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SOUTH VIEW LANE

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AN

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

# South Cockerington

LINCOLNSHIRE

REPORT BY

HILARY HEALEY



1994

## AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

SOUTH COCKERINGTON, LINCOLNSHIRE  
(Site Code CRO 94, Acc.No.116:94)

Report by Hilary Healey, NDD.,M.Phil., FSA.

### Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at short notice on a site in South View Lane, South Cockerington, on behalf of Foxhall Plant of Louth. The location is along one of the parallel roads that form the regular layout of the village.

Much of the site consisted of relatively recent soil and rubble make-up with a buried disturbed soil beneath. This layer contained a small quantity of medieval pottery of c. 10th to 14th century date, animal bones and a single Middle Saxon sherd from the 7th century AD. There were no features other than a small gully noted on the easternmost trench. The site is located at NGR TF 3797 8891.

### Introduction, topography and soils

The two villages of North and South Cockerington lie on the eastern margin of the Lincolnshire Wolds in the area known as the Marshland, 4.5km east-north-east of the small market town of Louth (Fig. 1). The canalised channel on the line of the River Lud runs east from that town on the north side of North Cockerington. The soil is classified in the Salop series, a partly fine loamy soil over clayey stagnogley (Hodge et.al., 1984). Stones, especially flints, occur in the chalky till, which is 25-30% clay, and seasonal waterlogging occurs. The landscape is comparatively level situated between 9m and 14m OD where the village centres lie, but with a gentle slope down to 3m OD at the east end of the parish.

### Historical and Archaeological Background

In other counties the 'Cocker' element in place-names refers to a winding or 'crooked' river (Ekwall, 1960, 114). This description applies equally to the lower stretches of the River Lud before canalisation, or to either of two other unnamed streams. One runs between the two villages, the other along the southern end of South Cockerington. These can be seen in the enlargement from the first edition Ordnance Survey 1 inch to 1 mile map (Fig. 2).

The area is traditionally pasture, although perhaps less so than 20-30 years ago. Both aerial photography and ground observation show very extensive earthworks under grass in both villages. Features noted include medieval moated sites and ridge and furrow. The latter, which is particularly clearly seen as crop or soil marks in aerial photographs of 1971 (County SMR collection), and the one-time close boundary ditches, noted both from photographs and on a map of 1793, have been plotted to show the area immediately round the village (Fig. 3). The parish, originally with two open fields, East Field and West Field, had evidently been enclosed early, which may explain the amount of ridge and furrow to be seen. By the time of the Enclosure Award of 1766 less than a quarter of its acreage remained unenclosed (Russell and Russell, 1983, 79). The village itself has a very regular road layout, perhaps the result of deliberate planning, but at what date it is impossible to say. The concentration of closes where former dwellings might be expected is, unusually, not centred on the church, but spread along different parts of the road system, with the ridge and furrow interspersed amongst them. Perhaps this curious arrangement dates to some period of depopulation when former house sites reverted to arable.

Both Cockeringtons are extensively referred to in Domesday Book (AD 1086) and the Lindsey Survey of AD 1115-1118 (Foster and Longley, 1924), and although there is no church mentioned this does not necessarily mean that one did not exist. The present church of St. Leonard, situated at the southern end of the village, some 250m south of the site, dates only from the early 14th century (Pevsner, 1989, 662). There are some old closes around it, but the expansion of works around the Hall itself, to the south of the church, has masked any traces of settlement between church and stream which might have been visible from the air. There are possible moats beside Hall Farm and a large water feature of very artificial appearance in the Hall grounds, as shown in the first edition Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 mile map of 1888 (Fig. 4).

There has been no archaeological investigation, either organised or casual, in the parish, and the only artifact discovery recorded is of Romano-British pottery in 1979 (SMR ref: 41380), at a site well to the east of the present village.

