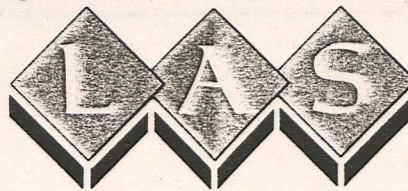


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# LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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

## Waddingham to Hamilton Hills (Lincs.)

Mains Replacement Scheme

### Archaeological Monitoring in Osgodby (near Park Farm, Usselby)

NGR: TF 0981 9312

Site Code: OPF 96  
LCNCC Museum Accn. No. 175.96

Report prepared for Anglian Water Services Ltd.

January 1997

Lincolnshire County Council

Administrative Services

Lincolnshire Council

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7.2.97

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# **Waddingham to Hamilton Hills (Lincs.)**

## **Mains Replacement Scheme:**

### **Archaeological Monitoring near Park Farm, Usselby**

NGR: TF 0981 9312

Site Code: OPF 96

LCNCC Museum Accn. No. 175.96

#### **Summary**

*A watching brief during trenching across the private lane leading from the A46 to Wood Cottage, Osgodby found no trace of a Roman road previously reported at this point. Post-medieval layers beneath the road appeared to be associated with the lane; prior to construction of the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway a road to Claxby followed this course. The A46 Caistor-Market Rasen road was found to be constructed on a spread of limestone lumps (almost certainly of post-medieval date) and this may have prompted the original identification.*

#### **Introduction**

Lindsey Archaeological Services (LAS) was commissioned by Anglian Water in November 1996 to conduct a watching brief of trenching for a 225mm diameter replacement water main along part of the A46 Lincoln - Caistor road (Fig. 1). The archaeological monitoring had been requested by the Lincolnshire County Archaeological Section because of records of a Roman road known from aerial photographs and local information. It was thought that details of the road construction might be revealed in the pipe trench faces.

The first inspection visit by the author was made on December 2nd 1996, but because of ground conditions trenching of the specified area was not completed until January 13th 1997; a total of 7 visits were made by LAS. Initial plans to lay the pipe by directional drilling were changed to open cutting across the specified area when a major culvert was encountered.

#### **Archaeological Background**

A Roman road between Owmbly and Claxby has been asserted by several authorities and local inhabitants since the early 19th century (Fig. 1). The recorded information consists of a number of observations made at different locations which may represent road metalling. The surveyed straightness of Roman roads has prompted the linking of these observations by straight lengths of parish boundary, field boundaries, road, tracks and paths. More recently air photographic records have been studied for linear soil or cropmarks in the appropriate position.

The road was listed by Margary in 1973 as part of a road diverging from Ermine Street at Owmbly Cliff through Osgodby to Usselby (Road 274). The nine mile stretch of road had been shown on the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain and reference was made to information recorded by OS fieldworkers (Margary 1973, 242). At Owmbly Cliff Farm a thick belt of



metalling had been noted and it was apparently also visible over fields on Osgodby Moor. It passed about 0.4km south of Osgodby village, and then along the east street in Normanby. East of the village its line continued along hedgerows; NW of West Rasen it crossed Dale Stream at Dale Bridge, perhaps on a terraced strip of land. It crossed the A46 Caistor - Market Rasen road 0.4km south of Usselby, again marked by hedgerows. To the east its course was conjectured to climb the Wolds near Claxby and join Caistor High Street.

The road alignment, from TF 0810 9230 to TF 1120 9420, is included in the Lincolnshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR 50577) with reference to these authorities.

During the enclosure of Osgodby Moor in the early 19th century, sections of paving were observed by J. Cragg; in 1929 C.W. Phillips recorded other sections south of Cote Hill Farm, Osgodby. Immediately south of Usselby, further sections of road were noted by A. Sharpe in 1913. This alignment has been extended to the east: D. Jones suggested it continued in the line of the track to Wood Cottage. The road, described as supposedly of chalk and visible as a cropmark and soilmark from the ground, then 'follows a dog-leg course to the Otby Beck, then straight to connect with Normanby Rise on the outskirts of Claxby' (Jones 1988, 28). Archaeological finds of Romano-British date have been found along the suggested alignment at Osgodby, and a pottery industry is known on Otby Moor.

