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LANGTOFT HALL FARM
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

June 1991

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LANGTOFT HALL, LANGTOFT

Archaeological Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

An evaluation of the archaeological remains at Langtoft Hall farm, Langtoft was undertaken by Lindsey Archaeological Services on behalf of the Land and Buildings Consultancy, Lincolnshire County Council in April and May 1991.

AIM OF THE SURVEY

The aim of the survey was to identify those areas within the proposed development area of particular archaeological importance and to recommend further action where necessary. A search of archive records and survey in the field were carried out to obtain as full a picture of the site's history as possible.

Illustrations may be found throughout the report and two figures on coloured paper may be opened out for reference whilst reading the text. Accompanying photographs are identified in the text with the prefix P. Please refer to the separate album.

SITE DESCRIPTION (Fig.1)

The site of Langtoft Hall lies at the east end of Langtoft village, on the fen edge (P1). There are several elements on the site which indicate past phases of use.

1. The Car Dyke

The Roman canal known as the Car Dyke runs along the north-east boundary wall of the farm.

2. Medieval moat

The remains of a moat lie to the north-east of the farm, overlying the Car Dyke, probably dating to the medieval use of the site.

3. 16th/17th century formal garden and walls and dovecote.

The enclosed areas around the farm contain fragments of garden walls dating to the late 16th or 17th centuries which must have been associated with a grand house complex, probably built by the Hyde family.

The earthworks adjacent to the main road are probably of a formal garden dating to this period.

The foundations of the dovecote lie in the field south-west of the present drive and may belong to this period.

4. 18th century farmhouse

The present modest farmhouse is 18th century in date and was built after the demolition of the great house.

A pond lies outside the proposed development area. It is thought to be late 18th/19th century in date.

5. Associated farm buildings

Other buildings on the site comprise a late 19th century crewyard and a recent barn and piggery.

HISTORY OF THE SITE

The whole village and parish of Langtoft belonged to Crowland Abbey, from before the Norman Conquest. At the time of the Domesday survey in 1086 the manor (i.e. the estate) was recorded as comprising meadow, marshland, woodland and arable. When an inventory of all the property owned by monastic houses was made on behalf of Henry VIII in 1536 the manorial property is described as being '....with houses and buildings within the [moated] site, [with] land, ways, waters, woods, commons, fisheries pertaining....a rectory....with tithes, barns and granaries pertaining. Although the estate had suffered as a result of the Black Death it was still a valuable property and after the Dissolution of the monasteries the manorial complex passed to the Hyde family several of whom are buried in the village churchyard. It remained the family seat until the 18th century when the Hall was demolished. The present farmhouse dates from that time and is the earliest surviving building on the site. There is also a late 19th century crewyard and later farm buildings.

DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE

1. Cartographic Evidence

Maps at the Lincolnshire Archives Office were inspected. The earliest was an estate map dated 1792 (fig. 2) showing the present farmhouse and a building in the same position as the site of a dovecote marked on recent O.S. maps. In addition it showed the present boundaries. There was no fishpond on this map.

The enclosure map of 1813 (not available for illustration) was prepared by the same surveyor and showed little that was different except for the fishpond. Despite the reference to fisheries in the 1536 description of the estate the pond on the site today appears to be a piece of early 19th-century landscaping.

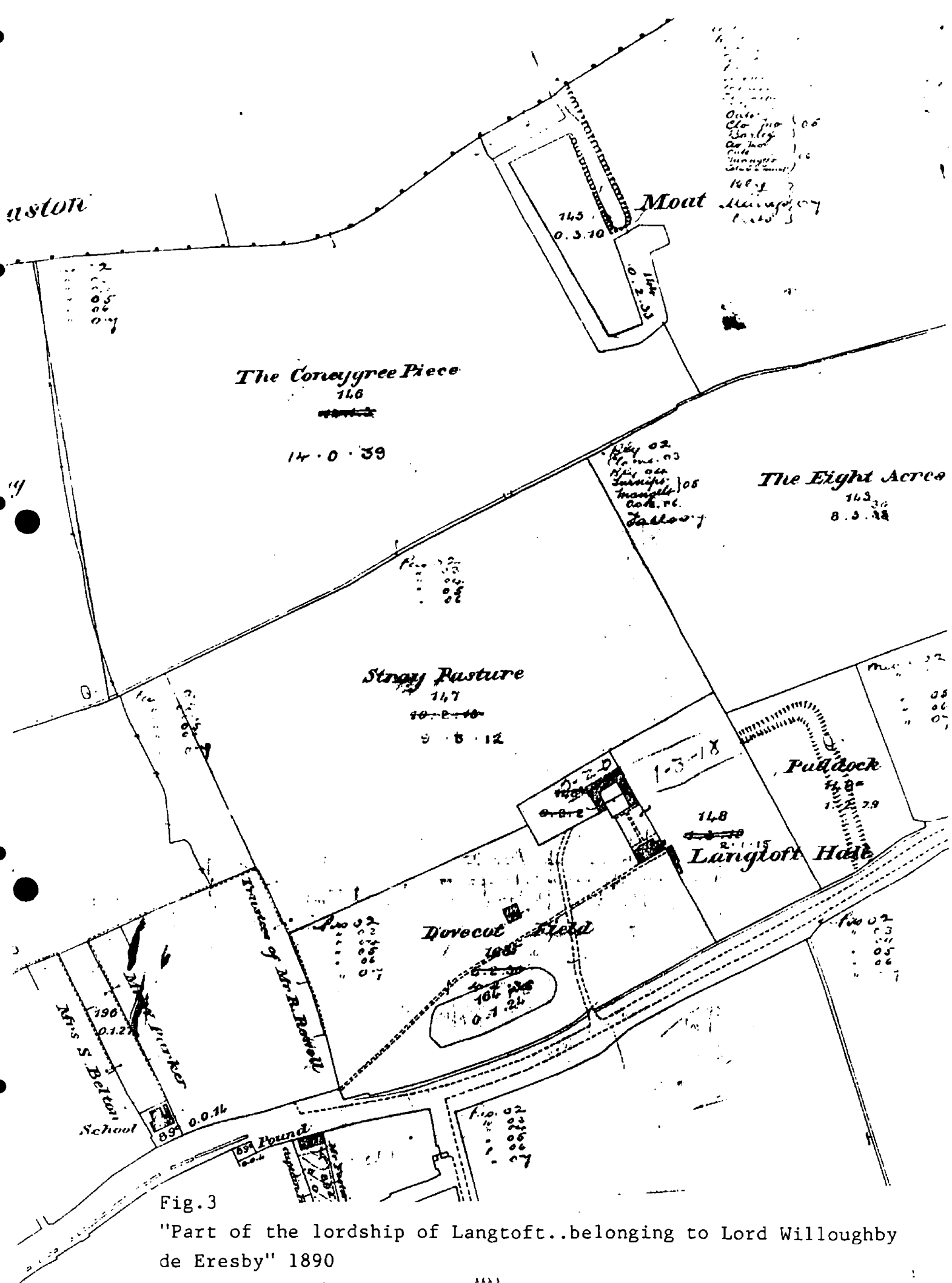
An estate map dating to 1890 (fig. 3) shows the same layout as on the earlier maps with the addition of the crewyard to the north of the farmhouse. (The outbuildings to the west of the crewyard date to the period after World War II.)