### The site

The development site occupies approximately half of a grass field on the north side of South View Lane, east of South View Farm, at NGR TF 3797 8891 (Fig. 4), and on the 11m OD contour. On the earliest map of the village, an estate map of 1793 this close appears to have been part of land belonging to the farm. In the adjoining close to the east a pond is shown lying alongside a the boundary between the two (Fig.5) This survives only as a low place, having been filled in since the last Ordnance Survey 1:2500 (Pathfinder) map was prepared (1966-1979). The first edition 6" to 1 mile map appears to show a wide ditch along the roadside, but the map copy available is not too distinct and the mark may represent trees or bushes rather than water (Fig. 4).

### Site work

The site, for a single bungalow, had been permanent pasture within living memory. There was no stripping of grass and topsoil and the future drive area between the road and the dwelling had already been laid with hardcore by the time of the site visit. Monitoring took place during a single day (26 July 1994) whilst foundation trenches were being dug. Excavation of the drainage trench and septic tank area was not carried out on the day in question, and in view of the information recorded in the foundation trenches it was not deemed necessary to make a return visit for the purpose of watching this work. Procedures were adhered to as laid down in the brief from the County Archaeologist. Soil profiles were recorded both by measurement and photographically. Artefacts were collected and their position noted and photographs taken of of selected sections. Historical and archaeological background wa carried out subsequent to the site visit.

### Results

It was early apparent that much of the ground, particularly on the north side of the site, had been made up with assorted soils and brick rubble. This was confirmed by the contractor, since it was remembered locally as having been a very low part of the field, where soil had been dumped during the last 30 years. The dumped material seen appeared to be of three kinds: brick rubble and yellow clayey soil on the central north part of the site (Plate I), clayey soyellow clayey soil on the central north part of the site (Plate I), clayey soil with some flint on the north-east side and a more sandy deposit on the south-west part of the foundations. These deposits have been classified as (00+1), (00+2) and (00+3). They varied considerably in thickness between 25cm and 1m in thickness. Below them was the turf/topsoil line, which in places was seen to connect with the present turf and was between about 15cm and 30cm thick (001).

Underlying soils also varied. On the east side of the site (Fig. 6, A and Plate II) there was a layer of dark brown soil averaging 45cm thick (002) and containing the occasional small find. This soil appeared disturbed, and was light and friable as if plough or garden soil. It showed no features, but filled a single shallow ditch (C) 1.3m wide from rim to rim was noted, crossed by the foundation trench some 0.7m from the south-east corner of the trench (Fig. 6). This ditch had been cut into an underlying blue clay subsoil (003) 20cm thick which in turn overlay a yellow-brown clayey subsoil (004). The foundation trench averaged 1m in depth, although this had to be increased in one place on the north side (D) to a depth of 2.10m, where a very soft, wet clay was encountered at the lowest level, with a metre or more of dumped soil over it!. Along the south-western foundation trenches there was on average 50cm of dumped material overlying 20 cm of old topsoil.

### Finds

Four partly worked flint flakes, average size 3cm across, were recovered from the deposited soil (00+1) on the north-east side of the site, together with a single medieval jug handle. Context 002 produced a total of seven partly worked flints, six small pieces of cut animal bone, two iron nails and nine pieces of pottery. The pottery consisted of one large sherd of Middle Saxon Ipswich ware, two sherds of late Saxon glazed Stamford ware, four unglazed sandy sherds dating to about the twelfth century and two medieval sherds of approximately 14th century date. Other than in the dumped material there was a complete absence of post-medieval or modern finds.

### Conclusion

From the map evidence the site in South View Lane has not contained any dwellings in at least the last 200 years. Modern deposition has masked any earthworks on the site. The depth of the buried dark soil, with its few fragments of medieval pottery and animal bone suggests an interpretation as garden or ploughsoil in which the artifacts have arrived through manuring or general rubbish disposal. The small ditch (C) may have been related to a structure or property division, but no other comparable features were seen. The plan and pattern of roads with the ridge and furrow and the position of the church at the southern edge of this network, suggest that the village has shrunk a good deal since the 14th century. A tentative reconstruction of the medieval plan, using information from aerial photographs at the County Sites and Monuments Record, has been attempted.

The number of partly worked flints on the site suggests prehistoric activity in the area, possibly in the Bronze Age, but the flint itself is of poor quality and no completed tools were recovered.

