

Odiham Castle,  
Hampshire

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## Odiham Castle, Hampshire

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 Background

An earthwork survey was undertaken between January and March 2004 of Odiham Castle, Hampshire, (SU 75 SW 11) by staff of the Field Investigation team of English Heritage based at Swindon. Most of the castle site is owned by Hampshire County Council; however, the surrounding area, including parts of the castle, is in private ownership. The survey was undertaken to provide a plan and analysis of the site and the surrounding area in order to inform the conservation and consolidation work that will be undertaken. The results of the survey will also form part of the forthcoming publication of the excavations that took place here in the 1980s. The survey was carried out as a level 3 survey at a scale of 1:1000 (RCHME 1999). A level 1 survey was undertaken on the deer park.

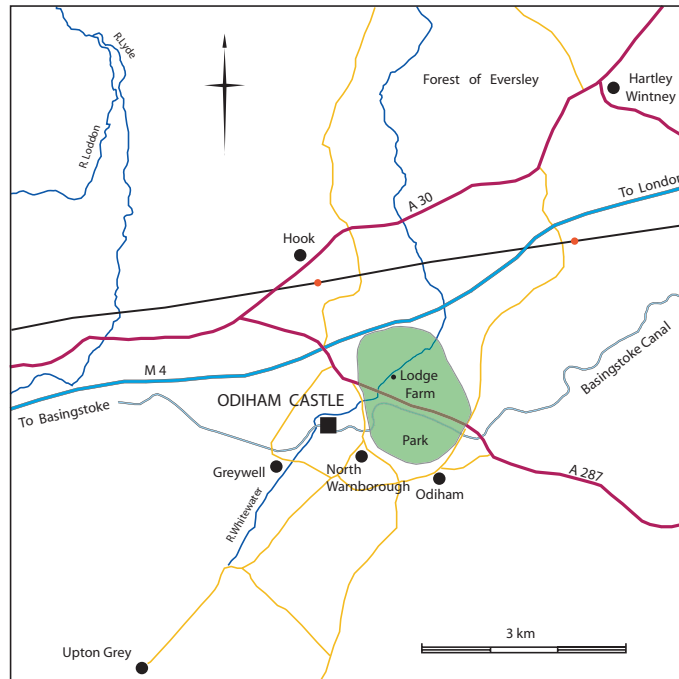
The surviving remains of Odiham Castle (centred at SU 7255 5187) lie on two rectangular moated platforms, with the ruins of an octagonal tower occupying the northern platform. The castle was probably built sometime in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, although excavation has revealed evidence of an earlier structure near the tower. The earthwork survey has identified the extent of the castle and probable approach, it also reveals evidence of its later use as a parkland feature. Analysis of the deer park has identified a possible deer chase, and provides a fuller understanding of how the park was possibly perceived during the medieval period.

## 1.2 Location and Topography

Odiham Castle is situated in the tithing of North Warnborough some 1.7km north-west of the small market town of Odiham and c10km east of Basingstoke (fig 1). The earthworks and surviving remains lie on the southern side of a major loop in the River Whitewater, with the Basingstoke canal slicing through the southern part of the site. A canal aqueduct spans the river near the northern platform. The course of the river has clearly been manipulated and managed; as late as 1914, for example, part of the river was diverted to provide additional water to the canal (Vine 1994, 177).

The ground in the area of the castle is relatively flat, but gradually rises towards Odiham. The underlying geology is of river alluvium, which extends in a south-westerly direction along the banks of the river towards Greywell. In the east, the valley gravels broaden out onto Warnborough Green and extend as far as the northern edge of the village.

The village of North Warnborough itself comprises a number of 15<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> century properties with other, later properties to the north, and others infilling the plots between the older houses. Along a lane between the canal and castle the properties are mainly of 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century date, with others encroaching onto Warnborough Green to the north of the river.



**Figure 1.**  
*Odiham Castle and its environs.*

The place-name is of some interest from a landscape point of view. It may have derived from the Old English word 'Wudighâm', which has been interpreted as meaning a 'wooded estate' (Coates 1989, 126) - an apt term for the Odiham area.

Situated some 800m to the north-east of the castle lies the royal hunting ground of Odiham Park. It is bisected by the River Whitewater into two distinct geological zones: in the north, beyond Park Lodge Farm, it is predominantly of valley gravel and sand, with a 'finger-like' projection of London Clay extending in a south-westerly direction. To the south of the river there is a smaller area of valley gravel and sand, beyond which London Clay occupies the remainder of the park.

## 2. BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

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### 2.1 The Castle

Odiham Castle was built in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century and was to remain a royal establishment until the late 15<sup>th</sup> century. Even before the 13<sup>th</sup> century the Odiham area was an important royal estate. At the time of the Domesday Survey it was the largest royal holding in Hampshire. As well as enumerating its land, meadow and woodland, eight mills are mentioned (Munby 1982, 1.1). Although it is not entirely clear where these mills lay, it is likely that at least two were situated on the River Whitewater in North Warnborough since, in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century, King John acquired 20a (8.3ha) of meadow from his tenant, Robert the Parker, and burnt down his mills in order to construct his castle (MacGregor 1983, 15, 22).

Building work appears to have begun in 1207 on what was termed the *domus regis* (king's house) and the moat. Work was to continue for some seven years before it was completed at a cost of £1,252 3s 10d (ibid, 26). Lying in an area of marshland and close to a major route linking Winchester and London (Ogilvy 1675), Odiham was well placed on the royal itinerary where kings and their retinues could take advantage of the hunting resources. King John frequently visited Odiham; perhaps the most notable occasion was in 1215, it was from here that he was summoned to Windsor by the barons prior to signing the Magna Carta (Moger *et al* 1911, 88).

In 1216, soon after the building works had been completed, Prince Louis of France, with some of the English barons, besieged the castle for fifteen days before the garrison (consisting of only three knights and ten sergeants) surrendered (ibid). Following Louis' siege, repairs were undertaken. In 1225, for example, lead was purchased for the repair of the roof of the tower and further repairs were made to the palisade around the tower, the tower's chimney, the chapel, and four bridges around the castle's enclosures (MacGregor 1983, 49).

The mid-13<sup>th</sup> century appears to mark yet another change at Odiham Castle when, in 1236, it was given by Henry III to his sister, Eleanor (Countess of Pembroke) as a place of residence. The following year she was also granted Odiham Park with its hunting rights (ibid, 50).

Two years later, in 1238, Eleanor married Simon de Montfort. Building works and repairs continued. A new hall and kitchen were completed in 1239. The kitchen was situated in the

north-east corner of the 'inner bailey' and was built over the moat with a passage leading to the hall (ibid, 52). Eleanor entertained many visitors at the castle, one of the most notable being Isabella de Forz, the wealthiest widow in England (ibid, 60).

In 1276, Edward I spent six days at Odiham Castle, which was by now part of the dower of his queen, another Eleanor. Work undertaken on the castle at this time included the replacement of the old chamber, which was located next to the tower on its eastern side, with a new chamber and chimney. A chapel and garderobe suitable for Eleanor's use was also provided. The kitchen was rebuilt and repairs undertaken to a number of other buildings including the king's alley, or passage; the king's chamber in the tower; and the hall. One of the castle's bridges was also rebuilt and the moats cleaned out and repaired. It was also at this time that part of the moat surrounding the tower was in-filled and the paling enclosing the brewhouse repaired. An indication of the amount of silting within the moats is illustrated in 1278-79, when fifteen acres of land were manured with the sewage removed from the moats. Work also took place on the king's mill at North Warnborough, which included repairs to the roof, the mill pond and sluices (ibid, 76).

