

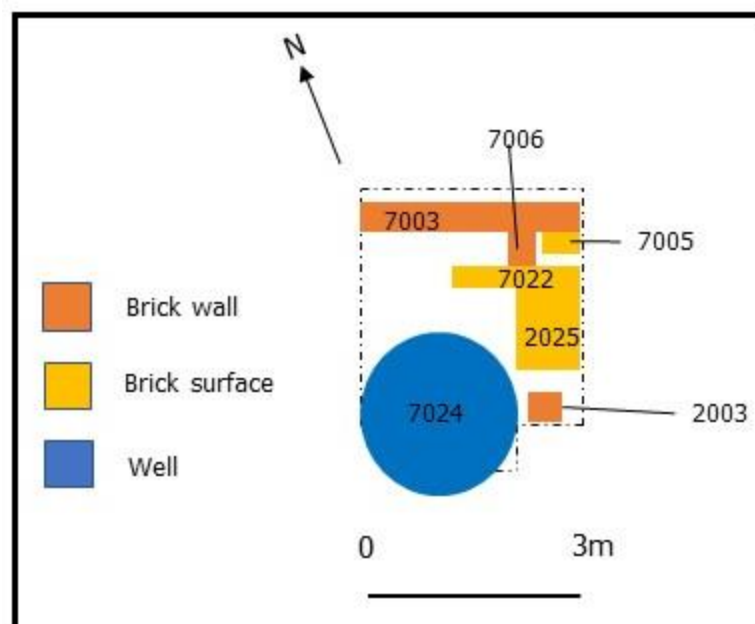
EXCAVATION AT HURSLEY PARK 2022 – INTERIM REPORT

Winchester Archaeology and Local History Group (WARG) returned to Hursley Park in June 2022 for a second season of excavation on the site of a brick-built house below the lawn of the current 18th century house. The historical evidence and pre-excavation geophysical survey are outlined in the 2021 Interim Report, together with the excavation results of Trenches 1, 2 and 3 ([WARG: Winchester archaeology and local history](#)). The key objectives for the second season arose from the results of the first season. Three trenches were opened, their positions informed by the geophysics. The west wing had been explored in Trench 2 and to confirm its width Trench 5 (11 x 6m) was located over the presumed east wall, extending beyond into a possible courtyard area. It was hoped that Trench 5 would provide further evidence for an earlier structure, traces of which had been identified in Trench 2 (**2028, 2029, 2047**). Trench 6 (14 x 5m) was sited across the width of the presumed east wing, taking in its south-east corner and extending into the potential courtyard to the west. An overlap with Trench 1 at the northern edge of Trench 6 would allow further exploration of the flint and brick structure (**1005, 1006**) partially exposed in 2021. Trench 7 (3 x 3m) was opened to explore the sinking of features in the north-west corner of Trench 2.

The 2021 excavation established that the lawn of the 18th century house had been laid on a clean topsoil with a substrate of imported gravel. Following removal of the turf by hand, a machine stripped the topsoil (**5001, 6001**) in Trenches 5 and 6 and the gravel (**5002, 6002**) was removed by hand. In Trench 7 both were removed by hand (**7001, 7002**). The modern pipe trench encountered in Trench 1 continued southwards through Trench 6 and was left *in situ* within a N-S baulk (**6004**).

Trench 7

Schematic plan of all the structural contexts in Trench 7



The north-west corner of Trench 2 overlapped the south-east quadrant of Trench 7 and the backfill was removed to reveal brick plinth **2003** and the brick surface **2025**. In the remainder of Trench 7 there was a demolition deposit up to 100mm deep (**7004**) which overlay brick features. An east-west brick wall (**7003**) crossed the trench at its northern end. It was 0.48m wide with alternate header and stretcher courses and a stepped foundation. This wall is considerably narrower than other excavated brick walls, all of which are at least 0.65m wide. It might relate to a well house or be a garden/enclosure wall.

To the south of **7003** the sinking of features noted in 2021 was explained by the presence of a well. This had been filled with loose demolition material and mortar (**7023**) over which a layer of tightly packed dressed flints (**7020**) had stayed in position when the looser fill beneath had compacted, to leave a void of 1.15m. Beside **7020** there was a block of mortared dressed flints 0.7 x 0.4m (**7016**) edged by two flat stone slabs each up to 400mm long x c40mm deep. It ended abruptly with an unfinished edge to the west, where demolition material surrounded it at a greater depth and it sloped to the east at a similar angle to the tip lines of the demolition layers overlying it. This suggests that the block was unlikely to be an *in situ* surface associated with the well, but was instead part of the demolition deposit, possibly deriving from the same structure as the dressed flint in **7020**. The general demolition deposit consisted of a compact layer of large pieces of flint, non-local stone (nls) and brick (**7018**), overlain by a layer largely of roof tiles (**7008**).

Trench 7: facing south, before removal of the flint well capping



For safety reasons excavation in Trench 7 was halted when the well void appeared. Using suitable safety equipment, the northern edge of the well was exposed to the natural clay surround and no evidence for brick facing was visible. This gave the engineers employed to cap the well a surface diameter of at least 1.5m to work to.

To the east of the well were the brick plinth **2003** and brick surface **2025**. It was not possible to fully investigate the relationship between these structures and the well. However, to the north of **2025** the brick surface was found to continue (**7022**) and extend further to the west, suggesting that it might originally have surrounded the top of the well. Another area of brick (**7005**) to the north of **7022** and abutting wall **7003** may be part of the same brick surface. To the west of **7005** a rectangular brick structure of two surviving courses (**7006**, 0.64 x 0.37m) also abutted **7003**. Its position suggested that it could be a buttress for **7003** but it didn't appear to be bonded in. In spite of the limited excavation and the extensive demolition around the well head, it can be suggested that **2003**, **2006**, **7006** and **7003** are component parts of a well house superstructure, with **2025**, **7022** and **7005** representing brick paving around the well head.

