



LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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Heighington
(New Water Main, Washingborough to Branston Moor)

NGR: TF 023 708 - 060 690; 054 700 - 068 708; and 039 678

Site Code: HWM 99

LCNCC Museum Accn. No.: 73.99

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report prepared for
Anglian Water Services Ltd

by G. Tann

LAS Report No. 411

April 2000

Lincolnshire County Council
Archaeology Section

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- Fig. 2** Location of observation 1 noted in the text. (Based on a reduced scale copy of 1:2,500 dwg. no. WAT-02244/1A, supplied by Anglian Water Services. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).
- Fig. 3** Location of observations 2- 18 noted in the text. (Based on a reduced scale copy of 1:2,500 dwg. no. WAT-02244/2A, supplied by Anglian Water Services. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).
- Fig. 4** Location of observations 19- 24 noted in the text. (Based on a reduced scale copy of 1:2,500 dwg. no. WAT-02244/3, supplied by Anglian Water Services. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A).
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Heighington
(New Water Main, Washingborough to Branston Booths and Branston Moor)
Archaeological Watching Brief

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Summary

Monitoring of small trenches for a new main close to known Romano-British features found no evidence for significant archaeological deposits or features.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned by Anglian Water Services Ltd in April 1999 to conduct an archaeological watching brief during directional drilling and excavation of a pipe trench for a replacement water main, mostly within Heighington parish (Fig. 1). Monitoring of specific sections had been requested by the County Archaeological Officer in a letter to the Conservation Section of Anglian Water Services Ltd, dated 9th February 1999. Intermittent monitoring by Geoff Tann and Naomi Field took place between April 6th and June 28th 1999; 22 monitoring visits were made.

Archaeological Background

Archaeological monitoring was requested because the pipeline route along the B1190 Washingborough-Bardney road passed beside the Car Dyke Roman canal (Scheduled Ancient Monument SAMs 275, 276 and 311). The Car Dyke appears to have been created in the Roman period by linking natural watercourses with an artificially excavated canal, which extended between Washingborough and Northamptonshire. It probably served a drainage function at the edge of the fen, as well as a communication and trade role.

Monitoring was also requested along Middle Fen Lane because of known Bronze Age barrows (burial sites) close to the road, and at Branston Moor, where Roman and medieval finds have been reported.

The Watching Brief (Figs. 2-5)

The total length of pipeline identified as being of potential archaeological interest comprised about 5.5km. Most of this was directionally drilled, with small access trenches at intervals of between 50m and 100m. Observation numbers were assigned by LAS for recording purposes.

Fen Road

1. The new main was directionally drilled and pipe-burst along the northern verge of the B1190 to the east of Washingborough, beside parts of the Car Dyke. The trench positions were

over ground that had previously been disturbed by the former main. An intermittent watching brief along this section checked that no encroachment onto the Scheduled Ancient Monument occurred.

2. Fen Road diverges from the alignment of the Roman canal to the west of Glebe Farm. The Catchwater Drain serves as an open watercourse alongside the south edge of the road, crossing to the northern side close to Moor Farm. A trench in the bank side close to the entrance to Moor Farm revealed the mixed backfill in the trench for the existing metal water pipe, and showed deposits that had been cut through for that main (Pl. 1). From a depth of about 0.75m from the road level, the deposits exhibit horizontal banding, and are apparently earlier than the watercourse and its embankment. The upper layers of this material were compacted grey and yellow sands in thin lenses, with iron-panned striations. The lowest layer exposed was yellow sand, with a clayier version above it. A thin band containing small rounded pebbles could represent an ancient ground surface.

Heighington Fen

3 & 4. Trenches opposite 'Conquest' and Brook Farm revealed only sand below the modern topsoil.

5. A trench in the road opposite 'The Sycamores' cut through a thin mixed layer of brick rubble and soil at a depth of 0.45m, within the hardcore for the road. This could be a post-medieval road surface, overlying a layer of limestone chips. 0.6m below the tarmac surface was an orange/brown sand deposit.

