

Archaeological Evaluation
at
Stamford School, Stamford
by
Heritage Lincolnshire
on behalf of the
Governors of Stamford Endowed Schools
September and October 1992

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SUMMARY

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Report compiled by M. Dymond

SUMMARY

Between the 28th September and 9th October 1992, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Heritage Lincolnshire at Stamford School, Stamford, Lincolnshire (N G R. TF 0339 0734, see fig. 1 and 2), on behalf of the Governors of Stamford Endowed Schools. The aim of the work was to assess the extent, depth and nature of any archaeological deposits, prior to the construction of a car park. The work was carried out on the site of Brazenose College, a scheduled ancient monument (County Monument No. 256) under the terms of a scheduled monument consent granted by the Secretary of State.

The results of the evaluation are that:

- 1 The archaeological deposits identified by the evaluation do not indicate substantial archaeological activity.
- 2 Although artefacts datable to the Saxon period were present, they were not associated with *in situ* Saxon deposits.
- 3 Structural remains were identified and these may be the remnants of Brazenose College.

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1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between the 28th September and 9th October 1992, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Heritage Lincolnshire at Stamford School, Stamford, Lincolnshire (National Grid Reference TF 0339 0734, see fig. 1 and 2), on behalf of the Governors of Stamford Endowed Schools. The aim of the work was to assess the extent, depth and nature of any archaeological deposits, prior to the construction of a car park, so as to determine the effect of any construction works on these deposits, and to make recommendations for further archaeological work, should it be required. The work was carried out on the site of Brazenose College, a scheduled ancient monument (County Monument No. 256) under the terms of a scheduled monument consent granted by the Secretary of State. A copy of this consent is given at Appendix 3

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There is little evidence for any prehistoric settlement at Stamford and its origins probably lie in the Roman period with the establishment of the Roman town of Great Casterton 3.5km. to the north west of the present town. Following the Roman period it is likely that a Saxon settlement was established to the north of a ford or fords (Stamford means 'stone ford') over the River Welland. It is not known when the first bridge was built but there was certainly a bridge in existence by 1086. The strategic importance of this position led to the fortification of Stamford by the Danes in the 9th century (probably around 877) as one of the five Boroughs of the Danelaw in eastern England. This Danish Borough lay immediately to the east of the Saxon enclosure. In 918, Edward the Elder ordered a Borough on the south side of the river to be built and regained control of the town once again for the English. Nothing remains to indicate the position of either the Danish or Saxon Borough. However, an archaeological evaluation undertaken at Station Road during April 1992 recorded the remains of what may have been a substantial ditch, which contained fragments of late Saxon pottery. This ditch may have

