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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF  
OF A DEVELOPMENT AT  
LAND NORTH OF  
WEST STREET,  
BOURNE,  
LINCOLNSHIRE**

Work Undertaken For  
Yelcon Homes Ltd

January 1995

Heritage Lincolnshire  
The Old School,  
Cameron Street,  
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Charity No: 1001463. Company No: 2554738 (England)

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## 1. SUMMARY

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches on land north of West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire.*

*Development at West Street affects an area containing archaeological remains from the Romano-British period (c. 50-400 AD), when Bourne was a settlement alongside the Roman road, King Street. Near to the site is Bourne Castle, built in the 11th century. Pottery and other artefacts of medieval date (1066-1500 AD) have been found at various locations close to the development site.*

*Two sets of different natural deposits were recorded. These indicate that a geological boundary passes through the site. A filled-in field boundary ditch of recent date was also observed. No archaeological deposits were encountered though pottery of 13th-16th century date was recovered near the south end of the site. These finds may indicate that occupation of that period was restricted to the West Street frontage. A single sherd of Romano-British pottery was also retrieved.*

## 2. INTRODUCTION

### 2.1 Background

During May 1993 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of foundation trenches for a housing development on land to the north of West Street, Bourne, Lincolnshire. Approval for the proposed development was sought through the submission of planning application number SK.93/0204/12/8. Permission was granted subject to a standard negative condition for archaeological monitoring. The work was commissioned by Yelcon Homes Ltd

and was carried out by Heritage Lincolnshire.

### 2.2 Topography and Geology

Bourne lies 26km south of Sleaford and 15km northeast of Stamford, in South Kesteven District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). The town is at the base of a gentle eastern slope with the fens to the east. At its western fringes, Bourne town reaches a height of c. 20m above sea level, declining to approximately 6m OD at its southeastern limit.

Development is centred on Kesteven Way, to the north of West Street (National Grid Reference TF091202). Located at a height of 16m OD, the investigation site is situated approximately 500m to the west of Bourne town centre as defined by the Town Hall (Fig. 2). Local soils are of the Aswarby Association, gleyic brown calcareous earths, and Curdrige Association, typical argillic gley soils. These two soil types are developed on interbedded Jurassic limestone and clays (Oxford Clay), and Jurassic sand and sandstone (Kellaways Beds) respectively (Hodge *et al* 1984, 99; 153-4). This solid geology is itself sequential, the Oxford Clay overlying the Kellaways Beds.

### 2.3 Archaeological Setting

The present investigation site lies in an area of dense archaeological activity with evidence from the Romano-British and medieval periods being most significant.

During the Romano-British period, Bourne was a small but important settlement alongside the Roman road, King Street. Aligned approximately north to south through the modern town, King Street passes about 400m to the east of the present investigation area. At various points along the course of the road



artefacts and sites of Roman date have been discovered. About 600m southeast of the present investigation area, and close to King Street, Romano-British pottery and building stone (SK12.11) has been found.

Romano-British pottery kilns have been revealed at several locations in the modern town. Approximately 1200m to the east of the development site is the Car Dyke, a Roman waterway. This watercourse connected the River Witham near Lincoln with the River Nene east of Peterborough (Whitwell 1970, 57).

Evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity at Bourne is fairly scarce. Most of the finds from this period have been recovered from northeast of the town. However, no actual Anglo-Saxon settlement has, to date, been located.

During the medieval period (1066 - 1500 A.D.), Bourne grew into a substantial settlement, centred predominantly around the church of SS. Peter and Paul. Mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, the church was once part of an Augustinian Abbey complex (SK12.77) founded in 1138 (Pevsner and Harris 1989, 172). A union of hermit monks following the rule of St Augustine, the Augustinian Friars had arrived in this country about 1100 AD. In 1536 the friary was dissolved, at which time the church reverted to parochial use.

Bourne Castle, the earthworks of which still survive, is located west of the church and approximately 400m southeast of the area under investigation. At one time the castle comprised a single motte (defensive mound), possibly surmounted by a stone tower, with two enclosures or baileys containing further buildings and a possible stone gatehouse that have since been destroyed (Cathcart-King 1980). The site and remaining earthworks of the castle are

now a Scheduled Ancient Monument, County Monument No. 95 (English Heritage 1992, 14).

Bourne was also a centre for pottery production during the medieval and early post-medieval periods (SK12.03). Excavations 1km to the east of the town centre revealed kilns dating from the 14th to the 16th century.

Medieval pottery has been recovered from 300m south of the development site (SK12.24). A medieval carved stone head (SK12.07) was found approximately 300m east of the investigation area. Large quantities of medieval and post-medieval pottery (SK12.23) have been found near to Bourne Castle, 400m southeast of the development site.

