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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT; BANK FARM, LINCOLN ROAD, DUNSTON, LINCOLNSHIRE

NGR: TF 0615 6273
SITE CODE: BFD00
LCNCC ACC. NO. 2000.320
Planning ref: N/26/0830/00

EVENT L11505
SOURCES L16289/16290
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61390 L181141
60472 L160472

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Report prepared for
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January 2001

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CONTENTS

List of Figures

List of Plates

Summary

- *An archaeological evaluation was carried out prior to residential development at Bank Farm, Lincoln Road, Dunston.*
- *The site had the potential to contain medieval settlement evidence, and four trenches were excavated in order to assess this potential.*
- *No significant archaeological deposits were exposed in any of the trenches, although a large undated feature was exposed close to the Lincoln Road frontage, and a field boundary depicted on the first edition OS map was traversed by one of the trenches within a former garden area.*
- *The primary conclusion of this report is that development of the site will not affect any significant archaeological remains.*

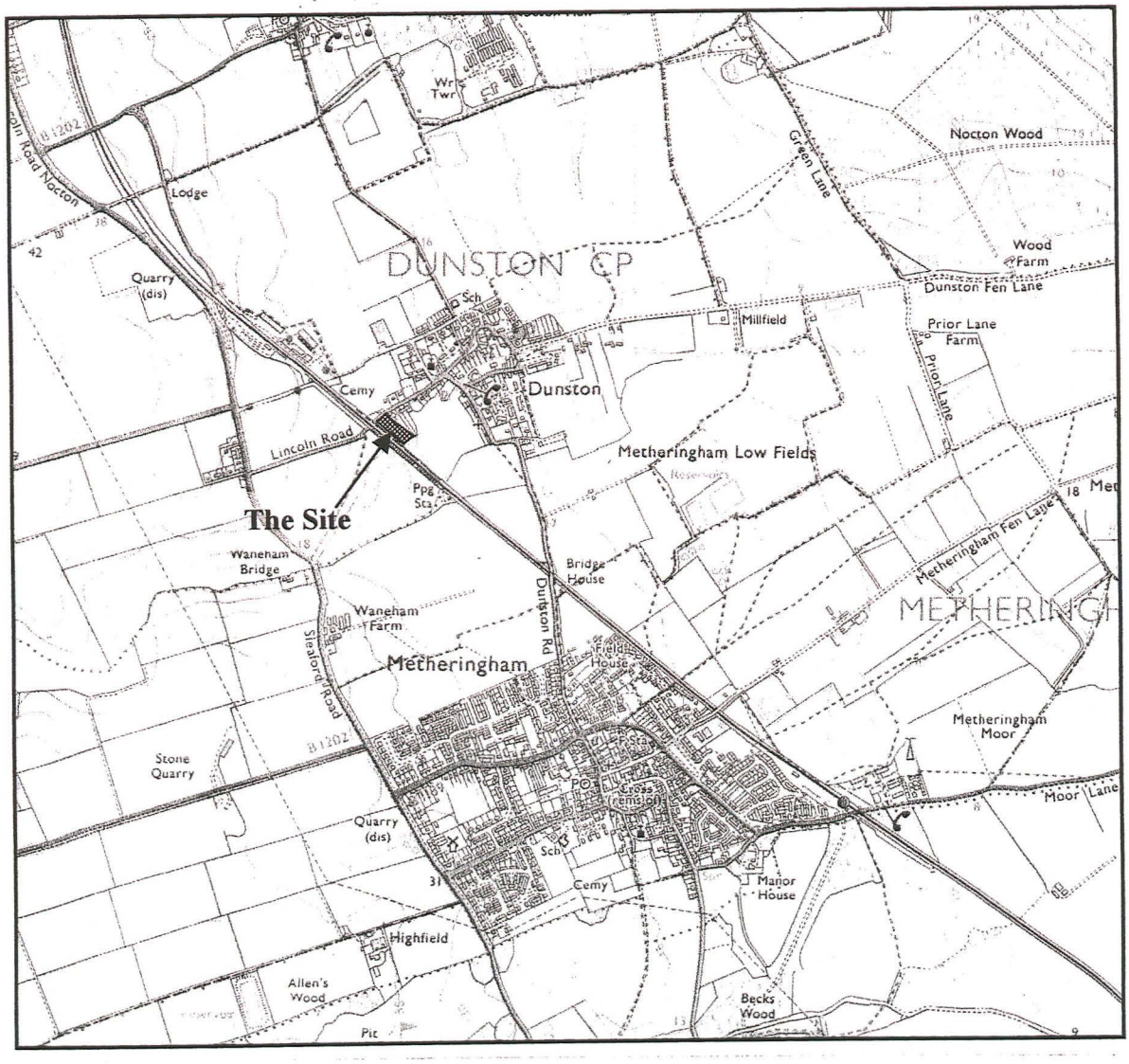

Fig 1: Site location (scale 1:25000)
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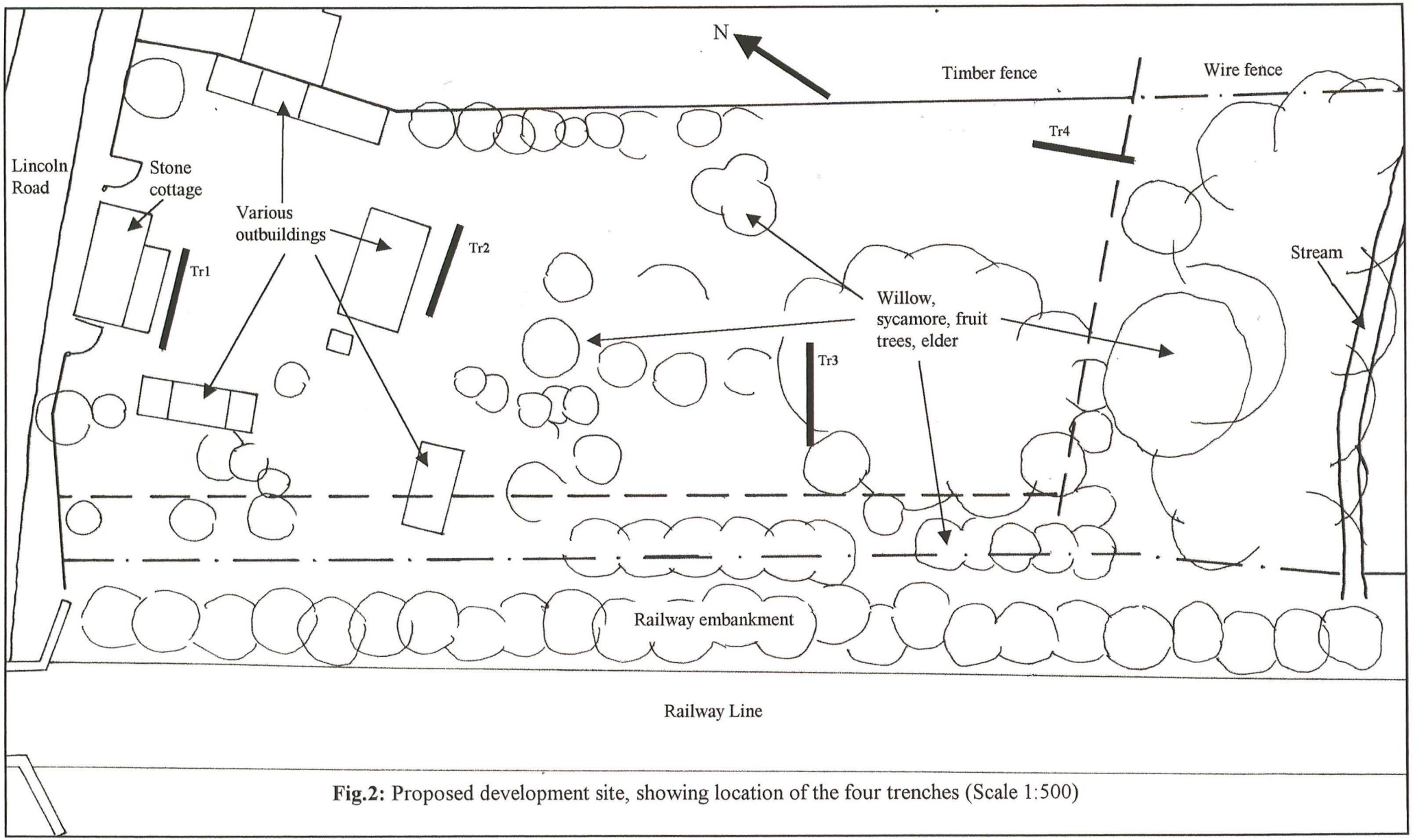

Fig.2: Proposed development site, showing location of the four trenches (Scale 1:500)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln), were commissioned by Mr. Andrew Hancock (on behalf of his client) to undertake an archaeological evaluation and subsequent reporting in advance of a residential development at Bank Farm, Lincoln Road, Dunston.