The presence of a large sherd of Late and particularly Middle Saxon pottery is interesting as evidence of earlier settlement in the vicinity, although no other assumptions can be made from so few fragments.

These small pottery records are important in that they are the first such finds recorded from this area, and provide some slight indication of the potential for future investigations.

The archive and finds will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to Messrs. Fairburn and staff for assistance and co-operation on site.

Primary Sources

Maps of South Cockerington, 1793 (Lincolnshire Archives Office, Document ref: Misc. Dep. 21/1 and 21/5).

Tithe Plan of South Cockerington, 1845 (Lincolnshire Archives Office, Document ref: C397).

Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record.

Secondary Sources

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Hodge, C.A.H., Burton, R.G.O., Corbell, W.M., Evans, R. and Seale, R.S., (1984) Soils and their Use in Eastern England (with map), 336-8.

Pevsner N. and Harris, J., revised Antram, N. (1989) Lincolnshire. The Buildings of England.

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Frontispiece: South View Lane site, South Cockerington,  
general view looking east.

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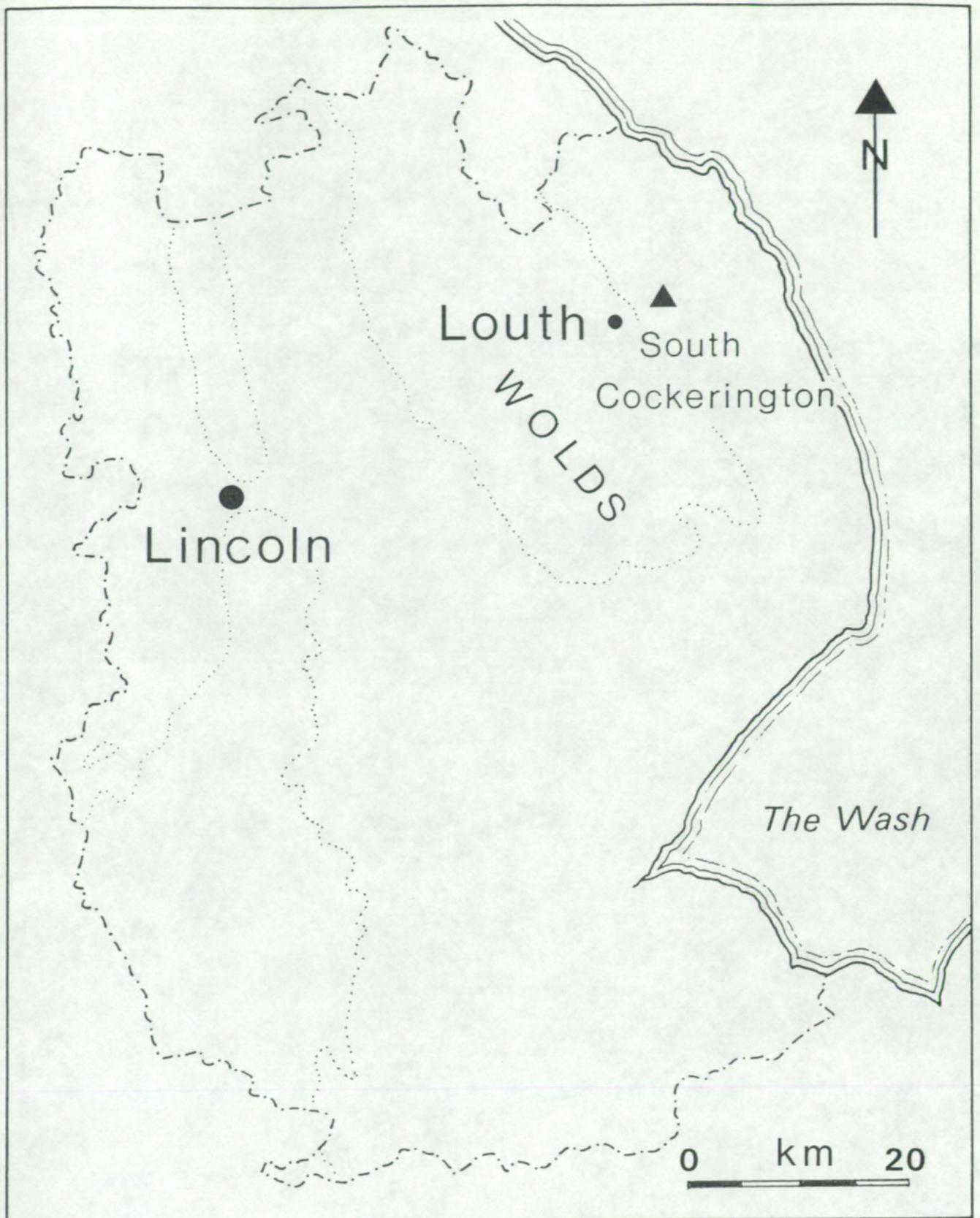


