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# **BRAMFORD HALL, (BRF038)**

## **RECORD OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING**

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## 1. BACKGROUND

A planning application (256/93) was made for the building of an extension to the remaining wing of Bramford hall. This extension would encroach onto the site of part of the old hall which was demolished in the 1950s (see Map 1.). The original hall was thought to be Georgian in date, although earlier buildings may have existed on the site. The remaining wing itself has a timber frame and may be an earlier structure with a Georgian red brick skin. A brief and specification for archaeological monitoring (see Appendix I.) was drawn up with the aim of recording any information about the old hall or any earlier occupation revealed during the initial phases of the building works. The archaeological monitoring, which was carried out by the Field Projects Division of the Suffolk County Council's Archaeological section in the first week of August 1993, was funded by Mr J.G.Sillet of Bramford Hall.

## 2. METHOD

Prior to the excavation of the footings for the extension the topsoil was mechanically stripped. This revealed the red brick footings of previously existing buildings. The footings were cleaned manually and recorded on a 1:50 scale plan (see Map 2. for location and Appendix II for plan). A photographic record, both monochrome and colour slide, was also made.

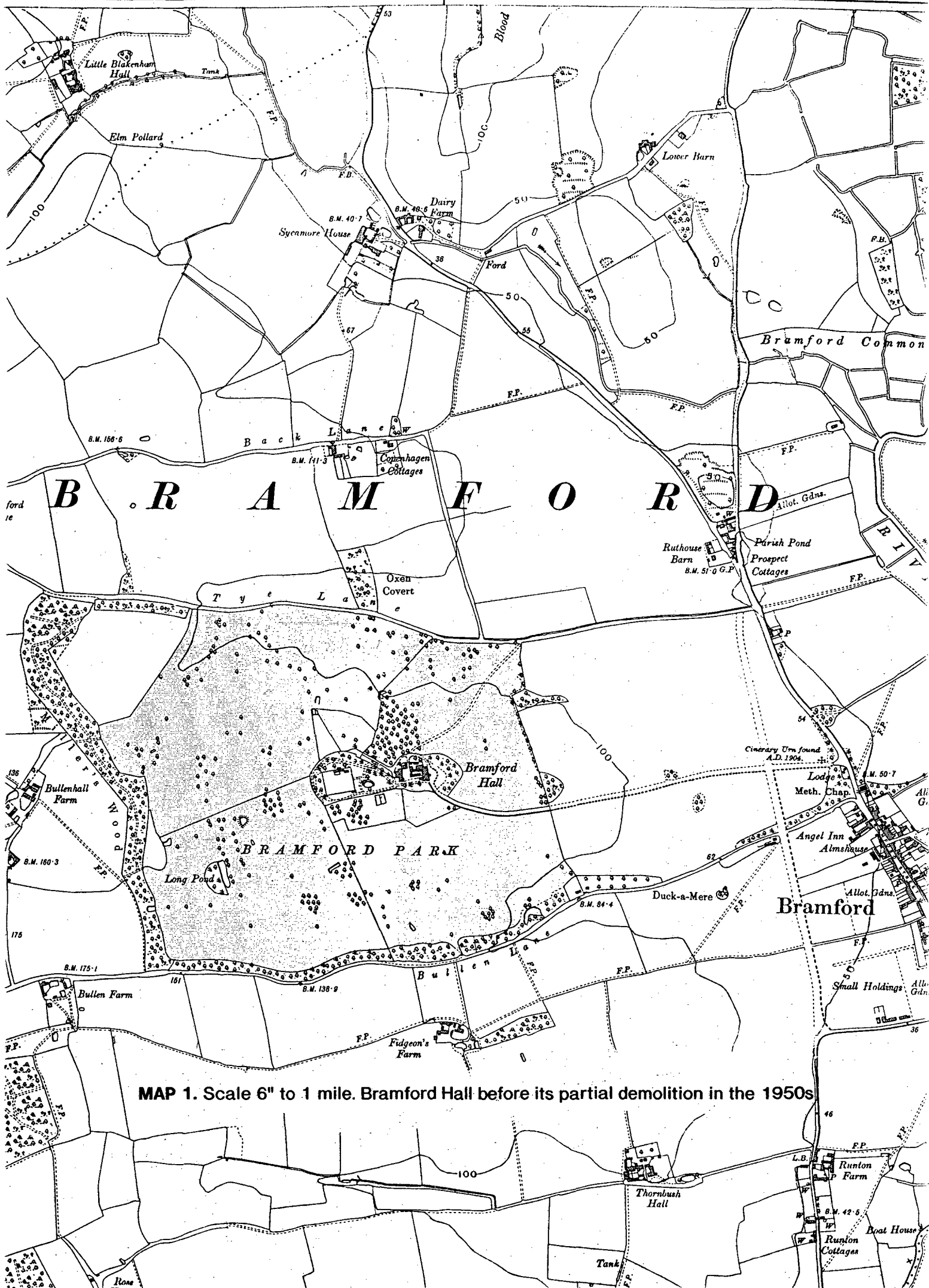
## 3. RESULTS

All the structures revealed seemed to belong to the Georgian hall, although it was possible to recognise more than one phase of construction (see Appendix II.). There was no evidence for any earlier structures or any finds, such as pottery, of an earlier date. All the footings seemed to comprise of eight courses of red bricks below ground level, and varied in width between 30 and 50cm. All the bricks measured 11cm by 25cm. The floor level was not seen in any of the rooms and must have been at a higher level. The red brick soakaways probably serviced an early phase of the hall and later became incorporated inside the building when a later phase was built. Both the soakaways were recorded photographically in the side of one of the footing trenches for the new extension. The small size of the rooms are an indication that this was not an important part of the hall but may represent store rooms or outbuildings connected to the main complex. Only one cellar was revealed, to the north east of the standing wing. The full depth of this cellar was not reached during the excavation of the extension footings, the walls were still going down at a depth of 2.5m below present ground level. The cellar itself was full of rubble, probably from the demolition of the hall. Other features associated with these rooms included two hearths and the remains of a wooden doorstep. Impressions of tiles or bricks were seen in mortar just to the north of the drain (see Appendix II.). This probably represents a path or yard surface, the drain indicating that this area must have been external to the buildings.

