

Conservation
Services
04 MAR 2005
Highways & Planning
Directorate

**LAND AT TYDDYN UCHAF,
SOUTH OWERSBY, LINCOLNSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
DESK-BASED ASSESSMENT**

NGR:
Planning ref.:

TF 0624 9342^{30 83}
M04/P/1109

Report prepared for Robert Alder Architect Ltd.
on behalf of Mr. J. Bannister

by

R. D. Gardner

January 2005



Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln)
Unit G
William Street Business Park
Saxilby
Lincoln
LN1 2LP
Tel. & Fax. 01522 703800
e-mail colin.pca@virgin.net
©Pre-Construct Archaeology (Lincoln)

Contents

	Summary	1
1.0	Introduction	2
2.0	Location and description	2
3.0	Objectives and methods	2
4.0	Planning background	3
5.0	Archaeological and historical background	3
6.0	Site-specific search/investigation results	7
	6.1 Aerial photographic and documentary information	7
	6.2 The County Sites and Monuments Record	10
	6.3 Site visit	12
7.0	Assessment of archaeological potential	14
8.0	Impact on archaeological resources	14
9.0	Conclusions	15
11.0	Mitigation	15
12.0	Acknowledgements	15
13.0	References	15

Illustrations

- Fig. 1: Location of site at scale 1:25 000
- Fig. 2: Sketch plan of earthworks seen during this study, superimposed on developers' plan of the proposed works, scale 1:1250
- Fig. 3: Map showing SMR information, scale 1:10 000
- Fig. 4: Reproduction of 1805 estate plan, scale unspecified
- Fig. 5: Extract from 1855 estate map, scale 6 chains to the inch
- Fig. 6: Vertical aerial photograph from 1972
- Fig. 7: Oblique aerial photograph from 1980

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Colour Plates

Summary

- *This archaeological assessment has been prepared for Robert Alder Architect Ltd. on behalf of Mr. J. Bannister, in respect of a proposed pond forming part of a landscaping development at South Owersby, Lincolnshire.*
- *It has been prepared in accordance with recommendations made by West Lindsey District Council, and will form the basis for a decision making process that will seek to address the needs of the developer, while ensuring that archaeological resources are not needlessly destroyed as a result of developing the site.*
- *The results of this study indicate that the development area represents one of the last relatively undisturbed portions of an extensive system of earthworks representing the relict landscape of the shrunken medieval village of Owersby.*

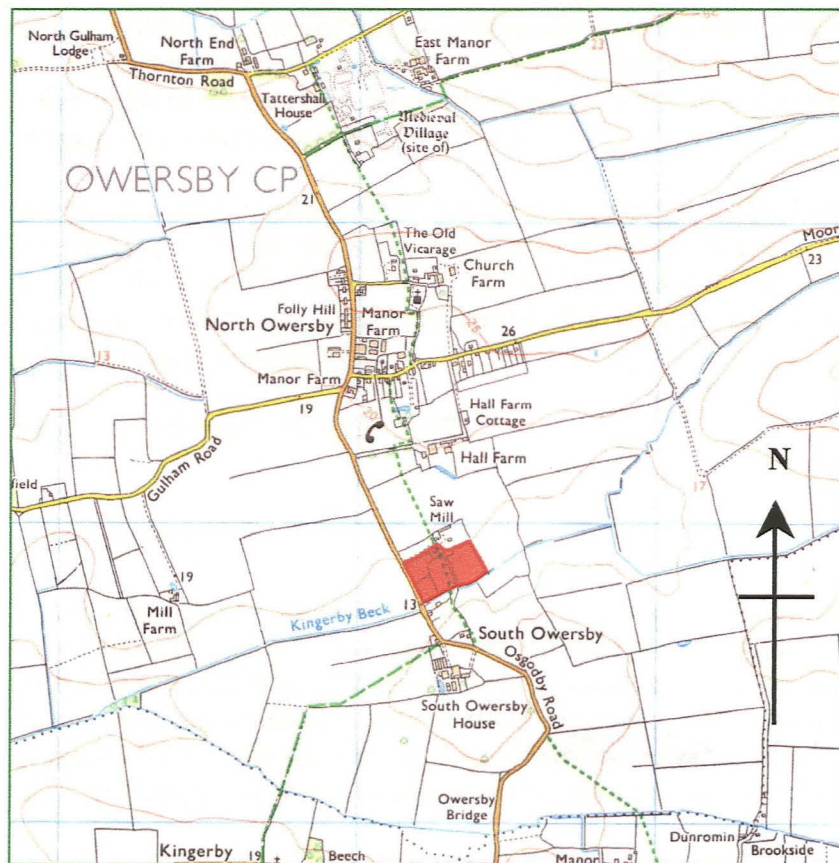


Fig. 1: General location map. The proposed development area is shown in red. Scale 1:25 000.
(O.S. copyright licence no. AL 515 21 A0001)

1.0 Introduction

This desk-based assessment was commissioned by Robert Alder Architect Ltd. on behalf of Mr. J. Bannister. Its purpose is to assess the archaeological potential of a group of five fields between the villages of North and South Owersby, without the use of intrusive methods, and to calculate the probable effect of the proposed excavation of a pond and construction of an all-weather surface on any archaeological remains which may be present.

2.0 Location and description (figs. 1 and 2)

The village of North Owersby and the hamlet of South Owersby are part of a line of villages, including North and South Kelsey, which runs along the change in local drift geology from blown sand to till along the eastern side of the valley of the River Ancholme (Everson *et al.*, 1991). The modern villages lie some 0.5km apart, and are divided by the Kingerby Beck, a tributary of the Ancholme. The parish of Owersby encompasses both settlements.

The proposed development site lies on the east side of the Osgodby Road, which connects North and South Owersby. The road forms the western boundary of the site, and the Kingerby Beck the southern boundary; to the north is a small industrial site, which is labelled 'Saw Mill' on current maps but does not appear to be in use at present. Beyond the eastern edge of the site are open arable fields. The development site comprises five fields of varying size, all of which are currently in use as sheep grazing; they slope gently towards the Kingerby Beck.

The solid geology of the development area is Ancholme Group clay. The drift geology in the region is principally till, but in the locality of the development area this has been cut away by the Kingerby Beck. The solid clay is exposed on the northern part of the site; on the southern side, this is overlain by drift alluvium laid down by the beck (British Geological Survey, 1982).

Central National Grid Reference: TF 0624 9342.

3.0 Objectives and methods

The purpose of this report is to establish the likelihood of archaeological remains, which may be vulnerable to groundworks associated with the proposed development, being present in the development area; to assess their potential significance and the extent to which construction works are likely to affect them, and, if necessary, to suggest further methods by which the site may be evaluated in advance of the works, or by which the works can be mitigated to minimise the impact to any such remains.

