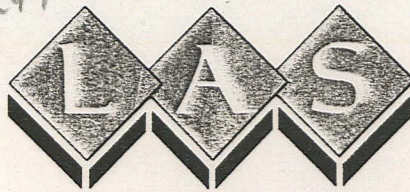


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LINDSEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

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

Land off Main Street, Torksey
Planning Application 97/P/0778
NGR: SK 8375 7896
LCCN Accn no.

DESK TOP STUDY

for

Anderson Associates

on behalf of

Kinvena Homes Limited

March 1997

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Fig. 1 Main Street, Torksey. Site location. Reproduced from the 1:10,000 O.S. map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, © copyright. Licence No. AL50424A.

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Fig. 3 Main Street, Torksey. Estate map of Torksey 1751 showing buildings along the street frontage (LAO ref. 3 BNL 13)

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Fig. 5 Main Street, Torksey. Map of Torksey 1843 showing buildings along the street frontage (LAO ref. 3 BNL 17) . The main road still runs to the rear of these properties.

Fig. 6 Torksey. Recorded sites and findspots prepared from information at the Lincolnshire SMR. Based on the 1:10,000 O.S. map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, © copyright. Licence No. AL50424A.

Land off Main Street, Torksey
Archaeological Desk Top Study
Planning Application: 96/P/0778
NGR: SK 8375 7896
Site Code: TMS 97
LCNCC Museum Accn No. 14.97

Summary

The proposed development site is located opposite the parish church within an area which may have been part of the medieval Market Place. Early Ordnance Survey maps mark the location of St Leonard's Priory in the street next to the development site. Although it is felt that its more likely location was to the east the possibility of monastic remains being found on the site cannot be ruled out. The potential for medieval or earlier buildings along the street frontage is considered to be high.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by Anderson Associates, on behalf of Kinvena Homes Ltd, to undertake a Desk Top Study in accordance with the requirements of the Brief set by the Archaeology Section of Lincolnshire County Council dated January 10th 1997.

Scope of Work

In order to ensure that all possible archaeological constraints are identified and assessed the following sources were consulted

- Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record
- Lincolnshire Archives Office
- information held at the offices of LAS

A site visit was made to verify site conditions and assess any modern disturbance to the site

The Site

The plot is located east of Main Street, to the south of the Old Vicarage, and covers an area approximately 0.19ha in extent (Figs. 1 and 2). The land is currently rough ground.

Geology and Topography

Torksey is located on the east bank of the River Trent, on the outside of a large meander, just below the point where it meets the Foss Dyke. The river is still tidal at this point and the braiding of the river course resulted in the formation of a series of islands recorded on early maps (Figs. 3-5) of which all that remains is Torksey Island. The narrower span of water between the islands may have proved attractive as a crossing point. (Newark is sited at a similar location upstream.) The parent clay of Mercia Mudstone (a red clay) is overlain by deep deposits of wind-blown sand.

Archaeological Background

Torksey lies c.10km west of Lincoln adjacent to the river Trent which here forms the county boundary between Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire, as well as the western limit of Torksey parish. The southern boundary of the parish is formed by the Foss Dyke, generally accepted as being a Roman canal in origin. Torksey village is located at the point where the Foss Dyke meets the River Trent and it thus controlled river traffic through the heart of the Midlands into the Humber Estuary and beyond to York (northwards) and the Wash to the east.

Of all the settlements in the Lindsey area of Lincolnshire Torksey must rank as the most important after Lincoln, perhaps rivalled only by Roman Caistor and Horncastle. There was probably a large settlement at, or near, Torksey in the Roman period although its location is unknown and its present status as a small village belies its former role as a major trading centre in the Roman and Saxon periods. At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 Torksey was a borough, third in size in the county to Stamford and Lincoln.

When the Foss Dyke began to silt up during the 13th century Gainsborough took over as the main Lincolnshire port on the Trent and Torksey went into a decline which has continued almost to the present day.

Prehistoric

There are too few prehistoric finds from Torksey to indicate any evidence of settlement, although the wind-blown sand deposits were probably attractive to settlers. A Neolithic stone axe was dredged up from the Trent on the west side of Torksey Island (PRN 52528) and a second one was found in the scheduled area of the town (PRN 52541). A few worked flints were found during evaluation at Verity, Church Lane, south of the proposed development (Palmer-Brown 1996).

Roman

In the 1930s Roman pottery kilns were excavated at Little London, on the south side of the Foss Dyke, south of the medieval and modern Torksey. The kilns were producing domestic grey ware pots and dishes, similar to products from kilns which have subsequently been investigated at Lea, Knaith and Newton on Trent. Any settlement connected with the pottery production centre would have been able to control traffic from the Witham and the Trent and the kilns were ideally located for trading. The Trent was probably a major tribal boundary and Roman Torksey would have been the first point of entry into a new territory.

Stray finds of metalwork, including coins, have been found in Fenton parish to the south of the pottery kilns which so far are the only indicators of Roman settlement in the vicinity. Nothing is known of any Roman settlement in the area now occupied by modern Torksey despite extensive fieldwalking north of the Foss Dyke. A scatter of Roman pottery was found east of the Common (PRN). A single Roman pottery sherd was found at Verity, Church Lane (Palmer-Brown 1996, 4). It should be noted, however, that nearly all

important Saxon towns, especially those in royal ownership, were founded on Roman sites and Roman Torksey may yet be found.

The Saxon and Danish Periods

Fieldwalking has produced a small amount of sixth-century pottery east of the village (PRN 50789) and to the west of the main road inside the Scheduled area but there is no evidence for any associated settlement remains. The very nature of early Saxon settlement is poorly understood although it is thought that it probably took the form of dispersed farmsteads.

