



Historic England

Historic Places Investigation

# Redlingfield Hall, Eye, Suffolk

## Analytical earthwork survey

Daniel Hunt and Magnus Alexander

Discovery, Innovation and Science in the Historic Environment



Research Report Series 066-2017

**REDLINGFIELD HALL,  
EYE,  
SUFFOLK**

**ANALYTICAL EARTHWORK SURVEY**

Daniel Hunt and Magnus Alexander

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## **SUMMARY**

Redlingfield Hall occupies the site of Redlingfield Priory, a Benedictine nunnery founded in 1120 and dissolved in 1537. An extensive fishpond complex, apparently associated, lies 300m to the west. In 2016 Historic England's Listing Team East requested a survey of the site in order to re-evaluate the scheduling which was based upon a very brief 'Old County Number' description and was of limited extent. To address this analytical earthwork survey was undertaken by Historic Places Investigation Team East supplemented by further research including aerial photographic analysis and limited primary archival research. This has concluded that earthworks indicative of buried archaeological evidence survive across the site relating to both the medieval priory and fishponds and the post medieval occupation of the site, perhaps including elements of a designed landscape.

## **CONTRIBUTORS**

Daniel Hunt undertook the analytical earthwork survey, produced the site plan and drafted the earthwork description as part of his Historic Environment Placement with Historic England sponsored by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and supervised by Magnus Alexander. Daniel also undertook the aerial photographic analysis. Magnus edited Daniel's material, undertook additional research and completed the report.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

Thanks are due to Mrs Caroline Risk for allowing full access to the site.

The staff at the Suffolk HER and the Suffolk Archive, Lowestoft gave freely of their time and supplied valuable information.

## **ARCHIVE LOCATION**

The archive is digital only and retained by the team.

## **DATE OF RESEARCH**

Research took place between November 2016 and June 2017. The survey was undertaken in January 2017.

## **FRONT COVER**

The north-east of the site looking south-west viewed from the valley floor. The rise in the foreground may mark the eastern extent of the priory precinct, the trees beyond are probably in the area of the priory cloister. The listed barn, probably based upon the western monastic range can be seen beyond (Magnus Alexander © Historic England)

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## INTRODUCTION

Redlingfield Hall is a farm complex on the site of a former Benedictine nunnery known as Redlingfield Priory or Nunnery. Although most of the standing buildings are 19th century or later, there is a barn thought to be late medieval in origin to the north-east of the current farmhouse and some earthwork remains suggestive of buried archaeological features. To the west lie the remains of a fishpond complex known as 'The Leys' thought to be associated with the priory and/or the later hall.

This report describes research and fieldwork undertaken by Historic England's Historic Places Investigation Team East in late 2016 and early 2017. The work was undertaken in response to a request from the Historic England Listing Team in their work to amend the existing scheduling description and area to ensure that it incorporates the full extent of the site if archaeological potential survives.

### Background to the project

The project was undertaken in response to a request from Historic England's Listing Team, Cambridge. The existing scheduling of Redlingfield Priory was generated from an 'old county number' (OCN) record. These are the oldest designation records held and do not have the same level of information that modern records contain. This monument was not reviewed under the Monuments Protection Programme (an internal English Heritage programme). This lack of detail was the main reason for this work being undertaken.

The casework request set out the team's need to 'amend the OCN scheduling to incorporate the full extent of the nunnery and its precinct if archaeological potential survives' and also noted that the fishponds appear to relate to the nunnery and survive well, and that other earthworks are evident in surrounding areas. It was determined that a new plan of the earthworks was required to establish its extent with further documentary research to support its interpretation.

Following from this the aim of the project was identified as:

- To improve the management of the site in order to best preserve the scheduled monument.

The objectives required to achieve this were set out as being to:

- Define the extent of the priory precinct, associated fishponds, and any other related visible surface features through analytical earthwork survey;
- Identify further related features and assess recent change (and potentially loss) recorded on historic maps and available aerial photographs;
- Develop a chronological framework for the site based upon ground survey complemented by the aerial photograph analyses and documentary research;
- Relate this chronology to the immediate local geographical context and to our wider understanding of priories and fishpond complexes both locally and nationally;



- Based upon this assign significance to the site and its main components;
- Recommend further work and approaches to management.

Limited documentary research was undertaken. This was confined to the main secondary sources and such primary sources as were readily accessible through the Suffolk Archive.

## Location and extent

Redlingfield Hall lies to the immediate south of the parish church of St Andrew, which itself lies a few hundred metres to the south of the modern hamlet of Redlingfield, about 5km to the south-east of Eye in Suffolk (Figure 1). A north/south road runs to the immediate east of the site.

The site consists of two main areas; that of the buildings, yards and enclosures immediately associated with Redlingfield Hall, and the fishponds to the west (Figure 2). The former is an approximately rectangular area measuring about 210m north/south by 190m east/west centred on TM 1860 7062. The churchyard sits within the north-east corner of this area. The fishponds lay about 300m to the WNW of the farm centred on TM 1831 7071 and is an approximately triangular area about 110m NNW/SSE by 175m south-west to north-east. The two areas were connected by a broad channel and bank.

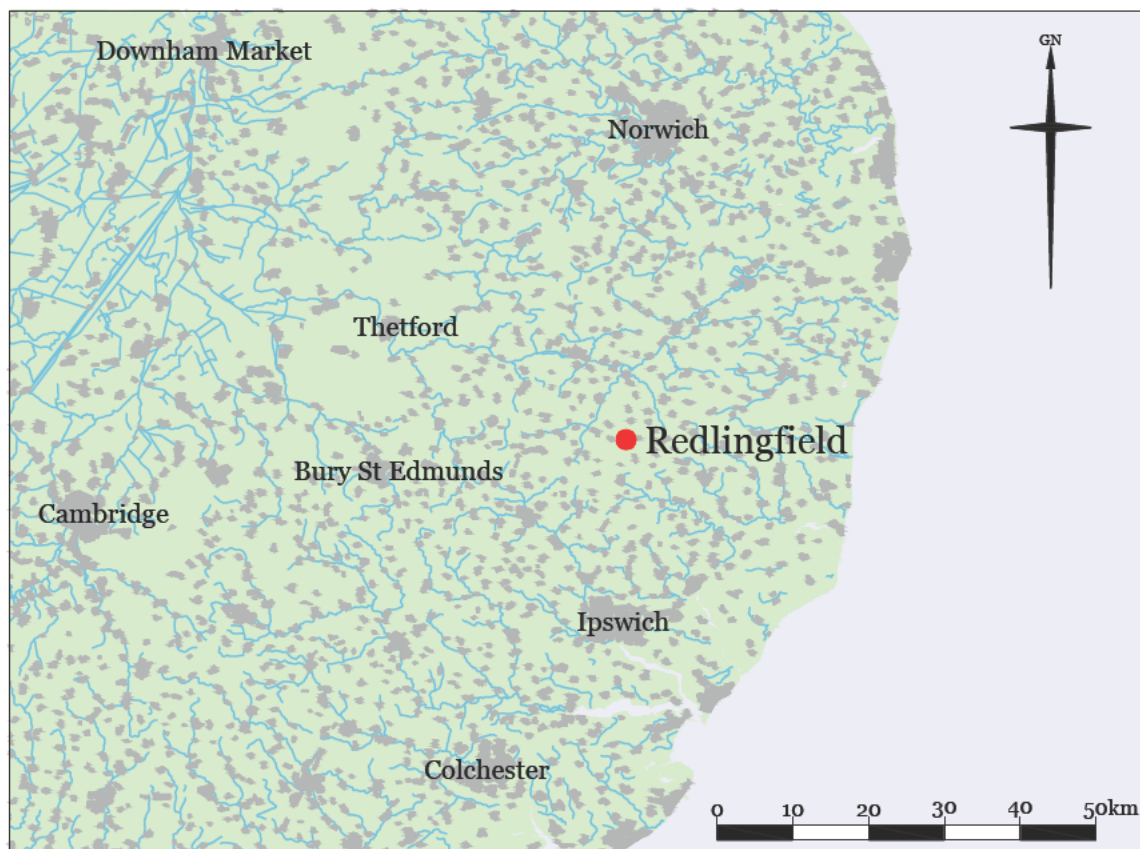


Figure 1 - The location of Redlingfield (based on Ordnance Survey OpenData Strategi mapping 2016).

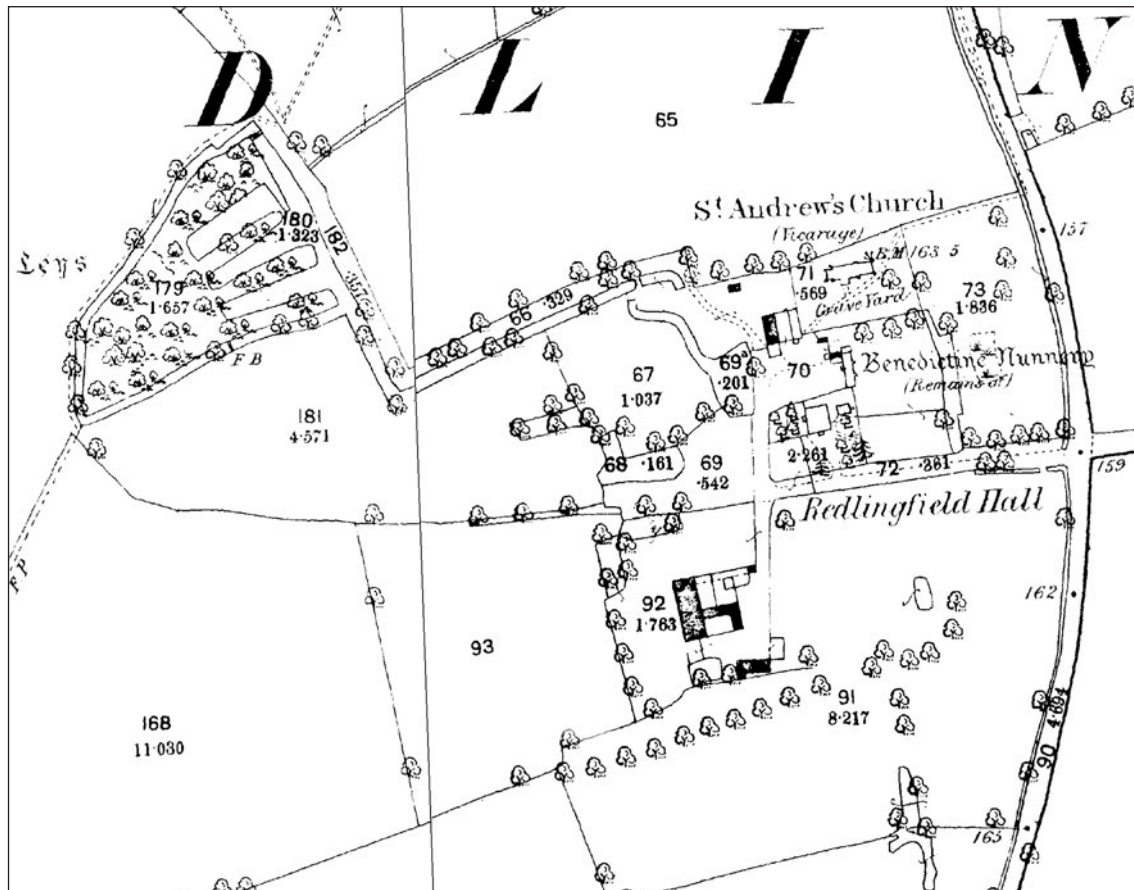


Figure 2 - The site as depicted on the Ordnance Survey first edition 25 inch to 1 mile map (not to scale) published in 1885/6 (Historic Ordnance Survey mapping: © and database right Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Ltd (All rights reserved 2017) Licence numbers 000394 and TP0024)

## Topography and geology

The area of Redlingfield is gently rolling countryside at about 50mOD. Drainage is superficial with run off being confined to field ditches in the immediate surroundings of the hall. A broad but reasonably well defined valley runs from the south towards Redlingfield Hall and continues to the north where it eventually becomes Gold Brook which meets the River Dove at Hoxne about 6.5km to the north. The small stream draining this valley now runs within the field boundary ditch along the west side of the north/south road to the east of the farm. A second, less well defined valley runs in from the WSW through the area of the pond complex leaving the hall and church on a slightly elevated spur a few metres above the lower valley floors to east and north. The north/south road to the east of the site would appear to run just off the valley floor, its slightly sinuous route reflecting the underlying topography.

The soils around Redlingfield are typical stagnogleys of the Beccles 1 association overlying a chalky till. These soils fine loams and silts overlying clayey soils and are slowly permeable so subject to seasonal waterlogging though in some places this waterlogging is slight. Crops are typically cereals and grass with dairying and stock raising (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1983).

## Designations

Currently the barn to the north of the house is Listed Grade II and part of the site is a Scheduled Monument. The church, excluded from this study, is also Listed Grade II.

The current listing description for the barn runs:

Barn to the north east of Hall Farmhouse (29.7.55/GV/II).  
Formerly part of a Benedictine nunnery (perhaps a guest house), now used as a barn. C14 with later repairs and re-roofing. Flint rubble, formerly plastered, with stone dressings. Later repairs in red brick; weatherboarded gables. Plaintiled roof. 2 storeys and loft. 3 bays long. Diagonal corner buttresses except to south west where another range adjoined. 2 of the 4 side buttresses are intact, one on each wall. There are 5 small oblong C14 windows (one fragmentary), including one to first floor. North wall has 2 low 2-centre-arched recesses. 3 C16-C17 mullion and transom first floor windows. Inside, 3 bays of the first floor structure are of C16 date, with heavy plain joists set flat. The roof is probably of C18 date. Minor agricultural buildings adjoin to west.  
Listing NGR: TM1863970674

The existing scheduling was generated from an 'old county number' (OCN) record. These are some of the oldest designation records so do not have the same level of information as modern records. This lack of detail is the main reason for this work being undertaken. The currently scheduled area is approximately rectangular and measures a little under 60m east/west by just over 30m north/south. It lies immediately to the south of the churchyard, underlies the listed barn and covers the open areas to its immediate east and west. The scheduled area is centred on TM 1864 7067.

## Previous research

Apart from the original OS plan no fieldwork is known to have taken place on the site; no work is listed in either the National Record of the Historic Environment or the local Historic Environment Record. Relevant known archaeological evidence is summarised in the Appendix.

Documentary research has focussed on the priory and has also been limited; the only detailed account is in the Victoria County History (Page 1907, 83-5) and most subsequent histories appear to refer back to this.