Trench 6

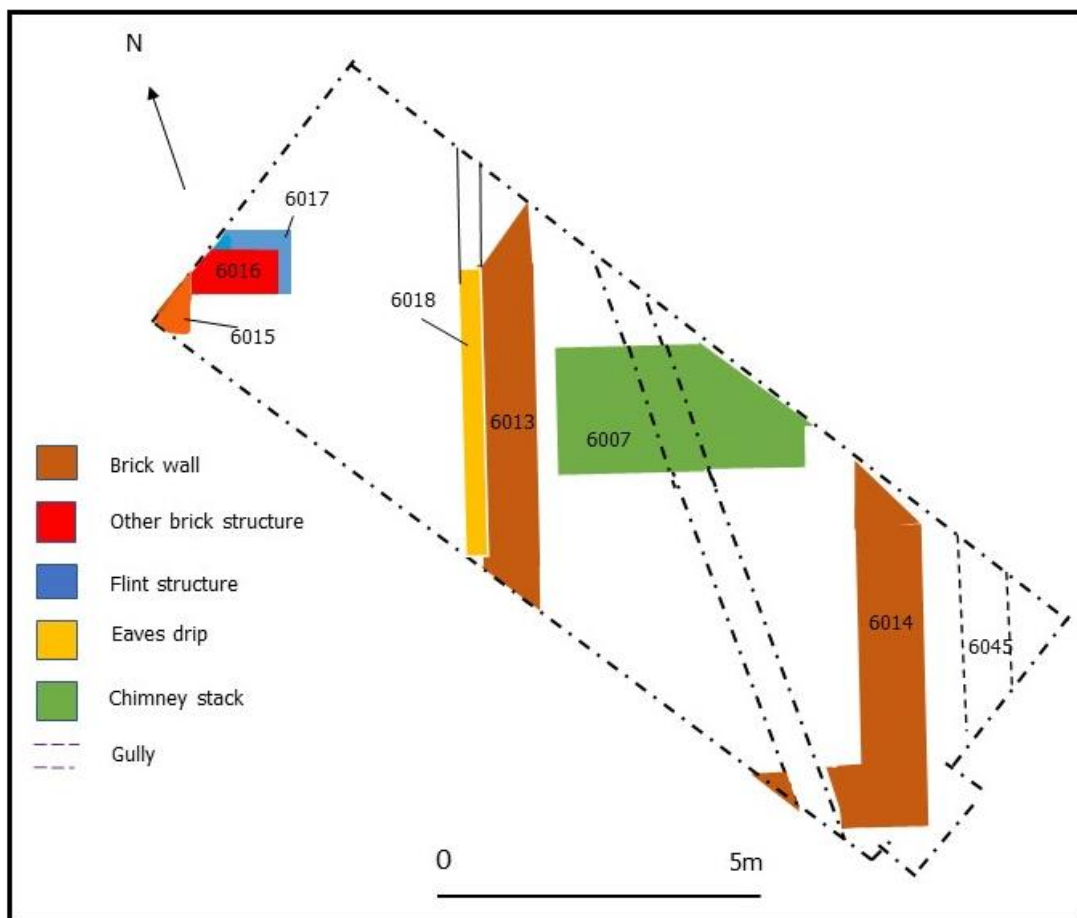
The north-east corner of Trench 6 overlapped Trench 1 and the backfill was removed. Elsewhere the base of the gravel layer (**6005**) was removed to reveal areas of cobbling. In the northern end of the trench the cobbling was carefully cleaned and it became clear that it was originally a continuous cobbled surface (**6008**), up to 60mm in depth, but in places only one cobble deep (cobble size 20–75mm). To the south of the cleaned area the visible cobbling indicated that this surface originally extended across most of the trench, excluding only the south-east corner. The cobbles were loosely pressed into the surface of a chalk layer (**6009**). This layer was not uniform in either depth (10-200mm) or composition. The chalk was extremely compacted in places and included chalk blocks up to 130mm. Elsewhere it was mixed with silty clay and minimal cbm. At the base of the layer the chalk was mixed with lenses of clay. The varying depths of **6009** were a product of the underlying surfaces and its function appears to have been to create a flat surface that covered the demolished walls and intervening deposits, onto which the cobbles were laid. The chalk may have derived from the excavation of the foundations for the 18th century house. An H-shaped mortared structure (**6007**) protruded through **6008** and **6009** towards the centre of the trench.

In the south-east corner of the trench **6008** and **6009** were absent and instead there was a concentrated demolition deposit (**6006**) which was 95% demolition material, consisting of whole bricks, part bricks, roof tile, mortared flints (up to 300mm) and occasional pebbles. Removal of **6006** revealed the east wall of the east wing (**6014**) with the demolition material lying directly on top of the surface of the demolished wall. Where **6006** met **6009**, to the west of **6014**, the two contexts merged into each other.

When **6009** was removed the south and west walls of the east wing were revealed. Overlying the west wall (**6013**) was a shallow demolition deposit (**6012**) consisting of brick fragments (40%, up to 100mm) mixed with flint nodules (<10%) and chalk (<20%) which

probably related to the removal of bricks from **6013** during the demolition process. Wall **6013** had been demolished to a flat surface of mortar in which the imprints of the removed bricks were visible. The wall width was 0.9m accommodating three and a half bricks, and the imprints of the removed course showed a regular pattern of two transverse bricks, a mortared half-brick space, and a third transverse brick, giving headers on both faces. The mortared space did not appear to be filled by complete longitudinal bricks. Below the mortar surface there was a foundation of mortared flint nodules (50-100mm) which extended 260mm beyond the brick line to the east, creating a stepped foundation (**6019**), 0.5m deep. In the two excavated slots to the east and west of **6013** no cut for the wall was visible, so it would appear that the foundation trench was dug and then completely filled with mortared flint. Projecting to the west of **6013**, and running along its entire excavated length, was a 400mm wide band of nodular flint (90-140mm) and chalk blocks (up to 240 x 150mm) tightly packed in a soil matrix (**6018**). There were two courses of flint and chalk blocks with the largest nodules at the top. None were mortared, either to the wall, or to each other. They were pressed into the silty clay subsoil. The shallow depth of this feature (max 150mm where sectioned), together with the lack of mortar, suggests that it was not structural, but it could have functioned as an eaves drip.

Schematic plan of all the structural contexts in Trench 6



Wall **6014** comprises the east and south walls of the east wing which were of one continuous build. The wall width was 0.9m and the top remaining brick course had a line of stretchers on the east face behind which three bricks were laid transverse to the wall, giving headers on the west face. This pattern extended from the northernmost excavated point of the east wall to a point 3.1m from the internal corner, where nls slabs began to replace the regular brick pattern on the western (internal) side of the wall. These slabs were flat-topped and 20-40mm deep, bedded on mortar which was laid on top of the first layer of brick above the flint foundation. The unusual stone slab element within **6014** extended to the south-east corner of the east wing. At the corner itself, on the external face of the wall, two large rectangular nls blocks (590 x 280 x 320mm deep and 390 x 300 x 280mm deep) projected above the demolished wall level. The exterior faces of both blocks were dressed. The larger block formed the corner of the wing and both must have been visible when the building was in use. It is possible that they represent the base of decorative stone corner-work extending up the building in a similar fashion to that on the 18th century house. Interestingly pieces of tile were mortared into the gap between the blocks and appear to have been used as spacers to create a regular 20mm gap. Below the two upstanding blocks, the use of nls blocks continued within the foundation for at least two courses, to an exposed depth of 250mm. The wall foundation at the corner was only exposed to its full depth (0.8m) in a slot excavated against the internal faces. Here it was composed of heavily mortared flint nodules and pieces of nls (both up to 300mm) with a basal layer of tightly packed flint nodules. A rough brick course topped the stepped foundation which projected c120mm beyond the wall on both faces. The foundation at the south-east corner of the wing was considerably deeper than that for wall **6013** (0.8m compared to 0.5m) and this may reflect the need to strengthen the wing at the corner, especially as the natural Clay-with-flints was seen to be sloping down towards the south east at this point. At the extreme northern end of the excavated slot, 0.95m from the internal corner, the depth of the foundation appeared to rise to 0.45m. This corresponds with the depth of **6013** and suggests that the foundation for **6014** away from the corner was shallower. As with **6013**, there was no visible foundation cut for **6014**, so a cut that was completely filled with the foundation is inferred. Construction of **6014** continued into the south wall of the wing as one continuous build, but there were no visible nls elements beyond the south-east corner.

