

Hobs Moat 1985 – 1988

The Final Report



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**The Final Report on the Archaeology and History of Hobs Moat, Solihull,
and the Conservation of the Moated Homestead site,
by the Community Project, 1985-1988.**

Pdf publication with video sequences.
Requires Adobe Reader 9.0 or later, or equivalent,
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varying according to speed of broadband connection

The Interim Report of the community project is included with the
disc, or can be downloaded from the website

secretary@hobsmoat.website



Surrounded by houses and heavily tree-covered (March 2016)



Rampart conservation 1986

A much threatened site . . .

The government established the Community Programme in a time of mass unemployment to do work 'which would not normally be undertaken' . This was the role of the Community Project at Hobs Moat in Solihull.

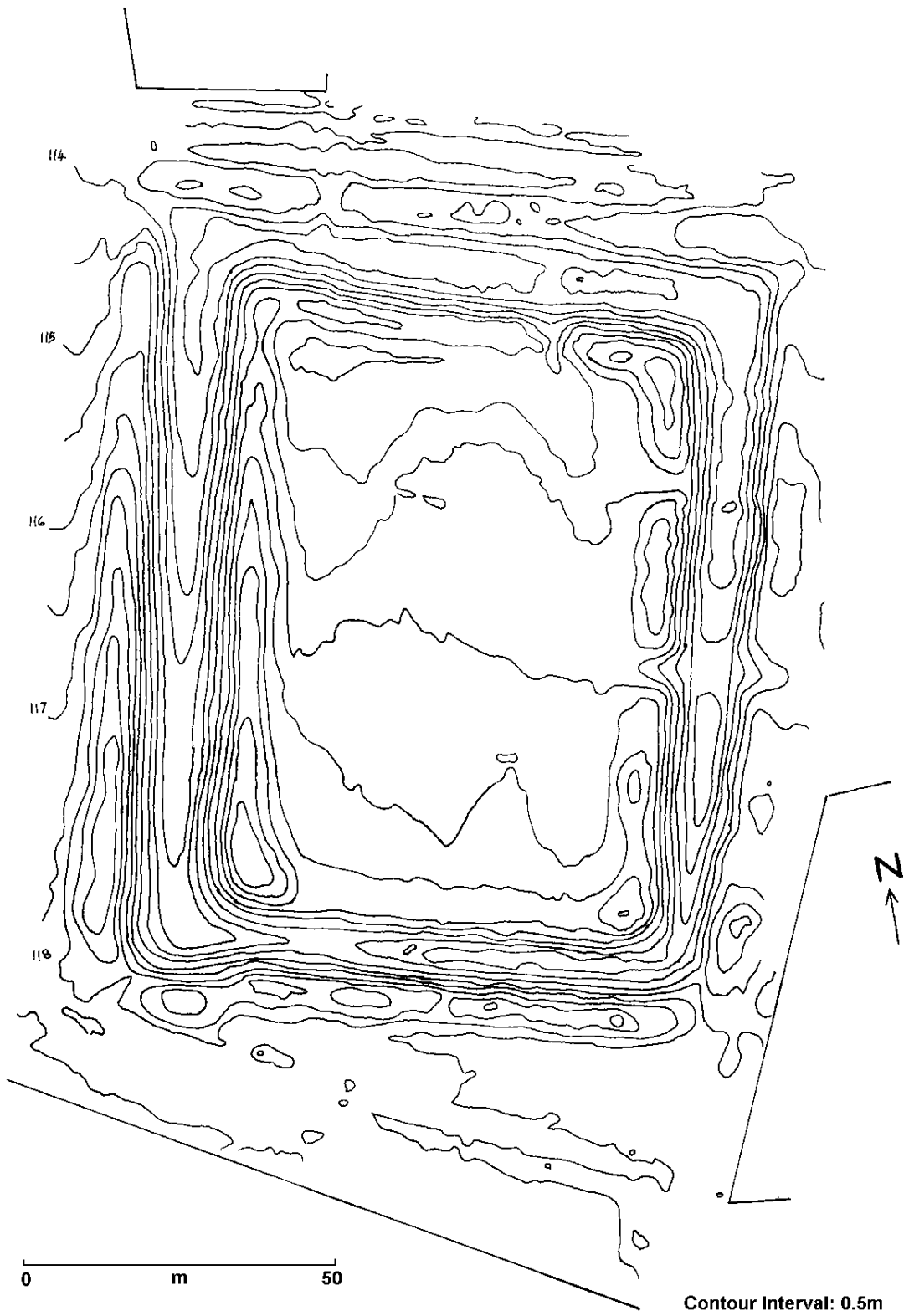
During a three year period, from 1985 until 1988, the project attended to the problems which afflicted the moated homestead site, restoring its impressive ramparts and halting the erosion which had denuded the earthwork. It installed paths around the monument and improved and managed the vegetation, and raised awareness of the site both in public and private perceptions.

Part of the project's brief was to mount an enquiry into the archaeological and historical background of the earthwork. This is the final report of its findings.

A final account of the conservation of the monument then follows.

The project was funded by the Manpower Services Commission for central government, and managed by Solihull Enterprise Agency, latterly Solihull Community Enterprise. Materials' funding was from Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, the landowner.

Sixty-six persons were employed by the project, half on the landscaping team and half on the archaeological team.



Hobs Moat Contour Survey 1986-1987

1. Site contour map produced by the community project

Acknowledgements.

Many individuals and bodies are to be thanked for their help thirty years ago: Solihull Enterprise Agency whose robust manager Tom Lewis provided so much support and back-up; the Manpower Services Commission for funding employment; English Heritage for its advice and interest; and Dr Michael Parker-Pearson, also of English Heritage, for giving the project a sympathetic hearing at the beginning. To Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council there is special indebtedness for sponsorship, and the project remembers also Dr Ron Barker of Birmingham University Department of Geology for services rendered; Charlotte Cane of Birmingham University who considered the pottery; and P. V. Panchanathan, of the School of Earth Studies, University of Kerala, S. India, who conducted the first resistivity work.

Gratitude goes to Dr David Wilson of Keele University for listening and encouraging, and to Dr David Higgins of Liverpool University for his report on the clay pipe finds. Most especially Councillor David Wilkes of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council is remembered, without whose vigorous interest the project would never have been started. Finally a special word of appreciation and respect goes to all the hundreds of formerly unemployed people who worked on the community project, patiently and without complaint, without whose efforts and indeed patience, in sometimes very difficult circumstances, nothing would have been possible.

James Debney, November 2016.

The Community Programme was set up to provide paid work for long-term unemployed people during the unemployment crisis of the 1980s. It was funded by the government's Manpower Services Commission, and organised in locally inspired community projects; these were sponsored by local bodies and individuals. Periods of employment were for up to twelve months for supervisory staff and six months for part-time employees - renewable for supervisory staff, by application, for a further twelve months.

The initiative ended in 1988, as the economy improved and people returned to normal employment conditions. It was replaced by an unpaid 'Employment Training' scheme.

The ending of paid employment at Hobs Moat meant that only in 2016 has it been possible to produce the Final Report for the site, finally.

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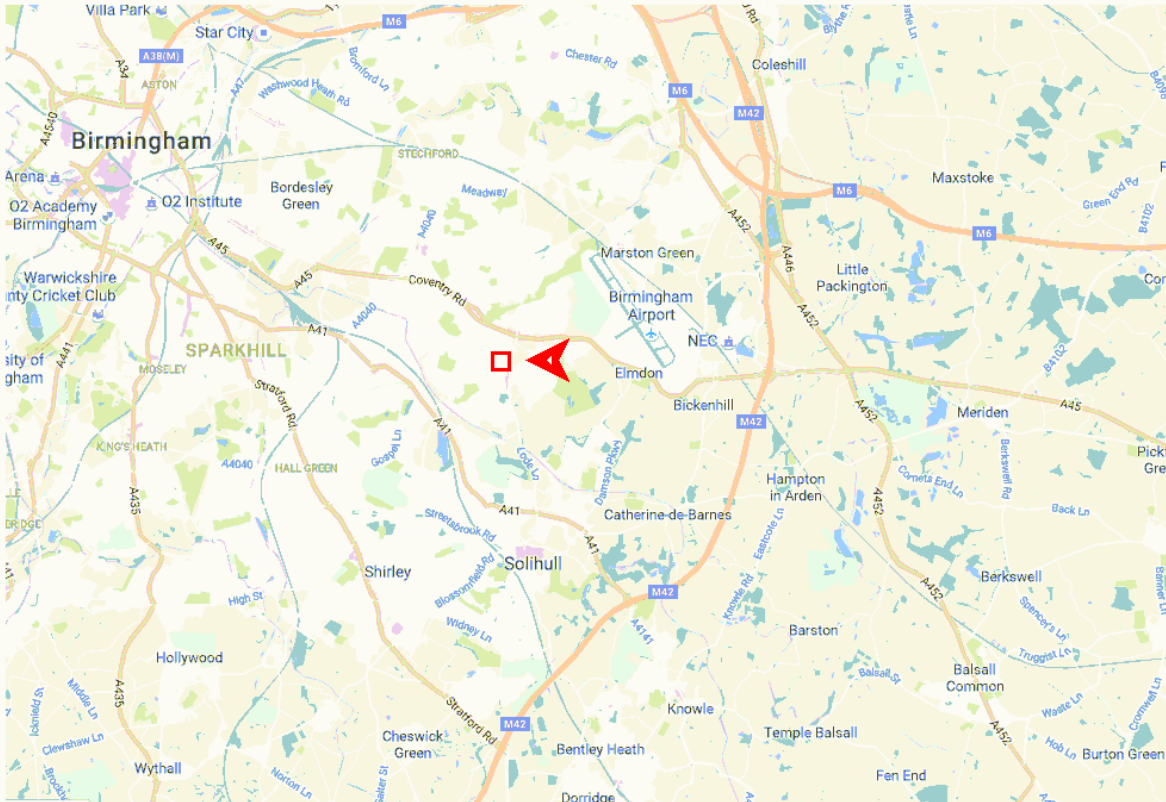
SUPERVISORY TEAMS

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P.S. Nichols, B.A.	Senior Supervisor
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2. Hobs Moat: site location

[Expand map](#)

Hobs Moat in 1985; the project background.

Hobs Moat became a scheduled ancient monument in 1936. A year later, the Ideal Benefit Society, the landowners, gave the earthwork to the people of Solihull as an open space amenity. Being scheduled, however, afforded it scant protection; by the early 1980s the existence of the site was severely threatened.

The initial problem was caused by local housing construction in the 1930s, and the consequent arrival of people in numbers. Prior to this the moat had existed in isolation in a rural landscape. It had been planted with trees in the eighteenth century and these trees and their descendants had produced a low light environment at ground level.

The increased activity on the site now caused the stressed ground level vegetation to lessen and disappear - by the 1960s the earthwork was largely denuded of grass and shrubbery. In 1985 the ramparts were very seriously eroded and the earthwork was being used by local children as a BMX bike track, leading to further severe erosion. In places the ramparts had been reduced in height by more than 0.5m, while more generally across the earthwork, the over-dense tree cover had itself begun to die back.

The serious situation could not be addressed by obvious means: a method had to be found of restoring and maintaining the earthwork, and urgent action was necessary. The problem then was people - bringing about a management method where the site and its visitors could co-exist. At the same time little was known of the history of the site. There was no reason for local people to have an investment in its future.

In a time of mass unemployment the government introduced methods for dealing with the jobs crisis. One scheme was the Community Programme, where long-term unemployed people were paid to do work which would not normally be undertaken. A community project was suggested for Hobs Moat.¹

The project came into being in October 1985, with a brief to halt the erosion of the earthwork, to re-topsoil it where necessary and establish ground cover, and to provide paths around the monument to reduce traffic in the scheduled area. A further requirement was that it should give people an interest in the site, and an awareness of its meaning, by a programme of academic and archaeological enquiry. Sixty-six people previously unemployed were to be employed generally on the project, mostly part-time.

Over the next three years the archaeological and historical programme produced a great deal of information: it is the primary purpose of this report to give a final account of these findings. The self-contained work begins with a general introduction to Hobs Moat followed by a description of the manorial history of the area, followed in turn by antiquarian accounts of the site. The archaeological findings are then described in detail - both in the scheduled area (the moat platform) and in its environs. The specialist reports, on site resistivity, the pottery and the clay pipe finds, finish this section.

The second section is, by its nature, much shorter and deals with the site

conservation programme. In text, pictures and video this most important aspect of the Hobs Moat project is described. It is also self-contained. An assessment of the effectiveness of the work, eloquently supported by pictures, brings to an end the publication and this, the Final Report on the Hobs Moat Project 1985-1988.

The report and more information on the site, both about its history and the history of the project, is available at www.hobsmoat.website. It is also available with its associated video and picture files (only) on DVD data disc retained in several places.



This graphic photograph illustrates the condition of the earthwork. A considerable scoop out of the inner side of the western inner rampart has been made by BMX bikers. The lack of topsoil is evident - note the exposed tree root on the right. The rampart cross-section H.M.2 was to be excavated at this point, taking 'advantage' of the damage.

Hobs Moat was scheduled as an ancient monument on 16th October 1936, and is currently listed as a protected site, entry no 1014043, under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

1 James Debney conceived and described the Hobs Moat project and campaigned for it throughout 1984 and 1985. Considerable impetus was added when ward councillor David Wilkes lent support and spoke for it in Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council meetings. In 1985 the council voted to sponsor the project.

The Archaeology and History of Hobs Moat.

The research findings of the Hobs Moat Community Project, 1985 – 1988.

Excavation Summary.

The project's archaeological team conducted a series of excavations on and around the monument during 1985 to 1988. The results obtained from these excavations showed that the earthwork's environs have suffered greatly from agricultural usage which seems to have destroyed, in most of the external areas investigated, evidence of earlier activity. The excavations on the scheduled area (the moat platform) disclosed that the earliest activity on the hill was an open medieval settlement which was later enclosed by a 'small earthwork', which in turn was superseded by the moat we see today. The monument appears to have been occupied for a brief time in its moat phase; subsequent to its abandonment it was used for agricultural purposes before being planted with oak trees in the late eighteenth century.

Introduction.

Hobs Moat covers an area of 11,000m² with a platform area of 4950m². The site is unusual in its size but its most interesting feature is its impressive rampart system which has both internal and external ramparts; the ramparts are up to 2m in height with the moat reaching 4m in depth and an average of 20m in width.

There is only one previous excavation recorded at Hobs Moat and this was not on the platform but through the northern moat to drain the standing water.¹ The site has been visited several times by historians, the most notable being Sir William Dugdale,² but all their accounts lack any firm evidence about the site. It was hoped that the archaeological investigation of the monument would enhance our understanding of the monument.

Physical Description.

Hobs Moat lies approximately 4km (2.5 miles) north of Solihull town centre on the north facing slope of a low hill overlooking Hatchford Brook (location plan p. 12), a tributary of the river Cole, and beside the Hobs Moat Road. The site is situated on glacial deposits of sand and clay which are underlain by Keuper Marl (Mercian mudstone), which is the dominant element of the solid geology.

The moat is not, and does not appear ever to have been, connected to Hatchford Brook or to any other source of flowing water. The boundary of the drift deposits, mentioned above, lies only a few metres away from the northern arm of the moat, and it appears that the cutting of the arm, into the underlying Keuper marl, produced a spring-line which seems to have been the main source of water for the moat. The moat, however, was essentially 'dry', water collecting only in the northern part of the ditch, as is evident from the contour map (p. 5). Here it can be seen that the lowest point of the ditch in the south lies above the northern counter-scarp.

1 P.W. Gathercole, *Hobs Moat, Olton, 1955*. Birmingham Archaeological Society, Transactions and Proceedings, vol. 73, pp. 118 – 119 (1957).

2 Sir William Dugdale, *The Antiquities of Warwickshire illustrated*, p. 939 (1656).



Videophoto

Water collects at the base of the northern ditch after extended rain periods - *top*. Above, the south-western internal corner of the monument. Both photographs show the severely eroded condition of the earthwork in the 1980s, clearly demonstrated by the exposure of tree roots.

The width of the moat, from rampart crown to crown, varies along its circuit from ca. 18m in the south to ca. 23m in the west, while the depth varies from ca. 3m to ca. 4.5m beneath rampart crown. The moat is now normally entirely dry for much of the year owing to a combination of slope, silting, rampart erosion and modern drainage. However this has not always been the case and the northern arm of the moat retained water until 1955 when the local authority constructed a drain.³ Documentary research also shows that up until the latter part of the eighteenth century a depth of water could be seen in the moat's northern arm while the southern section, as above, remained dry.⁴

The up-cast from the moat was used to construct the internal and external ramparts which are ca. 2m in height, although the southern internal and eastern external ramparts are not evident. The eastern internal rampart is broken in two places: in the northern of these two breaks, structural material could be seen eroding from the moat section; but despite investigation the precise function of this gap is difficult to ascertain (see H.M.3, p. 46). The second opening is 35m to the south and has a corresponding break in the external rampart; it would appear that this was the medieval entrance. A causeway bridges the moat at this point, but as with causeways on other moated sites, this may be a post-medieval construction related to agricultural use of the enclosure rather than being a medieval feature.

The platform is rectangular in shape, covering an area of ca. 85m by ca. 55m, and falls 2.5m from south to north. The north of the enclosure may have been raised slightly to produce a level platform, while two drainage ditches have been cut which channel water into the northern arm of the moat via a break in the northern internal rampart: the western ditch is vaguely evident and could be a natural depression of little definition. There are also, apparently, traces of ridge and furrow on the platform and these may be the result of the ploughing noted by Hutton in 1783.⁵ If this assumption is correct then it would date the ploughing to prior to 1783 but after 1656 when Sir William Dugdale visited the site.⁶

There is no evidence of any structural material to be found on the moat platform (but see above). However, there is disturbance in the centre of the platform, parallel with the entrance, and this perhaps marks the position of stone which is recorded as having been removed by local people in the nineteenth century.⁷

3 Gathercole.

4 William Hutton, *An History of Birmingham*. pp. 446-7 (1783).

5 Hutton.

6 Dugdale.

7 R. Pemberton, *Solihull and its Church*, pp. 34-35 (1905).



Videophoto



Videophoto

The apparent main entrance on the eastern side of the earthwork with the 'causeway' in front - top. The outer rampart has a corresponding break at this point. Above, the second gap in the eastern inner rampart, 30 m to the north. This is the site of H.M.2. Close-up, dressed sandstone blocks can be seen protruding from under the tree.

Documentary Evidence - 1.

Hobs Moat does not appear in any written source until 1656, when Sir William Dugdale visited the site and described it in his 'Antiquities of Warwickshire':

That this with the other lands which the said Christina then held, came to the Familie of Limsie, I have in Long Itchington already manifested, here being the seat of the Limsie's Barony, I mean in that place called Ulverle (about a mile distant from Solihull Northwards) though there be now so little memory thereof, that were it not for some grounds, lying adjacent to a petty Hamlet called Olton, which yet retaining the name Hullerley, gave me occasion of farther search, I should have been at great loss for the discovery thereof: but looking well thereabouts, and making diligent enquiry of the inhabitants, I found a large Moat, containing within it at least an Acre, whereon they say a Castle long since was situate, though nothing be left thereof (a parcell of old Oaks growing where the buildings stood) which tradition hath the more colour of truth, forasmuch as there is a Lane, near at hand, bearing the name of Castle Lane. Some of the neighbourhood do call this Hoggs moat, which I conceive is intended Odingsells moat, but by corrupt pronounciation now so termed; for I have seen the name of Odingsells very atiently written Hoginsells. Which grounds being at least a mile in diameter, have heretofore been a Park, as the Country people say, and is probable enough from the large bank that lieth on the outside of them, invironed with Lanes: not far from whence are the Vestigia of three very large Pooles, long ago converted to meadow ground. And 'tis not to be doubted, but that the village now called Olton, was antiently the Wolverle above specified; which since the plantation at Solihull, having lost the true name, is, and hath since Edw. 1 time, been called Olton, id est, the Old town.

The lane mentioned by Dugdale is also recorded in 1339 and this seems to support the tradition of a timber castle.⁸

Dugdale's explanation for the name 'Hoggs' is probably incorrect. The name "Hoddinsell" does appear in some documents, but these pre-date the de Odingsells of Solihull, whose name is always spelt conventionally in contemporary records.

An alternative explanation for the name may lie in one of the definitions of Hog/Hogg which is related to devils and goblins, a meaning which it shares with Hob/Hobb. The change from Hog/Hogg to Hob/Hobb may merely be one of pronounciation or of hearing, and although the earthwork has been recorded as "Hobbs Moat" since the late eighteenth century the usage of Hob has only become popular in the twentieth century.⁹

A further explanation of the name is also possible. 'Hoggs' may perhaps be found in the Middle English hog/hoge - mound/mounds. In some parts of the country earthed up rows of potatoes are called hogs - i.e. ridges between furrows. From a distance the earthwork without trees, or with little such cover, does indeed look like a series of linear mounds, and with the red colouration of the Keuper marl it could also be imagined to resemble hogs.

⁸ *Calendar of ancient deeds*. Ed. Maxwell-Lyte, H.C., vol. III, C 3662, pp. 394-5 (1890-1915).

⁹ Hutton.

The monument appears on Beighton's map of Warwickshire in 1725 where it is labelled as both 'Hogs' and 'Odensel' moat. A farm lying 200 metres to the east of the earthwork is labelled as 'Odensil farm' and it seems plausible to suggest that this may represent a preservation of the de Odingsell name. It is not known whether the name 'Odensel' referred to the moat and was transferred to the farm or vice versa.¹⁰

The first record of the monument as Hobbs Moat came in 1783 when William Hutton described the site in his 'History of Birmingham'.¹¹ His entry begins as follows;

Hogs-Moat . . At Oltonend (Old Town) originally Odingsell's moat, now Hobb's-moat ¹²

Hutton's account is clearly dependent on Dugdale and he does not indicate what evidence, if any, his further statements are based upon. Judging by his historical narrative, where facts and detailed research seem to have been substituted by fanciful imagination, his assertions should be viewed with some scepticism. Fortunately it appears that his physical description is much more accurate than his history; he describes the earthwork as being

....upon a much larger plan than Ulverley, (it) takes in a compass of five acres, (with) two trenches; the outer is nearly obliterated, but the inner is marked with the strongest lines we meet with ¹³. This trench is about twenty feet deep, and about thirty feet from the crown of one bank to another.

and that

the trench in one part is dry, and in another three or four yards deep in water.

while saying of the platform

the timber is changed since the days of Dugdale, but not the appearance of the land. The centre is bare of timber, and exhibits the marks of the plough. The late Benjamin Palmer, Esq; a few years ago planted it with trees, which are in...a...dwindling state ...

The trees mentioned are the predecessors of those which dominate the earthwork today.

Documentary references subsequent to Hutton do not contribute much additional information, aside from Pemberton who records a local tradition of sandstone having been removed from the centre of the platform some years previously.¹⁴

10 The influence of Dugdale's 'Antiquities' on Beighton's map should be borne in mind. It is possible that both the farm and the map have derived the de Odingsell connection via this route.

11 Hutton.

12 Whether Hutton was accurate in hearing the name as Hob/Hobb is open to question - the site was still known on occasion locally as 'Hogs Moat' in the earlier part of the twentieth century, as witnessed by local press reporting at the time.

13 No trace has been found of this external ditch. Field banks and drainage ditches, and the 'medieval lane' (below), running parallel with the outer rampart may have prompted Hutton's observation.

14 Pemberton.

Documentary Evidence - 2:

The descent of the manor of Ulverley/Solihull.

The first documentary reference to the manor of Solihull, or Ulverley (above), comes from the Domesday Book. Together with the Warwickshire manors of Arley and Long Itchington, and the manor of Broadwell in Oxfordshire, Ulverley formed the estate given by William 1 to Christina; the sister of Edgar "the Atheling". The Domesday entry shows Ulverley to be thinly populated:

Christina holds 8 hides in Ulverley from the King. Land for 20 ploughs. In Lordship 1; 3 slaves. 22 villagers with a priest and 4 smallholders have 7 ploughs. Meadow 12 acres; woodland 4 leagues long and 1/2 league wide; when exploited, value 12s. The value was £10; now £4. Earl Edwin held it.

Ralph de Limesi, a knight who came to England in 1066 from Limesy, a small town north of Rouen,¹⁵ was awarded Christina's estate upon her retirement to Romsey Abbey in 1086.¹⁶

Ulverley remained part of the de Limesi barony until 1195 when John de Limesi died without male heirs. The lands were held in custodianship until 1213 when the estate was divided between John's two surviving daughters, Basilia and Eleanor.

Both of the daughters had married by 1213, Basilia marrying a knight from Oudinghsela in Flanders, Hugh de Odingsell, while Eleanor had married David de Lindsey, a Scot.

At some time between 1213 and 1216, Hugh and Basilia paid 500 marks livery to take possession of their half of the de Limesi barony, their sons William and Hugh standing as surety.¹⁷ Hugh's half of the barony included the manors of Solihull, Maxstoke and Long Itchington, of which he held half of each as tenant in chief, and the other halves as tenant of David de Lindsey.¹⁸ It seems reasonable to assume that Hugh was resident in Long Itchington since it was the residence of the senior branch of the family in later years.

In 1238 Hugh died, his eldest son, Gerard, succeeded him and he became Lord of the manor of Long Itchington. William, Gerard's younger brother, became his tenant in the manors of Solihull and Maxstoke, and it is probable that William was the first resident Lord of the manor of Solihull.

William died in 1264 leaving two sons; William and Nicholas. William was the elder of the two and he succeeded to his father's manors of Solihull

15 M. Bourel, *La Commune de Limesy*, Rouen, p. 13 (1899).

16 *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, Ed. D. Whitelock, D.C. Douglas, S.I. Tucker, p. 162 (1961).

17 *Rotuli de oblatiis et finibus tempore regis Johannis*. Ed. Hardy, T.D., p 507 (1835).

18 A. Payne, *Portrait of a Parish, Kineton*, pp. 16-19 (1968).

and Maxstoke; holding one moiety from his uncle Gerard and the other from Henry de Pinkney;¹⁹ the de Pinkney family had inherited the de Lindsey portion of the de Limesi barony.

At some stage the manor of Forshaw was created for the younger brother, Nicholas.²⁰ Forshaw was the underdeveloped southern extension of Solihull, which Nicholas held from William in return for one penny each Michaelmas, and one pound of cumin seed which was to be paid at the first court in Solihull after Michaelmas.²¹ The de Odingsells of Forshaw continued until the early fifteenth century, and the remains of a double moat which surrounded their manor house still exist.²²

On 2nd April 1295 William,²³ or Sir William as he now was, died in Ireland of unknown causes.²⁴ He was followed by his only surviving son, Edmund, who died in the ensuing month, May 1295.²⁵

Since no male heirs existed, William's estate was divided between his widow, Ela, and his four daughters. In 1290 Ela had been jointly enfeoffed with William of the manor of Olton in Solihull, which made up one third of the manor of Solihull. Ela complained that the manor had been taken into the King's hands, and as a result she was assigned one third of the lands left by William in Solihull, presumably Olton.

