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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

**Royal Oak Lane, Aubourn, Lincs
Archaeological Earthwork Survey
and Watching Brief**

NGR: SK 92200 62754

Planning Application Numbers:

N/05/1166/00 and N/05/0021/01

Site Code:AROL 01

LCNCC Accn No. : 2001.152

Report for

for

Ablehomes Ltd

LAS Report No. 542

July 2001

25 WEST PARADE · LINCOLN · LN1.1NW

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Conservation
Services

13 AUG 2001

Highways & Planning
Directorate

EVENTS L12409 L12410
SOURCES L17046 L17047
61906 L182078

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Pl. 8 House plot 6, looking west. Scales 2m and 0.50m

Pl. 9 House plot 6. Sequence of deposits, subsoil overlying natural orange, iron panned clay and blue clay at base of trench. Scales 2m and 0.50m.

Royal Oak Lane, Aubourn, Lincs
Archaeological Watching Brief and Earthwork Survey
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Summary

An earthwork survey and watching brief at Royal Oak Lane Aubourn identified traces of ridge and furrow cultivation in the northern part of the site. Monitoring of groundworks produced 20th century finds in the south-west corner of the site but no other evidence of occupation was found.

Introduction

The following specification has been prepared for Ablehomes Ltd in accordance with a brief supplied by the North Kesteven Heritage Officer dated January 23rd 2001, and the general requirements set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section, 1998).

Site Location

Aubourn is a small village situated in the Witham valley between Lincoln and Newark, south of the A46 (Fig. 1). The development site is situated the north west corner of Royal Oak Lane. It is a wedge-shaped piece of land approximately 80m x 80m (0.6ha) in extent which was pasture prior to development. The northern boundary of the plot is formed by a drain and the natural soils comprises alluvium and river gravels over clay. The River Witham lies 200m north of the site (Fig. 2).

Planning Background

Planning permission has been granted for the construction of six houses with associated garages and services, subject to an earthwork survey of the land prior to development and an archaeological watching brief being carried out during the groundworks phase of construction.

Archaeological Background

The development site is located near the centre of the medieval and modern village with land fronting Royal Oak Lane. Aubourn is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 and is clearly a settlement which originated in the Saxon period. Earthwork remains in the field indicate that there is medieval ridge and furrow present. Pits and ditches containing pottery of 10-14th century dates were identified along the northern of Royal Oak Lane opposite the Royal Oak pub, east of the development site and it was thought that there would be potential for further medieval remains being present in the area closest to Royal Oak Lane (plot 6).

Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the earthwork survey was to record the evidence for medieval remains on the site prior to destruction. The purpose of the Watching Brief was to record any archaeological deposits disturbed during

groundworks at the above site.

RESULTS

Earthwork Survey

The measured survey was carried out using a *Geodimeter 640 Total Station*. A detailed contour survey of the site was undertaken with readings taken at approximately 2m intervals (Fig. 3). The resulting contour plot was annotated on site to produce a conventional hachured survey of the earthwork remains, with selected spot heights recorded (Fig.4).

This confirmed that there were four, possibly five plough furrows running approximately north-south across the site and petering out towards the south end. There was faint indication of a headland diagonally crossing the plot which suggests that the present road alignment may be relatively modern. The ground dropped away towards the road.

Watching Brief

Five monitoring visits were made to the site on June 26, 29, July 2,3 and 11th 2001. The first area to be cleared was in the south-west corner of the site where a new access road was to be constructed. This area contained mature deciduous trees and bushes. The undergrowth was cleared and topsoil removed to either side of the new road to provide machine access (Pl. 2). The access road itself was stripped to a depth of 0.50m below existing ground level (Pls 3 and 4).

The topsoil was up to 0.35m deep overlying the natural alluvium derived subsoil. The area appears to have been used as a rubbish dump in the early 20th century with bottles, crockery and tin cans in evidence. A sample of pottery was retained for examination by Jane Young who confirmed their 20th century date. The material was thrown away. The ground also smelt strongly indicating the presence of a cess pit nearby. Brick rubble was present in the topsoil and a small length of brickwork (1.25m long and one brick (240mm) wide) was found on the west side of the access road (Pls 4 and 5). Areas of burning were observed around old tree roots suggesting that the ground had been cleared in the past.