The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that in AD 873 the Danish army camped at Torksey for the winter. Nothing is known of its location or what influence the Danes had on the development and prosperity of the Saxon settlement. It has been argued that it was the arrival of the Danes which stimulated the growth of urban centres in England; the prime example in Lincolnshire being Lincoln itself. Certainly by the tenth century Torksey was in royal ownership and had a mint. Just before the Norman Conquest the estate was held by Queen Edith, wife of Edward the Confessor. The town remained in royal hands, passing to William the Conqueror in 1066. By then Torksey was a thriving port with strong trading links with Lincoln.

Pottery production, which had been so important in the Roman period, was also an important part of the Saxon town's prosperity. Excavations carried out in the 1960s located seven late Saxon pottery kilns (PRN 52529, 52531, 50793, 52535, 52546, 52263). More recently a further five kilns (PRN 52263) were found during excavations on the site of Castle Farm (Palmer-Brown 1994, 7). Products range in date from c. AD800-1200.

Medieval

According to the Domesday Survey the population of Torksey was about one sixth that of Lincoln but larger than Nottingham and twice the size of Newark. The urban character of the settlement was clear; 213 burgesses were recorded as living at Torksey in 1086. The liberties and privileges of the burgesses were confirmed by royal charter of Henry II (Barley 1963, 167). The town had three parish churches and two monastic houses. The core of the Saxon and medieval settlement is poorly defined and the location of only one of its three churches (St Peter's) is certain. Christian burials, thought to have been pre-Conquest in date, were found at the Castle Farm excavations (Palmer Brown 1994, 14-15). One of the lost churches may be close by.

The Fosse Nunnery (PRN 52540) lies within the scheduled area south of the modern village. The position of St Leonard's Priory is not entirely clear. The Ordnance Survey marks it in the road, adjacent to the proposed development site. An estate map of 1751 (Fig. 3) marks Abbey Yards east of the infill area which may have been the site of the market. The OS 1:10560 map (Fig. 1) marks earthworks which appear to have included fishponds still further east in the area which is now a caravan park. These earthworks were levelled in the 1955 when pottery was found but no structural remains were seen.

Geophysical survey and evaluation trenches on the site failed to locate any archaeological remains (Field 1990).

The Proposed Development Site

The proposed development site lies immediately opposite St Peter's parish church. Its western boundary is formed by the modern main road through the village. 18th and 19th century maps of the village (e.g. Figs. 3-5) show a back lane which would have run close to, or formed, the eastern boundary of the site. This delineated an island, including the proposed development site which has been identified as the infilled site of the Market Place (Barley 1963, 171, Fig. 3). Its location opposite the parish church adds weight to the argument as early markets were often associated with churches (e. g. at Boston, Horncastle, Sleaford). Geophysical survey on the site (see Appendix 2) revealed areas of high resistivity which may relate to demolished remains of the buildings shown on the various estate maps of the 18th and 19th centuries (Figs. 3-5).

Discussion

Little is known of the character of the medieval and earlier settlement at Torksey. The twelve pottery kilns so far identified are close to the presumed core of the settlement which is perhaps surprising given that such an industry, with the attendant risks of fire, was usually situated on the periphery of habitation. Pottery wasters and kiln furniture were recently found in the Hume Arms carpark very close to the south side of the proposed development (J. Young pers. comm.) The possibility that further kilns may be present on the development site itself cannot be ruled out. Apart from the kilns a pre-Conquest cemetery has been uncovered immediately east of the Castle.

If Barley is right and this part of the town was originally a Market Place it will be important to establish when the area became infilled and whether there are any early buildings along the street frontage. Assuming the decline of the town was connected with the silting up of the Foss Dyke in the 14th century it may be expected that any occupation of the site would date from before that period. No domestic buildings of any date have been recorded at Torksey to date.

The O.S. map (Fig. 1) locates the position of the Abbey (St Leonard's Priory) in the centre of Main Street although, given the possibility that the Market was located at this spot it seems unlikely and its precise location has yet to be determined. The fishponds at the caravan park to the east may well have been part of the complex with buildings lying between them and Main Street. The possibility of encountering monastic remains cannot therefore be ruled out.

Naomi Field
March 1997

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APPENDIX 1

TORKSEY: GAZETTEER OF SITES AND FINDS

	PRN	NGR	DESCRIPTION
1	50263	SK 837 791	Site of medieval priory
2	50570	SK 8363 7823	Roman building
3	50788	SK 8440 7890	Site of Abbey earthworks (destroyed)
4	50789	SK 8400 7890	Stamped Anglo-Saxon urn, part of another
5	50791	SK 8370 7894	Parish church
6	50792	SK 8390 7894	Roman
7	50793	SK 8383 7855	Saxon pottery kiln 3
8	50794	SK 8375 7895	Presumed location of medieval marketplace
9	50795	SK 8390 7894	presumed site of church
10	52263	SK 8367 7873	Saxon kilns 8-12
11	52528	SK 8350 7910	Neolithic axe
12	52529	SK 8357 7833	Saxon pottery kiln 1
13	52531	SK 8357 7833	Saxon pottery kiln 2
14	52533	SK 8362 7855	Medieval cemetery
15	52535	SK 8375 7865	Saxon pottery kiln 4
16	52536	SK 8370 7920	Medieval pottery
17	52537	SK 8369 7880	Roman jet toggle or button
18	52538	SK 8369 7880	medieval trackway
19	52539	SK 8369 7880	Post-medieval pottery
20	52540	SK 8364 7828	Priory
21	52541	SK 8358 7844	Neolithic axe
22	52542	SK 8361 7850	site of church
23	52544	SK 8393 7915	linear boundary cropmark (CUCAP FP 30)
24	52545	SK 8370 7890	Settlement remains
25	52546	SK 8380 7850	Saxon caterpillar brooch, kilns 6 and 7
26	52548	SK 8370 7870	Pre-Conquest cemetery
27	52559	SK 8355 7915	Railway bridge
28	52561	SK 8375 7865	Saxon pottery kiln 5
29	53578	SK 8370 7880	sherd of 10-11th century pottery