STRUCTURAL EVIDENCE

A full photographic record of the standing fabric was made, except for the post-war structures, and are listed below.

1. The Standing Buildings

Seven building units (B1-7) were identified on the site the earliest of which is the 18th-century farmhouse, B5 (see fig. 4 on the gold fold-out).



B1

Open shed, corrugated iron roof. Ruinous condition. Built over the top of Wall W1. Built after 1947.

B2

Brick piggery. Built after 1947.

B3

Barn, adjacent to piggery. Prefabricated concrete sections. Built after 1947, replacing another building on the site.

B4

Crewyard. Late Victorian, built shortly before 1890. The main construction is in brick with stone gable ends and comprises three ranges around a central crewyard. There is additional open cover on the external face of the west range overlooking Wall W3 (see below). The east side of the crewyard is a stone faced wall in the same style of construction as the gable ends (Ps 2-7). Crewyards were built on several farms belonging to the estate of Lord Willoughby de Eresby in 1890-91 and were part of a countywide (and countrywide) movement to modernise and improve facilities on farms.

B5

Farmhouse. 18th century. Two storey building; stone, except for brick north gable. Originally two properties with two entrances on front elevation (P8). This modest building must have been built after demolition of Langtoft Hall and did not belong to the same phase as the ornate garden walls. In fact the north gable end was constructed over the earlier garden wall W5. Many of the stones used for window and door surrounds, as well as quoin stones have been reused from the garden wall W7 (see below) and contain the same decorative detail (Ps 9,10). This same feature may be seen on stonework of the 18th century church porch (P11).

The original arrangement at the rear has been destroyed by the addition and subsequent removal of an outshut. The central portion of the facade has been rebuilt (P12), containing a modern window a eaves height and an inserted door and window at ground floor level. There is also a blocked doorway. The large stone blocks mark the line of an original door jamb showing that this door was an original access.

This is a plain but attractive building, very much in the style of other properties in the village. Although it needs refurbishing it would be a great asset to the new development and should be retained.

B6

Tack room/washhouse. Small stone and brick building on east side of B5. Its south elevation is actually part of Wall W5 with an inserted door (P13) giving through access to the orchard which divides the building. The other elevations have

lower courses in stone, and the upper half built in brick (P14). Stable but latterly also a coal store.

B7

Privy. Small brick built building with pantiled pent roof leaning against the garden wall W at the point where it forms the gable end of the farmhouse (P14).

2. The Walls

The earliest surviving features were not the buildings but the garden walls which belonged to a grand Hall in the 16th-18th centuries which has now gone. Of the walls which enclosed the orchard/kitchen garden the south-east boundary is missing, presumably removed by the drain which runs parallel to the modern road. Surviving portions are in poor condition but are nevertheless of great interest. These are described in seven sections (W1-7 on fig.4, gold fold-out).

W1

W1 forms the north-east boundary of the orchard (P15). A 30m stretch which leads from the ditch to a pair of ornate gates is demolished to ground level and only a single course of brickwork survives above a limestone chamfered plinth (P16). A 30m stretch which leads from the drain has been demolished to ground level and only a single course of brickwork survives above a limestone chamfered plinth. Gate piers, 4m apart, appear to be integral with this wall at plinth level (Ps 17,18). (A farmgate forms currently stands between the piers.)

The south pier survives above plinth height and holes in the stonework indicate the positions of gate attachments (P19). However, the fluted stone which is decorated on all faces could not have been in place at the same time as the wall and may have been moved to this position from the demolished Hall. The chamfered plinth and fluted gate pier are characteristic of the late 16th-18th century in style.

The wall footings continue north-west for a further 13m before meeting a brick buttress on a concrete base. This is clearly a modern piece of work intended to consolidate the standing stretch of wall (P15) beyond.

Internally, W1 is faced in brick and sits on a chamfered limestone plinth and foundation. Externally the wall is faced in rough dressed limestone blocks alternating course heights, two of 12-16cm with one of 6-8cm and is capped with a decorative limestone coping giving a total height of 3m. It runs over the line of the former medieval moat to meet W2 (Ps 20,21). The junction in the walls is quite clear, even internally, where two phases of brickwork meet although the bricks are very similar (P22). The external junction of the two walls was excavated and the foundations were seen to differ so it is clear that originally W1 did not continue beyond this point (P23).

W2

W2 is a brick wall on both faces, 2.73m high and 0.44m wide, built on a limestone base with an internal chamfered limestone plinth and is capped with the same chamfered limestone coping as W1. The limestone coping is continuous over the join, indicating that it was contemporary with (or later than) the construction of the later wall. W2 continues along the same alignment as W1 towards the north-west corner of the site and turns the corner to form the north-west boundary of the orchard (P24).

There are two external three-stage buttresses along the north-west stretch of the wall containing Victorian brickwork and are additions to the wall construction (P25). Buttress c forms a terminal of W2 and the coping has been trimmed to match the edge of the buttress (P26). The wall continues to the south-west only as footings. There are two large trees on the line of the wall at this point which may have been responsible for its collapse. Large quantities of brick can be seen in the field verge, probably from the missing length of wall. However, there may have been an original entrance within this stretch because the continuation of the wall has a terminal which appears to be neatly finished.

W2 continues south-west at a lower height of c.1.90m but is capped off with the same coping. Supporting the external face is a single raking buttress which is secondary but different in character to the other buttresses along this wall (P27).

W2 and W3 meet at the junction with the Victorian wall W4 (see below). This junction could not be examined because of restricted access but the external junction between W2 and W3 was recorded (P28). The south terminal is finished with ashlar limestone blocks with a narrow chamfered plinth near the base (P29). It is not clear which wall is the earlier. The presence of a chamfer on this face suggests that W3 was built against W2. However, the decorative tablet and coping (see below) appear to have been truncated suggesting the opposite sequence. The bricks themselves are very similar and the walls may be contemporary but different in style because they enclosed different spaces within the Hall complex.

W3

W3 continues south along the north-west boundary of the proposed development area (P30). This is a highly ornate brick wall with limestone decorative features on both faces standing to a height of 1m (to the top of the coping). The brickwork is a decorative Flemish bond with scorched headers forming a chequered pattern. The wall is built on a decorative limestone plinth and is capped with a limestone coping. The style of the moulding on these features is similar to that found on the gate pier fragments of W1.

There are rectangular limestone tablets 0.54m high and 0.42m wide on both faces of the wall (P31). Seven pairs existed along the wall, although one tablet on the external face is now missing (P30). Additionally, on the internal wall face there are two open-top limestone niches, 0.23m deep, built into the thickness of the wall and of unknown function (Ps 32-34).

