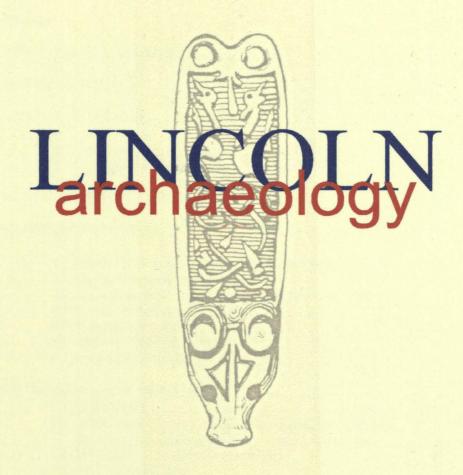
A Report to Lincolnshire County Council Highways and Planning Directorate

January 2000



THE PROPOSED BY-PASS AT WESTON, NR SPALDING, LINCS

Archaeological Desk-top Assessment and Fieldwalking

By R. Trimble

Report No.: 412

LINCOLN archaeology

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THE PROPOSED BY-PASS AT WESTON, NR SPALDING, LINCS.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-TOP ASSESSMENT AND FIELDWALKING

NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

This report has been compiled by CLAU on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council Highways and Planning Directorate. It contains the results of an initial two stage programme of non-intrusive investigation, comprising a desktop assessment and fieldwalking, along the route of the proposed A151 Weston By-pass in the parishes of Weston and Moulton. Research for the desktop assessment was carried out on an intermittent basis throughout the period 28 July - 18 August, 1999. The fieldwalking stage of the project was carried out during the period 10 - 13 December, 1999 following ploughing of the fields to be affected by the scheme.

The proposed by-pass route passes immediately to the north of the village of Weston (NGR TF2925 2500). The village is situated on the A151 Spalding to Holbeach road at a distance of c.5km to the east of Spalding in the parish of Weston and in the administrative district of South Holland.

The site lies within the the low-lying Fenland Basin, and upon a superficial geology of marine clays and silts thought to have been deposited during the Post-Roman period. The potential for archaeology in the area is closely dependent upon changes in the environment - in particular, the influence of marine flooding since the Early Mesolithic period.

The results of the desktop study and fieldwalking indicate that the focus of Saxo-Norman and Medieval occupation lies in the area to the north of St Mary's church - extending to just beyond Pinfold Lane to the west and for an indeterminate distance to the east and north. From the limited information available, the precise character of this occupation cannot be defined. However, a complex of tofts (enclosed areas of occupation) and crofts (agricultural enclosures) may be expected. The comparatively sterile area to the west of Pinfold lane may be interpreted as having lain within the open fields of the village.

Archaeological remains from earlier periods, if present at all in view of the environmental history of the site, are likely to have been buried by thick deposits of alluvium. However, the potential for encountering such material should not be discounted and should be considered as part of any further evaluation of the site and future strategy for mitigating impact of development on archaeological deposits.

THE PROPOSED BY-PASS AT WESTON, NR SPALDING, LINCS.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL DESK-TOP ASSESSMENT AND FIELDWALKING

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report has been compiled by CLAU on behalf of Lincolnshire County Council Highways and Planning Directorate. It contains the results of an initial two stage programme of non-intrusive investigation, comprising desktop assessment and fieldwalking, along the route of the proposed A151 Weston By-pass in the parishes of Weston and Moulton (Planning Application No. H.13 & 22/0412/98). Research for the desktop assessment was carried out on an intermittent basis throughout the period 2 - 18 August 1999. The fieldwalking stage of the project was carried out during the period 10 - 13 December 1999 following ploughing of the fields to be affected by the scheme.

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 SITE DESCRIPTION

2.1 Location

The village of Weston (NGR TF2925 2500) is situated on the A151 Spalding to Holbeach road at a distance of c.5km to the east of Spalding. It lies in the parish of Weston and in the administrative district of South Holland.

The proposed by-pass route (NGR TF 2904 2525 - approximate mid point along length) passes approximately 300m to the north-west of the village; deviating at its SW end from the High Road at a roundabout a short distance to the west of the Bay Tree Nursery. To the north-east of the village, the route passes between a horticultural warehouse (Lingarden) to the north and a group of buildings including St Mary's church to the south to rejoin High Road. East of this point the route passes to the north of a minor bend before once again rejoining the existing A151.

