reminiscent of the tertiary zone between Shelton Hall and church, created from a block of demesne pasture, but Sir James Hobart had the advantage of not only ancient demesne meadows and a large warren but also had at his disposal a large medieval deer park. In this Hales Hall differed from the residences discussed in Chapter 4 and Sir James used the park to create a suitably grand setting for and approaches to his impressive moated mansion.



Figure 89: Three-dimensional image looking southeast from Loddon towards Hales Hall (18; TM 3706 9602; North East)

In common with Sir Edmund Bedingfield, Hobart was a Suffolk man who needed to create a new powerbase in Norfolk, where he was known as a legal counsellor and agent of the Tudor king. Everything about the residence he created exudes power and control, from the multiple moats and high brick walls surrounding the hall to the manipulation of approach routes across the park and the position of the hall on rising ground, above Loddon. Standing on a false crest Hales Hall was built in a location more often found further south in East Anglia, for example at Moat Hall, Parham (34; TM 3119 5991; South East) or Gedding Hall (40; TL 9537 5858; South West). Perhaps Sir James, whose home manor of Eleigh Tye stood high above the valley of the River Brett, felt more comfortable away from the valley floor locations chosen for many late-medieval residences in the North East, North and West sub regions. This may have influenced his choice of the Hales site for his new mansion, along with the presence of the park and ample sources of water and building supplies.

The hall was located on the edge of an area of slowly permeable seasonally wet loams and clays, making the construction of the moats a more straightforward undertaking

than if the hall had been located on the light sandy loams just a few metres to the north.⁸ Sir James built his mansion on the site of an earlier hall near the edge of Hales Green and some of the moated features around the hall may date from the medieval period. The associated green-side settlement would have created points of interaction between the hall and the local population but the location allowed for the creation of spatial arrangements that exerted considerable control over the movement of people around the site.

Hales Hall has been the subject of archaeological excavations and documentary research by the Hales Hall Trust; in addition the site was included in Alan Davison's study of the development of settlement in the parishes of Hales, Heckingham and Loddon.⁹ The information from these sources has been augmented by the archaeological records contained in the Norfolk HER including secondary files and aerial photographs dating from 1946.¹⁰ Earthwork plans drawn by Brian Cushion and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century map evidence have been amalgamated to create layers, which in conjunction with the current edition of the 1:25,000 OS have been used to create **Figures 90 and 91**.

¹¹ The figures which offer a reconstruction of the Hales Hall site as it may have appeared circa 1510 on completion of the hall and before the death of Sir James Hobart in 1517.¹² The hall stood on a gentle west-facing slope of a low north-south ridge, overlooking a shallow valley and the stream known as Loddon Beck. The site lies on the edge of an area of boulder clay that gives way to sandy, free-draining soil a few metres to the north. Late-medieval and early post-medieval settlement was concentrated along the eastern boundary of Hales Green, with less evidence of settlement along the western margins than had been the case in the medieval period. The medieval settlement in *Stubbs Closes* had vanished by the sixteenth century, as had the hamlet of *Erwellestun*, which, in 1202-3 had been located in the north of Kirby Cane parish *ad caput parchi*, "against the bounds of the park".¹³ The park is also mentioned later in the thirteenth century when part of it was conveyed along with meadows and pasture in *Brantishaghe* to Roger de Hales.¹⁴

⁸ *Landis Soilscapes*, Cranfield University

⁹ Davison, A., (1990) *The Evolution of Settlement in Three Parishes in South-East Norfolk: East Anglian Archaeology* 49. Norfolk Archaeology Unit, Norfolk Museums Service.

¹⁰ NHER 1053

¹¹ Cushion, B and Davison A., (2003) *Earthworks of Norfolk*. *East Anglian Archaeology* 104. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service.

¹² *The Visitation of Norfolk Vol II*, p. 60.

¹³ Davison, A., (1990) *The Evolution of Settlement in Three Parishes in South-East Norfolk*, p. 57.

¹⁴ Fenner, A., "A documentary study of Hales and Loddon" in Davison, A., (1990), p. 53.

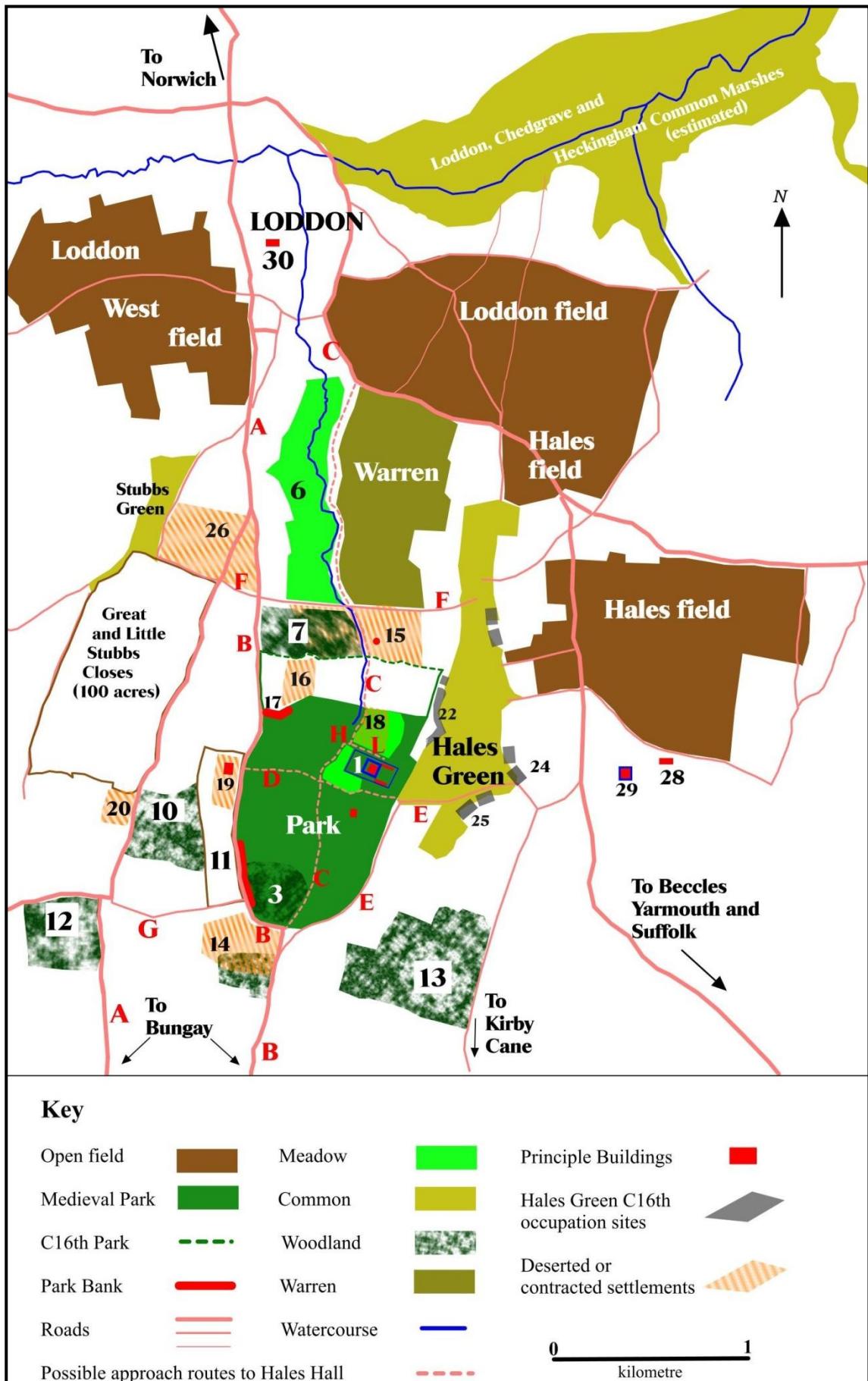


Figure 90: The landscape around Hales Hall circa 1510

Table 1: Sources for the evidence presented in Figure 90

Ref	Description and date of feature	Source
1	Site of the late fifteenth-century Hales Hall, gatehouse, barn and moats	NHER 1053
2	The medieval deer park of Hales Hall	Cushion & Davison <i>EAA 104</i> NHER 1053 and Liddiard
3	<i>King's Grove</i> in 1797 Later known as <i>Hare's Grove</i>	Extent and name as in Faden
4	<i>Crane's Croft</i> mentioned in 1647	Davison <i>EAA 49</i> , p 48
5	The Warren estimated to have occupied the area now known as Great and Little Warren on the Tithe Apportionment	NRO DN/TA 481
6	Water meadow and alder carr at <i>Brantishage</i> (part of the Hales Hall demesne since the 13 th century)	Davison, <i>EAA 49</i> , p 52
7	<i>The Hearnsey</i> or Heronry Wood	Davison <i>EAA 49</i> , p 54
8	Stubbs Green	Faden
9	<i>Great and Little Stubbs Closes</i>	NRO DN/TA 481
10	<i>Spitland Wood</i> now known as Hales Hall Wood	Faden
11	<i>Great and Little White House Closes</i> Loddon Tithe Apportionment, 1841	NRO DN/TA 481
12	Loddon Wood with earthworks of possible ridge and furrow	First Ed. OS and NHER 49633
13	<i>Kirby Wood</i> the remnants of which are now known as Furze Grove and Hales Wood	Faden
14	The site of <i>Erwellestun</i> DMS	Davison <i>EAA 49</i>
15	Roman and medieval settlement and the site of a probable medieval to post-medieval post mill	NHER 16860
16	DMS abandoned by the late-medieval or early post medieval period	NHER 17187 & NHER 49638
17	Site of medieval brick kiln and earthworks of a bank which may represent the boundary of Hales Deer Park	NHER 13496
18	Site of a brick kiln thought to have supplied high quality and ornate architectural decoration for Hales Hall, probably during the late-medieval and early post medieval periods.	NHER 16856
19	The site of a short lived late-medieval to early-post-medieval settlement or farmstead	NHER 16856
20	Deserted medieval settlement	NHER 20373
21	Possible medieval toft	NHER 41748
22	Deserted medieval- to post medieval settlements	NHER 16851
23	Deserted medieval- to post medieval settlements	NHER 49641
24	Site of medieval- to post-medieval settlement, Wash Lane	NHER 17188
25	Site of medieval to post medieval settlement	NHER 16855
27	Deserted medieval settlement and cross, possibly the site of <i>Brantishaghe</i>	NHER 19314
28	St Margaret's Church, Hales	
29	Medieval moat, possibly manorial	NHER 11916
30	Holy Trinity Church, Loddon	
A	Dulls Lane (13 th century)	Davison, <i>EAA 49</i>
B	Litchmere Lane (13 th century)	Davison, <i>EAA 49</i>
C	Possible early alignment of route B before the park was enclosed	
D	Route across Hales Park and earthworks of a hollow-way	Davison, <i>EAA 49</i> & Faden
E	From Bungay to Hales Green	Davison, <i>EAA 49</i> & Faden
F	Transport Lane (possibly Roman origin)	Davison, <i>EAA 49</i>
G	<i>Batchilers Gate</i> (mentioned in a document of 1617)	Davison, <i>EAA 49</i>

In addition to the evidence in listed in **Table 1** site visits facilitated the consideration of factors such as visual impact from a variety of viewpoints, alignment of approach routes, possible vistas and likely points of interaction.¹⁵ The opportunity to consider how the spatial arrangements might have been experienced was invaluable to the analysis presented below.

The late-medieval road system around Hales Hall is believed to have altered little over the succeeding centuries, although some routes now only survive as footpaths.¹⁶ Two ancient routes, *Dull's Lane* (A) and *Letchmore Lane* (B), approached Loddon from the south and both were first recorded in the thirteenth century.¹⁷ Faden's map of Norfolk shows that the latter road, which is today a footpath, turned westwards where it met the line of the park bounds at *King's Wood*, before continuing northwards passing between the park and *White House Closes*.¹⁸ At the point where *Letchmore Lane* met the park, Faden recorded a footpath (C) skirting *King's Wood* and continuing north, passing to the west of Hales Hall and following the watercourse on through *Brantishaghe Meadows* to Loddon. This route may have been in existence before creation of the park and might originally have carried *Letchmore Lane* directly towards Loddon rather than diverting around the park bounds. This path could have been used as an approach route to the hall, perhaps through gates or a lodge to discourage those thinking of taking a shortcut through the park. An east-west route (D) shown on Faden crossed the park from Hales Green to *Letchmore Lane*, it aligns with earthworks of a hollow-way to the south of Hales Hall and may have been a more formal approach from both the Beccles road and *Letchmore Lane*. The western entrance to this possible approach was directly opposite a late-medieval occupation site (19) in *Little White House Close*.¹⁹

The two closes opposite this possible entrance are called *Great* and *Little White House Closes* and an area of heavy, possibly sixteenth-century occupation has been recorded in the latter.²⁰ The pottery and other finds have been dated to the late fifteenth and sixteenth century, and both Alan Davison and the HER files note that this is the only apparent settlement expansion in the Hales/Loddon area at that date. Davison suggests

15 By kind permission of Mr. Terrance Read.

16 Fenner, A., "A documentary study of Hales and Loddon" in Davison, A., (1990), p. 49.

17 *Ibid.*

18 The park had been disparked by the eighteenth century but *King's Wood* survives to the present day as *Hares Grove* and an extant section of substantial curving embankment is believed to mark the park bounds.

19 NRO DN/TA 481; 1841 Loddon Tithe Award.

20 NHER 19324.

that the site may have been abandoned because it proved unsuitable but two alternative explanations are offered here. Firstly, the site might have accommodated some of the workforce employed in the construction of the new hall. The building perhaps housing specialised craftsmen from outside the region, such as stone masons or glaziers, who required long term accommodation. This location, although only 700 metres from the hall, lay beyond the park bounds and outside the tertiary elite zone, thereby keeping a metaphorical if not actual distance between the residence and the workforce.

The second possibility has been suggested by the field name associated with the occupation site. The closes were recorded as *Great* and *Little White House* on the tithe map of 1841 and this minor place name has occurred near other sites featured in this thesis. For example, in the case of Kimberley Hall, Kimberley a survey of circa 1500 recorded that *Le White House* stood beside the church, at the point where the approach to the Tower left Kimberley Green.²¹ At Blickling, a survey of 1563 stated that *Le Whate House* was the last building before reaching Blickling Hall.²² The spelling of the latter property suggests the Middle English word *whaite* or *waite*, which has several definitions including

- (a) a watcher, an observer, onlooker
- (b) a lookout, watchman, sentinel; a military guard
- (c) a custodian, caretaker²³

Given the location of the building at Hales, opposite an entrance to the park, it is possible that the site contained a keeper's house or large gate lodge. Finds of glazed floor tiles, brickwork and large amounts of glazed pottery and stoneware sherds suggest the structure was more substantial than a simple cottage. A watchman or custodian housed at this location and vested with the authority to act on the behalf of the lord, could control access to the tertiary and secondary elite zones from such a building. In addition to any gate keeping role, the building may have functioned as a lodging house as described above. After the completion of the building work it may have housed the servants or retainers of guests visiting Hales Hall. Such arrangements were common in the sixteenth century and are an example of the increasing desire for privacy within the residence.

21 NRO KIM 1/7/13 Survey of Kimberley.

22 NRO NRS 8582/21C2, Blickling, Manorial Survey of 1563.

23 Definitions from *The Electronic Middle English Dictionary*, University of Michigan at <http://quod.lib.umich.edu/m/med>.

It has been generally accepted that the principal northern approach from Loddon to Hales Hall followed route C, which survives as a footpath.²⁴ Travelling southeastwards the lane followed Loddon Beck and passed between the meadows of *Brantishaghe* (6) and the sandy slopes of the warren.²⁵ This combination of demesne meadow and warren would have alerted visitors that they had moved from the vernacular landscape into a more exclusive area, but even if they had travelled on the public highway and turned on to *Transport Lane* (F) they would still be in no doubt that they were entering a more exclusive part of the landscape. In what would appear to be a strategic arrangement, *The Hearnsey*, or herony (7) abutted both Transport Lane and the approach route (C), these majestic birds may have been encouraged to nest near the hall in order to provide both spectacle and birds for the lords table, in a similar manner to a swannery. Another part of the park was known in 1647 as *Crane's Croft* and whilst this may refer to a tenant's surname it could indicate that another species popular on the tables of great men was reared at Hales.²⁶

Distinctions of rank and status could be implied and acknowledged liminally and even subliminally, rather than being imposed by physical barriers. The organisation of a great late-medieval household was based on a hierachal structure, the boundaries between ranks distinguished in a variety of ways. In the year 1512, the Earl of Northumberland set out regulations for the management of his households at Wressle Castle and Leconfield Manor in East Yorkshire.²⁷ In *The Articles for Principalle Feistes* the *Regulations* stipulated that

*Firste it is thoughte that Crany's muste be hadde at Cristynmas ande outhir
Principall Feists for my Lords owne Meas. So they be bought at xvjd the pece
Item it is thoughte in-like-wies that Hearonsewis be bought for my Lordes owne
Meas. So they be bought at xiijd the pece.*²⁸

The list went on to include a wide range of domestic and wild fowl such as pheasants, peacocks, bitterns and widgeons. Whilst the Earl appears to have bought at least some

24 A. Fenner in Davison, (1990), p. 51; Rose, E., unpublished report, 1978, NHER 1053 Secondary file.

25 A. Fenner in Davison, (1990), p. 49.

26 A. Fenner in Davison, (1990), p. 48.

27 *The Northumberland Regulations and Establishment of the Household of Henry Algernon Percy, the Fifth Earl of Northumberland at his Castles of Wressle and Leckonfield in Yorkshire begun Anno Domini MDXII.* Transcribed by Bishop Thomas Percy 1770. New Edition published in 1905 by A Brown & Sons, London. Hereafter *The Northumberland Regulations*.

28 *The Northumberland Regulations*, pp. 183-185.

of the poultry for his table a park such as at Hales could provide habitats for birds as well as deer and wild fowl may have been hunted at pond complexes such as *Lez Leyes* at Oxburgh Hall. The *Regulations* provide strong evidence for the hierarchical demarcations that existed within elite households. For example in lists of birds to be included in the weekly provisions, the Earl of Northumberland's regulations stipulated that -

*Item it is devised that from henceforth no Caponnes to be bought but oonlie for my Lords own meas. Ande the Maister Chamberleyn ande the Stewarde be servidde with caponnes if there be straungeres sitting with theme.*²⁹

Similar rules governed the serving of pigeons and coney, the latter only to be served to the Chamberlain and Steward if they had guests at their table, presumably as an act of hospitality but perhaps also to imply that the Earl could afford to provide his household officers with such victuals on a regular basis. The social distinctions conveyed by the consumption of high-status foodstuffs within the great hall or dining chamber was reflected by the presence of the animals and birds outside in both the elite and the vernacular landscape.³⁰ The deer, rabbits, doves, swans, cranes and herons would be potent visible reminders of the elite residence and its occupants, in effect projecting the exclusivity of the lord's table and the primary elite zones out into the wider landscape. At Hales, Sir James appears to have arranged the approach routes to his hall so that they passed through and by the places where deer, rabbits and high-status birds might be seen by those travelling towards the hall, taking them through an increasingly exclusive landscape.

The Hearnsey or heron wood grew on a multi-period occupation site which had extended eastwards towards Hales Green but this and another site at 16 in **Figure 90** had all but vanished by the sixteenth century to be replaced it would seem by woodland.³¹ Opposite the herony, to the east of the approach, aerial photograph evidence indicates that a post- mill stood at 15.³² As we have seen, mills were potent symbols of manorial power and in late-medieval East Anglia, windmills appear to have been more prevalent than watermills.³³ The position of this particular mill is interesting

29 *The Northumberland Regulations*, pp. 168-9.

30 Creighton, (2009) *Designs Upon the Land* , p. 104.

31 NHER 17187; NHER 49638 and NHER 16860

32 NHER 49638 site of medieval to post-medieval windmill; Oblique Aerial Photograph: Edwards, D.A. (NLA). 1977. NHER TM 3696J-K (NLA 45/AHZ24-5) 19-JUL-1977

33 For example, Norfolk HER lists 146 possible medieval wind mills compared to 64 possible sites of watermills.

because it stood at a relatively low altitude compared to the surrounding terrain, which might have affected its efficiency. Perhaps the value of the location was more in the potential for display than in optimum functionality of the mill. A small stretch of bank with ditches survives at 17 possibly indicating the northern extent of the medieval park. However, Fenner has suggested the continuous field boundary, marked by the broken green line in **Figure 90**, may have been the northern limits of the medieval park.³⁴ Another possibility is that James Hobart extended the park northwards in the sixteenth century, when the archaeological evidence indicates that the occupation site at 16 was abandoned.³⁵ The contraction of settlement between the park and the warren may have occurred because adverse economic and climatic conditions, but it may also have been encouraged by Sir James Hobart so that he could gain control over the land and expand the area of exclusivity northwards to create an extensive tertiary elite zone. This would allow the approach route to pass through terrain over which Hobart could exert influence and the route could be aligned to display the park and hall to best advantage. For the entire length of nearly three kilometres the northern approach route is below the level of Hales Hall which would have been glimpsed at points along the way and come into full view after the road passed the herony.

The various approaches appear to have converged at H (**Figures 91 & 92**) where the visitor would have turned eastwards on to a causeway (L) raised two metres above the surrounding land. Having travelled along unpaved roads across the park, which may have been boggy and uneven in places, a guest would have been very aware of moving towards a more exclusive area as soon as they turned on to the raised, compacted and presumably drier surface of the causeway. Another function of a raised causeway was to provide a vista over ornamental or symbolic features, in the manner of the causeway beside Lez Leyes at Oxburgh. However, at Hales traces of a wall have been found along the northern edge of causeway which, depending on its height, would have blocked views across *Spring Meadow* and the northern part of the park towards Loddon. This would seem unusual but for the fact that part of meadow had been given over to production of what appears to have been decorative tiles and other ornamental clay products for the new hall. The wall would have screened the pits, kilns and workforce from those using the causeway and may have been removed if the meadow was renovated after the work was complete.

34 Fenner, A., "A documentary study of Hales and Loddon" in Davison, A., (1990), p. 49.

35 Davison, A., (1990) *East Anglian Archaeology* 49, p. 22.

There is, however, a possibility that the wall was retained because the low terrace between the outer and inner moats appears also to have been topped by a wall.³⁶ This would have created a rather confined space that may have been intended to feel quite intimidating. Matthew Johnson has discussed the potential vulnerability of a visitor when they had passed through outer gates into the darkness of a gatehouse ‘tunnel’ before emerging into the courtyard.³⁷ Walls to either side of the causeway might have created a similar effect, given the opportunity to block either end of the approach. Whilst it is unlikely that such measures would ever be deployed the overall impression would have been of power and control, leaving no options for veering from the designated route until arriving at the gatehouse.



Figure 91: The Gatehouse, Hales Hall

A wide section of the outer moat flanked the walls of a very long gatehouse wing which has many extant and blocked windows with a north-easterly outlook and probably housed upper servants or retainers, and members of visiting retinues of sufficient status to merit accommodation within the walls. The four-centred gatehouse arch is flanked on the outside by polygonal angle shafts with a projecting two light window on the gable

Figure 91. The Hales gatehouse was relatively restrained compared to Oxburgh, Kirby Muxloe or Shelton but it may be that Sir James wanted the turrets of his hall, rising

36 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, p. 377.

37 Johnson, M., (2002) *Behind the Castle Gate* Abingdon, Routledge, p. 72.

above the outer walls, to be the main focus of attention. The gates would only be opened for the most prestigious visitors, all others would be expected to dismount and use a smaller inset gate.³⁸ Members of the Sir James's lower household, servants and low ranking visitors were unlikely to have used the gatehouse entrance, using instead the gate in the eastern wall, accessed from Hales Green.

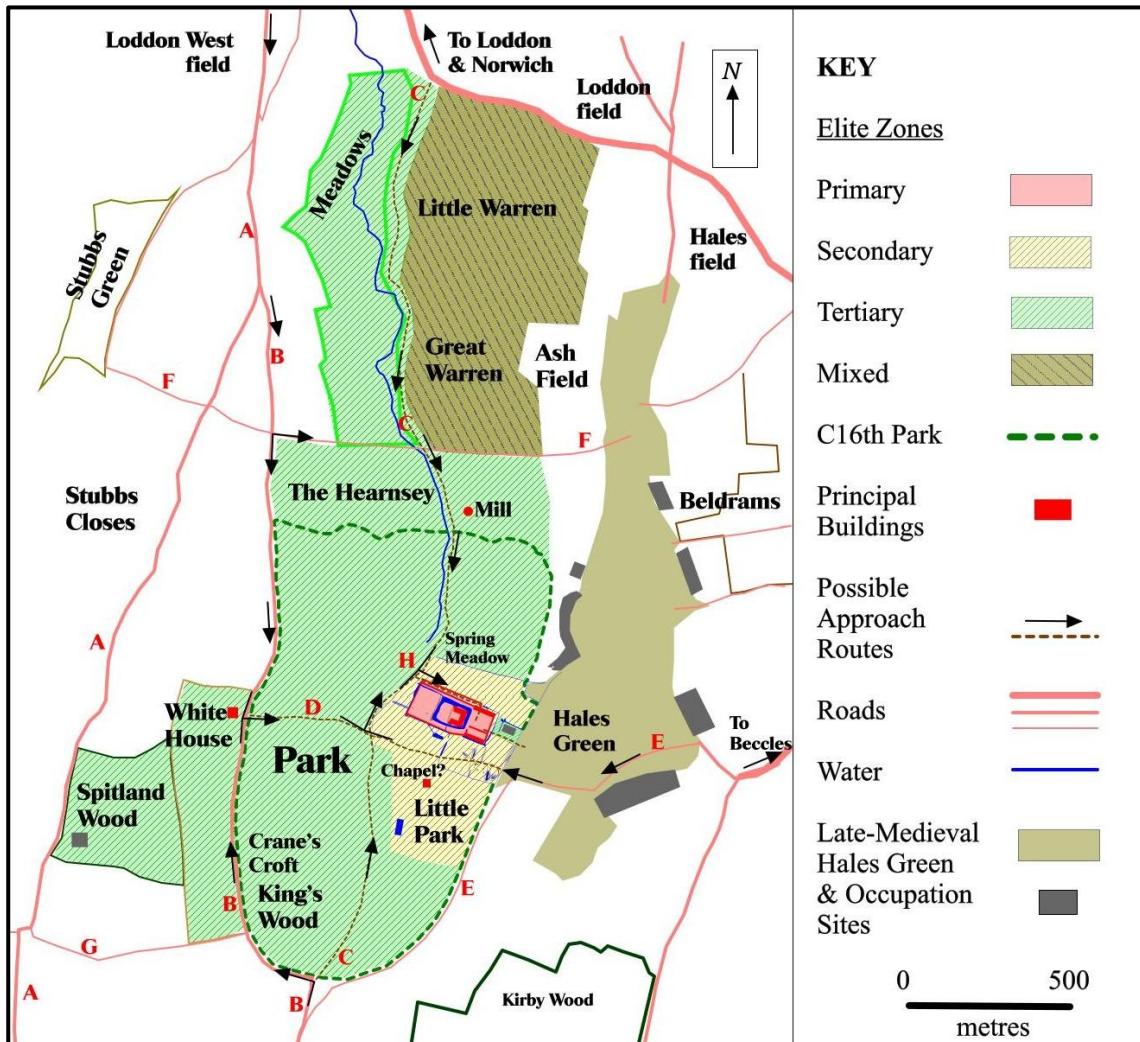


Figure 92: Hales Hall, elite zones and approach routes

The outer moat would have conveyed the exclusivity of the precinct within the courtyard walls and on passing through the gatehouse a guest would have entered a vast outer courtyard bounded on the south side by a magnificent barn. Built of brick with decorative diaper work and very early crow-stepped gables, the barn was far from being a utilitarian workspace. The fabric and size of the building was no doubt intended to communicate that Sir James could not only afford to build the barn but had sufficient arable resources to fill such a massive structure. The north wall of the building facing

38 Johnson, *Behind the Castle Gate*, p. 75.

the courtyard has three tiers of ventilation loops along the entire 56.5 metre length of the wall, giving the impression that entire building is a barn. However, the eastern three bays were partitioned off at the time of construction and divided into two storeys. A four-centred fireplace and several windows inserted in the east and south walls indicating that this was a residential range. The queen-post trusses along the barn roof were topped with crown posts in the domestic bays suggesting that these were perhaps the lodgings for senior servants or retainers.

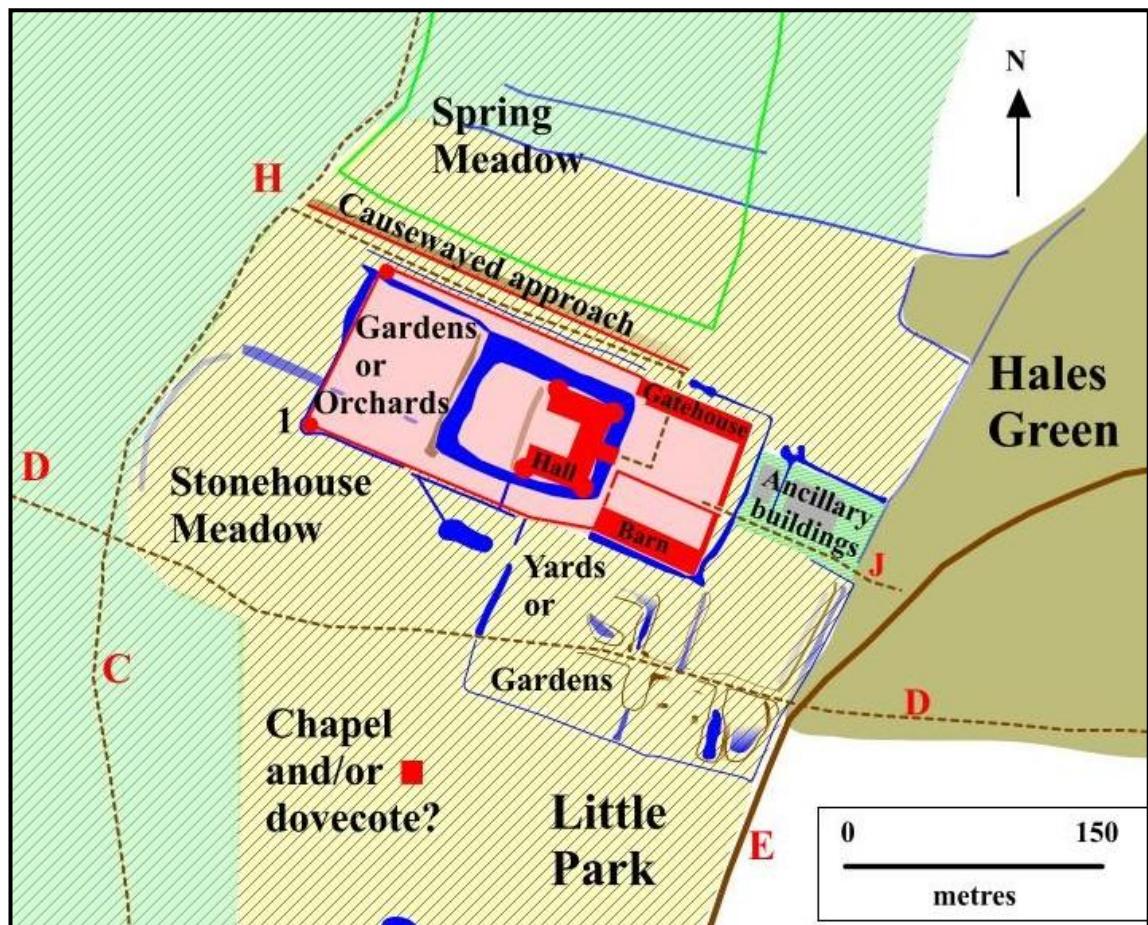


Figure 93: Detail of the primary and secondary elite zones at Hales Hall

A high brick wall joins the gatehouse wing to the barn and forms the eastern side of the outer courtyard. This wall has a line of splayed ventilation loops, which Pevsner suggested “can only be for defence”.³⁹ However, it seems more probable that these military motifs were employed as a statement of the rank and authority of Sir James Hobart over the inhabitants of Hales rather than as a serious attempt at defence. The wall, gatehouse and barn have decorative blue diaper work similar to that at Shelton

39 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2*, p. 378.

Church and Gedding Hall and it could be surmised that Hales Hall itself would have featured similar work.



Figure 94: The East Wall of the outer courtyard dividing the primary elite zone from the service yards and from Hales Green.



Figure 95: The Great Barn at Hales, with the inner courtyard wall in front, viewed from the gatehouse.