The eldest of William's daughters, Ida, received the whole of the manor of Maxstoke,²⁶ and half of the manors of Pirton,²⁷ and Budbrooke. These lands passed into the de Clinton family through Ida's marriage to John de Clinton.²⁸

The younger daughter, Ela, received two thirds of the manor of Solihull which passed to the de Birmingham family through her first husband, Piers fitz James MacPhioris de Birmingham.²⁹

William's youngest daughter, Margaret, was 18 when her father died,³⁰ and

19 *The Victoria County History, Herts.*, vol. III, p 46; Fisher, A.S.T, *The History of Broadwell, Oxfordshire*, pp. 9-10 (1968).

20 Dugdale, pp. 948-9.

21 Ibid.

22 Ibid; Solihull Archaeological Group.

23 Dugdale, p. 940.

24 *Annals of Ireland, A.D. 1162-1370*. Ed. Gilbert, J.T., ii, p. 324 (1965, reprint). William was the king's representative, Justiciar - effectively Viceroy - in Ireland at the time and had been so for six months.

25 *Calendar of inquisitions post mortem*, vol III, pp. 186-7.

26 *The Victoria County History, Warks.*, vol. IV, p. 138.

27 *V.C.H. Herts.*, vol. III, p. 48.

28 Ibid; *V.C.H. Warks.*, vol. IV, p. 138.

29 *V.C.H. Warks.*, p. 218; *Feet of Fines*, vol. XV, p. 81.

30 *Cal. Inq. P.M.*, vol. III, pp. 186-7.

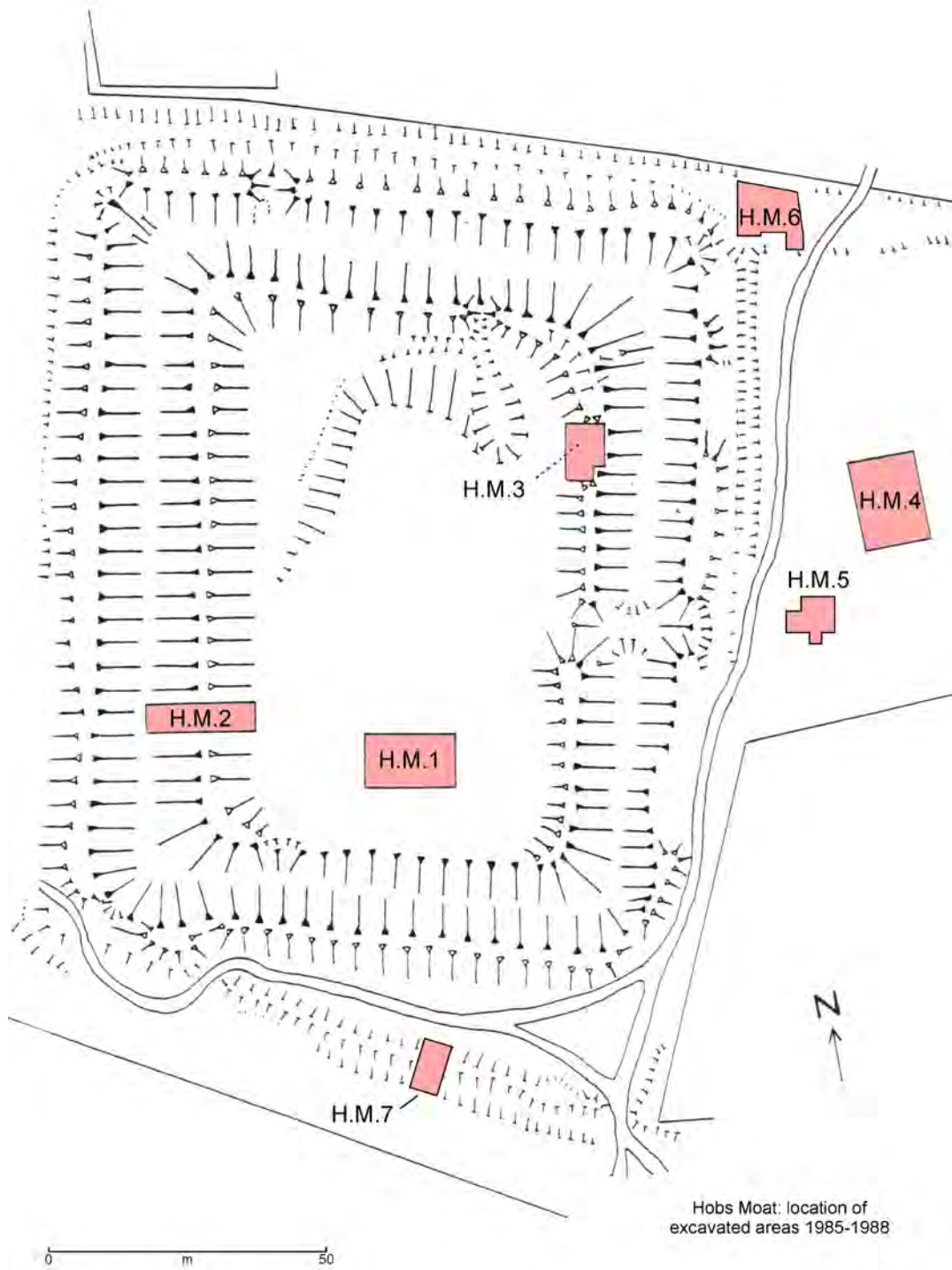
was married to John Grey of Rotherfield. John died in 1311, and the inquisition into his estate included only 22 marks of rent in Solihull,³¹ yet his descendants were in possession of the manor of Olton.³²

It would seem probable that the third of William's land granted to his widow was in fact Olton, and that upon her death sometime after 1311 the manor passed to Margaret as her portion of the estate. This would explain the two thirds of Solihull which Ela de Birmingham received as her share of the estate.

It may therefore be that, with the devolvment of Olton on the heirs of John Grey and Ela, occupation at Hobs Moat as the seigneurial residence came to an end at this time, and that the henceforth non-resident Lords of the manor had no further use for the site.

31 *V.C.H. Warks.*, vol. IV, p. 218.

32 *Ibid.*



3. Location of excavations

The Excavations.

Excavation took place in three places in the scheduled area: H.M.1, a trial trench in the southern part of the moat platform, H.M.2, a cross section through the western rampart, and H.M.3, a trench sited in the break in the eastern rampart north of the main entrance. Of these sites, H.M.1 and H.M.2 were completely excavated, while H.M.3 was partially excavated by the team for year 1 before being backfilled by the year 2 team on the end of Scheduled Monument Consent in March 1987.

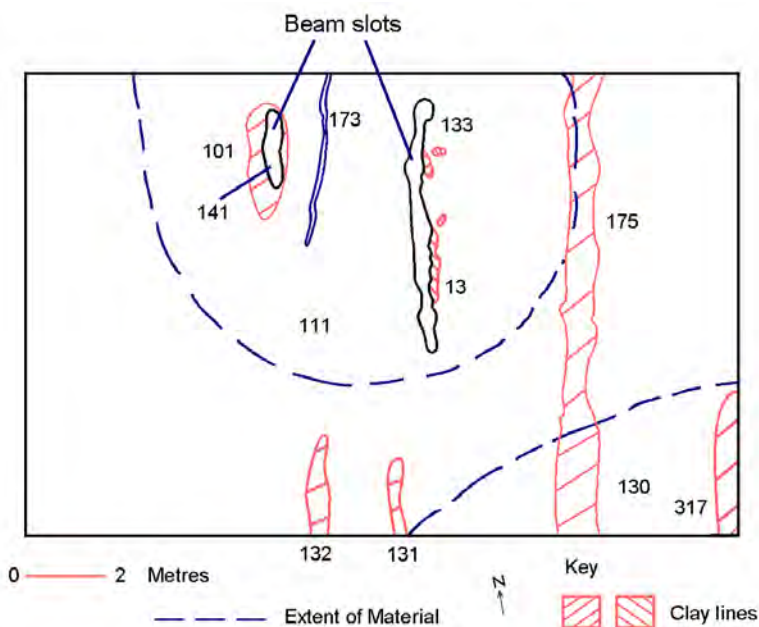
The siting of all three trenches were ad hoc decisions by the director of the first year's archaeological team, as was the strategy behind them and the execution of the greater part of the excavations in the scheduled area. The second year's team completed the excavation of these trenches (except H.M.3) and finalised the recording of all three.

Within the time limitations, further excavations were then undertaken by the teams for years 2 and 3 around the periphery of the moat to place it in its medieval setting. These comprised trenches H.M.4, H.M.5, H.M.6 and H.M.7 (locations, previous page).

The intention of these excavations was to see whether structures existed outside the moated area or whether agriculture took place, or whether the moat had existed in isolation. This seemed a valid extension of the archaeological project at no cost to the integrity of the moated site.

Excavation H.M.1.

The final report text for this area was not received. The narrative from the Interim Report from 1986-7 is substituted, supplemented with extracts from the video record kept by the project from 1986 and 1987, and with additional illustrations.

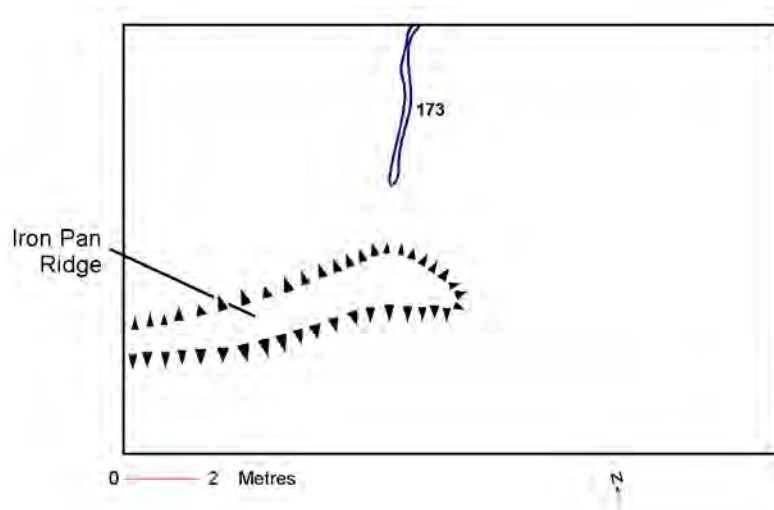


4. Principal features in H.M.1

The site of H.M.1 was located on the southern end of the earthwork's central platform. The positioning of the trench was circumscribed by the topography of the platform, which is dominated by oak trees which are the successors of those planted in the late eighteenth century. The excavation was intended to investigate anomalies detected during the original geophysical survey. The site covered an area of 17m x 9m and was excavated between September 1985 and December 1986.

Phase One.

The iron pan ridge and groove 173/174.



5. H.M.1 earliest phase

An iron pan layer runs across the site and forms a ridge in the centre (see also resistivity plan, pp. 88). The ridge acts as a separating feature for some of the lower archaeological layers. The iron pan forms a boundary between the archaeological and geological layers. The activity of tree roots in both ancient and modern times pierced the iron pan in several places and caused a substantial degree of disturbance at these locations.

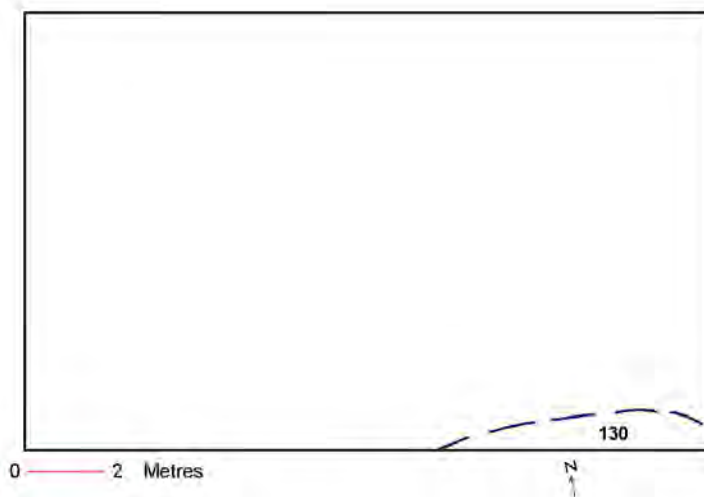
The archaeological layers in this phase are mid-brown in colour and are an amorphous mixture of sand and silt.

The finds from the phase come mainly from the eastern side of the site. The pottery is a local medieval coarse ware which dates to between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. A groove <173> also appears in the centre of the site. It runs north-south and it seems reasonable to suggest that this may be the result of early ploughing. If this groove is an ardmarek, it may go some way to explaining the amorphous nature of the layers.

A fragment of pre-Victorian clay pipe also came from these layers. Its presence is probably due to root action and should not be regarded as a terminus post quem for the layers. The phase plausibly covers the clearing of the land, the build-up of an early soil and possibly some early agricultural activity. The phase ends sometime after the construction of the main moat to the south of the site.

Phase Two A.

Context 130 - Fig. 6



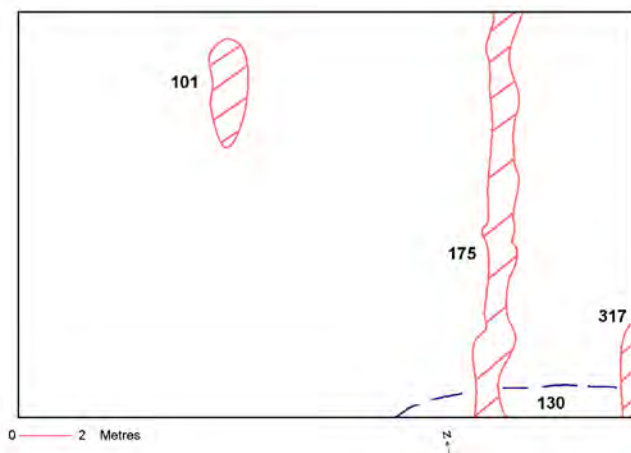
At the beginning of this phase, a wash of red Keuper clay and sand material <130> starts to appear in the south-east of the trench. It is possible that the origin of this material is a southern internal rampart which is no longer visible. The former existence of a southern rampart can only be proved by further excavation.¹

The red Keuper clay comes from deep within the geological profile. It does seem reasonable to suggest that the Keuper clay probably comes from the up-cast of the main southern moat ditch. This wash material seals the phase one layer in the south of the trench. The buried soil must therefore predate the construction of the main moat (see also H.M.2 and H.M.3). This will give us an effective thirteenth century terminus post quem.

A piece of tile was found directly beneath the northern end of the long line <175> (following). The presence of the tile fragment was suggested as evidence for a later cut but, without dating of the tile, this remains speculation.

Phase Two B.

Features 101, 130, 175 and 317 - Fig. 7



Shortly after the wash material 130 appears, two red Keuper clay lines are deposited on the eastern side of the site. The southern edge of the longer line 175 overlies some of the 130 material. The line must therefore postdate it. The shorter eastern-most line <317> lies on the buried soil and swiftly vanishes into the eastern section.

¹ It is to be noted that the southern moat ditch is also shallower than elsewhere at Hobs Moat. A possible explanation is that the earthwork is 'unfinished', as may be reflected also in the curious 'tailpiece' to the south-eastern external rampart, which appears separate to the southern external rampart.

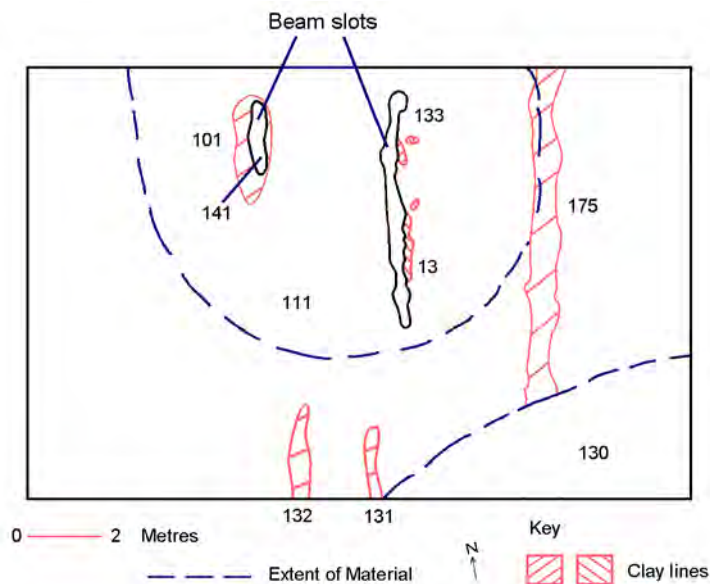
A third clay line <101> appears in the west of the site. Its precise course and nature is difficult to ascertain, since it has been heavily disturbed by the later beam slot and by post-medieval tree root activity.

The function of these clay lines is unclear. It does seem reasonable to suggest that they may have been the footing for timbers as on H.M.3 (see report p.). The northern end of the long clay line 175 is abraded and this may be the result of post medieval ploughing in Phase Four A.

The small size of the trench inhibits our interpretation of these features. The only way to avoid restriction is to have large, open area excavations since without this scale of operation it is impossible to link seemingly unrelated features, c.f. Kent's Moat.²

Phase Three.

Features 130, 131, 132 and beam slots 101 and 13 - Fig. 8



At this time two beam slots appear in the centre of the site. The western beam slot <141> seems to have been cut through the red clay line 101 discussed above. The eastern beam slot <133> is longer and curves slightly to the east. There is also a clay line associated with it but it would appear to be contemporary with the beam slot rather than pre-dating it. The relationship between the clay line <13> and the eastern beam slot is not easily explainable, although

weather boarding does seem the most likely mechanism for its deposition, as at Weoley Castle.

The structure related to the beam slot appears to have been of a very flimsy nature, judging by the size of the post holes. There is a dark olive brown, clayey loam occupation layer <111> associated with the structure. A high degree of organic material is found in this layer and some of this has worked its way down the profile, staining the layers beneath.

The occupation material 111 extends outside the building and covers the northern edge of the line 175. It is clear, therefore, that the building post-dates the line 175. At the southern end of the line 175 the wash material 130 continues to build up and eventually to cover the southern end of the line.

This clearly demonstrates that the clay line is no longer supporting any timbers. At this stage, two new clay lines appear <132> and <131> in the south of the site. Their function is difficult to discern but it has been suggested that they may be related to the beam slot structure in some way. Possibly this phase of activity belongs to the period after the moat had been abandoned.

Phase Four A

The beam slot structure and its occupation material must represent only a brief period. A plough-soil builds up in Phase Four A. The phase post-dates the desertion of the site. The suggestion is supported by several fragments of post-medieval clay pipe found in these layers. The plough-soil may be the ploughing mentioned by Hutton when he visited the site in 1783.

Phase Four B.

This phase consists of leaf mould from the oaks planted in the latter part of the eighteenth century. The layers contain only modern finds and are of no archaeological significance.



The beam slot 141 filled with sand to preserve the feature during the winter period. Like all features on HM1 it was close to the present ground surface, at around 20cm beneath.

[Video 1](#)

[long download time](#)



Top, an earlier stage in the excavation of beam slot 141. The feature is becoming apparent cut into the side of 'clay line' 101 (horizontal between scale bars).

Above, clay line 175 from the south of H.M.1. (to the left of north arrow)



Top, the soil depth in H.M.1 was shallow throughout, as elsewhere on Hobs Moat. Here it can be seen to reach a maximum of around 30cm, including modern leaf mould.

Right, the ard- or plough-groove 173 runs north-south in the area, the earliest man-made feature encountered.





Top, a sondage shows glacial material immediately below the soil layers in H.M.1. The arrow points to the transitional horizon separating the two, apparently below human activity.

Above, the same layer in plan, as this part of H.M.1 approaches completion.

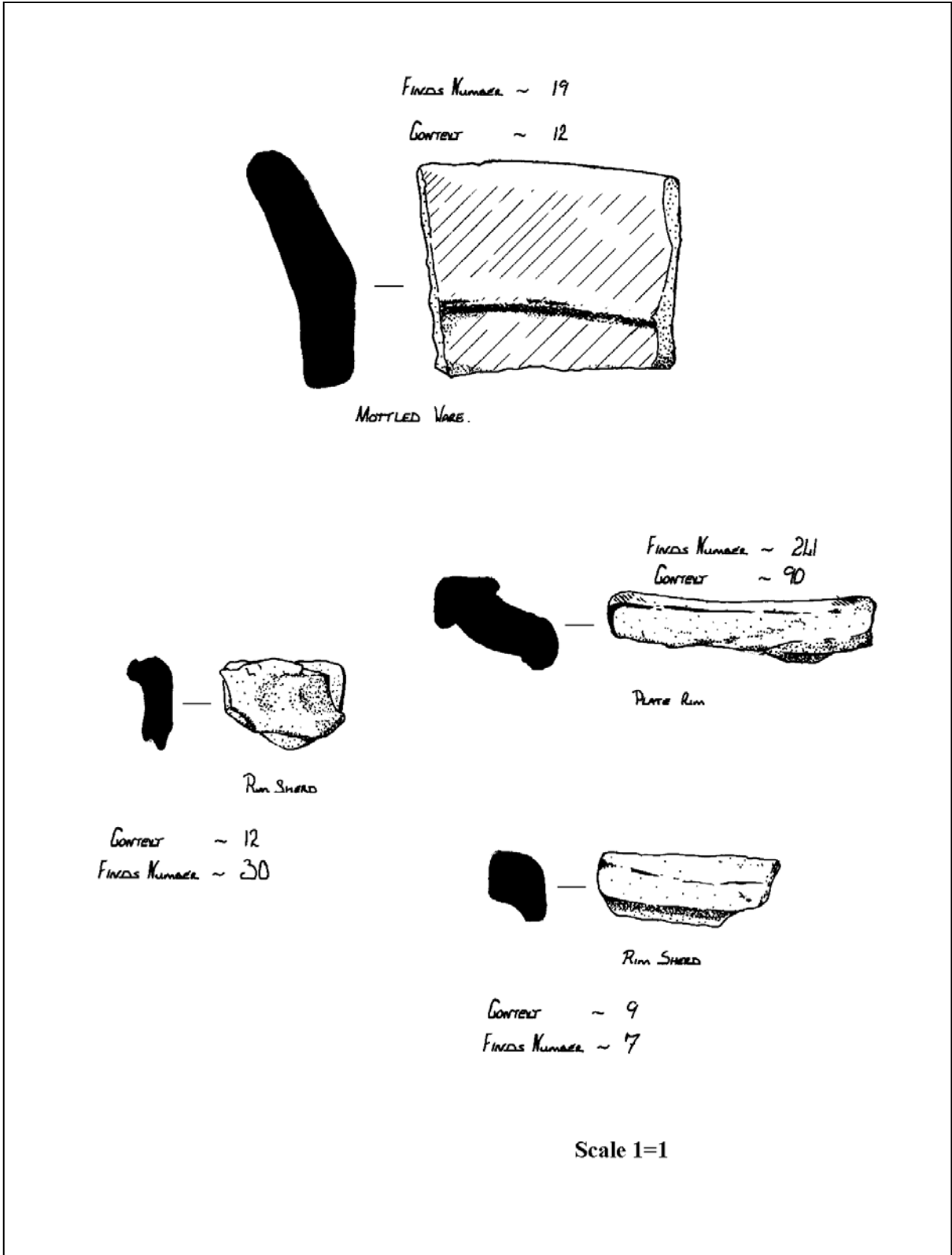
Video 2

long download time

H.M.1 Plan November 1987: Initial assessment
presented 2016



9. A part of the first general plan of H.M.1 as the features encountered are becoming apparent.



10. Sample pottery H.M.1

Excavation H.M.2.

A plan of this area with accompanying video descriptions is on page 45.

Cut through the western rampart and into the moat, this trench comprised about 80m² in area. Between October 1985 and August 1986 it was supervised by a member of the original archaeological team; descriptions of this phase of the excavation are based on his notebook and context sheets.

The trench was situated on a section of rampart which had been severely damaged by children, principally on BMX bikes. A deep depression had occurred at this point measuring 3.4m x 4.6m (see photograph p. 14). Containing a layer of light brown sandy clay, the depression was bordered above by a very stony light brown clayey sand which extended over the whole rampart crown, and on the sides by a brown sandy loam, which occurred on both the internal and external faces of the bank. On the internal face this layer overlay a humic, dark-brown sandy loam.

The eastern half of the rampart trench was excavated first to provide a cross section north-south. Numerous patchy insignificant contexts were encountered initially in a random construction of sandy clays, clay sands, sands and clays - these constituted the body of the visible rampart. As these contexts were removed the top of a yellow clay sandy feature became apparent in the rampart structure <19>. This was the crown of a bank, 2m to the east of the present rampart crown, running north-south in the trench. Beside this bank a layer of purpley brown clay extended 1m to the east, containing stones, pebbles and cobbles, the concentration of cobbles increasing where it came nearest the bank. A similar layer of sand, gravel and cobbles extended for 1m to the west, the density of cobbles in this element also increasing markedly close to the bank.

The western half of the rampart was now removed to show a through-section, composed of layers descending in a low arc from the edge of the moat ditch in the west to butt against the sand and gravel. A definite pattern of layers was apparent. Bands of red orange sandy clay alternating with layers of light brown or white sand could be seen, abruptly truncated near the western edge of the rampart.

East of the eastern cobbly layer, a layer of reddish brown sandy loam produced modern pottery sherds, iron objects, roof tile and bone. Beneath this a similar layer contained medieval pot-sherds <159>. The cobbly layers and the bank were then excavated in a quadrant to discover the method of construction.

Standing approximately 80cm high, the preceding bank was found to be roughly 2.5m wide at its base, with a very steep west face, around 70 degrees, and an east face sloping at an angle of 30 degrees. The top was fairly flat, varying in width between 80cm and 1m in the excavated section, and a layer of gritty orange sand covered its whole surface, varying from 20cm thick on the east face down to 3 or 4cm on the top of the bank, decreasing to 1 or 2cm on the steep west face.

The structure of the bank consisted of a layer of yellowish red sand overlying layers of brown clay sand, in places separated by lenses of red



Top, north-facing rampart section.

Above, south-facing section, the 'early' bank, retaining the later rampart. On the left, the edge of ditch 254 is visible. Behind the bank, on the right of the picture, part of context 159, containing medieval pottery, can be seen. Beneath the bank and only partly visible is the medieval soil context 99.

clay. These layers overlay brownish yellow sand 4 to 5cm thick tapering towards the east. Beneath the bank, a thick band of slightly sandy clay loam containing stones, sand and grit, ran under the clay and cobble layer and the bank, and extended to the edges of the trench <99>.