The decorative limestone coping has diagonally opposed sockets, 40mm², and c. 12 cm from centre to centre (P35), for iron railings, or possibly a balustrade on top (see reconstruction in fig.5a). Some of the projecting copes have a large centre recess as if for a main stanchion. The two measured examples were c.70mm² (not diagonally opposed) and 3.04m from centre to centre. One recess contains an iron stump c. 18mm² and set in lead.

A modern access cuts through the wall leading to the field beyond. Only the foundations survive beyond this point and they were traced for a further 7.30m beneath the derelict shed B1.

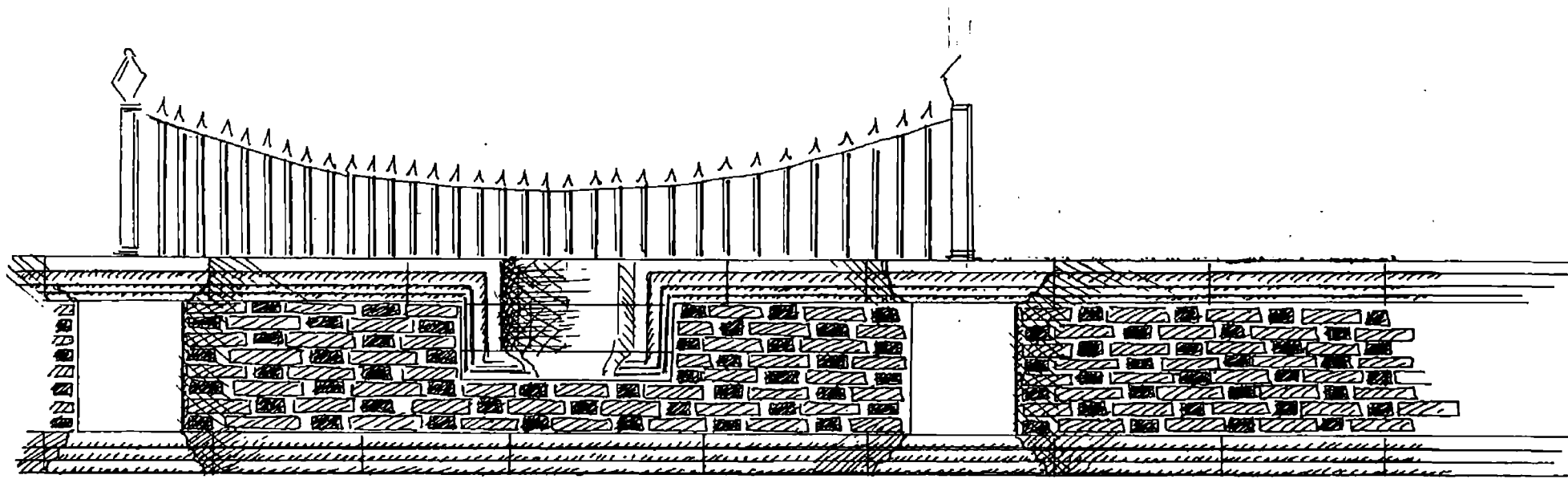
W4

W4 is a late 19th century brick wall, contemporary with the construction of the crewyard, B4, which butts W2 (P28). It is based on a single course of edge headers and thereafter is constructed in Flemish triple bond (17 courses) with an upper course of header dentils, capped off with moulded chamfer plinth bricks and rounded copes. It forms part of the south-west boundary of the orchard as does the crewyard wall which lies to south-east along the same alignment.

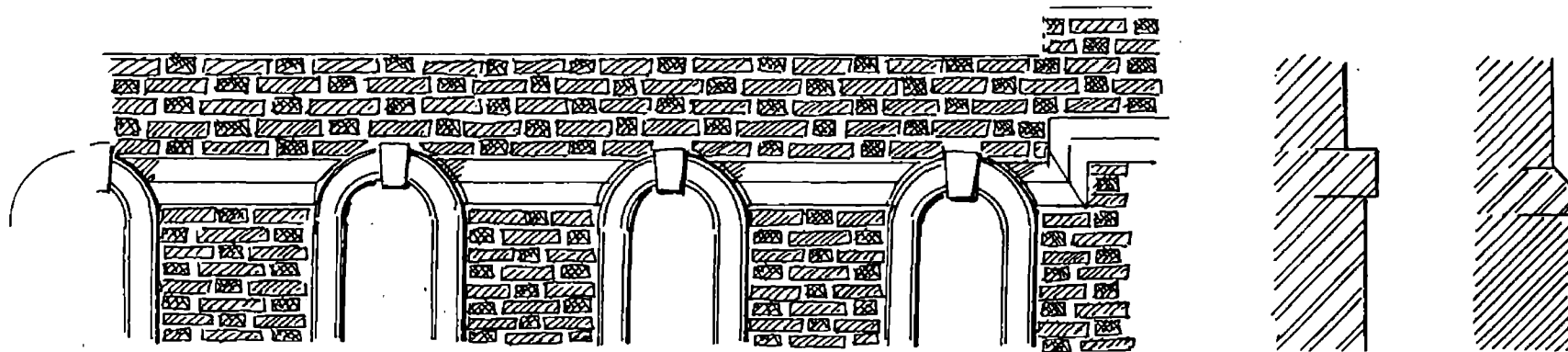
W5

W5 is the continuation of the orchard boundary to the south-east of the crewyard, standing to a maximum height of 2.85m, which also encloses the garden to the west of the farmhouse B5. In construction it is identical to W1 with a brick internal face built on a chamfered limestone plinth. Its external face is limestone blocks but differs from W1 in that there is also a chamfered plinth on this face (P36). This face forms a garden wall for the later farmhouse B5. The wall is capped with the same style of limestone coping as W1 and W2. Its junction with the crewyard wall is very neat (P37) with a vertical joint except at the base (P38) where the Victorian brickwork runs beneath the older wall. This may indicate the former presence of a corner stone, suggesting that W5 terminated or turned a corner at this point. A short stretch of wall adjacent to the crewyard is nine courses lower than the rest of the wall (P37). A section to the west of the farmhouse has also been lowered in a similar manner (P39).

W5 continues beneath the farmhouse, B5, forming the lower half of its gable wall (Ps 14, 39). It continues beyond the house as far as a modern farm gateway. W5 forms the south wall of the wash house (B6) which lies beyond B4.



a



b

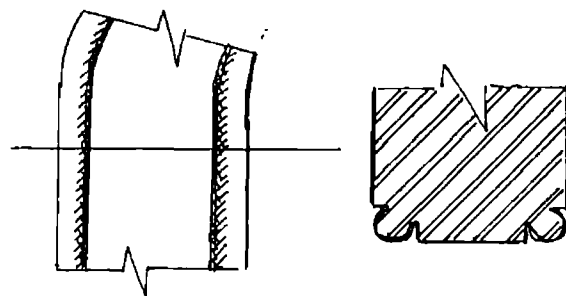


Fig.5

a) Suggested reconstruction of wall W3

b) Reconstruction of wall W7

Beyond B6 W5 survives only to plinth height and has been substantially rebuilt (see W6 below). A stretch of wall beyond the gate which is faced in stone may be the original W5 but this stretch was heavily restored in the 1970s and most of the internal brick face is certainly not original.

