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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY  
OF THE LINE OF THE M1 MOTORWAY FROM  
JUNCTION 21A TO 23A

by

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1. SUMMARY OF FINDS IN EACH FIELD

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The ASH Partnership, acting as environmental consultants for the Motorway Widening Unit of the Department of Transport, have commissioned the Archaeological Survey Team of Leicestershire County Council Museums, Arts and Records Service to assess the archaeological implications of possible motorway widening schemes in Leicestershire. The first phase, concerning Junction 21 to Junction 21A was completed in early 1992. The second phase from Junction 21A to Junction 23A is the subject of this report.

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1.2 The survey was undertaken in early 1993 by Richard Knox, Peter Liddle and Samantha Middleton.

1.3 The Team would like to thank all the many tenants, landowners and agents whose co-operation made the project possible and also Mr Bill Wood of ASH Partnership for his patience and help.

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## 2. AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

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2.1 The aim of this report is to synthesise all forms of archaeological data for the fields adjoining the M1 Motorway so that proper account can be taken of archaeology in the framing and determination of the planning permission for motorway widening.

2.2 The following methods have been applied to this area:

- a) Fieldwalking of a 60m corridor adjacent to the motorway. This was achieved by walking 60m-long traverses at right-angles to the motorway every 20m. This gives results directly comparable to the local standard non-intensive fieldwalking method, known as 'traverse and stint fieldwalking'. This should allow the identification of most archaeological sites. All material seen within a 1m strip each side of the traverse was collected, giving an approximate 10% sample. Where more information on the exact layout of the site was needed to assess possible impact, a 15m x 15m gridded walk was undertaken which aimed to collect an approximate 40% sample (for full description of techniques see Liddle, 1985).
  - b) Search of existing archaeological information, especially the Leicestershire Sites and Monuments Record and the National Archaeological Record.
  - c) Scanning of vertical and oblique aerial photographs for evidence of archaeological sites and past land use.
  - d) Inspection of grassland for earthworks.
  - e) Scanning of printed sources for historical references and early maps.
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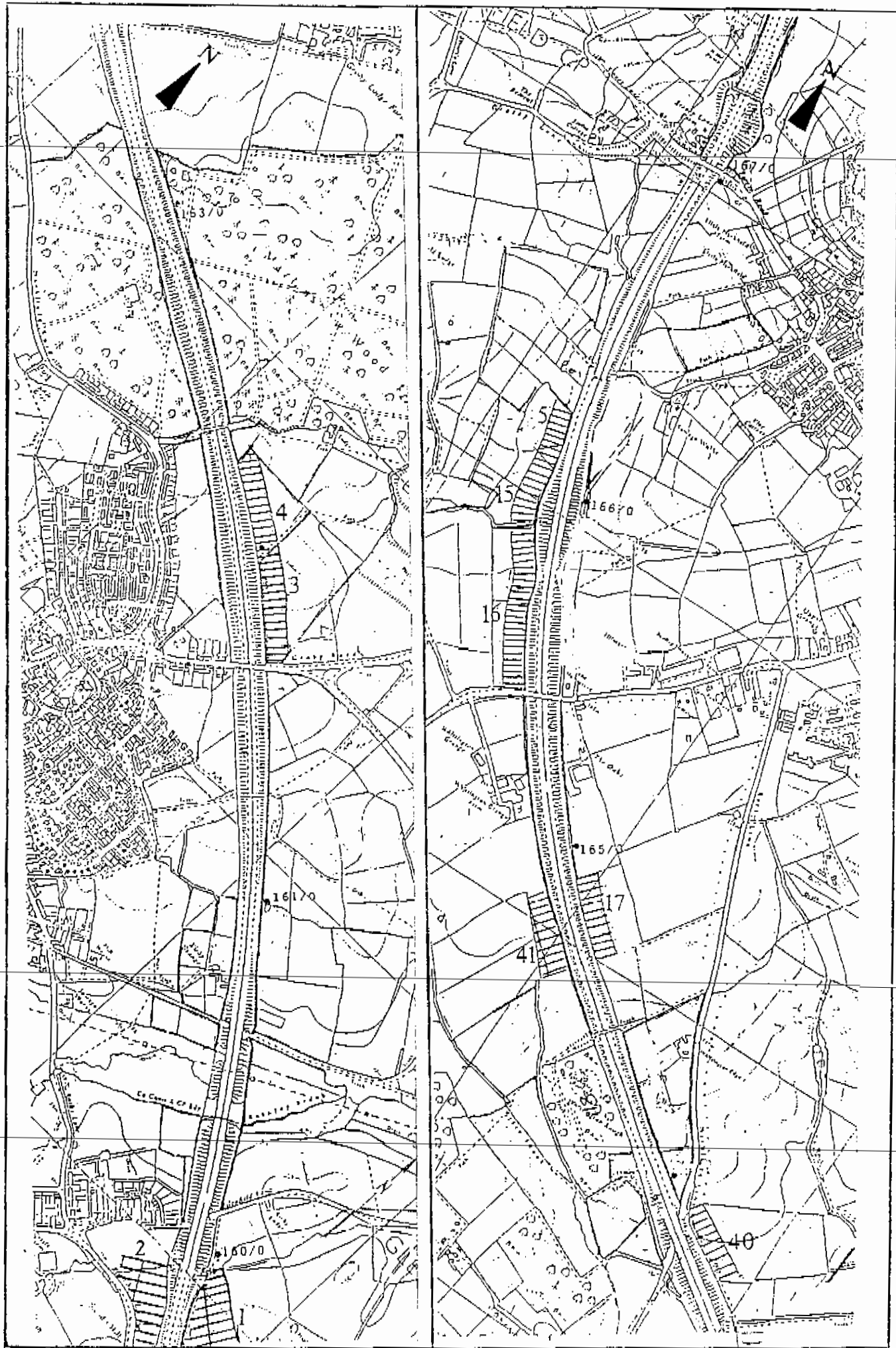