In the western half of the excavation a layer of pale-brown clay sand was found to overlie a layer of sandy-clay loam identical to that in the east <255>. The pale brown clay sand butted sand and gravel <212>. As the 212 layer was removed a linear feature <254> running parallel with the bank was seen.

At this stage of the excavation responsibility for the trench transferred to the team for the second and third year of the project, who produced this record and analysis.

The removal of the sand and gravel on the western side of the trench had also disclosed a single uneven line of red sandstone slats and large water washed cobbles running north-south, placed in soft sand on the eastern side of the feature 254 continuous with context 212. These were now seen as the initial material in the make-up of the rampart, seemingly positioned to inhibit sinkage into the soft sand of the later dump material.

When these were removed, with the associated sand and gravel 212, the feature 254 could be seen as the uniform outline of a ditch running north-south in the trench, parallel with the bank, underneath the rampart crown. On excavation the ditch was found to be a 'V'-shaped cut approximately 1m deep and 2.4m wide, containing a uniform dark red fill <251> at the bottom, ca. 50cm thick at its maximum, silty in nature and including small stones, pebbles and patches of clay. The ditch was fringed by a gritty orange sand layer 1cm thick, as with the bank, which formed a continuous layer separating it from the surrounding material. The ditch was cut into natural geology.

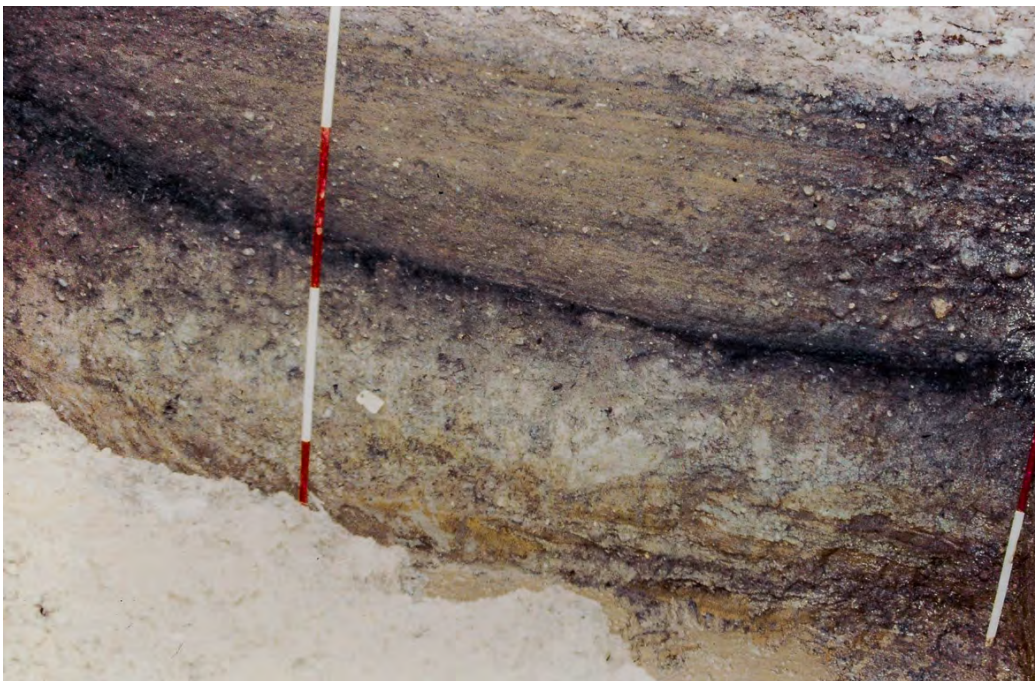
West of the ditch 254, a parallel feature <154> was now excavated, showing layers of red clay and sandy clay loam <242> sandwiched between a thin layer of sandy clay loam and the underlying thick sandy clay-loam 255. The layers combined to form this low mound, as it now appeared, ca. 25cm high and 175cm wide. The lower layer 255, like context 99, contained potsherds and overlay natural geology.

The sandy clay layer 99 underlying context 159 in the east varied between 10 and 15cm in depth, with the thickest part running towards the ditch. This layer also overlay natural geology; it yielded over 40 sherds of pottery and fragments of a small bronze ring. The two layers 99 and 255 were now established to be the same, and to be the pre-existing medieval topsoil.

Contemporary with this, the moat ditch (of the monument we see today) was re-examined to confirm the work of the earlier season. The 'U'-shaped ditch was found to be approximately 12m wide at this point and 3m deep with its eastern edge just over 3m to the west of the earlier 'V'-shaped ditch.



Videophoto



Top, north-facing, ditch 254 and its fill in section. Note tip lines from later rampart construction showing shallow depth of ditch silting.

Above, the fill of the existing ditch. At the top right is the ditch bottom visible today, and halfway down the section a dark layer records the runaway site erosion initiated in the 1930s. At the bottom of the section, water laid clays can be seen; above, and below the dark layer, is the total remaining deposition since the construction of the ditch and prior to the 1930s.

The upper fill consisted of alternate light and dark silty loam which contained modern rubbish such as pieces of plastic and modern glass <259>.

Below was a stony brown, slightly humic clay loam extending as far as the middle of the ditch <260>; this overlay a mixed brown layer of very humic material <153>, ca. 10cm thick, which started ca. 2m down the side of the ditch and which went fully across and reached an equal point on the other side. Beneath this, layers of dirty orange/brown sandy clay loam overlay natural geology <104>: these layers contained glass, pottery, clay pipe, bone and occasional coins. The bottom of the ditch was defined by lenses of an even, stone-free, blue-grey clay <261>.

Interpretation.

The development and construction of the visible rampart is seen in this trench as a simple sequence. The earliest phase is represented by the layer of pale brown sand 212, which was produced in the initial cut of the present moat ditch. The medieval topsoil removed at this time was perhaps spread on the surrounding fields.

The construction of the main rampart then proceeded by successive dumping of material. Tip lines show marl and sandy clay being thrown up from the 'new' moat ditch to rest against the early bank. This latter was used to support the replacement structure, and clay and cobbles had been put in place earlier with the apparent intention of giving the early bank additional strength - the line of sandstone slats and large water washed cobbles was most probably designed to inhibit the sand and gravel dump from sinking into the soft sand.

The present shape of the rampart could suggest that it was not revetted with timber or timber-laced as might otherwise have been expected, and excavation showed no evidence of this in the body of the rampart or that it supported a superstructure. However the possibility of a timber element associated with the rampart could not be positively excluded elsewhere (see H.M.3 account, following) and the amount of erosion on the site needs also to be considered - trees on the rampart had exposed roots recording this to be up to 50cm in the modern period. Examination of section images in 2016 showed that there are near-surface 'features' in the upper part of the external face of the rampart which could be regarded as evidence of timber structure, filled with talus slump - see images on pp. 37 and 41. The possibility is therefore not positively determined.

On the eastern side of the rampart was a modern brown sandy clay loam containing pottery, bone and metal objects, with underneath the similar brown loam layer, 159, containing medieval potsherds, interpreted as a soil build-up and backscatter from a thirteenth century building. The date may be open to question, but it seems a reasonable assumption that the layer represents occupation material associated with the main moat phase.

This is the development of the visible, final, moat phase in this trench. The earlier periods are less easy to interpret.

The strong brown loam which overlies the natural geology is undoubtedly medieval topsoil, and this buried soil contained pottery of medieval date



Videophoto



Top, the early ditch with, at the front and sectioned, the early bank now reduced in height by excavation. At back of the image is the early 'counter-scarp', sectioned but not reduced in height. The rampart section is north-facing.

Above, the south-facing section at a slightly earlier stage of excavation. Once again the rampart tip lines are clearly evident. The suggestion of a timber element in the rampart face occurs here too.

[Video 1](#)

[Video 2](#)

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both east and west of the 'V'-shaped ditch. As the greater concentration was east of the ditch - no doubt representing settlement activity associated with the early earthwork - the presence of pottery west of the ditch, presumably outside the settlement boundary, may be taken to suggest medieval occupation predating this bank and ditch. This inference is supported by the finding of medieval potsherds under the early bank, and is further developed by the observation of a decorated green glaze sherd within this group. This perhaps suggests a date in the twelfth/thirteenth century for the construction of the earlier earthwork.

The perception of less substantial 'sub-layers' within the earlier medieval soil is also to be noted, seen by vague lines of stones (possibly three such associations), suggesting the soil itself may have an extended history.

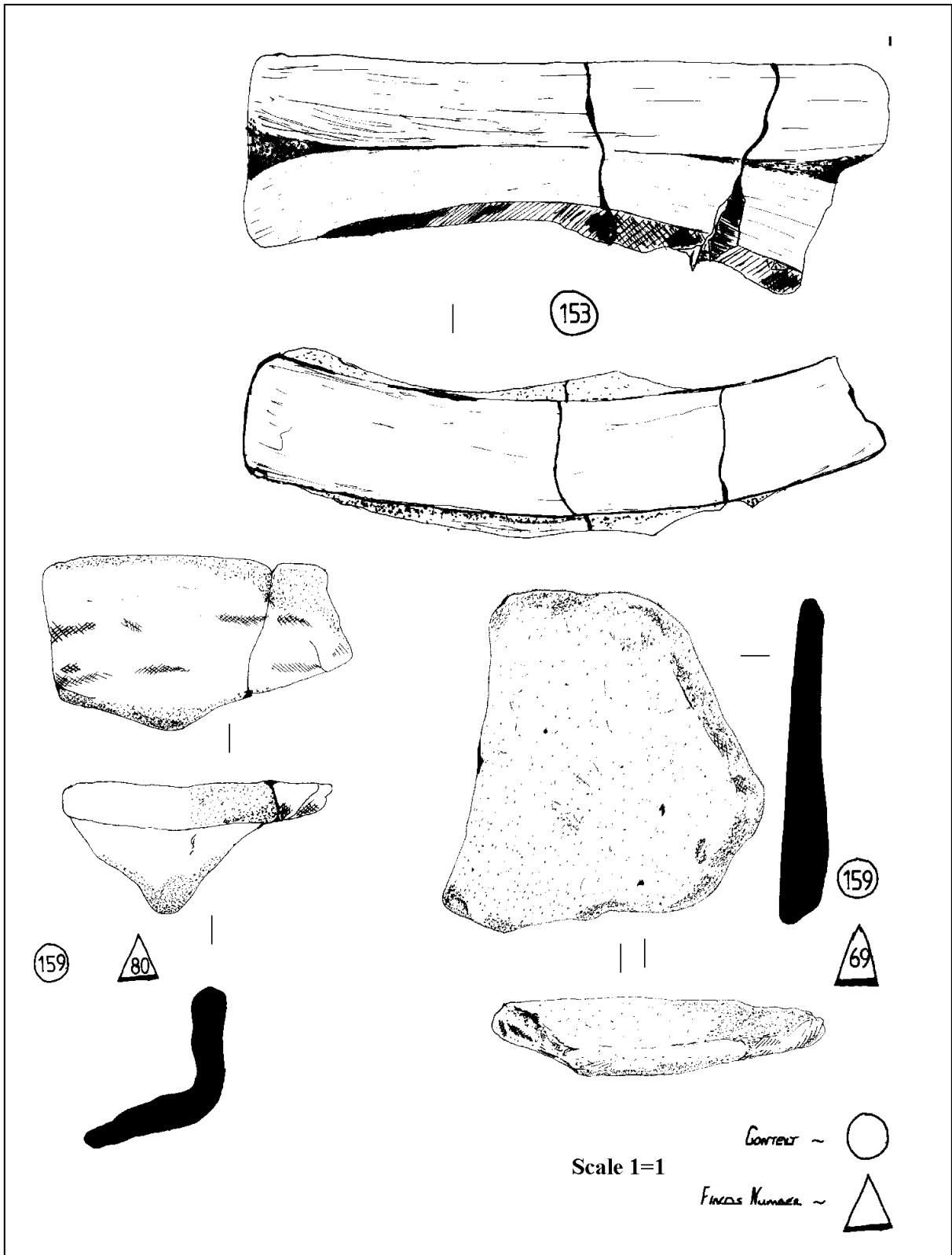
Why the settlement should have been reduced in area subsequently is of course a matter of speculation, and the extent of the settlement can, likewise, only be guessed at.

The material for the early bank was derived from the 'V'-shaped ditch running alongside it. It comprised geological sands and gravels, which created a structure of surprising steepness. The rake seems anomalous and the impression is reinforced by the difficulty of seeing material derived from it in the fill of the ditch. A possible explanation may be that the bank and ditch had a very short life, or that it was a turf-stack; alternatively, in view of the depth of the fill of the ditch, it might be that the bank was retained in some way. No satisfactory explanation is forthcoming for this contradictory observation - though evidence elsewhere, as for example the presence of the green-glazed sherd under the bank, might argue for a short life.

The low bank 154, at this point, seems to anticipate the counter-scarp of the later earthwork. Composed of a red clay (see above), it has affinities with the purple-red fill 251 of the ditch, which might therefore have been derived from it (or the other way around). Yet the source of the red clay for the bank was not apparent otherwise, unless it was the bottom of the ditch. Consequently it is not possible to be certain of the bank's relationship to the rest of the structure, and no sustainable model can be suggested in default for its construction other than as part of the bank 19 and 'V'-shaped ditch as a single exercise, whatever that means. There was no evidence that the ditch had been re-cut or cleared out.

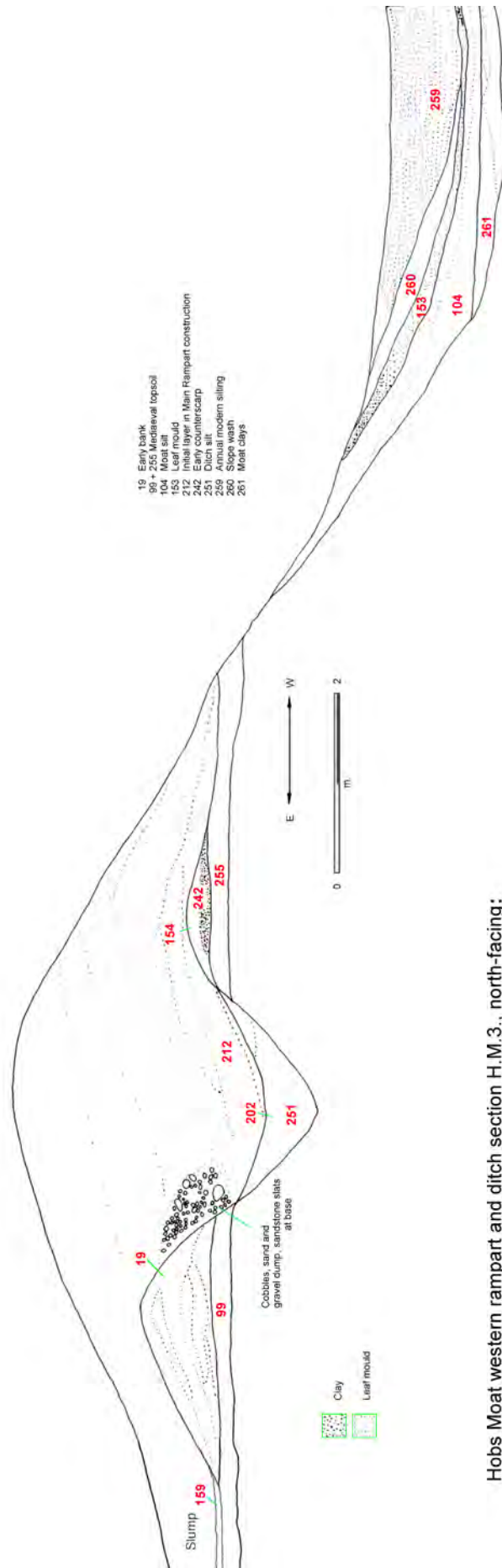
Finally, the later moat ditch fill was noted earlier. It consisted substantially of modern deposits, which seem to have accumulated over the last century. In a report on Tilehouse Green Moat, it was suggested that moat silts were much prized by farmers;¹ this could account for the character of the deposits at Hobs Moat, in that the silt from the ditch was cleared out on a regular basis. The top 75cm of moat fill <153> was obviously very modern and probably accumulated during the second half of the twentieth century.

1 Andrews, D., *Tilehouse Green Moat*, Transactions of the Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society, vol. 92 (1982).



11. Sample pottery H.M.2

The illustration following should be rotated 'landscape'
according to the viewing screen you are using,
and enlarged as necessary for detail.



Hobs Moat western rampart and ditch section H.M.3., north-facing:
 Structure and Contexts

presented 2016

Excavation H.M.3.

A plan of this area with accompanying video descriptions is on page 59.

The final trench in the scheduled area was placed on the north-western side of the moat platform in a gap in the internal rampart to the north of the apparent medieval entrance. Dressed New Red Sandstone could be seen exposed in the ditch face at this point between the roots of a tree, and a cobble-in-clay floor lay exposed to the south eroding out of the same section. Above this was a general cobble spread which was spilling out of the clay-loam matrix into the moat ditch.

The trench was excavated during the first season of investigation at Hobs Moat (1985-86). As with H.M.1 and H.M.2 the siting of the intervention was decided by the season's director, who supervised the excavation of the trench. This work ceased in September 1986, and it fell to the second season's archaeological team to interpret the findings and to understand the excavation generally.

In the circumstances, a period of close observation of the visible stratigraphical relationships and site features was undertaken between January and March 1987, in association with such plans, context sheets, sections and photographs as existed. A detailed account is given here. No additional excavation was undertaken by the second year team and the area remained as at September 1986. The trench was backfilled at the end of March in fulfilment of the requirements of Scheduled Monument consent.

The examination proceeded as follows.

The trench had been placed over the gap between and including the eroding terminals of the break in the eastern rampart 30m northwards from the platform 'entrance'. It measured approximately 11m x 10m and had been excavated to an average depth over the whole site of around 0.5m. An area on the western side of the trench had been backfilled to protect a spread of sandstone rubble; elsewhere a number of obvious features could be seen. These included a semi-circular sandstone wall in the northern part of the trench on the eastern side with a second semi-circular wall connected to it on its western side, a line of sandstones leading from the walls in a southerly direction with a possible threshold halfway along its length, and an area of cobbles in sand and clay-loam on the moat ditch side of the sandstone line: it was this which was eroding on the other side of the baulk separating the trench from the moat ditch into the moat ditch beyond.

Examination of the stratigraphy showed that the whole area had been covered by a very dark brown slightly sandy 'humus' or leaf mould (except the eroding crowns of the rampart terminals) and below this was a sandy humic clay-loam containing imported pebbles <17>. This layer was much subject to straggling root disturbance and this proved a constant problem as the investigation progressed. Finds from the layer had included fragmentary pieces of New Red Sandstone, a clay pipe bowl (FN 14) which could be dated to 1830-80 and a fragment of iron clad-in-bronze (FN 16).

Removal of the soil had exposed the cobbles-in-sand and clay-loam. These were seen as water-worn cobbles of various sizes and fragments of

sandstone in a small, roughly oval-shaped spread <96> occupying the base of the gap between the ramparts. The matrix into which these elements were set was a slightly sandy yellowish red clay-loam <97>, which towards the west of the feature became darker, varying in colour between brown and reddish-brown.

Southwards, an area had been removed during the first season's excavations revealing the underlying layer <233>.

Northwards of the cobble spread, up-slope, an area of stones marked a change, anticipating the approximate line of division separating the rampart clay to the north. The deposit <106> had a more mixed quality, containing sand and grit. To the west of the 96 feature lay a second disparate stony area <121>: this contained elements similar to the 96 feature but included in addition blocks of 'tea-green' marl.

Detailed observation showed the cobble spread 96 to be part of a larger spread, of several stones' depth and diameter 2m, consisting in its upper aspect of large cobbles and sandstone fragments, contained in a red clayey matrix <344>. The spread seemed to be at its highest in the centre, the boundaries of the feature being exposed last. The fragments of sandstone occupied the fringes of the spread, and a single corner fragment of tile was found near the centre of the feature (FN 17).

Northwards the mixed sandy clay-loam was resolved into a band surrounding an irregular stony deposit <108>, from the upper part of the Keuper Marl sequence, distinct from features 96 and 121, and consisting of cobbles of various sizes with some sandstone and tea-green marl inclusions. To the north of this the 106 soil was bounded by a pebbly area which separated it from the rampart clay - surrounding this was a yellowish brown clay-sand <149> which underlay the rampart clay. Investigation showed the 108 context to be a number of complimentary deposits within the same matrix.

Below the 106 soil and the 108 aggregation the stepped end of one of the curved sandstone walls could be seen <95>. It was similar to that protruding from beneath the tree - of which 95 was clearly a part - and at least four courses were apparent, emerging running south-west from the northern rampart. The blocks of the wall were bonded together by a compacted, even red clay <152>.

Above the bonded wall were further unbonded sandstones, amounting to two or three courses, which had tumbled southwards; these appeared to have been added to the wall at a later stage. They were incorporated in the unexcavated material to the south of the wall.

To the east and west of the wall-end were further stony deposits, which included sandstone blocks, in a matrix of dark reddish brown clay. Resting on the top of the wall and against it was the rubble pile 108. The matrix of this could clearly be seen to be separate from the clay bond of the wall beneath.

West of this, the stony area 121 was observed to be the upper northern part of a much larger feature <150>. The removal of the humic soil in the first



Top, H.M.3 photographed from the eastern counter-scarp (plastic sheeting drawn back for further observation). The gap in the rampart here was not an entrance to the site. The exposed roots of the tree had revealed dressed and bonded sandstone blocks, part of wall 95.

Above, the wall under the tree.



Top, the building in H.M.3 still under excavation in year 1. Material is yet to be removed from the walls 95 and 123, but the cobbles forming much of feature 96 have been removed to the baulk. No excavation was undertaken during years 2 and 3.

Above, part of the rampart section in the north of H.M.3, facing south, principally contexts 110 and 149/144. The tip lines are reminiscent of the similar method of rampart construction in H.M.2.

season had previously disclosed a rubble spread at this point, covering a visible area of 4 x 3.4m (before entering the western section). As a sub-rectangular feature, the spread consisted of various sizes of cobbles, sandstones and pieces of tea-green marl in a deposit several stones deep. It was reported by the excavator as 'set in a clay matrix' (the lower layers); and some groupings of these materials had been apparent, but there was no evident regularity. A bronze 'knife handle' had been found at the eastern edge of the feature (FN 65).

The northern and southern limits of the feature approximately touched the boundaries of the clay of the western sections of the rampart terminals. In the south the rubble was set into rampart clay; in the north, cobbles, with some fragments of sandstone and tea-green marl, overlay the shallow clay boundary of the terminal, setting a limit to the spread at this point.

An examination of the northern rampart and its relationship to the sandstone structures was then undertaken.

The low northern terminal was found to be capped by clay deposits, which comprised many separate lenses or dumps of a reddish brown sandy clay with grit and large pebbles <110>. Having a general depth of 0.25m, to the western edge of the terminal many large cobbles and a single large block of sandstone were included in the matrix. Beneath the capping deposit, and exposed and eroding out of the rampart crown, was a mixed yellowish-red sandy clay. This material increased in bulk to the west of the rampart.

Under the clay was a bulky core of yellowish-brown clay-sand comprising, again, many different lenses, contexts <144><149>. This formed a low bank 0.80m high, tapering towards the west, which was bounded on the south-west by a clay deposit. This created a roughly square-ended rampart terminal which on its south-eastern side met the low western edge of the second upstanding wall <123>. Here clay overlay the wall, merging with the stone-in-clay mentioned above which butted up against this wall and its companion 95.

The core material lay to the north of these upstanding walls, and it appeared that they, in their final form, had been used as a retaining feature for this terminal. To this end it was apparent that the upper lenses of the clay-sand core material 149 and context 106 were generally retained by the stony deposit and added unbonded sandstones which rested on the southern edges of the sandstone walls below. A lower lens of sand was banked up against and overlying the northern edge of the walls.

The earliest deposit of core material could be seen 1m north of the walls in the eastern-most part of the section. Occurring within this deposit were alternating and broken lines of dark greyish-brown loam and pale brown sandy loam <326>. This feature had a height of 0.40m and was clearly apparent. A sherd of coarse medieval pottery had been found towards the western edge of the core deposit, above the original land surface (FN 249).

The removal of both the core material and much of the upper dry-stone course of rough stonework had exposed the regularly-made walls, although the southern faces were partially obscured by unexcavated material (above).

As mentioned above, two walls could be seen. The eastern wall, 95, emerged from the eastern section and, 0.6m wide, stood to a height of 0.4m. Its upper bonded courses were level, and it was made predominantly of large near-rectangular blocks, the spaces between being filled with the clay bond 152. The wall continued for 1.6m and curved towards the south-west, where, as an exposed stepped section, it met the wall 123.

The northern face of the wall was squared off, and the primary constituent was blocks of sandstone, though several cobbles and an angular mass of tea-green marl were included. Generally, three courses of dressed sandstone blocks were laid upon two courses of angular sandstone blocks, smaller stones being used to level up the courses. The sandstones were by and large closely spaced and well laid.

The western wall 123 butting wall 95 was of a different construction. It stood to a similar height and its curved western end was exposed in stepped section. Roughly semi-circular in plan with a diameter of 1.8m, its width was 0.4m, and like 95 its northern face was squared off. However, the main body of the wall was composed of large angular sandstone blocks separated by thin vertically-laid blocks: the sandstones were less closely packed and again clay bonding was required, resembling in appearance the clay bonding 152. Unfortunately, the base of the wall to the west could not be observed as it was obscured by unexcavated rampart material.

North from the walls several features emerged at the base of the rampart core, though the buried soil was not fully exposed. The wall 95 rested upon a wider curving foundation trench, which was cut into an even brown clay loam. The fill of the trench was cobbles-in-clay, and the bonding material was similar to the clay bonding 152.

The wall 123 had a very shallow foundation slot, filled with clay. The slot curved towards the east, where it butted up against the deeper foundation trench of the wall 95.

Radially offset from the north of the wall 95 was a shallow linear feature, composed of an uneven and compacted yellowish-red clay reminiscent of the 'clay line' elements in H.M.1. Resting on an original land surface, it had a width of 0.4m and ran for 1m to the north before meeting the section. It was not possible to establish its significance, and the relationship of it to the construction trench of the wall was unclear.

To the south it could be seen that the walls 95 and 123 were part of a larger structure. Here the upper soils to the south and west of the stony feature 96 had been removed to expose the level remnant of a cobble-in-clay floor. The lower constituents of 96 could be seen in the north-south baulk section set into this layer of even red clay. The floor was bounded to the west by a course of sub-rectangular clay-bonded sandstone blocks running north-west to south-east <230>: in one place, to the south, two courses existed.



