

# The deserted medieval village at Doddershall

**HISTORIC LANDSCAPE REPORT / March 2013**

including HS2 high-speed rail line impact assessment

**Buckinghamshire  
Archaeological  
Society**



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by Peter Marsden

Report number  
BAS/2013-02

THIS REPORT is one of three produced on Doddershall by members of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society as a response to the plans announced in 2011 to route the HS2 high-speed rail line across the county.

The other two reports are:

- **Doddershall Lodge** (historic building survey, March 2013)
- **Earthworks at Doddershall** (historic landscape report, December 2012)

The society's HS2 impact reports do not include three listed buildings on the estate: Doddershall House itself (grade 2\*, believed to date from the 1520s), Lower South Farmhouse (grade 2, 17th-century) and Upper South Farmhouse (grade 2, 16th-century). Because these are listed buildings they will automatically register on HS2's impact agenda.

The plans for HS2 will inevitably have a serious effect on the archaeological and historic environment of Buckinghamshire. The society's aim in these reports is therefore to understand the heritage of unscheduled and unlisted sites affected, to assess the impact of the rail line's construction, and to recommend ways in which these sites may be preserved, protected or, at the least, professionally surveyed and excavated before their destruction.

This is the ninth report in the society's HS2 impact assessment series. See our website ([www.bucksas.org.uk/projects.html](http://www.bucksas.org.uk/projects.html)) to download copies of other HS2 reports – and for information about membership of the society.

## THANKS

to Christopher Prideaux, owner of Doddershall, for showing members of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society around the estate and giving us access to make this survey.

Produced  
and published  
by the  
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Field survey and research by Mike Farley with documentary research by Kim Taylor-Moore and contributions by Peter Marsden.

This is report number BAS/2013-02.

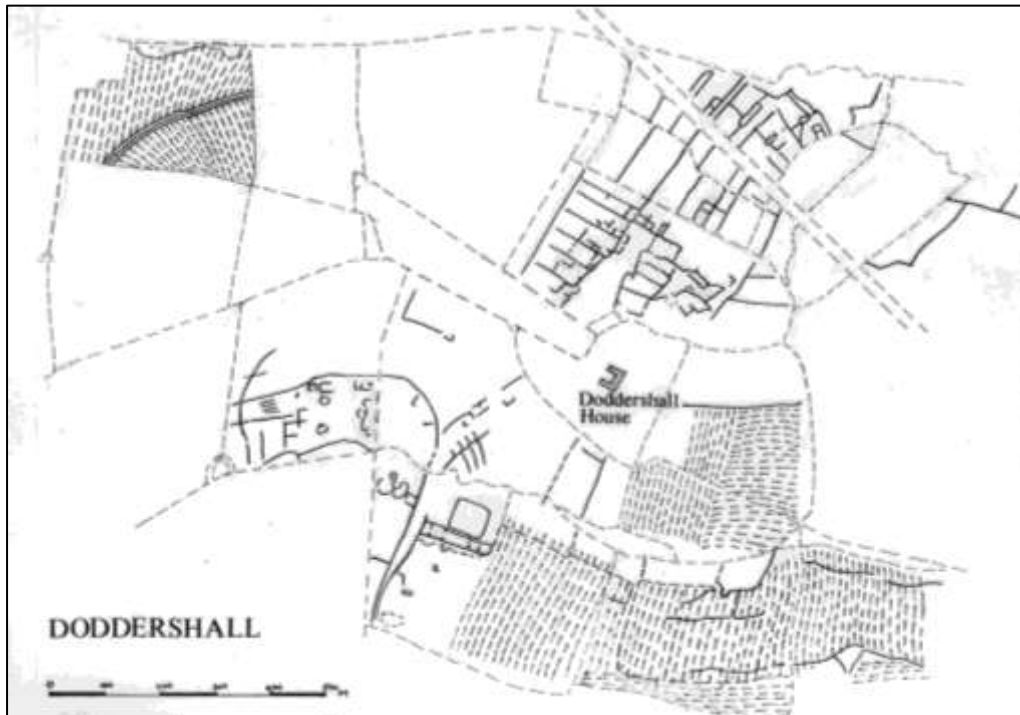


Figure 1:  
A plot of the  
village  
earthworks  
made from air  
photographs  
(from the  
Bucks Historic  
Environment  
Record HER  
0343).

## SUMMARY

Both aerial photographs and field surveys show low earthworks in the fields to the north-east and south-west of Doddershall House, near Quainton (Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SP 72035 20121).

Documentary evidence reveals that these are the remains of the village of Doddershall, which dates back to Saxon times and is recorded in Domesday Book in 1085. The village was destroyed in the years following 1495, when the lord of the manor evicted all his tenant villagers and turned the village's open fields over to sheep farming. Its site is unscheduled and has never been excavated.

The north-eastern section of the deserted village site is already bisected by the former Great Central railway line, now used for goods trains only. The planned HS2 high-speed rail line will run parallel to this existing line, which is expected to be retained and used for access to the HS2 construction site. The twin-track line itself will be 75 metres wide, destroying a half-mile section of village earthworks. This is the minimum because road access required for construction is not yet known.

This report concludes that the Doddershall deserted village site, encapsulating more than 500 years of medieval village life and untouched for a further 500, is a significant heritage asset which merits a full archaeological survey and excavation in order to record what will be lost as a result of HS2.

## 1: THE GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

The Doddershall estate lies towards the western edge of the parish of Quanton in Buckinghamshire. Doddershall House<sup>1</sup> is around 84 metres above sea level (c84m OD) on an outcrop of the 'West Walton Formation' of sedimentary rock which extends as a slight ridge for a short distance to the north-west. This can contain 'limestone and calcareous mudstone' in contrast to the land around, the underlying 'Weymouth Member,' a division of the Oxford Clay which consists purely of mudstone.<sup>2</sup>

This slight difference may account for the location of a settlement here. The drainage south of the ridge is into the River Thames, but on the north into the River Ray.

At the north-west the ridge is only a little higher (96 metres OD), but the distant views from there may have been sufficient to account for the place name which in the late twelfth century was 'Dodershille' or a variant of this. The 'Dod' prefix is thought to be a personal Old English name.<sup>3</sup>

Doddershall is in the parish of Quanton and the Buckinghamshire hundred of Ashendon.

