

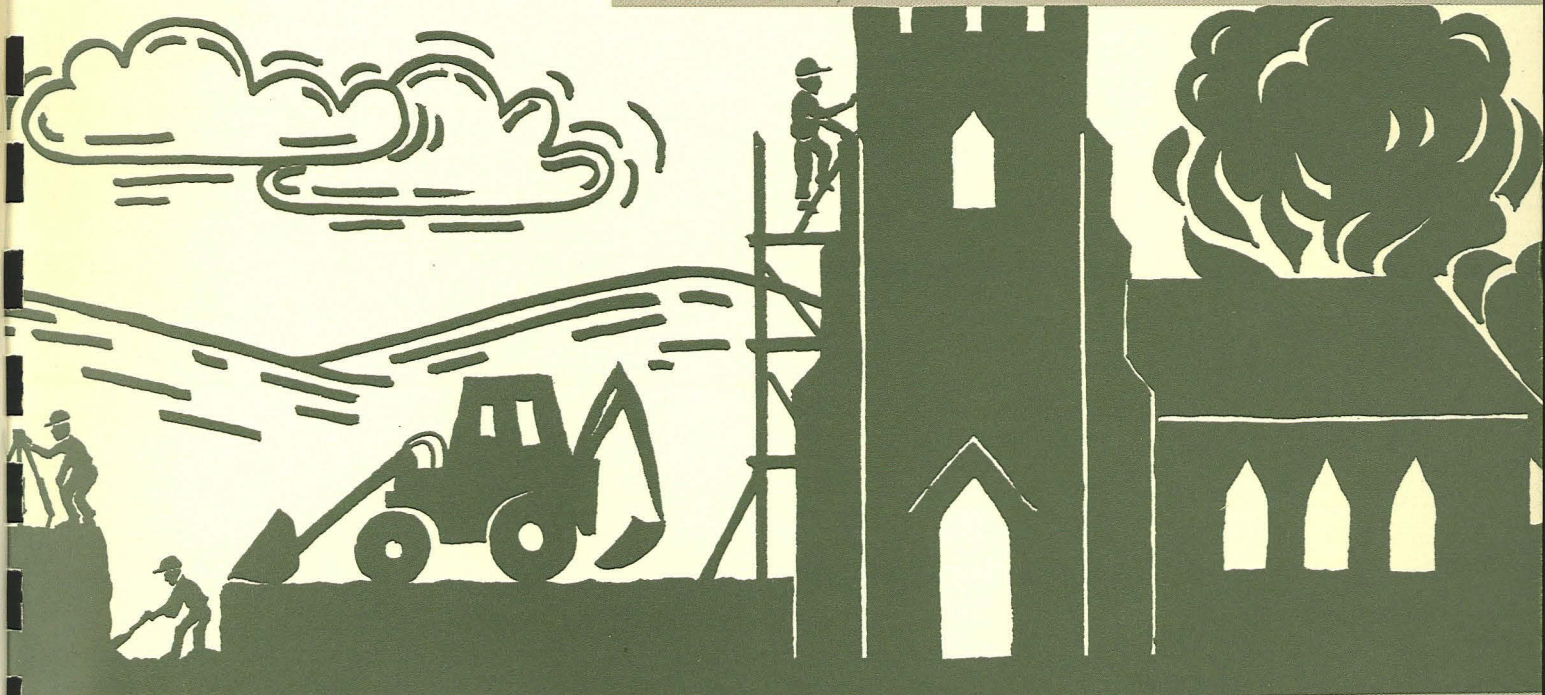
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WALCOT WATCHING BRIEF
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ADVANCING LINCOLNSHIRE'S PAST



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
OF A WATER PIPELINE
ALONGSIDE THE A15,
WALCOT,
LINCOLNSHIRE**

Work Undertaken For
Anglian Water Services Ltd.,

April 1994

Heritage Lincolnshire
The Old School
Cameron Street,
Heckington,
SLEAFORD,
Lincolnshire NG34 9RW

Company No: 2554738 (England). Charity No: 1001463

WAL 93

CONTENTS

List of Figures

1.	Summary	1
2.	Introduction	1
	2.1 Background	1
	2.2 Topography and Geology	1
	2.3 Archaeological Setting	2
3.	Aims	2
4.	Methods	2
5.	Results	3
6.	Discussion	4
7.	Conclusions	4
8.	Acknowledgements	4
9.	Personnel	4
10.	Bibliography	4
11.	Abbreviations	5

Appendices

1	Context Summary
2	The Archive

List of Figures

Figure 1 . . . General Location Plan

Figure 2 . . . Site Location Plan

Figure 3 . . . Section Location Plan

Figure 4 . . . Sections 4, 9 and 12

Figure 5 . . . Sections 6, 15 and 18

1. SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of a water pipe trench alongside the A15 between Osbournby roundabout and Walcot Bar, Walcot, Lincolnshire.

