



LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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**LAND ADJACENT TO CORNER HOUSE FARM, KNAITH
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

NGR: SK 8295 8479
Site Code **CHK 95**
Museum Accession No. **91.95**

report for

MR J. STORRY

August 1995

NEGATIVE

Contents

List of figures and plates

Summary	1
Introduction	1
Site Location and Archaeological Background	1
The Watching Brief	2
Discussion	3
References	3
Appendix 1 Context List	4
Appendix 2 Contents of Site Archive	4

Figures**Plates**

Figures

Fig. 1 Site location. Reproduced from the O. S. 1:10, 560 map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, Crown copyright. (LAS licence AL50424A)

Fig. 2 House plot location and trench plan (reproduced from plans by architect)

Fig. 3 Earthwork settlement remains at Knaith, surveyed by the RCHM, also showing location of Roman kilns and development site. Hatched area shows presumed extent of ancient flooding across site. Reproduced from Everson et al 1991 Crown copyright.

Fig. 4 Trench plan showing edge of flood silts (reproduced from plans by architect)

Plates

Pl. 1 General view of development site (right) in relation to the River Trent (horizon).

Pl. 2 Development plot after removal of vegetation, looking north.

Pl. 3 Development plot during excavation of foundation trenches, looking north.

Pl. 4 Sequence of deposits revealed in north wall trench: dumped soil containing roof tile and pottery, sealed topsoil and subsoil, grey clay, red clay at base of trench.

Pl. 5 Excavation of foundation for west wall of house

Land Adjacent to Corner House Farm Knaith Archaeological Watching Brief

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Summary

Archaeological monitoring during the excavation of foundation trenches for a single dwelling and garage produced no archaeological remains. Silt deposits in the southern half of the site indicated past flooding from the River Trent. Two pieces of Romano-British greyware pottery were found in this deposit.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Mr J. Storry to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new dwelling and garage in the old orchard adjacent to Corner Farm House. This was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the planning consent granted by West Lindsey District Council.

On this occasion no project brief was issued but the work was carried out by Lindsey Archaeological Services in with the general requirements of the Archaeology Section of Lincolnshire County Council.

The project has been conducted with reference to guidelines set out in the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1993, revised August 1994).

Site Location and Archaeological Background

Knaith is a small village located on the lower and upper terraces of the River Trent south of Gainsborough at a prominent bend in the river (Fig. 1, Pl. 1). The placename Knaith comes from the Old English *cnēohȳth* which means a landing place by the knee or a bend in the river (Eckwall 1960, 281). The site lies just east of the A156 at the north end of the village (Figs. 1 and 2). In 1966 Romano-British pottery was discovered NW of the site on the banks of the river at SK827848 (Whitwell 1967, 38). A proton gradiometer survey was carried out in 1967 which identified 30 areas of high magnetic anomalies thought to be kilns or areas defining pottery waste heaps. Three kilns within the area were excavated in 1968 (Whitwell and Wilson 1969, 101).

The medieval settlement remains survive as earthworks which were surveyed in the early 1980s as part of a survey of West Lindsey undertaken by the Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of England (Everson et al. 1993, 115-117) (See also Fig. 3). Their age is unknown but land at Knaith is mentioned in the Domesday Survey of 1086 when it belonged to the Manor of Brampton and was held by the Bishop of Lincoln. The settlement must have originated prior to 1066 (Foster and Longley 1924, 48). The main core of the

village comprises a rectilinear layout of earthworks was recorded just south of the kiln site bounded to the north and east by the original road line (c). As the placename indicates the settlement lay on a bend in the river with two roads (a) and (b) at right angles to the river. A modern drain which lies between the two former roads continues the line of Knaith Hill towards the river and may mark the line of a third former road. It is thought that the arrival of the Willoughbys at the manor led to the removal of the ancient village and its replacement by landscape gardens and park. The present settlement overlies ridge and furrow and may date from the 17th century (Everson 1991, 115).

The Watching Brief

It was possible that groundworks for the new house at Corner House Farm would disturb medieval settlement features and provide an opportunity to assess their forms, functions and possible date.

Numbers referred to in the text are context numbers, used for convenience of recording and briefly described in Appendix 1.

