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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Ketsby House Farm, South Ormsby, Lincs.

NGR: TF 3621 7675
ELDC Planning Application No.: S/160/0167/99
Site Code: SOK 99
LCNCC Museum Accn No.: 125.99

Archaeological Watching Brief

**Report
By G. Tann**

**prepared for Mr D. Cotterrell
on behalf of
Mr W. Haggis, Walmsgate Estates**

Lincoln County Council
Archaeology Section

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(for Network Archaeology Ltd)**

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at Ketsby House Farm during topsoil removal and ground levelling for a new grain store. Sandstone foundations and brick footings, thought to be from post-medieval farm buildings were uncovered. Several small ditches and pits were also present, probably of the same period. Large rounded pebbles, found to the east of the cleared area, may have been part of a medieval metalled track or possibly an interior surface for a barn. There was a high level of modern disturbance, but this is not thought to have had a great impact on medieval features. Twelve pottery sherds were found, including a single abraded sherd of Roman greyware. During the watching brief, Roman sherds previously found in a nearby cultivated field were presented to the archaeologist for donation to the City and County Museum, and a brief note of that separate site has been recorded.

Introduction

Network Archaeology Limited (NAL) was commissioned in May 1999 by Mr D. Cotterrell, on behalf of Walmsgate Estates, to conduct an archaeological watching brief during topsoil removal and groundworks for a new grain store south and west of existing farm buildings on the site of Ketsby House Farm, South Ormsby (Figs. 1 and 2). The watching brief was required by East Lindsey District Council to fulfil a condition of full planning permission on Application No. S/160/0167/99.

Groundworks were monitored by G. Tann on behalf of Network Archaeology Ltd on May 26th and 27th 1999.

The Application Site

The new grain store has a floor area of 36.5m x 26m. It is positioned on high ground to the south of an existing farm estate road, close to two existing storage buildings (Pl. 1). Construction of the nearby buildings, and widening of estate access tracks, has produced a series of cuttings around the edge of the natural slope. In order to minimise the visual impact of the building, the floor is at the same level as a building further down the slope; this necessitated lowering the site by between about 1m and 2.2m after topsoil removal.

Archaeological Background

Ketsby House Farm lies close to the centre of the former medieval village of Ketsby, now part of the parish of South Ormsby with Ketsby. Ketsby is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086, when its name was *Chetelesbi*, "Ketil's farmstead, village", with Old Norse and Old Danish name elements (Cameron 1998, 73). The medieval settlement may have been a ribbon development alongside the public road.

Ketsby House Farm (labelled Ketsby House on the 1983 and earlier Ordnance Survey maps) incorporated a medieval tithe barn, probably of fourteenth century date (Fig. 3). The barn was demolished in 1966, around the time when earthwork remains of the extensive medieval field system were bulldozed (Ordnance Survey record cards in SMR). The farmyard is about 100m from the traditional site of the former parish church, already a ruin in the sixteenth century (Massingberd 1892, 332).

Modern farm buildings are the only surviving buildings within the area of the medieval settlement. Two farm cottages on the site of the new grain store were demolished about ten years ago - a former resident was employed during earthmoving for this project. Ordnance Survey maps show other farm buildings on the site, which have since been cleared (OS 1956).

The Watching Brief (Fig. 4)

Context numbers were assigned by NAL for recording cut features, fills, soil layers and structural remains identified during groundworks. These numbers were used on finds and on the plan and section drawings included in this report (Fig. 5). Dimensions are those of the surviving features, after removal of topsoil.

The area of the new building, and an adjoining area to the west and east, was stripped of topsoil by a 360° machine with a large ditching bucket to a depth of about 0.35m. It contained late nineteenth/twentieth century debris, and brick rubble which may have been earlier. The topsoil was used to form a bund along the field edge to the rear of the new building.

After completion of the topsoil removal, the site of the new building was lowered with a toothed bucket to the required depth. This exercise cut through chalk bedrock and revealed no further archaeological features (Pl. 2). Excavated chalk was tipped in a depression behind the existing grain store to the north of the farmyard (Pl. 3). Archaeological monitoring stopped when chalk had been revealed across the site. The watching brief took place in good ground and lighting conditions.

Topsoil

The topsoil **1** varied considerably in depth over the stripped area from about 0.1m to 0.25m, the thinner deposits reflecting the sites of former buildings that had been cleared in the recent past. There was some evidence of previous topsoil removal, probably associated with the construction of the two existing buildings and excavation of access areas around them. The topsoil was very mixed, with frequent brick inclusions. Seven pottery sherds were collected.

