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SLI 1980

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35110 - Undated
35111 - Roman
35112 - Medieval.

Archaeological Evaluation
at
The Meadows, Langtoft, Lincolnshire
by
Heritage Lincolnshire

on behalf of
ARC (Central),
during March, 1992

Summary

Between the 9th and the 27th March, 1992, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Heritage Lincolnshire on land at Langtoft, Lincolnshire on behalf of ARC (Central).

1. A desk-top assessment, fieldwalking and geophysical surveys, and trial excavation were carried out. The results of the surveys indicate that there are Bronze Age, Roman and medieval archaeological deposits, as well as a large number of undated archaeological deposits, surviving within the study area.
2. The Bronze Age deposits, consisting of a ring ditch and domestic refuse pit, are suggestive of settlement on or close to the study area.
3. The Roman deposits take the form of a field system indicating that a habitation site exists in the vicinity of the study area.
4. The medieval deposits are the result of agricultural practices and comprise the remnants of field systems visible, and of ridge and furrow. These are associated with the medieval village of Langtoft and do not implicate medieval settlement in the study area.
5. The nature of the undated archaeology, which consists of pits, ditches and gulleys, suggests the presence of settlement within or close to the study area.

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Introduction

Between the 9th and 27th March 1992, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Heritage Lincolnshire on behalf of A.R.C. (Central) on land at Langtoft, Lincolnshire (National Grid Reference TF 131130, O.S. field N^{OS} 149 and 170) (see fig. 1). The purpose of the work was to evaluate the extent, depth, nature and status of any archaeological remains. The land evaluated has been under cultivation for the last five years, prior to which it had been pasture for at least 60 years.

Methodology

The evaluation was conducted in four phases.

Phase 1: Desk-Top Assessment

Data examined included: The Sites and Monuments Records maintained by the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist and the County Archaeological Officer; maps at the Lincolnshire County Archives; plus copies of aerial photographs (N^{OS} BVZ 029 and BVZ 030) obtained from the Department of Aerial Photography, University of Cambridge.

Phase 2: Fieldwalking Survey

The fieldwalking survey was undertaken on the basis of ten metre grids. One side of each grid square was walked, enabling artefacts recovered to be allocated a grid co-ordinate accurate to within ten metres.