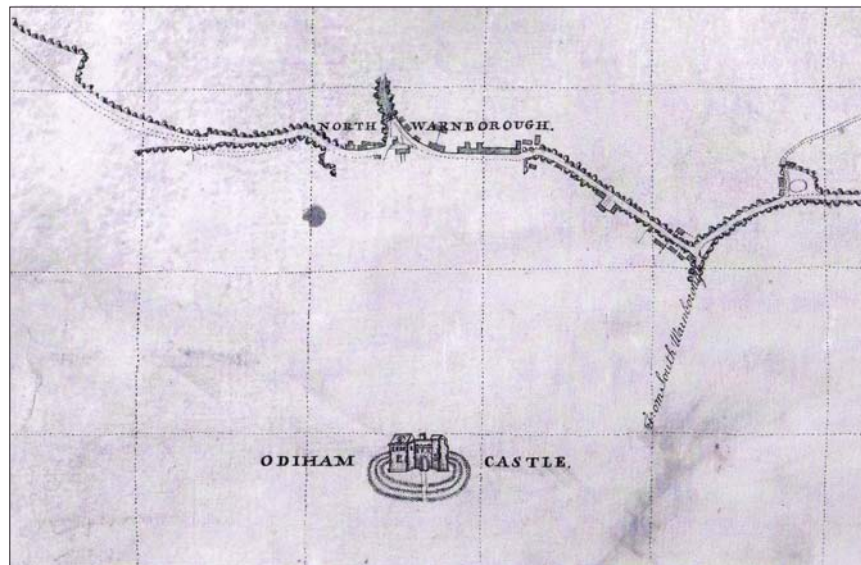
In the 14<sup>th</sup> century, during the reign of Edward II (1307-1327), Odiham Castle was involved in the Despenser's Rebellion when, in 1322, an attempt was made to storm the castle. It was held at this time by John St John of Basing and Ralph de Camoys, and an inventory of the castle gives details of the military 'hardware' here which included armour, crossbows and arrows (ibid 93). Two years later, another inventory lists, amongst other items, iron chains for the castle's principal drawbridge, four hemp ropes for the external bridges and the same number for the internal bridges. Items of furniture, such as five tables in the king's hall and one in the tower, are also mentioned.

The accounts for 1332 list the repairs undertaken to the castle bridges, the foundations of the king's kitchen, his garderobe, and other buildings. Hedges were also planted around the 'outer bailey'. At the east bridge, a new gate was constructed under the Constable's chamber and two weeks were spent renewing the joists of the bridge over the outer moat beyond the gate. Coffer-dams were constructed to prevent the ingress of water from the moat while work was carried out here and on the king's kitchen (which also stood partly over the moat) where rotten timbers were renewed (ibid, 101). Following the clearing out of twenty-six perches of the moat between the queen's chamber and the south side of the kitchen, a coffer-dam was used while work was carried out on the king's garderobe. The cost of clearing out sixty-eight perches of moat on the south, east and west sides of the castle's platforms amounted to £8 18s 8d (ibid, 102).

Odiham Castle was also used as a prison. David II of Scotland spent two years here (1355-1357); however, he was allowed to maintain a high degree of comfort whilst incarcerated.



He was to be the last royal person to spend any length of time at the castle although the royal household occasionally visited. During the 1370s further repairs were undertaken, but following the death of Edward III in 1377, the castle passed into the hands of a number of individuals whose principal interests lay elsewhere. In 1382, Richard II granted the castle to his queen, Anne of Bohemia, but although they visited on at least one occasion, by 1395 an inquiry was initiated into the waste and decay of the castle, manor and park. Repairs were again undertaken in 1399, but by 1404, it would appear that the castle was becoming increasingly derelict. Further limited repairs were carried out to the castle in 1438-41, but most of the money appears to have been spent on the park, suggesting that the importance of the castle had waned and the focus had now shifted to the park.



**Figure 2.**  
Extract of the Tynley estate map showing Odiham Castle (HRO: 15M4813/470/1)

The castle probably fell into disrepair by the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century or beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century since it is not mentioned in a lease of the manor to Chideock Paulet in 1545; nor does it appear in a survey of the manor in 1630, although its grounds are mentioned (Moger *et al* 1911, 90). In 1699, there is a reference to the 'ruins of the castle' (*ibid*). The manor was purchased by Paulet St John of Dogmersfield in 1742, (Dogmersh lies c3km to the east of Odiham) (HRO: 44M69/A/7). In 1774 an engraving of the castle is pictured on Earl Tynley's estate map where it is shown as a house surrounded by two circular banks (fig 2). This representation is, however, purely artistic, since another engraving dated two years earlier shows it as a ruin, in much the same condition as it is today (HRO: 15M4813/470/1). It is not entirely clear whether the depiction of the castle on the map implies that it was owned by Tynley at this time. His estate was centred at Tynley Hall in Rotherwick parish some 3.5km to the north of the castle. He also held some land in Odiham, which is shown in detail on the estate map. However, the map also includes the Odiham park and North Warnborough, but only in outline, which were held by Paulet St John. It is likely, therefore, that the castle was also owned by him, and that its inclusion on the estate map was purely

pictorial. In 1842 the castle was owned by Lady Mildmay, a relation of Paulet St John, and it remained in the family into the 20<sup>th</sup> century (HRO: 21M65/F7/177/2; Moger *et al* 1911, 90).

There is no evidence that Odiham Castle was re-fortified during the English Civil War, despite Odiham itself being a garrison at various stages. The only recorded action here was in 1644, when the mill at North Warnborough provided a suitable sentry position for Colonel Norton's troop and a skirmish was later fought near the castle (Godwin 1973, 212).

The final major 'event' at Odiham Castle was the construction of the Basingstoke canal, which began in 1788 and took six years to complete (Vine 1994, xiii). The canal slices through the southern corner of the southern platform. The principal reason for the construction of the canal was to provide an agricultural waterway connecting north-east Hampshire to the London markets. The 37-mile route from Basingstoke was linked to the Wey Navigation at West Byfleet and ultimately to the Pool of London. The canal continues in operation despite periods of neglect and dereliction.

## **2.2 The Deer Park**

There was probably a park at Odiham in the late Anglo-Saxon period (MacGregor 1983, 16) and later, King John visited to 'enjoy the pleasures of the hunt' (Roberts 1995, 92). As well as being a place for hunting deer, there was also a horse stud, and on occasions timber from the park was used to repair the castle. Dogs were an essential part of the hunt and during the early 13<sup>th</sup> century there were at least 120 kennelled in the park.

Odiham Park was clearly an important resource with a large deer herd; indeed, it was large enough to supply live beasts to re-stock other parks. In 1276, for example, 130 does were moved to Kennington and Langley and a year later twenty does were sent to London (*ibid*, 77). There was a deer-house, which may have been located close to a meadow near the river. This meadow was enclosed by a ditch and hedge and was specifically set aside for the deer (*ibid*, 76). During hard winters additional forage was required; in 1325-26, for example, fifteen cartloads of forage were fed to the deer and branches and ivy leaves were cut and fed to them (*ibid*, 96).

The perimeter of the park was bounded by paling, which occasionally required repair. Gates were also positioned along the boundary, and in 1441 a new gate was made on the north side of the park and the posts and paling were strengthened. How many gates there were during the medieval period is unclear, but Godson's map dating to 1739 shows two, one on the western side and the other leading from the town in the south. This map also shows the

extent of the park in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century, but whether it reflects the bounds of the medieval park is not entirely clear (fig 8). The Tylney estate map also shows the perimeter of the park where it is depicted as a hederow and the occasional track (HRO: 10M48/1).