The H-shaped structure (**6007**) was situated within the east wing but slightly off-centre to its east and west walls (0.8m to **6013** and 1.1m to **6014**). The modern pipe trench **6003** cut through it diagonally north to south. Context **6007** was 3.65m E-W and 2.15m N-S, with recesses in the north and south faces, and was clearly the base of a chimney stack. It was constructed using flint nodules (up to 180mm) and brick and tile fragments (up to 100mm) held together with a large quantity of mortar. The presence of mortared flint in the demolition deposit **6006** suggests that at least some of the material may have derived from demolition of this nearby chimney stack, after wall **6014** had been demolished. A nls block defined the south-west corner of **6007**, whilst the eastern face had a course of brick headers. Imprints of bricks within a band of clean mortar, c300mm wide, around the perimeter indicates that the chimney stack above the demolished level was faced with brick but had a well-mortared rubble core. An excavated slot to the west of **6007** exposed the

chimney breast foundation, confirming the large quantity of mortar used in its construction and its depth, 0.65m below the surviving top surface. The base of the foundation of **6007** was at the same level as that of the western wall of the wing (**6013**) exposed in the same slot.

The recesses in **6007** were lined with blocks of nls, some of which were architectural, indicating that they were re-used. The northern recess was 410mm deep and very tightly packed with 80% flint nodules (80-190mm) and 20% broken bricks in a yellowish-brown silty sand matrix (**6011**). Removal of the packing revealed splayed sides to a straight rear face, 0.95m wide. The eastern end disappeared into the baulk but the angle of the western splay suggests the front of the recess would have been c1.35m. The southern recess was bisected by **6003** with the packing to the west numbered **6020** and that to the east **6021**. Context **6020** was identical to **6011** in composition, as was the western portion of **6021**. In the eastern 450mm of **6021** the flint nodules were firmly mortared in place. The recess had a rear width of 1.2m, a front width of 1.35m and was 0.5m deep. Both recesses, which were not back-to-back but slightly offset, were presumably for fireplaces but there was no evidence for burning in either. It would appear that the fireplace recesses were begun below the eventual floor level and firmly packed in order to support the hearths above.

The position of the chimney stack indicates that the east wing was divided into two rooms, each with its own fireplace. There was no evidence for a brick dividing wall either side of the chimney stack so this would presumably have been of wooden panelling. The off-centre position of the chimney stack may have allowed a wider space on the eastern side for a doorway between the rooms. The southern room had internal dimensions of 4.8m N-S and 5.6m E-W.

Underlying **6009** within the east wing was a yellowish-brown compact clay (**6022**, **6025**, separated by **6004**) c100mm in depth, with inclusions of brick, tile, oyster shell and bone. Below this was a sterile natural clay (**6027**, **6031**) and it is likely that **6022** and **6025** represent the interface between demolition activity and the natural clay. Limited evidence for flooring material came from this area and it seems most likely that there was a suspended wooden floor above the natural clay. It was not possible to determine whether this floor was at approximately ground level, or at a level corresponding to the upper ground floor proposed for the north wing in Trench 1.

In the south-east corner of the trench, in an area that was outside the east wing, the demolition deposit **6006** identified lying over wall **6014** continued but gradually petered out. Beneath was a chalky (30%) silty clay (**6026**) containing smaller brick and tile fragments (<10%). Within **6026** there was a concentration of oyster shell (8.375kg) which looked like a deliberate dump. A deposit similar to **6026** but with less chalk and more clay (**6035**) underlay it. Below **6035** larger pieces of tile (up to 170mm), slate and occasional brick fragments in a silty clay matrix (**6042**) filled a gully [**6045**] cut into the natural clay (**6027**). The gully was excavated for a length of 0.9m and this section was parallel to **6014**, with the centre of the gully 0.9m from the wall. The top was 0.6m wide. If the gully originally ran the length of the wing it is most likely to be a drip/drainage gully carrying rainwater away from the walls, either deliberately cut or eroded by run-off from the roof.

Trench 6: facing north



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To the west of wall **6013**, in the supposed courtyard area, the chalk spread (**6009**) underlying the cobbled surface (**6008**) contained a concentration of brick rubble in the north-west corner which was given a separate number **6032**. The removal of **6009/6032** revealed a brick wall **6015** occupying the extreme north-west corner of the trench, emerging at an angle from the north baulk and turning through 90° to exit the west baulk. From its alignment and the geophysical evidence, it can be seen to be a continuation of **1009** and **5004**. The lowest surviving courses were alternate headers and stretchers on the east face. The foundations of **6015** were not exposed. A quantity of mortar was observed projecting from the east face by up to 80mm beyond the wall line in an irregular fashion. In the area of **6016** and **6017** this increased to 200mm. This mortar deposit, filling the gap between **6015** and **6016/6017**, was exposed in Trench 1 and interpreted as bonding. However, in Trench 6 it was clear that the mortar was stratigraphically later than **6016** and that **6015** cut through this structure, the mortar filling the gap between.

