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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWALKING
OF LAND AT NORTON BOTTOMS QUARRY, (2)
NORTON DISNEY, (1)
LINCOLNSHIRE**



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
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Conservation
Services

19 OCT 2001

Highways & Planning
Directorate

Event L12559
Source L17145

44177 L182288 Pmed

PRN 62667

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Work Undertaken For
Wardell Armstrong

October 2001

Report compiled by
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National Grid Reference: SK 8620 5920
City and County Museum Accession No: pending



A.P.S. Report No:123/01

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1. SUMMARY

This report presents the results of fieldwalking at Norton Bottoms Quarry, Norton Disney, Lincolnshire, conducted in advance of proposed mineral extraction.

Fieldwalking revealed an extremely low density of artefacts on the field surface. Two sherds of 18th century pottery were recovered and probably represent material brought to the site during manuring and subsequent ploughing.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

In advance of possible mineral extraction, *Archaeological Project Services* was commissioned to undertake fieldwalking on 12.1ha of arable land at Norton Bottoms, Norton Disney, Lincolnshire (Fig.1). The walking, commissioned by Wardell Armstrong, took place on Wednesday 3rd October 2001.

2.2 Topography and Geology

The field, sited at ^{SK}TF862592, is situated in Norton Disney parish, some 2.8km west of Norton Disney village and less than 500m from the county boundary with Nottinghamshire (Fig.2 and 3). It lies at the southern edge of a ridge of high ground which represents the watershed between streams draining into the rivers Trent to the west and Witham to the east. The field, which is very slightly undulating, slopes gently down from the north to south, with the northern end at c.20mOD.

On the site itself surface soils vary from slightly clayey sand to sandy clays. Soils have been mapped previously as the Blackwood Series, deep permeable sandy

and coarse loamy soils over river gravels (Hodge *et al.* 1984). Such soils are described as having a low inherent fertility and liable to long periods of waterlogging. The overall poor quality and low potential of these soils is reflected in the local minor place names in which 'moor' names, meaning 'marsh or barren upland' (Cameron 1998,154), are frequent. Examples are Stapleford Moor, adjacent to the south and Turfmoor (peatmoor), immediately to the west.

2.3 Archaeological setting

The area generally has a low level of archaeological presence. Previous fieldwalking along the route of the A46 corridor (TPAT 1991) located few finds of medieval or earlier periods as did systematic walking in Eagle parish to the northeast (Lane 2000). Moreover, the land either side of the line of the A46 Fosse Way, including the Norton Bottoms site, has one of the fewest incidences of cropmarks in Lincolnshire (Kershaw 1998, fig.2). This is all the more surprising, given that much of the area lies on sands and gravels, a type of geology where cropmarks and ancient settlements are usually abundant. Where cropmarks do occur they are generally around Brough, the Roman small town *Crococalana*, and further west towards the Trent.

However, there are a number of significant sites in the vicinity of Norton Bottoms. Iron Age finds are now known from Brough, on the Fosse Way little over 2km to the west of the field. This confirms a pre-Roman foundation for settlement which also continued after the decline of Roman control (Jones and Knight 2001). Iron Age pits and post holes have recently been excavated at Gallows Nooking Common, some 1.5km to the north of the Norton Bottoms site and also located adjacent to the Fosse Way, while there is also some pre-Roman material

from the Villa site excavated in the 1930s (Oswald 1937).

Lying less than 500m northwest of the Norton Bottoms field and at the southern extent of a high sandy ridge is a possible Iron Age fortified site identified from cropmarks. Now occupied by Brills Farm, the site dominates the area, with extensive views to the south, west and east. In addition to the sites noted above a number of lesser sites, generally of Roman date, are known but generally these are sparsely distributed.

3. METHODS

Prior to the work being undertaken it was agreed that fieldwalking would take place at 10m intervals (Fig.3).

Precise locations of all retained finds were plotted using a Geodolite Total Station Theodolite attached to a datalogger. Results were downloaded on PC using Survpro software.

The fieldwalking was undertaken by two experienced fieldwalkers. A pro-forma sheet was compiled for the field walked information. Details such as surface soils, cropping, surface weathering and artefact visibility were recorded. The field had a surface geology of sandy gravel.

All ceramics were retained with the exception of pottery of late 19th century onwards and tile/drain fragments (of which there were few).

The retained material was bagged separately in the field and returned to Archaeological Project Services' Finds Supervisor to be washed and marked. Finds identifications into period categories were made by G. Taylor.