FIG.1 FIELDS WALKED WITH FIELD NUMBERS AND GRIDS (SOUTHERN)

Scale 1:14000

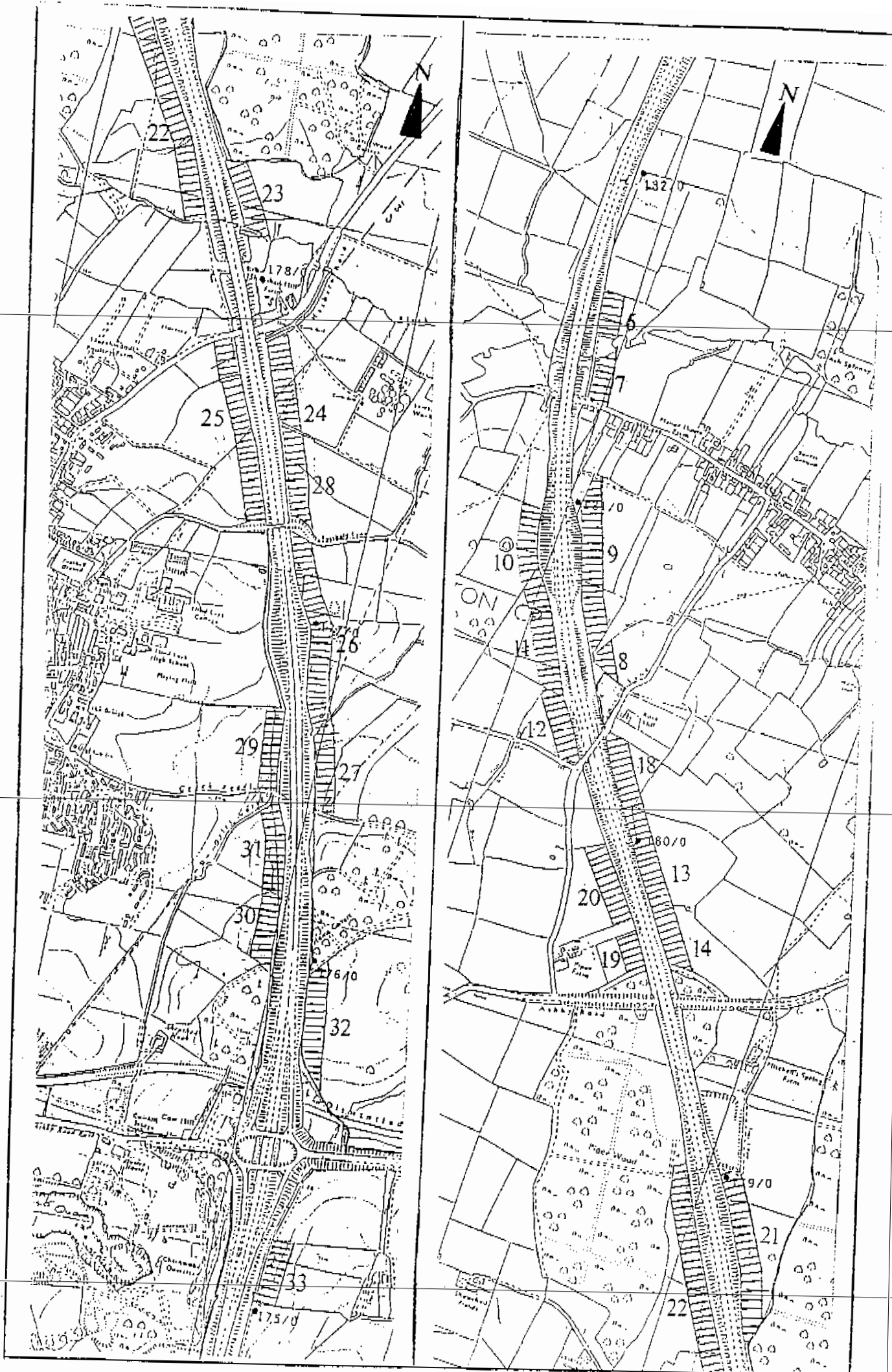


FIG.3 FIELDS WALKED WITH FIELD NUMBERS AND GRIDS (NORTHERN)

Scale 1:14000

3. RESULTS

3.1 General

This project involved the archaeological examination of a corridor on each side of some 22kms of the M1 Motorway running from Junction 21A at Kirby Muxloe to Junction 23A at Long Whatton. All ploughed fields - 41 in number - were walked. The Government 'set-aside' scheme reduced the available number by about 10 from previous years. Vertical aerial photographs (kindly supplied by Sir Alexander Gibb & Partners) were carefully scanned for earthwork remains in grass fields. Despite this, nearly 100 grass fields were also visited (many in transit between ploughed fields) but no sites not already seen from the air were located.