## 2 THE HISTORIC CONTEXT

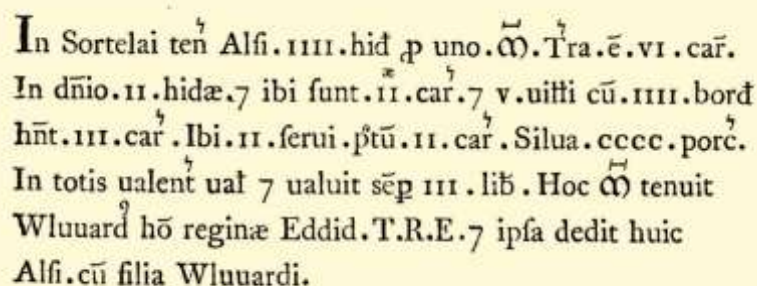
### 2.1 Domesday and earlier: 'Sortelai'

No place called 'Doddershall' is recorded in Domesday Book in 1086. However the manor that later bore that name has been identified with the name 'Sortelai' ('Short-lee' or Shortley), linked to the neighbouring manor of Shipton Lee.

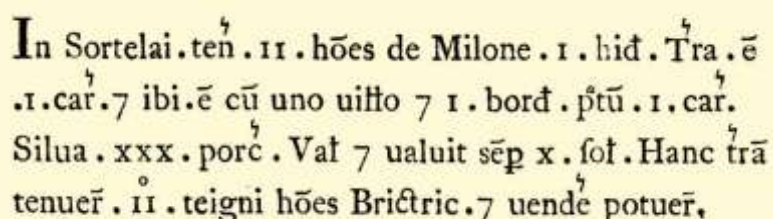
In 1086 the manor consisted of four hides (approximately 480 acres) of land. The manor was held by Alfsi, who reserved two of the four hides for his own use whilst the other two were worked by his tenants. He also held land in Shipton Lee and Chesham. In 1066 it had been held by Wulfward, a man of Queen Edith, the widow of King Edward the Confessor. Domesday Book reveals the relationship between Alfsi and Wulfward when it states that 'Edith gave the manor to Alfsi, with Wulfward's daughter'.

In addition there was said to be land for six ploughs, meadows for two further ploughs and woodland for 400 pigs.

Although it is not possible to say with certainty how many acres this meadowland and woodland encompassed, comparisons with other Buckinghamshire manors suggest that the total area of the manor was probably



In Sortelai ten<sup>4</sup> Alfi. iiii. hid<sup>4</sup> p uno. <sup>4</sup> Tra. ē. vi. car<sup>4</sup>.  
In dñio. ii. hidæ. 7 ibi sunt. ii. car<sup>4</sup>. 7 v. uilli cū. iiii. bord<sup>4</sup>  
hnt. iiii. car<sup>4</sup>. Ibi. ii. serui. ptū. ii. car<sup>4</sup>. Silua. cccc. porc<sup>4</sup>.  
In totis ualent<sup>4</sup> ual<sup>4</sup> 7 ualuit sēp<sup>4</sup> iiii. lib<sup>4</sup>. Hoc <sup>4</sup> tenuit  
Wluuard<sup>4</sup> hō reginæ Eddid. T.R.E. 7 ipsa dedit huic  
Alfi. cū filia Wluuardi.



In Sortelai. ten<sup>4</sup>. ii. hōes de Milone. i. hid<sup>4</sup>. Tra. ē  
.i. car<sup>4</sup>. 7 ibi. ē cū uno uillo 7 i. bord<sup>4</sup>. ptū. i. car<sup>4</sup>.  
Silua. xxx. porc<sup>4</sup>. Val<sup>4</sup> 7 ualuit sēp<sup>4</sup> x. sol<sup>4</sup>. Hanc trā  
tenuer<sup>4</sup>. ii. teigni hōes Brictric. 7 uende potuer<sup>4</sup>.

Figure 2: The entries in Domesday Book for 'Sortelai': the upper entry is Alfsi's holding of four hides, the lower shows Miles' holding of one hide.

not very different from the around 1300 acres recorded in 19th-century surveys of the Doddershall estate. Six villeins, five bordars (smallholders) and two slaves were recorded on the manor, which implies a total population of around 60 people.<sup>4</sup>

## **2.2 The medieval manor of Doddershall**

The earliest known reference to the estate as Doddershall is in 1167, by which time it was in the hands of the Cranford family who sometimes took the name of 'de Doddershall'.<sup>5</sup> They held the manor until the end of the 15th century and many deeds survive from their period of occupation which give much information about the land and people.<sup>6</sup>

For example a deed of 1225 records the presence of a windmill and a bridge, whilst another of 1295, refers to 'Richard the potter of Doddershall'.<sup>7</sup> Doddershall seems to have had at least two open fields, called Doddershall Great Field (later known as Harpers Field) and Doddershall Little Field (later Moncombe Leas).<sup>8</sup> The names of many furlongs are given, for example docfurlong, smethmede, brodemedefurlong, the denge and hyder elmhurst.<sup>9</sup>

The manor of Doddershall held its own courts and views of frankpledge although, sadly, no records of their proceedings survive. However some residents found themselves appearing in other courts, for example in July 1389 John Tyngryth, muleward, appeared before the Eyre at High Wycombe and was found guilty of stabbing to death John Moldessone 'in the common road of Doddershall outside his own front door'. The victim had himself been accused of another murder in Doddershall eight years earlier.<sup>10</sup>

The deeds show that the trials of the early 14th century - poor harvests, disease in livestock and above all the Black Death - had much impact on the structure of the lands of the manor. In the 15th century a field called 'The Barren field' appears in a rental and, in 1413, one common fallow field in Horsaye was granted by William Cranford to his tenants in Brokehende, suggesting that the open fields were no longer very fertile or fully utilised.<sup>11</sup> Some tenant holdings were combined, resulting in fewer, larger holdings. For example, in 1395 Walter Baron and Henry Bynewale granted to Hugh le Hewe Junior their two messuages and land 'annexed together'.<sup>12</sup>

