

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
AT
CHURCH FARM,
MARKBY,
LINCOLNSHIRE
(MCF95)

Work Undertaken For
W. H. R. Johnson Ltd

March 1995



A P S
ARCHAEOLOGICAL
PROJECT
SERVICES

LINCOLN COUNTY
24 APRIL 95
CITY AND COUNTY
MUSEUM

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1. SUMMARY

An evaluation was undertaken on land at Church Farm, Markby, Lincolnshire. This was in response to a proposal, by W.H.R. Johnson Ltd, to redevelop the site.

Adjacent to the site are remains of the Augustinian Priory of Markby, founded about 1160 and dissolved in 1534. The site of the priory is recognised as nationally important through designation as a scheduled ancient monument. Just south of the proposed development area is the 16th century parish church. Remains of the priory are incorporated in this building, which is the only thatched church in Lincolnshire.

It was anticipated that, by virtue of these sites and findspots, the area could fall within a zone of medieval religious activity. The development could affect related deposits and, in consequence, two trenches were excavated to test for the presence and survival of archaeological remains.

Natural glacial deposits were the lowest levels encountered across the area. Subsoil was only identified on the south side of the site, but may have been ploughed away to the north. Support for this suggestion is provided by the only archaeological feature found on the site, a possible ploughmark at the north side of the area. However, no date is known for this activity.

On the basis of surviving land boundaries, it is possible that the Church Farm compound was part of the priory complex. However, if so, it seems probable that the area served an insubstantial use, such as gardens or orchards.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services were commissioned by W.H.R. Johnson Ltd, to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land at Church Farm, Markby, Lincolnshire, in order to determine the archaeological implications of proposed development at the site, as detailed in planning application N116/2149/94. The archaeological evaluation was carried out in accordance with a brief set by the Archaeology Section, Lincolnshire County Council.

2.2 Topography and Geology

Markby is situated 18km southeast of Louth and 25km northeast of Horncastle, in East Lindsey District, Lincolnshire (Fig. 1). The village is located to the east of the Lincolnshire Wolds and c. 5km west of the present coastline.

The proposed development site is located at a height of c. 6m OD, just north of the parish church of St. Peter, on the A1111 Sutton Road, in the core of Markby village. Centred on National Grid Reference TF48707894, the proposed development site is located immediately north of the existing farm buildings and covers approximately 430 square metres (Fig. 2).

Local soils are the Holderness Association loamy typical stagnogley soils developed on chalky till and glaciofluvial drift (Hodge *et al.* 1984, 214). Immediately to the north are Wallasea 2 Association pelo-alluvial gley soils on reclaimed marine alluvium (*ibid.*, 338).

2.3 Archaeological Setting

Scandinavian influence is indicated by the

place-name Markby which means 'Marki's village or homestead', deriving from the Old Danish personal name *Marki* and *by* (Ekwall 1974, 315). Further indication of a pre-conquest origin for the settlement is provided by several references to Markby in the Domesday Book. Dating from 1086 AD, the survey establishes that the parish was divided amongst several manors (Foster and Longley 1976).

Immediately east of the investigation site are earthworks of the medieval Augustinian Priory (Fig. 2), a scheduled ancient monument, county number 189 (English Heritage 1992, 5). This religious house was probably founded *c.* 1160, though the earliest surviving reference dates to 1204, at which time the founder, Ralf FitzGilbert was long since deceased and his lands were in the possession of his grandson (Page 1988, 174).

Like many of the religious houses of the time, Markby was an important wool producer and was exporting twelve sacks a year around 1300 AD. There also appears to have been a tannery at the priory for, in 1360, lay brothers there were indicted as common tanners selling at an excessive profit (Owen 1971, 66; 68). The priory was dissolved under the first Act of Suppression in 1534 (Page 1988, 174). In 1538, the site and lands of Markby Priory were part of a large body of monastic sites granted to the Duke of Suffolk in exchange for his manor of Eye in Suffolk (Hodgett 1975, 50).

Surrounded by the earthworks of the priory and lying immediately southeast of Church Farm is the parish church of St. Peter. Listed grade II*, St. Peter's, the only thatched church in Lincolnshire, was probably completely rebuilt with stonework from the priory in the mid 16th - early 17th century. Amongst these reused architectural fragments is the reset 13th

century dogtooth chancel arch (DoE 1986, 50; Pevsner and Harris 1989, 552).

Approximately 50m south of the church, and occupying part of the priory site, is Priory Farm. Listed grade II, this is 16th century with later additions. However, an ashlar wall surviving within the farmhouse is probably part of the Augustinian priory (*loc. cit.*).

3. AIMS

The aims of the evaluation were to locate archaeological deposits and determine, if present, their extent, state of preservation, date, type, vulnerability, documentation, quality of setting and amenity value. The purpose of this identification and assessment of deposits was to establish their significance, in order to facilitate recommendations for an appropriate strategy that could be integrated with any proposed development programme.

4. METHODS

Two trenches were opened (Fig. 3) and selected deposits partially or fully excavated by hand to determine their nature and to retrieve artefactual material. The trenches were located to provide sample coverage of the entire development site in order to evaluate the potential survival of archaeological deposits and features across the area.