Subsoil

A 0.1m thick subsoil layer of brown loam **2** survived in areas undisturbed by modern activity. This layer was very similar in nature to the fills of the small ditches.

Gullies

A linear ditch or gully **3**, 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep, crossed the stripped area in a NE-SW alignment, projecting to the SE corner of the existing grain store (Pl. 4). It had a flat base and steeply sloping sides. Its stony, dark brown clay fill **4** produced brick fragments, animal bone and one fragmentary pottery sherd.

This feature was the latest identified ditch on the site, cutting other ditches but probably respecting the corner of building **23**.

Gullies 6 and 15 (Pls. 5-8)

A NW-SE aligned gully **6** was visible for about 20m across the stripped site, and was thought to be part of the same ditch as **15**, a 1m gap between them probably representing a narrow entrance. Its projected alignment would have reached clumps of mature trees either side of the farmyard. It is possible that it formed a field boundary within a field system no longer visible. The combined feature was over 32m long, probably terminating west of the brick wall foundation **22**.

Gully **6** was 0.6m wide and 0.14m deep, with a rounded base. Its fill **7** was very dark brown in colour, containing animal bones and two fragments of post-medieval pottery. Ditch **15**, to the east, was 1m wide and 0.35m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a flat base. Its fill, **14**, was similar in colour to **7**, and contained numerous small stones and infrequent coal fragments.

Gullies 9, 10 and 18 (Pls. 5 and 8)

These ditches appeared to be contemporary and could not be distinguished as separate units; the context numbers relate to their position. Gully **9**, 0.4m wide and under 0.1m deep, ran along the northern side of gully **6** before merging with it. As the 0.6m wide gully **10**, it followed a north-south alignment for at least 23m before reaching the edge of the modern farmyard. To the east of gully **10**, gully **18** continued a further 13m as a 0.65m wide and

0.15m deep feature, beyond which it had been truncated by modern disturbances. A fragment of redeposited Roman greyware pottery was found in **19**, the fill of **18**.

These gullies are probably later than **6** and **15**, although this relationship could not be established. They do seem to mark a period when land to the north was subdivided and no entrance gap was needed.

Gullies 12 and 16 (Pls. 8 and 9)

The ephemeral remains of two lesser features were recorded beside gullies **10** and **18**. These were not linked but may represent an earlier phase of the land sub-division created by gully **10**. Gully **12** on the east side of **10** was 0.6m wide and 0.12m deep; gully **16**, immediately to the north of gully **18**, was 0.4m wide.

Brick wall foundations 22 and 30

A brick wall foundation, surviving to 22m long and 0.35m wide, crossed the stripped area east of the site of the new grain store. Its northern end had been removed by an access cutting into the slope beside the existed storage building. Its southern end butted the sandstone foundation of another building, **23**. Much of its length was initially obscured by a 0.3m thick demolition deposit **24** (Pl. 4).

The unfrosted red bricks of foundation **22** were 245mm x 115mm x 55mm in size, probably dating from after the late seventeenth century. They were bonded with a pale yellow mortar. The wall is thought to have survived until about 1960, and to have been part of a large building shown on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map.

Brick foundation **30** was exposed against the edge of the farm access road through the farmyard at the beginning of topsoil removal (Pl. 10). All that remained was a 0.6m long NE-SW aligned section, 0.6m wide and excavated to a depth of one course into the chalk bedrock. This seemed to be a isolated foundation, possibly a stanchion base. It is possible that this formed part of the western side of the building represented by foundation **22**, although its fragmentary bricks looked older.

Sandstone wall foundation 23 (Pl. 11)

Topsoil stripping along the rear wall line of the new grain store exposed a green sandstone wall foundation **23**, defining part of two sides of a structure which extended beyond the limits of the excavated area. One wall foundation was aligned NW-SE, approximately parallel to the series of shallow field gullies **6**, **9**, **15**, **16** and **18**. The alignment may indicate that both the building and boundary were in use at the same time. The return wall of the building, leaving the south edge of the stripped area, was avoided by the apparently fairly modern ditch **3**, suggesting that the wall was either still standing or at least visible when the ditch was dug.

No return wall was found at the eastern end, but this building may have had an open side to the east. The brick wall foundation **22** butted the sandstone foundation on the northern side. It is assumed that the brick founded structure was later.