Similarly, several larger buildings appear in the records for the first time, for example those known as Chaundelers and Old Baronsplace, each of which frequently changed hands thereafter.<sup>13</sup> References to closes, such as those at Westerwykes, are seen for the first time, although whether these were enclosed from woodlands or the arable land is impossible to say.<sup>14</sup>

## **2.3 Enclosure and eviction**

The biggest change, however, came at the end of the 15th century when Thomas Pigott began to buy land in Doddershall, eventually acquiring the manor itself.<sup>15</sup> Pigott came from a family of Little Horwood peasants who had risen to gentry status 'on the Duke of York's coat-tails'.<sup>16</sup> (Like many 'new' families they had had a pedigree produced showing a more illustrious descent but this is now thought to be largely fictitious.)<sup>17</sup>

The Pigott family were notorious for enclosing arable land and turning it over to grazing for livestock, in the process robbing many tenants of their livelihoods and evicting them from their homes. Doddershall was one of a handful of villages in Buckinghamshire where substantial depopulation was recorded by a Commission set up in 1517 by Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, as Henry VIII's chief minister. This became known as 'The Domesday of Inclosures', and shows the Pigotts enclosing land in many of their manors, for example at Grendon Underwood and Beachampton.<sup>18</sup>



FIGURE 3:  
The site of  
Doddershall  
village, seen  
from the  
edge of the  
manor  
house  
garden  
today. The  
HS2 rail line  
will run on  
the other  
side of the  
further  
hedge.

Their most ambitious enclosure, however, was at Doddershall in 1495, where 960 acres were enclosed with hedges and ditches and used for pasturing sheep and other animals. This required the eviction of those who lived on and worked the land and the removal of 24 houses: '...he made ruin of the said messuages and lands and willingly allowed them to be in ruin and desolation ... sixteen ploughs were discarded and 120 persons were taken away who in the said messuages had until then dwelt ... and went tearfully away and were brought to idleness, ending their lives in extreme poverty'.<sup>19</sup>

The precise date that the village was eradicated is not known but must fall between 1489 when a statute against depopulation was passed and Wolsey's Commission of 1517 which looked at infringements after the Act.<sup>20</sup> Nor can we say how complete this 'ruin' was, nor what proportion of the village were evicted, because we lack population figures for Doddershall in the 1490s. But an estimate is possible.

The 1332 Lay Subsidy names 30 taxpayers in Doddershall and Shipton Lee together, which suggests, after allowing for the omission of those too poor to pay tax, that there were approximately 50 households in the two villages or around 200-250 people.<sup>21</sup> It is impossible to say how many lived in each village, and in fact many of the people named held land and buildings in both places.

In 1524, 27 people paid the subsidy in Shipton Lee but only nine in Doddershall indicating that the respective populations were approximately 175 and 60.<sup>22</sup> This does not show a substantial reduction in overall terms over the previous two centuries, but a comparison with the 120 evicted according to the 1517 Commission report does imply that two-thirds of the population of Doddershall were removed. The figures also reflect the effect of the early, major enclosures at Doddershall when compared to Shipton Lee, where enclosure was on a much smaller scale.

This was not the end of the process, however, because in 1566 Thomas Pigott was granted permission from Queen Elizabeth I to 'throw down a certain messuage and bam and convert to pasture and enclose certain lands (110 acres) in Doddershall'.<sup>23</sup>

Shortly afterwards he turned his attention to the woods and common lands and 'enclosed Doddershall Wood and Common, Greatmore Woods and part of Lee Lawne. He had great hedges and ditches made, altered the metes and bounds of the manor, depopulated the whole of the town of Doddershall, destroyed all the farm houses, and erected some few mean cottages upon Greatmoor to give colour of satisfaction to the statute made against depopulation'.<sup>24</sup> In 1569 he was keeping 400 sheep on Doddershall Launde.<sup>25</sup>

There are a number of 'deserted' village sites in central and north Buckinghamshire as well as other almost-completely abandoned hamlets. Examples of wholesale village 'desertion' can be seen at Fleet Marston, a site heavily ploughed but with a surviving church, and Quarrendon, a scheduled ancient monument where there are the fragmentary remains of a chapel but well-preserved village earthworks. Examples of partial desertion are Hogshaw, Fulbrook and Shipton Lee.

### **3: THE DESERTED VILLAGE SITE**

The location of the depopulated village, and at least part of the cultivated land which belonged to it, is clear from aerial photographs (figure 4). These show the individual streets and closes of the village and patches of ridge-and-furrow cultivation nearby which are indicative of medieval open-field farming.

#### **3.1 The village earthworks**

The majority of the earthworks described here are on relatively low-lying land. They are little in evidence on the ridge extending north-west from Doddershall House – though this is a location where early settlement might be expected. Today this is the main drive to the house.

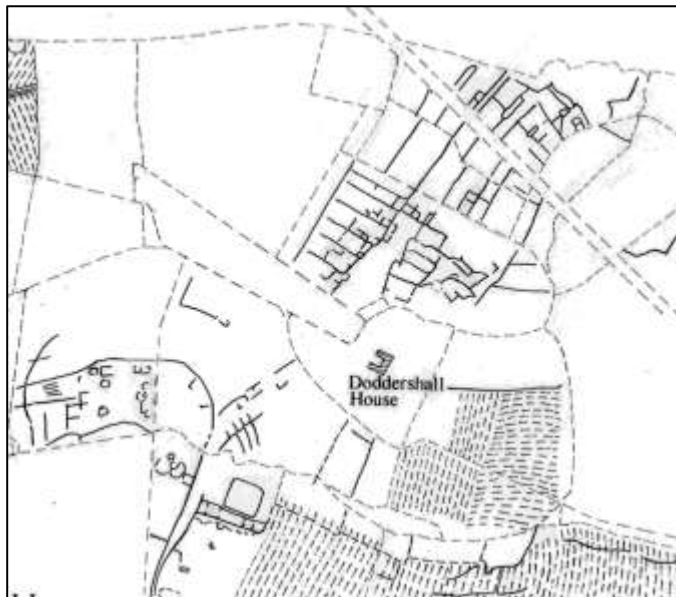


FIGURE 4: The village earthworks as they appear on the sketch-plot made from aerial photographs taken in 1976. The position of Doddershall House today is shown just off-centre.

