

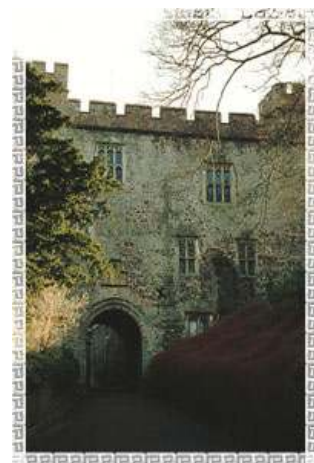
Fortified England

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Susan Carter, Editor

info@fortifiedengland.com



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Editorial

Thank you to everyone who supplied feedback to the last newsletter.

The Archaeological Field School was great fun but the nights were a bit cold – ranging from -6 to -1 degrees! My trip to the Burrup did not happen as I have to finalise a report I am writing and get some research undertaken for Fortified England. Not to worry, there will be other opportunities later.

The feature article for this edition is about Audley's Moat, Nr Stoke-on-Trent, an interesting history relating to a property held by the de Audley family and a site well worth further investigation.

This month sees the Festival of British Archaeology running from 17th July to 1st August. For further details see the News section below. Lots happening around the country so be sure to check out what is going on in your area.

I will have everyone's emails re-entered by the time the next edition is due and things will then be back to normal ☺ Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Please let me know if you have an article you would like to publish in the Newsletter, relating to a fortified place or site, and keep your feedback coming as it helps me know what you like and also what can be improved upon.

If you would like to receive the newsletter direct to your email, please sign up on the web page.

Have a great day

Sue ☺

NT
AUDLEYS MOAT-----LOCATION DETAILS

SUMMARY

Park Lane, Endon, Stoke on Trent

Mound with partially infilled moat, 11th or 12th century

In the ownership of the de Audley family

Park Lane divides site into two. Travelling up the lane from the A53, the left hand side is the NORTH side and the right hand side is the SOUTH side.

The south side is larger than the north side.

O.S. Grid Ref is SJ 9312 5366

Scheduled monument Number is 21589

**Google Earth Ref is:- 53° 04' 48.52" N and 2° 06' 14.12" W.
Altitude at highest point 146.00m ASL. Best viewed at eye altitude
400 to 500 m. this will put you within the site**

The North and the South sides are situated on land owned by two separate landowners

A COLLECTION OF INFORMATION FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES

Audley's Moat, to the vast majority who drive through it on a daily basis is no more than a bump in a field, and at first glance, it is. Now an indistinct ghost of what appears to be a glorious middle ages past, one has to look closely to see a faint depression that was once a moat, inside of which is a mound, no doubt the remains of whatever structure stood there.

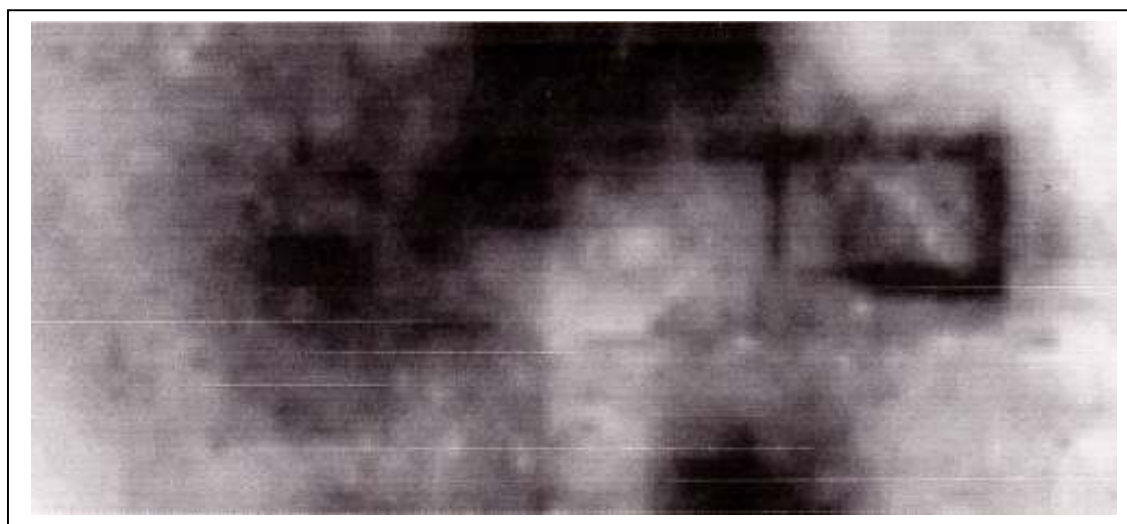
Considering the importance of the de Audley family as major landowners in Staffordshire from the 11th century onwards, there is very little known about this site. It is though a protected one, Scheduled Monument 21589 and English Heritage are fully aware of its existence.