This report details the result of an intrusive phase of archaeological fieldwork. It is written to conform to both national and local guidelines, as set out in the Lincolnshire County Council document *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook: A Manual of Archaeological Practice* (LCC, 1998). It also follows a formal project brief issued by the Heritage Officer of North Kesteven District Council and a project specification prepared by PCA.

2.0 Site location and description

Dunston is approximately 11km south-east of Lincoln in the administrative district of North Kesteven. The proposed development site comprises a broadly rectangular area of approximately 0.55 hectares on the south-west edge of the village (fig.1). The site is bounded by Lincoln Road to the north-west, a railway embankment carrying the Lincoln-Sleaford line to the south-west, a stream to the south-east, and a timber fence with residential properties beyond to the north-east. The site centres on NGR TF 0615 6273.

A ?nineteenth century stone built cottage lies at the north-west edge of the site, fronting Lincoln Road. Behind this is the former garden and a series of sheds and outbuildings associated with the cottage. The vegetation becomes increasingly dense towards the south-east end of the site, consisting of coppiced willows, sycamores, and other trees and low scrub.

The site lies on a geological boundary of Jurassic Clay and alluvial sand (on the north-west portion of the site) overlying Ampthill Clay to the south-east (BGS, 1973).

3.0 Planning background

An outline planning application (ref. N/26/0830/00) has been submitted for the erection of seven residential properties with associated access, garages and services. A field evaluation to assess the archaeological potential of the site was recommended as a condition of planning by the Heritage Officer of North Kesteven District Council, to determine the archaeological potential of the site in advance of development and the perceived impact of such a development on the archaeological resource. This approach is now common practice, and is consistent with the guidelines set out in *Archaeology and Planning: Planning and Policy Guidance Note 16 (1990).*

4.0 Archaeological and historical background

Evidence for pre-medieval settlement evidence around Dunston is limited to occasional artefactual remains. These consist of a Neolithic greenstone axe that was found 2.5km to the east of the current site (SMR ref. TF 06 SE L), a Bronze Age cremation urn, approximately 3km to the west (ref. 60323), a Bronze Age tanged and barbed flint arrowhead a short distance west of the railway bridge (ref. TF 06 SE J), an unlocated Bronze Age axe hammer in Dunston Fen (ref. 60476), and a single unprovenanced Roman coin of Vespasian (AD69-79)(ref. ~~60476~~). AS TF06SE

At the time of the Domesday Survey, Dunston was a jurisdiction of Nocton, under the lordship of Norman of Arcy. In the mid-11th century, the village supported six mills, a priest and a church (Morgan & Thorne 1986), suggesting that a developed community was in existence prior to the Norman Conquest.

Medieval earthworks, which have now been levelled as a result of ploughing, and an associated pottery scatter, were known to have existed just beyond the east end of the current site (ref. 60472), and a thirteenth century lead papal bulla (seal) was found in the field adjacent to the site (ref. 60519). These remains suggested that the site of proposed development might also have been of some significance during the medieval period, and the primary purpose of the evaluation was to address this potential and inform all interested parties.

5.0 Methodology

In accordance with the project specification, four evaluation trenches were excavated, each of these being 10m long and approximately 2m wide. A JCB fitted with a toothless ditching blade was used in each area to remove topsoil and overburden under controlled conditions.

The four trenches were located to evaluate a reduced area of the site that is most likely to be affected by the proposed development (indicated by the dotted line on fig.2). The area south-east of this contains mature trees that will be unaffected by development, and the strip of land parallel to the railway embankment will be used largely for gardens.

The positioning of the trenches was constrained by dense vegetation, which also prevented the use of non-intrusive archaeological techniques, such as field walking and geophysical survey.

The excavation took place over three days, the 18th - 20th December, 2000. Conditions at this time were far from ideal due to the exceptionally high water table that prevailed throughout much of the country during the autumn and winter of 2000.