## History of the site

### Medieval

In 1120, the priory of Benedictine nuns was founded by Manasses Count of Guisnes and Emma his wife, the daughter and heiress of William de Arras, lord of Redlingfield. It was endowed with the manor of Redlingfield and 'all its members



and all such customs as William de Arras held'. This included the parish church, an exceptionally early instance of appropriation. The foundation charter states that the house was dedicated to God and St Andrew (Page 1907, 83). Soon after its foundation, sometime 1123-5, a charter (SRO, Ipswich, MS SROI HD1538/7/f38) confirms the possessions of Eye Priory as including Redlingfield amongst many others across Suffolk and Norfolk (Briggs and Kilpatrick 2016, Fig 5, xxii).

A church in Redlingfield dates back at least to Domesday Book (1086). At this time the manor was held by William of Arques from Robert Malet. William was a minor landholder with one other manor (Brandeston) and three lesser holdings in other manors (Rumble 1986). It appears to have been a fairly typical manor with three carucates valued at 100s (Rumble 1986 6,192). The entry mentions a church with 12 acres, most probably the precursor to the current church and on the same site. This was not particularly unusual; almost all the surrounding manors have churches listed in their primary entries and Redlingfield church's provision also seems to have been fairly typical; for example Denham church also had 12 acres (7,4), Rishangles and Horham slightly more at 20 and 22 acres respectively (6,222 and 64,3), and Worlingworth and Occold slightly less at 10 and 8 acres (14,103 and 31,60).

The priory does not appear to have fared well. In both the Norwich Taxation of 1254 and the Taxation of Pope Nicholas in 1291 Redlingfield was listed but valued at 'nil' (Hudson 1910, 155). It was probably exempted on grounds of exceptional poverty (Page 1907, 83). These documents also record that the Benedictine Nunnery at Redlingfield held a spiritual in the Diocese of Norwich, and lay in the Deanery of Hartismere, Archdeaconry of Sudbury (Hudson 1910, map opp 46, 130).

It remained poor well into the 14th century. In 1343 the prioress only held part of the tithes of corn, wool, and lambs of Redlingfield worth two marks a year, and 40 acres of land worth 14s 4d. A year later the prioress and convent obtained licence to acquire land or rents to the annual value of £10 under the privy seal (Page 1907, 83), presumably to address this poverty. However this was not achieved until 1381 when Sir William de Kerdiston assigned a third of the manors of Hickling and Rishangles, with a yearly value of £7 13s 4d to the priory, in full satisfaction of the 1344 licence (Page 1907, 83). This appears to have made little difference as in 1383 a further licence was granted to obtain property to the value of £20 a year and other small grants were subsequently made (Page 1907, 83). The extent and value of these is unclear though as far as can be determined, the priory's fortunes appear to have improved and in 1416 Isobel Ufford, Countess of Suffolk, left 100 marks for the restoration of the church at Redlingfield and 40s to the prioress with 20s to each of the other ladies there (Watson and Jenkins 2006, 434).

Improving fortunes appear to have been associated with deteriorating behaviour and in 1427 an inquiry was held at which the prioress confessed to a long list of failings including never having been to confession, using violence on one of the sisters, sleeping in a private chamber with a novice, being alone with the bailiff 'in private and suspicious places', and selling off trees without the knowledge or consent of the convent. To avoid scandal she resigned and was banished to the priory of Wykes, and the whole convent was ordered to fast on Fridays (Page 1907, 83-4).

It is not clear if this cleared up matters or if poor behaviour continued. Almost a century later, in 1514 more trouble was recorded. The prioress complained of the disobedience of some sisters and in turn, the nuns complained that the sub-prioress was cruel and her discipline too severe often drawing blood, that no statement of accounts had been rendered, of a lack of curtains between the beds in the dormitory, that boys slept there, and that there was no proper infirmary. The prioress was ordered to correct these failings and the subprioress 'to correct and punish with discretion and not cruelly'. This does appear to have made a difference as three visitations between 1520 and 1532 found no fault. The mention of boys has been taken to indicate a boarding school at the priory (Page 1907, 83-85, fn 2).

In a 1535 Valor the annual value of the priory was recorded as £81 2s 5½d (Page 1907, 84) and the priory dedication was listed as the Blessed Virgin and St Andrew, contrary to the foundation charter (Page 1907, 83).

The next year, 1536, the house came under the Suppression Act of the smaller monasteries. The Suffolk commissioners visited Redlingfield on 26 August to draw up an inventory the total of which was £130 7s 11¼d (see Appendix?? for full details). Grace Sampson, the prioress deposed to the commissioners that the house had seven religious and twenty three servants, of whom two were priests. In February 1537 the priory was surrendered. Each nun received the trifling sum of 23s 4d, the two priests 25s, and 113 other servants from 15s to 2s 6d. The prioress received nothing but had been generously pensioned off (20 marks a year) the preceding January (Page 1907, 84). The discrepancy in the number of servants is marked and unexplained; perhaps the 23 recorded by the commissioners were solely those directly associated with the priory, the remainder with the home grange and other monastic holdings further afield.

## Post-medieval

### *The Bedingfield family*

In March 1537 the dissolved monastery, with the whole of its property, was granted to Sir Edmund Bedingfield (1479/80–1553) and his wife Grace. Several sources state that the manor was purchased and some imply that this was under the patronage of Charles Brandon, duke of Suffolk (see for example *The Suffolk Traveller* second edition of 1764) who Sir Edmund had served under in the French wars and who had knighted him in 1723 (Shiels 2004). Sir Edmund was a prominent figure; in addition to his service in France he was 'entrusted with the custody of Katherine of Aragon at Kimbolton Castle in Huntingdonshire after the royal divorce and was responsible for the arrangements for her funeral procession from there to Peterborough in 1536' (Shiels 2004).

He only seems to have had an indirect interest in Redlingfield though. Almost immediately he appointed 'Richard Hoo, as auditor and steward of all his lands, &c., in Norfolk and Suffolk' (Copinger 1909, 294). Further, 'In 1539 the manor is said to have been vested in Robert Bedingfield, clerk, brother of Sir Edmund, and he had licence to alien the manor to his nephew, Sir Henry Bedingfield' (Copinger

1909, 294). There is some uncertainty about this as the Dictionary of National Biography (DNB) states that Sir Edmund inherited the family estates from his brother Robert in 1539 (Shiels 2004). Perhaps the manor was being held by Robert on the understanding that it would go to Edmund's eldest son Henry but Robert's death obviated the need for this arrangement. Edmund appears to have been rather reluctant to take on the role of head of family.

Sir Edmund died in 1553 and was succeeded by his eldest son Henry. Sir Edmund's will provides some information about Redlingfield:

... And I bequeath to the like reparations of the churches of  
Redlingfield and Denham, to each of them 20s;  
Item, I bequeath unto my wife, Dame Grace Bedingfield ...  
... all my milch kine and other cattle being not above one year of  
age the which at the same time of my death shall be remaining at  
Redlingfield & Denham in the county of Suffolk;  
And I give and bequeath unto my son, Sir Henry Bedingfield,  
knight, ...  
... all mine eyries of swans called(?) swan-marks, except one couple  
of old eyries remaining at Redlingfield;  
And I give and bequeath unto my said wife, Dame Grace, all and  
all manner my household stuff and other necessary implements  
together with my utensils of husbandry now remaining as well  
at Oxburgh as at Redlingfield not before assigned, willed or  
bequeathed to my said son, Sir Henry Bedingfield, to do therewith  
her will and pleasure;  
And further I give and bequeath unto my said wife, Dame  
Grace, all my pullery and swine, together with all my corn and  
hay remaining as well at Redlingfield as at Oxburgh at the time of  
my death... (Green 2010)

It would appear that Redlingfield, together with Denham, was largely intended to provide for Grace's needs and many of its assets passed into her hands but it is unclear if this included the estate itself. It has not been possible to determine how long she lived as a widow but on her death it is likely that her possessions returned to the family, though whether all returned to her son Sir Henry as the head of the family, or if she made a more complex will (as her husband had) is similarly unknown.

It seems unlikely that Sir Henry had much interest in Redlingfield. At the time of his father's death and for some years afterwards he played a significant role on the national stage and was then forced into retreat in Norfolk. He was a supporter of Mary, the 'first gentleman to be mindful of his fealty and hasten to aid the queen' (MacCulloch, 253–4) and embroiled in the issue of the succession. Following this:

Mary included him on her 'consell' and made him knight marshal, or third in command of her growing forces. While he remained a privy councillor after Mary's accession to the throne, and served as knight of the shire for Norfolk in her first parliament, his primary

duties seem to have centred on Norfolk. He was there during Wyatt's rebellion at the beginning of 1554, but shortly afterwards Mary made him constable of the Tower and committed her sister Elizabeth to his charge. (Weikel 2004)

He subsequently appears to have spent most of his time at court until Mary's death in November 1558 (Weikel 2004). Despite this it appears that Sir Henry remained on good terms with Elizabeth. In about 1572 Queen Elizabeth made Henry's son Thomas a gentleman pensioner which 'may have been repaying a debt of gratitude to his father for easing her imprisonment under Queen Mary. As the cordial tone of a letter Elizabeth wrote to Sir Henry early in her reign shows, they were still on good terms' (Kelly 2004).

Nevertheless, his fortunes declined under Elizabeth, largely due to his continued adherence to Catholicism; in 1569 he refused to sign the statement of loyalty, and was placed under bond for his good behaviour, in 1578 he was in trouble because of the continuation of Catholic activity at Oxburgh and in 1581 he was in trouble again because of 'suspect persons at his house' (Weikel 2004). Sir Henry died on 22 August 1583 and was buried in the parish church of Oxborough (Weikel 2004).

Sir Henry was succeeded in turn by his son Edmund and grandson Thomas (*d.* 1590) (Shiels 2004) but this succession seems to have related to the main family holdings in Norfolk; 'the branch of the family which resided at Redlingfield was descended from John, the third son of Sir Henry' (*ibid*). He 'was a known harbourer of priests and was reputed always to have kept a priest in his house. This was a tradition maintained by his son Francis (*d.* 1644)' (Shiels 2004).

In 1609 the estate was in the hands of another Thomas Bedingfield and was later held by another John Bedingfield who died before 1626 (Copinger 1909, 295).

In 1717 a register of the estates held by Roman Catholics was compiled under Act of Parliament. This register makes it clear that Redlingfield Priory was held directly by 'Francis Bedingfield of Redlingfield' and gives a useful description of the estate at this time:

The Scite of the said Mannor of *Redlingfield* or Capital Messuage, commonly call'd *Redlingfield Priory*, with the Outhouses, Barns, Stables, Dove-house, Granary, Yards, Gardens and Orchards to the same scite of Messuage belonging and adjoining, together with the several Closes, Inclosures, Pieces and Parcels of Land, Meadow, Pasture and Wood Ground following, (*viz.*) One Close called the Homestall, one Close called the Barn Close, Lays, Meadows, one Close called Walfield, One close called Wall Meadow, one Pightle called Elming Picle, two Closes called the Nonsuch Pightles, one Close called Sheep's Close, the Lime Pightle, the Downs lying in three parts, the Lays Wood and Punchard's Wood: All of which said Mannor and Premises are situate, lying, and being in Redlingfield aforesaid, and are now in his own proper Use and Possession (Suffolk Archives 741/HA12/B1/1/8).



Other holdings of Francis' included a tenant farm in Redlingfield and Bedingfield (presumably to the south) leased to Samuel Read in 1714, another in Redlingfield and Occold (to the west) leased to John Cooke in 1716, and a third in Redlingfield and Denham (to the north) leased to Simon Hunt in 1715. Other smaller rentals included three closes to John Brookes, two small tenements to John Scott and Thomas Hawes, and a blacksmith's shop to John Denney. A smithy survived in the village until at least 1930 ('Yeoman')

### *The Willis family*

The DNB states that over almost two centuries the 'cost of their recusancy, and the succession of children into the clergy and religious life, resulted in the [Bedingfield] family line having no direct heirs, and the Redlingfield property was sold some time before 1747, when it was owned by the Willis family' (Shiels 2004). In fact Redlingfield was already held by the Willis family in 1735. The first edition of Kirby's *The Suffolk Traveller* records that John Willes was the patron of the manor and his 1736 map of Suffolk shows the manor as held by J Wellis Esq. In the appendices of the reissued facsimile the patron of the manor is given as John Willis Esq of Cranly Hall, Redlingfield in 1735 and in about 1765 as John or Henry Willis Esq (Dymond 2004, 222, 230). This is probably due to a discrepancy between the second edition of *The Suffolk Traveller* which records that the manor was granted 'to Edmund Bedingfield, which family enjoyed it till it was sold to John Willis, Esq who now hath it' (Kirby 1764, 178) and the 1766 map; presumably John died between these dates and passed it to Henry.

### *The Adair family*

Sometime after this the estate 'was acquired by William Adair' (Copinger 1909, 295). William Adair's interest in the manor apparently goes back to the early 1760s at least. A letter in the Suffolk Archive from Jonathan Van Kamp at Bungay dated to 25 January 1762, to William Adair at Pall Mall, London reports the particulars of Mr Willis's estate, detailing the rents, tithes and other assets 'by which you will be able to inform some little judgement of a extent of it & value proposed to be so upon it' (741/HA12/E1/5/155). He clearly looks to have been considering its purchase at this time. Perhaps it was the death of John Willis between 1764 and 1766 that lead to the sale.

At about this time, Hodskinson's map of Suffolk, published 1783, shows Redlingfield Hall much as today with a small cluster of buildings to the south of the church and the road running north/south to the immediate east.

William 'died in 1787, when the manor passed ... to his cousin Alexander Adair, from whom it passed in the same course of descent as the Manor of Cratfield le Ros, in Blything Hundred, and is now vested in Sir Fredrick Edward Shafto Adair, 4th Bart., of Fixton Hall, Bungay' (Copinger 1909, 295).

Well before this Redlingfield Hall or Hall Farm had been leased out as a tenant farm. In the 1839 tithe apportionment (Suffolk Archive 741/HA12/6864/6) it was

occupied by George Cracknell Senior with both Thomas and Charles Cracknell occupying adjacent farms in the parish, to the south and west. The 1762 letter (above) also records rents from a 'Cracknell older' and 'Cracknell younger' so the family seem to have been tenant farmers in the parish for getting on for 80 years. It seems probable that the priory may well have been tenanted under both the Willis and Adair families.

The main farmhouse and several ancillary buildings were rebuilt in the 1870s; the current farmhouse bears a date stone of 1875.

# AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY

## Methodology

Some aerial photographic (AP) analysis was undertaken to supplement the earthwork survey. Available images were viewed and archaeological features identified. A stereoscope was used when viewing vertical photographs to bring out three-dimensional features. All archaeological features visible on aerial photographs were recorded, potentially ranging in date from the Neolithic to the 20th century. These sites may be visible as cropmarks, earthworks or structures.