FIG. 1 LOCATION

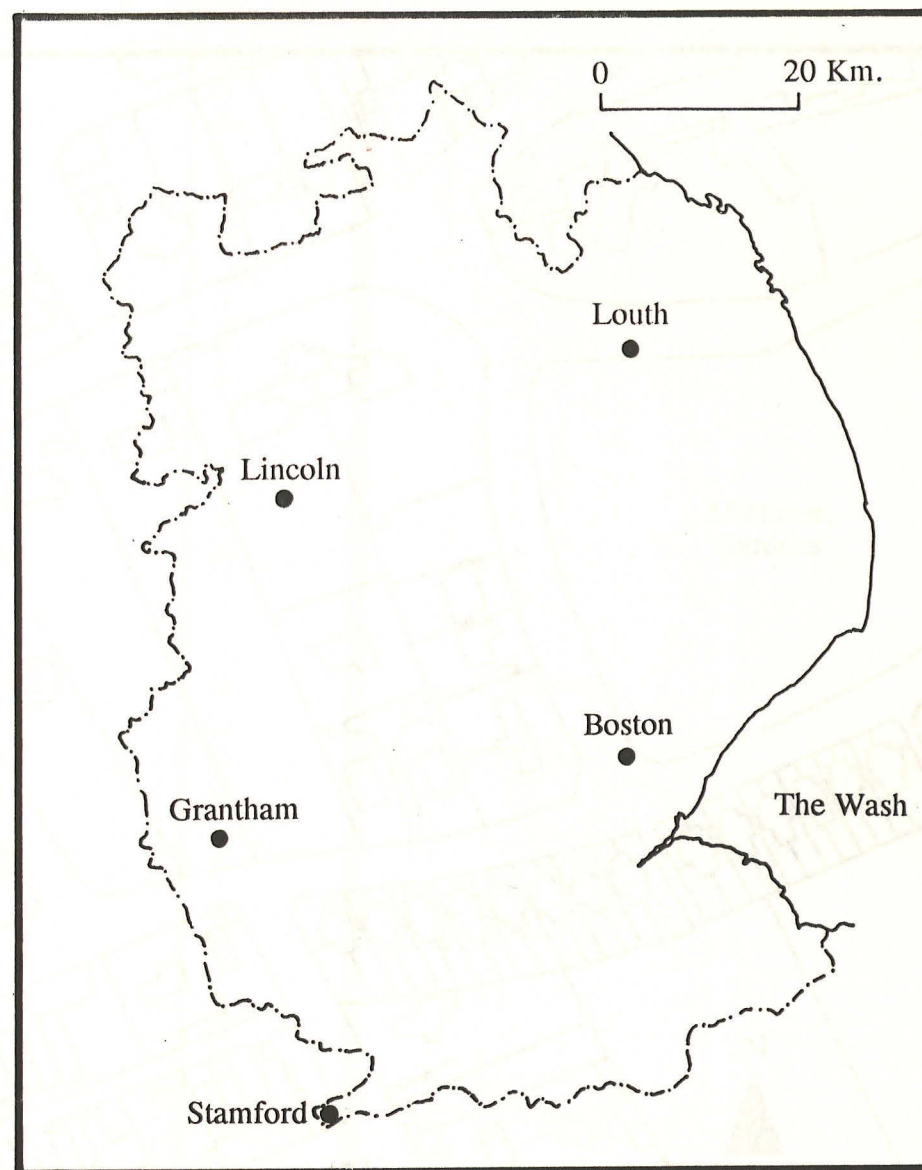
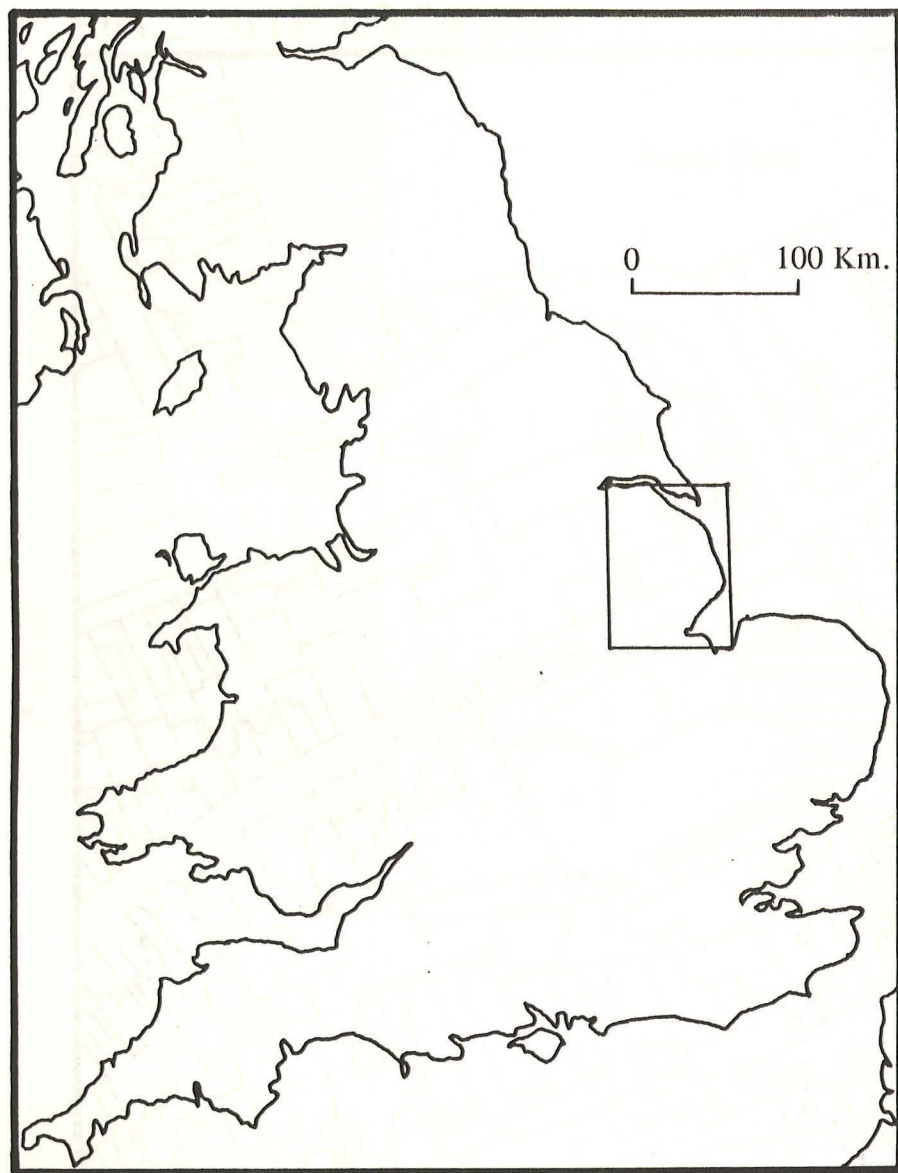
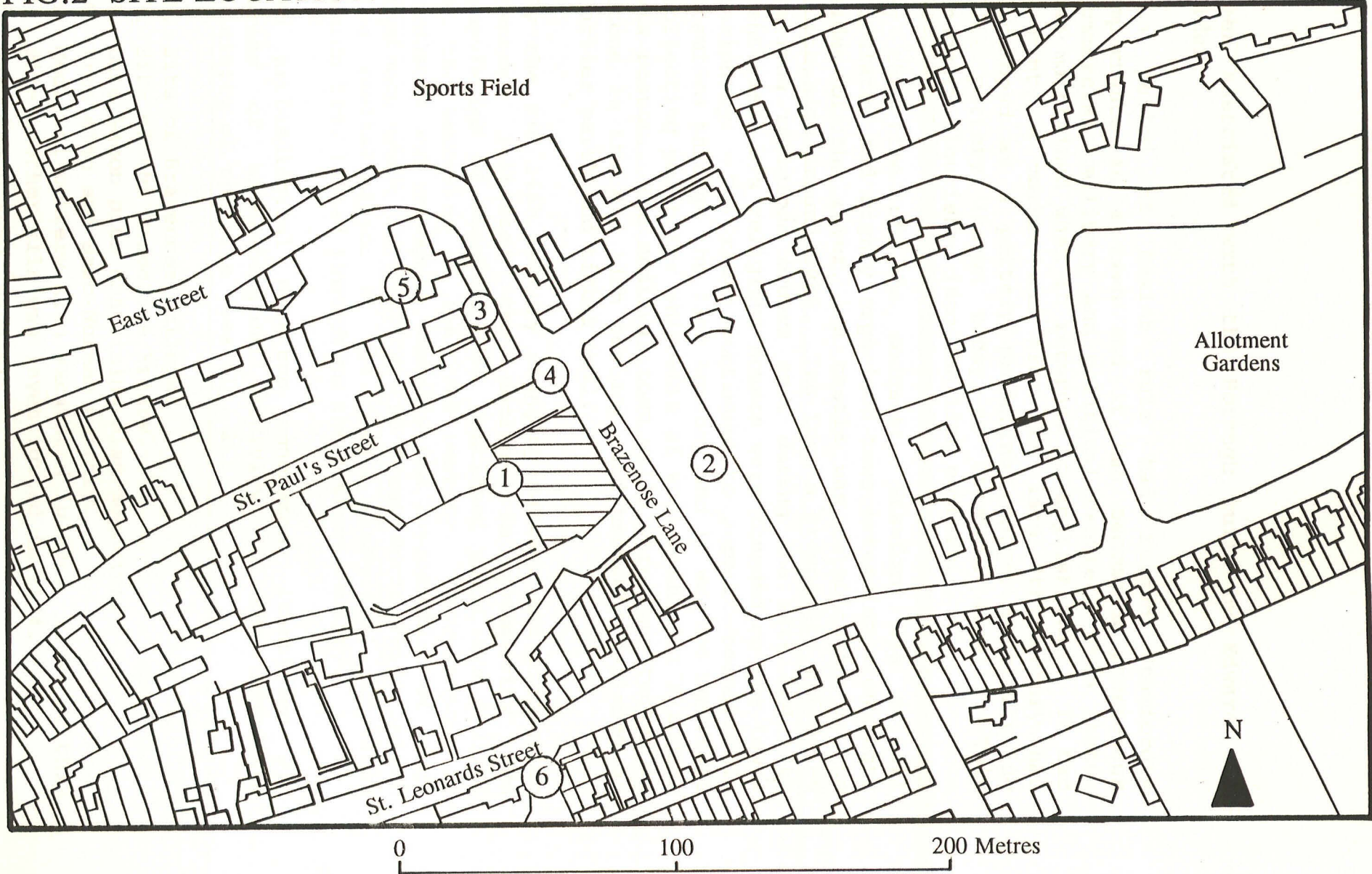
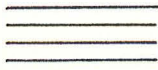


FIG.2 SITE LOCATION



EVALUATION
AREA



been associated with the Borough built by Edward the Elder.