Several archaeological sites and find spots are located close to the route of the pipeline. Prehistoric stone tools have been recovered from points east and northeast of the pipe trench. The A52, which forms the northern limit of the pipeline, preserves the course of the Salter's Way, a prehistoric track and later Roman road. Romano-British occupation of the area is known through several separate concentrations of pottery and other artefacts. Anglo-Saxon metalwork has also been recovered from the vicinity of the pipeline.

Surrounding the pipe trench route are the villages of Walcot, Osbournby and Threekingham, each recorded in the medieval period and all containing remains of that date.

Natural subsoil deposits were recorded beneath the A15 throughout much of the length of the pipeline. Additionally, earlier tarmac road surfaces occurred beneath the present verge, indicating modern re-alignment of the highway to improve traffic visibility.

No archaeological deposits were recognised, nor artefacts recovered during the watching brief.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Between February and April 1993, an archaeological watching brief was

undertaken during the excavation of a water pipe trench along the western side of the A15 from Osbournby roundabout at Threekingham Bar (NGR TF073368) to Acre Lane at Walcot Bar (TF075351). Commissioned by Anglian Water Services Ltd., this work was carried out by Heritage Lincolnshire.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Situated approximately 8km south of Sleaford, the water pipeline ran alongside part of the A15 road between *c.* 1km and 3km south of Osbournby village, North Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). Between these points the road follows the parish boundaries of Newton and Haceby and Walcot and Folkingham, which lie to the west, and Threekingham civil parish on the east. At its northern limit the pipeline meets the southern boundary of Osbournby civil parish.

For most of this stretch of the A15, the road crosses Ragdale Association pelostagnogley soils developed in till which has a clayey matrix containing chalky stones (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 293). Towards the south, the pipeline route crosses a band of Aswarby Association soils, fine loamy gleyic brown calcareous earths over interbedded Jurassic limestone and clays (*ibid.*, 99).

Commencing from Walcot Bar, the pipeline stretched northwards to Threekingham Bar, approximately 1.7km distant. Ground surface dropped from 50m OD at the south end of the pipeline down to *c.* 30m at the northern limit of the route. Located to the south of the village of Osbournby, the A15 crosses an unnamed stream that flows west to east towards Threekingham village (Fig. 2). This watercourse is coincident with the location of the band of Aswarby soils traversed by the A15.

2.3 Archaeological Setting

The pipeline route is located in an area of archaeological remains dating from the prehistoric through to the medieval period.

Evidence of prehistoric exploitation of the general area is provided by artefacts of predominantly Bronze Age date. A perforated stone macehead (NK48.15) has been recovered from a point *c.* 800m northeast of Osbournby roundabout and a Bronze Age stone hammer (NK65.4) was found *c.* 800m east of the access road to Grange Farm. Other prehistoric artefacts, including flint implements, stone axes and Bronze Age pottery, have been recovered from several locations northeast of Osbournby village, approximately 1.5km north of the northern limit of the pipeline.

Originating as a trackway in the prehistoric period, the Salter's Way was subsequently assumed as a Roman road. The course of this east - west Roman route is preserved by the modern A52, which provides the northern terminus of the pipeline. Paralleling the course of the A15, and therefore the pipeline, is a second Roman road, Mareham Lane, located 2km east of the investigation area. It has been suggested that the intersection of these two roads may have been the site of a Roman settlement of some importance (Whitwell 1970, 140-1).

Romano-British activity in the area is represented by Roman pottery from a point approximately 1km northeast of Osbournby roundabout (Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record). A more substantial Romano-British occupation site (NK65.2), defined by pottery, stones and bones, was located *c.* 500m southeast of the Osbournby roundabout. Romano-Saxon has been

recovered from this same location. From approximately 150m southeast of this Romano-British occupation site an Anglo-Saxon brooch (NK65.16) has been retrieved (Fig. 3).

Major place-name evidence indicates Scandinavian settlement in the area; both Osbournby and Haceby terminate in the Old Scandinavian *byr*, meaning village or homestead. Establishment of the other adjacent villages in the Anglo-Saxon period is also indicated by their respective place-names: Folkingham from the Old English *Folca's ingaham*, meaning 'the village of *Folca's* people'; and Threekingham similarly derived, though the first element (Threek-) is a tribal name of uncertain origin; and Walcot from Old English *Walacot*, 'the cottage of the serfs' (Ekwall 1974).