Photographic prints showing archaeological features were digitised. They were then rectified and geo-referenced to the base map using the University of Bradford's AERIAL5 programme to an accuracy of 2m or better. Control information was taken from digital 1:2,500 Ordnance Survey Mastermap data. This gives an overall accuracy of plotted features to true ground position dependent on the accuracy of the Ordnance Survey map. A digital terrain model was used to compensate for undulating terrain. Aerial photographs supplied by Landmark (APGB) were provided as geo-referenced images. Archaeological features were traced from the rectified and geo-referenced photographs using AutoCAD Map. The mapped features were depicted on different layers based on the original form of the feature (bank, ditch, structure etc).

## Description

This section describes those features which are exclusively visible on aerial photographs and historic maps around Redlingfield Hall. Modifications to features will be noted here where they are deemed relevant to the historic characterisation of the hall and its environs. Some of the mapped features relate directly to earthworks that were visible at the time of survey; these relationships will be discussed in the 'Earthwork description' below.

Visible on RAF/CPE/UK/1937 FS 2086 18-Jan-1947 is a sunken square area which measures about 23m x 23m to the immediate east of the similarly aligned barn. Given the location and orientation it seems possible that this earthwork represents the main cloister courtyard.

To the north of this an east/west ditch running just to the south of the churchyard and parallel with it was recorded. A second ditch ran off this to the south, to the east of the possible cloister and towards the extant pond. As they seem to respect the cloister alignment they may be related.

The area to the west of this was low lying rough ground. Two groups of features were noted here. In the north were two similar, broad, shallow gullies with a width of about 7m, one running north and then curving east, the other running ENE from the south end of other. Both sides of the southern gully were visible but only the eastern scarp of the northern part of the other could be seen, the feature only becoming a gully as it turned east. It is likely that silting from the higher ground

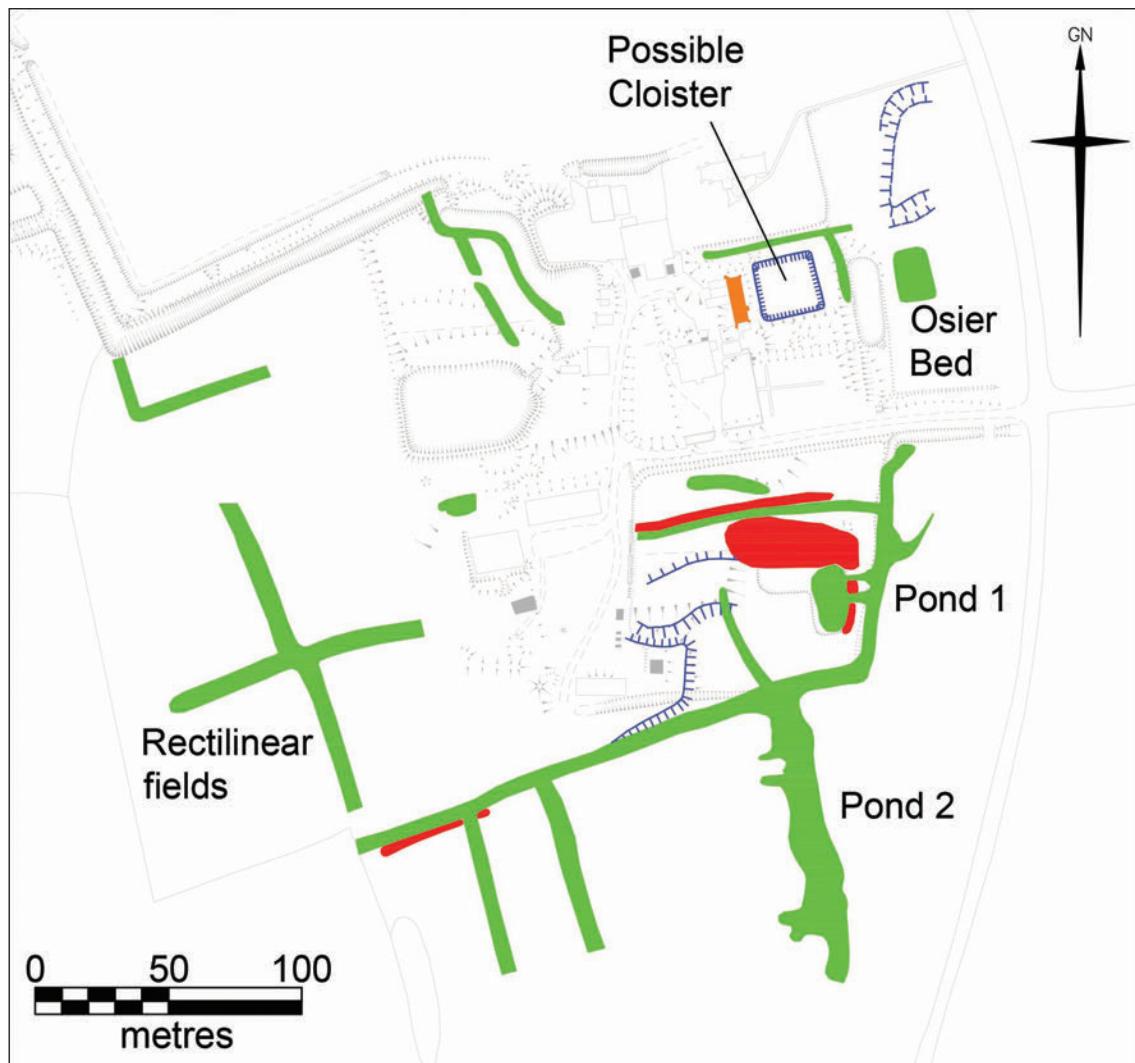


Figure 3 - Digital transcription of all archaeological features visible on aerial photographs overlying the survey drawing of the site. Green = negative features (ditches, dark cropmarks etc), red = positive features (banks, pale cropmarks), blue 'T' hachures = large features.

to the west has led to the loss of any clear scarps here. The southern gully seemed to pick up the alignment of the east/west ditch to the west so may be related. The northern gully seemed to run towards either the pond or the osier bed (below) and could be related to these. As the latter seem to be late features we may be seeing two different phases. To the east, both appear to terminate at a line of trees that possibly marked a boundary, visible on 1940s aerial photographs. There was no evidence of remains to the east of the trees so perhaps the gullies ran into a ditch on this line. It is likely that these are the remains of drainage ditches. Aerial photographs from the 1940s showed a rectangular pond to the south of these gullies. Marked on the 1886 OS map approximately 24m to the east of the barn was a small enclosed area of osiers in the same location. Although not surveyed it was visible as an amorphous depression with darker, wetter soil.

Surrounding the main farm buildings were several ditches. The largest of these could be seen on 1940s photographs as earthworks to the south of the hall. The



eastern arm of this ditch was aligned north/south and extended for about 100m. It was still largely visible in the field as an earthwork that still functioned as a land drain. To the north there was a slight dog-leg where it joined the ditch running east to the main roadside ditch; this was not seen at the time of survey. To the south the ditch turned to run WSW for well over 200m, perhaps decreasing slightly in size. Initially it followed the line of a ditch surveyed here but after 30m or so their lines diverged with the ditch recorded on APs running more to the south-west than the later surveyed ditch. Combined, these two arms appeared to define an enclosure to the north and west, though the southern arm perhaps extended further than might be expected if this were the case, though it could simply be picking up the line of another field boundary, perhaps indicated by a bank to the south of the ditch in this area.

Several other ditches were connected to this large ditch. Within the possible enclosure, running west for about 91m from the north/south arm of this ditch, on a slightly curving line roughly parallel with the current farm track and about 20m to the south of it, was a narrower and shallower channel with an associated bank on its north side. In the same area, a short ditch, similar in size to the east/west ditch to the north, ran into the southern arm of the main ditch. This extended for about 40m and ran NNW-SSE but didn't appear to be related to any other features. A similarly short but more irregular gully also ran off to the north-east from the north/south section of ditch but this appeared to have been ploughed out.

To the south-west two more substantial ditches ran SSE from the southern arm of the larger ditch, approximately at right angles to it. They ran approximately parallel to each other though the eastern was slightly more sinuous and irregular than the western, which appeared to cut the bank noted above, suggesting a later date. To the north of this, approximately 190m to the southwest of the barn, were several other ditches that were visible on photographs as shallow earthworks which varied in width between about 5.7m and about 6.3m. They appeared to be oriented similarly to the ditches to the south and formed a rough cross with the NNW and SSE arms slightly offset to one another. The SSE arm was likely to have connected to the ditch to the south though it was interrupted by a farm track. It seems likely that these are all fragments of a series of enclosures around the farm.

Immediately north again and projecting southwards from the south-western corner of the L-shaped channel connecting the fishponds to the farm area, was another small section of ditch. This initially ran SSE for 20m before turning to the ENE to run approximately parallel to the channel to the north for about 50m. although on similar alignments to the features to the south it was rather narrower and more regular so not necessarily related.

Several ponds were visible on APs; two are described here as they were visibly modified over the 1944-2000 sequence of aerial photographs or no longer extant. The first, still extant, was situated approximately 80m southeast of the hall centred on TM 1867 7056. It had been significantly modified since it was first depicted on 1886 OS mapping. In its original form (visible on historic maps and 1940s RAF and USAF vertical photographs) the pond was sub-oval and measured about 25m x

12m. A 1944 USAF photograph (US/7PH/GP/LOC188/6871 29-FEB-1944) shows the later addition of two small gullies which linked the pond to the long north/ south ditch to the east. These photographs also showed a large spoil heap immediately to the north which may have been created as a result of modifications made to the original pond and/or from the digging of surrounding ditches. Modifications carried out post-Second World War were first depicted on OS/73093 V 91 25-APR-1973. These saw the pond extended about 19m west to form an L-shape. The second pond lay beyond the survey area to the south, and no longer survived having been apparently in filled and/or ploughed out. In its final form it was long and irregular measuring about 107m x 13m and clearly had seen numerous modifications. The southern part was earlier; it was depicted on 1886 OS maps. It appears to pre-date field boundaries visible on 1886 mapping; the distinctive 'claw' shape of the southern part is likely to have been a product of the introduction of the boundaries that cut across it. The northern half, which was first visible on 1940s APs appears to have been shallower and more amorphous. This later addition also joined the original southern pond to the northeast/southwest aligned ditch to the north.

# ANALYTICAL EARTHWORK SURVEY

## Methodology

The site was largely open around the farm buildings but wooded over the fishponds and connecting channel. Consequently it was possible to survey the former with Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) equipment but the latter required survey by Total Station Theodolite (TST).

Across open areas detail was surveyed directly using Trimble R8 survey grade GNSS receivers working in Real Time Kinematic mode with differential data supplied by another R8 receiver configured as an on-site base station. The position of the base station had previously been adjusted to the National Grid Transformation OSTN15 via the Trimble VRS Now Network RTK delivery service. This uses the Ordnance Survey's GNSS correction network (OSNet) and gives a stated horizontal accuracy of +/- 0.010-0.015m per point, vertical accuracy being about half as precise.

Where wooded the survey method adopted was using a TST using a Trimble 5600 TST by taking radiating readings from each station. The fishponds were surveyed from a series of stations in sequence to form a closed loop or traverse. The traverse was based upon control established by GNSS (above) and surveyed directly to Ordnance Survey National Grid, later adjusted for errors using proprietary software. Overall accuracy is comparable to GPS (below), though unlike GPS, decreases with length of traverse and distance between surveyor and station.

The survey data was downloaded into proprietary software to process the field codes and the data transferred into AutoCAD software for editing and plotting for checking in the field. Corrections and some small areas of additional survey were undertaken by measuring in from known features using tapes. These were edited or added in AutoCAD.

## Description

The analytical earthwork survey of the grounds of Redlingfield Priory and fishponds recorded a multi-phased landscape which had not previously been studied. The following paragraphs are numbered to allow cross-referencing with Figure 4.

### The farm complex

As noted above the farm complex occupied an approximately rectangular area measuring approximately 210m north/south by 190m east/west. To the east of the farm complex was low ground, the valley floor; north of the entrance track and east of the farm buildings was a rough, recently ploughed area that was not surveyed as the ploughing had obscured any features present, to the south of the track was an area of very rough, heavily vegetated ground that also looked to have been ploughed at some point and which was also not surveyed due poor definition of the earthworks. South of the farm complex was a large ploughed arable field with a rough unploughed margin along its northern side. To the south-west of the

farm complex a track ran along this unploughed margin to the north of which was a second similar ploughed field. These two fields defined the southern and western extent of survey. A third recently ploughed arable field lay to the north of the farm again limiting survey in this direction.

Within this area, the farm complex could broadly be divided into four quadrants:

- The north-eastern; occupied by the church, listed barn, current farmhouse, yard, and some other derelict farm buildings separated from the other areas by a sinuous track and area of hard standing to the west and the main entrance track to the south (which extended 40m further to the east to meet the main road);
- The south-eastern; an open grassed area with a pond - a garden paddock associated with the house to the north and separated from the area to the east by a narrow bank and track;
- The south-western; a working area with barns and redundant agricultural buildings, a rough yard area, dumps, and a bonfire site;
- The north-western; an isolated grass area largely defined by ponds (or the vegetation growing adjacent to them) to the south, east and north-east and the channel leading to the fishponds to the north-west.

### *North-east*

The priory buildings were probably situated in this quarter, immediately south of the church, which was appropriated soon after its foundation for the use of the priory, and around the listed barn, which is thought to still contain some upstanding medieval structural remains.

1. The church and churchyard were separate from the rest of the farm complex and occupied a rectangular elevated area in the northeast of this quadrant defined to the south by a short, steep scarp which increased in height from the south-west corner (where there was a gate allowing access from the farm) to approximately 0.50m high at the south-east corner. The ground fell away markedly to the east of this (see [2] below) and though the level of the churchyard remained constant the east facing scarp was significantly higher as a result. This scarp decreased in height to the north but there was still a short steep rise to the path allowing public access to the church yard at its northeast corner.
2. A well-defined east facing scarp ran SSE from the corner of the churchyard, where the relationship was uncertain due to gully [6.b], as far as the earthworks associated with pond [4] which cut it. Although not particularly high, this scarp marked a clear transition from higher, better drained ground to the west to lower, wetter ground to the east. This scarp almost certainly formed a single feature with scarp [3] but was on a slightly different alignment to it, though this reflects the alignment of former arms projecting north and south from pond [4] depicted on the first edition 25 inch OS map of 1886 (based on a survey of 1884). A gully



recorded from APs also appeared to align with this scarp but ran slightly to the west. The slight discrepancy between the alignment of this feature and scarp [5] to the west suggest that this scarp is later and possibly that the pond/channels shown on the 1886 mapping was either secondary or had been remodelled at some point. Secondary scarps below the main scarp appeared to be related to the backfilling of the former pond arm and the ploughing of the area to the east.

