



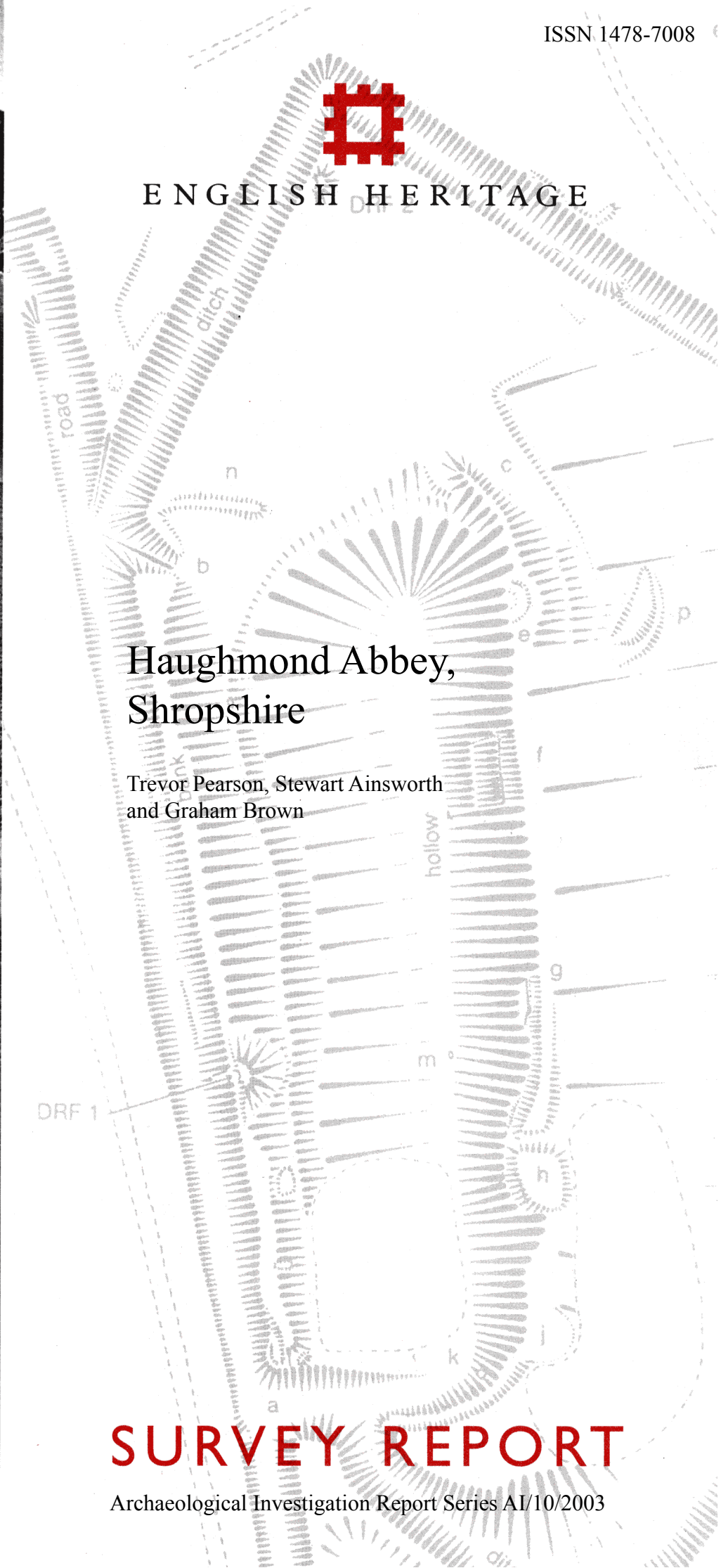
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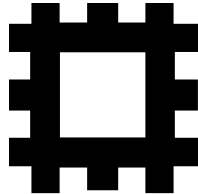
Haughmond Abbey, Shropshire

Trevor Pearson, Stewart Ainsworth
and Graham Brown

SURVEY REPORT

Archaeological Investigation Report Series AI/10/2003





HAUGHMOND ABBEY, SHROPSHIRE

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 2002, English Heritage carried out an archaeological investigation and survey of the Augustinian abbey of St John the Evangelist at Haughmond in Shropshire. The abbey dates back to the 12th century, but was partially demolished after the Dissolution and is now in the care of English Heritage and open to visitors. The survey was undertaken at the request of the West Midlands Region of English Heritage to advance understanding of the site and to help inform its long-term management, conservation and display. The results of the survey will also be included in a forthcoming monograph on excavations conducted at the site between 1975 and 1979.



Figure 1.
Location map

The abbey is in the parish of Uffington in the district of Shrewsbury and Atcham, and is centred at National Grid Reference SJ 5418 1516, some three miles to the east of the market town of Shrewsbury (Figures 1 and 2). It is situated below a tree-covered escarpment forming the west side of Haughmond Hill and enjoys extensive views westwards towards Shrewsbury and beyond to the foothills of the Welsh mountains. The abbey church has been almost entirely levelled to its foundations and most of the buildings around the cloister have suffered the same fate apart from the chapter house on the east side and part of the frater on the south. To the south of these are the ruins of the abbot's hall and private rooms which continued to be occupied as a private house after the Dissolution by the Barker family until the middle of the 17th century.

The English Heritage survey covered an area of 19ha (47 acres) centred upon the conventual buildings and extended eastwards above the escarpment. The principal discoveries relating to the period of the abbey include a major reassessment of the course of the precinct, a secure identification of the location of the main gate, the outer court and associated buildings, and the remains of the monastic water management. On the north side of the precinct the survey recorded the remains of several monastic ponds and associated features. The extent to which the Barker family transformed the monastic landscape after the Dissolution is now better understood and features from this period include the remains of a garden to the south and west of the main house. Evidence was also found of how the site was subsequently integrated into a landscape park by the Corbet family of the nearby Sundorne House in the late 18th and early 19th centuries.

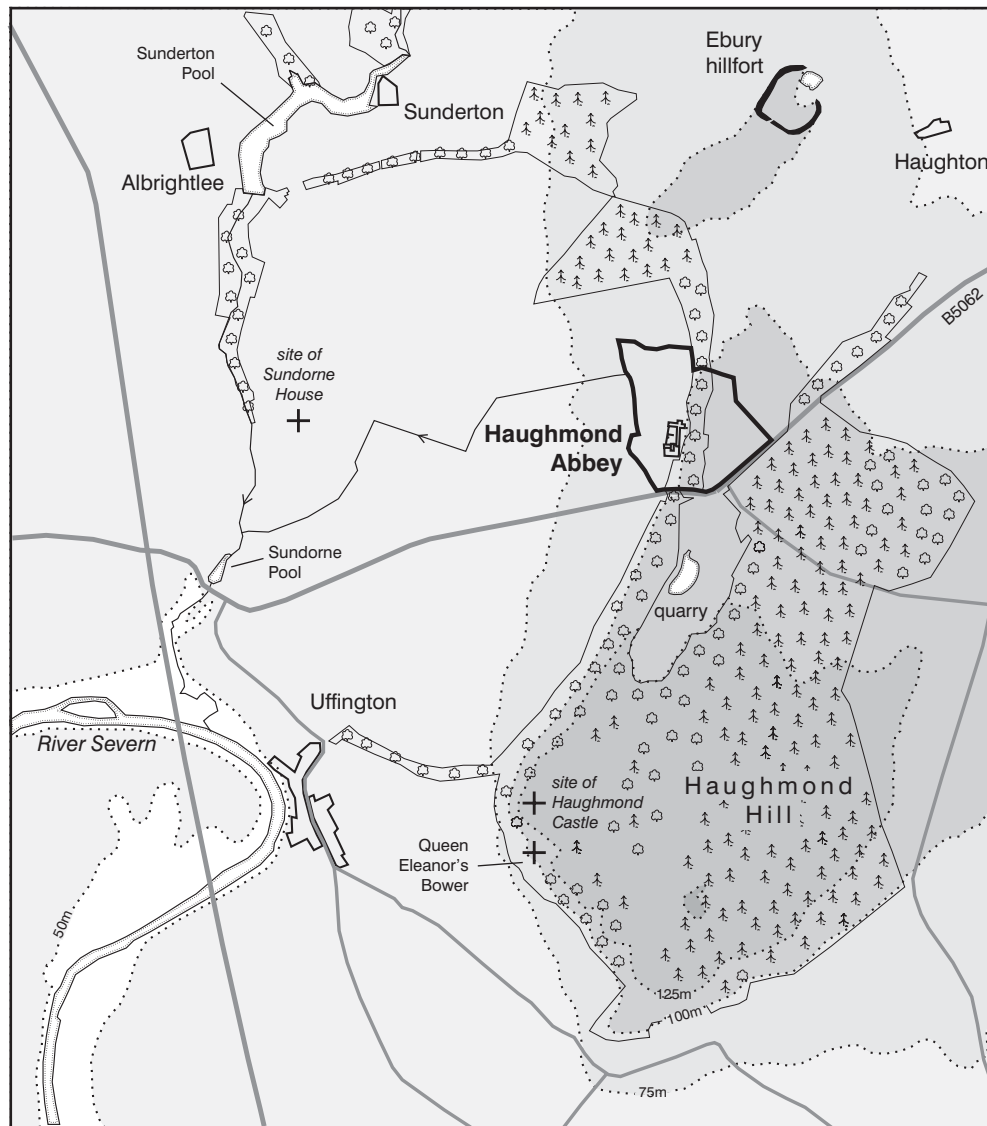
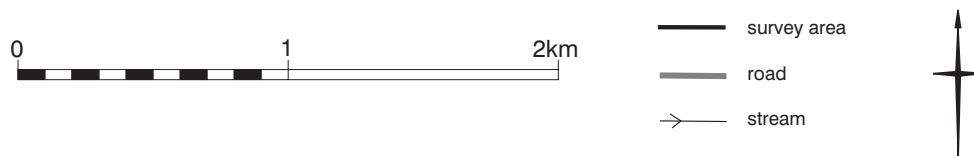


Figure 2.
The environs of
Haughmond Abbey



The areas of the site which were covered in woodland were surveyed in January and December 2002, whilst the majority of the survey was undertaken in September and early October. The abbey ruins are in guardianship and these and their immediate surroundings are protected as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (RSM 27548). The abbey ruins, the adjacent earthworks and a stone conduit house to the south-east of the abbey are recorded in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) for Shropshire as 00116, 03942 and 04546 respectively and are recorded in the National Monuments Record (NMR) under the combined reference of SJ 51 NW 5. The abbey ruins appear in the list of buildings of architectural merit as Grade I (reference number of 361543). The English Heritage field investigation was carried out at Level 3 standard (as defined in RCHME 1999, 3-4). The fieldwork produced a plan of the earthworks at a scale of 1:1000.

2. GEOLOGY, TOPOGRAPHY AND LAND USE

The abbey is sited on the crest of a gentle west-facing slope at a height of between 90 and 95m above Ordnance Datum (OD) immediately below the wooded west side of Haughmond Hill (Figure 3). The lowlands to the west of the abbey stretch as far as the foothills of the Welsh Mountains and are based on deposits of glacial boulder clay whilst Haughmond Hill itself is formed from pre-Cambrian gritstones and conglomerates belonging to the Long Myndian formation (Toghill 1990, 38). The stone has a distinctive red-brown colour when freshly exposed but changes to a dull grey after weathering and was used extensively in the construction of the abbey, mainly for rubble walling and core material. There is widespread evidence of quarrying on the hillside immediately to the east and north-east of the abbey church. The stone is not suitable for fine working or tooling, consequently for architectural details and wall faces the abbey builders widely employed better quality freestone from the Grinshill quarries, 8km to the north. Haughmond Hill is now being actively quarried for road stone immediately to the south of the survey area.

The hillside above the abbey rises quite steeply to a height of around 105m OD and here the bedrock is very close to the surface. Rocky terraces and outcrops break the wooded slope and there are further outcrops in the pasture fields at the top of the escarpment. Two gullies towards the south of the survey area indicate natural drainage down the escarpment, presumably from springs towards the crest of the slope, and further springs to the north may be indicated by the two ponds on the hilltop directly above the abbey. The natural drainage pattern in this area has been considerably altered, firstly to supply the abbey with water, and secondly to feed ornamental ponds after the Dissolution by the Barker family. Before this, water flowing westwards off the south part of the escarpment appears to have come together to form a small



*Figure 3.
Aerial photograph of
Haughmond Abbey
looking east
(NMR ref 15308
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NMR)*

stream at the bottom of the slope. The natural contours indicate the stream originally flowed almost due west away from Haughmond Hill but was re-directed northwards to define the west side of the precinct boundary. For descriptive clarity in the rest of the report, this is called the west stream. There is also a broad, shallow east-west valley to the north of the abbey where a second stream flowed westwards off the summit of Haughmond Hill. This watercourse will be referred to as the north stream in the remainder of the report but the valley is now dry.

The escarpment soon loses height to the north of the abbey but to the south the severity of the slope increases to almost cliff-like proportions on the south-west side of Haughmond Hill. Here the escarpment is around 140m OD and forms the natural vantage point known as Queen Eleanor's Bower (Figure 2). The ground falls gently away to the west of the abbey for 1.5km to the stream at Sundorne which, in the 18th century, John Corbet of Sundorne House dammed to form two ornamental lakes. The northernmost of these, Sunderton Pool, still exists, whilst the present Sundorne Pool to the south of the house is the remnant of a far more extensive lake that was probably drained in the 1950s when Sundorne House was demolished (Williams 1988).

The agricultural land within the survey area was entirely pasture at the time of the field survey although several of the fields at the bottom of the escarpment have been ploughed in the recent past. The fields below the escarpment are subdivided by post and wire fences. These do not follow long-established boundaries as mapping indicates that the whole area was one large parcel of land at the turn of the last century (Ordnance Survey 1902). The only mature hedge lines are at the north and west and were used to define the limits of the survey, although on the west side the survey was taken a small distance into the adjacent field to record the details of a medieval dam. The abbey ruins are bounded on the south and east sides by a high stone wall dating from the period of the Barker residence and there is a post and wire fence around the rest of the perimeter. The escarpment is covered in a belt of mixed woodland and in places is heavily overgrown with expanses of nettles and bramble bushes. A drystone wall along the crest of the escarpment encloses the east side of the woodland. There is a second stretch of wall at the bottom of the slope, along the north-west side of the wood. The woodland is maintained by Forest Enterprise who keep open a track for public use, which starts from a small car park adjacent to the B5062 Shrewsbury to Newport Road.

Apart from the former custodian's cottage in the south-east corner of the abbey ruins which is now rented out as a private residence, there is no occupied building within the survey area. The public has access to the abbey ruins at stated opening times and several public footpaths cross the site, including part of the Shropshire Way, a long-distance footpath which enters the site along the single track access road to the abbey from the B5062.

3. HISTORY OF RESEARCH

Serious research into Haughmond Abbey did not begin until the middle of the 19th century when the first survey and excavations were undertaken and the first detailed historical account was published. Prior to this, the site receives no more than passing mention from antiquarian writers, although the ruins were a popular subject for artists and engravers in the 18th and 19th centuries. The Tudor antiquary Leland makes a brief reference to Haughmond, recording a tradition that the abbey was founded on the site of a hermitage and chapel (Toulmin-Smith 1964, 230).

The history of the abbey was reviewed in some detail in the Victoria County History for Shropshire (Chibnall 1973) and in 1985 the Shropshire Archaeological and Historical Society published the first full transcription of the abbey cartulary (Rees 1985). The cartulary was compiled in the period 1478-87 to bring together details of all the abbey's landholdings but, rather disappointingly, it contains little information about the layout of the abbey or its immediate surroundings. The most detailed single account of the history of the abbey is that compiled by Dr Phillpotts for the forthcoming English Heritage monograph (Phillpotts 2002). In addition to much new research into the primary sources for the medieval abbey, the account is the first to examine the post-Dissolution history of the site in any detail.

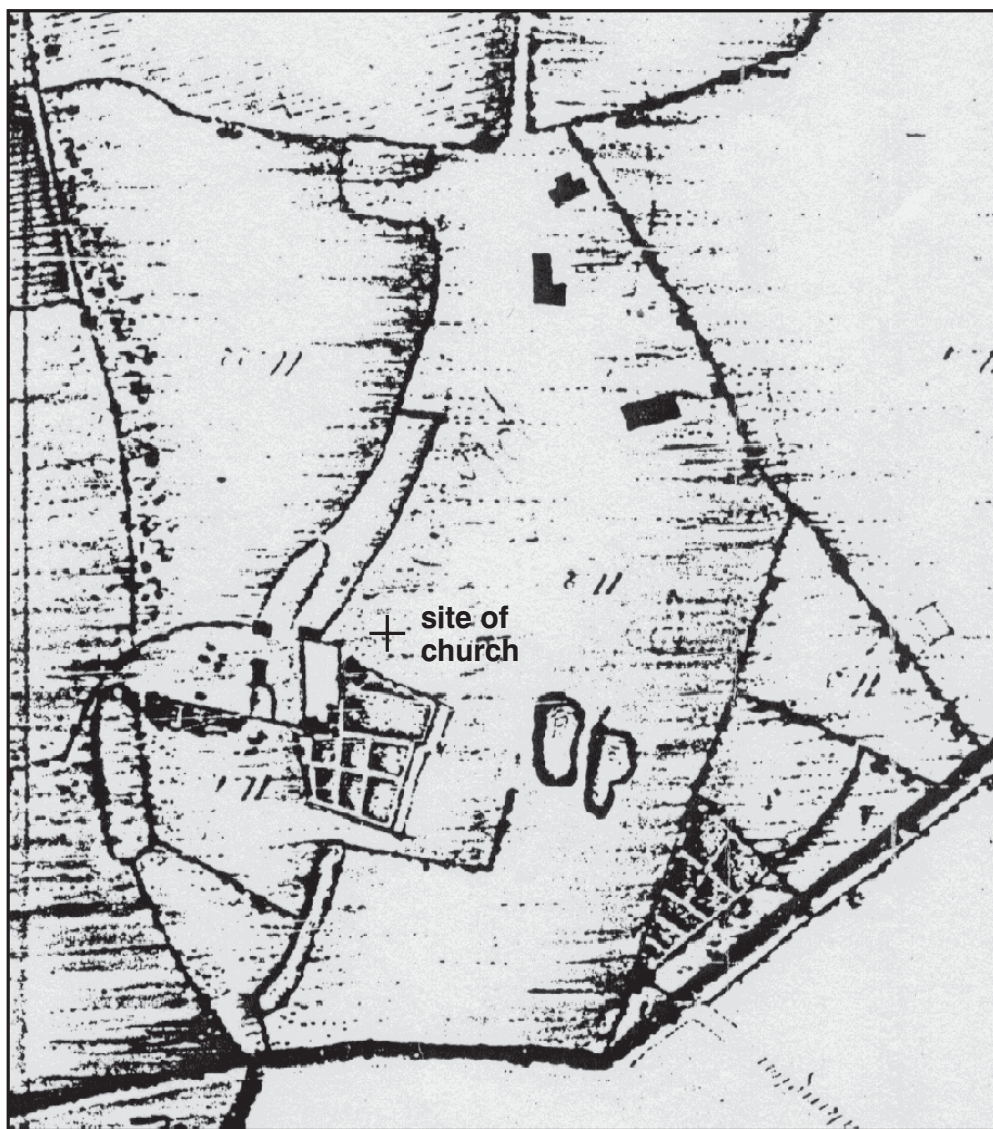


Figure 4.
Plan of Haughmond
Abbey from
Sundorne Estate
survey of 1777
(north to the top).
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and Research Ref.
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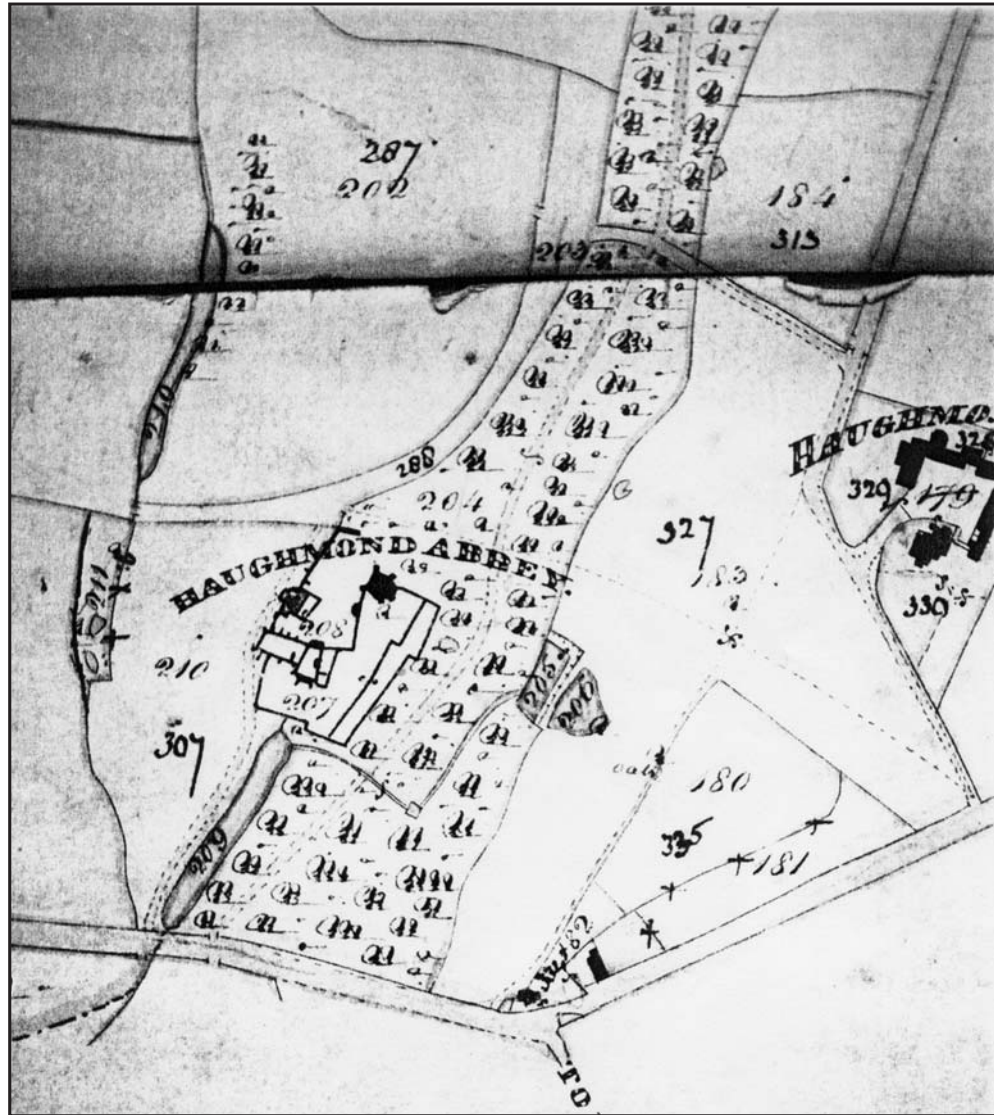


Figure 5.
 Plan of Haughmond
 Abbey in 1841 by
 Samuel Ashdown
 (north to the top).
 Shropshire Records
 and Research Ref.
 No. 2495/WJ/box 40
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Various maps of the site are a valuable source of information, particularly two estate surveys of 1777 and 1841. The 1777 map (reproduced as Figure 4) depicts the site of the abbey somewhat schematically and shows it surrounded by a largely agricultural landscape (SRRRC 3182/1). The 1841 map (reproduced as Figure 5) is more detailed and depicts elements of the landscape park associated with Sundorne House developed by the Corbet family in the second half of the 18th century (Ashdown 1841).