6. 60m SW of the junction with Five Mile Lane, a trench in the verge cut through 0.4m of concrete road strengthening. A 0.2m thick layer of dark brown sandy loam lay beneath this, covering 0.2m of orange sand. Between depths of 0.8m and 1.15m was a deposit of discoloured sand, with orange sand at the trench base. These deposits could be upcast material within the western bank of the Roman canal.

The depression of the Car Dyke canal is visible in arable fields on the southern side of the Five Mile Lane road junction (Pls. 2-4).

Five Mile Lane

7. At the SW end of Five Mile Lane the trench was excavated in the northern camber of the main road (Pl. 5). Here the tarmac was 0.7m thick, on a 0.1m thick bedding layer of flint gravel and pebbles. This material could be the remains of a post-medieval road surface, but in this position, it might be a recent road improvement on a sharp bend. Below the gravel was a thin lense of discoloured sand, with an equally thin leached sand layer beneath it. A yellow sand layer was present 0.9m below the road surface. The discoloured sand could possibly be a former peat layer,

but the extent to which deposits have been truncated by the road improvement is unknown. There was no apparent eastern upcast bank of the Car Dyke.

8. 20m NE of the road junction, the tarmac was 0.3m thick, overlying a thin band of gravel and 0.15m of limestone rubble. Orange sand was present 0.5m below the tarmac surface.

9. Outside 'Croft View', the thin tarmac road surface was bedded onto 0.1m of gravel and limestone rubble. Beneath this was 0.1m of light brown sand and loam, covering 0.15m of leached white sand. A 0.15m thick dark grey layer below this was suspected to have been a dried peat layer. The underlying layers were 0.3m of orange sand and over 0.1m of yellow sand at the trench base.

10. In front of Ings Farm, opposite the lane to the NW, the trench cut through 0.35m of tarmac and a 0.2m thick layer of gravel beneath it. This layer may have been a post-medieval track surface, leading to the ferry across the Witham. The 0.1m thick layer of black silt beneath the gravel could represent a dried peat deposit. Below the black silt was 0.15m of orange sand, and a coarse yellow sand at the trench base.

11. 100m SE of the Five Mile Lane junction, a small pit in the northern roadside verge revealed disturbed material in the existing pipe trench backfill.

12. 200m SE of the Five Mile Lane junction, opposite 'The Willows', the 0.4m thick topsoil covered a 0.25m thick layer of discoloured sand. Clean sand was present 0.65m below the verge surface.

13. The existing water main had disturbed deposits to a depth of 0.85m. Under the main was 0.25m of dark orange sand, with a white leached sand at the trench base.

14. Midway between Poplar Bank Farm and the Double Dyke Pumping Station, a trench was cut in the roadside verge, about 1m higher than the field surface to the north. The topsoil was 0.35m thick, over 0.55m of light brown sand. Beneath the sand was 0.1m of grey/brown, slightly clayey sand, containing small shells. This overlay a fine silt that may have been a dried peat.

It seems that this sequence could be evidence of an artificially raised feature, probably either a road causeway or an upcast bank north of the Car Dyke. The raised ground has been used as drier ground for the modern road.

19. The pipe was laid to the south of the road SE of Double Dyke Road. Ground here had been disturbed by an existing main.

20. 200m SE of Double Dyke Road, the trench cut through 0.7m of dark brown loam beneath the roadside verge. Below this was 0.3m of brown clay loam, with light brown silt clay at the trench base. These deposits probably represent upcast material from the adjacent Roman canal.

Middle Fen Lane

15. 130m NE of the junction with the Washingborough-Bardney Road, the topsoil covered a layer of sand, with peaty clay below it at between 0.7m and 1m below the surface. Yellow sand was revealed at the trench base.

16. No peat was seen in this trench.

17. The topsoil overlay dark brown sand, with peat present between 0.7m and 0.9m below the verge. Beneath the peat was yellow sand.