2.2 Topography and Geology

The village is surrounded by flat, low-lying arable land drained by a network of ditches. A record of current land-use, made at the time of a preliminary site inspection in late July 1999, noted a mixture of crops consisting primarily of wheat, potatoes and cabbages/kale. Land at the western end of the route, immediately adjacent to the Bay Tree Nursery, was mainly grass with some beds of what appeared to be strawberries. The proposed by-pass route intersects with several substantial drainage ditches and with two apparently long established tracks now known as Wiseman's Lane and Pinfold Lane.

The Fenland Basin, which includes the study area, probably originated through excavation by ice during a quaternary cold phase. Subsequent processes of modification within the Basin led, during the most recent glaciation (Devensian - c.20,000 - c.8,000 BC), to the deposition of the Fen or Fen Margin gravels, and then, during the Post Glacial or Flandrian (C.8,000 BC to present), to the accumulation of deposits of peat and silts to depths of up to 30m. (Hall & Coles, 13-14). Surface geology along the by-

pass route is believed to consist primarily of marine silts and clays of probable post Roman date, at surface elevations of between c.3 and 3.8m OD.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

The primary objectives of the project, as set out in a CLAU specification of 5 July 1999, were intended to:

- provide information on the archaeological and historical background to the site and immediate
 locality, and through the collection of any surface scatters of ancient artefactual material, provide
 an assessment of the potential for archaeological remains which might be contained within the
 site. Such information would be used to inform any further phases of evaluation which might be
 required.
- produce a project archive for deposition with the appropriate museum.
- provide information for accession to the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

4.0 THE DESK-TOP STUDY

4.1 Scope Of Historical and Archaeological Research

The project specification provided for consultation of the following potential sources of information.

The County Sites and Monuments Record
Museum Records
County Archives - Historic Documents
Archaeological Reports and County Journals
Aerial Photographs (if available)
Maps and other pictorial documents
Unpublished reports and archives

The study was confined to within a c.2km radius centred upon the site. A search of records and photographs contained in the County SMR revealed only a very low incidence of known archaeological sites in the area and no records of discoveries within the actual corridor of the proposed by-pass. This may reflect the geological and environmental history of the area (see below) rather than a genuine absence of archaeological sites - the potential for deposits buried beneath layers of alluvium cannot be discounted. There is no record of any formal archaeological investigations in the immediate vicinity of the study.

An essential source of information for the archaeology of the Fens in general, consists of volumes detailing the results of the Fenland Survey and the subsequent Fenland Management Programme. Although, the study area lies to the east and north of the surveyed area, general conclusions relating to the environmental history of the area and to the potential for archaeological deposits can still be drawn - particularly from work in neighbouring parishes such as Cowbit, Gosberton and Pinchbeck.

Provision was also made for a visual examination of the site to include recording of any extant features or other factors, such as previous or current land-use, that might have affected the survival or condition of archaeological remains and the effect that prevailing conditions might have on other investigation techniques.

A site visit made on 28 July, 1999 revealed no evidence for earthwork features.

4.2 The Environmental Background

The site lies within the area of comparatively elevated silt Fen surrounding the Wash to the east. In broad terms the silt Fen is characterised by silts and clays deposited as a result of successive episodes of marine inundation, while the peat Fens to the west originate from freshwater backup arising from the build-up of marine sediments.

The accumulation of Flandrian deposits within the Fenland Basin is believed to have begun with marine flooding and sedimentation during the Mesolithic period (c.8000BC-c.3300BC), leading to freshwater backup and the formation of peat in low lying areas and in the deeper river channels (Hall & Coles, 38). Marine sedimentation into landward areas continued steadily into the Neolithic period but appears to have accelerated greatly from the later third millennium, with vast areas inundated during the Bronze Age (c.2000-700BC - Hall & Coles, 65). Extensive marine incursions and still wetter conditions prevailed during the Iron Age (c.700BC-43AD), creating extremely inhospitable conditions.

A drop in sea level allowed extensive settlement to take place for the first time upon the marine silts during the Romano-British period. However wetter conditions, arising from renewed marine flooding led, during the late Roman period (probably at some time in the 4th century AD), to the widespread abandonment of these settlements.

Improved conditions during the Early Anglo-Saxon period may have encouraged resettlement but increased flooding during the Late Saxon period (AD850 - AD1066) appears to have once again led to a retreat from the silt Fens.

4.3 Lower Palaeolithic to Iron Age (c.500,000BC - AD43)

Prehistoric remains, if present in the Weston area, are likely to be masked by accumulated depths of alluvial sediment, deposited from the Mesolithic period (c.8000BC-c.3300BC) onwards. In the neighbouring parish of Cowbit, for example, Mesolithic land surfaces have been located beneath 10m of alluvium (Hayes & Lane, 176-177).