Top, the walls in H.M.3, 95 (left) and 123 (right) seen from the north. They are similar but not identical in construction. 123 butts up against 95.

Above, the building in H.M.3 at the beginning of year 2. The remaining elements are clearly apparent, and the structure of the rampart to the north.

The feature occurred below the level of the floor itself and therefore, at its existing height, did not retain it. At its northern end there was a definite break in its course, and several blocks were offset into the floor at this point. The material comprising the matrix of the return was a compacted and mixed clay-loam, which contained in addition both fragmentary and weathered tea-green marl.

On the outside, to the west of 230 the material was similarly composed, containing also fragmentary sandstone as well as several blocks of displaced sandstone and flecks of charcoal.

South of the structure, and of the feature, no regular boundary to the floor existed and it simply ended at this point. Resting on the floor, however, were several fragments of sandstone and a single block of red (Keuper) marl. Beyond this some material from the floor had slumped southwards, and it was noteworthy that the upper soil 97 then intervened and occupied the small gap between this material and the rampart core material. The soil was compacted.

North of the building it was seen that the clay floor was retained by the height of the wall 95, necessary because of the landfall from south to north. This had raised the floor markedly above the original land surface, and because of this the clay was deeper in the north.

A final observation concerning the building involved the curved wall 95 and its relationship with the structure. The removal of the stony layer in front of wall 123 had exposed the foundation trench of the former; now, interestingly, it was seen running on for approximately 1 m., to meet the final sandstones comprising the feature 230. At this point the lowest elements of the more westerly wall 123 were at the same level as those in 230, whereas the foundation trench to 95 was at a lower level than both. With its fill of cobbles-in-clay it could be seen to cut through the brown slightly sandy clay loam, which was selectively exposed beneath the clay floor of the building.

The Southern Extension.

The trench had been extended to investigate the southern rampart terminal, which stood to a height at its crown of 1.6m. The western side only had been examined by cross-section and this provided, also, a longitudinal section of the terminal.

As elsewhere in the trench, the upper soils covered much of the extension, but the crown of the rampart was exposed and eroding. The soil build-up of dark reddish-brown slightly sandy clay-loam <146><147> was equivalent to the soil 97 of the main excavation, which was banked to the west of the main excavation, overlying clay deposits, and containing several sherds of coarse medieval pottery.¹ These sherds, unfortunately, were wrongly

¹ Potsherds noted in this context earlier were certainly incorporated in the cast-up material from the moat ditch. Their existence seems to imply pre-moat activity to the east of the moat.

ascribed in our Interim Report (1987) to the rampart core, when a majority had come from this context (FNs 35,45,54,75,81). Similar pottery was indeed found in the rampart core (FNs 43,44). These sherds lay to the south of the rubble spread 150.

Excavation had revealed a rampart construction sequence similar to the northern cross-section, with the eroding crown deposit being only one lens among many lenses of clay, sandy clay and sand dumped to the western side of the rampart, yellowish-red sandy clay providing the final and most bulky deposit. Fragments of sandstone were included in this deposit.

Below, a core of distinctive brown clay sand <339> formed a bank 1.25m high at its flattened apex, which fell sharply to the west, where it was retained by the mass of the clay deposit. Within this was a low bank of similar sand <327> with alternating, broken lines of dark greyish-brown loam and strong brown sandy loam which gave rise to a feature analogous to the structure 325 seen in the northern terminal. This was most clearly apparent in section: the bank had a maximum height of 0.8m, rising from the western side of the section before entering the eastern baulk where this measurement was made.

Under the low bank and mass of core material to the west was a uniformly shallow deposit of strong-brown clay-sand <340>, distinguishable from the core material by the occurrence of striking yellowish-red flecks within the matrix. Like the core, it was bounded to the west by deposits of clay, and the pronounced edge of the upper core connected with it at this point.

North of the excavated cross-section the rampart began to slope down to form a roughly square-ended terminal. Examination of the longitudinal section showed a corresponding change in the rampart make-up beneath, where the underlying clay-sand deposit and the low bank feature 327 ended abruptly to be abutted by a mass of core material to the north; several sherds of pottery and sandstone occurred in the core matrix at this point. The upper core also ended abruptly to be retained by the upper clay-capping deposit and a lower mixed clay and sand deposit.

Closer examination of the upper section of this junction showed a possible post-pipe <337><338> of width 20cm tapering to 12cm cutting the upper eroding clay deposit. A most interesting feature, it had a fill of humic clay-loam and persisted to a depth of 0.5m, lenses of clay intruding into the southern edge of its upper part and obscuring it in plan. The lower mixed deposit was also cut by this feature, and some of the deposit occurred between the pipe and the steep edge of the upper core.

The clay cap of the terminal was deposited in lenses over the low bank of core material: the clay on the eastern side of the terminal did not extend down into the gap between the terminals, which was only a superficial covering, the core continuing beyond, to slope down to a point 0.8m to the south overriding the edge of the cobble-in-clay floor. Westwards the clay over the terminal bulked out beyond the sharply curving core to form the square-sided gap between the ramparts.



Top, the western part of the north-facing section through the rampart at the south in H.M.3. The material forming context 143/144 is clearly apparent, and context 340 underneath, as is the retaining marl to the right.

Above, walls 95 and (in front) 123 from the west. The eastern section on the left showed, on close inspection, that wall 95 had been overtopped by the rampart, meaning that it had been reused to retain the rampart for the present earthwork.



It was seen that excavation of the southern extension was not completed and the buried soil, of brown sandy loam, had been only partially exposed.

Interpretation of H.M.3.

The interpretation of this trench presents difficulties, not least caused by its arbitrary shape and ill thought-out placing. The brevity of records from the first season's activities exacerbates the problem - yet a sequence of events is discernible.

The first major activity on the site was the construction of a building with a semi-circular northern end. This building preceded the main rampart, and had a level floor of cobbles-in-clay raised above the original land surface, retained by a low and regular wall at its northern end.

Primarily made of blocks of New Red Sandstone - as the visible remains of the building were generally - it had a cobble-in-clay packed foundation trench. It was not necessary on the other sides of the building, it seems, to build to the same extent. This point is suggested by the simple nature of the course of walling bounding the floor to the west.

The entrance to the building was situated on the straight south-western side of the structure, where a break in the wall <231>, accompanied by compacted soil and a fragmented, weathered stony surface, was interpreted as a threshold. It seems possible that the building became unstable at some time in its existence; it was at this point that the buttress-like wall 123 was added. This is the best interpretation of the feature, which is generally like the rest of the building in construction but presents a somewhat less regular appearance.

No clear evidence for the superstructure of the building remained, and a timber frame construction surmounting these foundations was suggested (and this may seem most likely). A hint that a timber component is implied in the foundations is perhaps seen in the clay line offset departing from the northern wall of the building. Clay lines are known from H.M.1 to be associated with structural features. It seems possible that in association with the stone building such an offset recorded the base of a timber footing, designed to act as a support for a superstructure.

At the end of its life the building was systematically demolished, the materials spread and its northern walls re-used in the next phase of activity. No evidence was forthcoming for the length of its life.

The excavation of the material for the rampart, as in H.M.2., was by means of the new ditch to one side, and the method of construction was similar. The eastern side of the building was destroyed in this action, and the rampart was constructed on both sides, north and south, to create the square-sided gap by the addition of terminals.

The rampart construction began with the laying out of the striated features 326 and 327, north and south of the gap respectively. With their

distinctive changes in colouration these are best interpreted as turf-stacks. The core material was then banked up and over these, and to the rear, to form a structure similar to that seen in H.M.2.

Geological material from the Keuper Marl series, including red clay, sand and gravel was then dumped to the rear of the core and also over it, to provide a very effective retainer for the banked core. This was exactly the same method and intent as seen in H.M.2. No timber-lacing was incorporated in the rampart body, and with the possible exception of the timber noted above no superstructure was indicated for the rampart crown.² The ramparts were then left to the elements to attain the shape we see today.

The terminals were produced in what may appear to be the standard method of ending a bank at Hobs Moat - namely the core and its incorporated core stack ended abruptly to be abutted by retaining material. On the southern side of the gap this was accomplished by a dump of further core material capped with clay. On the northern side a slightly different method was used; here the northern end of the demolished building was used to achieve the same effect. The core material was run up to it, the walls were then added to, to some extent, by the addition of further construction-derived sandstones and marl, and the bank terminal was finished by the addition of a thin clay/marl capping. The final square-effect of the rampart gap was achieved by the selective depositing of the capping material.

The gap itself measured approximately 4m in width and clearly served some purpose - but its precise function is for conjecture. It was not an entrance, as was thought at the beginning of the excavation, but it gave access to the moat ditch; this much was evident. Water lies in the ditch at this point even at the present time, and it is the farthest south that the one-time reservoir of water in the northern part of the ditch reached. It is perhaps with this function, the collection of water, that the creation of the gap is concerned.

It is probably with this activity that the remaining features in the gap can be related. Above the building, and re-using material perhaps derived in part from it, was the spread of cobbles and fragmentary sandstone. With the pile of stones and rubble in place to one side of it, behind the remnants of the northern part of the building, it seems that this had been utilised as a foundation for another structure. This interpretation receives support from the identification of a large block of sandstone in its upper levels as a possible pad-stone. It may receive support in the identification of the other timber-indicating feature in the area of the gap: if the post-pipe in the southern rampart terminal is not to be associated with a rampart-fronting role then it may be that it is to be seen as connected with the use of the gap, and in particular as part of this 'structure'.

² It is to be noted that the rampart cross-section was incomplete and the possibility of some sort of shallow timber retaining feature or facade for the upper part of the rampart fronting the moat ditch is by no means excluded. This possibility derives support from the occurrence of the post hole in the terminal.

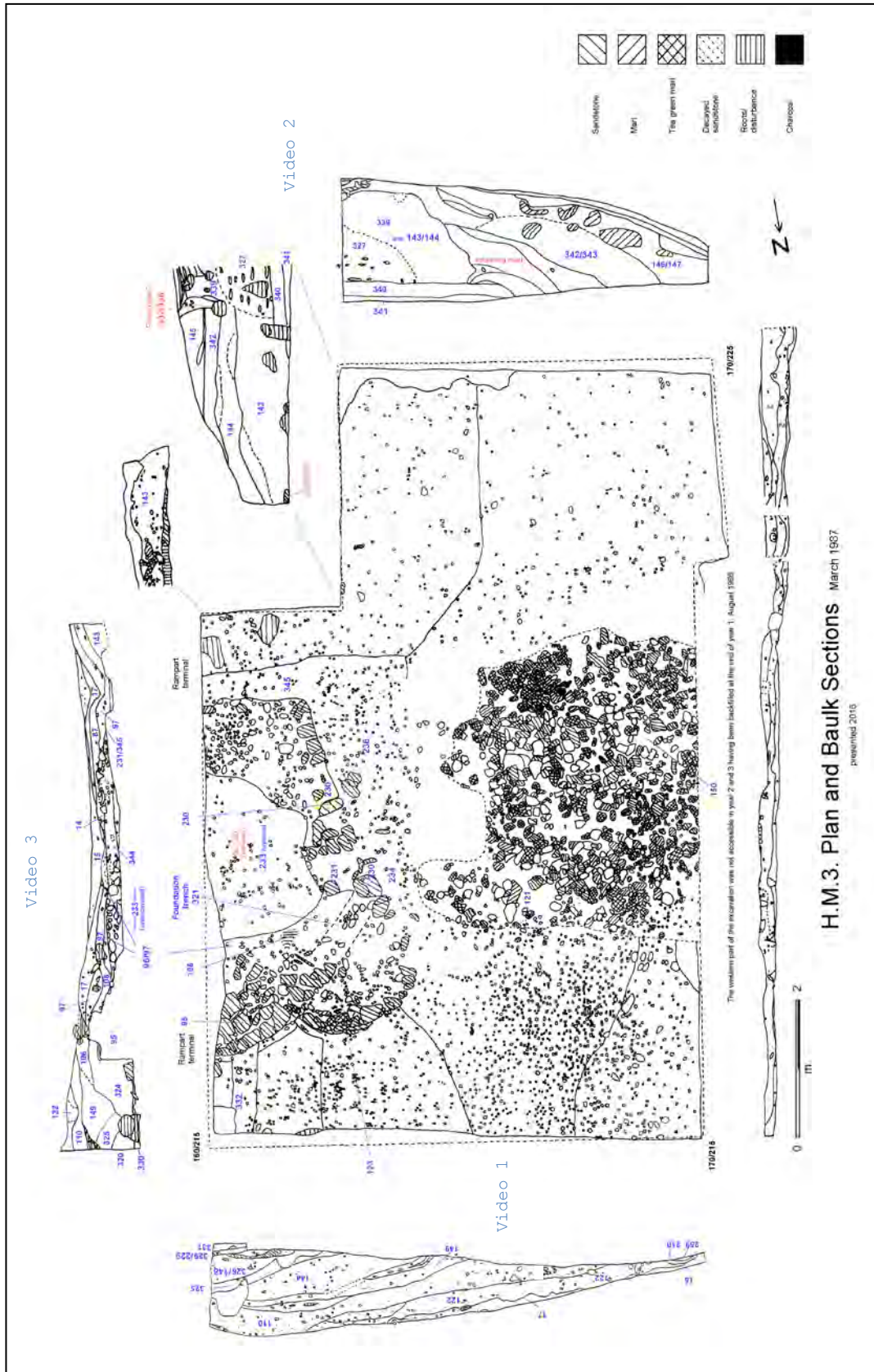
The structure was ephemeral and left little other than the pad-stone, the mass of cobbles and sandstone and its possible connection with the post in the rampart to record its presence. At the end of its period of use, the gap became empty and continued so down to the present day. Some tumbling of the rough stony material and unbonded sandstones from above the upper course of the curved remnant walls of the first building occurred, and with it some sandy core material. A sherd of green-glazed pottery came from this fallen deposit. For this reason it may be best to associate this find with the latest period of occupation.

This concluded the assessment of H.M.3 by the incoming team in year 2 of the project. As recorded above, no physical excavation of the trench was undertaken after year 1, and the area was backfilled on the expiry of Scheduled Monument Consent as agreed by the licence afforded at the beginning of year 1.

The illustration following should be rotated according to the viewing screen you are using, and enlarged as necessary for detail.

The plan contains video sequences.

(‘cropping’ occurs in landscape ratio but not in portrait)



H.M.3. Plan and Balk Sections March 1987
presented 2016

(to close video: rt-click> disable content)

Phase	Number	Content
I	184)
I	247)> Buried Soil
I	239)
III	111)
III	112)> Occupation
III	241)
IVa	12	Post Medieval Plough-soil
IVb	9	Leaf Mould
IVb	u/s	Unstratified

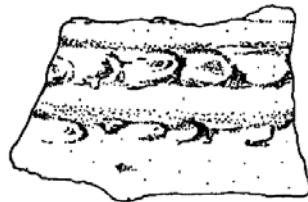
A table showing the number of sherds in each principal context on H.M.3



Context ~ 106

Finds Number ~ 25

Base Sherd.



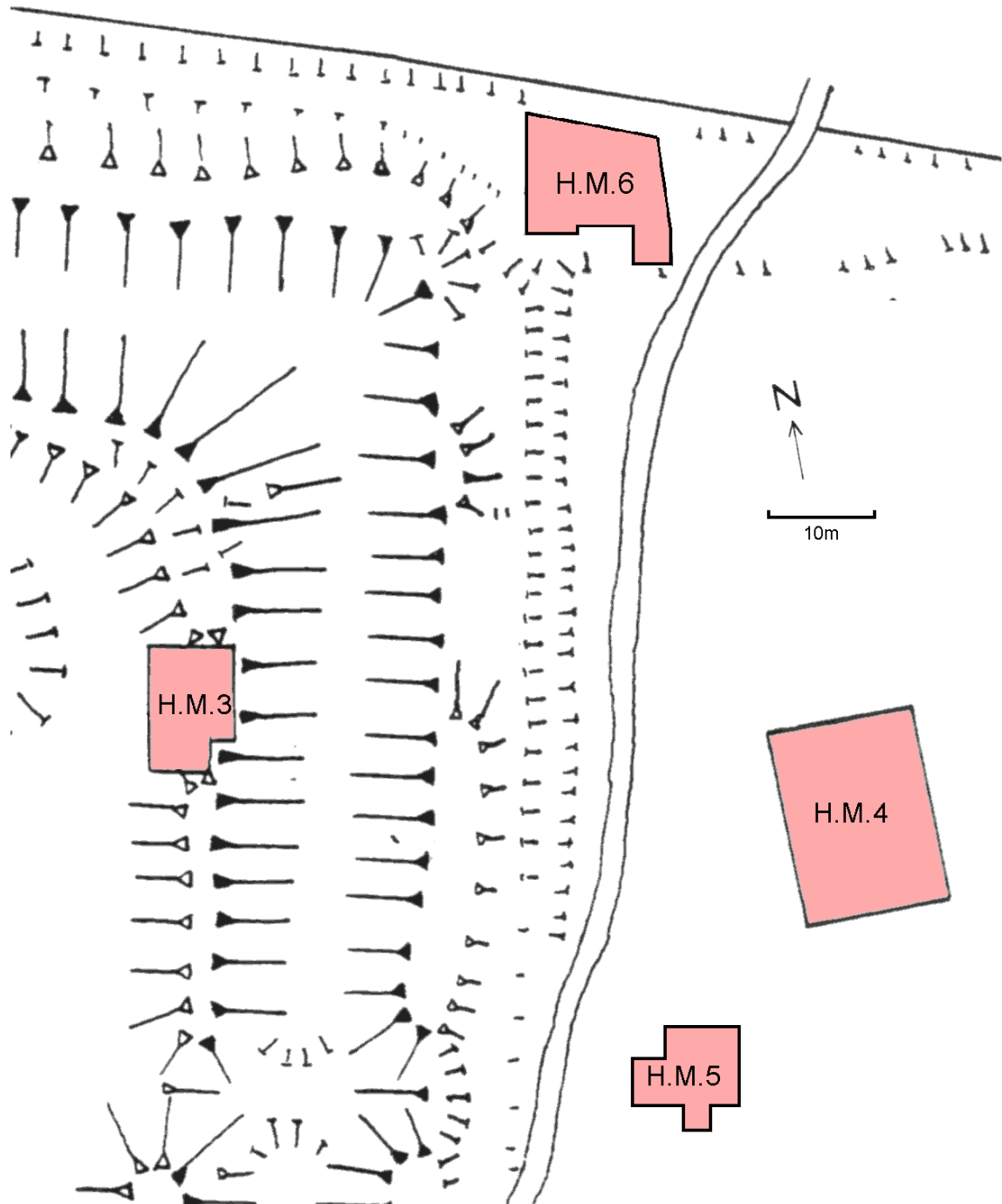
Context ~ 106

Finds Number ~ 21

Decorated Pot Sherd

Scale 1=1

Hobs Moat Excavated Areas,
north-east corner



15. Excavations on the north-eastern side of Hobs Moat.
H.M.4/5/6 are outside the scheduled area of the earthwork

Excavation H.M.4.

The excavation was carried out between April and May 1987, and was designed to understand the setting of the ancient monument. The area investigated a possible external building platform surviving to the east of the monument, between it and Hobs Moat Road. The road was constructed in two phases earlier in the twentieth century.

The precise location of the trench was predetermined by necessity. Excavations took place in advance of the erection of temporary project facilities. This development required the excavation of foundations into possible archaeological deposits, in a rectangular trench 16m x 12m. Work was limited to investigating the endangered levels; and was halted by the development of the facility in June 1987.

Pre-Excavation Work.

Physical survey revealed two features. First, there was a raised area adjacent to Hobs Moat Road, the road having been excavated deep below the original ground surface. Second, a slight bank running south to north formed an approximate edge to the raised area. It apparently ran into this rising ground to the south in the area of the intended excavation. Further to the north, the feature crossed the lane (the 'medieval' lane) running east-west along the northern edge of the monument; it clearly post-dated the lane.

Geophysical survey, using the project's Geoscan RM4 resistivity device, indicated higher resistance in the raised area with an edge approximately co-linear with the south-north feature. The lower resistance to the west appeared to be associated with the lower area, which in wet weather acted as a water collecting point.

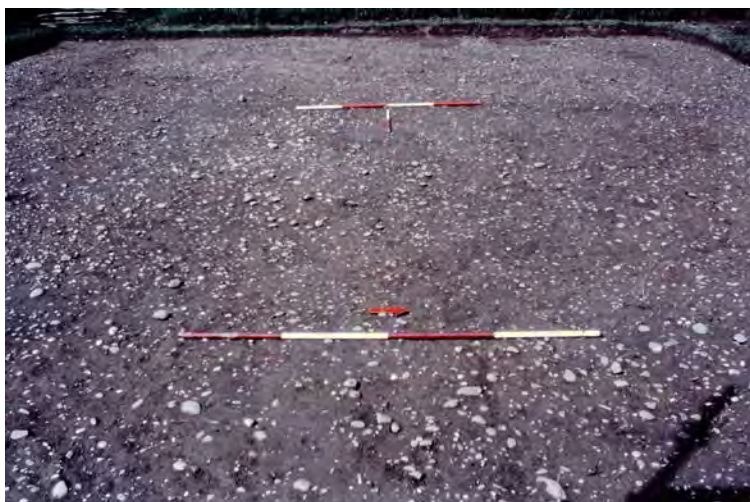
Cartographic research showed that in 1840 this area was part of Moat Field, Tithe Award No 59 in the parish survey. The field was in arable production at this time; agricultural disturbance of any archaeological remains was therefore anticipated.

The Excavation.

A turf <001> covered the site. This was removed to reveal in the raised eastern area a mixed deposit of dark-brown sandy loam <004> and brownish-yellow and red sandy-clays <005>, and in the west a uniform dark brown humic soil <002>. The low bank <006> visible in survey had a gritty brown soil matrix <007>.

The eastern area was pared-off; much modern building material was found in the mixed deposit. In section, discrete lenses of soil and clay were clearly revealed. The low bank was of a superficial nature bounding the mixed deposit to the north, but underlying it to the south. Beneath the mass of mixed material which formed the raised area was the uniform dark brown soil found to the west. The surface of this was generally even, but falling gradually from south to north. Below the humic soil was a dark-

brown pebbly clay-loam <003>; this formed a general layer across the site. Its surface contours showed two minor ridges and furrows running downhill from south to north. The distance between these furrows was approximately 6m.



The general layer 003. The largely featureless pebbly clay-loam extended across the whole of the area, and was underlain by similar material. Collectively the plough-soil, post-medieval drainage features running north-south (right to left) lay beneath.

[Video 1](#)

[long download time](#)

In the centre of the site, cutting slightly into the pebbly soil were the superficial traces of an unknown feature <011>, consisting of discrete patches of red-brown soil and three small, circular humus-filled holes. Charcoal and a fragment of metal were found in close association.

Shallow excavation into the pebbly soil uncovered a layer of fairly closely-packed pebbles <009> across the site; the soil matrix remained the same. Several sherds of badly abraded coarse medieval pottery were recovered from the matrix. Also mixed with this was a great deal of clay pipe, modern pottery and tile. Interestingly an irregular blade of flint was recovered in the same levels, and the remains of a shotgun cartridge. Removing the pebbles revealed a soil <010> which, with a slightly lighter brown colouration, differed only minimally from that above. The soil remained pebbly, but less distinctly so. Finds were as before.

Running along the sides of the furrows mentioned above, discrete lumps of yellowish-red clay <014> occurred, within the surrounding soil matrix.

Excavations continued by means of trowelled spits from east to west. It was noticeable that the average pebble size increased down the profile, and the soil colouration was lighter as excavation proceeded. The lower spit was given a separate context number <012> for the purpose of file recording; this appeared at first an arbitrary distinction, but small finds were noticeably fewer.

The clay spreads 014 were associated with two definite linear features <013> occurring directly below each furrow. In the time available only the eastern-most feature was investigated. It appeared as a prominent linear band of mixed reddish-brown clay. Immediately adjacent, to the west, was an associated band of dark soil. The width of the eastern 013 feature was 0.5m. It was clearly visible against the surrounding soil matrix.

Removing the dark soil of the feature, a regular clay edge was apparent, forming an a-symmetric V-shaped cut. Mixed with the soil was geological material; in the base of the cut, the soil was silty and contained fragmentary charcoal. Several sherds of modern pottery came from this silt. The depth of the clay-lined feature was a minimum of 0.2m. It was cut lower down through a geologically originated brownish-yellow pebbly clay-sand <008>.



Videophoto

Drainage feature 013 appears to have been cut from one side near-vertically, suggesting the use of a spade. Feature section on right.

At this stage, further excavation of the southern part of the site was discontinued; the necessary limit of the required foundations had been met. Investigations now concentrated on the northern third of the site, prior to the arrival of materials for the foundation construction. The remaining soil 012 was taken down evenly to a level at which the pebbly iron-rich geological 008 material emerged. In places, this layer was concreted into an 'iron-pan'. Interestingly, the geological surface was broken by narrow linear furrows <015> distinct in their location from the upper linear features and running approximately south-north on a slightly different alignment. The distance between the centres of these lower furrows was 3.5m.

The fill of the furrows was similar to the overlying soil, but a greater mixing of clay and sand was apparent in the matrix. A piece of modern tile was recovered from this fill. Only the two eastern-most features were excavated; excavation of the western ones was hampered by tree root activity.

To the centre of each furrow were very narrow, ca. 15 cms. wide, linear features <016> <017>, cut deeper into the geological material.

The easternmost had a generally red-brown clay fill; the second a mixed clay-loam fill, similar to that of the associated furrow.

Interpretation.

The early excavation work in this area dismissed the possibility of a raised medieval building platform to the east of the moat. Investigation of the higher eastern end of the trench showed the mass deposition of soil and geological material as up-cast from the excavation of the adjacent road earlier in the twentieth century. The slight bank which bounded this material was also of modern construction; it clearly overlay the surface of the lane to the north, disused when the Hobs Moat Road, which bisected it, was constructed.

The features covered a buried humic soil, which contained much modern material. The development of this soil suggests that the field was in pasture prior to the building of the road through it. The surface contour of the underlying pebbly soil clearly suggested a plough-soil, with a low ridge and furrow development. These linear features ran parallel to the line of the field boundary to the west, which bounds the outer edge of the Hobs Moat counter-scarp.



Looking towards Hobs Moat Road, the soil build-up can be seen increasing as the road is approached. Excavation showed this to be because of material deposited during construction of the road in the 1930s. The general layer is the lower plough soil.