Although the clearance of the village had long ago been documented, its actual location was first formally recorded by Beresford and Hurst in 1971, when it was listed among a number of other similar Buckinghamshire sites.<sup>26</sup> The process of identification was assisted by air photographs taken at the time by J K S St Joseph of Cambridge University.

A number of other photographs of the area, taken before and after this date, are held in the National Monuments Record and the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER). The most informative images in the HER are those commissioned by British Gas for survey purposes in 1976, and a sketch-plot of the village earthworks was produced from two of these.<sup>27</sup> The plot was prepared by a student for the County Archaeological Service some years ago. Not all of the features shown are necessarily of medieval date.

A recent visual survey of the fields concerned showed the features to be fairly shallow, but the extent of the earthworks at Doddershall is impressive. They extend over a distance of a little over a kilometre and fall roughly into a northern group which is fairly clearly structured, and a south-western group which is less easy to interpret.

### **3.1.2 The northern earthworks**

The northern group of earthworks (figure 5) has a very rectilinear form. Their dominant feature is a track or holloway running roughly from north-east to south-west. It is cut by the old Great Central railway line, but continues beyond this.

A block of six closes front on to this principal track, with other divisions adjoining them to the north. Some of these closes contain mounds adjacent to the track which may indicate the location of buildings.

A second track leads off the first at about its mid-point, heading south-east. This has a number of closes opening off it on both sides, now partly obscured by a later hedge which crosses them. Detail immediately to the north of these features is not clear. North of the railway line there is at least one other street with four accompanying plots with mounds indicating former buildings.

At the south end of this northern group of earthworks, the sketch-plot from aerial photographs indicates what may have been an open space or 'green' with another block of closes fronting it and extending down towards a stream lying on the east.

The whole of this northern area appears to have a regular layout, with aligned plots which probably indicate an element of deliberate medieval planning. There is slight evidence that this northern section of the village extended further south towards the present Doddershall House, but that this has been truncated by later estate cottages and garden buildings.



FIGURE 5: The northern set of earthworks, showing house plots (centre left) aligned along each side of a wide village street.



FIGURE 6: The village earthworks to the south-west of the house. The moated site is at centre, just below the stream (shown as a dashed line).

### **3.1.3 The south-western earthworks**

This second area of earthworks is to the west of the house and mainly on the north bank of the estate's principal stream.

In contrast to the regular layout of the northern earthworks, here there seems to be no coherent plan. The earthworks may be of several phases.



The curved northern edge of these earthworks, evident on the plot, may be a drainage feature and the south-eastern corner may be further confused by truncated ridge and furrow. The surface-visible evidence does not allow a reliable interpretation here.

On the south bank of the stream is a small moated site, roughly 50 metres square.<sup>28</sup> This is also shown on the Ordnance Survey one-inch map of 1833 (see figure 6).<sup>29</sup> On the ground (but not obvious on aerial photographs) it appears to have a less-substantial, rectangular, ancillary enclosure attached to its eastern side which utilises the stream as its north side.

There are slight indications that this moat may post-date existing ridge and furrow. There may be traces of ridge and furrow immediately to its north and east sides, but there is also clear evidence for a prominent headland abutting its south side. This suggests that although it may have been constructed on former arable land, shortening some of the strips, the open fields then continued in use. This would date the moat to the medieval period.

### **3.1.4 Ridge and furrow**

The occurrence of ridge and furrow - evidence of medieval open-field strip farming - can be helpful in defining the limits of a former settlement. The sketch-plot (figure 1) shows the present extent observed on aerial photographs and this provides some idea of the extent of arable fields converted to grassland by the Pigotts in the late 15th and early 16th centuries.

However, ridge and furrow can, and undoubtedly has been, completely levelled by modern ploughing methods, which may also have damaged some of the village earthworks – so the open-field arable would undoubtedly have been more extensive than the plot indicates.

The rectangular shape of the fields surrounding Doddershall House today are clearly of enclosure date, hedged either at the time of the early depopulation of the village or in a later phase. An investigation of the botanical content of the hedges may assist in dating the enclosure.

### **3.1.5 Archaeological finds**

No reported finds from the village are recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER). Construction of the 1868 railway line some distance east of the deserted village site is said to have brought to light 'several interesting articles' including a 'medieval bottle, bridle cutter, two bullets, buckle, leaden coin and the boss of a fibula',<sup>30</sup> but no objects from Doddershall have been identified in the County Museum's collection. (The only accessioned find from the area which mentions railway construction is a bellarmine jug found when making the Aylesbury-Buckingham line near Quainton Road Station.<sup>31</sup>)

The present owner of the Doddershall estate has mentioned that metal detectorists have worked on part of the deserted village site but he wasn't aware of anything of significance being discovered.<sup>32</sup>

## **4: DODDERSHALL AFTER THE ENCLOSURES**

### **4.1 The estate papers**

Seventeenth-century deeds and estate papers preserved by the Pigott family show that much of the enclosed land was let to tenants.<sup>33</sup> For example in 1602 'the great field of Doddershall' was in the occupation of Robert Johnson of Pollicott, yeoman.<sup>34</sup>

The deeds also give much detail about the topography of the manor and the manorial buildings. For example, an early 17th-century paper describes: 'six acres of ground parcell of the parke which lieth next and adjoines unto the parlor garden to the posterne gate yearde, to the chappell hill and upper garden of the Capital messuage aforesaid and also a certain building or house now used or occupied for a mault house and fitting there and also the two pitle thereunto next adjoining the said malte house build and pitle are situate and being within the six acres aforesaid'.<sup>35</sup> Another deed of 1624 suggests the presence of a second windmill.<sup>36</sup>

Even in the late 17th century dwellings were being removed from the estate: '30 June 1693. Articles of Agreement. John Neele of Quainton, Yeoman, for a consideration of £59 has sold to Francis Winslow of Shipdon Lee [sic] All that his close of pasture ground, garden, or yard ground whereon the dwelling house and other outhouses now stand, lying in the liberty of Doddershall ... all which said premises contain 1½ acres. It is agreed that John Neele shall take down and carry away said dwelling house ... and the hay now made upon the premises and all other outhouses thereupon'.<sup>37</sup>

The Piggott family, who were landowners at Doddershall over several centuries, have a tomb in Quainton church.<sup>38</sup>

#### 4.2 Map evidence

The earliest depiction of Doddershall is on a highly schematic map of around 1587. The original is in Doddershall House, but a redrawn and annotated copy was prepared by George Lipscomb for his county history.<sup>39</sup> (A section, showing Doddershall House and its park is figure 7.)

