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Chapelgate, Gedney,
Lincolnshire
by
Heritage Lincolnshire

on behalf of
Kings Quality Homes.

Archaeological Evaluation
at
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SUMMARY

Between the 10th-14th August 1992 Heritage Lincolnshire undertook an evaluation of land at Chapelgate, Gedney, Lincolnshire (NGR TF4130 2450) on behalf of Kings Quality Homes in advance of residential development.

The evaluation was commissioned in order to establish whether any detectable remains of the manorial chapel, shown on this site on old Ordnance Survey maps, survived. The evaluation also attempted to establish whether any human burials were present on the site.

The evaluation was carried out in two phases:

1. A geophysical survey (resistivity) was conducted which located three anomalies which may have indicated the presence of buried archaeological features.

2. Trial trenches were dug to investigate the anomalies. Two of the trenches revealed buried features: an area of hard-standing or a trackway and a small pond or ditch. No evidence for surviving remains of the chapel, or the presence of human burials, was found.

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INTRODUCTION

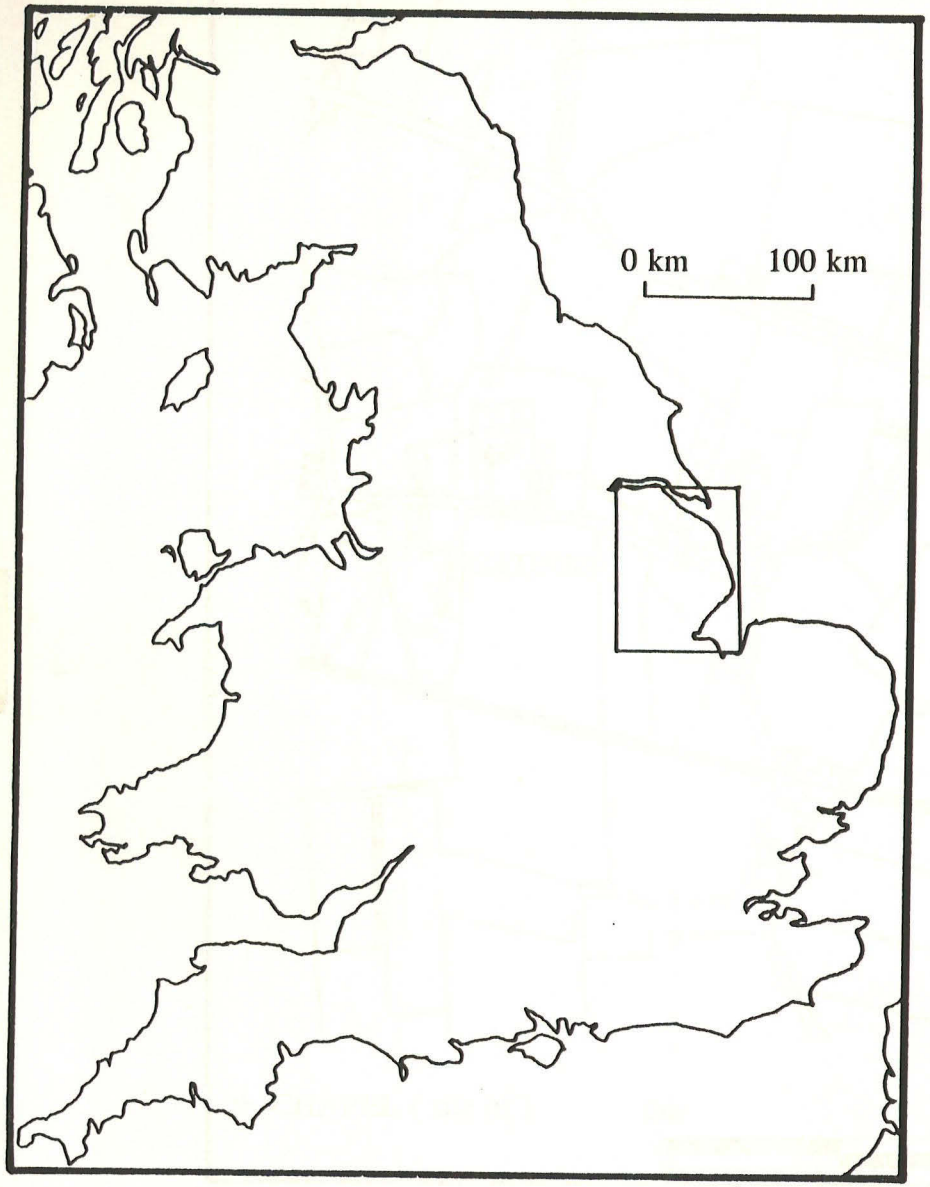
An archaeological evaluation, in advance of a proposed housing development, was carried out on 10-14th August 1992 on land at Kingsgate Gedney, in the area known as Chapelgate (see Figs. 1 and 2). The evaluation was commissioned by the Robert Doughty Practice, agents for the developer, Kings Quality Homes, and was carried out by a team of archaeologists from the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire.

At the time of the evaluation the land was in "set-aside" and very overgrown.