Set almost centrally within the park, on the south bank of the river Whitewater, was a royal lodge. It was already in existence in 1291-92 when repairs to it were required; a year later work was also undertaken on the pleasure garden beside the lodge. In 1332-33, further work took place when the garden was enclosed within a boarded fence in which there were five doors; there was also a garderobe screened by a hedge and a number of seats with turf roofs (MacGregor 1983, 102; Roberts 1995, 100). This area was clearly a prime site for settlement even in the Romano-British period; finds of Roman pottery and tile to the north-west of the lodge possibly indicate a building in the vicinity (SU 75 SW 26).

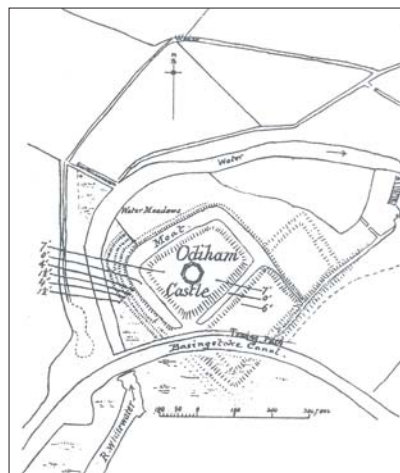
Horses were another important component of the park's economy. A royal stud was kept on a 7a (3ha) meadow called *Closmed*, which was surrounded by 145 perches of paling.

There was also a colt-house, which was occasionally repaired, and in the early 14<sup>th</sup> century it was dismantled and re-erected elsewhere (MacGregor 1983, 102).

### 3. PREVIOUS ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH

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The first published investigation of Odiham Castle dates to 1840 when Sir Everard Home presented a plan of the octagonal tower at a meeting of the Archaeological Association (Anon 1842, 390-91). Apart from a very brief description of the tower, nothing else was mentioned. It was over sixty years before an archaeological investigation was undertaken by Dr J. P. Williams-Freeman (1915, 67-69, 338-39, 389). He reported further on the octagonal tower as well as three rectangular platforms, which were surrounded by ditches (fig 3). The north-eastern platform no longer survives since it was probably destroyed during the construction of a lake sometime between 1972 and 1985. Levels across the western and south-eastern sides of the northern platform are also depicted.



**Figure 3.**  
*Williams-Freeman's plan of Odiham Castle (after Williams-Freeman 1915)*

Excavation of part of the site was undertaken over five seasons during the early 1980s by the Hampshire County Museum Service (Allen 1983, 52-55; Allen 1987, 39; Allen 2002, 29; Barton 1981, 25-25; Barton & Allen 1985: Barton & Allen 1986, 39-42). The excavations were confined to the northern platform, and included work in the interior of the tower and the western side of the platform between the tower and the platform edge. Four main phases of building activity were identified.

The earliest phase (1207-1216) was the construction of the platforms and an internal bank, and their surrounding moats. Buildings and a cesspit were constructed on the platform. The surviving fragments of these buildings included the lowest course of a finely decorated

doorway, which was blocked-in at some stage. One of the walls was parallel to the platform suggesting that they are contemporary.

The second phase was ascribed to the period 1216-1300. This appears to have been dominated by the construction of the octagonal tower, which resulted in the destruction of most of the earlier buildings. A circular moat surrounded the tower, the spoil from which was used in levelling the remainder of the platform. Finds from this area included numerous pottery sherds and several rough hearths. The tower was constructed on a foundation of mortared flint (this material also formed the wall core). The walls were faced with malmstone ashlar, most of which has been robbed, although several courses survive *in situ* below ground level. At the centre of the tower were traces of a massive posthole, or pier. To the east was a sump lined in both timber and stone.

The third phase dates to the 14<sup>th</sup> century when a substantial palisade was constructed just beyond the moat surrounding the tower. This palisade was fronted by a flat-bottomed ditch. The ditch appears to have been later deliberately filled in with, amongst other material, dismembered horse carcasses, roughly rounded stones, and socketed iron spikes. The stones have been interpreted as probable siege catapult missiles or *trebuchet* ammunition, while the iron spikes were armour-piercing arrow-heads. A small rectangular building was terraced into the west side of the earlier period bank that surrounds the platform. This has been interpreted as a lean-to structure, possibly a store.

The final phase occurs in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. During this period the moat surrounding the tower was in-filled and the ground levelled. A pattern of bowl-shaped pits were discovered, which were thought to represent tree or shrub planting holes. A small square building foundation may also date to this period, or perhaps to an earlier period when the main structure was being robbed of its dressing stone.

During 2002 a geophysical survey was undertaken of three areas to the south and east of the northern platform, with another on the south side of the canal (Turner, 2002). The survey revealed a number of anomalies; perhaps the most interesting as far as the present earthwork survey is concerned being the line of a ditch on the southern side of the canal, which corresponds with a continuation of the northern platform's outer ditch. This ditch was surveyed in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but is no longer visible.

## 4. EARTHWORK SURVEY AND INTERPRETATION

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Four main components have been identified within the surveyed area: the castle site; two rectilinear enclosures to the south-east of the castle; leats and field boundaries on the southern side of the canal; and a substantial bank and leats on the northern side of the river.

The letters in the text refer to letters on the plan.

### 4.1 The Castle site

The castle itself occupies two rectangular platforms, which are surrounded by a moat. The 1980s excavations occurred on the western side of the northern platform, and some of the earthworks here may, in part, reflect these excavations. The ditches and outer banks of the two platforms are covered in dense vegetation, particularly in the north-western corner of the northern platform and along the moat separating the two platforms. Although it was possible to survey these areas, the land to the east, between the southern platform and the lake, was largely impenetrable. A number of stands of Scots Pine occupy the northern platform, which were presumably planted as part of an ornamental landscape design.



**Figure 4.**  
*View of tower from the southern platform*



# Odiham Castle

100 0 100 Metres

The two platforms occupy low-lying ground within a relatively wide loop on the southern side of the river Whitewater (fig 5). The platforms are on the same alignment. The northern platform, the slightly larger of the two, measures 60m x 45m and stands c1.5m above its surrounding moat. Set 5m south-west of the centre of the platform are the remains of the octagonal tower (fig 4). Surrounding the tower is a berm, which measures up to 2m wide, with a partial ditch (a) beyond. This ditch measures up to 5m wide and 0.3m deep on the southern side of the tower. The ditch gradually diminishes thus leaving a slight, spread bank, on the south-east and north-east sides and is probably the remains of the moat that surrounded the tower which was back-filled in the 15<sup>th</sup> century (*above*).

An elongated mound (b), occupies the southern corner of the northern platform. This mound, which measures 14m x 7m, extends north-west along the edge of the platform and may be the remains of a perimeter wall. Further north-west along the edge of the platform (and within the excavated area) is a low, spread mound (c); the intervening depression between the two mounds is aligned on a cut in the side of the platform, which also lies directly opposite a gap in the outer bank of the moat. The southern end of the depression marks the terminal of the outer ditch bordering a palisade that was excavated during the 1980s (*above*).

At (d) there is a shallow bank, which is possibly a wall fragment that leads from the berm surrounding the tower towards the western corner of the platform. This bank can be traced further south-east as a slight scarp that cuts into the side of the platform.

The north-eastern side of the platform is largely devoid of earthworks apart from a small mound (e), which is probably recent stone clearance rubble.

The octagonal tower is a three storey structure that sits on a small earthen mound. The internal base of the tower is c1.7m lower than the surrounding platform. It measures c12m diameter internally, with walls c3.5m thick. Internally, ashlar is evident on the lower courses of the wall standing to a height of c1.2m.