### 3. AIMS

The aim of the watching brief was to locate and record archaeological deposits, where present, and to determine their date, function and origin.

### 4. METHODS

Foundation trenches were excavated by machine to an average depth of 1.3m. The sides of the trenches were then cleaned by hand. Each archaeological deposit or feature revealed was allocated a unique reference number with an individual written description. Natural geological deposits were also recorded. A photographic record was compiled and selected sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. See Figure 3 for locations of recorded sections.



## 5. RESULTS

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

In building plots 42-45, towards the northeastern part of the development area, were deposits of grey clay (4, 5, 9, 10, 12) interleaved with irregular bands and wedges of gravel (6, 7, 8, 11, 13). These are considered to be natural geological deposits (Fig. 4).

At the western side of the development area, on building plots 24-27, a sequence of interbedded sands and clays (contexts 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20) was recorded (Fig. 5). These are also considered to be of natural origin.

Cutting one of the clay deposits (4) in Plot 45 was a shallow concave feature (3) filled with sand (2). This is considered to be a natural feature (Fig. 4).

### Phase 2 Modern deposits

At the extreme west side of the development area, in Plot 27, a mixed layer was observed in the westernmost section (Fig. 5). These disturbed deposits are considered to be recently dumped materials.

Covering the entire site was a dark brown topsoil (1) that constituted the present ground surface. Brick footings and foundations of recently removed brick

buildings were seen widely distributed across the site but were not recorded.

Pottery fragments of Roman, medieval and post-medieval date were recovered as unstratified finds from Plot 3 and adjacent areas at the south end of the development site.

## 6. DISCUSSION

Two distinctly different geological deposits (phase 1) were observed at the development site. To the west were regular banded layers of sands and clays. These are identifiable as Kellaways Sands. On the east side of the site was an extensive layer of clay with bands and wedges of gravel. This material is recognised as Kellaways Clay. This differentiation in the natural materials evident at the west and east sides of the site indicates that a geological boundary must cross the area. Reference to the Ordnance Survey (1967) geological map of the Bourne area confirms this assessment and further establishes that the sands overlie the clay. A natural sand lens in the surface of the clay at the east side of the site may be an isolated remainder of the geological sequence.

An area of disturbed deposits (phase 2) at the western edge of the site is adjacent to a hedge. Consequently, these are considered to represent the location of a backfilled field boundary ditch. Remains of recently removed brick buildings were observed across the area. Topsoil provided the modern ground surface.

All of the medieval and later pottery sherds were found near the south end of the site. Consequently, although recovered as disturbed, unstratified finds, their distribution pattern may imply that contemporary activity occurred close to

West Street, with minimal extension northwards.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS

Archaeological monitoring at West Street, Bourne revealed a sequence of natural to modern deposits. A geological boundary is traversed by the development area, though no archaeological deposits were encountered.

Pottery of 13th-16th century date was recovered from the south end of the site only. This perhaps suggests that medieval and post-medieval activity occurred close to the West Street frontage, but was restricted in extent. A single sherd of Romano-British pottery was also retrieved.

## 8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heritage Lincolnshire wish to thank D R J Rapley and M Reed of Yelcon Homes Ltd for funding the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. Steve Haynes coordinated the work and Dave Start edited this report. Ruth Waller, the South Kesteven District Community Archaeologist, provided information from the relevant parish files.

## 9. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes  
Site Assistant: David Brown  
Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner  
Post-excavation analysis: Gary Taylor

## 10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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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

Numbers prefixed by 'SK' are the archaeological sites and finds reference numbers used by the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist.



