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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

New Dwelling, Chapel Lane, Foston

NGR: SK 8593 4288

Site Code: FCLB 01

LCNCC Museum Accn No.: 2001.236

SKDC Planning Application No.: S01/0498/33

Archaeological Watching Brief

Report for Derek Packwood

by G. Tann

LAS Report No. 569

January 2002

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Summary

Foundation trenches for a new building revealed numerous small pits, disturbed by late post-medieval outbuilding foundations and twentieth century spoil tipping. The pits are not well dated, but one contained a late medieval sherd, and this is assumed to be the approximate date of the features, as at least two other pits are stratigraphically later. The recovered pottery from the site, most from the pits but some from a twentieth century soil mound, included four sherds of fifth-eighth century wares, two ninth-eleventh century sherds, two eleventh century and two twelfth century sherds. This interesting early assemblage indicates nearby occupation of that period, which is likely, considering the site's location close to the settlement core. The function of the pits is uncertain, but could represent clay extraction for the construction of mud-and-stud type buildings or brick production.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned in August 2001 by Derek J. Packwood to conduct an archaeological watching brief during excavations of building foundation trenches and other groundworks on land beside Chapel Lane, Foston (Figs. 1 and 2).

Planning permission was granted by South Kesteven District Council for the construction of a dwelling and garage, subject to an archaeological watching brief being carried out during the groundworks phase of construction.

The watching brief was conducted in accordance with the general requirements set out in the *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook* (Lincolnshire County Council Archaeology Section, 1998). Groundworks were inspected by Geoff Tann on August 29th, 31st, September 2nd, 3rd and 6th 2001.

Site Location and Description

The Lincolnshire village of Foston lies 10km NW of Grantham and 10km SE of Newark. The village is bypassed by the A1 Trunk Road. St. Peter's Church, between Church Street/School Lane and Long Street, lies 100m NE of The Old Hall, and 80m NW of the Chapel Lane development site.

Archaeological Background

The place-name Foston is first documented in the 1086 Domesday Survey as *Foztun(e)*, deriving from elements signifying 'Fot's village'. The name appears to reflect an Anglo-Saxon settlement renamed by later Danish settlers (Cameron, K. 1998, *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*, 46).

Chapel Lane links Long Street with Back Lane, a parallel road which probably marks the rear of medieval crofts fronting onto Long Street (Fig. 2). Part of the land block is now occupied by Top Farm. Land to the south of Chapel Lane was developed during the mid-twentieth century, and properties fronting onto Long Street have been sub-divided for recent infill housing development.

The monitored site is supposed to have been part of the premises of the village bakehouse. A nineteenth century bakehouse was sited beside Chapel Lane in the position of the access to the new property; the building was demolished before the present development began. Local tradition maintains that a brickworks occupied a nearby site, and the uneven surface of the development site was claimed to be the result of clay extraction.

The Watching Brief

There was a rectangular area of brick rubble along part of the site frontage, representing the site of a brick building demolished before the site was acquired by the present owner. It had abutted the adjacent brick outbuilding (Pls. 1 and 2). This area was not cleared during the groundworks, but the slope was made uniform for vehicular access. To the rear of the demolished building was an area of tarmac, with further brick foundations visible alongside it. The present owner of The Bakehouse stated that these foundations were probably of twentieth century date.

Along the northern side of the site was a 10m wide and 0.8m high soil mound 1, which ended about 5m from the eastern site boundary (Pl. 3). The mound was levelled by machine, showing it to be a mixture of redeposited topsoil and yellow/brown clay; one sherd of late Anglo-Saxon pottery, one medieval and a post-medieval sherd, and drinks cans dating to the 1990s, were found within it. A brick, labelled *Belvoir*, was found in this material; it had a frog on both upper and lower surfaces, and dimensions of 230mm x 110mm x 75mm. The mound may be surplus soil excavated during construction of the garage in the next property (Mayfields) to the east.

0.5m wide foundation trenches for the new dwelling were then excavated to a depth of about 0.9m - 1m below the stripped surface (Pl. 4). These revealed a soil sequence of buried topsoil 2, an orange/brown friable clay subsoil 3, and an apparently undisturbed yellow clay with fossils 4. The subsoil layer had an irregular base horizon, but there were no identifiable ridges or furrows that would have demonstrated medieval ploughing.

Pits (Pls. 5-10)

The subsoil 3 had been removed over much of the area by pits excavated to depths of about 0.75m from the stripped surface. Pits 20, 23 and 29 were over 1m deep, deeper than the trench base. Nine pits were identified, but this may omit pits cut into the sides of others where the fills were not readily distinguished; the profiles of 9 and 29 look as if they have been extended.

Although small fragments of pottery were recovered from some of the pits, they contained mostly dark clay, and seem to have been backfilled with soil rather than domestic refuse. A single upper vertebra of a cow was found in fill **10** (Pit **9**), the only piece of stratified animal bone from the foundation trenches. Stratigraphically earlier pit **11**, and **13** (which was stratigraphically uncertain, but probably earlier still) produced Anglo-Saxon pottery sherds. However, Pit **13** produced a fourteenth/fifteenth century fragment, indicating that these features are probably no earlier than the late medieval period. An eleventh century sherd, and two twelfth century sherds were found in the fill of Pit **20**, which seems to indicate similar activity across the monitored site.

Neither the depth or the extent of these pits coincided with the limits of any natural deposits, and this suggests that their size was a matter of convenience rather than necessity. The natural clay here is a compact material, and manual excavation would have been laborious.