3.1 Field Description

Grid Ref: SK 862 592
Spacing: 10m
Crop: No crop
Conditions: Field surface weathering moderate to good; field visibility 100%
Notes: Field slopes gently down from north to south. Few finds present.

4. RESULTS

An extremely low density of material was recorded from the field (Fig.4). The two finds recovered over the 12.1ha area represents an average of 0.16 artefacts per ha or one artefact per 6.05ha.

Initial dating of the pottery has indicated the following

- | | | |
|-----|--|--------------------------|
| 001 | Earthenware rim sherd, brown glazed, pancheon? | 18 th century |
| 002 | Earthenware body sherd, black glazed, unknown? | 18 th century |

5. DISCUSSION

Fieldwalking was undertaken over 12.1ha of land in Norton Disney parish. A total of 2 artefacts, dating from the 18th century, was retrieved from the field surface. This density of artefacts is extremely low.

These artefacts may once have been included in middens or similar waste dumps, later spread onto the fields during manuring. All that can be inferred is that the land was most probably subjected to arable use in the period represented.

Given the light soils of the area generally and slope of the field it is possible that some

slight colluviation could have occurred but this is unlikely to be significant. Where slightly deeper ploughing had occurred on the field 'clean' gravel had been penetrated.

Overall, the low density of finds from the proposed quarry site appears to suggest only a limited pre-20th century use of the area.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wish to acknowledge the assistance of Dave Hodgkinson of Wardell Armstrong who commissioned the fieldwalking and analysis. Gary Taylor assisted with finds identification.

7. PERSONNEL

Project co-ordinator: Tom Lane
Fieldwalkers: Tom Lane
 Tobin Rayner
Surveyor: Tobin Rayner
Finds Supervisor: Denise Buckley
Illustration: Tobin Rayner
Analysis: Tom Lane

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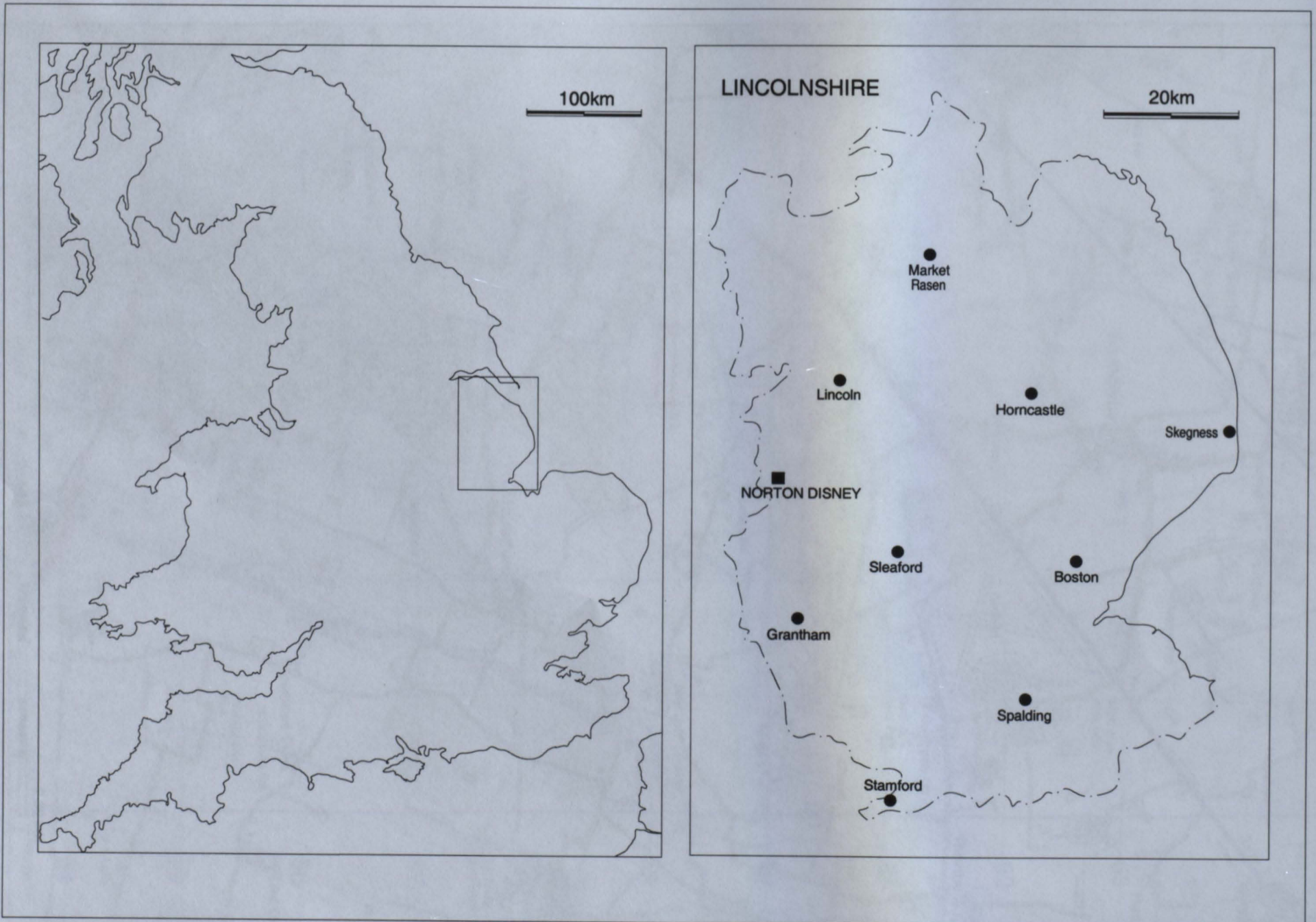


