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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON LAND AT MANOR FARM,
NOCTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(NMF99)**



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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
ON LAND AT MANOR FARM,
NOCTON,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(NMF99)**

Work Undertaken For
Stonewell Homes

Report Compiled by
James Albone MA, PIFA

September 2001

National Grid Reference: TF 0580 6450
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A.P.S. Report No. 113/01



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1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during residential development at Manor Farm, Nocton, Lincolnshire. The site lies close to the historic core of the village.

A post-medieval boundary ditch and a further undated ditch and two pits were recorded during the watching brief. A single sherd of residual 13th to 14th century Potterhanworth type pottery and an iron nail were recovered.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as, 'a formal program of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits maybe disturbed or destroyed.' (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of three detached houses at Manor Farm, Nocton, Lincolnshire. The archaeological work was required as a condition of planning permission (N/42255/98) granted by North Kesteven District Council.

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Stonewell Homes to carry out the watching brief. The work was undertaken in accordance with a brief set by the North Kesteven Heritage Officer. The watching brief was undertaken between 7th April 1999 and 26th April 2001.

2.3 Topography and Geology

Nocton is situated approximately 11km southeast from Lincoln and 16km north of Sleaford within North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). The present village lies on the dip slope of the Lincolnshire edge, towards the western edge of the River Witham valley.

The development site is located approximately 450m northwest of the parish church of All Saints on the northern edge of the village (Fig. 2). It is centred on National Grid Reference TF 0580 6450 at c.13m OD.

Loamy gleyic calcareous soils of the Aswarby Association overlie Jurassic Blisworth clay at the site (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 99).

2.4 Archaeological Setting

The development lies in area that contains known prehistoric (pre AD 43), medieval (AD 1066-1485) and post-medieval (after AD 1485) archaeological remains.

The earliest archaeological evidence from the vicinity is a Neolithic (2850-2250 BC) polished stone axe which was found approximately 300m southeast of the development site. Iron Age (400 BC-AD 43) pottery and animal bone have been recovered farther south, towards the southwestern edge of the modern village.

The settlement of Nocton is first recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086. The place-name is Old English in origin and refers to, 'the farmstead where the wether-sheep are kept' (Cameron 1998, 92). At that time the manor of *Nochetune* was held by Norman of Arcy and included a church and priest (Morris 1986).

The Manor House and Field House, which

lies close to the development area are grade II listed buildings of 18th and 19th century origin (DoE 1985, 16-17).

3. AIMS

The aim of the watching brief was to record and interpret archaeological features exposed during the excavation of foundation trenches of the development. The objectives were to determine the form, function, spatial arrangement, date and sequence of any archaeological remains encountered.

4. METHODS

Excavation of the foundations trenches of the three houses being constructed as part of the development were monitored. Trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator with a 0.5m wide toothed bucket.

All available section faces of the trenches were examined for archaeological features. The depth and thickness of each deposit was recorded. Each deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. Sections were drawn at a recorded scale and the location of these were marked on a plan of the development. A photographic record was also compiled. Recording of deposits encountered during the watching brief was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

Records of the deposits and features identified during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A list of all contexts with interpretations appears as Appendix 2.

5. RESULTS

5.1 Description of Results

Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. Three phases of activity were identified:

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Undated deposits
Phase 3	Post-Medieval and Modern deposits

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

5.2 Phase 1: Natural Deposits

The earliest deposits encountered during the monitoring of Plot 1 were light brown sand and gravel (004) overlain by a layer of medium brownish grey sand (003)(Fig.5, Section 1).

Yellowish grey gravel deposits (007 and 018), probably representing a continuation of (004), were recorded in Plots 2 and 3 (Fig.5, Sections 2 - 5). Overlying the gravel in Plot 5 were layers of light yellow silty sand (017) and yellowish brown silty clay (016).

5.3 Phase 2: Undated Deposits

Sealing the natural deposits in Plot 1 was a medium grey, slightly clayey silt subsoil layer (002). No archaeological features were identified in Plot 1.

Two undated archaeological features were identified in Plot 2. Pit [009] was located in the central area of the foundation trenches. It had a shallow sided profile with a rounded base (Fig. 5, Section 2). The fill comprised light to medium brownish grey silty clay (008), from which no artefacts were

recovered.

Pit [011] was situated on the western side of Plot 2. This feature had an asymmetrical profile with a flat base. Its principal fill consisted of light to medium brownish grey silty clay (010). Below this deposit within [011] was light to medium brownish yellow silty clay (012).

Ditch [019] was aligned northeast to southwest across the southern part of Plot 3. Its fills comprised dark brown silty clay (021) overlying medium grey silty clay (022) (Fig.5, Section 5).

5.4 Phase 3: Post-Medieval and Modern Deposits

Ditch [020] was aligned roughly east to west across Plot 3 and truncated ditch [019] (Fig. 4). This had a steep-sided profile which varied across the foundation trenches (Fig. 5, Sections 4 - 5). The main fill of this feature comprised dark brown silty clay (024) which contained limestone and brick fragments. These were recorded as being of post-medieval date. The upper fill of this feature (023) consisted of medium greenish yellow silty clay (Fig.5, Sections 4 - 5). This feature was sealed by an intermittent layer of dark brown sandy clay subsoil (015). It is possible that this deposit represents the remains of ridge and furrow, although it would appear to be later than the post-medieval ditch [020]. If this is the case it may have been created by traction engine ploughing in the 19th century rather during the medieval period. This subsoil deposit was sealed beneath a layer of dark grey clayey silt topsoil (014) and modern hardcore (013).