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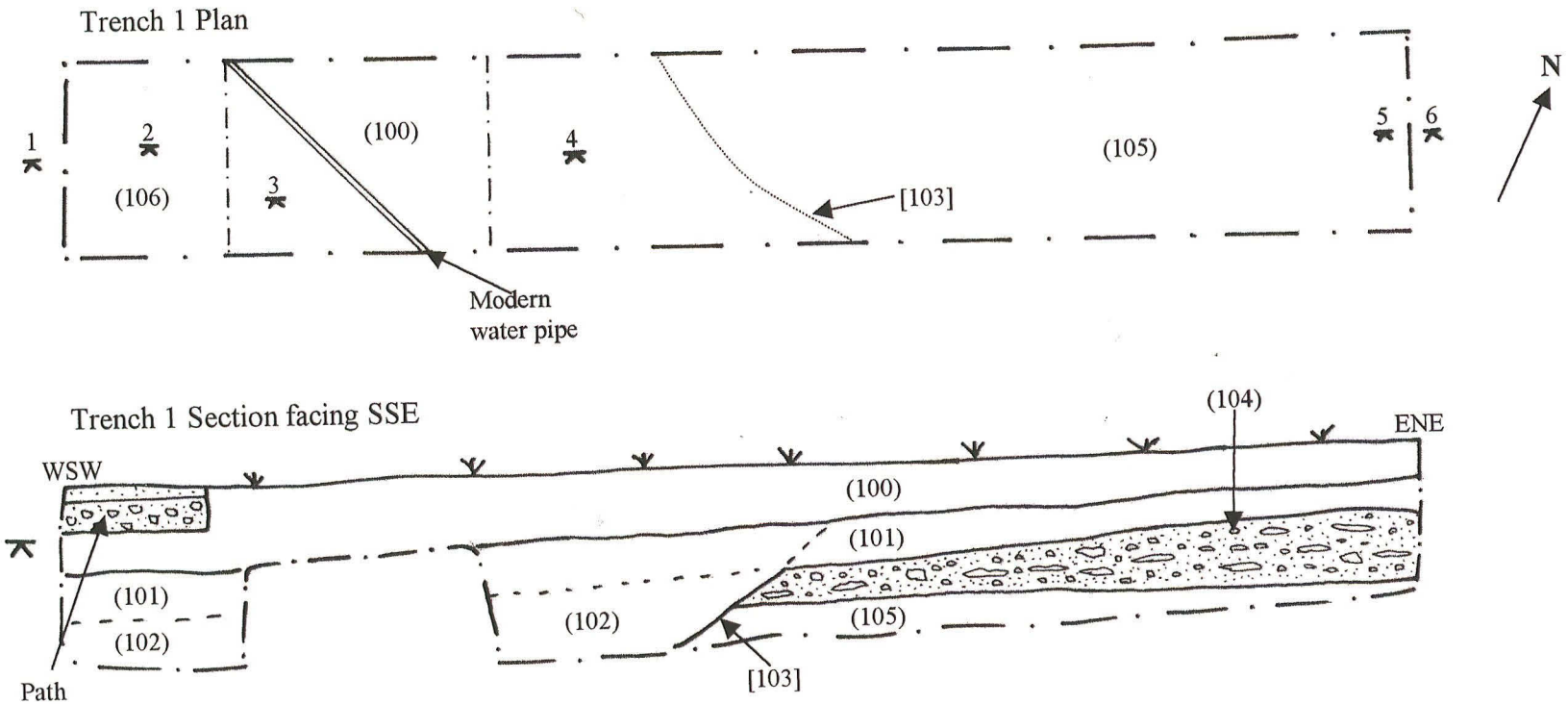

Fig.3: Trench 1 plan and section (Scale 1:50)