Fig. 1. Location map of South Cockerington, Lincolnshire

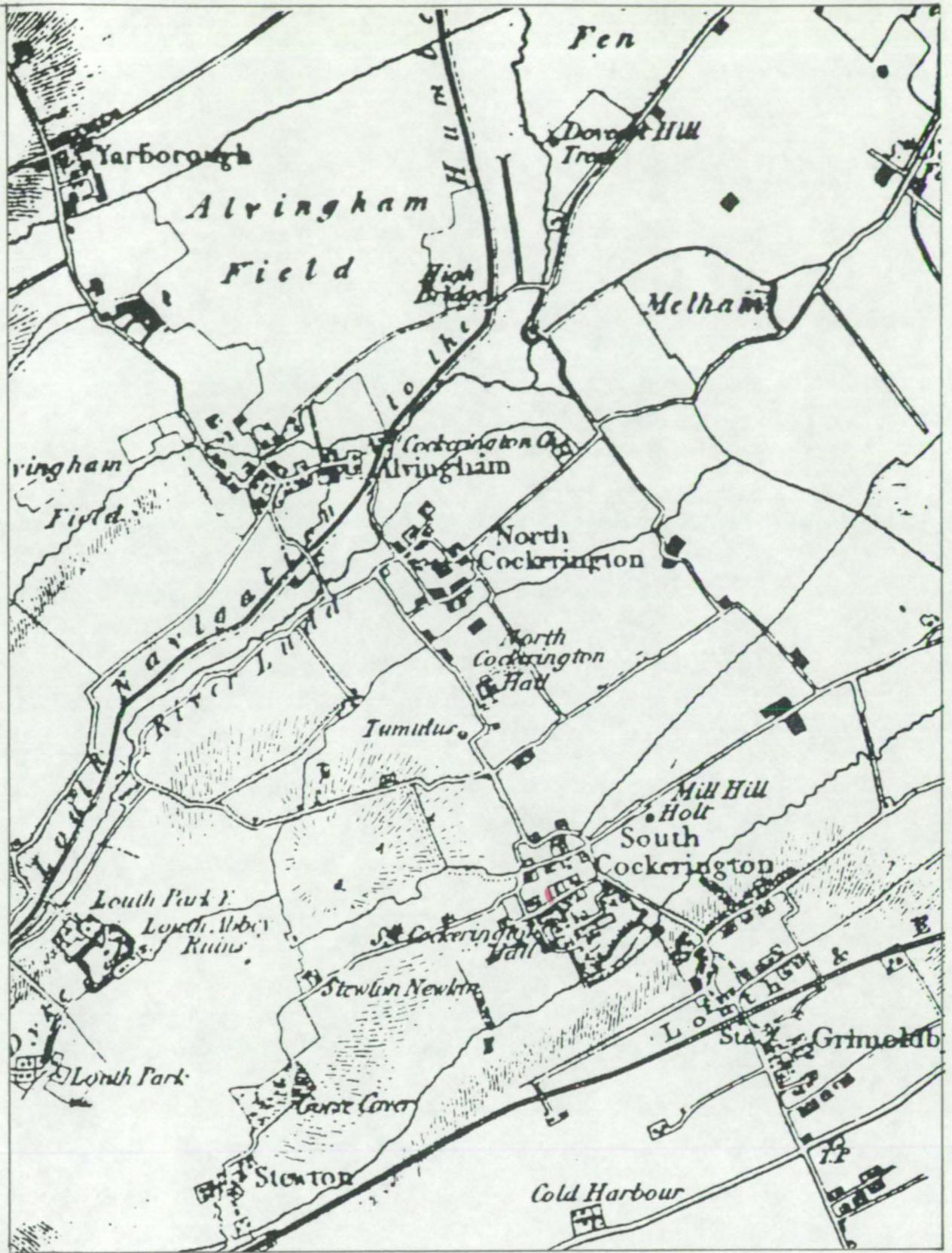


Fig 2. Enlargement of North and South Cockerington area (first edition Ordnance Survey 1" to 1 mile map)