A medium grey, slightly silty clay subsoil deposit (002) was recorded in Plot 1 beneath dark greyish brown sandy silt topsoil (001). In Plot 2, medium yellowish brown clayey silt subsoil (006) was identified. Although an

iron nail and a small sherd of medieval pottery were recovered from this layer, it is probable that this is part of the same deposit (015) which seals the post-medieval ditch in Plot 3. Consequently it is likely that the pottery from (006) is residual. Sealing this deposit was dark brown silty clay topsoil (005).

6. DISCUSSION

The earliest deposits exposed during the watching brief were natural sands and gravels. Four archaeological features were identified in Plots 2 and 3. However, only one of these, ditch [020] could be dated. It is likely that this post-medieval feature and the earlier undated ditch which it truncated were both property boundaries extending west from Main Road.

A single sherd of residual medieval Potterhanworth pottery and an iron nail were the only artefacts recovered during the watching brief. The absence of significant amounts of artefactual remains may suggest that the site was agricultural land during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

7. CONCLUSIONS

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during residential development on land at Manor Farm, Nocton, because the site lay in close proximity to the historic core of the village and adjacent to the site of the manor house.

A post-medieval boundary ditch and an earlier undated ditch were recorded extending to the west of Main Road. Two undated pits were also identified. The recovery of only a single sherd of pottery also suggests no more than limited earlier activity at the site.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr P. Goy of Stonewell Homes who commissioned the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor and this report was edited by Gary Taylor and Tom Lane. Joanna Hambly, the North Kesteven Heritage Officer, kindly permitted examination of the relevant parish archaeological files.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
Site Supervisors: Andrew Hardwick, Andrew Muddin, Dale Trimble and Fiona Walker
Finds Processing: Denise Buckley
Photographic Scanning: Susan Unsworth
Post-excavation Analysis and CAD
Illustration: James Albone

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Cameron, K., 1998 *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*

DoE, 1985 *List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Interest: District of North Kesteven, Lincolnshire (Parishes of Branston & Mere, Dunston etc)*

Hodge, C. A. H., Burton, R. G. O., Corbett, W. M., Evans, R. and Seale, R. S., 1984 *Soils and their Use in Eastern England*, Soil Survey of England and Wales 13

IFA, 1999 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Morris, J., 1986 *Lincolnshire: Domesday Book*

11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services
IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