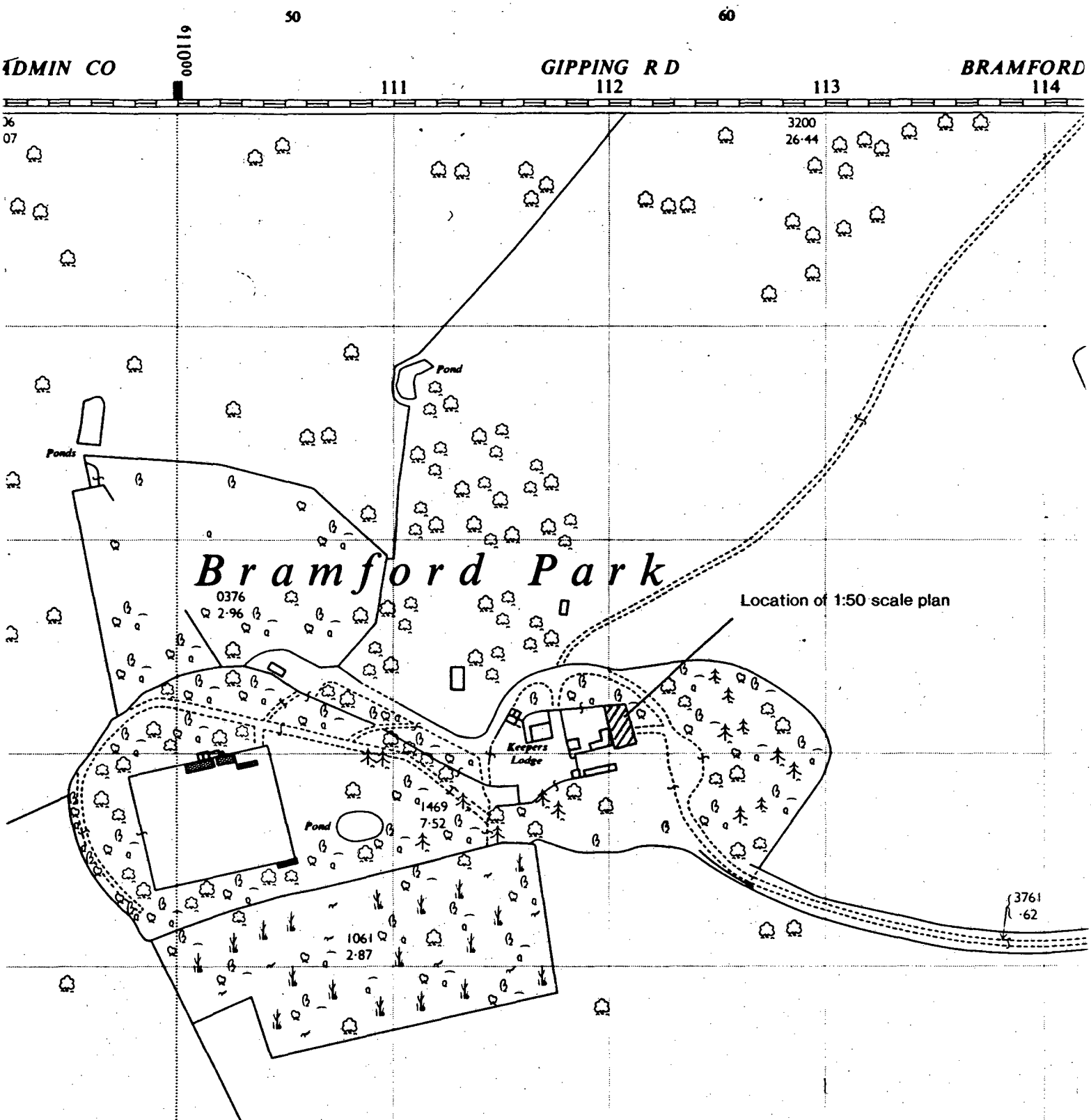
#### 4. CONCLUSION

The methods employed during the monitoring satisfactorily recorded the remains of the parts of the demolished buildings threatened by the new extension. The results seem to show that old hall was added to and altered considerably during its lifetime. There was, however, no evidence, in the recorded area, for any structures or occupation of the site prior to the Georgian