Late-nineteenth/early twentieth century brick-lined pit

The eastern end of a small brick feature **5** was removed by the eastern foundation trench, 1.9m west of the existing brick garage wall on the adjoining plot (Pl. 11). A loose fill **6** of mortar and bottle glass fragments filled the 0.65m deep and 0.45m wide brick-lined hole (Pl. 12). Among the bottle fragments were ceramic stoppers from screw-top carbonated drink bottles, possibly Lucozade. The fill of this feature was covered by a thin topsoil layer **2**, but it lay beyond the redeposited soil **1**, and overlying layers may have been removed during the groundworks which produced that soil.

Fired clay

A 1.1m wide shallow feature **16** was seen in the centre of the house plot, filled with a red heat-affected clay. This could be the remains of a hearth, either *in-situ* or elsewhere in the close vicinity. It was directly overlain by topsoil **2**, and its date remains unknown.

Post medieval/modern foundations

Small parts of several foundations of brick and of concrete were revealed, especially towards the southern side of the new house site. These were not recorded in detail; they are thought to represent sheds and outbuildings at the rear of the site. The 1903 revision of the 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map shows a long narrow building alongside Chapel Lane, with a smaller set of outbuildings on its north side, just to the rear of the existing house (OS 1906). The area of the new development was open ground in 1903.

Discussion and Conclusion

The new house plot has its frontage onto Chapel Street, but a consideration of the local topography suggests that this site should be interpreted in a rather different context. There are two virtually parallel roads to the east of the church, aligned NE-SW. Long Street is closest to the church, with Back Lane between 50-80m away. Buildings from the farm on Long Street extended both sides of the road, but the property boundaries recorded in 1903 show no consistent signs that Long Street has

been cut through an earlier settlement plan (Fig. 3; OS 1906). The layout appears to reflect a row of medieval properties fronting onto Long Street, with Back Lane representing a headland along the edge of the open field beyond their rear crofts. The property boundaries hint at some slightly later development to the east of Back Lane, extending a further 50m. Ponds shown at the junction of Chapel Lane with Back Lane, and east of the far end of Back Lane, could be evidence for a spring line, coinciding with the eastern edge of the medieval settlement, or may have been for clay extraction.

There are no indications that the Long Street medieval development extended further south than the edge of Chapel Lane, and the land blocks now developed to the south have none of the medieval characteristics visible to the north. Chapel Lane, named after the Wesleyan Methodist chapel on the south side of the lane, seems to have been cut out of the northern side of a large field.

The monitored site is therefore probably land at the rear of either the southernmost medieval messuage or possibly two narrow plots; as no west-east aligned boundary ditch was found crossing the house site only one property is the more probable. During the medieval period, the land behind the dwelling would have been used for supporting a pig and probably also for cultivation of domestic produce. It would have provided space for disposal of rubbish (in pits and on bonfires). The features identified from the watching brief are not obvious rubbish pits, although the clay backfill may have been used to level pits where organic material had decayed - there was no evidence of this. The pits appear to have been a multiplicity of small features rather than an extensive quarry, but could have served for materials for 'mud and stud' type buildings on a small-scale. Frustratingly, the function of these features remains unknown.

The Saxon and early medieval pottery from the watching brief is probably all redeposited, the result of backfilling the pits with soil containing earlier artefacts. None of the features recorded is thought to be this early, but the pottery suggests there was early occupation either on the site or in its close vicinity. This location is close to the parish church and was probably near the core of the Saxon settlement, so its recognition on this site is not exceptional. The provenances of the various wares show the trading hinterland of Saxon Foston, and this is very significant information to have been gained from the project. Sherds from pots manufactured in Leicestershire and central Lincolnshire during the fifth-eighth century period are present, as are later Anglo-Saxon sherds from Torksey, Stamford and Nottingham kilns. Medieval wares seem to have derived from the Nottingham area.

Acknowledgements

LAS is grateful to Derek Packwood and the contractors for their co-operation during the groundworks. Further thanks are due to Gail Smith (South Kesteven Community Archaeologist).

The pottery was identified by Jane Young and Dr Alan Vince, and the animal bone was identified by Richard Moore. Illustrations were prepared by Mick McDaid, and the report was collated and

produced by Jane Frost.

Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
January 30th 2002

Archive Summary

Archaeological finds: pottery (one sherd retained by specialist for pottery Type Series), animal bone