No linear cropmark features of a road in this position have been plotted by the RCHM(E) Lincolnshire Mapping Project on Sheet TF 09 SE, although Jones suggested that a road was perhaps discernible as a lighter cropmark on air photographs.

#### **The Watching Brief** (Fig. 2)

The junction of the lanes and the A46 was visited at irregular intervals when the contractors expected to mole or trench across the specified area. Although works initially approached from the south, the crossing was eventually trenched after the pipe had been laid on either side. Trenching was with a JCB to a depth of about 1.2m. Limited access was possible for safety reasons. Observations have been numbered for ease of reference in this report.

#### **North of the track**

1. A short length of trench was excavated in the A46 verge north of the track to Wood Cottage in order to locate existing services (Pl. 1). The trench was 0.9m wide and positioned between 1m and 1.5m from the edge of the main road, 20m north of the centre of the track to Wood Cottage and on the edge of the existing ditch. Brown loam containing twigs and other organic remains was visible in the SW and NE corners to a depth of 1.05m below the ground surface (Pl. 2). This deposit was interpreted as the comparatively recent backfill of a ditch closer to the road, mostly filled with detritus from the adjacent plantation. This ditch is unlikely to have been medieval or earlier.



2. The pipe trench was excavated to a width of 0.35m and a depth of 1.25m at the eastern edge of the main road north of the track. Part of this trench clipped the eastern edge of the foundation for the Caistor to Market Rasen road, a layer 0.2m thick of rough chalk blocks 0.3m below the modern tarmac surface (Pl. 3). This was only present on the western side of the trench.

Closer to the track, the trench was sited slightly further east and cut exclusively through the verge.

#### **Across the track to Wood Cottage (Pls. 4-7)**

3. The modern tarmac surface of the lane is 0.03m thick, overlying a black silty material 0.04m thick. This covers a thin layer of yellow sand 0.06m thick which is in turn above a similar depth of black soil (Pl. 5). These bands seem to have formed during a sustained period of minor use, either as re-surfacing or as wash of soil from adjacent land.

Beneath these thin layers is at least one layer of deliberate road construction material, exhibiting a distinct camber about 3.5m wide (Pl. 6). The upper layer is 0.25m thick, comprised of post-medieval brick rubble, sand and small pieces of limestone or chalk. It overlies 0.12m of compact grey silt which may represent a buried ground surface; a fragment of a post-medieval brick was found stratified beneath this layer (Pl. 7). Below this are layers of light yellow sand, brown peaty sand and coarse sand seen in the trench to the north, probably the sequence of natural deposits. At 1.1m from the surface, another small piece of brick was seen in the trench face within the coarse sand layer. This was also post-medieval; it is suspected to have been moved from a higher layer and pressed into the soft material by the machine bucket.

#### **South of the lane**

4. To the south of the lane the trench was cut into the verge. Here it cut through a thick yellow sand deposit beneath the topsoil (Pl. 8). The contractors reported similar ground to the south. Underneath the yellow sand was a brown sand which extended beneath the trench base.

#### **Discussion**

The respective dates of the two lanes previously thought to reuse the line of the Roman road have been researched as part of this project. This research has included the examination of maps and other documents in the Lincolnshire Archives Office and the Lincoln Central Library Local Collection.

The earliest map located was the 1806 Tithe Award of Kirkby-cum-Osgodby (LAO KcOPC 1806). This plan shows the Caistor-Rasen road as 50ft wide [15.25m], with 40ft wide [12.2m] roads to Usselby, Walesby and Claxby. The Claxby road is marked apparently in the same position as the modern lane to Wood Cottage, with a straight field boundary alignment extending to the SW.

By the date of the 1893 revision of the Ordnance Survey 1:63,360 map the former Claxby road had declined to a lane extending as far as two buildings



(probably Wood Cottage) with a field boundary marked as far as the Manchester, Sheffield and Lincolnshire Railway line (OS 1893).

