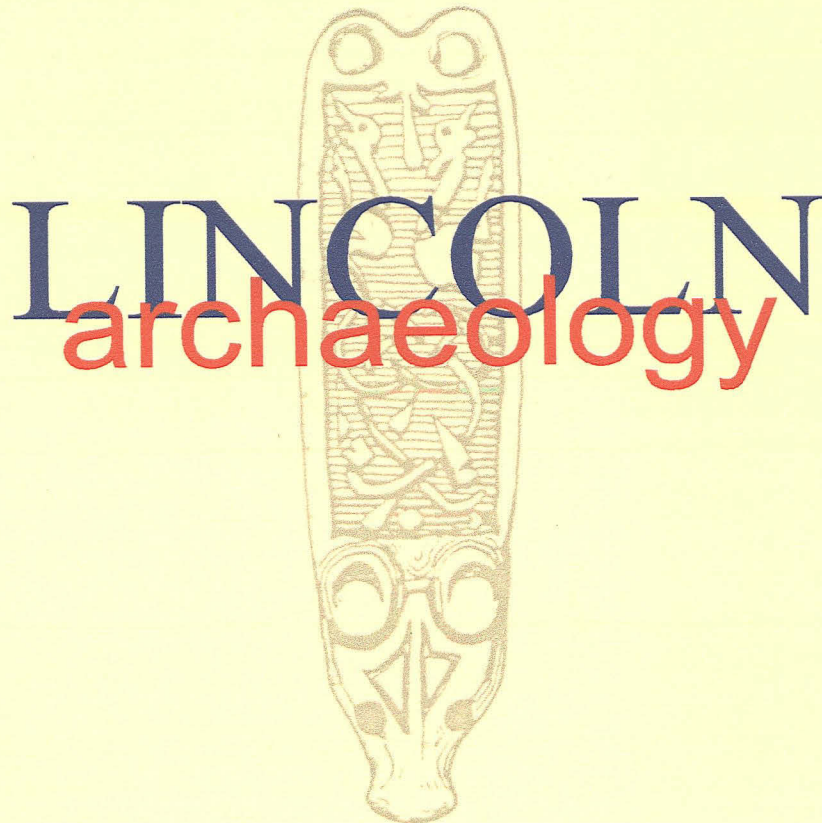


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A Report to Mr R.Cox

November 1999



Development at Manor Farm, East Firsby, Lincolnshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

By K Wragg

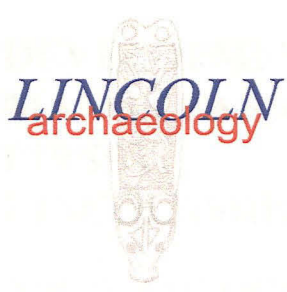
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Development at Manor Farm, East Firsby, Lincolnshire

Site Code: EF99
LCCM Accession No.: 63.99
Planning Application No.: 98/P/0932
NGR: TF 0075/8545

Archaeological Watching Brief

<i>Contents</i>	<i>Page</i>
NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY.....	1
1.0 INTRODUCTION.....	2
2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND.....	2
3.0 RESULTS.....	3
4.0 CONCLUSIONS.....	3
5.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	3
6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	4
7.0 LHA NOTES/ARCHIVE DETAILS.....	4
7.1 LHA NOTE DETAILS.....	4
7.2 ARCHIVE DETAILS.....	4
APPENDIX A - ARCHIVE DEPOSITION.....	5
APPENDIX B - COLOUR PLATES 1 & 2.....	6
APPENDIX C - ASSESSMENT REPORT ON THE POST-ROMAN POTTERY AND CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL...	7
APPENDIX D - LIST OF FINDS.....	8

Illustrations

- Fig.1 Site location plan - scale 1:50000
- Fig.2 Site layout plan - scale 1:2500
- Fig.3 Plan of main areas of excavation - scale 1:500

DEVELOPMENT AT MANOR FARM, EAST FIRSBY, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

East Firsby lies to the north of Spridlington (c.14km to the north of Lincoln), and now comprises little more than a collection of three isolated farmsteads, with Manor Farm lying at their approximate centre.

The development proposals forming the basis of this project are connected with the upgrading and extension of touring caravan facilities already present on the site.

The site lies in a rich historic landscape with features of Prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval origins identified in the general surrounding area.