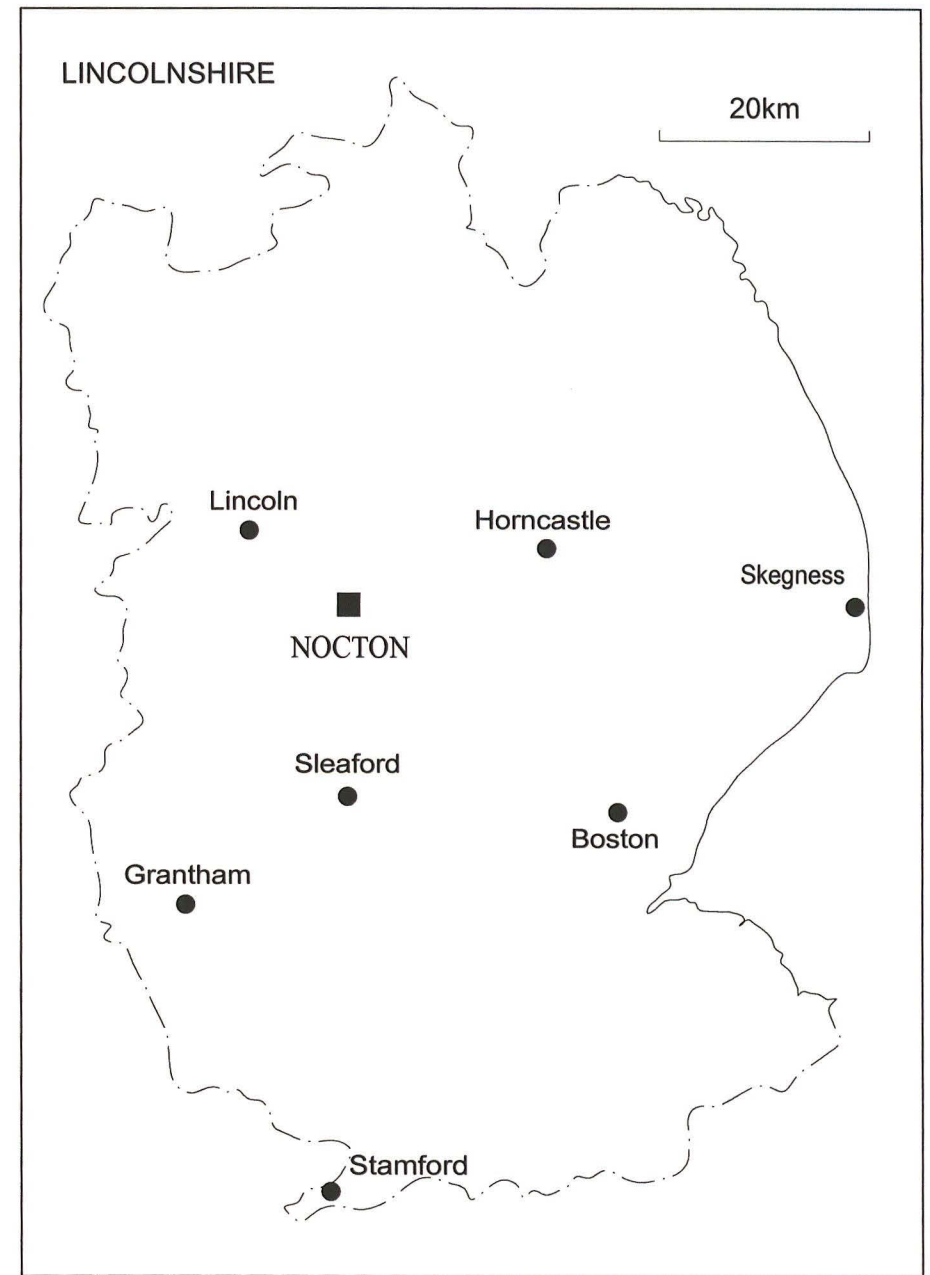
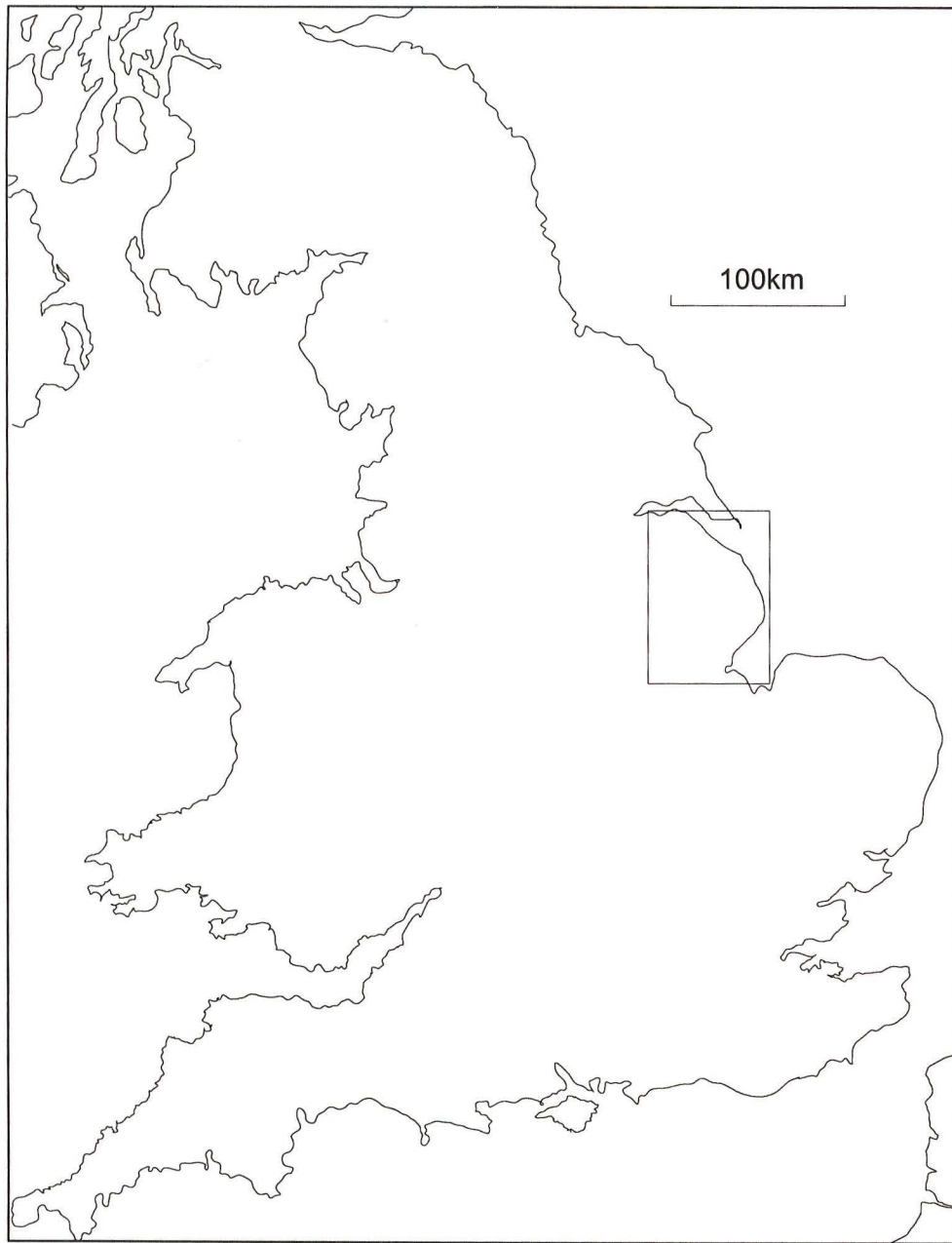