2.2 The period of Danish rule had raised Stamford's importance as a town and it had become a prosperous commercial, military and political centre. This status was maintained when it returned to English rule. It had a mint, a market and from the late 9th century had developed as a pottery producing centre, manufacturing fine pottery (known today as Stamford ware). This industry flourished into the 13th century.

2.3 By the time of the conquest, Stamford was a well populated and highly organised town extending along both sides of the river. A castle was established on the north side around 1086. The town's prosperity attracted various religious orders and, during the 12th and 13th centuries, six religious houses were founded on the town's periphery. The river continued to support commerce in Stamford through the 13th century and it was an important collecting point for shipments of wool bound for Flanders via Boston. The medieval town walls were constructed in stone in the mid 13th century, and probably replaced an earlier earth and timber wall.

2.4 By the mid 14th century changing markets and production centres initiated the decline in prosperity and population of Stamford that continued until its revival at the beginning of the 17th century. Improvements in industry and transport (notably the introduction of long-distance coach services on the Great North Road) led to the revitalisation of the town's commercial functions which have lasted through to the present century.

2.5 An archaeological desk-top assessment identified six areas of archaeological activity in the immediate vicinity of the site (see fig. 2):

1. Site of Brazenose College.
2. Site of the Carmelite Friary.
3. Late Saxon pits containing slag deposits.
4. Iron slag and Saxo-Norman pottery.
5. Medieval pottery kiln excavated in 1963, close to this site another kiln was investigated in 1874.
6. Late Saxon iron furnace.

- 2.6 Two maps of Stamford, both compiled during the 17th century, show the medieval town wall located in two different positions. A map by Speed c. 1600 positions the wall within the evaluation area, whilst the other, the exact date and author of which are unknown, places it against the area's eastern boundary.
- 2.7 Brazenose College is first mentioned during the 16th century when a 13th century house, referred to as 'Brassen Nose' is mentioned. Although commonly associated with Brasenose College, Oxford, and the secession of Oxford students in 1333, there is no evidence to support the claim that Brazenose College served an academic function. Brazenose College was demolished in 1688, and the eastern boundary wall was relocated further east to its present position where it now lies adjacent to Brazenose Lane.
- 2.8 The topography of the evaluation area has been landscaped to form one of a series of terraces, the remainder of which are located immediately to the south. This terracing has resulted in the deposition of a substantial amount of soil, which will have effectively buried any archaeological remains. Also, the base of the scarp formed by the southern extent of the terrace, which is bounded by a post-medieval rubble wall, may indicate the presence of a ditch, possibly associated with the Town wall (R.C.H.M.(E), 1977).

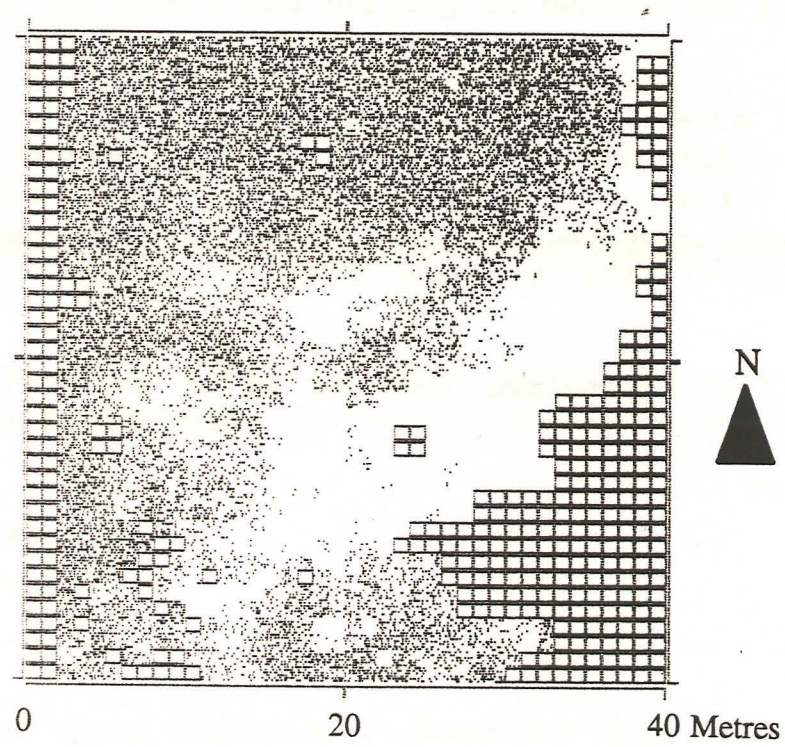
3 **METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1 The evaluation was undertaken in two phases:

Phase 1

Phase 1 comprised a geophysical survey (resistivity). This survey was carried out to locate any buried archaeological remains. Resistivity readings were taken at 1m. intervals over an area of 800 square metres.

FIG. 3 GEOPHYSICAL RESULTS



Phase 2

Phase 2, incorporating the results of phase 1, comprised the mechanical excavation of ten trial trenches, each nominally 4m. by 1.5m., and varying in depth from 0.60m. at the north of the site to 2.20m. at the south.

- 3.2 The recording of the archaeological contexts (see Appendix 2) exposed took the form of the allocation of a unique context number with a written description for each archaeological context. Plans and sections were drawn at scale 1:20 and, where necessary a photographic record was compiled.
- 3.3 Following the completion of the evaluation all the trenches were backfilled.