It seems likely that when the railway was constructed (1845-48) the necessary embankment close to the stream blocked the course of the road to Claxby and a diversion was constructed to the south, together with Usselby Station (Wright 1982). Road metalling which has been noticed between Wood Cottage and Claxby is quite probably part of that blocked road which continued in use until the mid-19th century.

The western track was not marked on the 1806 plan but a field boundary extended from the road to a narrow plantation.

The remaining, unsatisfactorily answered, question is whether the series of apparently aligned field boundaries and parish boundary reflect an extensive archaeological feature or a coincident pattern of land use. To some extent, the line of boundaries may mark the limit of wet ground to the south of a small stream which flows from Usselby Moor towards Osgodby village. The Cottage at Osgodby is the building marked closest to the stream on the OS 2nd edn. 1:2500 map, and this straddles the supposed Roman road course.

On the 1893 map a stream is marked crossing the main Caistor to Rasen road just south of the road to Usselby Station, probably as a ford. It is possible that this watercourse has been culverted along the eastern side of the road and diverted under the A46 at the junction with the tracks to Wood Cottage and Park Farm. To the west of the road, the stream has an abrupt change in course which seems unnatural in view of the sandy drift geology. This part of the watercourse may have been artificially deflected to the south to share a common culvert with its lesser tributary.

It may be that during construction of the culvert beneath the main road the chalk rubble foundation was seen and gave credence to the Roman road theory. The A46 Market Rasen to Caistor road does not seem to have been a turnpiked road but clearly was well constructed.

### **Conclusion**

No trace of a metalled Roman road or contemporary remains was revealed when the pipe trench was monitored. The tarmac track leading to Wood Cottage overlay a series of deposits containing brick fragments which seemed to have been laid for an earlier track very slightly to the north of the present track.

Although this watching brief found no evidence of a Roman road, this demonstration that a road here survived until last century does not dismiss the possibility that it was the successor to a Roman route. It is suggested, however, that the alignment of boundaries could represent a natural junction between tractable and wet ground alongside a small stream.

### **Acknowledgements**

LAS was grateful to Anglian Water Services Ltd., particularly Bill Wadsworth (Assistant Conservation Scientist), and John Turner for initial liaison and for copies of the plan. Co-operation was also received from their contractors, Morrison Construction and particularly the Site Engineer Mick Wright.

Information and access to air photographic data was also provided by the County Archaeology Section and the Sites and Monuments Record staff.

Monitoring visits for this pipe trench were also made by Pre-Construct Archaeology. LAS appreciated the co-operation received from Colin Palmer-Brown and René Mouraille.

The author would like to thank Naomi Field for assisting with the monitoring of this project, Mick McDaid and Jane Frost for preparing illustrations, and Jane Frost for producing and collating this report.

Geoff Tann  
Lindsey Archaeological Services  
30th January 1997

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### **Archive Summary**

Anglian Water plans  
field sketch plans and sections  
annotated maps  
photographs  
correspondence