The report is based on information derived from a variety of sources: -

The Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record

Records held by the Lindsey Archives Office

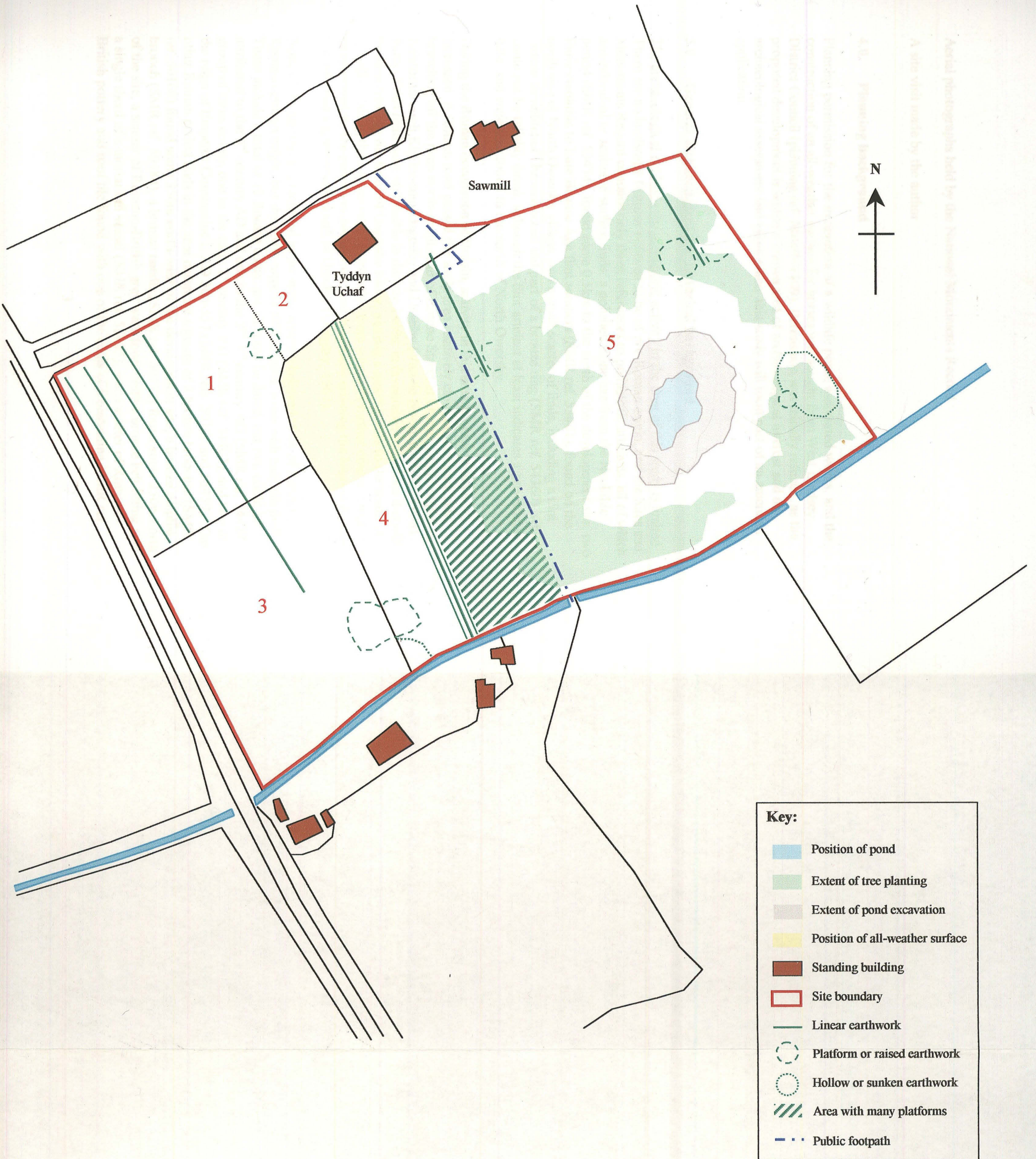


Figure 2: Sketch plan of the landscape features observed during the site visit (shown in dark green) superimposed on a plan of the proposed development. Scale 1:1250. Developers' plan supplied by Robert Alder Architect Ltd.

Aerial photographs held by the National Monuments Record

A site visit made by the author

4.0 Planning background

Planning permission for the excavation of a wildlife pond, associated works, and the construction of an all-weather surface for horses was sought from West Lindsey District Council (planning ref. M04/P/1109). Permission was initially refused, as the proposed development is within a known area of archaeological interest and no archaeological assessment had taken place: this study will form part of an amended application.

5.0 General archaeological and historical background

The archaeological evidence for prehistoric activity in the area of this study is limited. There are no landscape features believed to be of pre-Roman origin, and the Sites and Monuments Record contains only three references to prehistoric artefacts, all of which are individual or scattered surface finds: a polished stone axe from the Neolithic period (SMR ref. 53454), found some 0.5km to the north of the development site; two Early Neolithic to Late Bronze Age flint scrapers (SMR ref. 53461), found on the north side of North Owersby village; and a small scatter of finds, including a flint 'arrow straightener', bronze scrap and part of a bronze ring (SMR ref. 54360), which could not be reliably dated, although the flint artefact at least indicates a pre-Roman date, and were also found to the north of North Owersby.

During the Roman occupation of Britain, activity in this area appears to have increased. A Roman road passed the study area relatively close on the south side, branching off the main north-south road of Ermine Street at Owmbly, and running to Caistor through Kirkby-cum-Osgodby and Usselby (Van de Noort and Ellis, 1998). Parts of this road were still visible in the late 1960s: in favourable conditions it could be seen crossing the fields of Osgodby Moor, passing a quarter-mile to the south of the village along the east street of Normanby, from where its further course could only be identified by the pattern of hedgerows, and eventually crossing the Market Rasen-Caistor road a quarter-mile south of Usselby (Margary, 1967).

None of the earthworks recorded in the study area are believed to be of Roman or Romano-British origin, but the SMR records 10 findspots, some with multiple finds. These include a total of 10 Roman coins: not all could be dated, but two could be attributed to the 3rd century AD and one to the 2nd-3rd century AD (SMR ref. 54427 – group of three coins); one to the early 1st century AD (SMR ref. 54402), and two to the reign of Emperor Constantine I, AD 306-337 (SMR refs. 50175 and 53459). The other Roman period finds in the area comprise a group of 3 bronze brooches (SMR ref. 50168) found some 350m north-west of the development site; a bronze dolphin brooch (SMR ref. 50184), a bronze needle (SMR ref. 50172) found some 250m north of the site; a scatter of Romano-British grey ware found with a bronze belt fitting and a single sherd of a mortarium vessel (SMR ref. 53455); and a scatter of Romano-British pottery and roof tile found with one of the coins of Constantine (SMR ref.