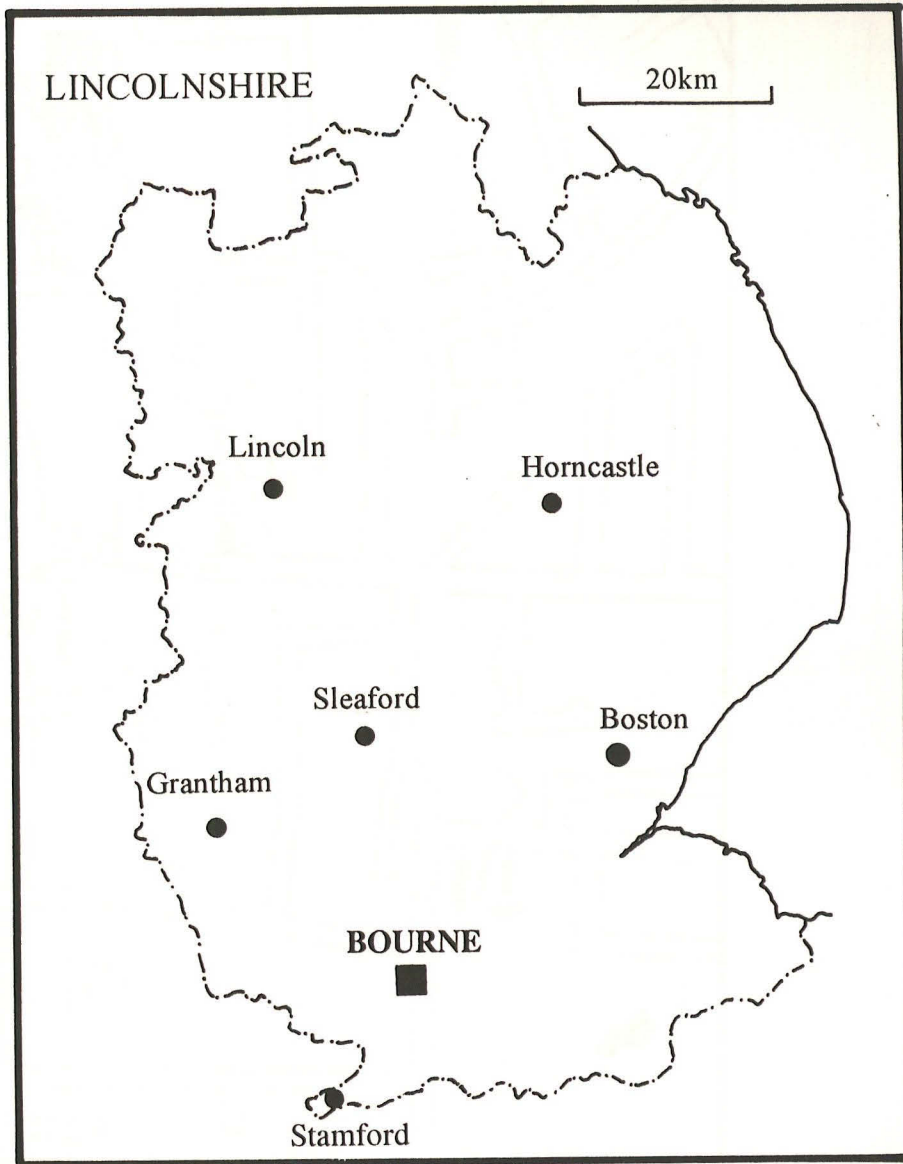
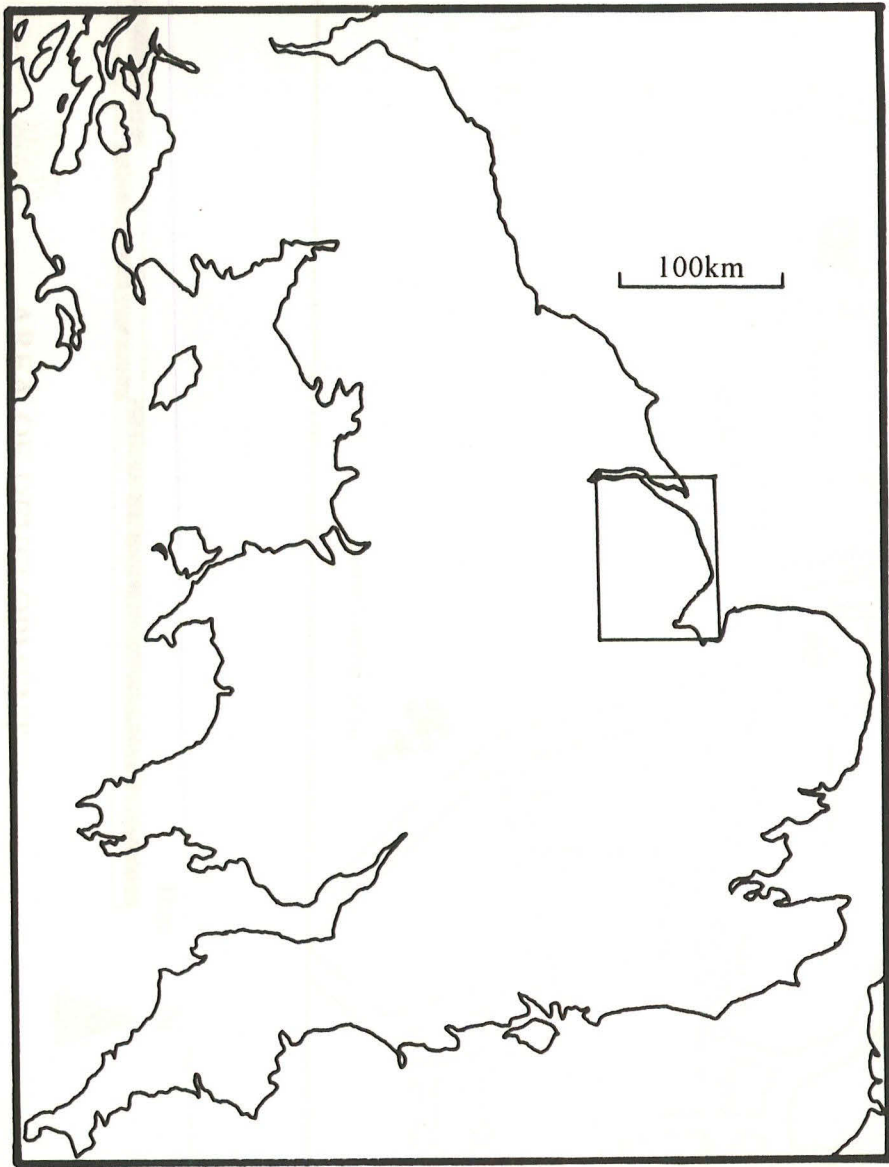
