

# Holbury Manor House Holbury, Hampshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report



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PROJECT 31742

W197

HOLBURY MANOR

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The Trust For Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Radmark Properties Limited to carry out an evaluation of Holbury Manor, Hampshire, prior to refurbishment of the manor and further housing development.

The manor is situated in a rectangular area of land approximately 130 metres long by 65 metres wide aligned north-south. The site is bounded by Lime Kiln Lane to the east, the new Old Manor estate to the north, a moated medieval site to the north-west and park land elsewhere. The manor house is centrally placed aligned east-west with out-buildings and a stable block on the southern side. The southern half of the area is at a lower level, below a terrace on which the house stands. This probably represents the remains of a courtyard associated with the manor and it's out-buildings.

Unoccupied since the mid 1960s, the manor suffered extensive fire damage in 1969 and no more than a bare shell of the walls survives. The out-buildings have been generally reduced to foundation or footing level, with the exception of the triple archway of the stable block and the structure in the south-east corner of the site.

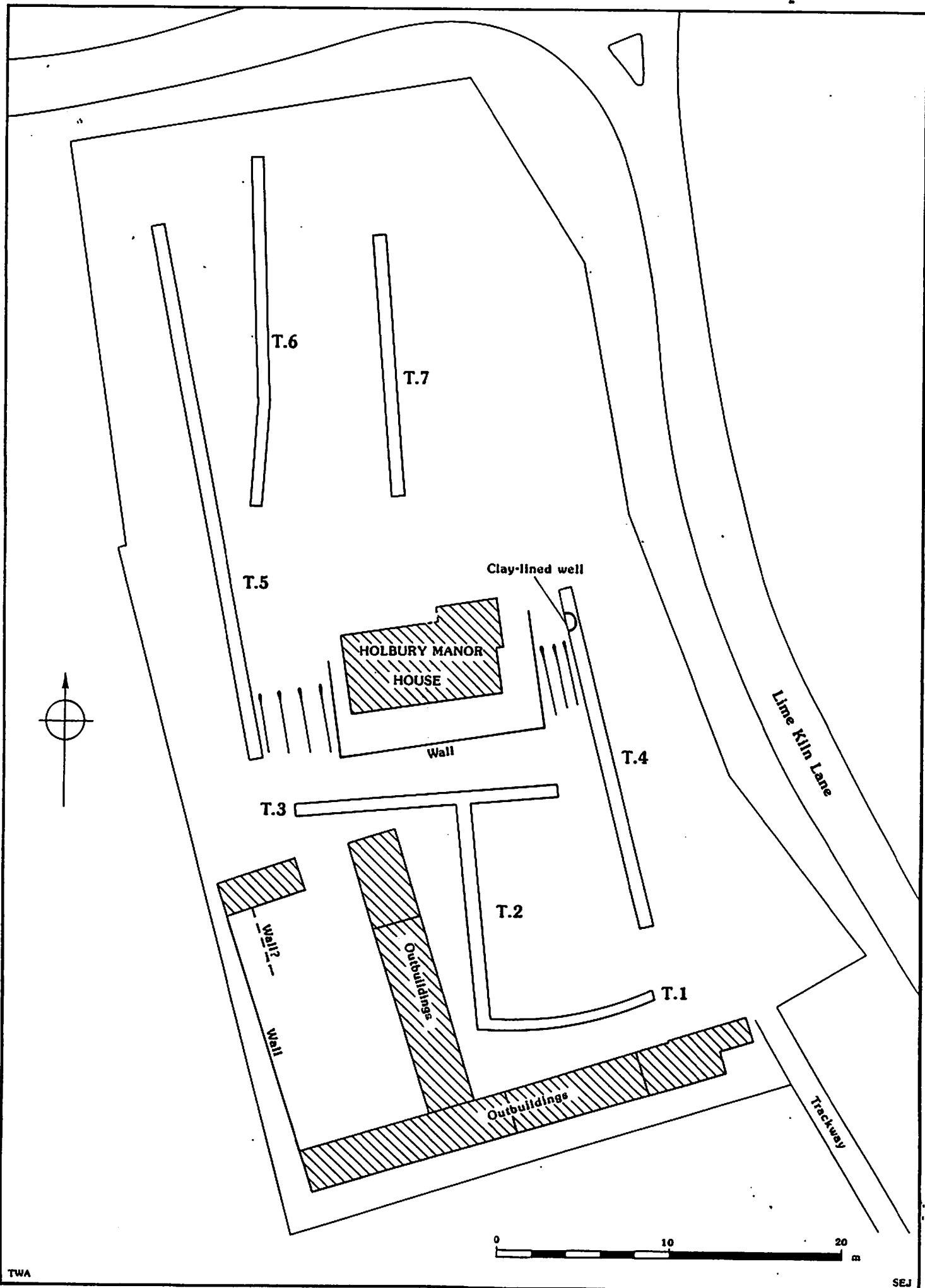
Seven trenches were excavated, all using a Ford 180 degree back actor. Apart from the southernmost trench (Trench 1), which was 0.80m. wide, all

the rest were 1.60m. wide. Three trenches were located on the north side of the manor (Trenches 5, 6, and 7), all aligned north-south. Trench 3 was situated immediately south of, and parallel to, the house whilst Trench 4 started just to the east of the manor house and ran southwards towards the track. The other two trenches (Trenches 1 and 2) follow the line of the out-buildings on the courtyard side.

The three trenches north of the house showed very little sign of disturbance with only occasional pieces of brick and tile in a well developed clay-loam topsoil. Trench depth varied from 0.60m-0.80m on average before the natural gravel was encountered, which showed no sign of any features cut into it.

Trench 4 contained a well in the north end, measuring c.2.00m in diameter. This had a clay lining and the top fill was made up of tile and building debris. It is presumably contemporary with the manor complex. Once the trench passes south of the house and below the terrace, it becomes shallower by c.0.35m, as the soil profile is less developed in the southern section, almost certainly due to the artificial lowering of the ground surface below the terrace. Incidence of building debris becomes increasingly frequent, although the ground is not of the same made up nature found to the west in trenches 1-3.

Trenches 1-3 examine the area of the courtyard bounded by the house terrace to the north and the out-buildings to the west and south. There was no topsoil as such, more a thin layer supporting a patchy overgrowth. Beneath this was 0.50m of made up ground consisting of building debris; brick, tile, mortar and slate providing the majority of the components. This



went straight down on to the gravel natural, which showed no sign of any other disturbance, suggesting that this area had been scoured down to the natural subsoil to provide a yard surface.

In conclusion, it would seem that the site falls into two halves. The northern half shows no sign of human interference, either contemporary with the manor or earlier. Probably this half was gardens or lawns/grassland. The southern half below the terrace appears to have been the working part of the manor with a levelled ground surface taken down to the gravel to provide a yard for the out-buildings and stable block. No evidence of earlier activity was noted; on these results the proposed development would seem to present no threat to anything of archaeological interest or value.

Assistance on site given by Liz Brooks, drawing by Liz James.

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July, 1987.



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