Specialist's archive list: pottery

Correspondence

Field sections and plans

Inked sections and plans

Copies of developer's site plans

Photographs: colour prints, LAS film nos. 01/70/8-17, 25-36; 01/106/13-31

THE APPENDICES

Context Summary: FCLB 01

Context No.	Type	Description	Findings
1	layer	0.5m high modern soil mound	3 pot sherds: 1 Saxon, 1 medieval, 1 post-medieval
2	layer	0.2m thick modern topsoil	
3	layer	orange clay subsoil, 0.2m thick	
4	layer	light yellow clay natural, at least 0.7m thick	
5	pit	brick-lined rectangular pit	
6	fill	loose white mortar, brick rubble	glass bottle fragments (not retained)
7	pit	edge of 0.7m+ deep pit at SE corner of garage	
8	fill	dark brown clay	
9	pit	0.7m deep, flat base with some irregularities	
10	fill	brown clay with brick fragments	brick x 3: post-medieval, not retained; 2 x animal bone fragments
11	pit	0.8m deep flat-bottomed pit, sloping sides	
12	fill	dark brown clay	1 sherd late Saxon pot
13	pit	2m wide, 0.8m deep flat-bottomed pit with almost vertical sides	
14	fill	dark brown clay	6 sherds 5th-8thC pottery, 1 x 11thC sherd, 1 x 14th/15thC sherd
15	cut	ceramic land drain	
16	fill	red heat-affected clay	
17	cut	0.15m deep, 0.6m wide scoop	
18	layer	brick rubble and tarmac of former yard surface	
19	not used		
20	pit	0.95m+ deep pit, 2.5m wide, steeply sloping sides	
21	fill	dark brown clay	1 x 11thC pot sherd, 2 x 12thC sherd
22	not used		
23	pit	0.8m+ deep, 2.5m+ wide, steeply sloping north face	
24	fill	dark yellow/brown clay	
25	layer	0.32m thick dark brown clay	
26	layer	0.15m thick dark brown clay with stones	
27	not used		
28	layer	dark brown clay and brick rubble, 0.55m thick	
29	pit	0.6m+ deep, with sloping south face	
30	fill	yellow/brown clay	
31	fill	dark brown clay	
32	pit	0.9m deep, 2m wide flat-bottomed pit with sloping sides	
33	not used		
34	layer	0.08m thick yellow clay	
35	cut	0.28m-0.5m deep flat-bottomed feature, probably associated with concrete slab	

Archive Report on the Post-Roman Pottery from Chapel Lane, Foston, Lincolnshire (FCLB01)

Jane Young
Lindsey Archaeological Services

Introduction

Fourteen sherds of post-Roman pottery were recovered from the site. The material ranges in date from the Anglo-Saxon to the late post-medieval or early modern period. The pottery was examined both visually and using a x20 magnification, then recorded on an Access database using locally and nationally agreed codenames.

Condition

The pottery recovered was in variable condition with most sherds showing a fair degree of abrasion.

Overall Chronology and Source

A range of nine different, identifiable post-Roman pottery ware types was found on the site, the types and general date ranges for these fabrics are shown in Table 1. A very limited range of vessel types was recovered including jugs and jars.

Table 1: Pottery codenames and date range with total quantities by sherd count

codename	full name	earliest date	latest date	sherds
CHARN	Charnwood ware	450	750	2
LMX	Late Medieval Non-local fabrics	1350	1550	1
NOTG	Nottingham glazed ware	1250	1500	1
NOTS	Nottingham stoneware	1690	1900	1
NSP	Nottingham Splashed ware	1100	1250	2
SST	Early to mid Saxon sandstone-	450	800	2
SSTCL	Central Lincolnshire Early to mid Saxon	450	750	1
ST	Stamford Ware	970	1200	2
TORK	Torksey ware	850	1100	2

Pottery was recovered from four stratified contexts (01, 12, 14 and 21). None of the material found on the site appears to represent primary deposition. The earliest sherds are of Anglo-Saxon date and include three different sandstone-tempered fabrics and one granite-tempered vessel. The two Torksey ware jar sherds are of undiagnostic type and cannot be dated closer than to the period between the late 9th and mid 11th centuries. The two Stamford ware jars however, are in a fabric type usually found in 11th century deposits. All three glazed medieval jugs are from Nottingham. The two 12th century vessels are in Nottingham splashed ware and the later jug (late 13th to 14th century) is in Reduced Green Glazed ware. A single jug in a late medieval, fine to medium quartz tempered fabric may also be of Nottingham manufacture. Only one late post-medieval or early modern sherd was recovered from the site, this vessel is in 19th or 20th century Nottingham Stoneware.

Summary and Recommendations

This is a small assemblage of post-Roman pottery suggesting activity in the area in the Anglo-Saxon, Late Saxon to Saxo-Norman, medieval and late post-medieval to early modern periods. A single Anglo-Saxon sherd (SSTCL) has been temporarily removed to a fabric type series held at Lindsey Archaeological Services. The assemblage should be kept for future study, as part of any characterisation of the local fabrics for a county ceramic type series.

Pottery Archive FCLB01

Jane Young Lindsey Archaeological Services

context	cname	sub fabric	form type	sherds	part	description	date
01	NOTG	reduced	jug	1	BS		late 13th to 14th
01	NOTS		hollow	1	BS		late 17th to 19th
01	TORK		jar	1	BS		late 9th to mid 11th
12	TORK		jar	1	rim	EVERA1 rim;soot;oxid	late 9th to mid 11th
14	CHARN		?	2	BS		5th to 8th
14	LMX	OX/R;fine-med sandy;hard	jug	1	BS	visually similar to LLSW/late Nottingham glazed ware	14th to 15th
14	SST	coarse	?	1	BS	soot	5th to 8th
14	SST	fine with common aggregate	?	1	BS		5th to 8th
14	SSTCL	mixed with oolite moderate aggregate and common fe	?	1	BS	smoothed;taken for LAS type series	5th to 8th
14	ST	A	jar	1	BS	soot	11th
21	NSP	fine/sandy	jug ?	1	BS	interior deposit;small frag	mid to late 12th
21	NSP	fine/sandy	jug	1	LHJ	interior deposit	mid to late 12th
21	ST	A	jar	1	BS	unglaze	11th