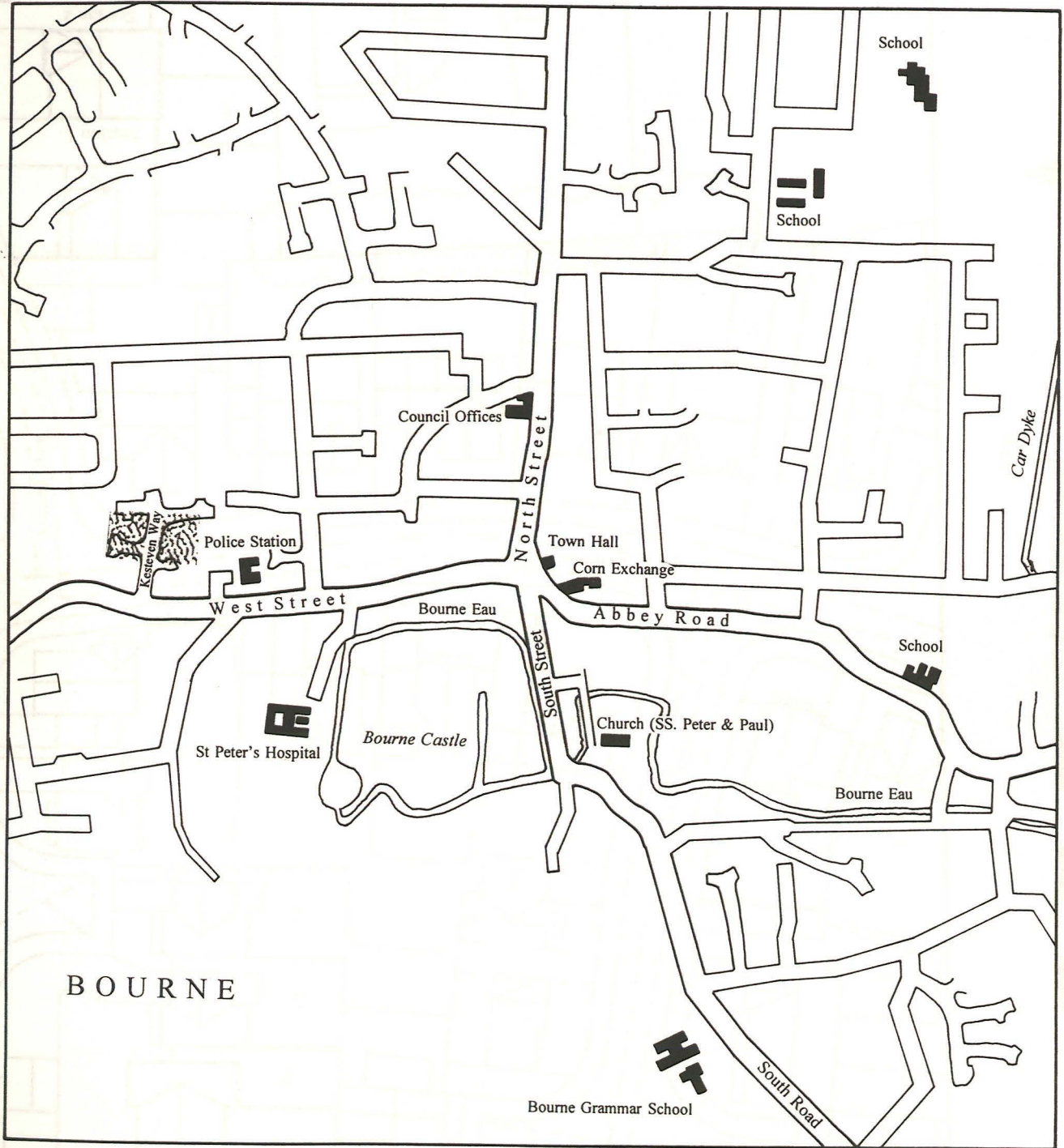