3.2 Arable fields were numbered in the order that they were walked (Figs. 1-3) and a summary of finds is given as Table 1.

3.3 Arable fields were not evenly distributed along the line of the motorway. There were 11 examined from Junction 21A to Junction 22, only 6 between Junction 22 and Junction 23, and 24 from Junction 23 to Junction 23A. Results will be presented for each stretch with sites numbered south to north.

3.4 Junction 21A to 22 (Fig.4)

Site 1 Kirby Muxloe (SK529049)

At the new Junction 21A a relatively large scatter of Roman and Iron Age pottery was located including kiln bars. Excavation of a sample of this site was funded by the Department of Transport in advance of construction of the A46 Leicester Western Bypass. Iron Age houses, Prehistoric burials and Roman features were located and excavated (site ref. 50SW.BR and 50NW.CQ).

Site 2 Ratby (SK522055)

Small group of Roman pottery (c.10 sherds) reported by M J Ball south of Kirby Grange in area now pasture. Possibly edge of site closer to M1 (site ref. 50SW.BL).

Site 3 Ratby (SK521057)

The projected line of a Roman road crosses the motorway immediately north of Kirby Grange. The exact line is not known but a possible metalled track associated with Roman pottery is reported rather south of the expected line (site ref. 50NW.CE).

Site 4 Ratby (SK517060)

Earthworks including a bank running NNE to SSW were noted in fieldwork and probably represent a Medieval trackway (site ref. 50NW.CR).

Site 5 Ratby (SK507070)

Sub-circular earthwork enclosure noted under tree cover north of the M1 in Martinshaw Wood. Findspot of Prehistoric pebble-hammer close by (site refs. 50NW.AQ & BM).

Site 6 Ratby (SK486082)

Whittington Grange is a modern farm probably on the site of a Medieval settlement. There is good documentary evidence but little archaeology beyond a ditch in a paddock north of the farm noted in fieldwork (site ref. 40NE.X).