Archaeological Background

The Ordnance Survey show this site on the 1959 (provisional) edition of their 6 inch (1:10,560) map as being that of a chapel and mark the estimated position with a cross. Ordnance Survey are generally very accurate in their siting of monuments and the place-name, Chaplegate, confirms the location. "*Gate*" meaning a road. The chapel is assumed to be associated with the nearby manor and to date from the late medieval period. No records of the chapel are known and the reasons why the Ordnance Survey show it on this specific site are unclear.

The proposed development affected the assumed site of the chapel and may also have disturbed any associated burials. The evaluation was carried out to assess the likelihood of archaeological and human remains being encountered and to minimise the effect of unexpected discoveries of human burials holding up the construction works programme.



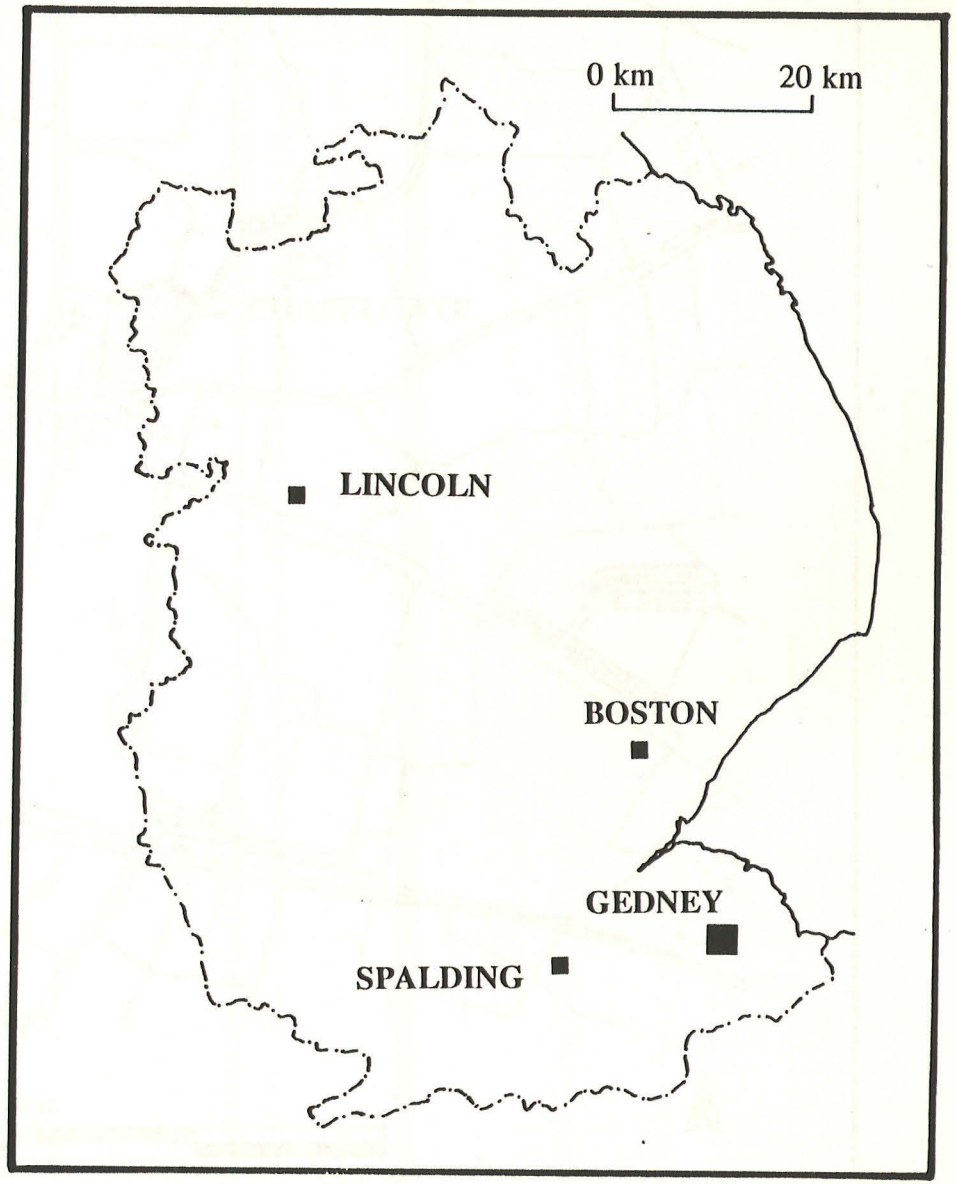


FIG.1 LOCATION OF GEDNEY

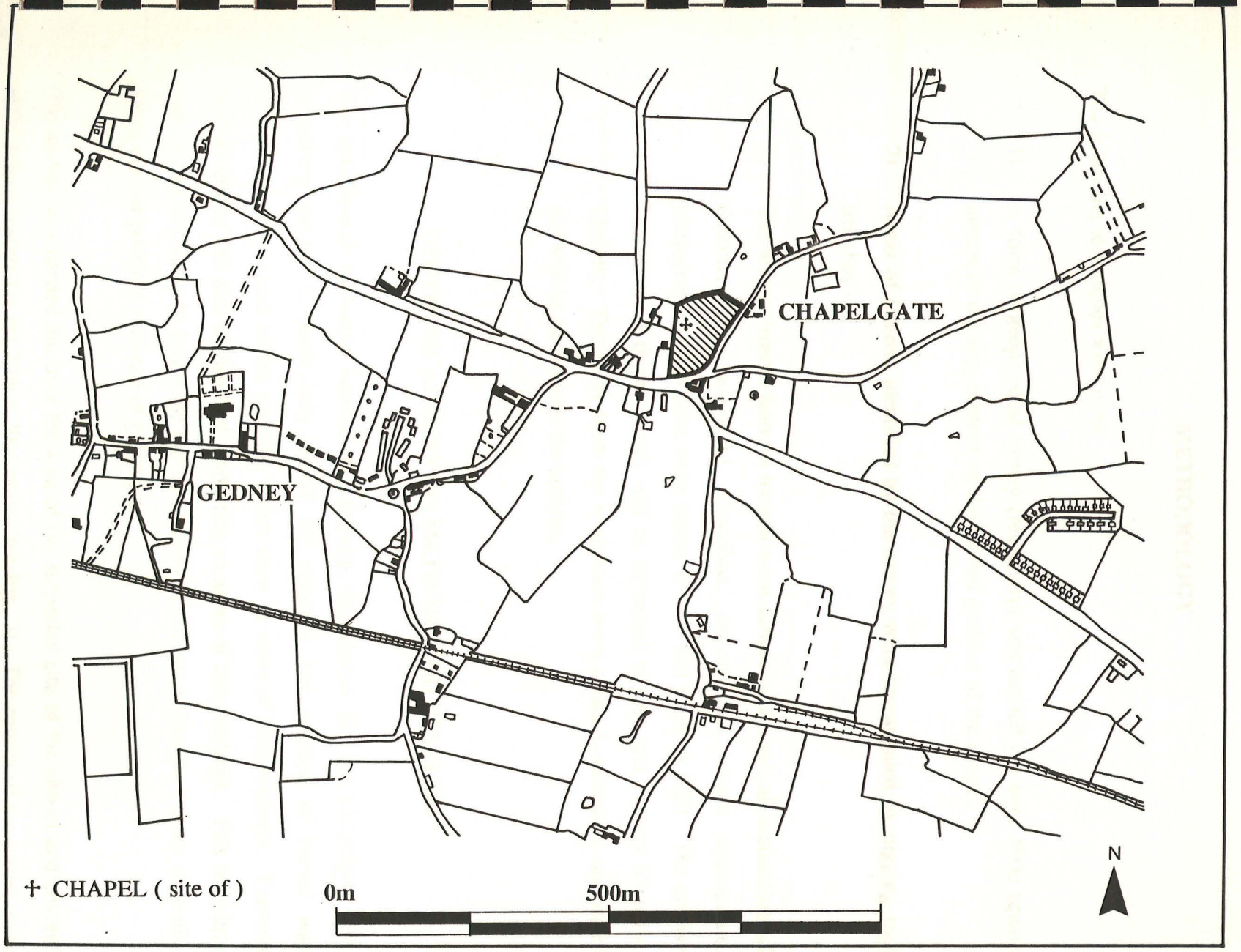


FIG.2 SITE LOCATION PLAN

METHODOLOGY

The following techniques were used:

1) A form of geophysical survey (resistivity) was carried out over 4000 square metres of the site, centred on the plotted position of the chapel.

2) Areas of interest identified by the survey were investigated by digging trial trenches.

3) The archaeological features located were sample excavated: all archaeological deposits were numbered, described, drawn and, where appropriate, photographed. Sections were drawn at 1:10 and plans at 1:20. The archive created from these records will be deposited at City and County Museum, Lincoln. The finds from the evaluation were cleaned, examined and dated and will be stored with the archive.

GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY: METHODS AND RESULTS.

The geophysical technique known as resistivity was chosen for the Chapelgate site. Resistivity survey is particularly useful for detecting the position of buried wall foundations, floors and rubble spreads, which show as areas of high readings. Features such as graves can also be detected, appearing as areas of low readings. This technique was chosen primarily to locate the buried remains of the chapel but the results were also examined for possible evidence of grave pits.

The survey was carried out over the area of the suspected site of the chapel and covered 4000 square meters (as ten 20m x 20m grids - see Fig. 3). The results of the survey were computer processed as dot density plots using Geoplot software. The dot density plots