In Lipscomb's version north is to the right. In the late 16th century the Pigotts' local estates stretched beyond Doddershall so the map shows a number of identifiable villages including Wotton and Brill.

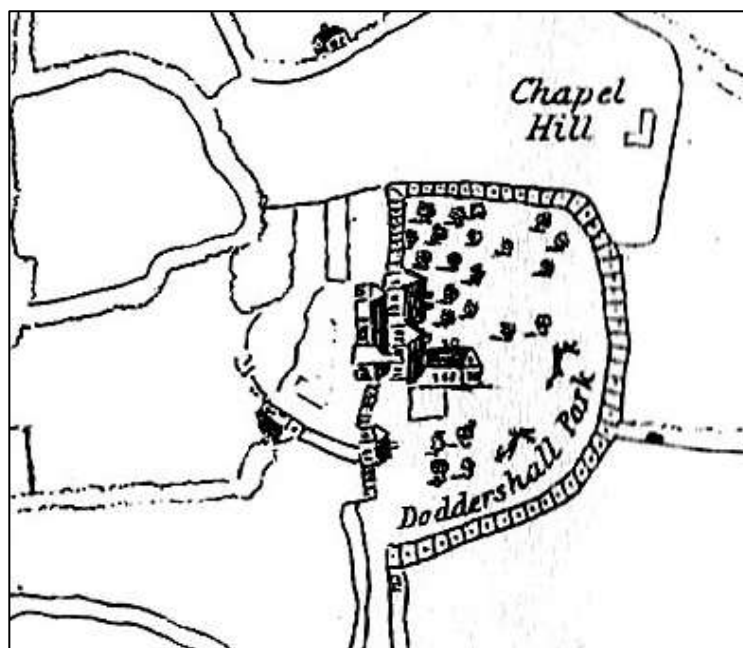


FIGURE 7: A section of the 1587 map showing Doddershall House within its park surrounded by empty fields where the village had been 100 years earlier

The map is thought to have been prepared during a dispute between Pigott and Sir John Godwin of

Over Winchendon over land rights in Bernwood Forest, of which Doddershall was at that time on the eastern margin.<sup>40</sup> It may be noted that 'Doddershall Wood, a mile to the west of Doddershall, extends into the parish of Grendon Underwood'.<sup>41</sup>

The image of Doddershall on the 1587 map shows a slightly ovoid park pale. There are five buildings partly within and without the pale and beyond this a slightly curved track with another building beside it which may indicate a green. Other tracks lead off from the complex. Adjacent to the south-east, possibly an interpolation by Lipscomb, are the words 'Chapel Hill' near an L-shaped building. Chapel Hill Meadow is also shown south-east of the house on a map of the manor of 1859.<sup>42</sup> No other documentary record of such a 'chapel' has been traced, so this remains a conundrum.

Around the house, where low earthworks and aerial photographs today reveal the site of Doddershall village, the 1587 map shows empty fields.

The nearest buildings are some way to the north, where ‘four houses and a pound’ are shown alongside ‘a very old trackway ... called Waterslade Lane’ (see figure 8). Rodwell, who examined the original map and the ground in the 1990s, writes that ‘There is little trace today of these houses apart from the westerly one, the largest, which I think is North Farm, and some humps beside the ditch in what is now called Graces Meadows. Possibly the easterly one beside Snake Lane may have been the reason for the S-bend anomaly where the old drive joins the lane.’<sup>43</sup>

The 1587 map shows Doddershall House standing isolated in its park and among its fields. Doddershall also appears as an isolated building on the margins of a map of 1590 of Bernwood Forest.<sup>44</sup> By the end of the 16th century, therefore, the removal of Doddershall village was complete.



FIGURE 8: A larger section of the 1587 map. The ‘four houses and a pound’ are alongside the road running vertically, left of centre. They are half a mile from the house.

### 4.3 The Park and Doddershall House

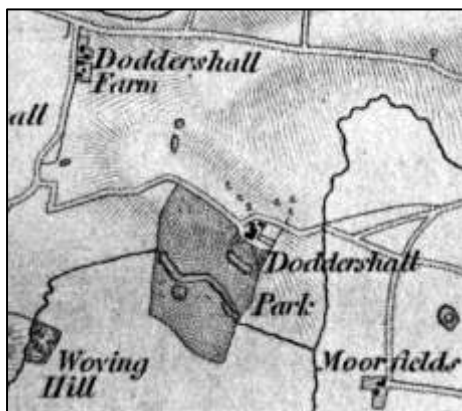


FIGURE 9 (left): A section of the 1833 Ordnance Survey map showing the house at the top right corner of its park.

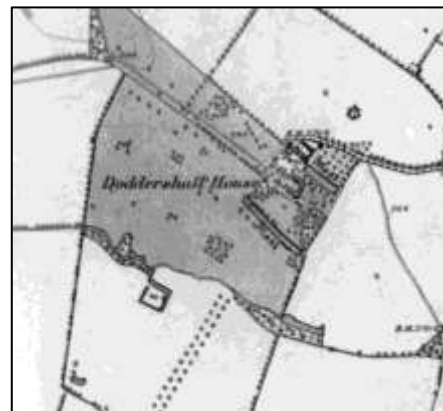


FIGURE 10 (right): Doddershall on the 1885 OS sheet, now with formal gardens and avenues of trees.