The earliest published survey of the abbey ruins was made by Reverend Baker of Beaulieu, Hampshire for the Shrewsbury Journal around the time of the first excavations of 1855 and was reproduced several times thereafter (Phillpotts 2002, 47). The plan is restricted to the church and claustral range but is of little use for research purposes as it is very schematic in its depiction and is not reproduced in this report. The First Edition 1:2500 scale Ordnance Survey map published in 1881 is therefore the first accurate portrayal of the site (Ordnance Survey 1881). Although labelled as Haughmond Abbey, the map only shows the standing buildings and makes no attempt to portray the earthworks of demolished buildings (Figure 6). This is understandable given that one commentator in 1877 described the site as ‘dangerous with pitfalls and holes’ and the outline of the church ‘could scarcely be traced by the green mounds which mark the boundary foundations’ (Walcott 1877, 30). Neither

Figure 6.
Ordnance Survey
1:2500 scale plan of
Haughmond Abbey
surveyed in 1881,
reduced to 1:5000
(reproduced from the
1881 Ordnance Survey
map)

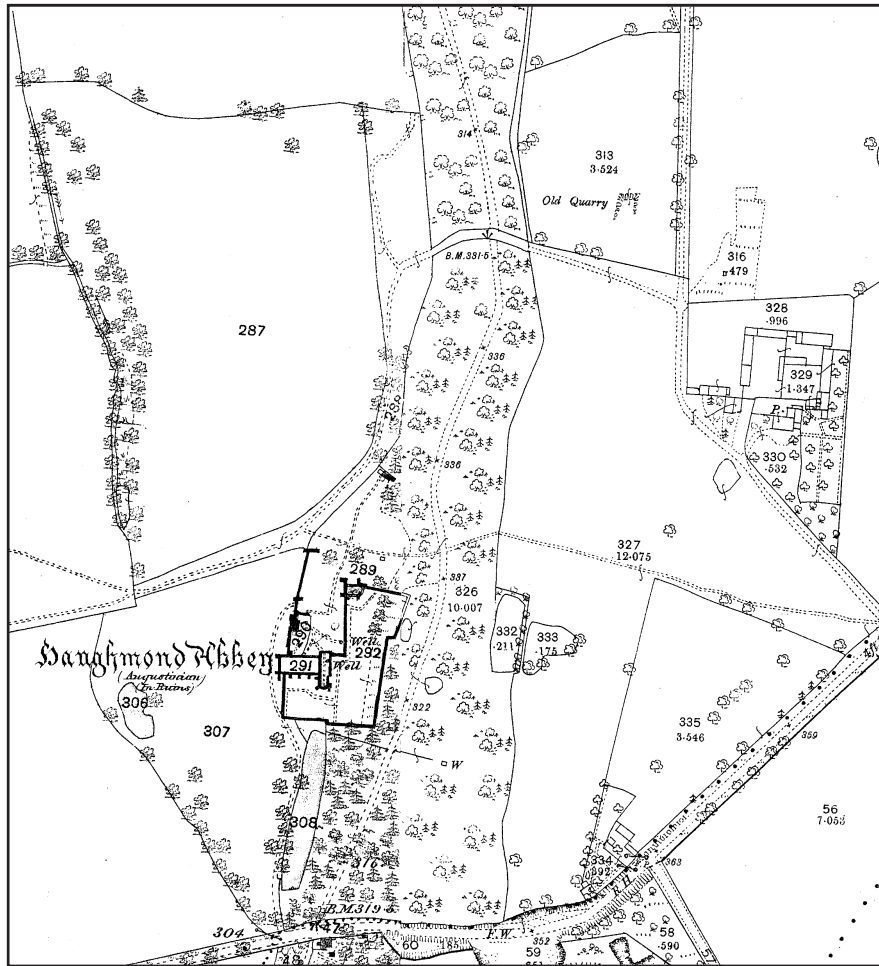
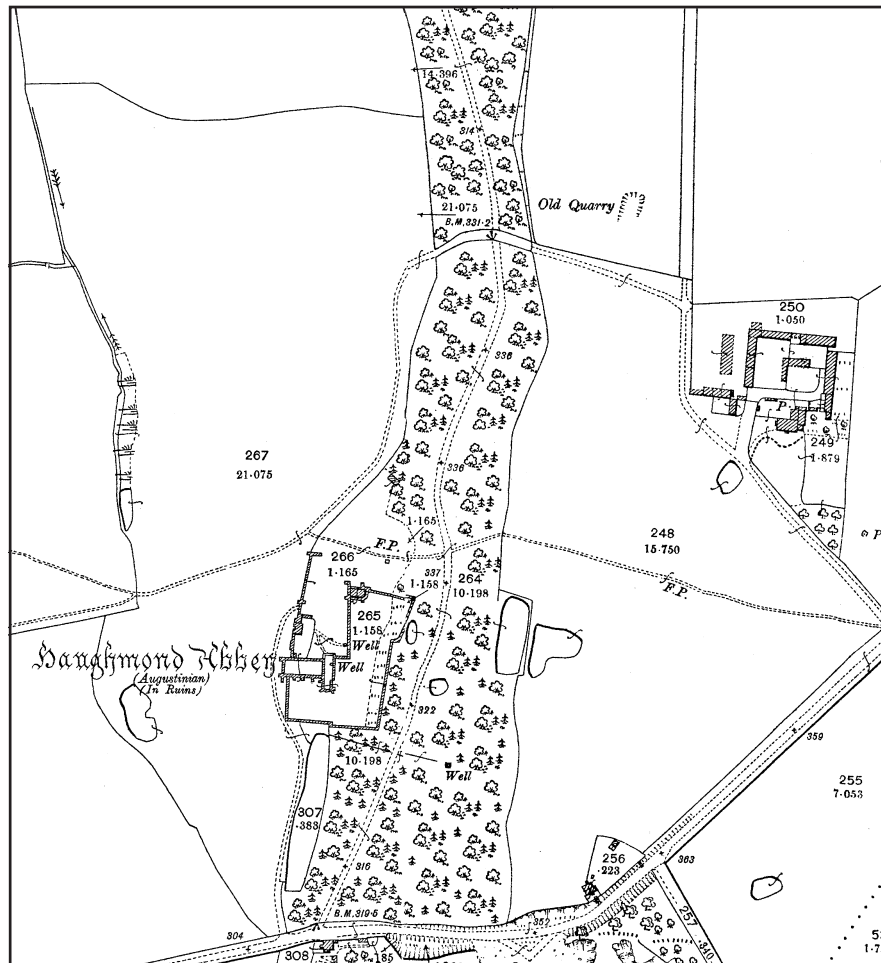


Figure 7.
Ordnance Survey
1:2500 scale plan of
Haughmond Abbey
revised in 1900, reduced
to 1:5000 (reproduced
from the 1902 Ordnance
Survey map)



this map nor the Second Edition published in 1902 (Figure 7) shows any of the earthworks in the surrounding fields, although a guide book published in 1867 noted that embankments in the field to the north of the abbey indicated the site of fishponds (Ordnance Survey 1902; Pidgeon 1867, 18). These are the remains of two dams and are shown on the 1969 edition of the 1:2500 map (Figure 8), though somewhat surprisingly there is no mention of them in the National Monuments Record entry for the site (Ordnance Survey 1969; NMR SJ 51 NW 5). The east dam, which is by far the larger of the two, is depicted continuing for a further 70m northwards than it does today. This bears out the recollection of the present farmer, Mr Davis, that the north part of the earthwork was removed to provide material to fill in a pond in the adjacent field around 1969. In 1980 the firm of Plowman, Craven and Associates undertook a 1:100 scale survey of the abbey ruins depicting all the standing walls and foundations as well as earthwork slopes and other minor details of the area. Although extremely accurate, the resulting plan has limited research value as it does not take in any of the wider landscape outside the abbey buildings and depicts the earthworks in a somewhat stylised manner.

The discovery of grave slabs in 1811 suggests some sporadic finds were made prior to the first excavations of 1855 (which were confined to the area of the church) when ‘shallow Anglo-Norman shafts were exposed which followed the wall of the building’ (Pidgeon 1867, 14). Mounds, possibly soil left over from this dig, were said to ‘indicate the general outline of the building’ (Leach 1891, 103). As the century progressed, popular accounts of the abbey started to appear in local guide books but

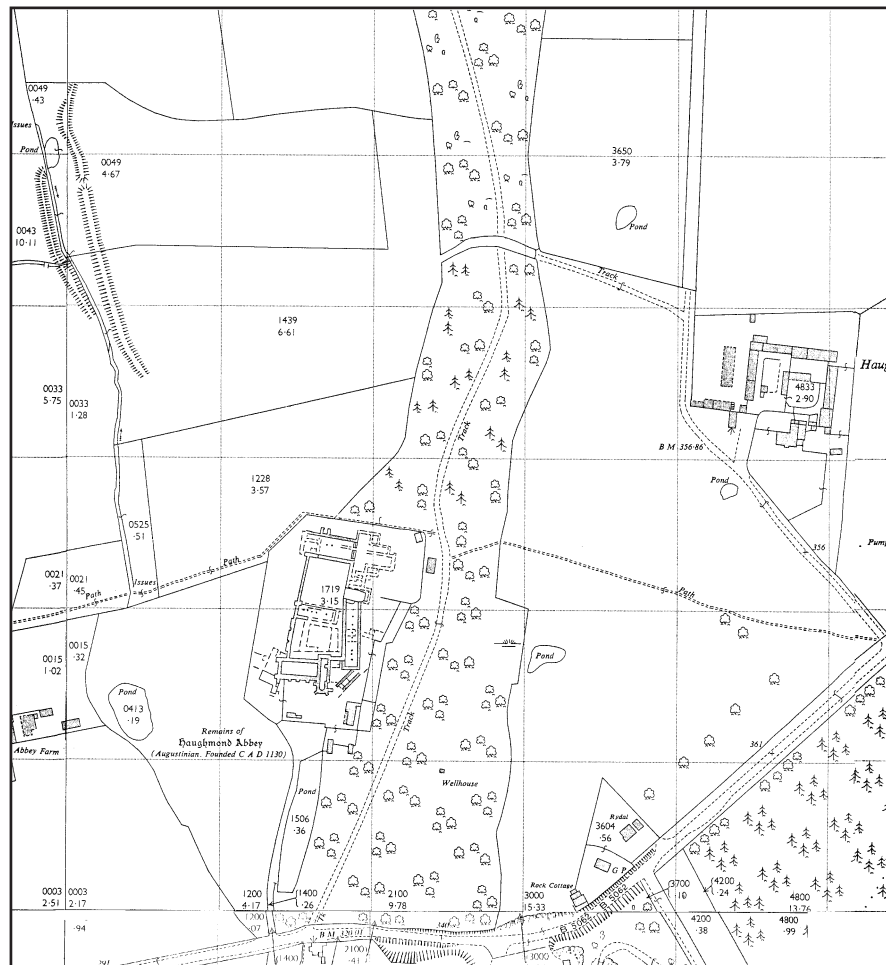


Figure 8. Ordnance Survey 1:2500 scale plan of Haughmond Abbey revised in 1968 and published in 1969 (reduced to 1:5000 scale). Crown copyright. All rights reserved.

these accounts are largely derivative and offer little new historical information other than to demonstrate the growing popularity of the site as a tourist attraction.

The absence of clear visible remains of much of the abbey led to the start of more systematic excavations in 1907 to clear the site after Mr Southam, a member of the Royal Archaeological Institute, secured the permission of the owner, Mr Hugh Corbet. The work was undertaken under the auspices of the Society of Antiquaries and the Royal Archaeological Institute and was directed by William St John Hope and Harold Brakspear who were then among the foremost excavators of medieval monasteries in the country. Now ‘ungentlemanly burrowing’ is a term used to describe their excavation techniques (Gerrard 2003, 62).

The principal aim of the 1907 excavation was to reveal the layout of the claustral ranges and church. Although the published account makes no mention of the methodology, this would typically have involved the rapid removal of overburden by gangs of workmen under minimal archaeological supervision and consequently much would have been lost without being recorded. Not surprisingly given the nature of the excavation, the accompanying report is mainly descriptive with little discussion of the site's development (St John Hope and Brakspear 1909, 281-310). However the fact that the abbey church was enlarged in the 12th century was recognised along with architectural evidence indicating that parts of the abbey were retained as a private residence after the Dissolution.

The report has little to say about the landscape beyond the immediate claustral nucleus. It was stated that nothing remains of the abbey's outer precinct, but it was claimed that the site of the presumed gatehouse could be traced some 400 feet to the north of the church though without any explanation of exactly what was visible. No other building remains were noted in the area between the church and presumed gatehouse. A brief description is also given of the small, stone-built conduit house on the slope immediately to the east of the abbey. The authors dated this structure to the 14th century without elaborating on their reasons.

The last decade has seen an increasing interest in the landscape setting of the abbey, leading to the recognition of several of the main earthwork components of the site. The revised entry in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (English Heritage 1997) identified most of the main earthwork components of the site, although some of the interpretations need revising in the light of the 2002 field survey. For example, the entry identified the stone wall along the crest of the escarpment as the east side of the monastic precinct. However, the field survey discovered that the boundary lay some 80m further to the east and that the wall is probably 19th century. Not unsurprisingly, the entry interpreted the system of ponds and drainage channels along the escarpment as all belonging to the period of the abbey, but it is now clear that most of these features, including the stone-built conduit house, date to after the Dissolution.

The 1997 account highlighted the existence of a complex area of earthworks on the north side of the precinct identifying them as part of a post-Dissolution garden contemporary with the Barker residence. The case for a garden was even more strongly presented in the management plan for the abbey prepared by Shropshire County Council in 1997 (Reid 1997). This document unequivocally states that the gardens here extended over an area of 4ha with the main components consisting of a series of gullies, terraced parterres and walkways with water conveyed from the same spring that supplied the abbey. As will be discussed in detail later in the report,

these descriptions do not offer the most reasonable interpretation of what are in fact a complex series of mostly medieval features.

The only excavation to have taken place away from the claustral area took place 80m to the south in 1994. This involved a limited excavation around the side of a large mound in advance of the construction of an access track to the pond on the east side of the single track road to the site (Hannaford 1994). The excavation revealed wall foundations interpreted as the remains of a medieval fish house and an overlying building of some pretensions which it was suggested might have been a lodge or gatehouse from the late 16th or early 17th century. However the excavations were limited to a watching brief and the identification of the medieval fish house and the interpretation of the later building as a lodge or gatehouse are not secure (see Section 5.2.3).

After the 1907 excavation campaign of Brakspear and St John Hope, the next major excavations within the claustral area took place in 1958 under the direction of Reay Robertson Mackay. He excavated two trenches to the west of the abbot's hall on behalf of the Ministry of Works to examine the foundations of an earlier building first exposed in 1907 (West and Palmer 2002, 77-88). The 1958 excavation established this was an earlier abbot's hall dating from the mid-13th century and the results of this excavation will be published in the forthcoming English Heritage monograph. The 1975-1979 excavations directed by Jeffrey West for the Department of the Environment encompassed the north part of the cloister, the south transept and the south part of the choir of the abbey church, and had the dual purpose of recovering the plan of the cloister walk and re-examining the early church identified by the 1907 excavation (West and Palmer 2002). The excavation resulted in a relatively closely-dated sequence for the development of the church beginning with a small cruciform chapel which was in existence by about 1100. The excavations will be described briefly in the following section and are to be fully published in the forthcoming English Heritage monograph.

The English Heritage survey of 2002 is the most comprehensive analysis and survey of the earthworks to be undertaken to date. It has considerably advanced understanding of the medieval abbey and of changes after the Dissolution when it was converted into a private residence and afterwards incorporated into a landscape park. In view of the historical study recently completed by Dr Phillipotts, further documentary research undertaken in support of the fieldwork was limited to a review of the secondary sources and readily available primary sources, particularly maps and plans.

4. HISTORY OF THE SITE

4.1 Before the abbey

There are no documentary references to the site before the 12th century, and archaeological evidence is sparse. The 1975-79 excavations found a small number of pre-medieval artefacts including Roman and Saxon pottery but not in sufficient quantities to point to permanent occupation of the site (West and Palmer 2002, 398). However, with Ebury hillfort just over a kilometre to the north and the Roman town of Wroxeter some 7km to the south, it is entirely possible that the area was exploited as agricultural land in the Iron Age and Roman periods. Dr Phillpotts has concluded from the place-name evidence that a wide tract of land to the east of the River Severn reverted to woodland after the end of the Roman period but that this was progressively cleared from west to east during the 10th and 11th centuries (Phillpotts 2002, 13-14). By the time of the Norman Conquest, the site of the abbey was probably on the edge of the woodland clearances and in the following century the abbey itself continued the clearance process, particularly to the east and north. The name Haughmond does not occur until after the conquest and its derivation has proved difficult to interpret. The most recent scholarly analysis suggests the meaning is either 'hill with enclosures' or 'hill characterised by haws' although both suggestions require the otherwise unparalleled use of the element *-man* to mean a hill (Gelling 1990, 148-150).

4.2 The medieval abbey c1100-1539 (Figure 9)

The origins and early development of the abbey are poorly documented as there is no foundation charter and few references to the site in the first half of the 12th century. The available documentary sources indicate there was an Augustinian priory at Haughmond in the 1130s and 1140s which was elevated to the status of an abbey before 1153. Archaeology has extended the chronology back in time with the discovery of a small cruciform stone church below the south transept and north-east cloister of the later abbey (West and Palmer 2002, 95-128). In its second phase this church probably served the priory but the first structure was not associated with any claustral buildings and its status is still open to debate. The possibility has been raised that the first church may have belonged to an eremetical community founded by the year 1100 (Chibnall 1973, 63; Phillpotts 2002, 7-8). The 1975-79 excavations found a small cemetery of 24 graves (including two child burials) immediately to the west of the church, suggesting that in its earliest phase the establishment may have ministered to the wider community.

The patron of the first religious community at Haughmond was probably one of the three individuals who were successively Sheriff of Shropshire in the late 11th and early 12th century. The last of these, Alan fitz Flaald was succeeded as sheriff by his son William FitzAlan I who almost certainly promoted the elevation of the religious house to the status of a priory sometime between 1125-38 at which time its members probably adopted the Augustinian rule (Phillpotts 2002, 8-9). The Augustinians were the largest of the new religious orders which emerged on the continent in the second half of the 11th century. They were part of a movement to return to the monastic ideals of poverty, celibacy and communal life first espoused by St Augustine at the beginning of the 5th century. The first Augustinian communities appeared in England in the late 11th century and the number of foundations grew rapidly during the first

half of the 12th century. Nearly half of the Augustinian houses founded during this period occupied the sites of earlier religious establishments and at Haughmond the elevation of the site to a priory has been linked quite reasonably to excavation evidence for a second phase of building (Phillipotts 2002, 8). This involved the addition of a small cloister and possibly a chapter house to the south of the church and the extension of the nave to the west. There is no documentary evidence of this re-building but it seems fairly certain that other conventual buildings would have been added at this time as the community adopted the regular observances of the Augustinian rule.

The third major change in the status of the site occurred before 1153 when it was elevated from a priory to an abbey, one of only nine Augustinian priories to achieve this (Robinson 1980, 25). The new foundation was given substantial gifts of land by William FitzAlan II in 1155 who may have wanted to encourage Haughmond to grow to the maximum permitted size of 24 canons. This number was probably never achieved, as there were only 13 or so canons in residence after the middle of the 14th

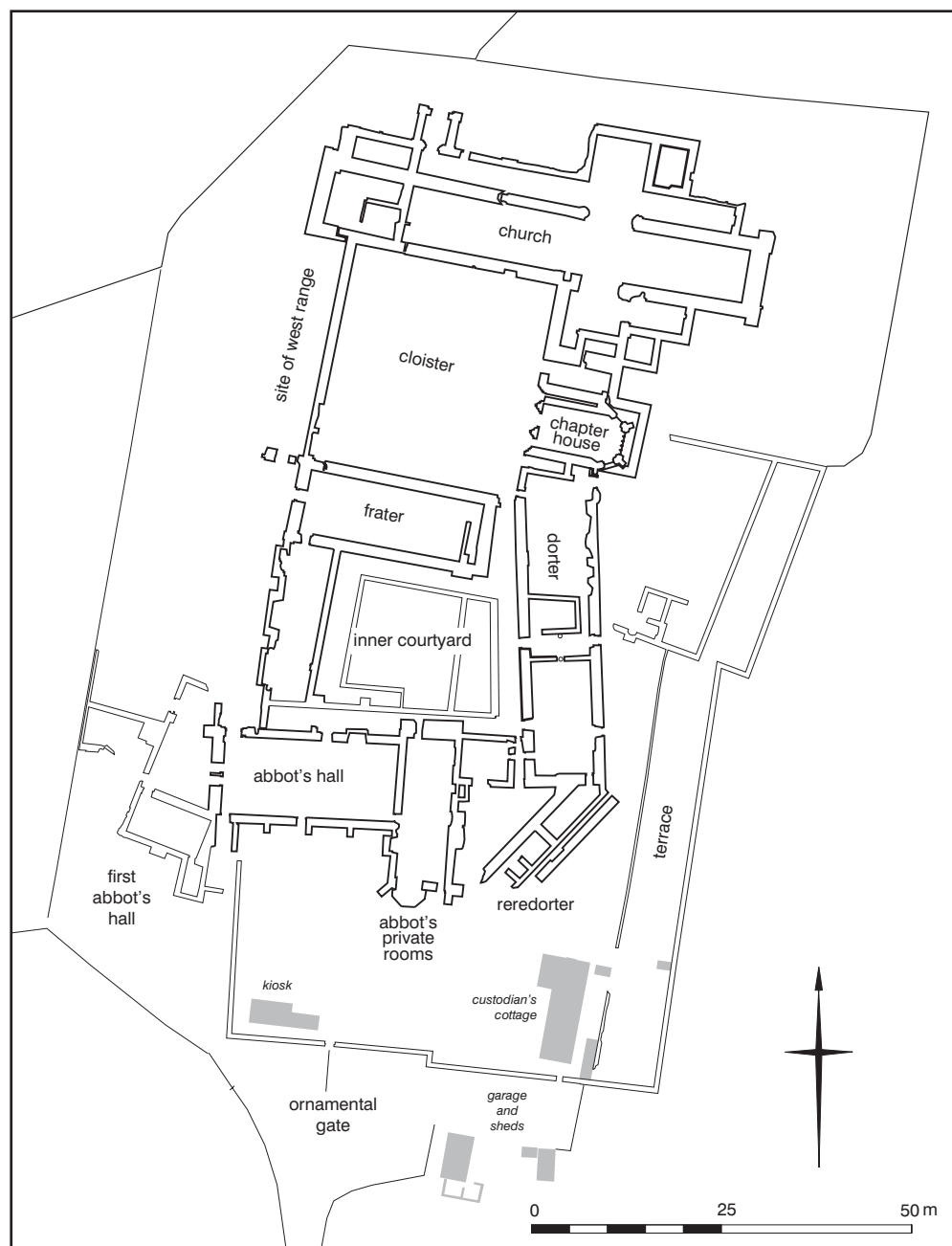


Figure 9.
The principal
buildings of the
medieval abbey

century, although it has been pointed out that the scale of the abbey suggests a larger number was at one time anticipated (Chibnall 1973, 65). The priory church seems to have continued in use for some 30 years after the founding of the abbey but excavation evidence indicates major rebuilding took place around the year 1180. The work involved the total demolition of the existing church and its replacement by a much larger building slightly to its north. The builders overcame the natural restrictions of the site by cutting back into the rock outcrops at the foot of the escarpment to accommodate a presbytery on the east and by stepping the choir and nave down the more gentle slope to the west. In all there are four major changes in height along the length of the building. In addition, the ground had to be built up along the slope to the south of the new church to make a level area for an enlarged cloister (West and Palmer 2002, 128-136).

Although there is little documentary or excavation evidence for the development of the rest of the abbey, it is thought that the principal ranges were in existence by 1190. These consisted of the frater on the south side of the cloister and the chapter house and dorter on the east. The dorter extended southwards beyond the frater and at its south end joined with the reredorter range built over the abbey's main drain. Sections of wall on the east side of the dorter are built off living rock and the building as a whole is at an angle to the rest of the claustral complex. It is thought that the building was aligned along the contours of the slope in order to minimise the amount of cut and fill needed at the foot of the escarpment (West and Palmer 2002, 41). A high wall on the west side of the cloister is all that remains above ground of the west range, apart from an earthwork bank continuing the line of the north side of the frater. The identity of the building represented by this wall and earthwork has not been firmly established, apart from the fact that the standing wall indicates it had two storeys. The site of the infirmary, referred to several times in the late 12th century, has not been located although the usual position to the east of the claustral range can be ruled out at Haughmond because of the steep rocky slope (Burton 1994, 145).