The appearance of building **23** cannot be deduced from the available information; although a small amount of crushed sandstone within and immediately outside the building probably represents demolition waste, very little sandstone was found across the stripped area and this finding does not tally with a substantial stone barn. Brick rubble was found across the SE part of the development site, and although much probably derives from a building based on **22**, it seems probable that the upper part of **23** was of similar brickwork. A barn built mostly of sandstone could have been built during the medieval period, whereas a brick barn is unlikely to have been built before the late sixteenth century when brick use became more common; a brickworks on the South Ormsby estate was active in 1660 (Bennett and Bennett 1993, 116). By the sixteenth century, the Ketsby parish church had become ruinous and may have served as a source of building materials for foundations.

Pebbles 29

Small surviving areas of large rounded pebbles, about 90mm diameter, were revealed to the east of **22** and **23** (Pls. 12 and 13). These had clearly been introduced to the site, perhaps from the nearby stream bed, and seemed to be the last remnants of a deliberately laid surface. Unfortunately, previous groundworks in the vicinity of the existing storage building have made the topography difficult to interpret, and it was unclear whether they formed a road surface, an external yard or the internal floor of a barn.

Site of farm cottages 25 and well 26

Within living memory, there had been two brick cottages on the western side of the development area. They were cleared about ten years ago, leaving concrete floors and brick foundations and a rubble spread **25** (Pl. 5). Towards the northern end of the demolition spread was a brick-capped well **26** of unknown depth (Pl. 14).

Brick lined feature 27

A small square brick-lined feature **27** was found 10m to the north of building **23**. It was approximately 5m square, cut into the chalk bedrock and backfilled with dark brown clay loam with chalk and brick rubble inclusions (Pl. 15). This has been interpreted as a cess pit, possibly of nineteenth century date.

Pit 5 and post-hole 20

Slightly north of the new grain store, in an area lowered to provide access to the store from the farmyard, a post-hole **20** and a small ovoid pit **5** were noted. The post-hole was 0.6m

diameter and 0.25m deep (Pl. 16). The irregular small pit was seen immediately to the west of ditch 3 in the northern part of the stripped area (Pls. 4 and 17). It had a dark brown clay loam fill and was 0.9m deep. This feature was not excavated. During levelling, one post-medieval sherd was recovered. No function was ascertained for either of these features but both are likely to be post-medieval or modern.

Ditch 31 (Pl. 18)

The modern track through the farmyard has a camber to the south, draining into a depression alongside the edge of the stripped area. After stripping, this showed as a partly backfilled ditch. It was thought to be a modern feature and was not recorded in detail.

Surface finds 100

During the watching brief, two sherds of Romano-British pottery were produced by Mr Hagis and an estate employee for identification. The sherds were presented to the City and County Museum as examples of an apparently prolific Roman and medieval pottery findspot within a field to the east of the track from the public road. The context 100 was assigned to them for recording purposes in order to distinguish them from the monitored site.

Conclusion

The archaeological remains revealed during this watching brief all appear to be related to use of the site as a farmyard rather than part of the medieval village settlement. The core of that settlement probably lies to the NE, where the ground slopes down to the stream.

The watching brief produced one abraded sherd of Roman greyware, but otherwise the sparse assemblage comprised late medieval and post-medieval pot fragments.

The shallow gullies were recut along a common NW-SE alignment, which could have been a former field boundary. Mature trees are present at each end of the alignment but it is unclear if all represent plantation clumps or preserve hedgerow trees.

Final clearance of the medieval and later buildings can probably be dated to construction of the adjacent storage shed. The grain store complex now occupies a central position within the estate, with access by estate roads reducing the need for vehicle movements on public roads. Once again, the farmyard site will become a focus of activity.

Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
(for Network Archaeology Ltd)
January 25th 2001

Acknowledgements

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The illustrations were prepared by Nicky Smith and the report was edited by C.Taylor and N. Field. It was collated and produced by Jane Frost.

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OS 1906 *Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 Second Edition map, Lincs. Sheet 65.2*.

OS 1956 *Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map, Sheet TF 37NE*.

Archive Summary

Correspondence

Archaeological finds: pottery

Specialists' archive lists

Developer's plans and annotated copies

Field plan and section drawings

Photographs: LAS colour print film nos. 99/31/ 23-37 and 99/32/0-27a (including those used in this report).