As part of the planning process, an appraisal of the archaeological and historical background of the site was carried out by the Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council.

Previous archaeological discoveries close to the site (as recorded in the county Sites & Monuments Record) have included several Roman coins and a *Fibula* brooch, together with the remains of late-medieval ridge and furrow earthworks.

In addition, the deserted medieval village of West Firsby, a complex and well preserved series of earthworks and building remains, lies approximately 1.5km to the west of Manor Farm.

Concentrations of Roman pottery close to the northern boundary of the medieval remains also suggest that a small Roman settlement was present on the site.

Additionally, a Roman road - *Ermine Street*, passes the site to the west, its alignment still recognisable in the line of the modern A15(T).

Ermine Street was the original route between Lincoln and the ferries at the Humber, and thence to York. This road was one of the most important routes to the north, probably having its origins as a military supply road in the early years of the conquest.

In view of this potential, West Lindsey District Council (in consultation with the Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section) decided that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out on all development groundworks.

As a result, in February 1999, the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit was commissioned by Mr R.Cox (the owner/developer) to provide the required archaeological services.

Observations subsequently took place during June 1999, but in spite of the archaeological potential of the site and its surroundings, the results of this watching brief have proved negative.

Given the very limited nature of the actual trenching proposed, however, this was somewhat to be expected.

In the event, no sign of any ancient archaeological finds or features was revealed, with the only finds dating to the 19th and 20th centuries.

The negative results from this particular project do not of course diminish the potential for future discoveries in the area (and indeed, perhaps, on other parts of this site).

DEVELOPMENT AT MANOR FARM, EAST FIRSBY, LINCOLNSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1.0 INTRODUCTION

East Firsby lies to the north of the village of Spridlington, and is located approximately 14km to the north of Lincoln, lying at a general height of c.20m O.D.

East Firsby itself is now little more than a collection of three isolated farmsteads, with Manor Farm lying at their approximate centre.

The development proposals forming the basis of this project are connected with the upgrading and extension of touring caravan facilities already present on the site.

The improvements to the site basically comprise three individual elements, as follows (see Figs.2 & 3):

- 1) An existing pasture field to be converted to accommodate an increased number of caravans on the site;
- 2) A new toilet block and drainage will be provided to service the increased number of visitors;
- 3) The existing road junctions and lay-bys will be modified/extended to ensure safe access to and from the new site, and neighbouring properties.

In general, all of the above improvements will necessitate only limited excavation.

In view of the archaeological potential of the site and the surrounding area, however (see 2.0, below), West Lindsey District Council (in consultation with the Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section) decided that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out on all development groundworks.

As a result, in February 1999, the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit was commissioned by Mr R.Cox (the owner/developer) to provide

the required archaeological services. Observations on the site subsequently took place during June 1999.

The information in this document is presented with the proviso that further data may yet emerge. The Unit, its members and employees cannot, therefore, be held responsible for any loss, delay or damage, material or otherwise, arising out of this report. The document has been prepared in accordance with the terms of the Unit's Articles of Association, the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists, and *The Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage, 1991).

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies in a rich historic landscape with features of Prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval origins identified in the general surrounding area (Whitwell, 1992; Everson et al, 1991).

As part of the planning process, an appraisal of the archaeological and historical background of the site was carried out by the Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section, on behalf of West Lindsey District Council.

Previous archaeological discoveries close to the site (as recorded in the county Sites & Monuments Record) have included several Roman coins and a *Fibula* brooch (SMR Nos. 50251/TF 0062/8522; & 50252/TF 0050/8540), together with the remains of late-medieval ridge and furrow earthworks (SMR No. 53992/TF 0092/8551).

In addition, the deserted medieval village of West Firsby, a complex and well preserved series of earthworks and building remains, lies approximately 1.5km to the west of Manor Farm (see Fig.1).

This settlement is mentioned in *Domesday Book*, and comprises an axial roadway running parallel to the River Ancholme, flanked by paddocks and house sites. A manorial complex is also present at the western end of the site, close to the site of the existing West Firsby Manor Farm. It appears that the settlement had begun to decline by the 14th century, and this

decline (a result of changing agricultural practises and the *Black Death*) was complete by the 16th century (Everson *et al*, 1991).

Concentrations of Roman pottery close to the northern boundary of the medieval remains also suggest that a small Roman settlement was present on the site (Everson *et al*, 1991).