The abbey prospered throughout the 13th and 14th centuries as it continued to enjoy the patronage of the FitzAlan family, although their power base shifted from Shropshire to the south of England after they succeeded to the earldom of Arundel in 1243. Despite this, members of the family continued to be buried at Haughmond until the middle of the 14th century as they regarded the abbey as their family monastery (Chibnall 1973, 64). Members of the Lestrangle family from Shropshire were also prominent benefactors to the abbey from the 12th century until well into the 15th century. The prosperity and influence which the patronage of these two families brought to the head of the Haughmond Abbey is reflected in the impressive range of buildings which were constructed for the use of the abbot in the 13th century on the south side of the abbey. Described recently as a major example of local domestic architecture, in its final phase the range consisted of an east-west hall for formal gatherings and meetings connecting with a separate residence for the abbot to its east, and formed the south side of what was effectively a private, inner courtyard (Emery 2000, 545). Around 1500, Abbot Pontesbury added impressive bay windows to the south side of his private residence on both the ground and first floors, although only the ground floor window now survives. Early in the 14th century, a kitchen range was added along the west side of the inner courtyard to serve both the frater and the abbots hall whilst on the east side a cross-passage below the dormitory gave access from the inner courtyard to a garden at the foot of the escarpment. The garden was probably laid out by Nicholas of Longnor, who was abbot between 1325 and

1346, since the area was referred to as 'Longnor's garden' in 1459. The same document also mentions a dovecote in the garden (Rees 1985, no 459).

The construction of the buildings referred to above around the south and west sides of the inner courtyard marked the last major addition to the abbey. Elsewhere on the site, analysis of the standing remains suggests there were few changes to the claustral ranges after the end of the 12th century. The only major alterations to the church involved the addition of a north aisle in the early 13th century and the shortening of the west end of the nave around 1500. The chapter house was also extensively rebuilt with the construction of a polygonal east end and the insertion of an ornate wooden ceiling. These alterations were dated by St John Hope and Brakspear to after the Dissolution but are now thought to date to around 1500 (St John Hope and Brakspear 1909, 296-7; West and Palmer 2002, 35).

References to the 'abbey wall' in several 13th and 14th century documents indicate that the abbey was situated within its own enclosure, although the surviving documents give no information about the alignment of this boundary (Phillpotts 2002, 34). The gate is referred to on several occasions since it was the practice to distribute alms to the poor at the gate and to receive the infirm. Consequently, there may have been an almonry or hospital adjacent to the gate whilst in 1536 a newly built dwelling house is mentioned where the janitor resided. There was also a pigsty outside the gate in 1332 (Phillpotts 2002, 33-34). There is no indication in these documents of where the gate stood, but traces were reportedly noted at the beginning of the last century 400 feet to the north of the church (St John Hope and Brakspear 1909, 284). There is also very little documentary information about the internal layout of the precinct or the buildings that it contained. At the Dissolution, two areas of pasture totalling ten acres and called the Abbot's Park and the Convent Park are mentioned within the walls of the monastery and indicate an internal division (Phillpotts 2002, 36). A dairyhouse, barns, stables, a brewhouse and a bakehouse are mentioned at various times and the home farm of the abbey might have been located here also, although it is not specifically mentioned in the documentary sources. There would also have been accommodation for the monastic servants who are recorded as living within the precinct and worshipping at the abbey church and possibly a guesthouse, although important visitors were probably accommodated by the abbot within his residence. The medieval documents are silent on the provision of the water supply to the abbey and there is no definite mention of any mills or fishponds in the immediate vicinity of the abbey.

The abbey's landholdings were mainly confined to Shropshire and were acquired through a combination of bequests, exchanges and purchases. The abbey established a series of dependent granges throughout the county to manage their more consolidated blocks of land. By the middle of the 13th century there were 16 of these of which the nearest to the abbey were at Homebarne Grange, 3km to the north-east and at Saunderton 2km to the north-west (Phillpotts 2002, 28). The abbey also held properties in the town of Shrewsbury, from where the main route to the abbey would have passed the grange at Saunderton and approached the outer precinct from the north. There were also routes called the Rodenway and Middlehokesway which converged at the south-east corner of the abbey. The Rodenway came from the north from the direction of Haughton whilst the Middlehokesway led south-east to Hunkington (Phillpotts 2002, 17-18).

4.3 The Barker Residence 1539-c1650

The abbey was dissolved in September 1539 and was sold to a local landowner called Edward Littleton who immediately began the demolition of the church. The present form of the ruins owes much to the selective demolition which then occurred to transform the remainder of the abbey into a grand private residence described in 1548 as a ‘capital messuage and manor place.’ At this date the then owner, Sir Rowland Hill, conferred the site on his newly-married nephew, John Barker and the property remained with the Barker family until the English Civil War (Phillpotts 2002, 39). They resided in the former abbot’s hall and private rooms, presumably because these were the most commodious and lavishly appointed buildings within the abbey. Both structures shows signs of alterations in the Tudor period in keeping with their use as private accommodation (Emery 2000, 545-547). Other buildings existed to the north of the main house although their date and precise function remain unclear. An ornate timber building occupied the space left by the demolition of the east end of the frater and is shown on an 18th-century view, where the style of the construction suggests a late 16th-century date (Phillpotts 2002, 40). A building at the south-west corner of the cloister incorporated the lavatorium and extended into the west end of the frater and it has been suggested that this structure was associated with a garden of c1600 discovered during the 1975-79 excavation in the area of the cloister (West and Palmer 2002, 157-161). The garden was open to the north because of the demolition of the church, but was enclosed on the west by a high east wall which was the only part of the west claustral range left standing. On the east the garden was bounded by the chapter house and the remaining west wall of the dorter range to its south. An upper storey was inserted in the chapter house, which it has been suggested might have been for agricultural storage (West and Palmer 2002, 37). However, it is also possible that the building had a less utilitarian function, perhaps serving the Barker family as a garden pavilion or banqueting house, whilst St John Hope and Brakspear suggest it was a chapel (St John Hope and Brakspear 1909, 309). The windows at the east end of the chapter house looked out onto an L-shaped privy garden on the south and east sides of the Barker house. This garden was enclosed on the west by the east wall of the dorter range and on the other sides by a high stone wall constructed by the Barker family from the south-west corner of the former abbot’s hall around to the east side of the chapter house. There is an ornamental gate, little wider than a doorway, on the south side which formally carried the initials of the Barker family on a pediment above the opening, although this lettering no longer survives (Pidgeon 1867, 18).

The Barker family had interests in cereal production and timber and may also have enclosed a wide tract of land around the abbey within a park pale. John Speed’s map of Shropshire of 1611 shows this park very schematically with the abbey at its centre (British Library 1988, 154-155). However, about 1644 the Barker family moved from Haughmond to their nearby house at Albrightlee (Figure 2). There is mention of a fire at Haughmond at around this time, although no trace of any fire destruction has ever been noted on any of the standing remains or during the excavation (Phillpotts 2002, 42).

4.4 The farm c1650-c1800

With the departure of the Barkers the site appears to have declined in importance reducing to the status of a tenanted farm. The timber building at the east end of the frater was perhaps retained as the farmhouse, whilst the former abbot's hall and private rooms were presumably left to decay. A barn was constructed in the north-

east corner of the cloister in the second half of the eighteenth century and a cobbled yard constructed over the remains of the ornamental garden, whilst other buildings were erected to the south of the frater (West and Palmer 2002, 161-166). By 1750 the chapter house was used as a stable (West and Palmer 2002, 35). The farm continued until about 1800 when it was moved by the then owner, John Corbet, to the present Haughmond Farm in order to make the site more accessible to visitors (Pidgeon 1867, 22).

4.5 The Sundorne landscape park (c1740-c1850) and later history



Figure 10. Haughmond Abbey and its environs in 1752 from Rocque's map of Shropshire (north to the top). The abbey is represented by the two buildings at the centre of the illustration with the lake immediately adjacent to the north-west

In 1741, the site was inherited by John Corbet who incorporated the abbey into the estate centred on his newly-constructed residence, Sundorne House, just over 1km to the west. It is recorded that the ruins were whitewashed soon after John Corbet acquired the estate revealing early on the family's intention to make a landscape feature out of the remains (Phillpotts 2002, 46). John Corbet died in 1759 and was succeeded by his son, also called John, who set to work rebuilding Sundorne House employing the Edinburgh architect and landscape designer, Robert Mylne. As well as additions to the house in 1774, Mylne was responsible for creating a large ornamental lake on its west side and for building a folly called Haughmond Castle some 2km to the south-east on the west side of Haughmond Hill (Stamper 1996, 49). There was evidently another lake closer to the abbey which is depicted schematically on John Rocque's map of Shropshire published in 1752 (Rocque 1752; Figure 10). The map indicates the lake was on the north-west of the survey area although it is not depicted on the first detailed map of the site in 1777. However, the accompanying description of the same area as 'meadowing part water'd and wood of young oaks' suggests it was still in existence (SRRC 3182/1).

John Corbet constructed a five-mile circular carriage drive around the landscape park at the turn of the 19th century to display the picturesque beauty and historical associations of his estate (Phillpotts 2002, 45). The abbey ruins would have been one focus of interest along with Mylne's castle folly on the hillside and there would also have been various views of Sundorne House. The area was also on the eastern fringe of the Battle of Shrewsbury fought in 1403. The tradition that Queen Eleanor is supposed to have viewed the fighting from the crest of Haughmond Hill

(commemorated by the name Queen Eleanor's Bower) probably added to the historical drama of the tour around the estate. Starting from Sundorne House and its ornamental lake, the carriage drive turned eastwards through a woodland belt to the base of Haughmond Hill where a diversion was possible to view the ramparts of Ebury hillfort. The drive then continued southwards through woodland along the side of the hill, passing close to the east side of the abbey ruins and over the Shrewsbury to Newport turnpike road to Haughmond Castle. This vantage point may have been used as a lodge or a hunting box and marked the furthest point of the carriage drive (Stamper 1996, 49). From here the route turned westwards away from the hill, and after crossing the turnpike a second time, returned to Sundorne House along the side of the lake. The drive was mainly created from existing tracks and footpaths though a new route had to be engineered to take it along the slope above the abbey. From here a diversion would have been possible to inspect the ruins at close quarters, especially since Corbet had repaired the fabric and cleared the farm from the site. The farm was rebuilt at the top of the escarpment in Barn Field and is now Haughmond Farm, whilst a cottage on the site of the abbey kitchens was rebuilt in the early 19th century and leased out as a private residence. The intention may have been to keep a permanent presence on the site to deter further robbing of the remains (Phillipotts 2002, 46).

Samuel Ashdown of Uffington surveyed the estate in 1841, by which date the southern boundary lay along the Shrewsbury to Newport Road indicating the loss of the area to the south (Ashdown 1841). The reduction in the size of the estate may have occurred as early as 1833 and by the middle of the century the Corbet fortunes were in decline (Stamper 1993, 410-411). The then owner, Andrew Corbet, moved out of Sundorne House to a residence at Pimley leaving only two servants to care for the house by opening windows and lighting the fires (Elrington 1989, 209). With the reduction in the size of the estate, the carriage drive may also have gradually gone out of use. The 1841 survey map shows it still open, but by 1881 the First Edition Ordnance Survey map indicates the route had been severed by the construction of a walled track to the north of the abbey beginning at Sundorne and leading up the escarpment to Haughmond Farm (Figure 6). The 1850s also witnessed the first recorded archaeological excavations at the site, followed by a more extensive campaign between 1907 and 1908 (as was discussed above). The estate itself was broken up during the first decades of the 20th century, which included the demolition of most of Sundorne House in 1955 (Williams 1988, 7). Haughmond Abbey ruins passed into the guardianship of the state in 1931 and soon afterwards the cottage on the site of the abbey kitchens was removed and the ruins cleared of the orchard, ash paths and kitchen garden used by the tenant. A new custodian's cottage, which still stands, was built in the south-east corner of the site.

5. DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE EARTHWORKS

5.1 Introduction

The English Heritage analytical field survey of Haughmond Abbey has recorded a complex, multi-period landscape, many elements of which are new discoveries (Figure 11). The remains divide into four broad chronological groups with phasing based mainly on observed stratigraphical relationships between features, supported by an analysis of the documentary sources, in particular the cartographic evidence relating to the site. The survey found no pre-medieval remains and therefore the first earthwork phase relates to the period of the medieval abbey.

The survey succeeded in tracing the entire course of the monastic precinct and as a result the full extent of the medieval abbey is now understood for the first time, revising previous assumptions which had entered the record (see Section 5.2.1). The boundary is variably preserved around the perimeter but sufficient survives to indicate it was mostly defined by a stone wall except on the west side where it was aligned along the west stream. The only gate identified by the field survey is on the north side of the precinct and is associated with several other structures (Section 5.2.2).

The area within the precinct is discussed in Section 5.2.3. In broad terms the escarpment preserves medieval quarry remains as well as evidence of the main water supply to the abbey. A series of medieval enclosures for livestock was identified on the high ground to the east. However, the low ground to the west of the claustral range which is potentially where most of the ancillary domestic, agricultural and industrial buildings would have stood, is largely devoid of definite medieval surface remains, apart from the route from the gate to the abbey. There is also the strong possibility of inner and outer courts to the west of the church but otherwise the plan of this part of the abbey is still largely unresolved.

A complex area of earthworks to the north of the precinct is discussed in Section 5.2.4. This area was previously interpreted as a post-medieval garden but the survey has conclusively demonstrated that the majority of the remains are medieval and of several phases, and indicative of an expansion of monastic activity outside the precinct.

The second period represented by the earthworks relates to the century after the Dissolution when the abbey was a private residence (Section 5.3). Throughout the report this is referred to as the Barker residence as this family occupied the house between 1548 and about 1650, although there was a brief period immediately after the Dissolution when others held the site. Various elements of the monastic layout were retained and incorporated in the grounds of the house, particularly on the south and west, where an extensive garden was laid out across the former monastic inner court. The discovery of this garden is particularly significant as it provides the context for the system of leats and ponds on the escarpment immediately above. In the past these features have been uncritically accepted as part of the monastic water supply.

The century after 1740, when the site was part of a wider landscape park associated with Sundorne House, is discussed in Section 5.4. This third period in the development of the site is represented by a large earthwork dam on the north-west side of the site which was constructed to form an extensive ornamental lake and by the carriage



Figure 11. English Heritage plan of Haughmond Abbey and its immediate environs (reduced from 1:1000 scale original)

drive along the escarpment which John Corbet established around the year 1800. There is also evidence for a subsidiary route linking viewpoints to the north and west of the abbey (for clarity in this report is referred as the abbey carriage drive). Finally, Section 5.5 deals with tracks, buildings and other evidence of the agricultural landscape after the Dissolution. Dating is not precise with any of these features as the land has been cultivated continuously since the Dissolution, although it is known that the farm was moved from the site of the abbey in 1800. Most of the remains probably date to the 18th and 19th centuries and so, although they are deemed to fall into the fourth and final period, some features are bound to overlap with the period of the landscape park and perhaps even that of the earlier Barker residence.

5.2 The medieval abbey c1100-1539

5.2.1 The precinct boundary (Figure 12)

The precinct boundary of Haughmond Abbey is rarely referred to in contemporary documents, and prior to the English Heritage survey had not been investigated in any detail on the ground. The precise course of the boundary around the entire perimeter of the abbey is now understood and it is clear that the stone wall along the crest of the escarpment does not define the east side of the precinct as had previously been assumed (English Heritage 1997). This wall is not shown on the 1777 survey and is probably contemporary with the later development of the landscape park in the early 1800s. Constructional details of the monastic precinct boundary were recorded for the first time including a surviving section of wall on the south side. The position of the gatehouse referred to in earlier accounts on the north side has now been located along with several adjacent structures not previously recorded.

In plan terms, the precinct defines quite a regularly-shaped five-sided enclosure of some 10.4ha (25 acres). In overall terms, it is narrowest on the south and widest at the north and was laid out in straight sections. The gate is central to the north side of the precinct. At the south, the boundary was aligned so as to bring several springs within the precinct, and similarly at the east where the catchment area for the pond at the head of the reredorter drain was secured by taking the precinct above the escarpment. At the west, the west stream was diverted to define the precinct boundary whilst on the north-east side the precinct extends far enough to include the last high ground before the escarpment levels off to the north.

The plan of the precinct is more likely the result of a single act of planning rather than piecemeal growth over a prolonged period but the date when it was laid out is not recorded. It is likely, though, to have been sometime after Haughmond was elevated to the status of an abbey around the year 1150 because prior to that the community was probably too small to have needed such an extensive precinct and possibly would not have had the resources to construct it. The 1975-79 excavations revealed that the church and cloister were rebuilt on a much larger scale during the 1180s and it may be that the precinct dates from this period of planned expansion.

The only information about the form of the precinct contained in medieval sources is the mention of a wall on the south-east side (Phillpotts 2002, 18). The survey has identified a 10m long section of drystone wall on the south side of the precinct which could well be a remnant of the monastic boundary wall (Figure 13). It is a well-coursed wall, averaging 1m thick and 1.5m high, and built with narrow stones. It is abutted at its west end by a much more roughly constructed stone wall typical of the

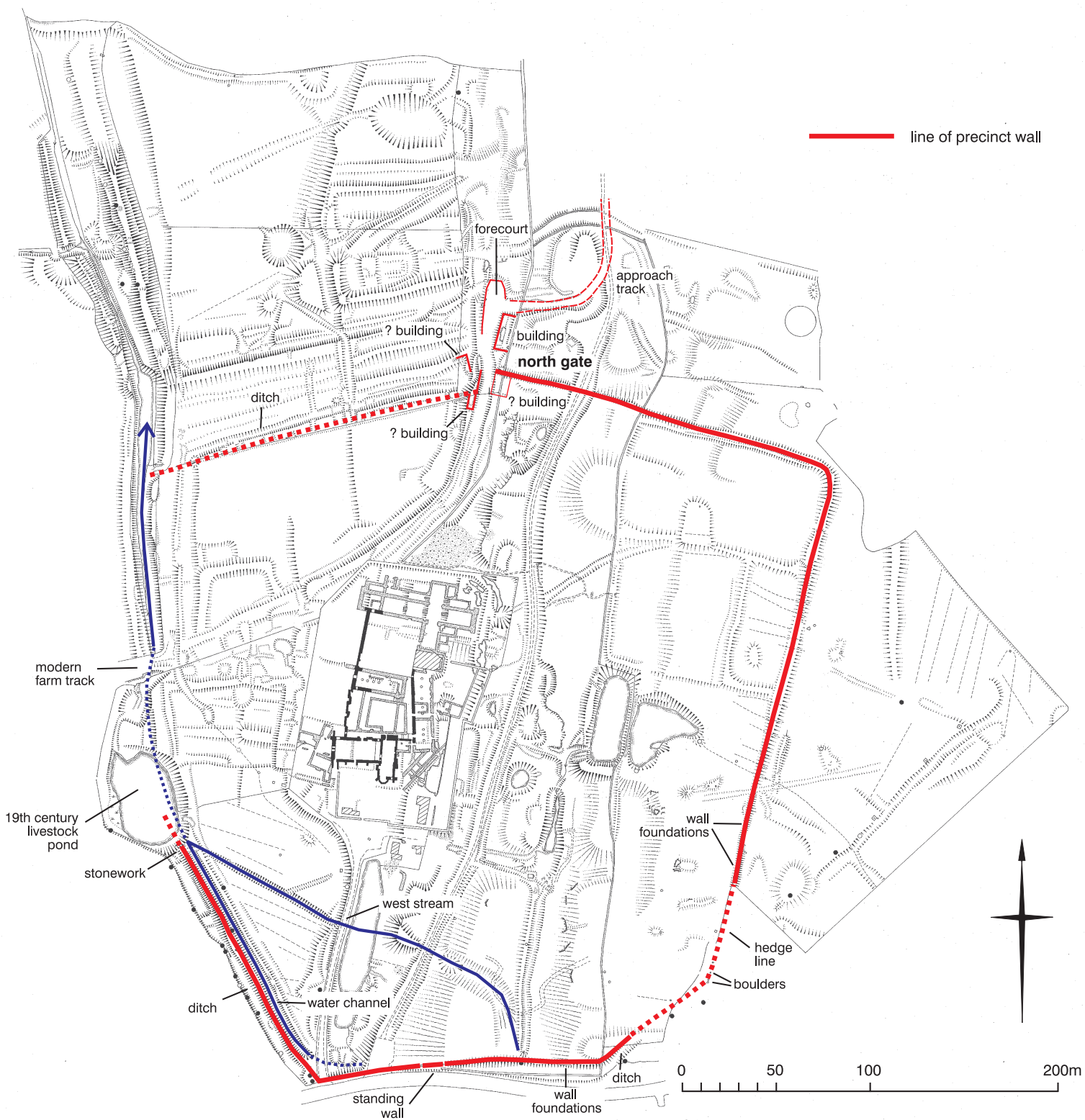


Figure 12. Plan showing features associated with the precinct boundary and the north gate

later field boundaries found elsewhere around the site. These field walls contain some re-used stone from the abbey ruins whereas crucially the better quality section of walling does not. This in itself suggests that it was built before the destruction of the abbey and the fact that it is on the line of the precinct boundary argues in favour of it being a surviving fragment of the original monastic wall.

The perimeter of the precinct is now mostly defined by a bank representing the collapsed remains of the stone wall. There are obvious gaps where the bank has been destroyed but it is more questionable if there was ever a wall on the west side along the section where the west stream was diverted to define the boundary. There is certainly no evidence of any *in-situ* masonry or any indication of a bank except on the south-west, south of the point where the stream formed the boundary. In sections where rock was not too close to the surface, that is on the north-west, south-west and south sides, the precinct also had an external ditch, indeed on the north-west side only the ditch survives. The intensity of ploughing probably explains the loss of the bank in this section, as there is some evidence to suggest a wall once existed here. It is possible that the precinct boundary continued in use after the Dissolution to define the grounds of the Barker residence, and perhaps this explains why it has survived reasonably intact as a landscape feature.



*Figure 13.
The possible
standing section of
precinct wall viewed
from the north*

South side

There is no trace of the precinct boundary across the access road to the abbey or the Forest Enterprise car park to its east, although a slight north-facing slope between the two may represent the inside face of the bank. The precinct boundary emerges on the east side of the car park ascending the side of the escarpment where it is defined first by a later field wall and then by the surviving section of possible monastic wall described above. To the east, the two walls diverge and the precinct boundary resumes as a fairly low stony bank to the north of the later field wall as it climbs to the crest

of the slope. The coursed foundations of the precinct wall are visible for a short stretch along the outside edge of the bank, but the bank disappears immediately after the junction with the later field wall along the crest of the escarpment. The greater height of the outside face of the bank compared to the inside indicates that the bank is aligned along the inner edge of the external ditch although the outside edge of the ditch no longer survives.

East side

The crest of the escarpment marks the point where the precinct turned northwards but all that survives is the external ditch which continues into the pasture field above the top of the slope. This disappears after 20m but further on, there are several large boulders in an adjacent garden which could conceivably be from the foundations of the precinct wall. The hedge at the rear of the neighbouring garden to the north probably picks out the continued line of the precinct but nothing of the bank or wall survives. The only well-preserved section of bank in the pasture field is immediately to the north of this hedge. Here the bank, which has a generally stony feel, stands nearly a metre high and several sections of a single course of wall foundation are visible on the inside face. The remainder of the bank on the east side has been much reduced by improvement ploughing, field drainage and trampling by livestock and is now a very low spread earthwork.

North-east side

Like the east side, the north-east side of the precinct boundary in the pasture field is also poorly preserved and has become very spread. A central furrow along the length of the spread bank is possibly connected with later drainage of the field and has contributed to the spread nature of the earthwork. The boundary is better preserved in the woodland below the crest of the escarpment, although a 15m long section was destroyed half way down when the Sundorne carriage drive was constructed c1800. Additionally, the first 5m of bank at the top of the slope has been reduced in height and width by robbing, presumably for stone for the adjacent field wall. However, the remainder of the bank down to the site of the gate is reasonably well preserved at up to 1m high and 4m wide. Here, there is the distinct impression of a collapsed stone wall as the bank is quite stony in places and several large stones are visible. Below the carriage drive a ridge of bedrock running down the slope gives the impression of a wide external ditch and a counterscarp bank. This appears to be an entirely natural feature, although it may have directly influenced the choice of alignment. At the western end of this section is the north gate.

