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Hopper Hill Road  
- Crossgates  
Seamer  
North Yorkshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

MAP  
June 2003

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Archaeological Watching Brief

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This report sets out the results of an Archaeological Watching Brief carried out by MAP Archaeological Consultancy Ltd. on the north-west corner of a field lying west of Hopper Hill Road, Crossgates, Seamer Parish, North Yorkshire (Fig. 1 - TA 0330 8310), in July 2003.
- 1.2 The Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on behalf Scarborough, Filey & District Business Development Agency, in accordance with an archaeological brief attached to the planning permission for the site, designed to ensure the implementation of a suitable scheme of archaeological work in advance of development for light industrial purposes. This brief arose from the results of an archaeological evaluation carried out in 2000 over the entire field as part of the pre-planning determination of the development (details of which are to be found in section 4 below).
- 1.3 All maps within this report have been produced from the Ordnance Survey with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Crown Copyright. Licence No. AL 50453A.

**2. Site Description**

- 2.1 The site comprises an area of c. 1 hectare forming the north-western portion of a former arable field of c. 8 hectares, bounded by hedges and fencing on the north and west sides (Figs 2 and 3). The topography consists of a number of a low undulating hillock, the general elevation of the land dropping towards the north.
- 2.2 The site lies immediately south of modern industrial units situated along Hopper Hill Road, and west of the access road to the Seamer Carr landfill site. The former Burton Riggs gravel quarry, now a wetland area of Special Scientific Interest, lies immediately to the west (Fig. 2).

**3. Geology**

- 3.1 The geology at the site consists of glaciofluvial deposits, mainly of sands and gravels, underlying coarse loamy, non-calcareous soils of the Wick 1 Association (Mackney *et al.* 1983).

**4. Archaeological and Historical Background**

- 4.1 The area lies within a rich landscape of multi-period archaeological remains, the Vale of Pickering having formed a focus for human occupation since earliest times.

Trench 1, lying c. 50m south of the watching brief area intercepted two gullies and a number of pits and postholes. Associated finds consisted of Neolithic pottery, and flint tools and flakes. Trench 2, at the southern boundary, revealed a broad shallow gully, possibly a furrow (MAP 2000).

## **5. Methodology**

- 5.1 Topsoil was stripped from the entire area by a tracked 360-degree excavator using a toothless blade, under close archaeological supervision (Fig. 3: Pls 1 & 3). A 3m wide zone adjacent to the hedged western and northern boundaries was excluded from this operation because of the presence of great crested newts in the locality. Initially, machining ceased at the top of natural deposits; areas of the natural were then excavated by a tracked excavator to provide 'cut and fill' landscaping.

An area for the temporary access road was also stripped (Pls. 2 & 4).

## **6. Results**

- 6.1. No archaeological features or deposits were revealed by the topsoil strip. The only features present were deep multiple (modern) plough scars running adjacent to the present field boundaries.

- 6.2 Four flint artefacts were recovered from the topsoil: a scraper, a core and two flakes. These are dateable to the early Neolithic period (P. Makey, pers. comm.)

## **7. Discussion**

- 7.1 The Archaeological Watching Brief illustrated that the Neolithic 'occupation' revealed in evaluation Trench 1, 50m to the south, did not extend into the north-west corner of the field. The presence of the four flint artefacts does however suggest that some kind of Neolithic presence.

- 7.2 The distribution of the features in evaluation Trench 1 suggested that activity might be clustered into groups rather than spread evenly. It is within the development plot (encompassing Trench 1) immediately south of the Watching Brief area where additional evidence concerning the nature of Neolithic activity is anticipated. A detailed scheme of archaeological works has been prepared by the Heritage Unit of NYCC for this plot, to be initiated in advance of development.