18. The 0.2m thick topsoil covered 0.2m of yellow/brown clay. Beneath this was 0.2m of dark brown material, which was thought to be redeposited peat (perhaps derived from ditch excavation or cleaning). A 0.2m thick layer of sand and gravel was suspected to have been a metalling surface for Middle Fen Lane, but may have been introduced naturally. Peat was encountered 0.8m below the verge surface.

Corporation Farm

In the vicinity of Corporation Farm, the Car Dyke is crossed obliquely by the B1190 Bardney Road, at the confluence of the modern channel of the Car Dyke and Branston Delph. It was hoped that information about the Car Dyke would be gained from monitoring works at this junction.

21. 150m NW of the road junction, the trench on the southern side of the road cut through 0.35m of topsoil, into a 0.45m deep fine black loam deposit. Beneath this was light brown clay. The dark loam may be derived from peat or other organic matter within a former watercourse. It is possible that the Car Dyke has been realigned here to improve the bridging point.

22. A trench where the watercourse enters a bridge to flow under the main road revealed the various road make-up deposits to be 0.9m thick. Up to 0.5m of this may have been from post-medieval metalled surfaces, incorporating brick dust and gravel (Pl. 6). Below this material was 0.07m of grey silt and 0.1m of black peat, over a light grey silty clay.

Moor Lane

23. 30m SW of the junction with the Washingborough-Bardney Road, a small watercourse runs NW-SE along the rear of properties fronting onto the main road (Pls. 7 and 8). On the northern side of Moor Lane, the ground drops, with 'Stone Cottages' built on the lower ground (Pl. 9). It is conceivable that the minor watercourse was previously linked with the existing Car Dyke channel

near 22; this might represent the original course rather than the existing drain labelled on Ordnance Survey maps.

24. The closest trench to the minor watercourse exposed no deposits of interest. Below the tarmac surface was brick rubble and ash, forming either a bedding layer or an earlier lane surface (Pl. 10). Beneath this was a grey/brown silty clay.

Branston Moor

25. Excavation of an open trench was monitored from the railway bridge to the track west of 'Moorlands' (Pl. 11). No trace of archaeological features or artefacts was seen. Below the road surface was a layer of mixed limestone brash and clay loam, with more clayey deposits below (Pl. 12). Variations in crop colour and growth were seen in an adjacent field to the north, possibly caused by archaeological features (Pl. 13).

Conclusion

Despite the close proximity of known archaeological features to the monitored sections of this scheme, no archaeological remains were found. The watching brief found that much of the monitored ground had been considerably disturbed in the past when existing services had been installed. The details of peat and sand deposits recorded during this project may prove of use in the future for establishing the extent of peat and the sequence of deposits along the Witham valley.

Acknowledgements

LAS is grateful to Anglian Water Services Ltd (especially Matthew Vickers) and their contractors Morrisons, for their co-operation during the monitoring project.

Illustrations were prepared by Mick McDaid, and the report was collated and produced by Jane Frost.

Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
7th April 2000

Archive Summary

Anglian Water Services plans

Annotated copies of AWS plans

Photographs (colour prints, LAS film nos. 99/30/7-12, 23-28; 99/39/5-10; 99/60/13; 99/74/8-10; 99/76/32,33, including those used in this report)