Test Pit

A test pit was dug by machine 8 metres north of the SW corner of the plot. It located the red Keuper marl (4) at a depth of 1.80m from the present ground surface. (0.40m depth comprised material (1) deposited when the site was levelled up in advance of a proposed tennis court which was never built.) The buried topsoil (2) was 0.12m thick. Beneath the topsoil was a compact red-brown slightly sandy silt containing a few water worn pebbles (3). Two body sherds of Romano-British greyware pottery came from this deposit, the only dating evidence from the whole site. This deposit appears to represent flood material from the River Trent. The pottery sherds were small and undiagnostic but their fabric was similar to the material from the Knaith kilns products which are 2nd century in date. It is not clear when the river flooded or if the deposit represents a number of flooding episodes. The presence of the medieval village earthworks so close to the present river course only suggests that the flooding is pre-medieval, but the origin of Knaith is unknown so a more precise date cannot be offered.

House Foundations

An area 13.10m x 9.55m was cleared of vegetation by machine revealing a sandy red-brown soil (Pl. 2). This material was imported to the site to level the area for the construction of a tennis court.

Excavation of the foundation trench along the north wall of the house revealed a simple sequence of deposits (Pl. 3). The dumped soil was clearly distinguishable and contained brick and tile debris which was a maximum of 0.40m thick. No finds were retained from this material because its provenance is unknown. It overlay the original topsoil on the site which was a brown clay loam 0.30m thick. No subsoil was distinguishable in the very dry ground conditions. This overlay a blue clay 0.50m thick which was on top of the red clay at the bottom of the trench (Pl. 4).

A similar sequence was observed on the west side of the building north of the fireplace (Pl. 5). However, the edge of the silt deposits seen in the test pit was located at this point deepening to a maximum of 1.10 m at the SW angle of the building. The silts were also seen in the east wall trench of the building but the garage foundation trench missed the silts (Fig. 4).

Discussion

Analysis of the surviving village earthworks suggested that the original village of Knaith developed close to the river, west of the present A156. Development of a new village took place east of the A156, but south of the present Terrace House Farm, possibly in the 17th century (Everson et al. 1991, 115). The area now occupied by Corner House Farm and the development site appear to lie east of the village remains. Observation of the foundation trenches at Corner House Farm confirms that there were no settlement remains in this area.

Naomi Field
August 29th 1995

References

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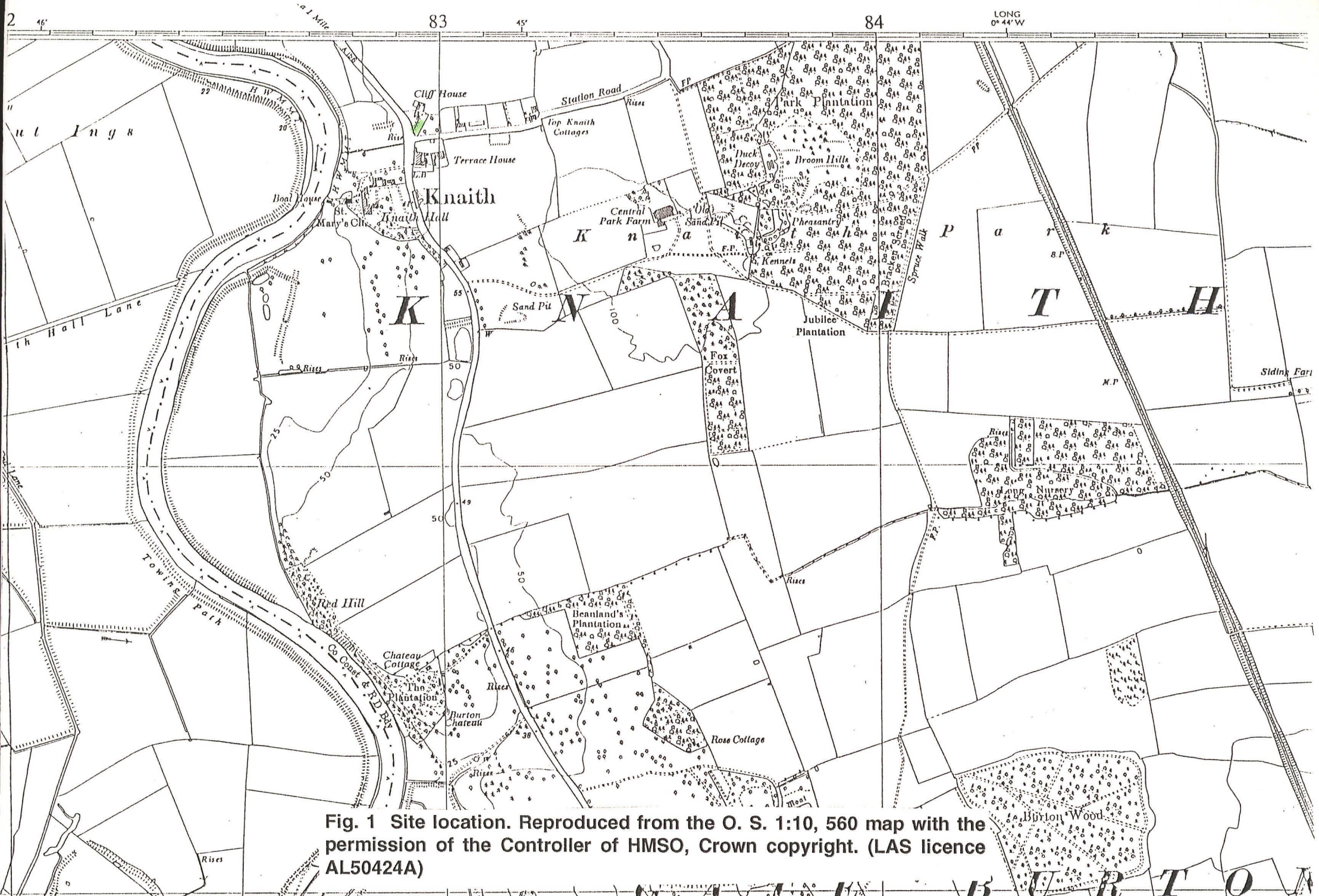


