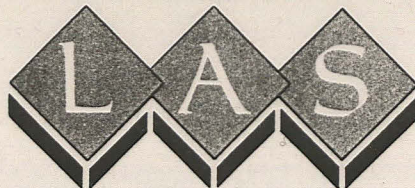


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OLD BOLINGBROKE
Onion Factory site Main Rd
(Accn no. 183.94)

TF 35081 64929

Archaeological Evaluation

for

D. L. S. (Holdings) Ltd

February 1995

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OLD BOLINGBROKE

Onion Factory Site Main Rd

Archaeological Evaluation

Introduction

The following evaluation has been prepared on instruction of Mark A. Damms Architectural Technician on behalf of D.L.S (Holdings) Ltd, Europa House Sheepbridge Lane, Mansfield, Nottingham, NG18 5DX. at the above sites.

The purpose of the evaluation was to

- provide supporting information for an outline Planning Application
- establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains
- determine the quality and extent of any remains
- determine extent of modern disturbance to the site
- determine the level of further archaeological recording required prior to development

Archaeological Background

The village of Bolingbroke is mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 when it was a substantial settlement with a market, church and 3 mills. The proposed development site lies just east of Bolingbroke Castle which was built in c.AD1220 and is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The site lies east of the church and castle but potentially close enough to these medieval areas to lie within the Saxon and medieval curtilage of the settlement. The development site bounds the modern street frontages and it was thought that remains of earlier buildings might survive along these frontages. The western boundary is formed by a stream used to power a water mill on the opposite bank. Although prehistoric and Roman remains have been found in the parish but on present available information it was considered unlikely that substantial remains of these periods will be present on the sites.

Site Description

The proposed development site lies at the junction of Main Rd and Moat Lane, the site of a former onion bottling factory. It covers an area c.2030 square metres (0.2ha).

A detailed assessment of the medieval development of the village has not been undertaken. Much of the documentation for the village is held at the offices of the Duchy of Lancaster in London or at the Public Records Office. The Lincolnshire Archives Office holds a photocopy of the Enclosure Award dating to c.1800. This shows that the development site lies within plot 107 where buildings are shown in the NW corner (Fig. 2) These lie outside the present limit of the development, on the west side of the stream which must have been diverted since 1800.

Since the 19th century the buildings on this plot have been used for a variety of purposes. Until demolition 4 years ago many of the standing buildings were

part of the Castle Brewery which had been constructed in the 19th century. Brookside Cottage to the north was originally the Duke of York pub, part of the brewery complex. The Maltings, a two-storey building of 14 bays length, had stood along the back of the plot, adjacent to the stream. Barley was stored and processed in this building.

Pl. 1 shows a view of the site taken c. 1974. The structure in the centre of the picture was one of the former stable blocks. (Horses were kept at the Brewery for transport).

In the 1950s and 1960s the buildings were reused for processing frozen turkeys and in the 1970s the large brewery building behind Brookside Cottage was converted to a factory for bottling pickled onions. Former buildings on the site were demolished in 1990, except for the open shed adjacent to Main Rd which were demolished in 1992. Much of the site is covered in concrete and there are several manhole covers visible indicating the presence of services. There is an outline proposal for the construction of five dwellings.

EXCAVATION

A large part of the site is covered in concrete and evaluation by fieldwalking and geophysical survey was not possible. The presence of former building foundations and floors and live services restricted choice of trench locations.

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located on the edge of the brewery block. which survives as a large slightly raised concrete platform surrounded by brick foundations. The purpose of the trench was to determine the depth of ground disturbance caused by its construction (Pl. 2).

The trench cut through the brick footings of the south wall and extended across a small section of the concrete floor. Beneath the concrete was a layer of crushed limestone chips which formed a bedding for the concrete. the topsoil had been removed prior to laying of the floor.

A zone of grey brown clay subsoil, c.0.20m thick, which contained brick rubble, was visible beneath the bedding and overlay the natural sandy clay (Pl. 3). It was thought that the natural deposits may be derived from the watercourse to the west of the site. Without clearance of a larger area it is difficult to tell whether all archaeological remains have been removed but it is considered that the area beneath the brewery has reduced potential because of previous soil clearance.

Trench 2

A shallow trench 4.30m long and 0.30m deep was dug to the south of Trench 1 which cut across the brick footings of the demolished maltings. The trench also crossed the line of a plastic pipe at its east end. The whole of the trench appeared to cross disturbed ground and was abandoned (Pl. 4).