4 EVALUATION RESULTS

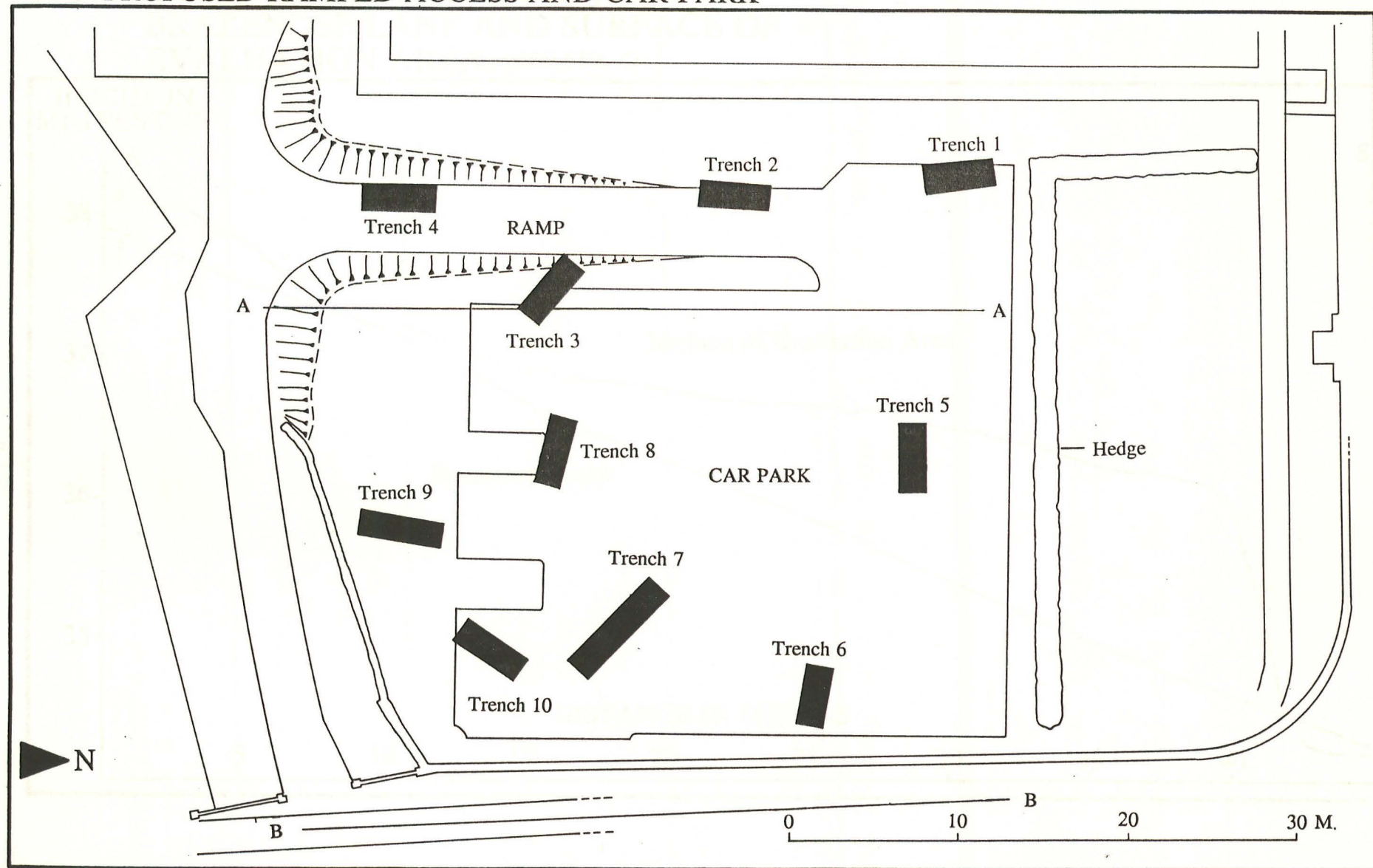
4.1 Phase 1

- 4.2 Although some minor resistivity anomalies were detected, the survey results did not identify any areas of significant archaeological activity. (See fig. 3).

4.3 Phase 2

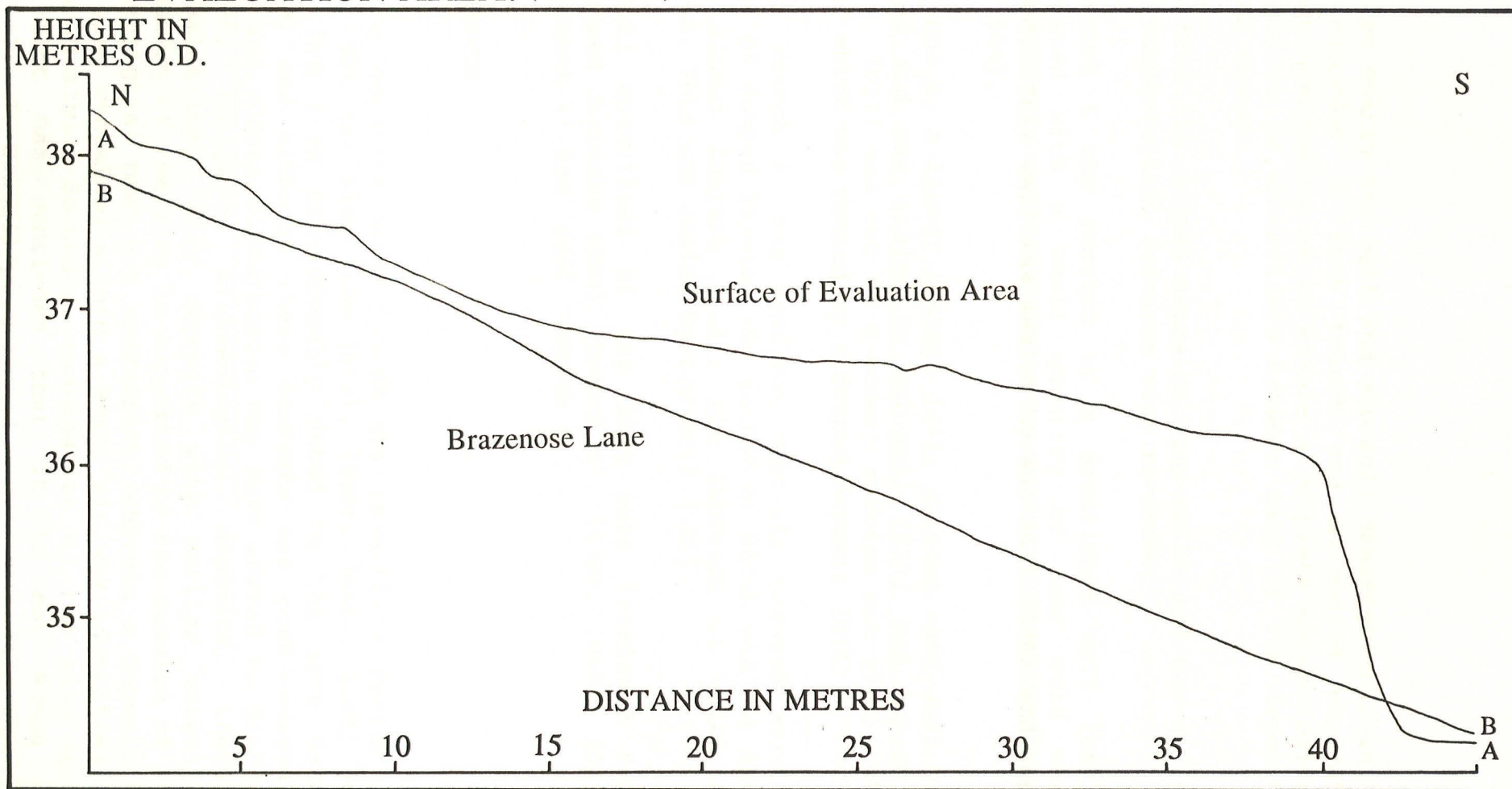
- 4.4 As no areas of archaeological activity were identified by the resistivity survey, the locations of the evaluation trenches were dictated primarily by the nature of the proposed construction works. Therefore, the majority of the trenches were positioned over those areas which would be affected by deep excavations at the south of the site, where a ramped access to the car-park is to be built. The excavation of trenches in the centre and in the NE corner of the evaluation area was impractical due to obstructions. Trench locations are shown on fig. 4.
- 4.5 A total of 51 contexts were recorded, 24 of which were interpreted as dumped deposits (see Appendix 1), created when the terraces were established. The remainder

FIG. 4 TRENCH LOCATION WITH POSITION OF
PROPOSED RAMPED ACCESS AND CAR PARK



A ——— A
B ——— B Ground profiles - See Fig. 5

FIG. 5 COMPARISON BETWEEN HEIGHT OF
BRAZENOSE LANE AND SURFACE OF
EVALUATION AREA. (SEE FIG. 4)



comprise mostly top-soil and sub-soil descriptions, which were recorded in each trench and allocated separate context numbers so as to enable a complete chronological sequence to be established between each of the deposits in each trench.