3. To the south of pond [4] (below) was a scarp very similar to [2] and almost certainly originally part of a single feature. This scarp was stronger to the north broadening out and weakening to the south. A secondary scarp beneath the main scarp may have been related to the backfilling of a former pond arm (see [2] above) as it was not obviously related to the modern pond or ploughing to the east but was perhaps too strong for this.
  - a. A noticeable rise in the entrance track to the south was on the approximate line of [3] and may suggest a continuation or, perhaps more likely, that the steeper scarps to the north were formed by the modification of a natural fall to the flood plain of the stream now running along the ditch to the east.
4. Cutting scarp [2]/[3] was a north/south aligned pond with approximately parallel east and west sides (slightly narrowing to the south) with curved ends. It measured about 23m x about 7.4m and was formed of short steep slopes that had clearly been recently recut and which cut all surrounding features. Significant changes over time could be traced on historic maps and aerial photographs. The earliest depiction of the pond was on 1886 OS maps where it was shown to have been more sub-rectangular in shape with two broad arms extending north and south which may originally have been a narrower linear feature, or parts of a channel that served the pond. On 1973 OS vertical aerial photographs (OS/11938 V 91 25-APR-1973 and OS/11938 V 92 25-APR-1973) the shape depicted is closer to what has been surveyed. Parts of the north and south arms were still partially visible in a more eroded and less rectangular form. The west and part of the east side of the arms were still partially visible. The west edge comprised a long and moderately steep slope which lined up with the western side of the pond. On the northern side was a much subtler curved counterscarp which represented part of the original north and east side of the channel. The final infilling of the arms and the current form of the pond must result from work after this date, and probably within the last ten years or so. Short straight scarps to the east of the pond were related to the ploughing to the east.
5. To the west of scarps [2]/[3] and the west side of pond [4] was a single straight slight east facing scarp. This appeared to largely respect the alignment of scarps [2]/[3] though at the northern end the slightly more NNE alignment of [2] meant that it cut this scarp suggesting that the lower steeper scarp was later or had been eroded. It is possible that this scarp relates to an earlier boundary along this side of the site.
6. To the north-west of the listed stable a scarp fell away from the area of concrete yard and the path to the churchyard, no doubt the result of levelling up for the yard.

- a. To the south-west of this though was a fall visible within the surface of the yard itself suggestive of a larger underlying feature.
  - b. To the south of this, and west of the barn an east facing scarp was visible within the yard and the small lawn to the south. It is possible that this may have been related to [a], but the 1837 1 inch OS map appears to show a feature to the west of the barn, possibly a pond.
7. Running parallel to the southern side of the churchyard for over 50m was a north facing scarp which with [1] represented the southern side of an east/west gully also identified during the aerial survey (above). To the west this appeared to run beneath [6], to the east it had probably been cut by [2] and may have originally continued, perhaps relating to the gullies recorded to the east from APs. It seems likely that there was once a boundary ditch here.
8. To the south of the west half of [6.b] was a second, similar, north facing scarp. To the west this also appeared to run beneath [6], to the east, where there was a tree hollow, it gradually spread and diminished in height merging with an open northward fall that was too vague to be recorded.
  - a. Beyond this this scarp once again became better defined but still very slight, and there was the suggestion that this scarp might have been related to [5] forming a return.
9. Within the open ground to the south and west of the return suggested by [8.a] was a slight scarp defining a corner that aligned with the possible corner to the north-east perhaps supporting this suggestion. Both appeared to reflect the possible cloister seen on APs (above) and it seems likely that they relate to the priory.
10. Running around the east and north sides of the barn was a relatively short and shallow scarp that was about 0.20m high and fell away from the building. This may relate to the priory but did not quite align with other features and project north suggesting that it was secondary. That the western scarp of this feature apparently ran parallel to the eastern side of the square cloister feature identified during AP survey may be circumstantial as the barn itself shares this alignment. It is more likely to have been created by masonry collapsing from the barn walls and roof (fallen stone was visible at the time of survey) or be a negative feature resulting from erosion, by traffic around the barn for example.
11. To the south of this was a broad and generally uniform but low, north facing scarp that ran at right angles to [5] suggesting a relationship. This also aligned with the south end of the barn and the possible cloister recorded from APs (above) suggesting it may well be related to the monastic complex.
12. To the south of scarp [6] were slight, ill-defined earthworks with a clearer platform to the west. These are suggestive of demolition and/or potential preservation of some foundations of former buildings, perhaps a southern range associated with the cloister to the north.
13. To the east of this was an east facing scarp very similar to scarp [5] but which appeared to have a return to the west just south of [6], though it may have con-

tinued to it. It had been cut by gully [14] but it was more spread to the south of it. This may have been due to a different history here as a former boundary had divided the northern area from the southern on the approximately line of [14]. This scarp may also have been related to the monastic complex.

14. To the south was a straight shallow gully which ran from the brick garden wall east of the hall where there was an access chamber towards the south end of pond [4] where it cut scarps [13] and [5], and possibly [3]. This clearly marked the line of a service apparently recently backfilled in 1973.
15. To the west and immediate south of the small outbuilding east of the farmhouse was a short south-east facing scarp. This may have been related to [6.b] or the platform mentioned in [12] but this is highly uncertain and it is more likely to be recent.
16. To the west of [13] and south of [14] was a fairly straight east facing scarp with a sweeping westward return to the south. As with the southern part of [13] this was slight and had apparently been levelled. It is also possible that this scarp aligned with a scarp to the north of [14] though this was uncertain. Nevertheless, this further suggests that remains of the priory may extend into this apparently featureless area.
  - a. To the west again a very vague curving scarp defined a broad shallow hollow perhaps related to [15].
17. To the south a substantial yew hedge obscured everything beneath it though the top of a south facing scarp could clearly be seen running quite straight to its immediate north. The hedge made it impossible to determine the exact form of this slope or to see any variation along it but it seems likely that it formed a return at the south end of [3] and it may well have defined the southern extent of the monastic precinct. To the west the top could be seen to run on an more northerly alignment than the eastern part but for the reasons already mentioned it could not be determined if this related to hollow [16.a], the southern return of [15], or was simply the result of erosion.
  - a. A spur of material was recorded projecting to the east of the yew hedge but once again its relationship with features to the west could not be determined. On balance it was probably rather a late feature though.
18. A slight scarp ran away east from the spur mentioned above on approximately the same general alignment though curving very slightly to the south. This hints that the entrance track may have once run on a slightly different alignment to the straight route shown since the 19th century though this may be making too much of a relatively slight feature. North of this a small ridge was clearly associated with the recent ploughing.

To the west of the current farmhouse were further earthworks and it is worth reiterating that the current farmhouse and several associated outbuildings were only constructed in the 1870s. It is unclear what was on the site prior to this, other than the listed barn, which is depicted on the 1837 1 inch OS map immediately

to the south of the church. Nothing appears to be shown on the site of the current farmhouse but other buildings are shown to the south, and possibly to the west, in the other quadrants (see [28] for example).

19. To the northwest of the farmhouse a slight scarp forming a near right-angle was oriented very similarly to the house. To the south, a similar near right-angled scarp appeared to enclose the north-west corner of the farmhouse and continued south almost as far as the entrance track. Broadly speaking, the two north/south sections of these features aligned, and the two east west sections formed a fairly well defined ridge. To the north a slight, west facing counterscarp hinted that this feature may have been a ridge that originally continued further to the north. Similarly, a slight north facing scarp hinted that the ridge to the east may have continued west. A 1973 AP (OS/73093 V 91 25-APR-1973) shows a pale linear feature that aligned closely with the southern north/south scarp, though not so obviously the northern. It was unclear what this was as it showed a dog-tooth pattern with semi-regular pale blocks extending west from the main linear element but it seems likely to be a garden of some sort, perhaps a path (there are hints of a gap in the garden wall visible to the south) or low retaining wall. The east/west ridge would appear to be related to services as several access hatches were recorded to the east. It should be noted though that the ridge aligned with the southern gable end of the barn so might be earlier in origin. It may have been truncated on its south side by a later service recorded as a faint gully on the lawn to the west.
20. Running around the western side of the farmhouse garden and respecting the track was a shallow curvilinear gully. This probably represented a robber trench left by the removal of the west and southwest brick wall that previously surrounded the hall; this must have been after 1973 as it was visible on APs of this date. The southern and eastern sections were still standing and were surveyed.
21. To the south-east of the house a low mound apparently underlying the garden wall was probably related to beds either side of it. The southern scarp was rather stronger and had a northern return to the east probably related to levelling up the garden. Perhaps [17] once continued further west.

### *South-east*

To the south of the farm was a large grassed enclosure bounded by banks and ditches. This was well maintained and appeared to be associated with the farmhouse. The ground within this enclosure fell steadily from west to east.

22. To the south of the east/west aligned entrance track and forming the northern boundary of the southern field was a fairly narrow steep sided ditch. It was about 96.50m long and maintained a regular width of around 2.9m. The western end of the ditch curved to the southwest before terminating and the eastern end was cut by ditch [23]. In a few places there was standing water in the bottom of this ditch and in wet conditions this would no doubt have drained eastwards. A railway sleeper had been placed across the ditch to act as a bridge allowing direct access from the house into the paddock.

23. Truncating the eastern end of ditch [22] was a wider and deeper ditch of several different phases well represented on aerial photographs. To the east this continued the line of [22] running alongside the entrance track and into the substantial drain running north to the west of the public road. Along this section it was over 3m wide and up to 1.5m deep. It was crossed by a brick revetted bridge on a concrete pipe allowing access into the area to the south. Where the two ditches met, the later ditch turned through about 80° to run slightly west of south. Initially the ditch maintained the size of the eastern arm but began to narrow and decrease in depth, to about 1m. After about 40m a kink in its alignment possibly indicates the point at which the later recut ended. South of this the ditch continued for about 50m (giving a length for the north/south section of about 90m) before it turned through about 80° again to run just south of west. It was much thinner and shallower here reaching a depth of only about 0.30m and width of about 1.65m. About 35m west of the corner the ditch turned fractionally northwards and once again broadened out. It seems likely that this also represents a secondary cut as the APs show that the ditch originally ran on a more southerly line from this point (above). The south-west terminus could not be surveyed due to heavy vegetation restricting access.
24. Bordering the west side of the field was a short and relatively steep east facing slope topped by an intermittent bank about 55m in length. The southern end turned east before returning to the south, probably defining the footprint of a building shown here on the 1886 OS maps though the agreement was not exact and it might be associated with a later yard surface. These features formed the latest western boundary of the southern field (and for the purposes of this report the boundary between the two southern quadrants).
25. Around the north and east sides of a derelict building to the east of the southern dog-leg of [24] was a short and shallow scarp that formed the edge of a constructed level building platform which held the overlying concrete base.
26. To the east was a second curving, generally east-facing scarp. This was recorded during the AP mapping (above) and shown with a definite western return to the north, approximately parallel to [28], and to continue to the south of [23]. It would therefore appear to be relatively early.
27. To the north of these features was a slight south-facing scarp running WSW/ENE. When viewed with the dog-leg of [24], and the curving northern parts of [25] and [26] this appeared as a shallow gully, probably a track or path leading from the yard area to the west out into the enclosure. The AP transcription shows a sinuous gully here but the evidence recorded on the ground is more likely to be correct.
28. To the north of this was a better defined south-facing scarp running closer to east/west for 35m from [24], becoming slightly shorter and steeper as it did so. It then turned about 80° to run slightly east of north for about 20m before returning to the east again. Further scarps appeared to continue its line northwards but the southern section was rather shorter and the return was quite clear. It seems likely that this was the result of the works to the pond to the east truncating this



feature; some material may have been dumped around the pond margin and the machine used may have also eroded the bottom of the scarp. Overall this feature formed a broad platform with an almost right-angled corner and the 1837 1 inch OS map seems to show a building in this area. A gully recorded from APs appeared to run from the site of this building into the ditch to the south-east. This may have been a drain or sewer. There were a few ill defined hollows and raised areas on this platform but though these did not form coherent features they did suggest past activity.

29. Continuing the line of the northern return of [28] were two east-facing scarps, a slighter one above a steeper one.
30. To the north of these a scarp curved around from the north-east across the line of [29] and then curved back to the north-east. This appeared to form a raised irregular platform and the 1837 map again shows a building here, immediately to the south of the entrance track. It seems that the pre-1875 farmyard lay in this area.
31. To the west a modern service was visible as a narrow shallow gully running east from about halfway along [24]. This aligned with the northern return of [28] and may in part have created it.
32. The lower, eastern part of the enclosure was dominated by an 'L' shaped pond ('Pond 1' above). This had clearly been recently re-cut (possibly at the same time as pond [4] to the north) as its sides were uniform and very steep around the entire perimeter. The longer north and east sides measured about 36.60m and about 27.20m respectively. The southern arm of this pond appears to be shown on 1886 OS maps but apparently not on the 1837 1 inch map.
33. Just to the northeast of pond [32] was a shallow, sub-circular hollow with irregular sides which measured about 9.6m by about 6.8m. To the south it ran into an area of rough ground and its full extent and any relationship to other features could not be determined.

It is surprising that no sign of several features recorded from APs in this area was seen during the survey. These comprised a short gully 5-10m south of [22], a gully and bank to the south of this running right across the enclosure east from [24] to join with [23] and a large spread mound to the north of the pond (though there was a hint of a north facing scarp in approximately the right location this was very vague). The last is perhaps easiest to explain as it may have been removed or levelled at the time the pond was remodelled, perhaps it was spread over the field masking smaller features or deliberately used to back fill larger ones.

### *South-west*

As noted above this was a working area dominated by a large, open sided barn used for storing hay bales, probably of mid-20th century date, and a second more modern enclosed barn with a working yard between the two.

34. In the south-west of this quadrant many of the earthworks recorded were clearly relatively recent; there were numerous vehicle tracks, several irregular mounds

and other recent dumps of material and a large area used for burning rubbish. To the east of this were several derelict buildings, dumped material and dense vegetation at the time of survey. The 1837 map suggests that this area lay beyond the farm enclosures at this time.