Trenches 3 and 4

In an attempt to find an area of the site which had not been disturbed by building activity a trench was dug along the southern boundary. This was split into two trenches because a lead water pipe crossed the trench.

The ground surface over Trench 3 comprised a layer of concrete, c. 0.20m thick (Pl. 8). To the west, over Trench 4, the ground surface gave way to a mixed layer of brick and chalk rubble. (Pls. 8 and 9). The remains of an earlier yard surface were visible in the side of Trench 4 (Pl. 12). A layer of grey-brown subsoil containing brick rubble was observed in both trenches c. 0.30m deep. This was very similar to the layer observed in Trench 1. Beneath was a paler grey-brown clay.

At the east end of Trench 3 was a modern, backfilled pipe-trench 0.30m wide which cut through the subsoil but was sealed by the concrete (Pl. 11).

To the west of the pipe trench was a disturbed area where black patches were mixed with the grey clay (Pls. 10 and 11). It smelt as if it had a high organic content. This area produced 16 sherds of Bolingbroke type pottery dating to a period between the 16-18th centuries. The majority were large pieces which were not worn or abraded. The same feature was observed in Trench 4 (Pl. 12), although the soil was not so black, where a further 15 sherds of pottery were found including a piece which had been distorted during firing. The presence of a waster might mean that the feature was a waster pit, where products from a kiln firing had been dumped.

It is difficult to interpret the shape of the feature in such a narrow trench. It extended beyond the western limit of Trench 4 but was at its deepest at the junction between the 2 trenches. (Pl. 12 shows Trench 4 excavated down to the natural clay (1.20m below ground level) on the west (right) side of the trench. At the same depth on the east side the dark deposit was still present. It was not possible to investigate these trenches fully because of strong fumes which were thought to be from contamination by diesel. No section drawings could be made for reasons of safety.

Trench 5

There was one area of the site which was marked as being without a concrete surface. A trench was dug across this area but it was apparent that the whole area was disturbed and contained brick rubble, plastic sheeting and domestic refuse (Pl. 13). Natural deposits of sandy silt were reached at a depth of 1.20m. It was again assumed that they were derived from the adjacent watercourse. The trench was abandoned.

THE FINDS

Pottery was found in Trenches 3 and 4 only. This was examined by Jane Young of the City of Lincoln Archaeology Unit.

All the pottery found in the trenches was locally produced, probably at one of the Bolingbroke kilns. One of the vessels from Trench 4, represented by 3

sherds, was distorted during firing and is a 'waster'. This is an indication of a kiln in the vicinity. A large proportion of the sherds, especially those from Trench 4 were large sherds with no signs of wear. There is a possibility that a water dump from a kiln might be close by.

The closest known site is that just south east of the development site at TF 352648. A 17th century kiln was found west of the castle at TF3480 6501 and a further kiln and 2 waster pits have been recorded to the north of the Rectory, 0.5km east of the development site at TF 356 648. Little detailed analysis of the kiln products has taken place and it is not currently possible to date the pottery more closely.

Trench 3

1 jug rim sherd
1 jug/ jar handle
2 pancheon rim sherds
1 base from bowl or pancheon
11 body sherds from jars or jugs

TOTAL 16 pottery sherds dating to the 16th-18th centuries representing 16 vessels

Trench 4

1 bowl rim
1 base large jar/jug
5 base sherds from jars/jugs, representing 3 different vessels
8 body sherds from jars or jugs, representing 7 different vessels

TOTAL 15 pottery sherds all dating to the early 16th-17th centuries, representing 12 vessels

1 17th century ceramic drainpipe
3 sherds of roof tile.

DISCUSSION

Excavations on the site were limited by extensive areas of disturbance from former buildings.

The results from Trench 1 suggest that the north end of the site was probably cleared of topsoil prior to construction of the brewery and any archaeological deposits will have been truncated.

The natural silt deposits in Trenches 2 and 5 along the west boundary suggest the close proximity of a water course. Although the present stream appears to post-date 1800 the original watercourse ran along the boundary to the castle only a little further west. Both trenches cut across disturbed ground which made assessment of the archaeological potential impossible but the probability of there being archaeological remains is likely to be reduced the closer one gets to the western boundary of the site.

It is unfortunate that the only area which showed potential for archaeological remains (Trenches 3 and 4) could not be fully investigated because of diesel contamination in the soil. There was a major pottery industry at Bolingbroke in during the 15th-18th centuries and the presence of large pottery sherds, including a waster may be significant, especially in the absence of similar finds in the other three trenches.