The remainder of the site was stripped of topsoil prior to excavation of foundation trenches. The exposed surface appeared to be natural alluvium with small rounded gravels and no evidence of any archaeological features. The undulations of the ridge and furrow were still visible across the site, especially along the boundary (Pl. 6)

A narrow trench, 0.50m wide and 1m deep, was dug along the eastern boundary of the site to re-route a water pipe from the main road to an animal water-trough north-east of the development (Fig. 5; Pl. 7). Examination of this trench confirmed that the sequence of deposits was entirely natural with yellow/brown and orange alluvium, containing pockets of small rounded gravels overlay brown/grey and blue clays at the base of the trench.

The highest potential for any occupation of the site was considered to be close to Royal Oak Lane, where House Plot 6 was located (Fig. 6). Monitoring of the foundation trenches revealed the same natural deposits recorded in the water pipe trench and no archaeological features were seen (Pls 8 and 9).

Conclusion.

The northern half of the development site at the west end of Royal Oak Lane was covered in ridge and furrow earthworks indicating that this part of the parish was one of the open fields in the medieval period and lay outside the built up area of the village. (The houses immediately east of the site are inter-war council houses, with older village properties being located further east). The presence of 19-20th century rubbish in the south west corner of the site, together with the possibility of a cess pit, are the only other evidence of activity on the site. A building is marked on the 1953 OS 1:25,000 map in this location (Fig. 1).

The presence of alluvium on the site and its location close to the River Witham suggests that the area may not have been suitable for occupation in the past but would have been ideal as a water meadow. The lack of finds of any date, apart from the last century make it impossible to state when the area was taken out of cultivation and turned into pasture.

Naomi Field
Lindsey Archaeological Services
August 8th 2001

APPENDIX 1

Royal Oak Lane, Aubourn (AROL 01)

Context Summary

Context	Type	Depth	Description
100	Layer	0.30-0.35m	Topsoil, mid-brown silty soil
101	Layer	0.65-0.70m	Subsoil, light brown alluvium with pockets of small rounded gravels, and iron pan
102	Layer	Not excavated	Natural clay, brown/grey and blue