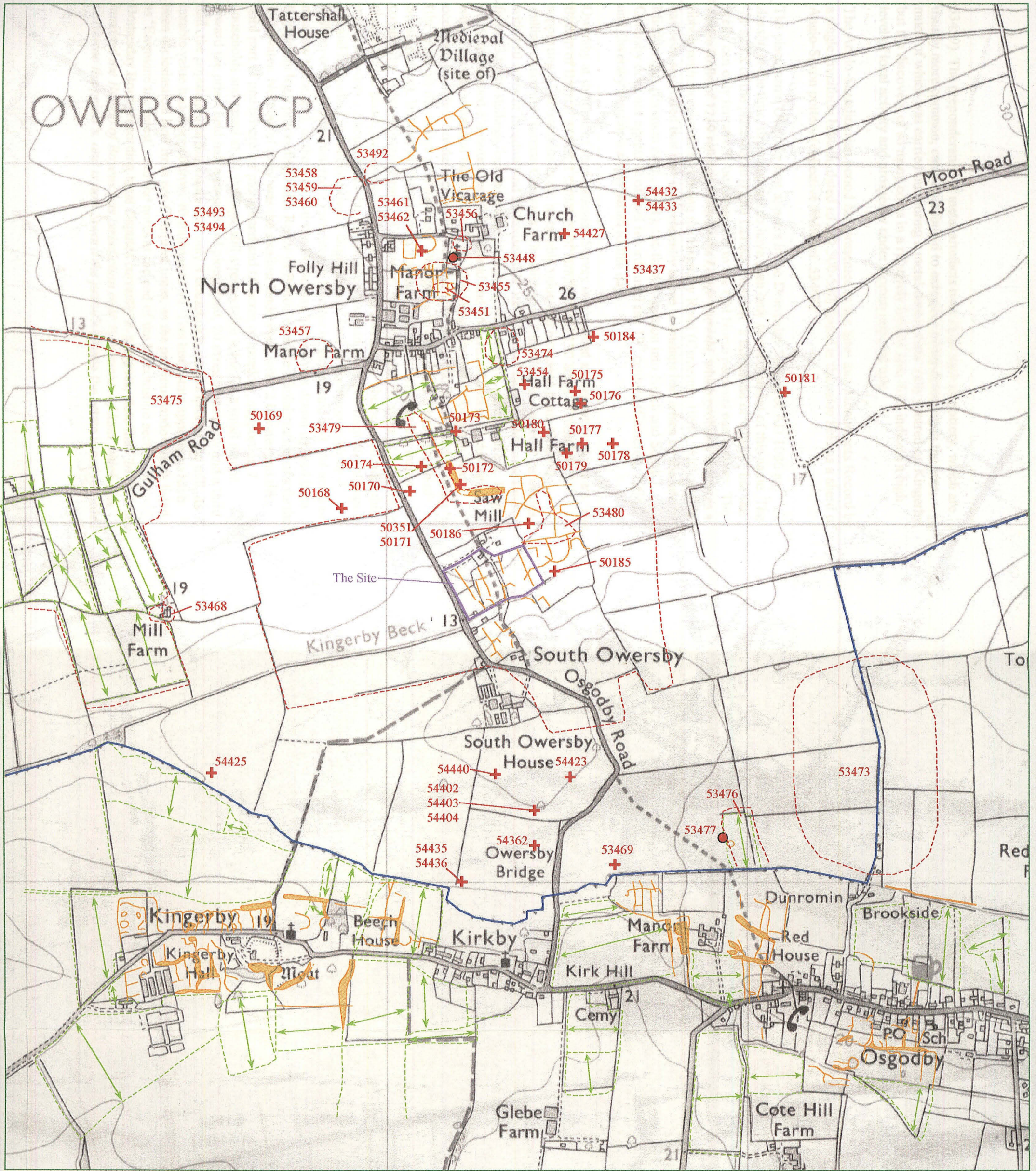


Fig 3: Reproduction of the information held by the Sites and Monuments Record for an area of roughly 1km radius around the proposed development area, with details of the landscape features known from a Royal Commission on Historic Monuments survey. Areas of ridge-and-furrow are shown in green, with arrows indicating the orientation of the furrows; other earthworks are shown in orange. SMR information is superimposed in red: buildings or monuments are marked with a circle, findspots by a cross, and areas are outlined with a broken red line. The Owersby parish boundary is marked in blue: the extensive earthworks south of it are not within the study area, but are shown here for completeness. The current development site is outlined in purple. Scale 1:10 000. (O.S. copyright licence no. AL 515 21 A0001)

53459). The preponderance of metal artefacts over finds such as pottery, which are usually more common, can be attributed to extensive metal-detecting in the area, much of which was carried out during a metal-detectorists' rally centred on Kingerby, but the discovery of so many coins in a relatively limited area does indicate a high level of local activity and prosperity under Roman imperial rule.

The Anglo-Scandinavian period is represented in the Sites and Monuments Record by a single cruciform brooch, dated to AD 500-550, found in the same field as a sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery (collective SMR ref. 53458).

The place-name Owersby first appears in the Domesday Survey of AD 1086 as *Aresbi*: at the time, there appears to have been only one settlement of this name. The *-by* suffix of the place-name is Old Danish, meaning 'a farmstead or village', but the prefix can only tentatively be connected to the Old Norse personal name *Avarr*. The Assize Rolls of 1219 refer to Owersby as *Longe Ouresbi*, which probably indicates a ribbon settlement stretching along the Osgodby Road (Cameron, 1998). Although it has been suggested that two independently active townships had arisen by the late Middle Ages (Everson *et al.*, 1991), the formal division into North and South Owersby does not appear in official records until the 19th century (Cameron, 1998), and Owersby remains a single parish to this day.

Owersby at the time of the Domesday Survey was divided among six landowners. The Bishop of Bayeux owned 2 carucates of farmland and 130 acres of meadow, supporting 35 households in all: its taxable value had increased from 40 to 60 shillings since the Norman Conquest. The Bishop of Lincoln also owned 2 carucates, with 110 acres of meadow and 29 households: its value had fallen in the same time from £3 to 40 shillings, but this estate included a mill paying 3 shillings in tax. Roger of Poitou owned 1½ carucates of ploughland and 76 acres of meadow: this estate, whose taxable value had fallen from 30 to 10 shillings since the Conquest, was occupied by only 2 *bordars* (peasants who were not free), and is recorded as being 'in (the lands of) the church of *Wingeham*' (Winghale Priory, in the nearby parish of South Kelsey). William of Percy owned a smaller, but extremely wealthy manor comprising '7 bovates and 2 parts of 1 bovate' of ploughland, 80 acres of meadow, a church with a priest, and another mill, also paying 3 shillings. The population of this estate was only 13 households, but its taxable value had increased from 40 shillings to 50, and it also had jurisdiction over a larger area of land in Thornton le Moor – William certainly administered 2 carucates, 6 bovates of ploughland and 364 acres of meadow there, and, at the time that the Domesday Survey was drawn up, had been engaged in legal proceedings with Roger of Poitou over the administration of a further 11 bovates. Norman of Arcy was the smallest landowner, with '2 bovates and the third part of one bovate' of ploughland and 60 acres of meadow, supporting 7 households and taxed at 20 shillings, still a respectable value for a small manor. Siward the priest held half a carucate of ploughland, 20 acres of meadow and a third mill: the population of this estate was only 4 households, and in spite of the mill, its taxable value had dropped from 40 shillings to 10. This last estate appears to have been ecclesiastical land from pre-Conquest times, as the previous landowner is listed as 'Earnwine the priest', and the notes at the end of the Lincolnshire section of Domesday Book, recording legal disputes currently in progress, state that '*In Owersby hundred the Bishop of Bayeux has jurisdiction over ½ carucate of land which was Earnwine the priest's, and is now Siward the priest's*': since the estate is not recorded

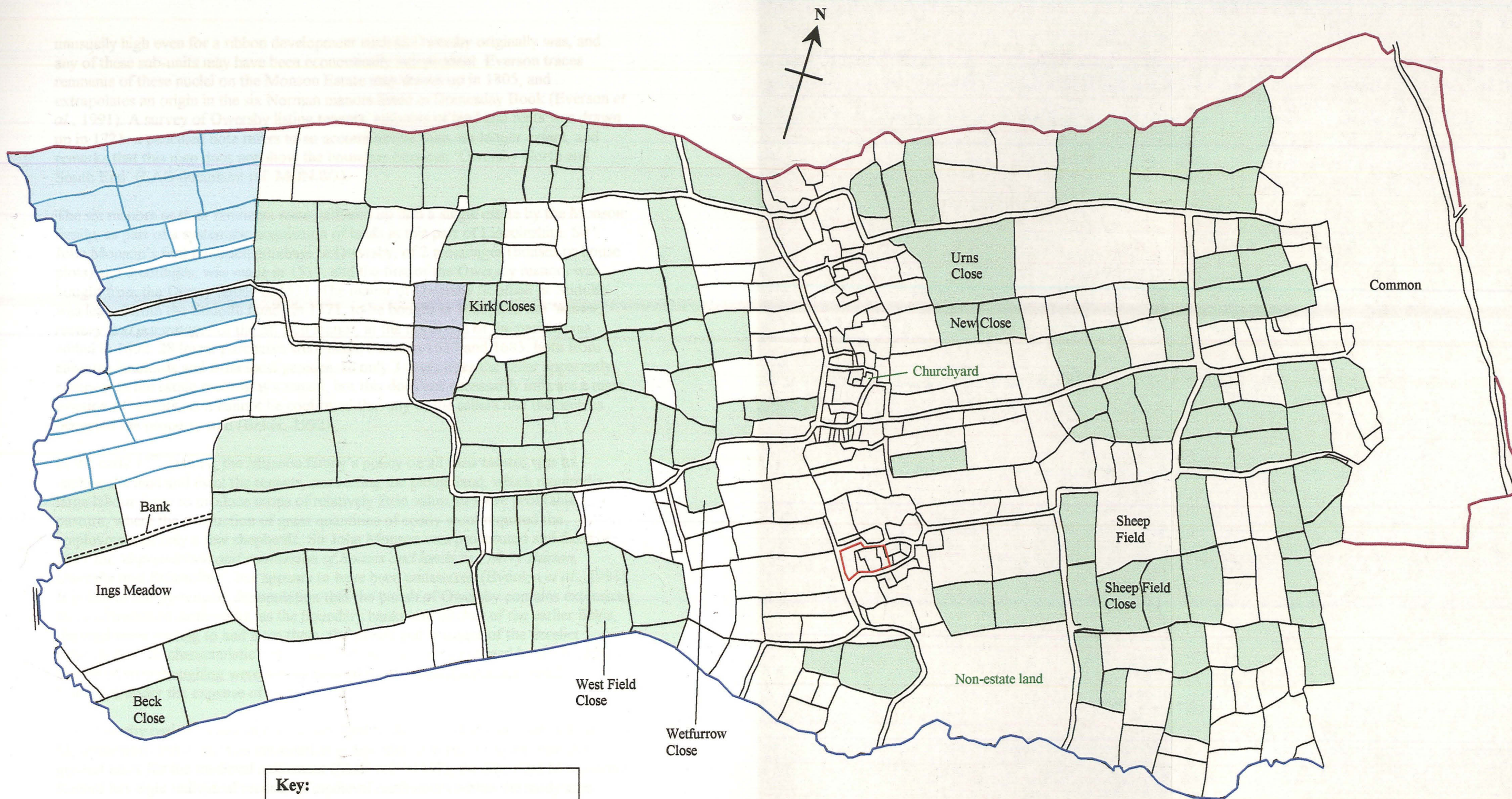
as part of the Bishop's lands, but in the chapter compiling the lands of the minor thanes, this presumably means that the Bishop was claiming to have jurisdiction over it (Morgan and Thorne, 1986).