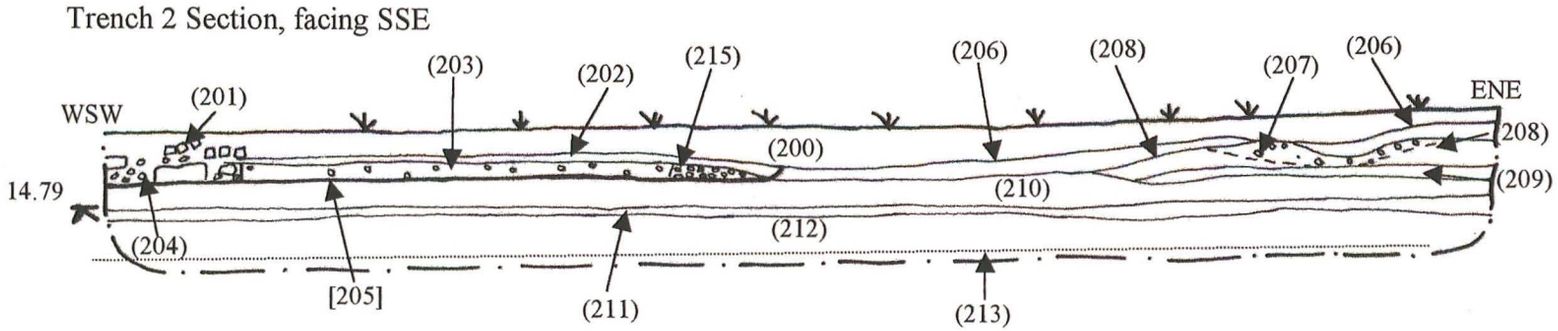

Fig.4: Trench 2 section (Scale 1:50)

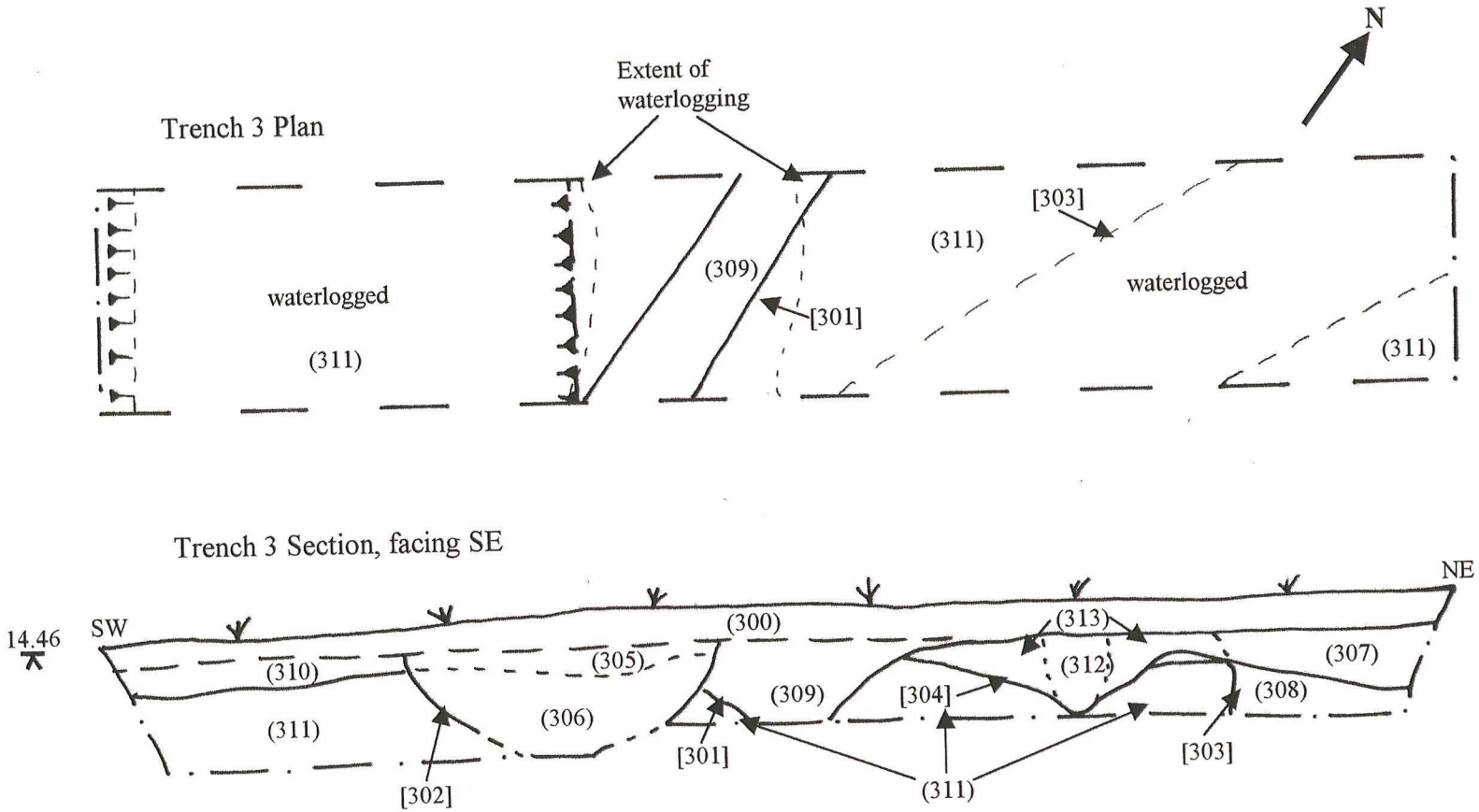

Fig.5: Trench 3 plan and section (Scale 1:50)

6.0 Results

6.1 Trench 1 (fig.3)

This was located at the north-west end of the site, aligned WSW to ENE, parallel with the stone cottage, and approximately one metre from its rear wall.