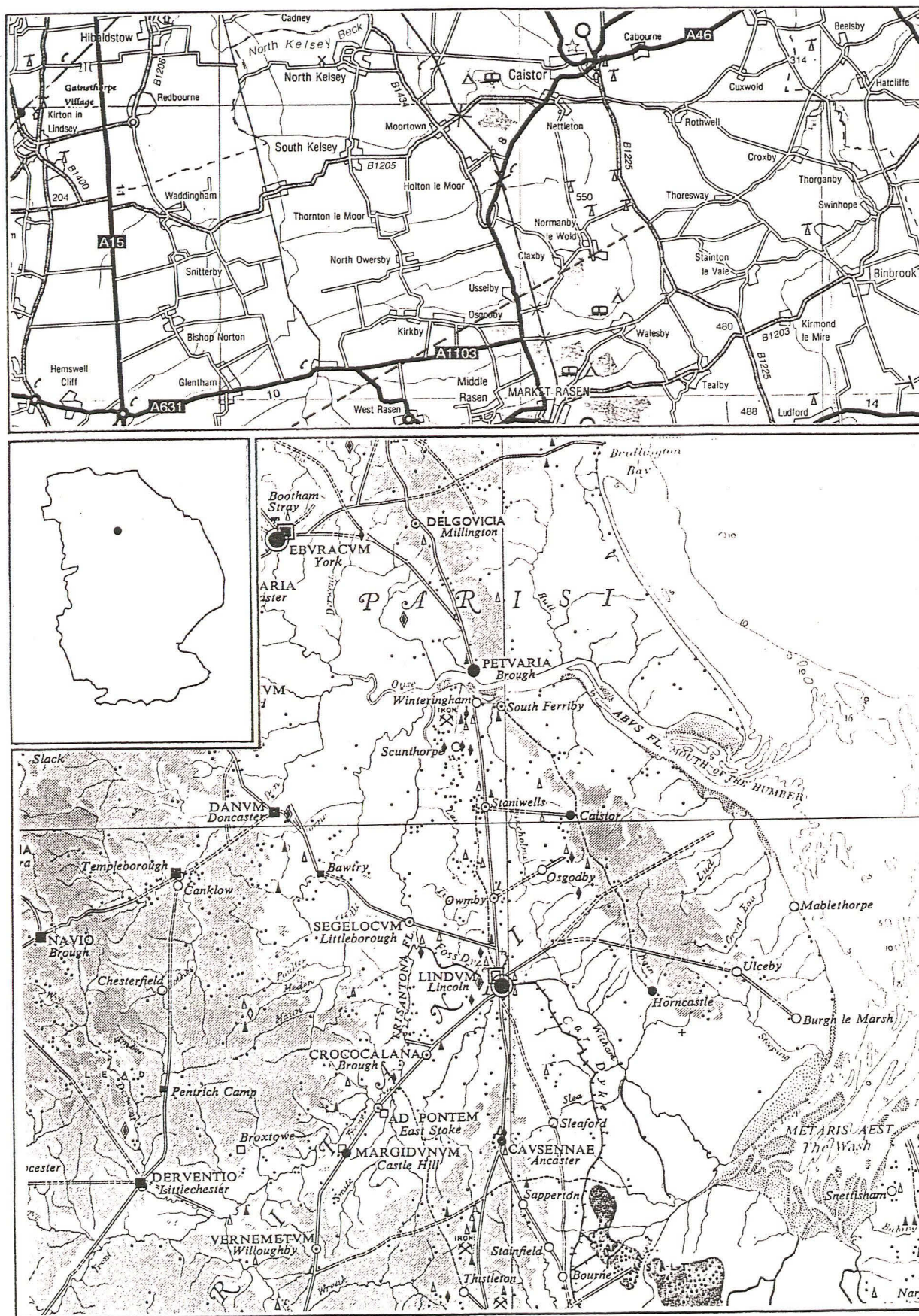


Fig. 1 Location of the monitored area, also showing the suggested Roman Road at Osgodby as marked on the Ordnance Survey Map of Roman Britain (3rd edn. 1956). Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 50424A.