It is only during the Iron Age that the first conclusive evidence for archaeological activity upon Flandrian sediments occurs, with limited settlement and salt production taking place on areas of higher ground created by the sedimentation of marine roddens (Hall & Coles, 92).

4.4 Romano-British (AD43-c.AD450)

The onset of relatively dry conditions permitted for the first time, during the Romano-British period, widespread settlement on the Flandrian marine silts (Hall & Coles, 114). Post Roman alluvial deposits extend over the immediate study area, but aerial photographs show, in unobscured areas to the south and west, a densely occupied landscape characterised by settlements and enclosures linked by a network of droveways. It has been suggested that the colonisation process began during the 1st century AD, with pioneers settling on the raised silts alongside extinct tidal creeks (or roddens). The rate of settlement may then have accelerated rapidly in the 2nd century AD (Hallam, 40-47).

It is thought that increased marine flooding during the Late Roman period (probably at some time in the 4th century AD) led to the widespread abandonment of settlements and much of the Roman landscape on the seaward side of the silts now lies buried beneath deposits of marine clay and silt. The resulting discontinuity of settlement evidence is apparent on aerial photographs which reveal fragmentary and incomplete pattern of settlement with no sites east of the South Forty Foot Drain (Hall & Coles, 114).

Weston lies at distance of c. 2km to the south of the Roman 'coastline' as defined by Hallam, in the zone of post-Roman marine inundation. Research for this assessment has not produced any evidence for Roman occupation beneath later sediments in the immediate vicinity of the study area. However,

Romano-British remains have been located beneath alluvial deposits, further to south - for example, along the Moulton Chapel to Whaplode pipeline at TF 2825 1812 - TF 3210 1476 (Dymond 1996). The precise position of the Roman coastline has yet to be determined and the possibility that similar deposits extend northwards towards the study area cannot be discounted.

4.5 Anglo-Saxon (c.AD400 - AD1066)

The extent to which the silt fens were abandoned at the end of the Romano-British period is uncertain. However, there is archaeological evidence for occupation during the early Anglo-Saxon period (AD400-AD650) centring on similar locations to those favoured during the Romano-British period namely elevated areas of ground towards the landward edge of the silt fen. Evidence for some continuity of settlement from the Romano-British period has been found on excavated sites in the parishes of Gosberton and Pinchbeck to the north of Weston. During the Early and Middle Saxon periods (c.AD450-AD850) a dispersed pattern of settlement appears to have prevailed, with settlements usually located away from the sites of medieval and later villages (Hall & Coles 122-124).

The Late Saxon period (c.AD850 - AD1066) brought a return to increasingly wet conditions leading to the abandonment, by the 9th century AD, of a number of recently investigated Early and Middle Saxon sites in the parish of Gosberton (Hall & Coles, 124). The increasing threat of marine inundation at this time may have prompted the construction of the Sea Bank, an earthwork barrier (probably incorrectly interpreted as Roman by seventeenth century antiquarians and thus named 'the Roman Bank') extending around the whole of the Wash. The proximity of Weston and other early siltland villages to the Sea Bank suggests that the barrier was in existence by the Late Saxon period (op cit, 127).

Late Saxon settlement on the Lincolnshire silt fen is characterised by a nucleated pattern similar to that which had already become established on the fen edge and uplands (Hall & Coles, 124). These later nucleated settlements tend to be situated near to the Wash - probably in response to the advance of freshwater flooding from the peat fens to the west (op cit, 131), .

The village of Weston is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 (see below) and can therefore be assumed to have been existence during the Late Saxon period. The place-name Weston, comprising the Old English elements west (west) and tun (a farmstead or village), probably refers to the settlement's position to the west in relation to the neighbouring parish and village of Moulton (Cameron, 137)) or alternatively to its position as the most westerly of all of the settlements to the east of the Welland (Marratt, 206).

Weston (settlement of Weston - SMR ref. PRN 20331) and the neighbouring parish of Moulton both lay within the Wapentake (the Anglo-Saxon/Scandanavian unit of land division) of Elloe and are mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086. The survey records Guy of Craon as having 15 *bovates* (a Latin translation of the Scandanavian 'oxgang' denoting an eighth part of a *curate* or ploughland) of land taxable, and land for 15 ploughs in Weston and Moulton, while six villagers had half a plough of land. Ivo Tallebois had, in Weston and Moulton, a jurisdiction, 10 curacates of land and 1 bovate taxable, and land for as many ploughs and oxen. The survey records that 26 freemen, 31 villagers, and 20 smallholders had 20 ploughs.

