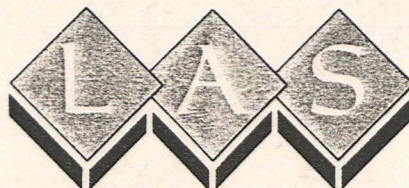


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# LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

FRANCIS HOUSE SILVER BIRCH PARK GREAT NORTHERN TERRACE LINCOLN LN5 8LG

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**Archaeological Watching Brief  
at  
Land Off Sandy Lane, Woodhall  
*NGR: TF 2045 6514***

Site Code **WSL 95**  
LCNCC Museum Accn. No. **197.95**  
Planning Application No. S/170/1139/95

Report prepared for R.W. Jackson

**January 1996**

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## **Summary**

*Archaeological monitoring of bungalow foundation trenches within an area of cropmarks identified small ditches and backfilled depressions but found no stratified dating evidence; the features were interpreted as probably of post-medieval date.*

## **Introduction**

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned in October 1995 by R.W. Jackson to monitor groundworks during construction of a bungalow on land off Sandy Lane, Woodhall (Figs. 1 and 2). An archaeological watching brief during excavation of the house footings was stipulated as Condition 4 of the Planning Consent by East Lindsey District Council as the local Planning Authority.

The development plot was at the rear of a narrow property to the north of Sandy Lane, south of Reeds Beck (Pl. 1). The new bungalow was 10m north-south and 14.5m west-east, constructed using a continuous trench around the perimeter but with internal divisions not extending below the topsoil. Monitoring, by the author, took place on 30th October 1995.

## **Archaeological Background**

The development plot lies within a complex of ditch-type features which have been identified on aerial photographs (Pls. 2 and 3). Similar complexes, thought to represent field systems, are known from cropmarks elsewhere in the Woodhall Spa and Kirkby on Bain district, where they show clearly in the sandy soils. Attempts to locate and date these cropmarks during other groundworks have been unsatisfactory but they clearly predate the present roads and the existing field pattern so are unlikely to be later than medieval. From their form, and by comparison with other similar sites elsewhere, they have been tentatively interpreted as of Iron Age or Roman date. Whatever the date, the cropmark features indicate an extensive organised landscape, presumably associated with farming communities and small settlements.

## **The Watching Brief** (Fig. 3)

The four connecting trenches around the outside of the new dwelling were dug to a width of between 0.8m and 1m and a depth of about 0.8m, using a JCB with a toothed bucket. Roots had penetrated deeply into the soft material and these had disturbed the interface between topsoil and lower

deposits. The underlying layers were compacted sands of varying colours with pockets of gravel; the colour variations did not apparently reflect human activity and may have been the result of minor channels within an early river course.

The black, sandy topsoil varied in thickness up to 0.35m thick, overlying sand. Features backfilled with dark fills, cutting the yellow or white sands, were seen in section and photographed.

1. A ditch or similar shaped feature 0.7m deep and 1.4m wide crossed the western foundation trench at a SW-NE alignment (Pls. 4 - 6). It was cut into a layer of sand with small pebbles, and had become backfilled with a grey/brown sandy soil. Part of the skeleton of a small animal, perhaps a rodent or a small domestic pet, was found in the trench side but this appeared to be within a later intrusion. Neither feature was thought to be of antiquity.

2. Close to the western end of the rear wall trench, a north-south aligned feature, about 0.8m deep, crossed the trench. This ditch or trench was 1.2m wide and filled with grey sandy soil in bands, separated by black lenses.

3. To the east of 2, two observations were made which were interpreted as being a single ditch or trench sloping downwards towards the NW (Pls. 7 and 8). The foundation trench had removed much of this feature, and it only survived where its depth was greater than the footings. On the south face of the foundation trench the cut was 1.7m wide and 0.6m deep; on the north side the cut was 1.8m wide and in excess of 0.8m deep. The fill was black soil (noticeably more sandy to the south) containing 18th to mid-19th century material.

4. A 1m wide and 0.5m deep feature filled with dark brown sandy loam was seen in the southern trench face only, at about 1.2m east of 3 (Pl. 8). Because of its shallow depth, the northern side was entirely removed, but it may have been a post-hole or small pit with sloping sides and a flat base.