Fig. 1 General Location Plan

Fig. 3 Development Area,  
showing Location of Recorded Sections

Fig. 2 Site Location Plan



AREA OF DEVELOPMENT



Fig. 3 Development Area,  
showing Location of Recorded Sections

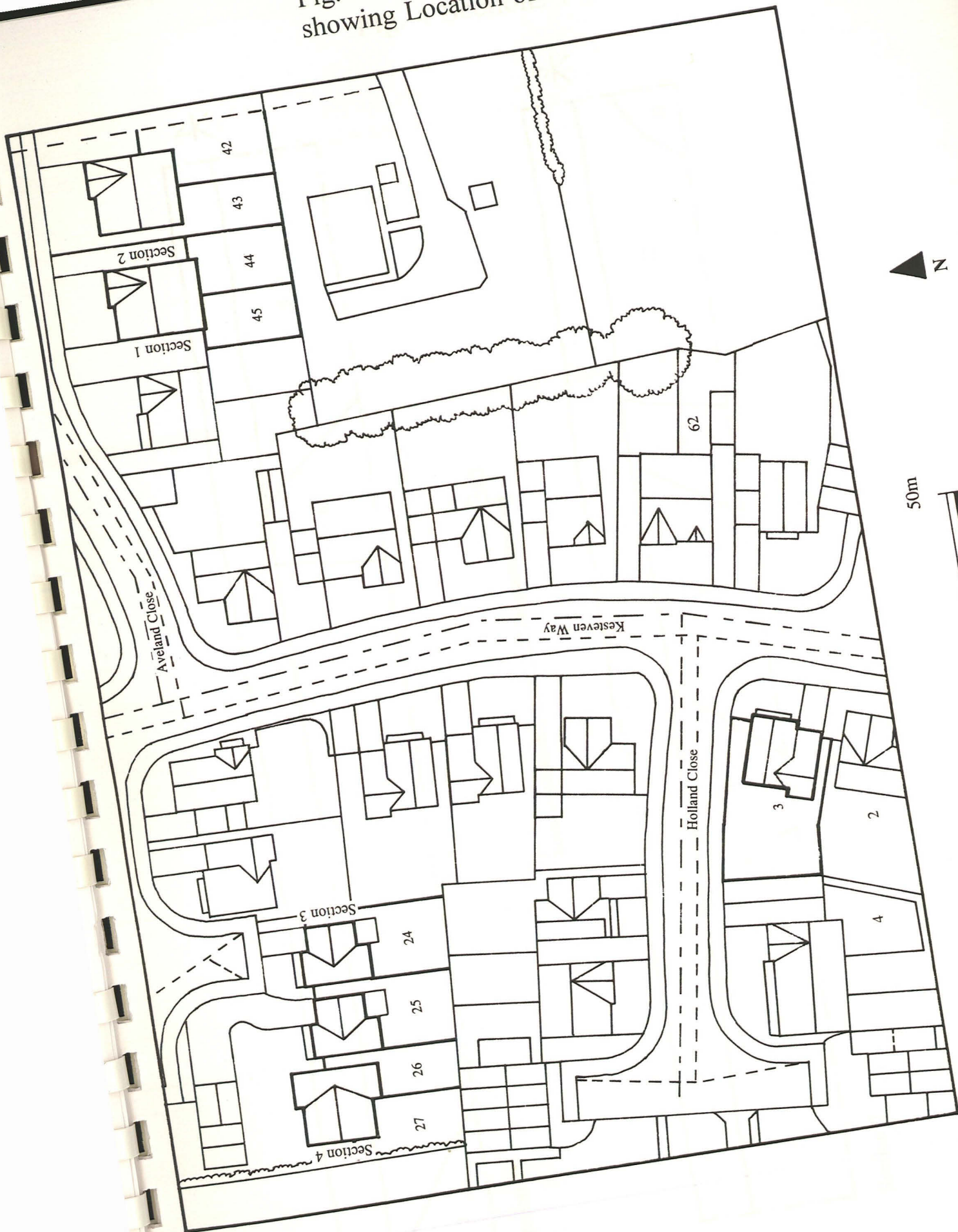
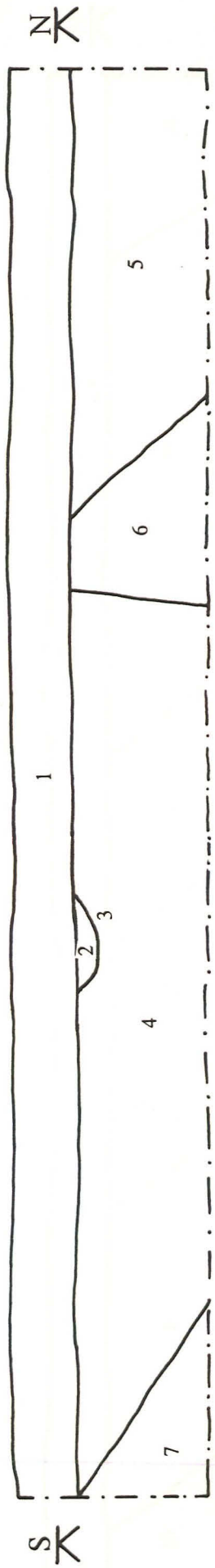
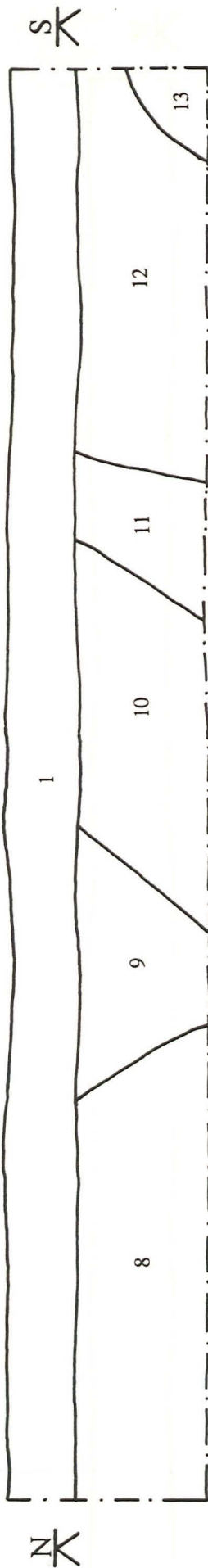