The archaeological investigations found footings of contemporary ancillary buildings between the outer moat and Hales Green, which along with the entrance route across the green, would have led to high levels of interaction with the wider community in the area

to the east of the outer courtyard.⁴⁰ No residential accommodation was located along this wall, the windows of the outer walls of the lodgings, in both the gatehouse or the barn, faced north and south respectively and therefore overlooked the park. Those using the postern gate from Hales Green would have to cross the outer moat and approach the substantial east wall of the courtyard with its intimidating gun loops facing the common. An area of earthworks including a hollow way that aligns with route D has been interpreted as part of the earlier medieval hall complex. No building debris has been recovered from this part of the site, which implies that the area may have been reused as gardens or yards for Hobart's new residence.⁴¹ A route from the Beccles to Norwich road appears to have led to the hollow-way in this area and may have been another approach to the causeway, passing the enclosure called *Little Park* to the south.⁴² As discussed above, the little park was a more private part of the deer park, often located close to the residence as at indicated by the field name at Hales. Two scatters of medieval debris have been found in this part of the park and have been interpreted as possible sites of St. Andrew's Chapel known to have stood within Hales Park.⁴³ A large sub-rectangular pond lies in the *Little Park* and it is also possible that a dovecote may have stood in this enclosure, which was in the ideal location to display manorial perquisites. To the northwest *Stonehouse Meadow* lay between the *Little Park* and the garden moat, the field name possibly referring to the small building that stood on the bastion-like feature at the southwest corner of the moat (1 in **Figure 93**). This has been identified as a summerhouse by Edwin Rose in the NHER and as one of two corner turrets by Pevsner.⁴⁴

The extent of excavated walls suggests that the inner hall moat stood within a brick-built rectangular curtain wall on three sides with the outer courtyard forming the eastern side of the precinct. The combined length of the curtain wall, the east wall of the courtyard and the wall to the north of the causeway amounts to over six hundred and fifty metres and must have presented a rather forbidding facade to both visiting dignitaries and the wider community. As at Caister Castle, the residence was arranged so that the lowest status areas abutted the vernacular landscape, the ancillary buildings and yards lying next to Hales Green, whilst the walled gardens and orchards overlooked

40 NHER 1053 Hales Hall Moated Site

41 NHER 1053 Hales Hall Moated Site

42 NRO DN/TA 481 Tithe Apportionment Loddon

43 Davison, p. 49.

44 NHER 1053, Edwin Rose report on standing remains and footings. Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2*, p. 376-7.

the park. The sense of exclusivity and exclusion was heightened by the wide inner moat that surrounded the residence at Hales, a bridge from the outer courtyard providing access to the hall. The inner moat was originally rectangular, the position of the west and south arms having been established by a geophysical and earthwork surveys.⁴⁵ The footings of two large octagonal corner towers and some internal walls have been excavated and the HER files state that the terrace-like feature that crosses the inner platform, as shown in **Figure 93**, marked the southern edge of Sir James Hobart's Hall. Insufficient evidence has been recovered to produce a floor plan of the hall but given the elaborate nature of the buildings in the outer courtyard and the immense number of bricks used to create the outer walls it would be likely that Hobart would have built an imposing house on the moat platform. The battlemented walls, large clerestory windows and fine brick and flintwork of Loddon Church may provide some clues to the outer appearance of the hall in addition to the evidence from the extant buildings at Hales. Compared to contemporary residences that purported to have some military pretensions such as Oxburgh, Baconsthorpe and Shelton, Hales Hall perhaps most resembled a medieval castle both in its layout and in the messages it conveyed to the wider community. It is unlikely that Sir James ever expected to have to defend his hall, the buildings being designed instead to proclaim the owner's power, authority and uncompromising attitude to law enforcement. During his long career as Attorney-General, Hobart had a reputation for ensuring legal outcomes that were to Henry VII's advantage. However, Sir James eventually overstepped even Henry's loose definition of what was acceptable and was fined £500 and relieved of his appointment in 1507.⁴⁶

The arrangement of approaches, moats, walls and buildings illustrated in **Figures 94 & 95** suggests that Sir James wished to create a strongly exclusive setting for his new residence, employing both physical and liminal barriers to produce highly structured spatial arrangements that exuded power, wealth and control. At Shelton Hall, we saw how Sir Ralph Shelton appeared to have created a double layer of display zones, where he could emphasize his knightly status but at Hales it was the primary elite zones that were replicated and enforced by both moats and walls. The outer courtyard and the curtain walls and outer moats of the gardens offered high levels of control over access and movement around the wide inner moat that protected the exclusivity of the hall itself. There are obvious connections between the fabric and architectural details of the extant buildings at Hales and some other contemporary structures, such as the use of red

45 NHER 1054 Hales Hall Moated Site.

46 Penn T., (2012) *Winter King: The Dawn of Tudor England* Penguin, p. 281.

bricks, blue diaper work and crow-step gables, all of which were employed at residences discussed in Chapter 4. The construction of very large barns was also a feature at several sites such as Oxburgh and Shelton Hall and meadows were apparently essential backdrops for most late-medieval residences. However, it has been difficult to find late fifteenth-century residences where comparable spatial arrangements were designed to create such a controlled and intimidating atmosphere. Middleton Tower, built in the 1450s, was surrounded by an inner and outer moat but there is no evidence of extensive walling around the site or of structured approach routes to the Tower. Shelton Hall sat within a park-like demesne through which visitors travelled before arriving at the outer courtyard and ornate gatehouse but at Shelton the emphasis was on display not seclusion. Sir Ralph wanted tell the story of his lineage and accomplishments to the wider community whereas Sir James Hobart appears to have wanted to impart that he would not tolerate any challenge to his authority, either as manorial Lord or as the King's attorney.

The deer park at Hales provided Hobart with a suitably exclusive space for his carefully-constructed landscape and elite residences were increasingly likely to be situated within a large area of demesne pasture or parkland.⁴⁷ Such arrangements gave the freedom to develop private pleasure grounds, water gardens and more extensive landscapes in which to engage in hunting and rear high-status animals and birds. However, where no park existed or was in the wrong location it could be a long and expensive undertaking to create one as was the case at Kimberley, where the process of creating an elite landscape around Kimberley Hall took well over a century to complete. This thesis was introduced with a brief examination of the landscape around Kimberley Hall in the fifteenth century including a reconstruction showing the position of the hall and the park as it they were described in 1495-6. To recap, John Wodehouse of Roydon is said to have built a new mansion at his wife's manor of Kimberley Hall in Central East Anglia in the early fifteenth century. The date of construction and exactly which Wodehouse built the hall is open to some debate but the location of the residence on the western edge of the medieval demesne known as Fastolf's Park can be identified by the moated remains of the hall and the earthworks of a surrounding pleasure ground to the east of the moat. As the fifteenth century progressed, they gradually consolidated their estates in Kimberley by acquiring the adjacent manor of *Kimberley Butordes* in 1446 the acquisition of which may have allowed the westward extension of the park towards

47 Creighton, (2009) *Designs Upon the Land*, p. 217.

Kimberley church.⁴⁸ From the mid fifteenth century successive Wodehouse heirs had made good marriages but earlier financial crises were apparently exacerbated by John de la Pole Duke of Suffolk, who in 1486 defaulted on a substantial sum owed to Sir Edward Wodehouse.⁴⁹ The marriage of Sir Edward's son Thomas to Thomasina, daughter of the wealthy lawyer and judge Sir Roger Townshend helped the family recover from their earlier financial difficulties. The Townshend marriage may have helped fund the westward expansion of the park at Kimberley in the 1490s, using the *certyn lands in Kymberley* that Thomas Wodehouse wished to purchase with the ten pounds he borrowed from his father-in-law as part of the settlement drawn up prior to the marriage.⁵⁰ In 1501 Thomas Townshend was made a Knight of the Bath at the marriage of Prince Arthur and Catherine of Aragon and his career as a courtier and in regional administration brought him prestige and appointments.⁵¹ The relative security of his position in the early sixteenth century appears to have encouraged a period of expansion of the elite zones around Kimberley Hall. The survey of 1495-6 that provided the evidence presented in **Figures 2** and **18**, above was followed by another detailed terrier of the manor, undated but with marginal annotations referring to charters of Henry VIII dated from 1539-41.⁵² The heavily annotated Latin document has been taken to reflect changes in tenure and land use around Kimberley Hall in the first four decades of the sixteenth century and used along with other sources to trace the changes in the tertiary and secondary elite zones around Kimberley Hall. The changes in tenure recorded in the survey have been mapped in **Figure 96** and shows that a considerable amount of land had been taken back in hand by Sir Thomas Wodehouse by the early sixteenth century.

The location of the grounds no longer tenanted in the sixteenth century is significant as most lay adjacent to the park, which had been extended westward prior to 1495-6. Four open-field furlongs lay to the north of the new park and by the early sixteenth century the vast majority of the field strips were in the hands of the lord. *Walnut Tree Furlong* contained 22 acres of which 1 acre was still tenanted and 3 rods were held by the vicar

48 NRO KIM 2F/4B Conveyance by John Sket to John Wodehouse of Butordes manor in Kimberley; 14th April, 1446

49 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., (1805) 'Hundred of Forehoe: Kimberley', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 2, pp. 535-539.

50 NRO KIM 4/2/1 Marriage settlement between Thomas Wodehouse, esquire and Thomasina Townsend, daughter of Sir Roger Townsend of Raynham, 1488. The settlement also witnessed that Sir Roger was willing to redeem mortgaged manors in return for two thirds of their annual value.

51 *The Visitation of Norfolk Vol 1*, p. 104.

52 NRO KIM 1/7/12 An extent of the Manor of Kimberley Hall; 1495-6; NRO KIM 1/7/13, Terrier of the Lands of Kimberley ND but NRO states late fifteenth to early sixteenth century.

of Kimberley. A marginal note stated that the two acres held by John Gooche were ‘*now required by the lord*’.⁵³ Thomas Wodehouse held 39 of the 40 acres and 1 rod in the *Clayland furlongs*, the vicar holding 1 acre 1 rod having exchanged a 1½-acre piece with the lord. Robert Swift’s 2 rods were ‘*now held by the lord*’, who also held 31 of the 32 acres in *ffoxstyle furlong*. The only furlong held by the lord but still tenanted was *Blackmere*, where all 25 acres were divided between two tenants, Henry Bailie holding a block of 13 acres and Thomas Mallowes 12 acres. These were two blocks were presumably enclosed as part of the piecemeal enclosure of this part of Kimberley Field. The entire 119 acres and 1 rod were referred to in the survey as *The Newe Lawne Closes*, the name perhaps referencing the new area of park to the south or to a planned further extension of the park northwards.

To the south of the park and west of the warren 38 acres, including *Le Grubbs Closes* and part of *Kirkstyle* or *Church Field*, were returned to the demesne allowing the road between Kimberley and Wymondham to be realigned southwards, away from the hall. The survey describes part of this area (A in **Figure 96**) as

lying next the lords warren towards the east and abutting upon the lord’s pasture called Grubbs Closes to the north and the new road that goes towards Wymondham crosses this piece

The adjacent *Grubbs Closes* (B) were described as

*abutting upon the old road called Halle Lane, now within the lord’s park, towards the north and the Church Path going to the church of Kimberley lying on the west part*⁵⁴

There is no record of any *Writ* or *Inquisition Ad Quod Damnum* for this road closure but neither is there any record of any dissent amongst the local inhabitants about the enclosure of *Halle Lane* within the park. To the west of the *Church Path* and next to *Halle Lane* stood *Le White House* (C), a capital messuage belonging to Thomas Wodehouse.⁵⁵ This is another possible example of the Whate or Waite House discussed

53 NRO KIM1/7/13, folio 1

54 NRO KIM1/7/13, folio 34

55 NRO KIM1/7/13, folio 35

above in relation to Hales Hall, the Kimberley house standing on the edge of the new park -

abutting upon the ancient way called Halle Lane to the north, opposite the cemetery of Kimberley

This may be the lodging house or *hospitium* referred to in the survey of 1495-6 when, before the warren was taken back in hand, it was recorded that -

William Alve holds at farm the lords warren in Kimberley and pays each year above a 100 couple rabbits annually in perpetuity, delivered to the lords lodging house and xxvij s viij⁵⁶

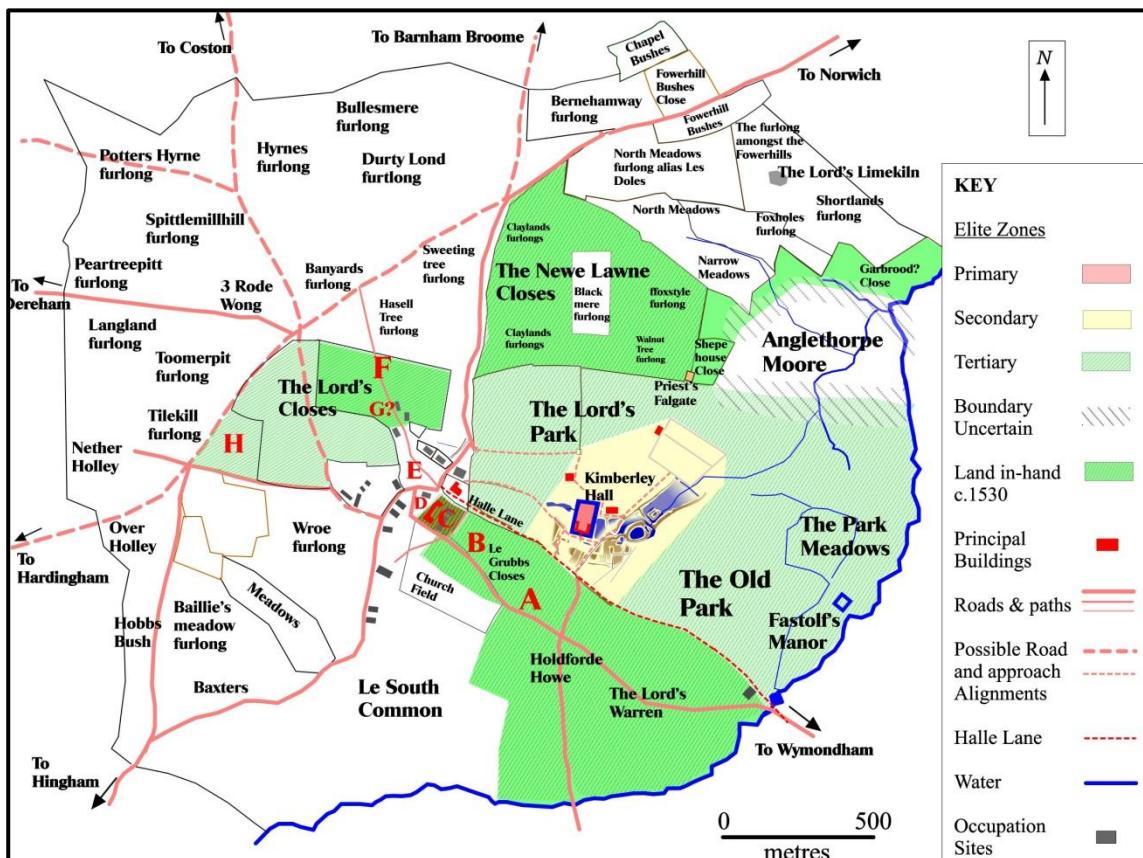


Figure 96: The elite landscape around Kimberley Hall circa 1530 showing land taken in hand since 1500

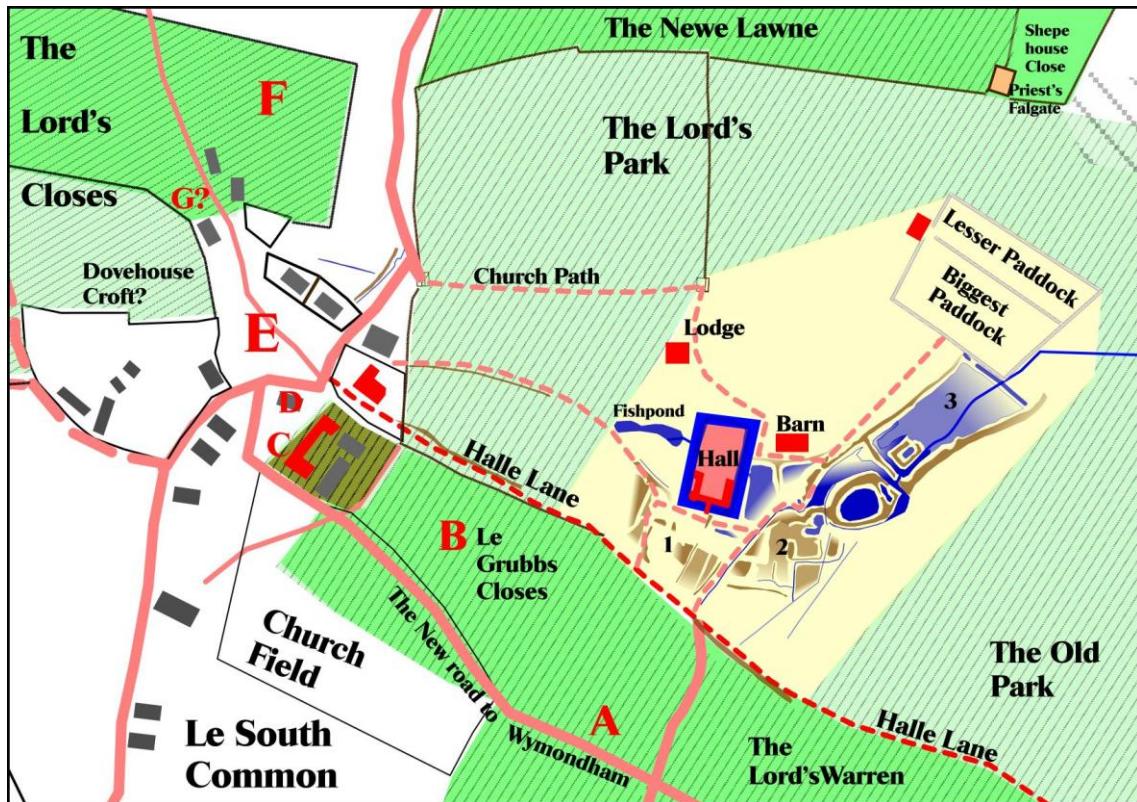


Figure 97: Detail from Figure 96 showing the pleasure grounds

Le White House was a large building with yards and buildings standing in 3 acres of pasture and occupied by Thomas Mallowes, who was the tenant of part of *Blackmere*, above. A map of 1700 referred to this property as the *Sign of the Green Man*, implying that it was an inn by that date, the '*Green Man*' probably being a 'wildman' or 'wodehouse' as featured on the Wodehouse coat of arms.⁵⁷ As at Hales this 'White House' stood on the edge of the tertiary elite zone near enough to be convenient but not so close to cause an increase in levels of interaction with the wider community. It may have functioned as a public inn or more specifically as a lodging house for Kimberley hall. The new road to Wymondham passed to the south of *Le White House* and to the west of *Le Chappel House* (D), a vacant messuage also tenanted by Thomas Mallowes.⁵⁸

To the west of *Carrow Green* (E), the manor of *Butordes* had been part of the demesne since its acquisition in 1446 but by the early sixteenth century the 20 acre *Brome Close* (F) had been bought from John Baynard along with the 4 acres *Wassepitt* or *West Pitt Close* formerly belonging to John Holderness (G).⁵⁹ In the sixteenth century these, along with *Tilekill Close* (H) and *Dovehouse Croft*, were referred to as *The Lord's*

⁵⁷ NRO Map of proposed site for the new hall at Kimberley by Samuel Gilpen, 1700 & Wodehouse Coat of Arms

⁵⁸ NRO KIM1/7/13, folio 35

⁵⁹ NRO KIM 1/7/12, folio 6 & NRO KIM/7/13

Closes in the sixteenth century. The lands acquired or taken back in hand and enclosed had altered the balance between the vernacular and elite landscapes at Kimberley by the 1540s. The changes had allowed Sir Thomas Wodehouse to realign the Wymondham Road and surround his park with demesne land over which he could exercise considerable control. At some point before 1540 Sir Thomas, or his son Sir Roger, created an elaborate pleasure ground and water garden to the east of Kimberley Hall, overlooking the *Old Park*.

Figure 98 combines earthwork evidence with the earliest map of the area around Kimberley Hall surveyed by Samuel Gilpen in 1700.⁶⁰ This map was produced to illustrate a proposed site for a new Kimberley Hall in the New Lawne and existing landscape features have been overlaid by a new designed landscape. However, neither house nor landscape were created in this location but the underlying information about the surroundings of the late-medieval hall proved useful as did the description of the landscape in the brief terrier accompanying the map, extracts from which have been included in the figure. Gilpen's map has been simplified in **Figure 98** by removing all the proposed changes to the Kimberley landscape, the remaining information has been combined with evidence from Brian Cushion's earthwork survey of the site, over a base layer of the First Edition 6" OS. The map and earthwork evidence adds detail to the description of the area around the hall contained in the terrier of circa 1530.

The Lord holds near the parish church of Kimberley on the east part of the cemetery one great park in which is situated the site of the manor called Kimberley Hall alias Woodhouses Tower. Containing with edifices, gardens, moats, pools of water, pastures and woods and other appurtenances enclosed within the said park by estimation [no acreage given]

The description above is the earliest instance encountered thus far of Kimberley Hall being referred to as *Woodhouses Tower*, the name it was known by in succeeding centuries. The wording is also interesting in that the first declension Latin noun *mota* was written in the ablative plural form *motis* suggesting multiple moated features in this part of the park. It is possible that the large oval pond with surrounding raised walk and outer ditched feature, immediately to the east of the main moat, was considered a moat for the purposes of the survey, or perhaps some part of *The Place Where the Old Ponds*

60 Cushion, B and Davison A., (2003) *Earthworks of Norfolk. East Anglian Archaeology 104*. Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service; NRO Mf/Ro 499/2 Map by Samuel Gilpen, 1700

Were had the appearance of a moat. In addition to the moats the survey refers to *stagnis aquis*, which can mean pools of water or a dam. These may well have been fishponds, fulfilling both ornamental and productive roles but they were not referred to as *stagnis piscis* or *aquis piscis*, terms that might have indicated more functional fishponds. The description of the manorial complex, although brief is very informative, suggesting a landscape where water has been used to create an extensive ornamental area around the residence.

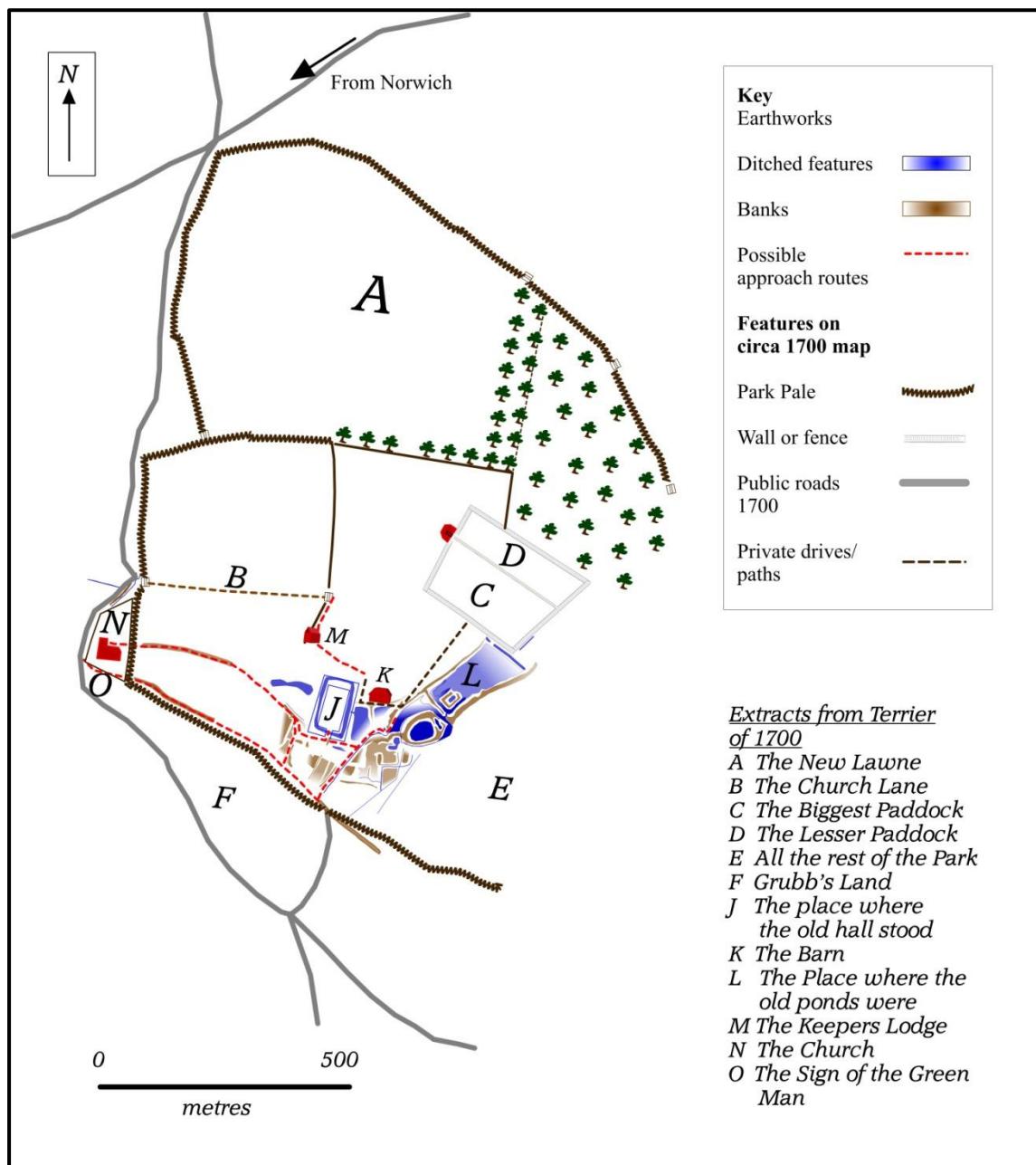


Figure 98: Earthwork Evidence combined with features and extracts from the terrier shown on a map of 1700

The earthworks cover approximately twenty-four acres and, along with the keeper's house, barn and walled enclosures shown on a later map, have been used to demarcate the secondary elite area around Kimberley Hall, which totalled fifty-four acres. Both the secondary and tertiary zones surrounded the hall and the realignment of the road completed the efforts to reduce levels of interaction and control the movement of people around the hall. The fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century documents, particularly the multiple annotations and marginalia included in the circa 1530 terrier have provided invaluable information about the process of piecemeal enclosure and land purchases that allowed the Wodehouses to expand their park and surround it with demesne, creating a wide tertiary zone that could be used as they wished. The earthworks and aerial photographs and later documents then supplied detail of the designed landscape that was developed as a result of the expansion of the tertiary zone. The enclosed part of *Anglethorpe Moore* had become a wood pasture and *The Newe Lawne Closes* were emparked within the pales. The earthwork evidence suggests that the gardens around Kimberley Hall were divided into a number of sections, the first lying immediately to the south of the hall, flanking the approach to the bridge over the moat. A second group of ditched enclosures, terrace-like features and paths lay to the south east of the hall. The area labelled *The Place Where the Old Ponds Were* in the terrier on the Gilpen map aligns with complex earthworks including evidence of raised walks, terraces and ponds, to the east of the moat. To the north east of the water garden a trapezoid walled or fenced enclosure was divided into *The Lesser* and *The Biggest Paddock* on the map of 1700. This may have been the site of further gardens accessed by the path shown on the map or via the small building on the western boundary. Alternatively, these may have been deer pens or horse paddocks and stables, the latter perhaps housing high-status breeding animals or the Wodehouse's personal mounts.

Brian Cushion has suggested that two linear earthworks between St. Peter's Church and the site of the hall may mark the route of *Halle Lane* and an early approach route to Kimberley Hall. This would be consistent with the evidence from the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century surveys in which it was stated that *Halle Lane* passed between *Le White House* and the church. The map indicated a route called Church Path crossing the park to the north of the church towards the hall that may have connected with another path or drive skirting the moat and barn before turning northeast towards the *Paddocks*. This would have created a private approach route to the hall that would have brought visitors travelling from Norwich to the hall via the park without having to pass through

the settlement around Carrow Green and the church. There is no evidence of a dovecote in the secondary zone around Kimberley Hall but field-name evidence indicates that there was one in *Dovehouse Croft*, part of the *Lord's Closes* around the site of *Butordes Manor*, on the west side of the Norwich road (**Figure 96, above**, page 232).

The documentary sources for Kimberley Hall contain evidence of a concerted effort to take land back in hand during the early sixteenth century. These actions, along with the acquisition of further land and the engrossment of existing holdings allowed Sir Thomas Wodehouse and his son Sir Roger to extend the secondary and tertiary elite zones around the hall. One of the most important outcomes was the enclosure of Halle Lane within the park and the instigation of a new route between Kimberley and Wymondham across land that had previously been tenanted. Within the extended secondary zone a group of elaborate pleasure grounds and water gardens, covering over twenty acres, were designed to enhance the hall. Such an overtly non-productive area made a very strong statement about the Wodehouse's ability to commit a large area of their land to ornamental purposes. The expansion of the tertiary zone and the realignment of the road would have emphasised the family's control over the landscape and how it was arranged and exploited. The topography of the location meant that whilst movement and interaction around the hall could be controlled, the park, mansion and parts of the pleasure grounds could still be viewed from the church, settlement and roads around Kimberley. The secondary zone at Kimberley was more extensive and further from points of contact with the wider community than any of the residences examined above but the location meant emblems of the Wodehouse's rank and achievements could still be displayed to the local community, passing travellers and other members of the elite.

The moat at Kimberley was a large rectangular feature that provided a physical and liminal boundary between the secondary and primary zones at Kimberley and moats have been a ubiquitous factor at all the locations discussed thus far. A location close to a reliable water supply that could be managed to feed moats, ponds, gardens and meadows was a priority for many families when deciding where to build a new residence. However, the desire to create watery landscapes was less evident in some parts of fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century East Anglia, particularly the West and North East sub-regions where watery surroundings were perhaps considered more commonplace and less desirable than in some other parts of East Anglia. As mentioned in Chapters 3 and 4, the majority of the Paston properties in the North East sub region

were not moated, including Mautby Hall (19; TG 4883 1137), Paston Hall (22; TG 3230 3456) and Oxnead Hall (21; TG 2302 2396).

Two fine late-medieval residences were built on the western bounds of East Anglia in the Marshland district of the West sub region, in locations not dissimilar to those of the Paston properties. The two Marshland manors, Welle Manor Hall, Upwell (8; TF 5059 0273; West) and Beaupre Hall, Outwell (47; TF 5151 0456; West) were both built to a very high standard using brick as the main construction material, however, the two residences stood in slightly different locations. The settlement pattern in Marshland saw areas of occupation concentrated along the riverbanks, taking advantage of the slightly higher, firmer ground conditions resulting from the deposit of silts by former or existing watercourses.⁶¹ These narrow strips of land had been settled since the Roman period and by the late fifteenth century the banks of the Welle Creek and the old course of the River Nene were densely populated, with Upwell, Outwell and Emneth forming a continuous line of settlement along the river banks. The Marshland landscape was mapped in a measured survey of 1582, following the acquisition of the Bishop of Ely's estates by Elizabeth I.⁶² **Figure 99** is an extract from the map, showing the settlements and rivers in the vicinity of Beaupre Hall (1), Welle Manor Hall is located just off the map at (2).



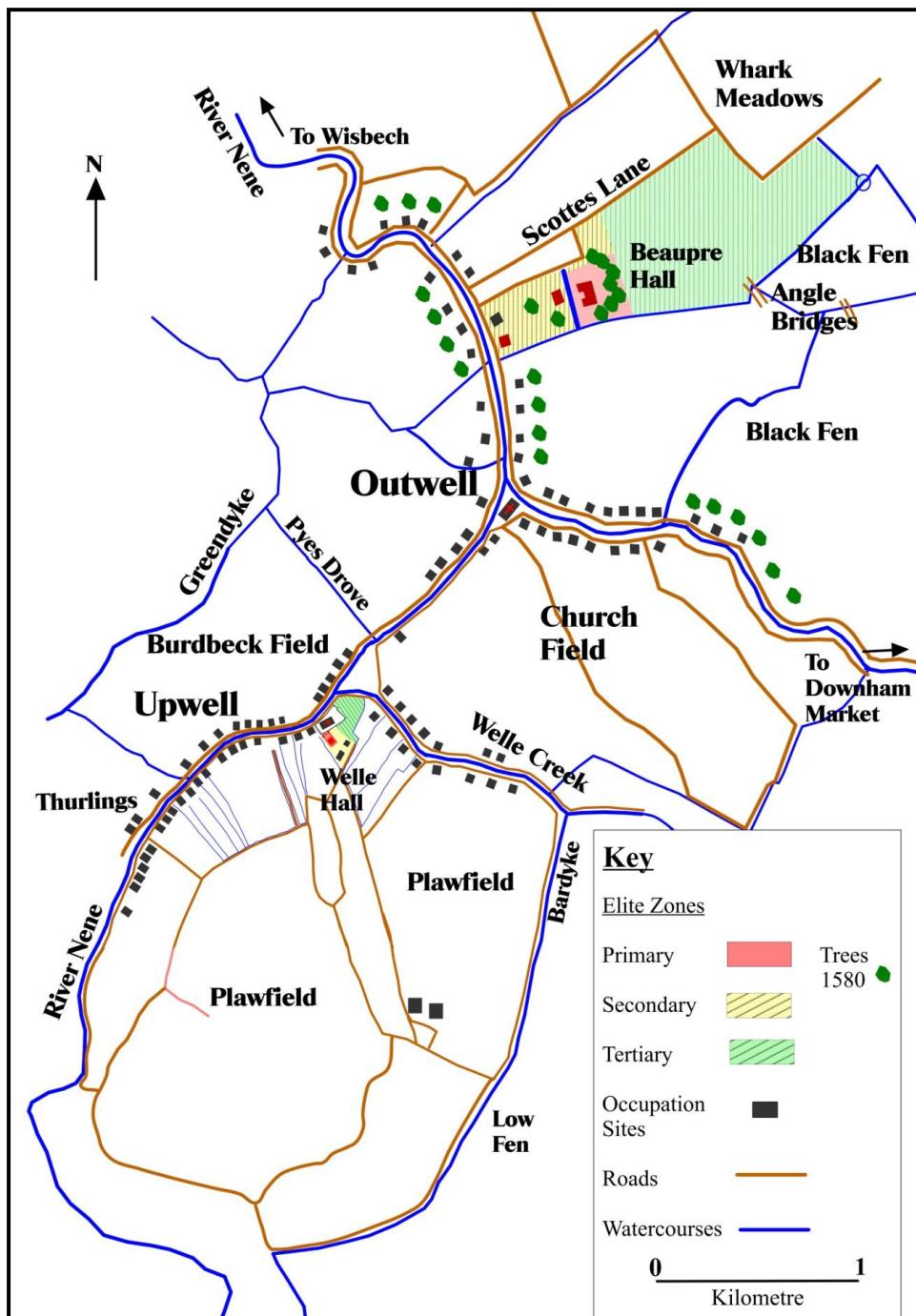
Figure 99:
The settlements of Outwell and Upwell as surveyed in 1582.

Beaupre Hall is shown at 1, beside the *Nedeham Loade*, set slightly back from the settlement of Outwell. Welle Manor Hall is just off the map, to the right of 2. The map highlights the density of settlement along the banks of the Marshland waterways.

⁶¹ Hall, D & Coles J., (1994) *The Fenland Survey: An Essay in Landscape and Persistence. Archaeological Report No.1* English Heritage. , pp. 114-5

⁶² BL Add. MS 71126. Map of Marshland circa 1580 thought to be 1582, surveyor unknown

Welle Manor Hall lay just beyond the mapped area in the 1582 survey but was included in William Haiwarde's 1591 map of Marshland, which has been used to reconstruct the landscape around the two properties.⁶³ Both surveys showed the river banks lined with closely spaced properties that merged with those in neighbouring Emneth. Roads also followed the line of the riverbanks taking advantage of the firmer ground whilst extensive areas of open field and common grazings surrounded the settlements.



⁶³ Late C17th copy of William Haiwarde's map of Marshland surveyed in 1591. Cambridge University Library Reproduced in Silvester R J (1988) *The Fenland Project No. 3 Marshland & Nar Valley East Anglian Archaeology No. 45*, pp. 10-11.

⁶⁴ Derived from BL Add. MS 71126 a survey of Marshland in 1582 by an unknown surveyor, and a seventeenth-century copy William Haiward's 1591 survey, original Cambridge University Library, reproduced in Sylvester (1998) *The Fenland Project No 3, East Anglian Archaeology 45*.

Rivers and creeks were an important part of the Fenland communication system bringing people and goods to, and through, the prosperous Marshland settlements and creating additional points of interaction. The Nene and Welle Creek were navigable upstream of Welle Manor adding further source of interaction around a site which was confined on all sides by settlement and the working landscape. Welle Manor Hall stood in a very small block of demesne of seven and a half acres, which appears to equate to the demesne of eight acres recorded as the *Hallecroft* in a survey of 1251.⁶⁵ The missing half acre perhaps accounted for by the extension of St Peter's churchyard in 1840.⁶⁶ This small enclosure could not be described as a park, nor was there any opportunity to create parkland, the churchyard, fields, tenements, roads and waterways lying on all sides of Welle Manor Hall making any extension of the tertiary zone extremely difficult. There is no evidence that the property was ever moated or had any fishponds in the grounds but seven fisheries were attached to the manor when it was part of the Bishop of Ely's estates. Despite the very restricted elite zone and the lack of any moat or ponds the residence itself was built to surprisingly high standards, possibly as a Bishop's retreat or by a wealthy tenant.