The second platform measures c70m x 30m and is cut by the canal; however, the southern corner is evident on the south side of the canal. Occupying three sides of the platform is a low, spread scarp (f). This scarp may mark the location of former structures or collapsed walling, with the central area perhaps defining a court. Alternatively it may mark an area of garden bordered by a terrace.





**Figure 6.**  
*Internal detail of the tower showing chimney*

Surrounding both platforms is a partly water-filled moat. The moat measures up to 10m wide and is c1.5m deep. In the southern corner of the northern platform is a causeway which is the modern access from the canal tow-path.

Along the south-western side of the moat is a broad, flat-topped bank with a gap (g) situated at the mid-point along the northern platform. The base of the gap is slightly raised above the moat. To the north of the gap, the bank continues around the western corner of the moat to a deep cutting on the south-western side of a bank (j). This bank, which is covered in dense vegetation, extends at right-angles to the moat to a slight scarp which is parallel to the river. Beyond this bank (j), much of the remainder of the moat is bordered by a narrower field boundary bank surmounted by trees, apart from the north-eastern side where the boundary is defined by a slight scarp. To the south of the canal, the bank surrounding the moat is only partially evident in the southern corner (h) between two leats.

Beyond the bank that surrounds the moat is an outer bank, which may have been some form of flood defence, along its south-western and western sides. It extends from the canal tow-path to the bank (j). This outer bank is narrower than the corresponding parallel inner bank, and measures no more than 0.2m high in the south-west, but gradually diminishes along the north-western side. Beyond (j) a low, spread scarp continues the alignment along the north-western and north-eastern sides, and may be the remains of the outer bank.

A sinuous water channel enters the moat in the northern corner of the northern platform. This channel may have formerly extended from the river and was probably part of the later water management.

Two shallow ditches cut the scarp along the southern side of the moat of the southern platform. This scarp continues north-east towards Castle Mill House and its width (ie from the scarp to the northern side of the present ditch) is the same as the width of the moat surrounding the platforms. It was probably part of the system draining water back to the river. A projection (k) may be the remains of the bank that continued around the moat suggesting that a sluice may have controlled the flow of water at this point. Since the moats were also used as a fish pond some form of barrier would have been required to prevent the fish escaping.

To the south of the lake is a steep-sided bank, which measures up to 2m high in the west, but gradually diminishes in the east. The make-up of this bank is quite loose and unlike the earthworks elsewhere, and it is probably material from the construction of the lake.

#### **4.2 Rectilinear Enclosures**

To the south-east of the castle platforms are two rectilinear enclosures. The southern one, which covers an area of 0.6ha, is cut by the canal and is defined by a bank along the south-eastern and south-western sides, by the moat on the north-western side, and by a low scarp along the north-eastern side. Two slightly curving ditches drain from the higher ground near the canal to the moat.

The northern enclosure covers an area of 0.8ha. At (l), a well-defined linear bank extends north-east to a spread mound. North-west of this bank are further slight earthworks, which may represent former building platforms. A slight ditch (m) lies to the north of the enclosure and is parallel to the northern boundary bank.

#### **4.3 Earthworks on southern side of canal**

An extensive area of marshland, which contains a number of water channels, or leats, dominates the southern side of the canal.

From the southern corner of the moat (h), and cutting the moat's outer bank, is an ovoid leat (n), which measures up to 0.1m deep. A number of other leats converge on this channel; the three most prominent being the two that lead directly from the ditched field boundary in the south-east and a third in the south that approaches from the boundary in a dog-leg fashion. A number of fragmentary leats are evident and are represented on the plan as pecked lines. Slight banks on the western side that adjoin the leats may be the remains of further leats. Analysis of the heights in this area shows that the higher ground lies towards the ditched field boundary, and that the ovoid leat is at its lowest point as it cuts the southern corner into the moat. The height differences are quite slight; the southern arm of the ovoid channel having no more than a 0.15m drop along its length. This would clearly have ensured a gradual flow of water into the moat.

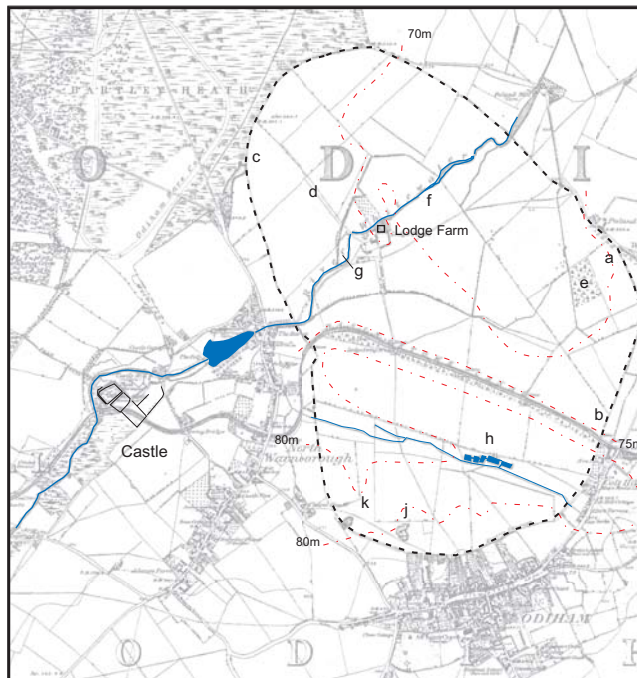
Lying parallel to the south-eastern field boundary that defines the edge of the surveyed area is a ditched field boundary (p), which continues on the northern side of the canal, and marks the south-eastern sides of the two enclosures. From a scarp (q) that links the two field boundaries, the ground is slightly raised above the marshland. South of this scarp are a number of other scarps and platforms that may represent quarrying, or alternatively an effort to drain the field to the south-east (beyond the surveyed area), with possible building platforms on the raised platforms.

#### **4.4 Earthworks on northern side of river**

A number of leats dissect the ground on the northern side of the river. The most prominent feature, however, is a deep ditch flanked by substantial banks along the north-western boundary. The bank on the southern, inner side is up to 1.5m high, while the ditch is c3m below the top of the bank. The inner bank turns at right-angles and extends for a further 30m towards the river bank. The ditch itself continues south, beyond the bank, to a boggy area near the canal. At the river's edge the remains of a sluice is evident (r). Williams-Freeman's plan shows this bank and ditch (fig 3), but the ditch is shown extending to the river (and sluice). Another leat is shown leading from the river in an easterly direction. Water from the river was therefore occasionally diverted along the ditch and leat, either to control the water at the mill, or prevent flooding of the lower ground near the mill.

The river itself has been canalised, particularly along either side on the straight section to the west of Castle Mill House. The flat area to the north of the house is 'soft' and liable to flood, suggesting that this area was formerly part of the river system, perhaps forming a series of braided water channels.

#### 4.5 The Deer Park (fig 7)



**Figure 7.**  
*Field investigation of Odiham Park (based on the OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition map)*

The sub-oval park lies 700m to the east of the castle and is cut by the canal and the Odiham bypass. The Odiham bypass lies on the northern side of the canal and parallel to it. The park lies wholly on the northern side of Odiham and is bounded in the north by woodland. The river Whitewater, which flows in a north-easterly direction, also bisects the park, with Lodge Farm (parts of which dates to the 13<sup>th</sup> century (Roberts 1996, 91-106)), set centrally along the river within the park. The farm, as well as being involved in agriculture, also includes a number of light industrial units.