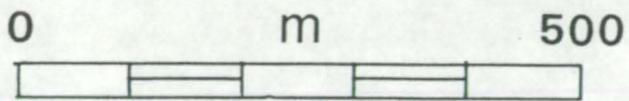
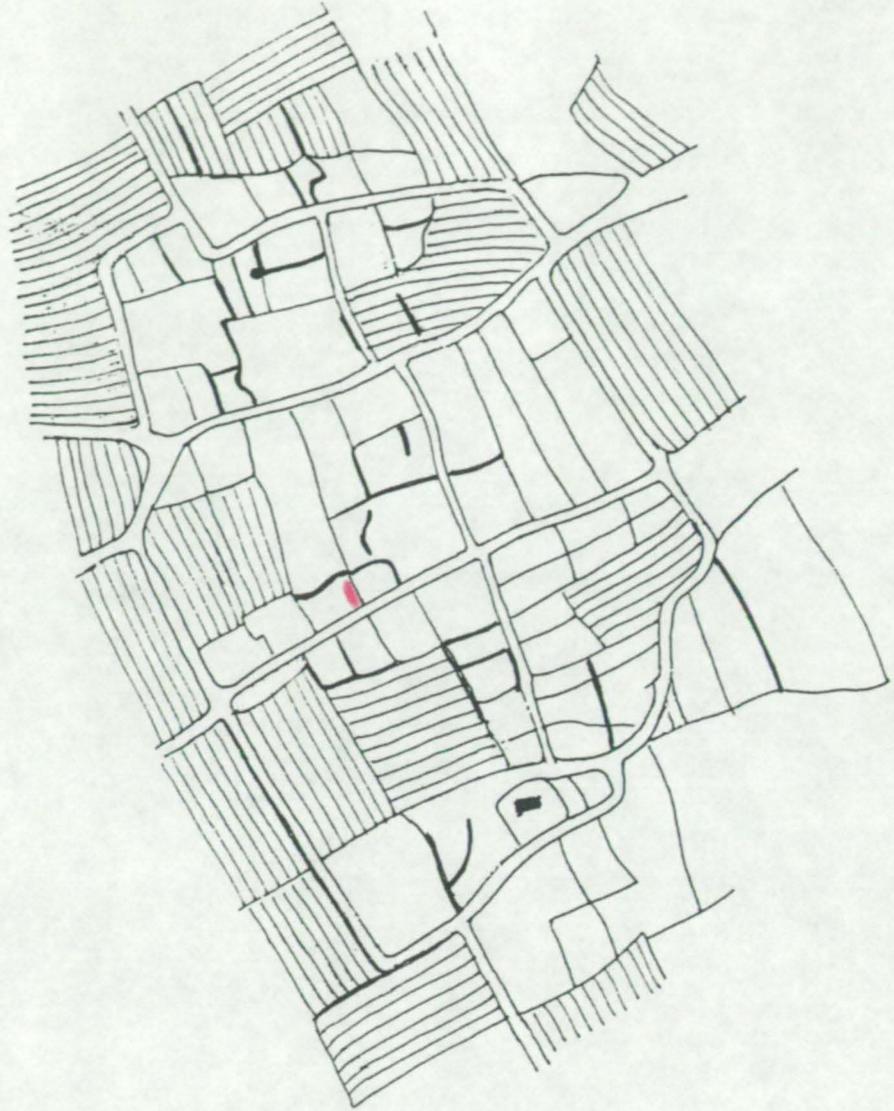


Fig 3. Map with sketch plot of ridge and furrow and other earthworks. The ridge and furrow is schematic and does not represent actual ridges.

