



LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Development at Church Farm, Church Lane, Saxilby

*NGR: SK 894 763
Site Code: SCF 02
LCNCC Museum Accn Code: 2002.528
WLDC Planning Application No.: 97/P/0906*

Archaeological Watching Brief

Conservation
Services

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Highways & Planning
Directorate

Report prepared for Lindum Homes

by G. Tann

**LAS Report No. 664
June 2003**

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MON 54824
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Development at Church Farm, Church Lane, Saxilby, Lincs. Archaeological Watching Brief

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief during groundworks for a housing development identified phases of a post-medieval farmyard, but no dateable medieval or earlier features were found.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned in September 2002 by Lindum Homes to conduct an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for a housing development east of Church Lane, Saxilby (Figs. 1 and 2). The watching brief was required by the local planning authority to fulfil a condition on the planning permission.

Groundworks were monitored by Dave Marshall, Doug Young and Geoff Tann, on September 25th, 30th, October 2nd, November 1st and 4th 2002).

The Development Site

The site lies to the NE of Church Lane, 150m NW of St Botolph's Church, and the two areas were separated by existing houses.

Planning Details

An application by Leverton Farms Ltd for permission to construct seven dwellings, and garages, was approved by West Lindsey District Council in July 1998 (97/P/0906). An attached Condition 5 required an archaeological watching brief.

Archaeological Background

The village of Saxilby is mentioned in the Lindsey Survey of 1115 and its origins lie clearly in the Anglo-Saxon period. The development site is close to St Botolph's Church, and can be assumed to have been near the core of the medieval village.

The site was formerly part of Church Farm, and contractors reported that a dairy had stood on the Church Lane frontage until demolition. A range of buildings are shown on the site on the Ordnance Survey map revised pre 1930 (OS 1956).

The Watching Brief (Fig. 3)

Excavation was by JCB with a 0.6m wide, toothed bucket. Context numbers were assigned by LAS for recording purposes, and these are used, in bold, in the text (Appendix 1).

The Access Road

Topsoil stripping of the new access road from Church Lane was monitored, but no archaeological features were revealed.

House Plots 1-5 (Pls. 1 and 2; Figs. 3-4)

Foundation trenches for these houses fronting onto Church Lane were excavated as a unit. Heavy rain and standing water affected the site but was not thought to have obscured archaeological remains.

A recent mixed demolition deposit **1**, between 0.15m and 0.4m thick, covered the southern side of the house plot. An asphalt surface **13** was present across the centre of the site, leading from Church Lane through the former farm dairy site to the existing houses to the east. Below this surface, and extending across most of the developed site, were a series of thin yard surfaces of crushed brick rubble **16** and gravel **19** (Pl. 3). These were associated with 0.3m wide brick foundations **12** at the western side of the site, which may have been part of the former dairy. The brick dimensions were 220mm x 110mm x 75mm, and the building was at least 4m NE-SW and 8m NW-SE. Foundations of a second, more substantial and probably more recent brick building were exposed at the eastern edge of the plot, extending eastwards beyond the new trenches. These foundations **14** were 0.4m thick, with brick dimensions of 250mm x 115mm x 70mm, bonded with a grey-flecked mortar (Pl. 4).

Undisturbed natural yellow clay **5**, and shaley clay **11**, was encountered at the north and south ends of the site at depths of about 0.1m - 0.45m below existing ground level. Across the centre of the site, a SW-NE aligned backfilled depression **17** was identified in the faces of the foundation trenches. At its deepest, this was about 1.1m below modern ground level, with its sides rising to about 0.75m (Pl. 6). It was about 17m wide. The southern side of this depression, about 9m of its width, was lined at the base with large cobbles **4** and infrequent pieces of brick rubble (Pl. 5). To the north of the cobbles it appeared to have been filled with a silt **10**, deliberately overlain by sand **15** (which post-dated the cobbles). The black silt indicated standing water; to the north of this feature, a 0.1m thick peaty layer **18** took the place of the black silt, containing twigs in the sand **15** above. Although this feature was initially recorded as a metalled farmyard, designed to collect slurry in the depression, it has been tentatively reinterpreted as a medieval or later hollow way.

