

LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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BRAUNCEWELL LIMESTONE QUARRY
TF032 521
Archaeological Desk top Study

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Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Brauncewell Quarries Ltd to undertake a Desk Top Study to assess the archaeological potential of the proposed development site at Brauncewell. This has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the County Archaeological Officer as outlined in the Brief dated October 5th 1993.

Site Location

The proposed development site is an extension to existing quarry workings lying west of the A15 Lincoln to Sleaford road c.7km north of Sleaford. The remains of Brauncewell village are east of the site and Dunsby lies to the south.

Background

Apart from the recently constructed Petrofina oil pipeline which runs along the limestone ridge there have been few opportunities to examine archaeological remains in the locality. Some fieldwalking was carried out in 1980 by Peter Chowne of the former South Lincolnshire Archaeological Unit, in fields just east of the proposed development site when small quantities of Roman and prehistoric material were found.

Whilst a string of modern villages (probably Saxon in origin) lie along the spring lines to west and east of the limestone ridge the top of the Heath was less favoured for settlement in the medieval period. Some of the land was wooded or used for grazing. Brauncewell parish contained two medieval settlements (Brauncewell and Dunsby) neither of which has survived into modern times. Both villages were mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086, as well as a church at Brauncewell and appear to have been largely deserted by the mid 16th century. There are now only a handful of houses in the parish.

Method

Records from Brauncewell parish lodged at the Lincoln Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) were examined and sites plotted onto a 1:25,000 map (Fig. 1). Records from the same parish were then examined at the offices of Heritage Lincolnshire and cross-referenced - see Appendix I.

The aerial photographic libraries at Swindon and Cambridge were asked for information about sites in Brauncewell and the Appendix also includes all aerial photographic records held at Lincoln, Cambridge and Swindon.

Results

The archaeological evidence comprises two main categories. Casual finds record human activity in the area dating from the Neolithic through to the medieval period in the form of pottery

and worked flints. Aerial photographs have recorded physical remains, such as enclosures and barrows, which are visible as marks in ripening crops, where ditches have been dug into the subsoil, sometimes in the same locations as the finds. There have been no archaeological excavations in the study area.

Records at the Lincolnshire Archives Office were searched but there is little by way of early cartographic information for the parish. There was no Enclosure Award for the parish and the earliest surviving large scale map of the parish is a survey carried out in 1845 by Robert Moore of Harmston for the Tithe Award which was completed in 1852 (LAO Tithe Award E639).

The field boundaries of the survey area are virtually identical to those found on the O.S 1:25,000 scale map of 1958. Each field is named and the proposed new quarry lies in the 'Near 40 Acres Field' which was recorded as arable land in 1852. The present quarry was in 'Far 40 Acres Field'. The cottages which line the A15 were labelled 'Brauncewell Cottages' in 1845 (and in 1958) and the disused stone pit to their south appears to have been in current use in 1845-52. An old stone pit is recorded in the field immediately east of the cottages. There are few buildings recorded on the 1845 survey. In addition to the cottages described above were Brauncewell Grange, the Manor House and Dunsby House and two isolated cottages east of Brauncewell Hill Top. In other words habitation in 1845 was the same as today.

The Manor House and Dunsby House mark the positions of the deserted settlements of Brauncewell and Dunsby respectively. It is considered unlikely that substantial medieval remains will be found on the proposed development site which is 1.5km from Brauncewell and 1km from Dunsby.

Two further maps held at the Bristol Estate offices in Ickworth comprise an 1835 plan of the estate of the Marquis of Bristol and an 1842 survey of Brauncewell and Dunsby (LAS records). These maps were not examined because they are so similar in date to the Tithe Award map described above.

Aerial photographic evidence clearly shows the archaeological importance of the area close to the proposed development site. There is a major Bronze Age barrow (burial) cemetery lying east of the A16, near Brauncewell church comprising two double ditched barrows and four single ring ditches (ref. A and K). There is a square enclosure, with an entrance on its east side, in the field immediately east of the proposed quarry and west of the A16 (ref. I). Walking of these fields, after ploughing, has produced scatters of Roman pottery (Ref. 15.7, 15.8) and prehistoric worked flints and pottery (Ref. 15.8, B,K). The general scatter of material from these periods on the land immediately east of the site indicates the potential for further discoveries in within the proposed development area.