5. Another SW-NE aligned feature crossed the eastern foundation trench close to the SE corner. This ditch-type feature splayed, from 0.8m wide on the western trench face to 1.6m wide on the eastern edge. The shape suggested that it was turning a corner but this could not be confirmed. No similar disturbance was seen in the southern trench where a projection would have crossed.

6. Near the western end of the front trench, a shallow scoop (0.6m wide and 0.35m deep) had cut into the sand. The topsoil above the backfilled mixed sand was thin (0.15m) suggesting that the feature was quite recent.

7. 3.5m east of 6, the western side of a feature extending below the trench base was seen crossing the trench virtually north-south. The width of this possible ditch could not be recorded as the centre of the trench was left

unexcavated for access purposes; the apparently post-medieval feature was not considered to warrant a second monitoring visit. This ditch may have been part of feature 2 (seen in the northern trench) but the alignment and position did not seem compatible.

8. Brick footings of former poultry houses had been removed from this area before the watching brief took place. Vestigial remains were noted to the SW of the present building plot. Similar buildings exist on land to the west, from where the former sheds were serviced.

9. Topsoil and sand removed from the bungalow site was redeposited to the north of the area, raising the ground level from the former depression close to the rear of the property. A slight downward slope from west to east was also evident in the existing ground surface; there had been some previous minor landfilling in the NE corner but no signs of a backfilled archaeological feature such as a pond were identified.

10. A clay tobacco pipe bowl (probably of 19th century date) was found on the ground surface at the base of the existing hedge to the SW of the house plot.

### **Conclusion**

Although several small ditches or backfilled depressions were located in the trench faces there was no reason to suspect them to be earlier than the post-medieval period and most may have been of recent date. Part of the land had been used for poultry sheds, demolished before the watching brief began, and some features may have been peripheral to that activity.

It was not possible to determine whether the features recorded formed part of the complex of ditches recorded as cropmarks on air photographs of adjacent land, or whether they represented land use since post-medieval Enclosure, restricted to the present plot boundaries. The artefacts recovered from this watching brief were all of post-medieval date and offer no clues as to the date of the pre-Enclosure cropmark features.

### **Acknowledgements**

LAS was grateful for the co-operation and interest shown by Robert Lowe (Architect), Mr. Jackson and those involved in excavating the house foundations (Ray Jackson Builders).

Geoff Tann  
Lindsey Archaeological Services  
17th January 1996

### **Archive Summary**

Developer's plan (annotated)  
Correspondence  
Archaeological finds: pottery and clay pipe bowl  
Specialist's archive lists

## Appendix 1:

### Archive lists of Archaeological Finds

#### Glossary of Fabric Codes

Lpm early modern: late 18th/20th centuries  
Lston late stonewares: late 18th/20th centuries

Ctps Clay tobacco pipe stem  
Ctpb Clay tobacco pipe bowl

#### WOODHALL, SANDY LANE (WSL95): BULK MATERIALS ARCHIVE LIST

##### Bulk Materials

Context	Type	Count	Comments
3	CTPS	1	PMED-MOD;18-19;DIS
10	CTPB	1	MOD;19;PROB M19

#### WSL95 POST-ROMAN POTTERY ARCHIVE

Context	Ware	Sherds	Form	Comments
3	LSTON	2	-	SAME VESS;19TH
3	LPM	1	-	? PEARLWARE

#### WSL95 POST-ROMAN DATING ARCHIVE

Context	Earliest horizon	Latest horizon	comments
3	EMH	EMH	EARLY TO MID 19TH?