Naomi Field
February 15th 1995

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Whitwell, J. B. and Wilson C. M., 1966, ' Archaeological Notes 1965', *Lincs. History and Archaeology* 1, 49

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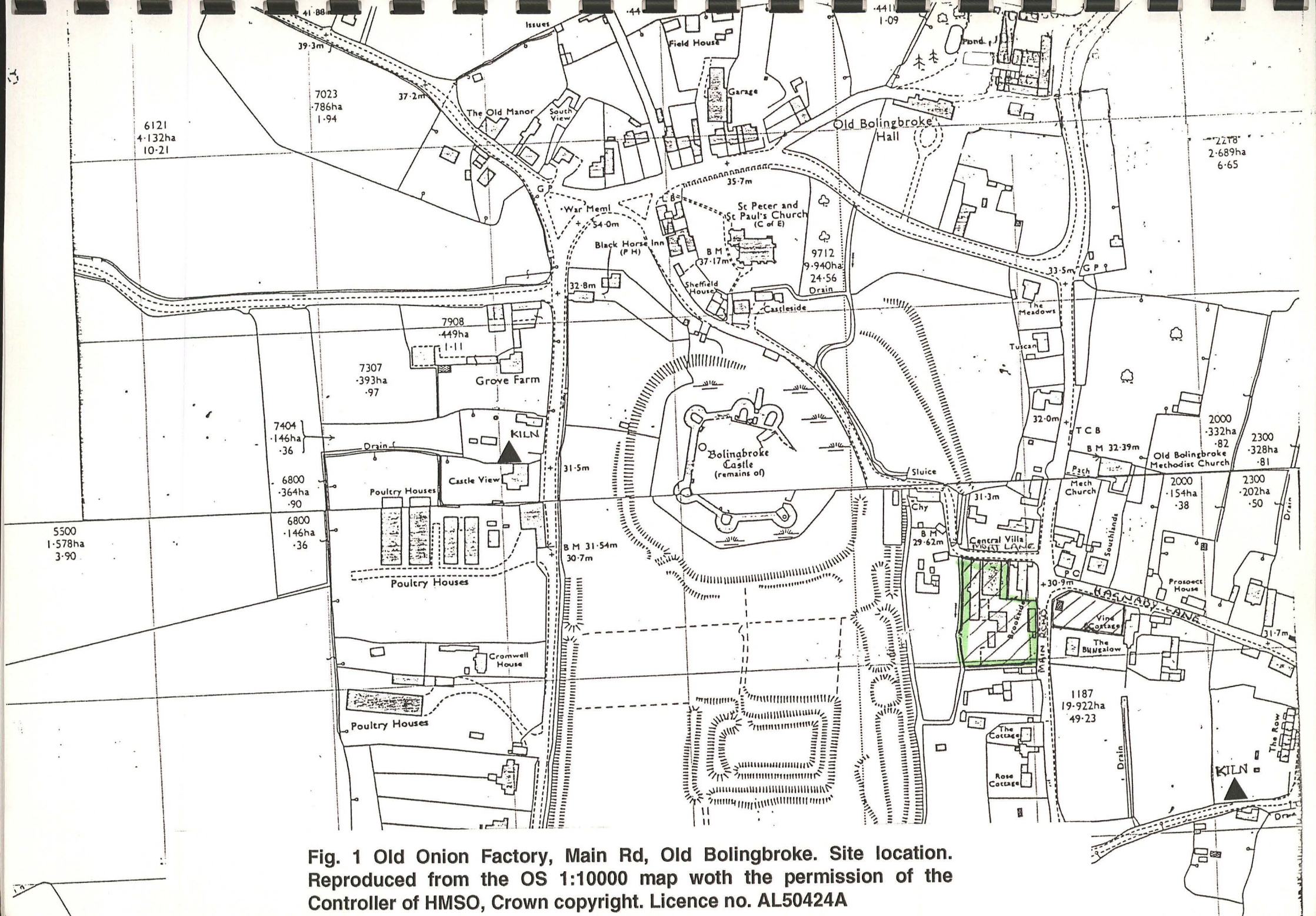


Fig. 1 Old Onion Factory, Main Rd, Old Bolingbroke. Site location. Reproduced from the OS 1:10000 map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, Crown copyright. Licence no. AL50424A