The Site

Aerial photographs taken in 1992 have revealed triple linear boundary ditches crossing the development site with a fourth a parallel linear ditch to the west. They follow a sinuous, north south direction from the north-west corner of the site, the marks of the triple ditches fading towards the south end of the field. Although cropmarks were first recorded in this field in 1974 by the National Monuments Record the site was not logged onto the County records until 1992. (The 1974 photograph, which is in the National Air Photographic Library at Swindon, has not yet been examined.)

Discussion

Similar parallel ditches have been recorded elsewhere in Lincolnshire, especially on the limestone, as well as in the rest of the country and form part of an extensive network of boundaries. Few have been excavated and rarely do they produce pottery or other finds to help date them. A single piece of pottery was found in a trench through ditches at West Deeping in 1989 and in 1992 Iron Age pottery was found in triple ditches at Tixover in Leicestershire. In January 1993 a trench was dug through a triple ditch system at Nettleham, north of Lincoln, where late Iron Age pottery was found in the bottom of the ditches. Despite these discoveries our understanding of the true function of these monuments is poor.

Conclusion

This study has shown that archaeological remains are present within the proposed development area and further investigations are likely to be required prior to commencement of quarrying. The triple ditch cropmark fades and merges with straighter marks left by later ridge and furrow. It should also be noted that aerial photography does not necessarily record all archaeological features present. This is because the results depend upon a variety of factors such as weather, crop conditions, ground disturbance and the angle at which the photograph was taken. For example the triple ditches are partially obscured by darker bands crossing the photograph from west to east, which are probably geological in origin.

It is recommended that geophysical survey should be carried out on at least the southern part of the site to locate more precisely the position of the ditches in this part of the study area. It may also be necessary to carry out associated fieldwalking and evaluation trenching to establish the depth of surviving archaeological deposits.

Discussions with the County Archaeological Officer are recommended to determine a precise programme of further archaeological works.