Correspondence

Field notes/sketch

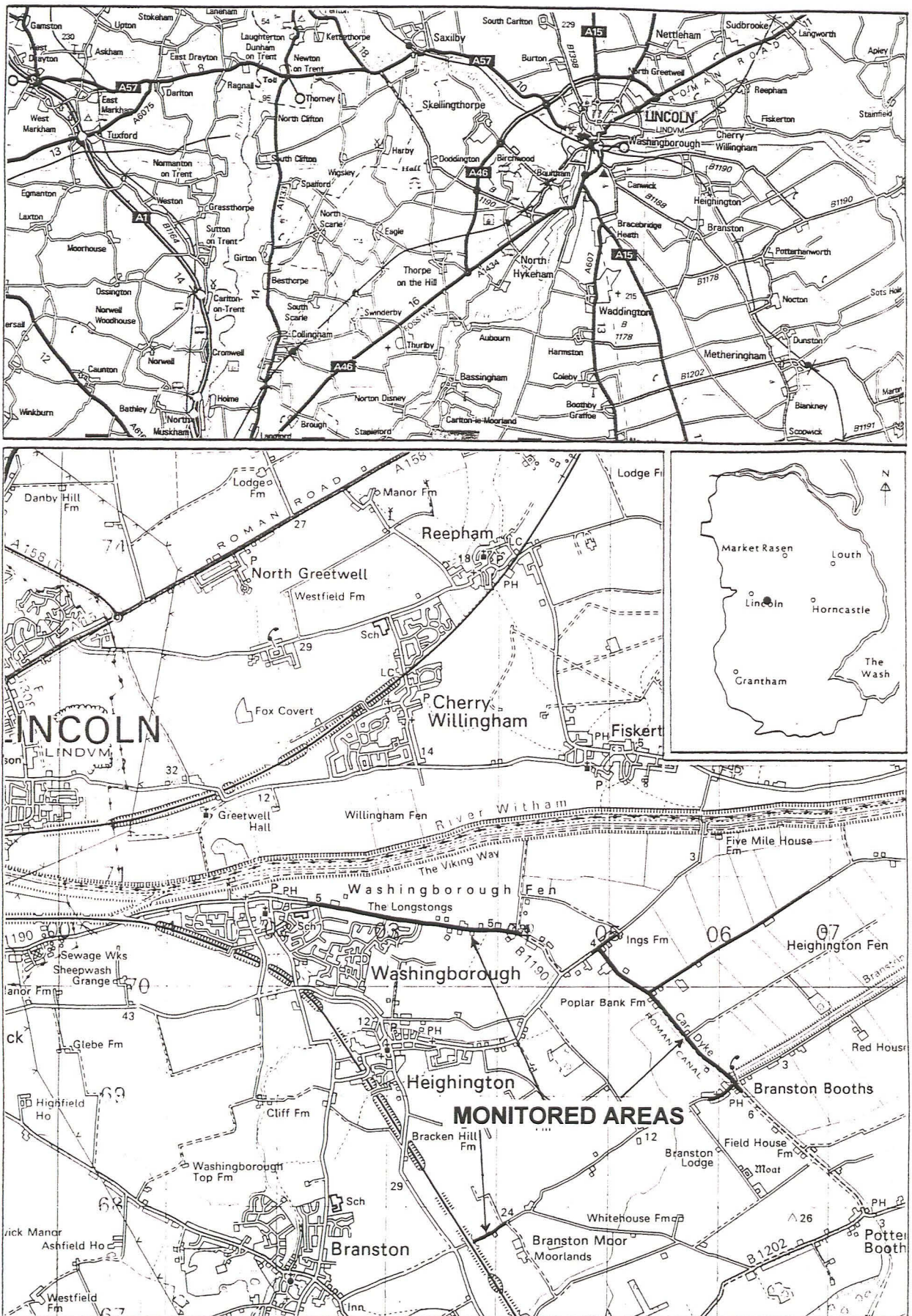


