NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Watching brief report
of the
TIVETSHALL SEWERAGE SCHEME
1992

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

REPORT OF WATCHING BRIEF

TIVETSHALL SEWERAGE SCHEME

by

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March - May 1992

July 1992

CONTENTS

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Location: Tivetshall St Mary

Grid Reference: TM 6172 2845 (centred)

Dates of field work: 3th March - 21st May 1992

SMR numbers: 11008, 11022, 18526, 28441

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Summary

The watching brief was carried out during the period of top soil stripping and trench cutting for the Anglian Water Authority's Tivetshall sewerage scheme. It revealed evidence for Roman and Early Saxon occupation.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Norfolk Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Anglian Water in February 1992 to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the construction of a first-time sewerage scheme for the villages of Tivetshall St Margaret and Tivetshall St Mary (Fig. 1) in the spring of that year.

1.2 Some 1,875 metres length of the pipeline to the south of Tivetshall St Mary was required by the Norfolk Landscape Archaeology Section to be examined archaeologically (see Figs. 2, 3 & Appendix I). The northern limit of the monitored section lay at Primrose Cottage (formerly Hill Farm). The 500m stretch of pipeline west of this was recorded as Section A; the next 300m (to the south, up to the hardstanding, as Section B; the remainder as Section C (Fig. 3). The junction of Patten Lane and Moor Road represented its southern end.

1.3 The site of a Roman villa, located about 1,000 metres north of Moor Road on the west side of Patten Lane, formed the focus of the archaeological interest along the pipeline route. The villa was attested by a concentration of discoveries recorded since 1897, the extent of which is shown in Figure 3 (Section C). Archaeological features recorded on the site included flint wall foundations, tessellated floors and refuse pits. Much additional recorded evidence for the presence of a Roman villa is also represented by metal detector finds from 1977 onwards. Patten Lane itself is believed to lie on the course of a Roman road.

1.4 A substantial proportion of the finds recovered from the putative villa site prior to the watching brief are Roman. The

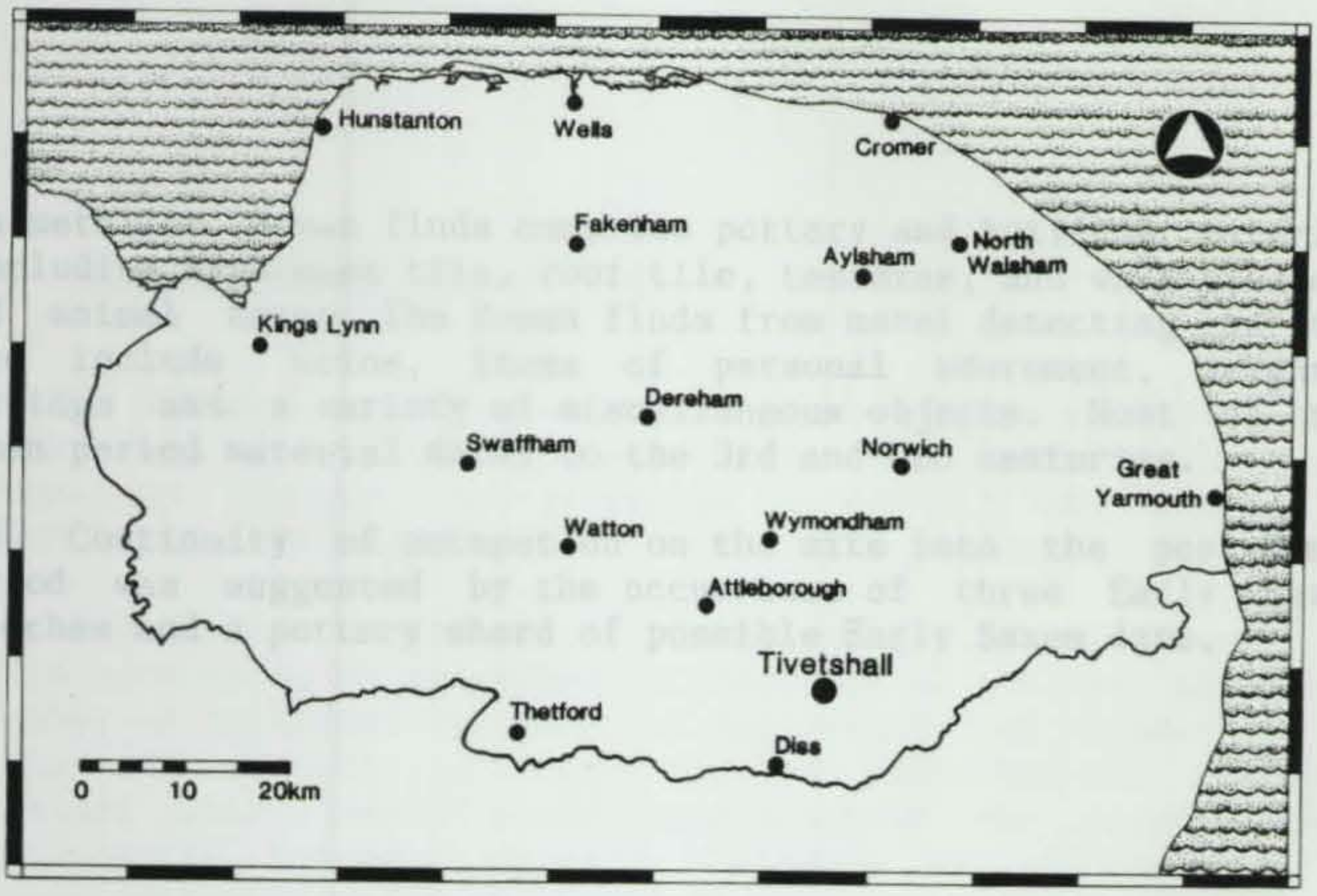

Fig. 1 Map of the county of Norfolk, showing the location of Tivetshall.