The Lindsey Survey, compiled in 1115-1118AD under Henry I, is less detailed than Domesday Book, but confirms that Owersby continued to comprise six manors, all but two of which had changed hands in the intervening time. The landowners at this time were the Bishop of Lincoln, Alan de Perci (heir of William of Percy), Norman de Areceio, Ranulf Meschin, Manaset Arsic and the Count of Mortain: this last held the estate previously belonging to Roger of Poitou, as the survey refers to '*in Ouresbi 1 carucate and 4 bovates which the monks of Wighala (Winghale) hold*' (Foster and Longley, 1924). Winghale Priory was an alien cell of the Benedictine Order, attached to the monastery of Séez in France. These remote outposts of overseas monasteries fell into disfavour in the 14th century AD, and were largely reduced to a nominal population, but it seems unlikely that Winghale can ever have supported more than one or two monks, one of whom would have had the title of Prior and acted as bailiff for the monastery's English holdings. Winghale was dissolved in 1400, and the estate granted to a secular clerk (Knowles and Hadcock, 1971).

No part of the fabric of the church listed in Domesday Book survives: the present church was built in 1762-63, albeit with re-used medieval masonry. The dedication of Owersby parish church to St. Martin is recorded in the 14th century (SMR ref. 53448), which may indicate that the church had also been rebuilt at that time. Certainly the early 14th century Lay Subsidies indicate that Owersby was then very wealthy (Everson *et al.*, 1991), and prosperous communities before the 20th century tended to rebuild or extend the parish church regularly – an almost complete Saxon or Norman church is the badge of an impoverished or failed parish.

Owersby's prosperity did not last much longer: the parish appears to have been almost completely depopulated by the Black Death epidemic of 1348-49. The early 14th century Lay Subsidies record a population of at least 60 taxpayers: in 1352, the parish received 82.5% tax relief, indicating that roughly this percentage of the villagers had died or been left without the wherewithal to pay tax (Everson *et al.*, 1991). Tax relief was granted to villages badly affected by the Black Death: 100% relief signified that the village was wholly destroyed or reduced to a handful of survivors, but only one incidence of this is recorded in Lincolnshire (Platts, 1985); almost all communities within the county could be rebuilt. Low levels of tax relief during the 15th century indicate that Owersby was again able to fend for itself, and while only thirty taxpayers were recorded in 1524, the population in 1542-43 had increased to 80 households (Everson *et al.*, 1991).

From the later 16th century, documentary sources often divide Owersby into two parts. A diocesan survey of 1563 distinguishes 'Owersby', with 53 households, from 'Owersby End hamlet in Kirkby' with 22, and in the early 18th century, 'Owersby End' was again returned with Kirkby and Osgodby, while the building to the south of the development site, which is now South Owersby House, was referred to in 1842 as Kirkby Old Hall. Consequently, it seems likely that the south end of 'Long Owersby' may have been an independent economic unit well before the 19th century census returns formalised it as North and South Owersby (Everson, 1991, RCHM archive notes held by the SMR). The medieval village shows at least six nuclei, which is



Key:

- Field names with the element 'close'
- Field names with the element 'car'
- Glebe land
- Probable location of development site
- Parish boundary
- Parish boundary formed by watercourse
- Drain

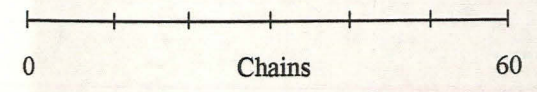


Figure 4: Reproduction of the 1805 map of the Owersby estate from the Monson Collection, at actual size (the original scale bar is reproduced, but does not appear to correspond with any scale of chains to the inch). Although buildings were shown on the original map, it was not possible to reproduce them on this drawing. The branch of the Kingerby Beck which forms the southern boundary of the development site did not appear. The approximate position of the site is outlined in red. Original text is shown in black, author's additions in green.

unusually high even for a ribbon development such as Owersby originally was, and any of these sub-units may have been economically independent. Everson traces remnants of these nuclei on the Monson Estate map drawn up in 1805, and extrapolates an origin in the six Norman manors listed in Domesday Book (Everson *et al.*, 1991). A survey of Owersby listing tenants, amounts of land and rents was drawn up in 1721: a pencilled note refers to an accompanying map, no longer extant, and remarks that this map does not show the boundary between 'Owersby North and South End' (LAO document ref. MON 8/3).

The six manors or their remnants were gathered up into a single estate by the Monson family, as part of a systematic acquisition of lands in this part of Lincolnshire. Sir John Monson's first recorded purchase in Owersby, of 2 messuages (houses or house plots) and 3 cottages, was made in 1517, and the first of the Owersby manors was bought from the Disney family in 1531. The manor of Owersby Southall or Stidolfe was leased from the Stidolfe family in 1571, to be bought in 1683, and the '*manor, rectory and parsonage*' of the St. Poll manor, at the north end of the parish, was added in 1602. 28 lesser purchases were made between 1517 and 1683, both from absentee landlords and from local yeomen. In only 3 cases does the seller apparently reappear in the estate records as a tenant, but this does not necessarily indicate a mass eviction of tenants, as it cannot be confirmed that any of the sellers had themselves occupied the property sold (Baker, 1992).

In the early 17th century, the Monson family's policy on all their estates was to enclose the land and evict the tenants, converting the ploughland, which required a large labour force to produce crops of relatively little value, to more profitable pasture, where the production of great quantities of costly wool required the employment of only a few shepherds. Sir John Monson was prosecuted and fined in 1637 for '*depopulation and conversion of houses and lands in Cherry Burton, Owersby and Broxholme*', but appears to have been undeterred (Everson *et al.*, 1991). It is due to this systematic depopulation that the parish of Owersby contains extensive areas of medieval earthworks, as the boundary banks and ditches of the earlier fields, the trackways leading to and from them, the streets and cottages of the derelict villages, and the characteristic 'ridge-and-furrow' earthworks caused by the medieval system of strip ploughing were simply grassed over, forming a residual fossil landscape under the expanse of pasture.