To the east of **6015**, and cut by it, was a free-standing structure composed of two elements: **6016** and **6017**. Context **6016** was first observed in Trench 1 as **1006** which was re-excavated in the overlapping north-east corner of Trench 6. **6016** and **1006** are a single layer of closely fitted unmortared bricks, set on edge and bedded on sand. The sand was yellow in the east and in patches along the southern edge (**6039**), but towards the west and at the rear of the feature the sand was reddened. The brick structure was 0.9m front to back and the surviving width was 1.5m. At the southern edge a small area of brick remained in situ, elsewhere for the first 400mm from this edge the brick was fragmented and was clearly

damaged, either during construction of **6015** or during the final house demolition, probably causing the brick rubble spread **6032**. Towards the northern edge there was better survival of *in situ* brick. In a N-S slot excavated through **6016** the sand on which the bricks were bedded was seen to be laid on a dark brown silty clay (**6044**), concurring with the sequence observed in Trench 1. **6044** contained roof tile fragments (up to 70mm) and sparse charcoal flecks (<2%). This horizon continued beyond the southern edge of **6016/17** within **6036** at the interface with **6038**. A similar brick-free tile horizon was observed in places in 2021. Surrounding the bricks to the north and east was a flint structure consisting of large nodular flint (up to 240x180mm) set in rammed chalk. Within the core there were occasional chalk blocks (up to 160x70mm). The width of this surround was 0.6m to the north and 0.5m to the east. It did not continue underneath **6016** although the brickwork did overlap it in the extreme east. Along the southern edge of **6016** there was a shallow continuation of **6017** (200mm wide x 90mm deep) beneath **6016**, consisting mainly of rammed chalk. The foundation of **6017** was exposed along the east face where its depth was 0.48m max, rising at the north-east corner to 0.28m. It is not clear how this structure fits into a building plan. It is earlier than wall **6015** but there are no obvious walls with which it is associated, although it is on the same alignment as the other structures on the site. It has the appearance of a hearth and the reddening of the sand in places could result from heat. However, there was no associated evidence for burning and the surround was of much less robust construction than the chimney stack (**6007**) and would be unlikely to support a chimney. Its south-facing aspect argues against it being the remains of the chimney of the early east wing depicted on the Tresswell map. Alternatively, it could have functioned as a garden feature within the courtyard area, such as a seat. A similar flint structure was partially exposed in the courtyard area to the west (**5052**).

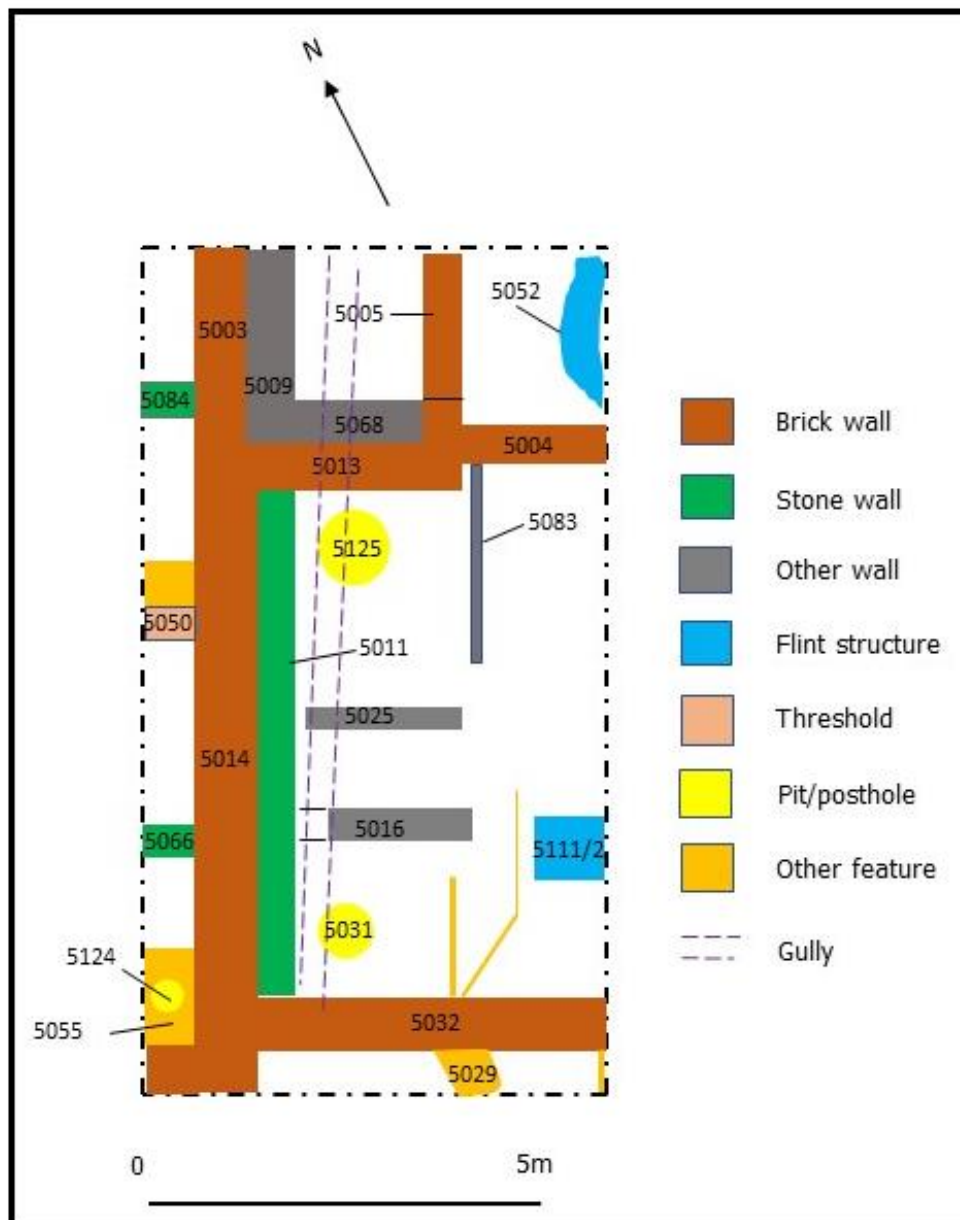
Trench 5

Removal of the gravel layer (**5002**) and demolition material (**5006, 5007, 5008, 5010, 5017** and **5019**) revealed the tops of a number of demolished brick walls, most notably the east and south wall of the west wing (**5014, 5003**). There were hints of a stone structure (**5011**) running parallel to **5014**. At the north end of the trench further walls (**5004, 5005** and **5013**) enclosed discreet areas. Near the southern end of the trench there was an east-west wall (**5032**) which represents the southern boundary of the house complex.