The present house contains remnants of a late fourteenth-century hall house built of brick, an early example of a building constructed entirely from what was at the time a rare and expensive material.⁶⁷ A major phase of rebuilding took place in the 1480s, which included the addition of a three-storey porch and two, three-storey, step-gabled bays on the north facade. The upper floors were accessed by two full height polygonal stair turrets, in addition to the existing medieval square stair tower. The late fifteenth-century rebuilding again used brickwork as the principal construction material, including trefoil friezes between the floors and a brick winder staircase similar to that at Oxburgh Hall (4, TF 7425 0122, West).⁶⁸ Stepped buttresses, hooded window mouldings and queen post roofs confirm the quality of the rebuilding, which was undertaken using the innovative materials and techniques typical of high-status late-medieval residences. During the remodelling, the hall was further aggrandised by the addition of a courtyard created by a curtain wall with a pair of octagonal turrets flanking the principal entrance.

65 Salzman, L. F., & others, Editors (1967) *The Victoria County History of Cambridgeshire: Outwell and Upwell*/London, Dawsons for the University of London, Institute of Historical Research.

66 *The Victoria County History of Cambridgeshire*.

67 Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, p. 741.

68 English Heritage, Listed Buildings TF5002 15/40 Welle Manor Hall.

The curtain wall has been demolished but the turrets still stand in the grounds of the hall indicating the dimensions of the courtyard.⁶⁹

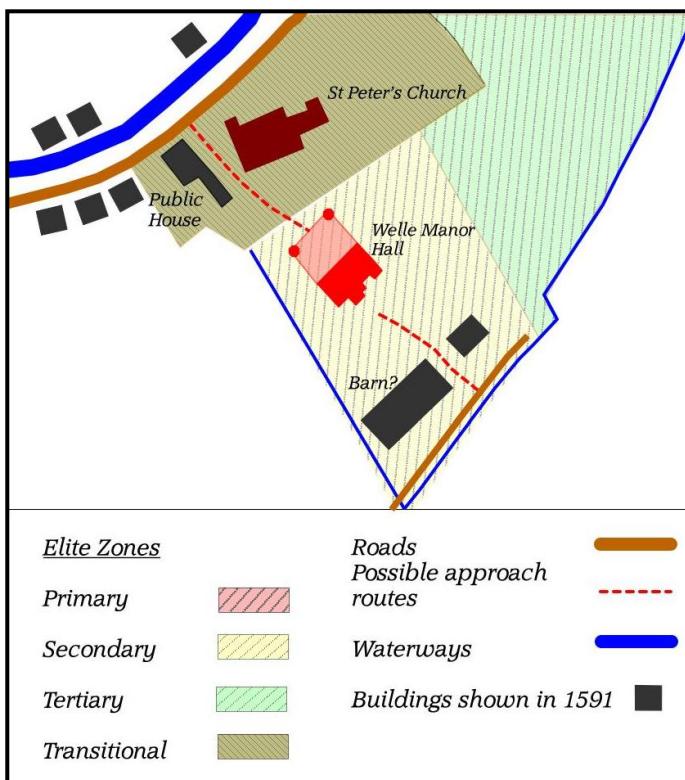


Figure 101: Welle Manor Hall, Upwell circa 1500

The Hall stood within a few metres of St. Peter's Church and a public house, which may have been a lodging house in the late-medieval period in the manner of the 'White Houses' discussed above.



Figure 102: Welle Manor Hall

The sketch was done before nineteenth-century additions, one of the corner turrets is shown in the background. By the eighteenth century the hall had become a rectory for St Peter's Church. The proximity of the churchyard may have influenced the decision not to construct a moat but it may also have been the case that watery surroundings were not considered an essential part of a high-status landscape in

69 English Heritage, Listed Buildings TF5002 15/41 & 42

very damp terrain of Marshland and the Fens. Possibly greater emphasis was placed on the use of expensive materials and technically challenging building techniques than on the creation of yet more water, even in the controlled conditions of a moat. However, despite the quality of the building materials and the innovative design of some of the features, the very restricted elite zone around Welle Manor may have contributed to its decline in status, to that of parish rectory.

The rebuilding of Welle Manor and the addition of the curtain wall and turrets in the late fifteenth century may have prompted the Beaupre family to embark on the construction of Beaupre Hall in the neighbouring settlement of Outwell. The Beaupres had held property in Marshland since the thirteenth century and in 1493 Nicholas de Beaupre married Margaret Fodrynggey, coheir to her father's estates in Brockley, Suffolk. The new hall was begun circa 1500 and a gatehouse faced with dressed ashlar was added in 1525 and in common with Welle Manor, Beaupre Hall was brick-built under slate roofs.⁷⁰ However, the latter was considerably larger than Welle Manor Hall and stood surrounded by meadows, some 400 metres from the roads, river and settlement of Outwell.



Figure 103: Beaupre Hall, Outwell (47; TF 5151 0456; West) 1827⁷¹

Beaupre Hall was extended in the 1570s by Sir Robert Bell, Speaker of the House of Commons in 1572 and Chief Baron of the Exchequer. Sir Robert acquired Beaupre Hall

⁷⁰ Salzman, L H & others (editors) (1967) *Victoria County History Cambridgeshire: Outwell and Upwell*
⁷¹ Illustration from WATSON, W. (1827) *An Historical Account of the Ancient Town and Port of Wisbech*. Leach, Wisbech.

on his marriage to Dorothy Beaupre in 1559 and the property remained in the Bell family until the late eighteenth century.⁷² The location chosen for Beaupre Hall allowed much larger secondary and tertiary areas to be established than around Welle Manor Hall, the tertiary zone possibly extending south towards *Black Fen* (Figure 100, page 239). The early nineteenth-century sketch of the hall in Figure 103 shows grass growing up to the walls, perhaps reflecting contemporary taste for the sweeping lawns of the landscape park. The walled gardens to either side of the hall provide some evidence of earlier spatial arrangements, when brick courtyards may have flanked the house. Part of the house was demolished in the nineteenth century and the remainder fell into decay in the twentieth century but still boasted many sixteenth-century features, including some the fine chimneys shown in Figure 103, sixteenth-century panelling in several rooms and a great deal of particularly fine heraldic glass. Despite Grade 1 listing Beaupre Hall was demolished in 1966 to be replaced by a housing estate.

These two properties were surrounded by watercourses, marsh and fen but even residences built on the Fen Edge near Downham Market still appear to have shunned moats and water features. There are a few examples of medieval moats along the Fen Edge, such as at the site of Walpole Hall (TF 6353 0010) in Roxham and the site of the medieval predecessor of Denver Hall (1; TF 6165 0137; West), but there is little evidence for the construction of moats around late fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century properties in the West sub region. The manor of Denver East Hall (1; TF 6165 0137) was acquired in 1465 by Sir William Willoughby, a junior member of the influential Willoughby family of Moat Hall, Parham (34; TM 3119 5991; South East) and Eresby (D; TF 394 652; Lincolnshire).⁷³ Denver East Hall is thought to date from 1490-1520 and stands near Denver Church on the site of a medieval hall.⁷⁴ Three kilometres to the south of Denver, Snore Hall (5; TL 6242 9934) overlooked the fens, and was the last vestige of the deserted medieval settlement of Snore. The manor was held from circa 1450 by William Skipwith who built a hall at Snore circa 1470.⁷⁵ William's descendent

72 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., (1805) 'Clackclose Hundred and Half: Upwell and Outwell', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 7, pp. 454-478.

73 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C. (1805) 'Clackclose Hundred and Half.: Denver', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 7, pp. 315 - 321

74 Pevsner dates Denver to 1520. Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, p. 340.. NHER states 1490-1520 NHER 2448

75 Snore dated to 1470-75 in Pevsner, N., & Wilson, B., (1999) *The Buildings of England: Norfolk 2, West and South*, pp. 340.

Sir William Skipwith served as a Justice on commissions of the peace in 1502-4 and by the 1540s had accumulated a considerable estate along the Fen Edge.⁷⁶

The third property in this group is the manor of West Riston alias Ryston Hall (7; TF 6238 0114), which stands one kilometre to the east of Denver, and three kilometres north of Snore Hall. Ryston Hall belonged to Walter Gylour or Gelour in the 1490s but by 1529 the small estate was the property of his grandson William Pratt.⁷⁷ As we shall see, during the course of the sixteenth century successive generations of the Pratt family expanded the estate towards both Denver and Snore.

Figure 104 below shows the position of Snore Hall on a low but pronounced ridge beside the Wissey, Denver just below the crest of a gentle fen-edge slope and Ryston Hall (7, TF 6238 0114) on a wide level site between the 10 and 20 metre contours. There is no indication that any of either late fifteenth-century halls at Denver or Snore were moated and a map of 1635 shows the moat at the site of the medieval Walpole Hall does not record a moat at Ryston Hall.⁷⁸

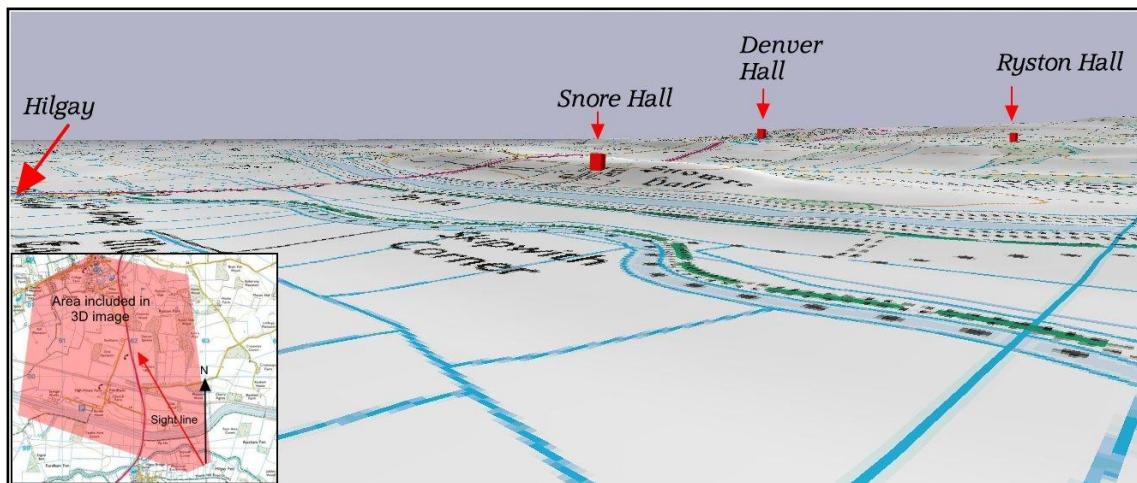


Figure 104: Three dimensional image of the locations of Snore Hall, Denver Hall and Ryston Hall.⁷⁹

There appears to be a strong correlation in the late-medieval period between the presence of marshes and fens and an absence of water features leading to the conclusion

76 MacCulloch, D., (1986) *Suffolk and The Tudors: Politics and Religion in an English County 1500-1600*. Oxford, Clarendon Press. Appendix II Norfolk JPs 1485-1558, pp. 393-411.

77 NRO PRA 45, 357x1, Extent of the Mannor of Ryston and Wallpole Hall, 1529

78 The Estates of Gregory Pratt in Ryston and Roxham, Thomas Waterman, 1635. Private Collection

79 Based on the current edition of the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 presented using Memory Map 3D World® systems. Key: Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 showing approximate area included in 3D image shaded red and the red arrow indicates the sight line.

that those building elite residences near such terrain preferred to express exclusivity by other means. The existence of earlier moats near Ryston Hall and Denver Hall suggests that new moats could have been constructed if the Pratts and Willoughbys had the inclination to build them or sufficient resources to fund the work. However, they along with many other landowners in the West and North East sub regions chose not to surround their houses with water features. At some locations soil conditions may have made the retention of water challenging and expensive but it may also be the case that factors such as fear of disease may have discouraged people from bringing water close to their walls. There was a perception that the foul miasmas emanating from marshes and fens aggravated conditions such as rheumatism and caused agues and other feverish conditions. The connection between the biting insects prevalent in damp environments and diseases such as malaria had not been made, the bad air being blamed for such ailments, but there may have been an antipathy to having areas of water under the windows of the residence. From a practical point of view, houses built on the periphery of fens and marshes were likely to have been in danger of occasional flooding and suffered from more than usual levels of dampness. Both these problems would have been exacerbated by the presence of a moat.

It is also possible that watery environments were considered to be less of a status symbol in areas where creeks, fens and marshes were very much part of the 'taskscape'. The local inhabitants made a substantial part of their livings from the waters and pastures of these low-lying, damp but profitable landscapes making water a more egalitarian resource than in some drier parts of East Anglia. Elite families who built residences in the West and North East sub regions during the late-medieval period may have wished to distance themselves from the sheer mundaneness of watery surroundings. Rather than emphasising their elevated status by constructing a water-filled moat, with the attendant drawbacks to health and comfort and connotations of labour and production, the local gentry in marshy areas appear to have looked for other ways to convey their superiority and wealth. The high quality materials and advanced technical skills employed in the rebuilding of Welle Manor Hall would have highlighted the financial resources of the owners, whilst the location within metres of the parish church would have indicated the manorial status of the building. The use of ashlar stone dressings over the entire gatehouse at Beaupre Hall would have set it apart from other brick-built capital messuages in Marshland and perhaps have impressed visitors sufficiently to distract attention from the lack of a moat.

Amongst the advantages of low-lying environments, apart from the profits of rich grazing grounds and fertile soils, were the opportunities to rear that most emblematic of birds, the swan. The swanneries used for breeding and maintaining flocks occurred more frequently in the west and north east of East Anglia than in other sub regions, occupying sites along rivers banks, beside broads and on fenland alder carrs. We have seen how herons and cranes could be used, both within the hall and in the elite zones beyond the residence, as symbols of rank and exclusivity but swans appear to have been the most prestigious of all the birds reared within elite landscapes. There is evidence to suggest that swans may have been held in even higher estimation than deer. For example, in the Earl of Northumberland's household warrants were issued for the procurement of venison from the Earl's parks throughout the year; twenty-six does during the winter months and twenty bucks during the summer.⁸⁰ In contrast warrants for the provision of swans were only issued at Christmas with instructions to the bailiff and the keeper of the swans to provide –

*..nowe againste the Feest of Cristynmas next comynge Twentie signettes to be taken of the Breed of my Swannys within my Carre of Aromme within my Loordeship of Lekingfeld.*⁸¹

Swanneries occurred more frequently in the west and north east of East Anglia, along rivers, beside broads and on fenland alder carrs. In 1482 Margaret Paston bequeathed her swans and their swan-marks to her grandson Robert Paston.⁸² The birds and their identification marks are likely to have been amongst those recorded in a register of dating from circa 1500 listing the ninety-nine swan marks held in the Broadland area, in the north east of the region.⁸³ The swan pens at Oxburgh Hall are likely to have been a holding area for birds used to enhance the moat and ponds near the hall, whilst part of *Lez Leys* may have been used as a swannery. The watercolour of Shelton Hall depicted what appears to have been a black swan in the moat, no doubt a rare and highly prized specimen. Swanneries and fisheries such as those at Barsham (16; TM 3958 9035; North East) tended to lie at some distance from the residence, those at Barsham being

80 *The Northumberland Regulations*, pp. 203-4.

81 *The Northumberland Regulations*, p. 109.

82 *The Paston Letters* 1422-1509, Vol 3, p. 285 The will of Margaret Paston of Mautby.

NRO MC2044/1, 906x8, ND circa 1500. Register of swan marks in the Broadlands of Norfolk and Suffolk

83 The beaks of swans were marked with distinctive recognisances in order that they might be identified by their owners.

located on the River Waveney.⁸⁴ Further upstream, Blomefield noted that the moat and the 'swan hill' of the medieval Bressingham Manor were still extant in the early eighteenth century.⁸⁵

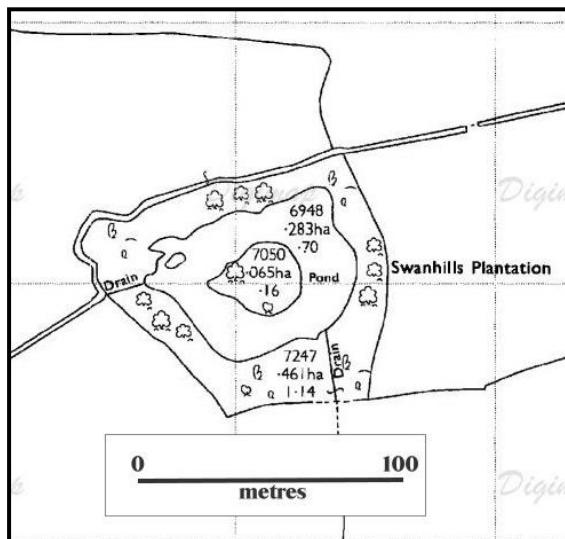


Figure 105: Swanhill Plantation, Salle, (TG10712 25517, North East)

Documentary evidence for swanneries is more forthcoming than archaeological evidence but the pond and island in Swanhill Plantation, Salle (TG 1072 2549 North East) may be an example of a swannery.

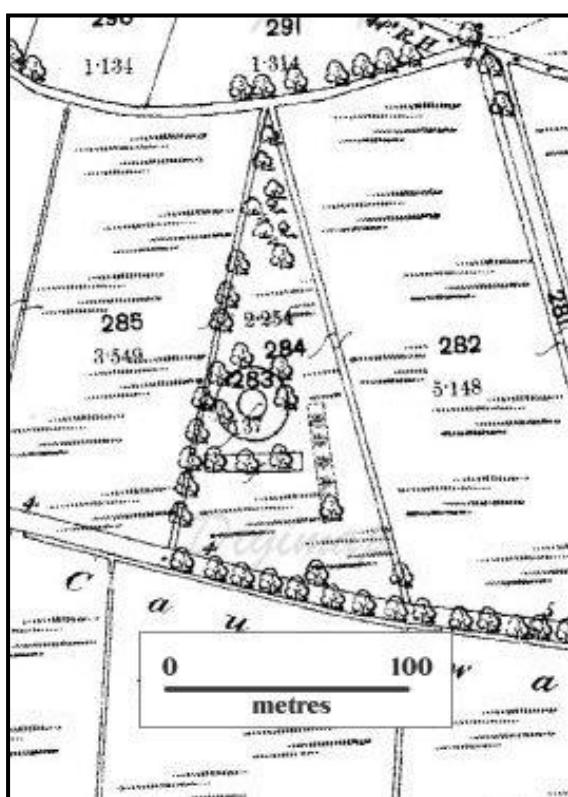


Figure 106: Ingham (TG 4082 2658; North East)

The sharpness of the outline of this feature may indicate a eighteenth- or nineteenth-century date but it demonstrates the principle of a raised island within a circular or irregular pond.

Fishponds occur less frequently in the low-lying sub regions perhaps for similar reasons to those that discouraged moat building. However, fisheries located on rivers and creeks may also have played a part in reducing the number of fishponds in the West and North East sub regions. The fisheries belonging to Welle Hall Manor were located in the

84 Copinger *The Manors of Suffolk* Vol 7.

85 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., 'Hundred of Diss: Brisingham', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 1 (1805), pp. 49-73.

Welle Creek, where it is likely that eels featured prominently amongst the catch.⁸⁶ The possession of a fishery appears to have reduced the presence of fishponds near some residences, for example fresh fish were brought to the Earl of Northumberland's hall at Leconfield by local tenants following the direction that –

My lords tenants of Herghamshall serve my Lords hous thrughowt the Yere with all manar of fresh water fish.

The location of the manor near the Humber Estuary and east coast ports resulted in salt-water fish featuring in the lists of provisions, including weekly orders for fresh ling, salmon, herring and salted fish, with the addition of sturgeon during the period of Lent.⁸⁷ The natural resources in the vicinity of a residence could therefore affect whether productive manorial appurtenances were required around the mansion. The absence of, for example, fishponds at sites located near fens, rivers or coastal fisheries in the west of the region might be less significant than the lack of ponds at a residence on the high claylands of south west East Anglia. This assumes, however, that only productive considerations influenced the creation of high-status manorial features such fishponds in the late-medieval period, which was not the case. Nevertheless water features may have been considered less essential around all but the grandest residences in the North East and West of East Anglia such as Caister Castle and Oxburgh Hall. The exclusivity of other residences perhaps expressed in the fabric and detail of the buildings whilst control over natural resources could be demonstrated by fisheries, swanneries or heronries. Where such features were located outwith the tertiary elite zone they could constitute detached elite zones in the vernacular landscape and thus act as visual reminders of the influence of the lord of the manor well beyond his residence.

The early move away from the use of moats in the West and North East of East Anglia may have been prompted in part by the local topography but by the 1520s a number of high-status residences were constructed without a moat elsewhere in East Anglia. In the North sub region, East Barsham Manor alias Wolterton's Manor (62; TF 9172 3391; North) was built for Sir Henry Fermor between 1520 and 1530 in a river valley location, where a moat could have been constructed around the manor house if Sir Henry had wished it. The tithe map shows a rectangular moated feature to the west of the hall and two large ponds in the grounds so water features appear to have been included in the

86 Salzman, L H & others (editors) (1967) *Victoria County History Cambridgeshire: Outwell and Upwell*
87 *The Northumberland Regulations*, pp. 8-9 and 107-8.

overall design but not in the form of a moat around the residence. The moat on the tithe map has the appearance of a garden feature rather than an abandoned medieval house moat.

At East Barsham it was not water features in general that were shunned but specifically a house moat and the same was true at Kenninghall, where Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk, decided to build a new principal residence in the 1520s. In contrast to East Barsham Thomas Howard's palace was located within a 700-acre park, isolated from the settlement of Kenninghall by the park. The medieval hall had stood within a large moated enclosure but the Duke built his new palace over 400 metres to the north east and did not construct a moat around the mansion, which was said to be built in an unfortified style.⁸⁸ The location of the medieval hall in the great double moated site known as *Candleyards* appears to have been reused as part of the pleasure grounds of the palace. Blomefield described it as being –

*a square of four acres, encompassed with a spacious trench, at each corner is a mount, but that to the south-east is much the largest*⁸⁹

The mounts may have been viewing mounds overlooking the waters of the moats and any gardens within the structure. Many other pools and ponds survived until the nineteenth century and although they cannot be dated, the formality of some of their outlines and their positions in relation to the palace and *Candleyards* suggest they may have been part of the pleasure grounds. Ornamental orchards, privy gardens and flowery meadows are likely to have surrounded the palace, with perhaps a fountain within one of the courtyards as at Hampton Court. Thomas Howard will have been familiar with Cardinal Wolsey's great palace on the Thames and may well have felt resentful that someone he regarded with ill-concealed contempt should live in such stately surroundings. Wolsey had delivered several blows to the Duke's pride, including passing the post of Earl Marshal to the Duke of Suffolk and that of Admiral of England to the king's natural son Henry Fitzroy. In addition, Wolsey favoured a diplomatic solution to the disputes with France whereas Thomas Howard wanted a military campaign. At the height of Wolsey's period of power the Duke retired to his estate at

88 Head, D. M., (2009) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune: The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk* University of Georgia Press, p. 84.

89 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., 'Hundred of Giltcross', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 1 (1805), pp. 213-227.

Kenninghall and set about the creation of a palace that would rival the Cardinal's Hampton Court.⁹⁰

From 1524 Howard began to sell off lands in other parts of England and buy up estates in East Anglia, particularly around Kenninghall, which had come to the Duke through his paternal great-grandmother Margaret Mowbray.⁹¹ The Duke's motives for choosing Kenninghall for a new mansion to replace Framlingham Castle as his principal East Anglian residence were probably multiple. A base in Norfolk would strengthen his influence in the north of East Anglia and bring him closer to the seat of regional government in Norwich.⁹² The large medieval deer park at Kenninghall would have been another powerful incentive for locating the new ducal palace there as it meant both recreation and privacy could be assured. The site also held royal connections, reputedly being the seat of early kings of East Anglia and capital of the Anglian kingdom. This legend would have been a useful for Howard's ambition to be the principal magnate in the region as would the tales of a medieval queen having lived at Kenninghall.⁹³ Although dismissed as local folklore there may be some truth in this legend as Queen Isabella, mother of Edward III, when not at Castle Rising appears to have spent time at Kenninghall. On 18th October 1344 letters patent were issued to the people of Coventry '*dated at Kenyngdale by the Queen Mother Isabella, Queen of England*'.⁹⁴ This additional royal association would have appealed to the Duke's immense pride in his descent from Edward I. Thomas Howard's first wife had been Anne Plantagenet, daughter of Edward IV and the family's obsession with royal marriages would lead several of the Duke's descendants into dangerous alliances. In the meantime, Howard no doubt hoped that his palace in Norfolk, set within a fine park and surrounded by pleasure grounds, would surpass Wolsey's Hampton Court in grandeur and amenity, whilst emphasising the Duke's superior rank and lineage.

Part of one wing is all that remains of Thomas Howard's great house most of which was demolished circa 1650. Some authorities believe it to have been an early example

90 Head, D. M., (2009) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune: The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk* University of Georgia Press, p. 83-84.

91 Head, D. M., (2009) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune: The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk*, p. 273.

92 Virgoe R., (1997) "The Recovery of the Howards in East Anglia" *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 231.

93 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., 'Hundred of Giltcross', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 1 (1805), pp. 213-227

94 'The corporation of Coventry: Charters, letters patent, etc.', *The Manuscripts of Shrewsbury and Coventry Corporations [etc]: Fourth report*, Appendix: Part X (1899), pp. 109-127.

of an ‘H-plan’ design orientated north/south.⁹⁵ However, the surviving enclosures and buildings at Kenninghall suggest a east/west orientation was possible. Parch marks to the west and south east of the extant service block may indicate building remains in these areas again indicating an east/west orientation.⁹⁶ If, as David Head has suggested, Kenninghall was intended to outclass Hampton Court, then a double courtyard plan, perhaps with ornate gatehouses similar to that at East Barsham would have been possible.⁹⁷ However, angle turrets on the west gable of the surviving wing suggest that this did not join another wing at right angles but was an outer wall.⁹⁸ A cable trench dug in the late 1980s revealed brickwork running south from the east end of the present building and low banks to the south of the extant wing may indicate a parallel block perhaps joined by a central block containing the great hall and with the guest lodgings above.⁹⁹ A tentative ‘half H’ plan is offered here, consisting of one three-sided courtyard with perhaps a wall between the two wings, and one enclosed courtyard with a gatehouse or porch on the east facade. As drawn the palace would have measured eighty metres by sixty but it may have been considerably larger and a residence of such high-status with a household of over one hundred people would have been surrounded by numerous ancillary buildings and service blocks. Further archaeological investigations and fieldwork would reveal more details of the spatial arrangements and ornamental landscape around this very important site.

95 Robinson, J. M., (1982) *The Dukes of Norfolk*, Oxford; Williams, N., (1964) *Thomas Howard Fourth Duke of Norfolk* London ; NHER 10846 Kenninghall Palace

96 NHER 10846 AP TM 0685E,F

97 Head, D. M., (2009) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune: The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk*, p. 84.

98 Drawn and photographed by Ivan Ringwood. *Late-medieval and Early Tudor Country Houses in Norfolk* Unpublished MA dissertation, 1998 UEA

99 Edwin Rose, building report Kenninghall Palace 1981. NHER 10846 Secondary File

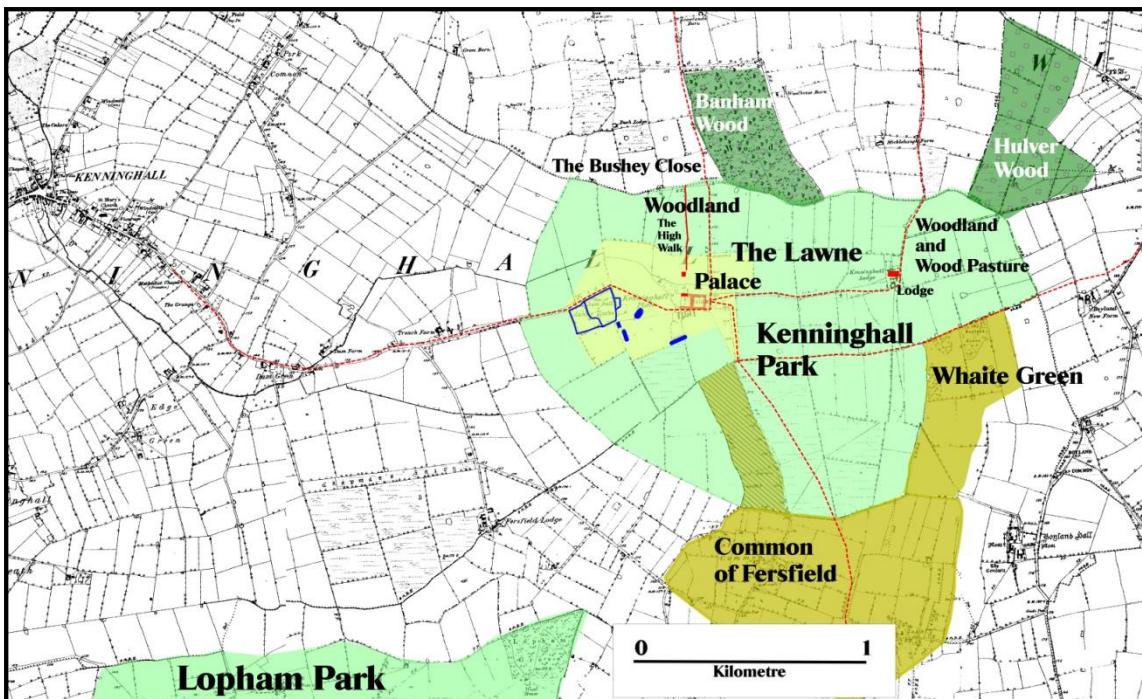


Figure 107: Kenninghall Park and Palace circa 1530, with Lopham Park to the south west and the settlement of Kenninghall to the west.¹⁰⁰

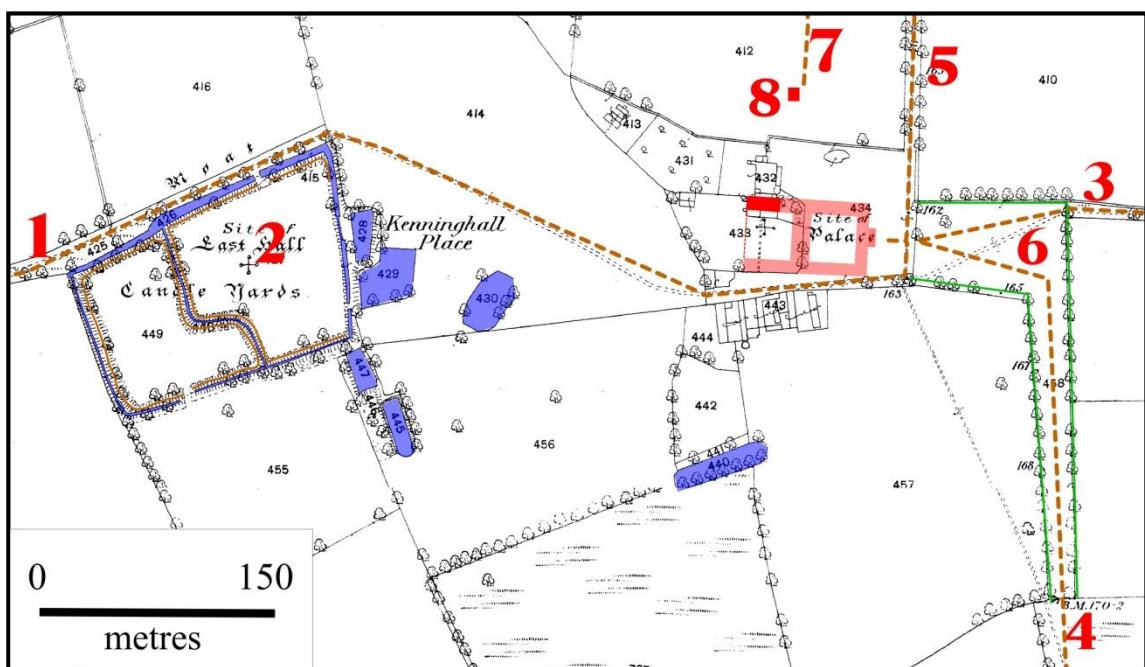


Figure 108: Detail of the area around Kenninghall Palace¹⁰¹

Figure 107 shows the extent of Kenninghall Park and the location of the palace within ‘*The lawne*’ or laund, a grassy clearing without trees, near the centre of the medieval deer park. The park and palace lay over two kilometres from the settlement of

100 Derived from ACA P5/6, Map of Kenninghall Park, 1621 by Thomas Waterman; ACA P51, Map of Lopham Park, 1612 by Thomas Waterman. NHER 10846 Base map First Edition OS 1:10,560 1888

101 Base map First Edition OS 1:2,500 1884

Kenninghall and access to the park was controlled by a series of gates in the park pale. Possible approach routes to the palace have been offered in **Figure 108** based on roads and paths that align with the park gates. The road from Kenninghall (1) skirted the double moats and terraces of possible water gardens in the *Candleyards* (2) and may have followed the route of the present-day approach to a possible gatehouse or porch. The road at (3) leads from Kenninghall Lodge and that at (4) entered the park through a gate from Fersfield Common. A road from the north (5) passed Banham Wood before entering an area of woodland to the north of the palace. All these routes and the 'L' shaped enclosure (6) appear to channel movement towards the east of the hall and strengthen the impression of a general east/west orientation to the site. The surviving wing of Kenninghall Palace has been shown in red in **Figure 108** and the ground plan discussed above has been added in outline. This is no more than a speculative offering based on the general layout of the site, the approach routes and the archaeological evidence discussed above but gives some impression of the scale of the residence and its position within the park.

The internal terraces of the *Candleyards* and the viewing mounts at each corner, described by Blomefield, suggest that this was an important part of the ornamental landscape at Kenninghall, which would have been viewed by those approaching from the west and Kenninghall village. Between *Candleyards* and the palace a number of formal ponds also appear to have had substantial terraces or banks around their edges, giving some vertical interest to a relatively level site. The path at (7) leading from a small building (8) was labelled '*The High Walk*' on the map of 1621 and may have been a raised walkway again providing views over the grounds and park. Given Thomas Howard's ambition for Kenninghall to be a ducal palace that would demonstrate his superiority over Cardinal Wolsey, then it is likely that the pleasure grounds were elaborate and extensive. Further investigations may reveal more information about the nature of the grounds and their extent but it seems likely that they included at least the area shown in **Figure 108**. This has been used as the basis for the boundary of the secondary zone in **Figure 107**, which was entirely surrounded by the tertiary zone of Kenninghall Park. Despite the vast size of the park the exclusivity of the tertiary zone was compromised by a piece of Fersfield Common that was described as extending into the Duke's park "like a harp and very near to his palace".¹⁰² The area in question has been estimated by using Blomefield's description and by measuring the acreage

¹⁰² Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., (1805) 'Hundred of Diss: Fersfield', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 1, pp. 74-114.

between field boundaries within the park that connected to Fersfield Common. The Duke's efforts to acquire this and other areas of common pasture around the periphery of the park will be discussed below but he did not have to make do with one very large park. Just to the south west of Kenninghall Park lay Lopham Park, which provided a detached tertiary elite area of even greater extent than that at Kenninghall where the Duke could entertain his peers and Henry VIII. The Letters & Papers of Henry VIII dating from 1541 include lists of the King's 'gests' or 'giestes', which were itineraries of proposed or intended visits and journeys that the King was due to undertake. The progresses did not necessarily follow the 'gest' but on three occasions both the Duke of Norfolk and the Duke of Suffolk at Westhorpe were expected to entertain Henry VIII

xi. The King's summer giestes from Greenwich to Bury and so to Greenwich

.....Enfeld, Hounsdon, Jastelen's house, 8, Beaulewe, 10, Henyngham Castle, Stoke, lord Wentworth's, 10, Frenyngham Castle, 10, Hokston, Kenynghale, Westrop, Bury.....

xii. The King's summer gests from Westminster to Norwich, and so to Ampthill.