Figure 1: General location plan

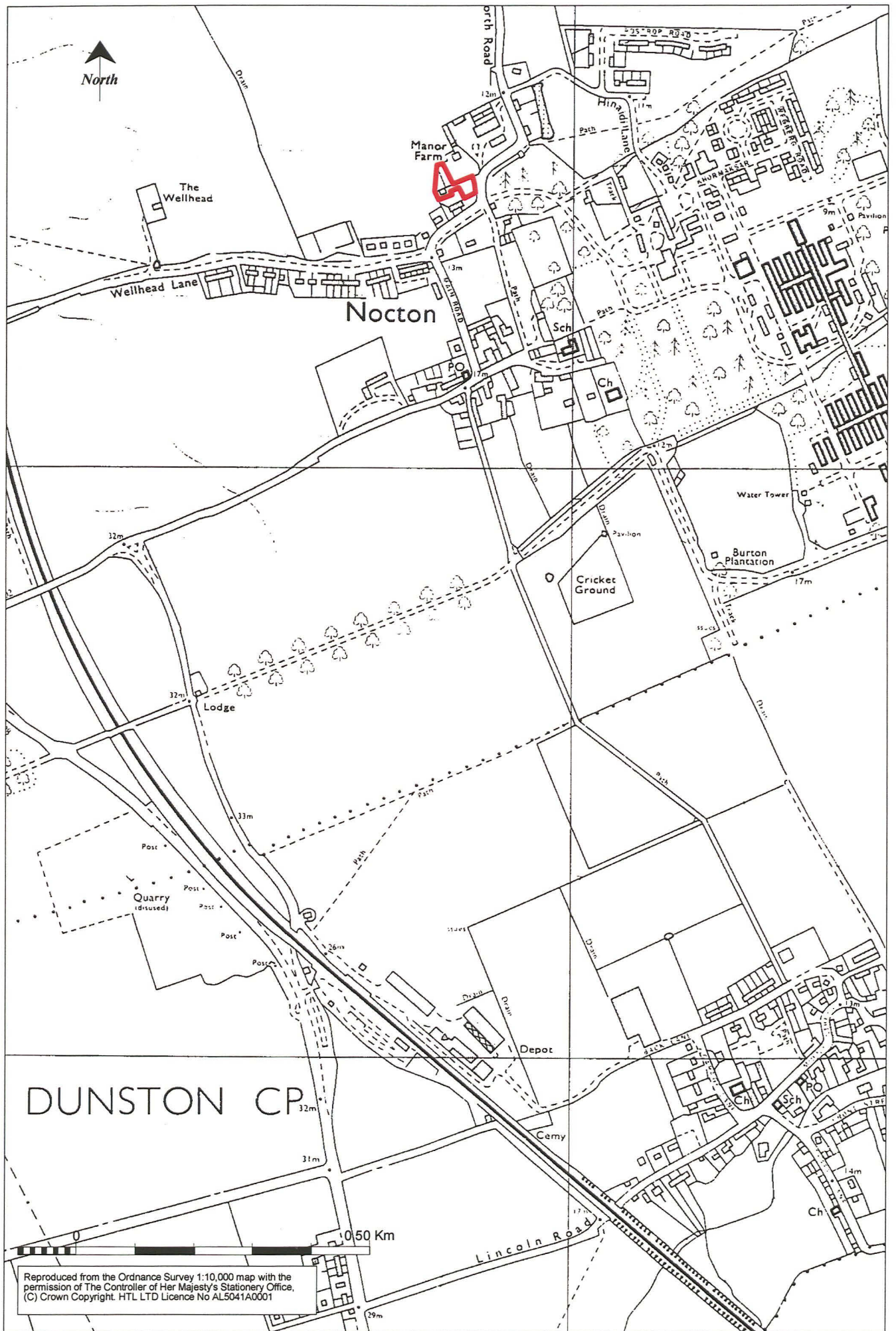


Figure 2 Location plan and archaeological setting

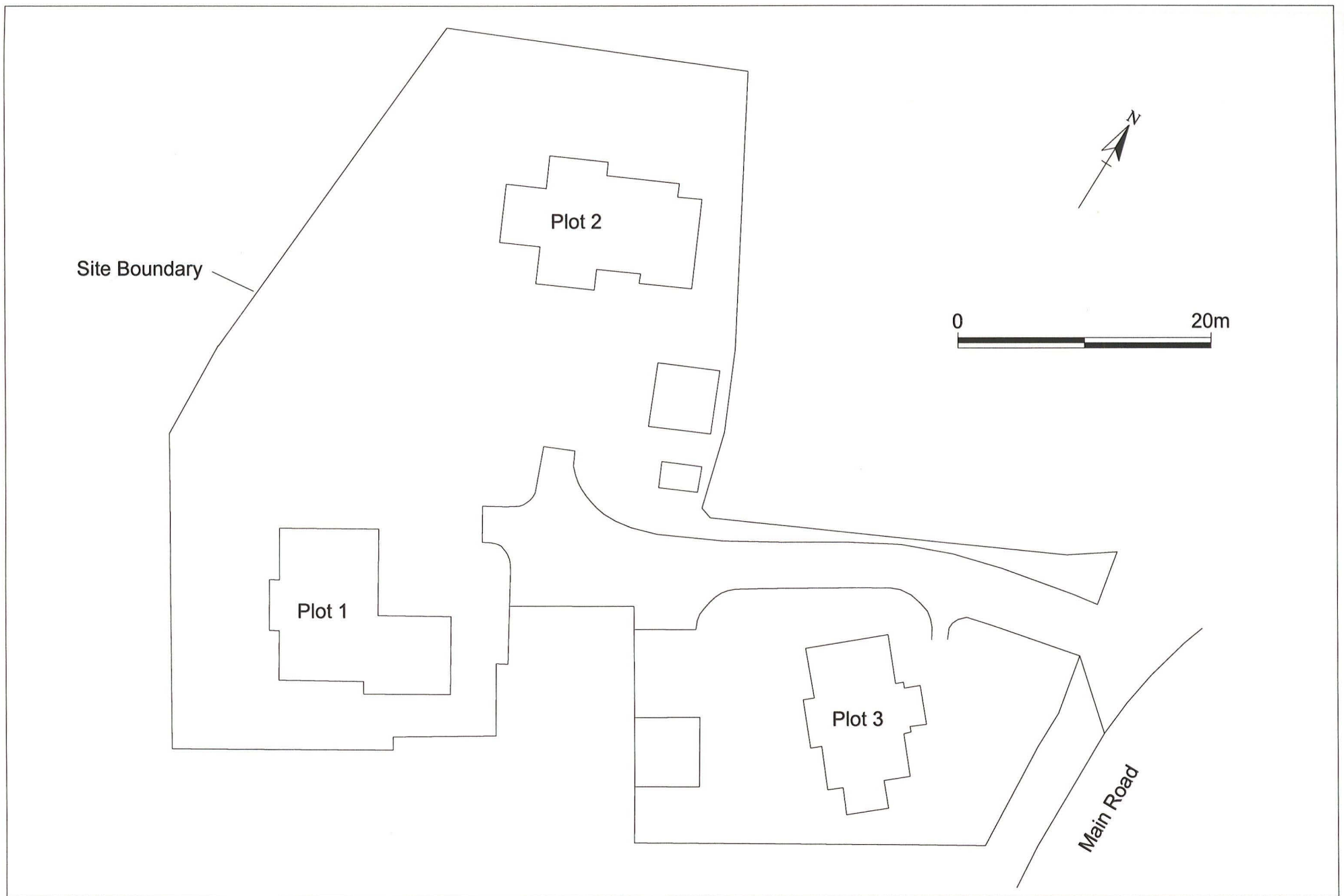