- 4.6 Apart from the dumped deposits, top-soils and sub-soils, four archaeological features were recorded.
- 4.7 In Trench 5 the remains of a demolished wall [047], associated with a small quantity of roof tile were exposed. This wall was sealed by sub-soil [005] and top-soil [004].
- 4.8 In Trench 6, a linear feature [044] aligned east-west was exposed and was sealed by sub-soil [017] and top-soil [021]. [021] was cut by a modern rubbish pit [022], the top of which was sealed by a dumped deposit [014].
- 4.9 Within Trench 8, the earliest deposits exposed were a series of dumped layers, the latest of which was cut into by a linear feature [028], the function of which is unknown. This was sealed by top-soil [025].
- 4.10 Small quantities of tap slag were retrieved from dumped deposits [003] (Trench 1), [038], [040], [041] (Trench 4) and [048] (Trench 6).

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1 All the deposits investigated are relatively recent in date. The tap slag from [003], [038], [040], [041] and [048] has been provisionally dated to the late Saxon period, and although these contexts are post-medieval, these and modern disturbances may have served to disturb earlier, unexposed archaeological deposits, thereby 'contaminating' later deposits with earlier material. The dating of the slag is supported by the results of the archaeological desk-top assessment, wherein a deposit of iron slag contained within a Saxon pit was identified in the vicinity. Secondly, examination of the slag by a specialist has concluded that it is not Roman or medieval. (J. Cowgill *pers comm.*).

5.2 The linear feature [044] exposed in Trench 6 represents either a ditch or a robber trench. If it is a robber trench, it provides evidence for a structure within the evaluation area which was demolished at an unknown date.

5.3 The remains of the demolished wall [047], exposed in Trench 5, indicate that a masonry structure once stood at this location and the presence of roof tile suggests a building rather than a solitary wall.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 The archaeological deposits identified by the evaluation do not indicate substantial archaeological activity.

6.2 The demolished wall [047] may represent the remains of part of Brazenose College or an ancillary building. Feature [044] may be associated with the destruction of, or a part of, this structure.

6.3 The tap slag retrieved during the evaluation and the slag deposits noted in the archaeological desk-top assessment (see 2.5) may indicate that late Saxon iron smelting occurred in the vicinity of the evaluation area. However, the absence of datable late Saxon deposits *in situ*, suggests that any archaeological features dating to this period are located at a depth greater than 2.20m. below ground level in the south of the site and 0.60m. in the north of the site.

6.4 The depth of the dumped deposits which make up the terracing and which are relatively recent in date, increases towards the south of the evaluation area (see fig. 5), and probably mask any earlier archaeological deposits.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Heritage Lincolnshire recommend that no further archaeological work is necessary within the evaluation area provided that construction works do not exceed a

depth of 0.60m. in the north of the site and 2.20m. in the south of the site.

8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heritage Lincolnshire wish to acknowledge:

The Governors of Stamford Endowed Schools for funding the evaluation and post-evaluation work, J. Cowgill for examining the slag, and the South Kesteven Community Archaeologist for his assistance.

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APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY OF CONTEXTS

Context	Trench	Description	Interpretation
001	1	Brown, friable, clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Top-soil.
002	1	Brown, loose, sand/clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Sub-soil.
003	1	Grey/brown, loose, silt/clay, limestone-tile-bone-charcoal flecks and fragments.	Dumped deposit
004	5	Brown, friable, silt, sandstone fragments.	Top-soil.
005	5	Brown, friable, silt/clay.	Sub-soil.
006	2	Brown, friable, clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Top-soil.
007	2	Brown, loose, sand/clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Sub-soil
008	2	Brown, loose, clay/silt/sand, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
009	3	Brown, friable, clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Top-soil
010	3	Brown, friable, sand/clay/silt, small limestone fragments, charcoal flecks.	Dumped deposit
011	3	Brown, loose, sand/clay/silt, small limestone fragments, charcoal flecks.	Dumped deposit
012	3	Brown, firm, clay/sand/silt.	Dumped deposit.

<u>Context</u>	<u>Trench</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
013	3	Brown, loose, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
014	6	Brown, soft, sand/clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
015	6	Brown, soft, sand/silt, small limestone fragments, crisp packets.	Fill of 022.
016	6	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Fill of 022
017	6	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small sandstone fragments.	Sub-soil.
018	4	Brown, friable, clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Top-soil.
019	4	Brown, loose, sand/clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
020	4	Brown, loose, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
021	6	Brown, friable, sand/silt	Top-soil.
022	6	Cut.	Rubbish pit.
023	7	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Top-soil.
024	7	Brown, friable, sand/silt, charcoal fragments.	Sub-soil.
025	8	Brown, friable, clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Top-soil.
026	8	Brown, loose, sand, small limestone fragments.	Sand lens.