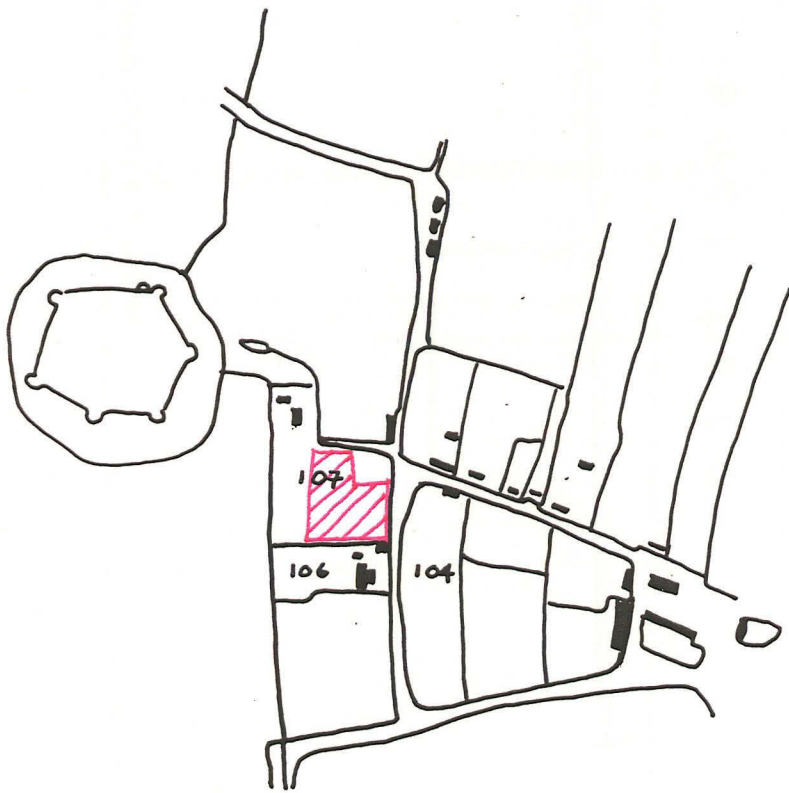


Fig. 2 Tracing of part of the Old Bolingbroke Enclosure Award of 1800 showing no buildings on Plot 107 (LAO ref. 851/14B/1+2).