Audley's Moat is situated just off the A53 Stoke to Leek road and can be seen on Google Earth at map reference shown above. Heading towards Leek from Stoke on Trent on the A53 turn right, on reaching Endon, into Park Lane. Fifty metres after turning you will find yourself actually inside the moated area. Park Lane runs through the site, although the mound is more distinct on the right hand side than it is on the left.

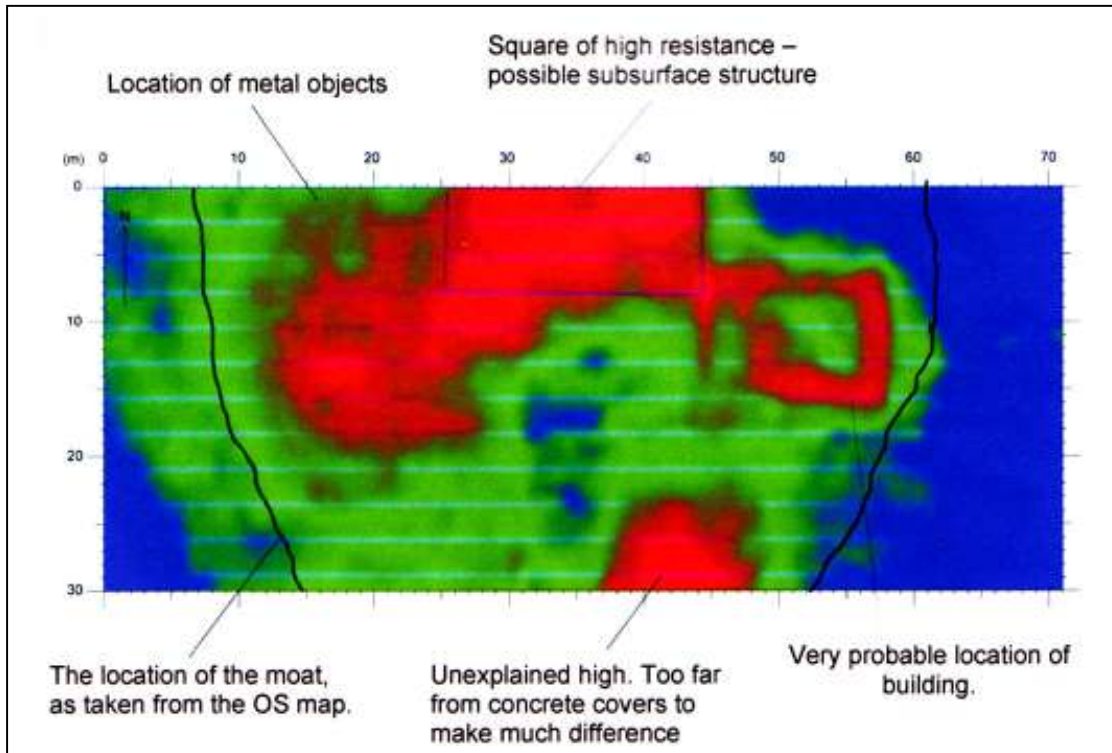


Over the years various attempts at trying to solve the riddle of this mound have revealed very little. Four flint flakes were discovered many years ago, which were deposited in the City Museum, but they are not there now. Were this substantiated then the site would have a prehistoric beginning. As it is, we must satisfy ourselves that it had a Norman beginning.