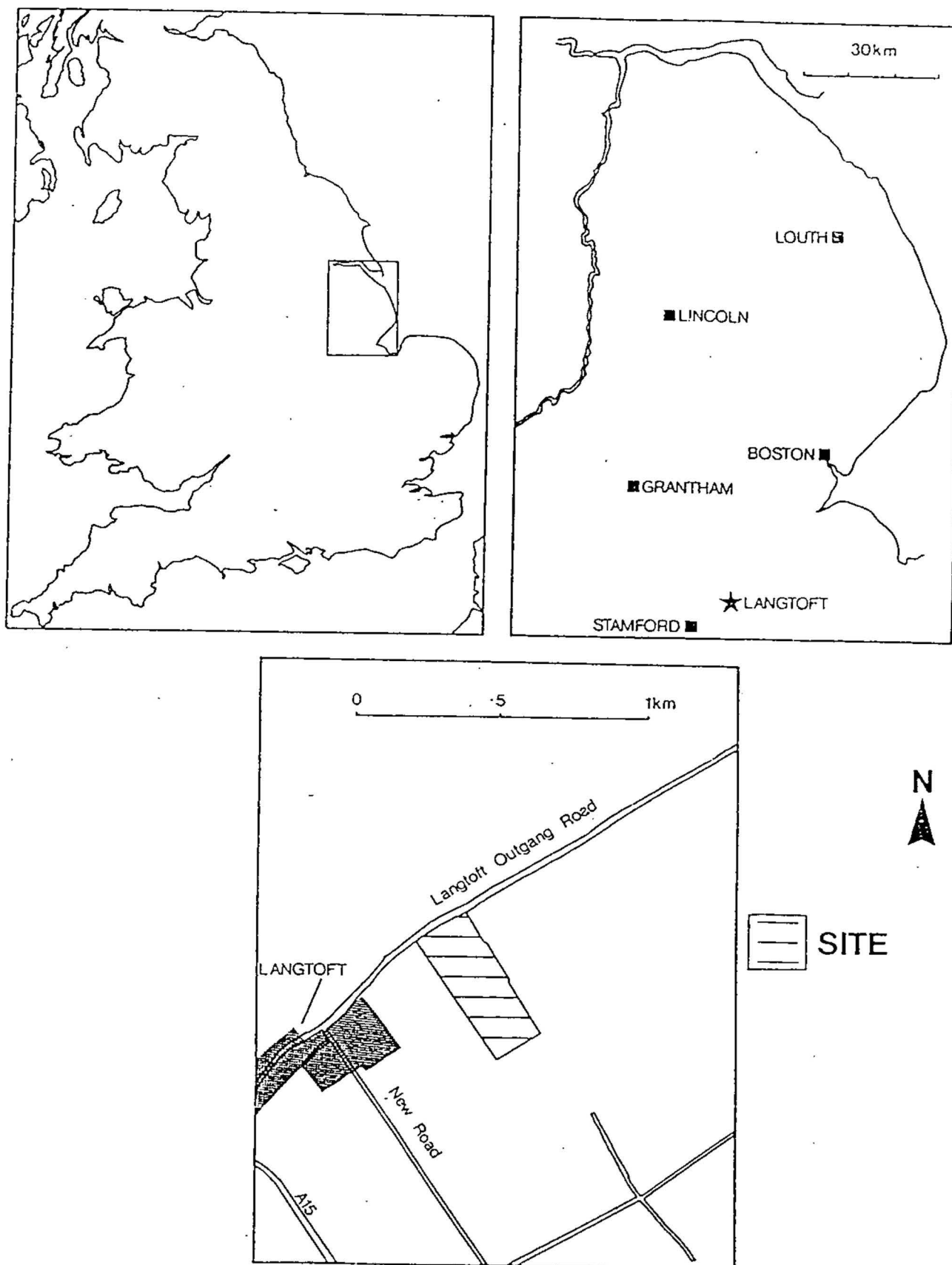
Phase 3: Geophysical Survey

A Geoscan Research RM4 resistance meter was used to take resistance readings at 1m intervals, in one 20m x 20m grid.

Phase 4: Excavation

Twenty three trenches were excavated by machine. The ploughsoil and underlying silt were removed, exposing the natural gravel. Each trench was then cleaned by hand to identify and record any archaeological features. The recording of the archaeological features and layers took the form of the allocation of a unique number with an individual written description being assigned to each archaeological 'context'; and, plans and section drawings were made at scales 1:20 and 1:10 respectively. A photographic record was compiled.

Fig.1
Location



Results

Phase 1:

The desk-top assessment identified several areas of archaeological potential within a 1km radius of the evaluated area. These areas have been annotated 1 - 13 on fig. 2.

1. Roman Samian ware and coarse pottery.
2. Pits containing Iron Age pottery of Trent Valley type.
3. Medieval moated site, probably a part of Langtoft Hall. (see 5 below).
4. The Lincolnshire Car Dyke; previously interpreted as a navigable Roman canal (Simmons, B.B., 1979) which also served as a catchwater drain, but now thought to be primarily part of a Roman drainage system (Thorpe, R., & Zeffertt, T., 1989).
5. Langtoft Hall, locus of early Medieval Estate.
6. Langtoft Village - site of early Saxon cemetery and Medieval earthworks.
7. Circular soil mark typical of a ring ditch.
8. Extensive soil marks indicative of medieval ridge and furrow.
9. Headland surviving as an earthwork, from an earlier phase of ridge and furrow pre-dating No. 8
10. Rectangular cropmark of unknown date and function which can be provisionally interpreted as an enclosure.
11. Dug-out canoe - unearthed during the 19th century and subsequently destroyed.
12. Cropmarks indicative of a droveway aligned east-west with an associated field system.
13. One thousand bronze coins discovered within an urn.

A map by Edward Hare entitled "A map shewing the situation of homesteads and old inclosures in the lordship of Langtoft and Baston" dated 1792, was examined but yielded no information relevant to the evaluation.