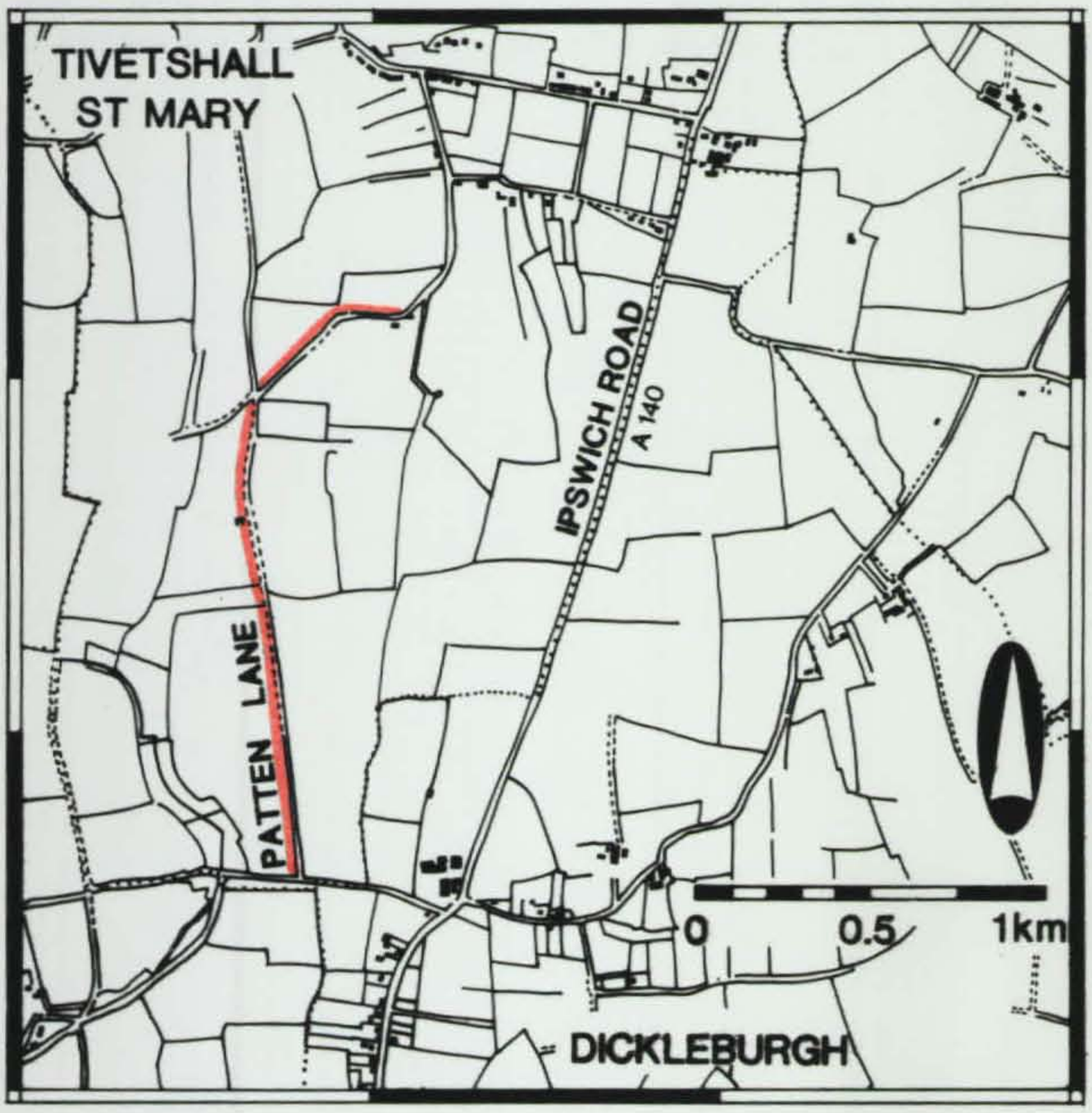

Fig. 2 Plan of the area south of Tivetshall, showing the extent of the watching brief. The A140 follows the line of the Roman road from Colchester to Caistor-by-Norwich.

non-metallic Roman finds comprise pottery and building material (including hypocaust tile, roof tile, tesserae, and wall plaster) and animal bones. The Roman finds from metal detecting on the site include coins, items of personal adornment, weights, fittings and a variety of miscellaneous objects. Most of the Roman period material dates to the 3rd and 4th centuries.

1.5 Continuity of occupation on the site into the post-Roman period was suggested by the occurrence of three Early Saxon brooches and a pottery sherd of possible Early Saxon date.

2.0 Objective of Watching Brief

2.1 The primary aim of the archaeological project at Tivetshall, as defined in the brief formulated by the Norfolk Landscape Archaeology Section, was to assess the quality and extent of archaeological evidence on the route of the pipeline.

2.2 Quality can be defined as the potential informativeness of a site were it to be excavated. Archaeological quality comprises a number of criteria: the level of preservation of deposits; the status and quantity of cultural and environmental material contained within deposits and the clarity of the stratigraphic relationships between deposits. Absence of information is another criterion which is recorded.

2.3 The extent and density of archaeological deposits is a product of both the past activities responsible for their formation and more recent processes of disturbance and decay.

