

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
DURING IMPROVEMENTS TO DRAIN 22,  
OFF LINCHFIELD ROAD,  
~~MARKET DEEPING,~~ ST. JAMES  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(MDL99)



**A P S**  
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PROJECT  
SERVICES

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DURING IMPROVEMENTS TO DRAIN 22,  
OFF LINCHFIELD ROAD,  
~~MARKET~~ DEEPING, ST. JAMES  
LINCOLNSHIRE  
(MDL99)**

Work Undertaken For  
Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board

Report Compiled by  
James Snee BSc

September 2000

National Grid Reference: TF <sup>1447 1079</sup>~~1475 1075~~  
City and County Museum Accession No: LCNCC : 1998.275

A.P.S. Report No. 131/00



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## 1. SUMMARY

*A watching brief was undertaken during extensions to Drain No. 22 at Linchfield Road, ~~Market~~ Deeping <sup>St. James</sup> because the site lay within an area of known remains dating from the prehistoric to the Roman periods.*

*The investigations documented a series of undated pits or ditches, which may have related to land drainage.*

*No finds were recovered from any deposits.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as 'a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons within a specified area, ..., where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed,' (IFA 1997).

### 2.2 Planning Background

A watching brief was undertaken between the 9<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> June 1999 during improvements to Drain No. 22, off Linchfield Road, ~~Market~~ Deeping. <sup>St. James</sup> The archaeological recording was commissioned by the Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board and carried out by Archaeological Project Services.

### 2.3 Topography and Geology

Market Deeping lies 11km northeast of Stamford in the administrative district of South Kesteven. (Fig. 1). It is one of a cluster of settlements (the Deepings) sited on the north bank of the Welland.

Drain number 22 is located to the northeast of Market Deeping, running approximately northeast-southwest between Linchfield Road and Godsey Lane, centred on national grid reference TF ~~1475 1075~~. (Fig. 2). The drain traverses an area of flat agricultural land at approximately 5m OD. TF1447  
1079

The local soils are Fladbury 1 association soils, pelo-alluvial gleys and Clayhythe association soils. Developed on river terrace drift previously covered by now degraded peat, calcareous humic gley soils comprise the Clayhythe association (Hodge *et al.* 1984).

### 2.4 Archaeological Setting

The lower Welland Valley has been recognised as one of the most important archaeological landscapes in the British Isles (Bradley 1984).

There is little evidence for human activity in the area until the Early Bronze Age. A few possible microliths of probable Mesolithic date have been found, and the Neolithic is almost entirely represented by lithic remains.

Early Bronze Age activity includes domestic and funerary pottery and a barrow cemetery has been identified to the north of the village. Survey evidence suggests that human activity declined during the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age.

The Middle Iron Age saw the establishment of several fen margin settlements which prospered in the Roman period. In addition, the Roman period appears to have been a time of settlement expansion and prosperity. The drainage of the fen edges was begun with changes made to the Welland and the excavation of the Car Dyke.

Very little evidence exists for post-Roman activity, and it is believed that the first Saxon

settlements were in the area around Market Deeping village. During the early medieval the Welland was brought under control and settlement expanded along its banks to Deeping St James and Frognall. The land around these villages remained uninhabited meadow land until post-medieval enclosure.

In the immediate vicinity of Drain No. 22, four key sites of special significance were identified.

1) A Roman Road. A pair of parallel linear cropmarks aligned east-northeast - west-northwest identified on aerial photographs. These were mapped by the RCHME and interpreted by them as a Roman Road.

2) Dense cropmarks of ditched enclosures. To the south of the Roman Road is an area of cropmarks identified on aerial photographs and mapped by the RCHME. These cropmarks are mainly linear features forming sub-rectangular enclosures. Several circular and sub-circular features were also identified.