FIG. 2. PHASE 1 RESULTS;
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES IN THE
VICINITY OF THE STUDY AREA

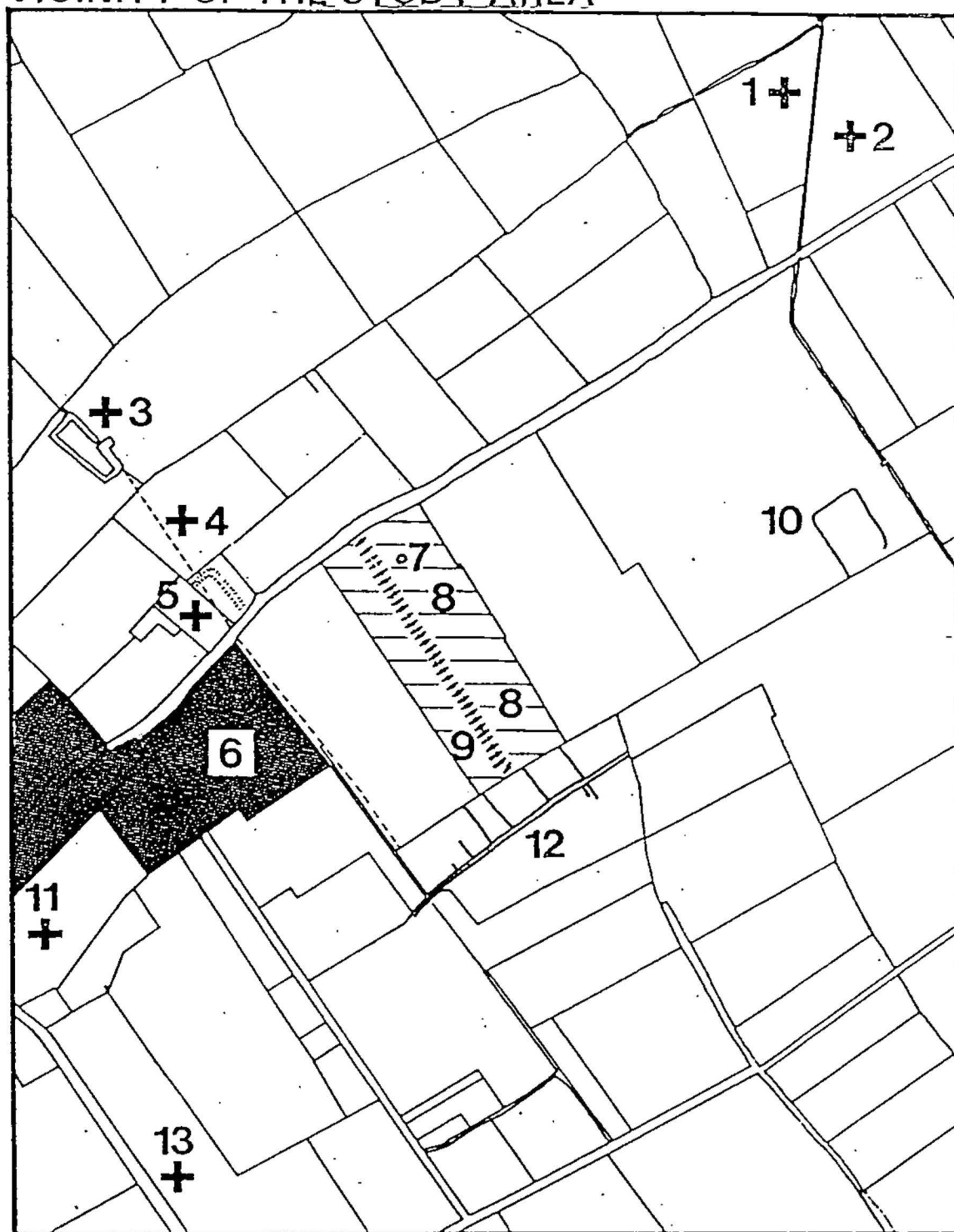
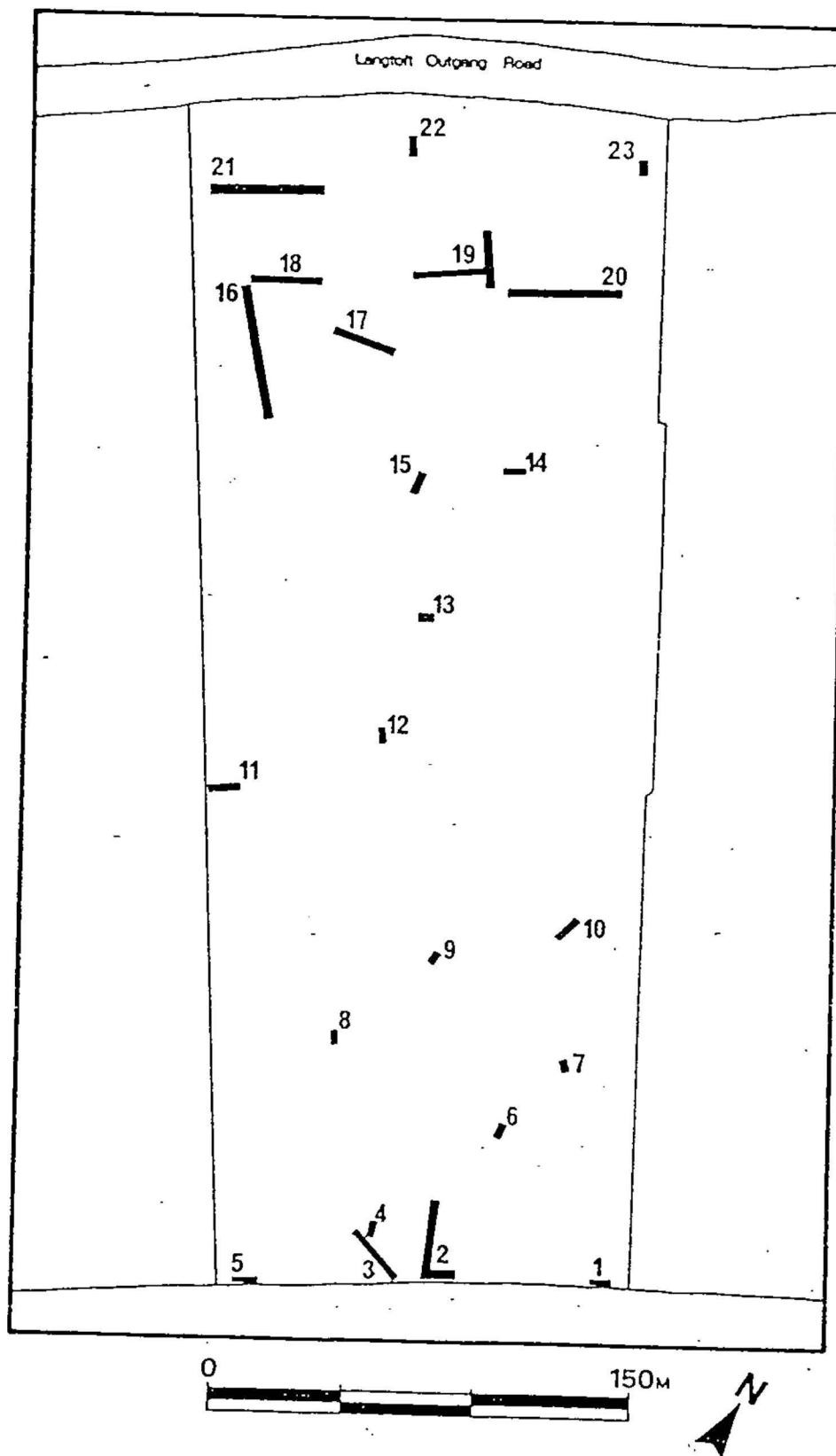


FIG. 3
TRENCH LOCATIONS



Phase 2:

The principal finds from the fieldwalking survey were four prehistoric pottery sherds, two prehistoric flint scrapers and one sherd of Roman grey-ware pottery. The distribution of these artefacts within the evaluation area is random and does not indicate any specific focus of archaeological activity.