2.4 The work was undertaken within a Method Statement drawn up by the Norfolk Archaeological Unit (Appendix II).

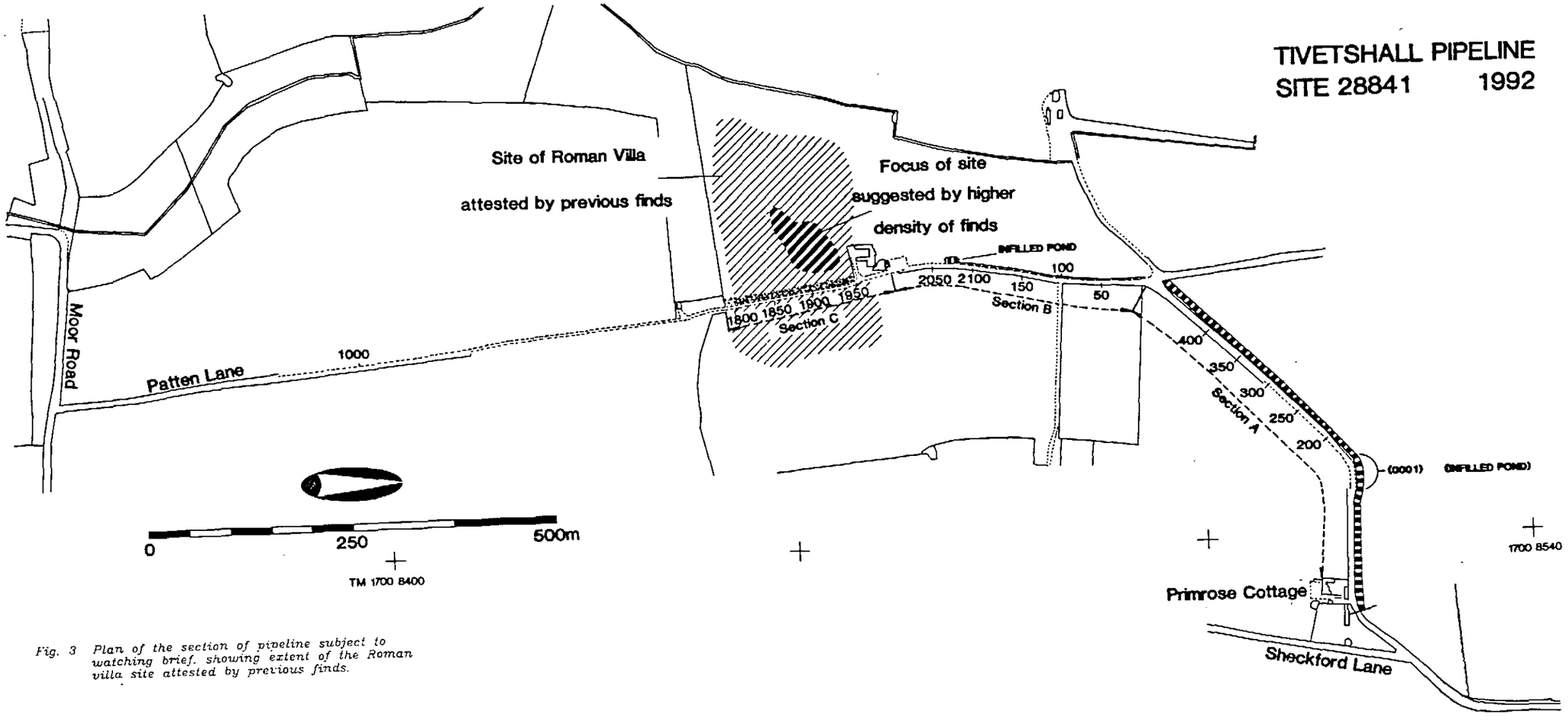

Fig. 3 Plan of the section of pipeline subject to watching brief, showing extent of the Roman villa site attested by previous finds.

3.0 Method of watching brief

3.1 Fieldwalking Survey

Fieldwalking comprised the plotting and recovery of archaeological material lying on the surface of cultivated fields in order to define sites and assess character and possible significance. The fieldwalking survey was conducted in advance of topsoil stripping and pipe-trench cutting.

3.2 Metal detecting Survey

The metal detecting survey involved plotting and recovering metallic objects lying buried within the ploughsoil located with a metal detector in order to enhance the information provided by fieldwalking. This took place over the entire width of the area to be stripped and again after ploughsoil had been removed. Small metal objects could be detected by the instrument up to a depth of approximately 200mm. This meant that the spoil heap generated by stripping needed to be scanned to maximise the recovery of objects buried deeper in the topsoil.

3.3 Monitoring of ploughsoil stripping

The ploughsoil was stripped by machine prior to the pipe-trench being opened to allow reinstatement of agricultural land when the works were completed. The exposed subsoil level was then examined for surviving archaeological features cut into it. This was followed by excavation (within the constraints of the stripping) of deposits occurring within such features. Archaeological material such as pottery, building material and animal bone encountered during excavation was recovered for analysis and dating. Once excavated the features were drawn in plan and section and also photographed.

3.4 Monitoring of trench excavation

The ploughsoil was only stripped where the pipeline crossed agricultural land. The rest of the trench was machine-excavated to its full depth without prior removal of topsoil. In order to check for the presence of archaeological features in these sections of the pipeline it was necessary to examine the sides of the trench. Archaeological monitoring of the trench digging was also required where features had not been clearly defined following the stripping of the ploughsoil.