THE FIGURES

1

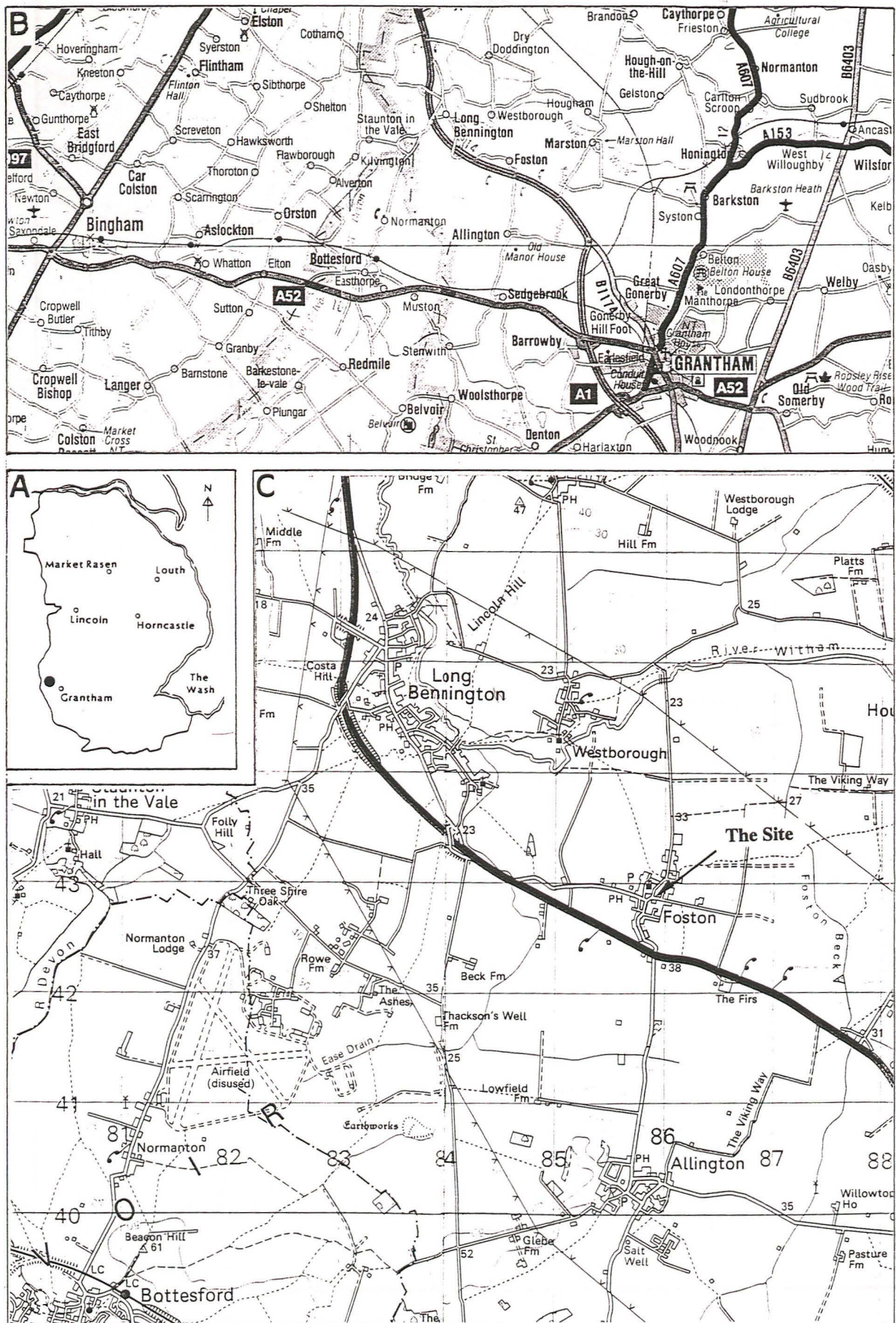


Fig.1 Location of Foston (C based on the 1990 Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 Landranger map, Sheet 130. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 10002165).