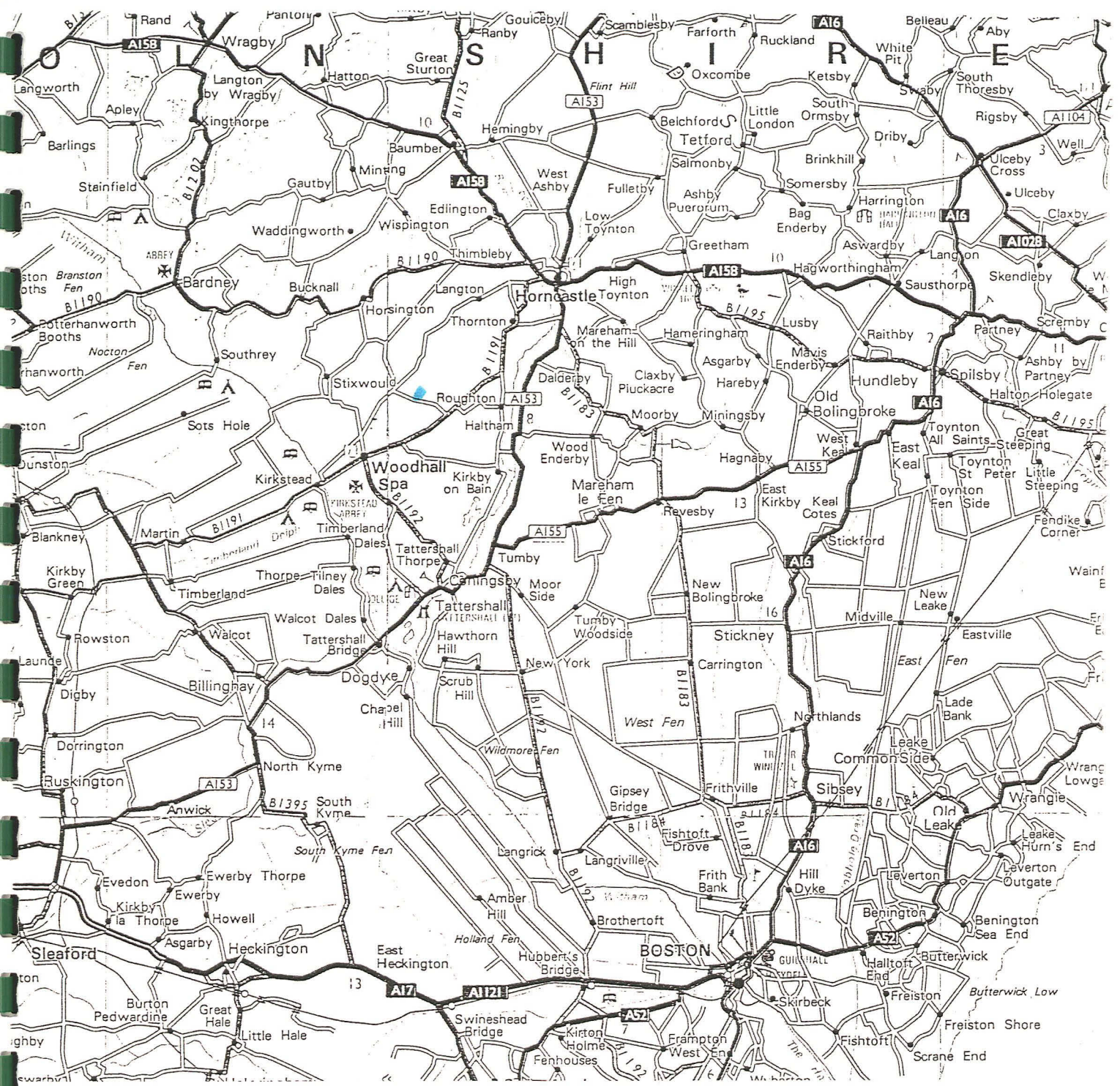


Fig. 1 Location of Woodhall

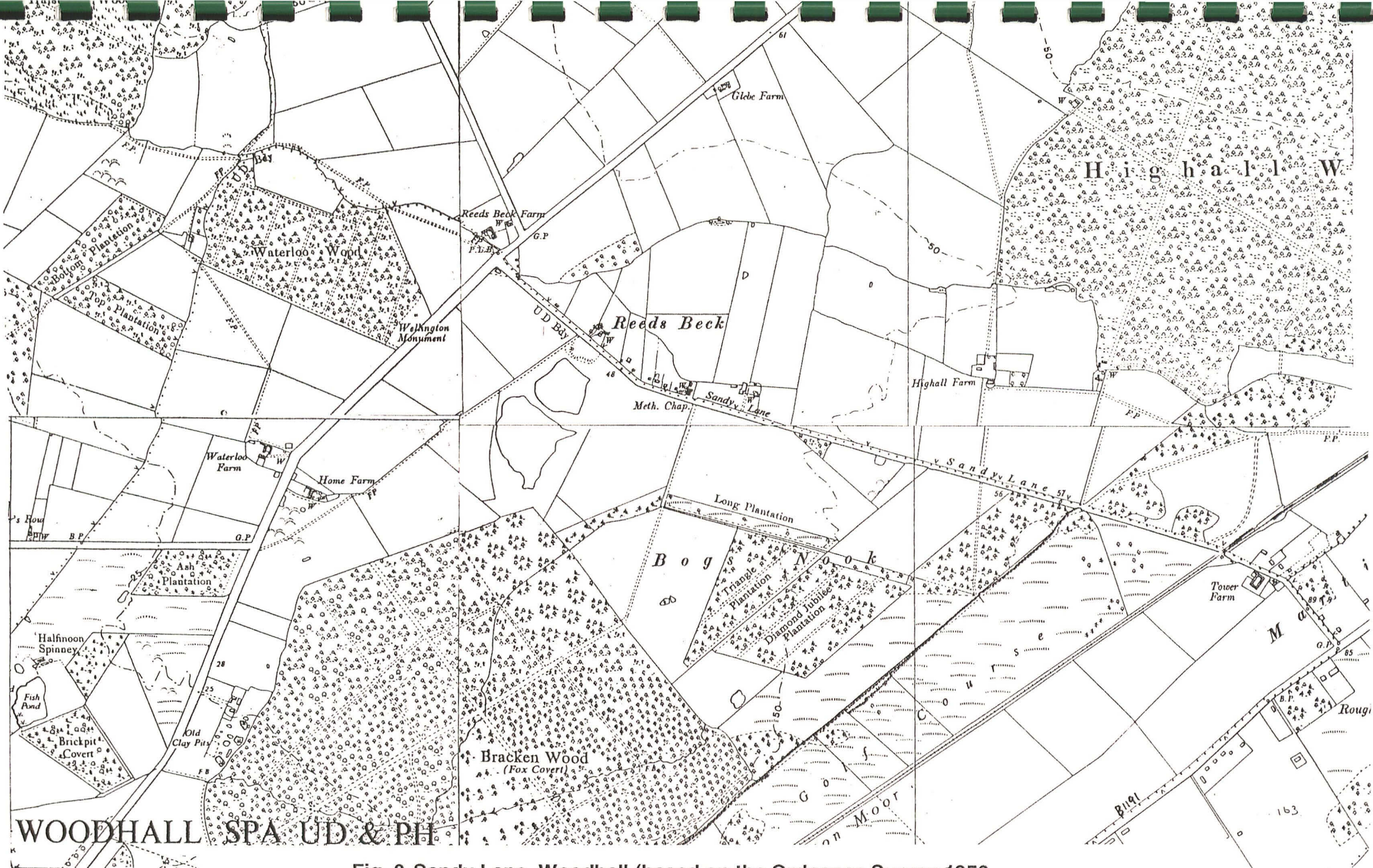


Fig. 2 Sandy Lane, Woodhall (based on the Ordnance Survey 1956 1:10,560 maps, Sheets TF 16 SE, 16 NE, 26 SW and 26 NW. Crown Copyright; reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. Licence No AL 50424A).