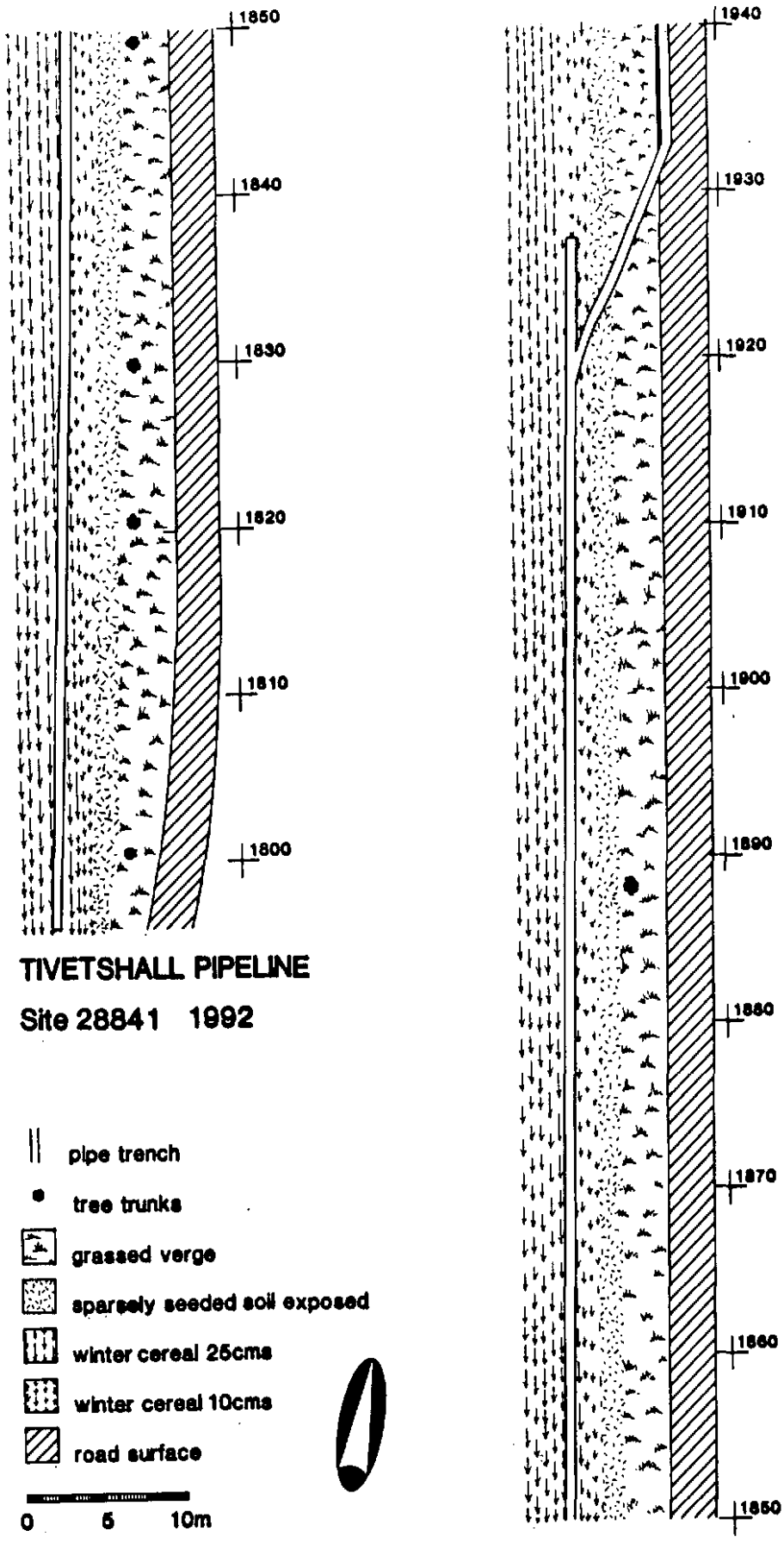

Fig. 4 Plan of section C of the pipeline in area of Roman villa site showing surface conditions and extent of survey.

4.0 Distribution of finds and features

4.1 Fieldwalking between Primrose Cottage and the hard-standing situated on the west side of Patten Lane some 1,000 metres north of Moor Road (at the junction of Sections B and C, Fig. 3), produced no finds of archaeological interest. However, the metal detecting survey located three coins north-east of the road junction. Two of the coins were Roman copper alloy folles (Constantine I, AD332 and 333-4). They occurred at 148 and 108 metres, respectively, from the south-west corner of the field. The third coin was a medieval silver penny (Edward III, AD1327-77) and occurred at 97 metres from the corner of the field. The stripping of the ploughsoil revealed a large feature approximately 180 metres west of Primrose Cottage, where the road bends to the south-west (see Fig.3). This feature, which contained a penny of 1938, was interpreted as a pond that had been infilled some time after that date. A further pond, also comparatively recently infilled, was revealed some 45 metres north of the hard-standing adjacent to Patten Lane (see Fig.3).

4.2 A concentration of surface finds was recorded by fieldwalking to the south of the hard-standing (Fig.5). This group comprised 55 pottery sherds and four fragments of building material. Some 68 per cent of these finds were Roman, the remainder being Iron Age or Saxon in date.

4.3 The metal detecting survey located three Roman copper alloy coins and a rim fragment of a small Roman bronze vessel within the area of the concentration of surface finds. The coins comprised an antoninianus of Carausius (AD287-93), a follis of Constantine I (AD330-1) and a follis of Constans (AD340). A post-medieval jetton (Hans Krauwinckel II, AD1586-1635) was also found in this section of the pipeline.

4.4 A total of 29 features (Fig. 3), which cut into the natural sand, occurred on the line of the pipe-trench between the hard-standing and the field ditch some 200 metres to the south. The ground surface contemporary with these features had been destroyed by ploughing. A further 11 pottery sherds were recovered from the stripping of the ploughsoil, again within the area of the concentration defined by fieldwalking.