Fig. 4 Sections 1 and 2



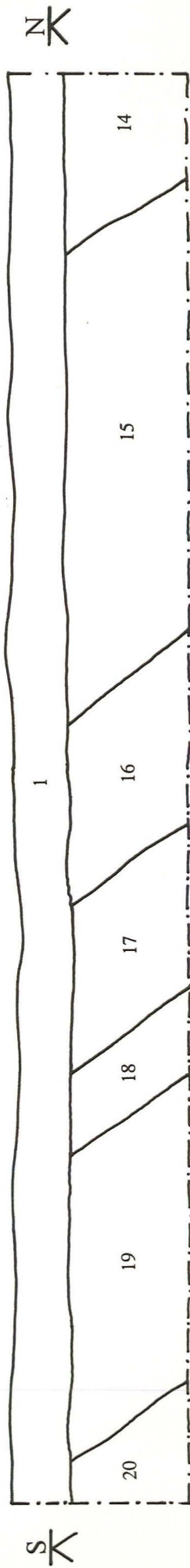
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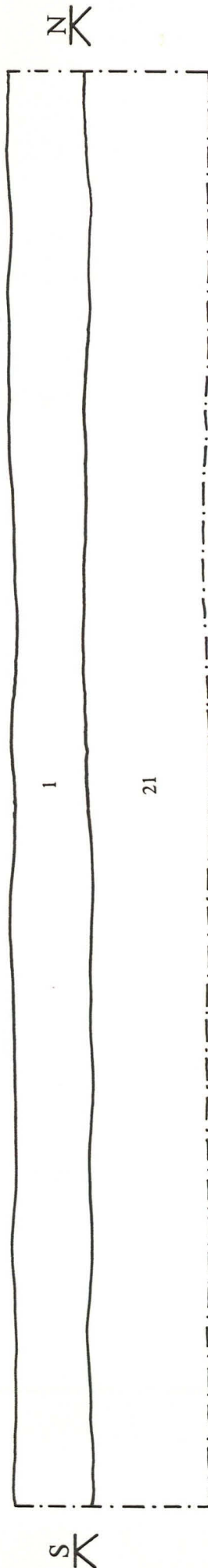
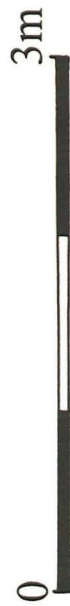
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Fig. 5 Sections 3 and 4