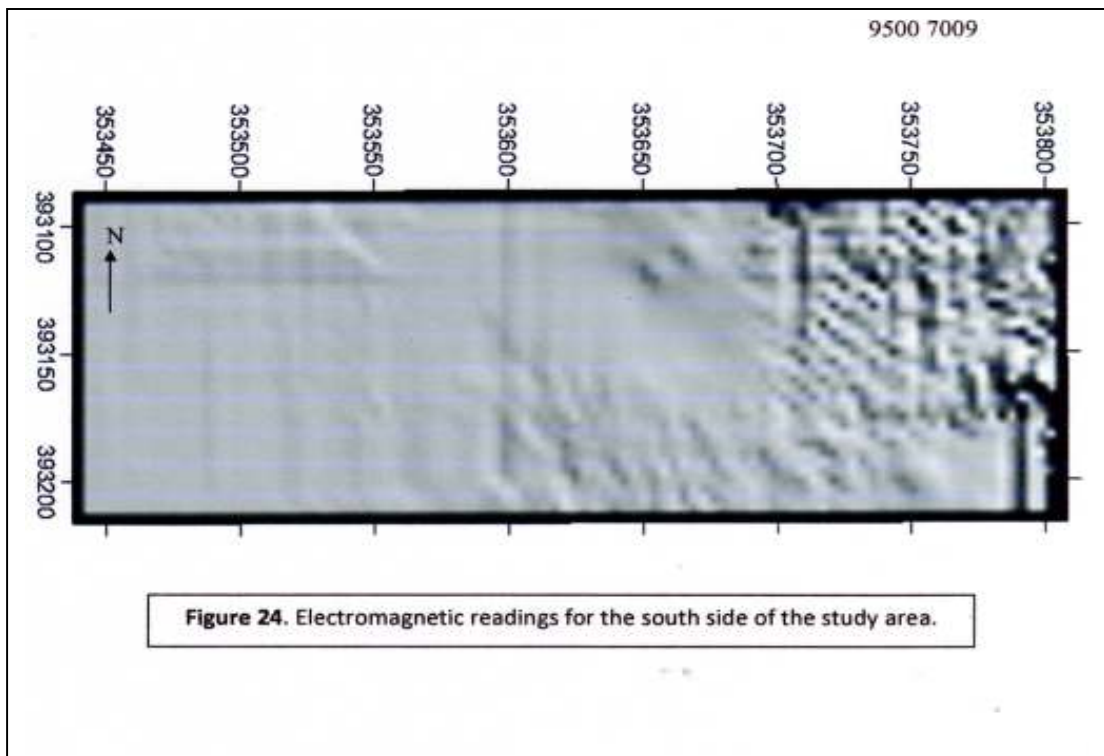
Several years ago a resistance survey, a copy of which is shown below, that clearly shows features, which warrant further investigation. Park lane is the light strip coming up from the bottom of the picture and the square shadow is on the right, i.e. South of Park Lane.



Reproduced with kind permission 2010.
(Owner requested to remain anonymous)



Reproduced with kind permission from Keele University 2010



Reproduced with kind permission from Keele University 2010

It can be seen that the coloured survey mimics the early resistivity survey quite closely and the figure 24 shows considerable “noise” in the same area.

Numerous attempts have been made to generate a “Time Team” interest but so far all have failed. This is a very important site. It may not make good TV but it is very important to Endon and some of its residents.

First references are of a family by the name of de Audley resident in the Endon area in the 12th century, and it can be easy to attribute this family to this site. At this time there was little else in Endon and no other known site around the area that could challenge the assumption that the De Audleys didn't live here. However no firm evidence exists to confirm this association. There is more information available about the Audley family, than there is about where they lived, as they were major landowners in North Staffordshire. In fact there is a village called Audley on the outskirts of the city where there is a Motte and Bailey known to have been the home of the family.

Sitting in the middle of the mound on a nice summer day, and looking around one has to wonder why this site was chosen as the local seat. It lies in the bottom of a valley, on a watercourse, which no doubt fed the moat as well as the residents, however the area is prone to frequent flooding which takes far longer to recede than to surprise. In Norman times the area was a wooded park of mainly oak and it makes one wonder, it's a very difficult site to defend. Your enemy would be on you before you would realise.

Before going into more detail, it's fair to say that this site, despite its location, ranked with the best in terms of the occupants importance. There are connections with rulers of the country and the De Audleys appear to have been at “court” frequently. There is also some reference to “two Knights, or shortly to become so”, and that one or both of these knights went off to fight in one of the Crusades. Not bad for a tiny little village sat in what several sources refer to as being a wasteland. The very first mention of Audleys appears as being Lord of the Manor in 1160.

The following are extracts from various sources and reassembled in chronological order. Thanks are offered to the following sources for permission to reproduce them:-

The “Old Road to Endon” by Robert Speake 1974.