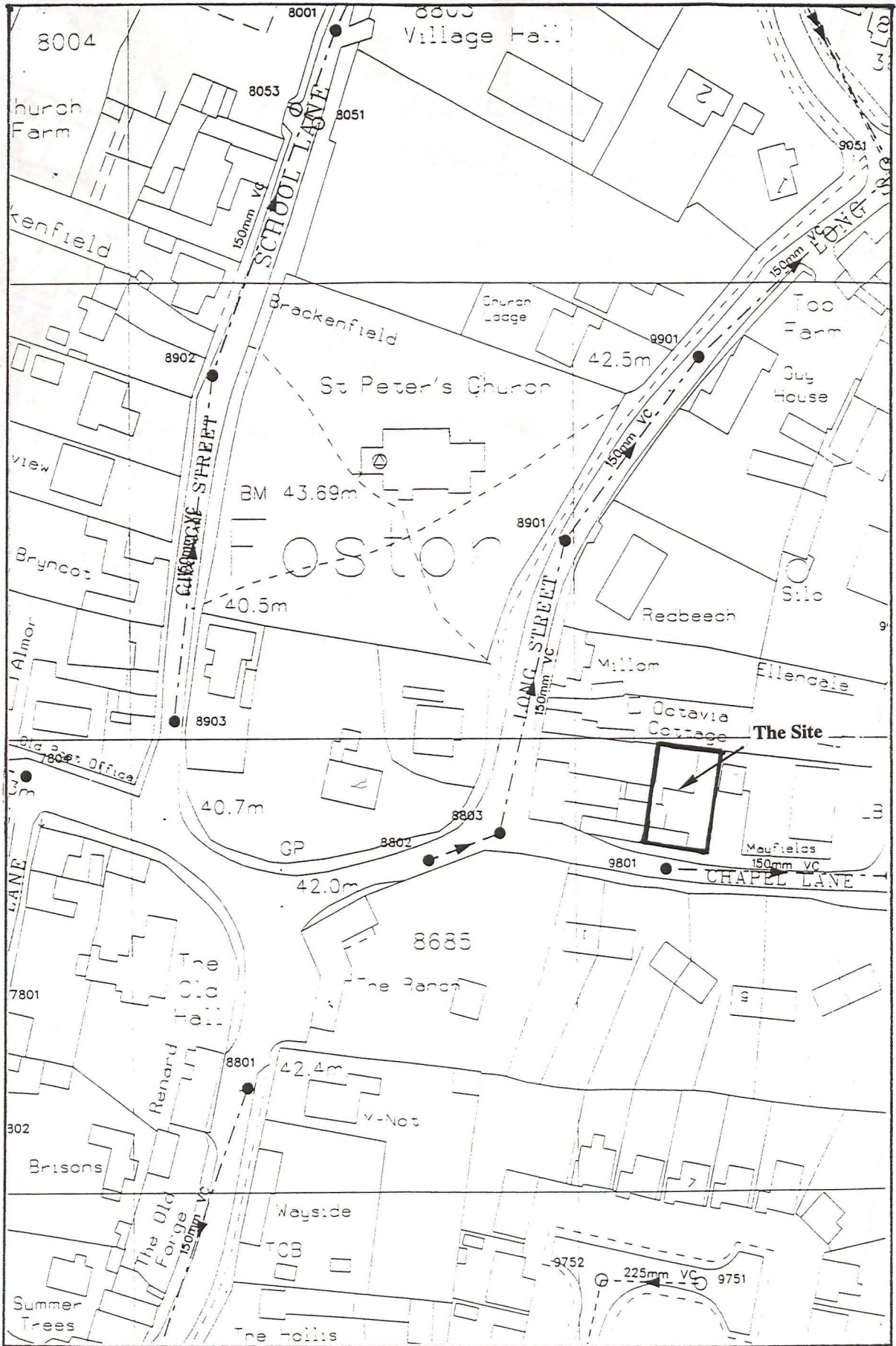


Fig. 2 Location of the development site (based on the 1:1250 map supplied by the client).

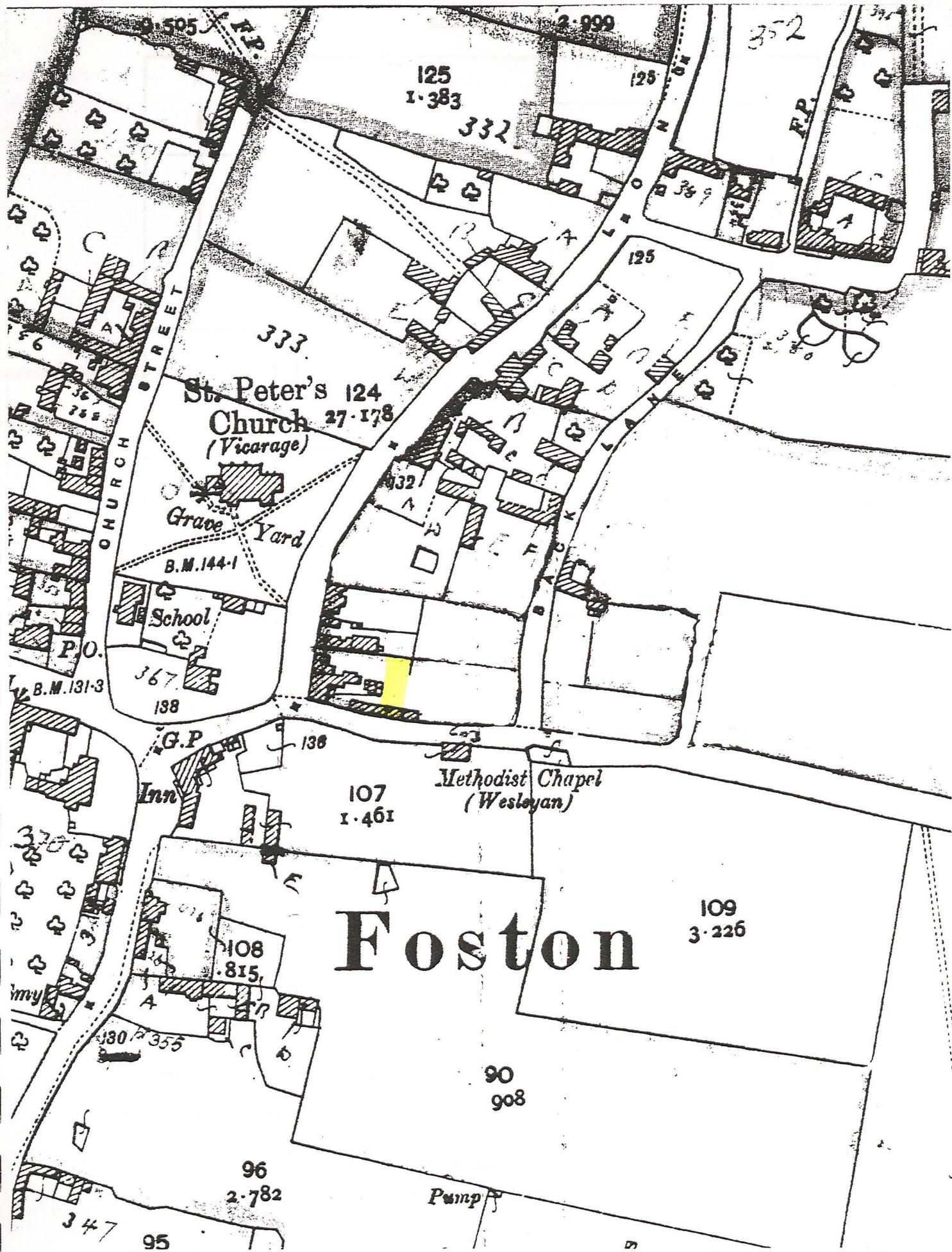


Fig. 3 Foston in 1903 (based on the 1906 Ordnance Survey 1:2,500 map, Lincs. Sheet 104.14. Reproduced at enlarged scale).