It is likely that the park was constructed not long after enclosure. The park is shown schematically on the 1587 map, and with greater accuracy on Jefferys map of 1770, Bryant’s of 1825 and the Ordnance Survey one-inch of 1833 (figure 9) where the house is shown at the north-east corner of the park with a stream, which is still a dominant feature in the landscape, passing through it.<sup>45</sup>

This remained a deer park until the late 18th-century when it was ‘converted into arable and meadow on the death of the Dowager Countess Say and Sele, whose second husband (of three) was John Pigott, Esq., in 1789.’<sup>46</sup> The Ordnance Survey six-inch map of 1885 (figure 10) shows an avenue of trees aligned on the house on the south side of the stream and possible traces of another leading west from the house towards the presumed location of ‘Dod’ hill.<sup>47</sup>

A number of sources note the presence of a ‘moat’ at the house, for example the Royal Commission on Historic Buildings, which recorded that ‘only fragments remain NE and SW of the house’.<sup>48</sup> These are clearly shown on the OS six-inch sheet of 1885.<sup>49</sup>



FIGURE 11: Doddershall House from the south-east. A drawing from Records of Bucks volume 3 in 1868.

From the thirteenth-century onwards there are numerous moats in Buckinghamshire which certainly once housed a building of manorial status, but this is not always their function and some clearly had other uses, for example as fishponds. By the 16th century a number were also being dug, or enhanced, to become an integral part of the formal gardens which accompanied large houses.

There are no fewer than eight other moated sites on the Doddershall estate.<sup>50</sup> About 500 metres to the east of the house is a three-sided moat whose origin is disputed. While the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments recorded it as the remains of a medieval moated house, an Ordnance Survey field surveyor disagreed – and as a result the site is shown on OS maps as a ‘civil war gun battery’, dating from the skirmishes of the 1640s. Today, however, the ‘moat’ is clearly used as agricultural drainage. This controversy is fully explored in another report.<sup>51</sup>

The Victoria County History for Buckinghamshire surmises that the present Doddershall House ‘beautifully situated in a large park’ was ‘built probably by Thomas Piggott, sergeant-at-law, about 1510...’<sup>52</sup> This date was subsequently modified to the early 1520s.<sup>53</sup> There are useful 19th-century accounts of Doddershall House.<sup>54</sup> The building is listed Grade 2\*.<sup>55</sup> Further research would undoubtedly cast light on the evolution of the park and garden.

#### **4.4 Construction of the earlier railway lines**

The construction of two railway lines in the 19th century had a substantial effect on Doddershall and can be seen on the Ordnance Survey six-inch map of 1900 (see figure 12).<sup>56</sup>

Though the first line curved away to the north-east, the second cut through the site of the deserted village and still operates as a low-level freight line today. Their construction caused the eastern driveway to the house to be re-routed several times.

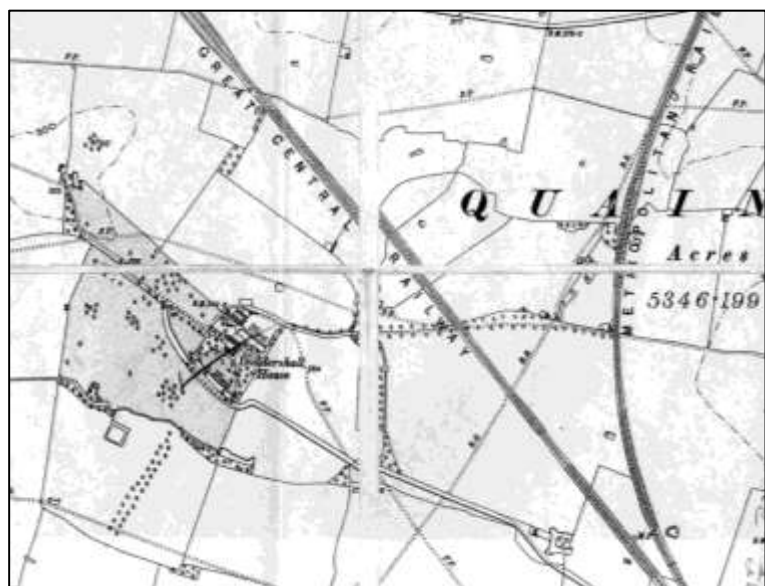


FIGURE 12: A section from the 1900 OS map, showing Doddershall House (left of centre) with the 1868 and 1899 railway lines.

First to be constructed was the Aylesbury and Buckingham Railway, which opened in 1868<sup>57</sup> and is shown curving north on the right-hand side of the map. This crossed the original access drive to Doddershall House from Quanton in the east, requiring a level crossing whose position is marked today by Railway Cottage.

The construction of the line and its bridges is likely to have occasioned opening of the brick and tile works at the junction of the railway and the track to Upper and Lower South Farms.<sup>58</sup> An invoice of 1862 refers to bricks 'bought from W.Locke and Son, Doddershall Patent Brick and Tile Works'.<sup>59</sup>

Writing in the year the line opened, Lowdnes notes, rather ironically given the present context, that 'a railroad has now been constructed, and its swift train ... will soon glide past this manor, and many a hitherto-unfrequented house and village'.<sup>60</sup> The line has been disused since the 1930s although its course, much of it embanked, remains clear.

The second line, the Great Central Railway, opened in 1899<sup>61</sup> and is shown running east-to-west on the OS map of 1900. This runs much nearer to the house and caused a complete re-alignment of the eastern driveway, with the abandonment of the northern route and a new drive constructed to meet the road near the site of the brick and tile works half a mile further to the south. It is likely that the Doddershall Lodge house, with its archway over the drive, was constructed at the same time.



FIGURE 13: The official HS2 route plan where it passes Doddershall House (centre), with listed buildings in red.

## **5: THE HS2 HIGH-SPEED RAIL LINE AT DODDERSHALL**

The revised route of the proposed HS2 high-speed rail line between London and Birmingham, defined in January 2012, shows the line following the existing track of the former Great Central line built in the 1890s.<sup>62</sup> This runs from east-to-west across the Doddershall estate (figure 13), cutting through the earthworks that remain from the medieval village (figure 14).