Wall **5014** retained its lowest brick course above the irregular stepped foundation. The wall width (0.7m) allowed for headers on the external face, stretchers on the internal face, with a core of one and a half bricks. Beneath this course was a levelling course of part bricks on top of the stepped foundation, which was constructed of bricks and mortar without regular coursing. The depth of the stepped foundation was 0.45m. At a point 3m from the north end of the trench wall **5014** became wall **5003** on the same alignment, as it narrowed to 0.6m wide and the coursing changed. The top remaining course of the west face of **5003** was headers and the east face was stretchers, with a single brick length in the core. The surviving course below confirmed the use of English Bond. The join between **5003** and **5014** was well bonded and this was also the point at which wall **5013** to the east was bonded to **5003**. There was a stepped foundation to **5003** of the same construction, depth and width

as **5014**, except that in places there were nls blocks (c300 x 120mm) at the base with unmortared gaps between them of several centimetres. The similarity of foundation construction of both walls, particularly the width, suggests that this element was built as a single enterprise, even though a narrower wall (**5003**) was constructed on top of it at the northern end. At the southern end of the trench **5014** turned 90° to the west and continued into the baulk, aligning with **2009a**, the south wall of the west wing exposed in Trench 2. Brick survival here was one course higher than in the east wall.

Schematic plan of all the structural contexts in Trench 5



Between **5014** and the west baulk of the trench there was a strip, up to 0.8m wide, where the interior of the west wing was exposed. The south-east corner of the wing was occupied by a brick feature which was constructed of bricks on edge, although these had been removed leaving impressions in the underlying bed of mortar (**5055**, 20mm deep). Impressions of nine rows of bricks E-W and a maximum of four bricks N-S survived. The mortar bed **5055** was at the same height as the top of the stepped foundation of **5014**, indicating that the wall and brick surface were part of the same building phase. The northern edge of the brick surface may be represented by a line of brick and roof tile (**5066**). The mortar (**5055**) had been cut by a post hole, **5124** (0.43m diameter, 0.52m depth), which had vertical sides and a single loose fill containing cbm (20%) and must be related to demolition activity. Visible in the northern quadrant of the post hole cut, below **5055**, there were four courses of mortared brick which were blackened and the mortar reddened. Below this was a silty clay which was reddened near the top. The remainder of the post hole circumference showed a stratigraphic sequence of 20mm of mortar (**5055**), 100mm of packed chalk with some brown soil, which merged into 50mm of a brown clay silt. Underlying this was 20mm of black charcoal deposit, 20mm of clean yellow-brown clay and beneath this a tile on edge hearth. Brown silty clay which was reddened near the top was the lowest deposit in the sequence. These elements were not recorded until the final day of the excavation so it was not possible to excavate the sequence fully in the surround of the post hole. However, it is clear that an earlier fireplace existed c200mm below the mortar bed of the later brick feature and the same distance below the top of the foundations of **5014**, suggesting that it belonged to an earlier structure.

The next structural element within the west wing, 3.4m north of the south baulk, was an east-west wall (**5065**, 200mm wide x 350mm depth), consisting of tightly-packed, roughly-faced flint and nls, both of a fairly regular size up to 140mm. It is in line with the north face of **2028** in Trench 2, which was of a similar flint and nls construction. Between **5065** and **5066** to the south was a chalk layer 250mm deep which contained pieces of brick and tile, pottery and animal bone.

To the north of **5065** the next structural element was a surface of well-worn bricks laid on edge on a bed of mortar (**5050**, 0.6m E-W and 0.46m N-S). In the central area the bricks had sunk into the underlying layers by up to 50mm creating a curved depression. North of this was a brick surface two courses deep laid on mortar (**5106**) which is in line with wall **2009b** in Trench 2. Contexts **5106** and **5050** combined had the appearance of a doorway through this wall with a worn brick threshold within the southern room. If the wear pattern on the threshold is central, this gives a doorway width of c0.7m. Beneath the mortared threshold there was a layer of sand (**5113**, 20-20mm deep) and beneath this a redeposited chalky clay (**5070**, up to 220mm deep). This clay layer extended south, covering both **5065** and the chalk surface, as far as the mortar bed **5055**. It correlates with the clay floor identified in Trench 2 (**2014**) in the south room of the west wing. Underlying the clay floor near the door threshold was a shallow (60mm) charcoal deposit (**5074**, 80% charcoal in a dark soil matrix), below which was a shallow (70mm) clay (**5092**). These two layers correspond in depth and composition to the two layers which overlay the earlier tile-on-end fireplace observed

below **5055**. A lens of reddened clay (**5093**) which contained tile, oyster shell and charcoal extended 0.9m south from beneath **5050** and was sealed by **5092**. The basal layer throughout was a clayey pre-existing soil (**5102**).

Continuing north within the west wing, there was an area measuring 1.75m N-S which was packed with flint nodules (up to 140mm) and re-used nls, including architectural fragments. It is unclear exactly what this represents. There was a faced wall at the northern end 0.45m deep with traces of mortar between the flint and nls (**5084**). A single course of broken bricks (**5034**) was roughly laid in mortar on top of **5084** at a distance of c100mm from the face creating a flat surface. The edge of the bricks may mark the edge of the underlying wall which would give a width for **5084** of 0.6m. The northern face lines up with the E-W stone wall exposed in Trench 2 (**2047**). South of this there was an area of less coherent flint and nls whose southerly limit was a relatively straight line 1.75m from the north face of **5084**. Within this area there was a dump of broken tile **5105**. It is possible that all of this was a rubble subfloor composed of demolition from the earlier building phase represented by **5084**, over which a brick floor was laid, a remnant of which survives as **5034**.

To the north of **5084** there were two similar dark soil deposits, **5081** above **5110**. The former contained charcoal (5%) and was 220mm in depth, the latter was 112mm in depth. Both contained the same suite of finds: pottery, bone, tile, metal, oyster shell and slate. The presence in **5081** of numerous tile fragments, plus flint nodules and nls similar in size to that in wall **5084** suggests that this layer may be associated with demolition of the earlier building phase prior to the brick walls being constructed.

It was mentioned above that wall **5013** was bonded to the west wing at the point where **5014** narrowed and became **5003**. Wall **5013** projected to the east of the west wing for 2.7m before turning to the north and continuing for 0.6m before terminating. It appeared to enclose an area that was open to the courtyard on its eastern side. **5013** was 0.75m wide and the exposed course was regular with headers on both faces and a core of a single brick length. The course below was faced with stretchers and below this was the stepped foundation, the top course of which was faced with headers. Beneath this the foundation had no regular coursing, consisting of brick, nls fragments and a quantity of mortar, to a foundation depth of 0.55m. In the interior of the enclosed space, effectively lining wall **5003** in the west and wall **5013** in the south and east, was a structure c 0.45m wide (**5009** and **5068**) whose function is not clear. It was constructed using brick, roof tile and re-used nls, including architectural pieces, mortared firmly together but randomly laid. The base was at the same depth as the base of **5003**. However, neither **5009** or **5068** were bonded to the brick walls which surrounded them. Where **5068** overlay the gully [**5101**] it had slumped but wall **5013** alongside it had not. The sequence of construction of the brick walls and the stone/brick/tile structures has not been established. At some point the open east side was filled with wall **5005** which was built against the terminal of **5013**. The visible course was not regular and the stepped foundation, particularly on the western side, was not straight. It had the appearance of having been built with less care than adjoining walls. Within the enclosed area the basal layer was the natural clay which was cut by a N-S gully (**5101**), filled

by a dark soil deposit (**5087**) which spread beyond the gully and was encountered to the east of **5005** and west of **5003**. The stratigraphy above **5087** was confined to the enclosed area. The lowest layer (**5058**) contained roof and floor tile, and above this was up to 100mm of degraded mortar (**5056**) on which a brick and tile floor surface had been laid (**5057**, **5077**, **5078**, **5080**). Sealing this was a chalky layer (**5054**) which contained roof and floor tile fragments. A central layer of sand (**5020**) appeared to level the area after the chalk had sunk. Above this a soil deposit (**5008**) had been laid, level with the top of the demolished walls.