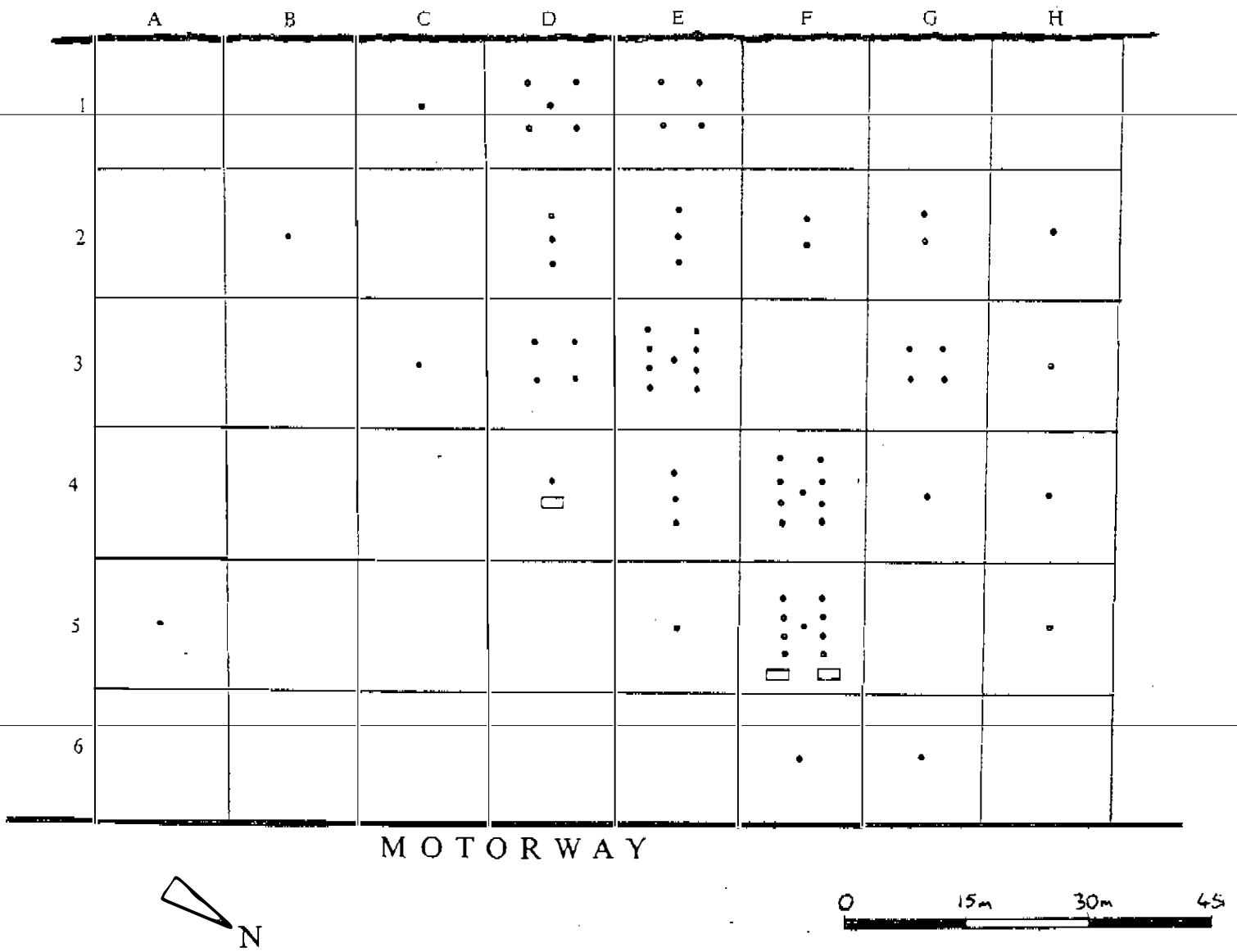


FIG.5 SITE 7: ROMAN OCCUPATION AND KILN SITE IN FIELD 16

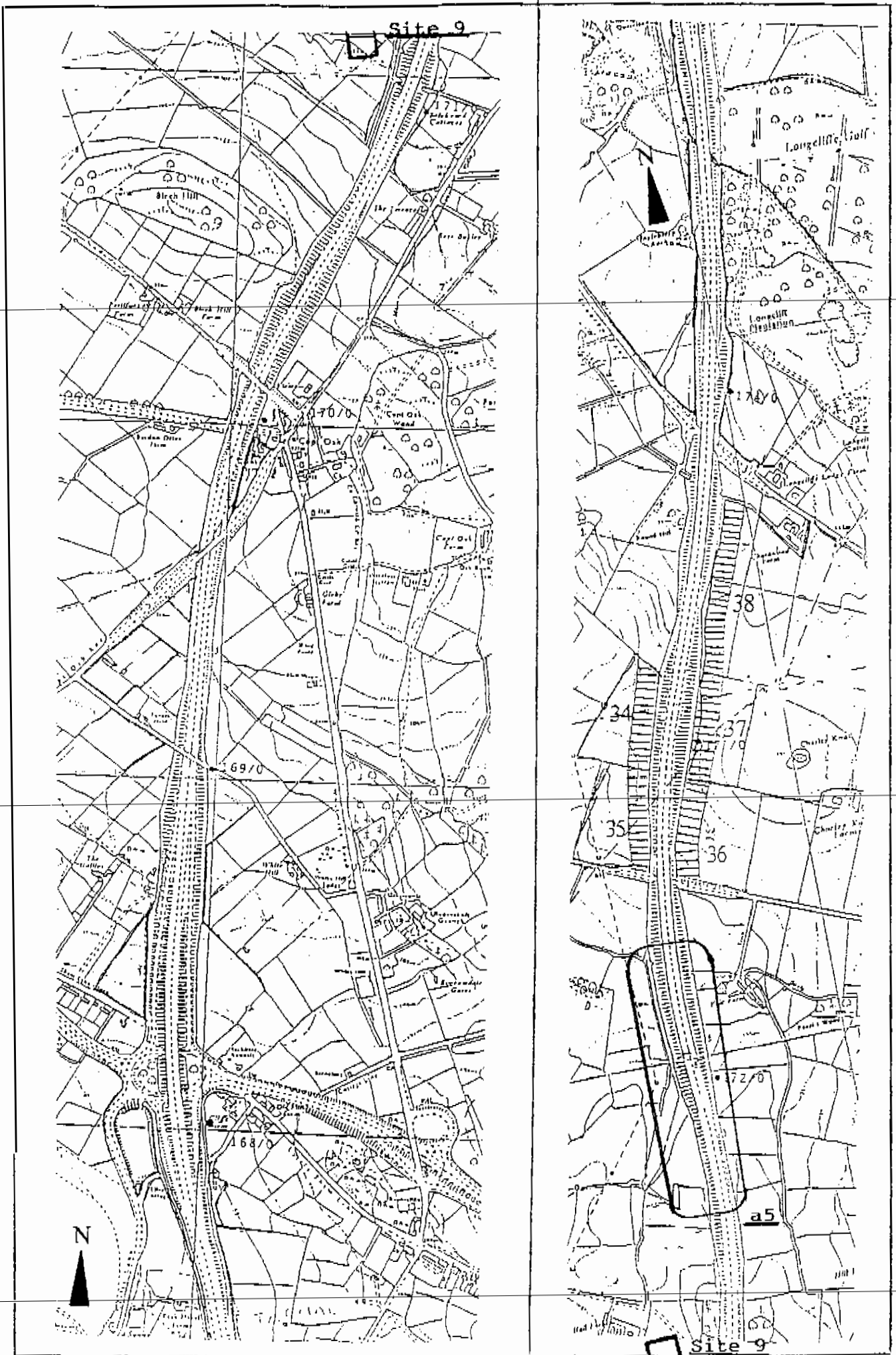


FIG.6 SITES OF KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND AREAS OF ALLUVIAL/COLLUVIAL POTENTIAL (CENTRAL)