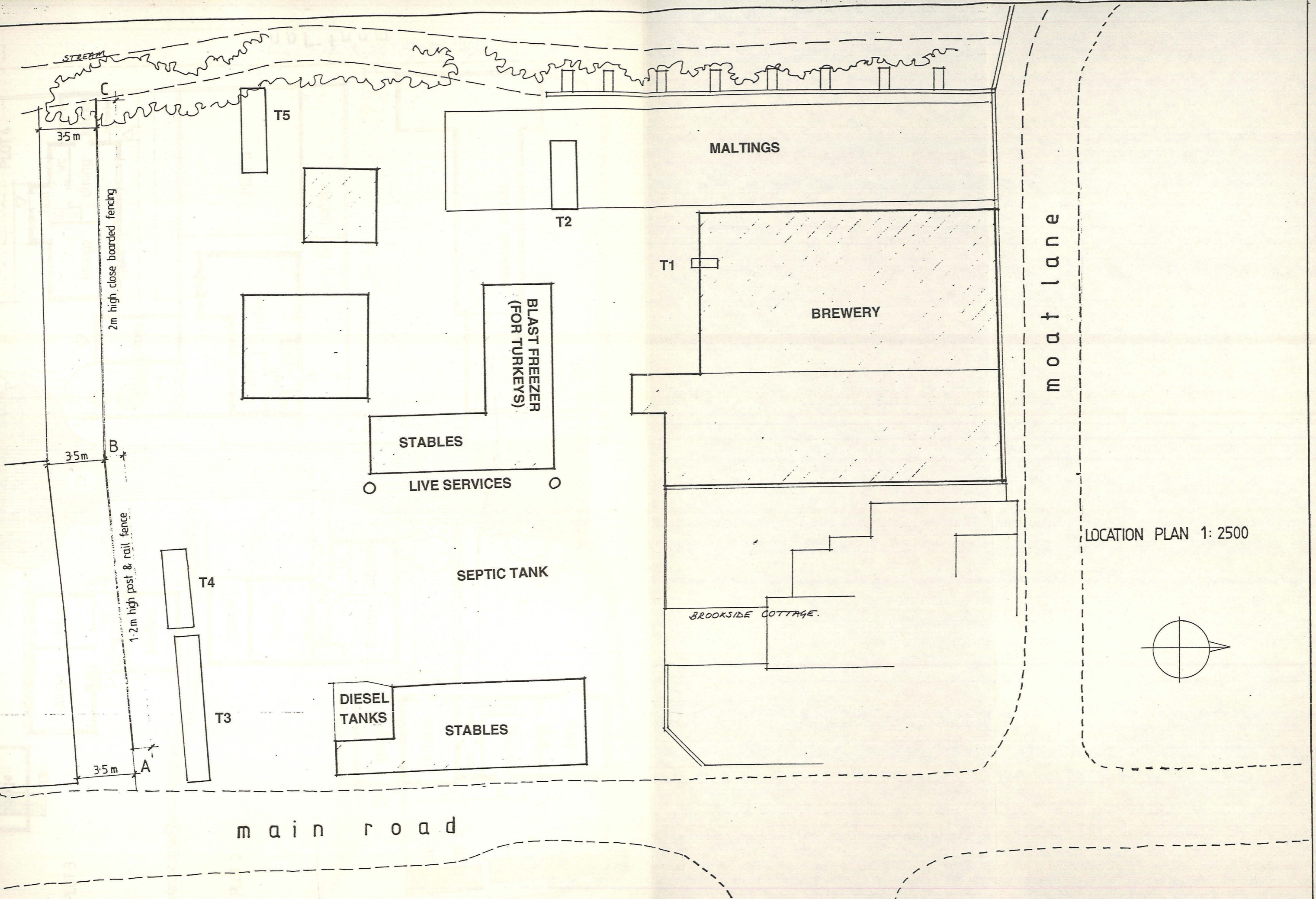


Fig. 3 Trench locations in relation to old buildings on site.