Phase 3:

The aim of the geophysical survey was to establish the precise location of the circular crop mark feature (see fig 2., No. 7). The results proved inconclusive.

Phase 4:

Twenty three trenches (see fig. 3) were excavated by machine. Certain trenches were located so as to investigate the archaeology identified in the preceding phases. Trenches 1, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17 and 22 did not contain any archaeological remains.

Trench 2 The southern extreme of trench 2 revealed a linear ditch [001] (4.24m length exposed x 1.01 wide x 0.05m deep) aligned northeast-southwest. Sample excavation produced a small quantity of Roman pottery sherds and a copper bracelet. North of ditch [001] were two undated ditches laid out on approximately the same northeast-southwest alignment, [002] (1.70m length exposed x 0.84m wide) and [003] (3.50m length exposed x 0.44m wide).

Trench 3 The southern extent of trench 3 located a linear ditch [004] (1.70m length exposed x 0.84m wide) aligned northeast-southwest assumed to be the continuation of [001], noted in trench 2. A thick accumulation of subsoil [005], created when the medieval headland (see fig. 2, N^o. 9) was formed, sealed ditch [004]. An undated ditch [006] (3.5m length exposed x 0.44m wide) aligned north-south, lay to the north of [004].

Trench 5 Within trench 5 was an undated ditch [007], (0.80m length exposed x 0.68m wide x 0.34m deep) aligned northwest-southeast.

Trench 7 Trench 7 revealed an undated ditch [008] (2.24m length exposed x 0.70m wide x 0.19m deep) aligned northwest-southeast.

Trench 9 An undated terminus of a gully [009] (1.70m length exposed x 0.55m wide) aligned northeast-southwest was identified.

Trench 15 This trench was located in order to investigate one of three back-filled ponds. Machine excavation revealed that the pond had been back-filled quite recently as evidenced by the presence of tarmac and the remains of a plastic bag. The base of the pond was not excavated.

Trench 16 Two archaeological features were identified and recorded; an undated ditch [010] (4.2m length exposed x 0.92m wide) aligned north-south and an undated ditch terminus/pit, [011] (1m length exposed x 1.10m wide).

Trench 18 Three undated ditches were identified and recorded; [012] (2.33m length exposed x 0.80m wide), aligned north-south; a ditch terminus, [013] (0.66m length exposed x 1m wide) aligned north-south; and [014], (1.50m length exposed x 3m wide x 1.40m deep) aligned northwest-southeast

Trench 19 Four archaeological features were identified and recorded: an undated shallow pit [015] (1.05m long x 0.68m wide x 0.11m deep); two undated ditches [016] and [017] (each 1.50m length exposed x 1.70m wide x 0.05m deep) aligned northwest-southeast. Located between [016] and [017] was a pit [018] (2.91m long x 2.30m wide x 1m deep)(see fig. 4). Sample excavation of the pit produced late Bronze Age pottery, burnt stone, organic remains and revealed that it had been re-cut at least twice.

Trench 20 Three undated pits were located: [019] (3.20m in diameter); and [020] and [021] (both 1m in diameter).

Trench 21 Three undated ditches aligned northwest-southeast were exposed: [022] (2.10m length exposed x 0.80m wide); [023] (1.5m length exposed x 0.80m wide) and [024] (1.50m length exposed x 2.0m width exposed). [024] is thought to be a continuation of [014] in trench 18.

Trench 23 A buried soil (a preserved ancient topsoil *in situ*) [025] (0.15m thick) was revealed in section, sealed by a headland created from the later phase of ridge and furrow (see fig. 2, N^o 8.)

Conclusions

The desk-top assessment has shown that there are several areas of archaeological activity ranging from the prehistoric to medieval periods, within and surrounding the evaluation area.

The fieldwalking survey, though producing only a small amount of data, indicated that some form of prehistoric and possibly Roman activity occurred on or near to the site.

The excavation results have revealed that at least three periods - Bronze Age, Roman and Medieval - are represented on site.