W6

Modern rebuild of wall W5 west and east of the farm gate which continues over W7 (P46)(see below). This was constructed in the 1970s in English garden wall bond, using old brick on the orchard face and limestone on the external face. Part of the wall is capped with vertically set pieces of limestone, including some medieval window fragments (Ps 41-45).

W7

W7 continues the boundary of the orchard to the drain and the main road (P40). It is another remnant of the 17th century but it is not clear whether it is contemporary with the orchard walls W1 and W5. Much of it is in a poor state and has been replaced with a simple wooden fence (P40). The internal elevation, facing into the orchard, contains the remnants of fourteen projecting stone arches. Only three complete examples survive, numbers 10,11 and 12, counting north-west from the main road. The remains of the others can be found strewn in the undergrowth (P47). The arches have the same moulding as the re-used stone details in the farmhouse, B5, see above. Each of the surviving arches has a tapered projecting keystone (P46) and are linked by a chamfered stone plinth, shaped to fit the arches at half-springer height. The arch tops and the keystones project beyond the brick wall-face. It is uncertain whether these were originally through features as they have been blocked from the rear with reused brick. Projecting brickwork and limestone slabs on the rear (south-west) face may represent part survival and repair of features behind the arches or could simply be clumsy attempts to underpin collapsing portions of the wall (P48).

The wall survives to a maximum height of only fourteen courses of brickwork, some four courses above the complete arches. There is an interval of only three brick lengths between the arches. The small length of wall beyond arch 14 (P46, Right) extends for at least 5 brick lengths without interruption suggesting that arch 14 was the last and the wall may have ended or returned close to this point.

3. Architectural Fragments

Several heaps of architectural fragments were found, the largest of which lies near to B6, the wash house. Some coping stones were found behind the crewyard, near to wall W3 (P49). A single stone, perhaps from a gate pillar, lies in the farmhouse garden, next to the wash house (P50). No detailed record was made of these fragments but at least some of them could be used in any repair programme.

4. The Earthwork Remains

Earthwork remains are still visible in the field identified on the O.S. maps as belonging to an earlier site of the Hall (P51). Investigation of this area comprised inspection of aerial photographs, geophysical survey and a quick measured survey of the features on the ground which identified the remains as belonging, in the main, to a formal garden.

The earthworks adjacent to the road are labelled on the OS map as being the remains of Langtoft Hall. A search of the main aerial photographic archives was not very productive but an RAF vertical photograph taken in 1947 (ref. CPE UK 1932/3408) showed these earthworks and further, remains in the south-west field together with the dovecote which has since been demolished. The foundations of the dovecote were relocated on the ground and identified on the geophysical survey (see below, Area 2).

A sketch plot of the earthwork remains is shown on fig. 6. The majority of the remains occupy a central position on the site. The curving lines and circular features are more indicative of flower beds than buildings. The features on the west side, closest to the modern outbuildings are the clearest. Geophysical survey was not possible because this area now lies beneath hardstanding where probes could not be inserted into the ground.

To the north the pattern is more disturbed and there is more than one phase of activity represented. This part lies in the grass paddock adjacent to the main road and geophysical survey located some of the features. The features are recorded as areas of high resistance which means that there are the remains of walls beneath the ground (fig. 8b). This would be in keeping with an interpretation of raised flower beds which form part of a formal garden. Some of these remains may belong to buildings which pre-date the laying out of the gardens.

It seems unlikely that such a grand scheme would belong to the present farmhouse and the style of the layout suggests a date in the 17th century. These gardens must have belonged to the Hall which was demolished in the 18th century. It is therefore suggested that the lost Hall lay not in the paddock but in the area to the north-west, now occupied by the crewyard and farmhouse gardens. Geophysical readings in Grid area 3 did not indicate the presence of any buildings other than the dovecote.

BELOW GROUND REMAINS

Geophysical Survey

In order to identify remains below the ground which did not survive as earthworks four gridded surveys were carried out, three within the proposed development area and one to the east but within the moated site (fig. 7, see blue fold-out). A resistivity meter was used in all areas and in Area 3 a magnetometer was also used (P52). The moat was located, cutting