Both trenches were opened by machine to the surface of undisturbed layers, which were then cleaned and excavated by hand. Recording of deposits encountered during the evaluation was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services practice.

5. ANALYSIS

Records of the deposits and features recognised during the evaluation were examined. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them. A stratigraphic matrix of all deposits was produced. Three phases were identified.

- Phase 1 - Natural deposits
- Phase 2 - Undated deposits
- Phase 3 - Modern deposits

Phase 1 Natural deposits

A deposit of reddish brown silty clay (8) was revealed at the base of Trench A. Sealing this, and also observed at the bottom of Trench B, was a slightly pebbly yellow-brown silty clay (4, 7) with a surface height of *c.* 5.4m OD. These deposits are considered to be glacial in origin.

Above these layers, but only encountered on the south side of the site, was a deposit of brown silty clay with occasional chalk fragments and flint pebbles (6). The surface of this layer, which is considered to be a natural subsoil, occurred at 5.65m OD (Fig. 4).

Phase 2 Undated deposits

Cutting the natural clay on the north side of the site in Trench B was a single V-shaped feature (3). Only seen in section, this was *c.* 0.2m wide, 0.15m deep and filled with grey silty clay (2). Although the function of this feature is unknown, it possesses an asymmetrical profile and may be a ploughmark (Fig. 4).

Phase 3 Modern deposits

Overlying the undated cut and the natural layers was a grey brown silty clay (1, 5)

that contained chalk fragments. Identified as topsoil, the surface of this layer declined from 6m OD to 5.7m OD, south to north.

6. DISCUSSION

Natural deposits (phase 1) of glacial drift were encountered in both trenches. Natural subsoil was only encountered on slightly higher land on the south side of the site. This material may naturally wedge out to the north, or may have been effectively removed by processes involved in the formation of the phase 3 topsoil.

Just such a formation process, ploughing, may have been responsible for the single, undated cut feature (phase 2) recognised in Trench B.

Topsoil (phase 3) provided the present ground surface of the development site.

Church Farm is located on a narrow, north-south strip of land between Markby Main Street and a major ditch that provides the western limit of the priory earthworks. Immediately north of Church Farm and the priory earthworks is Sutton Road, while the southernmost earthworks are extended westwards to Main Street by the access road to The Priory farm. Thus, a single rectangular unit is created by Main Street, Sutton Road, the access road to The Priory farm and the eastern ditch of the Augustinian Priory earthworks (Fig. 2). Therefore, although Church Farm, and the field immediately to the south (OS land parcel 6576) occur outside the area of earthworks, it seems probable that they constitute part of the priory complex but were beyond the *murus monasticus*, the formal precinct boundary. That no earthworks survive in these two fields suggests that they were kept free of buildings, perhaps being used as gardens or orchards.

7. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

For assessment of significance the *Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling ancient monuments* has been used (DoE 1990, Annex 4; see appendix 3).

No dating evidence was obtained during the evaluation, therefore no period is clearly represented. Similarly, the function and date of the single feature recorded during this excavation were not established, hence rarity cannot be determined. Moreover, for the same reasons, there is no diversity to assess.

Records of archaeological sites and finds made in the Markby area are kept in the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record. However, no summaries or syntheses of this material have previously been produced. Moderately high group value for the undated remains is supplied by the proximity of other sites, structures and findspots of medieval and later date in the vicinity

Deposits of unknown date do survive in the area but appear to be thinly distributed. Also, there was no evidence for the survival of environmental remains, either by waterlogging or charring. The sparse archaeological deposits were encountered at about 0.3m below the present ground surface. Although the proposed development may impact to greater depth, the intrusion will be restricted to about 5% of the total area, by virtue of the foundation design (piering). Consequently, any archaeological deposits present on site have limited vulnerability to destruction. Furthermore, potential is low that substantial medieval remains, associated with the adjacent priory, survive in the proposed development area.

In summary therefore, the criteria for assessment have established that although

the adjacent priory site is, as a scheduled ancient monument, of national importance, the sparse, undated remains on the proposed development area are of limited local importance. As such, archaeological deposits present on site may enhance the understanding of the origins and development of Markby.

8. EFFECTIVENESS OF TECHNIQUES

The strategy of using trial trenches to locate and evaluate archaeological deposits was, on the whole, effective. Excavation strongly suggested that remains associated with the adjacent medieval priory do not occur in the area of development. However, insubstantial use of the area in the medieval period, for example as monastic gardens or open space, may have left evidence too subtle to be recognised by trial trenching.

9. CONCLUSIONS

This investigation identified deposits of natural to modern date. Natural glacial layers occurred throughout the area though subsoil was only observed on the south side of the site. Absence of this deposit from the northern side of the site was possibly caused by ploughing, which may also have been responsible for the single cut feature of indeterminate date and function that was recognised during the investigation. On the basis of surviving boundaries and earthworks, it seems probable that the proposed development site was located within the priory complex, though in an area of gardens or orchards.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services would like

to thank Mr M. W. Johnson of W.H.R. Johnson Ltd. who commissioned the fieldwork and analysis. The work was coordinated by Steve Haynes and this report was edited by Dave Start.