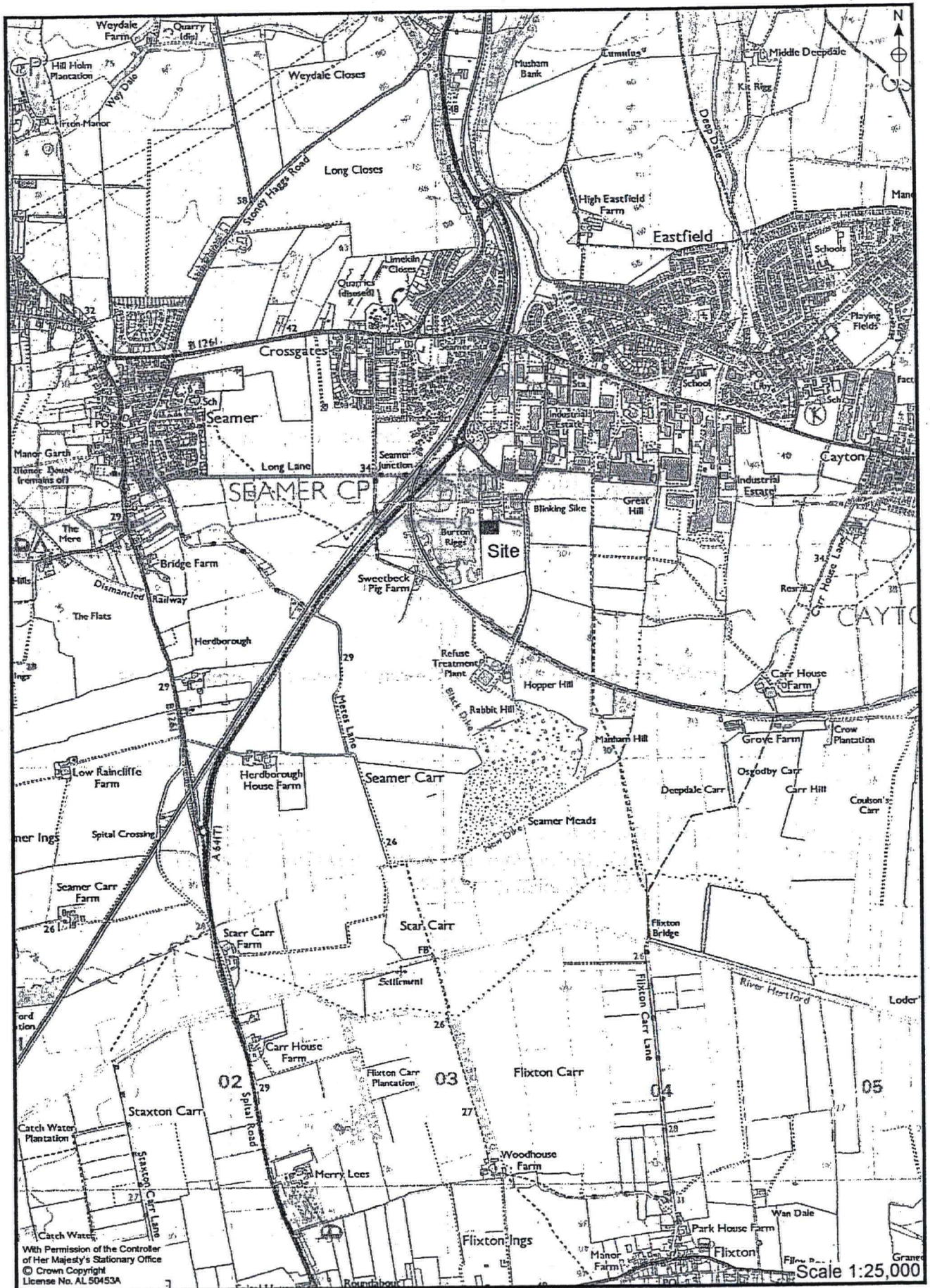