Scale 1:14000

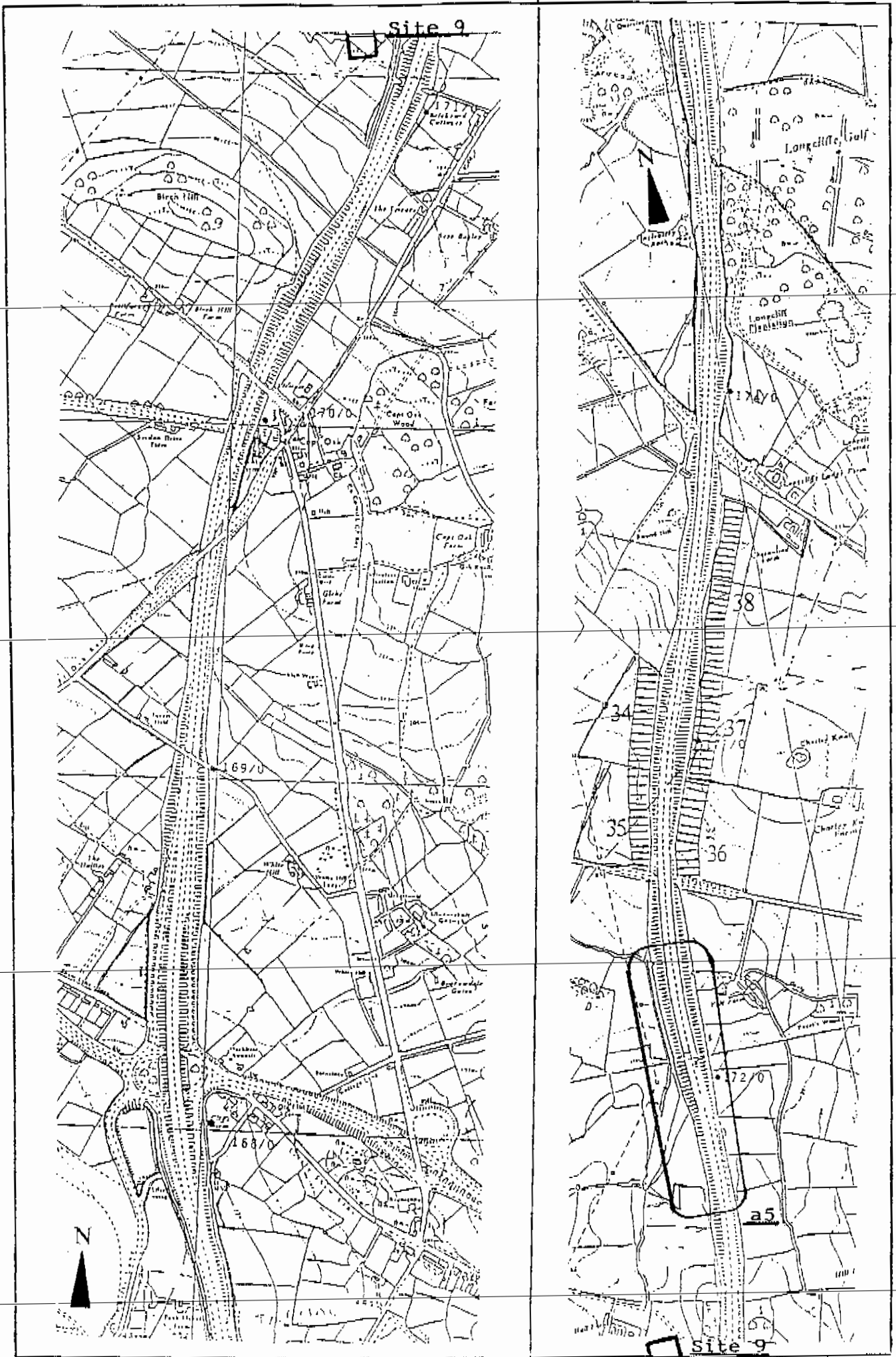


FIG.6 SITES OF KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND AREAS OF ALLUVIAL/COLLUVIAL POTENTIAL (CENTRAL)