Additionally, a Roman road - *Ermine Street*, passes the site to the west, its alignment still recognisable in the line of the modern A15(T). *Ermine Street* was the original route between Lincoln and the ferries at the Humber, and thence to York. This road was one of the most important routes to the north, probably having its origins as a military supply road in the early years of the conquest.

3.0 RESULTS

Notwithstanding the relatively large areas encompassed by the development (see Figs.2 & 3), the actual ground disturbance involved was of limited depth and extent.

In the area of the new toilet block (with its associated service trenching), the maximum excavated depth was approximately 700mm, with only the new septic tank requiring deeper excavation (in this case, c.2m). Trenching at the main road junction was c.500mm in depth, while the new lay-bys and the pond clearance comprised only removal of topsoil or accumulated silt.

As a result, no evidence was revealed of any archaeological features.

In addition, all of the finds recovered during the trenching were unstratified and dated to the 19th or 20th centuries (see *Appendices C & D*).

The stratigraphic sequence revealed was very basic, and consistent across the site.

The earliest deposit, [102], comprised a moderately compacted, slightly friable, mid-light yellow-brown sandy clay which contained no obvious inclusions. This deposit was present at a depth of approximately 200mm below the existing ground level (G.L.), and continued to the limit of excavation (L.O.E.).

[102] was then overlain by a topsoil deposit, [101], which comprised a moderate-loose compaction, friable, mid grey-brown sandy silt. This layer contained flint and limestone inclusions, and occasional dumps of modern brick, tile, pottery and other material close to its upper boundary. It was present across the entire site area, bearing a coarse turf covering in most locations.

Context [100] was issued to identify unstratified finds recovered during the trenching.

4.0 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

In spite of the archaeological potential of the site and its surroundings, the results of this watching brief have proved negative.

Given the very limited nature of the actual trenching proposed, however, this was somewhat to be expected.

In the event, no sign of any ancient archaeological finds or features was revealed, with the only finds dating to the 19th and 20th centuries.

The negative results from this particular project do not of course diminish the potential for future discoveries in the area (and indeed, perhaps, on other parts of this site).

5.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit would like to thank the following for their assistance during this project: Mr R.Cox (the owner/developer), Manor Farm, East Firsby, Market Rasen, Lincolnshire, LN8 2DB for kindly funding this project; Mr J.Bonnor, Archaeology Officer, Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section, Highways & Planning Directorate, City Hall, Lincoln, LN1 1DN; Mr A.Flintham, West Lindsey District Council Planning Department, 26 Spital Terrace, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, DN21 2HG; Mr D.Cox (groundworks contractor).

6.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Everson, P L, Taylor, C C & Dunn, C J (eds)
1991. *Change and Continuity. Rural settlement
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Whitwell, J B 1992 *Roman Lincolnshire -
Revised Edition*, History of Lincolnshire 2,
Lincolnshire Local History Society, Lincoln

7.0 LHA NOTE/ARCHIVE DETAILS

7.1 LHA NOTE DETAILS

CLAU CODE: EF99

PLANNING APPLICATION Nos.: 98/P/0932

FIELD OFFICER: K.Wragg

NGR: TF 0075/8545

CIVIL PARISH: West Firsby

SMR No.: n/a

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 09/06/99 -
15/06/99

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Watching Brief

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Mr R.Cox, Manor
Farm, East Firsby, Market Rasen,
Lincolnshire, LN8 2DB

7.2 ARCHIVE DETAILS

PRESENT LOCATION: City of Lincoln
Archaeology Unit, Charlotte House, The
Lawn, Union Road, Lincoln, LN1 3BL.

FINAL LOCATION: The City and County
Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln.

MUSEUM ACCESSION No.: 63.99

ACCESSION DATE: -

APPENDIX A - ARCHIVE DEPOSITION

The archive consists of:

No.	Description
1	Site diary
1	Report
3	Context records
3	Site drawings
1 set	Colour photographs
1	Stratigraphic matrix

The primary archive material, as detailed above, is currently held by :

**The City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit,
Charlotte House,
The Lawn,
Union Road,
Lincoln,
Lincolnshire,
LN1 3BL.**

It is intended that transfer to the City and County Museum, Friars Lane, Lincoln, in accordance with current published requirements, under Museum Accession Number 63.99, will be undertaken following completion of this project.