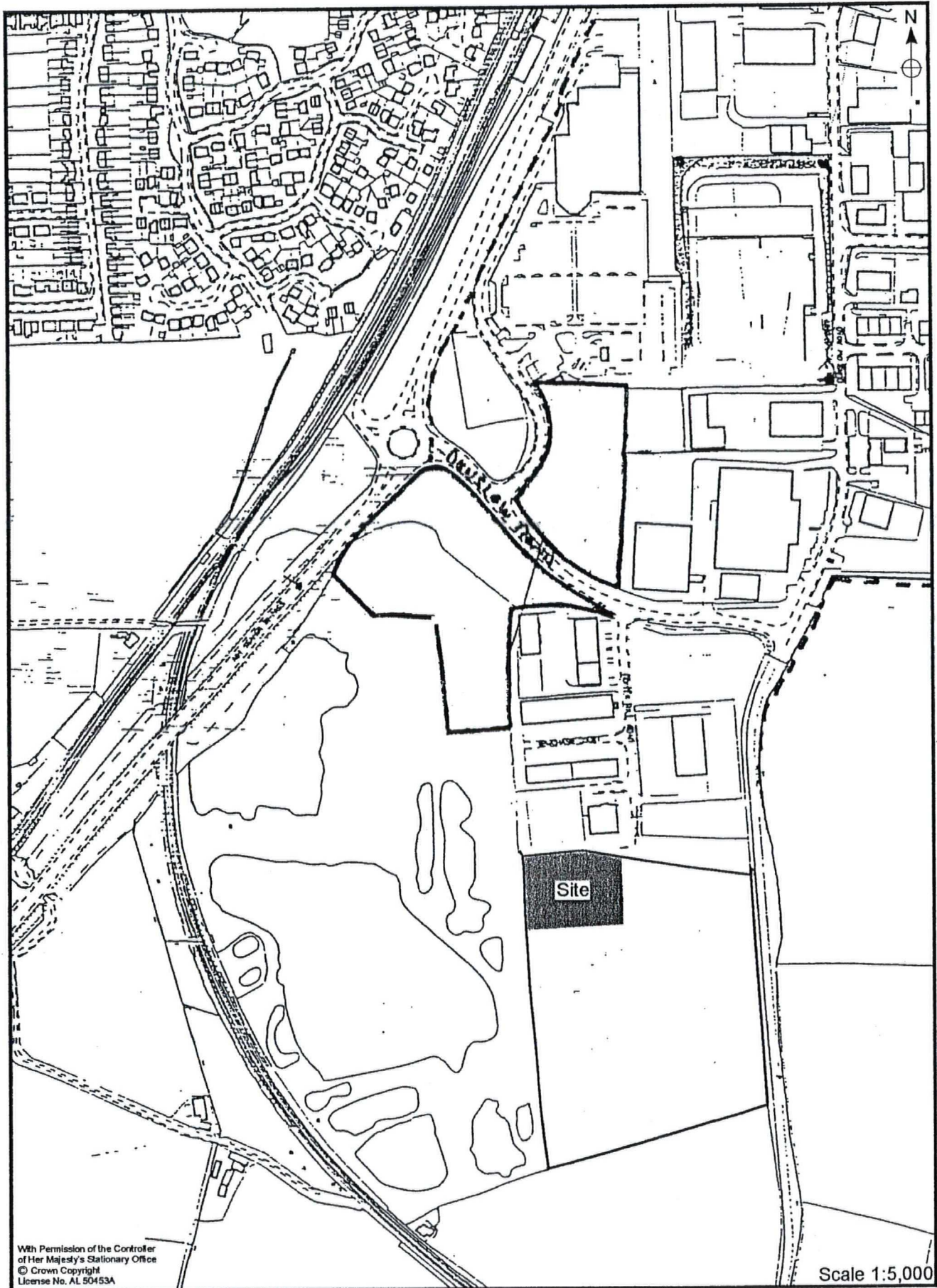