<u>Context</u>	<u>Trench</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Interpretation</u>
027	8	Brown, loose, clay/sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Fill of 028.
028	8	Cut.	Linear feature.
029	8	Brown, friable, ash, small limestone fragments.	Fill of 028.
030	8	Brown, moderate, clay/sand/silt, small limestone fragments, modern tin-foil.	Dumped deposit
031	8	Brown, moderate, sand/clay/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
032	9	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone fragments, crisp packets.	Top-soil.
033	9	Brown, friable, sand-clay/silt, small limestone-charcoal fragments.	Layer.
034	9	Brown, friable, rubble/sand/silt.	Layer
035	10	Brown, loose, small limestone fragments, silt and modern artefacts.	Dumped deposit
036	10	Brown, friable, sand/clay/silt, small limestone-charcoal fragments, modern artefacts.	Dumped deposit
037	10	Brown, moderate, silt/clay/sand, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
038	4	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone-charcoal fragments.	Dumped deposit
039	4	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped

040	4	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small charcoal fragments.	Dumped deposit
041	4	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
042	4	Brown, loose, limestone fragments, sand/silt.	Dumped deposit
043	4	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
044	6	Cut	Robber trench/ditch.
045	6	Brown, friable, sand/clay/silt, charcoal flecks.	Fill of 044
046	6	Brown, firm, clay-sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit.
047	5	Yellow/brown, loose, limestone locks and fragments, sand/silt.	Demolished wall.
048	6	Brown, soft, clay/sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit.
049	8	Brown, friable, sand/silt, small limestone fragments.	Dumped deposit
050	6	Brown, friable, sand/silt, medium sub-angular limestone blocks.	Dumped building material.
051	4	Brown, friable, limestone/silt, brick fragments, root remains.	Dumped deposit

GLOSSARY

- Context** An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an excavation or evaluation is allocated a unique context number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretation of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by square brackets e.g. [001].
- Cut** A cut refers to the physical action of digging a post-hole, pit, ditch etc. Once the fills of these features are removed during an excavation the original 'cut' is therefore exposed and subsequently recorded.
- Dumped deposits** These are deposits, often laid down intentionally, that raise a land surface. They may be the result of casual waste disposal, or may be positive attempts to raise the land surface.
- Fill** Once a feature has been dug, it immediately begins to silt-up (either slowly or rapidly) or it can be back-filled manually. The soil(s) which become contained by the 'cut' are referred to as its fill(s).
- Robber trench** When buildings were left derelict, they were often demolished so that the materials could be re-used. Walls were dismantled to ground level and sometimes a trench was dug around the foundations to remove these as well. The trench was subsequently filled in or silted up. The only evidence for the presence of walls in such cases is this 'robber trench' (or ghost wall).



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HSD 9/2/2631 pte

21 August 1992

Sir

ANCIENT MONUMENTS AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL AREAS ACT 1979 (AS AMENDED)-
 SECTION 2

PROPOSED WORKS AT: SITE OF BRAZENOSE COLLEGE, STAMFORD, SOUTH
 KESTIVEN, LINCOLNSHIRE

COUNTY MONUMENT NO: 256

APPLICATION BY: THE GOVERNORS OF STAMFORD ENDOWED SCHOOLS

1. I am directed by the Secretary of State for National Heritage to refer to your clients' application for scheduled monument consent dated 9 July 1992 and to drawing no SS and the trench location plan submitted therewith in respect of proposed works at the above-named scheduled ancient monument concerned with an archaeological evaluation of the site.

2. In accordance with paragraph 3(2) of Schedule 1 to the 1979 Act, the Secretary of State is obliged to afford to the applicant, and to any other person to whom it appears to the Secretary of State expedient to afford it, an opportunity of appearing before and being heard by a person appointed for that purpose. This opportunity has been declined in your telephone conversation with Mr Casselton of the Department on 20 August 1992.

3. The Secretary of State is required also by the Act to consult with the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England before determining whether or not to grant scheduled monument consent. The Commission have advised him that the proposed archaeological evaluation is to assess the extent, depth and nature of archaeological deposits to provide information for taking decisions on management of the monument and/or changes of land use. Accordingly, the Commission recommend that scheduled monument consent be granted, subject to the following conditions:-

i. the works to which this consent relates shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State, who will be advised by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission. At least 2 weeks notice (or such shorter period as may be mutually agreed) in writing of the commencement of work shall be given to Mr A J Fleming of the Commission at Room 329, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB in order that a Commission representative can inspect and advise;

ii. the works to which this consent relates shall be carried out only by Mr D Start of Heritage Lincolnshire at 28 Boston Road, Sleaford, Lincolnshire and his nominated excavation team;

iii. this consent shall cease to have effect on 31 December 1992;

iv. the excavation shall be backfilled within 3 months of completion of the excavation to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State, who will be advised by the Commission; and

v. a report on the evaluation shall be sent to the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission at Room 329, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB and to the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record, City and County Museum, 12 Friars Lane, Lincoln LN2 5AC within 3 months of completion of excavation.

4. Having considered the advice of the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission, the Secretary of State is satisfied that the proposed archaeological evaluation which is designed to assist in making future management decisions regarding the monument is acceptable. He is agreeable for the evaluation to proceed provided the conditions specified below are adhered to. Accordingly, the Secretary of State hereby grants scheduled monument consent under section 2 of the 1979 Act for the proposed works described at paragraphs 4 and 6 of the application dated 9 July 1992 and shown on drawing no SS and the trench location plan submitted therewith, subject to the following conditions:-

i. the works to which this consent relates shall be carried out to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State, who will be advised by the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission. At least 2 weeks notice (or such shorter period as may be mutually agreed) in writing of the commencement of work shall be given to Mr A J Fleming of the Commission at Room 329, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB in order that a Commission representative can inspect and advise;

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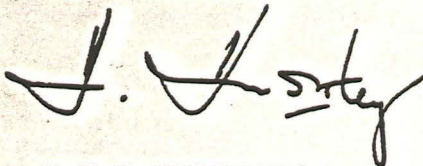
23 Savile Row, London W1X 1AB and to the Lincolnshire County Sites and Monuments Record, City and County Museum, 12 Friars Lane, Lincoln LN2 5AC within 3 months of completion of excavation.

5. This letter does not convey any approval or consent required under any enactment, bye-law, order or regulation other than section 2 of the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

6. Attention is drawn to the provisions of section 55 of the 1979 Act under which any person (hereinafter referred to as the 'applicant') who is aggrieved by the decision given in this letter may challenge its validity by an application made to the High Court within six weeks from the date when the decision is given. The grounds upon which an application may be made to the Court are (1) that the decision is not within the powers of the Act (that is, the Secretary of State has exceeded his powers) or (2) that any of the relevant requirements have not been complied with and the applicant's interests have been substantially prejudiced by the failure to comply. The "relevant requirements" are defined in section 55 of the 1979 Act: they are the requirements of that Act and the Tribunals and Inquiries Act 1971 and the requirements of any regulations or rules made under those Acts.

7. A copy of this letter is being sent to the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission and to Heritage Lincolnshire.