35. North of this was an east facing scarp running NNW/SSE for at least 25m; it was lost to modern works to the north and in a dense area of scrub to the south. This would appear to align closely with the east side of the western range of a group of buildings shown on the 1886 OS maps as grey (of wood or iron construction, Oliver 2013, 90) and still visible on 1940s aerial photographs. By 1973 this range had been removed though probably fairly recently as the footprint was still faintly visible on the APs and other elements survived. The area of hard standing here was also visible on the 1973 APs.
36. To the SW of this was a hollow apparently formed by a relatively modern track but the eastern side of this, and a return to east, would appear to also align with the south-west corner of the building mentioned above so the relationship with the track may be coincidental.
37. North of this was an enclosed barn or vehicle shed of uncertain purpose with extensive levelling and drainage works immediately around it, most notably to the south. This must have been constructed after the 1973 APs as it was not visible on these.
  - a. These later works may have cut an earlier raised area represented by a curving, generally south facing scarp but this was uncertain.
38. To the east two short sections of north facing scarp were visible near tracks where the vegetation was lower. These appeared to align with one another and may have formed a continuous scarp although this could not be seen due dense vegetation growth. They appear to mark the line of the northern range of buildings mentioned in [35].
39. To the immediate north-west of the enclosed barn was a heavily vegetated area within which was an overgrown and silted up pond. To the immediate east of this was an irregular approximately semi-circular depression defined by scarps to north east and south. The north and south scarps continue westwards into the vegetation, however, the full extent of the remains were not recorded due to the density of the vegetation. This would appear to be the remains of the original eastern end of the pond which was shown on 1886 OS maps to have been around double the size of the pond extant at the time of survey.
40. Running east from [38] was a fairly broad and shallow gully about 3.8m wide which ran on a similar ENE/WSW alignment to that of ditch [22] to the east. At the eastern end the gully widened to about 7.8m just before the track, perhaps due to vehicle erosion. This may represent a field boundary first visible on the 1886 OS maps but it may be that the actual boundary ran to the immediate north and that this was a ditch running to its south. Given the topography this may also have drained the pond to the west eastwards into [22], [23] and eventually the main roadside ditch. It would appear to be secondary to the pond howev-

er and perhaps post-dated its reduction in size as it appeared to overlie [38]. This might however be the conflation of two features. The north facing scarp to the south could be related to the foundations of the barn to the south, the south facing scarp to the north to the field boundary described above. If so this might explain the more marked deviation of the southern scarp around the east end of the building base.

41. To the north of [38] and the west end of [40] was a shallow sub-circular hollow about 10.85 wide which ran underneath the southern bank of pond [44]. It is possible that this marked the site of a building shown on the 1837 1 inch OS map but at that scale this can only be a tentative suggestion.
42. To the south-east was a more irregular hollow with slightly steeper sides. It was hard to relate this to other features but in part it seemed to form a low ridge with the west end of [40] and it is possible that this was in part a disturbed hedge bank and another hollow or gully to the north of this that appeared to be related due to erosion.
43. To the north of [40] and approximately parallel to it was a broad, moderate, south facing scarp. To the east this curved slightly to the north as it neared the farm track to the west of the house; probably due to vehicle damage and it is possible that it was cut by [20] suggesting it predated the current house. It is also possible that this scarp aligned with scarp [17] further to the east thought to mark the southern limit of the precinct, although this is not exact. Perhaps a track ran through this area at some time. To the west it appeared that a platform had been constructed against the scarp as there were hints, in the form of a very slight scarp that the scarp to the east continued west. Beyond this these features appeared to be overlain by the bank around [44].

### *North-east*

44. A large sub-rectangular pond measuring about 45m by about 26m dominated the south-west part of this quadrant. This was oriented slightly south of west to slightly north of east with straight south, west and north sides with rounded corners between. The east end was more curved with a slight point. Within the pond was an off-centre, sub-rectangular island. Around roughly 2/3 of the east side and the south and west sides was a continuous bank with short, steep eternal scarps, increasing in height to the south where the ground was lower to the south-west of [43]. The interior slope of the raised bank ran directly into the pond but for most of its length dense scrubby vegetation made it impossible to survey. In contrast the north and north-east sides did not have a surrounding raised bank but the slope fell similarly steeply straight into the pond. It seemed highly likely that the pond had been relatively recently remodelled, or at least cleared and the material dumped to form the enclosing bank. The 1886 OS maps depict this pond as a broad L-shape with the south arm roughly corresponding with the area of the pond to the south of the island and the west arm the area to the west of it, though the current pond would appear to have been widened, particularly to the west. Another rectangular east/west pond lay to the north-west, in the currently ploughed field; no sign of this was noted.

The 1837 1 inch OS map appears to show two buildings here; they are clearly darker than the 'L' shaped pond to the south. However, these two buildings appear to be in the same location as the southern arm of the 'L' shaped pond and the pond to the north-west so it seems likely that this is an error, either of depiction or interpretation. If so then the western arm of the L shaped pond was added sometime between 1837 and 1884. The area north and east of the island must have been added recently as they are not visible on the 1973 APs. It seems likely that the extension of the pond incidentally resulted in the formation of the island rather than it being deliberately constructed.

45. To the north-east of pond [44] was another pond, this sub-oval measuring about 23.3m x 14m and oriented north/south with a straighter eastern side. A broad arm, about 6m wide, extended north-west from the west side of this pond for about 30m and then turned to run west for about 25m. The west side of the pond, and most of the sides of the arm had short steep scarps running directly into the water, similar to those noted for [44] but not so high. To the east of the arm and along the north side of the pond was a high bank, also similar to that noted above but clearly the result of levelling for a yard surface to the north/east (see [53] below) and considerably scrappier in its make-up. This was clearly secondary and had impinged on the arm and pond narrowing the former to about 4m and altering the latter. The eastern side had a much shallower scarp immediately adjacent to the pond and an irregular rise beyond that could not be easily depicted due to farm buildings that were located here. This pond and associated arm are clearly shown on the 1886 OS maps although the eastern side appears to have run more north/south and the southern side to have been broader so it looks as though the pond has been partially filled to the south-east. They also appear to be depicted in much the same form on the 1837 1 inch OS map. They may have been older. That the arm of the pond clearly connected it with channel [55] suggests it may have been a similar date but as the pond and arm retain water today so must be self-sustaining, whereas [55] does not, it is possible that the pond itself was even earlier.
46. A broad shallow gully ran from the north-east of [44] to the south-west of [45], at the point where the two ponds above were at their closest. This would appear to suggest a former broad gully connected the two though no evidence for this was seen on any mapping or APs. A field boundary was shown to the immediate north on the 1886 OS maps and it could be that this was a ditch associated with this rather than intended to connect the two ponds. Within this broad gully two short narrow steep sided gullies extended north-east from [44] and south-west from [45] which very likely formed a narrow connecting channel between the two. It is possible that the broader gully was the result of erosion into the narrower but the two were on slightly different orientations so perhaps this was not the case.
47. East of [45] was a low ridge of material. This was very probably associated with the current building and yard to the immediate south-west.
48. Running north from [44] along the western edge of the survey area was a broad, slight, west facing scarp with a shorter, steeper west facing scarp beneath. The

latter was likely to be the product of the ploughing of the field to the west which incidentally reduced the ground level here slightly. The upper scarp was slightly sinuous and did not align exactly with the lower so may not have originated in the same way, though the simplest explanation is probably an earlier period of ploughing.

49. In the centre of the grass area to the east was a shallow, slightly sinuous gully which was broadly on an east/west alignment. This cannot be readily explained.
50. To the south of this was a very slight, generally north facing scarp which roughly paralleled the northern edge of pond [44] about 5.5m to the south. To the north of this was a second similar, though slightly stronger, scarp. Together they defined an area of higher ground, most likely a spread of material from the time the pond was extended to the north-east.
51. To the north, between the end of the arm running away from pond [45] and the channel running towards the fishponds, was a short broad gully. To the south the scarp into the pond arm was quite irregular and to the north material had clearly collapsed into the channel making it narrower and rather irregular. It was clear that the pond arm had formerly connected with the channel and that this area had been rather crudely filled in, presumable to allow access as vehicle tracks were visible at the time of survey.
52. In area to the east of this, and north of the pond arm, were an irregular dumped mound, a slightly more regular hollow and several scarps. Early OS maps clearly show that the channel to the fishponds formerly extended further east than was seen during the survey and it is likely that many of these scarps relate to the back filling of this part of it and subsequent levelling and dumping activity during the 20th century. In particular, the hollow appears to mark the location of a short southward return at the east end of the former channel shown on the 1886 maps.
53. To the south/east of this area was a large dump of material to the north of the yard mentioned in [45] above. This was highly irregular and incorporated earth, rubble and other debris. It was clearly modern and appeared to relate to modern agricultural activity and clearance of the yard area to the south.
54. To the north-east of this was the terminus of the ditch associated with the east/west field boundary north of the church. From the point immediately west of the churchyard where the orientation changes slightly (shown in the field boundary on the 1886 OS maps) the ditch seems to have been widened by cutting back the southern side. The 1940s APs appear to show a small building, wall or yard in this area so it is likely that this widening is more recent, perhaps in the early 1970s; some disturbance is visible on the 1973 APs. The western terminus of this widened area appeared to have had a service inserted and to have been filled in, a low hollow extending about 4m to the west was recorded as a shallow semi-circular scarp. The 1940s APs also suggest that the earlier narrow ditch may have extended further west again, perhaps for another 6m or so. At this point a slight, east facing, north/south scarp was recorded which might be related to a northward turn in this boundary shown on the 1886 OS maps.



## The fishponds

The fishponds lay about 250m to the WNW of the current farm house, separated from the farm complex by a gap of about 125m with ploughed fields to the north and south of a connecting channel.

55. As already noted an 'L' shaped channel ran from the north-west corner of the farm complex to the fishponds, initially running WSW for about 140m then turning exactly at right angles to the NNW, along the eastern side of the fishponds (this arm will be discussed in more detail below; see [55]). The channel was formed of steep, regular scarps, symmetrical to either side. The eastern arm was quite uniform in width though this generally increased slightly from about 8.3m near the ENE terminus to 10.2m close to the WSW corner and also narrowed slightly in the centre. This arm also increased in depth from about 1.3m in the NNW to about 1.8m near the WSW corner though the bottom had clearly silted up and this is unlikely to be the original depth. South of the fishponds, the first 50m of the northern arm was a fairly uniform 9.2m wide and about 2m deep. North of this though it changed character somewhat, almost becoming a channel only in name as the western side largely disappeared where it was joined by gully [66] and then ran across the open eastern ends of ponds [61] and [62]. The eastern side however continued, though from the point where gully [66] entered from the west its orientation shifted a little to the west and then curved very slightly back northwards before turning back westwards again after about 60m (see [58]). Since this deviation seemed to relate to features to the west it is possible that it may have arisen from the adaptation of existing features. It was notable however that the eastern side of the northern arm of [56] continued to be remarkably straight and did not reflect the deviations to the west. This channel has been described as a leat but it is unlikely that this is so. Although the top of the eastern arm fell from about 50m OD near the WSW corner to about 49.4mOD at its ENE terminus, this is negligible over 140m and more to the point the northern arm also fell away by a similar amount northwards, if not more. There is no evidence that water ever entered the system at the corner of this channel and it is difficult therefore to see how it could have carried water in either direction; with the overall topography it seems likely that the existing situation where water enters the pond system at the eastern corner and leaves it at the northern may well reflect the original flows. In addition the only feature it could have supplied is pond [45] and this is actually slightly higher than the east end of the channel so would have drained into it. The channel would also appear to be much larger than would have been necessary were it simply a leat and if it was intended to be purely functional other more straightforward solutions could have been employed.

- a. As noted in [51] and [52] above, the eastern terminus had seen a lot of modification in modern times. There was a large amount of deposited dumped material visible on the southern side which had likely slumped in from when the connection to pond [44] was filled in and the channel had also been shortened by about 25m, leaving an area of irregular earthworks to the east.

- b. On the inside of the southwest corner was evidence of erosion and the opposite external corner was obscured by tree growth but there were also signs of erosion to the immediate east of this. This was likely caused by foot traffic and possibly small vehicles such as dirt or quad bikes using the corner to allow easier movement. This was a feature seen in several places.
56. Running along the inner side of the L shaped channel, to the north of the eastern arm and east of the northern arm, was a wide flat topped bank defined by channel [55] on one side and a steep scarp falling directly into a field boundary ditch to the other. The eastern arm ran along the natural fall and its surface was at a very similar level to the ground to the south of [55], effectively it was a terrace. The northern arm (including [60]) ran across a very wide shallow valley and could be seen as a causeway crossing this, though it was probably unnecessary. The surface of this bank was generally flat and level though there was a clear drop in elevation of about 0.30m between the eastern and northern arms at the turn to the north. The bank was also generally straight and of a uniform width of about 7.25m (approx 24 feet or 8 yards). Although there were minor scarps along much of this bank falling away into the channel and ditch to either side it appeared to have been constructed deliberately to provide a broad level surface rather than simply being a retaining dam for the channel and ponds. If it was simply intended to be a functional dam it was certainly 'over-engineered' and along the eastern arm at least probably unnecessary.
- a. To the east, a north facing scarp suggested that the causeway had curved southwards to run almost due east towards [54] though a shorter south facing scarp suggested a straighter alignment. Historic maps suggest the latter is closer to the original layout.
    - b. To the east of the north end of [a] a short steep ramp led ENE into the field to the east crossing the ditch alongside. This appeared to be secondary but the orientation and form of [56] changed markedly to the north of this so it may be of some age.
57. The field ditch noted above, running along the inside of [56], appeared to be straighter and more uniform than [56] and was very probably secondary to it or had been recut in the modern era. At the east end of the south arm of this ditch a further fall away from the ditch towards the north was observed. This suggests that the ditch may have been secondary and cut into a rather more moderate fall from [56]. This could be the result of ploughing though it was rather strong.
58. At a point 106m from the internal corner of [55], opposite the bank between ponds [62] and [63] (and north of ramp [56.b]), the nature of [55] (and [56]) changed noticeably. It changed its orientation slightly to run a little closer to north-west than NNW, became slightly less regular in plan, and broadened out to 11-12m in width. Its base was also wider and considerably wetter but this was predominantly topographic; this area was the lowest of the whole complex. The south-west and north-east scarps were fairly uniform and parallel, though that section adjacent to pond [63] was rather lower and more irregular, probably be-

cause it was more vulnerable to erosion. There was also a slight deviation in the north-east scarp related to. The north-west scarp, forming the square ended terminus, was straight and clearly secondary, overlying the other two scarps here.