North-west side

To the west of the gate, the north-west side of the precinct boundary crossed softer ground permitting the construction of an exterior ditch which now survives as a shallow depression about 5m in width with the vestiges of a counterscarp bank; however, there is very little trace surviving of the precinct wall. All definite traces of a bank representing the collapsed wall has gone, probably due to the intensity of later ploughing as indicated by several deep north-south plough ridges on the inside of the ditch. At the east, the ditch ends at the foot of a natural terrace below the site of the gate; there are vestiges of a stony bank on the slope above which may be one remnant of the precinct wall. At the west, the ditch is obliterated by a farm track close to its junction with the west stream but on the opposite side of the track, a short section of

ditch actually cuts the stream channel and may be the medieval boundary continuing. Several large stones exposed in the ruts of the same farm track may be a further remnant of the precinct wall.

The west side

The west side of the precinct boundary is the least well-defined on the ground due to later depredations including the digging of a livestock pond in the 19th century and the loss of a 10m wide section in the middle for a farm track. The boundary was also defined differently to the rest of the perimeter because it incorporated an artificial watercourse (referred to earlier as the west stream) and because of this, it is not clear if the precinct wall was continuous on this side.

The only stretch of bank indicative of a collapsed precinct wall is at the south-west. This earthwork is far more prominent than elsewhere around the precinct boundary suggesting that in this section a wall may have been built on an embankment to give it greater prominence or that it was heightened after the Dissolution to form a garden feature (Section 5.3.4). Evidence of walling is restricted to a few stones exposed in section at the north end where the livestock pond cuts across the line of the earthwork, destroying all evidence of the boundary immediately to the north. There is a fairly wide, flat-bottomed ditch on the outside of the bank, a section of which was widened after the Dissolution to form a pond, whilst there is a water channel on the inside of the bank. The channel is about 3m wide and is bounded by a second, lesser bank on the east side formed by upcast from a slight exterior ditch. The channel is now dry but was probably fed from a spring source to the south, outside the survey area. It is probably monastic in origin although it could have continued as a garden feature after the Dissolution.

The point where the livestock pond cuts across and destroys the precinct boundary is about where the main westwards drainage flow off the escarpment (the west stream) was diverted northwards into the water channel. Map evidence indicates that the livestock pond dates to between 1841 and 1881 but that it succeeded a much more regularly-formed rectangular pond shown on the 1777 plan. The north half of the earlier pond partially survives as an earthwork and is probably monastic in origin, though probably later than the precinct boundary which it replaced in this section. It is probably contemporary with the damming of the west stream to form a further pond to the east (a possible precursor of the long pond adjacent to the single track access road to the site), and therefore will be discussed later in the report (Section 5.2.3).

It is difficult to determine the original form of the boundary to the north of the monastic pond. The farm track has obliterated all traces immediately to the north of the pond and beyond continuing up to the north-west corner of the precinct, there is just the stream channel. In origin this is probably the same feature as the water channel on the south of the livestock pond, although it is much deeper and wider as it was made into an ornamental pool in the early 19th century. If this comparison is correct, then any wall would have been on the west side, but the slight bank in the field immediately to the west of the stream is more likely to result from ploughing or represent upcast from cleaning out the stream channel. Most probably the stream alone formed the boundary along this section.

5.2.2 The north gate and associated features (Figure 12)

The survey has identified only one definite medieval gate into the abbey precinct. This is located at the centre of the north side on the natural terrace at the foot of the escarpment and hereafter is referred to as the north gate. The site was first identified at the turn of the last century and the possibility of a gate here has been strengthened by recent historical research which confirms that the main approach to the abbey was from this direction (Phillpotts 2002, 17-18). There is no field evidence of any route other than the existing forest track entering the survey area from the north and therefore in all probability this represents the line of the medieval approach. A quite deeply incised hollow way on the west side of the forest track indicates where the medieval approach turned to descend the slope. The hollow way goes around the north side of a rocky knoll and beyond it to the north are short sections of two more minor tracks indicating that the main route was occasionally bypassed on the slope. At the foot of the slope, the route turned south along a natural terrace at the base of the escarpment and here the hollow way opens out on to a fairly large and unnaturally level area of ground. Elsewhere, the surface of the terrace is quite uneven with rock very close to the surface but this area has obviously been deliberately cleared of outcrops, to create a forecourt a little distance in front of the north gate. From here, the east side of the route up to the gate is visible as an erosion scar although this is not definitely medieval as continued use of this last section of the route as a farm track could well account for the feature.

The position of the gate on the terrace is indicated by an offset break in the line of the precinct boundary, with the boundary on the east side aligned 10m to the north of that on the west side. The field remains indicate the basic layout of the gate, but the superstructure remains a matter for speculation. It is possible that there was an outer archway, perhaps as much as 5m wide, between the east end of the precinct wall and a free-standing wall on the west running north to south along the outer edge of the terrace. The free-standing wall, now represented by a prominent stony bank, would have defined one side of a passage continuing south as far as the west end of the precinct wall. There would have been space for a small building on the opposite, east side of the passage. However the only structural evidence here is a short length of stonework (aligned north-south) exposed in the base of the present farm track. This line of stones is not definitely medieval although the sudden increase in the proportion of re-used squared stones in the adjacent field wall suggests there was a stone structure in this immediate vicinity. It is also possible that the entrance passage was vaulted to support a superstructure, thus creating a true gatehouse. The gate may have been retained after the Dissolution to create a formal entrance to the grounds of the Barker residence.

There is evidence of a small rectangular structure on the west side of the hollow way immediately to the south of the angle between the precinct boundary and the wall flanking the west side of the entrance passage. The building measures up to 10m north-south by 4m across and is defined by a slight stony bank on three sides and by a short kerb of stones on the north which could be the foundations of the precinct wall. Some loss has occurred on the west side due to slippage down the outer edge of the terrace. It is possible that the building is medieval and therefore associated with the north gate. The site of a second small structure, this time just outside the gate, is suggested by a right-angled bank at the base of the terrace, overlying a medieval plough ridge. There is insufficient surviving to establish the original form of the structure, but its proximity to the north gate again suggests it is likely to be medieval.

What appears to be the site of substantial building occupies the angle where the medieval track down the escarpment turns south onto the terrace and therefore on the east side of the suggested forecourt. Here an outcrop seems to have been used as a building platform, as the rock faces on the north and west sides have been cut back and straightened, whilst the top is cut by a 2m wide trench aligned north-south. This may be a robbed-out foundation trench or possibly an excavation trench from the 1907 investigation of the gate area. At the south the feature intersects with a low stony bank, possibly representing a further wall alignment, but beyond this point an uprooted tree obscures the ground. Whilst the plan is admittedly far from clear, the available evidence nevertheless suggests some form of rectangular building measuring at least 20m in length and 8m across. It is tempting to equate this building with one of those suggested by entries in the abbey cartulary, but there is clearly not the evidence available. However, the location of such a substantial building and the adjacent forecourt do indicate the development of a small extra-mural area along the approach route.

It is possible that there were other, perhaps lesser entrances into the precinct which have left no visible remains above ground. It has previously been suggested that there was a gate on the west side of the precinct where there is an existing farm track (English Heritage 1997). In support of this, the area immediately to the west was named Drawbridge Field on the 1842/3 tithe survey and the names 'Gret and Little Drawbridge Fields occur at the Dissolution, and may indicate a medieval entrance (Phillpotts 2002, 36). However, there is nothing on the ground to indicate an entrance here any earlier than the present farm track.

Another possible location for a gate is on the south of the precinct as there are documentary references to a medieval route called the Rodenway at the south-east corner of the abbey wall (Phillpotts 2002, 18). The route may have started at this point, in which case there was almost certainly a gate which has left no surface traces. However, it seems more likely that the Rodenway carried on westwards down the escarpment on the approximate line of the present Shrewsbury to Newport road. A large section of the precinct boundary has been destroyed at the bottom of the escarpment and so there is no way of knowing for certain if there was a gate at the bottom of the slope opening onto the Rodenway. It would seem unlikely though, as a route from here would have entered directly into the inner court and would have compromised the privacy and security of the abbot's residence.

5.2.3 The interior of the precinct (Figure 14)

Introduction

The west half of the precinct is relatively level, free of outcrops and has direct access to the north gate and it was probably divided into inner and outer courts, indicated by the reference to the Abbot's Park and Convent Park at the Dissolution. The two parks totalled ten acres which is the same as the west half of the precinct including the claustral area and church. The Abbot's Park conceivably includes the conventual buildings and the area to the south around the abbot's residence and is therefore equivalent to an inner court whilst the Convent Park is the area to the north and represents the outer court. The agricultural and industrial buildings needed to support the wider monastic community were generally located in the outer court whilst the

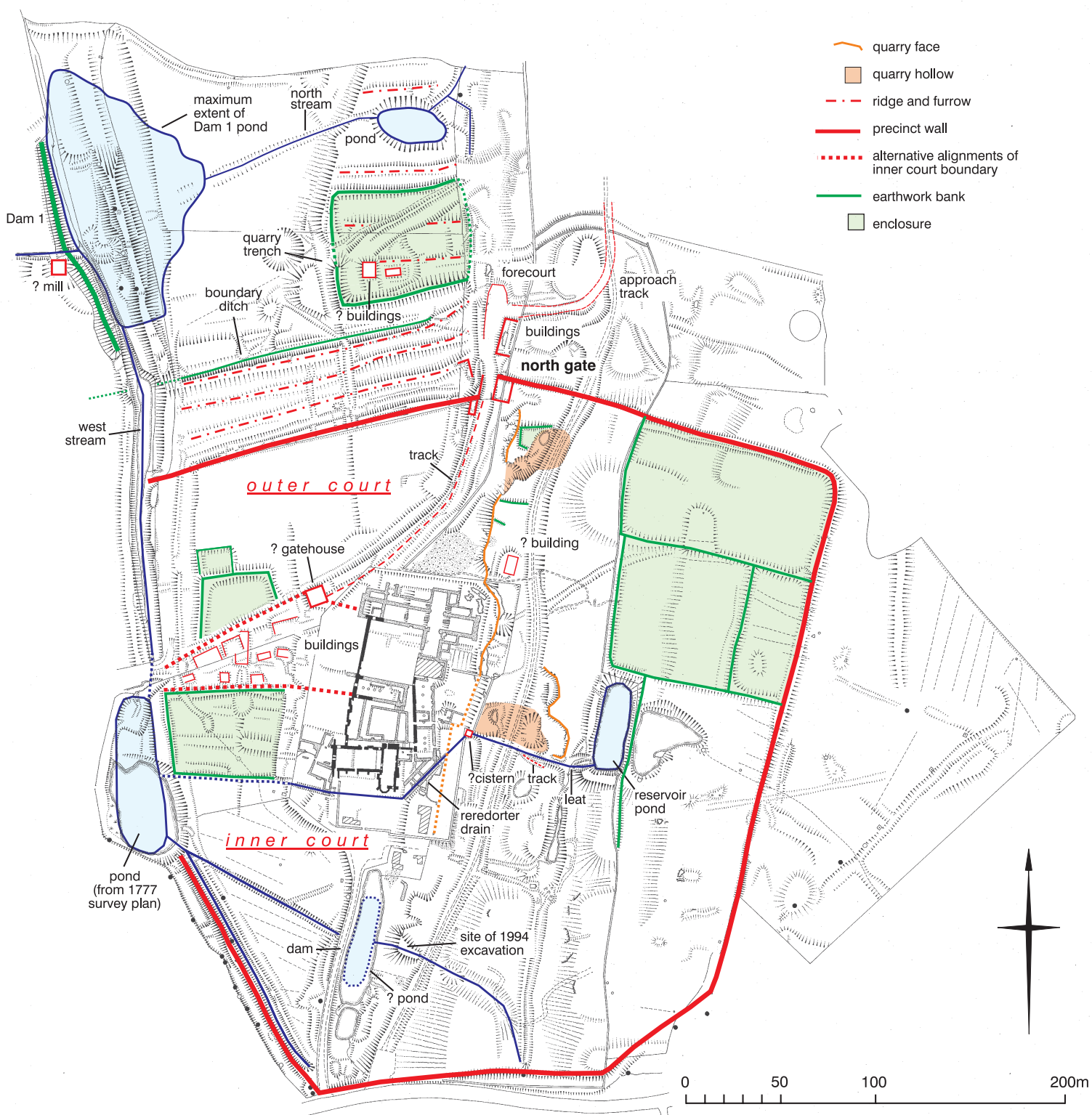


Figure 14. Plan showing medieval features within and to the north of the precinct

inner court might contain guest accommodation, a bakehouse, brewhouse and granaries (Coppack 1990, 100).

There are the earthworks of two large enclosures to the west of the claustral area which are probably medieval in origin and were probably retained as part of the grounds of the post-Dissolution house. Between them is an area of building remains which may have originated as a group of monastic structures, although most of the earthworks are demonstrably later. The medieval route to the north gate is also clear to the north of the claustral area since it continued in use after the Dissolution as the main approach to the Barker residence and afterwards became a farm track. However a large part of the area to the north and north-west of the claustral range is devoid of surface remains. Consequently, the layout of much of the area of the suggested outer court is not recoverable through field survey.

Although the escarpment and the high ground to the east account for about half the interior area of the precinct, it appears not to have been particularly intensively used during the medieval period due to the difficulty of the terrain. The escarpment preserves evidence of medieval quarrying and the engineering of the abbey water supply whilst there are a number of small enclosures on the high ground to the east, perhaps for livestock.

The claustral area

The main group of buildings on the west side of the precinct, namely the church, the claustral ranges and the abbot's residence were discussed briefly in the historical introduction to this report and will be considered in detail in the forthcoming excavation monograph. The buildings are therefore not described in this section of the report. The field survey did record a number of earthworks in association with these buildings, but they most probably relate to the general clearance and landscaping of the site in the late 19th and 20th centuries and to areas which have been excavated. The only medieval feature of any note is the broad, south-facing scarp defining the south end of the demolished west range.

The outer court

The area of the probable outer court is defined by the monastic precinct boundary on the west and north and probably by the route leading from the north gate on the east and south-east. The boundary on the south side with the inner court will be discussed in detail below. The route leading from the north gate survives as a slight hollow way which for the first 70m within the precinct heads southwards, following the rocky terrace at the foot of the escarpment. On the east side, outcrops have clearly been cut back to create a level passage and on the west there is the collapsed remains of a drystone wall. This is probably a post-medieval field boundary and appears to be depicted on the maps of 1777 and 1841. There is no evidence that it is a medieval wall to screen the precinct from visitors as has been suggested in the past (English Heritage 1997). The track turns to the south-west to run off the terrace and onto a slight artificial ramp shortly after which it divides. The deeper of the two hollow ways continues in a south-westerly direction, whilst the second heads more directly south, seemingly in the direction of the north porch of the abbey church. However, the latter route is not definitely medieval, as it is probably the remnants of a track leading to the 18th century barn found by excavation in the north-west corner of the cloister. The hollow way is aligned on the west processional door of the church

which the barn utilised as a loading bay with a cobbled area on its north side (West and Palmer 2002, 161-166). The main hollow way, which turns to the south-west, ends 15m to the west of the church and westwards beyond this point the track changes character to become a wide, rounded bank. This probably represents an extension of the route to form the abbey carriage drive around the year 1800, although it may have earlier origins as the inner court boundary as will be discussed below.

The only major earthwork feature visible within the suggested outer court is a large embanked enclosure to the west of the claustral complex which is overlain on the south by the abbey carriage drive. This enclosure has been heavily ploughed down and now has very low spread banks about 10m wide. The size of the banks suggests the perimeter originally stood to a substantial height and it was therefore probably more than simply a livestock enclosure and might have surrounded one or more buildings, although there are no internal features evident which might indicate this. Although the date of the enclosure is not firmly established as medieval, there is a strong possibility that it formed part of the monastic outer court although its survival probably indicates that it was retained within the grounds of the post-Dissolution house. There is a second, much smaller enclosure on the north-west side of the large enclosure, which again is defined by very low, spread banks and is probably a livestock pen. A slight terrace, probably associated with this enclosure, leads northwards from the north-west corner of the enclosure to the north-west side of the precinct. There is also a short section of a very truncated east-west bank on the edge of the slope above the west stream. It is aligned with the north side of the large enclosure and therefore may be contemporary with it. Apart from two long scarps running north to south the remainder of the outer court is completely devoid of earthworks. The intensity of recent ploughing may have contributed to this but it is also possible that the area up to the north-west precinct boundary was deliberately levelled after the Dissolution. The two north-south scarps probably represent land divisions post-dating the suggested levelling of the area.

The inner court boundary and associated buildings

The medieval route leading from the north gate ends at a prominent rectangular mound some 0.5m in height. This is probably a building platform and the 1777 map depicts a fairly large, rectangular structure at approximately this point. The relationship between the building platform and the approach route to the abbey raises the possibility that the structure could have been a gatehouse leading into the suggested inner court. The fact that it appears to have survived to be mapped in 1777 suggests that if it is interpreted correctly as a gatehouse, it was deliberately retained to serve as a formal entrance to the Barker residence.

The inner court boundary, (probably a free-standing stone wall), would presumably have led eastwards from the suggested gatehouse to end approximately at the south-west corner of the abbey church. However there is no earthwork evidence of any boundary surviving. In the opposite direction, the inner court wall may be the origin of the wide, spread bank which in its final form represents the abbey carriage drive which was constructed c1800. The bank is a substantial feature about 10m wide and up to 1.5m high. The 1777 estate map shows that before that date there was just a field boundary, although with a curving line that is not now evident on the ground. It is this field boundary that could represent the line of the medieval inner court wall but all surface evidence has been lost with the construction of the embankment for the carriage drive.

Alternatively, the inner court boundary may have been some 40m further to the south and represented by the bank defining the north side of the southern of the two earthwork enclosures. This boundary, (but not the enclosure), is shown on the 1777 survey where it is depicted continuing further eastwards than today to the west side of what is probably the frater. This demonstrates that the feature had an importance beyond that of the enclosure on its south side and this may be evidence that it began as the inner court boundary wall.

The area of building remains to the west of the claustral range represents a group of structures arranged along either the inside or the outside of the inner court wall, depending on which of the two alternative alignments discussed above is the actual boundary. The 1777 survey shows several structures in this area which may indicate monastic buildings continuing in use as farm buildings whilst the field evidence suggests in their final form some of these structures are probably quite late, perhaps even 19th century. However, it seems highly probable that they originated as a group of monastic buildings arranged next to the inner court boundary.

Of the five structures forming the north half of the group, four are defined by shallow rectangular depressions and the fifth is a rectangular platform. All are demonstrably later than the embankment for the abbey carriage drive as the building platform overlies the bank and the other four cut its south edge. In their final form therefore, these particular buildings probably date to after 1800. There is also chronology evident within this line of buildings. The building platform is oblique to the four other structures and is cut by one of them, indicating it is earlier.

The buildings in the south half of the group are represented by four sub-rectangular hollows associated with several slight banks and irregular depressions. The remains are poorly preserved on the surface but represent a group of small buildings perhaps with associated yard areas represented by the banks and irregular depressions. There is no chronology evident between any of these features, but a linear depression, possibly a path or track, cuts southwards across the bank defining the rectangular enclosure to the south. It opens out into a wide hollow in the interior, and thus cuts terraces within the enclosure which are interpreted as part of a garden layout from the period of the Barker residence. This suggests that there was some occupation after the abandonment of the Barker garden but it does not rule out the possibility that these structures originated in the medieval period.

The inner court

The north side of the inner court probably followed one of the two possible alignments discussed above. At the east, the inner court may have extended as far as the natural boundary created by the base of the escarpment, and on the south and west would have been defined by the outer precinct of the abbey.

The rectangular enclosure (the north side of which may represent the inner court boundary) has been heavily overploughed and consequently earthwork preservation is quite poor. The enclosure is defined by a low bank on the north and west sides and by an inward facing slope on the south. At the east, the enclosure ends at a sharply defined terrace which seems to overlie subdivisions within the enclosure and therefore is probably not the original perimeter. It is possible that the terrace results from the levelling of spoil from the clearance of the abbey ruins and that originally the enclosure continued further eastwards. As was mentioned above, on the 1777 survey, the

boundary defining the north side of the enclosure is shown continuing to the west side of the frater. The terraces within the enclosure indicate its final use was as a formal garden, probably belonging to the Barker residence. It is possible that it was a garden in the medieval period, perhaps more likely a kitchen garden than anything more formal because of the proximity of the abbot's kitchens immediately to the east. Alternatively it may have contained some of the buildings of the inner court.

To the south of the abbot's residence, it is conceivable that the long pond and the outlet channel on its west side have monastic origins, even though in their final form they are part of the landscape of the Barker residence as will be discussed below (Section 5.3.3). The engineered supply of water to the long pond is the work of the Barker family but a monastic predecessor could have been created by damming the natural drainage off the escarpment indicated by the two gullies on the slope immediately to the east. This drainage came together at the foot of the slope to form the west stream. The present single track access road to the site is aligned along the top of the dam forming the long pond and it is possible therefore that at least part of this earthwork is medieval.

The context for bringing the natural drainage off the slope under managed control was possibly the construction of the abbot's residence in the second half of the 13th century. This southward expansion of the claustral area would conceivably have brought this part of the inner court more into use. The suggested medieval pond could have been a fishpond, but equally the addition of ornamental bay windows to both the ground and first floors of the abbot's private rooms around the year 1500 hints at the possibility of views over a garden area. Latterly therefore, the monastic pond might have been an ornamental feature, although the adjacent garden remains belong to the period of the Barker residence.

The outfall heading north-west from the middle of the west side of the dam formalises the natural course of the west stream and is likely to be medieval in origin, although recut since, probably several times. The outfall fed a second pond on the west side of the abbey precinct boundary although the existing livestock pond established in the middle of the 19th century has destroyed most of the feature. The original pond is shown on the 1777 survey. It was a long, sub-rectangular feature of which only the north side survives as an earthwork, to the north of the livestock pond. The north-east corner has been cut away to accommodate the outflow from the livestock pond and the bottom is also partially infilled by a rectangular platform of spoil, possibly upcast from the livestock pond. There can be little doubt that this is a monastic pond, and it is probably contemporary with the pond to its east described above and therefore later than the precinct boundary across which it lies. The water channel on the inside of the precinct boundary to the south probably supplied the pond with water in addition to that provided by the outfall from the suggested pond to the east. The platform of spoil and the outlet channel from the livestock pond have been interpreted in the past as evidence for an abbey mill, however this can be discounted on account of the comparatively recent date of these features and it is more likely that this was a fishpond. The pond was evidently drained by 1841 as the map of that year depicts only two small pools of water.

One possible medieval building within the inner court was identified in a watching brief and small excavation in 1994, 80m to the south of the abbot's hall (Hannaford 1994). A prominent sub-rectangular mound situated on the west side of the Forest Enterprise track defines the site. This mound rises to a maximum height of about 4m

on the west overlooking the long pond. The circumstances of the watching brief were described earlier in the report along with the excavator's interpretation of the site as a late-medieval fish house, later incorporated in a post-Dissolution lodge or gatehouse. Whilst undeniably the excavation indicates a substantial building of probably more than one phase on the site, its late medieval origins were not established conclusively during the watching brief. The date seemingly rests on the discovery of 13th and 14th century floor tiles in the fabric of the west wall but these only indicate that the wall post-dates these centuries and it does not necessarily follow that the building represented is late-medieval. The site will be discussed again in Section 5.3.2 below where the identification of a post-Dissolution lodge or gatehouse will be challenged.

Evidence of quarrying on the escarpment

The field evidence indicates that rock was mainly quarried from the foot of the escarpment either side of the abbey and that the quarrying was wholly contained within the monastic precinct. There can be little doubt that the surviving remains almost entirely relate to the construction of the abbey, as after the Dissolution the availability of stone from the abbey ruins would have obviated the need for fresh quarrying. Some limited quarrying might have started again after 1800 when John Corbet put a halt to stone robbing and started to restore the abbey. There is a slight possibility therefore that some of the monastic quarries might have been re-worked after 1800 but no definite evidence of this was noted.