I am Sir
Your obedient Servant



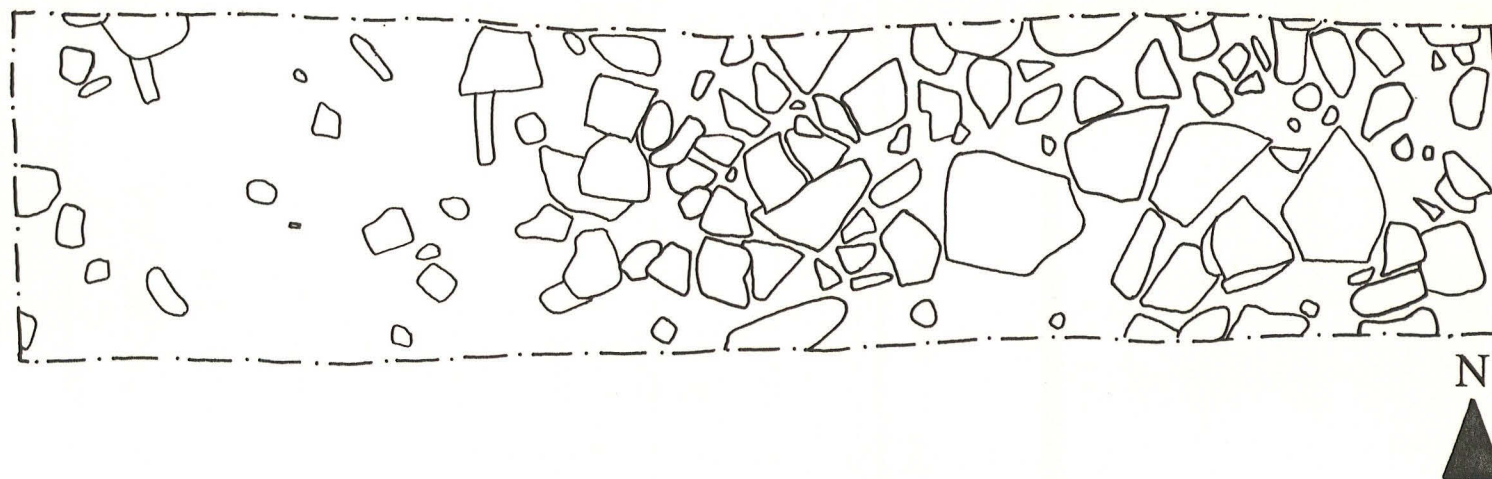
H F F KNOTTLEY
Authorised by the Secretary of State
to sign in that behalf