.....Yngham (Sir Francis Caltropp's house), 10, Norwich, 11, Asshefeldthropp to dinner, and that night to Kenynghal, Westroppe, St. Edmund's Bury¹⁰³

xvi. The King's gests by the sea coast from Westminster to Norwich, and so to Ampthill – repeats the list in xii

The Duke of Norfolk would no doubt have laid on lavish hospitality for the monarch, particularly as the King planned to visit the Duke of Suffolk at Westhorpe Hall. Suffolk was a rival to Thomas Howard's dominance in East Anglia but the two dukes had maintained an uneasy alliance against Reformers and 'new men' such as Thomas Wolsey, Thomas Cromwell and Richard Rich. The dukes had played significant roles in the downfall of both men despite having benefited greatly from the activities of the Court of Augmentations, the office established by Cromwell to distribute sequestered monastic property. Thomas Howard acquired a large amount of monastic land and manors throughout East Anglia through grants, purchases and exchanges. These

103 'Henry VIII: March 1541, 26-31', *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 16: 1540-1541* (1898), pp. 315-331. The numbers are the approximate distance between some of the residences.

included the Priory of St. Mary, Thetford, the lands of Castle Acre Priory and the lands and manors of Butley Priory, which along with many other acquisitions further increased the Dukes landholdings in East Anglia and his annual income.¹⁰⁴ The Dissolution provided vast resources, which Henry VIII was eager to capitalise on both to reward loyal supporters with grants of land and to fill his treasury with the profits from the Court of Augmentations. As discussed above the sixteenth century saw an increase in social mobility, when clever and ambitious men could advance their careers and their social status through diligent service and an influential patron. Sir Richard Rich, the man who was in charge of the redistribution of monastic property in his role as Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations, was one such individual.

Sir Richard Rich rose through the ranks of the Henrican administration to achieve both high office and great wealth. His background is unclear other than a connection with a London mercantile family but he clearly had sufficient resources to be admitted to the Middle Temple in 1516.¹⁰⁵ In his early years at court, he had been a protégé of Thomas Cromwell and rose to the office of Solicitor General, the office once held by Sir James Hobart. Selected as a knight of the shire for Essex in 1536, he was elected Speaker of the House of Commons in 1539 but arguably, his most lucrative office was that of Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations, where he controlled the profits of the Dissolution.¹⁰⁶ This allowed Rich to acquire estates across England, including Mulbarton Hall in Norfolk and many valuable monastic sites such as St Bartholomew's Priory, West Smithfield where he established his principal London residence.¹⁰⁷ His main residence outside the capital was at Leigh's Priory, near Chelmsford in Essex, granted to Rich by Henry VIII in May 1536, along with several adjacent manors.¹⁰⁸ His motive for focusing much of his wealth on redeveloping Leigh's Priory as his family seat can be deduced, at least in part, from its location and resources. The priory was situated within fifty miles of the capital, near good roads, yet set apart from the settlements of Little and Great Leigh's and Felsted. The priory had an existing park of 100 acres granted in by a patent of Richard II in 1381 and the acquisition of several

104 Head, D. M., (2009) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune: The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk* University of Georgia Press, pp. 83-84.

105 Carter, P. R. N (2004) 'Rich, Richard, first Baron Rich (1496/7–1567)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press. Online edition.

106 Carter, P. R. N (2004) 'Rich, Richard, first Baron Rich (1496/7–1567)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

107 Webb, E. A., (1921) "The Monastic Buildings: monastic close, fairground, gardens and grave-yard" *The Records of St Bartholomew's Priory and St Bartholomew the Great, West Smithfield: Volume 2*. The Centre for Metropolitan History, pp. 181-195.

108 "Houses of the Austin Canons: Priory of Little Leighs" *A History of the County of Essex: Volume 2 (1907)* Edited by W. Page and J Horace Round. Victoria County History, pp. 155-157.

neighbouring manors, either by grant or purchase, allowed expansion across the surrounding landscape.¹⁰⁹ John Norden's maps of Essex dated 1594¹¹⁰ and 1595¹¹¹ show two parks, one to the north and one to the south of the Priory. Place-names and boundaries on the first Edition 6 inch OS map indicate the location of the parks within the modern landscape.



Figure 109:
Leez Priory, as recorded on
the 1594 edition of
Norden's map of Essex.
BL Add MS 33769



Figure 110:
Leez Priory, as recorded on
a map of Essex by John
Norden dated 1595. BL Add
MS 31853

The lane or footpath that had passed within the pale of the north park appears to have been moved further north 'beyond the pale'. Henry VIII's manor and parks at New Hall are shown at the bottom right of **Figure 110**. The parks lay to north and south of the priory buildings,

which Rich largely demolished before building a double quadrangular house with two gatehouses, the inner of which was large and ornate. Much of Rich's mansion was

¹⁰⁹ A History of the County of Essex: Volume 2 (1907) Edited by W. Page and J Horace Round. Victoria County History, pp. 155-157

¹¹⁰ BL Add MS 33769 f.3 John Norden Essex 1594

¹¹¹ BL Add MS 31853 f.10 John Norden Essex 1595

demolished in 1753 but sufficient remains to give an impression of a house that exuded power and wealth, in a similar manner to Hales Hall, above. The gatehouse to the outer courtyard was rather austere and forbidding and once inside the visitor had to turn to the right and approach a larger and more decorative gatehouse tower that controlled access to the inner courtyard.



Figure 111: The Outer Gatehouse, Leighs Priory
Photograph Google Images



Figure 112: The Inner Gatehouse, Priory
Photograph Google Images

Battlements and turrets give both gatehouses a militaristic appearance and both resemble the gatehouses of the fifteenth century rather than the more decorative examples of the early sixteenth century, such as East Barsham. The two courtyards measured approximately one hundred metres by over sixty metres, possibly making Leighs Priory larger than Kenninghall. Sections of sixteenth-century garden wall survive and a contemporary

garden building stands to the north west of the outer court.¹¹² At Hales Hall Sir James Hobart had built a magnificent barn of the finest materials but Richard Rich felt that two great barns would be a more emphatic statement of his control over agricultural production and local resources. The barns are brick built with queen post roof trusses and stand to either side of a base court to the south east of the outer gatehouse, in a similar fashion to the barn and lodging block at Oxburgh Hall.¹¹³ Several large fishponds were created around the new residence but the house was not moated, despite a ready water supply from the adjacent stream. The two fine parks at Leighs were well positioned to entertain Henry VIII when he stayed at the royal manor of New Hall or Beaulieu, eight kilometres south east of Leighs Priory (TL 7342 1029). Richard Rich surrounded himself with all the trappings of a senior courtier and Privy Councillor but it is doubtful whether this endeared him to the senior peer of the realm, the Duke of Norfolk. Thomas Howard would have had to deal with Sir Richard Rich on a regular basis dealing with matters of state and in negotiations over monastic property. It is likely that the duke recognised the threat to his authority from this very ambitious and ruthless politician, who accommodated the factions attached to each of Henry VIII's wives and continued to gain power, prestige and property throughout the 1540s.

During the sixteenth century, many successful individuals from humble backgrounds chose to invest their fortunes and maintain new lifestyles from the profits of agriculture in East Anglia. Their endeavours were aided by a more commercialised land market and to a certain extent by the redistribution of monastic property that continued apace during the 1540s. In 1528/9 William Pratt purchased the manor of Ryston Hall from his maternal grandfather, Walter Gillor of Ryston and Hockwold.¹¹⁴ William appears to have been a younger son of Richard Pratt of Wimbotsham, a wealthy yeoman who died in 1532.¹¹⁵ As a younger son, William may not have benefited greatly from his father's will but he did receive a further share of his maternal grandfather's estate in a will dated 16th November, 1533.¹¹⁶ Just over a kilometre to the east of Denver Hall, Ryston Hall stood in a more isolated location, over 700 metres south east of the parish church of St Michael and the deserted settlement of *Ristuna*.¹¹⁷ The late-medieval hall had once

112 EssexHER 5957 Leighs Priory, Essex.

113 EssexHER 6137 Priory Farm Barns, Essex.

114 NRO PRA 45, 375x1 Valuation of the manor of Ryston with Walpole Hall in Roxham 1529 with amendments 1558-9.

115 *The Visitation of Norfolk in 1563 Taken by William Harvey, Clarenceux King of Arms* Edited by The Rev. G H Dashwood, F. S. A. (1878) Norwich, Miller and Levins, p. 217.

116 *The Visitation of Norfolk in the Year 1563 Taken by William Harvey*, p. 217.

117 NHER 2453

stood on the northern edge of Ryston Lyng Common but a valuation of 1529 recorded that William Pratt held a forty-five acre enclosure of demesne called the *Gret Closs* to the north and west of the hall and appears to have enclosed part of the Lyng Common.¹¹⁸ The document recorded –

Firstly the manor of Ryston with the ostyards and gardens abutting, together with one woodyard and clos to the same ajoyning called the Cowe Closs per annum vi £

Item one clos called the Gret Closs lying of the west part of the Cowe Closs aforsayd and of the north part of Ryston Hall per annum xvi £

Item one clos called Ryston Lyng of ye south part of Ryston Hall

Item one close called Garrets

Item one close called Church Broke sometym common pasture of Ryston

William's wife, and possibly cousin, Beatrix Gillor, predeceased him and he had no surviving children, but by the 1540s he had succeeded in amassing a considerable amount of new land. A manorial extent and valuation of 1548 showed that he had acquired land in Ryston, Roxham, Denver, Hilgay, Wimbotsham and Fordham, expanding towards both William Willoughby's Denver Hall lands (1; TF 6165 0137; West) and the holdings William Skipwith of Snore Hall (5; TL 6242 9934; West) in Fordham.¹¹⁹ Some of the new land had been the property of the abbot of West Dereham and a small amount had once been part of the estates of Ramsey Abbey. The abutments listed in the valuation recorded that other local gentlemen had also acquired monastic lands, for example Edward and Richard Bachcroft had been granted the lands formerly held by the Prior of Pentney in Ryston, Roxham and West Dereham. Thomas Dereham of Crimplesham, whose family had prospered as lawyers and minor court officials, gained control of lands formerly held by the abbot of West Dereham.¹²⁰

The valuation mentions that William's neighbour the wealthy lawyer Thomas Dereham had bought monastic lands abutting Roxham, including *Basshall Close, late the Abutt of West Dereham*.¹²¹ William Pratt had also purchased former abbey lands including –

118 NRO PRA 45, 357x1 Extent and valuation Ryston and Wallpole Hall, 1529, with amendments dated 1558.

119 NRO PRA 356, 376X5 Extent of Ryston, Roxham and Wallpole Hall, 1548.

120 *Calendar of State Papers, 32 Henry VIII*, p173; also NRO PRA 356, 376X5 Extent of Ryston, Roxham and Wallpole Hall, 1548 confirms Dereham's lands abutted those of William Pratt at various locations.

121 NRO PRA 356, 376X5 Extent of Ryston, Roxham and Wallpole Hall, 1548, folio 5

*In Haslater Medow a closse late of the abbutt of West Derham nowe the seyd William Pratt, 10 acres 3 rods*¹²²

The dispersal of monastic property in decades following the Dissolution allowed prosperous professional men like Dereham, Sir Nicholas Hare, and William Butts, the king's physician to amass extensive landed estates where they, or their descendants, could build fine new mansions and pleasure grounds. Younger sons like William Pratt and Thomas, the sixth son of Sir William Paston could take advantage of sequestered land to create the nucleus of estates that would, in some cases, come to rival those of their forbearers. Thomas Paston was a gentleman of the Privy Chamber and was knighted in 1544 having fought in France for Henry VIII.¹²³

Although significant, the acquisition of monastic land was not the only means by which William Pratt and his neighbours had increased their landholdings during the 1540s. The wording of the valuation and extent of 1548 shows that William Pratt, the Bachecrofts and Thomas Dereham had been buying, taking in hand and exchanging lands from each other, other landowners and tenants. For example, in *Duche Hyrne Furlong* William Pratt had purchased land from Edmund Cote and John Willoughby of Denver Hall. To the north of Ryston Hall and the *Grete Close* lay Ryston Field and a furlong known as *Wssiescrofte* and here the process of piecemeal enclosure was well underway by 1548. William Pratt already held 12 acres in *Wssiescrofte*, along with 3 rods that were divided from the 12 acres by a further 3 rods owned by William Drury of Downham Market. William Pratt noted in the valuation that –

the which 3 rods late William Drurys I have le exchange of the seyd William Drury for 1 acre of myne lying in a furlong called Gonnyngiswong and the heds sowth and north of all ye same 6 rods abutt as aforseyd

Thomas Dereham and Sir Nicholas Hare had been doing similar transactions to the north of *Wssiescrofte*, where William Pratt held 5 rods of land –

122 NRO PRA 356, 376X5, folio 10

123 Swales, T. H., (1969) "The Redistribution of Monastic Lands in Norfolk at the Dissolution" in *Norfolk Archaeology*, Vol 34, pp. 24; 33 & 17.

*lying between Lynne Waye part and an acre of lond late Thomas Dereham esquire now Sir Nicholas Hare, knyght of the est part and the sowthe hed abutt uppon Wssiecrofte aforseyd and the north hed abutt uppon Brymble Wong aforseyd*¹²⁴

William Pratt's efforts to amalgamate open-field lands in Ryston North Field and Bexwell Field appears to have been driven by both the desire to increase the area of exclusivity around Ryston Hall and the financial gains to be had from large-scale sheep farming. Eighty acres of furlongs to the north and east of the manor yards had been laid to sheep pasture by William Pratt, described in the valuation as –

Item here lyeth certen furlongs layd to Shepes pasture that is to saye a furlong kald Chesele, sub Chesele, trent, bradwong, brome hyll, le bottom, Post Sted, bowssywong, and shetgate conteyning by estimation 4 score acres be yt more or less lying between the waye kald Derham gatte on the north part the manor yard lands and common pasture of the Ryston on the sowth part, [w]hoesse est part abuth on a furlong kald Brery and others, the west part abuth on the closs nowe the sayd Wylliam Pratt the partyculers hereoff yn certen dedes tarryars and other evydences playnlye apereth

A fifteen acres piece in the adjacent *Brery Furlong* was owned by William Pratt and in the margin was written –

*Note: know ye that passell of thys sayd 15 acres 1 rod and a halff lyeth yn part in tyllage and ye rest yn shepe pasture*¹²⁵

It would appear that during the 1540s William Pratt had converted large areas of former arable land in Ryston Field to pasture for his sheep flocks. The furlongs lying to the south of Ryston Hall, beyond the *Grete Close* and *Lyng Close* were also subject to amalgamation and conversion to pasture. The enclosures at Ryston, in common with those occurring over much of England in the sixteenth century, were undertaken in order that landowners could benefit from the profits of large-scale commercial livestock rearing. Profit, however, does not appear to have been William and Gregory Pratt's only motive for choosing the lands described above as many of the new enclosures occurred

124 NRO PRA 356, 376X5, folio.

125 NRO PRA 356, 376x5, folio 39.

on lands immediately adjacent to the existing demesne. At Kimberley and Blickling records show that engrossment and enclosure were achieved by a series of purchases, exchanges and, in the case of Kimberley, an enclosure agreement dated 1555.¹²⁶ However, the surviving documentation for Ryston takes the form of a series of valuations including those referred to above, which show purchases and engrossment of open field and meadow but do not mention how the enclosure of parts of Ryston Lyng was achieved. It does, however, record the creation of closes from the common and the open field such as -

Item wone closse called the New Pond Close at the oak whereof part sometime parcel of the Ryston Lyng Close and part of Short Langland Furlong and this close lyeth at the east end of Camp Close.

There is some evidence to suggest that the enclosure of parts of Lyng Common may have aroused some dissent during the time of Kett's rebellion in the summer of 1549. Amongst the grievances listed by the yeomen and tradesmen led by Robert Kett was the enclosure of common pastures by landowners and one of the governors appointed by the rebels was based three kilometres from Ryston in the town of Downham Market¹²⁷. The oak in the above quote was sometimes referred to as *Ye Grete Oke* in the Ryston documents and would appear to be the venerable oak that still stands at Ryston (TF6277 0057) with a girth of over nine metres.

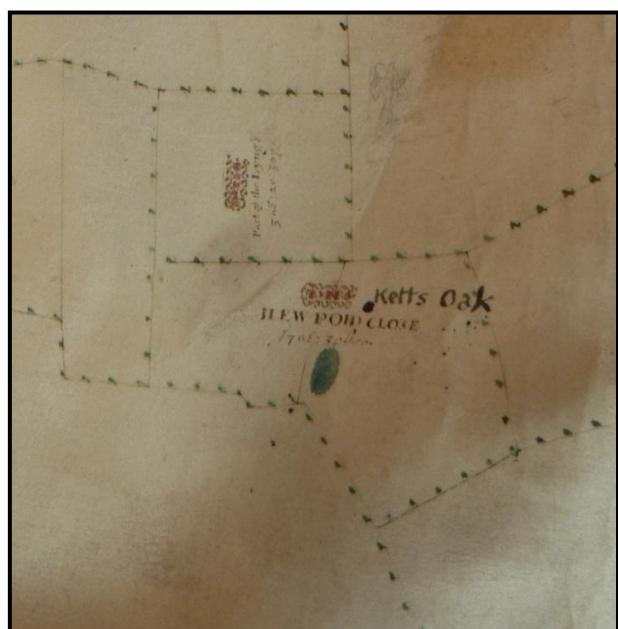


Figure 113: "Kett's Oak" marked in a later hand, on an estate map of the lands of Ryston Hall, surveyed by Thomas Waterman in 1635 (private collection).

The tree was clearly considered an important boundary marker within the vernacular landscape in the sixteenth century but following the enclosure of part of Lyng Common it was surrounded by *The New Pond Close*. It

126 NRO KIM 3/11/32, Enclosure of Anglethorpe Moore, 1555

127 Rutledge, E., "Kett's Rebellion" in Wade-Martins, P., (editor) (1994) *An Historical Atlas of Norfolk*, second edition. Norwich, p. 98.

may be that the early attempts to expand the elite zones at Ryston met with opposition from tenants and commoners, who were aggrieved at the loss of arable land and common rights, or the imposition of rack rents rather than customary tenancies. Perhaps the piecemeal enclosure of Ryston Lyng had become the focus of local dissent and the changing role of the oak tree may have been seen as emblematic of the expansion of enclosure of common pasture in southwest Norfolk.

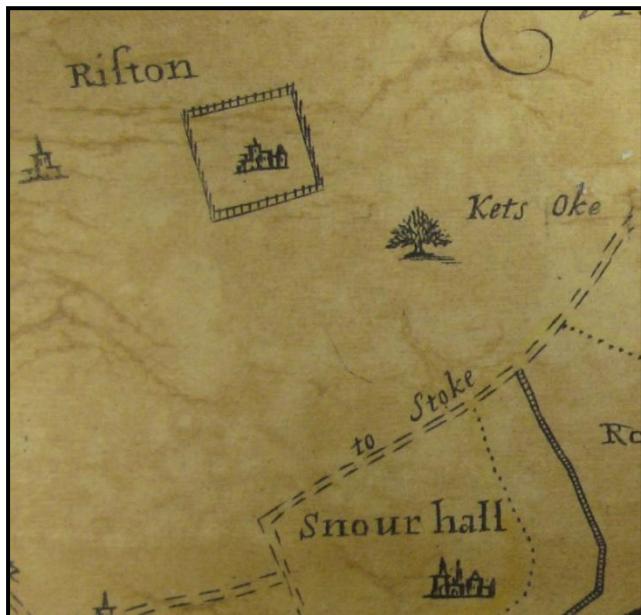


Figure 114: “Kets Oak” on a copy of Sir Jonas Moore’s map of the Fens, 1684, NRO BL 51. Also showing Snour (Snore) Hall to the south of Ryston

The oak is the only tree to have been named on this map that covers an area stretching from Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire to Lincolnshire and Norfolk.¹²⁸

The nature of the settlement pattern in much of northern East Anglia resulted in many manorial sites like Ryston being located on the edge of large areas of common grazing. Several fifteenth-century properties discussed in earlier chapters stood very near to large commons. Thomas Lovell’s Harling Hall was situated in a valley floor location between Harling Green to the south and Harling Common to the north, Middleton Tower (West) stood on the edge of Middleton Common Marsh and Hales Hall (North East) abutted Hales Green. By the sixteenth century residences located in close proximity to the waste adopted various methods of demarcating areas of exclusivity and reducing points of interaction. The small manor of Hardwick on the outskirts of King’s Lynn was located on the edge of Hardwick Common, as illustrated on the frontispiece of a survey dated 1648.¹²⁹

128 NRO BL 51, Copy of 'A Mapp of ye Great Levell of ye Fenns' by Sir Jonas Moore

129 NRO MC 308/1, 700x1, Survey of the estate of Thomas Pettus, Baronet, in Hardwick, Middleton, West Winch, North Runcton, Setchey and Tilney in Marshland, 1648

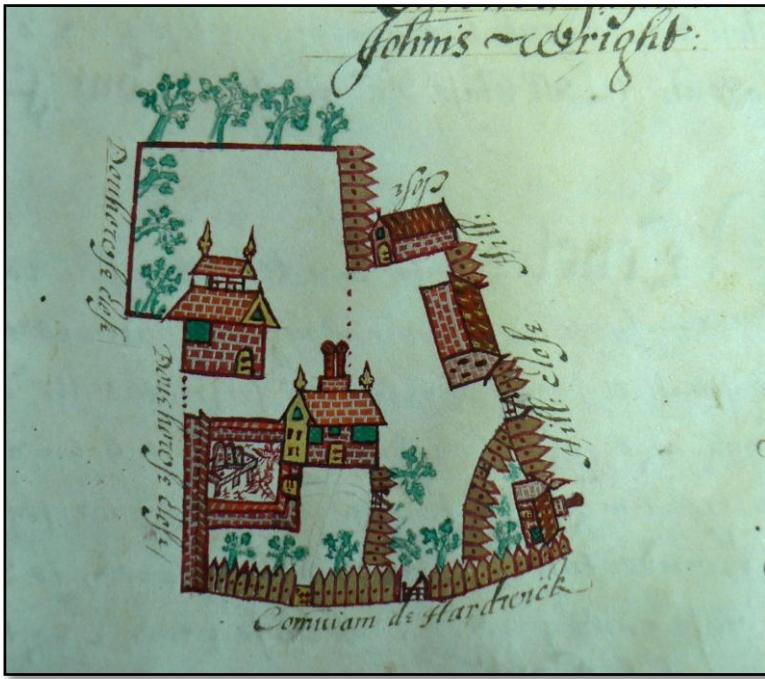


Figure 115: Residence abutting Hardwick Common, near King's Lynn as illustrated in NRO MC 308/1, 700 x 1

The illustration shows that even this relatively minor residence was concerned to demarcate zones of exclusivity. The residence and apiary are enclosed behind

walls and divided from the remainder of the yard by an internal pale. The outer pale continues around two sides of the yard, against Hardwick Common and *Hill Close* which was, despite the name, on the edge of marshland. The gates and pales created physical barriers and a visual statement of exclusivity, whereas the boundary between the yards and *Dovehouse Close* appears to be a less intimidating line of trees, or perhaps a hedge, without gates. This illustration suggests that the most exclusive space was the apiary within the garden of the residence, which was itself divided from the barns and a cottage. Faden's map showed that the highway from Lynn to Norwich crossed Hardwick Green passing close to the gates of the residence. By the 1880s the Green had been enclosed and Hardwick House was part of a large farm.

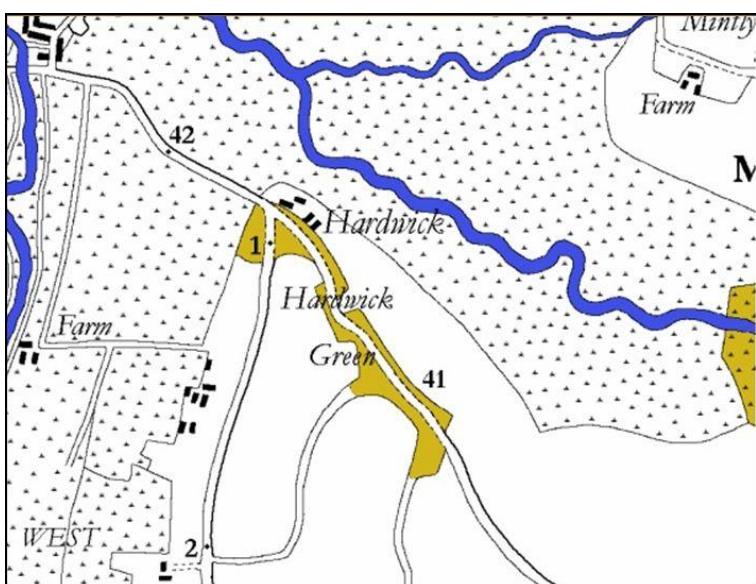


Figure 116: Hardwick Green, Faden's Map of Norfolk

Hardwick Green was atypical of the commons in northern East Anglia most of which were extensive areas of heath, warren or fen. This small area of roadside green is more redolent of the greens and

ties of the south west and south east of the region, where the percentage of common land was lower and individual commons tended to be much smaller. The custom of grazing stock on the shack or stubble after harvest was not prevalent in the south of East Anglia, animals were instead pastured on the greens and tyes, making them and integral part of the clayland husbandry. The lack of shack rights also made the process of piecemeal enclosure more straightforward and hastened the demise of irregular open fields in the south west and south east.

Some elite residences in the south of the region were located on the edge of greens, such as Badmondisfield Hall (south west) beside Genesis Green but more often the hamlets around greens were comprised of lower status properties. Hodskinson's map of Suffolk named relatively few halls abutting on to greens in the south west or south east, elite residences tending to be situated at some distance from green-side hamlets, as in the case of Moat Hall, Parham (south east) and Badley Hall (south west).

In the west, north, north east and centre of East Anglia the vast extent of late-medieval and early-modern common land had an impact on many elite residences. The presence of large areas of waste near a residence had consequences for the subsequent adaptability of the location, and could have compromised the introduction of large scale landscape features. The greens of the south east and south west presented different challenges, less of scale, more of interaction with the local inhabitants. The mixed husbandry of grain production combined with dairying or meat rearing required access to the pastures provided on the greens and access to the many small arable closes and fields. In the case of dairying the twice-daily movement of cattle and herders would have led to many possible interactions between the residence and the community.

At Ryston there was a concerted effort to acquire and enclose both common pasture and open-field land around the site of the hall, in part for sound economic reasons but also as a means of expanding the tertiary elite zone around the residence. William Pratt's father was described as a yeoman in contemporary documents but William had attained the rank of gentlemen by the time of his death in 1557.¹³⁰ As such William Pratt could be described as one of the new men who, by investing in the land market, were creating estates for the use and profit of themselves and their families. The necessary engrossment, enclosure and changes in tenure could cause contention between the new

¹³⁰ NRO HARE 4654, 214X5 Charter: Feoffment. Richard Pratt of Wymbottesham, senior, yeoman, to William Skipwith of Fordham, Esq.; TNA:PRO prob/11/40 Will of William Pratt of Ryston

lords and the local inhabitants but such dissent was not directed solely at the arrivistes. As senior courtiers and regional magnates the Howard, Dukes of Norfolk were near the pinnacle of Tudor social hierarchy. When in favour with the monarch Thomas Howard, the third Duke was one of the most influential men in the kingdom, capable of exerting both his military and political power at an international level. When out of favour with Henry VIII he retreated to East Anglia where as we have seen he built his ducal palace at Kenninghall, from which he ran his considerable estates and ordered regional affairs.¹³¹

In the 1540s Thomas Howard wished to expand the medieval park at Kenninghall, where he spent much of his time when not at court, sometimes addressing correspondence from the park lodge.¹³² It is unclear if this lodge stood on the site of the present day Kenninghall Lodge (TM0793 8571) but as no other houses have been recorded within the park bounds this is the most likely location for the sixteenth-century lodge. The forty four acres of Fersfield Common, discussed above, that ‘extended like a harp towards the palace’ must have been an irritation and possibly even an embarrassment to the mighty duke, particularly if the king was amongst those participating in the hunt. A further thirty four acres of common pasture lying between Kenninghall park and the park of Old Boyland Hall was also desired by Thomas Howard as it would extend the Kenninghall tertiary zone to meet that of Old Boyland Hall. In 1545, the Duke reached an agreement with his tenants in Lopham and Shelfhanger whereby he agreed to discharge the tenants from their feudal services of hayward, reeve and cullyer in return for the thirty four acres of pasture abutting Old Boyland.¹³³ However, the process of establishing exclusivity was not always straightforward, even for one of the most powerful lords in the country. The county antiquarian Blomefield, who lived at Fersfield recorded that the Dukes initial attempt to enclose the forty-four acres of Fersfield Green within Kenninghall Park did not go smoothly. The evidences stated that the land extended into the Duke’s park, lying very near the palace and the Duke ordered his bailiff to assign the inhabitants of Fersfield

131 Virgoe R., (1997) “The Recovery of the Howards in East Anglia” *East Anglian Society and the Political Community of Late-medieval England: The Selected Papers of Roger Virgoe*, p. 231.

132 For example a letter written by the Duke to Thomas Cromwell on 6th January, 1537 before the commencement of the Quarter Sessions in Norwich, was signed at “my lodge at Kenninghall” Henry VIII: January 1537, 26-31', *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 12 Part 1: January-May 1537* (1890), pp. 116-144.

133 NRO PT 12/21 Shelfhanger: agreement between Thomas, Duke and the Duchess of Norfolk and the freehold and copyhold tenants of the Duke's Manor of Lopham concerning feudal services. 1545

other lands to the “full value and quantity of their land enclosed”.¹³⁴ It would appear this undertaking was not carried out and the people of Fersfield raised a court action and reclaimed their common, prompting the Duke to grant the inhabitants forty-four acres of his demesne in Fersfield and Lopham adjacent to enclosed land in belated recompense.

Whilst many such court suits may have failed, the success of the Fersfield inhabitants at securing compensation illustrates how even the most powerful individuals were increasingly subject to the rule of law. Perhaps emboldened by their success the people of Fersfield next challenged the new king Edward VI and his commissioners when, following the Duke’s Attainder his estates passed to the Crown. More negotiations followed whereby both the parcel of Fersfield Green and the forty-four acres of compensatory land were retained within the park but the inhabitants received one hundred and ten acres of common that had previously been enclosed but was then returned to them.¹³⁵ They appear to have been satisfied with this arrangement but an incident of park breaking at Kenninghall during the 1549 rebellion may have been a reaction to the more general expansion of parkland over common grazing.

Thomas Howard, the third Duke, had fallen from power in December 1446, due largely to the conduct of his son the Earl of Surrey. Charged with treason by an Act of Attainder the Duke and the Earl were committed to the Tower of London where Surrey was executed in 1547. The Duke forfeited most of his estates to Henry VIII and remained in custody throughout the reign of Edward VI from 1447 until the succession of Mary Tudor in 1553. Diarmaid MacCulloch has argued that the East Anglian uprisings of 1449 were, in part, a popular response to the downfall of the Howards.¹³⁶ MacCulloch had suggested that the retention of bond tenure into the 1540s in eight of the Duke’s manors and several monastic estates was behind the demand of the rebels that *all bonde men may be made fre for god made all fre with his precious blode sheddying*.¹³⁷ Kenninghall was one of the manors in question, where the Duke had built his grand new palace in the 1520s. By 1549, the Act of Attainder against Thomas Howard meant that the palace was the property of Edward VI and was occupied by Mary Tudor from time to time during her brother’s reign. The Lady Mary was in residence when a group of rebels threw down part of the park pales at Kenninghall in

134 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., (1805) 'Hundred of Diss: Fersfield', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 1, pp. 74-114.

135 Ibid.

136 MacCulloch, D., (1979) 'Kett’s Rebellion in Context', *Past and Present*, no. 84(1), p. 55.

137 Quoted in MacCulloch (1979), p. 55.

August 1549. The Imperial Ambassador Van der Delft sent several detailed accounts of the uprisings perhaps embroidering the level of disturbance in order to make the new Protestant regime seem in greater danger than it was, mentioning that –

They have come as far as Elton near Greenwich and pulled down (the enclosures of) one of the King's parks. They are threatening to come to London to get their prisoners; and this would be disastrous, considering that the town is over full of people who ask for nothing better than an opportunity of, sacking it. In Norfolk, where the Lady Mary is now, there are over eight thousand of them. They partly pulled down the enclosure of her park, but did not molest her in any way. On the contrary, they asserted that she was kept too poor for one of her rank..¹³⁸

Whilst the rebels may well have been objecting to the perpetuation of bond tenure in the past by the Duke by 1549 it was the king, through his steward Sir Richard Southwell, who was continuing the practice at Kenninghall and elsewhere in Norfolk. The attack on the Kenninghall park bounds might have been aimed as much at Edward VI and his steward as at Thomas Howard. The fact that the bounds were thrown down emphasises the rebels' opposition to the enclosure of common pasture for the use of individuals, as had occurred on Mousehold Heath, near Norwich where the Robert Kett had established the largest rebel camp.¹³⁹

Another former Howard property was targeted by Kett and his supporters during the rebellion. Surrey House (79; TG 2418 0884; North East) had been built on the site of St Leonard's Priory by the Duke's eldest son Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey after the Duke having been granted the site during the Dissolution.¹⁴⁰ The Earl's house stood on a steep hill, which came to be known as Mount Surrey, overlooking the Cathedral precinct and the city to the west and Mousehold heath to the east. The house was reputedly very opulent, Blomefield describing it as "sumptuous" and the location would have ensured that it was visible from many of the approaches to the city including the River Wensum and much of Mousehold Heath. The Duke had considered marrying his son to Mary Tudor, thereby securing the Howard supremacy, even if his niece Anne Boleyn failed to

138 'Spain: July 1549, 16-31', *Calendar of State Papers, Spain, Volume 9: 1547-1549* (1912), p. 405.