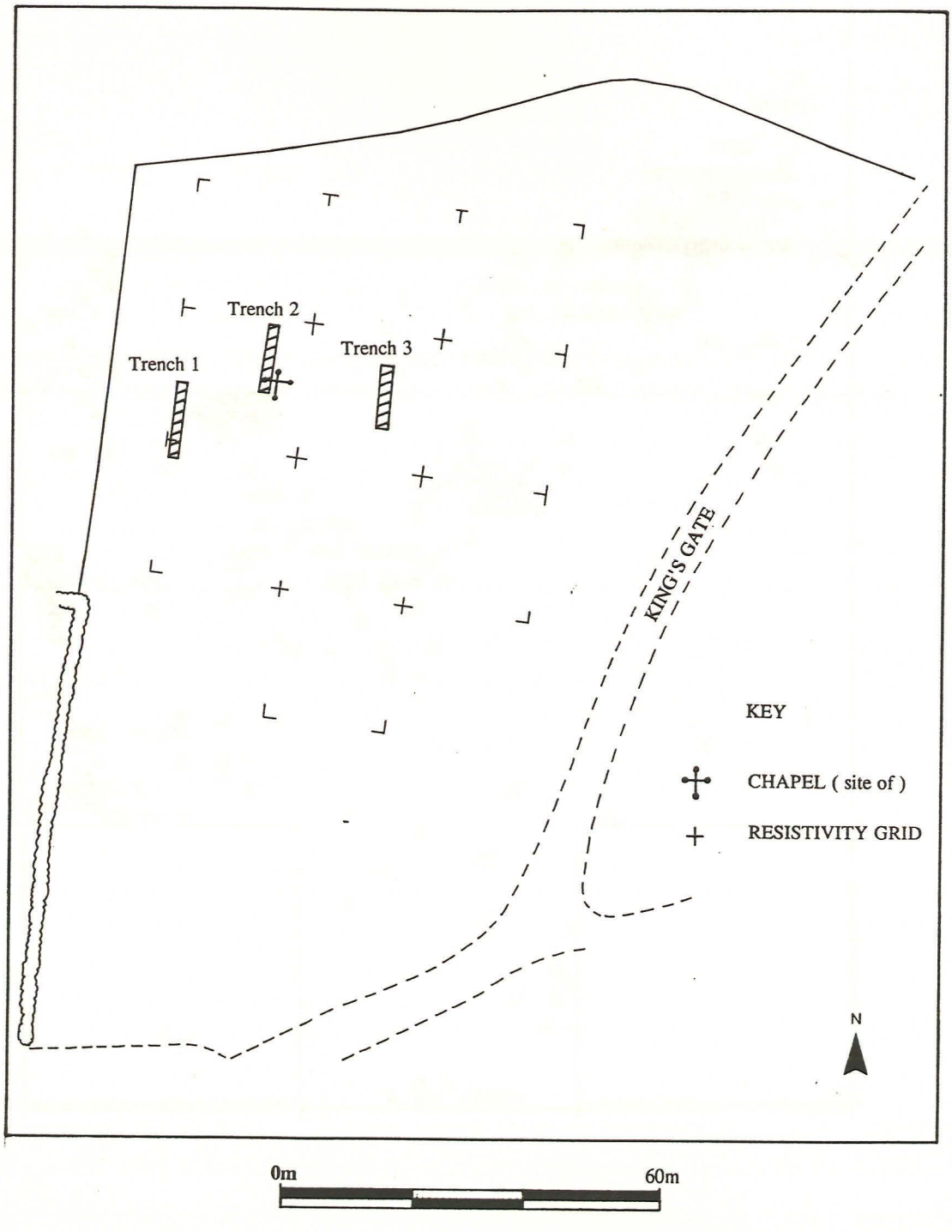


FIG. 3 LOCATION OF RESISTIVITY GRID AND TRIAL TRENCHES

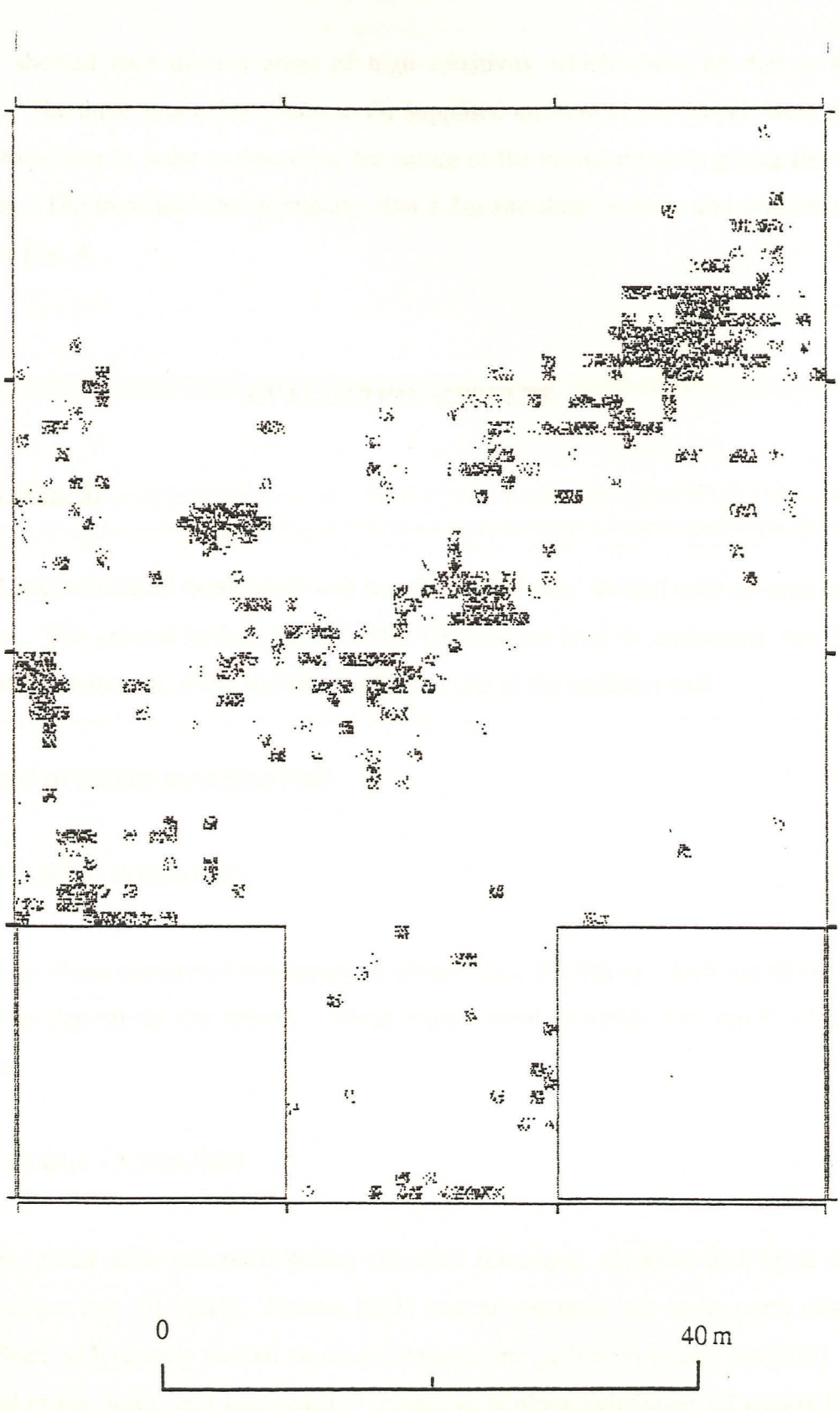


FIG.4 RESISTIVITY PLOT

(Fig. 4) showed four distinct areas of high resistivity which could be due to buried masonry. The three anomalies closest to the supposed location of the chapel were chosen for trial trenching in order to determine the nature of the buried deposits giving rise to the anomalies. The trenches were nominally 10m x 2m and their position and orientation are shown on Fig. 4.

EVALUATION RESULTS.

Trench 1 (Fig. 5)

Trench 1 was orientated north-south and was 12.4m x 1.5m, located over an area of high resistivity. The ground surface lay at 3.54m OD and the limit of excavation was 2.80m OD at the southern end of the trench, and 2.96m OD at the northern end.

Five phases of activity were identified:

Phase 1: (2.84m - 3.04m OD).

The earliest phase comprised two layers of clayey silts, [017/024] which lay above [018] the earliest deposit in the trench. These layers were probably the result of natural deposition.

Phase 2: (3.04m - 3.20m OD).

A feature, filled with yellowish brown silt with limestone, charcoal and brick flecks, [021], was cut into [017/024]. Feature [021] was subsequently cut on its north side by a feature filled with densely packed crushed limestone and yellowish brown silt [020]. This fill sloped to the north, and was possibly indicative of slumping/tipping of material. The

purpose of these cuts is unknown: their fills suggest, however, that they had been deliberately backfilled.

Phase 3: (3.24m OD).

Feature [022] ran east-west across the trench and was 3.6m wide and 0.28m thick. It consisted of very densely packed reddish brown crushed brick and reddish brown fine silt -possibly finely crushed ceramic building material. The sides of the feature were very straight and almost vertical, with half-bat bricks concentrated towards the southern edge of the feature, although no discernible structure or pattern could be seen. The material was so compacted that no slumping was seen in section or in plan. The surface of [022] was level with no evidence to suggest it had been demolished or truncated in any way. Topsoil [015] lay around the edges and the top surface of the feature, indicating that the feature was not trench built.

Phase 4: (3.04m OD).

In section, a possible feature was seen cutting [024], with a poorly defined southern edge running northwest-southeast across the trench. It was backfilled with [023], a greyish brown clayey silt containing crushed ceramic building material, limestone flecks and pebbles, and charcoal flecks which lay in lenses, possibly indicative of tip-lines. At the southern end of the trench, [016] was deposited against the south side of [021].

Phase 5:

The most recent phase was represented by the accumulation of topsoil [015] across the whole site.