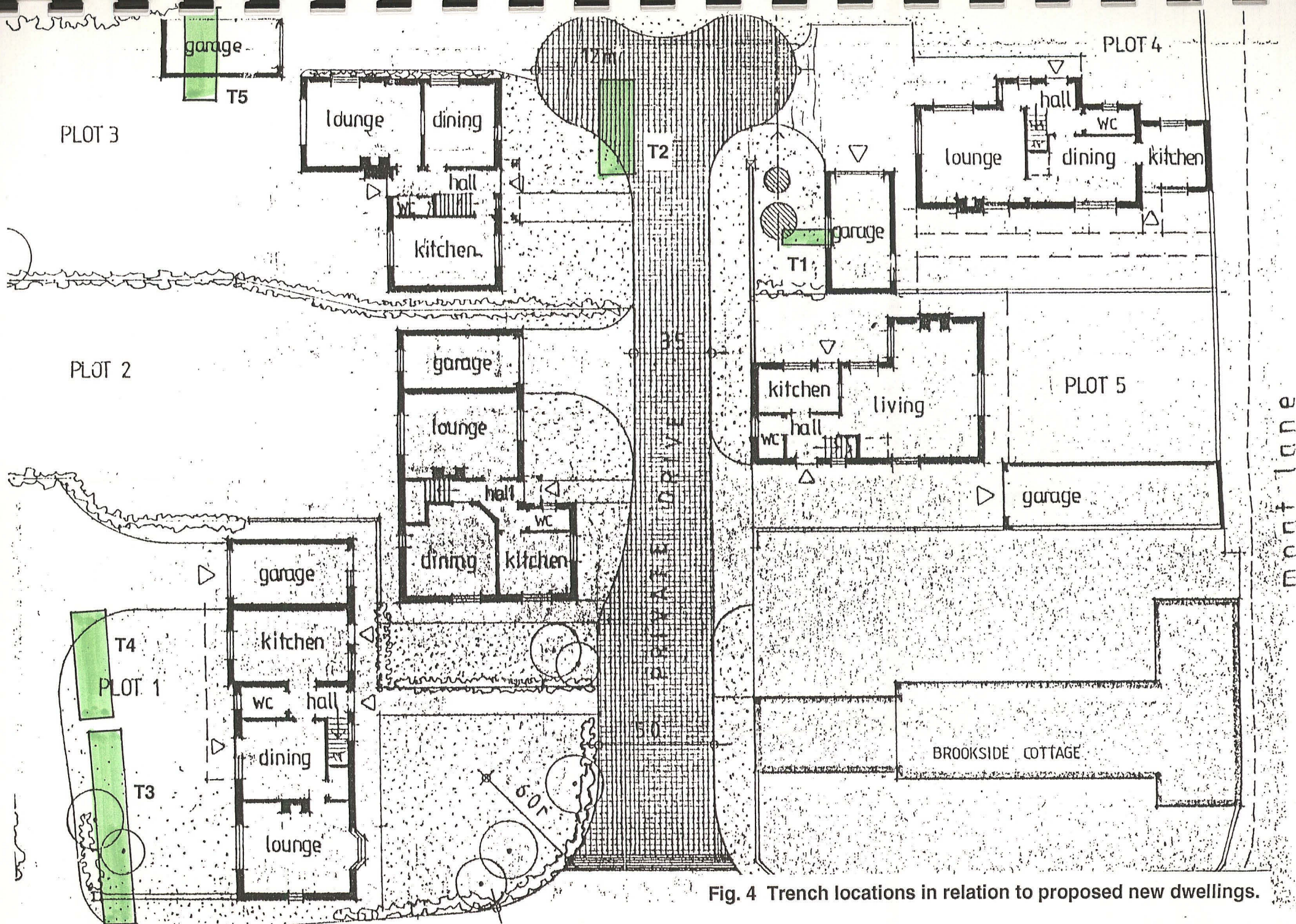
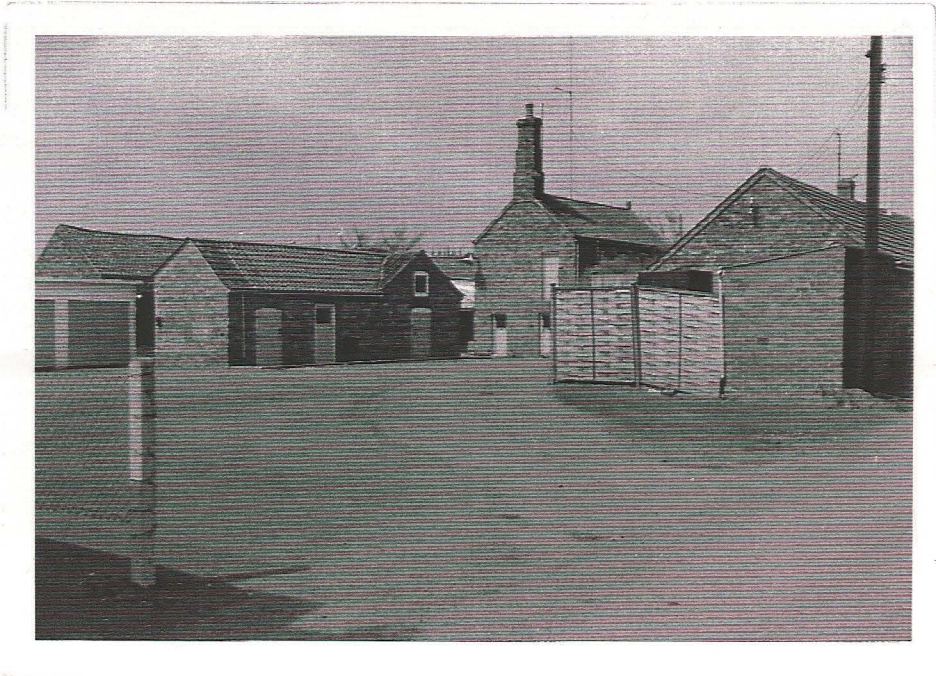


Fig. 4 Trench locations in relation to proposed new dwellings.



Pl. 1 Old Onion Factory, Main Road. View of site c.1974 looking N from SE entrance showing stable block, centre. Diesel tank behind fencing.



Pl. 2 General view of site looking N

Pl. 3 View of NW corner of site looking N





Pl. 4 General view of site looking S, excavation of Trench 2

Pl. 5 Trench 1, view N





Pl. 6 Trench 1, close up showing silty clay beneath make-up for concrete floor.



Pl. 7 Trench 2, view E. modern plastic pipe cutting through disturbed ground, site of former maltings block



Pl. 8 Trenches 3 and 4. Surface clearance, view W



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Pl. 10 Trench 3. Dark band of soil to west, possible feature/ditch running diagonally across trench.

Pl. 11 Trench 3. View N, showing backfilled modern pipe trench with dark soil to W





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Pl. 13 Trench 5. View E, disturbed ground containing brick rubble, plastic sheeting and domestic waste.