The Owersby parish earthworks were surveyed by the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments in 1980, and this information is reproduced in fig. 3. Apart from the general entry for the medieval settlement (SMR ref. 53437), the Sites and Monuments Record has eight individual records of medieval earthworks within the study area (SMR refs. 53451, 53473, 53475-80), of which the boundary earthwork 53479 runs north-north-west from a point some 150m from the development site, and trackway 53480 lies within an area of earthworks beginning at the north-eastern corner of the site and extending some 200m from it. The scale of medieval activity in the area is also represented in the finds corpus: 5 medieval coins – 2 silver sixpences and one silver penny of Queen Elizabeth I (SMR refs. 54423, 54440, 50177), a silver coin possibly issued by the Bishop of Durham (50186) and half a silver coin of King Henry III (50178) – are recorded, as well as 2 bronze buckles (50170 and 54433); 2 bronze horse fittings (50171 and 50186); 2 lead tokens (50185 and 50186), one possibly a pilgrim's badge, indicating that a local resident was prosperous enough to undertake a

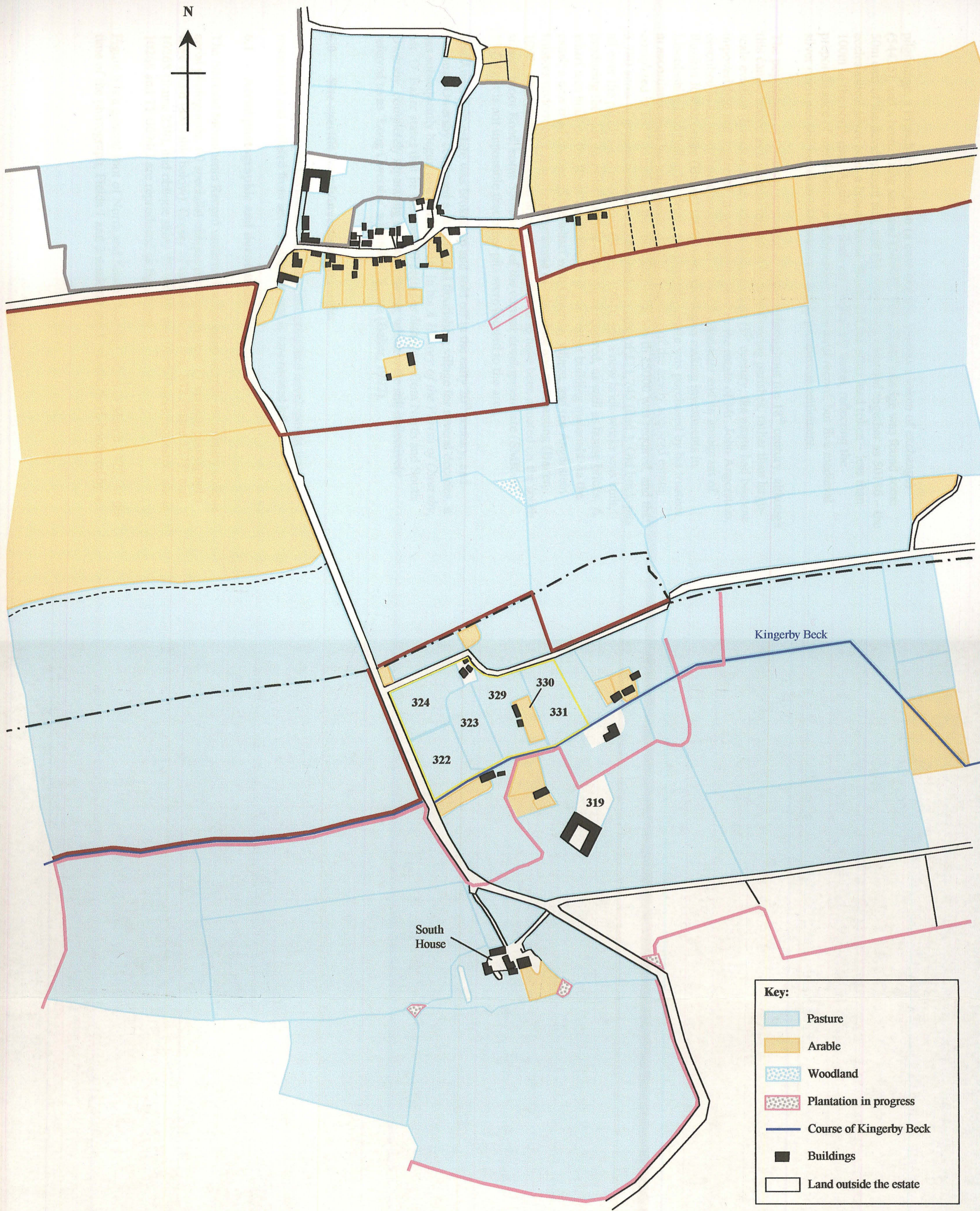


Figure 5: Extract from the 1855 map of the Angerstein estate, with the original colour coding reproduced as accurately as possible, at the original scale of 6 chains to the inch. Pasture land is shown in blue and arable in brown, but the significance of the coloured or broken lines is unknown. The approximate position of the development site is outlined in yellow: the reference numbers are those on the original map.

pilgrimage; a French bronze jeton (a coin-like disc used as a token of exchange) (54435), and a bronze ring and stud (54404). The pilgrim's badge was found some 50m east of the development site, and the three finds recorded together as 50186 – the ecclesiastical silver coin, a bronze horse fitting and the other lead token – less than 100m to the north-east. Again, the finds are exclusively metal, reflecting the preponderance of metal-detector information in the local record, but five medieval silver coins can still be taken to represent a highly prosperous settlement.

The population of Owersby continued to decline throughout the 18th century, although this can be traced as a gradual migration to neighbouring parishes, rather than large-scale eviction (Everson *et al.*, 1991). By the early 19th century, the estate had become impoverished and neglected. It was sold in 1833 to the estate of Mr. John Angerstein, described in an unattributed anecdote as a wealthy financier and an immigrant of Russian Jewish origin (Baker, 1994), who had begun making investments in Lincolnshire land before his death: the Owersby estate was purchased by his trustees in accordance with his will (Baker, 1992). A survey of the newly acquired estate, completed in 1834, concluded that building work worth £5000 was required, and that 3,780 acres of ground needed to be drained at a cost of £11,745 (*ibid.*). Old brick-pits all over the parish were re-opened (Baker, 1994), and a new brick-works was built, producing the vast quantities of field-drain pipes required, as well as house bricks. A wharf was built on the River Ancholme, to import other building materials via the canal; a new road connected the wharf with Owersby village, and the Angerstein trustees undertook a massive programme of rebuilding and re-tenancing (Baker, 1992). One of the re-opened brick-pits is believed to have been situated on the south side of Moor Road, some 550m north of the current development site (SMR ref. 53474): it is not impossible that other pits were located in the area.

The Angerstein estate was broken up and sold off in the early 20th century, and although Owersby continued as a large and flourishing village for several decades, it has subsequently begun to dwindle again. In his *A History of the Parish of Owersby*, Mr. D. Baker states that he has seen 40 cottages disappear from North and South Owersby, completely separating the two villages, which were still collectively referred to as 'Long Owersby' within his lifetime (Baker, 1992).

6.0 Site-specific search/investigation results

Information relating to the immediate area of the proposed development was researched and collated from several sources, and is summarised below.

6.1 Aerial photographic and documentary information

The National Monuments Record undertook a full cover search: no military oblique aerial photographs, 69 specialist oblique photographs and 17 vertical photographs were found (see table below). Copies of vertical shots nos. 832 (frame 3278) and 10268 (frame 258), and oblique shots TF 0693/3 and 0694/3 were requested: shots 10268 and TF 0694/3 are reproduced as figs. 6 and 7.

Figure 6 is a general shot of North and South Owersby, taken in March 1972. At the time of the photograph, Fields 1 and 2 made up one L-shaped field, bordered by a



Figure 6: Vertical aerial photograph at a scale of 1:7500, taken in March 1972. The development site is outlined in red: at this time, Fields 3, 4 and 5 were one large pasture. The small building in what is now Field 3 is a modern sheepfold. The extensive earthworks to north and east of the development site are being ploughed out, but are still visible as pale soil-marks in the ploughed fields; a similar set of soil-marks at the top of the picture represents the Manor Farm earthworks, while the undisturbed earthworks around Hall Farm are visible as lines of shadow.



Figure 7: Oblique aerial photograph taken in October 1980. The proposed development area is outlined in red: Fields 2, 4 and 5 and a small part of Field 1 are visible. At the time of photographing, there was no boundary between Fields 1 and 2, or between Fields 4 and 5. Much of the surrounding medieval landscape has been ploughed out, but the ridge-and-furrow and other earthworks surrounding Hall Farm, to the north of the site, are clearly visible.

hedge and ditch which is visible on the photograph as a black line, while Fields 3, 4 and 5 comprised one large pasture. At this scale (approximately 1:7500) the earthworks on the present development site are not clear, but the NNW-SSE running ridge-and-furrow in Field 1 can be made out, crossed by several perpendicular lines which probably represent recently laid field drains (similar lines can be seen in many of the surrounding fields). A linear feature parallel to what is now the boundary between Fields 3 and 4 can also be seen (this feature appears on the RCHM survey (fig. 3), but was not observed during the site visit), as can a linear feature near the eastern side of Field 5, which was observed as a single straight line during the site visit, but appears from this photograph to form the west side of a field outline visible as a white soil-mark in the ploughed field east of the development site.