The park boundary is largely defined by field boundaries and modern tracks. At (a), the current OS map shows a length of park pale approximately 250m long beside Poland Farm. This pale is marked by a bank measuring up to 0.3m high on the west side of the road. Further south, at (b), a further length of pale is shown on the map on either side of the bypass; however, this no longer survives, but instead is marked by a fence-line. In the north, the M3 motor-way lies against the boundary; however, further south, at (c), a bank measuring c100m long and 0.3m high and 0.5m wide at the top, with a water-filled ditch along the northern (external) side may be a fragment of the park boundary. The ditch is up to 10m wide, narrowing to c1m wide by the footpath leading to Lodge Farm.

Internally, the park is one of two contrasting areas. In the north, from the line of the canal, the land is cultivated, relatively flat, and lower than the southern area. The large fields are bounded by fence-lines and field drains, some of which (for example at (d)) are up to 2m deep. There are also two small copses in this northern area (e and f). The northern one (f), which has been planted since the late-19<sup>th</sup> century, is a managed copse dominated by mature coniferous trees, interspersed with saplings. The river on either side of the copse is relatively straight; however, within the copse it meanders quite noticeably. It is embanked on the northern side with a dry leat beyond. The leat terminates short of the mill pond at Poland Farm. The sinuous nature of the river here, coupled with a leat and mill ponds, may suggest the river was more braided in this area at some time.

A small meadow (g) lies immediately to the west of Lodge Farm. Fragmentary earthworks within the meadow, coupled with evidence of a sluice in the river beside the meadow, would suggest that this area may have been a bedwork floated water meadow.

To the south of the canal the ground is more undulating and comprises a number of smaller fields bounded by quick-set hedges. Five small rectilinear fish ponds (h) linked by leats, lie along the narrow valley bottom. The ponds are up to 1.5m deep. A dry pond measuring c40m x 10m lies to the east of an L-shaped pond. A slight, wide linear depression, which is probably the former water-course, extends eastwards from the fish ponds towards the park boundary. The depression is particularly wet, suggesting perhaps that it follows a spring-line. However, the ponds themselves were fed from a leat cut along the slightly lower ground to the south. A slight depression 'up stream' marks the course of a former leat to the eastern pond. From here dams controlled the water to the other ponds. Two linear depressions extend from the ponds to the leat. These were probably used to manage the water in the ponds. The leat continues west beyond the fish ponds, along the valley bottom and to the park boundary. At (j) and (k) there are two irregular dry ponds, which were probably areas of former quarrying.

## 5. DISCUSSION

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The survey and investigation of Odiham Castle and its parkland has identified a number of issues. These are essentially concerned with the choice of site; the approach; the relationship between the castle and deer park; and finally the post-medieval landscape. What is clear from the investigation is that the castle is set within what could be termed an early-13<sup>th</sup> century 'ornamental landscape' of the sort that has been identified elsewhere in England (*for example* Everson 1998, 32-38; Taylor 2000, 38-55; Brown 2002), and that it was not a military stronghold in any real sense despite the evidence of a siege, but more a place of pleasure, a place to impress, and a place to entertain. It was a place where the topography was used to maximum effect in the manipulation of routes for the exclusion and inclusion of vistas along those routes. In the park, the lodge, enclosed *herbarium*, and possible deer course, re-enforce this designed landscape perception.

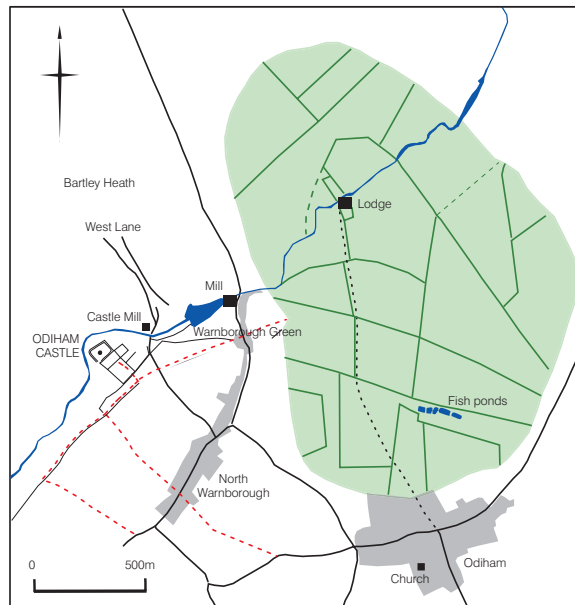
### 5.1 The Castle site

The choice of site for the castle and its layout is intriguing. Situated on low ground in a loop beside the river – the only significant loop along the river - the castle was purposely built in a watery landscape. Higher, more prominent land to the southeast was deliberately avoided, as was the town of Odiham. Also the area to the south of the canal, despite the more recent water management, retains its marshland appearance, while to the north of the castle, towards Castle Mill, the water table is clearly close to the surface. The river is canalised near Castle Mill, which suggests that it would have been wider. To the north-east of Castle Mill lies Warnborough Green, which is another marshy area beside the river with a huge mill-pond on its northern side (fig 8).

The principal area of the castle, the private royal apartments, was situated on the northern platform. This was at the furthest extremity and probably most secluded part of the castle, beyond which lay the river. Access to this 'island' would have entailed a controlled, or manipulated progression through the outlying parts of the castle, through gates and over bridges towards this inner sanctum.

Surrounding the northern platform, and separated from it by a moat, was a broad, flat-topped bank that also extended along the south-western side of the southern platform. The form of this bank, today only evident on the 'up-river' side of the castle, would suggest that it was part of a walk, which would presumably have been used as a promenade that provided views across the river and marsh, and internally to the castle and gardens. Access to this walk would probably have been in the area of the gap along the northern platform. A second, much narrower bank, lies on the outer side of the broad-topped bank and, although no

longer evident, appears also to have extended south of the canal (figs 3 & 9). The ditch between the two banks is appreciably narrower than the ditch between the platform and inner bank and it is perhaps significant that it only survives along the 'up-river' side of the castle, suggesting perhaps that this bank was some form of flood defence, or levy, which was designed to minimise the erosion of the inner bank when the river was in flood and to prevent the escape of fish from the moat.



**Figure 8.** Odiham Castle and its environs. The red pecked lines indicate the probable routes to the castle and deer park. The deer park depiction is taken from Godson's map of 1739.

The source of water for the moats was probably from the river in the south (the river flows in a northerly direction) or from the network of leats identified on the survey (*but see below*). If the source was the river, a leat and sluice would have to be constructed far enough upstream to ensure a controlled flow to the moats. Dense vegetation and marshland is prevalent in the area of the canal viaduct, the moat, and along the eastern side of the river near the canal, preventing positive identification of a leat here. However, the shape of the field boundary beside the river, and evidence of a slight ditch leading towards the area of the southern platform, would suggest that a leat may have followed the course of the field boundary to this slight ditch.