The uppermost layer consisted of dark sandy silt topsoil, context (100). This overlay a slightly lighter subsoil of sandy silt, context (101).

In the WSW part of the trench, machine excavation exposed a water pipe running north-west to south-east towards the garage, approximately 16m to the south-east.

A baulk approximately 1.8m was left in situ to accommodate the pipe, which appeared to be live.

Approximately 1.5m ENE of the baulk, a moderately sloping cut, [103] was observed in both of the long section faces. This cut feature was filled with (102): an homogenous bulk deposit that was very similar to the subsoil. As a consequence, the feature was not recognised until machining had continued beyond the cut itself.

Although not visible in plan, examination of the long section faces suggested that [103] was broadly aligned north-west to south-east, although it could not be confirmed that this large feature was linear.

Hand excavation of the baulk below the water pipe (which was made up of subsoil and the fill of feature [103]) took place in an attempt to recover artefactual dating evidence. This was not achieved, although a single body sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the overlying subsoil, (101).

It is possible that [103] was cut from below the topsoil, although the relationship between the feature and the subsoil was not clear due to the physical similarities that existed between the materials. Beneath the subsoil was a layer of light grey limestone brash and clay-silt (104), and this sealed natural orange-brown clay (105).

An interpretation for the large feature could not be established. In form, it resembled a pond, although its fill was an homogenous brown soil and not the typically interleaving lenses that one would associate with sedimentation within an aquatic environment.

6.2 Trench 2 (fig.4)

This trench was positioned approximately 2.5m south-east of a brick garage, and was aligned WSW to ENE. A layer of dark grey/brown topsoil (200) sealed a series of modern deposits, largely associated with the construction of the garage. At the WSW end of the trench, concrete paving slabs were removed, exposing a bedding of crushed limestone and limestone blocks. At the ENE end of the trench, further modern deposits containing limestone fragments and cinder or asphalt chippings were

exposed in section (206, 207, 208). These deposits overlay a light grey coarse gritty sand (209), interpreted as a levelling deposit for the construction of the garage.

The deposits described above separated the topsoil from a grey-brown clay-silt subsoil (210), which in turn sealed a thin lens of yellow-brown sticky clay/silt (211). This deposit was over a compact layer of limestone chunks set in light grey silty clay (212), and may have been a waterborne deposit (the trench rapidly became waterlogged during excavation). (212) sealed a layer of orange and yellow natural sandy clay (213).

6.3 Trench 3 (fig.5)

Trench 3 was located towards the south-east end of the site, aligned approximately south-west to north-east. This area had a moderately dense cover of vegetation, requiring the removal of several shrubs and small trees. A dark grey-brown topsoil, (300) formed the uppermost deposit.

This trench incorporated a change in the natural geology, from a sandy clay to clean sand (see Section 3.0 above). Cut into the natural sand from directly beneath the topsoil was a narrow ditch, [301], approximately 0.6m wide, and aligned north to south. The western edge of the ditch had been cut by a modern pit, [302], that was visible in the south-east facing section, and contained large amounts of modern tins, glass and plastic bottles. The ditch could not be excavated due to rapid flooding of the trench, both from pit [302] and from a land drain, opened during machine excavation.

Towards the north-east end of the trench, a tree bole was defined in the south-east facing section [304]. A small tree had been removed from this location prior to machine excavation.

Another possible linear feature, [303], was exposed, and this extended SSW-NNE into the northern corner of the trench. Flooding of the trench rendered it impossible to assess the dimensions or date of this feature.