To the north and east of the development site, and at the top of the picture to the south and west of the parish church, the deserted medieval village of Owersby can be seen as groups of white outlines: these are soil-marks, showing where earthworks are being ploughed out. Small house plots are visible near the church, while the fields close to the development area are larger, but still represent individual property, rather than the immense open fields, worked in communally allocated strips, of which a village would probably have three or four. Remnants of the village's open fields can be seen as surviving ridge-and-furrow to the north and north-west of Hall Farm: the presence of common village land between the two groups of individually owned plots indicates that the village in the late Middle Ages was an agglomeration of several independent economic units (Everson *et al.*, 1991) rather than a coherent whole.

Figure 7 is a more detailed oblique shot (oblique aerial photographs cannot be taken to scale) taken in October 1980: the south-west corner of the present development site, including part of Field 1 and the whole of Field 3, does not appear. Both linear earthworks observed in Field 5 during the site visit can clearly be seen, as can the banked ditch observed in Field 4. A very strongly marked linear feature between them, roughly on the boundary between Fields 4 and 5, may represent an earlier field boundary or simply a much-used path across the field, as the public footpath was not then fenced off – certainly no earthwork was seen here during the site visit.

The pattern of soil-marks in the arable fields to the north and east of the development site have become blurred in the intervening 8 years, showing that they were in the process of being ploughed out: no trace of them could be seen on the site visit, although they may never have been easy to see from ground level. The undisturbed ridge-and-furrow and other earthworks surrounding Hall Farm are clearly visible: the features which lie at right-angles to the direction of the sunlight, such as the linear feature crossing two fields to the north-west of the farm and the area of ridge-and-furrow directly north-east of the farm buildings, are particularly distinct.

Vertical aerial photographs:

NMR Library No.	Sortie No.	NGR Start	NGR Finish	Scale 1:	Date Taken
540	RAF/CPE/UK/1880	TF 054 932	TF 071 934	10 000	06/12/1946
832	RAF/CPE/UK/2563	TF 063 944	TF 056 943	10 000	28/03/1948
832	RAF/CPE/UK/2563	TF 054 932	TF 054 932	10 000	28/03/1948

2685	RAF/541/185	TF 070 934	TF 070 934	9960	19/10/1948
10268	OS/72024	TF 070 939	TF 057 939	7500	21/03/1972
10628	OS/72024	TF 054 927	TF 069 927	7500	21/03/1972

Oblique aerial photographs:

NGR Index No.	Acc. No.	Frame	NGR	Date Flown
TF 0692/16	NMR 1851	245	TF 062 928	09/10/1980
TF 0692/17	NMR 1851	220	TF 066 929	09/10/1980
TF 0692/18	NMR 1851	221	TF 065 929	09/10/1980
TF 0692/19	NMR 1851	222	TF 063 928	09/10/1980
TF 0692/20	NMR 1851	223	TF 061 927	09/10/1980
TF 0692/21	NMR 1851	224	TF 060 927	09/10/1980
TF 0692/23	INV 19411	08A	TF 068 929	30/03/1997
TF 0692/24	INV 19411	09A	TF 068 928	30/03/1997
TF 0693/1	NMR 1851	218	TF 069 930	09/10/1980
TF 0693/2	NMR 1851	219	TF 068 930	09/10/1980
TF 0693/3	NMR 1851	096	TF 064 938	09/10/1980
TF 0693/4	NMR 1851	097	TF 064 938	09/10/1980
TF 0693/5	NMR 1851	098	TF 064 938	09/10/1980
TF 0693/6	NMR 1851	099	TF 064 938	09/10/1980
TF 0694/1	NMR 1851	093	TF 061 944	09/10/1980
TF 0694/3	NMR 1851	102	TF 064 941	09/10/1980
TF 0694/4	NMR 1851	103	TF 064 942	09/10/1980
TF 0694/5	NMR 1851	104	TF 063 943	09/10/1980
TF 0694/6	NMR 1851	105	TF 062 944	09/10/1980
TF 0694/7	NMR 1851	106	TF 062 944	09/10/1980
TF 0694/8	NMR 1851	107	TF 061 944	09/10/1980
TF 0694/9	NMR 1851	108	TF 060 944	09/10/1980
TF 0694/10	NMR 1851	094	TF 061 944	09/10/1980
TF 0694/11	NMR 1851	095	TF 061 944	09/10/1980
TF 0694/12	NMR 1851	100	TF 064 941	09/10/1980
TF 0694/13	NMR 1851	101	TF 064 941	09/10/1980
TF 0792/20	NMR 1851	216	TF 070 929	09/10/1980
TF 0792/21	NMR 1851	217	TF 070 929	09/10/1980

The earliest available map of this area held by the Lindsey Archives Office is the survey of the Monson Estate drawn up in 1805 (fig. 4). This map is now in poor condition, and is drawn to such a small scale that individual buildings, although shown on the map, could not be reproduced in this figure. However, four of the six polyfocal village centres referred to by Everson can be identified from the pattern of streets and the tight groups of small house plots: the area of the current development site itself forms the most southerly nucleus, while the present-day North Owersby village is marked out as the second by the row of small house plots along Moor Road; the third nucleus lies immediately to the north of the second, around the church (the church is not marked as such, but the shape of the churchyard is recognisable), and the remnants of the most northerly visible village nucleus are formed by a curved dead-end road to the west of the field named Urns Close, in the area still occupied by the

earthworks of the deserted medieval village. The pattern of fields to the north and east of the present development site corresponds in part with the soil-marks visible in the 1972 aerial photograph (fig. 6).

Every field on the original map is named, and many of the names are of historical significance to the parish. Almost half the fields have names ending in 'Close', implying that the farmland has been enclosed relatively recently (two fields to the north-east of the village are labelled 'New Close'). The name of West Field Close may recall the medieval open-field system, in which a village divided three or four communal fields, frequently named after their positions, into individual strips, while Wetfurrow Close may also refer to an earlier land use, and the proximity of 'Sheep Field' and two fields named 'Sheep Field Close' implies the enclosure of communal grazing land. On the west side of the parish, the fields are divided by long straight drains, indicating recently reclaimed land in the base of the Ancholme valley. Almost all the fields in the north side of this area have the element 'car' in their names – 'carr' or 'car' refers to marshland – while the 'ings' element in 'Ings Meadow' indicates that it is water-meadow, flooded during the winter and cut for hay in summer.

Since Owersby parish was already fully enclosed at the start of the 19th century, no official tithe award or enclosure maps were drawn up. However, the Angerstein estate, then comprising most of the parish, was privately surveyed in 1855 (fig. 5). No key is incorporated into the map or the accompanying documents, and so most of the elaborate system of colour-coding is now inexplicable, but fields are coloured according to their use as arable or pasture land. South Owersby House is marked here as 'South House'; the large U-shaped building 319 appears in the estate list as 'Rickyard'. The approximate area of the development site comprises fields 322, 323, 324, 329, 330 and 331: a group of three small buildings occupies the position of the present Tyddyn Uchaf, with two more on the eastern edge of field 329. Fields 322 and 323 were leased to David Clark, 324 to Richard Clark, and the others to David Broughton; all were pasture apart from field 330, which lay approximately within the west side of the field in which the pond excavation is now planned.

6.2 The County Sites and Monuments Record

The records held by the Lincolnshire SMR which may be relevant to the proposed development scheme are as follows.