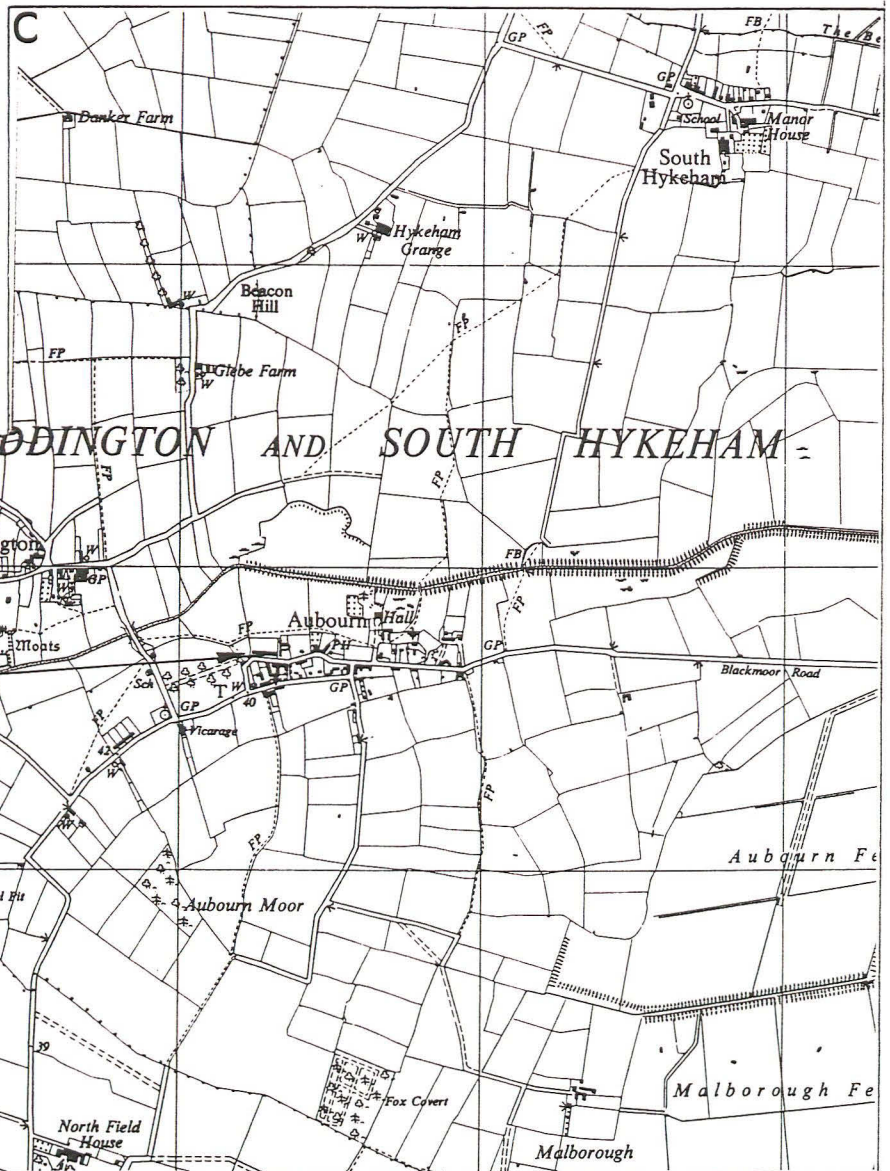
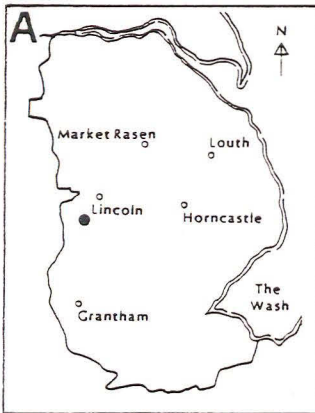
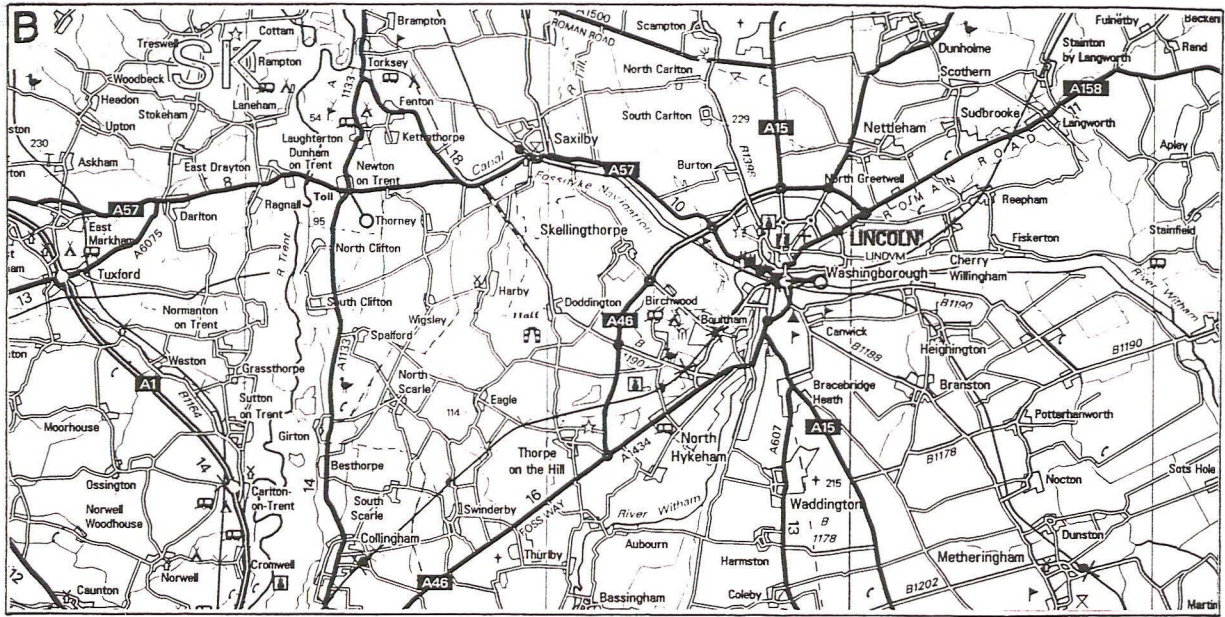