11. PERSONNEL

Project Manager: Steve Haynes
Supervisor: Paul Cope-Faulkner
Site Assistant: Chris Moulis
Illustration: Gary Taylor
Post-excavation Analyst: Gary Taylor

12. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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13. ABBREVIATIONS

Department of the Environment publications are indicated by the initials 'DoE'.

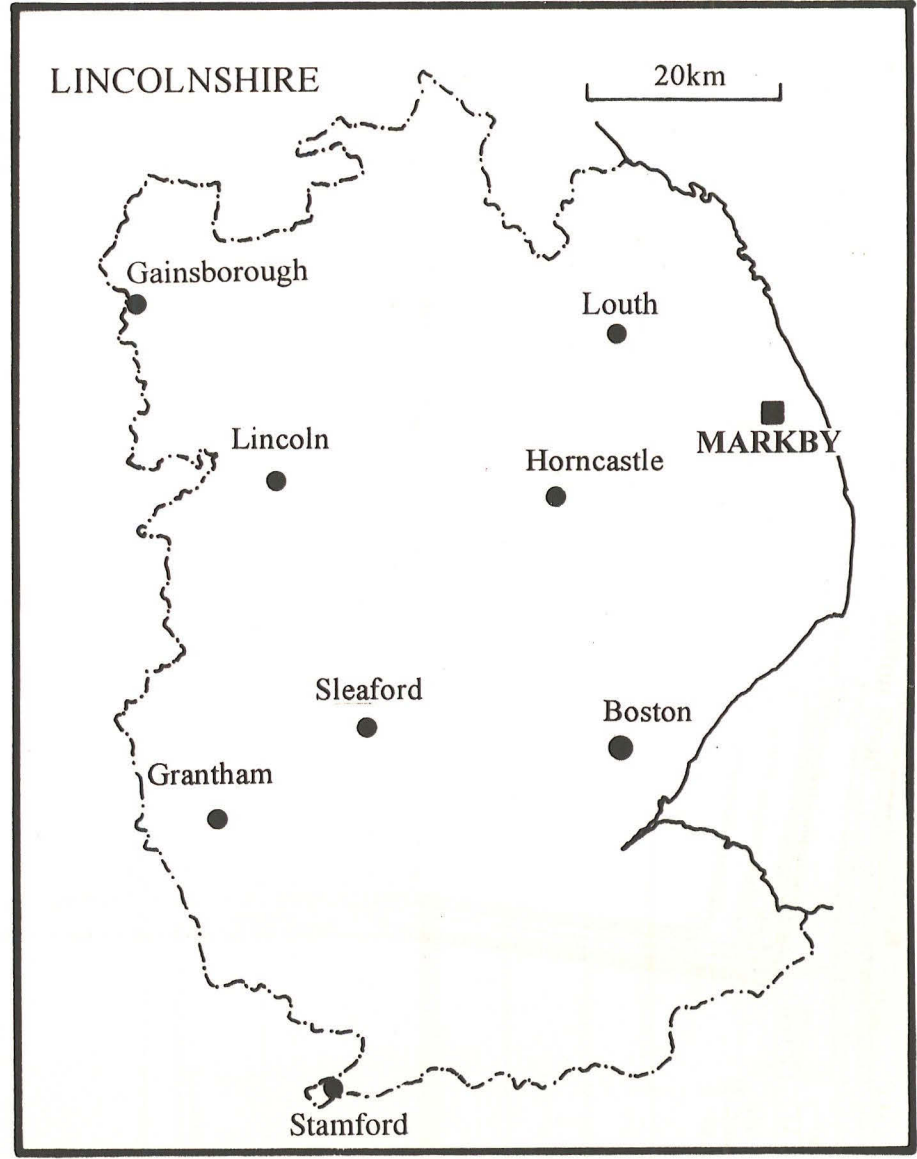
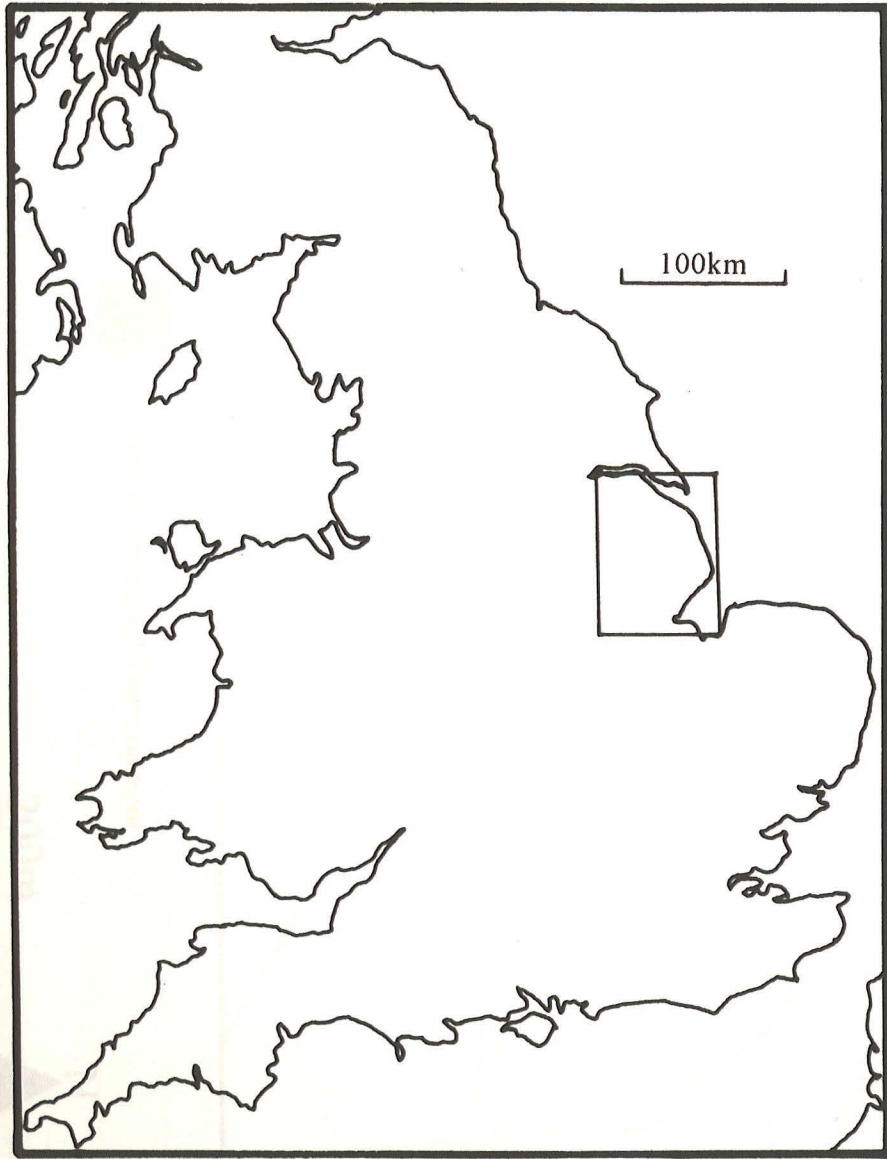
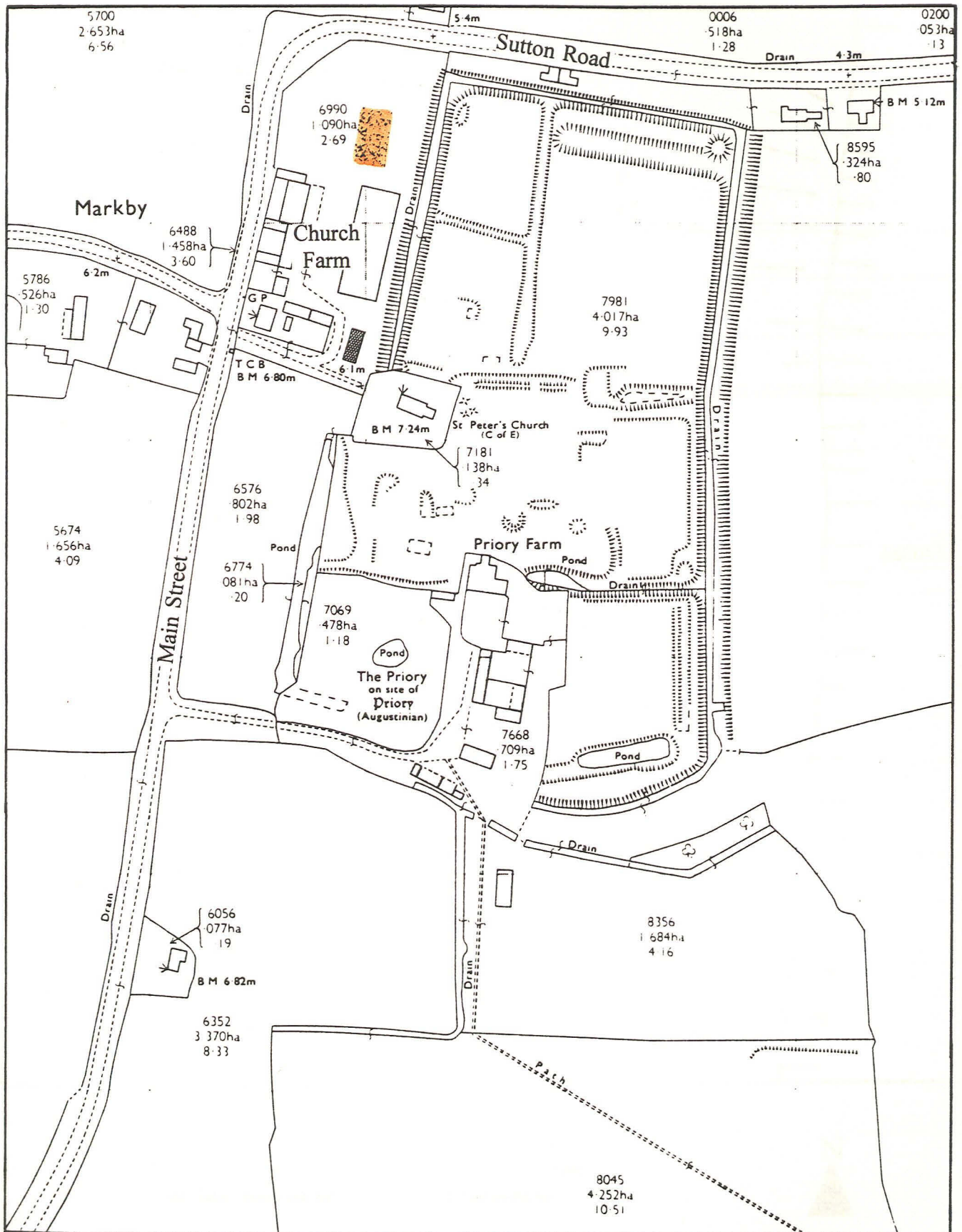