APPENDIX B - COLOUR PLATES



Plate 1: General view of prevailing site stratigraphy (foundation trench for new toilet block) - looking east



Plate 2: Overall view of modification work to main road junction - looking north-west

***APPENDIX C - Assessment
Report on the Post-Roman
Pottery and Ceramic Building
Material***

By Jane Young

1.0 Introduction

A small group of six pottery sherds and three fragments of tile was recovered from the site. The pottery and tile were examined and recorded at basic archive level using locally recognised codenames.

2.0 Condition

The assemblage consisted of slightly worn small to medium sized sherds and tile fragments. No vessel was represented by more than one sherd.

3.0 Overall Chronology and Source

The material is entirely of early modern date, probably late 19th to mid 20th centuries.

4.0 Further work

This assemblage needs no further work and could be discarded at a future date.

APPENDIX D – LIST OF FINDS

POST-ROMAN POTTERY ARCHIVE

Ware Types By Context


<i>Context</i>	<i>Ware</i>	<i>Sherds</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Comments</i>
100	LPM	2	-	Plain china; 19-20 th century
100	LSTON	1	BOTTLE	19/20 th century
100	LPM	1	-	Yellow earthenware
100	BL	1	BOWL	Body sherd; 19/20 th century
100	BL	1	BOWL	Body sherd; 19/20 th century
100	BL	1	BOWL	Body sherd; 19/20 th century
100	BL	1	BOWL	Rim sherd; 19/20 th century

Key to Ware codes:

<i>BL</i>	Blackware
<i>LPM</i>	Early Modern/Modern pottery types
<i>LSTON</i>	Late Stonewares