The History online website. 2010

Miss Thelma Lancaster. 2010

Keele University Dr J Pringle 2009.

English Heritage 2010.

NMP Report 2010.

Schedule of Monuments entry 2009.

So from 1160 no further mention of the de Audleys appears until 1227, when an entry in the Harleian Collection refers to it as the Manorial Seat between Endon and Park Lane (Where the site is now).

Also in the year 1227 there was a disagreement between Henry De Audley and Hervey Bagot of Stafford. This resulted in a duel, but as they were both under the protection of the monarch at the time they had to have their “freemen” fight the duel for them. Both of the freemen were archers. The outcome is not clear.

In 1246 Endon was held by Henry de Audley and in 1252 his son James was an under tenant. Also in this year it is recorded that “The Bishop” visited Henry de Audley at Endon (History on line, Leek and Endon).

In 1272 Endon manor is listed that “pannage” should be paid to the Lord of the Manor for the feeding of the beasts in the forest. Substantial evidence that the area was once thickly wooded and that nobility attended for the hunts. In both 1273 and 1276 there were inquests into the estates of the De Audleys, listing Messuage, garden and the olde park. Is this an indication that the estate was on the decline?

In 1278 William De Audley sued his brother Henry's wife, Lucy, for waste and destruction. She had apparently been cutting down oak trees and razing buildings. Lucy did not attend the hearing. What buildings, is not referred to but does indicate that there was more to this estate than what can be seen today.

To indicate that there was an element of conservation for wildlife in these early times, it is recorded that several people broke into the estate and stole an eyrie of Hawks. Whether this was strictly for conservation, or, the preservation of the sport of hawking is irrelevant. The result is the same and it stresses the importance of the breed.

In this area there were many "heys", for the corralling of beasts. This was to ensure that there was meat in the winter without having to hunt for it; beast management that there was always a supply should the nobility call for a hunting trip. In 1288 the Manor was listed as having 300 to 400 acres of deer park. A not insubstantial size.

Referring back to the accusation that Lucy De Audley was carrying out waste and destruction it could of course be destruction of these "heys. Today within the area of the site and along Park Lane we have Reynolds Hey, HitchHey and Manor Hey.

In 1293 in a land dispute, Nicholas de Audithliegh, claimed free warren on the grounds that the lands had been owned by his ancestors since time out of memory.

It can be assumed that the different spelling is not of any consequence. Also in 1293 Edwards 1st brother Edmond had gallows in both "Leyk" and Endon. This puts Endon on an equal footing with Leek, which today is much larger than Endon, and to have its own gallows indicates a relatively important place.

As gallows were frequently erected at the highest point in the locale, such that travellers could see from a distance that they were approaching a "no nonsense" place, then following this theory the gallows should have been at the end of "cats edge" which is at the very top of Park Lane.

In 1303 Lucy now with a new husband, William of Ryther, was again sued, this time by Thomas De Audley, again for waste and destruction, however William was away in Scotland on Kings business and so carried a letter of protection for his well being, preventing him from being held accountable.

Since 1303 William either died or was killed in Scotland, because in 1312 Lucy is again widowed. This did not however prevent her from carrying out further acts of waste and destruction and this time claimed that she had every right as she held everything in dower with her Father since 1297.

In 1307 Nicholas De Audley inherited one third of the park at Enedon (Note spelling) called the Olde Park, one third of a watermill and two serfs. We should be grateful that two serfs were not divided into thirds!

1350 see's Mathew of Cheleton (Cheddleton) in the manor court with James DeAudilege over some provision concerning two archers and two hobelars. Why, is not known (Hobelars were skirmishers from Ireland that rode a particular breed of light and agile horse called Hobbies).

The reader may note that on the Google map, Park Lane makes a definite "S" shaped detour as it passes through the site. As the lane is very much younger than the site it's likely that a path was established after the demise of the Manor that avoided some obstacles in the site, be it the remains of buildings or piles of debris left by a now derelict Manor. This could have been the shortest route through the site, to the early travellers.

I hope this article has generated some interest for the reader and displayed to all that this site is well worthy of further investigation.

My thanks to all those people that I have pestered for information.

Bob Clarke
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info@fortifiedengland.com
<http://www.fortifiedengland.com>

Susan Carter, Editor

M – 0403 022 281