The exposed rock-faces and steep-cut slopes adjacent to the east side of the abbey church, chapter house and dormitory range indicate that a lot of stone has been removed from this area. Stone extraction might have begun here to provide material for the first construction work around 1100. However the rock-faces and slopes visible today are primarily the result of cutting back the foot of the escarpment in the later 12th century for the enlarged church and the buildings on the east side of the cloisters.

At the east end of the church, and slightly higher up the slope, are several prominent vertical rock faces which are far enough away from the end of the building not to be part of the terracing operations. These are undoubtedly quarry faces and are part of an almost continuous rock-cut edge that begins on the north-east side of the precinct and extends for almost 240m southwards, although the last 90m on the south is incorporated in a later garden terrace. There can be little doubt that quarrying on this scale dates from the second half of the 12th century and relates to the main period of building at the abbey.

The quarry edge from the north-east precinct boundary to opposite the east end of the chapter house is characterised by long stretches of vertical rock-face interrupted by sections where material has slumped. An extensive spread of rubble below the quarry face immediately to the north of the church is spoil from the 1975-79 excavations. To the south of the chapter house, the same rock-cut edge is the origin of the garden terrace which continues as far as the rear of the cottage. The quarry face was probably made into a terrace after the Dissolution as part of the privy garden attached to the Barker residence, or possibly it is 14th century and associated with Abbot Longnor's garden. The quarry edge immediately to the east of the church has also been landscaped. A section of the rock face has been cut away and the area behind hollowed out. This was probably to provide a route for the track shown first on the 1841 estate

plan and on subsequent Ordnance Survey maps of 1881 and 1902. The track provided a direct route up the escarpment and has left earthwork traces higher up the slope (see Section 5.5.2 below).

Some 40m south of the north-east precinct boundary, the main quarry face has been cut by secondary quarrying extending up to 25m to the east. The mouth of the cut is around 15m wide and over 2m deep and opens out into a large, probably sub-circular quarry hollow some 20m north-south by 15m east-west, the eastern two thirds of which is buried by the causeway for the Sundorne carriage drive. There is a shallow pond in the quarry hollow on the west side of the causeway. This can be discounted as a pond supplying water to the abbey as there is no evidence of any drain leading from it and its only source of supply seems to be the run off from either side of the causeway. A modern pipe at the north end of the pond brings water under the causeway from the drainage ditch on the east side of the carriage drive. There is evidence of a track heading south-west from the mouth of the cut towards the main route to the abbey church, but the field wall along the east side of this track obscures the actual junction.

Whatever the reason for digging into and behind an existing quarry face, it must have occurred before 1800 which is the approximate date of the Sundorne carriage drive. It is therefore most likely to be medieval as in the period between the Dissolution of the abbey in 1539 and the end of stone robbing in 1800, it is reasonable to surmise that the abbey ruins would have provided enough stone without the need to open up fresh quarries. Within the medieval period, the quarrying is probably later than the major building works of the 12th century as this is probably the time when the main quarry face was exploited. The secondary quarrying therefore probably dates to the later period of the abbey. The quarry hollow cuts into a small enclosure immediately to the west and therefore this feature is probably medieval in date as will be described below.

Finally, 20m to the east of the chapter house, there is a localised area of intense quarrying slightly higher up the slope than the main quarry edge described above. The eastern extent of this quarrying is defined by a sinuous line of quarry faces stretching for 45m along the natural slope which attain a maximum height of around 3m. A large quarry hollow extends westwards from this quarry face as far as the stone boundary wall to the east of the abbey ruins. The wall dates to the period of the Barker residence (see below Section 5.3.2) and it is possible that it is aligned along the west side of the quarry hollow, making the hollow about 30m from east to west. It is up to 20m across and a maximum of 1m deep. It is now not one complete feature because it is bisected by the embankment for the Sundorne carriage drive. There is an oval pond some 7m long by 4m wide in the base of the quarry hollow immediately to the west of the carriage drive. It is a modern feature and does not form part of the engineering for the water supply to the abbey, despite its proximity to the north-east end of the reredorter drain. A modern pipe at the base of the embankment discharges into the pond via an inlet channel at the south-east corner.

This area of quarrying is so close to the chapter house and the church, it is almost certainly connected with the main period of construction of the abbey and therefore could well date to the 12th century. Indeed it is possible that it represents one of the first areas of stone extraction since the area would have been somewhat isolated from the main building complex after work started on the main quarry face.

Structures on the escarpment

The remains of a stone-walled enclosure survive on the hill slope some 30m to the south-east of the north gate. It is defined on the south side by the footings of a stone wall around 0.7m wide and on the west and north by a low stony bank which presumably represents the collapsed remains of more walling. As was described above, the east side has been destroyed by a medieval quarry which cuts obliquely across the feature and therefore makes it impossible to draw any firm conclusions about its original size, orientation or function. At the very minimum it could have been a roughly square feature some 10m across but equally it could have continued much further to the east. The sides of the feature are not exactly at right angles to each other and therefore it is unlikely to represent a building and is more probably an enclosure, perhaps for livestock or to surround a structure which has left no surface traces. The observation that the enclosure is cut by the possible medieval quarry to the east dates the earthwork to the period of the abbey.

Some 30m to the south of the enclosure is the first of two short lengths of bank, aligned east-west and 10m apart. They are roughly parallel to each other and to the enclosure described above. This may be evidence that there was a line of small enclosures along this section of the escarpment in the medieval period. However, the banks cannot be as firmly dated as the enclosure. The most northerly appears to be overlain by the make-up for the Sundorne carriage drive but this only establishes that it is earlier than about 1800. At the west, both banks run up to the edge of the main north-south quarry, but they are not obviously cut by the quarrying and could well post-date it.

Immediately to the south of this pair of banks are the remains of a small rectangular structure aligned north to south on a prominent spur created by quarrying around the east end of the abbey church. It is defined by a slight outward-facing slope with only minimal traces of an internal bank and measures 10m north to south by 5m across. A steep-sided, 2m wide gully with traces of rock-cut steps in the bottom provides access to the west side of this structure from the bottom of the former quarry face. It is probably a building and may be medieval in date given its proximity to the abbey church. However, it is such a good vantage point from which to see the abbey, that it is perhaps more likely to be for tourists visiting the ruins in the 19th century (it is very close to the Sundorne carriage drive) or even a works store from one of the periods when the site was being restored.

Water supply to the abbey

Evidence of water engineering dating to the post-medieval period is preserved along the escarpment immediately to the east and south-east of the claustral area. Here, there are the remains of a series of leats as well as a stone-built conduit house. The features are connected with the establishment of an ornamental garden by the Barker family after the Dissolution (as will be discussed below in Section 5.3.4). The evidence for the monastic water supply is limited to a large, rectangular pond on the crest of the escarpment directly above the claustral area and the remains of a leat taking the water down the slope to the head of the reredorter drain. The size and construction of the pond leaves little doubt that this was the main reservoir for the monastic water supply and presumably therefore dates from the 12th century. A second, more irregularly-shaped pond immediately adjacent to the east of the reservoir pond is discounted as part of the monastic water supply. The two ponds are only separated

by the footings of a field boundary. They are very unlike in terms of shape and construction and it seems more likely that eastern pond was for livestock and was established after the Dissolution.

The reservoir pond is aligned north-south along the crest of the escarpment and has a maximum length of 48m and a width of 18m. The sides of the pond are formed by steep, cut slopes which clearly penetrate into bedrock at the north-west corner and are augmented on the south and west sides by a massive earthwork dam. This attains its greatest height at the south-west corner where it is over 3m high and 5m wide at the top with an outside face that splays out steeply. The present water level is much less than the potential maximum capacity of the pond but there is no obvious indication of an inlet channel, although the overgrown condition of much of the perimeter makes detailed inspection impossible. Whilst surface run-off and field drains undoubtedly contribute to the supply, the size of the pond suggests that it is probably also fed by one or more springs in this vicinity. The size of the pond, its massive construction and its position on the crest of a relatively steep slope argues firmly for this being a reservoir rather than a fishpond or a watering hole for livestock. However, there is also evidence that the east side of the pond has been recut within the last couple of hundred years as the south-east corner cuts across the line of the stone field wall along the crest of the escarpment. The wall is dated later in this report to about 1800 (Section 5.4.3). There is also evidence of changes to the dam on the west side of the pond as the inside face clearly cuts back towards the south-west corner, resulting in a slight narrowing of the embankment.

Towards the north-west corner, a steep-sided, narrow channel cuts across the dam but does not connect with any leat and therefore is probably just a soakaway. There are, however, two adjacent outlets at the south-west corner of the pond. That to the north is the deeper of the two and the more sharply defined. It cuts the west end of the south outlet which therefore must be the earlier of the two. The north outlet is dateable to the period of the Barker residence since it directs water southwards into a leat forming part of the supply system to the long pond at the foot of the escarpment. The association of the long pond and its supply system with the period of the Barker residence will be explored more fully later in the report (Section 5.3.4). A mound of stony spoil immediately to the north of the outlet could have derived from cutting the channel. The south outlet is much narrower and shallower and is aligned directly down the slope and represents the original medieval outfall. Further down the slope, the line of the outfall channel is picked up by a slight and discontinuous ditch which, despite its appearance, has been constructed with some effort since the north side is partially rock-cut. This continues directly down the slope, skirting the outside edge of the large quarry hollow, but does not definitely reappear above ground on the opposite side. This could mean that it was piped along this lower section but presumably it continued directly westwards to intersect with the reredorter drain. Further back along the slope, the leat appears to cut the vestiges of a narrow track ascending directly up the hillside towards the south end of the reservoir pond. This earthwork relationship indicates that the track is medieval and consequently it is the only route of this date definitely identified ascending the escarpment.

If the alignment of the excavated section of reredorter drain within the claustral area is projected north-eastwards, it intersects with the line of the leat at about the point where there is the dog leg in the stone boundary wall belonging to the period of the Barker residence. A 2m long section of rebuilt boundary wall immediately to the south of the dog-leg probably indicates where the drain passes below the wall. It is

reasonable to speculate there would have been some form of tank here with a sluice to regulate the flow of water down the drain. This would also have been the point where water was dispersed to other parts of the abbey via a system of more minor channels or buried pipes. There is no evidence of any structure surviving above ground although the former existence of a conduit house may explain the dog-leg in the boundary wall.

Apart from several isolated sections of stone culvert within the claustral area, the means by which water was distributed is unclear. One possible element of this distribution system is a narrow channel cutting the surface of the outcrop nearest to the south-west end of the exposed section of reredorter drain. The feature does not look as though it is connected with efforts to quarry the outcrop, and so a small water channel is perhaps the best interpretation, although it is not necessarily medieval in date.

After the reredorter, the main drain flowed westwards and a short section has been excavated adjacent to the remains of the first abbot's hall. It presumably then ran along the south side of the enclosure within the inner court described above to discharge into the monastic fishpond on the line of the west stream. Alternatively it may have joined the stream directly by heading more to the north-west across the interior of the enclosure. There is surface evidence of a modern drainage on this line.

Enclosures above the escarpment

A complex of three rectangular enclosures survive as earthworks above the escarpment at the north-east corner of the precinct. The enclosures are defined by low spread banks and by the east and north-east sides of the precinct boundary which here is also reduced to a low earthwork. The bank defining the west side of the complex follows the crest of the escarpment immediately to the east of the present field wall and continues south for at least another 90m. This suggests there may have been further enclosures to the south although the only bank-like features in this direction are natural rock outcrops. The enclosures were probably small closes for livestock, although there are no gaps in any of the banks to indicate how they were accessed. The proximity of bedrock to the surface argues against the alternative possibility that they were small, cultivated fields and there is no evidence that they ever held buildings. The only structure noted within the complex is clearly later as it overlies the south side of the largest of the three enclosures (see below Section 5.5.3).

There is no firm evidence for the date of this complex of enclosures although the fact that they are co-axial with both the east and north-east sides of the precinct boundary suggest they may have a monastic origin. It is also possible that they continued in use after the Dissolution. At the west, the bank along the crest of the escarpment is clearly later than the reservoir for the reredorter drain because it 'dog-legs' around the north and east sides of the pond. This relationship establishes that this particular bank, and perhaps the enclosure complex as a whole, is later than the 12th century which is the presumed date of the pond.

5.2.4 The area to the north of the precinct (Figure 14)

The immediate surroundings of the abbey were within its desmesne and therefore probably farmed directly from the home farm. The desmesne extended well beyond the limits of the survey area and was largely developed for agriculture by assarting

sections of the royal forest (Phillpotts 2002). Around the abbey, the only significant block of surviving medieval earthworks is immediately outside the north-west side of the precinct, extending northwards to the hedgeline which marks the edge of the survey area. Here remains previously interpreted as a post-Dissolution garden are largely medieval in origin and divide into two broad phases. The first phase is represented by a possibly prolonged period of ploughing succeeded by the damming of the north stream to form an extensive pond across the west side of the field (Dam 1). There is a second much more prominent dam immediately to the east of Dam 1 (Dam 2) which is probably 18th century in date and will be discussed in Section 5.4.2 below.

Phase One

The first phase of activity is marked by a prolonged period of ploughing outside the precinct boundary to form a block of parallel ridges roughly aligned from east to west. These plough ridges are now generally quite degraded although at the south-east corner they are preserved as prominent earthworks up to 10m wide. It is possible that these particular ridges have been enhanced for an undetermined purpose. A single degraded ridge indicates that ploughing continued northwards beyond the line of the north stream but there is no evidence of the ridges continuing any further in this direction than the edge of the survey. This is not conclusive however as later, more intensive ploughing in the field to the north has probably eradicated all traces. At the south, the plough ridges begin immediately outside the monastic precinct boundary which strongly suggests that the ploughing post-dates the establishment of the abbey precinct. At the west, the ploughing probably ended along the line of the west stream, although most of the ridges now do not survive this far. To the east, the ploughing ended at the foot of the escarpment and all the ridges turn slightly to the north creating the reverse S pattern characteristic of medieval ploughing with oxen. As well as the dating evidence provided by this morphology, the southernmost plough ridge is overlain by the remains of a possible structure outside the north gate. Defined by an L-shaped bank at the foot of the terrace, this relationship establishes that the ploughing occurred prior to the construction of this structure, which is probably associated with the expansion of activity in the medieval period outside the north gate (Section 5.2.4).

Phase Two

In a second phase, the ground was taken out of cultivation and divided from the monastic precinct by a parallel boundary ditch 40m to the north. The boundary ditch defines the southern limit of activity in this phase and was presumably intended to establish a degree of separation between the area to the north (where ponds and an embanked enclosure belong to this phase) and the monastic precinct to the south. There is no evidence that the intervening area was put to any new use which explains the prominent survival of sections of the earlier plough ridges. The ditch is around 5m in width and has a terraced profile, with the south side cutting far more deeply into the underlying plough ridge. The ditch is almost exactly parallel with the north-west side of the precinct boundary but there is no evidence that it actually represents a re-definition of the boundary of the abbey. On the east, the boundary feature ends with a slight curve to the north, some 20m before the terrace at the foot of the escarpment. It probably continued westwards to the edge of the west stream or possibly beyond as the line of the boundary is respected by the south end of the medieval dam on the far side of the stream.

The creation of this dam (Dam 1) marks a significant change of land-use with the abandonment of cultivation and the establishment of a large pond across the west side of the ploughed field. The dam was constructed across the shallow valley which marks the natural course of the north stream and is sufficiently strong to have impounded an extensive and deep body of water against the gently rising valley to the east. There is no definite field evidence surviving for the edge of this pond but its maximum limits have been established by relating the height of the top of the dam to that of the ground surface to the east. This indicates that if the water level was almost at the top of the dam then the resulting pond would have been triangular-shaped and up to 70m east to west and 100m in length. There is a prominent north to south scarp 50m to the east of the dam which might conceivably represent at least part of the edge of the pond, but in its final form it represents a cutting for a farm track along the edge of the field.

Dam 1 survives as a flat-topped bank some 120m in length, up to 2m high and around 10m in width. The south end of the dam is rounded in plan but the north end has been cut back and is now more square-ended than when depicted on the 1969 Ordnance Survey map (Ordnance Survey 1969). The dam is built across the line of the north stream and parallel with the artificial channel of the west stream which flows immediately below the east side of the dam. The dam therefore held back water from both streams but now the water flows out across the line of the dam in a deep V-shaped cutting. This was presumably cut to drain the dam and the cutting has undoubtedly been enlarged since by erosion.

Water may have been drawn off from the pond via a trough at the top of the dam in order to power an overshot watermill on the west side. The only slight evidence for a building on the west side of the dam occurs about half way along at the point where the stream now cuts through. Here a semi-circular platform has been hollowed out of the rising ground to the south, possibly to create a level area for a building although there are no structural remains evident within this feature. There is also no certain documentary reference to a watermill this close to the abbey so the identification of the pond as a millpond is speculative.

To the east of this pond, and probably associated with it, are the earthwork remains of a second smaller pond. Now dry, its outline survives as a sub-circular hollow up to 2m deep and 40m in length with a maximum width of 25m. Its generally degraded appearance and rounded profile contrasts greatly with its appearance on oblique aerial photographs taken as recently as July 1969 which show a crisply defined sub-rectangular pond with embanked sides and an outlet on the apex of the west side (Aerofilms 1969). The form of this pond suggests a probable monastic fishpond. In 1969 the pond was a prominent feature of the landscape and the change in its form can only have resulted from deliberate landscaping, possibly soon after the photographs were taken. The farmer, Mr Davies, recalls mention of a pond being filled in this vicinity in the late 1960s. All traces of the enclosing banks have been lost but the outlet channel survives as a degraded cutting and there is a fairly wide inlet on the north-east on the probable line of the stream. There is additionally a section of channel 10m to the north of the pond, which may also have fed water from the south into the inlet.

The enclosing banks appear to be well over a metre high on the aerial photograph and were probably partially based on earlier plough ridges although it is impossible to be certain from the aerial photographs or from what remains on the ground. The

1777 map seems to indicate that the south and west sides of the enclosure were then incorporated in a field boundary which may explain some of the height of the perimeter banks on these two sides of the pond. This does not imply, however, that the pond was still functioning as a fishpond. The course of the stream westwards from the outlet channel does not survive as an earthwork. Its approximate course is picked out by the straight line of an infilled pipe trench that carries any residual drainage below ground.

To the east of the pond is an embanked enclosure. The enclosure measures 80m east-west by 60m across and is defined by a substantial bank on the south and south-west sides, the former aligned along an earlier plough ridge. This has a maximum external height of about 2m, though internally it is no more than about 1m high. The north-west and north sides of the enclosure are less prominent as they have probably been degraded by ploughing or perhaps even deliberately levelled, but the north side again is aligned upon an earlier plough ridge. There are also the slight remains of the two intervening plough ridges visible within the interior of the enclosure. The sections of bank on the south, west and north sides of the enclosure appear to be simple dumps of earth, presumably using material gained from levelling the interior and additionally on the west, from a flat bottomed quarry trench at the foot of the bank. In comparison, the bank on the east side along the foot of the escarpment is quite narrow and stony and is probably the collapsed remains of a much later stone field wall with a gap in the same position as a gate shown on the 1841 estate survey. However, it is reasonable to suggest that the field boundary is aligned along the original east side of the enclosure.

In broad terms, the enclosure must post date the abandonment of the field system but it is earlier than pond associated with Dam 2 since the edge of that pond cuts the quarry trench on the west side of the enclosure (see Section 5.4.2 below). The similarity of alignments between this enclosure and the smaller pond to the north suggests that they are contemporary and perhaps functioned together in some way that cannot now be determined.

There are a number of features visible in the interior which may be broadly contemporary with the enclosure although there is no definite proof of this. The southern of the two earlier plough ridges is overlain by a raised earthwork platform at its west end. This is some 0.8m in height, with sloping sides and level square-shaped top. It is almost certainly the site of a small building although there are no wall lines visible, whilst the site of a second structure may be indicated by a slight rectangular depression immediately below the east side of the platform. There are also traces of two possible terraces aligned north to south within the enclosure. One is immediately to the east of the rectangular hollow referred to above and may have helped create a level space around this structure, whilst the second terrace is 20m to the east but has no features associated with it. This field was called Dovehouse Meadow in the 18th century (Phillpotts 2002, 44) and it is therefore possible that the platform feature was the site of a dovecote. However, the reference is so late that it is unlikely to refer to a medieval dovecote and instead may indicate that one was built inside the enclosure at a later period. Physical evidence for the re-use of the enclosure is provided by the track which cuts diagonally across the interior from the north-east corner as far as the north side of the square platform. This track appears to have been deliberately engineered and it will be argued later in the report that it is evidence for the opening up of selected viewpoints around the abbey following the construction of the Sundorne carriage drive in 1800 (Section 5.4.5). The track leads up to the platform suggesting that it was used as a vantage point during this period. Although the

engineered track ends at the platform, there is a substantial gap in the west side of the enclosure immediately adjacent to the point where the track ends. This could indicate that the route continued further west into the field although an underground gas pipeline is also aligned on the same break and the cutting of the trench for this could account for the gap.

5.3 The Barker residence 1539-c1650 (Figure 15)

5.3.1 Introduction

After the Dissolution in 1539, the abbey passed briefly through several hands before descending to the Barker family in 1548 who then retained Haughmond as their principal residence for the next one hundred years. For the sake of clarity, the post-Dissolution house is described in this report as the Barker residence even though work to convert the abbey began before the Barker family acquired the site.

5.3.2 The Barker residence and privy garden

The basic layout of the Barker house is reasonably clear, although the precise function of some of the buildings is still open to debate. As was described in the historical introduction to this report, the abbot's private rooms and hall were retained as the principal residence whilst there were other buildings to the north. One incorporated the west end of the frater whilst the second lay to the east and was an ornate timber building dating to c1600. The precise function of these two buildings remains unclear whilst the chapter house was the only claustral building retained in its entirety. Again, the use to which this building was put immediately after the Dissolution is not certain though it is likely to have been more significant than the stable it had apparently become by the middle of the 18th century (West and Palmer 2002, 35). St John Hope and Brakspear considered that the chapter house was largely rebuilt after the Dissolution, (although this rebuild is now dated to around 1500 (West and Palmer 2002, 31-37)) and they go on to suggest the building was used as a chapel (St John Hope and Brakspear 1909, 309). It is also possible that the building was retained as a banqueting house or garden pavilion given that there is excavation evidence for a formal garden dating from c1600 immediately to the west. Also the windows at the east end of the chapter house look out onto an L-shaped privy garden to the south and east of the main house.