The tower on the northern platform appears to overlie an earlier structure, stonework of which lies parallel to the platform. The tower was possibly built in the early 13<sup>th</sup> century and was surrounded by a moat. Interestingly, the side of the moat was faced with yellow mortar, which may have enhanced its appearance from the tower. There was also a chapel in the

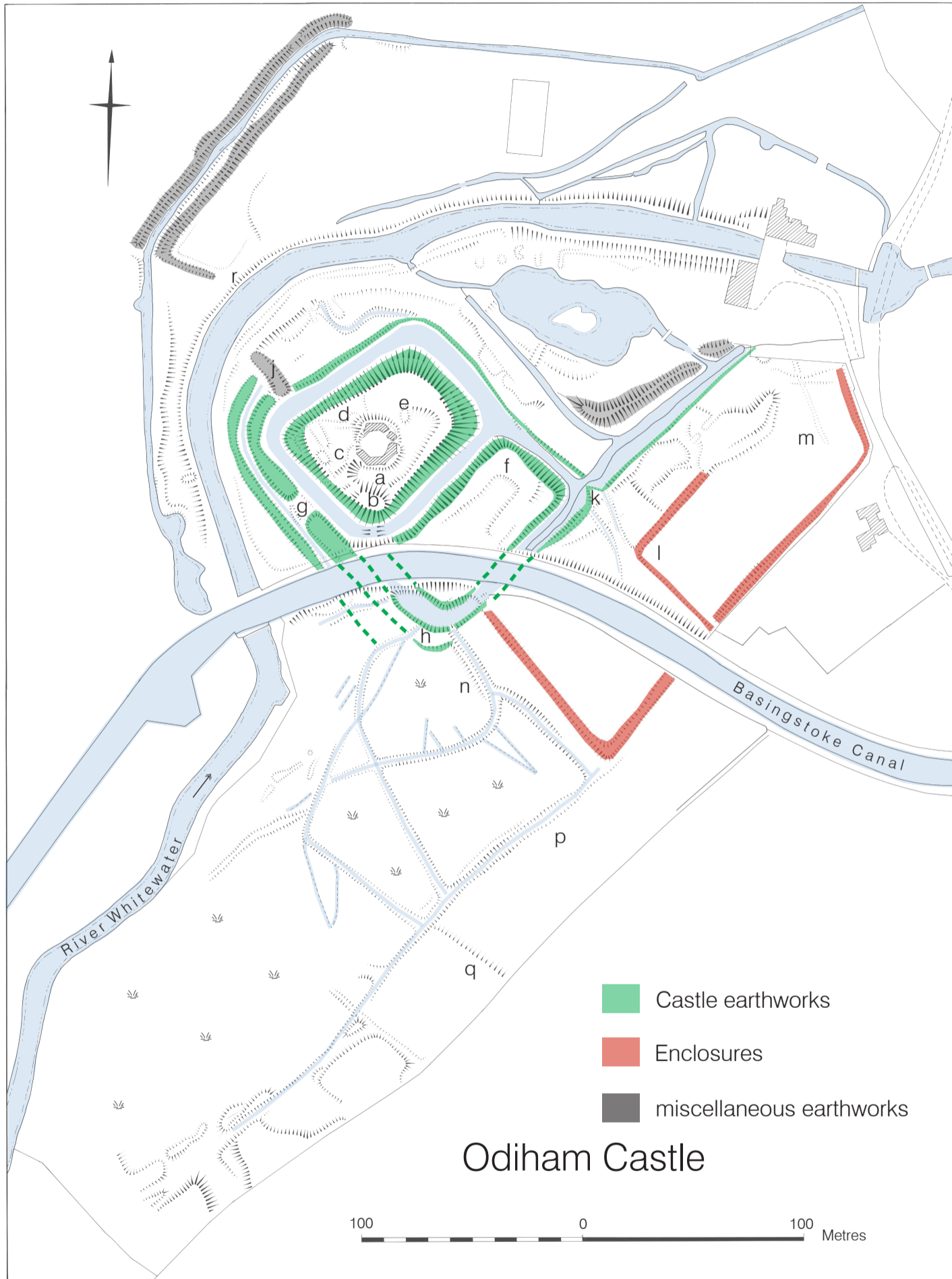


Figure 8. Interpretation of the earthworks



tower that was white-washed both inside and outside (MacGregor 1983, 49). Although there is little earthwork evidence, documentary sources would indicate that there were a number of other buildings on the platform (ibid, 76).

The southern platform appears to have been an integral component of the royal apartments. In contrast to the northern platform, however, there are no building remains here and, apart from a low, spread scarp (or terrace) around the edge it is also devoid of earthworks. This scarp is intriguing since it is a particularly low and a uniformly spread feature, which could either be interpreted as ranges of buildings surrounding a small central court, or alternatively it may represent part of a garden layout.

On the north-eastern side of the two platforms, Williams-Freeman recorded a third platform (fig 3). No evidence of this platform survives since part of it was probably destroyed during the digging of the lake in the 1970s or 1980s while the remainder may underlie upcast from the lake. Whether this third platform was contemporary with the other two is unclear. Despite being on the same alignment its moat would appear to be much narrower and the northern corner is sharply angular whereas the other platform corners are rounded.

Beyond the three platforms, the remaining elements of the castle, containing the barns, stables, and other outbuildings, probably lay in the two enclosures in the south.

## **5.2 The approaches**

The approach to the castle, and the route from the castle to the park, appears to have been deliberately contrived with the higher ground to the south providing 'eye-catching' views down towards the castle.

The more likely approach was from the south: the route leading from the main road at the southern end of North Warnborough and along the Greywell road (fig 8). The castle would first come into view near the junction of the North Warnborough/Greywell road. From here, the approach descends towards the river, but all the time the castle was visible standing above the marshland and water to the north. Before the river is reached, the route possibly followed the small track northwards along a terrace (now, in part, a public right-of-way) above the flood plain towards the castle. This terrace is bordered on both sides by a tree line, which can be traced further north, over the canal as far as Warnborough Green. One tree line also extends south beyond the Warnborough/Greywell road and follows a course parallel to the river, but whether this was also a former route is unclear.

An alternative route from the south may have been along a track that is depicted on the OS 1<sup>st</sup> edition map that leads from Odiham to North Warnborough. This track is aligned precisely on a field boundary on the north-west side of the village that continues the line towards the castle.

Later water management and the construction of the canal masks the probable entrance to the castle; however, it may have entered from the south through one of the two rectangular closes.

A probable medieval route can also be seen to the north of the castle. Here a wide embanked drove that broadens out at either end links Warnborough Green to the common land on Bartley Heath in the north.



**Figure 10.**  
*Castle Bridge Cottages form a range of jettied houses facing the street at the northern end of North Warnborough. Nine bays date to 1477/8 while a further seven bays date to 1534/5. Only one bay was heated (Roberts 2003, 238).*

Although the present route to Park Lodge Farm is to the north of the mill-pond and river, the probable medieval route was along the southern side of Warnborough Green, on the slightly higher, dryer ground (fig 8). If the line of the southern field boundary at Warnborough Green is extended, it will be seen to intersect the park boundary at a curious indentation, which

may be an entrance to the park. Also in this area is a group of 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century terraced houses known as Castle Bridge Cottages (fig 10), which may be later encroachments on the side of the Green. This route also lies to the south of the river, and since the Lodge is also on the southern side, it seems a logical approach.

The mill-pond beside Warnborough Green is huge (it covers an area of c1.2ha). It is far too big to be simply a millpond when compared to others in the area. Between Castle Mill House and the mill-pond, on both sides of the river, the land is marshy which suggests that it may once have either been a seasonally flooded area, or perhaps braided water channels. Either could enhance the ornamental setting between the castle and deer park

### 5.3 The Deer Park

Today, the deer park is an area of contrasting landscapes; in the north it is cultivated and relatively flat, while in the south it is more undulating and primarily composed of smaller pasture fields (fig 8). Lodge Park Farm was used as a lodge throughout the medieval period. The present building retains part of a two-bay cross-wing structure of 1368/69 date and remnants of a hall of 1375 (Roberts 2003, 239), although documentary evidence points to a lodge here by 1291-92 (Roberts 1995, 92). Many lodges were used as the park keeper's residence, but in the case of Odiham royalty may occasionally have used it, particularly since it appears to have been a more grand building with an enclosed garden. It may have been used as a retreat, or for what Girouard terms 'keeping secret house' (1976, 106). Odiham's lodge is at a pivotal point in the park; lying beside the river in the northern half of the park, it is nevertheless relatively secluded. Viewed from the south, from Odiham, the lodge and northern part of the park are screened by the rising ground that cuts across the park a few hundred metres away. Even as the lodge is approached from the castle, it only comes into view having ascended the rising ground within the park. The corollary to this is that, from the lodge, views are also restricted. It is an enclosed vista, with woodland possibly to the north and east, and rising ground to the south and west. These perceptions add to the feeling of isolation.