4.5 No features of archaeological interest were revealed in the remaining 835 metres of the pipeline to Moor Road. However, the bracketed iron ring of a post-medieval shoe-patten (Fig.7) was found during the metal detecting survey at the north end of the bank some 260 metres north of Moor Road. Shoe-pattens were overshoes which were worn to raise ordinary shoes out of the mud or wet.

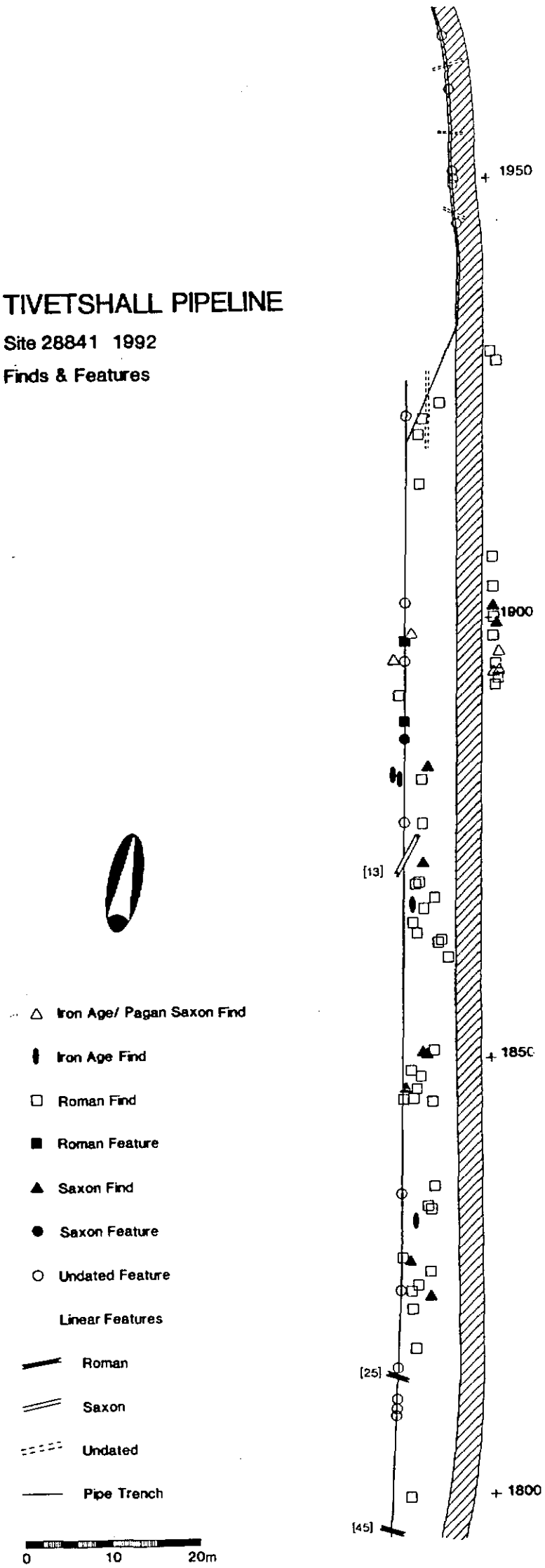

Fig. 5 Plan showing locations of finds from fieldwaking and metal detecting surveys, and of features revealed in the pipe trench

5.0 Discussion of archaeological evidence

5.1 The quantity of finds recovered in the watching brief represents a relatively small proportion of the accumulated corpus of material already known from the area. The results of this project, therefore, have to be examined in the context of previously reported discoveries. The distribution of finds and features recorded in this project (Fig.5) compares closely with the spread of previous finds (Fig.3). Figure 4 shows details of surface conditions at the time of survey in the area of the Roman villa (Section C, Fig. 3).

5.2 The following table quantifies the pottery recovered from the ploughsoil during fieldwalking and stripping:

PERIOD	SHERD TYPE			TOTAL
	BODY, NECK & SHOULDER	RIM	BASE	
IRON AGE	4	1	0	5
IRON AGE OR EARLY SAXON	2	3	0	5
ROMAN	30	6	6	42
EARLY SAXON	13	0	0	13
			SUM TOTAL	65

While 65 sherds probably represents a relatively small sample of the total population of sherds occurring in the ploughsoil, they do afford a basis for some general statements to be made about the artefact content. The majority of the pottery (65 per cent) dated from the Roman period. Continuity of activity into the Saxon period could be implied by the significant quantity of Saxon sherds (at least 20 per cent of the sherds recovered).

5.3 Of the 29 cut features revealed in the area of the concentration, six could be dated on the basis of finds recovered from their fills. Four of these features dated to the 2nd to 4th centuries; the other two were Saxon. The narrowness of the trench meant that the probability of exposing physical relationships between features was relatively low. It was also difficult to understand the patterning or distribution of features given the slit view afforded by the trench.

5.4 Of the 29 features seven were linear (Fig.5). However, the narrow width of the trench meant that the character of any

feature and its alignment was often uncertain.

5.5 The southernmost linear feature [45] was a ditch with a shallow profile (Fig. 5). The alignment of this feature could not be confidently determined on the basis of the short length exposed within the trench as it crossed the trench approximately at right angles. Two fills were identified. The lower fill (46) contained 8 sherds of pottery, of which 6 were definitely Roman. These included a sherd of Black Burnished Ware dating to the 3rd - 4th centuries AD. A decorated rim fragment of a clear glass jar or beaker (late 3rd - 4th century in date) was also recovered. The upper fill (44) produced 13 sherds from a single wheelmade vessel. This pottery, which had an orange fabric, was 2nd to 4th century in date. In addition, a sherd with incised decoration and of a black fabric, was also found.