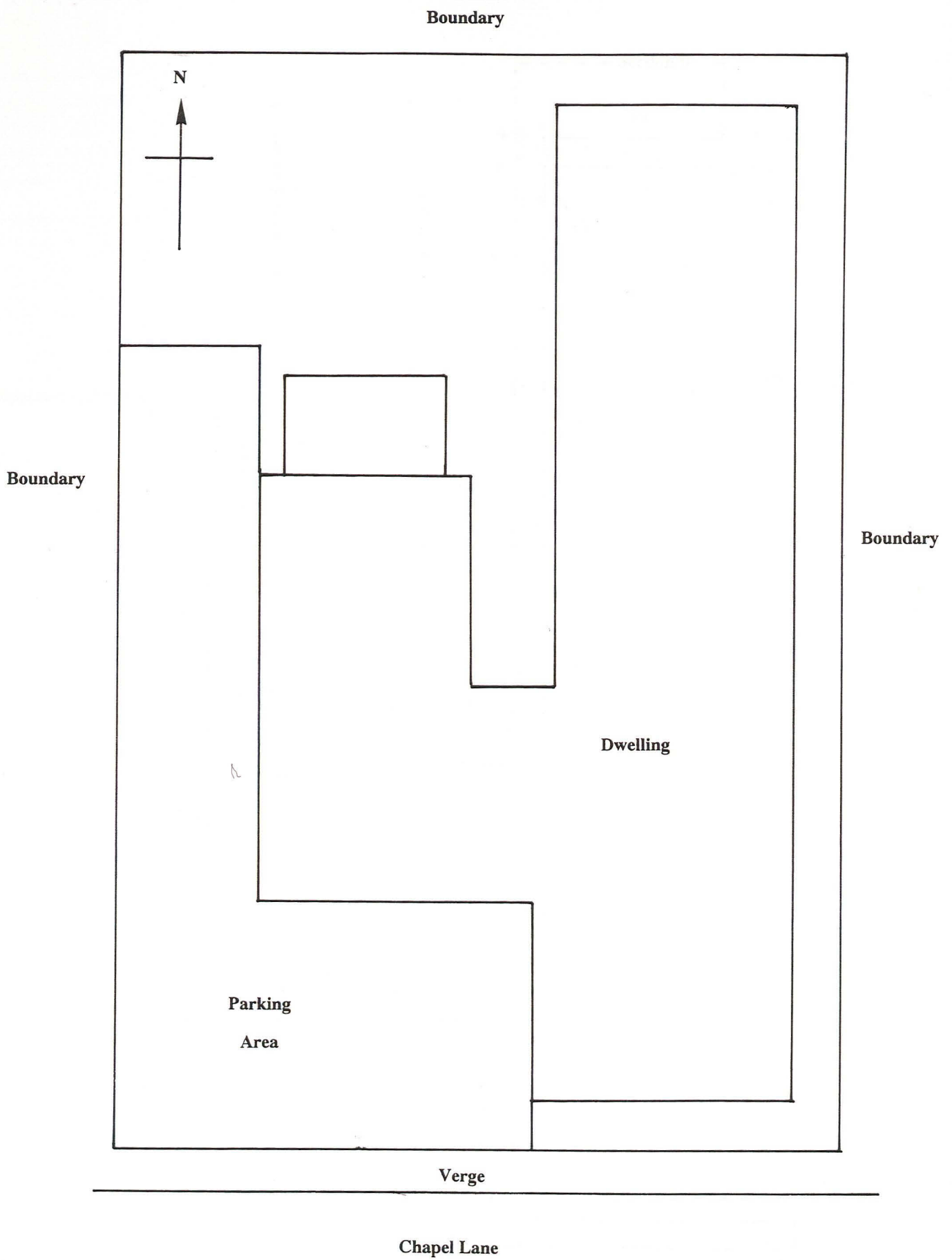


Fig. 4 The monitored development (based on a plan supplied by the client; not to scale).

Fig. 5 Plan of the monitored foundation development, showing the position of identified features (circled), after Tann, based on information from a plan by S.L. Designs, Sheet no. 1, reproduced at reduced scale.