House Plots 6 and 7 (Pl. 7)

The site was scraped of vegetation and topsoil, with about 0.40m removed. Within Plot 6, the exposed subsoil was 0.3m thick, covering a mixed sandy clay which appeared to be naturally formed; this sealed an orange/brown sand. On Plot 7 the 1.2m deep foundation trenches were excavated through a deep sandy subsoil to mixed grey/green and red sandy clay (Pl. 9). No features were seen and the earliest finds were of nineteenth century date.

Conclusion

The observations on the Church Lane frontage site suggested that before development of the site in the post-medieval period, the site had suffered from poor drainage and standing water, perhaps with a well-metalled track across it. It is possible, although unlikely, that the cobbled depression was a medieval water-holding feature such as a pond. This feature had become redundant, and the site was rapidly levelled with the importation of clean sand. This provided a more suitable surface for subsequent use of the site as a farmyard, with areas between brick-founded buildings being surfaced with gravel, brick rubble, and most recently, asphalt. The brick rubble surface could represent demolition of buildings on the site, but these did not appear to be those associated with the exposed foundations.

Acknowledgements

LAS is grateful for the co-operation received from all Lindum Homes staff. Illustrations were prepared by Karen Dennis, and the report was collated and produced by Naomi Field.

Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
6th June 2003

References

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

Archive Summary

Correspondence

Developer's plans and annotated copies

Field plans and section drawings

Photographs: LAS colour print film nos. 02/101/22-25; 02/106/1-14; 02/121/18-28.

Saxilby, Church Lane (SCF 02)
Context Summary

Context No.	Type	Relationships	Description
1	layer	above 9, 13	mixed demolition layer, brick rubble and concrete
2	layer	below 7, above 5, 3	brick rubble deposit
3	layer	below 2, above 4	discoloured clay with dark brown loam
4	layer	above 5, below 3 and 10	surface of large rounded cobbles, with occasional brick rubble
5	layer	below 4	undisturbed natural yellow clay
6	layer	below 1, above 7	discoloured clay with dark brown loam
7	layer	below 6, above 2	dark brown loam, topsoil
8	layer	below 9	yellow clay with some brick rubble
9	layer	below 1, above 8	discoloured clay with dark brown loam
10	layer	below 2, above 4	black silty clay layer
11	layer	below 10	natural shaley clay
12	wall	below 13, above 15	brick wall foundations, ?of demolished dairy buildings
13	layer	above 12, below 1	asphalt surface
14	wall	cuts 9, below 1	brick wall foundations, ?of demolished dairy buildings
15	layer	below 19; cut by 12, above 18, 2	sand deposit
16	layer	below 13, above 19	crushed brick rubble
17	cut	cuts 5, filled by 18 and 15	depression, SW-NE aligned
18	fill	fill of 17, below 15	peat layer
19	layer	above 15, below 16	gravel surface

THE FIGURES



Fig. 1 Location of Saxilby (c based on the 2002 1:50,000 Ordnance Survey Landranger map, Sheet 121. © Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of the HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 100002165).