Naomi Field
Lindsey Archaeological Services
November 22nd 1993

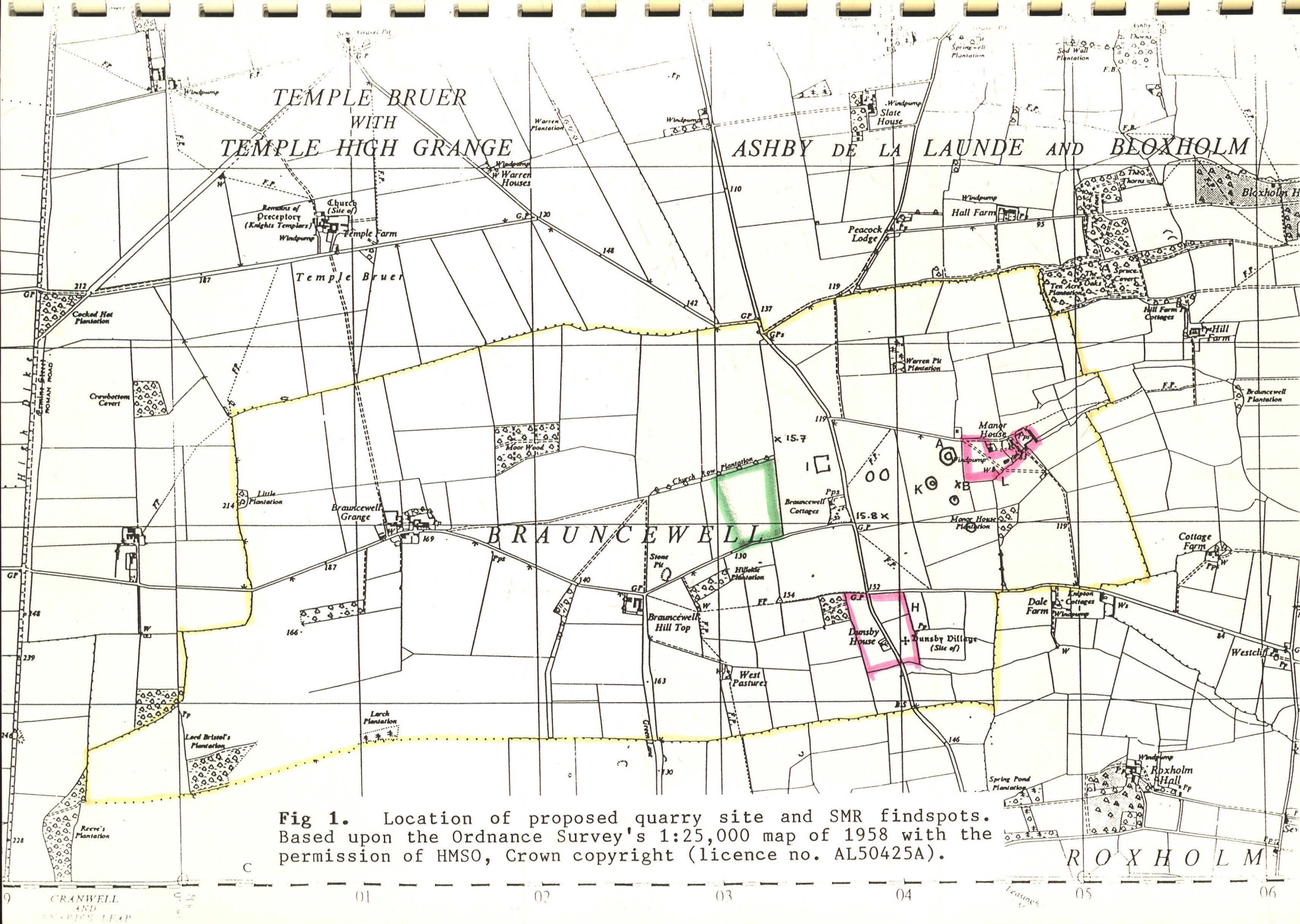




Fig 2. Aerial photograph of single and triple linear ditches looking west. (Photo Bob Thompson 5/7/1992.)