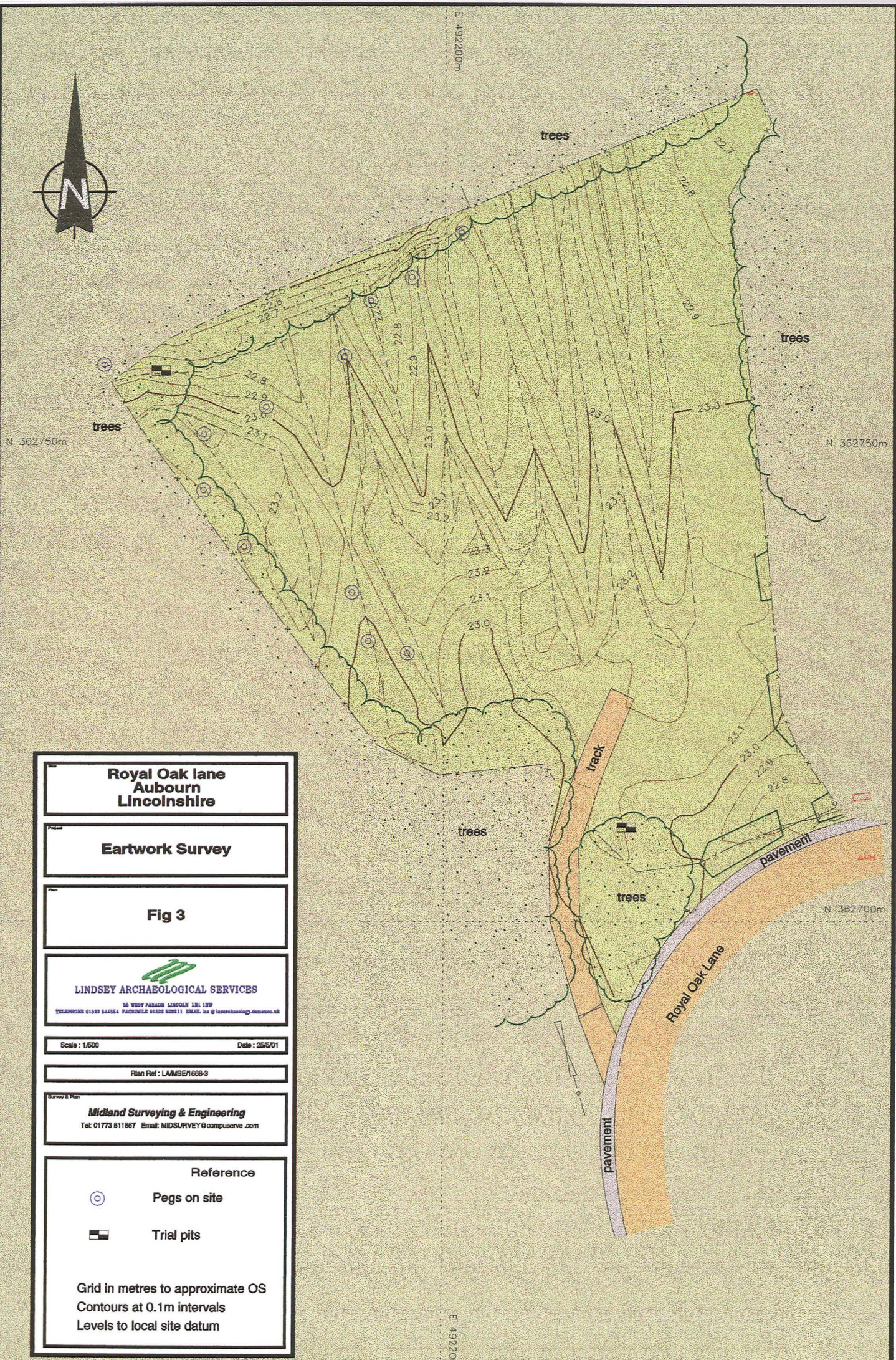
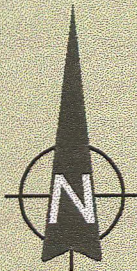