period. Earlier buildings may have existed in other areas of the site, and may even be beneath or incorporated in the still standing wing of the old hall. The plans drawn during the monitoring must now be added to and compared with existing documentary evidence to help with the overall interpretation of the hall site.

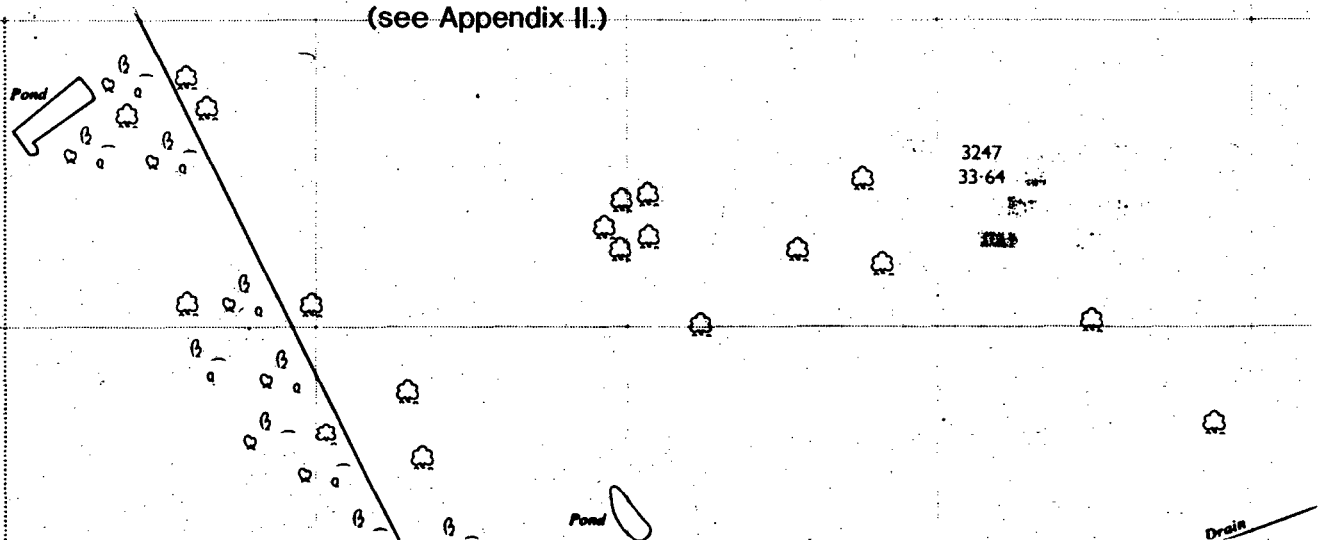
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Suffolk C.C.  
August 1993