139 Wood, A., (2002) Riot, *Rebellion and Popular Politics in Early Modern England*. Basingstoke, Palgrave, p. 67.

140 Swales, T. H., (1969) "The Redistribution of Monastic Lands in Norfolk at the Dissolution" in *Norfolk Archaeology*, Vol 34, pp

marry the king.¹⁴¹ The match with Mary was blocked but by the 1540s, the earl appears to have harboured notions of running the country along with his father after the demise of Henry VIII. This may have spurred him to create something akin to a royal palace on Mount Surrey, which amongst other extravagances led him into large amounts of debt.¹⁴² Some idea of the decoration can be gleaned from the inclusion of the royal arms within his own at Surrey House -

*he talked about painting into escutcheons which he sent to Norwich the arms of England. Nay, even after that, at Lambeth, he drew other arms for windows for a glazier of Norwich to work in glass for a new house that he was building for himself, and he had "a stamp of the same" to engrave them upon his plate.*¹⁴³

Not content with building a substantial and elaborate house above Norwich, Surrey travelled from Norfolk to London to petition the king for more monastic lands around his new mansion. This afforded the Privy Council the opportunity to arrest him on a charge of treason and he was executed in January 1547. Both he and his father were subject to an Act of Attainder that resulted in most of their property, including Surrey House and Kenninghall, passing to the crown. The Earl was executed as much for his pride and reckless ambition as any actual treason and had it not been for the death of Henry VIII in March 1547, the Duke might have followed him to the block. He escaped execution but remained a prisoner in the Tower of London throughout the reign of Edward VI.

During the 1550s the fortunes of several East Anglian families waned and recovered as the staunchly Protestant Edward VI was succeeded in 1553 by his equally devoted but Roman Catholic sister Mary Tudor. Once it was clear that Lady Jane Grey's reign was to be short the roads to Kenninghall were busy with lords dashing to offer their support to Mary and accompany her on her triumphant progress to Westminster. Sir John Shelton was amongst those who joined Mary at Kenninghall, ever pliable to the changing fortunes of monarchs and consorts the Sheltons had profited from the proceeds of the Dissolution but were happy to declare their allegiance to Mary Tudor. The Sheltons were by the 1550s established at their new residence of Carrow Priory in

141 Head, D., (2009 edition) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune: The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk*. The University of Georgia Press, pp. 109-10.

142 Head, D., (2009 edition) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune*, p. 218.

143 Gairdner, J., (1910) 'Preface', *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 21 Part 2: September 1546-January 1547* (1910), pp. VII-L.

Norwich leaving Shelton Hall to fall into gentle decline. Sir Henry Bedingfield of Oxburgh was also at Kenninghall in 1553 and was to have a brief period of influence in the upper echelons of the Marian regime. Mary also restored to Thomas Howard his dukedom and the titles of Earl Marshall and Lord High Steward, his lands were also returned to him following the reversal of the Act of Attainder in Mary's first Parliament.¹⁴⁴

Whilst courtiers and holders of high office were negotiating the ever-changing landscape of Tudor politics men such as William and Gregory Pratt of Ryston and Sir Roger Wodehouse of Kimberley were continuing to alter the status of the vernacular landscape around their residences. Sir Roger was amongst those captured and held at Surrey House during the *Comotion Time* of 1549.¹⁴⁵ His experiences at the hands of the rebels and familiarity with their demands may have influenced his actions when, in 1555, he wished to enclose part of *Anglethorpe Moore* common pasture in Kimberley. The common lay next to the bounds of his park and its acquisition would increase the tertiary elite zone to the north east of Kimberley Hall. Sir Roger appears to have followed the letter of the law and had an agreement drawn up with the inhabitants of Kimberley, which provided them with new areas of common in exchange for Anglethorpe.

In 1557, William Pratt's heir, his nephew Gregory Pratt took control of a much larger estate at Ryston than William had held in 1529. The creation of a large area of in-hand demesne at Ryston had been achieved by purchasing monastic lands, the capital messuages of other freeholders and small parcels of land as they became available. Exchanges with other landowners also played a part in allowing the engrossment of open-field furlongs but because the original demesne held by Walter Gillor was relatively small there was less opportunity to take tenanted land back in hand, as the Wodehouses did at Kimberley.

144 Head, D., (2009 edition) *The Ebbs and Flows of Fortune: The Life of Thomas Howard, Third Duke of Norfolk*, p. 238.

145 Blomefield, F., & Parkin, C., (1806) *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*: volume 3: 'The History of the City and County of Norwich, part I', pp. 220-265.

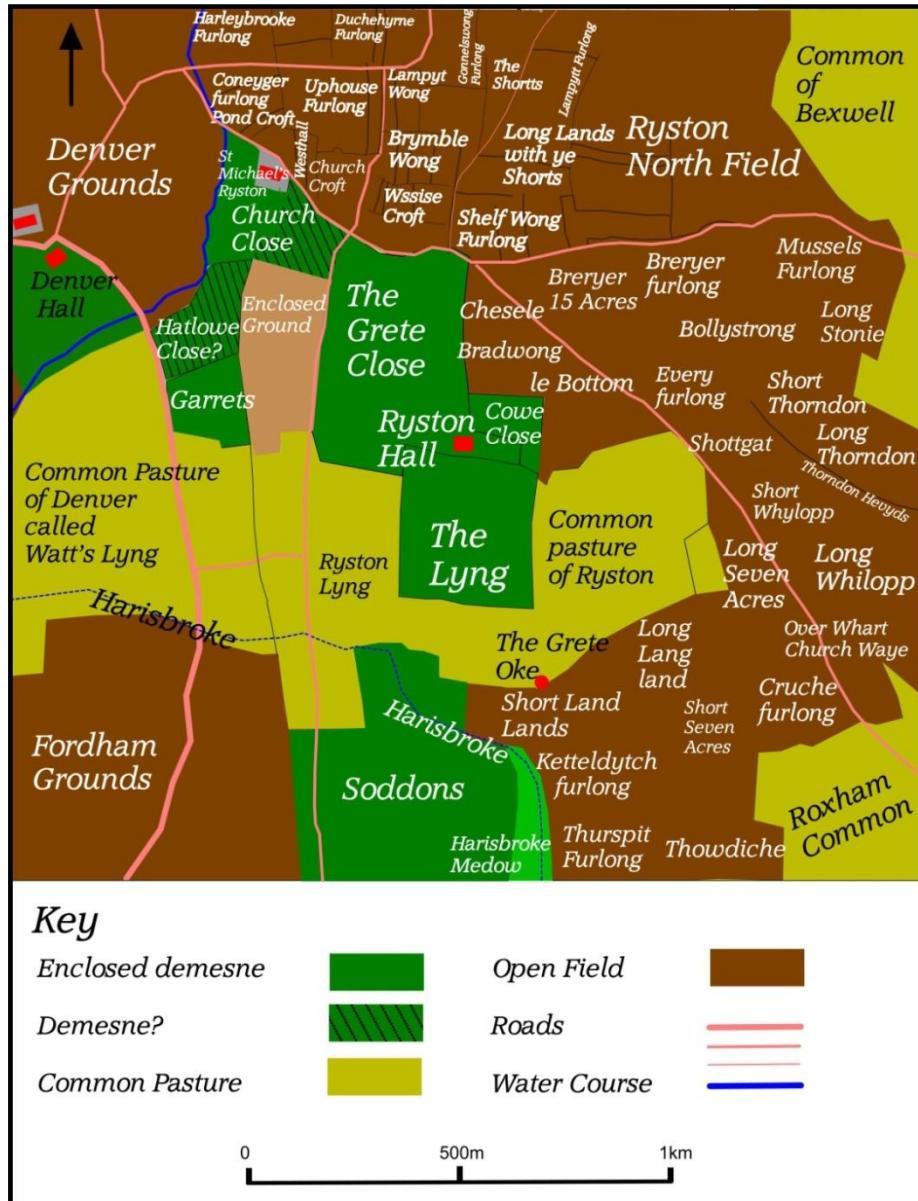


Figure 117:
The landscape around Ryston Hall Circa 1530¹⁴⁶

Figure 117 above shows the site of Ryston Hall sitting within a small block of demesne that appears to have been carved from Ryston Field and Ryston Lyng common pasture. By the time of William Pratt's death in 1557 he had purchased, exchanged and engrossed much open field land, particularly to the east and south of the block demesne around Ryston Hall. He had also enclosed further areas of Ryston Lyng, perhaps encountering opposition from the local inhabitants. The process of enclosure and engrossment had been employed in order to establish a large 'shepe pasture' on former open-field furlongs to the east of the hall and a number of pasture closes to the south of the hall around the 'Grete Oke', which would become known as 'Kett's Oak'. The new closes created a continuous block of demesne from St. Michael's Church to the pastures

146 Derived from NRO PRA 45, 375x1, Extent of Ryston & Roxham, 1529 & 1558-9; NRO PRA 356, 376X5, Extent & Valuation 1448; Maps by Thomas Waterman of Ryston and Roxham, 1635

of *Soddns* to the south of the hall. As we shall see this would become the core of a yet larger area of demesne that would become more ornamental over succeeding decades.

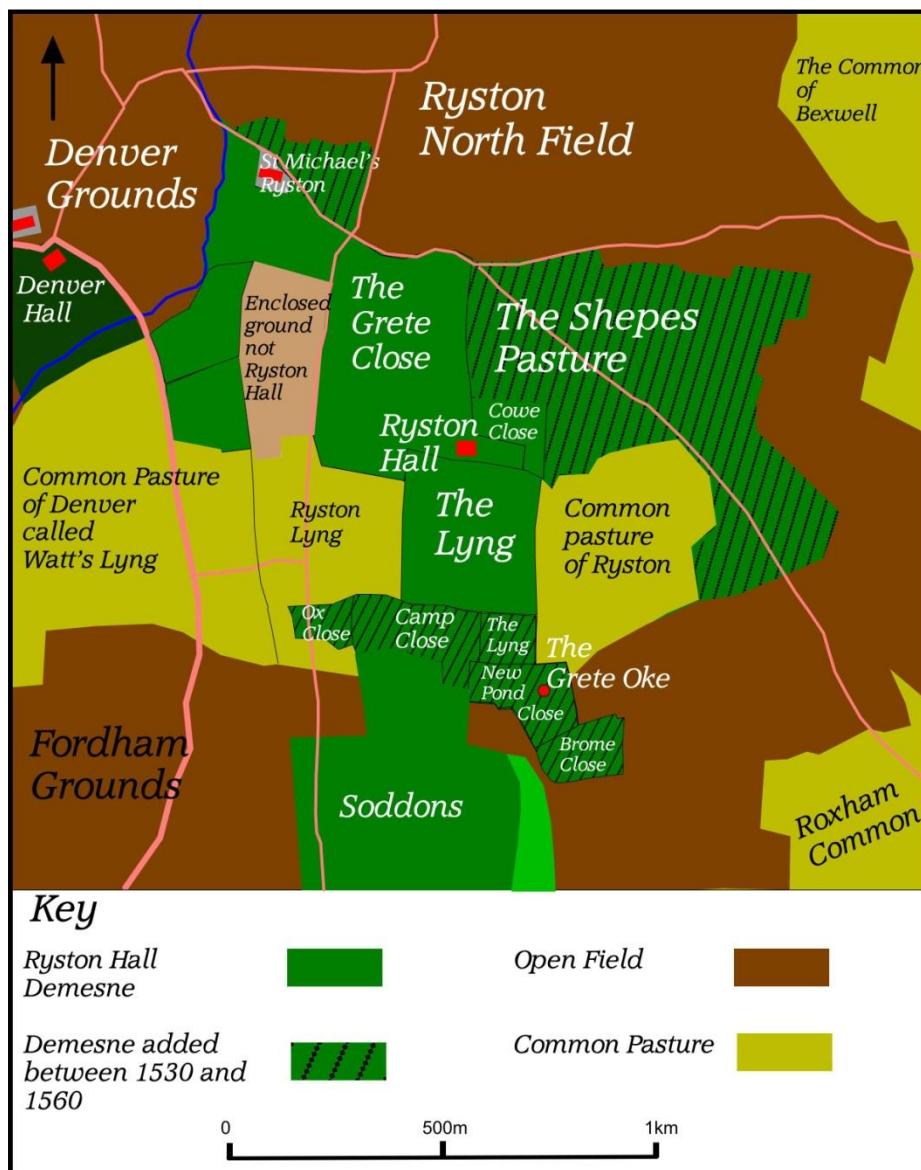


Figure 118: The Landscape around Ryston Hall Circa 1560 showing expansion of the tertiary zone around the site of Ryston Hall¹⁴⁷

By the end of the 1550s elite landscapes around residences such as Ryston, Kimberley and Kenninghall had expanded across the vernacular milieu changing the way the houses interacted with their surroundings. At Hales, Sir James Hobart built a magnificent but intimidating residence, approached by a series of carefully orchestrated routes. There was an increasing tendency for secondary and tertiary zones to encircle the residence creating a more secluded and private setting, particularly in the case of Kenninghall. At Kimberley the conversion of open field furlongs to the enclosed *The*

¹⁴⁷ Derived as Figure 117.

Newe Lawne Closes had a similar effect, as did the moving of the Wymondham road away from the edge of the gardens. Having sole control over large blocks of land allowed ambitious ornamental schemes to be developed those at Kenninghall and Kimberley featuring multiple water features. However, as the sixteenth century progressed the unmoated houses of the West and North East sub-regions were joined by grand new mansions in other parts of East Anglia such as East Barsham Manor and Kenninghall Palace, which were not surrounded by moats. Meadows were less evident within secondary elite zones than in the previous century but barns were still of the utmost importance, built to the same standards as the residence and situated in prominent positions. Primary elite zones at unmoated properties appear to have been demarcated by the quality of the exterior decoration, which often included moulded brickwork and terracotta panels and increasing numbers of large exterior windows. Large coats-of-arms including those of the sovereign, as at East Barsham, acted as signals of the power and influence of the family within the residence, whilst the fenestration often still mapped the status of the internal spaces.

The early decades of the sixteenth century had witnessed momentous changes in politics, religion, the economy and social relations. The Tudors managed to cling to power, six of them ruling during the six decades examined in this chapter, even if one only had a very brief reign. The East Anglian elite had to be flexible in their allegiances to survive the repeated turmoil caused by new monarchs, new consorts and new theologies. On the whole they succeeded in dealing with the changing needs of those in power and took advantage of the opportunities presented by the transformation of the medieval world into a more commercial and intellectually challenging society.

Chapter 6

1560 – 1630: Utilising Exclusive Landscapes in Early-Modern East Anglia

At the beginning of the 1560s the young Queen Elizabeth was consolidating her hold on the throne and gathering around her a group of courtiers, some of whom would serve the Queen the remainder of their lives. The Queen's favourite Robert Dudley would become Earl of Leicester and create spectacular gardens and landscapes at Wanstead Park, Kenilworth and Leicester House.¹ William Cecil, later Lord Burghley, was Elizabeth's chief political advisor and Dudley's rival both in affairs of state and in the creation of ever more elaborate gardens to delight their monarch. Cecil's grounds at Theobalds in Hertfordshire were considered to be amongst the finest sixteenth-century gardens in the country. Along with Cecil and Dudley, the premier peer of the realm Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk was anxious to reaffirm his position at the heart of the court after his very public support of the Queen's sister Mary and the Roman Catholic faith during the 1550s. Elizabeth's appointment of Sir Nicholas Bacon of Redgrave and Gorhambury to the post of Lord Keeper added another talented and creative man to the courtiers who were increasingly seeking to express their status and intellectual accomplishments through the medium of the landscapes they created around their residences.² In East Anglia, the Queen's relatives such as her cousin Edward Clere of Ormesby and her great-uncle Sir James Boleyn perhaps hoped for some preferment and Elizabeth did indeed confirm to Sir James his lands in Norfolk in 1658.³

Sir James Boleyn, brother of the Queen's grandfather Sir Thomas Boleyn lived at the Boleyn's principal East Anglian residence Blickling Hall (10; TG 1786 2866; North East). For over a century the family had played prominent roles both in East Anglia affairs and as influential courtiers, until 1536 when Sir James's niece Anne Boleyn went to the scaffold. The surviving Boleyns retreated to their estates and at the Dissolution Sir James acquired the Bishop's Manor at Blickling, which he amalgamated with the manor of Blickling Hall. Sir James had no issue from his marriage to Elizabeth Wood

¹ Henderson, P., (2005) *The Tudor House and Garden: Architecture and Landscape in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Centuries*, Yale University Press. New Haven, Conn.; London.

² Hassell Smith, A., (1994) "The Gardens of Sir Nicholas and Sir Francis Bacon: an enigma solved and a mind explored" in *Religion, Culture and Society in Early Modern England: Essays in Honour of Patrick Collinson* Edited by Anthony Fletcher and Peter Roberts, Cambridge University Press, pp.125-160.

³ Griffiths, E M., (2009) "The Boleyns at Blickling" in *Norfolk Archaeology*, Volume XLV, Part IV, p. 453.

so on his death in 1561 his considerable estates were divided between his niece's daughter Queen Elizabeth and Sir John Clere, the son of his sister Lady Alice Clere. The Queen retained a moiety in Blickling but the bulk came to Sir John and then to his son Sir Edward.⁴

Sir John made his home at Blickling and may have built the *new manor* mentioned in a manorial extent of 1563.⁵ As we have seen, the hall at Blickling was first built by Sir Nicholas Dagworth and may have been rebuilt by Sir Jeffrey Boleyn in the 1450s. It is unlikely that a manor built over a century before would be referred to as 'new' in the 1560s so the new manor may have been built when the Boleyn's were at the height of their power and influence before the fall of Anne Boleyn in 1536. Sir James may have felt that as Anne Boleyn's uncle and her Chancellor he needed a residence befitting the family's elevated position in society.⁶ The meteoric rise of the Boleyns in the late 1520s may have precipitated refurbishment or rebuilding at Blickling but after their equally spectacular fall it is unlikely that Sir James would have undertaken major building works in Norfolk. Another possibility is that the *new manor* was the work of the Cleres; either John or his son Edward. As cousins of Queen Elizabeth and with a considerable Boleyn inheritance to augment their estates, the Cleres may have felt that a new manor would emphasise their close relationship to the monarch. Edward Clere's marriage to Frances Fulmerston in 1567 brought another large inheritance to enhance yet further their property portfolio.⁷ In common with several of the families encountered in this study the Cleres had a great many manors to choose from when deciding which would be their principal residences. Whilst maintaining their ancient seat of Ormesby (TG 4947 1453, North East) Sir John chose to settle at Blickling, attracted perhaps by the manor's association with the Queen and her mother. Whether the hall had been rebuilt by the Boleyns or by the Cleres is unclear but, as discussed in Chapter 3, open fields and roads approached close to the pleasure grounds, particularly to the east, making expansion of the secondary elite zone difficult. A detailed manorial extent drawn up in 1563 provided evidence of the interactions between the vernacular and elite landscapes at Blickling.

⁴ Griffiths, E M., (2009) "The Boleyns at Blickling" in *Norfolk Archaeology*, Volume XLV, Part IV, p. 454.

⁵ NRO NRS 8582/21C2 *Survey of the lands of Edward Clere in Norfolk 1563* with later additions and alterations.

⁶ Brewer, J., S. (Editor) Introduction, Section 5', *Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, Henry VIII, Volume 4:1524-1530* (1875), pp. CCXXV-CCLXXXV.

⁷ Hassell Smith, A., (1974) *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603* Oxford University Press, p. 160.

In Chapter 3 the evidence contained in this extent was back-projected and used with archaeological evidence and place names to produce a plan of the possible configuration of features in the late medieval landscape around Blickling Hall. For the purposes of the present chapter, the document has provided a definitive source for the Blickling landscape in the 1560s and the many annotations and alterations to the text illustrated aspects of process that led to the expansion of exclusivity at Blickling over the following decades. The 1563 survey was written in Latin and recorded the demesne, the holdings of the tenants, freehold land and the boundaries of the manor. The acreage, value and position of each parcel of land were included, along with land use, i.e. arable, pasture, meadow, wood etc. Each holding was numbered, from 1 – 730 on 56 folios. Many closes, fields, meadows and roads were named as were the commons and heaths. The survey appears to have been used for many years, individual entries being amended as land changed hands, with some more extensive amendments in 1578 and 1586. The document includes an account of the parish bounds ‘by ancient word’ and a note of the timber trees standing in *The Great Furrs Close* and adjoining closes in 1576.

An estate map of 1739 by James Corbridge was used as a base from which to reconstruct the sixteenth-century landscape, by matching acreages and place names where possible and replacing seventeenth- and eighteenth-century features such as the lake with the landscape as described in the 1563 survey.⁸ By comparing the two sources and identifying similar patterns of land holdings and messuages it has been possible to identify the location of many of the 730 holdings. Others were located by using the directions in the survey which indicated where each piece lay in relation to its neighbours, then measuring out the required area using mapping software. These combined processes allowed much of the late sixteenth-century landscape to be mapped on to the First Edition 1:10,560 OS maps of Blickling. The total area described in the survey amounted to 1995 acres 3 rods and 8 perches of which 820 acres 2 rods and 12 perches were in hand. The acreage of the park was not given in the 1563 document but has been estimated at 85 acres, 15 acres less than the area of parkland recorded in 1622 and confirmed by measuring the land around Blickling Hall that was not specifically mentioned in the 1563 survey, other than by references to the park bounds.⁹ The *Lord’s Meadow* has been included in the 85 acres allowed for the park as the meadow was

⁸ Original map National Trust Collection Blickling Hall; a tracing of the map NRO FX 257 was used here along with a photograph of the original by Mr K Gray, National Trust Blickling.

⁹ NRO NRS 16391 32 C4 Particulars of the manor of Blickling Hall 1622. The extra fifteen acres were enclosed within the park after 1563.

mentioned but not measured in the 1563 survey. The remainder of the in-hand land included *The Lord's Several Heath* of 395 acres, *The Great Wood* covering 94 acres 1 rod, *The Wood Closes* at 30 acres 1 rod and *The Great Furs Close*, 65 acres 2 rods of former heathland enclosed by 1563. The meadows around *The Ould Mannor* were in hand, as were 34 acres of open-field strips. Other open-field land such as the pieces numbered 37, 42 and 625 were described as being *newly enclosed* and a number of closes *formerly Appliard's* were in hand.

Some of the most useful information concerned the field strips and roads around the periphery of the park. Blickling Field lay to the east of the hall and abutted against the secondary and tertiary elite zones around the hall, as did a number of roads and paths. Sir Edward Clere was attempting to gain control over some of the field land by enclosing within the park whole and part strips and the western end of the *Grenemere*, a footpath that was also the central headland of Blickling field (shown at 1 in **Figure 119**). *The Grenemere* stretched across the open fields from *Ormylle Hill* westwards originally passing to the north of the hall and possibly joining *Lodge Lane*, a road recorded in 1563 that had been subsumed within the park by 1739. The 1563 survey recorded that part of *Grenemere* and field strips 325 and 326 lay partly within the lord's park -

“Whereof about 1 rood is enclosed in the lord's park. By evidence this should be part of the common footpath called Grenemere going towards Ormill” (325)

“1 rod and 2 perches of this parcel of land is enclosed in the lord's park. Circa 1 acre is footpath and is in the lord's hands” (326)

The pieces numbered 321 – 333 in the survey all either abutted the east bounds of the park or lay within the park in 1563. At this time a road still crossed the park at (2) although it would be subject to an *Inquisition Ad Quod Damnum* in 1629.¹⁰ The road crossed the park heading towards the hamlets of *Moorgate* (3) and *Moorgate Green* (4). The park also abutted south on to the road from Blickling to Itteringham (5), west on to the Park Lane (6) and the north on to *Harding's Croft* (7). The survey concluded at

¹⁰ NRO NRS 11272, 26A5 *Inquisition Ad Quod Damnum* 1629.

-Le Whate House and the site of the new manor of Blickling with the park of the lord

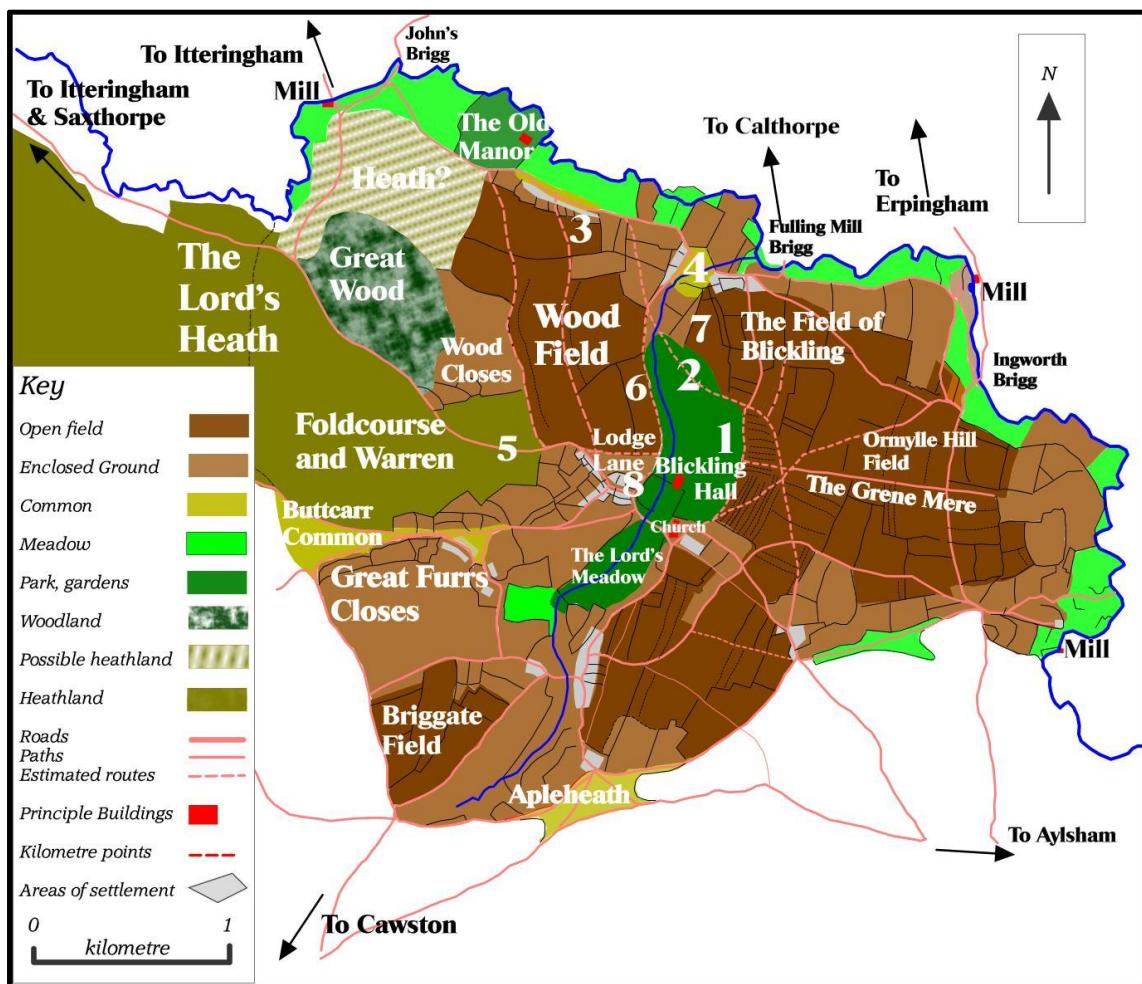


Figure 119: The manor of Blickling Hall 1563¹¹

Le Whate House stood between the park and the Itteringham Road, to the west of the hall, possibly on the site of the present day Buckinghamshire Arms (8). As at Hales Hall and Kimberley, the *Whate* or *White House* appears to have been a lodging house or inn standing near the gates of the park.

¹¹ Based on a transcription of NRO NRS 8582/21C2 Survey of the lands of Edward Clere in Norfolk 1563; Map of the Blickling Hall Estate by James Corbridge, 1729; NRO NRS 12085 Terrier of the lands of Thomas Wilkenson 1582; NRO NRS 16391 32 C4 Particulars of the manor of Blickling Hall 1622. Mapped on to the First Edition OS 1:10560.

The park at Blickling was relatively small and hemmed in by open field but during the remainder of the sixteenth century Sir Robert Clere continued to take in hand, exchange and purchase land as it became available. For example in 1581- 2 Sir Edward bought the lands and messuages of Thomas Wilkenson amounting to 76 acres plus the house and four acres of orchards and gardens abutting the park. The orchards were described as being *pulchoro* meaning beautiful or possibly ornamental or embellished and were subsequently included in the grounds of the hall.¹² The neighbouring property belonging to Robert Langley had been acquired by the early seventeenth century and as a result all of the land abutting the south eastern corner of the pleasure grounds was now in the hands of Sir Edward.

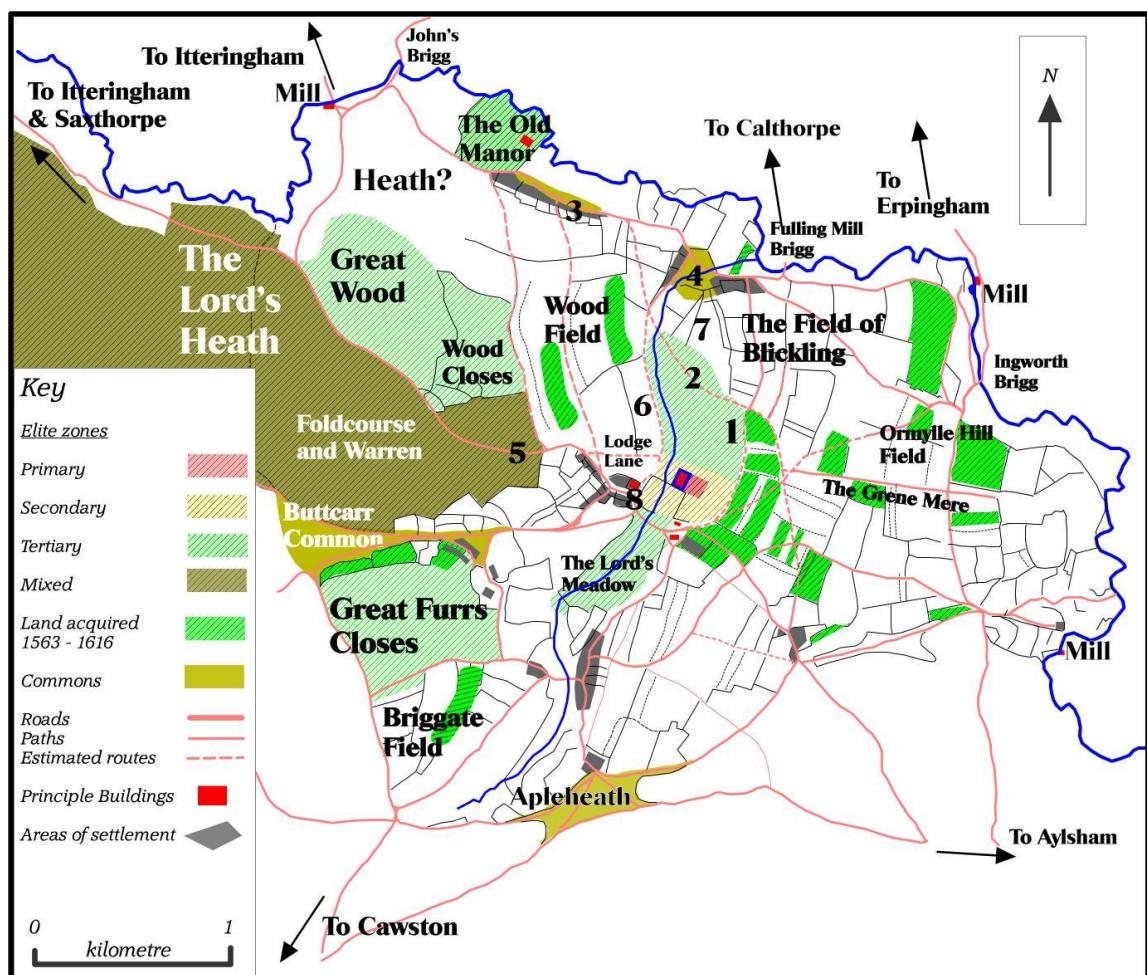


Figure 120: The Elite zones around Blickling Hall circa 1563 showing the location of lands added in the later sixteenth century

Sir Edward seems to have focused his efforts on acquiring as much land as possible to the east of the park bounds thus reducing levels of interaction to the east of the park and gardens and offering the possibility of closing roads and paths across the fields. This

¹² NRO NRS 12085 Terrier of the lands lately Thomas Wilkenson's 20th April 1582.

was a costly business, as was the maintenance of a large retinue and lifestyle befitting a cousin of the Queen. Sir Edward's name was added to the list of potential barons but Lord Burghley blocked the honour until Clere might perform adequate service to deserve the title, which was never conferred. Hassell Smith noted that "despite his wealth in land he lacked an income sufficient to sustain the dignity of a baron".¹³ However, he continued to buy land around Blickling whilst borrowing money to fund his profligate lifestyle. Nor did he take his expected place in the administration of East Anglian affairs, being dismissed as a justice of the peace after only a few months and rejected when he attempted to stand as a knight of the shire in 1572.¹⁴ Sir Edward's efforts to secure the land around his park at Blickling may have been due in part because he anticipated a royal visitation to the house closely associated with the Queen's mother. Like several of his East Anglian contemporaries Clere spent lavishly on his estates during the 1570s and 80s perhaps in the hope that Blickling might be included in a royal itinerary but there is no evidence that such a visit took place.¹⁵

The impact of royal visitations on elite landscapes

The arrival of the monarch and the court was an event eagerly anticipated by some but a source of deep concern for others. Queen Elizabeth maintained the tradition of summer progresses through south and central England, frequently visiting the houses of senior courtiers such as William Cecil, Lord Burghley and Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Lord Burghley's mansion of Theobalds in Hertfordshire was visited thirteen times by the queen and her entourage, forcing Burghley to rebuild the house in order to accommodate the court.¹⁶ The Earl of Leicester entertained the Queen regularly at Wanstead Park and at Kenilworth Castle in Warwickshire where, in 1575 he arranged a magnificent entertainment for the queen.¹⁷ Whilst Burghley and Leicester could be confident that their efforts and expenditure for the queen's comfort and entertainment would be rewarded with regular visits, others invested in mansions and gardens that were never graced by the royal presence. Famously, Lord Chancellor Christopher Hatton built an ostentatious mansion with elaborate gardens and grounds at Holdenby in Northamptonshire, which stood awaiting a visit from the queen that never occurred. Sir

¹³ Hassell Smith, A., (1974) *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603* Oxford University Press, p. 160.

¹⁴ Hassell Smith, A., (1974) *County and Court*, p. 162.

¹⁵ NRO NRS 8582/21C2 *Survey of the lands of Edward Clere in Norfolk 1563* with later additions and alterations.

¹⁶ Giroud, M., (1978) *Life in the English Country House* Yale University Press, p. 111.

¹⁷ Strong, R., (1979) *The Renaissance Garden in England* London, Thames and Hudson, pp. 50- 51.