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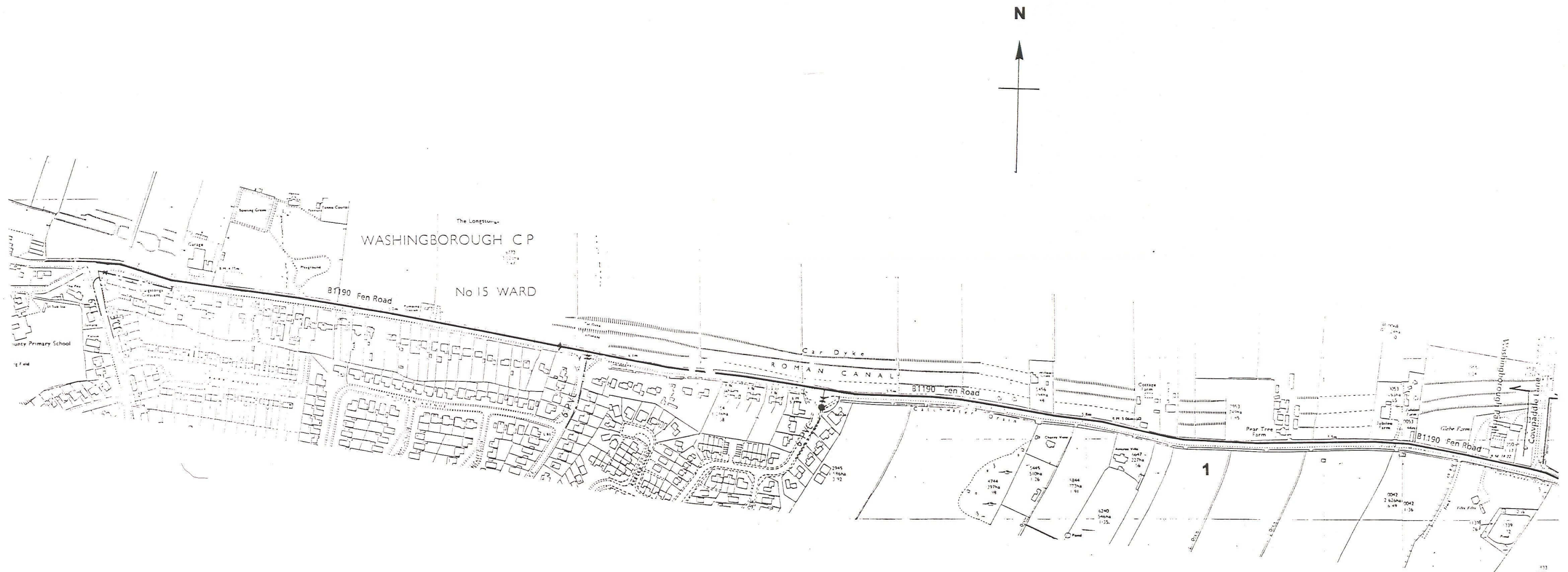