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TRENCH 1 W. FACING

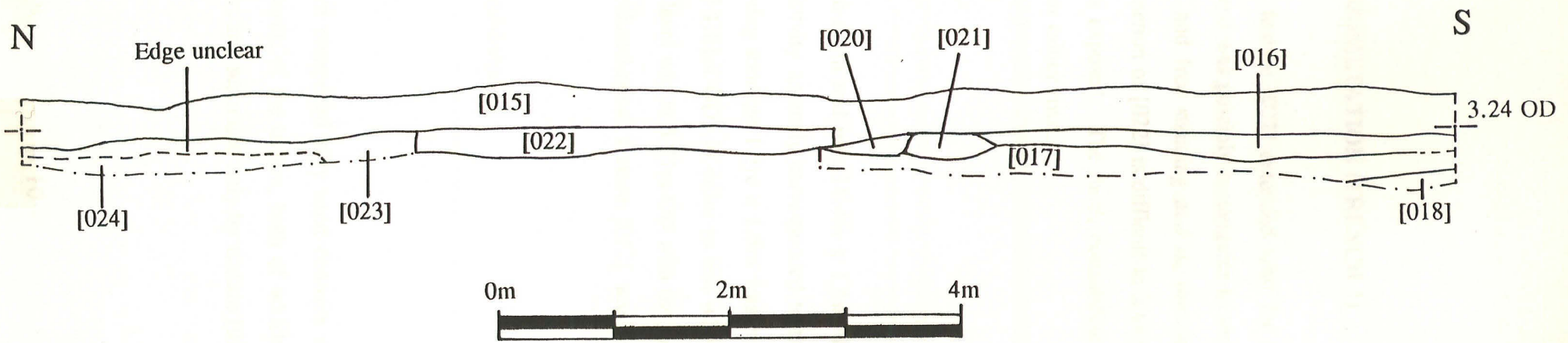

FIG. 5 TRENCH 1

INTERPRETATION (TRENCH 1)

On the resistivity survey plots, feature [022] extended west for approximately 4 - 5m. beyond the edge of the trench, and was possibly rectangular in shape. The feature seems to have been well consolidated and free standing and is, therefore, unlikely to be the remains of foundations. The function of [022] is difficult to interpret as only a relatively small sample of the feature was exposed. The hard, consolidated nature of the feature may suggest some sort of track or minor road.

Trench 2 (Fig. 6 A)

This trench was orientated north-south and was 11.4m x 1.5m, located over an area of high resistivity. This high resistivity anomaly corresponded to the supposed location of the former chapel. A machine-dug sondage 1.3m x 1.5m was excavated at the northern end of the trench to a depth of 1.81m OD, in order to test whether any archaeological deposits were present. Ground level was at 3.21m OD with the limit of excavation in the trench at 2.65m OD. One archaeological feature [012] was found, which was half-sectioned north-south.

Seven phases of activity were established:

Phase 1: (2.65m - 2.85m OD).

The earliest phase in this trench comprised silty sand deposits with [007] lying to the south, and [011] lying to the north, of the trench, both of which were natural deposits. These deposits were very similar, and separated only by feature [012].

Phase 2: (2.85m O)D.

Feature [012] cut layers [007] and [011]. It was at least 6.34m wide and was excavated to a depth of 1.97m before safety regulations precluded further investigation. Its northern side was well defined and straight sided while the southern side had a gently concave break of slope, becoming steeper towards the limit of excavation. The depth of the feature was not determined.

Phase 3:

Feature [012] was filled with [019], [013] and [008]. [019] was a greyish sandy silt containing a moderate abundance of snail shells. Above [019] lay [013], a brown clayey silt with occasional limestone and fragments of building material. Fill [008] was a reddish brown rubble layer with fragments of floor tile, brick, and roof tile. Fills [019] and [013] suggest they may have accumulated naturally, however, the nature of [008] suggests deliberate backfilling and this layer has two possible interpretations, which are discussed below.

Phase 4: (2.95m OD, base 2.35m OD).

The feature was re-cut, into the northern extent of the fill removing all but the southern portion of [008] and probably truncating [013]. The southern edge of the re-cut is steeper than the northern edge.

Phase 5: (2.93m OD).

The re-cut was deliberately backfilled with crushed limestone and ceramic building material [010]. The upper fill [009] comprised silt with frequent limestone inclusions and occasional flat sandstone fragments.

Phase 6: (2.93m - 3.05m OD).

The re-cut and remnant fills [008] and [013], were sealed by a layer of silt containing limestone and ceramic building material fragments [014]. This layer was contained by the northern edge of cut [012].

Phase 7: (3.05 - 3.21m OD).

Accumulation of topsoil [006] across the whole trench.

INTERPRETATION (TRENCH 2)

From the resistivity survey, feature [012] extends for a maximum of 2m either side of the trench limits. If the feature is a ditch, then it is not very extensive. It may be a sub-circular feature, perhaps a pond, if the limits shown on the resistivity survey are taken into account. Fills [008] and [010] contained a very high proportion of crushed limestone and crushed brick building material, which differs from the other fills. Fills [008] and [010] may, therefore, be indicative of demolition debris, possibly from structures in the immediate area. The limestone and brick fragments from these fills are very small measuring 30-100mm in diameter, and may have been used as hard-core to stabilise the back-filling of feature [012], either once it had gone out of use, or when its function was changed.