Section 3



Section 4

PLATE 1

General Site View



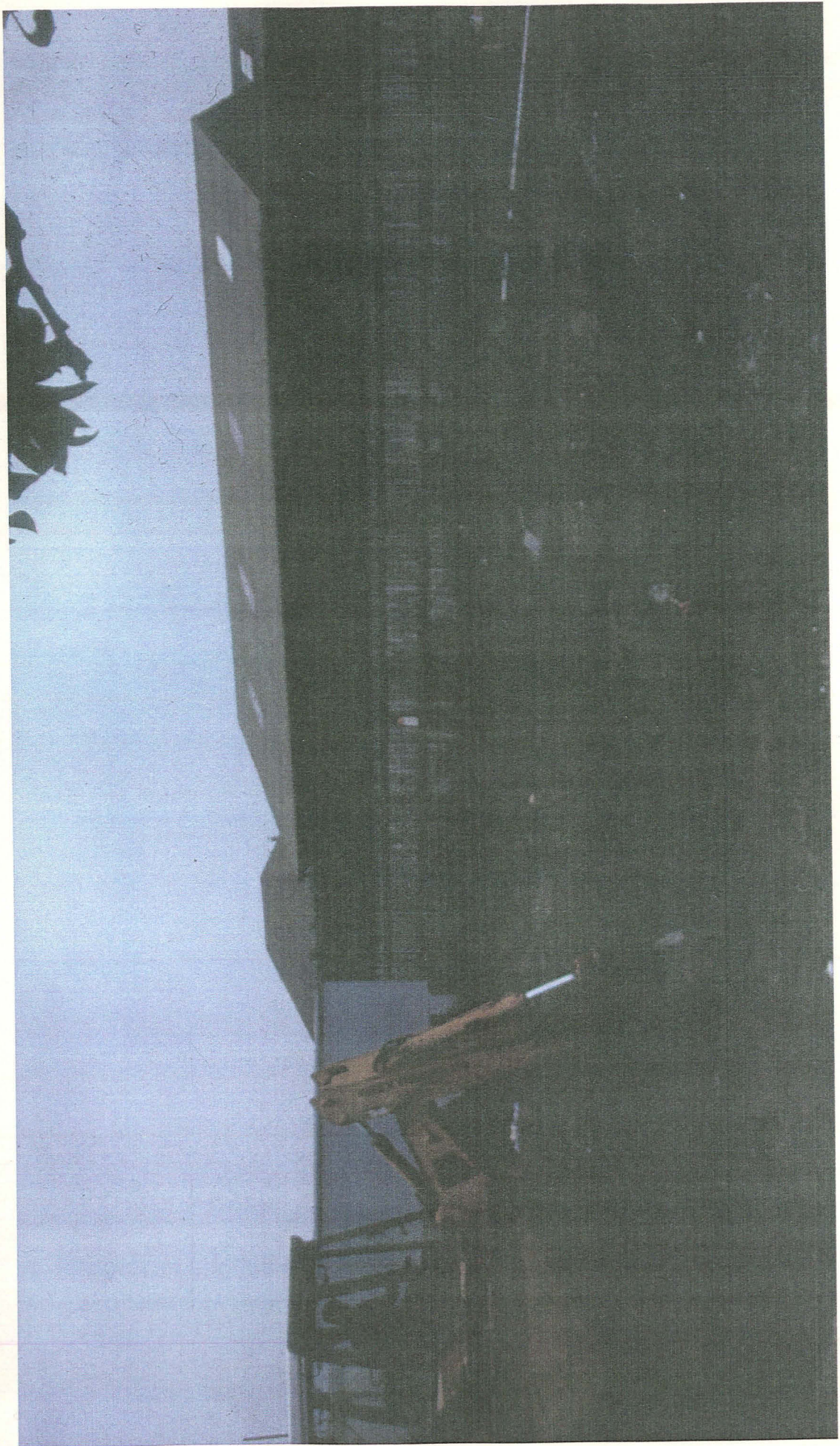
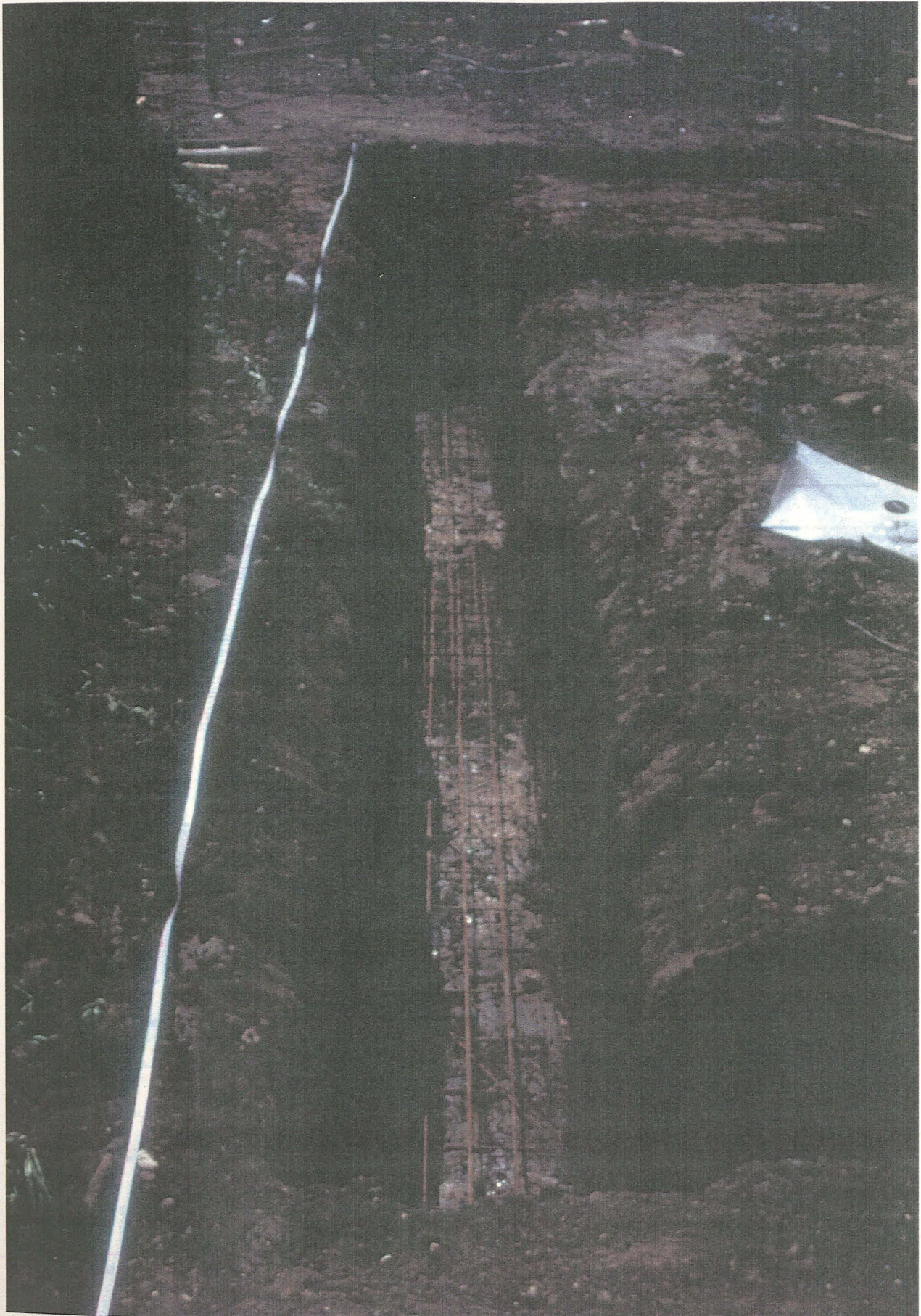