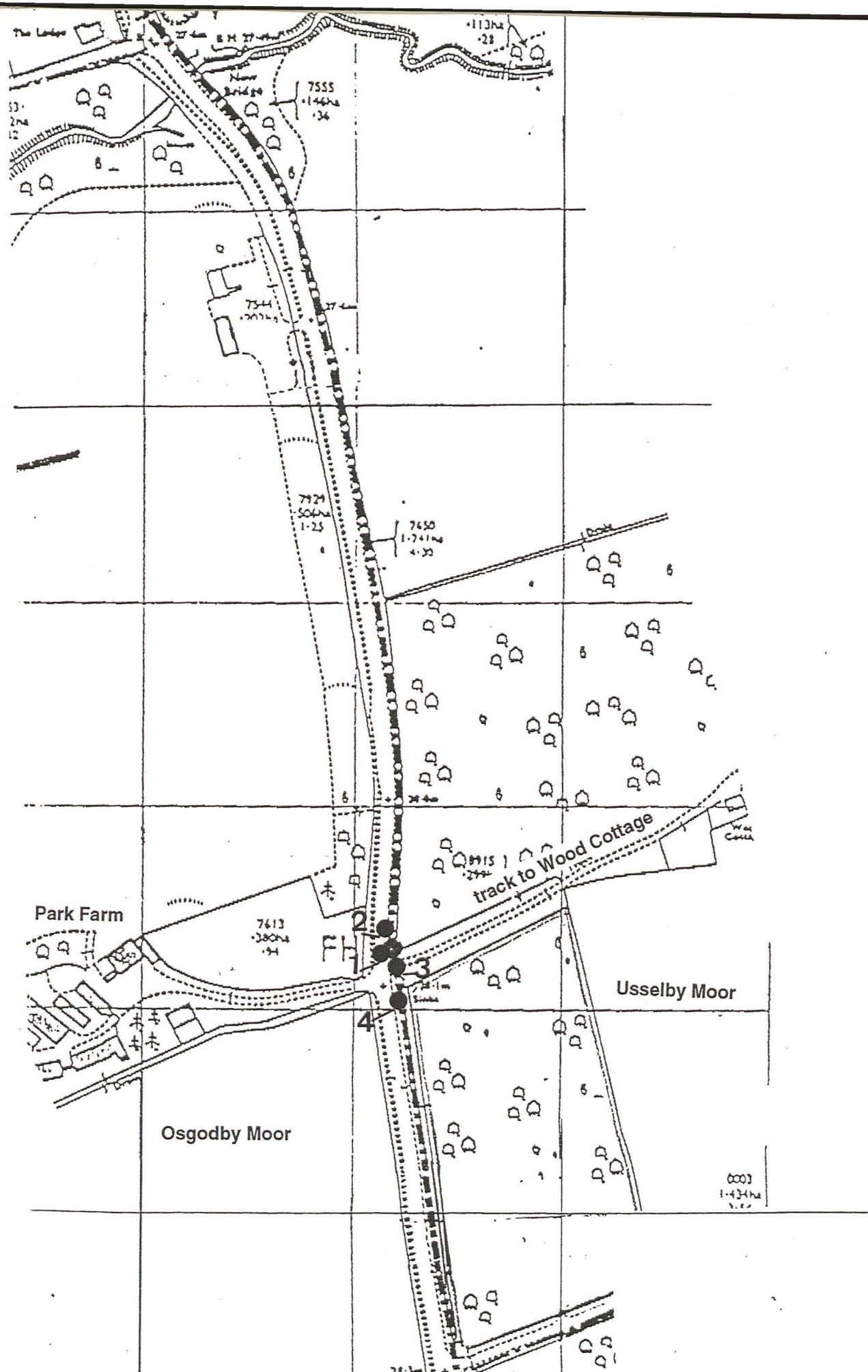


Fig. 2 The pipeline route, showing area monitored and the location of the observations noted in the text. (Based on the 1:2500 plan supplied by Anglian Water [dwg. no. 9344006, Copyright reserved]. LAS OS Licence no. AL 50424A).