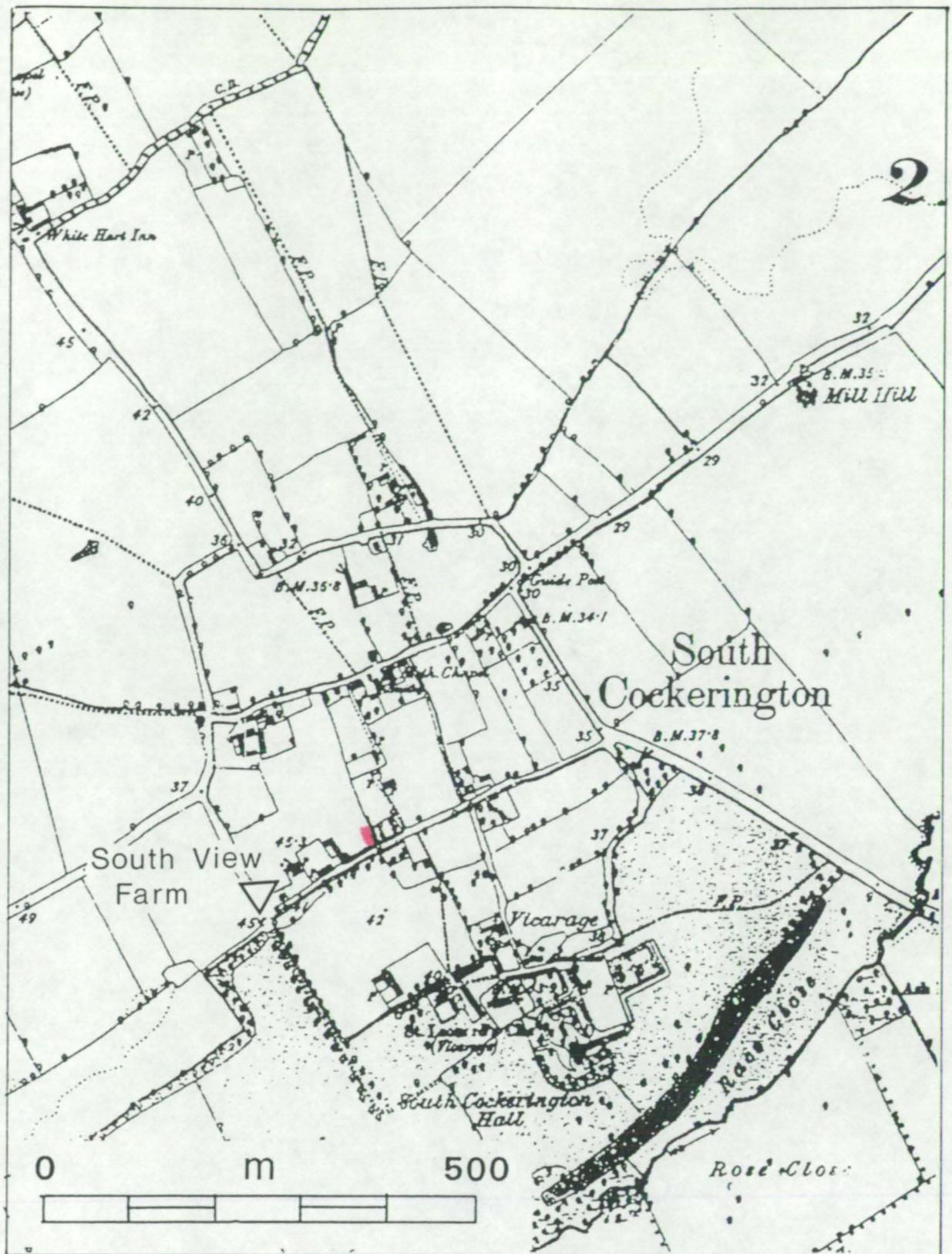


Fig 4. Site location (based on first edition Ordnance Survey 6" to 1 mile map)