Christopher died in 1591 having accrued enormous debts in building his prodigious mansion.¹⁸

The arrival of the queen and her court bestowed prestige on the hosts but brought a host of logical and financial challenges, not the least as Burghley had found, where to accommodate the members of the retinue. Some of the building and rebuilding of East Anglian houses during the later sixteenth century may have been in anticipation of a possible royal visit but other than her favourites such as Cecil and Leicester, there was no guarantee that any such investment would be rewarded. None the less, the atmosphere of uncertainty, intrigue and rivalry that was fostered by Elizabeth ensured that many of the wealthiest and most powerful families in the country spent a large proportion of their fortunes trying to ‘out-build’ each other, creating ever-larger houses set within yet more elaborate grounds.¹⁹ In addition, the enormous expense of entertaining the court once an impending visit was confirmed could keep the hosts in debt for years after the queen had departed. This strategy may have been an effective means of controlling the aspirations of ambitious courtiers, making it difficult for them to afford the large private retinues that could be used to perpetuate semi-independent fiefdoms such as that of Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk in East Anglia before 1547.

As we have seen, having lost their titles and estates in the Attainders of 1546 the Howards enjoyed a brief return to favour during the reign of Mary Tudor, who reinstated both their rights to the Dukedom and most of their lands. Thomas Howard grandson of the third duke had become the fourth Howard Duke of Norfolk. Although still the country’s premier peer and in control of much of the political affairs in East Anglia Thomas Howard had lost some of his prestige at court, where the Earl of Leicester and Sir Nicholas Bacon were amongst his principal rivals.²⁰ Ever since the third Duke had built his Norfolk palace in the 1520s, Kenninghall had been the preferred residence of the Howards when not at court or on military service.²¹ The landscape around Kenninghall would have been commensurate with their status as premier peers and holders of offices such as Earl Marshall, and a means of reinforcing

¹⁸ Giroud, M., (1978) *Life in the English Country House* Yale University Press pp. 111-2.

¹⁹ Giroud, M., (1978) *Life in the English Country House* Yale University Press, p. 85.

²⁰ Hassell Smith, A., (1974) *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603*, p. 26.

²¹ For example, Norfolk concluded a letter to Cecil *Hoping shortly after my duty done to the Queen, to see you as I go homeward to Kenynghall. Signed: Tho. Norff.* From ‘Elizabeth: January 1560’, *Calendar of State Papers, Scotland: volume 1: 1547-63* (1898), pp. 282-309.

their precedence over those they perceived to be upstarts. Whether or not royal visits were expected, Elizabeth's senior courtiers all expressed their wealth and accomplishments through the medium of elaborate pleasure grounds and parkland full of amusements and 'devices'. Thomas Howard would have been well aware of the elaborate gardens at William Cecil's Theobalds, and the delights on offer to the Queen at Wanstead Park, Kenilworth and Robert Dudley's other properties. The Duke may well have attempted to emulate or even exceed the spectacle of these sites and the acquisition of the lands to the east of Kenninghall Park allowed the Howards to expand the existing elite landscape and create a landscape to compete with those created by William Cecil and Robert Dudley.

The desire for greater exclusivity had led to the enclosure of part of Fersfield Common in the 1540s, as discussed above, and in the 1560s the Duke had "hired or mortgaged" the neighbouring manor of Boyland Hall in Bressingham.²² This moated property stood beside a park of over two hundred acres, to the east of Kenninghall Park and abutted the lands that the third Duke had acquired in Shelfhanger in 1545.²³ This created a crescent of exclusivity to the east of the palace around a common known as Thwaite Green which was the common pasture of the inhabitants of Fersfield. To the west lay the Duke's park of Lopham that had been extended north eastwards towards Kenninghall and was furnished with a lodge set amongst ponds and meadows.²⁴ Thomas Howard must have been confident that, with its fine palace, water gardens, lodges and two of the largest parks in the region, Kenninghall was a suitably grand residence for a family who were proud of their lineage and addicted to being at the centre of power. The houses and parks could offer accommodation and entertainment of the highest order to any illustrious visitor who might decide to visit his East Anglian powerbase.

Accounts of events staged for the Queen and other dignitaries on visits to the residences of courtiers recount spectacular displays, including feasts, fireworks, water pageants and tournaments.²⁵ Hunting was an immensely popular and highly organised ritual requiring space and the necessary game. More cerebral amusements required the principal guest to move through the grounds, meeting with various characters who would present

²² Blomefield *'Hundred of Diss: Brisingham', An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 1* (1805), pp. 49-73.

²³ TNA:PRO SC12/30/33&38, ND but Elizabeth I; A Survey of Boyland Hall.

²⁴ Liddiard, R., (2010) *The Norfolk Deer Parks Project: Report for the Norfolk Biodiversity Partnership*. Published online, pp. 30-31.

²⁵ Nichols (1823) *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, Volume 2*.

speeches, poems or vignettes to the Queen, after which she would move on to another performance in another grove, wilderness or bower. Meals might be taken al fresco, or in lodges and banqueting houses furnished with fascinating decorations and “devices”. A device could be a simple rebus of a family name, or an intriguing little banqueting house full of allegorical decoration.²⁶ To create ingenious “devices” for the delight and amusement of those who could interpret them was a major preoccupation of the later sixteenth-century elite. Any family trying to impress their monarch and their peers would ensure that their residence had at least one such contrivance and that their grounds were suitably furnished with amusing perambulations and interesting destinations. Such amenities required large areas of land that could be put to the exclusive use of the owner, where the necessary landscape of entertainment could be created. Whilst the orchestrated arrival of a hermit, forester or ‘wild-man’ in front of the Queen would be entirely acceptable and amusing, the appearance of a local husbandman and his cattle would not be deemed appropriate. Such considerations could be addressed by extending the zones of primary and secondary zones of exclusivity around the residence or by creating secure detached zones.

This process can be seen at Kenninghall where the core of the secondary zone had been gradually extended since the 1540s. However, in the 1560s following years of loyal service, the fourth Duke became embroiled in the intrigues surrounding Mary Queen of Scots and the succession. Like his Grandfather, he had regal pretensions and aspired to marry the Scottish queen, plans which eventually led to his imprisonment in 1569, and execution on a charge of treason on 2nd June, 1572.²⁷ In the months before his arrest the fourth Duke, as others before him, had retreated to Kenninghall in an effort to avoid the accusations of treachery laid against him. Letters written from Kenninghall in September 1569 present his excuses for absence from court to which the Queen sent a frosty retort.²⁸ A letter dated August 26, 1571 written by Thomas Howard from the Tower of London to the Earl of Leicester and Lord Burghley, included a line in which the duke -

*laments the Queen's determination to visit his son's house, who is not of age to receive her.*²⁹

²⁶ Girouard, (1978), pp. 86-87.

²⁷ Hassell-Smith, A., (1974) *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603* Oxford, Clarendon Press, p. 22.

²⁸ 'Cecil Papers: July-December 1569', *Calendar of the Cecil Papers in Hatfield House, Volume 1: 1306-1571* (1883), pp. 414-459.

²⁹ 'Queen Elizabeth - Volume 80: August 1571', *Calendar of State Papers Domestic: Edward, Mary and Elizabeth, 1547-80* (1856), pp. 417-421.

It is not clear which of the Howard properties the queen was planning to visit but the very suggestion of a royal visit may have encouraged Philip Howard, the young Earl of Surrey, to increase the areas of exclusivity around Kenninghall.

The fourth Duke was imprisoned or under house arrest between September 1569 and his execution in 1572 but his steward and /or the Earl of Surrey continued to acquire lands around Kenninghall in an attempt to create a vast unified park around the palace. Blomefield suggests that the manor of Boyland Hall was purchased from the Bolton family around the year 1571 and the house there let to “the keeper of the old park for his dwelling”.³⁰ Having acquired Boyland Hall the Duke reached an agreement with the inhabitants of Fersfield that he should have sole use of fifty acres of Thwaite Green in return the right to waste their copyhold houses.³¹ As Blomefield stated – *By this addition, the old park of Kenninghale, and that late Sir John Boyland's, were joined together.*³²

On his father's death Philip Howard, Earl of Surrey the duke's eldest son inherited much of the Howard estates although he lost the dukedom and his courtesy title.³³ Surrey struggled to gain favour at court, due in part no doubt, to his father's perceived treachery and doubts about the Howards' enthusiasm for the Protestant faith. The fact that King Philip of Spain was Surrey's godfather cannot have endeared him to the likes of William Cecil or to the Queen. In 1577, he was at court, spending vast amounts of money in an effort to gain the Queen's favour and impress his peers. He was said to be profligate and obsequious and his extravagant lifestyle so troubled his maternal grandfather the Earl of Arundel and his aunt Lady Lumley that they entailed estates that should have been his to other members of their family.³⁴ His efforts at court were not rewarded with any appointments or perquisites; instead, the Queen paid an extended visit to Kenninghall and afterwards went to Surrey House in Norwich, during her progress through East Anglia in July and August 1578. Doubtless Elizabeth was eager to check if the young Howard heir was trying to re-establish the family's East Anglian

³⁰ Blomefield 'Hundred of Diss: Brisingham', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 1* (1805), pp. 49-73.

³¹ 'Hundred of Diss: Fersfield', *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 1* (1805), pp. 74-114

³² *Ibid.*

³³ Philip Howard lost his title of Earl of Surrey in 1572 but contemporary sources often referred to him as My lord of Surrey, or Earl Surrey until he inherited his grandfather's earldom of Arundel in 1580. To avoid confusion he will, where necessary, be referred to as "Surrey" between 1572 and 1580.

³⁴ *The Lives of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, and of Anne Dacres, His Wife*. edited from an Original Manuscript by H. G. Fitzalan-Howard, Duke of Norfolk. (1857) London, Hurst and Blackett, p. 15.

powerbase; the visit would ensure that he was plunged even deeper into debt and therefore less likely to be able to finance any treacherous schemes. At Kenninghall we are told that –

The Earl of Surrey did shewe most sumtuous good cheere, in whose Parke were Speeches well settle out and a speciall device much commended.³⁵

This brief account belies the expenditure behind the creation of the entertainment, which along with other extravagances resulted in the Earl being £14,000 in debt by the end of 1578.³⁶ A more detailed account of the Earl's activities during 1577 and 1578 comes from a hagiographical account of his life written by a Jesuit priest in the early seventeenth century and transcribed in the nineteenth century by Henry, Duke of Norfolk.³⁷ The writer blames all of Philip Howard's subsequent troubles on his attempts to gain the Queen's favour –

By his following of the Court he wasted a great part of that Estate which was left him, by profuse Expences of great Summs of Money in diverse Tiltings and Tourneys made upon the anniversary dayes of the Queen's Coronation to please her, and at the entainment of certain great Embassadors, as also by the entertaining of the Queen herself, first at his house of Keninghall in Norfolk, where for divers dayses he lodged and feasted not only herself, and all her Family, the Council, Courtiers, and all their Company, but all the Gentlemen also, and the people of the Country, who came thither upon that occasion, in such plentiful, bountifull, and splendid manner, as the like had never been seen before in those Countrys. And after, he did the like at his house in Norwich the same summer when She came thither on her progress to see that City and Country

The writer was a priest in the household of the Countess of Arundel, Howard's widow and therefore reported these activities from a biased standpoint, being highly critical of the Queen and court whilst a great supporter of Philip Howard. The general impression however, is that Howard was a young man who would go to almost any lengths to

³⁵ Churchland, *The Entertaymemente of the Queenes Majestie into Suffolke and Norffolke* quoted in Nichols, J., (1823) *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, Volume 2, p. 130.

³⁶ *Lives of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, and of Anne Dacres, His Wife.*

³⁷ *The Lives of Philip Howard, Earl of Arundel, and of Anne Dacres, His Wife.* edited from an Original Manuscript by H. G. Fitzalan-Howard, Duke of Norfolk. (1857) London, Hurst and Blackett, p. 16-17.

please the monarch and her court. In order to provide enough entertainment for the entire retinue for several days, full use must have been made of the house, gardens, lodges and parkland at Kenninghall and it may be that Boyland Hall and its grounds were also used to accommodate guests. The itinerary described by Thomas Churchland states that the Queen left Euston Hall on the 10th of August and travelled to Kenninghall, the next recorded visit was a meal at Braconash with the Lady Style on 16th, suggesting that the retinue may have been entertained by Surrey for six days. This would be a remarkably long sojourn, equalling the number of days Elizabeth stayed in Norwich, and it would have required a prodigious amount of effort to keep the Queen and her court amused and provisioned for almost a week. The late Duke, his son and other members of the East Anglian elite would have been well aware of what was required should the Queen decide to pay a visit but a tertiary elite landscape could only be created by ensuring exclusivity of use and access over the necessary land. The expansion of exclusivity around Kenninghall Palace before 1577 is illustrated in **Figure 121** below.

Figure 121 has been compiled from the sources discussed in the preceding paragraphs, both the manuscript evidence and that of Francis Blomefield. In addition, field-names referred to in an agreement of 1545 discussed above, were identified in a survey of 1590 and were plotted using a map of the manor of Boyland Hall dated 1615.^{38 39} The plan in **Figure 121** shows the expansion of exclusivity eastwards across Thwaite Green and Boyland Park dating from 1545 to the 1570s and the line of an aqueduct or conduit that fed a bath-house and moated gardens at Boyland Hall. Given the chronology of the acquisition of Thwaite Green it would seem probable that this ambitious structure built across the common was constructed after Philip Howard had inherited and before his debts and his enemies overtook him in 1585.⁴⁰ It would seem likely therefore that the conduit was part of preparations for a royal visitation but it also made a powerful statement about the transition of Thwaite Green from the vernacular to the elite landscape. A World War Two airfield was constructed over much of this area but the line of the conduit can be detected in aerial photographs dating from 1946.

³⁸ NRO PT 12/21, 1545 Agreement between Thomas, Duke of Norfolk and his tenants re lands in Shelfhanger; ACA P5/4 A true description of Boyland haule ferme & of Sandfeilde ferme parcell of the possessions of the right honorable Thomas, Earle of Arundell & Surrey &c.; Extent of Boyland Hall 1590, Private Collection Boyland Hall

³⁹ I am most grateful to Philip Aitkens for making an annotated version of the map of 1614 available to me and for personal comments about the conduit and the spatial arrangements around Boyland Hall. Also, my thanks to Mr Nic Spaull for allowing access to the grounds of Boyland Hall.

⁴⁰ J. G. Elzinga, 'Howard, Philip [St Philip Howard], thirteenth earl of Arundel (1557–1595)', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Oxford University Press, 2004, Online Version

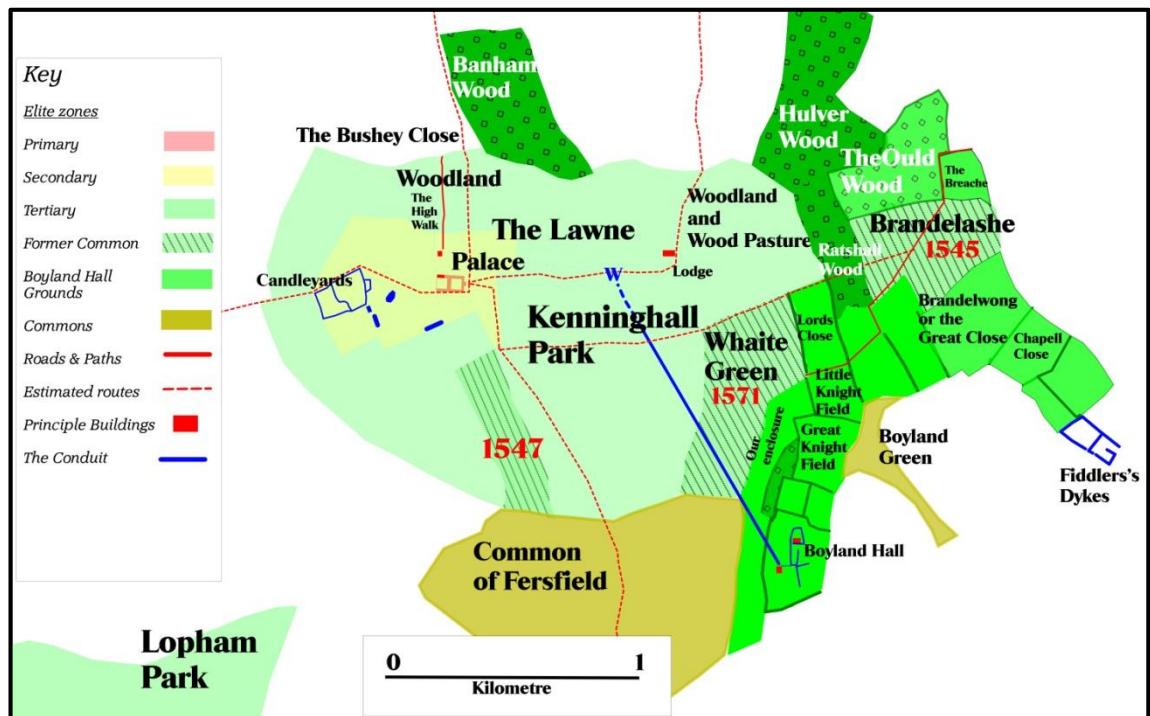


Figure 121: The Landscape around Kenninghall Palace circa 1578

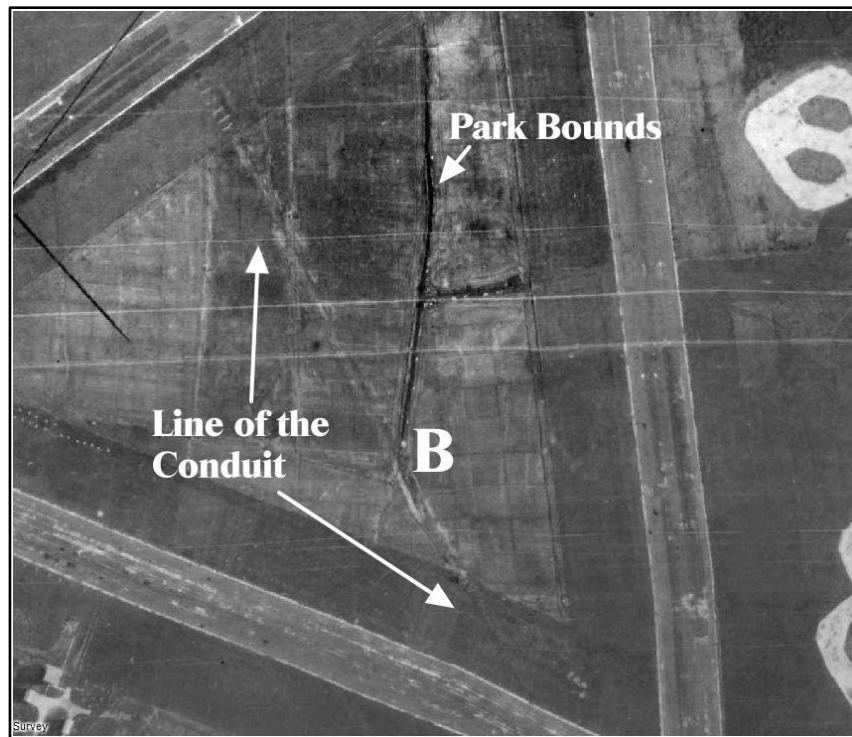


Figure 122: Aerial photograph taken in 1946 showing the line of the conduit continuing across the airfield and crossing a surviving section of the bounds of Kenninghall park

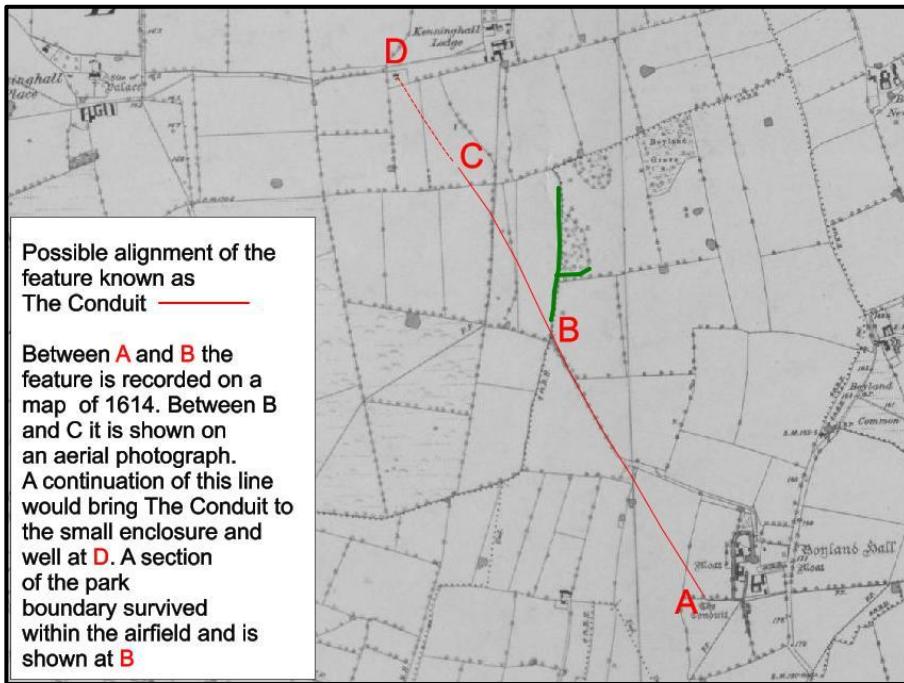


Figure 123:

Shows the location of the crop mark on the First Edition OS 6"

The conduit flowed from Kenninghall towards Boyland Hall, the slope being very slight the water may well have been carried above ground level for at least some of the way. Aqueducts and conduits were not uncommon in the sixteenth century, examples such as that at Theobalds and Leighs Priory having been noted above. If the Kenninghall example did run from near Kenninghall Lodge to Boyland Hall it would have covered a distance of one and half kilometres, making it an ambitious and expensive undertaking. It is possible that the well in the small enclosure near the lodge may have been topped by a decorative wellhead or '*sestern house*' as at Holdenby House.⁴¹ It is not known if the conduit was brick-built throughout or whether lead pipes were used without surrounding brickwork for some of the distance. However, the crop marks suggest a substantial feature, which may have had an associated walk leading to Boyland Hall. The Boyland Hall end of the conduit fed a series of pools or baths described by the antiquarian Tom Martin, in 1719 as –

A remarkable spring issuing out of a subterraneous vault arched over with brick and running into two other square bricked places, the former of which had once a house built over it which might probably be for the more convenience of bathing".⁴²

A small sketch accompanied the notes but the bath-house had gone by the time Martin inspected the site.

⁴¹ Henderson, P., (2005) *The Tudor House and Garden*, p. 88.

⁴² NRO NNAS C3/1/11, Rough notes and sketches by Tom Martin, 1719

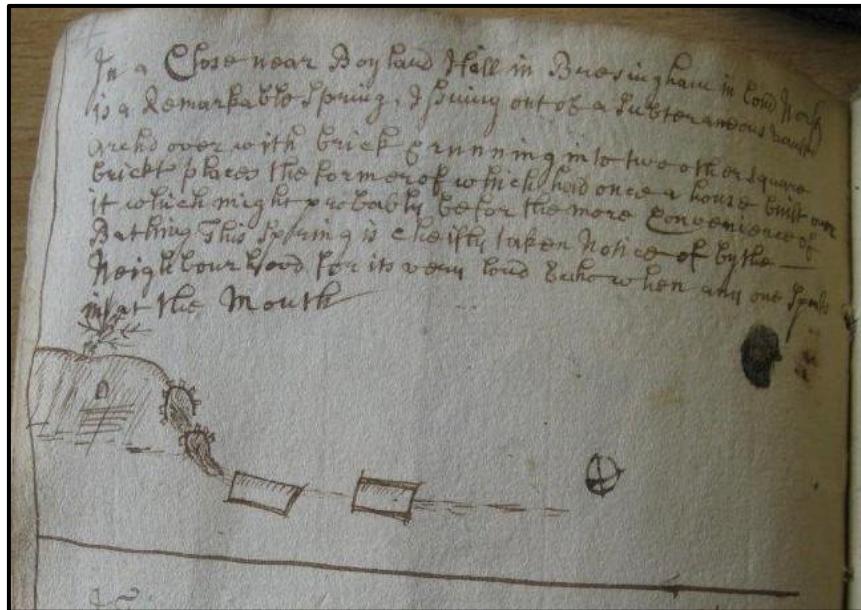


Figure 124:
Extract from the
notebook of Tom
Martin, 1719.
 NRO NNAS
 C3/1/11

Writing seventeen years later Blomefield, who lived in neighbouring Fersfield provided much more detail and had actually entered the vault and walked along it for some distance -

When you have entered this vault about four rods, there are two mouths of other arches, one on the right hand and another on the left, from which the water continually flows into the great arch, so that the three currents have one discharge only; what is in these two I know not, for though the mouths seem large, the arches are not big enough for one to enter. Right over the well, in the close, is a hill, raised (as I take it) to determine the place where the well is; when the water runs out, it comes directly into a square bath, over which there was lately a bathing-house of brick, with a summer-house joined to it, the ruins of which still [1736] remain. Out of this the water runs into such another square bath, which was designed as a common one, it being never covered; from this is a small conveyance, which seems to have been arched over formerly, that leads directly into the moat that surrounds the orchard.

Blomefield believed that the baths had been the work of Sir Richard De Boyland in the late thirteenth century but the brickwork has been dated to the late sixteenth century and dyke maintenance during the 1970s revealed some of the features in the antiquarian accounts above.⁴³ The description of the baths at Boyland Hall bear some similarity to

⁴³ NHER 10894 Secondary File, Report by Edwin Rose September 1981; Photographs taken during a watching brief by A Rogerson

the summerhouse and basins at Theobalds referred to by Paul Hentzner who visited England during 1598. Hentzner recalled that on the south side of the gardens there stood

*a summerhouse, in the lower part of which, built semi-circularly, are the twelve Roman emperors in white marble, and a table of touchstone, the upper part of it is set round with cisterns of lead, into which the water is conveyed through pipes, so that fish may be kept in them, and in the summer time they are very convenient for bathing.*⁴⁴

The baths at Boyland were described as square and built of brick rather than semi-circular, it is quite possible that the Boyland bathhouse contained Classical statuary and was topped by a summerhouse. By the late sixteenth century there was a growing interest in water that was animated, flowing through fountains, cascades or conduits. In 1625 Francis Bacon wrote that were two types of fountain –

*one that sprinkleth or sputeth water; the other that a fair receipt of water - the latter we may call a bathing pool, it may admit much curiosity and beauty.*⁴⁵

Such a grandiose structure as the conduit and its baths would have been exactly the type of project that Philip Howard would have spent his inheritance on if he thought it would impress the Queen and his rivals. The conduit, bathhouse and summerhouse may well have constituted the *speciall device much commended* described by Churchland but it is likely that Kenninghall had many other diversions and amusements to offer the Queen. Large-scale landscape projects such as the conduit were only possible because the necessary land had been appropriated from the vernacular landscape and come under the exclusive control of one individual within a tertiary elite zone. Philip Howard was still active at court in 1581 when as the new Earl of Arundel he entertained the French delegation negotiating a marriage between Elizabeth and the Duke of Anjou. A letter dated 25th April recorded that the French delegation had been feasted on consecutive days by the Queen, Lord Treasurer Burghley and the Lord Chamberlain and then – *my Lord of Arundell insteade of feastes entertaineth them with tilt and tourney.*⁴⁶ From this

⁴⁴ From Paul Hentzner *A Journey into England 1598*, edited by Horace Walpole 1757, pp. 54-55.

⁴⁵ From *The Works of Francis Bacon* and quoted in Henderson, P *The Tudor House and Garden: Architecture and Landscape in the Sixteenth and Early Seventeenth Century*, Yale University Press, London.

⁴⁶ Wright, T., (editor) (1838) *Queen Elizabeth and Her Times: A Series of Original Letters, Volume 2*. Letter from George Behun to W. Herle, 25th April 1581. London, Henry Colburn, p. 134.

and other references to his love of the tournament, it would be possible that one of the expenses incurred by Philip Howard before the Queen's visit to Kenninghall might have been the provision of a tilt-yard. It is possible that such a facility already existed, given the family's long association with the office of Earl Marshal and the military prowess of Howard forebears. The area would have to be level and well-drained and a possible location is suggested by the sixteenth-century field names *Great Knightfield* and *Little Knightfield*, both with a 'k' rather than "night field" or "night close". The fields are located next to Boyland Hall on a level, dry site and may have played a role in the festivities of 1578.

The diversions and indulgences of the Queen's visit to Kenninghall did not provide the one-time Earl of Surrey with any obvious rewards, such as the reinstatement of the Dukedom or a lucrative official role at court. Some of those who entertained Elizabeth on her progress fared even worse, losing their liberty as well as a fortune in expenses. The young master Rokewood of Euston Hall (Breckland), who had entertained the retinue was arrested following a search of his property by members of the privy council which revealed "papist objects" hidden within the house. Hassel Smith has noted that the Queen's itinerary included a high proportion of residences of known or suspected recusants who adhered to the Roman Catholic faith. He suggests that the council took the opportunity to be seen to be dealing with the matter of recusancy and several of the Queen's hosts were implicated⁴⁷ One such was The Lady Style of Braconash and Hethel Hall (96;TG 1632 0131: Central) who entertained Elizabeth on her approach to Norwich on 16th August, 1578. Churchland noted that *On the 16th August the Queen dyned at Bracenashe with the Lady Style*⁴⁸ Lady Elisabeth Style was the widow of Sir Humphrey Style of Beckenham in Kent who married Thomas Townshend, esquire of Braconash and was a known recusant. She escaped arrest but her name continued to appear on the recusant rolls until her death.⁴⁹ The Bedingfields of Oxburgh Hall were under constant scrutiny during Elizabeth's reign, Sir Edmund having been her gaoler at both Woodstock and the Tower was perhaps under more threat than many Catholics. The strictures imposed on recusants were one of the most likely reasons for the fossilisation of the Oxburgh residence and landscape until the eighteenth century but there were no such concerns for the Sir Roger Wodehouse of Kimberley. Sir Roger abided by the law

⁴⁷ Hassel-Smith, A (1974) *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603*, p. 218.

⁴⁸ Thomas Churchland quoted in Nichols, J., (1823) *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth, Volume 2*, p. 132.

⁴⁹ *Bacon Papers* Vol 2, p. 202.

with regard to religious observance and although he was not a supporter of Puritanism he kept within the bounds of legality.⁵⁰

Queen Elizabeth stayed at Kimberley following her visit to Norwich, arriving on Friday 22nd August and, rather than questioning Sir Roger's loyalty, the Queen bestowed a knighthood upon him.⁵¹ It is likely that preparations for a possible royal visit had been underway for some time and may have included major structural work to Kimberley Hall and additions to the designed landscape around the residence.⁵² *The Newe Lawne Closes* to the north of the hall were enclosed in the park by the 1570s and the map of 1700 illustrated in Chapter 5 included a reference to *The Queen's Corner* which was located just off the Norwich road beside the *Newe Lawne Closes*.

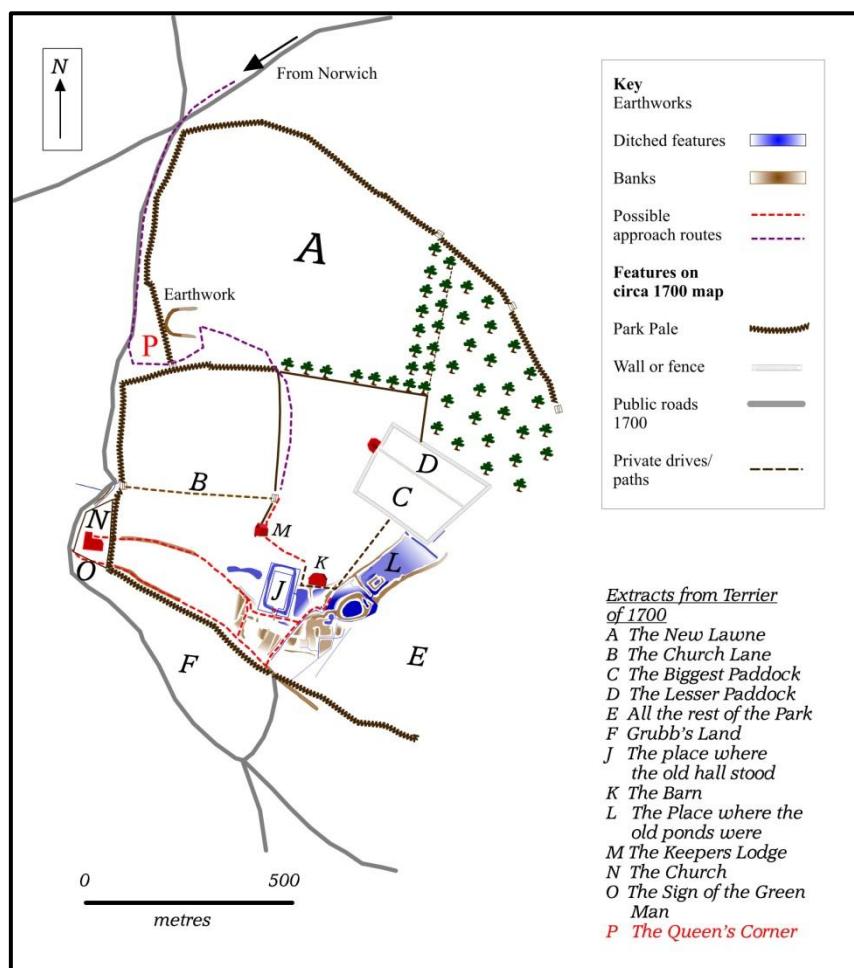


Figure 125: The Queen's Corner, Kimberley⁵³

The position suggested for *The Queen's Corner* on Samuel Gilpen's map of 1700 is very close to a large U-shaped earthwork that was recorded on the First Edition OS and on aerial photographs of Kimberley

⁵⁰ Hassel-Smith, A (1974) *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603*, p. 222.

⁵¹ *The Visitation of Norfolk Vol 1* Edited by Rev. Dashwood, p. 105.

⁵² NHER Report on the site of Kimberley Hall. Stephen Heywood reported sixteenth-century brickwork amongst the remains of the hall.