Figure 3: Site plan showing the location of Plots 1 - 3

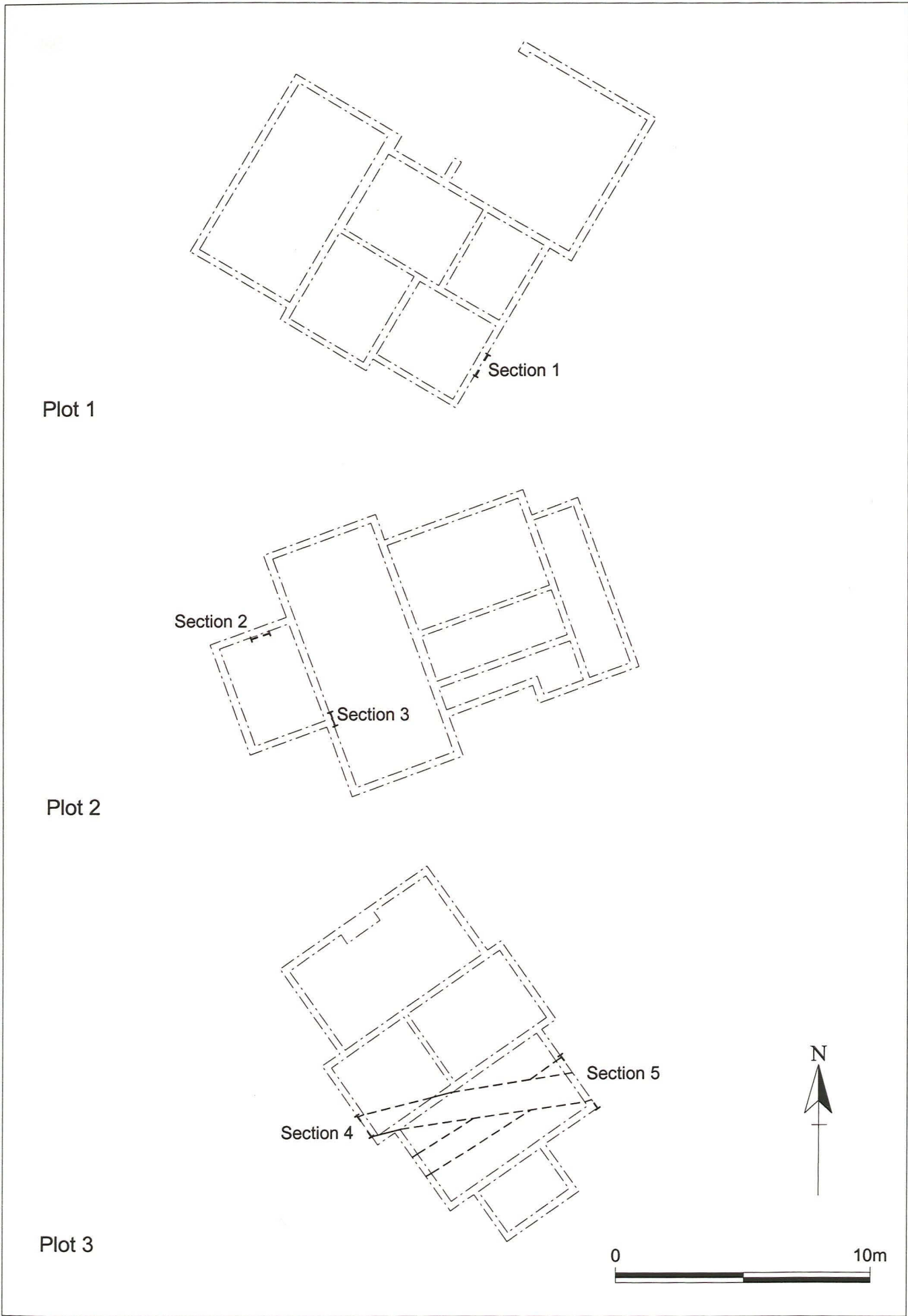
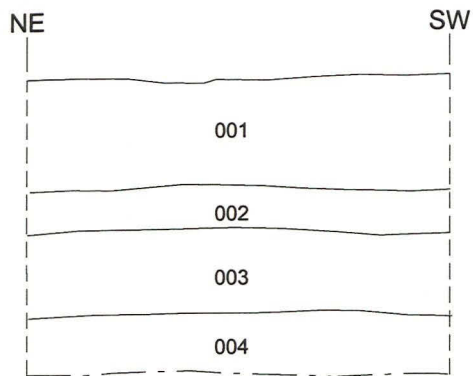