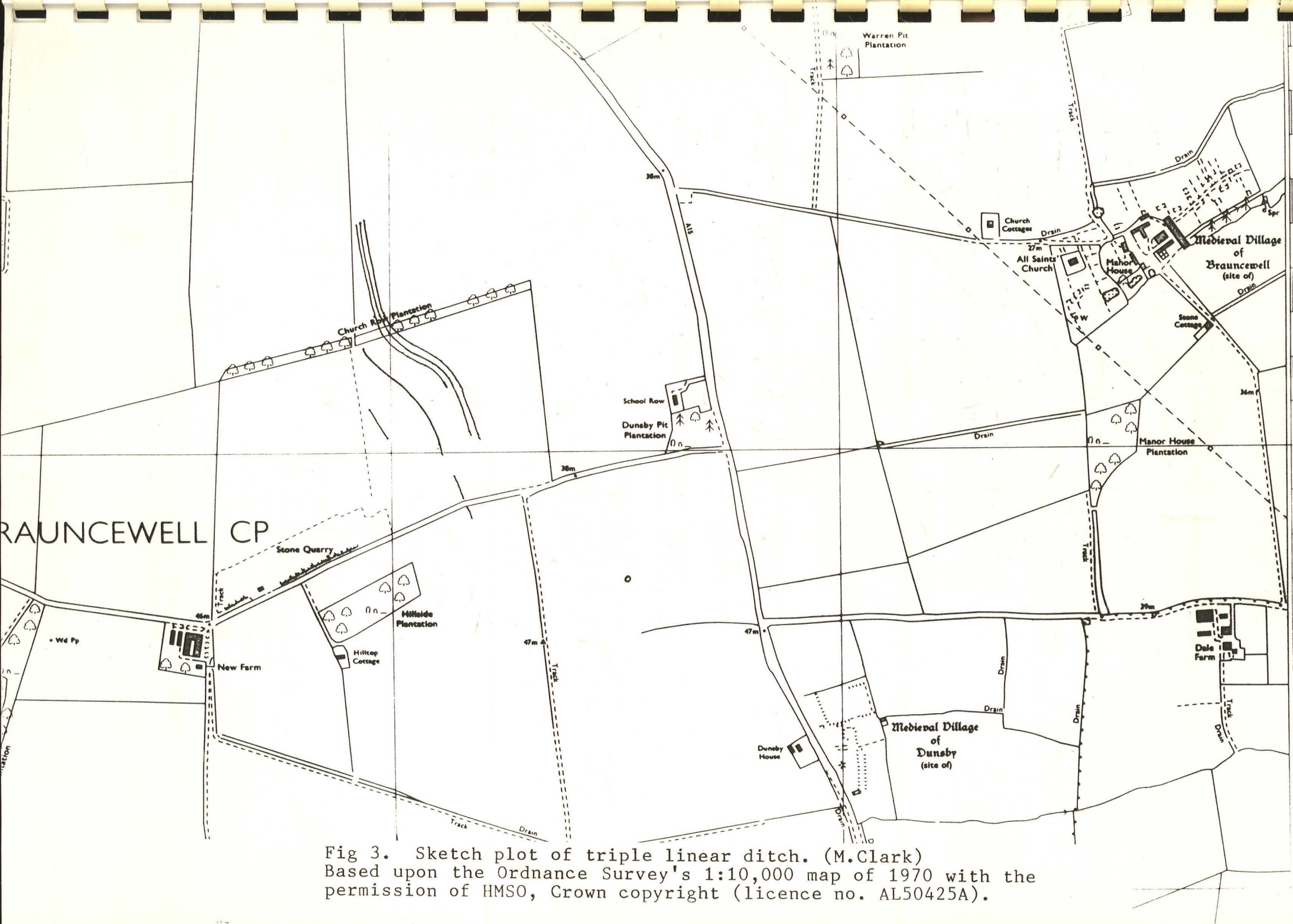


Fig 3. Sketch plot of triple linear ditch. (M.Clark)
Based upon the Ordnance Survey's 1:10,000 map of 1970 with the permission of HMSO, Crown copyright (licence no. AL50425A).

APPENDIX 1

Archaeological remains within the proposed quarry site.

AP = Aerial photograph(s)

CUCAP = Cambridge University Collection of Aerial Photographs.

NMR = National Monuments Record of the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England (Swindon)

LM = Lincoln Museum. Alphabetical references. A few records have been computerised by the County SMR and have reference numbers.

NK= North Kesteven. Parish number + find or site number

DMV= Deserted Medieval Village

SAM = Scheduled Ancient Monument

NGR (TF)	LM Ref.	Description
032 523	-	triple linear ditches with single linear ditch to West (AP B.Thomson 28.6.92, 5.7.92 NMR SF722/54-55 2.8.1974)

APPENDIX 2

Archaeological remains in the vicinity of the proposed quarry and in the parish of Brauncewell

NGR (TF)	NK	LM Ref.	Description
0432 5242	15.4	A (60322)	Double circle visible as gravelly small stones in the plough, ring ditches observed from the air AP T.Hayes, 1957 and 1959 CUCAP ref. AGC 74-75 (13.7.62)
0420 5225		K (60322)	multiple ring ditches
0431 5239			double circle
0433 5217			single ring ditch and pits
0382 5224			single ring ditch
0397 5225			single ring ditch
0440 5198			single ring ditch (AP T. Hayes 1957 and 1959; CUCAP ref. AXU 83, 21.6.69; NMR ref. SF2915/27A, 1976)
0435 5230	15.5 15.11	K (60322)	Worked flints and Bronze Age pot sherd
0355 5226	15.9	I	ditched enclosure with internal pits and E entrance (AP T.Hayes 1970)
02 51		J	Roman coins found in 1940s
0418 5209	15.3	B	Late Roman grey burnished ware carinated vessel

040 513	15.2	H	DMV earthworks of Dunsby SAM 277 (AP, CUCAP ref. ARC 64-65 2.5.67;AWX 18-20, 2.2.69)
047 525	15.1	L (60322)	DMV earthworks of Brauncewell SAM 278 (AP CUCAP ref. AWX 12-17, 21-22 2.2.69)
035 524	15.7		Scatter of Romano-British and medieval pottery. 1 sherd of Bronze Age pottery Flint scraper from barrow site.
039 521	15.8		Romano-British and medieval pottery scatter.
04 52	15.10		Spearhead ?Bronze at Grantham Museum (32.72)
053 518			Cropmarks <u>CUCAP</u> no reference, pre 1975.