TORKSEY
Lincolnshire

Work commissioned by :



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SITE SUMMARY SHEET

94 / 104a Main Street, Torksey, Lincolnshire

NGR: SK 8365 7935

Location, topography and geology

The site under investigation lies in the village of Torksey, Lincolnshire. The survey area is situated immediately to the south of the Old Vicarage and adjacent to the A156 road (known locally as Main Street). The site was level and under pasture at the time of the survey. The soils consist primarily of compacted glacio-fluvial sands of the Blackwood Association.

Archaeology

The site lies adjacent to the location of an Augustinian Priory recorded on the Ordnance Survey map.

Aims of Survey

A resistance survey was undertaken with the aim of locating any possible building remains associated with the priory.

Summary of Results *

The resistance data show an increase in readings to the west, adjacent to the wall and road. While this may be due to modern disturbance / compaction, an archaeological origin cannot be ruled out.

*** It is essential that this summary is read in conjunction with the detailed results of the survey.**

SURVEY RESULTS

94/104a Torksey, Lincolnshire

1. Survey Area

- 1.1 Site 2, 20m by 52m, occupies a small field immediately to the east of the A156 road, towards the north of the village.
- 1.2 The survey area was established and tied in by **Geophysical Surveys of Bradford**. Detailed tie-in information has been lodged with the client.

2. Display

- 2.1 The resistance data are displayed as a grey scale image with an interpretation diagram at a scale of 1:500.
- 2.2 Display formats are discussed in the *Technical Information* section, at the end of the text.

3. General Considerations - Complicating factors

- 3.1 At the time of survey conditions were suitable for geophysical survey, the site being level and under pasture.

4. Survey Results

- 4.1 There is a marked increase in resistance along the eastern edge of the survey area. As this is adjacent to the wall and road, it is likely that this is due to compaction of the ground or debris associated with them.
- 4.2 However, there are suggestions of linear high resistance responses which may be significant.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The resistance survey of has located several areas of increased resistance, although an archaeological interpretation is tentative.

Project Co-ordinator: Dr S M Ovenden
Project Assistants: N Nemcek, A Shields and D Weston