Fig. 1 Aubourn, Site location. C, reproduced from the 1:25,000 scale OS map © Crown copyright reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, LAS Licence number AL 10002165.



Fig. 2 Royal Oak Lane, location of site.



**Royal Oak lane
Aubourn
Lincolnshire**

Eartwork Survey

Fig 3




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Scale : 1/500 Date : 25/5/01

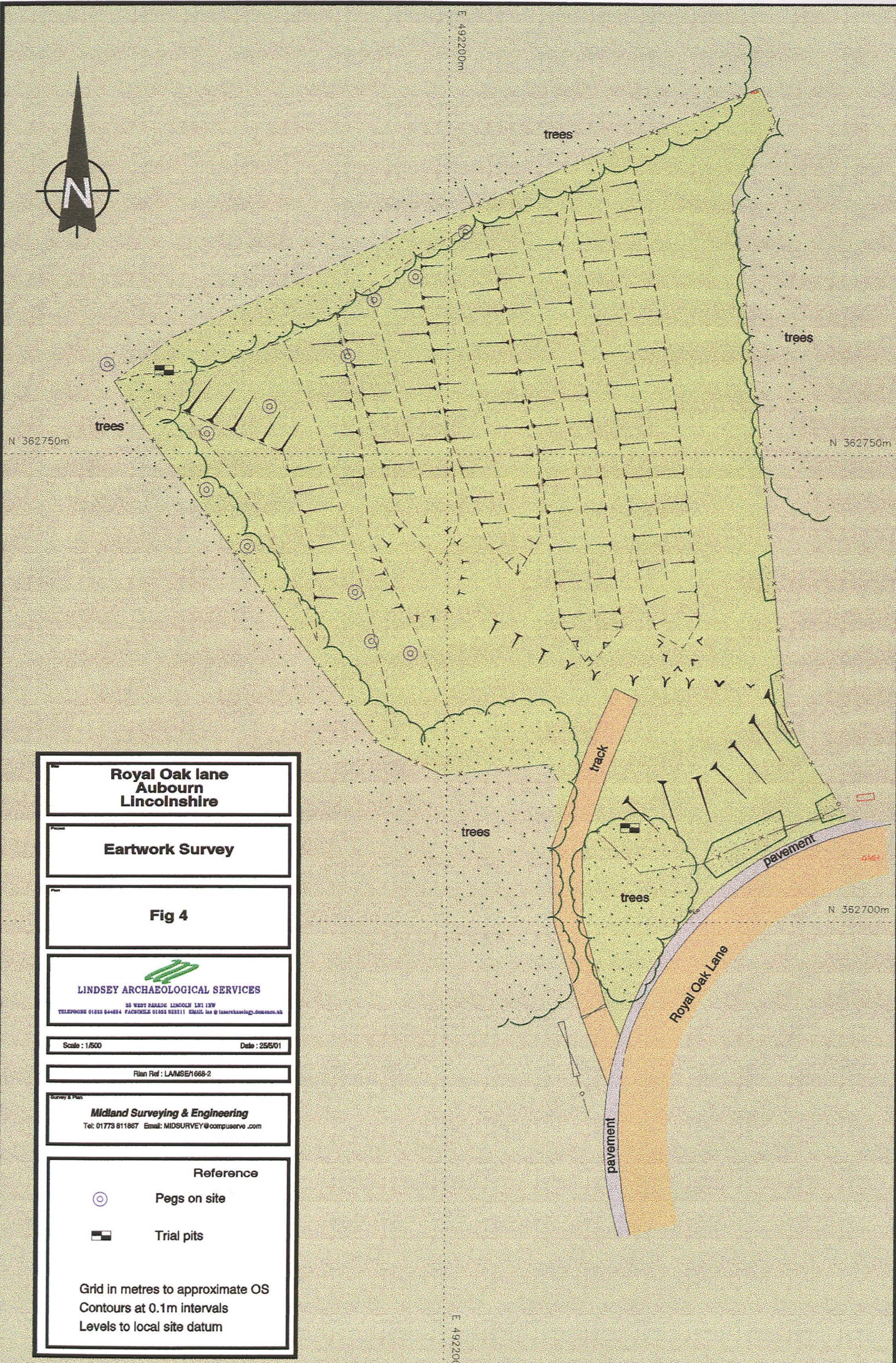
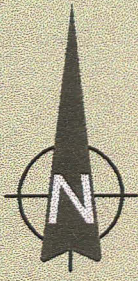
Plan Ref : LAMSE1668-3

Midland Surveying & Engineering
Tel: 01773 811887 Email: MIDSURVEY@compuserve.com

Reference

-  Pegs on site
-  Trial pits

Grid in metres to approximate OS
Contours at 0.1m intervals
Levels to local site datum