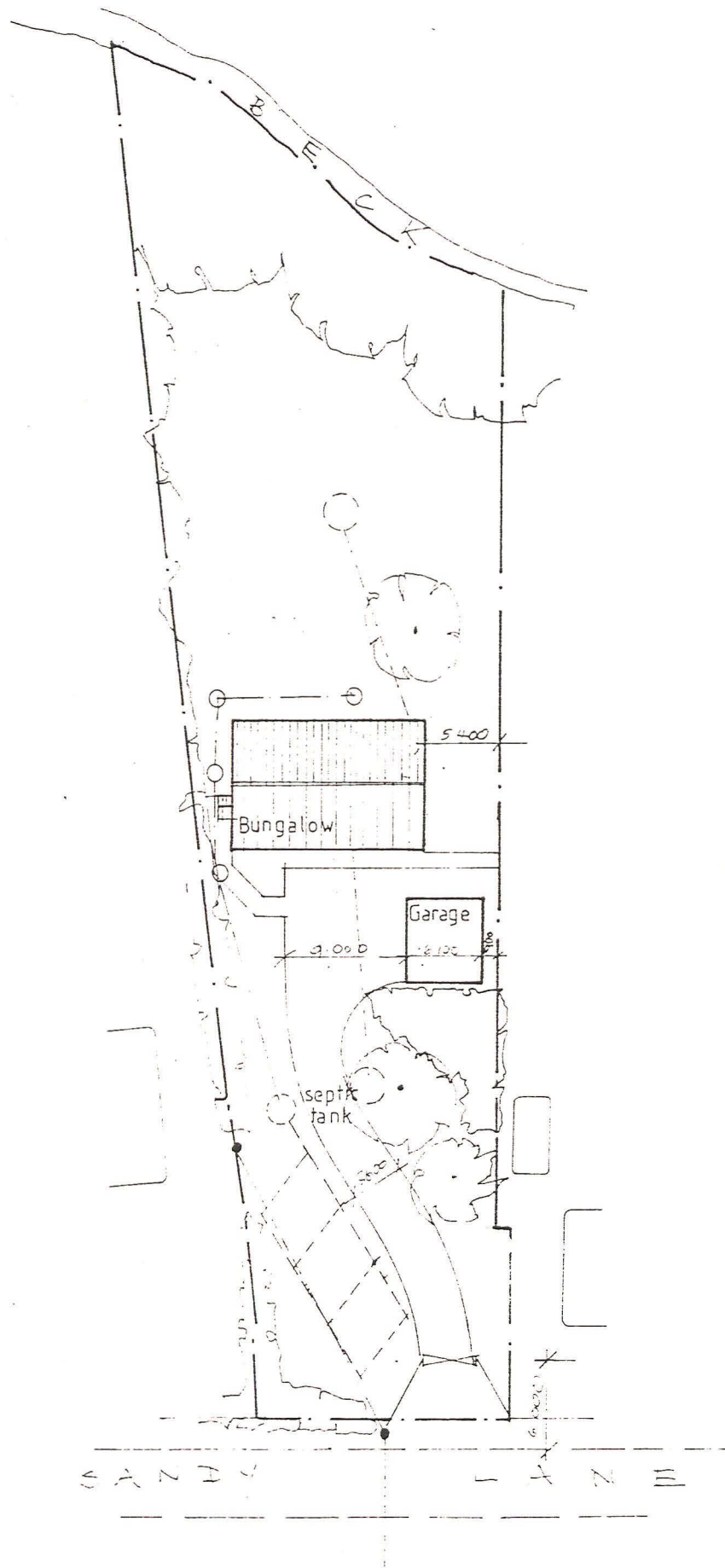


Fig. 3 Layout of the development plot (reproduced from a 1:500 site plan prepared by Robert Lowe [Chartered Architect] dwg. no. 9524.01B).