Scale 1:14000

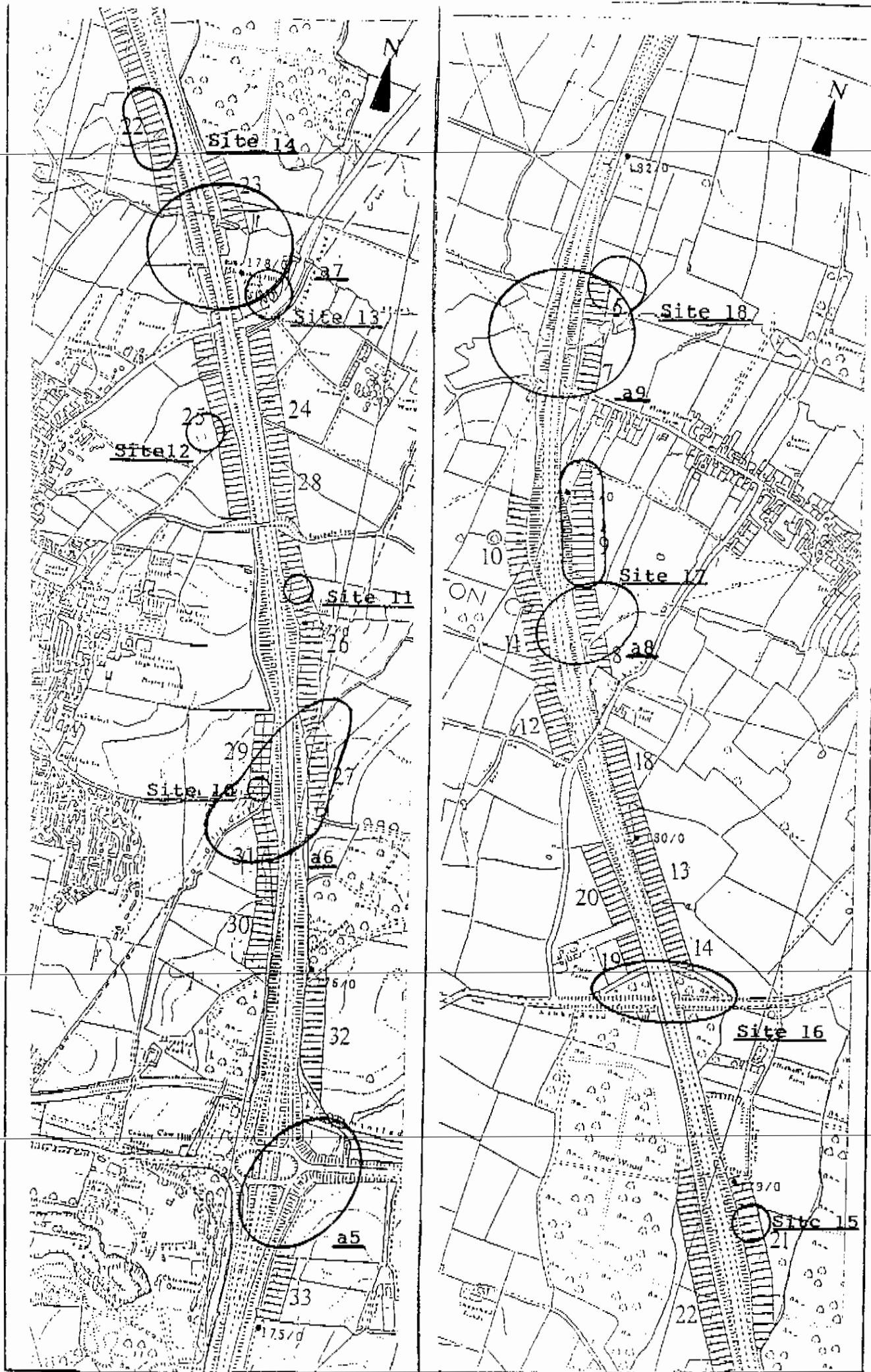


FIG.7 SITES OF KNOWN ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL AND AREAS OF ALLUVIAL/COLLUVIAL POTENTIAL (NORTHERN)

Scale 1:14000

Site 7 Markfield (SK483085)

Roman kiln and occupation site found in fieldwalking in Field 16. Also small, but possibly significant, number of flint tools (site ref. 40NE.AF). Intensive gridded fieldwalking has been undertaken here (Fig.5).

Site 8 Markfield (SK481090)

A single sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery from fieldwork in Field 15. May be significant (site ref. 40NE.AG).

3.5 Junction 22-23 (Fig.6)

Site 9 Charley (SK482140)

A rectangular platform c.100m from motorway was noted on vertical aerial photographs and confirmed on ground. Date uncertain (site ref. 41SE.AF).

3.6 Junction 23-23A (Fig. 7)

Site 10 Shepshed (SK487192)

A single sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery from fieldwork in Field 29. May be significant (site ref.41NE.AE).

Site 11 Shepshed (SK489198)

A single sherd of probable Iron Age pottery from Field 26. May be significant (site ref.41NE.AF).

Site 12 Shepshed (SK484202)

A small group of Roman pottery in Field 25 centred immediately beyond corridor of search. Not likely to be impacted (site ref.42SE.AJ).

Site 13 Shepshed (SK484206)

Shepshed Mill Farm is on the site of Shepshed water mill. Earthworks to west of farm may be leets (site ref.42SE.J) (see Estate Map Fig.8).

Site 14 Long Whatton (SK482211)

Iron Age pottery scatter found in fieldwalking in Field 22. Good group of Middle Iron Age pottery (site ref.42SE.AK). Intensive gridded fieldwork has been undertaken here with poor results because of dry condition of the field.

Site 15 Long Whatton (SK481216)

Scatter of Roman pottery, in Field 21, clearly an occupation site, and one fragment of Prehistoric pottery. This was originally noted when the motorway was constructed. There is a possibility of a north-south Roman road running through this site (site ref.42SE.AD).

Site 16 Long Whatton (SK475222)

A bank runs around Piper Wood and is probably a Medieval wood bank (site ref.42SE.AL).