**Royal Oak lane
Aubourn
Lincolnshire**

Eartwork Survey

Fig 4

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Scale : 1/500

Date : 25/6/01

Plan Ref : LAMSE/1668-2

Survey & Plan

Midland Surveying & Engineering

Tel: 01773 811867 Email: MIDSURVEY@compuserve.com

Reference

⊙ Pegs on site

▣ Trial pits

Grid in metres to approximate OS
Contours at 0.1m intervals
Levels to local site datum

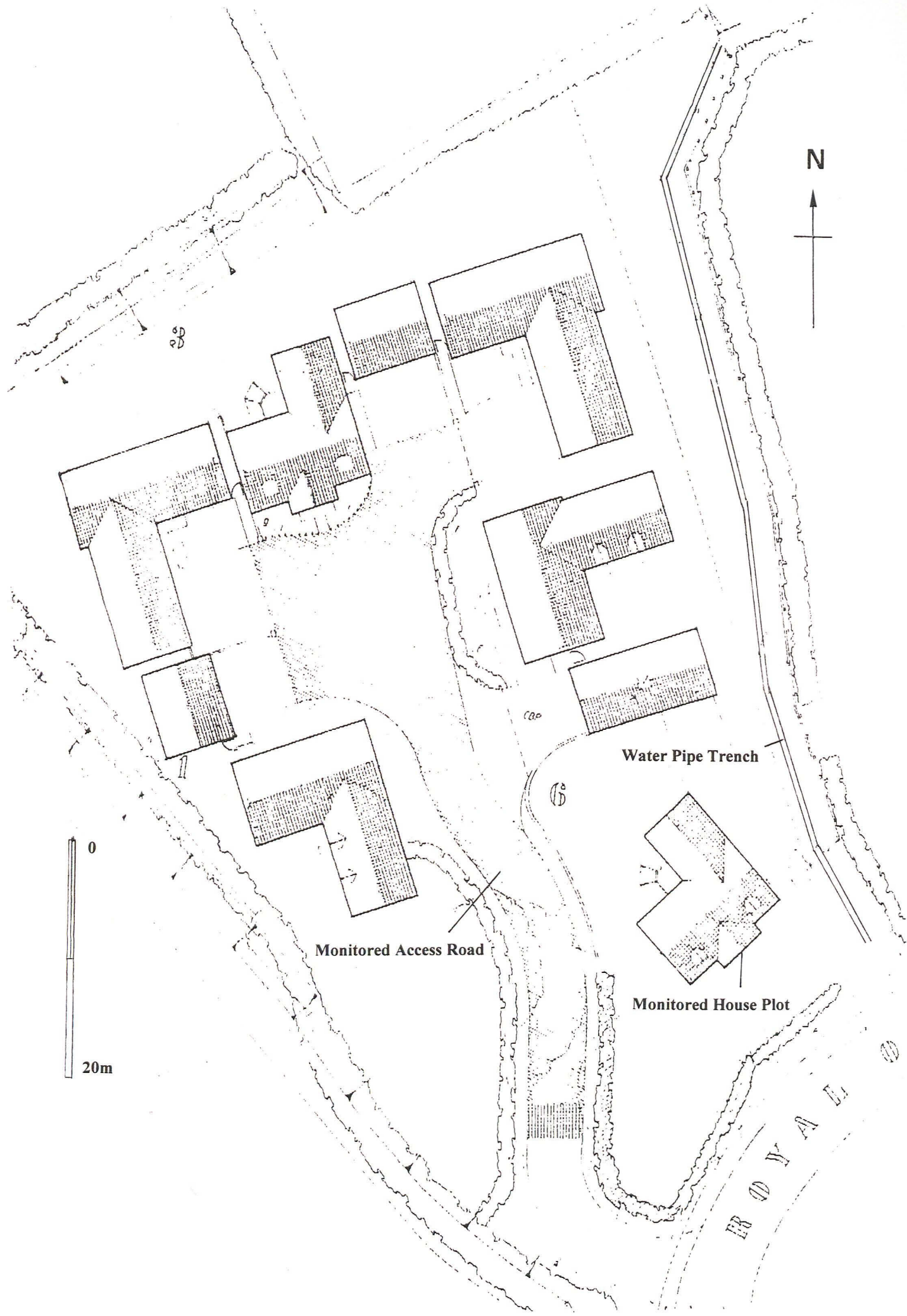


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Pl. 3 Access road looking south

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