59. To the north of [58] earthwork evidence suggests that it originally continued further in this direction. As already noted the scarp forming its current terminus was secondary. North-west of this a short moderate scarp curved around indicating that it may have originally had a more rounded terminus about 6m further on. Another west facing scarp ran NNW, apparently continuing the line of the north-east scarp of [58]/south-west side of [60], and there was a hint of a scarp to the south-west falling to the north-east. This suggests that it continued further to the north-west and would have connected to [65]. This is supported by the 1886 OS maps which show a very narrow causeway or more probably a footbridge. This area therefore appears to have been filled in, presumably to allow vehicle access from [60]. It seems likely that this led to the need to insert the modern concrete drain in the north-east end of [65] and so is probably of a similar recent date.
60. In parallel with [58], the nature of [56] also changed north of the same point. It changed its alignment and narrowed noticeably, though this was apparently due to the orientation of the field drain to the east which was probably secondary and may have been further affected by the insertion of the concrete pipe draining [65]. Immediately to the north a curving north-west facing scarp falling to the level of the field to the north marking the end of this feature. There was no sign of any continuation and it did not appear to have been truncated by recent activity. It was noticeable that by this point the surface of the field to the north-east was also at the same level obviating the need for any elevated bank/causeway.
  - a. Towards the south a noticeable gully crossed the surface of [60] that aligned with a deviation in the line of the adjacent scarp of [58] and a much more significant cut back in the line of the ditch to the north-east. This was very probably due to the presence of a drain from [58], the lowest point within the fishpond complex, running north-east into the ditch. Although a modern concrete pipe was visible this could have been secondary and the fairly substantial gully above (in contrast to the inserted pipe to the north) suggests that an outfall here may once have been larger and of some age, perhaps originally an open gully prior to the construction of [56]/[60].
61. The southernmost pond in the main group of three was sub-rectangular, measured about 52m by about 13m (excluding [55] to the north-east), and was orientated WSW-ENE. It had sides formed of fairly steep uniform scarps with the long sides (NNW and SSE) being very slightly curved. The eastern end opened directly onto the northern arm of channel [55] but there was no clear transition between the two and no sign of any former division. It had an average depth of about 1.2m, slightly deeper to the east, and a flat silty base so was probably originally deeper. In both of the western corners was evidence of erosion caused by foot and light vehicle traffic, particularly to the south-west where there was also evidence of erosion by traffic crossing ditch [66].

62. The middle pond was not as regular in plan as pond [61] but was otherwise similar with a length of about 53m, depth of about 1.3m, fairly steep uniform sides, flat silty bottom and east end open to [55]. Although their west ends aligned this pond's south side was more curved and initially ran more to the north creating a flat topped bank between the two that was narrower to the west than the east. Its north side was much straighter and parallel to [63] which was oriented closer to south-west/north-east; as a result this pond increased in width from about 14m at its west end to about 22m in the east. Here, there was a short moderate scarp in the base, probably caused by erosion of the silts to the east rather than marking a clear division between the two areas as there was no other evidence for this. In the northeast corner was an opening into pond [63], described below.
63. The northern pond was rectangular in plan with straight, parallel sides, measuring about 54m by 19.5m and an average depth of about 1.3m. Although much more regular in plan than [61] and [62], it was otherwise similar with steep uniform sides and a level silty base. Once again there was evidence of erosion in the corners caused by footfall. In contrast with [61] and [62] this pond did not open onto [55]/[58]. Between the two was a narrow rather irregular ridge that was on a slightly different orientation to the other scarps defining this pond with its northern end apparently projecting slightly into [58]. It was difficult to say if this was the result of being vulnerable to erosion or because it was secondary. As noted above the south side of this pond was parallel with the north side of [62] and between the two was a uniform, well-defined ridge with a flat top about 3m wide, which contrasted with the much more irregular ridge to the north-east. This ridge stopped about 7m from the south-east corner leaving an opening connecting this pond with [62] to the south. The terminus of the ridge between the two was uniform and did not appear to have been truncated so the opening may have been original. Shallow scarps to north and south formed a low ridge around 8.3m wide across the opening suggesting that it might be secondary though. A narrow modern gully had been cut through this feature presumably to drain the area to the north, which was noticeably wetter than elsewhere, suggesting that the bank itself was impermeable and supporting the latter interpretation.
64. Running along the top of much of the northern side of [63] was a low spread bank. This had no relationships with any other features and it seems likely that it was composed of material dredged from the pond.
65. Making up the northern side of the triangular enclosure around the ponds was a rather sinuous ditch approximately 185m in length. Initially this ran just east of north for about 45m then turned to run more to the north-east for about 100m before turning to the ENE. Apart from the last 35m or so it was quite uniform with steep scarps and a consistent width of about 6m and depth of about 1.2m. The northern end was wider and deeper, up to about 10m wide by up to 1.5m deep with a shallow scarp above a steeper cut which was particularly prominent to the north. The form of this area as shown on the 1886 OS map would appear to reflect the steeper scarp with a right angled dog leg south in the northern scarp and a more gradual deviation south in the southern. It is unknown why the ditch took this form here. At the time of survey, water entered this ditch through a modern concrete pipe from a field boundary ditch running in from the south-

west and then flowed north-east along it into the perpendicular ditch running alongside [60], again through another modern concrete pipe (inlet/outlet indicated by blue arrows on Figure 4). A mound of dumped material to the immediate south was recent and probably associated with the insertion of the latter pipe. Topographically the input point seems likely to be original as the field ditch runs along the approximate bottom of a broad shallow valley. The output however was not necessarily the lowest point in the complex, the picture being obscured by the insertion of the modern pipe and the very flat land to the east; the drain outlet at [60.a] was at a very similar elevation and would have effectively drained ditch [65] before the insertion of causeway [59]. Overall this feature was rather more substantial than field boundary ditches seen elsewhere and can perhaps be regarded as a by-pass channel.

- a. In two places a slight counterscarp falling away to the east/south-east from the ditch creating a slight bank was seen and there were suggestions of similar scarps between the two recorded sections though deep leaf litter accumulations made this uncertain. It was thought that this might indicate that a hedge had once run along the south side of this ditch. It is possible though that these scarps relate to features that appear to underlie the banks around pond [67] ([68] to [71]) as there was no evidence of similar scarps to the north-east of [69].

66. Forming the south side of the enclosure around the ponds was a second ditch approximately 140m in length that ran from a junction with [65] in the west to [55] in the east. The western section ran quite straight for about 85m, a little to the north of ENE and was a bit more irregular than [65] varying in width between 6m and 8m. There were signs that this section had been modified. The southern side showed a distinct change in orientation about 45m from the junction with [65], whereas the northern side ran on a much straighter line, or at least the top of the fall into the ditch did, the base seemed to reflect the change in orientation seen in the southern side. This appeared to be associated with an area of higher ground thought to be the result of dumping of material associated with the creation of pond [67] and it seems likely that dumped material had slumped into the ditch and been 'tidied' resulting in the straight alignment seen. The eastern section, from a point adjacent to the south-west corner of [61], it turned to run more to the south of ENE for a further 55m and along this stretch it was more consistent in form and width (about 7.5m), apart from where it broadened out in two places, apparently the result of erosion by traffic across the ditch as noted elsewhere. The difference in height between the two ditches was slight and in high flow conditions it is likely that water would run along both ditches. This seems to be the case as along much of the eastern half of [66] a smaller channel had been cut (or perhaps had eroded) into the base of the larger ditch carrying water into [55] and then northwards. The junction with [55] was also open but no evidence for any recut or any other sign of modifications, other than the channel in the base, was seen.

From the above it can be seen that the two ditches defining the enclosure around the pond were rather different in character; the northern more regular and generally narrower than the southern. The uniformity of [65] suggests that it may



be more recent as does the current form of the junction encouraging flow along it rather than [66], and the lack of any direct relationship between [65] and the rest of the complex, unlike [66] which seems to reflect [61], provides some support for this suggestion.

67. Immediately to the west of the three ponds described above, within the angle between the ditches to north and south, was another pond that retained water at the time of survey, within which was an inaccessible island. The pond was tear-drop shaped, with a pointed tip to the south-west measuring about 57m along its long axis and about 34m across. Around most of it was a broad, well defined bank up to about 6.5m wide but only about 0.3m high. To the south the bank was not visible but the general area was raised so material may have just been spread more broadly, as far as the top of ditch [66], so no counterscarp would be seen. This bank did not appear to be necessary to retain water and was probably spoil from the excavation of the pond. The pond plan appeared to conform to surrounding features and the earthworks were well defined suggesting a recent origin for this feature. The ponds have frequently been surrounded by woodland so little can be seen on 1940s APs but the 1957 OS maps do not depict it. By 1973 however, APs (such as OS\_11938 V 92 25-APR-1973) show a scrubby earthwork with the shape of this pond, though without any water and the 1984 OS mapping shows the enclosing earthwork in the current form but the water filled area appears as a small oval within the north-east of this. This would appear to be a post Second World War feature but of uncertain date.
68. Due east of the pond was a low triangular area defined to the south-east and north-west by a slight, inward facing 'L' shaped scarp that appeared to respect ditch [66] and pond [61]. To the north and east the bank of pond [67] and scarps to the WSW also probably associated with this pond, overlay these scarps and defined the other side of the triangle. It seems highly likely that the pond bank was overlying an earlier feature, possibly the corner of a former enclosure.
69. To the WNW of this was a slightly stronger and longer south-west facing scarp. This appeared to align with the WSW facing part of [68] and appeared to define a similar triangular hollow though this did not have a direct relationship with the pond bank and petered out to the north, perhaps supporting the secondary date for ditch [65] though there was evidence of light vehicle traffic in this area so a return may simply have been lost. This did not have the close relationship with [63] seen between [68] and [61] to the south.
70. A very short length of ENE facing scarp to the west was also recorded that appeared to run beneath the outer bank of [67] and may have been cut by [65] or overlain by the possible associated bank [65.a]. This may also represent an earlier feature underlying the pond.
71. Between [68] and [69] was a slightly deeper hollow that appeared to cut the longer scarp implied by their alignment. It was defined by straight scarps to north and south, broadly continuing the lines of the north and south sides of pond [62], which appeared to run beneath the outer scarp of [67]. That to the north seemed to cut [69] and that to the south had no visible relationship to [68] which would

have been lost beneath the overlying earthwork. The impression was that this was a broad shallow gully, probably later than the enclosure suggested by [68] and [69], but as only small parts of any of these features was visible this is a very tentative suggestion. It seems clear though that the creation of [67] has obscured earlier earthworks of whatever form.

72. Within the corner formed by [66] and [55] were some small ridges and gullies, more than likely created by ploughing prior to the planting of saplings in the late 90s.





Figure 4 –Earthworks around Redlingfield Hall and The Leys based on a survey undertaken January 2017, 1:1500 at A3, note that the pond complex and channel linking this area with the farm was heavily vegetated – this has not been shown for clarity (© Historic England, Modern Ordnance Survey mapping: © Crown Copyright and database right 2017. All rights reserved. Ordnance Survey Licence number 100024900.)





## DISCUSSION

### The medieval priory

In theory most monastic establishments were laid out according to a standard plan, which varied from order to order. It has been suggested that most nunneries adopted a modified Benedictine plan (Gilchrist 1989, 255). In Britain, this was based around a cloister with the church to the north. To the west was the chapter house immediately south of the church, with a first floor dormitory to the south of this over a series of rooms used for various purposes such as a parlour, warming room, novices' room, and a rere-dorter (latrine block) off this, usually as far from the church as possible. Accommodation for the abbot/prior and visitors usually lay on the west side of the cloister and the refectory (frater) on the south side with the kitchen further to the south, at least partially detached, presumably for safety. Beyond the main complex were other buildings such as the infirmary and an outer courtyard usually lay to the west, the whole enclosed within a precinct entered through a gatehouse (Greene 1992, 13-14). The wider estate attached to the monastery was also of vital importance as monastic houses were expected to be self-supporting, as laid down by St Benedict in about 520 (Bond 1989, 84). Consequently another key element was the home grange which was commonly adjacent to the monastic precinct and from which the demesne was farmed and often the wider estate managed (Moorhouse 1989, 39).

The application of such a model to nunneries should be undertaken with caution though; they should probably not be viewed through the lens of male monasticism (Gilchrist 1989, 251). As women in a militaristic feudal society prioresses had little status and, due to the teachings of St Paul, the prayers of nuns were considered of lesser value than those of monks. Consequently they received little in the way of endowments. 'Nearly all the 80 post-conquest Benedictine nunneries were small in scale, poorly endowed and lurching from one financial crisis to another, perhaps also beset by scandal' (Butler 1989, 3). All of this would appear to be true of Redlingfield, though the scandals can be set aside; of primary consideration here are the size of the establishment and its resources as these would have had most impact on the physical layout and development of the site.

Monasteries founded on previously unoccupied sites would have begun with temporary structures gradually replaced, probably initially in timber followed by stone as finances allowed, the church taking priority (Green 1992, 58-60). In poorly-endowed establishments this could be a long drawn out process; the monks of Sandwell Priory in the West Midlands took about 150 years 'to provide the ranges required by their rule and even then on a very basic model' (Coppack 2006, 92, Fig 55). In nunneries this process may have been even more tortuous; 'The poverty of nuns ... was expressed in either the permanent presence of wooden structures or the piecemeal development of plans' (Gilchrist 1989, 256). There may have been something of this at Redlingfield but it was founded with the whole manor, including the church, by the daughter of the holder and her husband, perhaps to provide for their daughter who seems to have been the first prioress (Page 1907, 83, 85). As such it seems likely that the site of the priory may have been determined by the location

of the church, and perhaps it made use of an existing manorial complex; it may not have initially been as poorly provided for as some nunneries. From this point on though, its limited income would have meant that it probably developed very slowly, if at all, before the late 14th century when its finances began to improve (above). It seems likely that it was only for the last 150 years or so of its life that Redlingfield was able to afford anything but the most basic provision though there may still have been little change; 'Even the richer nunneries reveal an absence of building work carried out after a nunnery's initial foundation' (Gilchrist 1989, 256).

For most small nunneries the customary size was 12 nuns under a prioress (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 251). This appears to have been the presumption at Redlingfield as the prioress admitted during the 1427 inquiry that she was at fault because 'there should have been thirteen nuns, but there were only nine' (Page 1907, 83). It appears that Redlingfield never had this full complement: nine nuns were recorded in 1381, 1427, and 1526, ten in 1514, 1520, and 1532, and only seven in 1536 (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 264). It has been suggested that this was because poorly endowed houses could not support the full complement of nuns (*ibid*, 251) and implies that Redlingfield was always poor. This was very probably the case early in its early history as it was exempted in the taxations of 1254 and 1291 probably 'on the ground of exceptional poverty' (Page 1907, 83) and it was awarded a license to acquire lands in 1343, perhaps a bid to relieve the situation. No land was acquired against this license until 1381 and in 1383 another license was obtained suggesting little improvement, and although further small grants were obtained this may not have made much difference as the number of nuns remained low. In 1535 though the priory had an annual income of just over £81 which compares to an average of all the nunnery incomes listed by Knowles and Hadcock (1971, 253-5) of something over £114 (though this was biased by a few large values and the median value of £45 might be more representative). By the time of its dissolution then Redlingfield appears to have been a small nunnery with a middling income but it should be recalled that nunneries were usually very much poorer than male houses.