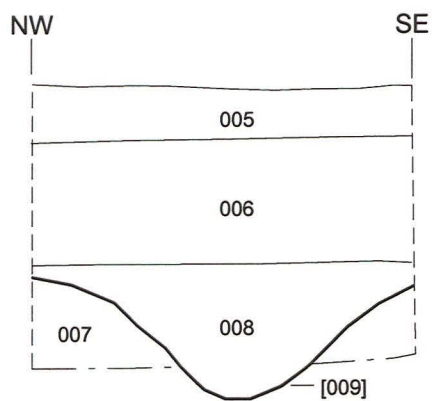


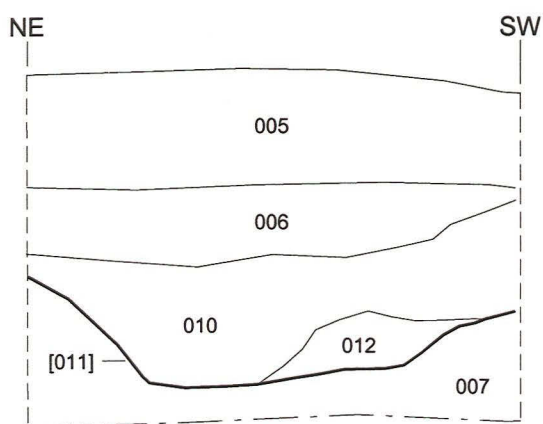
Figure 4: Plans of foundation trenches showing section locations