Medieval remains are mostly concentrated in the present villages of Walcot, Threekingham and Osbournby. Each of these settlements was mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 (Foster and Longley 1976). Churches of Norman date survive in Walcot and Threekingham, whilst the church of SS Peter and Paul in Osbournby is mainly in the Decorated (*c.* 1290-1350) architectural style (Pevsner and Harris 1989).

3. AIMS

The purpose of the work was to locate and record any archaeological remains exposed during the excavation of the pipe trench.

4. METHODS

A mechanical excavator was used in the construction of the pipe trench. Measuring 0.60m wide and 1m deep, the

trench extended approximately 1.7km in length. See Figs. 2 and 3 for a plan of the trench and location of the recorded sections.

The sides of the trench were cleaned by hand and inspected for archaeological remains prior to recording the sections. Each deposit or feature revealed within the pipe trench was allocated a unique reference number with an individual written description. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at scale 1:20.

Eighteen separate sections were recorded. With the exception of Section 18, which was 12m long, all were 10m in length. Most of the sections produced repetitive evidence, the type being dependent on whether the pipe trench cut through the highway surface or the roadside verge. Because of this repetition, only a representative sample of the sections, and only 7.5m of each, are reproduced in this report.

5. RESULTS (Figs. 4 and 5)

Records of the deposits identified during the watching brief were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. Two phases were identified:

Phase 1	Natural deposits
Phase 2	Modern deposits

Phase 1 Natural Deposits

Towards the southern extent of the pipeline route, at a location 35m north of Walcot Bar, a yellow silty clay was recorded at a depth of 0.3m below the present ground surface (Fig. 5). Observed

for a distance of approximately 12m, this deposit (7) contained frequent, angular limestone fragments. This layer was only identified in this restricted locality where the A15 road and pipe trench traversed high ground. By virtue of this topographic peculiarity, and the lack of similarity with other deposits recorded elsewhere along the pipeline route, this material is interpreted as natural subsoil.

Where the water pipe trench cut through the modern highway, and at a depth of 0.3m, a deposit of silty, sandy dark grey clay (6) was encountered (Fig. 4). This material, which extended below the 1m depth limit of excavation, is interpreted as a natural subsoil.

Phase 2 Modern deposits

Sealing the phase 1 clay layer (6) was a deposit of crushed limestone (5) which acted as the foundation for the tarmac surface (4) of the present highway (Fig. 4).

Where the pipe trench cut through the roadside verge, and at a depth of *c.* 0.5m, a deposit of crushed limestone (3) was recorded. This material persisted below the base of the pipe trench at 1m deep. Established on this limestone deposit was a layer of tarmac (2). Together, these two deposits are interpreted as constituting the foundation and surface of a previous course of the highway (Fig. 5).

Sealing this redundant road surface was a mixed, brown silty clay topsoil (1) approximately 0.4m deep. This material constituted the present ground surface of the roadside verge throughout the entire investigation area.

6. DISCUSSION

A natural layer of silty clay (phase 1) was observed towards the southern limit of the investigation area. Interpreted as subsoil, it is considered that the restricted observation of this material was due to landscape factors: the only record being made where the A15 road passes over a natural eminence. Elsewhere, a thick deposit of grey clay was observed below the course of the modern road. As, for much of its length, the modern highway is level with the surrounding countryside, this grey clay is considered to be a natural subsoil deposit. Variation in these two subsoils is believed due to the effects of topography, the yellow silty clay occurring at a ridge, the grey clay being encountered on lower land.

Beneath the verge topsoil, previous road surfaces (phase 2) were revealed in the pipetrench. Consisting of a tarmac skin on a limestone bed, this redundant carriageway surface is clearly of relatively modern date. Occurring within living memory (Hilary Healey, pers. comm.), the burial of this highway relates to road-raising and re-alignment schemes.

Tarmac on a crushed limestone foundation bed comprised the modern carriageway. Topsoil constituted the present ground surface of the roadside verge.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological investigation of the water pipeline trench alongside the A15 between Walcot Bar and Osbournby roundabout, Walcot, established that undisturbed natural subsoil deposits prevail across most of the area inspected and persist to a depth of at least 1.00m below the present road surface.

Consisting of layers of yellow and grey clays, variation in these deposits is believed due to topographic factors, the yellow clay being observed at a high point in the landscape and the grey layer occurring on lower ground.