SMR No.	Description	NGR ref.
50168	Metal-detector find: 3 Romano-British bronze brooches and a piece of furniture fitting.	TF 0588 9404
50169	Metal-detector find: medieval bronze buckle	TF 0608 9409
50170	Metal-detector find: post-medieval bronze strap-end	TF 0566 9427
50171	Metal-detector find: medieval bronze horse fitting	TF 0622 9412
50172	Metal-detector find: Romano-British bronze needle	TF 0620 9415
50173	Metal-detector find: medieval bronze buckle	TF 0622 9426
50174	Metal-detector find: Roman bronze coin, undatable	TF 0611 9417
50175	Metal-detector find: Roman coin of Emperor Constantine I	TF 0654 9438

50176	Metal-detector find: Roman bronze coin, undatable	TF 0664 9434
50177	Metal-detector find: silver penny of Queen Elizabeth I, dated AD 1560-61	TF 0656 9419
50178	Metal-detector find: half a silver coin of King Henry III, AD 1216-1272	TF 0664 9422
50179	Metal-detector find: silver coin of King Charles I, minted AD 1639-1640	TF 0651 9420
50181	Metal-detector find: bronze medieval seal matrix	TF 0713 9441
50184	Metal-detector find: Romano-British bronze dolphin brooch	TF 0659 9453
50185	Metal-detector find: medieval lead pilgrim's badge	TF 0645 9390
50186	Metal-detector finds: probable medieval bronze horse fitting, medieval lead token and a silver coin from an ecclesiastical mint, probably the Bishop of Durham.	TF 0640 9400
50351	Early Neolithic to Late Bronze Age flint knife	TF 062 941
53437	Settlement of Owersby, incorporating a range of medieval earthworks and cropmarks, and scatters of Saxo-Norman and early medieval pottery. A fragment of a 7 th -8 th century AD cruciform brooch and a strap-end of the same date, found during a metal-detecting rally, are also recorded under this reference number.	TF 0600 9540
53448	St. Martin's Church: rebuilt in 1762-63 re-using the medieval masonry.	TF 0618 9473
53451	Rectangular mound, possibly the site of a windmill	TF 0617 9469
53454	Neolithic polished stone axe	TF 0640 9440
53455	Scatter of Romano-British artefacts: sherds of grey ware, 1 sherd of mortarium and a bronze belt fitting.	TF 0615 9480
53456	Worked stone blocks found to W of St. Martin's Church, possibly remains of the earlier building.	TF 0620 9480
53458	Find of an Anglo-Saxon cruciform brooch, AD 500-550, and a rim sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery.	TF 0589 9492
53459	Romano-British artefact scatter: pottery, roof tile and a 4 th century AD coin of the Emperor Constantine.	TF 0589 9492
53460	Undated artefact scatter including a flint 'arrow straightener', part of a bronze ring, and bronze scrap.	TF 0589 9492
53461	Find of two Early Neolithic to Late Bronze Age flint scrapers	TF 0610 9475
53462	Undated iron arrowhead	TF 0610 9475
53468	Site of a post-medieval windmill	TF 0540 9375
53469	Finds of iron slag, recorded as evidence of Roman ironworking	TF 0662 9305
53473	Medieval field system, comprising field boundary earthworks, ridge-and-furrow earthworks and a trackway; a green lane runs along the field boundary.	TF 0730 9330
53474	Possible site of post-medieval brick kiln	TF 0630 9450
53475	Remains of a medieval field system	TF 0524 9410
53476	Late medieval ridge-and-furrow earthworks	TF 0696 9311
53477	Possible medieval earthwork stack stand	TF 0692 9311

53479	Linear earthwork, possible medieval boundary	TF 0617 9413
53480	Earthwork and cropmark trackway, possibly medieval boundary	TF 0748 9297
53492	Scatter of medieval pottery in the vicinity of 5 known medieval wells	TF 0595 9497
53493	Scatter of medieval pottery and glass fragments found during fieldwalking	TF 0540 9480
53494	Scatter of post-medieval pottery, glass and clay pipe fragments found during fieldwalking	TF 0540 9480
54362	Metal-detector find: undated bronze coin weight	TF 064 931
54402	Metal-detector find: early 1 st century AD bronze coin	TF 064 932
54403	Metal-detector find: lead/pewter strap fitting, possibly 17 th century AD	TF 064 932
54404	Metal-detector finds: medieval bronze ring and a medieval bronze stud or terminal	TF 064 932
54423	Metal-detector find: undatable Roman bronze coin	TF 074 953
54425	Metal-detector find: silver twopenny piece of King Charles I, AD 1603-1649	TF 055 933
54427	Metal-detector finds: three Roman coins, two dating to the 3 rd century AD and one bronze follis of the 2 nd -3 rd century.	TF 065 948
54432	Metal-detector finds: three Roman coins	TF 067 949
54433	Metal-detector find: medieval/Tudor bronze buckle	TF 067 949
54435	Metal-detector find: silver short-cross penny of King Henry III, AD 1216-1272	TF 044 933
54436	Metal-detector find: post-medieval perforated bronze disc	TF 062 930
54440	Metal-detector find: silver sixpenny piece of Queen Elizabeth I, AD 1564	TF 063 933

The SMR information is discussed as part of the general archaeological and historical background, section 4.0.

6.3 Site visit (Fig. 2)

A site visit was made by the author on 7/1/05, for the purpose of recording the present situation and appearance of the proposed development site. This included a colour slide photographic record, extracts from which are reproduced in Appendix 1. Weather conditions at the time were unfavourable, with gales and heavy showers.

The proposed development area is divided into 5 fields of varying sizes, all of which are pasture currently being grazed by sheep. Field 1 occupies the north-west corner of the site: its NE corner contains a small, relatively recently planted copse of broad-leaved trees, including sycamore and silver birch. The remnants of ridge-and-furrow earthworks can be seen on the westerly side of the field, running NNW-SSE (plate 1): four ridges are visible, bordered by a more pronounced ridge – probably representing the field boundary – which appears on the RCHM earthworks survey (fig. 3). No definable earthworks are visible on the eastern side of the field or in the much smaller Field 2, although a change in ground level between Fields 1 and 2 may represent a shallow platform.

Fields 1 and 2 are separated by a modern post-and-rail fence, and there is no indication of an earlier boundary, nor can one be seen in the aerial photographs. Both fields are bordered on the south side by a ditch and a mature hawthorn hedge, which has previously been laid and has grown out, occasionally incorporating other fully grown or old deciduous trees. A low linear mound with a heavy growth of nettles, running E-W along the ditch side in field 1, probably represents the spoil from a recent recutting of this ditch – stinging nettles are colonisers of recently disturbed land, and often outline demolished buildings or modern earthworks.

Field 3 slopes gently towards Kingerby Beck, which runs in a narrow course between very steep banks along the southern edge of the development site. There is no trace of a boundary on the north bank pre-dating the modern fence, but a row of mature hawthorn trees is situated on the slope of the south bank. The field contains a sheep-fold built of modern brick near its south side (appears on the aerial photograph from 1972, fig. 6). The only clearly defined earthwork visible in this field is the continuation of the linear ridge noted in Field 1: no ridge-and-furrow could be discerned adjacent to it. A low raised mound or platform was observed in the south-east corner of the field, although the RCHM survey (fig. 3) shows a short linear earthwork here.

Field 4 also slopes down to the Kingerby Beck, with a sharply pronounced dip in its SW corner: directly to the north of this lies another possible platform (fig. 2). In spite of the slope, the ground is wet enough to grow soft rush in places. The field contains a very distinct linear feature: a furrow or ditch with a ridge either side of it, running N-S for most of the length of the field, and marked on the RCHM survey (fig. 3). This feature may be a hollow-way – a track or unpaved street, hollowed out by regular use – but the presence of a double bank may indicate a boundary ditch surrounding a small, privately owned field or garth, similar to those appearing as soil-marks in fig. 6 (plate 2). There are no other linear features on this alignment, but on the east side of the N-S ditch is a ditched feature running E-W (fig. 2), which is exactly aligned with the boundary between Fields 1 and 2. The SE quadrant of the field, as formed by the two linear features, contains numerous raised platforms: earthworks of this sort generally mark the positions of houses.