Bronze Age

Evidence dating to the later Bronze Age was recovered from trench 19, context [018].

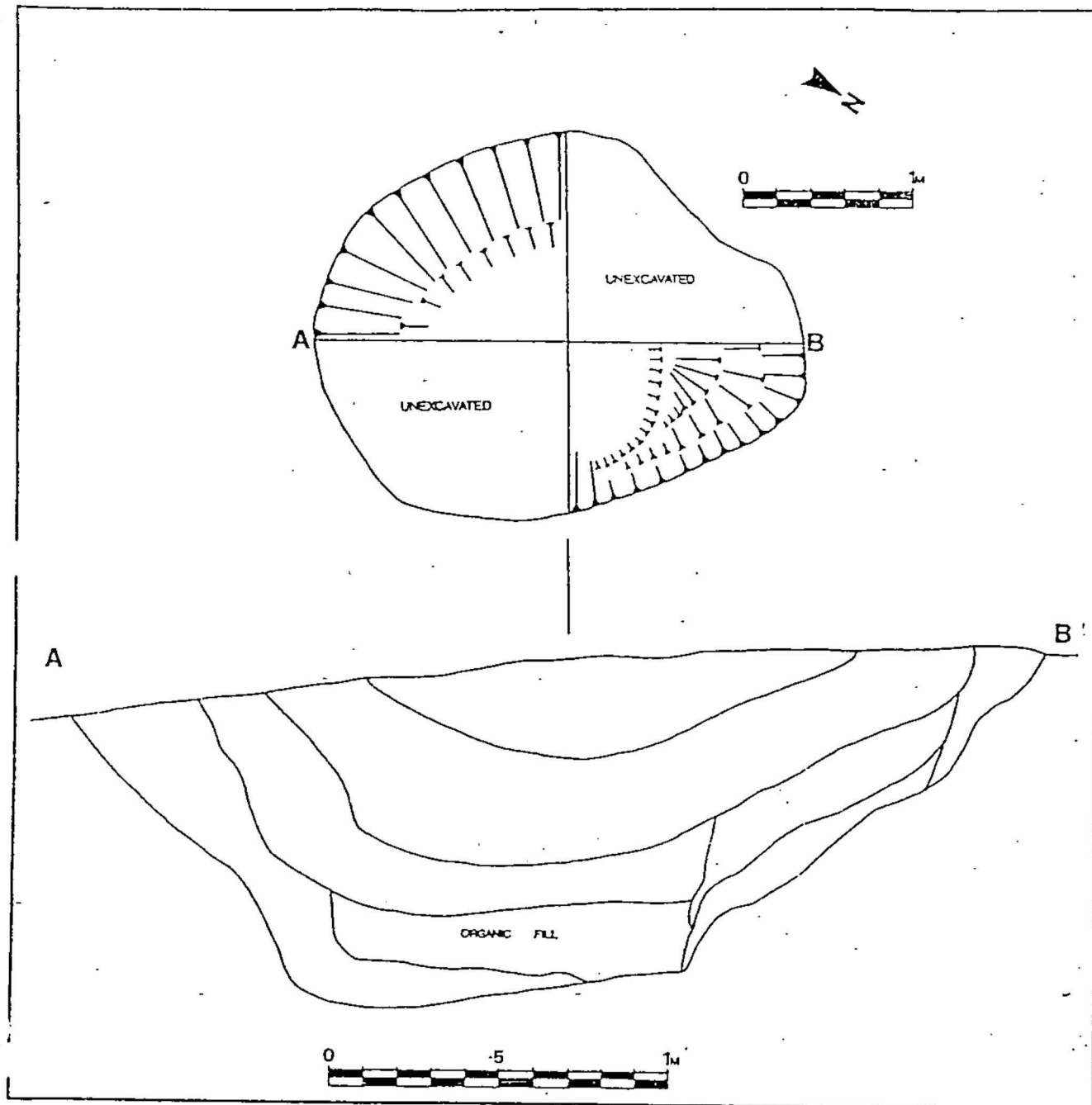
Ditches [016] and [017] form the ring ditch noted in Phase 1, (see fig. 2., N^o 7). Sample excavation of [016] did not produce any dating evidence and revealed the ditch to be only 50mm deep. Located in the centre of this ring ditch was a pit [018] which contained late Bronze Age pottery, fragments of animal bone, wood, burnt stone and a large bone needle. As noted above the fills of this pit contained a large quantity of organic remains. These have the potential to yield information on the soil, environment and climate of Langtoft during the late Bronze Age.