Earlier tarmac highway surfaces, indicating re-alignment and raising of the route, were examined where the pipe trench cut through the roadside verge. No archaeological deposits or features were compromised by the excavation of the pipeline and no artefacts were recovered during the watching brief.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heritage Lincolnshire wish to thank Anglian Water Services Ltd for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and Dave Start edited this report. Nicola Nuttall, the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist, kindly permitted access to the relevant parish files. Information from the County Sites and Monuments Record was provided by Ian George and Julia Wise of the Archaeology Section, City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes
Supervisor: David Brown
Illustration: Denise Buckley; Paul Cope-Faulkner
Post-excavation Analyst: Gary Taylor

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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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 Bulletin No. 13

Pevsner, N, and Harris, J, 1989 *Lincolnshire*, The Buildings of England (2nd ed, revised Antram, N)

Whitwell, J B, 1970 *Roman Lincolnshire*, History of Lincolnshire II

11. ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeological detail coded 'SMR' is site information held in the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record.

Numbers prefixed by 'NK' are the reference numbers used by the North Kesteven Community Archaeologist.

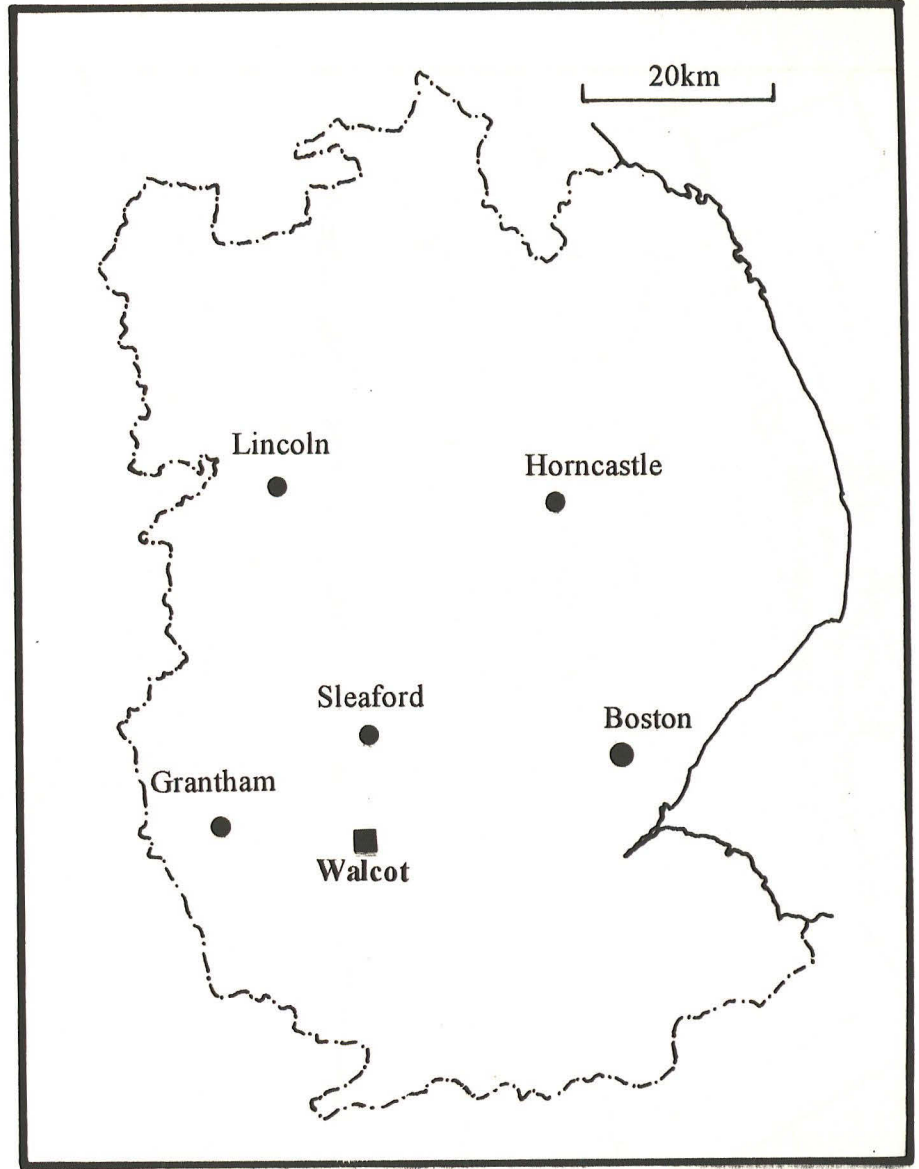
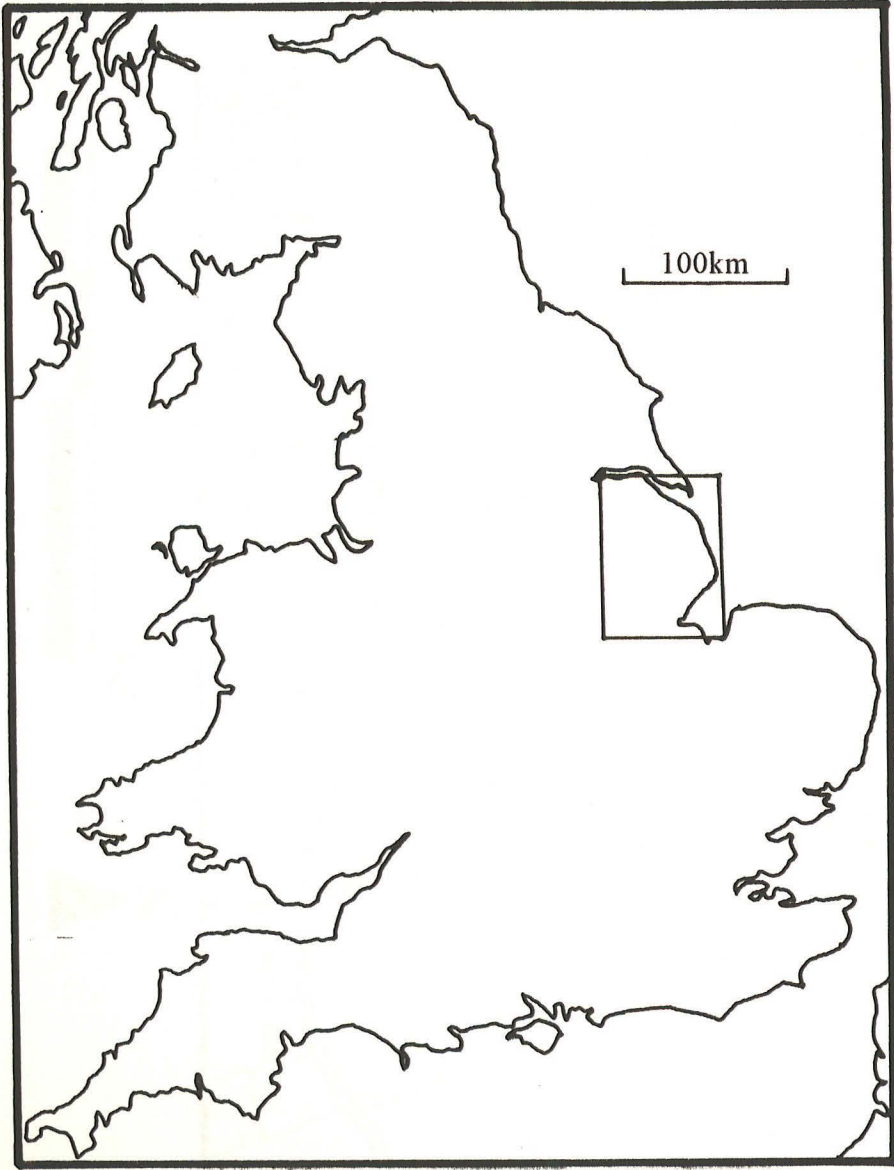
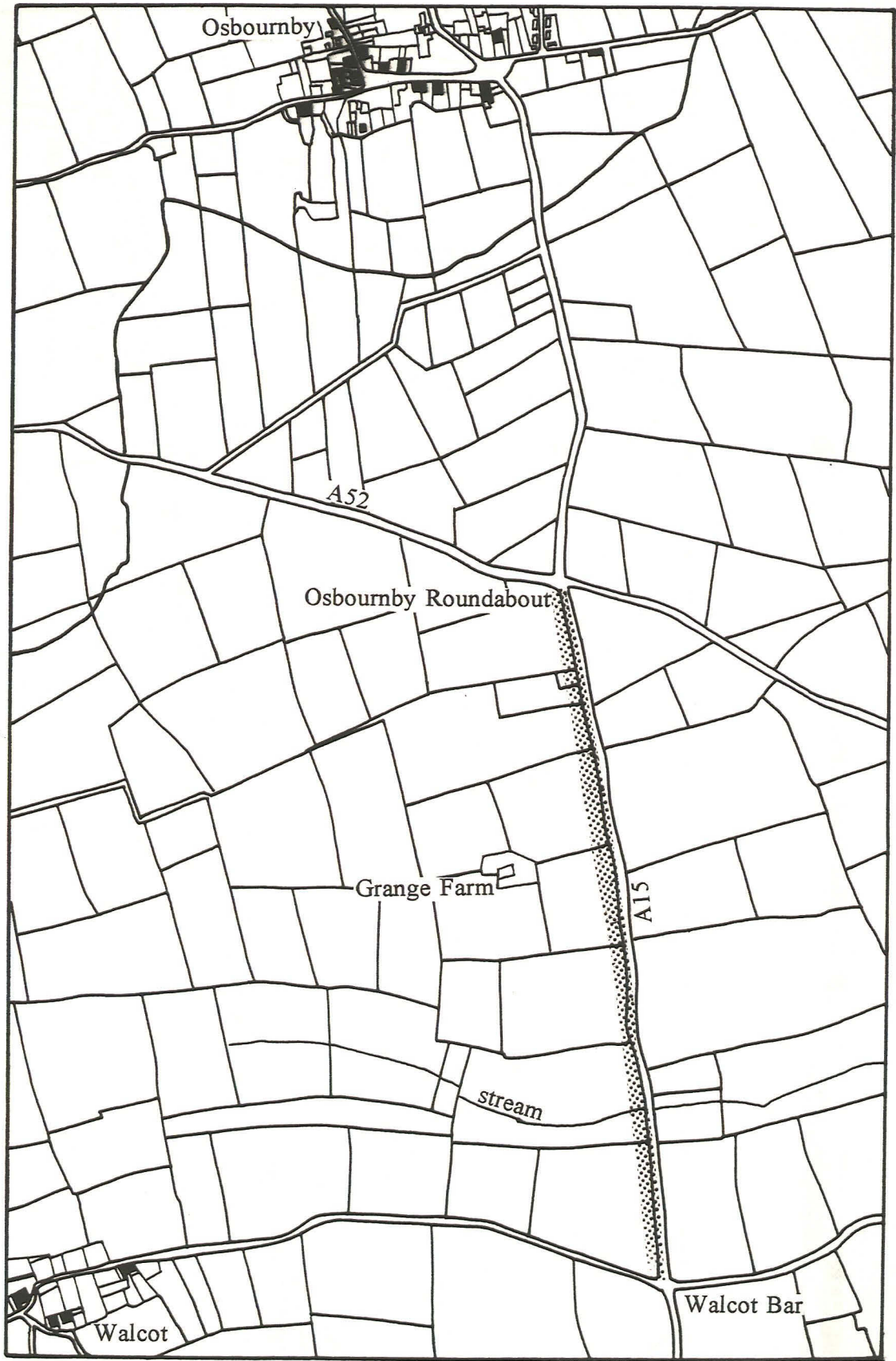
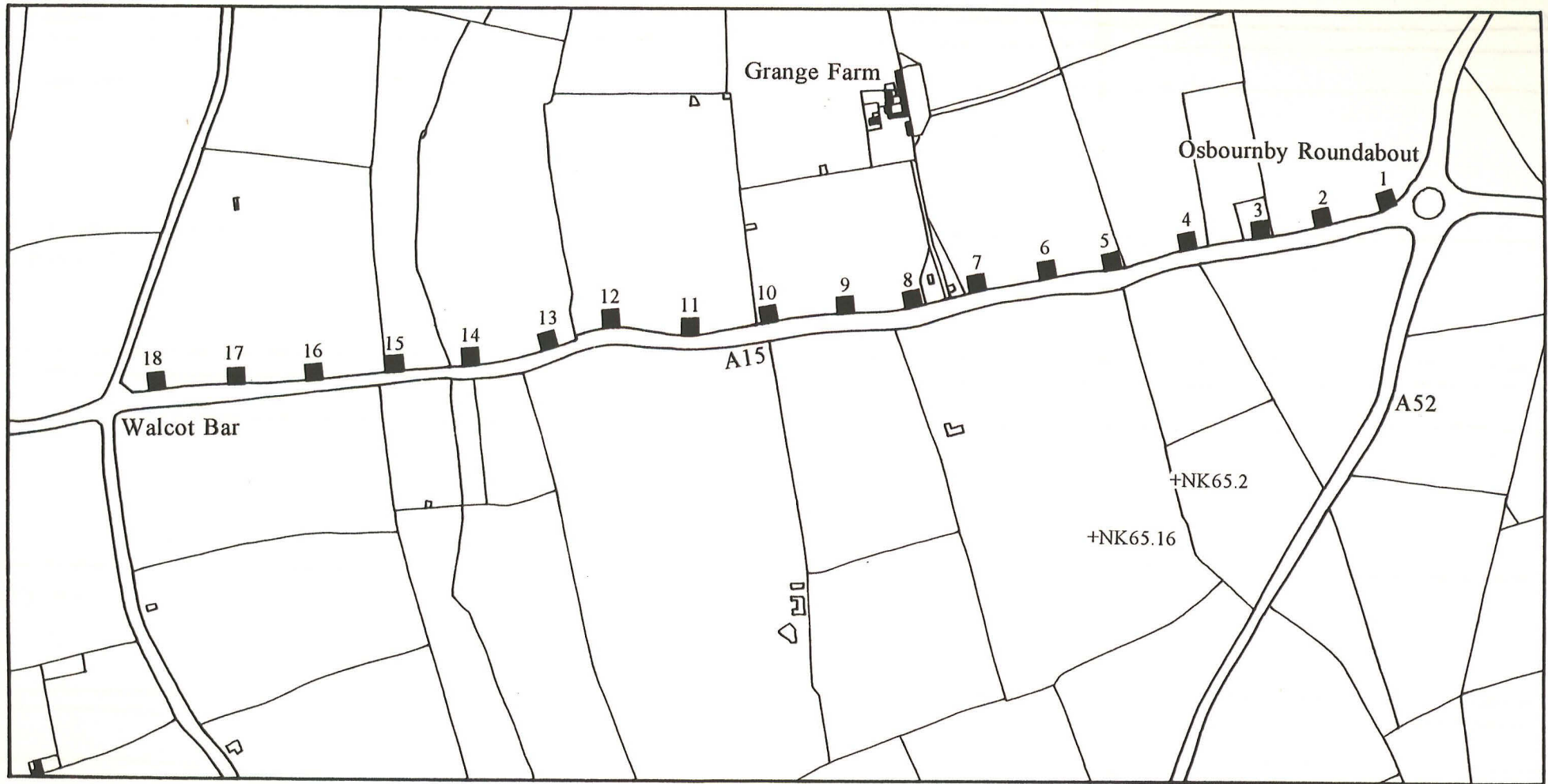