3) An area of surface finds identified during fieldwalking. Three large surface scatters of finds, in close proximity to each other were located during the Fenland Survey. The first was a scatter of pottery, tile, rubble and animal bone approximately 150m long and 100m wide. To the northwest of this was two smaller scatters of pottery, rubble and animal bone. Quernstone fragments were recovered from all three scatters. The three scatters were dated to the Romano-British period and probably indicate the presence of a settlement site.

4) A Middle Iron Age to Roman settlement site. This site was first identified by field walking during the Fenland Survey. Further examination of the topography of the site suggested it stood on the banks of a defunct channel. This was confirmed by augering

which also indicated the presence of well preserved waterlogged deposits. An excavation of part of the site exposed ditched enclosures dated to the Romano-British period, and earlier ditches and post structures along the channel bank dated from the middle to late Iron Age. Finds of pottery, loom weights, metalwork, worked wood and leather were recovered. Significantly, a large quantity of briquetage was recovered indicating that the site was associated with saltmaking.

### 3. AIMS

The aim of the archaeological investigation was to ensure that any archaeological remains exposed during the drainage works should be recorded and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

### 4. METHODS

The existing drain was deepened and widened and the banks cut to a slope of approximately 55° by machine using a toothless bucket. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed within the trench was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn (where possible) at a scale of 1:10.

Records of the deposits and features recognised during the investigation were examined. A list of all contexts and interpretations appears as Appendix 2. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A stratigraphic matrix of all identified deposits was produced.

## 5. RESULTS

Three phases were identified:

- Phase 1 Natural deposits
- Phase 2 Undated deposits
- Phase 2 Modern deposits

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

### Phase 1 Natural Deposits

The earliest deposit encountered during this investigation was moderately compacted, off-white gravel (005) with a slight amount of silt. This was interpreted as natural river terrace gravel.

Overlying the natural gravel was a layer of firm, light brownish yellow clayey silt (004) with some gravel inclusions. The deposit was *c.* 0.60m thick and was interpreted as a naturally deposited subsoil.

### Phase 2 Undated Deposits

Cutting the naturally deposited subsoil were five undated features (Figs. 3 & 4).

At the east end of the drain a section of a possible north-south ditch (003) was exposed. It was *c.* 0.55m deep and *c.* 2.3m wide and was filled with firm, dark brown clayey silt (002) containing occasional flint pebbles and charcoal flecks.

In the western half of the drain was a group of three pits or ditches (008), (010) and (012). Feature (008) was *c.* 1.6m wide and *c.* 0.6m deep. To the west was ditch (010), approximately 3m wide and *c.* 0.5m deep. Further west was (012), which was *c.* 1m wide and 0.3m deep. All these were filled with light bluish grey silty clay with yellow

mottling (007, 009, 011 respectively).

The western-most feature was a possible pit or planting slot (014). This had vertical sides and a flat base and was *c.* 0.5m wide and 0.8m deep. It was filled with friable, mid-dark brown clayey silt (013) containing some stone.

Sealing all the pits/ditches in the western half of the drain was a moderately compacted, light-mid reddish brown to light brownish yellow clayey silt (006), between *c.* 0.40m and 0.55m thick. This was interpreted as a subsoil.

### Phase 2 Modern Deposits

Sealing subsoil (006) and possible ditch fill (002) was a layer of firm, dark grey clayey silt plough soil (001) containing frequent flint inclusions. This deposit was approximately 0.39m thick.

## 6. DISCUSSION

Natural (Phase 1) deposits were represented by the gravel (005) and the naturally deposited subsoil (002), which are typical of river terrace drift deposits.

Five undated (Phase 2) features were exposed. These were interpreted as possible ditches or pits (003, 008, 010, 012 & 014). It is possible that they are drainage or boundary ditches. If they are pits then their function is not apparent. It is possible that these features are part of the pattern of undated cropmarks observed to the north of the drain. If this is so then it would suggest that the pattern of features extends further south than the apparent cropmarks indicate. Unfortunately no artefacts were recovered which would have provided a date for the features and cropmarks. Four of the features in the western half of the drain were sealed

by an undated subsoil (006). This may have been deposited by inundation.