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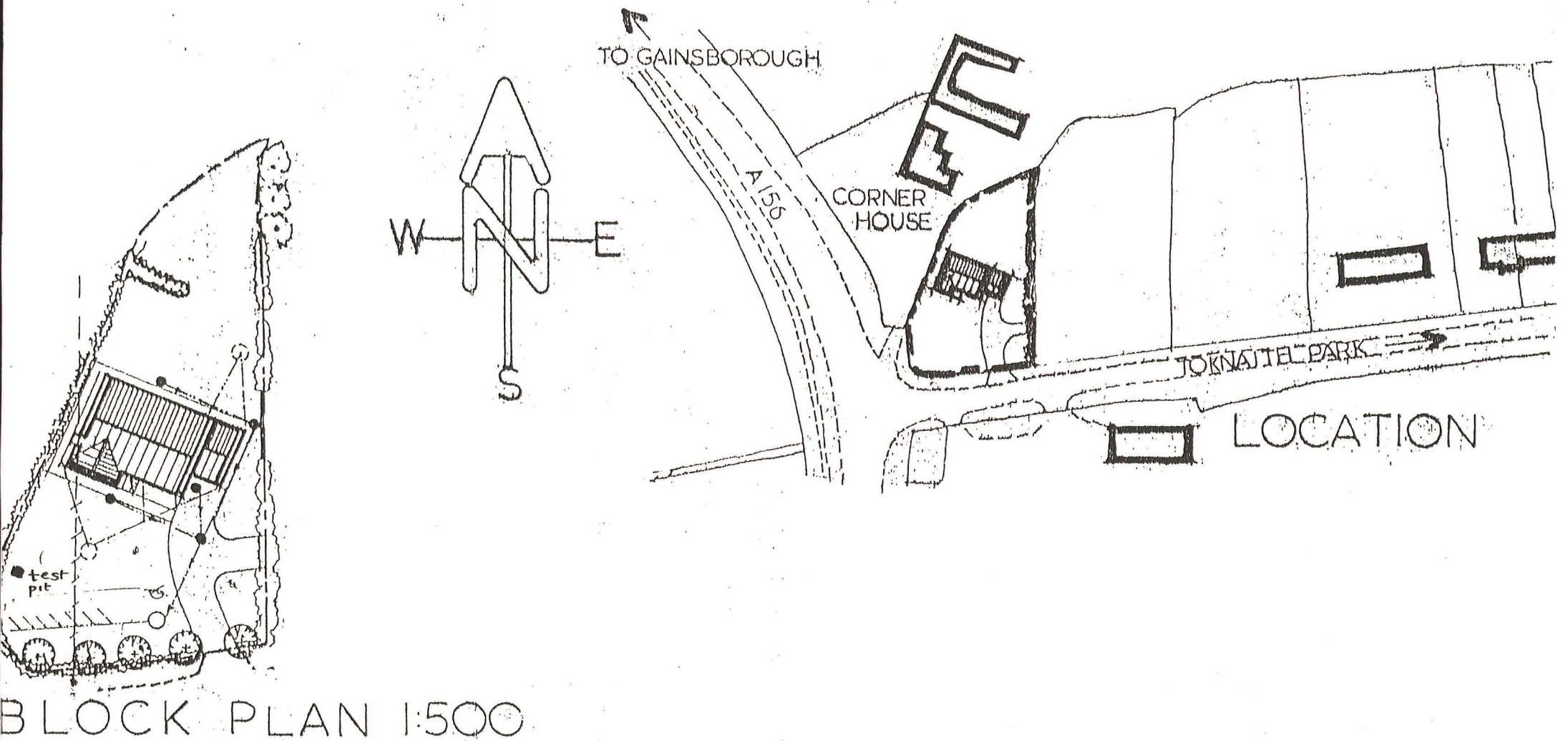