THE APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

**Post Roman Pottery and Tile
Archive List**

Jane Young

Pottery Archive SOK99

context	cname	full name	form	sherds	vessels	part	description	date
001	GRE	Glazed Red Earthenware	bowl	1	1	BS	not Boston	16th to 18th
001	MISC	Unidentified types		1	1	pedestal	modern arts & crafts?;marked CJ	late 19th to 20th
001	RGRE	Reduced glazed red earthenware	large jar?	3	1	BS	int & ext glaze	16th to 18th
001	TB	Toynton/Bolingbroke wares	bowl	1	1	BS		mid 15th to 17th
001	TB	Toynton/Bolingbroke wares	jar/jug	5	1	BS		mid 15th to 17th
004	LFS	Lincolnshire Fine-shelled ware	jar	1	1	BS	small frag	late 10th to late 12th
005	LMLOC	Late Medieval local fabrics	jug/jar	1	1	BS	oxid surfaces grey core;no glaze;? ID	late 14th to early 16th
007	BOU	Bourne D ware	jug/bunghole ve	1	1	BS	lhj;very odd hard reduced fabric;? ID;sandy fabric patches of ca	mid 15th to mid 17th
007	MEDLOC	Medieval local fabrics	?	1	1	BS	well worn	12th to 15th
019	R	Roman pottery		1	1	BS	worn scrap;? ID	Roman
100	R	Roman pottery		1	1	BS	worn	Roman
100	R	Roman pottery		1	1	BS	worn	Roman

Tile Archive SOK99

cname	full name	fragments	description	period
PNR	Peg, nib or ridge tile	1	coarse sandy fabric;corner	med to early modern

APPENDIX 2

The Context List

Ketsby House Farm, South Ormsby, Lincs. (SOK 99)

Context List

No.	Type	Relationship	Description
1	Layer		Topsoil
2	Layer	Below 1	Subsoil
3	Cut	Contains 4	Ditch
4	Fill	Contained by 3	Fill of ditch 3
5	Cut		Modern pit
6	Cut	Contains 7	Boundary ditch
7	Fill	Contained by 6	Fill of ditch 6
8	Fill	Contained by 9	Fill of ditch 9
9	Cut	Contains 9	Gully 9
10	Cut	Contains 10	Linear ditch
11	Fill	Contained by 10	Fill of ditch 10
12	Cut	Contains 13	N-S ditch
13	Fill	Contained by 12	Fill of ditch 12
14	Fill	Contained by 15	Fill of ditch 15
15	Cut	Contains 14	NW-SE Ditch
16	Cut	Contains 17	NW-SE ditch
17	Fill	Contained by 16	Fill of ditch 16
18	Cut	Contains 19	NW-SE ditch
19	Fill	Contained by 18	Fill of ditch 18
20	Cut	Contains 21	Posthole?
21	Fill	Contained by 20	Fill of posthole
22	Wall	Below 24	Brick wall foundation
23	Wall	Below 24	Sandstone wall foundation
24	Layer	Above 22,23,29	Demolition rubble
25	Layer	Below 1	Site of 2 farm cottages
26	Well		Post-medieval brick well
27	Cut	Contains 28	Brick-lined cess pit
28	Fill	Contained by 27	Fill of cess pit
29	Layer	Below 24	Pebble surface
30	Layer	Natural	Chalk