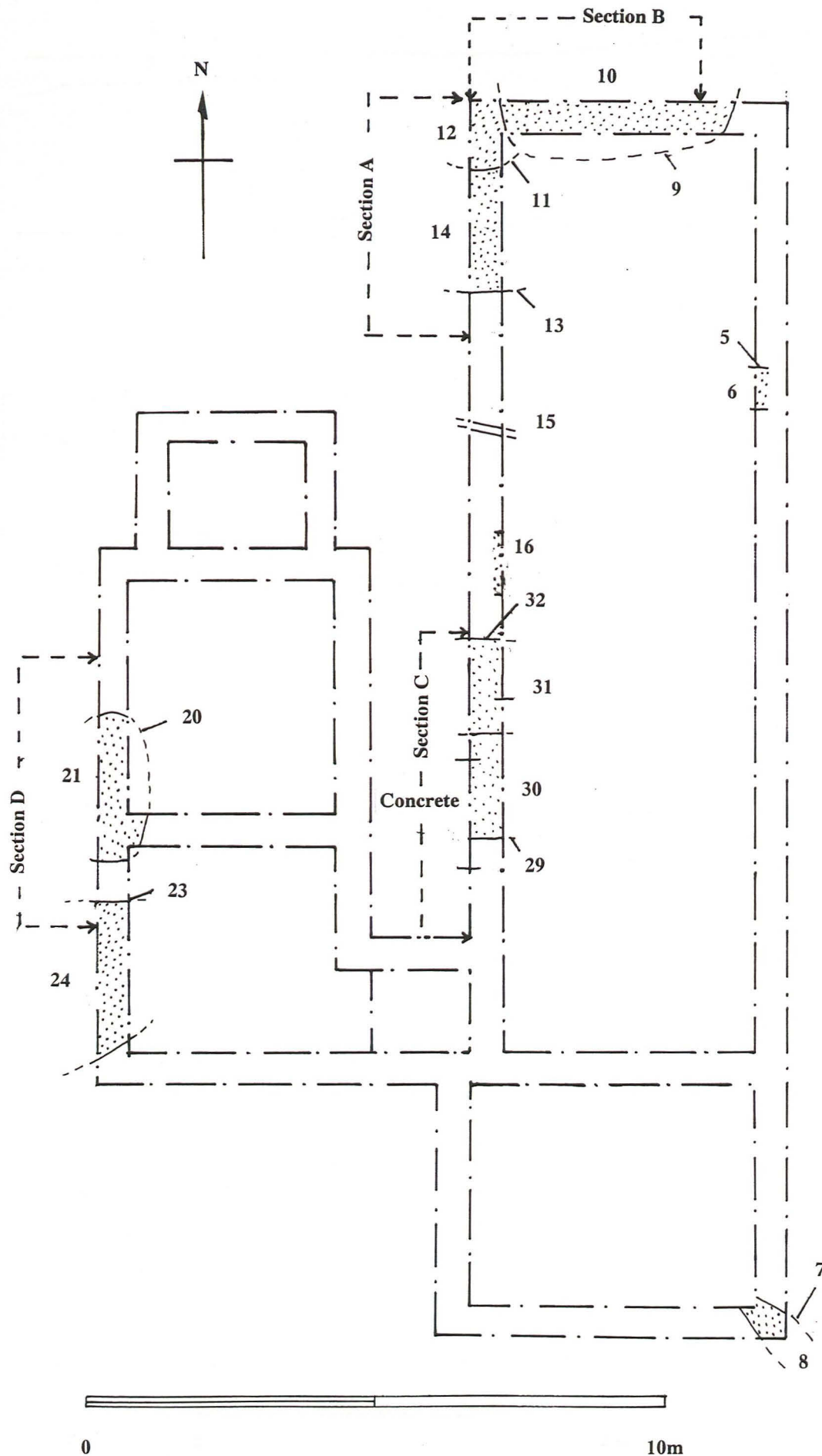


Fig. 5 Plan of the monitored foundation trenches, showing the positions of identified features (McDaid, after Tann; based on information from a plan by S.L. Designs, Sheet No. 1, reproduced at reduced scale).