TORKSEY

Site 2

Resistance Data

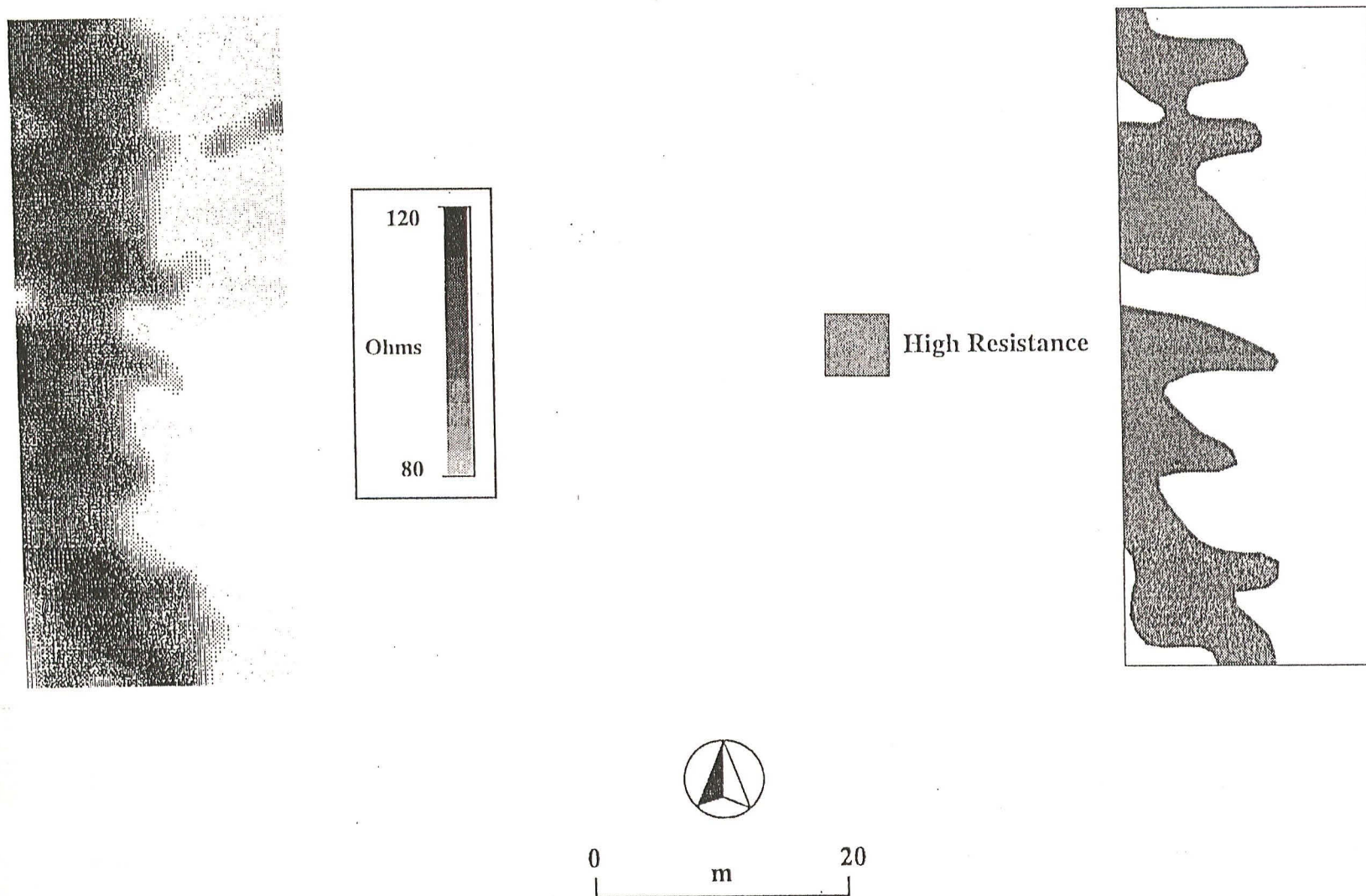


Figure R1

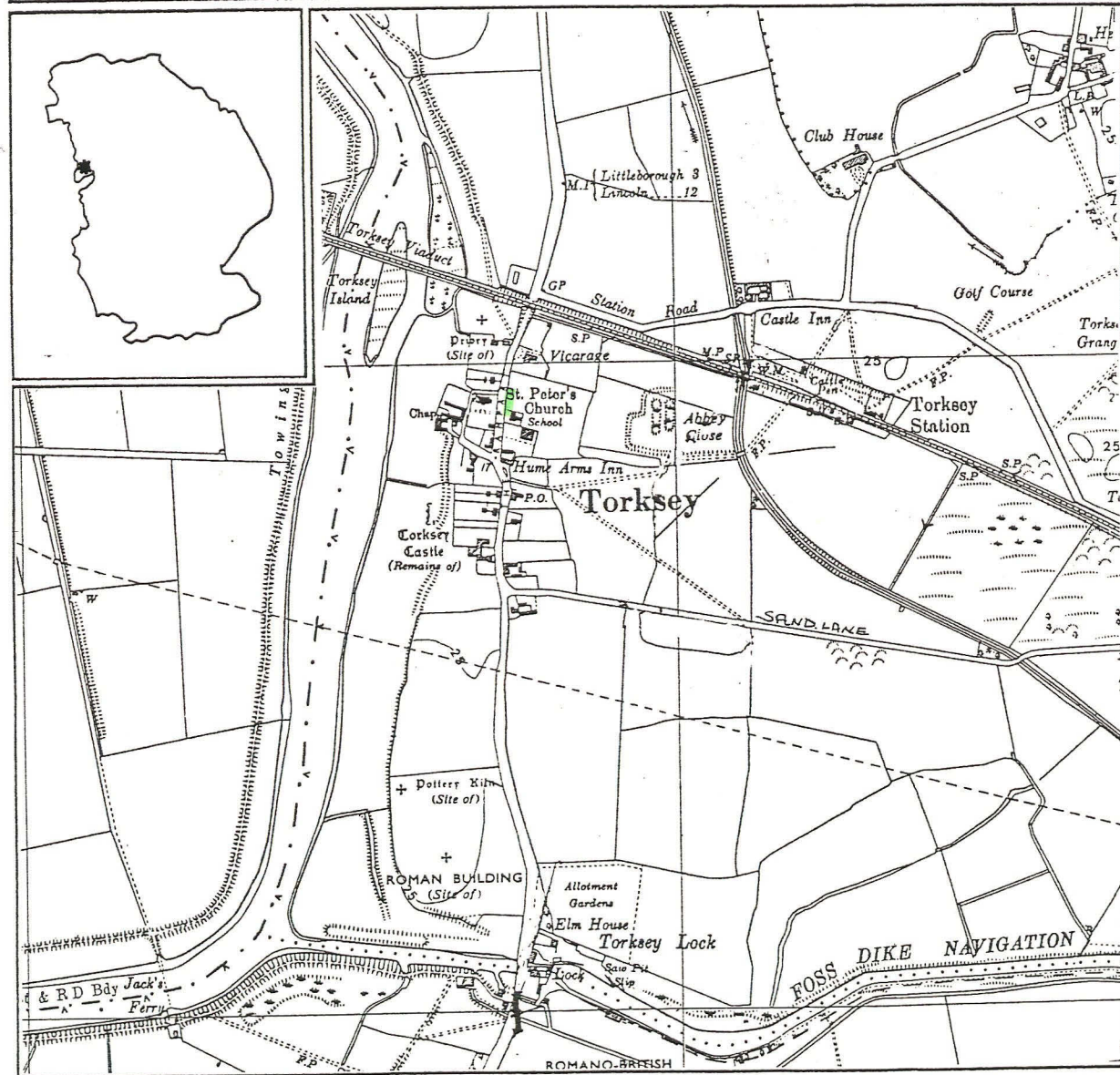
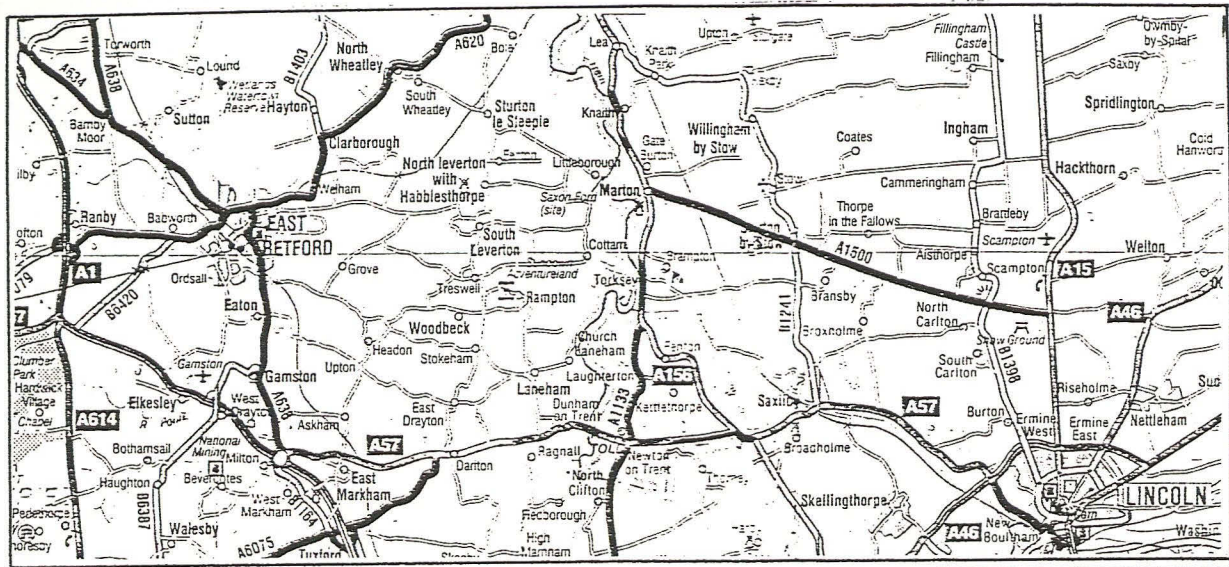