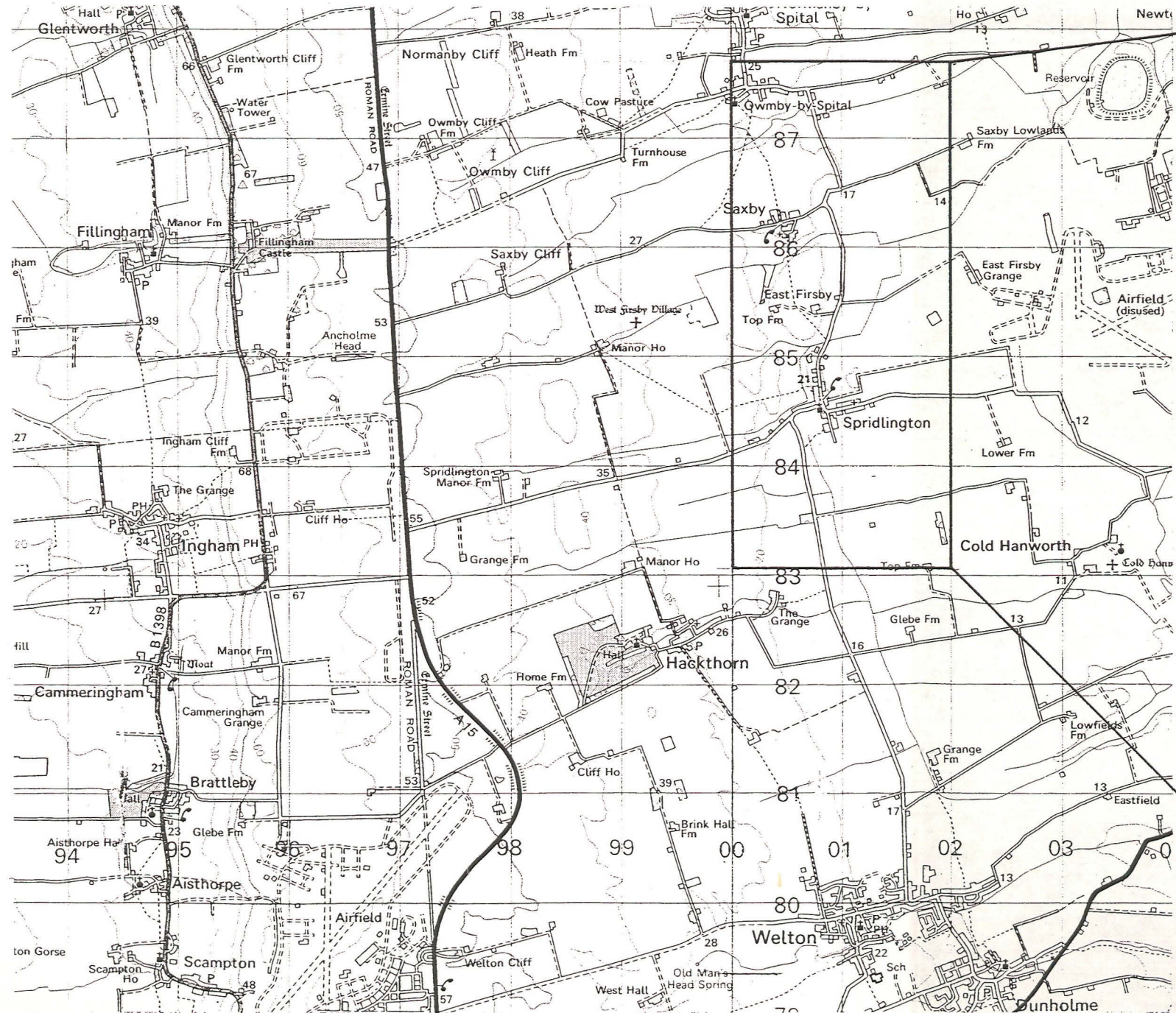


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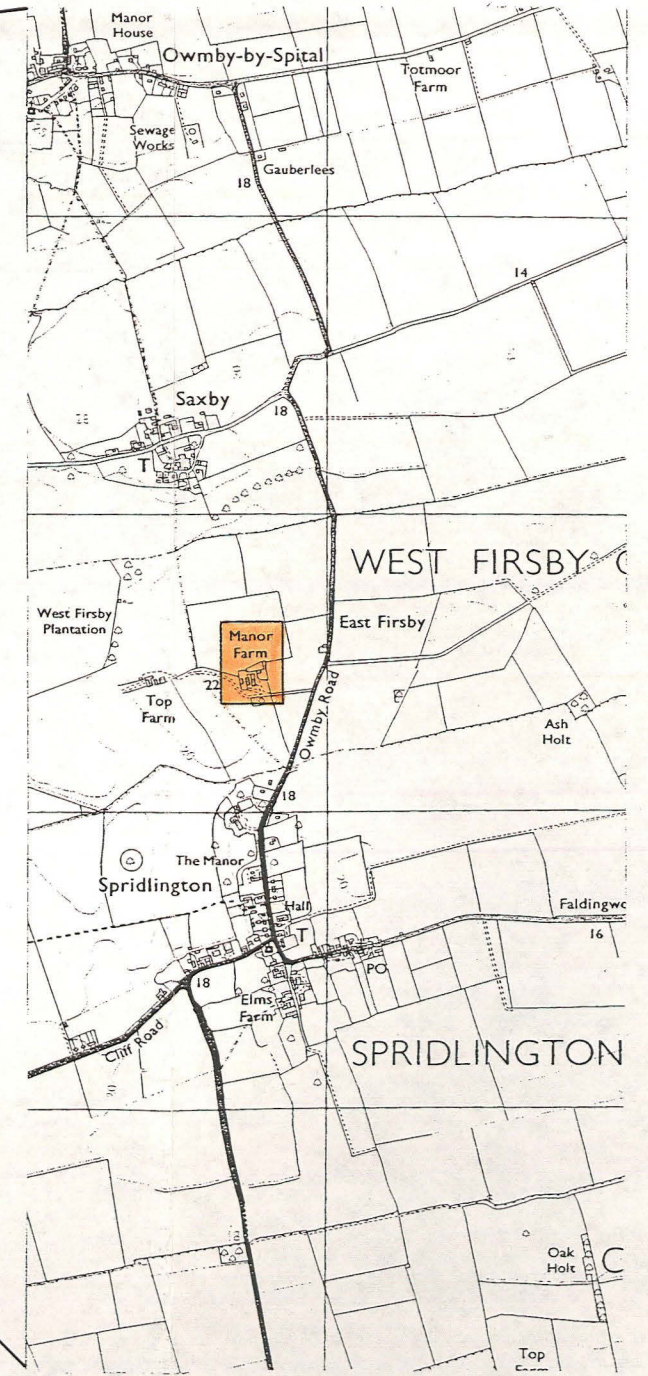
 Location of Site

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
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CLIENT: Mr R. Cox	DESCRIPTION: Site Location Plan	
SCALE:	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 63.99		