MAP 1. Scale 6" to 1 mile. Bramford Hall before its partial demolition in the 1950s



**MAP 2.** 1:2500 scale map showing location of 1:50 scale plan made of the development area (see Appendix II.)



**Brief and Specification for Archaeological Monitoring.****BRAMFORD HALL****1. Background**

- 1.1 An application to extend a house on this site has been granted conditional upon an acceptable programme of archaeological work being carried out. It has been decided that the area affected by new building should be recorded by archaeological monitoring.
- 1.2 The site is adjacent to the surviving wing of Bramford Hall. The hall is believed to have been Georgian in date, the major part is believed to have been demolished in the mid 1950s. The existence of earlier buildings can reasonably be expected. It is understood that the ground plan of the hall can still be traced.

**2. Brief for archaeological monitoring.**

- 2.1 To provide a record of archaeological deposits which are damaged or removed by any development, including services and landscaping, permitted by the current planning consent for application.
- 2.2 The main academic objective will centre upon the potential of this site to produce evidence for earlier occupation of the site and also to record the affected part of the Georgian ground plan.

**3. Specification**

The excavation methodology is to be agreed in detail before the project commences, certain minimum criteria will be required:

- 3.1 Examine any relevant and readily available maps and surveys. Record evidence for the early history of the site, e.g. building plan.
- 3.2 Record in plan all features exposed in building trenches which are, or could be interpreted as, structural, i.e. walls and floors. A sample section only through any walls found to be similar in style and date should be taken. Floor levels should be recorded in section along the same lines as walls.
- 3.3 All other features should be sufficiently examined to characterise function and date.
- 3.4 A sample of building materials should be taken. All other finds will be collected and processed. No discard policy will be considered until the whole body of finds has been evaluated.
- 3.5 N.B. No assessment has been made of non-archaeological underground hazards and constraints, e.g. services.

**Report requirements.**

- 4.1 An archive of all records and finds to be prepared consistent with the principle of 'Management of Archaeological Projects', English Heritage 1991 (particularly Appendix 3 and Appendix 4).

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- 4.2 The data recording methods and conventions used must be consistent with, and approved by, the County Sites and Monuments Record.
- 4.3 The objective account of the archaeological evidence must be clearly distinguished from its archaeological interpretation.
- 4.4 It is not envisaged that publication beyond a short note in the Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute for Archaeology will be necessary.
- 4.5 An important element of the report will be a description of the methodology.
- 4.6 The site archive should be deposited with the County Sites and Monuments Record within 12 months of the completion of work. It will then become publicly accessible. Finds should be appropriately conserved and stored [in accordance with U.K. Inst. Conservators Guidelines]. Every effort should be made to get the agreement of the landowner/developer to the deposition of the finds with the County S.M.R. as an indissoluble part of the site archive.