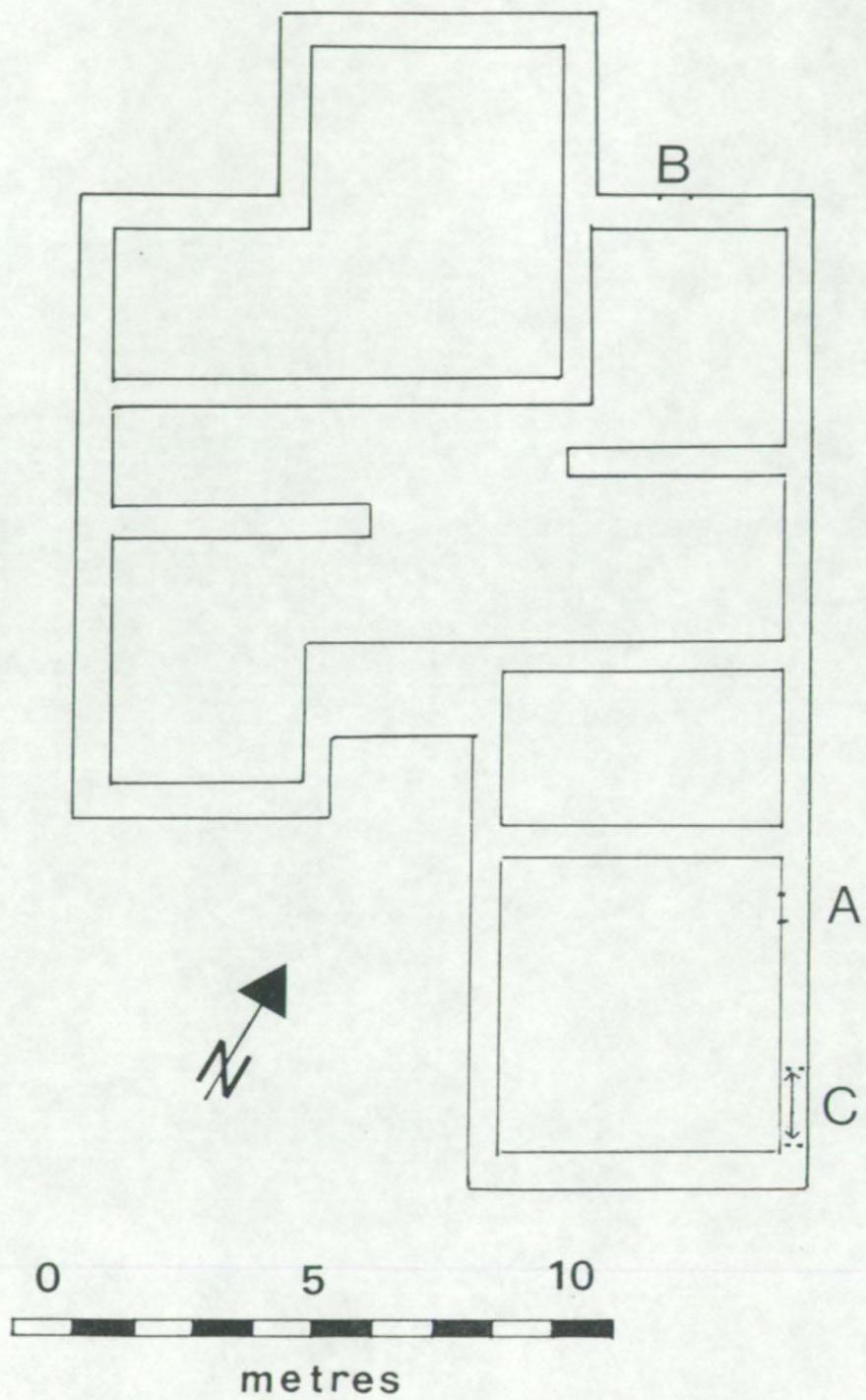


Fig 5. Plan of bungalow foundations showing location of recorded sections

A

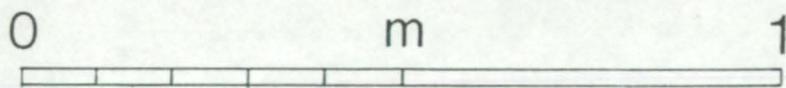
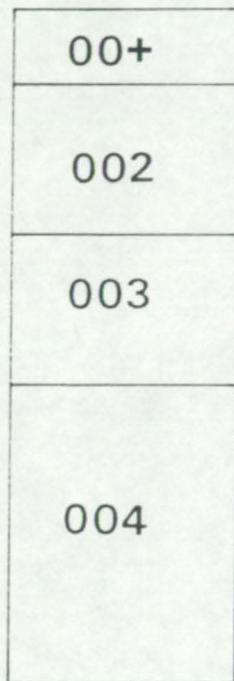


Fig 6. Section showing soil profile