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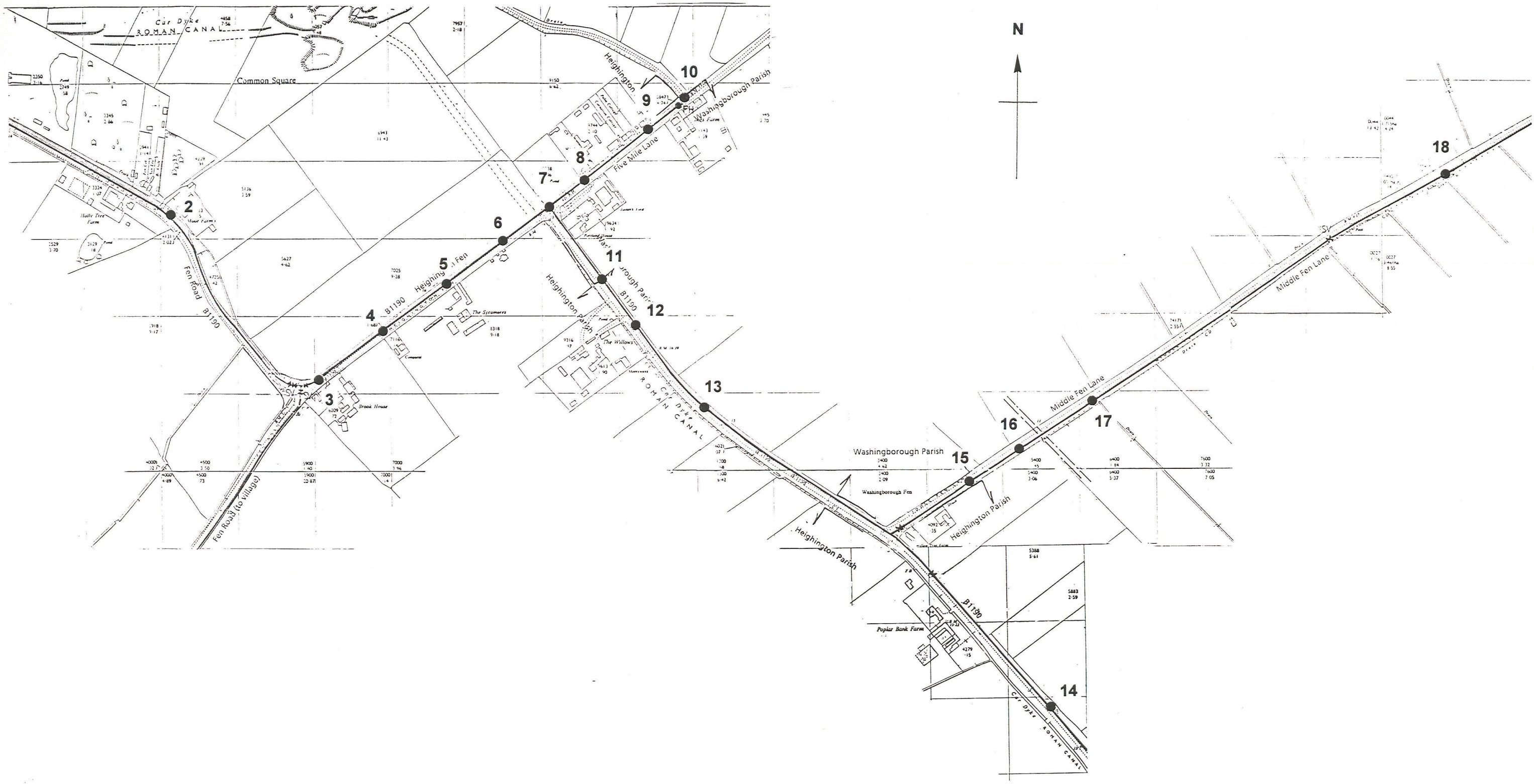