4.6 Medieval (AD1066 -c. AD1539)

During the medieval period, the Lincolnshire silt fen, was characterised by a settlement pattern of nucleated villages within an open field system and a complex system of tracks with more dispersed settlement extending along droveways. The older villages as recorded by the Domesday survey appear to have been concentrated upon the more elevated silts around the Wash, with the later, linear settlements developing along droves following the courses of ancient roddens. Monastic ownership of land in the silt fens, in common with the Fenland as a whole, was widespread during the medieval period and is represented by numerous granges and moated sites. These were usually founded away from established areas of settlement (Hall & Coles, 140).

During the medieval period a predominantly arable economy had developed on the Lincolnshire silt fens as further reclamation of land took place - with expansion beyond the original Saxon core to include areas on the seaward side of the Sea Bank. While the Saxon Sea Bank and Fen Bank continued to offer protection against flooding, the main elements of drainage were, by this time, entirely artificial (Hall & Coles 145-147).

It is possible that a set of property boundaries in the western part of the village (now covered by the Bay Tree Nursery), shown on an 1800 plan by J G Maxwell of land in Spalding and Weston 'as benefited by the Lord's Drain' (LAO ref. PSJ 13/14), and a tithe award map of Weston parish dated 1838 (LAO ref. F.31), preserve a part of the original layout of the medieval village. The properties are generally rectilinear in plan and extend between High Road to the south and a sinuous boundary to the north. The latter feature is still present, forming the northern boundary of the Bay Tree Nursery.

St Mary's Church (SMR Ref. PRN 22112) lies at the eastern end of the village of Weston. Its earliest surviving elements are Early English (c.1250) with Decorated (c.1290-1350) and Perpendicular (1335/50-1530) additions. Restoration work to the church was carried out in 1860-3 and 1882-5 (Pevsner, 793). The medieval remains of a Grade II Listed standing stone cross in the churchyard, to the south-west of the south porch, have been included in the Schedule of Ancient Monuments (Monument no. 22691, 2 November 1995) compiled and maintained by the Secretary of State under Section 1 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, as amended. The monument is regarded as a good example of its type and is believed to stand in or close to its original position.

The sheduled remains of the domestic chapel of St Nicholas (Monument No.45, SMR No.20011) and traces of a moat represent the only surviving traces of Wykeham Hall - the country residence of the Prior of Spalding built in 1311. This site lies c.2km to the north-west of Weston at TF27633 26433. An iron object, possibly a medieval spear or later shepherds crook was found close to the Hall site at TF 276 263.

An undated earthwork moated site (SMR No.20329) at TF 2992 2652, c.1.5km to the north of the village may also be attributed to the medieval period.

4.7 Post Medieval (c.AD1540-c.AD1800)

The site of a demolished small early 17th century manor house, Wimberly Hall (SMR No.20330), lies at c.200m to the north of the by-pass route at the eastern end of the village (TF 2942 2544)

The previously mentioned maps (see section above) show other landscape features which almost certainly predate the 19th century. These include the track now known as Pinfold Lane but marked on the earlier plans as Hurn Lane, which runs northwards from High Road before passing to the west of the Lingarden horticultural Warehouse, and Wiseman's Gate (formerly Bacon Lane) which now lies within the property of the Bay Tree Nursery. Wiseman's Bank, which lies a short distance to the north of the proposed by-pass route, is shown as Bacon Bank.

5.0 THE PROGRAMME OF FIELDWALKING

Owing to heavy demands on the time of the available finds specialists, it has not been possible at this stage to produce detailed finds listings. The following discussion is for this reason based upon a set of preliminary pottery and tile spot dates by the project's Anglo-Saxon and later pottery specialist, Jane Young, augmented by an approximate count of pottery by period by the author of this report. It is anticipated that detailed archive finds list will be available by the end of January, following which they, and a more detailed discussion of potential, will be included as an appendix in a final version of the report.

Two sections of the by-pass route, namely, the western end between High Road, and two linear stands of conifers, and the eastern end where it traverses land immediately to the north of the existing A151,

are not scheduled for ploughing in the immediate future and were therefore unavailable for fieldwalking.