If the new HS2 line simply replaced the existing freight line, as the January 2012 route plan implies, requiring no extra land on either side, then the earthworks of the deserted village might suffer no extra disruption. Two factors indicate, however, that this is not likely to be the case

First, the land-take for HS2 will need to be wider than the trackbed of the existing freight line in order to allow for power gantries and security fences on each side. The expected width is 75 metres, roughly three times as wide as the existing line. Beside this, the construction work is likely to require considerable access roads.

Secondly, Secretary of State for Transport Justine Greening announced on 16 July 2012 that the government intends to upgrade the line between Oxford and Bedford through Verney Junction, reopening it to passengers.<sup>63</sup>

This suggests that the existing single-track line between Aylesbury and Verney Junction will need to be retained as a link to the restored line. Indeed HS2's own engineering plans require the retention of the existing line as a means of freighting heavy materials into its planned Infrastructure Maintenance Depot between Aylesbury and Calvert.

To permit either of these requirements, the line of HS2, as defined in January 2012, would need to run beside the existing line where it crosses the Doddershall estate. This would mean the destruction of the surviving earthworks of the deserted village by a construction corridor half a mile long and at least 75 metres wide.



FIGURE 14: The plot of the village earthworks superimposed on the HS2 route plan where the line crosses. New proposals released during 2012 mean that the actual line is expected to be twice as wide as that shown.

## **6: CONCLUSIONS**

### **6.1 The significance and value of Doddershall deserted village site as a heritage asset**

The earthworks of the deserted medieval village of Doddershall are not scheduled as an ancient monument and have never been excavated. The evidence cited here shows, however, that the village is recorded in Domesday Book in 1085 and dates from at least Saxon times.

Field survey, aerial photography and documentary evidence show that Doddershall was a considerable medieval estate, with strip cultivation in open fields and a nucleated village. The report of Cardinal Wolsey's Commission in 1517 records that 500 years ago the villagers were evicted, their houses pulled down and their lands enclosed to make way for sheep pasture.

The earthworks that are visible today represent, therefore, archaeological evidence of five hundred years of medieval village life that has remained largely undisturbed for the past five centuries. Though the county has other deserted medieval village sites, few are so little disturbed and with the cause of their desertion (or dispossession) as well documented as that at Doddershall. It is suggested that the accessibility of the earthworks by way of an existing public footpath contributes to their significance as a heritage asset.

We trust that this report will make a real contribution to the HS2 Environmental Impact Assessment process (EIA). We believe that the findings of this report confirm that the earthworks of the deserted village have at least 'Moderate' and possibly 'High' significance within Table 11 of the Cultural Heritage chapter of the HS2 EIA Scoping and Methodology Report of September 2012 (SMR) because of its historical associations.

## **6.2 The impact of HS2**

The deserted village site will be crossed by a construction corridor, giving space for the lines themselves along with access and construction works, half a mile long by at least 75 metres wide. All existing earthworks within this corridor will be destroyed if the HS2 high-speed line goes ahead as currently planned.

Apart from this physical destruction the two public footpaths which cross the present railway line are bound to be affected, making the site of the deserted village less accessible. The impact of both the construction and the operation of HS2 will have a serious, adverse effect on the tranquil character of this isolated, rural and historic landscape.

On the basis of information currently available from the Department for Transport and HS2 Limited we believe the impact within Table 12 of the SMR would be 'High'. We therefore conclude that the potential significance of the effect within Table 13 of the SMR is 'Major'.

## **6.3 Recommendations**

### Assessment and evaluation

A critical precursor to be agreed with the archaeology adviser for Buckinghamshire County Council, this should include:

- Detailed ground and geophysical survey of deserted village earthworks to clarify their potential, aiming to identify significant buildings such as a former church.
- Trial trenching to confirm the potential and character of archaeological remains, including state of preservation and presence/absence of Anglo-Saxon and earlier phases.
- Review of assessment of significance in light of above and national/local criteria.

### Mitigation and offsetting

Subject to the results of the assessment and evaluation stage, the following measures are suggested:

- Full archaeological excavation of the identified construction corridor and a surrounding 'buffer zone' well in advance of construction with a strong research framework and opportunities for university involvement.
- Substantial and meaningful opportunities for public involvement in archaeological work through training and volunteering as well as guided visits for local people and schools.
- Publication of the results in both academic and popular formats.
- Provision for museum storage and display.

## REFERENCES

### ABBREVIATIONS:

BAS	Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society	OS	Ordnance Survey
CBS	Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies	RCHM	Royal Commission on Historic Monuments
HER	Historic Environment Record	VCH	Victoria County History