The function of the pit is uncertain. Situated, as it is, in the centre of a ring ditch it could be interpreted as a burial monument with an interment or cremation deposited in the pit. The grave would have been backfilled with the original excavated soil, and an annular or penannular ditch dug around the grave. The spoil excavated from the ditch may have been piled into the centre, creating a mound, or dumped around the outside edge of the ditch creating a bank.

The pit did not have a single fill as would be expected in a simple grave and the quantity, quality and variety of domestic refuse, which was located throughout all the pit fills, is uncharacteristic of a grave. Also, the pit had been re-cut, again uncharacteristic of burials which are usually left undisturbed. No evidence of human remains or of funerary practices was evident.

The ditches seem too insubstantial to produce the quantity of material required for the erection of a mound or bank and indeed no evidence for such was visible in the buried deposits.

FIG 4
BRONZE AGE PIT 018



One possibility is that the pit was originally some form of storage facility which, when it became redundant, was allowed to partially silt-up. At a later date it was cleaned out, re-cut, and re-used for depositing refuse. The evidence available from the evaluation would suggest that a late Bronze Age occupation site is likely to be located either in, or relatively close to, the evaluation area. The function of the ring ditch remains unknown.

Roman Period

Evidence for Roman activity was recorded in trench 2, context [001].

The Roman ditch, [001], which continues into trench 3, is almost certainly part of the field system noted in phase 1 (see fig. 2, N^o 10). Further traces were located in trenches 5 and 7.

Medieval Period

Evidence for medieval activity was recorded in trench 18, context [014] and trench 23, context [025] and noted in Phase 1 (see fig. 2., N^{os} 8 & 9).

The buried soil [025] is the remnant of a medieval agricultural soil which had been truncated from above by later agricultural activity (French, C.I.A., pers. comm.). It is probably contemporary with the NW-SE headland which survives as a degraded earth-work located approximately in the centre of the evaluation area. Adjacent to, and parallel with, this headland was [014], a large boundary ditch which had been deliberately back-filled, probably when Langtoft was subject to the Enclosure Act.

Sealing the buried soil [025] was another headland, created by a later phase of ridge and furrow. The latter are plainly visible on the ploughed surface of the evaluation area as bands of gravel-rich ploughsoil (these being the ploughed out ridges, the area between each band being the furrow).

Undated Archaeology

The remaining archaeology, which is undated, consists of ditches, gulleys and pits. The presence of the ditches located across a large part of the evaluation area implies, as evidenced by the Roman field system, that land management (probably dating to several periods) was being used to aid drainage and/or to mark out boundaries. The gulleys probably represent land management on a smaller scale.

However, the pits are an example of focused human activity in that they have the potential to remain in use over a considerable period of time and can be re-used. Therefore, it is likely that they are located in proximity to a habitation site (assuming the pits are all of the same date). The nearest contender for this site, based upon the available evidence, would be the enclosure located east of the evaluation area (see fig. 2, N^o 10), or further north in an area of generally higher ground immediately east of Baston village.