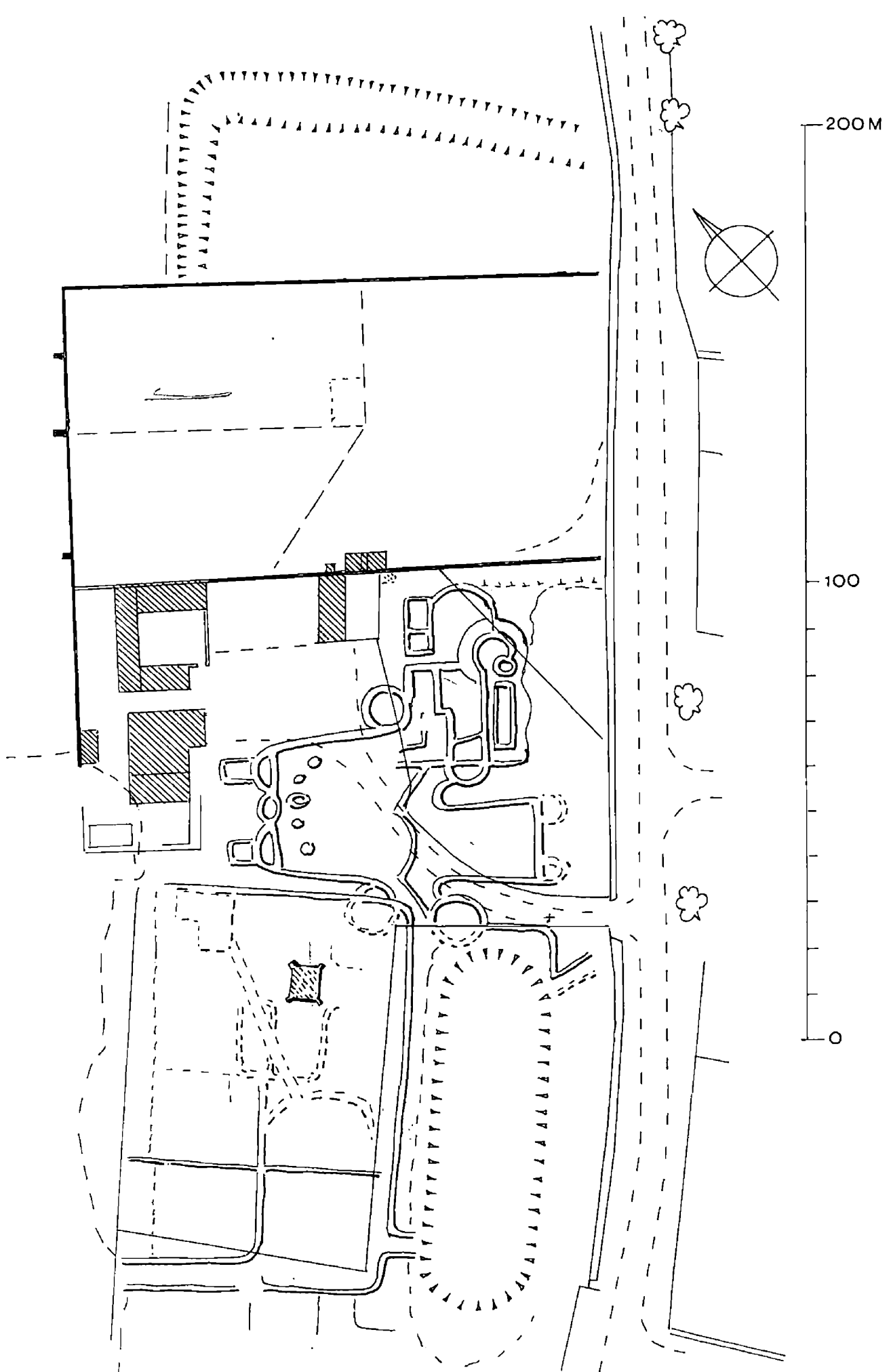


Fig.6
Sketch plan of earthworks as surviving in 1947, transcribed
from an RAF vertical aerial photograph.

through the earlier Car Dyke. Other results were disappointing due to the exceptionally dry ground conditions but the survey located features to the south and east of the site.

Area 1 (Fig. 8)

A sample survey of the earthworks was carried out using a theodolite (fig. 8a). Although the results were not very illuminating they served to substantiate and locate the features plotted from the aerial photograph. At least some of the surface undulations represent ground disturbance rather than structures.

The geophysical survey covered an area 20 x 60m and identified several high readings which may be robbed walls. Their shape and size is more in keeping with retaining walls for flower beds rather than buildings.

Area 2 (Fig. 9)

An area 80 x 40m was surveyed to the north of the present fishpond and revealed three features. Fig. 9a shows areas of high resistance. The small square outlined in the south east corner of the survey is very clear and represents the remains of a dovecote, marked on the OS map. The foundations are visible as a parchmark in the grass 7m x 6m and has diagonal corner buttresses. The building was still standing in 1947 and is visible on the RAF vertical photograph of that year.

On the eastern edge of the survey is evidence of a wall running north-south. This coincides with a change in ground level and may represent a retaining wall of a terrace. However, it might be the wall of a building lying further to the east.

Fig. 9b shows the same area highlighting the low resistance readings. A diagonal white line across the survey area represents a feature c.2m wide which may be a narrow ditch or possibly a path.

In the south west corner is evidence for a rectangular feature, perhaps a wall which has been completely robbed out. This feature is also visible as an earthwork on the 1947 RAF photograph and may be part of the garden. There was no indication of any more fishponds.

Area 3 (Fig. 10)

A grid 100m x 40m was examined. This area is under grass and contained fruit trees, most of which have been removed. This has probably resulted in the ground disturbance which can be seen in the results (a,b).

There was only one definite feature located within the survey, a rectangular foundation. The presumed line of the moat was not visible on the computer print out. Manual interpretation of the raw data located a line of readings which varied by 3-4 ohms across the presumed line of the moat. A magnetometer was used

and some indication of the moat was detected at the junction of the brick and stone wall. It is thought that the ground conditions were too dry to locate even such a large feature as a moat. An alternative possibility was considered where the return of the moat would run parallel to the orchard wall making it similar in shape to the moat lying to the north-west. There was no evidence in the data and this theory was discarded.

Area 4 (Fig. 10)

The results from the geophysical surveys in Area 1-3 gave no indication of any features which might be associated with the moat so a further survey 80 x 20m was undertaken in the field to the east of the walled garden where the likelihood of later disturbance was minimal.

A sand bank was found running parallel to the garden wall along the full length of the surveyed area. Whilst this could be a natural feature it is probably a part of the Roman Car Dyke bank which runs along the Fen Edge. The northern arm of the moat clearly cuts through this bank at the north end of the survey area. no internal features were identified. It is possible that buildings within the moat were built in timber and would not show well in a survey of this kind. A second moat to the north of Langtoft Hall appears to have been deliberately built over the Car Dyke and the Hall moat also probably took advantage of the dyke to fill its ditch. (This phenomenon has also been observed at Sempringham Priory, another monastic site on the Car Dyke).

SUMMARY OF RESULTS

1. The evaluation has shown that the earliest standing building on the site is the farmhouse, dating to the 18th century.
2. The fishpond is probably a late 18th century feature which means that further fishponds are unlikely to be present within the development area.
3. The dovecote does not survive but its position has been located and is at least as old as 18th century. However, the presence of diagonal buttresses are an indication that it may be considerably older.
4. The garden walls are the most interesting architectural feature surviving and belong to the 16/17th century period of occupation.
5. The formal gardens, probably belonging to the 17th/18th century have been located in the area traditionally assigned to the Hall itself.
6. The associated house must lie in the drive area of the site which is unsuitable for geophysical survey.

7. No certain evidence of the medieval period of occupation has been found, except for the moat.

RECOMMENDATIONS.

The site of Langtoft Hall and the earlier monastic manorial complex is of great archaeological importance. The nature and extent of the proposed development on the site is not known but it is clear that a blending of the older features on the site with the new buildings would enhance the status of any development and contribute to the value of the site.

1. The garden walls. It is strongly recommended that W7 and W3 should be retained and restored where necessary to form a unique feature of the development. The plainer walls W1, 2 and 5 are also valuable features and should be retained.

2. The farmhouse is a solid building and could be an asset to the development and should be retained if possible.

Excavation of all the areas to be affected by building should be carried out in advance of the development.

1. Areas of particular interest already identified are the earthworks adjacent to the road and the dovecote.

2. On current evidence it is thought likely that the Hall will be found in the vicinity of the crewyard and outbuildings B2 and B3. The layout and extent should be recorded. The presence and depth of these foundations may have structural implications which should be considered in the positioning of new buildings.

3. It should be noted that timber buildings belonging to the medieval phase on the site could be found anywhere on the site.