### NOTES

- 1: Doddershall House is at Ordnance Survey Grid Reference SP 72035 20121.
- 2: **Solid and Drift Geology Map** (British Geological Survey 2002) Buckingham: England and Wales sheet 219.
- 3: A Mawer and F M Stenton, **The place-names of Buckinghamshire**, volume 2 (English Place Names Society 1925).
- 4: **Domesday Book: Buckinghamshire**, edited by John Morris (Phillimore, Chichester 1978) section 56.2. A fifth hide in 'Sortelai' is listed as held by Miles Crispin, one of the county's big landholders based at neighbouring Waddesdon, who held 120 hides altogether. This small holding most likely did not become part of the later Doddershall (**Domesday: Buckinghamshire**, section 23.11).
- 5: **The great roll of the pipe for 13 Henry II, 1166-1167** (London, 1889), page 110.
- 6: The archives of the Doddershall estate, almost 600 documents, are deposited and catalogued in the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS) under D/P (Doddershall Papers).
- 7: CBS: D/P 29, Addl 23.
- 8: CBS: D/P 466.
- 9: CBS: D/P 65, 79, 80, 86, Addl 23.
- 10: L Boatwright (editor), **Inquests and Indictments from Late Fourteenth Century Buckinghamshire: The Superior Eyre of Michaelmas 1389 at High Wycombe** (Buckinghamshire Record Society, volume 29, 1994), pages 42-3.
- 11: CBS: D/P 141, Addl 1A. It is possible that the field was named after the Baron family who held land and property in both Doddershall and Shipton Lee.
- 12: CBS: D/P 104.
- 13: CBS: D/P 166 and 217.
- 14: CBS: D/P 143.
- 15: The descent of the manor through various landholders is set out in William Page (editor) **Victorian County History: Buckinghamshire**, volume 4 (1927), pages 96-7.
- 16: M Tompkins, 'Peasant Society in a Midlands Manor, Great Horwood 1400-1600' (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 2006), pages 48, 85, 95, 106, 209.
- 17: See <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/GEN-MEDIEVAL/2006-02/1139070598>, for example, and following correspondence. See also G Bramhall, 'A Pigott Chronicle' (unpublished book in CBS, 1991), which acknowledges that the published pedigree is wrong, but suggests that this is only in the detail and that the descent is from the same family.
- 18: I S Leadam, **The Domesday of Inclosures 1517-1518** (two volumes, London 1897) volume 1, pages 162-3 and 202.
- 19: Leadam, volume 1, page 162.
- 20: Maurice Beresford, **The Lost Villages of England** (1965) page 107.
- 21: A C Chibnall (editor) **Early Taxation Returns: Taxation of Personal Property in 1332 and Later**, (Buckinghamshire Record Society, volume 14, 1966) pages 8-10.
- 22: A C Chibnall and A V Woodman, **Subsidy Roll for the County of Buckingham Anno 1524** (Buckinghamshire Record Society, volume 8, Aylesbury 1950) pages 36 and 39.
- 23: CBS: D/P 344.
- 24: CBS: D/P AR/23A/66 quoted in M. Reed, **The Buckinghamshire Landscape** (London, 1979) page 179.
- 25: CBS: D/P Addl 1A.
- 26: M Beresford and J G Hurst, **Deserted Medieval Villages** (1971).
- 27: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) record ID 0343, taken from frames 219 and 221. It is understood that a Lidar survey may have been prepared in connection with a regional study for HS2. Examination of the results of this survey would certainly be informative.
- 28: Bucks HER record ID 0335.
- 29: Ordnance Survey one-inch to a mile series (1833) XLVI NW.



- 30: C Lowdnes, 'Doddershall in the parish of Quainton', in **Records of Buckinghamshire**, volume 3 part 4 (1868) pages 130-5.
- 31: Buckinghamshire County Museum, Aylesbury, accession number 1905.59.
- 32: Christopher Prideaux, personal communication to Mike Farley.
- 33: Many of these papers, including rentals, surveys and accounts from the 17th century to the 19th, are transcribed and printed in G Rodwell, 'Doddershall and Shipton Lee' (unpublished book in CBS, 1999) and an Addendum (unpublished book in CBS, 2003). These books also contain copies of several maps of the estate, some with corrections by the author.
- 34: Rodwell, 'Doddershall and Shipton Lee', page15.
- 35: Rodwell, 'Doddershall and Shipton Lee', page 14.
- 36: Rodwell, 'Doddershall and Shipton Lee', page 3.
- 37: CBS D/P Addl 1C, quoted in Rodwell, 'Doddershall and Shipton Lee, page 28.
- 38: S Lewis, **A Topographical Dictionary of England**, volume 3 (1840) page 536; N Pevsner and E Williamson, **The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire** (Harmondsworth 1994).
- 39: George Lipscomb, **The History and Antiquities of the County of Buckingham** (London 1847) volume 1, facing page 51. The original of this map has not been checked.
- 40: G Eland, **Papers from an Iron Chest** (Aylesbury 1937) page 15.
- 41: **VCH Buckinghamshire** volume 4, page 93.
- 42: Plan of the manor of Doddershall 1859, reproduced in Rodwell, 'Addendum', page 49F.
- 43: Rodwell, 'Doddershall and Shipton Lee', pages 2-3.
- 44: **Buckinghamshire Estate Maps** (Buckinghamshire Record Society 1964).
- 45: **Buckinghamshire in the 1760s and 1820s: The County Maps of Jefferys and Bryant** (Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, Aylesbury 2000) pages 3 and 13.
- 46: **VCH Buckinghamshire**, volume 1,page 175.
- 47: Ordnance Survey six-inch to the mile series (1885) sheet 22.
- 48: **Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (England): Buckinghamshire North**, (1913) page 245.
- 49: OS six-inch (1885) sheet 22.
- 50: See the historical map of the estate in Rodwell, 'Doddershall and Shipton Lee', page 17; this is reproduced with a short commentary in Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, 'Earthworks at Doddershall' (unpublished report in CBS and BAS Library, 2012) page 4.
- 51: RCHM(E), **Buckinghamshire North**, (1913) page 243; OS surveyor quoted in Bucks HER record ID 00334; BAS, 'Earthworks at Doddershall' (2012).
- 52: **VCH Buckinghamshire**, volume 4, page 93.
- 53: Pevsner and Williamson, page 280.
- 54: See for example Lipscomb (1847) volume 1, pages 390-411; J J Sheahan, **History and Topography of Buckinghamshire** (London 1862) pages 418-9; Lowdnes in **Records of Buckinghamshire** volume 3 part 4 (1868) pages 130-5; RCHM(E), **Buckinghamshire North** (1913) pages 243-5; **VCH Buckinghamshire**, volume 4, page 93), and Pevsner and Williamson (1994).
- 55: English Heritage: National Heritage List for England, entry number 1117820.
- 56: Both lines are shown on the OS six-inch map of 1900, sheet 22.
- 57: F G Cockman, **The Railways of Buckinghamshire in the 1830s: An account of those which were not built as well as those which were** (BAS, Buckinghamshire Paper number 8, Aylesbury 2006).
- 58: Sheahan, page 419.
- 59: CBS D/196/89/17 (not checked).
- 60: Lowdnes in **Records of Buckinghamshire** volume 3 part 4 (1868) pages 130-5.
- 61: Cockman, pages 99-101.
- 62: ARUP HS2 Post Consultation Route Plan and Profile Sheet 12 (Drawing number HS2-ARP-00-DR-RW-05012, issue 4.0, January 2012.
- 63: Ministerial statement at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/investing-in-rail-investing-in-jobs-and-growth> with a map showing the restored line at [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/3644/map-all-schemes.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/3644/map-all-schemes.pdf)