The boundary wall defining the south and east sides of the privy garden is the only major feature constructed by the Barker family to have survived above ground, and apart from some minor repairs, appears to be all of one period and of reasonably uniform construction. The boundary wall begins outside the south-west corner of the former abbot's hall and continues around the south and east side of the main house to end on the east side of the chapter house. It is built of uncoursed stone rubble from the abbey ruins with re-used ashlar masonry principally at the corners and laid in courses in the body of the wall. The boundary was originally topped by one, and in places two courses of coping stones to create an ornamental effect. The 1777 map indicates a formal garden arrangement of rectangular compartments subdivided by paths to the south and east of the house. Given that the map was surveyed over a century after the Barkers had left the site, it is not suggested that it is their layout which is depicted, but there is the possibility of some continuity of use. For example, the north-south terrace within this area is depicted on the 1777 map and may have been part of the Barkers' garden design, created by landscaping and straightening an

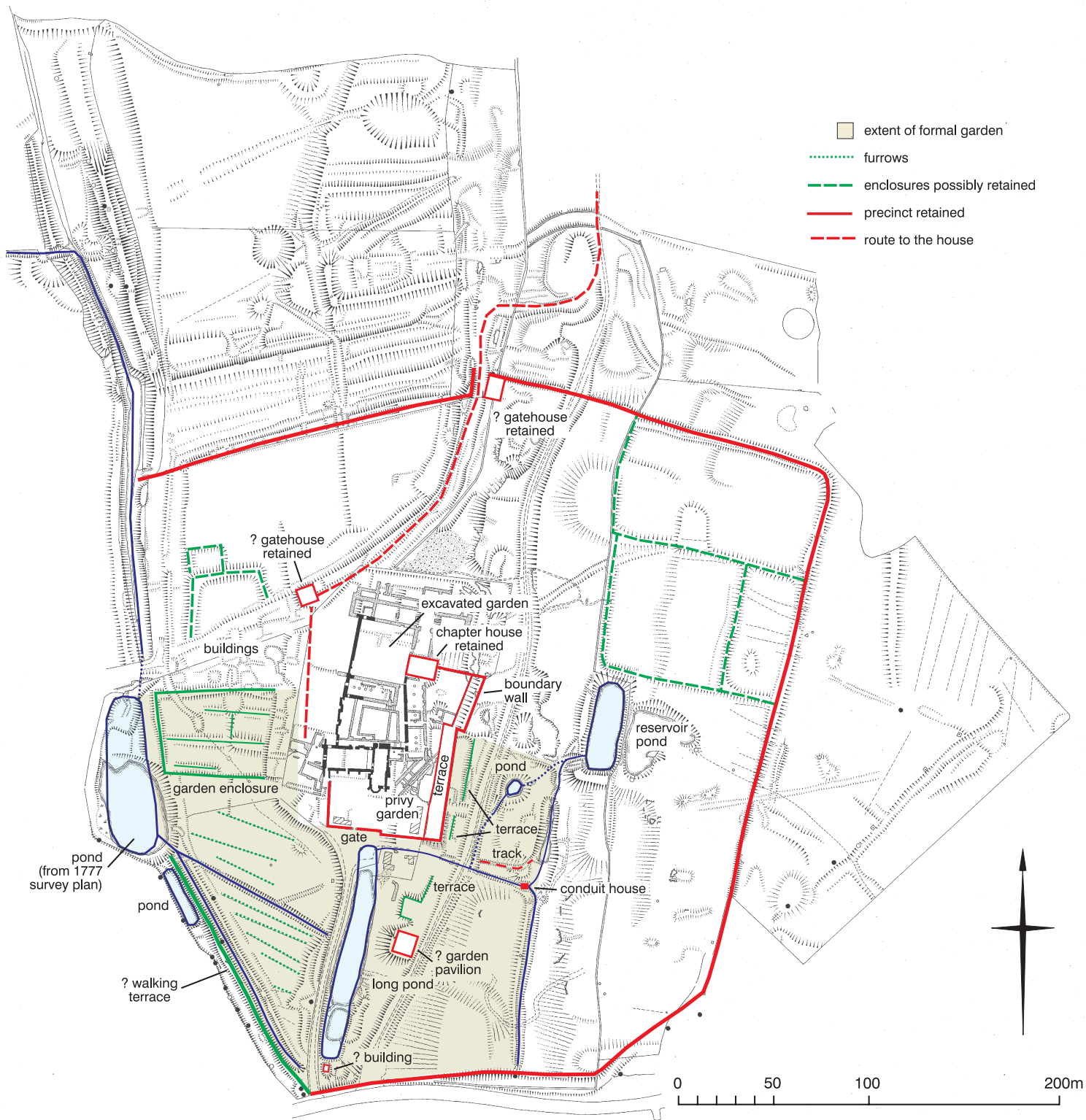


Figure 15. Plan showing features associated with the Barker residence

existing quarry face (see Section 5.2.3). Its line is almost exactly parallel to the stone boundary wall suggesting the two might be contemporary and it is possible that the top was used as a viewing terrace from which to look out over the house and the garden below.

The ornamental gate on the south side is the only original opening in the boundary wall. It is 1.2m wide with an arched opening of fine ashlar masonry with a pediment above. As was mentioned in the historical introduction, the pediment originally contained the initials of the Barker family but these no longer survive. It is not the main entrance to the Barker residence, as it is far too narrow and anyway, there was probably no main route at the south of the site until the construction of the Shrewsbury to Newport turnpike in the mid 18th century. The opening on the south side of the boundary wall was therefore a private gate leading out into a formal garden, (newly discovered by the English Heritage survey) which covered an extensive area to the south and west of the Barker house.

5.3.3 The grounds of the Barker residence

Previous accounts of this period have tended to overlook the wider landscape setting of the Barker residence. It is clear though from the field evidence that substantial elements of the monastic layout were retained to enhance the landscape setting of the post-Dissolution house. The residence was almost certainly approached from the north using the same route as to the medieval abbey and consequently it is entirely possible that both the north gatehouse and the suggested inner court gatehouse were retained as part of the formal entrance arrangements. Also, the survival of the monastic precinct boundary as a recognisable landscape feature suggests that this was retained to define the grounds of the Barker residence. With the demolition of the church, the full extent of the residence would have been revealed after passing through the north gate and would have remained in vision up to the suggested inner court gatehouse. Here the approach route would have turned southwards along the exterior, west side of the high wall on the west side of the former cloister and entered the former abbot's hall at the west end. Elsewhere within the precinct, the most extensive remains surviving from this period belong to a formal garden to the south and west of the house which extends over virtually the entire monastic inner court. This presence of this garden has not been noted in any of the previous historical accounts of the post-Dissolution house but its existence is clear from the earthwork evidence. The garden will be discussed in more detail below. Beyond the garden area, the post-Dissolution landscape is less clear but the survival of probable monastic period enclosures above the escarpment and in the area of the outer court (Section 5.2.3) suggests they may have continued in use after the Dissolution. It is also probable that some of the earthwork remains of buildings to the west of the claustral range discussed earlier in the report (Section 5.2.3), are those of structures belonging to this period. The lack of any significant medieval earthwork remains to the north and north-west of the abbey as far as the precinct boundary could indicate that the Barker family cleared and levelled this part of their grounds, perhaps for cultivation.

5.3.4 The Barker garden

The garden begins on the east on the escarpment where the conduit house and a system of leats conveying water to the long pond are the main surviving elements. At the foot of the slope there are a series of slight terraces which probably represent plant beds and these extended southwards to the site of the building encountered in

the watching brief in 1994. This building is more likely to have been a pavilion or banqueting house associated with this garden than the gatehouse suggested by the excavators (Hannaford 1994). The long pond to the west of this building was an integral part of the garden layout, although it probably had monastic origins (Section 5.2.3). The gardens continued to the south-west of the house, where the remains consist of a series of parallel furrows which could represent drainage between plant beds or within an orchard. There is also evidence that the bank defining the south-west side of the monastic precinct was adapted for use as a prospect terrace. A section of the ditch on the outside of the bank was also widened and deepened, most probably to form an ornamental pond. The garden continued to the west of the house where the remains of probable garden compartments survive within a rectangular enclosure. It is possible that the enclosure has earlier origins as part of the monastic inner court and the garden probably also encompassed the monastic pond to the west of the enclosure (Section 5.2.3).

The south part of the garden

The engineered water supply to the long pond is the main evidence that the garden to the south of the house extended eastwards up the slope of the escarpment. The conduit house is the key element in the design as it is sited at a nodal point in the leat system whilst the leats themselves impose rectangular divisions on the slope and probably defined subdivisions within the garden. However there are no definite garden earthworks surviving within the areas bordered by the leats. The conduit house probably acted as an ‘eye-catcher’ in the garden although this does not mean the building was purely ornamental since it is sited at the head of the channel carrying water down the slope to the long pond and probably had a practical role in regulating the flow. Equally, the conduit house and its associated system of leats and channels have no role in supplying water to the abbey and therefore the previous interpretation of the building as the source of the monastic water supply has nothing to recommend it. The building is constructed of re-used ashlar masonry indicating it is later than the abbey whilst a stone niche above the door on the west side of the conduit house is clearly a re-used medieval architectural fragment (Figure 16). Previous authorities



*Figure 16.
The conduit
house viewed
from the west*

have presumably used this fragment to date the building to the 14th century. There remains a possibility that the structure is a re-built medieval cistern, moved by the Barker family from elsewhere within the claustral complex such as from the head of the reredorter drain (Section 5.2.3).

The water supply from the conduit house entered the east side of the long pond via a single leat aligned along the bottom of the northern of the two gullies on the escarpment. There are the slight remains of a path on the north side of the gully which heads up the escarpment to a viewpoint overlooking the conduit house. It is therefore possible this path is an element of the garden layout. The conduit house itself was fed by two leats which head off in opposite directions along the line of the escarpment behind the building. The leat to the south runs straight south from the conduit house for a distance of 100m to the inside edge of the monastic precinct boundary where it taps into the spring which originally flowed down the southern of the two natural gullies.

The second leat extends northwards from the conduit house for 50m and is much wider and deeper than the south leat. Measuring up to 10m across and 1m deep it resembles a long, narrow pond and is fed from the north where there are the vestiges of a slight surface drain heading northwards to the reservoir pond for the monastic reredorter drain. This surface drain carries a small amount of water during rainy weather, but a manhole nearby indicates there is also a piped supply, probably from the same source, feeding into the north end of the channel.

There is also evidence of a second water supply to the east side of the long pond independent of the rectilinear system of leats and which therefore could be later than the Barker garden. Just over 10m downslope from the north end of the north leat described above, there is a fairly deep sub-circular pond. The feature is 15m in diameter and has quite steeply sloping sides augmented on the west, downslope side by a dam around 1.5m high which also curves around to the south. There is no visible inlet to the pond, which nevertheless carries a fairly constant volume of water, suggesting this is either a natural spring, or more likely, that it receives a piped supply. In the latter case the most likely source is the reservoir pond for the reredorter drain higher up the slope. The dam is pierced by the outlet channel at the south-west corner of the pond, which heads almost exactly due south.

This pond appears to be part of a second supply system to the long pond in the Barker garden. The west side of the dam has been cut back for the creation of the Sundorne carriage drive which therefore indicates that the pond is earlier than *c*1800. The drainage ditch on the north side of the drive, (which is probably far more recent), has destroyed the continuation of the outlet channel. Despite this, it is clear that the outlet would actually have directed water away from the abbey suggesting that the pond is not part of the medieval supply to the claustral complex. It appears much more likely that it supplied water to the long pond but independently of the rectilinear system of leats higher up the slope

A line of slight terraces begin opposite the east end of the Barker house suggest there were plant beds arranged along the foot of the slope. There are now three separate lengths of terrace but they could originally have formed one continuous feature. The two northernmost terraces are overlain by the embankment of the Sundorne carriage drive but this only establishes that they are earlier than *c*1800. They are no more than 0.3m in height, whilst the third is some distance further to the south and slightly

more prominent. This terrace has a clear right angled return to the west, which takes it close to the east side of the long pond.

The main evidence for the date of the garden comes from the 1994 watching brief to the south of the Barker house. The large building revealed by the watching brief is securely dated to the late 16th or early 17th century on account of the brick used in its construction. This firmly associates it with the period of the Barker family although the excavator's interpretation of it as a gatehouse can be discounted as the main entrance to the Barker house was on the north. There are two pieces of evidence associating this structure with the other elements of the garden. Firstly the mound defining the site of the building is immediately adjacent to and co-axial with the southernmost garden terrace, suggesting that the structure probably formed part of the same garden design. Secondly, the form of the earthwork suggests the building occupies an artificial platform, probably using material quarried from the floor of the natural gully immediately to the east where there is a large hollow. This extra elevation was probably to open up a view over the adjacent pond and this therefore links these two elements together. In the context of a garden, a building in this position with a view over the pond could reasonably be interpreted as a pavilion or banqueting house.

There are no definite garden features surviving to the south of this mound, but it is likely that the gardens continued in this direction flanking the east side of the long pond. The long pond is aligned north to south and is some 90m in length by up to 15m wide. The entire west side is formed by an earthwork dam which is up to 1.5m in height and 5m wide and carries the present single track access road to the site. The other sides of the pond appear to have been formed by cutting into the natural slope as is particularly clear at the south end. Here a steep, curving cut probably defines the original end of the pond, indicating that the amount of water is now somewhat less than its original capacity. A shallow rectangular depression immediately to the south of the cut may indicate a spring source or could possibly indicate the position of an ornamental feature or a small building located on the long axis of the pond.

At the south end of the pond, a narrow earthwork dam creates a separate pool but this is probably quite a recent feature as the earlier maps show one continuous body of water. The earliest Ordnance Survey map also indicates that the pond originally extended further northwards, stopping about 10m short of the south side of the Barker boundary wall (Ordnance Survey 1881). The end of the pond was filled in after 1902 and before 1938 (Ordnance Survey 1902; NMR 1938).

The evidence that the long pond was fed by a system of leats to the east has already been discussed whilst the main inlet visible today is at the south end where a copious supply of water flows along a channel from a modern brick culvert below the embanked side of the Forest Enterprise car park. The plan of the abbey accompanying the 1907 excavation report also implies that the outflow of reredorter drain may have been directed towards the north end of the pond where it may account for the dog-leg in the Barker boundary wall (St John Hope and Brakspear 1909, facing page 310). There is a large stone slab in the surface of the car park at the foot of the wall which could be connected with this suggested inlet.

The south-west part of the garden

The garden remains to the south-west of the house consist of a series of parallel ridges confined between the monastic precinct boundary to the west and the dam for the long pond to the east. The ridges are aligned from south-east to north-west which is the direction of the natural drainage as defined by the line of the west stream (Section 2). The ridges are fairly slight and about 8 to 10m across, whilst the intervening furrows are quite sharply defined suggesting they may have been cut to assist with drainage, whilst at the south, the ridges appear to end at the point where a large mound protrudes from the side of the dam embankment. The two furrows to the south of this mound are not part of the same system and are probably recent field drains. There is therefore the possibility that the mound represents a feature within the garden defining the southern edge of the ridged earthworks. The purpose of the ridges is not clear, but they may have been laid out as plant beds or possibly for an orchard.

The outlet from the long pond is aligned parallel to the ridges and it could have subdivided this part of the garden. The channel is shown on the 1777 map and was mentioned earlier in the report as it may be the medieval outlet from a monastic precursor to the long pond (Section 5.2.3). The channel is a uniform 5m in width and 0.5m deep and has probably been recut on several occasions as it is quite crisply defined. It is cut by a much narrower, and probably quite recent, drainage ditch heading westwards from a manhole below the side of the single track access road to the site.

It was stated earlier in the report (Section 5.2.1) that the bank defining the south-west side of the monastic precinct boundary is far more prominent than elsewhere around the circuit. Although this may indicate it was more substantially constructed originally, there is also the strong possibility that it was raised in height to provide a prospect terrace overlooking this part of the garden. This possibility is supported by the fact that the bank has a flattened top suggesting it has been deliberately fashioned as a walkway. The route may have started on the south at the south end of the long pond and could have continued northwards up to, and perhaps around, the rectilinear enclosure to be described below defining the west part of the garden.

The monastic water channel on the inside of the bank may have been retained as a water feature in the garden and there is additionally evidence that a section of the monastic ditch on the outside of the bank was widened to form a narrow pond. The south end of the pond (which is now dry) is defined by a distinct cut into the base of the ditch which continues around to the east and along the base of the precinct boundary bank to form one of the long sides of the pond. The opposite side has been formed by cutting back the outer edge of the ditch by up to 4m. There would presumably have been a small dam at the north end of the pond to keep the feature separate from the larger, former monastic pond to its north, but no evidence of this survives. Other than the observation that the pond post-dates the bank representing the collapsed precinct boundary wall there is nothing to firmly date the feature, or to indicate how it was supplied with water. However the most likely explanation is that it formed a further element in the layout of the Barker garden.

The west part of the garden

The earthwork remains of the garden to the west of the house are principally contained within a rectangular enclosure immediately to the west of the Barker residence. Additionally, the garden layout might also have included the former monastic pond to the west of the enclosure. The likelihood that the enclosure dates back to the medieval period was discussed earlier in the report but the garden remains within are more likely to be associated with the Barker residence. With the demolition of the monastic buildings outside the west end of the former abbot's hall, the Barker family would have had an open view over the garden from the great west window on the first floor. A garden here would also have been open to view from the main entrance to the house at this same end of the building. It is also possible that there was a formally laid out walk around the perimeter of the enclosure, perhaps continuing the suggested raised walkway along the south-west side of the monastic precinct boundary mentioned above.

The interior of the garden enclosure is slightly sunken and is subdivided longitudinally by a wide, east-west bank slightly to the south of the central axis but aligned upon the large west window of the abbot's hall. There are also the vestiges of second, parallel bank to the north and a slight terrace at the west end of the south side. The only cross division is a slight west-facing terrace which begins on the north side of the enclosure and extends as far as the central longitudinal bank, which is slightly more prominent to the east of their junction. This may be the vestige of a roughly square-shaped compartment within the garden however, the poor condition of the earthworks preclude any more detailed reconstruction of the garden layout.

Immediately to the west of the gardens and separated from the enclosure by a slight terrace, is the site of the medieval pond on the line of the precinct boundary. As was described earlier in the report, this has been all but obliterated by the present livestock pond created in the 19th century (Section 5.2.3). It is possible that during the Barker period it had an ornamental function providing a watery backdrop to the garden looking out from the Barker house.

5.4 The Sundorne landscape park c1740-c1850 (Figure 17)

5.4.1 Introduction

In the second half of the 18th century and continuing on perhaps to the middle of the 19th century, Haughmond Abbey became one of the focal points in a landscape park developed by the Corbet family of Sundorne House. In what probably represents an early phase of the development of the landscape park in the 18th century, a large ornamental lake was established in the north-west part of the site by damming the north stream. The lake created by this dam (Dam 2) was far more extensive than the medieval pond in this same area associated with Dam 1 (Section 5.2.4). Other than this lake, most of the elements of the landscape park recorded within the survey area date to the period after 1800 when John Corbet laid out the Sundorne carriage drive and planted the woodland belt along the escarpment. The existence of the Sundorne carriage drive was known before the start of the English Heritage survey, but a second drive has been identified running past the north-west corner of the abbey. Referred to in this report as the abbey carriage drive, it appears to have connected several specific viewpoints to the north of the ruins.

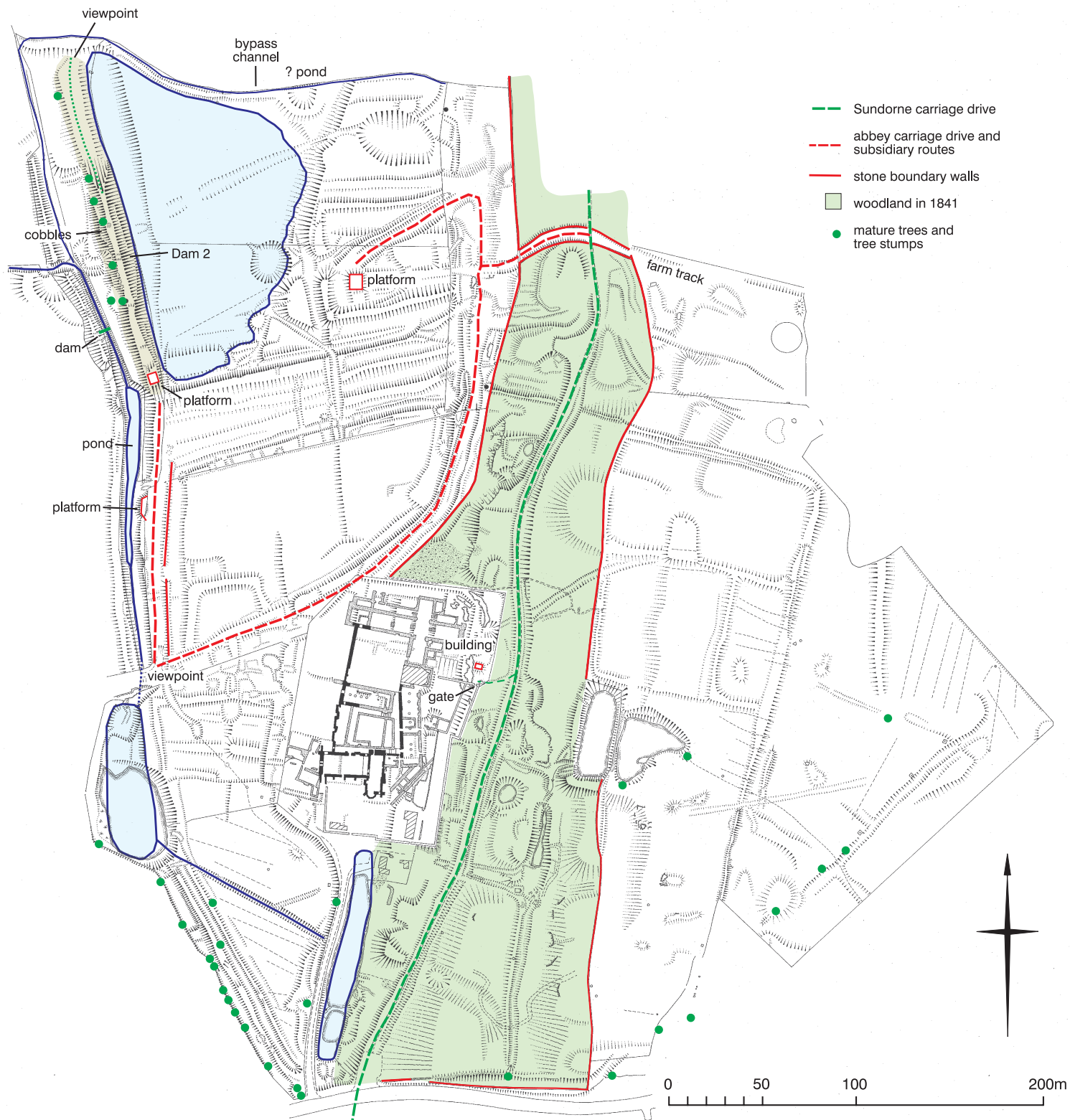


Figure 17. Plan showing features associated with the Sundorne landscape park

5.4.2 The ornamental lake and Dam 2

Dam 2 was constructed 30m to the east of the medieval Dam 1 across the shallow valley of the north stream and would have impounded a large sheet of water to the east, eclipsing in size the possible medieval millpond associated with Dam 1 (Figure 18). Unlike Dam 1 which was fed by both the north and west streams, Dam 2 was fed solely by the north stream, with the west stream flowing to its rear. Whilst it is not inconceivable that Dam 2 was constructed during the medieval period, the evidence to be discussed below points more towards an 18th century date and that the lake was formed as part of the early development of the landscape park.



*Figure 18.
Dam 2 viewed
from the east*

Dam 2 is aligned north-south and is up to 3m high and has an overall length of 130m. It is a steep-sided embankment with a broad and level top around 5m wide though at the south end the summit steps up slightly to create a distinct platform some 0.5m high. The south end of the dam slopes off quite gently and a break of slope towards the bottom indicates where it incorporates the south face of the southernmost of the earlier plough ridges. Towards the north end there is a small patch of cobble stones on the top of the dam which along with the uniformly broad and level character of the summit may indicate the existence of a formal walk along the crest. The 1777 map shows a woodland belt along the approximate line of the dam suggesting it may have been planted with trees at this date. The several mature oak trees on the top of the dam are unlikely to be this old, but nevertheless probably represent ornamental planting connected with the later stages of the park.

The south end of the dam has been partially cut away by the widening of the stream channel on its west side. Further south, on the same side, there is a wide erosion hollow at the base of the earthwork caused by groundwater seepage along the line of the former north stream, which probably also represents the line of the outfall from the pond. Minor slippages have occurred along the sides of the earthwork and there is also some damage from rabbits.

The present north terminal of the dam is not original, as the 1969 Ordnance Survey map shows the earthwork continuing for a further 70m up to the north edge of the field but breached by a 10m wide cut at about the point where the dam now ends. The breach may have been made to allow the pipe carrying the north stream to pass across the earthwork. The farmer, Mr Davies, recollects mention of the section of dam to the north of this breach being removed around 1969 to fill in a pond in the

adjacent field. The present north end of the dam slopes away far more gently than is suggested by the depiction of the breach on the 1969 Ordnance Survey map and on aerial photographs of the same year indicating that it was graded, probably when the rest of the earthwork was removed (Ordnance Survey 1969; Aerofilms 1969). Vestigial traces of the missing section of earthwork survive as a slight and very broad ridge continuing up to the field boundary and adopting roughly the same curve as shown on the map. An isolated tree stump on the west side of this ridge was probably a continuation of the line of mature oak trees growing on the top and west side of the remaining section of dam.