The last phase (Phase 3) was a modern topsoil (001) that formed the modern ground surface.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigations were undertaken at Linchfield Road, Market deeping because the site lay within an area of known remains dating from the prehistoric to the Roman periods.

The investigations documented a series of undated pits or ditches, which may have related to the area of cropmark features immediately north of Drain number 22. This could suggest that the features extent further than the visible cropmarks suggest.

No finds were recovered from any deposits.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge the assistance of Mr P. Chamberlain of the Welland and Deepings Internal Drainage Board who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Tom Lane and this report was edited by Gary Taylor and Tom Lane. Jo Simpson, the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist, kindly permitted examination of the relevant parish archaeological files.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Tom Lane  
Supervisors: Mark Dymond & Fiona Walker  
Illustration: Rachael Hall, Fiona Walker and Mark Dymond

Photographic Reproduction: Sue Unsworth  
Post-excavation Analyst: James Snee

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## 11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services

EAA East Anglian Archaeology

IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

RCHME Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England



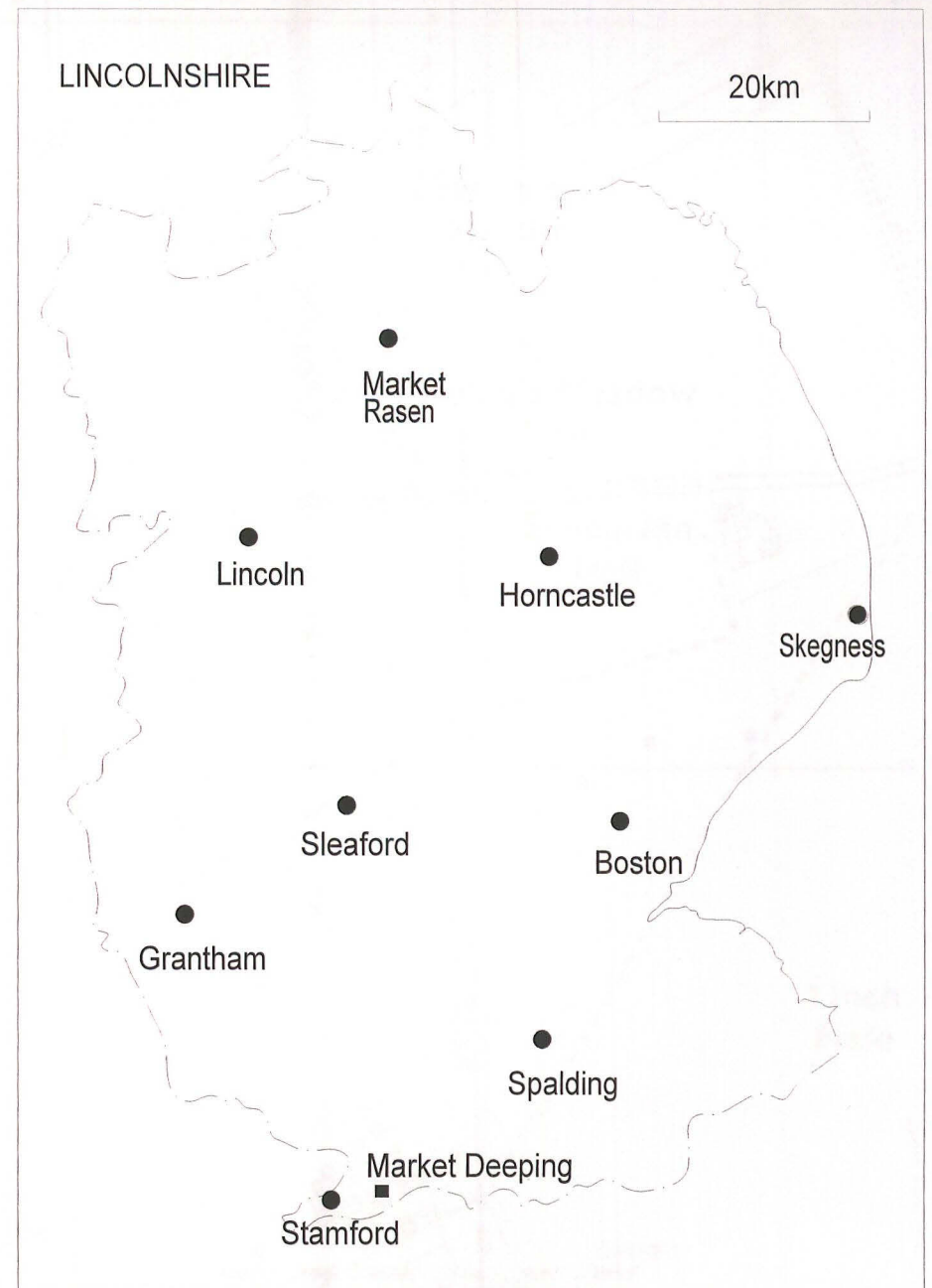


Figure 1 General Location Plan

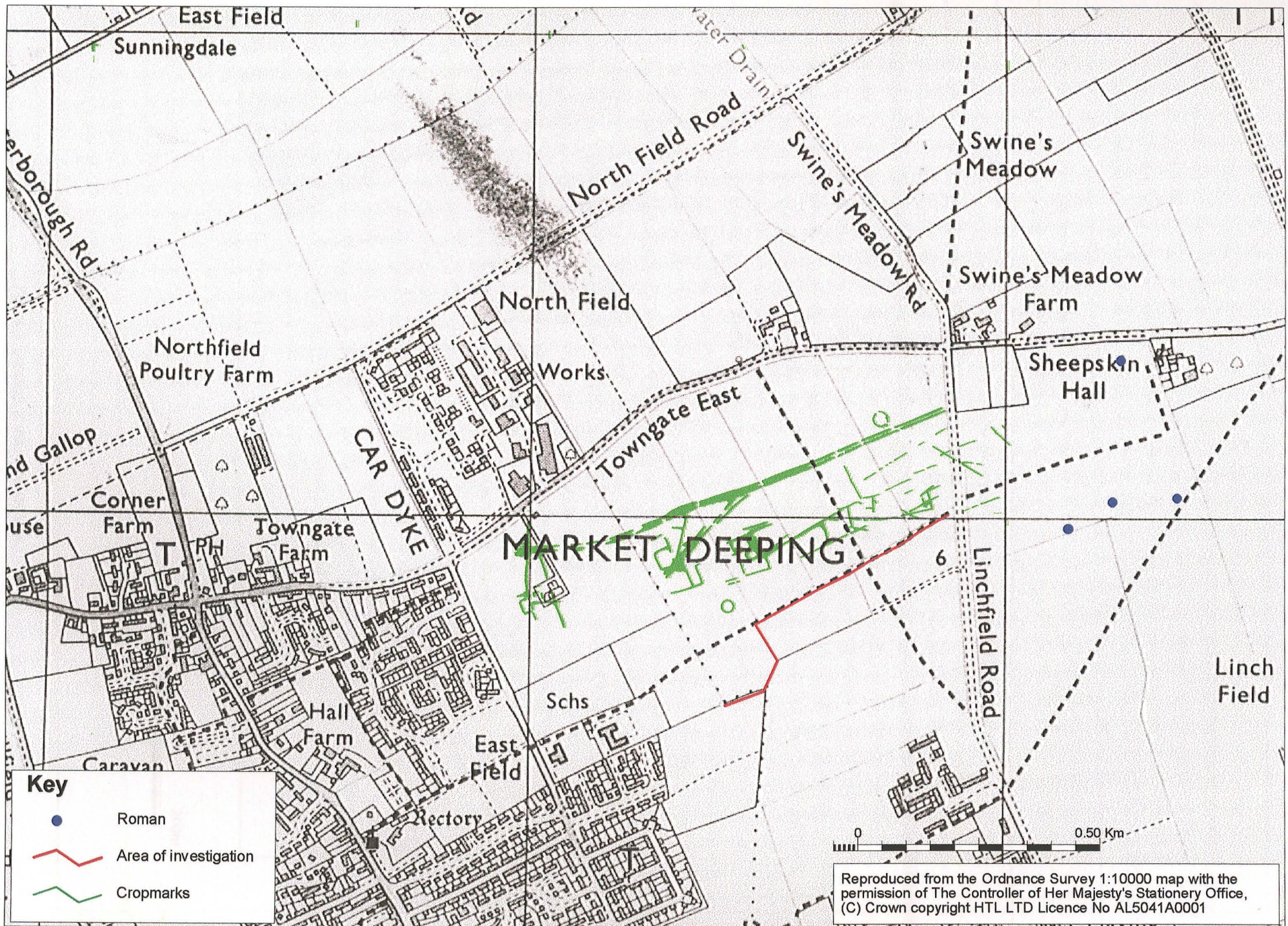


Figure 2 Area of investigation and archaeological remains

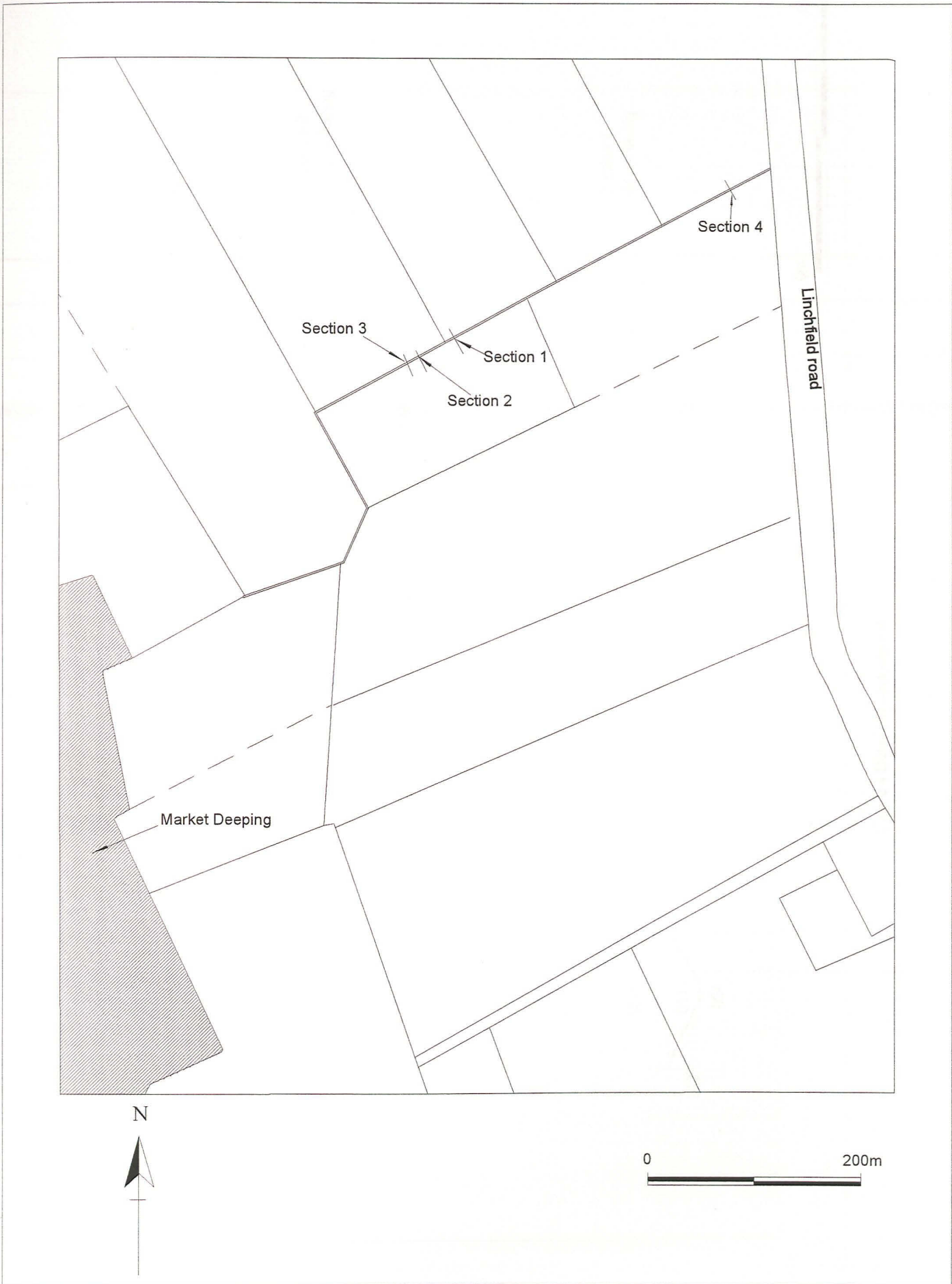


Figure 3: Location of drain and sections

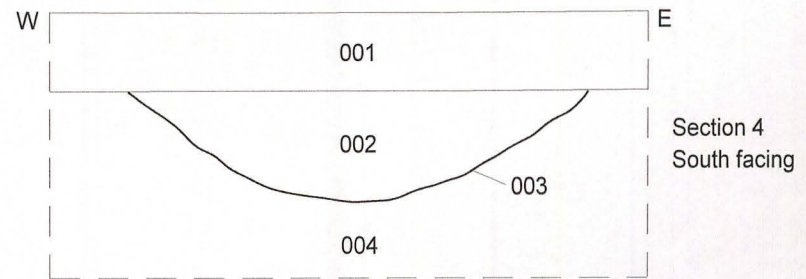
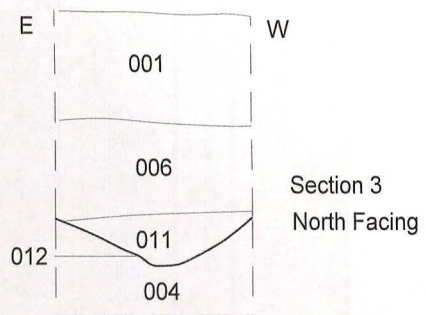
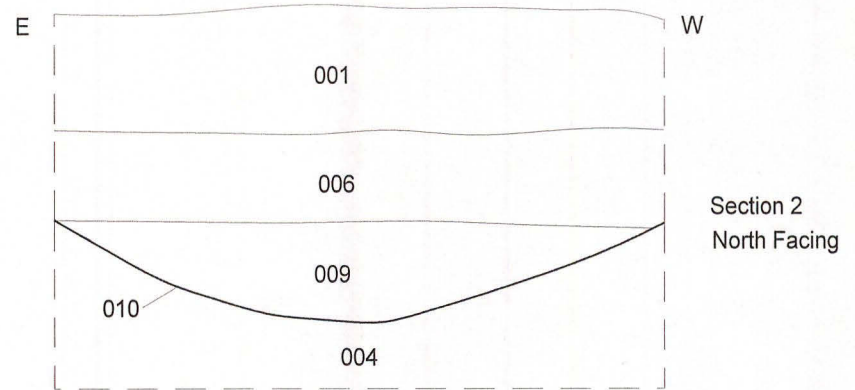
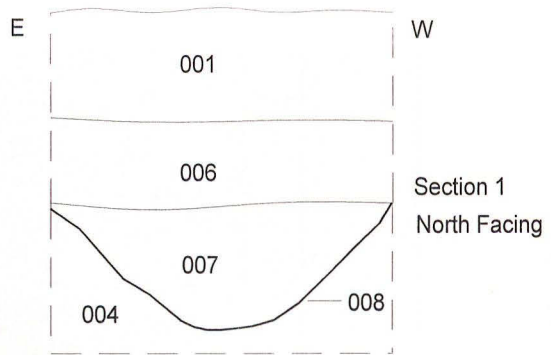


