

**EH9 9199**

**LOCATION: BURES ST MARY, SUFFOLK**

**Field to south of the village of Bures, and to north and northwest of Nether Hall. Sited in gentle meander of the River Stour which forms south west, south and south south eastern boundary. Centred on NGR TL909336**

**Background**

The 1886 County Series (Suffolk) OS map and current editions of OS maps show this field (outlined in green on Figs 1 & 2 ) with the Nayland Road forming its north eastern boundary, and the River Stour forming its south west, south and south eastern boundary. The longer boundaries running NE – SW are straight and join the river approximately at right angles. The 20m contour line passes through the site and the land to the north east rises quite steeply to 56m (site of St Stephen's Chapel). The Cambridge Brook joins the Stour opposite the southwestern corner of the field.

The present land use is permanent pasture, and amenity land, and it is crossed by a public footpath. The cropmarks are not visible at ground level.

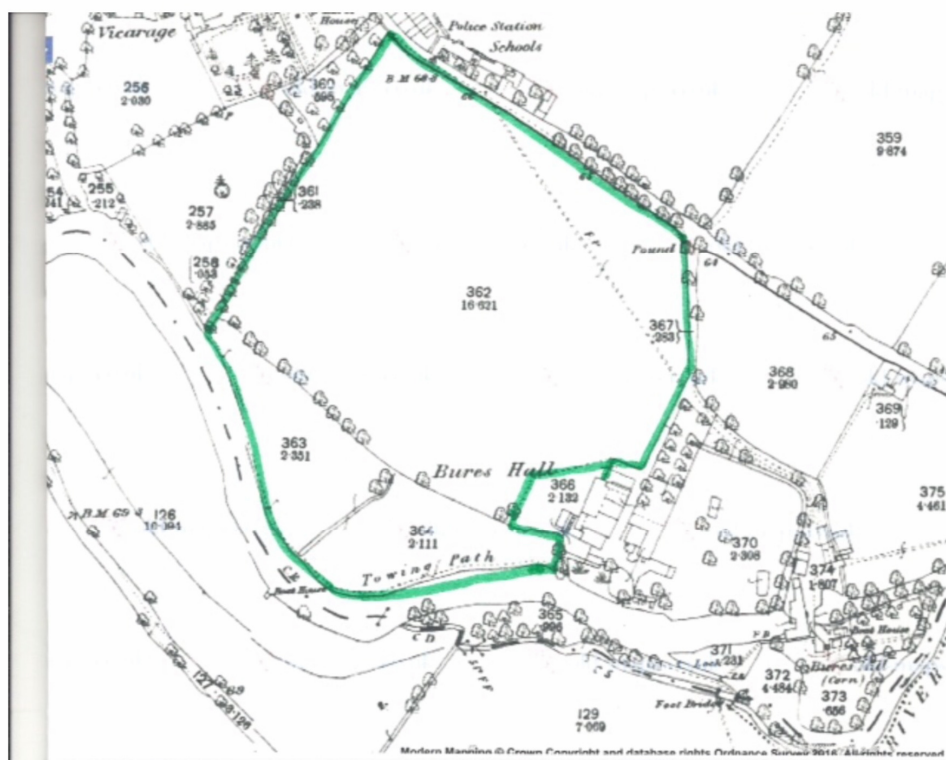


Figure 1: Ordnance Survey County Series (Suffolk) 1886



Figure 2: Ordnance Survey Explorer 196

### Previous Surveys

As a result of aerial photos taken between 1960 and 1980, and listed in the Bibliography section of these reports, the cropmarks in this field have been recorded as SMR 9199 by Essex County Council, ([unlockingessex.essecc.gov.uk](http://unlockingessex.essecc.gov.uk)); on the Suffolk Historical Environment Record; and as Monument 384757 by Historic England ([pastscape.org.uk](http://pastscape.org.uk)) and as shown in Fig 3 by the National Mapping Programme (NMP) (Ingle, Strachan, Tyler & Saunders 1993 - 2012).

No finds or excavations are recorded.

### Analysis of the cropmarks

As shown in Fig 3: One linear mark runs NE-SW roughly bisects the field and joins river at right angles and runs almost parallel to NW boundary of field and other boundary features still in existence on the ground. Two further short straight marks cross at right angles, these together with the NW – SE aligned field boundaries that still exist could be the boundary features of a much earlier, possibly prehistoric, rectilinear field system.