Ditch [012] had at least one re-cut, as discussed above. The nature of the southern side of the "ditch", and the nature of [008], which contains much more rubble and building debris than [019] and [013], may indicate another interpretation (Fig. 6B). The southern edge could indicate a first re-cut, running between [008] and [007], the base of which forms the interface between [008] and [013]. If this edge represents the first re-cut, then fill [008] is the fill of this re-cut, and [013] would be the fill of ditch [012] prior to any re-cutting. It

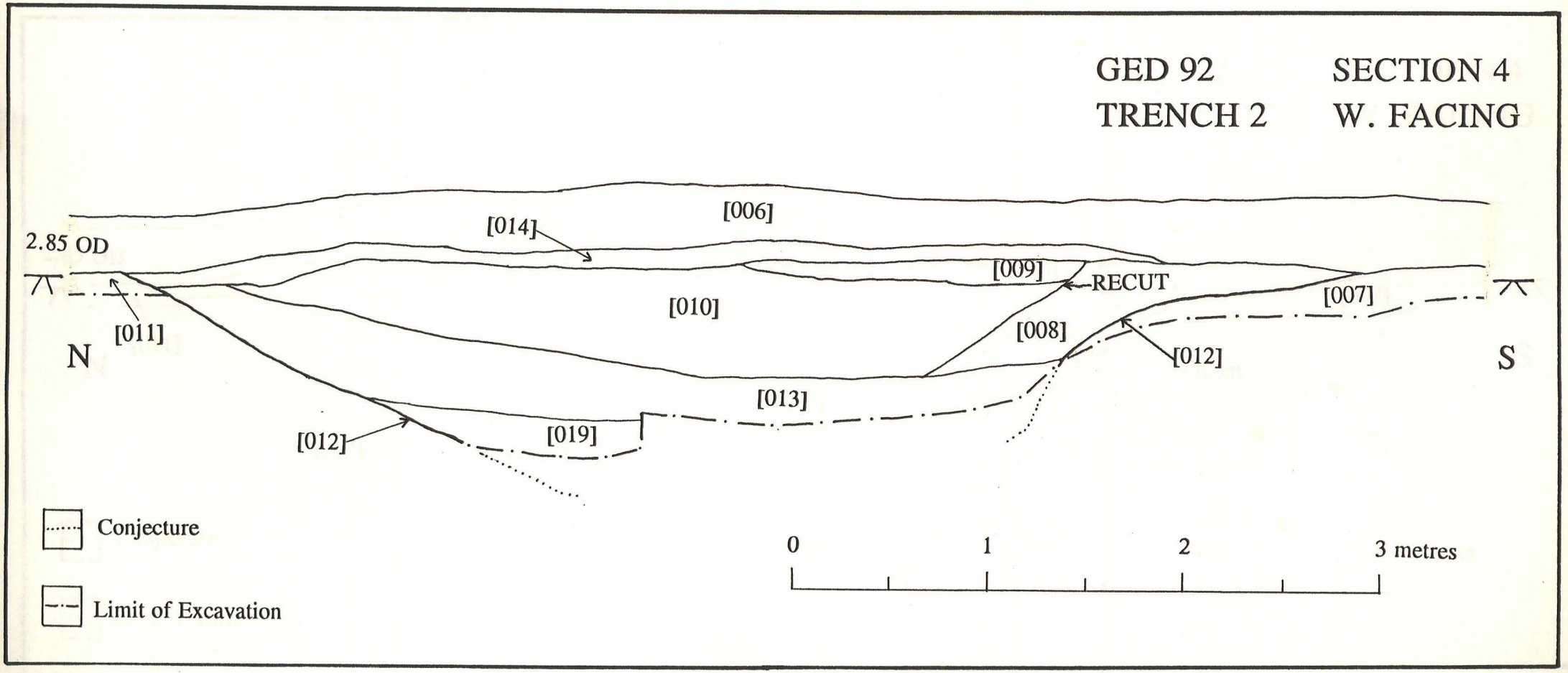

FIG. 6A Interpretation 1 Ditch cut [012]