Fields 4 and 5 are divided by a public footpath, fenced on both sides, with a mature, but not old, hedge (hawthorn, never laid, and young silver birch) on its east side, and a newly planted hedge to the west: there are no traces of a hedge-bank or any other boundary earthwork. The vegetation in Field 5 is slightly different from the others: Fields 1-4 are under closely cropped grass with very few other plants, while the grass in Field 5 is longer and coarser, forming relatively high tussocks, and contains a high percentage of thistles and stinging nettles. This difference is unlikely to be attributable to land use, as the sheep have equally free access to all five fields. The field, which slopes N-S, is bordered on the south side by the Kingerby Beck, on the north side by a hedge and ditch resembling that between Fields 1 and 2, and by a hedge only – hawthorn, once laid and now grown out, interspersed with mature deciduous trees – to the east: the southern end of this hedge stands on a low, indistinct bank. The neighbouring field beyond the eastern boundary hedge has been ploughed and sown with winter cereal, and no earthworks or soil-marks indicating ploughed-out earthworks could be seen.

Near the east side of Field 5 is a large, shallow depression, with a small mound on its western edge (plate 3), but no other earthworks could be discerned in the southern half of the field. Two linear features, both running N-S, are visible in the northern half (figs. 2 and 3); both seem to have a large, flat-topped mound or platform to either side. The linear feature on the western side of the field (plate 4) is particularly clear, and can faintly be seen continuing through the garden of Tyddyn Uchaf house; neither earthwork could be traced more than 40m from the northern edge of Field 5, although both the aerial photograph (fig. 7) and the RCHM survey (fig. 2) show the eastern one continuing the full length of the field. This feature might be a field boundary dating from the time of the Angerstein estate (fig. 5), while the shorter western feature seems more likely to be part of one of the zigzag boundaries shown on the 1805 map of the Monson estate (fig. 4) and may represent the original phase of enclosure.

The neighbouring field across the Kingerby Beck to the south of Field 5 is under pasture, but no earthworks could be seen in it; nor could any be seen in the turfed garden or parkland opposite Fields 3 and 4.

7.0 Assessment of archaeological potential

In the light of the information collated, a more precise estimate of the archaeological potential of the proposed development area is possible. Since the site lies roughly 1km from the known course of a Roman road, and the area of Owersby was clearly occupied during the Roman period, the possibility of Romano-British remains cannot entirely be ruled out, but the spread of finds recorded by the SMR indicates that the focus of activity lay well to the north of the present development site, on the higher ground above the Kingerby Beck.

The principal archaeological significance of the development site lies in its position within the extensive medieval landscape formed by a group of deserted villages. A large amount of this fossil landscape has already been destroyed by recent ploughing: the difference between the visible earthworks and cropmarks pictured in figs. 6 and 7 show how much damage had occurred in the intervening eight years, and many of the earthworks recorded by the RCHM in their 1981 survey no longer exist (Everson *et al.*, 1991). The proposed development site lies within one of the known village nuclei, and represents the last portion of that settlement which has not already been ploughed out. It must be borne in mind, however, that the 1855 estate map indicates that one part of the development area had in fact been ploughed up, and that relatively sizable buildings had been constructed adjacent to it.

8.0 Impact on archaeological resources

The excavation of a pond will inevitably obliterate any medieval earthworks surviving in that area, as such features are invariably shallow, and in the cases of agricultural earthworks are actually part of the topsoil. Consequently, not only the excavation of the main pond, but the shallow scrape required to form the surrounding wetland area (shown in grey on fig. 2) will severely damage or destroy any archaeological features within that area. Similarly, the construction of the all-weather surface will destroy any

earthworks beneath it, even though the groundworks associated with its construction are not intended to go deeper than the topsoil (Mr. R. Alder, *pers. comm.*).

9.0 Conclusions

In the positions in which they are laid out in the current development proposal, the construction of both the wildlife pond and the all-weather surface appear likely to damage the last surviving area of South Owersby's medieval earthworks. The all-weather surface overlies at least two linear earthworks, possibly field boundaries, recorded by the Royal Commission on Historic Monuments, and impinges on an area which could contain further earthworks such as house platforms. The surviving earthworks in Field 5 are less distinct, but the excavation of a large pond is unlikely to leave the archaeological record unscathed.

10.0 Mitigation

The immediate mitigation possibilities appear to be to reposition the planned development areas so that archaeological remains are not affected, or to involve an informed programme of recording of the affected areas in the construction process. It may be possible to identify the area of the site which was ploughed up in the 19th century, and in which surface earthworks will consequently already be absent: if so, the all-weather surface, whose construction requires only topsoil removal, might be relocated there, although an archaeological presence will probably still be required during groundworks. The excavation of the deeper central part of the pond, which has a proposed maximum depth of 2.0m below local ground level and covers an area of 30m x 20m, will also destroy features lying below plough depth, and will probably require a programme of archaeological work in any case, possibly in the form of a geophysical survey and/or some archaeological excavation within the pond footprint.

11.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeology would like to thank Robert Alder Architect Ltd. for this commission. Thanks are also due to the staff of the National Monuments Record, the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Records Office and the Lindsey Archives Office.

12.0 References

Baker, D., 1992, *A History of the Parish of Owersby*. Privately printed: on file at the Lincolnshire SMR.

Baker, D., 1994, *A History of Owersby and Osgodby*. Privately printed: on file at the Lincolnshire SMR.

British Geological Survey, 1982, *Brigg; England and Wales, Sheet 87, Solid and Drift Edition*. 1:50,000 Series. Keyworth, Nottingham.

Cameron, K., 1998, *A Dictionary of Lincolnshire Place-Names*. The English Place-Name Society, Nottingham.

Everson, P.L., Taylor, C.C. and Dunn, C.J., 1991, *Change and Continuity: Rural Settlement in North-West Lincolnshire*. HMSO, London.

Field, J., 1972, *English Field Names: A Dictionary*. David and Charles, Newton Abbot.

Foster, C. W. and Longley, T, 1924, *The Lincolnshire Domesday and the Lindsey Survey*. The Lincoln Record Society.

I.F.A. 1999, *Standards and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment*. Reading, Institute of Field Archaeologists.

Knowles, D. and Hadcock, R. N., 1971, *Medieval Religious Houses of England and Wales*. Longman Group Ltd.

Map of the Parish of Owersby... the property of John Angerstein Esquire, Situate in the County of Lincoln, 1855. Lindsey Archives Office ref. no. Misc. Don. 659.

Margary, I. D., 1967, *Roman Roads in Britain*. John Baker, London.

Marsden, A., 2001, *Roman Coins Found in Britain*. Greenlight Publishing, Essex.

Morgan P. and Thorne C., (eds.), 1986, *Domesday Book vol. 31: Lincolnshire*. Phillimore & Co. Ltd, Chichester.

Platts, G., 1985, *Land and People in Medieval Lincolnshire, History of Lincolnshire IV*. History of Lincolnshire Committee, Lincoln.

Survey Book containing a Plan and Valuation of the Parish of Owersby in the County of Lincoln, belonging to Right Honourable John Lord Monson, 1805. Lindsey Archives Office ref. no. MON 8/4.

Van de Noort, R. and Ellis, S. (eds.), 1998, *Wetland Heritage of the Ancholme and Lower Trent Valleys: An Archaeological Survey*. Humber Wetlands Project, University of Hull.

Plate 1 (right): View of Field 1, looking SW from the NE corner of the field. The ridge marking the beginning of the area of ridge-and-furrow is visible running from left to right a little more than half-way up the picture, and the ridge-and-furrow itself is more faintly visible beyond it.



Plate 2 (left): View of the banked field boundary or hollow-way in Field 4, looking S down the length of the feature from the N field edge. The feature is visible as a shallow furrow with a slight swell either side of it, slightly left of centre.

Plate 3 (right): The mound on the edge of the depression in the SE quadrant of Field 5, looking ENE. The sheep in the centre of the picture looking directly at the camera is standing on the mound: the depression occupies most of the area of the field visible behind the mound.



Plate 4 (left): View up the length of the linear feature on the W side of Field 5, looking N from the most southerly point at which the feature was visible. The feature starts in the foreground: the small white rectangle against the fence (the author's camera box) marks its E side at the point where it leaves the field.