Fig. 1 Main Street, Torksey. Site location. Reproduced from the 1:10,000 O.S. map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, © copyright. Licence No. AL50424A.

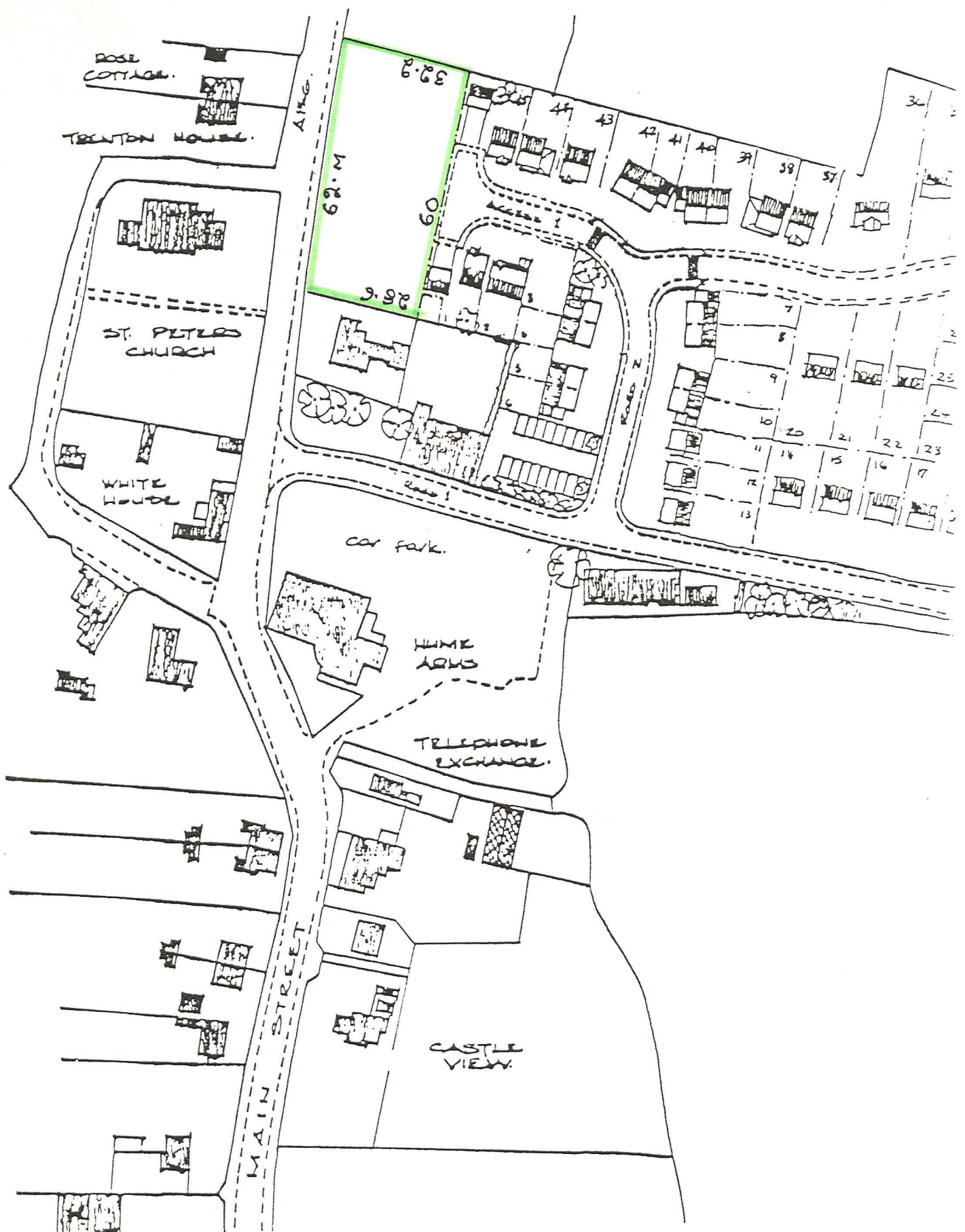


Fig. 2. Main Street, Torksey. Proposed development site. Plan supplied by Anderson Associates.