Figure 1. Site Location



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Scale 1:5,000

Figure 2. Site Location

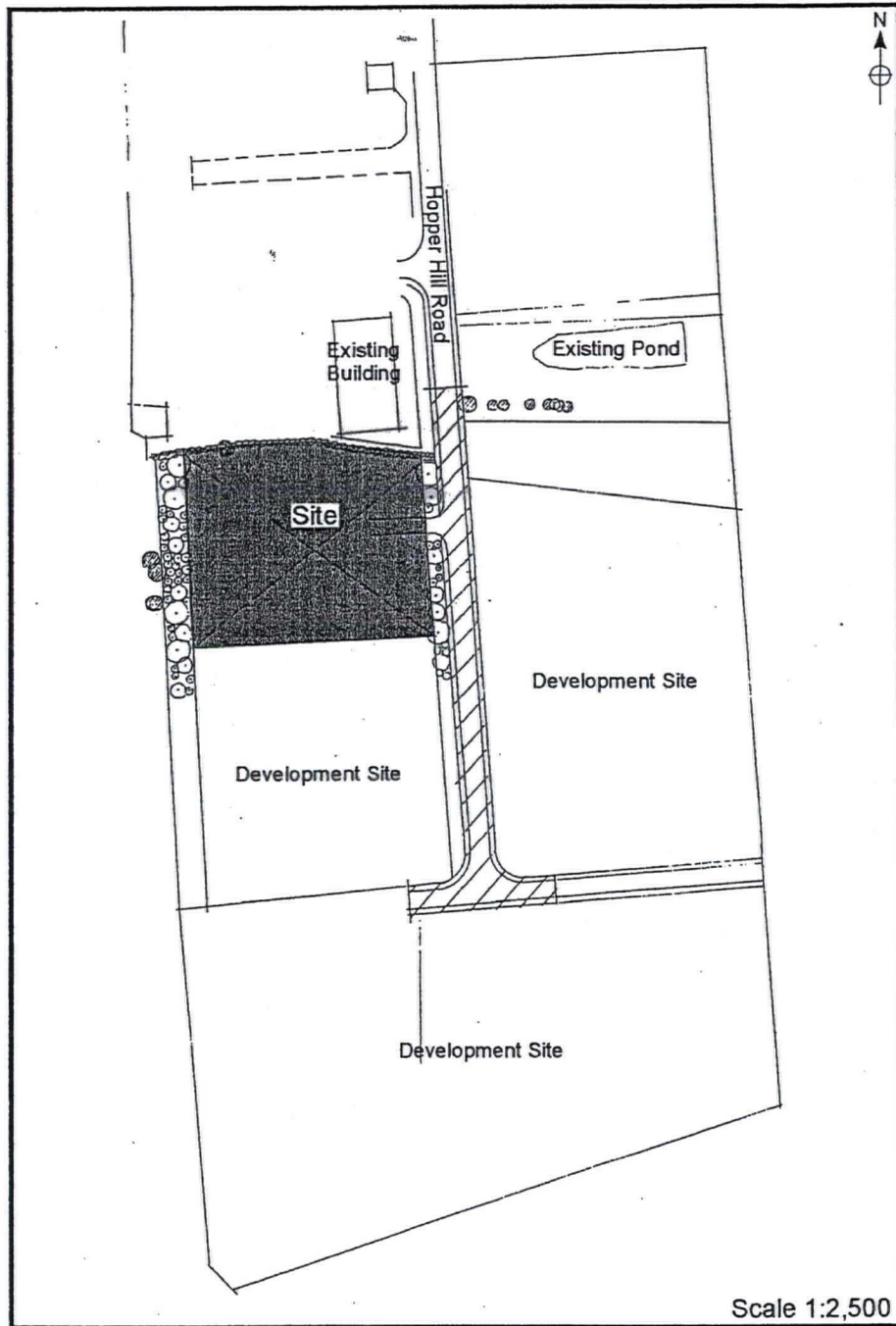


Figure 3. Area of Development



Plate 1. View of site prior to stripping . Facing north-east.