Extending the line of **5013** eastwards was another wall, **5004**, of different composition. The wall was 0.75m wide and one course above the foundation survived. This had stretchers along both faces and the core of the wall was of random part bricks not laid in any pattern. The foundation was not stepped and was composed of whole and part bricks very roughly and unevenly coursed. It was excavated to a depth of 0.4m, not to the base of the foundation. The stratigraphy to north and south of **5004** was different. There was a clear gap between **5004** and **5013** and they were not perfectly aligned, however the terminus of **5004** looked neat and deliberate, indicating that it was built up to **5013** but not bonded in. The geophysics shows **5004** to be a continuation of wall **6015** in trench 6, which was itself a continuation of wall **1009** in Trench 1.

Trench 5: facing north



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To the east of the west wing there was an area of courtyard, bounded in the north by walls **5004** and **5013** and to the south by wall **5032**, which was of irregular width (0.7-0.8m) and was constructed using part bricks, irregularly laid. The lack of regular coursing, especially at the faces, suggests that what remains is the stepped foundation of a narrower wall, although this would begin at least one brick higher than wall **5014**. There were no brick imprints in the top of the mortar to indicate the coursing. Wall **5032** appears to be the southern boundary wall of the courtyard. At a distance of 2.1m east of wall **5014** there was

the indication of a discontinuity in the boundary wall, which may relate to a drainage feature (**5012**) within the courtyard to the north. To the south of **5032** there was a narrow strip 0.5m wide before the southern trench baulk. This area was not fully excavated. Within this strip the tops of two brick surfaces were revealed. The more westerly (**5029**) approached wall **5032** at an angle of 45° opposite the drainage arrangement in the courtyard. Between **5029** and the west wing there was a layer of chalk (**5031**) with large nodular flints (up to 280mm) beneath. The second brick surface (**5028**) was clipped in the south-east corner of the trench and appeared to be curved. Between **5028** and **5029** there was a chalky layer **5027** which overlay a soil layer (**5097**) containing some bone and a 3kg concentration of oyster shell. This in turn overlay a yellowy orange clay with flint inclusions (**5121**).

Inside the courtyard there was a brick-lined drain bordered by split flint (**5012**) running N-S and turning a 45° angle to the south west, 1.2m to the north of wall **5032**. At its south-west end there was a junction with a brick surface (**5015**) which was only one brick length wide. This had the appearance of a covered drain, or very narrow path. It was not excavated. If it was a covered drain there would be a culvert through wall **5032** at the point of discontinuity mentioned above, and brick feature **5029** could be a continuation. The split flint bordering **5012** could be the remnant of a more extensive flint courtyard surface, laid on a chalk spread which extended across much of the courtyard (**5026**, **5036**, **5037**, **5038**, **5039**). The courtyard was divided into discreet areas by two E-W walls and an insubstantial N-S wall in line with their eastern ends. The N-S wall foundation (**5083**) was constructed of chalk and nodular flint, only 0.2m deep and 0.3m wide. It extended south from wall **5004** for at least 2.6m. The northerly of the E-W walls (**5025**) was poorly constructed, using whole bricks and nls in a chalky mortar. It was slumping towards the west above an underlying gully (**5122**) and the surviving height was only 0.2m. The southerly E-W wall (**5016**) was constructed of large dressed stone blocks which were exposed on the south face. The north face was entirely brick and the brick continued on top of the stone blocks with tile used to level for the brickwork. This unusual construction method may relate to a pre-existing stone wall being refaced and topped in brick at a later date. The dimensions of the combined stone and brick elements were 0.3m wide and up to 0.4m surviving height from the base. The stone element of wall **5016** also slumped towards the west.

The area between **5016** and **5025** was 1.2m N-S and a 1m wide N-S slot was excavated. At the base was a N-S gully [**5122**] and the two walls were constructed on top of the fill of this gully (**5116**). The slumping noted in both walls relates to compaction of **5116** over time. The gully cut the natural Clay-with-flints (**5100**). Overlying **5116** was **5115** a layer up to 0.25m deep which contained roof tile and floor tile with one brick fragment whose dimensions (115mm wide x 44mm deep) suggest an early date. This deposit may relate to an early construction/demolition phase. A compressed chalk layer (**5130**) on top of **5115** was up to 150mm deep. It had slumped centrally, on an E-W axis, and had been levelled at the top with sand, topped by a thin band of chalk. This looks like the repair to a floor surface. This small area, 1.2m N-S and approximately 2.3m E-W (bounded by **5011** to the west and the line of **5083** to the east) is interpreted as a covered courtyard structure.

Between wall **5016** and the south enclosure wall (**5032**) a N-S slot (2.1m N-S x 1m E-W) revealed the stratigraphy below the southern area of the courtyard. At the base was the natural Clay-with-flint (**5063**) which had been cut by the gully [**5062**], filled by **5061** a greyish-brown silty clay. Overlying this was a thin spread of chalk and another soily layer which contained no late dating material. Cutting all these layers was a funnel-shaped pit/post hole [**5098**] which cut into **5063** to a depth of 0.2m. The fill (**5099**) contained brick fragments the size of which suggests a date contemporary with the extant brick walls. The post hole is likely to be associated with construction of the brick house, its funnel shape resulting from removal of the post. Sealing [**5098**] was a chalky layer (**5039**) which graded into more mixed material above. The level chalk represents a courtyard surface associated with the brick house. A small area of unmortared laid bricks (**5040**) on top of **5039** may evidence a later, more substantial, courtyard surface, associated with the drain **5012** and brick surface **5015**.