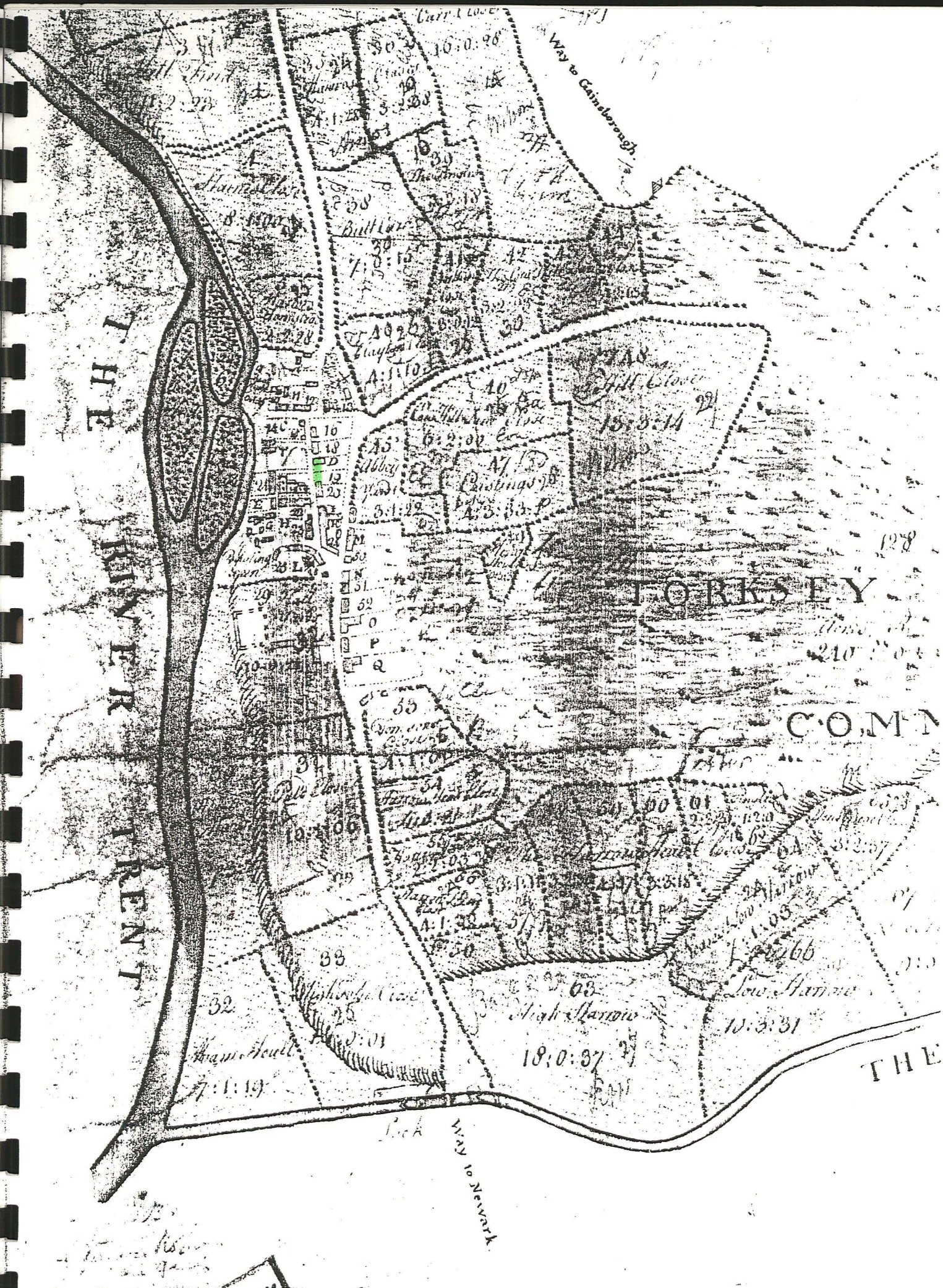


Fig. 3 Main Street, Torksey. Estate map of Torksey 1751 showing buildings along the street frontage (LAO ref. 3 BNL 13)