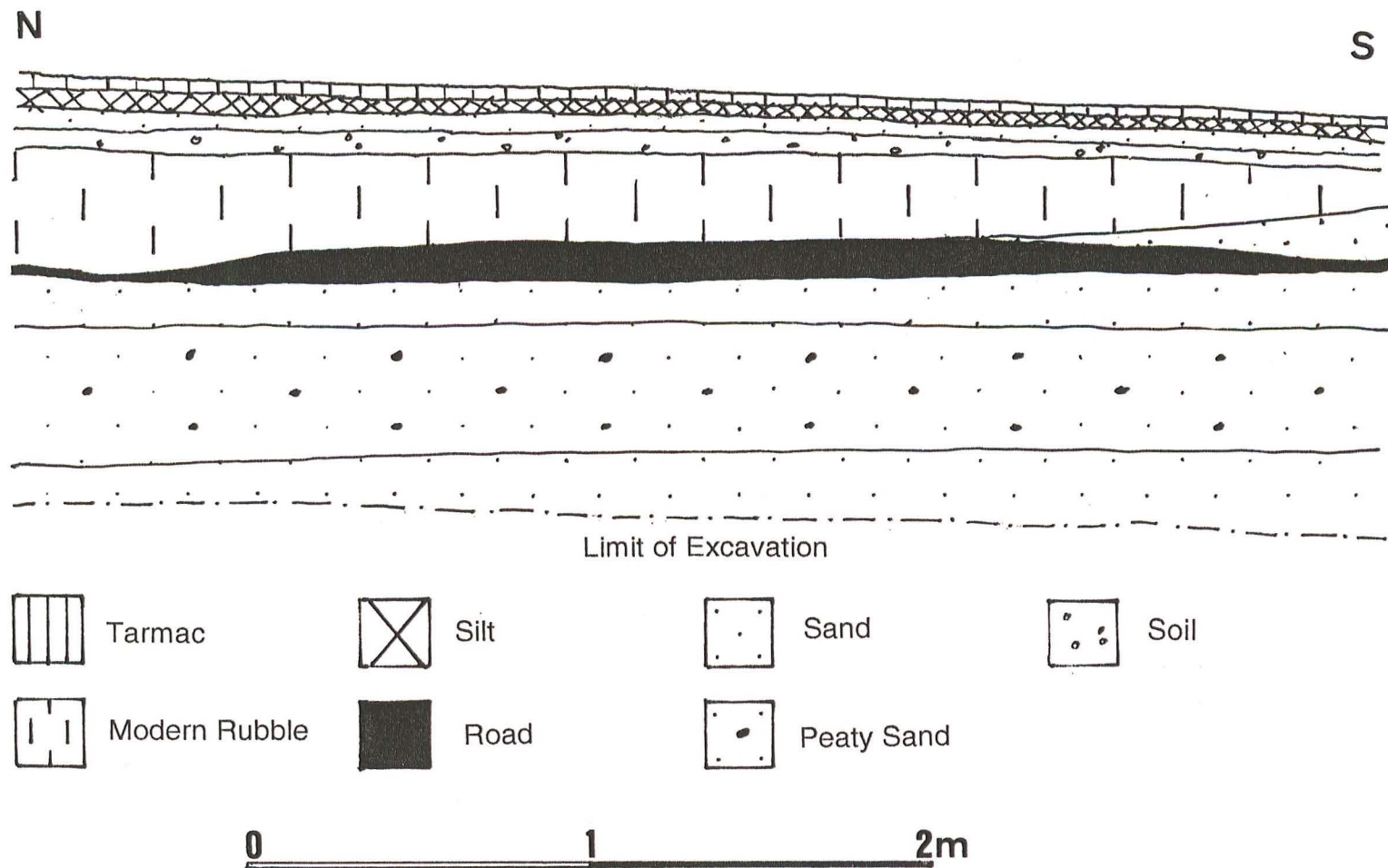


Fig. 3 Section across the post-medieval lane and lower deposits revealed in the trench face (McDaid and Tann).