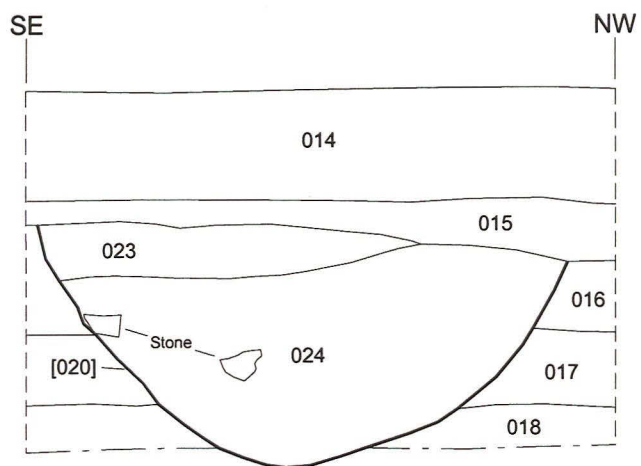
Section 1



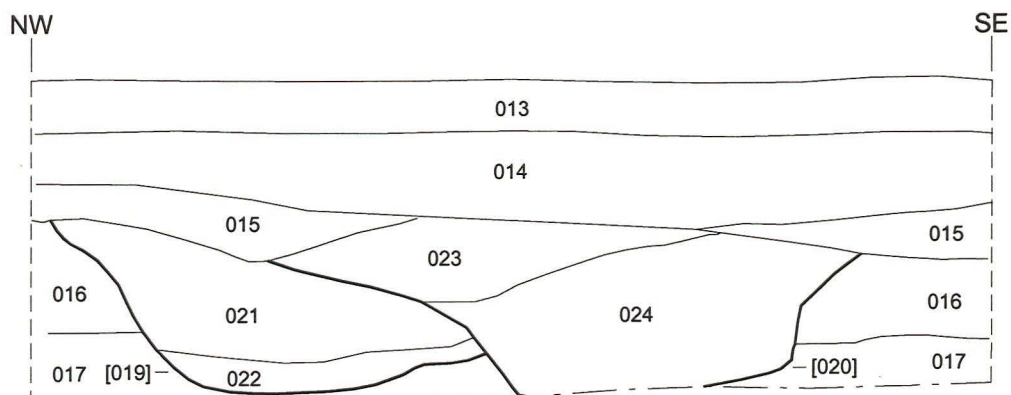
Section 2



Section 3



Section 4



Section 5



Figure 5: Sections 1 - 5



Plate 1 General view of excavated foundation trenches for Plot 1



Plate 2 Section 5 in Plot 3

Appendix 1

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND RECORDING (WATCHING BRIEF)

LAND ADJACENT TO MAIN ROAD, NOCTON, LINCS

Planning Application Number: N/42255/98 **NGR:** 505800 506450

Applicant: Stonewell Homes **Agent:** RB & S Hayward

1. Summary

1.1 This brief should be sent to archaeological contractors as the basis for the preparation of a detailed archaeological project specification. In response to this brief contractors will include the anticipated working methods, timescales and staffing levels.

1.2 These detailed specifications will be submitted by the client for approval by the North Kesteven Heritage Officer. The client will be free to choose between those specifications which are considered to adequately satisfy the brief

2. Site Location and Description

2.1 Nocton is a fen-edge village situated approx. 6 miles south east of Lincoln. The development site is located near the centre of the village, in between Manor Farm and a row of cottages on Main St (see enclosed map).

2.2 The site is at present the gardens of the cottages.

3. Planning Background

3.1 Full planning permission has been given to erect three dwellings and a replacement garage on the site.

3.2 Previously outline planning permission was given with a watching brief condition (N/42/978/96). This was a renewal of N/42/950/92.

4. Archaeological Background

4.1 The development site occupies an area which is likely to have been inhabited in the medieval period being near to the medieval village core. It is next to the Manor House which may be on the site of an older, perhaps medieval manor house.

5. Requirements for Work

5.1 The objective of the watching brief should be to ensure that any archaeological features exposed by the groundworks are recorded and interpreted.

5.2 Any adjustments to the brief for the watching brief project should only be made after consultation with the Heritage Officer for North Kesteven.

5.3 The following details should be given in the contractor's specification:

5.3.1 A projected timetable must be agreed for the various stages of work.

5.3.2 The staff structure and numbers must be detailed in the form of 'person hours' for field work.

5.3.3 It is expected that all on-site work will be carried out in a way that complies with the relevant Health and Safety legislation and

that due consideration will be given to site security.

5.3.4 The recovery and recording strategies to be used must be described in full.

5.3.5 An estimate of time and resources allocated for the post-excavation work and report production in the form of 'person' hours. This should include lists of specialists and their role in the project. It is expected that medieval finds will be encountered and therefore adequate provision should be made for specialists in this area.

5.3.6 Contingency costs should only be used in the event of unexpected costs and should only be activated after discussion with the Heritage Officer and the client.

6. Methods

6.1 The project should be carried out by a recognised archaeological body in accordance with the code of conduct of The Institute of Field Archaeologists.

6.2 The watching brief should involve:

6.2.1 archaeological supervision of topsoil stripping;

6.2.2 inspection of subsoil for archaeological features;

6.2.3 recording of archaeological features in plan;

6.2.4 rapid excavation of features if necessary;

6.2.5 archaeological supervision of subsoil stripping

6.2.6 inspection of natural for archaeological features and recording them.

6.2.7 any human remains encountered must be left in situ and only removed if absolutely necessary. The contractor must comply with all statutory consents and licences regarding the exhumation and interment of human remains. It will also be necessary to comply with all reasonable requests of interested parties as to the remains or associated items. Attempt must be made at all times not to cause offence to any interested parties.

6.2.8 Under the new Treasure Act, all gold and silver artefacts found during the watching brief, thought to be 'treasure' should be reported to the appropriate coroner's office in Lincoln or Sleaford within fourteen days.

7. Monitoring Arrangements

7.1 The Heritage Officer for North Kesteven will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project and will require preferably fourteen days notice but at least five working days prior to the commencement of the work. The Heritage Officer should be kept informed of any unexpected discoveries and should be regularly updated on the project's progress. They should be allowed access to the site at their convenience and will comply with any health and safety requirements associated with the site.