5.6 Feature [25] was a very shallow, apparently linear cut, which lay towards the southern end of the concentration of previous finds (see Fig.5).

5.7 Feature [13] was a further straight ditch. This feature crossed the line of the pipe-trench at an angle of 27 degrees (Fig.6). An Early Saxon date for the latest infilling of the ditch was indicated by the occurrence of 13 sherds of Early Saxon hand-made pottery in the fill. Two Roman sherds were also recovered. There was no evidence to discount a Roman date for the cutting of the ditch. Therefore, it is conceivable that the feature was created in association with the Roman villa attested by previous finds. The alignment of ditch [13] clearly conflicts with that of Patten Lane. This nonconformity suggests that the ditch and the road were not in use at the same time. Therefore, the existence of Patten Lane prior to the infilling of the ditch in the Early Saxon period seems unlikely. This places a Roman date for Patten Lane in some doubt.

5.8 The remaining 4 linear features, which lay in the northern part of the concentration, did not produce any finds. Three of them, which were aligned approximately east-west, lay beneath Patten Lane. Given the likelihood that these features have a similar date to other features and finds within the concentration, that is Roman or Early Saxon, the case for Patten Lane being of Roman origin is further weakened. Water Authority trenching along Patten Lane did not reveal any positive evidence of construction of the road during the Roman period. The remaining linear feature was parallel to Patten Lane.

5.9 A concentration of discrete, non-linear features (comprising possible pits and post-holes) was revealed immediately to the north of ditch [13]. These features lay in the vicinity of a high density of Roman finds recovered in the past (see Fig.3). It could, therefore, be postulated that ditch [13] represents the south-east boundary of the villa enclosure.

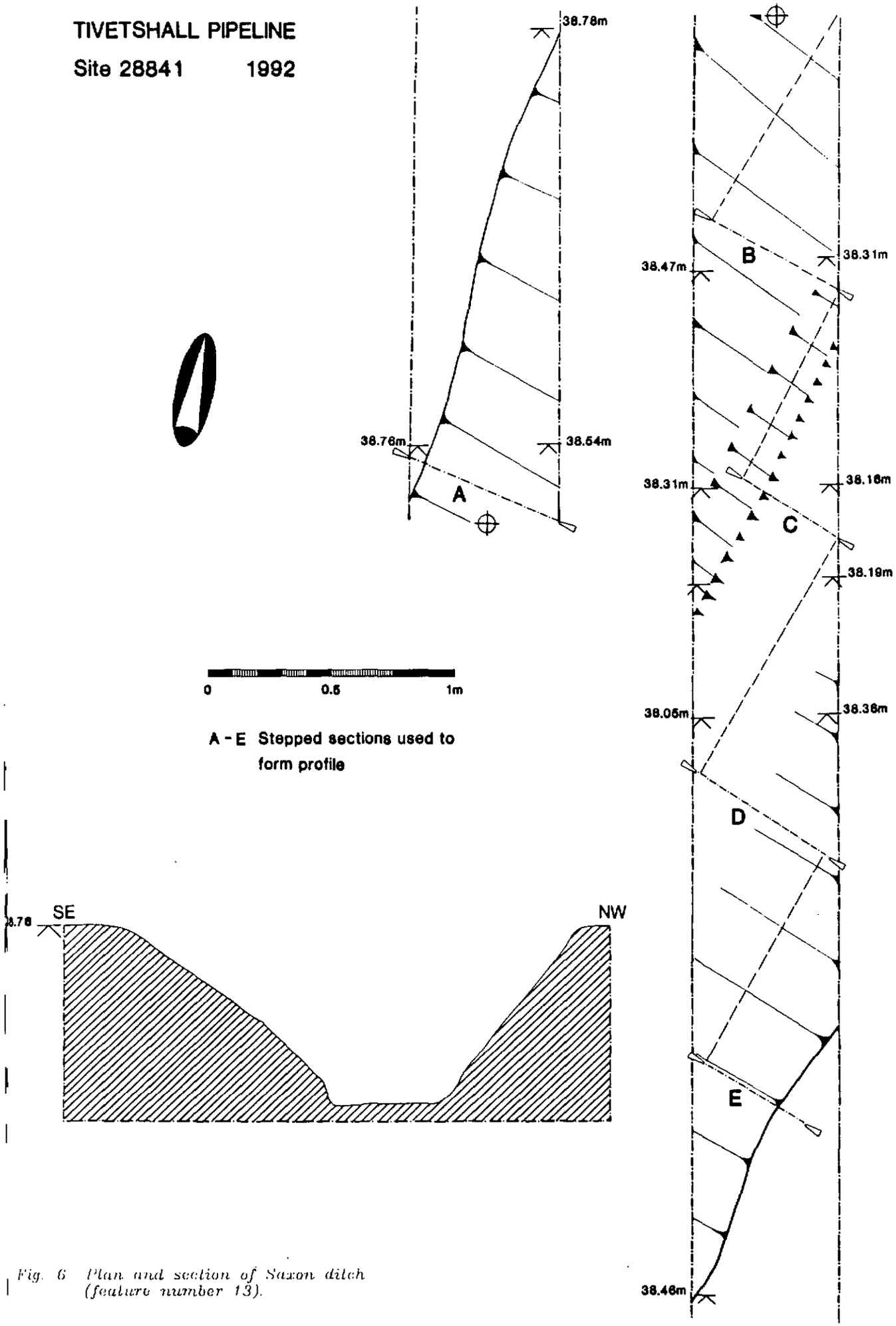

Fig. 6 Plan and section of Saxon ditch (feature number 13).