With a length of just over 200m, Dam 2 would have created a pond stretching back up the valley of the north stream for 100m. This equates to the relatively featureless expanse of ground in the western half of the two pasture fields to the east of the dam and there is little doubt that this represents the bed of the former pond. The edge of the pond is not particularly clear on the south where there are later drainage channels and evidence of minor landscaping. However at the east, a distinct terrace indicates where the ground has been cut back to create the edge of the pond and at the north, the present hedge line defines the limit, which explains its slightly curving alignment. The same boundary additionally preserves the line of the bypass channel for the pond. This begins some 90m to the east where the water of the north stream diverts from its natural course across the pasture field to flow along the field boundary. It is carried over a hollow at the north edge of the field in an embankment, and further west the south side of the channel survives as a slight bank to one side of the field boundary. At the east end of this bank the water now enters a culvert and is piped underground but originally it would have continued along the line of the bank and around the north edge of the new dam. The hollow mentioned above is not definitely an artificial feature although there are vestiges of a bank around the south and east sides which might be upcast from digging it out. If the feature is artificial, it is difficult to explain other than as a pond along the line of the bypass channel.



*Figure 19.
The view south
from the north end
of Dam 2*

Dam 2 and the lake to its east bear comparison in size and extent to the ornamental ponds (Sundorne Pool and Sunderton Pool) created by the Corbet family in the immediate vicinity of Sundorne House. Although the evidence is by no means conclusive, it is likely that the lake at Haughmond abbey was also designed as an ornamental feature, this time to enhance the visual setting of the abbey when viewed from the north end of the dam (Figure 19). The evidence that the dam was constructed with a broad level summit and the possible remains of a cobble path on the top, suggest it was designed to be used as a walking terrace. From its north end there would have given a particularly pleasing view of the abbey ruins with the mass of Haughmond Hill rising behind and the large sheet of water in the foreground. The lake appears to be shown somewhat schematically on John Rocque's map of Shropshire published in 1752 (Figure 10). This depicts a large body of water to the north-west of the abbey which compares more closely in size with the extensive lake created by Dam 2 than with its much more modest medieval predecessor. Rocque's map is barely ten years after the Corbet family acquired the site which suggests that the lake was probably one of the first landscape features created in the park. That the Corbet family should have paid such close attention to improving the landscape setting of the abbey is perhaps not surprising given that they are known to have whitewashed the abbey ruins soon after acquiring the site in 1740, presumably to make them stand out as a landscape feature. Neither the dam or the lake are depicted on the 1777 map, but the reference at this date to the field containing the dam being 'part-watered' suggests the lake was probably then still in existence (Phillpotts 2002, 44). However, the lake does not appear on the 1841 map indicating it had been drained by that date, presumably to return the land to cultivation. However, as will be discussed below, there is evidence that the dam continued to be used as a viewpoint in the early 19th century (Section 5.4.5).

5.4.3 The woodland belt

The belt of trees along the escarpment with its associated boundary walls at the east and west are first depicted on the 1841 map of the site and are presumably broadly contemporary with the establishment of the Sundorne carriage drive by John Corbet. The dry stone wall defining the east side of the woodland is aligned along the crest of the escarpment and has been identified wrongly in the past as the monastic precinct boundary which is now known to have been 80m further to the east. The wall is uniformly of stone rubble construction and the occasional architectural fragment indicates that some of the material probably came from the abbey ruins. However, with John Corbet's interest in preserving the remains, it is likely that much of the stone was freshly quarried from nearby outcrops on the crest of the escarpment. At the south, the wall turns westwards down the escarpment and ends just to the east of the Forest Enterprise car park, though it probably originally continued further along the side of the Newport to Shrewsbury road. The dry stone wall defining the west side of the woodland belt runs from the abbey ruins northwards. It was noted in Section 5.2.3 that there is a marked increase in the quantity of squared stone in the fabric of the wall adjacent to the site of the abbey's north gate, though elsewhere, the amount of shaped stone is fairly minimal.

5.4.4 The Sundorne carriage drive

The Forest Enterprise track along the wooded escarpment is on the line of the Sundorne carriage drive, and allowing for resurfacing and minor repairs, is essentially as constructed in 1800. The drive may have only had a life of about 50 years since by

the mid-19th century the declining fortunes of the Corbet family probably meant they were not able to afford the upkeep of the landscape park. By 1881, the Ordnance Survey map indicates the carriage drive was blocked by the farm track between Sundorne House and Haughmond Farm (Ordnance Survey 1881). The only major change to the carriage drive noted in the survey area is the addition of a large triangular-shaped platform on the west side of the track, 60m from the north edge of the survey area. This is probably a relatively recent turning circle for vehicles and is part of the Forest Enterprise track.

The Sundorne carriage drive enters the survey area at the north and is at first aligned along what was the earlier approach to the medieval abbey and the Barker residence. The 1841 map shows the carriage drive aligned along this section of track although there is nothing distinctive in the form of the track to indicate the existence of the carriage drive. After 40m the earlier route turns down the slope, and the carriage drive takes on a much more engineered appearance as a deliberately levelled terrace as from here southwards it was effectively a new route. The new section of drive was carefully aligned to pass immediately above the ruins of the abbey along a level course following the contours of the escarpment. On the south the drive slices across the south part of the Barker garden, with the embankment for the drive clearly overlying the line of garden terraces at the foot of the escarpment. Here the conduit house would have been clearly visible from the drive as an 'eye-catcher.' Along the engineered section of the carriage drive, the embankment is consistently around 8m wide at the top, and is almost uniformly higher on the west than on the east, reflecting the fact that it was built out from the slope. It is flanked on both sides by drainage ditches and in certain sections on the east side, the hillside was cut back into the rock during construction.

Despite passing close to the east side of the abbey, views of the actual ruins are quite restricted from the Sundorne carriage drive, largely due to the boundary wall around the Barker residence. A narrow gate at the north-east corner of the boundary wall may have been made at this period to permit access to the ruins from the carriage drive, whilst the rock knoll immediately to the north also provided an excellent vantage point. The top of this rock has been levelled and a series of slight banks define the outline of a small rectangular structure, which, given the open view over the ruins from here, might reasonably be interpreted as a shelter or viewing point for the benefit of visitors. The possibility that a second structure 60m to the north might have been for visitors was raised earlier in the report (Section 5.2.3).

5.4.5 The abbey carriage drive

At the north edge of the survey area, a disused track flanked by ruined stone walls on either side crosses the line of the Sundorne carriage drive. This crossroads is depicted first on the 1841 map and latterly the route was part of a farm track running from Haughmond Farm on the east to Sundorne House in the west. However, the section westwards from the crossroads had more formal origins as a second carriage drive sweeping past the north-west side of the abbey. This abbey carriage drive continues as far as the west side of the survey area where an associated route probably heads northwards to an elevated viewpoint on Dam 2. The existence of the abbey carriage drive is not mentioned in contemporary accounts of the main Sundorne carriage driven nor does it compare with the main drive in the overall scale of its construction. For much of its length it is aligned along the pre-existing route to the abbey although

where it is a new feature, the evidence is of something more substantial than just a simple farm track.

The stone walls defining the east and west sides of the route immediately after the crossroads are now mostly reduced to a stone bank, although several short sections of standing masonry survive on the west side and indicate that the walls were of drystone rubble construction. The 1841 map hints that there might have been large gateposts where the walls met the main Sundorne carriage drive although there is no evidence of these surviving on the ground. There is no suggestion that the route eastwards from the crossroads was ever part of a formal drive. The remnants of the collapsed flanking walls indicate that the route quickly narrowed eastwards and in the pasture field to the east the surface evidence of the route reduces to a slight and intermittent erosion scar heading in the general direction of Haughmond Farm. The route eastwards from the crossroads is therefore essentially just a farm track.

By comparison to the east side of the crossroads, the route westwards is much wider and more formally laid out as it descends the slight slope on a gentle south-westerly curve. This immediately suggests that the route is something more than just a utilitarian farm track since the curve would have had the effect of gradually unfolding a view of the abbey. The 1841 map indicates the route continued to a gate in the field wall along the edge of the woodland belt but this was blocked by drystone walling sometime after 1969 (Ordnance Survey 1969). The line of the drive beyond is picked out by a short length of hollow way from where a track appears to branch off to the north to a suggested viewpoint within the medieval embanked enclosure at the foot of the slope. As was described earlier in the report, the track is quite distinct where it crosses the interior of the enclosure indicative perhaps of deliberate engineering rather than prolonged erosion (Section 5.2.4). It ends at a square platform at the south-west corner of the enclosure suggesting there was perhaps a standing structure here at the time or alternatively the earthwork remains of a much earlier building may have created a ready-made viewing platform. Southwards, the abbey ruins are visible nestling below the wooded escarpment and westwards Sundorne House can be glimpsed in the middle distance above Dam 2. The house appears more prominent because all of the foreground is hidden by the dam and it is possible the view was framed by trees along the dam embankment. There are several mature oaks on the summit of the embankment which could date to the latter stages of the landscape park. The 1777 survey shows a woodland belt along the west side of the field suggesting the dam may have been planted with trees early in the development of the park.

The abbey carriage drive turned southwards at the bottom of the escarpment and joined the existing medieval approach route to the abbey. From here up to the north-west corner of the church the drive presumably used the existing well-worn track to the abbey as it is not detectable on the surface independently of this. It is only further to the west, beyond the site of the possible inner court gatehouse, that there is evidence of new construction with a wide rounded bank continuing almost to the west edge of the field. The scale of the earthwork bears superficial comparison with the embanked causeway of the main carriage drive. However, the evidence discussed earlier in the report suggests that the structure is probably of more than one phase. The bank may well incorporate the field boundary shown on the 1777 map which in turn might have originated as the inner court boundary of the medieval abbey. The final form though is a broad, elevated causeway extending the earlier route to the abbey further westwards and on a scale far in excess of that of a simple farm track. At the west, the causeway is cut by a later farm track running along the edge of the field but the earthwork does

not re-emerge in the field to the west suggesting it may have ended at about this point. Logically though, one might have anticipated that the drive would have continued westwards back to Sundorne House, but the 1841 map shows only fields in this direction with no evidence of even a farm track.

The sweeping curve of this route below the escarpment augmented the main Sundorne carriage drive by giving direct access to the north side of the ruins and by opening up further viewpoints. At the west end of the drive there was an attractive view looking east of the ruins against the wooded backdrop of the escarpment. At this point the field evidence indicates that a route went north to Dam 2 which probably continued in use as a viewpoint and walking terrace, although the lake to its east was eventually drained as was discussed above.

The route north from the abbey carriage drive starts as a broad trackway bounded on the east side by the collapsed and grassed-over remains of a narrow stone wall and on the west by the edge of the channel for the west stream. Although the route could arguably be just a farm track, (as it is now continuing up to the hedgeline on the north of the survey area) there is also clear evidence of ornamental landscape features associated with the route. The west stream was widened to make a long pool and a viewing platform accessible from the track was made about halfway along its east side.

The pond was formed by constructing a modest dam across the line of the west stream about 45m south of the point where it turns to cut through Dam 1. The earthwork only survives on the west side of the stream and has clearly been built using material quarried from the side of the medieval dam. The pond proper begins some 30m further upstream and has been formed by widening the channel with the consequence that the north-east corner clearly cuts into the rear of Dam 2. This relationship establishes that the pond post-dates the creation of the ornamental lake associated with Dam 2. The viewing platform, which consists of a flat-topped mound projecting from the east side of the widened channel, would have given a view along the length of the pond. Beyond this point, the route probably continued onto the summit of Dam 2 from the north end of which most of the principal elements of the developed landscape park would have been visible. The view would have encompassed Sundorne House in the west, Queen Eleanor's Bower and the folly castle on the escarpment to the south and the abbey ruins in the middle distance.

5.5 18th and 19th century agricultural features (Figure 20)

5.5.1 Introduction

Since the period of the abbey much of the survey area has been a farmed landscape and where remains can be directly related to a specific period they have already been described. This leaves a broad group of features relating to the agricultural exploitation of the area during the 18th and 19th centuries, most of which are of relatively minor significance for understanding the overall development of the landscape. For purposes of description they are divided into the categories of tracks, buildings, boundaries and drainage features (including ponds).

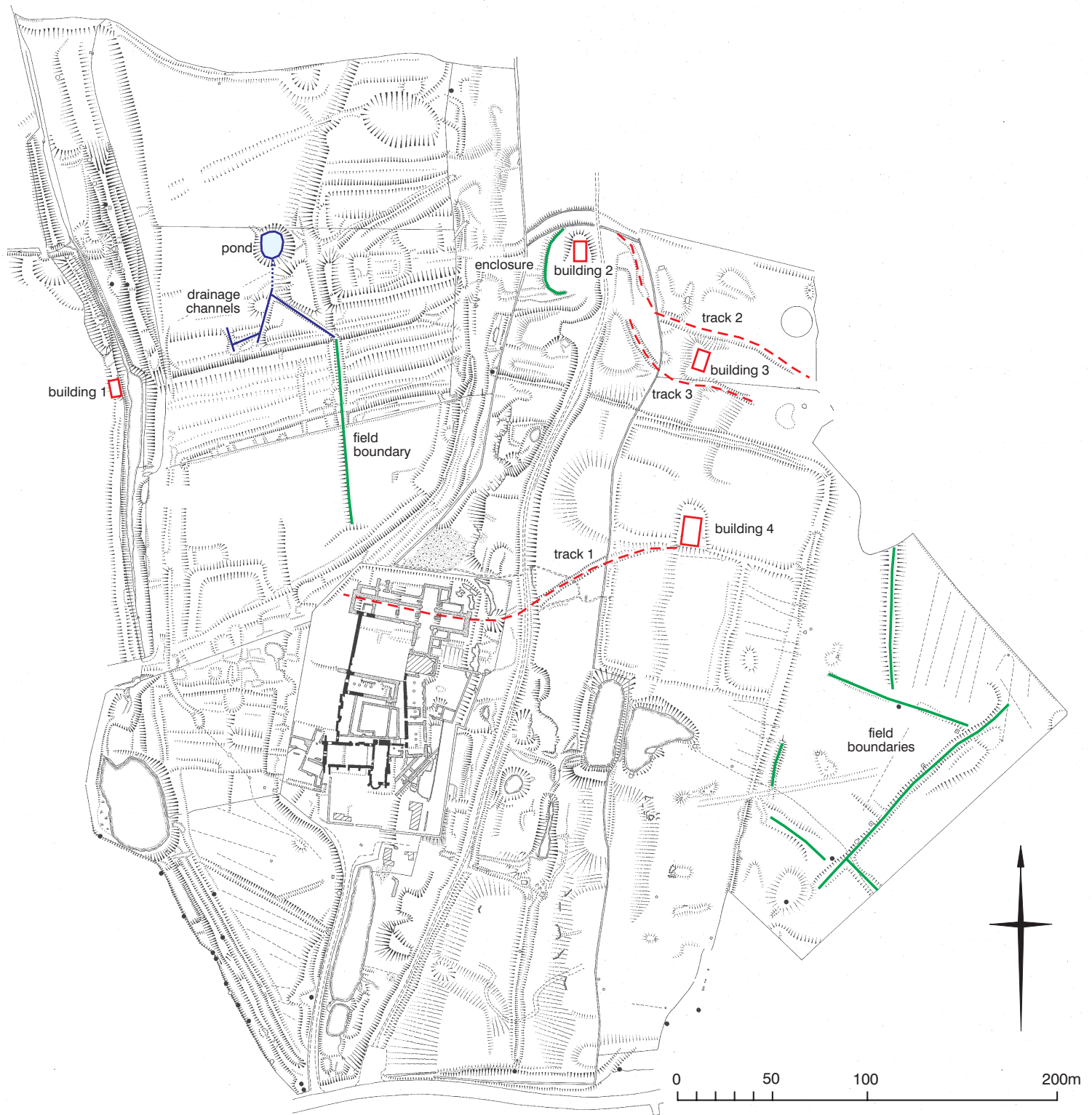


Figure 20. Plan showing agricultural features of the 18th and 19th centuries

5.5.2 Tracks

Modern tracks are indicated on the earthwork survey plan and are not individually described here. Tracks previously mentioned are not described again in this section.

Track 1

Beginning above a broad hollow above the east end of the abbey a narrow and quite prominent hollow way ascends the escarpment and leads to the platform defining Building 4 described below. It is possible that the route continued westwards down the hollow and over the site of the abbey church. Indeed it is possible that the hollow might have been cut expressly for the purpose of forming this route. The depth of the feature suggests it was used over a prolonged period, but it is not shown on any of the 19th century maps which instead depict a track along the line of the present footpath slightly further to the south (Ashdown 1841; Ordnance Survey 1881). But it is unlikely to be medieval because it almost certainly crossed the site of the church and therefore could well be 17th or 18th century in date.

Tracks 2 and 3

Tracks 2 and 3 run parallel in a north-west to south-east direction and are defined by discontinuous sections of hollow way. Their alignment suggests they branched off what is now the Forest Enterprise track and headed for Haughmond Farm and therefore probably post-date the construction of the farm around 1800. However, this part of the Forest Enterprise track has been used as a route since the middle ages as it formed part of the medieval approach to the abbey. There is therefore the possibility that both tracks could be medieval in origin and aligned around the outside of the monastic precinct boundary.

5.5.3 Buildings

Building 1

Building 1 is indicated by a slight platform on the west side of the west stream channel. A line of cobbles is exposed in the side of the channel which is probably associated with this feature. An aerial photograph taken in June 1950 shows a small structure on this site which may be the origin of the platform (CUCAP 1950).

Buildings 2 and 3

Buildings 2 and 3 are shown on the 1777 map and are presumably farm buildings from this period although the possibility that they are much earlier should not be discounted. The former is represented by a sub-rectangular mound immediately to the west of the Forest Enterprise track. The area is heavily overgrown and further surface details of the structure may await discovery. To the west, a slight stony bank defines what is probably the perimeter of an associated yard, whilst immediately to the east slight scarps between Tracks 2 and 3 define a second enclosure possibly associated with this building. It is evident from the position of Building 3 on the 1777 survey that it must have occupied a prominent rock terrace in the pasture field above the escarpment, but no definite surface traces were noted at the time of the survey.

Building 4

Building 4 is in the pasture field above the escarpment and is defined by a sub-rectangular platform some 20m east-west by about 15m wide. The platform overlies a medieval enclosure bank and is approached by Track 1 which ends at the south-west corner of the building. The track possibly dates back to the 17th or 18th centuries and this is therefore the most likely period for the building.

5.5.4 Boundaries and drainage features

A ploughed-down field boundary begins on the north side of the abbey as a broad, west-facing scarp. Northwards, it cuts across the line of the monastic precinct boundary where its form changes to a broad, shallow ditch. This then cuts across the medieval plough ridges where it accounts for the differential survival of these earthworks, with the sections to the east far more prominent than to the west. Ploughing on the west side of this boundary must account for this difference. The ditch changes direction to the north-west where it cuts the remains of the medieval boundary north of the monastic precinct and here it may have been purely for drainage with the earlier, medieval boundary perhaps defining the northern limit of the ploughed area. There is no indication of this division on any of the maps of the site and therefore it could date to before the earliest survey of 1777.

Several of the field boundaries shown on the 1777 map to the east of the monastic precinct survive as earthworks. The field remains indicate that the boundaries were defined either by banks or by ditches, but earthwork preservation is generally not good in this area. Additional features not depicted on the 1777 survey but probably part of this same period of enclosure include a broad bank heading southwards from the edge of the survey area and a short length of bank aligned parallel to the east side of the monastic precinct.

A circular hollow some 20m in diameter on the north side of the survey area probably represents a redundant pond and may be connected with a number of drainage channels immediately to the south. The feature was probably for livestock and it must post-date the draining of the former monastic pond in this area which was probably still there in the second half of the 18th century. There are several short lengths of deeply-cut drainage channels to the south of this pond which defy any obvious explanation. They are late as they cut through all the other earthwork features in this area.

6. SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

6.1 The medieval abbey c1100-1539 (Figure 21)

The reasons for the siting of a medieval religious house can rarely be defined with any certainty but in the case of Haughmond, the comparative remoteness of the area on the woodland fringe, the shelter provided by the slope and the ready availability of building stone are all valid explanations. However, these conditions apply widely along the foot of Haughmond Hill and so it was probably the occurrence of a number of springs along this particular section of the escarpment which was the determining factor. The need for a reliable water supply for drinking, washing and carrying away waste hardly needs stating but there is also the possibility that the first community chose to settle here because the springs already had an established spiritual significance. Life-giving springs issuing from the side of a barren, rocky hillside, especially if a rare occurrence along this particular escarpment, could have been considered miraculous locally and the site consequently one of sanctity. Although there is no corroborating evidence, there is at least the possibility that the first religious community were attracted to this locality by the existence of an established holy site. In the absence of any reliable historical evidence, the date of c1100 for the first church at Haughmond rests largely on evidence from the 1975-79 excavations whilst the status of this foundation is still open to debate. The possibility that it was eremetical in character has much to recommend it given the historical evidence for the comparative remoteness of the area at the end of the 11th century on the edge of the woodland clearances. However, the suggestion made above that Haughmond might have been considered a *numinous* place on account of the springs means the possibility of an earlier foundation should not be ruled out. The transepted and cruciform plan of the first church bears comparison with several late-saxon and early Norman minster and collegiate churches (Blair 1985, 122) suggesting there is scope for a continuing debate over the date and status of the first religious foundation at Haughmond.

One of the more important advances in understanding to result from the field survey is the discovery of the extent of the monastic precinct. It is an acknowledged fact that up until recently historical and archaeological research has tended to concentrate on the claustral areas of monasteries, and that less interest has been shown in the wider precinct (Coppack 1990, 109; Burton 1994, 148). Consequently the discovery that the precinct at Haughmond enclosed an area of 10.4ha is impossible to compare meaningfully with other Augustinian establishments as so few perimeters have been identified with any certainty. The area is small in comparison with the larger Augustinian houses, such as Thornton Abbey in Lincolnshire where the precinct eventually covered 72 acres (29ha). However, it bears comparison with other Shropshire monasteries, such as the Cistercian abbey at Buildwas where the precinct encloses an area of 13.7 ha (Robinson 2001, 20; Brown 2002, 5)

The regularity of the plan suggests the precinct was laid out as single entity and did not grow by a process of gradual accretion. A strong case was made for dating the construction of the precinct to the period after the site became an abbey around 1150 and for tentatively linking it to the rebuilding campaign of the 1180s when the church and cloister were enlarged. The construction of the surviving precinct boundary, which was probably walled around most of the perimeter, must have involved a considerable outlay of resources. This does not rule out the possibility that there was an earlier precinct boundary associated with the priory which has left no recognisable surface remains.