Fig. 1 General Location Plan

Fig. 2 Site Location Plan



Area of Proposed Development

0

200m



Fig. 3 Trench Location Plan

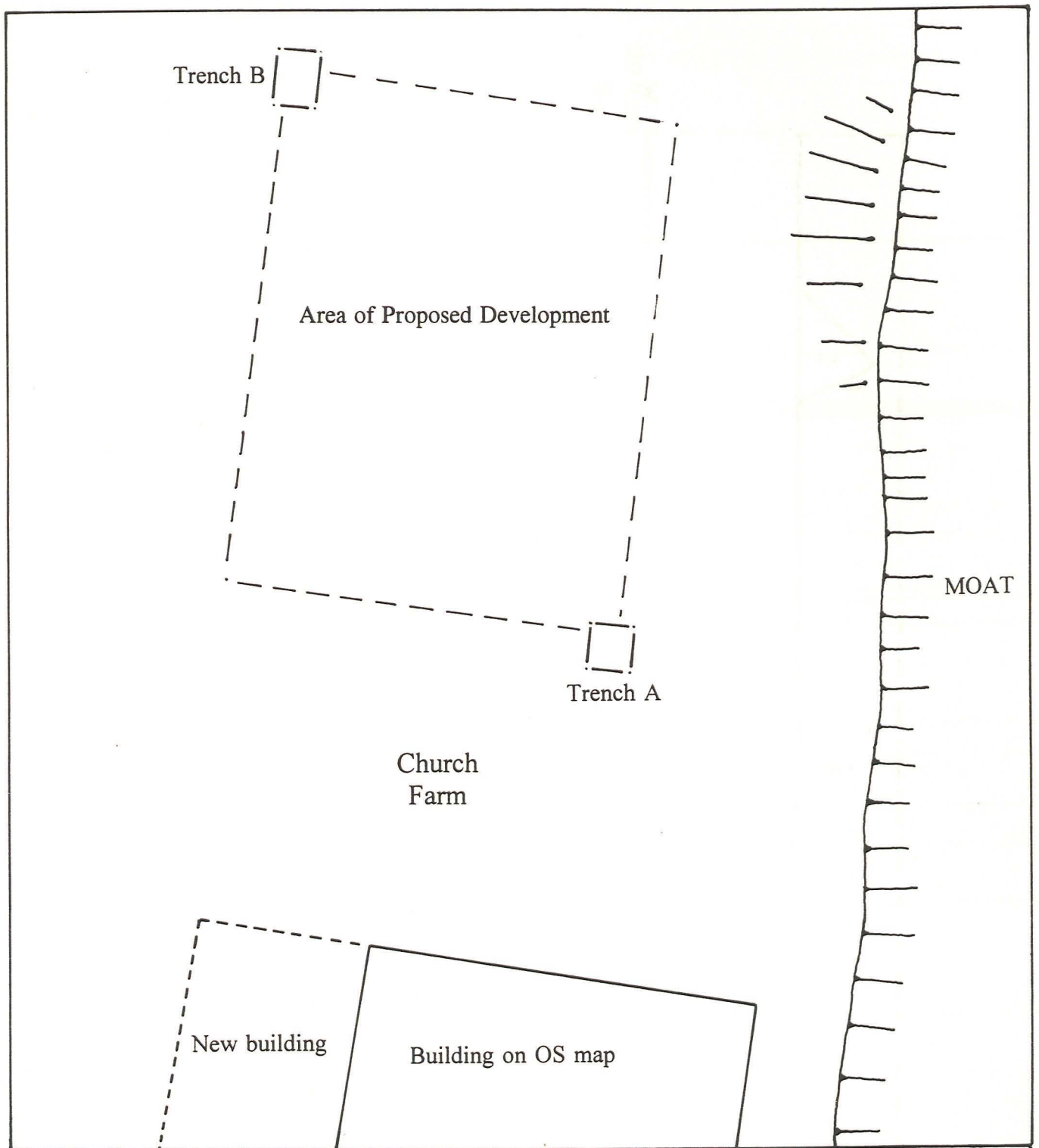


Fig. 4 Sections of Trenches A and B

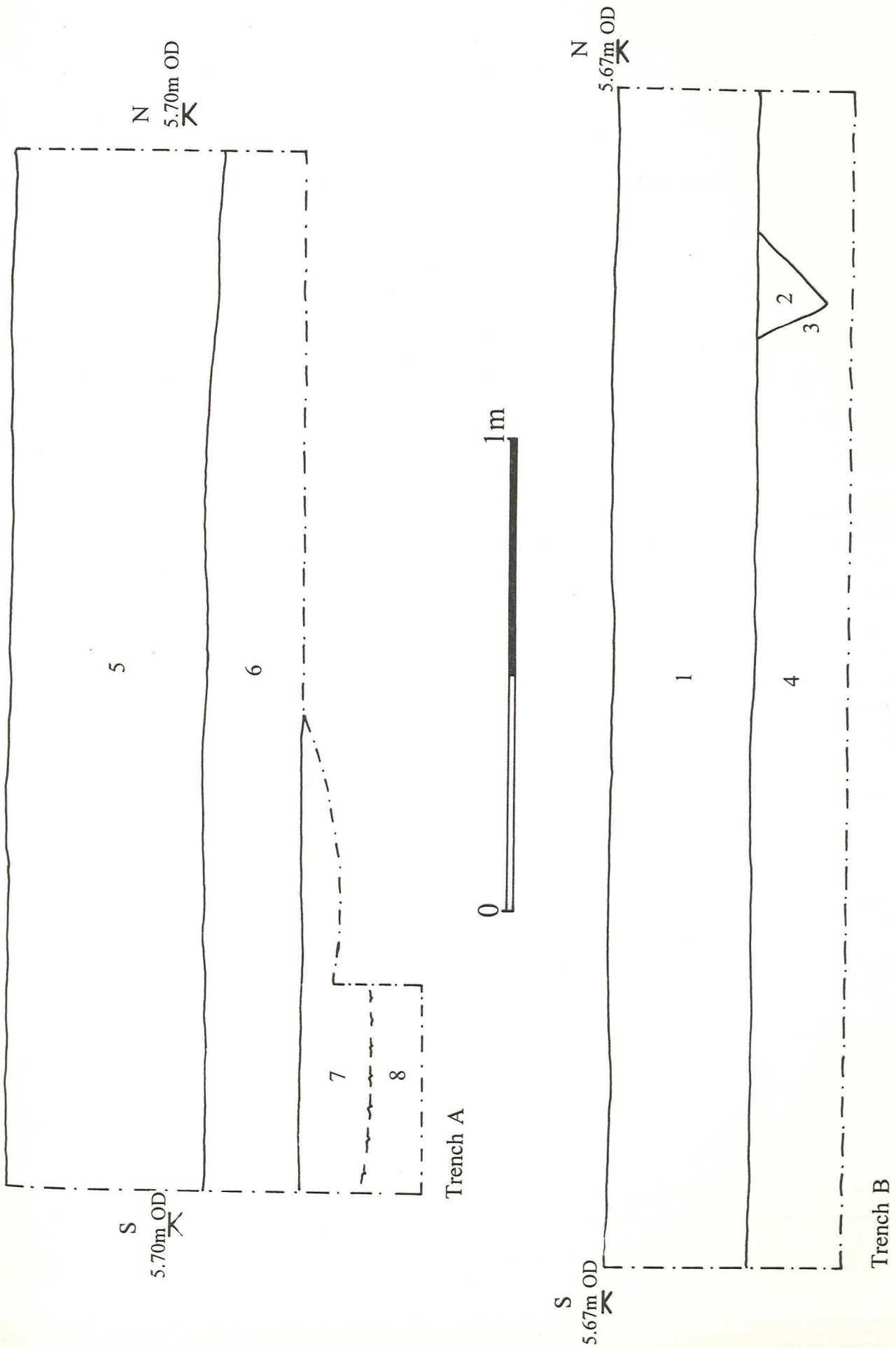


PLATE 1