APPENDIX 4

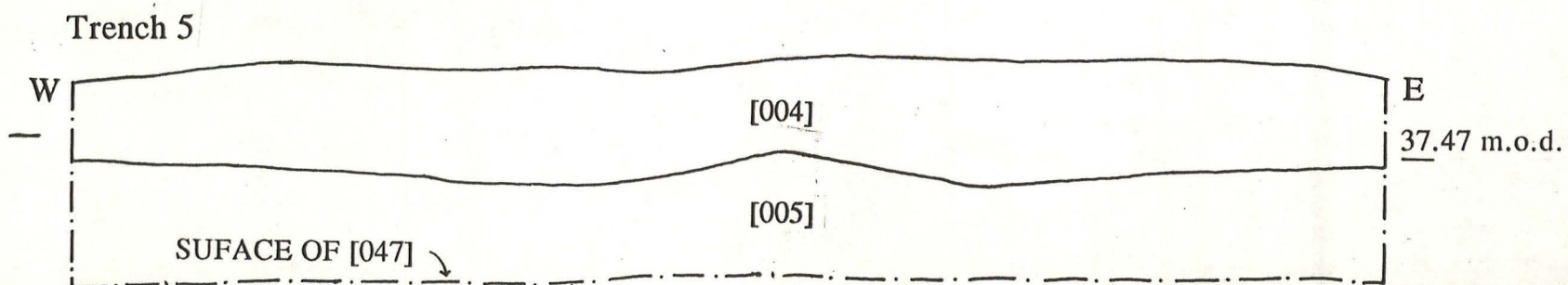
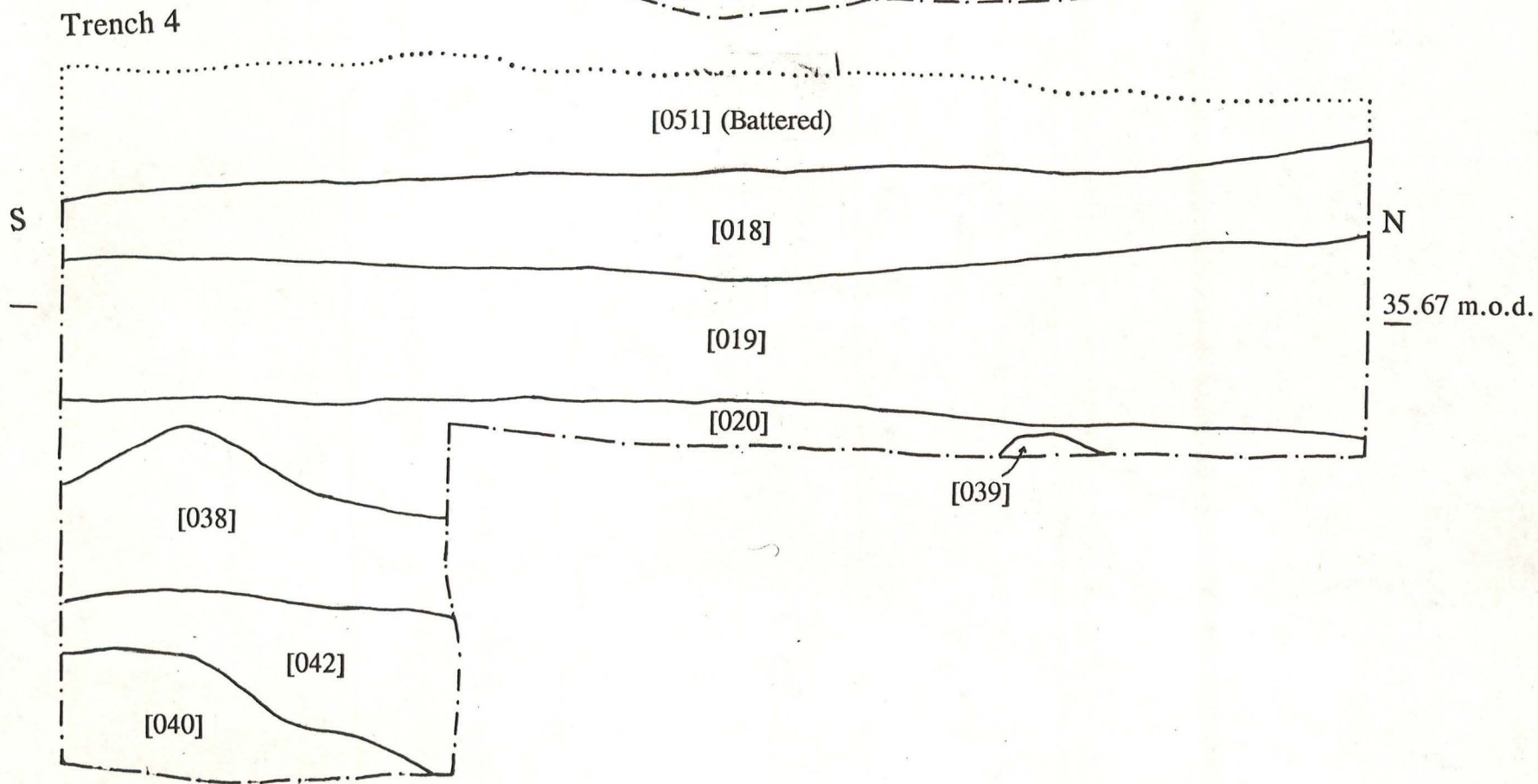
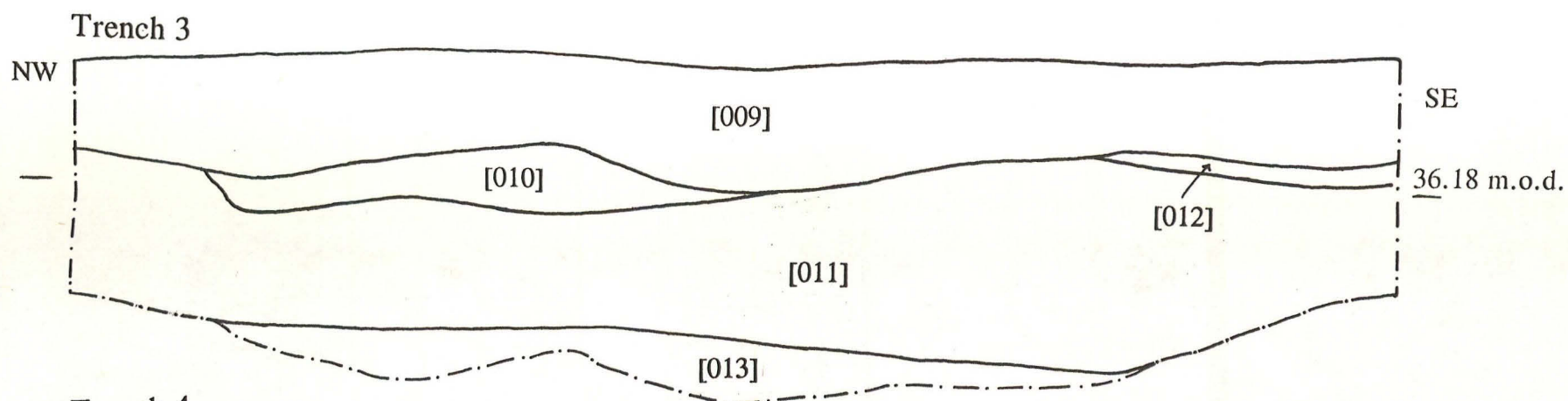
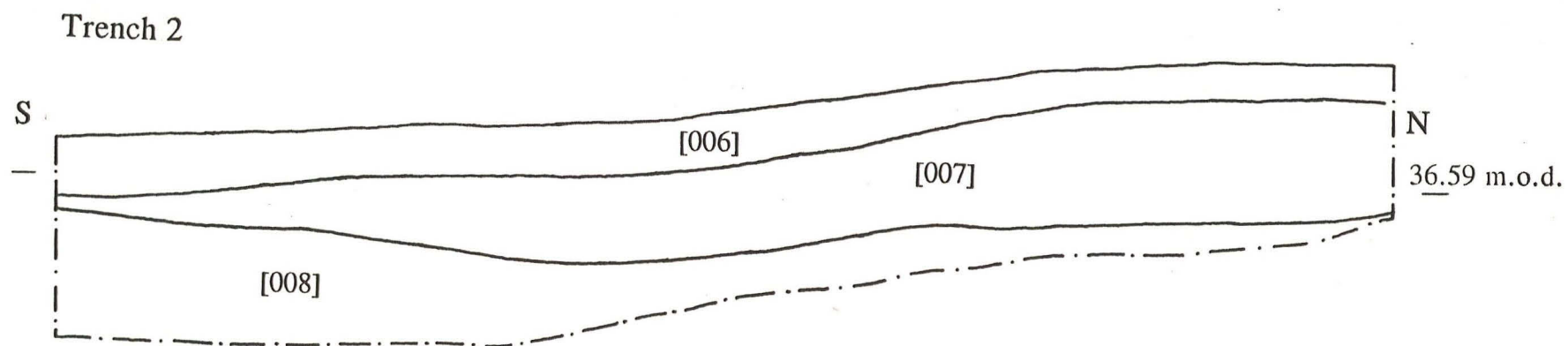
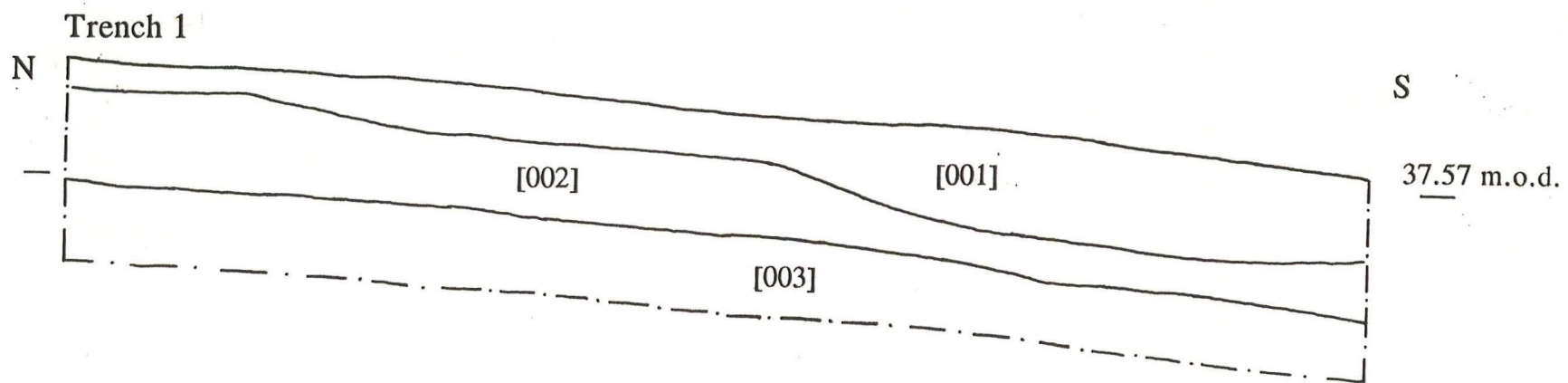
SECTIONS OF TRENCHES AND PLAN OF TRENCH 5

TRENCH 5. PLAN SHOWING SURFACE OF [047].

Drawn at 1:20.



SECTION DRAWINGS OF TRENCHES 1 - 5. All
sections drawn at 1:20.



SECTION DRAWINGS OF TRENCHES 6 - 10. All
sections drawn at 1:20.