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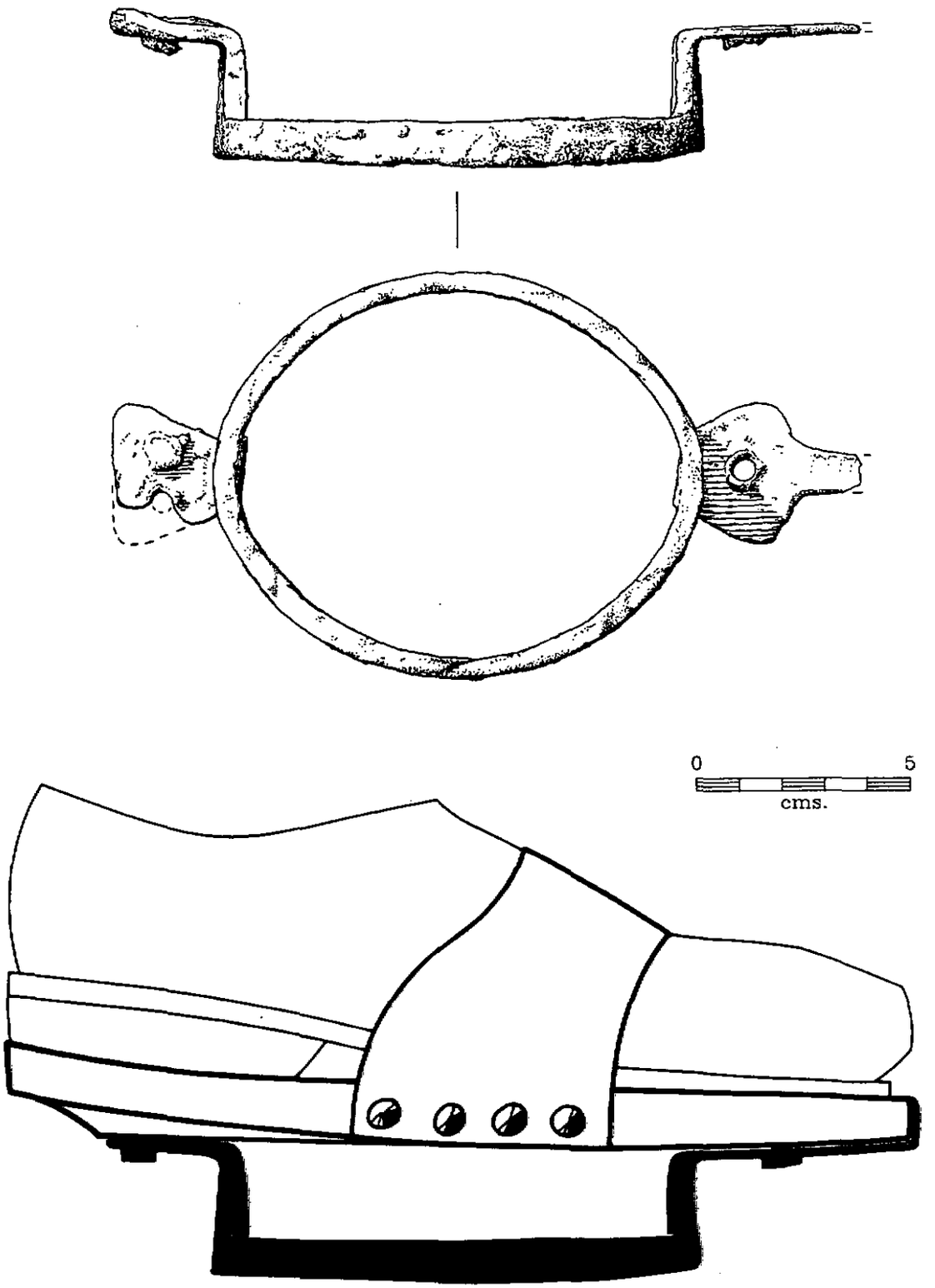

Fig. 7 Post-medieval iron shoe-patten found in bank next to Patten Lane.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The results of the watching brief have augmented the corpus of accumulated records of archaeological discoveries that indicate that the focus of a site of domestic occupation in the late Roman period lay to the west of Patten Lane. The extent of the spread of finds and features recorded during the watching brief broadly corresponds with that of previous discoveries.

6.2 The villa site is located within an area of boulder clay which contains possible planned field systems of pre-Roman date. The evidence for continuity of occupation into the Early Saxon period, demonstrated by the Watching Brief, emphasises the importance of this South Norfolk area for landscape studies.

6.3 It is of considerable interest that the excavated evidence questions the interpretation of Patten Lane as a Roman road, primarily by the discovery of a ditch [13] whose alignment was at considerable variance with that of the lane.

6.4 While modern ploughing has removed the upper parts of archaeological features and the ground surfaces from which they were cut, there is considerable survival of deposits below the level of agricultural disturbance. However, there was no indication of waterlogging that might have afforded good preservation of organic material.

6.5 No environmental evidence, other than some bones of domestic animals that had presumably been deposited as refuse, was found to survive within fills. In general, the pottery sherds in fills within features are not particularly abraded. The fresh condition of the sherds indicates that the pottery was probably not redeposited, and thus offers a more valuable contribution to interpretation and dating of deposits.

6.6 Definition of the edges of some deposits was difficult due to similarities in colour and texture between deposits. However, the stratigraphic sequence of features would be easier to resolve given a larger area of excavation than the 0.6 metre-wide trench examined during the watching brief.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The archaeological watching brief was commissioned and funded by Anglian Water Services, whose help and support is gratefully acknowledged. In particular the on-site assistance and cooperativeness of Bill Frazer and David Ward is noted.