GENERAL VIEW OF INVESTIGATION SITE,
LOOKING NORTH

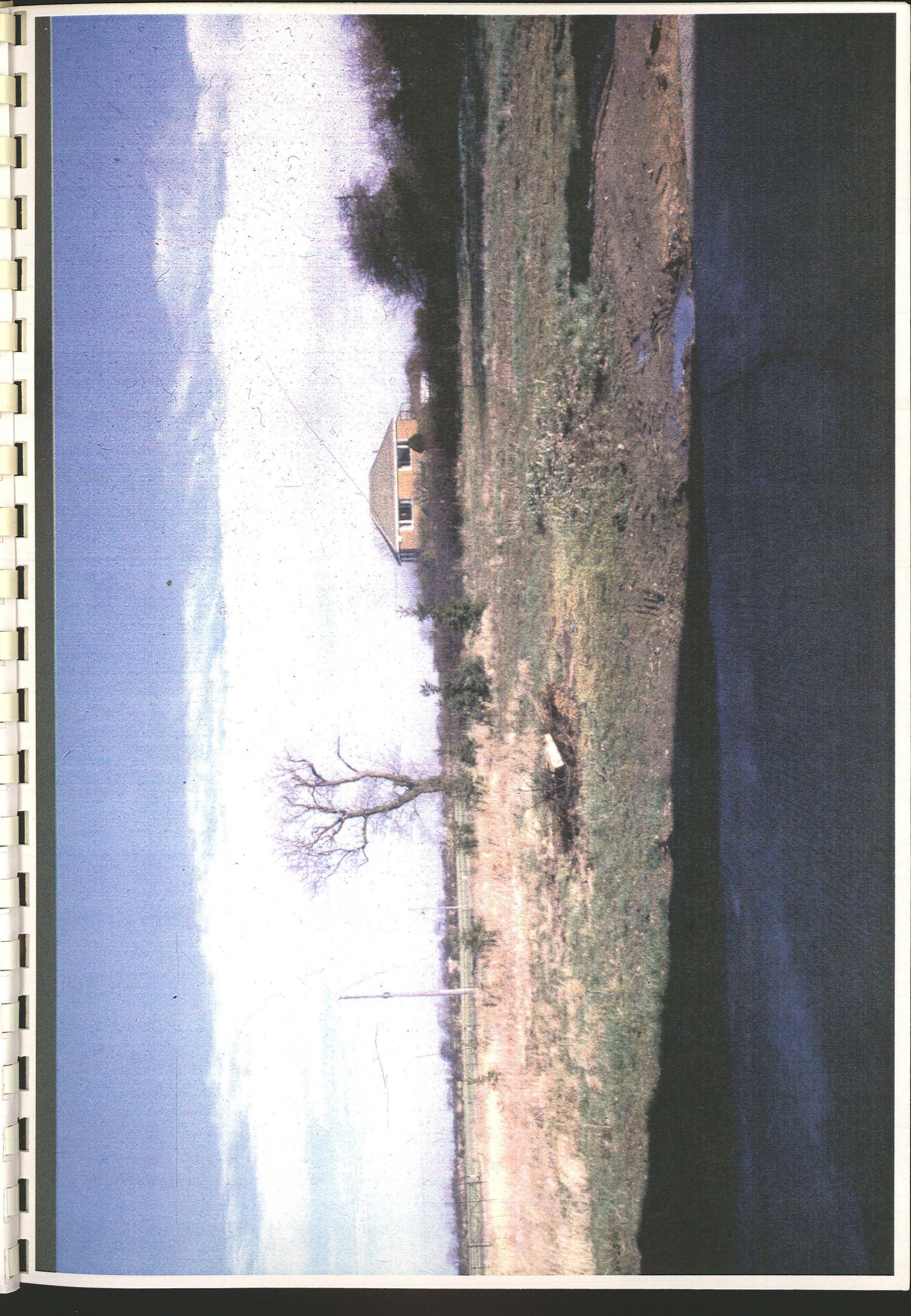
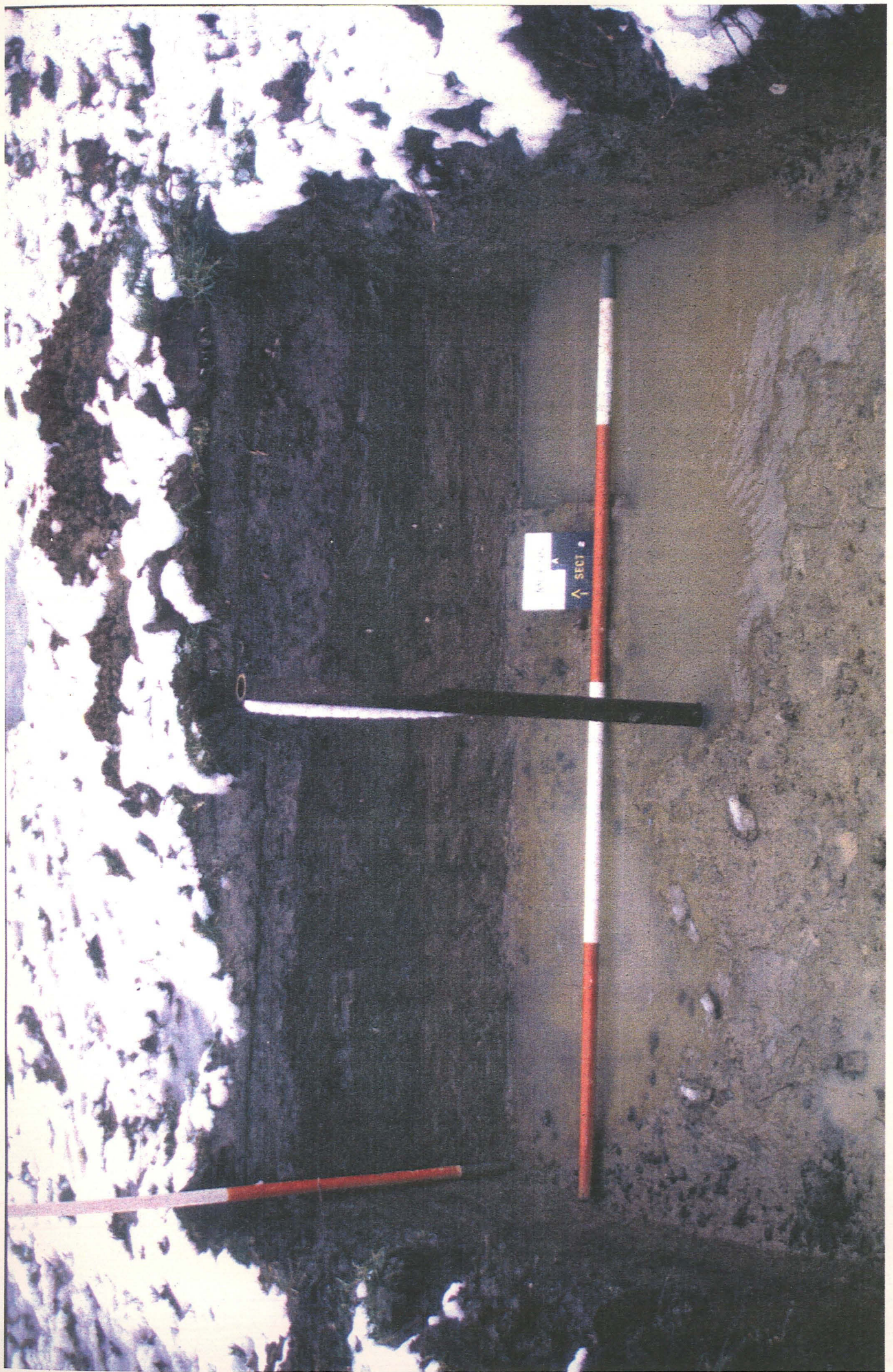