PLATE 2

Detail of Foundation Trenches







## APPENDIX 1

### Context Summary

Context No.	Area	Description	Interpretation
1	All	Dark brown sandy silt	Topsoil
2	Plot 45	Brown sand	Fill of 3, natural sand lens
3	Plot 45	Cut, 0.6m wide, 0.15m deep	Natural feature
4	Plots 45	Grey clay	Natural
5	Plot 45	Grey clay	Natural
6	Plot 45	Gravel	Natural
7	Plot 45	Gravel	Natural
8	Plot 44	Gravel	Natural
9	Plot 44	Grey clay	Natural
10	Plot 44	Grey clay	Natural
11	Plot 44	Gravel	Natural
12	Plot 44	Grey clay	Natural
13	Plot 44	Gravel	Natural
14	Plots 24, 25, 26	Grey clay	Natural
15	Plots 24, 25, 26	Red-brown sand	Natural
16	Plots 24, 25, 26	Grey clay	Natural
17	Plots 24, 25, 26	Red-brown sand	Natural
18	Plots 24, 25, 26	Grey clay	Natural
19	Plots 24, 25, 26	Red-brown sand	Natural
20	Plots 24, 25, 26	Grey clay	Natural
21	Plot 27	Mixed deposits	Fill of field boundary ditch



## APPENDIX 2

The Finds  
by Hilary Healey

Context	Area	Description	Date
unstratified	Plots 1 and 2	1 glazed rimsherd of Bourne ware	15th/16th century
		1 clay pipe stem (narrow bore)	19th century
unstratified	Plot 3	1 rimsherd of Bourne ware (unglazed)	13th/14th century
		2 body sherds of Bourne ware (unglazed)	15th/16th century
		1 fragment of tile (?pantile)	
		1 piece of plant pot	19th/20th century
unstratified	Plot 4	1 sherd of Romano-British orange coarseware	1st-4th century

## APPENDIX 3

### The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 21 Context records
- 1 Photographic record
- 4 Scale drawings
- 1 Stratigraphic matrix
- 1 Bag of finds

All primary records are currently kept at:

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

City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: 60.94