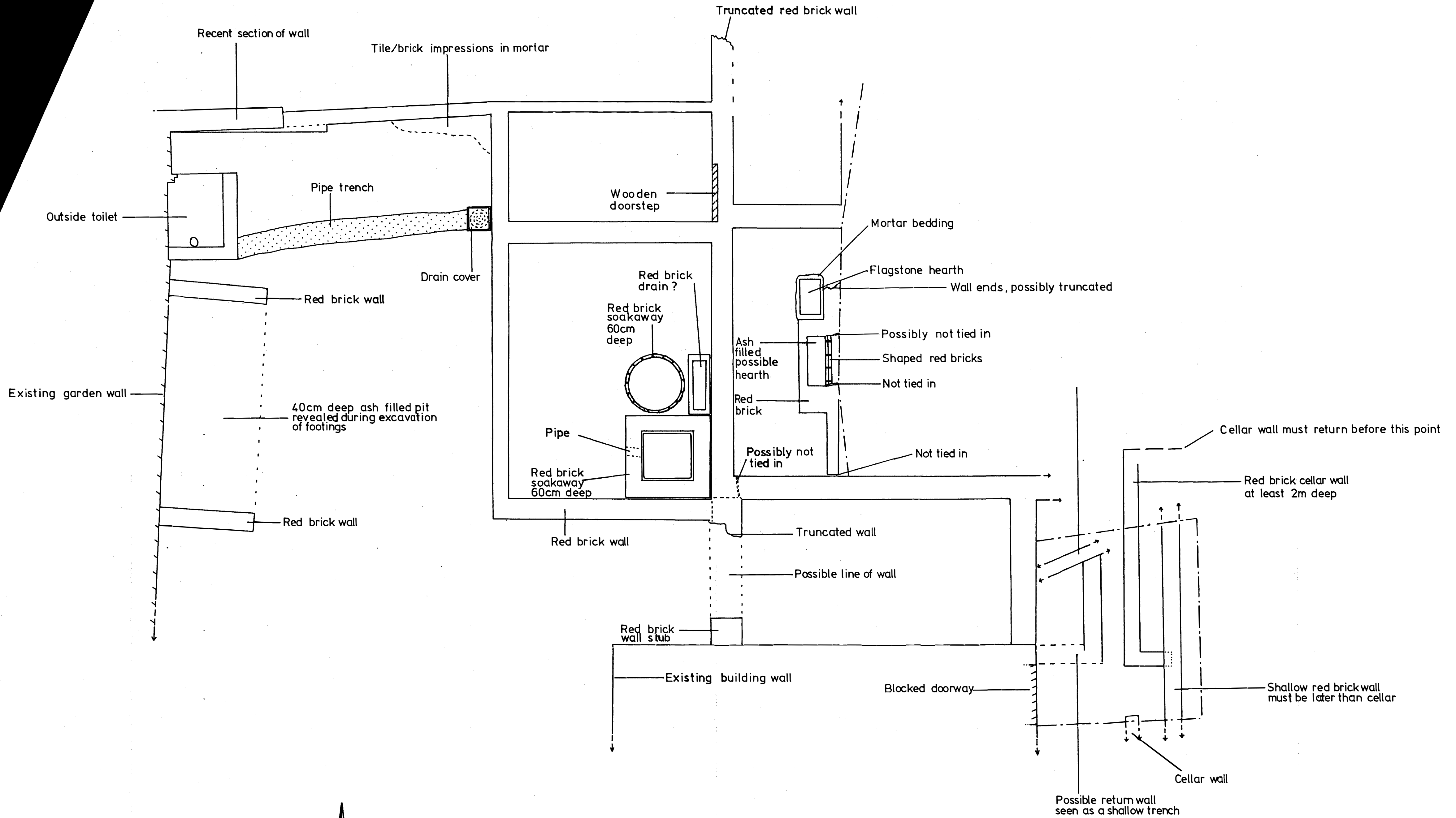
Specification by: R D Carr

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Date: 18 June 1993

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