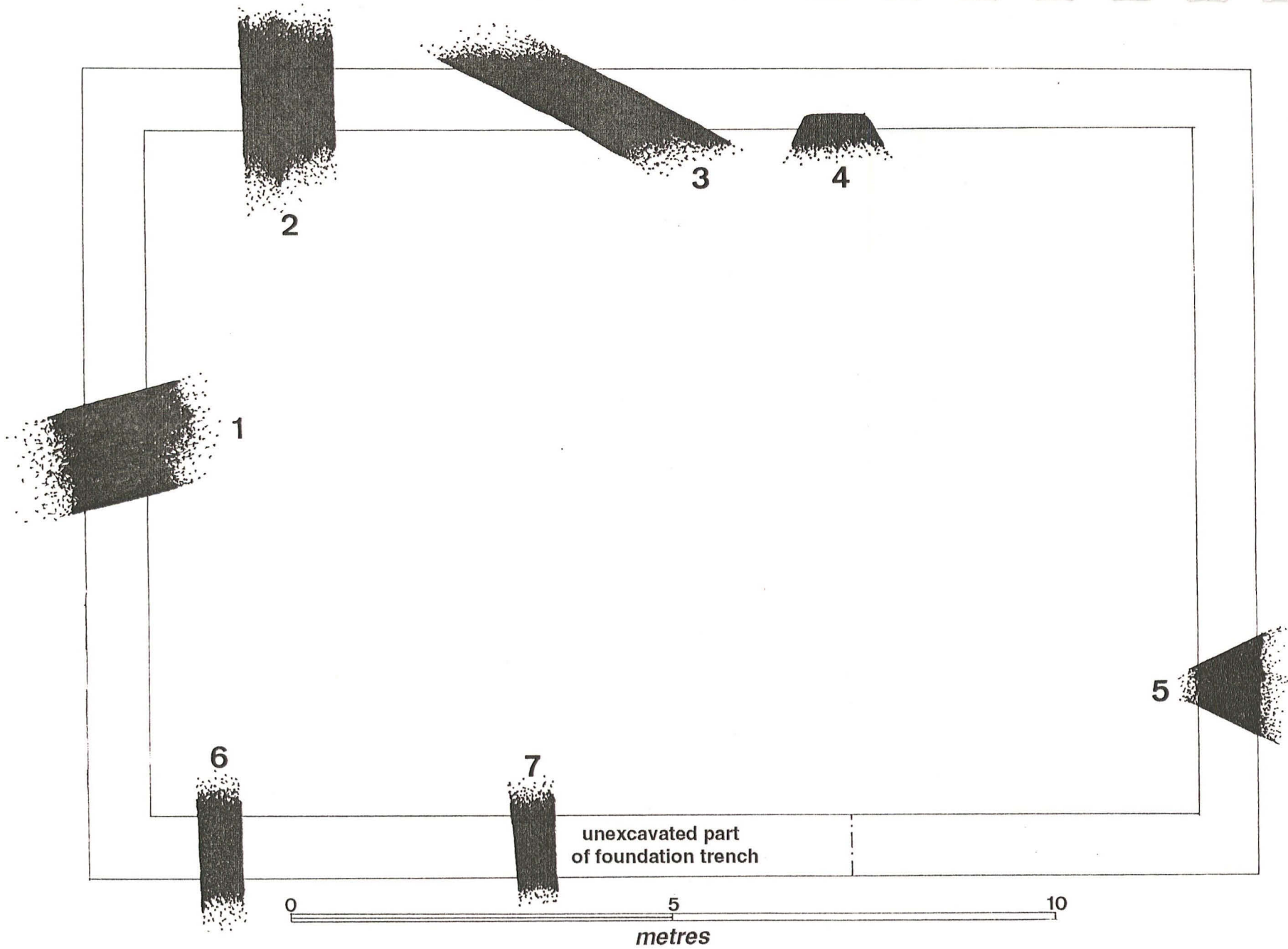
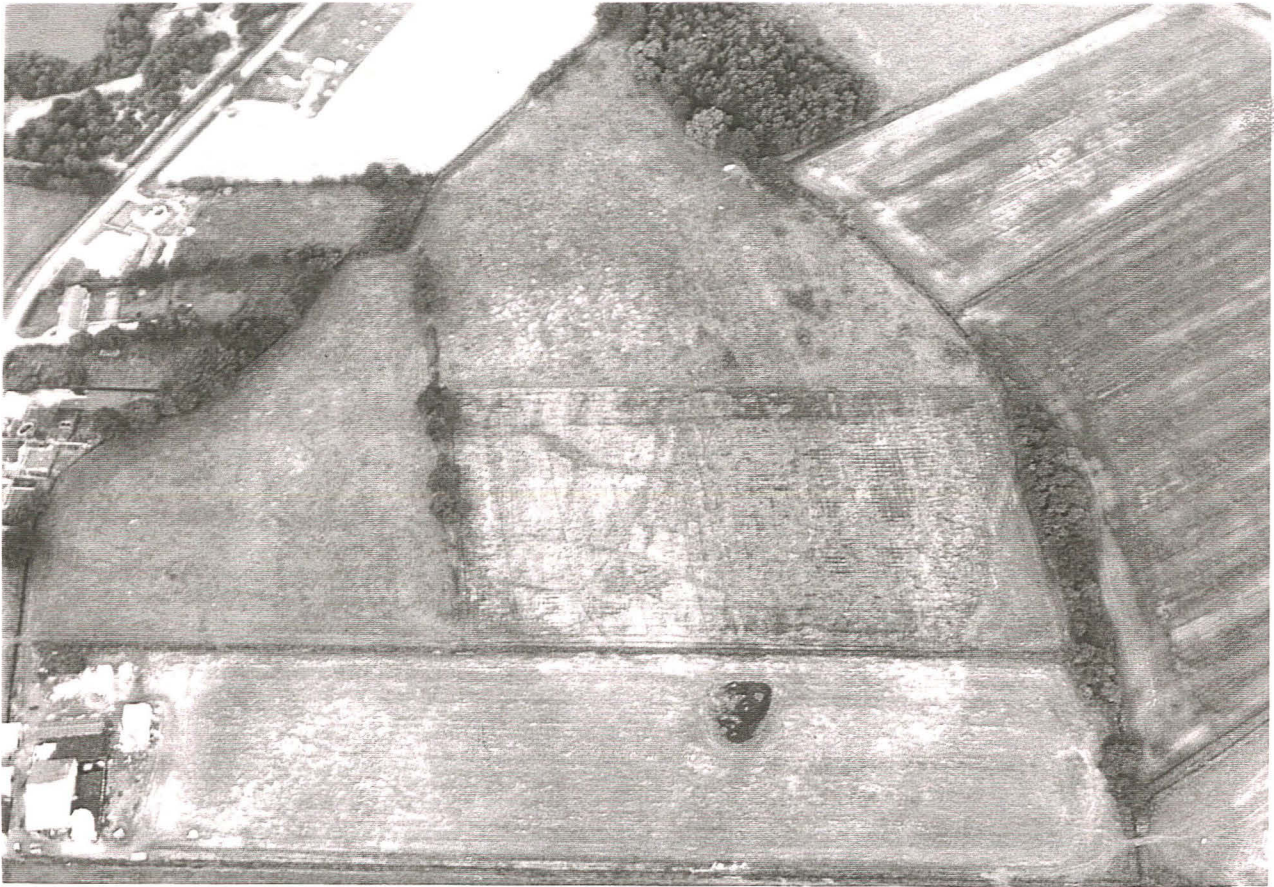