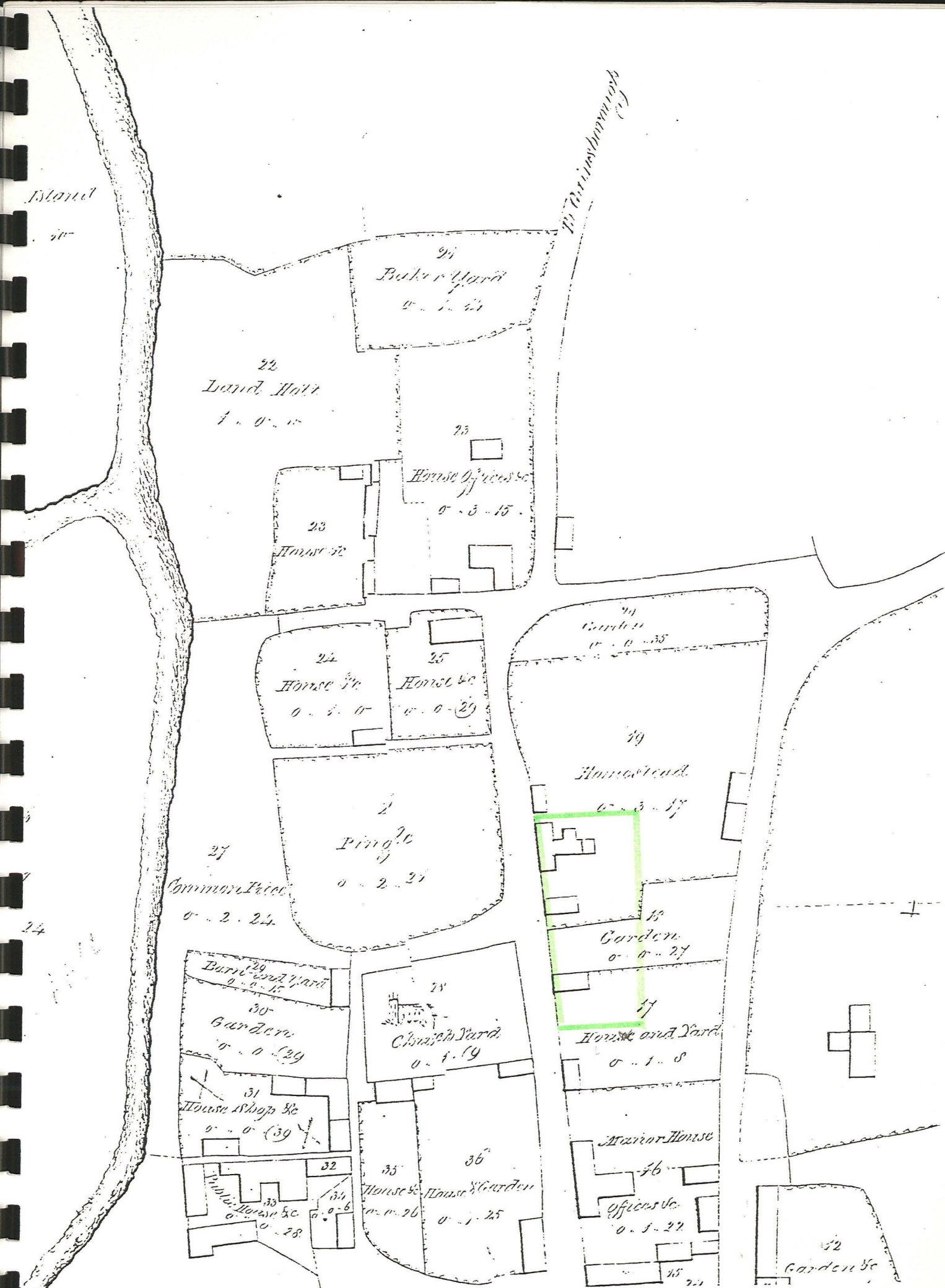


Fig. 4 Main Street, Torksey. Estate map of Torksey 1821 showing buildings along the street frontage (LAO ref. 3 BNL 15)

- (A) Situation for a Steam Engine for Earl Brownlow.
 (B) Situation of d.s. - - d.s. - for Brampton, Marton, &c.
 (C) Proposed Outlet for No 1 Report.
 (D) Proposed Outlet for No 2 Report.