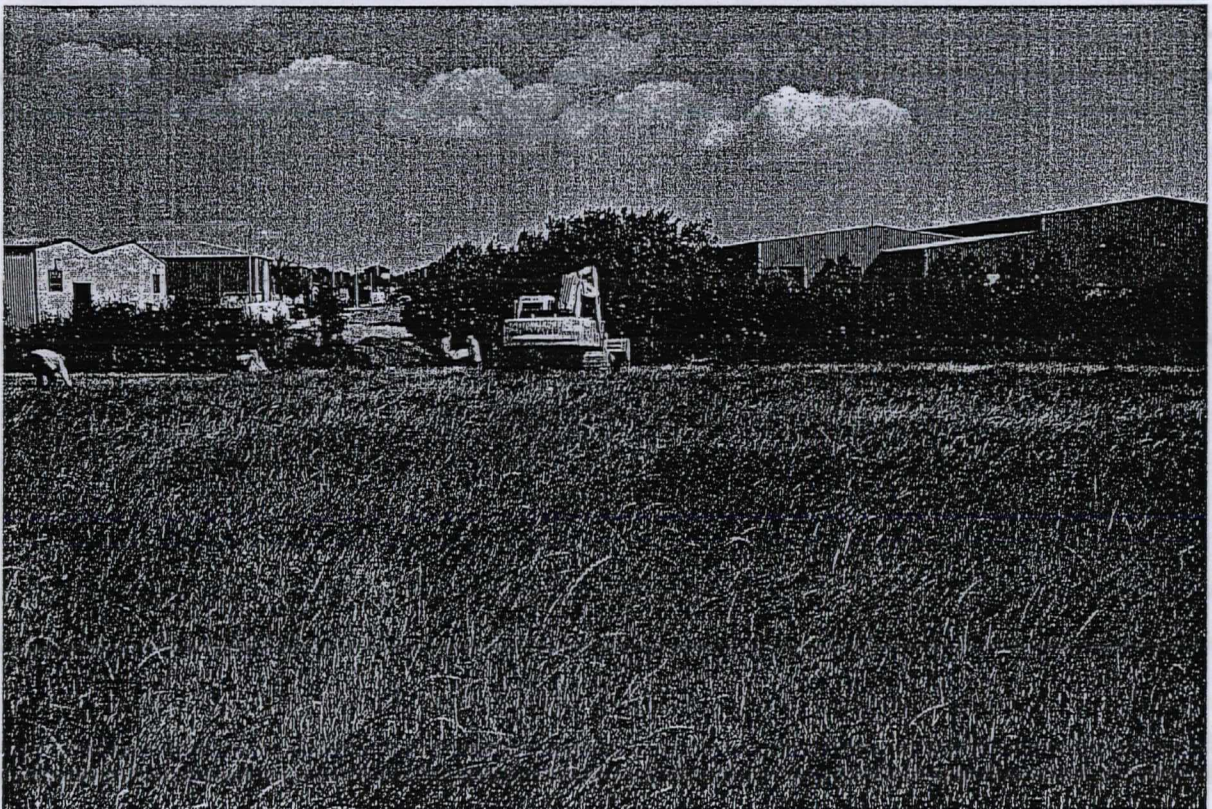


Plate 2. View of road alignment prior to stripping. Facing north.





Plate 3. Development plot during topsoil strip. Facing south-west.

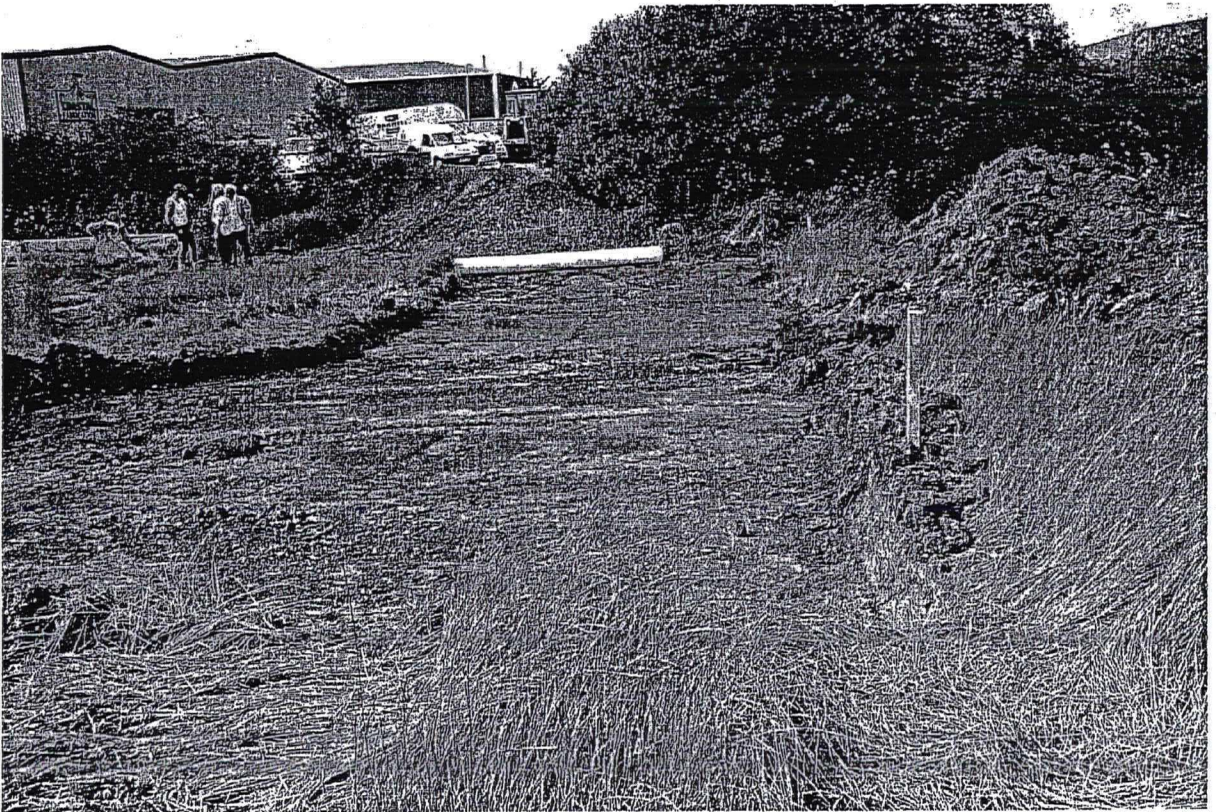


Plate 4. Access Road after topsoil strip. Facing north.