At the northern end of the courtyard an E-W slot (4m E-W x 1m N-S) was excavated. It extended from the east baulk to the western edge of the courtyard. The N-S wall **5083** was excavated in this slot. At the base of the slot there was a continuous layer of dark brown soil, up to 210mm deep, overlying the natural, which contained late 15th/early 16th century pottery (**5079**, **5094**). Wall **5083** was constructed on top of this layer and the subsequent stratigraphy to either side of it was different. To the east of **5083**, sitting on top of **5079**, there was a spread of closely packed nodular flint (up to 250mm), **5064**, in the extreme east of the slot. Covering and adjacent to **5064** was a soil layer up to 190mm deep (**5059**) and this was covered by c90mm of light yellowish-brown clay, **5023**. There was no chalky deposit in this area of the courtyard, instead **5023** was a roughly rectangular deposit delineated by **5083** to the west, **5111** to the south and ending at **5004** to the north. To the west of **5083** the N-S gully (**5120**) cut the natural (**5100**) and caused slumping in all of the later layers. A small lens of degraded mortar (**5114**), only 50mm deep, on top of the gully fill (**5117**) could be related to the construction of wall **5011**. Elsewhere, **5117** was covered by the dark brown soil (**5094**) and this was covered by a thin chalk layer (**5095**). Above this, pebbles (<25mm) were laid in sandy clay to a depth of 120mm (**5072**) creating a clearly defined surface. A later surface had been laid on top of this, consisting of sand (**5071**) to a depth of 100mm on which there were the remains of a single layer of disturbed bricks (**5069**). Cutting through all these layers, almost to the natural, was a pit/post hole (**5125**). It had similar basal dimensions to the funnel-shaped post hole **5099** and was in a similar position relative to wall **5014**. It contained a significant deposit of render. The final layer in the sequence was the chalky spread (**5026**).

The western edge of the courtyard was bounded by wall **5011**. This N-S wall was to the east of, and adjacent to, the brick wall **5014**. It was constructed of nls blocks and flint. At least some of the stone was re-used, with the dressed face to the east, and where removed the size ranged from 370mm x 260mm x 230mm to 250mm x 190mm x 170mm. The flints measured up to 230mm x 170mm and were tightly interlocked with the stone behind the wall face. The wall was excavated to the base of the foundation in the E-W slot. It survived to a height of 0.6m. The lower 0.3m was the foundation, at the base of which a bed of hard mortar, up to 20mm deep, sat on top of the natural clay **5100**. On this were placed roughly

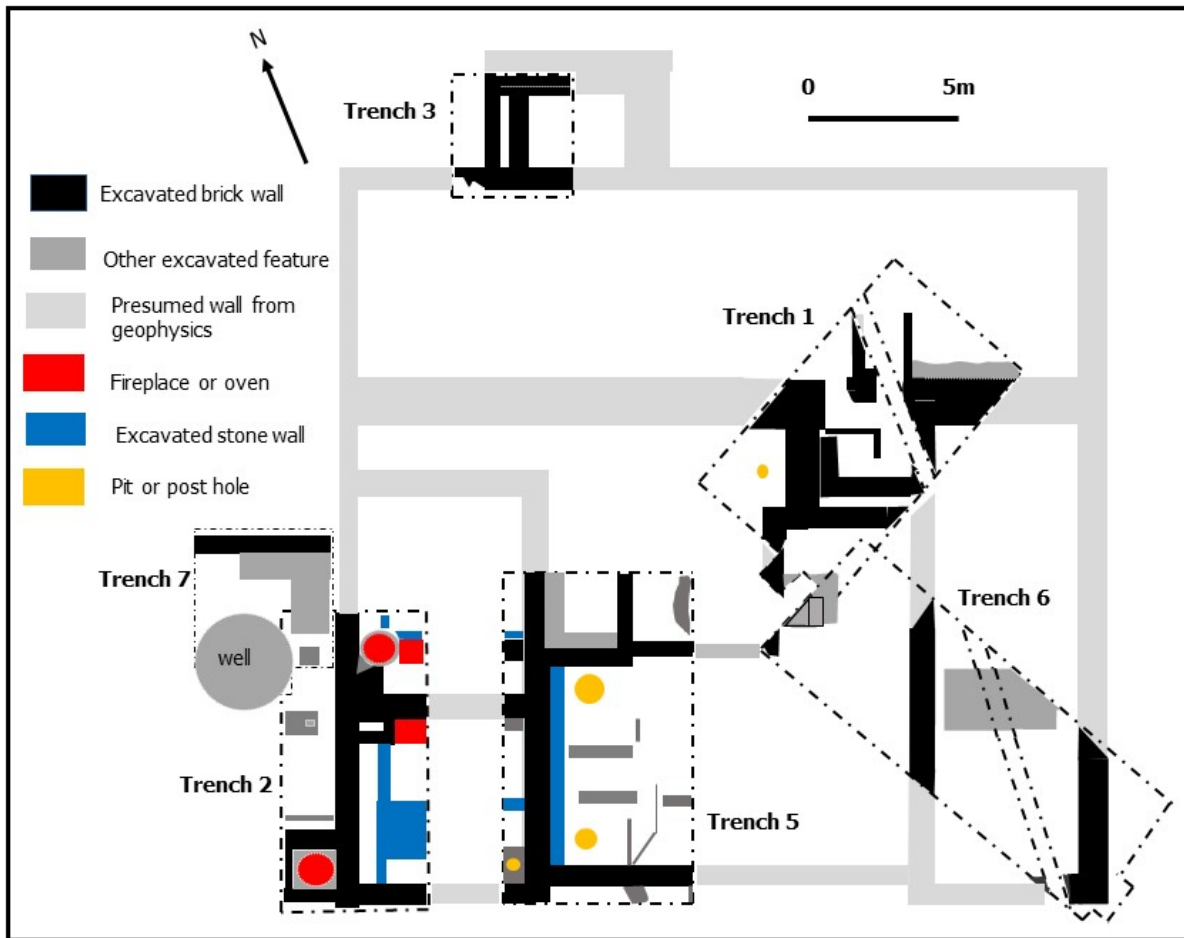
squared blocks c200mm, not mortared together but packed with flints and smaller pieces of stone, partly set in clay. On top of this foundation was another bed of mortar 20-30mm deep. The larger blocks of dressed stone which formed the faced wall were set on this mortar bed. The surviving wall width was up to 0.4m, the west face appearing to have been removed in the building of **5014** which had been constructed against **5011**, with the foundation of **5014** rising up in places to go over the top of the basal stones of **5011**. Therefore, the brick-built west wing appears to have directly replaced an earlier structure on the same alignment. The surviving stone wall of this earlier building could have supported a timber-framed structure above. Elements of similar stone and flint wall foundations (**5084**, **5086**, **2028**, **2029**, **2047**) are probably from the same structure, as is the tile fireplace seen in posthole **5124**. The foundation of **5011** was cut through the gully fill (**5117**) which contained finds dating to the 15th/early 16th centuries. The courtyard surfaces uncovered in the E-W slot which are associated with **5011** are **5072**, **5071** and **5069**.