In general, soils along the proposed by-pass route comprised mid brown clayey silts. Sections 1 and 2 had only recently been ploughed and were therefore relatively unweathered, Section 3 had been ploughed and harrowed to produce a fine silt while Section 4 in similar conditions had already been planted with a young cereal crop. Sections 5 and 6 had been ploughed and had weathered to varying degrees. Only two lines were walked along the latter Sections - the northern part of the route being covered by rough ground and parts of the Lingarden property. Of these two lines the southern line proved to be the more productive in terms of finds retrieval, much of the centre line having been compressed by farm traffic moving along the field edges.

5.1 Methodology

The fieldwalking was carried out on three 25m spaced transects along a 50m wide corridor centred upon the proposed route of the by-pass. The centre line was measured from a 1:2500 map from fixed points. A straight line was then walked between the set out points. The flanking lines were measured in from the centre line to an accuracy of c.2m.

Finds collection was on a total recovery basis within c.2m wide zones along the walked lines. Obviously modern material was located by Section while more archaeologically significant material, where found, was collected in much smaller units.

5.2 Lower Palaeolithic - Late Saxon (c.500 000BC - AD1066)

Fieldwalking produced no conclusive evidence for activity from these periods. This is thought to confirm the conclusions of the desktop study - that any Prehistoric, Romano-British, and possibly Anglo-Saxon remains would have been sealed by deposits of alluvium.

5.3 Saxo-Norman - LateMedieval (c.AD1066 - c.AD1540)

A small assemblage of approximately 20 pottery sherds, ranging between Saxo-Norman and Late Medieval in date, was collected from an area extending between a point c.25m to the west of Pinfold Lane and Point 3 (Section 5 - see Fig.3) in the area immediately to the north of the eastern end of the village - with the main focus occurring between the western end of the scatter and Point 2. This could reflect a bias in collection due to varying ground conditions but, in view of its proximity to the church, probably does indicate a focus of occupation. Random walking around the area immediately to the west of Pinfold Lane indicated the presence of a fairly dense scatter of material suggestive of settlement.

The fieldwalked areas within the remaining western part of the by-pass route, extending from the Baytree Nursery to the western limit of the artefact scatter as defined above, produced no evidence for significant Saxo-Norman/ Medieval activity. This absence could reflect relatively unfavourable conditions for artefact identification and recovery but probably reflects a difference in land-use throughout the period; namely that the area of low finds density lay beyond the immediate zone of occupation.

5.4 Post Medieval (c.AD1540 - c.AD1800)

Post Medieval activity is represented by a small assemblage of pottery and tile (c.10 sherds) collected from the same general area as the Medieval scatter as defined above. This may reflect a degree of continuity of settlement or movement of material from the present areas of settlement.

5.5 19th Century/Modern

A low density of modern material including shotgun cartridges, pottery, brick and tile was found along the entire length of the proposed by-pass route.

5.6 Note on the Ceramic Material

A preliminary inspection of the ceramics indicates that the material is in a generally poor condition, the earlier material being in better condition than the later. Plough damage was noted on the 15th - 17th century material, suggesting that the earlier material may have been freshly disturbed while the later material has been in the ploughsoil for a longer period of time.

6.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The combined desktop study and fieldwalking has succeeded in further defining the probable limits of the Saxo-Norman/ Medieval settlement of Weston. At the north-eastern end of the village, occupation may have clustered around the focal point of the church extending as far as Pinfold Lane to the west and for an unknown distance to the north. To the south-west, as suggested by the desktop study, settlement may have extended along the High Road into the area now occupied by the Bay Tree Nursery. The precise character of this settlement is difficult to determine from the limited evidence available but could include the remains of tofts (enclosed areas of occupation) and crofts (agricultural enclosures) typical of a medieval village. The archaeologically sterile areas to the west of the by-pass route possibly lay beyond the zone of occupation within areas of medieval arable cultivation represented by the village's open fields.

The foregoing discussion has demonstrated that there is a significant potential for remains of Saxo-Norman (and possibly Late Saxon) date at comparatively shallow depth (probably immediately beneath the modern ploughsoil) in the area to the north-east of the village. Should this prove to be the case, any future development in this zone is likely to have an adverse impact upon significant archaeological remains.

The desktop study has shown that any remains from earlier periods from the Palaeolithic period onwards are likely to have been buried by thick deposits of alluvium. However, the potential for encountering such material should not be discounted and needs to considered as part of any further evaluation of the site and future strategy for mitigating impact of development on archaeological deposits.