Figure 1: General Location Plan

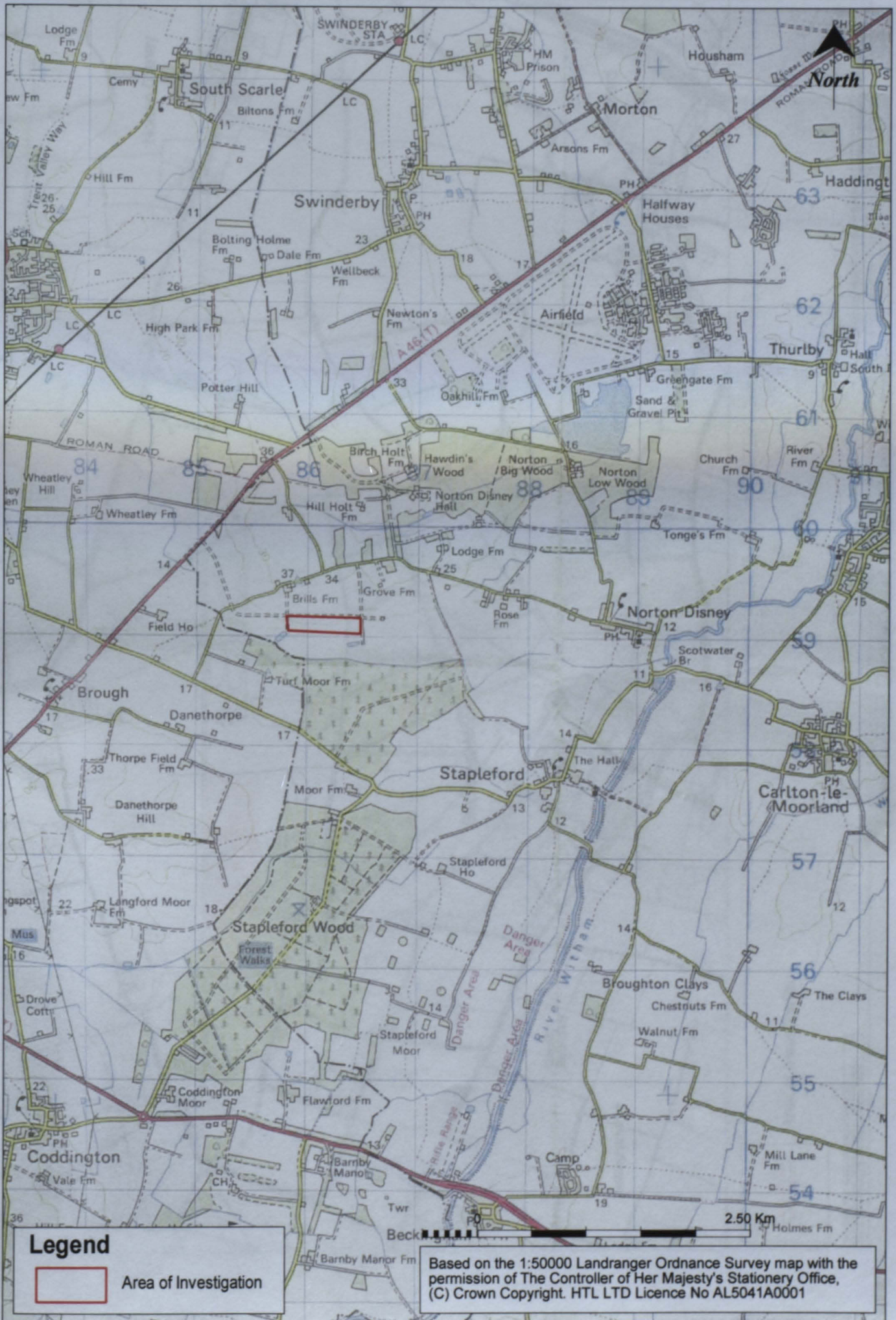


Figure 2: Area of Investigation