[Video 2](#)

[long download time](#)

The matrix of the soil indicated an apparent layering within the plough-soil, in particular in the distinct pebble deposit. This layering, seen in a progressive lightening of the soil colour, would seem to be the result of leaching through the soil profile. The pebble layer is more difficult to explain; it may simply represent a natural post-disturbance process with the largest pebbles settling out at a particular level. Alternatively an artificial deposition may account for the general layer, possibly an attempt to improve site drainage. If artificial, it represents a minor agricultural development which did not disrupt the shape of the ridge and furrow system. The source of the pebbles is more easily understood, deriving from the underlying glacial drift deposit which forms the low hill upon which Hobs Moat sits.

Finds from the upper soil included a small quantity of residual medieval pottery and seventeenth century clay-pipe, all abraded and of small size.

Also residual was the flint blade, probably of prehistoric origin. The majority of finds however included nineteenth century pottery, tile and clay-pipe, and indeed some material of twentieth century origin. The dating horizon applies also to the most recent agricultural activity on the site.

At the base of the plough-soil, in the centre of each furrow, were what appeared to be the clay-lined field-drains (context 13); these ran fully across the site and seem to be an attempt to facilitate site drainage downslope to the northern field boundary. These simple a-ceramic field drains would appear to be contemporary with the plough-soil; pottery found in their silting dates their construction. The plough-soil enveloped the drains, though a partial truncation of the features is indicated by the patchy clay material occurring in the soil directly above them. The actual preservation of the features of these features however indicates the shallow nature of this phase of agricultural disturbance.

The shallow ploughing of the site was determined by the restricted depth of the plough-soil soil present, only 15cm. However, an earlier phase of similarly oriented ploughing was apparent in this, disrupting the geological surface and no doubt adding greatly to the pebble content of the already pebbly soil. The date of this disturbance is unlikely to be much earlier than the upper phase. A piece of nineteenth century tile came from the fill of one of the furrows.

In sum, then, the area showed the same thin soil presence in the vicinity of the moat as seen earlier on the moat platform, but accompanied with modern activity which masks earlier archaeological survival at this point. Consequently, it was determined that the archaeological information present in area H.M.4 was essentially seventeenth/eighteenth century onwards and into the early- to mid-twentieth century.

At this point the usefulness of the Clay Pipe report, p. 108, in dating the layers in H.M.4, along with those in the excavated areas H.M.6 and H.M.7, is to be noted. In H.M.4 all contexts above the glacial natural 008 contain clay tobacco pipe.

Excavation H.M.5.

The second excavation outside the external rampart was also situated on the eastern side of the earthwork, in front of the apparent main medieval entrance to the site. Its purpose was to investigate further the surroundings of the moated site, continuing the enquiry of H.M.4. Excavation was carried out between January and July 1988.

The main approach to the moat at this point might be expected to have evidence of medieval activity; in particular, it was thought the area might preserve a lane or track-way approaching the site.

The trench was 8m x 10m with a western transect and a southern transect.

Pre-excavation Work.

The area was comparatively flat and appeared featureless; there was no information to be gained visually about the area. It was surveyed with the Geoscan RM4 resistance measuring device. The results from this were uninformative, showing only that the area exhibited higher resistance values in the west, closer to the moat, lower values in the east.

Cartographic evidence earlier for H.M.4 had recorded Moat Field as fronting the moat in the nineteenth century - Tithe Award 59 in the parish survey, in arable use at the time of the award (1840). It was anticipated, therefore, that H.M.5 as part of this field would also have experienced agricultural disturbance.

The Excavation.

A dark upper layer of soil <5001> covered the site under the turf, and beneath this was a slightly lighter layer <5002>. Averaging together about 25cm in depth in the northern section, the layers contained modern material including twentieth century machine-made brick. On analogy with H.M.4, the layers were seen to be a recent deposit connected with the construction of the Hobs Moat Road, through the site-parallel road cutting in the 1930s.

A plough-soil layer <5003> occurred below, covering the whole area, with ridge and furrow occurring north to south spaced at about 6m. between ridges, as in H.M.4. The plough-soil was recognised as equivalent to the same in H.M.4, suggesting no archaeological disconnection between the two areas.

At this stage geological material <5008> began to appear throughout the excavated area, and an iron-pan ridge was detected in the northern part. This ran south-east/north-west for about 3m and terminated sharply about 1m from the northern baulk. On the eastern side of this, medieval pottery including abraded green glaze sherds occurred in a discreet layer, while in the west of the area only modern material was seen. It was believed that ploughing elsewhere would prove to have truncated any features yet remaining throughout the excavation.



The plough-soil layer, 5003, in H.M.5 - facing north.

The southern transect is in the foreground.

[Video 1](#)

[long download time](#)

Videophoto

In the central area two circular areas were found <5006> <5007>, separated by 3m, north to south. Both were 0.5m in diameter. When half-sectioned they were seen to be pits for substantial timber posts; both contained large water-worn cobbles, and clay, for packing. In the base there were thought to be 'post points': there was no evidence that the former posts had rotted in situ. The northern post pit 5006 had clear evidence of an excavated scoop on its northern edge apparently to facilitate the dropping of the post into the pit; such a feature was less clearly apparent with the southern post pit 5007. There were no finds in either pit.

Videophoto



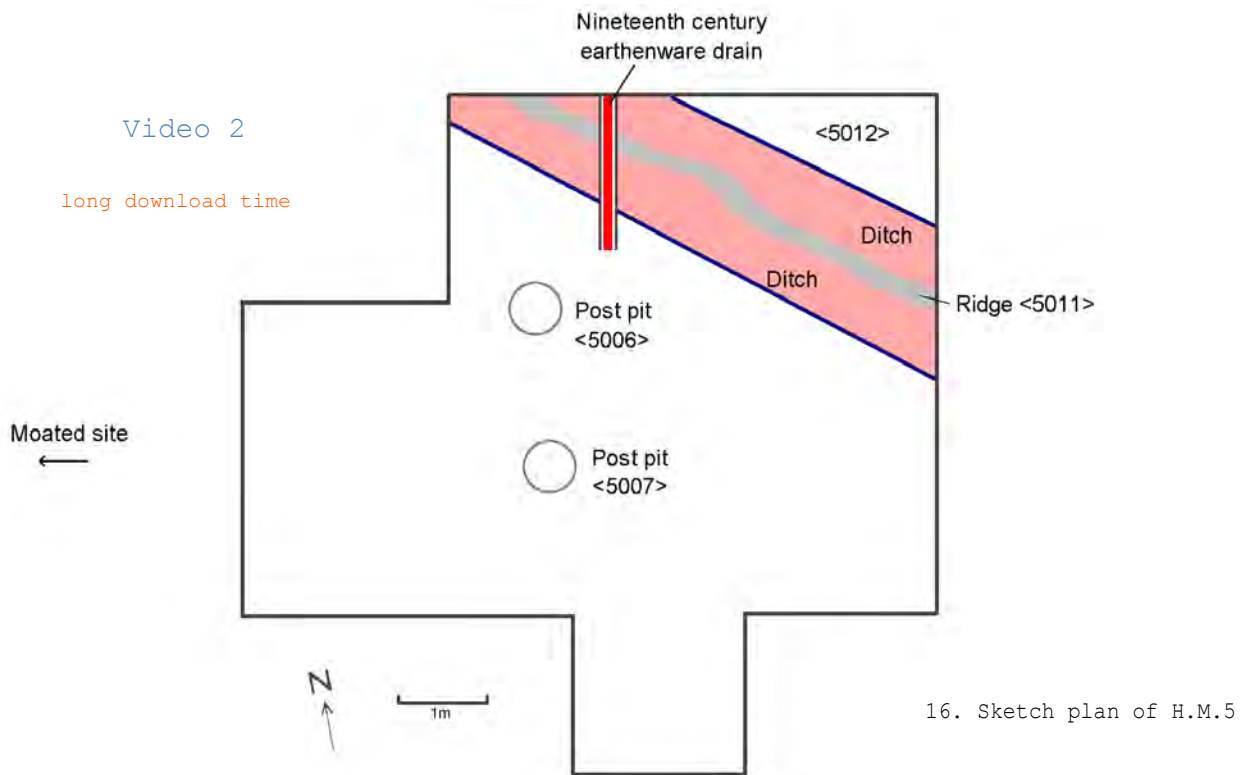
Post pit 5006 half-sectioned.



Post pit 5007 with packing largely removed.

In the northern area, excavation now concentrated around the iron-pan ridge, where unexcavated material remained. Trowelling showed features on either side of the ridge which ran parallel from the northern baulk in line with the ridge into the eastern baulk at its south. On excavation both were found to be 'u' shaped ditches 0.5m wide and 1m deep, separated by the flat topped iron-pan ridge 0.5m wide at its broadest point. The ditch-bottoms were silted to a depth of about 20cms.

Where the iron-pan ridge approached the northern baulk from the south-east, and was seen to terminate sharply, a further cut was revealed, running north-south through the ridge. This was discovered to be a narrow trench dug down from the bottom of the plough-soil and traversing both ditches and intervening ridge. At the bottom of this ditch was a nineteenth century (probably) ceramic land-drain consisting of serially laid short orange-coloured earthenware pipe sections of around 60mm internal diameter. The drain was seen to continue through the whole area southwards; it seemed that it was laid respecting the height of the bottom of the earlier parallel ditches, having very little of the preceding silt underneath.



At this point excavation of the area was discontinued with the ending of employment contracts for the third year archaeology team and the dispersal of its members.

Interpretation.

It is not unexpected that H.M.4 and H.M.5 should be similar in general terms. Both showed a very recent spread of material across the general area amounting to about 25cm in depth, on average, attributable to the up-cast from Hobs Moat Road development of the mid-twentieth century. Both showed a plough-soil layer beneath, of very similar appearance, both areas showing a comparable truncation, by plough activity, of underlying features.

Of more comment is the depth of the plough-soil encountered, a mere 15cm. Elsewhere on Hobs Moat - all the areas examined - a similar restricted soil development has been seen and the question arises as to its significance.



Videophoto



Above, *left*, post pit 5006 showing the 'scoop' on western side for post raising; *right*, stake point hole post pit 5007.



Left, the drain ditches in the north of the excavated area, with the 19th century ceramic drain cutting through these and the separating iron pan ridge 5011.



Below, the earthenware drain-cut in the northern section.

The reason for the poor soil development must be geological, but the lack of more tractable soil seems to argue that the eminence on which the moat is situated was chosen for more reason, perhaps, than its imposing location. It perhaps says something about the economic considerations of the manorial use and development of land in the medieval period.

Subsequently there have been further attempts to make the land more useable apparently concerning water. Drainage features were found in H.M.4 and there is the earthenware drain here, too, in H.M.5. The drain may well serve the same purpose as the underlying parallel ditches (which, however, in the small area seen, drain in a different direction to the later ceramic) and no other interpretation of these ditches as drains is obvious or can be conceived. It seems that not a great deal of time, as judged by the ceramic drain respecting the bottom of these earlier features, preceded its laying.¹ This is supported by the observation that the top of the cut for the ceramic drain in the ditches is from the top of the silting - the plough-soil providing the final fill of both.

The remaining features which are recognisable in H.M.5 are the two large post pits. These were cut from the base of the plough-soil layer and may well have been deeper than presently seen if the features have been truncated by the plough. The timbers they once contained were massive, and needed, it appears, scoops on the pit side to guide the timbers into the ground and to ease their raising (see video). They could have been fairly tall. It can't be said when the pits were dug out, but these large timbers were located north-south and might be associated with the main entrance to the moat. They are suggestive.

No medieval lane or track-way was found.

1. It does seem that both ditches were constructed in parallel and therefore presumably at the same time .

Excavation H.M.6.

As with the two preceding excavations, the excavation was intended to investigate the surroundings of the monument, to assess activity in the immediate area and to enquire, if possible, into the economic meaning of the moated site.

The area was positioned at the north-east corner of the monument, beyond the northern and eastern counter-scarps, where at this point the 'medieval lane' crossed the area. A field boundary passed to the south separating the lane and the monument - the relationship of this to both was included in the enquiry.

The description medieval lane had been applied to the northern track-way by the first season's director, though on no demonstrable evidence. At the end of the excavation it was seen that the description had no support in fact.

The Excavation.

The shape of the excavated area was irregular, measuring 10m and 9m along the north-south limits and 10m along the east-west limit in the north and 11m in the south, with two transects running southwards toward the monument. The latter were to examine the relationship of the field boundary to the earthwork and to the lane. Excavation began in June 1987 and continued until late November in the same year.

The area was situated under trees, and surrounded by pedestrian paths, which greatly hampered its position and shape. The ground cover was patchy soft woodland grasses, broad-leaved plants and occasional small bushes, separated by intervals without cover. A low rounded eminence, about 2m in width, marked the lane, running in parallel with the counter-scarp of the monument east-west, separated from it by about 5m.

The initial appearance after the removal of this cover was of a patch-work of contexts <1001> to <1019>. [A video describes these](#). The new surface then revealed was a further group of similar-looking elements across the entire area <1020> to <1039>.

The detailed appreciation of the area at this time was to discern what had been anticipated to be a complex series of historical actions. It was seen, however, that a sequence of little significance over a short period was recorded, representing the activity of people in recent times. The material was from the time when access to the site at this point had been increasing rapidly.

Below was the nineteenth century history of the area. On the southern side, the field bank was seen in feature <1020>, fronted by context 1019, the counterpart ditch, and in the northern part of the area was the lane,



Videophoto



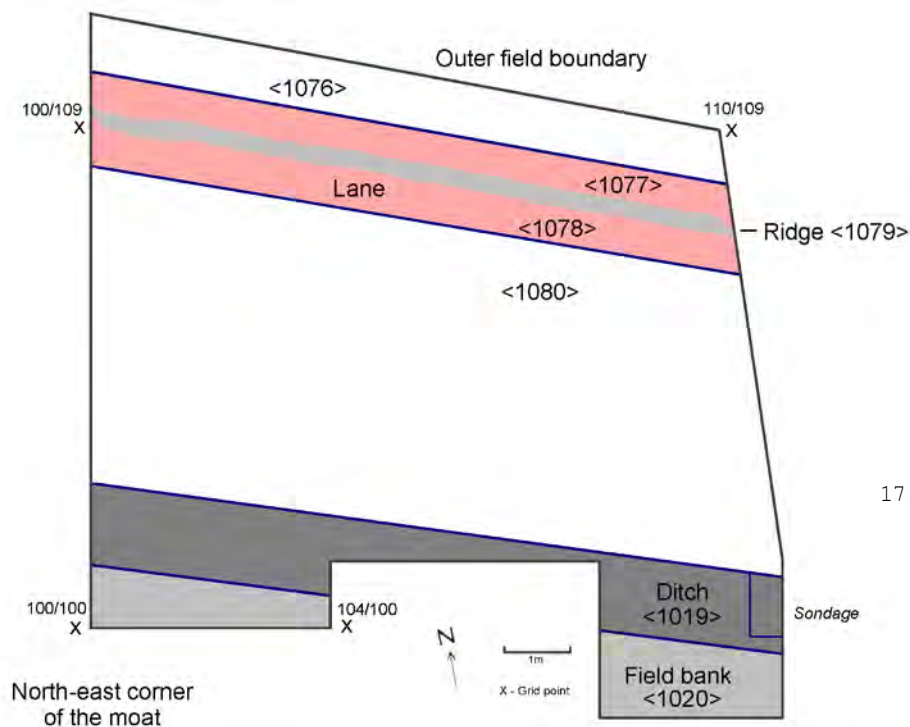
Videophoto

Top, the lane looking east, towards the site of the former Odensil farm. At the right is the field ditch fronting the north side of Hobs Moat.

Above, looking west, the groundcover has been removed from the area and the uppermost soil. The wheel grooves defining the lane are already apparent, suggesting use into the twentieth century.

now developing as a series of linear contexts, <1026>, <1027>, <1028>, <1036> and <1037>. The depth of these elements and the associated material producing the existing lane profile at ground level was about 25cm. Between the lane and the field bank in the south was an area of various dark contexts of similar character, separating the lane from the bank and ditch. Finds showed that these were nineteenth century in date with no evidence at this stage of earlier material or finds.

Further trowelling of the lane now showed a sudden change of character in its appearance. Whereas it was previously dark, ashy and humic in colour, much like the rest of the area at the same level, it became light and sandy-orange with stony inclusions. There was no gradation of change, or interval. To the north a flat topped similar layer running parallel was composed of hard light sandy-orange coloured clay <1076>. Two grooves <1078> <1077> with an intervening ridge <1079> defined the lane between its outer edges.



Video 2

long download time

17. Sketch plan of H.M.6

To the south, the intervening context in the middle of the area was removed <1048> and a markedly different surface appeared here too <1074>. This was composed of a similar sandy coloured matrix accompanied by a dense inclusion of stones - concentrated in the east as <1080>, less so in the west. Removal of these layers produced a further similar layer, now material clearly of glacial origin.

Beyond the central area, the bank at the southern limit of the excavation was excavated to its original surface, which consisted of an orange coloured stone-less clay above a glacial layer and natural geology. In front, the ditch 1020 was explored by a sondage. This proved to have a nineteenth century ceramic drain at the bottom, about 70cm below the



Videophoto



Videophoto

Top, the lane, looking west. The nineteenth century ash-derived overburden has been removed from the foreground section, showing the stone lowest layers. Beneath (not yet visible) is a glacial deposit, above natural geology.

Above, the west-facing and north-facing sections of the southern transect. The shallowness of topsoil is easily apparent.



Videophoto

Above, the earthenware land drain at the base of the ditch (and bank).

sondage surface. The vertical southern and eastern sections of the area here showed the very shallow soil build-up in H.M.6, overlying glacial material above natural geology. Once again the absence of soil around the monument, as in H.M.4 and H.M.5, as well as on the moat platform, was clearly demonstrated.

Removal of 1074 in the central part of the site had produced a glacial-in-origin layer composed of hard iron-rich natural clay and stones. This was similar to deposits encountered elsewhere on the site, including the scheduled area. The lane was excavated to show a greater depth of stones, these representing artificial deposits (possibly three layers in the section examined) on top of the 1084 layer. It was clear that the lane at the top of this stone sequence immediately preceded the dark humic build-up initiated in the mid-nineteenth century, while the bottom could not be dated. Its shallow development, of the order of a few cm, immediately under the ash layer seemed to imply a late date for its use however - perhaps in the eighteenth century, rather than an earlier one.

Interpretation.

Excavation showed that the field boundary fronting the moat, as with H.M.7 (following), was a simple structure with a ditch in front of it, with, in the north of H.M.6, the lane passing the moat parallel in the same direction as the field boundary.

Video 3

long download time

There was no dating evidence for the bank but the ditch had an earthenware drain at the bottom, suggesting a date in the second half of the nineteenth century for this latest development. The ditch was probably created earlier, though how much earlier could not be said. The sequence resembled the occurrence in H.M.5, where there were ditches followed by an earthenware drain; and in H.M.5 it seemed possible that the sequence may have had a short period between the elements, judging by the shallow fill of the ditches. It may therefore be that the moat boundary bank and ditch in H.M.6 also had a short development, perhaps suggesting an earliest date in the seventeenth or eighteenth century for its inception.

On the other side of the area the lane too seems to have had a short development. Above the stone layer was the 25cm accumulation of dark ashy material dated by finds to the mid-Victorian period and following. Below was the stony layer of little consistent depth, giving the appearance of ad hoc dumping of material to produce a route past the moat suitable, it appears, for wheeled cart traffic. The sequence <shallow deposits of stone followed by more determined and sophisticated use of domestic or industrial waste (ash)> is reminiscent of the drain sequence in the area and suggests again Victorian improvement activity from a simpler start, but one of no great antiquity.

That the development in H.M.6 is of comparatively recent date is indeed confirmed by the clay pipe recovery, where contexts 1081 and 1084, immediately above the glacial layer and originally thought to be part of it, have finds datable to the beginning of the eighteenth century.

The suggested source for this activity is Odensil farm, as recorded on Beighton's map, which perhaps came into being not long before - possibly a 'late' establishment in view of the poor quality of the soil on the hill-top. Drainage at the north side of the moat was clearly a problem as shown in the findings of H.M.4 to H.M.6, and the stone-surfaced lane was the solution forthcoming to getting farm traffic round the moat from the farm to the fields beyond.

The shallow build-up of soil generally on the hill-top and confirmed here in H.M.6 is again a surprising observation. As remarked earlier (unless a mechanical process can be suggested for an improbable reduction of soil) the lack of soil, at least, seems to suggest a wider consideration for the moat's positioning aside from its imposing location.

[Video 4](#)

[long download time](#)

Excavation H.M.7.

The remaining area was the final excavation of the community project. It was placed over the southern moat field boundary towards its eastern end, and was intended to investigate why, at this point, the bank and ditch seemed to be larger than elsewhere, and to compare the structure with the boundary and ditch excavated as part of H.M.6.

The area was rectangular, 3m wide and 6m in length, the long side running through the bank and ditch at ninety degrees to the moated site. It was excavated during the summer of 1988.

Excavation.

This was a small area. Excavation showed that the layer sequence was similar to the other areas outside the monument. A dark humic layer overlay the whole area, composed largely of leaf mould; this sat on top of a somewhat lighter, sandier layer derived from nineteenth and twentieth century erosion. The ditch was deeper than the northern example, but not greatly so, and the bank, which faced south, had a fairly steep profile.

A dirty grey deposit occurred in the lowest level of the ditch, filling it to about half-way vertically. There were no finds. The lighter sandier layer above contained nineteenth century and more-recent white glazed pottery.

There were no finds on the bank itself; which was greatly eroded, having been reduced substantially. The back of the excavation, however, nearest the moat counter-scarp, contained a local context from which all the remaining finds of the excavation came. The dark, greasy material produced a few heavily abraded apparently medieval potsherds - doubtless residual - and a quantity of clay tobacco pipe fragments. Some of the pipes represented were early eighteenth/late seventeenth century in date.

Nothing else about the excavation suggested an earlier date for activity and it was believed that the bank and ditch itself might be somewhat later, possibly a construction of the nineteenth century.

The combination of the bank and ditch presented an effective obstacle to access of the moat enclosure at this point.

Interpretation.

There seems to be little doubt that the bank and ditch in H.M.7 are a boundary construction for the moated site to prevent access, presumably by animals, from the land to the south. The late-eighteenth or nineteenth centuries seems to be the likely date of its construction.

[Video](#)

long download time



Videophoto



Videophoto

Top, H.M.7 seen from the south-east. The eroded field bank is in the middle ground at the left, fronted by its contemporary field ditch.

Above, the west-facing section at the end of the excavation. Hobs Moat is on the left-hand side, out of sight.

Discussion and Conclusions.

In the recording and classification of moated sites five general criteria are applied; size, shape, site location, function, and chronology. The size and shape, as well as the monument's geographic and geological position, have already been examined but the site's location in relation to settlement, owner-status, function and chronology remain to be discussed.

Hobs Moat lies 4km north-west of the town of Solihull, in the Olton district of the Domesday parish of Ulverley, subsequently known as Solihull.¹ According to Dugdale Hobs Moat was situated within a park which was over a mile in diameter, delineated by a bank and a ditch.² Unfortunately, there is no trace of the bank Dugdale describes since it has been obliterated by modern development, a fate which it shares with a number of archaeologically interesting sites in the area. Without Dugdale's record, therefore, the existence of the park would have been unknown, since none of the local field names preserve any tradition of being used as park-land. There are several factors for believing in the existence of the park other than just Dugdale's statement. The park's position within the manor is characteristic of a medieval park, being removed from the town or village, on the edge of a manor, and near to water bodies which would have formed its boundaries for at least part of its circuit.³ This would appear to be part of a pattern in this area, in the thirteenth century Warwickshire Arden, where moated sites and their parks are often found in conjunction, as at Forshaw, as well as at Park Hall and Coleshill. The de Odingsells were late-comers to Solihull and since there is no evidence of a manor house in the town,⁴ the siting of a residence on the edge of the manor, within its own park, may have been an easier as well as a much more desirable option.

The connection between Hobs Moat and the de Odingsell family was first made by William Dugdale,⁵ and although the detail of his statements may be subject to criticism, there are several reasons for believing his attribution is correct.

The name of the de Odingsell family was apparently preserved by Odensil farm lying some 200m to the east. On Beighton's map of Warwickshire in 1725, the earthwork is described as both 'Hogs' and 'Odensel' moat. William Hutton also called the site 'Odingsell's moat' although it is not known on what evidence he bases his statements, and they may only be a recapitulation of Dugdale's remarks.⁶

The most logical reason for suggesting that the de Odingsell family were responsible for the construction of Hobs Moat is that they appear to be the

1 descent of the manor, above.

2 Dugdale.

3 Dugdale mentions the 'vestigia' locally of three very large pools now meadow ground. The course of Hatchford Brook to the north of the site appears to be also a consequence of drainage improvement.

4 The designation of a building in Solihull High Street as the manor house is spurious.

5 Dugdale.

6 Hutton.

only resident lords of the manor (see descent of the manor, p. 22), and it is implausible that anyone else connected with the medieval history of the manor could have constructed the earthwork.

There can be any number of possible reasons for the construction of a moat, and its primary function can, and probably does, vary depending on the circumstances. At Hobs Moat it is arguable that status was a primary consideration. Although the enclosure is not particularly large, just over an acre, the moat ditch is unusual in its width and depth. It has been estimated that 11,000m² were displaced in the digging of the moat, and when this is compared with other moated sites in the area, for example Kents Moat where 3,000m² were moved, then Hobs Moat must represent a large investment in money and manpower. The up-cast from the moat was used to create the large internal and external ramparts which are distinctive in themselves, but which also exaggerate the depth and width of the moat. The purpose of the ramparts does not appear to be defensive since the external ramparts would provide any attacker with ready-made siege-works; there is also a very slight internal southern internal rampart which is the earthwork's weakest point, and no evidence for any substantial palisade or stonework on the ramparts has emerged from fieldwork, documentary research or excavation (but see remarks H.M.2 and H.M.3, above). Hobs Moat is unnecessarily large, with the appearance of no great practical value, and it is unlikely that such a large undertaking would have been commenced without planning and forethought. It seems, therefore, that Hobs Moat is the expression of the growing wealth, status and power of a rising knightly family in the thirteenth century.

In the descent of the manor section of this paper we stated our reasons for believing that William de Odingsell (d.1264) and his son, (Sir) William (d.1295), were the only resident lords of the manor. Green-glaze pottery recovered from beneath the early bank (see p. 42) proves the first phase of occupation at Hobs Moat to be no earlier than the thirteenth century, and not earlier as had been suggested previously. It is tempting to attribute the pre-moat phase and the moat phase to father and son respectively, although there is no proof of this, and no accurate estimate can be given for the date of the moat's construction. There was no application for a licence to crenellate nor for imparkment, and the grants of deer from royal forests, which can sometimes be used as an indirect way of dating imparkments, are too frequent and too widespread to provide a possible date for the creation of the park, although it seems reasonable to suggest that Hobs Moat and the park are contemporary.