Naomi Field and Michael Clark
June 1991

SITE : langtoft

Plotting parameters

Minimum	52.31	-5.00 %	-0.34 SD
Maximum	57.81	5.00 %	0.34 SD
Contrast	2.0	Intensity Multiplier	2.0

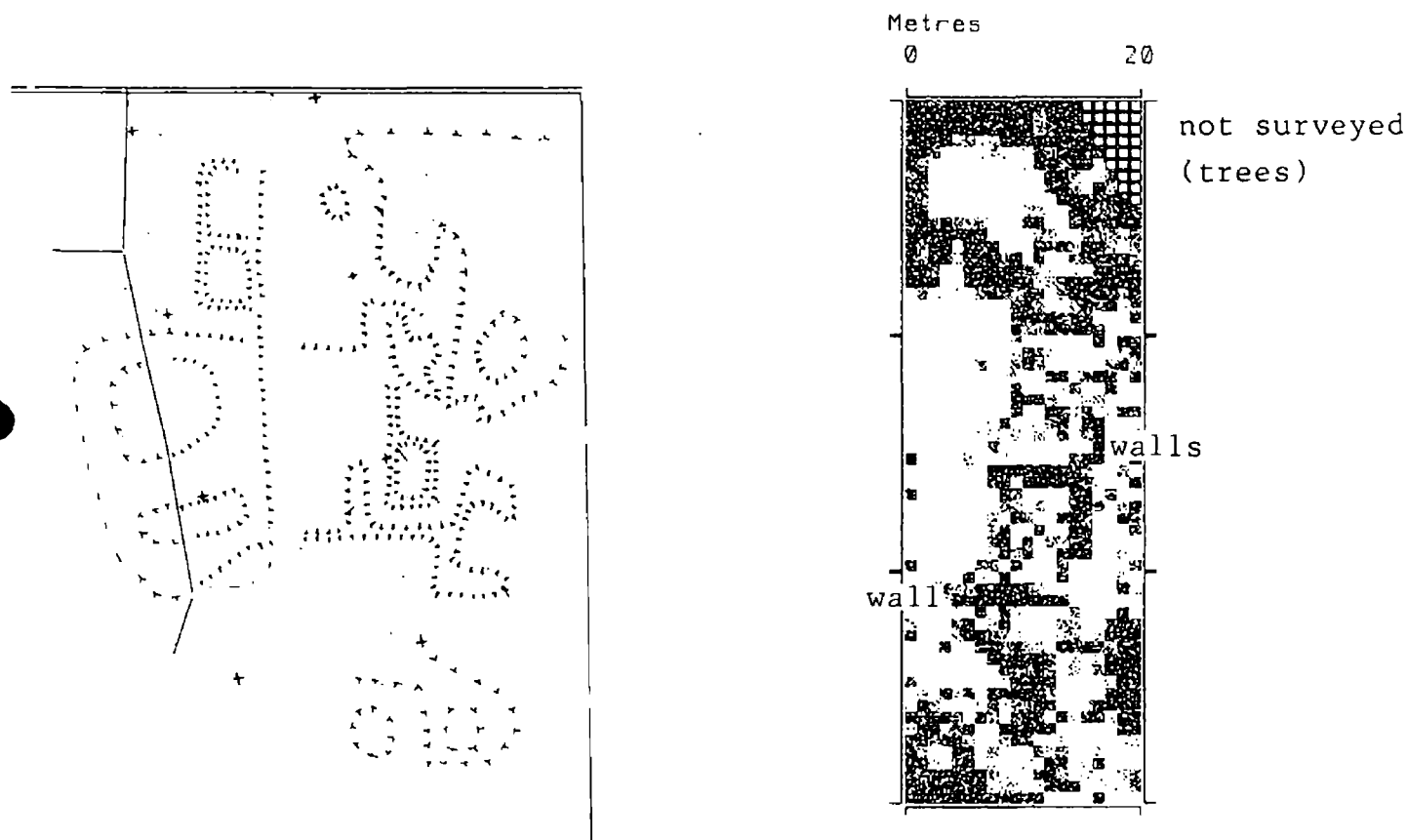
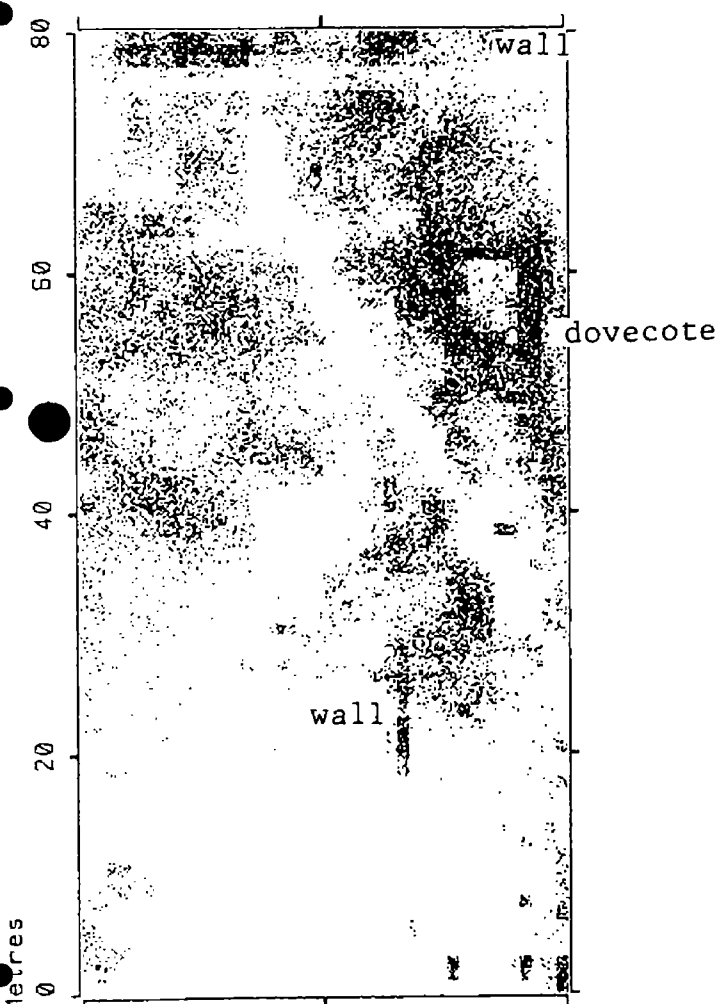


Fig. 8

- a) Area 1, earthwork survey. Resistivity grid marked +
- b) Area 1, resistivity survey. High resistance shows as dark areas, rectangular configurations are remains of wall foundations. (NB top grid surveyed after a rainfall and produced darker results which are not archaeologically relevant).