The total size of the priory was likely to have been larger than the population of nuns suggests. Nuns were subject to numerous liturgical restrictions so male priests were required to administer the mass, receive vows, hear confession and so on (Gilchrist 1989, 253), though this was not always the case: 'in the lists of inmates of nunneries some nuns' names were accompanied by the name "chaplain", for example at ... Redlingfield ... Clearly certain nuns were recognised as fulfilling a liturgical role in their communities' (Gilchrist 1994, 20). In addition lay brothers were attached to many nunneries to do the heavy work and after the mid-14th century they were replaced by paid servants (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 251). The most detailed record of these additional members of the Redlingfield community is from the 1536 valuation, at which time there were only 7 nuns but also 2 priests and 21 servants (Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 264) a total of 40 people but with the imminent dissolution this may be a reduced figure. At some time there was probably also a school at the site swelling numbers further; in 1514 the bishop ordered that the boys (probably under nine years old) should not sleep in the dormitory with the nuns (Page 1907, 84 & fn 2, Knowles and Hadcock 1971, 264). A typical community of perhaps 50-60 seems a reasonable estimate, though most probably worked the

home grange rather than residing within the precinct. It is worth noting that at the dissolution payments to 113 servants was recorded, though many of these may well have worked on other holdings or only occasionally.

Elements of Redlingfield Priory mentioned in the historical sources, mainly the 1427 and 1514 inquiries, include the church (pre-existing but included in the foundation), the chapter house (where the 1427 inquiry took place), dormitory, a private chamber, refectory, and probably a small hall. The lack of a proper infirmary was mentioned in 1514 but the nuns were ordered to put it to its proper use so it may have been present (Page 1907, 84). The 1536 inventory (Haslewood 1892, 95-8) listed the church altar, choir, vestry and Our Lady's Chapel, the new chamber, next chamber, white chamber, servant's chamber and Master Donstone's chamber, the hall, parlour, buttery and pantry (itemised together), kitchen, and the bake house and brew house (also itemised as one) and under this a mill house and an old horse mill so perhaps they were associated. There was little of value listed in any of these, the two largest items by some way being the Cattle (livestock) valued at £11 14s and the Corn (crops) valued at £11 16s. Several omissions in the 1536 inventory seem surprising; the chapter house, dormitory, refectory and infirmary are all missing but perhaps they simply contained nothing of value or that belonged to the priory. Alternatively, they may have been remodelled, the chambers could have been within the former dormitory for example and the hall might have been the chapterhouse. This may be indicative of a process where 'neglect of the frater in favour of several private messes ... developed into segregated households within the nunnery ... accompanied by the encroachment of breadhouses, breweries and dairies onto the cloisters ... By the 16th century the smaller nunneries took on a domestic appearance suggestive of their gradual secularisation ... the cloister format of monastic architecture had been rejected' (Gilchrist 1989, 256). This certainly fits the evidence at Redlingfield and the inspection of 1514 underscores this with the complaint that the refectory was not being used for meals but other purposes (Page 1907, 84).

To summarise the elements probably present at the dissolution:

- Church (altar, choir, vestry, Lady Chapel)
- New chamber, next chamber, white chamber, servant's chamber, Master Donstone's chamber (possibly constructed within the Dormitory; mentioned 1427, 1514)
- The hall (the chapter house or refectory?)
- Parlour, buttery, pantry (beneath the dormitory or within the refectory?), kitchen
- Bake house, brew house (sound like separate buildings)
- Mill house and an old horse mill
- [Chapter house; 1427]
- [Refectory; 1427, 1514]
- [Infirmary; implied in 1514, presumed present by 1520]

In 1343 the estate income comprised tithes from corn, wool and lambs worth 2 marks a year plus 40 acres of land (presumably in demesne) worth 14s 4d. In over two centuries since its foundation it looks as though the priory had received no further endowments and this very low income was apparently being used to support

the claim for a license to acquire more property. In 1381 a third of the manors of Hickling (in north-east Norfolk, about 70km away) and Rishangles (3 or 4 km to the west) worth £7 13s 4d were added to this (Page 1907, 83), perhaps raising the income to about £11. This was still quite low and probably why a further license to acquire land was sought and granted in 1383, to a value of £20, and some small grants were received following this. The 1535 valor demonstrates a considerable increase in income over the intervening century and a half, to over £81, which is suggestive of further acquisitions. It recorded income from temporalities (material possessions and revenues) in Suffolk and Norfolk, chiefly from lands and rents at Redlingfield, Rishangles, and Thorndon (5km or so to the west), totalling £68 10s 11d and from spiritualities (properties and revenues from provision of spiritual services) consisting of portions of the churches of Redlingfield, Walpole (20km to the east), Melton (20km to the south-east), and Levington (25km to the south), worth £12 11s 6d (Page 1907, 83). The omission of Hickling from this list is interesting and might hint at participation in the land market; perhaps it was sold or exchanged as too far away for a small nunnery to manage effectively. All that sites mentioned in 1535 were within a day's ride and the temporalities within an hour's walk.

The 1536 inventory (Haslewood 1892, 95-8) listed a plough horse and a mill horse, 16 cows (kine), three bulls, eight yearlings and seven calves, a boar, a sow and nine other hogs, and 15 acres of wheat, 32 acres of barley and eight acres of oats. These were probably from the demesne and amount to 55 acres of arable plus a reasonable amount of pasture to accommodate the horses and cattle; the pigs could have been kept in woodland (in 1427 trees were mentioned as having been cut down and sold without permission, presumably for timber and implying mature woodland (Page 1907, 84)) or perhaps within the precinct and fed scraps and other waste. Although not recorded in the inventory the prioress made reference to the possession of 17 hinds by the priory (Page 1907 84). This may imply a park and the 1839 tithe map and apportionment records that the field to the north of the farm was called 'Park' and that to the west of this 'Park by Lays'. No evidence for any pale was noted during the survey but an association between fishponds and parks in the medieval period would not be unusual (Alexander 2011). It may be significant that there is no mention of ponds, fish or anything associated such as nets, the first possible reference to the fishponds is the swanneries mentioned in the 1552 will of Sir Edmund Bedingfield (below).

The church and churchyard were separate from the rest of the farm complex and, as it had its origins before the priory was established and presumably continued to also function as the parish church, it was probably separate from the monastic complex. There was also no structural or surface evidence of any such relationship, if anything the gully identified during the AP mapping and earthwork survey [6.b] suggests a boundary between the two, though there is no way to know the date of this feature based on survey alone.

The AP survey identified a square feature to the immediate east of the listed barn and south of the church in a location where the monastic cloister might be expected. An 'L' shaped scarp here [9] might be picking up the north-east corner of the same feature. At about 23m across it is perhaps larger than average, Gilchrist (1989, 253)

suggests 14-18m was typical, so it might mark the external limit of the cloister rather than the cloister garth but it could also be a post medieval feature, perhaps based upon the cloister. The earthwork survey identified a broad scarp aligned with the south side of this feature [6] and an area of irregular earthworks [12] suggestive of sub surface building remains, very probably a south monastic range. If the Benedictine plan was being followed then this ought to have contained the refectory. These had been truncated to the south by a modern service [14] and the area beyond appeared to have been levelled but some evidence ([13]/[16]) suggested that further remains might lie in this area, perhaps the rere-dorter to the east and the kitchen to the west.

To the west, the orientation and position of the barn clearly support the likelihood that it is monastic in origin. Surviving details at the south-west corner strongly suggest an additional range lay to the south supporting the interpretation above. The exact extent of any medieval survival would require a detailed analysis of the building fabric which was beyond the scope of this project. The role of this building is open to question but following the typical Benedictine layout it should have provided accommodation for the prioress and perhaps visitors. The fabric is clearly vulnerable as fallen masonry was noted from several areas during the survey, particularly following some heavy rainfall.

The long slight scarp [5] to the east might indicate the limit of the monastic buildings in this direction with the stronger scarp beyond ([2]/[3]) a fall to meadow on the valley floor beyond. On the basis of this survey it is impossible to suggest that any evidence further east was of any significant age. To the south the prominent fall within the yew hedge would appear to be similar to [2]/[3] and may actually have been a westward return to [3]. It probably marked the limit of the precinct in this direction. How far this extended to the west is unknown and this feature seems to have been overlain by later developments. To the north the evidence was inconclusive but signs of a former ditch parallel to the south side of the churchyard suggest a limit in this direction though it is uncertain that these features are medieval in origin. North of the barn a second scarp [8] immediately to the south of the ditch scarp and a slight scarp on the same line to the east [8.a], may be of similar origin to that noted to the east ([5]) and indicate a boundary immediately south of the ditch in the same way as there may have been a boundary immediately east of the fall to the valley floor. On this basis there was little space for an east range or any buildings to the north of the cloister. There is some evidence that on small nunneries the cloister walk was incorporated into the ground floor of adjacent structures so it is possible that the dormitory range originally lay above the cloister but it is equally likely that the plan was adapted and the dormitory lay elsewhere.

Beyond this the likely extent of the monastic precinct and the degree of survival is unknown, primarily due to the construction of the existing farmhouse and associated structures in the later 19th century. Scarps (such as [6] and [6.b]) suggested survival of features beneath the current yard surface but of unknown significance and date. Elsewhere, the majority of scarps appeared to be contemporary with the farmhouse, or the result of more recent modifications such as the removal of walls but this is far from certain. Features such as [19], [43] and [45] could well be early at least in part.



It is highly likely that there were significant elements of the complex beyond the monastic precinct; primarily the home grange. Although the majority of the visible earthworks need to be seen in the context of almost 500 years of post-dissolution use, it is likely that this use was at least initially framed by the existing layout and only gradually evolved. Sweeping all away and starting from scratch was only for the richest. A common pattern where the monastery became a residence was that the monastic ranges were used to form the basis of the house whilst the home grange became the home farm. The survival of the barn provides some support for this and the earlier 19th century location of several buildings to south and south-west of this may suggest the home grange originally lay in this area though this is obviously highly speculative. If so then the earthworks in the field to the south of the farmhouse, particularly scarps [28], [29], and perhaps [30], may be significant – possibly defining the extent of the former grange. Recovery of several medieval artefacts from the area to the north, as recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme, suggests potential here too.

It is explored in more detail below but it is worth stating here the probability that the post medieval site is of greater significance than has previously been appreciated. If the conclusion that several features associated with the fishponds were part of a substantial post-medieval designed landscape then this implies the presence of a similarly substantial post-medieval residence, perhaps created within or from the monastic buildings. Whilst this might imply a loss of medieval elements and consequently significance it probably also suggests that this would have been offset for by a greater significance in the post-medieval period.

## The fishponds

Fish were an important part of the monastic diet and fishponds an important part of the monastic economy throughout the medieval period. It is very probable that fishponds were becoming more common during the 12th century, but many of these early creations appear to have been secular and aristocratic; examples are known of fishponds pre-dating the foundation of monasteries not only demonstrating their early secular origins but also the desire of lay benefactors to ensure monastic provision. Despite this, monastic fishponds probably remained rare until the late 12th century (Currie 1989, 147-51). After about 1350 economic changes meant that demesne agriculture generally declined and it is possible that fishponds also fell out of favour and were rented out or neglected, though the evidence for this seems to be patchy and many cases can be cited demonstrating continuing use and innovation right up to the dissolution (Currie 1989, 156).

Overall, the fishpond complex at Redlingfield comprised three main ponds; [61], [62], and [63]. Within these there appear to have been two distinct phases with the southern pond and the south side of the central pond being slightly more irregular and curved than the northern pond and the north side of the central pond which were very regular in plan with straight sides. This suggests that there may have originally been only two ponds, quite a small complex. The northern pond was probably added later, at which time the north side of the middle pond was also remodelled.

The three main ponds were enclosed by what seem to be by-pass channels to both the north and south; [65] and [66] respectively (as well as [55]/[58] to the east but it is argued below that this was later, at least in the form surveyed). No connection between either channel and the ponds was seen during the survey other than via [55]/[58] so either any connecting channels have been so well filled that they are invisible which seems unlikely, lost beneath modern pond [67] which is perhaps more likely but some trace would be expected to survive, or was lost when [55]/[58] was created which is probably the most likely explanation but this would have run counter to the topography.

It is noted above that the northern channel appeared to be later than the southern, again suggesting two phases. It is tempting to directly relate the two channel phases to the two pond phases and there is nothing to contradict this. The southern arm and the southern pond appear to respect one another, but the relationship is indirect. It is possible though that the two channels were simply to make the pond complex more secure as theft was not uncommon, particularly during the economic down turn in the later 14th century (see for example Alexander and Westlake 2009, 58). This does not preclude the suggested phasing as the secondary northern channel could have been added to create an enclosure already in part defined by the southern channel (and perhaps an arm to the east). This does mean however, that the northern ditch could have been constructed at any time as it is not directly related to any other elements.

The discussion above suggests that it is possible that the fishponds at Redlingfield pre-dated its foundation and were part of the original grant, but this seems unlikely as monastic fishponds remained uncommon until the late 12th century and Redlingfield was a small manor unlikely to be the site of such innovations. At the time fishponds were becoming more common, the nunnery was perhaps too poor to engage in such projects, but the original complex was quite small, in keeping with the likely size and wealth (or otherwise) of the nunnery so perhaps the cost was outweighed by the benefit; it has frequently been pointed out that their security of tenure meant that monastic houses were able to take a long term view and so were more likely to invest for long term gains. The original small self-contained complex may therefore date to the 13th century. If this is correct, then the most likely context for the later expansion of the complex was perhaps around 1400 when the nunnery's finances began to improve.

It has been estimated that a small house of ten monks may have required about 350kg of fish a year (Greene 1992, 124). We should probably be wary about applying these figures, derived from larger male monastic institutions, too rigorously to a small nunnery (above) but they indicate the potential quantities of fish required. Little of this demand appears to have been met by freshwater fish; they were obtained from a wide variety of sources and even on inland sites large sums were spent on sea fish, both fresh and salted (Currie 1989, 153-4). In fact, freshwater fish are notable by their absence from monastic accounts, though this was probably due to the medieval accounting practice of detailing incoming and outgoing monies rather than goods produced and consumed within the institution. 'The lack of documentation is ... explained because commercial sale was just not occurring. It is

more likely that fishponds were maintained, as the documents state, to provide fresh fish for special festivals and the visitations of important guests' (Currie 1989, 155).

Before about 1350, bream was the most popular freshwater fish (though evidence for others such as perch, rudd, roach and pike has been recovered (Greene 1992, 124)) but this gave relatively low yields as it takes about 5 years to reach an edible size. This does exclude the potential to increase yields through supplementary feeding, though it is not known to what extent this took place nor how effective it was (Currie 1989, 155). Towards the end of the period the faster growing carp started to become more common, but again there remain uncertainties as to the extent of their use, if they 'trickled down' to smaller institutions and the degree to which they might have increased production (Currie 1989, 159).