Dennis Jordan's contribution in the form of the metal-detecting survey was much appreciated. He also provided the NAU with much valuable advice and information.

The Norfolk Archaeological Unit is very grateful to the landowner, David Gill, for allowing the fieldwalking and metal detecting surveys prior to the ploughsoil stripping.

The writer was assisted in this work by Kevin Forrest who is thanked for his excavation and recording work, often during appalling weather.

TIVETSHALL SEWERAGE SCHEME
ANGLIAN WATER SERVICES LTD

REF: DRHP/AT/ST50A
AKC6485/Q116/4/1

SMR SITES 11008, 11022, 18526

L.A.S. REF. LASPLAG 285

BRIEF FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

Background

The pipeline passes beside the line of a Roman road (Site 11022), beside which are the known remains of a Roman villa (Site 11008) represented by finds since 1897 of Roman pottery, tesserae, wall plaster, metalwork and coins. The villa site has also produced a probable Iron Age sherd, a Middle or Late Saxon brooch and human skeletal remains. On the other side of the Roman road, opposite the villa, a scatter of Roman coins, metalwork and pottery has been recorded (Site 18526).

The presence of these sites indicates that this is an area of considerable archaeological importance. An archaeological watching brief should take place on the stretch of pipeline from Moor Road, Dickleburgh to Hill Farm, Tivetshall St Mary. The area of the watching brief is indicated in red on the attached plan (Scale 1:10,000; part of Drawing No. 4S/2349/1/1.

It is assumed that the pipe is to be laid in a relatively narrow open cut trench, and that the maximum working width of 10 metres will not be stripped of topsoil to its full width.

If it proves necessary for the maximum working width of 10 metres to be stripped of topsoil in this area, then additional time and funding should be allowed for the removal of the topsoil under archaeological supervision, and the excavation and recording of any archaeological features exposed.

Brief

The project design should, in the area shown on the attached plan:

1. Show what provision will be made for fieldwalking and survey by medal-detector of the pipeline route in advance of construction to assess the artefact content of the topsoil.

2. Show what provision will be made for the presence of an archaeologist during topsoil stripping and/or the excavation of the pipe-trench.

3. Show how as much information as possible will be collected on the presence/absence, extent, condition, character,

   quality and date of any archaeological deposits on the pipeline route.

4. Indicate that all archaeological contexts and artefacts exposed, examined or excavated will be fully recorded on appropriate context, finds and sample sheets, on plans and sections and by photographic record.

5. Include projected timetable on site, and numbers and grades of staff involved.

6. Include an estimate of the time and resources required for report production.

7. Provide a provisional programme outlining post-excavation analysis, with provision for conservation, the identification of artefacts, specialist reports if appropriate, production of archive report, donation of finds to an appropriate museum, transfer and storage of artefacts and archive in an acceptable form to an appropriate museum, and inclusion of the results of the project in the County SMR.

Results

1. Style and format of the report may be determined by the archaeological contractor.

2. A scale plan (at 1:10,000 or 1:10,560) showing the pipeline route, the location of all features and artefacts recovered and a gazetteer of all previously known or newly-discovered sites and finds must be included.

3. Where features have been excavated or finds recovered, the report should include comprehensive details of features and finds and interpretation.

4. A copy of the results will be supplied to the Norfolk SMR not later than six months after the completion of the project on the understanding that this will become a public document after an approprriate period of time (generally not exceeding six months).

The Norfolk Museums Service Landscape Archaeology Section will be responsible for monitoring progress and standards throughout the project. The archaeological contractor will give the Landscape Archaeology Section not less than one week's notice of the commencement of the work so that arrangements for monitoring the project can be made.

Archaeological contractors may wish to forward any 'Detailed Project Specifications' to the Norfolk Museums Service Landscape Archaeology Section for validation before any proposals are submitted. Any subsequent variation to the specification must be agreed with the Landscape Archaeology Section prior to its implementation.

D.A. Gurney
Principal Landscape Archaeologist
9 July 1991

NORFOLK ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

TIVETSHALL SEWERAGE SCHEME
ANGLIAN WATER SERVICES LIMITED

REF: DRHP/AT/ST50A
AKC6485/Q116/4/1

SMR SITES 11008, 11022, 18526

L.A.S. REF. LASPLAG 285

METHOD STATEMENT FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1. Archaeological field walking and a metal-detector survey of the pipeline route will be undertaken following agreement with the client prior to construction works.

2. An Archaeological Project Manager will monitor the removal of topsoil and the excavation of the trench.

3. Discussions will be undertaken with the client to permit the removal of topsoil prior to excavation of the trench so that archaeological features in the subsoil can be monitored and/or excavated archaeologically. Metal detecting of removed topsoil will be undertaken in those areas considered viable following the earlier surveys. Contact will be maintained with Tom Williamson of the Centre of East Anglian Studies in order to maximise the landscape archaeology potential of the evaluation.

4. Recording will be undertaken using standardised Norfolk Archaeological Unit recording systems. These records will include plans, sections, survey records, context, finds and sample sheets (where necessary) and photographs.

5. Timemetable dependent upon pipeline programme. Staff to include a Project Manager (Scale 5) and Experienced Excavators (Scale 3) as necessary.

6. Report within 6 weeks of conclusion of site works. Resources subject to negotiation.

7. Post-excavation programme dependent upon results. Provision will be made for any necessary conservation work, artefact identification, specialist reports as necessary, production of an archive report and storage of the archive. Donation of the finds to the Norfolk Museums Service subject to negotiation; successful negotiation will result in transfer of the artefacts to the NMS following NMS guidelines. A copy of the results will be sent to the SMR.

Brian S. Ayers,
Principal Field Archaeologist
29th August, 1991