In view of the information arising from the present study, it is suggested that any further investigation of the site, which may be required as part of pre-construction evaluation of the site, be directed towards confirming the presence or absence of Late Saxon and/ or Saxo-Norman/ Medieval remains in the area of the artefact scatter and if present to establish its extent, character and state of preservation.

Should further evaluation of the site be required, it is also essential that the character and chronological sequence of deposition of alluvial sediments across the site be determined to permit an assessment of the potential for remains of earlier periods and to evaluate the potential for environmental information.

7.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author of this report would like to thank the staff of the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Records Office, in particular Sarah Grundy and Mark Bennet, for assistance in locating relevant archaeological information.

CLAU Report No.:412: The Proposed By-pass at Weston, nr Spalding, Lincs. Archaeological Desk-top Assessment and Fieldwalking

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9.0 LHA NOTE/ARCHIVE DETAILS

9.1 LHA NOTE DETAILS

CLAU CODE: WES99

PLANNING APPLICATION NO.: H.13 & 22/0412/98

FIELD OFFICER: R.Trimble

NGR: TF 2904 2525

CIVIL PARISH: Weston

SMR No .:

DATE OF INTERVENTION: 28.07.99 - 13.12.99

TYPE OF INTERVENTION: Archaeological Desk-Top Assessment and Fieldwalking

UNDERTAKEN FOR: Lincolnshire County Council Highways and Planning Directorate

9.2 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.: 153.99

ACCESSION DATE: -

APPENDIX A - SITES LISTED ON THE LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY SITES & MONUMENTS RECORD

SMR NO.	NGR	PERIOD	DESCRIPTION
20331	TF 29250 25000	Medieval	Settlement of Weston
22112	TF 29240 25150	Medieval	St Mary's Church, Weston
22111	TF 29220 25150	Medieval	Cross in St Mary's churchyard, Weston
20330	TF 29420 25440	Post Medieval	Site of Wimberley Hall
20329	TF 29920 26520	Medieval	Moated site
20011	TF 27633 26433	Medieval	Wykeham Chapel, Nr Spalding, Weston
20351	TF 30700 24000	Medieval	Settlement of Moulton
20352		Post Medieval?	Windmill in Moulton

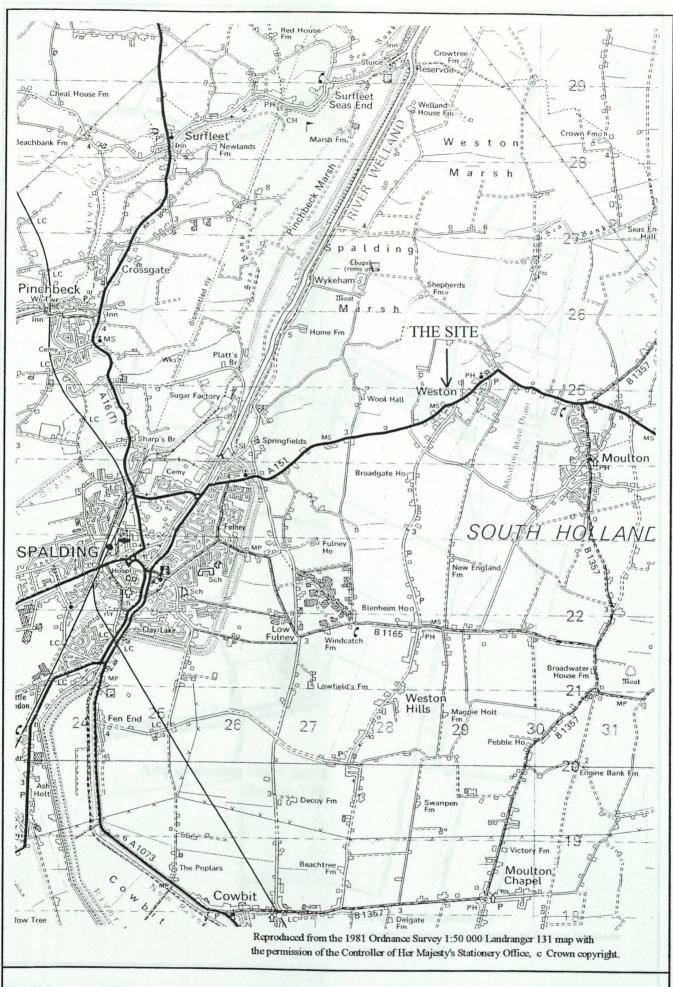




Fig.2