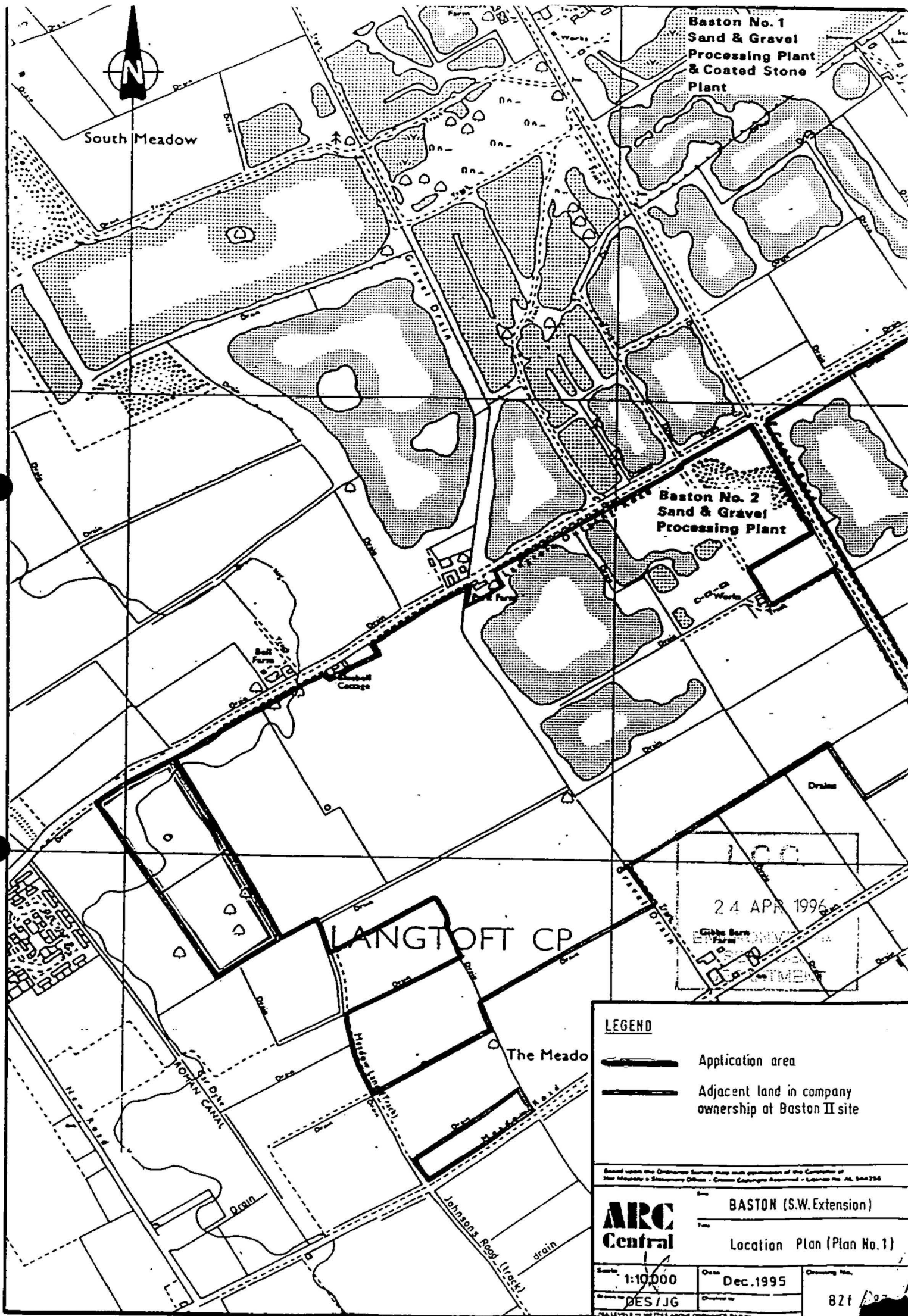
Acknowledgements

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PLANS



South Meadow

Baston No. 1
Sand & Gravel
Processing Plant
& Coated Stone
Plant

Baston No. 2
Sand & Gravel
Processing Plant

LANGTOFT CP

The Meadows

24 APR 1996

Gibbs Barn
Farm
LCC
ENVIRONMENTAL
DEPARTMENT

LEGEND

- Application area
- Adjacent land in company ownership at Baston II site

Based upon the Ordnance Survey map with permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office - Crown Copyright Reserved - Licence No. 46, 544756

**ARC
Central**

BASTON (S.W. Extension)

Location Plan (Plan No.1)

Scale: 1:10,000

Date: Dec.1995

Drawing No.

Drawn by: DES/JG

Checked by:

821 / 02