There are no compelling documentary dates for the occupation of the site, but mention of Castle Lane in 1339 points to the existence of a prominent structure in the vicinity at this time, though whether it was occupied or deserted then is obviously unknown.⁷ Documentary evidence does give other

⁷ Land document 1339: 'lecastellone'. Fifty years later in 1389 there is a reference to the 'dumpoul' – the lord of the manor's pool. As the 'dimple' in later times, this pool is situated on the west side of Lode Lane around 1.5km from Hobs Moat towards Solihull. Closer to Hobs Moat Dovehouse Lane is found also on the west side of Load Lane. Possession of a dove cot was a prerogative of the lord of the manor in the middle ages.

indication as to when the monument was deserted, however. It was certainly so in 1656 when Dugdale visited the site. The male line of the family ended in 1295,⁸ and the moat may have been deserted at this date, or possibly on the death of Sir William's widow sometime after 1311,⁹ after which all subsequent Lords of Solihull and Olton, who are documented, were absentees. The early desertion of Hobs Moat is supported by the absence of any pottery which can be dated to the later medieval period, and the paucity of medieval finds itself reflects a very short period of occupation.

Finally, the archaeology itself adds further support to these suggestions in the modesty of the structures so far examined on the site and in their appearance of little developmental life, other than the building in H.M.3, demolished on the building of the present moat. The paucity of the soil surrounding the moat confirms that the earthwork was not the grandiose expression of an extensive farm - the soil supported very little. Hobs Moat can only have been principal homestead of the seigneurial family.

8 Dugdale.

9 Cal. Inq. P.M., vol. III, pp.186-7.

Specialist Reports.

The Resistivity Surveys.

A major part of the archaeological team's efforts during 1987-88 was a detailed geophysical survey of the moated area and its environs. The raw results from the resistivity work on the platform area were collated and presented by the team and the data then passed to Dorset Institute of Higher Education for further processing; a report on the data was produced.¹ Earlier, in the summer of 1985, prior to the community project, a resistivity survey of the moat platform was undertaken by researcher at the School of Geology in Birmingham University P.V.Panchanathan, of the Centre of Earth Science Studies, Trivandrum, India. The two surveys are here reconsidered and re-presented using modern presentation methods and in the light of interpretation experience.

The contour map of spot heights, produced by the archaeological team, has been added to illustrations for context and for comparison with topography.

The Community Project Survey (1987):

Description and Method.

The platform measures approximately 90m x 55m and covers an area of 4950m². The survey was carried out using a 1m grid system with readings taken every 1m, and was conducted in dry and sunny weather, often after periods of rain. The entire platform was surveyed.

The equipment used for the survey was a Geoscan RM4 Resistance Meter and twin probe array P.A.1 with 0.5m probe separation. Raw data was collected manually and displayed initially as contour lines of equal resistance. Subsequent data processing was accomplished using a B.B.C. computer and a programme supplied by Dorset Institute of Higher Education. It was displayed, in monochrome, in grid areas using an Epson LX 80 printer.

Six 30m² rectangles, 1 - 6, comprised the grid display; these area numbers are now applied throughout the report following for location description.

Data Presentation.

Two presentation methods were used in 1987. As already mentioned, the raw data used a 'contour' line method, where lines of equal resistance values were interpolated between data points. For the processed data a dot density method was employed. This enhanced any anomalies and allowed the eye to see shapes in the data that may represent archaeological features even in the presence of other interfering patterns. Both presentations were monochrome.

In 2016 colour was added, and the six grid squares' images of the community project's processed results as originally produced combined into single images of the entire platform. The two 1987 presentations - raw and processed dot density - could now be directly compared

The added twelve-colour sequence shows relative levels of resistance, in black ranging through to red, in the raw presentation, whereas two colours

only, red and black, are used in the dot density illustrations; the density of dots then indicates 'high' or 'low' relatively above site mean.

Both versions of the survey were very similar in appearance and they are now considered jointly. In the pages following, the moat platform areas below site mean are shown in figure 18 as dot density processed data, while a composite dot density plan, figure 19, where the values have been filtered, demonstrates ploughing. Both illustrations show the location of the six original grid areas. The plan of the raw data follows, and a further plan, figure 22, then illustrates anomalies described in the text.

Results and Discussion.

Topographically, the centre of the moat platform is a flat area, declining slowly in height towards the northern internal rampart; lower areas of the platform on either side deepen and widen along the northern axis, behind the ramparts. In plan the higher area of the northern half is thus an upturned 'V' pointing north, which on the eastern side has a shallow ditch approaching a gap in the northern rampart - seen most easily in the contour survey. A less well defined feature on the western side may also be a ditch, although this is shallow, indeterminate and does not point to the gap in the northern rampart.

In the resistivity surveys as now presented the eastern ditch is confirmed as a low resistance element extending south-eastwards towards the eastern entrance to the platform, meeting but apparently not touching the eastern internal rampart a few metres to the north of the entrance in grid area 3 (see especially fig. 20). The resistance readings are the lowest encountered in the surveys; this further suggests the nature of the feature. Another ditch-like element may also be proposed feeding into the ditch on the western side as it approaches the northern gap in the rampart.

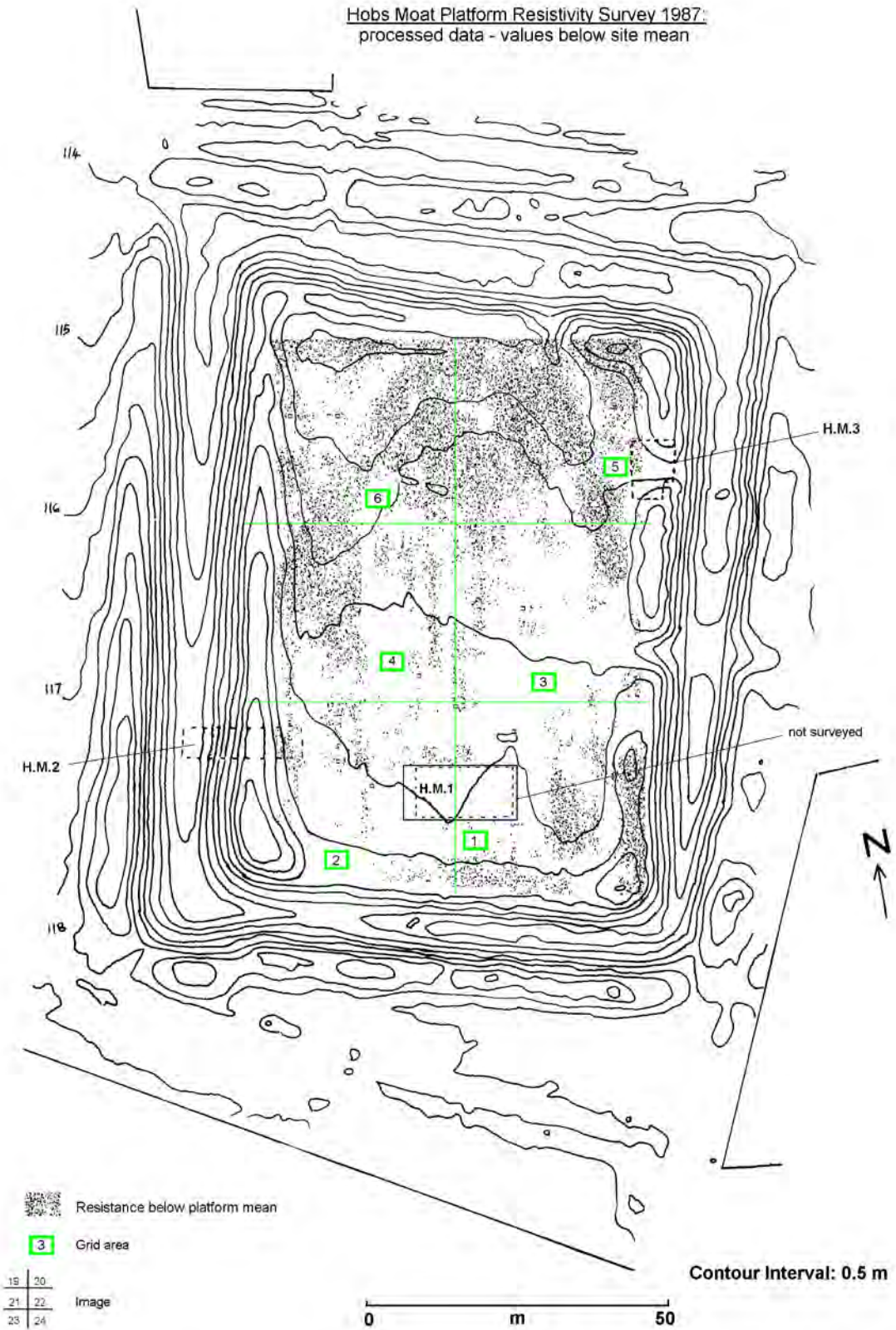
On the eastern side of the eastern ditch's course are higher readings perhaps indicating the spread of material dug out from the ditch, while beyond there is a low resistance area which completes the north-eastern corner of the surveys' grid and platform images. The area is partially accounted for by an accumulation of humic material at this point.

On the western side of the 'V' the reminiscent sequence occurs, but perhaps not requiring the presence of a ditch; a higher resistance element beyond also indicates a change of material.

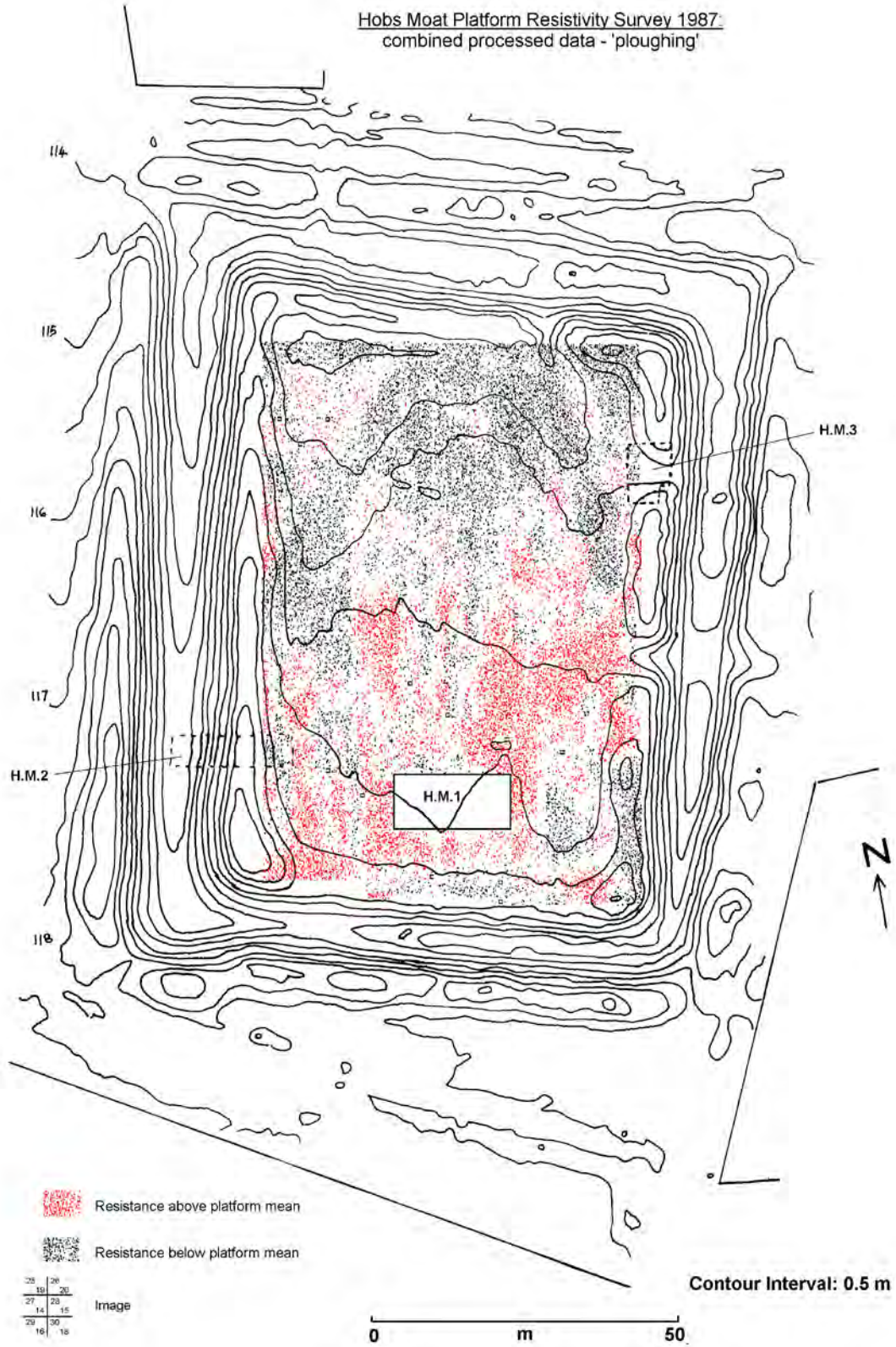
The north central area - the narrow point of the 'V' - is a low resistance area defined by the lower resistance values at its edges. It runs up to, and perhaps travels under, the northern internal rampart.

Elsewhere, a very extensive high resistance anomaly is evident southwards, running from the central eastern part of the platform through H.M.1 to the south-western edge of the platform (areas 3 to 2). This is apparently iron pan, which in H.M.1 was confirmed as such by excavation. The feature is

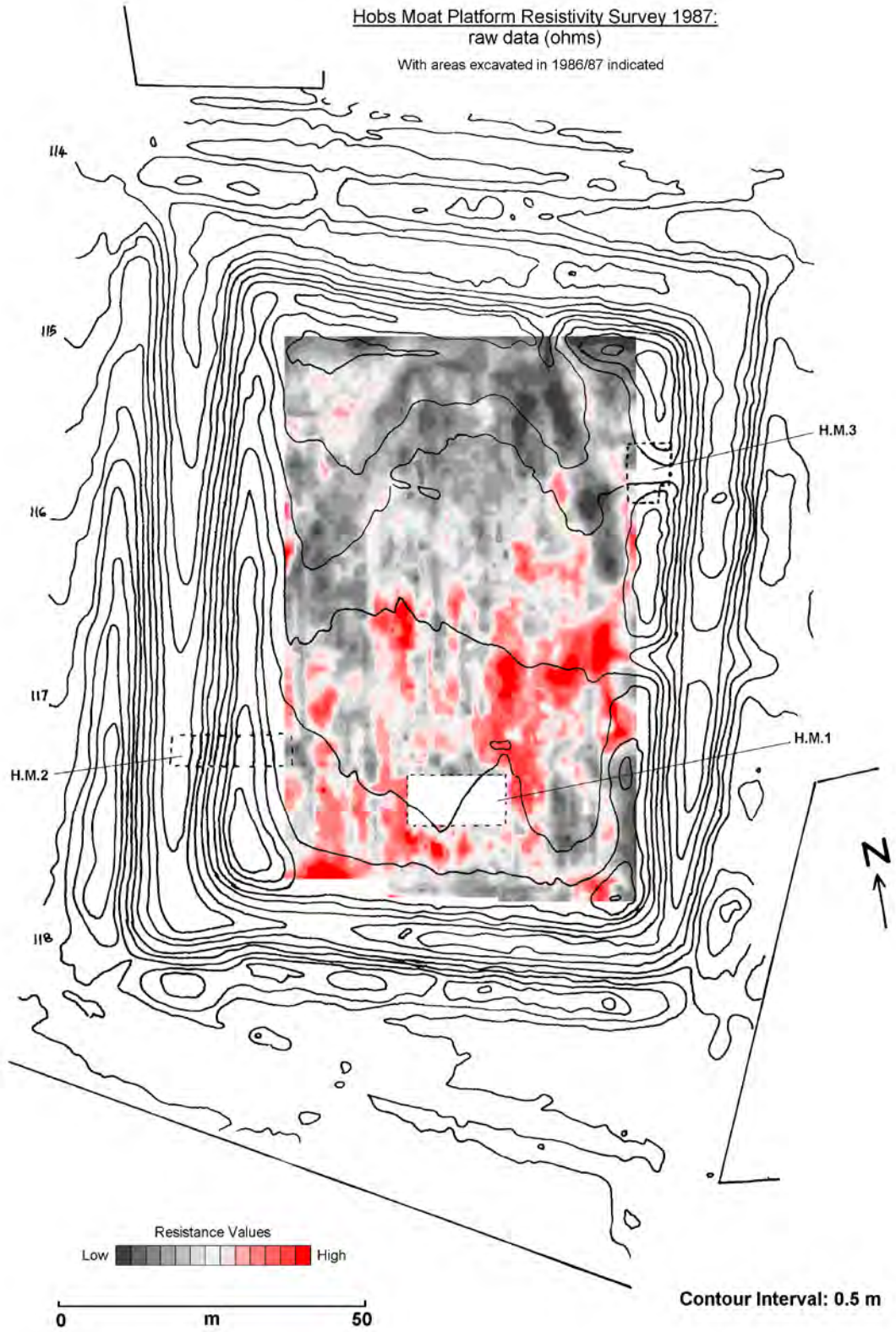
- Pdf reader page display arrows can 'flip' between the following images.



18. Resistivity values below site mean, dot density plan



19. Resistivity values above
below site mean



20. Raw resistance values

bisected by lower resistance values which run north-westerly, also through H.M.1, meeting a high resistance area in grid area 4.

On the western edge, a second high resistance anomaly runs in parallel with the western inner rampart (area 2 into 3). Closest to the rampart it is perhaps accounted for as the result of a build-up of stony sediments against the rampart, or eroded material from the rampart; but away from this it is probably also an area of iron pan in its further extent.

The whole of the southern and central platform in grid areas 1 to 4 is characterised by a further major component, a marked linearity, apparently superimposed on these features; this is produced by parallel lines of low and high resistance values. These extend into grid areas 5 and 6 as low resistance variations along the long axis of the moat platform. The lines are equally marked in both presentations. In their consistency and generality, and in their appearance of having scored the pre-existing resistivity pattern, they are highly suggestive. They are best visualised as evidence for ploughing.

Other features of less clarity occur over the platform. There is a vague near-circular ellipsoid containing-line 'perimeter' of mixed resistance values at A (fig. 22), a possible rectangularity of resistance values at B and a small high resistance feature at C. A, if it is accepted, is of large diameter at 30m, and it may appear to cut into high resistance elements to the south and east. It seems to continue into low resistance areas to the north and west where it is seen as a narrow line of resistance values closer to the platform mean than the surrounding. The rectangularity at B is discernible despite the plough lines and is defined on its western edge by an area of low resistance and on its eastern side by another low resistance plough furrow-like sequence.

It appears that B may contain a building or buildings. This is further suggested in that the feature is opposite the main entrance and in full view of it. At C, two small high resistance anomalies extend out from, and possibly from under, the western internal rampart, which shows a slight bulge at this point. The anomalies are in line with the western course of the central platform area (the 'V') but outside it and parallel to it. If related to the western edge of the 'V' they could be seen as part of a pattern unlike the rectilinearity of the present earthwork. The excavation evidence from H.M.2. might have significance here. 'Geology' or slope wash, as with the iron pan observation earlier in area 2, may also be the explanation for the feature.

Finally, localized low resistance anomalies are perhaps the result of trees and tree root action. Trees were present on the site since at least Elizabethan times,² and these were followed by a formal planting of the earthwork which, it has been suggested, happened at some time in the eighteenth century or following.

The 1985 Survey:

The earlier survey was carried out in circumstances similar to the 1987 survey, in summer and after a period of rain. It covered a smaller area of the moat platform at 4032m², and was effected by means of 43 profiles east-west along the northern axis of the moat platform at 2m electrode spacing. The survey was thus a quarter of the resolution of the 1987 survey in the area assessed.

The data was presented as contours in similar manner to the raw data from the later survey, and was treated both as linear (raw) and as modified logarithmic data. The latter used selective contour intervals and was not directly comparable with the later presentation. The linear data was rendered as apparent resistivity: this can be thought of as 'specific resistance' of a given unit area (1m³) in ohm-metres. The RM4 data of the later survey was measured as resistance in ohms, but as the values for this array are multiplied by a factor of 1 to attain apparent resistivity values, the values of both surveys were directly comparable. There was no dot density presentation.

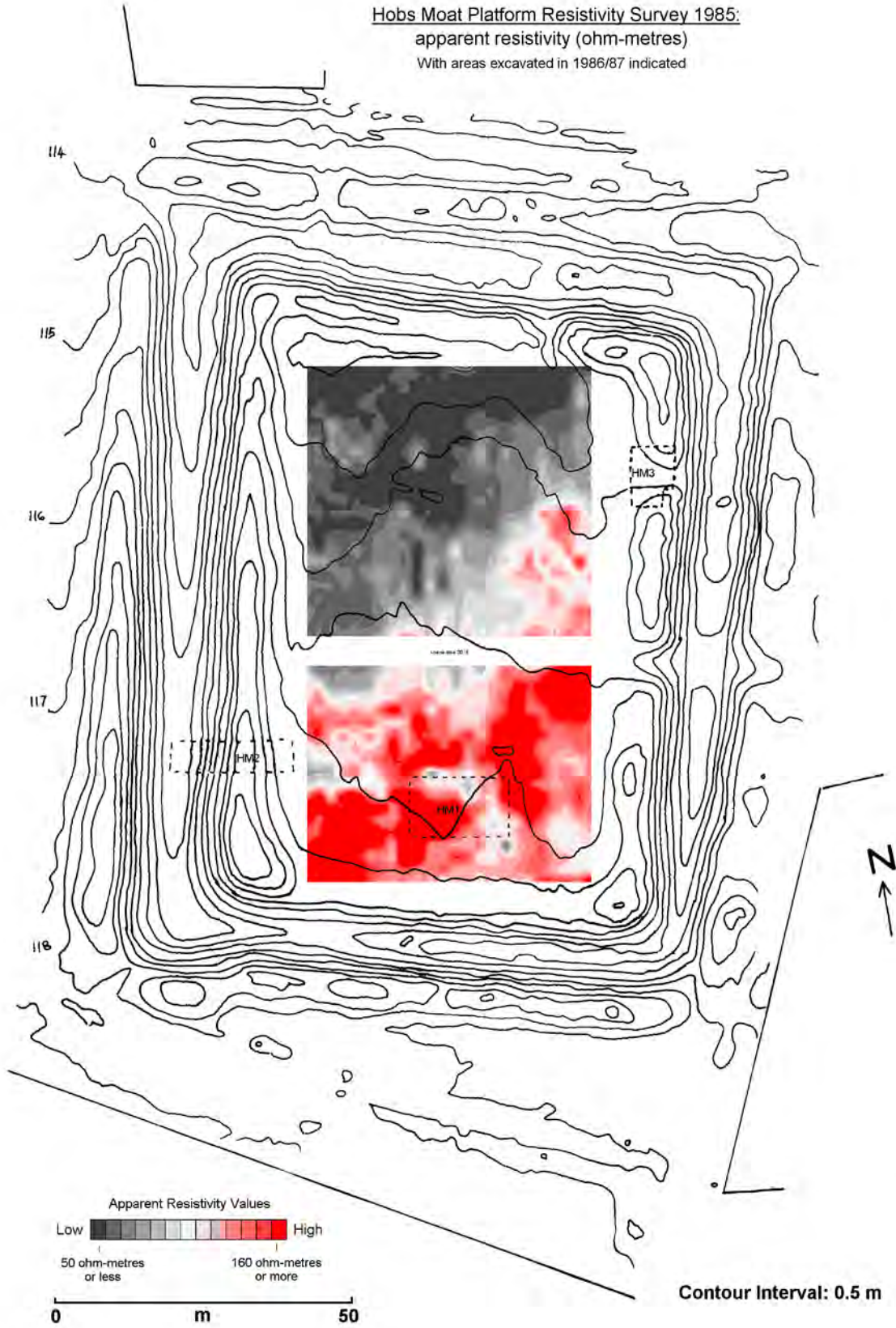
The 2016 re-presentation of the survey (fig. 21, page following) used the method adopted for the contour display of the later survey, and colour was added in 12 steps, red to black, high to low, using the same colours for resistance and apparent resistivity representing the same values. The two surveys could now be directly compared.

The map produced showed that there was a broad general agreement with the 1987 survey both in resistivity areas shown and in their electrical values.

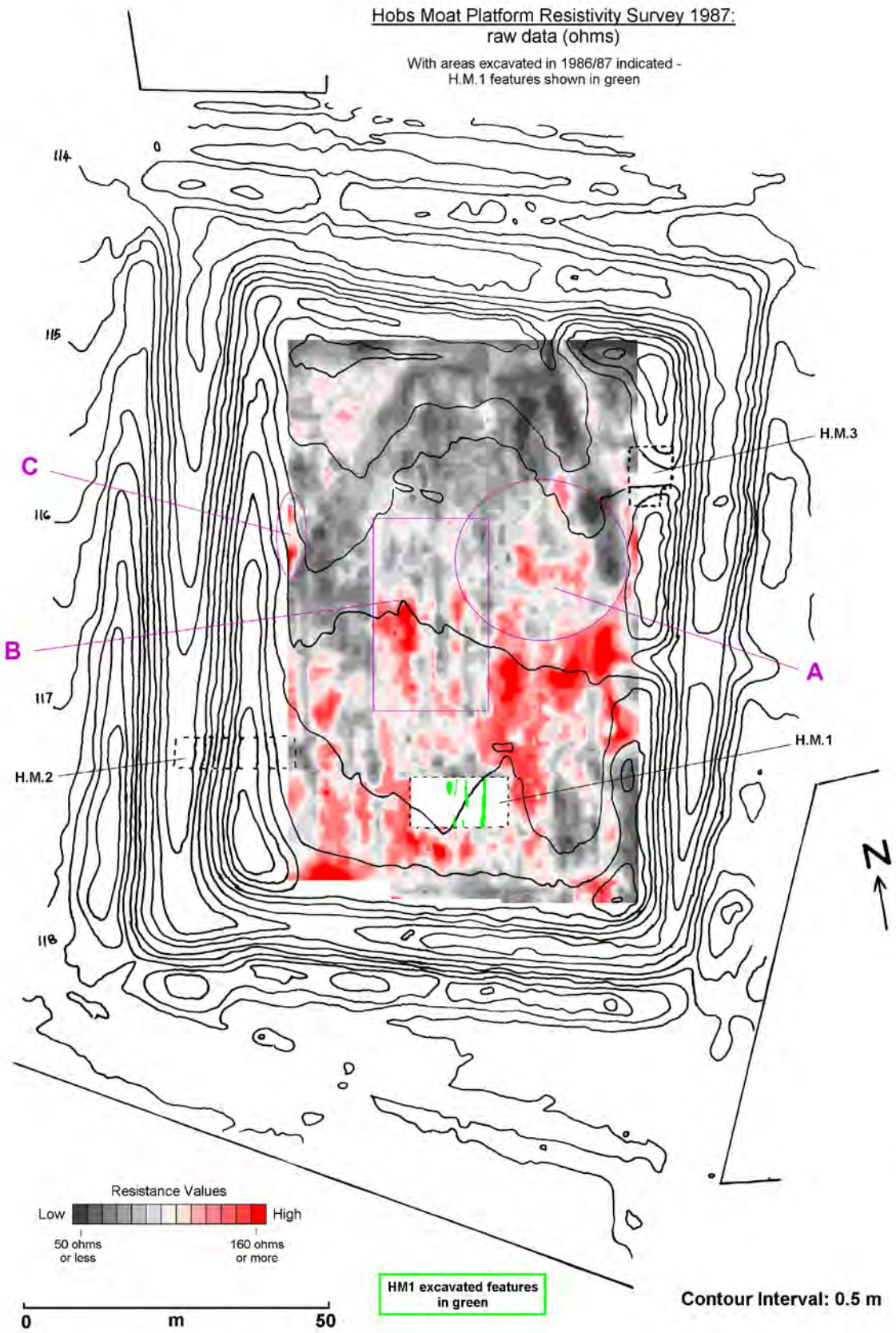
The platform again divides into a lower resistance northern area and a high resistance southern area. The shape of these areas is similar to the later survey. When allowance is made for the coarser nature of the earlier survey, the same features are represented in both: a similar pattern is seen in the southern area (including low resistance features), and the entrance to the moat platform in the east has a similar high resistance rendering. In the north, resistivity values decrease northerly and on the western side of the raised area, and on the east, the ditch may be represented by lower resistivity values lessening towards the gap in the northern rampart. At the other end of this feature, towards the eastern rampart, an area of higher resistivity forms its inner, western margin, repeating the observation of the 1987 survey.