Fig. 4 Archaeological features observed during the watching brief  
(based on a reduced scale copy of a plan prepared by Robert  
Low [Chartered Architect] dwg. no. 9524.01B).



Pl. 1 The site during excavation of the foundation trenches (looking south to Sandy Lane).



**Pl. 2** Cropmarks visible in fields to the north and NE of the bungalow plot. Slight traces of unidentifiable ditch-type features, and part of a recent rectangular structure can be seen in the undeveloped roadside plot (centre left). Looking west; air photograph by P. Everson 21.7.1979; ref. 2960/35 [TF 205 653]. Copyright reserved.



**Pl. 3** Cropmarks of an early field system cut by Sandy Lane. The bungalow plot is the undeveloped strip near the right edge. Looking SW; air photograph by P. Everson 29.7.1979; ref. 2963/18 [TF 207 652]. Copyright reserved.



Pl. 4 Ditch 1 crossing the western trench. Looking west; scale divisions: v 0.2m, h 0.1m.

Pl. 5 Ditch 1 crossing the western trench. Looking east; scale divisions: v 0.2m, h 0.1m.







Pl. 6 East face of the western foundation trench; Ditch 1 crosses beneath the shovel (looking north).

Pl. 7 Post-medieval ditch 3 close to the centre of the north trench (looking north; scale divisions: v 0.2m, h 0.1m).





Pl. 8 Northern foundation trench, showing features cutting the southern face. Ditch 3 is marked by the photographic scales. Ditch 2 crosses in the foreground, and the dark fill of ?Pit 4 is visible in the background.