THE FIGURES AND PLATES

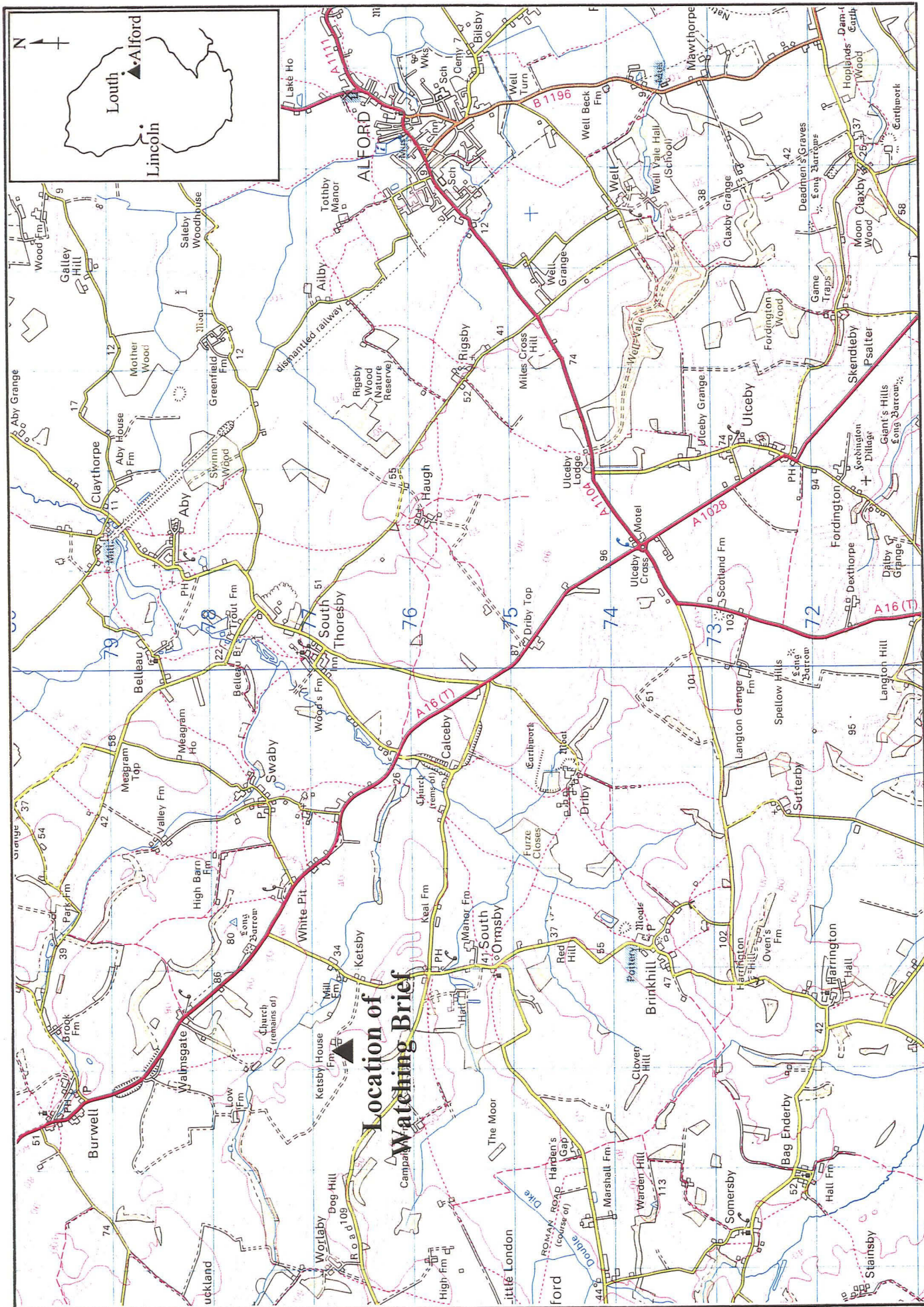
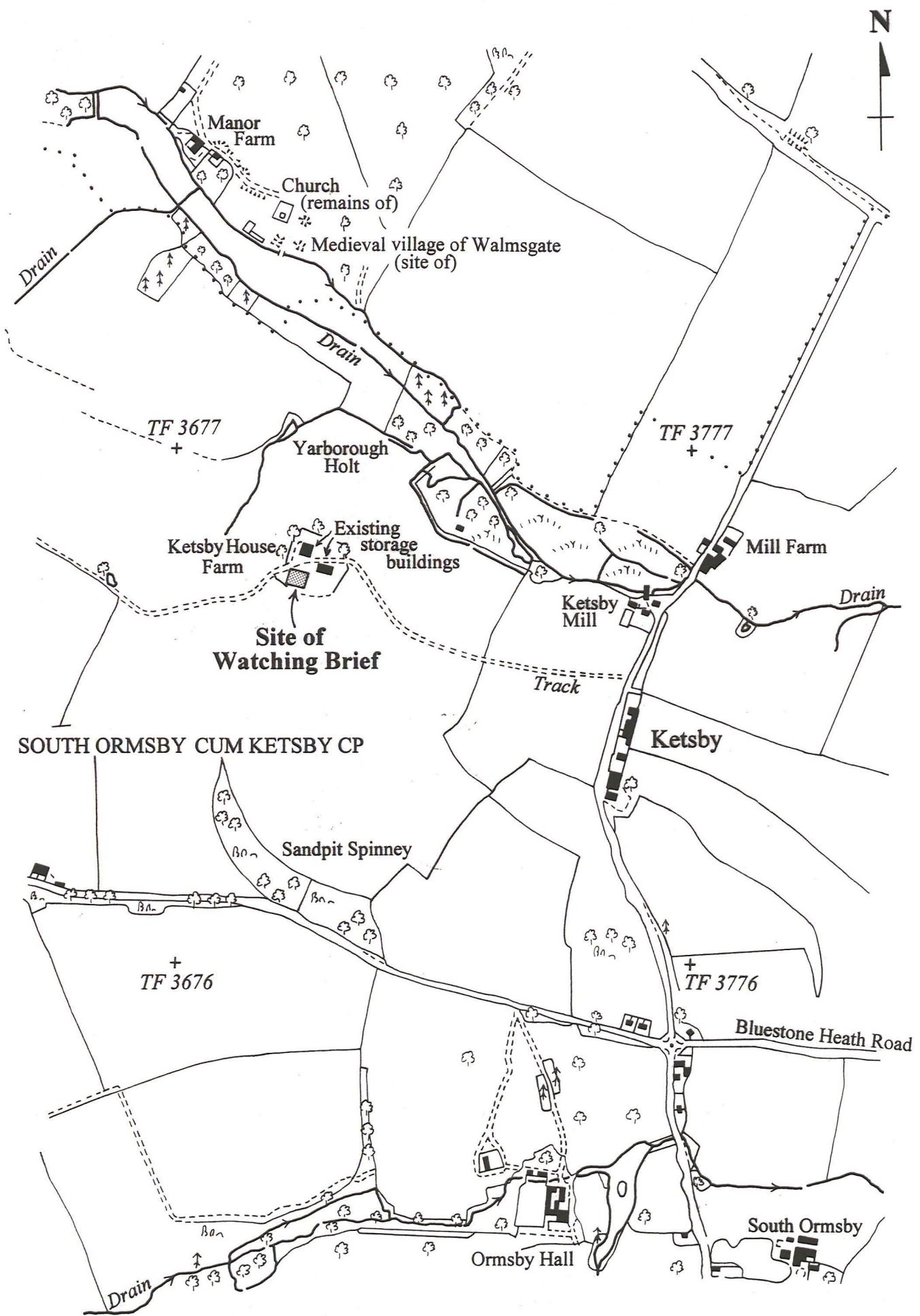