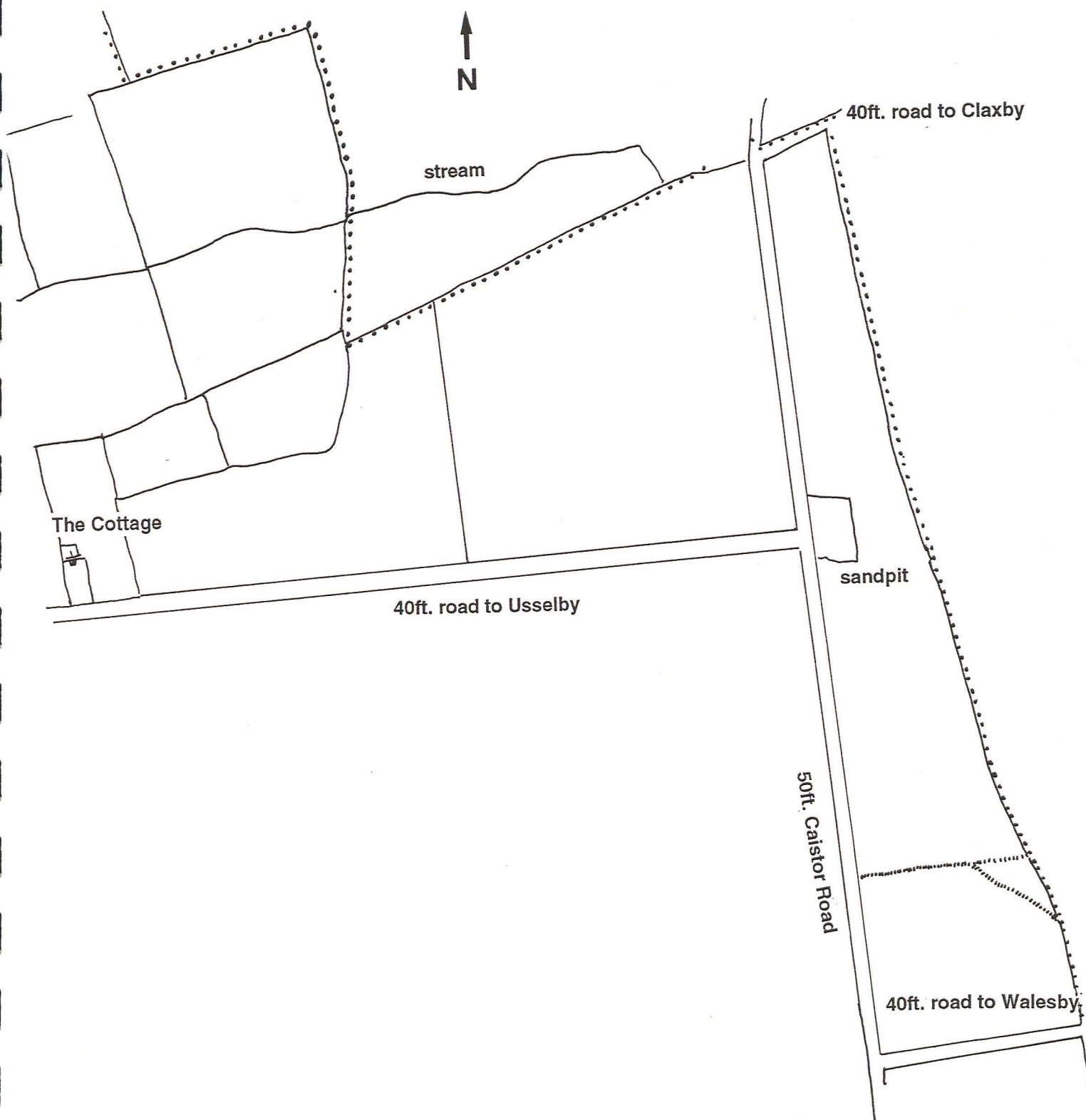


Fig. 4 Osgodby and Usselby Moors in 1806 (after the 1806 Tithe Map  
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reproduced at 1:2,500; Frost and Tann).





Fig. 5 The area in 1885 (1891 OS 1:10,560 map Sheet Lincs. 45NE).