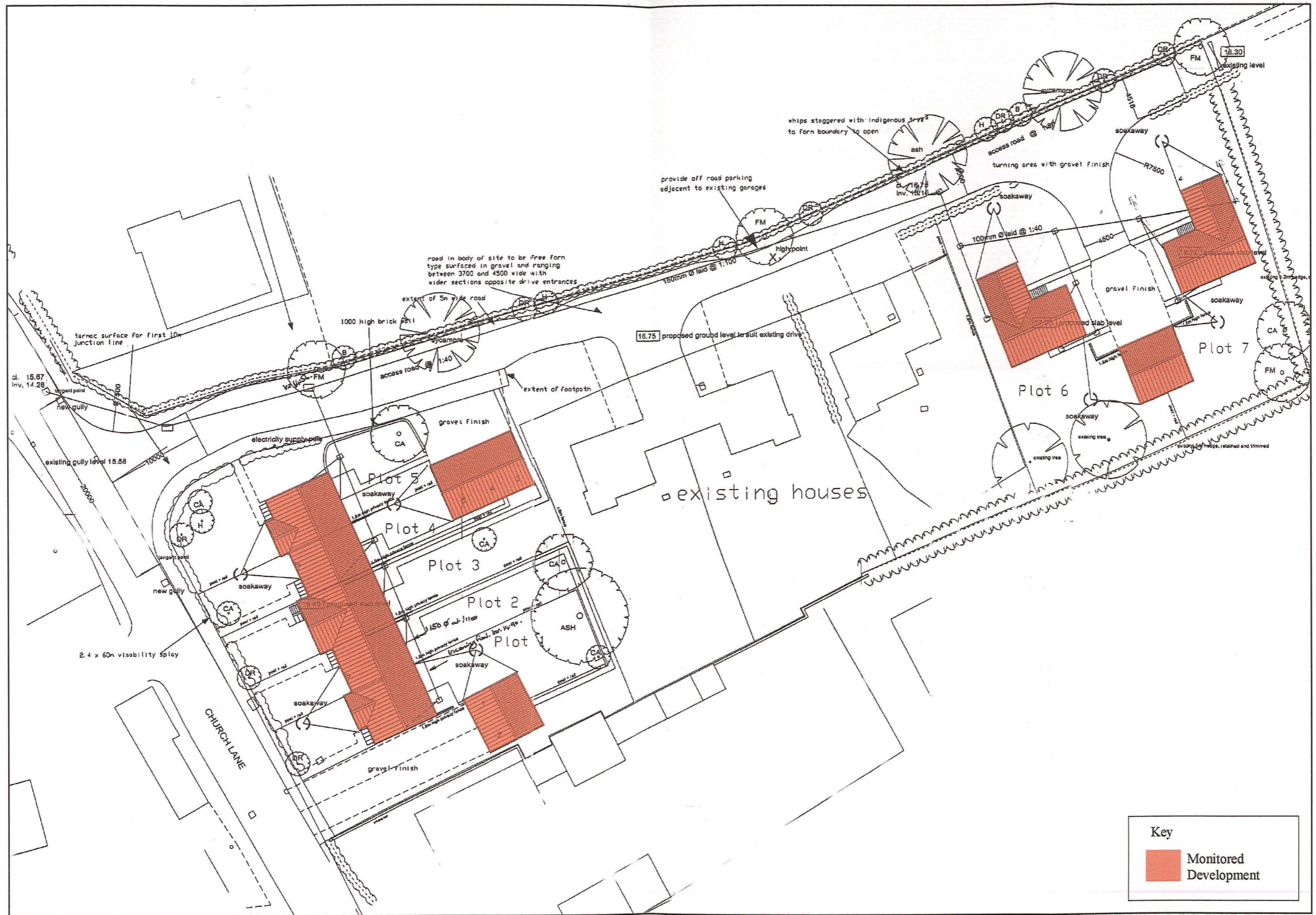


Fig. 2 Location of the monitored development (based on a plan supplied by the client, reproduced at a reduced scale).