Figure 3: Field Location and Fieldwalking Transects

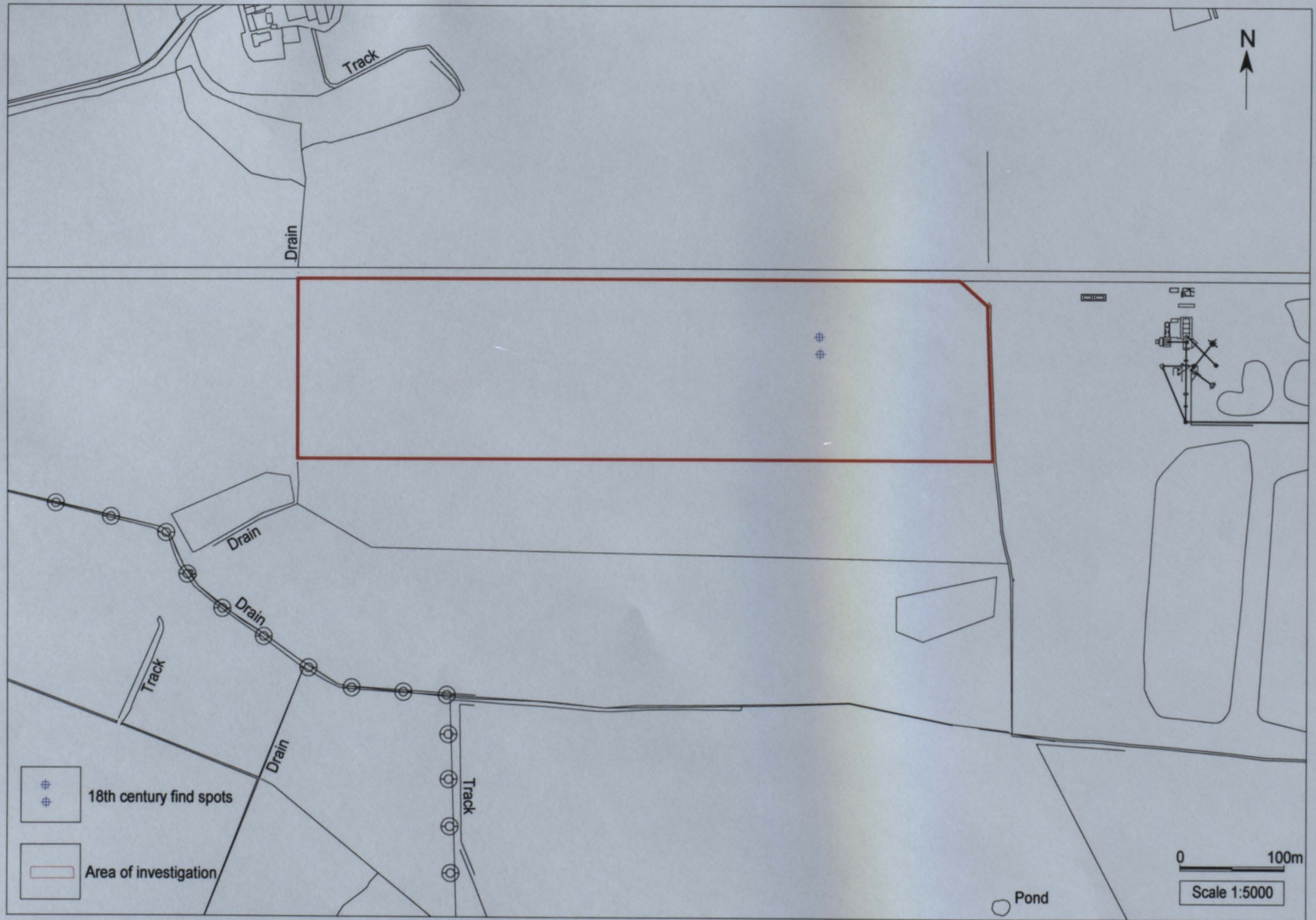


Figure 4: Finds Location