Figure 1 : Ketsby House Farm; general location of archaeological watching brief.
 1:50 000 scale. Based on 1989 Ordnance Survey, 1:50 000, Landranger Map Sheet 121.



SOUTH ORMSBY CUM KETSBY CP

Figure 2: Ketsby House Farm; site of archaeological watching brief. 1:10 000 scale.
Based on 1983 Ordnance Survey, 1:10 000. Map sheet TF 37 NE.

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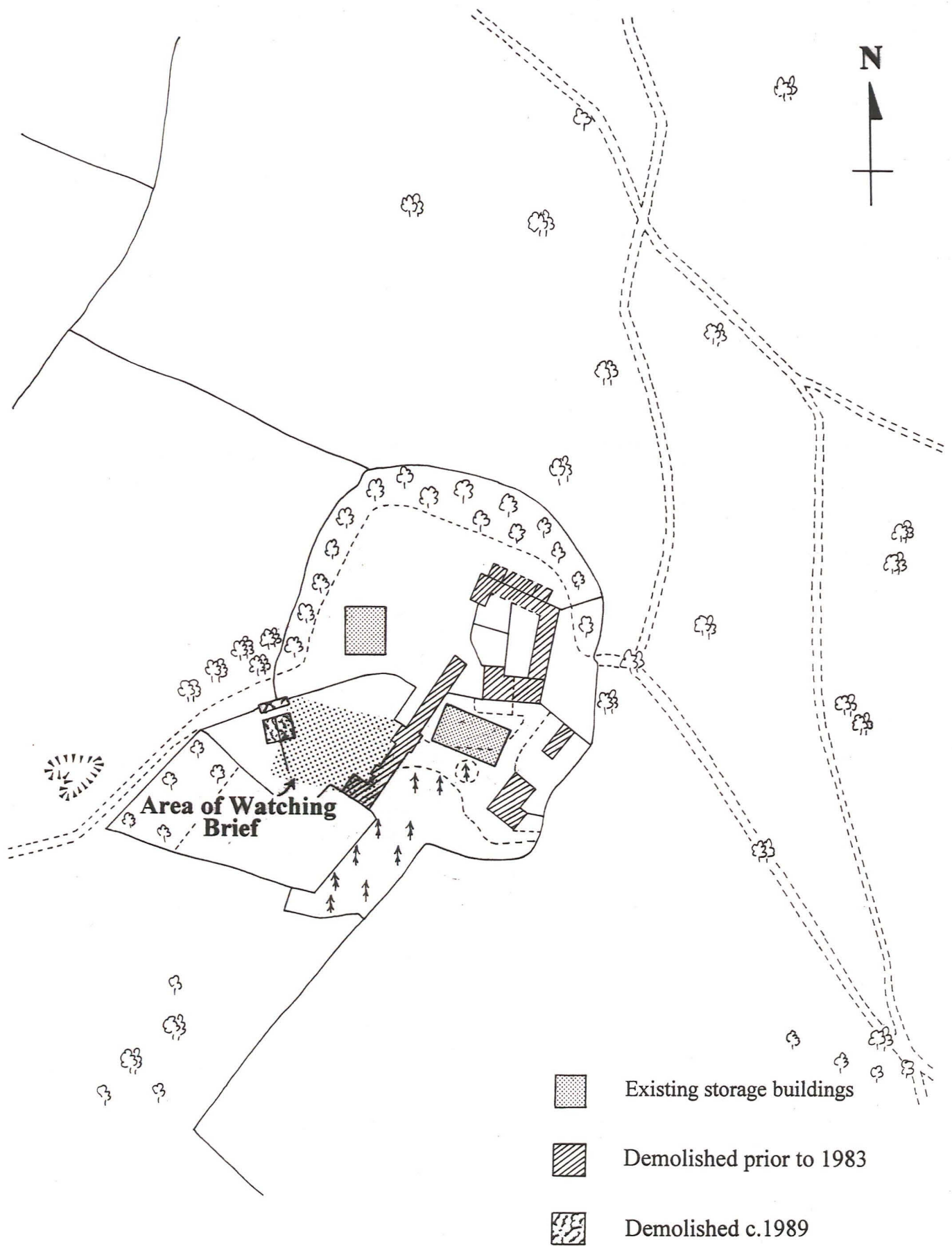