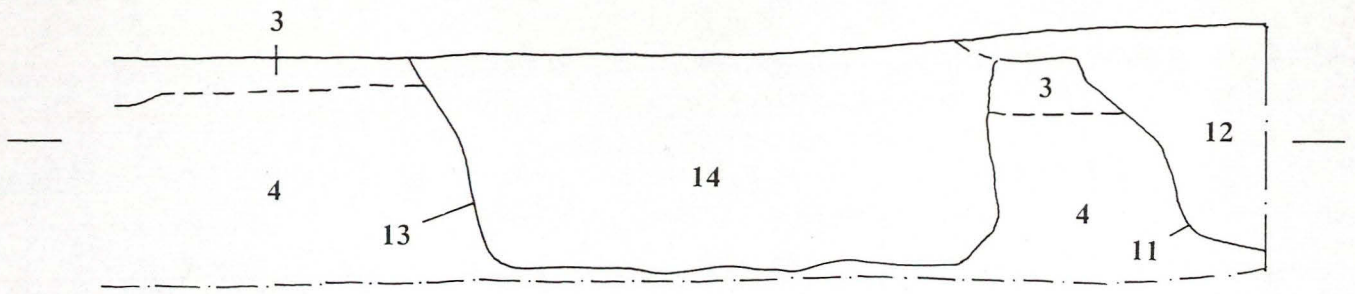
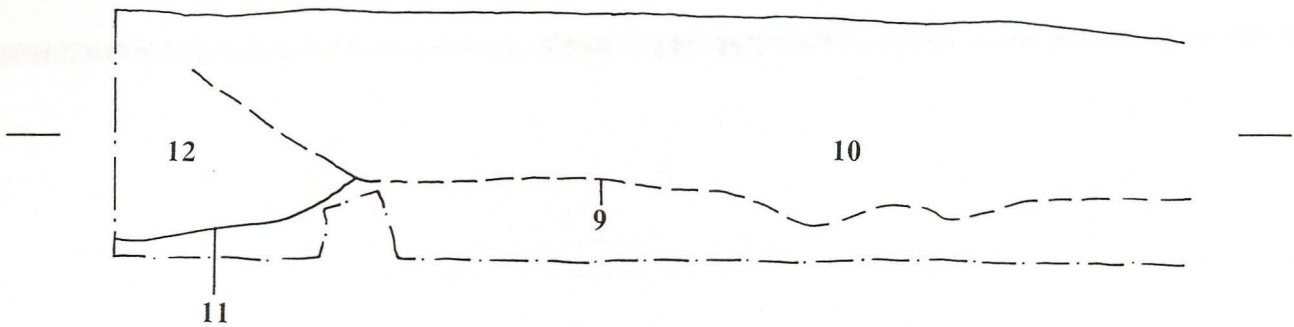
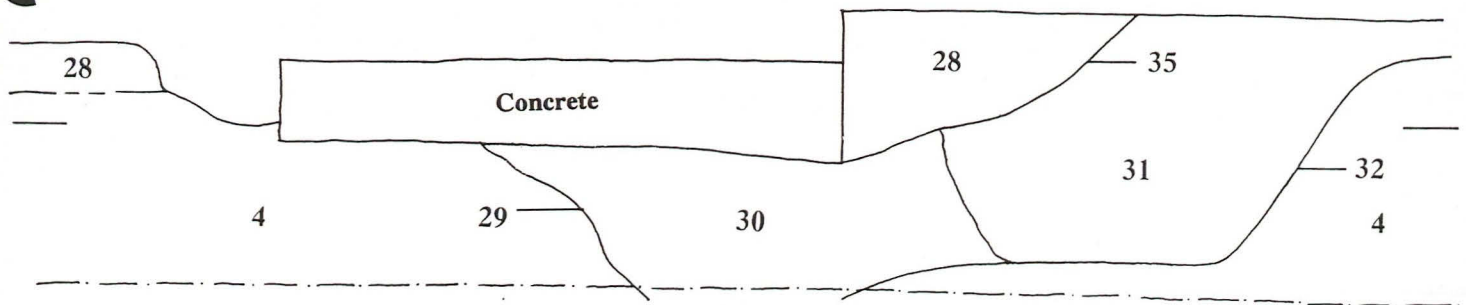
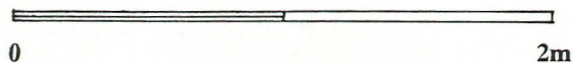
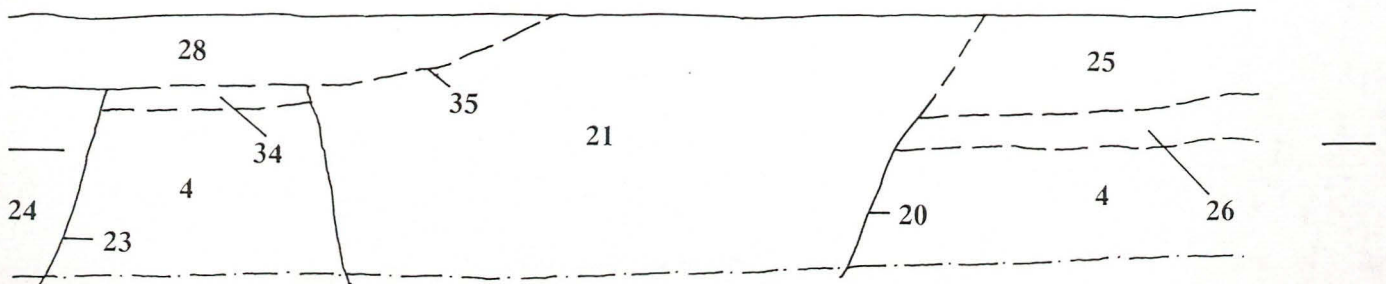
A**B****C****D**

Fig. 6 Sections across archaeological features identified in the foundation trench faces (as marked on Fig. 5). McDaid, after Tann.

THE PLATES



Pl. 1 Site of the demolished bakehouse, Chapel Lane, Foston (looking NW towards St Peter's Church).

Pl. 2 Location of the development site (looking north across the site of the demolished bakehouse. The grounds of Octavia Cottage lie behind the fence, and the brick garage forms part of the Mayfields property to the east).





Pl. 3 Clearance of the west-east aligned soil mound crossing the rear of the new house site (looking west).

Pl. 4 Excavation of the foundation trenches (looking NW).





Pl. 5 Northern edge of Pit 23, with the dark brown fill contrasting with yellow undisturbed clay to the right. The fill is covered by a brick rubble spread 28, probably derived from demolition of outbuildings on the site.

Pl. 6 Dark fill of Pit 7, visible at the corner of foundation trenches (looking NW).





Pl. 7 Dark fills of pits visible in the western face of a north-south foundation trench, below the later concrete slab and at the far end of the trench (looking NW).

Pl. 8 Eastern face of a foundation trench, with soil colour variations marking the positions of pits and later disturbances (looking NE).





Pl. 9 Dark fill of Pit 13, cut into lighter undisturbed clay near the rear trench corner (looking NE).

Pl. 10 Dark fill of Pit 11 at the rear trench corner, with part of Pit 13 to the left (looking NE).





Pl. 11 Position of the brick-lined feature 5 in the eastern foundation trench (looking north; scale 1m). The stone wall foundation marks the boundary with Octavia Cottage, behind the new development.

Pl. 12 Loose mortar fill of the brick-lined feature 5, interpreted as a cess pit associated with a demolished outbuilding (looking west, scale 1m).