1:50 000



1:25 000

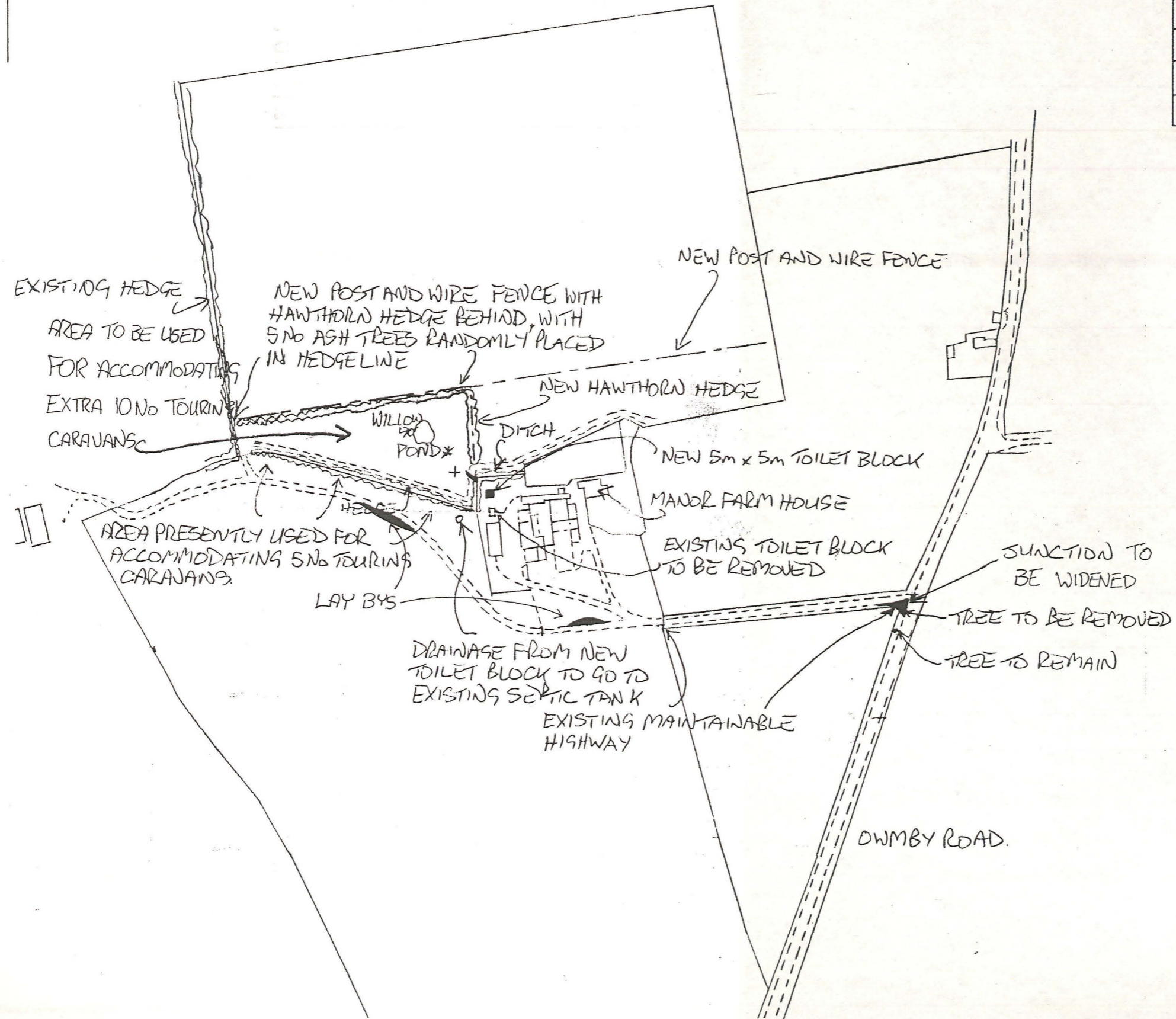


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Fig. 1

CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: EF99	PLAN/ELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: Mr R. Cox	DESCRIPTION: Plan of Proposed Development	
SCALE: 1:2500	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 63.99		