Figure 3: Ketsby House Farm; location of Ketsby House, as shown on various Ordnance Survey maps (1906 2nd edition 25"; 1951 6" Sheet TF 37 NE; 1983 1:10 000 Sheet TF 37 NE). Drawing is not to scale, but is based on 1906 2nd edition OS 25" map.

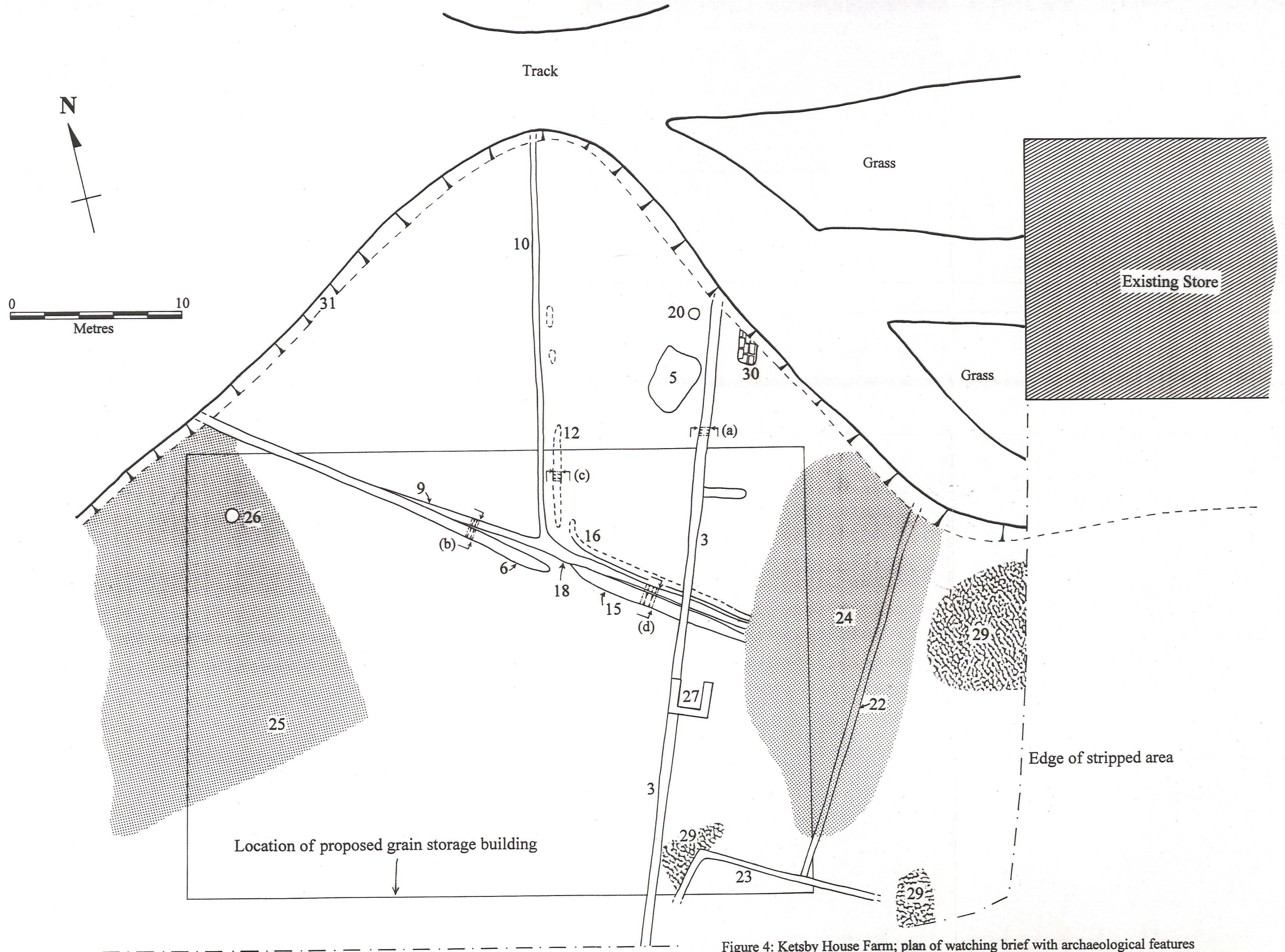
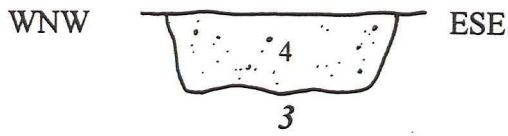
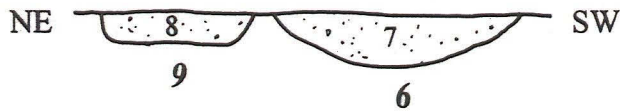