Fig. 1 GENERAL LOCATION PLAN

Fig. 2 SITE LOCATION PLAN

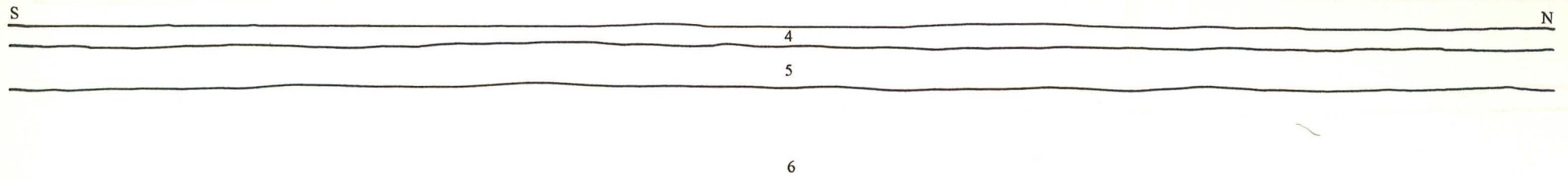


Area of Investigation

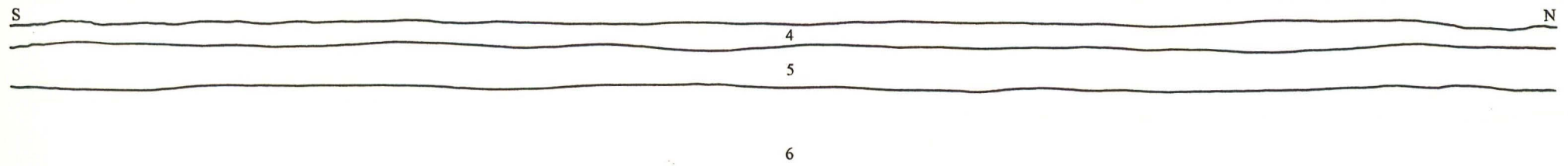


■ Location of Recorded Sections (Not to Scale)