⁵³ Detail from Samuel Gilpen's map of 1700 NRO Mf/Ro 499/2 combined with earthwork and aerial photographic evidence

Park. **Figure 126** shows the earthwork in a RAF photograph taken in 1946 when the feature was clearly defined but it has since been removed and the site levelled.⁵⁴

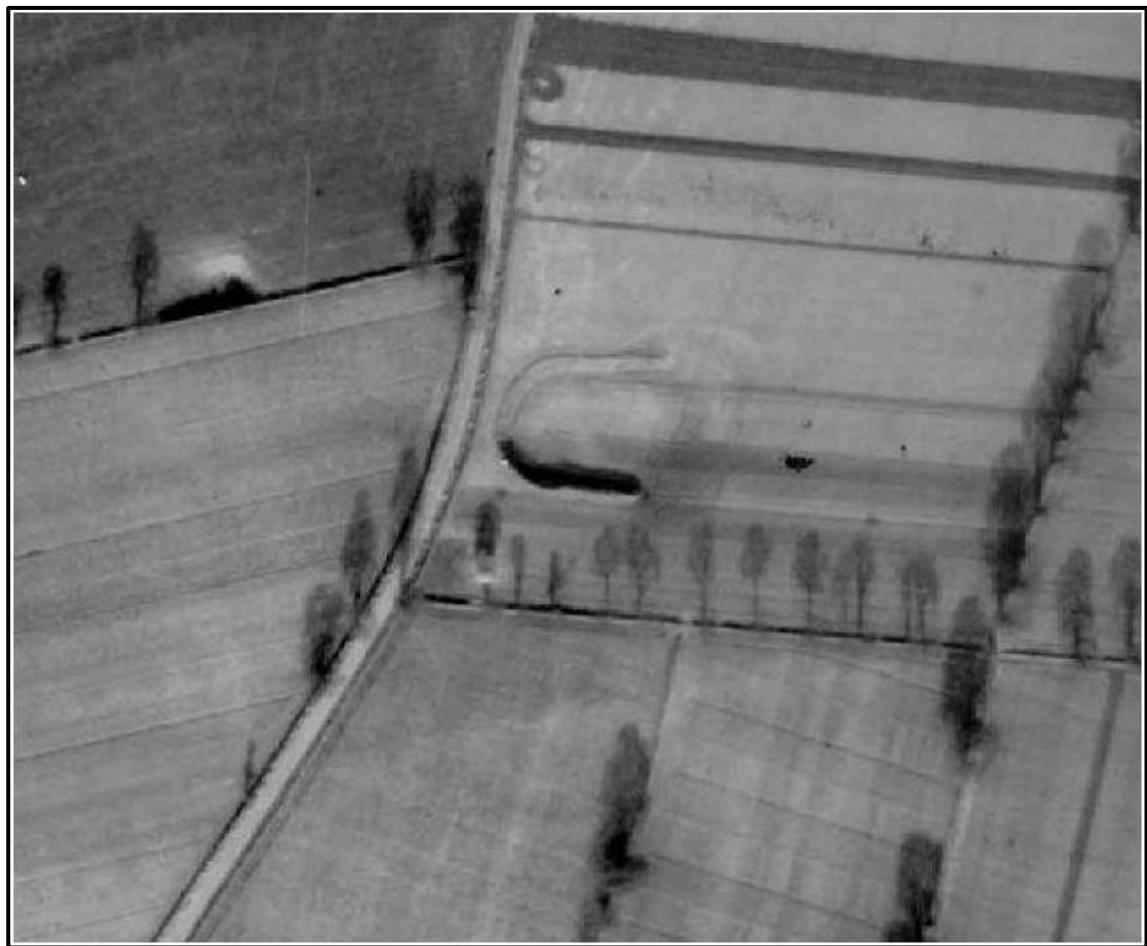


Figure 126: Aerial Photograph of the earthwork close to the position of *The Queen's Corner* (TG 0736 0473) AP TG0703A-E, TG0704A-G. RAF 1946 The Norwich road has been realigned eastwards since Gilpen's map of 1700

The feature does not appear to have been an extraction pit or reservoir and seems rather large for a root crop clamp. The earthwork is not recorded in the NHER but is possible that it was constructed as part of the preparations for the visit of Queen Elizabeth who is likely to have arrived at Kimberley via the Norwich road, which passes close to this earthwork. The Gilpen map shows an entrance at this point, where the park and the *Newe Lawne Closes* meet, the approach route then appears to lead to the *Keeper's Lodge* before arriving at the hall. If the usual protocol was followed at Kimberley, Sir Roger and his household would have staged an elaborate welcoming ceremony for the Queen and her entourage at the gates to Kimberley park, including speeches, pageants and 'devices'. In May 1578 Sir Philip Sydney had been commissioned to write a play to welcome Elizabeth to Leicester's new residence and garden at Wanstead Hall and when

⁵⁴ TG0703A-E, TG0704A-G. Kimberley 1946 – Compare with *Google Earth* images from 1999 onwards

the Queen had arrived at Norwich in 1578 the Mayor, Robert Wood, rode to meet Elizabeth at the gates. Wood was accompanied by a troop of thirty young men along with all the city officials and a pageant representing the founding of the city.⁵⁵ When the Queen had visited Kenilworth in 1575 Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester had staged an elaborate welcome for the Elizabeth, which began seven miles from Kenilworth and included a hunt before the Queen was led through the park. Once within the gates she was entertained and lauded by a cast of different characters at points along the route to the castle. As the Queen passed the lake a floating pageant depicting the Lady of the Lake sailed towards her and addressed the Queen before she was shown to the inner courtyard and her apartments.⁵⁶ There is a possibility that the earthwork at The Queen's Corner was created as an amphitheatre for the staging of a dramatic welcoming ceremony for Elizabeth as she arrived at Kimberley, or that it was used for a pageant or play later in the day. The extension of the tertiary zone at Kimberley ensured that the Queen could progress towards the hall through parkland rather than passing an area of open-field furlongs. The expansion of the elite zone at Kimberley during earlier decades allowed Sir Roger Wodehouse to entertain his sovereign in style. Whilst his park may not have been as extensive as that at Kenninghall, the water gardens and pools to the east of the hall would have been an impressive sight even for a monarch accustomed to the grounds of Theobalds and Hampton Court.

The visits of Queen Elizabeth to Kimberley Hall and Kenninghall Palace signalled a turning point for the two residences and the elite landscapes that had been created around them. The Wodehouses chose to entertain their monarch at their ancestral home but lived mainly at their residence in Norwich. Sir Roger Wodehouse purchased or, Blomefield suggests, was given the great Howard palace in Norwich by the third Duke of Norfolk during the reign of Edward VI.⁵⁷ The Act of Attainder following the charges of treason levelled against the third Duke was in force throughout Edward's reign and the Duke was imprisoned in the Tower at this time. Selling or leasing his Norwich mansion to the Wodehouses may have alleviated financial pressures resulting from the confiscation of his property but the legalities of the situation would suggest it was the King rather than Howard who disposed of the property. It would appear the Wodehouses spent more of their time at the former ducal palace in Norwich than at Kimberley, Blomefield noting of the palace that Sir Roger's son, Sir Philip "much

⁵⁵ Nichols (1823), p. 137-8.

⁵⁶ Nichols (1823) p. 94; Martin, T., (2008) *Elizabeth in the Garden* London Faber and Faber, pp. 62-64.

⁵⁷ Blomefield, F., & Parkin C., (1806) Vol IV, p. 168.

beautified it, and resided here often".⁵⁸ In the early seventeenth century the Wodehouses became embroiled in an interfamily property dispute and the hall fell into decay.⁵⁹ By 1650 it had been all but demolished, only a few sections of wall having survived to the present day. The map by Samuel Gilpen illustrated the Wodehouses desire for a new mansion set in a formal landscape that would have taken advantage of the gentle west facing slopes of The Newe Lawn Closes but the family decided instead to build in the neighbouring parish of Wymondham creating Kimberley House on the site of Downham Lodge (TG 0905 0474).⁶⁰

The great palace of Kenninghall was also destined to decline in status. By the 1590s yet another Earl of Surrey was languishing in the Tower of London, Philip Howard's profligacy and inconstancy having led him to imprisonment on charges of being a recusant, of leaving the country without permission and claiming the dukedom of Norfolk. He escaped execution but died in the Tower in 1595. The focus of the Howard property interests moved to Sussex and Arundel Castle became the principal residence of future Dukes of Norfolk. The bulk of Thomas Howard's palace was demolished and the materials sold off to reappear in the fabric of local farmhouses.⁶¹ Sir Edward Clere and his son, also Sir Edward, did their best to ensure a similar fate for Blickling Hall, the elder Sir Edward spending time in debtor's prison in the 1590s and the younger following the family tradition of living beyond his means.⁶² However, circa 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted part of her share of the Blickling estate to Henry Hobart, a lawyer and descendent of Sir James Hobart of Hales Hall.⁶³ By 1616 the Cleres were forced to do likewise and the manor of Blickling Hall came to Sir Henry Hobart who was by then Lord Chief Justice.⁶⁴ Hobart began to make plans to rebuild Blickling Hall and work was underway by March 1619 when accounts for expenditure on the new residence were prepared by Robert Lyminge the architect of the new mansion.⁶⁵

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ NRO KIM 9/2, ND Seventeenth Century. Notebook of poetry and family history and includes a poem about the destruction of the hall.

⁶⁰ Williamson T., (1998) *The Archaeology of the Landscape Park*. BAR No. 268 British Series, pp.256-7.

⁶¹ Blomefield, F., (1805) 'Hundred of Giltcross, Kenninghall' *An Essay towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk: volume 1* (1805), pp. 213-227.

⁶² Hassell Smith, A., (1974) *County and Court: Government and Politics in Norfolk 1558-1603* Oxford University Press, p. 161.

⁶³ Griffiths, E., (2009) "The Boleyns at Blickling" *Norfolk Archaeology Vol XLV, Part IV*, p. 454.

⁶⁴ NRO NRS 12080 Deed of Sale of the Blickling Estate from Sir Edward Clere to Sir Henry Hobart 1616.

⁶⁵ NRO MC 3/43-47, 466 x 2 Building Accounts Blickling Hall 1619 -20.

Much of the demesne had been leased out by Lady Clere in the years before Henry Hobart took over at Blickling, only 201 acres plus the Great Wood remaining in hand in 1622. The foldcourse and warren were leased to E Buck as was much of Wilkenson's land that had been bought by the Cleres in the 1580s. Other closes, meadows and arable lands were leased for between one and ten years bringing in a total annual rental income of £184 4s 6d.⁶⁶ Some of the leases were renewed by the Hobarts but by 1629 Sir John Hobart was taking land in hand and purchasing ground in order to extend the park at Blickling. An account of the lands purchased between 1629 and 1633 records that in 1629 a total of 170 acres and 36 perches were bought.⁶⁷ The total for 1631 was given as purchase price rather than acreage, the total spent being £614 6s 8d. The lands bought included the windmill at Ormyll Hill, Aylsham water mill and, at a cost of £200, Aylsham Manor. The document includes several references to land in or around the park, including –

*One messuage and 14 acres that was ffinns lying in the new park
2 acres bought of Thomas ffinns and John ffinns [1629]*

*One parcel of land at the side of the kitchen garden bought of ould James Smith
of Blickling [1629]*

The lands purtchased in the parke 31a 2r 6p [1633]

The parcel of ground next the kitchen garden may have been near the *Whate House*, to the west of the walled garden at Blickling and the other pieces were in the open field to the east of the park, where Edward Clere had been buying land in the 1580s. The acquisition of these lands and the closure of the road that had run north westwards to Moorgate and the river crossings in 1629 were followed by a licence to empark the extended tertiary zones at Blickling.⁶⁸ Much of the land to the west of the late-medieval park was included in the new park but even in the eighteenth century, when James Corbridge surveyed the estate, open-field strips still abutted the eastern bounds of the pleasure grounds. *The Temple Garden* had been created on the field land acquired in the sixteenth and seventeenth century but overlooked the working landscape to the east. The

⁶⁶ NRO NRS 16391 32 C4 Estate Particular 1622.

⁶⁷ NRO NRS 10975 *A bill of such lands as have been purchased in Blickling and elsewhere since the year of our Lord 1629 to the year 1633.*

⁶⁸ NRO NRS 11272, 26A5 *Inquisition Ad Quod Damnum* 1629.

NRO NRS 12967 27 FS Licence to Empark and Free Warren at Blickling 1633.

process of purchasing, exchanging and taking land back in hand that had taken place over the preceding centuries meant that in 1729 James Corbridge recoded a designed landscape that included gardens, avenues, a lake and park, an elite landscape that would continue to evolve and change until the present day.



Figure 127: James Corbridge's Map of the Blickling Hall Estate 1729 National Trust collection Blickling Hall. Photograph by Mr K Gray, National Trust

In the West of East Anglia and arguably at the other end of the social spectrum from the Howards, Cleres and Hobarts, Gregory Pratt of Ryston had continued to consolidate his estate. As was often the case, Gregory's ambitions for expansion were aided by a good marriage to Ann Cocket, coheiress of William Cocket of Besthorpe in Norfolk. In a direct contrast with the Clere's at Blickling, Gregory Pratt appears to have avoided debt and managed his lands well and profitably. Field books record the acquisition of further lands in the late sixteenth century and at his death in 1609, Gregory Pratt bequeathed a considerable estate to his son Gregory.⁶⁹ The Ryston lands now extended into the

⁶⁹ *The Visitation of Norfolk, Vol 1* (1878) Edited by Rev. G H Dashwood, p. 281-282.

surrounding parishes and bounded the lands of the Willoughbys and Skipwiths. In 1635 Thomas Waterman was commissioned to produce maps of Ryston and Roxham, which showed that much of these two parishes were now in the hands of Gregory Pratt, junior.⁷⁰

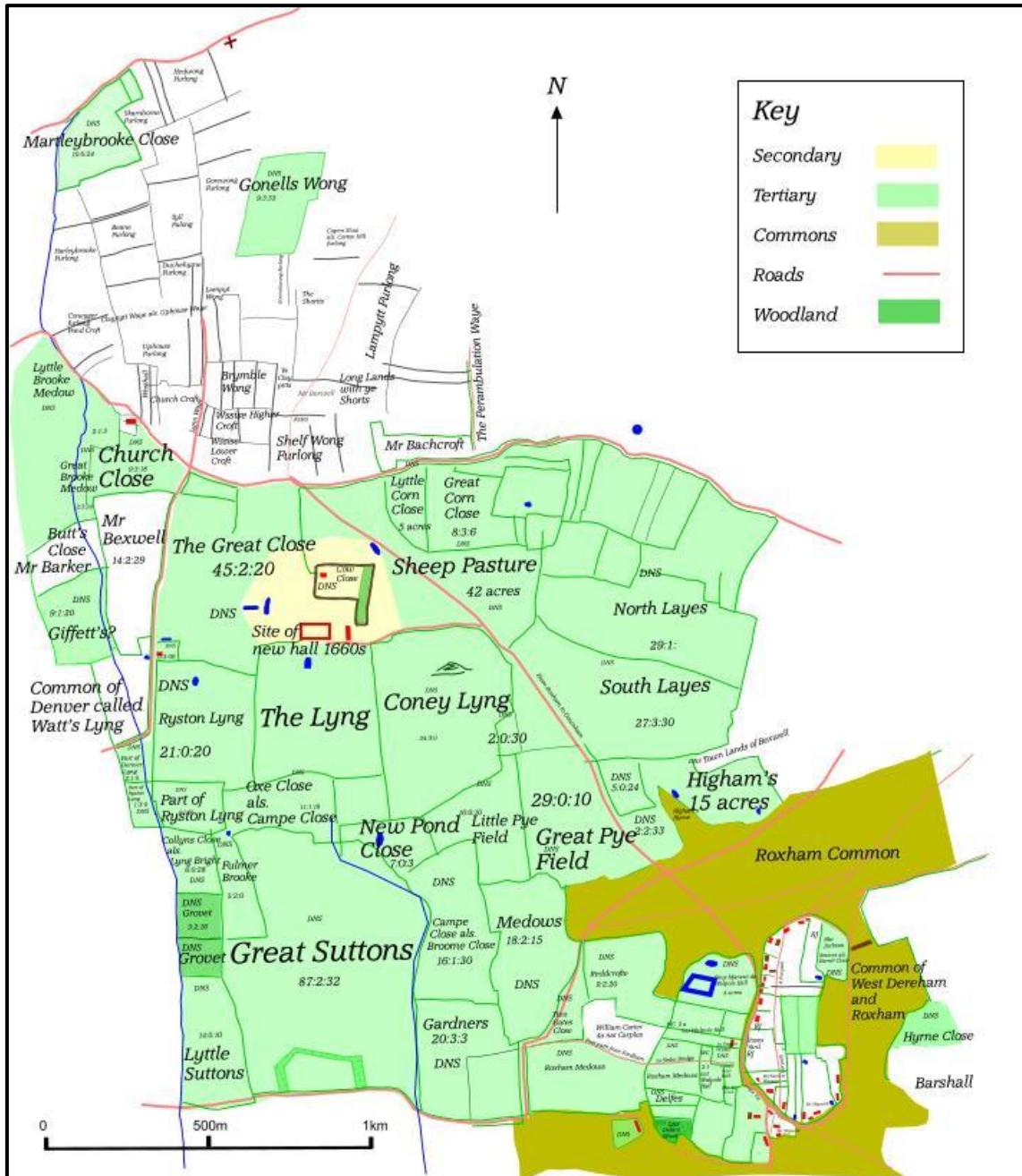


Figure 128: The Landscape of Ryston and Roxham in 1635 based on maps by Thomas Waterman. Private Collection Ryston Hall

⁷⁰ Maps of Ryston and Walpole Hall in Roxham by Thomas Waterman, 1635 Private Collection Ryston Hall

The land accrued by William and Gregory Pratt formed the core of an estate that would be further expanded by Gregory's son. The secondary elite zone at Ryston in **Figure 128** has been based on the position of the paled close known as *Cowe Close* and the fishponds near the site of the hall. No primary zone has been included as the Waterman map did not show the position of a residence. It is possible that the medieval house had been abandoned for one of the other Pratt properties at Ryston or the neighbouring parishes. Between 1669 and 1672 Gregory Pratt's grandson Sir Roger Pratt a gentleman architect of renown would build a fine new mansion at Ryston, near the site of the medieval Ryston Hall.⁷¹ Sir Roger's mansion stands amid a fine park that was created over the span of three generations of a family who rose from being prosperous yeomen to join the regional elite on commissions and at the Inns of Court. The expansion of the tertiary zones at Ryston created a block of land over which Sir Roger Pratt had complete control, allowing him to design a suitably grand setting for his new mansion. The photograph in **Figure 129**, below, was taken from the south boundary of Great Suttons Close towards the seventeenth-century hall.



Figure 129: Ryston Hall looking northward from land formerly known as Great Suttons Close, Camp Close and Ryston Lyng.

⁷¹ Williamson T., (1998) *The Archaeology of the Landscape Park*. BAR 268 British Series, pp. 256-7.
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Figure 130 shows an estate map of 1818 which illustrates the major changes that had taken place in the Ryston landscape between Thomas Waterman's map of 1635 and the early nineteenth century.⁷² Tree-lines mark the routes of roads no longer in use and the area of woodland has increased over former sheep-walks and arable land. The hall sits within a much-extended secondary elite zone, the well-wooded parkland effectively distancing Ryston Hall from the vernacular landscape. This nineteenth-century landscape was made possible by the land purchases, enclosures and engrossments carried out by the Pratt family in sixteenth and seventeenth century.

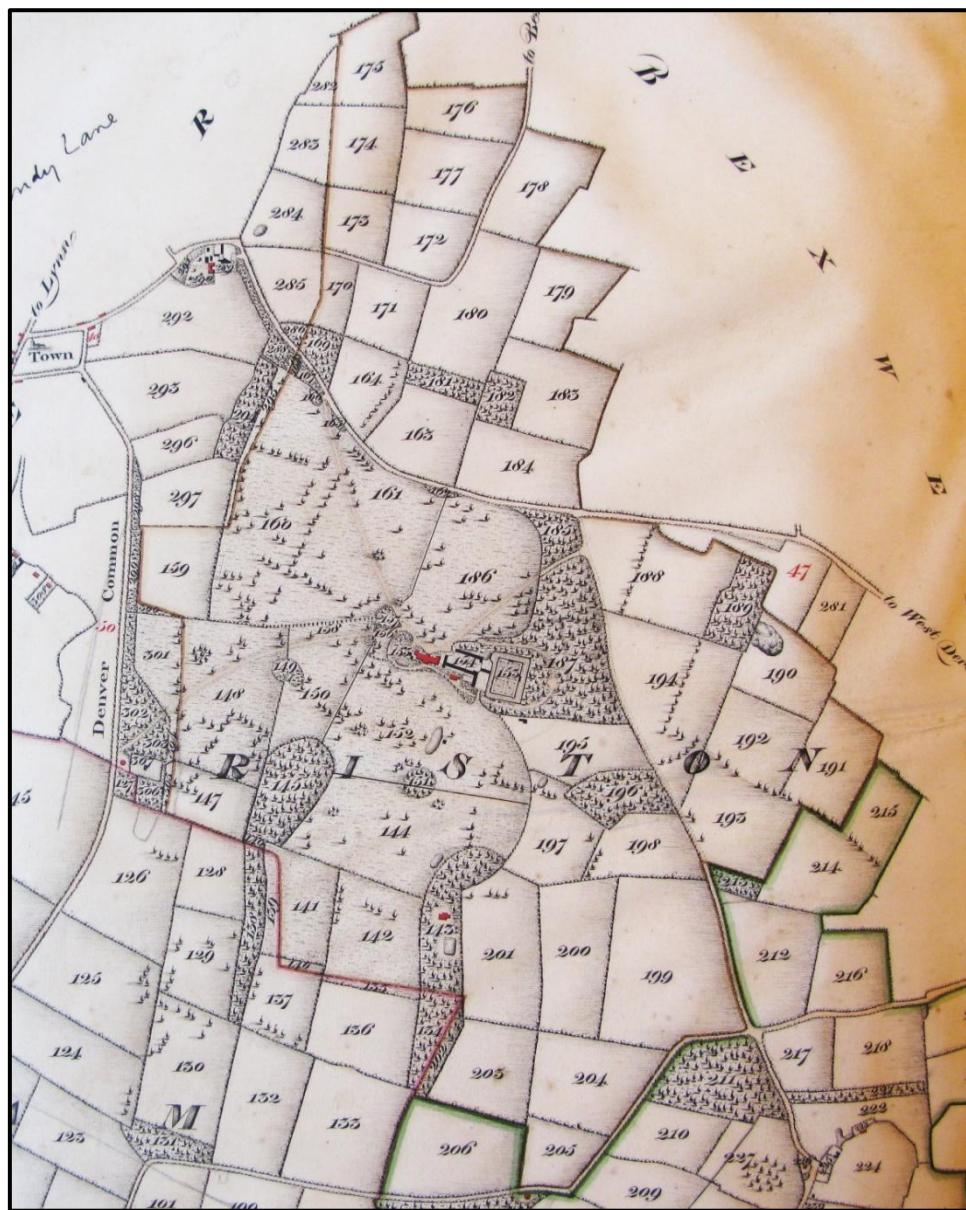


Figure 130: Extract from a map book of 1818 showing the park and landscape around Ryston Hall

⁷² Estate Map included in a map book dated 1818. Private Collection, Ryston Hall.

The successful expansion of the elite zones at Ryston was not replicated at all the case-study residences, for example at Blickling the development of exclusivity was a slow and expensive undertaking. The Cleres of Blickling risked everything they had to expand the elite landscape around their residence but it was the Hobarts who eventually succeeded in creating a much-enlarged exclusive zone around Blickling Hall. The acquisition of part of the open-field land to the east of the Great Garden allowed new pleasure grounds to be created but arable land and all its associated agricultural activities still abutted the new grounds as recorded by James Corbridge in 1729 (**Figure 127**, page 297). The construction of the conduit and water features at Kenninghall by Earl Surrey would have been impossible had the required land not been under his control. However, as the earl's fortunes waned and the focus of the family moved to Arundel the exclusivity of the Kenninghall landscape diminished. As Kenninghall declined, much of the land that had been acquired by the Howards was returned to the vernacular landscape and the exclusive zones diminished as the land was disparked.

At Kimberley some of the elite landscape accrued by the Wodehouses reverted to farmland, including parts of the warren but much of the parkland surrounding the site of Kimberley Hall was subsumed into the new deer park around Kimberley House, built in 1712. The existing parkland was expanded to the north and north east and a lake was established by damming the river near Fastolf's Wood. In the later eighteenth century Lancelot 'Capability' Brown produced designs for the grounds at Kimberley, some of which had first been removed from the vernacular landscape in the early sixteenth century.

The period from 1560 to 1630 demonstrates the adaptability and limitations of exclusivity but crucially shows that without exclusivity the creation of large-scale designed landscapes was not possible. The gardens of Theobalds and Wanstead could not have been laid out on land that was not under the exclusive control of the respective owners. At Stiffkey Hall, Nicholas Bacon drew up plans for his son Nathaniel's new residence where the gardens would be an integral part of the overall design, linked to the layout of the house. As Renaissance inspired ideas of integration and symmetry began to be disseminated the exclusivity of the intellectual achievement had to be matched by the exclusivity of the landscapes where the new designs would be realised.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

In this thesis the concept of *exclusivity* describes a process that encompassed ownership, display and control. When a piece of land came under the control of an individual, free from customary rights of access or use, it could then be used to create various levels of exclusivity within an elite landscape. By orchestrating movement through and around tertiary elite zones, people could be directed towards, or away from, secondary elite areas. Admission to secondary zones was subject to greater levels of control than in outlying areas and structured routes ensured that symbols of manorial authority and an abundance of natural resources could be viewed but not necessarily accessed. The display zones emphasised the exclusivity of the residence and the household located within the primary, most exclusive, areas. Here the resident family lived, administered their estates and entertained their guests in surroundings that legitimised the position within elite society they aspired to hold. Physical and liminal barriers were used to manipulate the flow of people in order that different messages could be conveyed to specific social groups. Evidence showed that the spatial arrangements within elite landscapes followed a pattern that could be recognised across East Anglia and at residences outwith the region.

The successes and limitations of the research design.

The Landscape Approach adopted here and the regional parameters used in this thesis allowed a greater range of properties to be studied in depth than might have been the case in a more general study that employed a different approach. The regional subdivisions proved useful when analysing differences in the choice of site for a new residence and, for example, in highlighting variations in the distribution of moated residences in low-lying and clayland sub-regions. The use of three-dimensional imagery was not intended to provide visual reconstructions of the late-medieval landscape but was used to illustrate the topography around residences. Distinct differences were found between the topography of chosen locations. For instance, in the north of East Anglia sites were located on valley floors whilst in south west they tended to be found on elevated sites overlooking river valleys.

Collating a large, primary dataset containing details of the archive and archaeological sources for sites across the sub-regions was a useful means of identifying residences to be included in a smaller secondary dataset that could be researched in greater depth. The decision to include residences demolished soon after construction and those of built by the lesser gentry added depth to the secondary group of sites and broadened the range of social groups included in the study. The evidence presented in the micro-studies presented in this thesis was compiled by combining manuscript and archaeological sources with fieldwork and published data. The transcription of documents including family correspondence, accounts, extents, surveys and memorandum books provided a wealth of information about the process of creating exclusivity within elite landscapes and, in some cases, indications of the motives behind such developments. Where a series of documents and later maps were available, reconstructions of late-medieval and early-modern landscapes were created using retrogressing mapping techniques and including information from aerial photographs, earthwork surveys and excavation reports. This laborious but worthwhile process revealed the expansion of elite landscapes and indicated how various levels of exclusivity were demarcated. The limitation of this approach to research is the time-consuming nature of the work involved, limiting the number of sites that can be researched in this way. However, it allowed the concept of exclusivity to be based on detailed empirical research that demonstrated how such ideas were deployed in the surroundings of elite residences.

The choice to research a transitional period that spanned the late-medieval and early-modern eras has made it possible to trace the evolution of elite residences and landscapes, and the fortunes of the their associated families through a time when many aspects of life were undergoing momentous change. Some residences such as The Rey (6), Shelton Hall (26) and Kimberley Hall (29) succumbed to changes in fortune, or in modes of living, but others survived to the present day. Blickling Hall (10) has undergone several incarnations at the hands of different owners and Oxburgh Hall (4) stands today as an example of a fifteenth-century residence, not altered greatly since Edmund Bedingfield first endeavoured to legitimise his claim to authority in the west of East Anglia. The moats, ponds and meadows around these two properties were repeated at most of the late-medieval sites researched for this thesis and the availability of reliable water supplies appears to have been a major factor when deciding where to build a new mansion in the drier parts of East Anglia.

A major benefit of researching across the traditional divide between the medieval and the early-modern eras has been the opportunity to trace the changing role of water as an indicator of exclusivity. Had investigations ceased at the end of the fifteenth century or the early sixteenth century then moated residences would have been almost ubiquitous in many parts of East Anglia. In contrast, a study that began circa 1650 would be unlikely to reveal any new moats around elite residences. However, by researching the period from the early fifteenth to the early seventeenth century it has been possible to identify changes in the way water was used to express aspects of exclusivity.

Moats played an important role in demarcating primary elite zones, some sites such as Hales Hall having multiple examples. The moats at Oxburgh (4), Baconsthorpe (9) and Shelton Halls (26) appear to have been constructed concurrently with the mansion to create the scenario where the house rose straight from the waters of the moat and emphasising that access to the most exclusive zones was subject to a range of restrictions. From the early sixteenth century the construction of residential moats declined although water features, including extensive water gardens, remained an important signal of exclusivity. At Kenninghall (24) the third Duke of Norfolk did not build a moat around his new palace but appears to have created a water garden with viewing mounts by reusing the medieval moats around the site of an earlier hall. As the sixteenth century progressed a greater emphasis was placed on the manipulation of water supplies through conduits and channels to bathhouses and ornamental pools as at Hawstead Place (120) and Boyland Hall (25). The construction of new moats declined but existing moats were usually retained and sometimes remodelled, as at Morley Old Hall (99) built between 1545 and 1600 and Attleborough Hall (87), rebuilt in the late sixteenth century. Brickwork in moat revetments has been dated to the mid- and late-sixteenth century, which might indicate that the moats were constructed concurrently with the residence but could also suggest that an existing moat was formalised in an attempt to conform to new ideas of integrating the house with its surroundings.

A further advantage of researching the centuries spanning the transition from the medieval to early-modern periods has been the opportunity to place the residences and associated families within the context of the major changes in society and culture that occurred during the fifteenth, sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The decision to disregard the usual boundaries of academic specialisms along with the use of multiple micro-studies has allowed the process of creating exclusive landscapes to be followed

through changes of ownership and changes in the position of various families in the East Anglian hierarchy. The inclusion of biographical information about the people who developed and inhabited the sites discussed above made it possible to examine establish family connections and networks of patronage that may have influenced decisions about the location and form of new residences. As the sixteenth century progressed many once powerful regional elite faded to relative obscurity, along with the residences they had developed, as in the case of the Sheltons of Shelton Hall. Others, such as the Bedingfields of Oxburgh Hall flourished and declined in response to the religious upheavals of the Reformation. As staunch adherents of the Catholic faith, they prospered during the reign of Mary Tudor but suffered the penalties of recusancy under Elizabeth I. The family's persistent rejection of Protestantism and support for Charles I cost them patronage and fines, as a result of which they were unable to invest in major work at Oxburgh Hall. The house and much of its surroundings survived in a state of fossilisation, the renovations in the eighteenth and nineteenth century doing little to alter its essentially late-medieval aura.

The contribution of this thesis to the study of designed landscapes.

In answer to Liddiard and Williamson's doubts about the date of the 'design threshold' the research presented here has shown that in the early fifteenth century elite landscapes were being consciously planned in order to create a series of zones around the residence.¹ The zones were designed to convey messages of authority and status to particular audiences with different strategies and spatial arrangements being employed depending on which social group the audience belonged. This amounted to more than manipulation of high-status features for the purposes of display, a phenomenon recognised and accepted since the late twentieth century. Rather it was a process that involved demonstrable control over many aspects of life, including natural resources such as water, wildlife and meadowland and over the movement of people through and around the elite zones. The construction of structured approach routes and the arrangement of display areas housing the symbols of manorial authority were designed to legitimise of authority of the resident family. Different levels of exclusivity were indicated by the managed nature of the surroundings and the deliberate placing of physical and liminal signals at points of transition from one zone to another.

¹ Liddiard, R. & Williamson, T., (2010) "There by Design? Some reflections on medieval elite landscapes." *The Archaeological Journal* 165 (1), pp. 520-35

The spatial arrangements were not created solely for the purposes of status-display but were intended to indicate who might be admitted to certain areas, or the route they should take around or through an elite landscape. In addition, the most exclusive areas of the grounds such as the water gardens at Kimberley were often placed where they could best be appreciated from the most exclusive parts of the residence. The evidence presented in this thesis shows that elite landscapes were being consciously designed to fulfil a range of requirements from the early fifteenth century. However, it must be stressed that these do not equate to the designed landscapes of the eighteenth century, when privacy and seclusion from the wider community were of great importance. In the period under consideration here elite landscapes were more open and the display of status and authority was an ongoing narrative between the various groups in late-medieval and early-modern society. Conducting research beyond the immediate surroundings of mansions, where the vernacular landscape abutted the demesne, revealed the methods used by landowners to increase the area available for the development of exclusivity. It was essential that the land be held in severalty if a large-scale elite landscape was to be laid out across it. In some examples, such as Blickling (10), Kimberley (29) and Ryston (7) the expansion of exclusivity in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries allowed not only for the creation of contemporary parks and pleasure grounds but provided the land for eighteenth-century schemes.

In answer to Matthew Johnson's criticism about the empirical nature of much landscape archaeology and history, this thesis has shown that archive research and "muddy boot" fieldwork can be combined with social history and theoretical concepts to investigate how elite landscapes were planned, utilised and perceived by the people who encountered them.² The idea of exclusivity within elite landscapes is based on research conducted using the principles of the landscape approach, drawing on archaeological and manuscripts sources, and consulting a range of "cartesian devices". The flexibility of the landscape approach means that evidence assembled from such sources can be used in conjunction with phenomenological concepts in order to develop new theories of how people organised and used the landscapes they inhabited. The concept of exclusivity is derived from a large body of evidence placed within a theoretical framework inspired by the idea of 'peopling the landscape'. The documents and material remains left by the individuals and families who strove to create elite landscapes have formed the core the research offered here. For example, the difficult

² Johnson, M. (2007) *Ideas of Landscape*, Blackwell, Oxford.

and time-consuming process of transcribing and translating manuscript sources provided evidence of how land was conveyed from the vernacular world to that of the elite. This aspect of the concept of exclusivity was demonstrated cogently by the words '*now the newe lawne closes*' beside the description of the former *Walnut Tree Furlong* in a survey of Kimberley Hall Manor. The land was now '*in the hands of the lord*' and no longer functioned as part of a communally organised open field but was the exclusive property of the Wodehouse family who felt a new place-name was necessary to reinforce the changed status of the land that was now part of the elite landscape. The occurrence of similar transactions in documents from across East Anglia strengthened the theoretical structure around this aspect of exclusivity. Evidence that elite landscapes were consciously designed in order to convey the exclusivity of the elite surroundings was gleaned from both material culture and documentary sources. Recognisable patterns in the layout of landscape features and buildings were found throughout the study area as were patterns of change across time.