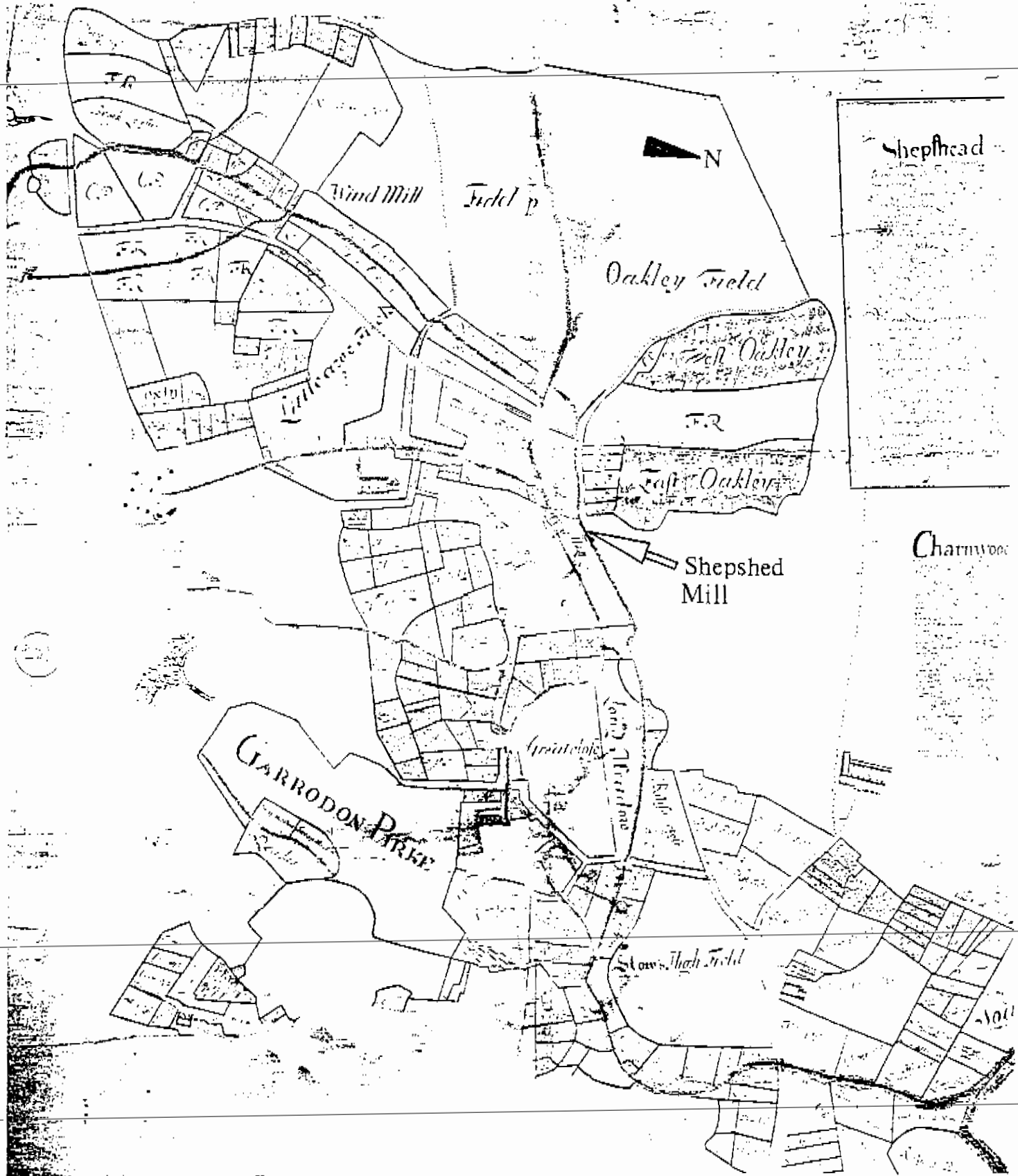


FIG.8 MANOR OF SHEPSHED AND GARENDON c.1700 SHOWING SHEPSHED MILL

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Site 17 Long Whatton (SK471232)

Scatter of Roman and ?Iron Age pottery fragments found on a ridge during fieldwalking in Field 9. May represent an occupation site but all the sherds are small and abraded. Also significant number of flint tools (site ref.42SE.AM).

Site 18 Long Whatton (SK469240)

One Iron Age and 3 Roman sherds produced in fieldwalking of Field 6. Kegworth Fieldwork Group report Roman material from fields to north during fieldwalking c.3 years ago (site ref.42SE.AN).

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF FINDS IN EACH FIELD

Field	Early Tools	Flint Waste	Later Tools	Flint Waste	Ba Pot	Ia Pot	Roman Pot   KB	AS Pot	EM Pot	LM Pot	Post M Pot	Slag	Clay Pipe
1			2	7		2	26		11	5	7		
2				3			2		4	1	11		
3			4	4					7	4	63	1	1
4				1					1	1	15		
5			1							3	18		
6			2	4		1	3		2	4	1		3
7									3		6	1	
8							1			1			
9	1		8	8		4?	10		10	16	75	7	1
10				5					3	6	44	2	2
11				7			1		2	5	86	2	4
12				4			1		2	3	33		5
13			2	1					2	10	31		1
14									2		10		
15			1	1				1	6	8	37		4
16		2	3	3			47	5	2	21	43	3	1
17				1					1		11		
18							1		3	1	45		
19			1								7		1
20										3	16		
21					1		23				34		
22		1	1	7		10	7		5	4	70	10	6
23										5	29		
24				1						3	13	3	
25				1			1+9		2	4	67		4
26			2	1		1?			1	3	82	2	3
27		1		2				1?		5	27	1	
28									4	8	42		2
29				1				1	1	1	13		1
30				1			1				5	1	1
31				1						1	7		1
32											2		
33											1	1	1
34		1		1							2		
35		1		2							2		
36			1	1			1				4		
37				3							4		
38		1	1	4							10		
39			1								28		
40											2		
41				2							1		

Key to Abbreviations:

- Ba        Bronze Age
- Ia        Iron Age
- KB       Kiln Bar
- AS       Anglo Saxon
- EM       Early Medieval
- LM       Late Medieval
- Post M   Post Medieval



4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 All arable land adjacent to the M1 between Junctions 21A and 23A has been fieldwalked. Aerial photographs and existing records have been checked. This has led to the identification of 18 sites of archaeological potential (see Figs.4, 6 & 7).