PLATE 2

TRENCH A,
NORTHERN SECTION



APPENDIX 1

Context Summary

Context No.	Area	Description	Interpretation
1	B	Grey brown silty clay with chalk fragments, <i>c.</i> 0.3m deep	Topsoil
2	B	Grey silty clay	Fill of 3
3	B	V-profile cut, 0.22m wide, 0.15m deep; only seen in section	Cut feature, indeterminate function
4	B	Yellow-brown clay, occasional flint pebbles	Natural
5	A	Grey brown silty sandy clay with chalk fragments, <i>c.</i> 0.4m deep	Topsoil
6	A	Brown silty clay with occasional chalk fragments and flint pebbles, <i>c.</i> 0.2m deep	Subsoil
7	A	Yellow-brown silty clay, occasional flint pebbles	Natural
8	A	Reddish yellow-brown sandy silty clay	Natural

APPENDIX 2

The Archive

The archive consists of:

- 8 Context records
- 2 Photographic record
- 5 Scale drawings
- 1 Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: MCF95
City and County Museum, Lincoln Accession Number: 31.95

The project archive will be deposited at the City and County Museum, Lincoln, by 31.12.1995

APPENDIX 3

Secretary of State's criteria for scheduling Ancient Monuments - Extract from *Archaeology and Planning* DoE Planning Policy Guidance note 16, November 1990

The following criteria (which are not in any order of ranking), are used for assessing the national importance of an ancient monument and considering whether scheduling is appropriate. The criteria should not however be regarded as definitive; rather they are indicators which contribute to a wider judgement based on the individual circumstances of a case.

i *Period*: all types of monuments that characterise a category or period should be considered for preservation.

ii *Rarity*: there are some monument categories which in certain periods are so scarce that all surviving examples which retain some archaeological potential should be preserved. In general, however, a selection must be made which portrays the typical and commonplace as well as the rare. This process should take account of all aspects of the distribution of a particular class of monument, both in a national and regional context.

iii *Documentation*: the significance of a monument may be enhanced by the existence of records of previous investigation or, in the case of more recent monuments, by the supporting evidence of contemporary written records.

iv *Group value*: the value of a single monument (such as a field system) may be greatly enhanced by its association with related contemporary monuments (such as a settlement or cemetery) or with monuments of different periods. In some cases, it is preferable to protect the complete group of monuments, including associated and adjacent land, rather than to protect isolated monuments within the group.

v *Survival/Condition*: the survival of a monument's archaeological potential both above and below ground is a particularly important consideration and should be assessed in relation to its present condition and surviving features.

vi *Fragility/Vulnerability*: highly important archaeological evidence from some field monuments can be destroyed by a single ploughing or unsympathetic treatment; vulnerable monuments of this nature would particularly benefit from the statutory protection that scheduling confers. There are also existing standing structures of particular form or complexity whose value can again be severely reduced by neglect or careless treatment and which are similarly well suited by scheduled monument protection, even if these structures are already listed buildings.

vii *Diversity*: some monuments may be selected for scheduling because they possess a combination of high quality features, others because of a single important attribute.

viii *Potential*: on occasion, the nature of the evidence cannot be specified precisely but it may still be possible to document reasons anticipating its existence and importance and so to demonstrate the justification for scheduling. This is usually confined to sites rather than upstanding monuments.