If we assume the two earlier ponds were of equal size than this would be a surface area of about 1200m<sup>2</sup> suggesting an annual harvest during the medieval period (based on figures given in Greene 1992, 124) of a little under 50kg a year, a fairly typical proportion of about one seventh of the total required, though this is perhaps a minimum (above). The construction of the northern pond and the remodelling of the middle pond may have added about 1150m<sup>2</sup> almost doubling both the size of the complex and its production but innovations such as supplementary feeding and the introduction of carp (above) may have increased this figure further. There is no evidence that the community had increased so the proportion of their needs supplied by the complex probably went up considerably, to perhaps a third.

To the west of the ponds, but enclosed within the two channels, was a fairly large area. This was almost completely dominated by modern pond [67] and associated earthworks but there were intriguing hints of underlying features (see [68] to [71]). The initial northern course of channel [65] might also have been intended to take it around some existing feature(s). On present evidence it is impossible to say what might have been here but it has already been suggested that the modern pond might have removed evidence for an inlet channel to the ponds, and it was fairly common for fishpond complexes to feature smaller ponds for breeding or to remove silt by settling (Bond 1989, 101). Other possibilities include features such as a small fish house for keeping nets and so on and possibly even a smoke house or accommodation for a fisher. It is even possible that the enclosure provided for the ponds was put to other uses such as for a warren (Alexander 2011).

## The post medieval period

It is not known in any detail what happened to the monastery after its dissolution in 1537. Whilst we know it was in the hands of the Bedingfield family for 200 years, their primary seat was in Norfolk and there is no obvious evidence that they initially took much interest in the estate (above). It is not until the later 16th century that there is a record of any of the family actually occupying Redlingfield; John, the third son of Sir Henry Bedingfield who was head of the family from 1553 to 1583. From this time though the estate seems to have been the primary residence of this cadet branch of the family and remained in hand until at least 1717, or more likely until it was acquired by the Willis family by 1735 (above).

It appears that there was a swannery at Redlingfield by the mid 16th century. The 1552 will of Sir Edmund Bedingfield (TNA PROB 11/36, ff.142-3) mentions 'mine eyries of swans ... except one couple of old eyries remaining at Redlingfield' (Green 2010). It seems that some fishponds, such as those at the Bishops of Lincoln's palace at Stow, Lincolnshire, also functioned as swanneries (Everson *et al* 1991, 185) so it is possible that this might be an indirect reference to the fishponds, if so it is the earliest known.

As described above, it is unlikely that the 'L' shaped channel linking the area of the priory with the fish ponds [55] can be classed as a leat. It must have held water (it did so as late as the 1884 OS survey) but it would appear that its primary purpose was not to carry water from one place to another for which it was completely over-engineered and topographically unsuited; its highest point was near its south-west corner outside the main fishponds complex where there was no evidence for any inlet or spring. Much the same can be said of the adjacent flat topped bank [56]. If this was intended simply as a functional dam retaining the channel it was far broader than it needed to be and largely unnecessary. Taking the two features together it seems reasonable to propose that they form elements of a designed landscape; a canal with a walkway alongside connecting the area of the priory with the fishponds which would have provided a focus in the immediate landscape, a target for perambulations. On the 1839 tithe map the field to the north-west was shown as wooded and named as 'Great Wood' in the apportionment; this could have provided a scenic backdrop to the ponds.

It is possible that these features were associated with the nunnery. In the medieval period it was recognised that when 'artistically sited, and perhaps surrounded by trees and walks, [fish ponds] could make a water pleasure' (McLean 1981, 98, 99). For example the Bishops of Lincoln's palace at Stow, Lincolnshire was described as 'delightfully surrounded with woods and ponds' in about 1186 so the idea of ponds as aesthetic features was clearly established early (Everson *et al* 1991, 185). This primarily related to high status secular sites and since it appears that nunneries were expected to be poor and dependent on charity (Gilchrist 1989, 257) the idea of such features at a minor nunnery seems inherently unlikely. Set against this though is the late improvement in Redlingfield's finances and its increasingly secular nature (above).

On balance it seems far more likely that these were post dissolution features associated with the secular occupation of the site. At Audley End, Essex, which also developed from a dissolved monastery, it is known that in the early 17th century the grounds featured canals very probably adapted from medieval fishponds, albeit on a rather grander scale (Alexander *et al* 2015, 112). A designed landscape on this scale implies a residence of a similar scale and in many cases these were initially at least created by adapting the existing medieval buildings, again as seen at Audley End (*ibid*). Further, given the association between [55] and pond [45] it raises the possibility that this was also an element in the designed landscape perhaps framing the western side of the house grounds if it was located within the former monastic complex. Perhaps the post-medieval development of the site is of more significance than has previously been appreciated.

## Conclusions

The relatively undisturbed remains of a small medieval nunnery such as this, which potentially have the possibility of providing a clear archaeological picture of a minor monastic institution, should be seen as highly significant. Overall, it seems likely that the whole area around the barn, north as far as the churchyard boundary, east to the pond and south to the entrance track has the potential to retain subsurface features and deposits relating to the priory. This has been demonstrated to a higher level of confidence within a slightly smaller area, covering approximately the northern 2/3 of the lawned area east of the barn and around and beneath the barn itself. To the west, the extent of the precinct and the associated area of potential is unknown due to the presence of the later 19th century farm buildings but potentially extends as far as the pond to the WNW of the farmhouse. It is also possible that the area to the south holds considerable potential and is likely to contain elements of the monastic home grange.

It should be reiterated that these areas also have a high potential for significant post-medieval remains relating to the post-Dissolution occupation of the site.

The fishponds are well preserved and the presence of waterlogged deposits suggests potential for the recovery of environmental and dating evidence that may not survive on many other sites. The presence of the channel and embankment suggest a designed landscape and if correct this makes this complex a much more unusual site.

## Further work

The listed barn requires both fabric analysis to determine the extent of any surviving medieval fabric and consolidation to prevent any further collapse.

The lawned area to the east of the listed barn, and potentially other areas around the farm complex, would benefit from geophysical survey to determine the extent of any surviving sub surface features suggested by the earthwork evidence.



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## APPENDIX: RECORDED ARCHAEOLOGY

### Existing National Record for the Historic Environment records for the site

The National Record for the Historic Environment (NHRE) is the main database of historic environment information maintained by Historic England. AMIE (Archives Monuments Inventory England) is the acronym by which the database itself is known.

The primary records for the site are Redlingfield Priory, which includes the fishponds (AMIE UID: 389057, NGR: TM 1863 7067), St Andrews Church (AMIE UID: 1334584, NGR TM 1863 7071), the barn (AMIE UID: 1334586, NGR TM 1864 7066).

Other NRHE records within 1.5 km are for a homestead moat in Bedingfield to the south-west (AMIE UID: 388779, NGR: TM 1765 6970), another moated site at King's Farm to the north-east (AMIE UID: 389063, NGR: TM 1712 7162), and a possible later prehistoric enclosure visible on APs also to the south-west (AMIE UID: 1595862, NGR: TM 1715 6962).

There are several records for other priories in the area most notably Eye Priory about 5km to the north-west (AMIE UID: 389045, NGR: TM 1524 7406) and Hoxne Priory 6km to the north (AMIE UID: 388959, NGR: TM 183 764).

There are also numerous other records for fishponds and possible fishponds nearby, though not all are medieval, including at Kenton Hall (AMIE UID: 388754, NGR: TM 187 651), Bedingfield Hall (AMIE UID: 388785, NGR: TM 199 677), Flemings Hall (AMIE UID: 388788, NGR: TM 1924 6793), Crows Hall (AMIE UID: 388876, NGR: TM 1923 6283), The Leys, Hoxne (AMIE UID: 388977, NGR: TM 185 754), Denham College (AMIE UID: 389075, NGR: TM 1910 7485), Chantry Farm (AMIE UID: 390287, NGR: TM 27136 69459), Dennington Place (AMIE UID: 390307, NGR: TM 2623 6688), Earl Soham Lodge (AMIE UID: 390498, NGR: TM 2321 6347), Wingfield College (AMIE UID: 390638, NGR: TM 2300 7678), and Home Farm (AMIE UID: 390788, NGR: TM 2353 7361).

### The Suffolk Historic Environment Record (SHER)

The SHER is considerable more detailed than the NRHE.

Records from Redlingfield include the main elements of the site: The Leys fishpond complex (RLG 001 MSF4024 TM 1830 7070), Redlingfield Nunnery (Priory) (RLG 002, MSF4025, TM 1864 7063), and the Church of St Andrew (RLG 003, MSF13934 Centred TM 1864 7072).

Elsewhere within the parish are Little Wood Ancient Woodland (RLG 004, MSF19416, TM 1907 7023), a complex of soilmarks/cropmarks, possibly an irregular medieval moat (RLG 005, MSF20420, TM 1979 7089), Redlingfield Green, site of a former medieval green (RLG 006, MSF30394, TM 1939 7129), a ring ditch and

linear features, possibly associated (RLG 007, MSF22115, TM 1810 7137), Wash Farmhouse, a 15th century farmhouse (RLG 008, MSF25629, TM 1883 7003), Kiln Farm a late 16th/early 17th century farmhouse and later farm buildings (RLG 009, MSF30395, TM 1773 7174) and a copper alloy pendant, kite- shaped shield, found metal detecting (RLG Misc, MSF19833, TM 1816 6963).

### The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS)

The PAS database was searched (February 2017) for all records from Redlingfield Parish, or within 1km of the hall which produced 33 records, all for finds recovered by metal detecting.

Of greatest significance to the current research is a group of eight finds from close to the hall. Most have six figure OS grid references which only locates them to a 100m square north and west of the farmyards extending into the field to the immediate north. Several were recovered on the same date: a sterling penny, very worn and clipped, of 1279-1333 (PAS 132006), a copper-alloy folding strap clasp of 1300-1450 (PAS 132004), two copper-alloy oval shaped buckle frames of 1300-1400 (PAS 131998/131997), and a complete copper-alloy sword belt fitting of 16th-17th century date (PAS 131989). Three other finds to the north of the farm were recorded with eight figure OS grid references which narrows the area of recovery to a 10m square. Of these one fell within the same area but was recovered on a different day; a plain gold finger ring without any diagnostic features but possibly of medieval or post medieval date (PAS 130662). Two further finds appear to have been recovered to the east of the main group although their locations are questionable. One was apparently from immediately south-east of the church and within the churchyard which seems unlikely to have been legitimately collected if the grid reference is correct; a worn and damaged silver coin of Henry II dated to 1158-1180 (PAS 136409). The other was from an area of rough ground immediately to the west of the churchyard where it seems unlikely metal detecting would have been practicable; a copper-alloy seal matrix of 'chess pawn' type dated to about the 14th century (PAS 136408). This seal sounds rather charming; the die has a squirrel in the centre and a border inscription reading *I CRAKE NOTIS*, 'I crack nuts'. Given that one of these references implies at best dubious collection it seems likely that the grid references are simply mistakes either on collection, in reporting, or in recording, nevertheless they are likely to be from the same broad area.

Finds recorded from further afield fall into several clusters:

- 500m to the east of the hall:
  - Five RB coins (it is not clear from the PAS database if this was a hoard though the relatively restricted range of dates suggests they may have been): incomplete copper alloy dupondius or as of uncertain ruler, dating to about AD 43-260 (PAS 810701); complete copper alloy radiate of Claudius II, AD 268-70 (PAS 810721); two complete copper alloy nummi of the House of Constantine, both AD 330-40 (PAS 810710/810707); incomplete copper alloy nummus of Constantine I,



AD 335-41 (PAS 810711)

- A complete silver medieval halfpenny of Edward III, dating to AD 1344-51 was recovered (PAS 810747)
- A group of largely RB finds, about 900m to the south-east of the hall:
  - A complete but highly worn and corroded copper alloy Roman dupondius or as, dating to AD 43-c.250/60 (PAS 717445)
  - A complete silver denarius of Geta, dating to AD 203-8 (PAS 717450)
  - A complete silver denarius of Vespasian, dating to the year AD 79 (PAS 717458)
  - A base silver radiate of Victorinus, dating to AD 269-71 (PAS 717476)
  - An incomplete copper alloy nummus of Valentinian or Valens, dating to the period AD 364-67 (PAS 717480)
  - An incomplete copper alloy Roman hinged Colchester derivative brooch (PAS 717481)
  - A complete copper alloy medieval or post-medieval ring (PAS 717439)
- North-east of the hall, from a broad area east of the village:
  - 350m to the north-east of the hall, an incomplete and very worn copper-alloy mount with heraldic decoration, probably a hanger for a heraldic harness pendant or similar and likely to be from about 13th-14th centuries AD (PAS 743216)
  - 300m further to the north-east, an incomplete copper-alloy brooch of probable later medieval date, ie 14th-15th centuries AD (PAS 743215)
  - Closer to Adair Cottage: silver halfpenny of Edward III of about 1344-1351 AD (PAS 743172); worn silver penny of Edward III, about 1351-1361 AD (PAS 743169); worn and heavily clipped shilling of Charles I of about 1625-1649 AD (PAS 743174)
- Near Hill Farm 600m to the north of the hall and to the immediate north of the village:
  - A complete copper alloy nummus of Constantine I, about AD 309-10 (PAS 721942)
  - An incomplete copper alloy post-medieval sword or dagger chape, of possible 19th century date was found near Hill Farm 750m to the

north (PAS 774694).

- Around Mill Farm, about 700m to the north-west:
  - A fragment of a probable Bronze Age socketed spear (PAS 774739)
  - A complete copper alloy medieval French 'crown' jetton dating to the period c.AD 1328-64 (PAS 722014)
  - An incomplete silver penny of Edward I, dating to AD 1280-1289 (PAS 721830)
  - An incomplete silver medieval penny of Edward IV dating to AD 1461-1470 (PAS 774717)
  - An incomplete (cut half) silver voided long cross penny of Henry III, dating to AD 1251-72 (PAS 774712)
- Two finds have simply been recorded as from 'Redlingfield':
  - A fragment of a middle Bronze Age socketed basal loop spear head (PAS 745372)
  - An incomplete copper alloy medieval stirrup, perhaps of 14th century date (PAS 745342)

Without a detailed inspection of the data it is impossible to determine the extent to which these apparent clusters reflect any 'true' distribution. Many cover a range of periods and find types and could have been produced by factors affecting accessibility such as sympathetic landowners. It may be significant though that many of the medieval and later finds were recovered from around the village, the exception (if the two groups of Romano-British finds to the east are set aside) being the cluster of finds around the hall, which is the most south-westerly within the parish.



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