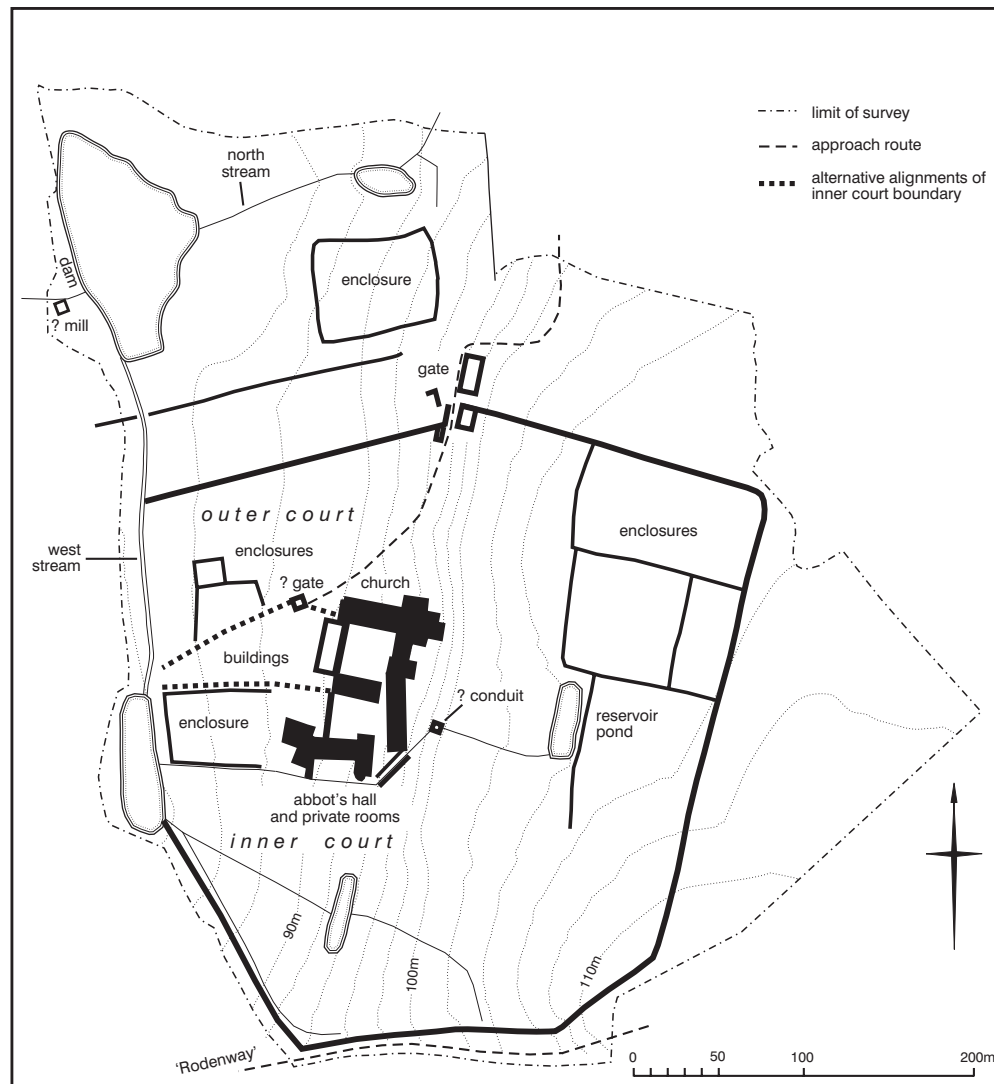


Figure 21.
Interpretative
plan of the
medieval abbey

The form of the north gate is now far more clearly understood than before the survey when all that was known for certain was that a gatehouse had been located 400 feet north of the church early last century. Although the exact details of the plan are still obscure, the field evidence suggests there was probably a structure on the east side of the passageway, perhaps for the porter referred to in 1329 (Phillpotts 2002, 34). There was probably just a free-standing wall on the opposite side of the passageway. Even though the area occupied by the gate is quite small, it could still have had quite an elaborate, two-storey superstructure above the entrance passage. The architecture of gatehouses often reflected the status of the foundation, as at the Augustinian houses at Kirkham in North Yorkshire and Thornton in Lincolnshire. Whilst the gatehouse of 1380 at Thornton is far larger than the building suggested by the field remains at Haughmond, the two-storey, 13th-century gatehouse at Kirkham Priory is more closely comparable in size. Here the exterior is carved with the arms of its patrons indicating that even a fairly modest gatehouse could have been quite elaborately decorated. One can justifiably envisage comparable ornamentation on the gatehouse at Haughmond reflecting the superior status of the site as an abbey and the patronage of the Earls of Arundel and of several notable local families.

Within the precinct, one of the main discoveries of the English Heritage survey has been the identification of the main elements of the monastic water supply. The existence

of an extensive group of ponds and leats on the escarpment above the abbey was known before the start of the survey and were uncritically assumed to represent the monastic water supply. As a result of the field survey though, it is clear that most of this system is later and part of an arrangement to supply water to the large, ornamental pond at the foot of the slope which formed part of the garden on the south side of the Barker residence. More specifically, the survey has also demonstrated that the stone conduit house is not the source of the monastic supply as had previously been assumed but that this was in fact the reservoir pond on the crest of the escarpment directly above the abbey. The vestiges of the leat partially survive on the slope below the pond and the existence of some form of settling tank or cistern at the point where it fed into the reredorter drain may explain the 'dog-leg' in the Barker period garden wall. Although highly speculative, one possibility is that the stone conduit house originally stood here and was moved to its present location in to provide an ornamental element in the Barker period garden.

The course of the reredorter drain and its outflow westwards, at least as far as the first abbot's hall, is obvious from the surface remains and demonstrates how the sanitary needs of the abbey were met. However, there is very little evidence surviving of how water was conveyed around the remainder of the abbey, in particular to supply the kitchens, the lavatorium and the church. The field survey has identified one possible rock-cut channel near the reredorter drain to add to the sections of stone drain visible around the claustral complex, but the network as a whole is still far from being understood.

The natural topography was clearly a dominant factor in the internal layout of the precinct with the escarpment and high ground to the east seemingly less intensively used than the lowland to the west. The area above the escarpment was somewhat isolated, a point emphasised by the fact that the survey found only one demonstrably medieval track on the slope, next to the leat supplying the reredorter drain. The possibility remains open that several of the other post-medieval tracks on the escarpment have earlier origins although there is no field evidence which confirms this. The survey results suggest that the area above the escarpment was primarily used for livestock pasture with the discovery of a series of small enclosures which are probably monastic in origin. As well as to provide pasturage, the other reason for bringing this area within the precinct was probably to control the catchment area of the reservoir pond for the reredorter drain.

The main earthwork evidence for the monastic layout across the western half of the precinct comprises two enclosures and an associated group of buildings to the west of the claustral area. Almost definitely there was an internal boundary in this area as well, reflecting the documented division between the Abbot's Court and the Convent Court mentioned in 1539 (Phillpotts 2002, 36). The field evidence suggests two alternative possibilities for the course of this boundary with the area to the south forming an inner court around the abbot's hall and private rooms and the area to the north, an outer court. Within the inner court, evidence has been put forward for the formalisation of the course of the west stream to create two ponds, possibly after the construction of the first phase of abbot's hall in the mid 13th century. It is also possible that by about 1500 there was a garden in this area, the forerunner perhaps of the garden later established by the Barker family. In the outer court, the field survey identified the main route from the north gate towards the suggested inner court and found that there may have been an inner gatehouse immediately to the west of the

church. However, other than these basic details of the monastic layout, the probable outer court is otherwise devoid of any definite surface remains of the period.

On the north of the site, the survey has identified a complex sequence of earthworks which collectively indicate the expansion of activity outside the north gate of the abbey. Ploughland was taken out of cultivation and divided by a boundary parallel with the north-west side of the monastic precinct. Part of the area was brought within a large embanked enclosure and two ponds were created along the line of the north stream. The ponds were presumably monastic fishponds (the larger of the two was possibly also a millpond), whilst the purpose of the enclosure remains obscure. The medieval references to the distribution of alms and the receipt of the infirm at the abbey gate suggests there was an almoner and perhaps even a chapel outside the entrance although the remains identified within the enclosure are not consistent with such major buildings. The survey identified only one, or possibly at most two, small buildings within the enclosure and there is no certain evidence that they are medieval. The explanation of the enclosure therefore remains obscure, but it may have had some agricultural function associated with the abbey. However, the survey did identify the site of one possibly quite large structure outside the north gate overlooking a forecourt area and this may have had some connection with the documented activities at the abbey entrance.

6.2 The Barker residence 1539-c1650 (Figure 22)

A period of great change to the abbey occurred immediately after the Dissolution when the monastery was transformed into a substantial private residence. St John Hope and Brakspear were the first to appreciate that the present form of the ruins is largely the result of selective demolition to create the post-Dissolution residence. It can be argued that the same also holds true for the wider monastic landscape and that the only medieval features surviving as earthworks are those which were deliberately retained to form part of the grounds of the Barker residence. The precinct boundary was probably retained to define the grounds of the house whilst the monastic reservoir on the crest of the escarpment was kept in order to supply water to the ornamental garden lower down the slope. The southern of the two large enclosures to the west of the claustral nucleus was laid out with garden compartments. Conversely, other elements of the precinct may have been deliberately cleared during this same period, explaining, for example, the almost complete absence of any medieval earthwork remains across most of the outer court.

The most important discovery relating to the post-Dissolution house is that there was an extensive garden on the south and west sides corresponding almost exactly to the area of the probable monastic inner court. It is possible that some elements of this garden had monastic origins, most notably the long pond to the south of the abbot's residence and the pond on the south-west side of the precinct boundary. However, the surviving remains principally date from the period of the Barker residence and therefore cover the period from c1550 to c1650. The overall layout of the garden is not entirely clear due to the incomplete preservation of the earthwork remains. However, there is evidence of a regular plan with the leats on the escarpment, the long pond at the foot of the slope, the stone boundary wall to the south and east of the house and the garden enclosure to the west all arranged co-axially. The garden appears to have been divided between a more secluded area to the south of the house accessed via the surviving ornamental gate, and a more open area to the west. Here

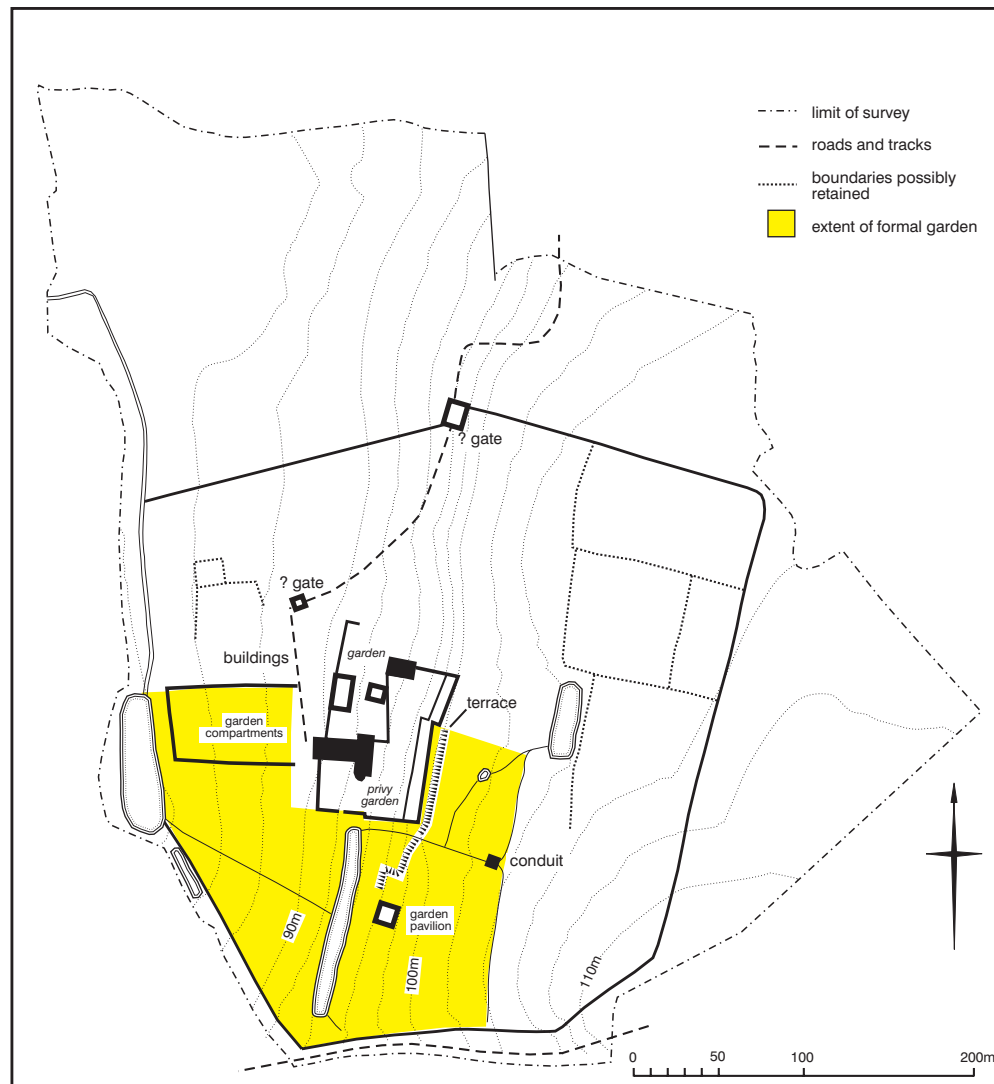


Figure 22.
Interpretative plan
of the site during
the period of the
Barker residence

the earthwork remains suggest a series of garden compartments laid out within a pre-existing enclosure and open to view from the main entrance to the house.

Although the plan of the garden is incomplete in its detail, several aspects of the layout appear to reflect design ideas prevalent in this period. It is possible that the use of water as an ornamental feature at Haughmond may be a modest attempt to emulate the water gardens established at more important houses of the period (Taigel and Williamson, 1993, 35). The use of water in the design of the garden is particularly emphasised by the positioning of the stone-built conduit house to act as an ‘eye-catcher’ at a focal point in the leat system. The existence of a possible pavilion or banqueting house on the east side of the long pond, dated by excavation to c1600 reflects the trend (starting in the middle of the 16th-century) of introducing small buildings into the garden for ornament and pleasure (Woodfield 1991, 124-5). Although nothing is known of the superstructure of this particular building, it appears from the earthwork evidence to have been raised on an artificial mound presumably to open up views westwards across the long pond to the foothills of the Welsh mountains in the far distance. Another apparent characteristic of smaller gardens of this period is the mixing of aesthetic and horticultural elements (Taigel and Williamson 1993, 42). At Haughmond, the broad ridges immediately to the west of the long pond certainly suggest a cultivated area within the garden though it is impossible to establish if this

was ornamental planting or had a more utilitarian purpose. One possible interpretation is that the ridges were developed to support the planting of an orchard.

The inner court was the part of the monastic precinct most closely associated with the abbot and by transforming the area into their formal garden, the Barker family may have been demonstrating that they were the successors to the abbots of Haughmond. In the same way, moving into the former abbot's hall and private rooms may have made practical sense in terms of the level of comfort available, but it was also symbolic of the fact that the Barker family had inherited the status formerly enjoyed by the abbot. It is possible that the Barker family also saw their role as preserving the sanctity of the site, with the chapter house possibly retained as a chapel (St John Hope and Brakspear 1909, 309). The evidence for a chapel was not made clear in the 1909 account, but it possibly stemmed from the fact that the chapter house contains a font and that the authors considered the building had been extensively re-constructed after the Dissolution. The role of the chapter house after the Dissolution is therefore crucial to understanding the period of the Barker residence. The religious sympathies of the Barker family have not been determined, but it is possible that they were recusants and kept the chapter house for Catholic worship.

The Sundorne landscape park c1740-c1850 (Figure 23)

The beginning of the Sundorne landscape park may be reasonably linked to the construction of Sundorne House around 1740. However, the existence of an extensive ornamental lake to the north-west of the abbey as early as 1752 (represented by the massive earthwork referred to in this report as Dam 2) raises the possibility that some elements of the park, including the lake, might have been established before 1740. The creation of the lake to enhance the view of the abbey from the north along with the documentary evidence that the ruins were whitewashed in about 1740 demonstrates the importance then attached to the ruins as a landscape feature. There were various reasons for incorporating a ruin into a landscape park during this period and include pride in the virtues of indigenous architecture, the aesthetic qualities of decaying ruins and a reminder of past Catholic tyranny exemplified by monasticism (Fergusson and Harrison 1999, 189). The latter theme probably does not apply at Haughmond since the Corbet family is known to have held Jacobite sympathies in 1740 and therefore its members were presumably Catholic. Indeed, it is more likely that their treatment of the ruins as a focal point of the park was intended as a demonstration of the family's Catholic sympathies.

The majority of the field remains relating to the Sundorne landscape park date from about 1800 and embody aspects of the picturesque approach to landscape design which were then very fashionable (Taigel and Williamson 1993, 78-81). The newly-planted woodland belt along the rocky escarpment provided an enhanced natural setting for the abbey ruins and may even have been a conscious attempt to recreate the imagined medieval setting of the abbey on the woodland margins. The picturesque movement also encouraged exploration of the wider parkland landscape and at Haughmond the field survey has recorded several subsidiary routes designed to reveal specific viewpoints and features.

That the present Forest Enterprise track is on the line of the Sundorne carriage drive was known before the survey, but the fieldwork has recorded elements of the original drive construction and demonstrated the extent to which it was engineered to create a new route along the slope. The field survey has concluded that the original approach

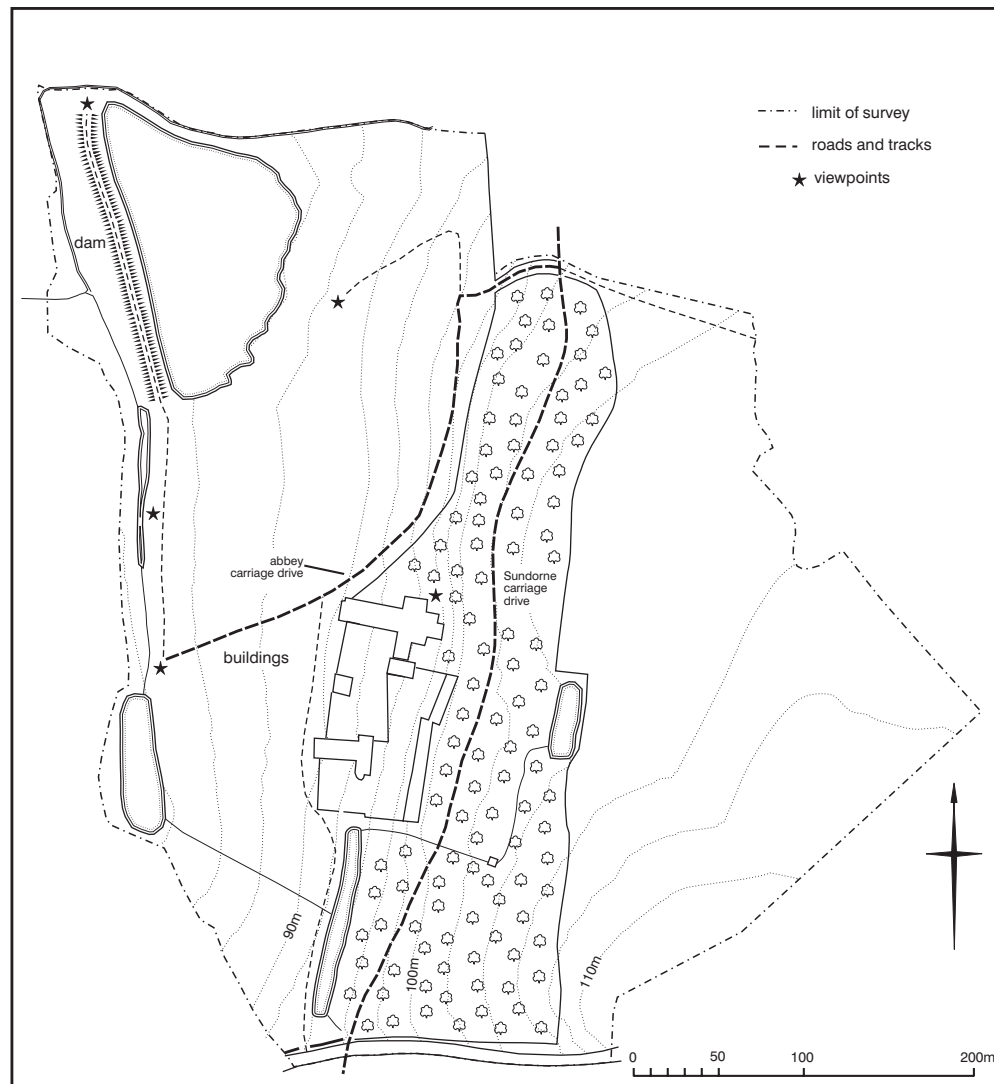


Figure 23.
Interpretative plan
of the site during
the period of the
Sundorne
landscape park

route to the abbey was incorporated in a second drive leading off the main carriage drive and sweeping past the north-west corner of the abbey. The field evidence for this abbey carriage drive is admittedly not as compelling as for the Sundorne carriage drive nevertheless the survey has clearly demonstrated that the route began as something more than a simple farm track.

The purpose of the abbey carriage drive, perhaps more than the main Sundorne carriage drive, seems to have been to link together several viewpoints to the north of the abbey. Near the beginning of the drive, a spur led into the medieval enclosure to the north of the precinct. Here there was a clear view westwards to Sundorne House as well as southwards to the abbey ruins. Additionally, there may have been a standing structure within the enclosure to act as a point of interest, although the date of the building platform recorded here is by no means certain. The survey also concluded there was a route northwards from the end of the drive onto the larger of the two dams (Dam 2). Virtually the entire landscape park is visible from this one viewpoint and there is the possibility that the ornamental lake created by the dam was retained for a while after 1800 to enhance the visual setting of the abbey ruins.

7. METHODOLOGY

The survey was undertaken by Trevor Pearson and Stewart Ainsworth of the York Office of English Heritage and Graham Brown of the Swindon Office. A number of digital photographs taken by Trevor Pearson and Stewart Ainsworth are held on disk as part of the project archive. The survey was undertaken using a Trimble dual frequency Global Positioning System (GPS). The base receiver was set up at the centre of the survey area on a temporary survey station ST01 and three receivers (Trimble 4700, 4800 and 5600 models) were used to set out control points and also to record some of the earthwork remains. A Leica TC1610 Electronic theodolite was used to put out the control in the woods and elsewhere where satellite visibility was poor, and was also used to record some earthwork details in these areas. The portrayal of upstanding remains from within the claustral area was taken from the Ploughman Craven and Associates' 1:100 scale survey of 1980. The resulting plan was printed at 1:1000 scale via Key Terrafirma, and AutoCad software and taken into the field for checking and the addition of the remaining earthwork details. These were supplied with tape measures using standard graphical techniques.

The hand drawn archive plan was prepared by Trevor Pearson and CAD-based drawings by Philip Sinton. The report was written and researched by Trevor Pearson and edited by Stewart Ainsworth and Paul Everson with comments from Graham Brown. The site archive has been deposited in English Heritage's National Monuments Record, Great Western Village, Kemble Drive, Swindon SN2 2GZ, to where applications for copyright should be made (reference number: SJ 51 NW 5).

The contour information was supplied by the Ordnance Survey as a digital file under Licence Number GD03085G.

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English Heritage would like to thank Mr Davies, Mr Morgan and Mr Teece for permission to access their land and for sharing their insights into the site. The fieldwork was arranged in consultation with Sarah Jennings of the Centre for Archaeology and the Inspectors of Ancient Monuments in the West Midlands Region of English Heritage, Dr Paul Stamper and Tony Fleming. Nicholas Palmer of the Museum Field Services of Warwickshire County Council and Jeff West of English Heritage provided background information and shared their insights into the site whilst Dr Chris Phillpotts is thanked for supplying the results of his historical research and discussing various aspects of the source material. The staff of the Shropshire Records and Research Centre are also thanked for their assistance.

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APPENDIX 1. Table of NMR numbers linked to the survey

Medieval abbey	SJ 5418 1516	SJ 51 NW 5
Gatehouse	SJ 5422 1535	SJ 51 NW 24
Quarries	SJ 5428 1534- SJ 5420 1513	SJ 51 NW 25
Reservoir pond	SJ 5429 1518	SJ 51 NW 26
Possible fishpond	SJ 5404 1514	SJ 51 NW 27
Track	SJ 5422 1535- SJ 5412 1523	SJ 51 NW 28
Enclosures	SJ 540 151	SJ 51 NW 29
Buildings	SJ 540 152	SJ 51 NW 30
Enclosures	SJ 543 152	SJ 51 NW 31
Precinct boundary	SJ 542 151	SJ 51 NW 32
Possible inner gatehouse	SJ 5413 1525	SJ 51 NW 33
Medieval field system	SJ 541 154	SJ 51 NW 34
Enclosure	SJ 5417 1543	SJ 51 NW 35
Medieval dam	SJ 5400 1543	SJ 51 NW 36
Possible fishpond	SJ 5417 1550	SJ 51 NW 37
Building	SJ 5423 1540	SJ 51 NW 38
Post-Dissolution house	SJ 5418 1516	SJ 51 NW 39
Building	SJ 5417 1506	SJ 51 NW 40
Ornamental pond	SJ 5415 1506	SJ 51 NW 41
Conduit house	SJ 5424 1509	SJ 51 NW 42
Garden	SJ 541 150	SJ 51 NW 43
Carriage drive	SJ 5428 1544- SJ 5416 1501	SJ 51 NW 44
Carriage drive	SJ 5428 1545- SJ 5406 1522	SJ 51 NW 45
Ornamental lake	SJ 5352 1483	SJ 51 NW 46



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