Adjacent to the east trench baulk in the southern courtyard a N-S slot (3m N-S x 0.75m E-W) was excavated to explore a concentration of nodular flint in this area. This concentration of tightly packed flint (up to 220mm) within a chalky matrix appeared to measure at least 1.2m N-S. It survived to a greater height in a band 0.4m wide (**5111**) which delineated the southern edge of the clay deposit **5023**. In this small area **5023** overlay a soil layer (**5108**), typically c100mm deep, which overlay more flint nodules (**5112**). A small area of dark soil (**5109**) was revealed below **5112** but not excavated. A similar, but better defined, nodular flint and rammed chalk/chalky mortar platform (**5052**) was found in the north-east corner of the trench. It was a minimum of 2.2m N-S and 0.6m E-W with a minimum depth of 0.34m. The flints (up to 250mm) were tightly packed within the chalky matrix. It was surrounded by a medium grey brown soil, but the relationship was unclear. Both were overlain by a roof tile and flint spread (**5048**) on top of which was a compacted chalk surface (**5022**). No evidence for the dating of either **5052** or **5111/5112** was obtained.

Summary

The 2022 season added more detail to our knowledge of the demolished structures at Hursley Park. The systematic nature of the demolition process itself was highlighted in Trench 6, where an area likely to have been used for the sorting and preparation of material to be re-used in the 18th century building was identified, overlying the demolished south-east corner of the east wing. To the north, between this area and the new build, there was a deliberate chalk spread, very well compacted in places, especially where it overlay the demolished west wall. The chalk was mixed with clay in places and both could have been from digging the foundations for the 18th century house. A cobbled surface had been pressed into the chalk and clay which could have made transporting material around the building site less hazardous.

Schematic plan of the 2021 and 2022 trenches



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The width of the west wing was confirmed and its status as a service wing was reinforced by the discovery of a well, and associated structures, just outside it to the west. Within the west wing a doorway between the north and south rooms was identified. The courtyard area to the east of the wing was explored for the first time. Here a late element was a N-S drain which may have entered a culvert to pass through the southern boundary wall of the courtyard. The final surface of the courtyard appears to have been of chalk which may originally have had brick and flint surfaces laid on it. The courtyard was divided into discreet areas, each with its own stratigraphy, by two E-W walls and another running N-S. Within these areas and well below the chalk ground surface of the brick building, there was an earlier sequence of laid surfaces, including a layer of cobbling. These courtyard surfaces are stratigraphically contemporary with a stone wall, running N-S, beside and parallel to the brick wall of the west wing. It is likely that this stone wall is a footing to support a sill beam for a timber-framed building which stood on almost the same footprint as the later brick west wing. In the interior of the timber-framed building there was an internal E-W wall of flint and stone, in the same position as a similar wall found in Trench 2. At the northern end of the trench there was another E-W wall, also of flint and stone, which was picked up at the

extreme northern end of Trench 2. This may be either another internal wall, or the northern external wall of this earlier building. Inside the brick west wing, at the south-east corner, a post hole had been cut through a mortared surface and in the side of the post hole a tile-on-end fireplace, with associated burning, was visible. This was 21cm below the floor of the brick building, a similar depth to the cobbled surface in the courtyard. This fireplace almost certainly belongs with the stone walls.

A picture is emerging of an earlier timber-framed building, with at least two rooms and a fireplace in the southerly room. Probably at some point during the life of this building, the external courtyard was divided into its distinct areas. Another strand of evidence for this building is the recurring discovery of layers that contain roof tile, with no brick, and a distinctive layer of burning, all of which are stratigraphically early, and could be related to its dismantling.

The N-S stone wall of the timber-framed building cut a dark brown occupation layer, filling a N-S gully, which contained a quantity of animal bone, some of which is definitely deer. There seems to be a predominance of antler, jawbones and lower limbs, indicative of the residue from hunting. Pottery from the gully fill and a number of small finds, including a jetton and type one aglets, date this layer to the 15th – early 16th century. This provides a date after which the timber-framed building, and associated courtyard surfaces, were constructed. Therefore, the earliest building it could be is Hoby's 'great lodge' of the mid-16th century, which is depicted as 'The Place' on the 1588 estate map. The early occupation layer, and the gully it fills, may have been associated with the Bishop of Winchester's lodge, for which we have no structural evidence.

Returning to the brick building, at the north of Trench 5 and to the east of the west wing, there was a small room which the geophysics suggests was roughly square. Its east wall finished after a short distance, suggesting that the room was originally open to the courtyard on the east side, the opening roughly blocked at a later date. Lining the west and south walls of the room there was a curious, substantial, structure built using stone, brick and tile, firmly mortared together. WARG hope to return to this area in 2023 to understand more about this room.

In the extreme east of Trench 5, within the courtyard, there were two flint structures, made of nodular flint in rammed chalk or chalky mortar with no nls component. There is little we can say about the dating of them at this stage because they lack stratigraphic relationships with other features. The building material used could indicate an early date, before the re-use of stone from Merdon, or alternatively they could be the bases of courtyard or garden features of any date. We are intending to return to this area in the 2023 season.

The picture emerging of the east wing, which was explored in Trench 6, contrasts with the west service wing. It is of one build, with carefully constructed wide walls, reinforced by stonework at the south-east corner, that could have supported at least two, if not three storeys. The massive chimney breast, which could have accommodated further fireplaces on the upper floors, divides the wing into two rooms, north and south, each with its own fireplace. The slightly off-centre position of the chimney breast may have been to

accommodate the width of a doorway in the wider east gap. There were no internal brick walls, so the dividing wall between the two rooms, to either side of the chimney breast, is likely to have been of wooden panelling. We know that wainscot was removed from the house during the demolition. No flooring evidence was found, but it is likely to have been a suspended wooden floor above the underlying clay. We can certainly visualise this as a high-status wing.

The eastern area of courtyard, exposed in the north-west of Trench 6, was quiet compared to the courtyard next to the west wing. Only one structure was found, the brick-on-edge feature, surrounded by nodular flint in rammed chalk, which was first encountered in Trench 1. It most resembles a fireplace but its position does not relate to any room that we currently know about. We lack securely datable finds and all we do know is that it is earlier than the brick wall which cuts it. The only other structures encountered of similar construction are the two flint platforms seen in Trench 5.

The 2023 season will be the final excavation at Hursley Park and will be targeted to answer outstanding questions about all the phases of activity on the site.

Jane King and Andrew King 2023