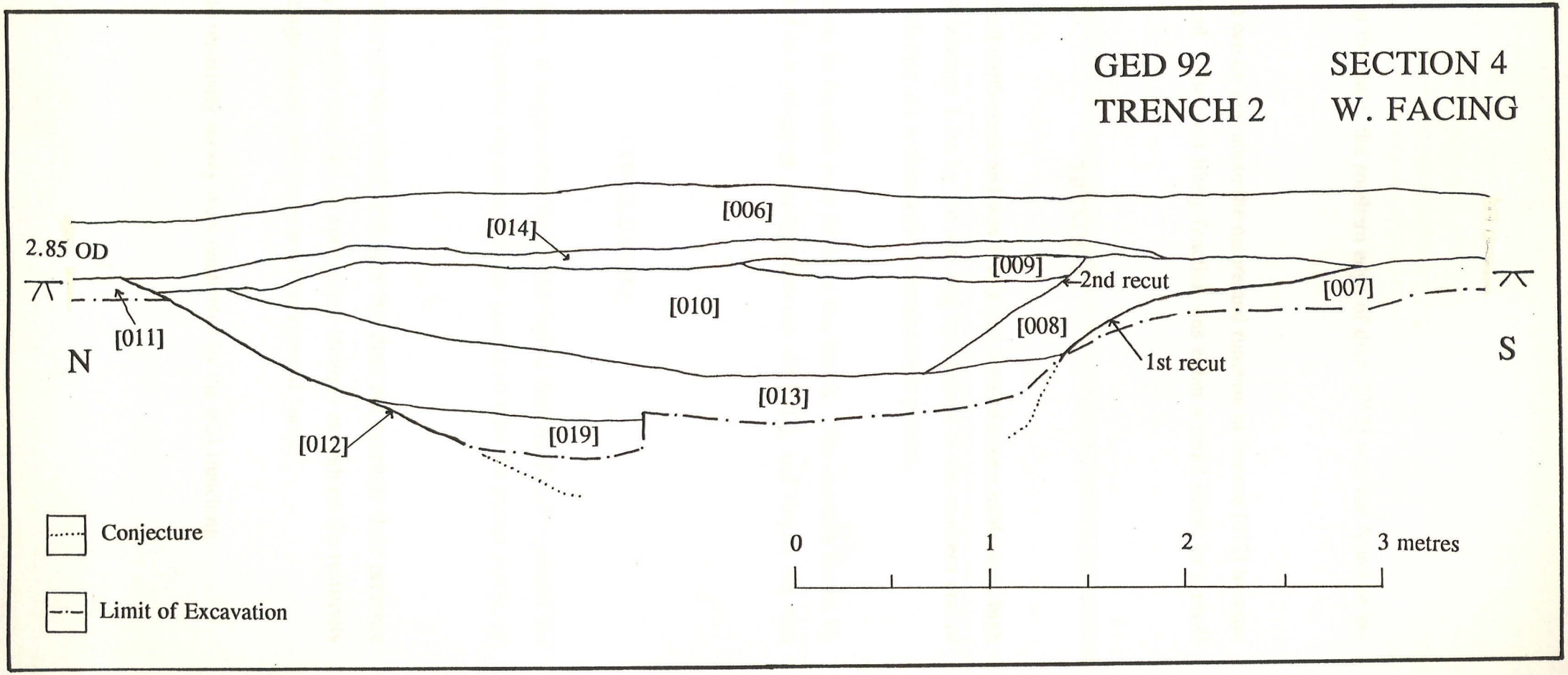

FIG. 6B Interpretation 2 Ditch cut [012]

follows therefore that in this case, the southern edge of ditch [012] was not found in the evaluation.

In conclusion very little can be said about the nature and function of feature [012] because of the small area sampled. The most likely function was either a small ditch, or a small pond.

TRENCH 3

This trench was orientated north-south and was 11m x 2m, located over a moderately high resistivity anomaly. A sondage 1.5m by 2m was dug by machine at the southern end of the trench to establish whether any archaeological remains were present.

No archaeological features or deposits were found in this trench. The anomaly shown by the survey corresponded to a change in geology between silt [002], and clayish silt with orange mottles [003].

CONCLUSIONS

1) There is no evidence to suggest that the archaeological features found represent the chapel. They may however represent features associated with the manor house, or its estate.

2) No evidence for burials was found, although this does not preclude their presence on the site. It is possible that they do not register strongly enough on the resistivity survey to be distinguishable from the general background "noise".

3) The results of the resistivity survey were confirmed by the trial trenching.

4) The date and purpose of the ditch/pond [012], and the hard-core surface [022] could not be established.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The evaluation examined the area pinpointed by Ordnance Survey as the location of the medieval chapel and has shown that its presence in this area is unlikely. However, the place-name evidence cannot be denied and not all the area proposed for the development has been evaluated. It is therefore, recommended that an archaeologist be present to observe deep trenching operations (e.g. deep footings or service trenches) on the remainder of the site.

Acknowledgements

Heritage Lincolnshire wish to acknowledge Kings Quality Homes for funding the evaluation, the Robert Doughty Practice for assisting in the preparation of the work, and the site team who undertook the evaluation

APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF CONTEXTS

Context	Trench	Description
001	3	Dark brown clayey silt
002	3	Light yellowish brown silt
003	3	Grey clayey silt, orange mottles
004	3	Light brown sand, orange mottles
005	3	Dark brownish grey clay
006	2	Dark brown clayey silt, bone, Building material fragments.
007	2	Light yellowish brown silty sand
008	2	Reddish brown silt, much rubble
009	2	Brown silt, frequent limestone fragments.
010	2	Crushed limestone fragments.
011	2	Light yellowish brown silty sand
012	2	Cut, possible ditch
013	2	Brown clayey silt
014	2	Greyish brown clayey silt
015	1	Dark yellowish brown, brick and Limestone fragments.
016	1	Light yellowish brown silt
017	1	Light yellowish brown clayey silt, limestone and brick fragments.
018	1	Dark grey brown clayey silt
019	2	Grey sandy silt, brown streaks, some snail shells included
020	1	Light grey brown silt, abundant crushed limestone.
021	1	Light yellowish brown silt, charcoal and brick fragments.
022	1	Reddish brown crushed/pounded ceramic

		building material.
023	1	Light greyish brown clayey silt
024	1	Light grey brown clayey silt