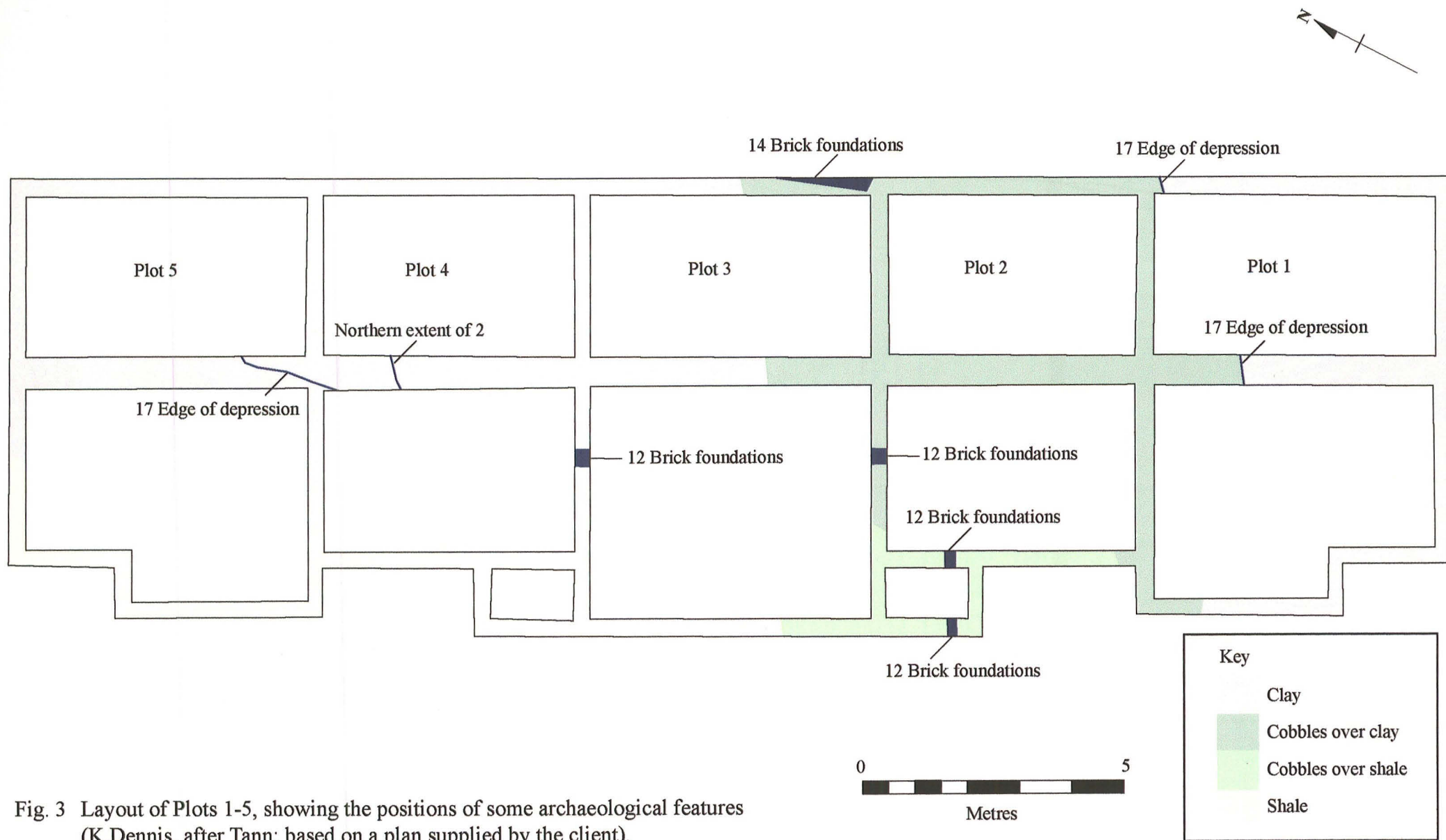


Fig. 3 Layout of Plots 1-5, showing the positions of some archaeological features (K.Dennis, after Tann; based on a plan supplied by the client).