The mix of empirical evidence and theoretical concepts adopted in this thesis lends itself to the inclusion of biographical details about the individuals and families who created and populated elite landscapes; an approach used by Finch and Richardson within the context of the eighteenth-century landscape.³ In 'Three Men in a Boat: Biographies and Narratives in the Historic Landscape' Jonathon Finch argues for the inclusion of biographical evidence when researching the modern landscape. He suggests that the use of sources that illuminate the lives of individuals can place landscape studies within the wider contexts of social and political history. Whilst it is more challenging to adopt a biographical approach when examining the motives and expectations of people living in pre-modern times it is possible to glean valuable indications of their ambitions and concerns from the body of surviving evidence. For example, from the abundant correspondence of the Paston family or a note scribbled in the margin of a manorial extent, it is possible to gain insights that can illuminate wider social and cultural themes. Letters from Agnes Paston to her husband recounting the process of blocking a roadway, and the manner in which she dealt with the resulting opposition to the realignment, illustrate the personal consequences of actions more usually found in the formulaic wording of writs and inquisitions.⁴

³ Finch, J. (2008) 'Three Men in a Boat: Biographies and Narratives in the Historic Landscape' in *Landscape Research*, vol. 33, no. 5, 511-530.

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⁴ *The Paston Letters*, Vol , p 58.

Scope for further research

The research framework adopted for this thesis could be used to investigate similar themes in other geographical areas. For instance, the methodology could be readily adapted for the purposes of a nationwide project, drawing evidence from sample areas across Britain. The research framework would ensure that a broader range of sites was considered than in a study conducted using the a more conventional approach, whilst the use of biographical evidence would ensure that the lives of the people who experienced exclusive landscapes were given due consideration. Studies of elite landscapes have tended to focus on the period after 1650 and in particular on the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The elite landscapes of the medieval era have been investigated but usually through the medium of castle studies. There is a need for a detailed landscape study that examines developments during the transition from the medieval to the early-modern world; a time when new groups were emerging within the elite milieu, amongst whom were people who needed to legitimise their place in a highly stratified society. One means of achieving this was through possession of an impressive mansion set in surroundings that could be arranged and managed at the will of the owner. The account of such residences and people presented above has been augmented by the inclusion of archaeological and biographical evidence, which has provided a more holistic view of the role of exclusivity in East Anglian society. The concept of exclusivity has been tested within the parameters set for this thesis but the framework could be adapted readily to encompass a wider area whilst retaining the emphasis on detailed research of elite residences and the families who occupied them.

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Reference	Doc Date	Details
PC Map of Long Melford	1580	A Map of the Manor of Melford Hall by Isaac Amyce, Suffolk. National Trust Collection
PC Map of Roxham	1635	Map of the manors of Walpole Hall and Roxham by Thomas Waterman
PC Map of Ryston	1635	Map of the Estate of Ryston Hall by Thomas Waterman Private Collection
PC Map of the Weybourne	1588	Map of the Norfolk Coast showing the fortifications at Weybourne. Private Collection Hatfield House
SRO [B] F652/3/4(2)a & T128/1 1841		Tithe Map and apportionment
SRO [B] FL652/13/2	1697 - 1731	Conveyance Land in Wickhambrook & Badmondisfield
SRO [L] HD 40 422	1619	Map of Hoxne Hall New Park
TNA:PRO 2ANC3/A/41	4th May, 1526	Will of Lord Willoughby of Eresby Hall in Lincolnshire and Parham Hall in Suffolk
TNA:PRO C 1/18/67	1452-54	Sir John Fastolf, knt. v. Geoffrey Bolleyn, alderman of London, and Thomas Eborall: Bonds and an annuity in payment for the manor of Blickling
TNA:PRO C 143/394/7	1378-9	Inquisition Ad Quod Dampnum: Ralph de Shelton, knight, to enclose a road in Shelton Norfolk.
TNA:PRO C 143/447/18	1419 - 1420	Inquisition Ad Quod Dampnum: William de Shelton to enclose a road in Shelton, substituting another
TNA:PRO C 2/Eliz/C24/34	1558-1603	John Colton v Fitzralph Chamberlayne esquire, Edward Rookewood esquire and others. Bill for injunction to quiet possession under an extent.
TNA:PRO CPR 976m1	1561	Licence to Empark lands at Baconsthorpe and elsewhere
TNA:PRO MPI 1/64	1509-1547	Map of Middleton showing the settlement and Tower
TNA:PRO PROB 11/11	28.1.1482	Will of Sir Edmund Bedingfield
TNA:PRO PROB 11/14, sig 23	1504	Will of Sir John Heydon
TNA:PRO PROB 11/66	1583	Will of Sir Henry Bedingfielde or Bedingfield Oxburgh, Norfolk .
TNA:PRO prob/11/40	1557	Will of William Pratt of Ryston
TNA:PRO REQ 2/8/79	1492-1547	Thomas Barvell and others, inhabitants of the township of Middleton, Norfolk, v Anthony Gybbyn and Osburn Montford. Commission only.
TNA:PRO SC 6/HENVIII/3379	1532-3	Badmondisfield: Possessions of George Somerset
TNA:PRO SC12/30/33	ND (ER)	Boyland Hall [near Shelfanger]: Particular of the house and park

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Appendix 1

East-Anglian residences recorded on the distribution maps in figures 1,6 and 9.

- **Number in Distribution Map**
- **The name of the property**
- **The present-day parish**
- **Grid Reference**
- **Sub-Region**
- **Construction History:** The date of construction of a residence featured in research for this thesis and the date of any major alterations or demolition.
- **Family:** The family or individual responsible for building the residence and subsequent resident families.
- **Availability of Manuscript Evidence:** 1 = scarce to 5 = abundant
- **Quality of Field Evidence:** 1 = poor to 5 = excellent

Note: Where a property is referred to in the text without being part of the active data set the letters NA will be used in the two above fields.

Map Number	1
Property	East Hall
Parish	Denver
Grid Ref	TF 6165 0137
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1490 -1520; Gate house and other alterations circa 1570
Family	Sir William Willoughby from 1465, the Willoughby family held Denver during the C16th and C17th.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	2
Property	St. Mary's Abbey
Parish	West Dereham
Grid Ref	TF 6615 0072
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Premonstratensian Abbey founded 1188; Italianate mansion built on the site circa 1690
Family	The Derehams of Crimplesham and West Dereham from the Dissolution until 1739.
Manuscript Evidence	NA
Field Evidence	NA

Map Number	3
Property	Middleton Tower
Parish	Middleton
Grid Ref	TF 6687 1755
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Circa 1455 - possibly never completed. Ruinous by C18th
Family	Thomas, Lord Scales built the Tower and it was inherited by his son-in-law Anthony, Earl Rivers. After the execution of Rivers it passed to the Howards, the de Veres and the Pastons Howard, De Vere, Paston
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	4
Property	Oxburgh Hall
Parish	Oxborough
Grid Ref	TF 7425 0122
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Circa 1480; damaged in Civil War; Great Hall demolished circa 1775; Extensive renovations 1830s
Family	Sir Thomas Tuddenham from 1426-7, inherited by Edmund Bedingfield in 1474 and remained in the Bedingfield family until the C20th.
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	5
 Map Number	5
Property	Snore Hall
Parish	Fordham
Grid Ref	TL 6242 9934
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1470-75 but altered during the C16th, C18th & C19th
Family	Sir William Skipwith held Snore from circa 1450 and it remained in that family until purchased by Roger Pratt, Esq. of Ryston circa 1730
Manuscript Evidence	1
Field Evidence	3
 Map Number	6
Property	The Rey
Parish	Roydon
Grid Ref	TF 6958 2313
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Circa 1420; Demolished 1454
Family	Built by Sir John Wodehouse
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
 Map Number	7
Property	Ryston Hall
Parish	Ryston
Grid Ref	TF 6238 0114
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Medieval manor house replaced by a new mansion 1669 -1672.
Family	Ryston came to William Pratt in the 1520s and has remained in the Pratt family to the present day.
Manuscript Evidence	5
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	8
Property	Welle Manor Hall
Parish	Upwell
Grid Ref	TF 5059 0273
Sub Region	West
Construction History	C14th hall house modified and extended circa 1480; Declined in status from the early C16th.
Family	Ecclesiastical manor associated with the Beaupre family.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	9
Property	Baconsthorpe Hall
Parish	Baconsthorpe
Grid Ref	TG 1214 3809
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1460-1500; 1540s; 1551 outer gatehouse added. Abandoned and partly demolished 1653-4 and now ruinous.
Family	Construction instigated by Sir John Heydon and completed by his son Sir Henry. The Heydons continued at Baconsthorpe until the early C17th.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	5

Map Number	10
Property	Blickling Hall
Parish	Blickling
Grid Ref	TG 1786 2866
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1400; Possible building phases mid C15th and Mid C16th; Extensive remodelling and alterations circa 1620.
Family	Sir Nicholas Dagworth d. 1401; Sir Thomas Erpingham & others 1401 - 1432 then Sir John Fastolf; The Boleyns 1450 - 1561; The Cleres of Ormesby 1562 - 1616; The Hobarts 1616 - 1793.
Manuscript Evidence	5
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	11
Property	Elsing Hall
Parish	Elsing
Grid Ref	TG 0400 1599
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	Circa 1460/70 extensively remodelled 1852.
Family	Hastings then Brown
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	12
Property	Hunstanton Hall
Parish	Old Hunstanton
Grid Ref	TF 6911 4184
Sub Region	North
Construction History	C13th core; gatehouse 1487; rebuilt 1617-23; Rebuilt after fires in the C19th and C20th.
Family	L'Estrange from the medieval period until 1760 when the hall was inherited by the Stylmans who took the name Le Strange.
Manuscript Evidence	5
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	13
Property	Mannington Hall
Parish	Itteringham
Grid Ref	TG 1438 3201
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1460s with C16th alterations and further remodelling in 1864.
Family	Built for Sir William Lumner and passed to the Potts family in 1550, who sold the estate to Horatio Walpole in 1736.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	14
Property	Melton Constable Hall
Parish	Melton Constable
Grid Ref	TG 0313 3195
Sub Region	North
Construction History	Built 1670s on the site of an earlier hall; Extended early C19th and further alterations between 1880s and 1920s.
Family	The Astley family held Melton Constable from the C16th until the 1980s.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	15
Property	Sharrington Hall
Parish	Brinton
Grid Ref	TG 0321 3695
Sub Region	North
Construction History	Medieval hall rebuilt 1480s - 1520s; Remodelled 1600.
Family	The Daubeney family from 1360 -1600 then the Hunts from 1600 - circa 1700.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	16
Property	Barsham Hall
Parish	Barsham
Grid Ref	TM 3958 9035
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1480s; extensive alterations circa 1563; Demolished circa 1810.
Family	Built for the Etchingham family; Blennerhassets from 1527 – 1613. The Suckling family from 1613 - C19th.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	17
Property	Caister Castle and Hall
Parish	Caister by Yarmouth
Grid Ref	TG 5044 1226
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	c.1432 then altered later C15th, now ruinous.
Family	Built for Sir Fastolf. The Paston family were granted the castle in the 1470s after a disputed inheritance.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	5

Map Number	18
Property	Hales Hall
Parish	Hales
Grid Ref	TM 3706 9602
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1478 rebuilt 1510; partly demolished.
Family	Built for Sir James Hobart and held by the Hobarts until 1647, then passed to the Humberstones.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	5

Map Number	19
Property	Mautby Hall
Parish	Mautby
Grid Ref	TG 4883 1137
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	rebuilt c.1450
Family	Mautby came to the Pastons through Margaret Mautby wife of John Paston of Paston. It remained in the Paston family until the 1760s when it was acquired by Lord Anson
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	20
Property	Newton Hall
Parish	Trowse Newton
Grid Ref	TG 2570 0770
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	c.1450; Severely damaged in 1766 and ruined 1890.
Family	Ecclesiastical residence used as a retreat by the Priors of Norwich. After the Dissolution it was home to former Deans of Norwich Cathedral before becoming a farmhouse until the 1760s.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	21
Property	Oxnead Hall
Parish	Brampton
Grid Ref	TG 2302 2396
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	Med/C15th/Rebuilt in late C16th and again 1630-1640
Family	C16th house built for Sir Clement Paston and remained in the Paston family until 1732.
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	4
Map Number	22
Property	Paston Hall
Parish	Paston
Grid Ref	TG 3230 3456
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	C15th courtyard house rebuilt in the C16th; ruinous by the early C17th.
Family	Built for William and Agnes Paston in the mid C15th. Remained in the Paston family until acquired by Lord Anson in the 1760s
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2
Map Number	23
Property	Harling Hall
Parish	Harling
Grid Ref	TL 9911 8680
Sub Region	Breckland
Construction History	1490; Some C17th and C18th remodelling; demolished C19th
Family	Built for Sir Thomas Lovell and remained in the Lovell family until the C18th
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	24
Property	Kenninghall Palace
Parish	Kenninghall
Grid Ref	TM 0650 8549
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1520s; Demolished 1650
Family	Built for Thomas Howard, third Duke of Norfolk and held by that family until the present day.
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	25
Property	Old Boyland Hall
Parish	Bressingham
Grid Ref	TM 0854 8442
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	circa 1500
Family	The Lancaster family held Boyland during the C15th and from them the hall passed to Williams Bolton (d.1528)
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	26
Property	Shelton Hall
Parish	Shelton
Grid Ref	TM 2273 9059
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	Circa 1490; abandoned mid C17th; demolished circa 1700
Family	Sir Ralph Shelton built the hall and it remained in that family until the late C16th when the hall and the park were sold to Sir Robert Houghton
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	27
Property	Wacton Hall
Parish	Wacton
Grid Ref	TM 1801 9027
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	Early C16th and extended 1600
Family	Dukes of Brampton & Benhall
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	28
Property	Wingfield Castle
Parish	Wingfield
Grid Ref	TM 2242 7724
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	1384/Early C16th
Family	Probably built by Michael de la Pole, first Earl of Suffolk, who had licence to crenellate; Ralph, Lord Cromwell in the late C15th.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	29
Property	Kimberley Hall
Parish	Kimberley
Grid Ref	TG 0761 0405
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	C15th; some rebuilding circa 1570; demolished 1659
Family	Fastolf then Sir John Wodehouse in whose family the manor remained until 1957
Manuscript Evidence	5
Field Evidence	5

Map Number	30
Property	Woodrising Old Hall
Parish	Cranworth
Grid Ref	TF 9913 0257
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	C15th and C16th
Family	Southwell then Crane
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	31
Property	Crows Hall
Parish	Debenham
Grid Ref	TM 1925 6279
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	1508 with further work mid C16th
Family	Francis Framlingham (d.1544) or his son Sir Charles Framlingham
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	32
Property	Gipping Hall
Parish	Gipping
Grid Ref	TM 0731 6370
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	C15th
Family	The Tyrell family
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	33
Property	Helmingham Hall
Parish	Helmingham
Grid Ref	TM 1868 5774
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	1485-7; circa 1750; 1800 and 1841
Family	Built for Sir Lionel Tollemache
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	34
Property	Moat Hall
Parish	Parham
Grid Ref	TM 3119 5991
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	C15th; early C16th; later C16th
Family	The Willoughbys were second only to the Duke of Suffolk. William 10th Lord Willoughby de Eresby, who succeeded his father at Parham in 1498
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	35
Property	Otley Hall
Parish	Otley
Grid Ref	TM 2071 5624
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	Mid C15th
Family	Gosnold
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	36
Property	Thistleton Hall [Thistleden]
Parish	Burgh
Grid Ref	TM 2356 5307
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	Medieval; Only earthworks remain
Family	de Thistleden, then John Bishopp. Anthony Bishopp in 1564
Manuscript Evidence	1
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	37
Property	Badmondisfield Hall
Parish	Wickhambrook
Grid Ref	TL 7474 5700
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	Medieval hall rebuilt C15th with further alterations C16th
Family	Hastings then the de Greys. Sir Henry North, youngest son of Lord North lived here c. 1620
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	38
Property	Balsden [or Balisden] Hall
Parish	Acton
Grid Ref	TL 8948 8543
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	Circa 1500
Family	An ecclesiastical residence used as a retreat for the Abbots of Bury then Sir William Cordell post Dissolution. Part of Melford Estate
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	39
Property	Denston Hall
Parish	Denston
Grid Ref	TL 7582 5235
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	C15th Gatehouse; C16th range; rebuilt C18th
Family	Broughton from C15th then the Burd family until early C17th
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	40
Property	Gedding Hall
Parish	Gedding
Grid Ref	TL 9537 5858
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	Late C15th; C16th; Extensive rebuilding 1897.
Family	The Chamberlain family during the C15th and C16th then the Page family until the C19th.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	41
Property	Gifford's Hall SBN
Parish	Stoke-by-Nayland
Grid Ref	TM 0179 3743
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	C.1428/late C15th
Family	Mannocks
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	42
Property	Gifford's Hall WBK
Parish	Wickhambrook
Grid Ref	TL 7709 5383
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	c.1480 -1520
Family	Hieghams
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	43
Property	Eriswell Hall
Parish	Eriswell
Grid Ref	TL 7204 8069
Sub Region	Breckland
Construction History	Medieval hall replaced by an C18th farmhouse
Family	The Tuddenhams
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	44
Property	Kentwell Hall
Parish	Long Melford
Grid Ref	TL 8634 4793
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	C15th; remodelled C16th
Family	Drurys
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	45
Property	Melford Hall
Parish	Long Melford
Grid Ref	TL 8664 4615
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	c.1545-55
Family	Sir William Cordell
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	46
Property	Appleton Hall
Parish	Flitcham with Appleton
Grid Ref	TF 7069 2728
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1596
Family	Sir Edward Paston
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	47
Property	Beaupre Hall
Parish	Outwell
Grid Ref	TF 5151 0456
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1500 - 1525
Family	Beaupre then Bell from until 1567 until C18th
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	48
Property	Flitcham Priory
Parish	Flitcham & Appleton
Grid Ref	TF 7363 2653
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Mid C16th house replaced by a C19th farmhouse
Family	Former Augustine Priory granted to Richard Cromwell at the Dissolution and passed to the Hollys family. Part of the Holkham Estate C18th
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	49
Property	Lovell's Hall
Parish	Terrington St. Clement
Grid Ref	TF 5495 1955
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Circa 1543
Family	Lovell
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	50
Property	Merton Hall
Parish	Merton
Grid Ref	TL 9117 9775
Sub Region	Breckland
Construction History	1613; Altered 1770s; Extended 1830s; partially destroyed by fire in 1956
Family	de Grey since 1337 until the present day.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	51
Property	Hockwold Hall
Parish	Hockwold
Grid Ref	TL 7242 8806
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Circa 1600; remodelled C18th and circa 1900
Family	The Heveninghamhs followed by the Wyche Family.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2
Map Number	52
Property	Panworth Old Hall
Parish	Ashill
Grid Ref	TF 8968 0479
Sub Region	Breckland
Construction History	C15th?
Family	Hoogan, 1581
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2
Map Number	53
Property	Stow Bardolph Hall
Parish	Stow Bardolph
Grid Ref	TF 6332 0606
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1589; Rebuilt 1796; replaced in C19th; demolished 1990s
Family	Sir Nicholas Hare acquired Stow Bardolph in 1553 and the estate has remained with the Hare family until the present day.
Manuscript Evidence	5
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	54
Property	Stradsett Hall
Parish	Stradsett
Grid Ref	TF 6665 0577
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1570; new facade created 1819
Family	Picot then Goldsmith then Bagge from C18th to present day.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	55
Property	Wallington Hall
Parish	Runceton Holme
Grid Ref	TF 6271 0758
Sub Region	West
Construction History	Early C16th
Family	Thomas Gawswell; 1525 - Coningsby . Bell from C16th.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	56
Property	West Dereham Grange
Parish	West Dereham
Grid Ref	TF 6715 0325
Sub Region	West
Construction History	c.1625; demolished 1950s
Family	the Dereham family mid-C16th to 1739 then inherited by Sir Simeon Stuart.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	57
Property	Euston Hall
Parish	Euston
Grid Ref	TL 898 786
Sub Region	Breckland
Construction History	Late med replaced 1660s and mid C18th; remodelled 1902 and partially demolished 1951.
Family	The Rookwoods then Lord Arlington and the Dukes of Grafton till present.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	59
Property	Hillington Hall
Parish	Hillington
Grid Ref	TF 7230 2574
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1627; altered 1620s; rebuilt 1820s; demolished 1946
Family	Hovell then Ffolkes.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	60
Property	Aylsham Manor
Parish	Aylsham
Grid Ref	TG 1948 2672
Sub Region	North
Construction History	c.1580
Family	Bought 1611 by Bishop Jegon.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	61
Property	Barningham Hall
Parish	Matlask
Grid Ref	TG 1479 3547
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1612; 1805; 1907
Family	Built for Sir Edward Paston and acquired by Thomas Vertue Mott in 1785.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	62
Property	East Barsham Manor
Parish	East Barsham
Grid Ref	TF 9174 3388?
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1520 - 30; restored 1919 and 1938
Family	Built for Sir Henry Fermor.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	63
Property	East Bilney Hall
Parish	East Bilney
Grid Ref	TF 9453 1970
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	c.1600; C19th hall nearby
Family	Crowe
Manuscript Evidence	1
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	64
Property	Felbrigg Hall
Parish	Felbrigg
Grid Ref	TG 1934 3941
Sub Region	North
Construction History	circa 1620; extended 1670-90 and 1740s
Family	The Windham family from 1460 to 1863; Now National Trust.
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	66
Property	Great Snoring Manor (The Old Rectory)
Parish	Great Snoring
Grid Ref	TF 9452 3454?
Sub Region	North
Construction History	c.1525
Family	Sir Ralph Shelton then Richardson.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	68
Property	Heydon Hall
Parish	Heydon
Grid Ref	TG 1160 2771
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1581-4; C19th repairs
Family	Built for Sir Henry Dynne then passed to the Colfers, the Kemps and the Earles until 1762.
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	69
Property	Hindringham Hall
Parish	Hindringham
Grid Ref	TF 9783 3665
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1562; Extensively restored 1907
Family	Dean and Chapter of Norwich Cathedral leased to various tenants
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	70
Property	North Barningham Hall
Parish	Gresham
Grid Ref	TG 1563 3692
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	C15th/but mainly C17th
Family	Palgrave or Pargrave
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	71
Property	Raynham Hall
Parish	Raynham, East
Grid Ref	TF 8820 2578
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1622-37
Family	Sir Roger Townshend and remains in the Townshend family
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	72
Property	Stiffkey Old Hall
Parish	Stiffkey
Grid Ref	TF 9746 4257
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1576 with C17th additions and alterations
Family	Sir Nicholas Bacon for Nathaniel Bacon, then the Townshends of Raynham
Manuscript Evidence	5
Field Evidence	5
Map Number	73
Property	Swannington Hall
Parish	Swannington
Grid Ref	TG 1387 1930
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1540 with many later alterations/additions
Family	Richers
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	74
Property	Thornage Hall
Parish	Thornage
Grid Ref	TG 0475 3629
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1472-99/remodelled C17th
Family	Grange of the Bishops of Norwich until 1535 then Sir William Butts then Sir Nicholas Bacon
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	75
Property	Thorpland Hall
Parish	Fakenham
Grid Ref	TF 9375 3220
Sub Region	North
Construction History	1520-30
Family	Fermor
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	76
Property	Thursford Hall
Parish	Thursford
Grid Ref	TF 9830 3360
Sub Region	North
Construction History	C16th
Family	Guybon
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	77
Property	Tacolneston Hall
Parish	Tacolneston
Grid Ref	TM 1381 9551
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	med/circa 1700
Family	Sir Robert Baldock
Manuscript Evidence	NA
Field Evidence	NA

Map Number	78
Property	Crostwight Hall
Parish	Honing
Grid Ref	TG 3399 2967
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1500-1540
Family	Le Gros
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	79
Property	Norwich, Mount Surrey
Parish	Thorpe Hamlet
Grid Ref	TG 2418 0884
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1544; damaged during Kett's Rebellion 1549; remainder became a farmhouse.
Family	Site of St. Michael's Chapel. Post Dissolution the Duke of Norfolk for his son the Earl of Surrey.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	80
Property	Castle Rising
Parish	Castle Rising
Grid Ref	TF 6660 2457
Sub Region	West
Construction History	1138
Family	Built by D'Albini subsequently passed to the Crown then the Howards till present day.
Manuscript Evidence	NA
Field Evidence	NA

Map Number	80
Property	Ranworth Old Hall
Parish	Ranworth
Grid Ref	TG 3443 1537
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	C15th; C16th ; Demolished 1985
Family	Holdich then Sidley
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	81
Property	Somerleyton
Parish	Somerleyton
Grid Ref	TM 4930 9777
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1600
Family	Wentworth
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	83
Property	Thorpe House
Parish	Thorpe St. Andrew
Grid Ref	TG 2553 0838
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	C14th courtyard house/late C16th
Family	Bishop of Norwich then Sir Edward Paston
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	84
Property	Waxham Hall
Parish	Waxham
Grid Ref	TG 4398 2623
Sub Region	North East
Construction History	1570
Family	Hall built by the Wodehouses of Waxham
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	86
Property	Ashwellthorpe Hall
Parish	Ashwellthorpe
Grid Ref	TM 1500 9782
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	c.1600; Altered in C19th
Family	Built for Sir Thomas Knyvett
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	87
Property	Attleborough Hall
Parish	Attleborough
Grid Ref	TM 0505 9633
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	C16th with C17th alterations
Family	Mortimer; Ratcliff; Sir Francis Bickley
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	88
Property	Barnham Broome Hall
Parish	Barnham Broome
Grid Ref	TG 0795 0805
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1510 -1550
Family	Chamberlain
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	89
Property	Besthorpe Hall
Parish	Besthorpe
Grid Ref	TM 0675 9541
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1590s; rebuilt C19th
Family	Built for Anthony Drury
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	91
Property	Breckles Hall
Parish	Stow Bedon
Grid Ref	TL 9619 9450
Sub Region	Breckland
Construction History	1583
Family	Wodehouse then Gardiner from 1599
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	92
Property	Channons Hall
Parish	Tibenham
Grid Ref	TM 148 884
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1569; Kitchen wing survived demolition of 1784
Family	Built for Robert Buxton
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	93
Property	Costessey Hall
Parish	Costessey
Grid Ref	TG 1630 1120
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1564; Altered 1780-90; Extended 1826; demolished circa 1918
Family	Jerningham
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	94
Property	Great Cressingham, Priory Farm
Parish	Great Cressingham
Grid Ref	TF 8519 0207
Sub Region	Breckland
Construction History	c.1545
Family	Former ecclesiastical manor acquired by the Jenney family at the Dissolution.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	96
Property	Hethel Hall
Parish	Bracon Ash
Grid Ref	TG 1632 0131
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	C16th?; demolished
Family	Townshend then Branthwayt from 1601
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	97
Property	Hoxne Hall
Parish	Hoxne
Grid Ref	TM 1760 774 approx
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	Early C16th
Family	Bishop's Palace, then Crown 1535, Duke of Suffolk 1536-7, 1543 Sir Robert Southwell.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	98
Property	Intwood Hall
Parish	Keswick
Grid Ref	TG 1935 0419
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	Before 1545; Rebuilt 1560; Rebuilt circa 1800
Family	Built for Sir Richard Gresham, remained in that family until 1596 when it passed to the Hobarts
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	99
Property	Morley St. Peter Old Hall
Parish	Morley St. Peter
Grid Ref	TM 0564 9840
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1545 - 1600
Family	Sedley from 1545
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	100
Property	Rainthorpe Hall
Parish	Flordon
Grid Ref	TM 2025 9716
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1503; two wings added 1580s
Family	Appleyard, then Baxter late C16th, then Thomas Newce from 1628
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	101
Property	Redgrave Hall
Parish	Redgrave
Grid Ref	TM 05 76
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	1545
Family	Sir Nicholas Bacon
Manuscript Evidence	4
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	103
Property	Brent Eleigh Hall
Parish	Brent Eleigh
Grid Ref	TL 9414 4824
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	C18th house on earlier site
Family	
Manuscript Evidence	NA
Field Evidence	NA

Map Number	104
Property	Wilby Hall
Parish	Quidenham
Grid Ref	TM 0321 9057
Sub Region	Central
Construction History	med/ rebuilt circa 1600
Family	Curson in 15th/C16th; Lovell; Green until 1622 then Wilton
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	107
Property	Friston Hall
Parish	Friston
Grid Ref	TM 4050 6028
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	Med/1532/rebuilt late C17th.
Family	Originally property of Snape Priory but acquired by Cardinal Wolsey 1524; Michael Hall or Hare 1532 then Sir James Bacon.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2
Map Number	109
Property	Henham Hall
Parish	Henham
Grid Ref	TM 4510 7820
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	1520s-30s
Family	Built for Charles Brandon Duke of Suffolk then Sir Arthur Hopton to 1544 then the Rous family until C20th.
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2
Map Number	110
Property	Framlingham Castle
Parish	Framlingham
Grid Ref	TM 2864 6373
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	C12th
Family	The Howards
Manuscript Evidence	NA
Field Evidence	NA
Map Number	112
Property	Shrubland Old Hall
Parish	Barham
Grid Ref	TM 1279 5303
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	circa 1525
Family	Built for Sir Philip Bothe
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	114
Property	Westhorpe Hall
Parish	Westhorpe
Grid Ref	TM 0509 6915
Sub Region	South East
Construction History	1520s
Family	Built for Mary Tudor, Duchess of Suffolk, wife of Charles Brandon
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	2

Map Number	116
Property	Badley Hall
Parish	Badley
Grid Ref	TM 0606 5584
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	1520-30
Family	Built for Sir Edmund Poley, the hall stayed in the Poley family until the 1750s
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	4

Map Number	117
Property	Barrow Hall
Parish	Barrow
Grid Ref	TL 7613 6419
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	Mid C16th
Family	Sir Clement Heigham, Speaker of the House of Commons, c. 1555
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	118
Property	Chevington Hall
Parish	Chevington
Grid Ref	TL 7893 6019
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	Mid C16th, altered c1700
Family	Kitson of Hengrave bought the estate post Dissolution
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	120
Property	Hawstead Place
Parish	Hawstead
Grid Ref	TL 8428 5997
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	1510;1578
Family	Manor of Bokenhams alias Talmages purchased by Roger Drury 1463-4 (S2). His son, Sir Robert Drury, had a licence for a chapel here 1501 and a licence to crenellate his manor 1510
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	121
Property	Hengrave Hall
Parish	Hengrave
Grid Ref	TL 8234 6857
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	1524-40
Family	Duke of Buckingham, then Sir Thomas Kitson, from 1524; Then Gages; C16th hall begun 1525, completed 1538
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	122
Property	Little Thurlow Hall
Parish	Little Thurlow
Grid Ref	TL 6735 5107
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	Only earthworks survive
Family	Ecclesiastical Manor acquired by Henry Turner of Wrating, before 1536 and remained in that family until the 1570s. Shortly afterwards the manor was acquired by Thomas Wisbicke and then Sir Stephen Soame, Knt., Sheriff of London in 1589, and Lord Mayor in 1598.
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	123
Property	Little Wenham Hall
Parish	Wenham Parva
Grid Ref	TM 0805 3910
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	1270-80
Family	
Manuscript Evidence	NA
Field Evidence	NA
Map Number	125
Property	Little Saxham Hall
Parish	The Saxhams
Grid Ref	TL 8063 6337
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	1505-14
Family	Built for Thomas Lucas, Solicitor-General to Henry VII
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Map Number	126
Property	Ousden Hall
Parish	Ousden
Grid Ref	TL 7352 5962
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	C16th; demolished 1955
Family	Moseley
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	2
Map Number	128
Property	Smallbridge Hall
Parish	Bures
Grid Ref	TL 9293 3307
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	c.1572
Family	Waldergrave
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	129
Property	West Stow Hall
Parish	West Stow
Grid Ref	TL 8159 0879
Sub Region	South West
Construction History	c.1520
Family	Sir John Crofts
Manuscript Evidence	2
Field Evidence	3

Map Number	141
Property	Hardwick Manor
Parish	King's Lynn
Grid Ref	TF 63 18
Sub Region	West
Construction History	c. 1600
Family	Petus
Manuscript Evidence	NA
Field Evidence	NA

Appendix 2

An Extract from the Research Database: Morley St. Peter Old Hall.

Note: Primary sources are stored in a separate but related database used to create the primary sources bibliography, above.

Property	Morley St. Peter Old Hall
Map Number	99
Parish	Morley St. Peter
Grid Ref	TM 0564 9840
Sub Region	Central
Chapter	5/6 Space permitting [Important for aspect, intervisibility and the creation of a 'display' zone.]
Construction History	1545 - 1600
Family	The Morley family during the C15th; Sir Henry Parker, Lord Morley sold the manor to John Sedley in 1545. The Sedleys (or Sidleys) continued at Morley until the late C18th
Manuscript Evidence	3
Field Evidence	3
Summary Family History	Lord Morley was a prominent courtier during the reign of Henry VIII whose principal residences lay elsewhere. John Sedley came to Norfolk from Kent. Martin Sedley Senior died in 1579: It may be the case that the new property was built after the son inherited. The Sedleys were Recusants 16th - early C17th;
Family connections	Knyvett of Ashwellthorpe Hall; Shelton of Shelton Hall; Somner of Buckinghamshire; Catton of Staffordshire
Other properties	Barford
Date of House, moat or no	C16th/Moat
Water Features	Rectangular moat; L-shaped pond/moat; Further ponds
Landscape Features	Enclosures with trees; suggestions of former park, ie Parke Wood and Parke Meadow, but may refer to Attleborough Park which bounded Morley. The hall was positioned 150 metres from edge of Hooke Wood Common; Open fields to east and north of demesne;
Garden Features	Possible garden courtyard within outer moat
Approach routes	From the east across the outer moated courtyard
Footpaths	One across the former open field
Church	700m NE of hall
Buildings	Dovecote in Dovehouse Yard; Two large barns flanking the approach route, one standing within the partially moated outer courtyard, the other just beyond the moated feature. Many outbuildings shown on Waterman map.
Neighbouring properties	Morley Manor 1km NW; Attleborough Hall 2.1 km SW; Ashwellthorpe Hall 9.5 km SE.
Location	The hall sits on the 50m contour on a gently rising south-facing site.
Commons or Greens	Hooke Wood Common lay within 150m of the hall, Morley green 800 m.
Surrounding Landscape	Hall was on the edge of Hooke Wood Common; open fields to north and east.
Contact with community	The principal rooms overlooked the demesne whereas the rooms at the back of the house overlooked Hooke Wood Common and a sheepwalk.
Subsequent residences on site	Gate house no longer exists; The c. 1600 residence is still inhabited and the principle moat is in good condition.
HER Ref	9118

HER summary

A 16th century brick hall within a medieval moat. The hall was reputedly built for the Sedley family in 1545 although the present hall appears to date from the late 16th century. The hall has ovolo-moulded windows with brick pediments and two crow-stepped dormer windows. The chimney stack to the south has a garderobe projection and the house has an original hardwood staircase.

HER 2nd File Available/seen

YES/YES

Aerial Photograph Ref

TM0598 C-F,G-R.

Pevsner Ref

Norfolk 2/545

Norfolk Arch or Proc Suffolk

Volume 32 p36,

Secondary Ref 1

Mercer, E.. 1975. English Vernacular Houses. p.190.

Secondary Ref 2

Williamson, Shaping Medieval Landscapes, pp.95 & 100

Secondary Ref 3

Rose, E.. 2001. Building Report

Secondary Ref 4

Charles Hawkins & Sons. 1975. Morley Old Hall (Auction guide).