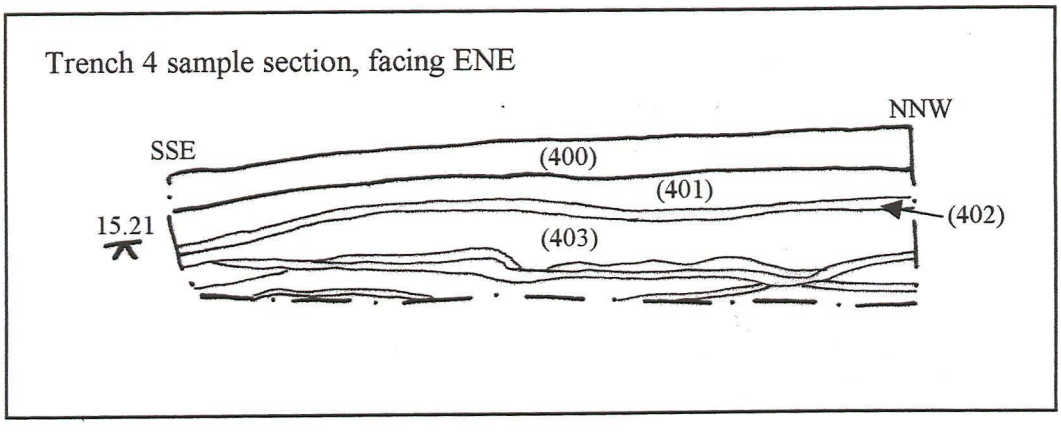

Fig.6: Trench 4 section (Scale 1:50)

6.4 Trench 4 (fig.6)

This was located at the south-east end of the site, and was aligned approximately NNW to SSE. No significant archaeological features were exposed in this area.

Beneath the topsoil (400), was a compact clay layer of approximately 0.5m depth (401). It was light grey/white in colour, and it appeared to comprise an abundance of lime or chalk dust. This chalky deposit may be associated with the construction of the railway embankment which delineates the south-west boundary of the site. The railway line forms part of the Great Northern and Great Eastern Joint Railway, built in 1882 (Wright 1993), and it is possible that the area of Trench 4 was once a suitable storage location for the quarried chalk/limestone that was used to build the embankment.
Context (401) sealed (402), a narrow band (approximately 0.1m) of mid brownish-grey silty sand. This may represent a buried soil, marking the ground surface that existed prior to the deposition of (401).

The ?buried soil horizon (402) sealed a series of natural clean sand deposits (collectively (403)).

7.0 Conclusions

Very few deposits of archaeological significance were exposed during this evaluation.

A substantial feature of indeterminate form was exposed towards the north-east of the site in Trench 1. This feature has not been dated, as its homogenous fill appeared to be devoid of finds (even animal bone fragments were absent). A single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil, but this is insufficient evidence on which to base any assumptions concerning the feature itself: the pottery can only be taken as evidence of medieval activity in the general area, and this is not a revelation.

In Trench 3, two linear features were exposed, although localised flooding prevented any detailed intervention, and the features could not be dated by finds association. That said, feature [303] is probably a nineteenth century property/field boundary: Figure 7 shows an extract from the first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888, with Trench 3 superimposed. The trench can be observed to transect a property boundary, which had disappeared by the time of the 1906 (Second Edition) Ordnance Survey, possibly due to a realignment of boundaries resulting from the recently constructed railway line.

The limitations of the evidence render it difficult to offer any detailed overview, other than to state that some limited degree of human activity has taken place on this site, largely within the later nineteenth and twentieth centuries. On this basis, it is concluded that the development will have little or no impact on the archaeological resource in this area of Dunston.