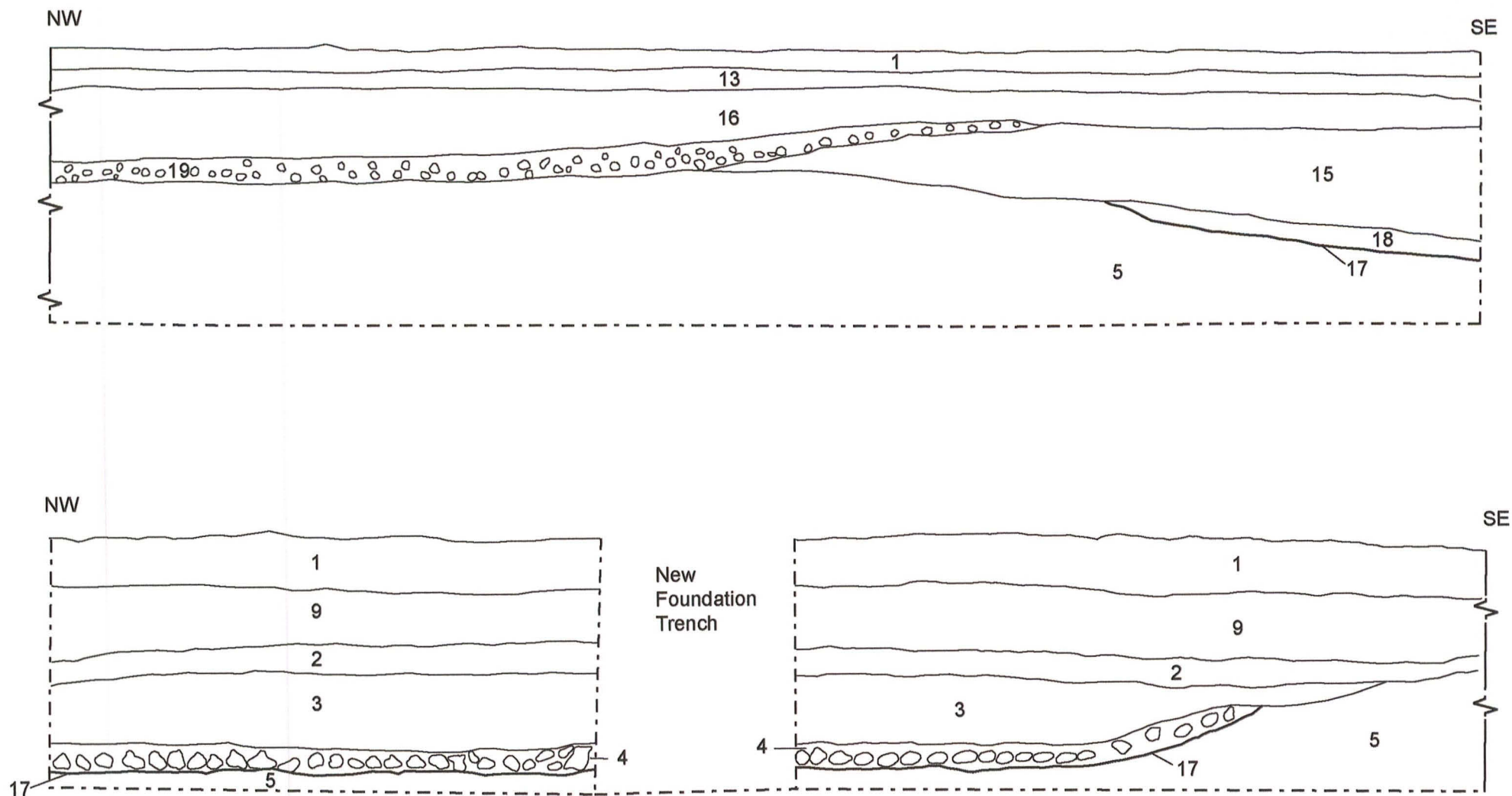


Fig. 4 a) Section across deposits at the northern edge of depression 17.
 b) Section across deposits at the southern edge of 17. (K. Dennis, after Tann).



THE PLATES



Pl. 1 Location of Plots 1-5, Church Lane (looking north past the cleared site of Church Farm).



Pl. 2 House Plots 1-5, during excavation of foundation trenches (looking south).



Pl. 3 A series of yard surfaces of asphalt, ash, gravel and brick rubble covered most of House Plots 1-5.



Pl. 4 Foundations of a brick building at the eastern edge of House Plots 1-5 (looking east).



Pl. 5 The yard surfaces were separated by a thick grey/brown silt deposit from an earlier surface of large irregular cobbles and infrequent pieces of brick rubble. This lay directly over undisturbed blue/grey clay.



Pl. 6 Crushed brick overlaying a black peaty soil layer at the base of the depression in the centre of House Plots 1-5 (looking south).



Pl. 7 House Plots 6 and 7, during topsoil removal (looking south-east).



Pl. 8 Excavation of foundation trenches on Plot 7 (looking east).



Pl. 9 Undisturbed mixed natural clay, Plot 7.