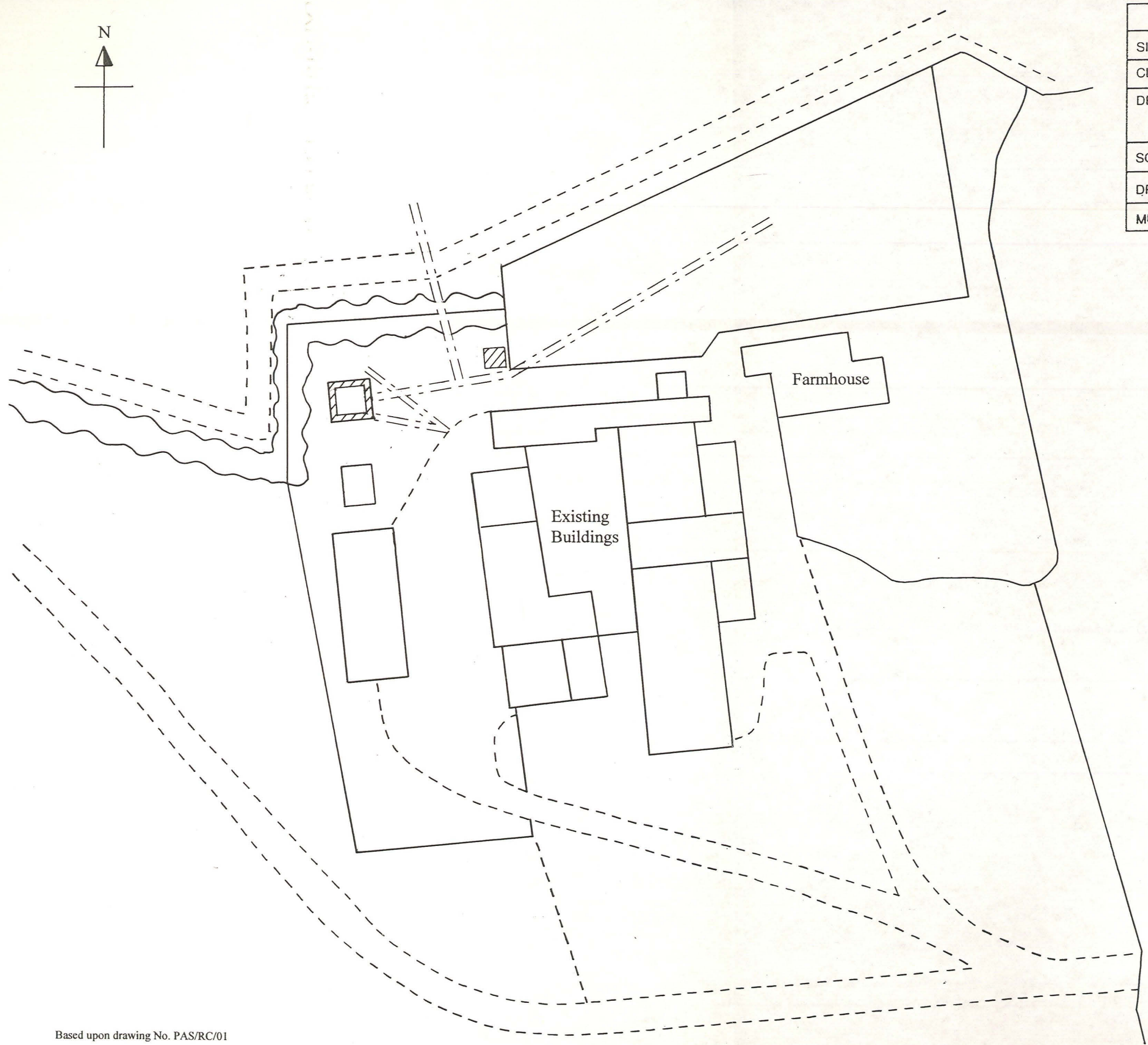


Based upon drawing No. PAS/RC/01

Fig.2



CITY OF LINCOLN ARCHAEOLOGY UNIT		
SITE CODE: EF99	PLAN/ELEV/SECTION NO:	
CLIENT: Mr R. Cox		
DESCRIPTION:	Plan of Main Excavation Area	
SCALE: 1:500	ARCHIVE NO:	
DRAWN BY:	CHECKED:	DATE:
MUSEUM ACCESSION NO: 63.99		



KEY

	Foundations for New Toilet Block
	New Septic Tank
	Drain Trenches

Based upon drawing No. PAS/RC/01

Fig.3