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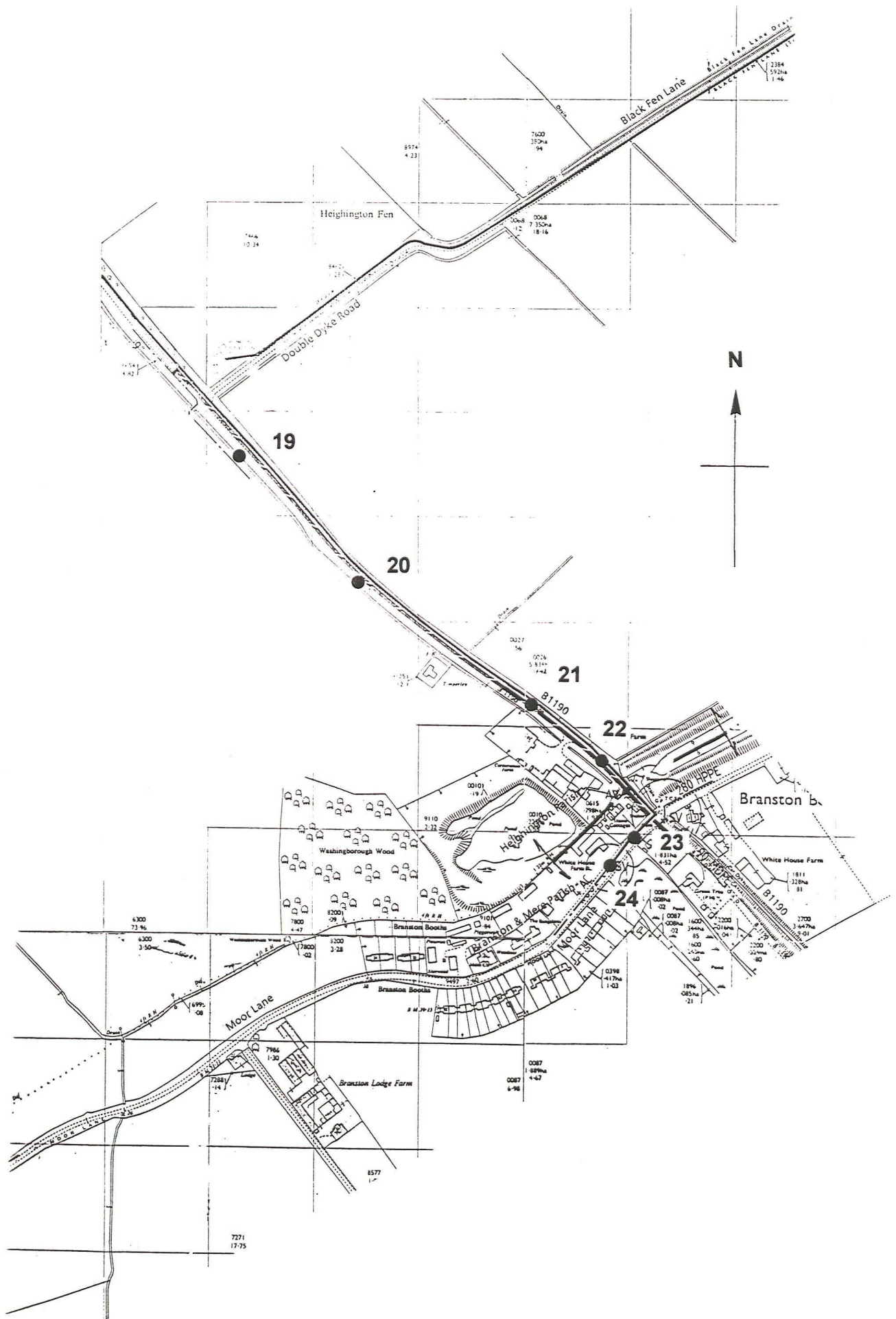