Fig. 2 House plot location and trench plan (reproduced from plans by architect)

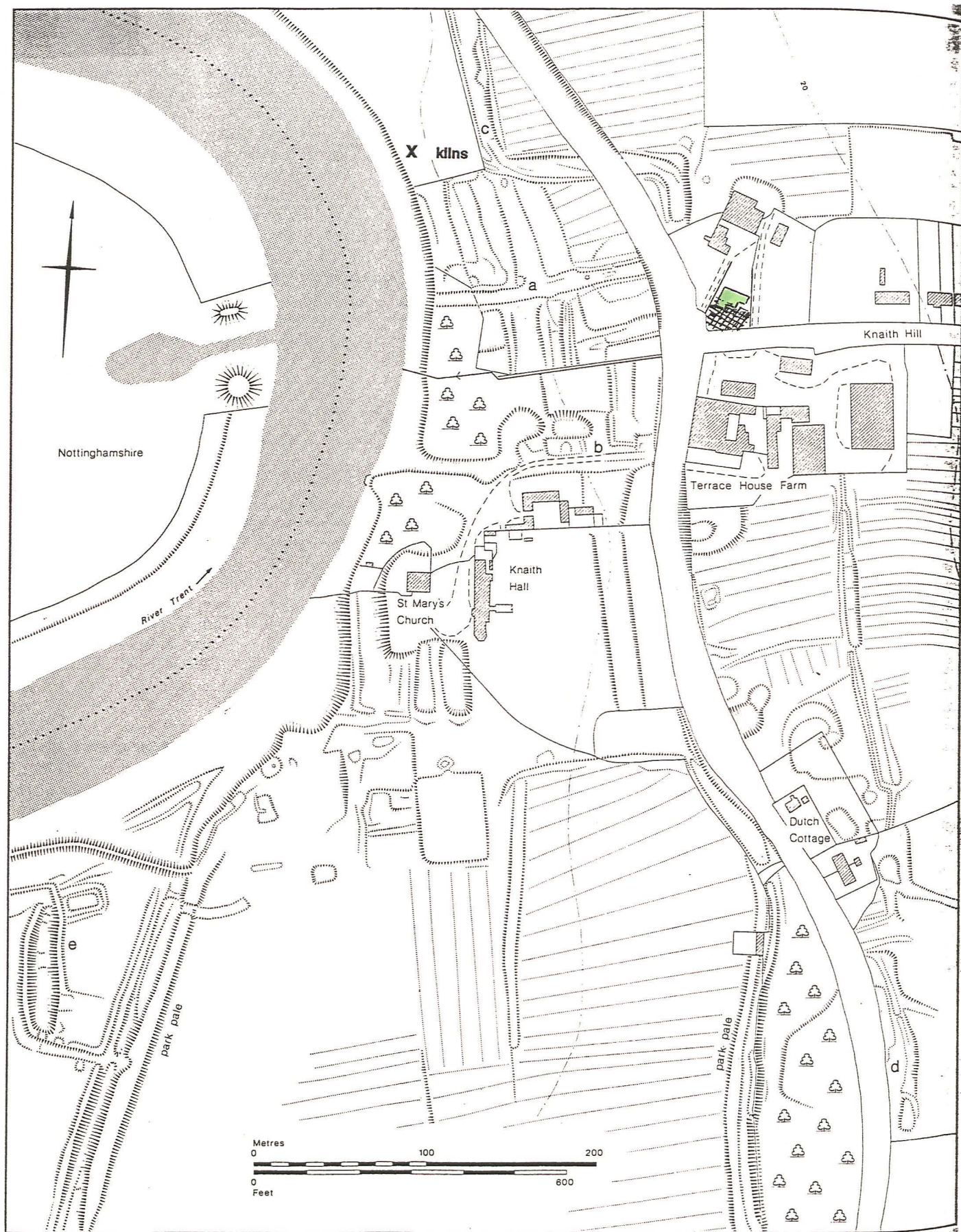


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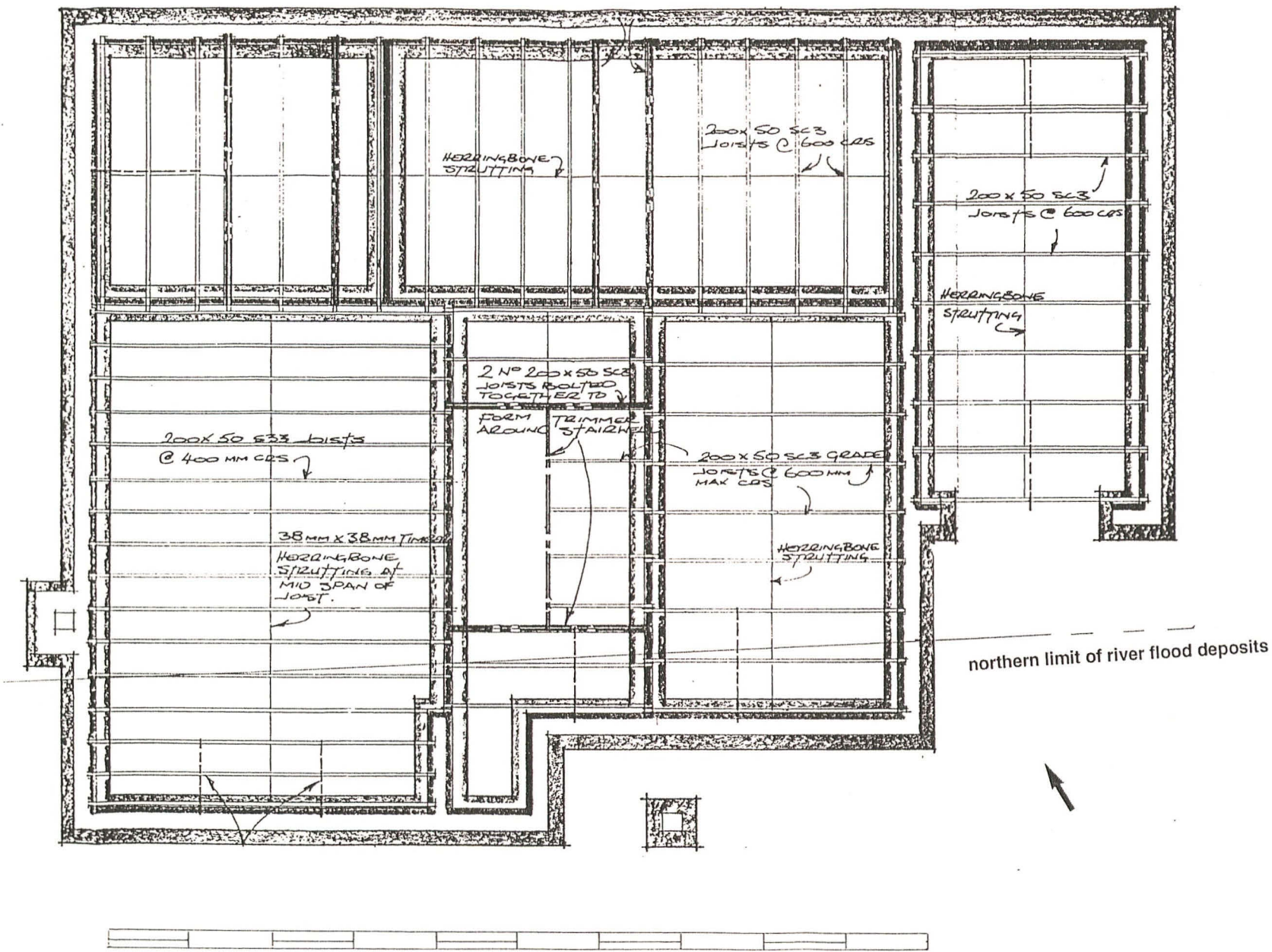


Fig. 4 Trench plan showing edge of flood silts (reproduced from plans)



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Pl. 2 Development plot after removal of vegetation, looking north.





Pl. 3 Development plot during excavation of foundation trenches, looking north.

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