Figure 4 Details of Sections 1-4

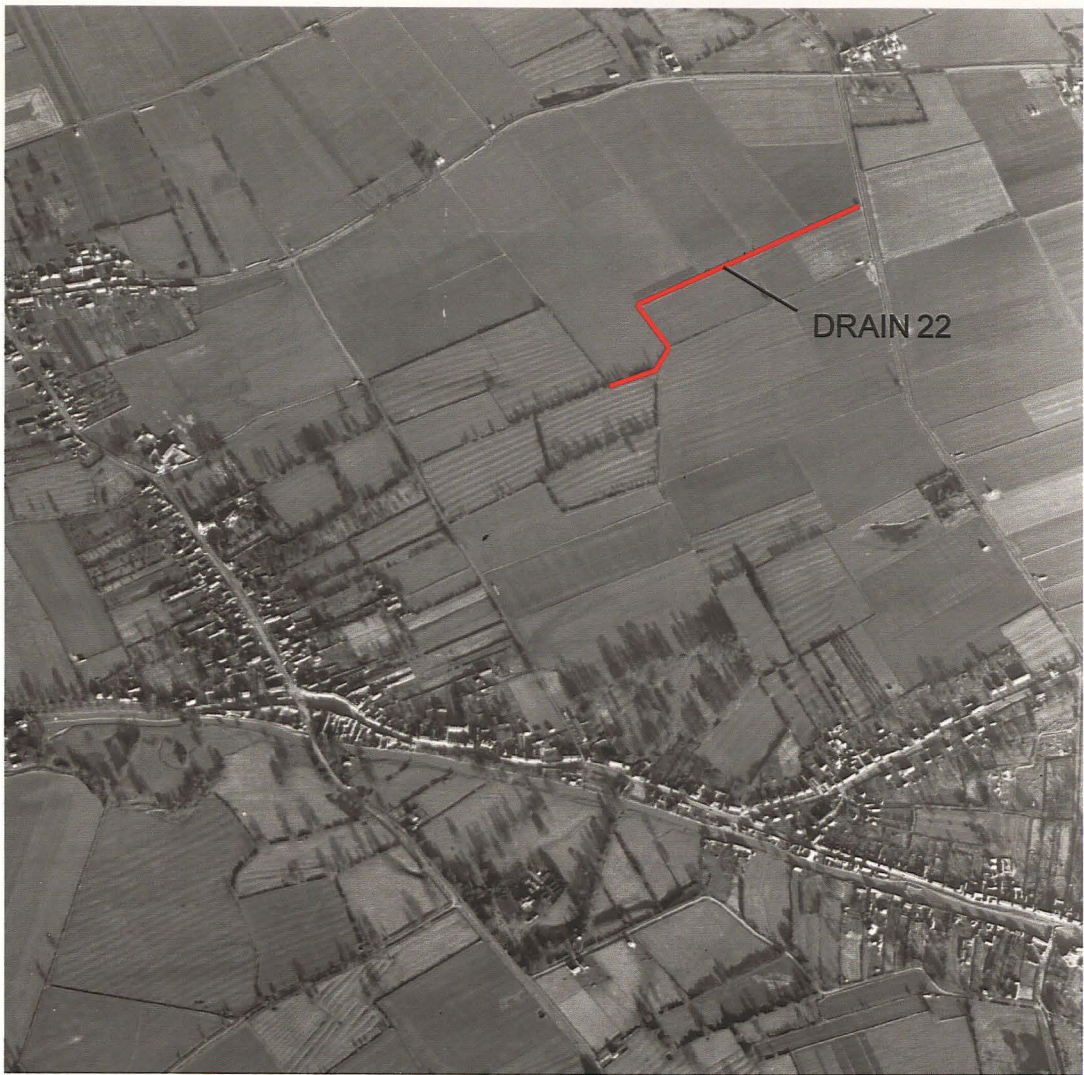


Plate 1 Aerial view of Linchfield showing route of Drain 22



Plate 2 Section through ditch (003), looking north

## APPENDIX 1

### Context Summary

Context Number	Section Number	Description	Interpritation
001	1, 2, 3	Firm, dark grey clayey silt with freq flints. Deposit 0.39m thick.	Ploughsoil
002		Firm, dark brown clayey silt with occ sub-rounded flint pebbles and occ charcoal. Deposit 0.55m thick.	Fill of ditch 003
003		Probable linear cut, 2.3m wide and 0.55m deep with gradual sides converging on a concave base. Aligned north-south and filled with 002	Ditch
004	1, 2, 3	Moderate-firm, light brownish yellow clayey silt with some gravel. Deposit 0.6m thick.	Natural
005		Moderate, light off white gravel.	Natural
006	1, 2, 3	Moderate, light-mid reddish brown becoming light brownish yellow (to the southwest) clayey silt. Deposit 0.55m thick	Subsoil
007	1	Moderate, light bluish grey silty clay with yellow patches/hue. Deposit 0.6m deep.	Fill of pit/linear 008
008	1	Cut, 1.6m wide and 0.6m deep with unclear gradual edges and smooth gradual sides converging in a concave base. Filled with 007	Pit/ditch
009	2	Moderate, light bluish grey silty clay with yellow patches/hue. Deposit 0.5m deep.	Fill of pit/ditch 010
010	2	Cut, 3m wide and 0.5m deep with unclear gradual edges and smooth gradual sides converging in a concave base. Filled with 009	Pit/ditch
011	3	Moderate, light blueish grey silty clay with yellow patches/hue. Deposit 0.3m deep.	Fill of pit/ditch 012

012	3	Cut, 1m wide and 0.3m deep with unclear gradual edges and smooth gradual sides converging in a concave base. Filled with 007	Pit/ditch
013		Moderate but crumbly, mid-dark brown clayey silt with occ rounded stones. Deposit 0.8m deep.	Fill of pit/plant slot 014
014		Cut, 0.5m wide and 0.8m deep with sharp edges, vertical sides and a flat base. Cut filled with 013.	Pit/plant slot.

## Appendix 2

### GLOSSARY

<b>Bronze Age</b>	A period characterised by the introduction of bronze into the country for tools, between 2250 and 800 BC.
<b>Context</b>	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
<b>Cut</b>	A cut refers to the physical action of digging a posthole, pit, ditch, foundation trench, <i>etc.</i> Once the fills of these features are removed during an archaeological investigation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
<b>Fill</b>	Once a feature has been dug it begins to silt up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
<b>Iron Age</b>	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
<b>Layer</b>	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
<b>Medieval</b>	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
<b>Natural</b>	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity.
<b>Post-medieval</b>	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
<b>Prehistoric</b>	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1st century AD.
<b>Romano-British</b>	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.



### Appendix 3

#### THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 14 - Context records
- 1 - Photographic record sheets
- 2 - Drawing sheets
- 1 - Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services  
The Old School  
Cameron Street  
Heckington  
Sleaford  
Lincolnshire  
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is:

Lincolnshire City and County Museum  
12 Friars Lane  
Lincoln  
LN2 1HQ

The archive will be deposited in accordance with the document titled *Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives*, produced by the Lincolnshire City and County Museum.

Lincolnshire City and County Council Museum Accession Number: LCNCC : 1999.275

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: MDL99

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

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