The field pattern to the north of the lodge, as depicted on Godson's 1739 map, contrasts markedly with the remainder of the park. Near the lodge, the pattern is one of relatively small enclosed fields forming a rather curious apex in the north. The OS First Edition map shows the western field boundary continuing in a south-westerly direction to the river (shown as a green pecked line to the north of the lodge on fig 8), which in effect forms a wide field in the east that gradually narrows, past the lodge, to the river. This field pattern suggests that this area was a meadow, perhaps a deer meadow. It could conceivably also be a deer course, with the deer being driven from the east and in front of the lodge, where there may have been a 'standing' (a raised open-sided platform), to the narrower part of the course.

The lodge may therefore be much more than a mere parker's residence, or indeed a retreat for royalty. It may also have been a place to entertain and a place from where the pleasures of the hunt could be appreciated. The date of the deer course is unclear. Most examples elsewhere in England would suggest a post-medieval date; for example, Windsor's Little Park a deer course is shown on John Norden's 1607 plan. It was a long, narrow strip of enclosed land along the northern side of the park, with a standing just beyond, but overlooking the course (Roberts 1997, 138). The deer course at Lodge Park, Gloucestershire, is yet another later example. Dating to the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, it is much narrower, but nevertheless extends along the edge of the park with a lodge beside it (Fretwell 1995, 133-44). At Odiham, the lodge was still known as 'the keeper's lodge' in 1630 (Roberts 1995, 100), and may suggest that the course here was of post-medieval date.

The river and ponds probably formed part of the medieval ornamental landscape, which may have provided recreational and sporting opportunities such as fishing and wildfowling while the river may be used for boating.

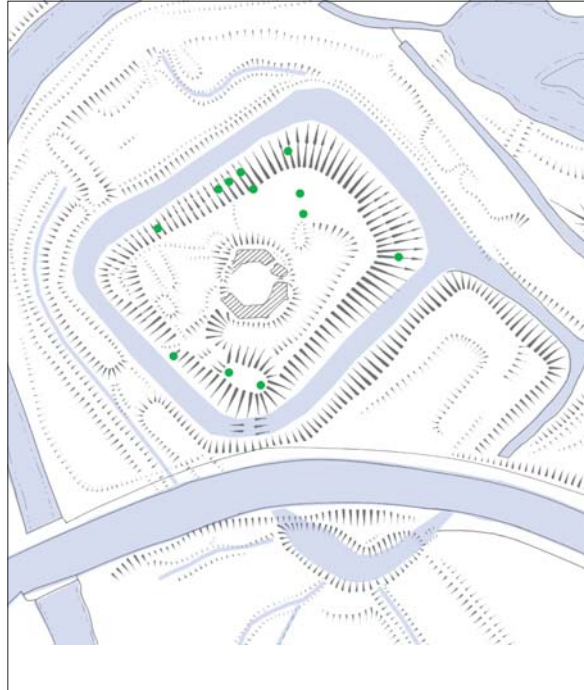
#### **5.4 The Leats south of the canal**

On the south side of the canal there are a number of water channels, or leats, that drain towards the southern platform's moat. Water for these leats emanated from the boggy ground to the south and flowed along the field boundary as well as from points within the field. The date and purpose of these leats is not entirely clear. It has already been suggested that they may have provided water for the moats during the medieval period; however, the possibility that they are later should not be ignored. They may, for example, have formed part of an artificially floated water meadow of the kind that is so prevalent on the chalk streams and rivers in Wessex; however, this seems unlikely since there is no evidence of a main carrier or sluices leading from the river, nor can any of the leats be interpreted as side carriers. In addition, the ovoid leat to the south of the moat would be a rather curious, and impractical, method of laying out a water meadow.

It is also possible that the leats formed part of a water drainage system with the aim of improving the land for agriculture. However, this also seems unlikely since the system looks unnecessarily complicated, and there is no evidence that it extended over the whole field.

Another explanation is that the leats were part of an elaborate designed landscape and could therefore be viewed as an ornamental water feature perhaps dating to the 18<sup>th</sup> century

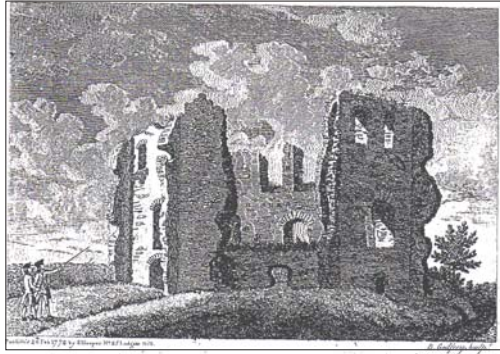
or 19<sup>th</sup> century. The picture presented would be one of two platforms surrounded by water and to the south, water flowing to the moat, and both draining north-east to the river. The construction of the canal effectively cut off the water supply to the moats, although the slight leat on the northern side of the northern platform was probably cut as an alternative source (fig 11).



**Figure 11.**  
*Earthwork survey showing position of Scot's Pine trees. Note they are confined to the northern platform.*

### 5.5 A post-medieval designed Landscape

Little is known about the later land-use following the abandonment of the castle sometime in the late 15<sup>th</sup> or early 16<sup>th</sup> century: the site certainly passed to a number of landowners, many of whom were absent landlords. The archaeological evidence, however, is unequivocal, since it indicates that the site was deliberately retained as part of a designed landscape, possibly dating to the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century and presumably before the construction of the canal in 1788. The planting of Scots Pine trees, which are confined to the northern platform (fig 11), the dismantling of the castle, but retention of the tower (perhaps as a Gothic 'romantic ruin') (fig 12), and the juxtaposition of the river, are indications of the sort of parkland feature found elsewhere in England (*for example* Jacques 1983, 47).



**Figure 12.**  
*Engraving of Odiham Castle in 1772 (HRO: 15M4813/470/1)*

## 5.6 Later Improvements

Improvements were undertaken in the grounds of Castle Mill. When this occurred is unclear since the mill appears to have been a fulling mill until at least the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, rather than a small country house (HRO: 21M65/F7/177/2). The improvements mainly concern the water drainage near the mill with new leats being dug at various times and others going out of use. In addition, a massive bank and ditch was dug along the northern boundary in order to assist in drainage. The bank turns towards the river (this bank is also the parish boundary), thus defining the area of 'improved' garden on the northern side. A similar bank extends from the northern platform towards the river and the former bank around the platform appears to have been largely levelled. Interestingly, the two banks on either side of the river are off-set from one another and therefore not part of a dam; they also stop short of the river itself. Viewed from the mill, however, these two banks would probably appear to merge with one another. This suggests that these earthworks may be associated with the gentrification of the mill to its current status as a country residence, possibly in the late-19<sup>th</sup> century or early-20<sup>th</sup> century.

## 6. METHODOLOGY

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G Brown and J Lord carried out the survey of the castle and G Brown carried out a field investigation of the deer park.

A survey-grade GPS (a Trimble 4800 equipment) was used to establish the co-ordinates of four stations, including a base station (station 1), around the site of the castle. From the GPS base-station, three linked traverses were surveyed using an EDM, which incorporated the remaining GPS stations. In addition, a forth traverse, comprising three stations closing on another GPS station, enabled earthworks on the south side of the canal to be surveyed. From these stations a control network was established from which the archaeological and topographical detail was plotted by tape-and-offset methods.