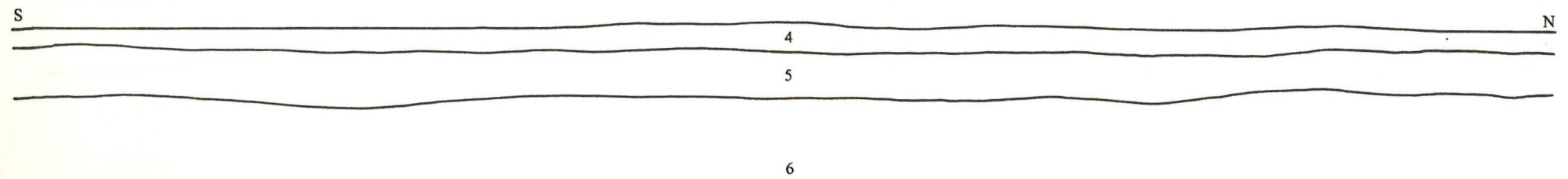
Fig. 3 SECTION LOCATION PLAN



SECTION 4



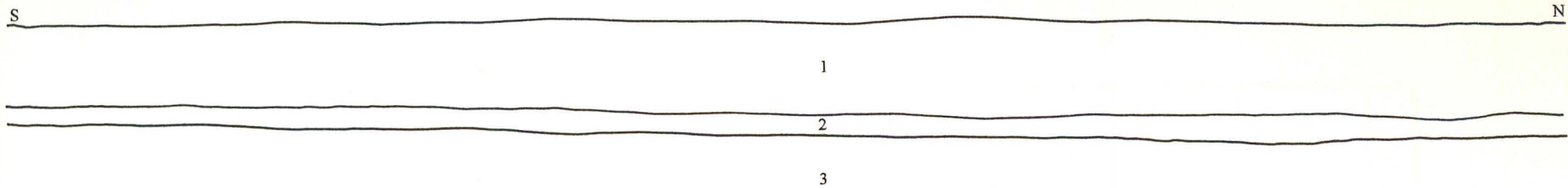
SECTION 9



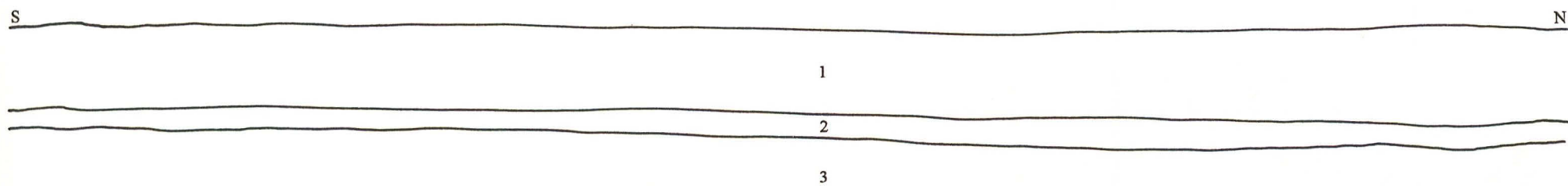
SECTION 12



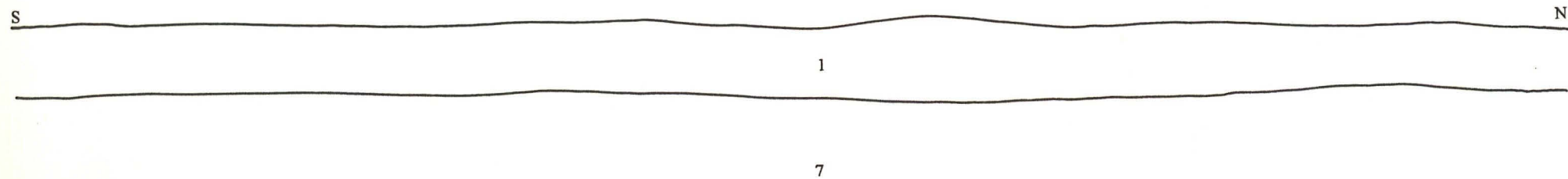
Fig. 4 SECTIONS 4, 9 and 12



SECTION 6



SECTION 15



SECTION 18



Fig. 5 SECTIONS 6, 15 and 18

APPENDIX 1
Context Summary

Context Number	Description	Interpretation
1	Brown silty clay with occasional limestone fragments and moderate root disturbance	Topsoil
2	Tarmac layer, <i>c.</i> 0.1m thick	Old road surface
3	Crushed limestone layer	Foundation for old road surface
4	Tarmac layer, <i>c.</i> 0.1m thick	Modern highway
5	Crushed limestone layer, up to 0.25m thick	Foundation for modern highway
6	Dark grey silty sandy clay with occasional chalk and flint pebbles	Natural subsoil
7	Yellow silty clay with frequent limestone fragments	Natural subsoil

APPENDIX 2
The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 7 Context records
- 3 Photographic records
- 18 Scale drawings
- 1 Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records and finds are currently kept at:

Heritage Lincolnshire
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: 26.94