A ring ditch of between 25 metres and 30 metres in diameter ('a' on Fig3) is situated in the south eastern end of the field approximately 25 metres north of the present day river channel. The lower section of the Cambridge Brook which enters the Stour from the south appears to have been straightened and the contours on the OS maps suggest it once may have joined the river directly opposite the monument. It is quite likely that the land around the southern half of the feature was marshy and presuming the centre of the ditch took the form of a barrow would have stood out visibly above its surroundings.

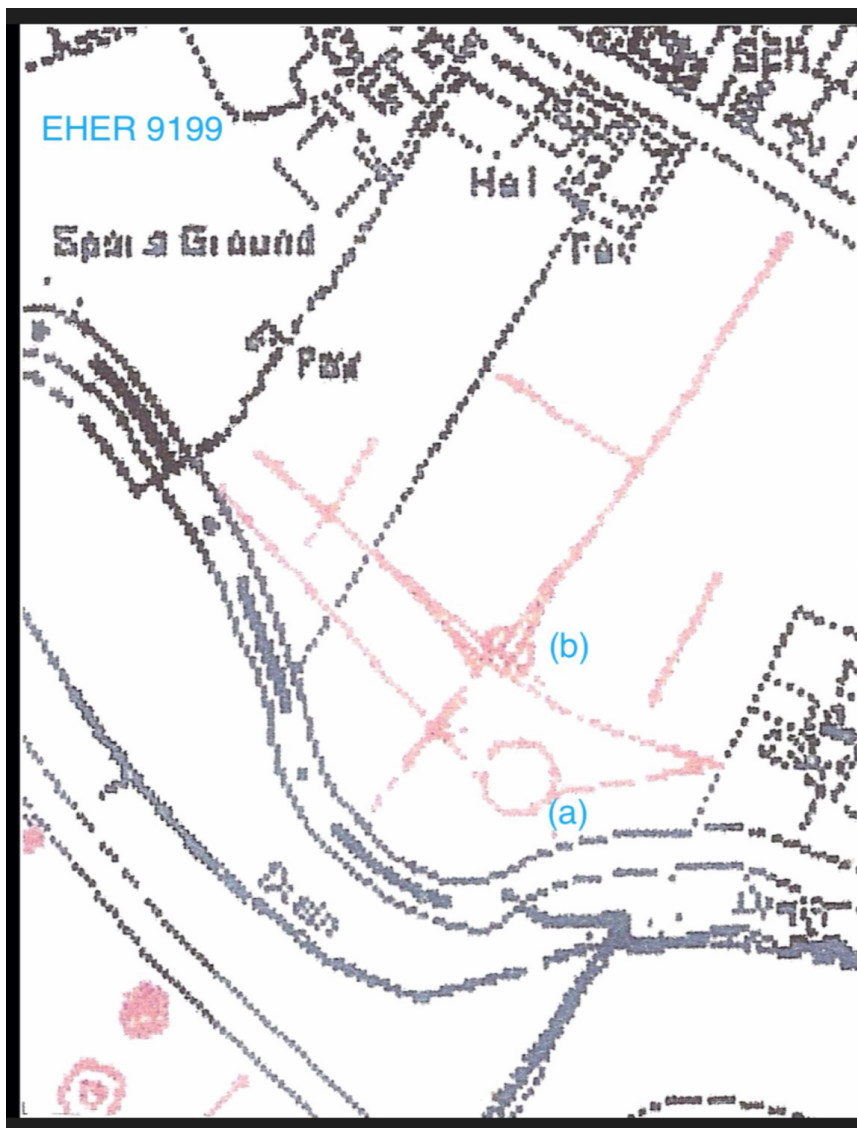


Figure 3 Copyright Historic England and Essex County Council

Two straight linear marks join the southern section of the ring ditch and appear to respect its position. The western most line joins the river about 130 metres to its west. They possibly could be ditches of a similar date, or came into existence when the feature was prominent, or at least visible, in the landscape. To the north of these marks another linear mark (or marks) running NW-SE crosses the field on a similar alignment but not parallel to them. The distance between them varies from about 20 metres to 40 metres to the west of the ring ditch, and they meet one another about 50 metres to its east. These linear features do not obviously appear to be part of a field system although they are crossed or joined by other linear marks at right angles.



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About 40 metres to the north west of the ring ditch several linear marks meet at and cross a smaller ring shaped mark ('b' on Fig3) described as a 'D' shaped enclosure' (*EHER*) or a 'causewayed ring ditch' (*SHER*) which is situated about 100 metres equidistant to the curve in the present day river channel.

### **Current Status**

At the time of writing (January 2017) the southern section is permanent pasture, although ungrazed, and much of the northern section is a sports field.