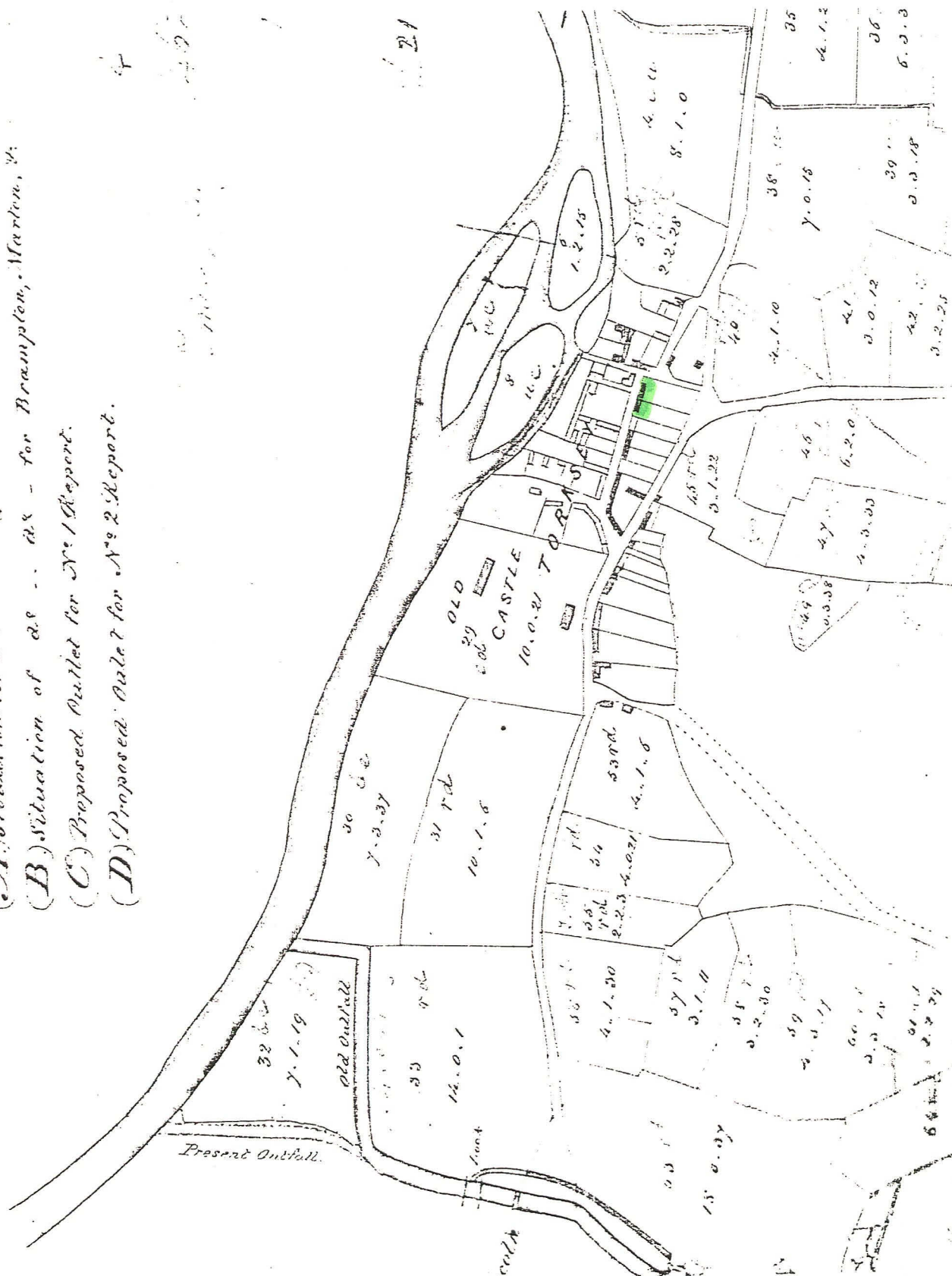


Fig. 5 Main Street, Torksey. Map of Torksey 1843 showing buildings along the street frontage (LAO ref. 3 BNL 17) . The main road still runs to the rear of these properties.

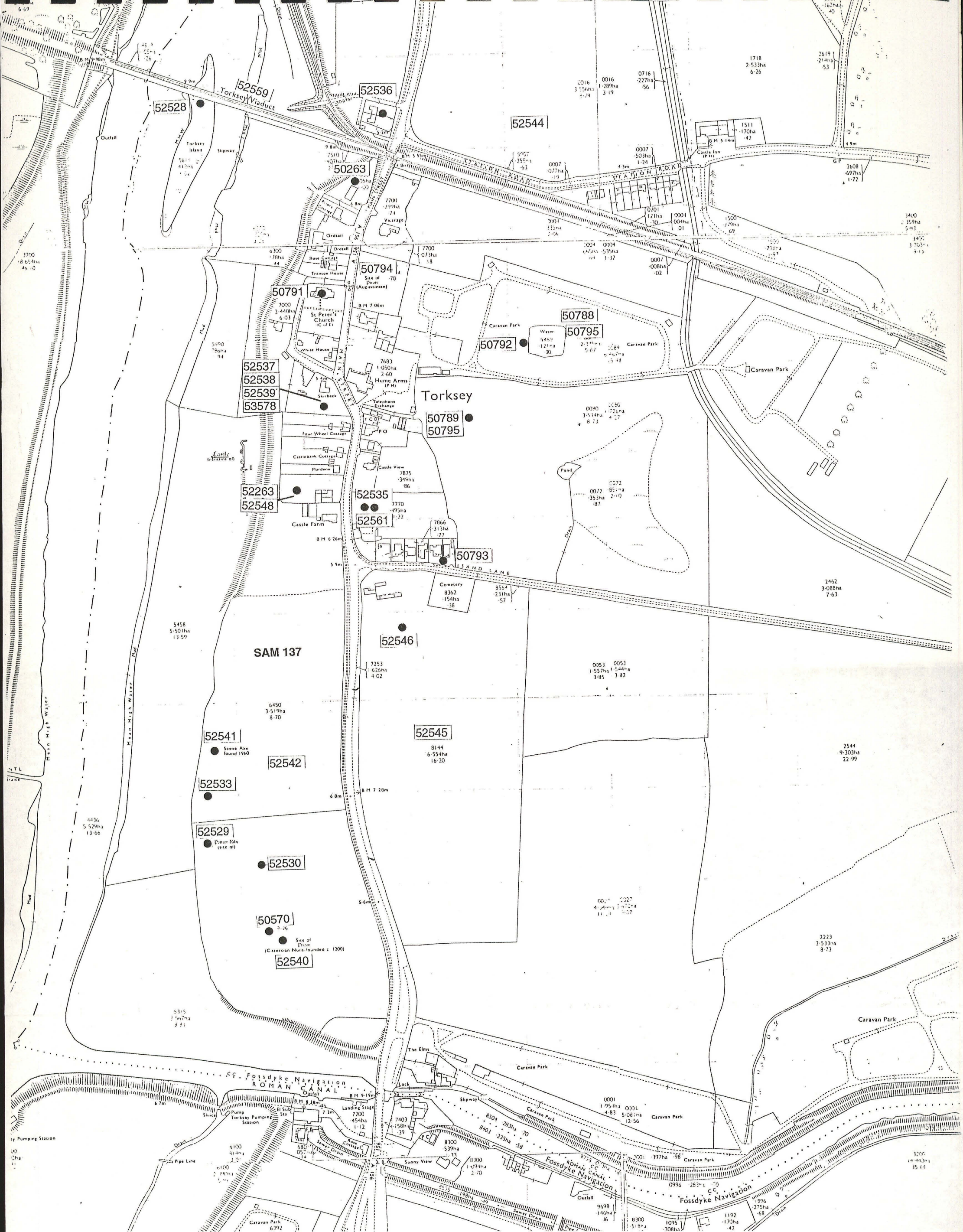


Fig. 6 Torksey. Recorded sites and findspots prepared from information at the Lincolnshire SMR. Based on the 1:10,000 O.S. map with the permission of the Controller of HMSO, © copyright. Licence No. AL50424A.