Plate I. Trench section at B (north side) showing depth of recently deposited soil and rubble

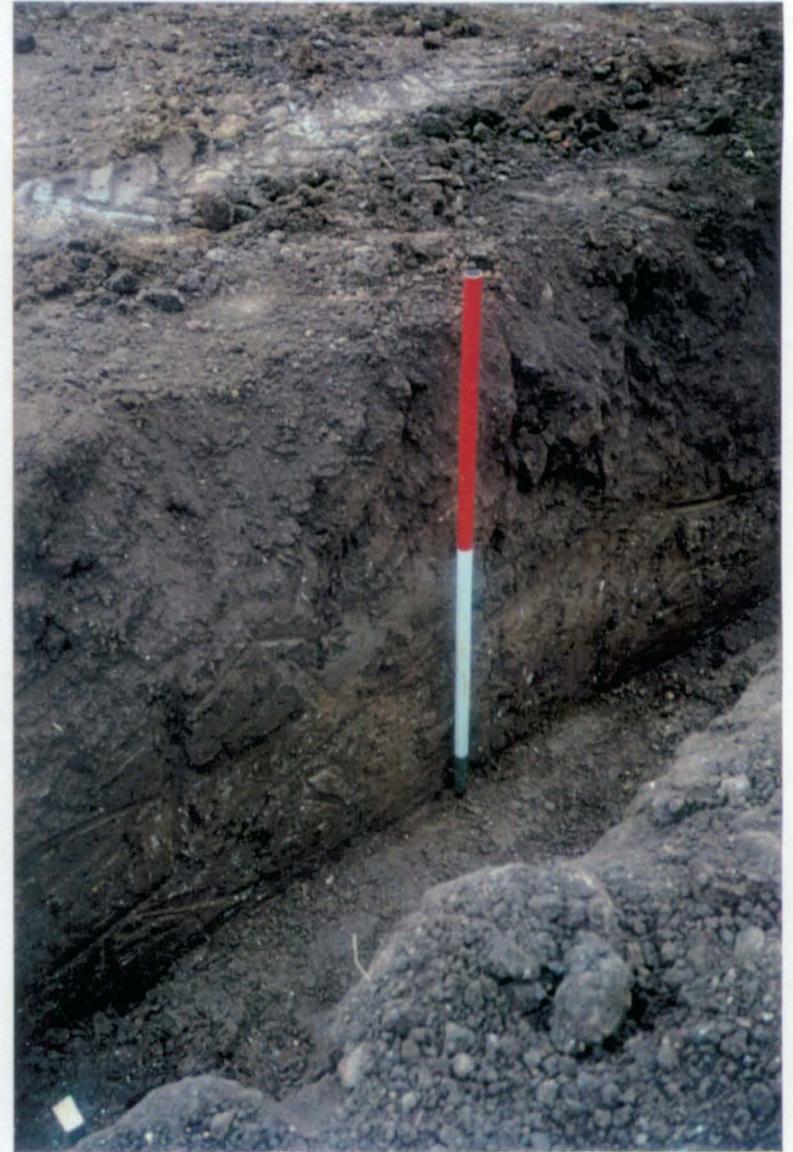


Plate II. Trench section at A (east side) showing plough/garden soil above subsoil