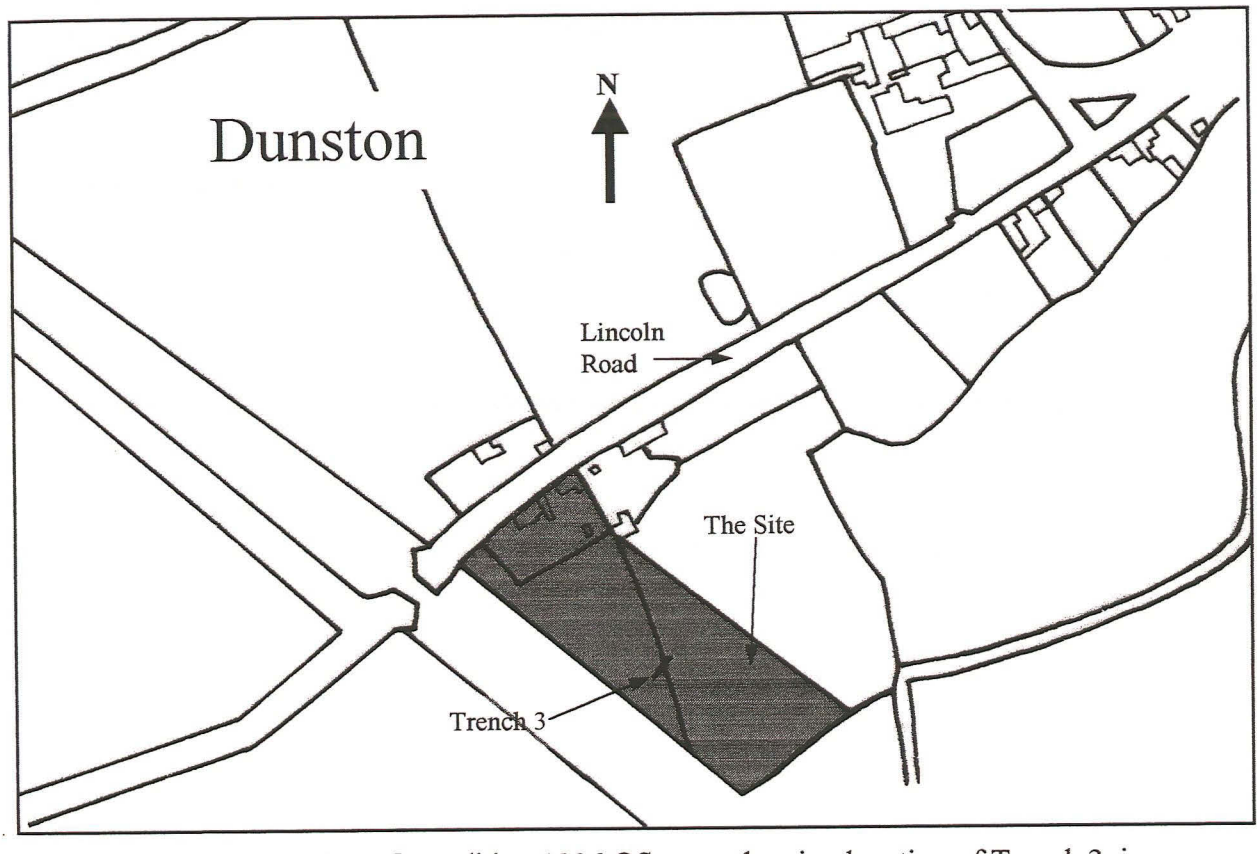

Fig.7: Extract from first edition 1886 OS map, showing location of Trench 3, in relation to former property boundary (Scale 25"to one mile)

8.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln) would like to offer thanks to Mr. Andrew Hancock for this commission and to the land owner Mr. Stuart Mackman for his co-operation during the work and the provision of site accommodation

9.0 Bibliography

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Morgan P., & Thorne C., (eds.), 1986, *Domesday Book: vol.31: Lincolnshire*, Phillimore & Co. Ltd, Chichester

Wright N., 1993, 'Railways and docks', pp112-3, in Bennett S. & Bennett N., *An historical atlas of Lincolnshire*, University of Hull Press, Hull.

10.0 Site archive

The primary records for the site are currently in the possession of Pre-Construct Archaeology. This will be deposited at Lincoln City and County Museum within six months. Access to the archive may be gained by quoting the global accession number 2000.320.

11.0 Appendices

11.1 Colour plates

Plate 1: General shot of Trench 1, looking west-south-west

Plate 2: General shot of Trench 2, looking west-south-west

Plate 3: General shot of Trench 3, looking south-west

Plate 4: General shot of Trench 4, looking north

11.2 List of archaeological contexts

Context	Description
100	Topsoil
101	Subsoil
102	Fill of [103]
103	Poss ditch cut
104	Natural brash
105	Natural clay
106	Natural silty clay
200	Topsoil
201	Modern pathway
202	Bedding layer for path (201)
203	Fill of [205]
204	Limestone footings for modern building
205	Construction cut for foundations (204}
206	Modern deposit
207	Modern deposit
208	Possible ground make up layer
209	Levelling deposit
210	Subsoil
211	Natural clay/silt
212	Natural limestone
213	Natural silt
214	Concrete surface related to modern building
215	Fill of [205]
300	Topsoil
301	Ditch cut
302	Modern rubbish pit
303	Possible ditch cut
304	Possible tree bole
305	Upper fill of pit [302]
306	Fill of pit [302]
307	Upper fill of [303]
308	Fill of [303]
309	Fill of ditch [301]
310	Subsoil
311	Natural sand
312	Fill of [304]
313	Fill of [304]
400	Topsoil
401	Poss quarry dust layer
402	Poss buried soil
403	Natural sand