4.2 IT IS RECOMMENDED that action to mitigate damage on each of these sites should be taken. In all cases evaluation of sites should be on a staged basis. The stages, as appropriate, should be:

Before Technical Appraisal Report and Preferred Route Selection

1. detailed gridded fieldwalking
2. geophysical survey

After Route Selection

3. trial excavations for field evaluation
4. site investigation and recording

4.3 RECOMMENDED ACTION for each site is summarised below:

<u>Site</u>	<u>Type of Site</u>	<u>Action Recommended</u>
1	Iron Age & Roman occupation	Evaluation of any additional areas to be disturbed.
2	Roman pottery scatter	Evaluation before any disturbance.
3	Roman road	Evaluation before any disturbance.
4	Medieval track	Evaluation before any disturbance.
5	Undated enclosure	Evaluation before any disturbance.
6	Medieval settlement?	Evaluation before any disturbance.
7	Roman kiln	Evaluation before any disturbance.
8	Anglo-Saxon pottery	Further fieldwalking needed. Only if positive result would evaluation be required.
9	Undated earthwork	Site is c.100m clear of line. No action needed.
10	Anglo-Saxon pottery	Further fieldwalking needed. Only if positive result would evaluation be required.
11	Iron Age (?) pottery	Further fieldwalking needed. Only if positive result would evaluation be required.
12	Roman pottery scatter	Site c.60m clear of line. No action needed.
13	Medieval mill	Evaluation before any disturbance.
14	Iron Age occupation site	Evaluation before any disturbance.
15	Roman occupation site	Evaluation before any disturbance.
16	Medieval wood bank	Evaluation before any disturbance.
17	Iron Age? and Roman pottery	Further fieldwalking needed. Only if positive result would evaluation be required.
18	Iron Age & Roman pottery	Further fieldwalking needed. Only if positive result would evaluation be required.

4.4 In addition to the conventional sites that have been identified, recent work has shown that alluviation (deposition of silt by streams and rivers) and colluviation (plough-wash) can mask significant archaeological sites. At Ratcliffe-on-the-Wreake (Beamish 1992a), Croft (Cooper, 1992), Wanlip (Beamish, 1992b) and Kirby Muxloe vital evidence was found in this way. At Ratcliffe and Wanlip colluvium, probably produced by Bronze Age or Iron Age deforestation and ploughing, sealed and preserved earlier features. At Croft, flint material was associated with old river channels which yielded good preservation of organic materials and environmental evidence. At Kirby Muxloe old river channels were similarly associated with animal bone, a flint knife and good environmental preservation.

4.5 The M1 crosses nine streams between Junctions 21A and 23A; each is likely to have potential for colluvial areas on the slopes and alluvial areas in the valley bottoms. These are marked on Figs. 4, 6 & 7 as follows:

A1	ROTHLEY BROOK (S. TRIBUTARY)	: SK527050
A2	ROTHLEY BROOK (N. TRIBUTARY)	: SK524053
A3	ROTHLEY BROOK (HEADWATER)	: SK483090
A4	BLACK BROOK (SOUTH)	: SK484151
A5	SHORTCLIFFE BROOK	: SK492181
A6	OXLEY GUTTER	: SK489193
A7	BLACK BROOK (NORTH)	: SK484206
A8	LONG WHATTON BROOK (SOUTH)	: SK471230
A9	WESTMEADOW & DISEWORTH BROOKS	: SK486238

4.6 The potential of these areas will need to be assessed. IT IS RECOMMENDED that engineering borehole data should be provided to give information on the character and depth of deposits and that trial excavation will also be required to assess the archaeological potential of areas likely to be disturbed.

4.7 Only approximately 25% of the area adjacent to the motorway between Junctions 21A and 23A were available for study by fieldwalking. The other 75% comprised 'set-aside', grass, woods and quarries. While much of this was visited, such superficial survey would only reveal a very small proportion of sites. Clearly, other techniques will be needed to deal with these other areas.

4.8 IT IS RECOMMENDED that a metal detector survey of grassland and 'set-aside' should be commissioned to give additional site information. This should be undertaken before the Technical Appraisal Report.

4.9 Archaeological observation of all engineering test pits should be commissioned in consultation with English Heritage and Leicestershire County Council Museums Archaeological Service.

4.10 IT IS RECOMMENDED that after route selection, trial trenching should be undertaken to test the archaeological potential of areas of grassland and 'set-aside'. On the recent A41 Berkhamstead and Kings Langley Bypass in Hertfordshire (McDonald, 1992), a high concentration of hitherto undetected important prehistoric sites was only revealed by such trial trenching survey of previously unexamined areas of the route.

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