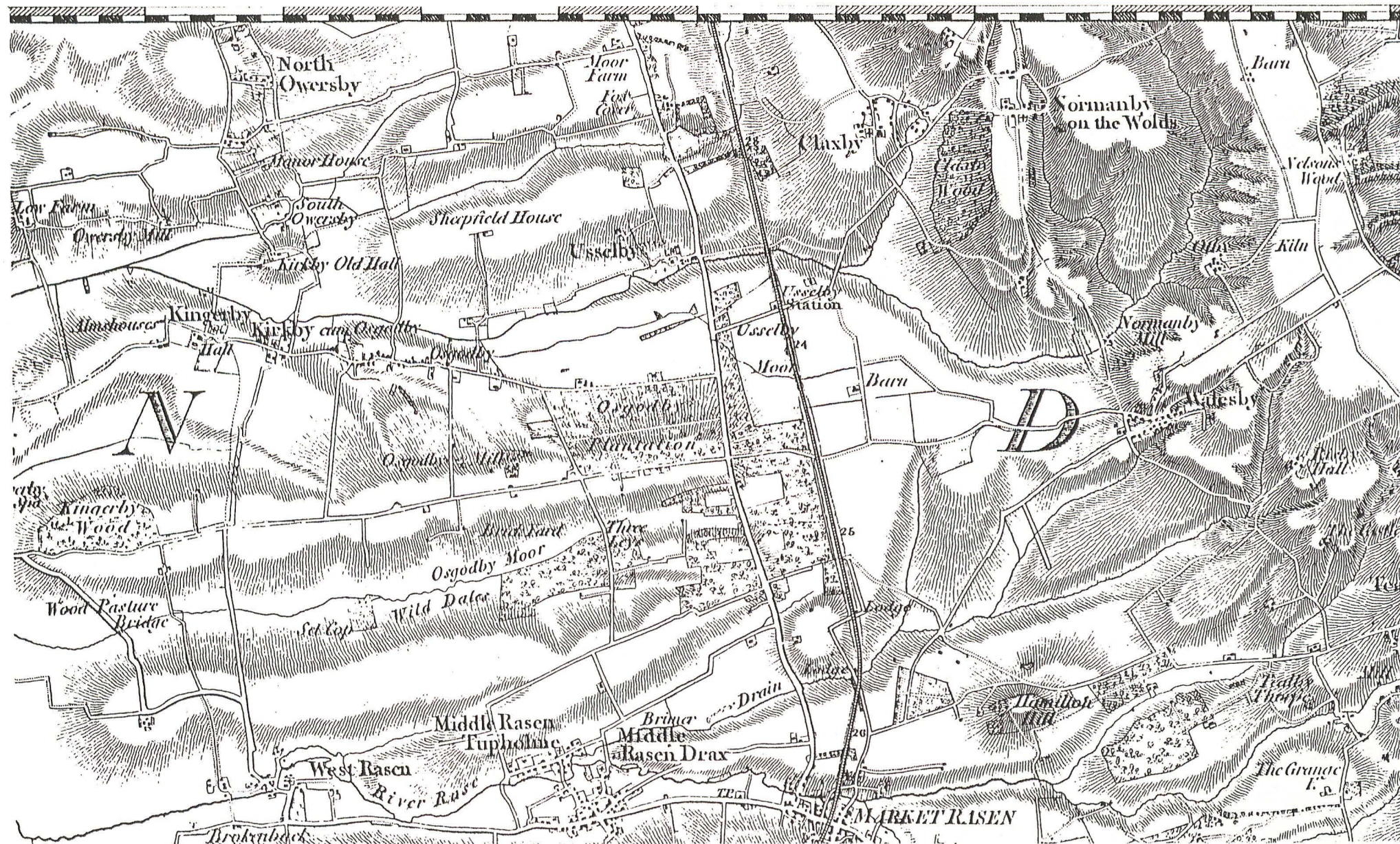


Fig. 6 Osgodby and Usselby in 1893 (reproduced from the 1893 Ordnance Survey 1:63,360 map Sheet 83 (reprint of the 1824 1st edn., with railways and other minor revisions).





Pl. 1 Position of trench on the A46 verge, near tracks to Wood Cottage (left) and Park Farm (right). The fencing marks 1. Looking south.

Pl. 2 Dark brown fill of woodside ditch 1 (left foreground, right background) north of track to Wood Cottage. Looking south, scale divisions 0.5m.







**Pl. 3** Chalk rubble blocks 3 of the post-medieval Caistor to Market Rasen road, visible beneath the modern A46.

**Pl. 4** Junction of the main road with tracks to Wood Cottage and Park Farm (opposite). Looking west; the 1m horizontal scale marks the centre of 3.







Pl. 5 The pipe trench across the Wood Cottage track, showing the thin upper lenses above a cambered rubble road 3 (looking NE).

Pl. 6 Detail of the road construction and underlying deposits at 3.







Pl. 7 Layer of compacted grey silt beneath road 3. Note the post-medieval brick fragment visible beneath the layer.

Pl. 8 Yellow sand deposits 4 in trench south of Wood Cottage track.