There is a suggestion of the north-south linearity over much of the platform seen so clearly in the later survey; but the electrode spacing at 2m does not allow the possibility of clear demonstration. However there is an obvious north-south furrow-like feature in area 3 of the survey, and this is accompanied on its western side by another similar element. If not caused by ploughing, these may be structural evidence suggested in the later survey.

Overall, both surveys agree in their general depiction of resistance and resistivity values on the platform.



21. 1985 raw resistivity values



22. Raw resistance values, with possible anomalies, 1987

Conclusions.

On wooded sites such as Hobs Moat resistivity surveys are difficult to undertake, and the difficulty is compounded by the possibility that the trees will have affected the data. The archaeological information on the site is contained in very thin soils, as sampled in excavated area H.M.1, and these will have qualified the results: geology will also have affected the readings. Nevertheless two different surveys have produced generally similar results for the entire platform, and some confidence can be placed in their combined picture.

The platform area divides into two halves, the northern area showing predominantly lower resistance readings, its counterpart generally showing much higher ones. In the northern half this pattern is partly defined by drainage features, clearly man-made, while the southern area is dominated by the near-surface geology. This is known to be, at least in part, iron pan.

Both areas show evidence of the plough and this will have disrupted the archaeology. The horizon will also have been further compromised by the tree root activity - and indeed over a long period.

It is possible that an archaeological signal persists in the results, however. This can be suggested for an implied rectangular quality to part of area 4 (feature B, fig. 22), and it seems it could apply to the ellipsoidal possibility in area 3 (feature A, fig. 22). The low resistance readings in the northern half of the platform also suggest that an archaeological component is present.

An earlier archaeological phase may be detectable in these surveys, too. The earlier earthwork was seen in excavation H.M.2 and excavation H.M.3 showed earlier activity. While no obvious evidence is seen in the resistivity surveys for a preceding period, it is notable in the 1987 survey that the strong lines defining the raised area in the north of the platform (the 'V'), and the apparent erratic feature in the western rampart, contrast with the axis and rectangularity of the present earthwork. There therefore may be evidence of an earlier sequence in the development of the site.

In sum, while clearly a heavily damaged site and with difficult conditions of preservation from the beginning, the results suggest that Hobs Moat contains general, recoverable archaeological information, which will supplement the material residual from the processes of damage and context degradation.

Notes

1 The report on behalf of the Archaeology Dept. of the Institute is used in a limited way for some textual sequences in page 1 and 2 of this revised view of the material. The debt is gratefully acknowledged. The dot density illustrations derived from the report have been collated and entirely re-presented.

Former Hobs moat community project member Adrian Swingler, a student there, wrote the report. Dorset Institute of Higher Education became Bournemouth University in 1992.

2 Dugdale noted a 'parcel' of old oaks in the centre of the earthwork when he visited the site in 1656.

The Medieval Pottery; Charlotte Cane.

Some 172 sherds of pottery were sorted against the fabric type series set up on the site, which was further refined during the sorting. From these 25 form sherds were further sorted, according to shape, producing 9 style types within the two broad form types:

FABRIC

Descriptions:

GWS 03:

Surface treatment: Exterior - apple green glaze
Interior - none

Firing: Soft

Manufacture: Wheelmade

Body colour: Pinkish-buff

Thickness: 4.5mm

Inclusions: Frequent - quartz, including red/pink quartz

Forms: No forms found in this fabric on this site, but it would normally be used in jugs

Date: 13-14th century

GHH 04:

Surface treatment: Exterior - pale green-to-brown glaze

Firing: Hard

Manufacture: ?Coilbuilt

Body colour: Pale grey

Thickness: 4-6mm

Inclusions: Frequent - quartz

Forms: No forms found in this fabric on this site, but it would normally be used in jugs

Date: 13-14th century

IWH 06:

Surface treatment: None

Firing: Hard

Manufacture: ?Wheelmade

Body colour: Dark orange, sometimes with a grey core
 Thickness: 5mm
 Inclusions: Very frequent - mainly quartz with some striated voids
 Forms: All the identifiable forms from this site are cooking pots

Date: 12-14th century

IHH 07:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Hard
 Manufacture: ?Handbuilt
 Body colour: Grey, often with red-buff surfaces
 Thickness: 4mm
 Inclusions: Frequent - mainly quartz with very occasional red inclusions, probably grog
 Forms: Cooking pots and bowls

Date: 12-14th century

IHH 08:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Dark orange with dark grey core
 Thickness: 5mm
 Inclusions: Frequent - mainly quartz with a few partially burnt out inclusions concentrated within the core
 Forms: All the identifiable forms from this site are cooking pots

Date: 12-14th century

IHH 09:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Dark grey body with dark orange surfaces
 Thickness: up to 5mm
 Inclusions: Fairly frequent - almost entirely with quartz with very rare partially burnt out inclusions
 Forms: No forms found in this fabric on this

site, but it would normally be used in cooking pots

Date: 12-14th century

IHH 10:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Dark grey to black, sometimes with a red interior surface
 Thickness: 7mm
 Inclusions: Very frequent - entirely quartz
 Forms: All the identifiable forms from this site are cooking pots

Date: 12-14th century

IHH 11:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Grey
 Thickness: 5mm
 Inclusions: Very frequent - mainly quartz with some red inclusions
 Forms: The only identifiable form from this site is a cooking pot

Date: 12-14th century

IHH 14:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Dark grey body with orange exterior margin
 Thickness: 8mm
 Inclusions: Frequent - mainly quartz with some red inclusions and some partially burnt out elongated inclusions
 Forms: No forms found in this fabric on this site, but it would normally be used in cooking pots

Date: 12-14th century

IHH 17:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Fairly hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Dark orange with black exterior, and, sometimes, interior surfaces
 Thickness: 5mm
 Inclusions: Very frequent - mainly quartz with some red inclusions
 Forms: No forms found in this fabric on this site, but it would normally be used in cooking pots

Date: 12/13th century

IHH 18:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Grey often with cream to pale orange surfaces
 Thickness: 5mm
 Inclusions: Frequent - mainly quartz, including some pink quartz, with several partially burnt out inclusions, several red (?iron) stains and some red inclusions
 Forms: All the identifiable forms from this site are cooking pots

Date: 12-14th century

IHF 25:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Fairly hard
 Manufacture: Handbuilt
 Body colour: Grey
 Thickness: 5mm
 Inclusions: Very frequent - almost entirely quartz, including a very few red quartz, with a few red inclusions
 Forms: The only identifiable form from this site is a cooking pot

Date: 12-14th century

GWF 26:

Surface treatment: Exterior - olive green glaze
Interior - none
Firing: Fairly hard
Manufacture: ?Wheelmade
Body colour: Mainly pinkish buff with rare dark grey patches
Thickness: 4.5mm
Inclusions: Frequent - mainly quartz and striate voids with a few elongated black inclusions and a very few red inclusions, some rounded some elongated

Date: 13-14th century

IHS 27:

Surface treatment: None
Firing: Soft
Manufacture: ?Handbuilt
Body colour: Grey body with red surfaces
Thickness: 5mm
Inclusions: Infrequent - quartz and red inclusions

All the sherds of this type are too small to identify with any certainty. Thus it is not possible to say what type of vessel they would have come from, nor their likely date, although there is no reason to assume that they should not be contemporary with any of the other pottery from this site

IHF 28:

Surface treatment: None
Firing: Fairly hard
Manufacture: Handbuilt
Body colour: Black body merging to orange through the exterior margin and on the interior surface
Thickness: 8mm
Inclusions: Frequent - mainly quartz with a few red and black inclusions
Forms: No forms found in this fabric on this site, but it would normally be used in cooking pots

Date: 12-14th century

IHS 29:

Surface treatment: None
 Firing: Soft
 Manufacture: ?Handbuilt
 Body colour: Orange
 Thickness: 6mm
 Inclusions: Infrequent - quartz and red inclusions

All the sherds of this type are too small to identify with any certainty. Thus it is not possible to say what type of vessel they would have come from, nor their likely date, although there is no reason to assume that they should not be contemporary with any of the other pottery from this site

Discussion

All of the pottery has the sandy quality which would be expected from the use of the sandy boulder clay found throughout the West Midlands region.

The bulk of the material was found on HM2 from contexts 99 and 159. It should be noted 5 of the 22 sherds of the slightly later green glazed pottery were found in context 99, thought to represent the earliest medieval occupation of Hobs Moat. This type of pottery is not so well represented in context 159, which has just one sherd.

The small amount and poor condition of the pottery made detailed distribution and seriation analysis pointless; table 1 shows the fabrics by context.

Form

The form sherds are cooking pot types, and a bowl, commonly found in the West Midlands region (see table 2). They are illustrated, but the small sherd size made reconstruction impossible. The diameter of the rims was assessed using a rim chart and the quantity expressed as a percentage of the circumference. Since this percentage was never greater than 10% and usually nearer to 5% the accuracy of the assessment of diameter is very low.

Decoration

Apart from the glazed wares, there were very few decorated sherds. These have not been drawn as their size prevents any real idea of their overall pattern. The decoration found on Hobs Moat cooking pots - thumbled applied strips

(H.M.2 <159> 69. 15, fabric 08), is also found throughout the West Midlands region. One jug sherd is decorated with parallel strips, thumbbed to form overlapping scales, each strip separated by a pinched relief line (H.M. <106> 21, fabric 04), which is a fairly common decorative motif on 14th century jugs. Another jug sherd is decorated with stamped comb decoration and had an applied strip (H.M.2 <99> 177, fabric 03).

Conclusions

Although it is a very small group, the pottery represents the types which would be found on any similar site of this period from the region. There is a lack of any obvious imports, but because of the small quantity of finds this need not be seen as significant.

The large number of fabric and style types within such a small group of material, together with the very abraded nature and small size of the sherds would suggest that they are residual and have indeed been much disturbed since their deposition. This is confirmed by the nature of the deposits from which they came. Furthermore, it must represent a very small and incomplete sample of what would have been used by the occupants of the site. However, assuming they do originate from the site, they would suggest a date range for its occupation in the 13/14th century.

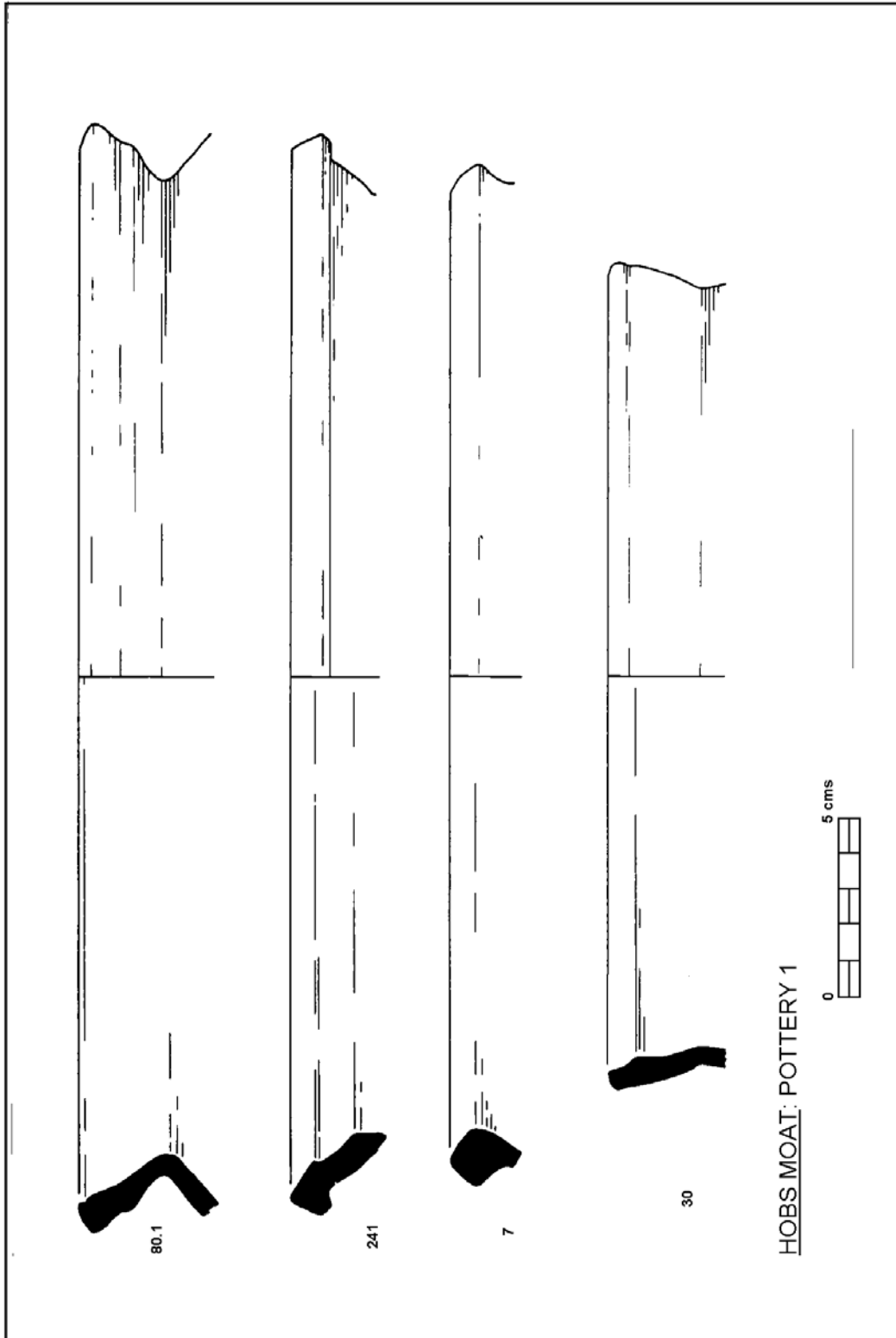
Because of the nature of the material, such dating must be treated with extreme caution.

Charlotte Cane,
13th May, 1988

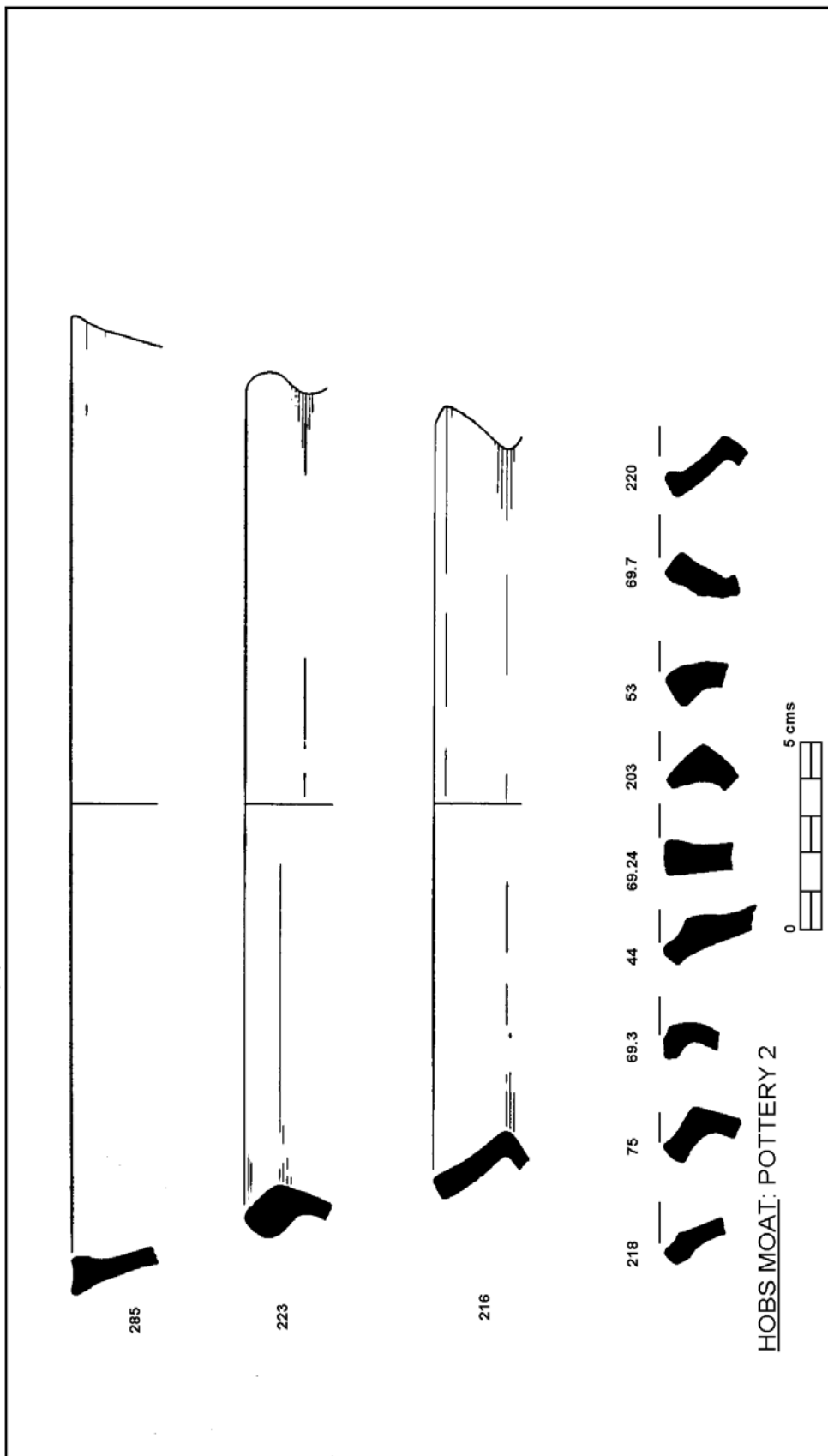
Pottery Fabric Summary List

- 1) No extant example, therefore cannot be described
- 2) Salt glazed 'honey pot' stoneware. Post medieval therefore not described
- 3) Medieval
- 4) Medieval
- 5) No record, no sherd
- 6) Medieval
- 7) Medieval
- 8) Medieval

- 9) Medieval
- 10) Medieval
- 11) Medieval
- 12) Same as fabric 11
- 13) No extant examples, therefore cannot be described
- 14) Medieval
- 15) Same as fabric 14
- 16) same as fabric 6
- 17) Medieval
- 18) Medieval
- 19) No record, no sherd
- 20) Same as fabric 11
- 21) Post medieval
- 22) Post medieval
- 23) Unused
- 24) Unused
- 25) New medieval fabric
- 26) New medieval fabric
- 27) New medieval fabric
- 28) New medieval fabric
- 29) New medieval fabric



23. Hobs Moat pottery types, 1



24. Hobs Moat pottery types, 2

TABLE ONE					
HOBS MOAT, Solihull: MEDIEVAL POTTERY FABRICS					
Site	Context	Fabric	Weight	Count	Forms
HM1	009	09	3.5	1	0
HM1	009	18	15.0	1	1
HM1	012	06	21.0	1	1
HM1	012	27	5.5	1	1
HM1	111	07	4.0	1	0
HM1	111	08	2.0	1	0
HM1	111	11	20.5	3	0
HM1	111	14	29.0	2	0
HM1	111	18	2.0	1	0
HM1	117	28	5.5	1	0
HM1	127	10	4.5	1	1
HM1	238	07	9.0	1	0
HM1	241	14	31.0	1	1
HM1	247	07	4.5	1	0
HM1	247	08	62.0	2	0
HM2	099	03	4.0	1	0
HM2	099	06	11.0	3	2
HM2	099	07	41.5	7	1
HM2	099	08	69.0	13	2
HM2	099	09	6.5	2	0
HM2	099	11	25.5	5	1
HM2	099	14	32.0	6	0
HM2	099	17	13.5	6	0
HM2	099	25	6.5	1	1
HM2	099	26	3.5	1	0
HM2	099	27	1.0	1	0
HM2	159	06	3.0	1	0
HM2	159	07	39.0	13	2
HM2	159	08	302.5	25	4
HM2	159	10	46.5	5	1
HM2	159	11	5.5	2	0
HM2	159	17	29.0	21	0
HM2	159	18	12.0	4	2
HM2	159	27	1.0	1	0

HM2	213	08	7.0	2	0
HM2	213	11	2.5	1	0
HM2	213	17	3.5	1	0
HM2	213	18	2.5	3	0
HM2	251	14	12.0	1	0
HM3	149	08	7.5	1	0
HM3	106	04	19.0	1	0
HM3	143	06	25.0	8	0
HM3	143	07	9.0	2	1
HM3	143	10	8.0	1	1
HM3	143	27	2.0	1	0
HM4	002	gs	15.5	1	0
HM4	003	06	6.5	4	0
HM4	003	29	3.0	2	0
HM4	009	06	5.0	3	0
HM4	010	29	2.5	1	0
HM4	2/3	09	9.5	2	0

TABLE TWO

MEDIEVAL POTTERY FORMS

Site	Cont.	Find	Fab.	Form	Vessel	Weight	Count	Dia	%
HM1	9	7.00	18	Rccae01	cook pot	15.00	1	27	5
HM1	12	30.00	06	Rcude01	cook pot	21.00	1	27	10
HM1	12	30.00	27	RTooFra	unident	5.50	1	0	0
HM1	127	53.00	10	RTooFra	cook pot	4.50	1	0	0
HM1	241	90.00	14	Rcuae01	cook pot	31.00	1	29	7
HM2	99	79.00	06	RTooAbr	unident	3.00	1	0	0
HM2	99	218.00	06	Rccae32	cook pot	5.00	1	0	0
HM2	99	216.00	07	Rcude34	cook pot	12.50	1	20	5
HM2	99	119.00	08	Rccae01	cook pot	5.00	1	0	0
HM2	99	220.00	08	Rcude34	cook pot	8.00	1	0	0
HM2	99	223.00	11	Rccae33	cook pot	18.00	1	22	8
HM2	99	203.00	25	RTooAbr	cook pot	8.50	1	0	0
HM2	159	0.00	07	RTooFra	unident	2.50	1	0	0
HM2	159	69.50	07	Rcsfe08	bowl	11.00	1	23	6
HM2	159	80.00	08	Rcude28	cook pot	30.00	2	22	10
HM2	159	80.10	08	Rcude26	cook pot	0.00	0	0	0

HM2	159	80.60	08	Rcude34	cook pot	7.00	3	0	0
HM2	159	69.30	10	RTooFra	cook pot	3.00	1	0	0
HM2	159	69.24	18	RTooFra	unident	3.00	1	0	0
HM2	159	69.70	18	RTooFra	cook pot	5.00	1	0	0
HM3	143	75.00	07	Rccae26	cook pot	6.00	1	0	0
HM3	143	44.00	10	Rcude01	cook pot	8.00	1	0	0
TABLE THREE									
MEDIEVAL POTTERY BY FABRIC									
Fabric	Site	Context	Weight	Count	Forms				
03	HM2	099	4.0	1	0				
04	HM3	106	19.0	1	0				
06	HM1	012	21.0	1	1				
06	HM2	099	11.0	3	2				
06	HM2	159	3.0	1	0				
06	HM3	143	25.0	8	0				
06	HM4	003	6.5	4	0				
06	HM4	009	5.0	3	0				
07	HM1	111	4.0	1	0				
07	HM1	247	9.0	1	0				
07	HM1	247	4.5	1	0				
07	HM2	099	41.5	7	1				
07	HM2	159	39.0	13	2				
07	HM3	143	9.0	2	1				
08	HM1	111	2.0	1	0				
08	HM1	247	62.0	2	0				
08	HM2	099	69.0	13	2				
08	HM2	159	302.5	25	4				
08	HM2	213	7.0	2	0				
08	HM3	143	7.5	1	0				
09	HM1	009	3.5	1	0				
09	HM2	099	6.5	2	0				
09	HM4	2/3	9.5	2	0				
10	HM1	127	4.5	1	1				
10	HM2	159	46.5	5	1				
10	HM3	143	8.0	1	1				
11	HM1	111	20.5	3	0				

11	HM2	099	25.5	5	1
11	HM2	159	5.5	2	0
11	HM2	213	2.5	1	0
14	HM1	111	29.0	2	0
14	HM1	241	31.0	1	1
14	HM2	099	32.0	6	0
14	HM2	251	12.0	1	0
17	HM2	099	13.5	6	0
17	HM2	159	29.0	21	0
17	HM2	213	3.5	1	0
18	HM1	009	15.0	1	1
18	HM1	111	2.0	1	0
18	HM2	159	12.0	4	2
18	HM2	213	2.5	3	0
25	HM2	099	8.5	1	1
26	HM2	099	3.5	1	0
27	HM1	012	5.5	1	1
27	HM2	099	1.0	1	0
27	HM2	159	1.0	1	0
27	HM3	143	2.0	1	0
28	HM1	117	5.5	1	0
29	HM4	003	3.0	2	0
29	HM4	010	2.5	1	0
gs	HM4	002	15.5	1	0

The Clay Tobacco Pipes; D A Higgins Summary

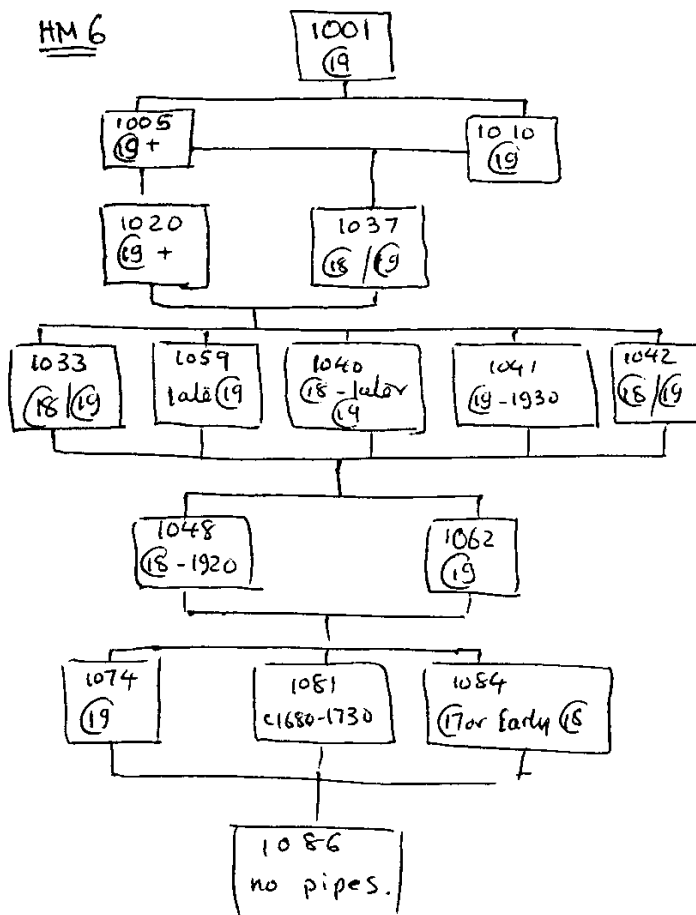
General Recording Notes.