Figure 4: Ketsby House Farm; plan of watching brief with archaeological features encountered during groundworks. 1:200 scale. Based on plan supplied by Precise Surveys of Louth.

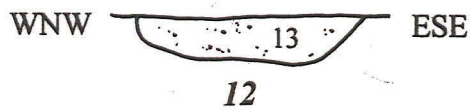
(a)



(b)



(c)



(d)

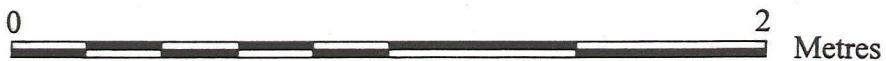
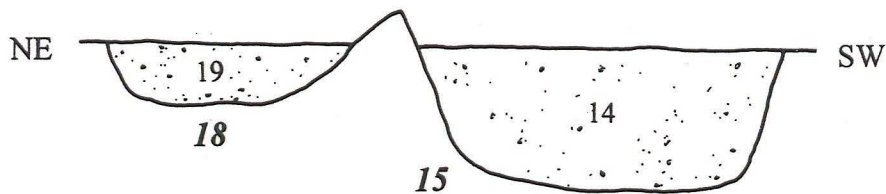


Figure 5: Ketsby House Farm; sections through archaeological features investigated during the watching brief. 1:20 scale.



Pl. 1 Site of the new grain store (looking NW, with existing grain store to right).



Pl. 2 Levelling the site after topsoil stripping (looking south across the farmyard).

Pl. 3 Natural slope to north of existing grain store, used for tipping of excavated chalk (looking NE).





Pl. 4 Ditch 3 (linear, right) and pit 5 (right foreground, to right of the ditch). Brick rubble along the line of wall foundation 22 is visible, left background. Looking south.



Pl. 5 Soil fill of ditches 6 and 9, centre, with site of demolished cottages 25 on right. Looking SE.



Pl. 6 Parallel filled ditches 15 (right), 18 (centre) and 16 (left). Looking SE, scale divisions 0.5m.

Pl. 7 Excavated section through fills of ditches 18 (left) and 15 (right). Scale divisions 0.5m.





Pl. 8 Junction of ditches. The main series of ditches 6, 9, 15, 16 and 18 cross from the left foreground; ditches 10 and 12 enter from the left. The 1m red/white scale lies across ditch 12. Looking east to the existing storage shed.

Pl. 9 Surviving base of ditch 12. Scale divisions 0.5m.





Pl. 10 Brick foundations 30 at north side of the stripped area. Looking south, scale divisions 0.5m.



Pl. 11 Sandstone foundation 23 at the SE corner of the site. The steel pin marks the corner of the new grain store. Looking SE.



Pl. 12 Pebbles 29 to east of sandstone foundation 23.

Pl. 13 Brick rubble and pebbles at the eastern edge of the stripped area (looking east).





Pl. 14 Top brick courses of well 26, showing lead pipe.

Pl. 15 Brick lining of possible cess pit 27 (NW corner to left of 1m red/white scale). Looking east.





Pl. 16 Half-section across post-hole 20. Scale divisions 0.5m.



Pl. 17 Section excavated by machine across pit 5 (looking SW, scale divisions 0.5m).

Pl. 18 Depression alongside farm access road marking ditch 31 (looking NW).