SITE : langtoft		Plotting parameters	
Minimum	50.00	-6.88 %	-0.82 SD
Maximum	80.00	24.17 %	2.87 SD
Contrast	2.0	Intensity Multiplier	2.0



SITE : langtoft		Plotting parameters	
Minimum	55.00	-18.88 %	-1.85 SD
Maximum	66.00	-2.65 %	-0.26 SD
Contrast	2.0	Intensity Multiplier	2.0

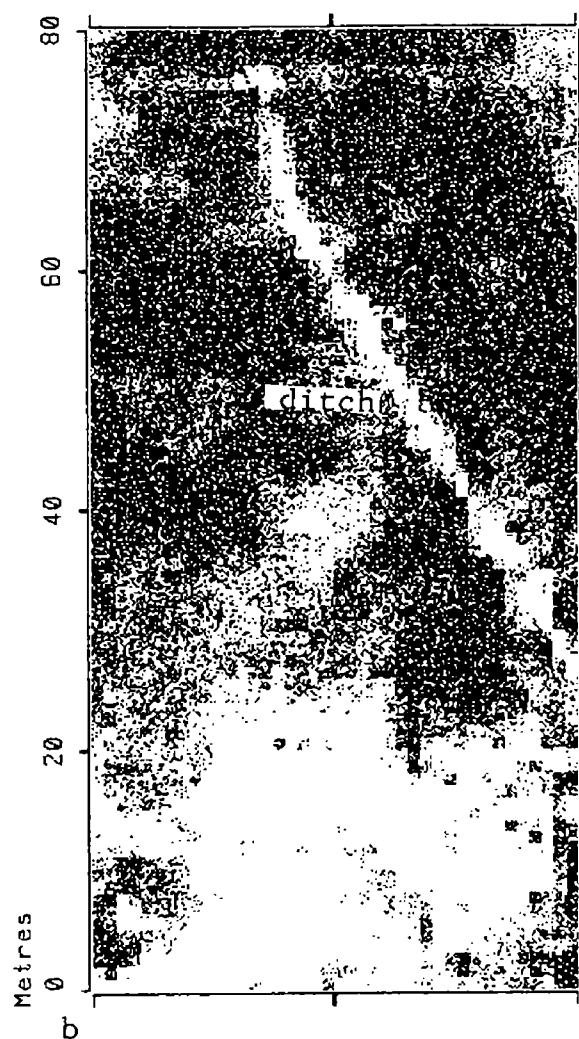


Fig.9

Area 2 resistivity survey

- a) Areas of high resistance revealing wall foundations
- b) Areas of low resistance revealing possible ditch

SITE : langtoft

Plotting parameters

Minimum	75.00	5.77 %	1.06 SD
Maximum	90.00	26.92 %	4.96 SD
Contrast	2.0	Intensity Multiplier	2.0

MESH : lang a

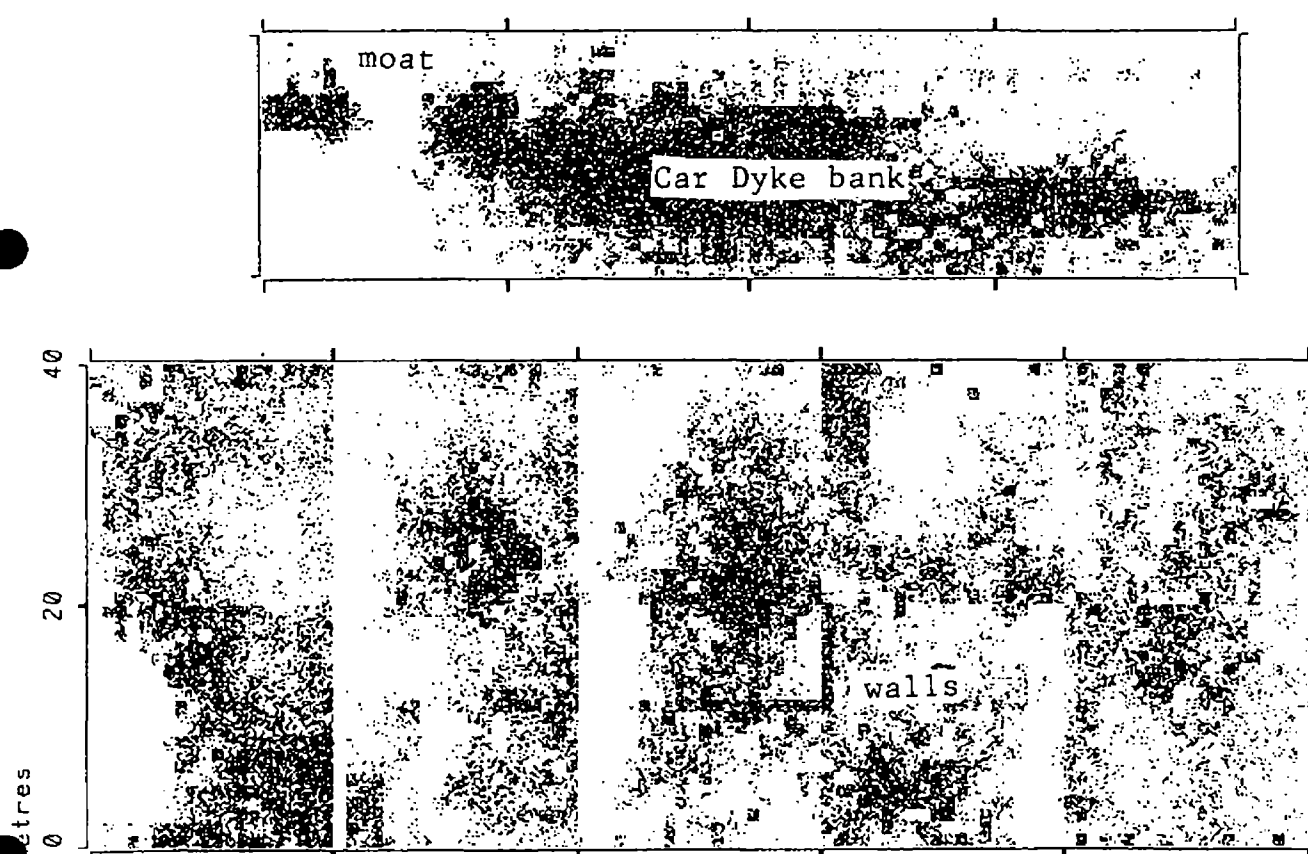


Fig. 10

Areas 3 and 4 resistivity survey

Area 3 shows remains of rectangular wall foundations near centre.

Area 4 shows dark band which is the bank of the Car Dyke. The break on the left hand side shows the moat cutting through the bank.