The pipes were submitted for examination in May, 1988, while excavations were still in progress. It is likely that other pipes have been recovered that are not included here.

Although the fragments had been listed and record sketches made each piece was re-examined for this study. The pipes all had small-find as well as context numbers. The material was therefore re-sorted into contexts, and the individual bags arranged and listed by small find number.

The general nature of the finds appears to be good. Many small fragments have been collected, and these often fit together. This suggests that the rate of finds' recovery has been good despite the small number of mouthpiece fragments present.

I was particularly asked to look at the dating of the contents of trench 6. The matrix, as given, with the pipe (only) dates is as follows.



Most of the contexts contain nineteenth century material and thus must have been deposited in or after that century. Of particular note 1041 includes a S. McLardy stem. This maker is recorded c.1869-1930. Also 1048 contains a bowl fragment of a form current c.1880-1920. All the contexts above this must therefore be later than c.1880 in date. Context 1048 has been dated to the nineteenth century on one stem fragment only, which could possibly be later 18th century in date. The most interesting contexts are 1081/1084. 1081 contains two pieces,

both of which could be c.1690-1730. Likewise 1084 contains a seventeenth or early eighteenth century stem fragment. If the other finds are consistent these deposits could well be of late seventeenth or early eighteenth century date.

Analysis.

Each fragment of pipe was examined and an assessment made of its likely date. Unfortunately most of the material consists of plain stem fragments or nineteenth century decorated bowls which often had a long currency. It is, clearly, unrealistic to expect an accurate date for an individual stem fragment. However, it is possible to attribute a general period such as nineteenth century (19) or eighteenth or nineteenth century (18/19). Bearing in mind that these are only general indications for the possible date of each piece the dates attributed were as follows, below (Tables One and Two. Details are context/small-find number; number of Bowl, Stem and Mouthpiece fragments, and general date).

Drawings.

Although there are some interesting nineteenth century pipes, these are generally rather fragmentary and not good examples of their type. Drawing has therefore been confined to the pieces with maker's marks, and examples of some of the more complete bowl forms.

TABLE ONE						
HOBS MOAT, Solihull: CLAY TOBACCO PIPE FINDS BY CONTEXT						
Site	Context	Find No	B	S	MP	Date
HM1	7	1	1	1	0	1690-1770
HM1	7	2	1			1850-1910
HM1	7	4		1		18/19
HM1	12	55		1		17
HM1	309	237		1		late 17/18
HM1		109		1		17
HM1	u/s	B		1		17
HM1	u/s	A		1		18/19

HM2	154	73	5	5	1	1850-1910
HM3	17	14	1			1830-1880
HM4	2	286		1		18/19
HM4	2	303		1		18/19
HM4	2	304	1			18/19
HM4	2	312		1		18/19
HM4	2	313		1		18/19
HM4	002/003	290	1			18/19
HM4	003	316		1		18/19
HM4	003	319		1		c1870-1910
HM4	003	320		1		1870-1910
HM4	003	329	11			1870-1910
HM4	003	339		1		18/19
HM4	003	341	28			1830-1880
HM4	003	355		1		19
HM4	003	364		1		19
HM4	003	391		1		18/19
HM4	003	393		1		19/19
HM4	003	395		1		17
HM4	003	397		1		?early 19
HM4	003	403		1		19
HM4	003	419	14			c1870-1910
HM4	003	421		1		19
HM4	003	424		1		1870-1910
HM4	003	437		1		19
HM4	003	447		1		18/19
HM4	003	448		1		19
HM4	003	453		2		1860-1910
HM4	003	468		1		19
HM4	003	477		1		19
HM4	003	477		1		19
HM4	003	485		2		18/19
HM4	003	498		1		18/19
HM4	003	499	1			c1790-1840
Site	Context	Find No	B	S	MP	Date
HM4	003	516		1		c1870-1910

HM4	003	517	1			c1870-1910
HM4	003	537	1			19
HM4	003	538		1		18/19
HM4	003	542		2		18/19
HM4	003	543		1		19
HM4	003	549	5			?early 19
HM4	003	550	1			?early 19
HM4	003	558		1		18/19
HM4	003	563		1		18/19
HM4	003	565		1		19
HM4	003	566	8	1		1850-1910
HM4	003	575		1		18/19
HM4	003	583		1		18/19
HM4	003	588		2		18/19
HM4	003	589		2		18/19
HM4	003	590		1		18/19
HM4	003	600	1			19
HM4	003	605	1			1830-1870
HM4	003	609		1		19
HM4	003	611		2		19
HM4	003	612		2		18/19
HM4	003	616		2		18/19
HM4	003	618		1		19
HM4	003	622		1		19
HM4	003	632	1			c1830-1900
HM4	003	636			1	18/19
HM4	003	638		1		18/19
HM4	003	641		1		1860-1910
HM4	003	646		1		18/19
HM4	003	648	2			19
HM4	003	651		1		17
HM4	003	652		1		18/19
HM4	003	665		1		19
HM4	003	668	1			19
HM4	003	671		2		19
HM4	003	693		1		19
HM4	003	700		1	1	19
Site	Context	Find No	B	S	MP	Date
HM4	003	704		1		19

HM4	003	705		1		19
HM4	003	706		1		18/19
HM4	003	712		1		18/19
HM4	004/005	262		1		18/19
HM4	009	607		1		18
HM4	009	675	1			18/19
HM4	009	683		1		18
HM4	009	695		1		17/18
HM4	009	707			1	18/19
HM4	009	711		1		18/19
HM4	009	723		1		17
HM4	009	724		1		18
HM4	009	730		1		18/19
HM4	009	740		1		17
HM4	009	741		1		18
HM4	009	742	1			1830-1880
HM4	009	743		1		18
HM4	009	747		2		18/19
HM4	009	750		1		18/19
HM4	009	754		1		19
HM4	009	755		1		18/19
HM4	009	761	1			1820-1910
HM4	009	763		1		18
HM4	009	764		1		18/19
HM4	009	765		1		18
HM4	009	768		1		18/19
HM4	009	770		1		18/19
HM4	009	773		1		18/19
HM4	009	781		1		18/19
HM4	009	788		1		19
HM4	009	792			1	18/19
HM4	009	795		1		18/19
HM4	009	796		1		18/19
HM4	009	800		2		18/19
HM4	009	801		1		18/19
HM4	009	802		1		19
HM4	009	803		1		18/19
HM4	009	805		1		18/19
Site	Context	Find No	B	S	MP	Date
HM4	009	807		1		19

HM4	009	808		1		19
HM4	009	811		1		18/19
HM4	009	835		1		18/19
HM4	010	821		1		18/19
HM4	010	828		1		17/18
HM4	010	829		1		18/19
HM4	010	804		1		18/19
HM4	010	833		1		18/19
HM4	010	834		1		18/19
HM4	010	827	1			18/19
HM4	010	837		1		18
HM4	010	859		1		18/19
HM4	010	861		1		18/19
HM4	010	862		1		18/19
HM4	010	864		1		18/19
HM4	010	870		1		18/19
HM4	010	873		1		18
HM4	012	850		1		18/19
HM4	012	854		1		18/19
HM6	1001	880		4		19
HM6	1001	882		2		19
HM6	1001	887		4		19
HM6	1005	914			1	19
HM6	1010	1213		1		19
HM6	1020	1238			1	19
HM6	1033	891		1		18/19
HM6	1037	1057		1		18/19
HM6	1040	907		1		19
HM6	1040	927		1		19
HM6	1040	936	1			later 19
HM6	1040	1091		1		19
HM6	1040	1100		2		18/19
HM6	1041	1081		1		18/19
HM6	1041	1084	1			1850-1910
HM6	1041	1089		1		1869-1930
HM6	1041	1106		1		19
HM6	1042	1086		1		18/19
Site	Context	Find No	B	S	MP	Date

HM6	1048	1155	1	18/19
HM6	1048	1156	1	18/19
HM6	1048	1158	1	18/19
HM6	1048	1166	1	19
HM6	1048	1175	1	19
HM6	1048	1180	1	19
HM6	1048	1181	2	18/19
HM6	1048	1249	1	1880-1920
HM6	1048	1251	1	1850-1910
HM6	1048	1164	1	1880-1910
HM6	1057	1088	1	late 19
HM6	1059	1172	1	late 19
HM6	1062	1124	1	19
HM6	1062	1128	1	19
HM6	1074	1191	1	19
HM6	1081	1326	1	17/18
HM6	1081	1327	1	1680-1730
HM6	1084	1271	1	17 or 18
HM6	u/s	1309	1	18/19
HM6	Topsoil u/s		1	1880-1960
HM7	05	1329	1	1660-1690

TABLE TWO

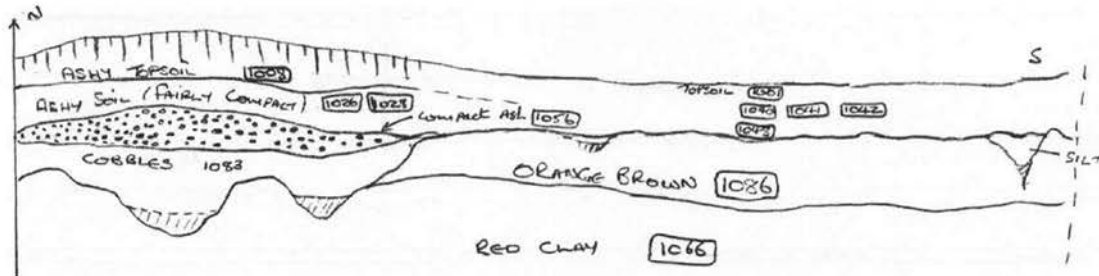
HOBS MOAT CLAY PIPES: CONTEXT SUMMARY

Site	Ctxt	B	S	MP	Date Range	Comments
HM1	7	2	1		1640-1910	clearly mixed deposit
	12		1		17	
	309		1		late 17/18	
	u/s				17-19	

HM2	154	3	5	1	1850-1910	
HM3	17	1			1830-1880	
HM4	002	1	4		18/19	
	002/003	1			18/19	
	003	76	61	2	17-1910	contains a lot of material 1870-1910
	004/005		1		18/19	
	009	3	35	2	17-19	latest identifiable: bowl frag ?1830
	010	1	13		17-19	
	012		2		18-19	
HM6	1001	1	10		19	
	1005			1	late 19	nipple type
	1010		1		19	
	1020			1	late 19	nipple type
	1033		1		18/19	
	1037		1		18/19	
	1040	1	5	1	18-later 19	
	1041	1	3		1800-1930	includes S. McLardy c. 1869-1930
	1042		1	1	18/19	
	1048	3	7	1	18-1920	several bits late pipe, c. 1870-1920
	1057		1		late 19	
	1059		1		late 19	
	1062		2		19	
	1074		1		19	probably 19, but could be later C18
	1081	1	1		c.1680-1730	both pieces consistent 1680-1730
	1084		1		17 or 18	
	u/s	1	1		18-20	
HM7	05	1			1660-1690	

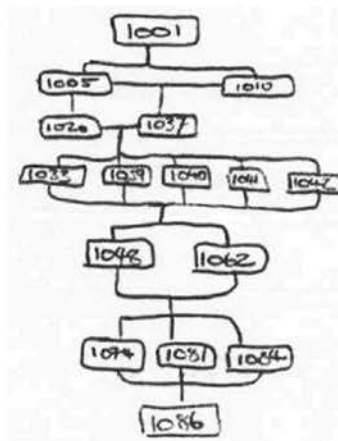
Hobs Moat, Solihull

HM6 Clay Pipe



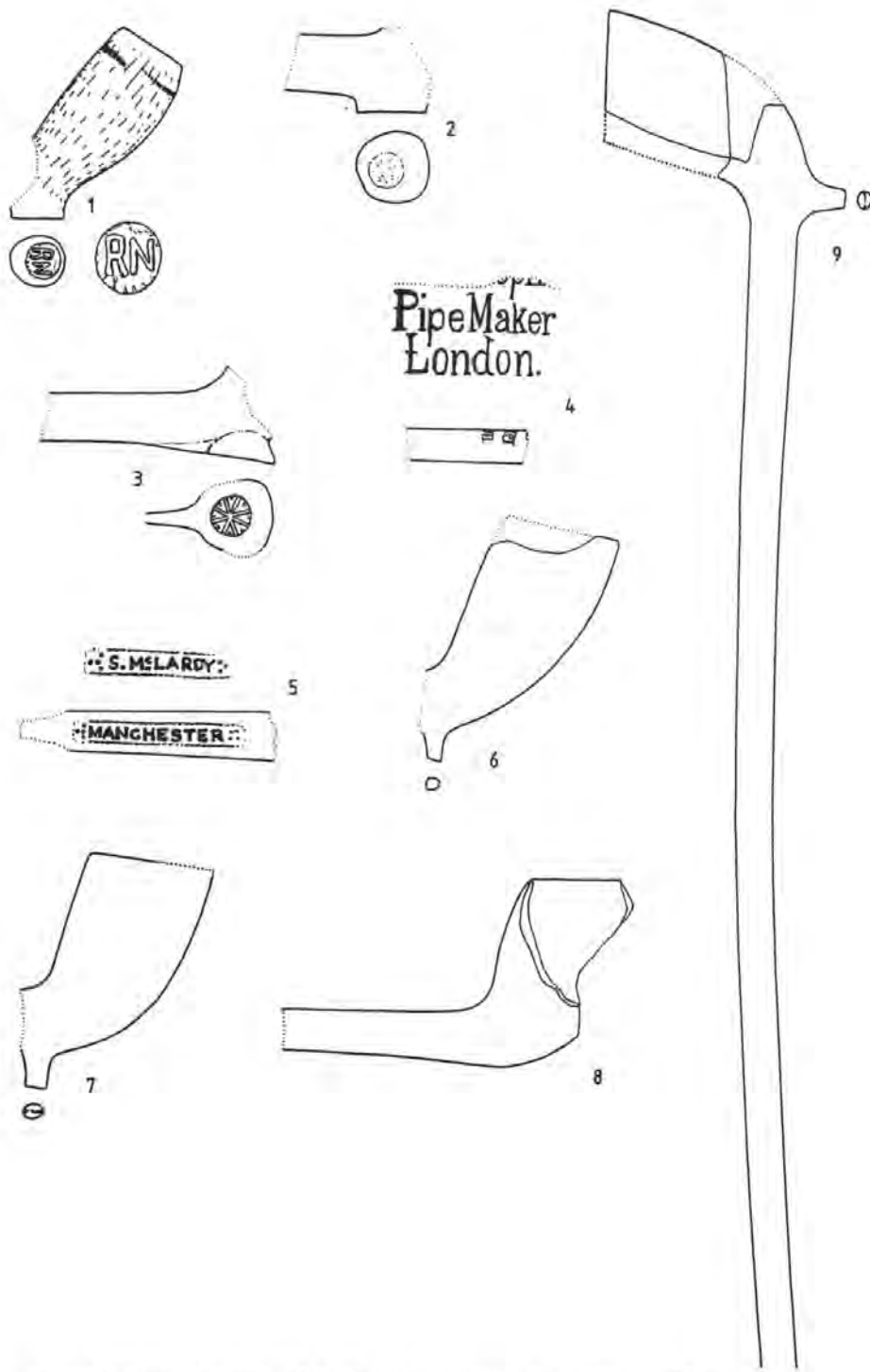
Not to scale Around 1 : 30

- 1001 = Topsoil
- 1005 = 1008
- 1010 = 1008
- 1020 = 1026
- 1037 = 1026
- 1033 = 1056
- 1040 = 1056
- 1041 = 1056
- 1043 = 1056
- 1048 = 1083
- 1059 = 1056
- 1062 = 1083
- 1074 = 1086
- 1081 = 1086
- 1084 = 1086



- Topsoil 1001
- Ashy Soil 1005
- Slightly Compact 1008
- Compact Ash 1056
- Cobles 1086
- Silty Clay 1083

26. HM6, relative chronology of contexts as indicated by clay pipe finds - section and extended matrix analysis



CLAY TOBACCO PIPES FROM HOBS MOAT, SOLIHULL, EXCAVATIONS 1 of 1.

SCALE 1:1; STAMP DETAILS 1, 2, 4, 2:1

D. A HIGGINS JUNE 1988

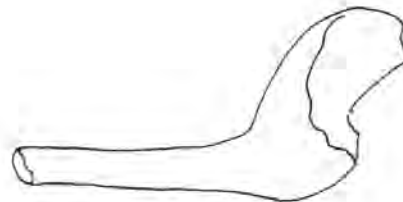
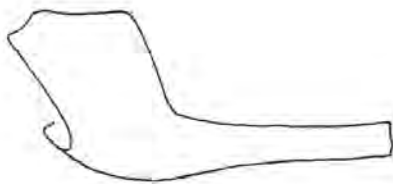
① HM1/85 ⑦ CLAY PIPE BOWL



⑭ HM3/85 ⑰ CLAY PIPE BOWL



② HM1/85 ⑦ CLAY PIPE



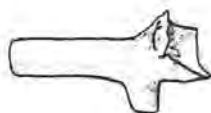
880 HML6 1001 CLAY PIPE FRACS



1023 HML6 1048



1084 HML6 1041. CLAY PIPE



1175 HML6 1044 CLAY PIPE



1244 HML6 1048 CLAY PIPE



887 CLAY PIPE STEMS



CURVILINEAR DECORATION

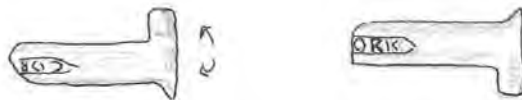
1089 CLAY PIPE



1172 DECORATED CLAY PIPE



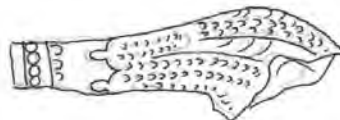
1264 CLAY PIPE



1327 CLAYPIPE BOWL BASE



CLAY PIPE UNSTRATIFIED.



△ 290 HM4 002/005 CLAY PIPE BOWL FRAG!



△ 632 HM4 (003)



△ 516 HM4 (003) STAMPED CLAY PIPE STEM



STAMPED "PIPEMAKER LONDON"

△ 424 HM4 (003) CLAY PIPE STEM



△ 319 HM4/87 (003)



The Conservation of Hobs Moat

by the Hobs Moat Community Project, 1985 – 1988.

Introduction.

Although the archaeology and history of Hobs Moat ancient monument has been described, little has been said of the community project's accompanying role in stabilizing and conserving the site. This section describes this and completes the picture of the project's history and achievements.

The Problem.

It was said earlier that Hobs Moat was given to the people of Solihull as an amenity in 1937, when it was part of a rural background little changed over the preceding centuries. During the next thirty years it became surrounded by houses, and this had a devastating effect on the tree-covered site because, with ground level vegetation already stressed by low light, people now visited the earthwork in considerable numbers. The simple passage of feet, and then bike-riding over the monument, tipped the delicate balance, so that the ground cover began to disappear. By the 1970s on most of the scheduled area little ground cover remained, and the ensuing severe erosion had reduced the ramparts in height by 0.5m. Large areas of the earthwork were completely denuded of soil.

The community project began in late 1985. It had three aims: to provide employment for local people, to say something of the history of the monument, otherwise little known, and to halt the erosive process and conserve the site by re-top-soiling and re-vegetating it. The elements were co-equal, but the conservation was a vital role. All three would contribute to an awareness of the site which, it was proposed, would lead to a care for its condition and future.

In 2016, the conservation of the site thus constituted an equal part of the history of the community project.



Erosion on a vast scale. There is no soil on most of the ramparts; and for this tree, conservation is too late, as for others. The ramparts are reduced in height by up to half a metre, as here on the western side of the earthwork.

[Video 1](#)

long download time

Videophoto

Method.

The low light environment was the underlying pre-condition for the erosion problem, but visitors to the site were its unwitting accomplices. It was decided to do two things. First, paths were to be laid around the monument, to encourage people away from walking on the site itself; second, top-soil was to be imported to re-cover the eroded banks. The topsoil, amounting to around 2,000 tons, would be conveyed by hand onto the scheduled area - no 'plant' could be used here, to avoid further damage. The soil was then used to re-cover the eroded rampart surfaces, these having been prepared for soil retention.

The system was to install upright 15cm pressure treated timber boarding at suitable intervals around the ramparts to retain the soil where it was placed. This had a second advantage in that it was anticipated that erosion might recur in places: the then slightly raised board edges would inhibit excessive transport over these rampart surfaces.

Movement on the earthwork was to be restricted generally as far as possible, particularly bike riding, to give time for a new ground cover to grow.

In total several thousand metres of boarding were installed to match the shape of the earthwork. The new soil surface was then covered with turf, to initiate the re-growth.

Turf covering is inappropriate under trees with low light at ground level, but only turf was easily and manageably available to protect the newly constituted top-soiled surfaces. It was hoped that a more-suitable vegetation would then establish itself; in turn robust larger ground cover would appear, itself inhibiting the movement of people on the earthwork. The self-generating obstacles would then establish a self-maintaining environment less stressed by human transport, whose movement on the site would have become progressively lessened.

The south-western corner of the earthwork at an early stage of conservation. Soil retaining boards have been laid. This is itself a considerable undertaking.



Progress.

Year 1 was concerned with stabilising the site: with removing rubbish and in generally improving its condition. Paths and earthwork protection were accomplished in year 2 and year 3. By September 1988, all the objectives of the landscaping team were complete.

Half the project's workforce, 33 employees, mostly part-time, were engaged in the programme throughout the three years.

Constructing a path along the eastern side of the monument began in year 2, outside the scheduled area to the east of the counter-scarp. Previously a path had developed by usage on the counter-scarp and this had contributed considerably to the erosion of this bank. The path led, past the apparent main medieval entrance, from Castle Lane in the south towards the shopping centre on the north side of the earthwork. The new path was laid-out separated by up to 10m from its predecessor, and lessened awareness of the main entrance. (It is interesting to compare photographs of the entrance taken thirty years apart - page following)



The new path. The old pathway, on the monument itself, can be glimpsed in both these photographs, in the left-hand photograph top right, left-hand in the right-hand image.

The path was simply constructed of limestone aggregate with crushed limestone added to the surface and consolidated using a roller and vibrating plate. The edging was of pressure-treated strip timber, and the path was 1m wide. It was extended round the southern limit of the site to allow access to the playing field in the west and the allotments there. It was also extended in the north down the line of the lane to allow, again, access to the playing field and beyond.



Videophoto



Top left and above, the main entrance on the eastern side of the earthwork. Thirty years have seen a considerable change in the ground cover (right image).



Videophoto



Videophoto



Videophoto

Above and left, the south-western corner of the earthwork at three stages of conservation. The re-topsoiling is followed by, here, the laying of turf.

The same view thirty years later can be seen on the next page.



Left, in 2016 the south-western corner of the earthwork. Mature ground-level vegetation is well established, in place of the turf. Movement on the ramparts is now very restricted,

Right, the south-eastern corner of the moat platform in 1988. Some areas have been seeded with wild grasses, and the ground cover is returning.



Below, the same area in 2016. A pathway has developed through the now-mature, and protective, under-storey.



The boarding and top-soiling of the ramparts began at the same time, beginning with an experimental area on the inner rampart on the western side of the monument. Boards were spaced horizontally along the line of the earthwork, at an interval of about 1m, and pegged so that they were approximately vertical to the rampart surface. Up to nine tiers were created in this area in this way. Soil was then hand-delivered from the moat platform above and grass-seeding of the new surface followed. The decision subsequently to use turf generally for the rest of the rampart area of the monument was not because of any perceived difficulty with this - rather because of considerations of speed and initial growth progress.

The success of this first area in the early part of 1987 then allowed the inner and outer ramparts entirely to be treated in the same way. The moat platform also received similar attention, though without the need for retaining boards. Here re-topsoiled areas were seeded with wild grasses. By the middle of 1988 the earthwork presented a different appearance; conserved, restored and green at ground level. It was the first time in many years that it had appeared as anything more than an uncared-for desert under the trees.

The Outcome.

It is thirty years since these works and it is possible to assess the success of the conservation programme. Remarkably the experiment which the community project adopted has now been shown to have succeeded - the earthwork is everywhere covered by bushes and low shrubbery. People visit the site when they wish to do so, but respect it; their movement on the scheduled area is so much lessened by these measures. The management of the site conceived by the community project passed to the local authority, Solihull, in 1989, and this has regarded the site as a nature reserve since. Solihull's custodianship has been a considerable achievement as an example of how to deal with a sensitive historic site with such latent problems so close to people. It has applications nationally.

The medieval site now survives much less troubled in the times in which we live.

This was the work of the community project - all of its participants on both the archaeology and landscaping teams. The project was a success.

Video 2

long download time

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