The report was researched and written by G Brown; however, it has benefited by discussion with M Bowden and P Everson. D Cunliffe drew the earthwork plan and digital drawings, and G Brown took the photographs.

## 7. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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English Heritage would like to thank Mr and Mrs Yeowart of Castle Mill House for allowing access to their land. The fieldwork was arranged in consultation with members of Hampshire County Council, David Hopkins, Charles Cuthbert and Russell Cleaver, and English Heritage's Inspector for Ancient Monuments for the region, Rob Perrin.



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15M4813/470/1 Engraving of Odiham Castle dated 1772

44M69/A/7 The manor of Odiham leased to Chidcock Paulet 1545

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## APPENDIX 1



### SURVEY STATION INFORMATION

ENGLISH HERITAGE

<b>SITE NAME</b>	Odiham Castle		
<b>Station number</b>	1 (GPS base)	<b>Status</b>	
<b>Type of mark</b>	metal peg	<b>NMR number</b>	SU 75 SW 11
<b>Date of survey</b>	Jan 2004	<b>SAM/RSM no.</b>	24326
<b>Office of origin</b>	Swindon	<b>Surveyors</b>	GB/JL
<b>OS National Grid</b>	<b>Eastings</b>	<b>Northings</b>	<b>Height</b>
	472746.688	151872.65	78.817

#### Metal spike positioned 1.75m west of tree cage



## APPENDIX 2



### SURVEY STATION INFORMATION

ENGLISH HERITAGE

<b>SITE NAME</b>	Odiham Castle		
<b>Station number</b>	3	<b>Status</b>	
<b>Type of mark</b>	metal peg	<b>NMR number</b>	SU 75 SW 11
<b>Date of survey</b>	Jan 2004	<b>SAM/RSM no.</b>	24326
<b>Office of origin</b>	Swindon	<b>Surveyors</b>	GB/JL
<b>OS National Grid</b>	<b>Eastings</b>	<b>Northings</b>	<b>Height</b>
	472593.135	151843.438	80.286

**Metal survey peg situated 11.7m from fence-line which borders canal tow path.**



## APPENDIX 3

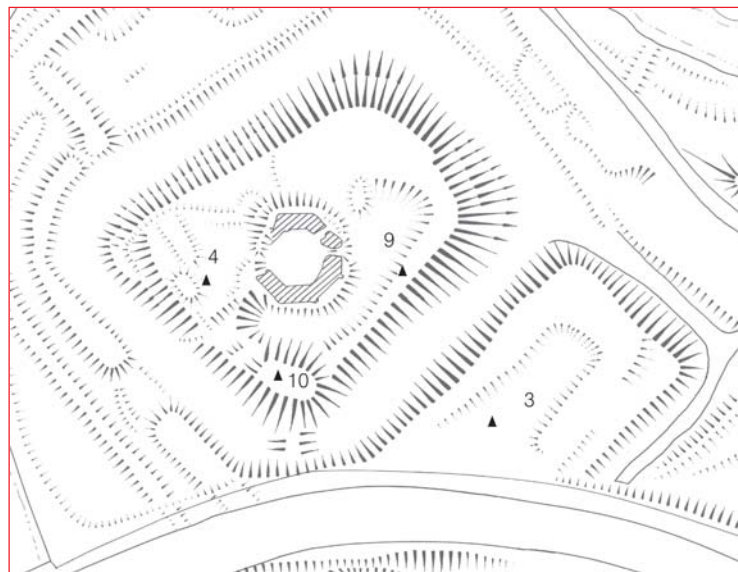


### SURVEY STATION INFORMATION

ENGLISH HERITAGE

<b>SITE NAME</b>	Odiham Castle		
<b>Station number</b>	4	<b>Status</b>	
<b>Type of mark</b>	red peg	<b>NMR number</b>	SU 75 SW 11
<b>Date of survey</b>	Jan 2004	<b>SAM/RSM no.</b>	24326
<b>Office of origin</b>	Swindon	<b>Surveyors</b>	GB/JL
<b>OS National Grid</b>	<b>Eastings</b>	<b>Northings</b>	<b>Height</b>
	472533.477	151870.750	81.303

#### Red peg 10.4m from tower buttress



## APPENDIX 4

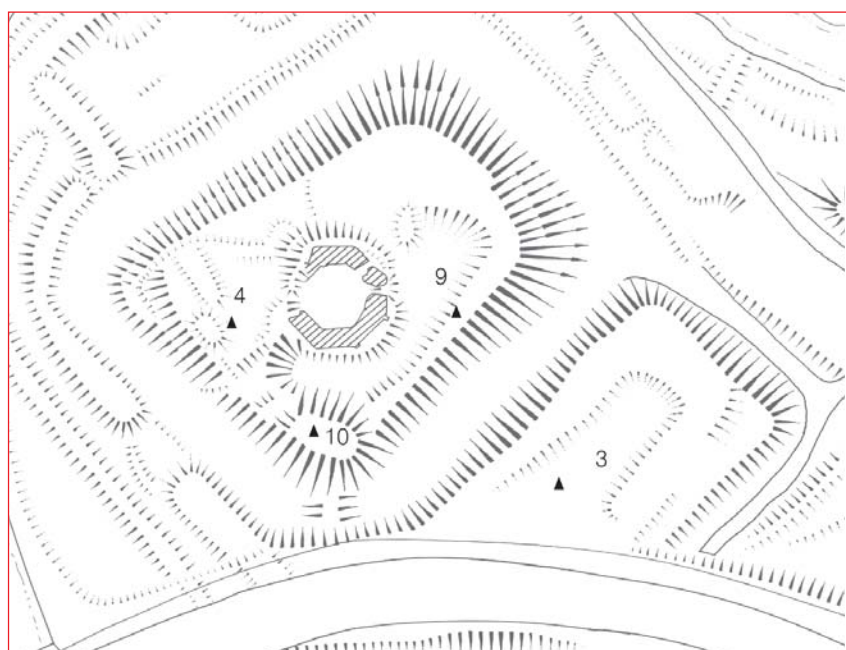


### SURVEY STATION INFORMATION

ENGLISH HERITAGE

<b>SITE NAME</b>	Odiham Castle		
<b>Station number</b>	9	<b>Status</b>	
<b>Type of mark</b>	metal peg	<b>NMR number</b>	SU 75 SW 11
<b>Date of survey</b>	Jan 2004	<b>SAM/RSM no.</b>	24326
<b>Office of origin</b>	Swindon	<b>Surveyors</b>	GB/JL
<b>OS National Grid</b>	<b>Eastings</b>	<b>Northings</b>	<b>Height</b>
	472575.957	151876.392	80.849

**Metal survey peg positioned 14.7m from castle buttress.**



## APPENDIX 5



### SURVEY STATION INFORMATION

ENGLISH HERITAGE

<b>SITE NAME</b>	Odiham Castle		
<b>Station number</b>	10	<b>Status</b>	
<b>Type of mark</b>	metal peg	<b>NMR number</b>	SU 75 SW 11
<b>Date of survey</b>	Jan 2004	<b>SAM/RSM no.</b>	24326
<b>Office of origin</b>	Swindon	<b>Surveyors</b>	GB/JL
<b>OS National Grid</b>	<b>Eastings</b>	<b>Northings</b>	<b>Height</b>
	472549.442	151850.602	81.217

**Metal survey peg sited by tree stump to left of upright of notice board at entrance onto northern platform.**

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