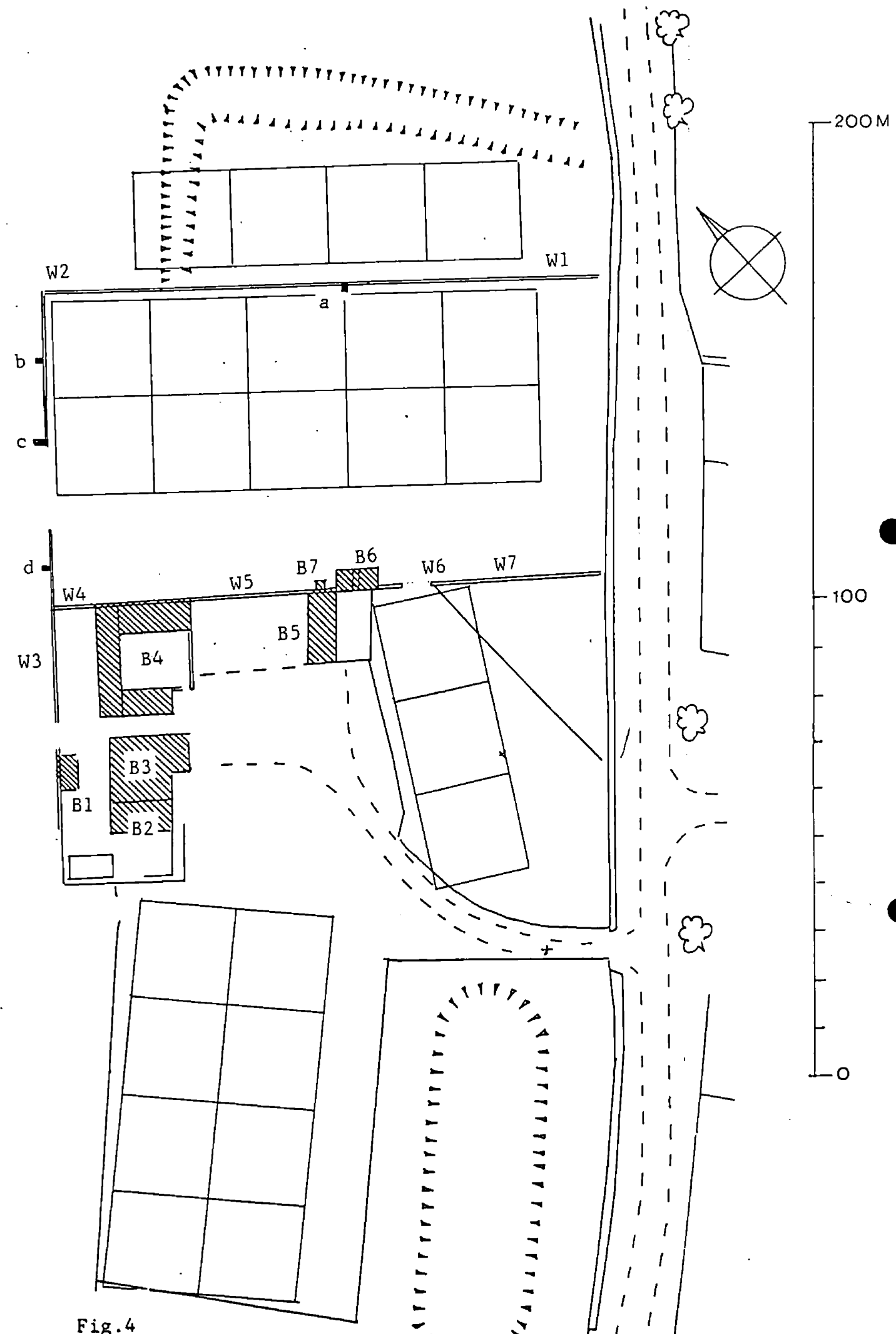


Fig.4

Location map of site showing buildings (B1-7) and walls (W1-7)

Butt sses marked a-d.

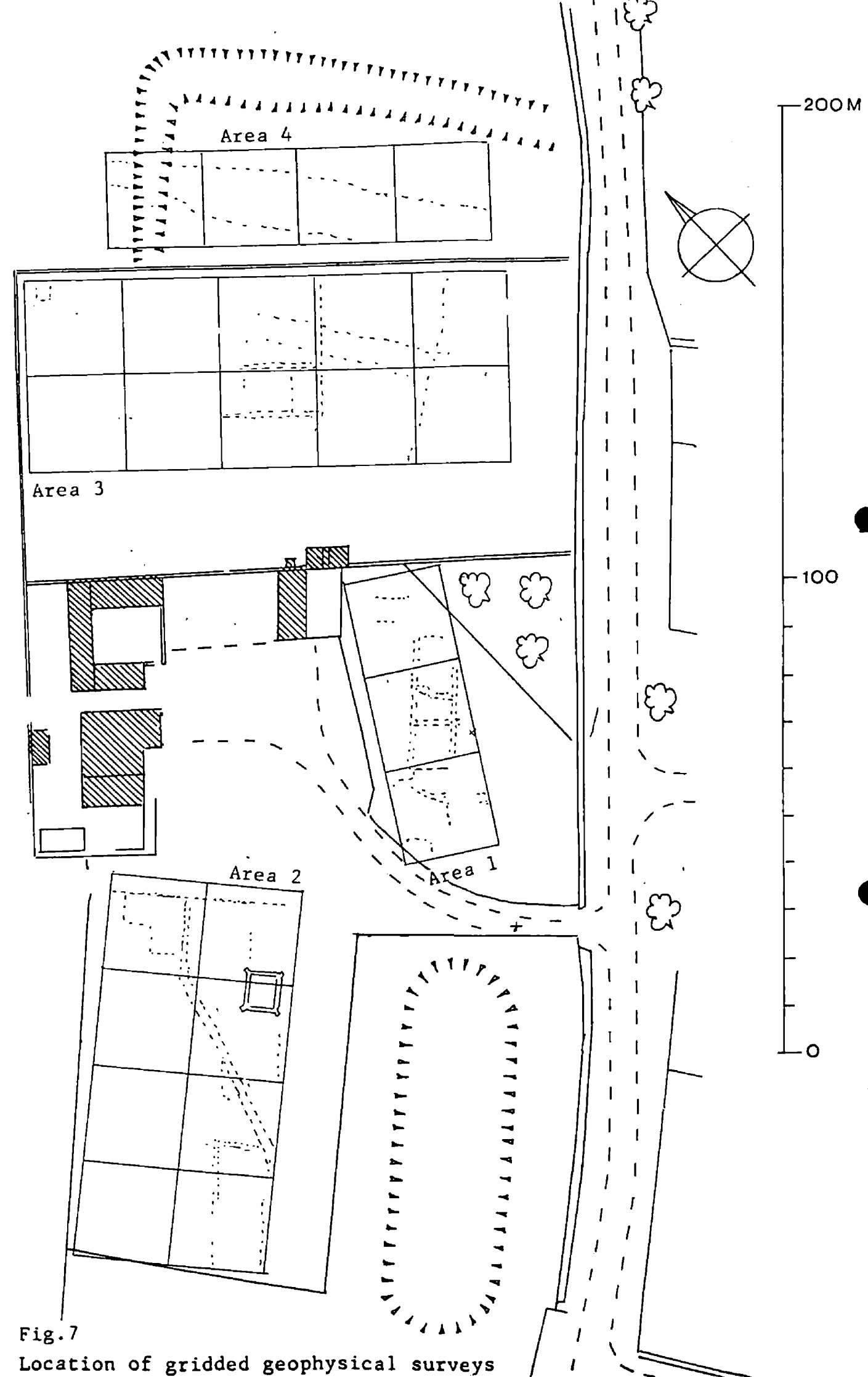


Fig.7

Location of gridded geophysical surveys