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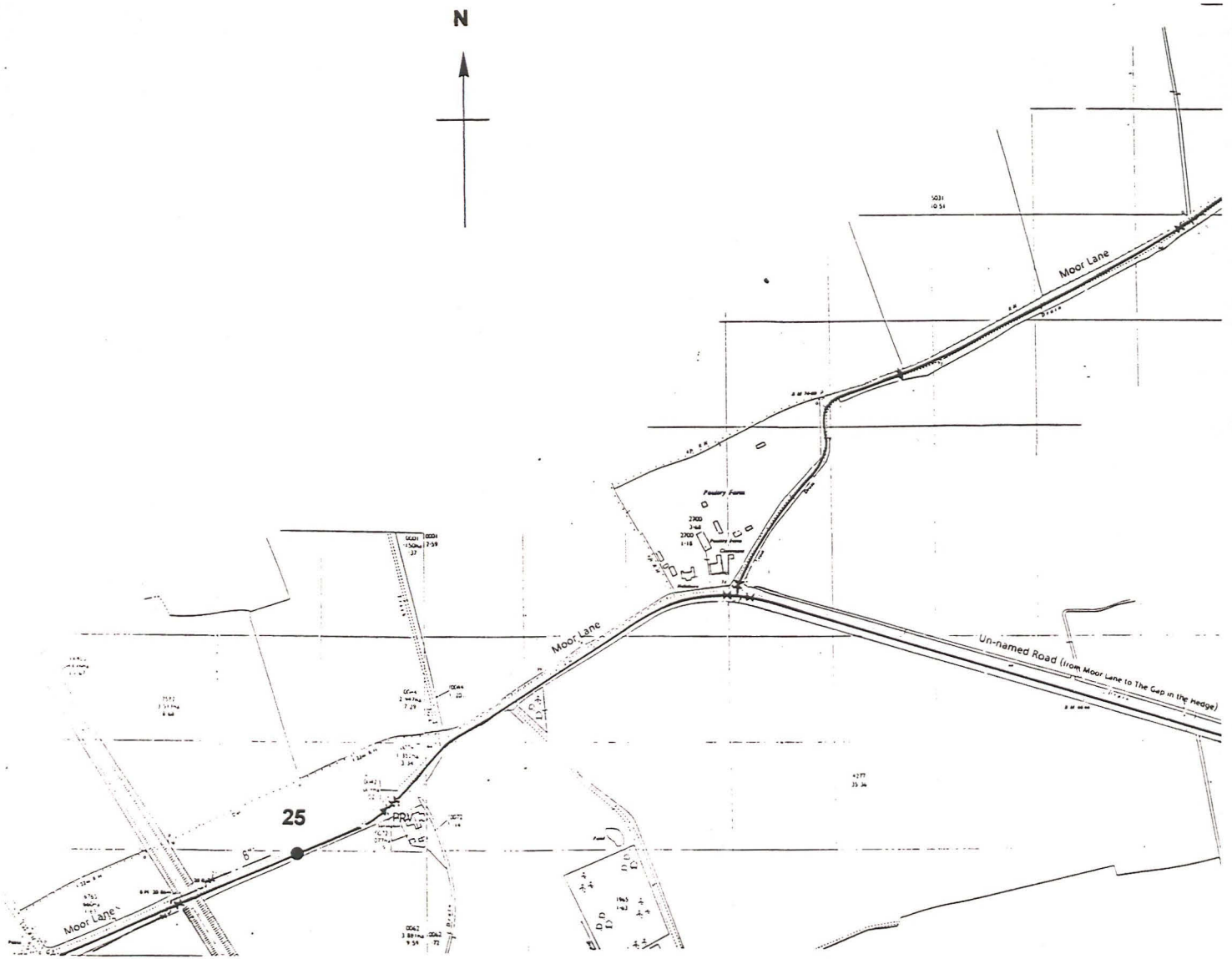


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Pl. 1 Sequence of deposits 2, in the roadside verge near Moor Farm. The existing pipe trench is on the right side of the red/white scale. (Looking north, scale divisions 0.5m).

Pl. 2 Line of the Car Dyke Roman canal (parallel to hedge, top right) at the junction of Heighington Fen and Five Mile Lane. The ridge at the junction may be the bank of the canal (looking north).





Pl. 3 Course of the Car Dyke across an arable field south of the junction of Heighington Fen and Five Mile Lane (looking SE along the Washingborough-Bardney Road).



PI. 4 Line of the Car Dyke across the field north of the junction of Heighington Fen and Five Mile Lane, looking north.



Pl. 5 Camber at the edge of the junction of Heighington Fen and Five Mile Lane, possibly on the bank of the Car Dyke (looking SW). The position of 7 is in the right foreground.

Pl. 6 Deposits below the road at 22, near Corporation Farm, showing the crushed brick layer and underlying peat.





Pl. 7 Moor Lane, Branston Booths, looking NE towards the Washingborough-Bardney road. The minor watercourse 23 is beyond the telegraph pole (centre right). The trench in the foreground is observation 24.

Pl. 8 Minor watercourse 23 to the left of the play area. This might be the original line of Car Dyke (looking SE).





PI. 9 The land to the west of Moor Lane slopes down at the gardens of Stone Cottages. This could be a backfilled watercourse, possibly the Car Dyke (looking north).

PI. 10 Post-medieval or later road foundation, Moor Lane 24, overlying brown silty clay.





PI. 11 Position of the pipe trench 25, east of the railway bridge on Moor Lane, Branston Moor (looking SW).

PI. 12 Limestone and clay deposits 25, east of the Moor Lane railway bridge.





Pl. 13 Growth variations in the arable crop NE of the Moor Lane railway bridge, possibly indicating archaeological features (looking north).