8. Reporting Requirements

8.1 A full report should be produced and deposited with the planning department of North Kesteven District Council, the Heritage Officer, the client and the County Sites and Monuments Record. The report should include:

8.1.1 location plan of the trenches;

8.1.2 section and plan drawings, with ground level, Ordnance Datum, vertical and horizontal scales as appropriate;

8.1.3 specialist descriptions of artefacts and ecofacts;

8.1.4 an indication of potential archaeological deposits not disturbed by the present development;

8.2 After agreement with the landowner, arrangements are to be made for long term storage of all artefacts and paper archive in an appropriate museum.

8.3 If the receiving museum is to be the City and County Museum, Lincoln then the archive should be produced in the form outlined in the museum's document 'Conditions for the Acceptance of Project Archives', see address below.

9. **Publication and Dissemination**

9.1 The deposition of a copy of the report with the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record will be deemed to put all information into the public domain, unless a special request is made for confidentiality. If material is to be held in confidence a timescale must be agreed with the North Kesteven Heritage Officer but is expected this will not exceed six months. Consideration must be given to a summary of the results being published in 'Lincolnshire History and Archaeology' in due course.

10. **Additional Information**

10.1 This document attempts to define the best practice expected of an archaeological watching brief but cannot fully anticipate the conditions that will be encountered as work progresses. However, changes to the programme are only to be made with the prior written approval of the Heritage Officer.

10.2 Further contact addresses:

Kate Orr
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Heritage Lincolnshire
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Lincolnshire NG34 9RW

Mr S. Catney
Archaeological Officer
Lincolnshire County Council
12 Friars Lane
Lincoln LN2 5AL

Mr T. Page
City and County Museum
12 Friars Lane
Lincoln LN2 5AL

Planning Services
North Kesteven District Council Offices
Kesteven Street
Sleaford
Lincolnshire NG34 7EF

Brief set by Heritage Officer, North Kesteven 22/4/1998

This brief is only valid up to one year from this date

Appendix 2

CONTEXT SUMMARY

No.	Section	Description	Interpretation
001	1	Dark greyish brown sandy silt.	Topsoil
002	1	Medium grey slightly clayey silt	Subsoil
003	1	Medium brownish grey fine sand	Natural deposit
004	1	Light brown sand and gravel	Natural deposit
005	2,3	Dark brown silty clay	Topsoil
006	2,3	Medium yellowish brown clayey silt	Subsoil
007	2,3	Light yellowish grey gravel	Natural deposit
008	2	Light to medium brownish grey silty clay	Fill of pit 009
009	2	Cut with rounded base	Pit cut
010	3	Medium brownish grey silty clay	Fill of 011
011	3	Rounded bottomed cut	Pit cut
012	3	Light to medium brownish yellow silty clay	Fill within 011
013	5	Light yellow gravel	Modern hardcore
014	4,5	Dark grey clayey silt	Topsoil
015	4,5	Dark brown sandy clay	Subsoil
016	4,5	Light yellowish brown silty clay	Natural deposit
017	4,5	Light yellow silty sand	Natural deposit
018	4	Light yellow gravel	Natural deposit
019	5	Linear cut	Cut of ditch
020	4,5	Linear cut	Cut of ditch
021	5	Dark brown silty clay	Upper fill of 019
022	5	Medium grey silty clay	Lower fill of 019
023	4,5	Medium greenish yellow silty clay	Upper fill of 020
024	4,5	Dark brown silty clay	Lower fill of 020

Appendix 3

THE FINDS

Hilary Healey and Gary Taylor

Provenance

All the material was recovered from subsoil (006).

The single fragment of pottery was made at Potterhanworth, only 2km north of Nocton.

Range

The range of material is detailed in the table.

A single fragment of pottery and an iron nail was recovered. Brick was observed during the investigation but not collected. No faunal remains were retrieved.

Context	Description	Context Date
006	1x Potterhanworth ware, 13 th -14 th century	13 th -14 th century
	1x iron nail, rectangular section and head	

Condition

All the material is in good condition and present no long-term storage problems. Archive storage of the collection is by material class.

Documentation

There have been a number of previous archaeological investigations at Nocton which are the subjects of reports. Details of archaeological sites and discoveries in the area are maintained in the files of the North Kesteven Heritage Officer and the Lincolnshire County Council Sites and Monuments Record.

Potential

As a very small assemblage, the material is of limited potential and may represent manuring scatter, which would indicate that the area was agricultural land from the medieval period on.

Appendix 4

GLOSSARY

Context	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 interpretation 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].
Cut	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.
Domesday Survey	A survey of property ownership in England compiled on the instruction of William I for taxation purposes in 1086 AD.
Fill	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) that become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
Iron Age	A period characterised by the introduction of Iron into the country for tools, between 800 BC and AD 50.
Layer	A layer is a term used to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Natural	Undisturbed deposit(s) of soil or rock which have accumulated without the influence of human activity
Neolithic	The 'New Stone Age' period, part of the prehistoric era, dating from approximately 4500-2250 BC.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Prehistoric	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.

Appendix 5

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

- 24 Context records
- 7 Sheets of site drawings
- 1 Photographic record sheet
- 2 Bags of finds

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: **259.99**

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: **NMF 99**

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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